



60 years in Greece

THE FULBRIGHT FOUNDATION



1948, ALISON FRANTZ IN HER STUDIO. *American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Agora Excavation Archives*



THE UNSUNG PIONEERS

The contribution of the American
School of Classical Studies

The American School of Classical Studies at Athens (ASCSA) has been one of the beneficiaries of the Fulbright Act since its enactment in 1948, along with other American institutions operating in Greece. What is not widely known is the contribution of three of its members to the successful implementation of the Fulbright Act in its incipient stages. In fact, the first unofficial Executive Director of the Fulbright Foundation in Greece was the renowned archaeologist and photographer, M. Alison Frantz, who served as Cultural Attaché of the US Embassy in Athens from 1946 to 1949. Bert Hodge Hill, Director of the American School of Classical Studies from 1906 to 1926 and an authority on ancient Greek architecture, served on the Board of Directors of the Fulbright Foundation and later became its first Executive Director. Finally, even less known is the involvement of archaeologist Carl W. Blegen, Professor of Classics at the University of Cincinnati and excavator of Troy and Pylos, who also served as Director of the American School in 1948-1949. All three of them envisioned the Fulbright Program "as a means of incalculable value in stimulating classical studies in the United States." Carl W. Blegen urged the members of the Managing Committee of the American School "to do all in their power to find and encourage qualified candidates" to apply for Fulbright research grants to Greece and promised that the American School in Athens would "do its best to cooperate in such a program ... that the Fulbright Fellows will always remember with infectious enthusiasm."

"Language difficulties, lack of suitable library facilities and other handicaps make quite inadvisable the enrolment of any United States students in Greek Universities," wrote Harold B. Minor, Chargé d'Affaires to the Secretary of the State Department on 1 October 1948, recommending that the American applicants for research grants should enrol at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens for work on Greek classical and medieval archaeology and history.

Without any question, the American School with its long history in Greece was in the best position to provide instruction on a level with that of the best graduate schools in the United States. Moreover, to the members of the American School, the Fulbright Program offered new opportunities for funding archaeological research at the Athenian Agora and for publication. The skyrocketing inflation in post-war Greece had left the American School grasping for funds to continue its archaeological projects at Athens and Corinth.

ΕΘΝΙΚΟΣ ΚΗΡΥΞ,
Ο ΕΛΛΗΝΙΣΜΟΣ

ΑΦΙΧΘΗΣΑΝ ΕΞ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ ΠΡΟΣ ΜΕΤΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΙΝ ΔΕΚΑΟΚΤΩ ΦΟΙΤΗΤΕΣ
ΚΑΙ ΦΟΙΤΗΤΡΙΑΙ ΜΕ ΤΟ ΥΠΕΡΩΚΕΑΝΕΙΟΝ "INDEPENDENCE"



Οι αφιχθέντες: Διευθυντής, Βέρα Όμελτσένκο, Θεόδ. Πετρίτσκι, Κ. Ίωάννης, Σπ. Πούλου, Ούραν. Αδάλοπούλου, Ήρση Κοντοναστοπούλου, Μαρία Κολοκοτρώνη, Αλίκη Στάρα, Καίτη Βακίρη, Εύαγγ. Μουστάκας, Ιωάννης Ατζουλίνο, Βασίλ. Βαρελιτζής, STAFF CAPTAIN Κ. Κοντός, και Νικόλαος Στάγκος.

NEW YORK, N. Y.— Με τὸ ὕψος τῆς ὁμάδος. 4) Μαργαρίτα Πιπινούλου — UNIV. OF KANSAS, LAWRENCE, KANS. OF ARCHITECTURE — RAWTUCKER 14) Καίτη Βαρέλιτζη — BROOKLYN PROVIDER



σιν νὰ γνωρίζετε, ποὺ διὰ εὐτάσεις των διὰ νὰ εἰσαχθῶμαι καλὴν ἰωάννη

1956, CARL W. BLEGEN IN THE GARDEN OF THE GENNADIUS LIBRARY DURING THE CEREMONIES OF THE DEDICATION OF THE STOA OF ATTALOS. American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Agora Excavation Archives

1955, FULBRIGHT STUDENTS ARRIVING IN NEW YORK ON THE INDEPENDENCE. Pipinopoulou-Panourgia Archives

"...the Fulbright Program is one of the really generous and imaginative things that have been done in the world since World War II."

ARNOLD TOYNBEE, 1971



1951, FULBRIGHT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR B. H. HILL, KING PAUL AND QUEEN FREDERIKA (AT CENTER), AT AN ARCHITECTURAL EXHIBITION AT ZAPPEION HALL.
American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Agora Excavation Archives

In addition to its superb reputation as an educational institution, the professional involvement of Alison Frantz in the administration of the Fulbright Program gave the American School a great advantage over other institutions, at least until the termination of Frantz's appointment in November of 1949. It was Alison Frantz who recommended Bert Hodge Hill's participation in the Board of Directors of the Fulbright Foundation. "As one of the other American members, Mr. Bert Hodge Hill would have much to offer. His long residence in Greece and his thorough acquaintance with the Greek educational system and especially with American institutions in Greece would make him an invaluable addition to the Board,"

wrote Frantz to Karl L. Rankin, Counselor of the Embassy, on 12 February 1948. With Alison Frantz's subtle support, the American School was successful in securing a considerable number of grants for scholarly research at the Athenian Agora during the first two years of the Fulbright Program and there were hopes for additional long-term funding of the Agora excavations. The Board of Foreign Scholarships in the United States, which managed the Fulbright Program in Greece, however, did not share these aspirations with the American School. "You have no doubt heard from your own sources that the Board of Foreign Scholarships does not seem inclined to support the Agora indefinitely..." wrote Alison Frantz to Homer

A. Thompson, Director of the Agora excavations, on 16 January 1949. Indeed, in the fall of 1949, following a new policy not to grant renewals, the Board of Foreign Fellowships decided not to extend the support of the Fulbright Program to the Agora excavations, despite the recommendation of the Board of Directors of the Fulbright Foundation in Athens which supported renewals "for exceptionally outstanding grantees." Carl Blegen's involvement with the initial stages of the Fulbright Program is less well known. In addition to his support for the American School and the Agora excavations through his position as Director of the American School in 1948-1949, Blegen was also interested in the establishment of a Chair of American History, Life and Culture at the University of Athens, an idea that had not been realized until then due to lack of funds. Blegen described it as his "pet project" and encouraged the selection of a "distinguished scholar, one of the most outstanding we have to offer, in history, literature, poetry, science or whatever field it might be. A succession of such men in different branches of learning would surely have a great success here and could do much to promote cultural relations between Greece and the United States." [Excerpt from a letter by Carl W. Blegen to Gordon T. Bowles, 15 Sept. 1948.] After several delays, Arnold Whitridge, a distinguished history professor at Yale University, was finally appointed as the first Chair of American Civilization at Athens University in the fall of 1949, a position he held until 1951.

The Annual Report of the United States Educational Foundation in Greece for 1948-1950, prepared by M. Alison Frantz, summarizes the early history of the Foundation by outlining issues of policy and administration, but most importantly it pays testament to the successful implementation of the Fulbright Program in post-war Greece. The American School also benefited immensely from the enactment of the Fulbright Program, not just by securing funding for its Agora excavations in the early stages of the Program, but also by opening its facilities and benefits to a larger number of people in the years to come. "The Fulbright Act provides means for scholars, both the younger and the more mature, to come to Greece. The role of a large institution is all but forced upon us," wrote John L. Caskey, Director of the American School, in April 1950 in his Annual Report. To date, more than 300 Americans have been able to benefit from the ASCSA with the support of the Fulbright Foundation. Many of these individuals have gone on to enjoy long and productive careers in the field, enriching both the work of the School and our knowledge of the Greek past, and in doing so fulfilling the goals of the Fulbright Foundation.

Natalia Vogeikoff-Brogan, Head Archivist, American School of Classical Studies at Athens. Fulbright Graduate Student, Archaeology, Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania, 1986-1987.

Sources: *American School of Classical Studies at Athens Administrative Records and Annual Reports*, National Archives and Record Administration of the US Embassy in Athens, *Annual Report of the United States Educational Foundation in Greece*.

1948, ALISON FRANTZ AT WORK. *American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Agora Excavation Archives*

