



## THE SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE GREEK HERITAGE

- The Society for the Preservation of the Greek Heritage was formed in 1975 .
- SPGH is a non-profit organization with a nationwide membership, dedicated to reintroducing modern audiences to the ideas and achievements of ancient Greece, and emphasizing the continuing relevance of these ideas to 21st-century society.
- Each year, we produce a series of seminars and lectures, inviting scholars from around the U.S. and the world to speak on topics related to the classics.
- SPGH has also collaborated with our Greek affiliate in Athens, Elliniki Etairia, on a number of restoration projects in Greece, including the Monastery of Osios Loukas, St. Catherine's Monastery in the Sinai, and the historic Plaka house.
- In 1997, SPGH played a major role in the repatriation of a set of stolen Mycenaean jewelry from the Aegean Bronze Age.

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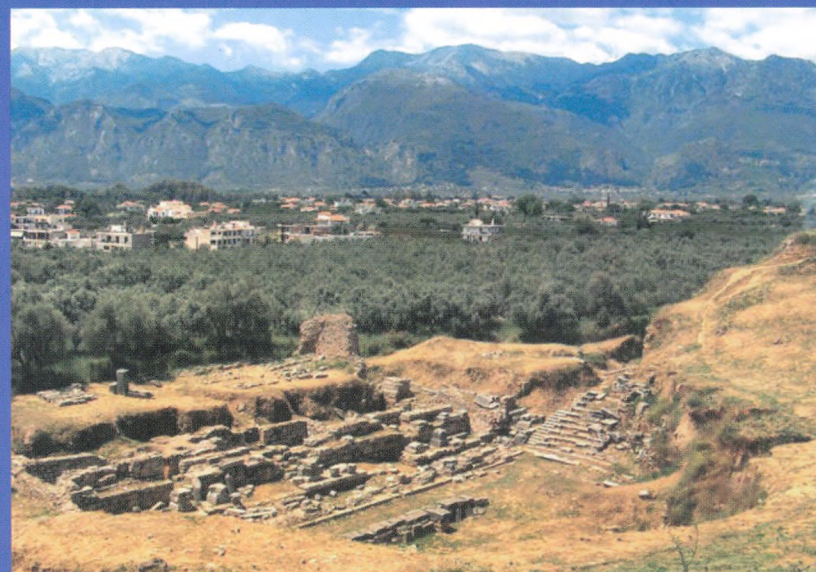
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## EXCAVATION & RESTORATION OF THE ANCIENT THEATER AT SPARTA



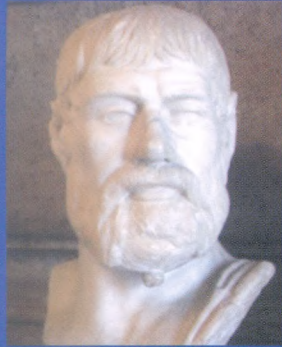
THEATER RUINS WITH VIEW OF TAYGETOS MOUNTAINS

THE SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE  
GREEK HERITAGE

WITH INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION



# THE SPARTA THEATER RESTORATION PROJECT



BUST OF PAUSANIAS

The ancient theater at Sparta, once the second-largest theater in all of Greece, has lain in ruin and disrepair, basically unexcavated, for thousands of years. It is situated with a breathtaking view of the mountains of Taygetos and the Byzantine site Mystra. Currently, the site is open and unprotected from looting or vandalizing. Excavations were started in certain parts of the site but were never completed.

SPGH and its partners are undertaking a project to breathe new life into this monument. We plan to first complete the previous excavations and then to restore the theater itself as well as the surrounding grounds. We have obtained the support of the Greek Ministries of Tourism and Culture, as well as the government of Sparta and various conservation groups in Laconia. We now ask for your help to ensure that this important monument of ancient Greece does not become forgotten.



AERIAL VIEW OF THE THEATER

# HISTORY OF THE SPARTA THEATER

- The theater was constructed in the Post-Hellenic period, probably in the first century B.C.
- It is located on the south slope of the Spartan acropolis in front of the temple of Artemis Ortheia.
- It probably replaced an earlier wooden structure.



CLOSE-UP OF THE THEATER



THE GRAND STAIRCASE

- During its heyday, it would have been used to hold musical and gymnastic concerts, as well as the famous flogging ordeal, known as *diamastigosis*.
- It could hold up to 16,000 guests on 48 rows, and was 140 meters long.
- The entrance to the theater was located on the east side, where remains of a grand staircase leading up to the frieze can still be seen.

- The walls of the theater were made of limestone and the center and stage were made of white marble, which was later taken to construct the Byzantine site Mystra.
- The writer Pausanias, in his Greek travel guide, mentioned that the Spartan theater was well worth seeing.



THEATER ENTRANCE





ELLINIKI ETAIRIA

HELLENIC SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT  
AND THE CULTURAL HERITAGE

28, Tripodon Street, Plaka - Athens 105 58 Greece Tel. 32 25 245, 32 26 693 Fax: 32 25 245

13<sup>th</sup> September 2006

Dear Adele Uphaus,

Fani Mallouhou, I and almost all the members of the Council of the Architectural Heritage had the opportunity to walk around the theatre in Sparta and the other monuments in its vicinity last Thursday. Even more significant at the ceremony for the restoration of the tenth century church in Tairia on Friday evening, the responsible Ephor for Byzantine Antiquities in Laconia was present and spoke very warmly. She also took us on a tour of some of the restored monuments in Monemvasia on Saturday morning.

On that occasion we had a substantive conversation in which she made clear that the Archaeological Service considers the Byzantine period houses currently occupying some of the area of the theatre to be of major archaeological significance because they date from a period, 8-11th century, for which we have almost no other surviving evidence. She made clear that it would be impossible to predict at this stage and before the process of excavation is completed whether they would agree to the remains of the houses being removed or whether they would insist on their being preserved in situ.

This is of course very important news in respect not of the archaeological but of the architectural side of the proposal. Fani Mallouhou and I are wondering whether we should not slightly divert our interest towards the general upgrading and enhancement of the archaeological site of the Acropolis of Sparta where the theatre is standing. Obviously this requires some discussion between us but I thought it was important you should know our news as soon as possible.

Furthermore please note that the meeting with Mr. Shahroukh Firouz can be arranged during the 19-21 Sep period.

With all good wishes.

Costa Carras

13 ΣΕΠ 2006 13:11

ΤΟ ΛΟΓΟΤΥΠΟ ΣΑΣ : ELLINIKI ETAIREIA  
Ο ΑΡΙΘΜΟΣ ΤΟΥ FAX ΣΑΣ : 00302103225240

| ΑΡΙΘ FAX ΠΡΟΟΡΙΣΜΟΥ | ΩΡΑ ΕΝΑΡΞΗΣ  | ΧΡΟΝΟΣ ΧΡΗΣΗΣ | ΘΕΣΗ ΣΕΛΙΔΑΣ | ΑΠΟΤΕΛΕΣΜΑ |
|---------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|------------|
| 01 0012023634658    | 13 ΣΕΠ 13:10 | 00'54         | ΑΠΛ 01       | OK         |

ΓΙΑ ΝΑ ΑΚΥΡΩΣΕΤΕ ΤΗΝ ΑΝΑΦΟΡΑ ,ΠΙΕΣΤΕ 'MENU' #04.  
ΚΑΙ ΕΠΙΛΕΞΤΕ ΟΧΙ ΜΕ ΤΟ '+' Η '-'. *(2+13, 4+27)*

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**Subject:** Sparta Project Proposal  
**From:** "SPGH" <classic.heritage@verizon.net>  
**Date:** Mon, 24 Jul 2006 16:14:47 -0400  
**To:** "Costas Carras" <colycarr@otenet.gr>  
**CC:** "Anna Lea" <a.lea@comcast.net>

ΓΙΑ ΕΙΡΑΝΗ  
FOR IRINI  
GRAZIA

Read to Irini Grams

Dear Mr. Carras,

We would like your opinion on the attached proposal regarding the Sparta theater restoration project, which was submitted to us yesterday by Prof. Dr. Joannis Mylonopoulos of the University of Erfórt, Germany. We are leaning towards selecting him as lead archaeologist, as he comes to us recommended by Prof. Dr. Angelos Chaniotis and is our most promising candidate to date. His proposal includes a comprehensive history of previous excavations at the site, and takes into account exactly what needs to be done both before the project starts and while it is ongoing. It also includes a very reasonable cost estimate over a five-year period.

We would appreciate your input regarding this proposal. The proposal is confidential at this point, as Prof. Mylonopoulos would first like to present it to the Ministry of Culture before it is made public. He plans to make his presentation for the Ministry in November. Thank you very much as always for your time and advice, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Adele

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Adele Uphaus

Program Director, SPGH

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Fax 202.363.4658

Mylonopoulos Proposal (7.24.06).pdf

Content-Type: application/pdf

Content-Encoding: base64



**Subject:** Sparta, EE and SPGH

**From:** Costa Carras <colycarr@otenet.gr>

**Date:** Thu, 04 May 2006 15:25:09 +0300

**To:** Anna Lea <a.lea@comcast.net>

Dear Anna,

Thank you for your message which I am passing on to Haris Kalliga, the President of the Committee of the Architectural Heritage, and Irini Gratsia at Elliniki Etairia (EE). The elements missing from your valuable message concern the substance of what actually is being proposed. The restoration of the Old Theatre requires a great deal of archaeological and architectural work and certain things that may be desirable may not be attainable, whereas other things that may be attainable may not be desirable.

A separate question which concern me as SPGH Chairman, is the amount of the donation. And any other information you may have on this potential project, if such is already available or as it becomes available, is of interest to me in my SPGH role, so please keep me fully advised.

Not surprisingly given your inability to meet me in Athens you have only limited information concerning the overall situation with the Ministry of Culture. I did not request - nor was I requested - to join in a meeting with Mr Voulgarakis. Had I been requested to attend however I would have come had it taken place while I was in Athens because Mr Voulgourakis needs to appreciate that human beings can meet and discuss constructively despite having differences on other issues. You certainly know EE's job is not just to help in the restoration of monuments - we are helping with or actually carrying out restorations on five at the present time - but also to fight against destruction of the heritage. Mr Zachopoulos was intimately involved with the destruction of the Roman Road in Verroia and EE has taken the issue to the Council of State where we have already won one (first) decision and another is pending. This occurred before the present Minister assumed office and he has doubtless been briefed by Mr Zachopoulos but has not yet had any opportunity to be briefed by us. No wonder he considers us "bad boys" but in fact it is Mr Zachopoulos who is the "bad boy" in this and indeed in other instances.

The close relationship between SPGH and EE - a different matter from my own chairmanship of the SPGH - suggests to me that quite apart from the "best advisers" you have undoubtedly tried to obtain - and I am delighted you are in touch with the US, British and German Archaeological Schools - EE should be among your (or better "our") advisers. This is precisely because for many years SPGH has not carried out work on the ground in Greece but has confined itself to activities in the US. As you well know I was originally disappointed by this decision but understand it was necessary under the circumstances and have greatly admired your initiative in organizing so many excellent activities. I am therefore now delighted SPGH is seeking again to do work "on the ground". Where Osios Loukas was concerned however this was done through EE - even though we had disagreements with the Ministry then as inevitably we do with the Ministry at all times - and I would anticipate the same awareness of EE's major role both in active conservation and in upholding conservation values, if necessary by press publications and court action, to be shown now. It would be tragic, and contrary to the fundamental intention when SPGH was founded, that SPGH and EE should be divided.

I hope your conclusion will be the same as mine, namely that there is no question of personal prestige involved but an important issue of coordination. We should try to achieve closer contact and more specifically on this particular issue. In principle it remains excellent news that SPGH is once again willing and able to do work on the ground, and I am delighted to have heard it.

Best wishes.  
Costa



**Subject:** Re: SPARTA Ancient Theater)

**From:** "Anna Lea" <a.lea@comcast.net>

**Date:** Tue, 2 May 2006 11:31:46 -0400

**To:** "Costa Carras" <colycarr@otenet.gr>

*P/s send to Haris Kalliga  
& Irini Gratsia*

Dear Costa

Thank you for your letter and your concern on the Sparta project. I would like to give you the story of how the SPGH got involved and its restrictions on its decisions as well as rights.

We were clearly told that there is a procedure that we have to follow in order that the Ministry will give us the go ahead with the restoration of the Old Theater. Following are the steps we had to follow: 1) Evidence of funds available 2) Find the best archeologist which KAS will approve. 3) The archeologist should be associated with a university.. He will then be the total manager who will provide his crew and will design\ a plan for our approval and as the reports come in payments will be forthcoming at the completion of the expected work at expected times. We will then ask our representative who lives in Sparta and is the President of GITIADA to confirm the completion of the work.. My visit in Sparta was to get to know the NOMARCHI, the MAYOR and the President of the GITIADA a group which has in the past tried to accomplish what we are doing now, but they have no funds!! We were clearly advised that we have to work and respect the local prominent officers as well as the local archeological Society.. We have done all that and we have the Green Light from the Minister to continue.. As I am writing now our lawyer will be meeting with Mr. Zacharopoulos the KAS president and the most powerful in this issue. Once we have his OK then we can discuss how ELLiniki Etairia could be involved. Unfortunately the date of our meeting with the Minister was changed the last minute and you could not attend.. But I was surprised to see the indifference of the Ministry when I mentioned your name.. In fact I sensed a hostility towards you (the boy who creates problems).. So your absence in fact would have perhaps damaged the results of the meeting. Don't forget that we have both being involved and have shown that for us the goals are more important than our selves..I am sure you will understand..And finally don't forget the donors are very important in this effort and I am happy to tell you that I am dealing with very good friends who trust and admire the SPGH.. At the present we are looking for the best archaeologist .. I am gathering the list and I will make sure that we get the best. I am working with both the British and the American school as well as the German Institute.. I have tried to have the best advisers and I will share with you the results .

I hope this letter will answer your questions and fears and I will appreciate your assistance and comments . All my best Anna

P.S. Please forgive the absence of paragraphing which pressure of time did not permit\

----- Original Message ----- From: "Costa Carras" <colycarr@otenet.gr>

To: "Anna Lea" <a.lea@comcast.net>

Sent: Tuesday, May 02, 2006 7:43 AM

Subject: (no subject)

Dear Anna,

Unfortunately I have not yet received the message you promised to send me re the theatre in Sparta so I could discuss it with our Committee for the Architectural Heritage this afternoon. Although we are missing an important opportunity to discuss the matter, please write to me about it the soonest possible.

With all good wishes.

Costa





# THE SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE GREEK HERITAGE

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April 9, 2006

Mr. Aris Anagnos  
8124 W. Third St.  
# 200  
Los Angeles, CA 90048

Dear Mr. Anagnos,

I am writing to let you know about an exciting new opportunity SPGH has been offered.

Earlier this year, SPGH president Anna Lea was approached by a couple, Mr. George Mercer and Dame Dr. Catherine Stamatacos-Mercer, about the possibility of helping them restore the Old Theater at Sparta. This project involves restoring the theater itself as well as the surrounding grounds, with the idea of building a bookshop and hotel that will increase tourism to the area. Since then, this possibility has developed into a concrete plan that we are almost ready to go ahead with.

On April 11, Anna will travel to Greece for two weeks to view the site of the theater and meet with the Greek Minister of Culture to discuss the particulars of this project. When she returns from her trip in late April, we hope to be able to inform you of further details about how the restoration will be carried out.

Anna has also been invited to a lunch meeting on Capitol Hill with the Greek Minister of Tourism, Her Excellency Mrs. Fani Palli-Petralia, before her departure for Greece. In this meeting, she plans to describe how the restoration of the theater as well as the grounds will be beneficial to the country by increasing tourism and interest in the area.

We have already found sponsors who are willing to support this project, and even better, SPGH will be able to keep 7 percent of the money donated to help us in the organization of our regular seminar and lecture series.

We are very excited about this opportunity to participate directly in the preservation of one of the monuments of classical Greece. As always, we welcome your comments, advice and input.

With best wishes,

Adele Uphaus  
Program Director

### Enclosure

*The Society for the Preservation of the Greek Heritage (SPGH) is a registered not-for-profit 501(c)3 corporation, tax exempt number 52-1058376. As no goods or services were provided in exchange for this donation, your contribution is tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law*



Αρχαιολογική Αρχαιότητα  
Αρχ. Οργάν

## The ancient Theater and the Akropolis of Sparta II

I would like to start by pointing out some factors that are important for an ambitious project such as the reconstruction of the Roman theater of Sparta. I mention only the reconstruction because I think that the mention of a complete excavation is pointless since the reconstruction is the priority. Thus excavation without the necessary work of reconstruction/preservation means more or less destruction of the monument. It is therefore important to point out that the parties involved in the project under discussion should realize that it is a lengthy and time consuming operation.

Having emphasized the importance of the reconstruction phase it should be mentioned that this phase will also absorb significant funds. I would also like to add that the phase preceding the reconstruction phase, i.e. that of the final study and proposal for the reconstruction will also be time consuming and it is also very difficult to set a definite chronological table for it.

The project will begin in 2010 when it is estimated that the excavation activity will have been completed. Excavation activity should begin in 2007 on the condition that a number of problems would have been solved and work schedules have been finalized so that under normal circumstances the deadline of 2010 should be realistic.

The difficulty in appointing a Project Manager can be overcome if his/her job description is clearly stated. If the main job of the Project Manager would be to oversee the project in connection with the funding, then the committee should appoint someone who has an expertise in this particular field. However if the main task of the Project Manager would be to focus on the actual hands on reconstruction phase that involves a very strong background in archaeology, archaeological field work and, most importantly, a very considerable experience in working with the Greek Public administration, ( i.e. Central Services of the Ministry of Culture and the local Archaeological Ephorates, as well as operators, agents, employees, workmen in both the public and private sphere) then a person with such qualifications as described above should be the right candidate for the position. Moreover I understand that the Project Manager should be someone who would be in a position to spend considerable amounts of time in Greece.

Another important matter that needs to be raised here is the relationship of all the parties involved in the project with the local archaeological Ephorates. Their participation in one form or another should certainly not be excluded. Already the Classical Ephorate acquired a new Director and the Byzantine will also have a new one early in 2007. The Ephorates are important because they have a daily presence in the archaeological site and have been in charge of it for many years. They have also experienced workmen and they know who else is capable in working in archaeological projects. Consequently apart from the fact that good collaborators would be something very important, there is also another important factor i.e. the proper service which could solve a lot of problems on the point and save money for the project through solutions they can offer. The experience of the Archaeologists of these Ephorates is great and any other who would have to spend a lot of time to adapt especially if they have never worked in Lakonia as Archaeologists. As I have mentioned this excavation is not academic pursuit to be done "at our leisure" for several years followed also by some years of study, but a task that should be completed in good time so that the rest of the work could proceed.





ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΕΤΑΙΡΕΙΑ

για την Προστασία του Περιβάλλοντος και της Πολιτιστικής Κληρονομιάς  
Τριπόδων 28, 10558 Αθήνα-Πλάκα, τηλ. 210 3225245, φαξ 210 3225240,  
[elet@ellinikietairia.gr](mailto:elet@ellinikietairia.gr), [www.ellinikietairia.gr](http://www.ellinikietairia.gr)

*Αποπεράτωση του έργου αποκατάστασης του ναού  
της Μεταμόρφωσης του Σωτήρος στο Αλεποχώρι Αττικής*

*Κυριακή 10 Σεπτεμβρίου 2006*

*Πρόγραμμα εκδήλωσης*

6 μ.μ. Εσπερινός-Θυρανοίξια ναού Σωτήρος  
6.30 μ.μ. Χαιρετισμοί - Ομιλίες  
7 μ.μ. Κέρασμα από τον Δήμαρχο Βιλλίων

(Πληροφορίες: τηλ. 210 3225245, εσ. 3, [sak@ellinikietairia.gr](mailto:sak@ellinikietairia.gr))

\*\*\*

Τα έργα αποκατάστασης έγιναν με την ευγενική χορηγία  
του **Ιδρύματος «Α. Γ. Λεβέντη»**,  
με την επίβλεψη του Συμβουλίου Αρχιτεκτονικής Κληρονομιάς  
της **ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗΣ ΕΤΑΙΡΕΙΑΣ** για την Προστασία του Περιβάλλοντος  
και της Πολιτιστικής Κληρονομιάς.

Η **1<sup>η</sup> Εφορεία Βυζαντινών Αρχαιοτήτων** του ΥΠΠΟ  
είχε την εποπτεία των έργων.



The collaboration with the services is crucial at least during the phase of the excavation and possibly would be better to participate. In September that you will arrive in Greece it is important to have a first meeting with the two Ephorates in order that both parts could set the collaboration terms.

As far as the appointment of the Director of excavation (i.e. the proposal to the Archaeological Service and the Ministry of Culture of a certain person) I suggest that it should be left aside and after the contacts in Greece have been realized and the talks have been fulfilled. In my opinion in this phase the major subject should be even on this topic an exchange of opinions with the Ephorates. In any case the person must have long experience on the subject and authority.

It is very important the fact that you had some contacts with the political Administration of the Ministry of Culture and the approval of the project, but the civil officers are those who are present and sometimes stay in their position longer than the political leadership. A good cooperation ought to ascertain the approval and good collaboration with the Ephorates, which will lead to the best results.

The project which is going to be undertaken, according to your good will, is a major event for Sparta and Spartan Archaeology, because it will be the first time a Spartan Archaeological site will be fully excavated, rescued and will be well known universally. It is understandable therefore that it is of great importance since via this approach there will be a rearrangement in the relations between the local society and the ancient monuments. Up to now local people had a vague concept of the ancient monuments or they were sometimes hostile to them, as Archaeologists and Archaeological Service have been an obstacle to their building of houses. Therefore it will be the first time a major restoration project will come true and it will be the first step for the reform of the Archaeological site.

All these have been mentioned in order to be understood that I follow an ancient Greek proverb "Don't run if you are in a hurry" [Σπεύδε βραδέως ] and I believe there must be great attention in all these first steps in order that the donors should not be disappointed. It is a unique chance to change the course of Spartan Archaeology and I would not like to see such an effort to fail. I strongly believe that it is better for us to start the task even a year later instead of starting it under conditions which will lead to an unsuccessful result.

Thank you for your consideration.

A. Themis



# Report on The Theater by Mr. Athanassios Themis

## THE ANCIENT THEATRE AND 'AKROPOLIS' OF SPARTA

The Roman theatre of Sparta constitutes an impressive monument of the so-called Akropolis of the city and as such holds great potential. The first phase of the construction of the theatre dates to the Late Hellenistic Period and comprises over 14.000m<sup>2</sup> and even today, although only partially excavated, is an attraction to visitors. Despite the partial excavation the remains of the monument, with a total width of 114m, is nevertheless impressive.

The cavea of the theatre was divided into two sections of which the lower section had originally, (according to the archaeological research of the British Archaeological School), 9 rows of seats, while the upper section housed 16. The theatre could hold 16,000 spectators and its elaborate stage was reconstructed several times during the Roman Period. The impressive cavea is supported by two equally imposing retaining walls at the two parodoi. The eastern retaining wall was covered during the Roman Imperial Times with inscriptions recording names of magistrates of Sparta. During the Byzantine Period the area of the cavea was covered by houses part of which have been revealed by the partial excavation of the monument.

### History of archaeological research

The excavations in the "Akropolis" area of Ancient Sparta begun at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup>c. (more precisely in 1892), when C. Meader and C. Waldstein of the American School of Classical Studies in Athens dug some trial pits in the area of the "Circular Building". Slightly later (1905-6), the British School at Athens started excavating activity in several parts of the ancient city. This revealed in the area of the Akropolis parts of the sanctuary of Chalkioikos Athena together with Late Roman buildings.

The British School also dug trial pits in the area of the theatre and the excavating activity in this area continued 1924-1928, conducted by A. M. Woodward, revealing during this period a considerable part of the theatre. In the 1930s the German archaeologist H. Bulle, focusing primarily on the skenotheke, continued the archaeological in the area of the theatre.

Archaeological research in the "Akropolis" area was resumed by the 5<sup>th</sup> Ephorate of Antiquities early in the 1960s with the Ephor at that time Chr. Christou. During this time, and aided by funds provided by the Archaeological Society, parts of a stoa with important finds came to light. Within such finds was found a bronze statue of natural size which is today exhibited at the National Archaeological Museum of Athens.

Excavating activity also continued in the area of the "Circular Building", notably next to it a Byzantine Church was revealed. Pits were also dug in the area of the Church of Christos Soter (the so called temple of Hosios Nikon), and at the temple of Chalkioikos Athena. During 1961-3, Christou removed earth from the orchestra of the theatre and in so doing revealed the lowest preserved rows of seats of the cavea together with other important finds.

Between 1973-1975 the then Ephor G. Steinhauer proceeded with important work. This included the arrangement of the area of the orchestra, the parodoi of the theatre and the Nymphaion which was built in the Late Roman Period in the area of the skenotheke. He also oversaw further earth removal and arrangement of the architectural members and inscriptions and the fencing of the archaeological site. During this work, new inscriptions came to light.



The British School at Athens resumed archaeological activity in the area of the "Akropolis" during 1988-1991 and with, during 1992-1998, trial pits in the area of the Roman stoa in the theatre area where the old trial pits (of 1924-1928) were mostly revisited in order to confirm conclusions. New limited in size trial pits were also dug in parts of the cavea and the stage (skene) and in the area of the skenothekē in order to date the monument more precisely.

#### **Archaeological Site and the Ancient Theatre - problems** **Actions of the Archaeological Service**

The ancient theatre can be viewed as a *de facto* part of the broader archaeological area of the "Akropolis" of Sparta. This area is generally problematic and in particular suffers from a lack of funding which, in turn, presents the visitor with an unrewarding picture of the site. The other main problem is that the land has not been fully acquired by the State resulting in restricted access to important parts of the archaeological site and to monuments where these have been fenced off by private individuals.

By contrast, the area of the theatre belongs entirely to the Ministry of Culture making matters straightforward and thus allowing work to commence immediately without complications.

Generally the area of the "Akropolis" of Sparta is not sufficiently organized and the parts of monuments which have been excavated have not undergone conservation treatment and thus run the risk of further damage.

Small scale conservation activity has previously been made to the aforementioned retaining walls of the theatre and the Ephorate of Antiquities periodically undertakes limited upkeep activity, such as regular weed and fauna removal - which often appears between the walls of the monuments potentially exacerbating existing damage. The area of the "Akropolis" is covered by both olive and large eucalyptus trees, the latter of which have strong and deeply penetrating roots that cause damage to both the visible monuments and those as yet unexcavated. During 1997 the 5<sup>th</sup> Ephorate of Antiquities removed the trees that had until that time grown within (thus hitherto disfiguring) the cavea and stage of the theatre.

The aim of the Ephoreia of Antiquities was always the creation of an archaeological worthy of visiting and that would appropriately reflect the historical significance of the city of Sparta. In view of this 2 separate projects were suggested to be included in the 3<sup>rd</sup> European Financial Support Packet (2000-06). In brief, namely:

- P1. The refurbishment; promotion; and restoration of the ancient theatre of Sparta. Original budget 650.000.000 drx (1.950.000EUR).

Including three sub-projects:

- 1.1 Completion of excavation of theatre. Cost: 100.000.000 drx (300.000 EUR);
- 1.2 Improvement, stability of retaining walls. Cost: 100.000.000 drx (300.000 EUR); and
- 1.3 Restoration of part of the cavea. Cost 450.000.000 drx (1.350.000 EUR)



The aim is that post works completion the theatre will be both fully accessible and easily comprehensible to the visitor .

- P2. Refurbishment; promotion; and conservation of the archaeological sites of Sparta and the broader area. Original budget 450.000.000 drx. (1.350.000 Euros)

**Unfortunately these two important proposals did not receive the funding and the state of the site remains unchanged.**

#### **Ancient Theatre of Sparta – future works**

- (1) In order to recover the original form of the theatre it is necessary to complete its excavation. The larger part of the cavea is covered by houses of the Byzantine Period. The excavation amounted according to an original estimate in 1997-98 to 300.000EUR. This amount is not definitive. The excavation is a slow and lengthy process subject to diverse factors to ensure its successful completion. Thus the estimated budget may not ultimately be the actual cost. Additionally, the ancient theatre of Sparta needs special attention since the excavation needs to take place in two phases, namely: (a) excavation of the Byzantine houses in which archaeologists specializing in Byzantine archaeology should be involved; and (b) phase in which the lower strata will be excavated and in which Classical archeologists will take the lead.
- (2) After Byzantine remains are duly studied, it will be necessary during the next stage of works to collect the ancient material from the theatre in order that they be examined together with previously discovered material thus enabling it to be possible to assess the finds in their entirety and in turn enabling the expert in restoration-engineering to have an informed opinion as to what extent the theatre can be restored.
- (3) It is also necessary to have foreseen the necessary funds for the conservation of the finds that will come to light and also those that will remain in situ.
- (4) Estimation of above mentioned works. Based on 2006 rates, I estimate 500.000EUR
- (5) With the completion of these works which will last, according to my estimate, 3 years, the study for the restoration of the theatre will begin. In this project many parties will be involved: archaeologists, architects and civil engineers, who will determine the form and extent of the restoration of the theatre. Such study will also determine the final cost of the restoration after having assessed the possibility of using ancient architectural members of the theatre together with the percentage of new material.
- (6) The final stage is the works of restoration (anastylosis) for which very few things could be said now because the previous stages will determine this work.

As one can easily understand the whole plan is very ambitious and should be very well organized. The main problem is not the excavation which, in our case, should be a meticulous but still routine work. We know almost everything about the ancient theater and we wait for the final publication from the last excavators. The main problem are the stages that follow and are the most important for the success of the plan and the idea a tourist or a citizen of



the town of Sparta should have about the site, after a day visit. **So a master plan is a priority** considering all the parameters mentioned in this text and probably a few others because otherwise time will be wasted and money and money without serious results.