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Contents

An Early Closed Deposit at the Roman Villa of Agios Donatos

Björn Forsén and Paul Reynolds

Agios Donatos of Zervochori is a small, ca. 1.1 ha lower spur of the Paramythia mountain range. On this small spur located at a level of ca. 220 masl and ca. 100-150 m above the bottom of the Kokytos valley there is an Early Hellenistic fortress, the existence of which has been known since the days of Hammond and Dakaris.[1] This fortress was chosen as one of the main research focus points of the Thesprotia Expedition in 2005, when an intensive survey of the spur revealed, apart from the Early Hellenistic fortification walls, also remains of house foundations inside the fortress itself. Part of the visible house foundations was constructed in *opus incertum* and the pottery collected included a surprisingly large amount of Italian terra sigillata, thus indicating that the site, which we call PS 25, had been in intensive use also during the Early Roman period.

From 2006 until 2009, several trial trenches were excavated at different points of Agios Donatos with the aim of broadening our understanding of the construction and date of the Early Hellenistic fortification walls as well as shedding more light on the nature of the Early Roman re-use of the site.[2] Trenches A, B and E produced much new information about the fortification walls that can now be dated to roughly the first quarter of the third century BC.[3] However, Trench E, and especially Trench A, which exposed half of the only square tower of the fortress, also produced Roman finds. The tower had apparently been re-used in Roman times, as a cocciopesto floor was found at a depth of ca. 1.6-1.7 m below the surface. Most of the filling of the tower can be dated to the first half of the first century AD,[4] although the uppermost 0.5-0.8 m can be dated to the second and third century AD. Below the *cocciopesto* floor finds dating to the late third or second century BC were recovered.[5]

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[1] Hammond 1967, 71; Dakaris 1972, 138-139. This chapter has been written in collaboration between the two authors. Björn Forsén has written the introduction, the stratigraphy of trench F and the small finds, Paul Reynolds the pottery section, whereas the section on date and implications was written together by the two authors. We owe thanks to John Hayes for discussing the pottery with us as well as to Jeannette Forsén and Patricia Francis for reading through and commenting on different versions of our text. Finally we want to express our thanks to the trench masters who were responsible for the actual excavation work of trench F in 2008 (Eeva-Maria Viitanen) and in 2009 (Terhi Taipaleenmäki). Figs. 4-5 and 12 are by Björn Forsén, Figs. 7-10 by Paul Reynolds and Figs. 1, 6 and 12-14 by Mikko Suha. Esko Tikkala produced the final versions of all the other illustrations of the chapter, partly on the basis of pencil illustrations by Anna Patteri (Fig. 10) and Eeva-Maria Viitanen (Fig. 2).

[2] For the location of the trenches, see Forsén *et al*., this volume, Fig. 30.

[3] Suha 2009; Suha, this volume.

[4] This corresponds to Locus 3 (partly mixed) and Locus 4 through 16, which included e.g. a large amount of Italian terra sigillata, for which see Ikäheimo 2009 and Ikäheimo, this volume.

[5] The late strata are Loci 1 and 2, whereas the early strata below the *cocciopesto* floor are Loci 17 and 18. The dates are based on a preliminary study of the pottery conducted by Paul Reynolds. The coins found in the tower partly support these dates. Thus, the only coin found below the cocciopesto floor dates to between 148 and the mid-first century BC, whereas the only coin found in the upper layers dates to the late second century AD. The main filling of the tower, which dates to the first century AD, includes a larger variety of finds with coins dating between the fourth and first century BC. For the coins, see Talvio, this volume.

Five additional trenches (C, D, F, G and H) were opened up in connection with the house foundations inside the fortress. Furthermore, parts of the walls were cleaned and traced, thus revealing an extensive Roman villa covering an area of ca. 90x40 m on three different terraces and also the re-use of the square tower.[6] Some of the wall foundations seem to belong to earlier Hellenistic buildings that were, however, largely destroyed when the Roman villa was constructed. Trench D and F proved to be of special interest. Trench D exposed in its entirety a small room with the inner dimensions of ca. 2.4x5 m. This room, which was located on the second or middle terrace, was probably a bedroom decorated with high quality wall paintings of the Second Pompeian style, with the best Italian parallels dating to between 50 and 30 BC.[7] On the lowermost terrace Trench F in its turn exposed another small room containing a closed deposit. The finds of this room are the topic of this chapter.

Stratigraphy of Trench F

Trench F is located just to the east of the apse of the small chapel of Agios Donatos. In 2008 this trench was 2x1 m large, but in 2009 it was enlarged to a size of 4x2 m, thereby exposing in its entirety a small room with the inner dimensions of ca. 1.8x1.8 m. This room was at one stage accessed through an 80 cm wide door from the lower southern terrace. This doorway had later been blocked with a crude masonry wall, which indicates that the room was probably abandoned (Fig. 1).

The small room in Trench F is demarcated to the north by bedrock which rises at a steep angle between the lowermost terrace and the middle terrace, leaving the middle terrace about 2 m higher than the lowermost one. Between the small room and the slanting rock face there is yet another small space with the inner dimensions of 1.8x1.5 m. No doorway to this space was found and it seems likely that it never was used as a room proper, but rather was built in order to create a vertical back wall to the small square room located at the lower terrace. Bedrock was reached in the inner space at a depth of only 50 cm below the top of the dividing wall and the filling above bedrock was largely void of finds.

The stratigraphy of the small square room is indicated by the profile drawn in 2008 of part of the west to east section through the middle of the room (Fig. 2). Below the humus-rich top soil follows a close to 90 cm thick light grey (10YR 7/2) layer, Locus 5. This layer contains plenty of building debris, such as tiles, mortar, plaster and some stucco, as well as pottery, animal bones, some shells and small finds (e.g. a loom-weight). Beneath Locus 5 follows a ca. 20 cm thick light brownish-grey (10YR 6/2) layer, Locus 6, which contains plenty of stones (diameter 5-20 cm), but less building debris than Locus 5. No tiles were, for instance, found in Locus 6, and the amount of pottery and other finds was much less than in Locus 5. The lower part of Locus 6 contained a certain amount of mortar sand, which clearly demarcates it from the following layer, Locus 7.

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[6] The architecture of the villa will be published by E.-M. Viitanen in Thesprotia Expedition III. The frieze-epistyle blocks that are reused in the small chapel of Agios Donatos and may originate from a Macedonian-type barrel vaulted tomb (E. Tikkala 2009) could theoretically also have belonged to the Roman villa.

[7] The wall paintings and stucco mouldings will be published by A. Freccero in Thesprotia Expedition III. See also the site catalogue (Forsén *et al*., this volume).

Fig. 1. The small cellar room in Trench F from the south. In front the blocked doorway.

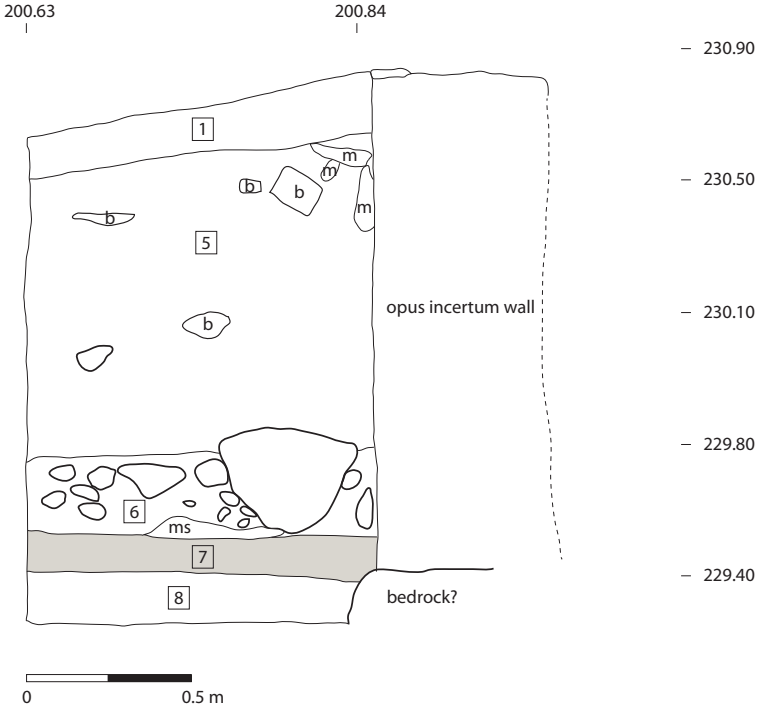

Fig. 2. North profile of the trial trench of 2008 (marked as P-P in Fig. 3). M = mortar, ms = mortar sand, b = brick/tile.

Locus 7 is a ca. 10-15 cm thick horizontal, fairly fine, sandy layer almost black (10YR 3/1) in colour. It contained a large amount of pottery and other small finds, as well as charcoal, animal bones and some shells, but few stones and tile fragments. The amount of finds decreased while going through locus 7, below which followed the fairly compact reddish-brown (5YR 5/2) locus 8, containing small limestone pebbles, but only a couple of pottery sherds and animal bones. The opus incertum wall to the east of the profile ended near the dividing line between locus 7 and 8. Below that two large stone blocks, probably the foundation of the wall were visible. No clear floor level was recorded, although it seems sensible to assume that the top of locus 8 was the level of the earthen floor of the room.

The loci excavated in 2008 were named F, Loci 5-8. When the trench was enlarged in 2009 to encompass the whole small room the area was excavated in two 2x2 m squares, F1 and F2, F1 being the southernmost of the two squares (Fig. 3). When the vertical back wall was uncovered it turned out that part of F2 belonged to the small square room and part to the northern closed space. The lower layers in the room per se were after that excavated as F1-2, Locus 3 (corresponds to F, Locus 5 of 2008), F1-2, Locus 6 (corresponds to F, Locus 6 of 2008), F1-2, Locus 7 and Locus 8 (corresponds to F, Locus 7 of 2008, the lower part of this find-rich layer was in 2009 considered as a locus of its own, i.e. F1-2, Locus 8), and finally F1-2, Locus 9 (corresponds to F, Locus 8 of 2008).

Most of the finds were made either in the southwest and southeast corners of the room, just to the left and right after entering the room through the small door, or then along the walls. Thus two lamps (Nos. 6-7), the small bowl (No. 3), a piece of Eastern terra sigillata B, a tile stamp ('COS' in Latin) and two of the loom-weights (SF 2 and SF

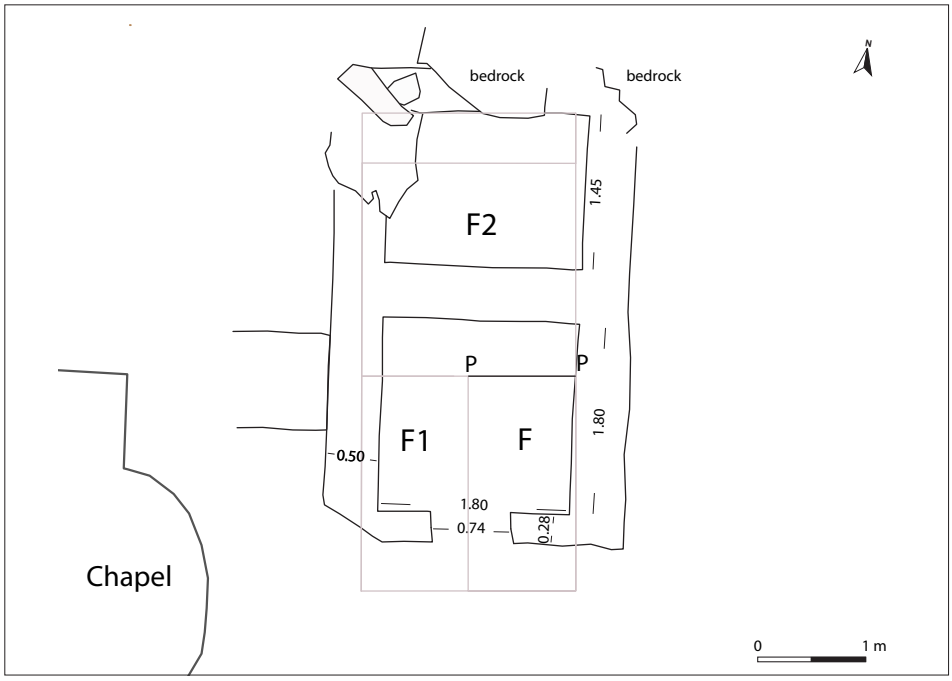

Fig. 3. Ground plan of Trench F with the small cellar room, behind which the closed space, probably never used as a room. Marked are also the trial trench of 2008 (F) as well as the two excavation squares of 2009 (F1 and F2).

3) were found in the southwest corner, whereas the bone handle (SF 11), the lead figurine (SF 9) and one of the loom-weights (either SF 1 or SF 6) were found in the southeast corner of the room. The following objects were recorded along the eastern wall (at a distance of 30 cm at most from the wall): the two lead weights (SF 7 and SF 8, found together), the unguentarium neck (No. 5), the barbotine cup with two handles and one of the loom-weights (either SF 1 or SF 6). Finally, the glass pearl (SF 10) finally was found next to the north wall of the room.

For the rest of the finds no exact find spot was noted; the cooking pots were found smashed into a large number of pieces, usually collected along the walls or in the southwest or southeast corner of the room. Lamp 3 was not found directly inside the closed deposit, but rather in the lowermost part of the layer above it (F, Locus 6, pail 2), but probably also belonging to the deposit. The deposit can be described as a dump of Late Hellenistic household waste, which was left in the room at some stage and consequently sealed by the thick layer of building debris (F, Locus 5-6 and F1-2, Locus 3 and 6). This layer of building debris seems to be roughly of the same date as the deposit, although it contains less pottery. The only object of this layer included here is the cooking pot No. 10, part of which was found in the deeper part of the building debris inside the small room (F, Loc. 6, pail 2). However, other parts of the pot were found in the uppermost parts of the building debris, just to the north of the small room itself (F1-2, Locus 3, pail 1).

Pottery

The small assemblage of pottery found in the 'cellar' room comprised several largely complete (Nos. 1, 3, 6-8), or half complete (Nos. 9-12, 15) vessels, as well as fragments (Nos. 2, 4, 5, 13-14). Though the variable state of preservation is probably partly due to the fact that not all the deposit was excavated, it is clear that the pottery was not an in situ group. As stated above, the pottery was part of a dump of household waste, including animal bone, deposited in the room. There were no amphora diagnostics recovered.

Two thin-walled vessels, a two-handled cup and a beaker (Fig. 4), decorated with thickly applied barbotine wreaths are from the same workshop (Nos. 1-2). The only parallel

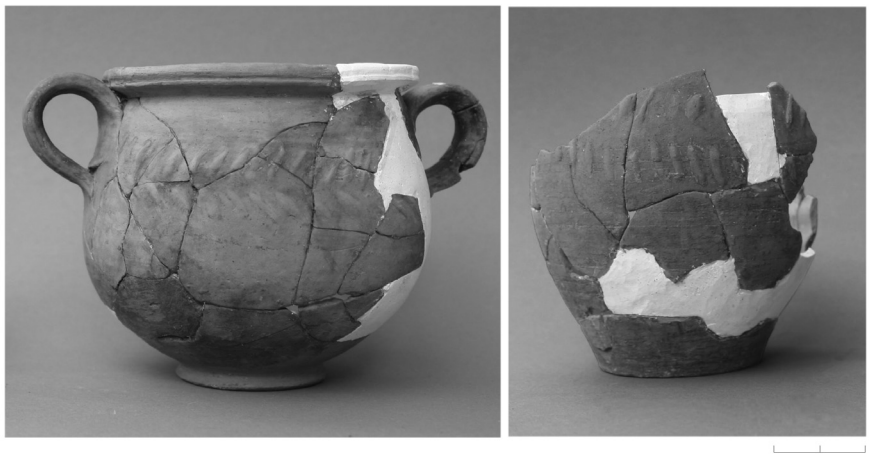

Fig. 4. Cup with two handles (No. 1) and beaker (No. 2), both decorated with a horizontal wreath of leaves.

Fig. 5. Lamps Nos. 6-8.

found for the distinctive cup No. 1 is illustrated in the catalogue of the Archaeological Museum of Igoumenitsa, from the late Hellenistic graves excavated at Kephalochori in Thesprotia.[8] This orange-red slipped two-handled cup, decorated with fine barbotine vine tendrils, though clearly not the same product as our cup (No. 1), does share its rounded body profile, ring base and ring handles (in this case with additional small thumb holds). The lower register bears rouletting. In the catalogue the piece is dated to the first century BC. Roman first century two-handled cups of this general shape and everted rim would seem to have a carinated lower body.

A small hemispherical bowl or cup in a pale green fabric (No. 3) recalls the ware of Apulian products (e.g. some Otranto type Medieval amphorae) but such a ware could be reproduced almost anywhere. A fragment of an unguentarium, in a hard, fine fabric with yellowish, turned surfaces and matt colour coat decoration (No. 5) is in the same Hellenistic imported plain ware that occurs in abundance in Hellenistic levels of the 'Tripartite Building' of Butrint.[9] Indeed a single, identical unguentarium of this type was recovered in the late Hellenistic sequence (For 635.1). It is very likely that mortaria in this plain ware found in Butrint are the same products as one illustrated from the Gravina Pit Group of ca. 80-70 BC.[10]

The three lamps (Fig. 5), all wheel-made, comprise two forms, both without handles. The first type (Nos. 6-7) is comparable to Agora Howland Type 39, typically handleless and dated 'to the late 2nd and into the 1st century B.C', or more precisely to 115-90 BC. In a revision of the dating of the Agora lamps, Rotroff has changed the dating of the two relevant contexts to 120-100 BC.[11] Two similar examples are published from Phoinike, in southern Albania.[12] The second type (No. 8) has strong parallels with the dominant lamp type in the Gravina Pit Group of ca. 80-70 BC.[13] The latter, according to John Hayes, 'are late versions of the simple wheel-made varieties found on Roman

[8] Kanta-Kitsou *et al*. 2008, 133, no. 3.
[9] Reynolds in preparation; for the site, see Hernández and Çondi 2008; for Roman pottery, see Reynolds, Hernández and Çondi 2008.
[10] Hayes 1994, 221, fig. 11.122.
[11] Howland 1958, 124 and plate 19; Rotroff 1997, 504-505.
[12] Gamberini 2005, 140, fig. 8.55.15, from Tomb 37.
[13] Hayes 1994, 212-213, fig. 8.

Republican sites throughout central and southern Italy'.[14] Fairly good parallels for the latter are also to be noted from Olympia, dated to the first century BC.[15]

The cooking pots (Nos. 9-12), also Hellenistic shapes, are products in local or regional orange coarse ware. These are not so obviously tempered with large fragments of chert as Imperial Roman Butrint cooking wares. Though chert and flint is present in the Agios Donatos cooking pots, perhaps calcite and feldspar is more common here?[16] It was not possible to make other than macroscopical examination of the fabrics on the spot, so these observations (and fabric descriptions, Catalogue) need to be confirmed through thin-section analysis of samples.

One vessel, thin-walled with a pointed curved rim and (single?) rectilinear handle attached to the rim top (No. 9, Fig. 6), and another in a thicker fabric, handle type unknown (No. 10), may be related to a much smaller 'jar' in cooking ware fabric in the Gravina Pit Group.[17] Though No. 9 is reconstructed as a vessel with two handles, the general shape recalls one-handled cooking pots in the Athenian Agora, particularly those late in the series (see Catalogue, below). Note that No. 9, unlike Nos. 10-12, did not bear traces of soot, so it may not have served as a cooking pot. The form is present in late Hellenistic levels of the 'Tripartite Building' of Butrint.[18] In the latter case it is associated with Roman Republican amphorae (predominantly Lamboglia 2), cooking pots similar to one Gravina Pit shape,[19] a casserole also found in the Gravina Pit,[20] non-figurative 'Ionian' Megarian bowls (ca. 150/130-80 BC), the occasional Campanian black glaze dish (Lamboglia 6 and 36) and a range of black colour coat fine wares that are not paralleled in Gravina. The latter, with their yellow-white fabrics may be products of nearby Phoinike,[21]

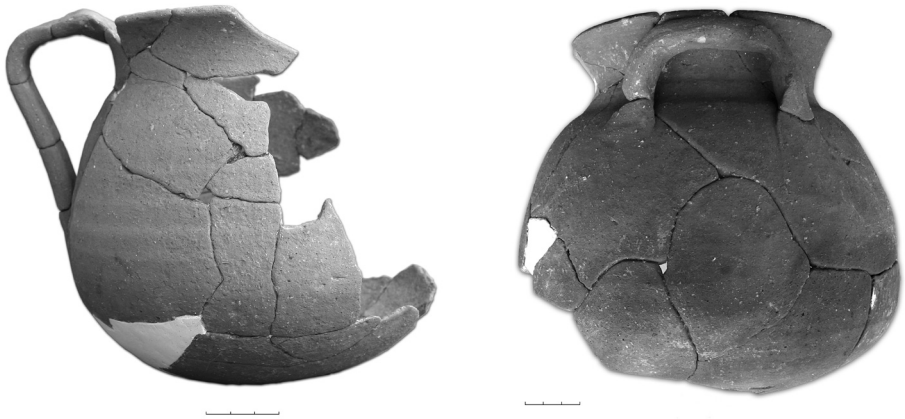

Fig. 6. Cooking pots Nos. 9 and 11.

[14] Hayes 1994, 206.
[15] Schauer 2008, 229, Abb. 4.3-6.
[16] I am grateful to Miguel Ángel Cau Ontiveros for his comments on my fabric descriptions.
[17] Hayes 1994, 224, fig. 13.142.
[18] Reynolds in preparation.
[19] Hayes 1994, fig. 13.130-131.
[20] Hayes 1994, fig. 14.149.
[21] Gamberini 2005; Gamberini 2008; Minguzzi *et al*. 2008.

though there are almost identical vessels at sites in Thesprotia that beg the question as to where the Butrint fine wares originate from.[22] These Butrint deposits could date to the last quarter of the second century BC or, perhaps more likely, to the first decades of the first century BC. This in part depends on the date ascribed to these, in this case, generally unstamped Lamboglia 2 amphorae: whereas they are probably more common from ca. 100 BC,[23] the earliest examples of the form have been dated from the late second century BC[24] or from the last quarter of the second century BC.[25] There appear to have been none in the foundation levels of Valentia, at Numantia (134-133 BC) or in wrecks of similar date.[26]

The second form at Agios Donatos (No. 11), with vertical ring handles pressed under the rim, is thicker-walled (Fig. 6). Another vessel (No. 12), has no rim, but may have been the same form. Such handles are found on cooking pots as well as casseroles throughout the Hellenistic period,[27] some of the latest examples being the cooking pots found in the Gravina Pit Group.[28] The rim type is not paralleled in Butrint or Gravina. Three round-based vessels, probably cooking pots, from the necropolis excavated at aforementioned Kephalochori (Thesprotia) may bear some connection.[29] These vessels have been dated to the third quarter of the second century BC.[30]

A large crater or jar form (No. 13), with its horizontal ring handle, is clearly Hellenistic in concept. The large, flat base (No. 14) is in the same rather fine ware.

Finally, a globular, rather thick-walled jar with two handles and concave rim-lid seat is a distinctive shape (No. 15). This is more generally a Roman form, but we may note two 'coarse ware' (*común*) vessels from a context thought to date to the foundation of the Roman colony of *Valentia* in 138 BC that are similar in concept, but the rims are more articulated and the bodies are rather ovoid (Nos. 16-17).[31] Two Campanian vessels, actually closer in shape with regard to the more sagging profile, have (early) first century AD parallels (Nos. 18-19).[32] However, apart from perhaps illustrating the longevity of such a form, none provide the necessary precise parallels and dating that would be helpful.

Fine wares

1. Cup with two handles. 60% of rim and ca. 80% of the body. Rim diameter: 8.2 cm. Thin-walled and light-weight. Ring base. Horizontal wreath of barbotine leaves across both sides of the cup. The barbotine is applied so thickly that some of the leaves have detached from the body. Fine pale

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[22] Kanta-Kitsou *et al*. 2008, e.g. 125, figs. 1-3; 133, fig. 1.
[23] Bruno 1995, 27-38, 293-301; Beltrán Lloris 1970, 349-358, for Spanish examples.
[24] Py 1993: dated 135 BC-25 BC.
[25] Cipriano and Carre 1989; Bruno 1995, 27, 29.
[26] Ribera i Lacomba and Marín Jordá 2003.
[27] E.g. Rotroff 2006, Chapter 6.
[28] Hayes 1994, fig. 13.127-128.
[29] Riginos 1999, figs. 23-25: these are classified quite simply as 'urns', and are unfortunately illustrated only as photographs and not as profile drawings. See also Aidonis, this volume, fig. 4, three last vessels in the right lower corner.
[30] Riginos 1999, 178, Gruppe B.
[31] Ribera i Lacomba and Marín Jordá 2003, fig. 3, lower centre, top, dated 145-135 BC.
[32] Gasperetti 1996, 30, fig. 2.15-16: with reference to Dyson 1976, 132, fig. 51.109-111, Tiberian; De Caro 1994, fig. 42.130

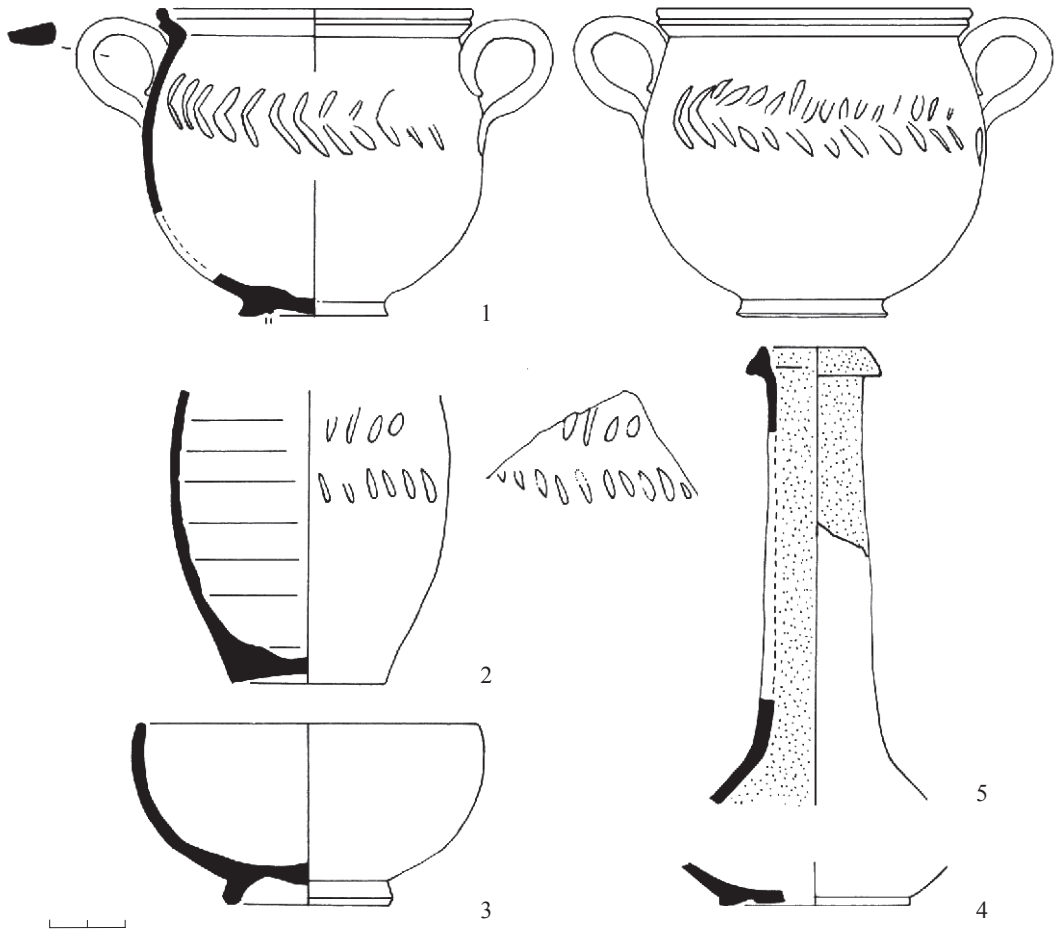


Fig. 7. Fine wares (Nos. 1-5). Scale 1:2.

salmon orange fabric. Fired pale yellow ochre inside. Mica dust on the surface.
Find context: F2, Loc. 7, p. 3.

2. Beaker. Base/wall. Diameter: 8 cm. Thin-walled and light weight. Same barbotine decorated ware as no. 1. Horizontal wreath of leaves, here the two halves well separated. Concave base. Very pale orange fabric, inner surface a little more yellow-orange. Inner surface has common fine-0.5 mm gold and lesser silver mica flakes. Inner surface finely pitted due to inclusions. Outer surface, being turned, mica less visible. Rather uneven break with common very fine quartz? Occasional very fine-fine white inclusions (chert?). Occasional 1 mm lime in surface pit.
Find context: F1, Loc. 7, p. 3, west side.

3. Cup. Complete. Rim diameter: 11 cm. Base diameter: 5.5 cm. Hemispherical body, ring base. No trace of slip. Fired pale green-yellow. Occasional fine oxide.
Find context: F1, Loc. 7, p. 4, west side, southwest corner.

4. Thin-walled ware base. Diameter: 6 cm. Bevelled foot. Rusty orange fine fabric with occasional fine chert, so a regional product. Poorly fired, leaving colour on ones hands.
Find context: F, Loc. 7, p. 2.

5. Unguentarium. Rim-neck. Diameter: 3.5 cm. Thin-walled. Well fired, hard, fine pale yellow fabric. Well turned-smooth surfaces. Matt, dark maroonish-brown paint/colour coat inside and upper section of the neck.
Find context: F, Loc. 7, p. 1.

Lamps

6. Lamp. Complete but for a few body sherds. Wheelmade. Spout attached separately. Circular body. No handle. Almost flat, string-cut base. Small band rim. No slip preserved. Salmon orange fabric, a little 'soapy'. Moderate fine-1 mm oxide pellets, moderate fine-0.5 mm lime and occasional 1 mm quartz. Related to Howland Agora Type 39, dated to the late second and early first centuries BC.[33] Rotroff's re-examination of the date of this type notes Howland's more precise dating of 115-90 BC and suggests a date of 120-100 BC.[34] She also provides a wider possible date range for a derivative of this type.[35]
Find context: F1, Loc. 7, p. 4, west side, southwest corner.

7. Lamp. End of spout missing. Wheelmade. Spout attached separately. Concave base. Bevelled narrow band rim. No handle. Matt red colour coat preserved on underside. Smooth surfaces, a little 'soapy'. Yellow ochre fabric (no chert or mudstone, so not local or Corinthian, respectively?). Rare fine lime. Same ware as No. 6. Howland Agora Type 39. For the date, see No. 6.
Find context: F1, Loc. 7, p. 4, west side, southwest corner.

8. Lamp. Complete but for two body sherds and the end of spout. Wheelmade. Spout attached separately. Small carinated cylindrical body, with rim simply bevelled. No handle. String cut base. Dark brown colour coat inside and outside. Very pale orange-dark yellow ochre fabric. Occasional 1 mm angular inclusion (chert? Not oxide). This general type, is typical in the Apulian Gravina pit group of ca. 80-70 BC, though these differ in the details of rim and base, as well as source(s) (the majority bearing a grey glaze, some being products of Metapontum).[36]
Find context: F, Loc. 6, p. 2.

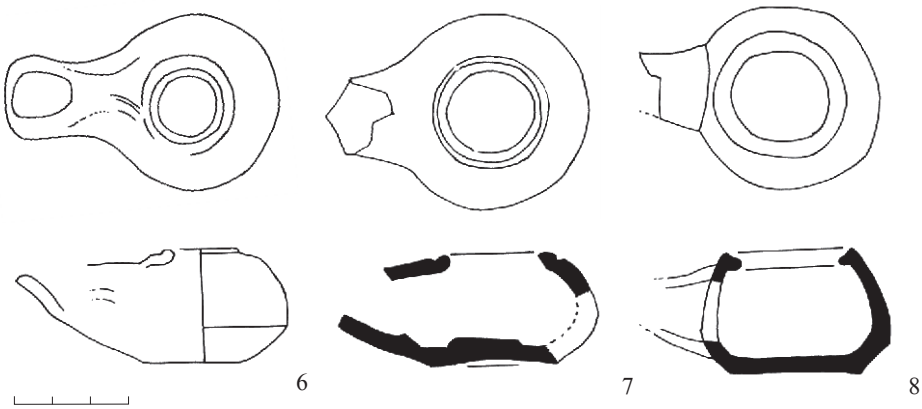


Fig. 8. Lamps (Nos. 6-8). Scale 1:2.

[33] Howland 1958, 124, pl. 19.
[34] Rotroff 1997, 504.
[35] Rotroff 1997, 505; Howland 1958, Type 39', the context comprising material dating to between 200 and the late first century BC.
[36] Hayes 1994, 206, 212-213, fig. 8.45-53, 57.

Cooking wares

9. Cooking pot? Roughly 50% of rim, ca. 50% of body, most of base. Rim diameter: 18 cm. Bag-shaped, globular, thin-walled vessel with a vertical collar and pointed rim. One, wide thin strap handle present with a central rib and right-angle profile, attached above and below the rim. Though I have reconstructed it as having two handles, this could be a one-handled lidless cooking pot (*chytra*).[37] Light double ribbing only in the area where the lower handles are attached. Lightly carinated to a rounded base. Base and extant body are not sooted, so, unlike Nos. 10-12, below, its use as a cooking pot is not assured. Bright orange fabric (more orange than cooking pots Nos. 10-12).
Macroscopic fabric description: Uneven, hackly break. Surfaces quite pitted. Inclusions a little 'melted' into the matrix. Moderate 0.5 mm irregular rounded brownish quartz; common fine, to occasional 2 mm whitish inclusions, irregularly faceted-hackly that may well be feldspar; occasional 2 mm black flint; moderate fine-1 mm white chert.
Find context: F2, Loc. 7, p. 3.

10. Cooking pot. Four fragments (59% total). Rim and upper wall. Rim diameter: 15 cm. Wide, pointed rim (cf. No. 9) and a collar neck, with its outer section flattened. Handle scars below rim (not on top face). Step to shoulder. Rim sooted on outer face and irregularly on rim top for 1 cm, with more soot on lower section of wall, 3 cm below the shoulder line.
Macroscopic fabric description: Rusty orange fabric. Uneven, granular break. Same fabric as No. 11, but inclusions are finer, generally fine-0.5 mm, with occasional 1-2 mm fragments. One 3 mm lump of oxide. Moderate fine rectilinear ice-coloured calcite is identifiable alongside more irregular semi -clear hackly material (feldspar?: see comment on No. 9). Occasional 3 mm reduced black oxide lump. Several 2 mm irregular lumps of grey and white conglomerate or rock (limestone and calcite?).
Find context: F, Loc. 6, p. 2 (2 rims, 15%), the rest in F1-2, Loc. 3, p. 1, north extension.

11. Cooking pot. 50% of rim, 1 handle, ca. 40% of body and most of base. Rim diameter: 17 cm top. Round section, arched handle(s) springing vertically from the upper shoulder to rest under the outer edge of the rim. Stepped shoulder to short collar and everted, rather square sectioned rim bearing a flat indent-lid seat on the top outer face. Deep body, carinated to a rounded base with flat central section (so is stable). One side sooted on base and up to 3 cm below handle. Large patch of sooting on body on the other side of the vessel. Macroscopic fabric description: Dark rusty orange (-red) fabric. Uneven, granular break. Common irregular semi-clear to brownish fine-1 mm fragments on the surface that may be quartz as well as feldspar (see No. 9); occasional 0.5 mm and 2-3 mm orange-brown flint; occasional large hackly pale grey material, probably chert; moderate 0.5 mm chert, common whitish fine-v. fine chert or calcite; moderate 0.5-2 mm oxide lumps; rare lime. Cf. Agora Rotroff 2006, two-handled chytra, no. 633 (ca. 225-175 BC), but there are no good Agora parallels.
Find context: F2, Loc. 7, p. 3.

12. Cooking pot. Rim missing. Roughly 70% of body and one handle. Base area part restored. Handle and body similar to No. 11, but smaller, with a shallower body. Base/lower body well carinated. Sooting on half of base, but up to the lower handles on both sides of the vessel. Did not sit directly in the fire but alongside it?
Find context: F 2, Loc. 7, p. 3.

Kitchen (plain) wares

13. Handled jar or crater. Diameter: 27 cm top. Similar rim and arched handle to cooking pot no. 11. Quite thick-walled. Horizontal ring handle pressed against the underside of a flared rim. Soft,

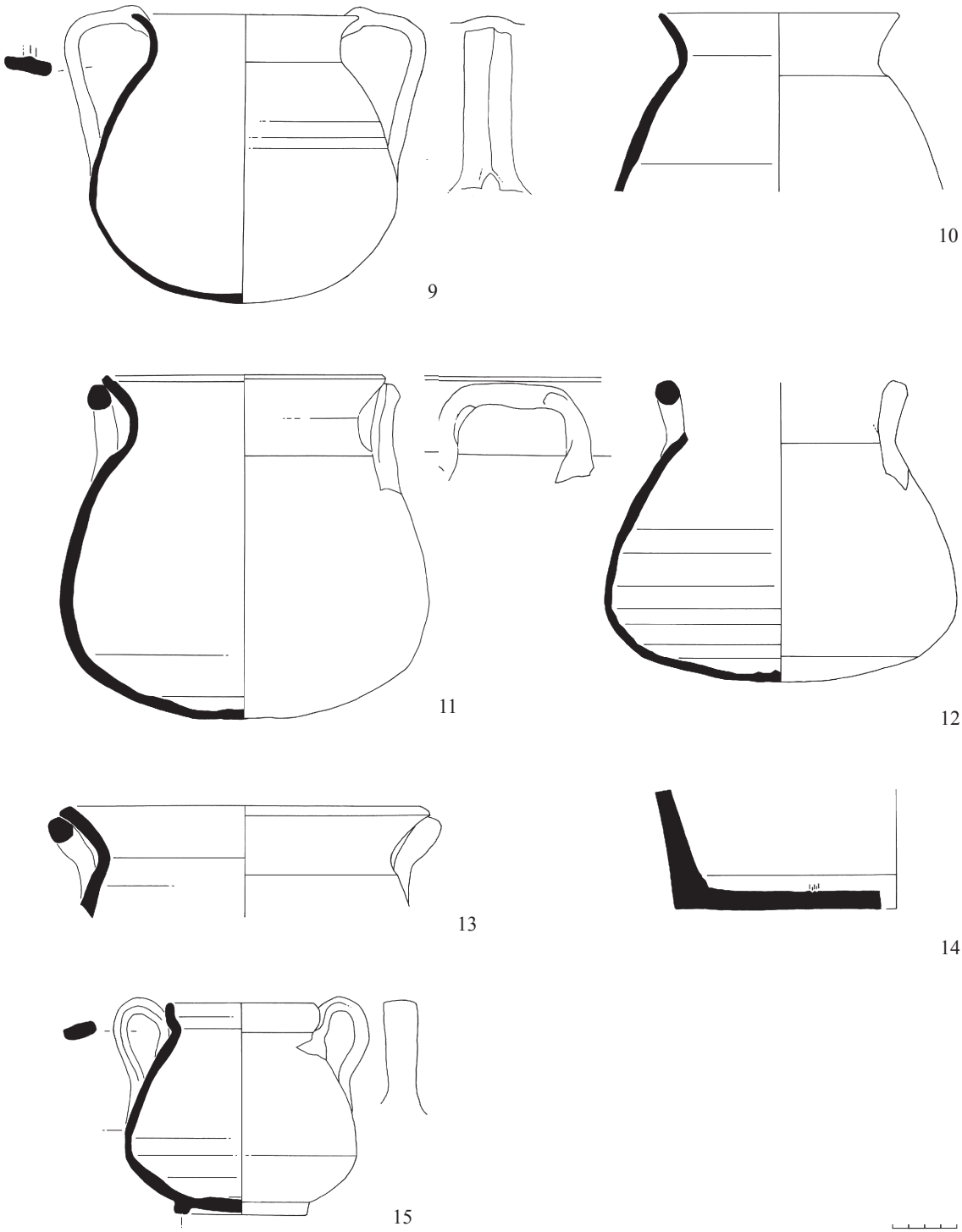
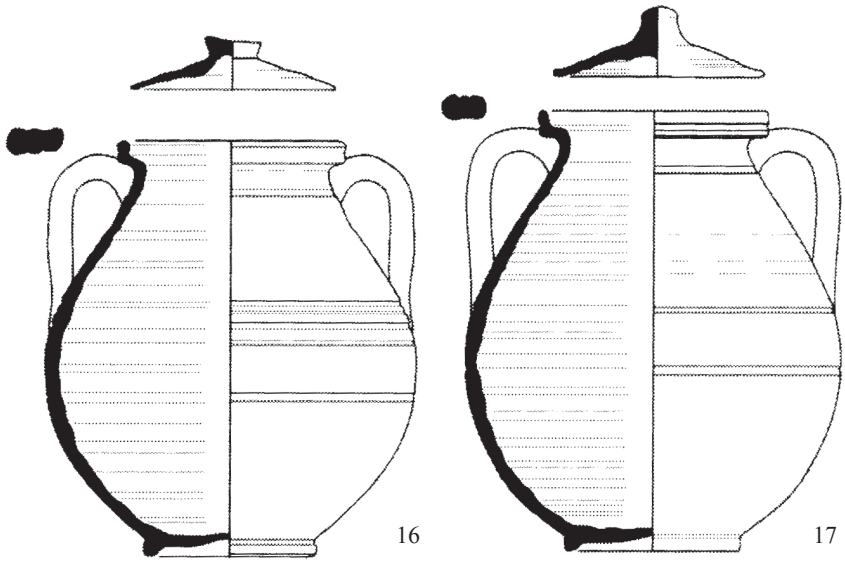
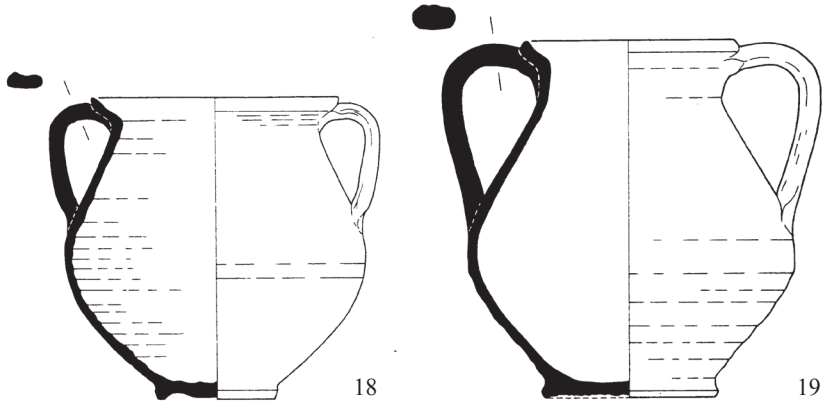


Fig. 9. Cooking and kitchen wares (Nos. 9-15). Scale 1:4.



Ribera i Lacomba, A. and Marín Jordá 2005, fig. 3. Approximate scale 1:3.



Gasperetti 1996, fig. 2.15-16.

Fig. 10. Kitchen ware parallels (Nos. 16-19). Scale 1:3.

fine bright orange fabric, poorly fired, leaving colour on one's hands. Moderate 1-3 mm chert. Close regional product.
Find context: F1, Loc. 7, p. 4, west side.

14. Jar or basin base. Diameter: 34 cm. Flat base and straight, lightly everted lower wall. Bevelled step on the lower inner wall. Light double groove on the floor. Similar ware to No. 13.
Find context: F, Loc. 7, p. 2.

15. Two-handled jar (two large for a cup?). 50% of rim, 2 handles and ca. 55% of body. Rim diameter: 11cm. Base diameter: 10.5 cm outer foot. Ring base. Carinated lower body. Plain strap handles. Convex rim and concave lid seat. Thick-walled. Well fired, very pale red fabric with rare chert. Moderate fine-2mm oxide, occasional 4 mm. It was not possible to examine the fabric more closely but it seemed to be finer (less quartz?) than that of the cooking pots. For comment, see Text.
Find context: F2, Loc. 7, p. 3.

Small finds

Apart from the pottery, the closed deposit also contained some small finds, mainly loom-weights, but also a glass pearl, a bone handle and three lead objects, as well as a fragmentary tile stamp. These are all published here except for the tile stamp that will be included in a forthcoming chapter on stamps and graffiti from the villa.

Loom-weights

A total of six conical loom-weights (Fig. 11) were recorded. A large number of loom-weights, mostly conical, were found in the other trenches dug on Agios Donatos as well as in the intensive field survey of the small hillock. In Corinth the conical loom-weight is the dominating type throughout time from the seventh until the first century BC.[38] In Attica and possibly also Arcadia there seems to be a shift in use from pyramidal to conical loom-weights in the fourth century BC.[39] According to our present knowledge the conical loom-weight also seems to be the dominant type in Thesprotia during the Hellenistic period.[40] The best published parallels to our loom-weights in Thesprotia can be found in Nekyomanteion in layers that date to the late third to early second century BC,[41] but this does not exclude the possibility that several of the shapes may have been in use even later in the second or first century BC.

SF 1. Conical loom-weight with pear-formed profile. H. 8.2 cm.
Find context: F, Loc. 7, p. 1.
Cf. Davidson 1952, profile XII; Tzouvara-Souli 1983, e.g. fig. 2, no. 7076, fig. 6, no. 7326, fig. 8, no. 7325ε; Turmo, this volume, Fig. 21.
Date: This shape is dated by Davidson between the mid-third and mid-second century BC. It was also one of the most common shapes found in Nekyomanteion (late third to early second century BC).

SF 2. Conical loom-weight with straight sides and somewhat rounded off lower edge. H. 9.8 cm.
Find context: F1, Loc. 7, p. 4.
Cf. Tzouvara-Souli 1983, fig. 9, no. 7317β and pls. 37-38.
Date: The loom-weights from Nekyomanteion date to the late third to early second century BC.

SF 3. Small conical loom-weight (H. 5.7 cm) with straight sides and two round stamps. The motive of the stamps is not visible.
Find context: F1, Loc. 7, p. 4.
Cf. Tzouvara-Souli 1983, pl. 36, middle one in lower row, for roughly similar shape, and Tzouvara-Souli 1983, pls. 17-20 and 25 for round stamps.

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[37] Cf. Rotroff 2006, 164-169, e.g. fig. 71.562: ca. 225-165 BC, fig. 72.569: ca. 150-110 BC, fig. 72.573: ca. 115-86 BC.
[38] Davidson 1952, 146-172. Davidson and Thompson 1943, 76, estimate that nine tenths of all loom-weights found at Corinth were conical.
[39] For Attica, see Davidson and Thompson 1943, 65-94; for Arcadia, see Forsén and Forsén 2003, 236-237.
[40] Cf. Tzouvara-Souli 1983 for loom-weights from Nekyomanteion that date to the late third or early second century BC (including only four pyramidal loom-weights among a total of 94 ones) or Turmo in this volume for loom-weights from the Sevasto house that date to between 275 and 200 BC (only conical loom-weights).
[41] Tzouvara-Souli 1983.

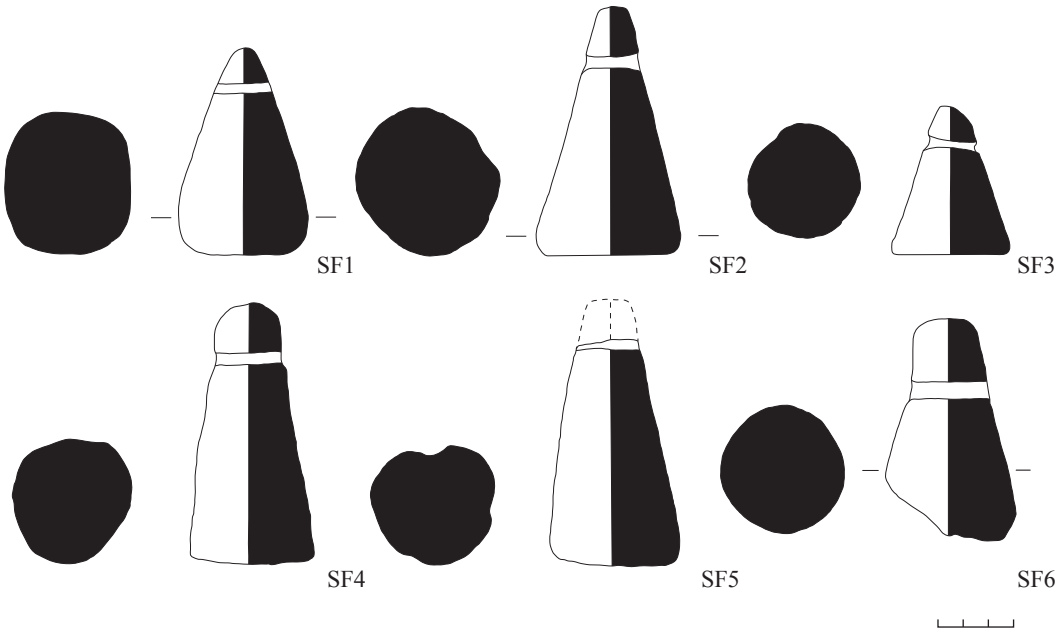

Fig. 11. Loom-weights (SF 1-6). Scale 1:3.

SF 4-5. Crudely shaped conical loom-weights. Top missing from one of the weights. H. of complete one 10.3 cm.
Find context: F2, Loc. 7, p. 3; F2, Loc. 8, p. 1.
Cf. Tzouvara-Souli 1983, fig. 6, no. 7324στ and pl. 35, nos. 7317γ, 7324 and 7326.
Date: The loom-weights from Nekyomanteion date to the late third to early second century BC.

SF 6. Chipped conical loom-weight. Preserved H. 8.7 cm.
Find context: F, Loc. 7, p. 1.

Lead objects

As well as three objects made of lead, the layer also contained some scrap pieces of lead, probably meant to be used as raw material for future production. Two of the objects were nearly identical lead weights (Fig. 12). Identical weights found in the ancient city of Leukas have been interpreted as weights for fishing nets,[42] whereas nearly similar weights from Delos seem to have been used quite frequently as official weights with letters as a stamp on the

Fig. 12. Lead weights (SF 7-8).

[42] Zachos and Douzougli 2003, 80, weights no. AE 2510 and AE 2512. For nearly similar lead fishing net weights from the Roman harbour in Mainz-on-Rhine, see Ginella and Koch 2006, 110, Abb. 56, esp. the second weight from the right.

Fig. 13. Lead figurine (SF 9).

bottom (some indicating Italian or Sicilian origin).[43] The villa on Agios Donatos was in antiquity located at a distance of ca. 18 km from the seashore next to Nekyomanteion. Still small quantities of sea shells and a fish vertebra found in the excavations indicate that the inhabitants of the villa consumed sea products.[44] The lead weights may indicate that some of the inhabitants of the villa actively took part in sea fishing. No similar weights were found elsewhere on Agios Donatos.

The third object made of lead is a small figurine depicting a dancing figure, probably a male (Fig. 13). This unique object, to which we know of no good parallels, had probably been used as a simple doll for a child.

SF 7. Lead weight. Roughly conical, with flat top and irregularly concave bottom. H. 6.0 cm, Base 2.4x2.4 cm.
Find context: F, Loc. 7, p. 3.
Cf. Zachos and Douzougli 2003, 80, weights nos. AE 2510 and AE 2512; Fiedler 2003 II, 349, nos. 1951-1952; Deonna 1938, 155-156, pl. 56; Davidson 1952, 163, 172, no. 1212; Sackett 1992, pl. 308:11-13.
Date: Late Hellenistic. The best parallels from Leukas were found in a Late Hellenistic house (terminus post quem for the construction of which is given by a coin dating to between the late third century and 167 BC; destruction dating to the turn of the first century BC and the first century AD). The weight from Corinth is dated to the Hellenistic or Roman period. In Knossos the weights are dated from the Augustan to the Hadrianic periods. No dates are given to the weights from Delos, but judging on the basis of the history of the island, they may well date to the first or even second century BC.

SF 8. Lead weight. Similar as SF 7. H. 5.4 cm, Base 2.4x2.8 cm.
Find context: F, Loc. 7, p. 3.
For parallels and date see SF 1.

SF 9. Lead figurine of dancing man (?) with outstretched arms. H. 4.1 cm.
Find context: F, Loc. 7, p. 2.

Other small finds

Apart from the loom-weights and the lead objects the closed deposit contained a small glass pearl (Fig. 14) and a bone artefact, possibly part of a pin or an ear scoop (Fig. 15). No parallels to the glass pearl were found elsewhere on Agios Donatos. Several other ear

[43] Deonna 1938, 155-156, pl. 56.
[44] Niskanen 2009, 146, n. 8 and 152.

spoons were found in the other trenches, but none similar to this one. A rather good parallel to the glass pearl has been found in a Late Roman grave in Augst, Switzerland, but the type may well have been in use for centuries. A hair pin in Augst (from a mixed layer, 30-900 AD) likewise is close in shape and decoration to our bone artefact.[45]

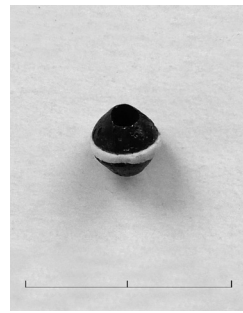

Fig. 14. Glass pearl (SF 10).

SF 10. Glass pearl consisting of two black biconical parts, separated from each other by a white disc. Diam. 0.6 cm.
Find context: F2, Loc. 7, p. 7.
Cf. Riha 1990, 115, no. 2906, Tafel 72 (dated to the Late Roman period).

SF 11. Bone artefact (end of a pin or ear scoop?) with incised geometrical decoration at the end. Round section and rounded end. Length 10.2 cm.
Find context: F, Loc.7, p. 4.

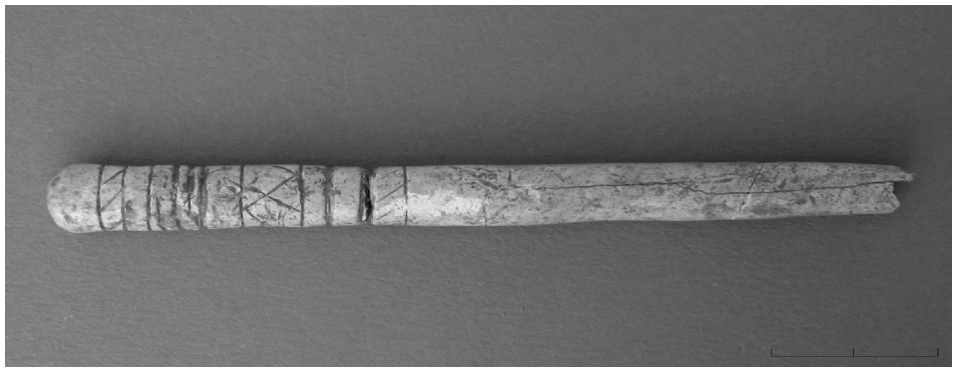

Fig. 15. Bone artefact with incised geometrical decoration (SF 11).

Date and implications

The dating of the closed deposit has proved quite difficult and in some cases no parallels could be found. However, a good estimate can be given on the basis of the pottery. The three lamps and perhaps the barbotine two-handled cup would seem to provide a date of ca. 120 to ca. 80/70 BC. The cooking pots, may, on the evidence of Butrint (cf. main period of exports of Lamboglia 2 amphorae), indicate that the assemblage belongs, like the Gravina Pit Group, to the early first, rather than to the late second century BC.

According to John Hayes's impression, based on the drawings,[46] the assemblage was 'basically Hellenistic', and the cooking pots and lamps looked more second century BC than first century BC, whereas the barbotine cup (No. 1), the two-handled jar (No. 6) and hemispherical cup (No. 3) were perhaps more first century BC in date. He nevertheless stressed the difficulties he also had in arriving at a more precise date. There

[45] Deschler-Erb 1998, 286, no. 3402. The much later (tenth to twelfth centuries AD) bone pins from Corinth (e.g. Davidson 1952, 286, nos. 2358, 2359 and 2361, pl. 120) are also rather similar to our bone artefact, but this is probably coincidental.
[46] Personal communication.

is the possibility that the date range is in fact wider than we would wish (i.e. last quarter of the second to early first century BC inclusive), a matter that will hopefully be resolved once more deposits and sequences of the Late Hellenistic to Early Roman period are published in the region and work on the Hellenistic pottery from Butrint is concluded.

Dating the closed deposit to between the late second and early first century BC has implications not only for understanding the origins of the Roman villa on Agios Donatos, but also for our picture of the early Roman influence in Thesprotia. Written sources seem to indicate that the senatorial aristocracy of Rome invested in large land-holdings in Epirus beginning from the 70s or 60s BC and the first colonies were established only somewhat later by Caesar in Buthrotum and possibly also at Photike.[47] These dates conform rather well with the date of the wall paintings recovered from the bedroom of the villa on Agios Donatos (50-30 BC).

The closed deposit now dates the first building phase of the villa on Agios Donatos to before the mid-first century BC. The small cellar with walls constructed in *opus incertum* existed when the dump was deposited there. The fact that the thick layer of the building debris that sealed the deposit also dates to the Late Hellenistic period (it contained no clearly identifiable Imperial pottery) seems to indicate a major rebuilding of the villa at some stage in the first century BC, in connection with which the wall paintings may have been made. The *opus incertum* walls of the small cellar room as well as the closed deposit found within the room belong to the first building phase of the villa.

It is unclear whether the builders of the first phase of the villa on Agios Donatos were local aristocrats or early Roman settlers, although the fact that the walls were built in characteristic *opus incertum* may indicate that Roman settlers were involved. In that case the villa on Agios Donatos may constitute one of the earliest archaeological pieces of evidence for Roman presence in Epirus.

[47] See Bowden 2009, 169 with further references. Cicero's correspondent Titus Pomponius Atticus seems to have owned an estate at Buthrotum beginning from 68 BC (Cic. *Att*. 1.5).

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