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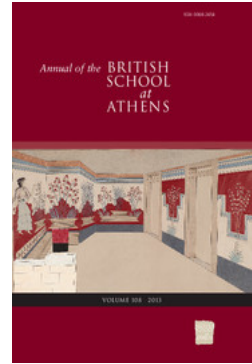
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THE DISCOVERY OF ELEUTHERNA: FROM THE FORMATION OF THE MODERN CRETAN STATE TO HUMFRY PAYNE'S EXCAVATIONS (1899–1929)¹

*For the centenary of excavations
at Eleutherna (1908–2008)*

INTRODUCTION

For the general public, the history of archaeology is largely a sequence of fascinating discoveries of hidden treasures, as well as of unravelling of primeval mysteries.² For the archaeologist, however, it is mostly an account of the complex development of a section of antiquarianism into a historical science, as well as a voyage of self-discovery.³ By the demonstration that scholars are not simply rediscovering the past, but also creating it, this field of research is particularly instructive in showing the shifting character of disciplinary practices and their connection with broader socio-political developments. It is largely for those qualities that the history of archaeological research has become a flourishing field of study in the last two decades.

Despite its widespread and increasing popularity, however, the subject is largely left out of the agenda and publication strategy of many archaeological projects centred on the Aegean. For example, the long, impressive series of publications—produced mostly by foreign schools—on major archaeological sites in Greece hardly elaborate on the scholarly interest those sites attracted before they were systematically excavated; and when they do elaborate, this hardly involves archival research.⁴ There are undoubtedly notable exceptions to this rule: for example, archival investigation is customary for scholars working in Knossos,⁵ while Vincenzo La Rosa's work at Phaistos includes a systematic study of the papers and works of Federico Halbherr, who instigated the exploration of the site (e.g. La Rosa 2000a-c; 2000–1; 2002; 2004; 2006). Similarly, Iannis Sakellarakis linked the resumption of excavations in the Idaean Cave with the study and publication of an existing corpus of late nineteenth-century

¹ I thank the British School at Athens for granting me permission to study and publish archival information on Payne's excavation at Eleutherna. I am profoundly grateful to the School's archivist, A. Kakissis, for facilitating my research and providing invaluable help and advice. The aid that several scholars kindly offered is acknowledged where appropriate. I also owe a debt of gratitude to the *Annual's* Editor and referees, as well as to Professors N. Stampolidis and P. Themelis for their comments and suggestions on this article. I take the opportunity to express my gratitude to the latter two scholars for the field training I gained in their excavations at Eleutherna. I also thank Professor Stampolidis for inviting me to collaborate in the study and publication of the Early Iron Age necropolis he is excavating at the site.

Special abbreviations:

BSA CR-L = BSA Corporate Records—London

BSA CR-A = BSA Corporate Records—Athens

JP = J.D.S. Pendlebury Personal Papers

² See e.g. Ceram 1954; Bacon 1976; Stiebing 1993.

³ Daniel 1967, 1981a, 1981b; Trigger 1989, 2006; T. Kalpaxis 1990, 11; 1993, 11–22; Stiebing 1993; Morris 1994; Bahn 1996; Renfrew 1996; Schnapp 1997; Hamilakis 1999, 2000b.

⁴ See e.g. Stillwell 1932, 126–33 for Corinth; Shaw and Shaw 1995, 1–14 for Kommos. Gallois 1910 (on the cartography of Delos) is a notable exception.

⁵ Out of a long and impressive list of references, I single out an early, even if controversial attempt to reconstruct archaeological contexts on the basis of extensive archival research: Palmer and Boardman 1963.

correspondence referring to the site and its antiquities (Sakellarakis 1998). It is often the case, however, that major publications, even those resulting from modern projects that adopt a diachronic and interdisciplinary perspective, involve no original archival research on the circumstances, aims, and politics of past investigations. Instead, they mostly rely on published information briefly listed in a couple of pages of their 'Introduction'.⁶

This state of affairs also applies to the major archaeological project that the University of Crete runs at Eleutherna, an ancient city located in central-west Crete and systematically excavated since 1985.⁷ The project has contributed immensely to our knowledge of the history of the city, the island, and the Aegean, as well as to the understanding of settlement and socio-political developments throughout a long period, from the beginning of the Bronze Age to the Medieval era (Stampolidis 2004a). Nevertheless, the project has paid limited attention to the ensuing periods, when the site supposedly dwindled into insignificance (A. Kalpaxis 2004, 115; Themelis 2004, 70–1).⁸ The present study, which focuses on the history of archaeological investigations at Eleutherna from 1899 to 1929, therefore deals with the later part of a long period for which little is known about the site. Previous references to early work in Eleutherna are brief, mostly repeat basic information, and occasionally include minor errors.⁹ It is symptomatic of the poor state of research on this subject that hitherto the strong Italian interest in the antiquities of Eleutherna has not been systematically charted, while Humfry Payne's excavations have received only limited attention. Accordingly, the present study aims at demonstrating the appeal that the ancient site exercised upon some of the pioneers of Cretan archaeology, describing the aspirations and efforts to excavate at Eleutherna, as well as discussing the monuments and finds identified and investigated, and their relation to others discovered in the last decades by the University of Crete. It also sheds important light on the research agenda of the British School in the 1920s and the practical side of a foreign excavation in Greece at the time. This study forms part of a larger project concerned with the aims and scope of pioneering work on Cretan archaeology of the historical period (Kotsonas 2005, 324–6; forthcoming a and b), which has generally been overshadowed by studies on early research in Minoan sites, particularly the clash of interests over Knossos.¹⁰

Ongoing research, primarily by La Rosa, on the correspondence of F. Halbherr forms the

⁶ See e.g. Cherry 1982, 10–13; Cherry *et al.* 1991, 63–6; Jameson *et al.* 1994, 3, 7–9; Mee and Forbes 1997, 2; Watrous *et al.* 2004, 3–6; Hayden 2004, 1; Haggis 2005, 2–3. In the case of the Berbati-Limnes publication, the reader interested in the history of past research is referred to a brief account published in an earlier article (Wells 1996, 15 n. 14). A more comprehensive study appears in Davis 1998, ch. 3.

⁷ The site, which is centred on the Prines hill, has been divided in three sectors, each excavated by a team from the University of Crete. The excavation of sector I, which covers the eastern slopes of the hill, was assigned to Professor P. Themelis; sector II, the top of the hill, was allocated to Professor T. Kalpaxis; and sector III, the western slopes, was assigned to Professor N. Stampolidis. Sectors II and III also cover parts of an area lying west of the Prines hill.

⁸ The picture of a site in demise is, however, hard to reconcile with the long resistance it posed to the

Venetians in 1364–6/7, which ended in its destruction and abandonment (Kotsonas forthcoming a).

⁹ A fairly common error regards dating Payne's excavation at Eleutherna to 1928, instead of 1929 (Themelis 1992, 91; 2004, 46; Momigliano 2002, 283 n. 86). Another, rather macabre error is found in Medwid's note that the British excavations at Eleutherna in 1929 were co-directed by D. G. Hogarth (Medwid 2000, 231), an important archaeologist and former Director of the British School at Athens, who, however, had died nearly two years earlier, as mentioned elsewhere in the same volume (Medwid 2000, 159). It was his son, W. Hogarth, who joined Payne's dig as an assistant (see below).

¹⁰ References on the clash are collected in Momigliano 2002, 268 n. 27. A series of publications discuss early Italian (Rizzo 1984; La Rosa 1990; Rocchetti 1995; Rizza 1995; Palermo 2001) and British (Coldstream 2000; Paton 2000) explorations of Cretan sites of the first millennium.

basis of the first part of the present study; the second draws largely on unpublished papers kept in the archives of the British School at Athens.¹¹ These documents provide surprisingly rich, even if unsystematic information on early research at Eleutherna. Much remains, however, to be located, including the notebooks from Payne's excavation at the site and the actual finds. Although greatly assisted by a number of scholars, to whom I am deeply thankful, my search for these items proved largely fruitless. The excavation notebooks were not in the archives of the British School at Athens, where all surviving documentation for Payne's later excavations at Perachora is kept, nor can they or any relevant material concerning Eleutherna be found in the Archaeological Museum of Rethymno or the Stratigraphical Museum at Knossos, whereas the archive of the Herakleion Museum has not been accessible.¹² The quest for the discovery of the notebooks in the United Kingdom was also unsuccessful. It is unlikely that M. Hartley, Payne's assistant in Eleutherna, took the notebooks to Britain, and no relevant material was traced in the archives of Girton College, Cambridge, where she was a student at the time she excavated in Eleutherna, or in the archives of Somerville College, Oxford, where she was a Classics tutor between 1934 and 1965.¹³ Moreover, the artefacts found by Payne are apparently neither in the museums of Herakleion, Rethymno, and Chania, nor in the Stratigraphical Museum at Knossos.¹⁴ Because of these lacunae, the following account can only outline the history of archaeological research in Eleutherna in 1899–1929. The purpose of this work is to stimulate scholarly interest and eventually lead to the identification of more evidence on early archaeological research at Eleutherna.

In another publication (Kotsonas forthcoming a), I discuss the modern discovery of Eleutherna, including visits by travellers from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century, efforts of cartographers active during those centuries to identify the site's location, and manifestations of the interest that some pioneer archaeologists developed in the site. The year 1899 has been chosen as the closing point of that study and the beginning of the present one because of its significance for the political history of Crete, as well as for the history of archaeological research on the island. Just before the end of 1898, the Ottoman army left the island, Crete was granted autonomous status under Ottoman suzerainty and Prince George was appointed as High Commissioner by the Great Powers (Britain, France, Italy, Russia).¹⁵ The Powers divided the island into four sectors and the district of Rethymno, including Eleutherna, was assigned to Russia. The political change favoured the beginning of excavations, which had

¹¹ Their full publication did not seem appropriate here, since they are concerned with a wide variety of issues that were current in the British School at the time and refer to Payne's excavation only in passing.

¹² Information drawn from the following: letter from the 25th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities, dated 6 June 2006 and signed by the Ephor M. Andreadaki-Vlazaki (protocol number 3506); e-mail from D. Evely, Knossos Curator, dated 17 Nov. 2006; letter from the 23rd Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities, dated 27 Oct. 2005 and signed by the Ephor E. Grammatikaki (protocol number 16/3962). Notes on the Perachora documents were kindly provided by the British School Archivist, A. Kakissis.

¹³ I thank K. Perry, Archivist at Girton College Cambridge, for information provided in an e-mail dated 20 May 2005, as well as P. Adams, Librarian and Archivist at Somerville College Oxford, for information provided

in an e-mail dated 16 May 2005. Mr S. Hood, who knew M. Hartley, kindly provided information and suggestions for further research (letter dated 7 Nov. 2005) and so did Dr. D. Gill (Department of Classics, Ancient History and Egyptology, University of Wales, Swansea; e-mail dated 12 May 2005). M. Hartley died in 1996 at the age of 92 (according to information provided by P. Adams in the aforementioned e-mail); it is doubtful that she was ever contacted about information regarding Eleutherna.

¹⁴ Information drawn respectively from the following: letters from the 23rd and 25th Ephorates mentioned in n. 12 above; letter from the 25th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities, dated 11 July 2007 and signed by the Ephor, M. Andreadaki-Vlazaki (protocol number 3248); e-mails from D. Evely, Knossos Curator, dated 17 and 22 Jan. 2006.

¹⁵ See e.g. Detorakis 1986, 438–9, 1988, 414–17; McEnroe 2002, 61; Momigliano 2002, 266–7, 282 n. 81.

hitherto been hampered by Ottoman laws on antiquities and the Cretans' fear that the finds would leave the island.¹⁶ Crete was now seen as 'the "Promised Land" of Aegean research' (Hogarth and Bosanquet 1899, 321) and foreign archaeologists rushed to submit their requests for sites to be excavated.¹⁷ Archaeological explorations had been conducted in Crete since the 1880s (see below), but it was only after 1899 that systematic excavations were inaugurated at a number of sites. This development established claims on behalf of foreign schools for particular sites or areas, which are largely still in effect (McEnroe 2002, 61–2; Momigliano 2002, 265). It further resulted in the formulation of the island's chronologies and typologies, as well as enduring research agendas (Hamilakis 2002b, 3). It was in this setting that an international interest in the antiquities of Eleutherna was generated.

A DECADE OF INTERNATIONAL INTEREST IN ELEUTHERNA (1899–1909)

The Russian control established over the district of Rethymno apparently did not attract the attention of any Russian archaeologists to Eleutherna or other sites.¹⁸ The ancient city, however, appealed to Italian and British scholars, who took advantage of the favourable attitude that henceforth prevailed towards excavations by foreigners.¹⁹ By revealing the island's deep-rooted Greek identity and demonstrating the significance of its legacy for Europe, these excavations served the struggle of the Christian Cretans for union with Greece (Momigliano 2002, 269; La Rosa 2002d, 10; 2000–1, 52).

Before 1899, this cause had mostly, even if indirectly, been served by the Italian project of recording the inscriptions of the island (La Rosa 2000d, 42–3; 2000–1, 86–7), nearly all of which were in Greek. In the mid-1880s (1884–7), F. Halbherr was sent to Crete by Professor Domenico Comparetti,²⁰ his mentor and patron, to locate what proved a long series of inscriptions, originating from several Cretan sites, including Eleutherna (Halbherr–Comparetti 1888, 162–70; Halbherr 1890, 745–6; Comparetti 1893, 419–30). Halbherr organized a similar exploration in 1894. In the previous year, Halbherr had submitted to A.L. Frothingham, Professor in Princeton College, NJ, and Managing Editor of the *American Journal of Archaeology*, the programme for a scientific mission, which would visit Crete from November 1893 to 1894.²¹ In a series of reports submitted to his then sponsor, the Council of the Archaeological Institute of America, and published in reduced form in the *American Journal of Archaeology* of 1894, Halbherr discusses the potential of several Cretan sites, including Eleutherna, which he calls 'an important centre of very early civilization' (Halbherr 1894, 539–40); some inscriptions of 'late years' (probably meaning Hellenistic) and an Archaic statue, which had been discovered and published only few years earlier by Joubin (1893), are cited as the site's attractions. According to the reports, Halbherr visited

¹⁶ Momigliano 2002, 267 n. 22; see also Chatzidakis 1931, 40; La Rosa 2000d, 14, 28; 2000–1, 56–7, 71.

¹⁷ See e.g. Chatzidakis 1931, 23 and 41. On Chatzidakis see Sakellarakis 1998, 194–5; Medwid 2000, 148–50; La Rosa 2000d, 2000–1; Brown 2001, 387; McEnroe 2002, 64–6.

¹⁸ The few available references to Russian scholars active in Crete regard the period before 1899 (Chatzidakis 1931, 49; La Rosa 2000d, 30 n. 115; 2000–1, 73 n. 115).

¹⁹ On the shifting and contrasting Cretan attitudes

towards foreign excavations see Sakellarakis 1998, 43–4, 139–41, 156–7; La Rosa 2000b, 37–41; 2000d, 14, 37–41; 2000–1, 56–7, 81–5; 2006; Momigliano 2002, 269–73.

²⁰ On Halbherr see Sakellarakis 1998, 202–4; Medwid 2000, 131–2; La Rosa 2000a; 2000d; 2000–1; 2004; Brown 2001, 384–5; Momigliano 2002, 263 n. 1. On Comparetti see La Rosa 2000d, 25; 2000–1, 68; 2002, 9; Brown 2001, 379.

²¹ Unpublished handwritten copy of a letter, the final part of which is missing: Halbherr to Frothingham, 4. Apr. 1893 (La Rosa 2000d, 27 n. 101; 2000–1, 70 n. 101).

Eleutherna in mid-August and collected a number of inscriptions (Halbherr 1894, 543–4), which he promptly published along with others that certainly or possibly originated from Eleutherna, but were kept in Rethymno (Halbherr 1896, 579–88, 604–8, republished in *I. Cret. II*, 141–74). Nearly one year earlier, on 13 September 1893, a pupil of Halbherr, L. Mariani, had visited Eleutherna and described its antiquities; he also referred to the Archaic statue discussed above and a plaster copy of it (Mariani 1895, 156, 187–8, 212–21 and pls. 6–7).

It is against this background that the Italian interest in Eleutherna reappeared in 1899; this time, however, it was rivalled by a British one. The latter originated in Arthur Evans's visit on 1 April 1899, during which he was informed by the villagers of Halbherr's previous visits to the site (Brown 1993, 80–1; 2001, 284–91). Evans saw some of the monuments regularly visited by early travellers, including the tower (FIG. 1) and cisterns on the Prines hill, the bridge lying further north (FIG. 2) and the church of Agios Antonis located in a Roman rock-cut tomb (Brown 2001, 285–7).²² He also identified several walls and buildings on the top of the Prines hill and mentioned the remains of an early Christian basilica and a sixth-century AD capital located on the eastern slopes, close to the Farangitis stream (Brown 2001, 291).²³ Further north on the same slopes, Evans spotted a well-built wall and a square tower and noted that a large number of tombs had been revealed next to the stream by a great flood of the previous year (*ibid.*).²⁴ He also mentioned several coins, the torso of a statuette, and a Christian inscription (*ibid.*).

The antiquities of Eleutherna immediately captured Evans's interest. In a letter addressed to Prince George, the Cretan High Commissioner, he included Eleutherna among the sites that attracted British archaeological interest. In response, the Prince granted the promise that the site would be reserved for British excavation.²⁵ Evans probably also wrote to Halbherr, evaluating the intentions of the Italians with respect to the site. This letter, which is now missing, was perhaps written just after Evans's visit to Eleutherna, given that Halbherr's reply is dated 18 April 1899 (Momigliano 2002, F.H.7). According to this, Halbherr requested excavation permits for Gortyn, Phaistos, and Axos. As for Eleutherna, he showed no great

²² For references to these monuments by early travellers, see Kotsonas forthcoming a. Evans commented that the bridge of Eleutherna was partly ruined on one side by a flood of the previous year and took photographs of the monument. The visits by Evans, and later by Payne and the Pendleburys (see below), are not recorded in Nakassis (2000, 360, 362).

²³ The long history of habitation on the top of the Prines hill is reviewed in A. Kalpaxis (2004, 110–15). The basilica in question can tentatively be identified with the one of Agia Eirini, by which Mariani had seen two capitals, which, however, he dated to the 3rd–4th c. AD (Mariani 1895, 215; see also Gerola 1908, 57 and Sanders 1982, 120). The church of Agia Eirini produced more fragments of sculptural decoration (Sanders 1982, 120; Tsigonaki 1998, 374–5). The capitals mentioned by Evans and Mariani can tentatively be associated—or even identified—with two 6th-c. capitals located in the neighbouring Byzantine basilica of Christ the Saviour and attributed to a local regional workshop (Tsigonaki 1998). Professor Themelis kindly informed me that another capital previously located in or by the latter church was

delivered to him by a local in 1985; this find is now kept in the old school of the village of Prines (Ancient Eleutherna).

²⁴ The term 'beyond' in Evans's text can here safely be taken to mean north or north-east. The 'tower' is discussed below, while the 'wall' can tentatively be identified with the well-preserved Hellenistic terrace wall explored by Themelis (2002, 18 FIG. 6). The group of tombs in question is important in representing a hitherto unknown cemetery (for the locations of other cemeteries of Eleutherna see Stampolidis 2004d, particularly 138–43).

²⁵ The promise of Prince George is mentioned only in a letter written by Evans almost thirty years later (see below, n. 41). The letter that Evans sent to Prince George in 1899, expressing the British interest in a series of Cretan sites, is lost. The British scholar, however, kept some notes of that letter in a diary, the published version of which does not mention Eleutherna, but displays a lacuna at exactly the point where the site's name was likely to appear (Evans 1943, 326–7).



FIG. 1. Eleutherna: photograph of the medieval tower on the acropolis probably accompanying Dixon's unpublished article for *BSA* (courtesy of the British School at Athens).



FIG. 2. Photograph of the north bridge of Eleutherna probably accompanying Dixon's unpublished article for *BSA* (courtesy of the British School at Athens).

concern and noted that no decision was taken. By 16 July, however, Halbherr had made up his mind and wrote to Evans 'ora domanderò anche Eleutherna' ('now I shall also ask for Eleutherna': Momigliano 2002, F.H.8). The permit was granted to the Italians before the end of that year, as documented in an article by Halbherr (1899, 526) and an unpublished letter sent to Comparetti.²⁶ The latter is interesting in including Halbherr's confession that he submitted permit requests for several Cretan sites regardless of a lack of means to excavate them all. His aim was simply to establish the Italian interest and repel that of other foreign schools.

The fate of Italian scholars' interest in Eleutherna proved to be largely dependent on the advance of their explorations in other Cretan sites. The interest was probably sparked by the commencement of Italian excavations in the neighbouring ancient town of Axos (1899),²⁷ but it soon waned, largely because of the establishment of major Italian excavations in the Messara in 1900 (La Rosa 2000c, 203–7). The discovery of the Minoan palace of Phaistos in 1900–1 and the beginning of excavations in the Minoan centre of Agia Triada in 1902 established a lasting interest in the Messara and brought Cretan Prehistory to the centre of attention for Italian scholars; the change of focus was largely stimulated by the startling discovery of the Minoan palace at Knossos a few months earlier (La Rosa 1984, 35; 2000b, 13–19; 2000e, 14–15, 19–22). As a result, already in 1901 Halbherr was arguing that some of the sites for which permits had been granted—including Eleutherna—should be abandoned so that work could focus on Phaistos.²⁸ At that time, however, another Italian scholar, G. Gerola, visited Eleutherna with an interest in its medieval monuments (Gerola 1905, 81; 1908, 56–7; 1939–40, 371, 483).

The Italian interest returned in 1908, with respect to a prospected visit of Halbherr to the site for the identification of inscriptions, in which he would be accompanied by his pupil Luigi Pernier.²⁹ Pernier had recently (1907) excavated the Archaic temple A at Prinias, with its imposing sculptural decoration, and would continue to work at this site until 1908 (Rizza 1984, 228). In a preliminary report, Pernier (1908, 441) argued in favour of the study of the early historical period of Crete, which had hitherto remained obscure, in contrast to the Prehistoric phases.³⁰ He further noted that, leaving aside the statue from Eleutherna, very little was known of Archaic Cretan sculpture, which he identified with the work of Daedalus and his apprentices (Pernier 1908, 442, 456, 460; see also Pernier 1914, 102–10). It therefore comes as no great surprise that in April 1909, by which time the dig at Prinias had finished, Pernier expressed an interest in excavating Eleutherna in that summer, along with two Italian students (Accame 1984, 12–13). Nonetheless, the plan was never realized, perhaps

²⁶ Halbherr to Comparetti, 16 Dec. 1899 (La Rosa 2000d, 29 n. 113; 2000–1, 72–3 n. 113; see also La Rosa 2000b, 14 n. 9).

²⁷ A connection, in the minds of the Italians, between Axos and Eleutherna is suggested in a letter from Halbherr to De Sanctis, of 29 July 1899 (Accame 1986, 21). For the commencement of Italian excavations in Axos, see Leekley and Noyes 1975, 102; La Rosa 2000d, 29 n. 113; 2000–1, 72 n. 113; Palermo 2001, 227. Given the marked Italian interest in Eleutherna manifested in 1899, one is surprised to see the lack of any reference to the site in Taramelli 1899, 308–20 on the antiquities of Axos and the wider area of Mylopotamos.

²⁸ Halbherr to De Sanctis, 22 Nov. 1901 (Accame 1986, 86–7).

²⁹ Halbherr to De Sanctis, 12 Apr. 1908 (Accame 1986, 142–5). On Pernier see La Rosa 1995, 41; Momigliano 2002, 286–7 n. 92.

³⁰ The importance of the discoveries at Prinias was remarkable because of 'the scarcity of Greek remains in Crete' (Dawkins 1907, 291). The importance of these discoveries and of Archaic Crete in general was taken to extremes by Löwy (1909; 1911).

because of Pernier's growing responsibilities as the future first Director of the Italian School of Archaeology (his office started in November 1909; Accame 1984, 18; La Rosa 1995, 40).

The return of an Italian interest in 1909 may also have been stimulated by a Greek initiative over the archaeology of the site, which (once again) was connected with political developments.³¹ In 1905, after further attempts at *enosis* with Greece were frustrated, Eleftherios Venizelos (the future Prime Minister of Greece) organized the Therissos revolt, which partly succeeded in changing the island's regime: Prince George was replaced (1906), a new Constitution was issued to reform the administrative structure (1907), and the bulk of foreign armies was withdrawn (1908), making union with Greece closer than ever (Detorakis 1986, 444–53; Makraki 1992, 395–413). Under these circumstances, in 1908 Venizelos proposed to the Cretan Assembly to commission an archaeologist with the repair of the well-known Hellenistic bridge located north of the Prines hill (FIG. 2). That 'unique monument for the Greek territory' (Petrolakis 1914b, 230) probably captured the attention of Venizelos, renowned for his deep interest in ancient Greek scholarship (Makraki 1992, 203–4). Although the restoration of the bridge formed part of a wider project for the expansion and repair of the island's road network, the Assembly's decree specified that the damaged blocks of the bridge would be replaced by new ones extracted from the ancient limestone quarries of the site.³² The enthusiastic approval and generous funding of the proposal (Petrolakis 1914b, 230), which demonstrates the care of the recently liberated Cretans for their past, is the first act of any Greek authority regarding the protection of the archaeological monuments of Eleutherna. The relevant work was carried out by E. Petrolakis, ephor in the district of Rethymno, who also carried out a small dig on the top of the Prines hill and discovered an inscription (Petrolakis 1912, 68. Petrolakis 1914a, 225–6).³³ Hence Petrolakis became the first excavator of Eleutherna in 1908. The year 2008 thus marks the centenary of that first dig at the site, but this has passed unnoticed, in contrast to other sites in Crete and beyond.³⁴

THE BRITISH EXCAVATIONS IN ELEUTHERNA (1929)

After the initiatives of Petrolakis and Pernier in 1908–9, the archaeological interest in Eleutherna apparently ceased. Although the non-violent union of Crete with Greece in 1913 had no serious effect on the island's archaeological exploration (Chatzidakis 1931, 28), the Great War (1914–18) drove Europe into serious and prolonged turmoil; furthermore, it personally affected the protagonists of Cretan archaeology³⁵ and held scholars off fieldwork

³¹ One may also add that some sporadic finds from Eleutherna, including a steatite scarab (Xanthoudidis 1907, 164–5) and fragments of relief pithoi (Courby 1922, 52 and pl. 2), were collected in the early twentieth century.

³² 'Επίσημος Έφημερίς τής Κρητικής Πολιτείας, Έτος Ι, Τεύχος Πρώτον, Άριθμός 10, Chania 14 Aug. 1908, p. 166.

³³ More inscriptions from Eleutherna, which were located either at the site or were kept in the Museum of Rethymno, are published in the two articles cited above. In a third article, Petrolakis (1915, 51) published three naiskoi from Eleutherna. He proved very active in later years, and excavated more sites, including Axos and Aisipades (Leekley and Noyes 1975, 101–2).

³⁴ At the time of writing, no plans for celebrating Eleutherna's centenary were in place. For celebrations of centenaries of other sites see, e.g. Cadogan *et al.* 2004 (Knossos); La Rosa 2000b (Phaistos); see also the 'Convegno di Studi per i cento anni dello scavo di Priniàs (1906–2006). Identità culturale, etnicità, processi di formazione a Creta fra Dark Age e Arcaismo' and the articles celebrating the centenary of excavations in the Idaean Cave (Sakellarakis 1986–7, 1987). Similarly, the centennials of Italian and American archaeological work on Crete were celebrated by collective works (see respectively Di Vita *et al.* 1984; Day *et al.* 2004).

³⁵ La Rosa 2000d, 70–1; 2000–1, 123–4; Momigliano 2002, A.J.E.10–11.

in the island's major sites until the early 1920s.³⁶ Soon afterwards, however, the international—in this case British—interest in Eleutherna reappeared.

In 1928, G.A. Macmillan (1927–8, 306), the Chairman of the British School, argued 'it is anticipated that before long it will prove possible to inaugurate the systematic exploration of some site or sites of the archaic period in Crete'. The stimulus behind this plan is recorded in the correspondence of A.M. Woodward, the School's Director. According to a letter he wrote to Payne, the aim was to unearth an Archaic sanctuary with rich votive offerings.³⁷ Another letter³⁸ specifies that Archaic offerings that would contribute to determining the Cretan or Laconian origins of some classes of finds were particularly sought after. The latter finds would be important in connecting the prospective plan with one of the School's greatest projects, which focused on Sparta and Laconia in general, with excavations and publications directed by Woodward and aimed at sanctuaries, particularly that of Artemis Orthia (Macmillan 1927–8, 300, 305–6; 1928–30a, 258, 264). The debate on the 'origins' that concerned Woodward is not explained in the correspondence, nor in the publication of the Laconian sanctuary (Dawkins 1929), but it is likely that the Director was implicitly referring to Löwy's pan-Cretan theories (1909 and 1911), which occasionally involved comparisons between finds from Crete and Sparta.

Another incentive for the plan in question should perhaps be sought in recent developments in Cretan archaeology of the period. The publication of the bronzes from the Idaean Cave (Kunze 1931), which was then eagerly expected (Payne 1927–8, 297), was a reminder of the riches to be found in Cretan sanctuaries.³⁹ Moreover, the notable discoveries that the Italian Doro Levi had recently made in the Cretan Early Iron Age necropolis of Afrati (Levi 1925 and 1927–9) had reached British academia; the fact that their first commentator (Droop 1925, 12–3) was keen to discuss their Laconian correspondences takes us back to the School's interest in the links between Crete and Sparta. The British had also made some similar discoveries at the time. In 1927, Evans had invited Humfry G. G. Payne⁴⁰ to excavate in Knossos, at a previously known burial-ground of the Early Iron Age. Work resulted in the discovery of two tombs (Payne 1927–8, 224–5), and drawing on these and earlier finds, the young scholar established the Cretan ceramic sequence of the early first millennium. This would prove to be crucial for carrying out the new plan on Archaic Crete.

The first concern of the British School was the choice of the site to be explored and Evans played a major role in determining this. In an important letter to Woodward, Evans argues against a project at Knossos owing to the problematic preservation of Archaic remains at the site and suggests alternative options.⁴¹ He then rejects the suggestion of Lyktos,⁴² and proposes an excavation at Eleutherna. To support his case, he refers to the aforementioned promise of Prince George and stresses that the ephor Stephanos Xanthoudidis would gladly

³⁶ See Branigan 2000 for Knossos and La Rosa 2000b, 19 for Phaistos.

³⁷ BSA CR-A: BSA Excavation Reports A–K: Eleutherna: Woodward to Payne, 17 May 1929.

³⁸ Ashmolean Museum, Evans Archive: Woodward to Evans, 30 Apr. 1928; a photocopy of this letter was kindly supplied by S. Sherratt. A copy of this letter is kept in BSA CR-A: BSA Excavation Reports A–K: Eleutherna.

³⁹ For the large and impressive corpus of votive offerings from that cave, which was known at the time, see Halbherr and Orsi 1888.

⁴⁰ On Payne see Macmillan 1928–30a, 257; Powell 1943; Hood 1998, 71–5; Medwid 2000, 231–2.

⁴¹ BSA CR-L: BSA letters 1928: Evans to Woodward, no date. Woodward's reply (see above, n. 38) favours a date in late April for Evans's letter. For the problematic preservation of the Archaic phase at Knossos see Kotsonas 2002, where references to earlier scholarship are collected.

⁴² For the British interest in Lyktos, see Kotsonas forthcoming b.

support the British request, while no counter-claims would be raised by other foreign schools. The archaeological attractions of Eleutherna (FIG. 3) that he cites include the aforementioned Archaic statue published by Joubin (1893), several early inscriptions, one of which refers to political affairs and a serf class, identified by Evans with that of the Minoans,⁴³ and the well-known bridge (FIG. 2). He further supposes that a church on the top of the Prines hill overlies an ancient temple.⁴⁴ Evans also mentions that he had asked two scholars who were planning a tour of western Crete to visit Eleutherna and assess the site's prospects: should their report be negative, he suggested a dig at Phalasarna. However, he clearly favoured Eleutherna.⁴⁵ The two scholars Evans was referring to were W.D. Woodhead and P.J. Dixon (FIG. 4); the former was then Professor of Greek at McGill University, Montreal, and the latter was the Craven Student of the School, from Cambridge University, who had an interest in Archaic sites (Macmillan 1927–8, 300–1). Later, Dixon turned to politics and became the British Ambassador to France and the United Nations (Powell 1973, 64–5; Grundon 2007, 360).

Woodward was convinced by Evans's letter of the unfavourable situation at Knossos and the advantages of Eleutherna, but objected to the initiation of a long project at the latter site.⁴⁶ He further expressed an interest in the report that Dixon would produce after his visit to Eleutherna (on Dixon's report, see also below).⁴⁷

The directorship of the dig at Eleutherna was assigned to the young archaeologist Humfry Payne (FIG. 5). Payne had been a student of the British School at Athens in 1924–5, 1925–6, and 1926–7, had worked in Crete and published a long article on Early Iron Age pottery from Knossos. When he was assigned the project at Eleutherna, the 27-year old Payne was a Research Scholar of Christ Church, Oxford (Macmillan 1928–30a, 257), but would soon be elected Director of the British School at Athens, the youngest in the School's history, after A.M. Woodward declined reappointment after six years in office.⁴⁸ Payne took office in the autumn of 1929, just a few months after the prospected excavation at Eleutherna (Powell 1973, 72).

The details of Payne's initial involvement with the project at Eleutherna are obscure. The earliest record available is dated as late as November 1928. In a letter addressed to Macmillan, Payne mentions that he has studied the relevant literature on Eleutherna and finds the site 'extremely promising'.⁴⁹ He also reflects on contacting Woodward concerning the prospect of

⁴³ The inscription in question should be identified with one published by Petrulakis (1914a, 225–6) and referring to the class of the *apamiotai* (see also *I. Cret. II*, 156–7, no. 16). Petrulakis had published the same inscription in a slightly earlier article (1912), where, however, the part of the text mentioning the *apamiotai* had been considered as illegible. Evans's interest in that inscription was a determining factor in the instigation of the British project, see BSA CR-A: BSA Excavation Reports A–K: Eleutherna: Payne to Woodward, 11 May 1929 and Woodward to Payne, 17 May 1929.

⁴⁴ In the letter in question, Evans wrongly attributes that church to Agia Elena. A chapel of Agia Elena is located north of the Prines hill (see FIG. 3), but Evans probably refers to the church of Agia Anna on the top of this hill. Alternatively, he may be referring to the church of Agia Eirini, by which some Archaic inscriptions had earlier turned up (for the latter two churches see

Tsigonaki 1998, 358; for the Archaic inscriptions by Agia Eirini see below).

⁴⁵ Cf. BSA CR-I: BSA letters 1928: Le Fanu to Woodward, 13 Dec. 1928.

⁴⁶ Ashmolean Museum, Evans Archive: Woodward to Evans, 30 Apr. 1928 (see above n. 38).

⁴⁷ BSA CR-L: BSA letters 1928: Woodward to Le Fanu, 27 May 1928. BSA CR-L: BSA letters 1929, P–Z: Woodward to Le Fanu, 6 Jan. 1929. A later letter confirms that Dixon's report did exist (BSA CR-A: BSA Excavation Reports A–K: Eleutherna: Letter: Woodward to Payne, 17 May 1929).

⁴⁸ Macmillan 1928–30a, 257, 261; BSA CR-L: BSA letters 1929, P–Z: Woodward to Le Fanu, 4 Feb. 1929; Powell 1943, 5; 1973, 73.

⁴⁹ BSA CR-L: BSA letters 1928: Payne to Macmillan, 27 Nov. 1928.

excavation. A fortnight later, Payne's project was granted £100 by the Macmillan Studentship Fund.⁵⁰ Woodward was pleased with the news and wrote to Macmillan praising Payne and promising to support him, hoping for the collaboration of the new ephor, M. Pippas.⁵¹

Practical issues of the prospected dig at Eleutherna are raised in a letter dating to early January 1929.⁵² Woodward suggests that a request for trial trenches in different areas of the site be submitted to the Greek Ministry. He assumes that 8–10 workers could achieve the results anticipated within three weeks, but has no particular view on the season in which the work should be carried out. He also mentions that Winifred Lamb and Piet de Jong⁵³ could assist Payne. Lamb, who had just been elected Keeper of Classical Antiquities in the Fitzwilliam Museum,⁵⁴ had already expressed a desire to join the project as Payne's co-director.⁵⁵ This plan was passed on to Payne, who declined to accept Lamb's involvement, since he held that a dig must be directed by a single person, while showing deep appreciation of Woodward's remarks and expressing an interest in visiting the School's dig in Laconia to see how an excavation should be run.⁵⁶

The British School's permit request for 1929 includes the project at Eleutherna, listing it second, after that of Knossos, and mentions that Payne would make trial trenches starting in mid-May.⁵⁷ The permit was soon granted,⁵⁸ and Payne first visited Eleutherna in May 1929, accompanied by the Pendleburys, and supplied with fine delicacies provided by Evans.⁵⁹ The visit's timetable was recorded in detail by J. D. S. Pendlebury, who was then the Macmillan Student of the British School and would assume office as Knossos Curator in the autumn of 1929 (Grundon 2007). The visit in question is recorded in a series of photographs that survive rather poorly and in a letter by Pendlebury's wife Hilda to her mother.⁶⁰ These various sources document the visit in good detail. The three British archaeologists arrived at Eleutherna via the village of Margarites on 4 May 1929. Earlier that day, they had met the local Keeper of Antiquities, J. Daskalakis, at Rethymno to discuss Payne's prospected excavations. H. Pendlebury describes the Prines hill, the heart of ancient Eleutherna, as an island surrounded by valleys and recounts the beauty of the plants and trees.⁶¹ The team camped on

⁵⁰ BSA CR-L: BSA letters 1928: Le Fanu to Payne, 13 Dec. 1928; Le Fanu to Woodward, 13 Dec. 1928. See also Macmillan 1928–30a, 257, 261. The Macmillan Studentship was intended to encourage long-term students to engage in excavation (Macmillan 1927–8, 299).

⁵¹ BSA CR-L: BSA letters 1928: Woodward to Macmillan, 23 Dec. 1928.

⁵² BSA CR-L: BSA letters 1929, P–Z: Woodward to Le Fanu, 6 Jan. 1929.

⁵³ On De Jong see Hood 1998, 224–70.

⁵⁴ Macmillan 1928–30a, 260–1. Lamb went on to excavate in Lesbos: Macmillan 1928–30a, 265–6; Woodward 1929, 223. In the academic year 1927/8, Lamb was Honorary Curator of Classical Antiquities in the Fitzwilliam Museum: Macmillan 1927–8, 304. On Lamb see Hood 1998, 71–5; Gill 2004.

⁵⁵ BSA CR-L: BSA letters 1928: Lamb to Le Fanu, 29 Dec. 1928.

⁵⁶ BSA CR-L: BSA letters 1929: Payne to Le Fanu, 7 Jan. 1929. BSA CR-L: BSA letters 1929, P–Z: Le Fanu to Woodward, 25 Jan. 1929.

⁵⁷ BSA CR-A: BSA Excavation Permits, Proposals, Surveys: Excavation Permits 1903–39: Αγγλική

Αρχαιολογική Σχολή πρὸς τὸ Ὑπουργεῖον Παιδείας καὶ Θρησκευμάτων, 5 Jan. 1929.

⁵⁸ BSA CR-A: BSA Excavation Permits, Proposals, Surveys: Excavation Permits 1903–39: Ὑπουργεῖον Παιδείας καὶ Θρησκευμάτων, Τμήμα Ἀρχαιολογίας πρὸς τὴν Ἀγγλικὴν Ἀρχαιολογικὴν Σχολήν, 22 Feb. 1929 (protocol number 6874/230).

⁵⁹ Macmillan 1928–30a, 261–2; Powell 1973, 72; Grundon 2007, 106.

⁶⁰ JP: Photo Album 6: ACC no. 1445: nos. 198–208 (an unnumbered picture is missing); JP: Letter 400, dated 11 May 1929, titled 'Trip with Humfry. Eleutherna' and signed by Hilda and John Pendlebury, though clearly written by Hilda. This letter is actually richer in information than the article based on it published by H. Pendlebury 35 years later (1964).

⁶¹ Evans had earlier described the beauty of the landscape between Eleutherna and the Arcadi monastery (Brown 1993, 80–1; 2001, 285) and so did Payne (see below). Eleutherna has officially been declared as an area of natural beauty (Φύλλο Ἐφημερίδος Κυβερνήσεως/1242/B/16–10–1973; I owe this information to Professor Stampolidis).

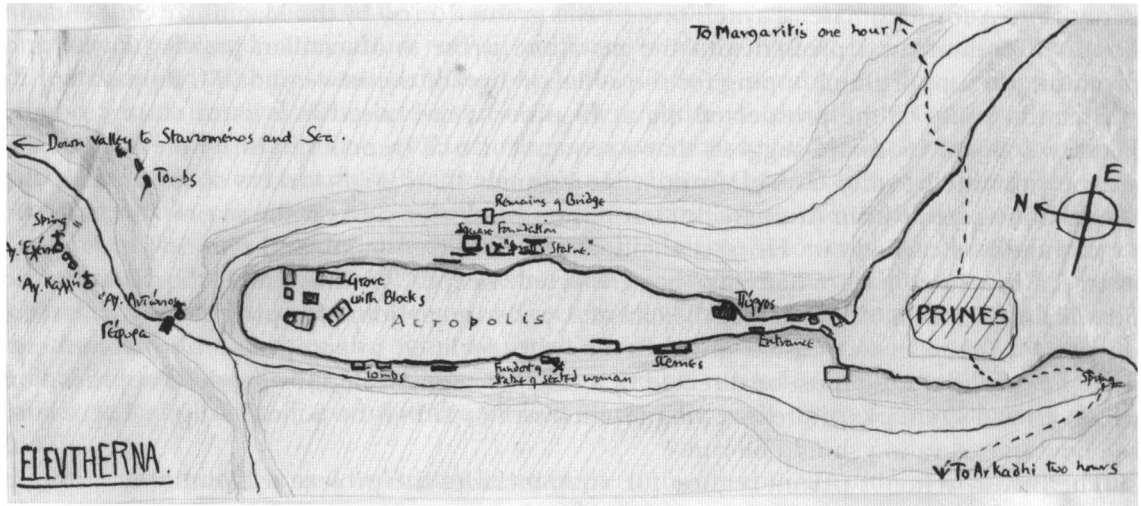


FIG. 3. Plan of Eleutherna showing the location of most monuments known in the early twentieth century, probably accompanying Dixon's unpublished article for *BSA* (courtesy of the British School at Athens).

the top of the hill⁶² and was supplied with water from the spring located south-west of the aforementioned tower and at a lower terrace.⁶³ They visited the bridge (FIG. 2) and Payne surveyed the site until May 6. One of the photographs taken at the time by Pendlebury (FIG. 6) illustrates a statue that was lying on the eastern slopes and was first mentioned by Spratt (1865, 94) (cf. FIG. 3) and later collected by S. Alexiou (1956, 421). Many of the locals were observing the British visitors, who were guided by Markantonakis, the mayor of Metochi, which can safely be identified with the modern village of Eleutherna, formerly known as Anachourdometochá.⁶⁴

Following his visit to Eleutherna, Payne submitted a report to Woodward expressing his admiration for the site's natural beauty and his concerns over the prospective project.⁶⁵ Payne wrote against a systematic exploration of the site, estimating on the basis of the latter's vast size that such a project would require £1,000 per year. He further commented on other practicalities: arguing that the harvest would necessarily delay the beginning of work until June, he proposed to dig for two or three weeks, beginning on 9 June. He also mentioned that he was planning to contact Hartley and Radford, two students of the School who had expressed an interest in joining the dig (see below);⁶⁶ Evans would provide the equipment necessary. The most interesting part of Payne's report is, however, the indication of the areas he was planning to dig. These included a rectangular building, tentatively identified as a temple (FIG. 7), and

⁶² Pendlebury (1964, 164) reports that the team camped 'on a terrace of olive trees at the northwest end' of the hill, but her letter clearly suggests 'near the watch-tower and causeway'; see also Grundon 2007, 107.

⁶³ For this spring, called Pigaidaki (*sic*), see Davaras 1967, 500–1; Themelis 1992, 92; Stampolidis 2004c, 99–100; Kalpaxis 2004, 112.

⁶⁴ Anachourdometochá was renamed Eleutherna in the early 1930s: Tsantropoulos 1994, 46 n. 8; Stampolidis 2004b, 24; Kotsonas 2005, 25.

⁶⁵ BSA CR-A, BSA Excavation Reports A–K: Eleutherna: Payne to Woodward, 11 May 1929.

⁶⁶ Payne's concern with the participation of Hartley and Radford is also apparent in: BSA CR-L: BSA letters 1929, P–Z: Woodward to Le Fanu, 5 May 1929. On Hartley and Radford as students of the School see Macmillan 1928–30a, 260–1.



FIG. 4. P. J. Dixon (dressed in white shirt) in western Crete and unidentified companion/guide (from JP: Photo Album 2: ACC308: no. 266; courtesy of the British School at Athens).

the ruined Byzantine church of Agia Eirini, around which some Archaic inscriptions had previously been collected (*I.Cret.*, II, 150 no 8, 152 no. 10). If these two locations did not produce important finds, Payne would consider stopping the dig.

Payne's report is also important in shedding light on scholarly contacts over the project at Eleutherna. It documents that Halbherr had been informed of the British interest, most probably by Evans,⁶⁷ and also comments on Dixon's report (cf. above). Evidently, Dixon submitted an article on Eleutherna for publication in the *Annual of the British School at Athens* early in 1929. Following Woodward's scepticism, Payne strongly criticized the article and rejected the possibility of its being published, citing the support of the Pendleburys. His criticism proved decisive and Dixon's article was at once rejected.⁶⁸

Dixon's text has yet to be found, but the illustrations that accompanied it are—I believe—a series of photographs from Eleutherna that are kept in the archive of the British School (FIG. 1–2, 7–8).⁶⁹ These are attached to plain sheets of paper, which are numbered consecutively and include references to (perhaps) pages of a manuscript. Some of these photographs illustrate well-known monuments that survive today, including the ledge leading to the Prines hill (FIG. 8), the tower guarding it (FIG. 1), the bridge (FIG. 2) and the rock-cut aqueduct. Others, however, show a lost or unidentified square building located on the eastern slopes

⁶⁷ Halbherr in turn reported the news to De Sanctis, without commenting on it (Accame 1984, 209–10).

⁶⁸ BSA CR-A: BSA Excavation Reports A–K: Eleutherna: Woodward to Payne, 17 May 1929.

⁶⁹ BSA CR-A: BSA Excavation Reports A–K: Eleutherna: photographs from Eleutherna.

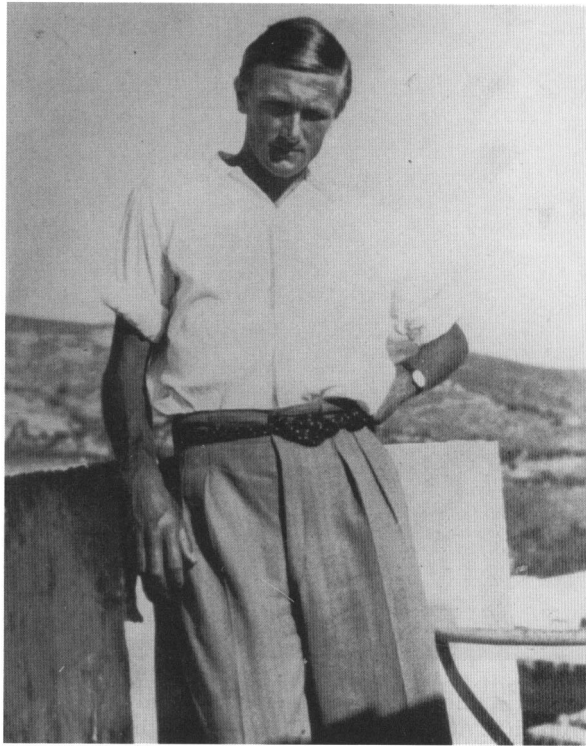


FIG. 5. Humfry Payne (courtesy of the British School at Athens).

(FIG. 7) that was to be explored by Payne. Moreover, one photograph illustrates the site where the Archaic statue (Joubin 1893) had been located in the late nineteenth century. A sketch map of Eleutherna (FIG. 3) kept along with the photographs is also very important in showing the location of the main monuments known to that date, including that of the square building and the Archaic statue.

Woodward approved the areas selected for exploration and accepted Payne's view that Eleutherna could not be a long-term project of the British School.⁷⁰ He also noted that the discovery of Archaic inscriptions alone would not be sufficient, and argued that only the unearthing of a rich Archaic sanctuary would satisfy both Payne and the School (Payne would, however, experience this satisfaction only one year later, in his excavations at Perachora: see Payne 1940; Powell 1943). Lastly, the Director wondered whether Payne would find students to assist his work, but noted that W. Hogarth (D. G. Hogarth's son, referred to as 'Hogarth junior') was interested in joining the dig and raised the possibility of visiting Eleutherna himself.⁷¹

In his reply, Payne welcomes Woodward's prospected visit and notes the lack of any news on the participation of Hartley and Radford in the dig.⁷² Hartley, who was then a Cambridge student and held an Old Girtonians' Studentship, had an interest in early Greek pottery

⁷⁰ BSA CR-A: BSA Excavation Reports A-K: Eleutherna: Woodward to Payne, 17 May 1929.

⁷¹ Woodward's worry is also expressed in: BSA CR-L:

BSA letters 1929, P-Z: Woodward to Le Fanu, 17 May 1929 and Woodward to Macmillan, 21 May 1929.

⁷² BSA CR-A: BSA Excavation Reports A-K: Eleutherna:

(Macmillan 1928–30a, 260). She had assisted Payne in his study of Knossian pottery (Payne 1927–8, 224 n. 1), participated in his dig at Eleutherna (Macmillan 1928–30a, 266), and published some Geometric and Archaic clay finds (the only ones that were ever published from the site: Hartley 1930–1, 108–11).⁷³ The collaboration between Payne and Hartley continued at Perachora in the following year (Macmillan 1928–30b, 284). The Eleutherna team was also joined by Hogarth junior during the later part of the dig, while Radford never came (Macmillan 1928–30a, 266).

Payne's excavations at Eleutherna lasted from 10 June–11 July 1929. Up to twelve workers were employed, along with foreman J. Katsarakis, a veteran of the School's digs from Palaikastro; Katsarakis, like Hartley, was later to follow Payne to Perachora (Macmillan 1928–30a, 266; Powell 1973, 12). Woodward was also briefly present during the first week at Eleutherna: he enjoyed his sojourn at the site, but was worried to see that all walls identified proved Roman in date and doubted whether undisturbed foundations could be traced on the top of the Prines hill.⁷⁴

Payne tested both the top and the slopes of the Prines hill (see his report in Macmillan 1928–30a, 266–8; Woodward 1929, 224–5). His exploration on the eastern slopes focused on a building located north of an area recently excavated by Professor Themelis (Excavation Sector I). The building was lying on the north-east foot of the hill, by the bed of the Farangitis stream. Measuring 6 m by 7 m, it was made of large blocks and was preserved to a considerable height (FIG. 7). I assume that the building was destroyed some time after Payne's excavation, since I could not identify it in a recent survey. Its blocks must have been incorporated in one of the modern terrace walls located in the area, which are clearly made by material robbed from ancient structures.⁷⁵ Payne's hopes that the building in question would be a temple were not realized: it proved to be a tower of late Roman date.⁷⁶ I am therefore inclined to identify this monument with the 'square tower' that Evans saw in that location in 1899 (cf. above). Terrace walls and domestic remains, as well as isolated burials were found throughout that area.⁷⁷ The 'very fine Greek terrace wall' (Macmillan 1928–30a, 267; Woodward 1929, 225) has convincingly been identified with a massive, well-preserved wall explored by Professor Themelis (2002, 33–7). Investigations also took place further south, by the churches of Agia Eirini and Agios Markos. Trenches were dug both inside and outside the former, because of the earlier discovery of Archaic inscriptions on the spot (see above). Nevertheless, all finds were Byzantine in date.⁷⁸ Equally disappointing, from the

Payne to Woodward, undated but clearly written after 17 May 1929. Hartley's participation is also mentioned in BSA CR-A: BSA Excavation Reports A–K: Eleutherna: Payne to Woodward, undated but clearly written during the last ten days of May 1929.

⁷³ Hartley discussed in detail only a Laconian krater, but her discussion stimulated a hot debate (Droop 1931–2; Hartley 1931–2) and the vase received considerable attention in the reports (Macmillan 1928–30a, 268; Woodward 1929, 224).

⁷⁴ BSA CRL:Box BSA letters 1929, P–Z: Woodward to Le Fanu, 21 June 1929 and Woodward to Macmillan, 10 June 1929. See also Macmillan 1928–30a, 257, 266.

⁷⁵ Spratt (1865, 94) records that the inhabitants of Eleutherna were unearthing ancient structures to acquire building material.

⁷⁶ BSA CR-A: BSA Excavation Reports A–K: Eleutherna: Payne to Woodward, 11 May 1929. The tentative identification of a temple in this area goes back to Spratt (1865, 94; cf. Psilakis 1899, 142); for the Roman date, see Macmillan 1928–30a, 266–7; Woodward 1929, 224.

⁷⁷ These finds echo Evans's earlier description of the area (Brown 2001, 291) as well as the results of the excavations conducted by Professor Themelis (see Themelis 2002 and 2004).

⁷⁸ Mariani (1895, 214–15) assumed that a Roman temple was located on a terrace above Agia Eirini, because of the presence of two capitals (see n. 23 above). In a recent visit to Agia Eirini and Agios Markos, I identified both Byzantine and Archaic stone finds to be published elsewhere.



FIG. 6. Statue lying on the eastern slopes of the hill of Eleutherna (from JP: Photo Album 6: ACC1445: no. 204; courtesy of the British School at Athens).

British explorers' point of view, were the trials made on the top of the hill, particularly on its north part, where a Doric capital of Classical date was resting (FIG. 3) and Excavation Sector II (Professor Kalpaxis) is nowadays situated. Investigations on the western slopes focused on the site of Orthi Petra, where the aforementioned Archaic statue had been located (FIG. 3) and Excavation Sector III (Professor Stampolidis) is situated. Early finds, mostly Protogeometric to Archaic pottery, did appear here and Payne suggested that 'the place was probably a necropolis, though we found no certain evidence of this' (Macmillan 1928–30a, 268; Woodward 1929, 226). His suggestion was fully confirmed in 1985, when Professor Stampolidis began uncovering substantial remains of the Early Iron Age necropolis of Orthi Petra (Stampolidis 2004c). Payne also discovered a deposit of clay figurines and coins nearby, which closely resembles another deposit recently identified just east of the core of the necropolis (Stampolidis 1994b, 37–8; 2004c, 94). North of Orthi Petra, Payne traced well-preserved terrace/fortification walls of Classical date and two Hellenistic graves.⁷⁹

The finds described did not meet the stated aims of the project and disappointed Payne, who concluded his report as follows: 'It will be seen from these results that there seems little if any possibility of the site justifying a second campaign' (Macmillan 1928–30a, 268; Woodward 1929, 226). It is indicative that only a few days after work ended at Eleutherna, Payne visited Lyktos, another Cretan city, to assess its potential.⁸⁰ Many years later, Dilys Powell, who was Payne's wife and would become a famous film critic, wrote 'the soil of

⁷⁹ Professor Stampolidis kindly informed me that the substantial walls mentioned by Payne should probably be identified with those he has recently located at the site of Lotos.

⁸⁰ BSA CR-I: BSA letters 1929, P–Z: Le Fanu to Woodward, 8 July 1929. For the British interest in Lyktos, see Kotsonas forthcoming b.



FIG. 7. Photograph of the square building, 'temple' or tower, located on the eastern slopes of the hill of Eleutherna; it probably accompanied Dixon's unpublished article for *BSA* (courtesy of the British School at Athens).

Eleutherna held no great treasure' and speculated that if the dig had proved important, Payne would have continued to work in Crete (Powell 1973, 12).⁸¹ In a similar vein, correspondence in the British School archive attest to a widespread 'disappointment of prospects',⁸² or suggests that at the end of the three-week period 'an unimportant cemetery' was located,⁸³ a comment that sounds ironic nowadays, since Orthi Petra has proved to be one of the most important necropoleis of pre-Classical Greece. In addition, a letter referring to the School's annual general meeting states: 'I do not think Payne has anything on which he could speak, owing to the comparative failure at Eleutherna'.⁸⁴ By November 1929, Payne, as the new Director of the British School, was making expeditions outside Athens, aiming at finding a site for excavation: work in Perachora would start only a few months later, revealing a rich Archaic sanctuary (Macmillan 1928–30b, 282, 285–7). Payne, however, did not entirely forget Eleutherna. In 1931 he took his wife there, but the visit was interrupted by a sudden and heavy rainfall (Powell 1973, 15). Apparently, the Idaean Zeus, who has been claimed to be benevolent to some foreign archaeologists working in Crete (La Rosa 2000c, 10), was not particularly so to Payne.

As already mentioned, Payne never published the results from his excavation at Eleutherna,

⁸¹ Powell discussed Payne's work at Eleutherna with Professor Stampolidis in 1989 (Stampolidis 2004b, 24). On Powell see Hood 1998, 71–5.

⁸² BSA CR-L: BSA letters 1929, P–Z: Le Fanu to Woodward, 2 July 1929.

⁸³ BSA CR-L: BSA letters 1929, P–Z: Woodward to Le Fanu, 8 July 1929.

⁸⁴ BSA CR-L: BSA letters 1929, A–P: Le Fanu to Macmillan, 9 Sept. 1929.



FIG. 8. Photograph of the ledge leading to the Acropolis of Eleutherna (taken from the medieval tower) probably accompanying Dixon's unpublished article for *BSA* (courtesy of the British School at Athens).

which would be overshadowed by the British excavations conducted at the Early Iron Age cemetery of Fortetsa near Knossos in 1933 (Brock 1957, xi). Eleutherna was not mentioned in an exhibition catalogue on British discoveries in Greece that was published only ten years later (Myres 1939, esp. map on p. ii). Similarly, recent publications on the history of British archaeological research in Greece mention Payne's dig in only a few words (Waterhouse 1986, 31, 125; Paton 2000, 177; Hatzaki 2005, 75).

Payne's work at Eleutherna marks the end of the early, intense as well as international interest in the site. For the ensuing half a century, the site only attracted minimal attention, largely through chance finds reported by the Greek Archaeological Service.⁸⁵ In 1984, however, the 25th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities gave permission to the Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Crete to undertake an excavation project on the Prines hill and the surrounding area. Work began in September 1985 and Eleutherna captured once more the interest of the international scholarly community and also of the wider public (Stampolidis 1993; 1994a; 2004a; 2004b).

⁸⁵ Platon 1947, 637–8: Geometric, Classical, and Hellenistic, human and animal figurines from the top of the Prines hill; id. 1956, 421–2: a statue of Herculaneum woman type, another statue and pieces of architecture; Alexiou 1960: three fragments of late Archaic inscriptions; Tzedakis 1965: a statue of a large Herculaneum woman type; Davaras 1967, 500–1: a statue

of Herculaneum woman type and a piece of limestone sima bearing a lion head; Tzedakis 1970, 478: a fragment of a late Archaic inscription; Papapostolou 1975, 516–17: a fragment of a Classical inscription and some decorated pieces of architecture. See also Stampolidis 2004b, 25 and Kotsonas 2005, 326.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The political autonomy granted to Crete in 1898/1899 involved the opening of ‘the “Promised Land” of Aegean research’ to foreign archaeologists. However, despite the scale of excavations that was at once undertaken and the major archaeological discoveries that soon came to light, the island’s exploration continued to be partly conditioned by wars, revolts, and diplomatic struggles for the following two decades. Academic rivalries and shifting scholarly priorities also played a significant role in shaping the complex history of early archaeological research for which the island is renowned.⁸⁶

Facets of the history of Cretan archaeology from the end of the nineteenth to the early twentieth century have been discussed here with reference to Eleutherna. The interest that the site attracted, outlined on the basis of largely unpublished documents, is important in demonstrating the complexities and vicissitudes of early explorations. Typical of the scholarly rush that followed the events of 1898/1899 is the development—by British and Italian archaeologists—of clashing plans for excavations at the site. In the case of Eleutherna, the issue was easily resolved in favour of the Italians thanks to the amicable relations between Evans and Halbherr. Nevertheless, the Italian plans would quickly be dismissed because of the startling discoveries of the Minoan palaces at Knossos and Phaistos in 1900. British and Italian archaeologists were hereafter zealously engaged in unearthing and understanding a hitherto largely unknown civilization. Under these circumstances, it was not foreign scholars, but local magistrates of the Cretan Assembly who would revive the interest in Eleutherna. Reinforced by political developments following the Therissos revolt, the Cretan Assembly issued a decree providing for the preservation of the site’s heritage (1908). By specifying that restoration would be carried out with stone extracted from the local quarries and be overseen by an archaeologist, the decree epitomizes up-to-date conservation principles and documents the deep care and sensible treatment with which the recently liberated Cretans embraced the island’s monuments. Beside restoration, the archaeologist in charge, Petrulakis, conducted a small dig in 1908, thus becoming the site’s first excavator.

The birth of Minoan archaeology in 1900 did not completely overshadow the study of the island’s later phases. The discovery of the Archaic temple at Prinias and the formulation of theories on the great importance of Crete in the early historical period revived the interest in Eleutherna, which was renowned as the home of an early Archaic statue. The Italian plan for excavations in 1909 fell through, unlike the British attempt in 1929. This British excavation was intended to elucidate material connections between Crete and Laconia with respect to the British School’s major excavations in Sparta. It was also stimulated by publications of Cretan Early Iron Age material and served Evans’s interests in the island’s post-Minoan phases. Nonetheless, by failing to produce the desired results, the 1929 excavation at Eleutherna extinguished interest in the site for the ensuing half a century. This was revived only as recently as 1985, with the beginning of systematic excavations by the University of Crete, which continue to this day (2008). After 100 years from Petrulakis’s first dig, the present excavations have fully vindicated the intuition of the early pioneers, bringing to light a major Cretan site of the historical period.

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⁸⁶ Probably the earliest account of this history is found in Psilakis 1909, vol. A2, appendix.

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