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# EXCAVATIONS IN MIDEA 2007

BY

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## *Abstract*

Excavations in Midea continued in 2007 as a Greek-Swedish programme under the direction of Dr Katie Demakopoulou in collaboration with Dr Ann-Louise Schallin. In the West Gate area excavation continued in the west part of the building complex that abuts the fortification wall. Room XIV was excavated with abundant remains of LH IIIB2 pottery. A sealstone with a unique, possibly ritual, scene was also found. On the lower west terrace of the acropolis excavation continued in Trench C, where a large section of the fortification wall was uncovered. Room I was excavated here, adjacent to the inner face of the fortification wall. Finds in this room date to the early phase of LH IIIC, under which there was ample evidence of the LH IIIB2 destruction, including human skeletons. Under this debris, a large opening leading to a gallery or syrnix through the thickness of the fortification wall was found. Excavation was resumed also in the East Gate area, where a new wall was revealed in the baulk between Trench 3 and Room 9. The wall is perpendicular to the citadel wall and borders Trench 3. Excavation was also resumed in Trenches 9 and 14. The latest Mycenaean material in this area dates to LH IIIB2, but there is evidence of post-Bronze Age activity, which is demonstrated mainly by pottery finds.

## A. LOWER ACROPOLIS: WEST GATE AREA, LOWER WEST TERRACE\*

### Introduction

In 2007 excavation continued inside the Acropolis in two sectors (*Fig. 1*): in the West Gate area, in the west part of the building complex adjacent to the fortification wall, uncovered in previous campaigns; and on the west terrace of the Lower Acropolis with the continuation of the excavation in Trench C, where a section of the fortification wall with part of an adjacent room had been uncovered in the 2006 season.

### West Gate Area

Excavation continued in the west part of the building complex that abuts the fortification wall in the West Gate area, where in the 2005 and 2006 seasons Trench Si was partly excavated<sup>1</sup> (*Figs. 1–3*). In 2007 the investigation of Room XIV, southwest of Room XIII (which was fully uncovered in 2006), continued and was concluded. For this reason the ex-

cavation of Trench Si was extended to the south one metre to the southwest of its half part.

In 2006 only a small part of Room XIV along the fortification wall had been excavated.<sup>2</sup> In 2007 continued excavations brought to light the whole room (*Figs. 2, 4*). It is a roughly square room, measuring 3.00 × 2.70 m, and is built against the fortification wall like Room XIII and the other rooms of the southwest wing of the building complex (*Figs. 2–3*). Room XIV is defined by wall 33, which is shared also by Room XIII, wall 34, which is parallel to the fortification wall, and wall 35, which closes the room to the west.

All these walls are preserved in very poor condition, almost ruined, evidently because of the earthquake that struck Midea at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century BC. They are built for the most part of small stones and are preserved only to the low height of 0.25–0.80 m; their width varies between 0.40–0.50 m. The room is founded partly on bedrock and has a floor made of trodden earth, sloping to the west. The floor is 0.70 m lower than the floor of the adjacent Room XIII, which is likewise 0.70 m lower than the floor of Rooms VIII a–b (*Fig. 2*). The rooms of the southwest wing of the building complex

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\*Abbreviations in addition to those in standard use:

FM Furumark Motif Number (see MP)  
FS Furumark Shape Number (see MP)  
MP A. Furumark, *Mycenaean pottery. Analysis and classification*, Stockholm 1941 (repr. 1972).

### *Acknowledgements*

The excavation on the Lower Acropolis of Midea in 2007 was undertaken with the help of a grant from the Institute of Aegean Prehistory, for which we are most grateful. We thank the Director Mrs A. Banaka, as well as the archaeologists, the conservators and the guards of the Argolid Ephorate for their help. We also thank the archaeologists M. Mavroeidopoulos, A. Koukou, I. Fappas, E. Roussodemou, D. Yianniou and the architect A. Kiratzis, who participated in the excavation. The finds were cleaned and mended by A. Lygidaki and photographed by Y. Patrikianos with the help of a grant from the Psycha Foundation, for which we are grateful. We thank Dr. M.E. Caskey for checking the English text and M. Mavroeidopoulos for much help in the preparation of this article.

<sup>1</sup> Demakopoulou *et al.* 2006–2007, 16–20; Demakopoulou *et al.* 2008, 14–19, fig. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Demakopoulou *et al.* 2008, 18, fig. 35.

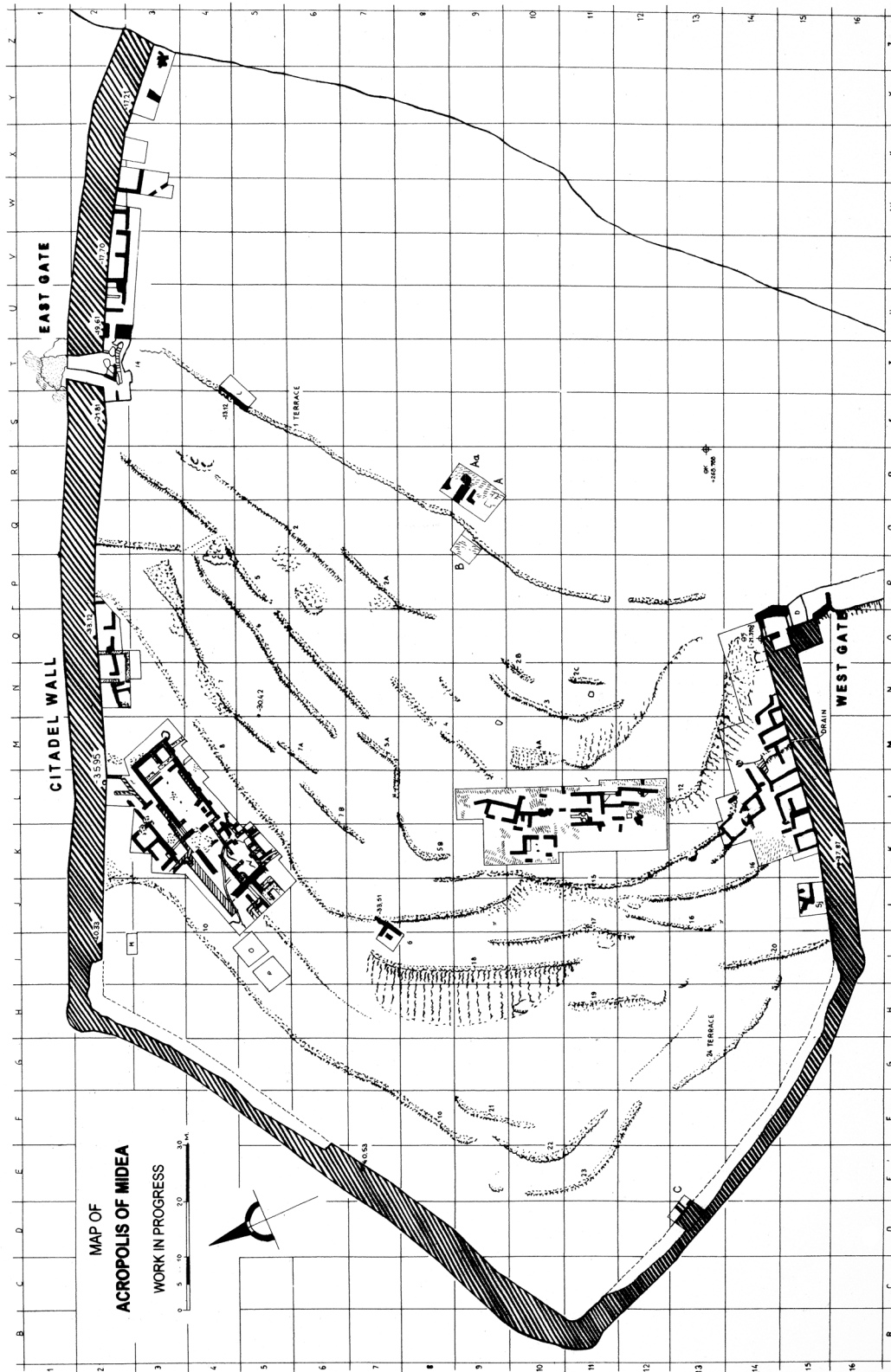


Fig. 1. Ground plan of the Acropolis of Midea (after E. Markou with additions by M. Patapatiou and A. Kiratzis).





Fig. 3. View of the building complex abutting the fortification wall in the West Gate area.



Fig. 4. View of Room XIV.

were constructed on successive terraces (Fig. 5). As has been pointed out,<sup>3</sup> it is significant that the difference in the floor level from room to room appears to be the same. Wall 33, which divides Room XIII from Room XIV, served also as a retaining wall for the terrace of Room XIII (Fig. 4), like the other cross walls that support the successive terraces.

The destruction deposit, which covered the entire room, yielded a great amount of fragmentary pottery of Late Hel-

ladic IIIB2 Late date, in addition to the finds from the small part excavated in 2006.<sup>4</sup> Numerous smashed vessels were found on the floor (Fig. 6). A great number of vases have been partly restored: a narrow-necked jug, FS 121, with panelled

<sup>3</sup> Demakopoulou *et al.* 2008, 18.

<sup>4</sup> Demakopoulou *et al.* 2008, 19.



Fig. 5. View of the southwest wing of the building complex.

decoration on the shoulder (*Fig. 7*); a large wide-necked jug with linear decoration, FS 105; a rosette deep bowl, FS 284 (*Fig. 8*); a stemmed bowl, FS 305 (*Fig. 9*); a medium-coarse askos; and a cooking jar (*Fig. 10*). The fragmentary pottery includes many pieces of Group A and B deep bowls, stemmed bowls and kraters, FS 281; fragments of wide-necked jugs with linear decoration were also recovered. There are many fragments of plain pottery, such as conical kylikes, jars and hydrias. Of the coarse ware pottery, worthy of mention are fragments of a large hydria and a basin, as well as of cooking jars and pithoi, some of which belong to the tall pithos found in the previously excavated part of the room.<sup>5</sup>

An important find from the floor deposit of Room XIV is an almost intact lentoid sealstone of haematite (*Fig. 11*). It depicts a frontal human face flanked by two arms with forearms and hands suspended. The face is elongated with accentuated features: pointed chin, small mouth with fleshy lips, rounded cheeks, straight nose and large, almond-shaped eyes with rectilinear eyebrows rendered in positive relief. The top of the head including the forehead is markedly bulbous and probably bears a head covering. The hands seem to be associated with the face, although they are not connected. The whole scene is encircled by a snake. Both hands are almost touching the snake, the left hand, its head and the right, its tail. This close association recalls cult scenes with deities and snakes of the Minoan-Mycenaean iconography.<sup>6</sup> Under the scene two wavy lines indicate the ground level.

Frontal human faces are very rare in the art of the Aegean Bronze Age with some isolated examples on sealstones and

painted pottery<sup>7</sup>. There are two close parallels with frontal faces on two carnelian lentoid sealstones, one from the Nichoria tholos<sup>8</sup> and the other from a private collection in Basel.<sup>9</sup> The first depicts a single frontal face occupying the entire surface of the seal; the other shows a smaller face or mask surrounded by a minotaur in contorted position that has a religious connotation. This scene is reminiscent of that on the seal from Midea, where the frontal human face is surrounded by a snake, which is likewise a sacred symbol. The hands on the Midea seal can be paralleled with three hands represented on a fragmentary clay sealing from Kato Zakros (House A).<sup>10</sup> Pairs of hands of wood or bone have been found in Egypt and in Thera and they are considered as clappers<sup>11</sup> (κρόταλα). If the hands depicted on our seal can be interpreted as clappers, then the ritual character of the scene is further supported. The Midea seal, made of haematite, is earlier in date than its context, possibly of the 15<sup>th</sup> century BC; it seems to be a Myce-

<sup>5</sup> Demakopoulou *et al.* 2008, 19, fig. 36.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. a.o. Dickinson 1994, 264–294, esp. 285, 288.

<sup>7</sup> See Morgan 1995, 137.

<sup>8</sup> *CMS V, Suppl. 2*, no. 431.

<sup>9</sup> *CMS X*, no. 145.

<sup>10</sup> *CMS II, Suppl. 7*, no. 206. We thank Dr. E. Hallager for this reference. For the extraordinary deposit of about 500 clay nodules from House A at Kato Zakros, see Krzyszkowska 2005, 178–182.

<sup>11</sup> See Mikrakis 2007, with bibliography.

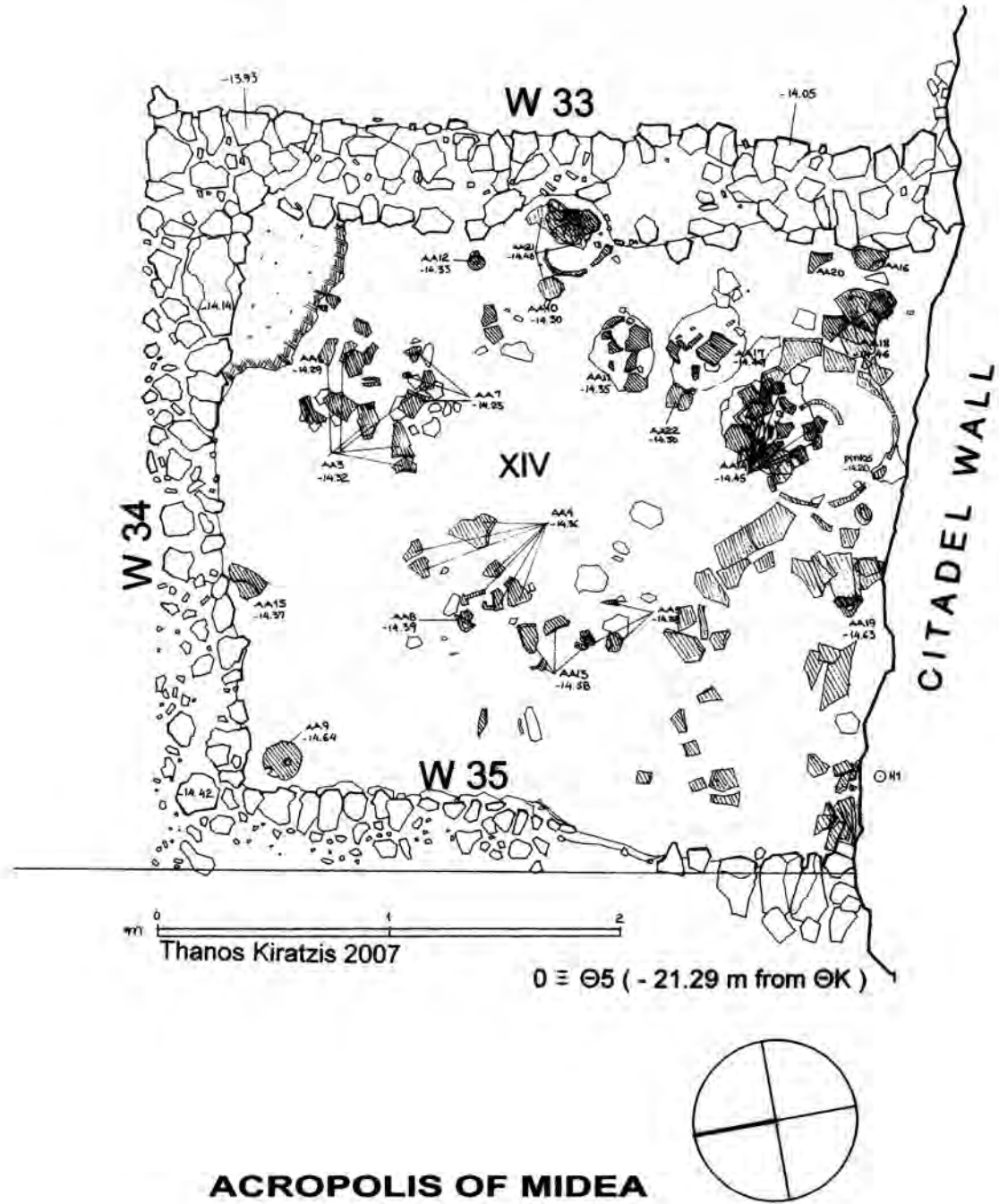


Fig. 6. Ground plan of Room XIV with smashed pottery as found *in situ*.



Fig. 7. Fragmentary narrow-necked jug with panelled decoration from Room XIV.



Fig. 9. Fragmentary stemmed bowl from Room XIV.



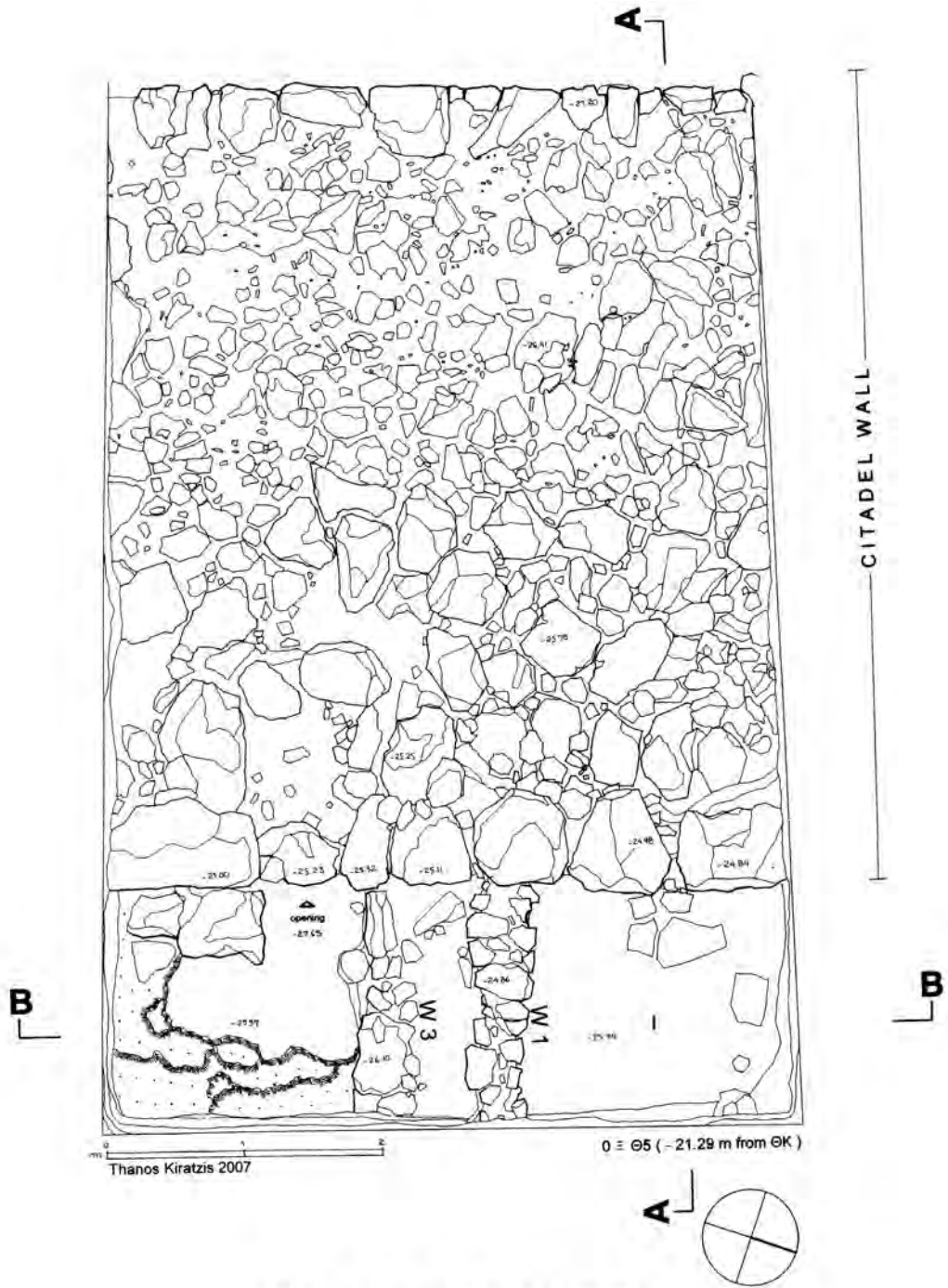
Fig. 8. Rosette deep bowl from Room XIV.



Fig. 10. Fragmentary cooking jar from Room XIV.



Fig. 11. Lentoid seal of haematite from Room XIV.



**ACROPOLIS OF MIDEA**  
**LOWER WEST TERRACE**  
**TRENCH C**

Fig. 12. Ground plan of Trench C.



Fig. 13. View of the section of the fortification wall exposed in Trench C.



Fig. 14. View of the outer face of the fortification wall.

naean work. Most probably it was manufactured in a workshop at Midea. Its local production is supported by the discovery at the site of unworked haematite pieces, some of which have traces of cutting.<sup>12</sup>

Other finds from Room XIV include fragmentary human and animal clay figurines, an obsidian blade fragment, two stone pounders and a fragmentary millstone, small pieces of mother-of-pearl, a piece of painted plaster, sea-shells and a few remains of carbonized fruits. A few fragmentary terracotta roof tiles were also recovered. In addition to those tiles, which may be associated with the Mycenaean building, a great number of Roman terracotta roof tiles were found in a disturbance in the west corner of the trench along the fortification wall, inside and outside of Room XIV.

Southwest and northeast of the room a large area was cleared, which appears to have been an open space (Fig. 2). In the northeast part of this area bedrock was exposed, which was roughly levelled and covered over with a layer of soil and



Fig. 15. View of the inner face of the fortification wall with Room I and the adjoining space to its south.

pebbles. A considerable amount of Late Helladic IIIB2 pottery was found here, including fragments of Group A deep bowls and pithoi. Among the latter a large neck fragment with perforations on the rim, apparently for attaching a lid, is worthy of mention.

Thus, the excavation of Rooms XIII and XIV has brought to light significant finds, notably an assemblage of characteristic Late Helladic IIIB2 Late pottery and a sealstone with a unique ritual (?) scene, which complement the picture of this extensive building complex, constructed against the fortification wall in the West Gate area. Furthermore, a great section of the inner face of the defence wall has now been uncovered, rising to a max. height of 2.16 m in Room XIII and 1.80 m in Room XIV (Fig. 5).

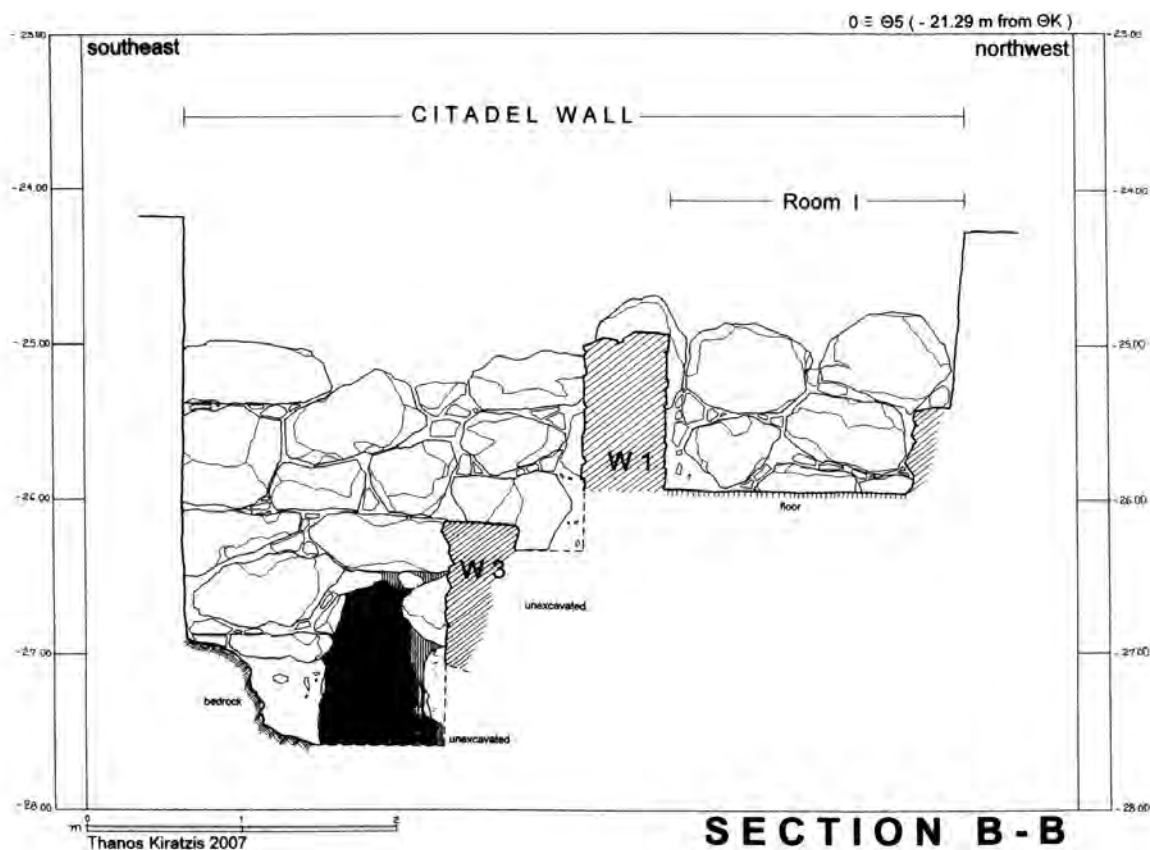
## Lower West Terrace

Excavation continued in Trench C on the lower west terrace of the Acropolis (Fig. 1). In the 2006 campaign a large section of the fortification wall was uncovered with part of a room against its inner face.<sup>13</sup> In 2007, Trench C was extended 3.50 m to the west in order to clear the entire upper surface and the outer face of the fortification wall, still uncovered at that point.

With the extension of Trench C, the fortification wall was exposed to its entire width, 5.70 m, while its uncovered length, occupying the entire space between the north and the south section of the trench, is 5.00 m (Fig. 12). The two faces

<sup>12</sup> Demakopoulou *et al.* 2003, 11, fig. 11; Demakopoulou *et al.* 2006–2007, 11, 14, fig. 15. The existence of workshops for the production of seals in Midea is also demonstrated by the finding of an unfinished sealstone of green steatite in a floor deposit in the West Gate area of the Acropolis, see Demakopoulou *et al.* 2008, 17.

<sup>13</sup> Demakopoulou *et al.* 2008, 19, figs. 39, 41.



## ACROPOLIS OF MIDEA

### LOWER WEST TERRACE

#### TRENCH C

Fig. 16. Section of the area adjacent to the inner face of the fortification wall in Trench C with Room I, walls 1 and 3 and the opening of the gallery.

of the wall are constructed with boulders and the filling is composed of large and small stones (Fig. 13). The outer face of the wall, which is very well preserved, was cleared to a height of 1.30–1.80 m (Fig. 14). It was carefully built with large stones and boulders, some of which are roughly dressed to display an even outer surface. One of them has the rectangular shape of a dressed stone block.

A large part of the uncovered section of the fortification wall had collapsed, mostly from its west side (Figs. 13–14). Piles of fallen stones and boulders were found in front of its outer face. Moreover, in more recent years the wall had been damaged by cultivation on this terrace of the Acropolis that partially destroyed its upper part. Many stones of the wall had been removed by ploughing and were found concentrated on the west edge of Trench C in the excavation in 2006. The deposits that covered the fortification wall and its outer face, as well as the upper layers of the rest of the trench, were much disturbed and contained pottery of Mid-

dle and Late Helladic periods, mixed with Roman and Byzantine sherds.

In the area of Trench C adjacent to the inner face of the fortification wall, excavation continued deeper to explore the room that was named Room I and the adjoining space south of it (Figs. 12, 15). This space occupies the southeast corner of the trench and is defined by cross wall 1 and the inner face of the fortification wall. Investigation in this area, which started in 2006,<sup>14</sup> penetrated to a great depth, about 3.70 m. Thick accumulated deposits with piles of large stones and boulders fallen from the fortification wall were removed. The upper layers had been disturbed by cultivation activities in modern times and for the most part by the building activities in the Late Helladic IIIC Early phase, during which Room I was constructed. This is attested by the pottery found in these layers, which is mixed Late Helladic IIIB2 Late and IIIC Early.

<sup>14</sup> Demakopoulou *et al.* 2008, 19.



Fig. 17. Trench C with walls 1 and 3 and the accumulated deposit between the foundation of wall 1 and the upper preserved part of wall 3.



Fig. 19. Trench C with the destruction debris and the burial in front of the inner face of the fortification wall (lower right).

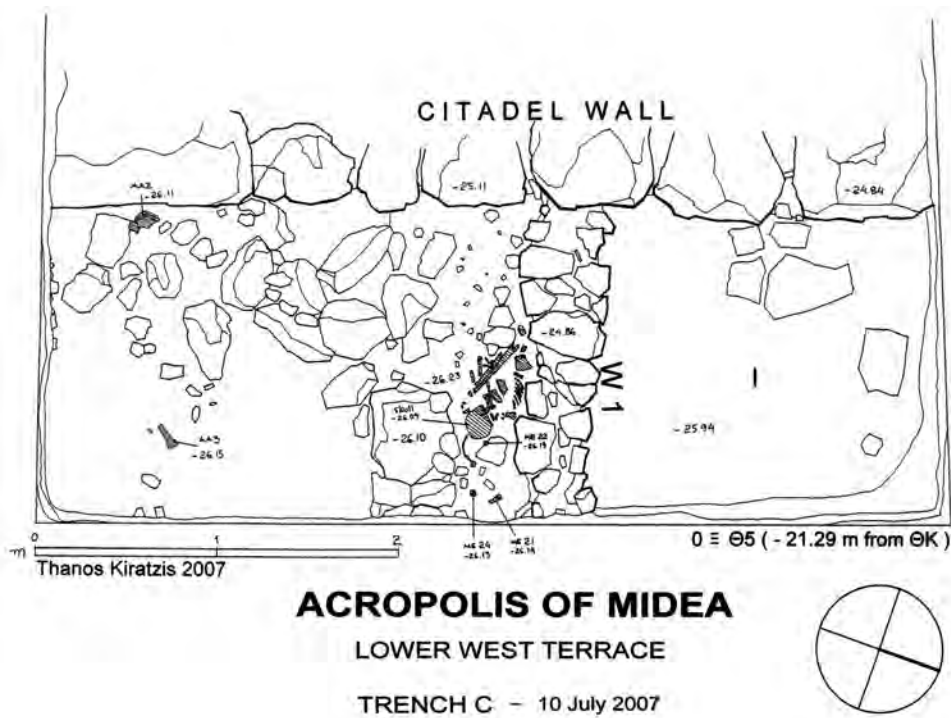


Fig. 18. Ground plan of the east part of Trench C with Room I and the adjoining space with the destruction debris.



Fig. 20. Trench C with the opening leading down to the passageway through the fortification wall.

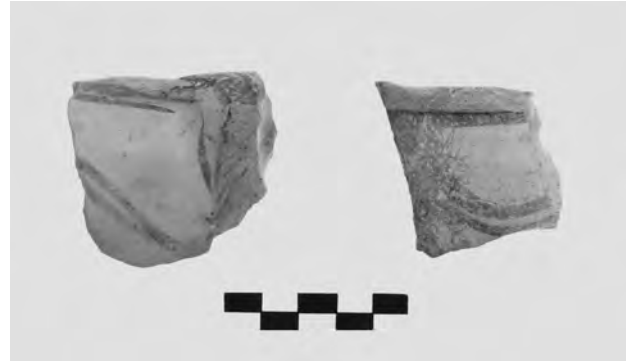


Fig. 23. Rim fragments of basins with linear decoration from Trench C.



Fig. 21. Fragmentary deep bowl of Group A from Trench C.



Fig. 24. Fragmentary plain mug from Trench C.



Fig. 22. Krater fragments with pictorial decoration from Trench C.

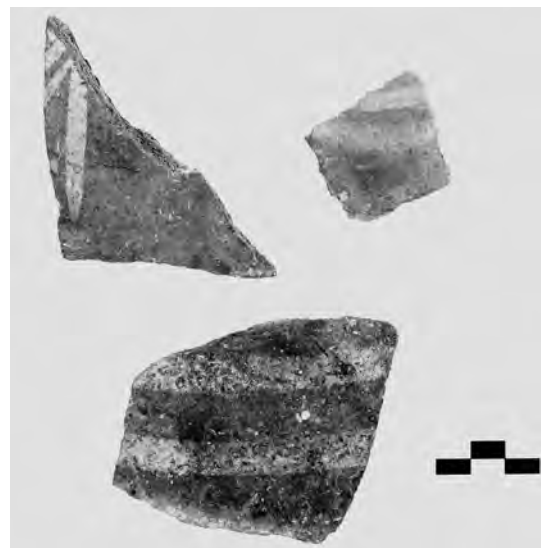


Fig. 25. Sherds of a coarse stirrup jar inscribed in Linear B.



Fig. 26. Mended fragments of a jar of Handmade Burnished Ware from Trench C.



Fig. 29. One-handed carinated cup from Trench C.

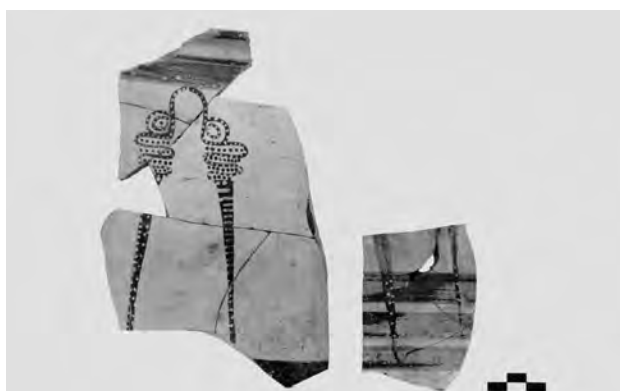


Fig. 27. Fragments of a ring-based krater from Trench C.



Fig. 30. Fragmentary shallow angular bowl with linear decoration from Trench C.



Fig. 28. Fragmentary ring-based krater from Trench C.

Below these deposits, at a depth of 2.15 m, a damaged wall, wall 3, was encountered, parallel to and 0.40 m south of wall 1 and at a lower level (*Figs. 15–16*). Wall 3 is 0.50 m wide. A stretch of 1.55 m has been uncovered. It is a strong retaining wall built of large and medium-sized stones with small ones

in the interstices. Its south face is badly damaged, with many stones fallen from its lower part. Between the foundation of wall 1 and this wall is an intervening, accumulated deposit about 0.20–0.30 m thick (*Figs. 16–17*).

With the discovery of wall 3, the ruins from a great destruction have been brought to light (*Fig. 18*). Piles of fallen stones and boulders were found scattered around, as well as the remains of human victims, evidently from the devastating earthquake that hit Midea at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century BC. Marked traces of burning were also visible. A hasty burial of a contracted skeleton of a child covered with stones was found next to and north of wall 3 (*Figs. 18–19*). Moreover two human skulls with no other skeletal remains were found in the debris in a deeper level in front of wall 3.

After the removal of the debris, a large part of the inner face of the fortification wall was uncovered. A large opening leading to a gallery or syrx through the thickness of the fortification wall was found; it is 1.76 m deeper than the higher preserved point of the wall (*Figs. 16, 20*). The gallery, of which only a small part of the interior has been investigated, is clearly a passageway penetrating the fortification wall. It is roofed with horizontal stone slabs and the side walls are slightly curving. The opening has a monolithic lintel, a boulder 1.00 m long and 0.50 m thick. The excavation in front of the opening has not been concluded, so its exact dimensions



Fig. 31. Fragments of a jar of Handmade Burnished Ware from Trench C.



Fig. 32. Fragmentary clay figurines of Psi type from Trench C.



Fig. 33. Fragmentary clay naturalistic figurine from Trench C.

are not yet known; the opening at present is 1.15 m high and 0.65 m wide in its lower part (*Fig. 16*). It is flanked by wall 3 and a megalithic construction (*Fig. 20*). Bedrock was revealed in a large part of this area and most probably continues to the entrance of the gallery sloping downward. This will become clearer with the continuation of the excavation, which will also show whether the syrx is a passageway leading down to an underground cistern or a concealed sally port. Both interpretations are supported by a comparison of the syrx discovered at Midea with the syringes of the fortification walls at Mycenae and Tiryns.<sup>15</sup>

The destruction debris had blocked the opening of the gallery and had also covered the whole space in front of it (*Fig. 19*). The pottery from the debris is dated to the Late Helladic IIIB2 Late phase, like the pottery recovered from all the other destruction layers at Midea. It is fragmentary, but includes all

typical shapes of the painted, plain and coarse wares. Of the painted pottery the most common shapes are deep bowls of Group A (*Fig. 21*), stemmed bowls and kraters; there are some fragments of kraters, most probably of the ring-based type, FS 282, with pictorial decoration (*Fig. 22*). There are also sherds from basins with linear decoration, FS 294 (*Fig. 23*). The closed shapes include stirrup jars, FS 173, feeding bottles, FS 161, jugs, FS 105, and amphorae, FS 69.

To the plain pottery belong many fragments of conical and carinated kylikes, FS 274, 267, as well as a large mug, FS 226 (*Fig. 24*), which was found in front of the opening of the gal-

<sup>15</sup> Iakovidis 1983, 35–37, fig. 8, plan 10 (Mycenae); 7–8, 12, plans 1C, 2–3 (Tiryns). See also Verdelis 1965.



Fig. 34. Clay animal figurines from Trench C.

tery together with a fragmentary coarse stirrup jar, FS 164. Many fragments of other stirrup jars of the same type were found. Noteworthy are three sherds of a coarse stirrup jar with light-on-dark decoration and a Linear B sign on the shoulder fragment (Fig. 25). All these coarse stirrup jars might well be imported from Minoan Crete.

A large amount of coarse ware pottery was recovered from the destruction layer including many fragments of storage and cooking vessels, such as pithoi, tripod cooking pots and basins. It is significant that in the lower stratum, near the opening of the gallery, many fragments of coarse hydrias and two-handled jars were found, which, most probably, were used to transport water. It is also interesting that the coarse ware pottery includes many fragments of the Handmade Burnished Ware, of which large parts of jars with appliqué cordon and horse-shoe handles have been restored (Fig. 26).<sup>16</sup>

Abundant pottery was recovered from the accumulated deposits above the destruction layer in this part of Trench C. Most of the pottery from these deposits is dated to Late Helladic IIIC Early, including some sherds of Late Helladic IIIC Middle. There are, however, quite a few sherds of Late Helladic IIIB2 date. This mixture of the pottery is owing to the disturbance of the deposits. The Late Helladic IIIB2 pottery includes fragments of deep bowls of Group A, stemmed bowls and kraters, one with antithetic whorl-shells and added white paint (Fig. 27). To the Late Helladic IIIC Early pottery can be assigned sherds of monochrome deep bowls or bowls decorated outside and coated inside, and ring-based kraters with monochrome interior. A large krater of this type, decorated with a central, narrow triglyph and antithetic spirals has been partly restored from fragments (Fig. 28). A typical vase of the Late Helladic IIIC Early phase, the one-handled carinated cup, FS 240,<sup>17</sup> coated inside and partly outside was also restored from fragments (Fig. 29). To the Late Helladic IIIC Middle phase belongs a fragmentary shallow angular bowl with linear decoration inside and outside, FS 295<sup>18</sup> (Fig. 30). From the layer with the Late Helladic IIIC Early pottery more sherds of the Handmade Burnished Ware were recovered (Fig. 31) in addition to those found in the Late Helladic IIIB2 destruction debris. It is of considerable interest that the number of Handmade Burnished Ware sherds found in Midea is increasing. This ware is known from other Mycenaean centres, notably Mycenae and Tiryns.<sup>19</sup> The Handmade Bur-



Fig. 35. View of Room I.

nished pottery from Midea resembles in various ways that from Tiryns, which has been dated according to context to Late Helladic IIIB2 to IIIC Late.<sup>20</sup> The pottery of this category from Midea came from Late Helladic IIIB2 Late and IIIC Early layers.

Many fragmentary clay human and animal figurines were found in the destruction layer and also in the upper accumulated deposits. The human figurines are of the Psi (Fig. 32) and Tau types. Worthy of mention are a fragmentary naturalistic figurine<sup>21</sup> (Fig. 33) and a small fragment of a wheelmade animal figure. A head of a handmade animal figurine was recovered (Fig. 34, right). Other finds are spindle-whorls of

<sup>16</sup> Fragments of Handmade Burnished Ware were recovered from other parts in the southwest area of the Acropolis of Midea, see Demakopoulou *et al.* 2003, 10–11, 14–15, figs. 9, 22, with references; other sherds of the same ware were found in 2006 in the upper layers of Trench C, see Demakopoulou *et al.* 2008, 19, fig. 45.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Mountjoy 1986, 147, fig. 185.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Mountjoy 1986, 179–180, fig. 233.

<sup>19</sup> See, most recently, Jung 2006, 21–47, 177–207, and Kilian 2007.

<sup>20</sup> See Kilian 2007, esp. 24–30, pls. 22–23.

<sup>21</sup> See French 1971, 109–112, fig. 2.



Fig. 36. Fragmentary globular stirrup jar from Room I.

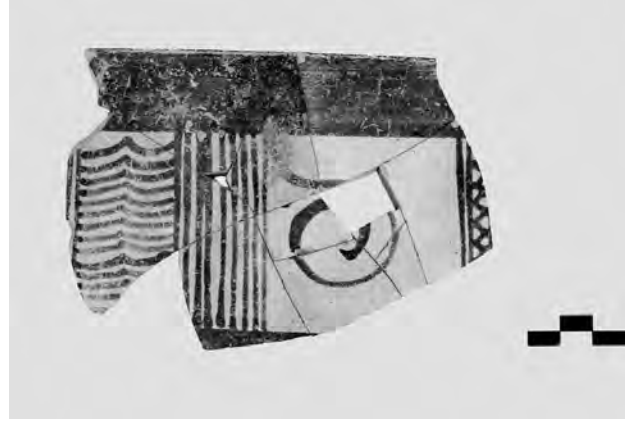


Fig. 38. Fragmentary deep bowl from Room I.



Fig. 37. Fragmentary deep semi-globular cup from Room I.



Fig. 39. Fragmentary rosette deep bowl from Room I.

steatite, a globular bead of glass, pieces of plaster and ochre, obsidian blades and flakes, two boar tusks and foodstuffs, such as sea-shells and carbonized figs and seeds.

In 2006, after the removal of a thick deposit inside Room I, a layer of fallen stones was uncovered with the remains of a hearth made of a paving of coarse sherds.<sup>22</sup> In 2007, this layer was investigated and removed. The investigation showed that wall 2, which was identified in the 2006 season,<sup>23</sup> was in fact a pile of stones, probably from a ruined wall. A floor deposit was encountered below this debris layer. The floor deposit was thick and contained more stones evidently fallen from the fortification wall and wall 1, which is built against the inner face of the fortification wall (Figs. 12, 15). Of Room I only a part is uncovered, measuring 1.85 × 1.50 m, defined by the fortification wall and cross wall 1 (Figs. 12, 35). Wall 1 is a strong wall, 0.60 m wide, built carefully with large and small stones. It is preserved to a height of 1.03 m. The floor is made of trodden earth; some broken slabs were found in the northwest part of the room. Room I was built above the destruction debris of Late Helladic IIIB2 Late date.

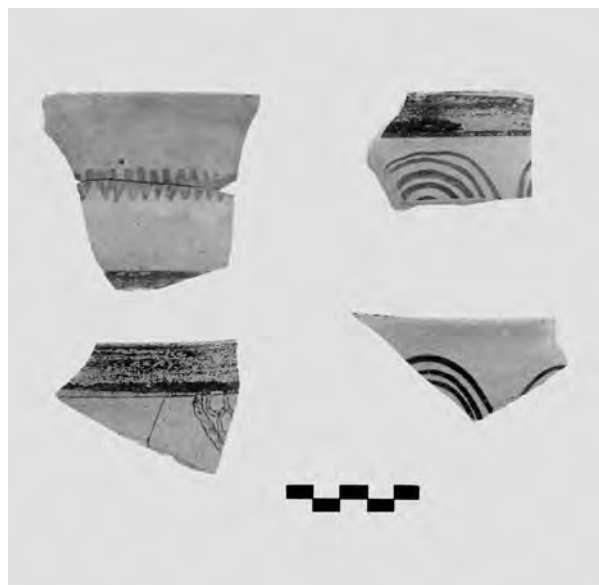
The upper layer, as well as the floor deposit of Room I, contained a considerable amount of fragmentary pottery. Like the pottery recovered from the upper layers of the trench,<sup>24</sup> the pottery from the debris layer comprises Late Helladic IIIB2 Late sherds mixed with much Late Helladic IIIC Early ceramic material. The pottery from the floor deposit of the room is almost exclusively of Late Helladic IIIC Early date. From the pottery fragments of this phase some characteristic vases have been partly restored: a globular stirrup jar, FS 174, with triangular patch, FM 42, on the shoulder and barred foliate band, FM 64, in the belly zone (Fig. 36); a deep semi-globular cup, FS 215, with monochrome interior and a medium band around the rim on the exterior<sup>25</sup> (Fig. 37); and two deep bowls, FS 284, one monochrome inside with a wide band over the rim and a central triglyph with antithetic spiraliform mo-

<sup>22</sup> Demakopoulou *et al.* 2008, 19, fig. 42.

<sup>23</sup> Demakopoulou *et al.* 2008, 19, fig. 39.

<sup>24</sup> Demakopoulou *et al.* 2008, 19.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Mountjoy 1986, 146–147, fig. 183:1.



Figs. 40–41. Fragments of deep bowls of Group A from Room I.

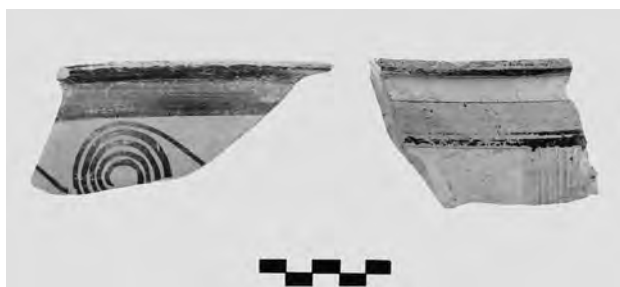


Fig. 42. Sherds of ring-based kraters from Room I.



Fig. 43. Bronze fibula of the violin-bow type from Room I.

tifs on the exterior (Fig. 38) and the other decorated with a rosette motif<sup>26</sup> (Fig. 39). The Late Helladic IIIC Early material from the floor deposit of Room I includes more fragments of deep bowls of Group A with narrow triglyphs, FM 75, and other typical decorative motifs such as triangular patch, zig-zag, FM 61, and running spiral, FM 46 (Figs. 40–41). There are also sherds of ring-based kraters, FS 282, some with monochrome interior, decorated with running spiral<sup>27</sup> and triglyphs (Fig. 42). A few fragments of jars of Handmade Burnished Ware were also found.

An important object, which was found almost on the floor of Room I, is an intact bronze fibula of the violin-bow type (Fig. 43). It is 0.11 m in length and very well preserved. It resembles the bronze violin-bow fibula from Chamber Tomb 61 at Mycenae, although it is smaller in length and lacks the incised decoration of the Mycenae fibula<sup>28</sup>. The violin-bow fibulae first appear in the Aegean in the late Palatial period and continue through Late Helladic IIIC times.<sup>29</sup> The fibula from Midea can be dated to the Late Helladic IIIC Early phase, since it was recovered from a floor deposit with pottery

of this same time. Other finds from the floor deposit of Room I include a clay animal figurine of the ladder type<sup>30</sup> (Fig. 34, left) and a steatite spindle whorl.

The pottery demonstrates that Room I belongs to a building constructed in the early phase of the Late Helladic IIIC period, soon after the great destruction. It is interesting that in

<sup>26</sup> For Late Helladic IIIC Early rosette deep bowls, see Mountjoy 1986, 151, fig. 190. See also Stockhammer 2006, fig. 2:1–3 for similar bowls from the North-eastern Lower Town of Tiryns.

<sup>27</sup> See Stockhammer 2006, figs. 1:1–2, 4:4, for Late Helladic IIIC Early kraters and deep bowls decorated with running spiral from the North-eastern Lower Town of Tiryns.

<sup>28</sup> Xenaki-Sakellariou 1985, 186, pl. 80: 2808. See also Kilian 1985, 152, figs. 1–2, types I–III, for this and other violin-bow fibulae from Mycenae and Tiryns.

<sup>29</sup> See Kilian 1985, 190; also Dickinson 2006, 161.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. French 1971, 151, 157–158, fig. 11.

Late Helladic IIIC Early there must have been two phases of occupation at this area of the Acropolis, as shown by the remains of a hearth and a wall in the upper debris layer of the room.<sup>31</sup>

Room I and its finds, including the Late Helladic IIIC Early pottery recovered from the upper layer of the adjoining space to its south, are significant in that they add to our knowledge about the Postpalatial settlement at Midea. The most important discovery, however, is the syrxinx, which was constructed at the same time as the fortification wall in the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century BC or slightly later. The syrxinx probably led to an underground cistern or served as a sally port. Similar constructions are known from the other two great Argive citadels, Mycenae and Tiryns, and from the Mycenaean Acropolis at Athens.<sup>32</sup> The same need to protect the water supply and to defend the fortified area of the Acropolis is evident at all these Cyclopean citadels, as is the engineering ability of the Mycenaean to solve these problems.

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## B. EAST GATE AREA\*

No new trenches were opened in the East Gate Area during the 2007 excavation season. The work force was divided between three sites: 1. The baulk between Trench 3 and Room 9, where excavation commenced the previous year; 2. Trench 9, last examined in 2004; and 3. Trench 14, partly excavated in 2005. The two latter projects were concerned with the search for evidence of the structure of the interior side of the citadel wall and how the adjoining rooms were planned during the Mycenaean period (Fig. 44).

<sup>31</sup> Demakopoulou *et al.* 2008, 19, fig. 42. It is noteworthy that in the recent excavations in the North-eastern Lower Town of Tiryns two Late Helladic IIIC Early settlement phases were attested, see Stockhammer 2006, 140–145.

<sup>32</sup> Iakovidis 1983, 7–8, 12 (Tiryns); 27, 35–37 (Mycenae); 82–84, 88–90 (Athens).

### \* Acknowledgements

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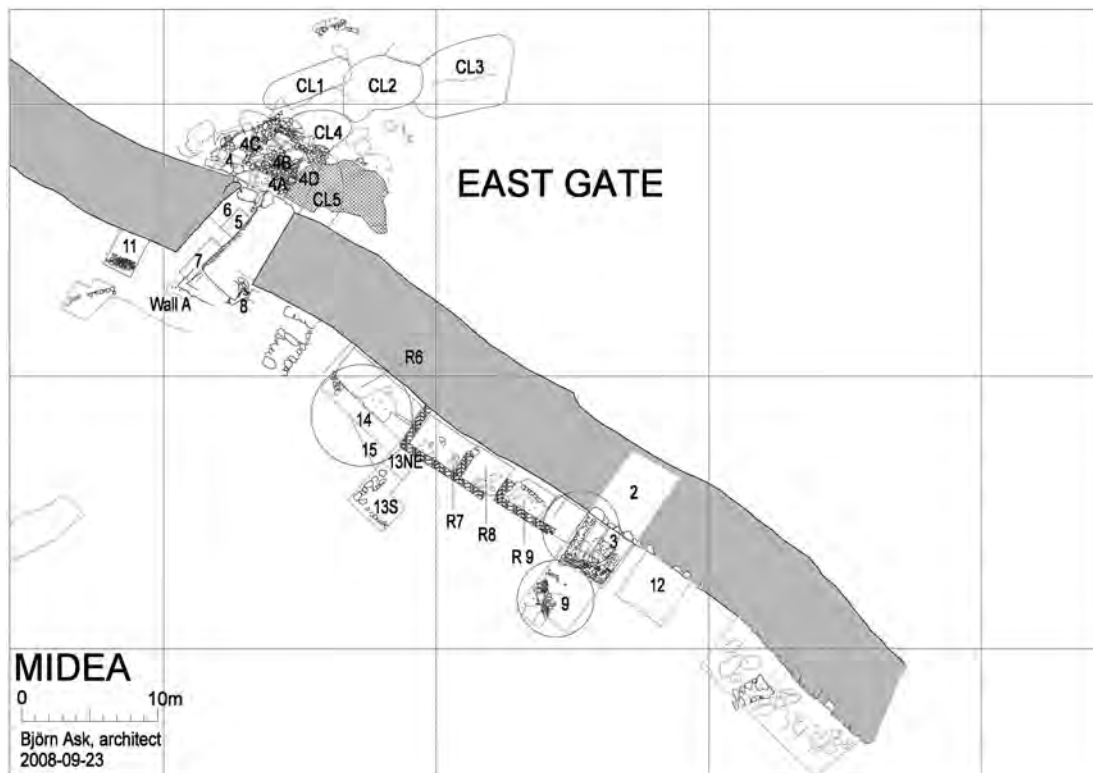


Fig. 44. East Gate areas investigated in 2007.

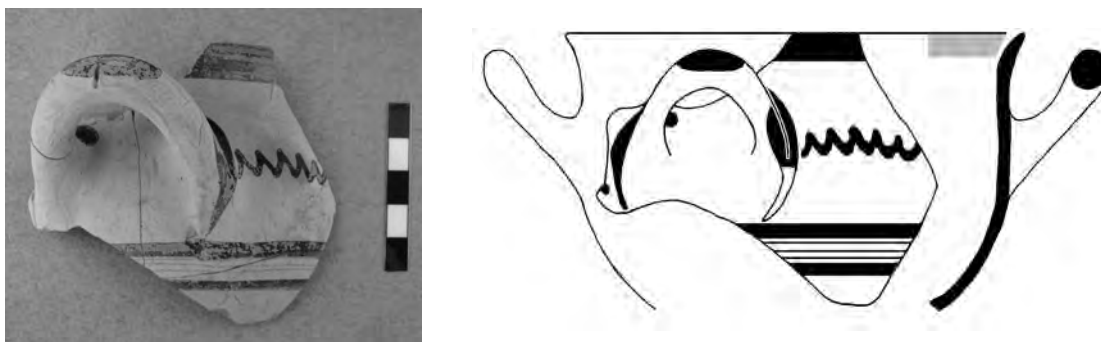


Fig. 45. Fragment of a LH FS 284 deep bowl with a FM 53 wavy line motif (inv. no. 2007C13) from the baulk between Trench 3 and Room 9, Layer 4.

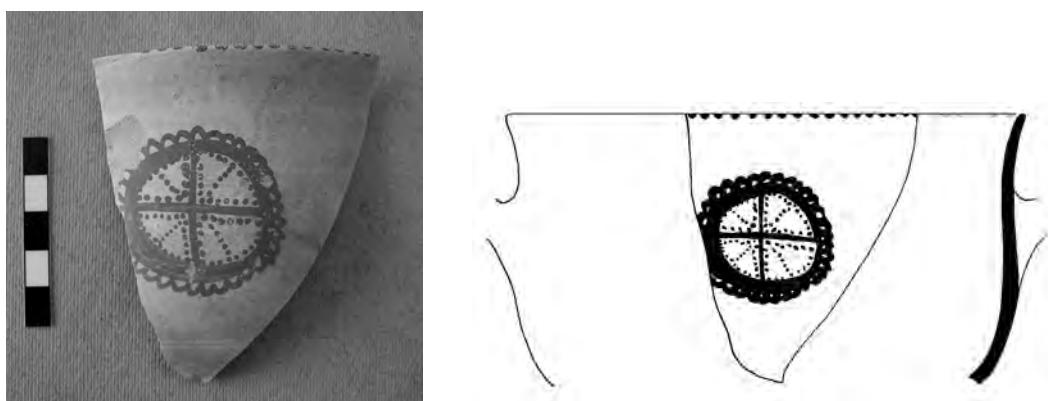


Fig. 46. Fragment of a LH FS 284 Rosette deep bowl with a FM 27 rosette motif (inv. no. 2007C19) from the baulk between Trench 3 and Room 9, Layer 4.



Fig. 47. Almost intact Mycenaean female figurine of Psi-type (inv. no. 2007F2) from the baulk between Trench 3 and Room 9, Layer 4.



Fig. 48. Fragment of a Mycenaean female figurine (inv. no. 2007F4) from the baulk between Trench 3 and Room 9, Layer 4.



Fig. 49a and 49b. Fragments of a relief plaque of bone (inv. no. 2007B1) from the baulk between Trench 3 and Room 9, Layer 4.

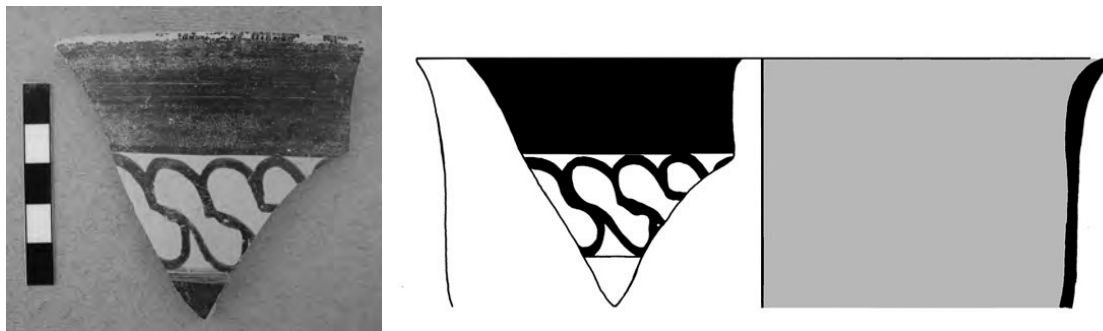


Fig. 50. Fragment of a LH FS 284 Group B deep bowl with a FM 48 quirk motif (inv. no. 2007C10) from the baulk between Trench 3 and Room 9, Layer 5.



Fig. 51. Room 9 after removal of the baulk between the room and Trench 3. The perpendicular wall (a) is forming the east wall of the room.



Fig. 52. Detail in room 9. The perpendicular, east wall (a) is seen to the left and the south wall (b), facing the citadel wall, is seen to the right.



Fig. 53. The West part of Trench 9 with evidence of fire.

### Baulk between Trench 3 and Room 9

Work was resumed in the massive destruction layer, Layer 4, which is a light grey and finely grained soil, to a high degree consisting of ashes in which charred seeds and figs are found. Pottery fragments and animal bones were frequent.<sup>33</sup> Several of the pottery sherds join with fragments excavated this year from Trench 9. No later dating of the pottery than LH IIIB2 could be certified (Figs. 45–46). Also, fragments of Mycenaean female figurines (Figs. 47–48), one pierced faience bead and two separate pieces of a figurative relief plaque of bone were collected. The latter depicts on one fragment two pairs of legs, one of which is clearly male and the other probably provided with hooves, while the second fragment shows the lower part of a human face in profile (Fig. 49a and b). The fragments were found close to bedrock in the lower part of the very thick and homogeneous Mycenaean Layer 4.

Close to floor level, the soil of Layer 5 became more reddish brown in colour and harder in texture. This floor deposit, c. 0.20 m in depth, was rich in pottery fragments (Fig. 50) and many of them join with fragments from Layer 4 above.

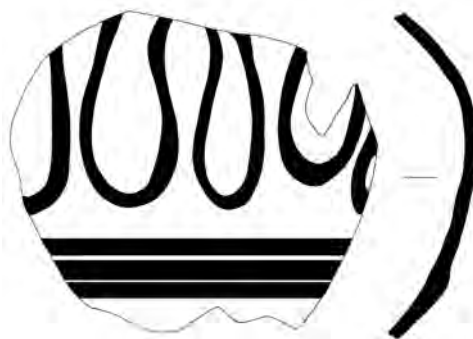


Fig. 54. Fragment of a LH III semicoarse stirrup jar (inv. no. 2007C33) from Trench 9 SW quadrant, Layer 4.

Layer 5 also contained a few small finds of uncertain application of metal and stone. Slight remains of white plaster from a floor covering could be seen both on the actual floor and on the citadel wall. The western part of the room consists of bedrock on a rather high level, as in the other rooms along the citadel wall. Along the citadel wall are hollows that may be ancient animal burrows.

The baulk has now been taken down to floor level and is part of Åström's earlier excavated Room 9.<sup>34</sup> Perpendicular to the citadel wall and bordering Trench 3 is a well preserved wall (a), while facing the citadel wall is a wall with fewer courses (b). Between these two walls there appears to be an opening, although it could also be interpreted as an indentation, since a few courses can be seen at a lower level, or as remains from an earlier phase (Figs. 51 and 52).

### Trench 9 and baulk towards Trench 3

When excavation in Trench 9 was postponed in 2004, numerous small to medium-sized stones had been uncovered.<sup>35</sup> Some of them may have been part of a paving, but now they have the appearance of rubble only. In the neighbouring Trench 3, a room was earlier excavated next to the citadel wall<sup>36</sup> and the aim of this year's investigation was to determine the relationship between this room and the area of Trench 9. The size of Trench 9, however, is 4 × 4 m and due to lack of time and resources, work was concentrated to the SW quadrant, 2 × 2 m. Excavation was recommenced at Layer 4, with the removal of stone rubble.

Especially in the west corner of the investigated area, there seemed to be evidence of burning. The stones had clearly

<sup>33</sup> Åström 2000–2001; Nilsson & Schallin 2002; Alisøy, Nilsson & Schallin 2003.

<sup>34</sup> Åström 2000–2001.

<sup>35</sup> Nilsson & Schallin 2005, 33.

<sup>36</sup> Nilsson & Schallin 2002; Alisøy, Nilsson & Schallin 2003; Nilsson & Schallin 2004.

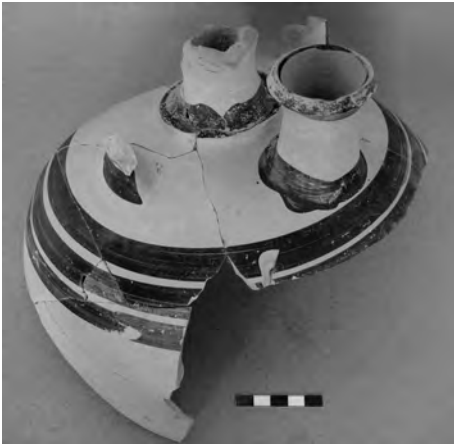


Fig. 55. Part of a LH III stirrup jar (inv. no. 2007C36) from Trench 9 SW quadrant, Layer 4.



Fig. 56. Fragment of a plain LH III kylix (inv. no. 2007C40) from Trench 9 SW quadrant, Layer 4.

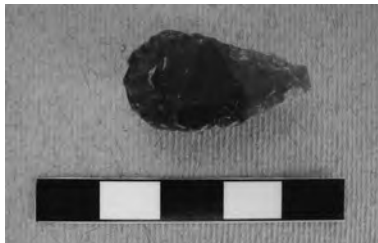


Fig. 57. An arrowhead of chert (inv. no. 2007L1) from Trench 9 SW quadrant, Layer 4.

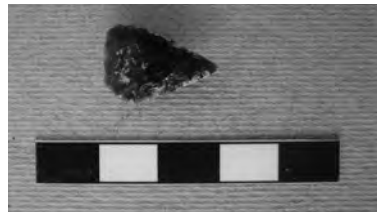


Fig. 60. An obsidian arrow head (inv. no. 2007L2) from Layer 2 in the baulk between Trenches 3 and 9.

been scorched (*Fig. 53*) and the soil in between was dark grey and contained charred seeds and figs as well as sooty pottery fragments. The latest pottery dates to LH III B2 (*Figs. 54–56*). Loose stones of various sizes were common through the whole layer. The area was excavated down to bedrock and except for pottery, animal bones, shells and charred seeds, only a chert arrow head was recovered (*Fig. 57*). No architectural structures were identified.

Work continued to the NE in the baulk between Trench 3 and Trench 9, at the level where excavation had stopped in 2004, i.e., in Layer 2. This is a dark brown soil that contained large pottery fragments (*Figs. 58–59*), one spindle whorl and one obsidian arrow head (*Fig. 60*). Again, stones were numerous, but did not make up any structures, and bedrock was reached in the larger part of the baulk. The latest pottery dates to LH III B.



Fig. 58. Fragment of a LH FS 305 stemmed bowl (inv. no. 2007C22) from Layer 2 in the baulk between Trenches 3 and 9.



Fig. 59. Almost intact LH III stirrup jar (inv. no. 2007C37) from Layer 2 in the baulk between Trenches 3 and 9.



Fig. 61. Layer of stones in Trench 14 S.

### Trench 14

The area of Trenches 13, 14 and 15 is not yet fully understood; since it slopes down towards Rooms 6 and 7 of Åström's excavations, erosion has affected it severely. Trenches 14 and 15 have yielded a post-LH IIIB2 disaster paving of small stones<sup>37</sup> and in Trench 13 is a platform-shaped structure of later date,<sup>38</sup> but only at the north end of Trench 14 has the Mycenaean ground level been excavated. It was decided that the south end of Trench 14 should be further investigated, in order to find the corresponding level, in an area of 1.00 × 1.50 m.

Work in the south end of Trench 14 was discontinued in 2005 in Layer 2, i.e., a dark brown loose soil. Only a few cm remained before Layer 3 appeared with hard, light grey

<sup>37</sup> Nilsson & Schallin 2006–2007, 27.

<sup>38</sup> Nilsson & Schallin 2006–2007, 24–26.

soil that mostly consists of fine ashes. Charred seeds were noticed, but few could be collected in one piece. At the top of the layer was the head of a Mycenaean female figurine and an incised pottery fragment, probably of later date. Stones, burnt so hard that they crumbled, were plentiful, but could only be interpreted as rubble. At the bottom of the layer were two finds: one flat lump of molten lead and half a spindle whorl.

Layer 4 consists of densely packed small stones in between which were found pottery fragments and a conical spindle whorl. It appears to be an intentional paving and is the only level in Trench 14, S end that could be associated with the neighbouring, Rooms 6 and 7 (Fig. 61).

Layer 5, with reddish brown soil, continues down to bedrock with an increasing number of stones and pottery fragments in the lower part.

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