As the main sanctuary of the city-state of Athens, Acropolis acquires its function as such from the late Geometric period, with a small format, in accordance with the architecture scale of the period in Greece as a whole. It is only at the beginning of the 6th c. B.C. and, to be more precise, during the second quarter of the 6th c. BC that this picture changes radically, owing to the implementation of a new building program, aiming at monumentalizing not only the sanctuary itself but also the city-state of Athens.

This program includes several components, as will be shown. Firstly, a monumentalizing building program with the erection of the archaic Parthenon, the first Doric Peripteral temple built entirely of stone in Athens, better known as the “Hekatompedon” or “H-Architecture” in the secondary literature, although it still remains controversial how big the temple was as well as whether it was erected at the site of the later Parthenon or on the Dörpfeld Foundations.

The new investigation of all the remaining architectural members of the “Hekatompedon”, which had never been studied and published in detail, has afforded two fundamental findings, which contribute to a new topography of the sanctuary during this period: firstly, it has been made possible to submit a new reconstruction of a monumental temple, along with its architectural sculpture; secondly, it has been possible to ascertain the location of the temple itself, which was built at the same site where the Parthenon was later erected. With this study as a basis, the whole program of the monumentalization of the Acropolis will be analysed, discussing its multiple aspects, including the necessary terrain arrangements and the terraces which had to be made before the erection of the building; within the same framework, the question whether the simultaneous votives or certain categories of votives contributed towards the monumentalization of the Acropolis or not will also be addressed. All of the above are to be investigated in the light of one crucial factor, that is their correlation to the still standing Mycenaean wall, which at the time still defined the terrain of the Acropolis and the perception of the site as a whole.

Lastly, the socioeconomic and political processes of the begging of the 6th c. BC at Athens, which certainly led to that program, are going to be examined more closely. It will be proposed that the close connection of the Hekatompedon with the tyranny of Peisistratus should no longer be maintained, and a new reassessment of the above described building and monumentalizing program with the constitutional reforms of Solon against the political, economic, and moral decline in archaic Athens will be ventured.

Elisavet P. Sioumpara
Service for the Restoration of the Acropolis Monuments
Greek Ministry of Culture