

Agia Paraskevi of Arachamitai

Report on the 2012 Season

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Work continued on the Late Hellenistic rectangular building (RB I) at Agia Paraskevi, which we in 2011 had managed to show to be part of the sanctuary of Artemis Lykoatis (Paus. 8.36.7).¹ The main focus of the excavation was laid on the ca. 45x11 m large RB I, of which Rooms 5, 9 and 10 were uncovered. However, we also opened up trenches to the north and south of RB I thus verifying the existence of another rectangular building (RB II) further towards the north, the faint outlines of which were visible already on the magnetometer map of the area made back in 2006-2007. RB II seems on the basis of the magnetometer map to have measured ca. 32-34x12-13 m (FIG 1).

Room 5 of RB I was entered from the north through a door from a corridor that leads further to the west into Room 2. Pottery (e.g. parts of large amphorae, a lagynos, jugs, plates and kantahoroi) found below the collapsed roof dates to the late third or second century BC. Originally Room 5 included what later was separated from it and made to the corridor. During this first building phase the room had two doors, one leading to the west into Room 2 and another leading to the east. There was a bench in the southwest corner and a fireplace close to the centre that was connected through a terracotta channel to the southeast corner of the room. A crucible was found next to the channel (leading fresh air to the fireplace?) (FIG 2). The earlier phase of Room 5 can be dated to between the late fourth and mid-third century BC on the basis of a one-handler and a small bowl with projecting rim decorated with grooves and stamped ovuli.

Room 9 was entered through a door from the north. It was entirely covered by the collapsed roof, on top of which a small Doric capital was found in secondary position. A Laconian coin dating to between 48 and 35 BC verifies the date of the destruction of the building to the late first century BC. In the centre of the room there was a fireplace consisting

¹ For the previous work at the site, see *ArchDelt* 2006-2008 and 2010-2011 as well as B. Forsén, 'Artemis Lykoatis and the Bones of Arkas: Sanctuaries and Territoriality', in M. Melfi and O. Bobou (eds.), *Hellenistic Sanctuaries: Between Greece and Rome*, Oxford 2016, 40-62 (summarising the results of the excavations 2010-2012).

of stone slabs covered with a layer of burnt clay. The floor layer consisted of small stones mixed with compact soil. The layer between the floor and the collapsed roof contained e.g. a total of 16 coins and four loom-weights. Most of the coins date between the late third and late first century BC, although there also is a Megalopolitan coin dating to ca. 363-350 BC. The pottery range in date from the late fourth until the late first century BC, including e.g. two small black-glazed gutturi with stamped decoration (late fourth to early third century BC), one unguentarium, as well as a couple of early Megarian bowl and terra sigillata sherds.



Fig. 1. Ground plan of RB I, also showing the location of RB II, the water channel and the ditch.

Below the floor level of Room 9 another, an earlier cultural layer that predates the construction of RB I was found. The layer resembles the one excavated below Room 7 in 2011 and dates to between the mid-sixth and mid-fourth century BC. The pottery includes e.g. fragments of craters and different types of jugs and drinking cups, but also a miniature vessel, two loom-weights, two fragments of miniature votive wreaths of lead and the bezel of a bronze finger ring that was decorated with a flying bird.

Only part of Room 10, which is located at the eastern end of RB I, was excavated. Parallel with the southern wall of Room 10 runs the long west wall of the entrance to the courtyard building of Roman date. It had collapsed towards the west, partly covering the roof tile layer of RB I. Under the collapsed roof of Room 10 an area of hard burnt red clay was found that probably belongs to a fireplace. However, our work was focused on the part of the room located to the east of the fireplace. Close to the eastern wall the foot of a Hellenistic lime-stone perirrhanterion was found, standing up-side-down on the floor that consisted of gravel and packed soil. The layer between the roof and the floor contained e.g. a total of 14 coins, five loom-weights, five lamps and three unguentaria. The coins date from the mid-fourth century until 48-35 BC, the lamps in their turn to the third or second century BC.



Fig. 2. Room 5, view from the west. Visible are the fireplace in the centre, the terracotta channel leading to the southeast corner of the room, as well as the crucible.

Ca. 10 m to the north of RB I we uncovered a short stretch of the southern long wall of RB II, which is located parallel to RB I and thus assumedly contemporaneous with it. Along the southern side of RB II runs an open, ca. 30 cm wide water channel, bringing water from somewhere further to the east. It later turns 90 degrees towards the south, probably entering RB I somewhat to the east of Room 5, leading to the yet not excavated Room 6, which is located next to the bath installation in Rooms 1 and 4. Water that has not been used has been let out of the building into the deep ditch that ran parallel to its southern long wall.

The ditch on the south side of RB I had at a later stage on purpose been filled with broken pottery, other finds and food remains. This year we opened a new trench cutting

through the ditch, the bottom of which was found at a level of ca. 1.8 m below modern surface. The ditch was at the time of the construction of RB I ca. 1 m deep and had a width varying from 0.5 (at the bottom) to 1.5 m (at the level of the ancient surface). The fill itself consists of several different lenses, which have accumulated at different stages in the past. A detailed study of the finds will probably reveal the full history of the re-fill, which seems to take place roughly during the late second and early first century BC.

The trench cutting through the ditch was extended all the way up to the southern long wall of RB I, whereby the exit of the water channel described above was found. Next to RB I we also uncovered the remains of a floor level, which was located ca. 1.6 m below the present surface and probably extends below RB I. Just above the floor level and next to the lowermost part of the foundations of RB I we found the foot of a Late Archaic to Classical stemmed drinking cup and next to it a small complete terracotta figurine depicting a pigeon.