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EXCAVATIONS IN MIDEA 2006

BY

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ANN-LOUISE SCHALLIN

with an Appendix by Kalliopi Nikita

Abstract

Excavations in Midea continued in 2006 as a Greek-Swedish programme under the direction of Dr. Katie Demakopoulou in collaboration with Dr. Ann-Louise Schallin. In the Upper Acropolis remains of an Early Helladic II defensive system were uncovered. East of this and at a lower level, a floor deposit was excavated with abundant pottery of Early Helladic I date including typical examples of the Talioti Ware. In the West Gate area excavation continued in the west part of the building complex adjacent to the fortification wall. Abundant Late helladic IIIB2 pottery was recovered from the exploration of two more rooms of the complex. A new trench was opened on the lower west terrace of the Acropolis in order to expose the line and the entire width of the fortification wall, which is almost completely covered by accumulated deposits in this area. Excavation was resumed in the East Gate area with the removal of a wide baulk and the investigation of the space associated with the series of rooms abutting the northeast section of the fortification wall. From the Mycenaean deposits removed, pottery including some pictorial sherds was recovered, as well as two human figurines.

A. UPPER ACROPOLIS, WEST GATE AREA, LOWER WEST TERRACE*

Introduction

In 2006 excavation continued inside the Acropolis in three sectors (*Fig. 1*): on the northwest terrace of the Upper Acropolis with the continuation of the investigation of Trenches A and Aa, which was expanded to the northwest of both trenches; in the West Gate area with the aim of investigating the west part of the building complex adjacent to the fortification wall, uncovered in previous campaigns; and on the lower west terrace of the Acropolis with the opening of a new trench against the fortification wall.

Furthermore, the major project, financed by the EU and the Greek Ministry of Culture for conservation of the site, maintenance and arrangement of the entire area of the Acropolis, continued and was concluded by the end of 2006. Following the establishment of walking paths for the visitors, the arrangement of the site was completed with the installation of eleven panels with plans and in-

formative texts in Greek and English. In addition to the work of the arrangement, a large area outside the Acropolis was fenced for the protection of the archaeological site. The latest phase of the whole project was the construction of an area with facilities for visitors on a level lower than the citadel wall.

Upper Acropolis

On the northwest terrace of the Upper Acropolis, Trench Aa adjacent to Trench A (*Fig. 1*) has been partly excavated in 2005.¹ The excavation continued and was concluded this year. Furthermore, excavation was extended to the northwest with the opening of a long trench, measuring 10.00 × 1.40 m, in front of Trenches A and Aa (*Fig. 2*). In 2005, with the removal of the upper layer from the entire space of Trench Aa, large bedrock outcroppings and piles of stones were revealed. Fragmentary pottery of Early Helladic II–III date had been recovered.² The purpose of the excavation in

*Abbreviations in addition to those in standard use:

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

Acknowledgements

The excavation on the Lower and Upper Acropolis of Midea in 2006 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 M. Patapattiou, who participated in the excavation. The finds were cleaned and mended by A. Makris 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.

¹ Demakopoulou *et al.* 2006–2007, 21–24.

² Demakopoulou *et al.* 2006–2007, 24.

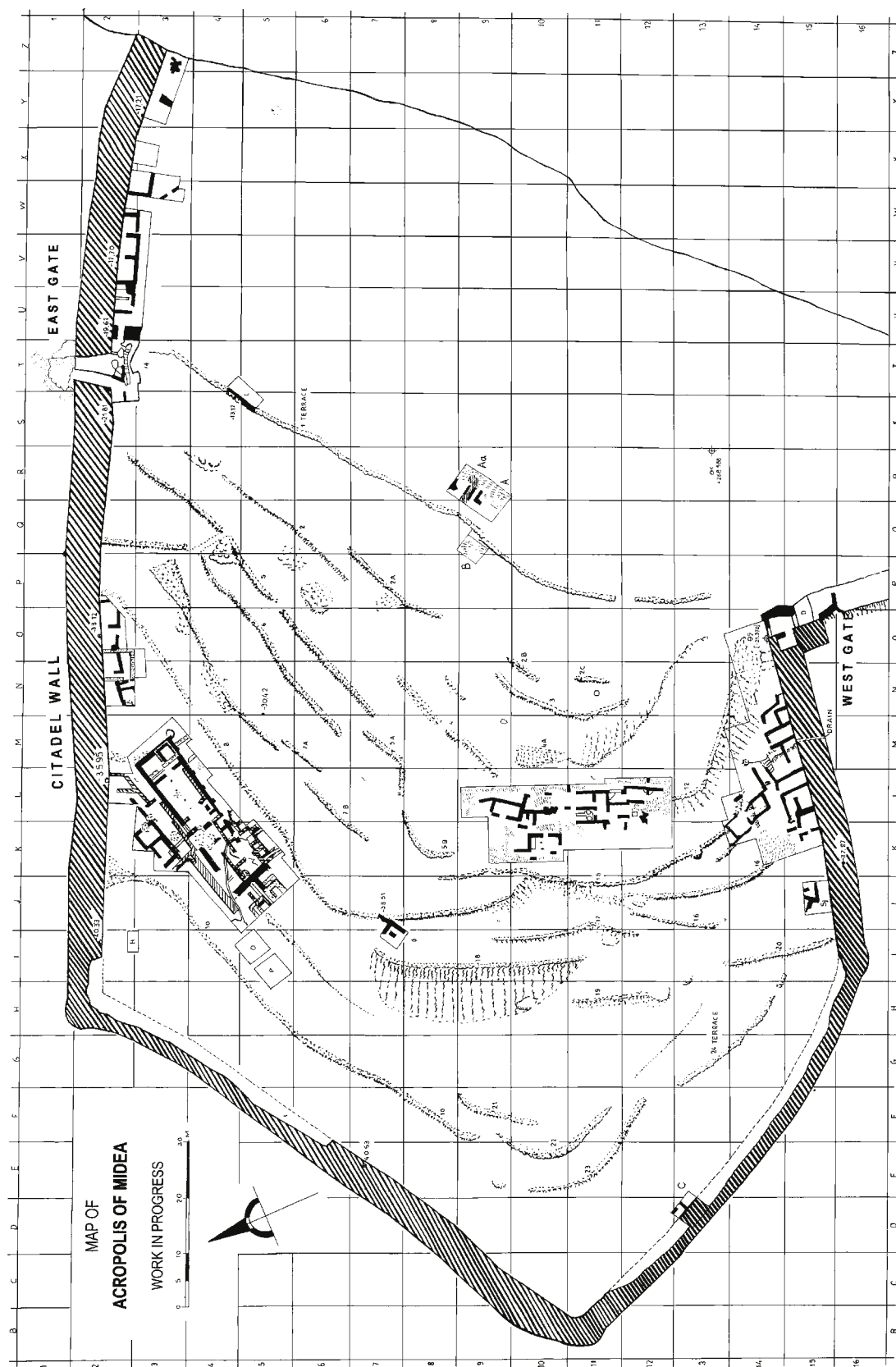
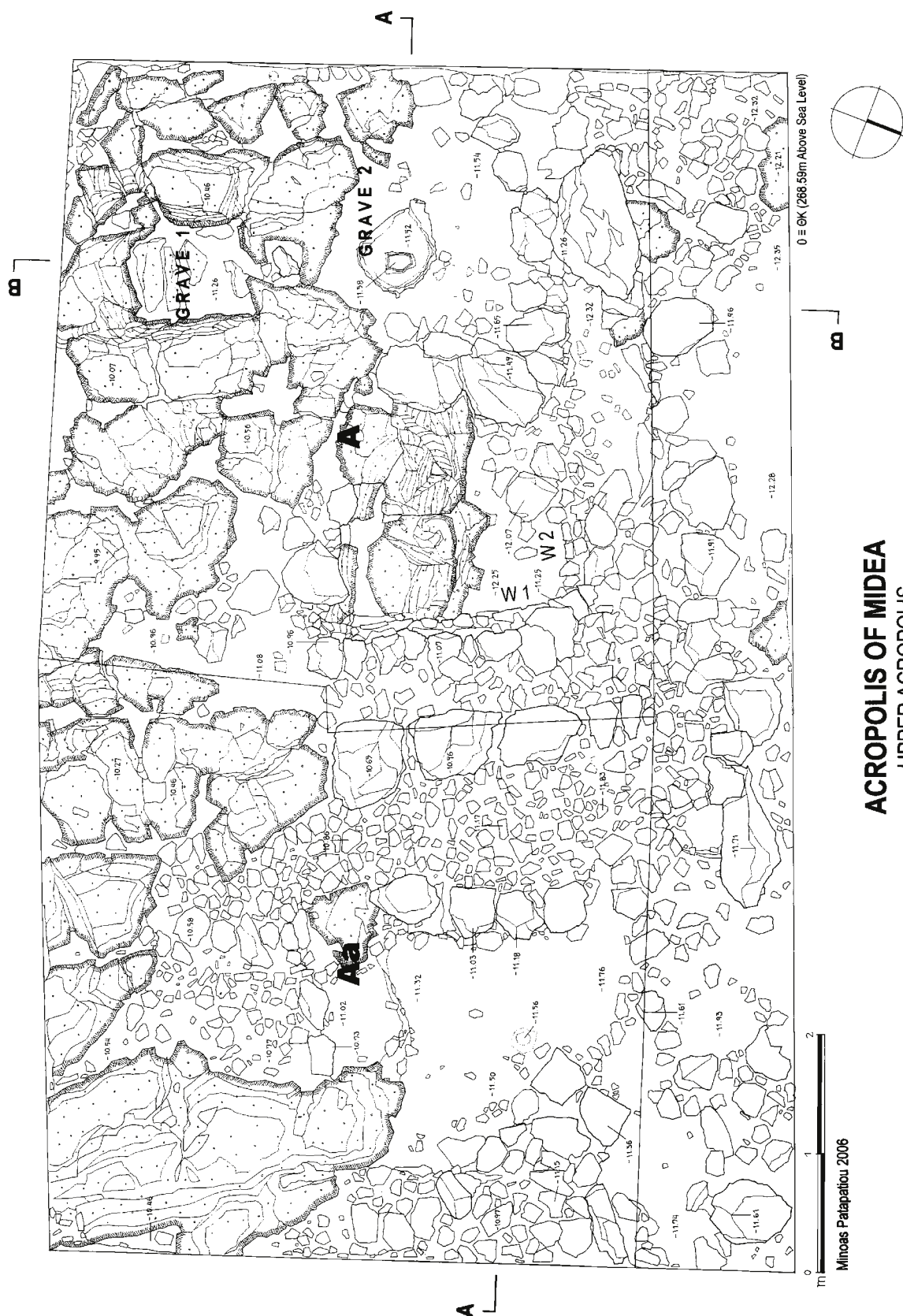


Fig. 1. Ground plan of the Acropolis of Midea (after E. Markou with additions by M. Patapatiou).



the 2006 season was to gain a clearer picture of the extensive concentration of stones and to determine if this implies the existence of structures in this area.

The excavation resulted in the discovery of a stone concentration, defined by the bedrock outcroppings, in the southeast part of Trench Aa (Figs. 2–3). It consists of a packing of medium-sized stones with a filling of soil and smaller stones. A series of large stones define its north edge. This construction is almost square, measuring roughly 1.60×1.60 m and with a preserved height of 0.30 m. It is connected with a strong structure consisting of two parallel lines of large stones or boulders retaining a filling of small stones packed together. The massive nature of this structure with the double megalithic face and the rubble fill shows that it must be part of a fortification wall (Figs. 2, 4). Its entire width is 2.00 m and its preserved height 0.40–0.50 m. The construction in the southeast part of the trench, which is associated with the wall, could also belong to the Early Helladic defensive system in this area of the Acropolis of Midea, that according to the pottery found can be dated to the second phase of this period.³ Of both structures, however, only the lower part has been preserved. As to the length of the fortification, it can be followed as far as the space of the extension of the excavation in front of Trenches Aa and A, where it seems to turn to the west, although its continuation is not clear (Fig. 2). To the east of the fortification wall the excavation uncovered two floor levels made of packed soil and containing traces of white plaster (Figs. 2, 5). Of the higher level only a small space in front of the edge of the square concentration has been preserved. The lower level is a more spacious area, measuring about 2.00×3.00 m, between the northeast side of the fortification wall and an extensive pile of stones and boulders along the northeast side of the trench. This pile of stones comes either from a ruined retaining wall or rather an outer wall of the defensive system. In the middle of this area a small cavity lined with white plaster was uncovered. It could have been used to



Fig. 3. View of a stone concentration with part of a fortification wall in Trench Aa.



Fig. 4. View of the fortification wall in Trench Aa.



Fig. 5. View of the area east of the fortification wall in Trench Aa.

support a pole or a vessel. Some fragments of vases and stone tools were found *in situ* (Figs. 3, 5).

The lower floor level continues in the area of the extension in front of Trench Aa (Fig. 2). The floor level has been largely damaged, however, by many stones and boulders, evidently fallen from the defensive wall. Piles of fallen stones and boulders, originally belonging to the fortification wall, have likewise been uncovered in the southwest part of the extension in front of Trench A.

Abundant pottery, mostly fragmentary, and other finds were recovered from the removed deposits in Trench Aa and in the extension. The pottery, which ranges in date from

³ The remains of the Early Helladic II defensive system on the Acropolis of Midea recall the fortifications of the same period at Lerna, see Wiencke 2000, 91–96, 646, plans 7, 18, and notably at Geraki in Laconia, see Crouwel *et al.* 2001, 11–17, fig. 3; 2002, 5–6, fig. 3; 2004, 4–6, pl. II; 2005, 4, 9–10, fig. 1, pl. IV. Cf. also the Early Helladic II fortification wall found near a Corridor House in Thebes, Aravantinos 1986, 60–61 and Alram 2004, 683–684, pl. 42a. For defensive systems of Early Bronze Age in the Aegean, see Alram 2004, 251–258, pls. 7–8 (Kolonna Aegina), 17 (Lerna), 49, 115, 120, with bibliography.

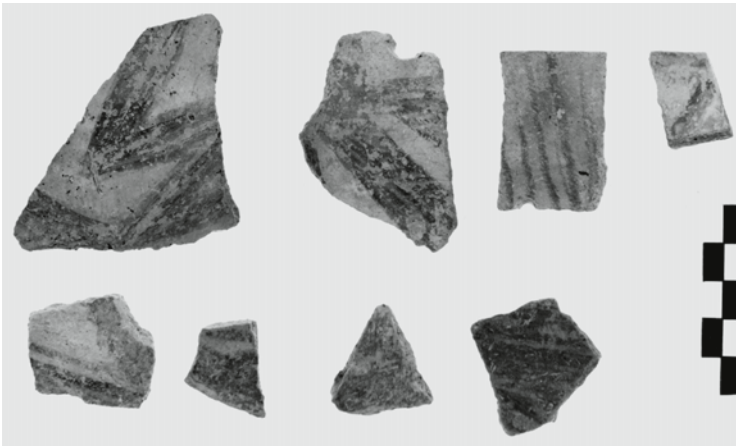


Fig. 6. Late Neolithic sherds from Trench Aa.



Fig. 7. Final Neolithic fragment of an open vessel from Trench Aa.

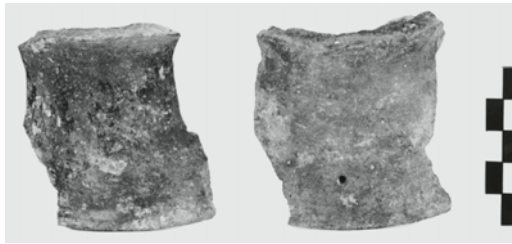


Fig. 8. Stems of Early Helladic I fruitstands from Trench Aa.

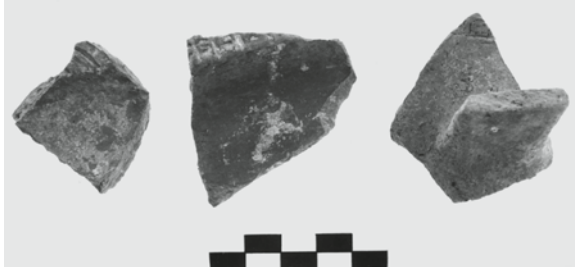


Fig. 9. Rim sherds with incised decoration of Early Helladic I fruitstands from Trench Aa.



Fig. 10. Fragments of Early Helladic I coarse vessels with incised decoration and holes, from Trench Aa.

Late Neolithic to Mycenaean times, was found mixed, for the most part in layers 1 and 2. This shows extensive disturbance in the area, probably due to levelling activities by the Mycenaeans.

The small quantity of Neolithic pottery includes sherds from closed and open vases with painted decoration of Late Neolithic (Fig. 6); and fragments of coarse vases of Final Neolithic, of which some horizontally pierced lug handles and a fragment of an open vessel with decoration of applied cordons with finger-tipping⁴ (Fig. 7) are worthy of mention.

The bulk of the pottery found is dated to the Early Helladic period, for the most part to Early Helladic I, although a considerable number of sherds belong to the Early Helladic II and III phases. It is most important that all three phases of

the period are represented in Midea, especially Early Helladic I.

Most of the Early Helladic I pottery was found in the area of the lower floor level in the northeast part of the trench. It includes fragments from typical vases of this pottery phase, which have good parallels in the Early Helladic I Talioti Ware, characteristic of many sites in the Argolid, notably the Talioti valley, Asine, Tiryns, Makrovouni, Lerna and Kephalaria.⁵ There are many examples of stems (Fig. 8) and rim sherds with incised decoration (Fig. 9, first and second from left) of fruitstands.⁶ Also rim and body sherds of coarse closed and open vases with plastic bands bearing deep incisions; some of the bands have a row of holes⁷ (Fig. 10). Other rim fragments of coarse deep bowls have a row of small holes under the rim (Fig. 11) and belong to the category of the “cheesepots” or baking pans of the Final Neo-

⁴ Final Neolithic sherds with similar decoration have been found at Geraki, see Crouwel *et al.* 2003, 16, fig. 4, pl. XI.

⁵ See Weisshaar 1990, 1–10, 21–26, pl. 1. Dousougli 1987, 165–168, fig. 1. Alram-Stern 2004, 156–157.

⁶ For stems and rim sherds of fruitstands, see Weisshaar 1990, 5–8, pls. 2–3; 5:11, 14; 23; 27; and Dousougli 1987, 182–184, fig. 12.

⁷ See Weisshaar 1990, 9–10, pls. 8:5–11; 9:5–12; 14:5–12; 24:10–11; 31:7, 9; 33:6–13; also Dousougli 1987, 202, fig. 27.

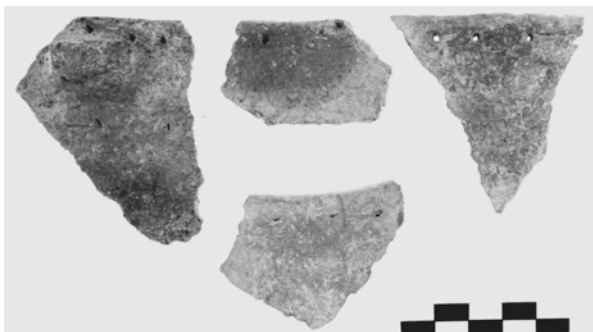


Fig. 11. Rim sherds of Final Neolithic / Early Helladic I bowls with a row of holes under the rim, from Trench Aa.

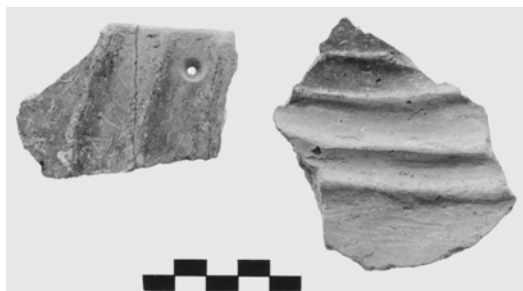


Fig. 12. Fragments of Final Neolithic / Early Helladic I open vases with ridges from Trench Aa.



Fig. 13. Part of a Final Neolithic / Early Helladic I bowl or scoop with incised decoration from Trench Aa.

lithic and Early Bronze Age in Mainland Greece and other parts of the Aegean.⁸ To Early Helladic I or even Final Neolithic can be assigned two fragments of coarse burnished large bowls with slightly diagonal or horizontal ridges, one with a hole under the rim⁹ (Fig. 12); and a large part of a coarse bowl or scoop with handle and rim, decorated with incised wavy, zig-zag and short horizontal lines (Fig. 13). Other fragments of open and closed vases of Talioti ware have a fine incised decoration¹⁰ (Figs. 9, third from left, 14). Noteworthy are some fragmentary handles of coarse ladles with the beginnings of the loop¹¹ (Fig. 15). Flat bases of coarse storage vessels with mat impressions also occur¹² (Fig. 16).

A significant amount of Early Helladic II pottery was



Fig. 14. Sherds of Early Helladic I vases with fine incised decoration, from Trench Aa.



Fig. 15. Fragmentary handles of Early Helladic I ladles from Trench Aa.

found associated mostly with the square construction and the fortification wall in Trench Aa. Consequently this complex could be dated to the Early Helladic II phase, when most of the summit of the hill of Midea seems to have been fortified. The excavation in 2005 of the layer immediately above these constructions likewise yielded abundant Early Helladic II pottery, thus confirming their dating in that phase, to which a room southwest of the fortification wall also belongs.¹³ The Early Helladic II pottery comprises dark-painted sauceboats¹⁴ and bowls, handles of ladles¹⁵ (Fig. 17), stands and coarse storage vessels including abundant fragments of large pithoi and pithoid jars decorated with applied cordons with finger-tipping.¹⁶

⁸ Similar vases are known likewise from Geraki, see Crouwel *et al.* 2003, 17, pl. XII, with bibliography.

⁹ Cf. Goldman 1931, 84–85, fig. 101.

¹⁰ See Weisshaar 1990, 7–10, pls. 9:2, 7, 9, 12; 29:6–13; 31:4–6.

¹¹ See Weisshaar 1990, 9, pls. 10:9–22; 11:1–4.

¹² See Weisshaar 1990, 2–4, pls. 22; 15:1–6; 19:10, 19, 21; 21:15, 18–20; 32; 34:11–14; also Dousougli 1987, 185, fig. 14:123–124.

¹³ Demakopoulou *et al.* 2006–2007, 24.

¹⁴ Cf. Weisshaar 1981, 242, fig. 85:14; 244, fig. 87:11; and Weisshaar 1982, 449, 451, figs. 66:3–4, 68 for similar sauceboats from Tiryns.

¹⁵ Cf. Weisshaar 1981, 232, 237, fig. 78:1, 3; and Weisshaar 1982, 454–455, fig. 70:2, 4–6, 8, for similar ladles from Tiryns.

¹⁶ For similar vases, see Weisshaar 1981, 230, fig. 76 a–b; 233, fig. 79:4, 6–7; 236, fig. 81; 245, fig. 88:9; and Weisshaar 1982, 449, fig. 66:5.

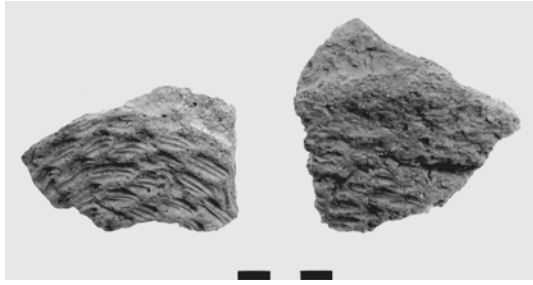


Fig. 16. Bases of Early Helladic I coarse vessels with mat impressions from Trench Aa.



Fig. 17. Fragmentary Early Helladic II handles of ladles from Trench Aa.



Fig. 18. Lower part of an Early Helladic III large vessel from Trench Aa.

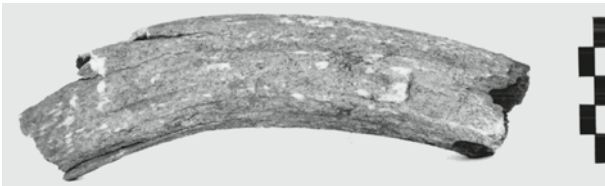


Fig. 19. Fragmentary horn of a deer from Trench Aa.

Some fragmentary Early Helladic III pottery was found in the upper layers of the trench including some sherds of coarse vessels and the lower half of a large medium-coarse closed vessel with slipped surface (Fig. 18).

Of the Middle Helladic pottery, found likewise in the upper layer mixed with Early Helladic material, noteworthy are sherds with incised herringbone decoration ("Adriatic" ware), Matt Painted and Minyan sherds, including some of goblets and kantharoi, as well as fragments of storage and cooking vessels. Some sherds with lustrous bichrome or light-on-dark decoration are dated to the Transitional Late Middle Helladic to Late Helladic I phase.

Worthy of mention among the other finds from Trench Aa, is a fragmentary horn of a deer (Fig. 19), recovered from the layer above the lower floor level in the northeast part of the trench. In the northwest part of the extension a small obsidian arrow head, almost intact, was found. A considerable number of large obsidian and flint blades (Fig. 20) were found dispersed in the entire area of the trench and in the extension of the excavation, together with cores and flakes of the same materials. The abundance of these finds strongly suggests the existence of a workshop for the manufacture of blades in that area. Some stone tools were also recovered from the same area, including pounders and fragmentary millstones. Two clay conical spindle whorls and perforated sea-shells, probably used as pendants, should also be mentioned.

In addition to a number of Late Helladic IIIB sherds recovered in the area of the extension, a clear deposit with a closed group of Mycenaean pottery and other objects was found by the corner of the Early Helladic II fortification wall (Fig. 2). The pottery of this group is dated to Late Helladic IIIB2. The closed group includes a fragmentary rosette bowl, FS 284, of very fine quality (Fig. 21), a large part of a Group A deep bowl decorated with a narrow central triglyph and antithetic spirals (Fig. 22), fragments of a straight-sided alabastron, FS 294, and a wide-mouthed jug, FS 110, with linear decoration; there are also parts of plain kylikes and dippers, as well as the base of a pithos and a fragmentary coarse vat. Other finds from the same group are two fragments from Mycenaean terracotta figurines, a polos head and a small part of a throne, two conical spindle whorls of steatite and some scraps of mother-of-pearl. An outstanding find is a well preserved large bead, flattened spherical in shape, recovered under fallen stones in the southwest part of the extension (Fig. 23). It is made of dark blue glass and has a polychrome decoration of an inlaid spot of white glass and three applied splashes of red glass. It belongs to the category of eye-beads of the spot type, which are thought to be of Egyptian origin; beads of the same type have been found at Mycenae.¹⁷ The beads from Mycenae and the recently discovered bead at Midea demonstrate the contacts and exchange between the major centres in the Argolid and the eastern Mediterranean.¹⁸

¹⁷ See appendix by K. Nikita with bibliography.

¹⁸ Cf. Wace 1932, 94, no. 7b, 206–208, pl. IX.



Fig. 20. Obsidian and flint blades from Trench Aa.

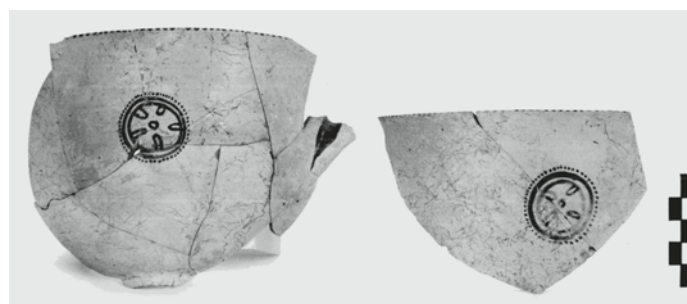


Fig. 21 (left). Fragmentary Late Helladic IIIB2 rosette bowl from the extension of the excavation in front of Trenches A and Aa. – Fig. 22 (right). Part of a Late Helladic IIIB2 deep bowl of Group A from the extension in front of Trenches A and Aa.



Fig. 23. Glass eye-bead with polychrome decoration from the extension in front of Trenches A and Aa.

West Gate area

Excavation continued in the west part of the building complex abutting the fortification wall in the West Gate area¹⁹ (Fig. 1). In 2005, Trench Si adjacent to Trenches Sf and Sg, which had been opened in previous seasons, was partly excavated²⁰ (Fig. 24).

In 2006, excavation was concluded in the north half of Trench Si with the uncovering of bedrock in the entire space (Fig. 24). This is a sloping rocky area with uneven surface. Many fallen stones and disturbed deposits were removed. A considerable amount of fragmentary, worn pottery was re-

covered consisting of Mycenaean sherds, mainly of Late Helladic IIIB, mixed with some sherds of Middle Helladic, Roman and Byzantine times.

In the south half of the trench, the excavation in 2005 had uncovered piles of stones and ruins of damaged walls. In the southeast part of this area a pithos and other fragmentary vessels were found, possibly associated with a floor.²¹ In 2006, with the aim of finding the room to which this floor belonged, investigation was extended to the unexcavated space measuring 3.70 × 1.10 m, in front of wall 26 of Rooms VIIIA and VIIIB in Trench Sf (Figs. 24–25). A deposit 0.70 m thick consisting of two layers was removed, revealing the entire west face of wall 26, 1.00 m high, and a new wall, wall 32, which is parallel to the fortification wall and joins wall 26 (Figs. 24, 26). These two walls form a new room, Room XIII, which is closed to the west by wall

¹⁹ See Demakopoulou *et al.* 2002, 27–29, 45, figs. 1, 42, with references.

²⁰ Demakopoulou *et al.* 2006–2007, 16–20.

²¹ Demakopoulou *et al.* 2006–2007, 19–20.

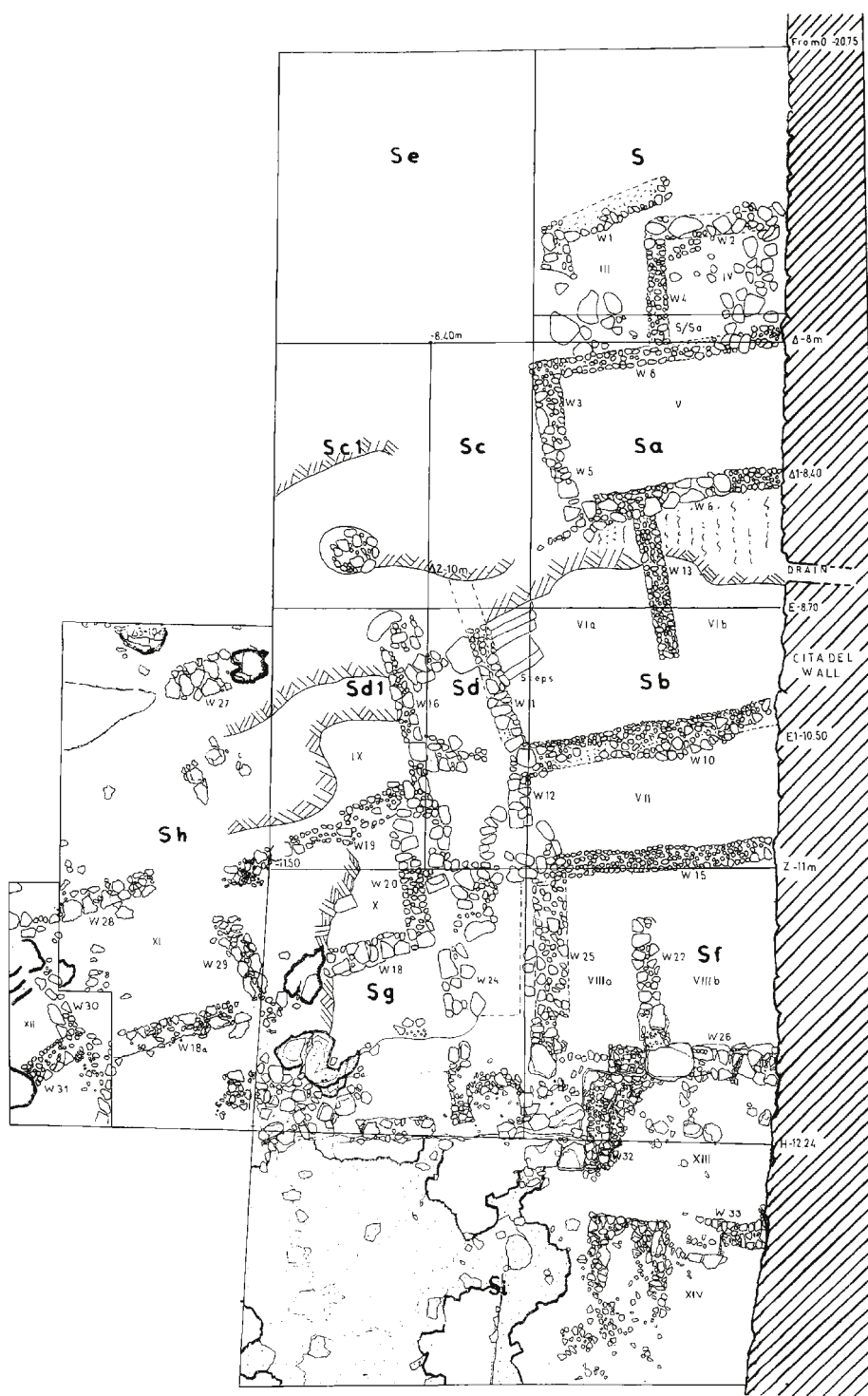


Fig. 24. Ground plan of the building complex in the West Gate area with Trenches Sf and Si.

0 1 2 3 4 5 m
E. Nerhou 1998 I.D. Roulien 2001 I.M. Patsopoulos 2005 - 6





Fig. 25. The space in front of rooms VIIIa and VIIIb in Trench Sf before excavation.



Fig. 26. Room XIII with walls 26, 32 and 33.



Fig. 27. Early Mycenaean sherds from the upper accumulated layer of Room XIII.

33 that is running at right angles to the fortification wall in a north-south direction (Fig. 24). The room is spacious, measuring 2.80×3.00 m, and almost square; its floor, made of trodden earth, is on a lower level than that of Rooms VIIIa and VIIIb. The walls of the room are not well preserved (Figs. 24, 26). Wall 26 is built mainly of large stones including a boulder. Many stones of its west face have col-



Fig. 28. Sherds of Late Helladic IIIB2 deep bowls from Room XIII and Trench C.

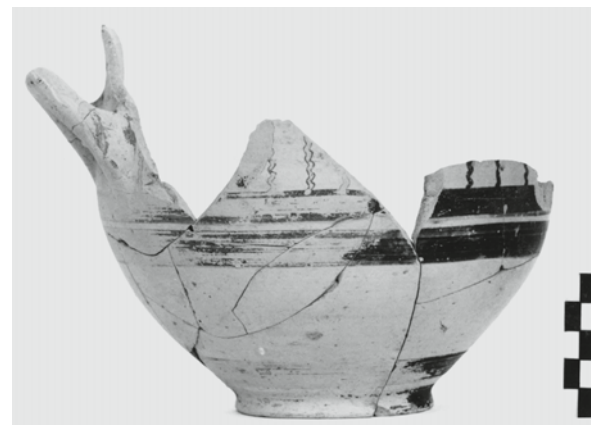


Fig. 29. Fragmentary deep bowl of Group B from Room XIII.

lapsed and were found in the removed deposits and on the floor of the room. Wall 32 is constructed with small stones and is much damaged and almost distorted. Wall 33 is built likewise with small stones but only a part of it has been fully uncovered; it may continue, however, under the ruins in the southwest part of Trench Si.

The upper accumulated layer of the removed deposit in the southeast part of Room XIII contained fragmentary Late Helladic II–IIIB pottery (Fig. 27) mixed with some Middle Helladic and Byzantine sherds. The lower layer was an intact floor deposit with abundant pottery of Late Helladic IIIB2 date. Part of this floor deposit had been excavated in 2005²² in the west half of Room XIII; the remainder was removed in 2006 together with the floor deposit in the east

²² Demakopoulou *et al.* 2006–2007, 20.



Fig. 30. Plain conical kylix from Room XIII.



Fig. 31. Plain dipper from Room XIII.

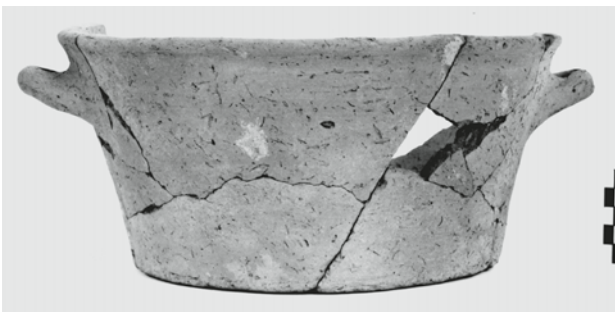


Fig. 32. Fragmentary vat from Room XIII.



Fig. 33. Clay animal figurine from Room XIII.

half of the room. From the entire floor deposit came many fragments of vases typical of this period, such as deep bowls of Group A and B,²³ rosette bowls (*Fig. 28*, top right, bottom left), stemmed bowls, FS 305, kraters, FS 281, mugs, FS 226, spouted conical bowls, FS 301, jugs and stirrup jars, FS 173. Fragments of fine plain vases and transport



Fig. 34. Fragmentary pottery as found among the ruins in the southwest part of Trench Si.



Fig. 35. Destruction layer with smashed vessels and roof tiles in the excavated part of Room XIV.

stirrup jars, as well as of coarse, storage and cooking vessels also occur. Some vases have been partly restored from fragments: a deep bowl of Group B (*Fig. 29*), a plain conical kylix, FS 274 (*Fig. 30*), a plain dipper (*Fig. 31*), an oval vat (*Fig. 32*) and a large cooking vessel. Other finds include an unfinished sealstone of green steatite, three clay figurines, two human and an animal of the ladder type (*Fig. 33*), as well as an obsidian arrowhead and a steatite spindle whorl.

In the southwest part of Trench Si, west of Room XIII, the ruins and debris uncovered in the 2005 season were cleared (*Fig. 24*). The debris comprised for the most part piles of stones fallen from damaged walls. Among the ruins many fragments, mostly of Late Helladic IIIB2 vases, were recovered (*Fig. 34*), such as stirrup jars, piriform jars, FS 64, jugs, a fragment of a straight-sided alabastron with legs,

²³ For the sherd with a central triglyph with half-rosettes and anti-thetic spirals (*Fig. 28*, bottom left), cf. the fragmentary deep bowl with similar decoration from the Upper Acropolis (*Fig. 22*); see also Mountjoy 1986, 129, fig. 159:3, for a parallel.



Fig. 37 (above). Fragmentary conical bowl (kalathos) from the destruction layer of the excavated part of Room XIV.

Fig. 36 (left). Fragmentary pithos from the destruction layer of the excavated part of Room XIV.



Fig. 38. Terracotta roof tiles of the cover type from the destruction layer of the excavated part of Room XIV.

FS 99, stemmed bowls and Group B deep bowls, kraters, FS 281, basins, FS 294, some of them spouted, plain conical and carinated kylikes, as well as transport stirrup jars and other storage and cooking vessels. Fragments of roof tiles were also found.

It is evident that in this area under the ruins there is another room divided from Room XIII by wall 33 (Fig. 24). Of this Room, Room XIV, only a small part measuring 1.00 × 2.00 m could be fully excavated in the time allotted. This space is west of wall 33 and adjacent to the fortification wall. A thick destruction deposit was removed with a group of smashed vessels including a tall pithos and roof tiles, which were found *in situ* on the floor level (Fig. 35). The floor of this room is about 0.70 m lower than the floor of Room XIII. These two rooms were built on successive ter-

aces, like the other rooms of the building complex, because of the prominent inclination of the ground. It may be significant that the difference in the floor level from room to room appears to be the same.

Noteworthy is that the destruction deposit contained some skeletal remains of an adolescent and a child. The bones were found scattered among the pithos and the other smashed vessels and most probably represent two victims of the earthquake that struck Midea at the end of the 13th cent. BC, resulting in the destruction of the building complex and other structures on the Acropolis.²⁴

²⁴ A smashed skeleton evidently of another victim of the earthquake, was found in one of the rooms in the East Gate area, see Åström 1996, 24; Åström & Demakopoulou 1996.

Of the numerous fragments found in the destruction deposit in the excavated part of Room XIV, some vessels were partly restored: half of the tall pithos (*Fig. 36*), a conical bowl with an extra disk base, FS 291 (kalathos), probably spouted, with linear decoration on the body inside and outside and a lozenge chain, FM 73, on the everted rim (*Fig. 37*), a wide-necked amphora, FS 69, with linear decoration, a collar-necked jar, FS 64, plain conical and carinated kylikes and dippers, FS 236, and a plain juglet. Other fragments come from deep bowls of Group A and B and stemmed bowls, as well as from storage and cooking vessels, such as transport stirrup jars, pithoi and vats, dippers, cooking jars and cooking grills. Large parts of terracotta roof tiles of both flat pan and cover types (*Fig. 38*) were restored from the many fragments recovered. A few stone tools were also found including an almost intact whetstone and two pounders.

The mass of smashed vessels and roof tiles in the small space of Room XIV that could be excavated in 2006 is impressive and indicates that some of them may have fallen from an upper storey. The excavation will continue in the 2007 campaign in order to uncover the entire room, which seems to occupy the southwest part of Trench Si.

Lower West Terrace

A new trench, Trench C, was opened on the lower west terrace of the Acropolis, against the west section of the fortification wall (*Fig. 1*). In this area deep accumulated deposits have been washed down from higher up the summit and slope of the hill. They have covered almost completely the fortification wall, of which only the outer face is partly visible. The purpose of opening Trench C, which measures 5.00 × 5.00 m, was to uncover the line and reveal the entire width of the fortification wall in this part of the circuit.

With the removal of the upper layers it became obvious that the fortification wall was at a deeper level and that the line of boulders, partly visible before the excavation at the west edge of the trench, was not part of the wall, but rather a modern supporting wall which had been made with stones fallen from the fortification wall itself (*Figs. 39–40*). With the cleaning of the sloping area west of the trench and at a lower level, the outer face of the fortification wall was identified (*Fig. 39*). The continuation of the excavation in the trench revealed its inner face with a large part of the filling (*Fig. 41*). The wall is built with boulders and large stones with smaller stones for the filling; its width, including the unexposed part, is calculated at 5.70 m. Against the inner face of the wall part of a room was uncovered, which is defined by walls 1 and 2 (*Figs. 39, 41*). The walls are constructed of medium-sized stones and have been exposed to a low height. In the east corner of the room, on a level over its

walls, a paving of coarse sherds was found which may belong to a hearth of a later building phase²⁵ (*Fig. 42*). Inside the room a layer of stones fallen both from its walls and the fortification wall was encountered. This layer seems to have sealed an intact floor deposit. It is probable that there is another room next to and south of wall 1, likewise against the fortification wall.

The excavated layers of Trench C were mostly accumulated and disturbed and contained piles of stones. Abundant fragmentary pottery was found consisting for the most part of Mycenaean sherds mixed with a few Early Helladic and more Middle Helladic, as well as with some of Roman and Byzantine times, including a small fragment of a vase of fine green glass. The Mycenaean pottery includes some Transitional Middle Helladic Late to Late Helladic I fragments of Yellow Minyan goblets and other sherds with Lustrous Bichrome decoration. A considerable number of Early Mycenaean sherds were found, dated to Late Helladic IIA–B (*Fig. 43*). Most of the pottery, however, can be dated to the Late Helladic IIIB2 period, comprising fragments of deep bowls of Group A and B (*Fig. 28*, top, first and second from left, bottom, second from left), rosette bowls and stemmed bowls, mugs, kraters, jugs and stirrup jars. Some sherds may belong to Late Helladic IIIB2 Late or IIIC Early vases, such as carinated kylikes with coated interior and a broad band under the rim on the exterior or with linear decoration inside and outside (*Fig. 44*); and spouted basins with coated interior. Of the fine plain pottery most fragments belong to conical or carinated kylikes, while a considerable amount of coarse ware pottery was found, including sherds of pithoi, vats, basins and hydrias, as well as of cooking pots, some of them tripod. The fragments of a large pithoid jar of Handmade Burnished Ware with horizontal appliqué cordon (*Fig. 45*) may also be mentioned.²⁶ It is of considerable interest that the decorated pottery includes some fragments datable to the Late Helladic IIIC Early period. These come from ring-based kraters, FS 282, with coated interior and elaborate decoration with antithetic spirals on the exterior²⁷ (*Fig. 46*), as well as from monochrome kylikes and deep bowls.²⁸ The Late Helladic IIIC Early pottery may be associated with a later building phase to which could belong the hearth found above walls 1 and 2 of the room abutting the fortification wall.

Other Mycenaean finds include fragmentary roof tiles, part of a lead vessel, a piece of plaster, blades and flakes and an arrowhead of obsidian, as well as a conical spindle

²⁵ Cf. the remains of a similar hearth at Tiryns, Kilian 1978, 451–452, fig. 4.

²⁶ Fragments of Handmade Burnished Ware were found in other parts on the Southwest Slope of the Acropolis of Midea, see Demakopoulou *et al.* 2003, 10–11, 14–15, figs. 9, 22, with references.

²⁷ Cf. Mountjoy 1986, 148–149, fig. 188; 172–174, fig. 223.

²⁸ Cf. Mountjoy 1986, 148, 151, figs. 187, 191.

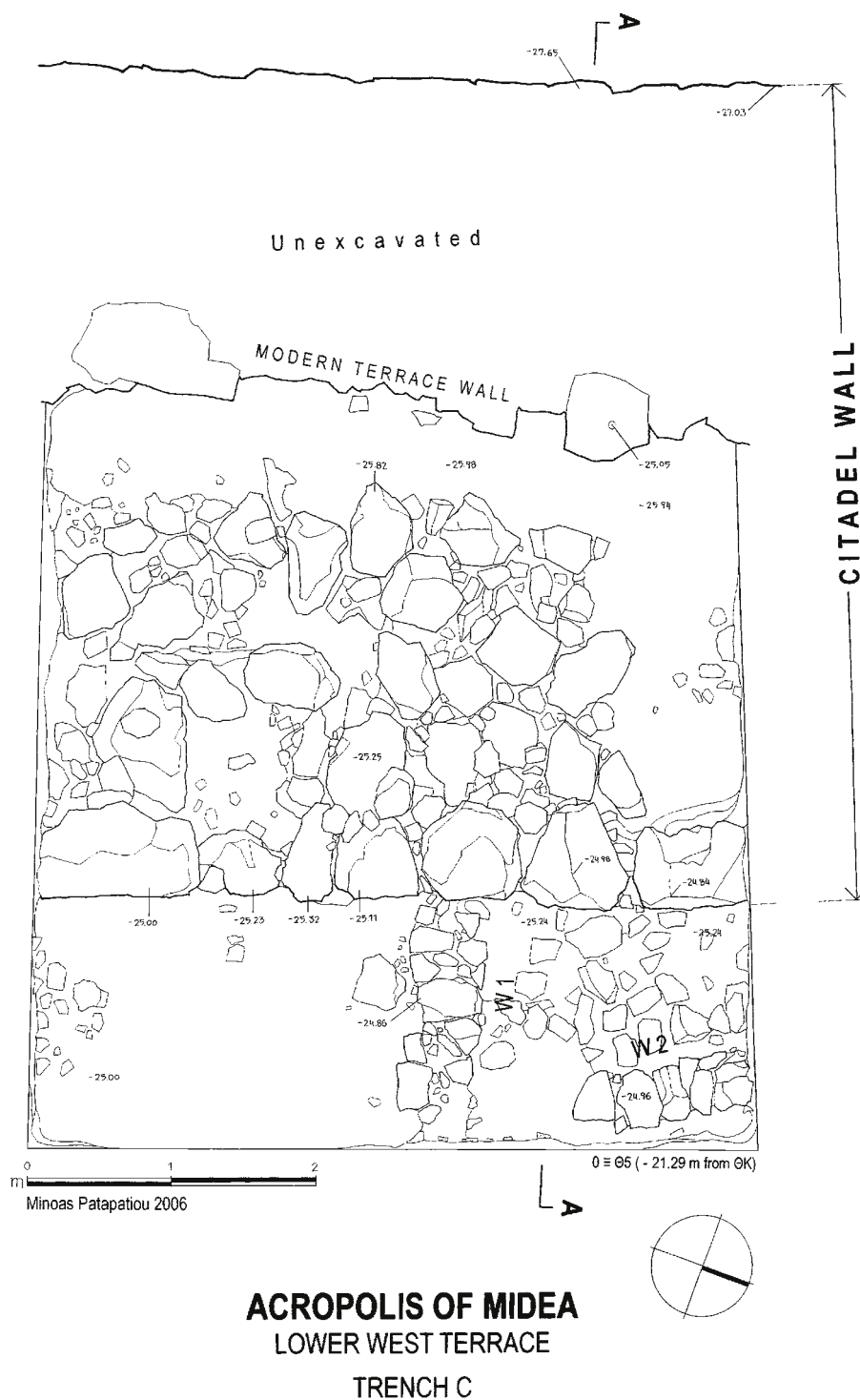




Fig. 40. View of the exposed part of the fortification wall with the modern supporting wall in Trench C.



Fig. 41. View of Trench C with part of the fortification wall and other structural remains.



Fig. 42. Remains of a hearth with a paving of sherds in Trench C.

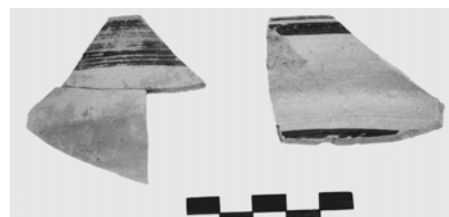


Fig. 44 (above). Rim fragments of Late Helladic IIIB2 Late carinated kylikes partly coated (left) and with Linear decoration (right).

Fig. 43 (left). Early Mycenaean sherds from Trench C.

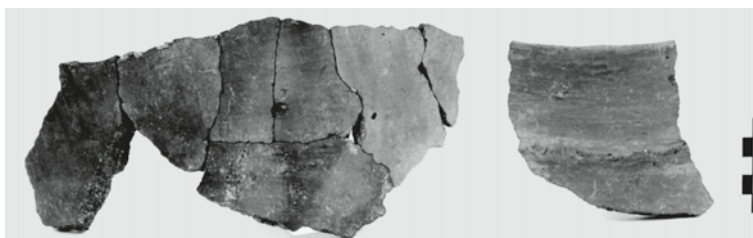


Fig. 45. Fragments of a Handmade Burnished Ware pithoid jar from Trench C.



Fig. 46. Fragments of a Late Helladic IIIC Early krater from Trench C.



Fig. 47. Head of a large wheel-made figure from Trench C.

whorl of steatite. Some fragmentary human figurines were also recovered. Special mention must be made of the head of a large wheelmade figure, the surface of which has suffered in places (Fig. 47). Remains of its decoration in red paint, however, are still visible.

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APPENDIX

Beads of glass and vitreous materials – Commentary on a glass eye-bead from Midea

A collection of glass and faience beads have been found at the excavations of Midea, which is of considerable importance despite the small number as might be expected in a settlement site.²⁹ Semi-worked or malformed ornaments in

conjunction with the steatite mould for casting gold or glass jewellery strongly suggest the operation of one or more jewellery workshops on the citadel although their exact location is as yet to be identified.³⁰

An intact and well preserved spot eye-bead of glass is outstanding in that it shows a combination of three techniques employed in its manufacture (Fig. 23). The bead, flattened spherical in shape (0.013 m diam. and 0.009 m h.) bearing a tubular vertically set perforation (0.004 m diam.),³¹ consists of a glass matrix in translucent dark blue colour, which was made by the wire-wound technique.³² One large spot (0.004 m diam.) of opaque white glass is inlaid into the glass matrix. Three smaller splashes of opaque red glass were applied onto the surface of the blue matrix.³³

The bead comes from a context dated to the Late Helladic IIIB period on the basis of pottery evidence. Eye-beads of the spot type are characteristic of the glass industry during the 18th Dynasty in Egypt. Nevertheless, glass eye-beads are difficult to date or provenance on the basis of a macroscopic inspection. Similar or even identical eye-beads can occur over wide geographical areas and time-spans. Moreover, glass eye-beads, owing to their amuletic or exotic character, may well be kept as heirlooms for a long time and thus can be found in contexts of a much later date than the date of their manufacture.

Glass eye-beads have a restricted distribution in Mycenaean Greece, especially during the palatial period, when the Mycenaean glass industry reaches its apogee. Noteworthy are the eye-beads found in contemporaneous chamber tombs at Mycenae which differ in form, colour and decoration from the Midea example.³⁴ The well established Mycenaean contacts with the Eastern Mediterranean explain their presence in the Aegean among other *orientalia*. Their more frequent occurrence in post-palatial times is associated with the falling-off of Mycenaean glass production and their ensuing importation from an alien glass-producing centre for covering a local demand for glass jewellery.³⁵ It seems that their *apotropaic* qualities against the “evil eye”, associated with Egyptian religious beliefs, were less significant to the Mycenaeans, which may also explain their rarity in the contemporary Aegean.³⁶

The Midea glass eye-bead can be seen as another manifestation of the dynamic intercommunications amongst the

²⁹ Nikita 2003, 23–37, esp. 30–32.

³⁰ Demakopoulou 2007, 70, nn. 71–73.

³¹ Xenaki-Sakellariou 1985, 292, Type 2.

³² Beck 1927, 60.

³³ Beck 1927, 63, figs. 56–57.

³⁴ Wace 1932, 94, no. 7b, 206–208, pl. IX; Xenaki-Sakellariou 1985, 135, 139, no. Γ 2378:2, pl. 40; Hughes-Brock 1999, 284–285.

³⁵ Nikita, Henderson & Nightingale (forthcoming).

³⁶ Nikita 2003, 33–34.

major centres in the Argolid as these are set within the broader context of the Aegean and the Mediterranean in the Late Bronze Age.

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B. EAST GATE AREA*

Activities near the East Gate during the 2006 season were concentrated to three areas: (1) the removal of the wide baulk between Trench 3 and Room 9; (2) the removal of Wall A within the gate area; and (3) the exploration of archaeological remains within the circuit of the excavated suite of rooms, i.e. Trenches 13:NE, 13:S and 15 (Fig. 48).

Baulk between Trench 3 and Room 9

The baulk that separated the excavations of Room 9 and the more recently investigated Trench 3 was considered to pose a danger to visitors in the eventuality that they came too close to the trenches.³⁷ It was therefore decided that it

should be taken down. The baulk covered 2×3.5 m, and was excavated down to a depth of c. 1 m. At the end of the work, there were still some cubic metres of soil to remove before the floor could be uncovered.

After the dark brown topsoil had been removed, it became evident that the light grey soil of the Mycenaean destruction layer had been cut in later times and had then been filled in with stones and dark soil. The intrusion was in the part of the baulk that borders on the citadel wall. Pottery fragments of a Byzantine-Medieval type give a date for the activities. Since the same phenomenon was seen along the citadel wall in Trench 3,³⁸ it may be part of quite extensive use of the citadel wall at this time.

Pottery fragments and other small finds were fairly com-

*Acknowledgements

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Participating in the excavations and processing of the material were Björn Ask, Ioannis Dedembilis, Lena Klintberg, Marina Lili, Vasiliki Lili, Monica Nilsson, Kostas Papageorgopoulos, Catrin Sandberg, Therese Sigmundsdotter and Ann-Louise Schallin. Drawings were made by Lena Klintberg.

³⁷ Åström 2000–2001, 50; Nilsson & Schallin 2002; 2003.

³⁸ Nilsson & Schallin 2002; 2003.

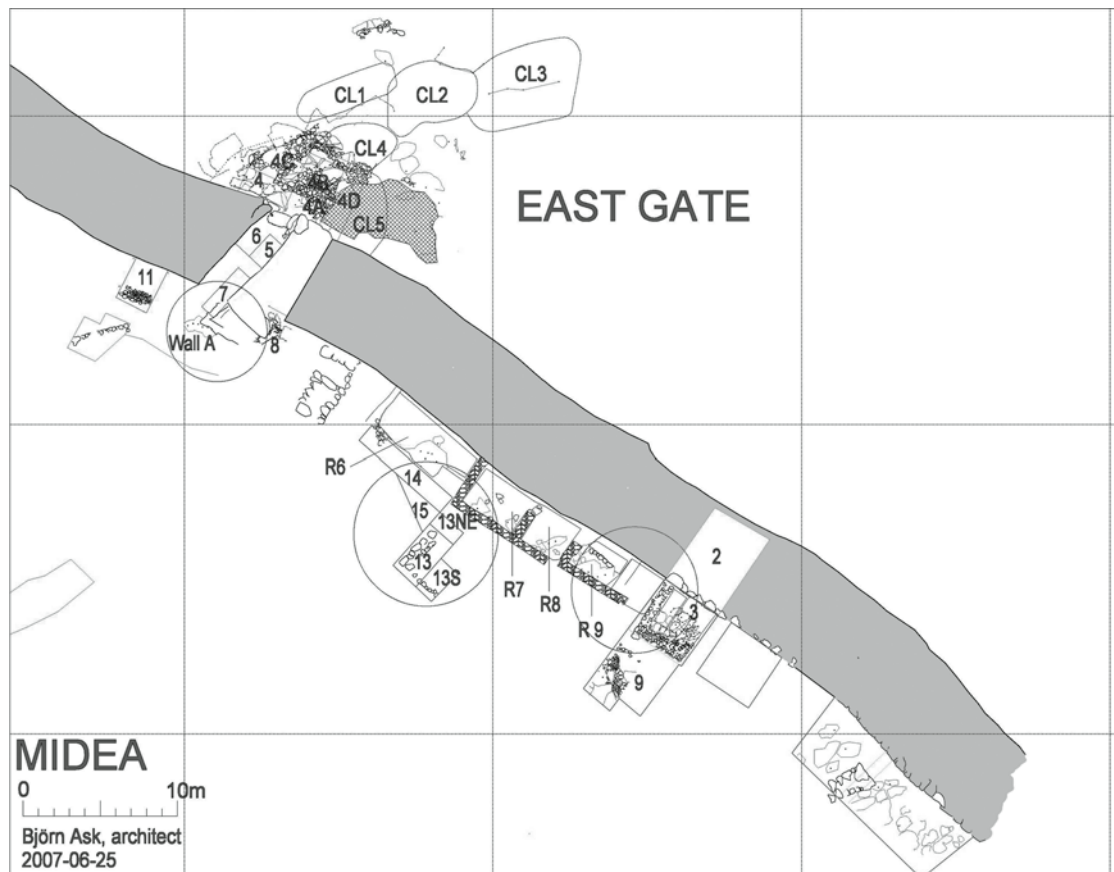
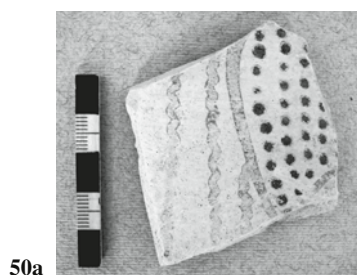


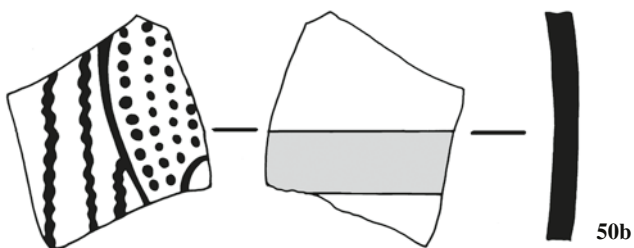
Fig. 48. East Gate areas investigated in 2006.



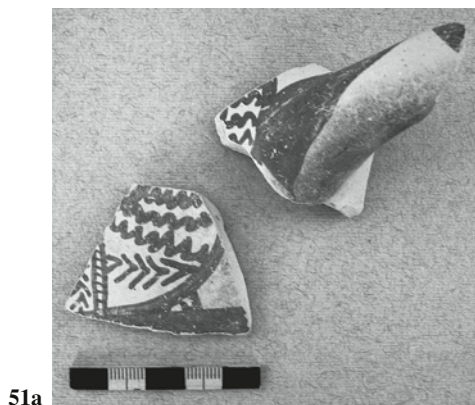
Fig. 49. A Mycenaean female figurine fragment from the baulk between Trench 3 and Room 9.



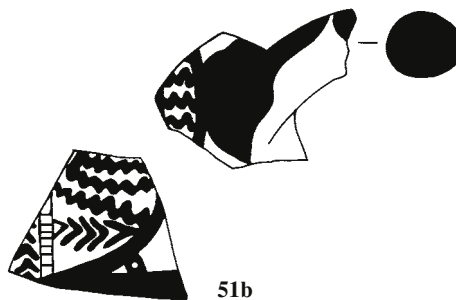
50a



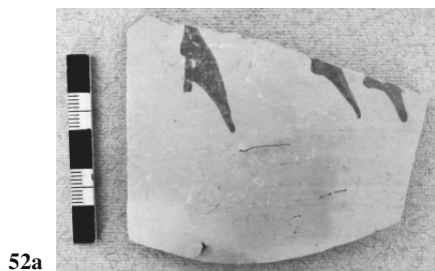
50b



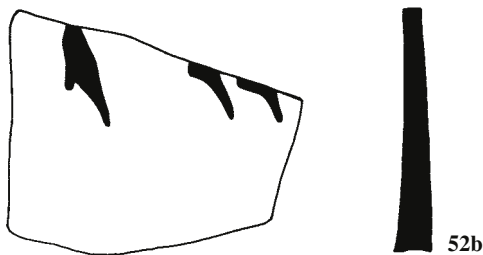
51a



51b



52a



52b

Figs. 50–52. Mycenaean pictorial pottery sherds from the baulk between Trench 3 and Room 9.



Fig. 53. The extension of the long wall in Room 9 making a right-angled turn towards the slope.



Fig. 55. The East Gate after the removal of Wall A. From the west.



Fig. 54. Wall A blocking the entrance to the East Gate. From the north.

mon in the Mycenaean destruction-layer, but they had probably fallen from higher up the slope through erosion. Among the finds are a Mycenaean female figurine (*Fig. 49*), and Mycenaean pictorial pottery sherds (*Figs. 50-52*). Moreover, some architectural features were discovered. The extension of the long wall in Room 9 was seen, but instead of continuing in a straight line, it appears to make a right-angled turn towards the slope (*Fig. 53*). This feature completely changes the pattern of the excavated rooms along the citadel wall, since it could either be a space open to the interior of the settlement or a room with a different architectural outline. In the scarp and at a lower level, another row of stones can be discerned. They are in line with Wall 3 in Trench 3, i.e. the enigmatic one-course row of large-sized



Fig. 56. Trench 13 with extensions 13:S and 13:NE.

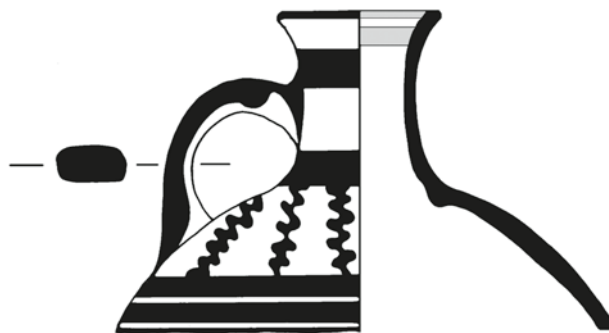
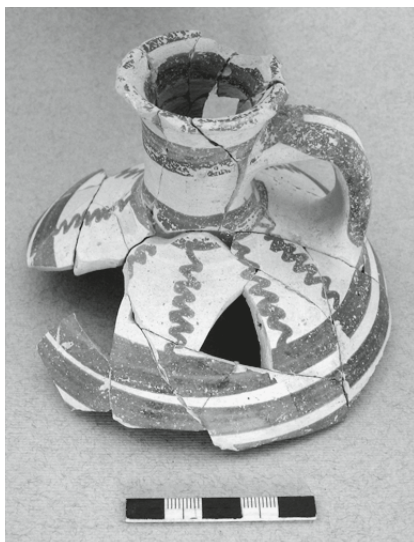


Fig. 57. Part of a LH IIIB2 jug from Trench 13:NE.

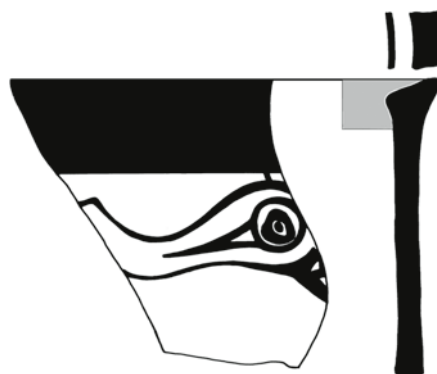
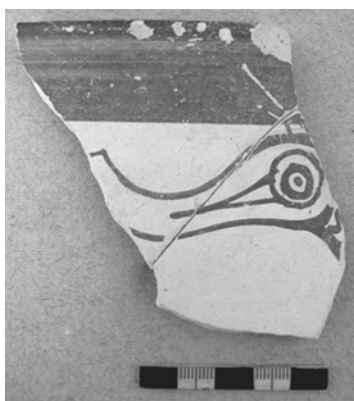


Fig. 58. A LH IIIB2 krater fragment with pictorial decoration from Trench 13:NE.

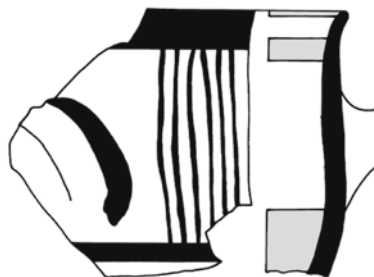
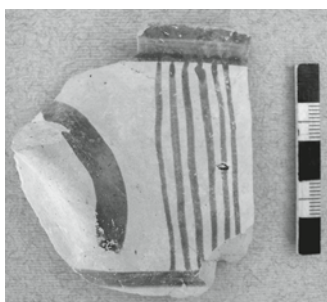


Fig. 59. A LH IIIB2 deep bowl fragment from Trench 13:NE.

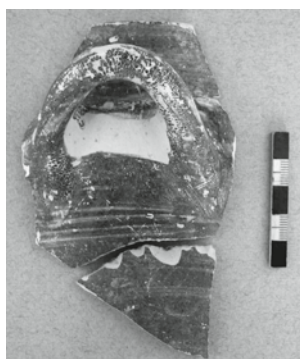


Fig. 60. LH IIIB2 monochrome deep bowl fragments from Trench 13:NE.



Fig. 61. LH III B2 Rosette bowl fragments from Trench 13:NE.

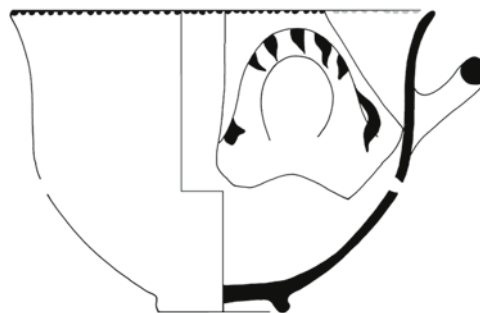


Fig. 62. A Mycenaean miniature female figurine fragment from Trench 13:NE.



Fig. 64. The stem of a Mycenaean female figurine from Trench 15.



Fig. 63. Trench 15 bordering to Trench 13 with extensions.

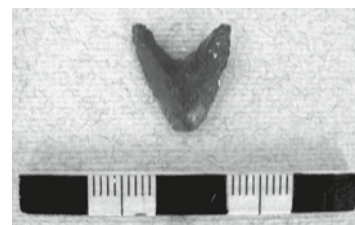
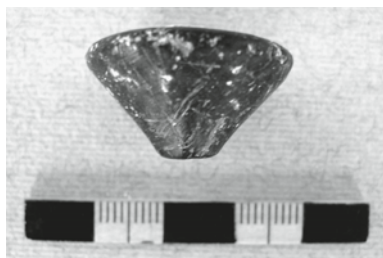
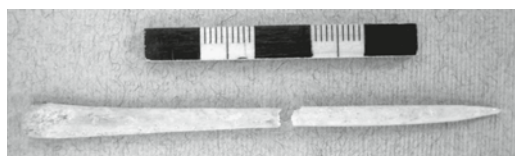


Fig. 65 (left). A Mycenaean bone needle from Trench 15. – Fig. 66 (middle). A Mycenaean stone spindle whorl from Trench 15. – Fig. 67 (right). A Mycenaean arrow-head of stone from Trench 15.

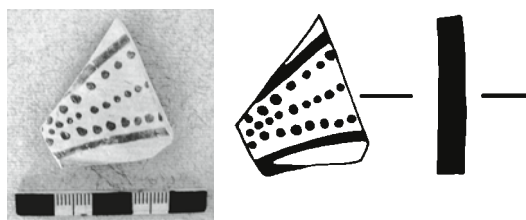


Fig. 68. A Mycenaean pictorial sherd from Trench 15.



Fig. 69. A fragment of a Mycenaean undecorated dipper from Trench 15.

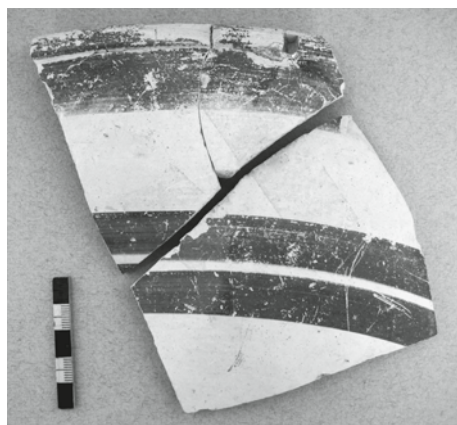


Fig. 70. Fragments from a LH IIIB2 basin from Trench 15.

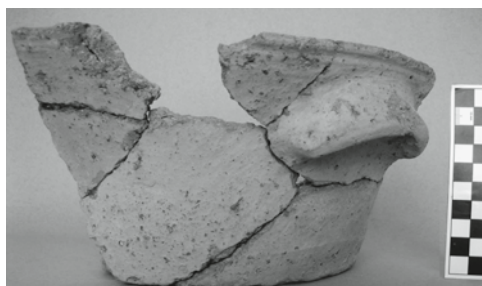


Fig. 71. Part of a Mycenaean coarse ware basin from Trench 15.

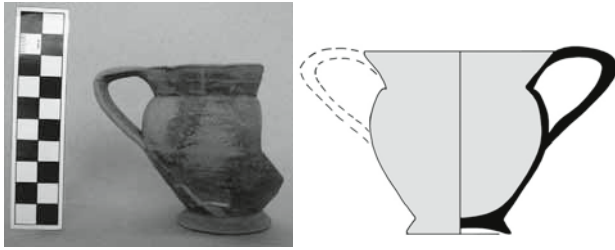


Fig. 72. Part of an Archaic kantharos from Trench 15.

stones that may be part of an earlier architectural phase.³⁹ It is hoped that future work will clarify its date and use.

Wall A in East Gate area

Some flimsy walls uncovered during excavations in the mid 90s have suffered greatly from erosion despite attempts to solidify them. These walls are post-Mycenaean, resting on the debris of the LH IIIB2 destruction (Fig. 48). One such wall is not known from any published plans, but it is now named Wall A and it is in line with the wall in Trench 11.⁴⁰ It is interesting that it is positioned so that access from the gate is restricted, possibly leading any visitors to the right upon entering, following the inner face of the citadel wall. Given its present state, however, the supposition that it was once a wall was disputed and the decision was taken that the remains should be removed (Figs. 54 and 55).

Close to the present ground level, small stones appeared. They are not closely packed, but they are level and may, perhaps, be the only preserved part of the original ground level used for the citadel. Pottery fragments from in between and under the stones were plentiful and the latest identified sherds date to LH IIIB2.

Trench 13:S

Trench 13 was extended towards the south in order to investigate the platform-like feature found last year.⁴¹ It continues another 1.50 m to the south (the width of the extension) and probably a little further (Fig. 56). The function of the platform is not yet clear. It rests not only on the Mycenaean destruction-layer, but on dark former topsoil and could therefore be a historical remnant.

Trench 13:NE

To show clearly the stratigraphy beneath the platform in Trench 13, and also to further investigation of the Mycenaean layers, Trench 13 was extended to the northeast (Fig. 56). In the dark brown soil just beneath the level of the platform, were many loose small stones, possibly the eroded remains of a stone packing seen at other places in the area.

Large pieces from one or more heavy vessels, as well as those of decorated fine ware, were retrieved in the Mycenaean debris (Figs. 57–61). The base of a pithos was found upside down at the lower edge of the light grey layer. Moreover, a miniature female figurine was found here (Fig. 62). Unfortunately, time did not allow a complete excavation of the trench.

Trench 15

Bordering Trench 13:NE and Trench 14 is the triangular Trench 15 (Fig. 63). Along its longest side is a stretch of stone packing that connects with the one found in Trench 14. It follows the slope of the hill and ends, or continues, just under the platform in Trench 13.⁴²

In the remaining part of the trench, Mycenaean debris was excavated. The Mycenaean material (Figs. 64–71) is mixed with earlier pottery sherds. However, definitely later material was found in the topmost layers. Noteworthy are the fragments of an Archaic kantharos (Fig. 72).⁴³ As in the neighbouring Trench 13:S, pottery was plentiful. Some fragments were very fragile and appear to have been submitted to secondary burning. Along the border between Trenches 15 and 13:NE are middle-sized stones that may constitute a low foundation-wall. However, the work in both trenches need to be resumed in order to determine whether this is the case.

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³⁹ Nilsson & Schallin 2003, 26.

⁴⁰ Schallin & Sjögren 2004, 26; 2005.

⁴¹ Nilsson & Schallin 2006–2007, 24.

⁴² Nilsson & Schallin 2006–2007, 27.

⁴³ The kantharos is of a common Argive type. Cf. Cook 1953, 44, fig. 17. An Archaic one-handled black-glazed cup was found in the 2005 season in the West Gate area of the Acropolis, see Demakopoulou *et al.* 2006–2007, 19, fig. 31.

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