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 Guy Dickins
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INTRODUCTION

§ 1. EXCAVATIONS ON THE ACROPOLIS¹.

From April, 1833, when the Turkish garrison was finally withdrawn, to March, 1882, when systematic excavations were first begun under the auspices of the Archaeological Society, the surface of the Acropolis underwent continuous if unscientific investigation. Three reasons may be given why results were hardly equal to expectation. In the first place the preliminary work of clearing away the remains of the Turkish buildings was itself a long and costly operation; in the second place, largely owing to financial reasons, there was no systematic scheme nor continuous direction of the work; and thirdly, the excavators were content with probing the accumulated *débris* down to a level approximating to that of the classical surface, without seeking below it for the treasures which had been hidden as early as the fifth century B.C. It is to M. Kavvadias, more than any other single archaeologist, that we owe the recovery of the treasures which fill the Acropolis Museum. He it was who, for the first time, elaborated a consistent scheme for turning over every inch of soil above the native rock, and between 1885 and 1890 succeeded in accomplishing this tremendous task, the story of which he has lately given to the world in conjunction with Herr G. Kawerau, the architect of the excavations.

It may be as well, however, before considering more in detail the scope of these operations, to mention briefly the sequence of events from the time of the Liberation.

In July, 1833, Pittakis was appointed a colleague of Weissenborn, Ephor-General of Antiquities, to superintend

¹ Cf. Kavvadias and Kawerau, *Ἀνασκαφαὶ τῆς Ἀκροπόλεως*, Athens, 1907.

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more particularly the discoveries on the Acropolis. It was determined in August, 1834, that the Acropolis should cease to be a fortress, and should be cleared of all buildings of post-classical date. Thus the earliest discoveries consisted of marbles, inscribed or figured, which had been lying among or built into the numerous erections of a later date. These were at first collected in the Propylaea, mainly in the north wing. At the same time trial excavations were begun in the Parthenon, the Propylaea, and on the S.W. slope. Ludwig Ross, however, who had succeeded Weissenborn, was compelled to abandon these efforts for a time in favour of the building operations in the town.

During the next two years little digging was done. Clearing of the ground continued, and some columns of the Parthenon were re-erected. Pittakis, who succeeded Ross as Ephor-General in 1836, proceeded with vigour in the demolition of later buildings. Between 1836 and 1842 the Erechtheum was cleared and partly re-erected, the mosque in the Parthenon and later additions in the Propylaea were removed, and the triangle between these three buildings was cleared for excavation. In 1837 the Greek Archaeological Society was founded for the purpose of promoting the work of discovery. More columns and part of the cella wall of the Parthenon were restored in 1841-2, and a year or two later the Nike temple was pieced together from fragments found in the great Turkish bastion on the slope below the Propylaea. Trenches were also dug south of the Parthenon, and French investigators received permission to make trials in the Propylaea and Erechtheum. In 1847 the Caryatid porch was re-erected; in 1850 the steps which now lead up to the Propylaea were restored; and two years later the French, under Beulé, discovered and restored the gate which bears that savant's name. During the succeeding years Pittakis continued his work with diminished funds owing to the temporary failure of the Archaeological Society. The numerous finds of this period, consisting mainly of fragments of the temple sculptures and great numbers of inscriptions, together with the previous collection housed in the Propylaea, were either moved to a great roofed-in cistern west of the Erechtheum or built into various walls

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and buildings with the purpose of displaying them to the passer-by

In 1863 it was determined to build a museum at the expense of Bernardakis' legatees, to supersede this somewhat primitive method of exhibition. The first site proposed, east of the Erechtheum, was abandoned after the discovery of ancient foundations, and the work was further hampered by the death of Pittakis. In 1864 Eustratiadis succeeded him, but funds were slow in coming, and it was not until 1874 that the museum was completed at the cost of the Ministry of Education. In 1875 the Archaeological Society again came forward, and with Schliemann's help the old Frankish tower at the Propylaea was demolished, and trenches dug in the north-west corner of the Acropolis. In 1877 the French school conducted excavations west of the Erechtheum, and in 1880 the German Institute dug in the Propylaea.

It was felt, however, that there was need of continuity and system in the operations, and in 1881 a large scheme was planned under the auspices of the Archaeological Society with Eustratiadis in charge.

Not until March 15th, 1882, were the first deep trenches cut north of the museum and in front of the east façade of the Parthenon. For the first¹ time the ground was probed below the ancient surface, and the results were instantaneous. A number of *poros* fragments, in particular the greater part of the two pediments in the first room of the museum, together with many marbles, bronzes, and terra-cottas were found close below the ancient level. In April, 1883, Eustratiadis resigned in consequence of a difference of opinion with the Archaeological Society, and digging was interrupted until February, 1884. Stamatakis was now appointed, but had barely started operations near the north-east corner of the Propylaea, when he was attacked by a serious illness, of which he died in March of the following year. In July, 1885, Kavvadias was appointed Ephor-General and continued the work of excavation in November. From

¹ A few pre-Persian potsherds were found by Ross in 1835 in trenches south of the Parthenon.

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that time until 1900 the work was continuous, and all the surface soil was turned over right down to the rock.

Dörpfeld, and later Kawerau, acted as architect to the excavation, and the latter's minute plans of the whole area are of inestimable advantage for the history of the site.

Commencing where Stamatakis had left off, at the north-east corner of the Propylaea, the trenches were carried eastwards past the Erechtheum, and round by the museum to the south side of the Parthenon, so returning to the Propylaea. The central area was then excavated, and finally the interior of the Propylaea. The most valuable finds were made near the Erechtheum and round the east and south sides of the Parthenon in artificial pockets, where the *débris* of the Persian sack had been packed during the later adornment of the Acropolis. Thus on two days in February, 1886, fourteen of the finest of the *Korai* were found packed together in a hole north-west of the Erechtheum.

From December 18th, 1888, the Ministry of Education took the place of the Archaeological Society, until in February, 1890, the last work was done in the Propylaea.

Meanwhile since January, 1886, the Acropolis Museum had been rearranged and refitted by M. Kavvadias. A smaller magazine was added to hold the fragments, so that only the more important finds might be exhibited in the large museum. At the same time the countless fragments were examined with a view to joining those that might belong together. In this work MM. Studniczka, Winter, Lechat, Brückner and others afforded valuable help and advice. One cannot feel too grateful that the old habit of restoration in plaster was for the most part abandoned. The vases, bronzes, and inscriptions were removed to the central museum, and the museum on the Acropolis received its present shape. Professor Schrader's recent discoveries in restoration have added some and greatly supplemented others of the marble statues, and two new pediments in *poros* have resulted from the researches of Professor Heberdey.

During the last twenty years the work of excavation has twice been taken up again in the neighbourhood of the Acropolis, in 1896—1900, when the outer slopes were explored, and since 1908, when trenches were started eastwards

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from the Theseum, but the Acropolis itself has already surrendered its treasures.

§ 2. THE "PERSERSCHUTT".¹

For the want of a sufficiently concise English equivalent we must accept the German *Perserschutt* as the generic title of the contents of those strata on the Acropolis which provided the finest of the exhibits in the first seven rooms of the museum.

In 480 B.C. and again in 479, the Persians occupied Athens and the Acropolis, razing and burning temples and statues. Whether the sack was as complete as Herodotus² would have us believe may perhaps be doubted. Pausanias, at any rate, in the time of Hadrian saw statues that had survived the wrath of Xerxes, and the contents of the museum alone are sufficient to shew that the work of destruction was not very thorough. The Athenians, however, on return to their blackened homes, determined to waste no efforts on restoration or re-erection, but to make a clean sweep of the *débris* and start the beautification of the Acropolis afresh.

The north wall of the citadel, built by Themistokles soon after the battle of Plataea, shews the same patchwork of materials as the walls of the lower town. Athens was fortified in a hurry, lest the Spartans should interfere with the work. It contains many of the architectural members of the old temple of Athena, as well as unfinished column-drums from the new temple planned by the victorious democracy of Kleisthenes. This wall was not built on the summit of the Acropolis rock, but on its side near the top, probably on the ruins of the old "Cyclopean" wall, and the pocket between the wall and the summit was packed with broken fragments of buildings and statues from the wreck-strewn surface of the hill.

The wall on the south side was later in date. Funds for its erection were not to hand until after the battle of the Eurymedon in 467 B.C. Then Kimon built it at his leisure of

¹ Cf. especially Dörpfeld, in *A.M.*, 1902, p. 379 foll.

² viii. 53.

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squared stones—the present face is mediaeval in date—but he used the same device as Themistocles. That is to say, he increased the area of the summit by building his containing wall some way down the slope of the hill, and then filling up the pocket thus formed with the unused *débris* that was still lying among the ruined temples.

Neither Kimon, however, nor Themistokles was the first to think of extending the surface of the citadel. The older Parthenon, whose foundations may still be seen projecting on the eastern side of the great temple of Perikles, is, according to the generally accepted theory of Dörpfeld, earlier than the Persian wars. Its half-finished column-drums are built into the Themistoclean wall, and it never got beyond the earlier stages of construction, but it, too, required an extension of the summit, and excavations to the south of it have revealed some facts of its history. If another temple was to be built on the hill besides the old temple of Athena, whose foundations still lie between Parthenon and Erechtheum, it was necessary to build out an embanked foundation on the south side. How this was done is shewn by the illustration on p. 7.

In this diagram, which shews a section running north and south between the Parthenon and the south wall:

1 is the remains of the early Cyclopean wall which ran round the Acropolis hill.

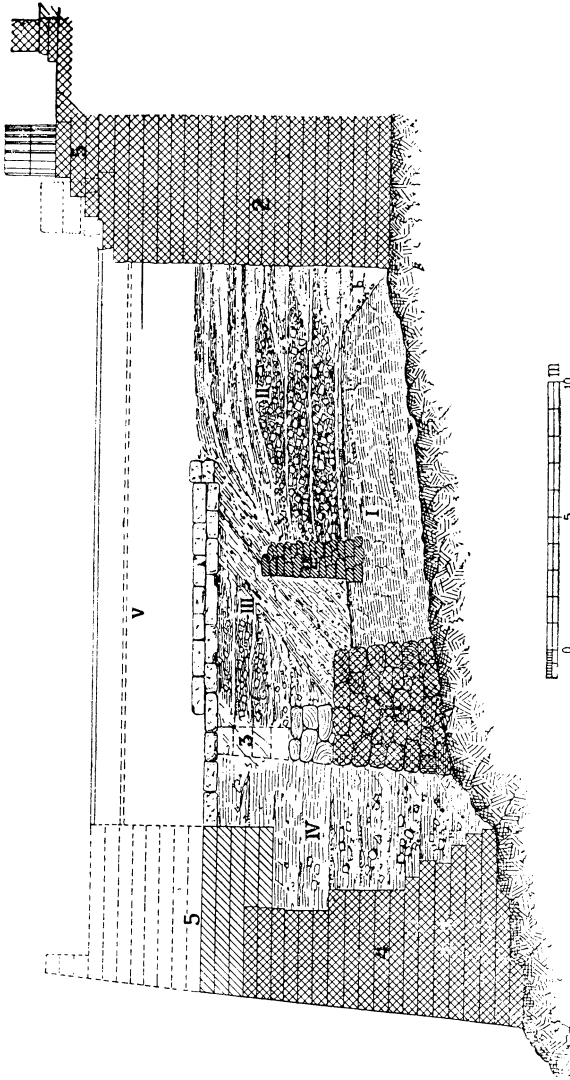
I is the original soil on the surface of the rock before the building of the earlier Parthenon. The wall of the foundation is built through this stratum down to the rock.

2 is the foundation of the earlier temple and also a containing wall built contemporaneously to contain the *débris* which was shovelled in to make a platform on the south side.

II is the stratum of rubbish thrown in at the time of the earliest building. In this stratum was found the greater part of the *poros* remains.

3 is a second retaining wall built on the ruins of the Cyclopean to serve as the platform wall after the rubbish

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Section running north and south from Parthenon to south wall of Acropolis¹. (Dörpfeld, *A.M.*, 1902, p. 393.)

¹ For kind permission to reproduce this illustration my thanks are due to the Imperial German Archaeological Institute.

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began to fall over 2. It shews a second period of building marked by a heightening of the foundation.

III is the *débris* filling up the angle and contemporary with 3.

4 is the Kimonian wall, the south wall of the Acropolis built after 469 to extend the platform.

IV is the corresponding *débris* containing objects of the same character as the pocket on the north side of the Acropolis, i.e. the *Perserschutt* proper, since II and III are *débris* of an earlier date.

5 is Pericles' addition to the Kimonian wall and the Periclean foundation of the Parthenon.

V is the additional filling of rough blocks and chips of rock at the time of the second (Periclean) Parthenon, when the height of the foundations was further raised, and the surface of the Acropolis levelled.

The total depth of these strata was about 14 metres (45 ft.).

5 dates from 447—434 B.C.

4 „ „ after 469 B.C.

Between 4 and 3 there is an interval during which, as we know from the contents of 4, came the Persian sack of 480.

Between 3 and 2 there is a short break, which is found most naturally in the Marathon period.

Between 2 and 1 there is an interval of quite uncertain length during which the foundations of the first Parthenon were laid, and *poros* sculpture flourished and passed away.

The date of the earlier Parthenon lies clearly between the Peisistratid renovation of the oldest Athena temple and the Persian wars. The unfinished drums on the north wall shew us that it was not completed in 480 B.C. The question therefore arises whether it was begun before or after Marathon in 490 B.C. Here our illustration helps us, for we see that there were two periods even in this earlier building, since 2 was built to serve as the terrace wall at first, but afterwards the height of the foundation was raised and 3 was built

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further out. We have to allow, therefore, for a break and for the erection of the massive foundations of the temple. Ten years is too short a time, especially as the funds of 483—480 were devoted mainly to ship-building. We may, therefore, conclude that the gap was caused by the Persian danger 492—490, and that the earliest scheme is still older.

Under such circumstances Dörpfeld can hardly be wrong in ascribing the earlier Parthenon to the time of Kleisthenes, when the new democracy that had just expelled the tyrants would naturally desire to replace the Hekatompedon associated with their name by a new building, greater still and more ambitious, to celebrate the triumph of the new order.

It was at this time then, 508 or a little later, that the first foundations were laid, and the first accumulation of *débris* II began. In this stratum the *poros* remains are found, and it must be remembered, therefore, that the *poros* remains were buried fully 30 years before the marbles in an earlier *Tyrannenschutt*, if the word may be coined.

In this way were the great deposits of archaic sculpture formed by men who felt so confident in their own artistic skill for the future that they were content to sweep into the rubbish heap the accumulated treasures of fifty years¹. Thanks to these three deposits of material, in 508, 478, and 466, we find at the present day marble and *poros* statues alike with the bloom of freshness still on them, and their original colour little impaired by time.

§ 3. CHRONOLOGICAL STUDY.

There are a few objects in the first seven rooms of the museum of a later date than 480 B.C., but it may be stated broadly that that is the lower limit of the chronological period. Most of these statues have come from the rubbish

¹ Many of the statues in the museum seem to have been hacked or mutilated, e.g. Nos. 595, 606, 671, 680 and 682. It has been suggested that this was for the purpose of packing them in the *Perserschutt*. It is not impossible however that it represents Persian destruction. Traces of the conflagration are visible in the many splintered surfaces like those of No. 665 and the new *Kore*.

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heaps of 508—500 or of 479—469 B.C., and represent either the ruins of the Persian sack or the superseded pediments of *poros*. Another chronological datum, unfortunately hard to fix, is the remodelling of the old temple of Athena under the tyrants, when the marble peristyle and pediments superseded the earlier *poros* fronts. We possess both the new and the old pediments, but we can only estimate vaguely the date of the change. Its importance rests largely on the fact that the pediments of the Hekatompedon are among the latest manifestations of *poros* art, and consequently we can attribute with safety the bulk of the *poros* works to an age prior to that of the temple reconstruction. Contributory evidence on this point is provided by a comparison of the *poros* sculptures in general with examples of black-figured vase paintings of the first half and middle of the sixth century. The date of the François vase is generally accepted as within ten years of 550 B.C., and its points of resemblance to the Introduction of Herakles pediment are many and striking.

On *a priori* evidence therefore we may premise two general periods in early Attic art:

(1) A period lasting down into the second half of the sixth century and including the *poros* sculptures.

(2) A period succeeding this one and lasting until 480, during which time fine marble work was accomplished.

A more detailed chronology depends largely upon the internal study of style.

M. Lechat, whose two works¹ on the Acropolis sculptures have hitherto provided the most careful and detailed general view of early Attic art, bases his study of style on two considerations:

(1) Work in a superior material is later than work in an inferior material;

(2) Good work, i.e. work of technical excellence, is later than bad work, i.e. work of clumsy or faulty appearance.

He is thus led to divide early Attic art sharply into a period of wood technique, a period of *poros* technique, and a period of marble technique. The first period depends only

¹ *Au Musée de l'Acropole d'Athènes*, Paris, Lyons, 1903; *La Sculpture attique avant Pheidias*, Paris, 1904.