

ASCSA Excavations
in Ancient Corinth
2022 Report

Excavations Northeast of the Theater

After two seasons scaled back because of the COVID pandemic, full-scale excavation resumed in 2022 in the field northeast of the ancient theater, where the current field campaign began in 2018 (Figure 1). In the southern portion of the area, excavation from the modern surface was initiated in grid-squares 13A, 13B, 14A, 14B, 15A, 15B, 15C, 16C, 18A, 18B, 18C, 19A, and 19B. In the northern portion of the area, excavation from the modern surface was carried out in grid-squares 1B, 2B, and 3B.

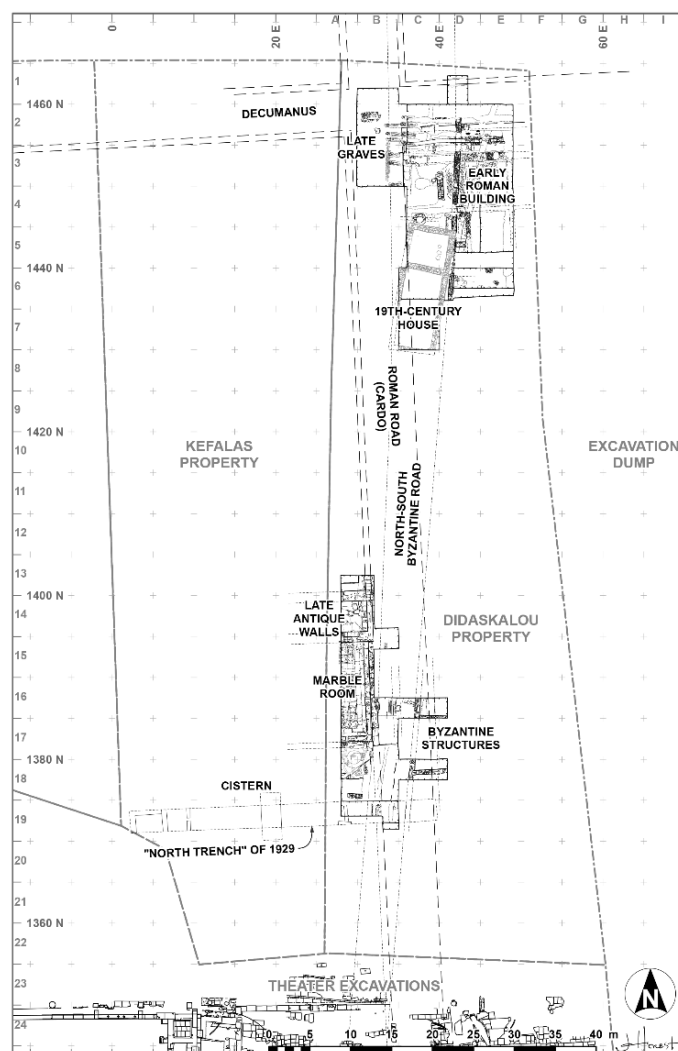


Figure 1. Plan of area after the 2022 excavation season

Excavation in grid-squares 16B and 18B revealed portions of the north-south Byzantine (12th century) road first recognized further to the north in 2018, as well as sections of walls of contemporary structures to its east. Below the Byzantine road layers in grid-square 16B, a deep robbing trench was revealed extending down into a partially plundered vaulted drain, which underlay the earliest Roman road layers uncovered to the west in 2021. To the east of this drain, part of a smaller secondary drain was discovered below a fill of stones and transport amphoras. The amphoras, including at least two types produced in Spain, are dated to the 1st century A.D. (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Spanish amphoras: Dressel 2-4, Beltrán IIA

To the west of the road, much more of the Late Roman “Marble Room” discovered in 2020 was revealed. Substantial remains of its brick- and stone-faced concrete east wall were found to extend northward for a distance of over 15 meters from the southeast corner of the room. The newly revealed portion of the floor of the room preserves much of its original *opus sectile* pavement with circles in a reticulate pattern, but some areas show signs of crude repairs (Figure 3). The original north end of the room was not discovered. Instead, excavation in this



Figure 3. Marble Room, view from the south

area revealed two massive east-west walls constructed in two distinct styles. The south wall abuts the west face of the pre-existing east wall of the Marble Room and is constructed in part with irregular poros blocks set in mortar with troweled lines similar to those found on several Late Antique buildings in Corinth (Figure 4). The north wall is also likely to date to the Late Antique period, but in contrast to the south wall, it cuts through the east wall of the Marble Room and is constructed of larger, more regular poros ashlar. At its east end, this wall forms a right angle with another wall that extends northward into the north scarp of the excavation trench



Figure 4. Late Antique wall over north portion of the Marble Room

in grid-square 13B. The exposed corner of the interior space defined by these two walls preserves evidence of a marble pavement and a marble veneered bench, similar to that of the earlier Marble Room to the south (Figure 5). The Marble Room seems to have remained open at



Figure 5. Room lined with a bench north of the Marble Room

least until the first of the Late Antique walls was constructed toward its north end. The late 6th- to 7th-century fill deposited over the original floor of the Marble room south of the Late Antique walls produced large quantities of pottery and glass vessels as well as a variety of other finds, including the head of a full-size marble copy of the Cassel Apollo type (Figure 6) and part of the



Figure 6. Head of the Cassel Apollo type: as found (left); cleaned (right)

leg of another large marble figure. Fill deposited between, and north of, the Late Antique walls seems to be contemporary with the fill to the south of these walls, but it contained very little apart from building debris (blocks, bricks, and marble revetment).

Excavation in grid-squares 2B and 3B revealed seven graves cut into the hard upper surface of the north-south Byzantine road that lay just below the modern plow zone (Figure 7). The location of these graves in close proximity to four others excavated previously in 2019 strongly suggests that all eleven graves belong to a single burial plot. Six of the seven graves excavated in 2022 were elongated, shallow pits, while the seventh was a slightly more elaborate rectangular cist lined with small stones. The disposition of the skeletons (supine with arms crossed and head positioned to the west) is consistent with Christian burial practice, but the lack of accompanying finds contemporary with the burials leaves their date in doubt. An isolated grave of a small child covered with a single cover tile was discovered in fill above the Marble Room in grid-square 16B. Its relationship to the other burials is unclear at this time, though it, too, appears to be a Christian burial no earlier than the 12th century.



Figure 7. Late grave cut into the north-south Byzantine road.

Conservation

Throughout 2022, the work of conserving and restoring the wall paintings excavated in the 1980's in the area to the east of the Theater continued to be carried out by a team of conservators from the Centro di Conservazione Archeologica – Roma. Three walls of one large room, decorated with images of Zeus, Hera, Athena, Aphrodite, Eros, and Herakles, received their final surface finish (Figure 8); fragments of one wall of another large room, decorated with



Figure 8. Wall painting from Unit 3 east of the Theater.

garlands and musical instruments, were mounted (Figure 9); and a painted wall niche from yet another room was mounted and restored. In addition, a previously restored wall painting from the area east of the Theater was taken off display in the Roman gallery of the Corinth Museum in order for additional fragments to be integrated into a larger, more complete restoration.



Figure 9. Wall painting from Unit 3 east of the Theater.

In the summer of 2022, work resumed in the Frankish Area south of the Corinth Museum. The walls of the *parekklesion* of Unit 2 were consolidated; crushed stone floors were laid down inside the church and in the areas around Unit 1 (Figure 10); two column shafts in the plateia east of Unit 1 were re-erected (Figure 11); fencing with iron posts and stainless steel wire rope was installed on the east side of the area; and landscaping of the surrounding area with plants and trees was carried out. Texts and illustrations for two signs were submitted to the Ephoreia of Antiquities of the Korinthia for approval. Once the signs are installed, it is hoped that visitors will be able to access the site and gain a better appreciation of medieval Corinth.



Figure 10. Frankish area, view of Unit 1 from the south.



Figure 11. Frankish area, view of the church from the west

In the summer of 2022, cleaning and minor conservation work was carried out under the supervision of the Centro di Conservazione Archeologica on the late 5th century B.C. pebble mosaic of the Centaur Bath (Figure 12).



Figure 12. Pebble Mosaic of the Centaur Bath (orthophoto James Herbst)

The work of 2022 was carried out with the permission of the Archaeological Service of the Ministry of Culture and Sport and under the supervision of the Ephorate of Antiquities of the Corinthia. We are grateful to the director of the Ephorate, Panayiota Kassimi, and the assistant Director, George Spyropoulos, for their cooperation and support.

– Christopher Pfaff

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Angela Stammati

Georgos Tsakalakis

Argyris Tsirikis

Photos



Kevin Lee and Mara McNiff setting up the total station with James Herbst



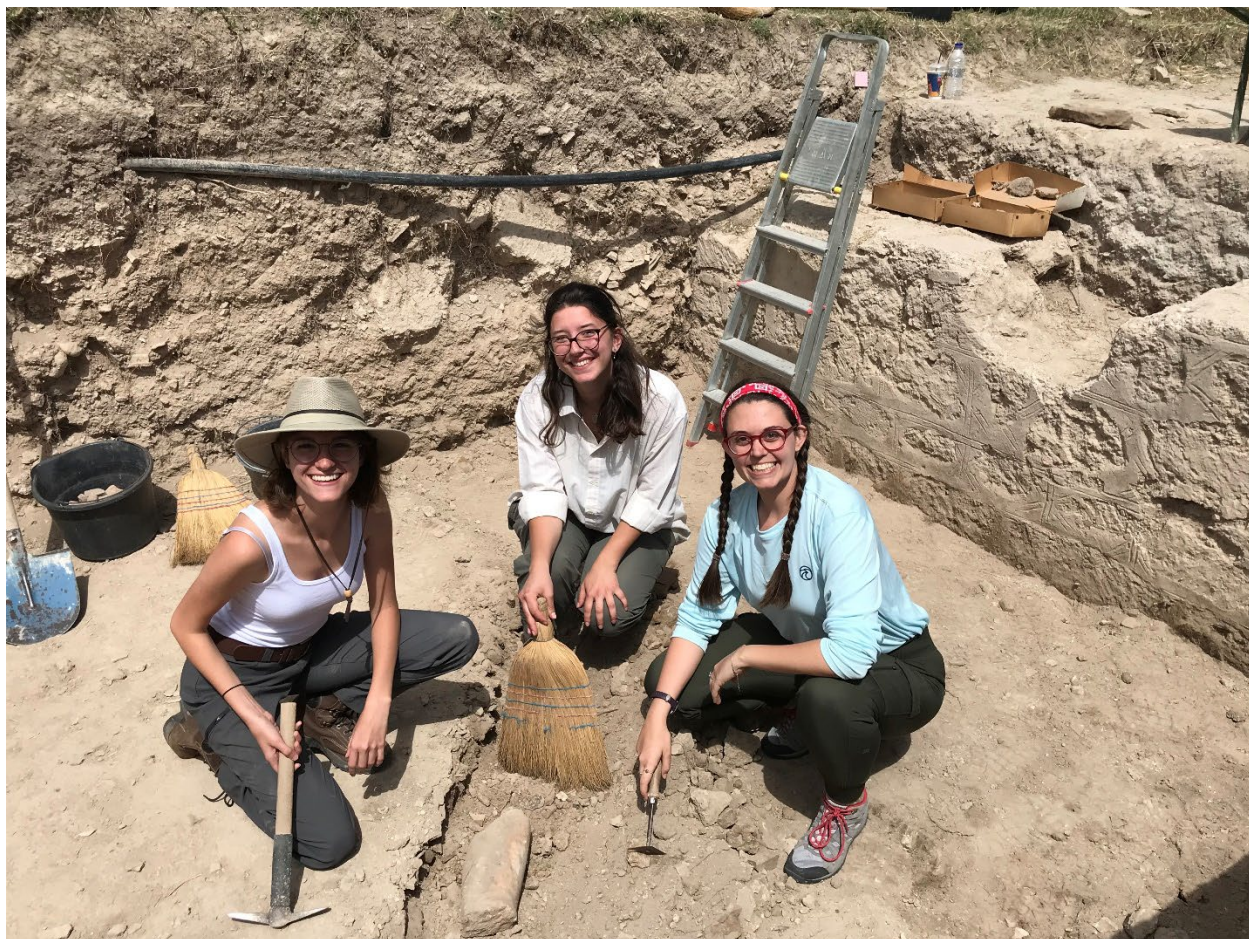
Eleni Gizas and Manolis Papadakis: Manolis' on-site birthday celebration



Kostas Arberoris excavating the head of the Cassel Apollo type



Kevin Lee, Argyris Tsirikis, Mara McNiff, and Panos Kakouros excavating south of the Marble Room



Allisen Hunter, Katerina Remma, and Taylor Cwikla with marble leg discovered in fill above the Marble Room



Eleni Gizas (left) presenting the excavations to a local school class



Kaia Brose, Taylor Cwikla, and Katerina Remma sorting pottery



Catherine Uritis and Kelly O'Connor sorting pottery



David Picker-Kille surveying with the total station



Phanis Kollias, Panos Kakouros, Paul Johnston, and Mary Danisi excavating east of the Byzantine road



Jesse James surveying the top of fill above Drain 6



Memo Karbouniaris and Luke Madson excavating the east side of the Byzantine road



Maria Liston with her students, Jessica Clarke and Grace Lenz, excavating one of the late graves



April Session



May Session



June Session