

ICOMOS

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MONUMENTS ET DES SITES
CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE MONUMENTOS Y SITIOS
МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ СОВЕТ ПО ВОПРОСАМ ПАМЯТНИКОВ И ДОСТОПРИМЕЧАТЕЛЬНЫХ МЕСТ

WORLD HERITAGE LIST

N° 491

A) IDENTIFICATION

Nomination : Archaeological Site of Epidaurus

Location : Nauplie Province, Peloponnese

State Party : Greece

Date : December 29, 1987

B) ICOMOS RECOMMENDATION

That the proposed cultural property be included on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria I, II, III, IV and VI.

C) JUSTIFICATION

In a small inner Argolides valley that is surrounded by rocky heights only thinly covered by the meager vegetation of Mediterranean scrub, the archaeological site of Epidaurus sprawls over several levels. At an altitude of 430 meters, the sanctuary of Apollo Maleatas overlooks the rest of the ruins. Lower down, to the southwest, at approximately 360 meters, is the theatre. Finally, the sanctuary of Asclepios and its various buildings -the baths, gymnasium, palaistra, stadium and katagogeion (dormitories for patients)- stretch over a western shelf located at between 320 and 330 meters altitude.

This vast site (although only an area of 520,000 m² is State property, construction has been forbidden throughout the entire valley from floor to crest) is a tribute to the healing gods of Epidaurus - Apollo, Asclepios, Hygeia. Legend has it that Asclepios was the fruit of Apollo's love for a daughter of the king of Orchomenes. In the 6th century a cult dedicated to him was established at Epidaurus where archaeological excavations uncovered a sanctuary dating from the much earlier Mycenaen period. By the 5th century the sanctuary already enjoyed great renown both for the miraculous cures that occurred there and for the games held every four years. The stadium dates from that time. Epidaurus entered its greatest period in the 4th century B.C., when the Temple of Apollo Maleatas and the great monuments of the Hieron were built. The Hieron includes the Temple of Asclepios, the Tholos, the Enkoimeterion, where the ill awaited their cures, the baths of Asclepios and above all the incomparable Theatre, rightfully considered one of the purest masterpieces of Greek architecture.

Epidaurus continued to flourish during the Hellenistic period. Despite pillaging by Sylla (87 B.C.) and the Cilician pirates, the restored sanctuary prospered during the Roman period as witnessed by the famous description by Pausanias in 150 A.D.

ICOMOS recommends the inclusion of the archaeological site of Epidaurus on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria I, II, III, IV and VI.

- Criterion I. The Theatre of Epidaurus, an architectural masterpiece by Polycletes the Young of Argos, represents a unique artistic achievement through its admirable integration into the site and the perfection of its proportions and acoustics. The theatre has been revived thanks to an annual festival held there since 1955.

- Criterion II. The Sanctuary of Asclepios at Epidaurus exerted an influence on all the Asclepieia in the Hellenic world, and later on all the Roman sanctuaries of Esculape.

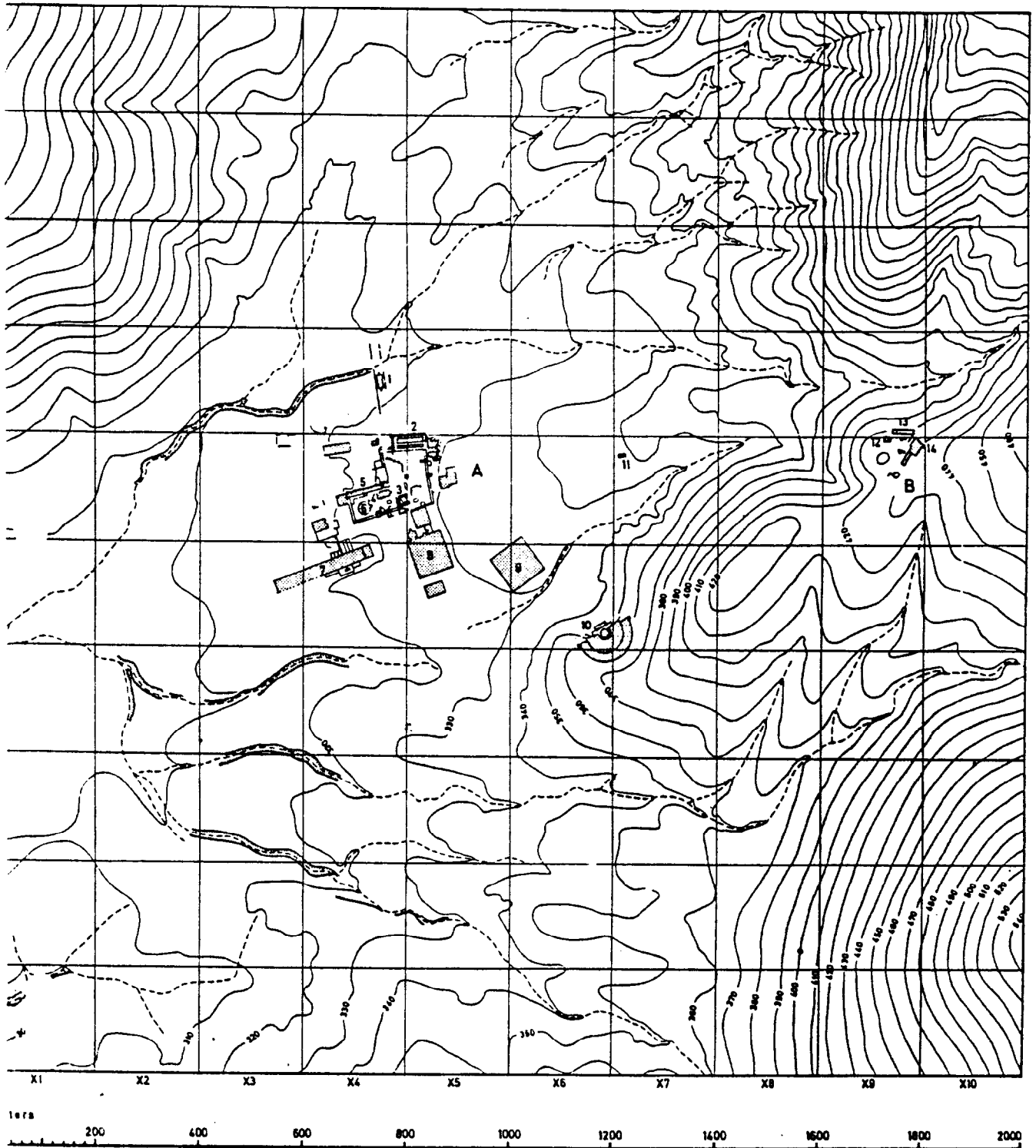
- Criterion III. The group of buildings comprising the Sanctuary of Epidaurus bears exceptional testimony to the healing cults of the Hellenic and Roman worlds. The temples and the hospital facilities dedicated to the healing gods constitute a coherent and complete ensemble. Excavations led by Cavvadias, Papadimitriou and other archaeologists have greatly contributed to our knowledge of them.

- Criterion IV. The Theatre, the Temples of Artemis and Asclepios, the Tholos, the Enkoimeterion and the Propylaea make the Hieron of Epidaurus an eminent example of a Hellenic architectural ensemble of the 4th century B.C.

- Criterion VI. The emergence of modern medicine in a sanctuary originally reputed for the psychically-based miraculous healing of supposedly incurable patients is directly and tangibly illustrated by the functional evolution of the Hieron of Epidaurus and is strikingly described by the engraved inscription on the remarkable steles preserved in the Museum.

ICOMOS, September 1988

GENERAL PLAN



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|-----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 PROPYLEIA | 10 THEATER | A SANCTUARY OF ASCLEPIOS |
| 2 STOA (OF KOTYS ?) | 11 TEMPLE L | B SANCTUARY OF APOLLO |
| 3 BUILDING E | 12 TEMPLE OF APOLLO | MALEATAS |
| 4 TEMPLE OF ASCLEPIOS | 13 STOA | |
| 5 ABATON (RITUAL DORMITORY) | 14 "SKANA" | |
| 6 THOLOS | | |
| 7 STADION | | |
| 8 GYMNASION | | |
| 9 KATAGOION (GUEST HOUSE) | | |

based on G. Roux, L'architecture de l'Argolide, 1961, Pl. 26, IG IV^2 (1929) Table 3, archaeological data by N. Faraklas and maps 1:5,000 of the Hellenic Army Geographical Service

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C. E. RESEARCH PROJECT: ANCIENT GREEK CITIES