

# Preface

“Archaeology is a team sport”

In 2001 the Zea Harbour Project (ZHP) began the investigations of the ancient shipsheds and slipways in Zea Harbour in the Piraeus. The site was first excavated and surveyed properly in 1885 by I.C. Dragátsis and W. Dörpfeld, whose precise work has been invaluable to the understanding of the architecture and topography of the Zea shipsheds. Since then, only a few studies have touched upon the subject, and the ZHP’s findings establish for the first time conclusive evidence regarding several architectural aspects and construction phases of these important structures.

The present study represents six years of Greek-Danish collaboration in the period between 2001 and 2006 in the harbours of the Piraeus. The work was completed by the ZHP with and under the auspices of the Danish Institute at Athens (DIA), the Ephorate of Underwater Antiquities, and the 26th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities. I wish to express my gratitude for our fruitful collaboration. I wish to single out Dr. Dimitrios Kourkoumelis, our main supervisor from the Ephorate of Underwater Antiquities, who has been a great friend to the project and often gone out of his way to help us. I wish to thank in particular Dr. Kornelia Axioti, Dr. Aikaterini Dellaporta, Dr. Elpida Hadjidaki, Stratos Karagiannakis, Sophia Michalopoulou, Dr. Kalliopi Preka-Alexandri, Dr. Elias Spondylis, Dr. Georgios Steinhauer, Alexandra Syrogianni, and the staff of the Danish Institute at Athens (DIA), especially the former directors. Dr. Jørgen Mejer’s (†) never-ending enthusiasm for the project in the early stages ensured a good beginning, and he is missed. I also wish to thank the present DIA director Dr. Rune Frederiksen and the former DIA director Dr. Erik Hallager for their assistance, as well as the former DIA assistant directors Dr. Jonas Eiring and Jesper Tae Jensen, and the ever-helpful Hanna Lassen (DIA secretary), and Lone Gad-Pilarinou (DIA accountant). Their support has been invaluable. Furthermore, I wish to thank Birgitta Hallager, John F. Coates (†), Dr. Kalliopi Baika, and David Blackman for their help and advice in the early stages of the project.

Other people have been key factors in the success of this project. Dr. John Hale of the University of Louisville has been a great friend both personally and professionally. Richard C. Anderson (former architect to the American Agora Excavations) should be singled out for developing our survey system and adding precision to our work over the years. I also wish to thank Prof. Vincent Gabrielsen of the University of Copenhagen, who has been an important mentor to us. Charles William Davenport Pochin, a renowned diving technician who has participated in more underwater excavations than most, has likewise been an invaluable help in setting up and constructing exceptional diving and excavation equipment, and remains a dear friend and mentor in life as in archaeology. Finally, I wish to thank Dr. Jari Pakkanen of Royal Holloway, University of London, my PhD supervisor, whose guidance has been important for the architectural research presented in this book. Dr. Susan Rotroff, Dr. Mark Lawall, and Dr. Paul Reynolds most kindly offered their expertise in examining the pottery from the project published by Mette Schaldemose in Vol. I.2. All Greek literature was kindly translated by Panagiotis Athanasopoulos; Stefanie Kennell translated the German quotes cited in this volume.

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It could not have been different, but it is a fact that our work in the harbours have often been somewhat intrusive in the daily life of the Piraeus, and we thank Marina Zeas A/S and its staff, but above all its director, Mr. Kopitsas, and Nautikos Athlitikos Syllogos (NAS) in Mikrolimano, for the continued support and help with supplying water, electricity, and storage facilities, but mainly for their patience in dealing with our many requests and demands. Similarly, I wish to thank the Olympiakos Sailing Club and Istioploikos Omilos (Hellenic Yacht Club) for their kind assistance during our fieldwork in Mikrolimano. The Port Police of the Piraeus, and particularly the Port Authorities of Zea Harbour, have been kind to deal swiftly with our official documents, and have given essential help in ensuring safe diving.

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I dedicate this book to the following people

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Karen Lovén  
Dr. Dan Davis  
Dr. Jørgen Mejer (†)  
Dr. Dimitrios Kourkouvelis  
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