

ΥΠ.ΠΟ.Α. – ΕΦΟΡΕΙΑ ΑΡΧΑΙΟΤΗΤΩΝ ΡΕΘΥΜΝΟΥ  
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# ΑΡΧΑΙΟ ΛΟΓΙΚΟ ΕΡΓΟ ΚΡΗΤΗΣ

Πρακτικά της 4ης Συνάντησης  
Ρέθυμνο, 24-27 Νοεμβρίου 2016

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Κωστής Ψυχογιός (*k.pezanos@gmail.com*)

ΣΧΕΔΙΑΣΜΟΣ ΕΞΩΦΥΛΛΟΥ

Κωνσταντίνος Ανδρώνης  
(*constantinos.alpha@gmail.com*)

ΕΚΤΥΠΩΣΗ & ΒΙΒΛΙΟΔΕΣΙΑ

Σ. ΚΑΣΙΜΑΤΗΣ & ΣΙΑ ΕΕ  
Μουρνιές Χανίων, ΤΚ 733 00  
(*info@taloskass.com*)

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of Philosophy, University of Crete / and the contributors  
e-mail: *ergokritis@gmail.com*

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## ΒΡΑΧΥΓΡΑΦΙΕΣ – ABBREVIATIONS

### 1. ΠΕΡΙΟΔΙΚΑ - ΣΕΙΡΕΣ - ΛΕΞΙΚΑ JOURNALS - SERIES - DICTIONARIES

<i>AAA</i>	Αρχαιολογικά Ανάλεκτα εξ Αθηνών
<i>ABME</i>	Αρχειόν Βυζαντινών Μνημείων της Ελλάδος
<i>AD (AD)</i>	Αρχαιολογικόν Δελτίον
<i>AE</i>	Αρχαιολογική Εφημερίς
<i>ΔΧΑΕ</i>	Δελτίον της Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας
<i>ΕΕΒΣ</i>	Επετηρίς Εταιρείας Βυζαντινών Σπουδών
<i>ΚρητΧρον</i>	Κρητικά Χρονικά
<i>NXK</i>	Νέα Χριστιανική Κρήτη
<i>ΠΙΑΕ</i>	Πρακτικά της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας
<i>AA</i>	Archäologischer Anzeiger
<i>AEA</i>	Aegean Archaeology
<i>AJA</i>	American Journal of Archaeology
<i>AR</i>	Archaeological Reports
<i>ArtBull</i>	The Art Bulletin
<i>ASAtene</i>	Annuario della Scuola Archeologica di Atene e delle Missioni Italiane in Oriente
<i>BCH</i>	Bulletin de Correspondence Hellénique
<i>BdA</i>	Bollettino d'Arte
<i>BICS</i>	Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies of the University of London
<i>BSA</i>	Annual of the British School at Athens
<i>DOP</i>	Dumbarton Oaks Papers
<i>JAS</i>	Journal of Archaeological Science
<i>JdI</i>	Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts
<i>JFA</i>	Journal of Field Archaeology
<i>JÖB</i>	Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik
<i>LANX</i>	Rivista della Scuola di Specializzazione in Archeologia – Università degli Studi di Milano
<i>Minos</i>	Minos, Revista de filología egea
<i>MonAnt</i>	Monumenti Antichi
<i>NumChron</i>	The Numismatic Chronicle
<i>OpAth</i>	Opuscula Atheniensi
<i>Opuscula</i>	Opuscula: Annual of the Swedish Institutes at Athens and Rome
<i>RA</i>	Revue Archéologique
<i>RendLinc</i>	Atti dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei. Rendiconti

## ΒΡΑΧΥΓΡΑΦΙΕΣ – ABBREVIATIONS

SkrAth	Skrifter utgivna av Svenska Institutet i Athen (Acta Instituti Atheniensis Regni Sueciae)
SEG	Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum
SIMA	Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology
SMAG	Studi e materiali di archeologia greca

## 2. ΣΥΝΕΔΡΙΑ – CONFERENCES

### ΑΕΚ, 1 :

Μ. Ανδριανάκης & Ι. Τζαχίλη (επιμ.), 2010. *Αρχαιολογικό Έργο Κρήτης 1. Πρακτικά της 1ης Συνάντησης. Ρέθυμνο, 28-30 Νοεμβρίου 2008*. Πανεπιστήμιο Κρήτης - Τμήμα Ιστορίας και Αρχαιολογίας & Υπ.Πο.Τ. - 28η Εφορεία Βυζαντινών Αρχαιοτήτων. Ρέθυμνο: Εκδόσεις Φιλοσοφικής Σχολής Πανεπιστημίου Κρήτης.

### ΑΕΚ, 2 :

Μ. Ανδριανάκης, Π. Βαρθαλίτου & Ι. Τζαχίλη (επιμ.), 2012. *Αρχαιολογικό Έργο Κρήτης 2. Πρακτικά της 2ης Συνάντησης. Ρέθυμνο, 26-28 Νοεμβρίου 2010*. Πανεπιστήμιο Κρήτης - Τμήμα Ιστορίας και Αρχαιολογίας, Υπ.Πο.Τ. - 28η Εφορεία Βυζαντινών Αρχαιοτήτων & Αρχαιολογικό Ινστιτούτο Κρητολογικών Σπουδών. Ρέθυμνο: Εκδόσεις Φιλοσοφικής Σχολής Πανεπιστημίου Κρήτης.

### ΑΕΚ, 3, τόμ. Α' & Β' :

Π. Καρανασάση, Α. Τζιγκουνάκη & Χ. Τσιγωνάκη (επιμ.), 2015. *Αρχαιολογικό Έργο Κρήτης 3. Πρακτικά της 3ης Συνάντησης. Ρέθυμνο, 5-8 Δεκεμβρίου 2013*. Πανεπιστήμιο Κρήτης - Τμήμα Ιστορίας και Αρχαιολογίας & Υπ.Πο.Α. - Εφορεία Αρχαιοτήτων Ρεθύμνου. Τόμος Α': *Εισηγήσεις Φορέων - Ηράκλειο - Γενικά Θέματα*, & Τόμος Β': *Χανιά - Ρέθυμνο - Λασιθί*. Ρέθυμνο: Εκδόσεις Φιλοσοφικής Σχολής Πανεπιστημίου Κρήτης & Εφορεία Αρχαιοτήτων Ρεθύμνου.

### Γ' Κρητολογικό = 3rd Cretological Congress :

*Πεπραγμένα του Γ' Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου (Ρέθυμνον, 18-23 Σεπτεμβρίου 1971)*, Τόμοι Α'-Γ'. Αθήνα: Δήμος Ρεθύμνης & Υπουργείον Πολιτισμού και Επιστημών, 1973-1975 = *Proceedings of the 3rd International Cretological Congress (Rethymnon, 18-23 September 1971)*, Volumes I-III. Athens: Municipality of Rethymnon & Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Science, 1973-1975.

### Δ' Κρητολογικό = 4th Cretological Congress :

*Πεπραγμένα του Δ' Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου (Ηράκλειο, 29 Αυγούστου - 3 Σεπτεμβρίου 1976)*. Αθήνα: Πανεπιστήμιον Κρήτης, 1980-

1981 = *Proceedings of the 4th International Cretological Congress (Heraklion, 29 August - 3 September 1976)*. Athens: University of Crete, 1980-1981.

Z' Κρητολογικό :

*Πεπραγμένα του Ζ' Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου (Ρέθυμνο, 25-31 Αυγούστου 1991)*. Ρέθυμνο: Δήμος Ρεθύμνης, Ιστορική και Λαογραφική Εταιρεία Ρεθύμνης, Ιερά Μητρόπολις Ρεθύμνης και Αυλοποτάμου, 1995 [= ΝΧΚ, 11-14].

Θ' Κρητολογικό = 9th Cretological Congress :

*Πεπραγμένα του Θ' Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου (Ελούντα, 1-6 Οκτωβρίου 2001)*. Ηράκλειο: Εταιρία Κρητικών Ιστορικών Μελετών, 2004-2006 = *Proceedings of the 9th International Cretological Congress (Elounda, 1-6 October 2001)*. Heraklion: Society of Cretan Historical Studies, 2004-2006.

Ι' Κρητολογικό = 10th Cretological Congress :

*Πεπραγμένα του Ι' Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου (Χανιά, 1-8 Οκτωβρίου 2006)*. Χανιά: Φιλολογικός Σύλλογος «Ο Χρυσόστομος», 2010-2012 = *Proceedings of the 10th International Cretological Congress (Chania, 1-8 October 2006)*. Chania: “Chrysostomos” Literary Society, 2010-2012.

ΙΑ' Κρητολογικό = 11th Cretological Congress :

*Πεπραγμένα του ΙΑ' Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου (Ρέθυμνο, 21-27 Οκτωβρίου 2011)*. Ρέθυμνο: Ιστορική και Λαογραφική Εταιρεία Ρεθύμνης, 2018 και υπό έκδοση = *Proceedings of the 11th International Cretological Congress (Rethymnon, 21-27 October 2011)*. Rethymnon: Association on Historical & Folklore Studies in Rethymnon, 2018 and forthcoming.

ΙΒ' Κρητολογικό = 12th Cretological Congress :

*Πεπραγμένα του ΙΒ' Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου (Ηράκλειο, 21-25 Σεπτεμβρίου 2016)*. Ηράκλειο: Εταιρία Κρητικών Ιστορικών Μελετών, 2018-2020 = *Proceedings of the 12th International Cretological Congress (Heraclion, 21-25 September 2016)*. Heraklion: Society of Cretan Historical Studies, 2018-2020 = <<https://12iccs.proceedings.gr>>.

Ο Μυλοπόταμος από την Αρχαιότητα ως Σήμερα :

Ε. Γαβριλάκη & Γ. Ζ. Τζιφόπουλος (επιμ.), 2006. *Ο Μυλοπόταμος από την Αρχαιότητα ως Σήμερα. Περιβάλλον, Αρχαιολογία, Ιστορία, Λαογραφία, Κοινωνιολογία (Πάνορμο, 24-30 Οκτωβρίου 2003)*. Πρακτικά Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου. Τόμ. Ι: Εγκύκλιοι, συμμετέχοντες, περιλήψεις, βιβλιο-



γραφία. Τόμ. II: *Αρχαίοι Χρόνοι*. Τόμ. III: *Αρχαίοι Χρόνοι, Ιδίο Άντρο*. Τόμ. IV: *Ελεύθερνα, Αξός*. Τόμ. V: *Βυζαντινοί Χρόνοι*. Τόμ. VI: *Βενετοκρατία, Τουρκοκρατία*. Τόμ. VII: *Νεότεροι Χρόνοι: Περιβάλλον, Ιστορία, Κοινωνιολογία*. Τόμ. VIII: *Νεότεροι Χρόνοι: Λαϊκός Πολιτισμός*. [Τόμ. IX:] *Αρχαίοι και Βυζαντινοί χρόνοι*. Ρέθυμνο: Ιστορική και Λαογραφική Εταιρεία Ρεθύμνης.

*Creta romana e protobizantina* :

A. Di Vita, M. Livadioti & I. Simiakaki (επιμ.), 2004. *Creta romana e protobizantina: atti del congresso internazionale (Iraklion, 23-30 settembre 2000)*. Vol. I, II, III.1, III.2. Padova: Bottega d'Erasmus, Aldo Ausilio Editore.

### 3. ΚΑΤΑΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΚΘΕΣΗΣ – EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

*Ελεύθερνα: Πόλη – Ακρόπολη – Νεκρόπολη = Eleutherna: Polis, Acropolis, Necropolis* :

N. Χρ. Σταμπολίδης (επιμ.), 2004. *Ελεύθερνα. Πόλη – Ακρόπολη – Νεκρόπολη. Κατάλογος Έκθεσης στο Μουσείο Κυκλαδικής Τέχνης του Ιδρύματος Ν. Π. Γουλανδρή, Μέγαρο Σιαθάτου*. Αθήνα: Υπουργείο Πολιτισμού, ΚΕ' Ε.Π.Κ.Α. – Πανεπιστήμιο Κρήτης – Μουσείο Κυκλαδικής Τέχνης = N. Chr. Stampolidis (ed.) [transl. A. Doumas], *Eleutherna: Polis, Acropolis, Necropolis*. Athens: Ministry of Culture – 25th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities – University of Crete – Museum of Cycladic Art.

**KENTRIKH KRHTH**

**ΓΟΡΤΥΝΑ**

**CENTRAL CRETE**

**GORTYN**

## NEW PERSPECTIVES ON THE EVOLUTION OF THE SANCTUARY OF APOLLO *PYTHIOS* IN GORTYN

JACOPO BONETTO, ANNA BERTELLI, EDOARDO BROMBIN,  
MARTINA COLLA, VALERIA DE SCARPIS DI VIANINO  
& MARIA CHIARA METELLI

During the third meeting of *Archaeological Work in Crete*, organized at Rethymnon in 2013, our team presented the new research project on the sanctuary complex of Apollo *Pythios* in Gortyn (Bonetto, Bertelli & Colla 2015). Since then two field campaigns, conducted in 2014 and 2016, and a period of study in 2015, have provided us with new and significant information about the evolution and architecture of the sanctuary, discovered at the end of the 19th century.

The sanctuary was brought to light in 1885 by Federico Halbherr, whose main resolution was to recover a substantial amount of inscriptions belonging to the Archaic period. These were carved into the original structure, whose stones the Roman builders reused in order to restore the building's walls in the 3rd century AD (Halbherr 1890a; Savignoni 1907). Therefore, in the years following Halbherr's discovery, most research focused on interpreting those crucial texts,<sup>1</sup> while the architectural characteristics of the building and its development over the centuries were only briefly discussed (Halbherr 1890a). Moreover, as often occurred in those hasty excavations, little attention was paid to small finds such as ceramic objects and to stratigraphical features.

For a long while the sanctuary did not receive much attention. Only several decades after the initial excavation Antonio Maria Colini carried out small trial excavations; the findings were published many years later, offering new data about the sacred complex (Colini 1940; 1974). A much more comprehensive examination was however carried out by the architect Maria Ricciardi in the 80's (Ricciardi 1986-1987). Even though her research did not focus on new stratigraphical analyses, it proved an accurate and valuable examination of the structures.

By his investigations, F. Halbherr had already divided the history of the sanctuary into three main building phases, which he dated to the Archaic, Hellenistic and Roman Imperial periods. All the following studies consistently repeated this sequence, which certainly today appears

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1 The texts were edited by the epigraphist D. Comparetti, who had promoted and supported the research, and by F. Halbherr: Comparetti 1888; 1890; 1893; Halbherr 1890b; De Sanctis 1907. The texts were later collected by M. Guarducci in the fourth volume of *Inscriptiones Creticae* (IC IV).

too rigid and schematic, given the limited and now methodologically outdated manner of investigation.

The evident lack of a well-structured and comprehensive historical assessment of the sanctuary required fresh, more systematic, and methodologically up-to-date investigations. Our research attempts to fill this vacuum, with the purpose of rewriting the history of one of the main centres of the city of Gortyn between the Archaic period and the Roman Imperial era. The area, sacred to Apollo *Pythios*, after acquiring a unifying role in the context of the developing *polis* (Di Vita 2010, 35), became, most likely, during the Hellenistic period the physical and religious location of the *Koinon ton Kretaieon*, the federal assembly of all the Cretan cities.<sup>2</sup> Given the political and religious importance of the area, it became the centre of the *polis* during the expansion of the city in the Late Hellenistic and in the Roman Imperial periods.<sup>3</sup> As a consequence, the urban space was extended both to the east and to the west, with a rich monumental apparatus, embracing the area of the sanctuary.<sup>4</sup>

Despite the importance of the sanctuary complex, our limited knowledge of it required the excavations to be resumed, as part of a more thorough and modern investigation of the area.

The new project had two main and complementary aims: firstly, a new digital survey of the structure, which was based on a detailed study of the architectural elements of the Temple and of its connected buildings, like the altar and the *heroon*. Secondly, the excavation of stratigraphical trenches in selected locations of the sacred area. Our purpose here was to clarify the structural relationships between the different parts and the stratigraphical sequences and chronologies.<sup>5</sup>

The excavation campaign undertaken in August 2016 allowed us to complete the survey and to perform a total of 14 trial excavations in the sanctuary complex (pl. 1). The data gathered at that time are still being processed; further excavations are scheduled for the coming years. Although it is too early to draw conclusions about the history of the sanctuary, it is already possible to present some important results and discuss the numerous challenges encountered during the first stages of research.

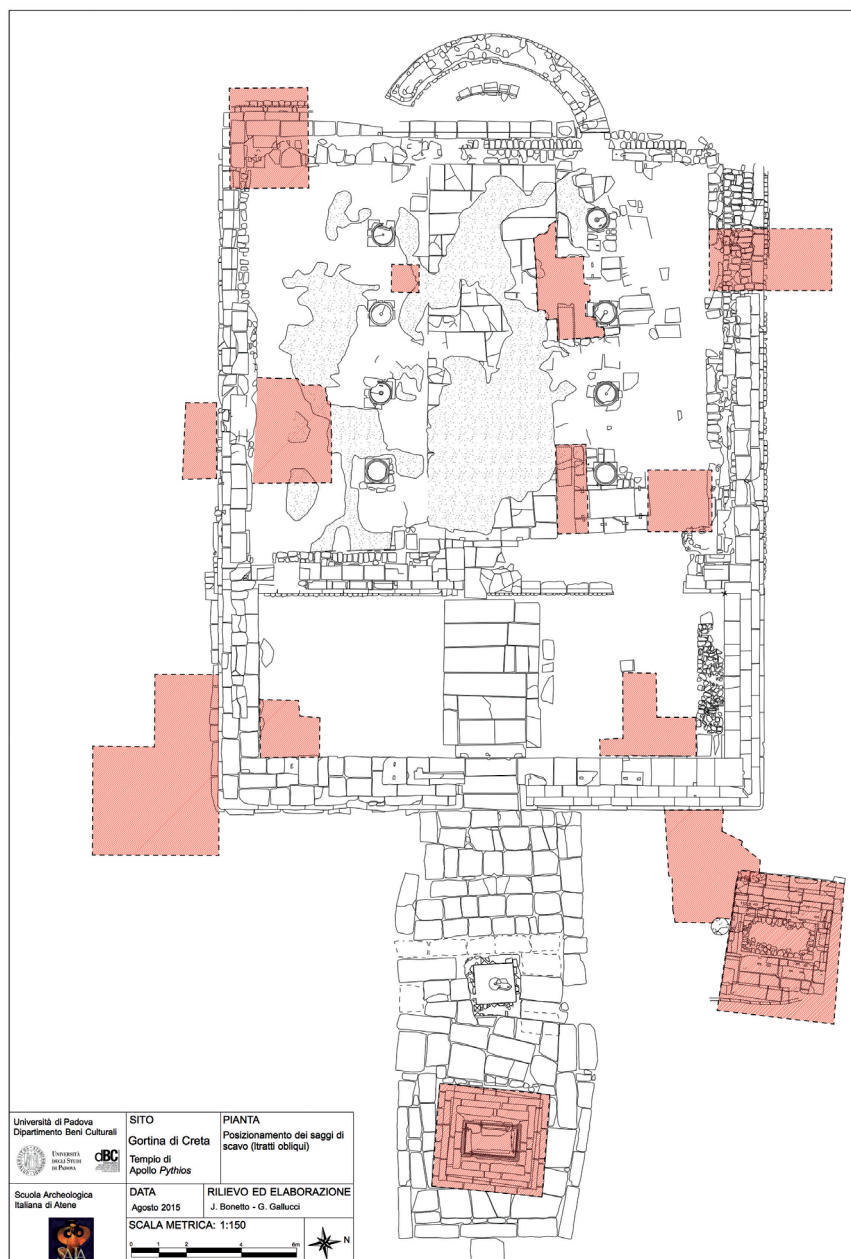
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2 Since its constitution in the 3rd century BC, the league met alternately in the cities of Knossos and Gortyn. In 27 AD, Gortyn was finally chosen as the institution's permanent seat. Several hypotheses have been advanced in order to identify the urban location of the *Koinon*, with one of them pointing at the Apollo sanctuary itself. On the subject, see in particular: Chaniotis 1999, 287-299; Di Vita 2010, 59-64; Chaniotis 2013, 63; Lippolis 2016, 159; Bonetto 2016, 525; Bonetto, Bertelli & Brombin 2020.

3 As testified by Stephanus of Byzantium, who also reports that the area around the sanctuary and its inhabitants took their name from the epiclesis of the god (Steph. Byz., *Ἐθνικά*, s.v. Πύθιον· τὸ πάλα μεσαίτατον τῆς ἐν Κρήτῃ Γόρτυνος. Οἱ κατοικοῦντες Πυθιεῖς καὶ οἱ τὸ Πύθιον οἰκοῦντες, ἐν ᾧ Απόλλωνος ἱερόν ἐστι).

4 On this topic, see the recent analysis of E. Lippolis (Lippolis 2016).

5 For the first excavation results, related to the excavations between 2014 and 2016, see Bonetto *et al.* 2016.



Pl. 1: The excavation trials carried out in the area of the Temple between 2013 and 2016

Our data can be used to review the historical origins of the sanctuary, which was built during the Orientalizing/Early Archaic period in an area of the Messara Valley, located at a considerable distance from the foothills of the Psiloritis (Haghios Ioannis, Pervolopetra, Armi and Profitis Ilias). During the Late Minoan and Geometric periods, namely before the birth of the *polis*, those hills were inhabited by several villages. The Temple of Athana (Rizza & Scrinari 1968; D'Acunto 2002; Santaniello 2011) and the city acropolis itself were erected on top of one of these hills, while their southern foot probably housed the agora.

To date, the location of the Apollo sanctuary, which appears well away from the population centres, has been linked to its possible role as a connection point between the urban and the *chora* spaces (Lippolis 2011, 96); however, the issue remains partially unsolved, given the sanctuary's isolation from the vital spaces of the new *polis*.

Some data that might help answer this question emerged during the stratigraphical surveys carried out inside the *naos* in 2016. Here, the excavation of the layers below a pre-Roman pavement, which was previously unknown (see *infra*), led to the recovery of several pottery sherds dating back to the Minoan and Mycenaean periods.<sup>6</sup> Although it appears evident that these sherds are part of residual material recovered in later deposits of the Pre-Roman period, it seems highly unlikely and unreasonable that these sherds could have come from an area located very far from the sanctuary. Instead, it seems more reasonable to consider them as small but significant evidence of the existence of a nearby site active during the Late Bronze Age.

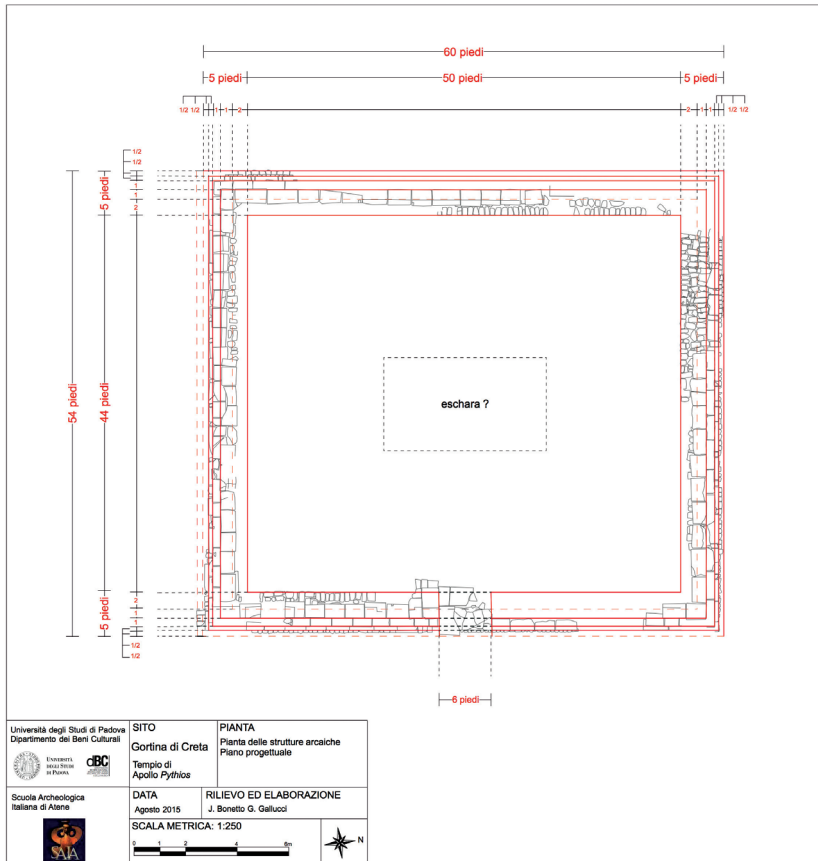
Therefore, in the future it would make sense to investigate whether this valley area had Minoan and Mycenaean occupation. Obviously and even so, it would not then be possible to establish any direct relationship with the birth of the Apollo sanctuary in the Orientalizing/Early Archaic period. Nevertheless, it might be then be worth considering if the existence of an earlier occupation might have determined in some way the Temple's placement in a seemingly isolated location.

Further attention must be paid to the layout of the oldest architectural unit, defined by a rectangular structure of 4 perimeter walls standing on two (or three, in the SE corner) foundation rows and on a three-stepped *crepidoma*. Our team could gather no additional useful information for the chronology of the first building complex: from the inscriptions carved into the second step of the *krepis*, the original building has been dated to the period between the 7th and the beginning of the 6th century BC.

Following the analysis of the measurement data, we believe that the complex constitutes a sophisticated architectural project based on a foot unit of 33.3 cm (Bonetto 2016). This foot unit is known from literary

<sup>6</sup> We would like to thank O. Palio, a colleague from the University of Catania, for his advice.

and archaeological sources: it suggests the local presence of artisans and architects who most likely came from the East. On such a unit was designed a six-foot modular basis, which defines the building door along with the length and the width of the complex (in a 10/9 ratio with measures of respectively 60 and 54 feet). The same unit is used to define the width of the foundations and the elevation (pl. 2 ).



PI. 2 : The Orientalizing/Early Archaic Temple, based on a foot unit of 33.3 cm (Bonetto 2016, fig. 12, p. 550)

The excavation provided new insights into the debate regarding the existence of a roof covering the most ancient building. Expressed in several hypotheses, Maria Ricciardi (Ricciardi 1986-1987, 53-56) suggested the presence of wooden supports within the four small pits placed symmetrically at the centre of the Temple. However, recent stratigraphical analyses have revealed that the small pits should be dated to the Roman

Imperial age, and that there is no further trace of supporting bases for elements holding up the Archaic roof. It must be mentioned that given such a complex planimetry, in the form of a fairly large (16.81 x 14.65 m)<sup>7</sup> and imperfectly-shaped square, the presence of a roof appears hard to substantiate.

Due to the above difficulties in defining the architectural features of the roof of the first building, it seems reasonable to consider an alternative option. If the building was roofless, it may be argued that the religious area was arranged as an open-air sacred enclosure. Similar buildings can be found at Cyrene;<sup>8</sup> an altar might have been located in the middle of the sacred space bordered by the four outer walls. Hopefully future research will lead us to new discoveries, as to this day the question remains unanswered.

In 2016 some important information emerged about the period between the 5th and 4th centuries BC, which previous research had been unable to recover. At the level below the Roman pavement there were the remains of an older surface, paved with limestone slabs (fig. 1). So far, this has been found only in a limited area near the southern perimeter of the structure; therefore, its precise extension, which is certainly wider, is unknown. Its chronology has yet to be confirmed by the finds retrieved in its preparation layers. Among them we highlight a rare silver *stater* of Knossos, dating back to the period between the 5th and the 4th centuries.<sup>9</sup> On the obverse, the Minotaur is represented facing right and running, his left hand raised high above his head and his right hand holding a stone. The reverse is decorated with a labyrinth pattern, featuring five pellets at the centre and deep incuse squares on each corner (fig. 2).

Trial excavations dating from 2014 confirmed that between the 3rd and the 2nd centuries BC the structures of the Temple were significantly modified. East of the archaic *naos*, the excavation of the structures' foundation trenches,<sup>10</sup> made out of large blocks of limestone, showed that the large *pronaos* (pl. 4) was indeed built during the 3rd century BC,

7 The maximum width at the foundation level is 20.21 x 18.09 m.

8 Especially the Archaic *temenos* of Apollo Archegetes (Purcaro 2001, 25-36); for other Archaic open-air sanctuaries, see Stucchi 1975, 7-10.

9 Regarding the first coinage of Knossos, with the Minotaur on the obverse and the swastika-shaped labyrinth pattern on the reverse, the chronology is still debated. While Wroth's studies at the end of the 19th century (Wroth 1884, 17-24) dated the first coinage to between 500 and 431 BC (see also Svoronos 1890, 65, pl. IV, 23), the work of Le Rider on the Cretan hoards (Le Rider 1966) lowered the chronology to a timespan between 425 BC and 360 BC. The sharp chronological gap between these two hypotheses has been recently overcome by C. Devoto (Devoto 2014), who proposed the first half of the 5th century BC as the starting-point for first coinage of Knossos.

10 For more information about the excavations inside the *pronaos*, see Bonetto, Bertelli & Colla 2015; Bonetto *et al.* 2016.





Fig. 1 : The pre-Roman limestone slab-pavement, discovered underneath the Roman *cocciopesto* floor in the south portion of the *naos*



Fig. 2 : The silver *stater* from the Knossos mint

when a new and large colonnaded façade with six columns was added to the Archaic precinct.

The dilemma of the structure's roof also persists in the Middle and Late Hellenistic phases. Although the *pronaos* was obviously covered by a double sloped roof, there is no archaeological evidence for the reconstruction of roof-support features in the central area of the building. The same unsolved problem of the roof's existence persists even in the Roman Imperial period.

From the new information gathered from stratigraphical excavation, the construction of the four small pits in the *cella* should be dated to this phase. Placed on the diagonals of the central sacred area, the pits consist of four limestone blocks, each defined by almost squared 30/40 cm-deep holes<sup>11</sup> (fig. 3).



Fig. 3 : The south-east pit

Based on a detailed analysis carried out in partnership with a team of engineers,<sup>12</sup> it seems unlikely that these structures could have housed vertical supports holding a roof for the entire building. Therefore, as for the previous periods, in this phase too it is very difficult to demonstrate

11 The three preserved pits measure: 69 x 72 cm (SE pit); 69 x 73 cm (NE pit); 100 x 100 cm (SW pit).

12 We wish to thank C. Modena and C. Marson, colleagues from the University of Padova, Department of Civil, Environmental and Architectural Engineering, for their direct analysis of the sacred building.

the existence and shape of a roofing system covering the entire *naos*. It is however clear that the construction of the pits, independent from their function, is incompatible with an earlier roof, even assuming it ever existed. The small pits were placed where, supposedly, the earlier vertical supports should have stood. Hence two hypotheses are plausible: either the *naos* area was never covered, or it underwent a radical transformation as the roof was placed – or replaced – using some structures that can hardly be identified by now.

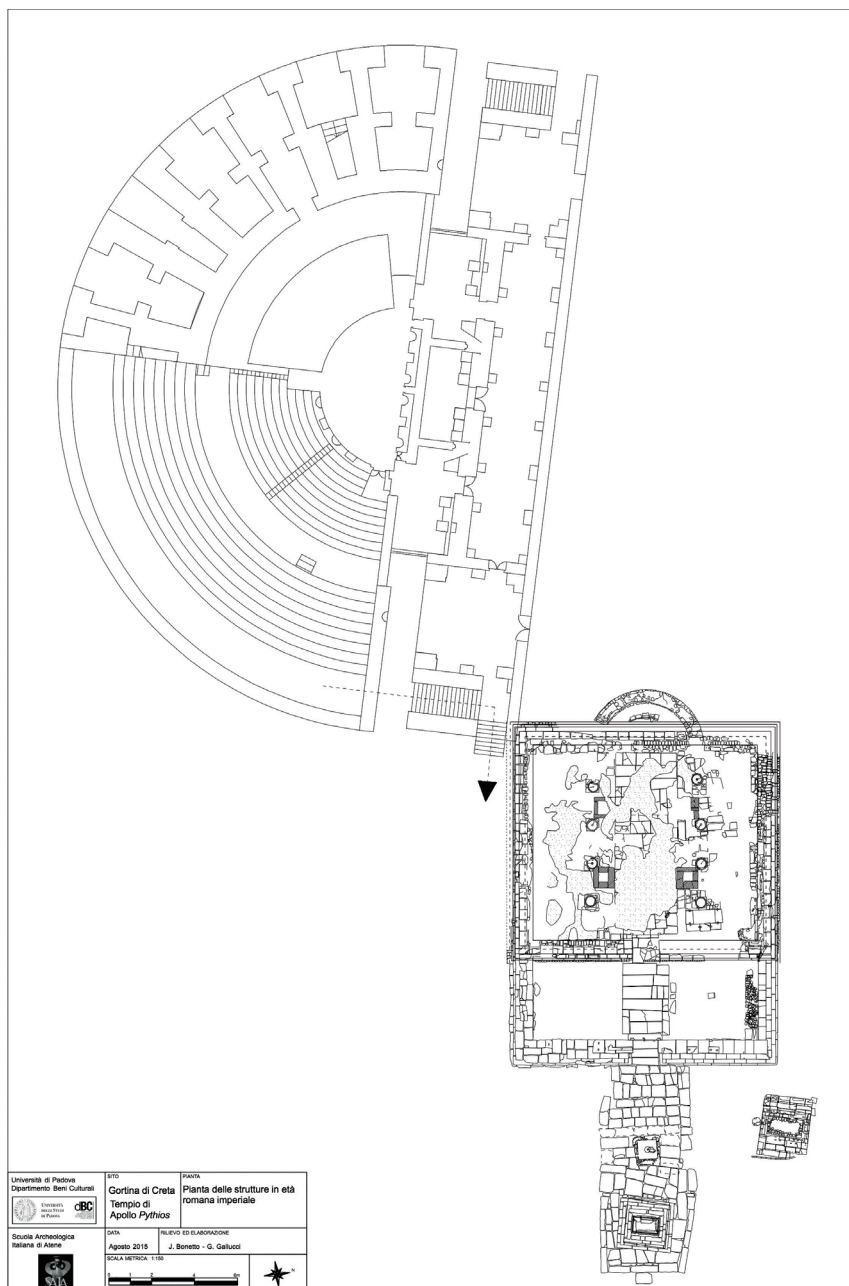
During the Early Imperial period, the sacred area was closely connected to the adjacent theatre, which was extensively investigated by the University of Padova between 2002 and 2013 (pl. 3). The recently concluded excavation<sup>13</sup> has revealed that the construction of the theatre took place in the first half of the 2nd century AD. A monumental staircase is situated on its eastern side, and by a processional path it connects the *cavea* and the *skene* building with the southern side of the Temple. As frequently occurred in several sanctuaries, the new theatre became part of the monumental apparatus of the place of worship and allowed the performance of religious activity, contests and perhaps political-legal activities of the *Koinon ton Kretaieon*.

The architectural layout of the Temple was completely transformed in the Middle Imperial period (pl. 4). According to clear evidence, the decision to cover the entire sacred space dates back to this phase. The Archaic blocks of the *krepis*, with their Archaic inscriptions, were dismantled and reused for the new outer walls; these were built over the Archaic perimeter walls, which were enlarged on each side in order to support the roof beams. Inside the *naos*, this roof was supported by a double row of four monolithic marble columns standing on attic bases. Together with the impressive roof went also the floor's resurfacing, realised in *opus sectile* in the central aisle and in some parts of the lateral aisles. Reliable evidence related to the chronology of this development is available. Two of the columns are engraved with the same inscriptions of Septimius Severus and Caracalla, dating back to the period between 211 and 217 AD<sup>14</sup> (*IC*, IV, 279 and 280; Di Vita 2010, 125). It is not completely certain, but at least possible, that the inscriptions were made when the columns were put into place, because the latter were originally part of another unknown complex and reused in the Temple.<sup>15</sup>

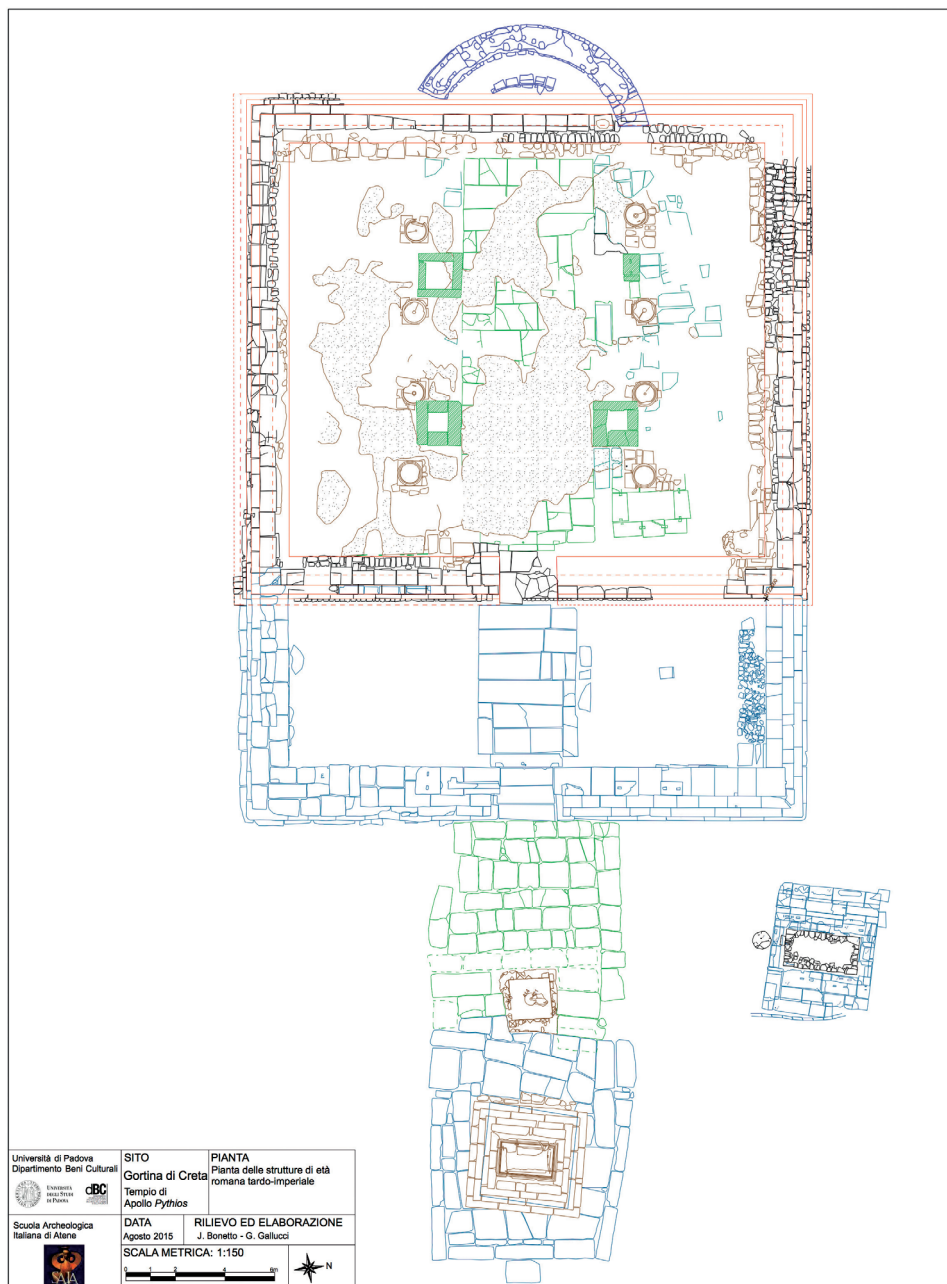
13 For the theatre, see the recent volume: Bonetto, Francisci & Mazzocchin 2019.

14 The first inscription mentions Septimius Severus as *theòs* and is therefore believed to have been written after his death; however, M. Guarducci (*IC* IV, 320) signals that this appellative is sometimes attributed to living emperors. The second inscription is related to Caracalla, who is called Germanicus Maximus. These elements support the dating of the inscription around 213 AD.

15 The texts are engraved on two of the eight columns reused to support the Temple roof. We cannot know whether the texts were engraved during the erection of the columns (in this case, the Temple roofing would date back to the period between 213-217



Pl. 3 : The Temple and its surrounding buildings: the theatre and the *heroon*



Pl. 4 : The Temple in the Archaic (red colour), Hellenistic (blue colour) and Early and Middle Imperial Roman (green, brown, violet colours respectively) phases, according to the University of Padova reconstruction

However, the stratigraphical data gathered from the recent excavations seem to confirm that the renovation of the Temple occurred in the first half of the 3rd century AD. It is also important to note that the recently concluded excavation of the nearby theatre suggested that a radical structural and functional reorganisation of that building should be dated to the same period (Bonetto, Francisci & Mazzocchin 2019).

The last phases of use of the Temple and its collapse appear more difficult to determine. However, we can state that the structural collapse was not preceded by a phase of neglect, abandonment or reuse of the construction materials, and further that it happened suddenly, as shown by the finding of marble and coating materials below the collapsed architectural elements. Therefore, the event was arguably connected to the well-known earthquake of 365 AD, when the impressive structure of the nearby theatre collapsed. The excavations of the Temple area showed that from the middle of the 4th century AD,<sup>16</sup> some newly constructed buildings started invading the court, the *pronaos* and the *naos* of the Temple, which therefore had lost their function, as they were no longer used for religious activity.<sup>17</sup>

The research carried out during the 2014-2016 excavation campaigns in the sanctuary complex provided new crucial information not only about the Temple itself, but also about the religious structures connected to the main building. The altar and the so-called “sacrificial column,” actually a fountain, have been re-evaluated.<sup>18</sup> At the same time the excavation of the *heroon*<sup>19</sup> has been undertaken. This structure, placed north-east of the main building (pl. 3), consists of large blocks and includes an inscription dating back to the Hellenistic period (*IC* IV, 311, n. 259). The large reused blocks enclose a smaller internal building, which is of rectangular shape and was realised with dried-assembled ashlar. Moreover, the inner core had its own external coating made of white-coloured gypsum alabaster slabs. The different techniques employed for the construction of the inner structure, along with its slightly different orientation, encourage us to ascribe its construction to a phase preceding the outside blocks, which belong to the Hellenistic structure. Although it was erected at an unknown time, it must precede

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AD), or before the columns reuse in the Temple (if so, the Temple roofing would have occurred some time during the 3rd century AD, but surely *post* 213 AD). Furthermore, we cannot exclude that the columns were erected before the engraving of the two inscriptions: in this case the Temple roofing would have happened *ante* 213 AD.

16 We would like to thank S. Costa (University of Siena) for these preliminary chronological data, the result of the analysis of ceramic materials from inhabited layers of the buildings erected after the Temple.

17 These buildings, which belong to a later phase, will be studied in collaboration with the University of Siena and Professor E. Zanini.

18 See for the column and its function: Bertelli in Bonetto *et al.* 2016, 52-53.

19 For a preliminary presentation of the new excavation data, see Bertelli 2016 and 2018. Previous notes in Di Vita 2010, 126-128 and Marginesu 2005, 55-57.

the 2nd century BC. Furthermore, our unsuccessful attempts to recover from the storerooms of the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion the human remains and related grave goods,<sup>20</sup> discovered during the 19th century excavation (Savignoni 1907, 234-235), permits only hypotheses to be posed about the buried person and the ritual burial in this heroic funerary structure (Bertelli 2016, 736-738). In addition to the small cultic buildings in the area in front of the Temple, a circular structure set inside a square feature will be the focus of our future research.<sup>21</sup>

Following these preliminary considerations on the recent investigations carried out at the Apollo *Pythios* sanctuary, it is clear that although a significant amount of new data has been collected, the original architectural layout and the precise evolution of the sacred area still leave some questions unanswered. Therefore, the historical reconstructions proposed so far need to be enhanced and examined more in depth. For this reason, further research is scheduled for the next years, with the purpose of extending the trial excavations, completing the analysis of the wall structures, and studying the materials unearthed during the stratigraphical excavations.

To conclude, it is important to emphasize that consistent parts of stratigraphy in the sanctuary of Apollo *Pythios* were left untouched by the 19th century excavations. These deposits will provide further insights and yield reliable information for interpreting this religious complex, which has always been considered a fundamental cornerstone of the city's history from its origins until the Roman Imperial period.

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20 Our warmest thanks go to S. Mandalaki and K. Athanasaki for supporting our research in the Gortyn warehouses and in the storage rooms of Heraklion Archaeological Museum.

21 The structure was brought to light in 2007 during the University of Siena excavations led by Prof. E. Zanini. For the excavation results see: Zanini *et al.* 2009.

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ΝΕΕΣ ΠΡΟΟΠΤΙΚΕΣ ΓΙΑ ΤΗΝ ΕΞΕΛΙΞΗ ΤΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΥ  
ΤΟΥ ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝΟΣ ΠΥΘΙΟΥ ΣΤΗ ΓΟΡΤΥΝΑ

JACOPO BONETTO, ANNA BERTELLI, EDOARDO BROMBIN,  
MARTINA COLLA, VALERIA DE SCARPIS DI VIANINO  
& MARIA CHIARA METELLI

Το Ιερό του Απόλλωνος Πυθίου στη Γόρτυνα (Μεσαρά) απέκτησε γρήγορα μεγάλη φήμη ανάμεσα στους μελετητές, κυρίως λόγω των αρχαίων επιγραφών που συλλέχθηκαν κατά τη διάρκεια των πρώτων ερευνητικών αποστολών. Λιγότερη προσοχή δόθηκε στα άλλα ευρήματα που αποκαλύφθηκαν κατά την ανασκαφή, καθώς και στη μελέτη των αρχιτεκτονικών φάσεων του κτηρίου.

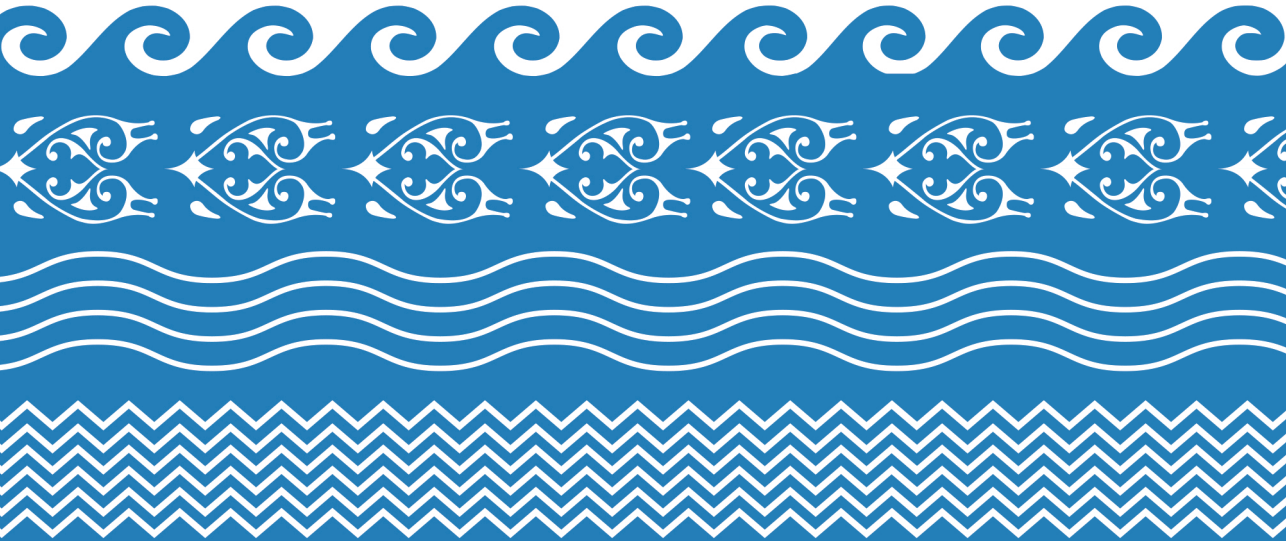
Η νέα έρευνα που εκπονήθηκε από το Πανεπιστήμιο της Πάντοβας, σε συνεργασία με την Ιταλική Αρχαιολογική Σχολή Αθηνών, συνέβαλε στην αναθεώρηση των ως τώρα γνωστών δεδομένων και στην ανασύσταση της οικοδομικής και λειτουργικής ιστορίας του ιερού καθ' όλη τη διάρκεια της ζωής του, από την Αρχαϊκή Εποχή έως την Ύστερη Αρχαιότητα. Στο άρθρο παρουσιάζονται τα αποτελέσματα των ανασκαφικών ερευνών που διεξήχθησαν το 2014 και το 2016 και επέτρεψαν τη συλλογή πολλών νέων στρωματογραφικών και χρονολογικών δεδομένων. Στην παρουσίαση συζητείται η κριτική ερμηνεία των συλλεχθέντων στοιχείων που οδηγούν σε μια αναθεωρημένη ερμηνεία του αρχιτεκτονικού πλαισίου του αρχαϊκού ναού, του ελληνιστικού πρόναου και του πρώιμου αυτοκρατορικού ναού.

Επίσης διατυπώνονται κάποιες παρατηρήσεις σχετικά με τις κοντινές δομές του ηρώου και του βωμού, η διαχρονική εξέλιξη των οποίων δεν έχει μελετηθεί έως τώρα, αποκαλύπτεται όμως ότι συνδέεται στενά με αυτήν του κυρίως κτηρίου λατρείας.



# ΑΡΧΑΙΟΛΟΓΙΚΟ ΕΡΓΟ ΚΡΗΤΗΣ 4

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