

ΠΡΑΚΤΙΚΑ ΤΗΣ ΑΚΑΔΗΜΙΑΣ ΑΘΗΝΩΝ

ΕΚΤΑΚΤΟΣ ΣΥΝΕΔΡΙΑ ΤΗΣ 12^{ΗΣ} ΦΕΒΡΟΥΑΡΙΟΥ 1980

ΠΡΟΕΔΡΙΑ ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΥ Ε. ΜΥΛΩΝΑ

ΟΜΙΛΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΑΚΑΔΗΜΑΪΚΟΥ Κ. Γ. Ε. ΜΥΛΩΝΑ

Ἡ Ἀκαδημία Ἀθηνῶν εἰς τὴν προσπάθειαν νὰ ἀνοίξη τὰς πύλας τῆς εἰς τὸν Ἑλληνικὸν λαὸν καὶ νὰ τὸν καταστήσῃ κοινωὸν τῶν ἐπιτευγμάτων τοῦ πνευματικοῦ μας κόσμου, ἐπρογραμμάτισε τὴν ἀποφινὴν ὀμιλίαν διὰ τὸ ἔργον ποὺ ἐπιτελεῖται εἰς τὴν Ἀκρόπολιν. Χαίρει διότι ἡ προσέλευσίς σας, διὰ τὴν ὁποίαν σᾶς εὐχαριστεῖ, ἀποδεικνύει ὅτι ἐπικροτεῖτε τὰς προσπάθειάς τῆς, ἐλπίζω δὲ ὅτι θὰ μᾶς χαρίζετε συχνὰ τὴν παρουσίαν σας.

ΑΝΑΣΤΗΛΩΤΙΚΑΙ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑΙ ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΑΚΡΟΠΟΛΙΝ

Θεοφιλέστατε, Κύριοι Συνάδελφοι, Κυρίαί καὶ Κύριοι,

Ὅλιγοι χῶροι, περιοχαὶ ἢ καὶ βράχοι εἰς τὴν ἱστορίαν καὶ τὴν πεῖραν τῆς Ἀνθρωπότητος περιεβλήθησαν μὲ τὴν ἀγάπην, τὴν ὑπερηφάνειαν, τὴν φαντασίαν καὶ τὴν ποιητικὴν πνοὴν μὲ τὴν ὁποίαν περιεβλήθη ὁ βράχος τῆς Ἀκροπόλεως τῶν Ἀθηνῶν. Καὶ κατ' ἀντιπαροβολίην, ὀλίγοι χῶροι ἐνέπνευσαν ἐπερχομένας γενεὰς καὶ προεκάλεσαν τὸν θαυμασμόν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ὡς ὁ ἱερός αὐτὸς βράχος.

Ἀπὸ παναρχαιοτάτων χρόνων οἱ περίοικοι τὸν ἐστεφάνωσαν μὲ θρόλους καὶ μύθους, ποὺ παραμένουν ζωντανοὶ καὶ εἶναι ἱκανοὶ νὰ ἀπαλλάξουν τὸν σημερινὸν ἄνθρωπον ἀπὸ τὸ ἄγχος τῆς προόδου καὶ τῆς αὔριου. Ὁ βράχος ἐγένετο «τὸ μῆλον τῆς ἔριδος» καὶ τῶν Ὀλυμπίων Θεῶν ἀκόμη καὶ ἡ νικήτρια θεὰ τῆς Τέχνης καὶ τῆς Σοφίας ἐπεμελήθη τῆς μορφῆς του καὶ τὸν κατέστησεν ἀπρόσβλητον. Διότι ἀρχικῶς, ὡς εἶναι γνωστόν, εἰς τοὺς μυκηναϊκοὺς ἀκόμη χρόνους ἐχρησίμευσεν ὡς ὄχυρόν ὅπου εἶχε τὸ ἀνάκτορόν του ὁ ἄναξ καὶ οἱ ταγοὶ τὰς κατοικίας

των. Ἐπὶ πολὺ παρέμεινεν ὡς φρούριον - ἀκρόπολις καὶ ὑπερέτησε πολεμικούς σκοπούς· ἀκόμη καὶ ὡς ὀρμητήριον τυράννων. Τέλος ὁμως μετεβλήθη εἰς ὑπέροχον ἱερὸν χώρον εἰς τὸν ὁποῖον ἰδρῦθησαν τὰ ἱερὰ τῆς πόλεως τῶν Ἀθηναίων. Εἰς τὰ μέσα τοῦ 5ου αἰῶνος π.Χ. ὁ ἠγετικὸς νοῦς τοῦ Περικλέους συνέλαβε τὸ ὄραμα μιᾶς ἀκροπόλεως σπινθηριζούσης ἑλληνικὸν πνεῦμα καὶ ποιητικὴν μορφήν. Ἡ φύσις ἐδημιούργησε τὸν βράχον αὐτὸν ὡσάν βωμόν, ὡσάν τράπεζαν ἀγίαν, ἀπὸ τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς ὁποίας θὰ ὑψώνοντο πρὸς τὸν καταγάλαζον Ἑλληνικὸν οὐρανόν, μέσα ἀπὸ τὴν τότε κρυσταλλίνην ἀτμόσφαιραν, αἱ ἐπίγειοι κατοικίαι τῶν Θεῶν. Τὴν εἰκόνα αὐτὴν ὠραματίσθη ὁ ἠγετικὸς νοῦς τοῦ Περικλέους καὶ τὴν εἰκόνα αὐτὴν ἀπεφάσισε νὰ πραγματοποιήσῃ. Τὴν φλόγα καὶ τὸν ἐνθουσιασμόν του κατώρθωσε νὰ ἐμφυσήσῃ εἰς τοὺς συγχρόνους του, εἰς τοὺς τεχνίτας, ἐργάτας καὶ καλλιτέχνας, οὕτως ὥστε τὸ ἔργον προῶδενε μὲ ρυθμὸν γοργόν. Καὶ γράφει σχετικὰ ὁ Πλούταρχος : «Ἀναβαινόντων τῶν ἔργων ὑπερηφάνων μὲν μεγέθει, μορφῇ δ' ἀμιμήτων καὶ χάριτι, τῶν δημιουργῶν ἀμιλλωμένων ὑπερβάλλεσθαι τὴν δημοουρίαν τῇ καλλιτεχνίᾳ, μάλιστα θανμάσιον ἦν τὸ τάχος».

Ἡ Ἀκρόπολις δὲν εἶναι μόνον τὸ σύμβολον τοῦ σπινθηροβόλου ἑλληνικοῦ πνεύματος, ἓνα διακοσμητικὸν ἀλλ' ἀδρανὲς στοιχεῖον τοῦ ἑλληνικοῦ ὀρίζοντος. Κατὰ τὴν μακροαῖωνα ζωὴν ἀπὸ τῆς ἰδρύσεως τῶν κτισμάτων της μέχρι σήμερον, ἡ Ἀκρόπολις μετέσχεν ἐνεργῶς τῆς τύχης τοῦ ἔθνους καὶ ἐγνώρισεν ὡς ἐκεῖνο περιόδους ἐξάρσεως καὶ θριάμβου ἀλλὰ καὶ ταπεινώσεων καὶ δυστυχιῶν. Ἡ ἀποχώρησις ἀπὸ τὴν κοινίστραν τῆς ἱστορίας τῶν Θεῶν τοῦ Ὀλύμπου, πὸν ἐπεβλήθη ἴσως διότι εἶχον ἐκπληρώσει τὸν προορισμὸν των, ἔδωσε θέσιν εἰς τὴν ἐπικρατήσαν χριστιανικὴν ἀληθῆ πίστιν καὶ τὰ εἰδωλολατρικά της κτίσματα ἀφιερώθησαν εἰς τὴν λατρείαν τοῦ Χριστοῦ : Ἀντὶ τῆς παρθένου Ἀθηναῖς ἢ Παρθένος Μαρία, ἀντὶ τοῦ Ἐρεχθέως ὁ Ἅγιος Γεώργιος.

Ὅταν οἱ μέλλοντες νὰ ἐλευθερώσουν τοὺς Ἁγίους Τόπους σιδηρόφρακτοι ἰππῶται κατέλαβον τὴν βασιλίδα τῶν πόλεων, τὴν Κωνσταντινούπολιν, τὸ 1204, καὶ ἀπὸ τὴν Ἐπτάλοφον οἱ ψευδοελευθερωταὶ κατέκλυσαν τὴν ἡπειρωτικὴν Ἑλλάδα, ἡ Ἀκρόπολις ἐγνώρισε σταυροφόρους κατακτητὰς, Καταλανούς, Ἀτσαγιόλους, Φράγκους καὶ τὰ ἱερὰ της, ὅπως λέγεται, «φράγκεψαν». Ἀργότερα, ὅταν ἡ Ἑλλὰς ὑπέκλυεν εἰς τὴν πλημμυρίδα τῶν βαρβάρων ἀπὸ τὰ κατὰβθα τῆς Ἀσίας καὶ ἀντὶ τοῦ Σταυροῦ ἐσελάγριεν ἡ ἡμισέληνος ἐπάνω ἀπὸ τὸν Ἱερὸν Βράχον, τὰ ἱερὰ τῆς Ἀκροπόλεως («ἐτούρκεψαν»), γιὰ νὰ ἀποκατασταθοῦν ὡς προσκῆνυμα παγκόσμιον μὲ τὴν ἀνατολὴν τῆς Λευτεριάς πὸν ἠκολούθησε τὸν ξεσηκωμὸ τοῦ 1821. Ἀκόμη καὶ εἰς τοὺς χρόνους μας ὁ βράχος ἐμιάνθη ἀπὸ τὴν σημαίαν τοῦ ἀγκυλωτοῦ σταυροῦ. Συγχρόνως καὶ καθ' ὅλον τὸ διάστημα συνετελέσθησαν ἀλλαγαὶ καὶ κατα-

στροφαι από άγριοιαν ή και από πολεμικόν μένος. Ένθυμούμεθα τόν βομβαρδισμόν και ανάτιναξιν τοῦ Παρθενῶνος τὸ 1687 ἀπὸ τὰ τηλεβόλα τῶν Βενετῶν τοῦ Μοροζίνη· τὴν ανάτιναξιν τῶν Προπυλαίων ἀπὸ τὸν κερανόν τοῦ Ἁγίου Δημητρίου τοῦ Λομβαρδάρη, τὰς ἀρπαγὰς τοῦ Elgin καὶ τῶν συναδέλφων του. Παρ' ὅλας τὰς καταστροφὰς καὶ τὰς ἀτυχίας, τὰ ἐρείπια τῶν κτιρίων τῆς Ἀκροπόλεως μέχρι τῶν χρόνων μας διετήρουν τὴν ιδιότητά πὸς τόσον ὄραϊα καὶ μὲ τόσον ὀλίγα λόγια περιγράφει ὁ Πλούταρχος, ὅταν λέγῃ: «Κάλλει μὲν γὰρ ἕκαστον εὐθὺς ἦν τοτ' ἀρχαῖον, ἀκμῆ δὲ μέχρι νῦν πρόσφατόν ἐστι καὶ νεουργόν· οὕτως ἐπανθεῖ καινότης ἀεὶ τις, ἄθικτον ὑπὸ τοῦ χρόνου διατηροῦσα τὴν ὄψιν, ὥσπερ ἀειθαλὲς πνεῦμα καὶ ψυχὴν ἀγίρω καταμεμειγμένην τῶν ἔργων ἐχόντων»).

Αυστηρῶς εἰς τοὺς χρόνους μας τὸ ἀειθαλὲς πνεῦμα καὶ ἡ ἀγίρω ψυχὴ ἤρχισε νὰ μαραίνεται καὶ νὰ φθείρεται μὲ τὴν ἐπέμβασιν τῆς λεγομένης τεχνικῆς προόδου καὶ τῆς ἐπιστημονικῆς δομῆς τῆς διαβιώσεως τῶν νεωτέρων ἀνθρώπων, πὸς ἔχουν τὴν θεῖαν τύχην νὰ ζοῦν ὑπὸ τὴν σκιά τῆς Ἀκροπόλεως. Ἡ ἐπερχομένη καὶ συνεχιζομένη φθορὰ ἐπεσημάνθη πρὸ πολλοῦ ὑπὸ ἐπιστημόνων καὶ ἐρευνητῶν, ἰδίᾳ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρχαιολόγων πὸς εἶχαν τὴν εὐθύνην καὶ τὸ προνόμιον τῆς διαφυλάξεως τῶν ἱερῶν της. Μέχρι πρὸ ὀλίγου ὑπῆρχον καὶ οἱ ἀρνούμενοι τὴν φθορὰν καὶ οἱ ἀναλίσκοντες τὸν καιρὸν τῶν εἰς ἀτελειώτους μωρολογίας. Μικρὰς ἐπεμβάσεις καὶ ἐνισχύσεις ἀπολεπιζομένων μελῶν, καὶ μάλιστα ὑπὸ τὸ βάρος παρανοήσεων καὶ κατηγοριῶν ἀκόμη, ἐπεχείρουν κατὰ καιροὺς οἱ ὀλίγοι ἐπιστήμονες, οἱ πιστοὶ φύλακες. Θετικὰ ὅμως καὶ τελεσίδικα μέτρα δὲν ἐλαμβάνοντο. Ἀδράνεια περιέβαλλε τὴν Ἀκρόπολιν καὶ τὰς ἀνάγκας της μέχρι τῶν ἡμερῶν μας. Τὸ 1975 ὁ συνάδελφος κ. Κωνστ. Τρυπάνης, τότε Ὑπουργὸς τοῦ Πολιτισμοῦ καὶ Ἐπιστημῶν, ἀπεφάσισε νὰ ἀντικρῶσῃ τὴν κατάστασιν μὲ τρόπον θετικόν καὶ νὰ τὴν θεραπεύσῃ εἰ δυνατόν. Εἰς τὴν προσπάθειάν του αὐτὴν ἐμπνευστὴν συνεργὸν εἶχε τὸν τότε καὶ νῦν πρωθυπουργὸν κ. Κωνστ. Καραμανλῆν, τοῦ ὁποίου τὸ ἐνδιαφέρον διὰ τὴν Ἀκρόπολιν ἦτο ἐξ ἴσου ἀμιγὲς καὶ ὀλόφρον. Τὴν 22αν Φεβρουαρίου τοῦ 1975 συνεκλήθη μεγάλη ἐπιτροπὴ εἰδικῶν, ἡ ὁποία ὑπὸ τὴν προεδρίαν τοῦ ὑπουργοῦ κ. Τρυπάνη ἔθεσε τὰ θεμέλια καὶ ἐχάραξε τὴν κατευθυντήριον γραμμὴν διὰ τὴν ἀνάληψιν τοῦ ἔργου τῆς διασώσεως. Ἀπεφασίσθη τότε νὰ ὀρισθῇ ὀλιγομελὴς («Ὁμὰς Ἐργασίας διὰ τὴν Συντήρησιν τῆς Ἀκροπόλεως»), ὡς ὀνομάσθη, ἡ ὁποία νὰ ἀναλάβῃ τὴν ἀναγκαίαν μελέτην. Τὴν 31ην Μαρτίου 1975 ὀρίσθησαν τὰ μέλη τῆς ἐπιτροπῆς πὸς ἀποτελεῖτο ἀπὸ τὸν ἀείμνηστον Ἰωάννην Μηλιάδην ὡς πρόεδρον, τὸν Γεώργιον Δοντᾶν, Διευθυντὴν τῆς Ἀκροπόλεως, τὸν Χαράλ. Μπούραν, Καθηγητὴν τῆς Ἱστορίας τῆς Ἀρχιτεκτονικῆς τοῦ Ε.Μ.Π., τὸν Θεόδ. Σκουλικίδην, Καθηγητὴν τῆς Φυσιοχημείας καὶ Ἐφηρμοσμένης Ἠλεκτροχημείας τοῦ Ε.Μ.Π., τὸν Ἰωάν-

νην Τραυλόν, Καθηγητήν Ἀρχαιολογίας καὶ Ἀρχιτεκτονικῆς καὶ τὸν Ἴω. Χρο-
νόπουλον ὡς γραμματέα. Βραδύτερον ἡ ὁμὰς διηρουνθῆ μετὴν συμμετοχὴν τῶν
Καθηγητῶν Νικ. Πλάτωνος καὶ Σ. Ἀγγελίδη, Καθηγητοῦ τῆς Δομικῆς Μηχανι-
κῆς τοῦ Ε.Μ.Π., τοὺς ἐκάστοτε Γενικοὺς Ἐπιθεωρητὰς Ἀρχαιοτήτων — τοῦ Δημ.
Λαζαρίδη καὶ τοῦ Νικ. Γιαλούρη καὶ τοῦ προϊσταμένου τοῦ τμήματος ἀναστηλώ-
σεων Ἰορδ. Δημακοπούλου. Ἀκόμη ἀργότερον προσετέθησαν εἰς τὴν ὁμάδα ὁ
Καθηγητῆς τοῦ Πολυτεχνείου τῆς Μεταλλογνωσίας κ. Κωνστ. Κονοφάγος, ὁ κ. Π.
Ραυτόπουλος, ὁ Ἀκαδημαϊκὸς Γ. Ε. Μυλωνᾶς καὶ ἡ ἀρχαιολόγος κα Μαλλούχου.
Ἡ Ὅμὰς ἐπλαισιώθη ἀπὸ 6 μικροτέρας ὁμάδας νέων ἐπιστημόνων, μετὰ συ-
λικὸν ἀριθμὸν 25¹. Κατὰ καιροὺς δὲ ἐνισχύθη εἰς τὸ ἔργον τῆς ἀπὸ συναδέλφους
διαφόρων εἰδικότητων ἀνήκοντας εἰς τὸ Πολυτεχνεῖον, τὸ Κέντρον Πυρηνικῶν
Ἐρευνῶν («Δημόκριτος»), τὸ Ἰνστιτοῦτον Γεωλογικῶν Πετρολογικῶν Ἐρευνῶν καὶ
καλλιτέχνας τοῦ Ἐθνικοῦ Ἀρχαιολογικοῦ Μουσείου².

Ἡ Ὅμὰς Ἐργασίας μετὰ ζῆλον καὶ ἐνθουσιασμὸν ἐπελήφθη τοῦ ἔργου τῆς ὑπὸ
τὴν Προεδρίαν καὶ καθοδήγησιν τοῦ ἀειμνήστου Γιάννη Μηλιάδη. Ὁ θάνατος τοῦ
Γιάννη Μηλιάδη, τὸν Σεπτέμβριον τοῦ 1975, ἐστέρησε τὴν Ἐπιτροπὴν διακεκρι-
μένου συναδέλφου καὶ σοφοῦ συμβούλου. Τοῦτον διεδέχθη ὁ Καθηγητῆς Νικ. Πλά-
τωνος ποὺ προηόρηνεν ἐπιτυχῶς τῆς Ἐπιτροπῆς μέχρι τοῦ Ἰανουαρίου 1978, ὅποτε
αἱ ὑποχρεώσεις του εἰς τὸ Πανεπιστήμιον τῆς Κρήτης τὸν ἠνάγκασαν νὰ παραι-
τηθῆ. Τὸν διεδέχθη ὁ Ἀκαδημαϊκὸς Γ. Ε. Μυλωνᾶς. Ἐν τῷ μεταξύ ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἰεροῦ

1. Ἀρχιτέκτονες : Β. Καρκάνης, Μ. Κορρές, Ἀ. Λαζαρίδου, Ἡ. Μοντόπουλος,
Ἀ. Παπανικολάου, Α. Τζᾶκου καὶ Τ. Τανούλας.

Μαρμαροτεχνίτες : Γ. Ἀλιμπέρτης, Γ. Βίδος, Ἰ. Δουκάκος, Θ. Σκαρῆς,
Μ. Σκαρῆς καὶ Ν. Σκαρῆς μετὰ τοὺς βοηθοὺς Ν. Βαζαῖον καὶ Γ. Γιασαφάκη.

Πολιτικοὶ μηχανικοὶ : Κ. Ζάμπας, Μ. Ἰωαννίδου καὶ Δ. Μονοκροῦσος.

Χημικοὶ μηχανικοὶ : Ν. Μπελογιάννης, Ε. Παπακωνσταντίνου καὶ Δ. Χαρα-
λάμπους.

2. Δρ. Ἀνδρονόπουλος, Δ/ντῆς Τεχν. Γεωλογίας ΙΓΜΕ καὶ Δρ. Γ. Κούκης, Γεωλόγος
τοῦ ΙΓΜΕ.

Καθ. ΕΜΠ, Π. Θεοχάρης.

Καθ. ΕΜΠ, Θ. Τάσιος καὶ Χ. Οἰκονόμου.

Δ. Χατζηανδρέου καὶ Μ. Σ. Λαδόπουλος τοῦ Πυρην. Κέντρον Ἐρευνῶν «Δημόκριτος».
Μηχανολόγοι - Ἡλεκτρολόγοι : Ἀ. Ι. Καλαμπάκας καὶ Θ. Πρωτοπαπᾶς.

Καθ. ΕΜΠ, Ν. Κουμουτσός.

Καθ. ΕΜΠ, Ἰ. Μπαντέκας.

Μουσειακοὶ καλλιτέχνηαι : Ὁ γλύπτης Σ. Τριάντης καὶ βοηθοὶ Χ. Ἀλετριᾶς,
Μ. Κουτσογιάννης, Γ. Μαλαματίδης.

Βράχον τῆς Ἀκροπόλεως ἠκούσθη ἡ φωνή τοῦ Γενικοῦ Γραμματέως τῆς UNESCO κυρίου Mahtar M' Bow, καλοῦσα τὸν πεπολιτισμένον κόσμον εἰς συναγερομὸν συμβολῆς διὰ τὴν σωτηρίαν τῶν μνημείων τῆς Ἀκροπόλεως.

Ἐδῶ θὰ μοῦ ἐπιτραπῆ νὰ ἐκφράσω καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ βήματος τῆς Ἀκαδημίας τὸν θαυμασμόν μου διὰ τὸ ἔργον ποὺ ἐπετελέσθη ἀπὸ τὴν Ὀμάδα ἐργασίας τῆς Ἀκροπόλεως. Τοῦτο δὲ δύναμαι ἐλευθέρως νὰ τὸ κάμω, διότι ἐγὼ προσωπικῶς πολὺ ὀλίγα προσέφερα εἰς τὸ μνημειῶδες ἔργον τῆς μελέτης των, ποὺ εἶχε σχεδὸν συμπληρωθῆ κατὰ τὴν περίοδον τῆς προεδρίας τοῦ Γιάννη Μηλιαδῆ καὶ τοῦ καθηγητοῦ κ. Πλάτωνος. Ὁ ζῆλος, ὁ ἐνθουσιασμός καὶ ἡ ἀφοσίωσις εἰς τὸ ἔργον τῶν συναδέλφων αὐτῶν εἶναι ἀπαράμιλλος. Τὸ παράδειγμά των ἐνέπνεε καὶ συνεχίζει νὰ ἐμπνέῃ τὸ λοιπὸν προσωπικόν, ἡ ἐργασία τοῦ ὁποίου εἶναι θαυμαστή. Ἀκόμη πρόπει νὰ ἐξάρω τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς συνεργασίας ποὺ ἐπικρατεῖ, συνεργασία ποὺ εὐρῆκα σπανίως εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα, καὶ νὰ τονίσω μὲ ὅλην τὴν δύναμίν μου τὴν σπουδαιότητα καὶ τὴν μεγάλην ἀξίαν τοῦ ἐπιτελεσθέντος καὶ ἐπιτελουμένου ἔργου. Ἡ πατρις ὀφείλει ἔπαινον, τὸν ὑψηλότερον δυνατόν, εἰς τοὺς ἐπιστήμονας καὶ συνεργάτας των ποὺ ἀνιδιοτελῶς καὶ ἀθορύβως ἐργάζονται μὲ αὐτοθυσίαν πραγματικὴν, πολλὰκις δεχόμενοι τὴν κριτικὴν ἀνιδέων ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐπιστημόνων ἀποβλεπόντων εἰς ἴδια ὀφέλη.

Βασικὴν ἀνάγκην καὶ ἀπαραίτητον προϋπόθεσιν δι' ὁποιαδήποτε ἐπέμβασις μικρὰν ἢ μεγάλην, ἀπετέλει ἡ τεκμηρίωσις καὶ διάγνωσις τῆς καταστάσεως τῶν μνημείων τῆς Ἀκροπόλεως καὶ ἡ ἐργασία αὐτὴ ἐγένετο ὑπὸ τὴν ἐποπτείαν τοῦ κ. Μπούρα καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν μελῶν τῆς ὁμάδος. Ἀνελήφθη καὶ ἐπερατώθη μελέτη εἰς βάθος, λεπτομερειακὴ μελέτη ἱστορικὴ, ἀρχαιολογικὴ, ἀρχιτεκτονικὴ, χημικὴ καὶ τεχνικὴ. Ἀκόμη ἐμελετήθησαν τὰ προβλήματα ποὺ παρουσιάζουν τὰ μνημεῖα καὶ διετυπώθησαν λύσεις. Ἡ ἐργασία αὐτὴ ἀπέδειξεν ὅτι ὅλα τὰ κτίρια τῆς Ἀκροπόλεως παρουσιάζουν φθορὰν καὶ πιθανότητα μερικῆς ἢ καὶ ὀλικῆς καταρρέσεως, ἀλλ' εὐθὺς ἐξ ἀρχῆς κατεφάνη ὅτι τὸ Ἐρέχθειον εἶχεν ἀνάγκην ἀμέσου προστασίας καὶ ἐπεμβάσεως διὰ νὰ ἐπιβιώσῃ. Διὰ τοῦτο ἡ προσοχὴ καὶ προσπάθεια τῶν μελῶν τῆς Ὀμάδος Ἐργασίας καὶ τῶν συνεργατῶν συνεκεντρώθη εἰς τὴν μελέτην τῶν ἀναγκῶν καὶ τῶν προβλημάτων ποὺ παρουσιάζει τὸ μνημεῖον αὐτό.

Εἰς διάστημα ὀλιγότερον τῶν δύο ἐτῶν ἡ μελέτη διὰ τὸ Ἐρέχθειον συμπληρώθη καὶ τὸ 1977 ἐδημοσιεύθη ὀγκώδης τόμος, 620 μεγάλων σελίδων, ποὺ περιλαμβάνει πλήρη ἀνάλυσιν τῆς καταστάσεως, τῆς φθορᾶς καὶ τῶν ἀναγκῶν τοῦ μνημείου. Ἀπὸ τὴν μελέτην ἐκείνην ἐλήφθησαν, ἐνίοτε δὲ διατυποῦνται καὶ αὐτολεξεῖ, αἱ λεπτομέρειαι ποὺ ἀναφέρω εἰς τὴν ὁμιλίαν μου. Τὸ γενικὸν συμπέρασμα: Ἐπιβάλλεται ἡ ἀποξήλωσις μέρους τοῦλάχιστον τοῦ Ἐρεχθείου καὶ ἡ ἀπο-

κατάστασίς του, ή προσωρινή απομάκρυνσις τῶν Καρνατίδων καὶ ή ἐπανίδρουσις εἰς τήν θέσιν των εὐθὺς ὡς ἐπιτρέψουν αἱ τεχνικαὶ συνθήκαι. Δὲν κατέληξεν ή ἐπιτροπή εἰς τὸ συμπέρασμα αὐτὸ μὲ ἐλαφρὰν συνείδησιν ἀλλὰ μὲ δέος καὶ μὲ πλήρη κατανόησιν τῶν αἰτίων καὶ τῶν συνεπειῶν. Θὰ μοῦ ἐπιτραπῆ νὰ ἐπαναλάβω ἐδῶ μερικὰ λόγια τοῦ Διευθυντοῦ τῆς Ἀκροπόλεως καὶ μέλους τῆς ομάδος κ. Γ. Δοντᾶ πὸν ἐκφράζουν καλλίτερα ἀπὸ κάθε τι τήν ψυχικὴν ἀγωνίαν τῶν ἀρχαιολόγων καὶ τῶν ἐπιστημόνων πὸν μετέχουν τοῦ ἔργου. Λέγει ὁ κ. Δοντᾶς : «Ὡστε ἀλήθεια, προτείνουμε ἕνα ἀπὸ τὰ ἀριστουργήματα τῆς ἀρχαίας τέχνης, στημένο ἐκεῖ στὸν Ἱερὸ Βράχο πρὶν 2500 χρόνια, νὰ διαλυθῆ σήμερα μὲ τὰ ἴδια μας τὰ χέρια, κ' ἕνα μέρος του, ἀπὸ τὰ πιὸ σημαντικά, οἱ πασίγνωστες Καρνάτιδες, ν' ἀντικατασταθοῦν μὲ ἀντίγραφα ; Καὶ μόνο πὸν ξεστομίζει κανεὶς τὸ ἐρώτημα αὐτὸ νοιώθει δέος στὴν ψυχὴ του. Εὐθὺς συνειδητοποιεῖ ὁ καθένας, ὅτι ή κατάσταση τοῦ μνημείου θὰ εἶναι ἰδιαίτερα σοβαρὴ γιὰ νὰ διατυπώνεται μιὰ τόσο τολμηρὴ πρόταση. Πράγματι οἱ εἰδικοί βεβαιώνουν, ὅτι ἂν δὲν ληφθοῦν ἄμεσα καὶ δραστικὰ μέτρα, τὸ κτίριον θὰ πεθάνει πολὺ σύντομα ἀπὸ διάφορα αἷτια». Ἴσως νὰ ὑπάρχουν ἀκόμη καὶ ἐκεῖνοι πὸν λέγουν ὅτι δὲν πρέπει νὰ γίνῃ ἐγχείρησις εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον, ὅτι αἱ Καρνάτιδες πρέπει νὰ ἀφεθοῦν εἰς τήν θέσιν των παρὰ τήν φθορὰν πὸν ὑφίστανται. «Ἄν ἤλθε λέγουν ή ὥρα των νὰ πεθάνουν, ἄς πεθάνουν». Ξεχνοῦν ὁμως τὰς ὑποχρεώσεις πὸν ἔχομεν νὰ διαφυλάξωμεν ὡς κόρην ὀφθαλμοῦ τήν ἱερωτέραν πολιτιστικὴν παρακαταθήκην μας.

Μὲ κατάνυξιν, μὲ δέος, μὲ πλήρη ἐπίγνωσιν τῶν ὑποχρεώσεών των τὰ μέλη τῆς Ὀμάδος ἀποκαταστάσεως τοῦ Ἐρεχθείου κατέληξαν εἰς τὰ συμπεράσματά των, τὰ ὁποῖα υἰοθέτησεν ή Πολιτεία καὶ ἀπεφάσισε τήν ὑλοποίησίν των. Προτοῦ γίνῃ οἰαδήποτε ἐπέμβασις εἰς τὸ κτίριον, ή Ὀμάς Ἐργασίας ἀπέστειλεν ἀντίτυπα τῆς μελέτης εἰς διακεκριμένους ἐπιστήμονας καὶ ἱστορικούς τοῦ δυτικοῦ μας κόσμου διὰ τήν ἐνημέρωσιν καὶ ἐποικοδομητικὴν κριτικὴν των. Ἡ Πολιτεία δέ, ἐν συνεργασίᾳ μὲ τὸ Προεδρεῖον τῆς UNESCO, συνεκάλεσε Διεθνῆ Συνάντησιν εἰς τὰς Ἀθήνας τὸν Δεκέμβριον τοῦ 1977, εἰς τήν ὁποίαν ἐτέθησαν ὑπὸ διεθνῆ ἐπιστημονικὸν ἔλεγχον ή μελέτη καὶ τὰ προτεινόμενα ὑπὸ τῆς Ὀμάδος τῆς Ἀκροπόλεως. Κατόπιν τριήμερον μελέτης καὶ συζητήσεως, Δεκεμβρίου 8 - 10, οἱ σύνεδροι, κορυφαῖοι ἐπιστήμονες ἀντιπροσωπεύοντες τὰ πολιτισμένα κράτη τοῦ δυτικοῦ μας κόσμου, ἐνέκριναν παμπηφει τὰ συμπεράσματα τῆς Ὀμάδος Ἐργασίας καὶ τὸν ὑπ' ἐκείνης προτεινόμενον τρόπον ἔργασίας. Ἐργράφη δὲ εἰς τὰ Πρακτικὰ τοῦ Συνεδρίου : «Οἱ προσκεκλημένοι εἰς τήν Συνάντησιν συγχαίρουν τοὺς Ἕλληνας συναδέλφους των διὰ τήν ἐπιστημονικότητα καὶ τὸ βάθος τῆς μελέτης, πὸν πραγματοποίησαν πάνω στὸ ἱστορικὸ καὶ στῆ σημερινὴ κατάσταση ἐνὸς μέρους τοῦ Ἐρε-

χθείον. Πιστεύουν ότι η μελέτη αυτή μπορεί να καθιερωθῆ σὰν ὑπόδειγμα γιὰ τὶς μελλοντικὲς ἀναστηλώσεις σ' ὁλόκληρο τὸν κόσμον. Μὲ τὴν ἐπιστημονικὴ ἀσθηρότητά της, τὴ θεοντολογία της καὶ τὴν πιστότητά της στὶς ἀρχὲς τοῦ Χάρτη τῆς Βενετίας, ἐξασφαλίζει τὴν ἀμεσότητα καὶ τὴν ποιότητα τῶν ἐπεμβάσεων συντηρήσεως, πὸν ἀπαιτεῖ ἡ σωτηρία τοῦ μνημείου». Ἀκόμη καὶ κατόπιν τῆς πανηγυρικῆς ἐγκρίσεως τῆς μελέτης καὶ τῶν συμπερασμάτων ὑπὸ τῶν διεθνῶς φήμης ἐπιστημόνων, ἀκόμη καὶ τώρα τίποτε δὲν γίνεται χωρὶς νὰ μελετηθοῦν καὶ ἐξονυχισθοῦν τὰ προβλήματα πὸν ἀναφέρονται διαρκῶς κατὰ τὴν περίοδον τῶν ἐργασιῶν. Κυριολεκτικῶς πέτρα δὲν μετακινεῖται χωρὶς τεκμηρίωσιν, χωρὶς μελέτην, χωρὶς συζήτησιν. Κάθε ἐπέμβασις, μετακίνησις, συμπλήρωσις ὑποβάλλεται τελικὰ εἰς τὸ Ἀρχαιολογικὸν Συμβούλιον τοῦ Ἑπουργείου πρὸς ἐγκρισιν καὶ αὐτὴ μεταβάλλεται εἰς δημιουργίαν μὲ τὴν ὑπογραφήν καὶ κατάνευσιν τοῦ Ἑπουργοῦ Πολιτισμοῦ καὶ Ἐπιστημῶν. Πρέπει ὅμως νὰ σημειωθῆ ὅτι τὸν ὄργανισμὸν τῆς περιόδου πὸν προηγήθη τῆς Συναντήσεως τοῦ Δεκεμβρίου, ἠκολούθησε καιρὸς ἀβεβαιότητος καὶ σχετικῆς ἀδραναίας, διότι προέκυψεν ἡ ἀνάγκη τῆς οἰκονομικῆς ἐξασφαλίσεως τοῦ ἔργου. Τύχη ἀγαθῆ, τὸ ἐνδιαφέρον τοῦ Πρωθυπουργοῦ κ. Κωνστ. Καραμανλῆ καὶ ἡ παρουσία εἰς τὸ Ἑπουργεῖον Πολιτισμοῦ καὶ Ἐπιστημῶν τοῦ Ἑπουργοῦ κ. Δημ. Νιάνια ὑπερενίκησαν τὰς δυσκολίας, ἀντικατέστησαν τὴν ἀδράναϊαν μὲ ἐνεργειαν καὶ ἐχάρισαν ταχὺν ρυθμὸν εἰς τὴν ἐκτέλεσιν τοῦ ἔργου. Ἡ προσφυγὴ μας εἰς τὸν κ. Ἑπουργὸν εἶναι συνεχῆς καὶ ἡ βοήθειά του ἀμέριστος καὶ συνεπής. Ὡς ἐκ τούτου σήμερον δυνάμεθα νὰ παρουσιάσωμεν σημαντικὴν πρόοδον εἰς τὸ ἔργον τῆς ἀναστηλώσεως καὶ ἀποκαταστάσεως τοῦ Ἑρεχθείου. Τὸ ὀργανωτικὸν σχῆμα τῆς ἐκτελέσεως ἦτο ἔτοιμον πρὸς τὸ τέλος τοῦ 1978· τότε ἐτελειοποιήθη τὸ χρονοδιάγραμμα τῶν ἐργασιῶν, ὑπεβλήθη καὶ ἐνεκρίθη ὁ προϋπολογισμὸς τῆς ἐκτελέσεως τοῦ ὅλου ἔργου, τὰ προπαρασκευαστικὰ στάδια τοῦ ὁποίου ἤρχισαν τὸ 1979. Διευθυντὴς τῆς ἐκτελέσεως τῆς ἀναστηλώσεως τοῦ Ἑρεχθείου καὶ ὑπεύθυνος τοῦ ἔργου, πάντοτε ὑπὸ τὴν ἐποπτείαν τῆς Ὀμάδος, ἡ ὁποία τότε ὠνομάσθη Ἐπιτροπὴ, ὠρίσθη ὁ κ. Ἀλ. Παπανικολάου, τῆς Διευθύνσεως τῆς Ἀκροπόλεως ἀντιπροσωπευομένης ὑπὸ τῆς ἀρχαιολόγου κας Μπρούσκαρη.

Ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα μνημεῖα τοῦ ἱεροῦ βράχου δὲν παραμελοῦνται. Μία διαρκῆς πληγὴ καὶ παραφωνία, ἡ ἄνοδος καὶ αἱ διαβάσεις τῆς Ἀκροπόλεως τυγχάνουν εἰδικῆς μερίμνης ὑπὸ τὰς ὀδηγίας τοῦ κ. Ἰωάννου Τραυλοῦ. Ἔτσι καὶ οἱ ἐπισκέπται δύνανται τώρα νὰ θαυμάζουν τὰ κτίρια, χωρὶς νὰ κατατρέχονται ἀπὸ τὸν φόβον καὶ τὸν κίνδυνον διὰ τὰ βήματά των, καὶ πολῦτιμα ἔχγη λαξευμάτων εἰς τὸν βράχον καὶ αὐτὴ ἡ ἐπιφάνεια τοῦ βράχου δὲν θὰ καταστρέφονται τοῦ λοιποῦ.

Ἐνα τμήμα τῆς κλίμακος πρὸ τῶν Προπυλαίων ἐκαλύφθη μὲ ξύλον, ἐνῶ αἱ διαβάσεις μὲ ὕλικὸν ἀνθεκτικὸν τῆς χρήσεως. Διὰ τὰ Προπύλαια, πού μᾶς αἰφνιδιάζουν ἀπὸ καιροῦ εἰς καιρὸν μὲ καταπτώσεις μαρμάρων των, ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος γίνονται ἀπὸ τὴν ἀρχιτέκτονα καὶ Α. Τζάκου συστηματικαὶ ἀποτυπώσεις καὶ μετρήσεις τῶν παραμορφώσεων, πού διάφοροι φθοροποιοὶ αἰτίαι ἐπέφεραν.

Καὶ ὁ Παρθενῶν ἀπασχολεῖ ἴδιον προσωπικὸν ὑπὸ τὸν ἀρχιτέκτονα κ. Μαν. Κορρέν. Ἡ ἀντοχὴ τῶν τοίχων καὶ τῶν κιόνων του, πού παρουσιάζουν βλάβας ἀπὸ παλαιὰς πυρκαϊὰς, ἐλέγχονται μὲ τὴν βοήθειαν γραμμογραφιῶν καὶ ὑπερήχων (ὑπὸ τοῦ καθηγητοῦ τοῦ Πολυτεχνείου κ. Θ. Τασίου) καὶ μελετῶνται σοβαρὰι φθοραὶ καὶ ζημίαι πού φανερώθηκαν εἰς τὰ γεῖσα καὶ τὸν θριγκὸν τῆς νοτιοανατολικῆς γωνίας τοῦ αἰωνίου κτιρίου. Διὰ τὴν μελέτην τῶν ζημιῶν καὶ τῆς φθορᾶς εἶχεν ἰδρυθῆ εἰς τὴν νοτιοανατολικὴν ἐκείνην γωνίαν σκαλωσιά, ἡ ὁποία, θεία τύχη, ἐβοήθησε νὰ διασωθῆ τεμάχιον τριγλύφου πού εἶχεν ἀποσχισθῆ ἀπὸ τὴν θέσιν του καὶ ἀσφαλῶς θὰ κατεκρημνίζετο καὶ θὰ ἐθρυμματίζετο, ἐὰν δὲν συνενκρατεῖτο ἀπὸ αὐτήν.

Μέχρι τῶν ἡμερῶν μας διετηρεῖτο εἰς τὸ Δυτικὸν Ἀέτωμα τοῦ Παρθενῶνος γλυπτὸν σύμπλεγμα γνωστὸν ὡς σύμπλεγμα Κέρκροπος καὶ Καλλιρρόης. Ἡ φθορὰ τὴν ὁποίαν ὑφίστατο ἐπέβαλλε τὴν μεταφορὰν τοῦ γλυπτοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς χῶρον μὲ κλιματισμόν. Τοῦτο καὶ ἐγένετο. Ἐν τῷ μεταξὺ εἶχε διαπιστωθῆ ὅτι, πλὴν τῆς ἄλλης φθορᾶς, τὸ μάρμαρον τοῦ συμπλέγματος προσβάλλεται ἀπὸ μικροσκοπικοὺς ὄργανισμούς, ἀπὸ βακτηρίδια μαρμαροφάγα, πού, λόγω τῆς ρυπάνσεως τῆς ἀτμοσφαιράς, πολλαπλασιάζονται μὲ καταπληκτικὸν ρυθμόν. Παρατηρήσεις ἀπέδειξαν ὅτι εἰς τὸ μάρμαρον τοῦ συμπλέγματος ζοῦν καὶ τὸ καταστρέφουν 50.000 - 80.000 βακτηρίδια κατὰ γραμμάριον, ἐνῶ εἰς τοὺς κίονας τοῦ Παρθενῶνος τὰ μαρμαροφάγα αὐτὰ βακτηρίδια ἀνέρχονται εἰς 2.000.000 - 7.000.000 κατὰ γραμμάριον. Ἐπειδὴ δὲν ἔχομεν ἐδῶ τὰ ἀπαιτούμενα ἐργαστήρια, παρεκλήθησαν οἱ Ἴταλοι καθηγηταὶ κ. Paleni καὶ Curri νὰ βοηθήσουν. Τοὺς ἐδόθησαν δείγματα μικροσκοπικὰ τῶν μαρμάρων καὶ εἰς τὰ ἐργαστήριά των κατώρθωσαν νὰ ἐπιτύχουν ἐργαστηριακὴν καλλιέργειαν τῶν βακτηριδίων. Ἐπεσήμαναν τὰ εἶδη τῶν μικροοργανισμῶν, πού κατατρῶγουν τὸ μάρμαρον, καὶ εὑρέθηκαν τὴν κατάλληλον οὐσίαν διὰ τὴν ἀποτελεσματικὴν καταπολέμησιν τῶν φθοροποιῶν αὐτῶν βακτηριδίων. Αὐτὸ γίνεται τώρα· τὸ σύμπλεγμα ὅμως ἔπρεπε νὰ καταβιβασθῆ ἀπὸ τὴν θέσιν του καὶ νὰ φυλαχθῆ εἰς κλειστὸν κλιματιζόμενον μὲ ἄζωτον χῶρον. Καὶ αὕτη ἡ ἐργασία ἐγένετο καὶ ὁ Κέρκροψ καὶ ἡ Καλλιρρόη φυλάσσονται εἰς τὸ Μουσεῖον.

Ἀπὸ τὸν Αὔγουστον τοῦ 1977 μία ἀκόμη προσπάθεια καταβάλλεται εἰς τὴν βόρειον κλιτὸν τῆς Ἀκροπόλεως ἐπάνω ἀπὸ τὰ Ἀναφιώτικα. Καταστροφικὰ ΠΑΑ 1980

κός κίνδυνος επικρέμαται τῆς κατοικημένης περιοχῆς, ἀπὸ κατάρρευσιν βράχων ποὺ τὰ νερά καὶ αἱ ρίζαι δένδρων ὑπονομεύουν. Ἡ στερέωσις τῶν βράχων εἶναι ἀπαραίτητος καὶ αὐτὴν ἐπιχειρεῖ συνεργεῖον ὑπὸ τὸν βραχολόγον κ. Μ. Ἀρβανιτάκη, τὸν πολιτικὸν μηχανικὸν κ. Δ. Μονοκροῦσον καὶ τὸν πολέπειρον ἐργοδηγὸν κ. Ἐν. Φεργαδιώτην. Ἐλπίζεται ὅτι καὶ τὸ ἔργον αὐτὸ θὰ περαιωθῇ ἄνευ ἀπενεκαίου, ὅπως ἐπερατώθη καὶ ἡ ἀποκάλυψις τοῦ ἀρχαίου «Περιπάτου» ὑπὸ τὴν διεύθυνσιν τοῦ κ. Τραυλοῦ.

Καιρὸς νὰ ἐπιστρέψωμεν εἰς τὸ Ἐρεχθεῖον καὶ τὴν σπουδαιωτάτην ἐργασίαν ποὺ ἐπιτελεῖται ἐκεῖ, ὑπὸ τὴν διεύθυνσιν τοῦ κ. Παπανικολάου, ὑπὸ ἐξόχων τεχνιτῶν μαρμαράδων. Εὐθὺς ἐξ ἀρχῆς πρέπει νὰ τονισθῇ ὅτι ἡ σημερινὴ ἐπέμβασις δὲν εἶναι ἡ πρώτη ποὺ ἔγινεν εἰς τὴν μακρὰν ἱστορίαν τοῦ κτιρίου. Ἀκόμη καὶ εἰς Ρωμαϊκοὺς χρόνους ἐγένοντο ἐπισκευαὶ κακόγουστοι, εἰς δὲ τοὺς χριστιανικοὺς χρόνους διερρηθμίσθη διαφόρως τὸ ἐσωτερικὸν τοῦ ναοῦ. Μετὰ τὴν ἀπελευθέρωσιν ἀνοικοδομητικαὶ ἐργασίαι ἐγένοντο ἀπὸ τὸν Πιπτάκη κατὰ τὰ ἔτη 1838 ἕως 1846. Διὰ τὰς ἐργασίας αὐτὰς ἐχρησιμοποιήθησαν ἑτερόκλητα ὕλικα καὶ σιδηροὶ συνδετήρες. Ἰδίᾳ ἡ ἐργασία αὐτὴ εἶναι καταφανὴς εἰς τὸ ἐσωτερικὸν τοῦ Ἐρεχθείου, ποὺ εἶχε κατασκαφῆ καὶ ἀλλοιωθῆ πολὺ προγενεστέρως. Τὰ ὑποστηρίγματα τοῦ Πιπτάκη, ὅπου ἐτέθησαν βεβαίως, ἠλλοίωσαν τὰς εὐθυντηρίους γραμμὰς τοῦ ἀρχικοῦ οἰκοδομήματος. Μεγαλυτέρα φιλότιμος προσπάθεια διὰ τὴν στερέωσιν καὶ ἀνοικοδόμησιν τοῦ κτιρίου κατεβλήθη ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀειμνήστου συναδέλφου Ν. Μπαλάνου, ποὺ εἰργάσθη ἐντατικὰ πρὸς τὸν σκοπὸν αὐτὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ 1902 μέχρι καὶ τοῦ 1930. Τότε κατεβιβάσθησαν ἀπὸ τὰς θέσεις των καὶ πάλιν ὑψώθησαν εἰς αὐτὰς τμήματα τοῦ κτιρίου. Ὡστε ἡ ἐργασία ποὺ γίνεται σήμερον δὲν εἶναι πρωτοφανὴς, γίνεται ὁμως μὲ τὸν ἐπιστημονικώτερον δυνατὸν τρόπον. Καὶ πρῶτον ἐπεσημάνθησαν αἱ φθοραὶ καὶ αἱ ζημίαι τῶν μελῶν τοῦ κτιρίου, ποὺ ἐπιμελῶς ἀπετυπώθησαν. Αἱ ζημίαι αὐταὶ προῆλθον κατὰ κύριον λόγον ἀπὸ δύο αἰτίας.

Πρῶτον: Οἱ σύνδεσμοι ἀπὸ σίδηρον ἀκόμη καὶ ἀπὸ ὀρείχαλκον, αἱ σιδηραῖ ράβδοι καὶ αἱ σιδηραῖ δοκοὶ ποὺ ἐχρησιμοποιήθησαν χωρὶς μολυβδοχόσην κατὰ τὰς ἀναστηλώσεις, ὠξειδώθησαν μὲ τὸν καιρὸν. Ἡ ὀξείδωσις αὐτὴ ἐπεταχύνθη κατὰ τὰ τελευταῖα χρόνια ἐξ αἰτίας τῆς ἀτμοσφαιρικῆς ρυπάνσεως. Τὴν ὀξείδωσιν αὐτὴν κατὰ φυσικὴν συνέπειαν ἠκολούθησεν ἡ διάβρωσις καὶ ἡ διόγκωσις τῶν μεταλλικῶν στοιχείων καὶ ἡ κατάλυσις τῆς ἀνοχῆς τοῦ μαρμαροῦ. Ἐπηκολούθησαν ρηγματώσεις, ἀνύψωσις δομικῶν στοιχείων, ἀποκολλήσεις καὶ πτώσεις τμημάτων τοῦ κτιρίου. Ἡ ρηγματώσις συνεχίζεται καὶ κάθε τόσον ἐμφανίζονται καὶ νέα ρωγματά. Οἱ χημικοὶ μηχανικοὶ τῆς δμάδος ἐπεσήμαναν καὶ κατέγραψαν εἰς σχέδια καὶ εἰς φωτογραφίας τὰς ρηγματώσεις ὅλης τῆς ἐπιφανείας τοῦ

Ἐρχοῦνται ἀκόμη καὶ τῆς προστάσεως τῶν Καρνατίδων. Αἱ ρηγματώσεις ὁμοῦ δὲν περιορίζονται μόνον εἰς τὴν ἐξωτερικὴν ἐπιφάνειαν ἀλλὰ εὐρίσκονται ἀκόμη καὶ εἰς τὴν ἐσωτερικὴν ἀθέατον μᾶζαν τῶν ὀγκολίθων. Αὐτὰς δὲ τὰς ἐσωτερικὰς ρηγματώσεις ἐφανερώσαν αἱ ληφθεῖσαι γραμμογραφίαι καὶ αἱ ἀκτῖνες γ, δ *Curies* εἰς τὴν ἀρχὴν καὶ 250 *Curies* ἀργότερον. Ἀκόμη αἱ ρηγματώσεις προκαλοῦν ἀπολεπίσεις καὶ ἀποσχίσεις τοῦ μαρμάρου μὲ θλιβερόν ἀποτέλεσμα καὶ θρυμματισμὸν μικρῶν τεμαχίων τῆς ἐπιφανείας. Πρέπει λοιπὸν νὰ ἀφαιρεθοῦν ὅλα τὰ ἐκ σιδήρου μεταλλικὰ στοιχεῖα καὶ νὰ ἀντικατασταθοῦν. Διὰ τὴν ἐργασίαν αὐτὴν πολλὰς φορὰς πρέπει νὰ ἀποξηλωθοῦν οἱ ὄγκοι τῶν μαρμάρων, νὰ ἀφαιρεθοῦν τὰ διωγκωμένα καὶ σκουριασμένα σιδηρᾶ στοιχεῖα καὶ νὰ ἀντικατασταθοῦν ἀπὸ ἄλλα στοιχεῖα προτοῦ ἐπανατεθοῦν οἱ ὀγκόλιθοι εἰς τὰς θέσεις των. Κατόπιν πολλῶν μελετῶν ἀπεφασίσθη νὰ χρησιμοποιηθῇ κρᾶμα τιτανίου διὰ συνδέσμους καὶ δοκοὺς, μέταλλον ποὺ δὲν σκουριάζει εὐκόλως καὶ διὰ τὸ ὅποιον λέγεται ὅτι τοῦλάχιστον διὰ 2000, ἔαν μὴ 3000 χρόνια, παραμένει ἀναλλοίωτον ἀκόμη καὶ εἰς θαλάσσιον περιβάλλον ὡς τὸ τῶν Ἀθηρῶν.

Δεύτερον : Ἀκόμη ἡ ἐπιφάνεια τοῦ μαρμάρου προσβάλλεται καὶ ἀλλοιοῦται ἀπὸ τὴν ρύπανσιν τῆς ἀτμοσφαιρας. Τὸ διοξειδίου τοῦ θείου, ποὺ περιέχεται εἰς μεγάλον βαθμὸν εἰς τὸν ἀέρα, ἐπικάθεται εἰς τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν τῶν μαρμάρων καὶ ὅταν ἔλθῃ εἰς ἐπαφὴν μὲ ὕγρασίαν καὶ τὸ νερὸν τῆς βροχῆς, μεταβάλλεται εἰς θειῶκόν ὀξύ, αὐτὸ δὲ φθείρει καὶ καταστρέφει τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν καὶ εἰς πλείστας περιπτώσεις τὴν γυφοποιεῖ. Ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰς ἐπιφανείας τοῦ μαρμάρου ποὺ δὲν ἔρχεται εἰς ἄμεσον ἐπαφὴν μὲ τὸ νερὸ τῆς βροχῆς δημιουργεῖται ὁμοίομορφον στρώμα γύψου ποὺ κρατεῖ λεπτομερείας ἰδίᾳ γλυπτικὰς τῆς ἐπιφανείας. Μὲ τὸν χρόνον καὶ τὴν ἐπήρειαν τῆς ὕγρασίας καὶ τοῦ νεροῦ τῆς βροχῆς, τὸ στρώμα τοῦ γύψου διαλύεται καὶ κατὰ συνέπειαν αἱ γλυφαὶ χάνονται. Ἡ διάλυσις καὶ ἀλλοίωσις εἶναι καταφανής, ἔαν παραβληθοῦν παλαιαὶ φωτογραφίαι τῶν Καρνατίδων πρὸς τὴν σημερινὴν των κατάστασιν. Ἡ παραβολὴ εἶναι πράγματι ὀδυνηρά. Ἡ διάσωσις τῶν Καρνατίδων ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος ἀποτελεῖ τὸ κέντρον τῆς προσπαθείας καὶ τῆς μερίμνης τῆς Ἐπιτροπῆς καὶ γύρω ἀπὸ αὐτὰς συγκεντροῦνται αἱ φροντίδες μας.

Δύο λοιπὸν καταστροφικὰ αἷτια ποὺ φθείρουν καὶ ἀλλοιώνουν τὸ μνημεῖον πρέπει νὰ ἀντιμετωπισθοῦν εἰς τὸ ἔργον τῆς διασώσεως. Δυνάμεθα νὰ ἀπαλλαγῶμεν ἀπὸ τὸ πρῶτον μὲ τὴν ἐξαγωγήν τῶν στοιχείων ἀπὸ σίδηρον καὶ μὲ τὴν ἀντικατάστασιν των ἀπὸ ἄλλα ἀπὸ τιτάνιον. Αὐτὸ καὶ γίνεται. Ἀπαλλαγὴ ὁμοῦ ἀπὸ τὸ δεύτερον κακόν, τῆς ἀτμοσφαιρικῆς προσβολῆς καὶ τῆς φθορᾶς τῶν ἐπιφανειῶν ἀπὸ τὸ θειῶκόν ὀξύ, εἶναι δυσκολωτάτη, διότι πρέπει νὰ ἀπαλλαγῶμεν πρῶτον ἀπὸ τὸν ρύπον τῆς ἀτμοσφαιρας. Ἀκόμη ἡ ἐπιστημονικὴ ἔρευνα, εἰς τὴν ὁποίαν

προτοστατοῦν τὰ ἐργαστήρια τοῦ Πολυτεχνείου, δὲν κατώρθωσε νὰ εἴρῃ οὐσίας μὲ τὰς ὁποίας δι' ἐπικαλύψεως νὰ προφυλαχθοῦν αἱ ἐπιφάνειαι τῶν Καρνατίδων καὶ αἱ ἄλλαι μαρμάριναι ἐπιφάνειαι καὶ νὰ διασωθοῦν ὡς ἔχουν σήμερον. Αἱ προταθεῖσαι πλαστικαὶ κονίαι καὶ αἱ ἄλλαι ἐπικαλύψεις ἐργαστηριακῶς ἀπεδείχθησαν ἀκατάλληλοι καὶ βλαβεραί. Αἱ περισσότεραι προσβάλλονται ἀπὸ τὸ ὑπεριῶδες φῶς μὲ ἀποτέλεσμα νὰ ἀλλάζουν χρῶμα ἢ νὰ ρηγματοῦνται ἀκόμη καὶ νὰ προκαλοῦν ἀποκολλήσεις. Ἡ μόνη ἐξασφάλις τῶν Καρνατίδων ἀπέκειτο ἢ εἰς προσωρινὸν ἐπὶ τόπου κλιματισμὸν, μὲ κυκλοφορίαν ἀζώτου, ἢ εἰς μεταφορὰν τῶν εἰς χῶρον τοῦ Μουσείου. Τὸ πρῶτον ἀπήτει κατασκευὴν ὀγκώδη πὸν θὰ κατέστρεφεν αἰσθητικῶς τὴν ὄψιν τοῦ κτιρίου. Ἐπροτιμήθη τὸ δεύτερον, ἢ μεταφορὰ δηλαδὴ εἰς τὸ Μουσεῖον. Ἐκεῖ θὰ παραμείνουν ἕως ὅτου ἡ ἐπιστημονικὴ τεχνολογία ἀνταποκριθῇ εἰς τὴν ἀγωνιώδη ἔκκλησιν τῶν ἀρχαιολόγων καὶ ἀναστηλωτῶν νὰ ἐξεύρῃ στερεωτικὴν ὕλην μὲ τὴν ὁποίαν νὰ καλυφθοῦν τὰ ἀπειλούμενα γλυπτά. Ἐπειδὴ ἡ παραμονὴ τῶν Καρνατίδων εἰς τὸ Μουσεῖον θὰ εἶναι μακροχρόνιος, καθίσταται ἀπαραίτητος ἡ προσωρινὴ χρῆσις ἀντιγράφων εἰς τὸ προστώον τῶν Κορῶν. Ὅμως καὶ ἡ ἀντικατάστασις αὐτῆ παρουσιάζει προβλήματα στατικά, ἀλλὰ πολὺ περισσότερον καὶ αἰσθητικά. Τὸ ὑλικὸν π.χ. πὸν θὰ χρησιμοποιοιθῇ διὰ τὴν κατασκευὴν τῶν πρέπει νὰ ἑναρμονίζεται μὲ τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν τοῦ κτιρίου καὶ αὐτὸ δὲν εἶναι εὐκόλον. Εἰς τὴν λύσιν τῶν σχετικῶν προβλημάτων καὶ εἰς τὴν κατασκευὴν τῶν ἀντιγράφων παρέχει σπουδαιοτάτην καὶ μοναδικὴν συμβολὴν ὁ καλλιτέχνης τοῦ Ἐθνικοῦ Ἀρχαιολογικοῦ Μουσείου κ. Στέλιος Τριάντης.

Τὸ πρόβλημα τῶν ἀντιγράφων ἀντιμετωπίζεται προσεκτικῶς. Δυσκολία, πὸν καμμιά φορὰ ἐφαίνοντο ἀνυπέροβλητοι, παρουσίαζεν ἢ ἀποκαθήλωσις τῶν ἀγαλμάτων καὶ ἢ μεταφορὰ τῶν εἰς τὸ Μουσεῖον. Πῶς θὰ ἀνηφοῦντο κατὰ τι ἀπὸ τὴν θέσιν τῶν, πῶς θὰ μετεφέροντο καὶ θὰ ἐτοποθετοῦντο εἰς τὸ ἀμαξάκι μεταφορᾶς; Βεβαίως θὰ ἐχρησιμοποιοῦντο σχοινιά διὰ τὴν ἀνάρτησιν· τὰ σχοινιά ὅμως αὐτὰ δὲν θὰ ἔπρεπε νὰ ἔρχονται εἰς ἐπαφὴν μὲ τὰς ἐπιφανείας τῶν ἀγαλμάτων, διότι, εὐθὺς ὡς τὸ βᾶρος τὰ ἐτέντωνε, θὰ ἔτριβαν τὰς ἐπιφανείας, θὰ συνέθλιβαν τὸ μάρμαρον καὶ θὰ προεκάλλον ρωγμάς, ἀποκολλήσεις, ἀκόμη καὶ θλάσεις. Πῶς θὰ προφυλάσσοντο αἱ γυψοποιηθεῖσαι ἐπιφάνειαι τοῦ μάρμαρου, πὸν συνεκράτουν γλυπτὰς λεπτομερείας καὶ δὲν θὰ ἀπεκολλῶντο οὐδὲ θὰ συνετριβόντο κατὰ τὴν μεταφορὰν; Πῶς θὰ μετεφέροντο τὰ ἀγάλματα, εἰς ποίαν στάσιν, ὄρθια ἢ εἰς στάσιν ὑπτίαν; Πόσῃ καταστρεπτικὴν ἐπήρειαν εἰς τὰ ἀγάλματα θὰ εἶχον οἱ κραδασμοὶ πὸν προκαλοῦνται ἀπὸ τὴν κίνησιν μεταφορικῶν μέσων, ἀπὸ τὰς στάσεις καὶ τὰς ἐκκινήσεις; Πῶς καὶ πόσον καὶ πάλιν πῶς, ἐρωτήματα καὶ προβλήματα ἐπισωρευόμενα κατὰ γεωμετρικὴν πρόοδον, πὸν θὰ ἔπρεπε νὰ ἀντιμετωπισθοῦν προτοῦ

ἀρχίση ἢ ἀποκαθίλωσις καὶ ἡ μεταφορά. Μὲ τὸν ζῆλον, τὴν μελέτην, τὴν προσπάθειαν ἐρευνητῶν καὶ τεχνιτῶν αἱ δυσκολίαι ὑπερενικίθησαν καὶ ἡ ἐργασία ἤρχισε μὲ θάρρος καὶ ἐπιμονὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ μὲ ἄγχος καὶ προσευχὴν καὶ μὲ πλήρη ἐπίγνωσιν ὅτι ἡ παγκόσμιος ἐπιστήμη ἔχει στρέψει τὰ βλέμματά της πρὸς τὸν Ἱερὸν Βράχον.

Θὰ μοῦ ἐπιτραπῆ νὰ ἐπιδείξω σειρὰν διαφανειῶν πὸν εἰκονίζουσι τὸ ἔργον αὐτό, βῆμα πρὸς βῆμα. Αἱ Καρνάτιδες παρουσιάζουσι στατικῶς ἀσθενῆ σημεῖα. Ὁ λαϊμός, π.χ. εἶναι ἐν πολὺ ἀσθενὲς σημεῖον πὸν οἱ ἀρχαῖοι καλλιτέχναι διὰ νὰ τὸ δυναμώσουσι ἐπύκνωσαν τοὺς πλοκάμους ὀπίσω ἀπὸ τὸν τράχηλον καὶ τοὺς ἐπεξέτειναν δεξιὰ καὶ ἀριστερὰ τοῦ λαιμοῦ. Σήμερα δὲν δυνάμεθα νὰ βασισθῶμεν εἰς τὴν ἐνίσχυσιν αὐτὴν, διότι εἰς πολλὰς περιπτώσεις οἱ πλόκαμοι ἔχουσι γυφοποιηθῆ καὶ ἡ γύφος αὐτὴ ἀντὶ νὰ ἐνισχύη ἔχει ἀνάγκην προστασίας. Ἀλλά, ὅπως λέγει ὁ καθηγητὴς κ. Σκουλικίδης, πὸν πειραματίζεται εἰς τὸ ἐργαστήριόν του νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν, διὰ νὰ ἀνακαλύψῃ τρόπον στερεοποιήσεως τοῦ πολυτίμου τούτου στοιχείου, ἂν δὲν προστατευθοῦν οἱ γύφνοι πλόκαμοι καὶ καταπέσουσι, αἱ Καρνάτιδες θὰ μείνουσι φαλακροί! Τὰ ὀλίγα αὐτὰ πιστεύω, ὅτι εἶναι ἀρκετὰ διὰ νὰ ἀντιληφθῆτε, ἴσως καὶ νὰ συμμερισθῆτε κατὰ τι, τὴν εὐθύνην καὶ τὸ ἄγχος πὸν βαρύνει τοὺς ἐρευνητὰς καὶ τοὺς ἐκτελεστὰς εἰς κάθε βῆμα τῆς πορείας τοῦ ἔργου. Ἀφ' οὗ ἐμελετήθησαν εἰς βάθος ὅλα τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ δυνατοῦ τρόπου δράσεως, ἀκόμη καὶ τότε ἔπρεπε νὰ γίνῃ βεβαίωσις τῆς ἀπολύτου δυνατοῦτος καὶ ἀξίας του. Ἀπὸ τὰς Καρνάτιδας, ὅπως εἶχον ἰδρῶθῆ ἀρχικῶς, μία, ἢ δευτέρα ἀπὸ τὸ νοτιοανατολικὸν ἄκρον τοῦ προστώου, εἶναι ἀντίγραφον τοῦ ἀγάλματος πὸν ἀπήχθη ἀπὸ τὸν Elgin. Ἡ Καρνάτις εἰς τὸ βορειοδυτικὸν ἄκρον τοῦ προστώου εἶχε συγκροτηθῆ ἀπὸ διάφορα τεμάχια καὶ ἡ κεφαλὴ μὲ τὸν λαιμὸν εἶχε κατασκευασθῆ ἀπὸ Ἱταλὸν Καλλιτέχνην εἰς τὰ μέσα τοῦ 19ου αἰῶνος (περὶ τὸ 1850). Αὐτὴ ἡ σύνθετος Καρνάτις, μὲ τὴν κεφαλὴν ἐξ ὀπτοῦ πηλοῦ, ἀπεφασίσθη νὰ χρησιμοποιηθῆ διὰ τὴν ἐπαλήθευσιν τοῦ τρόπου τῆς παρασκευῆς πρὸς μεταφορὰν καὶ πρὸς ἀποκαθίλωσιν τῶν ἀγαλμάτων.

Μέγα τμημα τοῦ ἀγάλματος ἐστερεώθη μὲ περίβλημα ἐκ γύφου. Γύρω ἀπὸ τὴν βάσιν του κατεσκευάσθη στερεὸν ἐκ ξύλου κιβώτιον ὕψους περίπου 1 μ. Ράβδοι ἐκ σιδήρου διαπεροῦν ἐγκαρσίως τὸ ἐσωτερικὸν τοῦ κιβωτίου καὶ τὰ ἄκρα των ἐξέχουσι ἀπὸ τὰς πλευρὰς των. Μία ἀπὸ τὰς πλευρὰς τοῦ κιβωτίου παρέμεινεν ἀνοικτὴ, ἕως ὅτου στερεοποιηθῆ τὸ ἐκ γύφου περίβλημα τοῦ ἀγάλματος, ὅποτε καὶ ἡ πλευρὰ ἐκεῖνη ἐκλείετο καὶ τὸ κιβώτιον ἐπληροῦτο μὲ σκυρόδεμα - μπετόν, οὕτως ὥστε ἄγαλμα καὶ κιβώτιον ἀπετέλουσι ἐν σῶμα. Λεπτομέρειαι τοῦ γυψίνου περιβλήματος ἠλέγχοντο καὶ ἐνισχύοντο καὶ τέλος τὸ ἄγαλμα ἀνηρτάτο μὲ σχοινιά πὸν ἐδέοντο εἰς τὰς προεξοχὰς τῶν σιδηρῶν ράβδων τοῦ κιβωτίου (εἶκ. 1-4).

Ἡ ἀποκαθήλωσις, ἡ μεταφορὰ καὶ ἡ τοποθέτησις εἰς αἶθουσαν τοῦ Μουσείου τῆς συνθέτου αὐτῆς Καρνάτιδος, ἔγιναν ὅπως ἐπρογραμματίσθη, χωρὶς φθορὰν καὶ καταστροφικὰς τάσεις, ἡ ἐπιτυχία δὲ αὐτὴ καθιέρωσε τὸ σύστημα ἐργασίας πὸν θὰ ἠκολουθεῖτο. Ἡ μία μετὰ τὴν ἄλλην αἱ Καρνάτιδες ἐνισχύθησαν μὲ γύψινον περιβλήμα. Ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὴ ἡ ἐργασία εἶχε τὴν δυσκολίαν τῆς, ἡ ὁποία ἔπρεπε νὰ ὑπερικηθῇ. Ἡ ὕγρασία τοῦ γυψίνου περιβλήματος ἀσφαλῶς θὰ ἔβλαπτε τὰ τμήματα γυψοποιημένης ἐπιφανείας καὶ διὰ τοῦτο πρὸ τῆς ἐπιθέσεως τοῦ γύψου αἱ ἐπιφάνειαι ἔπρεπε νὰ μονωθοῦν. Ἀριστον μονωτικὸν ἀπεδείχθη ὁ «χάρτης ὕγρειας» καὶ μ' αὐτόν, μὲ πολλὰς ἐπαλλήλους σειρὰς, περιετυλίχθησαν τὰ ἀγάλματα. Ὁ γύψος ἐπετέθη εἰς τὸ περίβλημα τοῦ χάρτου. Ἀς σημειωθῇ ἐπίσης ὅτι τὸ χάρτινον σάβανον καὶ τὸ κιβώτιον ἐσχημάτιζον ἓνα εἶδος μήτρας πὸν βοήθοῦσε τὴν ἀφαίρεσιν τοῦ περιβλήματος ἀπὸ γύψου καὶ τοῦ σκυροδέματος - μετόν.

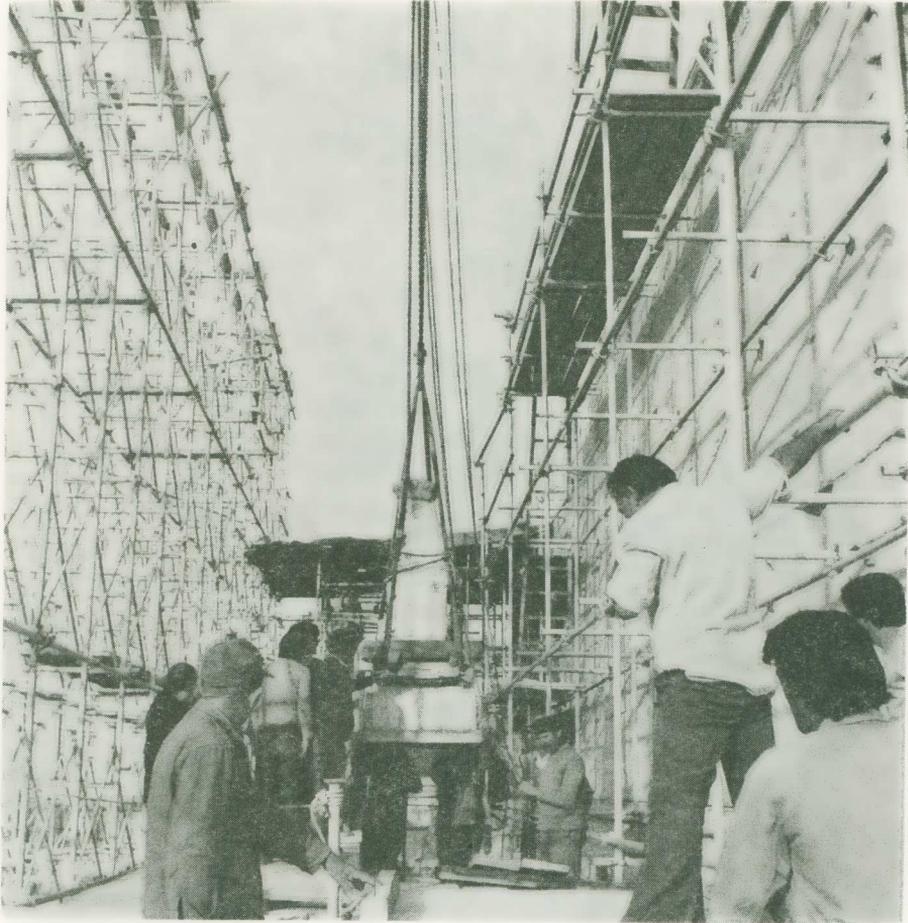
Τὰ ἀγάλματα μὲ τὸ γύψινον περίβλημά των ἔμενον εἰς τὰς ἀρχικὰς των θέσεις ἕως ὅτου στερεωθῇ ὁ γύψος. Κατόπιν ἐδέοντο τὰ σχοινιά ἀναρτήσεως· εἶναι φανερὸν εἰς τὰς εἰκόνας ὅτι τὰ σχοινιά δὲν ἔχουν κανένα σημεῖον ἐπαφῆς μὲ τὰ ἀγάλματα. Καὶ ἡ βραδεία, ἀλλὰ μεγαλοπρεπὴς μεταφορὰ τῶν ἀγαλμάτων δι' ἀμαξιθίου ἐξετελέσθη ἐπιτυχῶς ἄνευ φθορᾶς, ἄνευ ἀπενκταίου. Παρήλασαν αἱ Καρνάτιδες «καμουφλαρισμένες» πρὸ τῆς ἀνατολικῆς πλευρᾶς τοῦ Παρθενῶνος, διὰ νὰ καταλήξουν προσωρινῶς εἰς αἶθουσαν τοῦ Μουσείου τῆς Ἀκροπόλεως μὲ προβλεπόμενον κλιματισμὸν ἀζώτου. Ἐκεῖ ἀνέμενον τὰ βάρη τὰ ὅποια ἠτοιμάσθησαν ὑπὸ τὴν διεύθυνσιν τοῦ κ. Δοντᾶ καὶ τῆς συνεργατίδος μας ἀρχαιολόγου τῆς Ἀκροπόλεως κας Μπούσκαρη. Εἰς τὸ Ἐρέχθειον τῶρα παραμένει τὸ πόδιον ἢ βάθρον χωρὶς τὰς Καρνάτιδας, διὰ νὰ χρησιμοποιηθῇ διὰ τὰ ἀντίγραφα πὸν ἐτοιμάζονται, ἕως ὅτου ἡ ἐπιστημονικὴ τεχνολογία, ἰδίᾳ τὰ ἐργαστήρια τοῦ κ. Σκουλικίδου ὅπως ἐλπίζομεν, ἀνακαλύψουν τὴν οὐσίαν μὲ τὴν ὁποίαν θὰ καλυφθῇ ἡ ἐπιφάνεια τῶν ἀγαλμάτων χωρὶς νὰ τὰ βλάβῃ ἢ νὰ τὰ παραμορφώσῃ, οὐσίαν πὸν θὰ τὰ προφυλάξῃ ἀπὸ τὰς μικρὰς ἢ μεγάλας προσβολὰς τῆς ἀτμοσφαιρᾶς· ὡς ἐλπίζομεν τὰς μικρὰς προσβολὰς τῆς ἀτμοσφαιρᾶς.

Ἐλπίζω, κυρίαί καὶ κύριοι, ὅτι σᾶς ἔδωσα ἀμυδρὰν μόνον εἰκόνα τοῦ κολοσσιαίου ἔργου πὸν ἐπετελέσθη καὶ ἐξακολουθεῖ νὰ ἐπιτελῆται εἰς τὴν Ἀκρόπολιν τῶν Ἀθηνῶν. Ἐλπίζω ἀκόμη ὅτι σᾶς ἔδωσα ἓνα μέρος, ἔστω καὶ μικρὸν, τοῦ λόγου πὸν καθιστᾷ τὸ ἔργον αὐτὸ ἓνα ἀπὸ τὰ σπουδαιότερα ἀναστηλωτικὰ ἔργα ἀρχαίων μνημείων πὸν ἔχουν ἀναληφθῇ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα μας. Ἐργον πρωτοποριακόν, πὸν πρέπει νὰ καταστήσῃ ὑπερήφανον κάθε Ἕλληνα διὰ τὴν μοναδικὴν προσπάθειαν, ἡ ὁποία ἐπιτελεῖται εἰς τὸν Ἱερὸν Βράχον ἀπὸ Ἕλληνας ἐπιστήμονας, Ἕλληνας καλλιτέχνους, Ἕλληνας τεχνίτας καὶ ἐργάτας, οἱ ὅποιοι διανοίγουν νέας λεωφόρους

ἐρεῦνης εἰς τὴν ἐπιστήμην. Ὁ ἰδρῶς των, ἢ προσπάθειά των θὰ στερεώσῃ καὶ θὰ διατηρήσῃ μίαν ὑπέροχον παρακαταθήκην, ὥστε νὰ γίνῃ («κτῆμα ἔσαει») καὶ τῶν ἐπερχομένων γενεῶν τῆς Πατρίδος ἀλλὰ καὶ ὀλοκλήρου τοῦ πεπολιτισμένου κόσμου. Ἀπὸ τοῦ βήματος τούτου τῆς Ἀκαδημίας, αἰσθάνομαι τὴν ἀνάγκην καὶ πάλιν νὰ ἐκφράσω ἐγκαρδίους εὐχαριστίας, ἀκόμη καὶ τὴν ἐγνωμοσύνην μου εἰς τοὺς ἐργασθέντας καὶ τοὺς ἐργαζομένους εἰς τὸ μοναδικὸν αὐτὸ ἔργον τῆς ἀναστηλώσεως τῶν μνημείων τῆς Ἀκροπόλεως καὶ τὴν βαθεῖαν ἐγνωμοσύνην καὶ εὐχαριστίας εἰς τὴν Πολιτείαν καὶ ἰδίᾳ εἰς τὸν Πρωθυπουργὸν κύριον Κωνσταντῖνον Καραμανλῆν καὶ τοὺς Ὑπουργοὺς ποὺ συνέβαλον, συμβάλλουν καί, ἐλπίζω ὅτι θὰ ἐξακολουθήσουν νὰ συμβάλλουν μὲ τὴν στοργὴν καὶ ἀφοσίωσίν των εἰς τὴν ἀποπεράτωσίν του.

Ἐπικαλοῦμαι θερμῶς τὴν ἀρωγὴν ὅλων διὰ τὴν συνέχισιν καὶ ταχεῖαν ἀποπεράτωσιν τοῦ μνημειώδους ἔργου ποὺ ἀνελάβομεν ὡς Ἕλληνες, τὴν ἀρωγὴν τῆς Πολιτείας καὶ τῶν Ἀρχῶν διὰ τὴν ἐκμηδένισιν τῶν αἰτίων ποὺ ἔφθειραν καὶ ἀκόμη φθείρουν τὸ πάνσεπτον προγονικὸν μνημεῖον, τὸ ὁποῖον ἐσεβάσθησαν πόλεμοι, σκληρὴ σκλαβιά, κακοτυχίαι ἀβάσταχτοι, ἀποκαθιστῶντες μὲ μέτρα μεγάλα καὶ σοβαρά, ἂν ὄχι τὴν κρυσταλλίνην ἀτμόσφαιραν εἰς τὴν ὁποίαν ἐγεννήθησαν καὶ ἀνεδείχθησαν, τοῦλάχιστον μίαν ἀτμόσφαιραν εἰς τὴν ὁποίαν τὰ μνημεῖα θὰ δυναθῶν εἰς τὸ μέλλον ἐλεύθερα νὰ ἀναπνέουν καὶ νὰ ζοῦν.

*Εικών 1.*



Εικόνα 2.



Εἰκὼν 3.



Εικὼν 4.

CONSERVATION WORK ON THE ACROPOLIS OF ATHENS

In the course of the history and experience of humanity, very few places, or even Rocks, have received the love and the admiration of people as the Acropolis of Athens. Conversely, few places did give posterity the inspiration and vision of beauty that emanates from the Sacred Rock.

Since time immemorial people living round it have crowned its summit with legends that remain alive even today and that are capable of setting people free from the stress of progress and of tomorrow. Even among the Olympian Gods the Rock became the center of dispute and the winner, the goddess of Art and of wisdom, took special care of its form and rendered it impregnable. It is well known, that the Acropolis during Mycenaean Times (ca. 1500 - 1100 B.C.), was used as a fortress where the king had his palace and the leaders of the community their residences. For a long time it remained a fort-citadel and not only did it serve as the center of military adventures but also as the base for operations of tyrants. Eventually it was transformed into a magnificent place of Worship where the shrines of the City were erected. In the middle of the 5th century B.C., Pericles' leading personality and mind conjured up the vision of an Acropolis sparkling with Greek spirit and poetical form. Nature created this Rock as an altar, or a sacred table, from whose surface the earthly abodes of the Gods soar to the blue sky through the then crystal clear atmosphere. This vision, Pericles proceeded to make a reality. He managed to instil his burning passion and enthusiasm into his contemporaries and this is why the work progressed at a very fast pace. Plutarch says: "So then the Works arose, no less towering in their grandeur than inimitable in the grace of their outlines, since the workmen eagerly strove to surpass themselves in the beauty of their handicraft. And yet the most wonderful thing about them was the speed with which they rose".

The Acropolis is not only a symbol of the radiating Greek spirit, a decorative but lifeless element of the Greek horizon. Ever since the erection of its buildings, during its long existence, the Acropolis always played an

active role in the life of the Greek Nation and experienced not only periods of triumph and exaltation but also periods of misery and humiliation. The time came when the Olympian Gods were removed from the classical arena, because they perhaps had accomplished their destiny, and when they were succeeded by the true Christian faith. Then the pagan buildings were devoted to the worship of Christ: Virgin Mary took the place of Athena and St. George that of Erechtheus.

In 1204 the iron-clad knights, who were supposed to liberate the Holy Land, captured instead and enslaved the Queen of cities, Constantinople. Using the seven-hilled capital of the Byzantine Greek Empire as their base, those pseudoliberators overrun Continental Greece. The Acropolis came to know the rule of the conquering crusaders — Catalans, Atsagiols and Francs — and its shrines were attached to the Catholic church. Later, when Greece was overrun by barbaric hordes wandering from the remote heart of Asia, the Crescent instead of the Cross was hoisted above the sacred Rock and its chief shrine, the Parthenon, was turned into a mosque. Finally, after the war for independence of 1821 and with the birth of freedom, the Acropolis was restored to its former position and became the end of the pilgrimage of innumerable visitors from all over the world. Even in our own times the Rock was profaned by the swastika. Throughout the period of its long and adventurous life several changes were made and serious damage was caused to its buildings either through ignorance or war fury. Perhaps, I should mention the bombardment of the Parthenon by the Venetian artillery of Morozini in 1687, the blowing up of its Propylaea by the thunder of St. Demetrios Lombardaris, and finally the looting of Elgin and his colleagues. In spite of all the damage and misfortunes, the ruins of the Acropolis still preserved the quality and grace that is described so beautifully and precisely by Plutarch: "Each one of them, in its beauty, was even then and at once antique; but in the freshness of its vigor it is, even to the present day, recent and newly wrought. Such is the bloom of perpetual newness, as it were, upon these works of his, which makes them ever to look untouched by time, as though the unfaltering breath of an ageless spirit had been infused into them".

Unfortunately, in our time the "freshness of vigor" and the "unfaltering breath of an ageless spirit" began to fade and decay because of the

so-called technical progress and of the scientific structure of the way of life that is enjoyed by modern men who have the divine fortune to live under the shade of the Acropolis. Long before our day the occurring and continuing damage was pointed out by scientists, researchers and especially by the dedicated archaeologists who had the responsibility and the privilege of guarding its shrines. Not very long ago there were scientists who rejected the very idea that the buildings ran the danger of being damaged, while some others wasted their time in endless and futile talk. Under the burden of misunderstandings and sometimes accusations, few scientists, faithful guards of the Acropolis, attempted occasionally small intervention and support of detached parts. Positive and effective measures, however, were not taken; to the present time, the Acropolis and its needs had been enveloped in a veil of inertia. In 1975 our colleague, Prof. C. Trypanis, then Minister of Culture and Sciences, did his utmost to face the situation positively and to provide the necessary action. In his attempt he had the inspired and active support of Prime Minister Mr. C. Karamanlis whose interest for the Acropolis was equally positive and wholehearted. On the 22nd of February, 1975 a large commission of specialists, set up and presided over by Mr Trypanis convened to exchange thoughts on the matter, to lay the foundations and the guiding lines for the task of saving the Acropolis. It was then decided to set up a smaller committee, a work-group for the conservation and restoration of the monuments of the Acropolis, which would be entrusted with the study of the needs and the planning of methods of action. On the 31st of March, 1975 the members of the committee were appointed as follows: the long to be remembered John Miliades, as president, George Dondas, director of the Acropolis, Charalambos Bouras, Professor of the History of Architecture at N.T.U. Theodore Scoulicides, Professor of Physical Chemistry and Applied Electrochemistry at N.T.U., John Travlos Professor of Archaeology and Architecture, and John Chronopoulos Secretary. Later the group was enlarged with the addition of Professor N. Platon, S. Angelides, Professor of Structural Engineering at N.T.U., the active General Inspectors of Antiquities — Demetrios Lazarides and Nicolaos Gialouris and Mr Iordanis Demakopoulos of the Restoration Department. Sometime later were added to the group Mr C. Conophagos, Professor of Metallurgy at N.T.U., Mr P. Raptopoulos, Professor George E. Mylonas the Academician, and the archaeo-

logist Mrs F. Mallouchou. The group was enlarged, to a total number of 25, by the addition of six smaller teams of young scientists¹. At times the scientists were supplemented by colleagues of different specialties from the National Technical University, the Nuclear Research Center "Democritos", the Institute of Geological Mineral Research, and by artists from the National Archaeological Museum².

With zeal and enthusiasm the work-group undertook its task, under the leadership and guidance of the long to be remembered John Miliades, whose death, in 1975, deprived the committee of a distinguished colleague and of a wise adviser. He was succeeded by Professor N. Platon, who, for almost three years, successfully carried out the work. However, early in January 1978, his Academic duties at the University of Crete forced him to resign and then he was succeeded by the Academician George E. Mylonas. In the meantime Mr. Mahtar M' Bow's, the UNESCO Secretary General's voice was heard from the sacred Rock of the Acropolis calling the civilized world to a new crusade to Save the Monuments of the Acropolis.

I may be allowed now and from the platform of the Academy, to express my admiration for the work performed by the Acropolis work-group. I can do this unhesitatingly because my personal contribution is rather small

1. *Architects*: B. Carkanis, M. Corres, A. Lazaridou, H. Moutopoulos, A. Papanicolaou, A. Tzakou and T. Tanoulas.

Marbleworkers: G. Alibertis, G. Vidos, J. Doucacaros, Th. Scaris, M. Scaris and N. Scaris with the assistants N. Vazeos and G. Giassafacis.

Civil engineers: K. Zabas, M. Ioannidou and D. Monocroussos.

Chemical engineers: N. Belogiannis, E. Papaconstantinou and D. Charalabous.

2. Dr Andronopoulos, Director of Techn. Geology I.G.M.E. and Dr G. Coucis, Geologist at IFME.

Prof. N.T.U., P. Theocaris.

Prof. N.T.U., Th. Tassios and Ch. Economou.

L. Chatziadreou and M. S. Ladopoulos attached at Nuclear Research Center «Democritos».

Mechanical and Electrical engineers: A. I. Calabacas and Th. Protopapas.

Prof. N.T.U., N. Coumoutsos.

Prof. N.T.U., J. Badecas.

Museum artists: Sculptor S. Triantis and the assistants Ch. Aletras, M. Coutsoyiannis, G. Malamatides.

to their monumental work, which had almost been completed during the presidency of John Miliades and Professor Platon. The zeal, enthusiasm and devotion of the members of the group to their task is unparalleled. Their unique example is a constant inspiration to the craftsmen and workers, whose admirable contribution to the task is above praise. I should like, furthermore, to commend the prevailing spirit of co-operation, a co-operation I have rather seldom found in Greece, and to point out emphatically the utmost importance and the significance of the work that has been performed and which is still in progress. Our country owes the highest possible praise to those scientists and their collaborators who have been working quietly without remuneration but with self-sacrifice and who very often become the target of severe criticism on the part of irresponsible persons and self-interested scientists.

For any intervention small or large, it is absolutely necessary first and foremost the complete documentation of the remains, the diagnosis of the condition of the monuments. This process was carried out under the supervision of Professor Ch. Bouras and the other members of the committee. A detailed study in depth, historical, archaeological, architectural, chemical and technical was undertaken and concluded. Then were studied the problems, presented by the monuments as they exist and conclusions were reached as to possible solutions. This work made clear that all the buildings on the Acropolis had been seriously damaged and that there were indications of partial or even total collapse. It became obvious from the very beginning that the Erechtheion, in order to survive, was in need of immediate protection and conservation. Because of this, the attention and efforts of the work-group and their collaborators were concentrated on the thorough examination of its problems and needs.

In less than two years' time the study concerning the Erechtheion was completed, and in 1977, a large volume of 620 pages was published containing a detailed analysis of the conditions, the damage and the needs of the monument. From this study have been taken the details I mention here, and in certain instances as they are stated by the authors of the book. Our general conclusion: Parts of the Erechtheion have to be removed from their places, their damages attended to, their cracks strengthened, their original positions established, and then be restored. More specifically it was absolutely necessary to remove temporarily the Caryatids and at a later

time restore them to their original positions and this only, when technical conditions would allow it. The work-group did not reach its conclusions with a light heart but with awe and with full consciousness of the consequences. Allow me, on this, to quote Dr. G. Dondas, director of the Acropolis and member of the group. His words express the anxiety of the archaeologists and the scientists who have participated in the rescue operation. Dr Dondas writes: "Is it then that we propose one of the masterpieces of ancient art standing on the Sacred Rock for more than 2500 years, that such a monument be dissolved by our own hands and one of its most significant parts, the well-know Caryatids be removed and be replaced by copies? Even to voice such a statement, fills our souls with awe and agony. Everyone, at once realizes, that the monument must be suffering severely so as to project such an audacious proposal, that things have become desperate. Specialists, as a matter of fact, maintain that unless immediate and radical measures are taken, the building, for various reasons, very soon will die. There may be, however, some who claim that no operation should be performed on the monument, and that, in spite of the continuous damage, the Caryatids should be left where they are. "If their time has come to die, let them die" they say. However, they seem to forget that it is our sacred duty and our obligation to preserve as the core of our eyes our most sacred cultural heritage.

With devotion and awe and fully aware of their obligations, the members of the work-group reached their conclusions. These the government adopted and decided to carry out. Copies of the study containing the results of the investigation were sent to distinguished scientists, historians and other scholars of the world to inform them of the projected steps for the preservation of the monuments and to request their edifying comments. And this was done before any actual steps of removal were undertaken. Moreover the government, in co-operation with the Board of UNESCO, convened in Athens and in December 1977 an international congress during which the study and the suggestions made by the work-group were discussed by international specialists and scholars. After study and discussion, lasting for 3 days and from December 8 - 10, the delegates, eminent scientists and scholars representing the civilized countries of the Western World, unanimously approved the results obtained by the work-group, as well as the suggested procedure for conservation. In the proceedings of the Con-
PIAA 1980

gress the following was recorded: "The participants in the meeting congratulate their Greek colleagues on the profound scientific approach of their study on the history and the present conservational state of the Erechtheion. They believe that this study can be adopted as an example for future restorations. It insures the immediate and the high quality of the conservation operation, necessary for the preservation of the monument, with its purely scientific approach, its deontology and fidelity to the principles of the charter of Venice". However, even after the unanimous approval of the study and of its conclusions by scientists of international repute, nothing was done before the thorough examination of every single problem which would arise in the process of the work. Literally speaking, not a stone is moved without cast-iron proof, study and discussion. Any interference with the building, removal of its parts or completion, is ultimately submitted for approval to the Archaeological Council of the Ministry of Culture and Sciences and the plan is set into action only after the signature and the consent of the Minister of Culture and Sciences is obtained. It should be noted here that the hectic activity which preceded the December 1977 meeting was followed by periods of uncertainty and relative inertia, because then arose the critical and impressive need of financing the operation. The earnest interest of the Prime Minister Mr Constantine Karamanlis and the presence at the Ministry of Culture and Sciences of Professor Dem. Nianias became instrumental in overcoming all obstacles, in substituting inertia with zeal and energy. So the operation proceeded with speed, our recourse to the Minister is constant and his help consistently undivided. For this we should be grateful both to the Prime Minister and to Mr Nianias. The operational pattern was ready before the end of 1978. It was then that the time-table of the work, whose preparatory stages were put into operation in 1979, and the budget passed. Mr Al. Papanicolaou was entrusted with the direction of the work of conservation of the Erechtheion, always under the supervision of the work-group, which was then named "the Acropolis Committee", and the archaeologist Mrs Brouskari was appointed as a representative of the Acropolis.

We must, however, emphasize the fact that the other buildings and needs of the Acropolis were not neglected. The ascent and passages of the Acropolis, which have been a continuous cause of worry, receive special attention under the supervision of Professor John Travlos. Now the visitors

can admire the buildings without any fear of stumbling or worry that their steps might destroy the priceless traces of cuttings on the face of the Rock. Part of the flight of stairs before the Propylaea was covered with wood, while the passages were temporarily faced with a material resistant to continuous use.

The Propylaea, whose detachments and fall of small marble members often surprised us, are being studied by the architect Mrs. Tzakou; she is checking systematically all measurements and records all disfigurements and disalignments brought about by several corrosive causes.

Another team under the architect M. Corres, is in charge of the preliminary work on the Parthenon. The strength of the Walls of that monumental building and its columns which were seriously damaged by fire in the past, is checked by Prof. Tassios of the N.T.U. with the help of gram-mography and ultrasonics, and the serious damage which appeared on the entablature at the South-east corner of the building, is seriously studied. A scaffolding was put up at the North-east corner of the Parthenon. Sheer good luck saved a piece of triglyph which had been detached and which would have fallen and shattered to pieces but which was held up by the scaffolding.

Not so long ago on the west pediment of the Parthenon was still standing a sculptured group known as the Kekrops and Kallirhoe group. The galloping decay made necessary the transfer of this group into an air-conditioned space. Meanwhile, it had been found out that, besides other damage, the marble of the group is attacked by microscopic marble eating bacteria which, due to the air pollution, are multiplying at a terrifying rate. Observations made, proved that 50.000 to 80.000 bacteria per grm. live in the marble of the Kekrops - Kallirhoe and in the Parthenon columns these marble-eating tiny organisms number from 2.000.000 to 7.000.000 per grm. Since neither the necessary laboratories nor the specialists exist in Greece for the time being, the help of the Italian Professors, Mr Paleni and Curri was requested and given willingly. Tiny specimens of the marble infected were submitted to them. These were processed and a culture of the bacteria was developed in their laboratories. Then they established the types of the tiny organisms which erode the marble and developed the suitable insecticide substance to fight off effectively these erosive elements. This is now being done. However the Kekrops group had to be removed from its original posi-

tion and be kept in an air-conditioned room with nitrogen. This was also done, and both Kekrops and Kallirhoe are now kept in the Acropolis Museum.

Since August 1977 another operation has been in progress at the north slope of the Acropolis, over the inhabited Anafiotika district of the well-known Plaka of Athens. Huge rocks now stand scattered along this slope; they have been undermined by rain water and wild vegetation, even by shrubs and small trees. The danger of these rocks rolling down the slope and the possibilities of destruction of the houses of Plaka seem more and more imminent. Securing the rocks is of vital importance and this work is being carried out by Mr. M. Arvanitakis, rock-specialist, Mr. D. Monokroussos, civil-engineer and the very experienced technician Mr. E. Fergadiotis. It is hoped that this work will be completed without any misadventure, in as a good way as the work on the ancient "PERIPATOS" was done under the supervision of Prof. Travlos.

It is time we went back to the Erechtheion to look at the very important work being done by excellent and skillful marble workers under direction of Mr. Papanicolaou. It must be stressed from the very beginning that in the long history of the building, ours is not the first attempt for restoration ever made. Even in Roman Imperial times restorations were made and in Christian times the interior of the temple was given a different lay out, transforming it into that of a christian church. During the years 1838 to 1846, after the liberation of Greece, restoration work was attempted by Pittakis; For it were used a variety of unrelated materials and iron clamps. Pittakis' work is evident especially in the interior of the Erechtheion. The iron beams and clamps used by Pittakis, changed some of the guiding lines of the original construction, and these had to be remedied. A more serious and praiseworthy attempt for the conservation and the preservation of the building was made by our late colleague N. Balanos, whose work covered the years 1902 - 1930. It was then that parts of the building were taken down and subsequently replaced to their original positions. It is evident therefore that the work being carried out now is not the first attempt towards restoring the building; however, it is carried out in a strictly scientific way. To begin with, the damaged and decayed parts of the building were accurately located and recorded; then the causes that brought about the decay were established and finally remedies were determined. The decay and the disintegration were due in the main to the following two causes.

F i r s t: the steel and bronze clamps, rods and beams used in the restoration work were as a rule fixed without being cast in lead and so were unavoidably corroded and damaged as time went on. The corrosion was accelerated in the last decades, because of the atmospheric pollution. As a natural consequence this corrosion was followed by expansion of the metallic parts that over passed the marble strength. Then ensued the cracking of the marble, the lifting of the mortar, detachments and falling of small parts of the building. The cracking is getting worse and new fissures appear every now and then. The chemical engineers of the work-group spotted and recorded, by means of sketches and photographs, the cracks and fissures of the whole surface of the Erechtheion and the Porch of Caryatids. However, cracks are not only limited to the external surface but are also to be found inside the main, non-visible mass, of the blocks. The internal cracks were detected by grammographies and ex-rays of 8 Curies first and later of 250 Curies. These cracks cause the marble to splinter and deprive it of its strength. The shattering of small pieces of the surface follows as an unavoidable dreadful consequence. Thus it is clear that the removal of all metallic elements of steel is an imperative task. The process of replacement of the corroded metals very often requires the removal of blocks of marble from their places and, after the proper work on them is done in the workshop, they can be returned to their initial positions. After careful studies and experimentation it was decided to use for the beams and clamps an alloy of titanium, a metal which has a tremendous resistance to corrosion and for which it is said that it remains stainless for at least 2000 if not 3000 years, even in a marine environment like that of Athens.

S e c o n d: The marble surface is affected and altered by air-pollution. The sulphur dioxide which exists in great quantities in the air settles on the marble surface and when it is mixed with humidity and rainwater changes into sulphuric acid which corrodes and destroys the marble surface and turns it into solution. Even on marble surfaces where the sulphur dioxide does not come into direct contact with rainwater, it creates a layer, that is gypsum, and this layer covers the sculptured details. As time goes by and because of the humidity and rainwater the gypsum layer is dissolved and the sculptured parts gradually disappear. This dissolutions and alterations become clear if we compare old photographs

of the Caryatids with recent ones. Such a comparison is sad and painful. At present the saving of the Caryatids forms our main object and on this are concentrated the efforts of our committee.

The two destructive causes mentioned that damage and alter the monument must be dealt with effectively during our rescue operation. We can get rid of the first by extracting the steel elements and replacing them by others made of titanium. Deliverance from the second evil, that is, the atmospheric attack and the damage of surfaces by sulphuric acid is extremely difficult since first we must get rid of the pollution of the atmosphere. As yet the scientific laboratories, among which those of the National Technical University of Athens play an important role, have not managed to discover a substance with which the Caryatids and other marble surfaces could be coated and so could be protected and preserved in the state they are today. By experiment, the suggested plastic materials and other coating substances proved to be unsuitable and harmful. Most of these substances are affected by ultra-violet rays and as a result they discolor or crack the surfaces and can even cause detachment. The only solution left for the survival of the Caryatids was either temporary air-conditioning on the spot, with circulation of nitrogen, or their transfer to the Museum of the Acropolis. The first would require a bulky construction which would spoil the aesthetic appearance of the building. The second, that is, their removal to the Museum, was chosen as more preferable and possible. There they will remain until scientific technology manages to respond successfully to the agonizing appeal of archaeologists and restoration experts by discovering a fixative substance with which the threatened sculptures could be coated. Since the stay of the Caryatids in the Museum is not to be of a short duration the use of copies at the Porch of the maidens becomes imperative. Even this substitution presents structural and, on a larger scale, aesthetic problems. The material, for example, which is to be used for their construction must absolutely harmonize with the surfaces of the building and this is a very delicate matter indeed. Mr. Sp. Triantes, the excellent artist of the National Archaeological Museum of Athens, with the vast experience which he possesses in working with ancient sculpture, is engaged in the solution of the relevant problems.

The problem of the copies is being handled with care. The removal of the statues and their transfer to the Museum presented difficulties which at times seemed insurmountable. How were they to be lifted even a bit and how were they to be removed and loaded on to the transporting cart? Ropes, of course, had to be used to hoist up the statues, however, on no account these ropes would have to touch them otherwise; as soon as they would be stretched by their weight, they would scrape the surface, they would press the marble causing cracking, detachment and even breakage. How could the marble surfaces turned into gypsum, which still hold sculptured details, be protected during the transportation? How and in what position should the statues be transported? in a standing position or lying on their backs? Then, what about the damage due to unavoidable vibrations caused by the motion by the starts and stops of the cart? How, to what extent, and again how, should the questions and problems accumulated in geometrical progression, be handled before the taking down of the statues from their places and the removal started? The great care, concern and hard effort of both researches and workers overcame the difficulties and the work was began with courage and persistence, but also with anguish and prayer and in full consciousness that scientists and scholars, the world over, had their eyes fixed on the Sacred Rock.

With your permission I would like to project some slides showing the process in detail; from the slides have been chosen the pictures 1 - 4 of this publication. Structurally the Caryatids present certain weaknesses. The neck, for instance, is a most delicate point. In order to strengthen it the ancient artists thickened the braids at the back of the neck and extended the hair to its right and left frontal sides. Today we cannot rely upon that reinforcement because in most cases the marble of the sculptured hair has been turned into gypsum and thus needs to be supported, instead of providing strength. Professor Scoulicides, who has been carrying out experiments in his laboratory day and night in his attempt to find a substance that will preserve this priceless element, strikingly illustrates the need of preserving and strengthening the hair covering the heads and neck by stating that: «if ever the gypsified parts of the head fall then the Caryatids will remain bald!?!». I am sure that enough has been said to make us realize and appreciate the responsibility and the anguish that confronted

both researchers and workers at every single stage of the process. After a thorough study of all the details and the safe way of action, even then a confirmation of the absolute feasibility and the safety of the method had to be obtained. One of the Caryatids as they stood on their pedestal, the second from the southeast corner of the Porch, is a copy of the statue carried away by Elgin. The maiden at the Northeast edge of the Porch had been reconstructed from various unrelated pieces and its head and neck had been made of clay by an Italian artist in the middle of the 19th century, roundabout 1850. That composite Caryatid was used to try the safety of the way in which the statues were to be removed and carried away to the Acropolis Museum.

The greatest part of the statue was covered with layers of plaster, and with the same material weak points were strengthened. A box of solid wood, about 1 meter high, was built round the lower part of the statue with one of its sides open. Iron bars pierce transversely the interior of the box with their ends extending beyond the outer sides. The open side was totally closed and the box was filled with concrete. Thus, the statue and the box became parts of one body. The details of the plaster covering were checked and finally the statue was hoisted with ropes, secured to the ends of the iron rods protruding from the sides of the box.

The taking down, removal and the transportation of this composite Caryatid to the Museum as it had been planned was carried out without any damage or even danger. This successful performance established the method of work to be followed. One after the other the Caryatids were secured in the box around their feet, and were reinforced with the plaster coatings. However, even this process presented its own problems that had to be solved. For example, the humidity of the plaster with which the surface of the statues was covered, would naturally harm the parts of the surface that had been turned into gypsum, and because of this the surfaces had to be insulated before the strengthening plaster was placed on them. Tissue-paper turned out to be the best insulator and with this the statues were successively enveloped in many layers. Only then the plaster was placed over the paper cover. (Figure 2). Here, I should point out that the paper-shroud and the box made a sort of mould which helped greatly in the removal of the extraneous to the surface materials. The statues with their

plaster covering remained on their original places till the plaster became solid (Figure 1). Then the hoisting ropes were secured, as can be seen clearly in figure 3; the ropes do not touch the statues (figure 3). The hoisting in slow motion followed and then the slow and majestic transportation on small carts of the statues was carried out successfully, harmlessly and without anything untoward. Thus "camouflaged" the Caryatids paraded before the East side of the Parthenon, (figure 4) finally to be deposited in their temporary abode, in one of the Museum rooms to be air-conditioned with nitrogen. Now at the Erechtheion the pedestal stands without the Caryatids; it will support the copies which are being prepared, until scientific technology, as it is hoped, discovers the substance with which the surface of the statues will be coated, without damaging or disfiguring it, a substance which will protect them from minor or bigger attacks of the atmosphere; let us hope, of minor attacks.

Ladies and gentlemen, I hope that I have given you a tiny small picture of the colossal work that is being done and is still in progress on the Acropolis of Athens. Again I hope that I have given you an indication of the reason that makes this work one of the most important preservation and restoration works of our times. It is a pioneering task which must make every Greek proud of the unique achievement being carried out on the sacred Rock by Greek scientists, scholars, artists and workers who are opening up new avenues in the field of research and science. Their sweat and hard effort will make firm and preserve an unrivalled heritage so that it will become "the everlasting possession" not only of the Hellenic posterity but of the entire civilized world. From this platform of the Academy I feel again the necessity of expressing my hearty thanks and even my gratitude to those who worked and to those still working in this unique conservation work of the Acropolis monuments, and my immense gratefulness to the government, particularly to the Prime Minister Mr. Karamanlis and the Ministers who contributed and who are still contributing, and, I do hope, they will keep on doing so in the future so that with their sincere interest the task will be completed.

I may be allowed to make an earnest appeal to all who can help to insure the continuation and rapid completion of the monumental task we, the Greeks, have undertaken. I appeal to all Authorities of the State to

help make possible the extinction of the causes which damaged and are still harming the most wonderful monuments of our ancestors, monuments of humanity indeed, the monuments which wars, inhuman slavery and unbearable misfortunes proved incapable of destroying. More serious and radical measures must be taken to bring back, if not the crystal clear atmosphere in which the monuments were born and flourished, at least to create an atmosphere in which our monuments would be able to live and breathe freely.
