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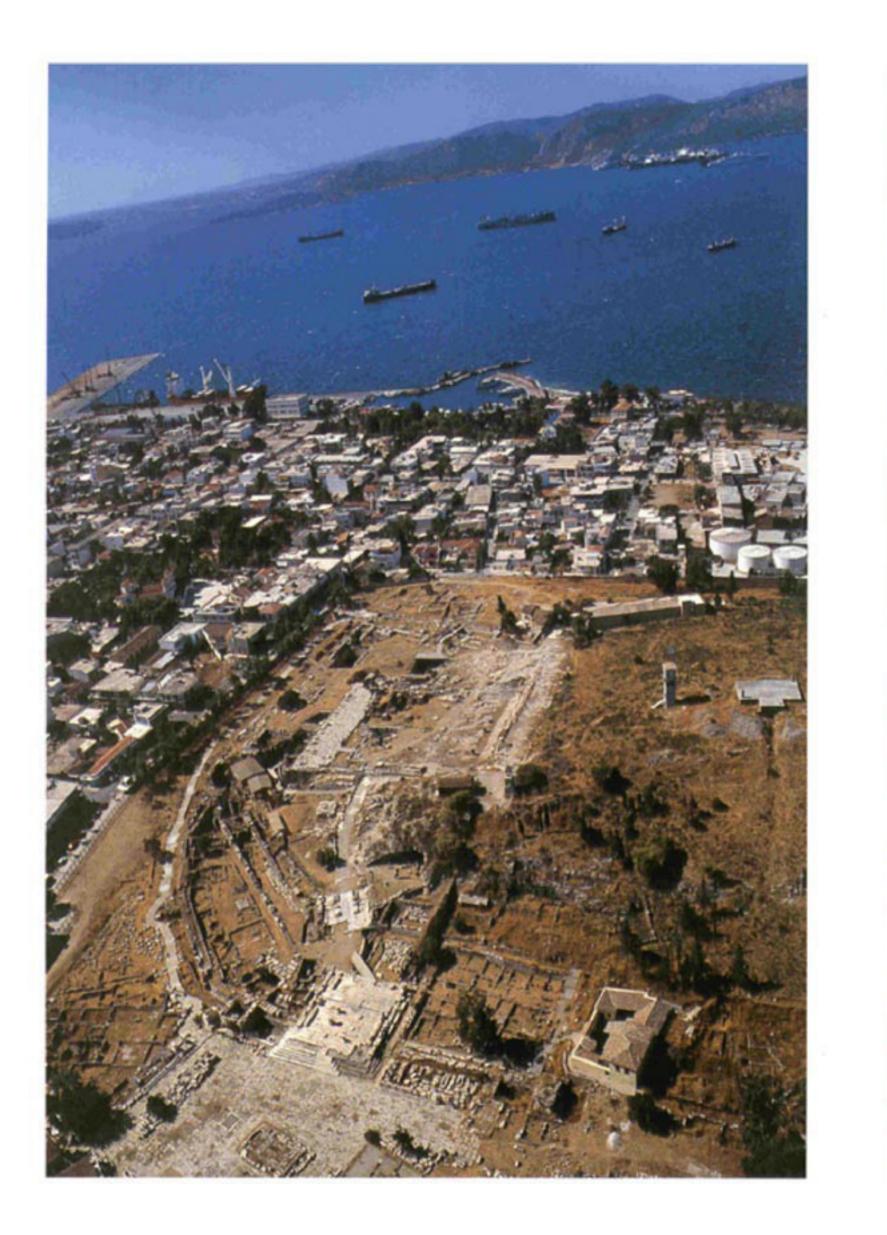
Cover: The Fleeing Maiden against a background painted painting by Lika Florou.

© Latsis Group / Eurobank ISBN 960-86743-2-8 **KALLIOPI PAPANGELI**

ELEUSIS THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE AND THE MUSEUM

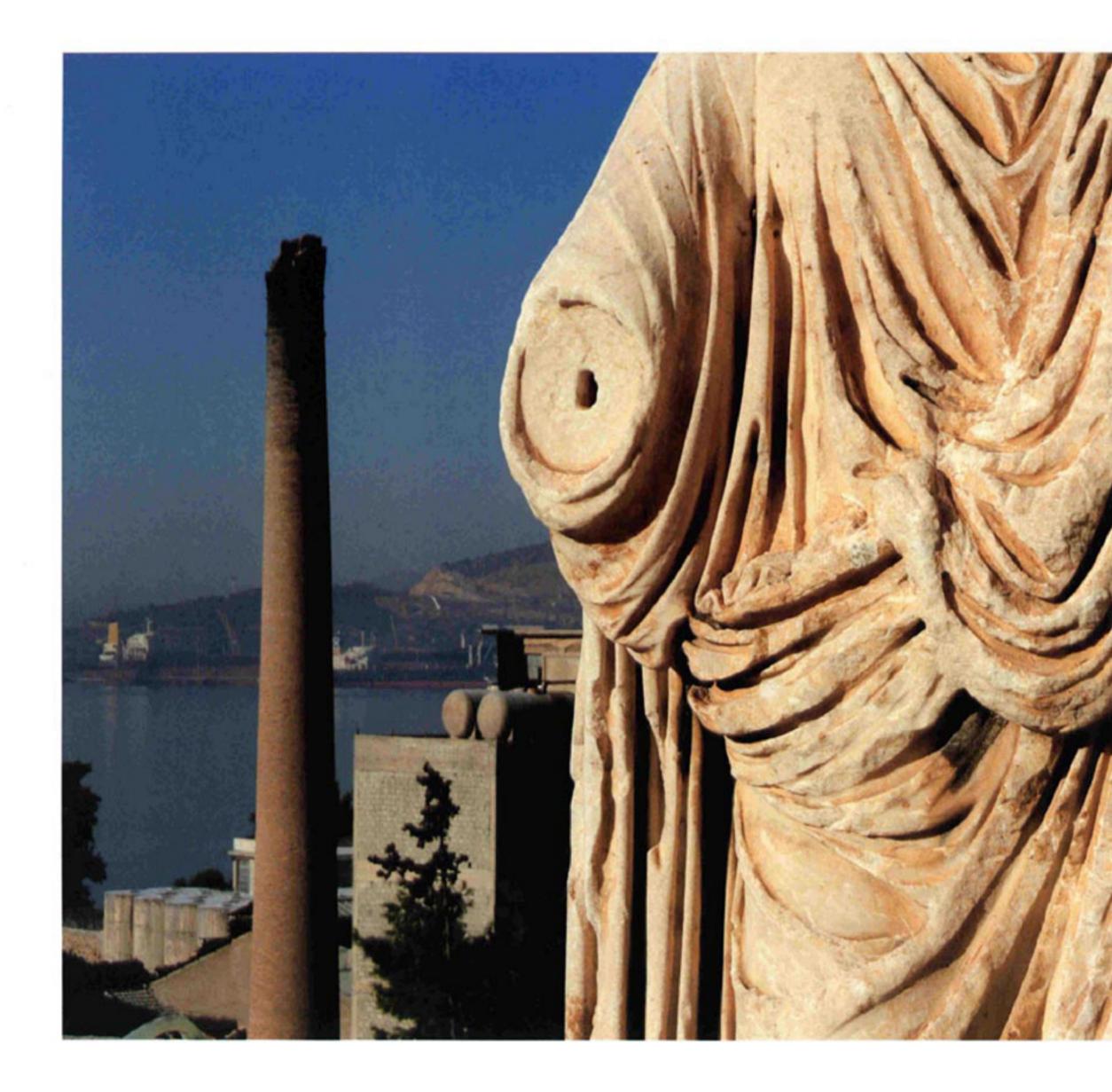
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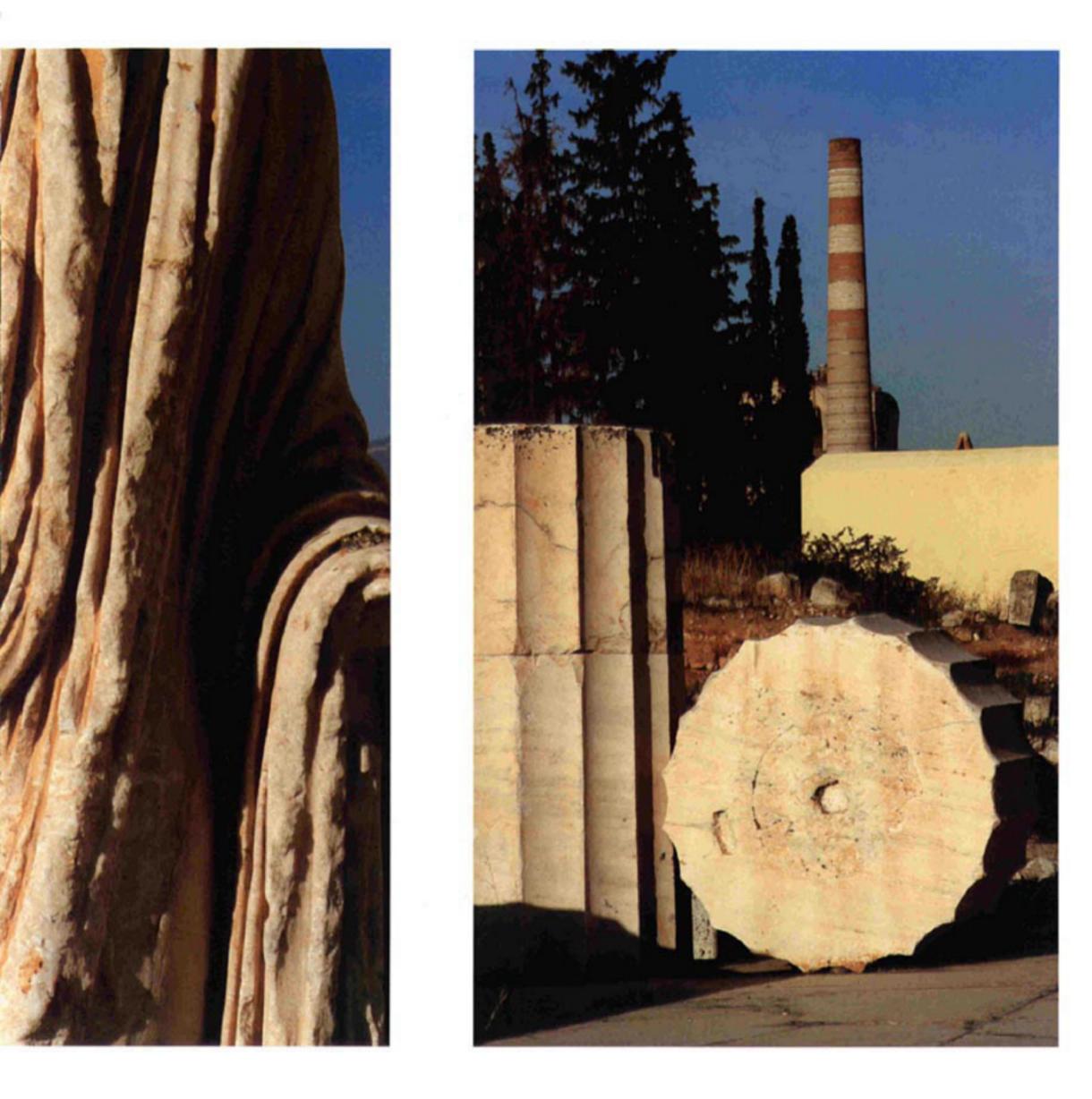


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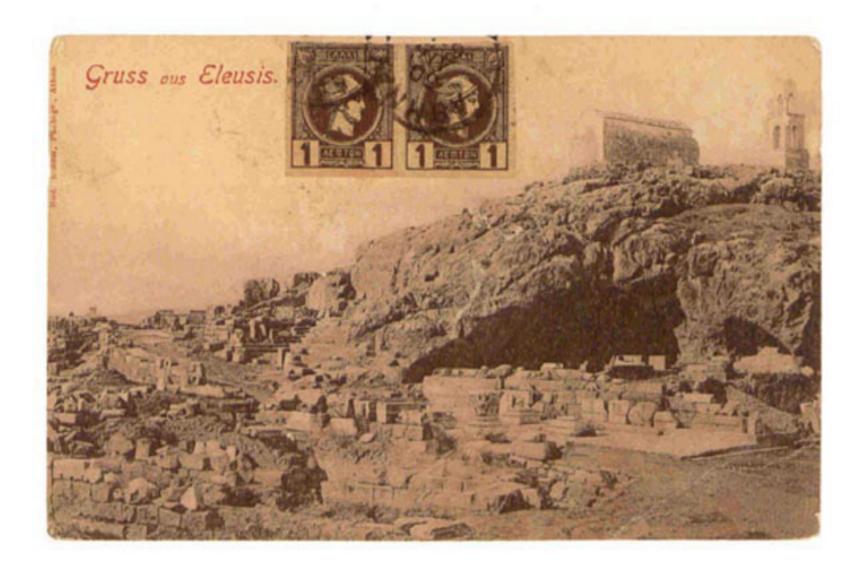
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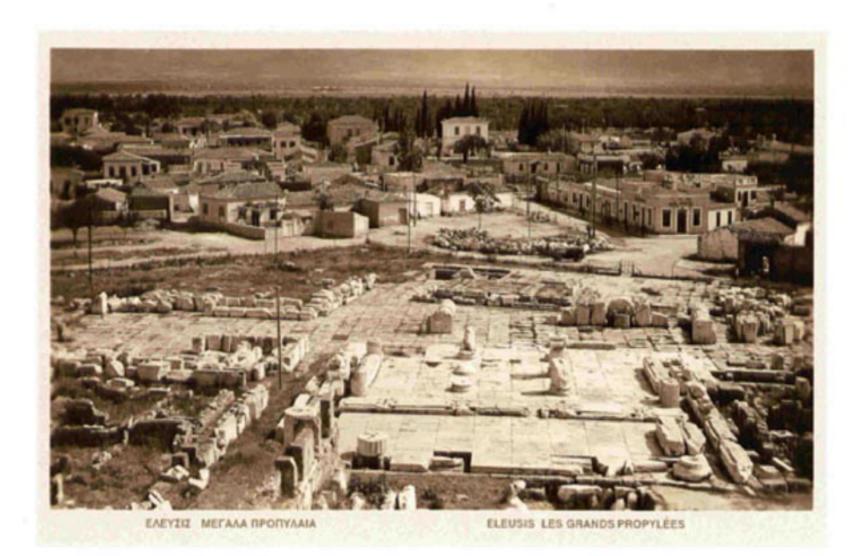
ELEUSIS was one of the most important Panhellenic religious centres of antiquity. The cult of Demeter and Persephone – a cult with much archetypal symbolism, but always bound to the earth, vegetation and fertility – flourished at the Sanctuary.

The goddess of grain gave her favourite city two great gifts: Knowledge of cultivating the earth and the Mysteries which taught that everyone, regardless of sex, age, social or economic status, could undergo a supreme spiritual experience, inspiring for one's earthly life, and full of hope for one's afterlife.

The secrecy surrounding the Eleusinian Mysteries is, naturally, one reason for the fascination they continue to exert; a fascination that became the basis for articulating many hypotheses and theories. Although there are many significant publications about either the findings and excavations at the Sanctuary, or the inscriptions and the architectural study of the monuments, we lacked a contemporary book that would condense the older and more modern date so as to deal with all of the issues having to do with ancient Eleusis.

I am delighted that this book has come to fill this gap in the literature, and indeed in a manner that addresses not only the experts, but also the broader public that displays an avid interest in Eleusis. I would like to congratulate the author of this book, Eleusis – The Ar-chaeological Site and the Museum, Mrs Kalliope Papangeli, for the exceptional work she has contributed to this publication that bears the quality seal that has always been a feature of the books published by the Latsis Group.

EVANGELOS VENIZELOS Minister of Culture



WE ARE PARTICULARLY DELIGHTED to present a book on the archaeological site and Museum of Eleusis this year, as part of the series of books funded and published by the Latsis Group and EFG Eurobank Ergasias. This year's book is on a city that has for many years been the home a significant section of our Group's business activities. Eleusis' historical significance comes to the fore in this book, rekindling the interest of the public.

The history of Eleusis is lost in the mists of time, as the area has been inhabited since prehistoric times. What made it special was the hospitality offered by the inhabitants to sad Demeter when she stopped to rest there amidst her wanderings. The goddess rewarded them by establishing her sacred sanctuary and granting them the hope of life after death.

The peace-loving goddess Demeter was the mother of civilisation. By teaching people how to cultivate, she led them to establish permanent settlements and cities, necessary prerequisites for the development of any art. At the same time, it was Demeter who gave people hope: "Upon coming to our land", wrote Isocrates, "she gave us two gifts which are the greatest, that is, crops so we would not live like beasts, and ritual, that gives all those who participate sweet hope for life's end and the end of the world".

The book you hold in your hands does not intend to shed light on or interpret the mysteries of the goddess, but only to be a source of knowledge and aesthetic pleasure, and to give today's reader a comprehensive guide on the sit and the Museum of Eleusis.

I would like to extend my warmest thanks to the author, Mrs, Kalliope Papangeli, as well as to all those who worked on this book, and to congratulate them all on the flawless result.

MARIANNA LATSIS



THE GLAMOUR, respect and awe that surrounded the cult of Eleusis from antiquity, have endowed the place with significant historical memory and resonance. The duty of the archaeologist who through a lucky twoist of fate has been called upon to serve in an area of such significance, is first of all to protect the monuments from the wear of time and other factors. The other side of one's mission is to inform the general public. A knowledge and understanding of the past contributes to self-knowledge and constitutes one of the greatest stimulants to progress and faith in the future. With this in mind, writing the book Eleusis – The Archaeological Site and the Museum is a payment of a debt that happily coincides with the 120 years since systematic excavations began in the area in June 1882.

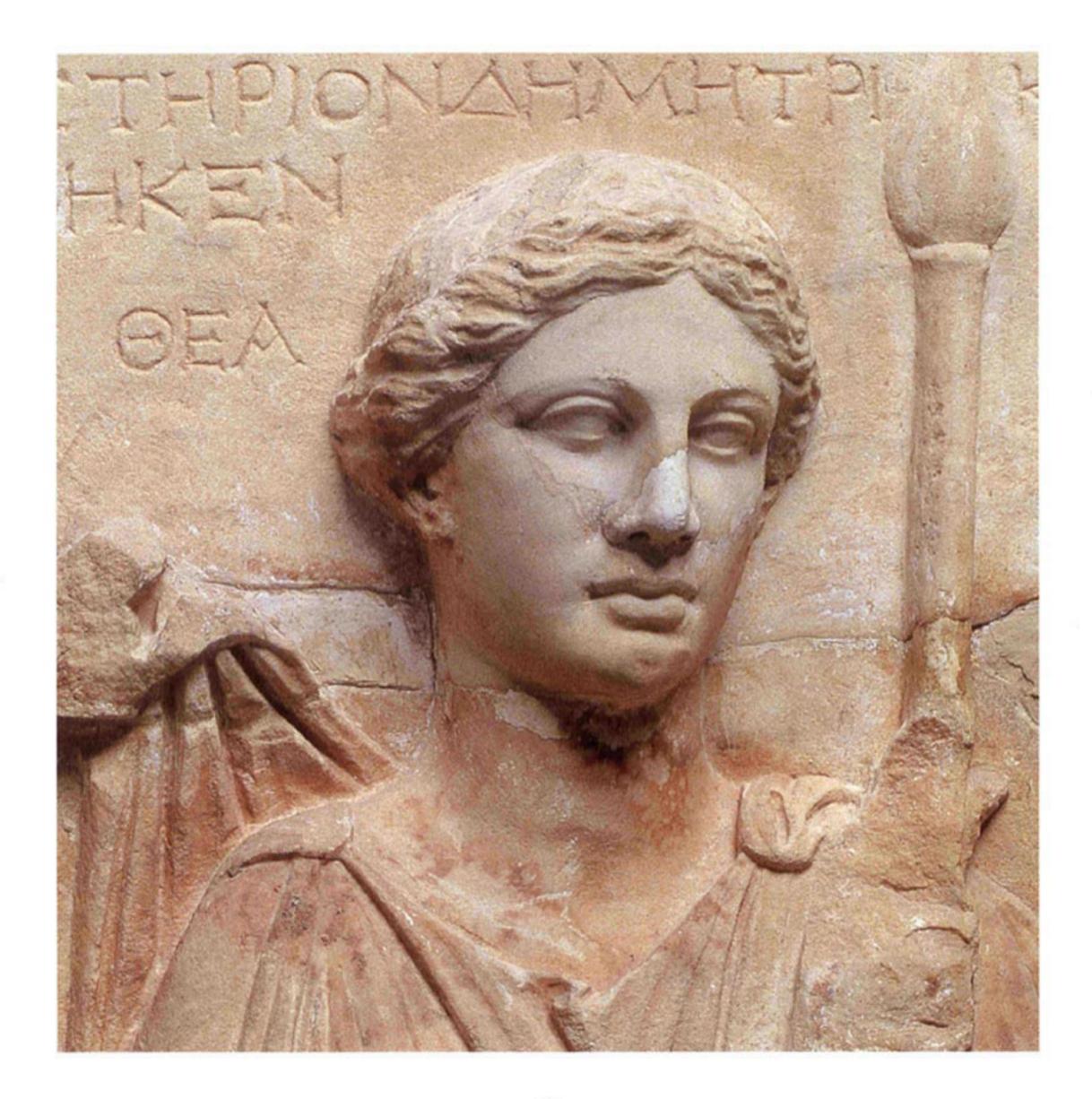
Sponsorship by the Latsis Group and EFG Eurobank Ergasias has ensured the best possible outcome for this book. Mrs Marianna Latsis proved yet again her interest in culture. The General Manager of the Latsis Group, Mr Evangelos Chronis, aided the publication in many ways, and chiefly with his kind support. The Director of the Third Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities, Mrs Liana Parlama, eagerly approved the publication of the book and encouraged me to write it. The precision and quality of Mr Socratis Mavrommatis' photographs convey the fascination of the archaeological site and the Museum's exhibits. In their overwhelming majority, the old photographs and the engravings come from the collection of Mr Georgios D. Pavlopoulos, a resident of Eleusis, who kindly permitted us to reprint works for this book. The aesthetic pleasure of the combination of text and illustrations is due to the artistic sensibilities of the artist Ms Lika Florou. This book would never have been published without the efforts of Mrs Eirini Louvrou of OLKOS Publications. Her work was vital from the first to the last stage. The collaboration with all those working on this book was both friendly and a learning experience. I wish to extend my warmest thanks to all.

> KALLIOPI PAPANGELI Curator of the Eleusis Antiquities



Ο ΜΥΘΟΣ ΚΑΙ Η ΛΑΤΡΕΙΑ

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MYTH AND CULT

For centuries, the Sanctuary of Eleusis was one of the most important and sacred sanctuaries in the ancient world. It is where the cult of Demeter and her daughter Persephone, often referred to by the generic name, Kore, was centred. (According to some, the etymology of the name Demeter is De=Ge which means earth + meter, which means mother. In ancient Greek, Kore meant daughter, bride or daughter.) Mother and daughter were the deities, perhaps even aspects of the same goddess – the young and more mature versions – who were associated with the cultivation of the earth and the ripening of its fruits, particularly of grains, that even today in Greek are called $\delta\eta\mu\tau\rho\iota\alpha\kappa\dot{\alpha}=$ 'demetriaka', or cereals.

The cult of Demeter and Persephone (for reasons of respect, use of the goddesses' names was avoided and they were referred to as $\tau \dot{\omega} \theta \epsilon \dot{\omega}$ = 'the gods' in the dual number) was secret and it was in their honour that the Great Mysteries were held in Eleusis. There are various hypotheses about the origins of the Mysteries that place them as having originated in Egypt or Crete. From his excavations, George Mylonas believed that they originated in Thrace because Eumolpos, the mythical ancestor of the hieratic family of Eleusis the Eumolpidae, came from there.

According to a more recent view, the origin of the cult can be traced to Boeotia, the breadbasket of prehistoric Greece. Another equally credible view is that the development of the Eleusinian cult began locally, initially was of a purely agricultural nature, and later, around the 7th century BC, began to take on a more metaphysical dimension due to the widespread desire for spiritual enlightenment that was a characteristic of the Archaic period. The shift in the nature of the cult to include elements of eschatology and salvation has been linked to the actions of Epimenides during that time.

The so-called Homeric Hymn to Demeter, written by



Marble kernoi, votive offerings.





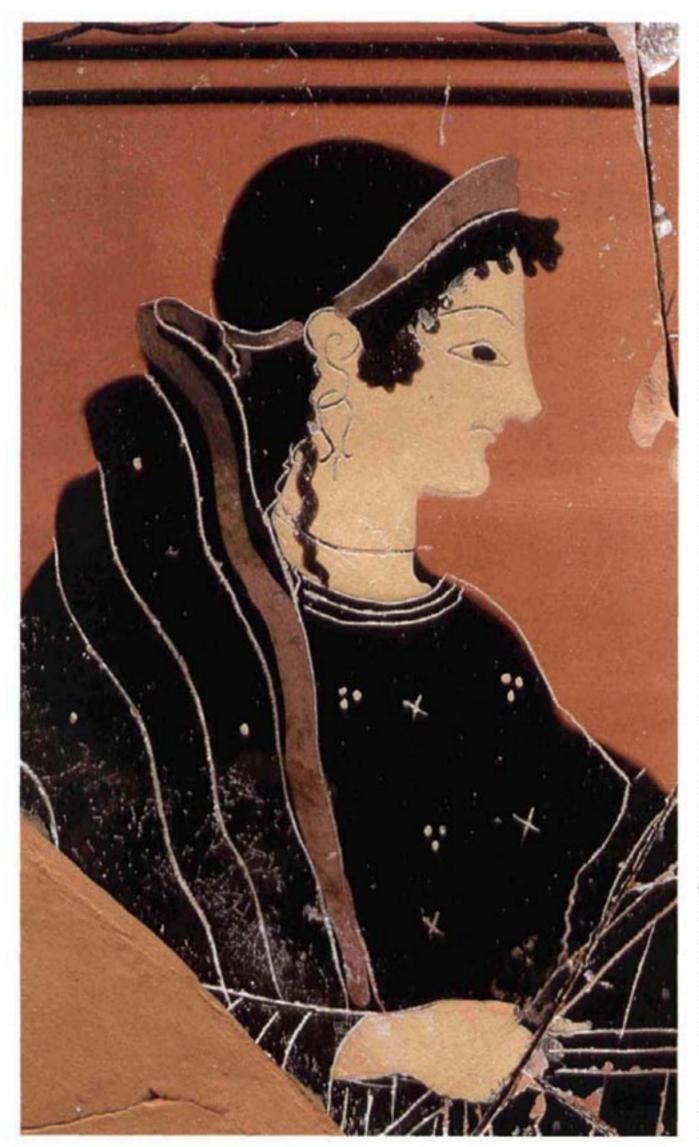
an unknown poet, contains the story of the mythological origins of the cult. The Homeric Hymns were hymns celebrating the gods and are believed to have been written by the great poet. Thirty three such hymns are extant, of varying length and date of composition. One of the longest, with approximately 500 verses, is the Hymn "To Demeter" which dates to the late 7th century BC, around 600 BC.

The Hymn tells the story of the divine dyad, Demeter and her daughter Persephone, the fruit of the goddess's union with Zeus. Persephone of "the delicate ankles" with her radiant beauty dazzled even the dark powerful god of the Underworld, Pluto, who wanted to make her his wife and Queen of Hades.

It was a certainty that her mother, the respected goddess Demeter, would not acquiesce to his wishes and this is why Aidoneus, i.e. Pluto, decided to abduct her, having first received the consent of the lord of mortals and immortals, Zeus, son of Cronos.

One day, the beautiful Kore, as Persephone was known, played in a flower-strewn meadow, the mythical plain of Nysa, which the poet placed at the ends of the earth. Persephone was accompanied by the Oceanids, the daughters of Pontus, and other young goddesses, as well as Athena and Artemis. Persephone began stray away from her friends and saw before her a narcissus growing in the soil. It was such a beautiful flower, she ran to pick it. At that moment, the Earth opened up and the "All-receiving Lord", Cronos's dark son sprang out. He seized the maiden and lifted her onto his golden chariot, despite her resistance, wails and lamentations which no one heard except for the goddess Hecate in her deep cave. As long as the chariot with the immortal horses ran on the Earth, there was still a spark of hope that she could be saved. But when the chariot ran to disappear into the Underworld, the desperate Kore let out such a heartbreaking cry that the echo reached her mother's ears. At

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this point in the Hymn, there is a description of maternal distress worthy of the great poet. She tore off her headband, dressed herself in black and, in desperation, began to seek her daughter in vain. Nine days she searched unceasingly, without stopping for water, or food, thirsty, un-bathed and hungry. Merciful Hecate found her then and told her all she knew: how she had heard the desperate cries of the Kore, but not seen the perpetrator of this evil act. They ran together to Helios, the seeing-eye of gods. He took pity on her in her grief and told her that Hades, with the permission of Zeus, had abducted her. To ease her pain, Helios reminded Demeter that the kidnapper was of high birth and wielded great power. Full of pain and rage, Demeter refused to go back to Olympus. She wandered the Earth aimlessly, until she reached Eleusis. She sat there to rest for a while in the shade of an olive tree, near the 'Parthenion' or 'Virgin's' well. The city's inhabitants got their water from this well, and the king's daughters went there carrying their bronze hydriae to draw water. Keleos, son of Eleusis, for whom the city was named, was king in "fragrant" Eleusis, a city redolent with the aroma of pennyroyal and mint. At the well, his four daughters, Kallithoe, Kallidike, Kleisidike, and Demo met the goddess, who had taken the form of an old woman, and she told them that she was from Crete, and that pirates had abducted her to sell her into slavery. She said that she had escaped when their ship put in at Thorikos, and that she was now looking for a noble house to work as a nurse and housekeeper. The girls named the nobles of Eleusis who were at that time Triptolemos, Dioklos, Polyxenos, Eumolpos and Dolichos. But, they said, the best thing would be for her to serve in the palace of the king, their father. They then left Demeter to seek their father's approval. Their mother, Metaneira, agreed to have the sad woman brought to the palace. But Demeter's disguise could not conceal her divine nature for long. As she walked through the threshold, the interior of the palace shone with a heavenly light, and the queen spontaneously got up from her throne to offer it to the goddess. But Demeter did not accept, and then an old slave, Iambe, brought her a simple stool covered in soft sheepskin so that she could sit. Metaneira, holding Demophon, her youngest child and only son in her arms, was awed by the noble appearance of the stranger and offered her the position

Black-figure painting of Demeter from a clay vessel (520-510 BC).

of nurse until the child should reach adolescence. Demeter accepted, and then the queen offered her a cup of wine. The embittered goddess, however, refused to drink, and sat speechless and sad, until Iambe, with her intuition and the experience of her age, began to joke and thus soothed the goddess's sadness, and in the end, managed to make her laugh. Then, Demeter agreed to break her fast, and put to her lips a cup of kykeon (from the verb $\kappa \nu \kappa \dot{\alpha} \omega$, which means to stir or mix) a drink made of water, barley and spearmint.

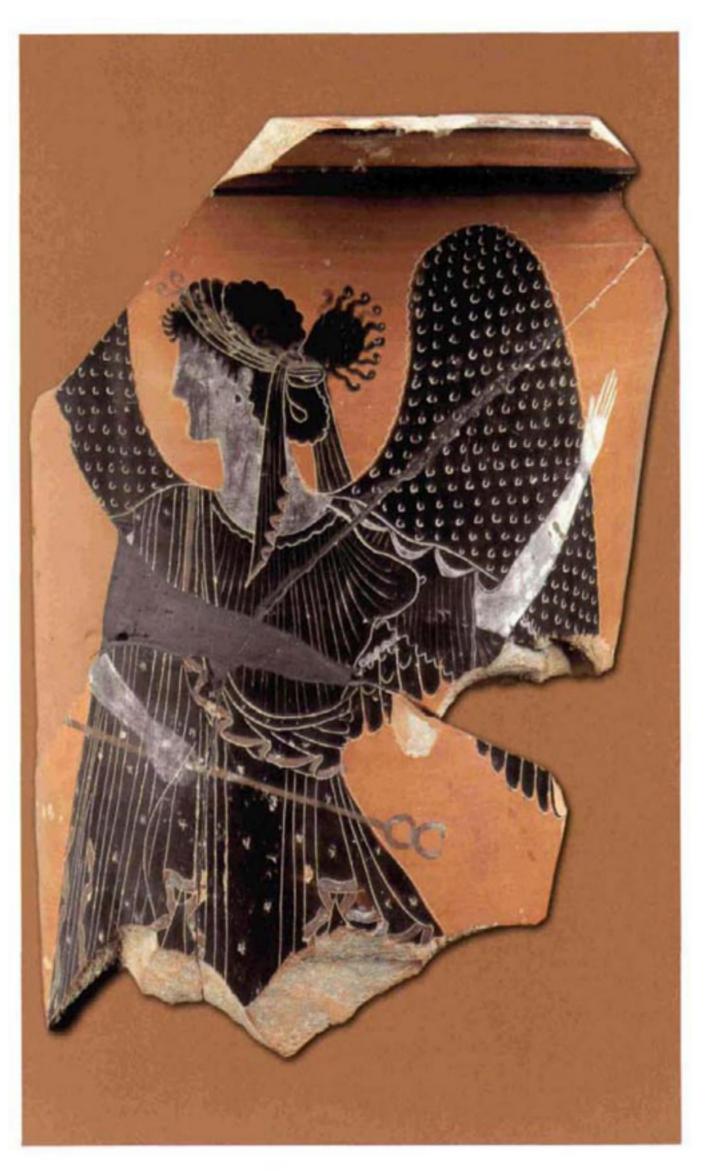
As a mark of her gratitude for her reception and the hospitality, Demeter decided to make the young prince immortal, breathing her divine breath on him, anointing him with ambrosia. At night, she would hold him over the fire in the hearth to burn away his moral elements. The attempt to achieve immortality by fire is a theme that occurs many times in ancient myths, as for example in the story about Thetis and the baby Achilles.

But Demophon's miraculous growth made his mother curious and so one night, she decided to observe the nurse secretly. At the sight of what the nurse was doing, she screamed in fear and thus, with the improvidence of mortals, interrupted the goddess's benefaction. Centuries later, the poet Constantinos P. Cavafy wrote in his poem "Interruption":

Hasty and awkward creatures of the moment, it is we who interrupt the action of the gods. In the palaces of Eleusis and Phthia Demeter and Thetis initiate rituals over high flames and heavy smoke. But Metaneira always bursts in from the royal quarters, hair loose, terrified, And Peleus, scared, always intervenes.*

Forced to abandon her mortal guise, the goddess reveals her identity and admonishes Keleos and the Eleusinians to build a temple with an altar dedicated to her. She pointed out the precise location, under the "lofty walls" of the acropolis, on the rocky hill that looms over the Kallichoron Well (the Well of the Fair Dancers). In grief and anger, Demeter locked herself away and prevented the Earth from blooming and putting forth fruit. The human race was threatened with extinction through starvation, but the immortals too

Black-figure painting of Iris from a clay vessel (500 BC).



adwere deprived of sacrifices and offerings. Zeus dusent golden-winged Iris, his herald, to soothe Demeter's wrath and invite her to come back to

Olympus. He then sent all the gods, one after to oother, all to no avail. Zeus was then forced to send 20 Hermes to the darkness of Hades to bring Perseanphone back to her mother.

Pluto did not ignore his brother's message, but shortly before his beloved was to ascend to the golden chariot of return, he gave her a pomegranvate seed to taste. The pomegranate, in the view of the ancients, was symbolic of death, and Pluto thus

bound the Kore magically to the Underworld. At the same time, this fruit with the many seeds was, and still is, a symbol of fertility. Consequently, the fact the Persephone ate the pomegranate given to her by Pluto constituted a sort of symbolic weducding ceremony.

Kt Accompanied by Hermes, Persephone returned
Kt Accompanied by Hermes, Persephone returned
Kt to her mother who was waiting for her in EleuAt sis. The moment in which mother and daughter
The met was described vividly by the poet. "BrightThe coiffed" Hecate came to embrace them, and from
that time she became Persephone's attendant and
that to the plain of Rharos, the plain of Eleusis, to
the meet Demeter and convince her to accept a comthat is, that the Kore remain with her for
two thirds of the year and return to the "darkness" and gloom" for four months.

The archetypal mater dolorosa of literature and Emyth was soothed and allowed fruit to come forth: Ei"but straightway made fruit to spring up from the morich lands, so that the whole wide earth was lad-Oren with leaves and flowers". But before Demeter wowith her daughter for once and for all returned to hoOlympus, from where the gods send to Pluto all it whom they have loved, she decided to reward the place that had given her hospitality. She called all 064"the kings who deal justice", Keleos, Eumolpos

them how to worship her with modest rites called the Mysteries. Whoever was to be initiated to the Mrites would be happy because they would have enθe sured a better fate for themselves in the afterlife. TFurther, she determined that it was forbidden to to discuss the mysteries with the uninitiated, and reon



Kernoi: clay cult vessels.



spect for the gods should ensure that mouths remained sealed: "for deep awe of the gods checks the voice".

The establishment of the mysteries by the goddess herself and the prohibition against discussing them with the uninitiated brings us to the end of the Hymn. Of course, Homer did not write the Hymn himself; it was written by a later poet who did not lack talent. The writer of the Hymn was familiar with the language of the epic and knew how to narrate a story well as, for example, when he likened Keleos' daughters to deer running in a flowered field; or when he described how, with a raising of his brows, Hades smiled – for the first time in literature – when he thought of the trick with the pomegranate to tie Persephone to him ("And Aïdoneus, ruler over the dead, smiled grimly"). The poet was also capable of portraying deeper emotions and psychological conditions, as when he wrote about Mateneira's pain when she saw her son in the flames ("she wailed and smote her two thighs"), or when he described how Demeter, like a Maenad in her joy at seeing her daughter again, rushed to embrace her when she returned.

The detailed discussion of the Hymn above was not so much for its literary merits as for its religious significance. The poem displays direct knowledge of the Eleusinian cult, and is clearly linked to the Mysteries. It can thus be considered the official sacred story of this very important centre of worship. Demeter's fast, broken by drinking the kykeon, the sheepskin with which old Iambe covered the stool she brought Demeter, the exact topographical placement of the temple, and, finally, the establishment of the secrecy of the rituals are symbols of the traditions of the Eleusinian Mysteries to which the poet was clearly initiated.

The Hymn, as well as the information that has come to light in excavations, comprise the most reliable sources of information on the Mysteries. Christian writers also left us much information, but this must be examined with a critical eye, because of religious fanaticism and their excessive zeal in trying to ridicule the ancient religion. The information they provided on the Eleusinian Mysteries is mixed with elements from other religious mystery cults, as these Christian informers were not initiated to the Eleusinian Mysteries.

The strict secrecy that according to tradition was imposed by Demeter herself was confirmed later in laws issued by the Athenian city-state. Anyone who



Marble statue of Demeter and the Kore (4th century BC).

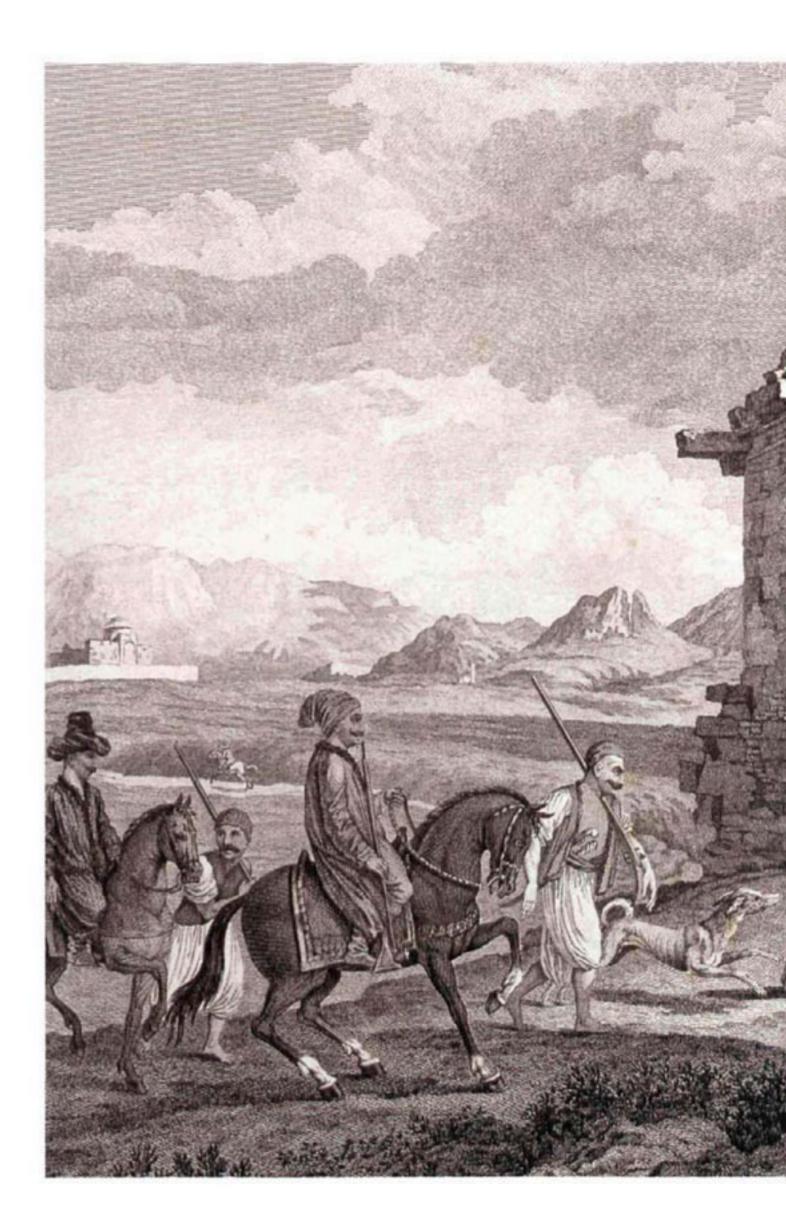
revealed anything about the Mysteries would be faced with a writ of impiety. Well-known historical figures such as the great Eleusinian tragic playwright Aeschylus and the orator Andokides were accused of such indiscretion but managed to avoid punishment. One of the most well-known cases of prosecution for such impiety was that of Alkibiades who, while in Sicily as head of the Athenian army, was condemned in absentia to death and seizure of his property, not only for the mutilation of the hermai, but also for profaning the Mysteries in comic re-enactments of the sacred activities at friends' houses.

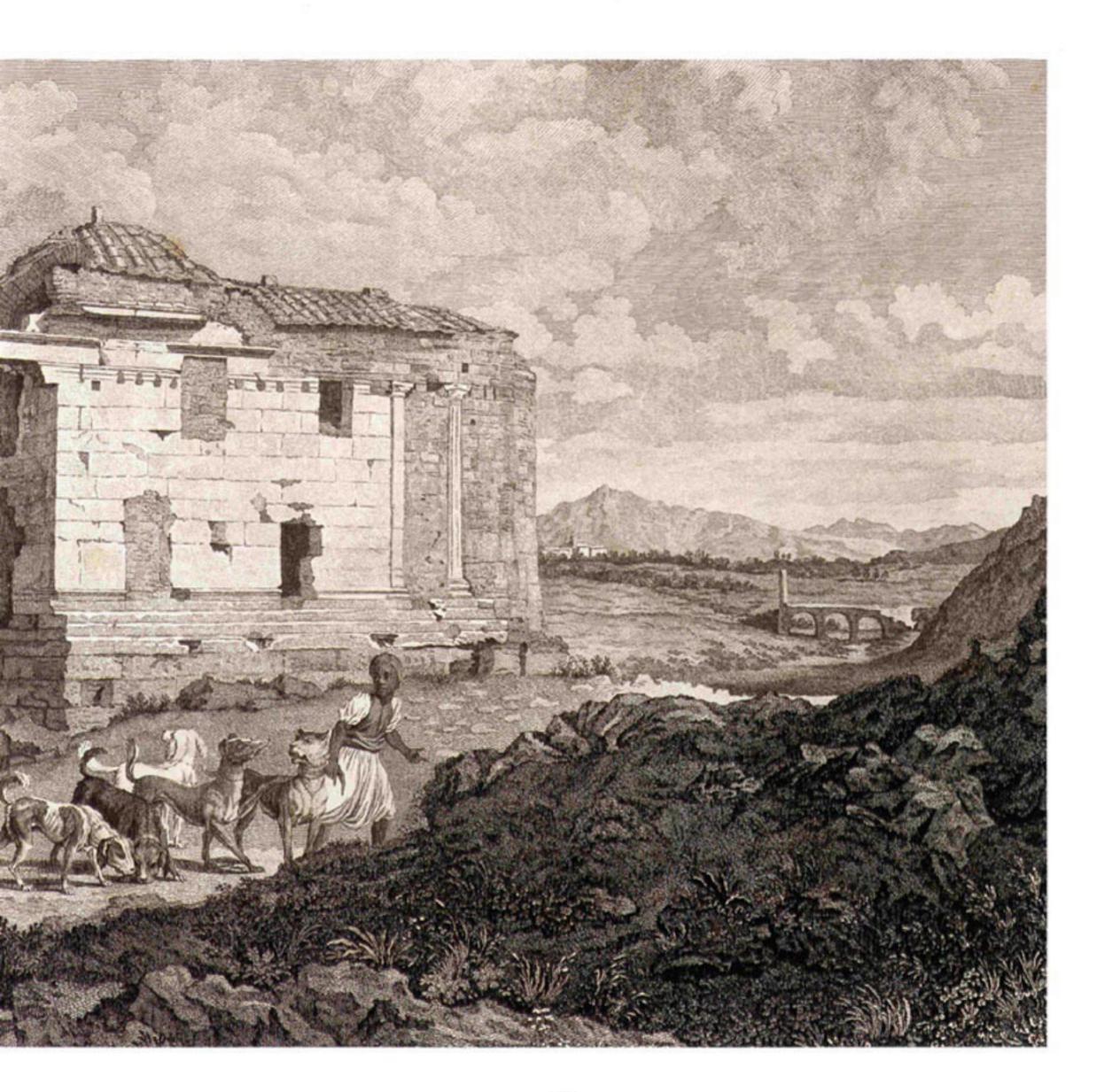
The rarity and the problematic nature of testimonies about the Mysteries make it impossible to extract definite conclusions both as to their deeper content and as to the ceremonies that took place during the festival. It would perhaps be wiser to restrict oneself to a description of the ritual, the order of services, and their appearance, as testimonies by contemporaries have survived, given that these facts were not secret, but accessible to all, not only to initiates.

In contrast to other festivals of Demeter, such as the Thesmophoria or the Aloa, in which women exclusively took part, participation in the Eleusinian Mysteries was open to all, regardless of sex, social position, financial situation, or even age. There are well-known testimonies about the "paides myethentes aph' hestias", or hearth-initiates, who according to the most accepted interpretation of the term, were children chosen symbolically to represent their city, and whose expenses for participating in the Mysteries were covered by public funds. It is worth noting that initiation into the Mysteries carried a significant cost to pay for the priests and to maintain the sanctuary. Slaves were allowed to become initiates if they themselves or someone else paid the fee. The only ones forbidden to become initiates were those whose hands were tainted with homicide, or those who did not understand the Greek language.

Initiation was a complex process of gradual development, in which three grades can be discerned. There was a preparatory stage in the so-called Lesser Mysteries in Agrai, named after the Athens suburb on the banks of the Ilissos River where they took place. The Lesser Mysteries were celebrated in the month of Anthesterion, around February. According to the mytho-

The Metroon in Agrai, an Ionic temple at the Ilissos. Engraving by Stuart and Revett, 19th century.





logical explanation, this festival was established so that Herakles could be initiated, because as a non-Athenian he did not have the right to take part in the Eleusinian Mysteries, which it seems were originally exclusively for the citizens of the city-state of Athens.

This initial, obligatory stage was followed in the autumn of the same year by initiation into the Greater Eleusinian Mysteries and then, after the passage of one year, elevation to the highest rank, the so-called epopteia.

The Greater Mysteries lasted nine days, the time that Demeter spent wandering the earth. They took place once a year, in the month of Boedromion, September-October in the Gregorian calendar. The official opening of the festival was on the 15th of Boedromion, but on the eve, on the 14th, the sacred objects, or hiera, that were kept all year round in Eleusis were taken to Athens, accompanied by the priesthood and an honorary guard of youths, or Ephebes, doing their military service. What the sacred objects were, we do not know. Clearly they were not heavy stone statues, as the priestesses could transport them in kistes (sing. kiste), the special cylindrical chests used to transport the sacred objects. George Mylonas hypothesised that the hiera were small, clay, Mycenaean figurines' that had survived as relics throughout the centuries.

The procession with the sacred objects to Athens and back on the Iera Odos (Sacred Way), passed by the Rheitoi lakes, where Scaramangas stands today. Each of these was dedicated to the two goddesses of Eleusis, and only priests had the right to fish in their waters. Only the larger of the two lakes, known as Lake Koumoundourou after the owner of the land in modern times, has survived today. Exhibited in the Eleusis Museum there is a document relief with an excerpt of a vote taken by the Athenian Boule dated precisely to 422-21 BC that refers to the bridging of the lake. According to the document, a bridge was to be built, five feet wide, that is just 1.50 metres, so that the sacred priests could transport the sacred items safely. The narrowness of the bridge meant that wagons were not allowed to pass, but in any case the faithful had to accompany the hiera on foot. The bridge was to be built of stones that had been collected when the Archaic Telesterion was torn down, and others that had been left over after construction at the

Rheitoi Lake (Koumoundourou).



Eleusis sanctuary had been completed. The ancients certainly displayed great forethought and a desire to economize on building materials. The relief crowning the inscription depicts the goddesses of both Athens and Eleusis, as the Rheitoi lakes were situated on the boundaries of the two cities. To the left is Demeter, pulling a strap from her shoulder with her left hand, and next to her is Persephone holding torches. To the right is Athena, wearing an Attic helmet, holding in her raised left hand a spear or sceptre rendered in writing; she extends her right arm to a young man standing in front of her who is considered by some to be the personification of the demos of Eleusis, and by others the Eleusinian hero Triptolemos.

The hiera arrived in Athens on the eve of the Mysteries and were taken to the City Eleusinion, a sanctuary on the northern slope of the Acropolis. The Phaidyntes, or statue-cleaner, a lower Eleusinian official, would hasten to announce their arrival to the priestess of Athena Polias.

The first day of the official commencement of the celebrations, the 15th of Boedromion, was called Agyrmos, that is the assembly of the prospective initiates. The priests of Eleusis, and especially the Hierokeryx, the sacred herald, called to all in the Athens Agora who wished to be initiated to come, and stated the selection criteria for suitable candidates. As mentioned above, those whose hands were tainted by blood were forbidden, as were non-Greek speakers, as they would not be able to understand the ceremonies and respond as they should.

The second day of the Mysteries, the 16th of Boedromion, was called Elasis, from the exhortation 'A $\lambda \dot{\alpha} \delta \epsilon$ M $\dot{\omega} \sigma \tau \alpha i$ (alade mystai or, "seaward, initiates"). The postulants, mystai, walked towards the sea, usually to Phaleron or Piraeus, where they would enter the water to cleanse and purify themselves, and wash the piglets that were to be sacrificed. In antiquity, the kind of animal that was sacrificed to divinities on particular occasions, as well as its age and sex, was strictly determined. The usual offering to Demeter was a piglet, perhaps because of this animal's legendary fertility. Following their return from the sea, every postulant sacrificed his or her piglet, whose blood was considered the a quintessentially purifying agent.

The third day of the Mysteries was dedicated to official sacrifices on behalf of the city of Athens and



Marble statuette of an initiate holding a bacchos and a piglet.



Marble votive offerings of piglets.



other cities that had sent representatives and offerings. The third day was known as hiereia deuro from the exhortation "Hither, victims", when the postulants were invited to take the victims to the altars.

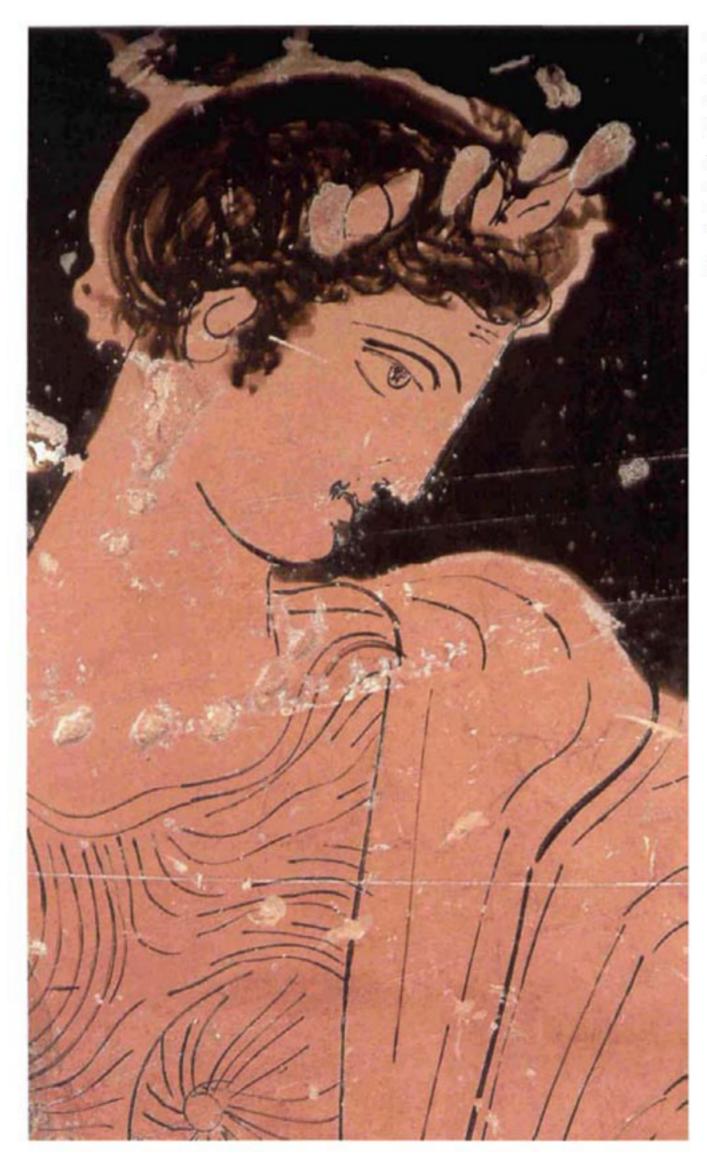
The fourth day was called Epidauria or Asclepieia because, according to tradition, when Asclepius travelled from Epidaurus to Eleusis to be initiated to the Mysteries, he arrived late on this day, after the other postulants had been registered, and the purification and the sacrifices had taken place. According to myth, because of the precedent with the god of medicine, tardy postulants had the right to show up on that day and briefly go through the prescribed preparatory procedures. For the rest of the postulants, the 18th of Boedromion was a day of contemplation, during which they remained behind closed doors in their houses preparing for the great spiritual experience.

On the 19th of Boedromion, the fifth day and one of the most splendid, the events reached a climax with the procession accompanying the sacred objects on their return to Eleusis. The procession to transport the hiera from Eleusis to Athens and back was a symbolic union of the city with the very important sanctuary that was on its outskirts, on the border with Megaris. The sacred objects were taken back to Eleusis by the sacred priests, accompanied not only by the priesthood and the honorary guard of Epebes, but also by all the postulants and initiates of past Mysteries who wanted to become "epoptai" (sing. epoptes), meaning watchers or viewers, but was also the name for those who had achieved the highest level of initiation in the Eleusinian mysteries. The procession was led by the statue of Iacchos with the special functionary, the Iacchogos, or Iacchos guide. Clearly, Iacchos, a youthful male god, was initially the personification of the ιαχές (iaches, meaning acclamations, or cheers) shouted by the initiates during the procession to Eleusis. He then became Demeter's and Persephone's young deputy, and over the years acquired some of the traits of Dionysus, perhaps because of the similarity of the names Iacchos-Bacchus. The procession began at Kerameikos, between the Dipylos and the Sacred Gate, where there was a special building with a large court, the so-called Pompeion, where official processions were organised. From there, it followed the Sacred Way, the "road which begins in Athens, pointing to Eleusis", that was "that road, always like a road of the soul" (Angelos Sikelianos). The initiates wore wreaths of myrtle in their hair and held bacchoi (sing. bacchos) bunches



Marble pedestal with crossed torches; Marble bacchos; Statuette of a young initiate ("paides myethentes aph'hestias" or hearth-child).

CO.



of myrtle tied together. Depictions of the procession have survived on monuments, precisely because they were the public face of the festival, not the secret part.

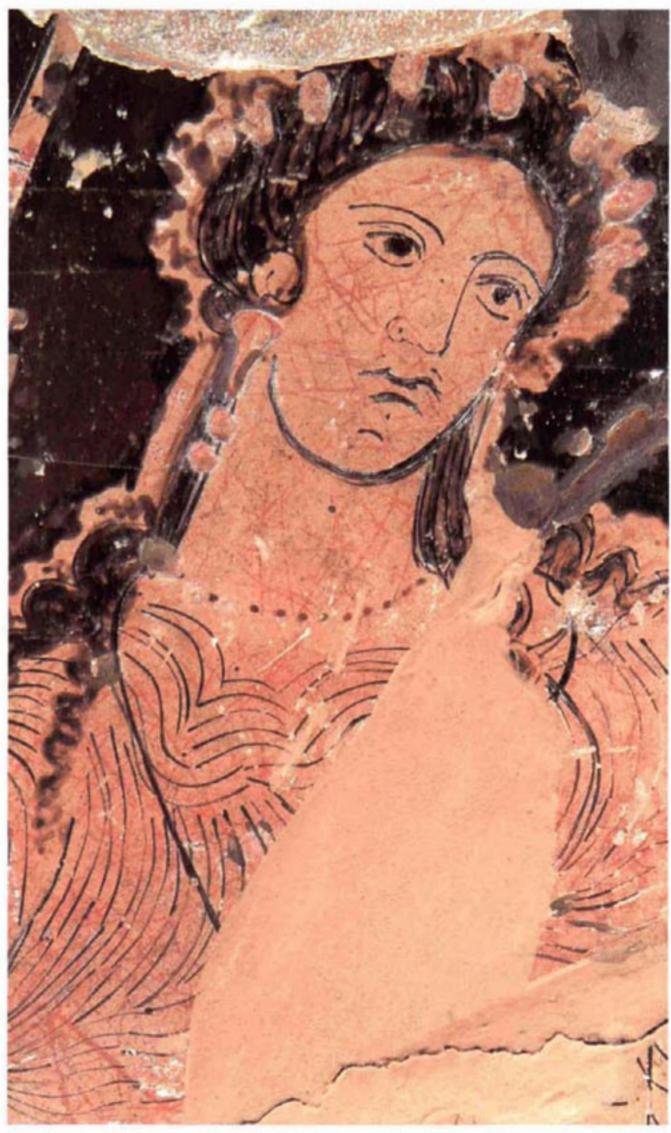
The approximately 20 kilometres from Athens to Eleusis must in antiquity have been a rather pleasant journey through woods and fields, with monuments lining the sides of the road, and opportunities for frequent stops in various temples and sanctuaries where initiates could chant hymns and rest. Such landmarks on the way to Eleusis were the sacred fig tree, where the hero Phytalos received Demeter as his guest and she gave him he first fig tree; the altar of Zephyr and

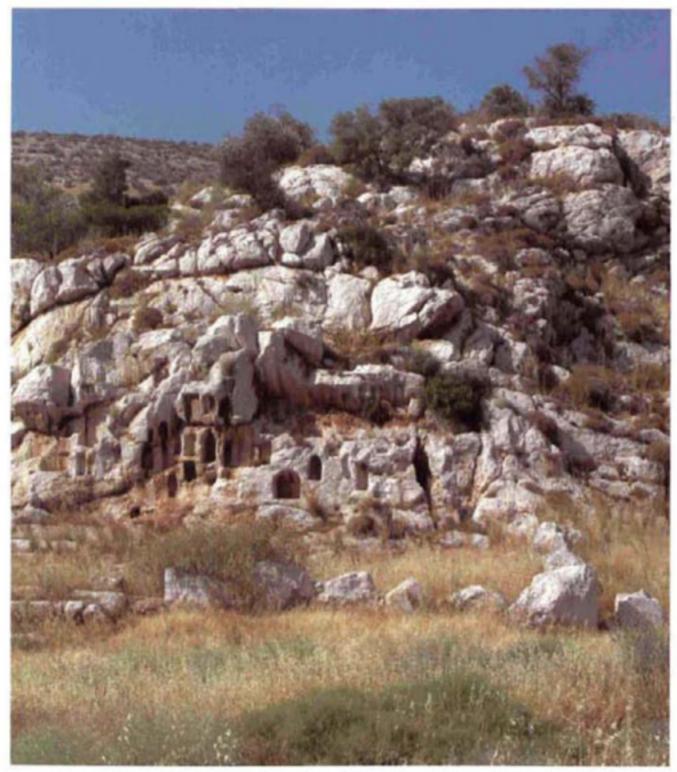


the temple of Apollo, which is thought to have stood where the superb Dafni Monastery was built in Byzantine times. The procession then moved on towards the sea, through the narrow passage between Mount Aigaleos and Mount Poikilon. At the passage's exit, on the right side, was the shrine of Aphrodite, a small rural temple. Its ruins can be seen today in the niches cut into the rock where worshipers of the goddess of love would place their votive offerings. A large section of the Sacred Way and its retaining walls are in front of the sanctuary of Aphrodite in Dafni. Continuing, the initiates would cross the Rheitoi and enter the region traditionally considered the kingdom of Kro-

Red-figure painting on clay of Demeter and Kore (4th century BC).

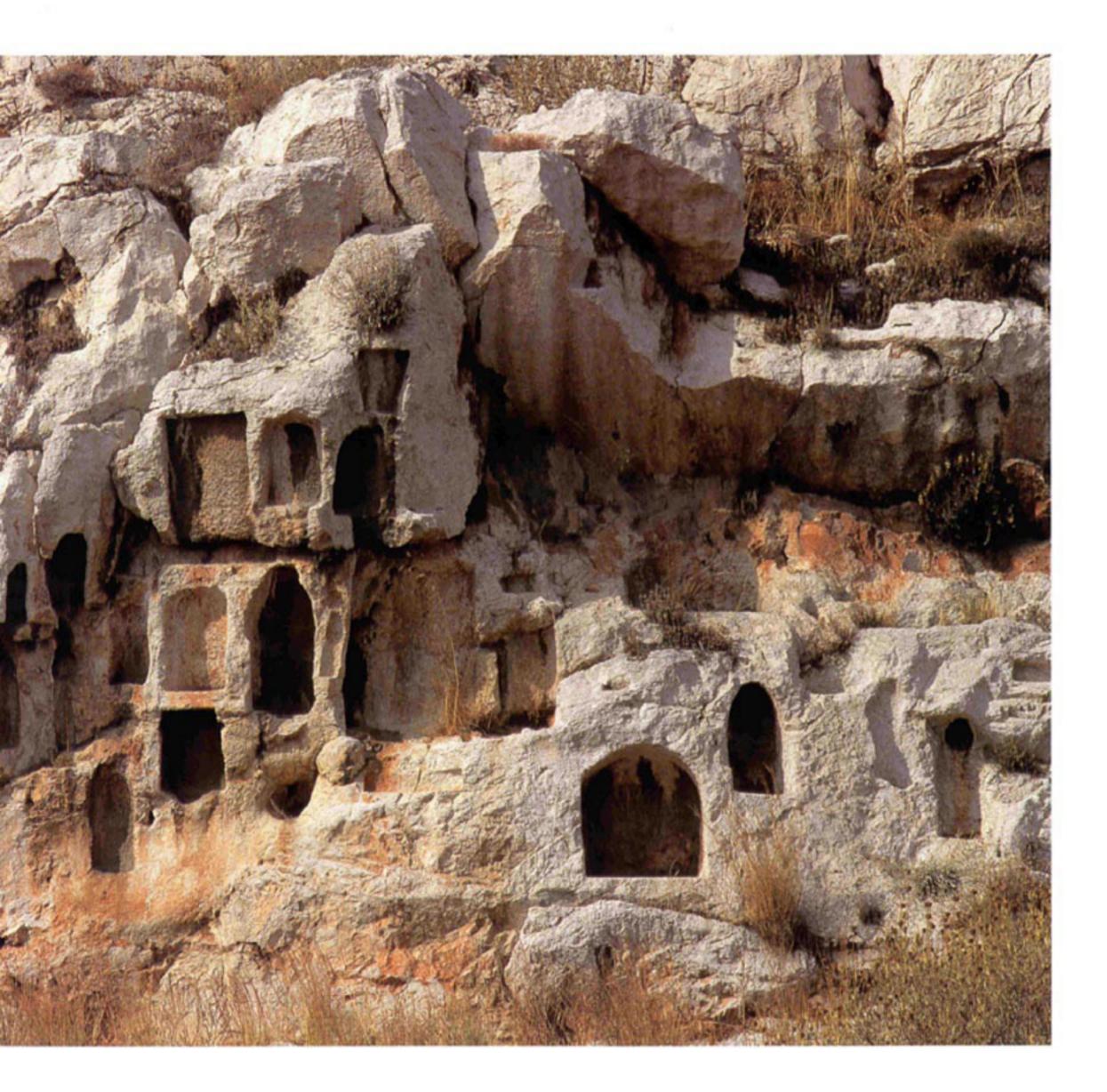






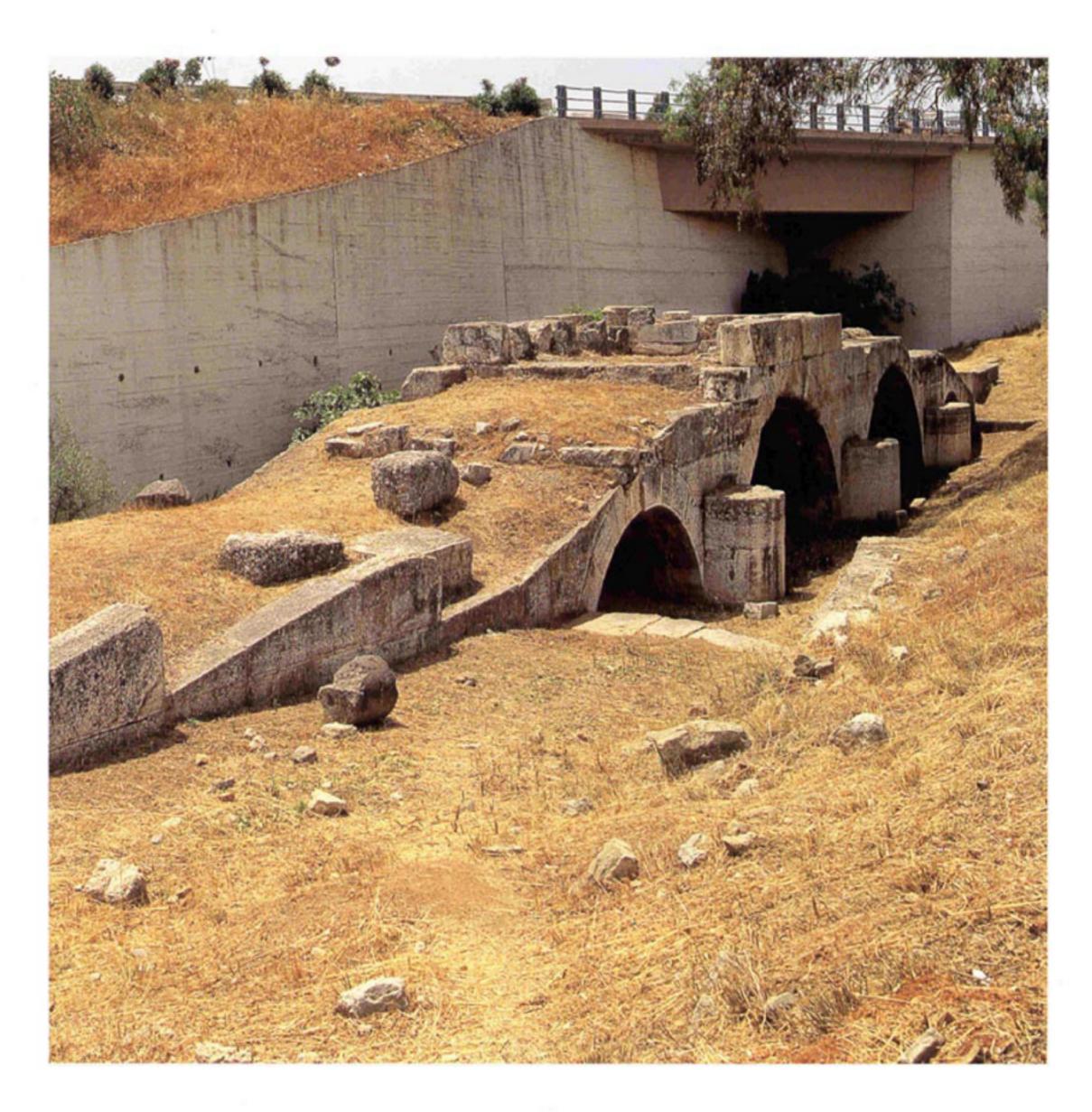
Sanctuary of Aphrodite at Dafni. Niches were carved into the stone to place votive offerings.











kos in mythical times. At this point, an interesting rite would take place. A representative of the descendants of Krokos would tie a woollen saffron-coloured ribbon, a kroke, on the right arm and left leg of each of the mystai. This rite, reminiscent to a modern Greek of the tradition of wearing a "March thread", was clearly to protect against evil spirits and the evil eye.

Having passed through the Thriasio Plain, at a distance of approximately one kilometre from the sanctuary, the Sacred Way intersected the Eleusinain Kephisos, a turbulent stream that frequently flooded the area. The so-called gephyrismoi, or bridge jests, took place at the bridge. Groups of men with covered heads and faces waited on the bridge and would hurl insults at the important, prominent citizens in the procession. A wonderfully preserved 50-metre-long ancient bridge has survived to this day. The bridge is consists of four arches made of Piraeus poros stone that has been fitted with exceptional precision. It was built in Roman times and its construction is attributed to the philhellene emperor Hadrian, who was a benefactor of Eleusis and the Sanctuary of Demeter, and was initiated to the Mysteries in AD 125. In his Chronicle, Eusebius wrote: "He [Hadrian], having wintered in Athens and been initiated into the Eleusinian [Mysteries], bridged the Kephisos river which had flooded Eleusis."

Naturally, this was not the first time a bridge had been built over the river, as there must have been earlier wooden or stone bridges. In the Palatine Anthology, there is an epigram referring to a bridge built at the expense of Xenocles by the Sphettos demos in the 4th century BC: Onwards then, walk, oh mystai of Demeter to the palace; do not fear the winter floods of water as Xenocles, son of Xeinis, built a secure bridge over this broad river".

After the procession crossed the bridge, in a mirthful mood following the exchange of insults at the gephyrismoi, it would have begun to go dark, and with the light of torches they would reach the outer court of the Sanctuary. There, Eleusinians would welcome the postulants and Iacchos. It is believed that the night would be spent dancing around the Kallichoron Well. The last act of the evening was the kernophoria, the carrying of the kernos (pl. kernoi). The kernos was a vessel used exclusively in the cult of Demeter; it stood on a stem and had a large number of small cups. Scholars are not certain what the kernophoria

Roman bridge over the Eleusinian Kephisos.





A kernos was a vessel that consisted of stem with many small, shallow cups, in which were placed small quantities of grains and fruit (wheat, barley, oats, lentils etc.) as an suitable offering to the goddess of agriculture. Representations of the manner in which kernoi were used have survived on artefacts, e.g. on a clay votive tablet dating to the 4th century

BC found in Eleusis.





involved, but believed that women bore a kernos on their head and performed a special dance.

The weary travellers would then rest in hostels, or in the homes of friends. In the following days and nights, ceremonies would take place in the peribolos, or enclosure, of the Sanctuary, but these are shrouded by an impermeable veil of mystery. We have very little information and the very little information available is unclear; the lack of data has been filled by hypotheses and theories developed by various modern scholars. But the multitude of views obscures rather than illuminates the Mysteries.

It seems possible that on the sixth day, the 20th of Boedromion, sacrifices were made at the Sanctuary in honour of the Eleusis divinities by the Archon-Basileus, the king-archon, one of the chief magistrates of the city of Athens, and the epimelitai, superintendents of the Mysteries. This would have been when the pelanos, a large loaf of bread made of barley and wheat harvested from the plain of Rharos, was offered. According to tradition, the Rharian plain in Eleusis was the first land to have been cultivated according to Demeter's instructions by the Eleusinian hero Triptolemos. Prospective initiates fasted, a physical preparation for the unique spiritual experience they would be undergoing. The fast was broken by drinking the kykeon in commemoration of the goddess's act. This drink was of divine origins as, according to the myth, it was Demeter who had first mixed it and drunk it.

The initiation of the faithful must have taken place on the same night, that is, on the 20th to the 21st of Boedromion. The priests of Eleusis played a leading role, especially the Hierophant, the high priest who, in the darkness of the Telesterion, in a flash of light, revealed sacred objects, to the faithful.

The Hierophant, always chosen from among the clan of the Eumolpidae, was the high priest of the cult. In order to maintain a balance, the Dadouchos, or torchbearer, second in importance after the Hierophant, was chosen from the other hieratic family, the Kerykes. In contrast to the priests of the other Olympus divinities, whose attire did not differ from that of the faithful, the senior functionaries of the Eleusinian Mysteries wore their hair in a special way and wore rich vestments that ancient sources compared with those of tragic actors. Indeed, it was said that the Dadouchos Kallias who took part in the battle of Marathon so impressed a Persian with the richness of his hieratic vestments, that the latter believed him be the "king" of Athens and showed him the way to a ditch with buried Persian treasure so that his life would be spared. Henceforth, Kallias acquired the epithet of "lakkoploutos" or "ditchenriched".

The vestments of the Dadouchos in classic times can be seen on a red-figure stamnos dating to the third quarter of the 5th century BC that is exhibited in the Museum of Eleusis. It is one of the extremely rare representations of the Mysteries. The mature man with the long curly hair and beard and carrying a torch is very possibly the Dadouchos. He wore a strophion, headband, tied around his forehead and a shin-length, draped tunic. His appearance is vaguely reminiscent of a Christian cleric. The Dadouchos is followed by a young initiate dressed in a mantle holding a bacchos in one hand. The last figure in the scene, on the left, a woman wearing a tunic and mantle, is believed to be either Persephone or a priestess.

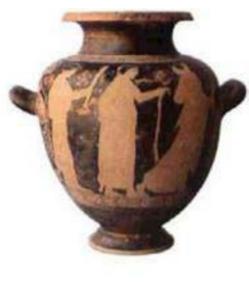
On the sixth and seventh days of the Mysteries, and particularly at nights, the $\delta\rho\omega\mu\epsilon\nu\alpha$ (dromena, the acts), the $\delta\epsilon\iota\kappa\nu\omega\mu\epsilon\nu\alpha$ (deiknymena the items sacred items that were shown), and the $\lambda\epsilon\gamma\omega\mu\epsilon\nu\alpha$ (legomena, the words spoken) took place. The dromena were very probably re-enactments of the goddess's ordeal that led the initiates, just as tragedies led spectators, to a final catharsis. The legomena were perhaps a kind of catechism, and in order to understand it, initiates had to know Greek, a prerequisite for becoming an initiate. Finally, the deiknymena must have been the sacred objects revealed by the Hierophant in a burst of light. The second night, the 21st to the 22nd of Boedromion, was devoted to the epopteia, the highest level of initiation, and only prospective epoptai took part in this.

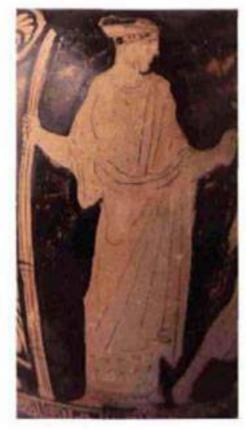
The nucleus of the Eleusinian Mysteries remains unknown. The deepest level of the initiation was never completely described, perhaps because it was an experience that could not be explicitly described. The initiation, myesis, was an intense spiritual experience that enriched the initiates spiritually in the here and now, and gave them hope for the hereafter. Sophocles wrote: "Thrice happy they, who, having seen these rites, then pass to Hades; there to these alone is granted life."

After the exaltation of the 20th and 21st of Boedromion. and the spiritual fulfilment of these days and nights, came a gradual reduction in intensity. The eighth day was devoted to libations for the dead called the plemochoai after the special vessel used for libations. The remaining part



Red-figure stamnos with a scene representing dadouchoi (torchbearers) (3rd quarter of the 5th century BC).





of the day was possibly spent on festive events, hymns and dancing. Many initiates probably offered the Sanctuary the new clothing they had worn for the initiation. Others took the clothes with them to use as swaddling clothes for their newborns, as they believed the clothing had absorbed something of the goddess's divine grace.

On the ninth and last day, the 23rd of Boedromion, the faithful would return to their homes, not in an official procession, but in smaller groups. Some believe that the gephyrismoi occurred on this day too, this time in a merrier mood. The priests would take the statue of lacchos back to Athens where it would remain in the god's sanctuary near Kerameikos until the next year's festival.

On the 24th of Boedromion, after the return to Athens, in compliance with a law by Solon, the Boule of 500 convened in the City Eleusinion and heard cases of violations of the Mysteries based on the report of the kingarchon, the Athens magistrate in charge of the religious and priestly functions of the state.

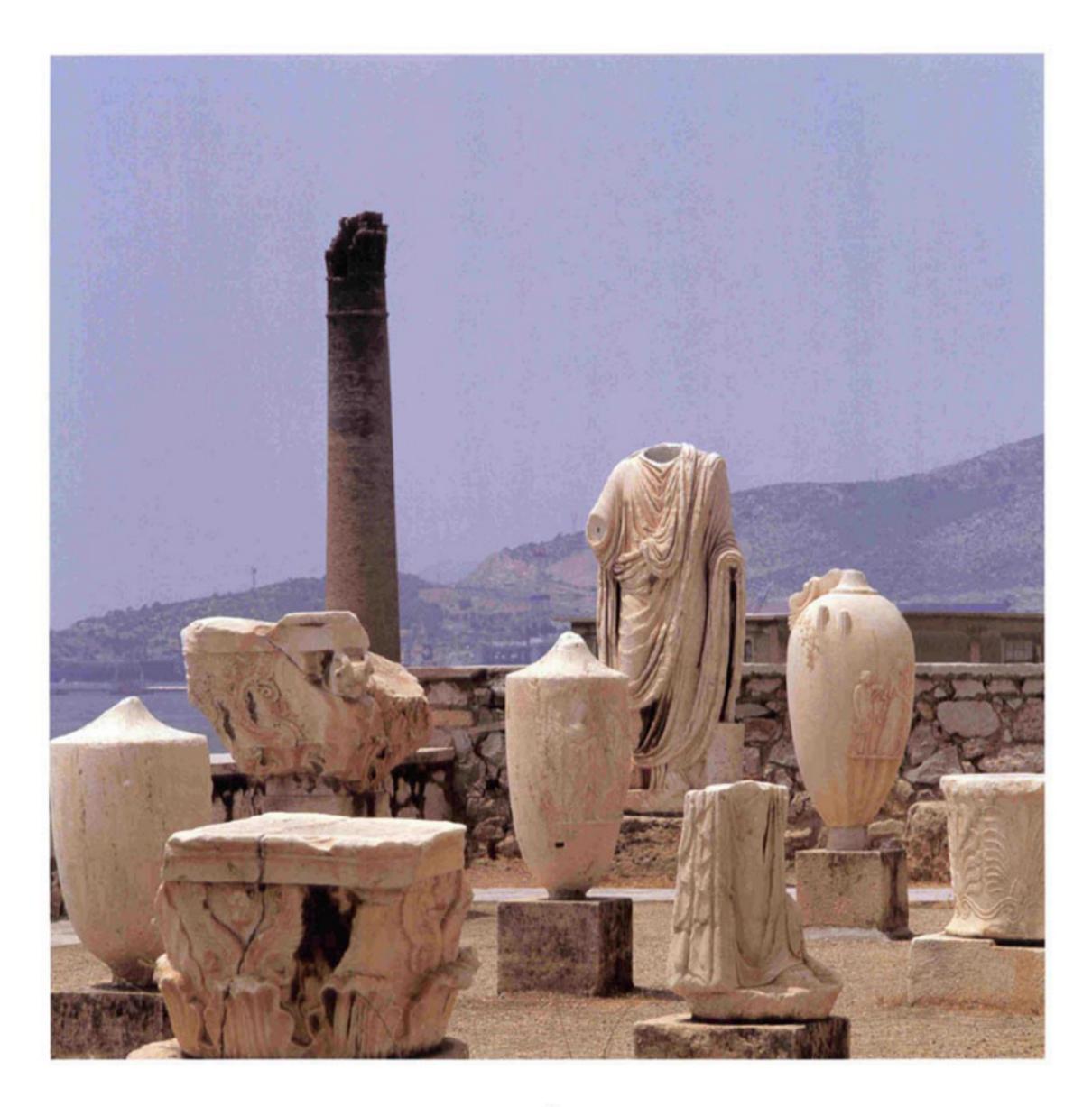
It seems the Mysteries were such a landmark experience for those who participated, that despite the multitudes of the faithful who had been initiated throughout the centuries, not one revealed the secrets. Even in late antiquity, a time when the cults of antiquity seemed to waning and Christianity began to rise, the secret nature of the Eleusinian mysteries was preserved. This can be interpreted in two ways. Either that initiates to the Mysteries did not feel the need to accept Christianity, or that even if some did adopt Christianity, they nevertheless continued to respect the terms of secrecy of their previous faith. Both these interpretations would seem to indicate, however, that initiation into the Mysteries left an indelible mark on the mystai for the rest of their lives.

The Mysteries were only abolished by successive legislative decrees issued by Theodosius the Great (AD 379-395), that forbade every rite of the ancient religion. It was Alaric's Goths who dealt the final blow to Eleusis in AD 395, together with the Arian monks that accompanied them. The Telesterion was burned to the ground, the altars and votive offerings were destroyed, and the priesthood was destroyed, from the lowest functionary to the last Hierophant. The earth covered the glory of antiquity forever, neglect and silence prevailed for centuries; Mother-Earth hid the sanctuary in her embrace, waiting for the archaeologist's spade to shed light.





Η ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑ ΤΩΝ ΑΝΑΣΚΑΦΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥ ΜΟΥΣΕΙΟΥ



THE HISTORY OF THE EXCAVATIONS AND THE MUSEUM

The catastrophic raid of the Goths at the end of the 4th century AD marked the end of the Eleusinian Sanctuary but did not lay final waste to the region. Deprived of her past glories, Eleusis survived as an insignificant community in the early Christian and Byzantine periods. The hill of the acropolis was fortified, as can be seen in the surviving sections of Byzantine-era walls on the northern brow of the hill, near the small Church of the Eisodia, and the southern section of the Byzantine fortifications that can be seen on the opposite side of the hill, north of the Museum.

Raids by Arab pirates brought destruction and inhabitants abandoned the site intermittently. In a letter dating to 1204 the scholarly Metropolitan of Athens, Michael Choniates, referred the area: "Eleusis was mysterious when..." while in his own time, he referred to the raids and the abandonment of the area, "Eleusis was hidden and plunged into a deep silence" and the savage pirates "threw those they had seized into the depths of Hades and initiated them into the mysteries of death, so that they could not speak ever again."

In order to strengthen the defences of an area that controlled important land routes during Latin rule, probably in the 13th century, a tall tower was built on the foundations of a pre-existing Hellenistic fort on the westernmost hill of Eleusis. The "Frankish Tower" , the only landmark dating to this period in the area, was demolished in 1953 when the Titan cement works were expanded. The building material, parts of ancient buildings, was assembled at the archaeological site for future use in restoring other parts of the monument.

During the Middle Ages Eleusis was more a castle than a residential community. A pilgrim from Capua, Niccolo da Martoni, who crossed the Thriasian Plain in 1395 wrote: Circa horam vespertinam longe XV milearia ab Athenis, invenimus quodam castrum





quod dicitur Lippisinox (Around the evening hour, at a distance of 15 miles from Athens, we reached a castle called Lippisinox). The name was clearly a corruption of the genitive case of the Greek name of the place, Elefsinos.

In the 14th century the sparse population of the Thriasian Plain was augmented by the immigration of Albanian tribes to southern Greece. The Greek name was to be corrupted as 'Lepsina'.

The late Middle Ages and early years of Turkish rule were dark periods for this region. Historical sources are silent. It seems that for some time a fear of pirates left the area bereft of people. At the end of the 17th century, in February 1676, a Frenchman, Jacob Spon, and an Englishman, George Wheler visited 'Lepsina' and found it empty. In the ruins, however, they saw marble architectural remains, ancient inscriptions and a "statue of Demeter", one of the caryatids of the Lesser Propylaea. They engaged in a brief illicit excavation as, strangely enough, their baggage contained a pickaxe and a shovel.

From the end of the 18th century and throughout the 19th century, improvements in travel and increasing European interest in classical antiquity brought about a dramatic increase in travel to Greece. Enthralled by its past, the visitors who came to Eleusis in the 18th century were emotionally charged and prepared for a unique experience. Although they expected to see an idealised place, what they came face to face with was a collection of approximately 50 huts – it couldn't even be called a village – built on the ancient ruins. The increase in visitors also brought about an increase in incidences of theft of antiquities, the most famous of these being the theft and removal to England of a caryatid from the Lesser Propylaea by E. D. Clarke in 1801.

Scholarly study of the Eleusis antiquities began during Turkish rule when the Society of Dilettanti, a society of gentlemen sponsoring the study of ancient Greek and Roman art, commissioned a group comprising Sir William Gell and the architects John Peter Gandy and Francis Redford, to travel to Greece in 1812. It is this group that located the precise location of the Telesterion, although the reconstruction of the ground plan they drew up was wrong. Their mistake was not due to ignorance, but rather to the fact that their study of the area was obstructed by the houses built on the site. They also studied the Greater Propylaea, and were the first to compare the design of this structure to that of the Propylaea of the Athens Acropolis. Their drawings of the Lesser Propylaea are also valuable as they recorded architectural details that were later lost. They also identified and studied, to the extent that they were able because of the overlying buildings, the temple of Artemis Propylaea, or Artemis of the Portals. The results of their studies were published in 1817 in the monumental book, The Unedited Antiquities of Attica.

Scholarly study was interrupted by the Greek struggle to cast off the Turkish yoke. Eleusis was turned into an army camp and it was from there that Karaiskakis set off to lift Kioutahi's siege of Athens.

Following liberation, Eleusis once again began to attract the interest of Greek and foreign visitors. Interest peaked in 1859 with the chance finding of an exceptional relief from the golden age of Greek sculpture. It depicted the sacred Eleusinian trinity comprising Demeter, the Kore and Triptolemos. The interest generated upon the discovery of this relief, and the hope that more items would be found, gave impetus to new excavations. In 1860, with the permission of the Greek government, a Frenchman, Francois Lenormant, conducted excavations in the area of the Propylaea, but these were carried out over a limited area and for a brief time.

As the Greek state began reconstruction, an awareness arose that the important archaeological sites, among which was Eleusis, needed to be excavated and promoted. The tangible proof of a glorious past would, it was hoped, constitute the heritage that would allow the newly-formed state to enter the society of civilised nations.

The "patriotic duty" of fully excavating the Ele-



Artist's reconstruction of the caryatid of the Lesser Propylaea.



usinian Sanctuary fell to the Athens Archaeological Society, and with help from the state, it began to expropriate land, as it had become clear that excavations could not be conducted unless the houses were removed and the peasants resettled elsewhere.

Excavations began on 2 June 1882, although, "there remained some homes not yet appropriated either due to the recalcitrance of the owners, or because they were sub judice, but even the appropriated houses had not yet been quit for various reasons", as the then Secretary of the Society, Stephanos Koumanoudes, stated at the first General Assembly of the Society after excavations had begun. He added that the excavations had not begun from the obvious piles of ruins at the Propylaea, but "it was deemed proper to proceed [with the excavations] in a Homeric manner, beginning with the nucleus, that is the Telesterion, or megaron of the goddess, itself". D. Philios, who had studied archaeology in Munich, was appointed head of the excavations. From the very beginning, Wilhelm Dörpfeld, the German architect, worked closely with him. All the topographical studies accompanying the excavation reports bore the legend: "Wil. Dörpfeld created this".

In his first report, Philios wrote: "the work, as is expected and proper, went slowly, due to the small number of diggers and the smaller number of carts", and he finished his exhaustive report on the proceedings with the following eloquent statement: "It is hoped that our excavations, while satisfying national pride, will also to a great extent promote knowledge of antiquity".

Excavations were carried out concurrently with the expropriations and removal of the houses, and at the end of September 1885, the village church of Ayios Giorgos was taken down and rebuilt where it stands even today, over the ruins of the imposing Roman baths.

Demetrios Philios worked on the Eleusis excavations for over a decade, from 1882 to 1894. He brought to light the Telesterion, the Kallichoron Well and most of the structures in the Sanctuary. Andreas Skias succeeded him as the head of the excavations in 1894, and he dedicated himself to the work with the same zeal until 1907. During his time as head, the southern courtyard of the Telesterion was uncov-



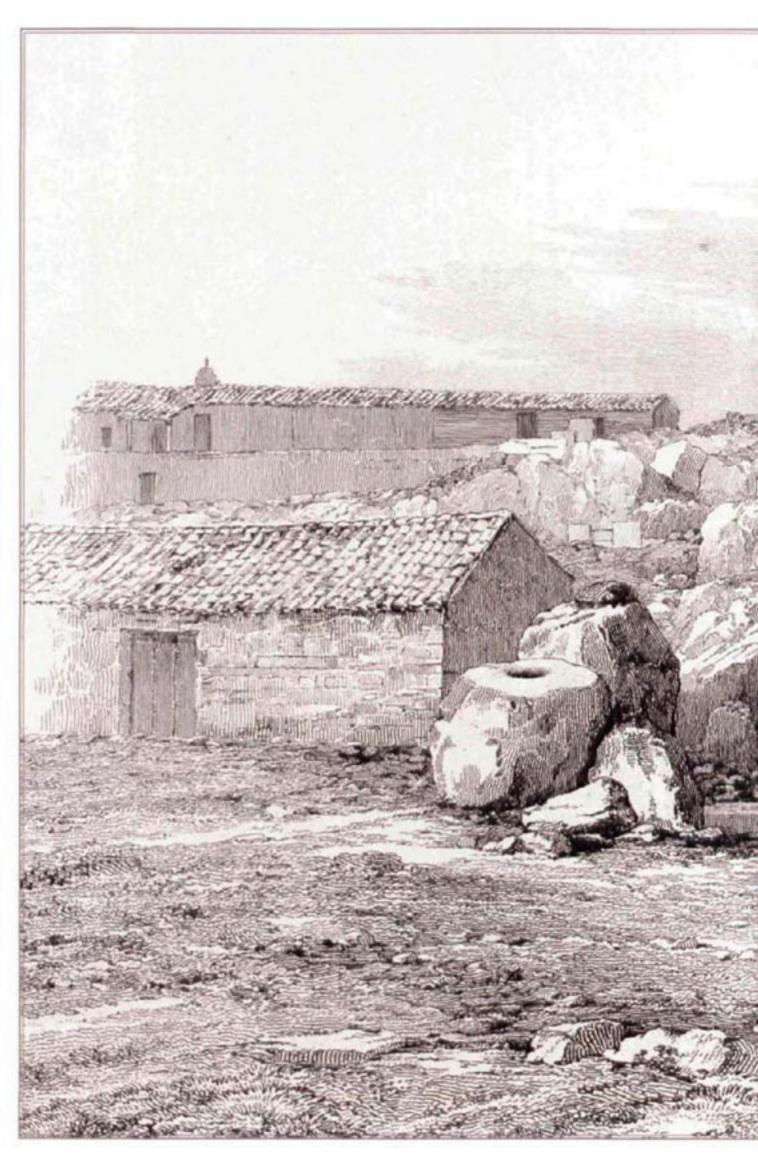
ered, as were the prehistoric settlements of the southern slope and the large Geometric Period cemetery, which he called the Ancient Eleusinian Necropolis. When Skias was elected a professor of the University of Athens, he was forced to resign as head of the excavations at Eleusis.

After a relatively brief interruption in the excavations, they began once again in 1917 under Konstantinos Kourouniotes, always under the auspices of the Archaeological Society. He used more modern methods to study many areas and identified the earliest stages of the Telesterion. He also excavated the Sacred House, the Mithraion, and the Roman structure with the peristyle courtyard outside the southern part of the peribolos. He also studied parts of the acropolis, shedding light on houses, cisterns and streets dating to the Hellenistic and Roman periods.

Kourouniotes had worthy collaborators in his work, including professor George Mylonas, the architect John Travlos and Ioannis Threpsiades, the Ephor of Antiquities, who continued his work even after Kourouniotes's death in 1945. Threpsiades excavated the large Roman bath complex in the area of the Church of Ayios Giorgos. By means of systematic excavations from 1952 to 1956, Mylonas studied the so-called Western Cemetery of Eleusis, where 417 graves were discovered, 150 of these dating to prehistoric times. Indeed, one group of graves was identified by the excavator as the area in which the "seven against Thebes" were buried, a site Pausanias mentioned he had seen on his visit to Eleusis. The precise topographical plans of the Sanctuary were the work of John Travlos, as were the proposals for restoring most of the monuments. He also studied the Sanctuary of Aphrodite in Dafni, the section of the Sacred Way near Rheitoi and, in 1950, he discovered the Roman bridge of the Eleusinian Kephisos. In the 1960s he excavated the north-west auxiliary area of the Sanctuary, segments of the wall and of the Asty Gates, or Town Gates. He carried out sporadic, smallscale excavations in the 1980s, and did not cease to take an interest in research in Eleusis until his death in 1985.

Excavations begin in the region of the 3rd Epho-

The hill of the Eleusinian acropolis before the excavations. Engraving by W. Gell, 19th century.





rate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities from the middle of the 1960s. The 3rd Ephorate is the office of the Archaeological Service responsible for Eleusis. As a state Service it carries out excavations to document the monuments of the past. Excavations are carried out beyond the boundaries of the official archaeological site, under the modern city of Eleusis. Up to now, they have brought to the fore much valuable information about the ancient settlement and the cemeteries that surrounded it, about the roads, the craft workshops, how the area was cultivated and irrigated originally through the wells, and later by the Roman aqueduct. The excavations continue until today, and have become more intense as they are following the development of the modern city.

The issue of how to keep the ancient finds discovered either by chance or in the first official excavations in Eleusis arose immediately after liberation from the Ottomans and the formation of the modern Greek state. The items were originally stored in the half-ruined Church of Ayios Zacharias and it was there that the Great Eleusinian relief was exhibited before it was moved to the Thiseion, and later to the National Archaeological Museum. The 1st July 1860 issue of the magazine Pandora wrote: "When with a few friends a few months ago I visited the small church in Eleusis that contains relics of the past, we were overwhelmed with surprise and wonder before this spectacular relic of art, whose very existence was unknown to us." At around the same time Francois Lenormant wrote: "Dans l'église de Saint-Zacharie, laquelle sert de musée provisoire à la commune d'Eleusis".

Besides the Church of Ayios Zacharias, Lenormant also stored findings from the excavations at the house of one Lascas (Laskos?), as he himself, and other later visitors noted. In his Itineraire de l'Orient (Paris1881) Émile Isambert wrote: "Les inscriptions et les scultures trouvées dans les Fouilles sont conservées, sous la garde d'un invalide, dans un petit musée spécial, organisé dans la maison du commandant Lascas, à côté des premiers propylées", that is, that the inscriptions and the sculptures found in the excavations were kept, under the supervision of a disabled person, in a special small museum, organised in the home of commander Lascas, near the first Propylaea.

The issue of how to keep the findings became more pressing with the commencement of Demetrios



Demetrios Philios



Andreas Skias



Ioannis Travlos

Philios's systematic excavations. The most valuable small findings were taken to the Collection of the Archaeological Society in Athens, and the most noteworthy sculptures were moved to the National Archaeological Museum. Many Archaic korai from the Sanctuary, the beautiful bust of Eubouleus, the Lysimachides relief and the Eleusis Youth, a statue of a nude athlete are exhibited there today.

Philios collected the remaining findings from the first years of the exactions in one of the houses in the village that had not been demolished, as it was near the Sanctuary, on the southern side of the peribolos. In topographical plans accompanying the excavation reports, this house was noted as a Museum. This picturesque building has survived to today, together with the contiguous building that Philios lived in during the excavations. This structure, along with another house on the northern foot of the hill, are the only buildings in the village that were not demolished, and thus constitute the oldest material testaments to the modern history of the city.

The first building constructed for the purpose of exhibiting the constantly increasing findings from the Sanctuary was begun in 1889, on the southern slope of the acropolis. The contractors handed over the keys to the Museum in mid 1890 and even the "wooden exhibition cases were complete". It was a one-storey, stone building with a tiled roof. It was rectangular in shape and initially comprised five chambers. It was one of the first museums in Greece and reflected the prevailing ideas on museums and the technical means available at the time it was constructed.

Andreas Skias was the first to place the antiquities in the exhibition rooms and to begin the recording of the findings. But as early as 1898 he stated in the Proceedings of the Archaeological Society that: "Unfortunately, the museum is already so full of antiquities, not only will it be impossible to place future findings, existing items are already not easily accessible. Before the excavations grow further, it is imperative that the museum be enlarged."

In the early 1930s another room was added to the western end of the building and the exhibits were rearranged by the then director of excavations, Konstantinos Kourouniotes. In the newly-built western

The Eleusis Msueum.



room that he called the pottery room, he exhibited the excavations' ceramic findings.

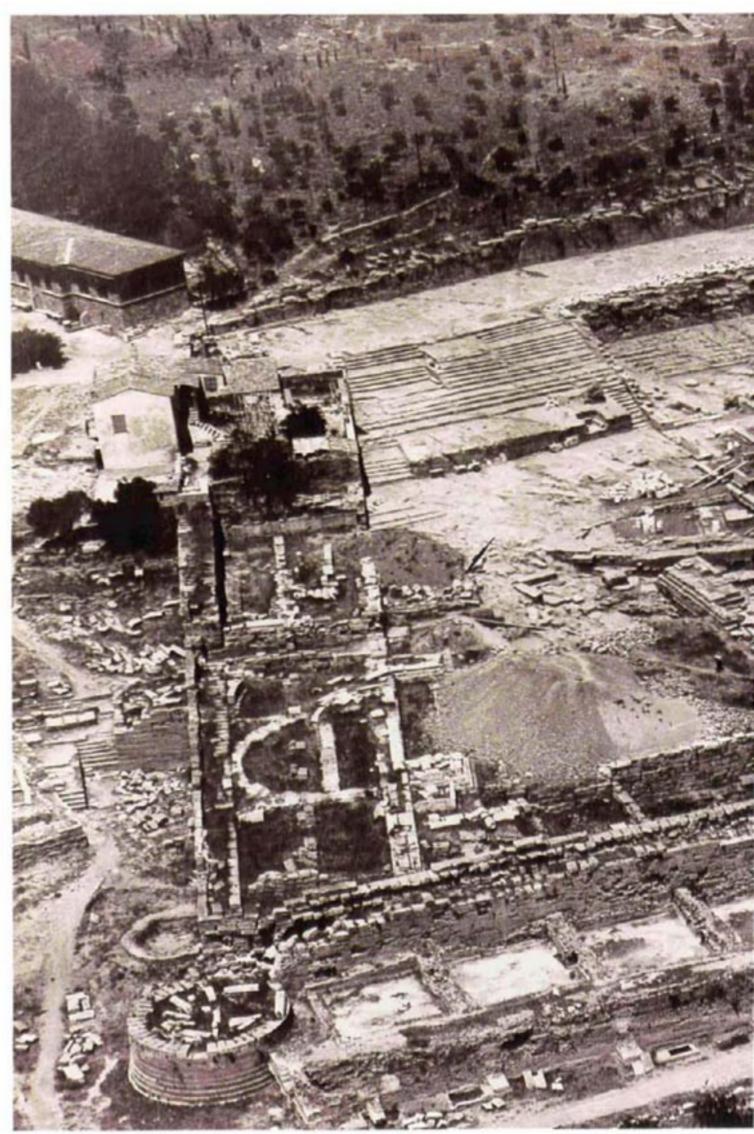
With the advent of the Greek-Italian war, measures were taken to safeguard the antiquities in the Eleusis Museum. According to a document of the times, the "first class" antiquities were moved to the National Archaeological Museum, while the remaining findings were placed in crates and transported to an ancient reservoir that had been dug into the stone of a hill, and this was then sealed. The larger vessels and stone exhibits were collected in the Museum's western room, as it was the only one that had a cement roof, and was therefore considered safer. Once placed inside, the objects were covered by several layers of earth. The larger items that were not easy to remove from their pedestals remained in place, protected by sacks of earth.

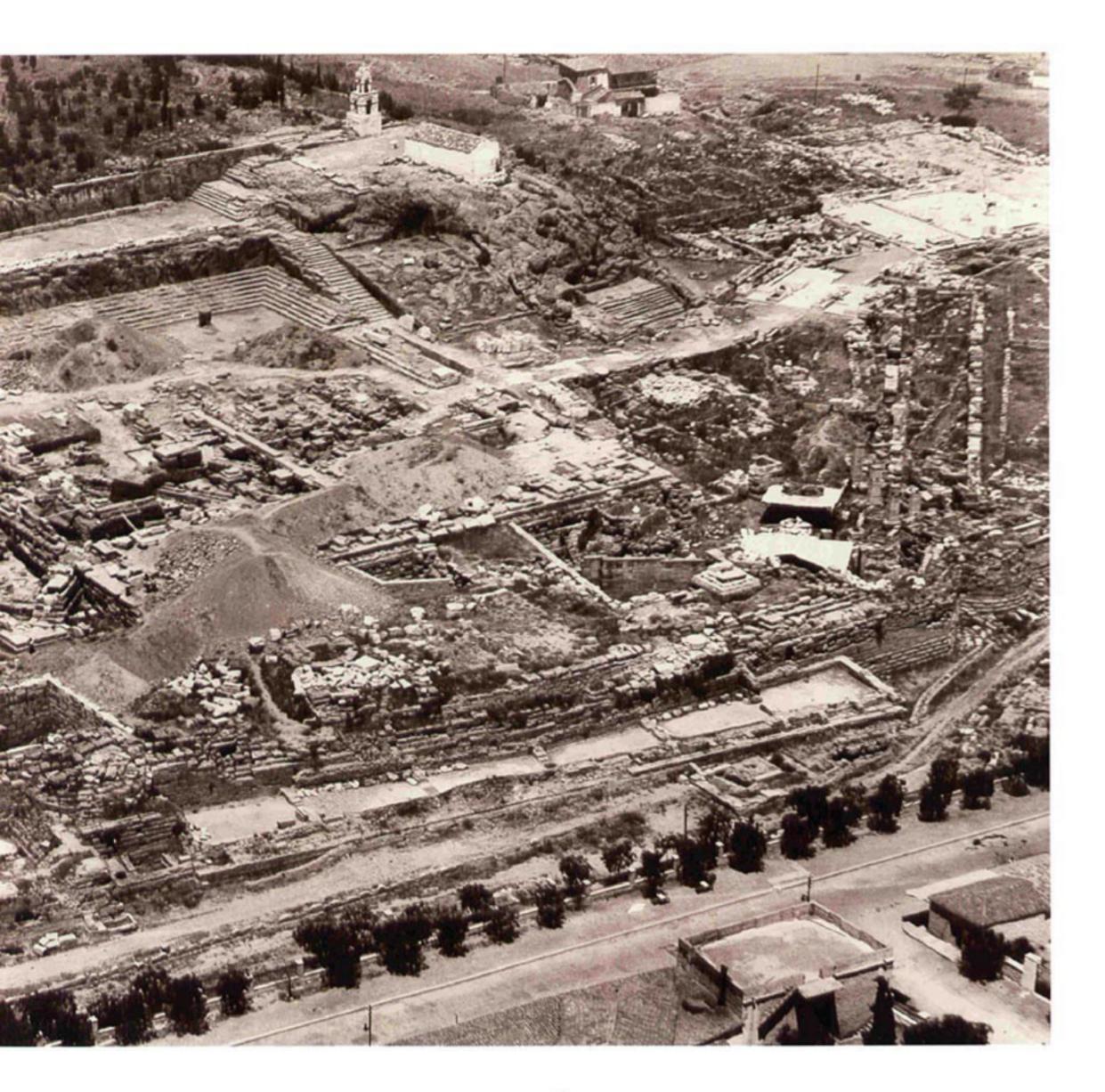
The Museum only began to be restored in 1947 when the earth was removed from the sixth room and the damage wrought by the war began to be repaired. That the antiquities were again exhibited was due to local Ephor, and later General Director of Antiquities, Ioannis Papademetriou. Since then, the building has been repaired periodically, the collection and has been augmented, and the exhibitions renewed. For example, all the pottery found in the post-war excavations of the Western Cemetery are now exhibited. In addition, two large new horizontal display cases were added in 1973 to display the plaster models of the Sanctuary made by John Travlos.

The strong earthquake that shook Athens, particularly western Attica, in the autumn of 1999 wrought notable damage to the old, yet sturdy structure. The Ministry of Culture acted rapidly, not only to repair the damage, but also to modernise the building: airconditioning was installed as was a new, central lighting system.

The exhibition of antiquities in the first five rooms has remained almost unchanged with only minor improvements, mainly enhancement of the information available to visitors. The exhibition in sixth room containing pottery was completely renewed and the old, wooden display cases were replaced by more

Aerial photograph of the archaeological site of Eleusis in the 1930s.

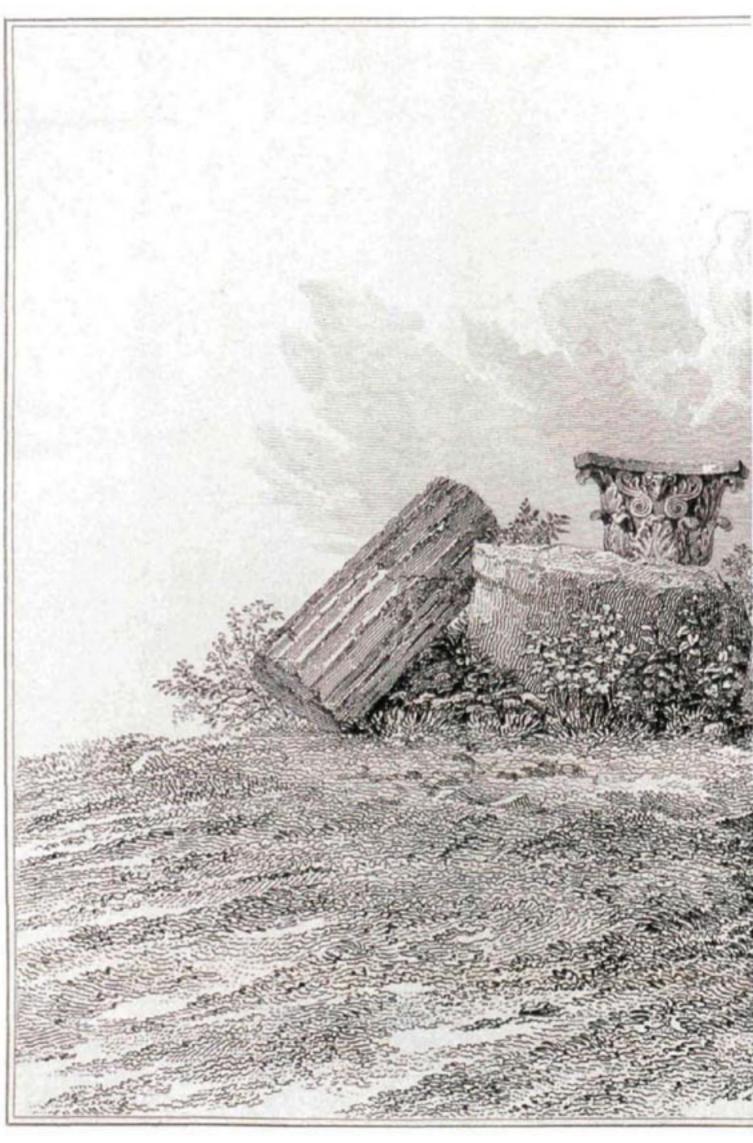




modern ones with fibre optic lighting. The exhibits were organised into two main units. The first consists of funerary offerings found in the city's cemeteries and are exhibited chronologically; the second consists of findings from the Sanctuary, presented in thematic units (for example, vessels, lamps, kernoi, figurines, and votive tablets). The accompanying drawings, texts and photographs that inform visitors testify to the Museum's educational nature. The next objective is to build a new Museum, worthy of the archaeological site's significance, that will conform to the museological demands of the 21st century. The findings not only from the older excavations, but also the ever increasing material from later excavations, and ones that are even now taking place, could then be shown to the their best advantage.

Our houses are built on top of other houses, straight, marble, and those on top of others, and a statue occasionally touches its hand gently on your shoulder

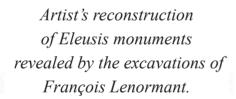
Yannis Ritsos

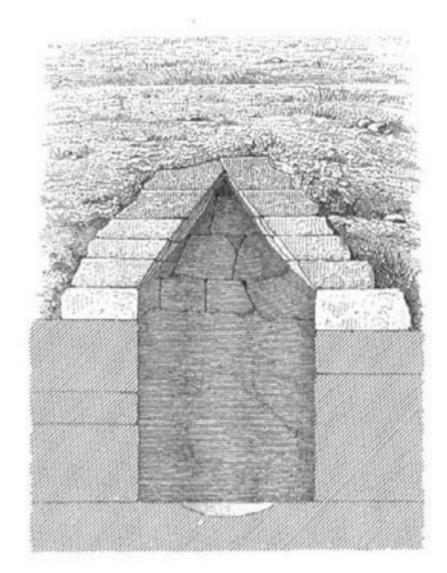


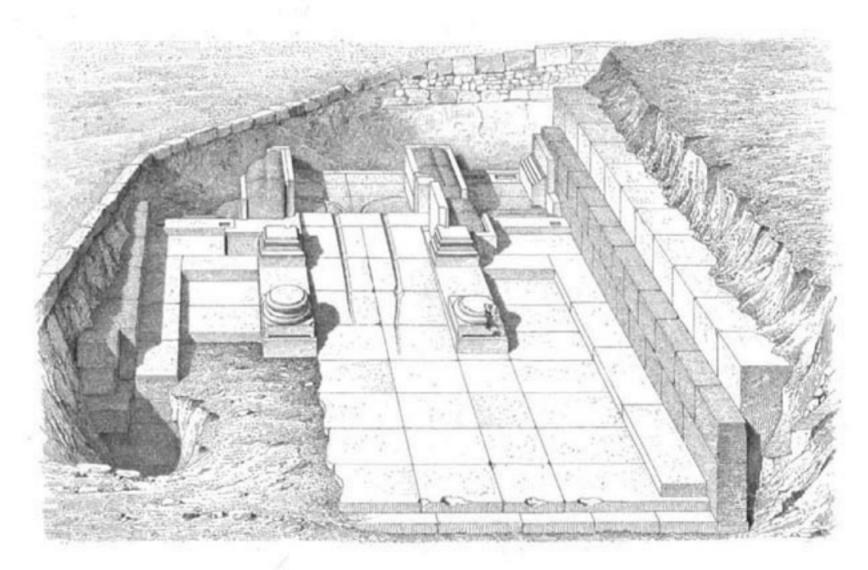
Post-Byzantine era church of Ayios Zacharias in Eleusis. Engraving from The Unedited Antiquities of Attica (1817) published by the Society of Dilettanti.

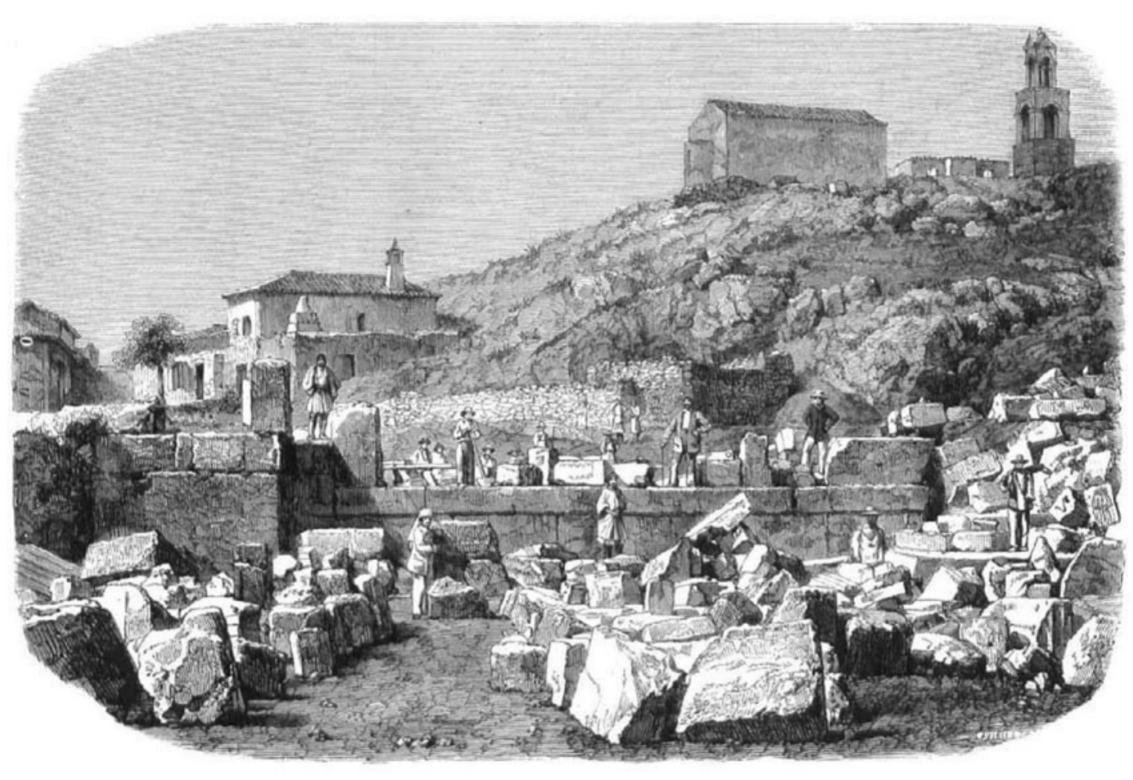




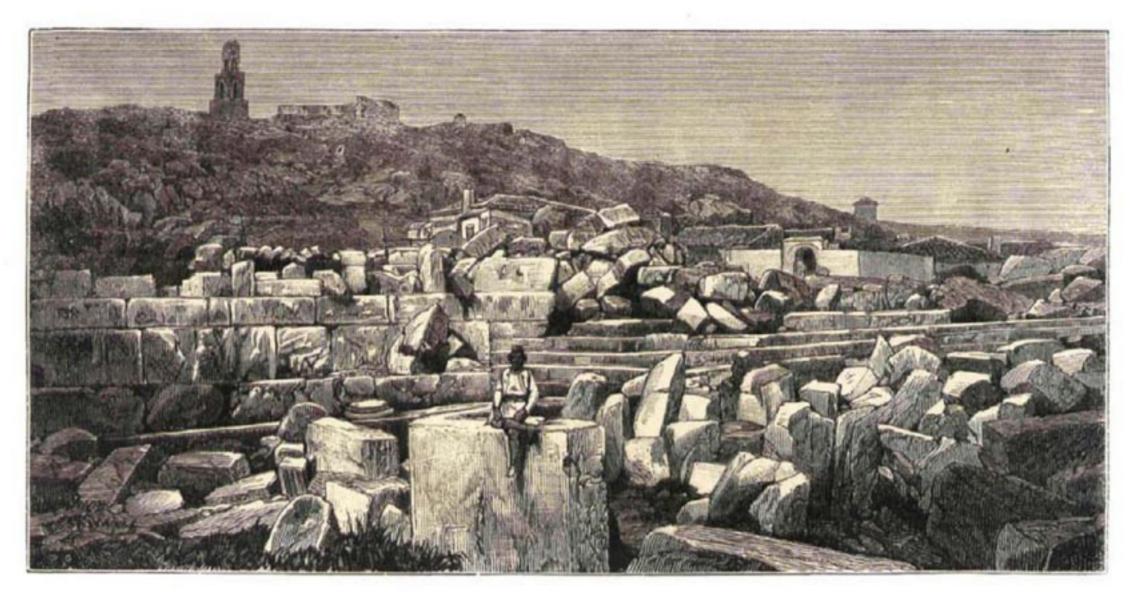








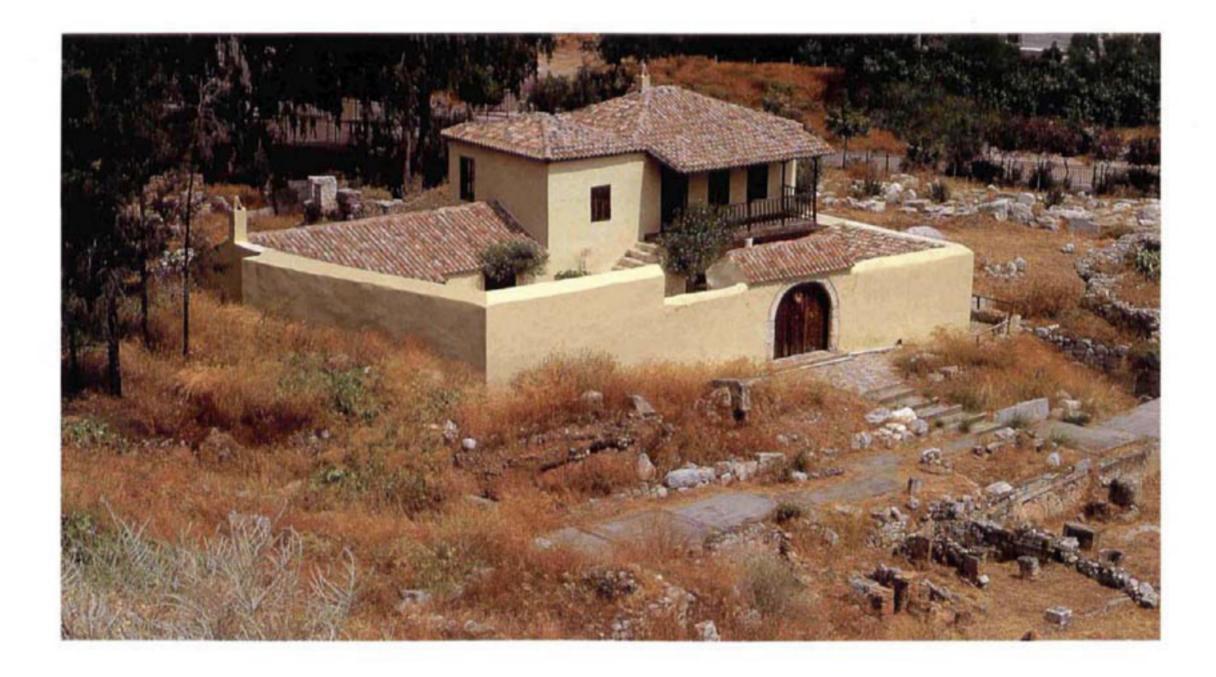
View of François Lenormant's excavations in Eleusis, 19th century engraving.



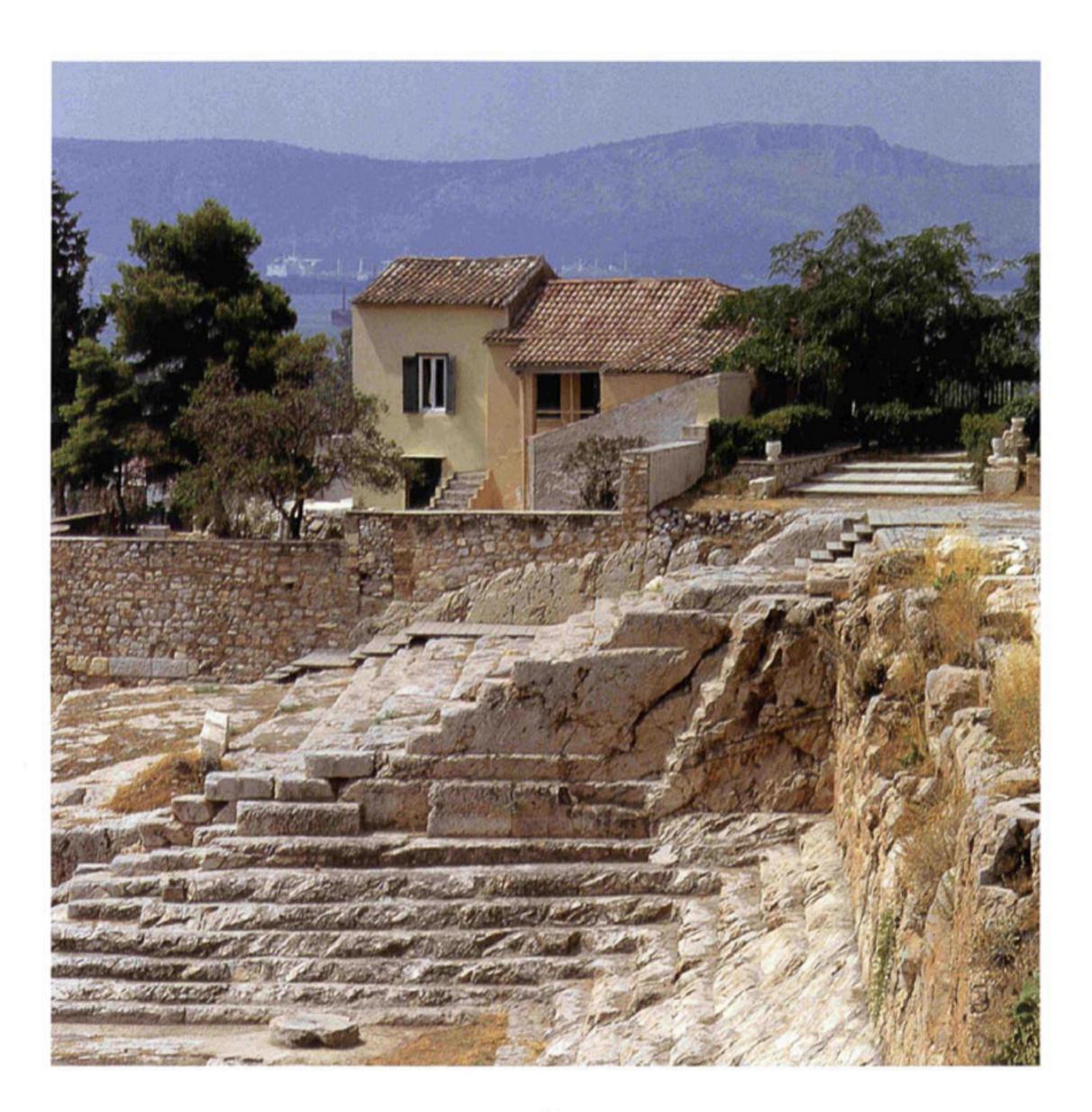
View of the Greater Propylaea before the excavations, 19th century engraving.

> View of the west side of the Telesterion; in the background is a village house and the Museum. Stereoscopic photograph, pre-1907.

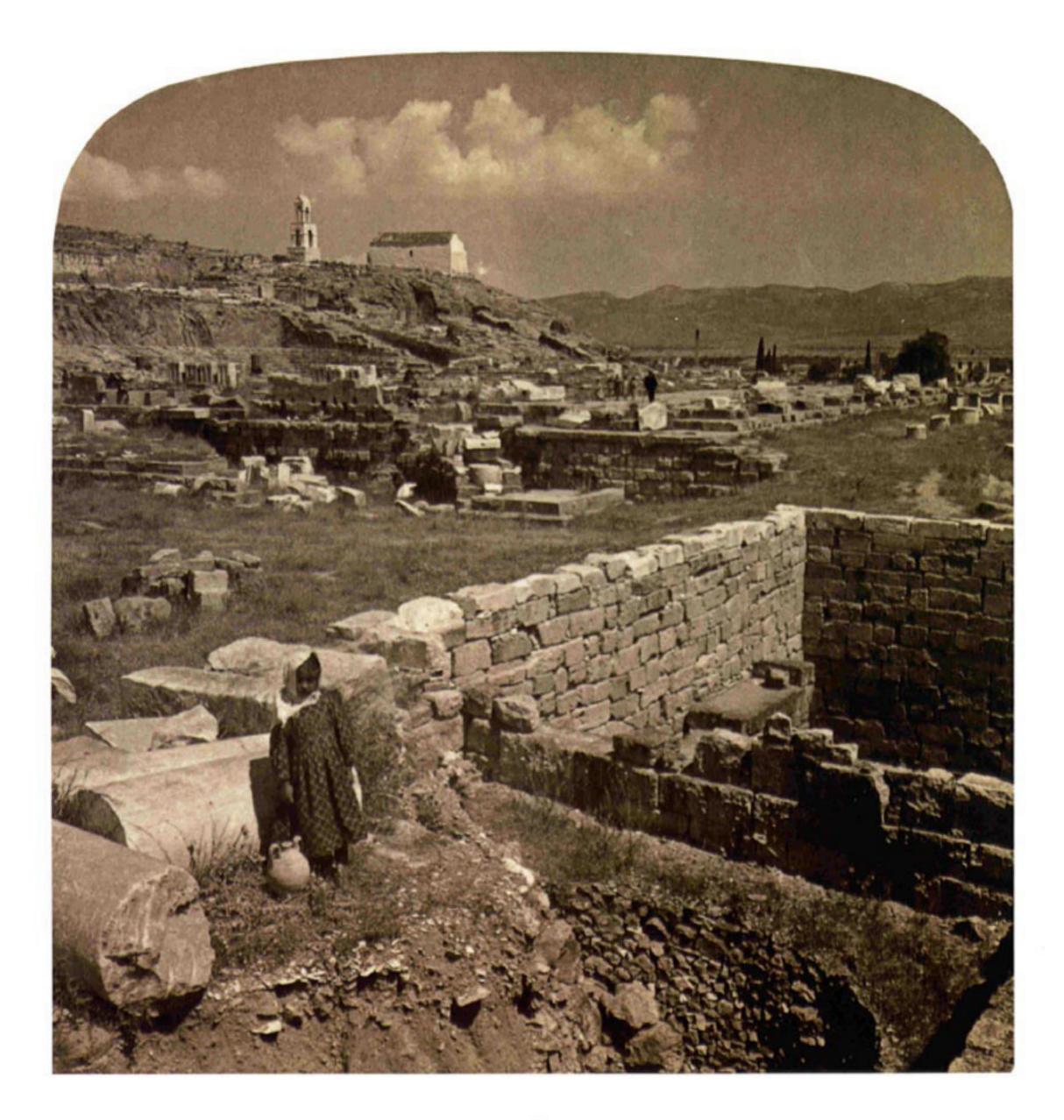


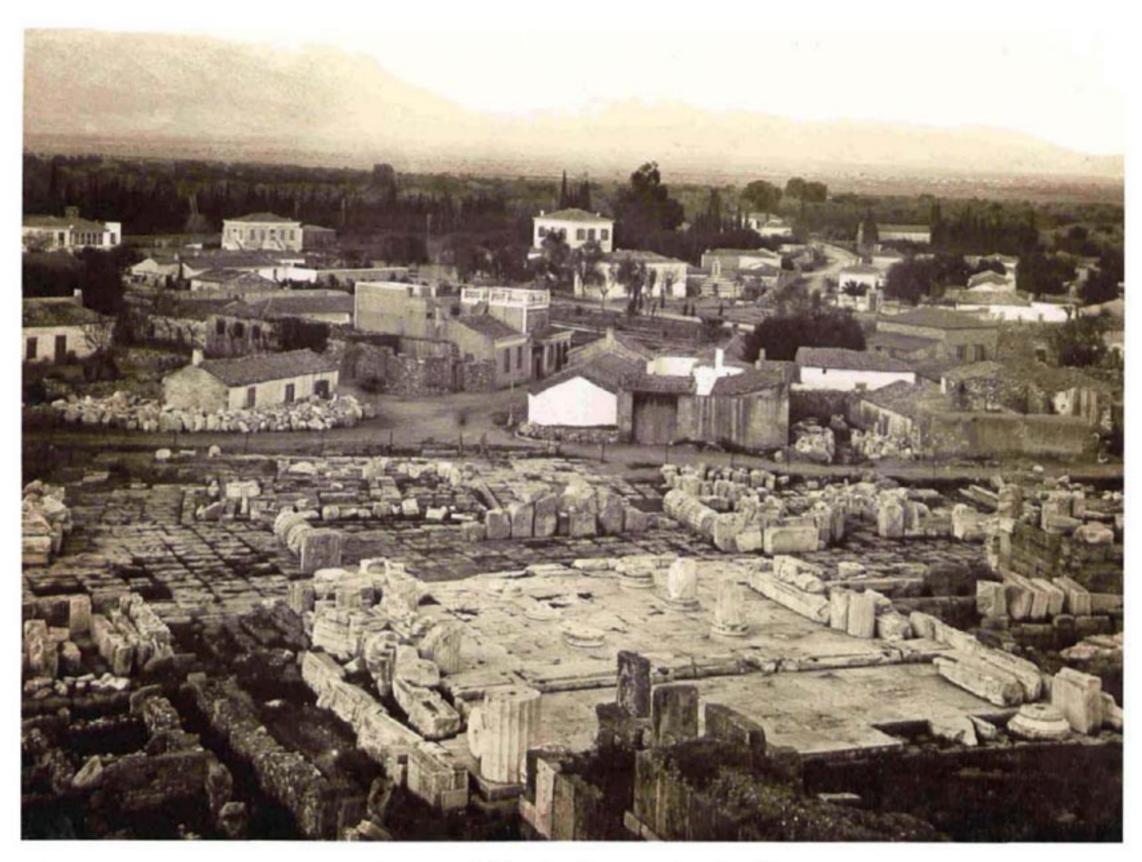


The two surviving houses of the old village of Eleusis. Restored, it is now used as an auxiliary building for the Museum.





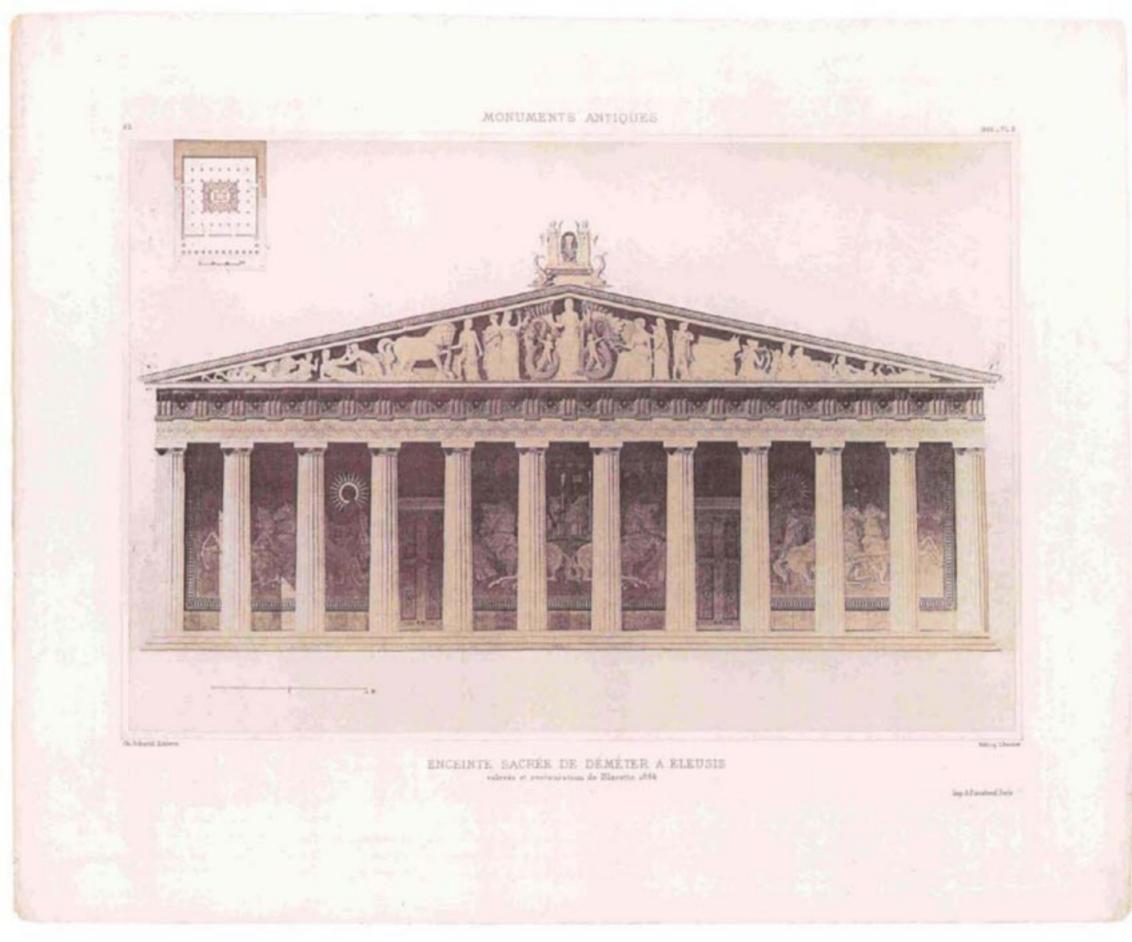




View of the Greater Propylaea and the Roman Courtyard. Photograph taken before 1910.



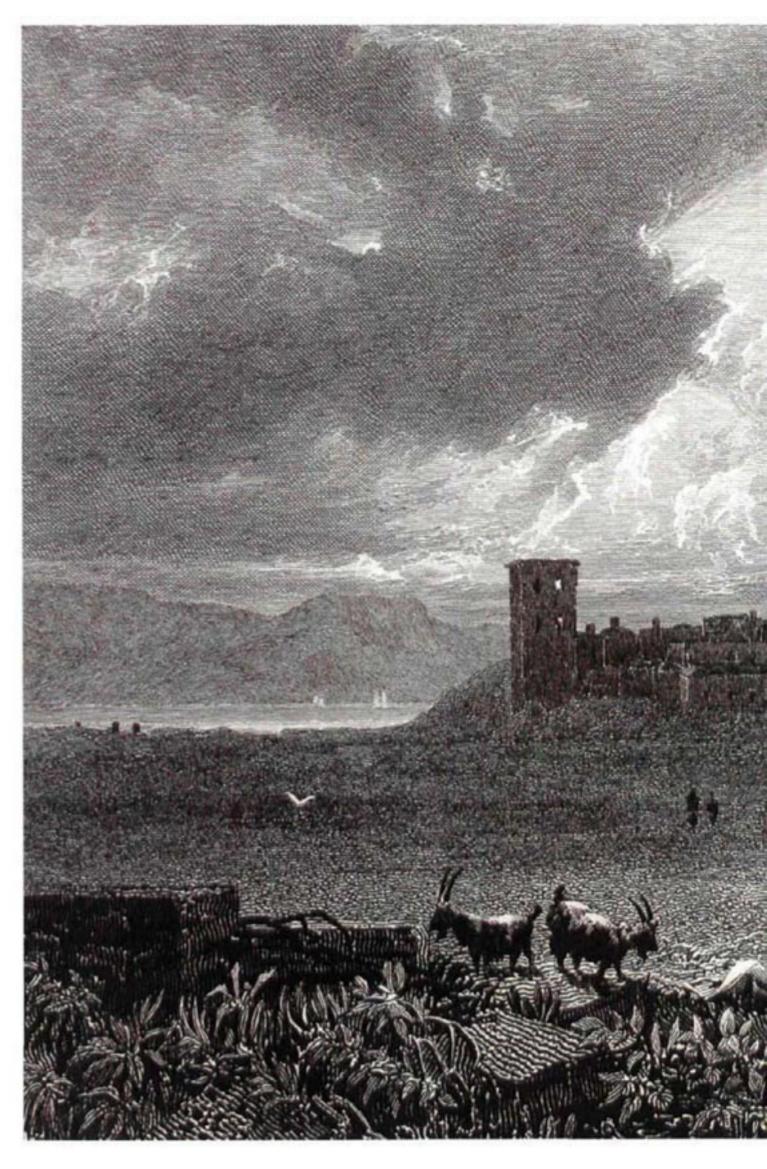
View of the eastern side of the Telesterion and the Stoa of Philon. Photograph by Konstantinos Athanasiou circa 1880.



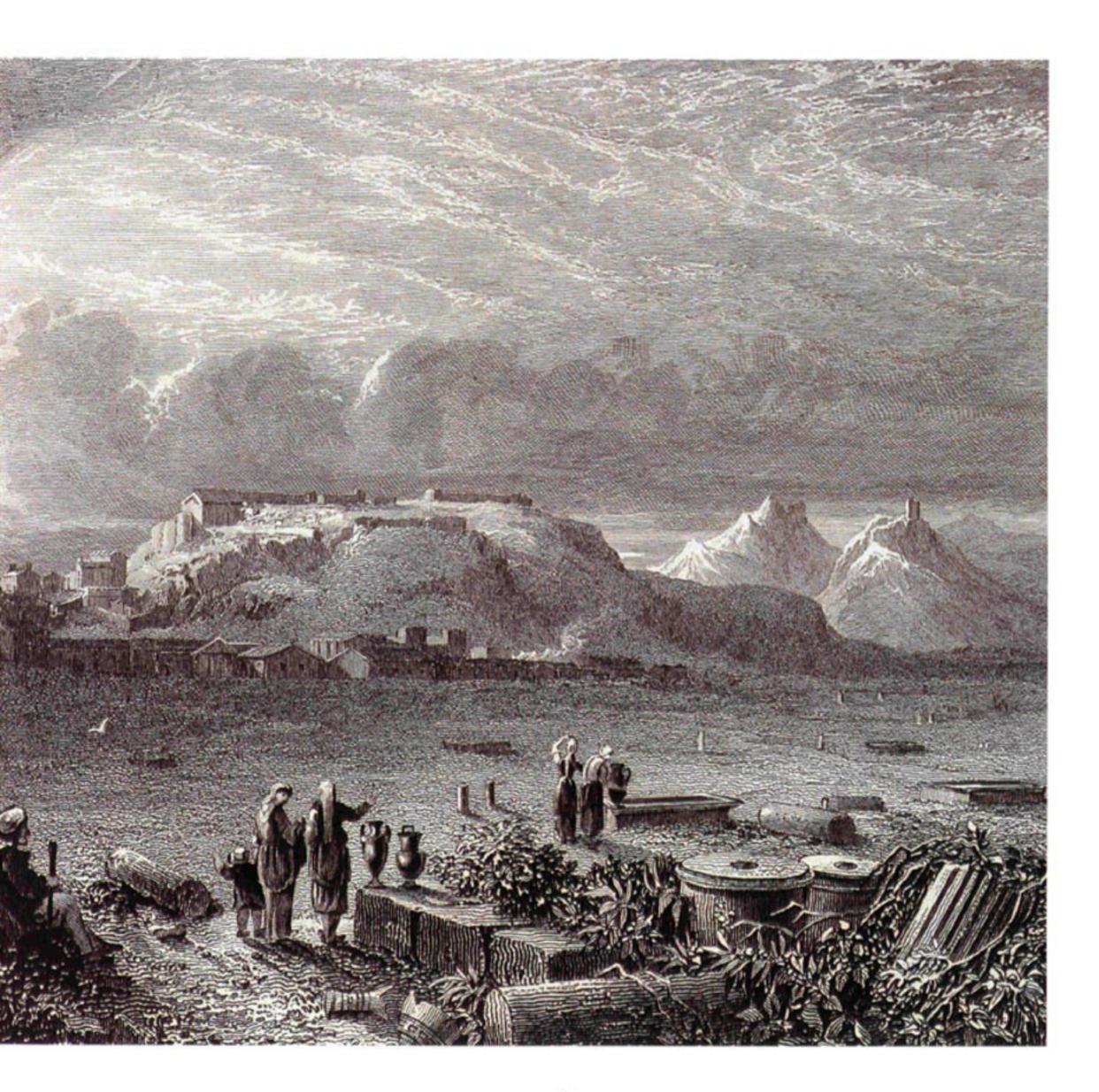
Artist's reconstruction of the façade of the Telesterion; 1884 engraving.

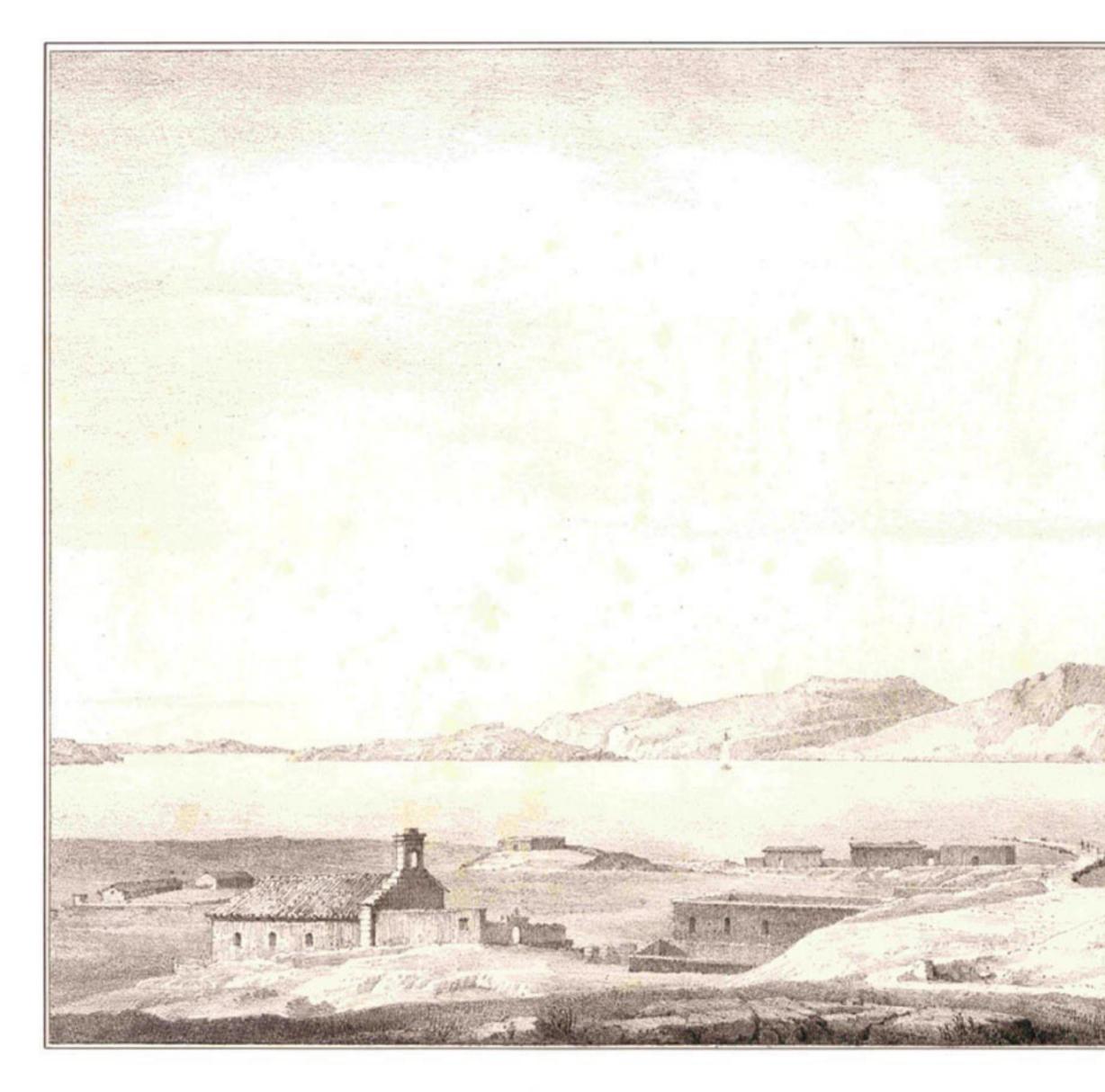


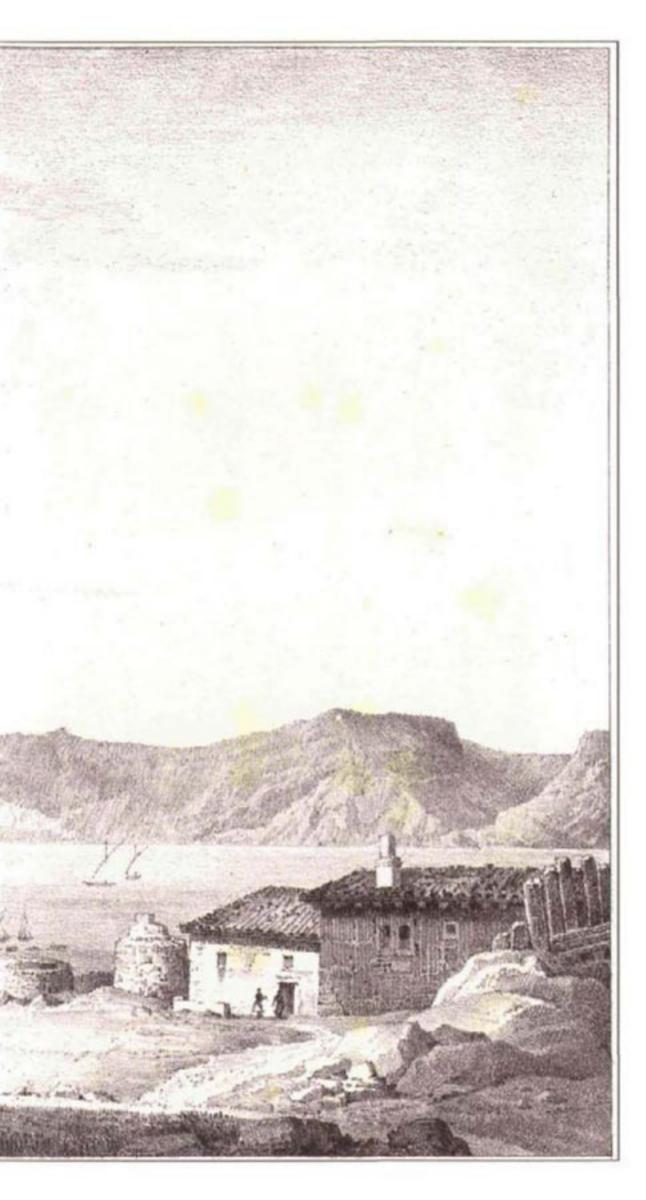
Artist's reconstruction of the Lesser Propylaea; 1878 engraving.



General view of Eleusis. Engraving by William Miller, 19th century.



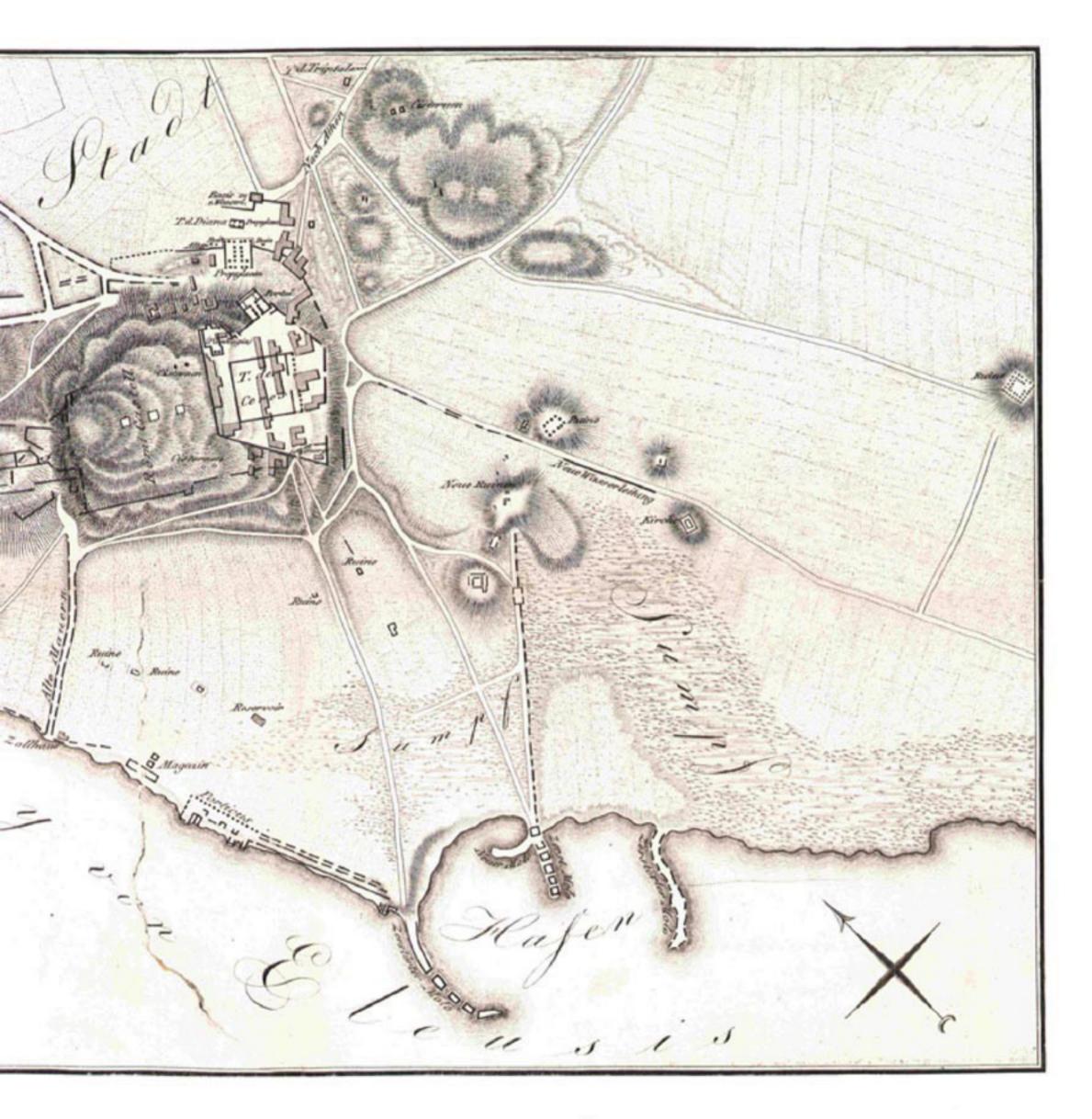




The port of Eleusis seen from the hill of the acropolis; Salamis is in the background. 19th century lithograph.



Map of Eleusis, 19th century.





TO IEPO KAI TA MNHMEIA TOY



THE SANCTUARY AND ITS MONUMENTS

A modern visitor's tour of the archaeological site of Eleusis begins exactly were a postulant would begin his or her pilgrimage in antiquity. It begins from the square where all the roads leading to the Sanctuary led. During the Roman period, a stone paved courtyard was built, surrounded by porticos and apses. The Sacred Way, the road on which the procession, or pompe, accompanying the sacred objects from Athens to Eleusis travelled, ended at the north east section of the court. Right next to where the Sacred Way ended, one can see the foundations of a construction with apses which scholars believe was used either to place statues, or served as a place for dignitaries and the priesthood to stand when receiving the procession.

The court was paved with large rectangular poros slabs, and the buildings surrounding it were designed and built in the 2nd century AD by the philhellene Roman emperors of the Antonines dynasty, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, and Marcus Aurelius. The whole concept, in a way a modification of the idea of a Roman forum, intended to create a space where initiates arriving from Athens for the Mysteries could assemble and be organised. On the eastern side of the courtyard was a small fountain house, a sumptuous construction in the Corinthian order, with eight troughs fed by a large reservoir. Its waters cooled the weary travellers, and its rich Corinthian décor added to the glory of the entrance to the Sanctuary.

The southeast and southwest corners of the court held two triumphal arches which were easy to study because of the large number of elements surviving from the superstructure. Study showed that they constituted faithful copies of Hadrian's Gate in Athens, near the Olympeion. Inscriptions



on both sides of the architrave stated TOIN Θ EOIN KAI T Ω AYTOKPATOPI OI ΠΑΝΕΛΛΗΝΕΣ, that is, "All the Greeks to the Goddesses and the Emperor".

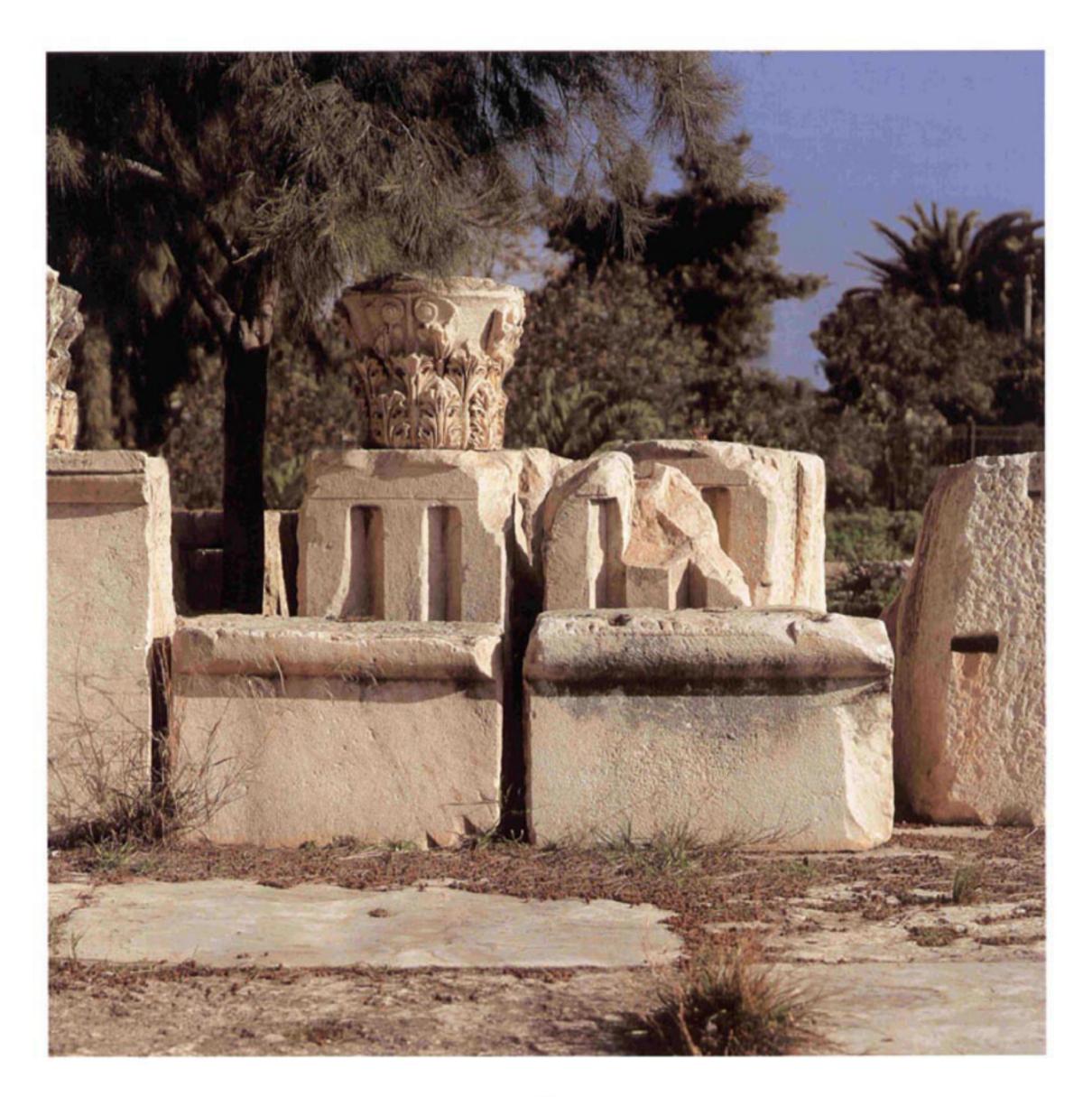
The goddesses referred to in the inscription in the dual number are undoubtedly Demeter and the Kore. The benefactors were the members of the Panhellenion founded in 131-2 AD under Hadrian, who was most likely the emperor being honoured. The surviving parts of the arches (Corinthian capitals, acroteria with acanthus leaves and the pediments with decorated cornices) have been assembled near the original positions to help visitors understand what they must have looked like. John Travlos began to restore the southeast arch and it was from this arch that an ancient road began which followed a course parallel to the eastern section of the peribolos, then went towards the sea, and ended up at the ancient port. The ancient road was lined with inns, taverns and baths serving the needs of the crowds of pilgrims that went to the Sanctuary in droves.

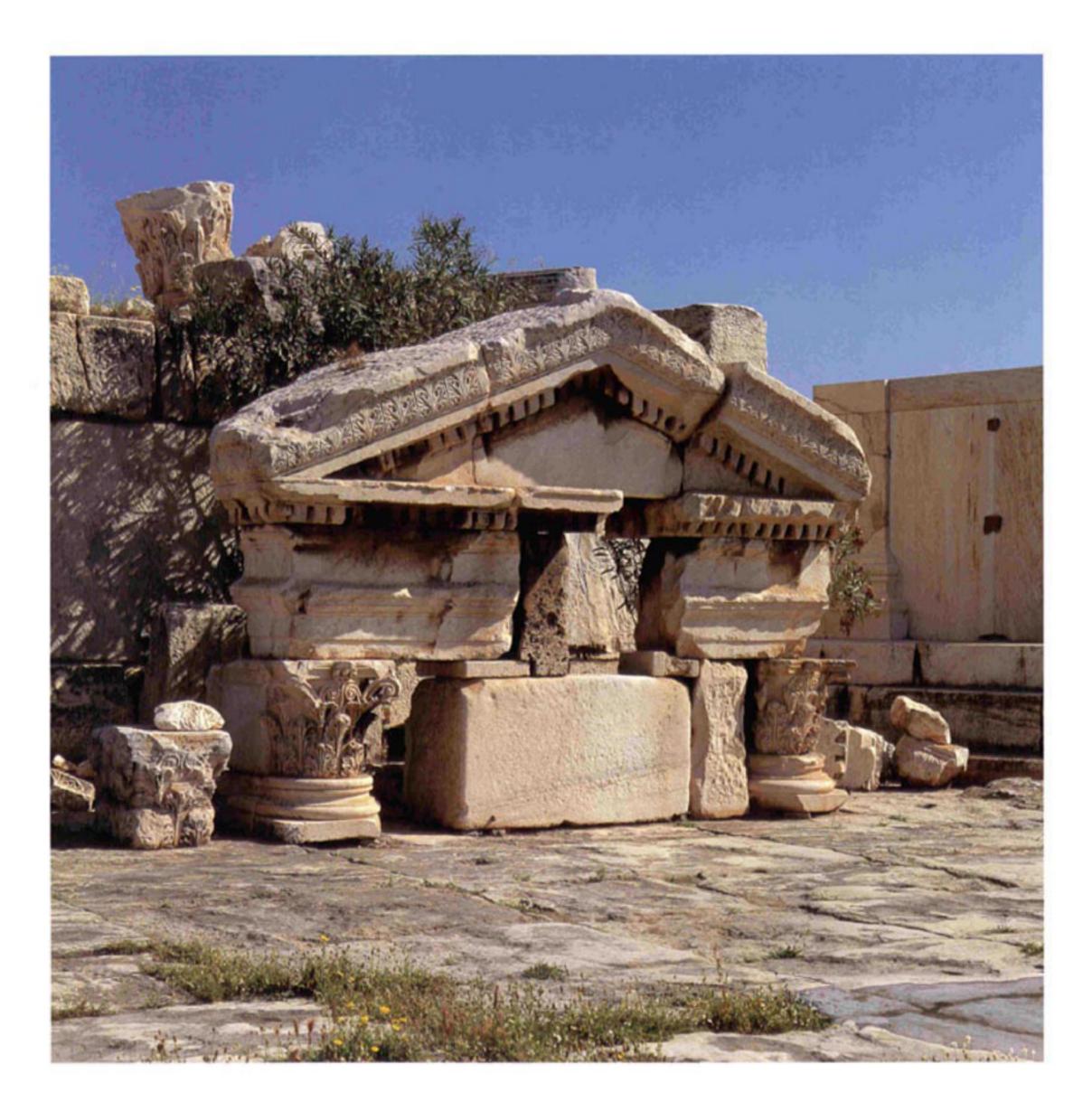
In the centre of the paved courtyard stands the crepidoma of a Doric amphiprostyle temple dating to Roman times. Pausanias, who visited Eleusis in 160 AD, wrote that the temple was dedicated to Father Poseidon and Artemis of the Portals. Unfortunately, he left no information on the monuments inside the Sanctuary peribolos because, as he wrote, a dream forbade him, as the uninitiated were not to be informed of what they were prevented from seeing: "My dream forbade the description of the things within the wall of the sanctuary, and the uninitiated are, of course, not permitted to learn that which they are prevented from seeing".

In front of the Roman temple lie the ruins of two altars dedicated to the two deities that were wor-

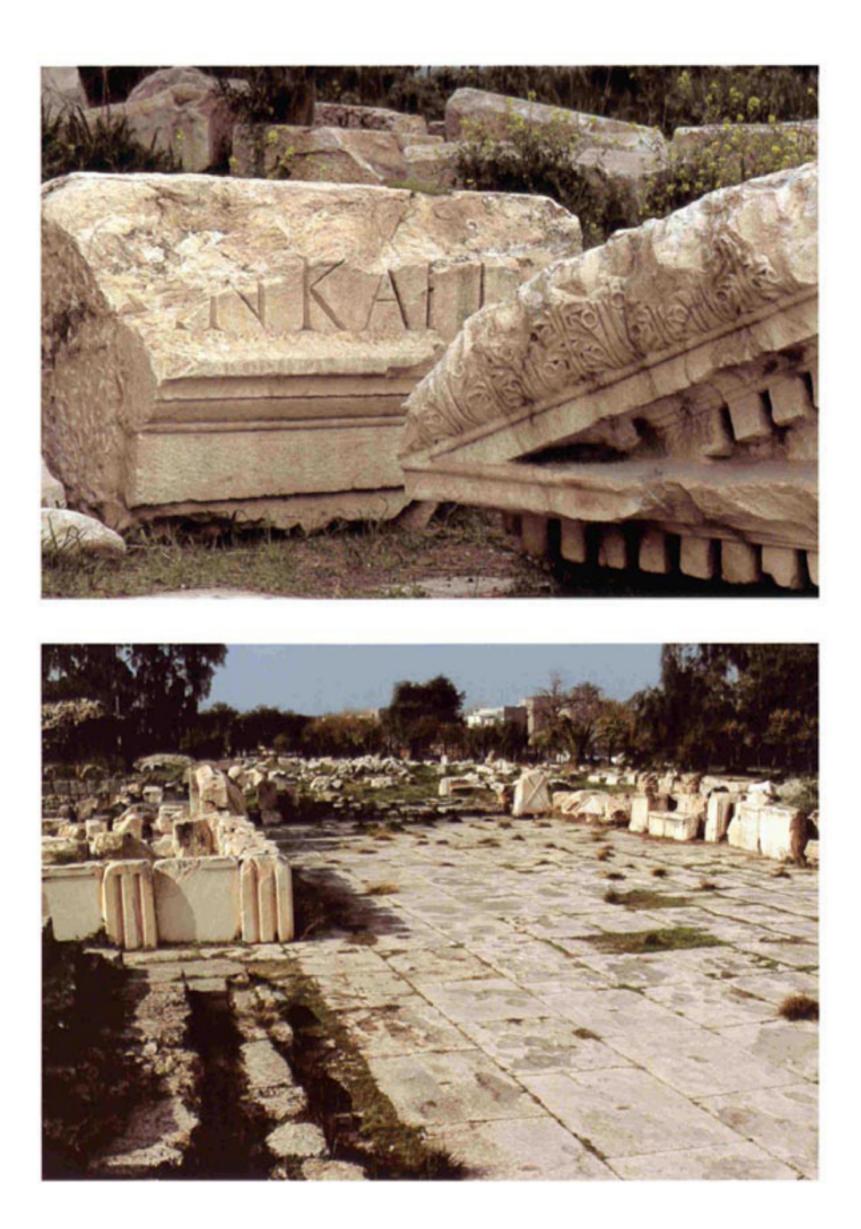


Marble architectural parts of triumphal arches from the east and west ends of the Roman Courtyard, 2nd century AD (pp. 80-85).



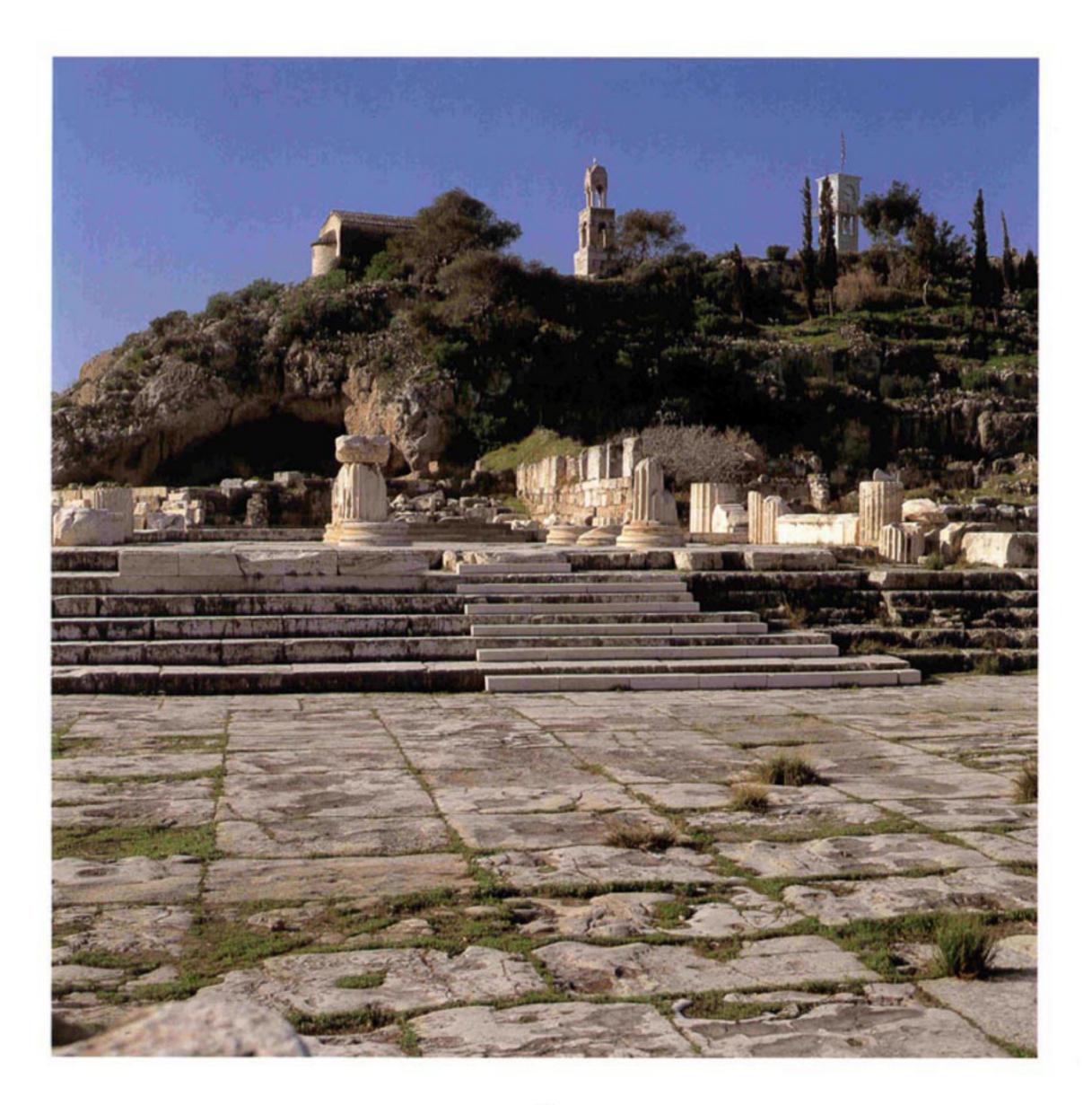


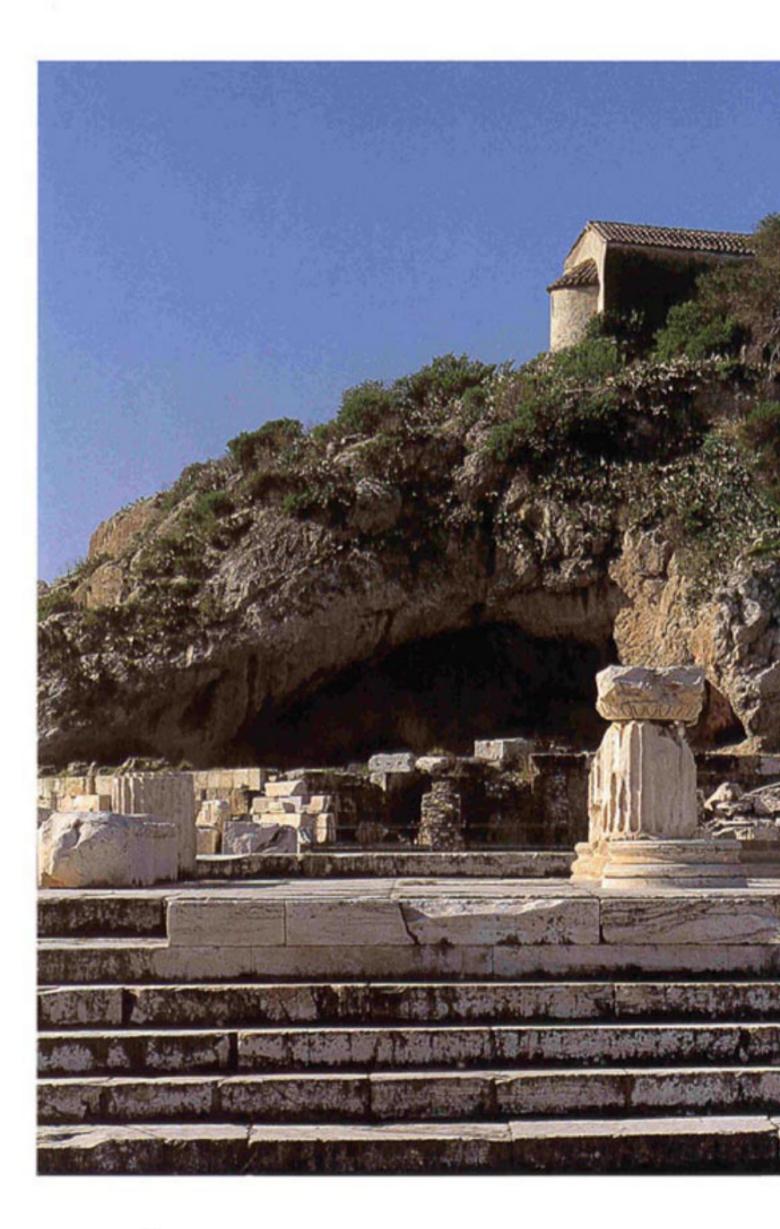


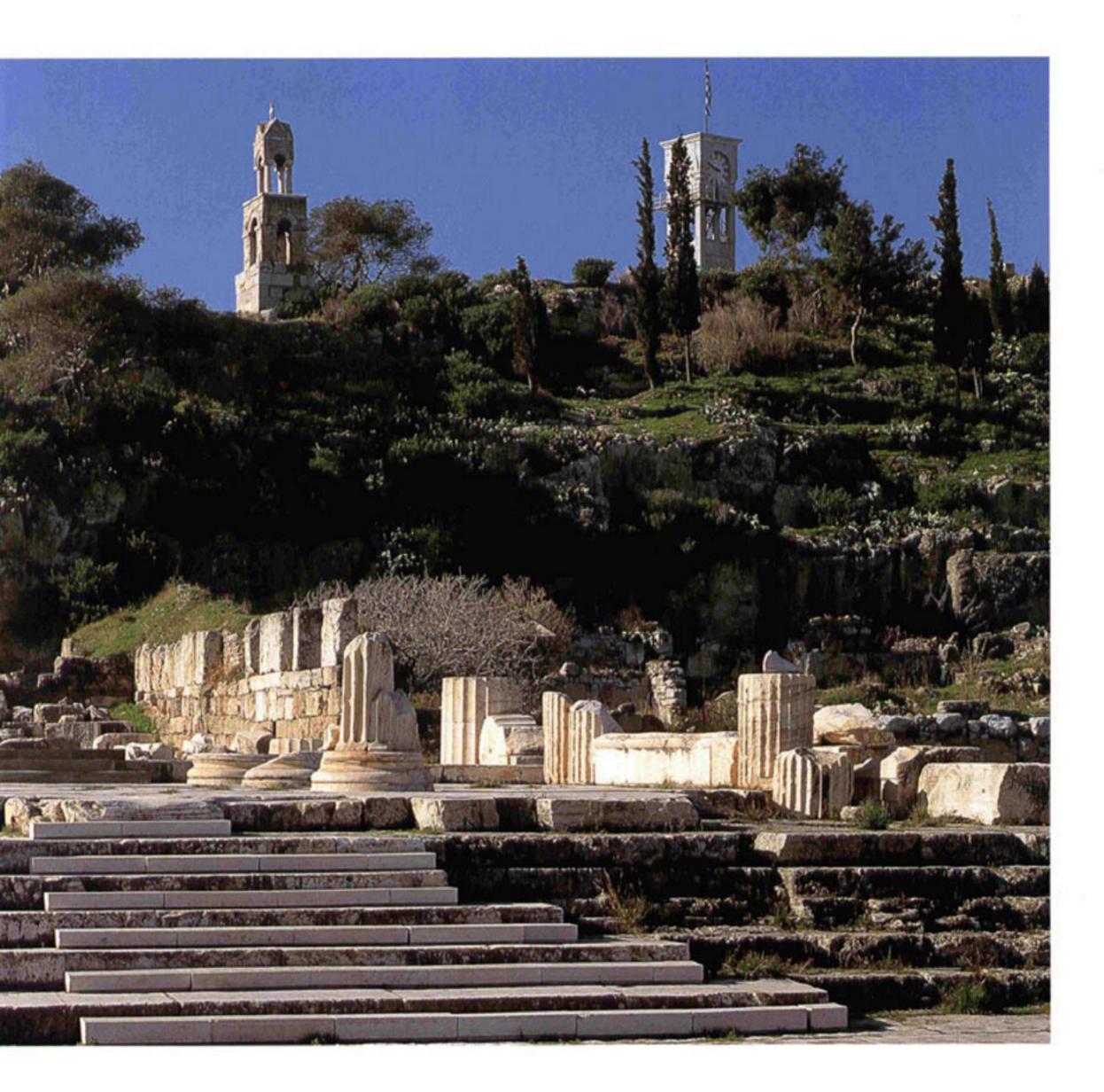


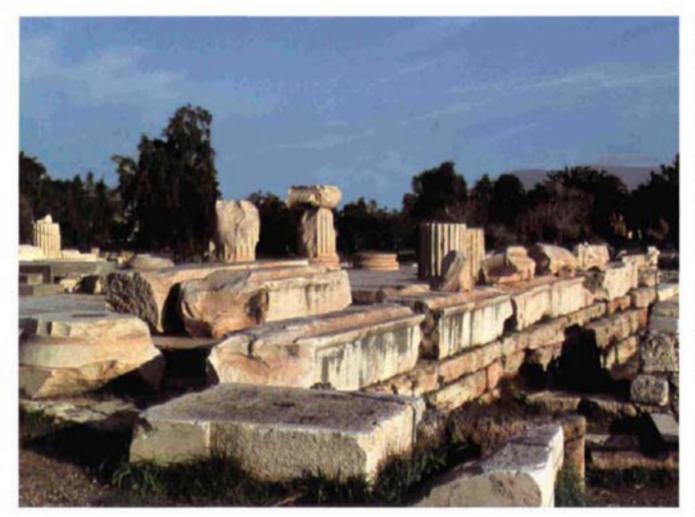


The Greater Propylaea, 2nd century AD.



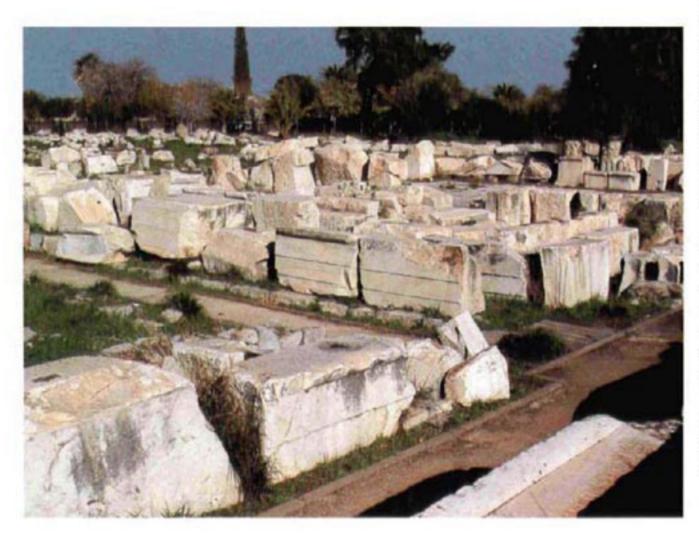






View of the Greater Propylaea.

Architectural parts from the Greater Propylaea.



shipped there. The remains of an altar to the north very possibly supported the statue of a 'god, perhaps Poseidon.

Northwest of the temple crepidoma lies the most interesting altar in the court: the eschara, or ground altar. It is an oblong, underground altar, surrounded by a low poros stone parapet. The walls of the underground altar were brick and punctured by vertical flues to feed the fire with air. Half way down, was a small, projecting shelf on which the metal eschara, or iron grill, rested. Sacrificial animals were burnt on the eschara.

Excavations under the Roman eschara, have brought to light even more ancient ruins. One is an Archaic wall, built in the polygonal style of the 6th century BC, and another is a segment of an arched construction dating to the 8th century BC.

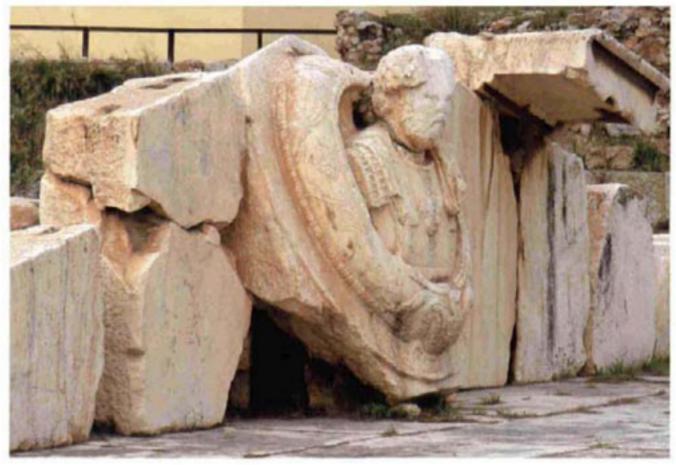
The south side of the court was closed off by the imposing Greater Propylaea, the monumental entry to the Sanctuary. The Greater Propylaea were built in the second century AD over an older pylon. The architect of this Roman construction used the Classic Athens Acropolis Propylaea as his model. The Roman architect copied only the central structure from Mnesicles' design, not the two side wings. Furthermore, in Eleusis, there is no elevation differential between the two sides of the construction; all of it lies on a level base that had six stairs on the northern side. Otherwise, the structure is a faithful copy, even to the architectural details. However, although the columns, their bases, the capitals, the panels of the ceiling and other parts of the superstructure are of the same type as the Athens Propylaea, the marble work and stone work are clearly inferior. The Greater Propylaea consisted of two porticos, an outer one facing the courtyard, and an inner one on the Sanctuary side. Both porticos had colonnades of Doric columns, of which only the southwest corner one has surviving drums in their initial places. Another two columns have been reconstituted and lie along the fencing of the archaeological site to the right of the entrance. Between the two Doric porticos of the

The Roman eschara, an altar for burnt offerings.



Propylaea, there was a wall with five doorways, of which only the thresholds have survived. The main, central doorway was wider than the others, but the threshold of the easternmost one is more worn, testifying to the fact that it was used more frequently. The wall with the doorways divided the building into two unequal parts, the longer of which was the northern one on the courtyard side. The roof structure of this larger northern space was supported by an inner portico of six, elegant Ionic columns. The bases of the columns were a part of the stone flooring, and thus were not stolen when construction materials were harvested from the site. Architectural parts from the building superstructure, triglyphs, metopes, and the pediment from the northern side, have been arranged on the stone-paved courtyard to the west of the Greater Propylaea. A bust of an emperor was carved in a shield in the tympanum (imago clipeata). The features of this emperor have been destroyed, making it difficult to identify him and thus date the building precisely, as he was clearly the benefactor. The view held by Ludwig Deubner, which has since become the most prevalent one, was that the emperor was Marcus Aurelius. His view was based on a carving on the shoulder strap of the bust of a 'giant', symbolising the Marcomani whom Marcus Aurelius defeated in AD 172-3. Christians later carved a large crude cross on the head of the Gorgon on his chest to exorcise the pagan spirits. Christian crosses were also carved on the steps of the crepidoma, and on

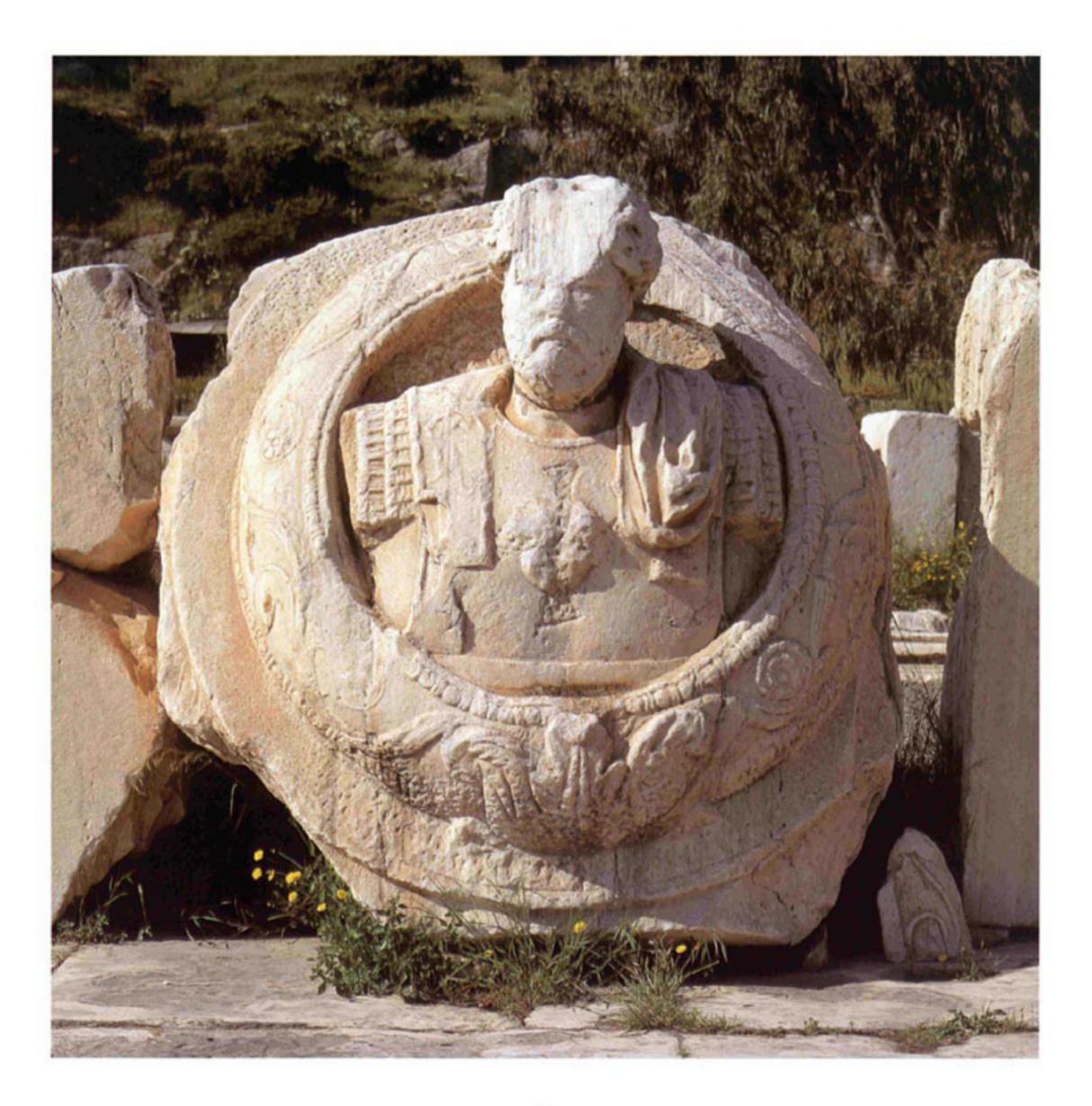
> *Graffiti carved into the threshold of the Greater Propylaea.*



Marble bust of the emperor Marcus Aurelius (imago clipeata) from the pediment of the Greater Propylaea.



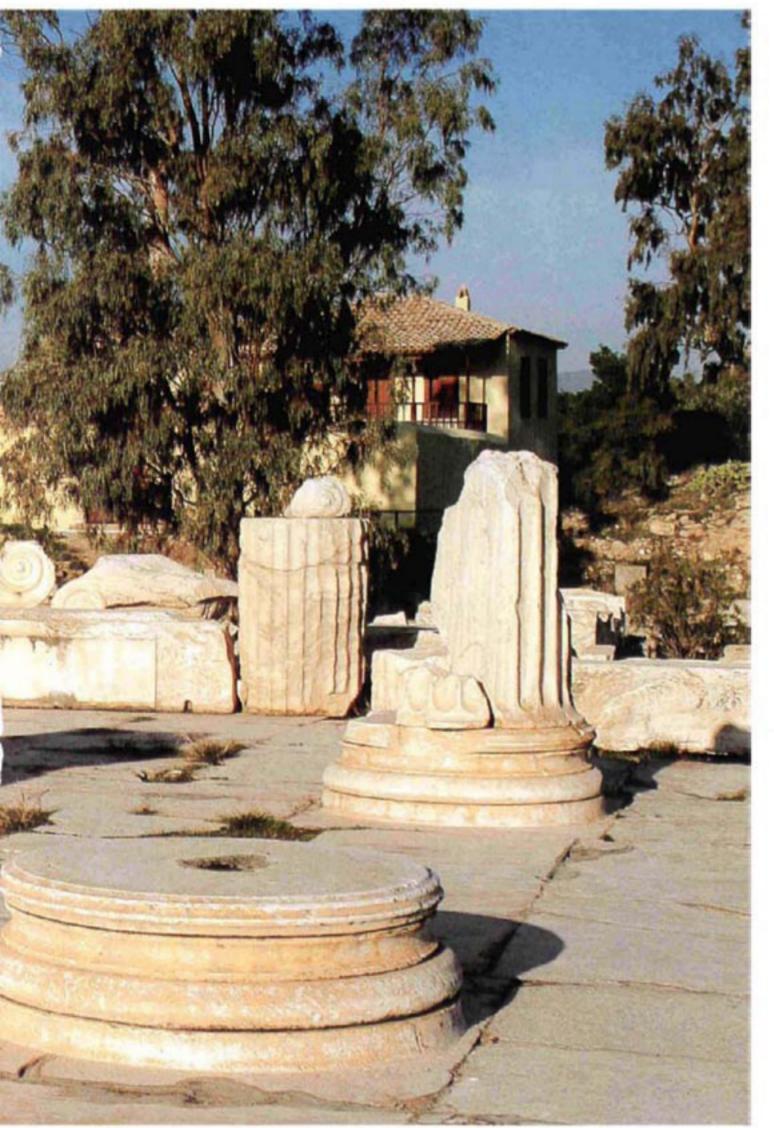
Doric columns from the Greater Propylaea (pp. 94, 95).











Entrance to the archaeological site, with a view of the Roman Courtyard, the temple of Artemis of the Portals and the Greater Propylaea (pp. 98-99).

The Greater Propylaea (*pp 100-101*).

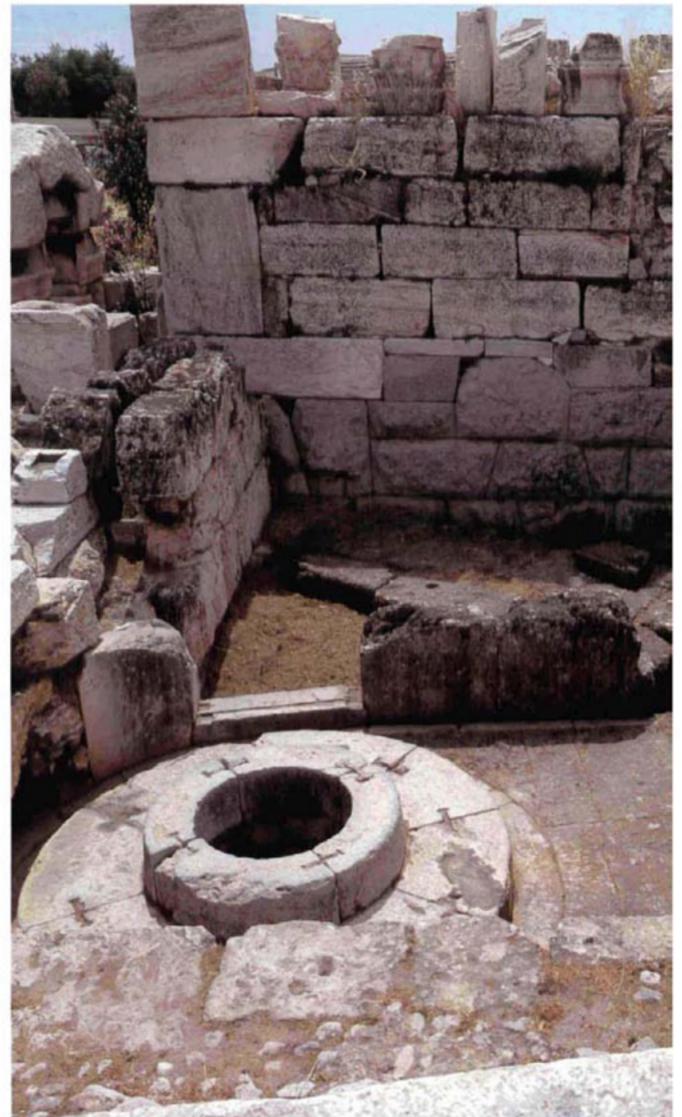
Ionic columns at the north end of the Greater Propylaea.











the paving of the Greater Propylaea near other graffiti carvings that have no evident meaning and might have been markers for games.

One of the most renowned and respected landmarks in the Sanctuary is to the left of the Propylaea, next to the northeast corner, approximately 1.35 metres below the level of the Roman court. It is the well next to which, according to Homer, Demeter sat to rest when she first reached Eleusis (ll. 98-100).

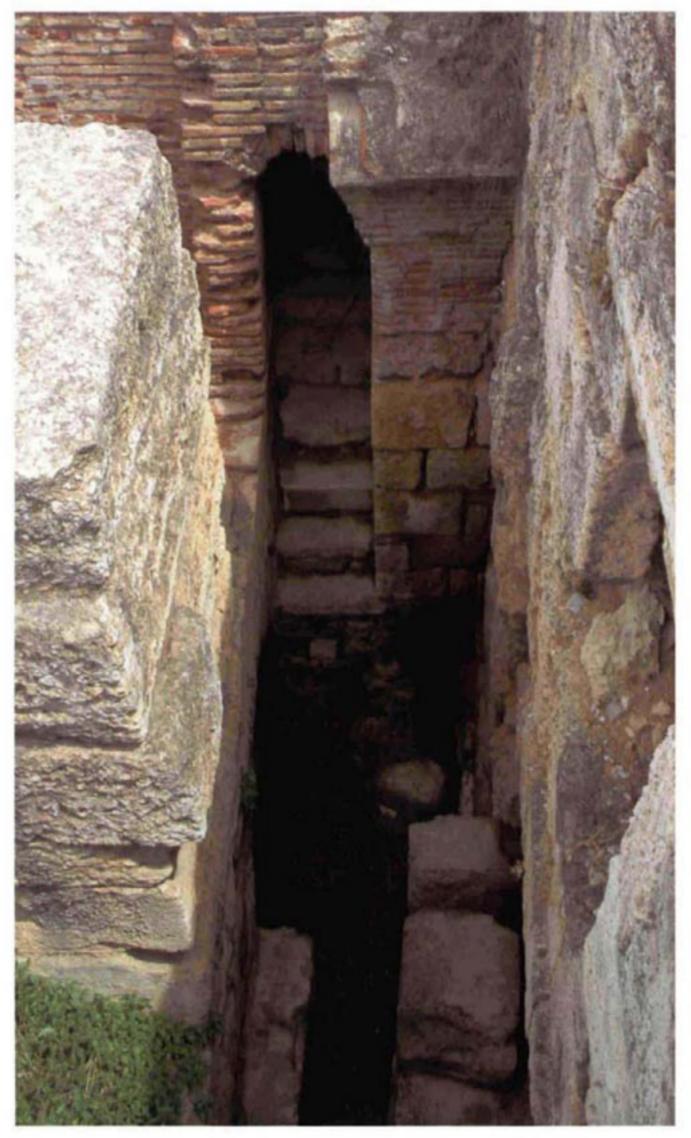
"... she sat near the wayside by the Maiden Well from which the women of the palace were used to draw water, in a shady place over which grew an olive shrub."

The name of the well is symbolic, as from antiquity until more recent times it was customary for girls to carry a home's water supply. The well was discovered in 1892 by Philios who wrote: "A well-built well was found, whose mouth, surrounded by concentric circles, brought to my mind at once the concept of the Kallichoron, that is, according to a correct reading of the word, the well that has good chorous ($\chi o po \dot{v} \varsigma$, i.e. dances), that is circles, which were intentionally built from the beginning around the well so as to help keep the circular shape [of the dance]".

Scholars are divided as to whether the Maiden's Well and Kallichoron Well mentioned in the Hymn refer to the same well, or to two different ones, but this debate need not concern us further. The mouth of the well comprises two concentric circles made of large Eleusinian stone blocks that are connected with junctions made of lead. The well's internal walls are lined in the style of Lesbos polygonal masonry, a style characteristic of the Archaic period. The ground around the well is paved with poros stone, and it was enclosed by a wall that had three entrances. Because Roman constructions were built all over the peribolos, today only the eastern section of the well can be seen. Most scholars date the construction of the Kallichoron to the latter half of the 6th century BC, that is, to the time of Peisistratos, while the wall is dated to the 4th century BC. A recent study dated the entire construction to the

The Kallichoron Well.





5th century BC.

To the east and west of the Greater Propylaea, inside the peribolos walls, are auxiliary buildings, accommodations for the priesthood and administrative buildings. An inscription bearing a report by Sanctuary stewards refers to the house of the priestess, the bakery, cistern, the dwelling of the dadouchos (torch-bearer), the vestiary and the house of the priests. The location many of these buildings has not been ascertained precisely. The House of the Kerykes and the Prytaneion were identified to the west, at the foot of the hill. As well as the buildings serving the Sanctuary's administrative needs and accommodation for the priesthood, a cistern dating to Roman years and a siros, or granary, were located to the east of the Propylaea.

The cistern, which is located next to the southeast corner of the Propylaea, is large and has underground arched areas plastered with waterproof kourasani, a traditional building material made of ground tiles and lime. A narrow stone stairway leads to this area. In the upper part of the reservoir, where the entrance is situated, there are traces of marble revetments. To the south of the reservoir there is a very long structure (approximately 60 x 6 metres) that was used as a granary to store the grains donated by various cities to the Sanctuary as a tithe. This building dates to Roman times, but behind the southern, narrow side, there is a subterranean hypostyle granary

The underground Roman reservoir.













Periclean siroi, or granaries (5th century BC).

Peisistratian siroi, or granaries (6th century BC).



Roman siroi.

Roman siroi.



dating to Periclean times. Also, to the west of the Lesser Propylaea, there is a wall of exceptional masonry dating to the 6th century BC, the Peisistratian period. This ancient rectangular granary continues to the west, underneath the 3rd century defensive wall that was built using a variety of building materials.

Continuing on the same path, the visitor passes through the Lesser Propylaea, an elegant 1st century BC building constructed where once the northern pylon of the Peisistratian peribolos had stood previously. According to the Latin inscription on the epistyle, Claudius Appius Pulcher dedicated the Propylaea to Demeter and Persephone. He was a historical figure who lived in the 1st century BC and held various titles and offices (magistrate, consul, imperator, governor of Cilicia). Pompey made him governor of Greece (proconsul of Achaea). He was a friend of Cicero, and indeed in a letter to Atticus the great Roman orator mentioned the construction of the Propylaea as part of the proconsul's interest in Greek sacred sites. Claudius Appius Pulcher died suddenly in Euboea in 48 BC, and the Propylaea were completed by his two nephews.

The building consists of two prostoa, columned porticos, an inner one on the side of the Telesterion, and an outer, north one. The two are separated by a transverse wall with a large aperture in the middle to allow communication between the Sanctuary and outside. A two-leaf door in the aperture opened towards the interior, as can be seen by the semi-circular grooves in the stone paving. Two more ruts, parallel to each other, separated by a space of 1.40 metres, have been inscribed in the threshold and the paving. These have caused much discussion, as some argue that they are wheel marks from chariots, while others, who believe it inconceivable for chariots to have been permitted to enter the Sanctuary, argue that they must have been runnels for the rain water that came down the slope of the hill.

The central doorway of the Lesser Propylaea was crowned by a pediment supported on the outside by the door's pillars and by two columns with

The Lesser Propylaea, 1st century AD.

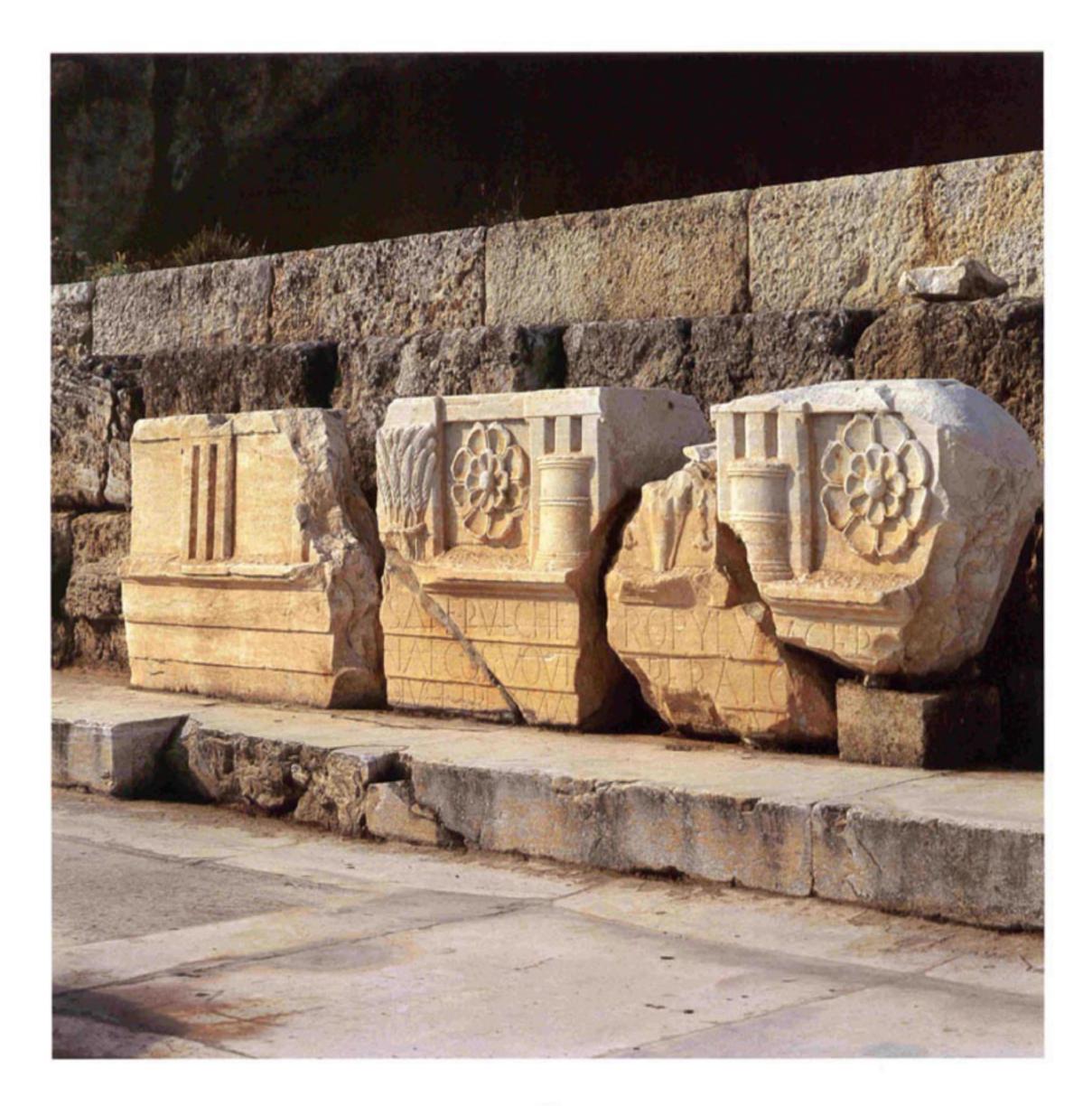






Intricate capital from the Lesser Propylaea, 1st century AD.





ornate capitals. These capitals, and the capitals of the pillars, are singular: a sort of Roman baroque, with a plethora of decorative details. The capitals are crowned with hexagonal abacuses and the lower parts bear the typical adornment of the Corinthian order, acanthus leaves. The upper parts bear fantastical winged lions and bulls amidst riotous floral decorations.

The entablature is in the same style, bearing elements from both the Doric and the Ionian orders. The epistyle is Ionic, with the three characteristic horizontal zones on which Claudius Appius Pulcher's dedicatory inscription appears. The frieze, on the other hand, is in the Doric order, with triglyphs and metopes that bear low relief rosettes, sheaves of wheat, bucrania and kistes. The ornamentation is excessive, covering not only the metopes, but also the triglyphs, unheard of in Greek architecture, which left triglyphs bare to emphasise their structural function.

The inner portico of the Lesser Propylaea is completely different in décor. It was covered by a level coffered ceiling, supported by two colossal caryatids, which in architecture jargon are the carved female figures used instead of columns to support roofs and ceilings; male figures are called telamones.

Originally, two fountains, whose water ran in to shallow rectangular basins, were carved into the floor, on either side of the central door, next to each caryatid on the transverse wall. Later, the fountains were removed, and two narrow side entrances were cut in their place. This probably occurred in the 2nd century AD, when the Greater Propylaea were built, at which time more doorways were needed to echo the Antonine structure. The bases of the caryatids are in situ on the floor of the inner portico. The upper parts of the statues have survived, but there are no surviving parts of the lower bodies. One caryatid was not buried under earth, and was still visible at the time of Ottoman rule. According to witness testimonies [see e.g. N. Polites, Παραδόσεις (Traditions)], the statue became a cult object for the inhabitants of the small village that had developed in

Segment of the Lesser Propylaea superstructure.







The Eleusis Museum exhibits the second caryatid, missing limbs, but a wonderful example of Greek sculptors' skills as late as the 1st century BC, and of the continuing influence of Classical ideals. The caryatid depicts a young woman with classicizing features. On her head she bears the sacred kiste, the cylindrical container bearing the cult's sacred objects. This indicates that the caryatids were representations of priestesses of the cult of Demeter, but another, poorly argued, view holds that they may possibly depict the daughters of Claudius Appius Pulcher. The kiste is decorated with cult symbols in relief: sheaves of wheat, bacchoi and, in the centre, a kernos, the most characteristic vessel in the cult of Demeter. The caryatid's earrings are decorated with rosettes. The maiden wears a tunic belted crosswise across the breast with straps that are held together with a Gorgoneion buckle, an apotropaic symbol commonly used in buildings to ward off evil spirits.

10 10 10 11

those dark times on the ruins of the glorious past. Unfortunately, Edward D. Clark, an English traveller on his Grand Tour, carried away one of the caryatids which is today exhibited in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge.

To the right of the Lesser Propylaea rises the rock of the acropolis, which at that point forms a cave that might possibly have been the nucleus of the ancient cult. It was believed that the cave was a channel of communication between the Upper and Lower worlds, and that Persephone returned to the Upper world from this cave.

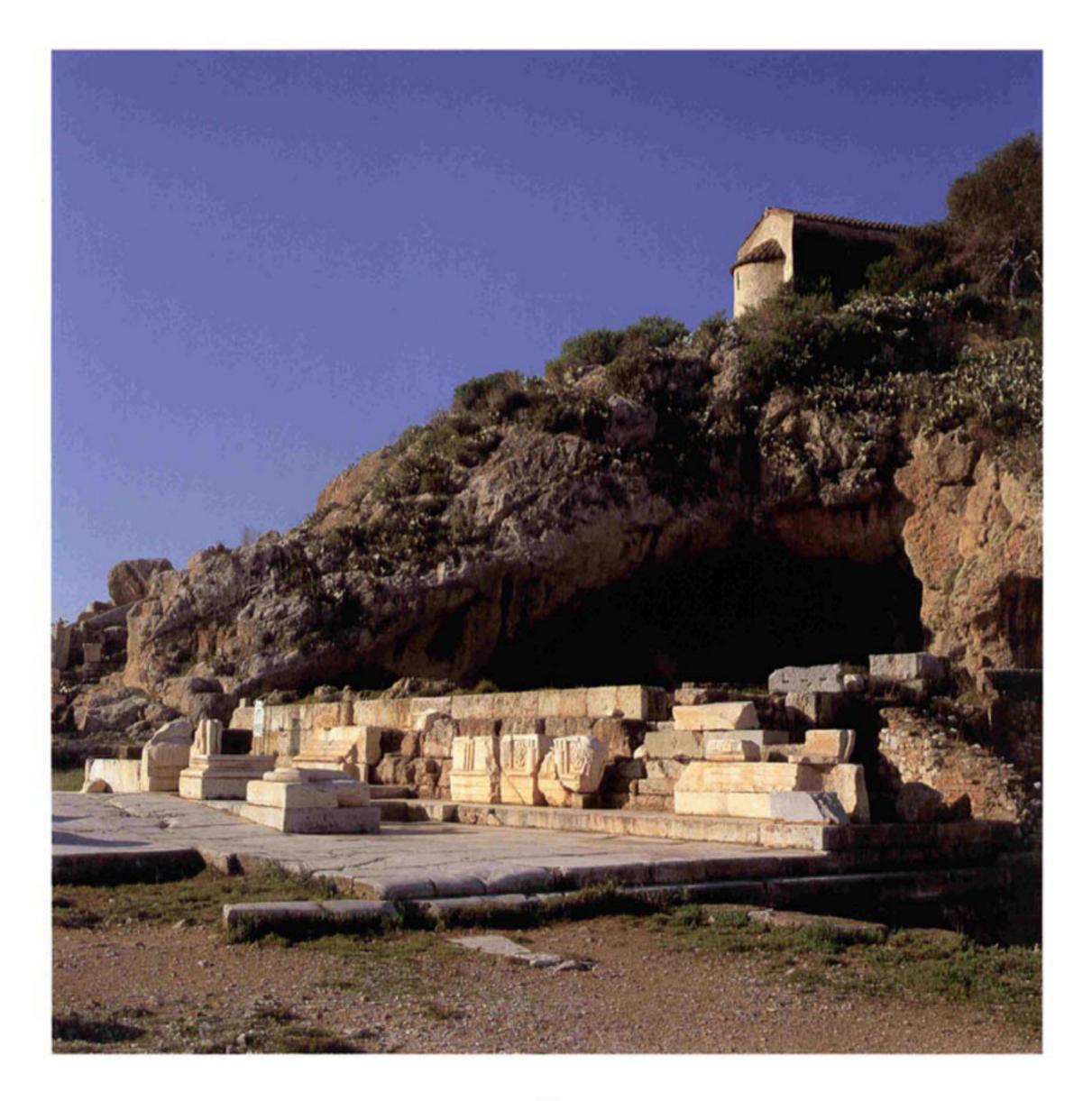
As early as the Archaic period (6th century BC) a small temple dedicated to Pluto was built in the cave. This ancient building was replaced by a later one in the 4th century BC; this, too, was a small building, due to the limitation of space. Today, the poros foundations of the later temple can be seen. It was simple in design, consisting of a rectangular cella whose walls are prolonged and end in antae (temple in antis). Around the temple was a retaining wall of poros stone built in the isodomic style. On the retaining wall, the same type of masonry was used to build a peribolos that separated the temple of Plouton from the rest of the Sanctuary. One entered the temple through a small propylon on the south side of the peribolos, which today can be seen to the right of the Lesser Propylaea.

As soon as one goes through the Lesser Propylaea, one begins to ascend the processional way that linked the Propylaea with the Telesterion. In Roman times, this street was paved with marble slabs, very few of which have survived. The underlying foundation of stones and lime dust has survived and been preserved by excavation teams. Following the processional way, just after the temple of Plouton, one can see a stepped platform on the right hewn into the rock, on which stands the post-Byzantine Church of the Panayia. Because of the skill and care taken over the hewing of the rock, archaeologists have dated it to the 4th century BC. Groups of pilgrims possibly stood on the platform to watch the dromena part of the Mysteries. Just in front of the platform there is a jutting stone on the surface of the processional way; interestingly it was not smoothed out to



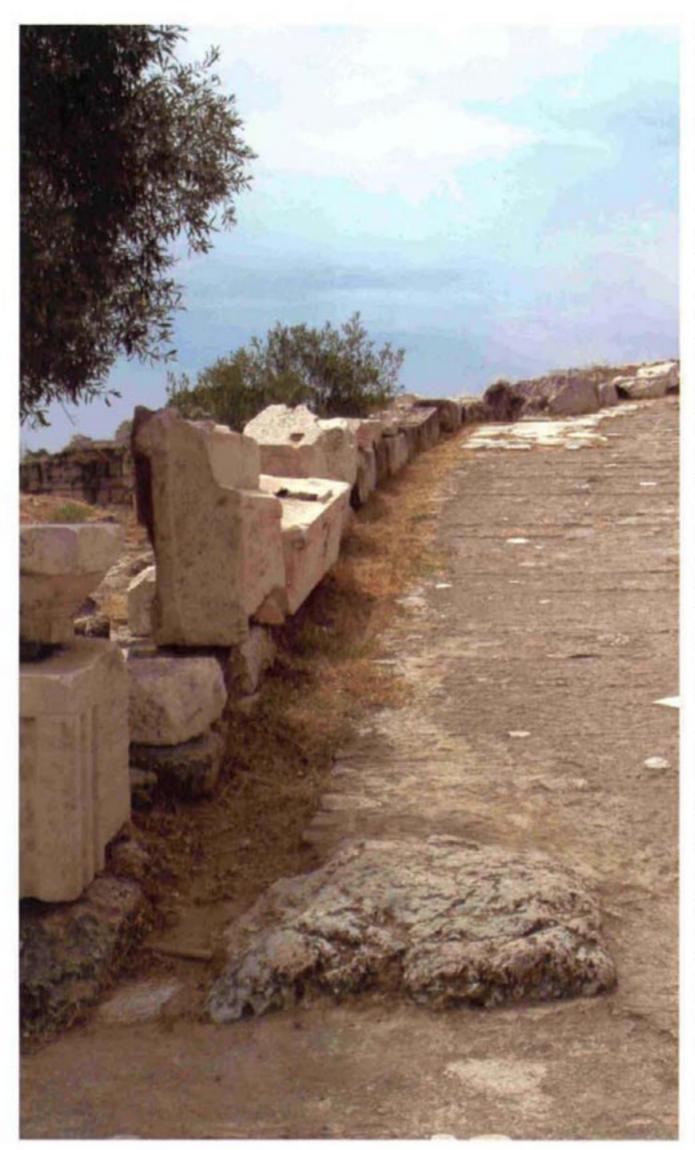
The temple of Plouton (pp. 120-123)











facilitate passers-by. One possible interpretation for this is that the outcropping might have been one of the sacred landmarks of the site, probably the Mirthless Stone of myth, on which Demeter sat, mourning the loss of her daughter. Spectators on the platform possibly looked on as a priestess played the part of the sad goddess.

To the southwest of the platform, on the right side of the processional way, is a temple in antis with four Doric columns in the façade that was built in Roman times. Very little has survived of this temple, which must have been built during the Antonine period. It is, however, of particular importance in art history, because the plastic composition that adorned the pediment was a 1:3 scale copy of the west pediment of the Parthenon. The Eleusinian copies give us a general idea of the Parthenon sculptures that were destroyed. We know that the Parthenon's west pediment depicted the contest between Athena and Poseidon over who would prevail over Attica. In the Roman version, the subject matter was adapted to the Eleusinian Sanctuary, and depicted the capture of Persephone. Fragments of the fourteen figures in the composition have survived, some of which are in the National Archaeological Museum of Athens, others in the Eleusis Museum.

Of the central figures, Pluto and Persephone, nothing remains. Some fragments of Athena and Artemis, who accompanied the Kore in her play in the flowered meadow, have survived. The two youthful goddesses flee before the sight of the brutal kidnapping: Athena wearing her helmet and carrying her shield turns to the left, while Artemis, wearing her quiver, turns to the right. The onlookers are heroes and heroines of Eleusis and Attica. Among them, the figures of Kekrops and his daughter Erse, can easily be discerned, as they echo the Parthenon sculpture. The figures nearest the centre are seated, while the ones near the ends half lay on the ground so as to fit into the acute angles of the pediment.

The Roman temple, conventionally called Temple F, was most probably dedicated to a Roman empress.

Having walked along the length of the processional way, the visitor enters the Telesterion,



The processional way and the Mirthless Stone.





Statue of Kekrops and his daughter from the west pediment of the Parthenon (438-432 BC).



Statue of Kekrops and his daughter from the Roman temple in Eleusis; smaller-scale copy of the Parthenon work.







Seated female figure from the west pediment of the Parthenon (538-532 BC).

Seated female figure from the Roman temple in Eleusis copying the work from the west pediment of the Parthenon.



Statue of female figure and child from the pediment of the Roman temple, a copy of the original Parthenon work.



Inscription in honour of the deified empress Faustina, 2nd century AD.



The young goddesses Athena and Artemis from the pediment of the Roman temple, copies of Parthenon originals.



where the road ended.

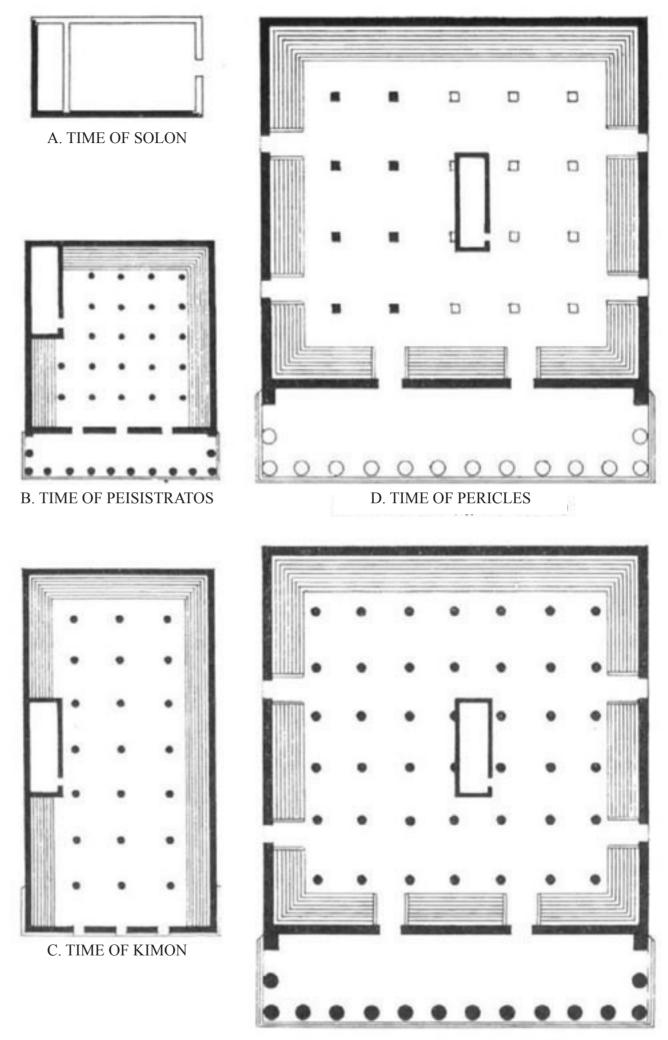
The Telesterion was the most important building in the Sanctuary, the temple dedicated to Demeter where the Mysteries took place. The remains that can be seen today belong to the temple dating to Classical times. It is a hypostyle chamber, almost square, approximately 51.50 metres per side. It had two entrances on each side, except the western one which was hewn out of the living rock. Inside, along the four sides of the chamber stood eight rows of benches from where the initiates could view the rites. The roof of this immense temple was supported by forty two columns, in six rows of seven columns each. On the sturdy columns rested another tier of lighter columns that reached up to and supported the ceiling. In the centre of the roof there was a sort of skylight, the opaion, from which air and light came into the building. In the centre was a small rectangular enclosure called the Anaktoron which was similar to the sacra sacrorum of Christian churches. The mystical cult objects were kept there, and entrance was permitted only to the Hierophant who, on the night of the Mysteries would take the sacred objects and show them to the initiates. Next to the northwest corner of the Anaktoron was the Hierophant's throne. A slab of stone from the wall of the structure surrounding the throne was found during excavations, and is now exhibited in the Museum. It bears an inscription, HIERO-PHANT.., in the style of the Roman period.

In his Lives, Plutarch wrote that the architect of the Classical Telesterion was Koroibos, who was responsible for the construction of the first row of columns. He was succeeded by Metagenes from Xypete who built the 'diazoma', and the upper tier of columns. The work was finished by Xenokles of Holargos, who oversaw the placement of the opaion.

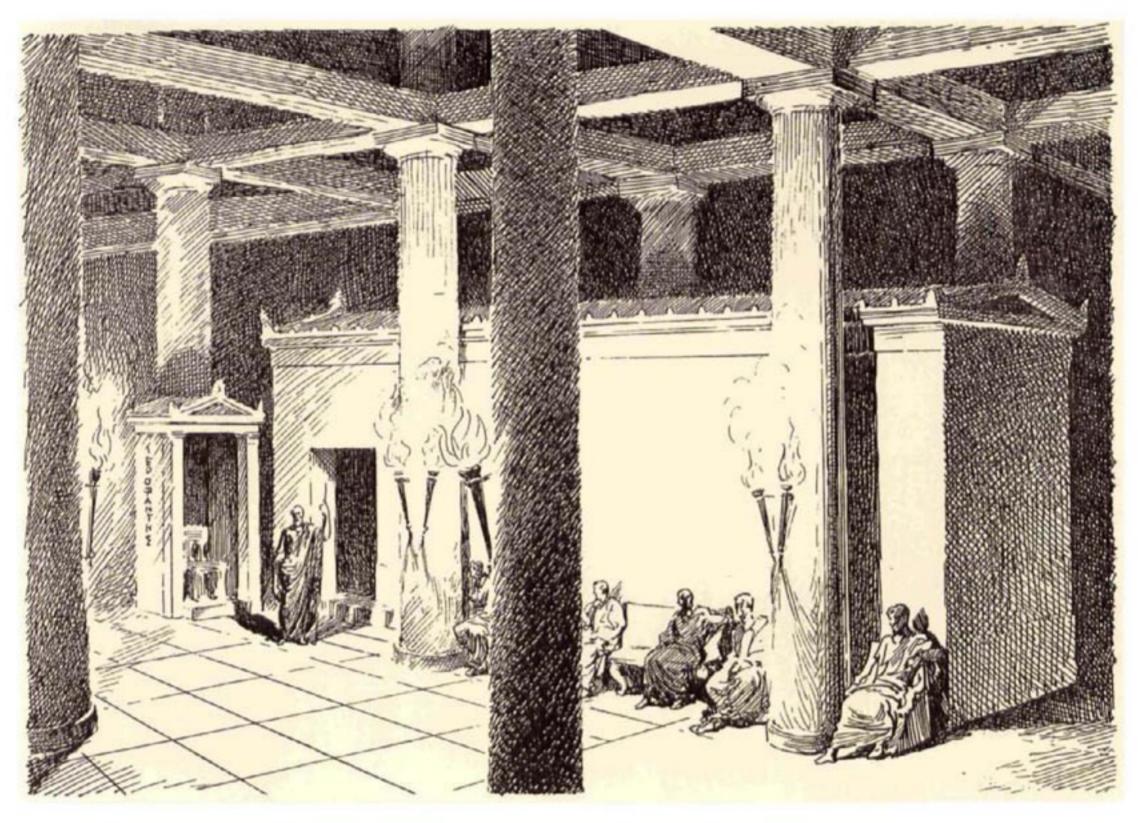
Strabo and Vitruvius, on the other hand, wrote that it was Iktinos, one of the Parthenon architects, who designed the Telesterion. Excavations brought to light the foundations of columns

Floor plans of the consecutive stages of the Telesterion made by Ioannis Travlos.

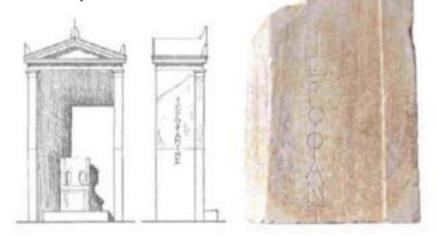
TEMPLE OF DEMETER AND KORE – TELESTERION

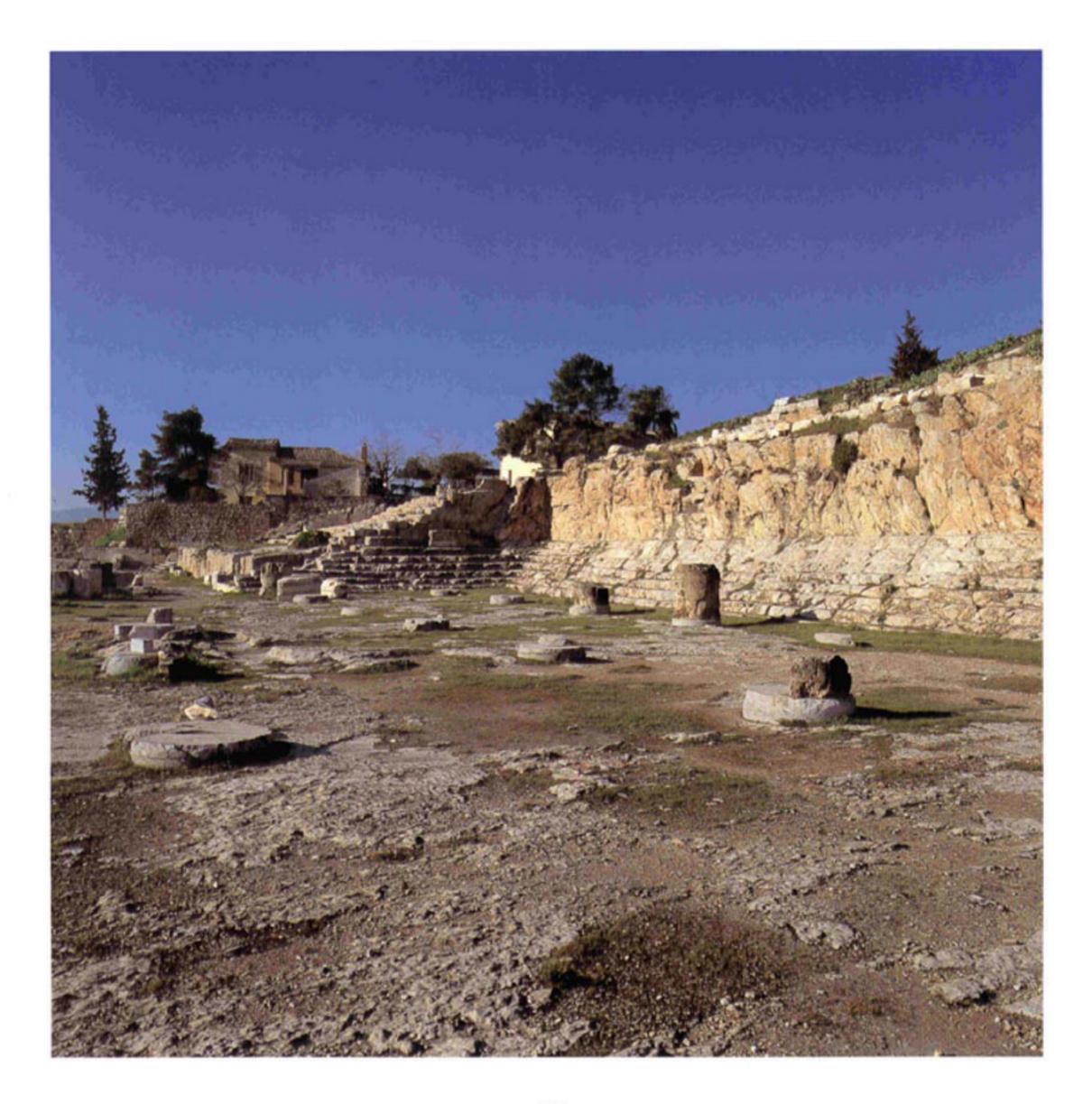


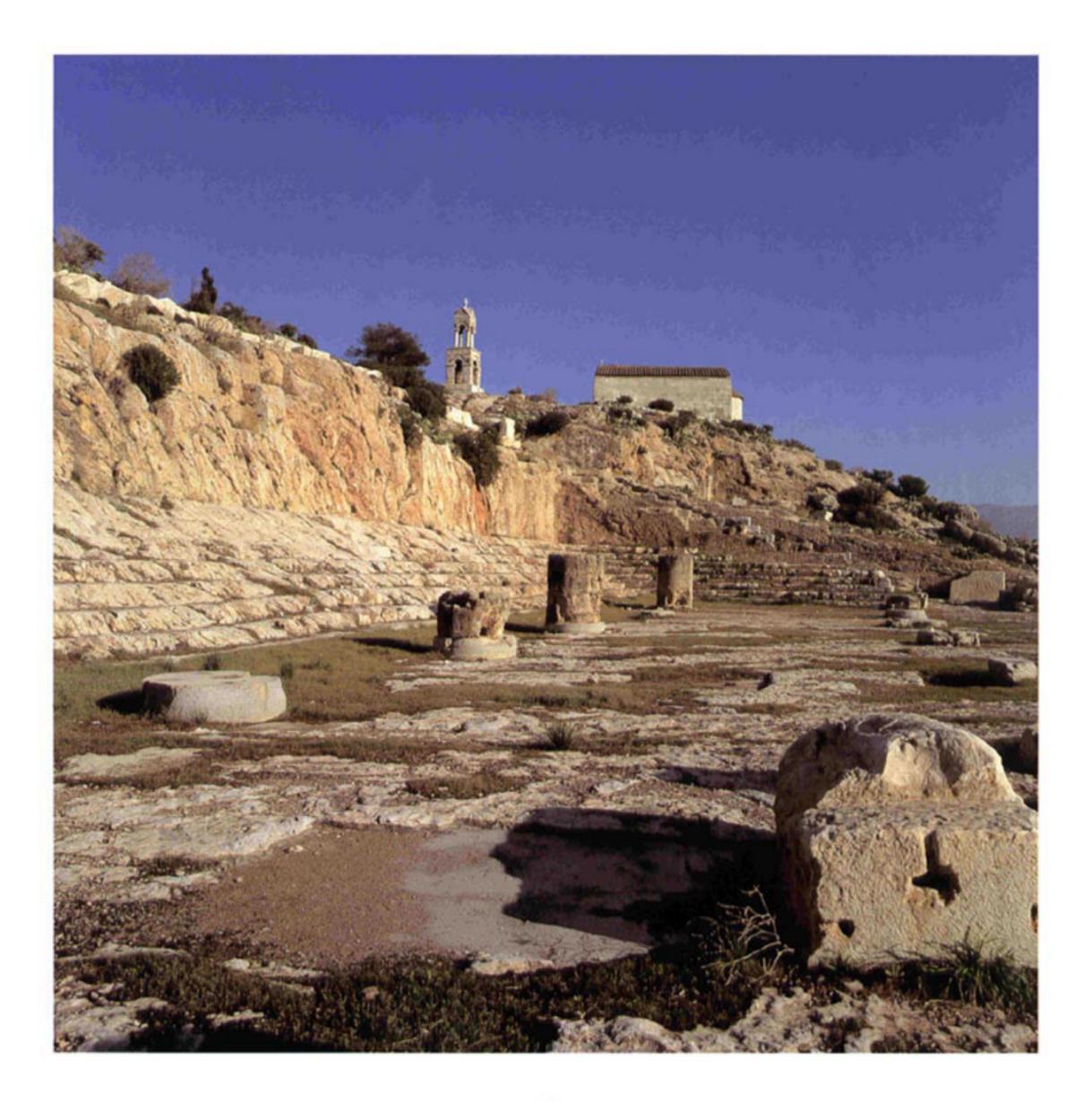
E. FROM THE TIME OF PERICLESTO THE ROMAN PERIOD



made of rectangular poros blocks, over whose construction extraordinary care had been taken. It seems that Pericles entrusted the architect of the Parthenon with the design of his splendid, new Telesterion. Iktinos made a very ambitious design, according to which the roof of the immense hypostyle room would be supported on only twenty columns, in four rows of five columns. Evidently the technical means available at the time forbade such a daring design and it was abandoned in the early stages of construction. The design was then entrusted to Koroibos, Artist's reconstruction of the interior of the Telesterion, with the Anaktoron and the Hierophant's throne.

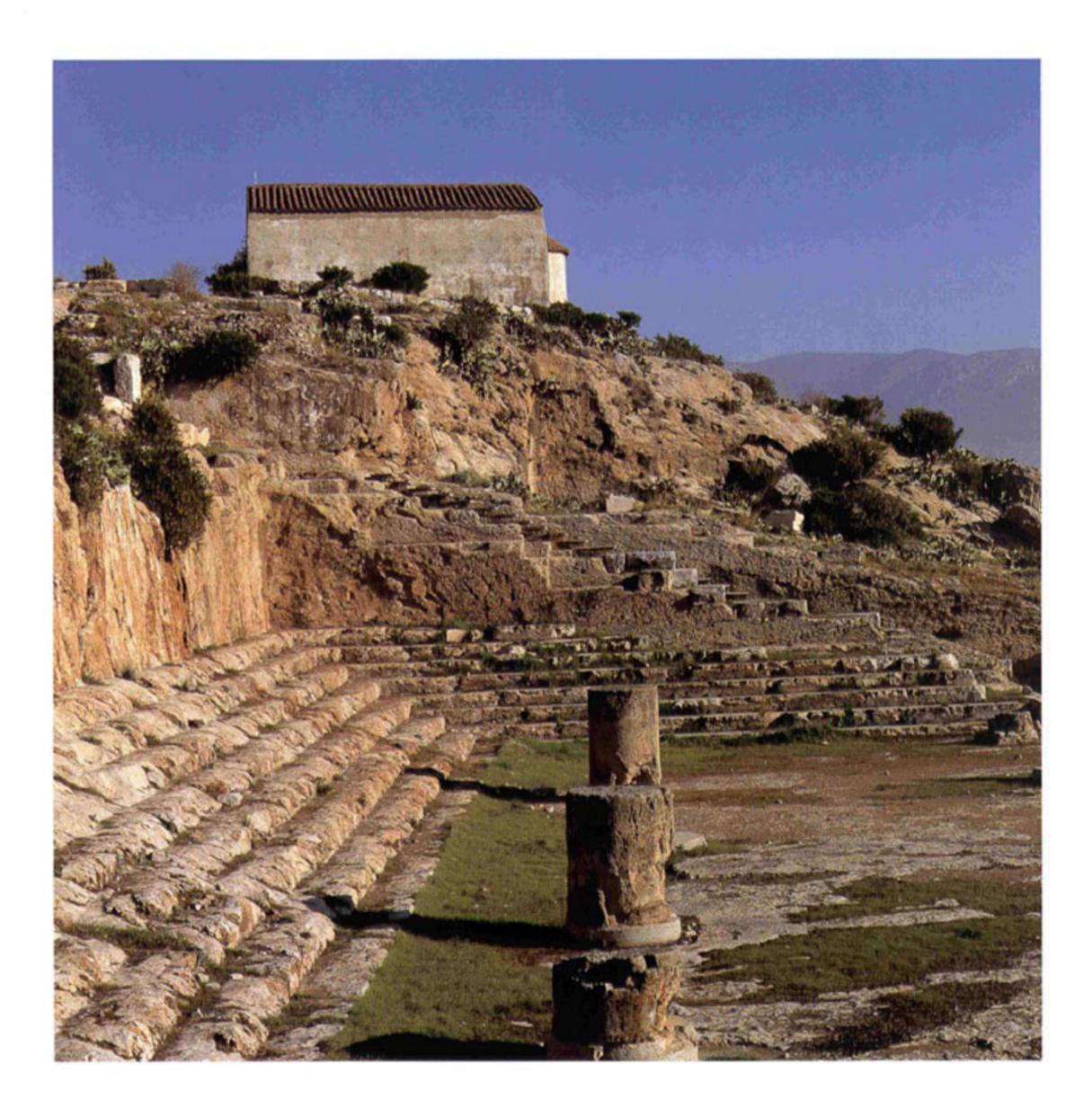


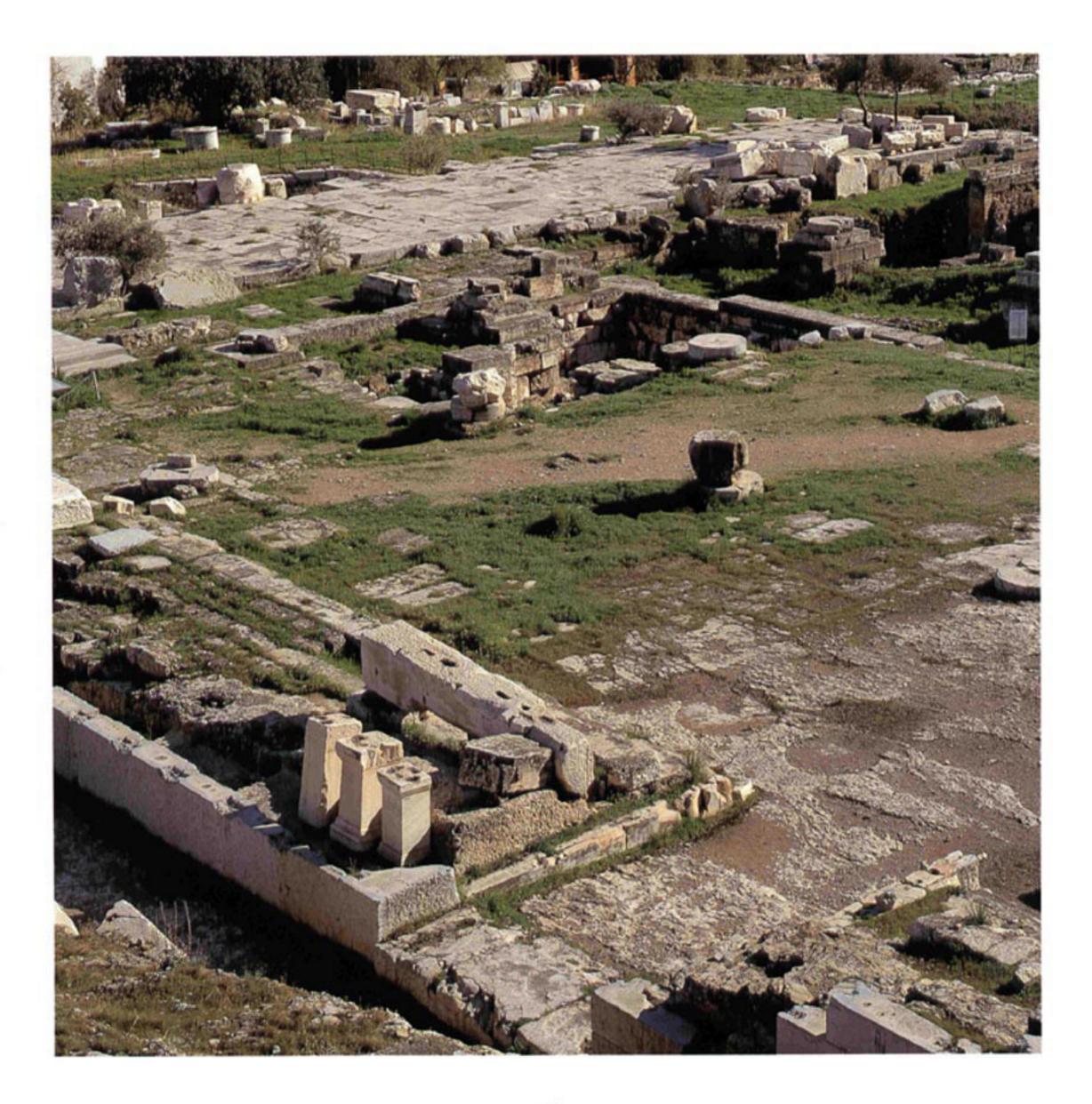


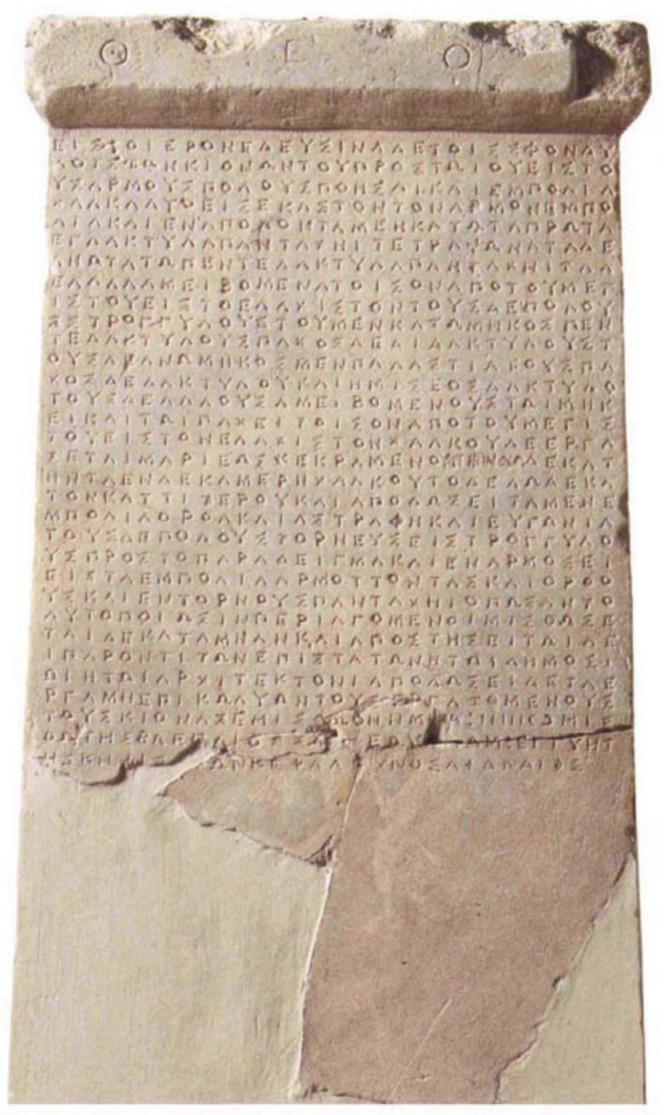












who retained Iktinos' square plan, but provided more columns to support the roof.

In the 4th century BC, the Athenians decided to make the eastern façade of the Telesterion even more impressive by adding a stoa. Vitruvius wrote that it was designed by the Eleusinian architect Philon, also known for the construction of the Skeuotheke (Arsenal) in Piraeus. The Stoa of Philon was built on a very sturdy stereobate floor of Eleusinian grey-blue limestone, while the twelve Doric columns of the façade, and of the two narrow sides, as well as the superstructure, were made of Pentelic marble. An inscription dating to the end of the 4th century BC exhibited in the Eleusis Museum mentions the commission for the fabrication of the bronze empolion, or centring pins that linked the Stoa column drums. This is one of oldest extant inscriptions laying down strict specifications for the builders as to the composition of the copper and tin alloy, and details on the precise assemblage of the pins. The strict specifications are a testament to the technical know-how in a period when achievements in the fields of the intellect and art occasionally overshadow other technical achievements.

The expansion of the Telestirion seems to have been planned in the 4th century BC. The design was abandoned as foundations were being laid. The aborted expansion is testified to by the strong foundation walls that jut out form the south east and north east corners of the 5th century BC temple.

The Telesterion retained its Classical-era design until the Roman era. In AD 170 the barbarous Kostovok tribe invaded Attica, conquered Eleusis and devastated the Sanctuary. The terrible damage was soon repaired. During the repairs and renovation – some claimed these were a virtual reconstruction of the Sanctuary – the temple was expanded to the west by approximately two metres, by digging out the rock. It was Marcus Aurelius, the emperor who had studied philosophy in Athens, who was both an administrator and an intellectual, who reconstructed the Telesterion and brought it to its former glory. For his

Inscription that mentions the crafting of the links for the columns of the Stoa of Philon, 4th century BC. work on renovating the Sanctuary, the Eleusin-







ians awarded him extraordinary honours, such as allowing him to enter the Anaktoron: Sacrarium solus ingressus est.

The excavations carried out under the floor of the Classical Telesterion brought to light even older ruins belonging to successive temples to Demeter. It is worth noting that the older buildings were constructed precisely over where the Anaktoron was built in the Classical temple. The fixation on this location must be ascribed to the tradition that it was to this precise spot that the goddess pointed out, saying, "But now, let all the people build me a great temple and an altar below it and beneath the city, and its sheer wall upon a rising hillock above Kallichoros." The memory of the sanctity of the site remained for centuries, until the cult ceased to be in late antiquity.

The oldest ruins discovered under the floor of the Classical Telesterion belong to an oblong megaron temple with an enclosure dating to the Mycenaean period. Excavators believed that it was the fist temple dedicated to the goddess, although the findings did not fully support such a view. Identifying Megaron B as a temple to Demeter would naturally lead to the conclusion that a small, local cult was established in the Late Helladic period, a with which some scholars disagree.

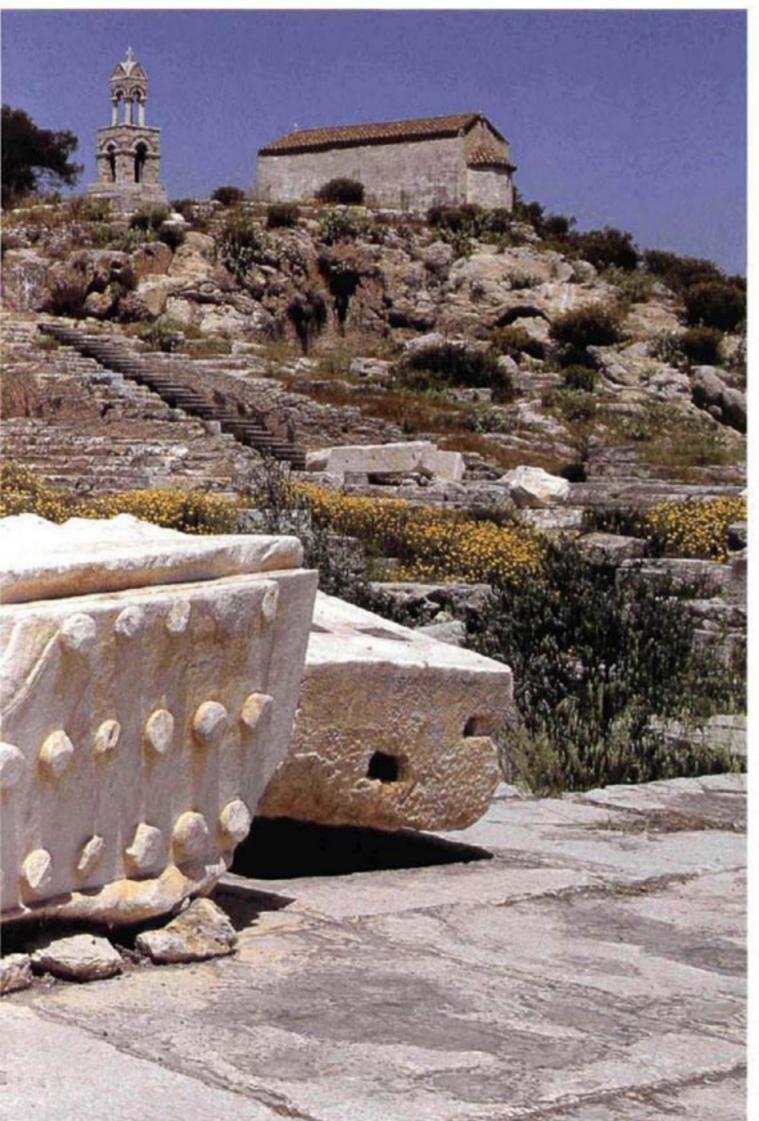
Written sources testify to a cult of Demeter in Eleusis from the Geometric Period, especially from the 8th century BC. According to written sources, the sending of the aparche, the offering of the first and best fruits to the goddess of Eleusis by all Greek cities, was established in 750 BC by the Oracle of Delphi, so as to put a stop to the famine that was plaguing Greece at the time.

A segment of a curved wall that belonged either to an altar or an arched temple that was discovered in excavations under the Telesterion floor dates to the same exact period, the 8th century BC.

An oblong cella built in the Lesbos polygonal masonry style in the early Archaic Period, the 6th century BC, was found on the exact same spot. This is the so-called Solon Telesterion, but there is no clear idea of its ground plan.

The dissemination of the Sanctuary's reputation and the resultant increase in pilgrims in the latter half of the 6th century BC created the need for a





new Telesterion, which the excavators called the Peisistratian Telesterion. The cella was square and the roof was supported by twenty-five columns arrayed in five rows of five. It had three entrances on the eastern side, and before them was a Doric ten-column portico. A part of the superstructure, mainly of poros stone, with some parts in Parian marble, was restored and is exhibited in the Museum. A particularly impressive piece of sculpture is a marble ram's head that adorned the corner of the sima and looked like a of water spout. However, it did not serve this purpose as it had no openings through which the water could flow. The head, with its curly hair and spiral horns, displays all of the vigour and zest for life that was a feature of Archaic art. The ram's head, the simas, and the marble anthemia still retain traces of the Archaic colouring.

It is obvious that particular care was taken over the decoration of the late Archaic temple, perhaps because Peisistratos, who was tyrant of Athens at the time, sensed that that the mystique of the Eleusinian cult lent Athens prestige all over Greece. The sacred court encircling the temple on the east, north and south sides, with its altars and votive offerings where the faithful would assemble and where rites were carried out, existed throughout antiquity. The western side was built against the rocky side of the hill. In the Roman period, two sets of stairs were carved into the stone: the northern one was simply a narrow stairway, but the southern one, much wider, was almost theatrical and was perhaps a point from which spectators could watch the rites being carried out. A visitor ascends the stairs to a rock-cut terrace made by the Romans by quarrying the rock along the western side of the Telesterion. On the northern side of the terrace, in front of and partly below the late-Byzantine church of the Eisodia, are the remains of a Roman temple which, like Temple F, is thought to have been dedicated to a Roman empress, perhaps the wife of Antoninus Pius, Faustina, who according to one inscription from the nearby city of Megara, was deified as the "Demeter the Nea". Hadrian's wife, Sabina, had also been honoured in the same manner, and it is perhaps to her that the second of the two unidentified

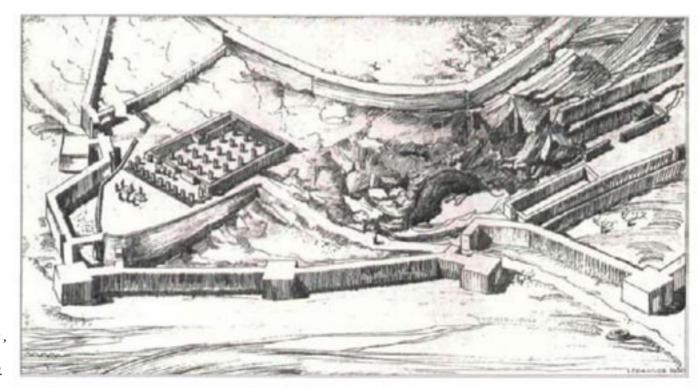


Marble rams' heads resembling water spouts from the superstructure of the Peisistratian Telesterion 6th century BC.





Marble floral antefixes from the Peisistratian Telesterion, 6th century BC.



Marble kernoi, votive offerings. Ioannis Travlos' reconstruction of the Archaic sanctuary.

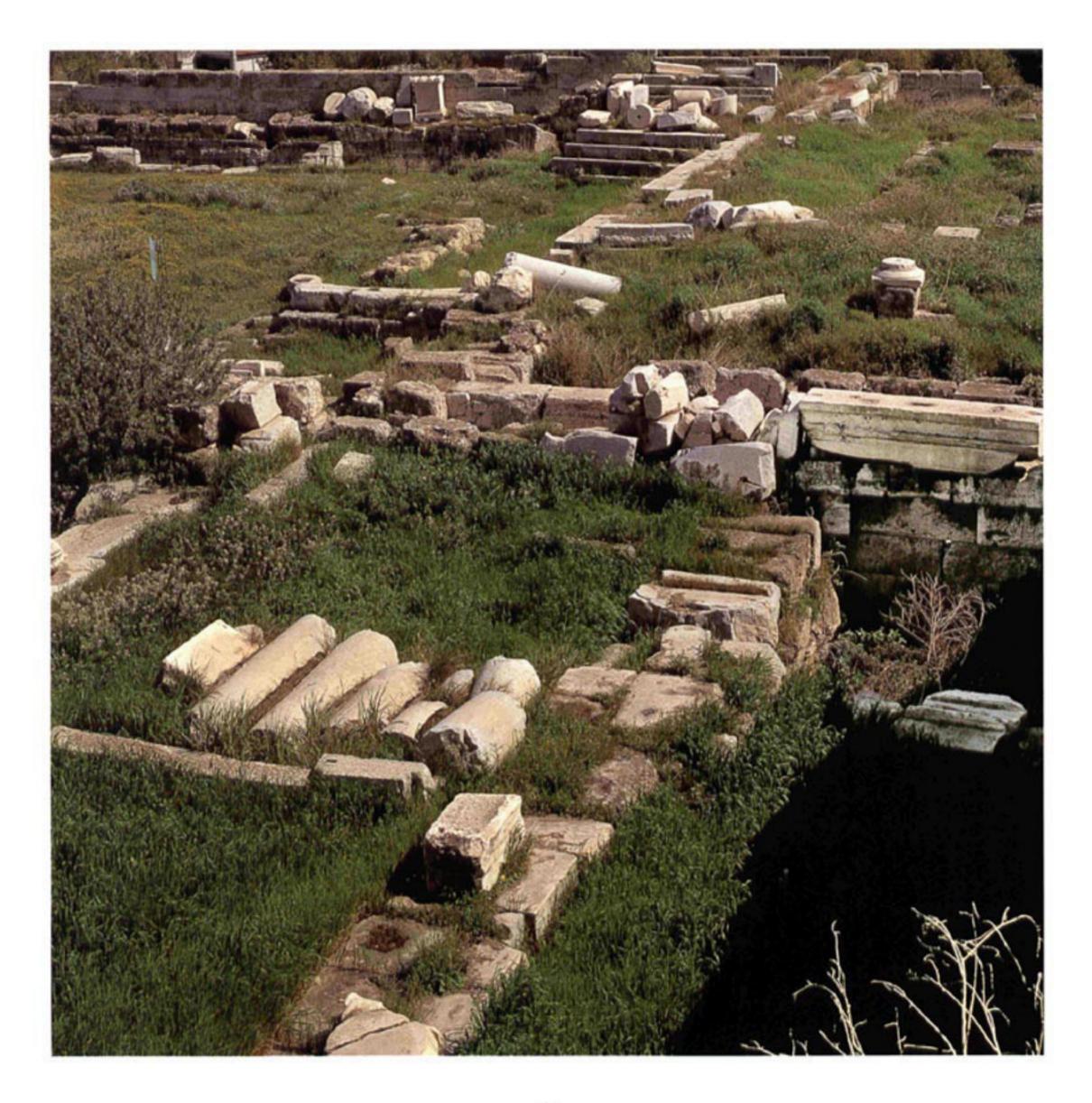




Terrace quarried from rock along the west side of the Telesterion, and the stairs to the temple dedicated to the Roman empress (pp. 150, 151).







Roman temples in the Sanctuary was dedicated. On the western side of the terrace, just above the brow of the hill, there is a wall built of limestone in isodomic masonry. This is the so-called diateichisma, or cross wall, which separated the Sanctuary from the acropolis, and the secular world from the Mysteries.

The Bouleuterion, where the Sacred Gerousia convened, was built in the 4th century BC in the Telesterion's southern courtyard, along the socalled Lycourgian peribolos, east of the north Pylon.

Passing through the south Pylon that opens to the Lycourgian perbolos, the visitor exits Demeter's shrine, but even there, south of the outer enclosure of the Sanctuary, cult buildings were erected in various periods. The most important of these is the so-called Sacred House that is just south east of the south Pylon. A peribolos, built in the impressive polygonal masonry of the 6th century BC surrounds the ruins of an even more antique house dating to the Geometric Period (8th century BC). During excavations, findings were unearthed, for example, layers of ash and a large number of potsherds, that indicated the existence of a cult and rites. In the 6th century BC a small oblong temple was build in the enclosure, over the Geometric Period ruins.

Various hypotheses have been posited as to why the area was sacred. It may have been a mark of respect and a place to worship some hero ancestor that lived there. Some argued that a grave east of the House examined in 1932 belonged to this ancestor. Another hypothesis is that the building housed the Eumolpidae clan when it moved from the Mycenaean Megaron B.

Touching the polygonal peribolos of the Sacred House, on the southern edge of the east section, there is an oblong room with a marble propylon dating to Roman times that excavators believe was a temple to the eastern deity, Mithras.

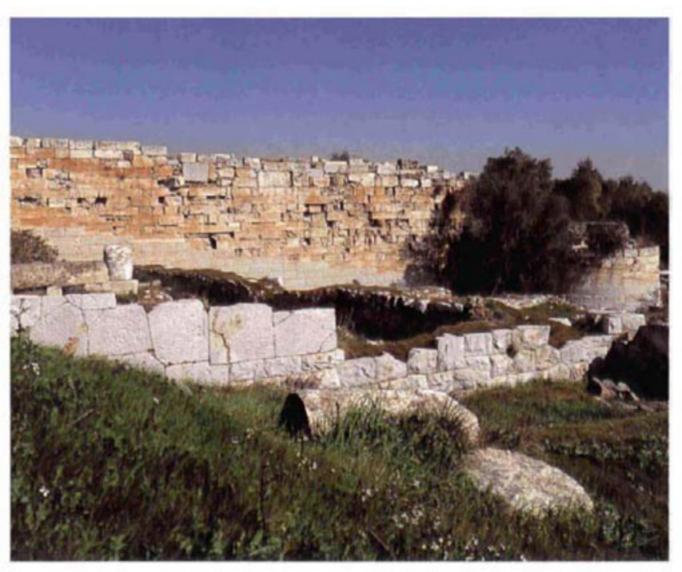
Just to the east, one can discern the foundations of a large oblong building with a peristyle court and a propylon on the northern side which is

The south courtyard and the Bouleuterion.

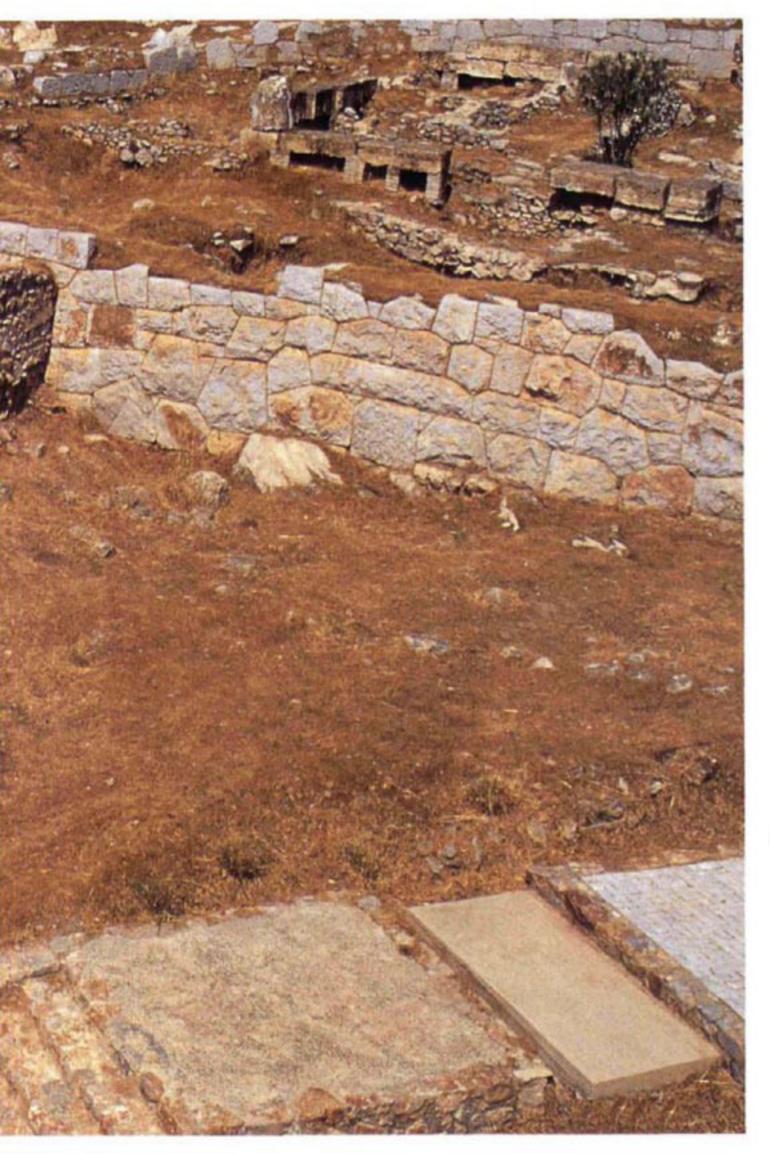


The southern pylon of the Sanctuary.

The Sacred House and the Sanctuary peribolos in the background.

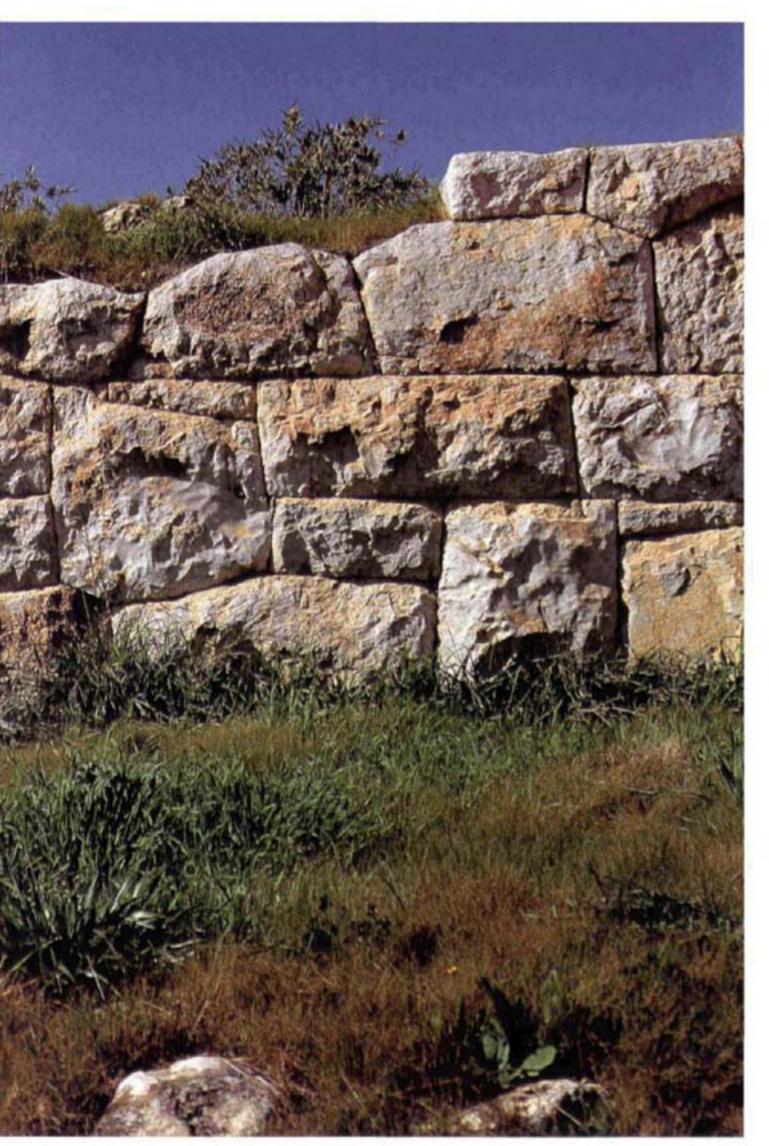






The Mithraion and the Sacred House.





The polygonal peribolos of the Sacred House 6th century BC.

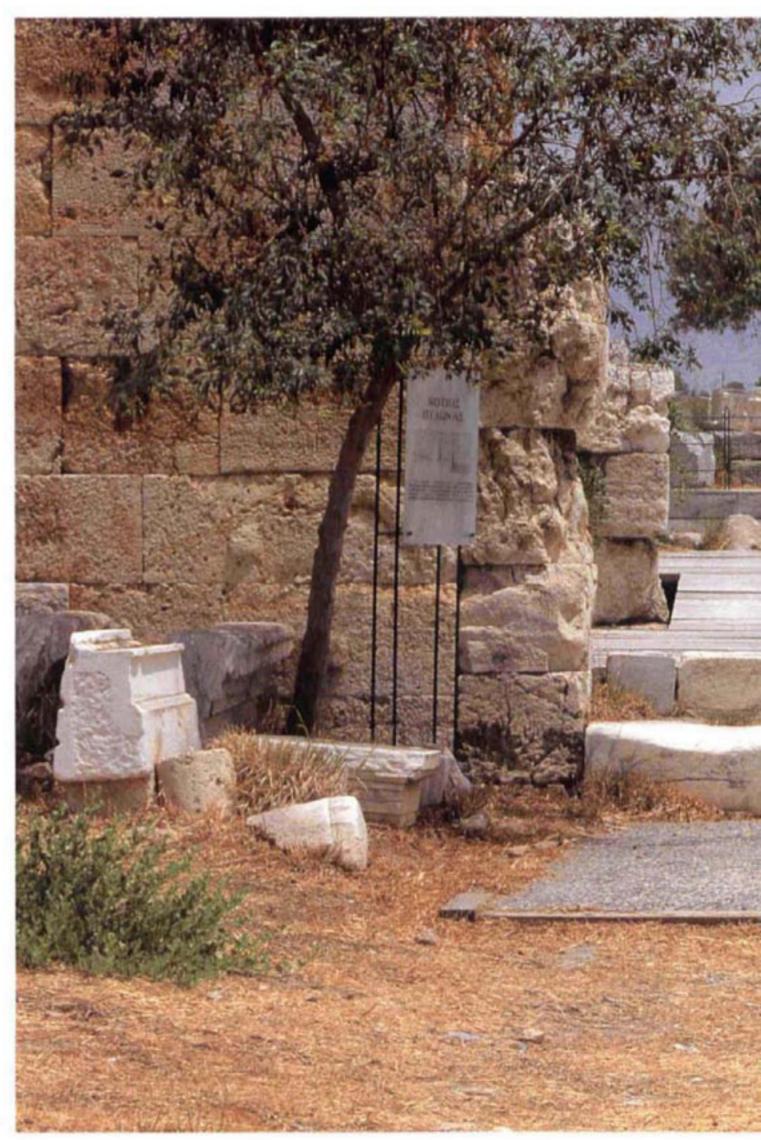
thought to have been a gymnasium or an Agora. The manner of its construction dates it to the Roman period, and the unearthing of a statue of the emperor Tiberius dates it more precisely to the 1st century BC.

From this point, the visitor can observe the wall that surrounded the Sanctuary, providing defence and ensuring the secrecy of the Mysteries that took place inside the enclosure. Beginning from the south, one sees the same view an ancient pilgrim would have seen upon entering the Sanctuary from the port. The southern side of the peribolos has survived at almost its original height, and is one of the most noteworthy examples of the art of fortifications. This section is part of an extension of the Sanctuary to the south that was carried out in the 4th century BC, and is called the Lycourgian peribolos, because it was initially believed to have been built by the orator who at that time managed Athens' finances so wisely. Later scholarship dated the extension of the peribolos to a time before Lycourgos, to 370-370 BC.

The wall was built in the isodomic style, and the precision with which the stones were laid is remarkable. The lower courses are of dark greyish-blue Eleusinian limestone. The exteriors are worked with dense vertical strokes of the chisel which create a lovely play with light and shadow. The upper courses are yellow-red poros blocks whose surfaces are smooth. The difference in the colour of the stones and the difference in how they were worked are yet another example of how the Greeks of classical antiquity cared not only for function, but also for the aesthetics of even the most mundane projects such as fortifying walls. The 4th century BC peribolos has a square tower next to the southern pylon so as to reinforce the entrance, and on the south east is a round tower, a more suitable shape for this particular site.

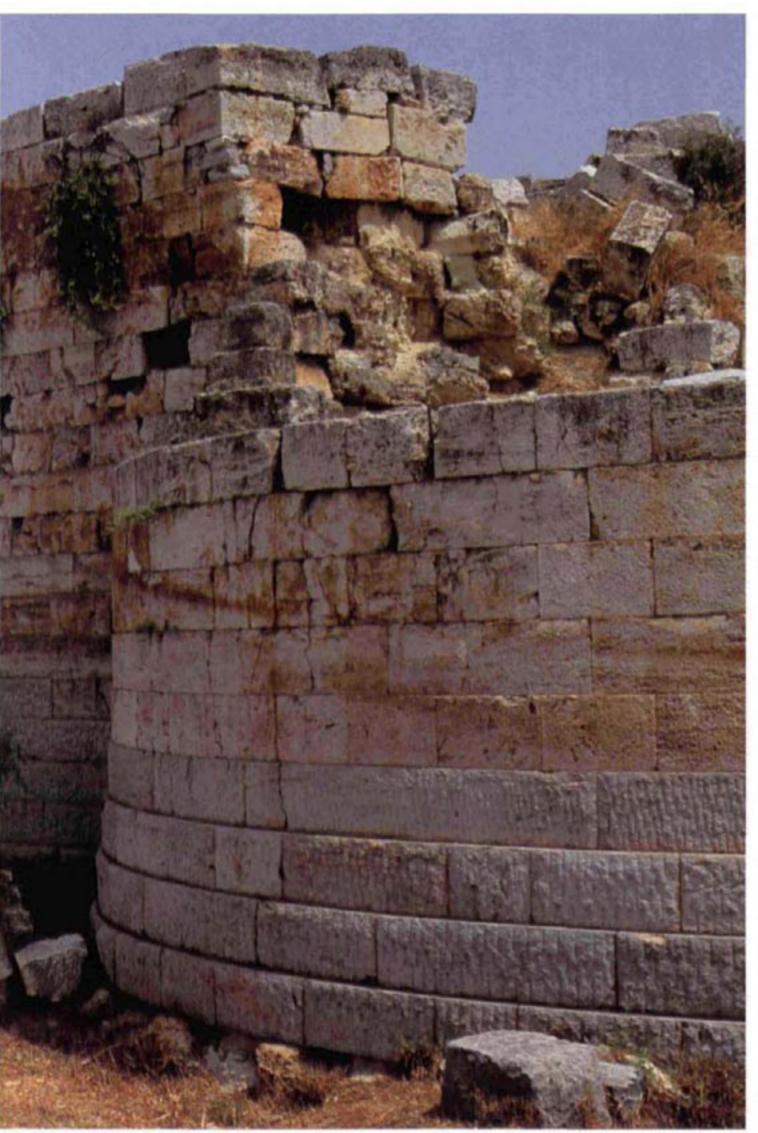
The visitor then turns north, onto a modern path that leads to the exit. Walking along the eastern peribolos of the Sanctuary, one can see the differences in the walls from successive periods. It is evident that the ever-growing fame of the Mysteries and the dissemination of the cult demanded that the

The south pylon of the Sanctuary peribolos.









Sanctuary and its surrounding walls be expanded. The monuments are evidence to the almost continuous construction that took place to strengthen and expand the walls, from the earliest periods of the Sanctuary's history, to late antiquity.

The walls nearest the nucleus of the Sanctuary are the oldest, such as the Peisistratian peribolos, mainly the part to the left (east) of the processional way that links the Propylaea with the Telesterion. This 6th century peribolos consisted of a lower section laid in the polygonal style with Eleusinian grey stone, and a superstructure made of sun-dried brick. Fortunately, many parts of the brick superstructure survived in the Archaic peribolos and its towers; today, they are covered with shelters to protect them from the weather.

The Classical peribolos of the 5th century BC, the so-called Periclean, was built in the isodomic style. The lower section was built of rectangular blocks of Eleusinian limestone whose faces were roughly worked, while the superstructure is of poros blocks, whose surfaces were level, and had a slight bevelling at the edges. The whole work gives the impression of strength and solidity, and is a testament to the mason's art. Unfortunately, only a few sections of the Classical peribolos can be seen today, as the entire southern part was demolished during the 4th century expansion. Furthermore, reservoirs and fountains were built in Roman times along the major part of the eastern side. From inside the Sanctuary one can still see the surviving part of southeast round tower of the Periclean peribolos.

After a stroll along the exterior of the walls, visitors end up where they began, the stone-paved Roman courtyard. A visit to the Museum provides more information. The Museum houses two plaster models of the Sanctuary made by John Travlos. One represents the Sanctuary in the Archaic Period (6th century BC) and the other is a model of the Sanctuary during Roman imperial times (AD 2nd century). They provide a more detailed understanding of the monuments, and an imaginary journey to the times of the Sanctuary's splendour.

The southern section of the peribolos with its towers, 4th century BC.



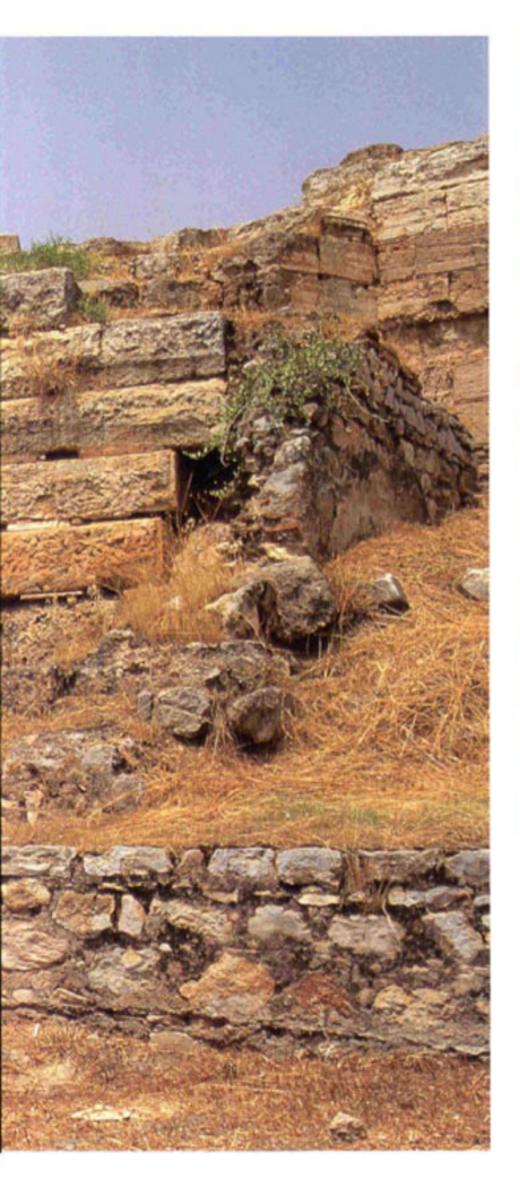






The east section of the Sanctuary peribolos; along the wall are Roman fountains and reservoirs. Section of the Periclean peribolos and the round corner tower, 5th century BC (pp. 166, 167).





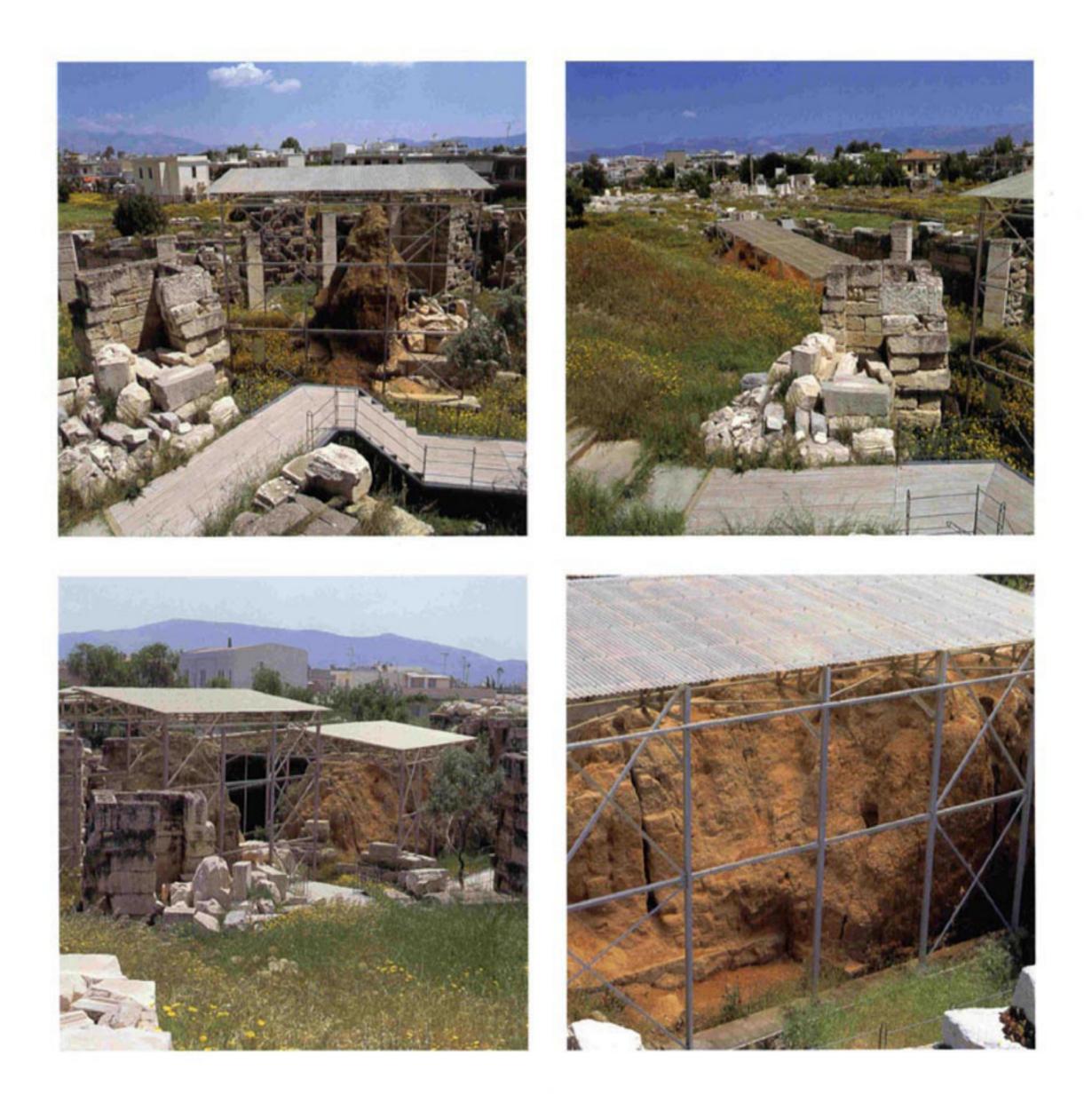




Classical era peribolos tower, 5th century BC.



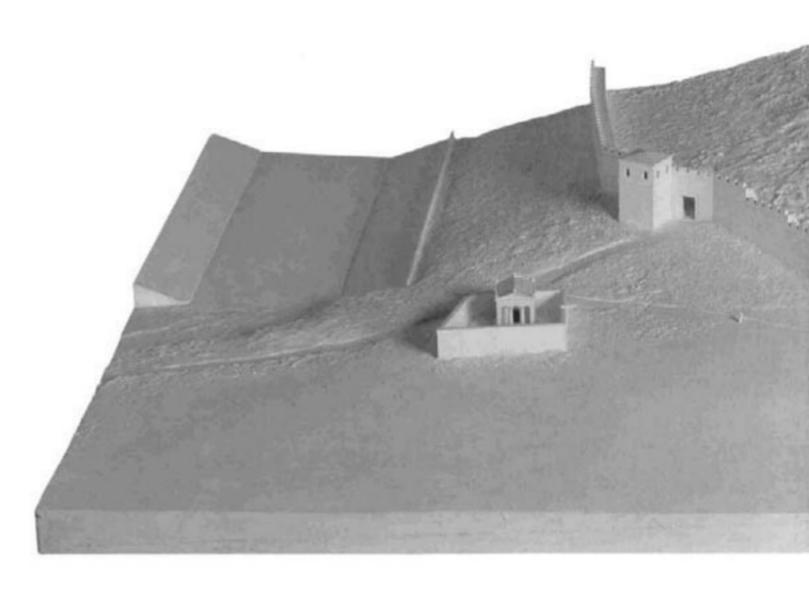
East section of the late Roman peribolos.



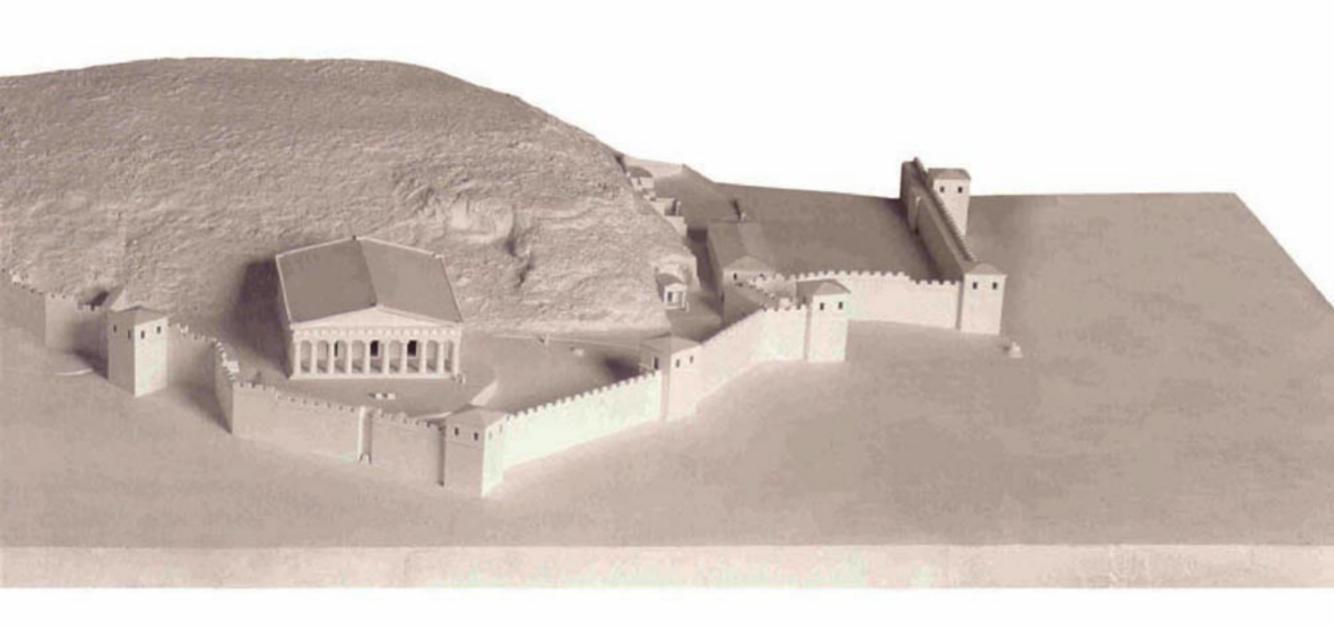


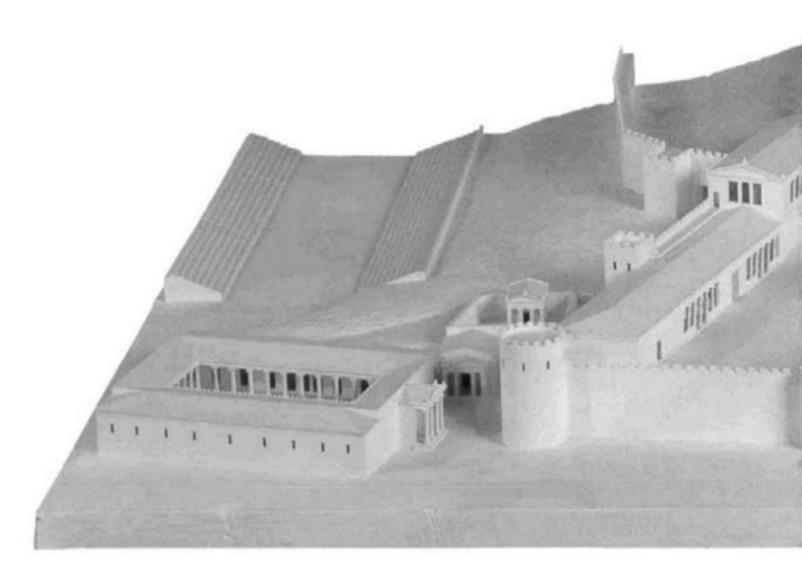
Section of the late Roman peribolos, between the Greater and Lesser Propylaea, 3rd century AD.

Plinths from the Archaic peribolos protected by modern awnings.

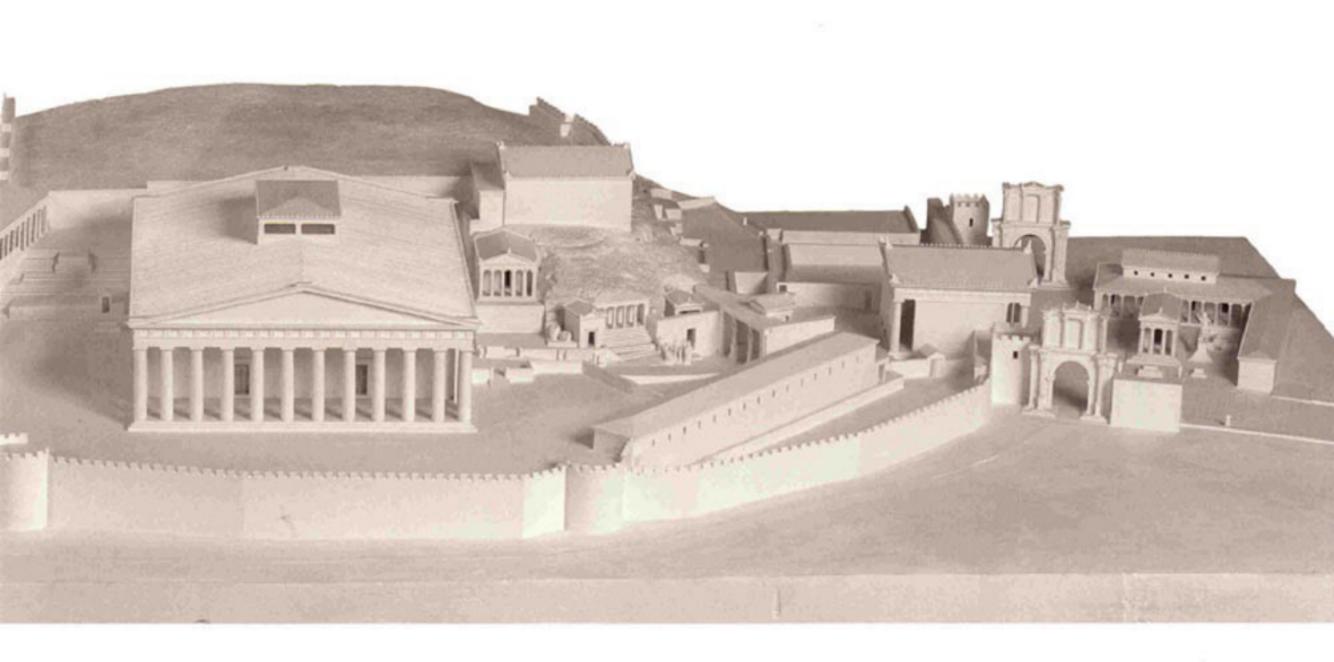


Plaster model of the 6th century BC Sanctuary (by Ioannis Travlos).





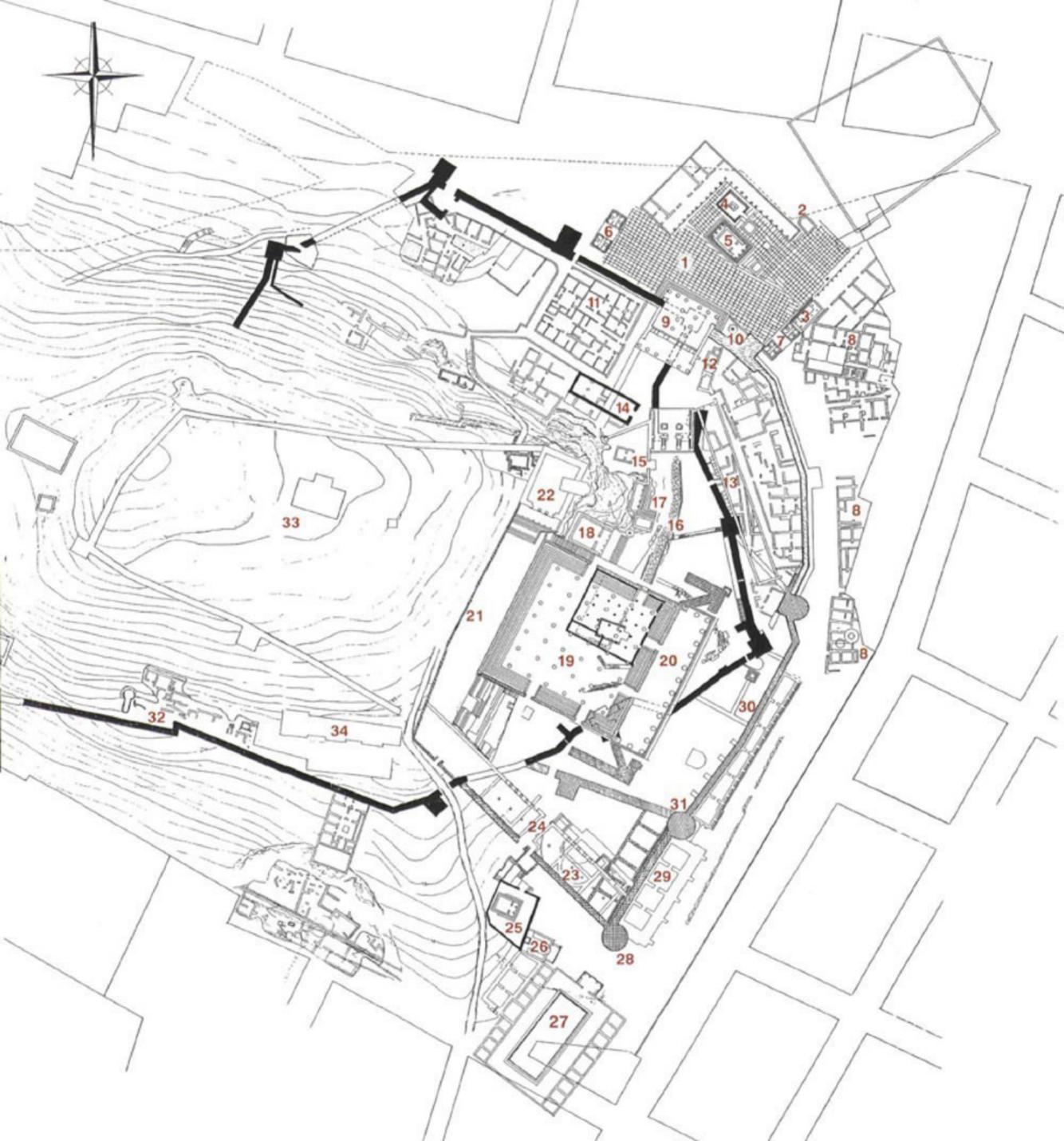
Plaster model of the 2nd century AD Sanctuary (by Ioannis Travlos).



SANCTUARY OF DEMETER AND KORE IN ELEUSIS (Designed by Ioannis Travlos)

- 1. Paved Roman court
- 2. Apsidal exedra or stand
- 3. Roman fountain
- 4. Eschara
- 5. The temple of Artemis of the Portals and Father Poseidon
- 6. Western triumphal arch
- 7. Eastern triumphal arch
- 8. Baths and inns
- 9. Greater Propylaea
- 10. The Kallichoron Well
- 11. Priests' houses and administrative buildings
- 12. Underground Roman reservoir
- 13. Roman granaries
- 14. Peisistratian granary
- 15. The temple of Plouton
- 16. Sacred Way
- 17. Terrace cut from rock
- 18. Temple dedicated to Roman empress (Temple F)
- 19. Telesterion
- 20. Stoa of Philon
- 21. Cross wall
- 22. Temple dedicated to Roman empress
- 23. South pylon
- 25. Sacred House
- 26. Mithraion
- 27. Roman structure with a peristyle court (Gymnasium or Forum)
- 28. 4th century BC peribolos (Lykourgian)
- 29 Fountains
- 30. Reservoirs
- 31. 5th century BC peribolos (Periclean)
- 32. 6th century BC peribolos (Peisistratian)
- 33. Eleusinian acropolis
- 34. Museum







ΤΑ ΑΝΑΘΗΜΑΤΑ ΣΤΟΥΣ ΘΕΟΥΣ

aler



Votive clay tablet with a black-figure representation of two female figures, Demeter and Kore (?), mid 6th century BC.

VOTIVE OFFERINGS TO THE GODS

With very few exceptions, the exhibits in the Eleusis Museum come from the area of the ancient city, and mainly from excavations of the Sanctuary. Having strolled the archaeological site, visitors who go to the Museum can get a more detailed picture of the ancient Sanctuary, as the ancient ruins and the findings exhibited are inextricably linked to it and constitute the pieces of a mosaic of the past. While it is evident that the movable findings come from the broader region of Eleusis, the precise places many of these were found remains unknown. Uncertainty as to exactly where exhibits were found, occasionally making it difficult to understand how they were used, is due to various reasons. Some findings were simply gathered from the archaeological site, others were found used in later buildings, while there is no information at all on the provenance of other exhibits. The complete lack of information must be attributed either to the loss of documentation during the long and adventurous history of the collection, or that many of the antiquities in the Museum and the storage rooms were found in the 19th and early 20th centuries, when the methods of archaeological research and documentation of findings were not as exhaustive as they are today.

The majority of the Museum exhibits must be votive offerings mainly to the Great Sanctuary of Demeter and the Kore, and secondly to other smaller sanctuaries dedicated to other deities that existed in Eleusis. Making votive offerings was one of the ways ancient Greeks demonstrated their piety, as was offering prayers and offering sacrifices, but votive offerings had a greater duration than the others because the offering retained the memory of the act forever, or at least for a very long time.

Individuals, groups linked by ties of blood or poli-





with representations of tripods, 7th century BC.



tics or finances, or even cities could make votive offerings, and there were many reasons why people made them. Offering was an act of faith either to appeal to the deity for help, or to give thanks for help offered. Naturally, votive offerings varied depending on who the benefactor was, what his or her motives were, and to which god the offering was being made. For a city as a whole, and for the ruling elites, the greatest uncertainty was war; for the ordinary person it was the harvest, the uncertainties and rivalries in his profession, the threats of storms at sea, the dangers of birth, child-rearing, the pain of frequent illnesses and the fear of death. An offering, therefore, could be anything from an entire temple, to a portico, a statue of a god, or a clay tablet, a figurine, or a small vessel containing perfumed oil.

The common, age-old phenomenon of making offerings that has survived in Greece to modern times in the form of tamata existed in Eleusis, where Demeter, giver of grains and wealth, was worshipped. Besides being a giver of wealth, the goddess may also have been a healer, as can be seen from incidents in the myth (the practical curative magic of fire in the episode with the baby Demophon), and in the offering by Eukrates (a blind man who regained his sight?) that is displayed in the National Archaeological Museum. Apart from her more material benefits, the goddess offered the faithful her blessing, that is, the promise of a favourable afterlife. But the fear of death is a fact of life, and therefore the cult of Demeter was a remedy for people's fears.

The oldest cult offerings found in the Sanctuary date to the Subgeometric and the early Archaic period (late 8th century BC – 7th century BC) and come from the Telesterion sacrificial pyres. These were purification rituals that took place in the court-

yard, and outside the peribolos the of Subgeometricand Archaic temples.

Many objects dating from the end of the 8th century BC to the 5th century BC were found in the pyres, while other objects from the same periods were found in the excavations of the Sanctuary.

Among the earliest findings of the pyres was an unusual clay figurine of a female figure seated between two horses. Could it perhaps be a Potnia Theron, Mistress of Wild Animals, or more precisely a mistress of horses, or "Hippia" Demeter, as the Arcadian version of the myth refers to her? Or is this a naïve portrayal of a goddess seated on an armchair whose arms are shaped as horses? Whatever it is, it is one of the most antique cult offerings and dates to the end of the 8th century BC.

Another handmade clay figurine that dates to the first half of the 7th century BC with childlike naiveté depicts a four-horse chariot with a charioteer. Deep red and blue horizontal lines make the figurine more colourful. The head of the charioteer, who is standing on the horses' hind legs, is bird-like and rendered schematically. Many clay figurines with bird-like heads that date to the Subgeometric and early Archaic Period have been found in the Sanctuary. The figuresare usually standing, their torsos are cylindrical or flat-bodied, and on the face only the nose is rendered plastically. It is not known if these figurines that are perhaps the development of earlier Mycenaean ones, depict deities or the worshippers themselves. Similar figurines have been found in other sanctuaries in Attica.

The same confusion as to their identity reigns over the Boeotian-type terracotta figurines that date to the 7th century BC and the early 6th century BC. They are wide, plank-like, have unnaturally long necks and most of the details of their bodies and attire are rendered in deep blue, black or red colouring on the white slip. They seem to be wearing vestments, and are called priests because of this and the similarity of their headwear to that of priests. Besides the fulllength figures, offerings were made to the goddesses of small female terracotta busts with the typical Daedalic wig-like hair and a polos (pl. poloi, a headdress), with details painted in red and blue. These



figures were made using moulds. The high polos of the busts and the full-length Boeotian figurines can perhaps be considered evidence that they are deities. In the 6th century BC clay female figurines were made using moulds and gradually became more naturalistic. Standing or seated on a throne, they were covered with white slip, on which the facial details and the details of the clothing were painted with vivid colours. Does the standing or seated stance serve to differentiate the mortals from the immortals? That is, are the standing korai supplicants approaching the deities with an offering in hand; are the seated figures goddesses? It could be argued that the clay figurine of a 6th century BC kore sitting on a throne with a high back represents a goddess, and that this is indicated by the formality of her seat. But the fact that the figure's hands rest on her knees and that she is not holding any divine symbol renders this hypothesis moot. Traces of a lost sky-blue pigment on her clothes give an idea of how both terracotta and larger stone sculpture was coloured.

Besides figurines, a significant number of relatively small ceramic tablets, many of which have painted decorations, were found in the Eleusis Sanctuary. Some of the tablets still have the holes by which they were hung. The oldest tablets found in Eleusis date to the 7th century BC and are decorated with simple linear designs, or simplified representations of water birds or lebetes (sing. lebes) sitting on tripods. The drawings are in red or black on the white slip covering the tablet. These are humble offerings by ordinary folk and were possibly meant as substitutes for what they pictured. A hypothesis has also been postulated that the tripods refer to the aparche, the Oracle of Delphi's recommendation that first fruit should be tithed to Eleusis.

In the 6th century BC the small oblong plaques grew in size and the representations were rendered in the black-figure style.

One small tablet bearing a drawing of a steed was perhaps offered in place of a real horse. Other blackfigure tablets of the 6th century BC are decorated with mythological or narrative representations, such as the tablet painted on both sides with figures of hoplites duelling. A fragment of another tablet depicts a chariot in black. A woman charioteer wearing a laurel wreath is represented holding the reins and a whip. Next to the chariot is a male figure which is also wearing a wreath on his long hair. As the male holds a seven-chord lyre in one arm and a pick in his other hand, he could be Apollo the lyre-player.

Another small tablet also dated to the mid-6th century BC represents two women facing each other who seem to be conversing. They wear tall poloi on their long, loose hair and are believed to be the two Eleusis goddesses, Demeter and Kore. From the workshop of the same painter came a plaque representing a similar female figure, also wearing a high polos, and holding a wreath in her hand. Under her elbow is a large flower – perhaps the remarkable narcissus flower growing in the Nysan Plain?

The subject of the next painting that also dates to the mid-6th century BC is also probably mythological. On the right side is a standing man, wearing a chiton and himation, tunic and mantle, who in his right hand holds a long thin sceptre that ends in a flower. In front of the man is a the figure of a woman who taking a long step forward, to the left. The clothing of both figures have painted decorations. Do the figures depict a divine couple, perhaps Pluto and Persephone? At the edge of the painting is a fragment of a vertical inscription, $EY\Phi IAHTO\Sigma$ (Euphiletos). Unfortunately, the verb of the inscription has not survived so we do not know if the inscription said Euphiletos έγραφσεν (painted this), εποίεσεν (made this), or άνέθεκεν (offered this).

It is very possible that there may also have been wooden plaques, but none have survived.

It was also very common to offer clay vessels to the Sanctuary. It may be safely assumed that many such vessels contained scent, perfumed oil or some other material, while others were offered just for their aesthetic value.

The oldest vessels found in the sacrificial pyres of the Telesterion were small, unpainted prochooi (sing. prochoos, a small, slender jug or pitcher) dating to the late 8th century, early 7th century BC. Many small Corinthian vessels were offered to the sanctuary throughout the 7th century BC and in the first half of the 6th century BC. These aryballoi (sing. arybal- Clay figurine of a seated kore, 6th los small spherical or globular flasks) and alabastra



Clay female figure with tall polos late 7th century BC.



century BC.

(sing. alabastron) (small vases for perfumes or oils) contained scents or perfumed oils and testify on the one hand to the growing economic activity of the city and, on the other, to Corinth's close relations with the Sanctuary.

Corinthian vase painters of the 7th century BC and the early 6th century BC loved miniature work and they used it on their perfume vessels in the blackfigure style, which they are believed to have created. Their favourite subjects were animals and birds, individual animals or in friezes, demonic figures, sphinxes and sirens, and happy, dancing revellers, or komastes. In the paintings on the aryballoi and alabastra found in Eleusis, one marvels at the liveliness of the figures, a liveliness that testifies to the artists' close observation and love of nature, their skilful drawing and their artistic sensibility in rendering the subject matter on the curved surface of a clay vessel. A siren opens her sickle-shaped wings on one alabastron, while on another, a goose faces down a rooster, head bent and foreleg lifted; a wild boar prepares to attack; a dolphin dives elegantly to the deep; a group of revellers dance on a spherical aryballos; an eagle opens its wings on another, and many vessels have floral decorative motifs such as anthemia and lotus blossoms.

Attic vases offered by the faithful to the Sanctuary were usually larger than the Corinthian ones.⁴ A black-figure amphora with a tall neck, the shape may have been exclusive to the cult, dates to 580-70 BC and is the work of an artist conventionally called the "Eleusis Painter 707" because of this vessel. The painter, characterised by a certain provincialism, painted sphinxes, sirens and lions on the amphora, while the neck of the vessel bore the figures of two women facing each other on each side. Identifying the figures as the two goddesses of Eleusis is tempting but risky. A loutrophoros-hydria dating to 580-70 BC has on its neck the painted figures of three men wearing mantles who are walking to the left; to the left and right of the men are roosters. The body of the hydria has a human figure, sphinxes, panthers and birds depicted in a lively but non-narrative manner.

Vessels of various shapes were offered to the Sanc-

tuary and at sacrifices: tablets, kylikes (sing. kylix) and lekythoi (sing. lekythos). Lekythoi perhaps had a chthonic meaning as they were the vessels typically used as funerary offerings. One such offering was a large black-figure lekythos with a representation of the struggle between Peleus and Thetis. Following the advice of Hera, the mortal Peleus managed to subdue Thetis and make her his wife, although she resisted by transforming herself into fire, water, a lion, a snake and countless other beings. The couple is in the centre of the composition; to their right and left, as elegant as dancers, the Nereids are fleeing the scene. The old man at the edge of the painting is perhaps Thetis' father, Nereus.

Scenes from everyday life were also represented on offerings. On the conical base of a 6th century BC nuptial lebes found in the Sacred House, there is a painting, fitting for this type of vessel, i.e. scenes from the gynaecium, the women's quarters.

Naturally, the vessels considered most interesting are those that are considered to portray the celebration of the Mysteries. One such is a loutrophoros, a vase used to carry water, dating to 540-530 BC with blackfigure painting attributed to the artist conventionally known as the Swing Painter. This artist seemed to have a particular interest in Eleusinian subjects, and it has been postulated that he was an enthusiastic initiate. On the neck of the loutrophoros amphora is a scene of a procession with eight bearded men wearing tunics and mantles, who are carrying baskets on their shoulders. On the surviving section of the vessel's shoulder one can discern another procession of men. They are preceded by musicians with pipes and lyres, followed by men carrying what might be myrtle branches. The scene is quite rightly considered to be a representation of the procession at the Eleusinian Mysteries.

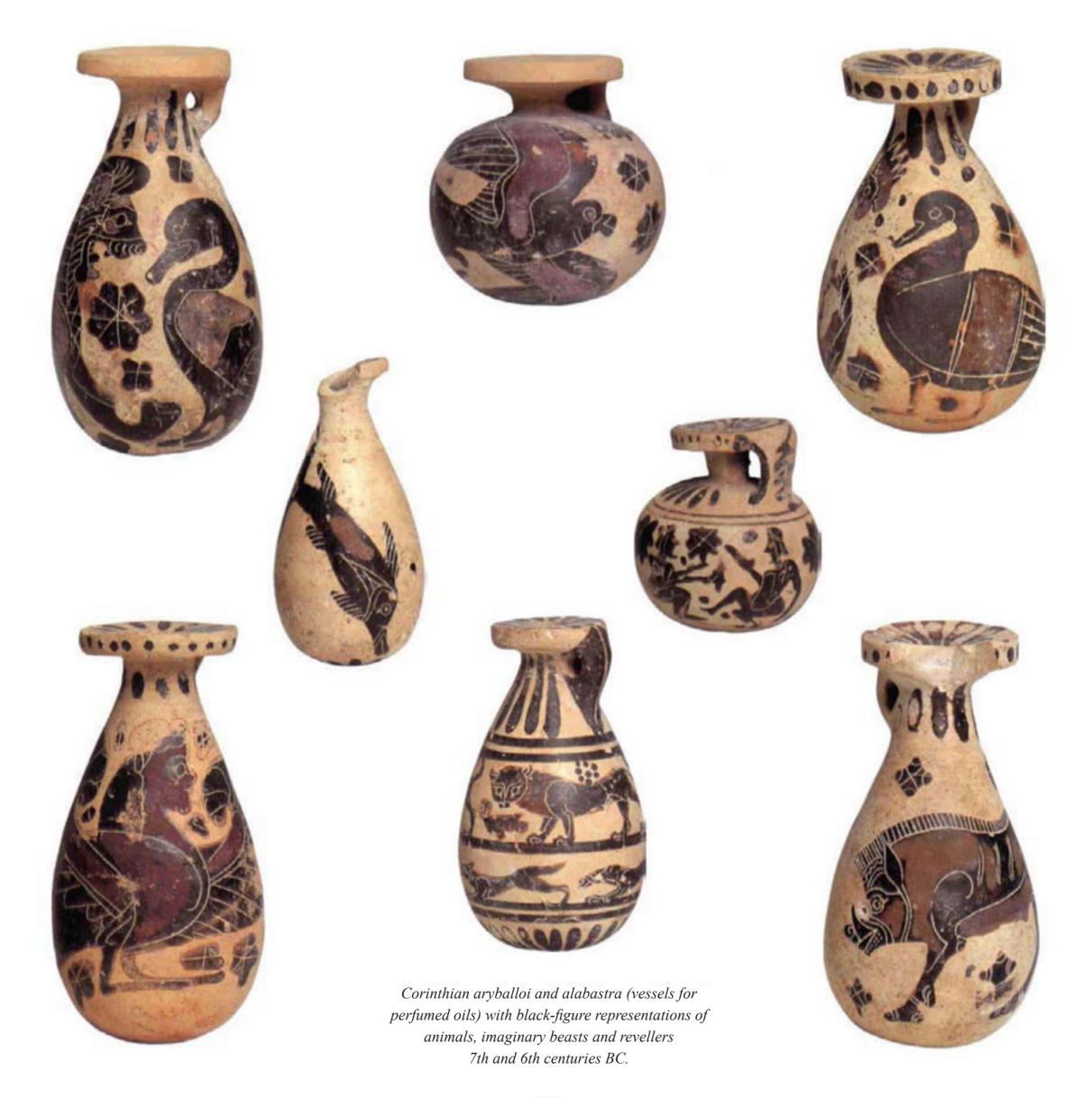
Another black-figure loutrophoros from the 6th century BC, of which unfortunately only the neck has survived and that in fragments, has a scene of a procession with men, women and children that probably has something to do with the Mysteries. In total there are eight faces, four on each side of the neck, and they seem to make up two discrete scenes. On both sides there is a man wearing a chiton poderes (a long, heel-length tunic) belted at the waist, and holding a



torch in each hand. It seems very likely that the man is a priest of the Mysteries, a dadouchos. In both scenes, the dadouchos is followed by two adults, a man and a woman on the one side, two women on the other, and the processions on both sides end up with a child. As representations of the initiation rites were forbidden, it is assumed that this is a scene of a preliminary rite, or simply the arrival of prospective initiates at the Sanctuary's courtyard prior to some ceremony. The people have rightfully been identified as initiates, judging from the best-preserved painting of a woman who is wearing festive attire: she walks modestly, and is wearing a wreath of laurel leaves on her lovely head, and her hair hangs down to her chest and back. In her right hand she carries a slender wand, assumed to be a bacchos.

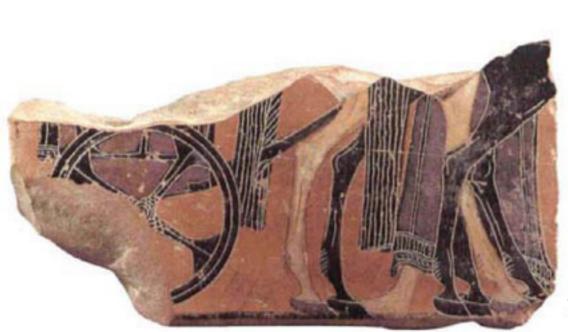
Sometimes the very shape of a vessel is enough to connect it to cult activities. Such vessels are the black-figure thymiateria (sing. thymiaterion; censer or incense burner) used for cult purposes that were found in the Sanctuary. Unfortunately, none of these clay vessels has survived whole. Thymiateria were long and cylindrical with a projection approximately in the middle to help in carrying it. The vertical part ended in a wide base to ensure stability, and the top had an open bowl in which the incense was placed. The bowl was covered with a perforated conical cover through which the incense smoke wafted. The best-preserved thymiaterion, which dates to the last decade of the 6th century BC, has a scene around the vertical section depicting a procession of the gods, amongst whom are Dionysus, Hermes, Apollo, Artemis and others.

Particularly noteworthy because of its singularly rare shape is a relatively small clay vessel that has not survived intact. The body is approximately spherical and its base is perforated like a sort of strainer. The upper part, which has not survived, was pointed at the top and it had a hollow, basket-like handle with an opening in the centre. This odd vessel was filled by dipping it in a lekane or other large water vessel. By placing their hand on the opening on the handle, the user prevented the contents from spilling. It is very possible that this vessel was used for ritual sprinklings of water. The black-figure decoration dates to approximately the middle of the 6th century





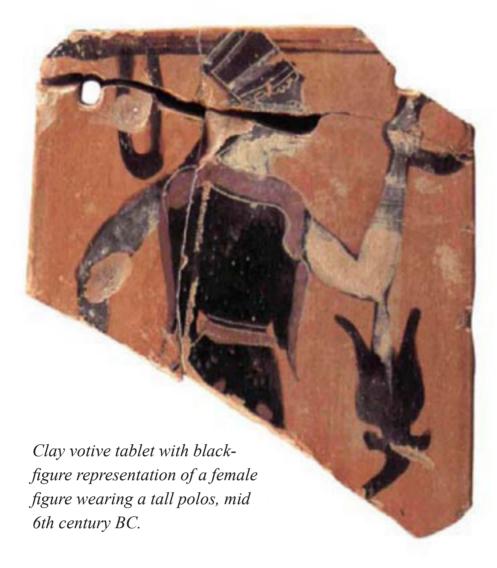
Portion of a clay tablet with representation of kithara player walking next to a chariot, 6th century BC.





Votive tablet decorated on both sides, with representation of hoplites, 6th century BC.

Section of a black-figure tablet with a representation of a chariot, 6th century BC.





Clay votive tablet with representation of horse, 6th century BC.



lay votive tablet with black-figure representation of a couple (Euphiletos' tablet), 6th century BC.





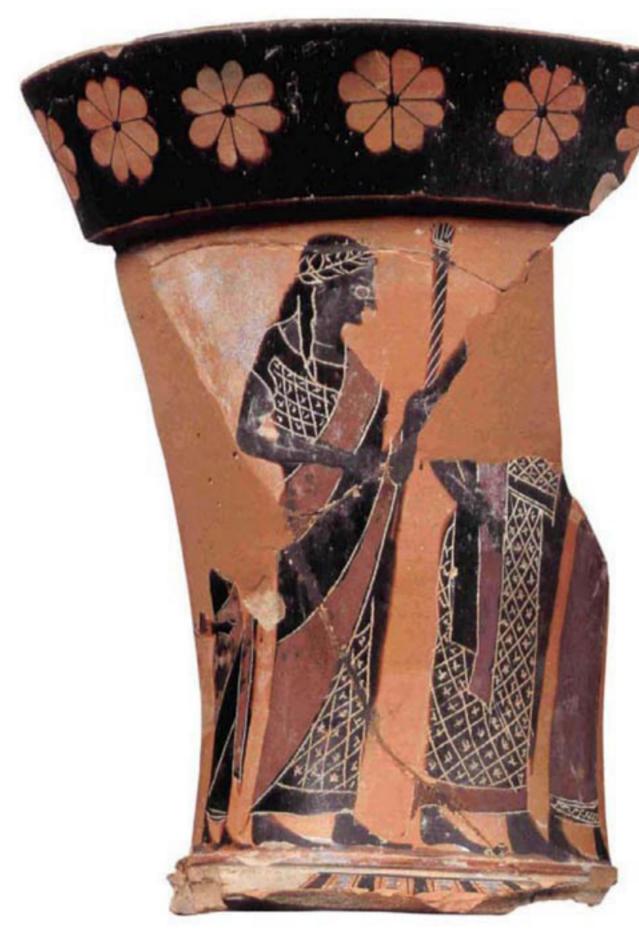


Black-figure amphora, votive offering to the Sanctuary, 580-570 BC.





Black-figure hydria votive offering to the Sanctuary, 580-570 BC.



Neck of a black-figure loutrophoros with representation of initiates in procession, 6th century BC.



Base of a nuptial lebes with scenes from the women's quarters, late 6th century BC.

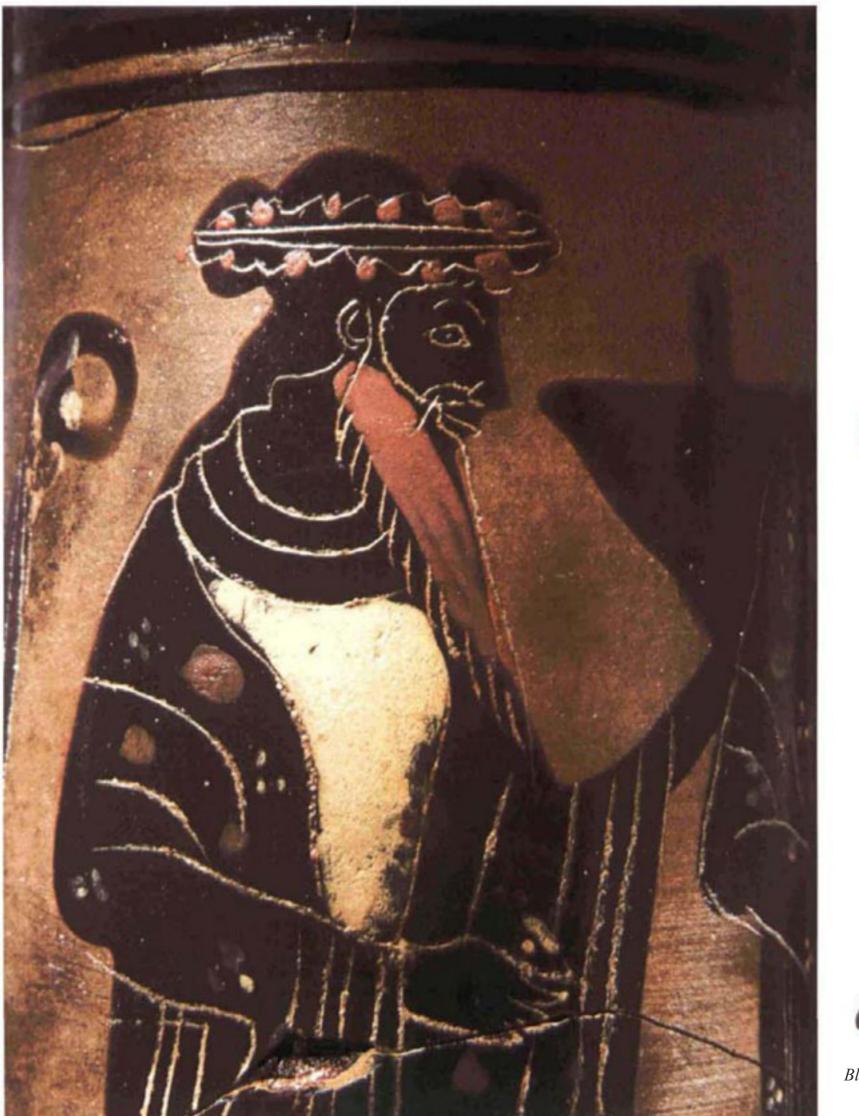




Clay vessel with strainer at the bottom; black-figure representation of the myth of King Midas and Silenus mid 6th century BC.

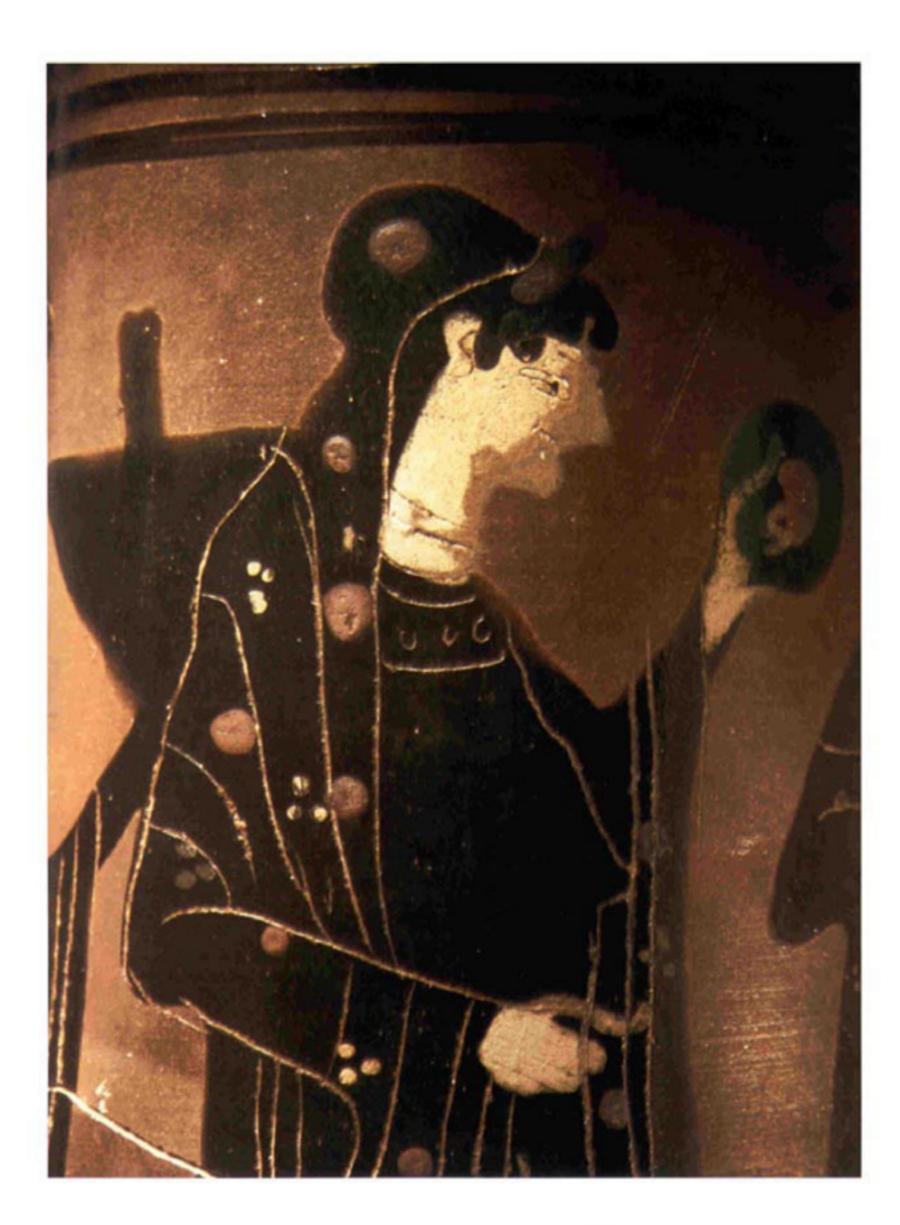


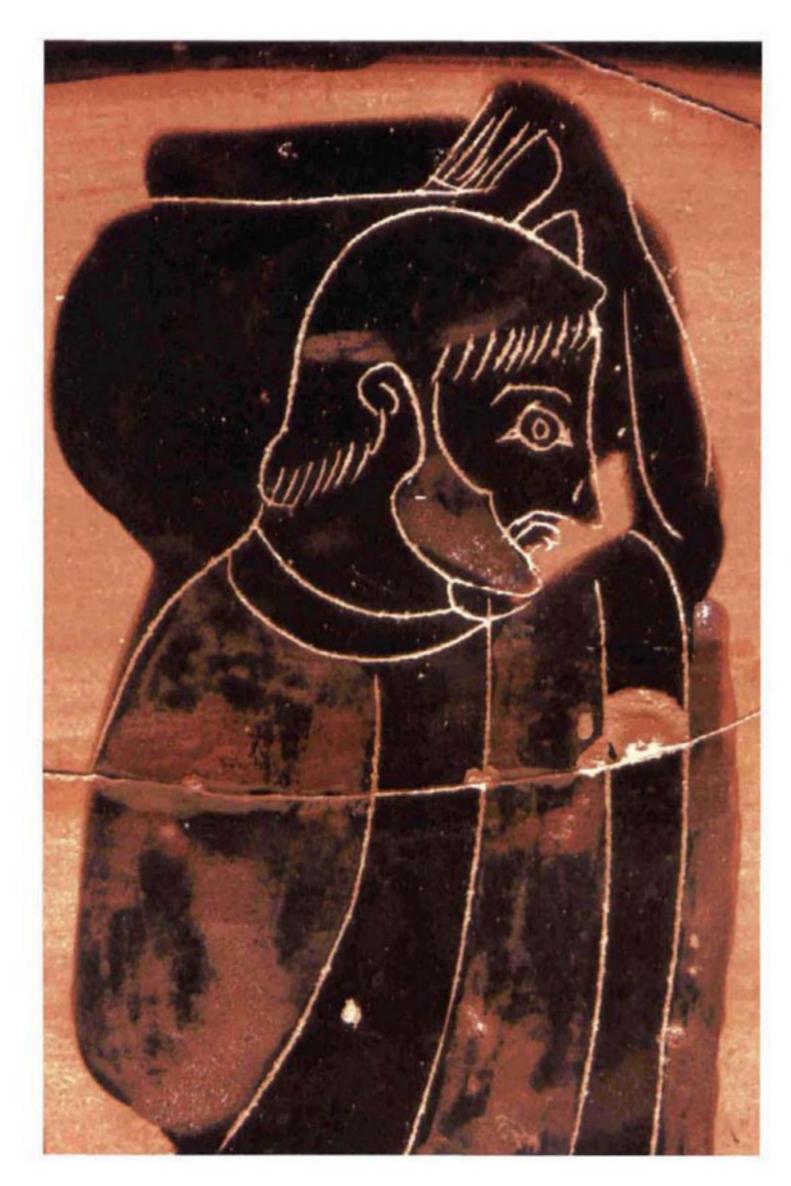
Black-figure lekythos with the scene of the struggle between Thetis and Peleus, 6th century BC.





Black-figure thymiaterion with a scene of a procession of the gods 6th century BC.

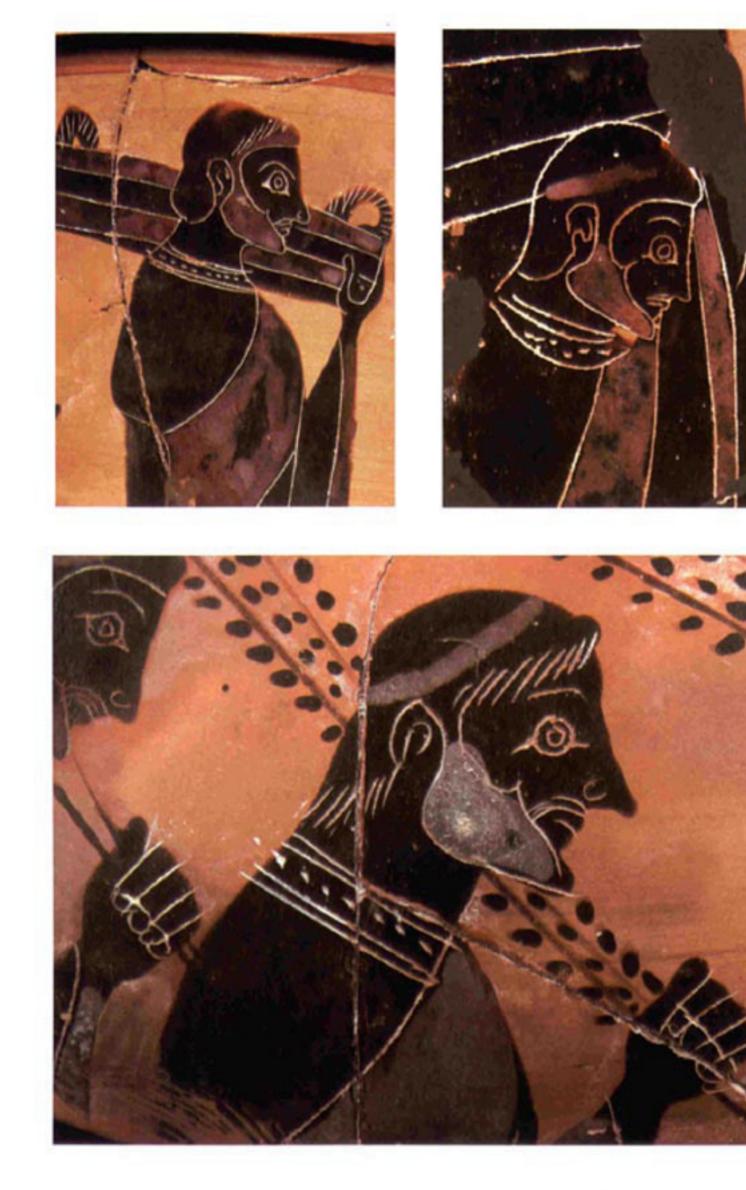






Section of a loutrophoros with black-figure representation of initiates in procession, attributed to the Swing Painter, 540-530 BC.





BC. The scenes depicted on the two sides of the vessel are not connected. On the better preserved side is an image of Midas' mythical capture of Silenus. The king of Phrygia, holding a sceptre, sits on a stool on the left side of the scene. The male figure standing before him is easily identified as Hermes from the long kerykeion, herald's staff, the petasos cap and the winged sandals. To the right is Silenus, his hands bound and looking to the right at a man armed with a spear who is leading him to Midas. The poorly preserved state of the painting on the other side makes it difficult to discern if it is a scene of a sacrifice, or the spring sowing.

Also found in the Telesterion sacrificial pyres were many cylindrical clay devices which it is believed were used to place round- or pointed-bottom vessels. M. Tiberios recently put forth the idea that they are libation vessels. On one such stand dating to 520-10 BC the Painter of the Madrid Fountain painted a statuesque goddess, evidently Demeter, getting on a four-horse chariot to return to Olympus. The goddess is accompanied by other gods.

On the fragment of another 500 BC stand the Dikaios Painter painted a winged female figure, probably Iris the herald of the gods.

Many of the vessels were clearly destined to be used as offerings, not for ritual purposes; this can be gleaned not only from their shape, but also by the technique used to decorate them. This is clearly the case with the libation bowls or phialai mesomphaloi (sing. phiale mesomphalos) found in the Sanctuary which are decorated inside in the so-called Six's technique. Named after Jan Six, the Dutch scholar who first described it, this style involves painting figures mainly in white on a black vessel. Some details can be added in red. It is clear that such vessels were only for offering, as filling them with any liquid would have destroyed the fragile painting in the vessel.

One such phiale mesomphalos, a shape that was derived from earlier metal vessels, was decorated inside with large white anthemia with spiral stems, and two sirens between them carrying a seven-string kithara. The incised letters in the back do not make up words, and must therefore denote the sirens' song. This vessel dates to the end of the 6th century, early 5th century BC.



Vessel whose body is rendered in the shape of cockle shells.



Vessel with scene of Demeter stepping on to a chariot, 520-510 BC.



Vessel comprising two female faces.

White ground kylikes, found only in sanctuaries, were also mainly intended to be used as offerings, as the fragile white colouring was not meant for every day use. Fragments of only two such kylikes were found in the Eleusis Sanctuary, but despite their state, one cannot but be awed by the masterful artwork.

The one kylix portrays a scene from the gigantomachy, with Athena attacking a giant, clearly Enceladus, who can be seen on the right. The goddess is wearing and Attic helmet, and the aegis with the medusa head lies over her shoulders and left arm, with which she has seized the giant. In her upraised right hand she holds a spear pointing at her opponent's face.

Of the other kylix, only a fragment has survived with the figure of a Triton. The sea daemon has a human shape from the waist up and the body of a fish from the waist down. He wears a sea anemone in his long curly hair. Behind him is a dolphin diving into the deep.

Both kylikes date approximately to 500 BC and are the work of the same artist, the so-called Eleusis Painter. The influence of the great master Euphronios is so evident in this work, it was originally ascribed to him. The figures on both kylikes are rendered in outline, drawn with bold black textured lines on the white ground. Diluted paint was used to highlight the details of Triton's body and the drapery of Athena's attire. The same diluted gold-coloured paint was used for Athena's helmet, Triton's fish body, his beard and hair, as well as the dolphin that appears to his right. Both the kylikes bear fragments of the inscription "KAAO Σ " (kalos) praising the beauty of some youth. Among the items offered in ancient sanctuaries were epinetra (sing. epinetron), semi-cylindrical objects, closed at one end, which women placed on their thighs, the closed end covering the knee, when they were carding wool. It is believed that the epinetra used in everyday life were wooden, and the clay ones were used exclusively as offerings at sanctuaries, or as gifts to newly wedded women. Frequently epinetra were decorated with scenes from women's quarters, the dressing of the bride, or the celebration of the wedding. The fragments of one epinetron found in Eleusis are decorated with an unusual subject. The black-figure paintings on the long sides are of Amazons preparing to go to battle. One of the Amazons,

who has already worn her sword, holds two spears in one hand and a trumpet in the other, with which she is perhaps calling her cohorts to battle. The letters that appear around this Amazon and the other figures have been considered to be the musical notes for the call to battle. It would be interesting if this hypothesis were verified, because it would be evidence that knowledge of music was widespread, if even an amateur musician, such as the painter of this epinetron, used musical notation and expected viewers of his work to read the melody. This epinetron has been dated to approximately 500 BC and is attributed to the Sappho Painter.



Phiale mesomphalos with sirens in between anthemia, late 6th century BC – early 5th century BC.

The plastic vessels found in the Sanctuary also seem to have been made as offerings rather than for daily use. One such vessel is a small aryballos whose body consists of plastically rendered cockle shells. The potter was so proud of his work, he signed the top side of the mouth with the words " Φ INTIAS EIIOIESEN", Phintias made this.

Another vessel has a narrow neck with two curved handles. The body comprises two moulded women's heads, one on each side. The eyebrows and eyes of the figures are rendered in black paint, the hair framing the faces still bears traces of the red paint, and the lips are slightly smiling. The figures' earrings are









Votive clay epinetron with a scene of Amazons preparing for battle, ca. 500 BC.





Fragment of white kylix with Triton, ca. 500 BC.

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rendered in black paint.

Aside from the offerings made of clay, the faithful may very well have offered objects made of other materials, but none such have survived. Many must have been made of wood, textiles, leather and other organic materials that simply could not have survived. Other offerings, ones made of metal and other precious materials, are usually the first to be plundered or used in the fabrication of new items by later generations. Offerings made of stone, on the other hand, are as durable as those made of clay, and constitute the second large group of offerings found in Greek sanctuaries. Because of the material they were made of, their mass, and the work they required, stone offerings were, as a rule, more expensive than ones made of clay.

The oldest stone offerings found in Eleusis belong to the Archaic period, the 6th century BC. Because most of the sculptures were found in the early years of excavations, before the Eleusis Museum was built, they were taken to the National Archaeological Museum in Athens. Segments of seven marble korai are exhibited there today, as well as a male head, that all come from the Eleusinian Sanctuary and date to the 6th, or early 5th century BC. The Eleusis Museum has only two very fragmented korai, without heads or limbs, smaller than life-size, and the head of a third, almost life-size, but with large portions missing. Also found in Eleusis and exhibited in the Museum is a kouros whose legs from the knee down have not survived, and whose face has been badly chipped. This kouros is made of coarse-grained island marble, and is softly moulded with slender proportions. These features have led scholars to attribute it to Cycladic workmanship, from Naxos or Paros. The hair is tied with a ribbon and falls down his back, covering the nape of his neck. The statue dates to the mid-6th century BC. The existence of a kouros in the Eleusis Sanctuary, where two female divinities were worshipped and where there was a preponderance of statues of korai, raises once again the question of whom ancient statues represent: that is, did kouroi and korai represent benefactors, or divinities? Unfortunately, the Eleusis kouros cannot shed light on this question, because it is not known where precisely it was found, and therefore we can-



Archaic period horse head.



Marble kouros mid 6th century BC.



not know if it was a votive offering to the Sanctuary or a funerary statue.

The marble segment of a horse's head dating to the 6 century BC also belongs to the Archaic period. It clearly belongs to an equine votive offering, either an individual horse or a group comprising horse and rider. The fragmented state of the statue prevents a modern viewer from truly appreciating its aesthetic value, but the grace of the Archaic art has survived in the details, such as the ringlets of the abundant mane on the animal's forehead. The horse's dash and vigour can be seen from the open nostrils and mouth, the inside of which still bears traces of red paint.

A better impression of what an Archaic equine offering might have looked at can be seen in a later Classical-era statue of horse and rider, but unfortunately in this statue the head, neck and legs of both horse and rider are missing. The tail was an inset made from a separate piece of marble or of metal. Of the rider, who was wearing a short tunic, only the lower body has survived up to the shins. But even only this fragment of the work is redolent with the animal's verve and the strength of the rider's body. It is evident that such expensive votive offerings could be made only by wealthy benefactors who belonged to the class of Pentacosiomedimni and the Hippeis. Such offerings were, in part, an opportunity to display one's wealth.

An even greater offering to the goddess was to provide funds for the construction of a whole building or temple. Such an offering could be made only by an entire city or a powerful, aristocratic clan, such as the Alcmeonids, who offered a large portion of the funding for the construction of the Temple of Apollo in Delphi in the 6th century BC. At this same time, a small oblong building, possibly a temple, was constructed in Eleusis on the ruins of the Geometric Period Sacred House, which is considered to be dedicated to the cult of a hero from the Eumolpidae clan, the sacred, aristocratic clan of Eleusis. This small building may have had a marble roof and architectural decoration. It was within the broader area of the Sacred House that Kourouniotes found the so-called Fleeing Maiden in 1924. The Fleeing Maiden is a marble statue of a female figure moving forcefully to the left, while looking back to the right. The statue is smaller-than-life size (0.65 me-



Fragment of a statue depicting a horse and rider.

The Fleeing Maiden.







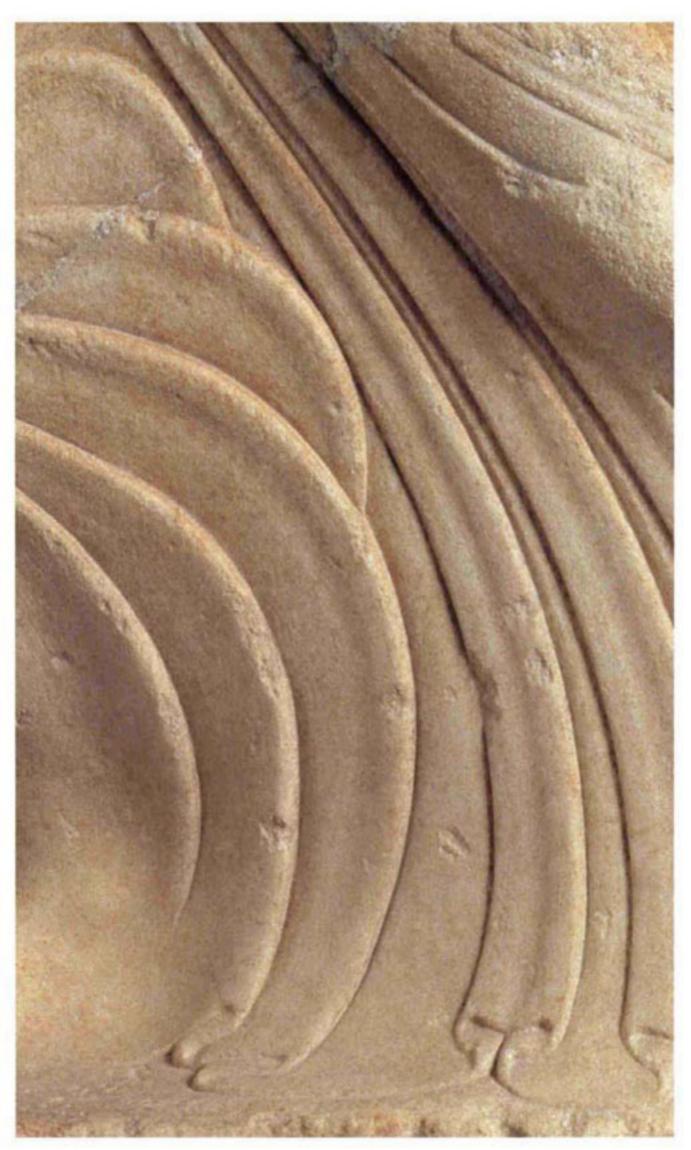


tres in height), and is wearing an unbelted peplos, characteristic attire for a young woman of the time. The forward movement of her right leg creates folds in her skirts that open up like a fan. The maiden's mantle, folded on her right arm, drapes behind her and would have been wrapped around her left arm, which is missing.

Her head is adorned with a diadem, a mark of high, or even divine, origins. Additional tresses of hair may have been inserted in the holes that can be seen in the back of her head. The fact that the statue is rendered in an almost two-dimensional manner the movement seems to be parallel to some plane in the background – as well as the lack of details in the back, have led scholars to believe that it was part of a pediment. Mylonas believed it belonged to the small, Archaic building in the peribolos of the Sacred House. The subject of the pediment sculpture was the Eleusinian mythological cycle. It was therefore proposed that the figure of the Fleeing Maiden was Persephone herself, or one of her friends, the Oceanids, fleeing in fear before the scene of the violent kidnapping that was taking place in the centre of the pediment. However, apart from the fleeing movement, nothing in the maiden's face indicates fear. This made Kourouniotes hypothesize that the sculptor did not wish to sacrifice the kore's beauty and realistically render her intense feelings; the sculptor chose beauty over realistic emotions.

A more recent theory has suggested that the subject matter of the pediment was the Kore's ascent from Hades, and identified the Fleeing Maiden as the goddess Hecate who, holding two torches in her hands that have not survived, lights the way for Persephone to return to her mother.

Although the subject matter of the pediment composition is still in doubt, as is the building it came from, there is no question about the artistry of the sculpture. A work dating to approximately 480 BC, it stands on a cusp and includes memories of the Archaic Period and the dawning trends of the Classical Age. The handling of the drapery combines Archaic love for calligraphic motifs, with a real sense of body movement. The Archaic tradition is evident in the dense curled tendrils of hair on the forehead and the light smile. However the manner in which the sculp-



tor rendered the running figure, and the sense of maidenly freshness of face and body are precursors of the early Classical innovations.

Another Museum sculpture is associated stylistically with the Fleeing Maiden and has been attributed to the same, possibly Eleusinian, workshop. It is a female figure made of Paros marble, almost half lifesize, and only the part from the neck to the hips has survived. The figure stands facing the viewer. The arms, that have been lost, were insets and made of separate pieces of marble. She wears a tunic with rich vertical parallel drapery, and a mantle that also drapes on top. It is not an ordinary statue of a kore, as can be observed by looking at the back of the statue. High on the back, one can see the beginnings of two large wings which opened up in the back behind the figure, making it seem as if it were floating in the air. The wings mark the statue as Nike. Nike also dates to approximately 480 BC and her stylistic similarity with the Fleeing Maiden has led to the hypothesis that she may have stood over the pediment which portrayed the capture of the Kore and her return to earth.

An exceptionally expensive offering, one that would have required an entire city to provide funds, was a full-size or larger than life-size statue. One of the most remarkable exhibits in the Eleusis Museum is one such statue of a standing female figure made of Pentelic marble, slightly larger than life-size. It is one of the very few original works of the great sculpture of the Classical period to have survived to this day, as most of the great 5th and 4th century works we are familiar with have come down to us as Roman copies.

The marble statue of Eleusis is unfortunately missing its head and two arms. Most scholars have identified it as Demeter, but it has been suggested that it might be a statue of Persephone. The goddess wears a peplos belted at the waist and stands straight, with her weight on her right leg. The left leg bends at the knee and only just touches the ground. With her left



Front and back of the statue of Nike, ca. 480 BC.



arm raised and her right at her side, the goddess perhaps held the ends of the long mantle that fell down her back. From the section of the neck that has survived, it seems that the head was turned slightly to the left and that the goddess had her hair upswept. The Eleusis Demeter, as the statue is called, dates to approximately 420 BC, the period in which the so-called Rich Style was prevalent. Because of its mastery, the work was originally attributed to the sculptor Agorakritos of Paros, a student of Pheidias. A more detailed study of the sculptor's works has led to the conclusion that the Eleusis goddess was not made by Agorakritos himself, but by his workshop.

The back of the statue is not worked with the same attention to detail as the front, a fact which has led scholars to believe that it was placed before a wall or perhaps in a niche. In any case, it does not seem likely to have been the cult statue of Demeter. It was perhaps an offering by the Athenians upon the occasion of a victory during the Peloponnesian War.

Another marble statue of a torso wearing a peplos, an original 5th century BC work, possibly represents Demeter, and may come from a group of statues representing the two Eleusinian goddesses. This largerthan-life size work dates approximately to between 420 and 410 BC.

The workmanship displayed in original 5th century BC sculpture can easily be appreciated when comparing it to a similar statue wearing a peplos dating to Roman times. The Roman statue, also larger-thanlife, was found to the south of the Lykourgian peribolos, in a building with a peristyle court that is thought to be the Gymnasium or the Agora. The statue, only the lower part of which has survived, obviously depicts either the goddess Demeter or the Roman empress called "Demeter the Nea". The drapery is not well-worked, making it seem rigid, and the posture exhibits a certain heaviness.

The same inferior workmanship or dryness in the rendering of the clothing and lack of grace in movement also characterises another statue of Persephone





Eleusis Demeter, marble, 420-410 BC.



Torso of female figure wearing peplos (Demeter?), 5th century BC.

Right: Statue of female figure wearing peplos (Demeter?) dating to the Roman period; Left: Detail of the foot bearing the weight of the statue.

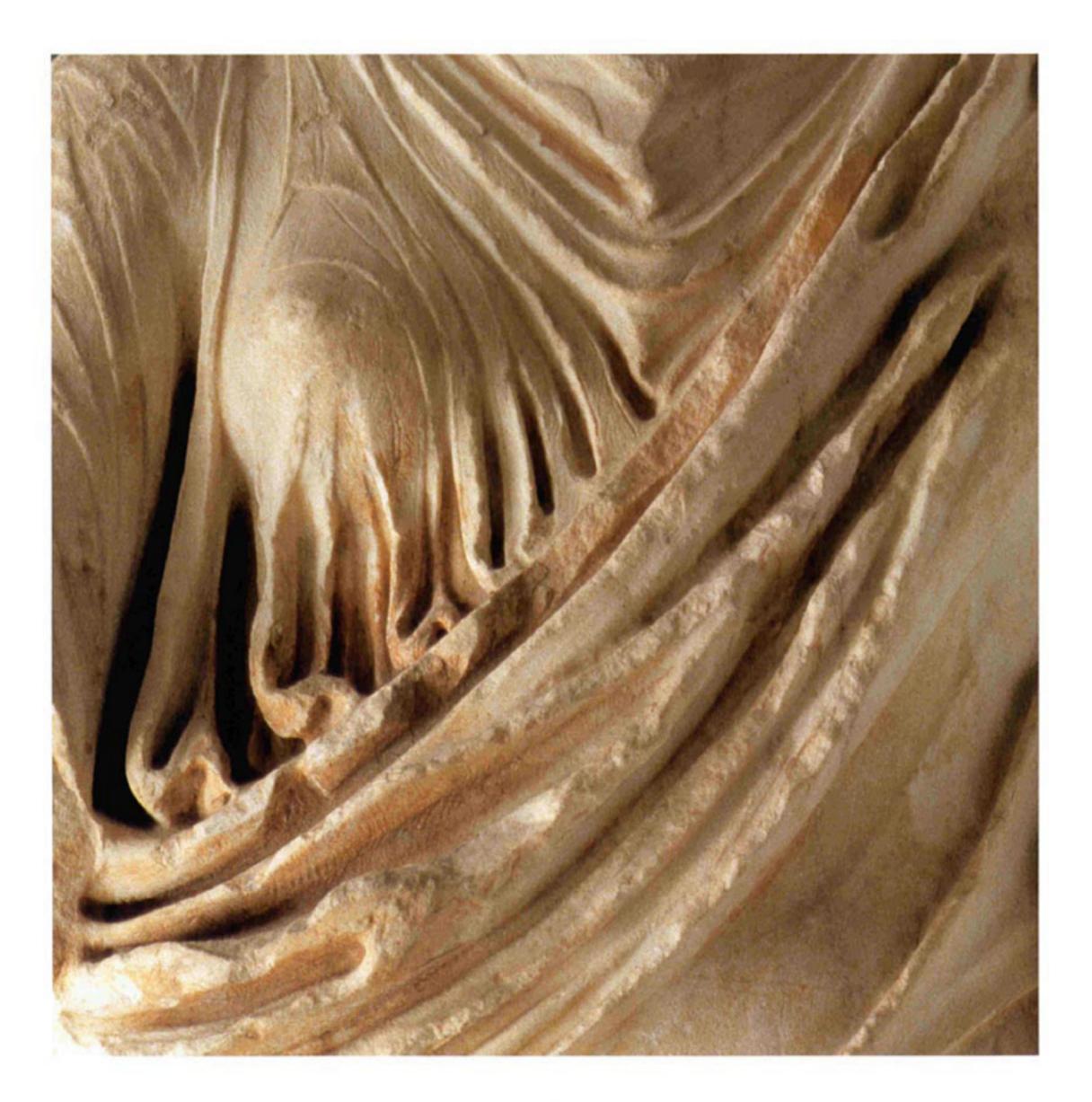


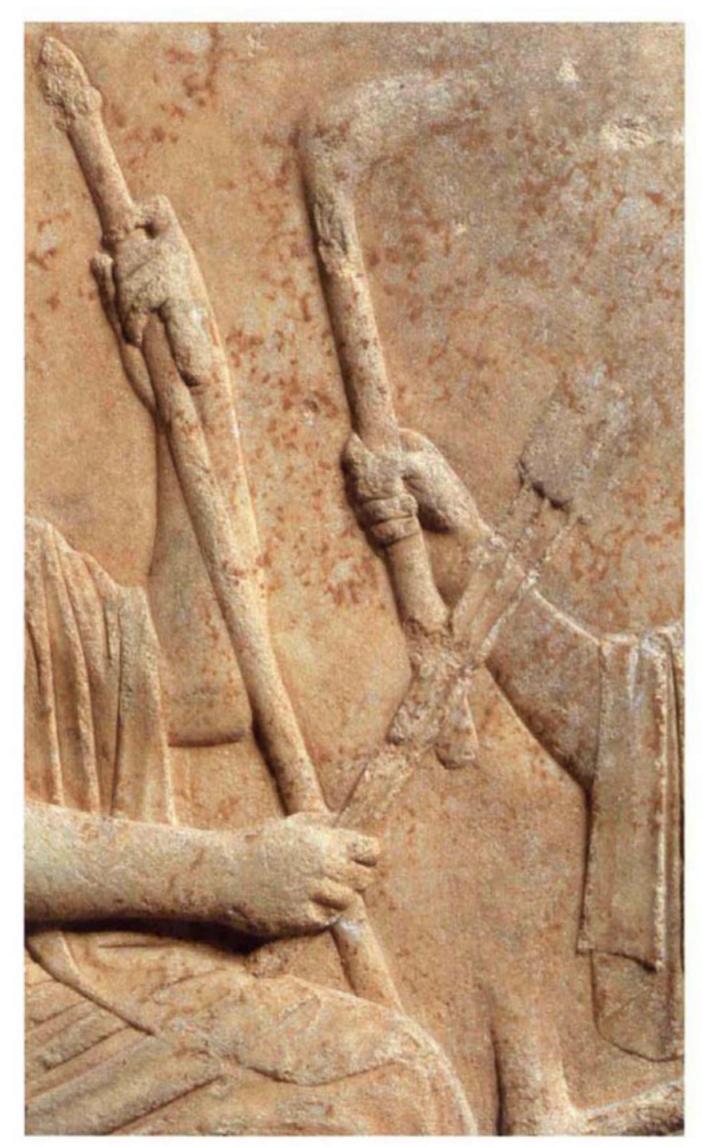




Statues of Persephone dating to the Roman period.







dating to Roman times. The figure stands leaning on her left leg and is wearing a sleeved tunic and a mantle which covered her left shoulder and arm. One of her hands may have been carrying a torch, but the head and arms of this statue have not survived.

Based on a comparison to other representations of Persephone in reliefs dating to the 4th century BC, another Roman marble statue of a female figure wearing a tunic belted above the waist and a mantle which covered her shoulder and arm, possibly represented Persephone. In her right she held a torch or torches.

The collection of votive reliefs from the Eleusis Sanctuary begins with one dating to the 5th century BC that has survived almost intact. On the left, imposing, sitting on a throne, is Demeter with her feet resting on footstool. She is wearing a tall polos on her head, and holds a sceptre in one hand and a sheaf of wheat in the other. A young woman approaches the goddess, a torch in each hand. The young woman is most likely the Kore, although some have suggested that it might be Hecate. There is some dispute as to the exact date the relief was made. Some classify it as belonging to the Severe Style (480-75 BC), while others date it to the mid-5th century, but this might be due to the fact that the work was made in a style older than the contemporary, and did not use the conventions of current trends in art.

In contrast, the Great Eleusinian Relief, one of the most well-known works of the Classical period, is absolutely within the spirit of its times in the mid-5th century BC. It was found in 1859 in the church of Ayios Zacharias in Eleusis, and was taken to the National Archaeological Museum, where it is still exhibited. A plaster cast of the relief was made to exhibit in the Eleusis Museum. The relief depicts the sacred Eleusinian trinity. On the left stands Demeter, hair loose on her shoulders, wearing a peplos and holding a sceptre in her left hand. In front of her and facing her is a nude youth, who the most prevalent view has identified as Triptolemos. Over his right should is thrown a chlamys, which he is holding onto with his left hand so that it does not slip. The youth extends his right hand to the goddess, who is offering him a sheaf of wheat, so that he can spread the skill of cultivating grains throughout the world. The



Marble votive relief with Demeter and Kore, 5th century BC.



sheaf of wheat, which has not survived in the relief, may have been metal, made of bronze or gold, or may have been painted. The youth is wearing sandals, perhaps to indicate the journey that awaits him. Behind him stands Kore, her hair upswept on her head, leaving her lovely neck bare. She wears a tunic and mantle, and holds a torch in her left hand, while her right hand is held above the youth's head in blessing, or to crown him with a wreath that has not survived, that was either made of metal or painted in. It is the sacred moment when Demeter offers her most precious gift, grain, to the human race. According to other hypotheses that are not, however, as widely accepted, the youth is Pluto, Demophon or Eumolpos, or even just an ordinary initiate.

The unusually large size of the relief (height 2.20 metres, width 1.55 metres), the quality of workmanship of the figures, which indicates the relief was influenced by the Parthenon sculptures, and the solemnity of the figures' gestures and facial expressions, distinguish this relief from all other reliefs dating to the Classical period. Indeed, a view has been put forth that it is a cult image, and that it stood inside the Telesterion. This view is not unanimously accepted, but it is certain that the relief was renowned even in antiquity, as copies of it have survived, such as one dating to the Roman period that is exhibited in the Metropolitan Museum of New York.

The size of the remaining reliefs in the Eleusis Museum which date to the Classical period are more ordinary in size and are offerings made by ordinary benefactors. The quality of the work is as varied as contemporary funerary reliefs and were obviously made in the same workshops. Very few Eleusinian reliefs date to the 5th century BC, and especially to the latter half.

One fragment of a relief dating to the end of the 5th century BC depicts two figures in very small scale. The figure on the right, whose head is covered, can be identified as Demeter, while the youthful figure behind her may be Persephone. This very small relief still bears evident traces of its original colouring. It was found in 1895 at a great depth beneath the Bouleuterion.

Another segment of a relief offering that dates to the last quarter of the 5th century BC, found in the tem-



Great Eleusinian Relief (National Archaeological Museum).

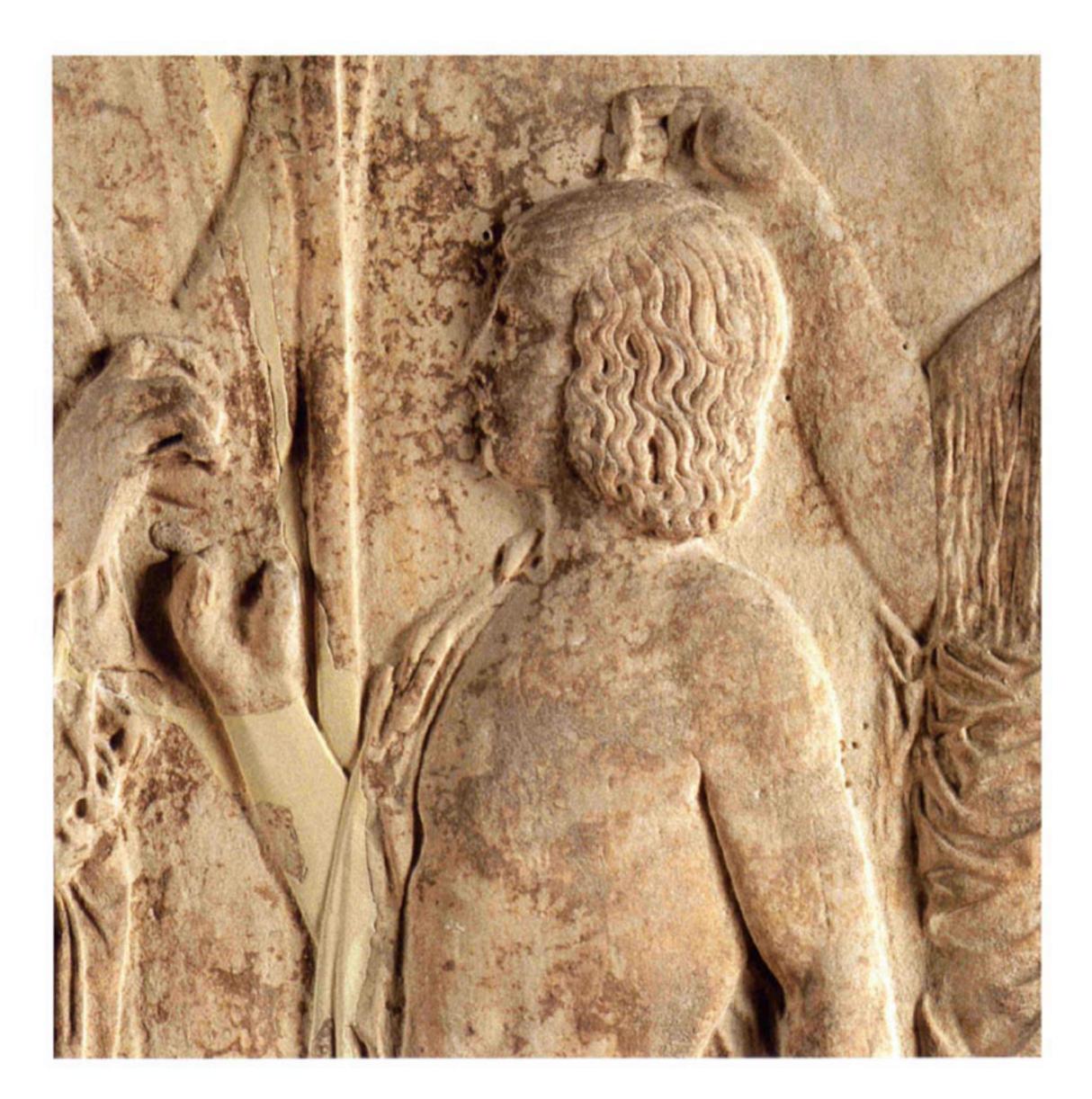
ple of Pluto in the autumn of 1885, depicts Demeter wearing a peplos and a head covering. Her upraised left hand may have been holding a sceptre, while her right hand, resting by her side, may have held a vessel for libations or a sheaf of wheat.

A goddess offering a libation is the subject of another relief that has caused some debate, both as to the scene it represents and as to when it was made. Persephone stands on the right side, her face, unfortunately, almost entirely destroyed. The young goddess is wearing a sleeved tunic and a mantle. The sleeve of her tunic has slipped from her right shoulder, leaving it bare. In her extended right hand she holds a phiale, which has not survived, that was an inset made from another piece of marble or more possibly bronze. In front of the goddess, below where the inset would have been, stands a nude youth with his arms at his side and his head slightly bowed. The stance of the figures, and the fact that the young man is depicted on a scale slightly smaller than the goddess indicating that he is a mortal, have led scholars to interpret the scene as the purification of an initiate by the Kore. Persephone is depicted as "Hydranos", that is to say, a priestess of purification. Various dates have been suggested, but it seems likeliest that it dates to the 5th century BC.

Another fragment of a relief dating to the late 5th century BC or early 4th century BC bears an inscription with the name of the benefactor $\Pi \Lambda A \Theta I \Sigma$ $\Delta IONY\Sigma IOY$ (Plathes Dionysiou). All that remains of the scene is the left side of Persephone's body moving rightwards, with two torches in her hands. Another seated figure, probably Demeter, was in front of her, but all that survives is a part of the throne and the left hand which is holding a sceptre.

There is an unusual 5th century votive relief offered to the goddesses of Eleusis that depicts a battle scene.



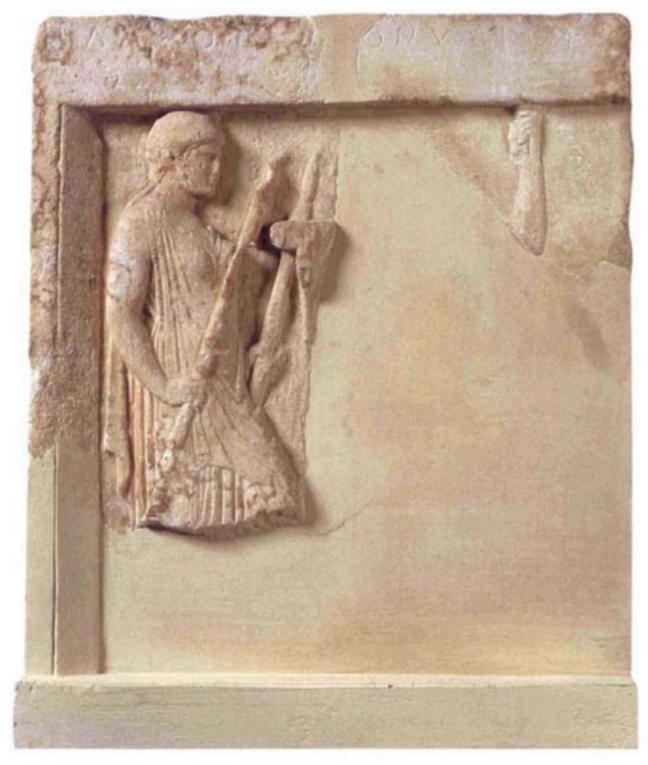




Pythodoros relief, ca. 420 BC.



Relief of Persephone Hydranos, 5th century BC.



Relief offered by Plathis, son of Dionysios, 5th century BC.



Votive relief with Demeter, last quarter of the 5th century BC.



The scene is on two levels, perhaps in an attempt to render perspective. On the lower level, an inscription has survived which needed to be deciphered, as it was in a poor state. Scholars have deduced that the relief was offered to the goddesses by Pythodoros son of Epizelos who served as hipparch, or cavalry commander. Pythodoros, son of Epizelos, is a known historical person who served as a general and who, together with Nikias, son of Nikeratos, took part in contracting peace with the Spartans in 421 BC. The relief is obviously a thanksgiving to the goddess, perhaps because Pythodoros was saved from deadly danger in some battle of the Peloponnesian War. It is believed that the mounted soldiers on the right are Athenians, while the hoplites retreating on the left are Spartans. The relief dates to approximately 421 BC, when Pythodoros was a cavalry commander.

The majority of relief offerings found in Eleusis date to the 4th century BC. It was during this period that the practice of making offerings of this sort to Sanctuaries became widespread. This could be because there was an increased need for religious expression in Attica in the 4th century BC, perhaps because of the terrible affects of the Peloponnesian War. The large number of reliefs found in Eleusis is also evidence of the prestige of Demeter's sanctuary.

Relief offerings were usually placed in a architectural-style frame, with pilasters on the side and cornices with anthemia antefixes. The main scene of the relief was inside the frame. As a rule, the honoured divinities were placed on one side, and the benefactors on the other. In a convention that is virtually universal in the art of all periods, the benefactors were made in smaller scale than the gods.

One of the most popular subjects of 4th century relief offerings found in Eleusis is the myth of Triptolemos' mission. Fourth century depictions differ greatly from the depiction in the 5th century BC Great Eleusinian Relief. In the 4th century BC reliefs, the young Eleusinian hero was depicted supplied with a chariot for his journey to the ends of the earth. Sitting on the chariot that has winged dragons to pull it, he accepts the blessings of the two goddesses and Demeter's last instructions on how to disseminate grain cultivation.

Other reliefs depict only Demeter and Persephone





Fragments of 4th-century BC votive reliefs.



being approached by families of worshippers; the mother is usually seated and the daughter is standing. Sometimes, only Demeter is depicted seated on the Mirthless Stone before she meets with her daughter again.

A rarer scene is a depiction of an assembly of the gods, that is a group of divinities and heroes that are usually connected. In fragments of a 4th century BC relief, of which only the left part and upper right corner have survived, one can see the two Eleusis god-desses. Demeter sits on the sacred cylindrical kiste, and behind her stands the Kore holding a torch. The young man with the long hair that is standing beside them is a god, perhaps Iacchos. On the other fragment a bearded god wearing a mantle (Pluto, perhaps) can be discerned, and behind him, a divine kithara player, Apollo or Eumolpos.

The fragment of a relief bearing a scene with Zeus seated on high-backed throne with an eagle in the background may come from another assembly of the gods. Iconographically, when Zeus was portrayed in this manner, he was called Zeus Philios.

Some fragments of reliefs bear the images of kithara players, but it is not always easy to identify whether they are gods, heroes or even ordinary mortals taking part in some celebration. Sections of other reliefs bear the images only of the benefactors who reverently approach the goddesses. In many scenes the benefactors bear offerings and in other scenes they are leading animals to sacrifice. The sacrificial animals are frequently piglets, but rams and bulls are not unusual. Some scenes also depict cult vessels, such as the tall, complex thymiaterion depicted in the left pilaster of the frame of one relief.

Also found in Eleusis are two reliefs of the "nekrodeipnos" style, as they used to be called. Today, scholars have agreed that these, too, are offerings, usually dedicated to heroes and to the gods. They usually depict a pair of dining immortals being served by a oenochoos, or wine bearer, as mortal supplicants approach them. The existence of such reliefs in Eleusis has allowed us to presume that the immortals in both the reliefs are Pluto and Persephone.

In the smaller nekrodeipnos-style relief which dates to approximately 370 BC, the bearded diner holds his rhyton in his raised right hand, while his left arm







Votive relief with scene of Triptolemos' mission, 4th century BC.



Votive relief with a scene of supplicants approaching the goddess Demeter, who is sitting on the mirthless stone 4th century BC.











Fragments of votive reliefs with animals being sacrificed 4th century BC.



Fragment of votive relief with a thymiaterion on the left pilaster.





Fragment of a votive relief with an assembly of gods, 4th century BC.



Votive reliefs of the heroic type ("nekrodeipna"), 4th century BC.



supports his weight on the recliner. The woman sitting across from him lifts the veil covering her head. Behind them, a nude servant bends towards a lebes. The benefactor appears at the edge of the scene, next to the left pilaster. The man, attired in a mantle, approaches the gods carrying an object that resembles a theatrical mask, which evidently is an indication of his profession.

In the larger relief which dates to approximately 350 BC, the bearded diner is depicted half-reclining, with a rhyton in his raised right hand and a phiale in his left. His divine nature is indicated not only by the larger scale in which he is rendered, but also by the polos he wears. His companion seated across from him holds a chest in her hands. The young wine-bearer is on the right pilaster and is drawing wine from a large krater. A group of five supplicants wearing cloaks approach from the left.

Of particular interest due to its unusual shape and rare subject matter is the fragment of a relief that is carved on both sides. The one side bears the figure of the goddess Demeter wearing a tunic and mantle and sitting on a cylindrical kiste. On the other side one can make out a section of a ship, a subject that was not very common, and unexpected when one considers that it was found in the sanctuary of the goddess of grains, who had no connection to the sea. The vessel depicted is not an olkas, the merchant vessel of ancient times that transported grains and other goods, but a trireme, a war ship, the symbol of Athens maritime hegemony. Only the middle section has survived, depicting the ship moving to the left. On the deck one can see people, passengers obviously, seated or half-reclining. Lower down, one can see the first row of thranites, the oarsmen on a trireme, all in all eight figures and their oars. In between their oars are other oars that belong to the lower rows of thranites, the zygioi, and the thalamites. The section under the oars is not carved in detail, as it possibly represented the sea and was painted. The presence of passengers on deck and the fact that they are in relaxed poses means that this is not a battle scene. It has been hypothesised that the ship represents the trireme "Eleusis gifted by Dionysius" referred to in inscriptions, which was a gift from Dionysius I, tyrant of Syracuse. In Syracuse and in Sicily as a



Votive marble vessel with a scene of Demeter and a supplicant in relief 4th century BC.





whole, the cult of Demeter and Persephone was very widespread.

Another unusual offering is exhibited in the Museum courtyard. It is a large marble vessel, but only the base and the lower part have survived. On the front, it is decorated with a relief representation, of which only the feet of a seated female figure have survived. The figure is wearing a long tunic and mantle, and in front of her there is a man in a mantle. It is the usual motif of a seated (on the kiste?) Demeter whom a supplicant is a approaching. The inscription under the scene leaves no doubt that this was an offering: IEPA TOIN ØEOIN, that is, Hiera to the goddesses. This section on relief offerings closes with the late Hellenistic relief of Lakrateides, found in the peribolos of the temple of Plouton. The relief, only fragments of which have survived, is impressively large, as its is estimated to have been 2.50 metres wide and 1.50 metres high. Approximately sixty pieces have survived, but there are large gaps in the composition. Although a large inscription tells us about the benefactor and the reasons he offered the relief, and the names of many of the figures have been inscribed next to them, there have been many different opinions as to who the figures are.

It is generally accepted that the scene on the relief represents an assembly of the Eleusinian gods. It is accepted that Demeter is the seated figure on the left of the scene wearing a veil and offering a sheaf of wheat to Triptolemos standing before her. It is also generally accepted that the figure standing before Demeter on a chariot driven by dragons, extending his hand to receive the goddess's gift is Triptolemos, although only fragments of the figure have survived. The standing figure with a torch before Demeter is Persephone, and the bearded man with the tousled mane of hair who stands behind her is Pluto, as the inscription next to his head clearly states. Another couple follows: a standing woman lifting her mantle from her right shoulder and a man wearing a mantle, seated on a throne and holding a sceptre. The inscriptions next to them state ΘEA , $\Theta EO\Sigma$, god, goddess. This couple is believed to be the chthonic incarnations of Pluto and Persephone. To the right of the chthonic couple stands the benefactor who, according to the inscription, is Lakrateides, son of





Marble votive relief with Demeter seated on the kiste; on the other side, a depiction of a trireme, 4th century BC.

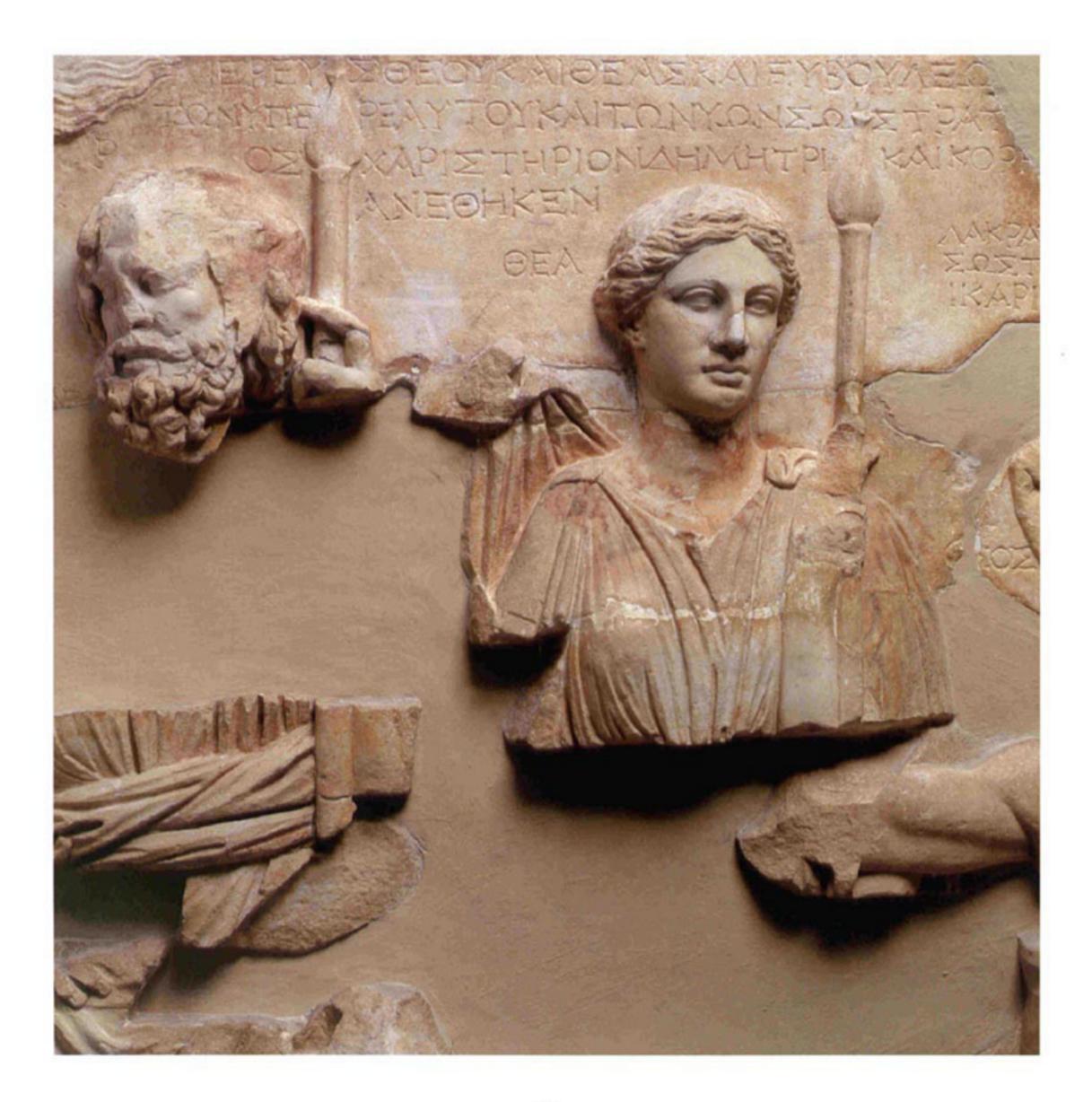




Relief of Lakrateides, with a scene of the Eleusinian deities, ca. 100 BC (pp. 246-255).





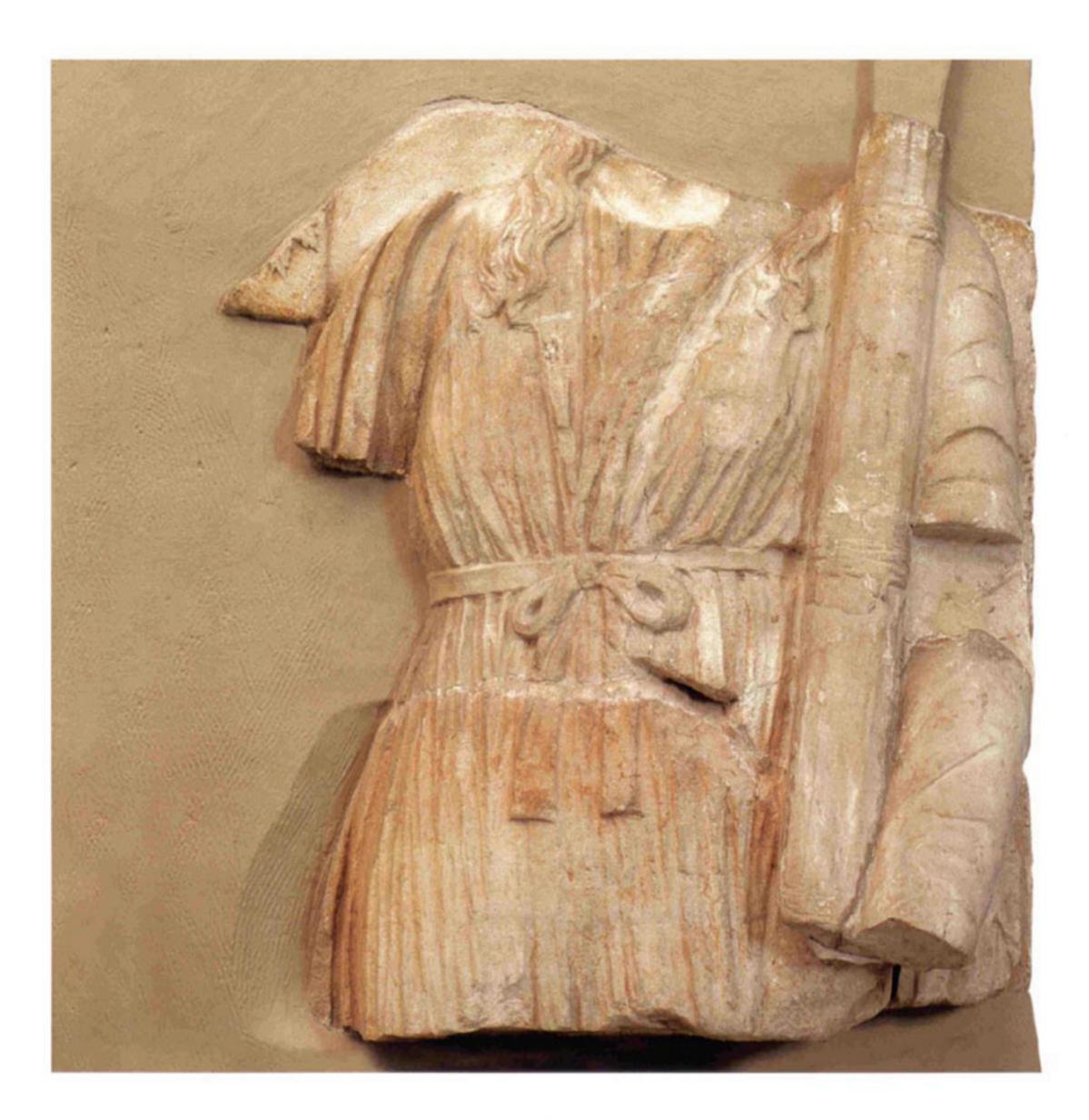










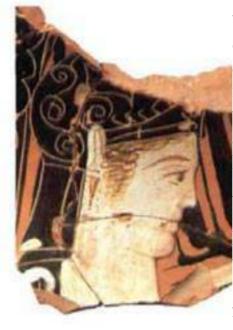


Sostratos, of Ikaria, the Attic deme of Ikaria, where the modern municipality of Dionysos is today. As the inscription informs us, Lakreteides was a priest of the god and goddess and of Euboulos. The young man bearing a torch and wearing a belted tunic on the right side of the relief has been identified as Euboulos. Scholars are not unanimous as, according to another point of view, the figure represents Sostratos, Lakreteides' oldest son. The same view would have it that the young boy on the other side of the relief is his other son, Dionysos, while the woman standing behind the child on the left is Dionysia, the wife of the benefactor. Scholars who disagree with this view believe that the child is Pluto, and the female figure behind it the personification of Eleusis. This impressive relief, dating to circa 100 BC, is chronologically the last of the votive reliefs from the Sanctuary.

Apart from the stone reliefs, a few 4th century BC clay tablet offerings have also been found in Eleusis. Of these, only two are in a good enough state to allow us to restore the scenes depicted. One of the tablets, the more fragmented of the two, seems to have depicted, in the red-figure style, the Eleusinian pantheon in full glory, that is, Demeter, the Kore, Iacchos and Triptolemos.

The other red-figure clay tablet has survived almost intact, with only small pieces missing. The tablet is on the small side (height 0.0445, width 0.33 m), and its pediment is missing, but the central antefix adorned with an anthemion has survived.

As the inscription on the bottom states: NINNION TOIN ØEOIN ANEØHKE, that is, the tablet was offered to the two goddesses by Ninnion. This feminine diminutive has raised questions about the identity of the dedicator, but the issue that has mainly concerned scholars is the red-figure scene on the tablet. It is a scene with many figures that is believed to portray a moment from the celebration of the Mysteries. The rarity, if not uniqueness of the subject, because of the secrecy surrounding the cult, has made the tablet the focus of much discussion from the moment that Skias found it in 1895 to today. Many interpretations have been posited which, for reasons of brevity cannot be fully developed. The figures are arrayed on two levels. Some scholars have hypothesized that the scene is a unified whole, while others maintain that the upper scene is taking place in a different location and at a different time to the one below. Those who maintain that this is one scene believe





Shards of Panathenaic amphorae, 4th century BC.



that the seated female figures on the right are Demeter and Persephone, towards whom initiates, men, women and children crowned with wreaths of myrtle, are walking from the left. Two figures who are standing before the goddesses bearing torches are presenting the initiates to the goddess, and are considered to be Hecate and Iacchos.

According to the other point of view, it is only the lower scene that takes place in Eleusis: Iacchos, acting as a Mystagogos, an initiate's sponsor, presents Demeter to the initiates who have just reached the courtyard of the Sanctuary from Athens on the 19th of Boedromion, the fifth day of the Mysteries. The upper scene, in this view, takes place during the month of Anthesterion in Agrai, and the Ionic column in the upper left-had corner is believed to be a representation of the small Ionic temple at Ilissos. Thus, the scene would be a depiction of the Lesser Mysteries, and the initiates are being led to Demeter by the Kore, the woman bearing a torch.

There are also variations on these points of view and independent hypotheses which belong only in scholarly monographs. The original 4th century BC tablet is exhibited in the National Archaeological Museum, while an exact copy was made by Gillieron for the Eleusis Museum. Another sort of offering, common in the 4th cen-

tury BC, were Panathenaic amphorae. Many pieces and several whole vessels were found during excavations of the Sanctuary of Eleusis. It seems that the winners of the Panathenaean Games occasionally dedicated to the gods the vessels they received as prizes.

Also found in the excavations of the Sanctuary of Eleusis were large quantities of clay kernoi, the sacred vessels of the Eleusinian cult. Besides being used in the rites of the cult, many such vessels, such as the marble ones which were clearly not functional, were presented as offerings. One marble kernos has an inscription: $ATH\Sigma / \Delta HMHTPI KAI KOPEI / ANE\ThetaHKE$, Atis offered [this] to Demeter and the Kore. Either due to their small size or decoration (e.g. gilding), many kernoi are believed to have been offerings.

In addition to the many other types of offerings, stone stelae were also found standing in the peribolos of the Sanctuary that bore decrees of the deme of Eleusis; on the upper part of the stelae, above the inscription, were the so-called document reliefs.



Red-figure tablet offered by Ninnion, 4th century BC.

One such inscribed stele dating to 319/8 BC, bears the entire text of a resolution of the demos honouring the general Derkyllos Autokleous Agnousios for his interest in the education of the Eleusinian youth. As mentioned in the inscription, this stele was placed in front of the propylos of the Sanctuary. It is crowned by a relief with an architectural frame, topped by a pediment. Persephone stands on the right end of the scene holding two torches. Before her, Demeter is seated on the mystical kiste and extends her hand to a man wearing a mantle who approaches her from the left. The small size of the man indicates that he is a mortal, possibly the general being honoured. Demeter's extended right hand either held out a painted wreath which has not survived, or simply gestured to the man.

Another document relief that has survived, dating to approximately 330 BC, honours patrol leader Smikythion. The relief depicts the two goddesses in their well-known stances, i.e. Persephone on the right standing with a torch in hand, and Demeter seated on the sacred kiste. Behind Demeter a man wearing a mantle, whose small stature denotes his mortal nature, must be Smikythion. The mother and daughter hold hands, and may have held a painted wreath for Smikythion.

Fragments of another document relief dating to the 4th century BC have survived. Of the inscription, all that survives is the first line $E\Delta O\Xi E T\Omega I \Delta HM\Omega I T\Omega I E \Delta EY\Sigma INI\Omega N$, that is, "it seemed good to the demos of Eleusis...". Only the lower part of the figures and the pilasters have survived. Triptolemos, depicted as usual on his chariot with dragons, seems to almost touch the right. Next to him stood Demeter wearing a heavy peplos. On the other side of the scene, next to the left pilaster, was Persephone, turned slightly to the right, wearing a tunic and mantle. Between the mother and daughter one can see the lower part of a man dressed in a mantle who, based on the other reliefs, can be identified as the honoured person.

Upon examining scenes with Demeter and the Kore on offerings and document reliefs, it becomes clear that the manner in which the goddesses were portrayed changed in the 4th century BC, and several

Document relief in honour of Smikython, 330 BC.









Document relief in honour of general Derkyllos, 319-319 BC.



Document relief with the honoured person depicted amidst the Eleusinian deities. Latter half of the 4th century BC.



Document relief on the bridging of the Rheitoi Lake, 422-21 BC.

conventions began to be used repeatedly. Demeter was portrayed either standing, wearing a heavy peplos, or sitting on the kiste, wearing a tunic and mantle. Persephone, on the other hand, was portrayed standing, holding torches, and dressed in a tunic and mantle, which was frequently draped in a singular manner over the chest.

The characteristics of both reliefs and statues must be attributed to the influence of great works, possibly cult statues, that were placed in Eleusis, in the Eleusinion en Astei, "in the city", in the Iaccheion, that is, the temple of Iacchos in Kerameikos, and in other sanctuaries.

Many marble statuettes, that is, full figure sculptured forms in dimensions smaller than life-size, have been found in excavations in Eleusis. As a rule, they usually depict isolated figures; groups are rare.

There are two noteworthy groups of figures found in the Sanctuary. One depicts Demeter seated on the cylindrical kiste, extending her hand to Persephone who stands next to her dressed in a mantle, with her hand on her mother's shoulder. The subject of the other group sculpture is rather unusual. Demeter sitting on the kiste holds the Kore on her knee and has her right hand wrapped around her back. Both these offerings are works of the 4th century BC that are clearly copies of contemporary life-size group sculptures.

The remaining marble statues depict either Demeter by herself dressed in a peplos, standing, or Persephone dressed in a tunic and mantle that is diagonally draped. Some 4th century BC statuettes depict the benefactors themselves, e.g. an initiate holding a bacchos and a piglet in his hands, or charming young hearth-initiate. Distinguishing between the initiates and the gods in not always easy when there are no symbols or conventions present. For example, it is not clear whether the headless statue of a man wearing a chlamys over a tunic fastened on this right shoulder represents an initiate or one of the younger gods of the Eleusinian cycle, Iacchos or Eubouleus, because the hands, which may have held something by which to identify him, are missing.

The Eleusis Museum also exhibits numerous statues and reliefs dedicated to gods who were not part of the Demeter and Kore myths. These offerings clearly come from other, smaller sanctuaries and temples in



Statue votive offerings 4th century BC.





Eleusis. Unfortunately, the precise locations in which they were found were not always recorded.

The fragment of a votive relief dating to the 4th century BC most probably came from a cave dedicated to the nymphs. Only the lower left side of the relief has survived; where the usual architectural frame would have ordinarily appeared, there is a rocky mass probably depicting a cave from which the bearded head of a river god emerges. In front of him is a man wearing a chlamys walking towards the left, holding the hand of a figure which must have been a nymph. It is probably Hermes in the role Nymphagogos, the bridebringer, at the head of a small group of nymphs. It is well known that a cave dedicated to Pan and the nymphs existed on the westernmost hill in Eleusis which was quarried in the 1950s. This fragment most probably comes from there, as it was common to worship Pan, Hermes and the nymphs together.

Of the same type is a life-size statue in the Eleusis Museum, but the lack of data on where exactly it was found, and the fact that it was found fragmented, make it difficult to identify the figure. The statue, which has survived from the neck to the knees, depicts a nude man with a small mantle thrown over his left shoulder. His weight is supported on his left leg, while the right projects forward slightly. The lower arms are missing, so there is no symbol or identifying attribute that would help identify who it represents. It is therefore subject to debate if it represents Hermes or a human athlete. The statue is a good copy of a work dating to the 4th century BC.

A statue in the Eleusis Museum that proved easy to identify was one of the sea-god Poseidon. The god is depicted nude, with only a chlamys laying on the thigh of his bent left leg, which rests on a dolphin, a symbol of Poseidon. In his raised right hand, the god would have held one of his attributes, the trident, which was most probably bronze. Long curly hair and a beard frame his face, and his gaze seems to seek out the boundaries of his aquatic kingdom. The statue is a Roman copy in smaller scale of a 4th-century BC work. It has been claimed to be a copy of a work by Lysippus, specifically the statue made by the famous sculptor for the temple of Poseidon at the Isthmus. The statue was found by Philios in 1892 in the auxiliary areas of the Sanctuary near the Propylaea, very



Marble statue of Demeter and Persephone, 4th century BC.

near where the Roman temple of Father Poseidon and Artemis of the Portals was situated.

It is believed that a marble plinth that still bears the remains of a sandal and the toes of two feet possibly was a statue of Poseidon because of the beautiful head of a horse that emerges from acanthus leaves next to the god. Poseidon was worshipped as Hippios (horse god) in Arcadia. Indeed, according to a local legend, in the shape of a horse, Poseidon coupled with Demeter. In Attic myths, it was claimed that during the dispute with Athena over who would become patron of Athens, the sea-god offered Athenians a horse. The plinth with the horse head perhaps dates to the 2nd century AD. In the past, it was assumed to have come from a group statue of the Dioscuroi.

A Roman statue of a seated female figure whose feet rest on a footstool is considered to be a mediocre work. Seated on a throne, the figure is wearing a belted tunic and a mantle. The head and neck are missing as they were made of a separate piece of marble; also missing are the left arm from the elbow down, the entire right arm and the end of the right foot. It is believed that this was a statue of the mother of the gods, Rhea-Cybele, although her attributes, drum and lions, are missing. This is a dry and sterile copy of a work dating to Classical times.

A statue of Asclepius, an original work dating to the latter half of the 4th century BC, was found at the end of the 19th century, approximately one kilometre north of the Sanctuary where there must have been a shrine to the god of medicine and healing. The head and right arm of the statue are missing, as is the staff with the snake wound around it, which the god held. Asclepius wears a heavy mantle that left his chest and right shoulder bare. The plinth, bearing a rectangular insert with an inscription, has survived. The inscription states that the statue was offered to Asclepius by Epikrates, son of Pamphilos, of the demos of Leukonoe. The sculptor copied an earlier work dating to the early 4th century BC, perhaps one made by Praxiteles or his workshop.

The marble statue of Herakles missing is arms can be easily identified by the strong body and the lion skin hanging from the left arm. It is a Roman work, a mediocre copy of another statue dating to the Classical period.



The upper torso of a statue of a young male figure (Apollo or Dionysus).



A marble statuette dating to the Roman period of which only the torso and left arm has survived is of the same hero. The lion skin and club help identify it. Herakles is associated with the cult of Demeter as, according to tradition, the Lesser Mysteries were initiated for him because in those mythical days non-Athenians were not allowed to take part in the mysteries. Inscriptions inform us that there was a temple dedicated to Herakles en akridi in Eleusis, but it has not been discovered by excavators.

Many statues of Dionysus have also been found in Eleusis, all of them dating to the Roman period as evidenced by the burnishing. The young god is depicted nude, or semi-nude with a mantle draped over his hip, holding his symbols in hands: the kantharos, a vessel for drinking wine at symposia, and grapes hanging off winding vines. His hair falls to his shoulders in curls, and his facial features and build are delicate, almost feminine, his gestures are almost languid. As to Dionysus' relationship with the Eleusinian cult, there are differences of opinion. Mylonas denied any relationship, while others claim there was a direct link.

The headless statue of a young satyr found in 1892 in the area of the Propylaea must also be included in the Dionysian cycle statues. The satyr stands on a rock, wearing only a panther skin covering his left shoulder; he holds crook in his left arm, while his right arm is missing from the shoulder. An inelegant work dating to the Roman period, it is clearly a copy of Hellenistic statues, which were perhaps inspired by a superb painting by Antiphilos who, as Pliny wrote, painted a satyr "cum pelle pantherina quem, Aposcopeuonta appellant", that is, clad in a panther's skin, and known as the "Aposcopeuon" or "shading his eyes".

Another archaistic headless marble has been identified as Dionysus because of the delicate moulding of the body and hair that falls to his chest. There is also a view that that it may be a statue of a priest. The work dates to the end of the 4th century or early 3rd century BC. It has been characterised as archaistic because of the exaggerated manner, reminiscent of Archaic works, in which the drapery and hair is rendered in a time when art was more naturalistic, as can be clearly seen in the moulding of the body. Archaism was a trend in art that can be seen in almost all periods of Lower part of a statue of a male figure. antiquity, and mainly characterises works offered to



Roman period statue of Poseidon.



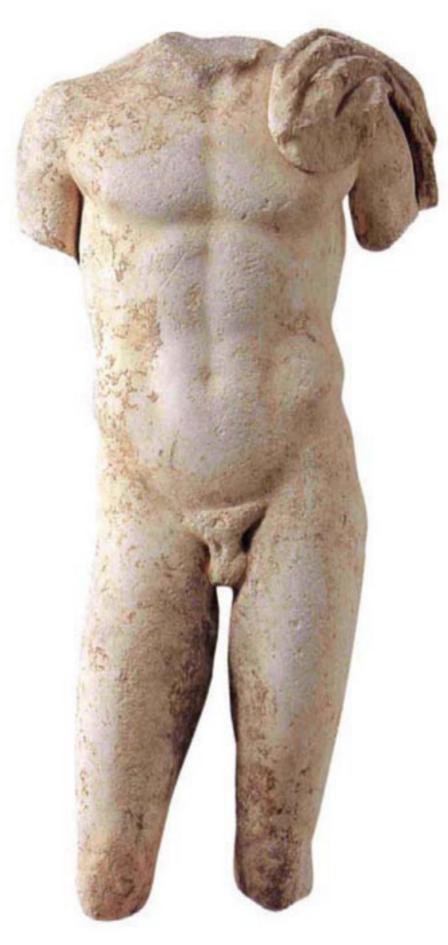




Votive statuettes of the 4th century BC.



Votive relief, with Hermes Nymphagogos (bride bringer) 4th century BC.



Marble Roman period statue of a male figure.



Marble statue of Asclepius on its original pedestal, 4th century BC.







Marble statue of a seated goddess. Roman period.



Roman era statue of Herakles with lion skin.





Statue of Herakles with a lion skin.

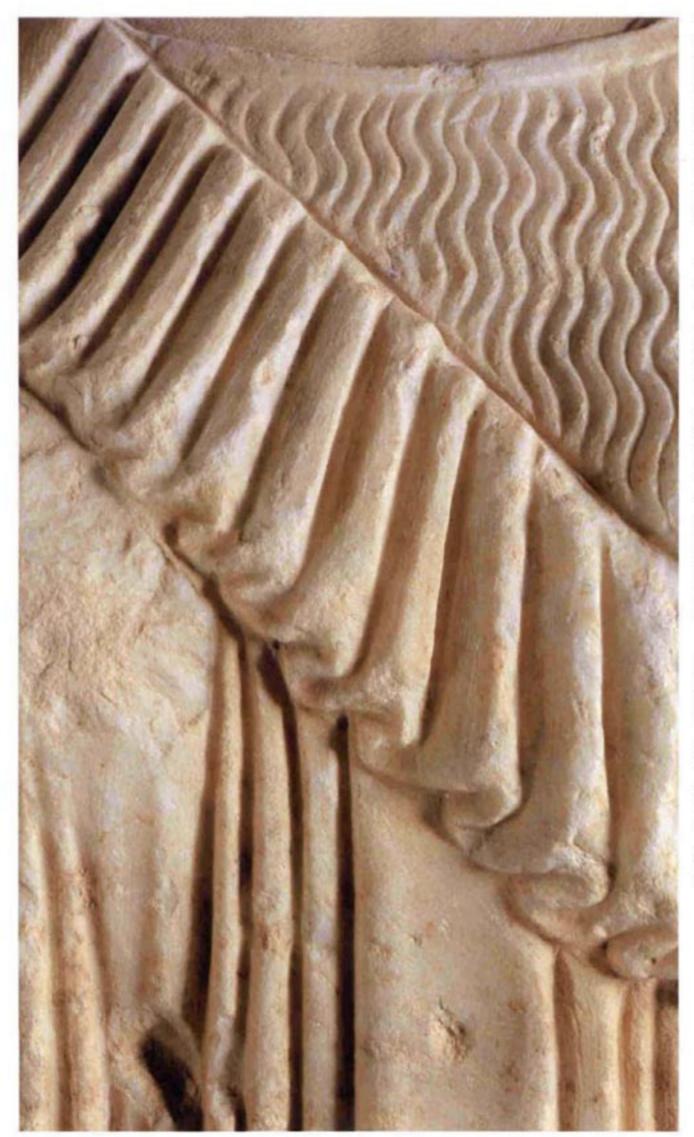
Roman era statue of a satyr.





Marble statues of Dionysus.





sanctuaries.

Other archaistic sculptures have been found in Eleusis. A marble head from a hermaic stele is a good quality Roman work, a copy of an original work by Alcamenes, the so-called Hermes Propylaios. The shape of the long beard and the symmetrical locks of hair, and chiefly the ordered row of curls on the forehead, give the work an Archaic look. It was found near the temple of Plouton and the stele may have been positioned before the entrance to the temple.

The main entrance to the Telesterion was adorned with a pair of archaistic korai holding lekanai, or basins, that held lustral water. The faithful would perform a symbolic purification before entering the temple. The practice of placing such basins in sanctuaries was common from the early Archaic period (7th century BC), and seems to have survived even today, with similar basins to be found in Christian churches of the West today. Of the two korai, only the one has survived un-mutilated to some extent. The large square whole in her body was where the lekane was supported. The statue is missing its head, neck and arms, which were made of separate pieces of marble. The mannered drapery of the tunic and the posture, in which the weight of the body is distributed equally between the legs, are an intended archaism. In contrast, the naturalistic manner in which the body is rendered under the clothing testifies to the progress of late classical sculpture. The pair of korai dates back to the 4th century BC. The inscription below on the square dais also points to the same time period. It states: Deme of the Athenians to the goddesses.

Also found in Eleusis were several pieces from another pair of similar korai that held lustral vessels. The second pair dates to the Roman period and copies similar 6th century BC works in a dry academic man-





Archaistic statue of Dionysus (?).





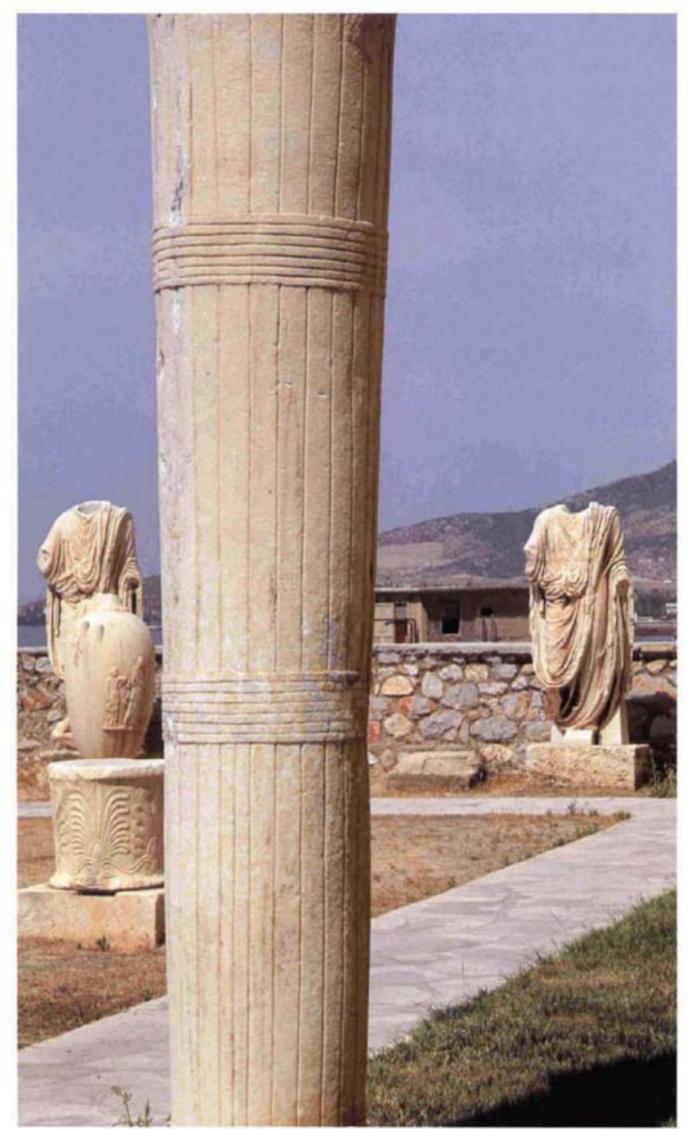




Fragments of marble archaistic statues holding lustral basings.



Marble archaistic statue of kore holding a lustral basin



ner. The archaistic influence is evident in the hair that falls to the breast of the kore, the drapery of the tunic, and in the manner in which the mantle is draped diagonally over the chest. It has been hypothesised that this pair had been standing near the Propylaea of the Sanctuary.

In the Roman period it was common to place in buildings and sanctuaries, not only statues of gods and votive offerings to them, but also statues and busts depicting emperors, their wives, priests and public office-holders. Many such busts and statues in differing states have of preservation have been found in Eleusis.

The larger-than-life size marble statue of a 1st century AD emperor was found south of the Lykourgian peribolos, in the building with the peristyle courtyard that is considered to be an agora or gymnasium. The emperor is depicted standing, wearing a tunic, and over that a Roman robe that covers his head. The velatio capitis, or covered head, is believed to be a mark of the emperor's position as Pontifex Maximus. In his extended right hand, which was made from a separate piece of marble, he probably held a libation vessel. The statue was originally considered to be one of Tiberius (14-37 AD), but more recent claims that it represents Nero (54-68 AD) are more persuasive.

There is another statue of the same type: a standing man in a toga with is head covered, offering a libation with his right hand. This statue was originally thought to represent Nero, but more recent work has identified it as a statue of the emperor Claudius (41-54 AD). Because the statue has not been preserved well, and the facial features are unclear, the view that this is a statue of Claudius is based on the figure's hairstyle.

Two more togati, that is men wearing a toga over a tunic, are to be found in the Museum courtyard. Both are in a conventional stance, offering libation, and are of the same approximate size as the previous two statues. It is, however, impossible to identify them, as the heads, which were made of separate pieces of marble, are missing. Also missing are their arms, which were also made of separate pieces of marble. The better preserved of the two still has its legs and the plinth, as well as a scrinium, letter box, that is rendered schematically. The scrinium is a cylindrical



Marble statue of male figure wearing a toga, latter half of the 1st century AD.



box in which documents were kept. There are two reasons why scriniums were depicted at the bases of statues: first of all they were used as a support for the statue, and secondly they said something about the people being portrayed, that is, that they are people of intellect, or officials of the state. The letter box served as a status symbol, rather as a briefcase serves to identify modern top executives.

A view has been put forth that the two headless statues, also dating to the latter half of the 1st century AD, may have been part of a group including the statues of Nero and Claudius.

Another statue at the Eleusis Museum has not been as difficult to identify as the previous ones. This was found in the old excavations by Lenormant, and has survived almost intact from the head to the plinth; the only damage this statue has sustained is a missing right arm and chips missing from the nose, hair, chin and drapery. The handsome young man depicted can be identified as Antinoös, the Emperor Hadrian's favourite. The youth, whose beauty has remained legendary, was from Bithynia in Asia Minor and drowned in 130 AD in the Nile under unclear circumstances. Extravagant in his grief, Hadrian had him deified and flooded the empire with statues, portraits and even temples dedicated to him. Greek sculptors made images praising the youth's beauty, and placed images of his head on copies of classical statues of the gods. The Eleusinian Antinoös stands with his weight supported on his left leg and his right leg slightly bent. He wears a mantle which leaves his chest and right shoulder bare. This is the stance in which Asclepius was conventionally portrayed, but next to youth's feet, where some type of support would usually have been placed, is the omphalos of Delphi. It is therefore unclear if the young man is being portrayed as Asclepius or Apollo. However it is certain that the statue was made after the youth's deification in 130 AD, and this conclusion is supported by the thoughtful expression and the slightly lowered head.

No statue of Hadrian (117-138), the benefactor of Attica, was found in Eleusis if one does not take into account a fragment of a marble torso wearing a breastplate that has tentatively been identified as the emperor. A small bearded bust has been identified as representing Antoninus Pius (138-161), Hadrian's suc-



Marble statue of male figure wearing a toga, latter half of the 1st century AD.



Portrait statue of Roman emperor (Nero or Tiberius), 1st century AD.



Portrait statue of Roman emperor (Claudius or Nero), 1st century AD.



Small portrait bust of Antoninus Pius, AD 138-161.



Statue of Antinoös, 2nd century AD.

cessor, who carried on his adoptive father's work.

Besides the statues and busts of emperors, many unidentifiable portraits of men and women from the Roman period have been found in Eleusis. Many of the people portrayed must have held some rank in the clergy or office, or must have been honoured for something, but all that remains today is their likeness graven in stone. The lovely bust of a man, labelled "Portrait of unknown man", has a short curly beard and thick hair. The thick hair brushed forward in the style of the time and his forehead has a deep furrow.

Two portraits of children found in the Sanctuary are also very interesting. Both date to the 3rd century AD and depict two young boys, approximately 7-8 years old. Their names are unknown, but the myrtle wreaths on their heads indicate that they were "paides myethentes aph' hestias", or hearth-initiate, young initiates sponsored by their city. Another interesting item is that the heads testify to the sacred hairdo written about in ancient sources. Throughout antiquity, young people would offer a lock of their hair to the gods. Frequently they would let a lock of hair grow, and after a time they would cut it and offer it to the gods. This lock was called skollys. The hair of the younger of the two boys is cut short, but over his right ear one can make out a long curl that is to be offered to the gods. In the second bust, one can see an asymmetry in the boy's haircut over the right side of the forehead; the skollys must have recently been cut off.

One of the most impressive portraits found in the Eleusis Sanctuary is the head of an older man that dates to the latter half of the 3rd century AD. The man has a short beard and his hair falls onto his forehead in spiky locks. On his head he wears a headband, the strophion, a sign of his priesthood. His asymmetrical eyes are wide open and the outlines of the irises and pupils are carved into the stone. He has deep furrows on his forehead. The intensity of his gaze is impressive. It has been suggested that this is a bust of Nikagoras, a 3rd century AD sophist who was a hierokeryx in the Mysteries. This claim is not without some foundation,





Marble portraits of "paides myethentes aph' hestias" or hearthchildren, 3rd century AD.



as a large marble base was found in the Sanctuary, on which a statue of Nikagoras once stood. The inscription on the base states, Nikagoras Keryx of the Mysteries and master Sophist, and descendent of the philosophers Plutarchos and Sextus.

Other types of offerings dating to the Roman period have been found in Eleusis. There are two tall marble torches, or possibly bacchoi, that were found in the church of Ayios Zacharias where they were used as pilasters for Royal Gates. The extreme stylisation of the sculptures makes it difficult to identify them with greater certainty. Christians later carved crosses on them to exorcise the pagan spirits.

The marble statue of a Nike whose garments drape elaborately as she flies to crown a victor was placed on top of a column or pier, or was perhaps an acroterion. The lower part of the body and feet have survived. This work was a good quality Roman copy of an earlier work.

The bust of Athena, easily recognised by the Attic helmet and the aegis with the head of a medusa on her breast, was also some type of roof fixture. The base is in the shape of a flower blossom from whose petals the bust emerges. This is a mediocre work dating to Roman times.

Another poor quality work also dates to the Roman period, but it is interesting because of the unusual subject. It is a rectangular tablet that seemed to have been placed horizontally. The upper part has a scene of an olive press. One can see the circular base of the olive press from which the oil poured to be collected in a large trough-like collector. The oil was then put in a clay vessel, and half buried in the ground. Next to the vessel, one can see the seal which is decorated with the bust of Athena, the goddess that protected olive trees and oil (Athena Moria), as she gave the blessed tree as a gift to the Athenians.

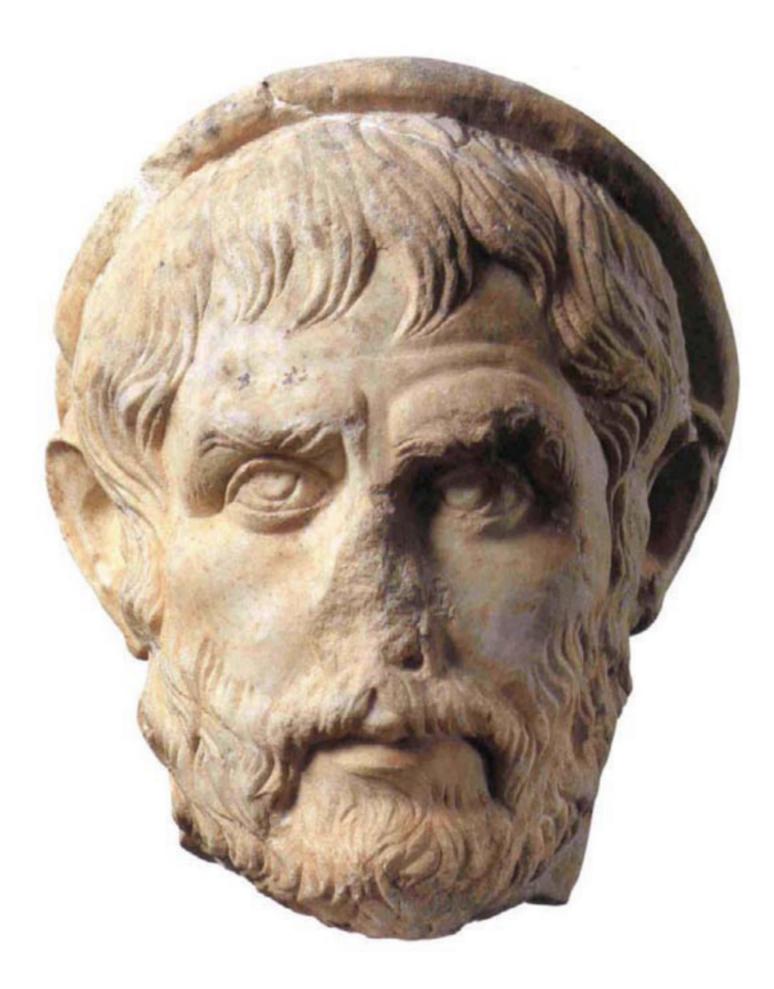
The section on offerings closes with this relief, a mediocre work, which nevertheless expresses sincere gratitude or hope and tells a personal story, just like every other offering whether small, large, valuable or humble.



Roman era portrait of a bearded man.



Roman era Nike.



Portrait of a philosopher (?), 3rd century AD.



Roman era bust of Athena.



Roman era marble torso of a male figure wearing a breastplate.



Votive offering with representation of an olive press. Roman era.



Η ΠΟΛΗ ΤΗΣ ΕΛΕΥΣΙΝΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΑ ΝΕΚΡΟΤΑΦΕΙΑ ΤΗΣ



THE CITY OF ELEUSIS **AND ITS CEMETERIES**

The development of settlements around Eleusis from **PREHISTORIC SETTLEMENTS** prehistoric times and throughout antiquity is easy to explain because of its geographical position. It is in the south west edge of a fertile plain, the Thriasio Plain, that is irrigated by the Kephisos river. From its central position, it controls the main roads that connect Attica to the rest of Greece. At the same time, the small port of Eleusis, suitable for mooring sailing ships, was another source of wealth and communication, and was protected from the furious south winds by Salamis.

A low range of hill that stands between the plain and the sea, and the easternmost hill has been the nucleus of all prehistoric settlements and later the fortified acropolis of antiquity.

The question of when exactly people first settled in the region is still open to debate. The Museum exhibits a Neolithic figurine whose origins remain shrouded in mystery. It is a small (0.24 cm) figurine of polished white (Pentelic?) marble. A characteristic work of miniature sculpture dating to the Neolithic period (6000-3000 BC), it depicts a standing nude woman whose arms are folded underneath her breasts. The elongated neck becomes narrower at the top and the end is the figurine's head. Of the facial features, only the nose is rendered plastically; the eyes are simply two indentations to the left and right of the nose. The figurine depicts a rotund woman with accentuated buttocks. The disproportionately short legs are closed, and are divided by a vertical incision. The figure is part of a group of a steatopygic female figurines which have been the focus of discussion amongst scholars. For some, these figures are the ideal form of womanmother, while others believe that such figurines were associated with the cult of the mother goddess that existed long before the creation of the Olympian gods. Similar figurines have been found in many Neolithic

AND CEMETERIES



Neolithic marble figurine of a female.



Protocycladic marble figurine.

settlements in Greece, but not in graves.

Although there is some doubt as to whether the figurine is connected with the early settlements of Eleusis, it is noteworthy for its aesthetic self-sufficiency and its remarkable similarity to modern art forms.

A small quantity of clay vessels dating to the early Bronze Age (3000-2000 BC) was found during the old excavations of the Archaeological Society on the acropolis hill. The weak evidence as to whether or not the area was inhabited in the 3rd millennium BC provided by these uncontextualised findings has recently been reinforced by the location of buildings dating to the Proto-Helladic period in excavations carried out by the Archaeological Service in the broader region of the modern city.

Another marble Cycladic-type figurine exhibited in the Museum also belongs to the same period, but its origins are unclear. It is documented as having been found in a grave located at the end of the 19th century in the neighbouring town of Mandra. The figurine, whose lower limbs are missing, depicts a standing nude female figure, whose head is slightly tilted back. The arms are folded below the breasts that can only just be discerned because of the damage the figurine has sustained. The figurine dates to the Proto-Cycladic II period (2700-2900 BC), a time when the Cycladic islands had extensive communications with the rest of the Aegean. The damage the figurine has sustained does not allow for a more precise typological classification into a further subgroup. The question of what the figurine represents is still open to debate. One view has it that it represents a female deity, while another is that it was an object that was considered to have magical qualities and accompanied the owner to the grave.

The oldest architectural ruins discovered on the acropolis hill belong to the Middle Bronze Age, or

the Mesohelladic Period, and mainly the last stages of this, that is, the 18th and 17th centuries BC. The houses belonging to this period were rectangular, vaulted and it has been discovered that children were frequently buried under the floors of the houses or in between the walls of neighbouring buildings. The only organised cemetery linked to this settlement comprises 92 graves dating to the Mesohelladic Period that were examined in the so-called "western cemetery", 750 metres west of the settlement, along the road that led to Megara. The graves are cist graves whose walls are lined with shingle, or, more rarely, simple trenches dug into the ground. Most graves, mainly the oldest ones, contained no funerary offerings, a fact that indicates either straitened circumstances, or the prevalent ideological views of death in those days. The vessels found in the Mesohelladic graves and in the settlement are decorated either with linear designs in dull colours ("matt-painted"), or were monochrome, grey, black or yellow. Vessels of the latter type were called Minyan, after the mythical inhabitants of Orchomenos, the Minyes, to whom they were originally attributed.

Among the usual types of vessels found dating to this period, there are two interesting bull-shaped vessels found in a grave in the western cemetery. They are unpainted, made of grey clay, handmade and depict animals having a long cylindrical body with short legs. On their backs are handles, and under these is an opening by which the vessel could be filled.

Another interesting Mesohelladic vessel, one that was found in the settlement, in a building in the southern section, is an handmade unpainted cup made of reddish-coloured clay. On the main body of the vessel, there are two horizontal lines of holes that lead to one view that this was a strainer. Another hypothesis, one claiming that it was an incense burner, seems open to question as there are no signs of burning on the inside, and there is no data on religious practices of the time.

It seems that the Mesohelladic settlement was destroyed by fire at the end of this period, and it was succeeded immediately afterwards by the first stage of the Late Helladic Period (Late Helladic I: 1580-1500 BC). This settlement extended over the summit and southern slope of the hill. In the later stages of



Two views of a steatite mould for a ring and plaster cast of one side. Mycenaean era.





the Mycenaean or Late Helladic Period (Late Helladic Periods II and III), the settlement grew and covered the eastern and northern slopes of the hill.

Excavators have hypothesised that the acropolis was fortified with "lofty walls" as stated in the hymn, although no remains of such a wall have survived. They also date the beginning of the cult of Demeter to these times, having identified the Megaron building found under the Classical Telesterion as the temple of the Homeric Hymn.

The buildings dating to the Mycenaean age are rectangular, many of them having a megaron shape. The custom of burying children under floors and in between the walls of buildings continued in the Late Helladic Period. However, the dead were mainly buried in the cemetery west of the acropolis, along the road to Megara. Indeed, some Mesohelladic graves were used again in the Late Helladic period, a fact that points to the uninterrupted habitation of the cemetery and the settlement. The types of Late Helladic graves are, in a way, a development of Mesohelladic cist graves, but there are also subterranean chamber tombs, although fewer in number, that had a descending "dromos" walkway.

Funerary customs appeared not to have changed in the transition from the Middle to the Late Bronze Age. It remained customary to bury the dead, and cremation was unheard of. The most customary funerary offerings were clay vessels, but were in this period they were decorated in the lustrous colours characteristic of Mycenaean pottery. Decorative motifs were augmented by subjects taken from nature. Leaves, flowers, spirals, schematically rendered birds and sea animals were drawn with wonderful results on vessels of various shapes. The Mycenaean vessels found in the graves and the settlement of Eleusis represent the entire range of Late Helladic vessel shapes: cups, skyphoi, prochooi, kylikes, alabastra, amphorae and stirrup jars.

Some of these shapes were exclusively for children. The thelastron, a vessel with a globular body and a protruding spout that narrowed at the top, was used to feed infants. A handle was always placed above the opening at the top, from where the vessel would be filled. There are also small vessels in the shape of an askos (pl. askoi, a small pouring vessel) with a spout on one end and a handle on the back. These were usually decorated with wavy lines and date to the Late Helladic III b period. The small size and the shape, which is obviously similar to the body of a bird, support the hypothesis that they were funerary offerings for infants and children.



Clay figurines dating to the 14th and 13th centuries BC (Late Helladic III AB) were also found in the graves of children. They are the ordinary, mass produced types of female figures with raised (type Ψ) or crossed (Type Φ) arms. The figurines are human-shaped, but have very few plastically rendered details (nose, breasts), and other details such as the eyes, clothing and jewellery are rendered in paint and in a very abstract manner. Many such figurines have been found in graves, settlements and in the sanctuaries of Mycenaean Greece. They are believed to be depictions of a protective female deity, simple funerary offerings or toys.

Mycenaean-age objects made of precious metals have not been found in Eleusis. Even bronze objects have been rare: one pin, two hair clasps and a couple of tools.

False-neck amphora with an inscription in Linear B on the vessel's shoulder. Bronze, Mycenaean-era daggers.

Three bronze daggers found in tombs in the western cemetery are noteworthy. These were offensive weapons with a relatively short blade that were meant for stabbing when in close contact. In the Homeric poems, much admiration is expressed by the people of those times for the weapons and armour of warriors. Swords, daggers and knives were status symbols, the warrior's most important weapons in heroic man-to-man combat, and they accompanied the owner to his grave.

One of the most important findings in a Mycenaean grave in the western cemetery was a mould made of dark reddish steatite dating to the Late Helladic II period. It is rectangular in shape and has survived unimpaired except for a few chips. On the one side there are two circles that end up in narrow casting groove, in which the metal was to be poured. The other side of the mould has two ovals enclosing an engravings which were used to make the crown of a ring. One scene depicts a bird, possibly a duck, and its fledgling. This was not a very common subject in works of Mycenaean lapidary arts. The other side depicts a scene that is clearly religious: two women walk carrying offerings towards a sanctuary, represented by three columns. The trees in the scene indicate the small sanctuary is outdoors. Similar steatite moulds, the products of jewellery-making workshops, have been found in other Mycenaean centres.

Yet another significant finding that links Eleusis with the great Mycenaean palatial centres is the large falseneck amphora found in 1933 in the settlement at the Late Helladic level, under the foundations of the Lesser Propylaea. The amphora, which has survived intact, is oval in shape with two thick handles and decorated with reddish-brown lines. Vessels of this shape were commonly used to store and transport liquids (oil or wine) and are therefore important in tracing commerce in antique times.

The Eleusis amphora has an inscription in Linear B on the shoulder, on the other side of the mouth. No interpretation of the text has been widely accepted. Although the precise meaning remains unclear, its mere existence, along with the mythical tradition and evidence found in excavations, is an indicator that Eleusis was the seat of one of the major Mycenaean leaders, even if this figure was not the Keleos of myth. It is unknown if the end of the Mycenaean settlement in Eleusis came from a sudden catastrophe, or if the end came about gradually. The fact is that the excavations at the acropolis and the graves have not found anything from the late Mycenaean period (Late Helladic III C), but what is clear is that there was a dramatic reduction of the population, if not outright abandonment of the area for a time spanning two centuries (12th and 11th centuries BC). The first signs that the area began to be inhabited again date to the Protogeometric period (10th century BC), and come from graves on the southern slope of the acropolis. During the late Protogeometric period, and mainly in the Geometric period (10th century BC and 9 BC-7th century BC), a new cemetery, the "south" or as its excavator called it, "the ancient Eleusinian necropolis", developed at the foot of the hill, inside boundaries of the previous Mycenaean settlement. By itself, this proves that the settlement of the so-called "dark years" was much smaller than its predecessors. Towards the end of the period, the increase in the number of graves and the rich funerary offerings provide evidence that the population was growing and becoming relatively more wealthy. Eleusis developed to become one of the most important settlements of Attica, a position it held to late antiquity. The cult of Demeter in the Sanctuary undoubtedly contributed to the town's development, as is attested to both by written testimonies and the findings from excavations.

The western cemetery remained in use but decreased in importance as only twenty graves dating to the Geometric period have been examined. In contrast, in the "the ancient Eleusinian necropolis" on the southern slope of the hill excavated at the end of the 19th century A. Skias, a total of 165 graves of children and adults were found.

The funerary traditions in the two cemeteries are identical, and they do not differ from those of Athens and the rest of Attica. The same applies to pottery. This leads one to the conclusion that Eleusis was at that time part of the city state of Athens, while there is some doubt about this for earlier centuries, as mythical traditions mention armed conflicts between the Eleusinians and their leader Eumolpos, and the Athenians with their king, Erechtheus. THE DARK AGES







The tradition of burying the dead in simple trenches or cist graves continued, but the custom of cremating the dead cremation also began in this time. One third of all the graves located were for the cremated. The usual funerary offerings accompanying the dead were clay vessels. However, some graves in the southern cemetery, such as the "Grave of Isis" and "Grave A" had rich funerary offerings, including gold jewellery, bronze buckles, collars inlaid with faience beads, Egyptian-style scarabs and figurines. The most valuable among these findings were taken to the National Archaeological Museum. The remainder stayed at the Eleusis Museum, where a visitor can examine an interesting selection from among the most important findings of the southern cemetery.

Of exceptional interest in terms of the development of art in this period is a Middle Geometric skyphos, drinking cup, that has scenes painted along the band where the handles are placed. It dates to the first half of the 8th century BC (ca. 770 BC) and constitutes one of the earliest appearances of the human figure in clay painting. One side has a scene of a ship with a long ram, on whose bow sits a bird (an omen, perhaps?). On the right, on the stern of the ship, the captain controls the rudder, and on the deck, an archer aims to the left. At the edges of the scene, to the left and right of the ship, are two warriors, who are evidently standing on land, bearing spears and shields. The other side of the vessel bears a scene of a of a fight between two men armed with bows and spears. In the centre of the composition are two bodies, victims of the conflict, lying on the ground.

The artist exhibited a particular interest in rendering the lively movements of the figures, who were drawn with a matt dark paint on the warm-coloured Attic clay.

It remains unknown if the scenes are from the mythical-epic tradition or adventures of Greeks, who at that time sought new lands for settlement – a venture that was not always peaceful and resulted in the great colonial expansion of the 8th century BC.

The funerary offerings found in the graves of the western cemetery are usually decorated with linear and geometric motifs, drawn with great precision and admirably adapted to the various shapes of vessels (prochooi, pyxides, skyphoi, kyathoi, amphorae). The many funerary offerings found in children's graves are a reminder of the pain their loved ones felt at their untimely loss. The miniature vessels, clay balls (marbles) and slingshot found in a child's grave in the western cemetery were obviously the child's favourite toys when it was alive.

Many clay objects were found in the southern necropolis, as well: a clay horse, perhaps from a pyxis cover, a toy resembling a modern rattle, a clay pomegranate, an object that is laden with symbolism about death and hope for rebirth.

A pair of clay boots found in the grave of a woman are an unusual funerary offering – very few such offerings have been found, but all of them are similar. Made by a competent craftsman, they are an example of 'akrosphyra' or 'akrosphyria', closed, tie-up boots, and they date to the latter half of the 9th century BC (Middle Geometric Period I).

A clay model of a tripod that dates to the 8th century BC is not a children's toy. It is decorated with a meander and was probably a support for some sort of vessel.

Many large amphorae were found in the early historical cemeteries of Eleusis. Some of them, the oldest, were cinerary urns, that is, they held the remains of cremations (bones and ashes). Other amphorae, coffins of a sort, held infants or small children. This was a common practice and is called 'enchytrism' by archaeologists.

Towards the end of this period, large amphorae and krateres were used as grave monuments, and thus constitute the earliest monumental marking of a grave. In later periods (the Archaic and Classical), marble, a more durable material than clay, was used to make grave stones for the dead and thus keep their memory alive and mark their place of burial.

Geometric Period vessels from graves in the west and south cemeteries of Eleusis. A THE THE DAY IN A COMPANY

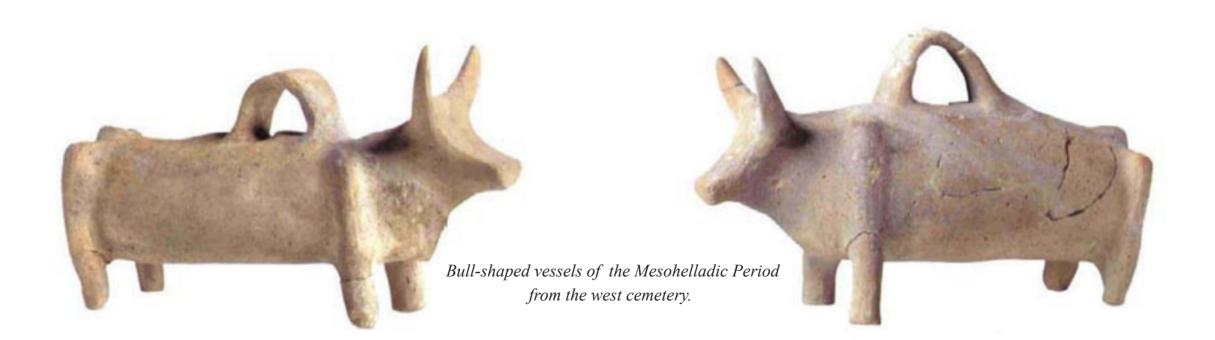


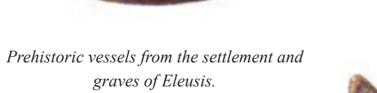




Clay figurines of the Phi (Φ) and Psi (Ψ) type, so named because of their resemblance to the Greek letters.











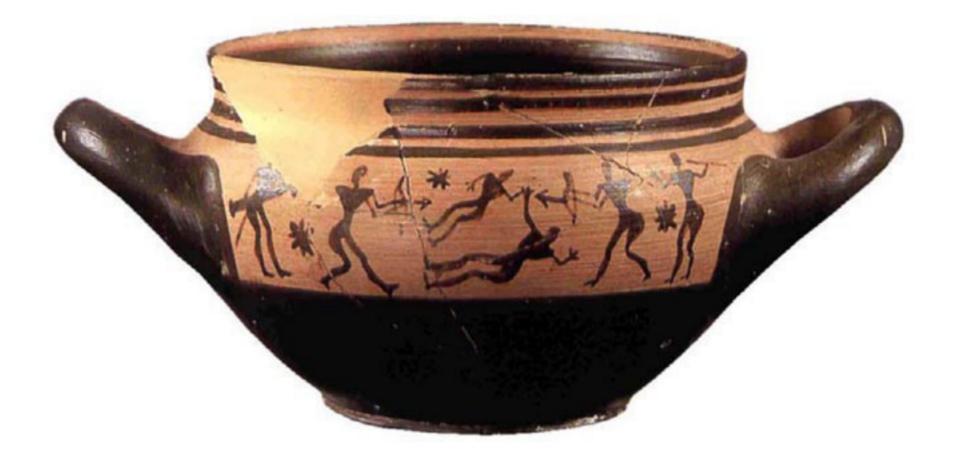
Red-figure pyxides from graves in the west cemetery, 5th century BC.





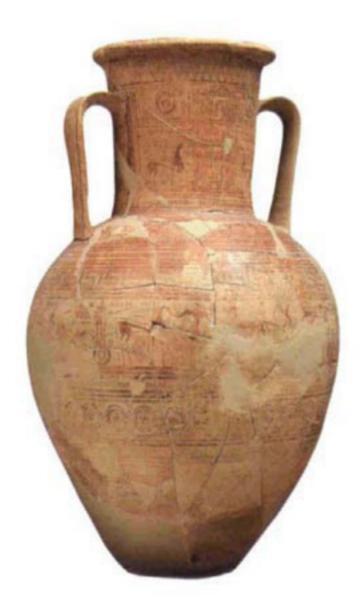


Vessel dating to the Middle Geometric Period with a representation of a ship on one side, and a battle with hoplites on the other.



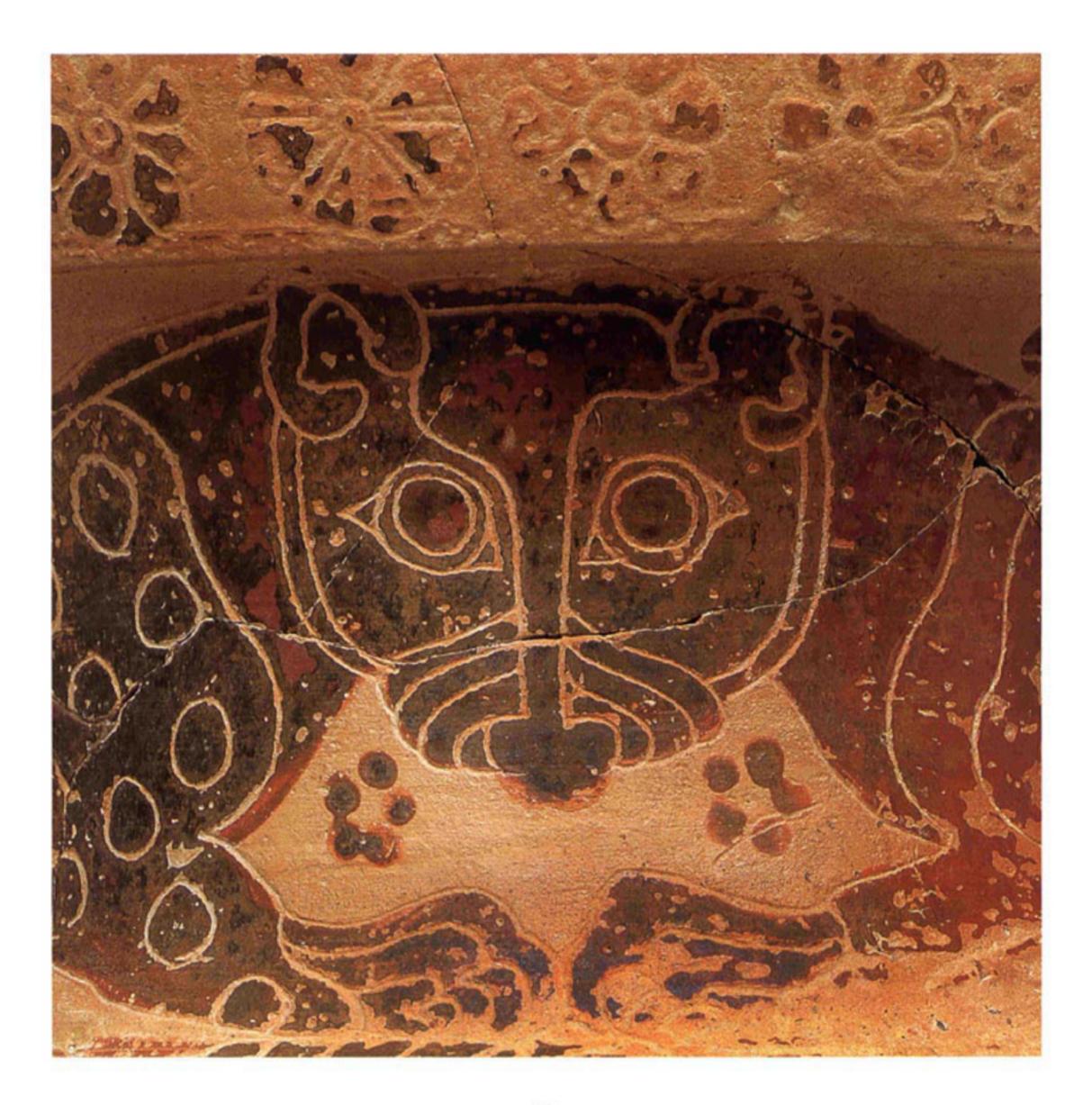






Vessels dating to the Geometric and Subgeometric periods used as cinerary urns, to mark graves or to bury infants or children.





The so-called 'Dark Ages' were succeeded by the Archaic Period (7th-6th century BC), two centuries of experimentation and innovations. The 7th century BC was a time of intense socio-political turbulence. Sources mention conflicts between Athens and Megara over the island of Salamis, a fact that naturally brought trouble to the region near the boundaries of the two cities, i.e. northeast Attica, the Thriasian Plain and Eleusis. But, by the end of the Archaic Period, the boundaries were set, the state of Athens had been formed and Eleusis was included in it. Peisistratos foresaw not only the prestige that the Sanctuary of Demeter could bring Athens, but also the strategic significance of the city of Eleusis. He therefore took care to fortify the hill of the acropolis with a strong wall that had four-sided towers and was a continuation of

the Sanctuary peribolos walls. With Kleisthenes' administrative reforms in the last decade of the 6th century BC, Eleusis became one of the tribes that comprised Hippothontis phyle and entered a period of political stability and artistic and intellectual progress.

In the early Archaic Period the settlement was limited to the acropolis. Houses were lit with oil lamps that seemed to be one of the innovations of the period, perhaps an idea that came to Greece from the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, Syria and Palestine. As Athenaios wrote: "The lamp is not an ancient invention; for light ancients used torches and other wood". The oldest lamps found in Eleusis date to the 7th century BC and are hand-made, shallow, with a handle on one side, and spout on the other. Functional items were left unpainted; the only decoration was an occasional drawing made with a stick.

Using oil for lighting was one technical development, among many other intellectual, spiritual and artistic developments that took place in this period. The decoration of vessels became completely detached from the Geometrical style and developed into the so-called Proto-Attic style, a style with a new wealth of motifs and ideas, the result of travel and contact with other peoples that began again after the isolation of the Dark Ages.

A reduction in population occurred in Eleusis, as

THE ARCHAIC PERIOD (7th – 6th century BC)



Black-figure amphora, ca. 610 BC.



Clay lamp, 7th century BC.



in the 7th century BC. This has been attributed to a drought and the famine and epidemics this brought in its wake. Child mortality was high at this time in Eleusis, and is proved by the fact that the majority of graves of the time were for children.

The splendid Proto-Attic amphora found in the western cemetery that was used to bury a 10-year-old boy came from such a grave. This masterpiece dates to the second quarter of the 7th century BC (ca. 670-660 BC), in the middle period of Proto-Attic vessels, and is in the so-called black-and-white style. It is, in fact, the most important example of pottery from this style. It is monumental, not only for its size (height 1.42 metres), but also because of the decoration, which is not all around the vessel, but only on the front and back. The back side is carelessly decorated with spirals and floral elements. The front side is di-

vided into three zones, on which the painter rendered some of the first paintings of mythological scenes in a fresh and vivid manner. On the neck is one of the oldest representations of the blinding of the Cyclops, Polyphemus. On the narrow surface where there is not enough room to fully develop the subject, one can see Odysseus, and only two of the four companions Homer refers to in the Book Nine (line 334 et. seq). Lips pursed with determination, the Achaeans raised the olivewood club above their heads and stabbed him in his enormous, half-opened eye. Gigantic, Polyphemus sits before them at the edge of the scene, as if he were sitting against the wall of his cave. The outlines of both his face and the faces of his prisoners are drawn in black. He opened his mouth, shouting ("he loosed a hideous roar, the rock walls echoed round"), and the expression on his face is one of the oldest efforts to depict pain in art. With his one hand, Polyphemus tries to ward off the attack, while his other hand holds the vessel that held the wine that made him drunk and bore his doom. The side view makes it difficult to determine of the vessel is a skyphos or a kantharos.

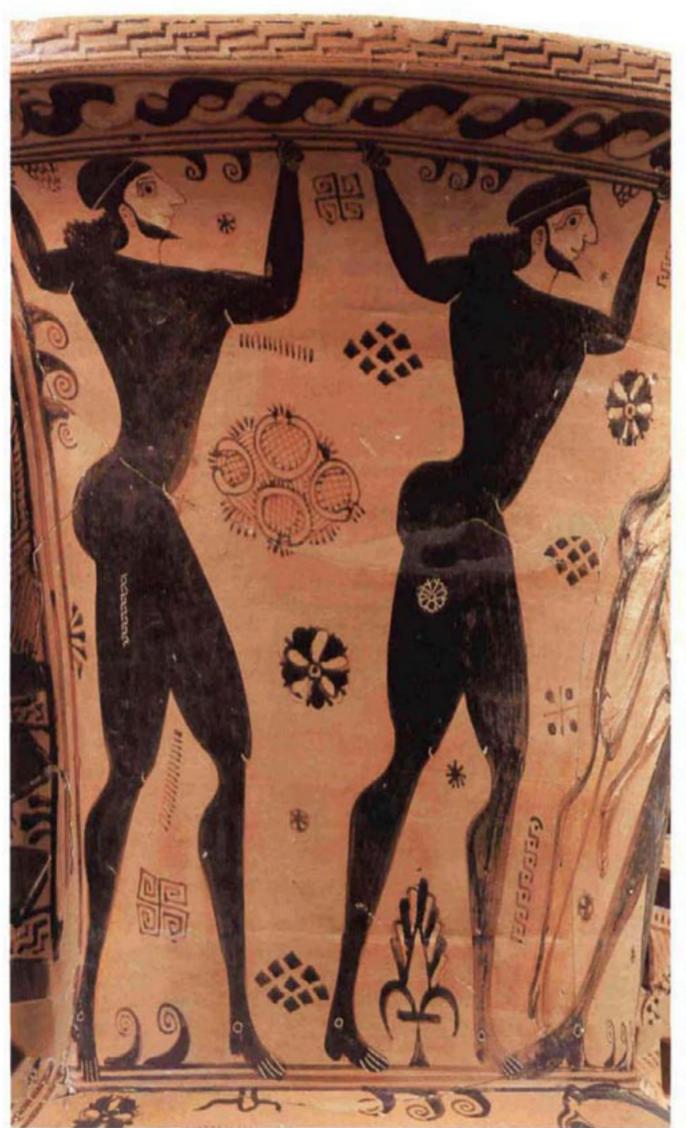
Odysseus and the first of his companions are actually stepping on the giant. On the one hand, this helps economise space in the composition, and on the other, it symbolises their victory over the Cyclops, as treading on the vanquished is a convention in the symbolic language of art.

well as in Attica as a whole and in mainland Greece Black-figure pyxis, 6th century BC. Odysseus' is rendered in white so as to stand out





The renowned Proto-Attic amphora of Eleusis that was found in a grave in the west cemetery (second quarter of the 7th century BC). On the neck of the vessel is the scene of Odysseus and his men blinding the Cyclops Polyphemus. The body of the vessel depicts the terrible Gorgons, sisters of the decapitated Medusa, chasing Perseus (pp. 318-317).



from his companions. The idea to paint him in white was obviously an one that struck the artist as he was painting, and had already made the first strokes in black. This gives the modern viewer a rare opportunity to glimpse the preparatory stage of painting, which was usually concealed after the application of black paint.

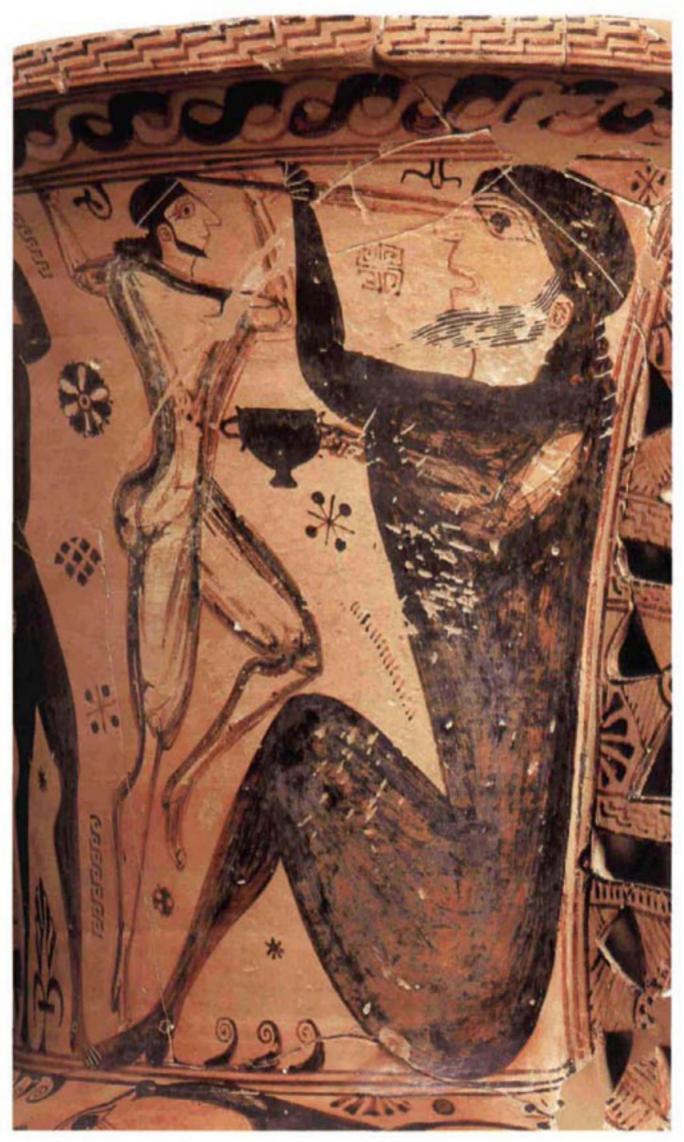
On the shoulder of the amphora (16 cm high) a wild boar faces a lion. Wild animal fights are a recurring theme in Archaic art. The boar on the left, lowers its head towards the lion's raised leg. On the right, the lion with a majestic mane and with his eyes wide open and sharp teeth is, according to one view, the guard that protects the eternal sleep of the child interred in this amphora.

With confidence and daring, the artist chose to decorate the widest band (height 90 cm) of the vessel with only one subject, the myth of Perseus. The figures are monumental. Only Perseus' feet, with the winged sandals he borrowed from Hermes, survive on the right side of the scene. Standing before him, the goddess Athena, as straight as a Doric column, holds a sceptre or spear and protects him from Stheno and Euryali, the Gorgons, Medusa's immortal sisters. The scene closes on the left with the decapitated Medusa lying dead.

The faces of the two Gorgons differ greatly from conventional depictions as have come down to us from antiquity. Not having a prototype to copy, the artist imagined that the Gorgons' heads were somewhat like bronze lebetes from which snakes sprang. Their open mouths and sharp teeth dominate the faces from end to end. Above their noses, small wavy wrinkles call to mind the snarl of an attacking feline. Huge eyes emphasise their fierceness. In this work, the Gorgons have not yet begun to be portrayed as having wings, nor had the "limbs akimbo" convention been established yet. Thus, their movement is implied by one foot protruding from their clothing. Having finished the narrative scenes, this Archaic artist was struck by a horror vacui and filled in the background with decorative motifs: rosettes, rhombuses, swastikas and meanders.

The decoration of the Eleusinian Proto-Attic amphora is ascribed to the "Polyphemus Painter" who was given this name because of his painting on the neck of this amphora. He was a great artist in a time full of enthusiasm, innovation and experimentation. His subjects were taken from the epic tradition and rendered in manner that surely make him a great artist, gifted with imagination and a sense of the monumental; a master of his medium and a technical expert.

Another important amphora in which a child was buried comes from the western cemetery. This amphora is a great example of the development of Attic vessel painting at the end of the 7th century BC. The work of another noteworthy artist, the Chimera Painter, it dates to approximately 610 BC. On the main part of the vase on one side is a large lion, and on the other a seated sphinx with the body of a lion, sickle-shaped wings and a female head on top of a long, sturdy neck. The neck of the vessel bears the images of two animals in a face off: a panther on the left and a lion on the right. The outlines of the two heads join up to create a frontal image of another feline. The illusion seems purposeful, as if the artist created it for fun. Children buried in amphorae were accompanied by smaller clay vessels as funerary offerings: lekythoi, skyphoi, prochooi, pyxides, which in the 6th century BC were decorated in the blackfigure style that had by that time fully developed.

















View of Eleusis from the ruins of the ancient mole. Engraving from The Unedited Antiquities of Attica (1817), published by the Society of Dilettanti.

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During the Classical and Hellenistic periods, the deme of Eleusis was one of the largest in Attica, one with many votes in the Boule, resources from the crops grown in the plain, quarries with Eleusinian limestone, and a port that was protected by a manmade mole that could be seen until the time of the Dilettanti.

Imposing walls surrounded the Sanctuary and the acropolis, making Eleusis Athens' most important fortification. The fortifications offered a safe haven during danger for those that lived outside the walls of Eleusis, and for the inhabitants of smaller, neighbouring demes. A 5th century BC decree discussed the need to monitor in-going and out-going traffic.

The city also had a theatre, and a stadium where games took place. The existence of these public buildings is testified to in inscriptions, but no traces of them have been unearthed. Scholars of ancient Eleusinian topography place them south of the acropolis hill, where factories have been built in modern times.

In contrast to public spaces and the Sanctuary, private homes in those days were characterised by simplicity, both in terms of how they were built, and in the fixtures and fittings. A rich collection of blackpainted lamps, with one or more spouts, dating to Classical and Hellenistic years that were found in Eleusis represent almost all of the types of lamps used during these periods.

In the Classical era, the cemeteries developed along major routes. More than 100 5th-century BC graves were examined in the western cemetery, allowing scholars to investigate the funerary traditions of this period.

For adults, burial was as frequent as inhumation, and it seems that the choice between the two was a matter of family tradition or the family budget. Inhumation took place in oblong pits in the ground, and the ashes and funerary offerings would be covered over with earth. In some rare cases, the burnt remains would be collected and wrapped in a piece of cloth, to be placed in a bronze vessel, a lebes or kalpe. The cinerary urn would be placed in a poros stone receptacle and buried in the earth, and then covered by a slab of poros stone. The Eleusis Museum has a rare example of such a piece of linen cloth dating to the 5th century BC. It is very rare for ancient artefacts made of organic materials to survive, and

THE CLASSICAL PERIOD



Black-painted lamps dating to the Classical era.



this piece of cloth seems to have survived because of the bronze vessel in which it was found. The cloth is approximately 2.20 metres long and 0.50 metres wide; the fact that its edges have survived means that scholars have been able to study the manner in which it was woven.

When burying the dead, bodies were placed in simple trenches, tile-covered tombs or in oblong poros sarcophagi that were covered by slabs of the same stone. The latter type of burial was clearly more expensive, and it has been observed that some sarcophagi were used to inter more than one deceased. For infants and young children, the practice of enchytrism', interring children in clay vessels, continued in this period, but a new tradition began of interring young ones in clay caskets. The Eleusis Museum has such example: two such caskets of the same shape and dimensions, one serving as the casket, and the other as a cover, in which a child was buried with its funerary offerings.

The most common type of funerary offering in the 5th century BC was the lekythos: long cylindricalbodied clay vessels with long necks that contained aromatic oils. Lekythoi were decorated with anthemia or other floral motifs (e.g. ivy leaves), linear designs (checkerboards), or with narrative scenes. Most lekythoi were in the black-figure style, and this technique seemed to become the norm for funerary offerings, as it was used up to the third quarter of the 5th century BC, a time when the red-figure technique became prevalent for vase painting. Blackfigure scenes were frequently painted hurriedly and shoddily, as these vessels were produced to supply the demand in funerary offerings. The price of these vessels remained low by mass producing standardised vessels, of poor quality with painted details that were very simple.

In contrast, the quality of red-figure and white lekythoi was high. On the white slip of the background, painters drew funerary scenes: preparations to visit a grave, the deceased next to his funerary monument, women taking care of the tomb.

While lekythoi accompanied the dead of both sexes, regardless of age, there were funerary offerings for specific groups. For example children were accompanied by feeding bottles, small red-figure lekythoi, toy clay figurines and animal ankle bones which were traditional children's toys.

Miniature choes, little jugs with clover-shaped mouths which were decorated with red-figure scenes of chubby toddlers and children at play, were a type of funerary offering found exclusively in children's graves.

Characteristic funerary offerings in women's and girls' graves were bronze mirrors, clay lekanides with covers and pyxides. Pyxides were cylindrical clay vessels with a cover that were used to keep jewellery or make-up. The decoration on these vessels was from the relatively circumscribed world of the women of those times, e.g. the women's quarters, or a young woman – usually a bride – being dressed by her friends and handmaidens with the help of winged Eros.

Bronze strigils, used by young athletes to scrape the oil and sand of the ring from their bodies, were common funerary offerings in men's graves. Strigils were also placed in children's graves, a gift by an adult to a dead child.

Classical cemeteries were frequently organised into imposing enclosures that contained the graves of members of one family. The enclosures were decorated with stelai bearing relief scenes and inscriptions, or with marble urns, stone lekythoi and loutrophoroi. Many such grave decorations can be seen in the Eleusis Museum.

In the relief scene of one Classical gravestone dating to the end of the 5th century BC, a dead women in a tunic and mantle turns to the right, looking at a young girl wearing an unbelted peplos. The smaller figure is probably a handmaiden, as can be seen by her short hair and the wooden box she holds in her left hand. From the lady's jewellery box, the young maid is offering her lady a bauble which was painted next the girl's right hand.

The 4th century BC marble head of a bearded man, a fragment from a grave stone or a temple is a superb work. The fact that it was found in a poor state subtracts nothing from its beauty, nor from the beauty of a surviving verse from the lost poem of an ancient lyrical poet. The head represents a middle-aged man who, because of his tidy hair and



Bronze cinerary urn (kalpes or lebes) from a grave in the west cemetery, 5th century BC.

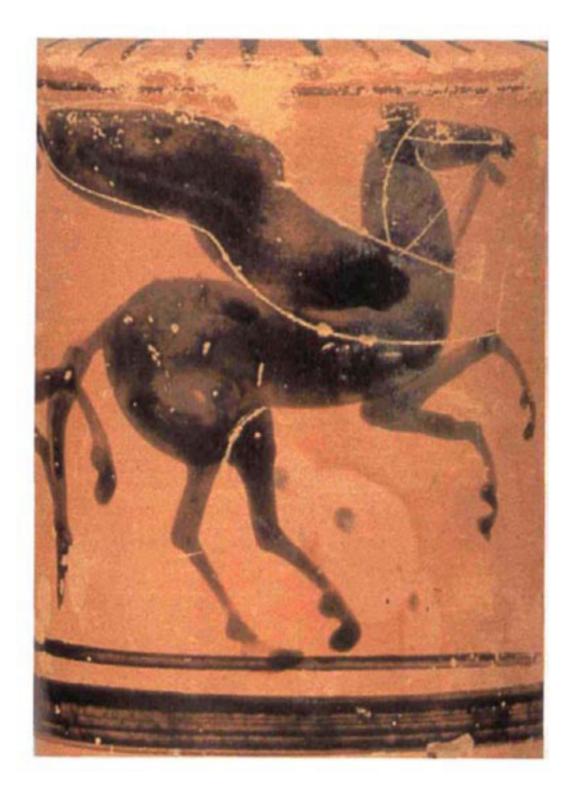
beard, must have been well-to-do. He bids farewell to a beloved person, a child, a parent, or his partner, who has left for the world of the dead. This can easily be seen in the pain in his expressive, almondshaped eyes, and in the mouth whose well-drawn lips seem to let a sigh of pain escape.

Also dating to the 4th century BC is the head of a young woman from a gravestone, but one cannot tell if it represents the deceased or a mourner who has now joined her beloved in the immortality of art.



Linen found in a 5th-century cinerary urn.

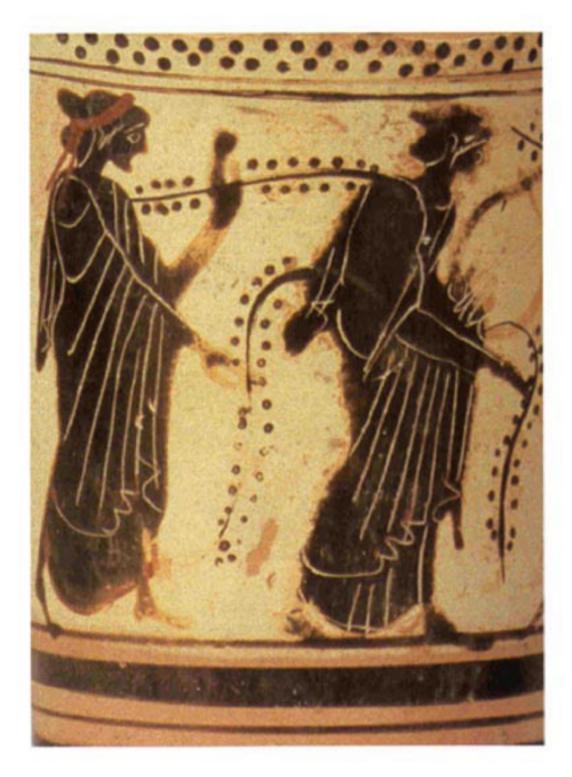


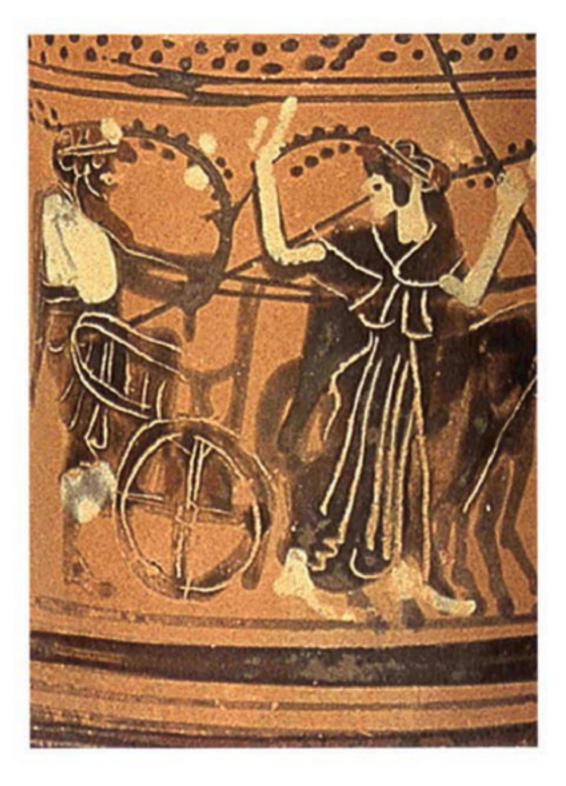




Black-figure and white lekythoi from *Eleusis graves*.





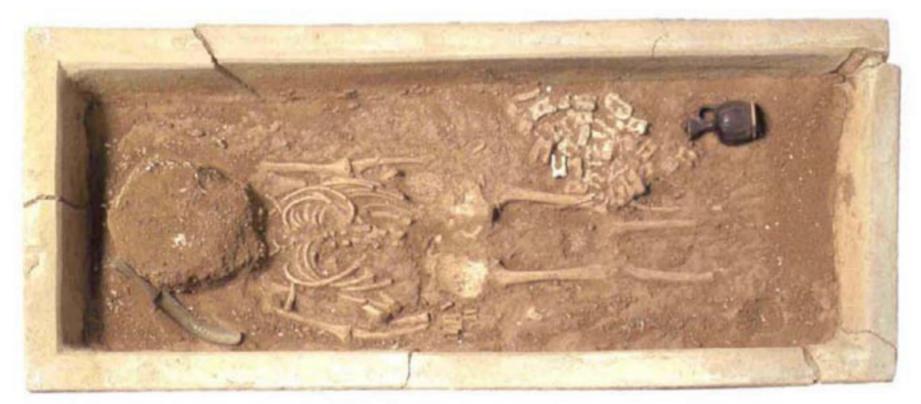




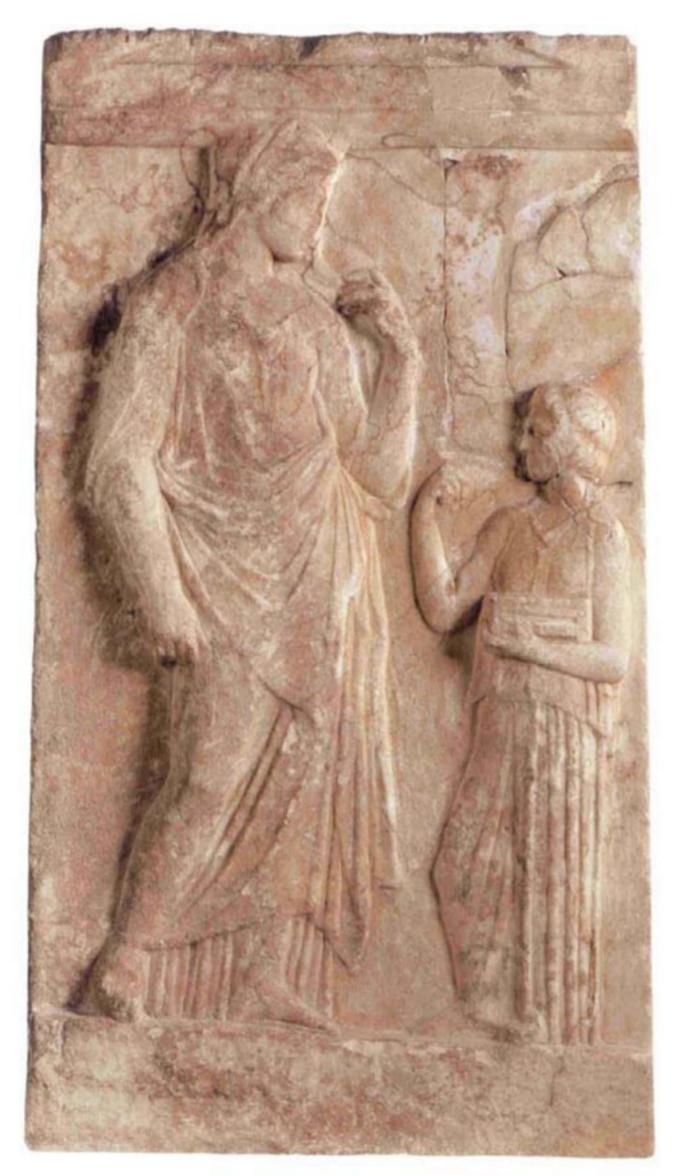








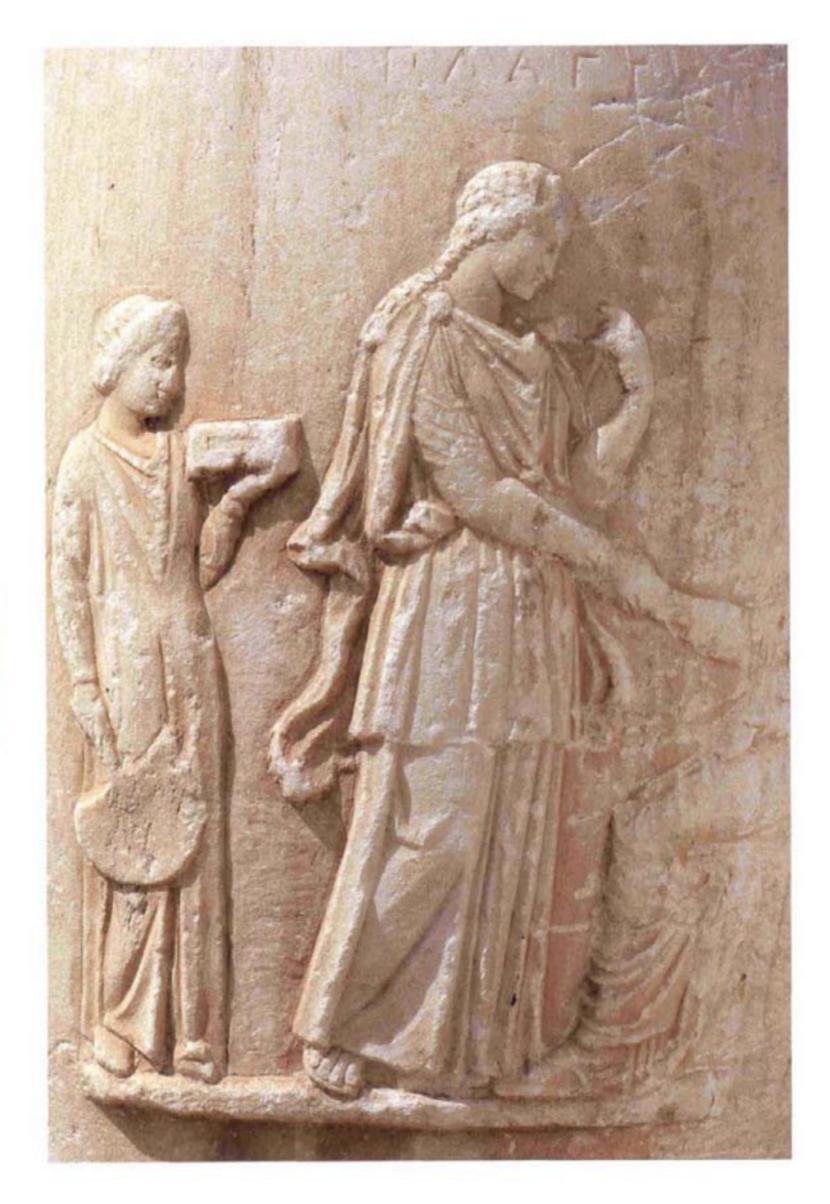
Child buried in a rectangular clay casket, late 5th century BC.



Marble grave stele, late 5th century BC.



Marble funerary vessel from the grave of Plagona 4th century BC.

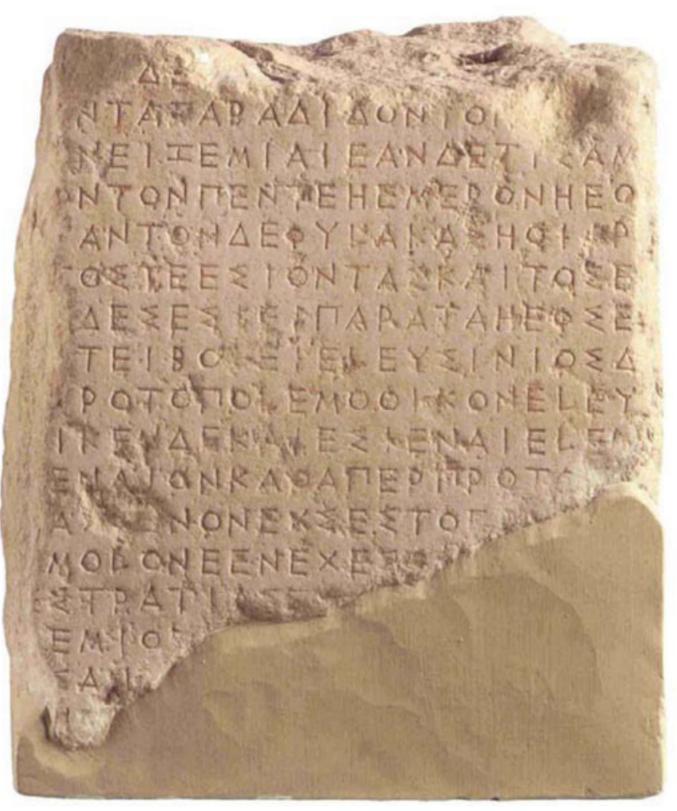




Marble head of a woman from a 4th-century stele.



Head of a bearded man from a marble funerary stele dating to the 4th century BC.



Segment of a document stele on the issue of traffic into and out of the walls of Eleusis, 5th century BC.

Views of the Classical-era fortifications of Eleusis (pp. 341-343).









Marble grave stele, 2nd century AD.

The custom of marking graves with sculpture in Attica came to an end in the late 4th century BC, with a law issued in 317-16 BC by Demetrios of Phaleron. The law limited conspicuous luxury and expensive monuments. However, during the Roman period it became the norm again, although the quality and inspiration of the Classical period was clearly absent. A characteristic example of a Roman era grave stele is one exhibited in the Eleusis Museum for a Miletus woman who died in Eleusis. The stele is in the shape of a small temple, with pillars and a pediment. The tympanum of the pediment has a relief depiction of a basket, denoting the woman's domestic activities. In between the pillars, facing the viewer, stands a female figure in a long tunic, wrapped in a long mantle in the style of the Small Herculaneum Woman. The epistyle bears an inscription with the name of the woman, her father's name and her nationality: NIKARION DIO-DOROU MEILESIA, Nikarion, daughter of Diodoros, from Miletus. It dates to Roman imperial times, the 2nd century AD.

The most common products of Attic sculpture workshops during imperial times were marble sarcophagi. One such sarcophagus, made of Pentelic marble and decorated with relief scenes, was found in 1925 near the Roman bridge of the Eleusinian Kephisos. It was clearly one of the monuments that lined the Sacred Way, the most ceremonial avenue of those days. Its top, in the shape of a scaled pitched roof with pediments, is smaller in size than the sarcophagus, and is clearly a later addition. The main view of the casket bears a scene with many figures, the hunt for the Calydonian Boar by Meleager and his companions. Ac-



ROMAN LATE-ROMAN PERIOD



Roman-era clay lamps.





cording to myth, a terrible boar sent by the angry goddess Artemis ravaged the fields of Calydonia where Oeneus was king. Heroes from all over Greece gathered to rid the land of this beast. In the centre of the scene is the boar attacking Ankaios, surrounded by dogs and the hunters. The twin Dioscuri in the background are behind a boulder. To the right, with back turned toward the viewer, Meleager attacks the boar, and will finally vanquish it with the help of the huntress Atalante. River gods watch the scene from the sidelines.

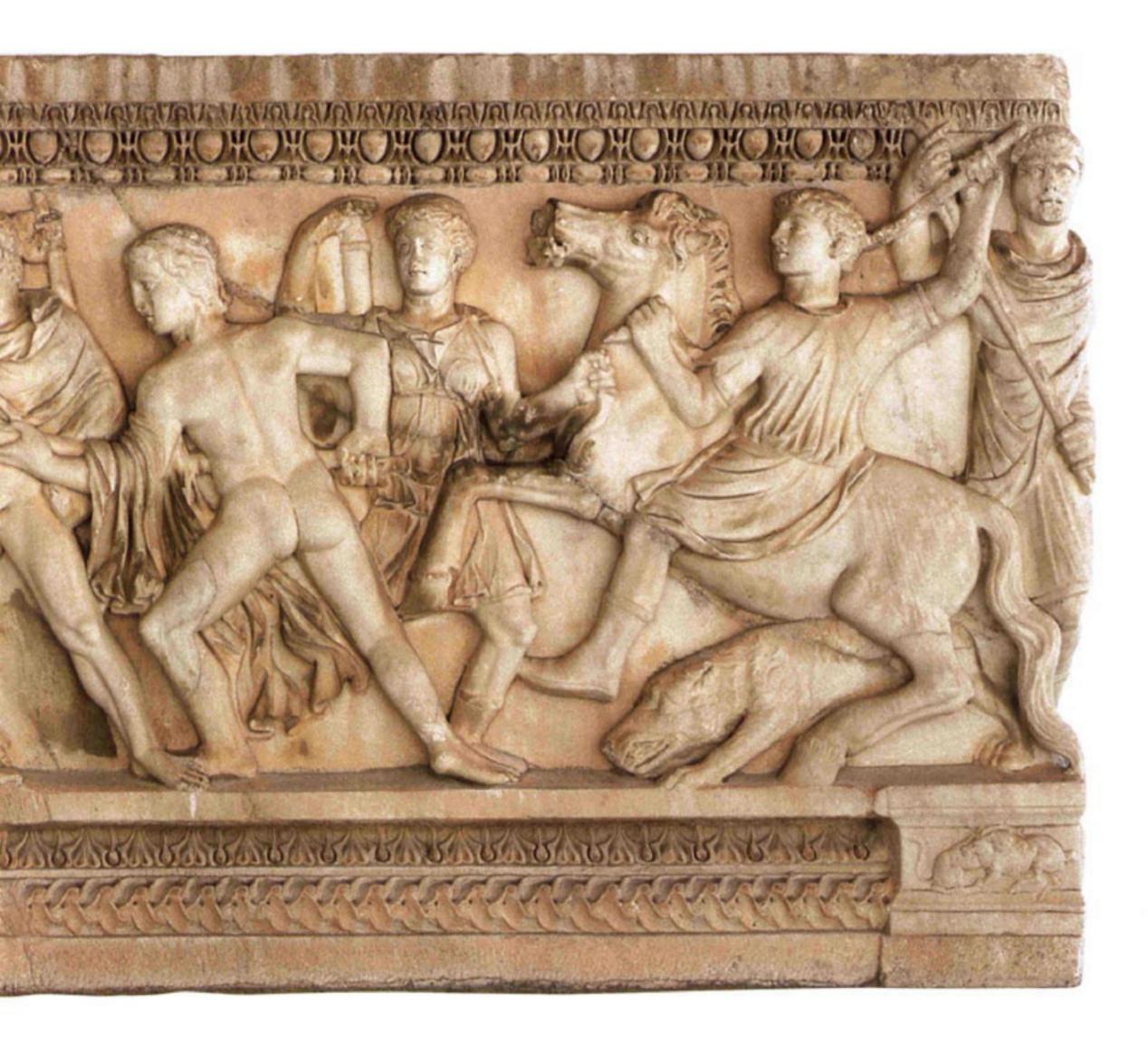
The other sides of the sarcophagus are decorated with other subjects: a sphinx on the right narrow side, and two gryphons facing each other on the back. The sarcophagus dates to the end of the 2nd or early 3rd century AD.

During Roman times, the city of Eleusis expanded beyond the boundaries of the older settlements and reached the sea. Excavations have brought to light, houses, baths and workshops in a large radius around the hill of the acropolis.

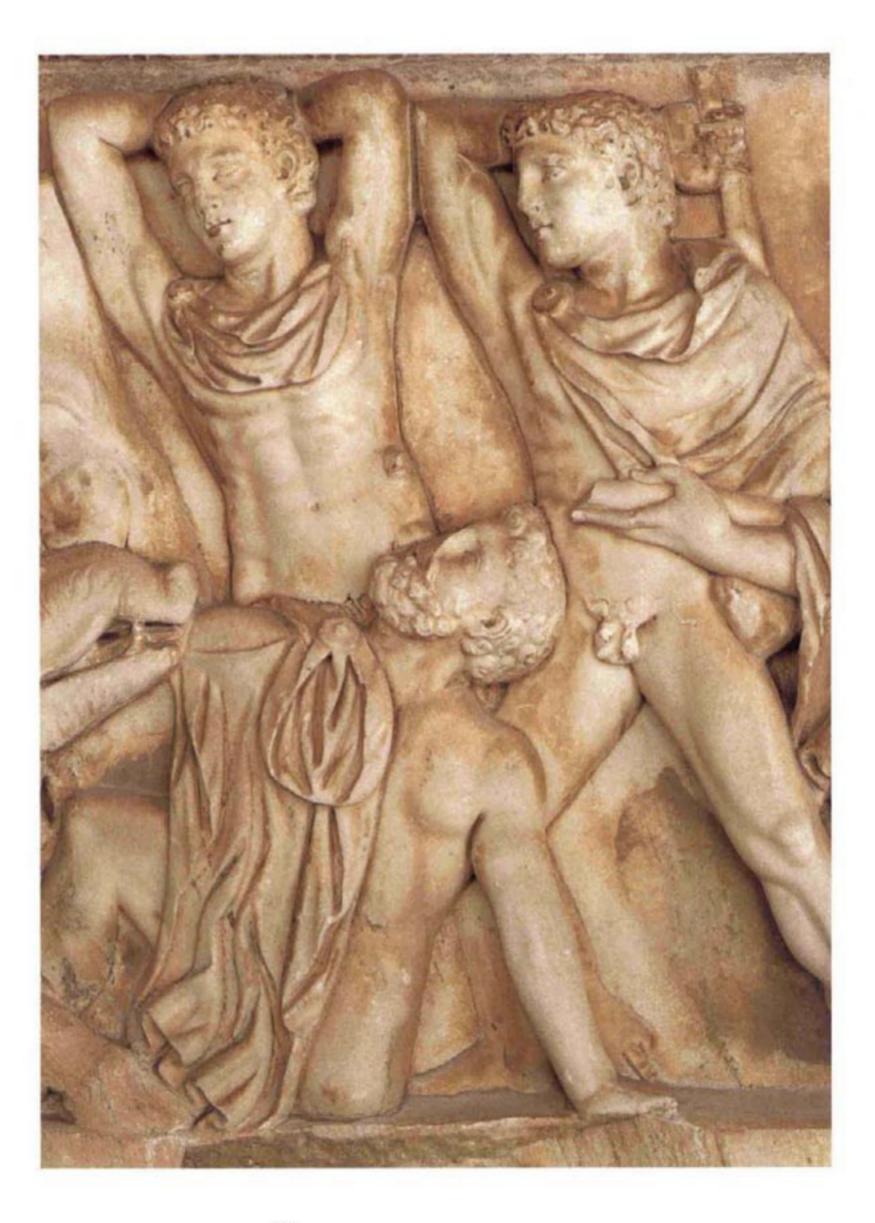
The fact that the area was inhabited from Roman times until the Early Christian era is testified to by a rich collection of lamps found in houses that date from the 1st century BC until the 5th century AD. Evidently, the raid carried out by Alaric which destroyed the Sanctuary did not manage to drive the people away, and so the settlement continued until the Byzantine era. However, by this time it had become a backwater, and was finally abandoned. So insignificant had it become, that written sources did not deign to mention it, and it remained up to excavations to determine how the end came about.











Marble sarcophagus with a relief representing the hunt for the Calydonian boar, late 2nd century, early 3rd century AD (pp. 346-349).



Decorative detail from the front of the sarcophagus.



Sphinx from the side view of the sarcophagus.





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KALLIOPE PAPANGELI

ELEUSIS

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE AND THE MUSEUM

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