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TOWARDS A REGIONAL HISTORY

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Cover: The Early Hellenistic fortress Agios Donatos of Zervochori seen from the south.
Photo: Esko Tikkala.

Layout: Vesa Vahtikari

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The ‘Dark Age’ in the Kokytos Valley – Not So Dark After All

Jeannette Forsén

We are finally gaining a better idea of the pottery sequences for the ‘Dark Age’ in northwestern Greece, albeit not from Greece proper, but from well-dated layers at Sovjan in southeastern Albania.¹ To these typologies we can add the Early Iron Age (=EIA, ca. 1150-700 BC) pottery found at Vitsa (Fig. 1) in the Zagoria Mountains in northern Epirus.²

What makes the study of Epirote pottery extra challenging is the tendency to produce similar wares and shapes for many centuries, merely showing changes in the percentage of the production of these wares.³ Thus, the characteristic wares with plastic decorations (Fig. 2, columns B and E), which began to appear already during the Final Neolithic period in Sovjan, lingered on throughout the entire Late Bronze Age and EIA periods. It is only in the case of the Matt-painted ware that we can say that something definitely new is being introduced in Sovjan and that it denotes the beginning of the EIA (ca. 1150 BC).⁴

Another type of EIA pottery typical of Epirus is what Wardle termed “orange-red” ware.⁵ This ware has been broadly dated at Dodona and Vitsa as spanning the period from the end of the eleventh until the seventh century BC.⁶ Tartaron describes it as having a distinctive blue-gray core and orange to red surface,⁷ which is borne out by some of the Thesprotia Expedition survey finds.

PS 17⁸, which was discovered in the spring of 2005 just below and to the northwest of Agios Donatos in the western foothills of the Paramythia mountains, produced apart from a fair amount of lithics (n=50) also some pottery. The pottery from PS 17 is unfortunately quite abraded and fragmentary. The sampled sherds are all plain except in two cases, either because they were always plain or because the original surfaces have worn off. Some of this pottery finds its best parallels among the so-called “local ware of Minyan type” of Middle Bronze Age date (Fig. 3: 5-7).⁹ Another group finds its best comparanda among the local class III at Vitsa, which is an orange-red ware (Fig. 3: 1-4), in our case usually with a diagnostic bluish-green core.

* Assistance from Barbara Greiner and Anna Patteri in illustrating the pottery is thankfully acknowledged. I would also like to thank Vesa Vahtikari for making Fig. 1 and Anna Patteri for making Figs. 4 and 7.

¹ Léra *et al.* 1996, 995-1026; Allen 2002, 65, table 1.

² Vokotopoulou 1986.

³ Léra *et al.* 1996, 1012-1018, esp. 1013, table 4.

⁴ At least at Sovjan and presumably also at EIA sites in Epirus.

⁵ Wardle 1972, 194, 204-206.

⁶ Wardle 1972, 206; Vokotopoulou 1986, 365.

⁷ Tartaron 2004, 88.

⁸ PS stands for ‘place of special interest’ and is a slight modification of the abbreviation used in the Pylos regional archaeological project; see Davis *et al.* 1997, 401, n. 27.

⁹ Tartaron 2004, 77-82.

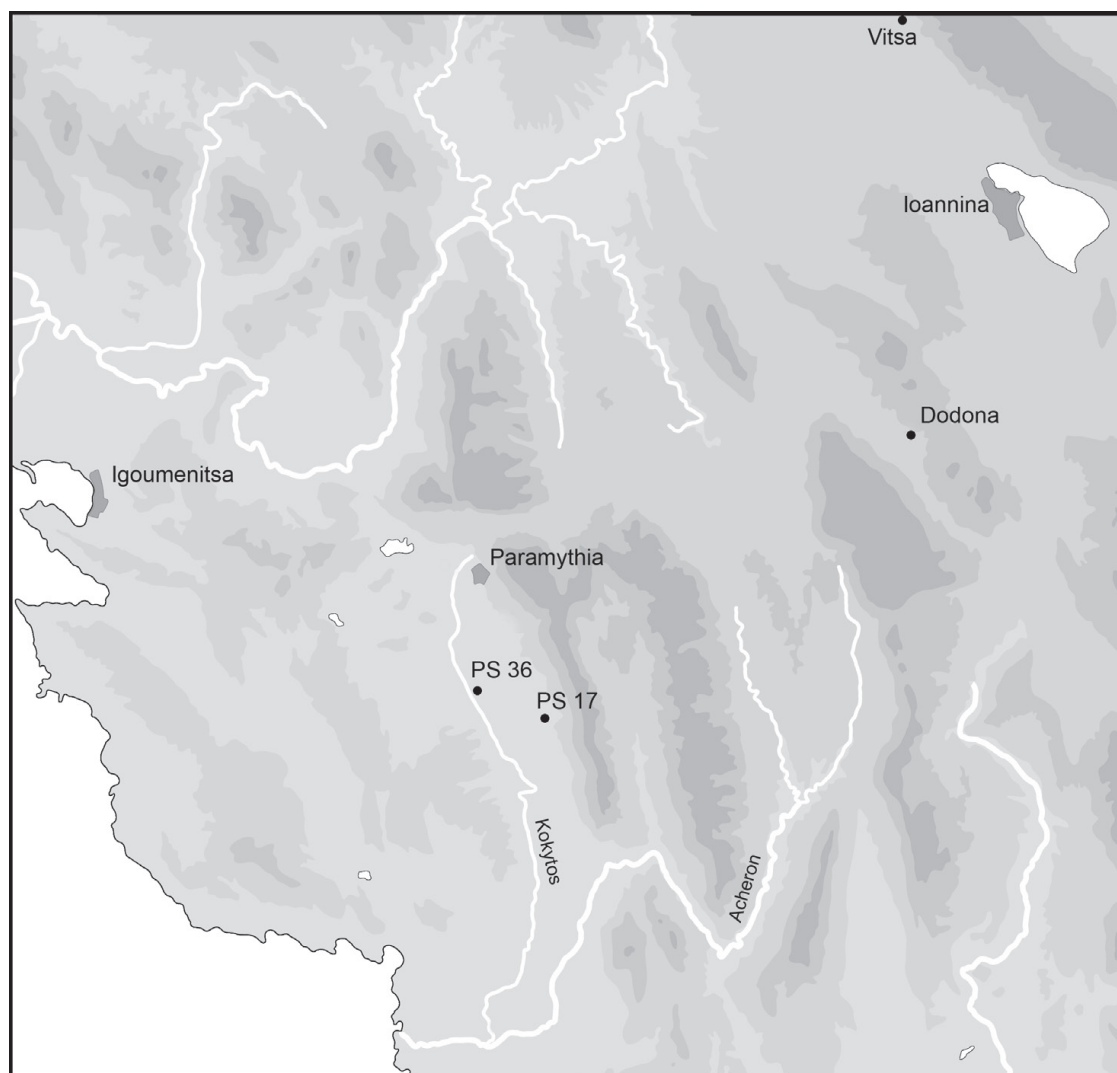


Fig. 1. Map with principal sites mentioned in the text.

Two further places of special interest, PS 31 and PS 36, were detected by the Thesprotia Expedition in the spring of 2006 at Mavromandilia, some 2 km southeast of the village Xirolophos and 200 meters east of the Kokytos river. They are located in one and the same field that borders on the Early Iron Age site excavated by the Greek Archaeological Service in 2005.¹⁰ PS 31 and PS 36 appeared as two distinct pottery concentrations located ca. 100 m apart in the newly ploughed field with no finds between them.¹¹ PS 36 was even visible as a dark spot in the field (Fig. 2 in Lavento and Lahtinen, this volume).

The survey pottery found at PS 36 makes a quite homogeneous impression, mainly dating to the Early Iron Age, although some later and earlier intrusions also were found (e.g. a wishbone handle possibly of Late Bronze Age). The pottery found at PS 31 is very worn and seems mainly to date to the Archaic and Classical periods. It also includes some sherds of miniature vessels.

¹⁰ See Tzortzatou and Fatsiou, this volume.

¹¹ For more details about the geo-archaeological setting at Mavromandilia, see Lavento and Lahtinen, this volume.

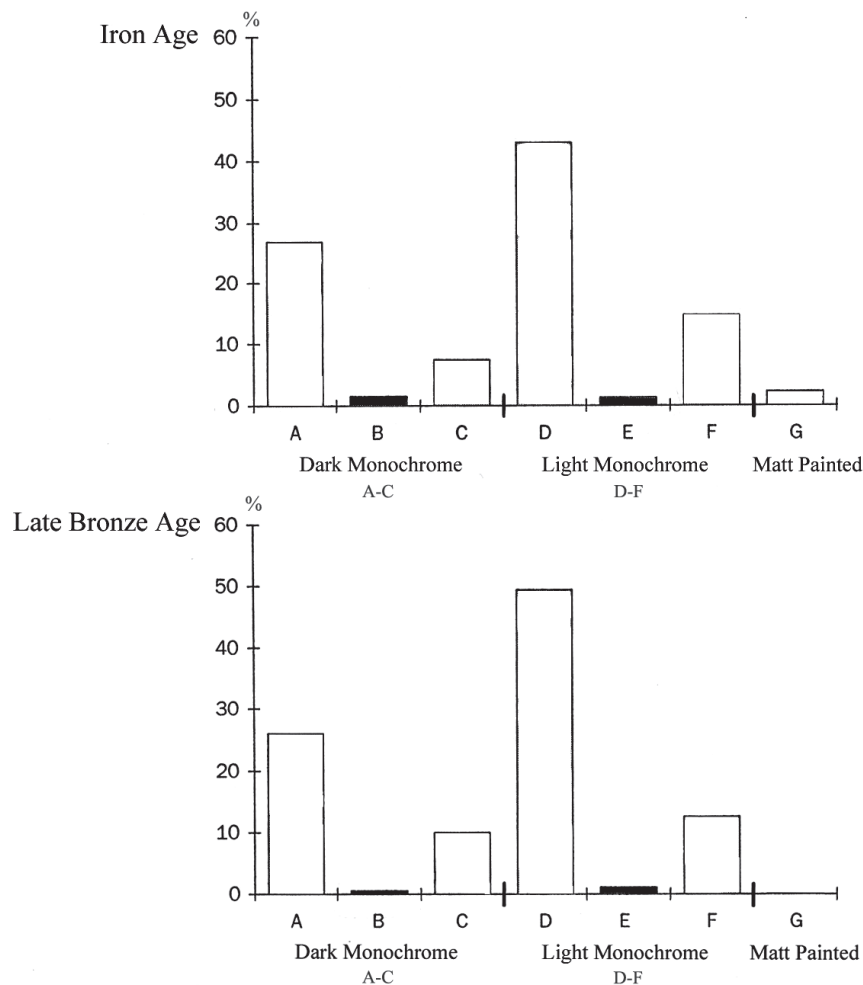


Fig. 2. Pottery wares found at Sovjan (after Léra et al. 1996, 1013, table 4).

In order to learn more about these concentrations of pottery, we conducted a trial excavation of PS 36 in the summer of 2006. The trench, which forms a T, was divided into squares A0 to A5 and B1 to B4 (Fig 4). Very early on during the excavation it became apparent that part of the cultural layer was just beneath the surface. When 25 to 30 cm of topsoil was removed in squares A3 to A4 and B1 to B2, an oval-shaped feature (ca. 4-5 x 2 m) began to appear, which was ca. 10-20 cm thick (henceforth called *feature I*). It contained large amounts of broken pottery (also restorable vessels), mainly dating to the eighth century BC (Nos. 1-12 below), animal bones,¹² some pieces of daub (Fig. 5) from a presumed wattle and daub construction, burnt mud-brick pieces and some fist-sized stones which had been secondarily fired. Apart from the large amount of human waste it was the colour of the soil, very dark grayish brown (10YR 3/2 on the Munsell chart), which made this area differ so conspicuously from the surrounding soil.

Clearly demarcated from *feature I* and at a somewhat lower level in squares A4, B1, B2 and B3, another oblong feature (ca. 5 x 1 m, 5 to 10 cm thick) resembling a ditch (Fig. 6) was exposed. It ran more or less parallel with, but underneath, *feature I* and contained large amounts of very small, water-worn and unidentifiable sherds, pebbles, and the ever-present animal bones, in addition to a unique arrowhead of iron. One C¹⁴ date

¹² See Niskanen, this volume.

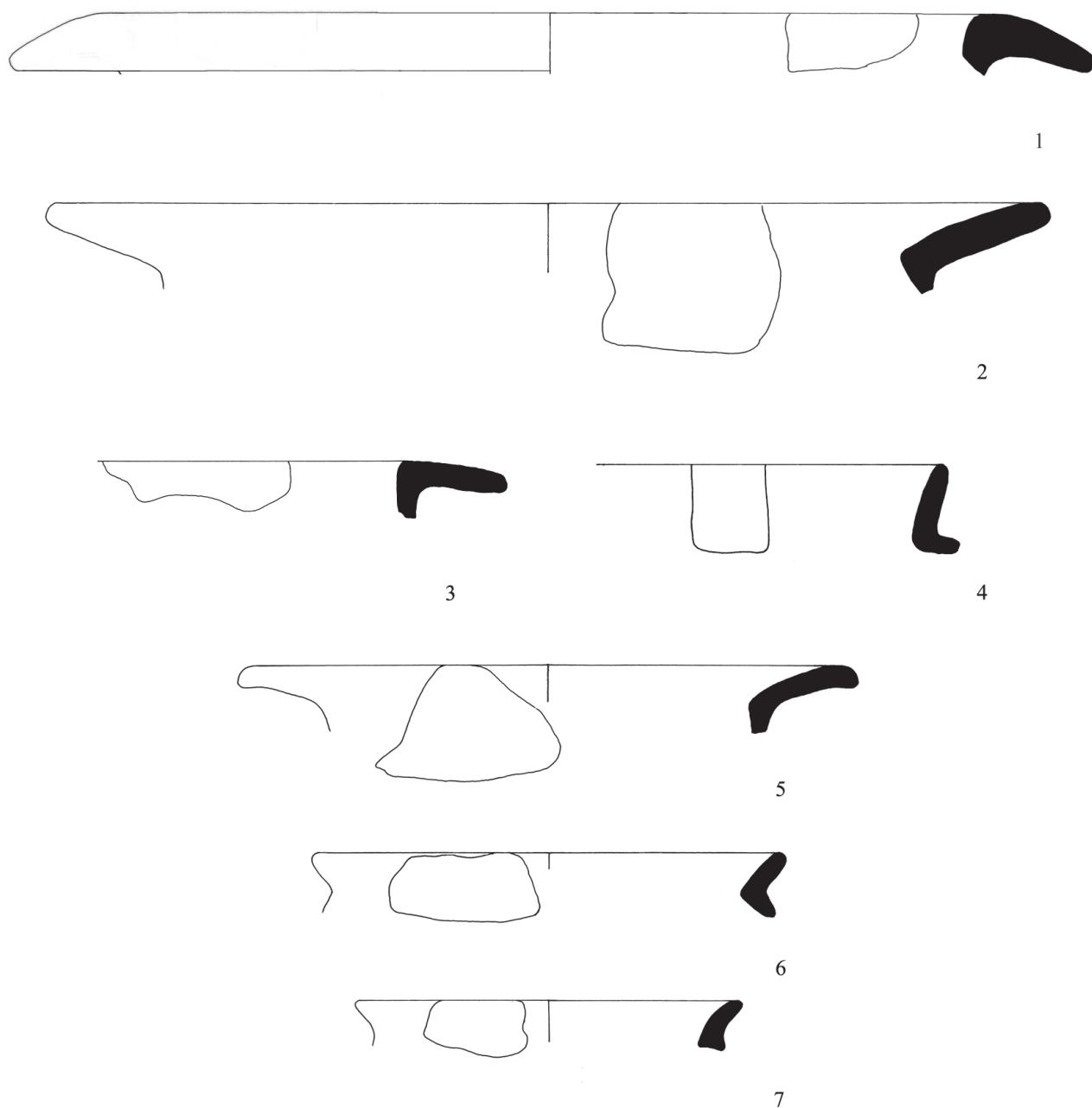


Fig. 3. Pottery from PS 17: “Orange-red” ware (1-4) and “Minyan” type ware (5-7). Scale 1:2.

was obtained from the ditch (Hela 1240: 2870 ± 40 BP or cal. 1135 [0.887] 920 BC). Thus, the ditch seems to be older in date than *feature I*.

In squares A1 to A3 another irregular oblong (ca. 3 x 1 m) dark discoloured spot, *feature II*, was excavated. *Feature II* was roughly aligned with *feature I*, although separated from it by a sterile area, devoid of any artefacts. It was smaller than *feature I* and not as thick (only 5-10 cm). In the uppermost part of *feature II* we found, apart from some EIA pottery (e.g. No. 19), also pottery of Classical and possibly Early Hellenistic date (Nos. 20-22), as well as some roof tiles, pebbles and animal bones.

At a lower level, two pits, ca. 50-60 cm in diameter and ca. 40-50 cm deep, were detected at the junction between A1 and A2 (Fig. 4). They were filled with very dark soil, mixed with ash and charcoal, but only some animal bones and pottery. C¹⁴ dates were

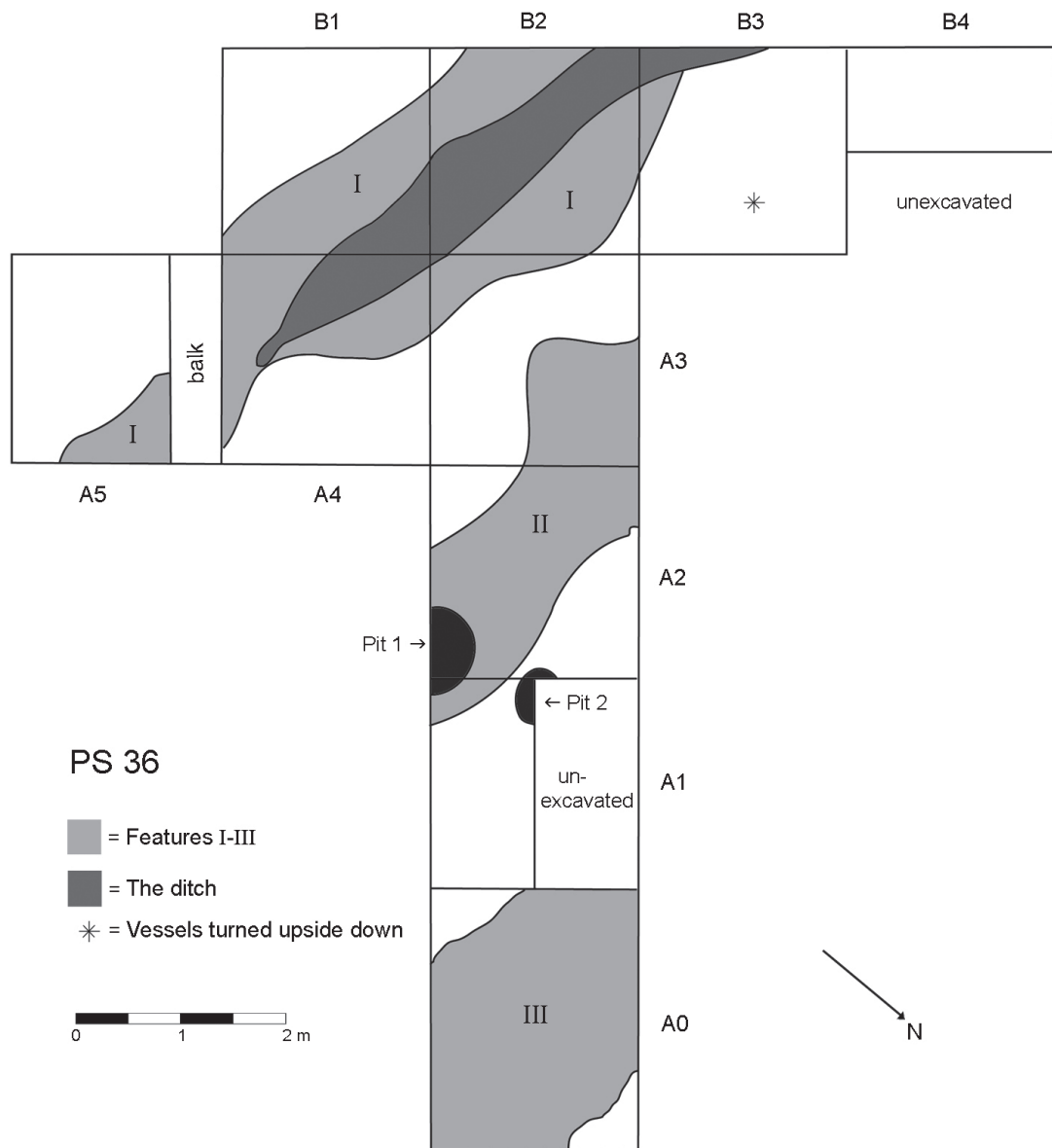


Fig. 4. General plan of the excavation in PS 36 showing the three parallel dark features, the two pits as well as the “ditch”.

obtained from each pit. The first one, *pit 1* (Fig. 7), received a calibrated date of 1055 (0.954) 835 BC (Hela-1238: 2805±40BP) while the second one, *pit 2*, had a calibrated date of 820 (0.592) 730 BC (Hela-1237: 2575±40BP)¹³.

Further towards the northeast, in square A0, a third dark feature, *feature III*, aligned in the same way as the previous ones was found, but this time at a depth of 80 cm below the surface (Figs. 4 and 7). This feature was ca. 15-20 cm thick and contained large amounts of broken roof tiles and chunks of sun-dried mud-bricks, as well as pebbles, animal bones and pottery. However, there was less pottery than in the other features and the sherds seem at least partly to be later in date (No. 17). Below *feature III*, at a depth of ca. 100 cm, we came upon another cultural layer (A0, Locus 6), with more homogeneous

¹³ The other calibrated probabilities for Hela-1237 are: 690 (0.13) 660 BC and 650 (0.232) 545 BC.



Fig. 5. Fragments of daub. Find context: B2, Locus 3, Pail 4.

although very worn EIA pottery sherds. Due to time restrictions this layer could not be excavated.

No clear house remains such as stone walls or postholes were found in the excavation, but numerous pieces of mud-bricks and daub (Fig. 5) seem to indicate that some kind of flimsy constructions once existed here or close nearby. The oval-shaped *feature I* could possibly be what remains of the interior of such a rudimentary construction. *Pit 2*, located at a distance of some 3 m from *feature I*, as well as some of the pottery found in squares B3 and B4, such as the two vessels found inside each other and turned upside down (Nos. 13-14 below, found at “x” in Fig. 4), are roughly contemporaneous with it and may indicate activities carried out near such a hypothetical construction. The pit could have been a cooking pit or some kind of bothros.¹⁴

On the basis of the radiocarbon dates, *pit 1* and the ditch both belong to an earlier activity phase, about which we know less. The ditch could be interpreted as a refuse drain, where water in combination with pebbles has ground the pottery into very small fragments. The function of *pit 1* is not clear – once again it is either a cooking pit or some kind of bothros.

Even less can be said about *features II and III*, except for the fact that they mainly seem to contain pottery of later date, Classical and Hellenistic (?), as well as pieces of roof tiles (including a piece of a Corinthian cover tile¹⁵), which indicate a more durable construction somewhere in the neighbourhood.

The excavated pottery confirms, by and large, the impression made by the survey finds, as most of it dates to the EIA. However, among the excavated finds there is no pottery which dates to the Late Bronze Age, and surprisingly many sherds date to the Classical and possibly even the Hellenistic period. Thus, the activity at PS 36 stretches over several centuries.

The pottery is of such an unusual character that we find reason to publish 22 items in more detail in the following catalogue as a preliminary excavation report. Added to this catalogue is also the unique find of the iron arrowhead. All the catalogued artefacts (Figs. 8-11) are arranged according to find context, where the square number indicates the horizontal and the locus number the vertical context. H = hight, E = exterior, I = interior.

Feature I includes the following loci: B1, Locus 3, B2, Loci 3, 6 and 8, and A3, Locus 3 (cf. cat. Nos. 6-12).

Feature II includes A2, Locus 4 and A3, Locus 3 (no catalogued items).

Feature III includes A0, Locus 4 (cf. cat. Nos. 17-18).

B1-B3, Locus 1 and B1, Locus 1 are topsoil layers (cf. cat. Nos. 1-3).

B1, Locus 2 is a 10 cm thick artificial layer under topsoil, probably part of *Feature I* (cf. cat. Nos. 4-5)

¹⁴ Unfortunately the macrofossil samples taken from the pits revealed no remains of preserved seeds or other organic material.

¹⁵ From A1, Locus 6.



Fig. 6. The ditch seen from the east in square B2.

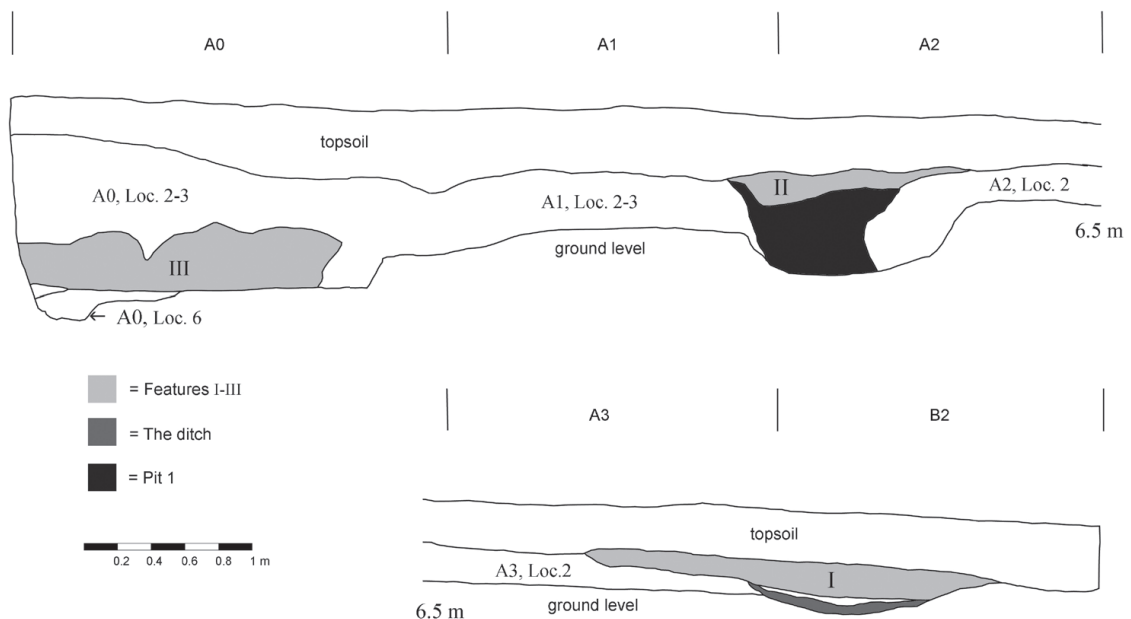


Fig. 7. Profile drawing through A0, A1, A2, A3 and B2. Visible in the profile is the large oval dark feature in squares A3 to A4 and B1 to B2 as well as the ditch running parallel with it at a deeper level. Also the dark irregular feature in squares A1, A2 and A3 and one of the pits located below it (A2, Locus 4, Pails 3-4) and the cultural layers in A0 can be seen.

B3, Locus 4 is a locus assigned the two vessels found turned upside down in a dark brown soil layer (cf. cat. Nos. 13-14).

B3, Locus 5 is a layer below B3, Locus 4 of dark grayish brown soil with less evidence of human occupation (cf. cat. No. 15).

B4, Locus 2 is a locus given to a fragmentary partly restorable kotyle found in a middle brown layer (cf. cat. No. 16).

A1, Locus 2 and A2, Locus 2 is an olive brown soil layer ca. 10 cm thick under topsoil (cf. cat. Nos. 19-22).

B2, Locus 9 is a brown soil layer with pebbles and very abraded sherds which also included the arrowhead (cf. cat. No. 23).

Catalogue

1. Small amphora with wide, everted rim. Inner diam. ca. 12.4 cm. Coarse ware, unevenly fired, reddish-yellow (7.5YR 7/6) with a light brown core (7.5YR 6/3). E and I plain.

Cf. Pfaff 1988, 30, 63, fig. 22 (C-1978-302).

Find context: B1-B3, Locus 1.

Date: Late Geometric to Early Protocorinthian (750-690 BC).

2. Bowl with wide, everted rim. Inner diam. ca. 14 cm. Medium ware, fired reddish-yellow (5YR 7/6), sub-surfaces partially exposed due to wear; they are light gray to gray (N7-N6).

Cf. Wardle 1974, 516, no. 748, fig. 137 (from Kastritsa), said to be of a "grey black fabric".

Find context: B1-B3, Locus 1.

Date: Ca. 900-700 BC.

3. Strap-handle of oinochoe. Fine ware, unevenly fired very pale brown (10YR 8/4) with a reddish yellow core (5YR 6/6). Corinthian import, painted with horizontal banding. Such banding on oinochoai handles is attested from the Protogeometric until Early Protocorinthian period.

Cf. Pfaff 1988, 45, no. 12, nn. 111-112 (with further references).

Find context: B1, Locus 1.

Date: Ca. 1000-690 BC.

4. Skyphos rim. Outer diam. ca. 18-20 cm. Fine ware, evenly fired, very pale brown (10YR 8/4).

E horizontal banding above lower part painted black. I black glazed. Possibly of Thapsos class.

Cf. Neeft 1981, 14 fig. 4, 15 (skyphos, plain type).

Find context: B1, Locus 2.

Date: Late Geometric (ca. 750-720 BC).

5. Trefoil mouthed pitcher or juglet. H = 10.3 cm, Base diam. = 4.2 cm. Fine ware, evenly fired, yellow (10YR 8/6). E black glazed, I plain.

Cf. Vokotopoulou 1986, 199-201, no. 5212 (T. 157), 334, pl. 71:i, fig. 317:a (775-750 BC);

Robertson 1948, 75-76, nos. 428-430 (local Ithacan, handmade, unpainted), which Coldstream calls West Greek LG II and dates to 720-680 BC (1968, 228-232, 330).

Find context: B1, Locus 2 + B1, Locus 3.

Date: 775-750 BC.

6. Divided handle, possibly of a kantharos. Medium ware, unevenly fired to reddish-yellow (5YR 7/8) with a gray core (5YR 5/1). Plain.

Cf. Wardle 1974, 215, no. 674 (from Dodona). This type of handle has been found in Late Bronze Age/EIA contexts in Albania (Prendi 1993, 25, pl. IV:7, 26) and at Thermon in Aitolia (Wardle 1972, 269). Touchais has similar handles datable to EIA, i.e. starting from 900 BC at Sovjan (pers. comm. 2007).

Find context: B1, Locus 3.

Date: Late Bronze Age to EIA.

7. Small handle-less cup. Outer. diam. 10 cm. Handmade. Medium-fine ware, evenly fired to grey (10YR 6/1). Traces of very pale brown slip (10YR 8/3) on E and I, onto which painted pattern in matt black paint has been applied (multiple zigzags). Plastic warts of different size and irregular shape applied on E. Secondarily fired, especially visible on the little warts which have partly

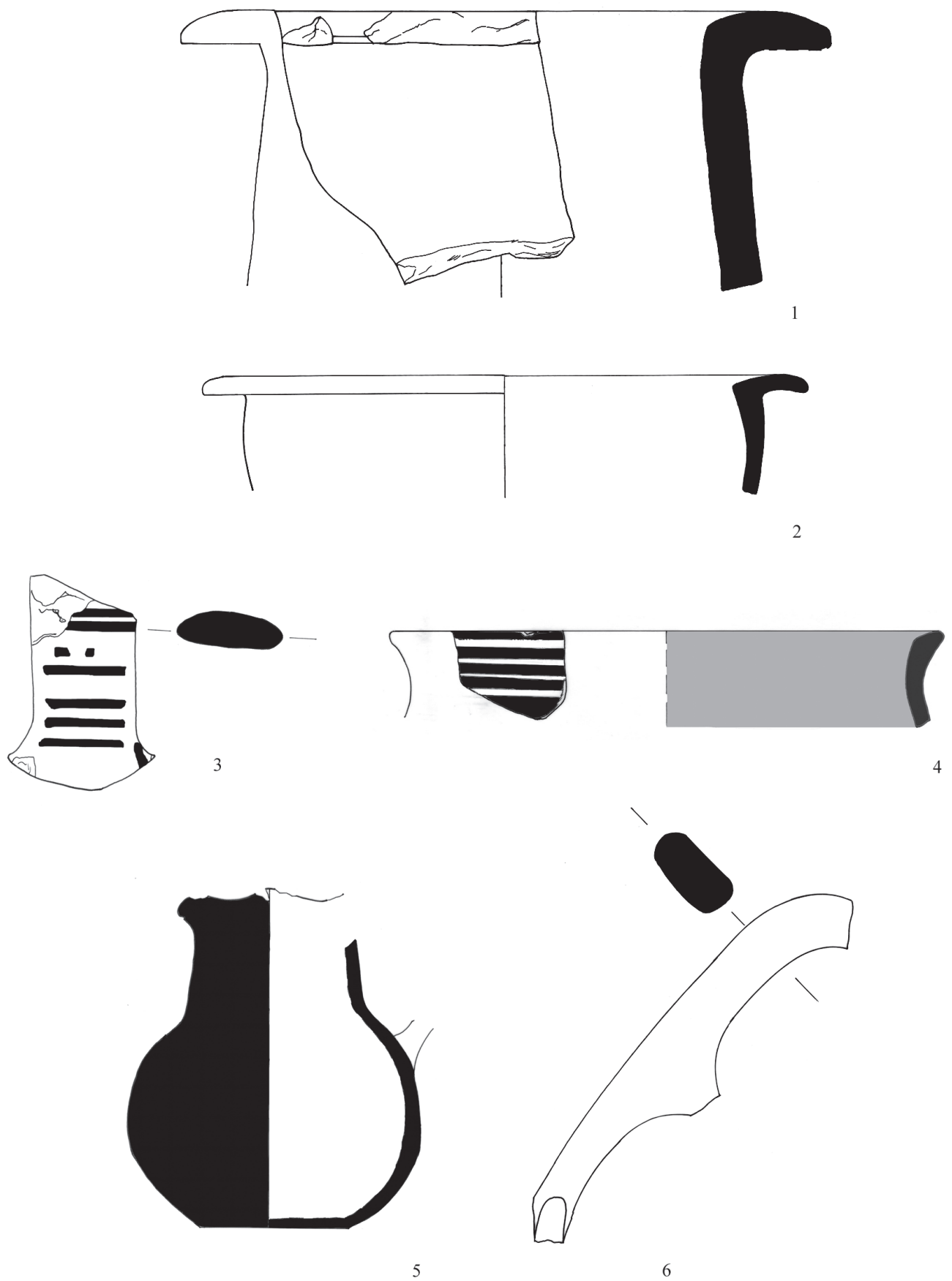


Fig. 8. Pottery from squares B1-B3 (Nos. 1-2) and B1 (Nos. 3-6). Scale 1:2.

vitrified.

Cf. Wardle 1974, no. 522 (Dodona, “grey fabric with dull, black paint”) and no. 610.

Find context: B2, Locus 3 + A3, Locus 3.

Date: Ninth century BC.

8. Kantharos rim and handle. Inner diam. ca. 16 cm. Medium ware, unevenly fired light red (2.5YR 7/8) with a gray core (5YR 6/1). E and I red slipped (2.5YR 6/6).

Cf. Vokotopoulou 1986, 126-128, 334, fig. 14:e, no. 5416 (T. 174).

Find context: B2, Locus 3.

Date: Ca. 775-750 BC.

9. Krater with stirrup-handle. Outer diam. ca. 38 cm. Fine ware, evenly fired to pale yellow (2.5Y 8/4). E running spiral in panel zone made in black paint, so-called “Thapsos class”. I black glazed.

Cf. Pedrizet 1908, 134, no. 2, fig. 501 also published by Friis-Johansen 1923, pl. 1:1 (‘Delphi 7395’). Neef has dubbed this a ‘panel type krater’ due to the decoration (1981, 84). Similar decoration found on pottery from Aetos, Ithaca, is dated by Coldstream to the Late Geometric period, i.e. 750-720 BC (1968, 98, 330, pl. 20:a: see more recently Cook 1997, 24-25). Stirrup-handles, i.e. a semicircular handle joined by a slanting band to the rim, were inherited from the Atticizing class of MG II pottery (i.e. 800-760 BC) and became popular in many regions (Coldstream 1968, 102, pl. 17f (Corinthian MG II), pl. 19h (Corinthian LG); pls. 30a, e (Argive LG II); pl. 44h (Boeotian LG); pls. 59g, 60e (East-Greek MG)).

Find context: B2, Locus 6.

Date: Ca. 750-720 BC.

10. Skyphos rim. Outer diam. ca. 20 cm. Fine ware, evenly fired to very pale brown (10YR 8/4). E horizontal banding in black paint. I black painted.

Cf. Vokotopoulou 1984, 80, fig. 3:d, 82, fig. 5 (from Arta/Ambrakia). Not enough remains to tell if diagnostic Thapsos elements such as panel decoration or solid black bottom (like No. 4 above) existed; see Bosana-Kourou 1984, 267.

Find context: B2, Locus 6.

Date: Late Geometric (ca. 750-720 BC).

11. Large basin. Outer diam. ca. 30. Coarse ware, unevenly fired, red (2.5YR 6/8) on I and dusky red (2.5YR 4/2) on E and with a brown core (7.5YR 5/3). Plain.

Cf. Léra *et al.* 1996, 1014, fig. 10:13 (from Sovjan).

Find context: B2, Locus 6.

Date: Ca. 900-700 BC.

12. Large, up-swung strap-handle and rim of one-handler (?). Outer diam. ca. 16 cm. Medium ware, unevenly fired yellowish-red (5YR 5/6) with a reddish brown core (5YR 5/4). E and I slipped red (2.5YR 6/8).

Cf. Wardle 1974, no. 596 (from Dodona, “yellow-red fabric”); Prendi 1982, 215, fig. 8:12 (from Maliq?).

Find context: B2, Locus 8.

Date: Late Bronze Age to EIA.

13. Small kanthariskos. Outer diam. ca. 4.8 cm, diam. of flat base 3.1 cm. Fine ware, evenly fired red (2.5YR 5/8). E red slipped (2.5YR 5/6). Found inside the small kyathos, No. 14.

Cf. Vokotopoulou 1986, 86-89, no. 2079 (T. 36), pl. 128:b, fig. 10:e, 334; Prendi 1993, 25-26, pl. IV:4-5 from northern Epirus (Chaonia).

Find context: B3, Locus 4.

Date: 775-750 BC.

14. Small kyathos. Outer diam. 13.5 cm. Diam. of flat base, 4.5-4.7 cm. Fine ware, evenly fired reddish-yellow (7.5YR 6/6). E plain, with one mastoid knob on shoulder at maximum point of diameter. I traces of light brown slip (7.5YR 6/4).

Cf. Wardle 1972, fig. 129, no. 601, fig. 137, no. 748 (exact parallel of rim from Kastritsa, but said to be of "grey-black fabric"). The shape of our vessel resembles most a kyathos, which

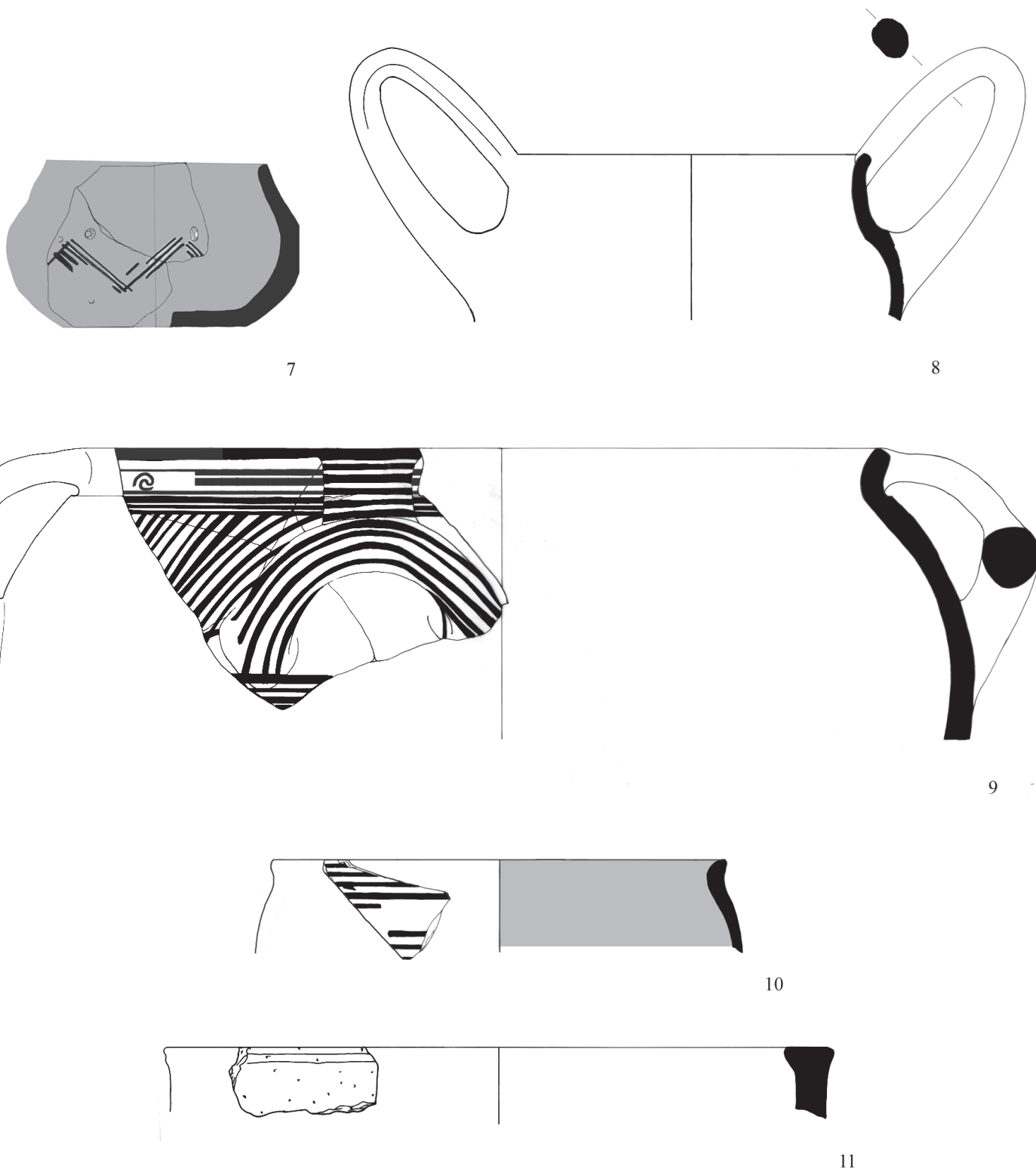


Fig. 9. Pottery from square B2 (Nos. 7-11). Scale 1:3.

Vokotopoulou places in her 3rd group which dates to 750-725 BC (1986, 246). However, her vessel is without a mastoid knob and has a black glazed exterior (1986, 72-73, 246-247, pl. 100: b, fig. 46:e, no. 5191 (T. 23). Small mastoid knobs exist already during the Late Bronze Age in western Greece (Vokotopoulou 1986, 360; Léra *et al.* 1996, 1017 fig. 14).

Find context: B3, Locus 4.

Date: 750-725 BC.

15. Up-swung strap-handle of kantharos. Outer diam. > 13 cm. Medium ware, unevenly fired, reddish yellow (5YR 6/6) with a bluish gray core (5B 6/1), so-called “orange-red ware”.

Cf. Vokotopoulou 1986, 164-165, kantharos no. 5206 (T. 134), pl. 263:b, fig. 8:b, 334.

Find context: B3, Locus 5.

Date: Ca. 850-800 BC.

16. Kotyle. Outer diam. 19 cm. Fine ware, evenly fired to reddish-yellow (5YR 7/8). E and I black glazed (high lustre).

Cf. Benton 1953, 294, no. 782, fig. 10 (‘kyathos’) described as of pink clay, paint gone, probably undecorated and from near 700 BC. Completely black glazed kotylai at Corinth are Late Geometric, i.e., from 750-720 BC (Dehl 1984, 40-42).

Find context: B4, Locus 2.

Date: Ca. 720-700 BC.

17. Rim and lug-handle of cup or bowl. Outer diam. 14 cm. Medium ware, evenly fired to gray (N5/). Plain.

Lug-handles occur on kraters, but the range in diameter is then between 27.5 and 75 cm and the rims and surface finish are quite different among the Agora examples; see Rotroff 1997, 137-139, 304, fig. 42. However, gray wares are said by Rotroff 1997, 236, to have a long history in Italy and Sicily.

Find context: A0, Locus 4.

Date: Hellenistic?

18. Horizontal handle with knob, handle oval in section. Fine ware, evenly fired to reddish-yellow (5YR 7/8). Plain.

Cf. Douzougli 1996, 26, fig. 2:e, (from Mesogefyra), 28, fig. 3:i (from Aetopetra).

Find context: A0, Locus 4.

Date: Eleventh to eighth century BC.

19. Bowl with out-turned rim. Outer diam. 18 cm. Medium ware, unevenly fired reddish-yellow (5YR 6/6-7/6), with a light bluish-gray core (5B 7/1). E and I red slipped (2.5YR 6/8).

Cf. Léra *et al.* 1996, fig. 10:2 (from Sovjan).

Find context: A1, Locus 2.

Date: Ca. 900-700 BC.

20. Small bowl with ring-foot. Outer diam. 9 cm. Diam of foot 4 cm. Fine ware, evenly fired to reddish-yellow (7.5YR 7/6). E and I black glazed.

Cf. Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 298, no. 870, fig. 9.

Find context: A1, Locus 2.

Date: Late fifth to mid-fourth century BC (*terminus post quem* 425-400 BC).

21. Amphora handle, Corinthian, type A. Coarse ware, unevenly fired to reddish-yellow (5YR 7/6) with a gray core. E black glazed, 5-petalled palmette stamp at base of handle, volutes springing from horizontal centre dot, U-shaped elongated field.

For the palmette, see Koehler type IVc, best paralleled by Isthmia (IP 3469), and dated to the

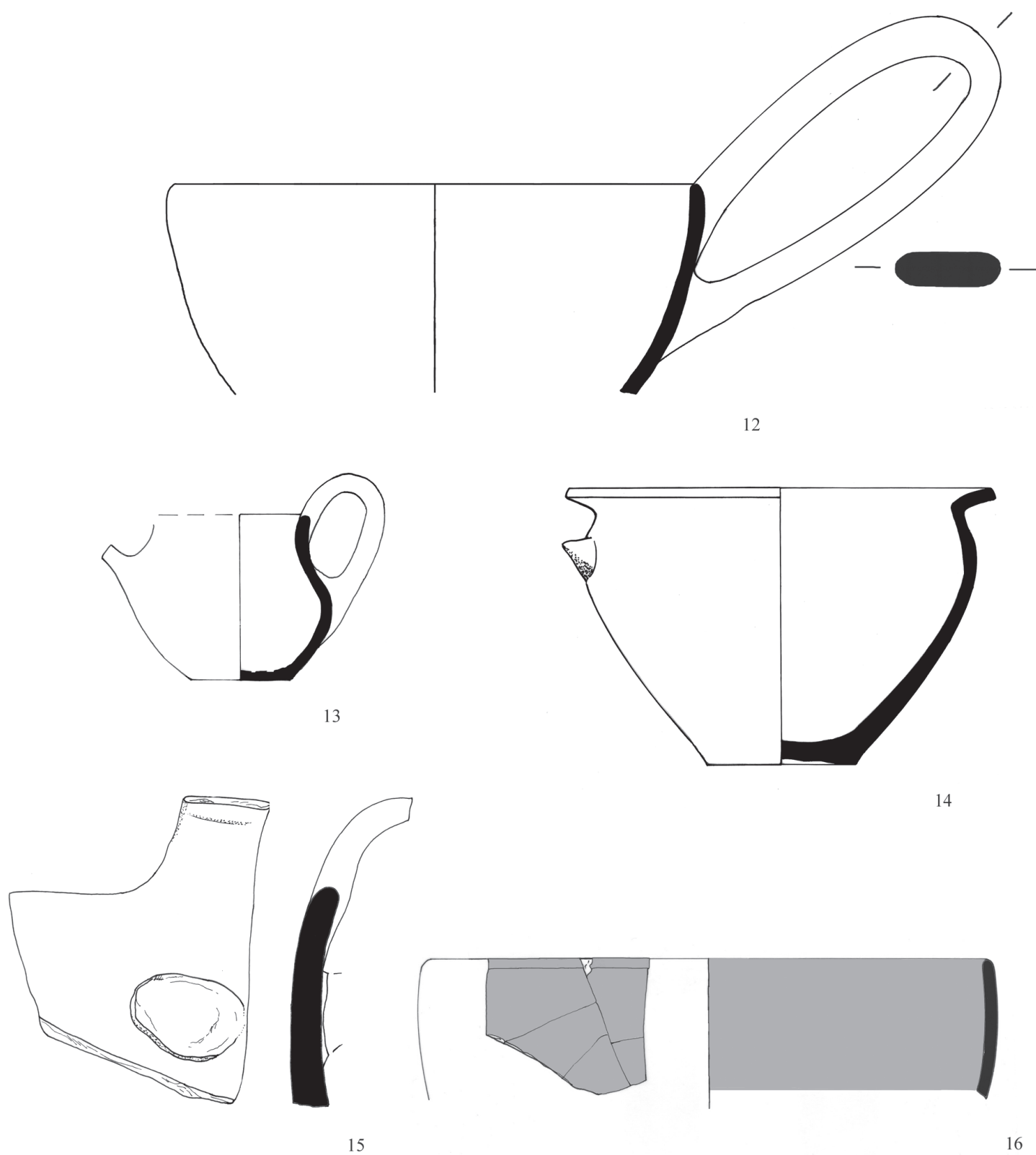


Fig. 10. Pottery from squares B2, B3 and B4 (Nos. 12-16). Scale 1:2.

mid-fifth century BC (1978, 103, no. 32, 144-145, pls. 5, 22). The round handle, where it joins the shoulder, likewise indicates a fifth century BC date (cf. Göransson 2007, 82-83).

Find context: A2, Locus 2.

Date: Mid-fifth century BC.

22. Ring-foot of small cup. Diam. 3.5 cm. Fine ware, evenly fired to reddish yellow (5YR 7/6). E and I black glazed, reserved resting surface. One incised line at junction foot and wall on exterior. Cf. Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 268, no. 471.

Find context: A2, Locus 2.

Date: Fifth to third century BC (*terminus post quem* ca. 470-450 BC).

23. Arrowhead of iron. Length 4.7 cm, Width 1.4 cm, Thickness 2-3 mm. Broken tip and tang. Cf. Kilian 1983, 139, fig. 8, 145, nn. 23-24 (with further references); Kilian-Dirlmeier 2002, 146-147.

Find context: B2, Locus 9.

Date: EIA.

Overall, the most remarkable vessel of the 22 in the catalogue above is No. 9, the stirrup-handled krater of the so-called Thapsos class. Its impressive size and non-local provenience (where the actual production centre of the Thapsos ware was located is a hotly debated question¹⁶) point to a certain importance of this site, an importance which we still cannot quite understand. At Vitsa there are Corinthian imports from Middle Geometric II, i.e. from 800 BC into the seventh century.¹⁷ As seen above, our krater can be more exactly dated to the third quarter of the eighth century BC.

Looking at the pottery assemblage as a whole, it can be noted that all shapes are connected to storage, serving or drinking of liquids, presumably wine. Thus, an amphora (No. 1), a krater or mixing-bowl (No. 9), different jugs such as a pitcher (No. 5), and an oinochoe (No. 3), many different drinking cups, e.g. skyphoi (Nos. 4, 10), cups (Nos. 7, 16) and kantharoi (Nos. 6, 8, 14-15) as well as a small kanthariskos (No. 13), which is almost the size of a votive vessel, were found in the excavation. Their dates vary between the eleventh and the eighth century, with an emphasis during the eighth century BC. In area A we also found a later phase with Classical and Hellenistic pottery including an amphora (No. 21), two small cups (Nos. 20, 22) and a cup or bowl with lug handle (No. 17).

The Thapsos ware krater (No. 9) as well as the Corinthian transport amphora (No. 21) places the site PS 36 along the route for the vigorous trade between Corinthia and the west, which began in the late eighth century and continued until the late third century BC. Important ports along this trade route were for instance Patras in the Peloponnese, Corcyra, besides Syracuse and Megara Hyblaea in the Sicilies.¹⁸

The assemblage of pottery published here should be considered together with the pottery from the rescue excavation by the Greek Archaeological Service at the site of "Mavromandilia", ca. 60 meters further northwest from PS 36, which is dealt with in another chapter in this volume.¹⁹ When comparing these two assemblages, it seems

¹⁶ See for instance Neeft 1981; Dehl 1982; Dehl 1984; Bosana-Kourou 1983; Pfaff 1999, 58-59, nn. 7-8 and the excellent overview by Morgan 1999, 272-277.

¹⁷ Coldstream 1977, 186

¹⁸ See Koehler 1978, 378-379.

¹⁹ See Tzortzatou and Fatsiou, this volume.

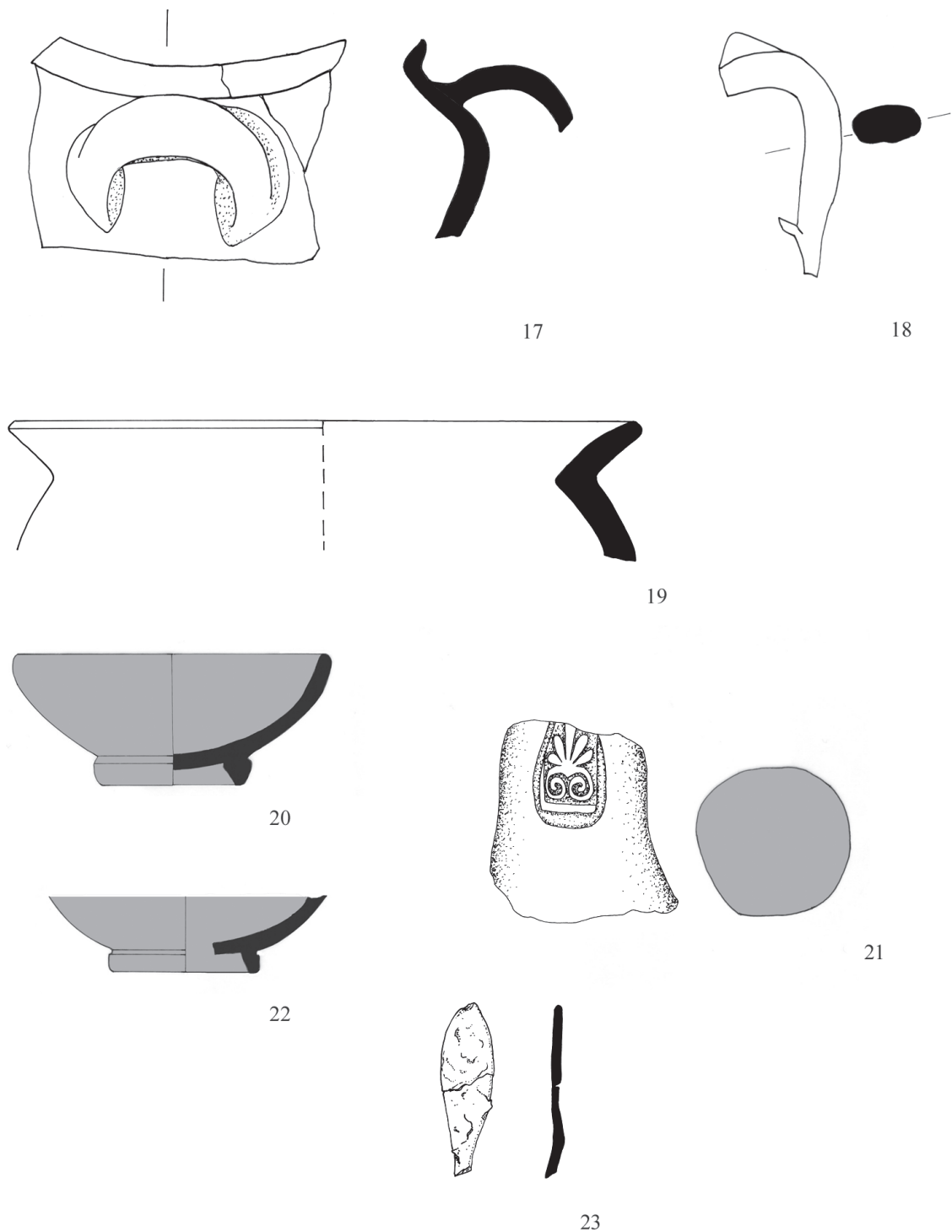


Fig. 11. Pottery from squares A0, A1 and A2 (Nos. 17-22) as well as the arrowhead from square B2 (No. 23). Scale 1:2.

that the material discovered by the Ephorate differs mainly in that there is more definite Late Bronze Age pottery and that there also is a fair amount of matt-painted so-called “Boubousti” ware, which seems to be totally lacking at PS 36.²⁰ However, this might be

²⁰ I owe Antonia Tzortzatou and Lila Fatsiou many thanks for showing some of their finds to me in 2006.

due to worse preservation conditions for our pottery material, as the same shapes seem to be present although the surfaces are completely worn off.

It is possible to interpret the different assemblages of material as a broadening of the chronological span and a difference in function between the different loci, i.e. PS 31 with their miniature vessels could have had a different function and be of a later (Archaic to Classical) date, compared to PS 36 which might be the setting for some flimsy huts dating to ca. 900-700 and a house of Classical (?) date, both belonging to the more permanent (?) site partly excavated by the Greek Archaeological Service. The geo-archaeological work in the area indicates that PS 36 is part of a much larger site, and that the Ephorate carried out their rescue excavation in 2005 in another part of it. A better overall picture of this intriguing site can only be obtained through a more thorough study of the entire corpus of pottery and continued excavations.

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