











ELEUTHERNA



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ISBN: 978-960-8154-94-0



NIKOLAOS CHR. STAMPOLIDIS

# ELEUTHERNA



John S. Latsis  
Public Benefit Foundation









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THE ARCHAEOLOGIST'S SPADE often brings forth great surprises and exciting discoveries, sometimes in places that at first sight look unlikely or are initially underestimated. Places, however, which, thanks to the perspicacity, conviction and perseverance of the excavators, reveal hidden treasures of inestimable historical and cultural value.

Ancient Eleutherna is one such case. Founded at a nodal point at the heart of Crete, it is a place with almost continuous human habitation from prehistoric times into the Middle Ages. After its heyday passed, the city did not fall into historical oblivion for long. Nonetheless, it remained for many years in the shadow of the imposing Minoan palatial centres which, to a great degree, monopolized the interest of the first archaeologists working on Crete, who initially passed Eleutherna by, paying it little attention.

Over the past thirty-six years, however, the systematic excavation project of the University of Crete in three sectors of the city and in the necropolis at Orthi Petra, under the scientific direction of outstanding archaeologists and academic teachers, professors Petros Themelis, Athanasios Kalpaxis and Nikos Stampolidis, and with the input of hundreds of students and young researchers from Greece and abroad, have brought to light the extensive material remains at the site. They have enhanced the rich history of Eleutherna, which enjoyed periods of zenith in Homeric, Graeco-Roman and Early Byzantine times. Through its highly significant finds, Eleutherna has made a decisive contribution to our knowledge of the political, economic, social, religious and artistic history of the whole of Crete, particularly during early historical and Archaic times.

A distillate of this knowledge for scholars and researchers, and at the same time a valuable guide and companion for every visitor to the archaeological site and museum of Eleutherna, who is eager to learn and aware of its importance, is offered in this luxurious and superbly produced publication.

Continuing their precious long-standing and manifold contribution to the cultural heritage of Hellenism, the John S. Latsis Public Benefit Foundation and Lamda Development enrich with the nineteenth volume the emblematic series 'The Museums Cycle', inspired idea of the multi-talented Vangelis Chronis. 'The Museums Cycle' presents and promotes, always with the same paramount scholarly authority and aesthetic excellence, the leading museums and archaeological sites of Greece. I express once more my gratitude for the invaluable contribution it makes.

Warmest thanks are due also to the author of the volume and one of the excavators of Eleutherna Professor Nikolaos Chr. Stampolidis, an exceptionally prominent and gifted personality in the Archaeology and Culture of Greece, but also on the international stage, with profound and impeccable scholarship, boundless energy, but also rare sensitivity and lyricism of expression. In the book in hand, yet again he succeeds in his own special and distinctive way in transmitting to the reader not only his deep knowledge and accumulated experience, acquired over decades of investigations at Eleutherna, but also his sincere love of the place and its people, throughout its history.

LINA MENDONI  
MINISTER OF CULTURE AND SPORTS





THE JOHN S. LATSIS PUBLIC BENEFIT FOUNDATION AND LAMDA DEVELOPMENT, continuing the tour of the museums of Greece, dedicate this year's album to Eleutherna.

This is the nineteenth volume in the publications series 'The Museums Cycle', which aspires to present ancient Greek civilization with the quality it deserves. Each museum makes its own contribution to promoting our rich and diverse cultural heritage.

Ancient Eleutherna, this important city in Crete, site of continuous habitation from prehistoric into Byzantine times, with epicentre the Homeric age, remained silent for centuries until it was revealed thanks to the perseverance of its excavators over many years.

However, it is not only the excavation work that is discussed here. The creation of a large archaeological park and of a museum, ark of civilization, within the archaeological site –the first museum of an archaeological site in Crete– are unparalleled achievements. They constitute an ongoing cultural worksite, a hub of research and study for the coming generations, and for today's visitors and readers a stimulus to think about human issues through time.

The excavator and author of the volume, Professor Nikolaos Chr. Stampolidis, a Renaissance man with a deep love and knowledge of the land, has, through the material culture remains, the finds of the necropolis and the enhancement of the natural beauty of Eleutherna, shed light on centuries of human activity and linked the ancient sources with archaeology, in essence with the tangible and visible part of history. We thank him warmly because through his excellent texts and his keen eye he has imprinted a precious legacy of history and scholarship, which he offers to us in a uniquely poetic manner.

We address our thanks also to the Minister of Culture and Sport, Lina G. Mendoni, and the responsible services of the Ministry for their valuable support of the publishing initiative 'The Museums Cycle' over the years and, of course, to all those who contributed to the production of the present volume.

JOHN S. LATSIS PUBLIC BENEFIT FOUNDATION

LAMDA DEVELOPMENT







*The hill of Eleutherna with Mount Ida, today's Psiloreitis, in the background.  
Here the ancient wind still blows whatever the weather, leaving wide open the curtains of time.*





LIKE AN OUTSIZE SHIP OF STONE that steered its prow northwestward of Ida and moored in the midst of the ineffable green sea of olives and vines, styrax and holm oak, cypresses and plane trees, stands the hill of Archaia Eleftherna (former Prines). Two small ravines, two *sphákes*<sup>1</sup>, through which flow two torrents, surround the hill-hulk upon which thousands of people have voyaged through the history of Crete.

The presence of potable water in the streams, as well as in springs and wells, the security that the hill of Archaia Eleftherna affords –and indeed on the flat swathes of land on the summit of its acropolis (Sappho sang of ‘on the city’s peak’ [ες κορύφαν πόλεως])–, the difficulty of access to it, possible only from the south, and the great distance separating it from the hills around it, far wider in range than any ballistic-offensive weapon of antiquity; the combination of extensive tracts of arable land in the area of the north, west and east slopes, with pastures and forests towards the southern uplands, for stock-raising and hunting, as well as for timber used in architecture and ship-building, for honey and beeswax and the famed Cretan herbs that heal men’s wounds and sicknesses, and aromatic plants to cense their gods and to anoint their body, of those that grow high up near the cradle of the omnipotent god, Cretan-born Zeus, high up in the eyrie named Ida, today’s Psiloreitis; the existence of limestone for quarries and its use in architecture and sculpture, even the lode of iron ore close by; these are just some of the reasons I can enumerate why ancient Eleutherna and its territory were founded here. Its location at the heart of Crete, more or less equidistant from Kydonia and Knossos, and on the route from Phaistos and Gortyn in the south to the northern shore, essentially an eagle’s nest looking out over the Cretan Sea, favoured Eleutherna in many ways. Its contact with the sea was not only visual, for it had most probably two harbours on the coast, at Sfakaki-Stavromenos and at Panormos. After all, the ports and anchorage dues, as well as Eleutherna’s ships, for trade and/or piracy, would surely have been a further source of wealth, in addition to the produce of the soil. The same may be supposed for the Eleuthernian mercenaries, already from the eighth/seventh century BC and possibly earlier, as well as for the city’s interaction in general with foreigners. All these were foremost among the reasons for the structure of an open society in Geometric and Protoarchaic times, to which Eleutherna owes its relations not only with other regions and cities of Crete, but also with the Peloponnese, Attica, the Aegean islands, the Cyclades, the Dodecanese, Asia Minor, Cyprus, the Syro-Palestinian littoral and Egypt – perhaps also of Etruria –, to confine myself to the contacts verified so far by the material culture remains brought to light daily in the excavations.



For all the aforesaid reasons, man put down roots here gradually from at least the third millennium BC and the settlement grew and flourished many times in the trajectory of its history, until the Middle Ages when the Venetians prohibited habitation in the wider environs of the hill-hulk, so that the Serenissima Repubblica of Venice could secure serenity in Crete. But the fair city was not banished to oblivion for long. From the Renaissance and throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries it was visited and referred to by scholars, antiquarians and naturalists, for various purposes. Even Sir Arthur Evans came here in the late nineteenth century, before ending up at Knossos. Only one small-scale exploratory excavation was conducted, in 1928, by Humfry Payne, then Director of the British School at Athens, who concluded *that there seems little if any possibility of the site justifying a second campaign.*

His premature assessment is being refuted every day and more and more by the excavations conducted by the University of Crete over the past thirty-six years. Thirty-six years of excavation and research in three different sectors, by colleagues Petros Themelis (until 2003), Athanasios Kalpaxis (until 2009) and the author who continues –since the wider area of the polis (city) with its sanctuaries and its necropolises spreads over some four square kilometres– have succeeded in enhancing only some of the aspects of settlement at the site and its wealth, in three periods of zenith to the present: *of the Homeric epics of the ninth, eighth and seventh centuries BC*, the *Graeco-Roman*, and last *Early Christian/Early Byzantine times*, making Eleutherna the antipode of the great excavation sites of the Minoan palatial centres of Crete. Eleutherna is a city that eloquently bespeaks the continuity of the island's prosperity during the centuries of the so-called Dark Ages and its seminal contribution to the genesis of Hellenic civilization. Over a third of a century of ongoing training of hundreds of students from the University of Crete, as well as of students –in smaller number– from all the other universities in Greece, and from abroad: Cyprus, Denmark, Holland, Germany, Spain, Italy, Great Britain, the United States, Australia, Japan and Turkey. Thirty-six years of creative labour and synthesis, aimed at reconstructing history from the material culture remains of this highly-important ancient Cretan state.

It should be stressed here that thanks to the excellent cooperation established between the University of Crete and the Ministry of Culture, we were able to celebrate the completion of twenty years of investigations in the most appropriate way, by presenting the findings to the public, Greek and foreign, but also to schoolchildren, university students and colleagues, through the exhibition *Eleutherna: Polis – acropolis – necropolis*, mounted in the Museum of Cycladic Art (2004-2005), and the accompanying volume, in Greek and in English. Just as we had done to mark the tenth anniversary of research in 1994, with a then smaller exhibition, again in Athens and in the same venue, which followed a smaller but emblematic exhibition in the Rethymnon Archaeological Museum in 1993/94.

These references to anniversaries are not irrelevant to the fact that archaeologists usually have – or ought to have – a heightened sense of the notion of finite time, which in its turn leads – or ought to lead – them to pre-empt the hurried step of inexorable time which, like Kronos, devours its children, with the only known antidote: the preservation of memory by presenting their work. And that is why we undertook this precious publication, generous offering in the series produced by the John S. Latsis Public Benefit Foundation, which makes an outstanding contribution to promoting the museums of Greece as possession *forever and ever.*





*Satellite photograph of Crete with the site of Eleutherna.*

The extremely difficult and delicate task of presenting the result of a research project in progress, and which will be continued by generations to come, was for me not a deterrent but an incentive, and so I replied positively when the John S. Latsis Public Benefit Foundation honoured me with its proposal to devote its 2020 album to Eleutherna. Among the many reasons I could cite here for my response is the ascertainment that the product of archaeological investigations to date, mainly in the Orthi Petra necropolis, is of such quality and quantity that it will long be the stuff of discussion, debate and further study by specialists. Thus it will contribute to our knowledge of the history of the ideas, the mores and the customs of the Geometric and the Archaic period, drawn from the domain dubbed the '*archaeology of death*', but also from the fields of palaeodemography, palaeopathology, physical and cultural anthropology, palaeobotany, and so on. It will contribute to the more specialized knowledge of the history of Crete both during the so-called Dark Ages (11th-9th century BC) and to the so-called Silent Period<sup>2</sup> of Archaic and Classical times (6th and 5th centuries BC) on the island. Furthermore it will add much to the chapters on public, social and private life, spatial organization, inter-state treaties, laws, religion, economy and art of the subsequent periods, the Classical, Hellenistic, Roman and Early Byzantine. For these very reasons, after all, the archaeological park of Eleutherna was created, with funding from the Third Community Support Framework and Interreg II for 2006/7. Included within the park is the in-situ museum with its three-tier shelter to protect the site of the Orthi Petra necropolis, but also at other points in the excavated ancient city, such as at Katsivelos, the shelter over the Early Christian basilica of Archangel Michael, as well as an integrated network of roads, paths, guardhouses, vantage points, seating and signposting, in other words, a network encompassing the ancient polis, acropolis and necropolis, and its surrounding monuments. With funding from the Fourth Community Support Framework of the



Ministry of Development and the Ministry of Culture, the Ark of the relics of ancient Eleutherna, the beacon of memory, its Museum, which was inaugurated by the President of the Hellenic Republic in June 2016 and is today (statistics for autumn 2019) the second most-visited museum in Crete.

So, we hope that this book will be for the readers not just another occasion for getting to know an important ancient city of Crete, with continuity over time –at least from the dawn of Hellenic Civilization onward– but that through reading it and visiting the site, readers will be given the opportunity of a personal approach which will help them to proceed to comparisons with today and to extract their own conclusions. Through its pages an attempt is made to give to the specialist and the well-informed reader, as well as to the non-specialist, the pupil, the ordinary visitor to the archaeological site and the Museum, that essential knowledge which will induct them into the time, the space and the human activity of a past reality.

I express my thanks and gratitude to the Spiros Latsis family and to Vangelis Chronis whose brainchild is the series 'The Museums Cycle'. I thank also Odysseas Athanasiou, Chief Executive Officer of Lamda Development, and Yvette Kosmetatou, as well as Eva Lianou of the J. S. Latsis Public Benefit Foundation. For the excellence of the volume in your hands, I thank warmly the publisher Irene Louvrou, Eliza Kokkini, Nikos Lagos, Alexandra Dumas, the photographer Sokratis Mavrommatis and all who collaborated on its production.

Professor NIKOLAOS CHR. STAMPOLIDIS







# I N T R O D U C T I O N

## ELEUTHERNA *The location*

Over eighty million years ago, Crete was a seabed, as is confirmed by the shells and fossilized marine creatures found today in its rocks, even in the highest parts on the island. Later, the Aegeis emerged, with the islands forming stepping stones of land amidst the waves of the sea, and the largest isle was Crete, to the south, with its dominant peaks (approximately 2,500 m asl) of Mount Ida (Psiloreitis) in the middle and the White Mountains in the west, and Dikte and the mountains of Lasithi to the east.

Kazantzakis describes Crete as a beast (*it was not an island, it was a beast basking in the sea*). For me, Crete is a human body borne upon the waves, with the arms held high in the west, the capes of Kissamos, the head at Akrotiri near Chania, the heart at Mylopotamos of Rethymnon, the belly – the wealth – at Heraklion and the legs that hold the body up at Lasithi.

For the ancient world Crete would have seemed a continent, an infinite landmass, which is why Homer, in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, refers to it as *πίπειρα* (*pieira*, meaning rich and self-sufficient) with as many as one hundred cities. One of these cities was Eleutherna, jewel at the island's heart. The long and narrow marly limestone hill of Prines (present Archaia Eleftherna) is among the lowest outliers of the northwest foothills of Psiloreitis, Mount Ida<sup>3</sup>. Two ravines, two torrents – the waters of which dry out in June and flow again with the first heavy rainfalls in autumn – the first running southeast to northwest and the second almost from due south to northwest, the Pharangitis or Agia Kyriaki ravine to the east and the Chalopota ravine to the west, respectively, define the hill at its base. A third smaller gully, narrow and deep, running southwest to northeast, passes through Kolakes and at its confluence with the Chalopota delimits from the west the hill of the present village of Eleftherna. Thus, all three streams united into one continue towards the north-northwest, to meet the famed ancient bridge in the area of Laga, an area that borders to its northwest with the village of Alpha, where there are limestone quarries renowned even today. This tributary then merges with others in its course towards the Cretan Sea. The valley formed by the tributary is one of Eleutherna's natural exits to the sea, to the coast east of Stavromenos. Older villagers still remember that this was where their flocks and herds went in summertime, for the saltlick. A second exit was the estuary of the River Geropotamos<sup>4</sup> further to the east, between Stavromenos and Panormos. The latter is easily reached from the flat area of Angelianoi and Perama, to the north and east of Eleutherna, forming a third passage of the ancient city to the north coast of the island.

*The entrance to the acropolis from the south, with the 'Medieval' Tower in the middle and the Cretan sea in the distance.*





*Topographical plan of Prines hill and Eleutherna, with the locations named.*

The westernmost access to the city from the north coast of the Cretan Sea, wends its way upwards from Sphakaki to Viran (=collapsed) Episkopi and then passes either via Erphoi towards Alpha, or via Skoulouphia and Roupes, towards Eleutherna. After Roupes it passes by the locality Tsidos towards the hill of Eleutherna, west of Prines, leaving a short distance to the southwest the nearby Arkadi Monastery.

Prines (present Archaia Eleftherna) hill rises to an altitude of about 380 m at its highest point and about 410 m in the present village. The crest of the hill is divided into two almost flat, rather spacious strips of land, a stepped level area to the north (Pyrgi) and a wider and higher one in the middle, while further south is a col that is interrupted at its north end by the so-called Medieval Tower. The east and west slopes of the hill are steep from the summit to about halfway down, but in the lower reaches they are formed as wider flat terraces,

descending towards the base of hill and the beds of the torrents. Access to the hilltop, to the acropolis of the ancient city, was only possible from the south, via the narrow col about 20 m wide with precipitous almost vertical sides to east and west, the middle of which is protected even today by the restored Medieval Tower, which is founded on an earlier base. The col is reached from the main street of Archaia Eleftherna (former Prines), a pretty piedmont village, as the road towards the sword carved by the northwest crest of Psiloreitis encounters no other village after this.

The hill of the present village of Eleftherna, to the west of Prines (Archaia Eleftherna), more easily reached and with a flat ridge slightly more elevated in the south, is quite capacious with terraces only on its east slope, which descends to the Chalopota ravine. To the south of it is the modern village of Eleftherna (so named in 1935), former Anachourdometochia or Metochia, today larger in size and population than Prines (Archaia Eleftherna).

It becomes clear from this description that the two hills project like peninsulas between the ravines and the torrents at their base. In fact, I believe that it is to this resemblance of the configuration of the terrain to actual peninsulas, which thrust into the sea, that the north extremity of the hill of modern Eleftherna owes its name today, Nisi (= island).

The central nucleus of habitation in the ancient city, and indeed diachronically, is located on Prines hill and, on present evidence, it seems unlikely that this picture will change radically even though, over time, other





*View of the Hellenistic bridge of Eleutherna.*

settlements have been identified and investigated in the surrounding area. This choice seems to have been dictated by the security offered by the hill, and indeed the broad swathes of land on its summit, which would have served also as the citadel of the initial settlement, the acropolis of the polis. It is not only the height of the hill, several dozen metres above the bed of the torrents that circumvent it, nor the relatively steep gradient of its upper slopes, which adequately protected the acropolis, it is also the distance separating the ridge of the hills of Eleutherna to the west, Laga to the north and Tripodo to the east, from the acropolis of Prines. Far greater than the range of any ancient ballistic-offensive weapon, it precluded close besieging of Eleutherna from these places. Moreover, defensive installations, which it is possible that the city would have set up on the said hills, would have guaranteed it greater protection. Last, the only natural access from the south, from the narrow defile of the col, with sheer drop to east and west, made the acropolis difficult to besiege or capture, particularly with the existence of a fortification wall in this place, as we know was also the case elsewhere (e.g. the Geometric city at Zagora on Andros). Moreover, even today at the north end of the narrow path leading from the village of Prines (Archaia Eleftherna) up to the top of the hill, there stands part of a restored fortification wall-tower, most probably Byzantine, which is bedded on earlier foundations.

*FOLLOWING PAGES FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: The university excavation on Prines hill. Visible are Sector I to the east (Greek and Roman city), Sector II at the centre (acropolis) and Sector III to the west (Greek and Roman city and Homeric cemetery of the Early Iron Age at Orthi Petra).*













The same conditions as regards visual contact with the sea, water supply and agriculture apply also to the hill of Eleutherna, as well as to the northernmost part of the hill of modern Eleutherna, Nisi, the only difference being that the natural access, which is to the south, is here relatively easy and therefore the factor of natural fortification is not so important. This is also the situation further to the southeast, at the locality Elleniko, despite the abrupt fissure in the rock from the east and southeast. Of course, Nisi could also be fortified from the south, even by a longer fortification wall, and be used as a defensive position for possible attacks directed at the acropolis on Prines. Here too the distance from the west, north and east is greater than the range of any ancient ballistic weapon. Moreover, 2-3 kilometres to the west, at the locality Tsidos, with its vista over the White Mountains, the Rethymnon plain and the north coast, there would have been a (defensive?)





*View of Prines hill and the so-called Medieval Tower of Eleutherna from the southwest. The Tallaian mountains in the background.*

installation which was in a position to warn the city in the event of danger from the west. The same seems to have been the case with installations proximate to ancient Eleutherna, at the localities Alpha to the northwest and Laga to the north and east. Last, on the actual hill of Eleutherna there is evidence of human activity and habitation at least from Geometric/Archaic times and the Classical period, which becomes more abundant at the locality Nisi in Hellenistic times, with a dense settlement there. The moveable finds – mainly terracotta figurines – from the large Classical enclosure (peribolos) to north and east of the Primary School of Eleutherna and south of the church of the Dormition of the Virgin, the sporadic sherds of Geometric/Archaic pottery under the Hellenistic settlement and the earlier as well as the more recent finds in the sanctuary at the locality Elleniko, to the south, in the present village cemetery, are dated at least to Geometric and Archaic times.





*Cretan bowman. Woodcut on paper 13.5 x 16.5 cm, Amsterdam 1688.*



## OBLIVION AND THE REGAINING OF MEMORY

The turbulent four years (1363–1367) that were scarred by the *Revolt of St Titus*, so that Crete might become independent of Venice, and the uprising headed by Ioannis Kallergis (1365) against Venetian oppression came to an unhappy end. As consequence, the Venetians ordered the evacuation of Eleutherna, Lasithi and Anapolis of Sphakia, so that these places would never again be launching pads for rebels<sup>5</sup>. In the 465 years of Venetian rule in Crete (1204–1669), the harshness of the conquerors in this 'colony' provoked no less than twenty-seven (27) uprisings, the most important of which for the Mylopotamos region, where Eleutherna is situated, were those of A. Kallergis (1283–1299) and V. Kallergis, centred on Eleutherna's neighbour Margarites (1332–1333).

This insurrectionist activity of the Kallergis family, over almost a century, so infuriated the Venetians, not only against the Kallergoi but also against the region of their jurisdiction, Mylopotamos, that in Volume I, book IX, p. 203, of the year 1365, in the report sent to Venice by one of the island's provveditori, Paul Loredan, the following is written: ... *concerning the strict measures that were taken in order to consolidate the submission of this colony* (i.e. Crete). *The rebels no longer have leaders ... Those strongholds that were used by them as place of refuge, the towns of Lasithi and Anapolis, and last all the fortified forts, those that we did not deem appropriate and suitable to take possession of, were demolished, and their inhabitants were moved and settled elsewhere, and the fields around them shall remain uncultivated, indeed it is forbidden, on penalty of death, even to approach them*<sup>6</sup>.

The severity and the cruelty of Venice is eloquently described by V. Bérard<sup>7</sup>, in the late nineteenth century, as follows: ... *they razed it to the ground, they sowed it with salt and they forbade them to rebuild its walls ...*

From the above, some documented conclusions can be drawn relating to Mylopotamos and in particular to Eleutherna. The glaring absence from Loredan's report of any reference to regions such as Lasithi and Anapolis of Sphakia, may point to the shrinking of Eleutherna as a city already during the *Revolt of St Titus* (1363–1366) and the uprising of I. Kallergis (1365). Eleutherna can be included only in the term *fortified forts*, as can be deduced from the existence to this day of part of the fortified Tower at the south entrance to the acropolis of ancient Eleutherna (present hill of Prines/Archaia Eleftherna)<sup>8</sup>.

So, it is very possible that human presence at Eleutherna during the thirteenth and the early fourteenth century, as well as after the destruction and razing of Margarites by the revolution of Vardas Kallergis (1332–1333), would have been much diminished. Therefore, the total abandonment of the Tower and the houses would have taken place finally and irrevocably after the measures spoken of by the provveditore in his report.

The desertion of Eleutherna, not only of the buildings for residence and worship, which were in use until the time of the *Revolt of St Titus* and the uprising of I. Kallergis, but also of the cultivation of the fields, seems to

FOLLOWING PAGES: *Manuscript map of Crete. Oppianus Apamensis, 1554.*



Ἐρανίδης δ' εἰσὶν κραιερόν  
πρόσθεσ ἀμφίχλασέθρσ ρυτ  
καὶ θήρας ποίησεν ἀμφὶ ψάιδνο





νεοθηλέα παύση ,  
ἤρας ἀζωοῦς ,  
σκούρητας      8 +





have led to its desolation and obscurity. Henceforth, only the site of its ruins and its name continued to exist, the latter frequently corrupted as Lefterna or Leftina.

Two generations later, in 1415, quite close in time to the events outlined, Christoforo Buondelmonti (1386–ca 1430) was travelling around Crete. He refers to the destruction of Eleutherna and some of its monuments, singling out as the most noteworthy, its Cisterns<sup>9</sup>, a monument still visible and almost untouched by the ravages of man and time, as the tanks are cut in the living rock of the west slopes of the hill of Archaia Eleftherna, beyond the entrance to the acropolis, below and slightly to the northwest of the half-ruined Tower. However, although Rethymnon and Ida (Psiloreitis) are marked on the map given in the first edition of his travelogue<sup>10</sup>, Eleutherna is not.

Over one hundred years after habitation at Eleutherna was banned, it is marked as Eleutere in the first publication of Claudius Ptolemy's map (2nd century AD) by the cartographer Donnus (Dominus) Nicolaus Germanus, in the Ulm edition (1482)<sup>11</sup>. Eleutere –a name we come across again in maps of Crete– is classed among the *Cuitates autem in Creta mediterraneae* between Sybritos (Subrita) and Gortyn (Gortyna), on longitude 44 1/2 and latitude 34<sup>12</sup>, although it is marked on the map much further east of Ida and northeast of Gortyn.

Unfortunately, the maps by Bartolomeo dalli Sonetti (1st edition)<sup>13</sup> do not have names upon the places, even though for Crete, which interests us here, Chania, Rethymnon and Heraklion (Candia) are painted in positions more or less corresponding to the present ones, and castles, villages and towns are noted in the hinterland, one of which could be Eleutherna. In his fourth sonnet for Crete Bartolomeo refers to Chania, which was called Kydonia, and Rethymnon (Retemo), which was called Rithymna (erethina). In the same sonnet he mentions Pantomatrion and Apollonia, most probably today's Agia Pelagia (which Stylianos Alexiou identified in the 1970s), a coastal town that is often confused with Eleutherna, to the west of Heraklion (Candia), as we shall see below.

I shall not continue here by enumerating the mapmakers, who are referred to in another way in a recent text by our colleague Fani-Maria Tsigakou<sup>14</sup>, because this demands another kind of approach to the cartographic material, which I hope will be made at another opportunity.

Nevertheless, I shall begin with a neglected map of Crete that is found in a mid-sixteenth-century manuscript (1554), the map by Oppian of Apamea<sup>15</sup>, where, consistent with the spirit of the Renaissance and the adulation of antiquity, Crete is depicted with its then analogous outline and its northern coastal cities. Protagonist here is the depiction of the myth of Rhea giving birth to Zeus inside the cave on Mount Ida (Psiloreitis), at about the centre of the island, in the presence of the four Curetes who are depicted goat-legged, as confections of Satyrs and Pans, while bearded Kronos, seated majestically to the west of the island holds his scythe, as Chronos (Time) who consumes his own children, then and now, even the gods themselves! Legends accompany all the figures, so that the manuscript's reader is not confused.

I shall also mention here indicatively other maps, such as that by Wolfgang Lazius (1514–1565)<sup>16</sup> in the edition of 1558, where Eleutherna is marked as Eleuthera, southeast of Gortyn (Gortinia, Metropolis) and below



Knossos (Cnossus), far away from Ida and to the southeast of it, north of Lebena. Yet once again near a river and a mountain, as in the previous maps.

Eleutherna is marked in about the same position on the map by Ferrando Bertelli<sup>17</sup>, southeast of Ida, south of Heraklion (Candia) but northeast of Gortyn, as on Ptolemy's map. Important is the vignette next to its name, with two towers, one either side of a fortification wall, which means that it was considered as a fortress and not as a city, as for instance Candia.

Eleutherna is absent from the map in the 1591 Isolario of Antonio Millo<sup>18</sup>, on which are marked mainly the harbours and bays, among them Rethymnon (Retimo), the estuary of the Mylopotamos (milopotamo), Panarmo-Panormo (armaridi), Atali (atali) and further to the east Agia Pelagia (s: pelagia).

On the 1570 map of Crete by Abraham Ortelius (1527–1598)<sup>19</sup>, which seems to be much better balanced and in which Crete acquires a form closer to reality, marked on the north coast, to the west of Heraclea and Panormus, is the site of ancient Apollonia, which was formerly named Eleuthera (*Apollonia antiquitus Eleuthera appellata*). It has now been clarified that this site is that of ancient Apollonia, present Agia Pelagia<sup>20</sup>. To the south of Heraclea, which is not identified with Heraklion (Heracleum), which is placed further east again on the north coast in relation to Knossos (Cnossus), south and northeast of Gortyn, Ortelius marks the city Eleuthere. This he identifies with Aoros (Aora) Saoros (Saora), synonyms according to Stephen of Byzantium<sup>21</sup> (*Eleuthere, Aorus et Saorus, tria synonyma Stephano*), presenting again, like Bertelli, the vignette with the two towers. On the same map, he marks after Rethymnon/Rithymna (Rhytima), on the north coast, Pantomatrion (Pantoma:trium) on the estuary of a river whose headwaters are in the mountainous south, where he places ancient Lappa, again with the vignette of the two towers. This location could be that of ancient Eleutherna and if this is the case then the Pantomatrion marked after Rithymna-Rethymnon must correspond to present Pagalochori and the hill on which the sanctuary of the Matriae has been identified and where an inscription of Hellenistic times was found, referring to a city, implying Eleutherna<sup>22</sup>.

Eleutherna usually does not appear on the maps of Crete by the important historian-geographer Philippus Cluverius (1580–1622)<sup>23</sup>, which resemble that by Ortelius, whereas neighbouring Sybritos (Sybrita) is marked grosso modo in its correct (present) position. However, it exists as Eleuthe-ra on a map of 1624<sup>24</sup>.

The Tabula Peutingeriana, a twelfth/thirteenth-century copy of an ancient Roman road map, which was discovered in 1507 by Konrad Celtes of Vienna and given to the collector Konrad Peutinger, is one of the few rescued works of antiquity. There is a copy of 1547 in Naples Italy, while a copy of 1591, made by Marcus Welser, was printed by Aldus Manutius in Venice. Ortelius asked Welser for a copy and the editio princeps of the Tabula was published in 1598 by Jan Moretus<sup>25</sup>, after Ortelius's death. The version by Johannes Janssonius of 1652 is taken from Ortelius's original<sup>26</sup>. It is remarkable that on this Tabula, where Crete is presented in its longest and narrowest version ever, the island's successive cities are marked as distances on a Roman road network, exceptionally accurate in their sequence for anyone arriving from Rome and South Italy or Sicily on the western shores and bound for the capital of Roman Crete and Cyrenaica together, namely Gortyn. It is obvious that mentioned here are important capital cities of Roman Crete and the distances





Map of Crete, detail, from the publication by Wolfgang Lazius.  
 Depicted is the scene of Theseus' battle with the Minotaur, exactly above a coin with representation of the labyrinth.



Map of Crete. From the publication by Wolfgang Lazius, Vienna 1558.









Map of Crete, Vincenzo Maria Coronelli, engraving on paper, 49 x 124 cm, Venice 1707.

of the Megaris, of Attica, and Crete are imprinted, depicted in a frieze divided into metopes are the Labours of Herakles, while the rest of the map, in the shape of an inverted  $\Pi$ , is bordered by a series of tangential circles-medallions. This is essentially a kind of early guilloche, like that of Coronelli, about one and a half centuries earlier. Above the north coast of Crete, in the Cretan Sea, Theseus on the left, as warrior with helmet, breastplate, greaves and armed with spear, battles against the Minotaur (with the body of a bull and the head of a horned and bearded man), while below the scene is the explanatory inscription *THESEI CUM MINOTAVRO PUGNA* (The struggle of Theseus with the Minotaur). Depicted in a roundel under the Minotaur is the square shape of the labyrinth, as this is represented on coins of Knossos. The same symbol, but in smaller scale, is depicted above Knossos (Cnossus) with the legend *LABIRINTUS*. Medallions, as coins, embellish the interior of the map of Crete: one with the bearded head with fillet of a god, Zeus (?) above Aptera, and another with diademed head of a goddess (Hera?, Rhea?) under Phaistos and to the east of Gortyn.

Twenty years after this map by Lazius and in the same Renaissance zeitgeist, Barozzi<sup>32</sup>, who had settled in Crete, wrote in 1577/8 about the cisterns and conduits (probably of the water supply/drainage system of Eleutherna), as well as about other ancient finds and coins, but does not include Eleutherna among the settlements of Mylopotamos. This makes us think that most probably it had not been re-inhabited, two centuries after the prohibition of 1367<sup>33</sup>. However, elsewhere in the same text there is reference to its name as well as to the existence of an Orthodox monastery in the area<sup>34</sup>.





Towards the end of the sixteenth century, in the same Renaissance spirit, Onorio Belli visited Eleutherna and wrote about its monuments: the tower, the cisterns and other antiquities too<sup>35</sup>. Apart from the coins and the columns, he mentions also a handsome statue of a river god, which he took away with him. Other antiquities, such as statuettes of deities, of Demeter and others, in the Grimani Collection, were removed from Crete at the same period and taken to Venice<sup>36</sup>. The removal of moveable antiquities from Crete, by connoisseurs and travellers, had already begun and was to be continued in other ways by others later<sup>37</sup>.

The seventeenth century, having inherited the knowledge and refinement of the Renaissance in the sixteenth, is impressive not only because of the mapmakers already referred to, such as de Witt and Coronelli, but also because of the sophisticated knowledge of antiquity which passed to at least some of the travellers, such as Olfert Dapper. In his travelogue (1688)<sup>38</sup>, Dapper notes with regard to Eleutherna mythological, onomatological and historical information drawn from ancient authors, which we shall examine in due course<sup>39</sup>.

This bequest from the late seventeenth century passed on its learning and was continued during the eighteenth, with more methodical orientation. Priorities now were experience and specialization, and precision combined with adulation of antiquity were uppermost concerns for mainly foreign travellers. From the dawn of the eighteenth century, Delisle's *Atlas* of 1707/1708<sup>40</sup> is the work that gives the most accurate position – until then – for Eleutherna, that is, to the northwest of Sybritos. This was followed by other maps, as well as by





Detail with the drawing of a coin of Eleutherna from the Map of Greece by Rigas.

the famed *Charta* of Rigas Pheraios in the late eighteenth century (1797), on which there is also a drawing of a coin of the ancient city<sup>41</sup>.

Of the travellers, Pococke, who visited the site in 1739<sup>42</sup>, records the Tower of Eleutherna as well as a cave-chapel of St Antony. Since his description is specific, we may imagine the place more accurately. It seems that Pococke came from the east, from the village of Margarites, and following the Vrysi path

that leads to the ancient (Hellenistic, north) bridge of Eleutherna, passed by the chapel of St Antony –*inside a cave*–, which exists to this day inside a rock-cut Roman tomb<sup>43</sup>. It seems that he continued on through the northwest valley of Eleutherna, as he beheld –*in the distance*– the Tower of one more remote area that is called Teleutherna, and rightly considered that these are the ruins of the ancient city of Eleutherna. Later, in his travels in western Crete, following O. Belli's tradition adapted to his century, he did not remove an ancient statue, as Belli had done, but purchased a 'very old relief' from Aptera<sup>44</sup>.

The correct position of Eleutherna in Delisle's Atlas and on Rigas Pheraios's map, in the eighteenth century, led in the nineteenth to the interest of researchers in the ancient city. However, the outstanding Austrian physician and naturalist F. W. Sieber, who visited Crete in 1817<sup>45</sup> and saw some ancient sites, does not include Eleutherna among those<sup>46</sup> that could be qualified as a 'city'.

Robert Pashley, in his short work *Travels in Crete* (1837), notes the correct position of Eleutherna on the map but honestly admits that he did not actually visit the site, due to snowfall<sup>47</sup>. Of course, we may wonder how he managed to visit Axos, which is at a much higher altitude, but in his notes he defines Eleutherna as higher (!) than Axos, yet very close to the Arkadi Monastery. However, he does note clearly that both Eleutherna and Axos are classed among 'the places which still bear the names of the ancient cities' (in fact, for Eleutherna he gives two types: Eleutherna and Eleuthera, a name encountered in early maps and travel accounts).

So, on present evidence, the work in which the exact position and the memory of the city began to be regained is the two-volume publication by the ship's captain T. A. B. Spratt, of 1865<sup>48</sup>. The second volume of his travels includes a whole chapter on ancient Eleutherna, with descriptions and illustrations. It deals with the landscape, the geological strata of the hills, the fertility of the soil, the monuments: the Tower, the acropolis and its fortified location and two ancient bridges. Spratt notes that he saw ruins and foundations of houses and rock-cut tombs, the chapel of St Antony and early churches. He records remains of terraces and buildings, which he places on the east side of the hill, he finds a statue of Parian marble, architectural members, an altar, and so on, and speculates about alterations and repairs to earlier remains for their reuse in later periods. Among other things, he mentions also coins<sup>49</sup>.

Immediately after Spratt, visits to the ancient city proliferate. Louis Thenon and Georges Perrot, refer to their voyage to Crete in separate texts. The first published in the *Revue Archéologique*<sup>50</sup>, the second in the small



book of his *Memories of his trip to Crete*<sup>51</sup>. Perrot refers to Axos and the village of the same name, considers it of little interest and, on visiting Eleutherna describes it characteristically by comparing it to Polyrrhenia and Aptera. He makes special mention of the cisterns, giving also measurements in his description. The same applies to Thenon, who speaks at length about Eleutherna, the tower and the access to the acropolis, the lack of fortification walls and about other monuments.

In contrast, C. Bursian in his book on the *Geography of Greece (1862–1872)*<sup>52</sup>, with reference to Crete, mentions Eleutherna and the existence of its fortification walls, while others, such as V. Raulin<sup>53</sup> passed through the area to the south of Eleutherna without even mentioning it.

All these references and publications comprise a pre-scientific archaeological dialogue about ancient Eleutherna, relating to the geography, topography and identification of the city, certain remains –that is, visible immovable monuments– and, sometimes, moveable finds too. The growing antiquarian/archaeological interest, mainly of epigraphists, triggered for the ancient city an investigation even closer to its emergence. The German E. Fabricius read Spratt and Thenon and refers to them when he published two inscriptions from ancient Eleutherna in 1885<sup>54</sup>, while at about the same time the Italian Federico Halbherr<sup>55</sup>, in his quest for inscriptions during his travels in Crete, visited the city and found inscriptions, among them also those studied by Fabricius. In 1889, one more inscription from Eleutherna, which was in Rethymnon, was published by G. Doublet<sup>56</sup> in volume 13 of the *Bulletin de Correspondence Hellénique*.

It seems that already in these years several antiquities from various parts of the prefecture, among them inscriptions, had been gathered together in Rethymnon. So, in 1891, with the support of the French consul in Chania and the Turkish governor, as well as with the assistance of M. Triphyllis, vice consul of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in Rethymnon, the French scholar A. Joubin studied various moveable antiquities from Eleutherna, among them those now well-known as ‘Orphic gold inscribed lamellae’<sup>57</sup>. Joubin had also shown great interest in one more Daedalic sculpture that had been brought from Eleutherna to the Phil-Educational Association of Heraklion and which he published in 1893<sup>58</sup>. This is the well-known upper torso of a limestone figure that is today exhibited in the first sculpture gallery of the Heraklion Archaeological Museum and had been found at Orthi Petra.

The presence of the Frenchmen Perrot, Thenon, Doublet and, primarily, Joubin coincides with the timeframe of the removal from Crete of a Daedalic statue and its appearance around 1895 in France. This is the celebrated Dame d’Auxerre, today in the Louvre, a work about which I have written in great detail elsewhere, as the petrochemical analysis of its material, which matches 99.73% with newly-discovered sculptures in the Orthi Petra necropolis at ancient Eleutherna, shows that it should be considered a younger sister of the Eleutherna Kore, which I unearthed in the necropolis in 1987<sup>59</sup>. My excellent collaboration with French colleagues in the Louvre, A. Pasquet and J. L. Martinez<sup>60</sup>, from the late 1980s, facilitated not only the petrochemical analysis of the Dame d’ Auxerre but also the crucial first-hand comparisons, since the French colleagues and friends permitted the statue to leave the Louvre for the first time and travel to the Museum of Cycladic Art in 2004, *so as to visit its relatives*, as they charmingly put it. On the other hand, it has not been possible for me to have access to the archive of the French School at Athens, to learn more about Th. Homolle,



its Director in those years, and to see for myself his still unpublished correspondence with Joubin, so as to make progress with the issue of the Dame d' Auxerre's origin historically too. And although the history related to my excavations at Orthi Petra, the name of the site, and so on, have been published elsewhere, in discussing below here about the history of the Dame d'Auxerre, pending is the publication of a booklet with all the data relating to her probable removal from the site.

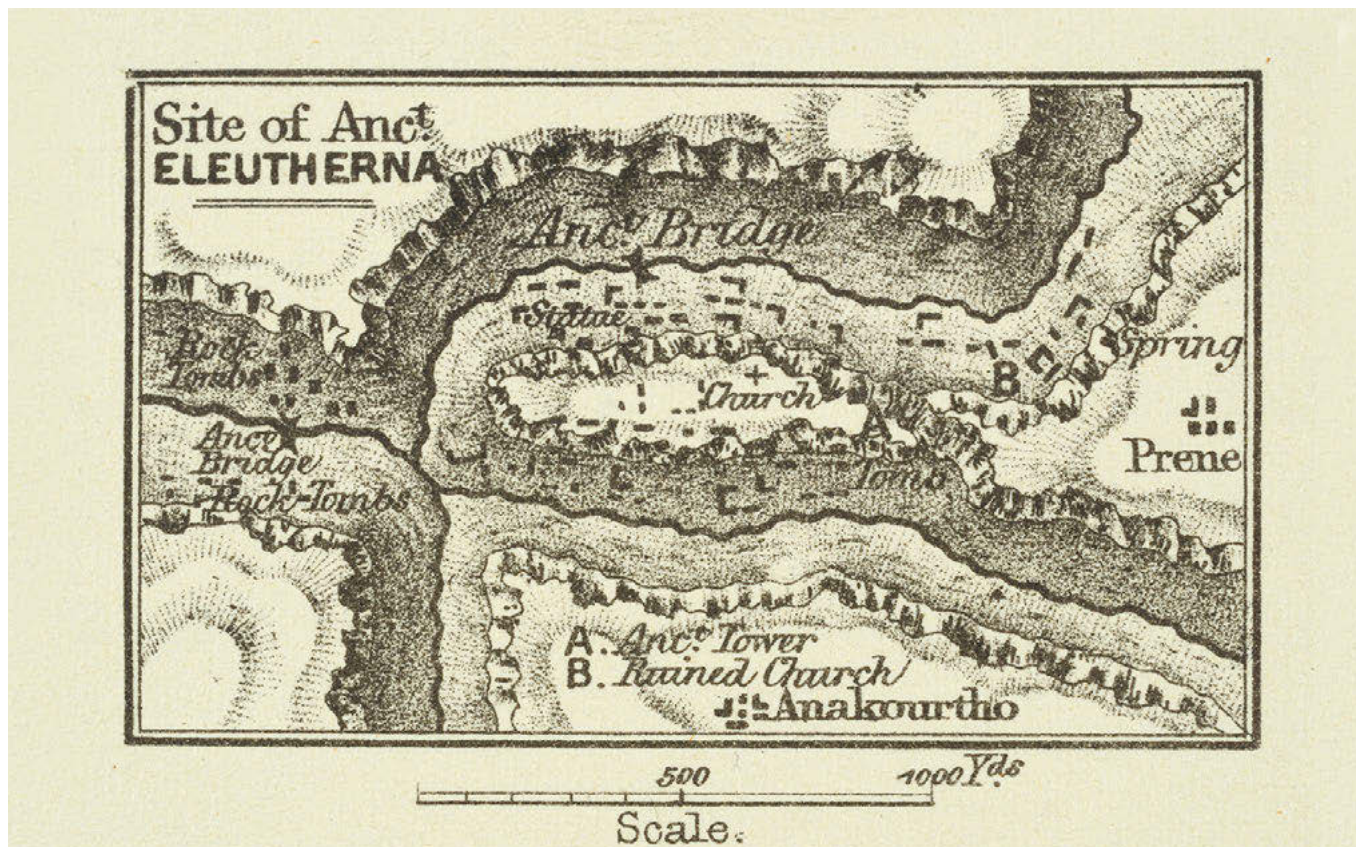
The year 1892 saw publication of Esperance von Schwartz's book<sup>61</sup> presenting her experiences and observations from twenty years of living in Crete, during which she visited Eleutherna. In the year that Joubin published the Archaic statue, Eleutherna was visited by L. Mariani<sup>62</sup>, who refers to its topography and monuments. He is the second Italian to show interest in the ancient city, after Halbherr. However, there was no apparent lull in Halbherr's interest in Eleutherna and its inscriptions, which he gathered together both from the site and from Rethymnon and published<sup>63</sup>. From the diaries of Sir Arthur Evans, which were published by Ann Brown<sup>64</sup>, it would appear that Halbherr stayed<sup>64</sup> for some time at Eleutherna, in order to collect information and inscriptions.

The French, Italian and German interest in ancient Eleutherna, mainly in the second half of the nineteenth century, did not leave the British indifferent. So, after Spratt, it was Evans who visited the site in the spring of 1899. His diary reveals his interest in the ancient city, for he evidently saw the Tower at the entrance to the acropolis, buildings on the top of the hill, the Cisterns to the west, the ancient bridge over the confluence of the torrents to the north of the city and the church of St Antony. From the east slope he mentions a well-built retaining (?) wall, a tower and graves to the north of the Pharangites (Agia Kyriaki) torrent, a basilica and a column capital obviously further south on the same slope, coins and a Christian inscription.

We shall not speak here about the political situation in Crete after the withdrawal of the Ottoman Army at the end of 1898, nor about the rivalries between the foreign archaeological schools and between persons who had scholarly or other interests and ambitions regarding the one or the other archaeological area in relation to both the administrative division of Crete by the four Great Powers and the influence these exerted on behalf of the interested parties. Issues of this kind and the various correspondence concerning also Eleutherna have been examined quite recently<sup>65</sup>.

Certainly there was international interest in Eleutherna at that period. Particularly from the side of the Italians and the British, in the years between 1898/1899 and 1908<sup>66</sup>. In 1908, Eleftherios Venizelos expressed the Greek interest, five years before the Union of Crete with Greece (1/12/1913), in reconstructing the ancient part of the Hellenistic (north) bridge, a project undertaken by the schoolteacher E. Petroulakis<sup>67</sup>. As is apparent from his publications (1912–1915), Petroulakis was active for a short time in the area and especially in that of the acropolis<sup>68</sup>. In the end, British interest took concrete form with the month-long (?) excavation by H. Payne in 1928, at various points in the ancient polis<sup>69</sup>. However, his desire –in line with what was then in vogue– was to excavate a sanctuary with rich votive offerings<sup>70</sup>. This could not be fulfilled and in the end the excavation by the British School was not continued, because *Eleutherna held no treasure*. Moreover, as McMillan and Woodward point out<sup>71</sup>, after the second and third week of investigations Payne had reached the conclusion that there was *little if any possibility of the site justifying a second campaign*. This was confirmed for me by





Topographical plan with the site of Eleutherna, Captain. T. A. B. Spratt, vignette within a text (lithograph), 1865.

Payne's widow Dilys Powell, when I visited her in London in 1989<sup>72</sup>. She told me that although Payne had his excavation at Perachora, in 1931 he wanted to travel with her again to Crete. They tried on that trip to visit also Eleutherna, so that he could to show her exactly where he had excavated in the ancient city, but such a violent storm broke out<sup>73</sup> that *it was as if the place did not want us to come back here. It wanted to be excavated by Greek hands.*

The abandonment of the British excavation attempt seems to have discouraged the other suitors for excavation research, and so the emergence of the ancient city was left waiting. The renaming of the village of Anachourdometochia to the west of Prines hill as Eleftherna seems to be due to the efforts of the enlightened schoolmaster K. Nikoloudakis, friend of Paul Faure, after 1930<sup>74</sup>. After the end of the Second World War, the Archaeological Service monitored the area more systematically. In 1956 or so, there was a land redistribution of the hamlets and the fields which belonged to the Arkadi Monastery. These were divided up and sold to the inhabitants of the two neighbouring villages, Eleftherna and then Prines, so dealing a blow to the antiquities that had until then been kept safe in the ground. The parcelling of the properties increased the number of owners, who, having suffered the effects of war and poverty, justifiably set about putting their landholdings in order, planting them with olive trees and vines, so as to gain a respectable income for themselves and their families, supplementing that gained from their few heads of livestock (mainly sheep and goats). So, apart from the incorporation of some large ancient retaining walls, in one way or another, into the terrace walls built by the farmers to keep the soil in place for cultivation, ploughing and the digging of pits, sometimes over half a metre deep, and the shifting of ancient stones in order to build the modern dry-stone walls caused multiple



destruction. However, the creation of terraces also had a positive function, to a degree, since whatever was in their deeper layers was preserved, while the ancient stones that were used in the dry-stone walls awaited recognition.

Since that time the Greek Archaeological Service has dealt occasionally with the area, mainly after chance finds came to light, such as anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figurines from Prines hill<sup>75</sup>, large statues of great value (headless statues of female figures, such as in the type of the Large Herculaneum Woman) and other architectural members<sup>76</sup>, Archaic and Classical inscriptions and architectural members<sup>77</sup>. It was also involved with a partial conservation of the tower to the south of the Prines acropolis<sup>78</sup>.

Objects were turned up continually in the fields during the 1960s and 1970s. However, only some of them – mainly clay '*kapsákia*' (= lamps or censers) – ended up in the small collection in the Primary School of Eleftherna, which had been formed by the schoolteacher K. Nikoloudakis. Others, unfortunately were handed over by the farmers to pedlars, *in exchange for a pair of bedsheets or pillowcases ...*, as I was told in the early years of the excavation by the older villagers of Eleftherna. I note here, as an aside, that only after excavations by the University of Crete commenced were some objects handed over to the archaeologists, mainly coins and inscriptions, which were sent to the Rethymnon Archaeological Museum in the old town of Rethymnon and later to the Museum outside the Fortetsa. This was the outcome of the interest now generated in the region, the strictness of the archaeological Law on antiquities looting, but also the ordinance relating to remuneration for antiquities handed in to the state authorities, issued by the late Melina Mercouri.

This was the situation, more or less, until 1984. In that year, the then Community of Eleftherna constructed the rural road linking the village from its east edge (D. Kanakis residence) and all along the east slope of Eleutherna hill as far as the confluence of the Chalopota and Pharangitis streams, and even further north, with the area of Laga. In the course of constructing this road, there were some losses of antiquities –parts of walls, buildings and graves– which are visible here and there on its west verge (Mesoporos, Xeniana, and elsewhere).

Again in 1984, the University of Crete made an application to the Ministry of Culture, the then 25th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities and the Central Archaeological Council for a permit to conduct systematic excavations at one of two sites: a) Aptera, overlooking the south inlet of the Bay of Souda, and b) Eleutherna, near the Arkadi Monastery. Both sites were of known cities of historical times, as the objective was to shed light on other periods in the history of Crete, apart from the Minoan, with the excavated large palatial centres that had for decades dominated the island. The Archaeological Service decided to grant a permit to the University of Crete to excavate the second site. So, on 8 September 1985 the university excavation of Eleutherna began<sup>79</sup>.



# THE EMERGENCE OF THE CITY: OLD AND NEW DATA

## *General Information*

Our knowledge about the area of ancient Eleutherna, its name and its history is drawn from all manner of textual sources, from antiquity to today, as well as from material cultural remains which, at various times, had come to light either by chance or in circumstantial excavations, prior to the onset of the systematic excavation by the University of Crete in 1985. In other words, use is made here of ancient texts and inscriptions, as well as of entries by lexicographers relating to Eleutherna and its environs, of references made by travellers from the Renaissance onward, mainly in the nineteenth century, as well as of the notes and writings of antiquaries, archaeologists, epigraphists and historians who have dealt sporadically with Eleutherna, primarily during the twentieth century. A part of the oral tradition in the villages hereabouts, and in particular Archaia Eleftherna (Prines), has helped and still helps excavation research.

## ONOMASTICS AND MYTHOLOGY

Satra, Saoros (Saora), Aoros are some of the first names of ancient Eleutherna, according to the lexicographers<sup>80</sup>. One further name, Apollonia –if it ever belonged to the city, that is, if the information offered us is correct– is probably later and we should think of it as an epithet or an explanation qualifying Eleutherna, or as a name of an outport of Eleutherna or, even, as a city or town, most probably coastal, that at some point in time was under the jurisdiction of Eleutherna or associated with it in some way<sup>81</sup>. P. Faure considers *Apollonia* the name of the hill of Pyrgio at Prines and juxtaposes it to the name *Sipylen*, which in his opinion was the name of the west hill of Eleutherna, Nisi<sup>82</sup>. However, so far the excavations have brought to light the Protoarchaic temple of a goddess and not of a god on the acropolis of Prines<sup>83</sup>. Furthermore, I think that, regardless of whether Faure's identification is correct or not, *Sipylen* is a name that is encountered also in Asia Minor<sup>84</sup>, like the *Ida* in the Troas, and should be correlated with worship of a female deity of the mountains (cf. also *meter Sipykene*<sup>85</sup>), the great Mother, Rhea of Greek mythology, with multiple qualities and variations of names, and a different ceremonial of cult going back a long time. Moreover, Crete's relations with Asia Minor are known, as is worship of the mother goddess<sup>86</sup> or of the Telchines and Curetes, despite the differences in their nomenclature and their common qualities in both places.



The dominant one of the earlier names, Satra, possibly derives from the types *Satara* (therefore the same word as the toponymic *Ka-ta-ra*, which is encountered in the Linear B tablets, or with the later *Katre*, which is mentioned by Pausanias VIII, 53.4) or *Satyra*, with syncope of the middle vowel. It may well be that due to its copying in codices and lexicons in minuscule cursive script the type *Saora* resulted (and from this *Aora* with spiritus asper instead of sigma [Σ], as for example from Selana, Selene, Helana, Helene), however the word in one way or another lived on as an epithet of Apollo (*Sasthraios*) in an inscription of Hellenistic times<sup>87</sup>. Thus the name of a spring *Sauro*, which is mentioned in Theophrastus<sup>88</sup> and is on wellheads from the area, and which is in fact twelve stades from Ida, could also be considered as related. It is characteristic that this type too (*σαουπιγο*) exists in Linear B<sup>89</sup>. If this spring actually existed, then we could try to identify it with one of the springs on the Nida (Ida) plateau, which belonged possibly to Saura, Eleutherna. If the above distance is taken into account, it could be identified also with a very important spring on the route from Eleutherna towards the Idaean Cave, with excellent water even now, at Aravanes, an area that we explored in part in the early 1990s and which has yielded Minoan buildings and Hellenistic artifacts in the small caves-hollows around it<sup>90</sup>. Moreover, we should not ignore the fact that the so-called 'sword' of Psiloreitis, the ridge that runs northwestward on the mountain's summit, resembles the back of a lizard (Gr. *saura*), when beheld from the hill of Archaia Eleftherna. The Thracian-Pelasgian (?) root *Sat-* means free (Gr. *eleutheros*), master –as also the eastern (and with its Lycian form *ksat-*) which is the root of the word *ksat-ra-pes*, *sat-rapes* (= satrap, lord, sovereign)– and therefore the name Eleutherna could be considered as affined or at least related to the preceding name of the city. But the name Eleutherna too is given in many variations: Eloutherna, Eleuthenna, Eleutherna, Eleuthernai, Eleutherai, Eleuthera (with eta), Eleuthera (with epsilon)<sup>91</sup>. The root *eleu-* (*eleutheros*, *eleutheria*, *eleusis*, and so on) is directly related to the name of one of the Curetes daemons who danced fully-armed and beat on their shields, so as to drown the crying of the infant Zeus and prevent him from being devoured by his father Kronos. This Curetes was named Eleuther and is considered the founder and protector of the city to which he gave his name<sup>92</sup>. He is associated with daemons that had powers of liberation and augmentation, and who assisted at childbirth and protected newborn babes, in other words daemons which were protectors of every new life. This name occurs already in inscriptions in Linear B script from Thebes, where the word *e-re-u-te-ri* (ε-λε-υ-θη-ρ) appears among others that refer to trades/professions of people among whom quantities of wheat are shared. Among hunters and tanners, the *ereuteri* is the overseer (official) of sacrifices, an office of seemingly religious character. As V. Aravantinos notes<sup>93</sup>, the epithet Elethereus (*Eleutheraios*), which accompanies usually Dionysos, is appropriate to the Theban cycle, while Pausanias<sup>94</sup> mentions one Eleuther, son of Apollo and Arethousa (daughter of Poseidon), as ancestor of Poimander, husband of Tanagra, daughter of Aiolos.

It is interesting that qualities analogous to those of Eleuther, relating to childbirth, the liberation of the babe from womb, are attributed to St Eleutherios in the Christian faith, as protector of women in labour and childbirth; the wish that accompanies pregnant women even today in Greek is *kalí lefteriá* (=good freedom). The tradition about the Curetes and their dances to the accompaniment of music is preserved also in the names of the peaks around Ida, such as Tympanatoras (from Greek *týmpano* = drum) to the northeast or Tites to its northwest. We wonder, to which Eleuther does Pausanias refer (X, 7.3) when he notes in his book



on Phocis and Ozolian Locri that Eleuther was the first to win a Pythian victory, because he sang loudly and sweetly (*They say too that Eleuther won a Pythian victory for his loud and sweet voice, for the song that he sang was not of his own composition*)? The hypothesis that this Eleuther was a Boeotian, as some researchers believe<sup>95</sup>, cannot be ruled out and there were cities of that name (Eleutherai) in Central Greece during antiquity. Moreover, the relationship between the Cretans (priests) and the founding of the Delphic sanctuary<sup>96</sup> does not preclude the hypothesis that this was the Cretan Eleuther or some other descendant, the musical and vocal abilities of whom seem to have been esteemed in antiquity. Moreover, the musical tradition of Eleutherna, at least in the early years, does not seem to have been exhausted by just one name, since the city is considered the birthplace of the famed composer of amorous odes and kithara-player, Ametor, who is referred to by Athenaeus in the *Deipnosophists* (XIV, 638B *the first person who ever played amatory songs on his harp was Ametor, the Eleuthernaean, who did so in his own city; and his descendants are called Ametoridae*). The name of the clan and its descendants is confirmed also by the testimony of Hesychius (s.v. *Αμητορίδας –καθαριστάς Κρήτες ή κιθαριστάς*). Hesychius' doubt about whether the word is *kitharistás* (kithara-player) or *katharistás* (from *katharmós* = purification) does not seem to be without basis, since the second status too is par excellence Cretan, with famed representative the Cretan Epimenides<sup>97</sup>, sage seer and expert on purifications, who is dated to the late seventh century BC. Furthermore, both statuses are close to one another and the period favours the movement of itinerant and mendicant musicians and soothsayers<sup>98</sup>. As for the name *Ametor* (Ametorides), homonymous with the epithet *amétor*, meaning motherless, orphaned of mother, pertinent is the narration of Herodotus about the adventure of Phronime, daughter of the king of Axos and the relationship between Thera –north coast of Crete– Eleutherna-Axos and the Idaean Cave, as this emerges through the finds from the Orthi Petra necropolis<sup>99</sup>. Of course, the word *amétor* means also one not of mother born, such as Athena –born from the head of Zeus– or Dionysos –born from the thigh of Zeus. It is characteristic, moreover, that Julian the Apostate, in his work 'Oration to the Mother of the Gods' refers to her as *παρθένον αμήτορα* (*parthénon amétora* = motherless virgin). If she is Rhea, and indications of worship of a female deity too seem to be strengthened by finds in the Idaean Cave, then the Ametorides purifiers or kithara-players could have been a clan associated with Eleutherna and the pan-Cretan sanctuary in the cavern on Mount Ida.

Last, also associated with the music of Apollo and Apollonia is one of the traditions about the origin of the mythical musician Linos, son of Apollo, as well as the reference to the great physicist of the fifth century BC Diogenes, if the information given by Stephen of Byzantium is considered correct (*Apollonia xxiii. The old Eleutherna of Crete, homeland of Linos, from there the physicist Diogenes*).



## EPIGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL INFORMATION

On present evidence, the epigraphical and historical testimonies about Eleutherna begin from the Archaic period. Most of the early epigraphical testimonies concern the social structure, the laws and the regulations of the polis. This at least is deduced from the corpus of inscriptions that had been compiled by M. Guarducci<sup>100</sup> before the Second World War. When the excavations of the University of Crete began at ancient Eleutherna, new Archaic inscriptions were uncovered, enriching our knowledge regarding various issues, such as ordinances prohibiting wine-drinking, but also references to trades and occupations (?), as well as legal-procedural matters<sup>101</sup>. More recently, a more thorough study of the inscriptions from Eleutherna, by Perlman and Gagarin, has offered aggregated data on the laws of the ancient polis<sup>102</sup>.

Unexpected was the discovery of small and large fragmentary inscriptions on the rocks at the localities Agia Eirini and Agios Markos on the east slope of the hill of Archaia Eleftherna, a few hundred metres south of Katsivelos<sup>103</sup>. Thanks to the host of inscriptions, their early date (6th/5th century BC) and the information they provide, the new epigraphical corpus makes a major contribution to our knowledge of the city's history.

In contrast, the historical texts and the inscriptions mainly of Hellenistic times are linked with the city's political and diplomatic history, its relations with other cities in Crete as well as with the rest of the Aegean and the East Mediterranean. An early testimony of Eleutherna's relations with the distant outside world seems to be the incision of part of an inscription (graffito) on a small bowl from Hermonassa in the Cimmerian Bosphoros, which is considered to belong to the Eleuthernian alphabet and to the manner of its writing, and is dated most probably 'not later than the third quarter of the sixth century BC'<sup>104</sup>. A small coin of the Tenedians, which is dated to the fifth century BC and was found at the Orthi Petra site, seems to point in the same, northerly, direction<sup>105</sup>.

The testimony of Stephen of Byzantium<sup>106</sup> concerning the origin of the well-known natural philosopher Diogenes from Apollonia, includes the reservations we expressed above regarding the name Apollonia and its relation to Eleutherna. However, if Apollonia is indeed Eleutherna, then the important physicist, metic of Athens, who was active in the fifth century BC, is one more person who has emerged from the mist of myth. The so-called *Period of Silence*, as I have dubbed<sup>107</sup> the period of the sixth and the first half of the fifth century BC in the history of Crete, does not seem to apply to Eleutherna for most of its duration, that is the sixth century BC<sup>108</sup> and perhaps also the early fifth. It appears to have been limited to the second and the third quarter of the fifth century BC, possibly relating to the island's non-participation in the Greek-Persian Wars, essentially a stance of neutrality (?) which may well be due also to the influence wielded by Argos, at least on cities of western Crete, already from the end of the eighth century BC<sup>109</sup>. However, this 'silence' seems to have been broken gradually after the mid-fifth century BC, a period in which the first coins were perhaps used in Eleutherna, as in other Cretan cities. Moreover, imports of Attic pottery appear to have reached the island after 430 BC<sup>110</sup>. A graffito with the name of the Eleuthernian Akousilas, son of the woman Glaneia, is one of the earliest instances of an Eleuthernian in Egypt, in the sanctuary of Zeus Ammon in the Siwa Oasis, and probably dates to the fourth century BC<sup>111</sup>. An Attic honorific decree mentioning Eleutherna (?) –if Lambert's reading is correct– dates to the same century<sup>112</sup>.





Coins of (a) Aegina, (b) Argos, (c) Argos, (d) Rhodes, (e) Gortyn, (f) Knossos? (g) Tenedos, (h) Kydonia.

We learn about Eleutherna's relations with Rhodes, about which more and more will be said henceforth, and with Argos, from the coins of these cities, which have come to light in all the sectors of the university excavation, on a temporal horizon starting certainly in the fourth century BC. However, we have to come down to Early Hellenistic times (4th/3rd century BC) in order to have a series of epigraphical documents which speak volubly about the city's history.

An inscribed pedimented stele of the early third century BC, found in house I at Katsivelos on the east slope of the hill, refers to the treaty between Eleutherna and Rhaukos<sup>113</sup>. It demonstrates the relations of Eleutherna and other Cretan cities in the treaty between the Knossians and the Milesians<sup>114</sup> and advocates the early dating of the latter to 292 BC, thus vindicating all those researchers who over the years dated the specific treaty to the beginning of the Hellenistic period. One other inscription, again Early Hellenistic, refers to Eleutherna's alliance with another Cretan city, the name of which has unfortunately not been preserved<sup>115</sup>. In 262 BC, Pronax son of Pronax, a Cretan from Eleutherna, became proxenos of the Aetolians<sup>116</sup>. The name Pronax is attested also in Axos, the neighbouring city of Eleutherna (*Ἰαξος, πόλις Κρήτης, Ελευθέρνης ου πόρω*, Stephen of Byzantium). Relations between Eleutherna and Axos, already from the early seventh century BC, were hinted at above, in the tale of *ameto*r Phronime, daughter of King Etearchos. They are further demonstrated by the finding of terracotta plaquettes of female deities of 'Axos types', which are dated to the seventh century BC, both in Eleutherna and in the nearby sacred cave of Melidoni<sup>117</sup>.

As is well known, Crete's relations with Egypt began in prehistoric times. Well known too is the reference to the voyage of Pharaoh Amenhotep III to the area of Sisaia (cf. pres. Sises), in quest of medicinal and aromatic herbs. For Eleutherna, as we shall see, there are several indications of relations, direct or indirect, with Egypt



at least from the Subgeometric/Protoarchaic period<sup>118</sup>. These were apparently continued, in one way or another, later and, of course, in the period of the Ptolemies<sup>119</sup>, in the latter's efforts to establish naval stations in the Aegean, as is ascertained from the Lagids' relations with Rhodes, Kos and Thera, as well as from the presence of pottery and particularly hydrias of Hadra type (from Alexandria or Rhodes or both) in western Crete<sup>120</sup>. The Ptolemies relations with Eleutherna are confirmed by a portrait statue of Ptolemy III, erected by the city sometime between 247 and 221 BC<sup>121</sup>. Perhaps in the third quarter of the third century BC, one more treaty of alliance seems to have been signed between Eleutherna and Phaistos, an act that is linked with the war against Lyktos<sup>122</sup>.

Relations with Egypt, at least for the Hellenistic period, seem to have been strengthened also by the presence there of Cretan mercenaries, a profession in which Eleuthernians engaged –perhaps from of old. This emerges moreover from the epigraphical testimony<sup>123</sup> referring to the alliance of the Eleuthernians and Hierapytnians together in the League of Leagues formed by the Macedonians under Antigonos Doson with the Achaean Confederacy (227-224 BC) in order to confront Sparta, to which the final blow was dealt in the battle of Sellasia (222 BC)<sup>124</sup>.

In 223/2 BC, three Eleuthernians together with other Cretans became citizens of Miletos, in the context of Eleutherna's relations with other cities outside Crete. Some of the names recorded in this inscription are encountered frequently in other epigraphical texts of Miletos<sup>125</sup>. Furthermore, in that same year or slightly later, Sosos son of Agemon a Cretan from Eleutherna was honoured as proxenos in the Aetolian city of Thermos<sup>126</sup>. After the events at Sellasia and the return, presumably, of the Cretan mercenaries there was a mobility in the Cretan cities –Eleutherna among them– which was probably due to their economic prosperity. This mobility is apparent in cities (among them Lyttos and Eleutherna) into which flowed wealth and new ideas, resulting in the improvement of the economic circumstances of the poorer classes as well as the younger age groups, with petitions obviously for democratization. According to Polybius (IV.55,4), the Achaean Confederacy and the new king of Macedonia Philip V put pressure on both Eleutherna and Kydonia, as well as on the latter's neighbour Aptaera, to break away from the alliance of the Knossians, who were enemies of Lyktos. At the same time, those who had broken away from the alliance of the Knossians took part in the Lyttians' struggle against the Rhodians. *The Rhodians having complied, and the vessels having arrived at Crete, Polybius narrates (IV.53,2), the people of Eleutherna suspecting that one of their citizens named Timarchos<sup>127</sup>, had been put to death by Polemocles to please the Cnossians, first proclaimed a right of reprisal against the Rhodians, and then went to open war with them.*

After these events and the unrest between the Cretan cities, the mutability of the alliances and the difficulties created by political and other rivalries, an inscription of 201 BC from the city<sup>128</sup> attests that the Eleuthernians, with the mediation of Hegesander the Rhodian, envoy of Antiochos, and Perdikkas, envoy of Philip V, consented to the inviolability of the rural territory (*chora*) of the city of Teos in Asia Minor. Before the end of the third century BC, ca 208 BC, Lilaia in Phokis granted civic rights to men in the Attalids' bodyguard, among whom were Eumachos from Eleutherna and the Cretan Antipatros – without specification of his native city<sup>129</sup>. A dedicatory inscription found in Miletos<sup>130</sup>, and dated to the very end of the third century BC, ca 200 BC, records a series of Cretans

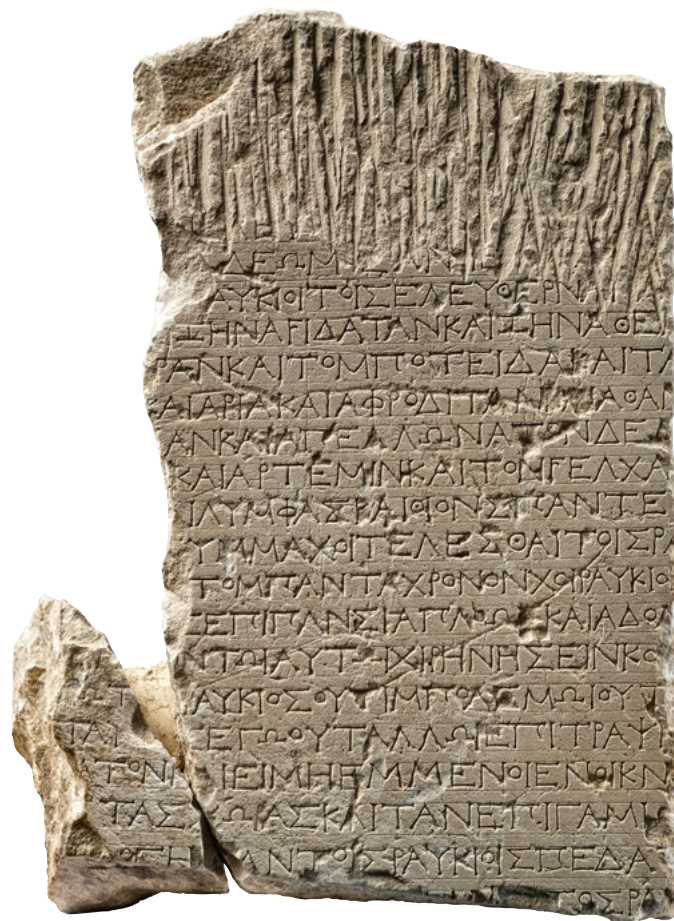


from Eleutherna, Gortyn and Axos. The inscription on the grave stele of Alexander son of Diodoros the Eleuthernian, who died at Demetrias in the land of Thessaly, should be dated within the same century<sup>131</sup>. This applies also to Sochoros son of Poikilidas, a Cretan from Eleutherna who died in Egypt, as is written on his grave stele in Alexandria<sup>132</sup>. Dated to the turn of the third to the second century BC is the inscription referring to Kyrtyos son of Androskylos, an Eleuthernian (*Ἐλευθερναῖος*), proxenos of the Gortynians.

Dated within the third century BC is the artistic activity of the Eleuthernian Timochares, who seems to have travelled and worked in cities in the eastern Mediterranean (mainly in Rhodes, Lindos, but also Karpathos, Astypalaia, as well as Knidos in Asia Minor and even in the Levant, at Sidon) in the early years of the second century BC<sup>133</sup>. His diverse activity, which seems to show also the magnitude of the commissions that his reputation as a skilled sculptor ensured, in all probability earned for him Rhodian citizenship, which was enjoyed most clearly by his famous son, Pythokritos, who worked in Rhodes, Lindos, Kamiros, Kedrees, Olympia, and elsewhere. Pythokritos was most probably the creator of the celebrated Nike of Samothrace<sup>134</sup> –today in the Louvre– and signed his works as a Rhodian, at least for the second or third decade of the second century BC<sup>135</sup>. The son of Pythokritos and grandson of Timochares, who was named Simias, was likewise a sculptor and was working in Rhodes in the middle years of the second century BC<sup>136</sup>.

At the beginning of the second century BC, Eleuthernians were contracting agreements of alliance with Lato and Aptera<sup>137</sup>. A series of fragmentary inscriptions of Kydonia in Crete, of Miletos and of Magnesia on the Maeander in Asia Minor, which are dated to the early second century BC and are linked either with commissions or with *proxenies* (hosting of foreign emissaries) or diplomatic and political incidents, refer to Eleuthernians, but without it being easy to identify persons and events<sup>138</sup>. In these years, the consolidation of the kingdom of the Attalids in Pergamon of Asia Minor signalled the start of a significant foreign cultural policy<sup>139</sup>. Eleutherna, together with other cities in Crete, negotiated a treaty with Eumenes II in 183 BC<sup>140</sup>. In the same year, an Eleuthernian was honoured by the Gortynians<sup>141</sup>.

A considerably eroded inscribed pedimented stele referring to a treaty of alliance between Eleutherna and Aptera, which makes provision for reciprocal military support and mercantile exchanges, seems to date to the first half of the second century BC<sup>142</sup>. The inscription from Aptera upon an Ionic epistyle: *Σωτήριος Πρωτογένιος Ἐλευθερναῖος ἐποίηι* (Soterios son of Protogenes Eleuthernian made [it]) dates to the same period<sup>143</sup>.



*Stone inscribed pedimented stele from Katsivelos. The text is a treaty of alliance between Rhaukos and Eleutherna. The inscription also includes an oath sworn to pan-Cretan and local deities. 3rd century BC.*



The development of the pan-Ionian sanctuary of Apollo in his hallowed birthplace Delos and the island's relations with Athens were beneficial to both sides. However, the declaration of Delos as a free port in 166 BC gave it new momentum, at the same time establishing it as centre of the slave trade, resulting in a thriving economy throughout the rest of the second and at the beginning of the first century BC<sup>144</sup>. Thus, the presence of citizens of Eleutherna on Delos in 157/6 BC is not surprising. These are Serambos son of Heraippos, with guarantor Hermippos son of Hermippos, from whom the first leases a workshop, as a relevant inscription records<sup>145</sup>. Relations with Delos are further corroborated by the finds of Delian pottery (sherds) –'Megarian bowls'<sup>146</sup> and so on– at Eleutherna, mainly in the necropolis and Nisi but also at Orthi Petra. As tantalizing as it is difficult, is the prospect of linking the contract in the inscription with some of the sealings from the Skardanas house on Delos<sup>147</sup>, but unfortunately the papyri with the notarial acts, which the sealings secured, have been burnt. The same would apply also to the lease contract for the shipbuilding yard owned by the Parian Nikander son of Charmas, which was leased by Ariston with his Eleuthernian master Heraippos son of Heraippos, as recorded in another column of the said inscription<sup>148</sup>. Was this, we wonder, the seashore shipyard in the bay of Phournoi in the southwest of Delos, which had been hewn out of the granite rock a short way to the west of the sanctuary of Leukothea? Eleuthernians' relations with Delos were not limited to contracts and economic transactions, but extended to their participation in the festivals of the Apollonian sanctuary, as mentioned in an inscription of 144/3 BC, again from Delos<sup>149</sup>.

So, we may ask, was the *thearodokos*, whose name is missing, in a second-century BC inscription from the Delphic sanctuary<sup>150</sup>, undoubtedly from Eleutherna on Crete? The institution of *thearodokos* (sacred envoy) is well-known in antiquity and in Crete we have routes taken by *thearodokoi* from central Greece on the island<sup>151</sup>.

Dated to sometime in the second century BC are the inscriptions referring to treaties of Eleutherna with Lato<sup>152</sup> and with Aptera<sup>153</sup>. Indeed, in the first case the relations of these cities with the sea is clearly seen, since they mutually agree to defend 'forts (*φρώρια*) and harbours (*λιμένες*)'. Also very important are the treaties with other cities and many problems arise when the inscriptions in which the cities are mentioned do not always preserve the names of the contracting parties. Copies of stelai with texts of this kind usually exist in all the cities referred to, such as between Eleutherna and Messene<sup>154</sup>. In addition, the spread of Eleuthernians to busy commercial cities, at least in the second century BC, is apparent also from the grave stele of Kran]nos son of Krantiades, an Eleuthernian, which was found in the Piraeus<sup>155</sup>.

Last, a series of fragments of inscriptions from Pyrgi, published by Th. Kalpaxis and other colleagues in the late 1980s and early 1990s, seem to date to the second century BC and indeed its second half (150-100 BC)<sup>156</sup>. These are inscriptions of 'sacred laws' and in fact religious calendars with names of deities, offerings of sacrifices and holy ordinances. This category of inscriptions from Eleutherna is exceptionally important, not only because analogous ones are rare in Crete, but also because they include rare names and epithets of the island's gods, as well as a calendar with references to divisions of time (months, days).

Later, at the turn of the second to the first century BC, on an inscription from Gortyn on Crete, an Eleuthernian of unknown nomen, son of SAG]olidas, is honoured (as proxenos?) together with other Cretans.<sup>157</sup> Dated



perhaps to the first century BC, if not earlier, is the votive inscription from Kythera, dedicated by a man from Eleutherna to Pan (and Aphrodite Kytheraia?)<sup>158</sup>.

Furthermore, it seems that the Archaic musical tradition of the Eleuthernians still existed in the first century BC, as at least is suggested by an inscription of 94/3 BC<sup>159</sup>, in which *proxenia* is offered by the city of Delphi to two brothers, Antipater and Kriton, proficient musicians who played a difficult instrument, the hydraulis. Remains of this large musical instrument, a kind of hydraulic organ, have been found and assembled at Dion in Pieria, while representations of the hydraulis exist in a series of Roman, mainly, reliefs<sup>160</sup>. In the same century, Sosthenes son of Ariston, Cretan and citizen of Eleutherna, was honoured by the Andrians, according to yet another inscription<sup>161</sup>, while a small inscribed altar of the first century BC refers to the dedication by a woman Kleopatra, whose nomen is followed by the name of her mother Pauso, and not by the patronymic<sup>162</sup>!

For all the fame, progress, prosperity and activity of citizens of Eleutherna during the Hellenistic period, the city was evidently not strong enough to prevent its conquest by the Roman armies. As Dio Cassius relates [XXXVI, 18, 2 and as is confirmed by Latin sources, such as L. A. Florus, (*Epitome* I, 42, 4)] in 68/7 BC Quintus Caecilius Metellus captured Eleutherna, after its betrayal, and plundered it: *Metellus... captured the city of Eleuthera by treachery and extorted money from it; for those who had betrayed it had by night repeatedly saturated with vinegar a very large brick tower, most difficult of capture, so that it became brittle.*

However, the conquest did not spell the end of the flourishing city. Almost a generation later, Augustus was named *oikistes* (colonizer) of the city, ushering in a splendid heyday that was sustained throughout the Roman imperial period, from the second half of the first century BC into the fourth century AD, as investigations in all sectors of the university excavation attest.

Several inscriptions of this period are unpublished. According to a preliminary presentation, a small altar found in the vicinity of house I at Katsivelos<sup>163</sup> refers to Augustus: *Καίσαρι|θεώ|θεού|υιῷ|Σε|βαστῷ* (O Caesar god son of god, I support you). A series of other earlier honorific inscriptions<sup>164</sup> refer both to Augustus and to Tiberius. Yet other inscriptions referring to Trajan and Hadrian are partly published<sup>165</sup>, while those referring to Septemius Severus and Caracalla were published some time ago<sup>166</sup>. Recently, inscriptions of the Roman period, in Greek and in Latin, were and are identified on the slopes of the hills of Eleutherna and Archaia Eleftherna, in houses in the village and elsewhere, but



Stone inscribed small altar. The inscription refers to the deified emperor Augustus. Late 1st century BC/early 1st century AD.



Part of a stone inscribed colonnette with hole for affixing a metal dedication or a stone crowning. Kleopatra daughter of Pauso dedicated the colonnette with the lost votive offering. 1st century BC.

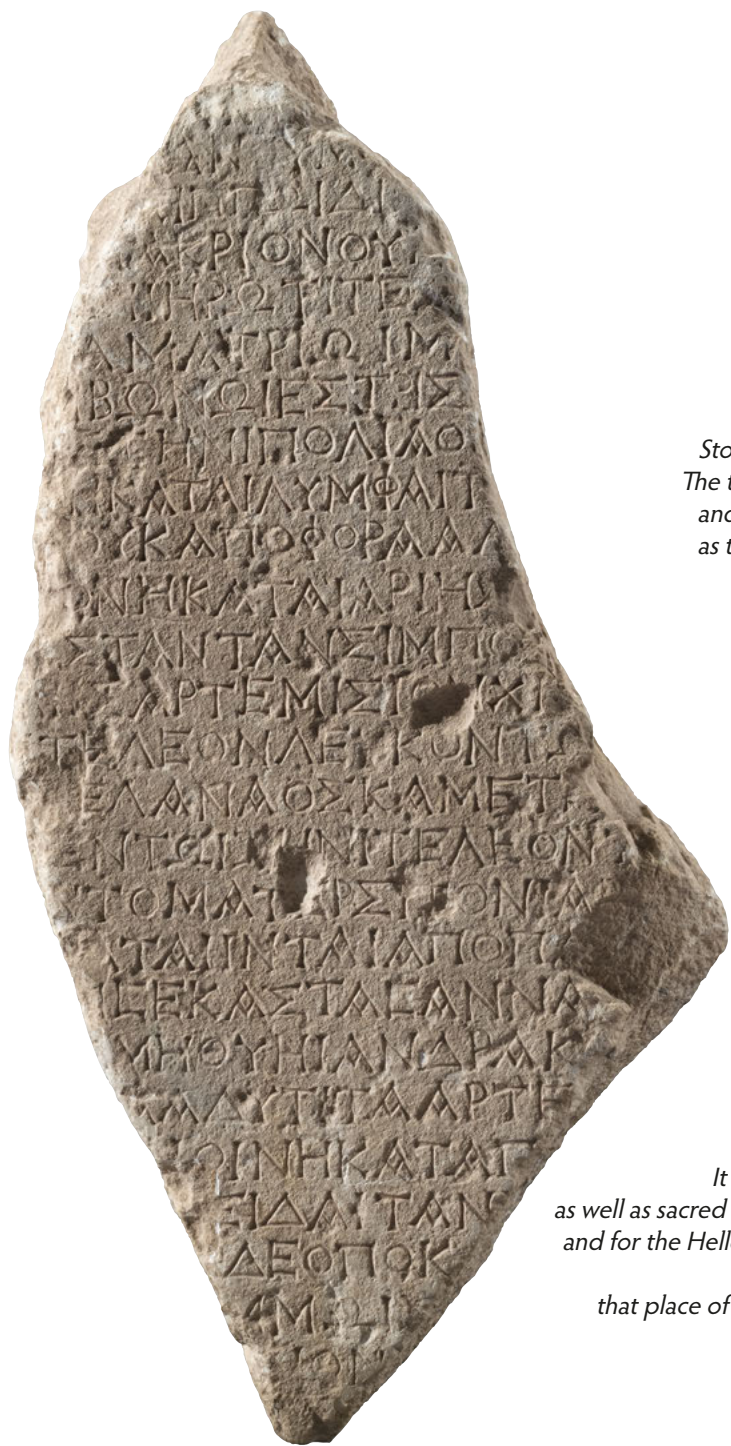


also on the acropolis. The epigraphical zenith of the Roman period, complemented by wonderful works in architecture, sculpture, the minor arts, and so on, is becoming known gradually through publications, such as the Catalogue of the Exhibition held in the Museum of Cycladic Art in Athens, in 2004, and more recently the *International Conference Eleutherna, Crete and the Outside World*, in 2018, giving another picture of the city and revealing through architectural and other remains that the Roman period was one of the most dynamic in Eleutherna's history<sup>167</sup>.

The seed of Christianity, which after the arrival of Apostle Paul at Kaloi Limenes in Crete in AD 52 took root and sprouted under Apostle Titus, first bishop of the island, seems to have spread to the cities of Crete during Roman imperial times. Indeed, in the capital of Crete and Cyrenaica together, Gortyn, the Italian excavations have brought to light evidence of religious tolerance, in the form of an altar to the unknown god<sup>168</sup>. However, Christianity seems to have prevailed rather late, in the fourth century, and specifically after the severe earthquake in AD 365 or 367, which shook the foundations of the East Mediterranean and Crete, destroying many Late Roman cities, among them flourishing Eleutherna, Knossos and Kissamos, as recounted by contemporary and later historians<sup>169</sup>. The picture given by the archaeological evidence for the earthquake in the city is characteristic and dramatic in some cases<sup>170</sup>. Important too is the phase of Early Christian and Early Byzantine Eleutherna, as this has been revealed through the university excavation<sup>171</sup>. The sources known to date speak of the continuation of life and activity in the city after the catastrophic earthquake, since already from the early fifth century Eleutherna seems to have been an episcopal see. The three-line foundation inscription, executed in mosaic, of the basilica at Katsivelos, in the heart of the Late Roman-Early Christian city, refers to the founder of the church dedicated to Archangel Michael, Bishop Euphratas, who according to P. Themelis<sup>172</sup> is identified with the homonymous Bishop of Eleutherna, who took part in the Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon in AD 451, as noted in the Synekdemos of Hierokles<sup>173</sup> as well as the Acta of the Ecumenical Councils<sup>174</sup>. In the view of P. Themelis, the years in which the basilica was built coincide with the reign of Theodosios II (401-450), the emperor who seems to have assisted Crete in the tragic aftermath of the earthquake of AD 367, by sending aid to its smitten cities<sup>175</sup>.

As we have said, the basilica was dedicated to Archangel Michael, which is rare since the known churches dedicated to this archangel usually date from after the eleventh century. It may well be that the dedication was due to the pre-existing worship of the deities Hermes and Aphrodite, ruins of whose temple were found underneath and south of the basilica at Katsivelos. Moreover, material from herms, one of them with a Janus head, of Roman times, was found built into the fabric of this basilica.<sup>176</sup> The 'metamorphosis' of Hermes, known also as psychopompos, the god who was leader of souls to Hades, the tradition and iconography of whom begins in Classical times<sup>177</sup>, into Archangel Michael seems to be related not only to the city but also to the wider area of Eleutherna, where the couple Pluto and Persephone played a significant role. This we know also from ancient epigraphical testimonies, as well as from the gold mouthpieces (*epistomia*) found in graves of the Hellenistic and Roman periods, upon which are written the names of the Lord and the Mistress (Despoina) of the Underworld<sup>178</sup>.





*Stone, eroded, fragmentary inscribed pedimented stele. 200-150 BC. The text refers to an alliance between the cities of Aptera and Eleutherna and foresees mutual military aid in the event of external threat, as well as the reciprocal import of each city's products without customs dues.*

*Part of an inscribed stele. The inscription belongs to the category of 'sacred laws' and to the subcategory of religious calendars. It records names of deities and of the sacrifices offered to them, as well as sacred ordinances. The text is the first epigraphic testimony for Crete and for the Hellenic world generally of the worship of the Matriae (=Mothers) and appears to confirm the information in the literary sources that place of origin of their cult was Crete and specifically the Idaean Cave. Second half of 2nd century BC.*





*Clay vases (trefoil-mouth oenochoe, amphora), 6th/7th century.  
Clay glazed jug (right). Late 12th / early 13th century.*

According to the evidence of coins as well as of pottery, the basilica seems to have been destroyed, most probably by earthquake, and abandoned in the reign of Constans II (641-668) or Constantine IV (668-685). However, it seems that the city continued to exist for some time, judging by the participation of Epiphanius, worthless Bishop of Eloutherne<sup>179</sup>, in the Ecumenical Council of Nicaea in 787. The presence of a bishopric, seat of which in P. Themelis's opinion was the basilica underneath the church of the Transfiguration of the Saviour, in the south part of the Pharangitis (Agia Kyriaki) valley, indicates that Eleutherna continued to be the centre –at least ecclesiastical– of the region in the second half of the eighth century.

From this time onward, information about the city in literary sources and inscriptions is sparse and only excavation sheds further light on its history. On present evidence, it appears that from the reigns of Constans II and Constantine IV the city began to wane. The situation was exacerbated by the destructive earthquakes and the threatened Arab invasions. Its desertion is dated to the late eighth century, after the earthquake in 796 and the new wave of Arab incursions during the reign of Harun Al Rashid (768-809), as maintained by P. Themelis<sup>180</sup>. However, according to Tsougarakis<sup>181</sup>, the presence of two Byzantine churches (of St Anne on the acropolis and of Christ Soter [Saviour] or others<sup>182</sup>) and certain inscriptions attest human activity in the city and that Eleutherna was an episcopal see until the tenth





*Copper coin (follis)  
mint of Constantinople, AD 669-674.*



*Copper coin,  
mint of the period of Venetian rule,  
16th-17th century.*



*Lead seals: of Zosimos or Zosimianos (?), 8th century  
and of Photeinos of Hypata, 7th century.*

century. Indeed, Eleutherna was perhaps the Cretan city which resisted the Arab invasion in the ninth century, when, according to historians<sup>183</sup>, twenty-nine (29) of the island's cities were captured, excepting one. If the dating of the earliest part of the church of the Transfiguration of Christ the Saviour to the twelfth century is correct, in all probability this indicates that the site of the city had not been abandoned completely or, at least, that after the possible desertion due to the 796 earthquake and the Arab raids, life returned to the shrunken city after the liberation of Crete by Nikephoros Phokas in 961. The use of the Byzantine church of St Anne on the Prines acropolis, as well as the houses in the same area, the moveable finds from which date from the eleventh into the thirteenth century, lead to the same conclusion<sup>184</sup>. This Byzantine habitation of the city seems to have ended much later, when Eleutherna together with Margarities played an active role in the revolts against the Venetian conquerors.







# THE EMERGENCE OF THE CITY THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY OF CRETE EXCAVATIONS

## GENERAL INFORMATION • QUARRIES AND MINES

In contrast to other Bronze Age settlement or palatial centres or to Early Iron Age 'poleis', Eleutherna was fortunate in its proximity to sources of raw material suitable for building permanent, stable and monumental structures. Two main sites at which limestone was extracted in antiquity have been identified. The first is the ancient quarry at Peristeres<sup>185</sup>. It is located on the upper part of the west and northwest hill of the Community of Laga, to which leads the cobbled road and the continuing pathway at the northwest exit of the ancient (Hellenistic) bridge of Eleutherna, built over the north tributary formed by the Pharangitis and Chalopota torrents together, as discussed in the Introduction. This is an extensive quarry that is preserved in quite good condition<sup>186</sup> with support pillar, 'benches' and notched limestone boulders ready for quarrying and rectangular blocks that were not detached and have remained in situ. This limestone rock continues to the northwest, to the environs of the village of Alpha, from which the famed Alpha limestone, or 'Alphopetra' was quarried, which was used ubiquitously for building in Venetian times, particularly for quoins, lintels, portal frames and windows, and is quarried to this day.

The site of another important limestone quarry is identified at 'Dexamenes'. These are cisterns that supplied the ancient city with water, which were quarried in order to create dug-out storage tanks for water to the west of and below the Tower at the south entrance to the acropolis. The huge amount of material quarried so as to create the cisterns was used for public works (e.g. paving of streets) as well as for public and private buildings. By the same token, in different places both on Prines hill and Eleftherna hill there are clear traces of quarrying. Some have been created to facilitate accesses, paths and streets, or to create a stable foundations for buildings. Whatever the case, the quarried material was used also as building material.

Last, in the 1960s, investigations by the Institute of Geology and Mineral Exploration (IGME) located iron ores in the area of Kouloukonas (Tallaian Mountains), in the east of the ancient city's territory. Exploitation of iron in antiquity is documented by a small ingot (solo) of the metal, found inside an Early Iron Age cooking pot, to the west of the Orthi Petra necropolis. It was to the existence of iron ore, among other things as we shall see below, that Eleutherna owed its great heyday.

*The ancient quarry at Peristeres. Stone blocks that were never extracted. Bottom right, the late N. Tzanidakis, one of the first workers in the excavation and donor of the initial plot of land for the Museum of ancient Eleutherna.*



## THE HUMAN PRESENCE

On the west slope of Prines hill, where the excavation at the Orthi Petra site was concentrated and the Early Iron Age necropolis was located, a series of tools and artifacts came to light from time to time, which in their own way narrated man's presence and activity in the area. These are small stone axes of the Late Neolithic or the Early Bronze Age. Found in the lowest layers, almost on the marly limestone bedrock, were two fragments of small Early Cycladic marble figurines: a little head as well as part of thighs. Although these Early Cycladic figurines (2700 – 2400/2300 BC) point to early relations between the Cyclades and Crete<sup>187</sup>, they are not all imported from the islands and could have been made in Crete by Cycladic or Cretan creators, like the figurines of Koumasa type<sup>188</sup>. Also recovered from Orthi Petra were sherds of Bronze Age pottery, as well as a clay figurine, seal-stones of the Late Minoan period and fragments of obsidian blades. Notable among the finds is a stone 'blossom bowl'.



*Stone 'blossom bowl'.  
Late Minoan I period (1600-1450 BC).  
The outside of the vase is decorated  
with flower petals carved in relief.*

The accumulation of these objects at Orthi Petra may not be linked, for the present, with architectural remains of habitation or graves, which would lead us to the conclusion that there was a settlement hereabouts in the Bronze Age. However, in combination with analogous finds (obsidian and fragment of a Cycladic figurine<sup>189</sup> and potsherds of the Early, Middle and Late Minoan periods, and very few Neolithic<sup>190</sup>) to the east at the locality Katsivelos, below and around the disturbed layers of a Late Geometric/Archaic megaron (see below), as well as earlier finds from the site of Pyrgi on the Prines acropolis (stone tools, obsidian pieces, large number of Bronze Age sherds and indeed from different parts of the island – Pyrgos Style, Hagios Onouphrios Style and Vassiliki Ware, as well as a stone seal with spiral device)<sup>191</sup> point to human presence and activity in the area and indeed over time<sup>192</sup>, from the Early to the Late Bronze Age. Finds from the most recent investigations on the acropolis reinforce the conclusions about this early human presence at Pyrgi<sup>193</sup>. Consequently, an early installation on the hilltop should be considered certain even though the architectural remains are too vague at present or have not been fully published. The difficulty of identifying architectural remains, especially on the acropolis, is mainly due to the successive layers in which one phase overlies the other, each time interrupting, intruding into or breaking up earlier buildings.<sup>194</sup>





*Fragments of stone axes of the Late Neolithic/ Early Minoan period.*



*Fragments of obsidian blades, flakes and cores of the Minoan period.*

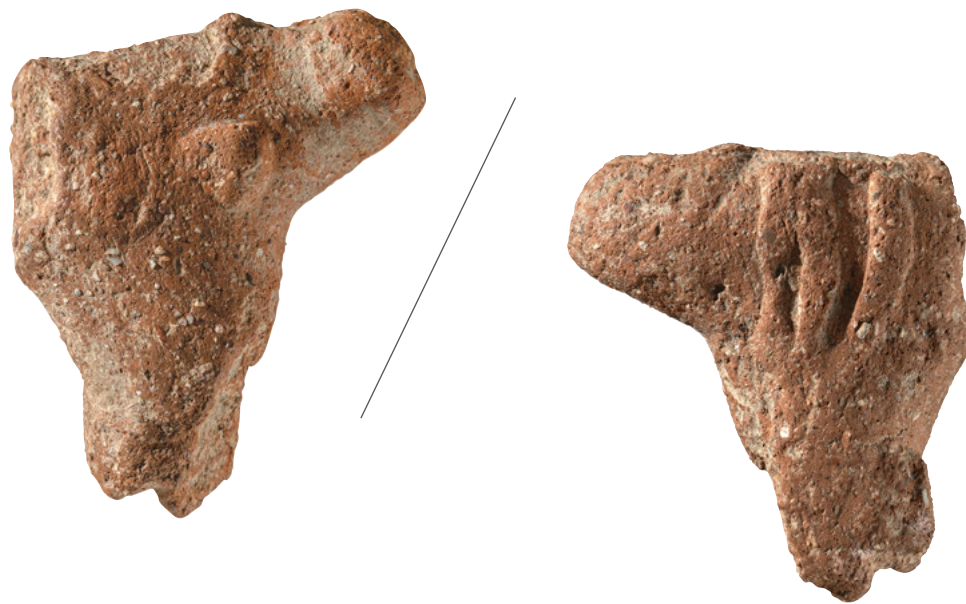




*Marble small head and part of the thighs of Cycladic figurines. Early Cycladic II period.*



*Seal-stone of truncated conical shape with suspension hole. Incised spiral on the obverse. Early Minoan II-III period.*



*Torso of a clay figurine (front and back). Late Minoan period (1600-1100 BC).*





*Seal-stones of the Late Minoan period. From left to right, with representations of a ship, a bird and heart-shaped leaves.*



*Sherds of Minoan clay vases from the locality Pyrgi. The sherds come from locally-made vases, as well as from vessels of Pyrgos, Hagios Onouphrios and Vassiliki wares, which had been imported to Eleutherna from other regions of Crete.*



## HABITATION IN THE EARLY IRON AGE

Many remains dating from Geometric and Archaic times have come to light on the top of the hill of Prines (Archaia Eleftherna). Architectural remains of houses (?), sherds and figurines, have been revealed, as well as an impressive cultic building of the seventh century BC, which was repaired at various times and continued in existence into Roman times, as ascertained from the finding of Archaic sherds and figurines, and Roman lamps. Found too was an underground cylindrical 'treasury' (*thesauros*) with stone walls and stone pivot, and a triple, very carefully made seal, so that it was not easy to open<sup>195</sup>. The existence of a second space for worship, fragmentary inscriptions with religious and other ordinances, walls that have not been exposed completely, are also among the finds that furnish adequate evidence of a fully-operative religious and administrative (?) centre of the Early Iron Age<sup>196</sup>.

Some of the terracotta plaque figurines of the seventh century BC that have been found on the acropolis and in the polis –even in the necropolis, as we shall see below)– resemble those from Axos, as do those found in the Melidoni cave, which is associated with Eleutherna<sup>197</sup>. This connection between Eleutherna and Axos is documented also by finds from the necropolis –figurines and vases – and works that are related to the tale of Phronime, to which Herodotus refers and which has been spoken of on different occasions here<sup>198</sup>. Parallel to the west verge of the flat area of this acropolis a pottery kiln was excavated, which from the finds and pending its full publication seems to be dated to Late Geometric/Protoarchaic times<sup>199</sup>.

Correspondingly, below the terraces and the edifices of the Hellenistic and Roman city, on the east slope of Prines hill, remains of buildings of the Geometric/Archaic period have been uncovered, among them a 'megaroid' structure with hearth. The building, with a socle of stones laid in courses and a superstructure of mudbricks and timber, would have had a roof of timber and schist slabs (?), supported by a wooden colonnade. Its doorframe at the entrance would also have been of wood. According to the excavator, the edifice had a porch (prostoon) on the south narrow side. In addition to Late Geometric/Archaic sherds, it yielded also a stone support for a bench on which its occupants at various times would have sat. P. Themelis considers that it served as a local administrative building, inside which decisions were taken by people (a council of elders?) seated on benches. Sherds of the same period, terracotta figurines, anthropomorphic and zoomorphic, and two stone moulds for lamellae are also finds of the same period, which come either from buildings or are chance finds in the lower layers of the excavation at Katsivelos<sup>200</sup>.

Last, Geometric and Archaic sherds under the Hellenistic houses on Nisi –that is, to the north of the hill of the village of Eleftherna–, as well as terracotta anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figurines of Geometric and Archaic times, inside cavities in the large space with the stone enclosure (*peribolos*) of the sanctuary of Classical times, parts of which are visible to north and east of the village Primary School, are, in the excavator's view, from the installation on the hill of Eleutherna at this period<sup>201</sup>.

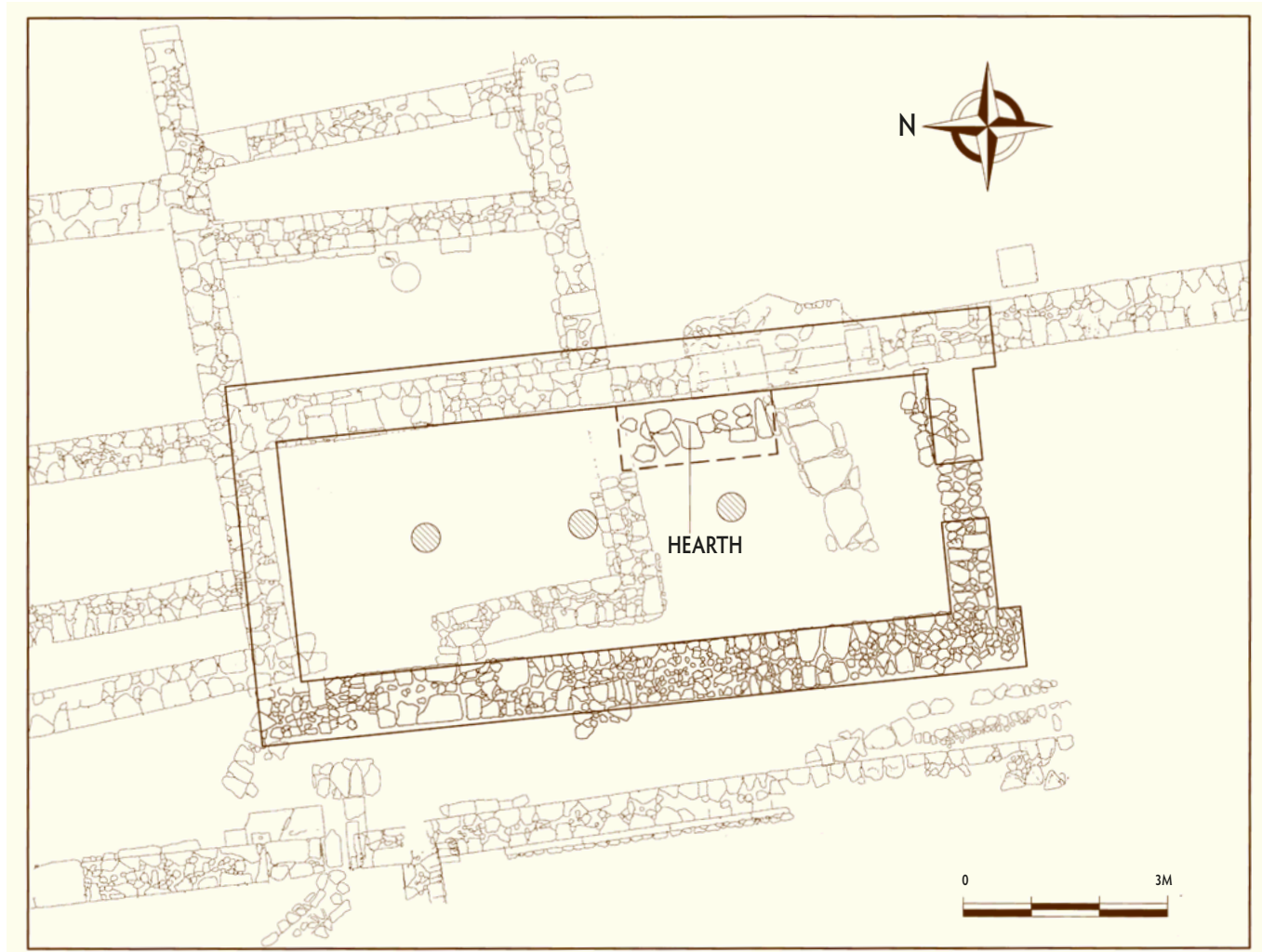
Very low down on the east side of the hill of the present village of Eleftherna, close to the west bank of the Chalopota stream, at the locality Xeniana, architectural remains of buildings were revealed in 1988. These appear to be built on terraces, following the configuration of the terrain<sup>202</sup>. They are parts of two relatively





*Xeniana. Bottom left, walls of a building of the Late Geometric/Early Archaic period.  
Right, part of a fortification wall (?) of Hellenistic times.*





*The ground plan of the Geometric/Archaic megaron. Visible are three circular bases for the wooden colonnade on the axis of the long sides and in the middle of the building, as well as a rectangular hearth that abutted the east wall that no longer survives.*

small rectangular or square rooms. At the edges and in the corners of these rooms, which fortunately were preserved intact during the construction of the rural road in 1984 – one year before the systematic excavation commenced – small surfaces of compacted clay floors were uncovered<sup>203</sup>. Found on the floors, in addition to a series of sherds of the Late Geometric and Protoarchaic periods, were clay spindle whorls, fragments of bronze pins (needles), as well as a fragment of a plaque figurine of the early seventh century BC, with representation of the torso and arms of a human figure.

Some preliminary conclusions can be drawn from the above about the spatial organization of Eleutherna during the Early Iron Age. Habitation was obviously in settlement nuclei (neighbourhoods/quarters or villages-*komes*) at different localities on the east slope of Prines hill (locality Katsivelos, and, as emerges more recently from sherds, also Agia Eirini and Agios Markos): on the acropolis of the same hill and perhaps on the high terraces to the west of it, at Xeniana on the east slope of Eleutherna hill, possibly also on Nisi. The buildings, public or private, follow the same canons, with stone foundations and socles, and mudbrick superstructure. Depending on the use, the public and cultic buildings seem to have been of neater and more robust construction. Wooden columns supporting the roof, wooden beams and doorframes are expected features but which usually leave no clear traces in the archaeological record.





Head of a terracotta male figurine.  
Geometric/Archaic period.



Head of a terracotta figurine.  
Geometric period (?).



Terracotta head of helmeted male figure.  
Late 8th/early 7th century BC.



Head of a handmade terracotta figurine.  
Late 8th/early 7th century BC.



Torso of a terracotta relief plaque of a female figure.  
Late 8th/early 7th century BC.



Terracotta figurine of a female deity.  
Late Minoan (?) / Protogeometric (?) period.



Terracotta female figurine with Daedalic wig-like hairstyle.  
Mid-7th century BC.





Head and upper torso of a terracotta figurine.  
7th century BC.



Clay mould for a female  
Daedalic figurine. 7th century BC.

Sanctuaries seem to have existed during the Geometric/Protoarchaic and Archaic periods, both at Pyrgi, on the acropolis at Archaia Eleftherna, as noted already, and to the south of the Hellenistic habitation on Nisi, on the site of the later Classical peribolos, and at Elleniko in the space of today's cemetery of present Eleftherna. The 'megaroid' buildings (*andreia?* = men's house), such as that at Katsivelos but possibly also elsewhere during the same period, were most probably local administrative centres, venues of assembly for each *kome*.

In the ongoing excavations at the localities Agia Eirini and Agios Markos, the deeper layers –mainly at Agia Eirini– have yielded Archaic sherds, as well as several fragments of inscriptions incised on slabs and/or cornerstones of public buildings of the Late Archaic (and Early Classical) period.

However, the great discovery that gives evidence for the Geometric and the Archaic period, that is from the early ninth to the sixth century BC, is that of the necropolis at Orthi Petra, on the lower west slope of Prines (Archaia Eleftherna) hill, which will be discussed thoroughly in due course. This necropolis and its finds, as we shall see below in detail, is the pinnacle of the exceptionally important Early Iron Age settlement on Prines hill, most probably at first *kata komas* (in villages) and subsequently, towards the end of the period, in the constitution of the polis of Eleftherna.





Clay lamp of 'Cretan type'.  
Incised on the base are the letters OY,  
which probably denote the ΓΑΜΟΥ (Gamos) workshop.  
First half of 2nd century AD.



Clay lamp of 'Cretan type'. 1st/2nd century AD.



Twin clay lamp with horse heads. Late 1st century AD.



Clay lamp with representation  
of Serapis upon a sphere.  
Late 1st/early 2nd century AD.



Triple clay lamp of 'Cretan type'. 1st/2nd century AD.



*Stone moulds. On one is the intaglio figure of a waterfowl, the other is possibly part of a girdle or a leg of a tripod. 8th/7th century BC.*



*Fragment of a stone stele with inscription on the back. It refers to the processing of hides that were probably used for making parts of military equipment. 6th century BC.*



*Stone support of a bench. Represented on it in very low relief are two legs of an item of furniture. 7th century BC.*





*Stone corner akroterion from the superstructure of the propylon of the large enclosure on Nisi. Late 5th/early 4th century BC.*



*Fragment of a stone sima with high-relief lion head. 1st century BC.*



*Part of a stone horizontal cornice with guttae, from the propylon of the large enclosure on Nisi. Late 5th/early 4th century BC. This enclosure is the most monumental architectural structure of Classical times found in Crete to date, as well as one of the most singular constructions of this period. Its use is still puzzling, although the finds from the space point to the existence of an open-air sanctuary during Geometric and Archaic times.*







# THE FORMATION OF THE GRAECO-ROMAN CITY

## GENERAL INFORMATION

On present evidence from the excavations it is difficult to recompose the picture of Eleutherna, at least of advanced Archaic and Classical times, as very few recognizable architectural remains of these periods in the city have been found. By contrast, the area occupied by the Hellenistic, Roman and Early Christian city is estimated to have been quite large. Kalpaxis, Furtwängler, Schnapp and others consider that in the Hellenistic period the city covered about 1.5 sq. km<sup>204</sup>.

It may well be that the Protoarchaic religious, administrative as well as residential centre of Eleutherna, on the acropolis and the east slopes of Prines hill, continued in existence during Archaic and Classical times. This can be clearly seen not only from an abundant series of black-figure and red-figure sherds recovered from the area to the north of the shelter over the Orthi Petra necropolis, but also from a series of Late Archaic and Classical figurines found in trial trenches opened to the southeast of it. In all probability these are from a deposit which has yet to be investigated thoroughly<sup>205</sup>.

On the other hand, the presence of so many inscriptions dispersed not only over the acropolis but also in the Orthi Petra area, as well as those found very recently in the localities Agia Eirini and Agios Markos, many of which date to Late Archaic and Early Classical times, bear witness to a thriving city with governmental and social structures and which was conscious of the need to record in stone legal, administrative/arbitrational, cultic-religious and regulatory texts. The plethora of inscriptions from this period can, however, be interpreted also as a need to write down earlier customary law and canons by a society in which changes were predicted or imminent. Also dated to the same period is the relief stele of a warrior with shield, from Eleutherna, which was published several years back by A. Lebesi<sup>206</sup>.

In addition to the artifacts –pottery and figurines– noted above, from study of the undecorated, mainly, pottery by B. Erickson<sup>207</sup> it is clear that there was both local production and imports during the sixth and the early fifth century BC. Simply, it was more difficult for earlier researchers to distinguish them. As the study mentions, it seems that the neutrality of Crete, which did not take part in the Persian Wars, most probably influenced by the powerful city of Argos which adopted an amicable neutral stance towards the Persians, played a considerable role at least in the reduction of imports from outside the island<sup>208</sup>.

*View of the Graeco-Roman and Early Byzantine city and the acropolis of Eleutherna  
(Below, the city at the locality Katsivelos, the hills of Laga in the middle and in the distance the Cretan sea).*



However, as noted above <sup>1209</sup>, this period of 'silence' apparently lasted for two generations at most and signs of recovery can be seen from the imports to Eleutherna already by the last third of the fifth century BC.

To the north of the sanctuary at Elleniko, below the rural road, in the Childrens' Playground, sherds of Archaic/Late Archaic vases were found in cavities in rocks, indicating that the sanctuary perhaps reached as far as the south boundary of the present Community of Eleftherna. Around the end of the fifth and the beginning of the fourth century BC, it seems that the large strong precinct wall (peribolos) of the sanctuary on Nisi took shape, constructed of large stone blocks laid in courses. To the west of the peribolos was a propylon, from which architectural members survive: cornice with guttae, corner palmette, and so on.

Sometime in the fourth century BC and in Hellenistic times, Eleutherna acquired the form of a true city for the first time. It was a densely-built urban centre developed on a series of appropriately arranged terraces, at least on the east slopes of Prines hill. Towards the end of the fourth century BC, the first large-scale building intervention was carried out on these east slopes, at the locality Katsivelos, according to P. Themelis<sup>210</sup>. It was then that retaining walls began to be built, to underpin and to delimit the stepped terraces, a procedure that evidently continued dynamically in the third century BC. This was the time of a veritable building boom in Eleutherna, which is perhaps related to the 'democratization' of the system of governance and the extending of the right of citizenship to the lower classes –that is, to a larger number of citizens– after the revolt in 220 BC.

## THE FORTIFICATION WALLS (?)

At the locality Xeniana, on the lower slopes of the east side of the hill of present Eleftherna, excavations uncovered a foundation trench that had been partly destroyed by the aforesaid architectural constructions of Protoarchaic times<sup>211</sup>. The trench had been cut in antiquity, in order to receive a robust construction. This consisted of quoin blocks of local marly limestone, set in pairs as stretchers, that is lengthwise running east-west and which still stands to a height of at least seven steps. However, it cannot be ruled out that it stood to a much greater height than the present (approx. 6 m). From a slight alternation of height by course of stone blocks a kind of isodomic - pseudo-isodomic masonry seems to be created. As can be seen from a broken stone block in the lowest course, the construction would have extended eastward, towards the bank of the Chalopota stream. Unfortunately, this seems to have been destroyed in the course of constructing the rural road, one year before the university excavations began. However, this construction would not have been able by itself to reveal the system for protecting the city<sup>212</sup>. Moreover, its findspot leaves little leeway for speaking confidently about the possible relation also to the settlement on Nisi (north of present Eleftherna), which Th. Kalpaxis<sup>213</sup> considers was enclosed by a strong fortification wall, even if this did not surround the whole extent of Nisi hill but only its north part. In my opinion, this strong construction at Xeniana may well have come from the west towards the area of the settlement on





*View of part of the construction at the locality Potamida, which was possibly part of a fortification wall of the ancient city.*

Nisi, following the north crest of Eleutherna hill. P. Themelis refers to a fortification of the city around the Prines acropolis, as well as in the Pharangitis torrent<sup>214</sup> but without giving further data.

About 300 m to the south of the 'fortification wall' discovered at Xeniana, in the locality Potamida, exactly at today's point of entry to the archaeological site of Orthi Petra, several large retaining walls were visible, the westernmost of which seems to have been swept away at some time by the Chalopota torrent. A few metres west of the façade of these retaining walls and deeper in the bed of the Chalopota, the excavation uncovered a construction of overall length 23 m, which stopped south at the point where in 2006 the south abutment was set for a small bridge that now serves the entrance to the Orthi Petra site in the winter months. This is an isodomic construction of stone blocks approximately 1.20 m long, 0.60 m wide and 0.30 m high, placed as headers and stretchers in pairs, forming a structure 1.20 m thick, which today stands to a height of about 1.80 m. Its manner of construction, position and impressive volume<sup>215</sup> could advocate its interpretation as a fortification wall, which at once would have protected this part of the city from the force of the water flow of the torrent and would have created a first terrace of the city to the east.

However, in 2004-2005, the systematic clearing of the vegetation cover at the locality Lotos<sup>216</sup> uncovered parts of four constructions of cornerstones about 4 m high, which, despite interventions and partial reconstructions, are parts of a mighty fortification wall (?) which probably protected the acropolis from the northwest. Apart from protecting the acropolis, a projection of this construction to the west/southwest would seem to have met, probably obliquely, the 'fortification wall' at Xeniana. In the recent excavations at Agia Eirini



(2007, 2014, 2016-2018), the north wall of the narthex of the basilica (see below) is perhaps the south wall of a tower (?) from a system to protect the city. Even though the above contributions to our knowledge of the defence system appear to be essential, we must wait for other discoveries before beginning to trace a possible direction of a fortification wall and its repairs at various times<sup>217</sup>. And this because we have to understand whether sections of a fortification wall actually existed, which together with other constructions (e.g. high retaining walls or even strong walls of buildings) in some places constituted a single system of protection<sup>218</sup>.

## THE STREET NETWORK

From the sectors of the ancient city excavated so far, mainly on the east and west slopes of Prines (Archaia Eleftherna) hill, the urban plan of Eleftherna can be sketched broadly, with habitation on terraces as well as the street network. The latter seems to be contemporary with the construction of the Hellenistic retaining walls, with the general organization of the space and the creation of the 'asty'. This, at least, is the picture that is presented by the central street at Katsivelos, which runs east-west and ascends towards the hill of the acropolis. A second street, running south-north crosses the main street at right angle, directly west of the entrance to the basilica of Archangel Michael (Euphratas). Both streets, initially paved, as can be seen from the preservation of their flagstones in places, partly surrounded houses 1 and 2 at Kasivelos and appear to have continued in use, with changes, repairs and alterations, into the seventh-eighth century AD.

Analogous evidence comes from the excavations on the west slope. Revealed to the south of the Crematorium and monument 4A in the Orthi Petra necropolis is an excellent paved street 3-3.5 m wide, which to facilitate our work we named conventionally Nike Street. It has been excavated so far for a stretch of about 31 m, sufficient for us to elicit constructional details as well as chronological developments in its construction and the duration of its use. The greater part of the better-preserved stretch of street runs in a northeast-southwest direction. The northeast end is interrupted today at the south limit of monument 4A (the heroon-cenotaph). Today's southwest end, a short way beyond the south side of the shelter over the necropolis, turns southward at an angle of about 130°, following a different direction, almost northwest-southeast, for a considerable distance. Due to destruction in the area of the bend, we do not know whether there was a branch going down as far as the Chalopota stream. The upward section to the southeast has been trespassed on by later buildings for at least 2 m on its west/southwest side. The widest and largest section of the street reveals that it is laid on a solid underlayer 0.70-0.80 m thick, of earth and small stones, a kind of inert material, bedded on which are wide rectangular slabs of limestone, which form offsets so that their joints, which receive the thrusts, fit together more effectively with each other. Lately, the continuation (?) of the paved street, but at a higher level, is being excavated to the east, outside the shelter over the necropolis. This is a narrower street, straight and with slightly upward gradient, which has been excavated to date for a length of approximately 15 m, while its overall width is about 3 m. However, only its central part seems to be paved, consisting of rows of two slabs





*View of the large paved thoroughfare, 'Nike Street', from the southwest. Top left, remains of the Orthi Petra necropolis.*

analogous to those of Nike Street. Perhaps at a lower level there is an earlier phase of this street, which was highered over the centuries by the successive layers. This street, which runs in the direction of the acropolis, is lined to north and south by buildings, which will be discussed in detail below. There is no doubt that Nike Street was a major broad thoroughfare at the heart of the west slope of the hill, which from some point on the east bank of the Chalopota led up to the acropolis on Prines hill (or at least from one point onward might have run northwards, skirting the hill, to join with other streets to the east in the Katsivelos neighbourhood)<sup>219</sup>.

A system of streets, sometimes with smoothing of the bedrock and sometimes with paving, as at Orthi Petra, with similar paving –although neater– existed in the settlement on Nisi, which Th. Kalpaxis dates to Hellenistic times<sup>220</sup>. P. Themelis tends towards the same dating for the original planning of the streets at Katsivelos on the east slope, after examining the material residues of the sewer of the Roman street that lies to the north of house I and runs east-west<sup>221</sup>.

Consequently, the street network of the ancient city seems to have been an ambitious public works project, very well planned and implemented, which had begun in part in Hellenistic times. It was included in a more general programme that took into account the direction of the terraces upon which public and private buildings stood. If this is the case, it is possible that after the conquest of Eleutherna by Gaius Caecilius Metellus (68) 67 BC, the earlier street arteries of Hellenistic times were the template for the Roman city and its new street network, which were designed and executed in sectors (?), perhaps by Augustus, who is hailed as the city's new 'colonizer'.





*The large kerb along the north and northwest axis of ancient 'Nike Street'. Left, the south sector of the Orthi Petra necropolis.*



## WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE-SEWERAGE SYSTEM

The Chalopota (= Kalopota, meaning good [*kalós*] to drink [*píno*]) stream at the west foot of Prines hill, as well as the Pharangitis (or Agia Kyriaki) stream at the east foot, would have supplied water both to the villages (*komes*) of the Early Iron Age –that is the Geometric and Archaic periods: ninth, eighth, seventh and sixth centuries BC– and to the polis from its initial phase at least until that point in time when the drains/sewers of the city with its growing population would have created sanitation problems affecting the drinking water.

However, in addition to the water from the streams, which nowadays dry up for at least three-four months in summertime, there were also springs –some of which still exist– in the wider environs of Prines hill: two at least on the east slope, at Soteras Christos to the south<sup>222</sup> and at Katsivelos<sup>223</sup>, and one high up on the west slope of the hill. Water still flows from the last, which is used mainly for watering the livestock. This is the so-called Pigaidaki, which is on our right as we walk up the pathway from the new concrete bridge, to the south of the Chalopota, leaving to our left the Metochi, just before we reach the ‘Cisterns’.

The use of the large Cisterns<sup>224</sup>, to the northeast of Pigaidaki, should be linked with a large increase in the city’s population, which occurred in Hellenistic<sup>225</sup> or, in my opinion, more so in Early Roman times, as is apparent from the layer of hydraulic plaster coating some rock-cut surfaces. Moreover, as we learn from the ancient historians, it would be strange for such enormous cisterns to have existed and for the city to suffer from water shortage during the siege by Metellus in 68/67 BC. Rather, the Cisterns must have been one of the requirements of the new city and its layout, immediately after the Roman conquest. The capacity of the underground cisterns in the open areas (atria, courts) of the Hellenistic houses (cf. numerous examples on Nisi)<sup>226</sup>, pear-shaped or cist-shaped, was enough to serve the household’s needs for water, not the city’s. In any case, in the city wells have been dug too, which belonged to the houses, as can be seen also from those discovered and partly excavated both in the west valley (north of Potamida) and on the east slope of Archaia Eleftherna hill.

As noted already, the north verge of Nike Street at the side of the Orthi Petra necropolis is defined along its length by a large conduit. This is carefully built of slabs of local marly limestone, ranging in size from 1.20-1.35 m long, 0.45-0.55 m wide and 0.15-0.17 m high (thick). These slabs are placed lengthwise at a depth of about 0.40 m below the surface of the paving slabs of the street, about at the lowest point of the underlayer of the street, something that perhaps indicates the unity and contemporaneity of the construction of the conduit and the street. This conduit differs considerably, however, from the drains/sewers that have been excavated at Katsivelos, both in terms of construction (limestone slabs on the base but rubble masonry on the sides) and their position (there down the middle of the street)<sup>227</sup>. Its connection with the systems of drains of the city’s houses goes without saying, as can be seen clearly from the underground bifurcation that connects it with the system of drains of house A to the south of Nike Street at the northeast surviving end of the street. In all likelihood these are drains for rainwater and sewerage respectively, but the issue will require more meticulous examination when larger sectors and neighbourhoods of the ancient city are excavated.







## PUBLIC AND PRIVATE BUILDINGS OF THE HELLENISTIC AND ROMAN CITY

At the locality Nisi, to the north of the present village of Eleftherna, there are the ruins of an important Hellenistic settlement. It was observed that corresponding to many of the ruined houses is a rock-cut cistern for collecting rainwater. The total number of cisterns counted by the excavator is forty (40). In all, four houses have been excavated, the lower part of which at least was stone built. They comprised five to six roofed spaces around an internal court and the overall area is usually 200-250 sq. m. Small pottery kilns were found in two of the houses. Public, administrative or cultic buildings have not been located so far in the settlement. Unfortunately, after the excavation and publication of the houses these were backfilled and it is not possible to visit them. From the finds –mainly pottery– and from the foregoing remarks, it is considered that this was a settlement of about 300 inhabitants and that among their occupations was pottery production. The abandonment of the settlement is dated to the mid-first century BC –that is, the time of the capture of Eleutherna by the Romans in 68 BC<sup>228</sup>.

Analogous ruins, of houses that are partly rock-cut, have been identified also at Xeniana, to the west and south of the Late Geometric/Archaic house. The same applies also to some sectors of the city, to the west below Pigaidaki and to the southeast a short distance from the spring. Unfortunately, due to the declivity of the hill, down which stone blocks and artifacts roll, it is not known whether these buildings and houses are of Classical, Hellenistic or Roman times. Moreover, quite often buildings of Hellenistic times have been used in part or in whole, with repairs and alterations, also in Early Roman times, as we shall see below at Orthi Petra, to the east of and above the necropolis.

However, as can be surmised from the parts of the ‘fortification walls’ uncovered around the acropolis on Prines hill, at Xeniana and Potamida, and possibly those mentioned near the Pharangitis stream, as well as, last, those calculated to have encircled a large part of the settlement at Nisi on Eleutherna hill, the urban plan of the city had most probably been established in Hellenistic times. The strong retaining walls between the ‘fortification wall’ that we excavated at Potamida, within the Chalopota stream, as we come up towards the Orthi Petra necropolis and to the east of it, are constructed of setts. The manner of construction, with smaller stones (wedges) filling in the gaps, refers to a later period, most probably Late Hellenistic or Early Roman (late 1st century BC – 1st/2nd century AD).

It has been observed that large rectangulated stone blocks create a front or a corner in these large retaining walls to the northwest –that is, in the places where the downward gradients of the west slope of Eleutherna hill converge. In all probability there was a system that defined the retaining walls and, therefore, the terraces on which the city was built. A system that possibly began to be applied already in Hellenistic times, as there are instances in which walls of different sizes and construction are also revealed.

*Marble statue of Aphrodite. 2nd-1st century BC.*



In this area, the finding of roof tiles and sherds in the surface layers, as well as a series of coins, offer indications for their dating both to Hellenistic and to Roman times, and sometimes with repairs and alterations considerably later. For instance, whereas the direction of the retaining walls and the buildings on the terraces in the area of Potamida and Orthi Petra is from north to south, there is a series of buildings with slightly different orientation, from northeast to southwest and from northwest to southeast. These buildings overlie the ruins of earlier phases, Hellenistic and early Roman. This can be seen clearly in the area of Potamida, close to the so-called Hellenistic construction, while the buildings to south and west of the main paved (Nike) street, which cuts through the Orthi Petra necropolis to the south, have the same orientation. Even though it is obvious that at some points, at least, earlier walls have been partly or totally incorporated into later building phases of the city, a series of moveable finds, such as roof tiles, lamps, vase fragments and sherds, give a dating at least for the use of these buildings in the first and second centuries AD. Certainly, the quarter to the south of the main street seems to have included houses, some of which were accessed from this street. They comprised small and large rooms (kitchen, residential rooms), court or cistern with floor of hydraulic plaster and conduits. Use of the houses, with alterations, seems to have been of long duration, certainly after the earthquake in AD 141/142 and in some cases even after the earthquake in AD 365 or 367, since part of Nike Street was trespassed on and continued in use, obviously in part, as a floor of a building that was constructed probably in stages on the paved surface of the street and in part on top of the south orthostats of the north verge of the street. The final destruction of the quarter was probably due to an earthquake, as indicated by the collapse of the walls of the west part of the houses onto the paving stones of the street.

The most recent excavations have not changed the picture of the west slope of Eleutherna hill. The neighbourhood to north and south of the paved street, to the east of the modern shelter over the Orthi Petra necropolis, offers a better picture, as it has been excavated systematically and to considerable depth. The retaining walls oriented north-south demarcated the residential insulae, while at the same time constituting walls of the large houses. These houses consist of many rooms with doorways between them, as well as entrance-exit openings on the side of the narrow paved street which seems to lead up to the acropolis. There are pithoi storeroom and paved courts in the ground-floor spaces. The evidence suggests that these residences also had an upper storey, at least in some parts. The dating of their construction ranges usually from the late first century BC to the mid-second century AD. However, there are cases of use of parts of earlier –Hellenistic– constructions, as well as later repairs-alterations to the same houses. Interesting is the building brought to light to the north of the narrow paved street, with a pottery kiln from which terracotta statuettes and reliefs of Hellenistic times were retrieved. The kiln, of which the lowest part survives, was included in a ‘room’ of the overall building, the dressed stone blocks of which used in its construction date to Hellenistic times, as do the ceramic finds from the kiln. Because the upper layers in the excavation were disturbed, due to earlier and recent cultivation, it is difficult at present to discern whether the building had been reused in part in Roman times or whether a later building had been raised on top of it.

A better picture is obtained from the excavation of a Roman house with interesting finds, to the south of the same street. This is a large building of almost square plan, the walls on the east side of which are





*View of the paved street (left) leading up to the acropolis and of the houses on either side of it, on the west slope of Prines hill and to the east of the shelter over the necropolis.*

preserved to a height of over 2 m and are constructed of medium-size ashlar stone blocks. Even though it has not been fully excavated, it seems that there existed in part an upper storey over the ground floor, in which there is a row of intercommunicating rooms as well as a paved court in its southeast corner. Noteworthy is its pithoi storeroom (pitheon), revealed in a spacious room in the northeast corner of the building, with a row of storage jars (pithoi) and vases, while recovered from the layers in the central part were a terracotta figurine of Zeus, a small bronze Harpokrates, as well as a lead Dea Fortuna. The materials and the manner of building, in combination with the finds, advocate a dating of the building's use perhaps from the second half of the first century AD into the mid-second century AD. We still have to investigate whether the north wall, facing the street, rests on an earlier (Hellenistic) building. The unfortunately disturbed upper layers indicate alterations and use of the basic building even into Late Roman times. To west and south of this house to the east of the shelter over the Orthi Petra necropolis, some houses of the same period had been excavated –although not fully– some years ago. Sherds, lamps and figurines, such as the of a terracotta bull, illustrated here, were recovered from these buildings and perhaps had rolled down from higher up the west slope of the hill, The Dionysos and Satyr group, which the residents of Eleftherna remember as 'the twins', probably comes from inside these houses.

The space of the city excavated earlier by P. Themelis<sup>229</sup>, at the locality Katsivelos on the east side of the hill, comprises four basic terraces of differing height, upon which buildings of public –administrative-political or cultic-religious– and private character were erected. The north terrace includes a small balneum and a public edifice. The easternmost lowest terrace, towards the Pharangitis torrent, enclosed



NORTH AISLE

SOUTH AISLE

NARTHEX



MODERN ROAD

ANCIENT ELEUTHERNA  
SECTOR I. 2003

0

10

20M

*General view of the Graeco-Roman  
and Early Christian city  
on the east slope of Prines hill  
at the locality Katsivelos.*

*Hellenistic temple-like edifice.  
Mid-3rd century BC onward  
N1-N3d*

*Public building of Hellenistic and Roman times,  
2nd century BC-2nd century AD.  
37, 37β, 38, 39, 46, 76, 80, 80δ*

*Small balneum, 2nd-6th/7th century.  
40-45, 47, 48, 50-53, 57-58, 60-61,  
70, 70δ, 72-74, 77, 84, 87*

*Roman residence to the north of the small balneum.  
58β, 65, 71*

*Large bathhouse,  
second half of 2nd-third quarter of 3rd century AD.  
93, 89, 95, 92, 90, 91, 106, 101, 99, 97, 98*

*House I,  
1st century to third quarter of 4th century AD.  
1 (fauces), 2 (atrium), 3 (impluvium), 4-10,  
11 (peristyle), 94, 100, 116*

*House II, 1st century to third quarter of 4th century AD.  
22, 21, 23, 24-26, 82, 78, 75, 66, 68, 79, 85, 86, 88*

*Early Christian three-aisle basilica  
of Archangel Michael,  
5th century to third quarter of 7th century.  
North aisle, central and south aisles, narthex*

*Outbuildings of the basilica of Archangel Michael.  
5th century to third quarter of 7th century AD.  
I (diakonikon) – III*



an Early Byzantine basilica and, at deeper levels under this, constructions of Hellenistic times. The wide middle terrace is occupied by two large urban villas of the Roman period, houses 1 and 2, the deeper layers under which yielded architectural remains of Geometric–Archaic times, referred to above. The elevated southernmost terrace, which is underpinned by a well-preserved and particularly imposing retaining wall, is occupied by a large bathhouse<sup>230</sup>.

The basilica of Bishop Euphratas, dedicated to Archangel Michael, which stands on the easternmost low terrace, is partly founded upon the ruins of a building complex of Hellenistic times. Stones from the superstructure of this complex have been used in its construction. Preserved in the south atrium of the basilica are the foundations of a building of rectangular plan, which according to its excavator is temple-shaped, 9.50 m wide and of surviving length 17 m, with north-facing façade. It comprises three spaces in sequence: a deep prodomos which has been cut off in part by the construction of the south aisle of the basilica, a shallow antechamber and a large cella measuring 7.70 x 8.20 m. Also brought to light was the stylobate (?) parallel to the south and the west side of the temple-shaped building. The excavation to depth in the cella revealed architectural remains of two earlier phases in the Hellenistic period. To the earlier phase belongs a wall of careful construction, oriented east-west, while to the second belongs an open square space of side 5.50 m, with pavement preserved in places, and a stone open drain for rain water on its east side. To the same phase belong two parallel walls at a distance of 2 m and 7.5 m respectively from the south side of the building, with entrances on the same axis<sup>231</sup>. The first and second Hellenistic phases appear to date from before the conquest and destruction of the city by Metellus' forces in 68/67 BC. Indeed, the second phase seems to have been cut short by the Roman destruction in 68/67 BC, as is indicated by the intense traces of conflagration. A third phase is dated to the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius<sup>232</sup>. The Hellenistic architectural remains are perhaps from a temple of Aphrodite and Hermes, as deduced from a relief with representation of these two deities, which was found nearby, to the east of house 1, as well shall see below.

The initial construction of a large (approx. 20 x 10 m) and carefully built public edifice located to the north of house 1 and south of the small balneum, also dates to the Hellenistic period. However, it was used during Roman times too and seems to have been destroyed by unknown cause and abandoned after the mid-second century AD. It includes large rectangular rooms, a corridor, an oblong space and a triangular paved atrium, accessed from the west through a staircase of 'Minoan inspiration'. During the second building phase of Roman times, the Hellenistic floor was raised considerably by deposition of fill, while the surviving, in large part, strong walls of the first phase, neatly built with regular ashlar blocks, were filled in by shoddier masonry of irregular stones<sup>233</sup>. P. Themelis considers that this was a public building, perhaps the residence of an official. Stone miniature temples, which resemble lararia (shrines of domestic deities, the Lares) of Roman houses, were retrieved from this building. Analogous finds came also from the south house, to the east of the Orthi Petra necropolis, as well as a small statuette of the Fréjus Aphrodite type.

During the Roman Imperial period there was a building boom in Eleutherna, which was due, possibly, to the increase in the number of inhabitants. The 'fortification walls' and the retaining walls were repaired. The east





*The large peristyle of House 1.*

slope of the hill, where the terraces are wider, the gradients smoother and the water sources rich, was chosen as the best place for residences of the elite, as borne out by the two luxurious urban villas (**houses 1 and 2**), the bathhouse installations and the rest of the buildings uncovered between 1985 and 2002.

**House 1** has a propylon (porch) in the middle of its north side. The visitor passes through two successive portals into a spacious portico which surrounds a small rectangular open space that functioned as a lightwell and at the same time received the rainwater from the roofs of the atrium, which is why it is also called an *impluvium*. Conduits covered by stone slabs enter a carefully-constructed cistern. At some point in time, the cistern was used also as a repository (*apothetes*). Along the west side of the atrium are four spaces. Space 5 includes a water tank and a well and communicates with space 10<sup>234</sup>. Space 6/7 includes an inscribed rectangular room and a built workbench in the middle. Space 8, blind and small and accessed via an internal staircase from the floor of the second storey, functioned as a basement storeroom. Space 6/7 also functioned as a storeroom. Spaces 6/7 and 8 were filled in in a second phase of use and reconstruction of the house. On the south wall of the atrium, a doorway with stone threshold and jambs leads to the north portico of the large peristyle of house 1. All the auxiliary and secondary rooms of the west side of the house had a second storey, where the womens' quarters (*gynaikonites*) with the lofts is placed. The first building phase of house 1 is not known. However, it seems to have been used without interruption from the first century BC until the end of the third century AD. To the last phase, between AD 310 and 360 belong the makeshift alterations which are associated with the reduction in the size of the house. In AD 365 house 1 was destroyed by an earthquake which also caused the fire<sup>235</sup>. House 1 yielded a series of marble statues and sculptural groups, unfortunately





*The colossal marble base of a perirrhanterion in one of the rooms of House 1, which was possibly a banqueting hall.*

broken, from the space to the west of the peristyle. Among them is a sculpture of Aphrodite mounted on a he-goat, a rare work that is probably a variation of model by Skopas, as the excavator points out<sup>236</sup>. Found in one room of the same house were the exquisite ivory plaques with scenes from the life of Achilles, while in other spaces were items of jewellery (finger-rings)<sup>237</sup>. Last, a rare slender lampstand of the fourth century AD comes from the south portico of the large peristyle court<sup>238</sup>.

**House 2** comprises two wings, each with many rooms, which are positioned almost symmetrically on the south and north sides of a large rectangular atrium. The south wing comprises two large parallel halls (66 and 68), abutting the north wall of which is space 75 and contiguous with this are spaces 78/82. Spaces 78/82 make up the atrium, the entrance to which from the main street is in the middle of the east side, while there is a second entrance in the north part of the west side. The north wing includes rooms 13 to 26. The two building phases of the complex are clearly distinguishable. The first was interrupted before the end of the third century AD, when the form of the building changed, and possibly its use, after an earthquake, contemporaneously with house 1<sup>239</sup>.

One of the most notable structures at Katsivelos is situated on the south terrace. The excavation revealed that it includes a complex of at least four vaulted-roof water cisterns, each one at a lower level than the one before it, in stepped arrangement downward and aligned from north to south. They filled with water via a network of tunnels starting from the large aqueduct of the acropolis. These cisterns supplied in their turn the **bathroom complex**, monumental in size, aspect and construction, that occupied the entire area of the south terrace. The building does not have the typical form of Roman balnea. It is rectangular in



plan, with absolutely regular arrangement of its spaces. Dominating the middle is a large rectangular space with carefully-laid pavement, the roof of which was upheld by two pillars along the long axis. The excavator dates the first phase of the building to the second half of the second century BC. It seems that the roof was abolished in a second phase of careless reconstructions and slight modifications to the arrangement of the rooms. Along the south side of the central paved space is a suite of three rooms, the two square ones of which, at the east end, were hypocausts, while the third rectangular one at the west end was the *frigidarium*. Along the north side of the central paved space is a row of ancillary spaces, the north end of which is defined by a high retaining wall. An impressively large staircase starting from the east edge of the atrium connects the building to the central east street of the city. Found in the central paved space (space 90) was the superb sculpture of Aphrodite *sandalizousa* (fastening/loosening her sandal) and her companion Pan. The bath complex was apparently destroyed violently and abandoned some time in the third century AD, in the latter years of the reign of Emperor Probus or a little later<sup>240</sup>.

The small Roman bathhouse in the north part of the archaeological site includes at least three building phases from the second to the sixth/seventh century AD. Its construction began after the mid-second century AD. Uncovered on its west side were two identical adjacent halls (70 and 50), the narrow west side of which forms an apse. They functioned as hypocausts and intercommunicated through an air duct. Room 50 communicated in the same way with the hypocaust hall 57. Halls 70 and 50 were abandoned at the end of the fourth century AD and were used as rubbish dumps during the Early Byzantine period, mainly in the sixth and seventh centuries. A rectangular cistern a short distance to the southeast supplied water to the small balneum. The large paved hall 47, from which was recovered part of the head of a life-size statue, most probably dated to the reign of Trajan, was the *frigidarium*. Space 51 was the *tepidarium*, halls 43 and 44 the *caldarium* and the remaining spaces (52, 45, 41, 61) had an auxiliary use. The paved space 48 was the atrium of the bathhouse, from which there was access to the *frigidarium*, the north sector of which functioned as an *apodyterion*. Space 60 functioned as a fuelling hearth, while together with space 61 constituted the *praefurnium*. Outbuildings 58 to 71 were warehouses for vases and shops in which they were sold, until their abandonment in AD 365 after the major earthquake. Moreover, found in space 58B were a rare metal mechanism and a pair of iron tongs of the fourth century AD. The bathhouse seems to have been abandoned in AD 365, during the earthquake, and ceased to be used, as surmised from the trapped skeletons unearthed in storage spaces 58 and 65<sup>241</sup>. Last, the two large statues in the type of the Large and the Small Herculaneum Woman, found in 1956/7 and today exhibited in the Rethymnon Archaeological Museum, were probably found to the south of the small balneum, as was a headless statue of a himation-clad man, of Roman times.





*Marble statue of Aphrodite  
in the type of the 'Sandalizousa'  
(tying or loosening her sandal).  
2nd-1st century BC.*





*Marble statue of Pan. 2nd-1st century BC.*



*The sculptural tradition of Eleutherna seems to have begun in the Early Archaic period, the seventh century BC, as is ascertained from the superb pieces sculpted in limestone, which have come to light in the Orthi Petra necropolis (here pp. 218-233), with pièces de résistance the Eleutherna Kore, the shield-bearing warriors, the legs of the 'Kouros', and others. It was continued during Classical times, as borne out by reliefs and fragments of sculptures, and evolved with charming creations of Hellenistic/Late Hellenistic times, such as the statues of Aphrodite and of Pan, which are illustrated here.*

*That sculpture flourished in Eleutherna during the Hellenistic period is corroborated by epigraphical testimonies, with references to the Eleuthernian Timochares who was active beyond his home city, in Rhodes and in cities of the East Mediterranean, and to his son Pythokritos, whom some researchers claim was creator of the celebrated Nike/Victory of Samothrace, today in the Louvre.*

*The technique of piecing, which is observed in the statue of Aphrodite (head, feet), is characteristic of the Rhodian workshop in Hellenistic times. There was no lull in sculpting at Eleutherna during Roman and Early Christian/Early Byzantine times, from which there are works in marble or limestone, as can be seen in the present volume.*

















*Marble statuette  
of a very shaggy young he-goat.  
Visible is the lower torso  
of a female figure wearing himation,  
sitting on the back of the goat,  
as well as a female right hand  
resting on the animal's horns.  
This is a sculptural group of Aphrodite  
mounted on a he-goat (epitrageia),  
in the type of the bronze statue  
of Aphrodite 'epi tragou',  
a work by Skopas in Elis,  
which is described by Pausanias.  
1st century BC.*

*The goddess of Love dominates  
over the symbol of faunal reproduction.*







*Marble statue of a female figure (Muse?),  
2nd /1st century BC.*





*Part of a marble vase (krater). Depicted is a dancing Maenad holding a thyrsus in the right hand and part of a deer in the left. This was probably part of a Dionysian scene. 1st century BC – 1st century AD.*





*Part of a marble head from a portrait statue, perhaps of a member of the family of an official of Eleutherna in Roman times. 1st century AD.*



*Marble statuette of Aphrodite. 1st century AD. The goddess wears a peplos that clings to her body and leaves the left breast bare. It belongs to the statue type of the Fréjus Aphrodite.*



*Marble head from a statuette of a male figure, 1st -2nd century AD.*



*Marble statue of Skylla.  
Skylla is represented with a female torso  
and the scaly body of fish  
from the waist down.  
On either side of the body  
are two integral dogs.  
1st century BC/1st century AD.*



*Marble console (trapezophoro), an old chance find from Eleutherna. Represented is a group with a Satyr grasping the young nude and drunken Dionysos. The support on the back indicates that the sculptural group belongs to a trapezophoro. 2nd / 3rd century (?) AD.*









*Marble headless statue of a female figure in ankle-length chiton and himation, in the type of the so-called Small Herculaneum Woman. The type was used for statues of younger females. 1st century AD.*





*Marble head of a statue in the type of the so-called Large Herculaneum Woman. This statue type was used from the outset for portraits of mature women. This is a first-century AD copy of a statue type of the mid-fourth century BC, which is considered to be a creation of the great sculptor Praxiteles. 1st century AD.*





*Terracotta figurine of Zeus. 1st/2nd century AD.*





*In the middle, a marble female head of Hellenistic times. Left and right, clay copies of it, the sizes of which fit the torso of the terracotta figurine. 3rd century BC.*

*Hellenistic terracotta figurine of a female deity (Aphrodite) wearing chiton and himation, found in a pottery kiln together with the marble head that was used to create a mould for analogous clay heads.*





*Clay beehive of horizontal type. Roman period.*



*Clay lekanis, 4th century AD.*



*Terracotta bull figurine of the Classical period.*





*Terracotta figurine of Pan playing the syrinx ('Pan pipes'). 3rd/2nd century BC.*

*Myth has it that Pan fell madly in love with Syrinx, one of the Arcadian nymphs, daughter of the river-god Ladon. However, on seeing the ugly and crooked-legged Pan, she was frightened and ran towards the river, anxious to escape by any means. The gods transformed her into a reed plant (Gr. syrinx) on the river bank. The disconsolate Pan cut the reed into pieces and made a musical instrument, which he called syrinx, the name of his beloved, so as to have her always on his lips and kiss while playing melodies.*





*Small lead figurine of Harpocrates. 1st/2nd century AD.  
Front and side view.*





*Small lead figurine of the goddess Tyche (Dea Fortuna) with cornucopia in the left hand and rudder in the right. 1st/2nd century AD. Front and side view.*





*Iron stand for a lamp or a censer,  
4th century AD.*



*Iron flesh-hook (kreagra), a combination of prong and ladle. 4th century AD.*



*Mechanism of particularly careful technical specifications,  
of iron and bronze, with cylindrical case, cogs and suspension chain.  
Both how it operated and what it was used for elude us.  
Possibly it was an instrument for measuring time or distance.  
Horologion or Hodometer. 4th century AD.*



*Bronze key. 2nd century AD.*





*Glass vases. Roman period.  
Above, in the shape of a bunch of grapes and coloured accordingly;  
below, fine eggshell goblets, fragile luxury.*





*Clay lamps of Roman times. Above, with representation of Artemis Kynegetis; below, of a gladiator/theriomachos (combatant with wild beasts).*



*Bone figurine-pendant, worn as an amulet. 2nd century AD.*





*Clay mould for a medallion of Hellenistic (?) times, with head of Medusa and on the right its impression.*



*Bezel gemstone of the so-called magic or talismanic type. 2nd/4th century AD.*



*Bezel gemstone with bust of bearded Zeus and eagle. 1st/2nd century AD.*



*Bezel gemstone with representation of the head of Pan. 1st century BC/1st century AD.*



*Bezel gemstone with representation of the goddess Tyche (Fortuna) holding a cornucopia in the right hand and a rudder in the left. 1st century BC/1st century AD.*



*Gold finger-ring with bezel of trichrome agate with intaglio fish. 2nd (?) century AD.*





Stone votive relief within an architectural frame of a small temple. Depicted is a divine couple in frontal pose and embracing: right, Hermes wearing short himation or chlamys, petasos on the head and carrying the kerykeion (caduceus) in the left hand; left, Aphrodite wearing chiton, himation (?) and diadem. Hellenistic period.



Stone house model with pediment and niches. 1st/2nd century AD.



Stone temple model with standing female figure carrying a basket (kanephoros). Late Hellenistic/Roman (?) period.





*Stone inscribed plaque.  
Referred to is the Roman artist Poplius Sabellius.  
The inscription is a rare sample in Eleutherna  
and in Roman Crete of the signature  
of an artist-craftsman.  
1st century AD.*



*Stone Corinthian capital and base of an engaged column. It probably  
comes from the interior of an edifice and flanked, in combination with  
its pair, a mural conch with a small statue. 1st century AD.*











*Ivory plaque of the fourth century AD, with three successive scenes from the life of the great hero of the Trojan War, Achilles.*

*His birth.*

*Thetis is depicted semi-recumbent on a couch. On the left, a crouching handmaid holds the infant Achilles in her arms and between her legs is a deep basin in which the newborn hero will be given his first bath.*

*The baptism of the infant Achilles in the waters of the Styx.*

*His mother Thetis, between two Nereids, holds him upside down from the fateful heel, which will remain mortal and vulnerable. The personified Styx is depicted as a reclining female with bare torso.*

*The handing over to Cheiron.*

*Thetis, accompanied by three handmaids-Nereids, delivers the infant Achilles to the Centaur Cheiron who will take him to Pholoe for his education.*













*Ivory plaque of the fourth century AD with representation of a helmeted hoplite with spear, standing in a four-horse chariot. He wears a peculiar cuirass covering the whole body and scaled, of Eastern type, and chlamys, while on his head is a helmet with brim. He turns his head towards the back of the quadriga, where a naked man lies. Perhaps Achilles dragging the corpse of Hector around the walls of Troy is depicted.*





*Ivory plaque of the fourth century AD with representation of three seated mature female figures (Fates ?).*



## THE CITY IN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN AND THE BYZANTINE PERIOD



*Gold cross from the reign of Justinian.*

Early Byzantine Eleutherna was built upon the ruins of the Roman/Late Roman city, in some places on debris fill and on other by using part of earlier buildings or erecting new ones, even on the streets of the earlier city. Eleutherna seems to have become an episcopal see already by the early fifth century, as indicated by the large number of basilicas in the archaeological site and by the recent excavations.

On the acropolis and the central flat area, Th. Kalpaxis (and later Ch. Tsigonakis and P. Karanastasis) had excavated a palimpsest of habitation that spanned at least the Late Bronze Age to the Early Christian/Early Byzantine period.

This neighbourhood at Pyrgi, directly linked with the ruins of the Archaic temple which functioned, with repairs, well into Roman times, was turned in the Early Christian/Early Byzantine period into a building insula with epicentre a large building complex to the north of the temple.

Its centre now is a tetraconch hall with outbuildings. Among the finds from this Early Byzantine complex are parts of closure slabs, mullions, metal ecclesiastical vessels. It seems that the initial building, perhaps of AD 300, was utilized in part for erecting a Christian church on top of it. Burials inside and outside it seem to belong to this church and were probably associated with the clergy.

This habitation at Pyrgi apparently declined from the seventh century. Years after the initial abandonment of the space, a single-space basilica was evidently constructed there, with buildings around it. Of the houses in the Byzantine settlement one had been excavated systematically. The finds from it (11th-13th century) point even to relations with Constantinople and Italy. At other points in the city too, this settlement seems to have been abandoned in the fourteenth century, as noted already.

During the 1990s, P. Themelis brought to light an Early Christian three-aisle basilica, which was built on the east terrace of the neighbourhood at the locality Katsivelos, specifically on top of pagan cultic buildings with successive phases spanning the third century BC until the end of the Roman Empire. Earlier building material, inscriptions and several sculptures were incorporated as spolia in the fabric of the main building, the outbuildings and the south enclosure wall of the basilica. The earlier architectural remains were razed and were included in the pavements of the basilica's atria.

This basilica, 24.47 m long and 14.52 m wide, is a representative example of the architectural type of the basilica as it developed in the Aegean region. A propylon with staircase leads to the main north entrance of the narthex. The floors of the atria to north and south are paved, while the floor of the narthex is tessellated, repaired in places with flagstones. In the narthex is a marble phiale, which is unusual<sup>242</sup>. Preserved on the south side of the narthex, to the right of the doorway leading into the diakonikon and the row of outbuildings of the south aisle, is part of a wall-painting with scale pattern and flowers. A large stone threshold leads to the central aisle, which was paved with rectangular monochrome flagstones. Arcades separated the aisles and





*Small copper-alloy tripod censer. 6th / 7th century AD.*



*Bronze Chi-Rho monogram with chain for a hanging lamp and bronze hooks for suspending a glass or metal lamp. 4th / 7th century AD.*



were bedded on elevated stylobates. Inside the sanctuary conch are the remnants of two of the three tiers of the sedile for the presbyters. Close to the presbytery screen is the octagonal ambo (pulpit) of the basilica, the floor of the platform of which was decorated with cut-out slabs. Preserved on the floor of the sanctuary is a small part of a polychrome opus sectile pavement with geometric motifs. The decoration of the building extended also to the floors of the north and south aisles, which have mosaic pavements with vegetal and geometric motifs. In contact with the south narrow side of the narthex are outbuildings which functioned as a diakonikon, a baptistery and a residence. Last, the lateral room abutting the west end of the south aisle was





*Geometric and vegetal plaques from the opus sectile mural decoration of the central aisle in the basilica of Archangel Michael (of Bishop Euphratas). 5th century AD.*



probably a sacristy. Two inscriptions executed with black tesserae were found in the narthex. The first, incomplete, is in front of the north entrance, predisposing the congregant to pass over the threshold of a sacred space, and the second, intact and three-lined, refers to the founding of the church and to Bishop Euphratas as its donor. According to the excavator, the years in which the basilica was constructed coincide with the reign of Theodosios II (401 – 450)<sup>243</sup>. The basilica is dedicated to Archangel Michael, which is rare since the known churches dedicated to this particular archangel are usually dated after the eleventh century<sup>244</sup>. The evidence from coins, but also from ceramics, shows that the basilica was destroyed, most probably by an earthquake, and abandoned during the reign of Constans II (641 – 668) or Constantine IV (668 – 685). The final phase of the basilica was during the eighth century, when the southeast corner of the central aisle was used as a *parekklesion*. It continued in use possibly until the years when Bishop of Eleutherna was Epiphianos<sup>245</sup>, who took part in the Council of Nicaea in 787. Fragments of closure slabs, stone crosses, a small stone cube with representation of Christ, and other finds, were retrieved from the basilica site.

From 2007, when works began on the shelter over the basilica of Archangel Michael, I and my collaborators started new excavations, on the east side of Prines hill, between Katsivelos in the north and Soteris Christos to the south, mainly at the localities Agia Eirini and Agios Markos, very close to the guardhouse on the east slope of the archaeological site. In recent years in particular, these investigations have revealed one more essential and indisputable picture of the heyday of Hellenistic, Roman and especially Early Christian Eleutherna. Two large three-aisle basilicas were located and excavated, yielding abundant finds. Architectural members of public buildings or temples –among them epistyles, columns, column capitals and so on– of the Hellenistic and Roman city were used as building material (*spolia*) in the construction of the basilicas, the larger of which, that of St Irene, has, on present evidence, at least two building phases. Very important and interesting is the finding of a large number of inscribed fragments of stone slabs and blocks of the Archaic/Classical period, which were used as construction material in the churches. The buildings of the preceding phases, to which the material in second or third use in the basilicas



*Marble two-sided herm. 2nd century AD.*





*Marble two-sided herm with notches for inserting false arms.*

*Represented is youthful Dionysos, wreathed with ivy and wearing a mitre, together with Ariadne. Two-sided herms are rare in Crete, as well as in Greece generally. The herms at Eleutherna were possibly set up either in the intercolumniations of a stoa or in the temenos and the sacred grove of a deity. 2nd century AD.*







belonged, will perhaps be found under the basilicas or close to them, as the excavation progresses. However, the excavated basilica of St Irene and the part of the basilica excavated so far at the locality Agios Markos, reveal the excellent quality of the architectural members of the period of their erection and of the mosaic pavements, where these are preserved, such as in the entire north aisle of the St Irene basilica and in fragments in the south aisle and the narthex. The finding of inscriptions in which there is reference to St Irene of God and the names of hitherto unknown bishops who are not mentioned in the *Notitiae Episcopatum*, the different phases (at least two) of the building, their magnitude and other features make this a pre-eminent edifice in the Early Christian and Early Byzantine city. On the other hand, the basilica at Agios Markos, excavation of which is in progress, seems also to be a superb example of architecture and architectural sculpture, mainly in limestone. Spolia from earlier buildings have been used in its construction, as well as slabs and stone blocks with Archaic/Classical inscriptions. This basilica has a series of mullions, excellent-quality closure slabs, pier capitals and other architectural members, some of which refer to designs and motifs that are encountered in the large early basilicas of Constantinople, the Acheiropoietos and the St Demetrios basilicas in Thessaloniki, as well as some basilicas in the Peloponnese, such as that at Kato Sikyon. These are just some of the material that will be added to the bibliography of the Early Byzantine period not only at Eleutherna but also in Crete generally.

After completion of investigations at these sites, this remarkably interesting discovery, the location of the basilicas, their rich finds, the reuse of earlier material in them, and so on, will change our picture of the ancient city and will constitute together with the now unified site of Katsivelos the new destination for visitors to the archaeological site of Eleutherna.

*Aerial photograph of the Early Christian basilicas  
at the localities Agia Eirini (above) and Agios Markos (below).*









*Stone incised portable icon of Christ, from the basilica of Archangel Michael.  
To left and right of Lord's hair are heads of winged angels (?). A rare image of the Pantocrator amidst stars. 7th century AD.*





Stone incised plaque with cross and inscription *IΗΣΟΥΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΝΙΚΑ* (Jesus Christ Conquer), the first of this type to have been found in Crete. AD 500-650.



Stone inscribed plaque with crosses and the letters Alpha (Α) and Omega (Ω). AD 500-650.



Stone colonnette, support of an 'altar' or baldachin from the Christian church on the acropolis. 6th (?) century AD.

Limestone pier terminating in a flower.  
From the Early Christian basilica  
at the locality Agios Markos.







*Terracotta rare inscribed roof-tile from the Early Christian basilica of St Irene.*



*Part of a stone sima with high-relief lion head. Work of a local stone-carving workshop. 5th century AD.*





*Limestone Ionic column capital of Hellenistic times, reused in the basilica of St Irene.*



*Marble Corinthian column capital. Second half of 4th century AD.*





*View of part of the central aisle of the basilica at the locality Agios Markos, with closure panel in situ between mullions.*





*Large limestone stele with acanthus, globus and cross, from the narthex of the basilica at the locality Agios Markos.*





*Aerial photograph of the Early Christian basilica of St Irene. Visible are the narthex (below) and the three aisles of the church. The north aisle after cleaning and consolidation of the mosaic pavement, the central aisle after removal of slabs for conservation and the excavation in the space beneath them, and the south aisle with parts of covered mosaics and broken limestone slabs.*

*RIGHT: Detail of the mosaic in the north aisle of the basilica of St Irene.*









*Detail of the mosaic strips that run round the parallel walls of the north aisle in the basilica of St Irene: flowers, ivy leaves and pomegranates.*



*Detail from the mosaic in the north aisle of the Early Christian basilica of St Irene: geometric and vegetal motifs.*





*Detail from the mosaic in the north aisle of the Early Christian basilica of St Irene: scale pattern of papyrus flowers.*





*Aerial photograph of the Early Christian basilica at the locality Agios Markos during the course of its excavation.*





*Closure panel and pier in situ, from the parabema at the east end of the south aisle in the Early Christian basilica at the locality Agios Markos.*



*The narthex and the west part of the three aisles of the Early Christian basilica at the locality Agios Markos. Aerial photograph taken of the basilica during the excavation of it.*





*Dosserets and pillar capitals from the Early Christian basilica at the locality Agios Markos, decorated with acanthus leaves, crosses and tendrils.*







*High-relief, almost sculpted in the round, eagle and heads of a bird and a ram. From the decoration of the pillar capitals from the Early Christian basilica at the locality Agios Markos.*

*The superb quality craftsmanship of the sculptures on the pillar capitals and their thematic repertoire bring to mind corresponding examples from centres such as Constantinople, and analogous column capitals in the basilica of St Demetrios at Thessaloniki.*





*Relief peacock and lion, from the exquisite balustrades and parapet of the ambo (pulpit) of the Early Christian basilica at the locality Agios Markos.*



*Part of a relief closure panel decorated with acanthus leaves and boar coming out of a thicket. From the Early Christian basilica at the locality Agios Markos.*





*Parts of the triangular edges of large relief closure panels with central lozenge pattern, from the Iart basilica of St Irene: fish above and foliate rinceau below.*









## CEMETERIES AND NECROPOLISES

### THE CEMETERIES TO THE NORTHWEST AND NORTH, OUTSIDE THE CITY

The earliest cemetery site located to date, which was evidently in use from the late fourth or the early third century BC until well into the Late Hellenistic period, is at the locality 'Mnimata' or 'sta Mnimata' (Gr. *mnema* = grave, tomb)<sup>246</sup>, up on the hill to the west of the Hellenistic settlement on Nisi<sup>247</sup> and reached by crossing the Kolakies gully. It comprises clusters of rectangular 'cist' graves cut in the limestone bedrock, which have been partly excavated by Th. Kalpaxis and his collaborators and have been discussed thoroughly in an earlier publication<sup>248</sup>. The southernmost cluster of graves in relation to the road to Eleftherna, on account of its location and its contemporaneity with the habitation on Nisi, is considered to be the burial place of the residents of that settlement<sup>249</sup>.

In the spring of 2007, further north, during the widening and surfacing of the road between Eleftherna and the Community of Alpha –where there are renowned limestone quarries even today– dozens of graves were found, some with grave goods, which were investigated in a rescue excavation carried out by the Ephorate of Antiquities of Rethymnon.

The numerous graves start from the west slope of the east hill of Laga, high up to north and east of the city, as well as above the east end of the Hellenistic bridge over the tributary formed by the confluence of the Pharangitis, the Chalopota and the Kolakies stream, which separates Nisi from the west hill of Lagada, and end in the wider area of the ancient quarry at Peristeres. They clearly constitute the necropolis of Eleftherna, at least in Hellenistic, Roman and Late Roman times, which we have been mapping through photographs and drawings, and excavating at intervals from 1993 to the present. These are some 'cist' graves on the marly limestone bedrock and a host of rock-cut underground chambers. The latter are of rectangular or square plan with or without doorframe, sometimes with rudimentary dromos and sometimes without. Most of them have one chamber, but others have two or more chambers, in the side walls of which are 'cubicula' (*thekai* - cist graves) for the dead, usually three (one on each side plus that of the entrance), while sometimes there are cubicula also in the floors. Some other chambers, of analogous form, have cubicula under arches and arcosolia. Their variety is great and their typology will not be discussed here. Some also seem to have had architectural decoration. In most cases the graves have been looted. Grave goods are rare. These are usually clay or glass unguentaria or lacrimaria. Some chambers were turned into chapels in the nineteenth and the early twentieth century<sup>250</sup>, others, unfortunately, were used as sheepfolds, as were the ancient quarry at Peristeres.

*The central emblem of a bronze shield of Idaean Cave type. High-relief head of a feline (lion). On the nape of its neck is a female figure outstretching her hands towards the muzzle of two heraldic lions. 820/800-730 BC.*



## CEMETERIES AND GRAVES INSIDE THE LIVING SPACE OF THE CITY

At the locality Mesoporo, on the east slope of the hill of today's village of Eleftherna, to the west before the bend and fork in the road leading to the archaeological site of Orthi Petra, the collapse of a modern retaining wall revealed the stratigraphy of the site, with a sequence of at least three cremations. Unfortunately, here too the construction of the rural road in 1984, one year before the university excavations began, had left only scant remnants of them two. In the third, however, which intruded deeper to the west, it was possible to locate the pit, the greater part of the row of fieldstones that covered it, as well as the unexpected find of part of a terracotta animal figurine, most probably of a pig. The sherds recovered from the area, both during the clearing of the site and in the excavation, as well as the the terracotta animal figurine, probably date to Protoarchaic times (7th century BC) or a little later. If this is indeed the case, then this site is exceptionally important not only for its early date but also, and mainly because it seems to be an indication of habitation in villages (*κατά κώμας*) in Geometric/Archaic times. In other words, it lies opposite the Orthi Petra necropolis on the west bank of the Chalopota torrent –a natural boundary– and may well be the burial ground of a village (*kome*) centred on the hill or the slopes of today's Eleftherna, just as correspondingly Orthi Petra was, possibly, the necropolis of the inhabitants of Prines hill, before it became the important common necropolis of the Geometric/Archaic polis.

A short distance below, on the road to the Orthi Petra guardhouse, built cist graves with slabs were uncovered, which contained the dry bones of the dead and in one case an amphoriskos, as a grave good, which dates the specific grave to Early Byzantine times (6th/7th century). Slim rectangular parallelepiped stelai seem to have marked the graves, while there are indications also of funeral pyres, which await excavation.

The Roman/Late Roman necropolis to the northwest and west of the city undoubtedly received also Early Christian burials, at least in its wider area. However, the gradual shrinking of the city brought also gaps in its urban tissue. The erecting of basilicas at various points in Early Christian and Early Byzantine Eleutherna, and the gradual change in conceptions relating to burials, which were now made close to cemetery basilicas or to churches, led also to the creation of burial spaces either in proximity to churches, in their outbuildings or even under their floors, which are usually linked with priests, patrons or persons directly associated with these churches.

Thus, the lateral aisles of the Early Byzantine basilica of Bishop Euphratas, in its second phase, was used for burials<sup>251</sup>, as were its outbuildings to the south. These were in cist graves of the sixth/seventh century and were unfurnished. A limestone slab found on top of one grave carries a six-line inscription referring to the presbyter Nikasios and it is therefore very possible that the rest of the graves belonged also to presbyters of the period. Under the pavement of the south atrium of the basilica, a series of graves, cist and tiled-roof, of the seventh century, were excavated, some of them furnished with grave goods, such as vases – ceramic, glass and metal – bronze buckles, and so on. Excavated among them was a tiled-roof grave of very careful construction. Last, during the excavation of the shafts for the abutments of the bearing elements of the shelter over the basilica, which I carried out in the framework of the Third Community Support Framework in the





*Gold amulets. 2nd century AD (left) and 6th century AD (right).*

summer of 2007, many cist graves of the sixth/seventh/eighth century, with multiple burials and some grave goods, were uncovered outside the north walls of the basilica, in the atrium under their pavement. Rich in burials too is the under-floor layer of the central and the south aisle of the basilica of St Irene, which is still being excavated.

The same applies to the central building on the site of the acropolis, which the excavator<sup>252</sup> considers to be a Christian church of the sixth century and where graves of the seventh century have been found in the interior, even in the north apse. Last, the same picture emerges in various places to the east of the Orthi Petra necropolis, where graves of the Early Byzantine period and later are excavated from time to time, above or inside the ruins of the Late Roman and Early Christian phases. Likewise on the east slope, at Katsivelos, later graves have come to light, such as that on the site of house 2, from which comes a small cylindrical amulet of the sixth century.



*Bronze belt buckles 6th/8th century AD  
and ring-key (middle above) 4th century AD.*





*The huge and bulky, modern retaining walls of terraces for the cultivation of olives and vines at the locality Orthi Petra, prior to the start of the first excavations (1986/1987). After their removal, the celebrated 'Homeric necropolis' of the Early Iron Age began to appear.*





## THE ORTHI PETRA NECROPOLIS

At about the mid-point of the length of the west slope of Prines hill, at a height of 20-40 m above the bed of the Chalopota torrent and about level (on an imaginary straight line west-east) with Pyrgi and Katsivelos is the locality Orthi Petra. In the systematic excavation at this site, which commenced on 8 September 1985, about 1,300 sq. m of ground have been explored, which held for me and my collaborators many unique surprises.

On present evidence it seems that the Orthi Petra site was used as a necropolis at least from the Late Protogeometric I period, that is from about the beginning of the ninth century BC<sup>253</sup>.

The limits of the necropolis have not yet been found, as at least to south and east the earlier layers of the Geometric/Archaic times have been covered over by later, Hellenistic/Roman interventions, with paved streets and buildings. In some cases, such as underneath Nike Street, the continuation of the necropolis has been ascertained, as also to the north and west in the area outside the modern shelter for the protection and enhancement of the site. It is puzzling indeed why no later architectural remains have been found also in the excavated central sector of the necropolis<sup>254</sup>. There are two possible explanations for this: either remains did exist but were destroyed completely by the creation of terraces for cultivation, after the land redistribution in the area in 1956, or that in the course of expansion of the Hellenistic and Roman city and the construction of streets and residential insulae, even ruined monuments were still standing in the central part of the necropolis, which were respected by leaving this space as a square, during the design of the city<sup>255</sup>.

In the excavated part of the necropolis, three burial practices have been identified: a. **cremations**, b. **enchytrismoι** (jar-burials, usually in pithoi or amphorae) and c. **simple** or **'open' inhumations**.

On present evidence, the overlapping of the burials at certain places is considered confirmed, while it seems that from one point onward, at least in the eighth century BC, all three practices coexisted. From as early as the ninth century BC, cremations were the norm for high-status aristocrats, male warriors and, in highly exceptional circumstances, for females and for specific reasons, whereas jar burials and open burials were the norm for women, children and old men.





- ① *The crematorium*
- ② *Enclosure K*

- ③ *Tomb A1K1*
- ④ *Tomb A1*





- ⑤ *Building A*
- ⑥ *Building M*

- ⑦ *Monument A1K1*
- ⑧ *Monument 4A*
- ⑨ *Obelisk*



## Cremations

It is impossible, in the absence of a full study and publication of the material from the necropolis, to speak about all the related issues raised. For this reason, I shall present here some basic data from the excavated site so far. Two main groups of cremations can be distinguished: those made inside a pit and/or stone enclosure (?) and those made directly on the ground, sometimes partly resting on stones or mudbricks.

### The crematorium

In the middle of the excavated part of the necropolis a pit measuring 5 m from north to south, 3 m from east to west and about 0.60 m deep has been revealed. It is surrounded by a wall of dressed stone blocks on its north, west and south sides. Its large size, the fact that the yellow colour of the limestone bedrock of the hill has turned to red on all the walls of the pit, to a thickness of 5-10 cm, from which it is deduced that this change was due to continuous conflagration at very high temperatures, the fragments of carbonized wood, human bones and animal bones, and last the variety of sherds and rich grave goods (vases and cups with geometric decoration, faience beads, rock-crystal necklace, and so on), over a time phase starting from around 880/870 BC down to at least the end of the eighth century BC, all advocate the interpretation of the pit as a crematorium, in which cremations were made at regular intervals of time. When the pit was filled, it was emptied of the residues in order to receive new funeral pyres. There is no wall on the east side of the pit. The space outside the pit had been demarcated by a row of large limestone orthostats, in Π-shaped arrangement, from the north, east and south, forming a kind of 'court' which was filled in by a dense row of fieldstones set with their even surface uppermost. The finding on top of the east orthostats of an exquisite clay incense-burner of ca 700 BC, with relief protome of a deity, as well as other interesting vases, advocate the view that this 'court' had an ancillary role in the preparatory procedures for the cremations in the crematorium<sup>256</sup>.

### Enclosure K

To the north of the crematorium and using the exterior face of the well-built north wall as its south limit, is a Π-shaped construction of rather large fieldstones. Inside it were pieces of charcoal, shells, broken vases both large and small –such as one outstanding amphora and one krater– fragments of bronze vessels, cauldrons –warped and damaged by the fire and by stones that had fallen on top of them– fragments of iron spits (obeloi) or tripod cauldron stands, iron spearpoints and daggers, tools, and so on. This seems to have been material from funeral pyres of different chronological phases. Until the material has been





*Faience beads of assorted sizes and colours, from a necklace or sewn onto textiles. 9th century BC. Sometimes they were embroidered in various designs on cloth srips, as known from the Near East.*

studied in full, noting details and other more general observations, it is difficult to decide today whether we have here one or more successive funeral pyres, whether these had been lit inside the enclosure or whether the enclosure was erected later to include them or even if one or some of them preceded the enclosure. Whatever the case, no traces of burning have been found on the outer face of the north wall, which could indicate the presence of a depositional space, an adjunct to crematorium A<sup>257</sup>, in which were dumped residues removed from the crematorium pit, when it was emptied from time to time in order to receive new cremations.



*Necklace composed of beads of gold and rock crystal. An excellent specimen of Early Iron Age jewellery art. 9th/8th century BC. The unique comparandum comes from the so-called tomb of the princess at Salamis on Cyprus.*





*Clay incense-burner, ca 700 BC.*



*One-handed cup of Geometric times.*



*Clay krater imported from Attica. Late 9th-early 8th century BC.*





*Tripod vase with integral small bowl. 9th century BC.*



*Clay stirrup jar. First half of 9th century BC.*



*Clay hydria with strainer mouth. First half of 9th century BC.*





Clay lekythion. Second half of 9th century BC.



Small clay bichrome oenochoe/lekythion. Second half of 9th century BC.



Protocorinthian aryballois. First half of 7th century BC. These exquisite little perfume vases (like that on p. 241), with their excellent-quality clay and lustrous surface, attest the trade in aromatic oils and the refined luxury of wealthy Corinth in the late eighth and the seventh century BC. («Οὐ παντὸς πλεῖν ἐξ Κόρινθον»).



Lekythia (Creto-Cypriot and Cretan). Late 8th / 7th century BC.



Corinthian piriform aryballos/alabastron, for perfume, with cockerel protome.



Aryballois of the so-called Rhodian-Cypriot type or Spaghetti Ware (SW), due to their decoration. These perfume vases have been found on Rhodes, in the Cyclades, Crete as well as South Italy, Sicily, Etruria, and are probably linked with the overseas voyages from Rhodes and Crete to the Italian Peninsula.





Clay hydria. 8th / 7th century BC.



## Tomb A1K1

This is a grave cut in the marly limestone bedrock and oriented east-west, directly to the west of and at a lower level than crematorium A and enclosure K. In its interior were dozens of cinerary vases, with or without lid over their mouth, as well as all manner of very rich grave goods. It is, therefore, a closed assemblage, a time capsule of the period spanning roughly the early ninth to the mid-seventh century BC, a particularly interesting one for Post-Minoan Crete. The shapes of the cinerary vases vary. They are mainly clay jars, small and medium-size, with straight walls and with or without carinated shoulder, some local and some from the Cyclades and elsewhere, pithoi and amphorae and even bronze cauldrons. Usually the mouth of the cinerary vase was closed with a bronze vase: bowls of various types, in fact one bossed bowl still preserves the flimsy textile in which the bones of the deceased were wrapped, chernibes (fruitstands or kalathoi), lebetes, small or large, and other times by clay vases, mainly deep basins (lekanides) but also oenochoai, one time also by a bronze shield that served as the lid of a clay cinerary vase but which might have belonged to one of the bronze cauldrons that were found inside the grave.

The funerary offerings inside the cinerary vases consist of one or more small or large clay, usually perfume, vases (lekythia), the number of which depended also on the number of individuals contained in the cinerary kalpes. Vases of faience (amphoriskoi or small pyxides) are also present. Iron (and more rarely bronze) weapons (swords, lances, spearpoints, knives and arrowheads) sometimes accompanied the bones of the cremated dead, which in some cases were wrapped in textiles, while they were also furnished with tools, such as iron double-axes. Jewellery was deposited too (gold fillets with repoussé decoration, diadems plain or ornamented, cut-out metal sheets, beads of glass or faience, bronze fibulae, bronze, gold or silver pins, etc.). Unfortunately, some of the small vases and items of jewellery, pins and a scarab or pendant were found outside the clay cinerary vases, due to the breakage of them, and so we can only speculate as to their initial position in the grave. Larger vases, of clay or bronze and even of faience, bird-shaped askoi (flasks), tripod or plain kraters, sometimes with groups of one-handled cups or small kraters inside them, very often accompanied the cinerary vases, placed outside but in contact with them, or around them. Other times, bent weapons, mainly swords, but also tools, such as iron double-edged axes, were literally hanging on the neck or the handles of the ash-urns, preserving in their hole a small part of their wooden haft which disintegrated over time and was lost. Exceptionally interesting in every respect is the presence of Minoan seal-stones inside cinerary vases, as heirlooms or amulets, with multiple sociological explanations. Found inside one ash-urn was a clay cube, a die, for playing dice games then, as now.

*RIGHT: Cinerary vases and grave goods in the interior of tomb A1K1, as revealed in the excavation. They were hung like bunches of grapes from the walls of the tomb cut in the limestone bedrock. The burnt bones from the cinerary vases yield information on the palaeodemography of the aristocratic warriors of ancient Eleutherna from the beginnings of the ninth into the first half of the seventh century BC. The grave goods (weapons, tools, jewellery, vases, and so on) reveal the city's relations, direct or indirect, with the rest of Crete, metropolitan Greece, Asia Minor, Cyprus, Phoenicia, and elsewhere.*









*Clay cinerary vases and grave goods from tomb A1K1 of the warriors, as exhibited in the Museum of ancient Eleutherna.*

The cinerary vases and the grave goods were placed inside the rock-cut chamber tomb successively, over the course of the two centuries and more of its use, and the doorway on the west side was gradually blocked by fieldstones until a stone slab closed its upper part, thus sealing the tomb forever, shortly before the mid-seventh century BC. However, even after the closing of the doorway cinerary vases and (fewer) grave goods continued to be placed both in the dromos of the tomb, outside the doorway as well as to north and south of it.<sup>258</sup>.

*Clay cinerary pyxis-kalpe with iron spearhead on which there is an imprint of textile. Second half of 9th century BC.*









*Clay pithos. Second half of 9th century BC.*



*Clay pithos without decoration.  
It is perhaps the first cinerary vase to be placed  
inside the tomb A1K1 of the warriors,  
together with other vases and grave goods  
(see also p. 163, Attic pyxis).*



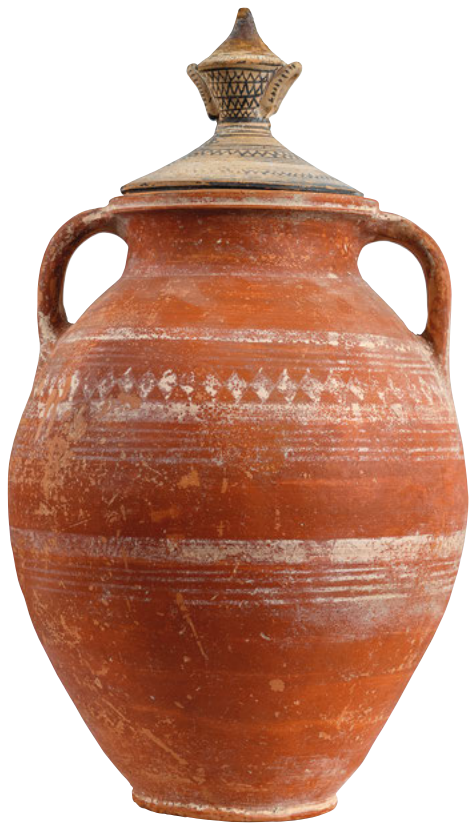


*Clay bichrome bird flask (askos), imported from a Cretan workshop.  
Second half of 9th century BC.*



*Krater with integral tripod stand. Second half of 9th century BC.  
On both vases similarities are observed in the geometric motifs,  
which match analogous ones of the Protogeometric II period (850-810 BC).  
From workshops of central Crete, primarily of Knossos.*





*Clay amphora and lid of different firing and coloration.  
Second half of 9th century BC (840-810 BC).*



*Clay four-handled pithos (amphora)  
without neck and with lid, probably  
from a Knossian workshop.  
Late 8th century BC.*



*Clay pithos. Late 9th / early 8th century BC (810-780 BC).*



*Clay amphora. First half of 9th century BC (880-850 BC).*





*Clay pithos. 9th / 8th century BC (810-775 BC).*



*Clay pithos. Second half of 9th century BC (850-810 BC).*



*Clay pithos. Late 8th / early 7th century BC (710-690 BC).*



*Clay amphora. Late 9th / early 8th century BC (820-780 BC).*





*Large clay Corinthian spherical pyxis. Second half of 8th century BC.*



*Clay amphora with double handles of 'bucranium' type. Late 8th/early 7th century BC (710-680 BC).*



*Clay pithos. Second half of 8th century BC (770-740 BC).*





*Attic spherical pyxis with conical lid and exceptional decoration. 880-850 BC. It was found together with other grave goods inside the undecorated pithos (p. 160), one of the earliest vases in tomb A1K1 of the warriors.*



*Clay lekythos of 'Praisos' type. 735-730 BC.*



*Clay pithos. Second half of 9th century BC (850-810 BC).*





*Clay amphora decorated with aquatic birds, from the 'birds workshop' of Eleutherna, which was set up by one or more artisans who migrated from the Cyclades (Paros). Second quarter of 7th century BC (675-650 BC).*







*The components of the representation overall should be sought in various parts of the East Mediterranean and the Orient. However, griffins with closed beak are characteristic of artworks – frequently of metal – in the region of Urartu, while the triangular ornament with volutes and the small vertical lines are encountered on Hittite works going back centuries, which are associated with the Great King. In all probability the creator of this particular vase drew inspiration for this composition from some Hittite or Urartian works that reached Eleutherna via Cyprus.*



*Clay pithos decorated with two heraldic griffins, on either side of a lozenge with checkerboard pattern. 675-650 BC.*





*Clay amphora attributed to a craftsman who grew up in the Cyclades (Thera) and migrated to Eleutherna.*

*Depicted in the main decorative zone encircling the vase are three horses grazing nonchalantly in a meadow and a lion hunting a wild goat. The dramatic effort of the hunted animal to escape is conveyed by the high horn that escapes the frame of the scene, thus defying the discipline of the geometrical composition and heralding the 'Orientalizing' disorderliness that was to dominated throughout the seventh century BC. First quarter of 7th century BC (700-675 BC).*



*Detail from the wide metopes with waterfowl, on the shoulder of the vase.*









*Bronze 'shield' with lion protome. 9th/8th century BC (820/800-730 BC).*

*A work of excellent synthesis and execution in the category of shields of Idaean Cave type. At approximately 39-40 cm of its diameter, with the raised rim, the roundels and the guilloches in the narrow zones, as we proceed to the internal frieze with the lions attacking or overcoming bovids, the well-balanced composition at the centre is remarkable also for its craftsmanship, being fashioned from a single sheet of bronze which was hammered with unique mastery.*

*Above the high-relief protome of the seemingly roaring lion with half-open mouth stands the naked female deity with Hathor-wig hairstyle, outstretched and slightly raised arms, who gazes at the felines (slender lions) which flank her heraldically. The unusual forelegs of the central lion, with five toes, which resemble a gloved human hand, impart a supernatural, daemonic quality to the creature, since they appear to subjugate two confronted winged semi-crouching sphinxes.*

*If intentional connotations of the metalworker-artist with the lion as symbol of Assyrian military ascendancy over the Egyptian sphinxes can be identified in this representation, then its signification leads also to models from the Near East. On the other hand, the nude female deity calming the young lions with open mouth and protruding tongue probably refers to her dual symbolism as goddess of love and of war, who is linked with youths who come of age and become warriors. Consequently, this shield, like others too, was associated with rites of passage to adulthood which took place at regular intervals of time in the Idaean Cave and/or elsewhere (see also pp. 276-285, Tales).*





*Clay cinerary jar (pithamphora) which was covered by a bronze shield. Late 9th century BC.*

*The findspot of the shield leaves no doubt that it was placed intentionally to shield (protect) the burnt bones of the aristocratic warrior, which were found inside the vase. The fact that its diameter fits the diameter of bronze cauldrons found nearby, inside tomb A1K1 of the warriors, also suggests its function as a lid. Whatever the case, this object does not seem to have been used as an actual shield, as advocated also by the thinness of the metal, as well as by other technical details.*

*Consequently, the shield could have been used only in ceremonies, processions or occasions of such ilk. It is the unique example of a shield of Idaean Cave type to have been found in its archaeological context and is dated with precision in relation to all the analogous – frequently much larger – shields that were found in the said cave and rarely at other sites and sanctuaries in Crete. Since the cinerary vase is dated to the late ninth or the early eighth century BC and a lekythos of Praisos type (ca 735 BC) had slipped on top of the shield, the shield should be dated from 830/820 BC onward and, of course, long before the lekythos.*





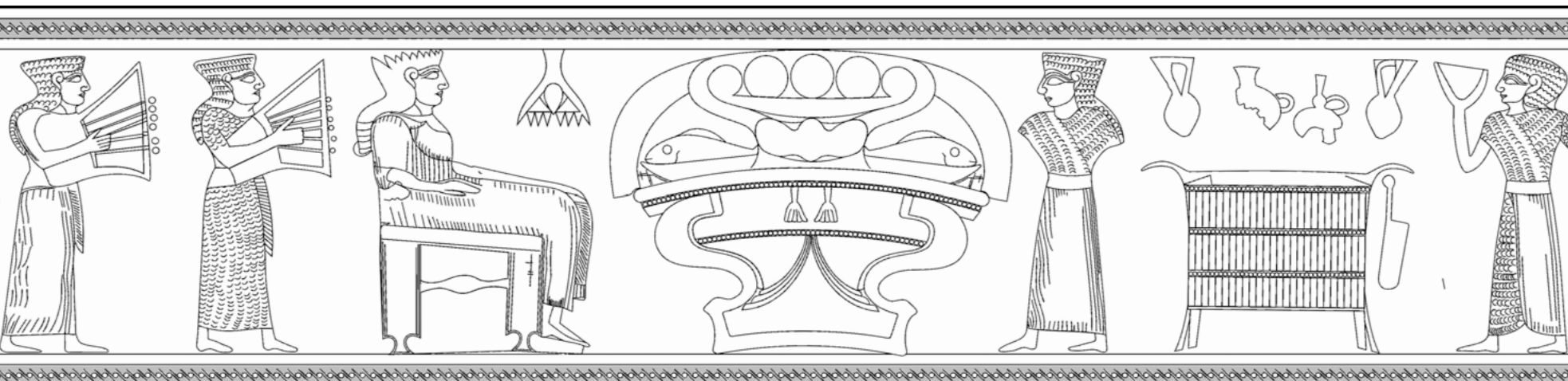




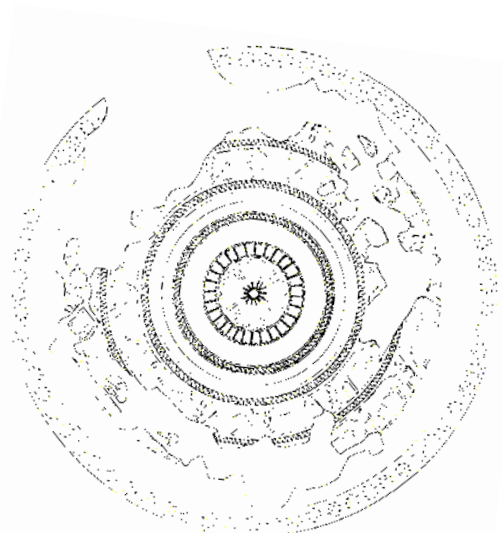
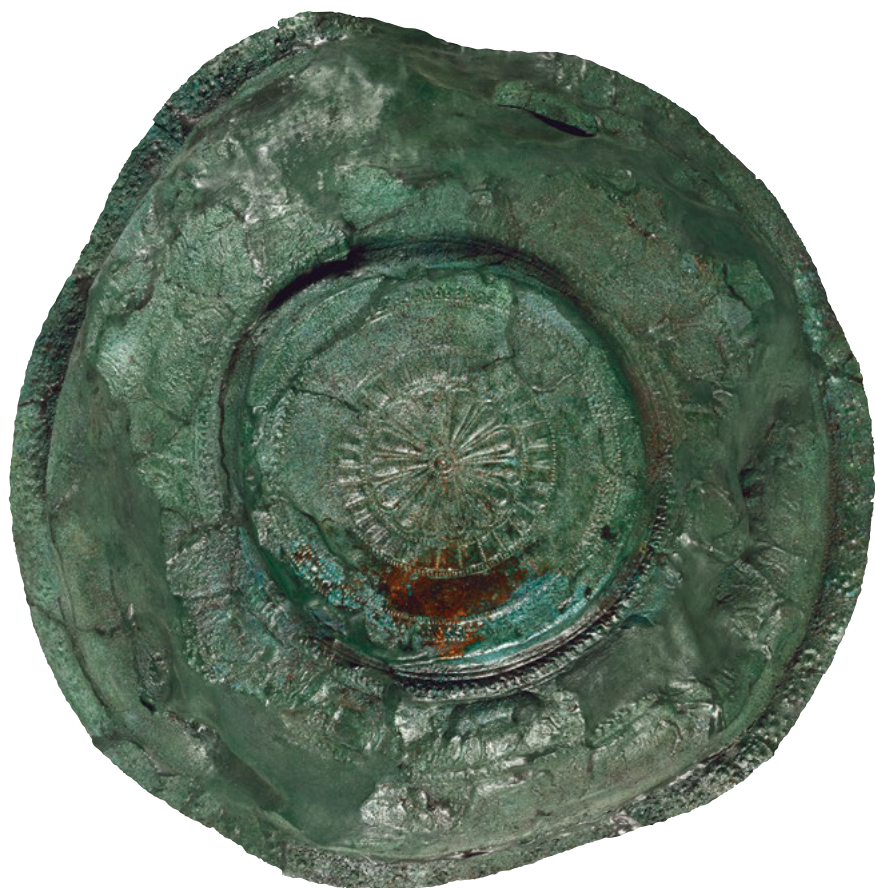
*The decoration at the centre of the shield.*

*Left, the drawing of the work, to facilitate the fullest understanding of it, because the green patina of an object some 2,800 years old tends to obscure its reading. In its pristine state the shield would have gleamed like gold, as described in the Homeric expression *εοικε χρυσέω*. (See part of its modern replic by D. Alexandrou, p. 274, 284, Tales).*





*Bronze bowl (chernips-fruitstand) with ritual representation (and the rollout drawing of it, left and right page). Depicted in front of an enthroned female deity are an offering table, women (priestesses?) offering fish and other goods, musicians playing stringed instruments and women holding hands at the wrist and dancing. 7th century BC (see pp. 295-297, Tales).*



*Bronze bowl (chernips-fruitstand) and the drawing of it. In the central frieze, executed in repoussé technique, are grazing stags with many-branched antlers. Late 9th / early 8th century BC.*





*Bronze bowl (chernips-fruitstand) and the drawing of it.  
In the central frieze are groups of crouching and roaring lion-griffins. 7th century BC.*





*Bronze distorted cauldron. Geometric period.*

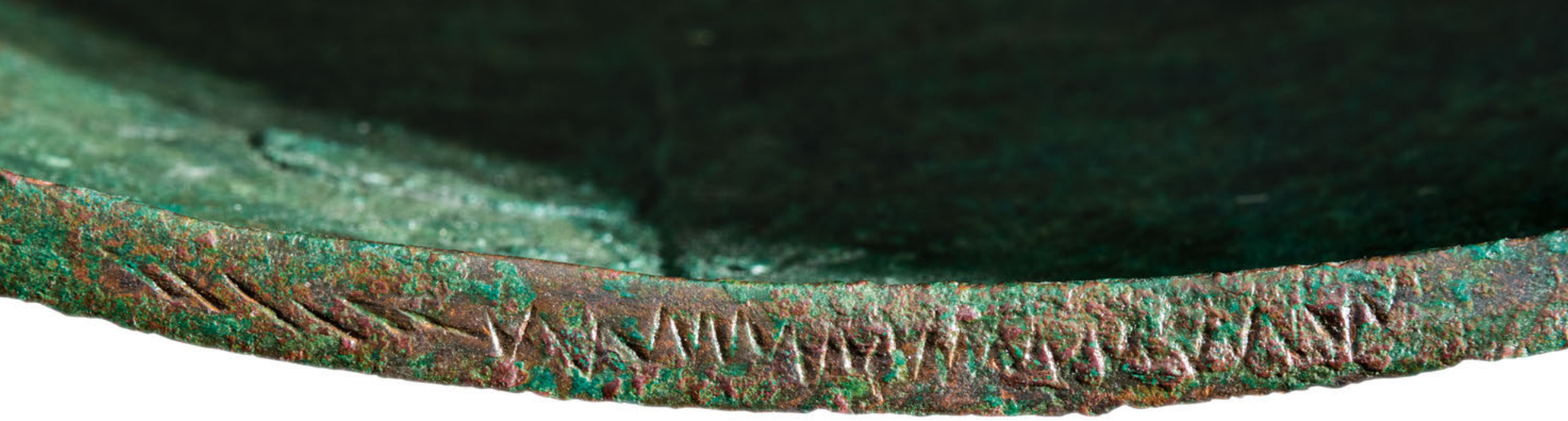


*Bronze cauldron with carinated shoulder, of Cypro-Aegean type.  
Second half of 9th century BC.*



*Bronze cauldrons with straight walls.  
Geometric/Archaic period.*





*Bronze cauldron with iron handles. On its rim a numerical metrical system. Geometric period.*





*Bronze Phoenician bowl that covered the mouth of a clay Thera stamnos used as a cinerary vase.  
Decorated with a representation of heraldic sphinxes, papyri and lotuses. An excellent specimen of the metalworker's craft.  
Late 8th century BC (see pp. 301-305, Tales).*











*Bronze hemispherical bowl. 8th (?) century BC.  
Bowls of this type are known from the Near East and Cyprus (often with an internal ring) and are usually dated from the ninth to the seventh century BC. A large number of them has been found in sanctuaries and cemeteries of Crete, the Aegean and the Greek Mainland.*



*Bronze one-handed cup. 8th century BC.*



*Bronze bowl with omega-shaped handles. 8th / 7th century BC.  
Shallow bowls of the type with metal strip and moveable handles are known to have been made in the Near East (Syria, Assyria, Phoenicia and Cyprus) and have been revealed in various parts of Crete, Euboea, South Italy, in a wide range of sizes as well as in local variations.*



*Bronze bowl with conical boss (omphalos).  
From an assemblage of Geometric times.*





*Bronze tongued bossed bowl. 8th/7th century BC. Similar bowls of this type (see also below) are encountered during the Neo-Assyrian period (9th–7th century BC) in regions such as Assyria, Syria, Palestine, West Iran and further west in Cyprus, Crete, Greece, Italy (where ones of Etruscan production are also found) and Spain.*



*Bronze bossed bowl of Phrygian type. Analogous bowls with radiate petals in variations have come to light in Asia Minor, as well as in Aegean islands and Crete, and are usually dated from the eighth to the sixth century BC.*



*Bronze tongued bossed bowl with flower motif on the boss (omphalos).*



*Bronze bossed bowl preserving a fragment of fine diaphanous textile. Late 8th/first half of 7th century BC. These bowls with boss (omphalos) surrounded by concentric rings are normally products of a Phrygian workshop and occur also in precious metals (cf. silver bowl with conical boss, in an assemblage from Elmali).*





*Iron double axes (above and below). 9th century BC.*



*Iron spear points. 9th/8th century BC.*

*Iron points of 'killed' spears. 9th/8th century BC. Bent weapons found in graves of the period have been interpreted as 'killed', so that they could not be used again and would remain grave goods accompanying the dead in perpetuity.*





*Iron weapons (swords, daggers, spear points and arrowheads). 9th/8th century BC.*





*Glazed amphoroid lekythia. Second half of 8th century BC. The amphoroid lekythion above is the earliest in the series as it was found inside a cinerary vase that is dated to the middle years of the eighth century BC.*



*Similar glazed and faience amphoroid lekythia have been found in Syria and on Rhodes and as far west as Ponte Cagniano in Italy. The trajectory of the workshop where such vases were produced starts from North Syria (Idlib) and reaches as far as Rhodes.*







*Late Minoan seal-stones recovered from inside cinerary vases and assemblages of the Geometric period in the Orthi Petra necropolis.*



*Bronze leaf-shaped fibulae. Geometric/Archaic times.*



*Gold and silver pins of 'Cretan type'. 8th/7th century BC.*



*Bone comb. Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age.*





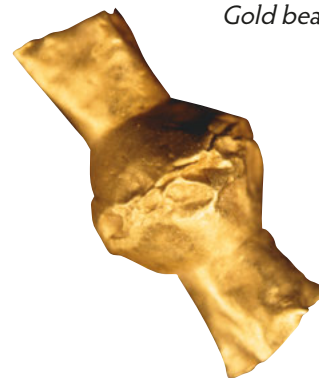
Gold lunate pendant.



Gold globular pendant.



Gold pendant or earring.



Gold bead from a necklace (?).

*Frequently such items of jewellery or similar ones are difficult to date precisely because even when they are identified in dated assemblages they may well be 'heirlooms' or 'antiques' inherited down the generations. 8th-7th century BC.*

*RIGHT PAGE Gold-sheet cutouts. Above, heraldic sphinxes, below in the middle, representation of a Mistress of Animals (Potnia Theron), to left and right a panel with vases or baetyls, visible in which is a female figure, left, and a spearpoint, right. Late 8th / first half of 7th century BC.*

*A young man who has just reached adulthood dies and is cremated at Eleutherna. His burnt bones are discovered inside tomb A1K1 of the warriors, together with precious symbolic gifts for the kingdom of Persephone: two gold-sheet cutouts. Represented on one are two sphinxes, daemons and guardians of the gates of Death. On the other are three panels on the left and on the right two vases with lids: in the first panel is a nude female figure, goddess of love and of the marriage the dead youth would never experience; in the second a lance, symbol of his martial virtue. In the middle one is a Mistress of Animals (Potnia Theron), a goddess who holds two deer upside down, signifying the death of a young life that did not reach maturity, as Yannis Ritsos says in his poem 'Epitaph': '...your foot light-tripping, like a tender little deer, stepped upon our threshold and you gleamed like gold...'*









*Gold fillet with representation of chariots in which the charioteer and an archer stand.  
This has been interpreted as a battle scene, as indicated by the dead men lying on the ground. Late 8th (?) century BC.*





*Gold fillets with geometric decoration. 9th / 8th century BC.  
(Above: swastika motifs and wreaths. Below: wreaths or shields in panels.)*



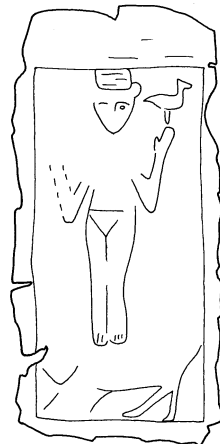




*Gold rectangular sheets (and drawings of them).  
Representation of a standing female figure with raised arms.  
Second half of 9th century BC.*

*The sheets were found folded over and crumpled so that their original impressed decoration is difficult to recognize.*

*In the one above, clearly visible is the head with low polos of a female figure with raised arms holding undecipherable objects (perhaps birds) in her hands. It is difficult to discern whether she stands on the back of an animal. Comparable gold sheets from Naxos and Cyprus have been interpreted as belonging to diadems.*





*Gold ornament in the form of a tortoise. Late 8th / 7th century BC.*



*Gold ornament with representation of a hippalektryon (hybrid creature, part horse and part rooster).  
8th (?) century BC. The jewellery items found in the Orthi Petra cemetery are distinguished  
by the quality and the techniques of their craftsmanship.*



## Monument A1K1

Almost the south half of the west side of the wall of enclosure K and part of the north half of the west side of the wall surrounding crematorium A served as the east limit of an elegant Π-shaped construction of admirable architecture. It comprises a base, orthostats and an epikranitis, upon which is bedded a further course of rectangular parallelepiped stone blocks. At the centre of the construction, held in place by close-packed fieldstones, was a large amphora containing burnt bones. It was covered by a hemispherical bronze bowl and a bronze strainer, and all together were covered by a deep clay lekanis that rested on the amphora's shoulder. Next to the amphora was the greater part of a glazed vase –the base missing– which was obviously a grave good. The position of the cinerary vase, the coverings as well as the grave goods indicate that the architectural construction overall was a kind of monument, which enclosed them. There is no doubt that the monument occupies the greater part of the ceiling of tomb A1K1, upon the northeast part of which its southwest part is also bedded. Since the cinerary amphora is dated to the early seventh century BC, with terminus post quem the end of the first half of the century (700-675 BC), it seems very likely that the monument was an exceptional case of a construction intended to include the remains of one cremation placed inside an ash amphora, for which either there was no room – due to its size – inside the almost full rock-cut tomb A1K1, the doorway of which most probably had now been blocked, or because the Eleuthernians wanted to enhance the specific burial, or, last, for both reasons combined. The conspicuousness of the monument, on account of its position and its design, together with its excellent construction, speak eloquently about the status of the deceased to whom it belonged<sup>259</sup>.

## Tomb A1

This is one more grave cut in the marly limestone bedrock, which was discovered very recently to the south of A1K1 and close to it. However, whereas we would expect the tomb to contain cinerary vases, as was usual at that period in Crete, its particularity lies in the fact that behind a stone barrier with doorway to the west, the rock-cut space houses at the centre an enormous pithos, the mouth of which was covered by a very heavy and large square stone slab. Inside the pithos was the inhumation of an elderly man and of two or three women aged about thirty. Due to the humidity and the water that collected in the pithos over the centuries, the bones had shifted, as had the grave goods, among them an iron knife, jewellery of exquisite quality, an eye that brings to mind the eyes in the gold mask of Tutankhamun, a gold bee-goddess, thousands of superb small fragments of a cut-out gold belt ornament or chains sewn onto a garment, small glass juglets, and so on. On top of the pithos were two inverted bronze cauldrons, while outside the pithos, to north, south and east of it, were hundreds of clay vases, weapons, bronze vases, a small bronze brazier, and so on. Outstanding among the finds is a wonderful krater with representation of a 'horse-whisperer', inside which were a hydria and cremated bones of a warrior of about thirty years old, while around the krater were vases and iron weapons.





*'Argive' krater with representation of a horse-whisperer. Late 8th century BC.*



As the assemblage of finds from tomb A1 has not been studied, it is important to look at whether this preceded or succeeded the neighbouring tomb A1K1 with the gathering together of the burnt bones of warriors, and whether the dead inside the pithos and the cremated warrior were relatives, in order to proceed to the final interpretation of the find.





*Small glass trefoil-mouth oenochoai. 8th/7th century BC.*



*Iron brazier. 8th century BC.*





*Eye pendant. Gold and Egyptian blue (?) paste. Late 8th/7th century BC.*

*Characteristic is the similarity of this item to the analogous eyes in the gold facemask of Tutankhamun.*



*Gold heavy pendant or ingot. Four-pointed or ox-hide (?) shape.*



*Gold plaque decorated with double spiral. Late 8th/7th century BC.*







## Buildings Λ and M

In about the middle of the excavated area, to the north of enclosure K, a bipartite building has come to light, building Λ. This is of rectangular parallelogram plan but unfortunately survives only to the height of its foundations. Its relatively thick walls, built of fieldstones, reveal that if a superstructure existed it would have been a very robust construction (a sanctuary inside a cemetery?) of stones or mudbricks, for which there is no evidence today. Unfortunately, there were no finds inside the building. The sherds in its sub-foundation advocate a date for the building in the late ninth or the early eighth century BC (ca 800 BC). Only one jug was found to the east, inside the larger east room. It contained burnt bones. If this vase was placed there much later, it could be associated with some later cremation and the collection of the bones, and could have been used as a cinerary vase that was placed there when building Λ had already been destroyed. If, however, no superstructure ever existed, then the cinerary jug could be interpreted as a remainder of analogous vases that were placed inside building Λ. Important, however, was the finding of a limestone *cippus*<sup>260</sup> (grave marker) of Phoenician-Oriental type in the layer of the collapsed southwest corner of the narrower and smaller west room<sup>261</sup>.

A very short distance to the northeast of building Λ, a semi-basement building was excavated relatively recently. This is building M, which survives to a considerable height, over 2 m. Built of rubble masonry in a Π-shaped cutting in the limestone bedrock of the hill, it is almost square with a doorway on its west side. Ashlar blocks form its doorframe. It is difficult to make out, without thorough study, whether it was roofed with stone or with timber beams and a roof of impervious earth (such as Theron pozzuolana). Despite the later interventions that have been identified in the course of its excavation (burial pithos in its upper layers, other vases in layers to the west), the lowest layer was undisturbed and preserved finds of considerable archaeological value: in its east half, on the ground, were skeletons of four females aged 13.5, 16, 28 and 72 years, oriented east-west, found in such a way that the anthropological study insists that they were all inhumed at the same time. The three younger females had been placed full length, from north (head) to south, while the oldest seems to have been buried sitting, since the skull was found on the pelvis without any indication of stratigraphical or taphonomic disturbance. The females were accompanied by rich grave goods, mainly gold jewellery –among them three exceptional lunate pendants with protomes of helmeted warriors, a Master of Animals (Potios Theron) and a bust of an animal (ox or lion), a protome of a goddess with Daedalic hairstyle, and so on–, beads of various materials, scarabs, Minoan seal-stones, bronze vases of various types, bowls and cups, a small cauldron, a bronze lamp and so on, a bronze pin, spoon and curved saw, as well as a bronze bull figurine, faience vases and clay vases, mainly lekythia of various types. Leaning against the east and north walls were large amphorae with lids, the neck of one of which was sealed by a rare intact shallow glass bowl which is dated before the mid-seventh century BC. From the assemblage of finds, their position and other details, the building is interpreted as the tomb of princesses-priestesses, the oldest of which was a high priestess<sup>262</sup>. But if the four females were indeed buried simultaneously, we could think that they died in an epidemic or from other causes.

*Gold pendant with representation of a bee goddess. On the upper torso she is depicted as a female with Daedalic wig and arms bent at the elbows. The rest of the body resembles an insect, its large wings decorated with stippled rosettes. 7th century BC.*







ABOVE P. 198:  
*Gold pectoral ornament.  
Before mid-7th century BC.*

BELOW P. 198:  
*Gold pendant in the form  
of a walking (?) tortoise.  
Before mid-7th century BC.*

RIGHT P. 198:  
*Gold pendant with representation  
of a Daedalic female head  
with triangular wig.  
Before mid-7th century BC.  
Rendered below the head  
are three pointed-base vases  
in horizontal arrangement.*



*Lunate, gold pectoral ornament with heads of two helmeted confronted male figures (Curetes, Zeus-Kouroi); Before mid-7th century BC.*



*Lunate gold pectoral ornament with Master of Animals  
(Potios Theron) between two rampant lions.  
Before mid-7th century BC.*



*Lunate gold pectoral ornament with depiction  
of an animal (ox or lion) protome,  
as known from representations on clay and metal works,  
of the eighth and seventh centuries BC from Crete.*





*Gold-sheet cutout with human and animal figures. These compose a narrative frieze. Probably an appliqué sewn onto a garment or belt. Before mid-7th century BC.*



*Gold sheets with shield-bearing warriors (left) and heraldic sphinxes (right). Before mid-7th century BC.*



*Gold eight-petalled rosette with granulation decorating the petals. 8th/7th century BC.*



*Part of a gold fillet/strip with mesh of lozenges. Before mid-7th century BC.*

PAGE RIGHT:

*Gold cutout strips.*

*Thousands of tiny fragments that were assembled with patience by the conservators and compose guilloches bordered by fine bands. The cutouts were sewn onto textiles or leather belts. 7th century BC.*









*Necklace recomposed from beads of gold and silver. Before mid-7th century BC.*



*Necklace with carnelian (sard) beads of various shapes. Before mid-7th century BC.*





*Necklace recomposed from rock crystal beads of various shapes. Before mid-7th century BC.*

*FOLLOWING PAGES: Left, amethyst beads, silver link, bronze pendant, silver lunate pendants. Right, gold bead, gold pendant with traces of organic matter, gold lunate pendant, Egyptian blue scarabs and silver pin of Cretan type. Before mid-7th century BC.*













*Bronze miniature cauldron with handles.*



*Bronze one-handed cup.*



*Bronze two-handed vase.*



*Bronze two-handed cup.*



*Bronze shallow bowl.*



*Bronze bowl with conical boss (omphalos).*

*The objects illustrated, as well as those on the next page, are just some of the grave goods from the tomb-oikos of the princesses-priestesses. Before mid-7th century BC.*





*Small iron saw with arc-shaped handle.*



*Small bronze saw.*



*Small bronze spoon.*



*Bronze bull figurine.*



*Bronze two-nozzle lamp of Phoenician type.*



*Small bronze two-handled lekanis/plate.*





*Clay amphora with representation of aquatic birds facing right, in metopes, and lid. Before mid-7th century BC.*





*Faience alabastron with two handles and large frieze of papyrus flowers. Before mid-7th century BC.*



*Glass bossed bowl. A rare specimen of the art of glass-working. Before mid-7th century BC.*



## Individual or autonomous funeral pyres

It seems that already from the end of the eighth century BC the upper layer of crematorium A had been taken over by funeral pyres that were left in situ. Nevertheless, further east, on top of the fieldstones of the 'court' with the orthostats, individual pyres of the seventh century BC were excavated, the content of which was found in situ. To north and east of enclosure K and along the entire length and width, from northeast to as far as the limits of the present shelter, a large series of individual funeral pyres has been revealed from 1987 onward<sup>263</sup>.

The funeral pyres, which were set directly on the ground – with or without mudbrick or stone supports to facilitate the burning – cleave closely to the description of the mortuary customs given in the verses of Homer, particularly in the *Iliad*. Essentially, a wooden construction of tree trunks, logs and dry branches was erected, on top of which the dead (one or several) – usually adult – was placed together with many grave goods, personal possessions and other objects from everyday life as well as artifacts used during the funerary ritual: large and small plain vases, empty (?) or containing offerings of liquid or solid foodstuffs (olive oil? wine? honey? –olives, grapes, figs, pomegranates, meat?)<sup>264</sup>, tools, weapons, games (dice) sometimes even animals. The fire was then lit, burning at a temperature ranging from 800° to 1000° C. When it had it had 'consumed', as Homer says, men, livestock and objects, it was put out and the cremated bones of the dead were then carefully collected. They were washed, sometimes they were perfumed too, and then and placed reverently inside the cinerary vases, which were covered either with clay or bronze vases –depending on the economic means and social standing of the dead– and put usually at the edges of the remains of the funeral pyre. Subsequently, a tumulus (a mound of earth and fieldstones) was raised, covering all the remains. Frequently burnt offerings are found on top of the tumulus, from memorial services<sup>265</sup>, as well as markers, usually small stone pillars that define the site of the funeral pyres.

The density and the superimposition of the funeral pyres that have been excavated so far in the northeast part of the olive grove at Orthi Petra is very great, making the task of separating them difficult. As far as we can conclude, all appear to date from the late eighth and the duration of the seventh century BC, and at some moment in time were covered over as a whole by a large tumulus of earth mixed with dispersed small fieldstones. A relatively large number of the funeral pyres of the large tumulus have been excavated but not all of them, for purely scientific reasons.

## The funeral pyre of the aristocratic warrior and Homer

Among the many (intact and disturbed) funeral pyres that have been excavated at Orthi Petra, investigations brought to light an intact one whose remains are preserved in very good condition. This funeral pyre (ΛΛ90/91)<sup>266</sup>, which had been constructed with trunks and branches of trees set lengthwise and widthwise, as described above, was of a warrior and his male or female companion. His large iron sword, the iron knives and the bronze spearpoint –if the last is part of his military equipment– speak





*The funeral pyre of the aristocratic warrior of Eleutherna and the slain man. 730-700 BC.*

*Visible on the left are the bent-over skeleton of the killed captive, the whetstone, the narrow-neck hydria, while at the centre and on the right are remains of charred wood, fragments of the warrior's bones and his grave goods: perfume vases and other vases, his iron sword, knives, spear-point, and so on. Only the small blackened tree trunks and the small clay plates are modern. The fruits, seeds and grape pips, olives and figs, as well as the charred wood, are authentic. Above the funeral pyre is a mound of earth (tumulus) formed as a tomb surfaced with river pebbles.*

clearly of his martial status, even though the term warrior used here does not necessarily mean that he was a professional arms bearer. It is deduced from the anthropological study of the residues of his bones that he must have been about 30 years old at the time of his cremation. However, funeral pyre ΛΛ90/91 held an unprecedented surprise: at the northwest edge of the pyre was the skeleton of a robust man, aged 30-40 years and for the most part not incinerated. The skeleton's position, at the northwest edge of the pyre and clearly outside its limits, its unnatural crescent pose, the fact that it was found headless, unburnt and essentially without grave goods, lead logically to the interpretation that it is of a man who did not die a natural death. The contemporaneity with the funeral pyre of the 30-year-old man is certain, since only a few of the bones of the skeleton, high up towards the neck (the so-called spine) have been half burnt by the flames and the strong heat of this pyre. Among the hypotheses that can be posited on the basis of the excavation data and context, the most plausible interpretation is that the man was most probably a captive who was executed by beheading in front of the warrior's pyre. However, the absence of the severed head leads to the conclusion that this was an execution of reprisal. That is, the cut-off head, as seat of the soul, was burnt so that the gods of the Underworld were not offended. This, at least, is seen



from the two parts of a skull that were identified on the north verge of the funeral pyre, beyond the cremated bones of the warrior's legs. The severing and the removal of the captive's head leads to some initial conclusions regarding the beliefs of the period, which belong in the domain of the history of ideas. On the one hand, the head alone which took part in the 'god-kindled' fire so that the soul could descend to the Underworld, could not harm its enemy, the cremated elite warrior of Eleutherna, and on the other hand, the decapitated body could not harm, even as a headless ghost, its executioners. Consequently, it would have been essentially a dead man in limbo, hovering between two worlds, the Upper and the Underworld. The rest of the decapitated body, incomplete, would have remained 'away from', as it is described in Homer's verses, that is, separately, so that the bones would not be mixed with those of the Eleuthernian warrior during the final selection. The dating of the whole find, from the vases and the other grave goods accompanying the elite warrior, to the end of the eighth century BC (730-700 BC) is certain.

This unique discovery brings to mind not only the ceremonial of the funeral rites as described in the epos (*Iliad* and *Odyssey*) but also the corresponding dramatic scene of the slaughter of the captive Trojans in front of Patroclus' pyre, which Homer describes in rhapsody XXIII of the *Iliad* and which has been depicted in vase-paintings of the Classical period<sup>267</sup>. Moreover, this discovery vindicates Aristotle in his dispute with Plato as to what extent the truth is described in the epic poems of Homer<sup>268</sup>. Consequently, funeral pyre ΛΛ90/91 is a unique illustration of Homer's lines in book XXIII of the *Iliad*, and at the same time seems to contribute to our knowledge of the manner in which the epos was written (see below).

## The enchytrismoι

Enchytrismos, the burial of one or, rarely, more deceased inside a vase, is the second mortuary practice that was applied in the Orthi Petra necropolis. The vases used for enchytrismos are usually pithoi, amphorae or pithamphorae of large dimensions (the height usually ranges from 0.60/0.70 m to 1.70 m and in some cases exceeds this) unless it is an infant burial, in which case they may be smaller. It seems that in rare cases two pithoi were used for one burial, apparently because the capacity had not been properly estimated and another vase had to be added so as to fit in the corpse and completely cover the deceased's limbs. Most enchytrismoι seem to be associated with tumuli and funeral pyres or with cemetery buildings, in direct proximity to which they have been found. To date, several dozen enchytrismoι have been excavated, single or in clusters, in an arc that begins from the south, under the main paved street (Nike Street), south of the wall of crematorium A, west and between buildings K and Λ1, proceeds westward in great density as we approach the north, where there are large clusters of enchytrismoι among monuments and funeral pyres. The aforesaid arrangement gives the sense that the enchytrismoι –excepting later interventions– seem to be placed on the verges of the tumuli or the funeral pyres and the buildings in the necropolis, in what we could call a peripheral arrangement. Their temporal horizon varies. Although there are early enchytrismoι, mainly on the outer, west arc, the majority of these burials appear to date from the late eighth and the seventh/sixth century BC. Usually each pithos contains



one skeleton, but there are exceptions to the rule, with two skeletons<sup>269</sup>. In the northwest excavated part of the necropolis, in a cluster of three jar-burials of huge pithoi placed en chaîne, in the first and the last more than two burials (3-5) were ascertained. (3-5). These are characteristic examples of enchytrismoι of the second half of the eighth and the first half of the seventh century BC<sup>270</sup>. In some cases we found small grave stelai outside or on top of the mouth of the burial vases, which without doubt marked the grave. Anthropological study of the bones inside the pithoi showed that these are usually burials of females, adolescents and children, and more rarely of aged men.

The wealth of grave goods in the enchytrismoι, irrespective of period, is linked with the social and economic status of the dead and their families. In other words, there are very rich enchytrismoι which refer to members of wealthy elite families, and others clearly of middling economic standing.



*Geometric pithos decorated with concentric circles on the shoulder and successive bands on the body.*

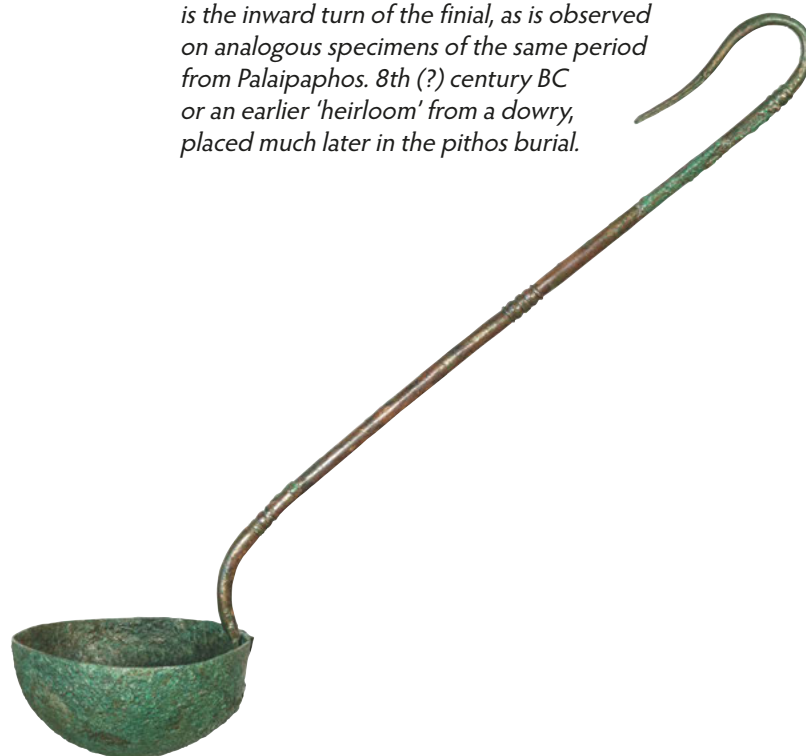








Askos (zoomorphic flask) in the form of a ram. 8th / 7th century BC.



Cypriot bronze ladle. Characteristic is the inward turn of the finial, as is observed on analogous specimens of the same period from Palaipaphos. 8th (?) century BC or an earlier 'heirloom' from a dowry, placed much later in the pithos burial.

LEFT: A matrilineage.

Three huge burial pithoi placed in a deep trench, the north and south side walls of which are revetted with retaining walls.

The earliest pithos (above) was placed to the east. The two others followed, at different intervals of time. The base of each later pithos blocked the mouth of the previous one, creating a concatenated sequence spanning decades (three generations).

These were burials of women of high social status and economic standing, as attested by the rich grave goods (clay and bronze vases, jewellery, and so on) both inside and outside the enchytrismo. Anthropological examination of the bones and teeth (Professor Agelarakis) has shown that the dead were kinswomen, from which it is hypothesized that they are links in a genealogical chain. This kinship tie perhaps explains also the placement of the pithoi in a chain arrangement. 8th / 7th century BC.



Trilobe oinochoe with representation of octopuses, snake and lily. 8th century BC (see pp. 286-289, Tales).



## The simple 'open' burials

The number of simple or 'open' burials seems today smaller by comparison with the enchytrismoi and the cremations. However, this is perhaps due to the fact that when research began the archaeologist's spade seems to have struck the 'heart' of the necropolis or a central area with funeral pyres and architectural constructions, and not the periphery of this centre, where jar-burials and simple 'open' burials are usually found.

Simple burials are identified at different locations in the necropolis, mainly at the side of buildings or of enchytrismoi. Because they are often unfurnished, it is difficult to ascertain their date. Even stratigraphically it is sometimes difficult to decide whether they belong to one chronological layer or whether they are later interventions. Most unfurnished simple burials are made on the ground or, more rarely, inside a rudimentary pit in the ground, and are found usually in the north and west corners of the necropolis between dense enchytrismoi. Noteworthy among them is the skeleton of a woman who was shown by anthropological analysis, from the habitual stresses on her limb bones, to have been a potter<sup>271</sup>. Among the open simple burials with grave goods, significant is the one found at the north end of the central excavated space. This is the skeleton of a female and of a child between her thigh bones (femurs). Found to the south of the external wall of the crematorium was the upper part of a skeleton of a girl. It was accompanied by five gold rosettes, in pairs, most probably as a pair of earrings or hair ornaments, and one with a hole at the centre, as head (?) of a pin whose shaft has not survived. One other simple burial of a woman in the space between the dromos of tomb A1K1 and building Λ, was accompanied by a lovely bronze bowl of oriental type, which was found on her pelvis, which means that she was interred holding it in her hands on the abdomen.

Last, there are two cases of unburnt skeletons upon two funeral pyres: of the rich pyre 4Λ to the west of the base of the large pillar/obelisk, as well as of the remains of a pyre to the west and below the later large pithos in the group of jar-burials en chaîne. They are of females: the first is confirmed anthropologically to be of a girl, who was cast prone and with the hands crossed (obviously tied) at the wrists, upon pyre 4Λ; the second is of an older woman, who was in contracted pose and certainly with one hand behind the back. Stratigraphically they belong to the layer of extinguishing the funeral pyres and do not seem to have been placed there later. Their pose and the fact that they do not appear to have been furnished with grave goods calls to mind references in ancient authors to involuntary offerings to dead heroes or warriors. In particular, the dead girl on pyre 4Λ automatically recalls the sacrifice of Polyxene, who was placed as gift of honour upon the tumulus of Achilles, as is depicted on vases of the Archaic period<sup>272</sup>.





*Gold rosettes decorated with granulation. 8th/7th century BC.*



*Found in pairs (above and centre) on the temples of a dead girl, probably as earrings. The rosette (below) with a hole at the centre is considered to have been the head of a pin. An outstanding example of a set of jewellery. 8th (?) / 7th century BC.*



## The large funerary monuments above ground

Among the mortuary monuments above ground, important for their form and early date are those designated as A1K1 and 4A. The first has been discussed in detail above in relation to tomb A1K1 and crematorium A. Monument 4A, to the east of the court of the crematorium, is a relatively large almost square building inside an enclosure, the west part of which is founded at a higher level, upon the orthostats of the said court. The monument itself, built on strong foundations that go down to considerable depth, today measures 3.60 x 3.50 m at the euthynteria. Above the euthynteria there was at least one stepped crepidoma, on which the walls stood. As the fragments of its stone architectural members vary, those with the rope decoration of a false door and low-relief decoration of a spiral seem to have been used as portal jambs and lintels of a false door, most probably on its west side. The rest of the fragments with the multiple spiralling meander in higher relief seem to be from a kind of epikranitis at a higher point of the edifice. The overall graphic reconstruction of the monument heightwise and the partial restoration of it in situ bring to mind depictions of Minoan shrines or funerary monuments, as for example the one painted on the large frieze of the Hagia Triada sarcophagus<sup>273</sup>.

Brought to light around monument 4A were stone figures of warriors with tenons in the lower part and the back part of the buttocks cut away, and other finds such as helmeted head, probably belonging to one of them, which were most probably stone 'antefixes' from the cornice. From the space outside the west side of the monument comes the lower part of a Daedalic kore statue, which is strongly reminiscent of the analogous Dame d'Auxerre – today in the Louvre –, as well as other fragments of inspired sculptures such as the legs of a kouros (?), found inside and outside the monument. The find-spot of the kore suggests that it was placed in the niche of the west doorway (false door) of the monument, as we shall see below. Moreover, on the basis of excavation observations and other data<sup>274</sup>, the monument seems to date to the years shortly before or shortly after 670 BC.

Inside monument 4A, which was excavated down to the foundations in the interior, not even a trace of bone was found. To the contrary, apart from architectural members from the stone blocks of the walls and the fragments of sculptures that had been deposited in the empty space of the interior, obviously after a destruction, the only find was a baetyl (a pillar-shaped stone with almost pointed top). So, the suggestion that the monument was a shrine, cenotaph or heroon is, on present evidence, the most plausible. Indeed, if our proposal that the shield-bearing warrior figures were antefixes or akroteria on its roof –among those found during the excavation, one lay prone above the southeast corner of the euthynteria of monument 4A and the other just outside its west enclosure– is correct, then the interpretation of the monument should be based on its 'types parlantes' (canting symbols) of this kind.

*Funerary monument 4A (heroon/cenotaph), partly restored.  
This is the earliest-known monument to the 'unknown soldier', which is dated ca 670 BC.*









After laborious and persistent investigation of the entire site of the necropolis and the dry-stone walls of the modern terraced fields, the number of stone figures of shield-bearing warriors has reached ten. Their shield and the absence of arms, exactly as in the figure in front of the building depicted on the frieze of the Minoan larnax from Hagia Triada, leads us to propose that some of these, as antefixes of the monument, are symbolic representations of heroized warriors who fell in battle far away from their city and so could not be buried there. In their honour the Eleuthernians erected the monument as a heroon/cenotaph, which is why no bones were found inside it. Moreover, if we take into account the baetyl inside the monument and interpret it as representing the stone that Rhea gave to Kronos to swallow, thinking that he was devouring the newborn Zeus, then the shield-bearing figures could be interpreted as mythical daemons (genii) and shield-carrying warriors, role models of bravery and defenders of the supreme god<sup>275</sup>. After all, one of them was Eleuther, founder of the city and from whom it took its name, Eleutherna<sup>276</sup>. With such an interpretation, monument 4A could be considered as a shrine and the shield-bearing warriors as protectors on its roof. Whatever the case, heroon/cenotaph or shrine, monument 4A and its stone warriors would have been for years, in the eyes of the buriers and the relatives of the dead –that is, in the eyes of the people/citizens– the models of warrior-heroes, mythical or real, whom young men should emulate for the defence of their city. In this respect, we should see in monument 4A the premature idea of a tomb monument of the ‘unknown soldier’, which the now constituted polis founded, obviously, at some important moment in its history. What is more, its dating to around 670 BC advocates this view. The monument appears to have been destroyed in the latter years of the seventh century BC. Part of the west wall of its enclosure was removed in order to set upon it an important funeral pyre with several vases –among them Early Corinthian oenochoai– as well as five small ivory heads, which most probably decorated a casket or something of the kind. The differences





in colour of them is due to the heat of the fire and the degree of their exposure to the flames.

Monuments above ground, given the conventional excavation names 3A, 3K and 4K (from east to west), and located to the north of the heroon/cenotaph 4A, reveal in their turn the wealth of architectural structures in the Orthi Petra necropolis. Unfortunately, evidence of their superstructure is scant. A stepped crepidoma survives on the north narrow side of monument 3A, while only a stepped part of the toichobate of monument 4K is preserved in situ to the east. Indeed, it is clear that this monument was bedded in sections upon the north enclosure of the heroon 4A, so attesting the density of architectural structures in this particular part of the necropolis, which together with the colossal obelisk (discussed below) seems to have been its centre. Furthermore, stone reliefs and works sculpted in the round, and fragments of them (a human head, a waterspout in the shape of a male bearded sphinx, part of a frieze, and so on) constituted the decoration of these monuments, unfortunately too fragmentary to lead to a secure graphic restoration.



*Protocorinthian aryballos with representation of running dogs, as apparent from the rollout photo above. 7th century BC.*





*Parts of the epikranitis (above) and the doorframe (below) of the heroon-cenotaph in the Orthi Petra necropolis (see p. 219), which bring to mind the corresponding members of the funerary monument depicted on the celebrated Late Minoan sarcophagus from Hagia Triada (right).*



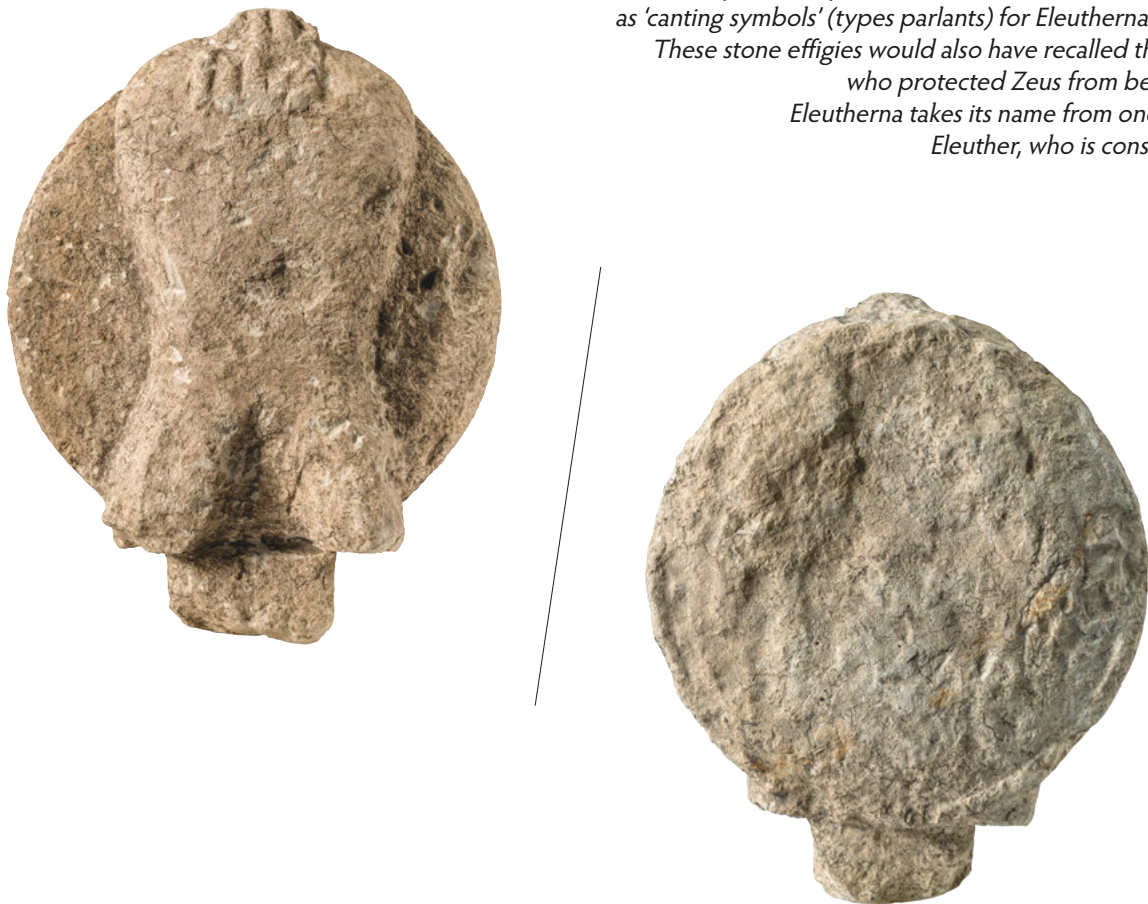








*Stone shield-bearing warrior figures which were uncovered around the heroon/cenotaph in the Orthi Petra necropolis (see p. 219). In all likelihood these were antefixes on its roof, as 'canting symbols' (types parlants) for Eleutherna's warriors killed in battle. These stone effigies would also have recalled the shield-bearing Curetes who protected Zeus from being devoured by Kronos. Eleutherna takes its name from one of the mythical Curetes, Eleuther, who is considered the city's founder.*







*Back view of the statue, which preserves the most details.*

*The Eleutherna 'Kore'.*

*Lower body of a stone female statue. From the findspot of the Eleutherna 'kore', just west of monument 4A, and its condition, it is surmised that it would have stood in the conch formed by the monument's false door. Guardian and 'daemon' or deity who separated the two worlds, that of the living outside and that of the dead inside. ca 650 BC.*

*Apart from the obvious external similarities and other details, iconographic and stylistic, of the kore with the famous 'Dame d'Auxerre' –today in the Louvre (see p. 298)– petrochemical analysis of the two statues, as well as of the stone warriors (correspondence of the order of 99.73%) leaves no doubt that their material –marly limestone– comes from the same quarry of ancient Eleutherna, thus documenting that the 'Dame d'Auxerre' originates from Crete.*



*View of left side. Visible is the left hand resting on the thigh.*



*Detail of the decoration on the lower part of the garment, where red pigment is preserved on the motifs.*





*Part of the decorated plinth, feet and calves of a kouroi (?). 6th century BC.*



*Detail of the statue's base with incised decoration of bands and X motifs, on which the red pigment is preserved. Integral left foot on the upper surface.*





*Limestone bearded head of a Sphinx. It would have served as a waterspout at the end of the sima of a funerary monument, or as decoration of a spout of a fountain. 7th century BC.*



*Archaic stone head  
from a frieze that decorated a funerary monument in the Orthi Petra necropolis.*





*Five ivory heads.*

*The difference in colour is due to their exposure to the flames of a funeral pyre. The technical details indicate that they are body parts of figures that decorated a frieze, most probably of a wooden casket or piece of furniture. Usually heads, hands and feet were fashioned in ivory because this material, as is noted in the Homeric epics, resembles the colour of skin.*

*The other parts were of wood sheathed with gold leaf (technique of chryselephantine works). The heads were found together with fragments of Early Corinthian oenochoi and are dated to the turn of the seventh to the sixth century BC.*







*Although damaged, the exquisite refinement with which the material has been crafted is evident, surely referring to famed workshops of the period. Distinguished at that time were workshops of Corinth and Ionia, with which Crete and Eleutherna had relations, as attested also by other imports. We should not forget that from Crete hailed Chersiphron and Metagenes, who worked in the renowned Ionian sanctuary of Artemis Ephesia. Exotic materials such as ivory were imported from Asia and Egypt, and objects from them were produced in cities, sanctuaries and courts of rulers and tyrants in continental and insular Greece, as well as Asia Minor, during the seventh and sixth centuries BC.*





## Pillars and grave stelai

Important are the grave stelai and primarily the pillars which have come to light in the Orthi Petra necropolis. The grave stelai, large and small, sometimes preserve their champlévé decoration, as well as traces of red pigment, mainly on their crownings. The pillars are far more numerous. Some are distinguished by the originality of their incised subjects: wild goat (Cretan ibex) or vegetal and other motifs, the most robust ones a warrior or a dignitary, the slimmest found so far. The wild goats and the vegetal motifs in particular seem to have been chthonic in character, making up a Cretan thematic repertoire for grave markers. Notable among them are rectangular parallelepiped pillars of Cretan type and some cippi of Oriental-Phoenician type.

Outstanding among the pillars, because of its great height, about 4 m, is the obelisk restored on its large pedestal, in the middle of the ancient necropolis. It would have been visible throughout the Chalopota valley, from the acropolis and from other parts of the polis, a landmark at the very heart of the necropolis. The fact that in this way the Orthi Petra necropolis seems to be located at a central point in the city brings to mind automatically Aristotle's maxim that among the Greeks it was the Cretans and the Spartans who had (in early times) their cemeteries *intra muros*, so staking their ancestral claim to ownership of their habitation space and reinforcing the cohesion of identity of its inhabitants. Although we might think that the area was named Orthi Petra (= Standing Stone) after this large obelisk/pillar, the obelisk had already been destroyed before the period of Venetian rule and a large olive tree had been planted on top of it. Thus, it seems more likely that the site owes its name probably to a stele/pillar which still stands in situ a short way to the northeast of the obelisk but was covered over with earth when the Ottoman paved road leading from Alpha to Prines (Archaia Eleftherna) was constructed.

*Stone grave pillar. 7th (?) century BC.*

*On the upper part are successive bands with fine relief panels and incised dotted rosettes. On the body are two frames, above and below, with incised wild goats (see next page). At this period youths were frequently likened to wild goats and to caprids.*









LEFT: Limestone grave pillar. Incised representation of a standing male figure holding a long shaft, either a warrior with spear (or an aristocrat with sceptre). Visible are the body and the hands with the long shaft in the left. 7th / 6th century BC.  
RIGHT: Limestone grave pillar with incised linear decoration. 7th (?) century BC.





*Upper part of a limestone grave stele with volutes framing a palmette. Red pigment is preserved. 6th (?) century BC.*



*LEFT: Limestone grave stele (grave pillar). Crowned with cavetto moulding. In the upper part are volutes with trefoil palmette between them. Below the middle, incised X motifs form a 'chain'. Red pigment preserved locally. 7th / 6th century BC.  
RIGHT BELOW: Limestone grave stele-cippus of Phoenician 'Tanitic' type. 8th / 7th (?) century BC.*







## SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS FROM INVESTIGATIONS TO DATE AT ANCIENT ELEUTHERNA

I think that there is no need for me to spell out that in order to draw secure and full conclusions from a systematic university excavation, prerequisite is to have completed this, which is not the case for Eleutherna. The enormous size of the city, the different areas and different densities of habitation at different periods, economic and other parameters –time, possibilities, and so on– make a complete synthesis impossible. Therefore, we shall confine ourselves to a synoptic presentation of conclusions from research so far, in the hope that these will be useful for research in the future.

I shall not refer here analytically to the indications of very early human presence at the site and of possible habitation of it, at least on the hill of Prines (Archaia Eleftherna). At present, very early human presence and habitation in the wider area –not only on Prines (Archaia Eleftherna) hill– is evidenced by stone tools of the Late Neolithic period/Early Bronze Age found at different points on the hill (Katsivelos, acropolis, Orthi Petra necropolis), and by blades and cores of Melian obsidian, both on the hill and its environs, even as far as Alpha to the northwest of Eleutherna. Moreover, the finding of fragmented Cycladic figurines, as well as their Cretan versions of Koumasa type, bears witness to early relations with the Aegean and the Cyclades, already from the third millennium BC.

The quantity of finds of the Early, Middle and Late Minoan periods recovered from the acropolis, Katsivelos and Orthi Petra may be relatively small, but small too are the spaces excavated so far in the vast ancient city. However, in combination with the finding of stone vases and seal-stones, as well as of clay figurines, and so on, in different localities and contexts –although not always in clear layers of the second millennium BC– the pottery points to more permanent human presence and, therefore, at least dispersed habitation on the hill. Nonetheless, I shall insist indicatively on what research offers to date, contributing essentially to the knowledge of chapters of the city's history in periods of floruit, as deduced from the necropolis, while for the city of later phases of 'the day is nigh', when we will have acquired a fuller picture from the continuing excavations.

A par excellence space of silence, as is the necropolis, speaks volubly about the whole spectrum of life at ancient Eleutherna in its early phase, that which coincides in large part with the creation and oral dissemination and, last, the composition and textualization of the Homeric epics (9th – 6th century BC).

*Part of one of the Archaic/Early Classical inscriptions found at various points in ancient Eleutherna.*



The Orthi Petra necropolis, with the funeral pyre of the elite warrior and the slain captive, is, as far as we know, the unique proof of the truth of the description of Patroclus' funeral pyre in Rhapsody XXIII of the *Iliad*, particularly regarding the slaughter of the twelve Trojans in front of the pyre, as the final honouring (*γέρας*) of the dead. Thus, it contributes to ending the dispute between Plato and Aristotle, as the Eleutherna find tips the balance in favour of the latter. We speak of the dispute over whether the epics consists of poetic extravagances or includes also prosaic realities. At the same time, the find contributes to our knowledge about the way in which the epics were apparently composed, from different sagas that were united by the bards who came from various parts of the Hellenic world to participate in panhellenic festivals or fairs, in different places and at different times, where each one recited his own poetic parts. With regard to the case here, although in the *Iliad* the leading role is usually accorded to Achilles, Agamemnon or Odysseus, it is telling that in the episode of Patroclus' funeral pyre two Cretans are protagonists: Idomeneus (the fury of Ida, the courageous man of Psiloreitis) and Meriones. They were the ones who knew all about constructing the pyre, as well as about the ceremonial of the funeral rite, and so they could perform it on Mount Ida of Troy, from their knowledge gained on Mount Ida of Crete, in the northwest foothills of which lies Eleutherna<sup>277</sup>.

Consequently, the core of the narrative about the construction of the funeral pyre and the funeral rite for Patroclus, about the offerings and even about the execution of the captives, seems to be of Cretan origin, since the dating of the funeral pyre of Eleutherna between 730 and 700 BC, that is long before the final synthesis and writing down of the epics, demonstrates that what we have at Orthi Petra it is not an act of mimesis which derived from reading the epics but a model for one of the sagas in the composition of the *Iliad*, just as *mutatis mutandis* the narration about the celebrated cup of Nestor had, I suppose, a Messenian origin.

The wealth of the finds in the necropolis, the grave goods of the warriors, the priestesses and in general of the persons of high status (social and economic), in combination with the anthropological studies, paint clear pictures of the society of Eleutherna in the Early Iron Age. Ages, illnesses, everyday hardships, kinship relations, causes and reasons of death; a whole world leaps forth from the study of the bones, dry or incinerated. A preliminary examination and publication of the burnt bones from the cinerary vases in tomb A1K1 of the warriors, as well as other studies of bones from the necropolis, by A. Agelarakis<sup>278</sup>, his collaborators and students, has demonstrated kinship relations, such as the matrilineage of the women who were buried inside the pithoi 'en chaîne' on the north side of the excavated part of the necropolis, where for generations 'grandmothers, mothers, daughters, granddaughters, sisters, female cousins, aunts' with common inherited traits were buried in large pithoi, together with part of their material wealth as grave goods. The sicknesses while alive or the causes of death of occupants of the necropolis, such as in childbirth, due to injury, and so on, are also discussed. Mainly discussed, however, is the everyday wear and tear, the habitual stresses that leave their marks on the bones, such as on the hands of a noble lady who worked at her loom or on the limbs of another woman who was a potter<sup>279</sup>, while the relief of the bones of the arms or legs of men points to their sturdiness, for they clambered up and down mountains or were mounting or dismounting horses all their life.





*An extremely rare find, 2,700 years old. Carbonized grape found in the tumulus of earth and pebbled casing of the renowned funeral pyre of the warrior. 720-700 BC.*

The same applies also to the results of studies relating to dietary habits and other aspects of life<sup>280</sup>. It is not only the foodstuffs that can be detected for instance on the teeth of a dead individual, but also the material remains, such as olives, figs, grapes, liquid and solid foodstuffs that were contained in the vases, and for which we await their analysis by the method of Gas Chromatography. This method is applied also to perfume vases and incense burners, to lamps and stands, as well as to those vases that perhaps held unguents or medicaments. That is, to detect substances that were used to scent the body, to heal human pain, but also to cense the gods and to light moonless nights. A whole living world.

Even vases or objects used for food and drink: kraters for mixing wine with water (the name of the vessel derives from the verb *kerannymi*, meaning to mix, as does a word for wine – *krasi*), drinking cups, vases for preparing and consuming food (basins, plates, etc.), iron spits (*obeloi*) for broiling pieces of meat, as well as large bronze cauldrons, some for boiling/stewing food, others for boiling water and cleansing the body, of the living or the dead, it matters not. Cycle of life and cycle of use.



*ABOVE: Set of five obeloi (spits), πεμπύβολα (pempobola) according to Homer, 9th century BC.  
BELOW: Pair of iron fire-dogs in the shape of a 'ship' with iron cylindrical spits upon it.*





*Clay Archaic (?)  
gaming piece (die).*

However, this material wealth of objects fashioned from clay, stone (ordinary, precious or semiprecious), metal (gold, silver, bronze, iron), glass and faience, ivory or anything else, apart from the working, the forming, the shape or the use of them, reveals Eleutherna's relations, mercantile –direct or indirect– with far-off places and centres of production, such as Attica, the Peloponnese, Corinth, Euboea (?), the Cyclades, the Dodecanese (mainly Rhodes and Kos), Asia Minor, Cyprus, Phoenicia, Egypt... and possibly distant Etruria, or even further North, at least for the raw material amber. Indeed, in some cases even the macroscopic and microscopic analysis of the material, such as clay, points to more specific places of provenance, such as a lekythion from the area between Akko and Tyre (today northern Israel and southern Lebanon)<sup>281</sup>. Several of the bronze vases –mainly bowls– are known to come from or to be inspired by centres such as Phrygia in Asia Minor, Cyprus, the Syro-Palestinian littoral (Levant), while an exceptionally well-preserved faience figurine of Sekhmet is from Egypt or Phoenicia. An idea about the daily life, customs and recreation, as well as the social status of their owners is given by objects such as the swords and iron spearpoints for warfare, the large clay die for dice games, then as now a male pastime, as can be seen from the celebrated vase by the painter Exekias, with Achilles and Ajax. The clay loom-weights and spindle whorls on the other hand point to the occupations of women. Elegant pins of ivory or bone, in addition to those of gold or silver, which we have already seen, are wonderful items of adornment and functional accessories of dress, mainly of women. The fragments of a bronze basin with handles decorated with arched guilloches, with lotus blossom finial, find very good comparanda from Palaipaphos (Skales) on Cyprus<sup>282</sup>, as does a recently found bronze ladle (arytaina) which brings to mind analogous Cypriot specimens that are dated to the eleventh-tenth century BC<sup>283</sup>. Both the basin and the ladle from Eleutherna seem to belong to the later products of this Cypriot workshop. Of course, it should be admitted that such kinds of imported large of valuable metal objects (which could have reached Eleutherna also as dowry items) could be handed down from one generation to the next and therefore the date of their production bears no relation to the date of the cremation or inhumation which the examples from Eleutherna accompanied as grave goods (9th/8th century BC)<sup>284</sup>.

The jewellery items, such as the gold rosettes, but mainly the necklaces, both the one with beads of gold and rock crystal, and that with tiny heads alternating with gold flowers, denote on the one hand the wealth and on the other the high status of their female owners in the society of the period. The rectangular gold lamellae with representations of divinities could be Cretan, but there are also others for which similarities merit further research as to their provenance. The issue of circulation of analogous pieces of jewellery over a long time span, as well as the contribution it makes to the debate on and the interpretation of artistic exchanges and relations between certain regions, in particular between Asia Minor, Cyprus, the Levant and northern Syria and Crete and Eleutherna –which is reinforced also by the imports of or the inspirations in bronze vessels and mainly bowls, referred to above– is a chapter of immense interest. The provenance of gold outside Crete is considered certain, but the craftsmanship of both gold and rock crystal cannot rule out Crete as place of production of some of the pieces of jewellery. Nonetheless, thematic and iconographic issues are raised, as





*Part of a stone with Late Archaic boustrophedon inscription.  
In line four is reference to strangers (...το κσεν...). The 'kosmos ton xenon',  
the official responsible for the strangers in the city, is known both in Eleutherna and in other Cretan cities.*

well as others relating to East Mediterranean lands (Cyprus, northern Syria) as places of production or inspiration of analogous pieces of jewellery<sup>285</sup>.

Hundreds of faience beads in various colours and sizes are perhaps not from a necklace but, more likely, were embroidered on a textile as a pectoral, as seen for example on the female figures represented on some stelai from Prinias, or on a kind of purse/scrip, as is known from analogous examples from Syria<sup>286</sup>. Sometimes the journey of the imports is much more complicated and fascinating than we may imagine, as glazed amphora-like vases which are very similar to each other are discovered in the area of northern Syria, Cyprus, Rhodes, Eleutherna and even at Ponte Cagniano in Italy<sup>287</sup>. Analogous was the journey of Geometric and Archaic Cypriot oenochoai, which started from Cyprus and travelled to the East (Syria, Idlib) and to the West (Dodecanese, Crete).

Four ivory heads found at Eleutherna point in the direction of the East or Egypt. The raw material comes from Asia or Africa. The little heads do not appear to be related to the Laconian workshop or to be 'Ionic' works, as these are known from Delphic assemblages of the mid-sixth century BC. In my opinion they are stylistically closer to works in ivory or wood from Samos and Ionia, which have at times been linked with Cretan workshops<sup>288</sup>.

Needless to say, it is impossible to exhaust in these few lines all the artifacts that bespeak the wide geographical extent of the lands of production of those mentioned and of dozens of others that are omitted here. This geographical ambit can be interpreted in diverse ways. It could be that Eleutherna was a nautical power and indeed not always with a mercantile (I mean it could also be piratical) fleet. It could be due to the existence of harbour installations and facilities for the mercantile fleets of other commercial centres,



cities or regions and indeed at different periods, such as Cyprus, Phoenicia, Rhodes, Miletos, Athens, Euboea and the Cyclades, Corinth, and so on. Or, last, it could be the outcome of Eleutherna's mercantile activity with other 'mediating' cities and regions of Crete, which had direct trading relations with the above regions.

Of course, combinations of the above hypotheses cannot be ruled out, nor can isolated cases of acquisition of these objects by Eleuthernians who had contact, in one way or another, with the 'outside world'. We could think for instance of different interpersonal relationships (friendship, marriage, and so on), of gift exchanges between aristocratic families of Eleutherna and the aforesaid regions and especially with Cyprus and Phoenicia, and of Eleuthernians who were present as mercenaries in courts of rulers in the regions of Lycia, Cilicia, northern Syria, the Levant and Egypt<sup>289</sup>. Some precious objects could also have come into the possession of Eleuthernians as plunder from conquests of neighbouring cities which had acquired such wealth, or even from the presence of foreigners who, for whatever reasons, lived and died in this city (as is probably indicated by the presence of Phoenician cippi<sup>290</sup> or by the use of a Phoenician letter in the Archaic inscriptions of Eleutherna and Axos<sup>291</sup>), to confine ourselves just to logical arguments.

Nevertheless, the gamut of imports refers mainly to mercantile activity and to remarkable mobility in the region. Whether trade was conducted directly or indirectly by the Eleuthernians, the question arises as to what kind of products were exported from the city's territory, which had such exchange value as to ensure that precious goods and materials (jewellery of precious metal, bronze vessels, ivories, and so on) were imported –if, of course, the term precious had for eastern Mediterranean societies of Geometric and Archaic times the same meaning as it has today. Because not only could some of the above artifacts be considered precious, but also anything exotic, anything that is lacking or rare in a society, anything foreign, strange or curious, which on being exchanged (or gifted) would have analogous value for both parties to a transaction (or gift exchange).

The question becomes more substantial if we bear in mind that these were pre-coinage societies, at least during the Geometric period, and for Crete –and therefore for Eleutherna– perhaps also throughout the Archaic period, at least until the end of the sixth century BC.

Consequently, the Orthi Petra necropolis with its finds of all kinds, even though a space of silence, speaks loquaciously about all manner of relations of Eleutherna's inhabitants with other regions of Crete, the Aegean and the wider area of the East and Central Mediterranean, about a slice of life of the people in the polis.





*Clay Attic amphora. Late 9th century BC (830-810 BC).*



*Clay Protocorinthian aryballos. 7th century BC.*



*Clay amphora from a Cycladic (Parian) workshop. Late 8th / 7th century BC (700-690 BC).  
This vase, like the Theran stamnos on p. 302, attests the close ties of Crete and Eleutherna  
with the Cyclades also during the Early Iron Age and particularly in the eighth and seventh centuries BC.*





*Clay lekanis.*  
*On the resting surface is champlévé*  
*decoration of a large cross with running spiral*  
*on the arms and leaves in the quadrants.*  
*The cross motif brings to mind*  
*the corresponding one*  
*from the tombs at Fortetsa*  
*near Heraklion (below).*  
*Late 9th, early 8th century BC.*



*Clay trilobe oenochoe*  
*from western Asia Minor-Phrygia (?). 8th century BC.*



*Clay oenochoe from an East Aegean workshop*  
*(perhaps Kos or Rhodes). Second half of 8th century BC.*





*Clay oenochoe of Early Wild Goat Style, imported from the Southeast Aegean (perhaps from Miletos)  
ca mid- 7th century BC (660 / 650 BC).*





*Clay Cypro-Phoenician and Phoenician lekythia. From macroscopic analysis of the clay of the vase bottom right it seems to come from the region. Late 8th/7th century BC.*







*Five Cypriot oenochoi (black on red, BOR I-II (III-IV)) with concentric circles. 8th century BC.  
For their voyage from Cyprus to the Aegean and Crete, (pp. 278-279, Tales).*



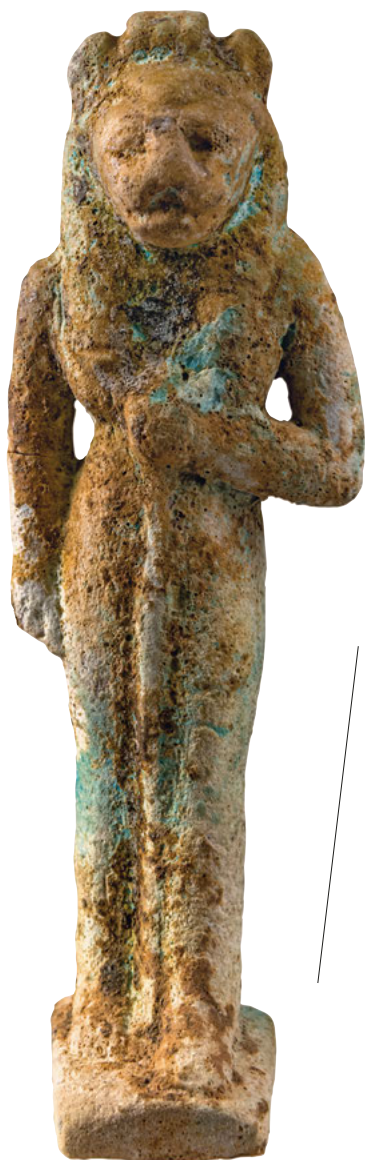




*Small female (?) head of amber. 8th/7th century BC.*



*Bone pinhead (?).  
First half of 7th century BC. This is a masterwork in the minor arts.  
Daedalic female deity with polos and rampant lion turning his head  
backwards while resting his forelegs on the polos and the back  
of the goddess's head and shoulders.*



*Pendant in the form of the Egyptian  
deity Sekhmet. 8th century BC.*



*Glass lekythion in the form  
of a pomegranate. 7th century BC.*



*Handleless lekythion of faience (?). 8th / 7th century BC.*





*Gold rosettes. 7th century BC.*



*Necklace or diadem of rosettes and plaquettes with Daedalic head (gold and gilded silver). 7th century BC.*



*Bow fibula of bone and bronze, similar to analogous Etruscan ones. There were perhaps amber inlays in the cloisons. Late 8th / 7th century BC.*





*Detail of the incised linear decoration of the bird from the inside of the bowl below.*



*Bronze hemispherical bowl with superficial incised decoration (of a cockerel) on the inside. 730-700 BC.*





*Bronze bowl with relief decoration on the inside. An excellent specimen of metalwork of the late eighth century BC with a medley of subjects and elements from earlier periods. At the centre a multi-petalled rosette, the internal frieze with bulls and lions. On the external frieze hunting scenes with kneeling archers, lions attacking wild goats and other animals, as well as a griffin 'landing', in two parts separated by vegetal motifs and ornaments of Cypro-Egyptian inspiration.*









*Details from the inside of the bronze bowl (p. 249) and drawing of it (left). Clearly visible are both the kneeling bowmen who have trapped a lion between them, and the body of the lion taut as a bowstring on the right, in aggressive gallop against a bearded and horned wild goat which tries in vain to escape, turning its head towards its pursuer.*









## REGAINING THE SITE OF ANCIENT ELEUTHERNA AND CREATING THE NEW IDENTITY

There are scores, hundreds of rescue and systematic excavations all over Greece, conducted by the Archaeological Service, the Greek Universities and the Foreign Archaeological Schools which are active in our country. Some excavations are never published and forgotten, while others are published partly or completely, but as time passes the excavated sites disappear from sight and therefore, for the general public, they are essentially non-existent. Last, some excavations may exist as sites or as result through their moveable finds, but these finds are buried in the storerooms of museums, awaiting their second emergence from them.

For Crete, with a history of excavations going back well over a century, only naturally there are examples of all the enumerated ways of dealing with them.

Knossos, by which I mean its palace, notwithstanding the criticisms, the disagreements or the different opinions, was excavated completely, early in the twentieth century. The antiquities were protected, as far as possible, while the moveable finds, not only from the palace but also from the city and its territory, graced and grace the Heraklion Archaeological Museum, as it used to be and in its new form. The site of the palace was fenced and was opened to the public and, like all sites, it began to have problems: problems of characterizing and defining the limits of the wider area of the city and its cemeteries, problems of buffer Zones A and B which were only recently resolved, problems of guarding the site, problems of wear and tear of the monuments in one of the largest archaeological sites in Greece and with one of the highest number of visitors. Even the large number of visitors, the routes inside the fenced area, the sale of tickets at the entrance are still issues demanding better and better solutions.

Even though I was well aware of these problems, I considered that the University of Crete Excavation at Eleutherna, given its importance and the enormous excavation work carried out and still ongoing there<sup>292</sup>, should not be just an educational project. Its mission should not be limited to teaching students about excavation, to offering practical training and knowledge to budding archaeologists, albeit scientific knowledge of many disciplines related to Archaeology. Nor should it remain known only to aficionados of archaeology and culture.

*The three-level shelter over the Orthi Petra necropolis, today a landmark of the archaeological site. Its stepped arrangement follows the curved shape of the hill of ancient Eleutherna, while the copper sheets that protect the necropolis bring to mind the bronze shields of the Curetes daemons. 'The bones of the ancestors are shielded with bronze shields, so as to escape the rage of Kronos, that is inexorable Chronos (Time), which devours its children: mortals and immortals indiscriminately.'*



Archaeology, and its results, is not only a discipline but also a public good. It is linked with society, with people, Greeks and foreigners, of every gender, age, educational or economic background, it is part of the identity and the culture of a people, and it should have a practical return. It should be a part of lifelong process of learning and generating knowledge in perpetuity, as well as a factor of sustainable development. After all, the role of the university is not solely the production of knowledge, but as spinoff the linking of this knowledge with society, to the benefit of the latter.

So, as far back as 1986, we began publicizing the results from all the excavation sectors, with articles published in scientific periodicals, papers presented at national and international conferences, contributions to collective volumes, with monographs, with term papers by students and young colleagues, postgraduate dissertations and doctoral theses, and this continues. The production of knowledge by the excavation and the work at Eleutherna was and is extremely important and involves the participation of colleagues from elsewhere in Greece and abroad, not only in the discipline of Archaeology but also of Anthropology (physical and cultural), Palaeodemography and Forensics, of Zooarchaeology, Palaeobotany, Architecture, Epigraphy, History<sup>293</sup>...

However, in addition to the scientific domain, I strove from as early as 1990/91 to make Eleutherna and its site known to the wider public, through the mass media [newspapers, magazines, radio, television, more recently social networking, and so on] both in Greece and abroad. Especially for the finds from the Orthi Petra necropolis, because of their importance and their link with the Homeric epics, in particular with the mortuary customs and the funeral pyre of Patroclus described in Rhapsody XXIII of the *Iliad*, in the end for the proof of the truth of Homer which contributes to solving the Homeric dispute<sup>294</sup>, as discussed above<sup>295</sup>. In other words, the contention as to what extent Homer narrates the truth and is not poetic hyperbole, an issue first raised in the fourth century BC, between Plato and Aristotle. In parallel, archaeological exhibitions devoted to the necropolis were organized both in Crete (Rethymnon 1993)<sup>296</sup> and in Athens (1994)<sup>297</sup>. A third exhibition followed, for the whole site, in 2004/05. *Eleutherna: polis, acropolis, necropolis*<sup>298</sup>, which was mounted in the Museum of Cycladic Art in Athens, consolidated the ancient city's place in the eyes and minds of visitors from all over the world.

Concurrently, I began with my collaborators to implement the project for creating the Archaeological Park of Eleutherna (*Άλσος Ελευθερναίων* – Eleuthernian Grove). This involved laying routes and pathways for visitors, installing wooden steps, planting trees, arranging halting places in the archaeological site and vantage points with seating, providing information panels, putting in underground electricity cables at the site of Orthi Petra, constructing a tarmac road to Orthi Petra to the west and Katsivelos to the east, installing water tanks of 20 tonnes capacity in collaboration with the Fire Service of Rethymnon, for the protection of the site from fire, and, of course, building guardhouses on the west slopes, at Potamida, at the access to the Orthi Petra necropolis, and the east one at Katsivelos, at the access to the ancient city. A uniform fence was erected around the purchased fields on the west slope, the acropolis on Prines hill and around the ancient polis and the basilica at Katsivelos on the east slope (a practice continued for the fields purchased by us at Agia Eirini and Agios Markos). Last, the studies for the erection of shelters, both over the Orthi Petra necropolis and over the basilica of Archangel Michael (Euphratas) at Katsivelos, were finalized,



approved by the Central Archaeological Council and the Ministry of Culture (ΥΠΠΟ), and implemented respectively in 2006 and 2007. Today these shelters, funded by the Third Community Support Framework of the Region of Crete, are landmarks protecting and enhancing the ancient city<sup>299</sup>. Praised in particular is the shelter over the Orthi Petra necropolis, on account of its shape and the philosophy behind it: just as the Curetes protected with their shields the supreme god Zeus, so that he would not be devoured by Kronos (that is Time [Chronos] that devours everything), so we too covered with copper sheeting the triple shelter over the necropolis, shielding and protecting 'the bones of the ancestors', essentially creating an in-situ museum that is a memento mori.

The restoration of the obelisk in the middle of the necropolis, as well the partial restoration of the cenotaph/heroon, monument 4A of 680/70 BC, which is essentially the first memorial to the 'Unknown Soldier' in European History, was carried out in 2007/8 with funding from the European Union programme Interreg III and private sponsors, in order to give visitors the sense of the heightwise dimension of the monuments, without altering the excavation picture.

The continuation of the excavations in the twenty-first century, particularly in the necropolis, and the unearthing of the tomb of the priestesses-princesses, brought Eleutherna into the world's TOP-10 archaeological sites for 2009/10<sup>300</sup>, together with sites in countries such as Egypt, Russia, Israel, Peru, and elsewhere. This means that our duty to take the right steps for the emergence, conservation, protection and enhancement of both the necropolis and the polis (city) is even more imperative.

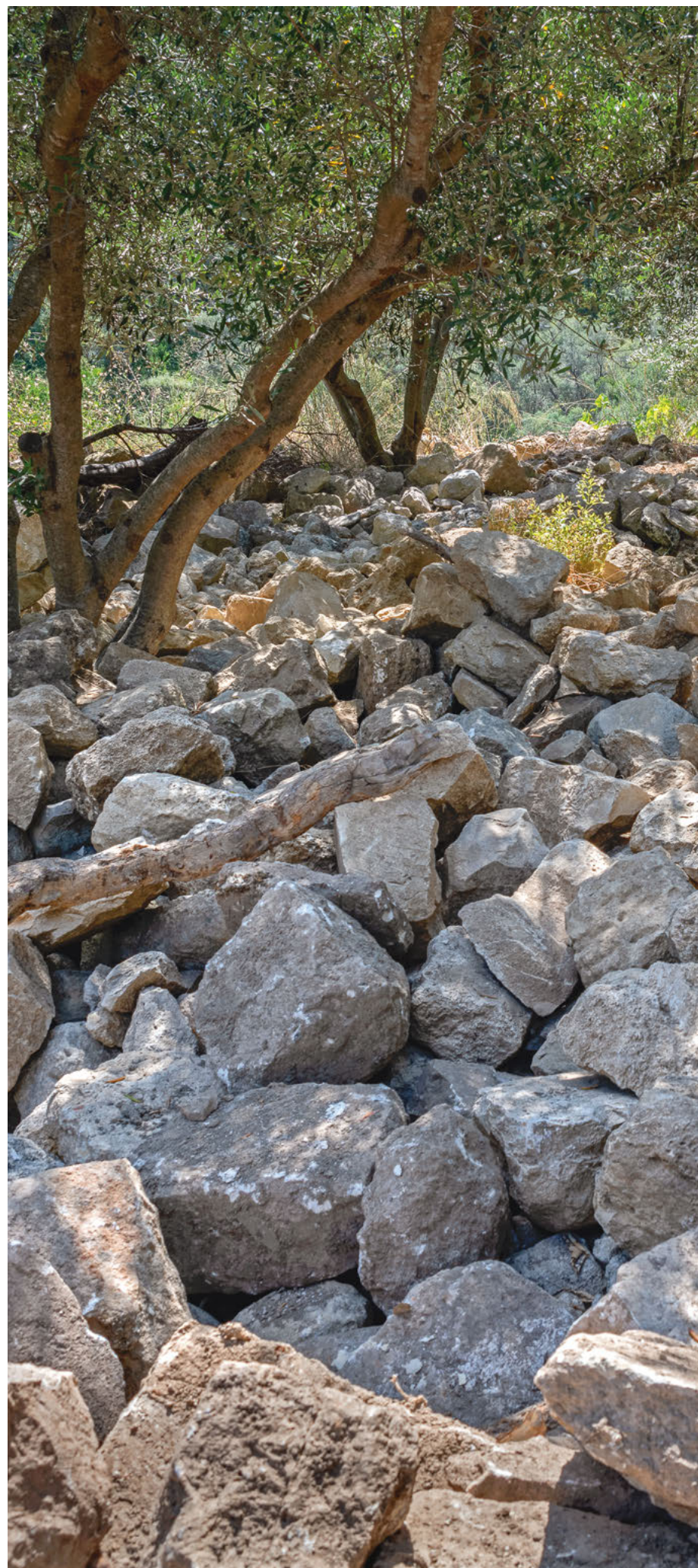
So we went ahead with preparing also the excavation at Agia Eirini, on the east-central slopes of the hill (pre-excavation survey and trial trenches from 2007 onward). Significant in the Orthi Petra necropolis was the uncovering of tomb A1 (2011-2013) as well as of other spaces in the necropolis around and outside the shelter, revealing even today parts of the Hellenistic and Roman city also in deeper layers of the necropolis itself. The whole development went hand in hand with my efforts for the final demarcation of the archaeological site and of the buffer Zones A and B, which bore fruit with the publications of the relevant Laws in the *Official Gazette* (*ΦΕΚ* 96/28-3-2012 and *ΦΕΚ* 145/30-4-2012). So, the earlier pivotal declarations pertaining to the archaeological site and the protection of the historical and natural beauty of the landscape of ancient Eleutherna were instituted fully, the limits of Zones A and B were defined and indeed with the broad consensus of the residents and property owners in the surrounding Communities. This development defined a first circle of emergence of the ancient city and at the same time signalled the beginning of other efforts that had already commenced after the completion of the Eleuthernian Grove.

Recently, our efforts have shifted from the west slope of Prines hill and the 'dark' period of the Early Iron Age and Homer, to the east slope, for one further emergence of the polis of Eleutherna in the critical stage of changes from the Hellenistic to the Roman city and, mainly in the transition from paganism to Christianity. So, with my new collaborators and students, I went ahead with investigating the antiquities at Agia Eirini and Agios Markos. Once again the olive groves and fields for the excavation at these localities were purchased with sponsorship and donations secured from foundations, organizations and individuals



– as was the case for most of the fields so far – and, as good luck would have it, we are today bringing to light two major monuments: the basilica of St Irene and the basilica at Agios Markos, with exceptional results.

Not only are these outstanding monuments being revealed, but also their phases, as well as the earlier layers and the materials that were used for their construction (Archaic, Hellenistic and Roman spolia). With the purchase of the new fields, the already excavated site at Katsivelos is unified with the areas of Agia Eirini and Agios Markos, and of the guardhouses on the east slope of the hill, thus creating a second pole of attraction for visitors, within the Archaeological Park of Eleutherna. In this way a balance is struck between Orthi Petra on the west slope of Prines hill, with centre of gravity the necropolis of the Early Iron Age and Homer, and the east slope, where the focal point is Hellenistic, Roman and Early Christian Eleutherna.



*Beneath the shade of the olive grove, the toil of the exhaustive excavation with the stones awaiting rearrangement. From the basilica at the locality Agios Markos.*









## THE MUSEUM

Culmination of all our endeavours was the creation of a Museum, which is state of the art in all respects – environmental, architectural, museographical, museological and educational. It is situated inside the limits of Zone B of the archaeological site of ancient Eleutherna and directly connected to the ongoing excavations. The Museum is situated between the Communities of Eleftherna and Archaia Eleftherna, on an initial plot of 0.55 hectares owned by the University of Crete from legal transfer by its owner to the then Municipality of Arkadi and, via the Municipality and the Region of Crete, its donation to the University in order to build the Museum. Later, a further 0.7 hectares were purchased and added to the original plot, and to the ownership of the University of Crete, thus constituting the entire area of the Museum and its grounds. The initial plans were prepared in 2008 but were worked on and completed later. After a checkered course, the implementation was eventually included in the NSRF Programme *OPCE OPIAN... 2007-2013*. Works started in 2012 and were completed in 2015, excepting the final placement of the exhibits, which was done a few months later. As the Museum of an archaeological site, the first such Museum in Crete, it houses the antiquities from the ancient city, places emphasis on the Early Iron Age and Homer, and because of the ongoing excavations, is original in one other respect: thanks to the constant supply of new finds, the material in the showcases will be renewed every four years, which means that visitors will return time and again. The Museum of ancient Eleutherna (MaE) is operated by two agencies: on the one hand the University of Crete (the serving Rectorate) with the author as Head of the Study Centre and the laboratories, and on the other hand the





*The west side (Entrance) of the Museum of ancient Eleutherna. In the background right, the foothills of Mount Ida (Psiloreitis).*

Ministry of Culture, through the responsible Ephorate of Antiquities of Rethymnon, in a relationship of excellent collaboration. It was opened on 19 June 2016 by the President of the Hellenic Republic, in the presence of the authorities and 2,300 visitors.

The Museum building resembles an ark emerging from the earth and facing ancient Mount Ida, today's Psiloreitis. It is a contemporary construction of 1,800 sq m, with two storeys, a semi-basement as it follows the gradient of the ground, and a ground floor.

The semi-basement houses the laboratories and storerooms, and in the ground floor, which is divided into two units, are the atrium and the guardhouse, the exhibition spaces in the central and north parts, and the Study Centre and its offices in the south part. On the east façade there are features that refer to 'Mycenaean' offset-inset fortification walls, while the atrium brings to mind ancient Greek internal hypostyle courts. The whole is an austere structure with clean lines. The building was designed to human scale and is incorporated in the natural environment, yet at the same time, as a contemporary concrete construction, it distinctly and recognizably represents the time of its creation. Thanks to the declivity of ground it does not rise conspicuously above its surroundings, reaching the height to west, south and north, of about 4.5 m above the level of the metalled rural road, without jarring the visitor's eye. The east side, partly sloping on the façade and double in height, is sunk in the slope of the hillock on which the whole is also founded.



In the space directly in front of the west side of the Museum are gardens, planted trees, a small parking lot for persons with special needs, seats and specially paved surfaces with guidelines leading to the entrance. At the back of the building, to the north, so as not to mar the picture of the building, there is a parking lot. At the east edge of the parking lot, next to the north side of the Museum, an auxiliary building has now been designed to house the Museum shop and cafeteria, which we hope will soon be constructed by the Ministry of Culture. Arranged in the large esplanade on the east side of the Museum is an open-air theatre, to host events but also a place where visitors can sit and relax, enjoy the landscape and gaze at the eyrie of Ida (Psiloreitis) and the summit of the mountain, there where the father of the gods, Zeus, was born. Stone pathways lead from the outer entrance to the south façade and the large court, where replicas of statues are now being set up and which is planted with trees and aromatic herbs characteristic of the Cretan flora from antiquity to today. There is a separate fence around the immediate environs of the Museum, while outside this space, to east and south, is a discreetly-fenced buffer ring of over 0.7 ha, filled with holm oaks and other plants.

On entering the atrium of the Museum from the west, visitors encounter on their right the guardhouse and the ticket booth, fully equipped to serve the public and the custodial personnel. The entire south wing of the ground floor, beyond the guardhouse, to west and east, is occupied by the offices, the library, the archive and sanitary facilities, which are under the jurisdiction of the University of Crete as a centre for study and research. Staircases and lifts lead to the basic spaces of function and work.

The Museum has cutting-edge storage spaces, as well as specially-equipped laboratories for conserving drawing, photographing, restoring, documenting and studying the diversity of material from the excavations that are underway at various locations in the archaeological site of Eleutherna.

In the east, north and west ground-floor spaces are three exhibition galleries for the archaeological material. From the planning stage of the Museum, provision was made in the layout of the galleries for visitors arriving at the same time to be channelled to different points in the galleries and to avoid one group disturbing the other during the guided tours. So, by taking spatial and ergonomic parameters into account, the galleries, depending on the number of exhibits and the thematic units they house –private and public life, cults and necropolises– are of different size and are consecutive for the reasons referred to above. Visitors enter the internal space of the exhibitions through a large introductory space in which the inside communicates with the outside as large windows guide their gaze to Psiloreitis, Mount Ida, birthplace of Zeus, as well as to the natural setting of the ancient city and the Museum itself. Displayed at the centre of this space is one of the museum's emblematic exhibits, the bronze shield of Idaean Cave type. It has a dual function, not only as *type parlante* of the Museum, but also as a link with the birthplace of Zeus, the Idaean Cave, which visitors behold in the distance through the picture windows. Together with the original object, displayed without showcase is a replica of the shield, made in the 'Homeric' way –that is, with tools analogous to Early Iron Age ones. The replica looks like gold, as Homer would have said of the scintillating bronze, before it developed the green patina of time. It has been created not only for scientific reasons and so that the general public can understand the representation on it, but also, mainly, so that the visually challenged can touch and feel it, thus acquiring a sense of the object. Because





*The ark for the safekeeping of the history of ancient Eleutherna. The east side and part of the courtyard of the Museum, where there is also the small modern theatre.*

culture is not just exhibiting antiquities in showcases but taking measures to ensure that these are appreciated and understood by as many people as possible. In the same introductory space, large wall texts in Greek and English describe the history of the excavations, while others, together with emblematic maps, outline the history of Eleutherna.

In the large long gallery A the public and private life of the city, from prehistoric to Byzantine times (3rd millennium BC-1st millennium AD), is presented through the finds in each showcase. On the right –east– side of entering visitors, the showcases are of different sizes and house a different density of exhibits, so as to convey the volume and the variety of finds by period: Prehistoric times, Geometric/Archaic period, Classical period, Hellenistic period, Roman times, Early Byzantine/Byzantine period. In the gap between each showcase there are explanatory wall texts as well as representative exhibits. Inside the showcases are all kinds of artifacts and materials: vases, tools, weapons, statues, figurines, jewellery, and so on, of clay, stone, bronze, silver, gold, bone, ivory, glass, faience, and so on. In the huge showcase opposite, on the west side of this gallery, against a changing backdrop of Google images, starting from the globe and zooming into the Mediterranean, are arrayed most of the imports to Eleutherna, from places such as Etruria (?), the Peloponnese (Argos, Corinth), Attica, the Cyclades, the Dodecanese, Asia Minor, Cyprus, North Syria, Phoenicia, Egypt...

*FOLLOWING PAGES: The Museum lobby. Here the outside enters the inside and the inside gazes upon the outside, the unspoiled landscape of the ancient city and its environs. Explanatory wall panels and the emblematic bronze shield of Idaian Cave type. Among the central exhibits-symbols of the Museum.*













*The large showcase with some of the finds from tomb A1K1 of the warriors.*

Displayed in the middle of the gallery is the wealth of jewellery, mainly of gold and to lesser extent of silver, and semiprecious stones, accompanied by drawings and enlarged combinations. This is an original digital holographic magnification of traits of the precious pieces of jewellery, which are exhibited in a showcase with animations, so that in a delightful and playful way visitors can scrutinize even the tiniest object and its details, which cannot be seen with the naked eye. At the far end of the gallery, there is a display of coins not only from Eleutherna itself but also from other cities of Crete, metropolitan and insular Greece. The ivory masterpiece with scenes from the life of Achilles is extolled in a separate showcase, while just before the entrance to Gallery B is a showcase with the Theran pithos and Phoenician bronze bowl, accompanied to the side by a short film based on Herodotus' tale of Etearchos king of Axos and his daughter Phronime, and how Eleutherna is involved in this through the specific finds.

Last, perpendicular to the large gallery A is the space for screenings and small conferences, in which is screened each day the film about Homer and Eleutherna, which visitors can sit and watch.

Gallery B focuses on the religious life and cults of the city, starting from the Geometric period and reaching to Byzantine times. A large showcase contains finds, mainly figurines, pottery, statues, inscriptions, and so on, which span the Geometric into Roman times and come usually from sanctuaries, but also, to a lesser





*The showcase of the tomb of the 'princesses-priestesses' with the authentic grave goods. In the background an artistic restoration of them as 'spectres and spectra, kisses and satiated lips, with the curtains of time wide open!'*

extent, from the necropolis or other buildings in the city. All, however, are linked with cult and the deities worshipped in the city, as are the inscriptions and the calendars of festival, or even reliefs, statue groups, statues and architectural members, and so on, which are displayed freely in the gallery. Noteworthy is the showcase with the bronze bowls that are associated with the ritual and offerings to a seated deity or with mythical creatures (lion-griffins). Because it is difficult for viewers to appreciate fully the art of these exquisite bronze bowls with green patina, they are accompanied by their copies, as was done with the shield in the antechamber, so that the representations on them can be understood.

Christian worship is represented by objects of diverse materials (mainly stone and bronze), such as closure slabs, hanging lamps and others, which come from the basilica of Archangel Michael and can be seen in one other large showcase. Visitors proceed towards the entrance to the next gallery between a presentation of architectural members and sculptures –among them the story of the Eleutherna Kore and the Dame d'Auxerre in the Louvre– which are linked with the heroon/cenotaph of the necropolis, which is related directly to beliefs and notions about the Underworld.

The Underworld –the ideas, beliefs, and mortuary practices of the Early Iron Age– dominates gallery C. In other words, focused on is the Orthi Petra necropolis, due to its relation to Homer. Protagonists in the large showcases here are the assemblages of grave goods from the two most important burial groups:



tomb A1K1 of the warriors, and the built tomb M of the priestesses-princesses. The many and rich finds in both assemblages, of all kinds of artifacts and materials, yield abundant information not only about the places of their production and their finding at Eleutherna, but also their reference to the graves. Concurrently, they disclose to us a range of activities of the inhabitants of ancient Eleutherna and indeed in the 'Homeric' period (9th – 6th century BC), because they are linked with warfare, diet and the way of life, with religious conceptions, cultic manifestations, and so on. Large grave pillars, grave stelai and statues coexist freely in the gallery. Climax of the exhibits is the funeral pyre ΛΛ90/91, which has been removed from the necropolis site. This cremation of an Eleuthernian warrior, with the slaying of a captive, illustrates vividly the verses of Rhapsody XXIII of the *Iliad*, with the funeral pyre of Patroclus. And next to it visitors can watch the 1996 film, a kind of experimental archaeology, with the re-enactment step by step of the ritual of the funeral pyre by participant students and collaborators and the author. A short film which was awarded first prize for an archaeological documentary, at the Rovereto Festival in Italy that year.

As we have said already, short films and projections which combine scientific research with fictionalization, ancient texts with archaeological finds, have been created for the edification and aesthetic enjoyment of all visitors. Reconstructions, animations and 3D images and models complete the visual aids.

The number of visitors to the Museum of ancient Eleutherna in the over three years of its operation is several hundred thousand, bringing it, on the basis of statistics of autumn 2019, into second place in Crete, of course after the Heraklion Museum. The MaE's educational programmes are provided gratis, thanks to sponsorship for this purpose, and have been participated in by over 15,000 primary and secondary school pupils<sup>301</sup>. The number and the quality of some visitors imprints also other remarkable details. In the course of preparing the exhibition *Crete. Emerging cities: Aptera – Eleutherna – Knossos*, in the Museum of Cycladic Art in Athens<sup>302</sup>, I was told that the guards of the site of Aptera frequently collect up thrown-down tickets from the MaE and the archaeological site of Eleutherna, which attests the high number of visitors to the latter. At the same time, however, it attests also the network that visitors to Eleutherna create through an itinerary of archaeological touring of the whole of Crete, and therefore the benefit that arises at every level from the new archaeological-cultural status quo on the island.

The archaeological site and the Museum of ancient Eleutherna are now a reality in the sector of planned cultural development. A series of events, paedagogical (educational programmes), cultural (lectures, conferences<sup>303</sup>, national and international), entertainment (music<sup>304</sup>, etc.) have taken place and are scheduled to take place in the actual archaeological site, that is in the Orthi Petra necropolis, as well as in the open-air theatre and the grounds of the MaE. The large screening hall of the MaE has already hosted the exhibition *Cretan Cities: The testimony of coins*, a collaboration of the University of Crete, the Ephorate of Antiquities of Rethymnon and the Alpha Bank Numismatic Collection<sup>305</sup>. Furthermore, visitors to the MaE have the opportunity of seeing not only the reconstructions, the short and longer films and the stories that emerge from the combination of the archaeology of the finds and the ancient literary sources of Homer, Herodotus, and others, but also of studying in the library or the conservation laboratories the material from the ancient



city, archaeological, architectural, anthropological, palaeobotanical, epigraphical, and therefore, of understanding the historical, social, institutional, cultic-religious, public and private life of the people. Independently of the provision of knowledge that electronic technology offers today, we have primarily a tangible experience, through the ancient wind that still blows in the area, the light, the climatic conditions, the nature and the environment in which all these were created. We can look at and we can see, we can read and we can learn, and in the end we can empathize with the people who lived and died in Eleutherna, who left behind this piece of their civilization, as memory and monument forever and ever. We can see not only the things themselves but also the people behind them, and through learning to understand them we can create a better life. That which is the new identity of ancient Eleutherna.







## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> In ancient terminology σφάξ (*sphax*) and σφαγή (*sphage*), i.e. gash in the body of the earth, means ravine or gorge (φαράγγι – *pharangi*), hence the territory of Sphakia, meaning of the gorges and the oleander – *sphaka* in Cretan dialect – the endemic plant in gullies and ravines.

<sup>2</sup> Term coined by the author, first published in Stampolidis 1990a, 399-400.

<sup>3</sup> *Ida* means wooded or forested mountain, which would have been the case in antiquity. The rich woodland must have been depleted in two periods: in Roman times, to use its timber for shipbuilding and other constructions, and during the Venetian Occupation, to construct galleys and grand buildings. The deforestation in more recent times is probably due to over-grazing.

<sup>4</sup> Geropotamos does not mean 'old river' (from the Greek words *géros* = old and *pótamos* = river) or 'strong river' (from the Greek words *gerós* = strong and *pótamos* = river). Its name derives from Hieropotamos, meaning 'sacred river' (from the Greek words *hierós* = sacred and *pótamos* = river). It is a sacred river because its headwaters are high up on Mount *Ida*, the locus sanctus that was the birthplace of the supreme god, Zeus.

<sup>5</sup> See Τσερεβελάκης Γ., *Ιστορία των Κρητικών Επανάστασεων Βενετοκρατίας και Τουρκοκρατίας. Α΄ Βενετοκρατία (1204 – 1669)* [G. Tserevelakis, *History of the Cretan Revolutions against Venetian rule and Ottoman rule. I Venetian rule (1204-1669)*], 14, from the text uploaded on the Internet (<https://www.scribd.com/doc>) and Τσερεβελάκης 2009.

<sup>6</sup> From Volume 12 of the General History by the Flemish traveller Olfert Dapper (1639 – 1689), *La Canée*, Paris 1703 (translated into Greek by M. Vernardos Cretan 1846, Athens, 151-152).

<sup>7</sup> V. Bérard, *Les affaires de Crete*, Paris 1898 and 1900<sup>2</sup>. See V. Bérard, *Κρητικές Υποθέσεις. Οδοιπορικό 1897. Μέρες Ναυάρχων και Επανάστασεις: Χανιά, Ρέθυμνο, Ηράκλειο, Σητεία, Σφακιά*, (Greek translation by G. Moraglis 1994), Athens, 310.

<sup>8</sup> The term *Archaia Eleftherna* refers henceforth to the village formerly known as *Prines* and renamed as *Archaia Eleftherna* in 1986, whereas the term (ancient) *Eleftherna* refers to the ancient city in its environs.

<sup>9</sup> van Spitael – Σπανάκης 1981, 18, Αποσκήτη 2002.

<sup>10</sup> From the manuscript by Cristoforo Buondelmonti, *Liber Insularum Arcipelagi*, 1420. See also Αποσκήτη 2002.

<sup>11</sup> Donnus Nicolaus Germanus (ed.), *Claudii Ptolomei Viri Alexandrini Cosmographie Octavus et Ultimus Liber Explicit Opus*, Ulm 1482.

<sup>12</sup> Noteworthy is the minimal difference-deviation from today's accurate data for the location: 45°, 156' and 35°, 19' respective.

<sup>13</sup> Bartolomeo dalli Sonetti, *Isolario*, Venezia 1485.

<sup>14</sup> Τσιγκάκου 2018, 346-371, Tsigakou 2019, 336-363.

<sup>15</sup> Oppianus Apamensis, *Cynegetika*, Parigi 1554 (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, mss. Occ. Grec 2737, fol. 35).

<sup>16</sup> Wolfgang Lazius, *Commen: Rerum Graecorum Libri II in quibus tam Helladis quam Peloponnesi. Quae in luceum antea non venerunt explicantur. Inclutis Prin: diuo Ferdinando Rom: Imp: Max: & Maximiliano Boh: Regi Serenissimo Consecrati. Autore Vulgango Lazio Medico & Historico Caesareo*, Vienna 1558.

<sup>17</sup> Ferrando Bertelli, *Heac Est illa Insignis Insula Creta*, Venezia 1562.

<sup>18</sup> Τσελίκας 2006.

<sup>19</sup> Στυλιανού 1974.

<sup>20</sup> Αλεξίου, ΑΔ (1960), Χρονικά, 271-272.

<sup>21</sup> Stephen of Byzantium, s.v. *Σάτρας, Σάωρος και Άωρος*. Guarducci 1939, XII. 141 ff.

<sup>22</sup> Stampolidis 2008.

<sup>23</sup> Philippus Cluverius, *Introductio in Universam Geographiam*, I-VI parts, Leiden 1624-1629.

<sup>24</sup> Ζαχαράκης 2004, 213, no. 53.

<sup>25</sup> Jan Moretus, *Tabula Peutingeriana*, Antwerp 1598.

<sup>26</sup> Johannes Janssonius, *Tabula Peutingeriana*, Amsterdam 1652.

<sup>27</sup> That is, Eleutherna succeeded in having the Roman road network pass by the city itself or its vicinity, even though this increased the cost of road-building and the distance in miles, as well as the time needed for someone travelling from western Crete to reach the capital Gortyn.

<sup>28</sup> Cornelius de Wit, *Atlas sive descriptio Terrarium Orbis*, Antwerp 1680.

<sup>29</sup> Vincenzo Maria Coronelli, *Citta, Fortezze, Porti ed altri luoghi del Regno e Isole di Candia...*, Venezia 1707.

<sup>30</sup> See Kotsonas 2009, 385, where Ortelius (1584) is considered earlier.

<sup>31</sup> Very close in time to that in manuscript of Oppian of Apamea (1554), which we saw above (p. 28-29).

<sup>32</sup> Francesco Barozzi, *Descrittione dell' Isola di Creta*, Venezia 1577-1578. See also Κακλαμάνης 2004.

<sup>33</sup> However, some activity in or visits to the site of the ruined city in the later fifteenth and the early sixteenth century can be timidly conjectured from the Venetian coins found in the excavations. Likewise for later, in the seventeenth century, again from coins brought to light in the university excavations (e.g. at the very recently excavated locality *Agia Eirini*).

<sup>34</sup> Whether this was a monastery on the site of the present church of Christ the Saviour, on the east and south side of *Prines* hill, or a dependency (*metochi*) of the *Arkadi* Monastery, ruins of which can still be seen half way along the path from the *Cisterns* towards *Orthi Petra*, on the west slope of the hill, will only be elucidated by excavation. The *Arkadi* Monastery seems to have been in charge of the area, as is deduced from the monastery's history and from the west façade of its *katholikon*, with the relief heads which recall the analogous ones on the *Rimondi* Fountain in *Rethymnon* or the fronts of the church of the Holy Trinity at *Akrotiri*, *Chania*, works of the late sixteenth and the early seventeenth century.

<sup>35</sup> Τσιγκάκης 1990.

<sup>36</sup> Τσιγκάκης 1990.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. also the corresponding distances in other areas of the Aegean and Asia Minor, such as the *Mausoleum of Halikarnassos*, for *Rhodes*, *Kos*, *Genoa* already through the beginning of the sixteenth century, see Stampolidis 1988.

<sup>38</sup> Olfert Dapper, *Naukerige, Beschryving der Eilanden, in de Archipel der Middelantsche Zee...*, Amsterdam 1688.

<sup>39</sup> However, Dapper depicts a Cretan archer in his book (see also Τσιγκάκου 2018, 357-358). In antiquity the Cretans were skilled bowmen, as apparent even from the Homeric epics (see *Iliad* XXIII, 860, 870 ff., in particular for *Idomeneus* and *Meriones*). A series of excellent arrowheads of the ninth century BC, which were found in a cinerary vase in tomb A1K1 (of the warriors) at *Eleutherna* itself, bear witness to this tactic of warfare, of the *Eleuthernians* in the Early Iron Age. For representations of Cretan archers, such as *Oryssos* from *Aptera*, who fought with the *Lacedaemonians* and killed the son of the king of *Epirus*, see *Plutarch, Parallel Lives, Pyrrhus*, 30. This prowess was known also in Byzantine times and the Middle Ages, see e.g. Μαλάλας I. 2001, Χρονογραφία, Athens, 126 (lines 6-7).



- <sup>40</sup> Guillaume de Lisle/ Delisle, *Atlas de Geographie*, Paris 1731.
- <sup>41</sup> Μελάς 1999.
- <sup>42</sup> Richard Pococke, *A Description of the East and Some other Countries*, vol. II, London 1745, 259.
- <sup>43</sup> There is another chapel of St Antony in a rock shelter-cave on the provincial road between the present village of Eleftherna (former Anachourdometocha) and the village of Archaia Eleftherna (former Prines), a short distance to the east of the Museum of ancient Eleutherna. It is difficult, but not improbable, to associate this with the route he followed from Margarites (east) westward, because then he would have passed closer to the ancient Tower of the necropolis rather than viewing it in the 'distance'.
- <sup>44</sup> Τσιγκνάκης 1990.
- <sup>45</sup> Franz W. Sieber, *Travels in the Island of Crete in the year 1817*, London 1823, (Greek translation D. Moustris 1994, *Ταξιδεύοντας στη νήσο Κρήτη το 1817*, Athens).
- <sup>46</sup> Among them Knossos, Gortyn, Aptaera, Rithymna, and others.
- <sup>47</sup> Robert Pashley, *Travels in Crete*, vol. I, London 1837, 145-146. In fact, in the 36 consecutive years I have been excavating at Eleutherna, on three or four occasions the modern road leading to the site, at least from the village of Roupes and higher, has been impassable due to snow. For the good climatological conditions, see also Σταμπολίδης 2008, 25.
- <sup>48</sup> Thomas A. B. Spratt, *Travels and Researches in Crete*, London 1865.
- <sup>49</sup> Spratt's claim that he is the first to locate the ancient city may be considered exaggerated (see Kotsonas 2009, 387), but he is the traveller who actually visits the site and 'reads' its ruins and monuments.
- <sup>50</sup> Thenon 1868.
- <sup>51</sup> Perrot 1867.
- <sup>52</sup> Conrad Bursian, *Geographie von Griechenland*, Leipzig 1862-1872.
- <sup>53</sup> Victor Raulin, *Description physique de l'île de Crète*, Paris 1869.
- <sup>54</sup> Fabricius 1885, 92-94, Guarducci 1939, 150-151, no. 8-9.
- <sup>55</sup> Halbherr – Comparetti 1888, 162-170.
- <sup>56</sup> Doublet 1889, 47.
- <sup>57</sup> Joubin 1893a.
- <sup>58</sup> Joubin 1893b, Joubin 1893c.
- <sup>59</sup> Stampolidis 2008, 135-137, 143-151, Σταμπολίδης 2012, 5, 9 ff., figs 10 and 15, Σταμπολίδης 2018, 110, Stampolidis 2019, 113.
- <sup>60</sup> See Martinez 2000, Pasquier – Martinez 2007.
- <sup>61</sup> von Schwartz 1892, 77-78.
- <sup>62</sup> Mariani 1895.
- <sup>63</sup> Halbherr 1894, Halbherr 1896, 579-608 (passim).
- <sup>64</sup> Brown 1993, Brown 2001.
- <sup>65</sup> For all the above, see Kotsonas 2008a, 278-282, Stampolidis 2008, 46-48.
- <sup>66</sup> Halbherr, after all, had considered Eleutherna as 'an important centre of very early civilization', see Halbherr 1894, 540.
- <sup>67</sup> Stampolidis 2008, 47 more thoroughly. See also Kotsonas 2008a, 282, n. 34 ('At the time of writing, there were no plans for celebrating Eleutherna's centenary!'), where there is no reference either to my book or to the anniversary reference to 1908.
- <sup>68</sup> Πετρουλάκης 1914a, Πετρουλάκης 1914b, Πετρουλάκης 1915.
- <sup>69</sup> For thorough discussion of the preparations for the excavation, the 'intrigues', the living conditions and the progress of Payne's investigations, see Kotsonas 2008a, 275-298. However, it shall return to some interpretations and hypotheses expressed in this article at another opportunity.
- <sup>70</sup> Payne's wish was fulfilled immediately afterwards, with his excavation in the sanctuaries of Hera at Perachora. See Μάντης 2008.
- <sup>71</sup> Woodward 1929, 226.
- <sup>72</sup> Stampolidis 2008, 47-48.
- <sup>73</sup> Powell 1973, 12.
- <sup>74</sup> From oral information, in about 1935. See Τσαντιρόπουλος 1994, Stampolidis 2008, 49.
- <sup>75</sup> Πλάτων 1947, 637-638.
- <sup>76</sup> Πλάτων 1956, 421-422, Τζεδάκις 1965.
- <sup>77</sup> Αλεξίου 1960, Τζεδάκις 1970ε, Παπαποστόλου 1975, 516-517.
- <sup>78</sup> Δαβάρας 1967, 501, Τζεδάκις 1970ς, 468.
- <sup>79</sup> The site was divided into three excavation sectors: Sector I, eastern for the east side of Prines (Archaia Eleftherna) hill, under the direction of P. Themelis (1985-2003), Sector II, central for the flat area of the acropolis on Prines hill and the area of the flat area of Eleutherna (locality Nisi), under the direction of Th. Kalpaxis (1985-2009) and Sector III, western for the west slope of Prines hill, the east slope of Eleutherna and the corresponding slopes of Laga, under the direction of N. Stampolidis (1985 ff.). Since 2007 Sector I, eastern is under the direction of N. Stampolidis, while since 2011 Sector II is under the direction of Ch. Tsigonakis.
- <sup>80</sup> Stephen of Byzantium, s.v. *Σάτρας, Σάωρος και Άωρος*. Guarducci 1939, XII. 141 ff.
- <sup>81</sup> Σταμπολίδης 1993, 25, Σταμπολίδης 1994, 143-144. Cf. the corresponding relation between Cyrene and Apollonia in North Africa (present Libya).
- <sup>82</sup> Faure 1959, 197, See also Chaniotis 1996, 112 and 404.
- <sup>83</sup> See Καλπαξής 2004, 111.
- <sup>84</sup> It is a mountain (153 m asl) to the northeast of Smyrna, which is associated with the myth of Niobe and the extermination of her children by Apollo and Artemis.
- <sup>85</sup> Strabo, 10.469: "... the Great Goddess; from the places also where she is worshipped, Idæa, and Dindymene, Sipyrene, Pessinuntis, and Cybele".
- <sup>86</sup> See Σταμπολίδης 1998, 129-130, Stampolidis 1998, 95-96.
- <sup>87</sup> v. Effenterre 1991.
- <sup>88</sup> *Historia Plantarum* 3.3.4.
- <sup>89</sup> Chantraine 1980, 991.
- <sup>90</sup> Stampolidis 2007.
- <sup>91</sup> Guarducci 1939, XII. 141 and 145.
- <sup>92</sup> See Stephen of Byzantium s.v. *Σάτρα και Ελευθεραί*, and Ηρωδιανός, s.v. *Ελευθεραί*.
- <sup>93</sup> Aravantinos 1999, 59.
- <sup>94</sup> *Description of Greece*, 9.20.1.
- <sup>95</sup> E.g. Παπαχατζής 1981, 133-134, 296 (Cf. *Description of Greece*, 9.20.1 και 10.73).
- <sup>96</sup> See Homeric Hymn to Apollo and the Minoan rhyta in the Delphic sanctuary (Stampolidis 2003, 403 nos 633-634), not to mention the bronze shields or other works associated with Crete, which have been found in Delphi, op. cit.
- <sup>97</sup> See *RE*. vol. VI1 (1907), columns 173-178.
- <sup>98</sup> Cf. Burkert 1992, 23-24, Σταμπολίδης 1998, 109, Stampolidis 1998, 75.
- <sup>99</sup> Cf. Stampolidis 2006. In this study the relationship between the metropolis Thera and the colony Cyrene is made clearer, as well as the role of Crete in this, through the archaeological remains. See here, below, p. 301.
- <sup>100</sup> Guarducci 1939.
- <sup>101</sup> Σταμπολίδης 2004, 154-155, nos 9-10 (Θ. Καλπαξής), 155, no. 11 (I. Τζιφόπουλος) with bibliography.
- <sup>102</sup> Gagarin – Perlman 2015.
- <sup>103</sup> See Σταμπολίδης (in press)



- <sup>104</sup> See Treister M. – Shelov-Kovedyayev V. 1989, 289 ff., esp. 292-293. Oikonomaki also agrees on a Cretan alphabet (of Eleutherna ? or of Deros ?), see Oikonomaki 2020.
- <sup>105</sup> See Σταμπολίδης 2006, «Το νόμισμα στα νησιά του Αιγαίου», *Διασχίζοντας το αρχιπέλαγος. Νομίσματα από τα νησιά του Αιγαίου στην Ελεύθερνα της Κρήτης*. Ε΄ Επιστημονική Συνάντηση Μυτιλήνη 16-19/9/2006 (unpublished paper).
- <sup>106</sup> S.v. *Απολλωνία*.
- <sup>107</sup> See Stampolidis 1990a, 399-400. The terminology was adopted by Morris and is copied by Haggis, who refers to Morris, ignoring the initial source.
- <sup>108</sup> See Erickson 2000, 156-228. We should add here the dating of the grave pillar from Eleutherna in the Rethymnon Archaeological Museum (Λεμπέση 1981, 7-9) to the late sixth century BC.
- <sup>109</sup> For the relations of Argos with the cities of western Crete already from Late Geometric times, see. Ανδρεαδάκη-Βλαζάκη 2004.
- <sup>110</sup> Erickson considers that this took place ca 400 BC, but in my view Crete's peculiar 'embargo' on trade with Athens, which started with the Persian Wars, had faded after the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War, for various reasons. See Erickson 2000, 385-401, Erickson 2005, 636-641. Moreover, the activity of artists in Athens, such as the Kydonian sculptor Kresilas, who also had relations with the school of Argos, should not be forgotten.
- <sup>111</sup> See recently Oikonomaki 2020.
- <sup>112</sup> Lambert 2007, 123, no. 134.
- <sup>113</sup> Θέμελης 2000, 16 figs 5 and 15, Θέμελης 2004, 50 fig. 8 and especially 156 no. 12.
- <sup>114</sup> Rehm 1914, 140.
- <sup>115</sup> v. Effenterre 1991, 26-30, Chaniotis 1996, 190-195.
- <sup>116</sup> *IG IX<sup>2</sup> 1*, 17.
- <sup>117</sup> See Ανδρεαδάκη-Βλαζάκη 2004a, 28 and Τζιφόπουλος 1999, where he links the inscriptions in the cave, which refer to a city, with Eleutherna.
- <sup>118</sup> See Σταμπολίδης 2007.
- <sup>119</sup> See Χανιώτης 2000, concerning Cretans and Egypt, as attested by inscriptions from the fifth to the first century BC. The graffito of Akousilas could be linked with the activity of mercenaries, perhaps during the reign of Ptolemy I.
- <sup>120</sup> See Γιαννικουρή 1996-97.
- <sup>121</sup> Guarducci 1939, *XII*. 164-165 no. 25. See also Thenon 1868, 296.
- <sup>122</sup> v. Effenterre 1991, 24-26. Chaniotis 1996, 205-208. It seems that the relief with the epigraphical testimony about the Cretan oneirocrits, which was found in Egypt and is now in Berlin, belongs in the same category and dates to the same period, see Καρέτσου – Ανδρεαδάκη-Βλαζάκη 2000.
- <sup>123</sup> *IC II*, 12,20.
- <sup>124</sup> See also Μπουραζέλης 1981. See Καρέτσου – Ανδρεαδάκη-Βλαζάκη 2000.
- <sup>125</sup> Guarducci 1939, *II*, 143. Rehm 1909, no. 38.
- <sup>126</sup> *IG IX<sup>2</sup> 1*, 31.
- <sup>127</sup> The name also exists in inscriptions from Eleutherna, Guarducci Ελεύθερνα no. 9, 2.
- <sup>128</sup> Guarducci 1939, no. 21.
- <sup>129</sup> *FD III*. 4.135, col. II, 10-11.
- <sup>130</sup> Rehm 1909, 115, no. II.
- <sup>131</sup> *IG IX<sup>2</sup> 1*, 1176.
- <sup>132</sup> Breccia 1970, 23.
- <sup>133</sup> Σταμπολίδης 1991, 485.
- <sup>134</sup> Pythokritos' name also exists on an inscription on Samothrace, see *IG XII*, 8.239, where he signs as Rhodian: *Πυθόκριτος Τιμοχάριος Ρόδιος ἐποίησε* (Pythokritos son of Timocharis made [it]).
- <sup>135</sup> For his signature with Eleuthernian, see *SEG* 49, 1080, 58.809 and Φανταουτσάκη 2004, 44-45.
- <sup>136</sup> Σταμπολίδης op. cit. and later. Παπαχριστοδούλου 2000, 541-549.
- <sup>137</sup> v. Effenterre 1991, 24-26. Chaniotis 1996, 276-278.
- <sup>138</sup> See Guarducci 1939, 144.
- <sup>139</sup> For the foreign policy of the Attalids, see Σταμπολίδης 1981, Σταμπολίδης 1987.
- <sup>140</sup> Guarducci 1950, 250-253 no. 179.
- <sup>141</sup> *IG IV*, 179, 4.
- <sup>142</sup> Σταμπολίδης et al. 2018, 185, no. 68 (I. Λουρεντζάτου), Stampolidis et al. 2019, 180, no. 68 (I. Lourentzatu).
- <sup>143</sup> It is probably the epistyle of a funerary monument that was in use from the second century BC into the second century AD. The reference to the name and origin of Soterios from Eleutherna stresses the relations of alliance and accord between the two cities, see Νινιού-Κινδελή – Τζανακάκη 2018, 57-59.
- <sup>144</sup> See Bruneau – Ducat 2005, 41-44.
- <sup>145</sup> *ID*, 1416, B. col. I, 100 ff.
- <sup>146</sup> Σταμπολίδης 2004, 198, no. 125 (N. Τσατσάκη) with bibliography.
- <sup>147</sup> Σταμπολίδης 1992.
- <sup>148</sup> *ID*, 1416 B. col. II, 56 ff.
- <sup>149</sup> *ID*, 2593, 63.
- <sup>150</sup> Plassart 1921, 19, cols 111, 119.
- <sup>151</sup> See Guarducci 1935.
- <sup>152</sup> Guarducci 1939, *XII*, 144, Chaniotis 1996, 276-278. *ICI*, *XVI*, 17, 14-20.
- <sup>153</sup> v. Effenterre 1991, 51-68, Chaniotis 1996, 278-280.
- <sup>154</sup> Θέμελης 2010, 60-62 and Oikonomaki 2020.
- <sup>155</sup> Κουμανούδης 1871, 202, αρ. 1646.
- <sup>156</sup> Σταυριανοπούλου 1991, Σταυριανοπούλου 1993, Καλπαξής – Πετροπούλου 1988-1989, Σταμπολίδης 2004, 157-158, no. 14 (Θ. Καλπαξής).
- <sup>157</sup> Xanthoudidis 1898, 71 ff.
- <sup>158</sup> *IG*, *VI*, 939. For Pan and Aphrodite at Eleutherna.
- <sup>159</sup> *Syll<sup>B</sup> 737*.
- <sup>160</sup> See Παντερμαλής 1992, Παντερμαλής 1999, 236-239.
- <sup>161</sup> *IG XII 5*, 718.
- <sup>162</sup> Σταμπολίδης 2004, 158, no. 15 (Π. Θέμελης).
- <sup>163</sup> Θέμελης 2002, 20, fig. 8.
- <sup>164</sup> Guarducci 1939, *XII*, 145 and nos 27 ff.
- <sup>165</sup> Θέμελης 2002, 20, Σταμπολίδης 2004, 159, no. 18 (Π. Θέμελης).
- <sup>166</sup> *Syll<sup>B</sup> 737*.
- <sup>167</sup> Βλ. Θέμελης 2002, 31 ff., Θέμελης 2004, 57-69 and elsewhere., Καλπαξής 2004, 111-114 and elsewhere, and Σταμπολίδης 2004.
- <sup>168</sup> Di Vita 2000, 459-476.
- <sup>169</sup> A. Marcellinus, *Rerum Gestarum XXXVI*, *X*, 15-19 and Ζώσιμος, *Νέα Ιστορία*, *IV*, 18, 1-2.
- <sup>170</sup> Θέμελης 2000, 21.
- <sup>171</sup> See Θέμελης 2000, Θέμελης 2002, 80 ff. but also a considerable amount of information about the Prines acropolis is presented in part in *Κρητική*



- Εστία*, while other data are still unpublished. Very recent references, see Σταμπολίδης 2018, 137-139, fig. 12, Stampolidis 2019, 136-137, fig. 12.
- <sup>172</sup> Θέμελης 2002, 22-23, figs 10-11.
- <sup>173</sup> 650.9
- <sup>174</sup> ACO.
- <sup>175</sup> Θέμελης 2002, 24.
- <sup>176</sup> Θέμελης 2002, Θέμελης 2004, 70 ff.
- <sup>177</sup> Σταμπολίδης Οικονόμου 2014.
- <sup>178</sup> For the gold mouthpieces, see Carratelli 1993, Τζιφόπουλος 2004.
- <sup>179</sup> OC, 2, 270. Guarducci 1939, 145.
- <sup>180</sup> Θέμελης 2002, 24-25.
- <sup>181</sup> Τσουγκαράκης 1987, 373 and 402-403.3. Tsougarakis 1988, 323-324.
- <sup>182</sup> An issue discussed below.
- <sup>183</sup> Genesisius, 2.10.32.22.
- <sup>184</sup> See Καλπαξής 2004, 115.
- <sup>185</sup> For a preliminary commentary see Σταμπολίδης 1993, 29 ff., Σταμπολίδης 1994, 146 ff.
- <sup>186</sup> Because the quarry is used as a sheep pen in the winter months, it needs cleaning from time to time and, of course, the erection of a fence around it.
- <sup>187</sup> See Manning 1994, 226.
- <sup>188</sup> After the name of the site at which they were found in South-Central Crete. For these figurines, see recently Σταμπολίδης 2017.
- <sup>189</sup> Θέμελης 2002, 14.
- <sup>190</sup> Θέμελης 2004, 49.
- <sup>191</sup> Καλπαξής 2004, 106-107. For the seal, see Σταμπολίδης 2004, 188, no. 90 (Θ. Καλπαξής).
- <sup>192</sup> For Middle Minoan sherds also in the East Sector, see Θέμελης 2002, 29.
- <sup>193</sup> Τσιγωνάκη (in press).
- <sup>194</sup> This happens mainly in the excavation on the acropolis, where parts of walls have been found at depth, bedded almost on the marly limestone bedrock of the hill and associated with Late Bronze Age sherds, see Καλπαξής 2004, 106.
- <sup>195</sup> Καλπαξής et al. (in press).
- <sup>196</sup> See Καλπαξής 2004, 100-111.
- <sup>197</sup> See Ανδρεαδάκη-Βλαζάκη 2004a, 28. See also Τζιφόπουλος 1999.
- <sup>198</sup> Tsatsaki 2013, 283-284.
- <sup>199</sup> Θέμελης 2002, 25 ff., Θέμελης 2004, 48-50.
- <sup>200</sup> Θέμελης 2002, 25 ff., Θέμελης 2004, 48-50.
- <sup>201</sup> Καλπαξής 2004, 108-109.
- <sup>202</sup> For a preliminary presentation, see Σταμπολίδης 1993, 34-35 fig. 16, Σταμπολίδης 1994, 148-149, fig. 16, Σταμπολίδης 2004a, 84.
- <sup>203</sup> For analogous construction and with compacted clay floor, see the megaroid building at Katsivelos, see Θέμελης 2002, 25 κ.εξ.
- <sup>204</sup> Καλπαξής et al. 1994.
- <sup>205</sup> Stampolidis 2008, 89-90, fig. 36, 107, fig. 48. For other sherds of the period, from the necropolis and elsewhere on the west slope of Prines hill, see Erickson 2010.
- <sup>206</sup> Λεμπέση 1976.
- <sup>207</sup> Erickson 2005, Erickson 2010.
- <sup>208</sup> Θέμελης 2004, 50.
- <sup>209</sup> See also above p. 44, 56
- <sup>210</sup> Θέμελης 2004, 50. Σταμπολίδης 2018, 124.
- <sup>211</sup> See above p. 60
- <sup>212</sup> For this reason, from here onward analogous sections which may belong to a system of protecting Eleutherna will be referred to as 'fortification wall(s)', until relatively reliable documentation is obtained, as the excavation progresses.
- <sup>213</sup> Καλπαξής 1994-1996, 286.
- <sup>214</sup> Θέμελης 2002, 18.
- <sup>215</sup> Usually 1.20 m is the minimum thickness of Classical and Hellenistic fortification walls, as for instance of the bulwark of Athens, in present Dipylou Street. For its construction and excavation see Σταμπολίδης 2004a, 92, fig. 11.
- <sup>216</sup> I learnt from testimonies such as this of the old man N. Tzanidakis, that when he was a boy (in the 1930s) his father was telling him that Payne had excavated at Lotos (*today above Fountoulis's olive trees*) and that the hurried departure of the British excavators had made a great impression was talked about a great deal in the village: *suddenly, one early morning, they were no longer there. They had taken up their tent and had left, without even saying goodbye.*
- <sup>217</sup> So, e.g., part of the late fortification wall to the east of the flat area of the excavated space of the acropolis, which was located some time ago by the excavators Ch. Trigonakis and P. Karanastasis.
- <sup>218</sup> Such systems, in which high retaining walls or even external walls of high buildings, without doorways, could be at once walls and fortification wall in settlements, are known from antiquity into the Middle Ages.
- <sup>219</sup> See Θέμελης 2000, 37-38.
- <sup>220</sup> See Καλπαξής 2004, 217.
- <sup>221</sup> Θέμελης 2002, 38.
- <sup>222</sup> See Spratt 1865, 96 and drawing on p. 90.
- <sup>223</sup> See Myres et al. 1992, 91.
- <sup>224</sup> See Σπανάκης 1991, 263, Myers et al. 1992.
- <sup>225</sup> Sanders 1982, 162.
- <sup>226</sup> Καλπαξής 2004, 105.
- <sup>227</sup> Θέμελης 2000, 36-38, fig. 23.
- <sup>228</sup> Καλπαξής et al. 1994, Καλπαξής 2004, 107-108.
- <sup>229</sup> Θέμελης 2000, Θέμελης 2002, Θέμελης 2004 from which also it is drawn.
- <sup>230</sup> Θέμελης 2004, 51.
- <sup>231</sup> Θέμελης 2004, 53.
- <sup>232</sup> Θέμελης 2004, 54.
- <sup>233</sup> Θέμελης 2004, 55.
- <sup>234</sup> Θέμελης 2004, 58.
- <sup>235</sup> Θέμελης 2004, 58-62.
- <sup>236</sup> Σταμπολίδης 2004, 182-183, no. 77 (Π. Θέμελης).
- <sup>237</sup> Σταμπολίδης 2004, 231-232, no. 248 (Π. Θέμελης) and 224, nos 221-222 (Π. Θέμελης) respectively.
- <sup>238</sup> Σταμπολίδης 2004, 217, no. 186 (Π. Θέμελης).
- <sup>239</sup> Θέμελης 2004, 63-64.
- <sup>240</sup> Θέμελης 2004, 64-67.
- <sup>241</sup> Θέμελης 2004, 67-69.
- <sup>242</sup> This could be justified, however, as, unlike the case in other basilicas, there is no large space outside the narthex.
- <sup>243</sup> Θέμελης 2002, 24.
- <sup>244</sup> However, the dedication here could be justified, because the ancient temple on top of which the basilica was built was dedicated to Aphrodite



and Hermes. Among the roles of Hermes was that of leader of souls (psychopompos), which is also the role of Archangel Michael.

<sup>245</sup> Θέμελης 2004, 78-80.

<sup>246</sup> The sites were known by this name when the University of Crete began excavating and were pointed out to me by N. Tzanidakis in 1985. The northernmost clusters towards Agia Elea were also known and are obviously those referred to by Faure 1965, 44-45. In all likelihood, some of the gold-sheet mouthpieces (epistomia) from the area of Eleutherna come from these graves. For the lamellae, see overall Caratelli 1993 and Tzifopoulos 2002.

<sup>247</sup> For the excavations on Nisi, see Καλπαξής et al. 1994 and for some of the graves 'sta Mnimata', see Kalpaxis – Tsatsaki 2000.

<sup>248</sup> See Σταμπολίδης 2004, 138-139.

<sup>249</sup> Kalpaxis – Tsatsaki 2000.

<sup>250</sup> Σταμπολίδης 2004b, 139-141, Σταμπολίδης 2008, 95-97, figs 38-40, Σταμπολίδης 2018, 139.

<sup>251</sup> Θέμελης 2002, 81.

<sup>252</sup> Καλπαξής 2004, 114.

<sup>253</sup> Indeed, to the north, northeast of the corresponding side of the shelter, trial trenches excavated at intervals have yielded several sherds of black-figure and red-figure vases of the sixth and fifth centuries BC, which may be linked with the use of the necropolis into these years.

<sup>254</sup> In the upper layers, however, mixed sherds of various periods, even Hellenistic, have been found and it may well be that these are deposits or 'debris fill' to arrange the space.

<sup>255</sup> Something similar happened in more recent times, at the centre of the town of Rethymnon. The central part of the Ottoman cemetery, extra muros, to the south of the town, remained a free square and was gradually transformed into the 'Park' of Rethymnon, a green lung just a few metres to the southwest of the church of the Four Martyrs.

<sup>256</sup> See Σταμπολίδης 2008, 109-111, Σταμπολίδης 2018, 144, Stampolidis 2019, 140.

<sup>257</sup> See Stampolidis 2008, 111-112, Σταμπολίδης 2018, 144, Stampolidis 2019, 140.

<sup>258</sup> See Σταμπολίδης 2008, 112-117, Stampolidis 2008, 112-117, Σταμπολίδης 2018, 145, Stampolidis 2019, 141.

<sup>259</sup> See Σταμπολίδης 2008, 117-119, Stampolidis 2008, 117-119, Σταμπολίδης 2018, 147, Stampolidis 2019, 145.

<sup>260</sup> For the *cippus* and its comparanda, see Stampolidis 2003a, 221-226.

<sup>261</sup> For Building Λ, see Σταμπολίδης 2008, 133-134, Stampolidis 2008, 133-134, Σταμπολίδης 2018, 146, Stampolidis 2019, 144.

<sup>262</sup> For a preliminary presentation of the assemblage, see Σταμπολίδης 2012.

<sup>263</sup> See Σταμπολίδης 2008, 120-126, Stampolidis 2008, 120-126.

<sup>264</sup> For analogous food residues in child cremations in the Cyclades or the Dodecanese, see e.g. Ζαφειροπούλου 2001, 287-288, figs 15-16.

<sup>265</sup> See Σταμπολίδης 1996, 30 ff., Stampolidis 1996, 30 ff.

<sup>266</sup> See Σταμπολίδης 1996, Stampolidis 1996, Stampolidis 2015.

<sup>267</sup> See Σταμπολίδης 1996, 125, fig. 174, Stampolidis 1996, 125.

<sup>268</sup> See Σταμπολίδης 1996, 201-203, Stampolidis 1996, 201-203.

<sup>269</sup> For two skeletons in enchytrismoi from other regions, see e.g. in Athens, Kurtz – Boardman 1971, 55 and 179, 185-186 (for two confronted vases).

<sup>270</sup> See Σταμπολίδης 2008, 126-130, Stampolidis 2008, 126-130, Σταμπολίδης 2018, 149, Stampolidis 2019, 146.

<sup>271</sup> Agelarakis 2020.

<sup>272</sup> See e.g. the slaying of Polyxene upon the tumulus, on a Tyrrhenian amphora by the Timiades Painter (570-550 BC), today in the British Museum (no. 1897.0727.2).

<sup>273</sup> See recently Δημοπούλου-Ρεθεμιωτάκη 2005, 170 ff.

<sup>274</sup> The wall of the enclosure bears marks from the flames of the funeral pyres that were set up above the orthostats and the east part of the 'court' of crematorium A. The dating of the pyres to around the mid-seventh century BC or the third quarter of the century, which is confirmed by the Protocorinthian aryballois found as grave goods inside them, is also the *terminus ante quem* for the enclosure and therefore also for the monument erected at the centre of this space.

<sup>275</sup> See LIMC s.v. Κουρήτες

<sup>276</sup> For his qualities, etc., see Σταμπολίδης 2004b, 140-141.

<sup>277</sup> See Σταμπολίδης 1996, Stampolidis 1996, Σταμπολίδης 2008, 120, 125, 158-159, Σταμπολίδης 2018, 152, Stampolidis 2019, 149.

<sup>278</sup> Agelarakis 2005.

<sup>279</sup> Agelarakis 2020.

<sup>280</sup> See Σταμπολίδης 2008, 151 ff., Stampolidis 2008, 151 ff.

<sup>281</sup> Σταμπολίδης 2004b, Σταμπολίδης 2008, 152, fig. 106.

<sup>282</sup> See Σταμπολίδης – Καρέτσου 1998, 236, no. 282 (N. Σ.)

<sup>283</sup> See Stampolidis 2020, 34, fig. 20.

<sup>284</sup> For these works, see Σταμπολίδης 2004, 274, no. 340 (N. Σταμπολίδης), Σταμπολίδης 2008, 153-154.

<sup>285</sup> For some presentations of items of jewellery, see Σταμπολίδης – Καρέτσου 1998, Σταμπολίδης 2004, 286, 290-291, Σταμπολίδης 2008. Recently E. Μητάκη 2019 (unpublished PhD thesis).

<sup>286</sup> Σταμπολίδης 2003, 522, Σταμπολίδης 2008, 154, figs 110-112.

<sup>287</sup> Σταμπολίδης 2003, 487-488. For a faience figurine of Sekhmet, see Σταμπολίδης 2003, 510, no. 974 (N. Σταμπολίδης).

<sup>288</sup> Stampolidis 1992. It should be added here that a fifth one from the ensemble was identified much later, which is why it has not yet been published.

<sup>289</sup> Characteristic is the later relationship of the Euxine Pontus (6th century BC) through a *graffito* in the Eleuthernaian alphabet on a clay lasanos or the finding of a Classical coin of Tenedos in Eleutherna itself.

<sup>290</sup> Stampolidis 1990.

<sup>291</sup> See Σταμπολίδης – Οικονομάκη 2009.

<sup>292</sup> See above pages

<sup>293</sup> For relevant bibliography in the most recent works, see Σταμπολίδης 2004, Stampolidis 2008, Stampolidis 2014, Stampolidis 2016.

<sup>294</sup> Σταμπολίδης 1993, Stampolidis 1995, Σταμπολίδης 1996, Stampolidis 2014.

<sup>295</sup> See above p. 236, 254 and below p. 291.

<sup>296</sup> See Σταμπολίδης 1993.

<sup>297</sup> See Σταμπολίδης 1994.

<sup>298</sup> See Σταμπολίδης 2004.

<sup>299</sup> See recently Πυργιωτάκης 2018, 405-419.

<sup>300</sup> See the periodical *Archaeology*, February 2010 (<https://archive.archaeology.org/1001/topten/crete.html>).

<sup>301</sup> For more details and images relating to the creation of the archaeological site and the Museum, see Πυργιωτάκης 2018, 411-419.

<sup>302</sup> Σταμπολίδης et al. 2018, Stampolidis et al. 2019.

<sup>303</sup> Such as the International Archaeological Conference *Crete, Eleutherna and the Outside World*, 30/5/2018 – 3/6/2018 Rethymnon.

<sup>304</sup> Such as by Giorgos Kaloudis in the Orthi Petra necropolis, with works by Bach played on the cello and four-string Cretan *lyra*, or by Ludovico of Anogeia, Nena Venetsanou, also in the open-air theatre of the Museum. These events were usually held about the time of the anniversary celebrations of the ΜαΕ, in June or July each year (2017, 2018, 2019).

<sup>305</sup> See Σταμπολίδης – Τσαγκάρη – Γιαννοπούλου / Stampolidis – Tsangari – Giannopoulou 2019.







## TALES THROUGH THE TANGIBLE PART OF HISTORY

When guiding the President of the Hellenic Republic at the opening of the MaE in June 2016, I dared to say that important as completing the Museum was, with regard to keeping within budget and to its architectural, museographical and museological execution, it is not the concrete or the electrical mechanical systems, the layout, the full storerooms and laboratories, the 3D reconstructions, the documentaries and the short films, the explanatory texts, the splendid showcases and their arrangement in the galleries, I would be so bold as to say not even the antiquities inside them, which should impress us. Because for me the most essential element of the MaE was and is the people. Of then and of now. The people of now, we who succeeded in bringing the MaE to fruition, each to the best of his/her ability and with his/her own contribution, *each with his stone, whether small or large ...*, as the poet says. But above all, the people of then, the people behind the artifacts of the culture that we admire, the creators, their beliefs, their ideas, the protagonists of a culture of measure, as is the Hellenic culture, in which god, nature and humankind are one.

Guided by this principle and the conviction that the archaeological result is a public good, not only for specialists but for whoever wishes to see and to learn [Aristotle: *All men are made in such a way by nature as to seek knowledge*] we shall try below to present the tangible, palpable part of History in such a way that it is easily understood. From the exhibits in the MaE we have selected nine (9) –the number of the Muses in antiquity– and we deal with them here in two ways: for some we simply interpret their content and significance, while for others we treat them as snippets from people’s stories, as these could have happened – that is, we look at persons of that period and their truths as a pleasant fiction based on scientific research and knowledge, as little ‘romances’.



## THE SHIELD

### *The big picture of our story*

In the early first millennium BC, which we name the Early Iron Age, the cosmopolitan cities of the Syro-Palestinian littoral had benefitted greatly from trade. Abundant products of the East flowed into Tyre, Arad, Sidon and other ports, from beyond the lands between the two great rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates, and even further East, from the North, eastern Asia Minor, but also from the South, the Arabian Peninsula and Egypt, and even from the West, Cyprus and the Aegean. Among the commodities were metals, precious and base –gold, silver, copper, iron–, and exotica – perfumes, incense, ivory, spices and everlasting timber of the cedars of Lebanon–, textiles, herbs, works of art... Major markets were Egypt and the islands of the Great Green Sea, as the Egyptians called the Mediterranean, and all the coasts, as the sun turned from the Taurus mountain range and beyond. Architects, artisans and artists of all kinds, soothsayers, mountebanks, priests, physicians and, above all, merchants, flocked to the cities, and the new empire of the Assyrian monarch Adad-nirari II (912–891 BC), with its eyes turned to East and West, took measures to fulfil its ambitions. Having established an excellent war machine, Assyria first captured mighty Babylon, then took power in southeastern Asia Minor (Anatolia) and occupied the Syrian plain. Subsequently, it seemed easy for his grandson Ashurnasipal II (883–859 BC) to reach the coasts of the Great Green Sea, and for his great-grandson Shalmaneser III (859–824 BC), whose long reign lasted 34 years, to expand his empire in Babylon and Persia and south towards the Mediterranean coast, to take control of the land of Aram.

So, when the son of Shammuramat, whom the Greeks called Semiramis, Adad-nirari III (810-783 BC) ascended the throne, neither the lands nor the wealth nor the peoples subjugated by his forebears were strange to him. His vassals were the Neo-Hittites in the north towards the Taurus mountain range, Syria, the land and cities of the Arameans, the cities of Phoenicia which paid tribute already in his grandfather's time, the Philistine states, Damascus, Israel. He even attacked the inhabitants of Urartu to the south of towering Mount Ararat, the Medes and, in the south where the two rivers narrow, the Chaldeans. The Assyrians were to have such a military machine and such profits again only under Sargon II (721–705 BC), his sons and grandsons: Esarhaddon (681–669 BC) and the famed Ashurbanipal (668–627 BC), whom the Greeks named Sardanapalus. It was they who attacked and conquered Egypt and Urartu, while Ashurbanipal reached from Lydia to Elam in the Arabian Peninsula. A few years later, however, his youngest son, Sinshariskhun, was to live through the sacking of their capital itself, Nineveh, in 612 BC.

The wars and lootings at various times, for the expansion of Assyria, sent waves of refugees towards the Great Green Sea and even beyond it. Already from the first waves of pressure of Ashurbanipal and its longest-reigning monarch, Shalmaneser III, craftsmen and masons from northern Syria, the south of the former land of the Mitianians and Urartu, together with shrewd merchants and skilled artisans of the Phoenician cities, sought refuge and a better fate in the large



land in the Green Sea, Alashiya, Cyprus, which the Assyrians named Iatnana, and even further off to the West. However, the great migration was made in the reign of Semiramis' son, Adad-nirari III. Human waves following the sea routes to the North and the West moved towards Cyprus and Crete, and others to the South, via the coasts of Crete and Egypt, to find refuge in the newly-founded (814 BC) Phoenician colony, Kart-Hadas (= new city), the later renowned Carthage. Some left out of fear and others in search of profit, some were lured by the unknown and others carried with them their beliefs, ideas, habits and mores, their arts, their relations – mercantile, ideological or other, direct or indirect. Peoples who seem alike but who are different, in perpetual motion like the waves of the Mediterranean Sea, tempestuous when Boreas blows from the North and calm when Zephyrus blows from the South...

### *The little story*

Hiram son of Ethbal the coppersmith and grandson of the master craftsman Hiram, who had worked in the great temple in Jerusalem when Solomon was king, had become the captain-cum-owner of a ship, prosperous and powerful, mainly from his voyages to and from Qarti hadast, Kition, the city in the southwest of the island of Alashiya (Cyprus), which the Assyrians called Iatnana. Lately, he was reopening to Paphos and bringing purple-dyed textiles, perfumes but also bronze objects made by his father, to sell them in the sanctuary of the Great Goddess, whom the Greeks name Aphrodite, in the harbour of Bafa (Paphos). There he met other merchants from the islands of the Blue Sea (Aegean), who were voyaging to and from Paphos from the harbours of the big land of Kouretia, which their ancestors called Keftiu, Crete, passing from the island of Iyalisa, Ialysos on Rhodes. Captain Kyrbis, who hailed from the small islands in the middle of the Blue Sea, the Cyclades, the position of which was changing with the Horai (seasons), and with whom Hiram chatted about the difficult passages, the currents of the Blue Sea, the constellations, as well as the profits from trade, spoke to him often of the beauty of the harbours and cities of Kouretia, Crete.

So, one day, together with Paphian captains who with their ships were frequenting the land of Kouretia, Hiram decided to follow them on their route to the ports of populous Konossos (Knossos). As his vessel was approaching Kouretia at daybreak, he made out its large landmass and high, for him enormous, mountain with its snow-capped summit even though it was the second month of spring. On Alashiya some time had already passed since the last winter rains.

The harbour looked promising and extremely busy, with captains from the islands of the Blue Sea, from the shores of Athens, and even from the coasts of the land of the ancestors of the Ahhiyawa (the Peloponnese). Hiram loaded his ship with excellent perfumed olive oil and top-quality honey, dried medicinal herbs, delicate perfumes of iris and exquisite pieces of jewellery: a necklace of gold and rock crystal and two pairs of earrings. To purchase a small ivory statuette he parted reluctantly with a heavy bronze bowl incised with his paternal uncle's name, to a Knossian merchant. On departing, homeward bound, he promised he would return. And indeed, for a decade or so, he was voyaging to Kouretia.











Several years had passed since his first voyage, when Hiram decided to take with him his son, Aram, and his eldest nephew, Apalla, son of his sister by the Assyrian Kaskas, a skilled bronze-smith and craftsman who had kept all the virtues of his grandfather's art. Passing by Lindia on Rhodes, he reached Ialysos, where he delivered a consignment given to him by the Paphian merchant Gelason. Gelason's wife, Arbe, had just given birth to their second son, Koures, which is why Gelason decided not to travel with them. They reached the harbour of Konossos at dawn, with the sun rising rapidly into the sky. This time there was no rush, so they left the crew in the harbour and set off for the bustling city, which was already awake, spread over hills beside the River Kerites. They were offered hospitality, they exchanged wares, and the young Aram with Apalla were observing the bronze objects, which had a certain charm and refinement compared to those of Paphos. In the course of their conversations they heard about the great sanctuary in a huge cave at the top of the high mountain that was called Ida. They heard about the cities that were closer to the sanctuary and the city in which its new rulers left free (Gr. *eleutheros*) all those who sought there asylum and employ, Eloutherna. They picked out the slender-bodied girls, who resembled those of Paphos, and eager to visit Eloutherna they persuaded Hiram to sail further west, coasting by its harbours, before taking the route home once more.

The weather was balmy and it didn't take them long to reach the big harbour, leaving behind them the lagoon formed by the sacred river whose headwaters are in the peaks of the high mountain. The sun was shining bright, giving the Blue Sea a wine-dark hue, as sung of by the bards.

Early in the morning they set off on mules, hired from Praxias who lived in Eloutherna, by paying him with small pieces of gold. From Praxias they had bought aromatic herbs and medicine, together with superb-quality wool for women's fine tunics. They took a steep path up towards the mountain. The towering trees with their verdant foliage, the flocks and herds grazing in the pastures, the peasants –Praxias called them *aphamiotes*– toiling in the fields and the scented air delighted them. After some time, they espied the hill of Eleutherna, with its houses built of stone and mudbrick. They passed between the springs of fresh water, made out the potters' workshops on the road and halted to observe the finely-dressed ladies and their daughters, spinning wool in the courtyards of their houses. The happy faces and the friendliness of their menfolk made a good impression, and the delicious food offered to them in Praxias' house made them determined to come back to this city again.

Hiram stayed behind in the city but Aram and Apalla set off very early next morning for the sacred cave, in the company of Praxias' brother Toxotes, who was married to the daughter of the captain from the Cyclades Kyrbis. They took with them food and blankets, so as to spend the night there. They passed by the city of Oaxos, clinging to the top of high hills, and saw the herds and flocks scattered amidst the vegetation on the slopes. Late in the day, they reached the plateau of the cave. A couple of herdsman and a priest welcomed them. They dined frugally and lay down to sleep under a rock shelter, so that on the morrow they would visit the place where the supreme god was born and brought up. The omnipotent god, master of the universe,



but the god who was born, died and resurrected each year, as the priests explained to them. It had suddenly turned cold and clouds were gathering in an eerie enveloping mist. Apalla was startled when a lightning bolt flashed through the darkness and lit up the cave, in which he made out the shadows of the rocks and the votive offerings, illumined by the faintly flickering lamps that the priests had set in its depths. He wanted to get up and to venture into the cavern, but Toxotes held him back. He could vaguely distinguish the priests who were preparing to cover with big pieces of cloth items of furniture and sacred objects at the far end of the enormous chamber. Toxotes explained to him, as best he could, the qualities of the great god, the lord of Heaven, the powerful god of weather, of thunder and of the fertility of the earth. And also the power of the priesthood, the rites with the young men who ascended the mountain at specific festivals, the ceremonial of cult, the communal meals...

Apalla remembered the stories told to him when he was young, by his father Amuro. About working on the reliefs in the grand palace of King Ashurbanipal, about the shields with lion heads and the nails that were forged in the workshop of his grandfather Kurunda for the Assyrian armies and which were dedicated in the shrines of the god of thunder and rain. And, all of a sudden, he realized that only the names of the gods changed, some details perhaps, the manners, but the faith was just as alive. And with these thoughts, he slept soundly.

The veils of night changed colour as vanquished it vanished like a ghost in the light of an enormous sun rising rapidly into the sky. They awoke in the light of a splendid day. Toxotes pointed out to them to the north, in the vast Blue Sea, a barely-visible landmass and explained to them that it was Thera, native isle of Captain Kyrbis. The priests welcomed them reservedly, but when Aram opened his woollen bag and gave them ivory pins for their cloaks, they were overjoyed. Apalla promised that he would bring them bronze objects next time, explaining to them about the workshop of his father and grandfather. With the mediation of Toxotes, they talked also about the god of Ida as well as about their own gods with comparable qualities but different names. The priests invited them to stay with them if they wished, so that Apalla could make or repair bronze cauldrons for the needs of the communal meal at the great festival for which they were preparing. However, in the little time they had available he was able to repair by patching only one of the sanctuary's large bronze cauldrons.

As they were descending to Eloutherna, late in the afternoon, they witnessed a unique phenomenon. The sun was setting in the sea, swathed in a purple veil, brighter and better than the Phoenician carmine dye, and at the very same moment Pasiphae, she who illumines everything, the Moon (Selene) approached from the East, between the mountains of Talos and Tympanator, to the northeast of Ida. Apalla vowed to himself that he would come back, as on the next day they sailed along the coast of Kouretia on the sea route back to the East.

Apalla did not manage to fulfil his vow for some time. Even though he learnt that several merchant mariners were now sailing in the wake of their Cypriot and Cycladic colleagues for Kouretia, Hiram had cut down his voyages to the West and was trading with Egypt. The Assyrian king Shalmaneser had prepared a formidable military machine. The warriors' weaponry, swords, helmets, shields –especially those of the officers with the terrifying lion-head device



in the middle— and breastplates had given work to the region’s bronze-smiths and blacksmiths. So, he had little time for long voyages. The great conflict was not long in coming, at Karkar on the river Orontes. Shalmaneser set out to battle against the alliance of twelve kings, headed by the King of Damascus Hadadezer. His chariots as well as, for the first time, the combined forces of cavalry and infantry claimed a brilliant victory, enabling the Assyrians to invade the rich regions and cities of the South. Shalmaneser’s attacks on the land of Aram and on the cities of Phoenicia – Tyre, Sidon and Arad – were vicious and the taxes he levied on his subjects were swingeing.

Apalla worked for a while on the large friezes for the gates of Balawat, commissioned by Shalmaneser to imitate the works of his father. After the orders for shields at Samal, for King Hayya and his son Sail, the orders and the jobs became fewer and so he decided to try his luck to the West. He settled first in Kition and, not long after, in Paphos, near relatives and friends. Together with other craftsmen and charlatans, forced out of their homes in the East and Phoenicia, Apalla mingled with the crowds in the busy port, where he had set up his workshop. This humble workplace was a hub frequented by many men, an entire world of refugees and the dispossessed with their stories and tales. But Apalla did not make his home in Paphos. After the sudden death of his wife, his thoughts turned again to Kouretia, to Eloutherna, to the sanctuary. And together with his son and the men of his workshop they boarded the ship of Theras, Kyrbis’ son, and set sail for Crete. In the harbour of Knossos they embarked on a Cypriot vessel and coasted westward, dropping anchor in the west harbour of Eleutherna.

As soon as they came ashore, they asked about Praxias and Toxotes, only to learn that they were now old men and no longer came down to the waterfront. But they were introduced to Toxotes’ son, Idas, a wealthy landowner with property on the hills near the harbour, who welcomed them and offered them hospitality in his house. A few days later, Praxias’ son came to get them and so, after many years, they made their way up again to Eloutherna. His son and his collaborators admired the countryside and the landscape, just as Apalla had done as a young man with Aram and his father Hiram. His own concern was how he could settle in the city. Eloutherna had grown and expanded, it looked clean and prosperous. Praxias’ son showed them the sanctuary high on the acropolis and the necropolis lower down to the west, further down was the torrent and to the south were the pastures where the people’s livestock grazed. Some snow still capped the mountain.

Praxias welcomed them warmly and Toxotes was moved indeed to see Apalla again. They reminisced about their trek to the sanctuary of the great cave, about his repairing the bronze cauldron. When they had dined, Apalla asked if they could speak to the elders and the archons, the *kosmoi* of the city, because they wanted these worthies to permit them to set up a workshop of bronze-smiths and blacksmiths there. The time was ripe, because iron ore was being mined on Talos to the east and the archon Preigistos was trading the metal with great success.

So, the newcomers easily settled in the city. The workshop’s prowess was evident from the outset. Local artisans involved with the iron mines smelted the ore in crucibles, forming small flat ingots of iron, to be used for making tools and weapons. Copper continued to



reach Crete from Cyprus but Apalla and his collaborators, together with locals, collected up scrap from old bronze vessels and objects, and melted it down to make new artifacts. Apalla did not forget his promise to the priests. He went up Mount Ida with his son Kaska and the men from his workshop, to attend the great festival to celebrate the coming of age of Eloutherna's new warriors. Some of the older priests remembered him. They welcomed him, they remembered his repair of the large bronze cauldron and he kept his promise by presenting them with a bronze tray decorated with a representation of the god holding the bull above his head and attended by winged daemons. The priests were astonished and elated. They discussed the representation and asked him about his work. He told them about his workshop and he agreed to execute commissions from the priests, whenever they wished. Thus began a new period in the life of Apalla, his son Kaska and the personnel of his workshop, locals and incomers. Admiration of their works spread from the sanctuary in the great cave to the harbour and to the neighbouring cities.

Adept craftsmen, they travelled to other cities too, to sell their wares, adapting them to the whims and taste of their clients and the elite. They also trained other craftsmen from the city and some of the bronze-smiths they came across as they moved about from place to place.

Kaska married the daughter of the Knossian bronze-smith Koures, whose father was the Cretan Mitas and mother the Cypriot Glauke, and the couple made their home in Eloutherna, bringing joy to his father Apalla and to the city too. After all, relations between Cypriots and the Cretans of Eloutherna, and their ties, as with the Cycladic traders too, were growing stronger day by day, bringing concomitant wealth to the cities and the territories around them.

As the years rolled by, commissions for the sanctuaries, the households and the needs of the warriors proliferated, and Apalla and Kaska and their collaborators developed into major creators. Their contact with the city and the priesthood of the cave of the great god, their involvement in festivals and fairs, their interaction with the harbour and the news that reached there from the Blue and the Great Green Sea, brought the people and their ideas closer together. Kaska even learnt from the priests of the supreme god the ceremonial of the young men's rite of passage to adulthood. The youths gathered in bands at the great festival of the god, they camped around the cave, hunted and then roasted pieces of their prey on long iron spits (*obeloi*). They ate, drank, sang, were trained in the use of weapons and in dance ... until the momentous day arrived. On that day the faithful and the bands of initiates who would come of age gathered with their relatives and friends. The slaughtered and butchered the animal of the god and boiled the pieces of meat in the large cauldrons. They drank communally the broth from the cauldrons and each one took a piece of the god's animal, thus participating in the common social body of their city, as citizens and warriors and now defenders of Eloutherna.

Apalla did not live to see the new waves of people who quit the East, seeking their fortune in Kart-Hadas (Carthage). Kaska and his men learnt the news from the merchants and crews of the vessels that moored in the harbours of Knossos and Eloutherna. To mark the coming of age of Preigistos' son Idas, Kaska wrought a superb bronze shield. Based on old designs of his father, he embellished it with a lion protome at the centre. As he was remembering his father's







accounts of Shalmaneser's victories, the military might of the Assyrians, like the punch of a robust daemonic beast, he fashioned the animal's feet as human hands, with five fingers and an iron glove. Below them he placed two heraldic sphinxes, in remembrance of the loss and the subjugation of the twelve kingdoms, brought about by Egypt, which under Pharaoh Osokron lost its influence in the whole zone of Phoenicia. He adorned the nape of the lion's neck with the figure of the great naked goddess of Love and War, her outstretched hands balancing the strength of the young lions flanking her to right and left. Goddess of nature and its equilibrium, from on high she regulated the young lions and her life, the young citizens, warriors and defenders of Eloutherna. And around the rim he placed lions and bulls in combat, the deterrent power of life and death.

The shield gleamed resplendent, as if golden, when Idas held it in the parade of the great festival. The priests called for Kaska, talked with him and decreed that from now on one such shield, even bigger, should be included in the ceremonial of the great festival celebrating the cohort of young citizens' coming of age. A shield that was befitting to the ceremonial and cauldrons at the great feast. Such was the dynamic of this decree and so impressive the shield that the guests each time commissioned similar shields, and so their production was linked also with other sanctuaries on the island. Naturally, there were variations in the size and the representations on the shields, but all had at their centre the protome of a lion, symbol of strength and power, and they remained in the sanctuaries as votive offerings, when the rites of passage were over. In the large cave on Mount Ida all the shields, irrespective of size, had the lion as emblem, excepting one, the big shield that the priests had ordered at the festival that coincided with the largest full moon and the eclipse, which the priests had predicted. Then they requested that the large shield that would be shown to the devotees should have, as an exception this time, not a lion as blazon but the eagle of almighty Zeus, to spread its wings, protecting everyone and everything on earth.

Kaska was to live for many years more, long enough to see the death of Idas, son of the archon Preigistos. His fellow warriors snatched him wounded from the battle to which he had sped to aid an allied city. They brought him home, a few days before the great festival in which, as *kosmos* and head of the new citizens, he would have paraded holding his own, the first, bronze shield, which had been fashioned for him by Kaska.

The whole state assembled for the cremation of Idas. The youths came down from the camp, interrupting their training, and his loved ones brought as funerary offerings his weapons and, the firedogs from their shared meals. Kaska polished the shield anew and handed it over to Preigistos, the father of the deceased. And he, in his suffering, placed it as the lid over his son's cinerary urn, to shield him on his long and hazardous journey into the unknown, which ended in the meadows of Hades and Persephone.







## THE SERPENT AND THE LILY\*

Among the rich grave goods found in the earliest burial pithos with chain of richly-furnished female burials of the eighth and seventh centuries BC, to the north of the excavated area of the Orthi Petra necropolis, was a cracked oenochoe. Today, the jug, conserved and lustrous, spins around slowly on a turntable in the second showcase of gallery A in the Museum of ancient Eleutherna, so that visitors can enjoy it from all sides.

It is a very elegant oenochoe with wide base, voluminous globular body, narrow cylindrical neck, fine trefoil mouth and sturdy twisted handle. On one face, on the lower belly, is a medium-size circular hole that seems to have been made deliberately for some reason. In all probability the hole was made to 'kill' the vase, so that it could never be used again and would remain forever a funerary gift accompanying the dead female, outside whose grave it was deposited. Moreover, since it is a wine jug of the kind used at symposia, it was perhaps one of those that may have been used at drinking parties in the dead woman's house, while she was alive – although I have reservations as to whether the oenochoe had ever been used in such a context. What is special about this vase, apart from the excellent quality of the clay and the sheen of the glaze, is its decoration.

Apart from the black glaze of the handle and of some rings around the neck and the base of the jug, two symmetrical superbly-drawn slender octopuses inscribed in a circle decorate the lateral surfaces of the round body, leaving a gap in which the creator of the composition has fitted a serpent uncoiling upwards. Its broad head approaches a flower hanging from the base of the neck, as if smelling its fragrance. And at the back, under the lower end of the handle, is a lozenge formed from concentric roundels.

As the decorative motifs do not seem to be in keeping with the everyday sympotic or festive use of the wine jug, but rather are more appropriate to a vase intended to symbolize something different in the funerary ritual, I suggest that this oenochoe was probably used as a libation vase.

Regardless of whether the slim-bodied octopuses refer to females of the curled octopus species, polypods and molluscs are common decorative motifs on vases in funerary assemblages and on clay sarcophagi already from Late Minoan (Late Helladic) times of the thirteenth century BC. Consequently, their depiction on this particular oenochoe is anything but fortuitous.

*\*Although the title refers to the first short story by Nikos Kazantzakis, here its meaning is not metaphorical but literal.*



The octopus has the ability to regenerate its severed tentacles, which if cut off grow back in time. And this regenerative quality seems to have established it as a frequent decorative motif associated with death and the belief of people of the period in a rebirth after death.

However, how, we may ask, is the depiction of the octopuses linked with the serpent writhing up and rearing its head to smell a lily flower?

Since the vase appears to have been made in Crete, my thoughts sped immediately to the celebrated myth of Glaukos. According to this myth, the naughty little son of King Minos, while playing in the magazines of his father's palace, was drowned in a vat of honey. In his grief, the king summoned the sages, the seers and the healers of his kingdom, exhorting them to restore his child to life, otherwise he himself would put them to death. Frantic, the wise men tried to resuscitate the boy. One of them, Poly(o)idos (= he who knows many things), in his quest for a way to revive the young Glaukos noticed a dead snake lying beside its living companion, which slithered swiftly and brought back in its mouth a lily flower. The snake placed it on the nose of its dead companion and it was immediately resurrected. Overjoyed, Polyidos brought the lily to the palace of Minos, placed it on Glaukos' nose and brought the boy back to life. Last, the lozenge motif formed from roundels, below the twisted handle of the oenochoe, as we know from other examples, probably represents a schematic 'tree of life'.

Consequently, the overall reading of the iconography of this jug refers to beliefs and notions of resurrection and rebirth. In other words, it is not a simple or chance decoration of any vase but of a vase with potent symbolism, which was placed as a grave good by the loved ones of the dead women inside the burial pithos, outside which it was found. It is a declaration of the belief of the deceased female – and possibly of her relatives too – in a life after death, a future rebirth/resurrection. Thus, we have here an illustrated short story in three sections, which refers to the 'credo' of at least one group of people at Eleutherna, some 2,800 years ago.

The image of an animal smelling a flower seems to have deep roots in the iconography of ancient Greek art, going back to at least the Mycenaean period. It exists on a series of Late Bronze Age vases and continued until Archaic times on Cyprus, where a bull is depicted bending over to smell a flower. This representation brought to my mind the book by the Israeli author Amos Oz, and the film of the same name (2015), *A Tale of Love and Darkness*. At one point the main character, the father of the young Amos, says that the etymology of words is the magic of meanings. For example, the word for flower/blossom in Hebrew is a combination of the words 'bull' and 'fragrance'. The Hebrew word 'bull' has the same root as the word 'fertility' and the scent attracts the insects to fertilize the flowers.

An etymological-linguistic interpretation such as this, in one of the ancient languages of the Near East, fits perfectly with the depictions mentioned, the combination



of the bull smelling a flower, as the strong and sturdy animal bends over almost tenderly to sniff its scent. So, the fertilizing power and fertility seem to be linked with the scent, and the scent becomes through the air and the breath, exactly as God in the Old Testament creates man as an image from clay but it is breath that gives him life, in exactly the same way as the lily gifts breath and life to the dead Glaukos, who has form but not breath. Of course, in our case the animal is a snake, it too a symbol of rebirth as every year it is renewed by shedding its old skin, its slough, and growing a new one.

It is also a symbol of wisdom and a symbol of the underworld –chthonic and hypochthonic–, just as Chthonia, the underground earth, is a power of fertility and life as it annually fertilizes and gives birth anew to Nature.









Among the many funeral pyres, undamaged or disturbed, excavated so far in the Orthi Petra necropolis, one has been brought to light intact, the remains of which are preserved in very good condition. This funeral pyre (ΛΛ90/91), which had been constructed in the way already described<sup>1</sup>, belonged to a warrior and his companion (male or female). His large iron sword, the iron knives and the bronze spear-point – if the last is part of his martial equipment – which accompanied him in his last resting place clearly point to his military role in life, even though the term warrior as used here does not necessarily mean that he was a professional arms-bearer. The series of grave goods found together with his weapons denote his elite status, his outstanding position in Eleuthernian society of the time. As the anthropological study of the bone residues has shown, he must have been around 30 years old when he was cremated. However, funeral pyre ΛΛ90/91 held for us a unique discovery: unearthed at its northwest edge was the skeleton of a robust male aged 30-40, the greater part of which had not been burnt.

The position of the skeleton, outside the residues of the cremation of the Eleuthernian warrior, the unnatural crescentic pose, the fact that it was found headless, unburnt and essentially unfurnished, lead logically to its interpretation as a man who did not die of natural causes. Its contemporaneity with the funeral pyre of the Eleuthernian warrior is certain, since some of the bones of the decapitated skeleton, high up near the neck, have been half burnt by the flames and the heat of the funeral pyre. Among the hypotheses that can be posited on the basis of the excavation data and context, the most plausible interpretation is that it was probably a captive who was executed ‘ἀνευθεν’ (far away), in front of the warrior’s pyre. It is difficult to determine whether this was a simple execution, a ritual revenge or an expiatory sacrifice, since all three interpretations are close to each other. However, the absence of the severed head leads to the conclusion of a retributive execution. If two small cranium fragments found to the south, near the feet of the cremated thirty-year-old Eleuthernian, belong to the beheaded dead man, then their burning should be considered essential for the customs and mores of the period. In other words, the captive’s severed head, as seat of the soul, was burnt so as not to offend the gods of the Underworld. Nonetheless, its deposition separately from the rest of the man’s body, leads automatically to the possibility of interpreting the act. The head by itself in the halls of the Underworld could not harm its enemy, that is, the cremated outstanding warrior of Eleutherna,

<sup>1</sup> See above p. 210 and full publication, Σταμπολίδης and Stampolidis 1996.

*Detail from the Attic red-figure amphora by the painter Myson (510-490 BC). King Kroisos (Lat. Croesus) of Lydia, enthroned on top of the pyre, performs a libation and the slave Euthymos prepares to set alight the pyre.*



and the unburnt body could not harm its executors, not even as a headless ghost. Consequently, it would be essentially a dead man in limbo between two worlds – the Upper World and the Underworld.

This unique discovery brings to mind not only the funeral ritual of cremation, which is described sometimes in the epos, but also the corresponding dramatic scene of the slaughter of twelve captive Trojan nobles in front of Patroclus' pyre, as narrated by Homer in Rhapsody XXIII of the *Iliad*. This scene is depicted also in vase-paintings of the Classical period<sup>2</sup>, such as by the Darius Painter in the fourth century BC. There too, as here, the decapitated dead are not burnt but are 'ἀνευθεν' – apart from the distinguished deceased of the pyre. This discovery also vindicates Aristotle in his dispute with Plato as to what extent epic poetry and Homer describe the truth<sup>3</sup>. Consequently, funeral pyre ΛΛ90/91 is a unique illustration of most of Homer's lines in Rhapsody XXIII of the *Iliad*, and at the same time its dating to the end of the eighth century BC seems to contribute to our understanding of the way in which the epos was written.

Today, most of those studying the Homeric epos (philologists, structuralists, and so on) agree that it includes three levels of temporal oral narration: those belonging probably to the Late Bronze Age, that is to Mycenaean Greece (16th – 12th century BC), those belonging to Proto-geometric times (11th – 9th century BC) and last, those belonging to Geometric-Protoarchaic times (8th – 7th century BC), that is the years before it was written down. It is a fact that in many cases the leading figure in various episodes of the epos was Odysseus. He is protagonist in acts of espionage, gatherings, various actions; he and his companions construct the Wooden Horse. It is, therefore, puzzling why for the construction of the most formal funeral pyre, that of Patroclus, Homer does not put Odysseus and his Cephallenians as prime movers of the funerary ritual but, from the first steps of collecting the timber from the forested slopes of Ida until the construction of the pyre, he places as protagonists two Cretans: Idomeneus and Meriones (with their liegemen). For Homer to do this means that he considered –he and obviously his audience– that in matters of rites and ceremonial, and indeed funerary, Crete and the Cretans had the leading role<sup>4</sup>. Consequently, the saga about Patroclus' funeral pyre has, in my opinion, a Cretan kernel, just as, correspondingly, the saga about the celebrated cup of Nestor presupposes a Messenian kernel. Moreover, not unrelated is the fact that situated in the northwest foothills of Nida, that is, Psiloreitis, the then-wooded Ida of antiquity, is Eleutherna, where the funeral pyres were revealed, just as placed on Ida of Troy are the Cretans who knew the procedure to undertake the task.

As I have said already, funeral pyre ΛΛ90/91, of the aristocratic warrior of Eleutherna, is dated confidently from the assemblage of finds –vases, weapons and general grave goods– to the last third of the eighth century BC (730-700 BC), that is to the period when the epics

<sup>2</sup> See Stampolidis 1996, 125, fig. 174.

<sup>3</sup> See Stampolidis 1996, 201-203.

<sup>4</sup> We know this from the Kylonian Affair, which beset Athens and in which again a Cretan, Epimenides, was called upon to play an effective role in the purifications of the city.



had not been fully elaborated but were still taking shape until their first (?) writing down, most probably in the sixth century BC. Consequently, the incorporation of the Cretan saga for the funerary ritual pre-existed and, therefore, the specific funeral pyre and those that preceded it –as well as some that came after it– in the Orthi Petra necropolis, neither copied nor imitated the funeral pyre of Patroclus in Rhapsody XXIII of the *Iliad*. This was a funerary ritual practised in areas of Crete already from the Late Bronze Age (e.g. at Olous in East Crete) and during Protogeometric and Geometric times at Eleutherna and elsewhere. What makes the discovery at Eleutherna outstanding is precisely the slaying of a captive in front of the funeral pyre of a warrior, a rare custom but not unknown, which is linked with the mores of warfare.

Moreover, even the name Idomeneus (*Ida + menos* = the brave lad, the power of Ida) refers to primeval Ida (Psiloreitis), in the foothills of which lie Eleutherna and the Orthi Petra Necropolis with the cremations. Needless to say, I am not implying that Idomeneus was from Eleutherna or that he reigned there, as around the massive mountain and in its wider environs many cities have been discovered, dating from at least the Late Bronze Age onwards.

To put it simply, in antiquity there were no radios, televisions or newspapers from which Greece could learn news, mores and customs from different provinces of the mainland, the islands, the wider Hellenic world. There was, however, mobility, travel, movement not only of things but also of people and together with them of beliefs, notions, ideology, opinions, which travelled from one place to the other. And among the mobile or itinerant persons were merchants, craftsmen, healers, soothsayers, envoys and, also, an excellent breed, a chain linking together the different regions, the bards, the minstrels, who garnered myths, maxims, performances, stories and beliefs from all corners of the Greek world, during the Later Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age. They plied their art not only in palaces and at banquets, but also, mainly, at the great panhellenic festivals where they congregated to sing their ‘epics’, not only at Olympia already from the early eighth century BC (776 BC the first Olympiad) but also at other sanctuaries in the Peloponnese, Attica, the islands, and the panionian festivals such as on Delos or Samos. At these gatherings some would sing the parts of the ‘tales’ of their homeland, others would listen and would compose more and more ‘epics’ until the final writing down of those that were collected and synthesized by Homer or the Homerids.

Consequently, the nucleus of the myth, the saga, of Patroclus’ funeral pyre would have had a Cretan stamp, as is borne out not only by Homer’s verses in Rhapsody XXIII of the *Iliad* and elsewhere, but also by their ‘illustration’, as this emerges tangibly from the excavations and the totality of the funeral pyres of Eleutherna from *ca* 900 BC until the sixth century BC. Specifically, indeed, funeral pyre ΛΛ90/91, mainly because of the ritual revenge that took place there.

The issue concerning the truth of the Homeric epics is not new. It was raised in antiquity, already from Archaic times, and mainly by Plato (*Republic* 391b) in the fourth century BC, when the philosopher wondered to what extent the poet of the epics was telling the truth when



he narrates that Achilles dragged Hector around Patroclus' grave and that he slew the Trojan captives in front of his dead friend's pyre (*And again the trailings of Hector's body round the grave of Patroclus and the slaughter of the living captives upon his pyre, all these we will affirm to be lies*). Plato considers this to be poetic licence or hyperbole, as in his view poetry, and indeed epic, affects the soul and, therefore, reacting as a regulator of social life and indeed at the level of politics, he has objections as to what degree the ancient discourses (*αρχαίοι λόγοι*), the myths referred to in Homer, can be beneficial in the education and training of young men. Aristotle, to the contrary, a great admirer and advocate of Homer, undertook (as many had done before him, such as Theagenes from Rhegion [6<sup>th</sup> century BC]) and collected in six books with the title *Homeric Problems*, a whole catalogue of the questions that arise from Homer and proposed answers to them. So, challenging Plato as to the truth of Homer regarding the dragging of Hector and the immolation of the Trojans, and employing the so-called historical and anthropological method, Aristotle replies to him that on the basis of prevailing customs in contemporary Thessaly of the fourth century BC, and citing as example Eurydamas son of Meidias, who was killed by the tyrant of Larisa Simos, avenging the death of his brother Thrasyllos, comes to the conclusion that Homer describes the truth in Rhapsody XXIII of the *Iliad*.

After all, it seems that this practice of vengeance will continue to exist in all 'archaic' societies, in which the spontaneous reaction of man for blood justice will exist and there will be self-redress whether in wartime or in peacetime, irrespective of the laws of organized societies. Telling in this respect is the episode from highland Crete during the Second World War, which I cite here. When explaining each time our finds to the students and the technicians in the excavation, in the year when pyre ΛΛ90/91 was found in the Orthi Petra necropolis, in summarizing I asked those from modern Eleftherna if they understood what we had discovered. Among them, the then 70-year-old N. Tzanidakis told me characteristically, in Cretan dialect – alas, lost in translation: *Of course I'll tell you what you've found. In 1944 an Occupation detachment caught a brave young lad from Anogeia (which is near Axos, further east of and higher than Eleutherna), Stephanogiannis was his name, and they executed him. Later, his friends and his relatives, so as to take their revenge, caught the commander of the German detachment, they dragged him over Stephanogiannis's grave and they killed him. And as they held the head of the slain man above the grave, they shouted: 'Rise up Stephanogiannis, to see what's happening'. That's exactly what you found too.*



Among the host of grave goods from the warriors' tomb (A1K1), noteworthy is a category of bronze vases, which according to their use have been named basins, fruitstands, chernibes, bowls. Large or small, they had been used as covers-lids to close some of the cinerary vases in the tomb, thus shielding from 'intruders' their precious content, the burnt bones of the warrior-heroes.

Outstanding among them is a large bronze bowl about 39 cm in diameter, with an exquisite repoussé representation in low relief on the central decorative frieze encircling the outside of the vase. Apparent protagonist in the narration represented is a large female figure in profile, turned to the right, sitting on a throne without back and armrests, her feet stepping on a footstool. She wears a long garment and brings her half-bared right arm onto her right thigh. Although her head is now lost, the lower part of her beautifully-braided long plait survives, to about the middle of the back. Behind the female, a group of five musicians, turned right and playing string instruments (two kitharas, of Greek and Oriental type) seems to attend and participate in the scene unfolding in front of the enthroned female figure. There we see a table with vases and offerings for her, a female figure in full-length garment standing between the table and a casket-cabinet behind her, upon which there are also vases of various types and a ladle (*arytaina*), hanging on the right. Then come female figures in long garments, which advance bearing offerings: one with hemispherical bowls in her raised hands, another holding fish hanging from rope, one on the right and three on the left, while between the gift-bearers and the instrument-players is a large group of females with long garments, who dance holding hands at the wrist, as Homer describes the hold between dancers in Rhapsody XVIII of the *Iliad*, in analogous scenes on Achilles' shield.

The whole scene seems to take place in the open air, as implied by the absence of buildings. A 'baldachin' could be vaguely hinted at by the presence of a flower dangling, in front of the seated protagonist, towards whom and for whom both the offerings and the music and dance take place.

This is probably a ritual for the enthroned female figure, the interpretation of which can be deduced from the offerings as well as from certain symbolisms. The existence of the pendent and withered flower leads to an interpretation of mourning, as does the offering of fish to a deity (or rarely to a deceased) in rituals analogous to those known from the Near East already from the third millennium BC for deities of the Underworld, such as Inanna and Ishtar. I note here, as an aside, that even today at meals linked with death rites, funerals or memorial services, the consumption of fish is an integral part. This iconography of offering, borrowed from the East but without the presence of dancers (dance was added later, probably in the Cypriot-Aegean milieu), finds on the bowl from Eleutherna the fullest and the most monumental representation known to date, with its conceptual content altered.



So, we should recognize in the enthroned figure rather some deity and not some dead female –even if heroized– since this bronze vase, like other comparable ones, some with similar representations, covered the bones of warrior-heroes and not of women. The interpretation of the seated figure as a deity associated with the Underworld should therefore be considered certain. Her corporeality could lead to her identification as Demeter –Demeter Chthonia or Melaina–, however, her beautiful long braid, which brings to mind also the corresponding hairstyles of the young female figures of the entire representation, leads rather to an interpretation of her as Persephone, a deity referred to frequently in inscriptions and on gold funerary mouthpieces, which have been found at Eleutherna, but of later periods than the bowl. This interpretation is in keeping also with the space in which the bowl was found, the chamber ‘tomb of the warriors’ (A1K1), the space where all the cinerary vases containing burnt bones and ash of the warriors and defenders of the city were deposited, offering archaeologists and anthropologists a palaeodemographic capsule for the centuries from about 900 to 660/50 BC.

The representation on the frieze of the bronze bowl, of a scene with offerings to Persephone (?) and with the participation of musicians and dancers, seems to render a ritual that was possibly linked with the mortuary customs and the memorial services of Protoarchaic Eleutherna. It seems that this vase, as well as analogous ones of its kind, were utilitarian objects that were filled with offerings –as revealed in any case by the bowl of comparable shape with representation of fruits upon the table of offerings to the same deity– for the purposes of the burial and of the memorial services, and after their use they were not taken back to the house but remained perpetually in the grave, covering the cremated bones of the dead. During the same Geometric/Archaic period something comparable was happening, as we observe also on the vases that were used in analogous rituals around the tombs and which were buried in situ so as not to be used again. They were smashed as polluting, to ‘break’ evil and not return to the house, and they belong only to the space of the dead. Again, as an aside, I note here that the same happens even today with the smashing of the plate with the *kollyva* (memorial sweetmeat with boiled wheat and nuts), at the nine-day remembrance, upon the graves of the dead in many parts of Greece and Crete.

*One further observation:* Male figures are absent from these representations on the friezes of the metal vases of Eleutherna. It would appear that only women knew how to perform the funerary ritual. Females were the agents of the ceremonial acts observed after completion of the cremation and of the memorial services for the dead. It is known from ancient sources and mainly from Aristotle that women in antiquity were associated par excellence with the life of the household and were excluded from the male-dominated public marketplace, the agora, as well as from participation in wars. However, outside their home, women often played a leading role in public rites of religious character, as well as prominently in the sphere of death, as evident from Archaic black-figure vase-paintings, mainly Attic. In Crete, however, as we know from the queen of inscriptions, the Law Code of Gortyn, which is dated to between 480 and 450 BC but echoes Archaic structures, the social status of women was privileged, as they had the right of land-ownership and were called *astai*, which refers to their family origin and civic rights. So, the





representations on the basins reveal an aspect of the woman's role, a role that was prominent in matters of customs and religion, particularly those relating to the sphere of death –that is, affairs pertaining to the public domain, from as early as the beginning of the seventh century BC, when the institution of the city-state was being gradually established and the women of Crete were protagonists in this in their own way. Because grieving and its expression belong in the woman's domain, we could say: 'mourning becomes Electra'







## A DOUBLE FAREWELL

The archon Preigistos, thrice *kosmos* in Eleutherna, a man rich and powerful, with vineyards and olive groves to the north of the great city, had climbed up the slopes of the sacred mountain, Ida, to oversee the herdsmen grazing their flocks there. It was on Ida that news reached him of the death of his eldest and first-born daughter, Glauke. Hurriedly he gathered up his personal belongings, to come down to the city, and sent his men ahead to order the ‘*tholos*’ in which they would bury her. This was an enormous storage jar, which would be placed last in a line of pithoi containing female relatives of his clan, to the west, below the burial *oikos* of the priests.

The whole city assembled for the funeral, relatives and friends and, of course, Preigistos’ other two children, his son Glaukos and the little Pasiphae, whom he intended would become a priestess in the temple of the patron goddess on the acropolis.

As they had closed off with a wall the ‘*tholoi*’ of the women who had died earlier, they placed Glauke’s pithos further to the west with all her grave goods. The keening and the sobbing of the womenfolk subsided and the people began to disperse. Preigistos remained alone in the necropolis and gazed at the heroon where, not long before, Skyllis had dedicated the lovely statue he had carved in local stone and had personally placed on the false-door of the monument. The sunlight was falling upon the little statue, fading the colours on the front. But the hair was still bright red and falling on the shoulders.

A few years later, Skyllis’ son, Kanachos, sculpted another little statue for the cemetery. They placed it on the monument with the sphinxes, to the north of the heroon. The truth is that Kanachos had in mind as its model Pasiphae, as he was seeing her in her long garment with the bronze girdle she wore round her slim waist at the rituals, the fine cloak (*epiblema*) over her shoulders and her beaded hairstyle, resembling that of Egyptian figurines that had been left in the sanctuary on the acropolis by foreign merchants who frequented the city. The brand-new statuette glanced sideways at Preigistos’ dedication and visitors to the necropolis dubbed the works ‘the two sisters’.

Year in, year out, Kronos-Chronos, Old Father Time, continued to devour his children and the necropolis continued to receive the bodies of the dead in the earth’s great embrace. As the centuries rolled by and the city grew and prospered, the old cemetery was abandoned, and after the capture of Eleutherna by the Roman Metellus, its urban plan changed, leaving the central part of the necropolis with the large monuments as a square among the insulae with the new buildings. And when the city shrank, crumbled and was forgotten, the ‘sister’ statuettes had lain asleep in the earth’s embrace for many years.

Until suddenly, with the measuring of our time, in the late nineteenth century, the thud of spades digging close to them was heard. People different from those that the small stone statues had once faced,



drew forth the little kore, Kanachos' statue, into the daylight. Dizzied and with the face half destroyed, she looked around for her big 'sister'. She saw her in pieces, with her lower body lying in front of the heroon. She wept and prayed that she would be thrown together with her. But someone wrapped her and pushed her again into the darkness, this time of a suitcase. Months later, she woke up in a sculptor's workshop. The statuettes, of terracotta and of stone, that were together with her on a big wooden table, explained to her that she was in France, in the town of Auxerre.

With the death of the French sculptor, her adventure began. His widow sold her in the market. She was bought and used as a port-chapeau, on which those attending the opera in Auxerre hung their hats. At first she felt uncomfortable, she often remembered the monument on which she once stood, the warm sunshine, the invigorating rain, the alphabet of the stars, the moonless nights, the rising of the moon over the necropolis of Eleutherna. But mainly she remembered her sister and the people who visited the necropolis ... Her only consolation was the ever-changing stream of people attending the opera. And this until a venerable gentleman, Maxim Collignon, recognized the emigrée and gave a painting in exchange for her, so that he could take her with him. Monsieur Collignon took her and placed her in a different world, in the Louvre Museum, among works from her homeland, Greece, and some even from Crete itself. Her eyes were ever searching in the hope of seeing her big 'sister' tucked away in some corner. In vain. The grand and well-cared-for exhibition hall, and the companionship of the other expatriates were not enough to heal her pain, particularly in her quest for her big 'sister'. How she longed to travel to Greece, to Crete, to soak up the sun that set before her every day in the Orthi Petra necropolis, to gaze on the acropolis, to be caressed by the ancient wind... The image of her dismembered sister, as she had left her on the day of the departure, haunted her.

About one hundred years must have passed since her arrival in France, when one day she heard the Director Alain Pasquier and his then young colleague Jean-Luc Martinez discussing in front of her that a young archaeologist excavating in the necropolis of Eleutherna had found again the lower body of her 'sister'. Her heart was pounding, at exactly the point where they had earlier taken a sample of her DNA, leaving a tiny hole under her left breast. Did this mean she would be able to see her big sister again? Her hopes were high. But she would have to wait another fourteen years until she saw the archaeology professor who had discovered her 'sister'. He was conversing in front of her together with the Director of the Louvre Jean-Luc Martinez and Alain Pasquier, and was arranging for her to travel to Greece, when, deeply moved, she heard the Frenchmen say to the professor: *Of course we'll allow her to visit Greece, to meet her 'sister'*. She was tremendously excited. Preparations were made for the journey. Not to Crete but to Athens. That was fine with her. In 2004, she arrived in the Museum of Cycladic Art, where its director, N. Chr. Stampolidis, received her with honours. He uncovered the lower body of her 'sister' and he placed them together again, after so many years. How many people came to admire them, to see them talking to one another, to enjoy them together!

Over and over again, they chatted about the history of their city and about the sculptors who created them, while staring at familiar objects and grave goods from their necropolis. Time and again, they thanked with their gaze the excavator who took their DNA sample, in order to prove their kinship. They remembered their human models, Glauke and Pasiphae, the separation of the two sisters by the death of the first, and slowly they prepared themselves emotionally for their own second separation...



It is commonly acknowledged that the *Father* of History is Thucydides, because of his objectivity in narrating the events, about the cause and the effect. By contrast, his predecessor Herodotus from Halikarnassos, who dealt with an enormous body of material from different lands and peoples, is considered sometimes, at least, to fantasize, using folklore elements and tales that are incredible. Does this apply, we wonder, to Herodotus' narrative about Axos in Crete?

In the fourth Book of his *Histories* (IV, 154-156) Herodotus relates an episode about the founding of Cyrene, linking Crete, Thera (Santorini), Delphi and Cyrenaica with protagonists who seem to be of his invention. The story he tells is as follows: Once upon a time there reigned in Oaxos (present Axos, between Eleutherna and modern Anogeia on Crete) a king named Etearchos, who had one daughter, Phronime, whose mother had died. The king remarried and Phronime's stepmother proved to be wicked. She blamed and denounced the child at every opportunity, even accusing her of 'lewdness', and eventually persuaded Etearchos to get rid of Phronime. At the time there was in the city a merchant from Thera, Themison, whom the king invited to be his guest. And as was customary, after he had treated him well, he made Themison swear to do him a favour when he left. Etearchos asked Themison to take Phronime with him and to throw her overboard into the open sea, to drown her.

Themison, having taken the oath, could not renege on it. So he took Phronime and when they were in the open sea he bound her with a rope and, keeping his oath, cast her overboard. But instead of leaving her to drown, he brought her up again. Thus, he did not betray his oath and he rescued the princess from drowning.

When they reached Thera, Phronime passed into the hands of Polymnestos, a wealthy Theran nobleman, who kept her as a concubine. After some time, Phronime gave birth to a boy, whom they named Battos, it is said because he stammered. At some moment, in order to find out why the boy stuttered, they consulted the oracle of Delphi, but the Pythia answered that Battos would become king of Libya, because in the Libyan language 'battos' means king. They were puzzled indeed, for they had gone to the oracle for one reason and the ambiguous Apollo had given another answer.

Years later, it seems that Thera was experiencing great difficulties. The distressed Therans sent representatives to the Delphic sanctuary, to learn how they could improve their circumstances. And the Pythia uttered the oracle that Battos with other Therans should colonize Cyrene in Libya. This was done and Battos set off with two fifty-oared ships on his voyage to North Africa.

This summary version of Herodotus' text generates a series of hypotheses and thoughts, which only the visible and tangible part of History, the excavation data and the archaeological finds, can document. I shall not insist here on details from the earlier scholarly publication of







mine on the subject<sup>5</sup>. It is true that the names in this story are tailor-made for the role of each character. The name of the king, Etearchos, is a composite of the words *eteos* + *archein*, meaning he who has the hereditary authority to rule, from generation to generation. His daughter, who is falsely accused of unruly behaviour, has the name Phronime (well-behaved) and Polymnestos, who has her as a concubine, is the man with many (*poly*) suitresses (*mnestes*). Last, the merchant who keeps his vow but is just is called Themison (from Themis, the name of the goddess of Justice), while the child is named Battos, which means ‘king’ in the language of Libya, there where he was to go as colonizer (*oikistes*) to found Cyrene in 631 BC, as accepted by scholarship.

So, what truth might emerge from Herodotus’ narrative? How can archaeology help in this and how is Eleutherna involved, which is not mentioned at all in Herodotus’ text?

The logical sequence in the Pythia’s prophecy that for the situation to improve on Thera Battos must depart with other Therans and colonize Libya probably has to do with the reality of the eighth and seventh centuries BC, as known to us from laws and ancient sources. This is that strictures of space and over-population in some regions fomented insurrections and revolts with dire results. This is considered a major cause of the so-called Second Colonization from the late eighth century BC and the duration of the seventh century BC, mainly at sites in the central Mediterranean (Sicily, Italy, Cyrenaica) but also the Ionian cities in the Euxine Pontus.

Consequently, hardships on the little island of Thera led the Pythia to pronounce that a Thera colony should be founded in the fertile part of North Africa, the Cyrenaica, *there were the sky is full of holes and rains*, as the ancient Greeks said. And, of course, in the Colonization those who left their homeland were not the first-born sons who inherited their father’s property, but the other sons who were less fortunate, as was the son of the concubine Phronime, Battos, who sailed away from his native isle with two penteconters, bound for the shores of Cyrenaica.

The islet of Platea off the coast of Cyrene, again known to us from Herodotus in the episode with the Samian captain Kolaios and the Cretan Korobios, discloses the long overseas voyages from the Aegean region to the West, as well as the ports of call where the ships dropped anchor and the participation each time of neighbouring populations. The harbour of Cyrene, Apollonia, on the north coast of Africa opposite Platea, as well as the valley and the landscape of Cyrene itself, which resembles Delphi to a degree, bear witness to the influence exerted by the Delphic sanctuary, the ‘hard disk’ of knowledge in antiquity, during the colonizations. Archaeological finds, such as vase sherds and Archaic pottery from Ionia, Samos, as well as Thera –possibly also Cretan which have not been diagnosed– attest the reality in the region of Cyrenaica<sup>6</sup> in the years of Herodotus’ narrative.

I do not know whether there is unpublished ceramic material from Axos that could demonstrate its relations with Thera. However, in Axos’ neighbour Eleutherna –their ter-

<sup>5</sup> Stampolidis 2006.

<sup>6</sup> After all, not unrelated is the fact that after the Romans’ conquest of Crete and its subsequent division into the provinces and themes of the Roman State, Gortyn in southern Crete was capital not only of Crete but also of Cyrenaica.



ritories bordered in antiquity—, we were lucky in finding Thera vases inside tomb A1K1, of the warriors. One vase was uncovered near the entrance to the tomb and relatively high up, which associates it with the last depositions of cinerary vases in the tomb. This is a Thera pithos, which is dated to 680 BC and was used as a cinerary vase for the residues of the burnt bones of an adult male. Its mouth had been covered with a shallow Phoenician bronze bowl with representation on its inside: a six-rayed star in the middle, two inner narrow zones of vegetal ornament and Egyptian sphinxes, scarabs and falcons upon papyri in the quite wide outer zone near the rim. The bronze vase is perhaps earlier than the Thera pithos but their presence in the same assemblage inside the tomb suggests that both were purchased by the same owner, either the deceased whose cremated remains were found inside the pithos or even the close circle of relatives who buried him.

The finding of Thera clay vases and particularly of the pithos in combination with the Phoenician bowl refers to direct commercial contact between Thera and Eleutherna, at least during these years, of the late eighth and the early seventh century BC. The interaction between the two islands is not surprising, as their proximity is given and their relations are known from as early as Minoan times. The combination of the Thera clay vase and the Phoenician bronze bowl brings to mind another passage in Herodotus (Book IV, 147), in which he speaks about the settlement of Phoenicians on Thera, of course long before the period we are discussing here. Consequently, the Thera pithoi found in Eleutherna and the Phoenician bronze bowl reveal the route (or one of the routes) followed from Thera (Santorini) to the north coast of Crete, most probably to one of the harbours of Eleutherna and hence to the Cretan hinterland or to the city itself, higher inland. Although no evidence linking Thera with Axos has yet been found, the discovery of a similar Phoenician bronze bowl inside the Idaean Cave, much closer to Axos, confirms the route taken by merchants from Thera to the north coast of Central Crete, to one of the harbours of Eleutherna and subsequently to Axos, exactly as is hinted at in the story of Phronime, Etearchos and the Thera merchant Themison.

And something more: if Cyrene was indeed founded in 631 BC—even if we do not take into consideration a delay from the first mooring off the islet of Platea and afterwards on the coast of North Africa, in the subsequent harbour of Cyrene, Apollonia, and finally the founding of Cyrene itself in a higher location— Battos must have been about thirty or forty years old when he led the mission of two penteconters. And since we learn from Herodotus that Phronime gave birth to him after some time had elapsed (*χρόνου περιόντος ἐξεγένετο ὁ παῖς*) it becomes clear that Herodotus' story refers to about the decade 680-670 BC, the period to which the Thera pithos in tomb A1K1 of the Eleutherna necropolis is dated, so endorsing the view that hidden behind the possible invention of the protagonists' names in Herodotus' narrative is a kernel of actual events, part of the truth of Herodotus' *History*.











## DEATH AND GRIEF\*

His elder brother, Leukokomas, had come down from the mountain, from wooded Ida, after two months of training by the archon Euxythetos. The great festival, with the sacrifice of a bull to Zeus and the communal repast that followed, with choice commensals –lovers/mentors (*kleinoi*) and their protégés/stand-bys (*parastathentes*) with their red chitons and their cups from their own analogous honours, before those for Leukokomas– had just ended.

The pubescent boy Praxias wanted to grow up quickly and was eager to start his training too. But it was slow in coming, even though he knew how to herd his father's flocks of sheep and even to set traps for birds, although he preferred to hunt thrushes with his sling. He hadn't dared to pull taut his father's bow, but he had tried that of Leukokomas once or twice, behind his brother's back. Bored by the gathering and while the participants were engaged in other things, Praxias slipped away to hunt, taking his dog Tauros with him. Tauros was a top-class Cretan hound, his faithful friend and companion since childhood. As they were running towards the mountain, Tauros smelt two partridges and Praxias, trying to keep up with him, fell into a crevice on the flat summit of Tites. The boy's death became known when Tauros returned home alone, barking frenziedly and running to the spot where the lad had been accidentally killed. Eleutherna was shocked by the incident.

Two days after the feast for Leukokomas, the city was shrouded in a mantle of grief as one and all followed the deceased to the big necropolis. Praxias' body was inhumed in a pithos, in the middle of the necropolis, close to the monument of the rock-cut warriors' tomb, and a large heavy stone was placed over the mouth of the jar forever. After the burial rites, silence reigned. Only Tauros roamed around the burial pithos, seeking in vain his dead master. He tried to dig with his nails under the huge stone covering the mouth of the jar, and keeping the boy in darkness. But to no avail.

Every day, the hound returned home, sniffed around its food, but ate nothing. He snuggled at the edge of the courtyard, crying. Some days later, the hound disappeared. Leukokomas and his father thought it was probably wandering around the fields or was with the sheep. More days passed, and when the women came back for the memorial service at Praxias' grave they found the dog lifeless on top of it. They understood. Tauros had died of grief at the loss of his young master. They dug a small pit next to Praxias' burial jar and placed the dead hound inside it. Praxias would no longer be alone in Hades. He would be able to hunt with Tauros in the meadows of Persephone.

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\* This tale is about the burial of a Cretan hound which died of grief and was buried next to the enchytrismos of its young master, in the middle of the excavated area of the necropolis, to the north of the tomb of the warriors, in Archaic times. The tale told here is a flight of fancy. However, the customs and some of the names of the key players are those known from ancient sources.







## A PROHIBITION ON WINE-DRINKING

A small inscribed stone stele, which resembles a cartouche or tablet, was found on the acropolis of ancient Eleutherna. Its surviving height and width are about that of an A4 page, while its thickness is about ten centimetres. Preserved on the front are just two paragraphs, written 'as the ox ploughs a field' (boustrophedon), the lines alternatingly from left to right and from right to left. The way in which it is written and the carved lettering are comparable to other inscriptions from Eleutherna that are dated to the Late Archaic period, the mid-sixth century BC.

Both paragraphs refer to the prohibition of excessive wine-drinking (*MH INIINEIN*, freely translated as *Do not drink to get drunk*).

In the first paragraph is a ban on excessive wine-drinking by one category of young adults, the *dromeis*, equivalent in today's military terminology to those serving in the communications corps, the fast-runners who served as guards, in the wider sense of the term, somewhere in the borders, at Dion Akron. The place was most probably either a cape or a mountain top, the name of which linked it with the supreme god Zeus. The *dromeis* were ordered to desist from wine-drinking, most probably at some communal drinking party (a symposium?, a festival?), so as not to have difficulties when they needed to bring a message quickly to the city of Eleutherna, or elsewhere, or even so as not to betray some secret to the enemy, should they be taken captive drunk. The second prohibition concerns people who perform religious acts and duties, priests. I presume so that they did not pray when inebriated and so slur their words, so that the gods would hear them but not understand what they were saying.

The inscription was found in an Early Byzantine complex on the acropolis, obviously in second or third reuse. However, its size and its neat execution on incised separating lines suggest that it may well have been kept, possibly with others, as a bulletin of ordinances, in a public building, such as an *andreion* (men's house), so that the prohibitions were publicized and could be read by interested parties.



## AN IMAGE OF TRANSITION

In the most recent excavations, which are still in progress, two exceptionally interesting Early Christian basilicas have been found at about the midpoint of Archaia Eleftherna hill. The larger one, on the lower slopes, was dedicated to St Irene of God and had been constructed with material in second and third use, from architectural members and blocks (spolia) from earlier edifices of the Hellenistic and Roman city. This is true, in part, also for the basilica at Agios Markos, a short distance higher up the hillside. Uncovered between them, however, was a large number of inscriptions and fragments of inscriptions dating from the Archaic and Early Classical period (6th/5th century BC).

The question raised by the excavation picture is whether and to what extent the construction materials used in the basilicas came from already demolished earlier buildings or whether these were demolished on purpose, in order to use their material to build the churches of the new religion.

The question is difficult to answer, as there are indications of intentional forced detachments, as for instance on some fragments of plaques with Archaic inscriptions. However, in all cases the plaques seem to be intact and reused, incorporated carefully in the new buildings. The period in which the basilicas were founded, one of changes and of gradual transition from one ideology to another, from one faith to another and the ways in which Christianity came to prevail, do not seem to have been the same everywhere. There are examples, such as in the East and Egypt, where the transition evidently took place violently, whereas elsewhere, such as in Athens, it was on a more even keel. At Athens in the early fifth century AD, the Eparch Herculius allocated the porticoes of Hadrian's Library to the pagans (idolaters) and the enormous space of the atrium to the Christians, who built a basilica inside it.

It seems that in Crete and at Eleutherna the transition was likewise smooth, but because things are not always what they seem, we need to study more evidence for each area from one end of the island to the other, and the timeframe of the founding of each building. For the present, from the excavated parts there is one piece of evidence that heralds the new faith, as this is imprinted in the well-preserved mosaics of the north aisle of the St Irene basilica. The motifs of the mosaic pavement are drawn from earlier Hellenistic and Roman subjects, such as the guilloches and the rinceaux bordering the walls and surrounding the central subjects, with fruits such as pomegranates, and ivy leaves, multi-seeded and evergreen symbols, attributes of old deities, such as Persephone and Dionysos. After all, in other Early Christian mosaics there are popular Dionysiac symbols, such as the vine, which were taken over by the new religion, in which Christ declares *I am the true vine, you are the branches*.







So, as the faithful passed through the doorway of the narthex to enter the north aisle of the St Irene basilica, they stepped on a mosaic ‘carpet’ of schematic flowers, as if in Paradise, while the ‘carpet’ was interrupted in the middle of its length by symbols such as the eight-spoked wheel of life, ‘Syriac’ braided crosses and other such subjects and motifs. Depicted at one end of this unit is a large amphora from within which sprouts a small leaf or fruit, which a cockerel bends down to peck. To the right, at the base of the amphora, is a tessellated fish. The representation as a whole is interpreted as follows: it is well known that the fish is an early symbol of Christianity, because its name in Greek *ΙΧΘΥΣ* is an acrostic for the cryptic phrase *Ιησούς Χριστός Θεού Υιός Σωτήρ* (Jesus Christ Son of God Saviour). It is depicted to the side of the base of the large amphora, the vase that denotes the source of life, from within which the new (Christian) faith sprouts symbolically, most tender and kind. The chancleer is none other than the bird that announces the new day and here, allegorically, the dawn of a new era, the Christian, as it bends over to feed on the fruit of the newly-grown vegetation issuing from the Source of Life. Transition with new content, like new wine in old barrels.





*Orthi Petra, below the pathway of modern times, linking Prines hill with the ancient bridge and Alpha.*





*People: Photographs and memories of thirty-six years of excavating at Eleutherna. The work continues ...*



## ABBREVIATIONS

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AA	<i>Archäologischer Anzeiger</i>	HOROS	<i>Ήορος: ένα αρχαιογνωστικό περιοδικό</i>
ACO	E. Schwartz and J. Straub, <i>Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum</i> (Berlin, 1914 -)	JHS	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
AΔ	<i>Αρχαιολογικόν Δελτίον</i>	IC	<i>Inscriptiones Creticae</i>
AE	<i>Αρχαιολογική Εφημερίς</i>	ID	F. Dürrbach et al., <i>Inscriptions de Délos</i> (Paris 1926 -)
AEMΘ	<i>Το Αρχαιολογικό Έργο στη Μακεδονία και Θράκη</i>	IG	M. Fraenkel, <i>Inscriptiones graecae</i> (Berlin 1895 -)
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>	Κρητική Εστία	Periodical Publication of the Historical, Folklore and Archaeological Society of Crete
AM	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilung</i>	ΚρΧρ	<i>Κρητικά Χρονικά</i>
BAR Int. Series	<i>British Archaeological Reports, International Series</i>	MonAnt	<i>Monumenti Antichi</i>
BCH	<i>Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique</i>	OC	<i>Oriens christianus</i>
BICS	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies</i>	ΠΑΕ	<i>Πρακτικά της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας</i>
Boreas	<i>Boreas: Münstersche Beiträge zur Archäologie</i>	PP	<i>Parola del Passato</i>
BSA	<i>Annual of the British School at Athens</i>	RA	<i>Revue Archéologique</i>
FD III 4	G. Colin, R. Flacelière, A. Plassart, J. Pouilloux eds., <i>Fouilles de Delphes, III. Épigraphie. Fasc. 4, Inscriptions de la terrasse du temple et la région nord du sanctuaire, 4 vols. - (1 inscription)</i>	RE	A. Pauly and G. Wissowa, <i>Real-Encyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> (1893–1978)
Hesperia	<i>Hesperia, Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens</i>	Syll. <sup>3</sup> (SIG)	W. Dittenberger, <i>Sylloge inscriptionum graecarum</i> (Leipzig 1883 -)
		ZPE	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>



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# PHOTOGRAPHIC CREDITS

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P. 26 *Cretan archer*. From the publication: *Olfert Dapper*, *Naukerige, Beschryving der Eilanden, in de Archipel der Middelantsche Zee.*, Amsterdam 1688. Woodcut on paper 13.5 x 16.5 cm. Athens, Benaki Museum, Library.

Pp. 28-29 *Map of Crete*. *Oppianus Apamensis, Cynegetica* (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MSS. OCC. grec 2737, fol. 35) (Source: *Di Vita* 2010, 2, fig. 2).

P. 32 *Map of Crete*. From the publication: *Wolfgang Lazius*, *Commen: Rerum Graecarum Libri II. In quibus tam Helladis quam Peloponnesi, Quae in lucem antea non venerunt, explicantur.* Vienna 1558.

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P. 33 *Map of Crete* from the publication: *Abraham Ortelius*, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, Parergon.* Antwerp post 1584.

Engraving on paper 34 x 50 cm. National Bank of Greece Cultural Foundation Collection.

P. 34 *Map of Crete* from the publication: *Vincenzo Maria Corenelli*, *Citta, Fortezze, Porti ed altri luoghi del Regno e Isole di Candia...*, Venice 1707. Engraving on paper 49x124 cm. Athens, Benaki Museum, inv. no. 24576.

P. 36 Courtesy of the *Sylvia Ioannou Foundation*, inv. no. SIF M. 0287.

P. 39 *The location of ancient Eleutherna*. From the publication: *Capt. T.A.B. Spratt*, *Travels and Researches in Crete, vol II, London, 1865*, p. 90. Vignette in the text (lithograph). Athens, Benaki Museum, Library.

Archive of the excavator Professor P. Themelis: pp. 62, 80-84

Archive of the excavator Professor N. Chr. Stampolidis: 12-13, 16, 18, 20-25, 54, 61, 63 (below left), 68, 71, 73, 98-99, 109 (below right), 140, 146-147, 148-149 153 (above), 154 (all except the two above), 157, 161, 162 (above), 162 (above), 164 (above), 165 (above), 171 (above), 172, 174 (drawing), 175 (drawing), 180 (below left), 181 (below left)), 186, 187 (above), 190 (drawing) 191, 200 (centre) 209 (below left), 214, 242, 249, 250 (drawing), 264, 278-279, 290, 298.







## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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For all the toil and work's camaraderie, the hours of excavation and the hours of cleaning the finds, the hours of writing up daybooks and sorting the material, the hours of classes and of nocturnal gatherings; the days of inventorying, drawing, photographing and documenting the finds, the hours of transporting, the hours outside working hours; for considering the problems and the solutions to them outside the excavation too; for the tasks of organizing and mounting exhibitions in Rethymnon, Heraklion and Athens, and participating in international exhibitions, such as in Rome, Canada, the USA –New York and Washington–, in the Louvre–Lens in France; for the hours and the days of writing the excavation reports, writing catalogues, preparing conferences and colloquia, writing articles, monographs, books; for all the above and for much more that I now fail to bring to mind, I wish to thank my undergraduate and postgraduate students in the Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Crete, who over the past thirty-six years were trained along with their colleagues from other universities in Greece and abroad, and whose hundreds of names cannot, unfortunately, be given here. Nonetheless, as sample, I mention those who took part in all the activities described above for over a decade and did not come to the excavation merely for the experience, the 'compulsory' attendance, to take a taste or to 'profit', but who were true collaborators: Yorgos Tassoulas (MPhil), Maria Chatzipanagioti (MPhil), Stavroula Oikonomou (PhD), Eva Mitaki (PhD), Nikos Maragoudaki (MPhil), Panagiotis Koutis, and more recently PhD candidate Ioulia Lourentzatou (MSc), and I thank them all from the bottom of my heart. At the same time, I wish to thank especially my sister Eleftheria Stampolidi-Dath for all her moral support over the long period of this endeavour.



Further to the persons just mentioned, whose direct involvement created the result of the specific endeavour, I wish to express also my heartfelt gratitude to all our co-workers in the excavation, the residents of Eleftherna and Archaia Eleftherna, who labour with us on this grand project, the erstwhile Presidents and Community Heads of the two villages, the Mayors of Rethymnon and of the former Municipality of Arkadi, without whose help many issues would not have proceeded along the right tracks.

Warm thanks are due to my external collaborators, Greek and foreign colleagues professors, archaeologists, anthropologists, palaeobotanists, architects and technicians: Professor A. Agelarakis, Dr T. McGeorge, Dr Th. Nakasis, D. Koutsogiannis, V. Drougas, Dr M. Giannopoulou and T. Belas, who each contributed in his/her own way to the project overall, as well as to the Ephors of Antiquities of Chania M. Vlazaki, E. Papadopoulou, of Rethymnon A. Tzigounaki, responsible for the Prefecture, of Heraklion V. Sythiakaki. All those who worked on the conservation and enhancement of the objects from the excavation: A. Polenta, N. Paschali, A. Fountoulakis, Ch. Kalogerakis, G. Pachakis especially, D. Vasilikakis, N. Klimatsaki and the Heads and the Directors of the Heraklion Museum: Ch. Kritzas, A. Karetsou, E. Grammatikaki, G. Rethemiotakis and N. Dimopoulou-Rethemiotaki, and more recently S. Mandalaki; the conservators of the Rethymnon Archaeological Museum: Ch. Alerta, X. Cheiloudaki, M. Dalamvela and K. Skourli, but also those who worked on the conservation of the monuments at the site: K. Nikakis, G. Zakynthinos, the Professors of the Technological Educational Institute of Athens V. Lampropoulos and the sculptor P. Tazanoulinos with their collaborators.

However, if all the aforementioned strengthened, each in his/her own way, the whole undertaking, the completion of the technical works and the conservation of both the immoveable finds in the excavation and the moveable finds formerly in the Rethymnon Archaeological Museum and now in the Museum of ancient Eleutherna, the organizing of conferences, the publication of books and monographs, exhibition catalogues, scientific papers, and so on, would not have been possible without the material and moral support of Ministries, Foundations, Companies and individuals, to whom our sincerest thanks are owed (in chronological order): the Greek National Tourism Organization (EOT), the Vardinoyannis Foundation, the Institute of Aegean Prehistory (INSTAP), the Mediterranean Archaeological Society (M.A.E.), GRECOTEL and especially Nikos and Mari Daskaloantonakis, the Ministry of the Aegean, the Ministry of Regional Planning and Environment, the Public Power Corporation (ΔΕΗ), Cosmote, Alpha Bank and primarily the Region of Crete and the Ministry of Culture.

The major university excavation of ancient Eleutherna would never have started, let alone continued, were it not for the whole-hearted support from the outset, morally and materially, of the Authorities of the University of Crete and the input of the former Prefecture of Rethymnon. We express our immense gratitude to the Rectors of the University, Professors D. Makris, G. Grammatikakis, Ch. Spyraakis (†) and especially Ch. Nikolaou (†), I. Pallikaris, E. Stephanou and, in the most dynamic stage of the project, the Rector Professor O.-I. Zoras, the Rector P. Tsakalidis and recently the Rector P. Tsakalidis, who all appreciated and continue to appreciate the importance of its educational and research mission and made available significant funding to promote it. The same applies to the Vice-Rectors of Financial and Academic Affairs, and in particular to the Vice-Rector



of Infrastructure and Projects I. Giatromanolakis, as well as, particularly, to the Technical Service, the Director E. Kaklamanos, the engineers and architects K. Ouranos, G. Doulgerakis, A. Mygiakis, as well as all the personnel of the Finance and Development Office of the University of Crete. I thank them all most warmly and make the wish that their successors will always embrace and support the continuing project. After all, this is, I stress again, the unique, tangible contribution of the University of Crete to society as a whole.

Last, I thank those persons, all of them honorary members of the M.A.E., who through their kind sponsorship have shown such trust in the project and in me personally: Princess Aga Khan, Alekos, Aliko and P. N. Goulandris, Maria Embiricos, Sylvia Ioannou, Nikolas and Eirini Lemos, Lauder, Eirini Moschoklaidi (†), Artemis Skoutari, Stelios Christodoulou. All the above and those whose names are not mentioned here have my deepest gratitude and the gratitude of the people who enjoy and benefit from the fruits of our endeavours at Eleutherna *forever and ever*.

Professor NIKOLAOS CHR. STAMPOLIDIS



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# ELEUTHERNA

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SOKRATIS MAVROMMATIS

Layout: ELIZA KOKKINI  
Processing of photographs: NIKOS LAGOS (INDIGO GRAPHICS)  
Printing: FOTOLIO  
Binding: GEORGE ILIOPOULOS

Translation: ALEXANDRA DOUMAS

Publication Supervisor  
EIRINI LOUVROU



THIS BOOK WAS PRINTED IN ATHENS ON 170-GR. HANNOART SILK PAPER  
IN 1000 COPIES IN OCTOBER 2020



