

ATHENIAN AGORA EXCAVATION SUMMARY for 2021

Excavations were carried out in 2021 from June 14 to August 6th in the Athenian Agora, with a workforce of eighteen student volunteers, most already resident in Athens. As in other recent seasons, efforts were concentrated on the sections north of modern Adrianou Street, where work was done in and under the Classical Commercial Building, the Painted Stoa, and the orthostate enclosure tentatively identified as the Leokoreion. For previous work, see *Hesperia* 89, 2020, pp. 595-657. Once again, primary support was offered by the Packard Humanities Institute, and the work was carried out under the supervision of the A' Ephoreia of Classical and Prehistoric Antiquities.

Classical Commercial Building

Further detailed digging was carried out under the Classical Commercial Building in the northwest part of the area (Section BZ) under the supervision of Brian Martens and Allene Seet (**Plan 1**). The primary goal was to explore further the later archaic remains, perhaps of houses or shops, which underlie the Classical building. Fills consisted of deposits of broken pottery dating to just before and after the Persian destruction of the city in 480/479 BC. As has been so common in this area at these levels, more than a dozen *ostraka* appeared, carrying the name of Xanthippos and others who were probably candidates in the 480's BC. Traces of the floors of the various rooms were sampled and the micromorphology will be studied by Dr. P. Karkanas, director of the Wiener laboratory. Beneath the late archaic levels excavations were also carried out in layers full of fragmentary pottery, mostly of the 8th century BC; a round cutting and reaching the water table both suggest that we may be at the top of a well (J 1: 19). With Well J 1: 12 of the 8th and 7th centuries just to the north, and well K 1: 5 a few meters further east in the late 9th century (*Hesperia* 68, 1999, pp. 266-267), the evidence is accumulating that the area was used for habitation in the Iron Age, after several centuries as a burial ground.

A handsome stray find was made by Nikos Vasilopoulos in the eastern part of the section (BZ 2315) (**Fig. 1**) It is the upper part of a small marble gravestone. Inscribed across the top: [. . .] Α Σ Χ Ρ Η Σ Τ Ο [.]. Below there is the relief of the upper part of a man at the left, seated in a chair and facing right, toward a standing woman, who is facing left. Brian Martens notes that the brevity of the inscription,

with no patronymic or demotic, suggests that the seated individual may have been a slave, as does the second word (*'useful'*). Letter forms and the carving of the two figures point to a date in the 4th century BC.

Stoa Poikile, Western half

Excavations were also carried out in the western half of the Stoa Poikile. (Section BΘ West) under the supervision of Laura Gawlinski and Vassia Dimitrakopoulou. Here we opened two small areas below the levels of the later Byzantine houses in order to locate and check the state of the stoa floor, which lies at ca. 52.40 m. above sea level (*Plans 1 & 2*).

In the western trial trench we recovered a rubble fill which included a half dozen fragments of a smashed up inscription of the Roman period (lunate sigmas and epsilons, curvilinear mu, double-u shaped omegas, and elf-hat deltas) (*Fig. 2*). The fragments preserved enough to determine that part of the text consists of lists of names in columns and we could read the full names of Metrodoros and Dioteimos. No traces of patronymics or demotics are clearly recognizable, though the lists are most likely to concern ephebes or prytaneis.

Also cleared was more of two adjacent rubble walls, running SW-NE within the stoa. Their levels suggest they are appreciably earlier than the house walls of the 10th century AD. Presumably they are walls of the late Roman period (4th/5th AD?), built when someone began using rubble walls to subdivide the interior open space of the Stoa. This trend was noted at the extreme east end of the stoa, where blocking walls were built between the columns of both colonnades and the back wall (*Hesperia* 84, 2015, pp. 480-493 and especially fig. 7 on p. 477). The latest examples at the western end do not align with either of the colonnades, interior or exterior, and though their orientations are close, neither follows the older classical lines.

These walls, and a large extent of disturbance a few meters to the east, suggest that later activity has eliminated most traces of the original stoa floor in this area.

Section BΘ East (= 'Leokoreion'). (*Plan 2*)

The area around the orthostate enclosure was supervised by Nick Seetin, assisted by Katia Pikouni. Small trenches were laid out against the north wall of the enclosure, both inside and out. Cleaning in 2021 revealed three new inscriptions on the sides of a large statue base found in 2018, built into the east wall of the Roman tank and

described in *Hesperia* 89, 2020 (Block a = I 7668 = BΘ 418) p. 636 and figs. 47 and 42.

A close parallel for the layout and arrangement of this piece is *IG II² 1749* (= *Agora XV*, No. 38 = EM 10517). H. 0.46 m., W. 0.78 m., Th. 0.78 m., also with an oval cutting in the top for the attachment of a marble statue. Like our block, there are inscriptions on both sides. The inscription on the front of No. 1749 does not identify the statue, but is a prytany list of 341/0 BC of the tribe of Aigeis. On both sides are decrees of the tribesmen, honoring various officials and individuals with praise and olive crowns, matched by similar references on both sides of I 7668, including tribesmen's decisions to award crowns, though the crowns awarded on our block are of gold.

The small, well-cut letters suggest that the inscriptions of I 7668 were also carved in the 4th century BC. When the front face and its inscription(?) are exposed, it is likely that an archon's name will allow for a greater degree of precision as to the date.

I 7668: Side A (left side for one facing the block), No. 1 (**Fig. 3**)

Letter Height: 0.011 m. (o = 0.007 m. Letter W.: ca. 0.01 m.
Non-Stoichedon ca. 26-30 letters per line.

ΕΔΟΞΕΝ ΤΟΙΣ ΦΥΛΕΤΑΙΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΩΣ ΑΙ
ΧΡΥΣΩΙ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΩΙ ΚΙΡΩΝΙΔΗΝ ΕΠΙΧΑΡΙ-
ΔΟΥ ΠΗΛΗΚΑ ΑΠΟ ΠΕΝΤΑΚΟΣΙΩΝ ΔΡΑ-
ΧΜΩΝ ΑΡΕΤΗΣ ΕΝΕΚΑ ΚΑΙ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗΣ
ΤΗΣ ΕΙΣ ΤΟΥΣ ΦΥΛΕΤΑΣ

'It seemed good to the tribesmen to crown with a gold crown worth 500 drachmas Kironides the son of Epicharides of Pelekes on account of his virtue and justice to the tribesmen'.

Line 2: The name Kironides does not appear in Athenian inscriptions, though it does occur once in neighboring Oropos (*IG VII*, 385). It appears in Thucydides, however, in some of the manuscripts, at viii. 25.1 and viii. 54.3, usually emended by editors to Skironides, which

appears on other manuscripts. Interestingly, another Skironides, from the tribe of Leontis, is attested in [Demosthenes] lviii. 17-18 as the mover of a decree proposed to the tribe in the 340's. (See D. M. Lewis, *JHS* 1961, pp. 118-123, esp. p. 122; I am indebted to Nick Seetin for this reference. (Cf. also *PA* Nos. 12730 and 12731).

The patronymic, Epicharidou, is not a common Athenian name, but several of the known examples apply to individuals from the tribe of Leontis (e.g. *PA* No. 5007, 5008)

Line 3: Pelekes is a Leontid deme (inland trittys, south of Phyle), just as all the other inscriptions reused in the Roman basin have Leontid connections or associations. Pelex/Pelekes is a small deme, usually sending two representatives to the boule. Cf. J. Traill, "Diakris, the Inland Trittys of Leontis", *Hesperia* 1978, pp. 89-109, esp. p. 90, lines 52-55.

Below the inscription is a representation of the crown itself, handsomely carved in low relief.

Usually the cost/value of the gold crown is specified by X (1,000) or as a ligature of a small H set within a larger Π (5 x 100), or by the phrase κατὰ τὸν νόμον, rather than by spelling out the full amount, as is found on all three lateral inscriptions (line 3 in all cases). For parallels, see *IG* II² 1202, l. 9 and 1203, l. 14.

I 7668; Side A, No. 2.

To the right of Inscription No. 1 on Side A there is a second inscription, very similar in lettering and text. Much is still embedded within the masonry of the east wall of the Roman tank, but the first several letters can be read, as follows:

ΕΔΟΞΕΝ [ΤΟΙΣ ΦΥΛΕΤΑΙΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΩΣΑΙ]
ΧΡΥΣΩΙ ΣΤΕ [ΦΑΝΩΙ ...name...ca. 15...patronymic]
ΦΡΕΑΡΡΙΟΝ Α [ΠΟ ΠΕΝΤΑΚΟΣΙΩΝ ΔΡΑΧΜΩΝ
ΑΡΕΤΗΣ ΕΝ [ΕΚΑ.....

"It seemed good to the tribesmen to crown with a gold crown worth 500 drachmas son ofof Phrearrhioi on account of his virtue"

Line 3: Phrearrhioi is a large coastal deme of the tribe of Leontis. and sent nine representatives to the *boule*.

I 7668: Side B (right side for one facing the block).

Letter W. ca. 0.1 m.

[ΕΔΟΞΕΝ ΤΟΙΣ] ΦΥΛΕΤΑΙΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΩΣ ΑΙ
[ΧΡΥΣΩΙ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΩΙ] ΝΙΚΙΑΝ ΝΙΚΟΒΟΥΛΟ
[...demotic, ca. 8 letters ... ΑΠΟ ΠΕΝΤΑΚΟΣΙΩ]Ν ΔΡΑΧΜΩΝ

‘It seemed good to the tribesmen to crown Nikias, son of Nikoboulos, (demotic) with a gold crown worth 500 drachmas.....’

Sides A and B are 0.63 m. wide, allowing for ca. 58-65 letters per line if each line filled the lateral width of the block. The texts seem to suggest non-stoichedon lines of 26-30 letters per line.

Noteworthy is the fact that two and perhaps all three awards were passed by members of a tribe (φυλή), probably that of Leontis, in view of the demes (Pelekes and Phrearrhioi) of the honored individuals of line 3 of both inscriptions on Face A. If so, then this piece matches the tribal connections of three other inscriptions which were inscribed on two blocks also reused in the Roman tank: 1. the statue base for Eukles of Marathon. set up by the tribe of Leontis in the early first century AD, which also carries an earlier (probable) prytany list honoring the members of the tribe of Leontis for their service in the *boule*, and 2. a dedication by the epimeletai of Leontis to the tribal hero, Leos (See *Hesperia* 2020, pp. 636-644).

The fact that three inscriptions were inscribed on the two sides of I 7668 suggests that the statue which stood on the base was of some importance. Their recognition also strengthens the theory that the original location of all three blocks (and the 6 or 7 inscriptions they carry) was an area or sanctuary administered by the tribe of Leontis. All three new inscriptions are honorific, recording crowns of considerable value awarded to individuals by a tribe rather than the demos of Athens, and two of the three recipients can be shown to have been members of the tribe of Leontis.

At the moment, it would seem as though we have located one of the outstanding landmarks of Agora topography and Athenian history. The significance of the sanctuary and its probable identification as the Leokoreion in the history of Greek democracy

and of Athenian honorary statuary is outlined in the 2-page summary that concludes this report.

This report was written primarily for the student volunteers. Virtually every word represents a very hurried analysis of the results of the season's work and should be regarded as preliminary and tentative in the extreme. As noted, the season was unusual, with a much smaller volunteer workforce (18 students) than usual. The finds, though modest, include the three new important and useful inscriptions, and with Laura's Roman pieces and Brian's ostraka, make for a good epigraphical season. Numerous bronze coins were found in the drain under the road in BZ and from BE east we have a "New Style" Athenian drachma, silver, but with a high content of bronze (**Fig. 4**). Plated coins are not unknown for this type in the early 1st century BC (M. Thompson, *The New Style Silver Coinage of Athens*, New York 1961, pp. 440-472). A small, terracotta figurine of Eros became the chosen candidate for the T-shirt (**Fig. 5**).

Precautions were taken (daily temperatures, vaccination, weekly tests, some degree of social distancing) for those not fully vaccinated. Those of you who joined us were excellent diggers, with a full measure of enthusiasm and interest in the work, and we are most grateful for all your good help.

John McK. Camp II
August 2021

Summary of the significance of the Leokoreion, its role in the foundation of the Athenian democracy, and the statues of the tyrannicides. Sources from R. E. Wycherley: *Agora III*

Mythological Past:

During a great plague, the Athenians sent to the oracle in Delphi about what to do. The answer came back that an individual must sacrifice his children to save the city. Leos sacrificed his 3 daughters and the plague subsided. In return, the Athenians founded in the Agora the Leokoreion ('the sanctuary of the daughters of Leos'), thereafter a well-known Athenian landmark

Aelian, *Varia Historia*, XII, 28.

2nd-3rd c. A.D.

Λεωκόριον Ἀθήνησιν ἐκαλεῖτο τὸ τέμενος τῶν Λεῶ θυγατέρων Πραξιθέας καὶ Θεόπης καὶ Εὐβούλης. ταύτας δὲ ὑπὲρ τῆς πόλεως τῆς Ἀθηναίων ἀναιρεθῆναι λόγος ἔχει, ἐπιδόντος αὐτὰς τοῦ Λεῶ ἐς τὸν χρησμὸν τὸν Δελφικόν. ἔλεγε γὰρ μὴ ἂν ἄλλως σωθῆναι τὴν πόλιν, εἰ μὴ ἐκεῖναι σφαγιασθεῖεν.

Leokorion was the name given at Athens to the shrine of the daughters of Leos, Praxithea, Theope and Euboule. The story goes that they met their death for the sake of the city of Athens, Leos giving them up to satisfy the Delphic oracle, which said that the city could not be saved except by their sacrifice.

514 BC:

Hipparchos, the brother of the tyrant Hippias, was assassinated by Harmodios and Aristogeiton, while he was marshalling the Panathenaic procession at the Leokoreion. Both tyrannicides were killed and the tyranny persisted, now much harsher.

Thucydides, I, 20, 2.

5th c. B.C.

τῷ Ἱππάρχῳ περιτυχόντες περὶ τὸ Λεωκόρειον καλούμενον τὴν Παναθηναϊκὴν πομπὴν διακοσμοῦντι ἀπέκτειναν.

(Harmodios and Aristogeiton) meeting Hipparchos in the neighborhood of the so-called Leokoreion as he was marshalling the Panathenaic procession, killed him.

Aristotle, *Ath. Pol.*, 18, 3. 329-322 B.C.

καταβάντες καὶ προεξαναστάντες τῶν ἄλλων,¹ τὸν μὲν Ἱππάρχον διακοσμοῦντα τὴν πομπὴν παρὰ τὸ Λεωκόρειον ἀπέκτειναν, τὴν δ' ὅλην ἐλυμήναντο πρᾶξιιν.

they descended, and, stepping out before the rest, they killed Hipparchos as he was marshalling the procession by the Leokorion.

510 BC:

The tyrant Hippias was expelled from Athens. One of the first things the Athenians did was to set up two bronze statues of the Tyrannicides, done by Antenor (Pausanias 1. 8. 5 and Pliny, *HN* 34. 17). These were the first honorific statues ever set up by the Athenians, according to Pliny. It is an assumption that the statues were erected near or at the spot where the deed took place, in or by the Leokoreion.

Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, XXXIV, 17.

1st c. A.D.

Athenienses nescio an primis omnium Harmodio et Aristogitoni tyrannicidis publice posuerint statuas; hoc actum est eodem anno, quo et Romae reges pulsi.

The Athenians set up statues officially to Harmodios and Aristogeiton the Tyrannicides, who were, I rather think, the first to receive such statues; this was done in the same year in which at Rome the kings were expelled.

507 BC:

Foundation of democracy by Kleisthenes. New system involves the creation of 10 new 'tribes' (φυλαί), the names chosen by the Delphic oracle from 100 early Athenian heroes (= Eponymous heroes). The 4th tribe is Leontis, named after Leos.

480 BC:

Persians take Athens with minimal resistance. Greeks fight and win battle of Salamis. Persians withdraw from Athens to Boiotia, after destroying and burning Athens, taking with them the statues of the Tyrannicides as war booty. They are displayed at Susa.

477 BC:

The Athenians set up a second set of statues of the tyrannicides to replace those taken by the Persians. This second set was done by Kritios and Nesiotes (Paus. 1. 8. 5, *Marmor Parium* 54. 70, and Lucian *Philops.* 18)

Ca. 330 BC:

Alexander takes Persia. In Susa he finds the original statues and he or Seleukos sends them back to the Athenians. Thereafter the two sets (510 BC and 477 BC) stand side by side in the Agora.

. Pausanias, I, 8, 5.

2nd c. A.D.

οὐ πόρρω δὲ ἐστᾶσιν Ἀρμόδιος καὶ Ἀριστο-
γείτων οἱ κτείναντες Ἱππάρχον· αἰτία δὲ ἥτις
ἐγένετο καὶ τὸ ἔργον ὄντινα τρόπον ἔπραξαν,
ἑτέροις ἐστὶν εἰρημένα. τῶν δὲ ἀνδριάντων οἱ
μὲν εἰσι Κριτίου τέχνη, τοὺς δὲ ἀρχαίους
ἐποίησεν Ἀντήνωρ· Ξέρξου δέ, ὡς εἶλεν
Ἀθήνας ἐκλιπόντων τὸ ἄστυ Ἀθηναίων, ἀπα-
γαγομένου καὶ τούτους ἄτε λάφυρα, κατέ-
πεμψεν ὕστερον Ἀθηναίοις

Not much further on stand Harmodios and Aristogeiton, who killed Hipparchos. The reason why this happened and the manner in which they did the deed have been related by others. Of the statues, the one pair is the work of Kritios, the old pair was made by Antenor. Xerxes, when he took Athens after the Athenians had left the city, took away these last as spoils, but they were later sent back to the Athenians



Fig. 1. BZ - Grave stele.



Fig 2. BΘ West - Fragments of inscription dated to the Roman period.

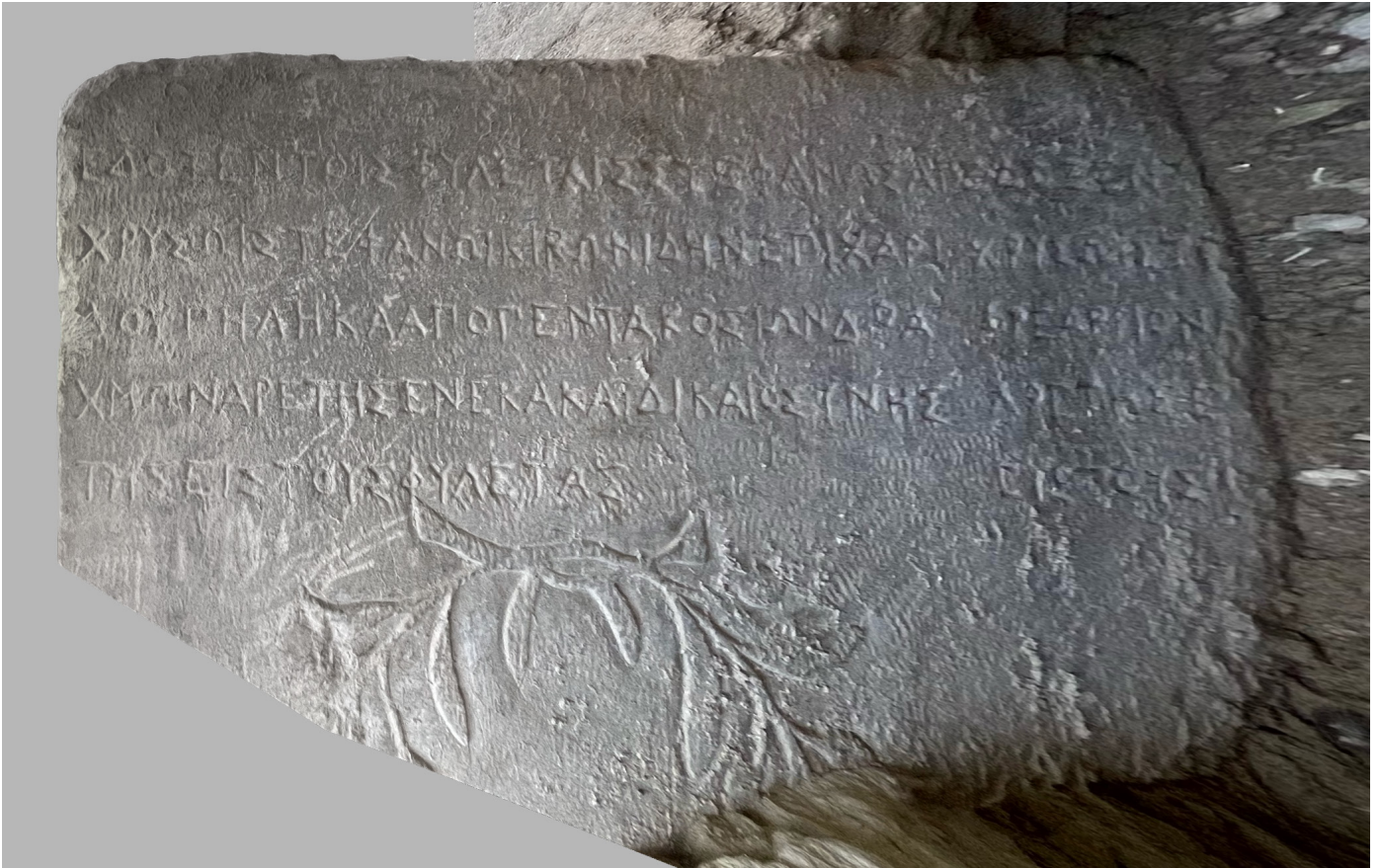


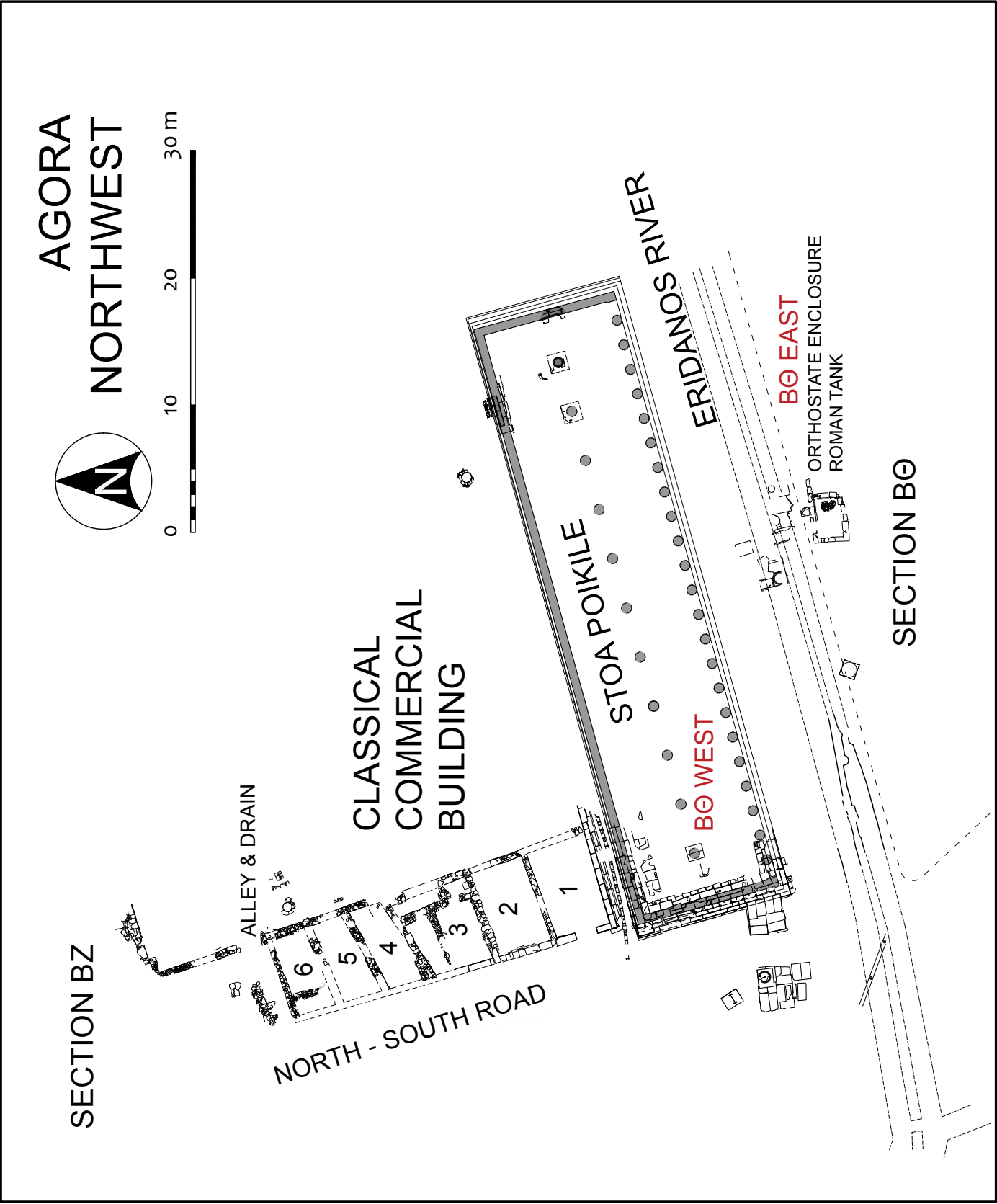
Fig. 3



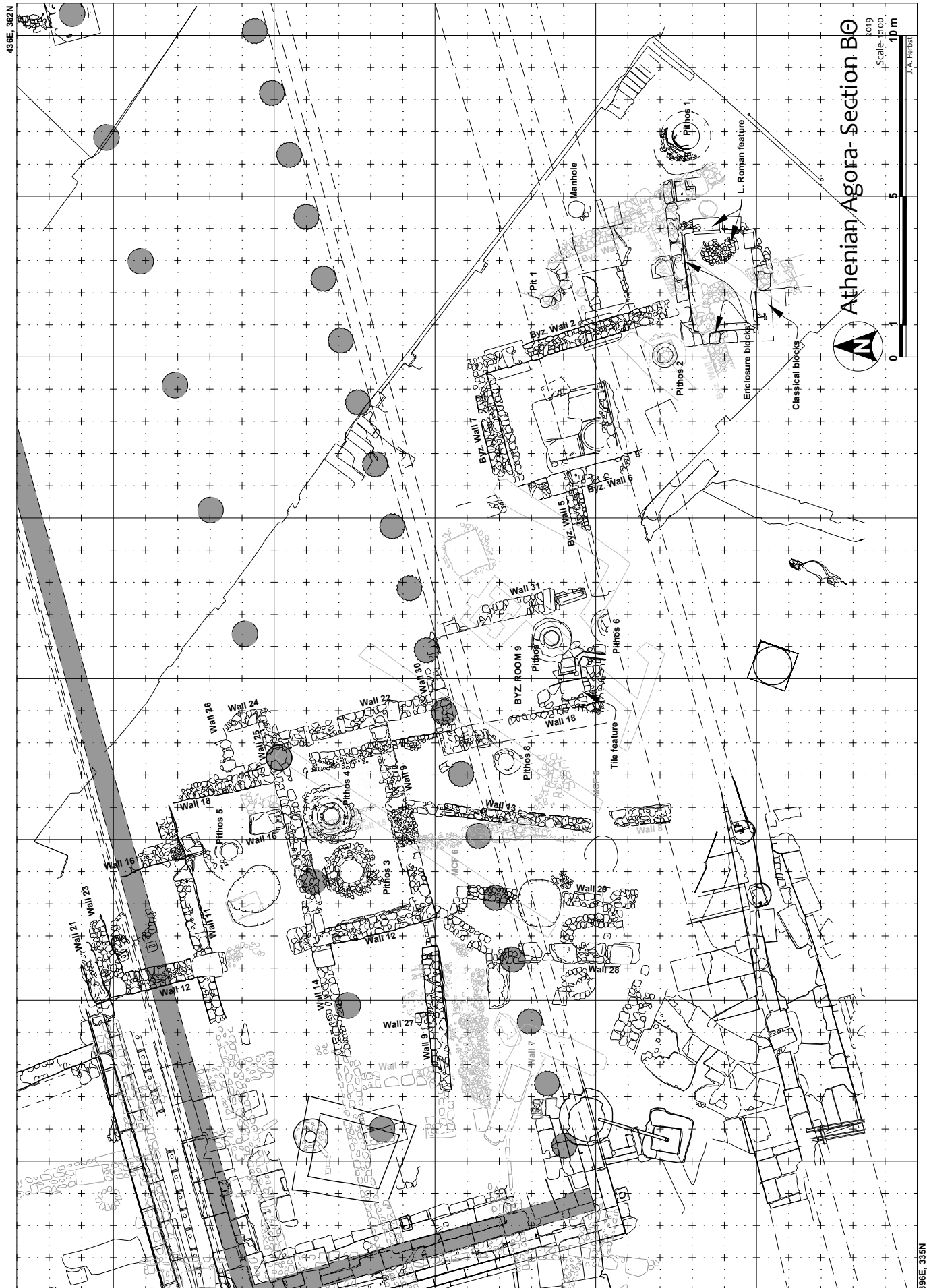
Fig. 4 “New Style” Athenian drachma, silver, but with a high content of bronze.



Fig. 5 Head of terracotta figurine of Eros.



Plan 1



Plan 2