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THE LAST MYCENAEANS AT AIGEIRA AND THEIR SUCCESSORS*

This paper reports on the Final Mycenaean and Early Iron Age activity at Aigeira, at the so called “Lower Saddle” excavation area, that has not yet been the focus of research. Before the excavations of the Austrian Archaeological Institute moved to the Acropolis plateau in 1975, an area was investigated that is situated on a saddle immediately below (Figs. 1, 3). The plan published already in the report of 1973 (ALZINGER 1974) shows the various architectural phases found at the Lower Saddle (Fig. 2). The pink and green colours mark walls, attributed to the LH III C period, and the yellow colour those of the Geometric period. The excavations at the saddle lasted from 1972 until 1975, when digging at the Acropolis started. Since then the main focus of the prehistoric research at Aigeira concentrated on the important finds from the Acropolis plateau.¹ In order to carry out the publication duties at the Lower Saddle excavations, the Austrian Archaeological Institute resumed research work there. In the fall of 2006 a first study campaign lasting for five weeks was maintained.

Previous research at the Lower Saddle may be summarised as follows.² The area excavated covers approximately 650 m² and is therefore only a bit smaller than the approximately 820 m² large plateau of the Acropolis. The excavation was done in an 8 × 8 m grid system, later subdivided into smaller trenches. The layers reached are difficult to interpret, due to the sloping hill and later building activity that caused many disturbances. At least seven different architectural phases were differentiated, and the first two were dated preliminarily to the LH III C period by the excavators, an important statement that implies nothing less than the existence of a lower settlement area at Aigeira in the Bronze Age. If this assumption is correct, the Mycenaean settlement might have been much larger than originally thought. Furthermore the excavators also claimed to have reached Geometric layers, situated on top of the Mycenaean. It is impor-

* I do want to express my thanks to the organisers of this workshop, who gave me the opportunity to report on a new project at Aigeira, a site Sigrid Deger-Jalkotzy and Eva Alram-Stern have been closely affiliated with for many years. Both have also supplied me with valuable information about Aigeira and the excavations. I also want to thank especially Georg Ladstätter (ÖAI-Athens), who supports my study at Aigeira and who frankly shared his knowledge on Ancient Aigeira. John Papadopoulos provided me with important information on Achaian pottery in general. Guy Sanders and Ioulia Tzounou-Herbst made a stay at the dighthouse at Corinth possible, where I was able to study Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age pottery from Corinth and Korakou and was provided with important additional information on Corinthian fabrics. Dora Katsonopoulou kindly showed me pottery from here excavations at Helike. Furthermore I do want to thank Gudrun Klebinder-Gauß, John Papadopoulos, Florian Ruppenstein, Jeremy B. Rutter, Rudolfine Smetana and Eva Alram-Stern, for their advice and constructive criticism. David Scahill kindly read and edited the final draft of the text.

This paper is dedicated to the memory of my grandparents Barbara and Walter who were much interested in my work at Aigeira.

¹ Reports on its stratigraphic sequence and the rich Late Bronze Age pottery finds have been published since 1985 (ALZINGER UND MITARBEITER 1985. – ALRAM-STERN 1985. – ALRAM-STERN 1987. – DEGER-JALKOTZY 1991. – ALRAM-STERN 2003. – DEGER-JALKOTZY 2003a. – DEGER-JALKOTZY 2003b) and the first volume of the Acropolis publications was printed in 2006, dealing mainly with the pre-Mycenaean finds (ALRAM-STERN – DEGER-JALKOTZY 2006).

² ALZINGER UND MITARBEITER 1985, 407–408 with further references. – See also SCHACHERMEYER 1976, 156–157 and SCHACHERMEYER 1980, 51–2, 68–72, 120, 268.

tant to note that most likely no architectural remains from the Early Iron Age survived the later building activities of the Archaic period on the Acropolis plateau.³ Due to this absence the remains at the saddle, plus the stratigraphic sequence and related finds are of major importance for the early history of Aigeira and its development from Bronze Age to Iron Age.

The various settlement phases of the Acropolis plateau and those from the Lower Saddle are compared with each other in Fig. 4. The grey coloured background covers the time between the latest attested architectural remains of the Late Bronze Age settlement Phase II and the Late Geometric or Early Archaic remains of Phase III that could belong to the historical sanctuary.⁴ One of the few finds associated with an early sanctuary are fragments of a bronze tripod (Fig. 5),⁵ found on the Lower Saddle in a post-Mycenaean stratum of presumably Late Geometric to Early Archaic date, fragments of some spits and a few feet from large kraters, dated around 700 B.C.⁶ The tripod, however, was attributed to the 9th century B.C. based on a stylistic comparison with tripods from Olympia.⁷ The archaeological context of this important find has not been checked yet, but during the study season we came across other Late Geometric and early Archaic finds.⁸ These fragments are the first clear evidence for activity on the site since the Late Bronze Age.⁹ One of the few Late Geometric finds identified so far is from a krater (Fig. 6:1), decorated with multiple zigzags. Most interesting is the rim fragment of a vessel John Papadopoulos termed “Achaian Vapheio cup” (Fig. 6:2),¹⁰ a rare Archaic shape found in southern Italy and also occasionally in Greece.¹¹ Other vessels date to the Archaic period and are Corinthian, like the skyphos (Fig. 6:4),¹² or are representatives of the emerging Achaian pottery style,¹³ like the fragments of a large krater (Fig. 6:5).¹⁴ All the pottery shown, was found close to surface and immediately beyond the Acropolis rock, and might have slid or fallen down from there.

The documentation of the excavation at the Lower Saddle is sometimes problematic, as for instance little or no records are kept on the amount and character of the discarded material. The pottery is generally speaking badly worn, often crusted with sinter, scattered and fragmentary, with only a few complete profiles. Therefore it is difficult to date and further problems

³ DEGER-JALKOTZY 2003a, 54 on the excavation on the Acropolis plateau. For a continuation of settlement activity there see DEGER-JALKOTZY 1991, 28–29 fig. 3.

⁴ SCHWARZ 1991. – See in particular MAZARAKIS-AINIAN 1997, 164–166 with a critical summary on the evidence of the early sanctuary at the Acropolis.

⁵ ALZINGER UND MITARBEITER 1985, 449–450 fig. 43; 450 n. 22 with references on similar tripods in Ithaca and Olympia. – See also MAZARAKIS-AINIAN 1997, 165 n. 1183 referring to: ALZINGER 1981/82, 12 fig. 4. – MORGAN 1990, 65, who notes: “The only surviving bronze tripod fragment (from Aigeira) is hard to date, yet appears closer Ithakan rather than Olympian styles.”

⁶ MAZARAKIS-AINIAN 1997, 165 n. 1184 referring to: ALZINGER 1988, 23 and ALZINGER UND MITARBEITER 1986, 326–329; 328 figs. 118–119.

⁷ ALZINGER UND MITARBEITER 1985, 449–450.

⁸ The archaeological evidence goes well together with the oldest reported evidence in literature (apart from Homer). A victor from Hyperiseia at the 23. Olympic Games of 688 B.C. is reported by Pausanias; see ALZINGER UND MITARBEITER 1985, 450 n. 23. – On the ancient sources see HAINZMANN 2001 with further references.

⁹ See also MAZARAKIS-AINIAN 1997, who concludes (165–166 with ns. 1186–1187): “There is no palpable evidence, however, that the acropolis was continuously occupied from LH III C to the EIA. It is perhaps in the EA [Early Archaic, WG] that the acropolis was exclusively devoted to cult practice, while Aigeira later became the cult centre of the Achaian ethnos.”

¹⁰ PAPAPOPOULOS 2003.

¹¹ For references see PAPAPOPOULOS 2003. – Ano Mazaraki: GADLOU 2002, 180 cat. no. 57a, pls. 1; 12. – PAPAPOPOULOS 2003, 420–421, fig. 9.

¹² RISSER 2001, 58 cat. no. 110 (C-57-524); pl. 9:110. For chronology of the dotted bands Risser notes that it is “rare by the middle of the 6th century and virtually nonexistent in the second half” (RISSER 2001, 25). C-57-524 is dated to the second quarter or mid 6th century BC (58 cat. no. 110).

¹³ PAPAPOPOULOS 2001.

¹⁴ See PAPAPOPOULOS 2001, 395 fig. 15 for similarly decorated vessels.

arise, when looking for parallels, as most published pottery comes from tombs, whereas settlement contexts are rare, especially at eastern and western Achaia and the Sikyonia. Finally one has to be aware of the fact that scholars have suggested varying dates for one and the same feature or comparison. How difficult the situation is, particularly in Early Iron Age Achaia, is demonstrated by the almost total absence of Achaian sites in the book “Protogeometric Aegean”, a recent study by Irene Lemos.¹⁵

In 2006 the finds of the excavation grid B1 were chosen to start with, as that grid produced the largest amount of material and the longest stratigraphic sequence, up to two and more meters from today’s ground level. Most of the pottery illustrated, was found in grid B1, but some of the best and most interesting fragments are surface finds or come from other grids that have not yet been studied in full detail. In the following part I will first describe the two most important fabrics and then analyse some of the open and closed vessels.

The inspection of the fresh break resulted in the differentiation of various macroscopic groups, and two of them are of interest for our aims (Figs. 7, 8). Pottery of the first group, macroscopic group **MG 1**, is usually of a light buff colour that could sometimes change to light pinkish (Fig. 7). The fabric has a soft, sometimes powdery surface that can easily be scratched with the fingernail. The grain size is small and on the unpainted surface there are usually very few, sometimes even no visible inclusions. The few existing ones are small sized chalky white and beige. The fresh break is slightly uneven, sometimes even porous and has usually no inclusions apart from very occasional beige rounded ones, most likely clay pellets. The clay (after all) seems to be very similar to the Corinthian.¹⁶ The other macroscopic group of importance, **MG 13** (Fig. 8), has a different colour, usually dark reddish brown to dark orange red. The surface is often soft and very powdery and the paint flakes off. In some cases however, the fabric was fired very hard. The fabric can be very fine to medium fine. The grains of the very fine variety are of smaller size than those of MG 1 and almost all fragments do have very small sized sparkling inclusions that reflect light in the sun. Apart from that, very few black inclusions have been isolated at the surface. The fresh break of the very fine version is almost even and no inclusions at all have been identified so far.¹⁷ The fine to medium version has occasional chalky white inclusions, as seen on the image. A search for the fabric in nearby areas was partly successful as the same fabric was found at Helike in post-Mycenaean layers.¹⁸ A search for comparisons within Late Bronze Age or Iron Age pottery stored at the museum of Corinth was only partly successful. Thanks to the kindness of Dr. Joulia Tzounou-Herbst, also some of the finds

¹⁵ LEMOS 2002. Derveni close to Aigion and at a distance of ca. 20 km from Aigeira is shown on Map 2 (201) but not mentioned neither in the index nor in the text, pp. 200–201. The situation in Achaia is described by COLDSTREAM 1998, 323: “During the next three centuries the Achaeans present us with an age that is ‘darker’ than in most parts of Aegean Greece, and an archaeological record that is still very patchy.” – COULSON 1986, 20, 55 notes parallels to Messenian DA I and DA II. – MAYR 1992, 177 notes relations to Corinthian EG and MG. For Derveni see also below note 50. Other EAI pottery from Achaia has been published by DEKOULAKOU 1973 and DEKOULAKOU 1984. The work of Anastasia Gadolou and her study on the Geometric and Archaic pottery from Achaia will contribute much to the better understanding of Achaia in the Early Iron Age (GADLOU 2008). A few fragments of EIA vessels have already been illustrated by Gadolou: LPG skyphoi from Aigion (GADLOU 2002, pl. 9 AM 1588a–c; pl. 12 AM 1567. – EG open vessel (GADLOU 2002, pl. 9 AM 12806).

¹⁶ This impression was confirmed by a personal study of Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age pottery from Corinth and Korakou (5.–7.2.2007).

¹⁷ We have yet not been able to compare this fabric with fabric of the Late Geometric kraters found in the cistern on the Acropolis (ALZINGER UND MITARBEITER 1986, 326–329. – ALZINGER 1988, 23. – SCHWARZ 2001). The fabric description of cat. no. 1 (E 114/79) seems similar, judging from following description (ALZINGER UND MITARBEITER 1986, 327): “Ton rötlich mit beigem Überzug und dunkelbraunem Firnis. Überzug innen orange, dunkelbraun gestrahnt. Schlecht gebrannt. [...] Da der Ton nicht korinthisch ist, möchte man am ehesten an eine lokale Produktion denken.”

¹⁸ Dora Katsonopoulou was so kind to offer me the opportunity to see recently excavated material from Helike.

from the site of Dorati¹⁹ near Sikyon were inspected and one fragment closely resembles the macroscopic group MG 13 from Aigeira. A very similar fragment was also found at the Demeter and Kore sanctuary at Corinth presumably dated to Protogeometric.²⁰ A large closed vessel from Korakou described by Jeremy Rutter as potential import from Achaia is different in respect of fabric, hardness and colour.²¹ To present the chronological distribution of both macroscopic groups at Aigeira is remarkable, as the first group is most commonly found within Mycenaean, Archaic and Classical pottery. The other group is by far less frequent and often small sized and very fragmentary, usually solidly painted and therefore difficult to date. The shapes seem to be limited mainly to deep bowls with rim diameters between 11 and 20 cm, kraters with rim diameters up to 50 cm and a few narrow necked jars. Most interesting is the fact that until now no pattern painted Mycenaean fragments or other unambiguous Mycenaean shapes, such as kylikes or stirrup jars, have been identified in this fabric. As a working hypothesis, I would like to assume that pottery of this fabric is basically of post Mycenaean date.

Regarding the distribution of vessel shapes found at the Lower Saddle it is interesting to note that kylikes (Fig. 9) are almost absent and no examples have a swollen or ribbed stem, like for examples the well known kylikes from Olympia or Ithaca. The ribbed stems appear occasionally in LH III C Middle²² and they are very popular in the Early Iron Age pottery of the southwestern Peloponnes.²³ Slightly inturning kylix rims are almost absent as well²⁴ (Fig. 9:4). They are, however, known since in LH III C Early²⁵ and continue within the Early Iron Age pottery from Olympia for example.²⁶ Carinated bowls or carinated kylikes (Fig. 9:6–7) are almost absent as well, but well known at the Acropolis in Phases Ia and Ib.²⁷ Therefore I assume that their almost total absence at the Lower Saddle most likely indicates a later stage of this pottery.²⁸

Few kraters are present and a selection of them is illustrated here (Fig. 10). All fragments have a solidly painted interior and the rims show different shapes: some are decorated with an incised plastic band or rib below the rim (Fig. 10:3–4), a feature first noted in LH III C Middle pottery.²⁹ One example has a plain rib and is pictorial, depicting presumably a birds' head (Fig. 10:5). Only a few pattern painted fragments are preserved, maybe due to the bad state of preservation. The patterns found on body fragments consist of triglyphs (Fig. 10:1–2), spirals

¹⁹ Ioulia Tzounou-Herbst was so kind to show me this fragment (unpainted surface 5YR 6/6, personal inspection 5.2.2007) that will be published in detail in the forthcoming report in *Hesperia* on the survey of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens at Dorati. – For Dorati see MARCHAND 2002.

²⁰ PFAFF 1999, 78 cat. no. 19 (C-71-303); fig. 6. The fragment originates from a closed vessel, its shoulder is pattern painted with cross hatching. The soft fabric is similar to those from Aigeira, but less red in colour (surface 5YR 6/6, personal inspection 5.2.2007). The surface is polished on the exterior and smoothed on the interior; sparkling inclusions are visible, even without direct sunlight.

²¹ The suspected Achaian import CP 129 from Korakou (RUTTER 1974, 363, 381–382) is different in colour, fabric and hardness. The colour of the unpainted surface is 2.5 YR 5.5/4 (RUTTER 1974) to 2.5 YR 6/4 (personal inspection 5.2.2007).

²² EDER 2006, 147 with n. 17. Swollen stems on conical kylikes FS 275 are known since LH III C Middle. – See *MDP*, 172 fig. 222:1 (Lefkandi 66/P302, Phase 2a).

²³ See EDER 2006, 146–154.

²⁴ EDER 2006, 147 n. 16 with further references.

²⁵ *MDP*, 148 conical kylix FS 274, fig. 187:2–3 (Lefkandi 66/P209; 65/P103 Phase 1b). Both examples are solidly painted on the interior and exterior. The Lefkandi phases quoted are those published by EVELY 2006. Kylikes with an inturning rim profile are attested also at Kalapodi from Layers 2 to 16 and most frequent in Layers 8 and 9 (LH III C Advanced, synchronised with Lefkandi Phase 2b). – See JACOB-FELSCH 1996, 50; tab. 24.

²⁶ EDER 2006, 147 n. 16 with further references to LH III C kylikes. Kylikes from Olympia see p. 150; cat. no. 7–11.

²⁷ DEGER-JALKOTZY 2003a, 64.

²⁸ Rutter notes the absence of carinated cups at the Demeter and Kore sanctuary / Terrace Wall pottery of his Phase 5 (RUTTER 1978, 60. – RUTTER 1979, 382).

²⁹ *MDP*, 174–175 (LH III C Middle, Rutter Phase 4b).

(Fig. 10:6), fringed circular motifs (Fig. 10:7–8), horizontal rows of filled triangles (Fig. 10:9), or a checkerboard pattern (Fig. 10:10). Fringed patterns seem to be typical for LH III C in Achaia. They are attested in settlement Phase II at the Acropolis but also from the final stages of LH III C at Corinth.³⁰ A continuation of fringed motifs into the Early Iron Age is proven by finds in the western Peloponnes for example at Olympia,³¹ the Ionian Islands³² or at Derveni in eastern Achaia close to Aigion.³³ It seems however, as if fringed spirals and circular motifs are most common on Late Helladic vessels, whereas in the Early Iron Age fringed triangles or compass drawn circles or semicircles are more common.³⁴ Checkerboard patterns on kraters (Fig. 10:10) are known from Late Bronze and Early Iron Age and therefore difficult to date.³⁵ The pattern of the horizontally arranged filled triangles (Fig. 10:9) is, to my knowledge, not attested within the Mycenaean pottery on kraters,³⁶ but known in the Attic and Euboean Proto-geometric pottery.³⁷ There, however, the pattern occurs usually as single motif or is separated with horizontal bands from the next row.³⁸ White Ware attested at the Acropolis Phase II, is so far almost absent, maybe again an indication for the overall late stage of the pottery from the Lower Saddle.³⁹

Rim sherds of bowls and deep bowls are most common and their diameters vary between 10 and 20 cm (Figs. 11, 12). Most examples are solidly painted on the exterior and interior. Some examples have an up to 2 cm wide band at the rim (Fig. 11:1,3) and only a few are pattern painted (Fig. 11:1–2). Short vertical bars on the interior of the rim are attested once (Fig. 11:2). All handles so far seen are solidly painted, again a late feature.⁴⁰ Two kinds of rim profile can be differentiated: the first has a flaring, somewhat s-curved rim profile (Fig. 11:6–7). The second is hardly curved but rather straight sided. The upper body and shoulder is sometimes even slightly inturning and the rim could end in a pronounced rounded lip. The latter version is also found within the second macroscopic group. So far only one rim fragment has a reserved band on the interior side immediately below the lip (Fig. 12:1), a feature typical for the latest stages

³⁰ RUTTER 1979, 359 fig. 4:8; 361–362 cat. no. 8.

³¹ For fringed motifs see COLDSTREAM 1968, 222. A krater from Olympia is decorated with large fringed concentric circles (EDER 2006, 238 cat. no. 292; pl. 67:292). – EDER 2006, 181 n. 187 refers to a large closed vessel from the Heroon at Lefkandi also decorated with fringed concentric circles.

³² Ithaca (COLDSTREAM 1968, pl. 47f; Ithaca PG).

³³ COLDSTREAM 1968 pl. 48j. – Further references regarding Derveni see below note 50.

³⁴ See for example: LEMOS 2002, pl. 49:1 (Toumba, T.48); pl. 84:2 (Toumba, building fill); pl. 93:4 (Toumba, T.1).

³⁵ See motif FM 56:1,2 (checkers) and FM 75:7,19,34 (triglyph). Motif FM 56:1 originates from a pictorial krater, found at Mycenae (FURTWÄNGLER – LOESCHKE 1886, pl. 34:341), FM 56:2 is from a pictorial deep bowl from Asine (FURTWÄNGLER – LOESCHKE 1886, pl. 39:402), both fragments are dated by Furumark to LH III C:1. A pictorial krater with a checker motif was found at Kalapodi (JACOB-FELSCH 1996, 36–37, 146 cat. no. 231; pl. 36:231) in Layer 10, attributed to LH III C (FELSCH 1996b, XVI). At Olympia a body fragment of a krater was found (EDER 2006, 181; 239 cat. no. 297; pls. 68, 79). At Messenia a pictorial krater was dated either to LH III C Late (COULSON 1986, 81 fig. 2:2. – *RMDP*, 359) or PG (EDER 2006, 181 n. 189 referring to LEMOS 2002, 49).

Kraters and krater-bowls with checkerboard patterns are also known from the fill of the Heroon at Lefkandi. On krater-bowls it is an exceptional pattern (CATLING – LEMOS 1990, 24, pl. 15:292), and at least two published kraters have this pattern (CATLING – LEMOS 1990, 28, pl. 21:361,362). The checkerboard pattern is also found on an imported Attic skyphos fragment (CATLING – LEMOS 1990, 87, 134 cat. no. 889; pl. 43:889).

³⁶ See motif FM 61A (triangle) and motif FM 71 (elaborate triangle). A “Submycenaean” stirrup jar from Salamis has two rows of filled triangles on the shoulder (MOUNTJOY 1993, 116 fig. 338).

³⁷ For the pattern see KUNISCH 1998, 134 fig. 53d (after lekythos KÜBLER 1943, pl. 4).

³⁸ See for example: DESBOROUGH 1952, pls. 6:A (shoulder handled amphora); 7:4 (trefoil-lipped oinochoe); 8:20 (kalathos); 11:29 (skyphos). – LEMOS 2002, pls. 34:8 (skyphos); 39:10 (kalathos from Lefkandi, Palia Perivolia tomb 23).

³⁹ RUTTER 1978, 60 reports that White Ware on larger open and closed shapes in his Phase 4 at the Demeter and Kore sanctuary “now had dwindled to virtually nothing”.

⁴⁰ LH III C Early and Middle deep bowls often have only a stroke of paint at the handle; see for example *RMDP*, 157 fig. 41:315–318; 173 fig. 49:363–366.

of Mycenaean pottery.⁴¹ Only one complete profile of a much smaller sized deep bowl is preserved so far (Fig. 12:2). The body is solidly painted apart from a reserved band at the ring base, again a feature attested only once. The almost vertical rim profile and the offset lip of another fragment (Fig. 12:5) make me believe that this fragment might belong already to the Early Iron Age.⁴² The slightly incurving rims of other fragments (Fig. 12:6–7) have similarities with bowls and kantharoi of the Geometric period, for examples from Olympia.⁴³ Therefore I assume that the two fragments from Aigeira are Early Iron Age in date. As no traces of a handle are preserved, it is impossible to decide about the exact shape.⁴⁴ The almost total absence of bowls and cups with one or two vertical rim handles is surprising, as the shape is well known from Geometric and Archaic sites in the north-western Peloponnes.⁴⁵ Birgitta Eder noted a special distribution of the Protogeometric two handled bowl/kantharos in Aitolia, Elis, the Ionian Islands and Achaia⁴⁶ and an occasional appearance in the Corinthia, the Argolis and Attica.⁴⁷ Even though the Corinthian examples seem problematic to me,⁴⁸ it is obvious that the shape is attested at various surrounding sites, including Aigion⁴⁹ and nearby Derveni⁵⁰ but at Aigeira it is so far absent. Other features diagnostic for Early Iron Age pottery are at the present absent at Aigeira, namely the ribbed stems of kylikes, high conical ring feet, compass drawn circles and semi-circles and framed zigzag patterns on the shoulder between the handles.⁵¹ Interestingly all these features are known at Corinth,⁵² even though in a limited number, or at Kalapodi.⁵³

⁴¹ *RMDP*, 188. 196.

⁴² See PAPAPOPOULOS 2005, 485; fig. 157:h (Tomb T.101-8).

⁴³ EDER 2006, cat. nos. 27, 51 and 99 for example.

⁴⁴ The rim diameters vary between 14 cm (1973/109-001) and 16–18 cm (1973/109-002), and are larger than the bowls from Olympia (see below note 48).

⁴⁵ EDER 2006, 154–172 (Olympia). – PAPAPOPOULOS 2001 (Archaic). The ancestors of these vessels are Late Bronze Age (EDER 2006, 155–156 and ns. 61–63, 67). Eder notes that no fragments of kantharoi were found in the LH III C layers at the Acropolis of Aigeira (155 n. 63).

⁴⁶ EDER 2006, 156 n. 67.

⁴⁷ EDER 2006, 156 n. 68 with further references.

⁴⁸ EDER 2006, 156 n. 68 with further references. The cited example from Isthmia (MORGAN 1999, 83 cat. no. 199, pl. 26) is a rim fragment without a handle attachment. Morgan therefore attributes the fragment to a skyphos or kantharos. The rim fragment from Corinth referred to by Morgan (MORGAN 1999, 83 C-50-112 mentioned with cat. no. 199, pl. 26) is said to be from a krater with a vertical rim handle of EPG date (a suggestion made by C. Morgan, who also refers to the opinion of J. B. Rutter and K. DeVries) or a kantharos of Submycenaean date (*RMDP*, 242; 241 fig. 80:223). Its rim diameter of 24 cm is much larger than the average rim diameter, 7 to 12 cm, and only a few between 14 and 17 cm, of open vessels (bowls and cups) from Olympia.

⁴⁹ GADLOU 2002, pl. 9 (AM 1720) for a LPG kantharos from Aigion.

⁵⁰ COLDSTREAM 1968, 221–222; pl. 48 (Achaean PG, maybe one vessel pl. 48f close to Achaean LG I). – DEKOULAKOU 1973. – DEKOULAKOU 1984. – NITSCHKE 1987, 46 n. 139–143 (skyphoi with an offset rim are found at Kalapodi in Layer 30–32, EG II [FELSCH 1996b, XVI]). – MAYR 1992, 177 n. 68. (skyphoi like [COLDSTREAM 1968, pl. 48e] are found at Corinth until MG I). – COLDSTREAM 1998, 325.

⁵¹ I think that the framed zigzag pattern on skyphoi should be seen as a feature of PG (see NITSCHKE 1987, 38 n. 101 with further references and PFAFF 1999, 62–63 especially n. 18: “skyphoi with the zigzag framed with horizontal framed bands do not appear until the Protogeometric phase” with further references). – At Tiryns framed zigzags are found too (PAPADIMITROU 1988, 228 n. 8; 229 fig. 1:27; 241 fig. 6:4,7,10,29). – At Kalapodi framed zigzag patterns appear in Layers 24–27, dated to MPG (NITSCHKE 1987, 38 n. 101. – FELSCH 1996b, XVI). – And at the Athenian Kerameikos a skyphos with a framed zigzag pattern was found in Grave PG 4, dated to EPG by LEMOS 2002, pl. 7:4). It is important to note that some of the “Submycenaean” sherds from Mycenae illustrated by Mountjoy (MOUNTJOY – HANKEY 1988, 3 fig. 2 bottom line) have framed zigzags and are therefore, if from skyphoi, most likely PG.

⁵² PFAFF 1999, 62–64; 88 cat. nos. 51–2 (figs. 15; 17) and C-38-619a (figs. 17; 18). C-38-619a is one of the finds from the so called Weinberg house. The deposit and skyphos are dated by the transition of “Submycenaean”/PG or EPG: “Submycenaean”/PG: *RMDP*, 242 cat. no. 228; 241 fig. 80), who states: “The framed wavy line of 228 is a Protogeometric feature.” – EPG or PG: MORGAN 1999, 252 and n. 13. – PFAFF 1999, 63 n. 18; 87.

The most common closed vessels are narrow necked jars with a variety of rim profiles (Fig. 13:1–7). Hollowed rims are present and very common, as are thickened and rounded rims (Fig. 13:1–4). Other typical Late Bronze and Early Iron Age vessels are represented only in a few examples such as small jugs or stirrup jars (Fig. 13:8–9) or are totally absent, such as trefoil-mouthed jugs.⁵⁴ Nevertheless the few examples are important for the latest Bronze Age and Early Iron Age activity. The shoulder fragment, shows a hand drawn multiple semi-circle at the shoulder zone (Fig. 13:9). The body fragment is from a closed vessel, presumably from an amphoriskos or jug, maybe decorated with fringed triangles (Fig. 13:10) and from another closed vessel, decorated with a vertical row of fringed triangles (Fig. 13:11). Interestingly there is so far no evidence for cooking pottery such as tripods or for handmade and burnished pottery. However the latter is attested at the Acropolis in all three settlement phases.⁵⁵

The most important (preliminary) results may be summarized as follows: At the so called Lower Saddle at Aigeira, there is evidence for LH III C Middle and Late pottery, mainly deep bowls and kraters, a few of them have plain or incised plastic bands below the rim. One exceptional fragment is pictorial but not well preserved and presumably depicting a bird. Other pattern painted pieces like the framed motifs or the checkerboard pattern are difficult to date, as the patterns are known in the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age. The range of closed shapes is very limited. Narrow necked jars are present, showing a whole variety of rim profiles. Lekythoi are very rare and stirrup jars are rare. One shoulder fragment of a stirrup jar is decorated with handdrawn multiple semicircles. Trefoil mouthed jars are so far totally absent. The same is true for diagnostic kitchen ware, such as tripods and jars or handmade and burnished pottery. Features unambiguous for the Early Iron Age, such as high conical feet, deep bowls with compass drawn circles or framed zigzag patterns are absent, as are so far kantharoi and cups with vertical rim handles. However, there are a few fragments of Early Iron Age date. Deep bowls with a vertical or a slightly incurving profile and a rounded offset rim, a krater with the filled triangles, and maybe an amphoriskos or jug with fringed triangles. Furthermore we assume that the pottery of macroscopic group MG 13 is likely to be Early Iron Age in date.

The limited amount of Early Iron Age pottery clearly identified at present makes one wonder, to what extent the Acropolis and Lower Saddle area were continuously used from the latest stages of the Bronze Age to the Late Geometric and Early Archaic period. Hopefully our future studies and a continuation of excavation work at the Lower Saddle will cover this gap.⁵⁶

Another fragment from the so called Weinberg house originates from a closed vessel and is clearly handmade (C38-620). It is decorated with multiple triangles at the shoulder zone, a thick solidly painted zone below and below that again an unpainted zone (*RMPD*, 241 fig. 80:221). This vessel was recognized already by Weinberg as unusual. He noted in the catalogue: “The handmade, glazed jug is unusual in this context, but the variegated streaky glaze and the decoration are best placed in the Submycenaean period.” After personal inspection (5.2.2007) I could well imagine that C38-620 is not of Latest Bronze Age but of Early Helladic III date. Closed handmade vessels, solidly painted in the zone below the shoulder and pattern painted with multiple triangles are well known in Early Helladic III. – See RUTTER 1995, 552–563 pattern VIII.

⁵³ NITSCHKE 1987, 38 fig. 60:7 (Layer 24/27, MPG according to FELSCH 1996b, XVI). Framed zigzag patterns appear in Kalapodi in Layers 24–27, in MPG (FELSCH 1996b, XVI). – NITSCHKE 1987, 38 n. 101 with further references to Corinth and Asine.

⁵⁴ JACOB-FELSCH 1996, 61 with further references (n. 242–252). – See RUTTER 1977, 3–4 (Phases 3 and 4a). – *MDP*, 155 for a first appearance in LH III C Middle, Developed).

⁵⁵ See the most recent comment on the handmade burnished pottery by JUNG 2006, 43–46

⁵⁶ See also COLDSTREAM 1998, 325: “It still remains hard, however, to estimate how much time ought to be allowed for the lacuna between the Protogeometric and Late Geometric styles in Achaia, and this problem will remain with us until much more material is available from published studies of well-documented excavations, especially of single graves, which form the sinews of relative chronology.”

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Fig. 1 Aigeira: Acropolis and excavation area of the so called Lower Saddle (right arrow)

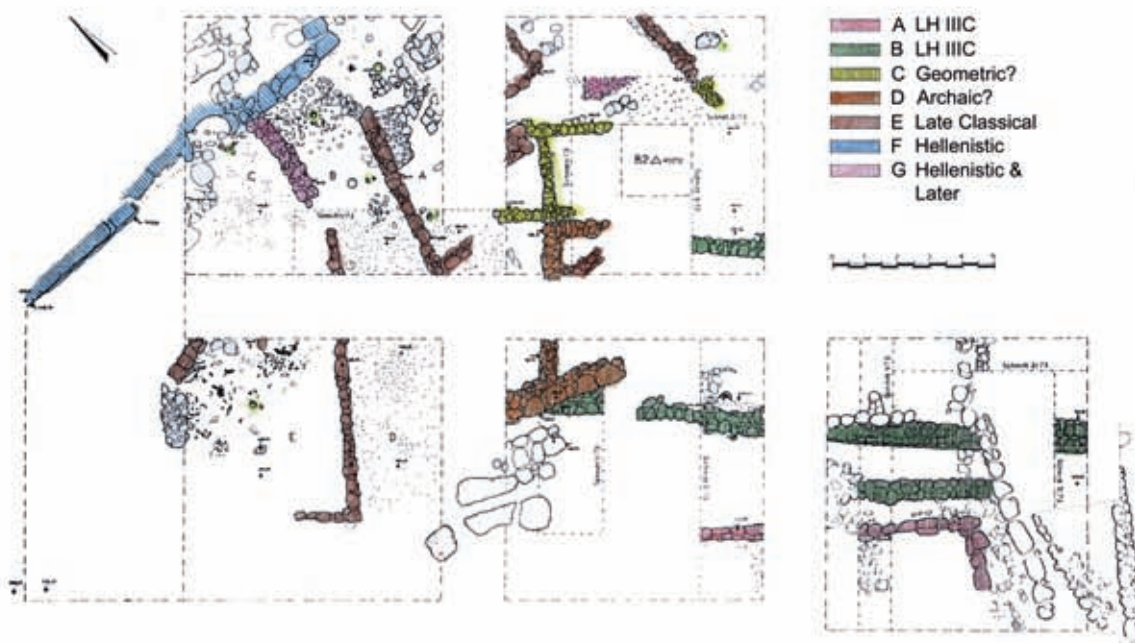


Fig. 2 Aigeira: Plan of the architectural phases at the Lower Saddle



Fig. 3 Aigeira: 1975 excavation at the Lower Saddle

Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age Stratigraphy

<i>Phases/Periods</i>	<i>Settlement Sequence Acropolis</i>	<i>"Saddle"</i>
LH IIIC Early	Ia Ib	A
LH IIIC Middle (Developed)	Ib	B
LH IIIC Middle (Advanced)	II	
LH IIIC Late	↓	↓
LH IIIC Late/Submycenaean		↑
PG		
(EG)		C
(MG)		
LG		↓
	III	

Fig. 4 Aigeira: Settlement phases at the Acropolis and the Lower Saddle

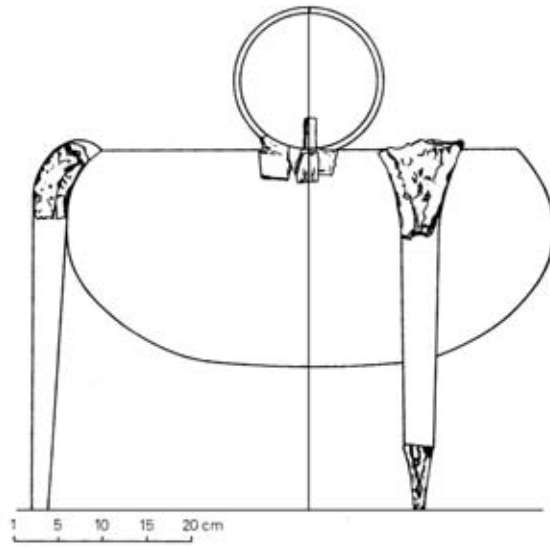


Fig. 5 Bronze tripod

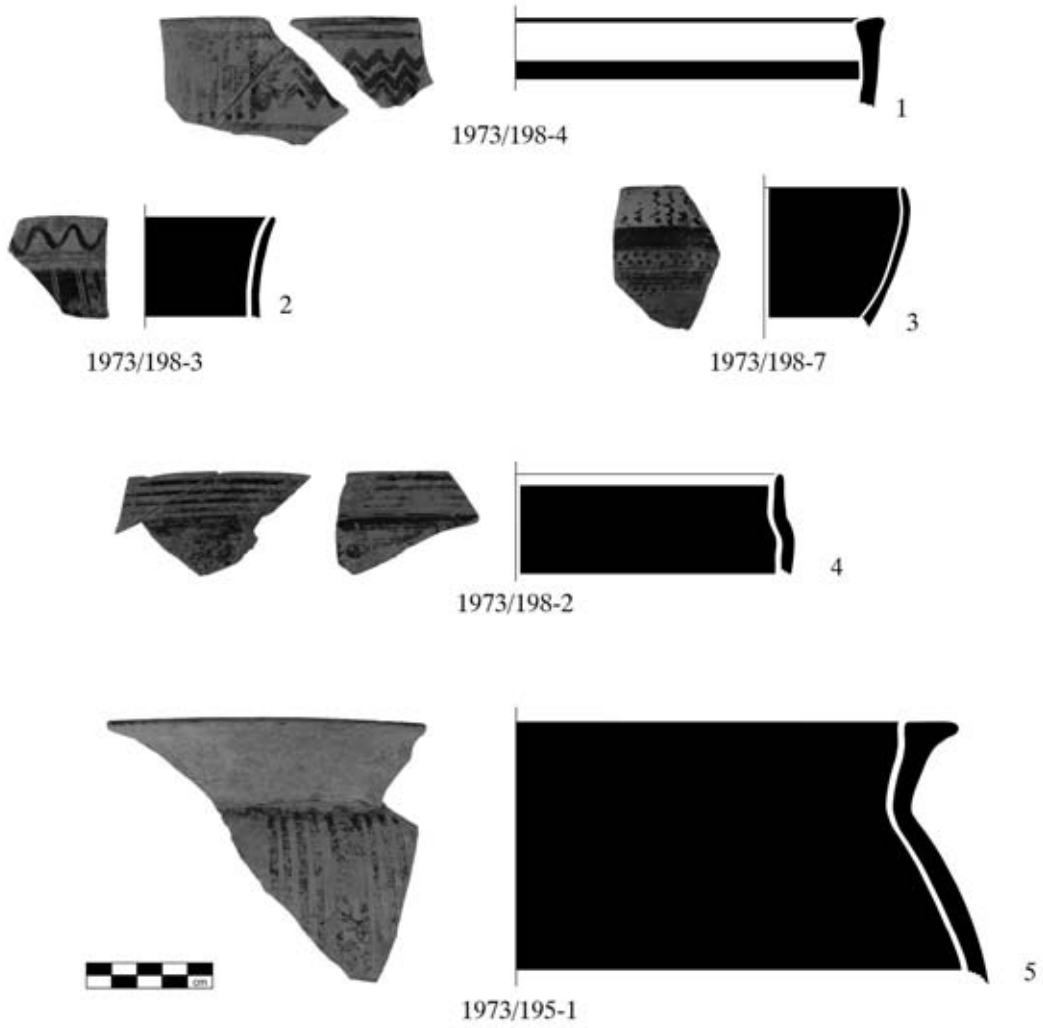


Fig. 6 Late Geometric and Archaic pottery



Fig. 7 Macroscopic group MG 1

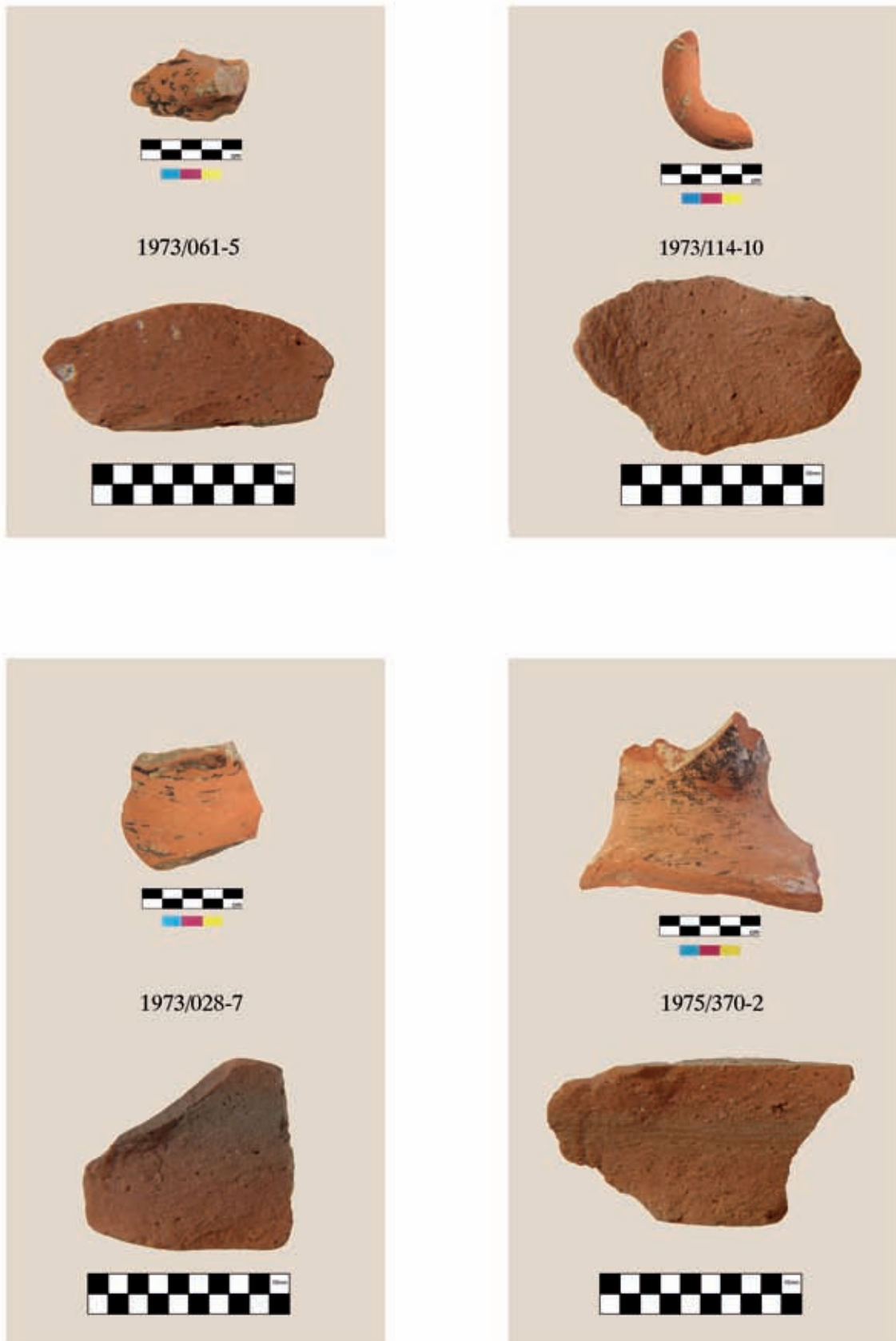


Fig. 8 Macroscopic group MG 13

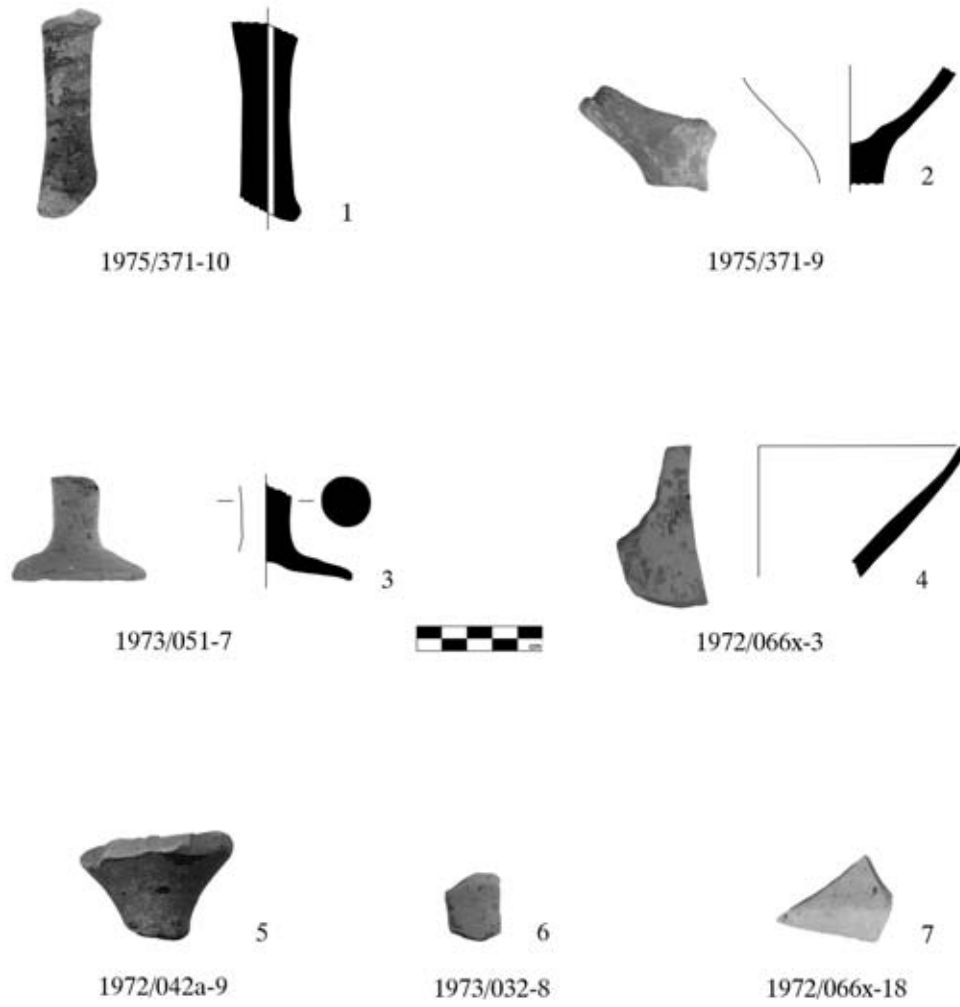


Fig. 9 Open shapes: kylikes and carinated vessels

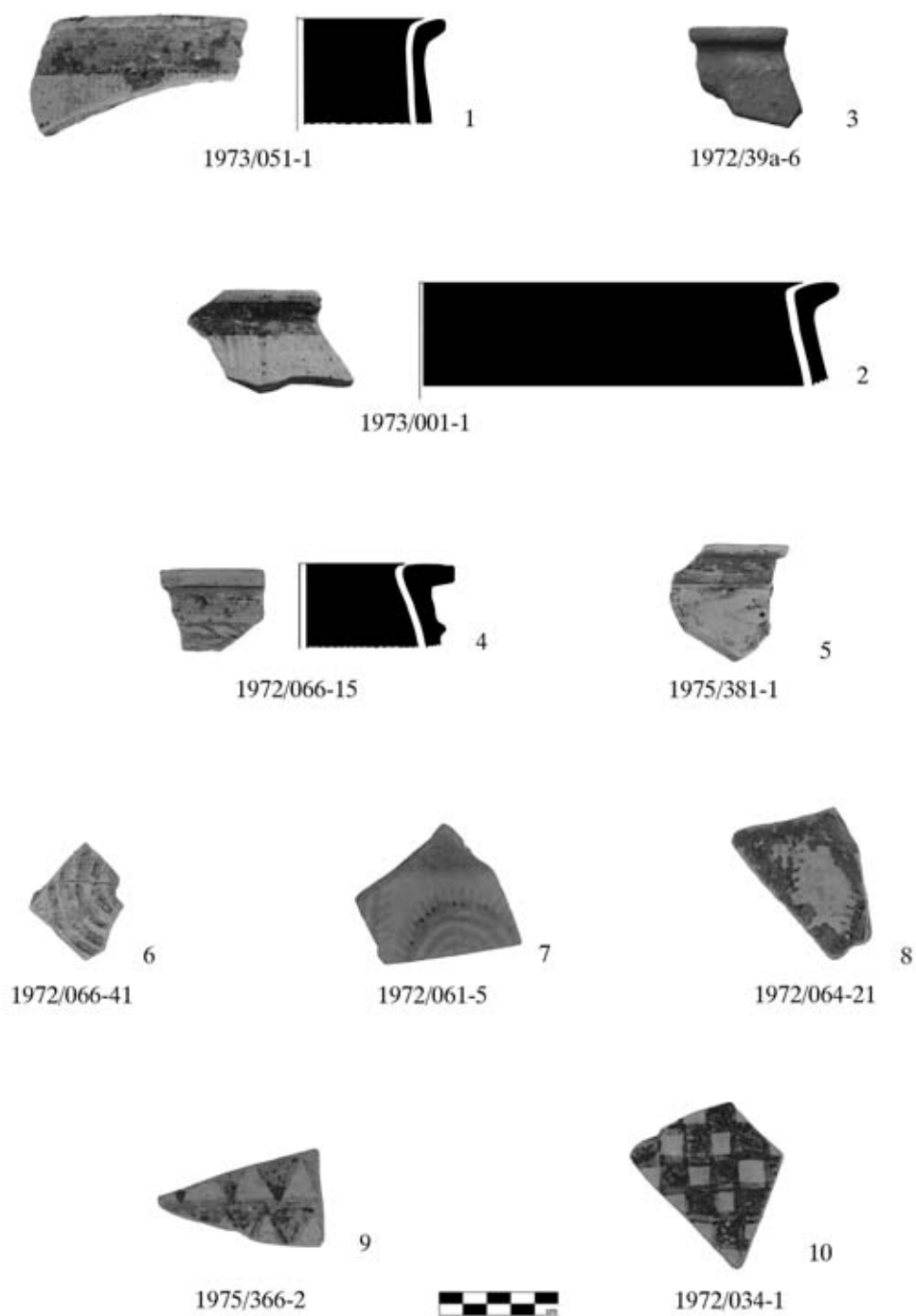


Fig. 10 Open shapes: kraters

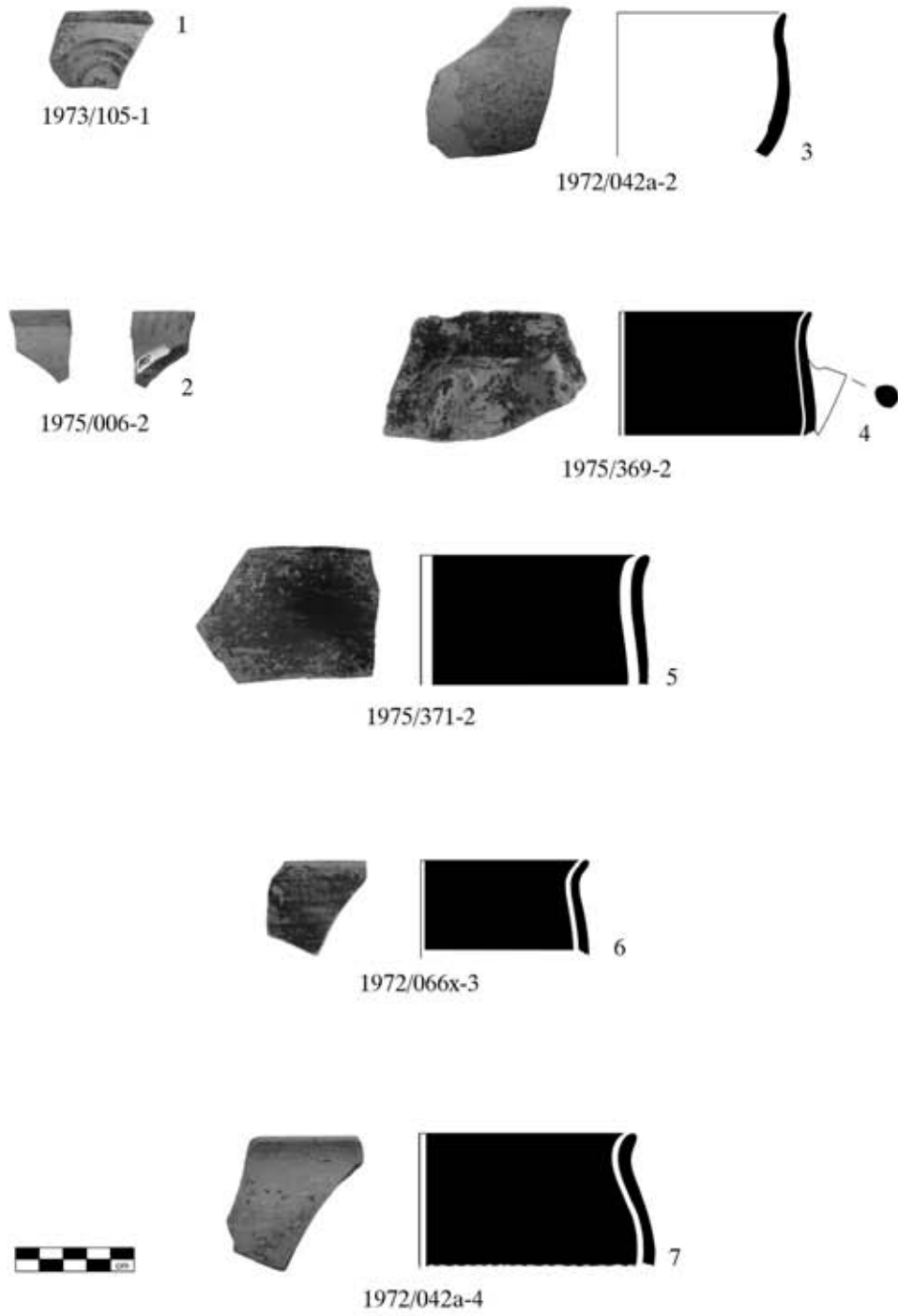


Fig. 11 Open shapes: deep bowls and bowls

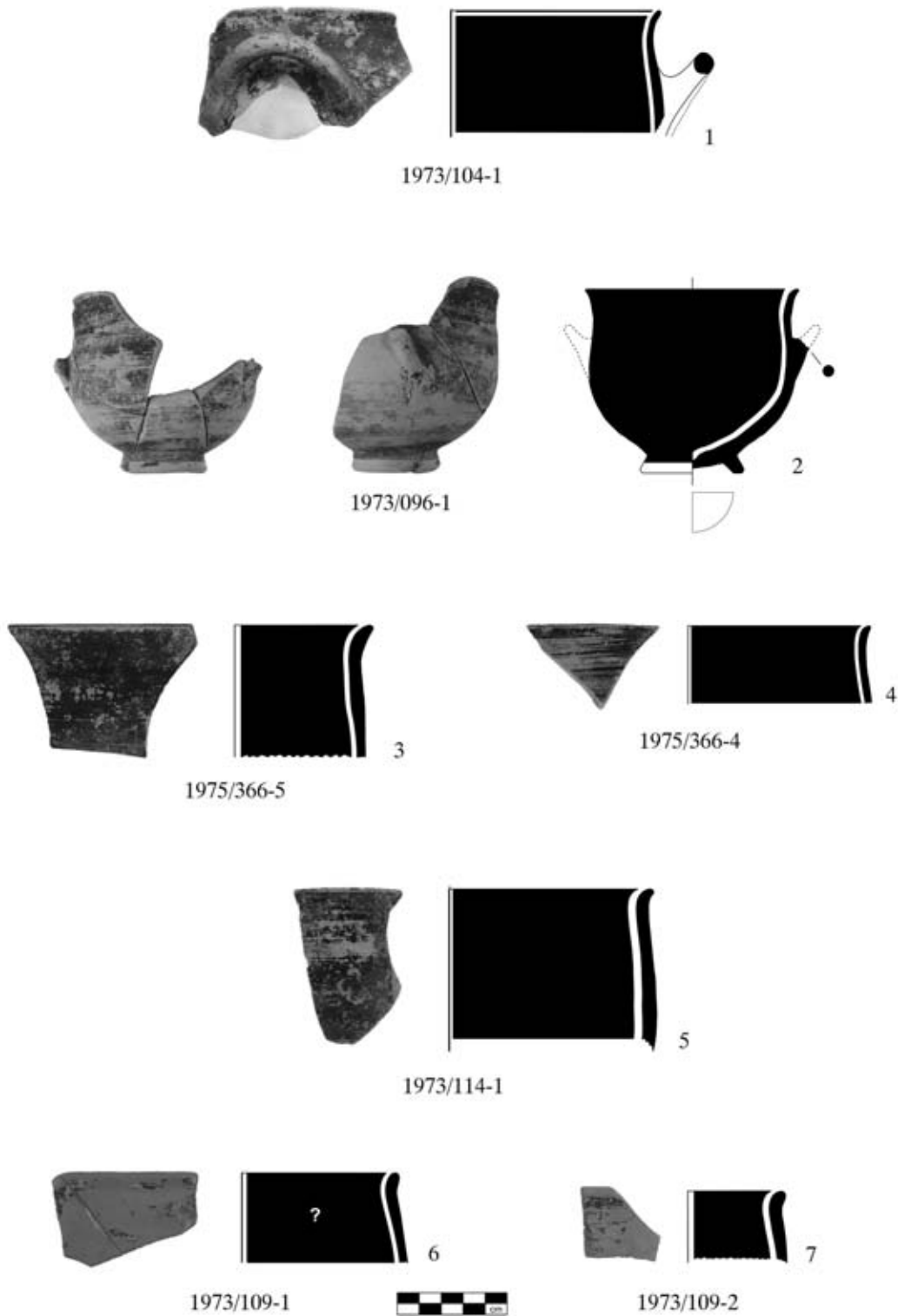


Fig. 12 Open shapes: deep bowls and bowls

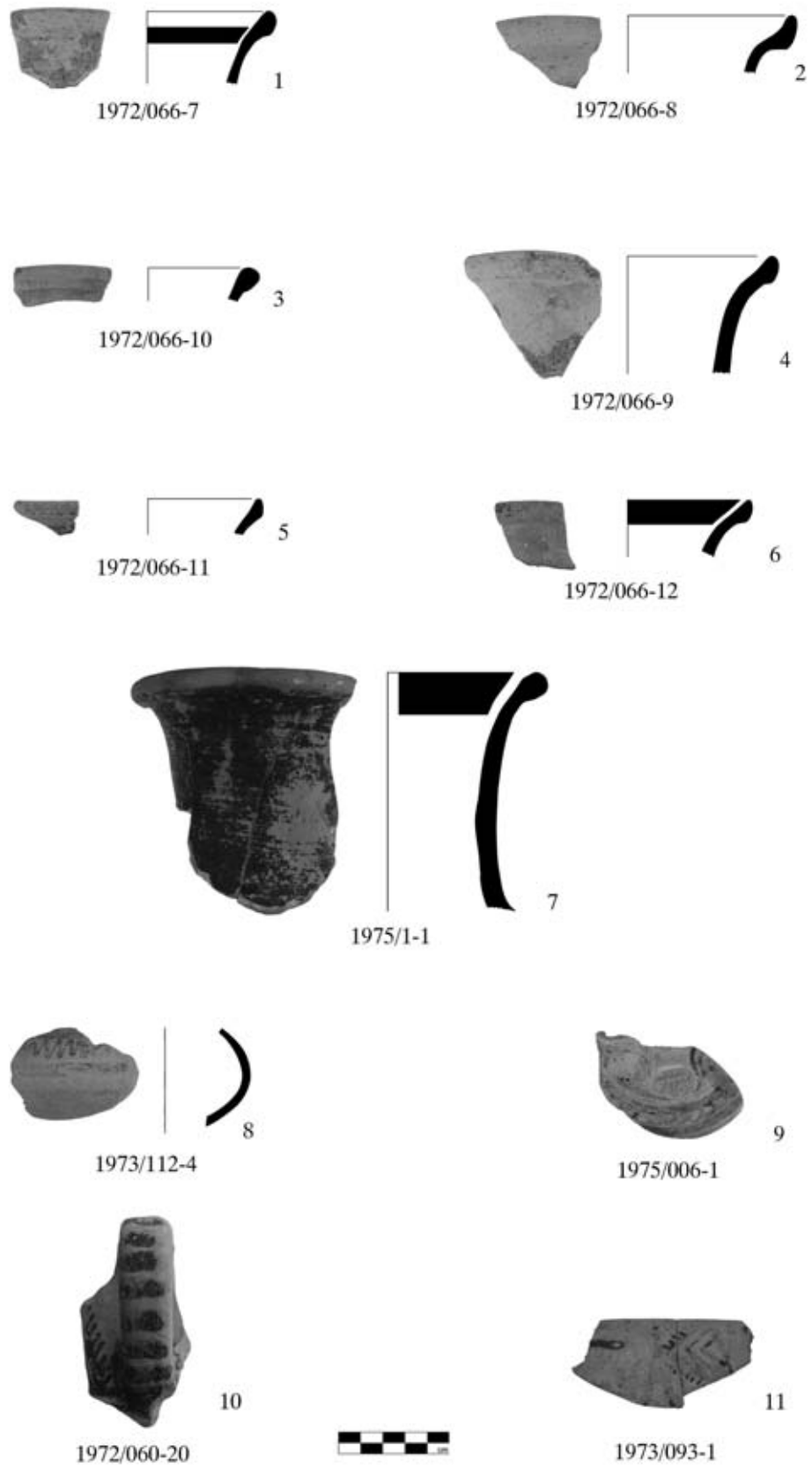


Fig. 13 Closed shapes