

Preface

This book is the first volume of the final publication of the Neolithic contexts and finds from the tell site of Platia Magoula Zarkou in western Thessaly which was excavated by Kostas Gallis from 1976 till 1990. The aim of this excavation was to prove a new chronology of the Late Neolithic period which had been suggested by the synchronous appearance of pottery of the early Late Neolithic Tsangli phase and the ‘final’ Late Neolithic so-called Larissa phase found at the nearby cemetery of Platia Magoula Zarkou. To this end, Kostas Gallis established a deep trench on top of the tell. This trench not only proved the newly suggested chronology in the settlement based on its pottery, but also produced an uninterrupted sequence of strata and finds from the earlier phases of the Middle Neolithic to the earlier phases of the Late Neolithic period. Furthermore, an open house model including nine figurines and three miniature objects (one movable, two fixed) became one of the most prominent finds of the Thessalian Neolithic period.

During the following years, Kostas Gallis published a number of articles on the new chronology based on the pottery sequence as well as on the house model. Furthermore, he invited French archaeologists in the ‘Mission Néolithique de Thessalie’ and German specialists, namely Jean-Paul Demoule and Gerwulf Schneider, to study and present the pottery of the site as regards its technological and stylistic development and its relation to other regions of Thessaly.

However, neither the excavation nor its finds were ever presented extensively in a final publication. For this, Kostas Gallis, director emeritus of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Larissa, and its vice-director Giorgos Toufexis invited Eva Alram-Stern to develop a project for the study and publication of the stratigraphy and the finds. From the very beginning it became clear that only an international team of specialists would be able to study these rich and diverse groups of material. Therefore, Eva Alram-Stern – assisted by Areti Pentedeka – applied to the Austrian Science Fund for a stand-alone project in 2014 with the aim of presenting Platia Magoula Zarkou as a type site on the edge of the Western Thessalian Plain and demonstrating cultural change during the 6th millennium BC, i.e. the Middle Neolithic and Early Late Neolithic periods of Greece.

The project was accepted in the same year (FWF P27159), and housed at the Austrian Archaeological Institute, Department of Prehistory & West Asian/Northeast African Archaeology of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, with the Ephorate of Antiquities of Larissa – Diachronic Museum of Larissa as the international cooperation partner. So, based on this financial support and provided with a splendid infrastructure in the laboratories of the Diachronic Museum of Larissa by the Ephorate of Larissa, Kostas Gallis, Giorgos Toufexis and Eva Alram-Stern were able to invite a number of specialists who were familiar with Neolithic Thessaly, or even with the material of the site itself, to contribute to the publication.

The stratigraphy and architecture of the excavated trench was studied by Giorgos Toufexis, who, as a member of the excavation team, had already been responsible for the excavation in the last excavation campaigns, and by Christos Batzelas. For this, Kostas Gallis entrusted them with all the excavation archives. Giorgos Dallas scanned the photographs and took aerial photos of the site. For the processing of the data, Christoph Schwall provided advice in several cases. The results were particularly fruitfully discussed with Kostas Gallis, Anna Stroulia, Stella Souvatzi, Rozalia Christidou, Catherine Perlès as well as Agathe Reingruber and Stella Kyrillidou. Financed by the Holzhausen Legate of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, the editing of the plans for publication was undertaken by Anja Buhlke.

The pottery was studied by Areti Pentedeka who – through her petrographic expertise – was familiar with the material from her dissertation. In addition to this chemical and geological approach, pottery was also studied for its typology and its technology, creating an important backbone for the

publication. For drawings and photography, Areti Pentedeka was assisted by Ourania Exarhou, Sarah Eder and Stephanie Horwath (Austrian Archaeological Institute). The drawings were partly financed by the Stiftung der Familie Philipp Politzer (Foundation of the Family Philipp Politzer) of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. For the chemical analyses, she was supported by Gerwulf Schneider and Malgorzata Daskiewicz. Experimental firing of grey on grey ware was carried out by Loe F. H. C. Jacobs. Very soon it became clear that this part of the project was too large to be published together with the other finds and findings in one volume. Therefore, we decided to present it in a separate volume.

As to the tools, the chipped stone tools were analysed by Catherine Perlès (CNRS – Centre national de la recherche scientifique), who was already part of the French team which had studied the material in the 1980s, as well as by Lygeri Papagiannaki for use-wear analysis. Lygeri Papagiannaki's work in Larissa was supported by a grant from the UMR (unités mixtes de recherche) 7264 (CEPAM – Cultures et Environnements – Préhistoire, Antiquité, Moyen Âge). Catherine Perlès' stay in Larissa in 2016 was funded through the stand-alone project Platia Magoula Zarkou (PMZ) of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, while her trips in 2017 and 2018 were facilitated by grants from her laboratory, the UMR 7055. The respective laboratories supported not only the fieldwork, but also all the work done before and after this. Sylvie Beyries accepted to come to Larissa twice to discuss her determinations with Lygeri. Niccolò Mazzucco studied the materials with regard to their use as agricultural tools and most generously shared all his observations with the team. In addition, chemical analyses executed by Michael Brandl (Austrian Archaeological Institute) in cooperation with the University of Graz allowed a closer insight into the provenance of radiolarites.

The macrolithic (or ground stone) assemblage was analysed by Anna Stroulia with funding from the PMZ grant of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. Elsa Zilou expertly cleaned the surfaces of several tools and Rania Exarhou did the drawings. Vasilios and Margarita Melfos identified the macrolithic raw materials and addressed geology-related questions. Vasilios and Margarita Melfos, Michael Brandl, Giorgos Toufexis, Christos Batzelas, and Matina Karageorgiou participated in the raw material surveys. Giorgos Toufexis provided constructive feedback on earlier versions of the macrolithic chapter. Michael Strezewski helped with editing and offered technical support, while María Antonia Negrete Martínez put together the illustrations. Last but not least, Christos Batzelas ungrudgingly dealt with myriad stratigraphy-related questions and solved many practical problems.

The analysis of the bone artefacts was carried out by Rozalia Christidou at the Diachronic Museum of Larissa (2015 and 2017), and at the Wiener Laboratory of the American School of Classical Studies in Athens (2017 and 2019). Panagiotis Karkanas and Dimitris Michailidis provided access to and helped with the new Wiener Laboratory facilities.

The clay tools were studied by Eva Alram-Stern, and the textile tools were analysed in the course of a dissertation project by Christopher Britsch (Austrian Archaeological Institute). Much discussion on this subject came from Christoph Schwall (Austrian Archaeological Institute). The drawings and photos were arranged by María Antonia Negrete Martínez.

Eva Alram-Stern was privileged to be entrusted with the analysis of the figurines, including the house model. For this, she was supported by a digitised recording of the figurines made by Mario Börner (Austrian Archaeological Institute) on a portable 3D scanner. The drawings and photos were processed by Mario Börner and David Blattner and put together for publication by María Antonia Negrete Martínez. Argyris Fassoulas and Nektaria Alexiou shared their unpublished works on Thessalian Neolithic figurines, and Nancy Krahtopoulou (Ephorate of Karditsa) provided her with unpublished information on figurines from her surveys. Furthermore, Giorgos Toufexis, Catherine Perlès and Tracey Cullen discussed this chapter with her extensively and enabled her to take a fresh look at the material. Fruitful discussions about the house model and the architecture of the site inspired the Ephorate of Larissa to produce a short film disseminating a narrative on the making and interpretation of the house model. The film was awarded the First Prize in the international contest 'Museums in Short' 2020.

Nina Kyparissi, who had already included the ornaments in her dissertation, took responsibility for publication of the same. With the help of Giorgos Toufexis and Christos Batzelas, the ornaments were located in the plans and separated by phases. Additionally, Christos Batzelas produced drawings of the ornaments, and Rania Exarhou undertook their digital transformation. Giorgos Dallas, the photographer of the Ephorate of Larissa, photographed the ornaments with sensitivity and respect.

These studies were supplemented by summarising chapters by Paul Halstead on the economy and by Stella Souvatzi on the society of the site in relation to its surroundings.

Chronology is one of the backbones of this project. Consequently, the project was supplemented by radiocarbon dating of the stratigraphy of the site, financed by the Institute of Aegean Prehistory and the Dr. Anton Oelzelt-Newin'sche Foundation of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. The data were processed at the Klaus-Tschira-Archäometrie-Zentrum at the Curt-Engelhorn-Zentrum Archäometrie in Mannheim by Ronny Friedrich, and Bernhard Weninger processed them according to his Gaussian Monte Carlo Wiggle Matching program. In addition, Agathe Reingruber shared with us her results on the old data from the cores extracted in the course of the topographic studies by Tjeerd van Andel.

While the main aim of the Science Fund project was the publication of the finds, for the final publication, research was extended to the geological history of the area as well as to the topography of the area around the tell. The geology of the Peneiada was studied by Riccardo Caputo and his team. In order to improve our knowledge on the composition of the Peneiada plain, a 61m-deep bore hole was drilled close to the Peneios River, financed by the Dr. Emil Suess Legacy of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. The prehistoric topography of the tell had already been studied by Tjeerd van Andel in the 1990s. To gain a better insight into the activities around the tell, a geophysical prospection project was undertaken, directed by Apostolos Sarris (Digital Humanities GeoInformatics Lab, Archaeological Research Unit (ARU), Department of History and Archaeology, University of Cyprus), under the auspices of the Ephorate of Trikala and financed most generously by the Holzhausen Legacy of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. For this, we are most grateful to the Ephorate of Trikala and Ephor Krystallia Mantzana for the permit and her most generous help with the geophysical prospection.

In November 2017 the entire team met at the Austrian Archaeological Institute in Vienna and discussed their raw manuscripts. This workshop was the backbone for bringing together the data and results of the various specialists. We thank the Institute, especially Barbara Horejs, for hosting the publication team.

In consequence, our thanks go to the sponsors of this project, as well as all the collaborators on this project who made it possible to have this book published. Our special thanks go to the current director of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Larissa, Stavroula Sdrolia, and her predecessor, Anthi Batziou, for enabling this project in general and especially for providing us with a large working space in the restoration workshops of the Diachronic Museum of Larissa for the duration of the entire project.

Giorgos Toufexis was responsible for the administration of the project in Larissa, for the applications necessary for the various permits, and for the cooperation with the Ephorate. Christos Batzelas inventoried the finds and selected them for the specialists. Both of them were involved in any discussion of the finds as regards their stratigraphic or horizontal contextualization. Furthermore, they were the ones who gave constructive feedback to all the specialists and who helped with all their problems and questions. Christos Batzelas in particular was a constant help to all collaborators during the whole project, and without him the project would never have come to a successful end. Therefore, the whole team offers its warmest thanks. All of us appreciate what he did for the project and for us. In addition, we are most grateful to the excavation teams and the personnel of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Larissa, particularly the conservators and the guards of the Diachronic Museum.

Furthermore, we would also like to thank members of the Department of Prehistory & West Asian/Northeast African Archaeology of the Austrian Archaeological Institute, first of all its director Barbara Horejs for her support of the project, as well as Mario Börner and Christoph Schwall, for their help in technical issues.

Finally, we are grateful to María Antonia Negrete-Martinez and Anja Buhlke for preparing several parts of the illustrations for publication, to Nicola Wood for native speaker correction of the texts as well as to Jörg Weilhartner and Ulrike Schuh for final editing of the text.

Vienna – Larissa, 1 June 2021

Eva Alram-Stern
Kostas Gallis
Giorgos Toufexis



Map 1 Map of Greece, showing the sites mentioned in the text (A. Buhlke)

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| 1 Platia Magoula Zarkou/Pref. Trikala | 23 Agiopigi/Pref. Karditsa | 44 Vasilis/Pref. Larissa |
| 2 Koutsaki Magoula/Pref. Trikala | 24 Orgozinos/Pref. Karditsa | 45 Zoodochos Pigi/Pref. Larissa |
| 3 Theopetra Cave/Pref. Trikala | 25 Prodomos 1/Pref. Karditsa | 46 Chalkiades 2/Pref. Larissa |
| 4 Kephalovryso Magoula/Pref. Trikala | 26 Prodomos 2/Pref. Karditsa | 47 Zappeio 5/Pref. Larissa |
| 5 Damasi 4/Pref. Larissa | 27 Prodomos 3/Pref. Karditsa | 48 Astritsa/Pref. Karditsa |
| 6 Argissa (Dendra 1)/Pref. Larissa | 28 Makrychori/Kambos area/ Pref. Karditsa | 49 Sykeon Magoula/Pref. Karditsa |
| 7 Otzaki (Dendra 2)/Pref. Larissa | 29 Myrine-Ag. Varvara/Pref. Karditsa | 50 Aliphaka Magoula (Kastro 1)/ Pref. Larissa |
| 8 Arapi (Giannouli 1)/Pref. Larissa | 30 Ag. Theodoros-Voulgarolakka/Pref. Karditsa | 51 Koilada 1/Pref. Larissa |
| 9 Mezourlo, Larissa/Pref. Larissa | 31 Paliouri/Pref. Karditsa | 52 Mandra/Pref. Larissa |
| 10 Larissa 2 (Neraida)/Pref. Larissa | 32 Mavrachades-Tataria/Pref. Karditsa | 53 Mesorachi 1/Pref. Larissa |
| 11 Souphli (Larissa 9)/Pref. Larissa | 33 Mavrachades/Pref. Karditsa | 54 Magoulitsa (Larissa 7)/Pref. Larissa |
| 12 Makrychori 2/Pref. Larissa | 34 Invrou Pigadi Magoula/ Pref. Phthiotida | 55 Galini 1/Pref. Larissa |
| 13 Makrychori 1/Pref. Larissa | 35 Koutroulou Magoula/Pref. Phthiotida | 56 Chalki 3/Pref. Larissa |
| 14 Rachmani (Makrychori 4)/ Pref. Larissa | 36 Theophani Magoula/Pref. Karditsa | 57 Chalki 1/Pref. Larissa |
| 15 Sykourion/Pref. Larissa | 37 Megalo Pazaraki/Pref. Karditsa | 58 Amygdali 1/Pref. Larissa |
| 16 Deleria 1/Pref. Larissa | 38 Margarita Magoula/Pref. Karditsa | 59 Palioskala/Pref. Larissa |
| 17 Ambelonas, Sofades/Pref. Karditsa | 39 Sofades/Pref. Karditsa | 60 Chatzimissiotiki (Stefanovikeio 5)/ Pref. Magnesia |
| 18 Ag. Sophia/Pref. Larissa | 40 Tzani Magoula/Pref. Karditsa | 61 Karamourlar Magoula (Stefanovikeio 2)/Pref. Magnesia |
| 19 Domeniko 1/Pref. Larissa | 41 Rizava Magoula/Pref. Karditsa | 62 Rizomylos 2/Lake Karla/ Pref. Magnesia |
| 20 Palaiochori Magoula/Pref. Karditsa | 42 Tsangli/Pref. Larissa | |
| 21 Votanikos Kipos/Lake Plastiras/ Pref. Karditsa | 43 Achilleion/Pref. Larissa | |
| 22 Zaimi/Pref. Karditsa | | |



Map 2 Map of Thessaly, showing the sites mentioned in the text (A. Buhlke)

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| 63 | Visviki Magoula (Velestino 4)/ Pref. Magnesia | 92 | Limnochori II/western Macedonia | 119 | Elateia/Phthiotida |
| 64 | Omvria, Velestino/Pref. Magnesia | 93 | Pontokomi-Souloukia/western Macedonia | 120 | Chaironeia/Boeotia |
| 65 | Thermokipia, Mavrovouni/ Pref. Magnesia | 94 | Varemenoi Goulon/western Macedonia | 121 | Ag. Petros/northern Sporades |
| 66 | Sesklo/Pref. Magnesia | 95 | Megalo Nisi Galanis/western Macedonia | 122 | Cyclops Cave/northern Sporades |
| 67 | Dimini/Pref. Magnesia | 96 | Grevena region/western Macedonia | 123 | Skoteini Cave, Tharrounia/Euboea |
| 68 | Kazanaki near Volos/Pref. Magnesia | 97 | Piges Koromilias Cave (Kastoria)/ western Macedonia | 124 | Saliagos near Antiparos/Cyclades |
| 69 | Petromagoula/Pref. Magnesia | 98 | Dispilio/western Macedonia | 125 | Zas Cave, Naxos/Cyclades |
| 70 | Pefkakia/Pref. Magnesia | 99 | Paliambela/central Macedonia | 126 | Ftelia, Mykonos/Cyclades |
| 71 | Pyrasos/Pref. Magnesia | 100 | Makriyalos/central Macedonia | 127 | Akrotiri, Santorini/Cyclades |
| 72 | Belitsi Magoula/Pref. Magnesia | 101 | Mesimeriani/central Macedonia | 128 | Yali/Dodecanese |
| 73 | Perdika 1/Pref. Magnesia | 102 | Angelochori/central Macedonia | 129 | Kitsos Cave/Attica |
| 74 | Perdika 2/Pref. Magnesia | 103 | Apsalos/central Macedonia | 130 | Ag. Kosmas/Attica |
| 75 | Karatsadagli/Pref. Magnesia | 104 | Avgi/central Macedonia | 131 | Aegina-Kolonna/Saronic Gulf |
| 76 | Zerelia/Pref. Magnesia | 105 | Koronia/central Macedonia | 132 | Corinth/Corinthia |
| 77 | Almyros 2, Ambelia/Pref. Magnesia | 106 | Olynthus/central Macedonia | 133 | Tsougiza, Nemea/Corinthia |
| 78 | Almyriotiki/Pref. Magnesia | 107 | Heliotopos, Langada/central Macedonia | 134 | Franchthi Cave/Argolid |
| 79 | Pournarolakka/Pref. Magnesia | 108 | Prophitis Langada/central Macedonia | 135 | Asine/Argolid |
| 80 | Kamara/Pref. Magnesia | 109 | Sosandra/central Macedonia | 136 | Lerna/Argolid |
| 81 | Stournareika/Koziakas Mountains/ Pref. Karditsa | 110 | Stavroupoli, Thessaloniki/central Macedonia | 137 | Berbat-Limnes Survey Findspot 39/ Argolid |
| 84 | Servia/western Macedonia | 111 | Vasilika/central Macedonia | 138 | Mycenae/Argolid |
| 85 | Nea Nikomedea/western Macedonia | 112 | Toumba Thessalonikis/central Macedonia | 139 | Tiryns/Argolid |
| 86 | Mikro Nisi Akrinis/western Macedonia | 113 | Thermi B/central Macedonia | 140 | Klissoura Cave/Argolid |
| 87 | Archontiko, Giannitsa/western Macedonia | 114 | Dikili Tash/eastern Macedonia | 141 | Ayioryitika/Arcadia |
| 88 | Ag. Christophoros/western Macedonia | 115 | Sitagroi/eastern Macedonia | 142 | Limnes Cave/Arcadia |
| 89 | Kleitios I and II, Pref. Kozani/western Macedonia | 116 | Promachonas-Topolnica/eastern Macedonia | 143 | Kouphovouno/Laconia |
| 90 | Koromilia/western Macedonia | 117 | Makri/Thrace | 144 | Alepotrypa Cave/Laconia |
| 91 | Kremasti Koilada (Toumba)/western Macedonia | 118 | Paradeisos/Thrace | 145 | Drakaina Cave/Kefallonia |
| | | | | 146 | Kastritsa/Epirus |
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| | | | | 150 | Kommos/Crete |
| | | | | 151 | Mallia-Quartier Mu/Crete |

