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ΠΕΡΙΟΔΙΚΟ ΤΟΥ ΤΟΜΕΑ ΑΡΧΑΙΟΛΟΓΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΤΕΧΝΗΣ  
ΤΜΗΜΑ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΑΡΧΑΙΟΛΟΓΙΑΣ ΤΟΥ ΕΘΝΙΚΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΚΑΠΟΔΙΣΤΡΙΑΚΟΥ  
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# Desacralised Eleusis

## Contemplating the impacts of non-restoration on a major classical and poetic locus

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*Dedicated to the memory of John Travlos and Angelos Delivorrias*

### ABSTRACT

*Classical Eleusis is a major archaeological site of Greece and Greater Athens which enjoyed global fame in antiquity as hub of the Eleusinian Mysteries plus as seat of the age-long worship of goddess Demeter and her daughter Persephone. Following its irreverent treatment, which began after the establishment of Modern Greece in 1830, this paper proposes a new, sustainable approach to archaeological landscapes and sites based on restoration plus the artistic 'translation' of their spatial qualities. The Eleusis sanctuary appears to have fallen victim to a special, implicit compromise between, on the one hand, the national industrialist class, and on the other, the archaeological establishment, which has tolerated manufacturing in the Thriasian Plain, including the immediate vicinity of the Eleusinian sanctuary. As the area was being turned into the core location of Greek industrial development, the Eleusinian sanctuary was being fully recovered. However, throughout this 'compromise and failure discourse,' it should be remembered that enormous as well as continuous effort has been bestowed upon the protection of cultural heritage since the establishment of the Greek State.*

*Embracing a 'poetic' methodology, deemed suitable to the genius loci of Eleusis, the outlook here eschews the isolated straightforwardness of architectural history, archaeological data, restoration precedents and building details, to explore the pulsations of Eleusinian space as a Thalesian entity 'full of gods.' The paper first, discusses the area's profanation as illustration of a specific interaction between modernity and antiquity. Second, it unveils some important spatial qualities, including what is proposed here as 'spatial pliability,' which were destroyed around Eleusis and the Sacred Road linking it to classical Athens. Third, it enquires if partial restitution is still possible through cultural and urban design policies. Finally, it advances the hypothesis that timely restorations could potentially safeguard heritage sites threatened by industrial development or other noxious land uses.*

Eleusis is hub of the Eleusinian Mysteries, foremost rituals of the Greek world, seat of the age-long worship of goddess Demeter, a very ancient divinity of community and land fertility, and her daughter Persephone or Kore (Figs. 1 and 3). The archaeological site dates from early Mycenaean to Roman times.<sup>1</sup> In fact, such were the preciousness of the Eleusinian cult and the power of religion as conduits of sociopolitical integration on both a local and Panhellenic

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1 Phoca and Valavanis 1997; Mylonas 2010.

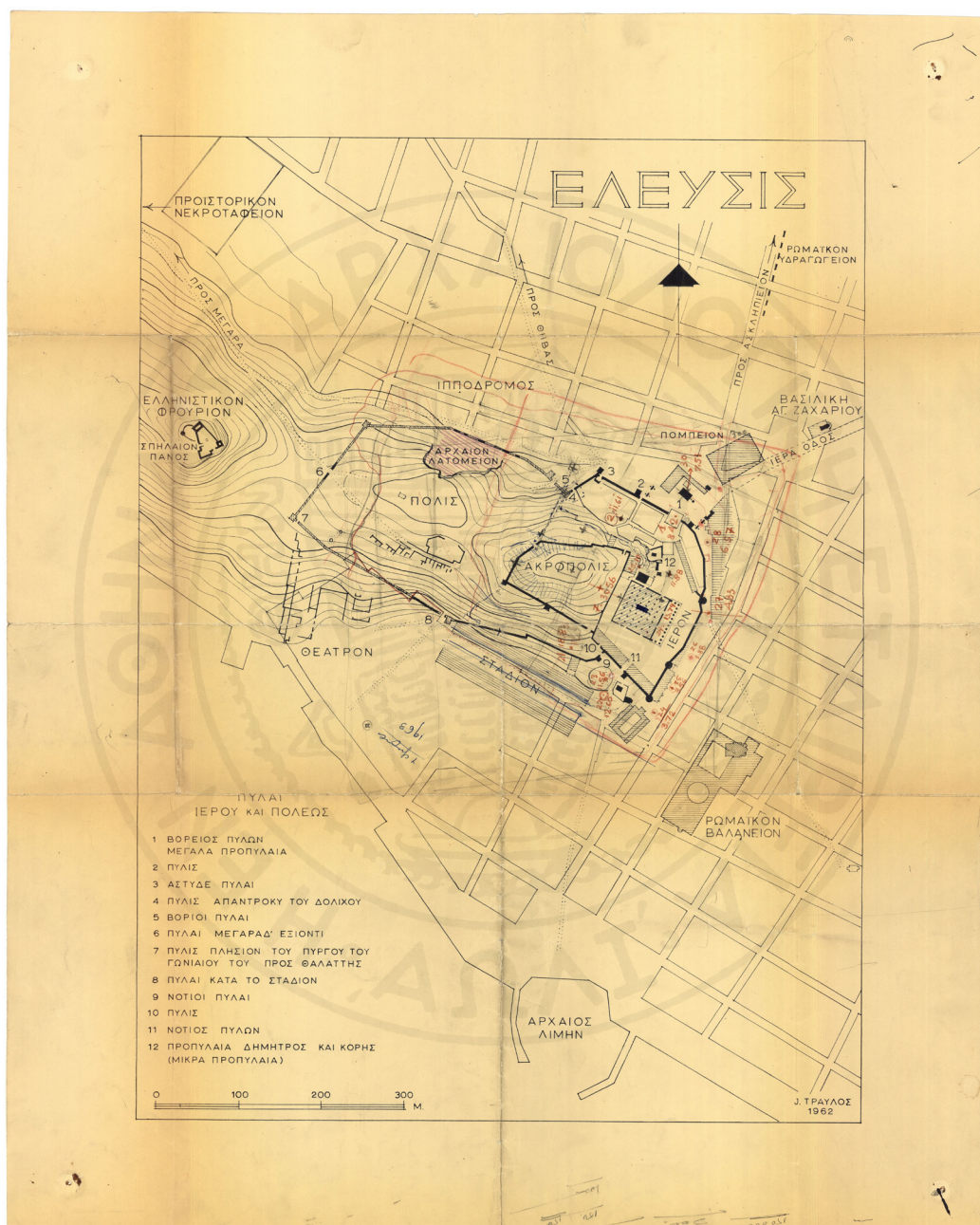


Fig. 1. The topography of ancient Eleusis according to John Travlos. Source: The Travlos Archive, Archaeological Society of Athens, 1962.

level,<sup>2</sup> that Greeks feared life would become unsupportable if this cult were to be interrupted. The sanctuary remained functional for at least two millennia<sup>3</sup> as pinnacle of Greece alongside Olympia according to ancient geographer Pausanias:

Many are the sights to be seen in Greece, and many are the wonders to be heard; but on nothing does heaven bestow more care than on the Eleusinian rites and the Olympic Games.<sup>4</sup>

2 Bruit Zaidman and Schmitt Pantel 2010, 129.

3 Kerényi 1967.

4 <http://perseus.uchicago.edu/perseus-cgi/citequery3.pl?dbname=GreekFeb2011&query=Paus.%205.10.4&getid=1>

This venerable site lies in West Attica, about 22 kilometres northwest to the Acropolis, guarded by the island of Salamis, at a recess where the Saronic Gulf meets the fertile Thriasian Plain (Fig. 1). From earliest prehistoric times,<sup>5</sup> the ancient town and fortified acropolis of Eleusis are located on the eastern summit of the same range of hills running from east to west close to the coast. Lower still, outside the fortification, the Sanctuary of Demeter was founded very early.<sup>6</sup>

The post-industrial now meets the archaeological in an offending case of de-territorialisation (here: elimination of important characteristics from this archaeological location and its milieu),<sup>7</sup> thus of spatial loss of a symbolically, sensuously, visually, communally and archaeologically significant field. A new territorialisation has substituted the sanctuary: Eleusis, Europe's Capital of Culture for 2021 (the designation was postponed due to the 2020 coronavirus outbreak), is today a major, yet de-industrialising centre, visible from and noxious to the reverent ancient site, an early focus of Greek industrialisation which began during the 19th century. That period coincided with the gradual recovery of the ancient city through systematic excavations (Fig. 1). Eleusis has hosted chemical industry (the largest oil refinery in Greece), initially facilitated by railroad infrastructure, plus the fast-paced post-war industrial development.

Starting from the viewpoint of a spatial, cultural and arts theorist, not of a classical archaeologist, I propose to focus on the massive impacts of modern (presently post-)industrial development on this archaeological backdrop of Greater Athens, in order to explore a new approach to archaeological landscapes and their safeguarding. More specifically, I intend to discuss the area's profanation as a special instance of interaction between modernity and antiquity. Namely, the failed or disputable compatibility between cultural heritage and industrial development in the Greek metropolitan area (Fig. 2). I will try to surmise, on the basis of available data, to what extent the advancement of industrialisation consciously turned the archaeological landscape and its immediate environment into sacrificial lamb to national development and capitalism. Further, I will reflect if restorations could prove to be a sustainability backup policy in heritage sites threatened by large-scale industrial growth. I will also address the question whether important spatial qualities, including what is proposed here as 'spatial pliability,' were jeopardised in the sacred landscape of Eleusis and if some kind of restitution is still possible through cultural and urban design policies.

Granted, there is always an ongoing dilemma at play, between, on the one hand, the obligation to protect a quantitatively and temporally expansive heritage like the Greek, while simultaneously facilitating national economic development,<sup>8</sup> often a delicate and hard balance to accomplish. Throughout this failure discourse, it should be remembered that an enormous as well as continuous amount of effort has been bestowed upon cultural heritage and its protection since the establishment of the Greek State in 1830. Various researchers have explored this; my previous work has established that heritage management by the Greek state has been persistent and innovative, even breakthrough.<sup>9</sup>

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5 Phoca and Valavanis 1997; Mylonas 2010.

6 The western summit housed the remains of a Hellenistic military tower (Travlos 1949). The town extended to the north only in the early Geometric period. Kourouniotis located the original sanctuary while excavating the Telesterion (see below).

7 For generic analysis, see Dorian and Rose 2003.

8 Loukaki 2016b.

9 Loukaki 2016b. One need consider that the English Heritage only cares for around 400 historic buildings, monuments and sites, see <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/about-us/>, <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/about-us/our-history/>





Fig. 2. Eleusis and its bay today. The archaeological site is in the middle. Source: Elaborated from <https://greece.greekreporter.com/2019/02/16/historic-greek-city-of-eleusis-to-become-european-culture-capital-2021/>

On the other hand, this place has been a source of ecstasy,<sup>10</sup> poetic mania and inspiration since deepest antiquity. Hence, methodologically, the outlook here embraces a poetic standpoint which eschews the isolated straightforwardness of architectural history, archaeological data and building details,<sup>11</sup> to explore the pulsations of Eleusinian space as a Thalesian entity 'full of gods' and meanings, changing and yet relevant throughout time.

In this sense, the paper links interdisciplinary awareness with a sensuous response to the place, plus the synthesis of seemingly disparate, unconnected impressions and accidental flashes of existing elements,<sup>12</sup> in response to the consistently poetic character of the sanctuary and the Sacred Road from deepest antiquity to the present.

In the rest of this article, I will first argue quite for the constantly sacred and poetic character of Eleusis in order to fathom the major effects of the Eleusis violation, which transcend merely aesthetic or environmental concerns, to occupy deep psychic strata. Thereafter, I will try to advance the concept of the Athens-Eleusis spatial polarity, briefly present the site, discuss the simultaneous situation of Eleusis as Frisby's<sup>13</sup> 'fragment of modernity,' namely as the joint result of recovery through excavations, successive urban plans, the circumstances behind heavy industrial development, plus the ways in which the Eleusis-Athens corridor has concerned the responsible Greek authorities after 1974, the year when democracy was restored in Greece. Finally, I will focus on the impacts of restoration in regard to proposals of the architect John Travlos.

10 Zaidman and Schmitt Pantel 2010.

11 For more on this outlook, but limited to domestic space, see Bachelard 1994.

12 The latter in the manner Delivorrias 1994 interpreted the method of architect John Travlos, see below.

13 Frisby 1988.



Fig. 3. Relief of Demeter, Triptolemos and Kore, c. 440-430 BC, 2.20 X 1.52 m. Athens, National Archaeological Museum. Source: <https://www.namuseum.gr/collection/klasiki-periodos-2/>

## ELEUSIS: CONSTANT SOURCE OF POETICS AND SACREDNESS

Sacred space transmits the apex of a culture by ritually bridging the human with the divine<sup>14</sup> or by exposing us to sublime experience arising from human-made and yet magnificent creation.<sup>15</sup> Ultimate lucidity joined with formal perfection makes the Parthenon into a radiating *espace indicible*, argued Le Corbusier,<sup>16</sup> space reaching the thresholds of sanctity; the Eleusinian sanctuary is 'unutterable' because no language can adequately express the mystic acquisition of philosophical knowledge,<sup>17</sup> plus of poetic and experiential awareness, and thereby also remained sacred throughout its transformations. The stark antithesis between dazzling light and its abrupt disappearance, 'from a flare of burning banners to the darkest dark'<sup>18</sup> in the archaeological site possibly explains the choice of this setting, evoke as it does the death-revival sequence. Eleusis is an age-long poetic and literary stimulus, though the orientation of the creative compass has changed over time.

After the invasion of the Visigoths, the destroyed sanctuary was abandoned and built over with village houses,<sup>19</sup> yet its aura lingered on. Sacredness of the site is also due to this persistent

14 See <https://www.encyclopedia.com/environment/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/sacred-space#:~:text=As%20meaningful%20space%2C%20sacred%20space,such%20as%20mountains%20or%20rivers.>

15 Kant 1952. On the importance of the sublime in the urban space, see Loukaki 2021.

16 <https://www.philo52.com/articles.php?lng=fr&pg=1739>

17 Agamben 2014.

18 Miller 1985.

19 Papangeli and Chlepa 2011.

continuity, confirmed until early Christian times. Land fertility was attributed to statues found locally, including the Caryatid which ended in Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge. Popular rituals reverently merged ancient and Christian religion until about 1932.<sup>20</sup> The attachment remains. The worship of Panagia Mesosporitissa (St. Mary of the Seeds) on November 21, in its church overlooking the Telesterion, a special celebration for agricultural areas, directly reverberates the worship of Demeter.<sup>21</sup> Consequently, profanation has not entirely desacralised Eleusis as Giorgio Agamben<sup>22</sup> would anticipate.

The poetic interpretation of Eleusis and the Sacred Road linking it to Athens is also age-long and persistent. The wanderings of Demeter, as described in the Homeric Hymn (7th century BC), constitute stations of an itinerary that promotes an archetypal universal memory sieved, humanised and elaborated through the Greek condition. The mystic experience of theophany during the Eleusinia, suggested by the poet of the Homeric Hymn and later by Plato and the tragic poets Sophocles and Euripides,<sup>23</sup> responds to the age-long desire of encounter between human and divine, similar to the desire voiced by Homer and Sappho.<sup>24</sup>

The relation between antiquity and modernity is registered in a number of contemporary literary and poetic works, Greek and foreign, on Eleusis and the Sacred Way.<sup>25</sup> The major Greek poet Angelos Sikelianos, inspired by the passage, still idyllic during his lifetime, wrote the poem *Sacred Way* in 1935. Imagining himself as an ancient initiate, he called the Eleusinian Way 'road of the soul' to reveal vivid spatial-temporal flows between the Attic past and present:

And, as I sat, I crossed my hands around my knees,  
forgetting whether I had started that day or  
whether I had taken this same road centuries ago.

Eleusis is predominantly among the last universal bastions of age-long matriarchy according to Sikelianos, namely of secret human unity, harmony and fecundity, a spiritual chapter of human cohesion.<sup>26</sup>

Henry Miller argued: 'here one perceives that the temple of the spirit is a residence made of humans.' The Sacred Way was free from the horrendous griefs evoked, for instance, in Via Appia in Rome. He believed that the spirituality of the Sacred Way infiltrated directly the soul, leading to metaphysical bliss, stressing that:<sup>27</sup>

There is no suffering, no martyrdom, no flagellation of the flesh connected with this processional artery. Everything here speaks now, as it did centuries ago, of illumination, of blinding, joyous illumination. Light acquires a transcendental quality: it is not the light of the Mediterranean alone, it is something more, something unfathomable, something holy.

Contrast the above with the devastating song *Persephone's Nightmare* written by poet Nikos Gatsos and composer Manos Hadjidakis in 1976:<sup>28</sup>

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20 For both, see <http://3gym-kerats.att.sch.gr/library/spip.php?article10>

21 Papaioannou 2012.

22 Agamben 2007, 73.

23 The third great tragic, Aeschylus, was born in Eleusis.

24 Loukaki 2016a.

25 Agamben 2014; Kavafis (see <https://cavafy.onassis.org/el/object/kzws-sdbz-xtqb/>) and many more.

26 Sikelianos 1978–85, 3: 69. On the issue of Eleusinian matriarchy, see Loukaki 2019.

27 Miller 1941, 45.

28 Translation by the author.

There, where it smelled of pennyroyal and wild mint  
and the earth grew her first cyclamen  
now peasants bargain over cement  
and birds fall into the blast-furnace dead.

There, where with their hands spread first  
initiates devoutly entered the sanctuary  
now tourists throw away their butt-ends  
and go to view the new refinery

There, where the sea was once a boon  
And benefactory the plane's bleats  
Now lorries carry to the shipyards  
Hollow bodies scrap kids and metal sheets

Sleep, Persephone  
In the bosom of the earth  
On the world's balcony  
Never emerge again

We see that, in the course of the 20th century, industrialisation has ironically become a poetic terminus ante and post quem: Respectively, the Sacred Road and Eleusis before industrialisation are seen as universal bastions of matriarchy, global pacification and landscape transcendence, acclaimed by both Greek and foreign creators. Thereafter, Greek poets and songwriters see Eleusis as the site of loss, be it of love, sacredness, or environmental quality.

## ELEUSIS-ATHENS: POLARITY AND SPATIAL PLIABILITY

The territory of a classical Greek city is understood as the closed space of the citizens under the control of a single sovereign body.<sup>29</sup> The Athenian Acropolis was linked with Eleusis through the Sacred Way, lined with tombs, statues, graveyards and sanctuaries.<sup>30</sup> Eleusis could be considered a sanctuary of territorial dominion according to de Polignac's analysis. I would argue that a dialectic emerges between the 'male' condition of conquest and defence of the race, focused on and around the Acropolis, and the 'female' Eleusinian condition of peaceful coexistence and creativity, Greeks' instructor of mystery rites.<sup>31</sup>

Together, the sanctuary of Eleusis, the Sacred Way and the *asty* of Athens condensed a spatial and spiritual field which included multifarious elaborations, political, social, poetic, theatrical-performative and sensuous, but its ultimate purpose was to secure the continuity of the Athenian and the Greek world (Fig. 4): The mysteries arguably safeguarded Attic rootedness, while also 'connecting the entire human race' according to Sikelianos.<sup>32</sup> However, Eleusis could also be a task force before national dangers: The priests of Eleusis intervened before the Battle of Salamis, insisting that the clash take place in the sea across the Thriasian Plain. A miraculous dust cloud and the mystic 'Iacchus' cry arose from Eleusis to foretell the

29 de Polignac 1996.

30 Including the sanctuary of Apollo, within the ground of the Byzantine monastery of Daphni, and of Aphrodite at Skaramangas. See Papachatzis 1974, 466–73; also [http://odysseus.culture.gr/h/2/eh251.jsp?obj\\_id=1514](http://odysseus.culture.gr/h/2/eh251.jsp?obj_id=1514)

31 Miller 1985.

32 See Sikelianos 1978–85, 5: 77.



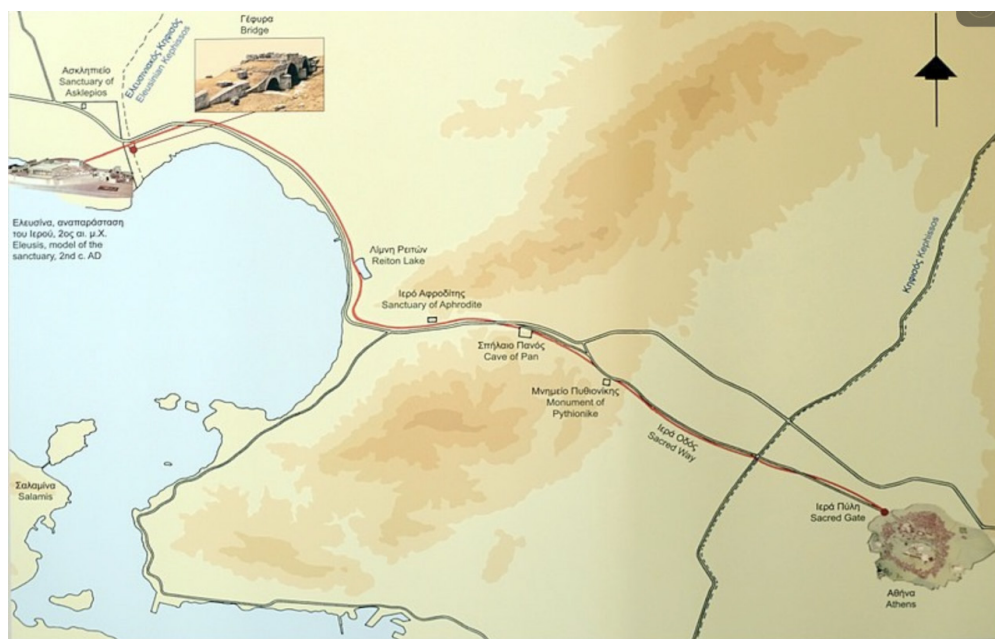


Fig. 4. The Sacred Way. Source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map\\_of\\_sacred\\_way\\_from\\_Athens\\_to\\_Eleusis.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_sacred_way_from_Athens_to_Eleusis.jpg)

Persian defeat according to Herodotus citing an eyewitness in his *Ιστορίαι* (*Histories* 8.65), and Plutarch in his *Θεμιστοκλής* (*Life of Themistocles*).<sup>33</sup>

Thousands of pilgrims seeking initiation annually walked in procession from Athens to Eleusis.<sup>34</sup> This adulatory itinerary included stasis and flow: The crowd stood in side sanctuaries and in Eleusis.<sup>35</sup> In present-day Aphaia of Skaramangas there was a sanctuary dedicated to Aphrodite, a main stasis of the Eleusinian procession from the 5th century BC to the Roman period, explored by architect John Travlos in 1936 and 1937.<sup>36</sup> Various happenings enriched the experience of the pilgrims. Insults and jokes against the initiates were launched by groups of Athenians waiting on bridges (*gefyrismoí* or bridge insults, see the mood in Aristophanes' *Βάτραχοι* (*Frogs*)). Literal and metaphorical happenings also took place, including multi-layered adulatory and imitative-theatrical acts in the sanctuary itself.

This religious occurrence, which included cheerful and playfully democratic experiences alongside the mimesis of death and revival, emerges as a sophisticated, balancing, spatial pliability of the Athenian and Hellenic collectivity. Below I turn to its focal point, the Eleusinian sanctuary.

## THE SITE

The Eleusinian sanctuary in which the mysteries took place is rather bewildering. The oldest finds come from a prehistoric settlement (18<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> century BC).<sup>37</sup> Its rich stratigraphy includes

33 English translation of the former by A. D. Godley, accessible at: <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:abo:tlg,0016,001:8:65>; also Mylonas 2010, 89.

34 Travlos 1988. See also <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Eleusinian-Mysteries>.

35 For details on constructions and natural features alongside the Sacred Road, see Papachatzis 1974, 463–74. For a resolution on the bridging of Rheitos Lake, see Papangeli 2018.

36 Oikonomos 1936, 9–10; 1937, 5–7.

37 Phoca and Valavanis 1997.

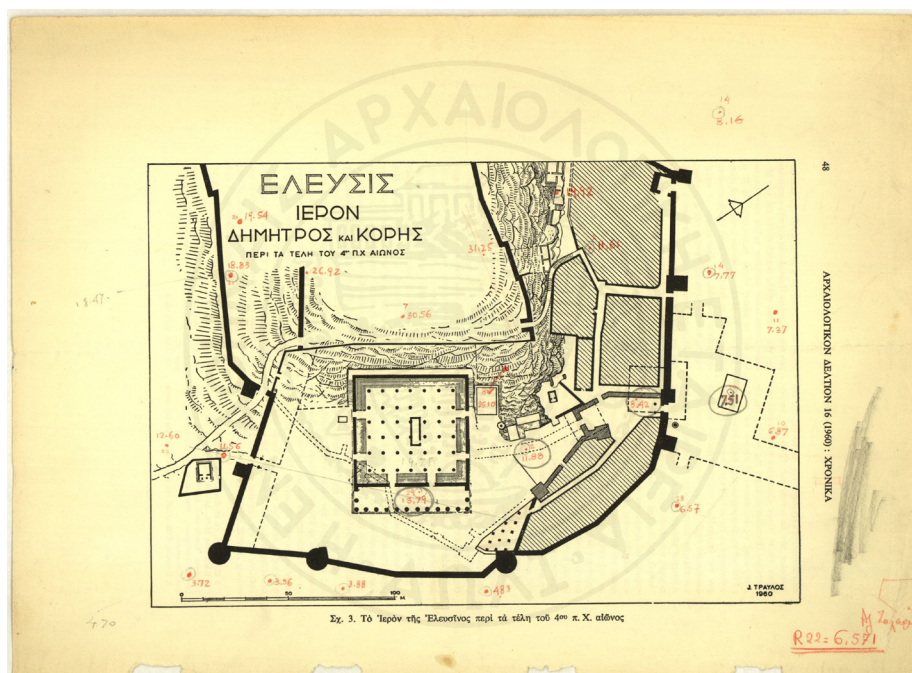


Fig. 5. The Sanctuary of Demeter and Kore, end of 4th century BC. Source: Source: The Travlos Archive, Archaeological Society of Athens.

Mycenaean, geometric, archaic, classical, Hellenistic and Roman layers, among which prevails the classical Telesterion (Figs. 5–6). Walls, sacrificial altars, priests' houses, temples, depository spaces and the all-sacred Telesterion, in which Demeter and Kore were worshipped, were built or altered at different times.

The early excavators, Konstantinos Kourouniotis and George Mylonas, proposed that the Mycenaean Megaron B, located under the later Telesteria and respected throughout antiquity despite transformations, was the earliest temple of Demeter, suggesting that the Eleusinian Mysteries originated in Late Bronze Age.<sup>38</sup> Travlos produced representation drawings depicting the Megaron, to which belongs the foundation at the centre of the Telesterion (Fig. 7). This placement coincides with the first Mycenaean 'temple' raised to honour Demeter,<sup>39</sup> where sacred objects for the rituals were kept.

Eleusis has become controversial:<sup>40</sup> until the 1970s, continuity of the Greek religion from Mycenaean times to Early Iron Age was a common tenet. Scholars like Darcque, highlighting lack of continuity in the archaeological record, challenged continuity arguments. Recently, Cosmopoulos<sup>41</sup> brought fresh evidence on the religious function of Megaron B.

Also disputed remains if Eleusis was forced by Athens into annexation in the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC as part of the Athenian domination of Attica, turning the Eleusinian Mysteries into a major

38 See also Filios 1905; Kavvadias 1909/1998, 309–10. Travlos argued that Megaron B was residence of the Eumolpids, one of the leading families of Eleusis, which used it continuously from the Mycenaean period to the Early Iron Age. Similarly, Mazarakis-Ainian suggested that Megaron B may have been the residence of the leading family of a powerful clan (a *genos*) during the Mycenaean period, abandoned in late Bronze Age until descendants of that family re-inhabited it in Early Iron Age. The transmutation of religious beliefs came from changing sociopolitical and cultural conditions, not from a gap in the use of the site (Cosmopoulos 2014).

39 Oikonomos 1950, 14.

40 Cosmopoulos 2014.

41 Cosmopoulos 2015.





Fig. 6. General present view of the Telesterion. Source: Wikipedia.

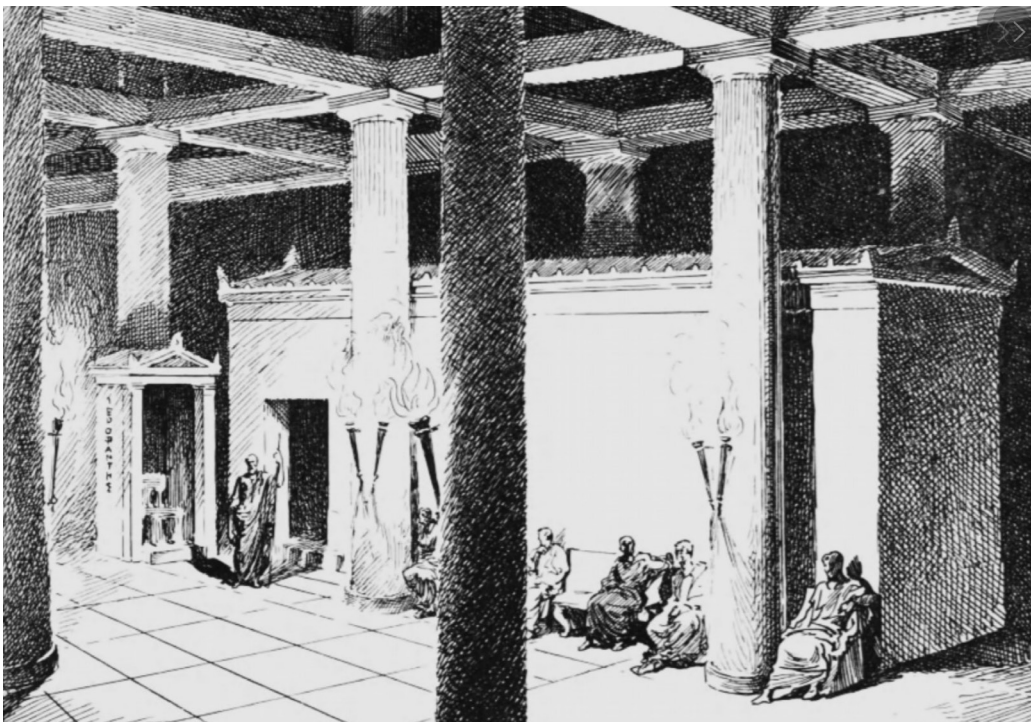


Fig. 7. Travlos's representation of the Telesterion's interior with the Megaron and the Hierophant's throne before its entrance. Source: Elaborated from Travlos (1950).

Athenian religious festival.<sup>42</sup> In any case, during Solon's time (639–559 BC), the Mysteries were among the most important Athenian festivals plus the most famous Panhellenic secret rite, surrounded by greatest awe. Increased construction activity in the period of tyrant Peisistratos (608–527 BC) and his sons (r. 527–510 BC) included a larger Telesterion plus the enclosure of the sanctuary and the settlement through a fortification wall reinforced with towers. Splendid buildings were erected during the classical and Roman periods, including gateways marking the transition of initiates and pilgrims from movement to stasis and successive temples on the east side of the hill. Present-day visitors enter the site from the same side as ancient pilgrims. Enormous architectural members strewn everywhere bear witness to the scale of the buildings,<sup>43</sup> though little has been restored.

The origins of the cult are obscure. Demeter was worshipped as a deity connected to nature and the culture of cereals.<sup>44</sup> A radical change took place in late 7th or early 6th century, transforming an agricultural cult to a significant eschatological/soteriological worship.<sup>45</sup> Very little is known on the exact manner of initiation.<sup>46</sup> The purifying elaboration of the civic and personal unconscious strengthened the political body of men and the quasi-political body of women with collective Eudaimonia and revitalisation through internal union with the Divine Essence; it also empowered them before death.<sup>47</sup> Transcendence of death involved symbolic descent to the bosom of the earth, death-rebirth experiences and divine visions.

Further analysis requires an overview of the excavations, state heritage management, and local industrial development, which follows below.

## FRAGMENTED ELEUSIS: BETWEEN RECOVERY OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

The plinth houses of the village of 'Lepsina' were built on the ruins of the temple of Demeter and the ancient Acropolis. Lepsina had a small harbour in the place of the ancient and a tower of the Turkish commander on the eastern foothills. The glory of the ancient city enchanted cultured Europeans and prompted the investigation since the 18th century.<sup>48</sup> The first attempts at excavation, limited due to the overlaying houses, took place in 1811 by the Dilettanti, an archaeophile association of London-based aristocrats.<sup>49</sup> They excavated the Great Propylaea and the temple of Artemis and Poseidon.

The Greek state has been aware of the sanctuary's importance since its establishment. The first urban planning of modern Eleusis was elaborated just 5 years later, in 1835, by F. Stauffert, then architect of the City of Athens, in collaboration with the geometer C. Mitteregger. The

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42 <https://www.britannica.com/place/Eleusis-ancient-city-Greece>.

43 Mylonas 2010.

44 Phoca and Valavanis 1997, 192–98. To Foucart, the origin was Egyptian, introduced during the 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty (1549/1550–1292 BC, Mylonas 2010, 15).

45 This shift echoes in contemporary attitudes to death and funerary 'ideology' and resulted from political tensions during the archaic period (Sourvinou-Inwood 1997).

46 Zaidman and Schmitt Pantel 2010.

47 Mylonas 2010, esp. 284–5.

48 Papangeli and Chlepa 2011.

49 To excavate the sanctuary, the Dilettanti secured permission from the Sultan. Their lead, Sir William Gell, was accompanied by architects John Peter Gandy and Francis Redford. The write-up of the trip was published in 1817 as *The Unedited Antiquities of Attica*, and in 1840 as the third volume of *Antiquities of Ionia*, edited by William Wilkins. Gell and Gandy also published *Pompeiana* (1817–9, Wikipedia).



visible ruins were carefully depicted and provision was made for enhancement through planting. A triumphal arch was included to define the Sacred Way and the Road to Thebes. This plan was not implemented for unspecified reasons.<sup>50</sup> French archaeologist Fr. Lenormant investigated Eleusis and the Sacred Way in 1860, supervised by the Ministry of Education.<sup>51</sup>

In terms of the Greek economy, the main 19<sup>th</sup>-century leverage was agricultural production. 85% of the labour force worked as sharecroppers of Turkish landowners before liberation. Independence changed the structure of land ownership and production.<sup>52</sup> The newly established Greek capitalism developed in the 1870s, period of a highly competitive international environment, when new means of transport, railways and steamboats virtually abolished the traditional limits of entrepreneurial expansion. The decades that followed independence saw significant progress in the country's infrastructure, long ignored by Ottoman rulers.<sup>53</sup> The Greek economy, constantly tested by demand instabilities of agricultural exports such as currants, was open to international fluctuations between 1830 and the end of the century. The currant crisis led to an economically driven exodus of 500,000 Greeks to the USA between 1891 and 1922. Yet, participation of the economy in the international upward cycle of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century was actively pursued.<sup>54</sup>

The present debasement, relatively invisible from the lower part of the sanctuary, conceivably came as the outcome of erratic decisions of different administrative branches which tried to reconcile the irreconcilable. The usual rationale used by 20<sup>th</sup> century decision-making bodies I have encountered in previous research<sup>55</sup> is development purposes and irrefutable social needs; apparently, the same rationale has also guided the decisions of 19<sup>th</sup> century Greek cabinets. Subsequently, two summits of the same low, at one time walled hill<sup>56</sup> beside the seashore that Eleusis occupied strategically, accommodated between them the first factories *and* the archaeological excavation, materializing an instance of uncoordinated, conflicting, bizarre state action.<sup>57</sup> Thereafter, industrial development expanded widely along the Sacred Way plus in large chunks of the Thriasian Plain.

Suddenly, in 1875, the first industry in Eleusis, the Harilaou soap industry appeared on the same, still partly explored hill, south of the archaeological site. The development of the Eleusis industry was launched by the so-called 'Zurich Circle,' a group of engineer industrialists who had studied chemistry in Zurich between the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and mid-interwar period. This group introduced heavy chemical industry in Eleusis.<sup>58</sup> Ironically, while these educated entrepreneurs chose ancient names for their factories (Votrys, Titan, Heracles, Cronus, Iris), their business

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50 Papangeli and Chlepa 2011.

51 Alexopoulou-Baya 1985.

52 Kyrou 2005.

53 Kyrou 2005.

54 Patronis 2015, ch. 5.

55 Loukaki 1997; 2016b.

56 Phoca and Valavanis 1997, 198.

57 Other examples include, besides Eleusis and Megalopolis in the Peloponnese, where the stake was large-scale industrialisation vs classical sanctuaries and sites, Knossos, where the main concern has been urban illegal expansion (Loukaki 2018).

58 This circle included Epaminondas Charilaos and Nikolaos Kanellopoulos, founders of the Eleusis Soap and Olive Oil Factory, Andreas Hadjikyriakos, owner of Titan and Heracles cement factories, Leontios Economides, founder of the distillery company later named Votrys, engineer Pavlos Santorinis, who built the Cronus plant, and Menelaos Sakellariou, who established the Iris Varnish and Paints Factory. They introduced cutting-edge technology in chemical and building industry, see <https://www.insider.gr/eidiseis/ellada/25468/i-viomihaniki-elit-tis-elladas-anavionei-stin-eleysina>. Later, big names were added, like Latsis, Niarchos, Bodossakis, Aggelopoulos, also active in the Eleusis wider area.

deteriorated the archaeological landscape and polluted the air of Eleusis; the irony deepens, since some of these factories are now considered part of the industrial heritage of Greece.

Why Eleusis? Because it was about a blend of 'comparative advantages': The leeward Eleusinian gulf secured maritime activities. The Thriasian field provided mineral raw materials and agricultural products, including, but not limited to, bauxite, oil and resin, used by the chemical industries.<sup>59</sup> The railroad that passed nearby connected Athens with Corinth in 1885, and in 1887 with Patras. Infrastructural modernisation was promoted by Prime Minister Charilaos Trikoupis as a key development policy of the Greek state;<sup>60</sup> this included the Korinthos Canal, opened in 1893. Finally, the capital and the Piraeus port were relatively nearby.

It was then that a development fury broke out. Consequently, from 1870 the ideological and spatial oxymoron is observed, given the institutional importance of archaeology for the Greek state, that industrial infrastructure and exploration of the archaeological site develop simultaneously in Eleusis: The former was in fact gutting the intestines of the silent latter's natural topography as on one side of the hill industries were operating, noisy and polluting, and on the other a most sacred space was being archaeologically surveyed.

Absurdly, at least by current standards, the commitment of the central state to Eleusis has nevertheless been continuous, even in phases of national bankruptcy. The Decree 'On the Approval of the Eleusis Town Planning Layout' was published in 1877, in the Government Gazette of the Kingdom of Greece.<sup>61</sup> The site's boundaries were clearly delineated, some modern buildings marked as demolishable, visible antiquities depicted. Expropriations and demolitions were based on these proposals. Traces of the ruins were represented with strong lines indicating interest. The Sacred Way would be enhanced and its proposed opening up would follow the ancient trail. Antiquities were declared protected in the sanctuary per se plus in the *peribolos* (encirclement). Possible limits were demarcated through lines of trees.<sup>62</sup> A little later, however, a large part of the hill on which medieval antiquities were located was used as a raw materials' quarry for the *Titan* cement industry which settled in 1902 at the western edge of the Eleusis coastal front, adjacent to the hill of the ancient city. Besides, industrial plants occupied the town seafront. Thus was established the wider industrial zone and the Thriasian Plain was increasingly dilapidated.

Modern Greek architect Dimitris Pikionis's text "Gaias Atimosis" (Sallying the Earth<sup>63</sup>) may have been inspired by Eleusis. Yet 19<sup>th</sup>-century archaeologists do not appear to have resisted the damage, suggested alternative areas for industrial location or, at the very least, advised drastic measures of visual and olfactory protection, despite the close relations that the Archaeological Society seems to have had with the government and the palace. I could not find a single negative comment in the Annual Reports of the Archaeological Society<sup>64</sup> of that period. Remarkably, the excavators had time to pounce against their critics<sup>65</sup> but not to stop this devastation. The self-

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59 Belavillas *et al.* 2011.

60 The railroad infrastructure, a symbol of progress, was portrayed as an end in itself. By 1882, Trikoupis established an extensive rail network, see <http://www.lifo.gr/team/gnomes/50351>

61 It was signed by the Minister of Interior A. Koumoundouros.

62 Papangeli and Chlepa 2011.

63 Pikionis 1985.

64 Established in 1837 through initiatives of upper class Greek archaeophiles, the Athens Archaeological Society purported care for the ancient monuments in Attica, support of the state action, and promulgation of the newly-founded country's bonds with ancient Greece. All actions of the Society were planned in common with the General Ephor of Antiquities (Loukaki 2016b, 150–1). Reports were, and are, published in the journal *Ο Μέντωρ*.

65 As happened in Filios' answers to John Svoronos.

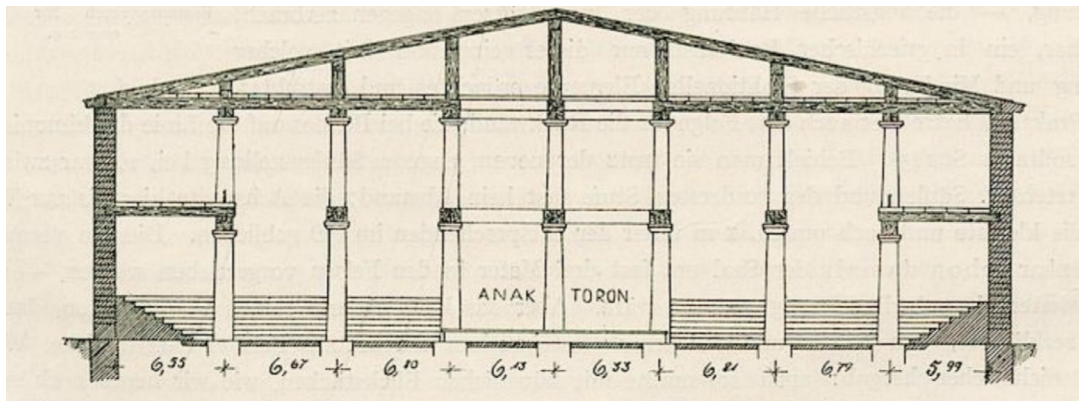
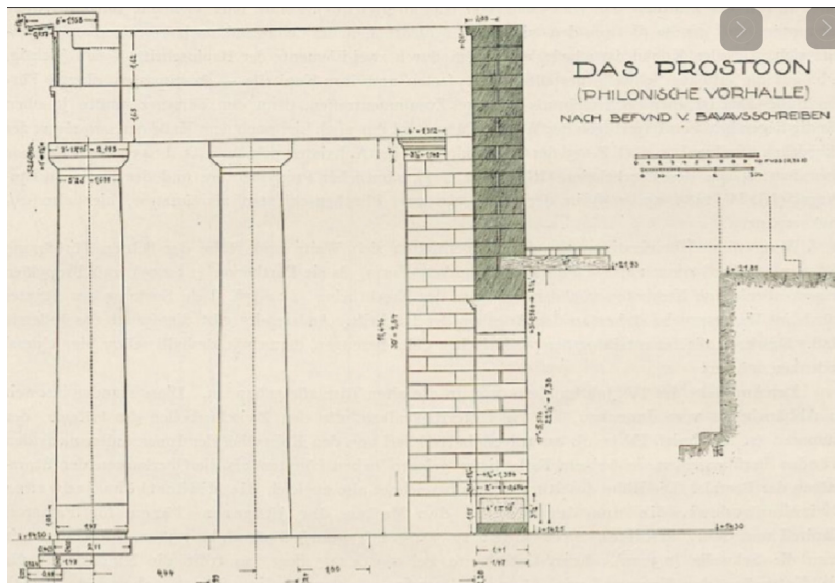


Fig. 8a and b. The Telesterion with Philon's porch. A. Orlandos' drawings from 1927. Source: Adapted by the author from Noack (1927).

blinding shift of interest towards a permissible or more neutral field of action is a rather typical case of the defensive mechanism which Freud (1961) calls 'sublimation.'

Systematic, gradually extensive excavation did begin in 1882 by the Archaeological Society after extensive expropriations and demolitions of the houses on the hill, even the church of the village. The settlement was moved to the low area around the archaeological hill and towards the sea.<sup>66</sup> Preparations for the site's release, in coordination with the government, are mentioned in the annual report by the Head of the Society.<sup>67</sup> Despite open issues, its Council decided that the excavation should begin because otherwise the project would be likely abandoned. The excavation lasted for an entire century and revealed the sanctuary monuments plus a large part of the ancient city fortification.

Excavations, led by a sequence of directors over time, unearthed the whole sanctuary and cemetery, used new archaeological methods of systematic research and study of the finds, supported by Greek and foreign funds,<sup>68</sup> and clarified issues of chronology. Dimitris Filios

66 Papangeli and Chlepa 2011.

67 Stefanos Koumanoudis (in Kourouniotis 1936).

68 Alexopoulou 1985.

launched the excavation amidst difficulties, dedicating ten years, from 1882 until 1892. He worked with unrelenting zeal to unearth the whole sanctuary, the Telesterion and the ancient cemetery. His annual reports have aided his successors and later researchers. Architect Wilhelm Dörpfeld helped as technical associate, perfecting the method of systematic research and study of the findings.<sup>69</sup>

From 1893/4 until 1907 Andreas Skias headed the excavation. His most important contributions were the recovery of the Geometric cemetery and the ancient settlement plus the classification of the objects hosted in the Eleusis Museum.<sup>70</sup> However, his interpretations were disputed; the research of Professor Mylonas restored persuasively the prehistoric remains. Kourouniotis headed the excavation between 1917 and 1940 (Fig. 10), completing and clarifying the edifices' palimpsest. The work, until 1930, was jointly funded by the Ministry of Education and the Archaeological Society.

Already in 1927, an important volume, edited by Ferdinand Noack, appeared in German with the contribution of the Greek Professor Anastasios Orlandos,<sup>71</sup> an archaeologist and architect who left an essential legacy, stressing mainly the pre-Roman antiquities. For his study of the Telesterion (Figs. 8a–b), Orlandos must have been assisted by Plutarch's *Life of Pericles*, where classical architects and their contribution to the Periclean Telesterion were named.<sup>72</sup>

Orlandos also provided exact publication of the Roman temple of Artemis and Poseidon (2nd century AD) in the paved outer court in front of the Greater Propylaeum,<sup>73</sup> and of a Roman fountain.<sup>74</sup>

Judging from the plans, I would think that restorations (instead of the impromptu placement of co-belonging members on top of each other without fastening, as is the case in Eleusis), even on a limited scale, would be perfectly possible at that relatively early time, including, perhaps, some restored shafts of the Periclean Telesterion columns, plus some shafts, and even part of the frieze, of the Artemis and Poseidon temple columns (Figs. 8a–b, 9).

Instead, disregard for the cumulative external danger continued: In a 1932 book dedicated to the memory of his predecessors Filios and Skias, published on the 50th anniversary of the excavations, Kourouniotis<sup>75</sup> propelled as main desideratum their completion and publication of the site, not the safeguarding of the setting. And yet, the arrival of Greek refugees aggravated the sanctuary's prospects, since Eleusis was declared an industrial zone in 1939,<sup>76</sup> in a move which appears to have linked grassroots and capitalist demands. Pre-war Eleusis was also

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69 Kourouniotis 1936.

70 Skias accepted a professorship and left the excavation but recommended its continuation outside the sanctuary, *ibid.*

71 Noack 1927.

72 Architect Koroibos planted the columns on the floor and linked their capitals with architraves. After he died, Metagenes, of the demos Xypete, carried up the frieze and the upper tier of columns. Xenocles, of the demos Cholargos, set on high the lantern (*opaion*) over the shrine. The involvement of Iktinos, one of the two Parthenon architects, listed by Vitruvius and Strabo, is possibly true (Miller 1997, 232).

73 Orlandos 1932. The Greater Propylaeum replaced the early classical gateway and was probably built by Marcus Aurelius following the classical Mnesikles model. Standing next to the Kallichoron Well, it was complemented by the Lesser Propylaeum and two commemorative arches spanning the entrances to the forecourt from Megara and the harbour. Dedicated by the Panhellenion to Demeter, Kore, and the emperor, these arches referenced the Hadrianic, not the Periclean city and were modelled on Hadrian's Arch which demarcated his new quarter of Athens (Longfellow 2012, 140).

74 Orlandos 1936.

75 Kourouniotis 1936.

76 Leontidou 2006, 178.





Fig. 9. Temple of Artemis and Poseidon, drawing restoration A. Orlandos. Source: Wikipedia.



Fig. 10. The sanctuary and the Kourouniotis excavations in the 1930s. Source: Travlos (1949).

producing ammunition, disregarding potential dangers.<sup>77</sup> The wider industrial installations now include the Eleusis Shipyards, cement, petrochemical and steel factories, the Greek Gunpowder Makers, and many more, forming the industrial heart of Greece. A strong second wave of

77 German ammunition was transported there after the Greek front fell. Explosives were also stocked by Germans in the local aviation repair installations, see <http://ikee.lib.auth.gr/record/136228/files/Manousakis.pdf>

industrialisation followed in the 1960s.<sup>78</sup> De-industrialisation started slowly twenty years later.<sup>79</sup>

After Kourouniotis's death, from 1945 onwards, the Archaeological Society continued excavations with Orlandos and Georgios Mylonas until the latter's death in 1988, and with architect Ioannis Travlos who worked there at least between 1936 and his death in 1985. Rescue excavations, under the supervision of other archaeologists, are carried out since the 1970s due to the demand for low-rise working-class housing. During the 1990s, excavations continued under the guidance of M.D. Cosmopoulos. Presently, the responsible agency of the Ministry of Culture is in charge of the sanctuary.

Mylonas in his book,<sup>80</sup> wonderful for the rest, displays symptoms of this special kind of earlier Greek archaeologists' 'Eleusinian blindness' through his idyllic references to the site adjoining the blue Aegean waters. Some present narratives of the Eleusis urban and industrial development still deal with this disgrace in neutral terms, as if its fate were inevitable, not the result of concrete decisions<sup>81</sup> or lack thereof: commentators refer to the transformation of Eleusis from a rural town to an industrial city attributing it to labour availability and to post-1922 Greek refugee population. Others extoll the monumental heritage of heavy industry as a reminder of the workforce and the entrepreneurial past, plus the future local potential.<sup>82</sup>

Kerényi,<sup>83</sup> however, crossing the Sacred Way, saw the cloud of dust and smoke over Eleusis, while beholding in the foreground, quite unchanged, the scene of the battle of Salamis, a glorious moment in world history. He expressed his disappointment that the Sacred Road and Eleusis were fading through urbanisation, enterprise, and the widening of the ancient pass between Mounts Poikilon and Aigaleos.<sup>84</sup> The latter could not be avoided, but the former could possibly be moderated and controlled.

## THE IMPACTS OF NON-RESTORATION AND ARCHITECT JOHN TRAVLOS

John Travlos (Fig. 11), a sensitive, valuable architect and archaeologist dedicated himself almost exclusively to Athens and Eleusis. The huge volume of records, surveys, drawings, restoration proposals and ideas he left mostly piled up over time, as he was dealt with negativity, noted Angelos Delivorrias, the late director of Benaki Museum. In regard to Travlos's proposals for some Eleusis restorations which never materialised, Delivorrias<sup>85</sup> added: '...the fate of his ideas' application throughout the long period during which the restoration policy of the Archaeological Service and the Archaeological Society that went with the Service's flow was a function of other parameters; this was a source of profound bitterness to Travlos.' And Delivorrias continued: 'It would be incredibly painful for him to see the restoration works for the Antoninus Pius arch in Eleusis (which imitated Hadrian's in Athens) discontinued...'

Probably drawing from the Greek poetic substratum, mentioned above, Delivorrias found Travlos's work poetic in the face of a sinking Athens. 'He was collecting and registering

78 See Leontidou 2006, 191–7; Loukaki 1997; 2016b; Belavillas *et al.* 2011.

79 <https://www.capital.gr/epixeiriseis/2152020/stin-eleusina-mia-fora-upirxan-fougara>

80 Mylonas 2010.

81 When mentioned in the historiography of the municipality. Books were funded by a key destroyer but also saviour, Titan Cements.

82 <http://art.yerolymbos.com/el/art/industrial-eleusina/>

83 Kerényi 1967, 4–6, first ed. 1962.

84 In the southern slope of Aigaleos Xerxes, king of the Persians, had a throne of rock erected to take in the victory of his fleet.

85 Delivorrias 1994.



Fig. 11. Architect and archaeologist John Travlos (1908-1985) in the 1930s overlooking the Rheitos Lakes, the Sacred Road and the Eleusis Bay. Source: <https://www.timesnews.gr/ioannis-travlos-architektonas-ke-archeologos/>

systematically, and inconspicuously, what was about to be sacrificed on the altar of a development ideal, the effects of which we experience with ...an everyday stuffy regularity'.<sup>86</sup> Why so? Because Athens, classical capital of the world, was being speedily transformed from a neoclassical into a modern city through the *antiparochi* system.<sup>87</sup>

In the instance of the Eleusis restoration, Travlos had located 130 archaeological members of one of the commemorative arches in the sanctuary's forecourt. Restoration would have been instructive<sup>88</sup> and useful to its enhancement and protection, even though the ancient material was not abundant, according to current restorers of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture.<sup>89</sup> Granted, Greek restorations are eminently based on rigorous aesthetic, technical and quality criteria which I have tried to explore elsewhere.<sup>90</sup> Distinguished restorers like Charalambos Bouras and Manolis Korres, to name but a few, have been inspired by, among others, the monuments' value system proposed by Alois Riegl. However, I would argue that the environmental value has been among the foremost to the Eleusis sanctuary, and, as such, it should have been protected accordingly via some pre-emptive and strategic restorations.

In a plan of 1953 Travlos marked the active quarry on the pass between the two hills (Fig.

86 Delivorrias 1994. Delivorrias would have been delighted with the new book on Travlos's oeuvre (Kokkou 2020), published during the preparation of this article.

87 *Antiparochi* is an urban building system whereby a land plot or a neoclassical house owner could turn them over to a small-scale construction company in exchange an agreed number of apartments in the finished building. This system lies behind the post-war transformation of Greek cities. This process of 'creative destruction' caused creators distress, see Pikionis 1985 and Loukaki 2009; 2016b. Other theoreticians, however, argue that this 'miracle' created a European Brasilia (Burgel 2002).

88 Bouras 1994.

89 Information from Dr. Toumbakari, see the Acknowledgments section.

90 See Loukaki 2016b, ch. 3.



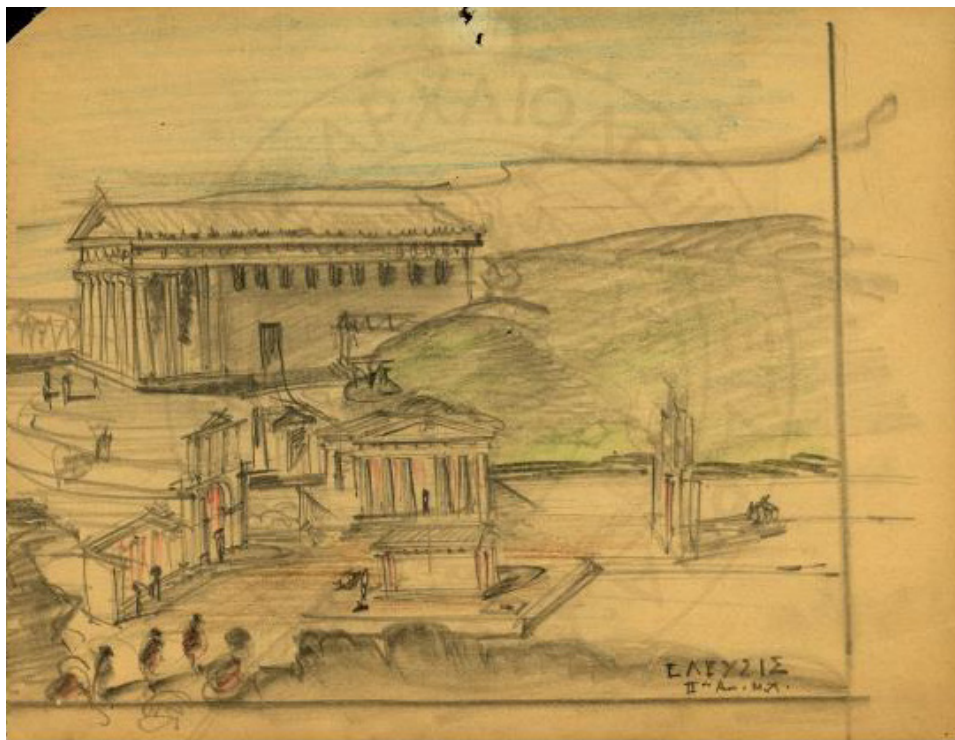


Fig. 11. Eleusis, 2nd century AD. Sketch by John Travlos. Source: The Travlos Archive, Archaeological Society of Athens.

1). In the same year, the dissolution of the tower from the Frankish period was approved when gradual quarrying almost reached its base. The tower, built with ancient material on the ruins of the Hellenistic fortress to control the road linking Attica to the rest of Greece, was a landmark imprinted on many engravings. Its building material, Eleusinian limestone, was transferred to the site for a future reconstruction which never happened.<sup>91</sup> Had the western fortification been restored, as Travlos had also suggested in a 1949 publication, quarrying and demolition of the tower would have been blocked.

Delivorrias passionately, and perhaps overstatedly, given the heritage accomplishments mentioned above, burst out further: '(T)he image of abandonment...(and) the...misery of our negligence that weighs heavily over the great sanctuary would be extremely painful to him, (namely) our small-scale concern for what has been bequeathed to us, the criminal malignancy of our attitude towards our most important assets.'

From the previous analysis, one can surmise three things: First, that some kind of compromise may have been active at Eleusis between early archaeologists and the national entrepreneurial class prescribing that the former (initially on their own as members of the Archaeological Society and/or Service, later in conjunction with foreign archaeological schools and donors) would be allotted their excavation turf on the condition that they would not object to the massive 'creative destruction' taking place in the vicinity. This, despite fervent intentions to defend national history.<sup>92</sup>

Second, that some Heads of the sanctuary excavation like Kourouniotis may have cared slightly more about the thrill of full recovery than the maintenance and restoration of the ruins brought to light.

91 Papangeli and Chlepa 2011.

92 See Oikonomos 1950, 39.



Third, that in what appears as a strictly hierarchical archaeologist 'boys' town,' extremely competent, hardworking, unassuming Travlos was condemned to always play second fiddle: That of the man who could produce extremely accurate restoration designs and plaster models plus dazzlingly solve every manner of archaeological riddle and still remain in relative shadow in terms of office and privilege. It should be stressed, however, that archaeological practice has meanwhile advanced a great deal in Greece.<sup>93</sup>

Further, especially during the post-war period, in a country devastated by World War II and torn by the subsequent civil war, anxious to rapidly improve its lot, the global ambiguity of early modernism, both architectural and urban planning, towards ancient traces,<sup>94</sup> whereby a constant theme has been the joint rejection *and* invocation of the past, was possibly intensified. The other side of this coin is the pre-emptive efforts of Greek archaeologists to protect and hide national treasures before the German invasion of 1941.<sup>95</sup> The magnitude of the post-war disaster is perceivable in the report of planner Constantine Doxiadis.<sup>96</sup> Granted, the target, a Greek economic miracle, was triumphantly accomplished.<sup>97</sup> The wider Eleusis area contributed greatly to this. And granted, there were frequent reactions, like those of architects Aris Konstantinidis and Dimitris Pikionis, towards what they perceived as environmental or archaeological missteps, including castigation of the Attalos Stoa restoration;<sup>98</sup> these, however, were variably impactful. Pikionis undertook an ineffective campaign as President of the Committee for the Protection of the Greek Landscape (1954). To its credit, in 1958 the Committee approved a resolution entitled 'In order to save the Greek Landscape,' mentioning that it mobilised against the national damage that landscape degradation represents.<sup>99</sup> Yet, planning literature, even in the late 1980s, continued considering the archaeological parameter as secondary.<sup>100</sup>

The Central Archaeological Council (CAC) has been consistently fighting to protect the environment of major antiquities and to impose certain unwritten yet active rules.<sup>101</sup> A main priority has been the preservation of antiquities visually and acoustically isolated from deteriorating land uses, and of their environment as close as possible to its ancient form. Eleusis repeatedly occupied the CAC in the period 1974–90, as accrues from the thousands of CAC proceedings I have researched. In 1986, there was a reference to an earlier proposal for restorations in Eleusis, most likely Travlos's, discussed above.<sup>102</sup> But it took more time for the Archaeological Service as a whole to become fully aware of the environment's enormous significance for the enhancement and protection of monuments and sites. Nonetheless, the role of the Service towards safeguarding Greek monuments and archaeological sites must be stressed.

The CAC was repeatedly busy in 1984 with issues of intra-state differences in aesthetics and priorities, including the conflict between the Ministries of Culture, of Settlements and the Environment, and of Public Works, when the latter decided to re-tarmac and widen the Sacred Way. Not only was this averted, but this crisis led to the unification of the two latter ministries.<sup>103</sup>

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93 Loukaki 2016b.

94 See <https://sites.udel.edu/britlitwiki/modernists-perception-of-the-past/>

95 <https://www.lifo.gr/mag/features/3704>

96 See <http://www.tovima.gr/society/article/?aid=536525>

97 Close 2014.

98 Konstantinidis 1987 (1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1947).

99 [http://library.tee.gr/digital/techr/1958/1958\\_gened/techr\\_1958\\_157\\_158\\_9.pdf](http://library.tee.gr/digital/techr/1958/1958_gened/techr_1958_157_158_9.pdf)

100 See Psychopedis and Getimis 1989.

101 Loukaki 1997; 2016b.

102 Act 26/22.07.1986 of the CAC, see Loukaki 2008, 186 n. 75; Loukaki 2016b, 186, n. 75.

103 Loukaki 2016b.



Fig. 13. Delos, the Southern Stoa, mid-3rd century BC. Source and ©: Author.

Why did the absence of restorations probably contribute to the desecration of Eleusis? Because restored sites are automatically elevated to a higher sphere of state care.<sup>104</sup> Associations of clarity, measure, better enhancement and proportion of the monuments in regard to the surrounding space are important. Via restoration, monuments become commanding through their sheer presence, restored three- and four-dimensionality (if we include time flows), engaging mobilisation of the imagination of both local people and visitors, the power of integrated images and of lived, tangible, physical space,<sup>105</sup> protection of the ancient material from post-excavation wear, as well as persuasive, palpable state attention. In all likelihood, even one-to-one scaled, 3-D, laser-ray-produced models installed locally could only be a shadow of the material gravitas, spatial consciousness, cultural magnetism and poetics of the Eleusinian ruins.<sup>106</sup> Restored sites participate from a stronger position in the advance of urban dynamics; this strength can deter the violation of archaeological landscapes. It seems to me that in almost every aspect, restoration is a shield of protection.

See for comparative reasons the recent restoration program on Despotikon, an uninhabited islet of a minimally disturbed archaeological and historical environment, not a threatened location like Eleusis, lying close to Antiparos. Restoration currently turns this 'Other Delos' (Fig. 12), into an exceptional archaeological park.<sup>107</sup>

104 Loukaki 2016b, esp. ch. 6.

105 On space categories, importance and effects, see Harvey 2004; Loukaki 2016a.

106 On the importance of tactility in regard to architectural design and the imagination, see, respectively, Malnar and Vodvarka 2004; Bachelard 1992.

107 See Kourayios *et al.* 2020. See also <https://www.iefimerida.gr/politismos/brethikan-entyposiakes-arhaiotites-sto-tsimintiri>. Ancient members are adhered with new completions shaped through a robotic pantograph (CNC) in Athens (columns and architrave of the temple).

The possible argument that negative prioritisation of the Eleusis ruins was due to many of them being Roman, and because top priority were at the time classical ruins of mainly 5th–4th century BC is a complicated issue: Restorations of Delos buildings, belonging to a rich stratigraphy in which the Hellenistic period prevailed, started early on.<sup>108</sup> Further, soon after the establishment of the Greek state, study of the Greek and Roman antiquity became principal in the curriculum of the University of Athens, first university of Greece, which educated historians and archaeologists. In late 19th century, the Archaeological Society launched the first restorations of Byzantine monuments, the exquisite Daphni Monastery (1893) on the Sacred Way, and Mystras in the Peloponnese (1895).<sup>109</sup>

Therefore, given also that timely studies and surveys of the sanctuary's strictly classical period were readily available in early 20th century, we can safely infer that the reason for the absence of restorations in Eleusis cannot actually be the material prevalence of the Roman phase.

## CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

We studied some effects of a state failure against a manifold locus which has consistently stirred the personal and collective unconscious. With the signs of the coming devastation imminent, it was crucial that restorations be materialised early on, even partial, suggestive and not fully studied, even not exactly compatible with the (later) high standards of the Charter of Venice (1964) and, of course, the subsequent, stricter Greek principles of total reversibility.<sup>110</sup> An early restoration, though imperfect, would possibly, partly at least, avert the current situation. Dispersed materials from the Great Propylaia and elsewhere are now being recovered. The archaeological museum currently stands in for the ruined Telesterion which is to be restored.<sup>111</sup> However, the guiding norm of this restoration, maximum authenticity of the palimpsest, here would discount volume representability and the re-establishment of the third dimension which are necessary, as hopefully shown.<sup>112</sup>

Modern Eleusis has pursued cure from the deep trauma<sup>113</sup> through cultural politics. The city transmits a damaged and yet strangely appealing quality through the coexistence of archetypal sanctity and the profanity of workfloors, abandoned and still functioning as cultural venues, which persistently emits traces of sanctity also due to the human sweat that has been irrigating them. This aesthetics of violation, in conjunction with multi-layered threads of

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108 Bruneau and Ducat 2010.

109 The ancient Greek and Roman heritage canon remained predominant during the 19th century at the University of Athens, as it both aligned to European universities and linked Modern with Ancient Greece, emerging two lines of historical chronicling: First, this canon decelerated the incorporation of Byzantine history into national historiographical accounts, opposing the Paparrighopoulos scheme (Karamanolakis 2006, 63–133). Second, Greek intellectuals forwarded restoration of historical continuity (Sakka 2002, 91). Respectively, throughout the 19th century, archaeological teaching focused on the most important classical monuments. In 1911, the seat of Byzantine archaeology was created (Karamanolakis 2006, 382). Outside academia, interest in the Orthodox Byzantine tradition never ceased (Sakka 2002).

110 See analysis of restoration practices and aesthetics in Loukaki 2016b.

111 See [https://www.culture.gov.gr/DocLib/2018\\_09\\_25%20ΔΑΑΜ%20ΤΕΛΙΚΟ%20ΠΡΟΣΛΗΨΕΙΣ%20ΕΛΕΥΣΙΝΑ%20τροπ\\_αποδ\\_%20ΕΕΤ%20τελ%201.pdf](https://www.culture.gov.gr/DocLib/2018_09_25%20ΔΑΑΜ%20ΤΕΛΙΚΟ%20ΠΡΟΣΛΗΨΕΙΣ%20ΕΛΕΥΣΙΝΑ%20τροπ_αποδ_%20ΕΕΤ%20τελ%201.pdf)

112 Due to lack of original materials, according to Dr. Toumbakari (interview on 23.07.2020). The study of restorer Helen Chlepa was approved by the CAC, subject to modifications. For a brief remark on substitution between sacred and profane forms, see Agamben 2007, 84. Museums are affected by the aura of their objects. For the auratic quality of authentic artworks, see Benjamin 1969.

113 [http://politics.wwf.gr/images/stories/political/positions/Thriasio\\_jul08.pdf](http://politics.wwf.gr/images/stories/political/positions/Thriasio_jul08.pdf)

continuity, human travail, flames spitted by chimneystacks of still-working plants and rusting carcasses of both factories and ships ends up being absurdly attractive and unique as a strange architectural and monumental uncanny,<sup>114</sup> a fundamentally unhomely ultra-modern condition.

As cultural capital of Europe, Eleusis will optimistically profit culturally.<sup>115</sup> Even though the damage remains, deserted factory spaces are planned to be used for various artistic happenings. The unification of archaeological sites in the wider area is a sustained idea.<sup>116</sup>

Building on all aspects of the extremely rich Greek archaeology-related experience with the purpose of theoretical reflection, as well as of practical healing, however partial, of such a wound seems imperative. This response will honour the spatial, material, spiritual and scholarly tradition of the place, but also the ancient whisper constantly rising from the Eleusinian soil.

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I had the unforgettable chance to discuss briefly Travlos and Eleusis with Angelos Delivorrias the last time I saw him on 30.01.2018, three months before his death.

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114 Vidler 1992; Loukaki 2016a.

115 <http://www.ypeka.gr/Default.aspx?tabid=942&language=el-GR>

116 See Papangeli and Chlepa 2011.



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