

Greek women in archaeology: a chronicle of achievement¹

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In memoriam Liana Stefani

Introduction

This article sketches a historic panorama of Greek women's contributions to archaeology,² and elaborates on some of our previously published ideas.³ In 1993 our first collaborative efforts resulted in the first book on gender in Aegean prehistory, which still remains one of the few syntheses on the topic.⁴ In 1998 we recounted the (then) untold achievement of pioneer Greek female archaeologists and their legacy.⁵ In 2009 we registered the progress – or absence thereof – towards feminist alignment in a scholarly field that has seen ever-larger female participation since the 1960s.⁶ Some fifteen years later, developments call for an updated appraisal of long-standing issues, this time in a more optimistic spirit.

Female archaeological activity in Greece, in the course of more than a century, is an extensive terrain to cover. In these pages, we can only highlight selected examples which, we believe, are representative of the whole picture. The narrative is organised in chronological sections, each one starting with a summary of the broader historic context, within which female involvement in archaeology has to be assessed.

International prelude

Early women archaeologists can broadly be divided into three age groups: a) self-taught pioneers, born until the mid-19th century; b) first generation graduates, born in the second half of the 19th century; and c) second generation graduates, born in the late 19th–early 20th centuries.⁷

¹ The transliteration of Greek follows the ISO 843 System. When a different spelling of personal names has been adopted by Greek authors in their non-Greek publications, it is maintained in the footnotes and bibliography. The UK English spelling is used throughout the text, including Greek personal and place names (unless they are commonly spelt otherwise). Throughout the text, the translations of Greek quotes are ours.

² Parts of this paper were first presented, in different versions, at two symposia: Δ. Κοκκινίδου, Γυναικείες διαδρομές στην ελληνική αρχαιολογία: η ανάκτηση και η διατήρηση της μνήμης, in 'Τα αρχαιολογικά τεκμήρια μιλούν...για τις πρώτες γυναίκες στην αρχαιολογία (πρώτο μισό του 20ού αιώνα)'. Επιστημονική ημερίδα, Υπουργείο Πολιτισμού και Αθλητισμού, Τμήμα Διαχείρισης Ιστορικού Αρχείου Αρχαιοτήτων και Αναστηλώσεων, Αθήνα, 19 Νοεμβρίου 2021; D. Kokkinidou and M. Nikolaidou, From the Museum to the Trench and beyond: Greek Women in Archaeology since the 1950s, in 'Unsung Pioneer Women in the Archaeology of Greece'. Workshop, École française d'Athènes, 8 March 2023. The respective texts will be published in the forthcoming proceedings.

³ Nikolaidou and Kokkinidou 1998; Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 2004, 2009; Kokkinidou 2012: 109–129, 2016, 2017.

⁴ Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 1993; more recent syntheses have been offered by Nikolaidou 2012; Hitchcock and Nikolaidou 2013.

⁵ Nikolaidou and Kokkinidou 1998.

⁶ Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 2009.

⁷ Díaz-Andreu and Sørensen 1998b: 11–21.

There was a strong presence of British women engaged in archaeological endeavours around the Mediterranean and the Near and Middle East,⁸ as had also been the case with earlier travellers.⁹ The relatively great mobility of British women had to do with the early appearance of feminism in their country, as well as with the explicit political aspirations of Great Britain to the hegemony of the Ottoman Empire over those lands.¹⁰ Overseas archaeology appears to have appealed more to unmarried women everywhere, for reasons that merit further investigation: were these women being excluded from fieldwork in their own countries and thus looked for alternatives elsewhere? Did they find an outlet for their talents abroad, enjoying more freedom and career opportunities?¹¹

A smaller and, until recently, rather neglected group includes non-professional or professional archaeological wives who, although crucial to the success of expeditions, often left behind a faint record, as they were overshadowed by their powerful and famous husbands.¹²

Early female archaeologists were representative of a new category of affluent, educated women who emerged in the West during the second half of the 19th century. The struggles for the right to study and participate in politics brought improvements to the position of women, at least those of the privileged strata. In the USA and the UK, access to higher education and, thus, to the formal qualification required for professional status was made possible from the 1870s onwards, either at newly-founded single-sex colleges or by admission to universities that became coeducational.¹³ By the late 19th–early 20th century, women were allowed to pursue academic studies in other European countries, too.¹⁴

Towards the end of the 19th century, American and British female graduates began to arrive in Athens to attend the archaeological institutions of their countries. Annie Peck and Eugénie Sellers were the first female students to be admitted by the American School (1885–1886) and the British School (1889–1890), respectively.¹⁵ Initially, young women aspiring to professional recognition were only accepted as second-class members, relegated to subordinate and routine tasks, with no right to apply for official studentships, work on excavations, or reside in the schools' quarters.¹⁶ Their stay abroad was intended to broaden their undergraduate learning rather than offer them real scholarship opportunities through field experience, which was a crucial step towards employment. On the pretext of unsafe working conditions and difficult logistics, women were barred from any meaningful participation in fieldwork; the real reason was that they did not fit the male adventurer stereotype.

The American Harriet Boyd was the first to shatter the glass ceiling, by conducting and publishing her own field projects on Crete. She used her stipend to finance an excavation at Kavousi (1900),¹⁷ and secured sponsorship for a new excavation at Gournia (1901, 1903–1904),¹⁸ both carried out in collaboration with female colleagues. Strategies of solidarity were common among early women archaeologists, who were seeking to achieve more than mere tolerance in a male-dominated world.¹⁹ Indeed, Boyd's success owes much to the model of cooperation she introduced for single women, in an era when the most viable path for a woman to break into fieldwork was to marry a fellow scholar. Her network of 'female interaction'²⁰ included Jean Patten, Blanche Wheeler,

⁸Moorey 1992: 99.

⁹Kamperidou 2002:1009–1056.

¹⁰Kolokotroni and Mitsi 2005: 12–13, 16.

¹¹Díaz-Andreu and Sørensen 1998b: 14.

¹²Díaz-Andreu and Sørensen 1998b: 14–15; Dever 2004; Root 2004: 8–12.

¹³Myers 2010: 1–26.

¹⁴Anderson and Zinsner 1988: 185–196; Ballarín *et al.* 2000; Rogers 2006: 118–120.

¹⁵Lord 1947: 15; Waterhouse 1986: 11.

¹⁶Waterhouse 1986: 132–135; Allen 2009.

¹⁷Boyd 1901.

¹⁸Boyd Hawes *et al.* 1908.

¹⁹Cohen and Joukowsky 2004b: 557–558; Allen 2009; Wragg Sykes *et al.* 2013.

²⁰Picazo 1998: 211.

Adelene Moffat, and Edith Hall; the latter went on to lead another woman-directed excavation in Crete, at Vrokastro (1910, 1912).²¹

Boyd's example inspired others: Elizabeth Gardiner was accepted to the Corinth excavation (1908);²² Hetty Goldman and Alice Walker launched and funded²³ a co-directed excavation at Halae in Boeotia (1911).²⁴ The American precedent seems to have impacted sex policies at other foreign institutions: Dorothy Lamb, Lilian Tennant, and Hilda Lorimer were admitted to the British School excavation at Phylakopi on Melos (1911),²⁵ whereas Grace Holding had already joined the excavation at Ritsona in Boeotia, which was conducted under the School's auspices (1907);²⁶ and Margarete Bieber was awarded a grant to work on the photographic archive of the German Archaeological Institute (1910–1912).²⁷ Other European women followed suit: the Italians Gina Reggiani and Margherita Guarducci,²⁸ and the French Marthe Quilié, Hermine de Saussure, Ella Maillart, and Mariel Jean-Brunhes arrived in Crete in the 1920s.²⁹ Archaeologists of other nationalities, whose countries did not yet have permanent missions, were traditionally hosted by the French School;³⁰ among them, W. Wentzel and Ch. Brondsted from Denmark, and Melle Van Leeuwen-Boomkamp, A. Roes, and Emilie Haspels from the Netherlands.³¹ By the 1930s, we find British women directing excavations in insular Greece (Winifred Lamb on Lesbos and Chios, Sylvia Benton on Ithaca, and Edith Eccles on Chios),³² and American women working at the Athenian Agora.³³

The mid-war years witnessed the establishment of archaeology as a separate academic field with increased numbers of female participants, now of more diverse social and national origins.³⁴ Nevertheless, women archaeologists (like their peers in other fields) still remained on the margins and faced many barriers to advancement.³⁵ Only after the Second World War did they begin to enter the profession in any considerable numbers, and eventually reached the top of professional hierarchy.³⁶ At the foreign archaeological schools in Greece, women were not appointed as directors or assistant directors until the 1980s.³⁷ One notable exception was Veronika Mitsopoulos-Leon, director of the Austrian Archaeological Institute at Athens from 1964 to 2001.³⁸ Nowadays archaeology has achieved a better sex balance than many other disciplines, at least in Europe, and the surging trends in most European countries point to a majority of women in the near future.³⁹

Entering the stage

Between the last two decades of the 19th and the first two decades of the 20th century, the Greek political scene was dominated by the so-called National Question. The young state that had emerged after the 1821 Revolution against a four-hundred-years-long Ottoman occupation, was still struggling to modernise itself, while also holding onto the Great Idea of integrating into the

²¹ Hall 1914.

²² Dyson 1998: 88; Gill 2011: 120.

²³ Wheeler 1912: 135.

²⁴ Goldman 1915, 1916, 1930, 1940; Walker and Goldman 1915; Walker 1916; Goldman and Jones 1942.

²⁵ Gill 2011: 135, 193.

²⁶ Thornton 2019.

²⁷ Recke 2013: 143.

²⁸ La Rosa 1995: 47–48; D'Agata 2009: 265–267.

²⁹ Detournay 2005.

³⁰ Roland 1996: 13.

³¹ Viviers 1996: 192; Vogeikoff-Brogan 2020.

³² Waterhouse 1986: 32, 35, 90, 113.

³³ Rotroff and Lamberton 2006: 45–54.

³⁴ Díaz-Andreu and Sørensen 1998b: 15–21.

³⁵ A case in point is Mary Ross Ellington, a student at Johns Hopkins University, whose master's thesis (1932) and PhD dissertation (1939) on the figurines of ancient Olynthus were heavily plagiarised and appropriated by her academic supervisor and renowned excavator of Olynthus, David Robinson (Kaiser 2015; see further Nikolaidou 2017; Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 2018; Haagsma 2020).

³⁶ Díaz-Andreu and Sørensen 1998b: 21–26.

³⁷ Nixon 1994: 15.

³⁸ Veronika Mitsopoulos-Leon (19.02.1936–09.07.2023), *Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut*, 12 July 2023. <https://www.oeaw.ac.at/oeai/medien/newsarchiv/news-detail/veronika-mitsopoulos-leon-19021936-09072023>.

³⁹ Lazar *et al.* 2014.

national body the lands that remained ‘unredeemed’ under Ottoman rule. A patriotic fervour burned across the country, fuelled by substantial territorial expansion at the expense of the declining Ottoman Empire during the Balkan Wars (1912–1913). In 1922, however, military victories were succeeded by an unprecedented disaster when the forces of Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish Republic, crushed the Greek campaign in Anatolia (1919–1922). What followed was a mass population transfer, in reality, an ethnic cleansing: some 1,2 million Greeks were violently displaced from their historical cradles in Asia Minor, eastern Thrace, and Pontus (once parts of the Byzantine Empire and the dominions of ancient Greek cities), in exchange for some 400,000 Turks who moved from Greece to Turkey.

During this turbulent period, the social landscape underwent dramatic transformation. Urbanisation intensified as immigrants from the newly-annexed lands and, mostly, refugees of the Asia Minor Catastrophe flocked to the cities in search of work. Ongoing war contributed to the growth of unemployment and poverty, forcing a substantial portion of the population to migrate. Women saw their share in the increase of wage labour; by the end of the 19th century, poor rural women were eking out an existence as housemaids, dressmakers, or workers in the textile and tobacco industries. For the few educated ones, teaching was almost the only possibility to earn a living of their own.

The ruling elites sought to forge a shared identity, which they defined as a combination of the Greek nation’s perceived uniqueness – and thus its capacity to advance – and Western modernity. It was at this intersection that feminism was born in Greece: the so-called Woman’s Question was integrated into the National Question. Since the mid-19th century, debates on the Woman’s Question began to appear in newspapers and magazines published in Athens, Constantinople, and Smyrna, including periodicals initiated by women and directed to a female readership.⁴⁰ Callirrhoe Parren, founder and editor-in-chief of *The Ladies’ Gazette* (*Ἐφημερίς τῶν Κυριῶν*, established in 1887), became the leading figure in what has aptly been called ‘the Ladies’ Revolt’,⁴¹ which brought women together to demand their collective emancipation – albeit one that prioritised rights in education, employment, the family, and social welfare rather than the right to vote. Parren’s associates were educated, enterprising women from the upper echelons of society, including the Greek diaspora, who shared the patriotic aspirations of their male peers. They idealised motherhood, trusting that women’s ‘innate’ nurturing qualities would enable success where men had failed: in the promise to regenerate the nation. In female education they saw a prime restorative force, for it edified the mothers of future soldiers and provided teachers devoted to patriotic causes. The adoption of such nationalist rhetoric allowed early Greek feminists to legitimise the intervention of privileged women in the public sphere, on terms that were different from but complementary to those of men. This type of alternative female citizenship, they believed, could safeguard the moral well-being of the nation, which had been compromised by corrupt male politics.

Charity was another important venue for activist Ladies, as it was considered a respectable public involvement and, therefore, was tolerated. In addition, workshops for domestic crafts were established to provide training and a basic income for poor young women and girls, orphans and refugees. These initiatives were part of the Greek efforts to preserve the disappearing folk traditions – both a cultural treasure and an economic resource. They were also supported by the British, who shared an interest in Greek ethnography.⁴² This interest most probably accounts for the unique case of Eleni Triantaphyllides, a graduate of the Arsakeion Girls’ School at Athens (*Ἀρσάκειον Παρθενγωγεῖον*), who was admitted to the British School in 1896–1897.⁴³ In the same

⁴⁰ Anastasopoulou 2004; Dalakoura 2010; Exertzoglou 2018.

⁴¹ Varika 1987.

⁴² Greensted 2011; Bounia 2014: 295.

⁴³ Smith 1896–1897: 221.

year, she published a paper on Macedonian folk customs in the School's *Annual*,⁴⁴ apparently with the encouragement of the director Cecil Smith.⁴⁵ Since this was her only publication, at least in the *Annual*, we may assume that her work did not continue.

In 1890 Greek women obtained the right to university education. The excellent performance of the first female students was saluted by Parren as a 'female triumph'⁴⁶ against the 'barbarous chase' by male students⁴⁷ whenever their lady fellows appeared in class. Between 1890 and 1920, 392 women graduated from Athens University – then the only one existing in the country – out of a total of 29,696 students.⁴⁸ It is among their ranks that we find the first women professional archaeologists.

Learned societies

The first erudite association to admit female participants was the Athens Society of the Friends of the Muses (Φιλόμουσος Ἑταιρεία Ἀθηνῶν, established in 1813), which counted twelve women, eight Greeks and four foreigners, among its 101 founding members.⁴⁹ It is worth noting that one of the Greek female members was Thiresia Makri, the muse of Lord Byron's love poem 'Maid of Athens, ere we part' (1810).⁵⁰

The Athens Archaeological Society (Ἡ ἐν Ἀθῆναις Ἀρχαιολογικὴ Ἑταιρεία) was founded (1837) as an independent body,⁵¹ in order to assist the poorly-resourced Archaeological Service (a state agency, founded in 1833)⁵² in the exploration and protection of monuments. Princess Dora d'Istria (Elena Gjika) was the first woman honorary fellow (1860), to be followed by other royals or aristocrats from whom the Society expected to receive some donation in exchange. Eliza Dragoumi, wife of the future prime minister Stephanos Dragoumis, was a subscriber between 1872 and 1894, and was reportedly keen to pay a bigger subscription fee if she were accepted as a full member. Although the administrative board was initially receptive to her request, on the grounds that the society's charter did not explicitly exclude women, in the end she was not included in the register of fellows.⁵³

The Christian Archaeological Society (Χριστιανικὴ Ἀρχαιολογικὴ Ἑταιρεία) was established (1885) with the aim to restore the legacy of Byzantium as a bridge between ancient and modern Greece, and the West and East.⁵⁴ The inclusion of Byzantium into official history was largely intended as a rebuttal to the theory of Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer, who questioned the Hellenic purity of modern Greeks on account of the Slav and Albanian invasions during the medieval era. The Christian Archaeological Society apparently was more receptive to women, including ten among a total of 141 founding members,⁵⁵ albeit without voting rights.⁵⁶

An archaeological wife

The first Greek woman known to have participated in an excavation is Sophia Engastromenou-Schliemann (1852–1932), second wife of the famous Heinrich Schliemann, who took part in her spouse's explorations during the 1870s and 1880s. Although colourfully portrayed by Schliemann

⁴⁴ Triantaphyllides 1896–1897.

⁴⁵ Footnote in Triantaphyllides 1896–1897: 207; see also Waterhouse 1986: 129; Gill 2011: 182.

⁴⁶ Parren 1894, 1896, 1899.

⁴⁷ Parren 1895: 2.

⁴⁸ Dalakoura and Ziogou-Karastergiou 2015: 189, table 4.

⁴⁹ See the society's founding charter and list of members in Kampouroglou 1889: 215–220.

⁵⁰ Brouzas 1949.

⁵¹ Approval document by the Education minister no. 10333, 18 January 1837, in Athens Archaeological Society 1846: 16; Γενική Διεύθυνσις Ἀρχαιοτήτων (General Directorate of Antiquities) 1886: 30–32.

⁵² Βασιλικὸν Διάταγμα (Royal Decree), Ἐφημερίς τῆς Κυβερνήσεως (Government Gazette [henceforth ΦΕΚ]) 14, article B.2.7, 13 April 1833.

⁵³ Petrakos 1987: 323.

⁵⁴ Βασιλικὸν Διάταγμα (Royal Decree), ΦΕΚ 26, issue A, 13 March 1885.

⁵⁵ Christian Archaeological Society 1892.

⁵⁶ Konstantios 2009: 21.

himself and the biographers as an enthusiastic and knowledgeable archaeological wife,⁵⁷ Sophia nevertheless faced gloomier realities: trapped in an arranged, unhappy marriage, she had little choice but to juggle raising a family with supporting the career of her formidable husband.⁵⁸ Her iconic portrait modelling prehistoric gold jewellery from Troy (the famous so-called Priam's Treasure) still circulates widely: her solemn, almost melancholic gaze perhaps hints at her difficult relationship with a much older man, who seemed to display her as a trophy along with his findings (Figure 1). Remarkably, she did see to the promotion of his legacy, including the posthumous publications of his excavations and autobiography.⁵⁹ Sophia's own strengths shone after Schliemann's death; she then devoted herself and her resources to philanthropy, while keeping her landmark house open to the Athenian elite and the archaeological community⁶⁰ – including Harriet Boyd, whom she encouraged to excavate in Crete.⁶¹

Pioneer professionals

Until the early post-World War II period, only a handful of Greek women practiced archaeology at a professional level (Figure 2). They fall into the third generation of early female archaeologists, having been born between the late 19th and early 20th centuries (see above). Two of them, Anna Apostolaki and Kleosemni (Semni) Papaspyridi-Karouzou, engaged in feminist activism at the beginnings of their careers.

Anna Apostolaki

Anna Apostolaki, the oldest of the pioneer professionals, was among the first female graduates in Greece, and the first one from her native Crete⁶² (Figure 3). Her work exemplifies what has been described as 'the museological "discovery" of the peasant in Greece',⁶³ a neo-Romantic trend calling for a return to the national roots.⁶⁴ She saw traditional culture as the most authentic continuation of ancient culture, and promoted female visibility by collecting, preserving, and showcasing folk art created by women.

She began her career as a school teacher in Crete. When her family fled to Athens amidst the failed uprising of the Cretan Greeks against the Ottomans, she went on to study at Athens University (1903), earning her living through tuition. A refugee of rather modest circumstances, Apostolaki was at the time an exception to the rule of affluent learned women. Through her friendship with Iphigeneia Syngrou, widow of the powerful banker Andreas Syngros, she secured employment among prominent Athenian families and access to scholarly opportunities. As volunteer assistant to the director of the Numismatic Museum Ioannis Svoronos, she could pursue her academic interests, and was eventually accepted as the first female full member of the



Figure 1. 'Mdme. Schliemann in the parure of Helen of Troy', in Amelia Edwards, 'Dr Schliemann's discoveries at Mycenae', *The Graphic*, 20 January 1877: 62, London; printed engraving. Digitised by The New York Public Library. <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/9f9f40a0-c5a4-012f-14fc-58d385a7bc34>.

⁵⁷ Traill 1989.

⁵⁸ Vassiliadou 2015: 222–229, 234–240, 2020.

⁵⁹ Schliemann 1891, 1892.

⁶⁰ Vogeikoff-Brogan 2022.

⁶¹ Fotou and Brown 2004: 203, 209.

⁶² On her life and career, see, in more detail, Oikonomou and Florou 2017.

⁶³ Papadopoulos 1983.

⁶⁴ Papadopoulos 1983; Oikonomou 2017; Fragouloupoulou 2018: 238, 322–323.

GREEK WOMEN IN ARCHAEOLOGY: A CHRONICLE OF ACHIEVEMENT

	YEARS SERVED	LAST POSITION HELD
Kleosemni (Semni) Papaspyridi-Karouzou (1897–1994)	1921–1964; retired.	Head of the Department of Pottery and Metalwork of the National Archaeological Museum
Eirini Varoucha-Christodouloupoulou (1896–1979)	1921–1964; retired.	Director of the Numismatic Museum
Eleni Filtsou (dates of birth and death unknown)	1921–1922; resigned following her marriage to senior archaeologist Nikolaos Papadakis.	Curator
Anna Apostolaki (1881–1958)	1922; moved to today's Museum of Modern Greek Culture in 1924; retired in 1954.	Director of the museum
Ioanna Konstantinou (1907–1989)	1928–1964; retired.	Ephor (Regional Director) of Antiquities
Venetia Kotta (1901–1945)	1943–1945	Curator
Anna Marava-Chatzinikolaou (1911–2005)	1950–1969; fired by the Colonels' dictatorship.	Ephor of Antiquities

Figure 2. The first women in the Greek Archaeological Service. Based on Petrakos 1982: 100–101; 2013, vol. 1: 272, vol. 2: 5–6, 47–64.

Athens Archaeological Society (1906). Parren hailed Apostolaki's university graduation with highest marks (1909) as another 'female triumph', praising her as a model for Greek educated women: 'Miss Anna Apostolaki is young, unpretentious, charming, very cute, without spectacles or short hair as the foreign scholars usually have'.⁶⁵ This description eloquently summarises the limits of early Greek feminism, which had from the very beginning been stigmatised as a 'foreign affliction' and 'antisocial behaviour'.⁶⁶ The circumstances required a 'prudent' version of emancipation: if feminism was to be incorporated into the prevalent Greek narrative, it had to be cleansed of any radical connotations.



Figure 3. Anna Apostolaki at Mycenae, 1930s(?). Benaki Museum, Anna Apostolaki Archive, no. 0242. Reproduced by permission.

In 1909 Nikolaos Politis founded the Greek Folklore Society (Ελληνική Λαογραφική Εταιρεία).⁶⁷ Following suit, Parren established the Lyceum Club of Greek Women (Λύκειον τῶν Ἑλληνίδων) in 1911

⁶⁵ Parren 1909.

⁶⁶ Psarra 2007: 150.

⁶⁷ See the founding charter in Greek Folklore Society 1909.



Figure 4. A procession of young ladies of the Lyceum Club of Greek Women wearing Minoan attires, which were made under the instructions of Anna Apostolaki; festival held in 1926 at the Panathenaic Stadium. Photographic archive of the Lyceum Club of Greek Women, no. 20407. Reproduced by permission.

to foster women's progress through the preservation and dissemination of folk culture.⁶⁸ The two institutions collaborated and shared members; Apostolaki was a founding member of the Folklore Society and an active member of the administrative board of the Lyceum Club. She delivered some of the Lyceum's inaugural public lectures in 1912 on the topic of Knossos, which was then being excavated by Arthur Evans.⁶⁹ These lectures mark her first foray into the comparative study of past and contemporary weaving, embroidery, and lace work, which would thereafter become the focus of her research. In her words, 'The motifs of these beautiful [Minoan] vases can serve as models for the modern Greek woman who, being aware of her great destiny, works, strives, and agonises to produce something Greek'⁷⁰ (Figure 4). Like her fellow Ladies, Apostolaki envisaged an empowering femininity for women in Greece, where 'art and civilisation had made their first steps, and the idea of the good was still preserved like a spark amidst ashes, ready to shine again'.⁷¹

After a brief stint at the Archaeological Service, Apostolaki spent her career working in what is today the Museum of Modern Greek Culture,⁷² first as volunteer assistant to the founder Georgios Drosinis (1924–1926), then as curator (1926–1935), and finally as director (1935–1954) – the first woman to direct a museum in Greece. Drosinis noted in his diary: 'I loved and cared for the Museum as if it were my youngest child, and I did not abandon it. Adept female hands were found that took care of it with motherly affection, and worked with zeal and devotion to enrich and preserve it; and they are working tirelessly until now, enlightened by experience and science, the hands of Anna

⁶⁸ Βασιλικόν Διάταγμα (Royal Decree), ΦΕΚ 51, issue A, 2 March 1911.

⁶⁹ Apostolaki 1912a, 1912b, 1912c, 1912d.

⁷⁰ Apostolaki 1912b: 1996.

⁷¹ Undated notes from Apostolaki's personal archive; cited by Florou 2017: 48.

⁷² Since its foundation as the Museum of Greek Handicrafts (Μουσείον Ἑλληνικῶν Χειροτεχνημάτων) in 1918, the museum changed name several times. In 1923 it became the National Museum of Decorative Arts (Ἐθνικόν Μουσείον Κοσμητικῶν Τεχνῶν), in 1931 the Museum of Greek Folk Art (Μουσείον Ἑλληνικῆς Λαϊκῆς Τέχνης). The 1923 name returned in 1935, and that of 1931 then again in 1959. In 2018 the museum acquired its current name: Museum of Modern Greek Culture (Μουσείο Νεότερου Ἑλληνικοῦ Πολιτισμοῦ, <http://www.mnep.gr/gr/to-mouseio/i-istoria-tou-mouseiou>).

Apostolaki'.⁷³ Indeed, Apostolaki nurtured the museum (a job that she considered suitable only for women), cataloguing and conserving the existing acquisitions, making new purchases with her own money, and even subsidising the museum's operating costs.⁷⁴

A short-lived 'feminist victory'

As the hopes for Greek territorial expansion collapsed on the aftermath of the 1922 Asia Minor Catastrophe, national priorities shifted toward domestic socio-political issues. Liberal and socialist ideas injected greater dynamism to the feminist movement, although privileged women remained its principal force during the inter-war period. The League for Women's Rights (*Σύνδεσμος για τα Δικαιώματα της Γυναίκας*, established in 1920) became the most active women's organisation, giving priority to political enfranchisement as a precondition for other pending institutional changes related to work, family, reproduction, health, and education. In 1931, the League's president Avra Theodoropoulou greeted as 'a feminist victory' the promotion of Semni Karouzou and Eirini Varoucha-Christodouloupoulou to the positions of regional directors (*ephors/έφοροι*, henceforth *ephor*) of Antiquities.⁷⁵ A victory that would not last long.

Governments of different political persuasions across Europe responded to the Great Depression with attempts to force women out of jobs considered inappropriate for them.⁷⁶ In Greece, women were banned from certain parts of the public sector by the successive dictatorships of Georgios Kondylis (1935–1936) and Ioannis Metaxas (1936–1941).⁷⁷ They were prohibited from joining the Archaeological Service; those already serving were forced into professional stagnation and early retirement under the provisions of a law that was instigated by the Service's head Spyridon Marinatos: 'Only male graduates of philology are appointed as curators [...] The female contingent already on the staff shall continue in the service but shall not under any circumstances be permitted to undertake the direction of museums or regional directorates [...] Should female members of the scientific staff happen to be married, they must take obligatory retirement after completing 25 years of public service'.⁷⁸ Nevertheless in 1933, the first woman, the Byzantinist Venetia Kotta, applied for a lectureship at the (then) newly-founded University of Thessaloniki. Her application was rejected on a bureaucratic pretext, but in reality, on the grounds of her sex.⁷⁹ With the exception of Kotta and Anna Marava-Chatzinikolaou, who were appointed under special circumstances during the war and early postwar periods, respectively,⁸⁰ there were no female entrants in the Service until 1955, when prohibitions were eventually lifted.⁸¹

Semni Papaspyridi-Karouzou

Semni Papaspyridi-Karouzou, a member of the League for Women's Rights, was the first woman appointed to the Archaeological Service (1921) (Figure 5). Her scholarly qualities, already apparent in her early publications,⁸² were praised in the League's journal *Ο Αγώνας της Γυναίκας* (The Woman's Struggle) by the archaeologist Giannis Miliadis,⁸³ who correctly foresaw a promising career for his novice colleague. Like Karouzou herself and her future husband Christos Karouzos,

⁷³ Drosinis 2001: 704–705.

⁷⁴ Florou 2017: 32–34.

⁷⁵ Theodoropoulou 1931: 1.

⁷⁶ Anderson and Zinsser 1988: 301–303; Avdela 1990: 54–57.

⁷⁷ Avdela 1990: 147–149.

⁷⁸ *Αναγκαστικός Νόμος* (Compulsory Law) 1947, ΦΕΚ 366, issue A, chs. 2.4, 9.4, 6 September 1939; see also Petrakos 1982: 52; 1995: 50; 2013, vol. 1: 298–299. Some young women pursued alternative ways of entering the profession, as assistants to Service archaeologists or as archaeological staff at the foreign archaeological schools. Several of these women were later admitted to the personnel of the Archaeological Service, or were appointed as temporary archaeologists; among the latter, we mention Athina Kalogeropoulou (1920–2004), who eventually became the first director of the Archaeological Receipts and Expropriations Fund (Romiopoulou 2018: 200).

⁷⁹ Foukas 2016: 132–138.

⁸⁰ *Νομοθετικόν Διάταγμα* (Law Decree) 1521, ΦΕΚ 182, issue A, article 4.3, 21 July 1942.

⁸¹ *Νόμος* (Law) 3192, ΦΕΚ 95, issue A, 21 April 1955.

⁸² Papaspyridi 1920, 1922, 1923.

⁸³ Miliadis 1924: 2.



Figure 5. Semni Papaspyridi-Karouzou. Παγκόσμιο βιογραφικό λεξικό, Αθήνα: Εκδοτική Αθηνών, 1985, vol. 4: 320. Digitised by Pandektis: Modern Greek Visual Prosopography, National Documentation Centre. <http://pandektis.ekt.gr/pandektis/handle/10442/62013>.

Miliadis was an advocate for innovation in the Service. Humanists of erudition and integrity, the three of them remained militant defenders of the archaeological mission throughout their careers.

In a following issue of the same journal, Karouzou wrote forcefully about the responsibility of female scholars to advance the woman's cause. Educated women, she states, ought to try harder than men to accomplish their goals, otherwise they should 'stay aside so as not to block the way of those women who are better' (Figure 6). If they refuse to do so, then they deserve to 'be fought ruthlessly' by those hard-working women who can bring real credit to their professions.⁸⁴ The journal's editors applauded the young archaeologist's 'faith and enthusiasm', but distanced themselves from her '*uncompromising* point of view', noting that 'it is difficult to demand heroism from every human being'.⁸⁵ In fact, Karouzou had taken straight aim at the core issues: the direct relation between economic and gender inequality, the challenges facing working women in a man's world, and the moral obligation of feminist academics and professionals to use their advantages for the sake of the common struggle.

Over the years, Karouzou's talents came to fruition in sophisticated treatises of ancient Greek art, in particular, vase-painting.⁸⁶ Her penetrating discussions focused on the 'invisible meaning' of the ancient works (even those which 'may cause puzzlement'⁸⁷ as apparently meaningless or obscure), as well as on their historical context and the people who created and used them. Through a 'creative vision' (*δημιουργική όραση*)⁸⁸ she explored the relationship between art and its creators, specifically, how the transformation of material means into intellectual values shapes the aesthetics of a culture. Her writings are infused with 'the power of verbal expression' that she considered essential for 'a perfect description' of an artwork.⁸⁹ She had the rare skill of engaging a broad audience beyond a narrow circle of experts, and frequently contributed newspaper pieces on ancient and modern art, religion, mythology, philology, and the dialogue of antiquity and modern reality.⁹⁰ A lover of modern Greek and world literature,⁹¹ she saw archaeological and language education as inseparable, and urged scholars to pursue 'the cultivation of their national languages'.⁹²

Karouzou's first appointment was at the National Archaeological Museum in Athens. After serving in various posts across Greece, she returned to the museum in 1933 as head of its pottery and metalwork department, a position she held until her retirement.

Soon after the Italian offensive of 28 October 1940, the Greek state undertook an operation to protect archaeological collections from the oncoming looting; antiquities were buried in hidden

⁸⁴ Papaspyridi 1924.

⁸⁵ Comment in Papaspyridi 1924; emphasis in the original.

⁸⁶ On her life, career, and list of publications, see her autobiographical account: Karouzou 1984; also, Bechraki and Oikonomou 1997.

⁸⁷ Papaspyridi-Karouzou 1945–1947: 23.

⁸⁸ Karouzou 1997.

⁸⁹ Οι περιγραφές, *Ελευθερία*, 18 May 1963; republished in Karouzou 2011, vol. 2: 219–220.

⁹⁰ Collected in Karouzou 1997, 2011.

⁹¹ Delivorrias 1997: 53; see also M. Ανδρόνικος, Σέμνη Καρούζου: μια μεγάλη Ελληνίδα, *Το Βήμα*, 9 April 1989; republished in Andronikos 1993: 169.

⁹² See note 89, 219.

Η ΓΥΝΑΙΚΑ ΣΤΙΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΕΣ ΘΕΣΕΙΣ

“Ότι η γυναίκα σε κάθε κλάδο, όχι για να νάνει ψηλότερα, αλλά αλλά και μόνο για να στερεώσει τη θέση της, είναι ανάγκη να εργαστεί πολύ περισσότερο από τον άντρα, είναι ζήτημα που καινείς βέβαια δε σκεπτεται να το αμφισβητήσει.

Τό να περιμένει όμως καινείς την αντίληψη αυτή από μία δακτυλογράφο π. χ., που ενδιαφέρεται κυρίως να βγάλει το ψωμί της και να βοηθήσει το σπίτι της, πρόκειται δε—τό έλπιζει τουλάχιστο—να φύγει μία μέρα από έναν κλάδο όπου κανέναν μέλλον δε βλέπει και απ’ όπου δεν πέρνει κανένα ενδιαφέρον, αυτό είναι ατεόχρημα παράλογο. Κείνη που είναι φυσικό να συλλογίζεται αυτά είναι κείνη, απ’ την εδωκίμηση της οποίας ακριβώς πρόκειται να κριθεί ο όλος γυναικίος αγώνας, δηλαδή η **επιστήμων γυναίκα**.

Κάθε επιστήμων γυναίκα ή γενικότερα κάθε γυναίκα με άνωτερη μόρφωση, μπαίνοντας ύστερα από χίλιες δυο ανειδίκευτες, σ’ έναν κλειστό ως τώρα για αυτή κλάδο, πρέπει να νοιώσει ότι έχει υποχρέωση απέναντι στις άλλες, που απ’ αυτή περιμένουν να τους ανοίξει την πόρτα, να εργαστεί με όλη της τη δύναμη για να διακριθεί. Αυτό δε είναι ανάγκη να το κάνει σύντομα, γιατί, ενώ για τους άντρες υπάρχει καιρός, για τις γυναίκες μόνο ανυπομονησία υπάρχει από μέρους πολλών, που, αν δεν τις ιδούν να εκδηλώνονται, θα σκεφθούν ναπομνησθούν ότι «η γυναίκα είναι μόνο για την κουζίνα».

“Αν μία γυναίκα καταλαβαίνει πως δεν έχει ούτε κόπια γερά ούτε την απαιτούμενη θαρραλότητα ψυχής για τον αγώνα αυτόν, προτιμότερο είναι να ζητήσει μίαν οποιαδήποτε άλλη χειρωνακτική δουλειά, παρά να κλείνει το δρόμο σε άλλες, που θα μπορούσαν, αν ελάβαιναν την ευκαιρία ναπροσχωθούν σ’ αυτό που αγαπούν, να αναδειχθούν και τον εαυτό τους και τις άλλες. Κάθε επιείκεια από μέρους των γυναικών προς εκείνη που θα ζητούσε ένα μισθό κι ένα αποκούμπι, για να μην προσφέρει κανένα επιχείρημα στον αγώνα τους, θα ήταν ασυγχώρητη και καταστρεπτική, αντίθετα δε θα ήταν πολύ τιμω αν καθόρα της έλεγαν γιατί δεν πρέπει να επιδιώκει κάτι, με το οποίο θα βλάψει την κοινή υπόθεση.

“Η γυναίκα πάλι που νομίζει τον εαυτό της αξιο να δουλέψει γερά για να διακριθεί σε μία θέση, δεν πρέπει να δέχεται καμιά παραχώρηση χέρι του φύλου της από τους άντρες, που είτε γιατί βλέ-

πουν σαυτή την κόρη ή την ανήψιά τους, είτε και μόνο γιατί τη λυπούνται, είναι σχεδόν πάντα πρόθυμοι να προστατέψουν «το αδέναιο μέρος». Εδώ χρειαστεί πολλές φορές να προβεί σε θυσιές, για να μη δώσει αφορμή σε γενικώτερους χαρακτηρισμούς. Για έναν άντρα π. χ. θα θεωρηθεί πολύ φυσικό να ζητήσει ναποφύγει μια μετάθεση, αν όμως μια γυναίκα το ζητήσει, το πρώτο που θα πουν είναι ότι οι γυναίκες δεν μπορούν να βγαίνουν πάρα έξω.

“Αν δε μία υπέρτατη ανάγκη την έμποδίζει να κάνει μία τέια θυσία, τότε πρέπει να προβάλει οποιαδήποτε άλλη δικαιολογία, αλλά ποτέ να μην διστάσει πίσω απ’ την αδυναμία (που δεν υπάρχει άλλωστε τις περισσότερες φορές) του φύλου της, όποτε προκαταλαμβάνει πολλούς άντρες—και με το δικό τους—έναντια στην είσοδο άλλων γυναικών στον κλάδο εκείνο.

Συμπέρασμα: Οι μὲν γυναίκες που μπορούν να προσφέρουν κάτι, πρέπει αδιάκοπα να δουλεύουν περισσότερο παρά οι άνω από το μέτρο άντρες, δώες πάλι βλέπουν πως δεν μπορούν να εξυπηρετήσουν την κοινή υπόθεση, αυτές καλό είναι να κείνται παράμερα, ώστε να μην κλείνουν το δρόμο στις καλύτερες.

“Αν δεν τὸ κάνουν, τότε πρέπει οί άλλες να είναι ἀμείλικτες γι αυτές και να τις πολεμούν φανερά και ἑστέρα, σῶζοντας έτσι τὰ χρήσιμα στοιχεία, που ἡ τυχὸν ἀτυχία τῶν ἄλλων θὰ τοὺς ἐκλινει κάθε ευκαιρία δράσης και ἀνάδειξης.

ΣΕΜΝΗ ΠΑΠΑΣΠΥΡΙΔΗ

Είμαστε εὐτυχεῖς που δημοσιεύουμε τὸ ἄρθρο αὐτὸ τῆς διακεκριμένης μας ἀρχαιολόγου Δδης Σέμνης Παπασπυρίδῃ, που οἱ μελέτες της γιὰ τὴν ἀρχαία ἀγγειογραφία ἐκαινέθησαν τόσο πολὺ ἀπὸ τὸν ἐπιστημονικὸ μας κόσμο. “Ὅμως γιὰ τὶς γενικὲς ἀρχὲς που βάζει ὡς πρὸς τὶς ἐργαζόμενες γυναίκες εἴμαστε ὑποχρεωμένες νὰ δηλώσουμε πὼς δὲν εἴμαστε ἀπόλυτα σύμφωνοι. Εἶναι δύσκολο νὰπαίτῃ κανένας ἡρωϊσμούς ἀπὸ κάθε ἀνθρώπο. “Εἶναι οἱ συνθήκες τῆς ζωῆς δημιουργοῦν μερικὲς ὑποχρεώσεις που ὅταν ἀρχίζει καμιά τὸ σταδιὸ της δὲν μπορεῖ νὰ τις προβλέψει. Θὰ ἦταν βέβαια εὐτύχημα ἂν κάθε γυναίκα που καταπιάνεται μίαν ἐπιστήμη τὴν ἐπισκοῦσε ἀπὸ ἀγάπη και κίση και ὅχι μονάρι ἀπὸ οἰκονομικὴ ἀνάγκη. Φανταζόμαστε πὼς αὐτὸ θὰ γίνεῃ με τὸν καιρὸ. Ὡς τόσο μᾶς ἐνδιαφέρει πολὺ και ἡ **ἀπόλυτη** ἀποψη τῆς Δδης Παπασπυρίδῃ και μακαρί νὰ βρεῖσκονται πολλὰς με τὴν πίστη και τὸν ἐνθουσιασμὸ της.

Figure 6. Semni Papaspyridi (Karouzou), ‘The woman in higher positions’, *The Woman's Struggle* 15, 1924: 2. Digitized by Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Studies in Gender and Equality in the Political and Social Sciences. <http://www.gender.panteion.gr/gr/pdfs/clp10293.pdf>.

underground spaces of museums or in other crypts. The scholarly and technical personnel of the Archaeological Service, as well as guards, workmen, and volunteers, along with some foreign archaeologists, worked tirelessly to complete the rescue work before the Nazi troops invaded the country (6 April 1941).⁹³ Years later Karouzou recalled: ‘The moon was often still shining on the sky when I was leaving home to go to the Museum. When all the showcases were emptied, we all gathered in the basement [...] some nice wives of guards were themselves also wrapping objects, even the most valuable of them. It was with pride for our people that I made sure, at the end of the war when the boxes were opened and the antiquities received, that despite this fatally insufficient supervision, not a single gold object, no precious gem was missing’.⁹⁴

The very day that the Wehrmacht forces took over Athens (27 April 1941), Karouzou and her husband withdrew, in protest, their membership of the German Archaeological Institute: an

⁹³Petrakos 1994, 2021.

⁹⁴Karouzou 1984: 32.

extraordinary act of courage, and all the more noteworthy because the two were the most eminent representatives of the German tradition in Greek archaeology.⁹⁵ After liberation, the couple led the formidable, lengthy effort to recover and redisplay the buried objects, thereby training a host of young archaeologists who participated in the project. The first re-exhibition was inaugurated already in 1947, to uplift and educate a war-torn country and ‘especially the Greek children who had grown up without antiquities’.⁹⁶ The couple was honoured in Greece and internationally for their achievement; Karouzou later wrote two acclaimed guides to the museum.⁹⁷

Three years after her retirement (1964) and less than a month after her husband’s death (30 March 1967), a military junta seized power (21 April 1967). Marinatos, the inspirer of the 1939 law discriminating against women (see above), was reappointed as head of Antiquities. Now barred from accessing her research material in the National Museum, Karouzou received welcome support from her foreign colleagues, who invited her to lecture at their institutions. She left the country secretly by boat from Patras to Brindisi, to arrive first in Rome and then in Munich. On her return to Greece, the authorities accused her of being a communist enemy of the state and withheld her passport. After a group of eminent British academics denounced this prohibition in a letter published in *The Times*,⁹⁸ the regime was eventually forced to suspend the travel ban. In the post-dictatorial years, she enjoyed a new period of creativity and fruitful scholarly interaction, as chair of the Greek section of the *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*.

Having lived through a tumultuous century of Greek history, Semni Karouzou left a legacy of profound scholarly contribution, democratic ethos, broad intellectual perspective, and commitment to the public mission of archaeology, which remain relevant today: ‘If some good instinct shows the way to the study of the ancient world, the reward is the strength that this study offers to people even at the hardest moments of life. [...] There is one more thing that I learned from studying the ancient world, that is, to value humanism’.⁹⁹

The legacy of the pioneers

For decades, these pioneers had remained little known outside Greece. Since the late 1990s, however, when their collective story was first presented to international readers,¹⁰⁰ they have slowly been gaining their rightful place in the global annals of path-breaking women archaeologists.¹⁰¹ Much like their peers in other parts of the world, they were exceptions to the male rule, and stand out because of their sex. They survived and often thrived thanks to their ability to carve out their own special niches, principally in the ‘housework’ area of the profession,¹⁰² as museum curators. In this way, the women could achieve ‘double conformity’; namely, they established themselves in a male-dominated environment by excelling in ‘female’ tasks,¹⁰³ such as record-keeping or exhibition management.

Local mentality is another factor that may account for the underrepresentation of Greek women archaeologists in fieldwork: their foreign counterparts might have been tolerated as ‘exotic’, but native females on digs could have caused a scandal, for they tried ‘to make noise about themselves and unnecessarily innovate and show off’, to borrow Parren’s phrase.¹⁰⁴ Nor would they themselves

⁹⁵ Resignation letter published in Petrakos 1995: 62–63; original handwritten reproduced in Kankeleit 2020: 117.

⁹⁶ Karouzos and Karouzou 1981: 16.

⁹⁷ Karouzou 1967, 1979a.

⁹⁸ A. Andrewes, B. Ashmole, J. Boardman, M. Robertson, and C. Woodhouse, A passport refused, *The Times*, 9 December 1970: 11.

⁹⁹ Karouzou 1984: 51.

¹⁰⁰ Nikolaidou and Kokkinidou 1998.

¹⁰¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anna_Apostolaki. <https://trowelblazers.com/2021/07/29/anna-apostolaki/>. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semni_Karouzou. <https://trowelblazers.com/2014/05/08/semni-karouzou-visible-resistance/>. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venetia_Kotta. <https://itsallgreektotanna.wordpress.com/2021/02/03/wccwiki-in-athens/>.

¹⁰² Gero 1985.

¹⁰³ Delamont 1978: 140–141.

¹⁰⁴ Parren 1903: 2.

have necessarily been keen on the actual business of excavation, which would mean dealing with the ‘anonymous’ workers – including rural women,¹⁰⁵ the cheapest labour force.¹⁰⁶ There is even arrogance in Semni Karouzou’s reminiscence of her fellow students at Athens University: ‘There were only a few girls and most of them were unimportant [...] most of the male students were provincials, I would more precisely say sons of peasants’; she, on the other hand, belonged to the ‘somewhat more enlightened’ minority.¹⁰⁷ Clearly, it was social class rather than sex alone that determined scholarly opportunities.

Be it as it may, these women managed to subvert discriminatory policies to their own advantage, turning Greek museums into an arena of significant female activity. Although confined within the art-historical and typological paradigms then prevalent in the discipline, their work nevertheless furnishes some of the finest examples of archaeological writing of the time. Perhaps most importantly, they successfully challenged the disdain for their sex by demonstrating ‘real heroism in an era in which the first manifestos of emancipation exposed women to male reaction and ridicule’.¹⁰⁸

Despite their achievements, pioneers did not always serve as positive role models for their younger colleagues: Manto Oikonomidou (Table 2) recalls ‘the extremely unpleasant atmosphere’ after she announced to the director of the Numismatic Museum Eirini Varoucha that she was going to sit the Archaeological Service entrance examination. She was forced to stop volunteering at the museum, and upon her return as curator, she had to continue to work under the same hostile head: ‘I would probably not have survived as curator had I not had the eminent Greek archaeologist Christos Karouzos as director (back then the Numismatic Museum was part of the National Archaeological Museum), to whom all possible reports necessarily ended up’.¹⁰⁹ Karouzos and his wife were also respectfully remembered by their younger collaborators in the postwar re-exhibition of the National Museum, Agni Xenaki-Sakellariou (1922–1995) and Evi Stasinopoulou-Touloupa.¹¹⁰

Making progress

The mid-war social movements were suppressed by the Metaxas dictatorship, and the suppression extended into the war years. Mussolini’s failed attempt to invade Greece caused Hitler to come to his aid. The triple occupation of the country by the Germans, Italians, and Bulgarians (1941–1944) met with mass resistance, largely organised by the National Liberation Front and its military wing, the Greek People’s Liberation Army, which were founded by the communist and other left-wing parties. In the Resistance, women broke through centuries of stereotypes and proscriptions; the unprecedented female mobilisation in all facets of the antifascist struggle marks a turning point in the history of women in Greece. Although their public engagement mainly concerned traditional ‘female’ tasks of social welfare, it did contribute to the transformation of rigid models of womanhood: women raised arms, worked underground, took on positions of responsibility, and were not spared by torturers and executioners. Greek women were for the first time able to enjoy full rights in the rural areas which had been liberated by the partisans: the ‘Mountain Government’ proclaimed the equity of all Greeks, and implemented this principle in the election of representatives to its National Council and other institutions of the ‘Free Greece’.

The end of World War II brought no respite to the country. The civil war that followed (1946–1949) between the Right (supported by Britain and, after 1947, the United States) and the Communist Party was won by the former. This victory set the scene for a long period of systematic persecution

¹⁰⁵ At the Swedish excavations in the Argolid (Wells 1998).

¹⁰⁶ Stroszeck 2019: 37.

¹⁰⁷ Karouzou 1984: 12; see also Stroszeck 2019: 39.

¹⁰⁸ Zora 1958: 467.

¹⁰⁹ Oikonomidou 2009: 13–15.

¹¹⁰ Sakellariou 1987; Touloupa 1987, 2013–2014: 30, 2015.

of the defeated: thousands of men and women were tortured, executed, or interned in concentration camps on the islands; many sought refuge in the Eastern Bloc or were forced to emigrate. A deep rift opened between 'nationally-minded' citizens and 'enemies of the nation'; the latter were vilified and excluded from the state apparatus. In this Cold War environment, women, especially those who had fought with the Left, had little opportunity to capitalise on their experience during the Occupation. The Greek governments were unwilling to ratify the United Nations conventions on human rights, including sex equality. Ironically, it was right wing women who pushed for full electoral rights as a 'national duty', for fear that the international image of the country might be tarnished, or, worse still, that the issue might be exploited by communist propaganda. When the relevant legislation was eventually passed, it was more a response to problems of international credibility regarding Greece's democratic credentials rather than a commitment to women's advancement.¹¹¹

The short shift from ultra-conservative to centrist governments (1963–1965) was followed by a period of grave political crisis caused by palace intervention in parliamentary matters. Finally, a group of army officers staged a putsch and imposed martial law (see above). Civil liberties were suspended, and citizens with a leftist or merely liberal record were fired, arrested, tortured, imprisoned, deported to prison islands, or assassinated. After seven years of harsh rule, the dictators' disastrous involvement in the Cyprus crisis – which resulted in the Turkish invasion of the island – led to their fall (24 July 1974). Parliamentary government was restored, and the question of monarchy versus republic was definitively settled in favour of the latter.

The second generation

In the postwar period, Greek women of more diverse social backgrounds began to gain access to higher education, until the number of female students reached more than a half of the overall enrolment in the early 1990s.¹¹² However, the majority clustered in the increasingly less 'marketable' domain of the humanities,¹¹³ whereas women were (and still are) underrepresented in the natural and technical sciences that led to more 'productive' and better paid jobs.¹¹⁴ Archaeology hovered between these two poles, aligned in subject matter and intellectual pursuit with the 'female' hemisphere, yet also involving 'male' skills: physical stamina for fieldwork, assertiveness, and leadership. Albeit not a 'profitable' profession, archaeology remained prestigious thanks to its administrative and intellectual authority over one of the country's most valuable assets: its past. Also, it was exclusive: appointment to the Archaeological Service required rigorous entry examinations that admitted only a few at a time. Thus, while women seemingly began to populate archaeology when humanities became 'downgraded' and therefore more accessible, women were actually gaining ground in a still very 'masculine' realm.

Changes in legislation allowed women to participate in the Archaeological Service recruitment examinations of 1956 and 1959,¹¹⁵ but the successful candidates (Figure 7) were soon faced with gender biases and the dysfunctions of the state bureaucracy. Although the appointment of more women injected new blood into the Service, the challenges of heritage restoration and future management remained daunting: antiquities had suffered grave damage by the occupation troops; the museum collections that had been buried for protection had to be recovered and reinstalled; and new material kept accumulating, as excavations resumed at a vigorous pace. At the same time, uncontrolled building activity was posing an ongoing threat to monuments. A 'picture of misery, unattractive to young people longing to work and create something better' was denounced by a

¹¹¹ Pantelidou-Malouta 1989: 9–10; Samiou 1989: 170–172; Vervenioti 2002: 122–124.

¹¹² Katsikas and Kavvadias 1994: 125.

¹¹³ See annual statistics in *Στατιστική της Έκπαιδευσεως: Ανώτατη Έκπαίδευσις*. Αθήναι: Εθνική Στατιστική Υπηρεσία της Ελλάδος: http://dlib.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/categoryyears?p_cat=10007898&p_topic=10007898.

¹¹⁴ National Authority for Higher Education 2021: 50–51.

¹¹⁵ Υπουργική Απόφασις (Ministerial Decree) 96453/4521 ΦΕΚ 162, issue B, 6 September 1955.

GREEK WOMEN IN ARCHAEOLOGY: A CHRONICLE OF ACHIEVEMENT

	YEARS SERVED	LAST POSITION HELD
Evangelia Protonotariou-Deilaki (1931–2002)	1956–1991	Director of Paleoanthropology and Speleology
Varvara Philippaki (1914–1997)	1956–1979	Director of the National Archaeological Museum and Director General of Antiquities
Kanto-Fatourou-Isychaki (1926–2019)	1956–1978	Director of Modern Monuments; afterwards, professor at the University of Crete
Angeliki Andreiomenou (1933–2019)	1956–1993	Ephor of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities
Olga-Tzachou-Alexandri (1931–)	1959–1994	Director of the National Archaeological Museum
Adamantia Karamesini-Oikonomidou (1927–2015)	1959–1994	Director of the Numismatic Museum
Maria Karamanoli-Siganidou (1928–1995)	1959–1991	Ephor of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities
Aikaterini Romiopolou (1935–)	1959–1995	Head of the Department of Sculpture, National Archaeological Museum; Director General of Antiquities, 1991–1993
Myrtali Acheimastou-Potamianou (1935–)	1960–1995	Director of the Byzantine and Christian Museum
Foteini Papadopoulou-Zafeiropoulou (1931–2024)	1960–1995	Ephor of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities
Fani Koutsokosta-Drosogianni (1930–)	1960–1995	Ephor of Byzantine Antiquities
Theodora Karagiorga-Stathakopoulou (1936–2022)	1960–1995	Director of the National Archaeological Museum
Paraskevi (Evi) Stasinopoulou-Touloupa (1924–2021)	1960–1989	Ephor of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities
Evgenia Leventopoulou-Giouri (1935–2015)	1960–1973	Curator of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities
Styliani Papadaki-Oekland (1937–2002)	1960–1969, 1975–1977; forced by the Colonels' dictatorship to resign in 1969; resumed service in 1975; resigned permanently in 1977	Curator of the Byzantine and Christian Museum; afterwards followed academic career at the University of Crete.

Figure 7. The second generation of women in the Greek Archaeological Service. Based on Petrakos 1982: 101; 2013 vol. 2: 67–73.

‘Group of [13] women outside of the Service’ in a letter to the Athenian press.¹¹⁶ In a reactionary response, Marinatos – once again head of the Archaeological Service (see above) – blamed those among the older staff who lost courage amidst hardship, as well as the young, ‘inexperienced and cowardly [curators] (many of them belonging to the so-called weak sex)’.¹¹⁷

Among the oldest state agencies, the Archeological Service originally constituted a minor directorate within the Ministry of Education, until it was upgraded to a branch of the higher-ranking Ministry of the Presidency of the Government (1960),¹¹⁸ as a result of a new emphasis on the economic importance of monuments. The initial positive changes under the competent directorships of Ioannis Papadimitriou (1959–1963) and Ioannis Kontis (1963–1967) were cut short by the Colonels’ coup.¹¹⁹ The regime tried to rectify the long absence of a cultural policy by establishing a separate Ministry of Culture and Sciences (1971).¹²⁰ Under Marinatos’ renewed directorship, archaeologists

¹¹⁶ *Τό Βήμα*, 12 October 1957; cited by Petrakos 1995: 211, note 167.

¹¹⁷ *Ἡ Καθημερινή*, 22 October 1957; cited by Petrakos 1995: 126, 211 note 166.

¹¹⁸ *Βασιλικόν Διάταγμα* (Royal Decree) 632, *ΦΕΚ* 141, issue A, 12 September 1960.

¹¹⁹ Petrakos 2013, vol. 1: 420–460.

¹²⁰ *Νομοθετικόν Διάταγμα* (Legislative Decree) 957, *ΦΕΚ* 166, issue A, articles 15, 37, 25 August 1971.

with suspect political loyalties were purged,¹²¹ and new appointments circumvented the entry examinations in an attempt to secure recruits favourably disposed to the regime,¹²² but also in order to exclude successful female candidates.¹²³ After the restoration of democracy, examinations were again held at intervals (1979, 1981, 1989, 1992, 1993, 2004).¹²⁴ Still, the examination protocol was often side-stepped, as governments sought to carry favour before elections by granting permanent positions to contract staff (now of both sexes).

Against this background, the women in the Archaeological Service came to play their part across the country, pursuing their careers in full and eventually rising to the highest ranks. Besides museum management, they were actively involved in fieldwork and site protection, research, and publication. Especially valuable were their salvage efforts, which arose as an urgent priority in the face of unbridled ‘development’. Women archaeologists had to be ‘tough as men’, as they sparred with disgruntled property owners, rapacious contractors, city councils, government bureaucrats, and even top-ranking officials often indifferent, if not hostile, to the archaeological cause. Their rescue excavations documented a significant number of antiquities which would otherwise have been irretrievably lost. A case in point is Evangelia Protonotariou-Deilaki, who fought valiantly for years to protect Nafplio (the capital of the Greek state between 1828 and 1833)¹²⁵ (Figure 8). Deeply resented by the locals as a ‘nasty archaeologist’ at the time, she was posthumously recognised and vindicated.¹²⁶ Nafplio – sitting in a rich archaeological landscape, steeped in history through the centuries, and studded with monuments – remains one of the most atmospheric Greek cities.



Figure 8. Evangelia Protonotariou-Deilaki at Mycenae. Evangelia Protonotariou-Deilaki Archive, National Historical Archive of Antiquities and Restorations, Greek Ministry of Culture (ΥΠΠΟ/Διεύθυνση Διαχείρισης Εθνικού Αρχείου Μνημείων/Τμήμα Διαχείρισης Ιστορικού Αρχείου Αρχαιοτήτων και Αναστηλώσεων). <https://haas.culture.gov.gr/archive-protonotariou-deilaki/?localId=136024>. Reproduced by permission.

¹²¹ Petrakos 2013, vol. 1: 468–469, 487; Touloupa 2013–2014: 40–41; Romiopoulou 2018: 201.

¹²² Petrakos 1982: 52, 2013, vol. 1: 487, 506.

¹²³ Χ. Ντούμας, Σπυρίδων Μαρινάτος: πενήντα χρόνια συμμετείχε ενεργά στα αρχαιολογικά πράγματα, *Τα Νέα*, 18 January 2000 (αφιέρωμα ‘Ο ελληνικός 20ός αιώνας: τα πρόσωπα’); republished in Dumas 2000: 308.

¹²⁴ Romiopoulou 2018: 242.

¹²⁵ The history of Nafplio is beautifully written by Semni Karouzou (Karouzou 1979b), who had worked there in the 1930s.

¹²⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evangelia_Deilaki. Ημερίδα στη μνήμη της Ευαγγελίας Δεϊλάκη. Όμιλος Τέχνης και Πολιτισμού Ναυπλίου, 5 April 2008. Η Άλλη Πρόταση, 21 April 2008, <https://alliprotasi.wordpress.com/2008/04/21/Μνήμη-Ευαγγελίας-Δεϊλάκη/>. Ένα θεατρικό αφιέρωμα για την αρχαιολόγο Ε. Δεϊλάκη. Η Άλλη Πρόταση, 14 June 2016, <https://alliprotasi.wordpress.com/2016/06/14/deilaki/>. Μια μοναδική θεατρική παράσταση στη μνήμη της αρχαιολόγου Ε. Δεϊλάκη. Η Άλλη Πρόταση, 19 June 2016, <https://alliprotasi.wordpress.com/2016/06/19/deilaki-2/>. Π. Κατσάκος, Στη μνήμη μιας ‘κακιάς’ αρχαιολόγου, *Η Αυγή*, 30 November 2016, https://www.avgi.gr/politiki/218571_sti-mnimi-mias-kakias-arhaiologoy/. Ημερίδα αφιερωμένη σε αρχαιακά τεκμήρια εμβληματικών μορφών της ελληνικής αρχαιολογίας’ [Colloquium devoted on Archival Documents of Emblematic Figures of Greek Archaeology], National Historical Archive of Antiquities and Restorations, Ministry of Culture and Sports, Athens, 29 June 2018. <https://www.culture.gov.gr/el/information/SitePages/view.aspx?nID=2290>. Για την Ευαγγελία Δεϊλάκη, την ‘κακιά’ αρχαιολόγο που έσωσε το Ναύπλιο από τη λαίλαπα της αντιπαροχής, *Αθηνολόγιο*, 11 July 2021, https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=search&v=330400758723259&external_log_id=f613e735-d6fe-46b3-9ebf-697780cd47e6&q.

The pioneers of the earlier generation had specialised in classical antiquity and medieval times; now their successors worked on every past period and in different areas of expertise. For the first time, they became active in prehistoric archaeology, for example, in the largely unexplored region of northern Greece, where research was gathering momentum just then.¹²⁷ Thus, Aikaterini Romiopoulou excavated at the Neolithic–Early Bronze Age settlement of Servia, Kozani (codirected with the British Cressida Ridley)¹²⁸ and the Early Iron Age cemetery of Vergina, Imathia.¹²⁹ Previously, she had joined the Greek–French excavation team at the Neolithic–Early Bronze Age settlement of Dikili Tash, Kavala, together with three other women: the archaeologist Maria Papadopoulou-Theochari (1933–2022, wife of the director Dimitrios Theocharis)¹³⁰ and the students Chaido Koukouli and Kalliopi Nikolaidou.¹³¹ Koukouli-Chrysanthaki (1942–) later became curator and ephor of Antiquities in eastern Macedonia, where she distinguished herself as a leading prehistorian, codirecting (among other projects) the Dikili Tash excavations and the Greek–Bulgarian excavations at the Neolithic site of Promachon-Topolnica.¹³²

Agni Sakellariou co-published, with Georgios Bakalakis, the excavations at the Neolithic–Early Bronze Age settlement of Paradimi, Rodopi (conducted by Efstratios Pelekidis and Stilpon Kyriakidis in 1929–1930, and by Bakalakis in 1965).¹³³ Sakellariou was better known for her work on the Bronze Age of southern Greece. Responsible for the reinstallation of the prehistoric collection of the National Archaeological Museum after the war (see above), she later focused on Minoan and Mycenaean seals and metallurgy,¹³⁴ and also published the 19th-century excavations of the chamber tombs at Mycenae conducted by Christos Tsountas.¹³⁵ During the junta, she and her husband, the historian Michael Sakellariou, were forced to leave the country.

Evangelia Deilaki, Evi Touloupa, and Varvara Philippaki also joined the coveted field of Mycenaean archaeology, excavating a series of tholos tombs in the Argolid,¹³⁶ the Kadmeion palace at Thebes,¹³⁷ and the citadel of Agios Andreas on Siphnos, respectively.¹³⁸

As every Service archaeologist, women professionals were expected to, and did, deal competently with all antiquities under their jurisdiction, that is, everything from early prehistory to late antiquity, and from Byzantine to post-Byzantine times. For example, Deilaki finished her career as head of the Directorate of Speleology and Paleoanthropology, which encompassed much Paleolithic and Neolithic material along that from later periods. As director of the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki, Romiopoulou organised the first major exhibition of the finds from the royal cemetery at Vergina and other Macedonian necropolises, which travelled internationally and was awarded first prize for best European travelling exhibit in 1979 by the Council of Europe.¹³⁹ Under her directorship, the museum also held a retrospective on the 20th-century painter Giannis Tsarouchis (1981); it was the first exhibition of a contemporary artist in a Greek archaeological museum,¹⁴⁰ setting the example for future encounters of archaeology and modern art in museums around the country. In addition, Romiopoulou produced significant work on the Classical and Hellenistic periods in Macedonia.¹⁴¹ So did also Maria Karamanoli-Siganidou, ephor

¹²⁷ Vavouranakis and Kourtessi-Philippakis 2021.

¹²⁸ Ridley, Wardle, and Mould 2000.

¹²⁹ Rhomiopoulou and Kilian-Dirlmeier 1989.

¹³⁰ Ο Σύλλογος Ελλήνων Αρχαιολόγων αποχαιρετά με θλίψη τη Μαρία Θεοχάρη, 30 September 2022, <https://www.sea.org.gr/details.php?id=1285>.

¹³¹ The field teams, *Dikili Tash*, http://www.dikili-tash.fr/content_en/annexes/equipes_fouilles.htm.

¹³² The heads of the programs, *Dikili Tash*, http://www.dikili-tash.fr/content_en/annexes/responsables_programmes.htm.

¹³³ Bakalakis and Sakellariou 1981.

¹³⁴ Xénaki-Sakellariou 1958; Xénaki-Sakellariou and Chatziliou 1989.

¹³⁵ Xénaki-Sakellariou 1985.

¹³⁶ Protonotariou-Deilaki 1980.

¹³⁷ Platon and Stassinopoulou-Touloupa 1964a, 1964b; Touloupa 1964a, 1964b; Touloupa and Symeonoglou 1965; Touloupa 1966.

¹³⁸ Philippaki 1970, 1973, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979.

¹³⁹ Ninou 1979.

¹⁴⁰ Romiopoulou 2001.

¹⁴¹ See her list of publications in Adam-Veleni and Tzanavari 2012: 3–5.

of Antiquities and long-term director of the excavations at Pella, the second capital city of the Macedonian kingdom. Siganiidou reorganised the Archaeological Museum of Pella, and was very involved in public education and outreach.¹⁴² These two representatives of the postwar generation, together with other colleagues who joined the Service in the 1960s, such as Aikaterini Kostoglou-Despoini (1931–2021),¹⁴³ Ioulia Kouleimani-Vokotopoulou (1939–1995),¹⁴⁴ and the aforementioned Chaido Koukouli-Chrysanthaki, formed a cadre of remarkable female personalities who led the archaeological endeavour in Macedonia in the 1970s and 1980s.¹⁴⁵



Figure 9. Evi Stasinopoulou-Touloupa with Stephen G. Miller at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1986, in Natalia Vogeikoff-Brogan, 'Remembering Evi Touloupa', 13 October 2021. American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Archives, Events Photographic Collection. <https://www.ascsa.edu.gr/news/newsDetails/rememering-evi-touloupa>; Reproduced by permission.

Evi Touloupa (Figure 9) likewise exemplified the high calibre and scope of postwar women archaeologists. As a novice, she worked with Semni Karouzou and Christos Karouzos on the reinstallation of the bronzes of the National Archaeological Museum. Her subsequent posts included the regional directorates (ephorates/εφορείες) of the Ionian Islands (a young curator, she defied Queen Frederica's demand to have Byzantine icons from the Corfu Archaeological Museum transferred to the royal collection);¹⁴⁶ Epirus (she worked to protect the historic city of Ioannina); Boeotia (besides excavation at the Kadmeion, she reorganised the Archaeological Museum of Thebes); and Euboea (she excavated and published the

Geometric–Archaic temple of Apollo at Eretria and, in collaboration with the British School, the Early Iron Age locus of hero cult at Lefkandi). She excavated the Archaic city of Karthaia on Kea and studied the sculptural decoration of the temple of Athena; and she reorganised the Archaeological Museum of Skyros.¹⁴⁷ She became best known for her last office as ephor of Antiquities in Athens, where she oversaw the major restoration works on the Acropolis and spearheaded the foundation of the Centre for the Study of the Acropolis. Following the example of her mentor Semni Karouzou,¹⁴⁸ Touloupa reached out to the wider public as a columnist;¹⁴⁹ she also wrote the preface to an edited collection of Karouzou's newspaper columns on the Acropolis,¹⁵⁰ published posthumously by the

¹⁴² Remembrances of Manto Oikonomou, Maria Lilimpaki-Akamati, Katerina Romiopoulou, and Stella Drougou in Lilimpaki-Akamati and Tsakalou-Tzanavari 1998: x–xx. It is worth mentioning Siganiidou's pioneering interest in scientific conservation, a subject almost unknown in Greece in the early 1950s, when she attended related seminars in London (Lilimpaki-Akamati and Tsakalou-Tzanavari 1998: xiii, xvi).

¹⁴³ Αφιέρωμα Μουσείου Ακρόπολης στη μνήμη της Κατερίνας Κώστογλου-Δεσποίνης, 12 October 2022, <https://www.theacropolismuseum.gr/dialexeis/afteroma-moyseioy-akropolis-sti-mnimi-tis-katerinas-kostogloy-despoini>.

¹⁴⁴ Adam-Veleni 2000.

¹⁴⁵ Adam-Veleni 2017: 340.

¹⁴⁶ Touloupa 2014: 12.

¹⁴⁷ On her career and list of publications see, in more detail, her autobiographical note: Touloupa 2013–2014; also, Επιστημονική εκδήλωση στη μνήμη της Έβης Τουλούπα, Ένωση Φίλων Ακροπόλεως, 20 Ιανουαρίου 2023. <https://www.blod.gr/lectures/ekdilosi-sti-mnimi-tis-evi-touloupa/>; Ειδικό αφιέρωμα για τα 35 χρόνια της Ένωσης Φίλων Ακροπόλεως και την ιδρύτρια της Έβη Τουλούπα 2002–2023; and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evi_Touloupa.

¹⁴⁸ Karouzou 2011.

¹⁴⁹ Touloupa 2004, 2008.

¹⁵⁰ Karouzou 1997.

Association of the Friends of the Acropolis, which was founded on Touloupa's initiative (1988).¹⁵¹ Touloupa had her own share of suffering during the dictatorship, when she and her husband were arrested, and the latter was subsequently displaced and imprisoned.

These and other dynamic, committed individuals paved the way for redressing the sex imbalance in the archaeological profession, which eventually became a largely female endeavour.

Dominating the profession

During the seven-year military rule (1967–1974), Greece was cut off from the contestation movements, including feminism, that were transforming society in the USA and Western Europe. A violently crushed student uprising against the dictatorship, under the slogan “Bread, Education, Liberty” (17 November 1973), bore some resemblance to its more famous counterparts elsewhere in the West, but did not bring about any radical reappraisal of the prevailing culture. Following the fall of the dictatorship, a diverse feminist movement brought to the fore renewed demands on three core issues: family law, women's right to decide on their bodies and sexuality, and women's participation in public life. Centre-left-wing and left-wing parties created women's organisations that aligned the woman's cause with the wider project of effecting political change through access to central power. Feminists in mainstream politics soon found themselves confronted with the endemic androcentrism within their parties. By contrast, radical feminists espoused independence, on the grounds that women are the only ones responsible for organising their liberation struggle, and opted for consciousness-raising and self-help in small, non-hierarchical collectives. Fluid in nature and without the resources to compete with party-led women's organisations, feminist autonomous groups appealed mainly to educated women and students, whereas they were attacked both by the Right and the dogmatic Left for elitism and imitation of foreign cultural models that had no relevance to the ‘real needs of the average Greek woman’.

The 1975 Constitution stipulated for the first time that ‘All Greeks are equal before the law. Greek men and women have equal rights and obligations’ (article 4). Greece joined the European Economic Community on the 1st of January 1981; on the 18th of October of the same year the socialist party (PASOK) came to power for the first time. Partly in response to women's demands and to domestic socioeconomic pressures, and partly in order to align national legislation with European standards, the new government enacted a series of legal provisions that had been pending since the reinstitution of democracy.

The presence of an enduring feminist culture in Greece was undermined by political party manipulation. PASOK governments, in particular, presented legislative equality as true equality, thus de-legitimising any further demand. By the 1990s, the women's movement had lost most of its dynamism. Subsequent initiatives to address women's issues were a product of mandatory directives by the European Union, such as increasing women's educational and professional outlets or combating sexual violence. With European grants, the Greek Ministry of Education introduced Programmes on Issues of Gender and Equality and related research projects in those universities that wished to take advantage of this opportunity. Although some of these programmes were fruitfully implemented on a feminist platform, in other, less grounded cases such courses were hastily put together, in order to make opportunistic use of unexpectedly available funding.

The post-dictatorial and contemporary generations

In the post-dictatorial years, women's participation in the professions intensified, thanks to the foundation of new universities that broadened society's access to higher education, and the

¹⁵¹<https://acropolisfriends.gr>.

resulting increase in academic positions. Previously, women in the academy had been an exception to the male rule, mostly confined to the lower ranks. The new developments (partly due to pressure by the student movement demanding a redistribution of power in the universities) led to a major legislative reform¹⁵² which, in turn, improved the situation of female academics – although not to as marked a degree as one would have expected.¹⁵³

Among the first women who entered academic archaeology in the seventies, we mention, in particular, the prehistorians Angeliki Pilali-Papasteriou (1945–2007) and Aikaterini Papaefthymiou-Papanthimou (1945–) of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki,¹⁵⁴ whose life-long collaboration and friendship echoes the tradition of the female networks among the pioneers in the early 20th century (see above).

At the same time, successive waves of recruitment in the Archaeological Service brought fresh energy and new prospects.¹⁵⁵ By the 1990s, women had risen to an overwhelming majority in the Service, at all hierarchical levels.¹⁵⁶ In the 2010s, the ratio of women archaeologists working in Greece was the highest among 21 European countries surveyed (76%);¹⁵⁷ only in the more prestigious domain of academic archaeology do men slightly outnumber women (Figures 10–15).

Equally important, women across the profession are increasingly present, often as leaders, in every field of archaeological action, including those previously spearheaded by men, such as large-scale and/or international excavations and surveys, underwater archaeology, and archaeological sciences. Women archaeologists around the country have risen to the challenges of the massive, intensive excavations that have become more common since the 1990s in conjunction with major public works and often with corporate funding (the latter factor deeply impacting the scope, practice, and ethics of Greek archaeology, which had formerly been the sole responsibility of the state). They have equally excelled in post-excavation management and restoration of sites, making them accessible to the public. Their efforts against the illicit antiquities trade have secured the repatriation of looted artefacts. They have turned museums into hubs of scholarship, archaeological and artistic activity, and community outreach. On par with their male peers, women are pursuing every field and topic of archaeological research. They have breathed new life into traditionally ‘female’ subjects such as textiles, minor arts, or figurine studies, producing innovative experimental work, rigorous analyses, and exciting interpretations. They have kept pace with international advances in archaeological method and theory. Last but not least, women, as members of the Association of Greek Archaeologists, have constantly been defending the public character of cultural heritage against recent measures of privatisation, and working to raise collective awareness of the links between past and present.¹⁵⁸

Archaeology by women, archaeology for women?

A weak relationship between archaeology and feminist thinking largely accounts for the prolonged lack of interest in gender among Greek scholars.¹⁵⁹ Until the 2000s, such research was the rarest of exceptions,¹⁶⁰ as was also the visibility of women in museum galleries.¹⁶¹ An international conference on ‘Fylo: Engendering Prehistoric “Stratigraphies” in the Aegean and the Mediterranean’, held at

¹⁵² Νόμος (Law) 1268, ΦΕΚ 87, issue A, 16 July 1982.

¹⁵³ Eliou 1988; Γραφείο Θεμάτων Φύλου και Ισότητας Εθνικού και Καποδιστριακού Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών, <http://thefylyliscentre.uoa.gr/ereynes/1864-2004-ekpa.html>.

¹⁵⁴ Merousis, Stefani, and Nikolaidou. 2010: 11–23, and Merousis, Nikolaidou, and Stefani 2022: 2–28, respectively.

¹⁵⁵ Adam-Veleni 2017: 340.

¹⁵⁶ Nikolaidou and Kokkinidou 1998: 252, table 12.7.

¹⁵⁷ York Archaeological Trust 2014: 27–28.

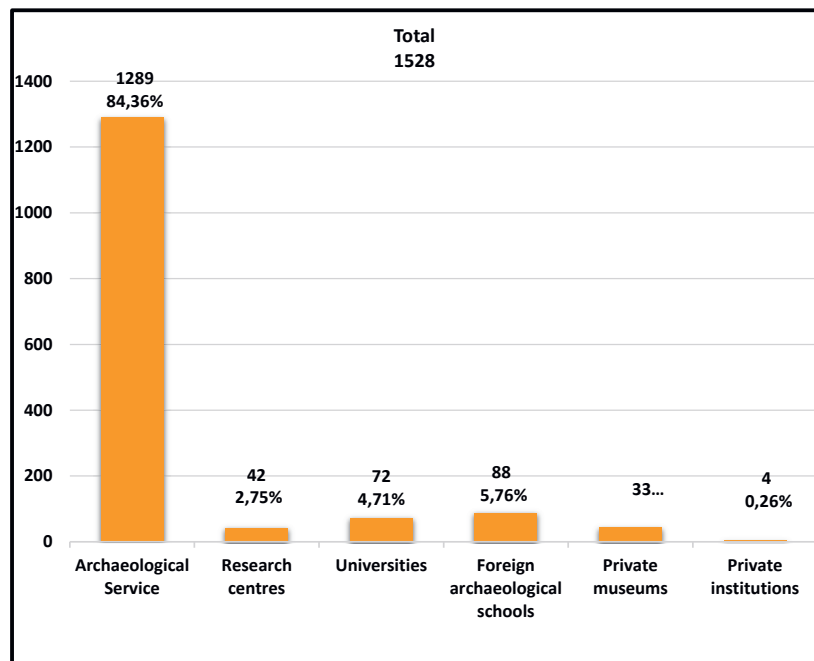
¹⁵⁸ Σύλλογος Ελλήνων Αρχαιολόγων (Association of Greek Archaeologists): <http://sea.org.gr/index.php>.

¹⁵⁹ Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 2009.

¹⁶⁰ On the sparse literature until then, see Kokkinidou 2012: 146–147.

¹⁶¹ Lone example: the exhibition ‘From Medea to Sappho: Untamed Women in Ancient Greece’, National Archaeological Museum, 20 March–30 June 1995 (Tzedakis 1995).

Figure 10. Professional archaeologists in Greece. Based on Initiative for Heritage Conservancy 2014: 10–11.



Based on a sample of 578 individuals

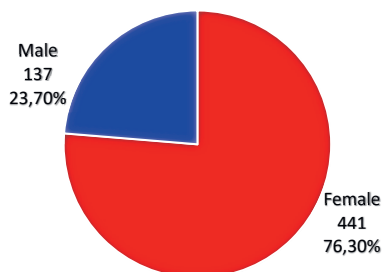


Figure 11. Female versus male archaeologists working in Greece. Based on Initiative for Heritage Conservancy 2014: 13.

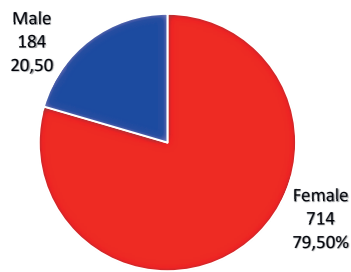


Figure 12. Female versus male archaeologists employed by the Greek Archaeological Service. Based on Initiative for Heritage Conservancy 2014: 14.

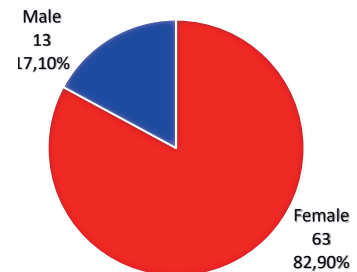


Figure 13. Female versus male archaeologists in directorial positions of the Greek Archaeological Service. Based on Initiative for Heritage Conservancy 2014: 14–15.

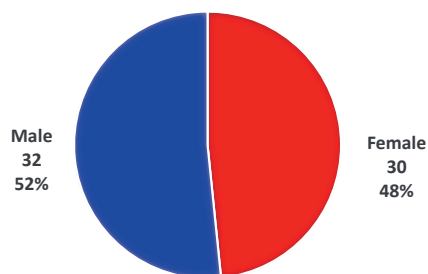


Figure 14. Academic staff, by sex, teaching archaeology courses in Greek universities offering a related degree.

Based on:

National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Department of History and Archaeology, Division of Archaeology and Art History. <http://www.arch.uoa.gr/didaktiko-proswpiko/onomastikos-katalogos-biografika-syggrafiko-ergo.html>.

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Department of History and Archaeology, Division of Archaeology. <https://www.hist.auth.gr/en/faculty-department-of-archaeology/>.

University of Ioannina, Department of History and Archaeology, Division of Archaeology and Art History. <http://www.hist-arch.uoi.gr/index.php?lang=en&Itemid=547>.

University of Crete, Department of History and Archaeology, Division of Archaeology and Art History. <http://www.history-archaeology.uoc.gr/en/the-department/research-and-teaching-staff-2/>.

University of Thessaly, Department of History, Archaeology, and Social Anthropology, Division of Archaeology. <http://www.ha.uth.gr/index.php?page=arch-personnel>.

University of the Aegean, Department of Mediterranean Studies, Specialisation in Archaeology. <https://dms.aegean.gr/en/faculty-members/>.

University of the Peloponnese, Department of History, Archaeology, and Cultural Resources Management. <http://ham.uop.gr/en/departments/people/fmomen>.

University of Patras, Department of History and Archaeology. <http://www.ha.upatras.gr/en/personnel/faculty/>.

Accessed: 9 April 2023.

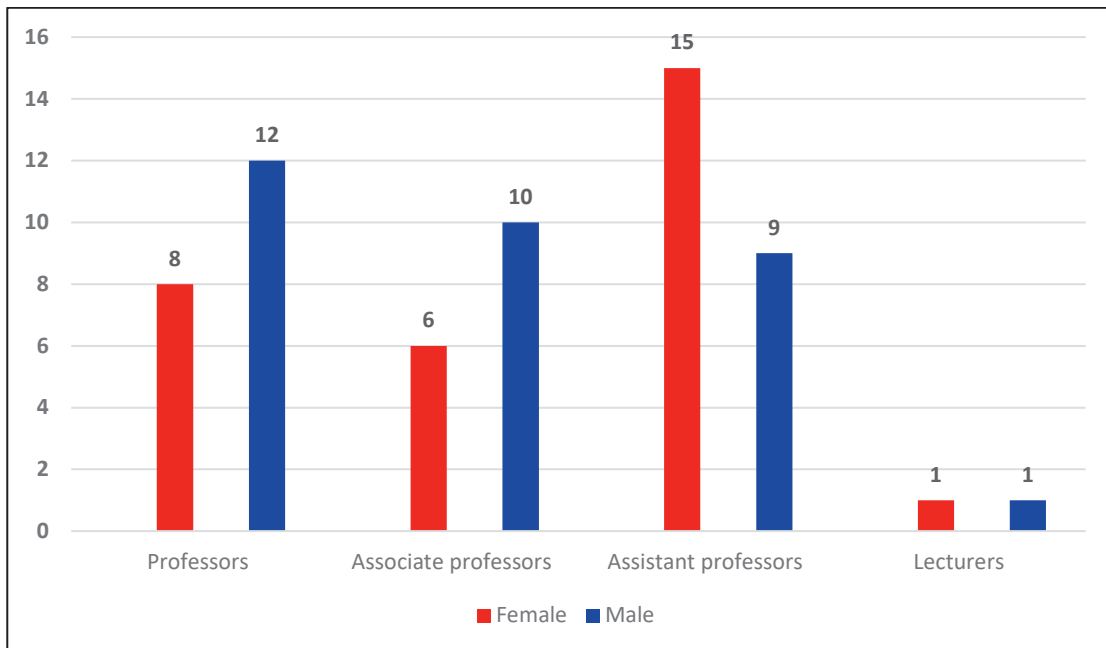


Figure 15. Academic staff, by sex and rank, teaching archaeology courses in Greek universities offering a related degree. Sources: same as in Figure 14.

the University of Crete (Rethymno, 2–5 June 2005), marked a turning point in ‘legitimising’ women and gender as worthy of the archaeologists’ attention.¹⁶² Since then, more scholarly meetings have been devoted to the same subject,¹⁶³ and a number of master’s theses and PhD dissertations have been produced on related topics regarding, specifically, Greek prehistory and antiquity, which is our focus in this article.¹⁶⁴ Over the past fifteen years, women have repeatedly been the subject of museum exhibitions.¹⁶⁵ Finally, museums and directorates of antiquities around the country have been paying tribute to the International Woman’s Day with a range of thematic events for the wider public. Among these activities, we especially note two well-attended colloquia that were held at the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki, the first such events to take place in a Greek museum: ‘Οι γυναίκες στην αρχαιολογία: μεταξύ αφάνειας και ορατότητας’ [Women in Archaeology: Between Invisibility and Visibility] (7 March 2018),¹⁶⁶ and ‘Φύλο και αρχαιολογία: ανιχνεύοντας έμφυλες ταυτότητες’ [Gender and Archeology: Tracing Gender Identities] (8 March 2019).¹⁶⁷ The colloquia were organised on the initiative of the museum’s late director, Liana Stefani (1966–2019), who had already included women and gender in her academic interests¹⁶⁸ (Figure 16).

¹⁶² Kopaka 2009.

¹⁶³ International Symposium on ‘Women in Museums: Reality and Representation’, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, University of Western Macedonia, Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art, 19 May 2008, https://ma-museology.web.auth.gr/dpms_conferences/mouseia-08/; panel on ‘Ζητήματα φύλου στην αρχαιολογία’ [Gender Issues in Archaeology], Annual Meeting of Archaeological Dialogues, Mytilini, 14–17 April 2016, <https://archdialogoi.blogspot.com/2016/>.

¹⁶⁴ For example, Karapanagiotou 2013; Tsakni 2014; Karliampas 2016; Margariti 2017; Tsimetta 2017; Andreovits 2019; Braga 2019; Pytichouti 2019; Aretaki 2020; Bouzouka 2020; Chronaki 2021; Kanellidou 2021; Marinaki 2021; Orfanou-Vernardaki 2021; Plataki 2021; Toutsidou 2021; Tzelali 2022.

¹⁶⁵ ‘Worshipping Women: Ritual and Reality in Classical Athens’, Onassis Cultural Centre, New York, 10 December 2008–9 May 2009, National Archaeological Museum, Athens, 20 July–30 November 2009 (Kaltsas and Shapiro 2009); ‘“Princesses” of the Mediterranean at the Dawn of History’, Museum of Cycladic Art, 13 December 2012–10 April 2013 (Stampolidis and Giannopoulou 2012); ‘Reflections of Women of Ancient Pella’, Archaeological Museum of Pella, January 2019–June 2020 (http://odysseus.culture.gr/h/4/eh41.jsp?obj_id=25146), with associated colloquium ‘Γυναίκα μοι ένεπε...’ [Tell me, Muse, about the Woman...] (27 June 2019), <https://www.academia.edu/40293732>; ‘Rethinking Identities: Gender, Diversity, Discrimination’, Museum of Cycladic Art, 20 March–8 May 2023, <https://vimeo.com/815571741>; ‘The Multiple Roles of Women in Antiquity through the Permanent Exhibitions of the Museum of Cycladic Art’, 30 May–4 November 2024, <https://cycladic.gr/en/ektheseis/oi-pollaploi-rolai-tis-gynaikas-stin-archaiotita-mesa-apo-tis-monimes-ektheseis-tou-mouseiou-kykladikis-technis/>.

¹⁶⁶ <https://www.amth.gr/news/epistimoniki-imerida>.

¹⁶⁷ <https://www.amth.gr/news/imerida-1>.

¹⁶⁸ Stefani 2002, 2011, 2013. Also connected to Stefani’s research on costume and gender was the 2019 exhibition ‘Αναβιώνοντας τις

Liana was planning to publish the proceedings and establish the colloquium as a regular event on Woman's Day, until her untimely death decided otherwise.¹⁶⁹ In parallel with the sharpening focus on past women, archival research¹⁷⁰ and memoirs by archaeologists of the older generations have been published as well;¹⁷¹ these testimonies breathe life into the history of the profession, linking past and present through female genealogies. The National Historical Archive of Antiquities and Restorations of the Ministry of Culture took another step in this direction, with a colloquium on early women archaeologists: 'Τα αρχαιακά τεκμήρια μιλούν... για τις πρώτες γυναίκες στην αρχαιολογία (πρώτο μισό 20ού αιώνα)' [The Archival Documents Speak...about the First Women in Archaeology (First Half of the 20th Century)] (Athens, 19 November 2021).¹⁷²

And the French School at Athens organised a workshop on 'Unsung Pioneer Women in the Archaeology of Greece' (Athens, 8 March 2023).¹⁷³ A sequel took place on 13 March, 2024 on 'Women and Archaeological Institutions', dedicated to Veronika Mitsopoulos-Leon (1936–2023).¹⁷⁴

Since the early 1980s, the Ministry of Culture has frequently been headed by women.¹⁷⁵ Readers do not need to be reminded that women's participation in decision-making centres will not by itself guarantee any true change. Being members of the ruling elite, powerful women are primarily committed to the interests of their class and embrace the policies of the establishment. As an example, we mention the current Minister of Culture – the first archaeologist to sit at the helm of this ministry in Greece (since 2019) – who, in alignment with broader policies of the administration of which she is a member, has been implementing a series of privatisation policies that are impacting the legal and operative status of museums and monuments, which until recently



Figure 16. Liana Stefani at the opening of the exhibition 'Bringing to Life Aegean Late Bronze Age Costume', Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki, 10 May – 30 June 2019. Photograph courtesy of Nikos Merousis.

αιγαιακές ενδυμασίες της ύστερης εποχής του χαλκού' [Bringing to Life Aegean Late Bronze Age Costume], Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki, 10 May–30 June 2019), which featured experimental reproductions of ancient costumes by the late archaeologist and designer Diana Wardle (<https://www.amth.gr/exhibitions/temporary/anavionontas-tis-aigaiakes-endymasies-tis-usteris-epohis-toy-halkoy>).

¹⁶⁹ Her paper at the 2019 colloquium was published posthumously (Stefani 2022).

¹⁷⁰ Oikonomou and Florou 2017.

¹⁷¹ Karouzou 1984; Oikonomidou 2009; Papakonstantinou-Diamantourou 2013; Touloupa 2014; Zafeiropoulou 2016; Zafeiropoulou n.d.; Sapouna-Sakellari 2017; Romiopolou 2018.

¹⁷² <https://www.academia.edu/61372531/2021>.

¹⁷³ <https://www.efa.gr/fr/manifestations-scientifiques/nos-anciennes-manifestations-scientifiques/2303-08-03-2023-workshop-unsung-pioneer-women-in-the-archaeology-of-greece>.

¹⁷⁴ Second Workshop on Women in the Archaeology of Greece, 'Women and Archaeological Institutions', École française d'Athènes and Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut, Athens, 13 March 2024. <https://www.efa.gr/events/women-and-archaeological-institutions/>.

¹⁷⁵ 'Former ministers', Ministry of Culture, <https://www.culture.gov.gr/en/ministry/SitePages/allministers.aspx>.

belonged to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Greek state. The archaeological community at large has strongly opposed these measures. Notwithstanding the complexities, and the shortcomings, of the state-run management of cultural heritage, the increased involvement of the private sector nevertheless undermines the scholarly and professional traditions, indeed the ethics and the two-centuries-old civic character of the Archaeological Service (since 1833).¹⁷⁶

A strong female presence may be a necessary condition for feminist-inspired or, at least, gender-oriented work in a given area, but it is insufficient by itself. Raw numbers alone cannot reveal the whole spectrum and complexity of gender relations, whether in the archaeological record or in the professional reality. Women archaeologists have yet to move beyond dominant intellectual concerns and question their own roles in contemporary society. Their education has been filtered through androcentric bias. In their work, they are frequently subject to, and themselves reproduce, overt or covert assumptions and sexist models of authority that are so deeply rooted as to be taken for granted.

The substantial contributions of Greek women archaeologists, past and present, offer encouragement for the future. Over the decades, the quickening pace and expanding scope of female achievement have substantially transformed not only the archaeological profession but also its public image and political leverage in the country. Pending problems undeniably exist, and they are all too often masked by measuring female ‘dominance’ by numbers only. In our view, the circumstances are ripe for rethinking what it means to have a ‘female’ and/or feminist archaeology, and how women’s involvement can benefit the discipline and society as a whole.

Acknowledgements

Our warm thanks to Katerina Trantalidou, who read and commented on an earlier draft, and to Eleni Manakidou, who brought to our attention the case of women archaeologists seeking alternative ways to enter the profession. For permission to reproduce photographs, we are indebted to Athina Chatzidimitriou (National Historical Archive of Antiquities and Restorations, Greek Ministry of Culture), Maria Dimitriadou (Benaki Museum), Amalia Markatzi (Lyceum Club of Greek Women), Nikos Merousis, and Natalia Vogeikoff-Brogan (American School of Classical Studies at Athens). We are also grateful to Margriet Haagsma, who acted as manuscript reviewer for the JGA and provided constructive suggestions, and to John Bintliff for his editorial support. Any omissions or errors remain our responsibility.

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¹⁷⁶ Σύλλογος Ελλήνων Αρχαιολόγων, 119 ιστορικά στελέχη του Υπουργείου Πολιτισμού υπογράφουν έκκληση για την παραμονή των μεγάλων μουσείων στον κορμό της Αρχαιολογικής Υπηρεσίας, 23 March 2021, <https://www.sea.org.gr/details.php?id=1157>; Ανοικτή επιστολή 487 μελών της διεθνούς ακαδημαϊκής κοινότητας προς τον Πρωθυπουργό για την παραμονή των μεγάλων δημόσιων μουσείων στην Αρχαιολογική Υπηρεσία, 25 April 2021, <https://www.sea.org.gr/details.php?id=1179>; Ομόφωνα αντίθετο το ΔΣ του ΣΕΑ στο σχέδιο νόμου του ΥΠΠΟΑ για τη μετατροπή πέντε δημόσιων μουσείων σε νομικά πρόσωπα δημοσίου δικαίου, 30 March 2022, <https://www.sea.org.gr/details.php?id=1245>.

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