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CULT MATERIAL
FROM ARCHAEOLOGICAL DEPOSITS TO INTERPRETATION OF EARLY GREEK RELIGION

Edited by Petra Pakkanen and Susanne Bocher

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New Beginnings? Preparations of Renewal of Cult at Kalaureia and Asine

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edited by Petra Pakkanen, Arto Penttinen and Jari Pakkanen

Introduction

Garbage, refuse, debris, accumulations of archaeological material, depositions and deposits? These terms relate to what we actually are investigating in the field. What some of us throw away can be invested with meaning by others and as highly valued items with symbolism. For my purposes here I will differentiate between depositions (a general term) and deposits (the more specific). I will designate all accumulations of archaeological material in an excavation as depositions, whether they accumulated over time or are fills for landscaping or for building purposes. In my view depositions that are manipulated by man, bounded, sealed or which can be tied to acts displaying specific meanings, as we understand it, are deposits. In this paper I will discuss three deposits of late Early Iron Age excavated at Kalaureia and a contemporary unpublished assemblage of material excavated on the Barbouna Hill at Asine in 1924 and 1926. These eighth-century BC deposits are all associated with cult. What these depositions have in common is the total absence of what perhaps most readily comes to mind when cult deposits are discussed, namely figurines, miniature vessels and metal objects. Nonetheless, I would like to define them as 'cult deposits' because of their contents and the way the material assemblages were created and followed by cult installations. Hence, I admit that cult deposits can be very different in kind; it is the circumstances of their deposition in tandem with their contents that make them special.

Kalaureia

Before the currently ongoing research program at the site, the Sanctuary of Poseidon at Kalaureia on the island of Poros had attracted little scholarly attention but for a one-season investigation in 1894. The reason behind that is surely the poor preservation of its monuments which offered little to generations of archaeologists who had been brought up in a tradition where architecture was at the core of sanctuary studies. When the investigations were resumed in the 1990s, it was realized that the cultural layers in the sanctuary had been little interfered with in the 1894 excavations. They, therefore, now present a treasure of materials, which earlier generations could not extract and did not have the tools to investigate.

The Sanctuary of Poseidon is located on a saddle at 190 masl in the center of the island of Kalaureia, the larger of the two islands that make up today's Poros (Figures 8.1 and 8.2). In antiquity the sanctuary was known as the refuge of the orator Demosthenes, who was persecuted by the Macedonians after their take-over of Athens. Demosthenes took poison in the sanctuary in 322 BC. In the eyes of the contemporaries this also signaled the end to the golden age of Greek freedom and democracy. All Greek sanctuaries could

Fig. 8.1. An aerial view of the Sanctuary of Poseidon in 2012. Photograph S. Stournaras.

function as places of asylum for supplicants seeking refuge from their enemies, but Kalaureia is considered to have been particularly advantageous as an asylum due to its peripheral location on an island.[1] Poseidon's sanctuary at Kalaureia was also the seat of an amphictyony, i.e. of a religious federation of city-states, whose members came together at specific occasions to sacrifice to the god and feast together. The amphictyony has been dated variously to the Late Bronze Age, the Archaic period (seventh century BC) or possibly even to the Hellenistic period (fourth to first centuries BC).[2] In 1894 Samuel Wide and Lennart Kjellberg excavated at Kalaureia (published in 1895) and in the 1930s Gabriel Welter studied the architecture (published in 1941).[3] The obvious reason for the discontinued investigations is the lack of spectacular finds, such as standing remains of buildings or statuary. When the Swedish Institute at Athens in 1997 resumed excavations at the site, this was rather seen as an advantage, as we wished to explore daily life in a Greek sanctuary in its widest sense, i.e. how those who lived there (provided asylum seekers were regular customers) and those who visited it to sacrifice interacted with each other and the gods.[4]

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[1] See e.g. Sinn 1993; Schumacher 1993. For the ancient sources on the death of Demosthenes, see Wells et al. 2003, 30 n. 10.

[2] For a summary of the discussion see esp. Kelly 1966, 113–115, with references; more recently Tausend 1992, 12–19; Schumacher 1993, 74–76; Mylonopoulos 2003, 427–431; Figueira 2004, 622–623; Pakkanen 2008, 238–239.

[3] For the results, see Wide and Kjellberg 1894, 248–282 and Welter 1941.

[4] The 3-year research program (2003–2005) 'Physical Environment and Daily life in the Sanctuary of Poseidon at Kalaureia (Poros)' was directed by B. Wells. It was funded by The Stiftelsen Riksbankens Jubileumsfond. For the results, see Wells et al. 2003; Wells et al. 2005; Wells et al. 2006–2007. The current research program 'The Sea, the City and the God' is also funded by the Riksbankens Jubileumsfond and is now directed by Arto Penttinen.

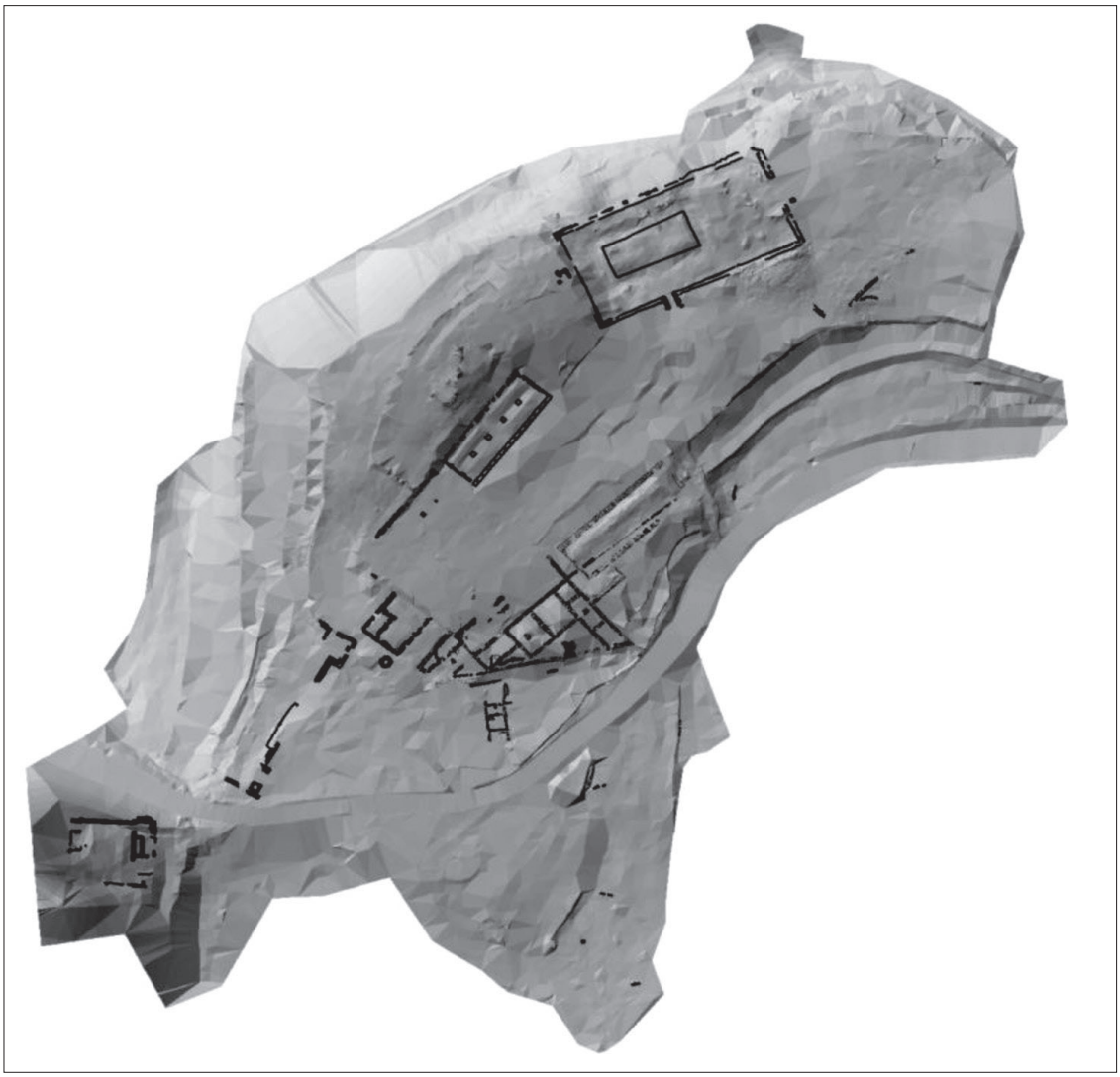

Fig. 8.2. Plan of the Sanctuary of Poseidon after 2008 excavation season. E. Savini. For the figure in color, see Plate 8.2.

The Kalaureia deposits I shall discuss here are in the three pits cut into bedrock around 750 BC, Features 07, 08 and 09 shown on Figure 8.3 and Plate 8.3.[5] They were investigated in the excavations between 2003 and 2005.[6] The pits are situated in close proximity to each other in the Area D in the southwestern part of the sanctuary (Figure 8.3 and Plate 8.3).

The northern part of Building D has now been assigned a late sixth century BC date, whereas its triangular, southern extension was only constructed in the late fourth century BC.[7] In 2003 and 2004, excavation into accumulations underneath the Archaic

[5] Fig. 18 in Wells et al. 2006–2007, 46.

[6] They have been published in two final reports on our investigations in the *Opuscula Atheniensia*: Wells et al. 2005 and 2006–2007.

[7] Wells et al. 2003; Wells et al. 2005, 135. The existence of the stoa is strongly questioned in these excavation reports, but all the observed architectural features are consistent with the interpretation that Stoa D was the first monumental building in the area; see Pakkanen forthcoming.

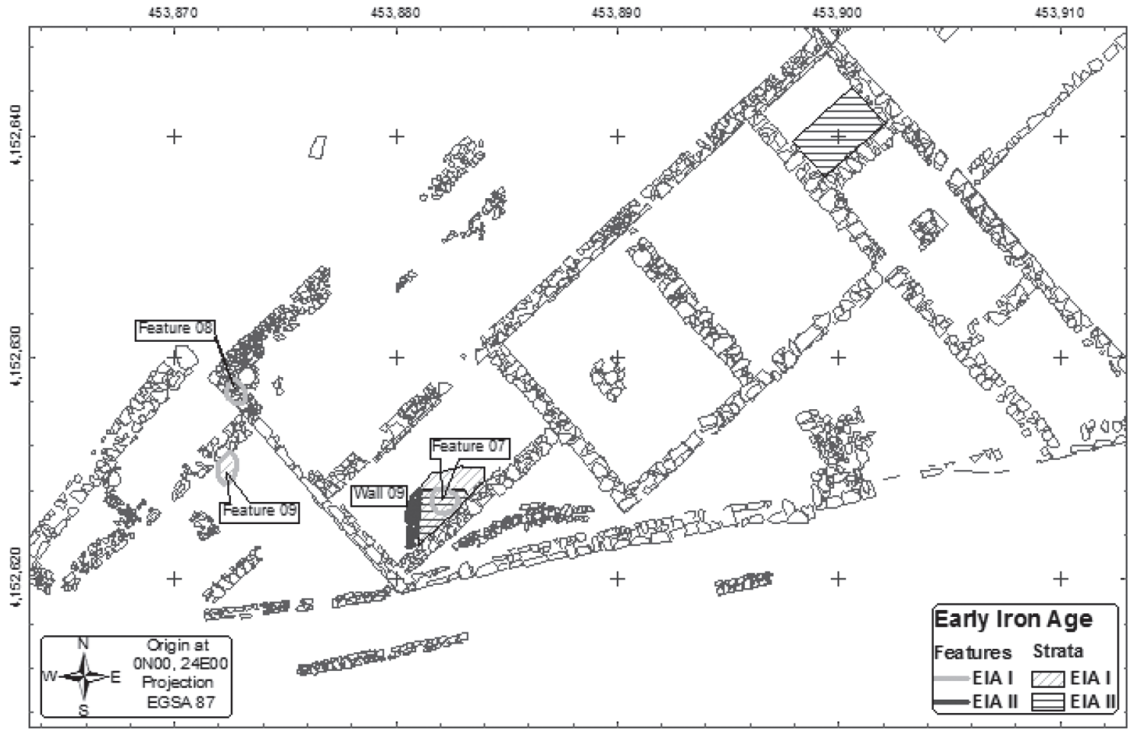

Fig. 8.3. Area of Building D, with walls, features and strata dated to the Early Iron Age. For the plan in color, see Plate 8.3. E. Savini.

and Classical structures in the southwestern corner of the area brought to light stratified material datable to the eighth century BC, an Early Iron age structure[8] and the pits described below. The pits were obviously created at the same point in time, and the circumstances of the depositions in them were, I believe, the same. They are clearly interconnected and also associated with other Early Iron Age strata.[9] However, they are differently preserved: Feature 08 was severely damaged when a cistern was dug through in the Archaic construction phase of the building. It is now a cavity in the western wall of the cistern, and it was discovered loosely packed with stones, some large and flat, and with large fragments of Late Geometric pottery. The cavity continued for 0.5 m to the west, where it ended in bedrock and a tight stone-packing above it, perhaps a sealing of the pit, or, more probably, blocks from the overlying wall. It contained fragments of large vessels only.[10] Feature 09 disappeared during extensive later activities in the area west of Building D. It was found dug into the fairly soft bedrock, and contained fist-sized stones mixed with large fragments of Late Geometric pottery (Figure 8.4 and Plate 8.4).[11]

My contention of contemporaneousness is not only based upon stratigraphy but also upon the fact that fragments of one and the same pot occur through the fills of the pits and in the fill underneath the later building constructed above Feature 07. The distribution of the fragments retrieved throughout the Early Iron Age I depositions of the fragments of three Late Geometric, large amphorae and of three LH IIIC Late kraters is shown in Figure 8.5 and Plate 8.5.

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[8] Wells et al. 2005, 150–159; Wells et al. 2006–2007, 49–51.
[9] Wells et al. 2006–2007, 68.
[10] Wells et al. 2006–2007, 64, 68.
[11] Wells et al. 2006–2007, 58–59, fig. 30.

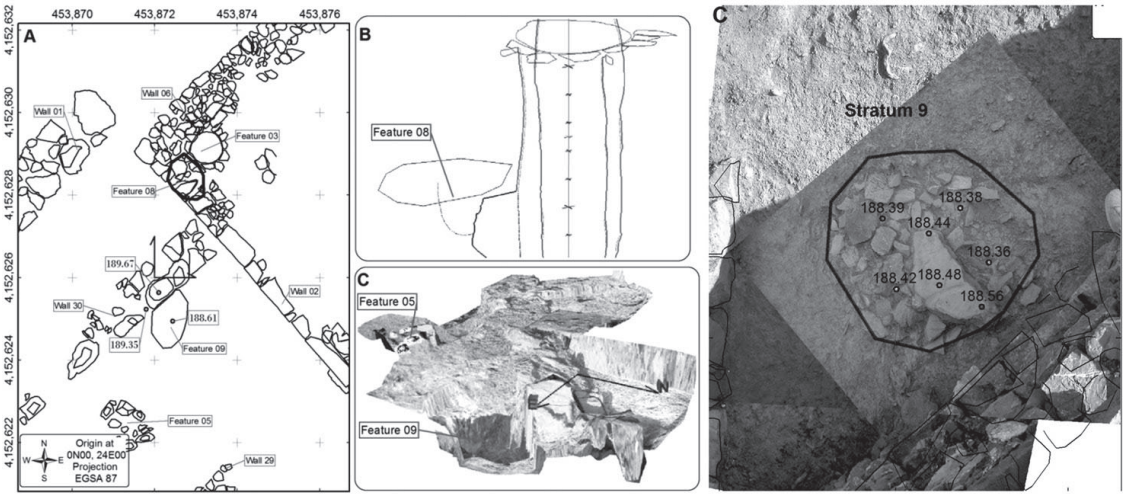

Figure 8.4. (a) The EIA II phase with Wall 09 and the associated; (B) the EIA I fill underneath the floor of the EIA II structure; (C) the fill, Stratum 9, which equals Feature 07 (C) with the big boulder in the center. For the figure in color, see Plate 8.4. E. Savini.

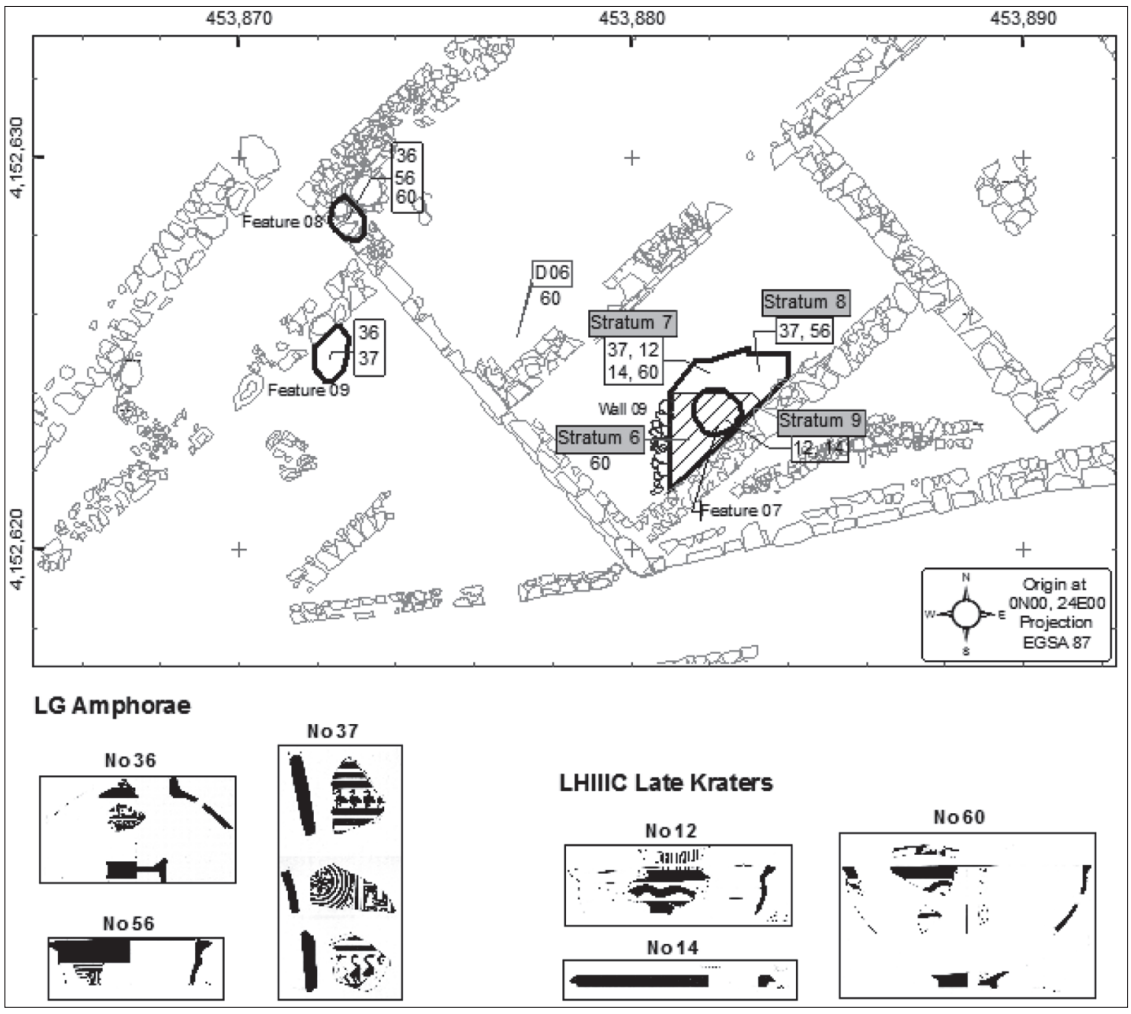

Fig. 8.5. Distribution of the fragments retrieved throughout the EIA I depositions of the LH IIIC Late kraters and of the fragments of the LG large amphorae. For the figure in color, see Plate 8.5. Illustration E. Savini.

Feature 07 is a circular pit, c. 20 cm deep with steep sides and an almost flat bottom, intentionally cut into bedrock. At the top it was filled with tightly packed stones. The stone packing was noticed as deviating from the surrounding fill, and, therefore, the pit must have been consciously sealed before, or perhaps rather at the time of the bringing in of the fill.[12] The Early Iron Age phase II building was built above it, and a preserved remnant of its wall is stratigraphically associated with a floor layer (C2 in Figure 8.4 and Plate 8.4). We are in the lucky position to be able to reconstruct in detail the series of events which led up to its construction.

The earliest evidence of interference with the landscape in the area was probably the cutting of the pits into bedrock. We cannot establish with certainty whether there was an original soil cover on the bedrock or not. If there was, it may have been this layer that was cleared away in anticipation of the following steps of reorganizing the area and used both to fill the pits and to create the deposition on which the building was erected. Obviously the building site was meticulously prepared: the sloping bedrock was levelled with soil mixed with stones and refuse.[13] The fill of Feature 07 comprised small stones, soil, pot fragments, and bones; some bones were abraded, others were in mint condition. This fact, according to our bone specialist Dimitra Mylona, reveals different depositional histories for them. The abraded bones were part and parcel of the soils used for the fills whereas the well-preserved bones were added at the time of deposition. Such bones were the several fragments of a goat skull and a goat horn core found at the top of Feature 07. They had in all likelihood been consciously deposited at the moment of the filling of the pit.[14] A large, fairly flat oval-shaped stone stands out in the center of the pit in close proximity to Wall 09 and visible already in the floor stratum. It had been placed on bedrock, as had the uneven, large boulder further east.[15] We believe the goat bones stem from a sacrifice executed at the time of the deposition and perhaps the flat stone was employed in the ritual act, after which the pit was sealed with field stones and, finally, an up to 20 cm thick layer was spread over the area. This layer was created for drainage for the ensuing structure: the lower part of the fill consisted of larger stones and the upper part of smaller stones and more soil and ceramic fragments. The ground slopes towards the south and the fill was thicker in there than in the north. Here the stony fill stretched outside the building. The building was constructed on top of the fill; its floor accumulation was intact.[16] I suggest that the debris of previous activities from phase EIA I was cleared away, collected and then redeposited in pits, the Features 07, 08 and 09 as a preamble to the construction of the EIA II building.

The cutting of the pits, the assumed sacrifice of a goat and deposition of some of its bones, the sealing of the pit and the levelling and drainage of the building site – all these circumstances cannot be coincidental. The various steps had been carefully calculated before initiating the building project. The entire area was thus reorganized but what came before was not forgotten or done away with; instead, it was incorporated into the new. The ritualizing of the construction of a new building is hard to imagine outside a cult context and the contents of the pits also underscore such a notion. Not only do we have

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[12] Wells et al. 2006–2007, 56.
[13] Wells et al. 2006–2007, 68.
[14] Mylona in Wells et al. 2006–2007, 57, 69.
[15] Wells et al. 2006–2007, 55, 68.
[16] Wells et al. 2005, 150–159; Wells et al. 2006–2007, 49.

a set type of vessel shapes for storage and consumption[17] but they come from all corners of the eastern Aegean. In the following I will discuss the large Attic vessels from this context excavated in 2003. The gigantic Attic amphorae were costly and prestigious vessels only affordable by the élite. They seem to have been transported to Kalaureia across the Saronic Gulf.[18] I should say a word about their chronology in relation to the sanctuary of Kalaureia. The Dipylon amphorae, both those produced probably by the master himself or at least coming from his workshop, and the Hirschfeld amphora (Figure 8.6) belong to around the middle to the third quarter of the eighth century BC, whereby the first phase of the Early Iron Age in this specific area falls within this spectrum.[19]

Fig. 8.6. Fragments of large amphora (no. 36) by the Hirschfeld Painter. Photograph C.Mauzy.

It is noteworthy that of the five amphorae, one of which could theoretically also have been a large pyxis, four are of very large proportions. Regarding the ceramic material excavated in the Early Iron Age stratum it cannot be ascertained whether the material originated at this exact location or whether it was brought in from somewhere else. The large Geometric vessels, however, can be traced to Attica. The amphorae and the probable pyxis were spectacular vessels of very large proportions: the diameter of the belly of one of the amphorae can be estimated as c. 70 centimeters and its neck is 40.0 cm tall.[20] Its decoration is a triple meander which, according to N. Coldstream, was developed by the Dipylon Master for his vast funerary vases,[21] and the one on our amphora is an exact parallel to the one on the neck of Athens 804. Similarly, the decorative scheme of the pyxis points to Attica as the neatly executed composite parts and the overall decorative scheme are in all details Attic. The large amphorae have two smaller counterparts which may have been manufactured in Athens as well.[22] The large

[17] Kraters in particular seem to abound at the site; Wells et al. 2005, 148. For parallels, see Langdon 1995, 58–59, fig. 62.
[18] Cf. Wells et al. 2005, 182.
[19] Wells et al. 2006–2007, 58, 62, 64, 66 (no. 36), figs. 31, 33, 34. See Coldstream 1968, 43.
[20] Wells et al. 2005, 150 (nos. 51 [amphora] and 54 [pyxis]), fig. 27; Wells et al. 2006–2007, 58, 63–64, 67–68 (nos. 37, 57, 58) and figs. 31, 34, 38; Wells 2011, 213–214 and fig. 9; cf. Coldstream 1968, 41–43 and pl. 8.
[21] Coldstream 1968, 36 and pls. 6 and 7.
[22] Wells et al. 2006–2007, 50, 54, 62 (nos. 3 and 4), fig. 24.

Fig. 8.7. Fragments of large amphora. Photograph C. Mauzy, illustration A. Hooton.

Attic amphora shown on Figure 8.6 displays dotted lozenge chain with dots above and below the interconnections, a hallmark of the Hirschfeld Painter and his workshop, and metopes, which can be discerned on our amphora below the lozenge chain, are more common there than in the Dipylon workshop.[23] The large amphora shown on Figure 8.7, on the other hand, displays bird file, has dot rosettes and squiggles underneath the rumps of the birds. I would suggest, therefore, that this vessel was produced in a different Attic workshop, where the sloping rim and the raised ridge are also known to have been employed. The comparative severity of the decoration points to the Dipylon workshop in LG Ib.[24]

It is noteworthy that large amphorae like the ones excavated in the Late Geometric stratum were manufactured not only in Athens but also in the Argolid, for example at Argos,[25] and they have turned up also in southern Argolid.[26] I will show below that at Asine they were found in the deposit discovered south of the remains of the early cult building in the sanctuary to Apollo Pythaeus on the Barbouna Hill.

Early Iron Age pottery gives an approximate *terminus post quem* for the construction of the building.[27] It was constructed on the fill of probably local origin. The

[23] An amphora by the Hirschfeld Painter in the National Archaeological Museum in Athens, NM 18062 of LG Ib date (740–735 BC), can be compared with ours; it is published by Kourou 2002, 37–38, 82–83 and pls. 98–99.
[24] Wells et al. 2006–2007, 68; Wells 2011, 213–214; Coldstream 1968, pl. 8.
[25] Courbin 1966, 129–130, pls. 100–104.
[26] Langdon 1995, 67 and fig. 58, no. 1129.
[27] Wells et al. 2005, 155, 159.

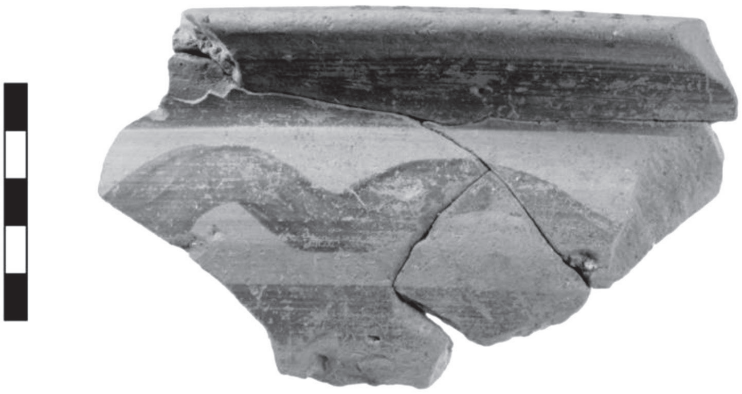

Fig. 8.8. Fragment of LH IIIC Late krater (no. 12). Photograph C. Mauzy.

fill, therefore, gives the *terminus post quem* for the date of this event in the ceramic phase LG Ia or just before the middle of the eighth century BC. Certainly in the ceramic phase LG II the building was in use and continued to be so until the end of the phase. In absolute years this takes us down to around 700 BC according to the traditional dating.[28] It is noteworthy here that also several fragments from a large LH IIIC Late krater were excavated in 2004 in the continuation of the stratum 07 fill.[29] They are the earliest pieces in this assemblage, and were part of the fill, but there is no way of knowing whether the vessels were already in fragments when the cultural material constituting the fill accumulated or whether they were still complete vessels at that time. The krater shown in Figure 8.8, because of its thick wavy band in the handle zone, can be securely dated to the very end of the Bronze Age. This attests to earlier activities in this particular part of the sanctuary.[30] It is tempting to suggest, however, that the LH IIIC Late krater fragments ended up in the EIA I horizon for a reason: they may have still been complete vessels at the time, a reminder of the past of which people probably never lost sight. The rest of the material from this same horizon, datable to around 750 BC and found in the pits and in the fill utilized to prepare the site for a new building in EIA II, is the result of a conscious manipulation of the past to restructure the present.[31]

The large, decorated containers such as our vessels represent great value. They were obviously shattered in the area, but only a few fragments of each vessel ended up in any of the excavated contexts. Only members of leading social classes could afford such display and conspicuous consumption.[32] Overall the shapes of the Early Iron Age pottery from our context are for storage of food and liquids, and for serving and drinking. It seems clear that dining or feasting was always the main activity in the area of the Building D. Generally, the large amphorae occur mainly in two contexts: as grave markers and in sanctuaries, as we know well from Athens, Argos and Asine. In the sanctuary to Apollo Pythaeus on the Barbouna Hill at Asine they are closely linked with serving and drinking vessels, as I will show below, and in this respect Kalaureia resembles Asine.[33] During the Early Iron Age, feasting here seems to have involved some element of displaying richly decorated, oversized vessels. Here I have also associated this activity, which I wish to regard as part of ritual practices of the sanctuary, with ritualizing of the construction of a new building. Contemporary parallels can be found at Asine, the location of the next case study.

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[28] Wells et al. 2005, 159, 182.
[29] Wells et al. 2005, 154–155 (no. 61), fig. 29; Wells et al. 2006–2007, 53, 56, 70 (nos. 12 and 14), fig. 25.
[30] Wells et al. 2005, 155, 159, fig. 30.
[31] Wells et al. 2006–2007, 70–71.
[32] Wells et al. 2005, 182.
[33] Wells et al. 2006–2007, 71.

Fig. 8.9. The Kastraki promontory seen from the Barbouna Hill during the 1920s excavations. Photograph from the Asine Archive at Uppsala University.

Asine

The archaeological site, conventionally identified as ancient Asine, consists of the rocky Kastraki promontory (Figure 8.9) and the nearby Barbouna Hill (Figure 8.10). The site controls the outer entrance to the Bay of Argolis, while Nauplion (ancient Nauplia) dominates the inner and narrower part of the bay.

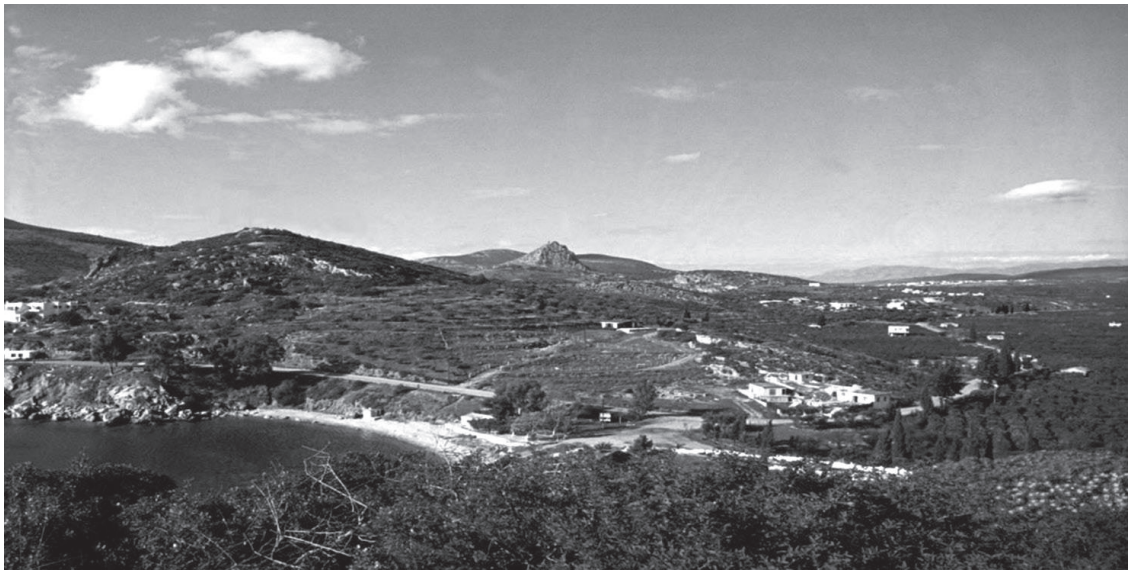

Fig. 8.10. The Barbouna Hill. Photograph Berit Wells.

Fig 8.11. Top Terrace of the Barbouna Hill during the excavations. Photograph from the Asine Archive at the Uppsala University.

During two campaigns in 1924 and 1926 the remains of a rectangular building on a partly artificial and fortified terrace on the top of the Barbouna Hill were investigated by Swedish archaeologists (Figure 8.11).[34] Now little remains of what was extant in the 1920s, mostly due to activities during the war when advantage was taken of Asine's strategic position once again. It is, however, still possible to trace part of the northern wall of the ancient rectangular structure, but the supportive terrace walls have decayed and the additional ancient walls on the terrace do not exist any more.[35]

In the 1938 publication of the excavations, the architecture is described and illustrated,[36] but of the rest of the material only a lead statuette and a terracotta figurine are briefly mentioned.[37] The sherd material on the whole, mentioned in passing in the architectural survey, was never studied and published due to some unfortunate circumstances. After the first season in 1922, the excavators were generously permitted to transport all the excavation finds to Sweden for study on the condition that they were returned to Greece before the second campaign. The arrangement was repeated in 1926, whereas it was prevented in 1924 by the political situation in Greece.[38] Apparently this meant that less time and money could be spent on studying the finds from that year which, in turn, had further consequences. When the Greek government eventually presented the various departments of Classical Archaeology at the Swedish universities with the bulk of the sherd material from the excavations as a part of an exchange agreement between

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[34] Frödin and Persson 1938, 146–151.
[35] Cf. Frödin and Persson 1938, 148, fig. 129.
[36] Frödin and Persson 1938, 148–151 with fig. 130.
[37] Frödin and Persson 1938, 133–134 with fig. 225, 1 and 3; nos. 4 and 5 were both found in the Geometric house on the acropolis.
[38] Frödin and Persson 1938, 12.

the governments,[39] the material from the excavations in 1924 which had not been studied for publication remained in the Nauplion Museum. The present day state of affairs is, therefore, that the finds from the top of the Barbouna Hill are divided between Uppsala University (where the entire sherd collection ended up and now forms the bulk of the Asine Collection) and the Nauplion Museum. In Nauplion material was first stored in the basement of the mosque where between the years 1825 and 1828 the Parliament of the newly born Greek state assembled, and then moved to the old *medrese*, the present storerooms.

The Architectural Remains

The ancient remains on the Top Terrace of the Barbouna Hill cannot, however, be isolated from their surroundings. On the northern slopes of the hill a number of walls have remained totally unnoticed since the 1920s. They consist of the foundations of a rectangular building A, referred to by the excavators as a temple, almost certainly positioned on the terrace, and, to the west of it, the curved wall B, and to its south, the straight wall C, apparently damaged in places (Figure 8.12). Today merely a part of the northern wall of the rectangular structure can be made out. To establish the relative chronology of the three units we have the recorded levels to solve the issue: it can be established that B and C are stratigraphically contemporaneous and earlier than A. The curved, apsidal wall B and the straight wall C both lay in ruins when building A was erected, and it is likely that they provided at least some of the building material for A. The plan (Figure 8.12) demonstrates how the foundations of the three constructions were laid in the same manner. Therefore, they undoubtedly belong to the same building tradition. All these hypotheses can be verified through the groups of pottery still extant from the 1926 excavations and now in Uppsala. Rather, what material there is appears to contradict the observations made in the field as the pottery ranges from Early Helladic to Archaic/Classical. Manifestly therefore, the Top Terrace attracted people before Geometric times, although none of the once exposed architectural remains can be ascribed to them. Also, the assortment of post-Geometric pottery demonstrated that whatever activities took place on the Terrace, it did not cease at the end of the eighth century BC. However, the presence of the most of the later material can most likely be associated with the use of the rectangular building A. It is worth asking what was the function of the wall C? As the ground level rises towards the north it seems natural to assume that it was constructed as the retaining wall for the northern part of the terrace on which stood building B. But it may in addition have served the further function of delimiting the area connected with building B; in other words, it may have been a temenos wall. According to the old diary notes stones had fallen from the easternmost part of wall C along its southern side and towards building A. It is added that 'underneath and between the stones Geometric sherds were found'. This certainly makes a Geometric date for wall C plausible. The excavators noted that the temple (A) stood on a partly artificial terrace with thick, buttress walls in the south and in the north where terracing had been carried out. They also saw design in the placement of the entrances to the open area: they are aligned with the orientation of the temple and the excavators drew the conclusion that the temple and the buttresses were parts of the same building program. What they did not understand was that these activities

[39] Frödin and Persson 1938, 12; Wells 2002, 13–17.

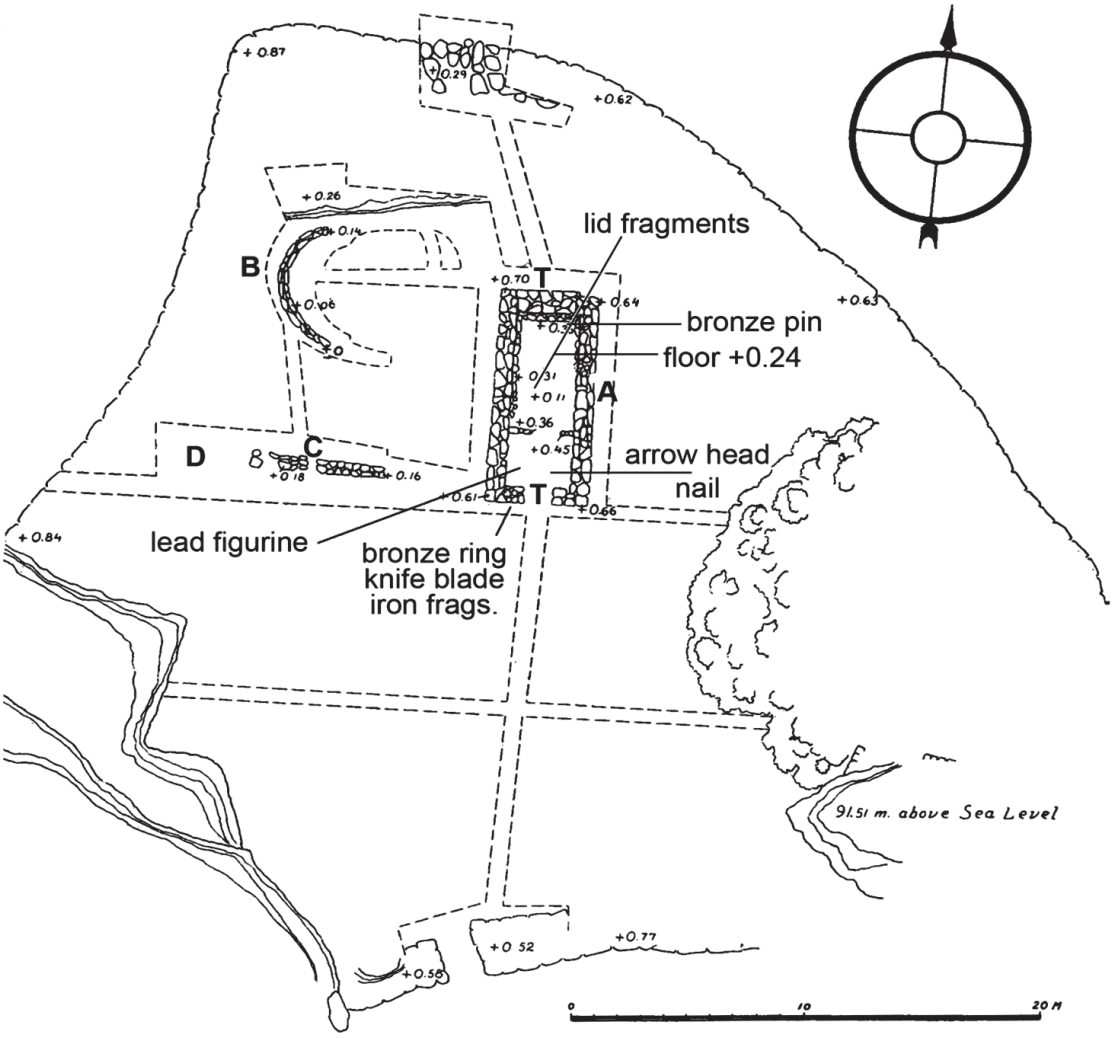

Fig. 8.12. Plan of the remains on the Top Terrace of the Barbouna Hill
(based on Frödin and Persson 1938, 150, fig. 130).

may also have been the result of a reorganization of space on the top of the hill and that there was a predecessor to the west of the temple.

The excavators described the curved wall B in the west as an exedra, but they note that the ends of the walls are not finished. At the point of excavation apsidal buildings from the Early Iron Age were more or less an unknown phenomenon. What they make clear, however, is that the material connected with the remains is overwhelmingly Geometric and, I might add, actually Late Geometric. The curved wall is, of course, nothing but the apse of an apsidal structure built close to the rocky outcrops in the north; the straight wall to its south (C) served as a terrace wall. This probably meant that the area on the top of the hill was considerably smaller at this earlier point in time and was felt to be too small for the later building and activities associated with it. The plan illustrates the trial trenches dug across the later terrace and nowhere else did any architectural elements come to light, but this is not to say that none existed. In my study of the material assemblages from the Barbouna terrace twenty years ago I reached the conclusion that the apsidal building (wall B) may have been as early as the end of the eighth century due to pottery found in association with it. The rectangular building (A), its immediate successor probably existed for close to two hundred years receiving new roofs ever so often as indicated by the

tile and sima fragments found. It has been identified as the temple to Apollo Pythaios mentioned by Pausanias in 2.36.5 and was dated after excavation to the seventh century BC.[40]

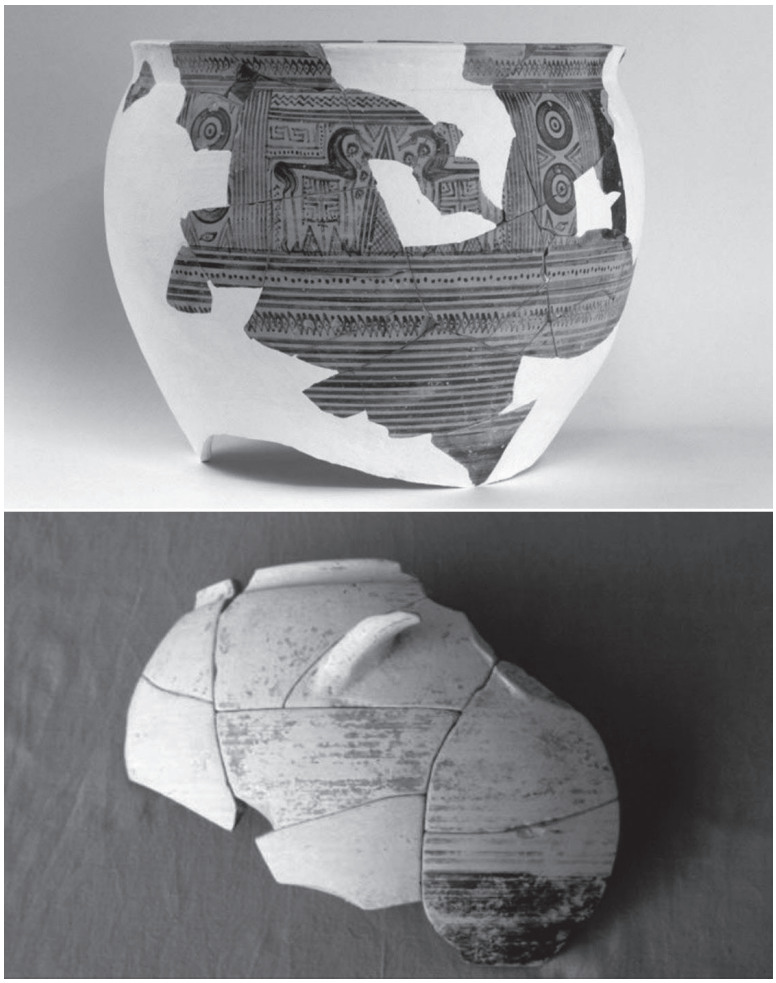

Fig. 8.13. Large kraters from the Barbouna deposit. Photograph C. Mauzy.

The Finds

At this point a formidable assemblage of material must be introduced, namely the so-called 'Vase Deposit' (or 'sherd deposit'). It is an accumulation of pottery which as such has a role in my analysis of date and function of the apsidal structure under discussion. The deposit was mentioned in passing in the publication of 1938: 'At the western end of the east-west trench was found a great accumulation of sherds of mostly very large, Geometric vessels'.[41] Luckily the excavation diaries are somewhat more explicit and the old shoe-size boxes, where the pottery from this 'accumulation' had been kept since the 1920s, were in some cases marked 'Vase Deposit'. Clearly the excavators understood the accumulation of pottery as a deposit. The vases found in it are demonstrably closely connected with activities in the apsidal building: fragments of some large vessels found inside the apse belong to vessels found in the accumulation; whether or not the deposition was a deposit according to the definition I give here at the beginning, or merely broken pots disposed of in a more haphazard manner cannot now be ascertained. What can be speculated, however, is the role the material may have had in association of the buildings and structures at the site.

The vessels in the deposition are spectacular, indeed, but almost all of them in such a state of preservation that illustrations of the fragments cannot do justice to them. We have to study them together with the slips of paper stemming from the 1924 excavation among the A.W. Person Papers in the Library of the Uppsala University. They record the

[40] Frödin and Persson 1938, 148–151; Wells 1987–1988.

[41] Frödin and Persson 1938, 149. Cf. the diary entry from June 12th, 1924: 'At the western end of the trial trench was found an accumulation of sherds of mostly very large vessels'.

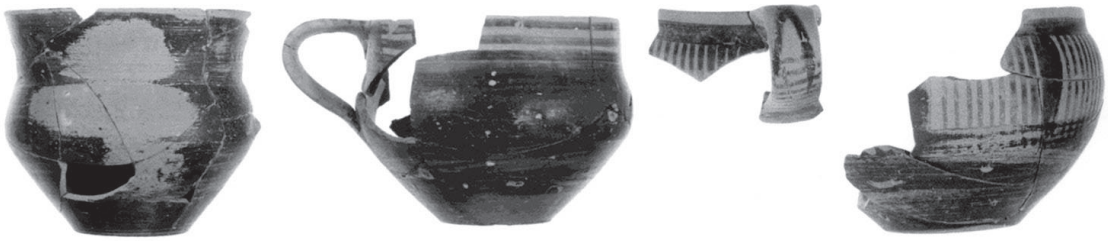

Fig. 8.14. Cups from the Barbouna deposit. Photograph C. Mauzy.

contents of the 52 shoe-box size boxes with material excavated on the Top Terrace of the Barbouna Hill. 'All the boxes contained Geometric ware, sherds from mainly large, coarse vessels' runs the general description of the lot. The material is still in existence in Nauplion today, and as already noted, complies with the evidence, now stored in Uppsala, from the 1926 excavations. In fact both of the pottery units associated with the apsidal building B comprise many fragments of very large vessels, both wheel-made and coarse hand-made. The nature of the pottery in the two groups of material, namely the one in Nauplion and the other in Uppsala, is similar, and sherds from one and the same vessel are in fact included in both. This allows us to link the sherd deposit with apsidal building B and it is also of consequence for our interpretation of its function. Before presenting some examples it must be noted that the presence of the pre- and post-Geometric material in the deposit warrants an explanation. Obviously it cannot originally have constituted part of the deposit, but must be considered as intrusive, and the presence of the Mycenaean sherds are in fact witnesses to activities on the terrace before Late Geometric times, and the Late Corinthian to Hellenistic sherds to activities after the period in question. Even though the rectangular building A can hardly have survived the fifth century BC, the cult could have done so, even without a cult building. And it may be that the scattered Hellenistic evidence from the terrace testifies to a revival of the cult after Asine was resettled in the early Hellenistic period.[42]

Among the Late Geometric vessels from the deposit, there are fragments from six or possibly more loop-legged amphorae of a type that inspired P. Courbin to describe Argos as having its own 'Dipylon style'.[43] To these can be added a number of very large kraters (Figure 8.13), jugs and probably also a great number of cups (Figure 8.14).

There is a problem with the cups, altogether 53 more or less complete ones of various types, as none of them was stored in the boxes labelled 'Vase Deposit'. However, since complete vessels are generally few in settlement material, I am convinced that some, if not all, of the more or less complete cups found in other boxes originated in the deposition. There is also a small number of vases manufactured at Corinth, such as the Late Geometric kotyle shown in Figure 8.15. It is technically of superb execution with its hatched meander which is an unorthodox motif in Corinthian LG except on the Thapsos class of pottery.[44]

The vessels enclosed in the deposition can be broadly dated to the third quarter of the eighth century BC. There is not a single piece datable to Courbin's 'degenerate style' or, in

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[42] Frödin and Persson 1938, 431. For the date of Asine's Hellenistic fortifications, see Penttinen 1996, 166–167 and n. 26.

[43] E.g. Nauplion 10006, see Courbin 1966, 450, and pl. 11.

[44] Cf. Blegen et al. 1964, pls. 9–11 for similar examples; see also Courbin 1966, 98–104.

more technical terminology, GR 2c.[45] The whole deposit can, therefore, be dated in Courbin's terminology to GR 2a and b which in Coldstream's terminology would be approximately early LG II.[46] We should note that no figurines were found and only one miniature, which may be an intrusion as are undoubtedly some earlier and some later pottery sherds. I, therefore, believe that we can be fairly confident in our assessment of the material. Differences in building type in the phases represented on the terrace are coupled with an even greater difference in the artefact assemblage. Furnishings associated with the apsidal structure are, as we have seen, extraordinarily large pots, richly decorated with above all horses, and other both large and small vessels for storage and consumption. With the later building come miniatures, figurines of terracotta and lead, terracotta plaques, weapons and regular size vessels.

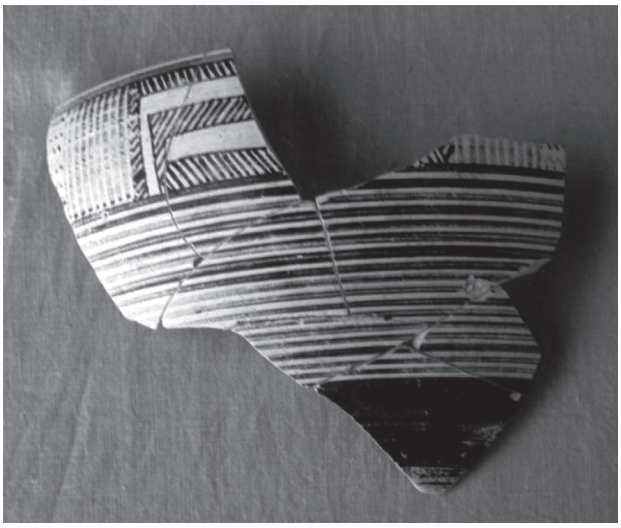

Fig. 8.15. Late Geometric Corinthian kotyle. Photograph C. Mauzy.

Interpretation and Conclusions

The changes that took place in architecture and material goods were drastic as was the reorganization of the whole area at Asine. Organization is evident through the actual physical boundedness of the Barbouna Hill: walls were erected to demarcate the boundaries for special-purpose locations and these walls were, therefore, invested with symbolic meaning. The terrace was enlarged and the earlier site for the cult building abandoned and a new one (A) built. What could have caused such modifications of architecture and cult paraphernalia? Namely, there is a marked change between the activities we can surmise associated with building B and those performed in building A. In the former were found no figurines, no miniature vessels, except for one miniature cup base, whereas in A numerous metal fragments came to light, as well as figurines of terracotta and lead, aryballoi, miniature drinking cups and terracotta pinakes.[47] As building B obviously went out of use in Courbin's GR 2b, it is my contention that the marked difference between the furnishings of B and those of its immediate successor A must be ascribed to a drastic change in the conditions for the existence of the sanctuary.

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[45] Courbin 1966, 563–564.

[46] Courbin 1966, 117; Coldstream 1968, 132 who notes that Courbin's phase GR 2a is not very clearly defined.

[47] The metal finds are lost since the war, but other objects found in 1924 along the south wall of the building A are still extant. In addition, a diary entry on June the 12th 1924 reads: 'Along the whole stretch of the wall a great number of sherds were discovered: Geometric, Protocorinthian (aryballoi and skyphoi) and one Corinthian. Further there lay a couple of idols of archaic type and a horse, a thin fragmentary bronxe ring, some pieces of iron of tubular shape, and some fragments of blade and knife.' The extant objects include 3 6th-century aryballoi, 6 Archaic fragmentary figurines (human and animal), and 2 6th-century pinakes.

What most readily comes to mind is the Argive attack and ensuing destruction of Asine, at which time, according to Pausanias (2.36.5.) the sanctuary to Apollo was spared by the Argives and the rest of the Asine razed to the ground. Maybe the early cult building was destroyed but the sacred area spared. We can only guess. However, I think that for such a total shift in material goods to take place this explanation is not sufficient. Societal, economic or spiritual transformations in the society must have been at work. In the eighth century there is a general and drastic change in the organization of cultic space for which also Asine gives evidence. This is when the sanctuary on the Top Terrace of the Barbouna Hill has its beginning. The prestigious vessels decorated with horses in the Late Geometric Argive manner could only have been acquired by the élite and we may surmise the existence of an aristocracy buying and bringing these pots to a sanctuary, with or without their contents. In the case of Kalaureia we know that at some point one of the large Attic amphorae had legumes in it.[48] The presence of the drinking services (kraters, oinochoai, skyphoi, cups) preclude an interpretation of the Barbouna building B as a mere storage for food and drink, and the spectacular loop-legged vessels and some of the kraters could not possibly have been intended as receptacles only but must have served as a means of displaying wealth and rank of the givers. As such they should obviously be seen and duly admired, not hidden away in dark corners.[49] Therefore, I suggest that the apsidal structure accommodated people bringing containers with food and drink and who consumed the food stuffs and drank together in the assumed presence of a deity or god.[50] In other words, building B served as a dining hall for those who could afford to exert themselves materially and who had the incentive to gather in a secluded spot, which the Top Terrace provided. The building seems to have been large enough to house a good number of people: its width was approximately 4 to 5 meters, but its length is uncertain. The only institution that would answer these requirements is the *symposion* in which the aristocracy of the period assembled as a political and military body, as rulers of the community. *Symposion* was a cohesive force in early Greek society.[51] In this society religion was all pervasive, which allows us to suggest that the sympotic group was always sanctioned in a cult. This manifests itself archaeologically in prestigious goods being deposited in sanctuaries by the aristocracy, such as the large richly decorated vessels associated with building B.

Communal consumption with a deity may be imagined both on the Top Terrace of Barbouna Hill and in the sanctuary at Kalaureia: eating and drinking were also acts of religious deference and as such inherent in cult, a ritual performed inside a *temenos*. In the second phase in both sanctuaries a change occurred. Did society become a more egalitarian one? Did other strata of society take control of cult? If the early cult building at Asine were destroyed by the Argives, maybe they reorganized both sanctuary and cult on the Barbouna Hill, and at Kalaureia they may have marked new beginnings by ritualizing of the construction of a new building.

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[48] Wells 2011, 220 and n. 8.

[49] Cf. Osborne 1994, 153–154, 159–160; also Bergquist 1990; Whitley 2001, 197–220; Mylonopoulos 2006, 87–89.

[50] Cf. Cook 1953, 39 for the votives from the *Agamemnoneion.* Literature on communal dining and feasting in sanctuaries is vast. For an overview, see e.g. discussions in Murray 1990, especially the articles by Schmitt-Pantel and Murray.

[51] Murray 1983, 195–200.

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Plate 8.2. Plan of the Sanctuary of Poseidon after 2008 excavation season. E. Savini.

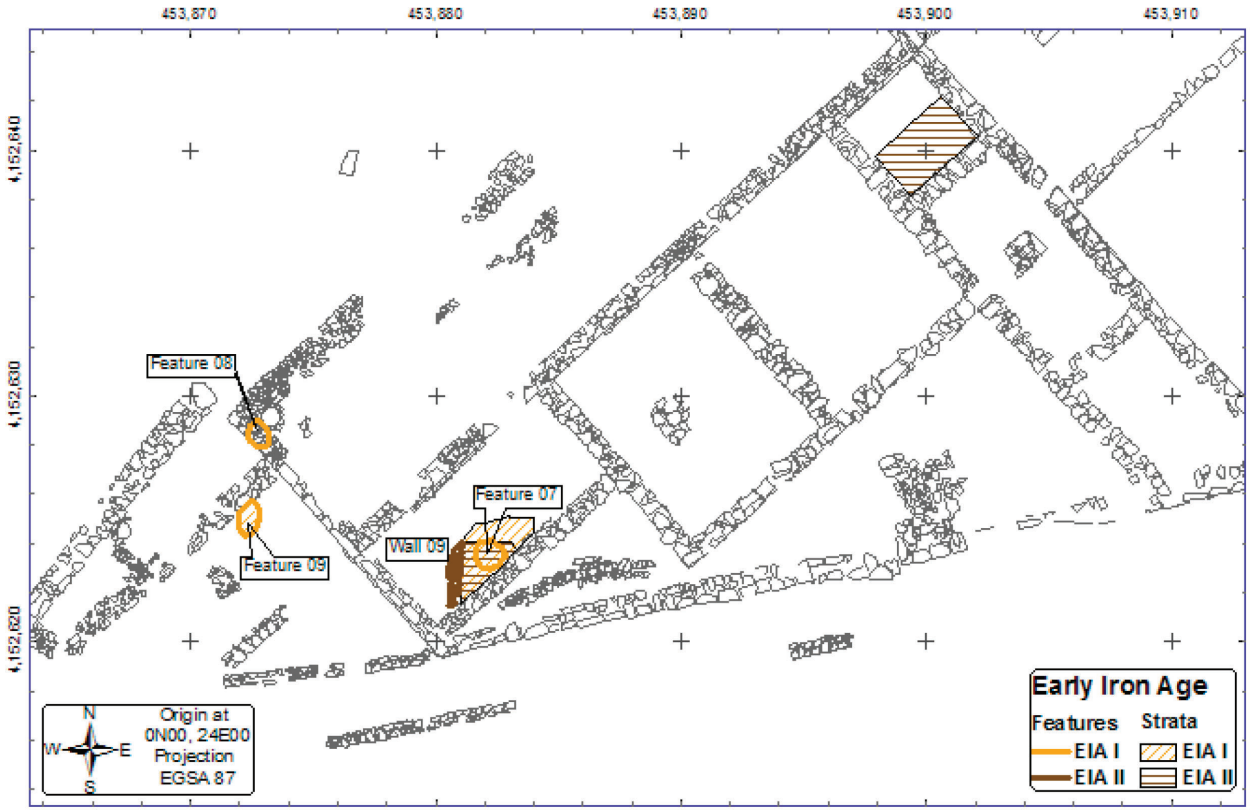

Plate 8.3. Area of Building D, with walls, features and strata dated to the Early Iron Age. E. Savini.

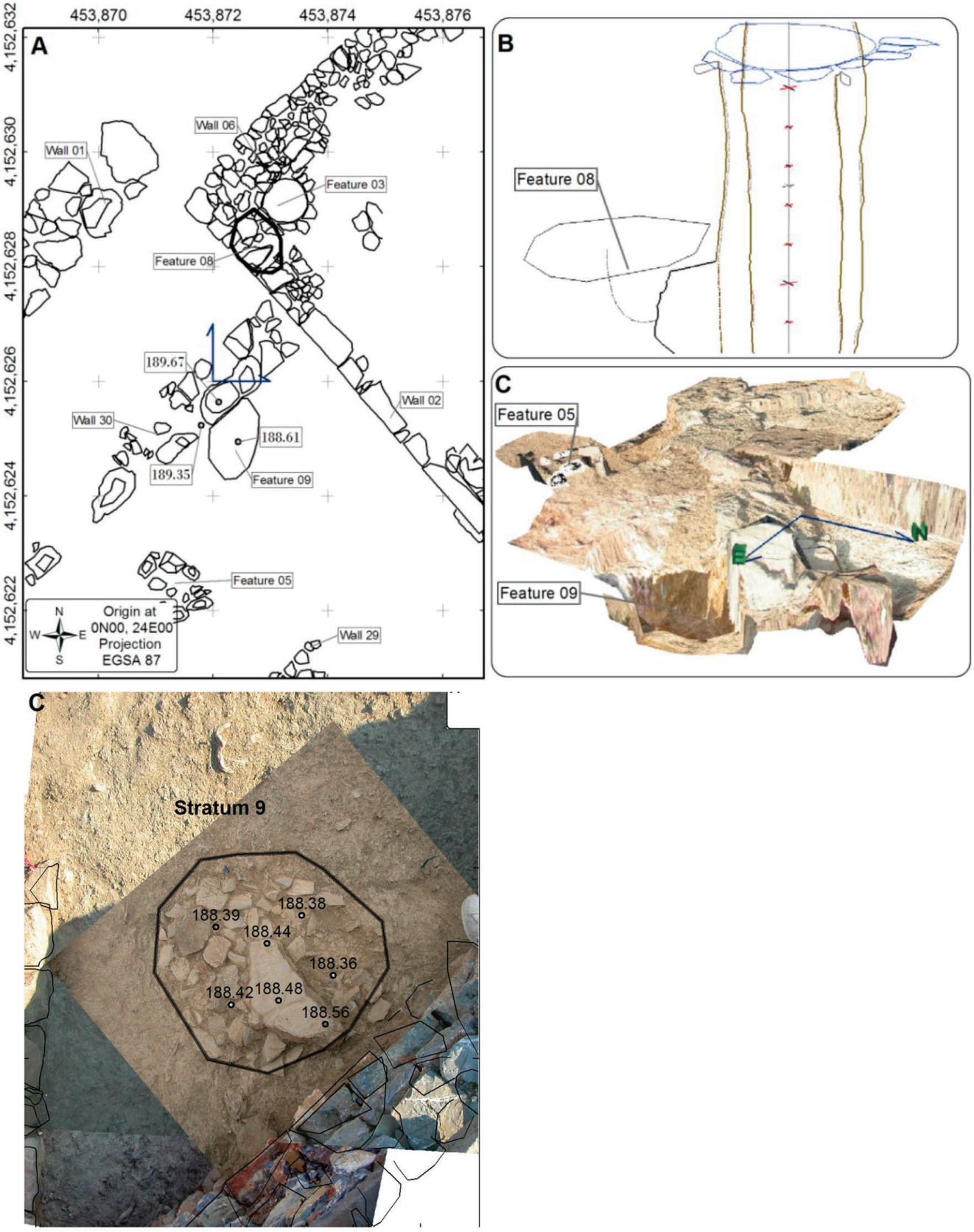

Plate 8.4. (a) The EIA II phase with Wall 09 and the associated; (B) the EIA I fill underneath the floor of the EIA II structure; (C) the fill, Stratum 9, which equals Feature 07 (C) with the big boulder in the center. E. Savini.

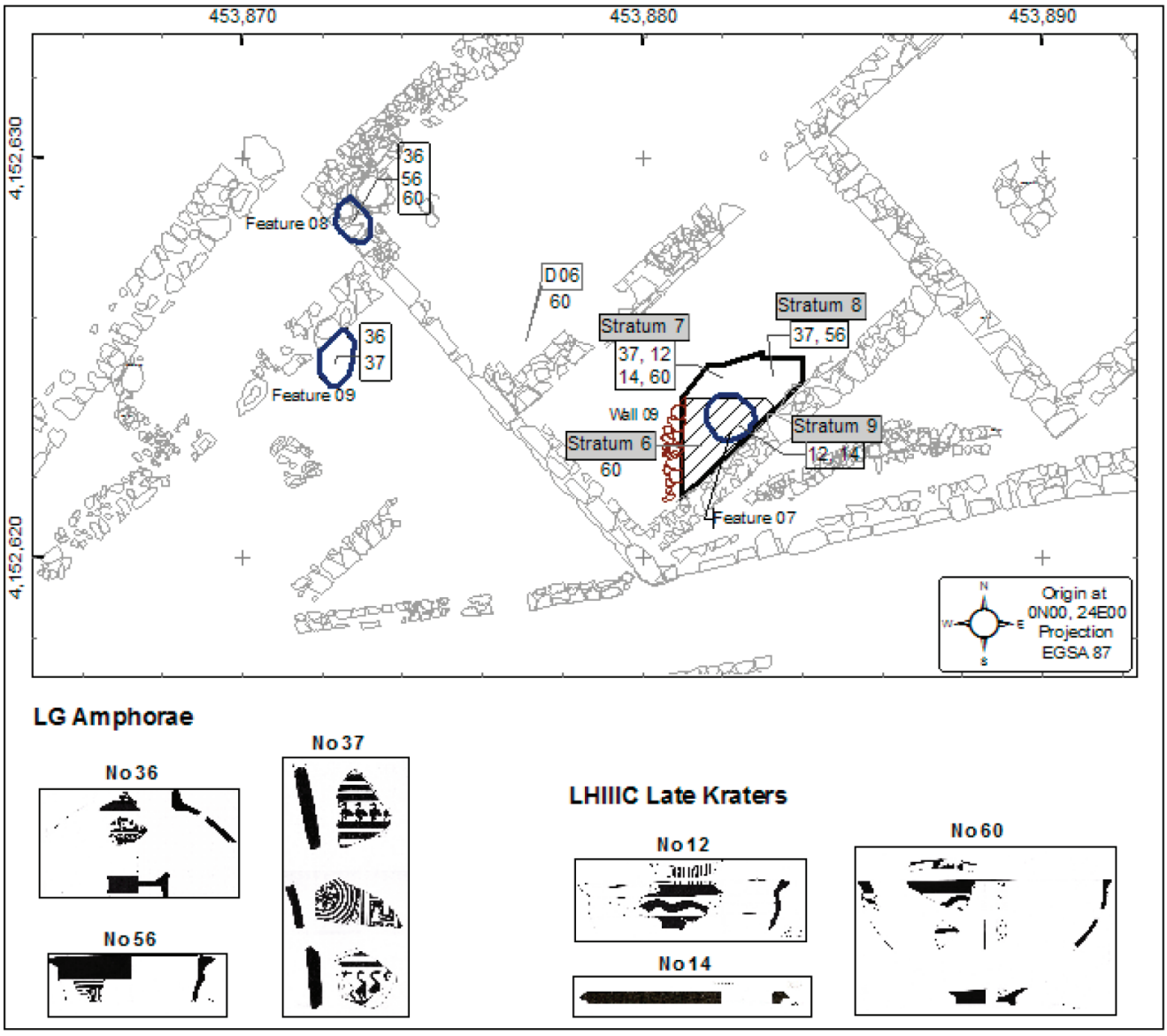

Plate 8.5. Distribution of the fragments retrieved throughout the EIA I depositions of the LH IIIC Late kraters and of the fragments of the LG large amphorae. Illustration E. Savini.