

Kadmeia, Thebes: The Pottery from a Storeroom Destroyed at the End of the Mycenaean Palatial Period

*Eleni Andrikou*¹

Abstract: In 1997, in the plot of the Municipal Conference Centre (MCC) of Thebes on the N-NW part of the Kadmeia Hill, the contents of a Mycenaean storeroom were partially excavated, about 250m N-NW of the Kadmeion. It comprised a bronze corselet, an agate seal depicting a cow suckling her calf, traces of melted lead and pottery. All the items had fallen from a higher level and were found in a fill of red earth, probably deriving from the disintegrated mud-bricks. Areas of black earth with charred wood and signs of burning on several of the finds indicate fire as the cause of destruction. Thirty-five vases were complete or nearly complete: twenty-four of coarse or plain ware (storage vessels, lamps, a small amphora, shallow cups, ladles, kylikes), ten decorated closed vessels (stirrup jars, jugs, a hydria, a based askos, a small amphora), and one Group A deep bowl. The pottery is dated to the end of the LH IIIB period, when some features of the LH IIIC Early pottery had already appeared. The pottery from the storeroom is discussed in connection with pottery groups from other sites in Thebes as well as from other Mycenaean palatial centers.

Keywords: Mycenaean pottery, Thebes, Kadmeia, end of Mycenaean palaces

After the House of Kadmos was revealed by Antonios Keramopoulos² in the period between 1906 and 1929 on top of the Kadmeia Hill (Fig. 1.1), intense excavations from 1960 onwards brought to light several parts of the Mycenaean settlement at Thebes. The picture gained is fragmentary, not only due to the rescue character of the excavations represented by random trenches in the entire town following modern building activity but also because it is mainly based on preliminary reports.

In 1995–1997 the plot where the Municipal Conference Center (MCC) of Thebes was later erected had been excavated (Fig. 1.6). The plot is situated on the N-NW slope of the Kadmeia Hill, on Loukas Bellos and Threpsiadis Sts., about 250m from the Kadmeion. On top of the hill, above the excavated area, stands the church of Ayios Georgios in the homonymous square, 9.16m higher than Loukas Bellos St.

The ceramic contents of a storeroom destroyed by fire will be presented and compared to other pottery groups from Thebes and other – mainly palatial – Mycenaean sites. The deposit was devoid of later intrusions and represents the stage of the final collapse of the Mycenaean Palatial system in Thebes. For comparison, three excavations in Thebes have been selected, where the palatial character is clear and publication or more detailed references to the pottery exist. These sites are situated at a distance of 100–250m to the SE and SW of the Kadmeion. The two most remote sites (MCC plot, 1 Oedipus St. plot) are approximately 450m apart:

- The plot on Epaminondas and Democritus (former Metaxas) Sts. (Fig.1.3), where a building comprising a Linear B tablet archive was excavated.³
- The plot at 1 Oedipus St. (Fig.1.4), where three buildings destroyed by fire at the end of LH IIIB2 were excavated in 1981 and 1983.⁴ For Building III, the excavator identified an

¹ Head of the Ephorate of Antiquities of East Attica – Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports, Greece; e-mail: eandrikou@culture.gr.

² Keramopoulos 1909; Keramopoulos 1930.

³ Spyropoulos – Chadwick 1975.

⁴ Piteros 1988; Piteros 1989.

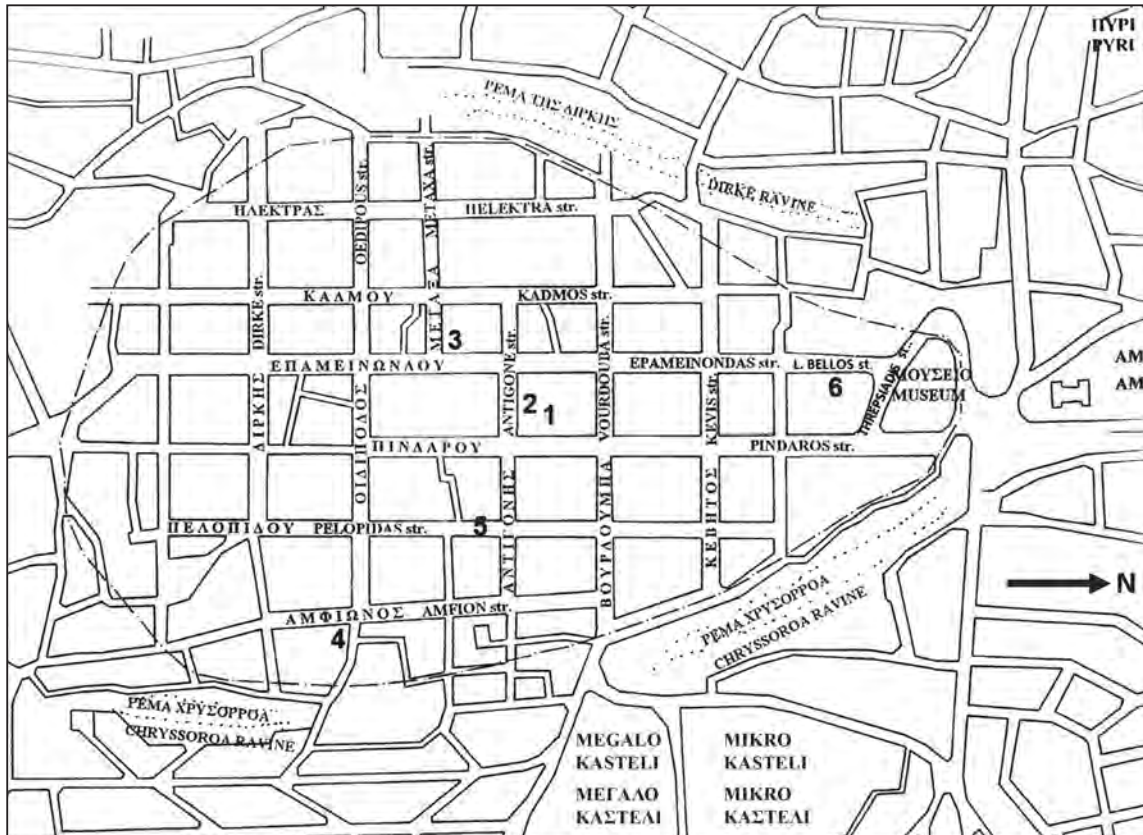


Fig. 1 Map of Kadmeia Hill. 1. Old Kadmeion; 2. New Kadmeion; 3. Epaminondas and Democritus Sts. Plot; 4. 1 Oedipus St. plot; 5. Pelopidas St. excavation; 6. MCC plot.

earlier destruction level also caused by fire, dating to LH IIIB1. A group of 60 clay sealings, 56 of them inscribed in Linear B, is connected to this earlier destruction.⁵

- The excavation below the surface of Pelopidas St. (Fig.1.5), where another Linear B tablet archive has been revealed.⁶ The study of the pottery led to the dating of the archive to the end of LH IIIB2. Habitation levels from LH IIIA2, LH IIIC Early and LH IIIC Middle also existed.⁷

On the MCC plot (Fig. 2), dense occupation with substantial architectural remains from all Byzantine periods was attested by the 1st Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities.⁸ Pottery from the Classical and Hellenistic periods indicates that some of the fragmentary walls date to these periods.⁹ The Mycenaean layer was attested in the south and in the central part of the excavation. Middle Helladic architectural finds were rather poor and restricted to the southern part and the central-eastern border of the excavated area.¹⁰ The Early Helladic period was well attested, including a big apsidal house in a good state of preservation, again in the southern part of the plot.¹¹

⁵ Piteros et al. 1990.

⁶ Aravantinos et al. 2001; Aravantinos et al. 2002; Aravantinos et al. 2005.

⁷ Andrikou 2006.

⁸ Koilakou 1992, 118–119; Koilakou 2000, 77–80.

⁹ Andrikou 2000a, 291–292; Karakitsou 2000; Sabetai – Karakitsou 2016. Our late colleague Elissavet Stassinopoulou excavated the relics of a sanctuary, possibly the Thesmophorion referred to by Pausanias (IX.6.5), on Ayios Georgios Square, during the 1980s.

¹⁰ Andrikou 2000a, 294; Deligianni 2003.

¹¹ Andrikou 2000a, 294; Andrikou 2000b.

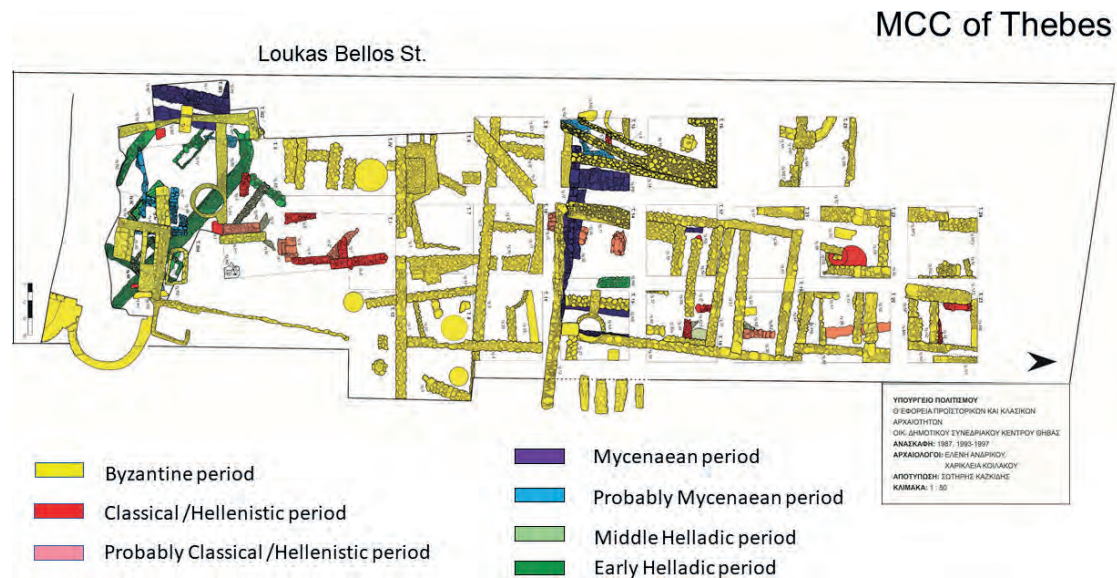


Fig. 2 MCC plot, Thebes. Ground plan of the excavation (Archive of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Boiotia).

In the Mycenaean layer, six lots were discerned named Deposits I–VI.¹² Deposit II is the contents of a storeroom at the SW corner of the terrain, defined by Wall κβ' and extending to the west (Figs. 2, 3). The pottery is of LH IIIB2 Late date.¹³ Deposit V in the central part of the terrain also dates to this phase, while Deposits I and IV date to LH IIIC Early, immediately after the destruction. Earlier occupation in LH IIIA2/B1 is attested by the small Deposit III between the Walls κβ' and κε' (Fig. 3a–b).

Of the building to which the storeroom belonged, only the exterior east wall (Wall κβ') has been revealed at a length of 4.50m, extending from N-NE to S-SW.¹⁴ Its total preserved height is 1.80–1.92m. The lower part, 1.35–1.42m in height, constitutes the foundation, 1m wide. The upper 0.50m is the wall itself. The walls on the other three sides were not discovered (Fig. 3a–b).

The contents of the storeroom were excavated over an area of almost 4m² and most likely extend further to W below the modern street level. The level at which it was found corresponds to the basement of that time. Given that all the items had fallen into the place where they were found and that the basement is too short in height to be of proper use, it is suggested that the actual storeroom was on a higher level of the ground floor. The upper 0.30/0.50m of the deposit (Fig. 3b) were composed of dark brown earth with burnt areas, and the remaining 1.10m till the lowest course of the foundation of the Wall κβ', of bright red earth, probably from the dissolution of unbaked bricks, with black burnt areas.¹⁵ That the dark and the red layer belong together is proven by the jug II.250, which was found in the dark layer. However, matching sherds were also found in the lowest 0.40m. The level connected to the actual wall was disturbed when the area was reused after the destruction (Deposit I).

The contents of the storeroom comprised various ceramic vessels and a few individual items, such as a steatite conulus, some stone tools and lead sheets or wires. Among them, a deformed

¹² Andrikou, forthcoming. The catalogue numbers of the vases referred to in the text derive from the publication catalogue.

¹³ The term LH IIIB2 Late is considered an appropriate one for the last ceramic phase within the Palatial period. However, I think that regional variations can be clearly identified and characteristic features of one area are not so important for another. See Vitale 2006, 199; Andrikou 2006, 36; French – Stockhammer 2009, 216–218.

¹⁴ It should be noted that the direction of the Walls κβ' and κε' does not coincide with the NE-SW axis of Keramopoulos' Kadmeion.

¹⁵ At this depth, the upper surface of Wall λη' was revealed (Fig. 3), but it was not possible to continue the excavation.

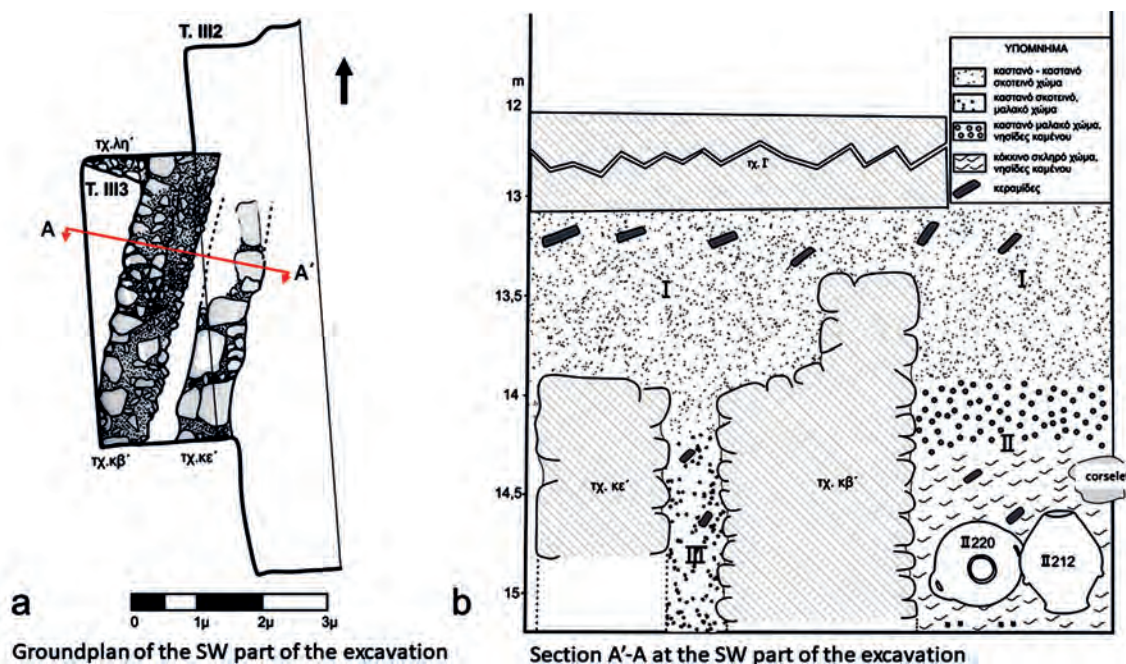


Fig. 3 MCC plot, Thebes. Area of Deposit II. a. Ground plan; b. stratigraphical section (Archive of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Boiotia).

bronze corselet,¹⁶ an agate seal¹⁷ and two ivory fragments that belonged to a lyre demonstrate the high status of the owner, also confirmed by the building's sturdy construction. Some of the items are burnt and others not, and several vases are partially burnt because they were smashed before the fire spread. The vases were broken but mostly with their pieces remaining together or within a limited vertical and horizontal distribution. At the depth of the foundations (15.11m from the Ayios Georgios level/5.95m from Loukas Bellos St.) two storage vases were lying side by side, cracked but keeping their original shape. They were both upturned, the pithos II.212 almost vertical with the mouth downwards to the N and the belly-handled amphora II.220 almost upright, leaning to the N. The red-earth fill ended at the level at which both vessels stood (Fig. 3b). No signs of a floor were attested, which also suggests that the basement was not used, and most probably constituted an empty space into which the items collapsed.

The storeroom was for alimentary provisions, mainly liquids – i.e. wine and oil. Cooking pots and vases suitable for serving and consuming these products were also kept. The pottery comprises 35 whole or nearly whole vases and 587 sherds.

The storage vases are plain, of coarse or semi-coarse ware:

Pithos FS 13. Pithos II.212 (0.62m in height, Fig. 4.4) was found on the bottom of the trench. It has the smooth contour of the LH IIIB pithoi,¹⁸ a flat base and two horizontal handles on the shoulder. The closest parallel, although it displays different proportions, is known from the LH IIIB1 West House at Mycenae.¹⁹

Belly-handled amphora FS 58. Three amphorae of that type (II.219–II.221), similar in size (0.60–0.70m in height) are preserved (Fig. 6.4). The amphora II.220 was found next to the pithos II.212. The shape is known from the LH IIIB1 houses around the acropolis of Mycenae²⁰ and from

¹⁶ Andrikou 2007. The date suggested in this paper is now changed due to the refinement of the pottery study. A lower date (LH IIIB) for the corselet is more consistent with the line of evolution from LH IIIA.

¹⁷ Andrikou 2003, 610–613 no. 1; Andrikou 2004, no. 377.

¹⁸ Iakovidis 2006, 50, pl. 15.26; Demakopoulou – Divari-Valakou 2010, 30, fig. 44.

¹⁹ Verdelis 1963, 22, fig. 33; French 1967, 172 n. 44.

²⁰ Verdelis 1963, 23–24, figs. 36–37, 40; French 1967, 172, 174, fig. 14.52-568, pl. 39d.

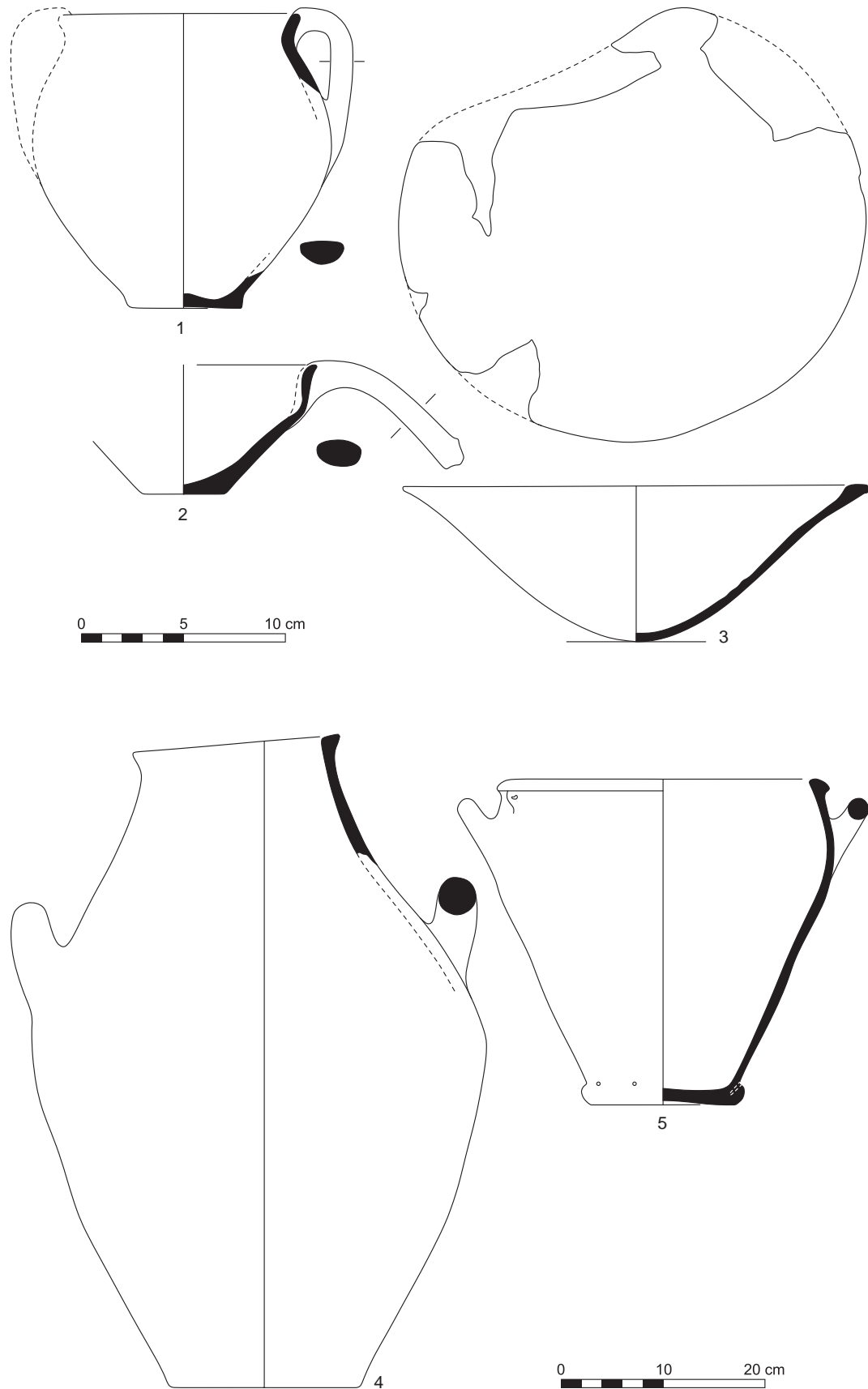


Fig. 4 Pottery from Deposit II. 1. Cooking pot II.206; 2. lamp II.209; 3. lamp II.210; 4. pithos II.212; 5. wide-mouthed storage jar II.214. 1–3, 5. scale 1:3; 4. scale 1:6.

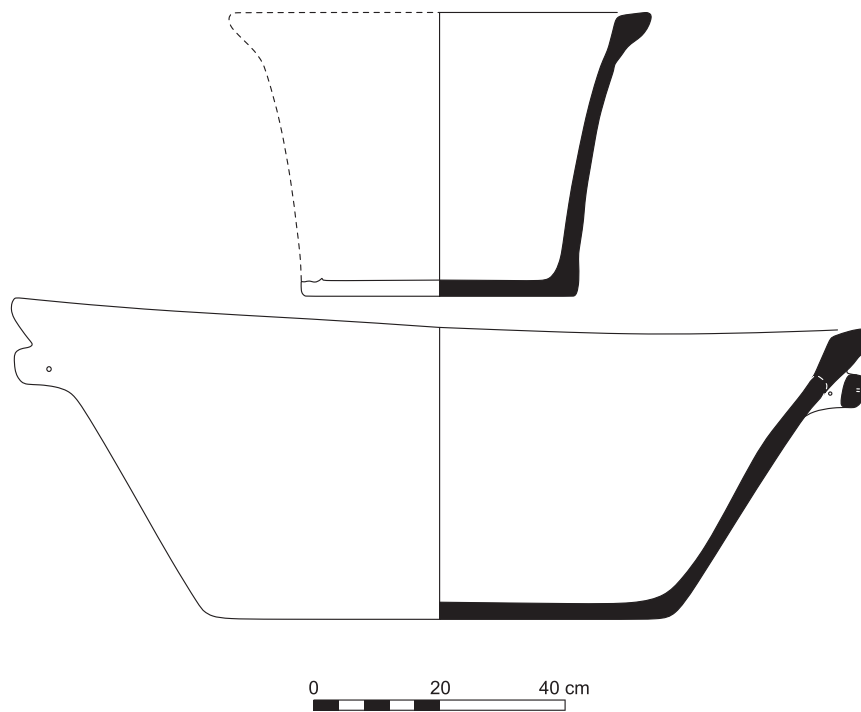


Fig. 5 Pottery from Deposit II. Tub II.211. Scale 1:6.

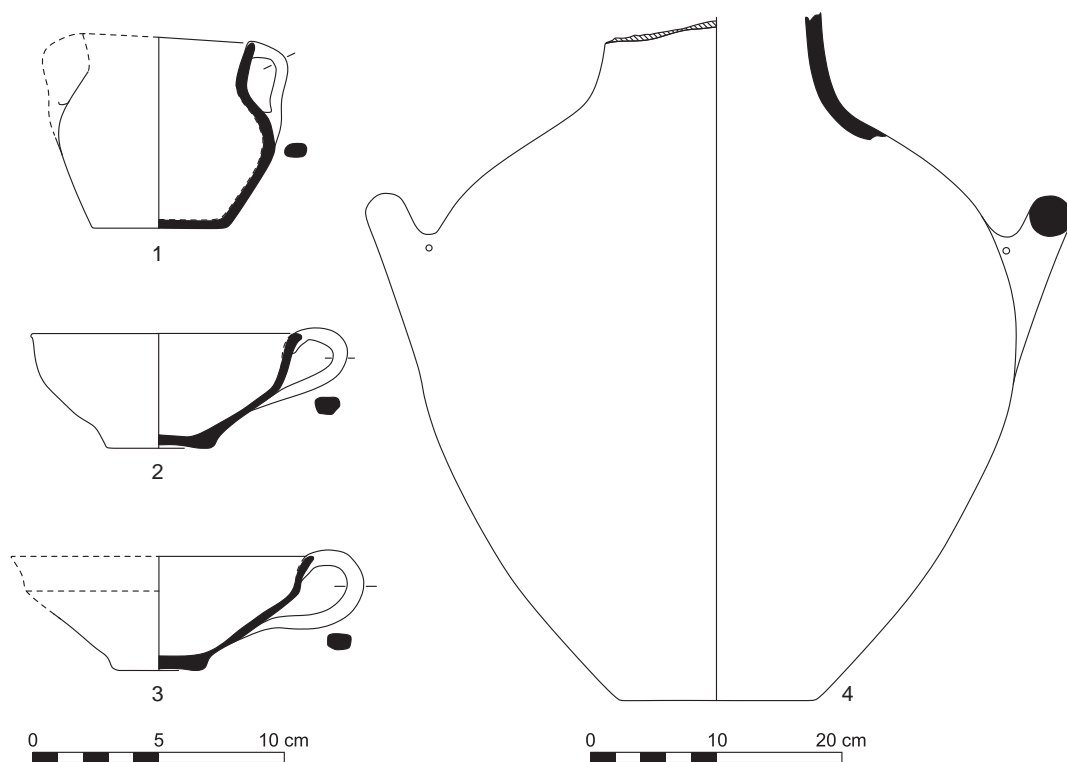


Fig. 6 Pottery from Deposit II. 1. Amphoriskos II.225; 2. cup II.227; 3. cup II.226; 4. belly-handled amphora II.220. 1-3. scale 1:3; 4. scale 1:6.

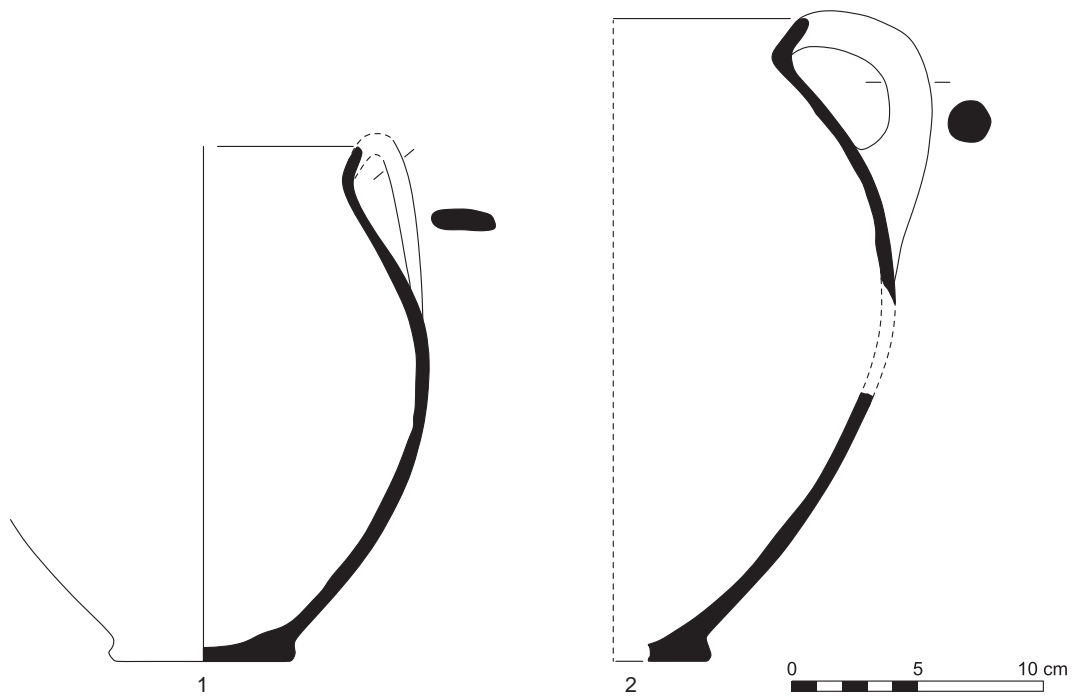


Fig. 7 Pottery from Deposit II. Storage amphorae. 1. II.222; 2. II.223. Scale 1:3.

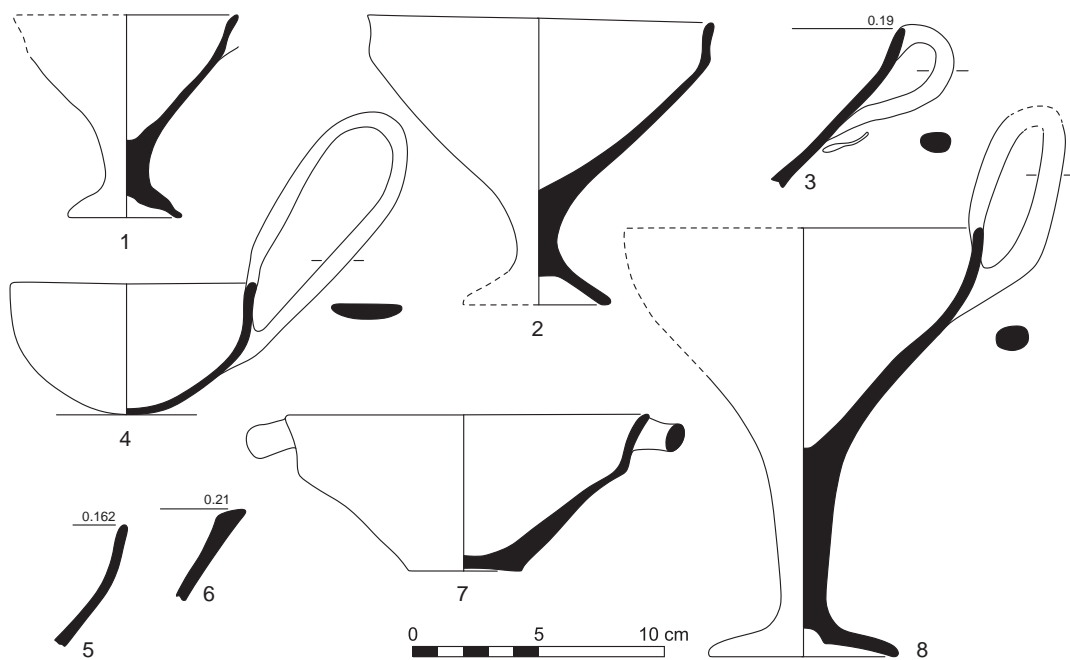


Fig. 8 Pottery from Deposit II. 1. Low-stemmed kylix II.239; 2. low-stemmed kylix II.237; 3. conical kylix II.243; 4. ladle II.233; 5. conical kylix II.244; 6. conical bowl or basin II.247; 7. shallow angular bowl II.246; 8. kylix with high handles II.242. Scale 1:3.

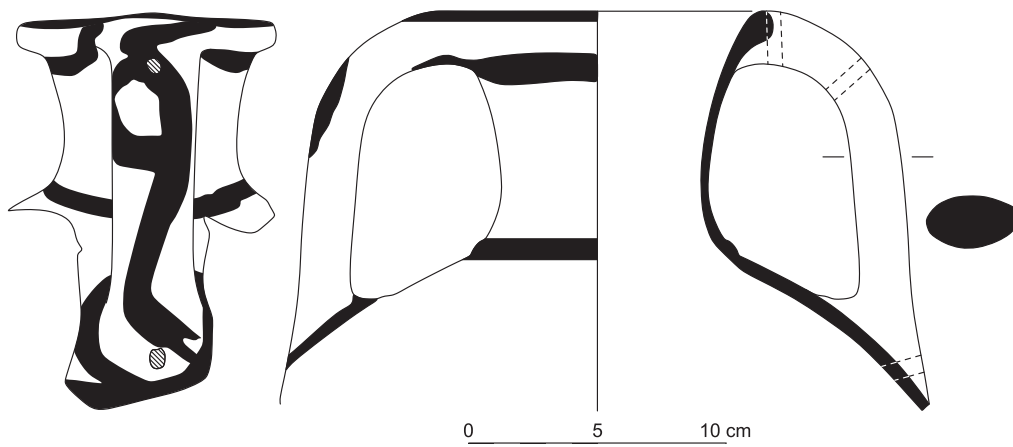


Fig. 9 Pottery from Deposit II. Large amphora II.248. Scale 1:3.



Fig. 10 Pottery from Deposit II. 1. Hydria II.255; 2. amphoriskos II.254. Scale 1:3.

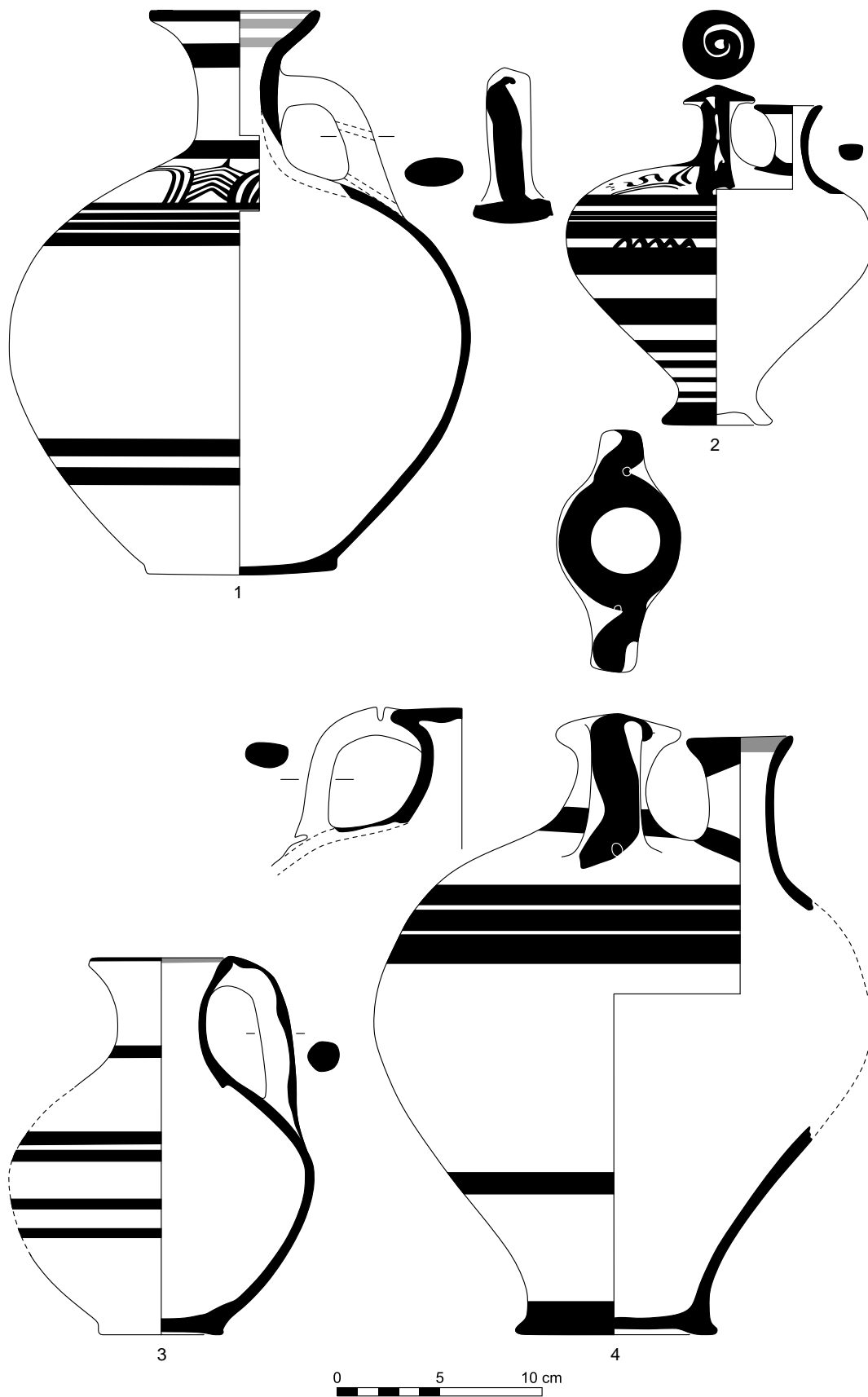


Fig. 11 Pottery from Deposit II. 1. Narrow-necked jug II.253; 2. stirrup jar II.257; 3. jug II.250; 4. stirrup jar II.256. Scale 1:3.

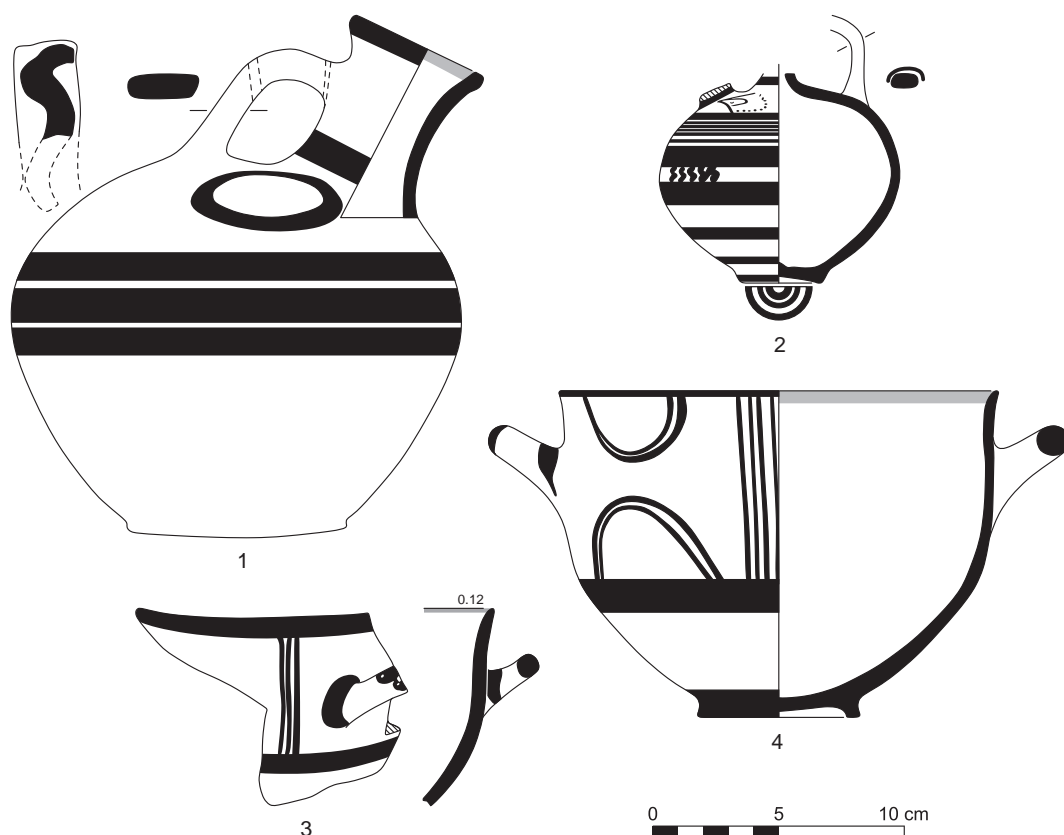


Fig. 12 Pottery from Deposit II. 1. Based askos II.261; 2. stirrup jar II.260; 3. deep bowl II.267; 4. Group A deep bowl II.266. Scale 1:3.

the LH IIIB2 destruction levels at the Epaminondas and Democritus Sts. plot in Thebes,²¹ from the Englianos palace,²² the West Gate Area at Midea,²³ the House of the Tripod Tomb at Mycenae,²⁴ and Storeroom 4 at Megaron B in Dimini.²⁵

Tub FS 1. The tub II.211 (Fig. 5) was reconstructed from pieces scattered south of the storage vases II.212 and II.220. A similar but slightly smaller tub (IV.335) was reused in the Post-palatial Deposit IV after having been mended with lead clamps.

Although plain tubs in domestic sites have not gained much attention and a special study on them is lacking, it seems that they became more common in late Mycenaean times, either as bathtubs or for other uses like storage,²⁶ as is the case here. Several tubs are known from LH IIIB2 and LH IIIC Early 1 destruction contexts at Thebes (Epaminondas and Democritus Sts. plot,²⁷ 1 Oedipus St. plot²⁸), at Mycenae (the House of the Tripod Tomb)²⁹ and in Attica (Ayios Kosmas).³⁰

²¹ Spyropoulos – Chadwick 1975, 27 no. 3, pl. 15.46.

²² Blegen – Rawson 1966, figs. 373–374 (Shape 49).

²³ Demakopoulou – Divari-Valakou 1997, 22, fig. 36.

²⁴ Onassoglou 1995, 96 no. β; 109 no. α; 110 no. ι, fig. 48.3, pls. 41β; 42α; 44γ; 45β.

²⁵ Adrimi-Sismani 2014, 373–374.

²⁶ Keramopoulos 1917, 92; Onassoglou 1995, 143; Marabea 2010, 149–150, 268–270, discusses several other potential uses of the vessel.

²⁷ Spyropoulos – Chadwick 1975, 11, 21.

²⁸ Piteros 1988, 191, pl. 120α; Piteros 1989, 132.

²⁹ Onassoglou 1995, 110 no. θ, fig. 51, pl. 45α.

³⁰ Mylonas 1959, 53, pls. 31, 171.

Storage jar FS 280. The wide-mouthed storage jar II.214 (Fig. 4.5) was designed to accept a lid fastened just below its rim. It has no exact parallel, although a similar vase was found in the destruction layer at Midea³¹ and a variety of comparable shapes belong to the Palace of Nestor collection.³²

Amphora FS 66. This shape (II.222, II.223, Fig. 7.1–2) of semi-coarse fabric seems to be confined to Thebes. A semi-coarse example comes from the Epaminondas and Democritus Sts. excavation.³³ At Mycenae and Pylos, the type with handles from neck to shoulder (FS 67) was preferred.³⁴

Vessels for special purposes or cooking comprise:

Lamps FS 311, 312. Arne Furumark calls these two shapes ladle or brazier. Two examples of a semi-coarse fabric are present. II.209 (Fig. 4.2) is considered a lamp since two similar vessels from the MCC plot (III.274, VI.595) bear signs of burning on the nozzle opposite the handle. This was also observed on two lamps from the Panagia Houses at Mycenae.³⁵ II.210 (Fig. 4.3) could also be a lamp if one considers the slight traces of burning on the rim approximately opposite to the handle, which was attached at the portion of the wall which was pushed in and is now missing. Whatever its use, the vessel is present in LH IIIB2 destruction contexts at Midea.³⁶

Cooking pot FS 66. The shape of the cooking pot II.206 (Fig. 4.1), as assumed based on the fabric and the signs of fire, is most probably that of an amphora with handles from rim to shoulder. The shape, also known in semi-coarse fabric, is recognized as a cooking pot from several fragmentary examples at the MCC plot and the Pelopidas St. archive.³⁷ The predilection for the amphoroid type of cooking pot is also noted in the Argolid, though there the types with handles from neck to shoulder FS 67 and 74 were preferred.³⁸ The tripod cooking pot FS 320 is represented in the contents of the storeroom only by two fragments.

Baking pan FS 323. Only a small part (II.208) indicates the existence of the vessel, which seems to be present, although sparingly, in every LH IIIB household context.³⁹

Open undecorated vases are of fine or semi-fine fabric:

The **cup FS 222** is one of the most common shapes (Fig. 6.2–3). The version with an angular profile prevails; this is also the case in the destruction layer of the Kadmeion.⁴⁰ A comparable variety in shape can be observed in the Englianos palace,⁴¹ while cups with a rounded profile seem to have been preferred in the Argolid.⁴²

The **ladle FS 236** appears in a smaller (II.233, Fig. 8.4) and a bigger (II.234) variation with a 0.06–0.07m-high handle. Parallels can be found among the ladles of the Palace of Nestor and in the examples from the Epaminondas and Democritus Sts. excavations.⁴³

The **low-stemmed kylix FS 267** (Fig. 8.1–2) is by far the most frequent unpainted vase, mostly with an angular bowl, like the cup FS 222 and the shallow bowl FS 295. They are common

³¹ Demakopoulou – Divari-Valakou 1999, 63, fig. 15.

³² Blegen – Rawson 1966, 394–396, figs. 383–384 (Shapes 57, 58).

³³ Spyropoulos – Chadwick 1975, 29 no. 2, pl. 17.55.

³⁴ Blegen – Rawson 1966, 384, fig. 372 (Shape 48b); French 1967, 172–173, fig. 13.2–3, 5–6; French 1969, 86, fig. 12.9.

³⁵ Mylonas Shear 1987, 99–100, pl. 27.110–111 (Drain Deposit N of Room 7).

³⁶ Demakopoulou – Divari-Valakou 1999, 71–72, fig. 69; Baumann 2007, 160, fig. 177.2049, 2051.

³⁷ Andrikou 2006, 27 n. 3.

³⁸ French 1967, 173–174; Wardle 1969, 282–283, fig. 8.81, 84; 291; Mountjoy 1976, 96, fig. 10.103–104; Mylonas Shear 1987, 109, pl. 32.139–142; Onassoglou 1995, pls. 44.1; 50.2; Dalinghaus 1998, 135, pl. 88.662, 664.

³⁹ Blegen – Rawson 1966, 340–341, fig. 348.12; French 1969, 85–86, fig. 12.24; Mylonas Shear 1987, 111 nos. 148–149, fig. 21, pl. 33; Iakovidis 1989, 235, fig. 9β; Dalinghaus 1998, 136–137, pl. 89.680–685; Demakopoulou – Divari-Valakou 1999, 67, fig. 44; Andrikou 2006, 61 no. 22, pl. 27.9–10; Adrimi-Sismani 2014, 450–452.

⁴⁰ Raison 1968, 48–49 n. 190, pl. 37.78.

⁴¹ Blegen – Rawson 1966, figs. 353–354 (Shape 12). Cf. also Vasilogamvrou et al., this volume, for a cup with angular profile from the LH IIIB Middle destruction deposit at Ayios Vasileios.

⁴² French 1967, 174, 176, fig. 16; Wardle 1969, 282, 284, fig. 9.88–94; Mountjoy 1976, 95, 98–99, fig. 12.136–142; Hiesel 1982, 433, fig. 52.3; 436–437; Verstraete 2007, 152, figs. 167.1963–1965; 169.1982.

⁴³ Blegen – Rawson 1966, figs. 357–358 (Shape 22); Spyropoulos – Chadwick 1975, pl. 18.65–67.

in the LH IIIB1 destruction layer of the Kadmeion,⁴⁴ differing in that they have a lipped rim and maybe a shallower bowl, and also in the late LH IIIB2 destructions in Pelopidas St.⁴⁵ and in Epaminondas and Democritus Sts.⁴⁶ They are present at Pylos⁴⁷ and other Mycenaean sites, and at Midea they are characterized as the most common undecorated vase.⁴⁸

Kylix with high handles FS 273. The only example, II.242 (Fig. 8.8) with a deep bowl, compares well with the kylikes from the Palace of Nestor.⁴⁹

The **conical Kylix FS 274** (II.243–II.245) is recognized only from parts of the bowl. The profile of II.243 (Fig. 8.3) is straight and slightly curving before the rim, similar to a kylix from the Kadmeion and to another kylix found at Midea.⁵⁰ The other two examples (Fig. 8.5) present a smooth, rounded profile similar to kylix fragments from the Pelopidas St. archive⁵¹ and kylikes from the Palace of Nestor and other Mycenaean sites.⁵²

The lower part of a high stem with the beginning of the base disc (II.265), probably solid painted or banded, is the only decorated piece. Both forms of decoration appear in Tiryns late in LH IIIB2.⁵³ Similarly, low-stemmed kylikes with a solid painted foot are considered diagnostic for LH IIIB2 Late.⁵⁴

Shallow angular bowl FS 295. II.246 (Fig. 8.7) is an almost complete example and finds close parallels at the Pelopidas St. archive,⁵⁵ the Palace of Nestor and the Midea West Gate destruction deposit.⁵⁶ The type was already present among the Kadmeion pottery.⁵⁷

II.247 (Fig. 8.6) is attributed to a large conical bowl or basin, similar to the basins of the Palace of Nestor.⁵⁸

Closed decorated vases are of semi-fine or fine fabric:

Large amphora FS 69. II.248 (Fig. 9) is the only example safely attributed to this shape. The handle decoration and the stripe below the rim on the outside may be an indication for a late date in LH IIIB2.⁵⁹

Hydria FS 128. II.255 (Fig. 10.1) is an almost complete example with ovoid body and band decoration. The partially preserved hydria from the Palace of Nestor can be compared, as well as the hydria from the Epaminondas and Democritus Sts. excavations.⁶⁰ Two fine ware hydriae come from Deposits I and IV (LH IIIC Early) of the MCC plot.

Jug FS 110. II.250 (Fig. 11.3) has a smooth contour from shoulder to neck and is decorated with stripes and a nearly straight band along the handle. The narrow neck expanding to the rim reminds one of the lekythos. The shape and decoration find parallels in the jugs of MCC Deposit V, the Epaminondas and Democritus Sts. excavations and a bigger jug from the Pylos palace.⁶¹

⁴⁴ Raison 1968, 48 n. 188, pl. 37.75.242, 263, 247, 261; 77.260, 363.

⁴⁵ Andrikou 2006, 28, pls. 9.136–137; 11.175–176; 40.46.

⁴⁶ Spyropoulos – Chadwick 1975, 34 no. 3, pl. 20.79.

⁴⁷ Blegen – Rawson 1966, 366–367, figs. 359–360 (Shape 27).

⁴⁸ Demakopoulou 2003, 82.

⁴⁹ Blegen – Rawson 1966, 372–374 (Shape 30c, 32), figs. 365–366.

⁵⁰ Raison 1968, 47–48 n. 186–187, pl. 37.77.265; Demakopoulou – Divari-Valakou 2001, 40, 43, fig. 19.

⁵¹ Andrikou 2006, 109, pls. 9.139–144; 11.177A–B; 40.47.

⁵² Blegen – Rawson 1966, 371 (Shape 29h, i), figs. 363–364; French 1969, 86, fig. 12.6; Wardle 1969, 286, fig. 10.104; Mountjoy 1976, 101, fig. 13.163; Hiesel 1982, 433, fig. 52.4; Mountjoy 1983, 79, fig. 32.150.

⁵³ Podzuweit 2007, 107, 110, pls. 54.1; 55.8.

⁵⁴ French – Stockhammer 2009, 219, fig. 23.6.

⁵⁵ Andrikou 2006, pl. 9.149.

⁵⁶ Blegen – Rawson 1966, fig. 350 (Shape 4); Demakopoulou – Divari-Valakou 2001, 44, fig. 30.

⁵⁷ Raison 1968, 48, pl. 37.77.295, 269.

⁵⁸ Blegen – Rawson 1966, fig. 350 (Shape 1, no. 225; Shape 2, no. 508).

⁵⁹ Podzuweit 2007, 185, Beil. 63 (Variety 4, decoration type 7), 64 (handle decoration e).

⁶⁰ Blegen – Rawson 1966, fig. 345.4; Spyropoulos – Chadwick 1975, pl. 21.87.

⁶¹ Blegen – Rawson 1966, fig. 367.676 (Shape 37); Spyropoulos – Chadwick 1975, 29 nos. 3–4; 34 no. 1, pls. 17.56–57; 20.77.

There exist two **amphoriskoi**, with no versions in Furumark's typology: a plain one with a wide neck (II.225, Fig. 6.1) and a decorated, somewhat taller one (II.254, Fig. 10.2). The decoration on the shoulder connects it to the narrow-necked jugs II.252 and II.253 (Fig. 11.1).

Narrow-necked jug FS 120/121. There are three mended jugs (II.251, II.252, II.253) of the same size (height 0.26–0.275m) (Figs. 11.1; 13.2). Although they are not equal as regards the quality of the fabric and painting,⁶² they are thought to come from the same workshop. The motifs on the shoulders of II.252 and II.253 (Figs. 11.1; 13.2) are reminiscent of the aforementioned amphoriskos II.254. The calyx-shaped mouth of II.253 is considered a development of an earlier feature, also noticed at Glas.⁶³

The decorative system of either alternating perpendicular motifs or continuous motifs comprising panel-like designs is characteristic of the shape.⁶⁴ A close parallel to II.251 is a jug from Tomb 3 in the area of the Elektra Gate.⁶⁵

The narrow-necked jug, a funerary vase during LH IIIA2 and LH IIIB1,⁶⁶ becomes common, as much as a specialized shape can be, in settlement contexts in LH IIIB2. In the West Gate Area at Midea, at least eight have been found in the destruction layers⁶⁷ as well as at Mycenae (Perseia Trench L, Panagia Houses, House of the Tripod Tomb, Citadel SW Quarter)⁶⁸ and Tiryns.⁶⁹ This popularity continued and even increased in LH IIIC with the succeeding shape known as a lekythos.

Stirrup jar. II.256 (Fig. 11.4) is an example of a medium-sized storage stirrup jar FS 164 of semi-coarse fabric, bearing linear decoration. A similar stirrup jar with an additional wavy band around the shoulder comes from the Kadmeion.⁷⁰ A circle on the flat disc of the handles and a wavy band along them appear on another stirrup jar from the Kadmeion and also on a stirrup jar from Mycenae (House of the Tripod Tomb).⁷¹

The piriform stirrup jar II.257, of medium size (FS 166/167, Fig. 11.2), resembles those found in LH IIIB2 destruction layers in the houses outside the Mycenae Citadel⁷² and in the Pylos palace.⁷³ The convex disc of the handles indicates a late LH IIIB2 date, as does the simple banding on the lower body.⁷⁴

The medium-sized stirrup jar II.259 bears only linear decoration comprising the usual system for the shape consisting of lines between bands. On the disc of the handles a spiral is painted, as is common on stirrup jars,⁷⁵ and a wavy band along the handles which does not reach the disc.⁷⁶

Small globular stirrup jar FS 171/173. II.260 (Fig. 12.2) is decorated in the LH IIIB2 style with a group of lines between bands separating the shoulder, where Mycenaean flowers are painted, from the belly zone filled with vertical wavy lines. The lower body is covered with

⁶² II.251 is of a high standard on both aspects (fig. 13.2), II.252 presents a hasty drawing and II.253 (fig. 11.1) is of semi-fine fabric.

⁶³ Iakovidis 1998, 25–26, fig. 10; Mountjoy 1999, 682–683, fig. 261.177.

⁶⁴ See n. 65–68 below.

⁶⁵ Keramopoulos 1917, 28, fig. 24 (= FS 121.6); Mountjoy 1999, 682–683, fig. 261.177.

⁶⁶ Cf. indicatively, Mountjoy 1999, 119, 135 n. 652 (for LH IIIA2, LH IIIB1 examples from burials), 147 n. 730–733 (for examples from LH IIIB2 settlements).

⁶⁷ Demakopoulou – Divari-Valakou 1994, 27 (the most common closed shape together with stirrup jar FS 173), 29, figs. 25–26; 30, fig. 28; Demakopoulou – Divari-Valakou 1999, 64, fig. 22 (Room VIa); Demakopoulou – Divari-Valakou 2001, 42–43, figs. 12–13, 21 (Room VIIIa, b); 47, fig. 47; Giering 1998, pl. 73.271; Giering 2007, pl. 139.1626.

⁶⁸ French 1969, 73–74, fig. 1.11–13; Mylonas Shear 1987, 106–107, fig. 18, pl. 30.128; Onassoglou 1995, 76, 79, fig. 45.3; pl. 28a; Iakovidis et al. 2013, 370, pls. 89a; 94a.

⁶⁹ Podzuweit 2007, Beil. 69 (Varieties 5 and 6).

⁷⁰ Raison 1968, pls. 32.69; 34.71 (Thebes 826).

⁷¹ Raison 1968, pl. 5.20 (Thebes 853); Onassoglou 1995, fig. 49.1.

⁷² Onassoglou 1995, 109–110 no. ζ, fig. 50.1, pl. 44β; Iakovidis 2013, 67, pl. 21β.

⁷³ Blegen – Rawson 1966, 406, 410–411 (Shape 65f), fig. 367.676.

⁷⁴ See below FS 171/173: n. 78.

⁷⁵ Blegen – Rawson 1966, fig. 394.

⁷⁶ A similar blank space is noticed on some stirrup jars between the disc and the solidly painted handle. Podzuweit 2007, 160 n. 955, considers it a chronological criterium for a LH IIIB Early and Middle date.



Fig. 13 Pottery from Deposit II. 1. Rim fragment of Group A/B deep bowl (Deposit II.271); 2. narrow-necked jug II.251.

bands of nearly equal width. Simple band decoration on the lower body appeared in LH IIIB⁷⁷ and became more common and widespread during LH IIIC in other closed shapes as well.⁷⁸ II.260 is one of the very rare examples with circles painted on the underside of the base. The small globular stirrup jar is very common in the MCC plot and also found in the Epaminondas and Democritus Sts. plot.⁷⁹

Based askos FS 195. There are two examples of decorated based askoi: the medium-sized II.261 (Fig. 12.1) and the big II.262. Based askoi are known from LH IIIA on in funerary contexts.⁸⁰ In LH IIIB2 their number, especially for undecorated ones, increases in settlement contexts, like in the Epaminondas and Democritus Sts. plot at Thebes, at Mycenae, Tiryns, Midea and Dimini.⁸¹ Decorated examples, mainly linear, are rare. On the decorated askoi from the MCC plot, Thebes and Plakes, Mycenae,⁸² circular or curvilinear motifs are added on the shoulder.

Deep bowl FS 284 of fine fabric. II.266 (Fig. 12.4) is a nearly complete example of a Group A deep bowl. The decoration, consisting of simple rectilinear triglyphs and pairs of semicircles in the metopes, although characteristic of LH IIIB stemmed bowls⁸³ and Group B deep bowls,⁸⁴ is known on Group A and Group A/B deep bowls as well.⁸⁵ The simple rectilinear triglyph also appears on a rim bowl fragment (II.267, Fig. 12.3) with an exterior lip band wider than is usual on Group A deep bowls. The motif on the metope is missing. It could be a lozenge, like on deep bowls from MCC Deposits V and VI or another motif or combination.⁸⁶ Interior decoration is very rare. It can be a second band below the rim (II.268) or concentric circles on the bottom (II.270).

Group A/B deep bowls are represented only by two sherds with the multiple stem motif FM 19. On the rim fragment II.271 (Fig. 13.1) the ‘tongue’ variation appears, and on a small belly fragment, probably the ‘hooked’ one. The multiple stem in several variations is also present on Group A and Group A/B deep bowls in other deposits of the MCC plot.

Six small fragments, one of which is a rim, belong to monochrome deep bowls, which have a clear presence in all MCC contexts.

⁷⁷ Mylonas Shear 1987, pl. 28.117–119.

⁷⁸ Andrikou 2006, 40 n. 4; 83 no. 295, pls. 18, 48.72. Cf. also Mountjoy 1999, 573, fig. 211.348, 354; 683, fig. 261.179; Voigtländer 2003, pl. 136.Bü 30.

⁷⁹ Spyropoulos – Chadwick 1975, 30, fig. 8, pl. 17.60–60a.

⁸⁰ Immerwahr 1971, 138–139. For a LH IIIB1 domestic example see Thomas 2005, 507.

⁸¹ Spyropoulos – Chadwick 1975, 34 no. 2, pl. 20.78; Hiesel 1982, 437–438, figs. 54–55; Demakopoulou – Divari-Valakou 1997, 22, fig. 33; Demakopoulou – Divari-Valakou 2001, 44, fig. 28; French – Tylour 2007, 24 (Area 36, no. 66-509); Daniilidou 2008, 150, fig. 118, pl. 52; Adrimi-Sismani 2014, 374–375.

⁸² Iakovidis 2013, 136, pl. 50β.

⁸³ Demakopoulou 1974, 172, fig. 13; Voigtländer 2003, pl. 107.HS 69.

⁸⁴ Voigtländer 2003, pl. 124.Si 43; Adrimi-Sismani 2014, 468.

⁸⁵ Mountjoy 1995, 207, fig. 6.64; Marabea 2010, 660, fig. 121.2.112; Adrimi-Sismani 2014, 468.

⁸⁶ Demakopoulou – Divari-Valakou 1994, 27, fig. 16; Mountjoy 1999, 679–680, fig. 259.162.

Regarding the open plain shapes represented in the sherd material, the deep bowl FS 284⁸⁷ has been identified as well as various types of cups (FS 204, 215), while fragments of the angular kylix FS 267 are the most numerous. Among the decorated sherds, the closed vases are well represented, and two belong to the stemmed bowl FS 304. The Group A deep bowl FS 284 constitutes 76% of the total examples of the shape; the monochrome deep bowl, 16% and Group A/B, 5%.⁸⁸ Other types of the deep bowl, e.g. of Group B, with rosette, with linear decoration or medium band are not found, nor is the cup FS 215 with lip band or medium band.

The best-preserved vases of Deposit II are closed shapes, plain or decorated. Open table vases (kylikes, cups, shallow and deep bowls) are better attested in sherd material. The range of shapes found in the excavated material primarily serves the storage needs of foodstuffs and especially liquids (pithos, several types of amphorae, stirrup jars, jugs, askoi) and secondly of serving and consuming the same (ladles, jugs, kylikes, cups, deep bowls).⁸⁹ Bearing in mind the restrictions regarding the shape variety due to the nature of the deposit, resemblance can be attested between the pottery of MCC Deposit II and the pottery from the Linear B tablet archive in Pelopidas St. (Deposits 2a, 2b) and from the excavations at Epaminondas and Democritus Sts. Focusing on decorated open shapes it is observed that:

- Group A deep bowls prevail in the Theban pottery groups selected for comparison.
- The monochrome deep bowl is well attested in the Pelopidas St. archive⁹⁰ and the Epaminondas and Democritus Sts. excavations.⁹¹ It is present at Mycenae and Tiryns in LH IIIB⁹² and at the Palace of Nestor.⁹³
- Group A/B deep bowls are sparingly present in the MCC plot and in the Pelopidas St. archive⁹⁴ and not mentioned in the report of the Epaminondas and Democritus Sts. excavations.
- Group B deep bowls are only represented with three small sherds from Deposit 2b in Pelopidas St.⁹⁵
- Rosette or medium band deep bowls and the cup FS 215 (linear, with dotted rim, solidly painted interior) are only found at Pelopidas St.⁹⁶

Deposit I was lying over Deposit II and extended further to the east over the MH layer. It consisted of dark brown earth and dissolved building material covering fragmentary walls which did not allow any certain reconstruction plan and are hard to date. Most of the pottery is Mycenaean, but it is clear that the deposit was disturbed in later times. The Mycenaean pottery is preserved in sherds with almost no joins amongst them. Although it appears very close to the pottery of Deposit II, it presents certain characteristics which suggest it dates slightly later. The deep cup FS 215 is represented both in a plain and a decorated version (linear, with lip band, medium band, dotted rim) by a few fragmentary examples. The Group A deep bowl continues to be the most common type followed by monochrome and Group A/B ones. However, a slight increase in the number of cups and deep bowls with monochrome interior is observed. Various examples, like a jug with disintegrated leaf decoration on the shoulder (I.126) or a linear semi-fine stirrup jar (I.134) find parallels in LH IIIC Early contexts.⁹⁷

⁸⁷ French 1967, 175; Wardle 1969, 291–292, fig. 12.121; Döhl 1973, 170 nos. A 9, A 11–A 12, pl. 70; Mountjoy 1976, 102, fig. 14.179; Mountjoy 1983, 40–41, fig. 14.313; Mountjoy 1995, 221–222, fig. 16.172–174; Dalinghaus 1998, pl. 86.642; Demakopoulou 2003, 81; Andrikou 2006, 28, tab. 5A; 30, 109, pl. 9.145–146.

⁸⁸ All sherds that could be recognized as belonging to deep bowls and could be attributed securely to each type have been counted and formed the basis for calculating percentages.

⁸⁹ For the function of various vases see Tournavitou 1995, 98–103.

⁹⁰ Andrikou 2006, 29–30, tab. 5B; 32, tab. 6.

⁹¹ Spyropoulos – Chadwick 1975, 35 no. 7; 36 no. 14, pls. 21.83; 22.90.

⁹² Ph. Stockhammer in: French – Stockhammer 2009, 211.

⁹³ Blegen – Rawson 1966, 398 no. 594, figs. 385–386.

⁹⁴ Andrikou 2006, 29, tab. 5B, pl. 13.217–218, 221.

⁹⁵ Andrikou 2006, 29, tab. 5B.

⁹⁶ Andrikou 2006, 29, tab. 5B, pls. 10.153; 12.191–199; 13.219–220, 222–225.

⁹⁷ Grossmann – Schäffer 1971, 68, pl. 37.30; Stockhammer 2008, vol. 2, 8, pl. 3.66.

In the effort to synchronize the final destruction of the Mycenaean palatial centers through pottery comparisons, one should keep in mind that apart from the differences in shape range due to the different character and function of each deposit, differences in shape and decoration due to local preferences may also exist.

As far as the range of shapes is concerned, it is observed that some shapes, plain or decorated, in Deposit II, are more common in the other final destruction layers at Thebes and other Mycenaean sites. Apart from the pithos and the belly-handled amphora, the tub is quite frequent, although its use is ambiguous (was it a bathtub, a storage chest or both?). Lamps are often attested – maybe because they were needed in storerooms – and also wide-mouthed jars and plain deep bowls. Among the decorated shapes, the hydria, ovoid-shaped and with band decoration, is common in habitation deposits. Even more common is the narrow-necked jug succeeded in LH IIIC by the lekythos. The based askos is found in settlement contexts, mainly plain but also decorated. The piriform stirrup jar FS 167 gains popularity and continues with linear decoration in LH IIIC. The small spherical stirrup jar with Mycenaean flowers or dotted circles on the shoulder prevails over other types of stirrup jars.

Despite the differences,⁹⁸ the destruction of the MCC storeroom must have been simultaneous with the one at the Pelopidas St. archive and the Epaminondas and Democritus Sts. excavations. Deposit II finds close parallels to the pottery of the latter.

Individual vases can be found linking one site with others. For example, the collar-necked jar FS 63/64, with quite a wide and short neck, appears in the destruction deposit at 1 Oedipus St. and Epaminondas and Democritus Sts.⁹⁹ as well as in the West Gate Area, Midea.¹⁰⁰

Another vase that links pottery groups is the deep bowl decorated with a running spiral with dense coils which almost completely covers the wide decorative zone framed by the thin rim band and a single wide band round the belly below the handles. The interior is plain or has a secondary band below the rim and one or more circles on the bottom. A complete example comes from the Epaminondas and Democritus Sts. excavations¹⁰¹ and a fragmentary one from the Pelopidas St. archive.¹⁰² A third example is reported in Building III at 1 Oedipus St. connected to the earlier (lower) destruction level dated to LH IIIB1 by the excavator¹⁰³ and a fourth one from the Panagia Houses at Mycenae, but of uncertain stratigraphic context.¹⁰⁴ Variations of this spiral may appear on Group A deep bowls with a second line below the rim¹⁰⁵ or with stemmed bowl rim banding¹⁰⁶ and usually with a solid painted eye in early LH IIIC at Thebes,¹⁰⁷ Mycenae¹⁰⁸ and Dimini.¹⁰⁹ A link between the LH IIIB2 Late destruction in the 1 Oedipus St. excavations and in the House of the Tripod Tomb, Mycenae is illustrated by a piriform medium-sized stirrup jar FS 164 with tassel pattern decoration on the shoulder.¹¹⁰ Although the motif is known on earlier LH IIIB stirrup jars¹¹¹ it became common on various closed shapes in LH IIIC Early.¹¹²

⁹⁸ See above comment on deep bowl FS 284 and cup FS 215.

⁹⁹ Cf. Spyropoulos – Chadwick 1975, 34–35 no 6, pl. 21.82; Piteros 1988, 191, pl. 120στ.

¹⁰⁰ Demakopoulou 2003, 82, fig. 5.4.

¹⁰¹ Spyropoulos – Chadwick 1975, 30 no 2, pl. 18.61.

¹⁰² Andrikou 2006, 76, pls. 12.206; 43.57a.

¹⁰³ Piteros 1989, 132, pl. 64β. The date of the destructions will be clarified when the pottery is published since the pottery shapes in the lower destruction level at Oedipus St. comprise belly-handled amphorae and collar-necked jars (stamnoi) which are also present in the upper destruction layer (see above n. 99), while Group B deep bowls are not mentioned. However, the motif is preserved on a LH IIIB1 example from Tsoungiza, see Thomas 2005, 490, fig. 16.8.

¹⁰⁴ Mylonas Shear 1987, 84, 87 (fill washed into Room 9), fig. 13, pl. 22.77.

¹⁰⁵ Iakovidis 1998, 147, pl. 19α1–2; MCC Deposit I (I.154).

¹⁰⁶ Taylour 1963, 38–39, fig. 77; Andrikou 2006, 76, pls. 12.206; 43.57a.

¹⁰⁷ MCC Deposit I (I.156) and Deposit VI (VI.760); Andrikou 2006, pl. 20.317.

¹⁰⁸ French 2011, 36, fig. 9 (Phase IX).

¹⁰⁹ Adrimi-Sismani 2014, 508–509 (BE 35885).

¹¹⁰ Piteros 1988, 191, pl. 120δ; Onassoglou 1995, 80 no. η, fig. 46.1; pl. 28γ.

¹¹¹ Blegen 1928, 149–151, figs. 132.371; 139–140; Mountjoy 1976, 84, pl. 14a, in a horizontal position.

¹¹² Cf. for Thebes, Andrikou 2006, 48.

Apart from the similarities, differences between the pottery groups may be of chronological value, if they do not reflect local preferences for certain shapes or decoration. The Group B deep bowl, which only barely appears in the Pelopidas St. archive, is present in destruction layers at Mycenae¹¹³ and especially in that of the House of the Tripod Tomb, which also exhibits features of LH IIIC pottery styles.¹¹⁴ It is also present in the West Gate destruction at Midea¹¹⁵ and at Tiryns, where examples are even found in LH IIIC Early.¹¹⁶ This is probably due to the fact that the Argive centers were destroyed earlier than Thebes. It should be noticed that on the acropolis of Glas, Group B deep bowls are more numerous than Group A ones in the destruction and abandonment level dated 'in the advanced but not late LH IIIB'¹¹⁷ and thus prior to the destruction of Thebes. But we must keep in mind the reservation that the nearly complete absence of Group B deep bowls from the final destruction in Thebes indicates that the type was not preferred.¹¹⁸ This may also apply for the cups or kylikes with solidly painted interior, a feature suggested as diagnostic of the late LH IIIB2 phase in Mycenae and Tiryns.¹¹⁹ Analogous skepticism is expressed for the rosette deep bowl, of which a few fragments are reported in Thebes,¹²⁰ but which is not mentioned in other Boiotian sites like Glas, Eutresis, Orchomenos etc.¹²¹ Conversely, the monochrome deep bowl is the most popular after the Group A deep bowl in Thebes and other Boiotian sites.¹²² Comparisons of the MCC Deposit II pottery to the vases from the destruction at Englianos refer mainly to the coarse ware and to plain fine tableware. It is not peculiar that the pantries of the Palace of Nestor contained a high number of vases in a larger range of shapes so that the special procedures and needs of the palace could be served. This variety has caused a lot of controversy regarding the destruction date of the palace.¹²³ As at Thebes, it is not clear whether dissimilarities in comparison to the Argive pottery reflect solely a later chronology for the destruction or express more clearly the tastes and the abilities of the local pottery workshops.¹²⁴

The pottery from the destroyed storeroom (Deposit II) in the MCC plot at Thebes coexamined with that from the destruction layers of three other sites on the Kadmeia Hill, at least two of which yielded Linear B documents, shows that an extensive fire at the end of LH IIIB2 drove to an end the palatial administrative system at Thebes. Although the character of the pottery is LH IIIB2, some elements appearing more regularly in LH IIIC Early are already present. At these sites, situated at a distance of 100–250m around the presumable palace core on top of the Kadmeia,¹²⁵ independent architectural units should have stood, especially in the MCC and I Oedipus St. plots and Pelopidas St. archive, which lie lower down the slopes of Kadmeia Hill, while the Epaminondas and Democritus Sts. plot is at the edge of the plateau on top of the hill. These sites operated within the palatial system in its later period, but it has yet to be proved if and which of them were directly connected to the palace. The latter seems not to be the case for the MCC plot

¹¹³ French 1969, 75, 82, fig.7; Wardle 1973, 315–318, fig. 11; Iakovidis 2006, 175; French – Tylour 2007, 23 (end of Phase VII) nos. 66-619, 66-439, 66-1504.

¹¹⁴ Onassoglou 1995, 143–144.

¹¹⁵ Demakopoulou 2003, 81–82, 84, fig. 5.3.

¹¹⁶ Podzuweit 1979, 413–414, fig. 35.10–11; 420, fig. 40.6; 422; Kardamaki 2015, 84, tab. 1.

¹¹⁷ Iakovidis 1998, 148, 190–191, 271.

¹¹⁸ Group B deep bowls are mentioned in excavation reports but rarely illustrated, see Demakopoulou 1974, 163; Demakopoulou 1979, 431, 433, pl. 284γ. The material of the LH destruction layer in Room B at 14 Oedipus St. (Kordatzis plot) comprises one sherd of such a bowl, cf. Symeonoglou 1973, 21, pl.18, fig. 29.1.5, and at 29 Pindar St. (Koropouli plot) is totally absent, cf. Demakopoulou 1974, 173.

¹¹⁹ French – Stockhammer 2009, 219, fig. 23.5–7.

¹²⁰ Andrikou 2006, 32–33, tab. 6.

¹²¹ Mountjoy 1983, 112; Iakovidis 1998, 143–148; Mountjoy 1999, 678–681. Similar observation about the rosette deep bowl at the destruction level at Dimini (Adrimi-Sismani 2014, 346, 425).

¹²² This is valid for all deposits in the MCC plot. See n. 90–91, 117.

¹²³ For a summary on the chronology debate see Mountjoy 1997, 109.

¹²⁴ For a detailed analysis of the pottery production at Pylos see Hruby 2006, 178–223.

¹²⁵ For the existence of one or two Mycenaean palaces on top of Kadmeia Hill and their extent see Spyropoulos – Chadwick 1975, 58–71; Catling et al. 1980, 95–97; Symeonoglou 1985, 40–50; Dakouri-Hild 2001, 105–107.

since the variety of the items in the storeroom contents and the amount of pottery for keeping and consuming food points to a wealthy owner and not to the extensive and specialized storerooms of a palace. The evidence speaks for a widespread disaster striking Thebes. The cause of this disaster is attributed by Theodoros Spyropoulos and John Chadwick to an earthquake,¹²⁶ but relevant evidence is dubious for the Pelopidas St. archive¹²⁷ and absent in the MCC plot. Palatial Thebes did not recover from this situation as it had done earlier, since earthquake or fire disasters attested in LH IIIA2–B and/or LH IIIB1 Late¹²⁸ had not affected the operation of the palatial administration. The inevitable deduction is that the Theban palace was weakened and unable to face successfully the unfavorable results, maybe due to problems in the economic system and the distribution of food and other goods. The relationship between Thebes and Orchomenos is of primary importance in this respect, as, surely, were also the effects of the abandonment of Glas and the subsequent flooding of the cultivated land in the dried Kopais Lake. To address this problem, more evidence from Orchomenos is needed. Following the collapse of the palatial system, Thebes continued to be inhabited. The people resumed their life over the ruins immediately after the destruction, as is shown by the pottery in use at the MCC plot and the Pelopidas St. excavation site. Dense habitation through centuries in Thebes caused the humble architectural relics of this revival to disappear. Future excavations, however, may hold surprises. Although crafts dependent on precious or semi-precious raw materials were negatively affected, pottery retained a certain quality and also creativeness, as demonstrated by a pictorial krater with a representation of sphinxes and a chariot scene from the MCC plot.¹²⁹ This new situation seems to have gone on and led to a moderate flourishing until LH IIIC Middle.

The final destruction at Thebes falls in the same time span (LH IIIB2 Late) as the end of the Mycenaean palatial centers in the Peloponnese. It seems to be closer to the destruction of the Pylian palace and slightly later than Argive centers. The analysis of more ceramic material from other plots in Thebes may confirm this suggestion.

The cause of the demise of the Mycenaean palatial system is a subject that has mobilized research.¹³⁰ The most recent proposal, that it resulted from internal social problems and social upheaval, seems to be gaining ground.¹³¹ The disintegration most probably started from the Mycenaean centers in the Argolid and soon spread to surrounding areas including Boiotia, which seems to fit the pottery evidence from various sites, as discussed above. That a new order was established after the destructions which did not essentially differ in material culture insofar as can be observed in the pottery is attested in all Mycenaean centers. The evidence from Tiryns¹³² in particular demonstrates how the post-destruction society was reorganized on a new basis and benefitted from the achievements of the past.

Acknowledgements: I warmly thank Reinhard Jung and Elina Kardamaki, the organizers of the workshop ‘Synchronizing the Destructions of the Mycenaean Palaces’, for the invitation and the opportunity offered to participate in the fruitful discussion on this matter. I also thank them for improving my text.

¹²⁶ Spyropoulos – Chadwick 1975, 55, 68–69.

¹²⁷ Indications only exist for an earthquake as the cause of the conflagration: Aravantinos et al. 2001, 16–19; Andrikou 2006, 55–56.

¹²⁸ Andrikou 2006, 56–58, Sites 1, 3, 4, 7, 9.

¹²⁹ Thebes Museum BE26996. Pliatsika 2000, 296, figs. 1–2; Mommsen – Maran 2000/2001, 97–98, tab. 1, Theb61 (26996); 101, tab. 3.

¹³⁰ Maran 2010, 242.

¹³¹ Maran 2010; Jung 2017.

¹³² Maran – Papadimitriou 2017.

Bibliography

Adrimi-Sismani 2014

B. Αδρύμη-Σισμάνη, Ιωλκός. Η εϋκτιμένη πόλη του Ομήρου. Ένα αστικό κέντρο στον μυχό του Παγασητικού κόλπου. Το διοικητικό κέντρο, οι οικίες και το νεκροταφείο (Volos 2014).

Andrikou 2000a

E. Ανδρίκου, Συμβολή οδών Λ. Μπέλλου και Ι. Θρεψιάδου (οικόπεδο Δημοτικού Συνεδριακού Κέντρου (ΔΣΚ) δήμου Θηβών Ο.Τ. 377), *Αρχαιολογικόν Δελτίον* 50/1995, 2000, Β', 290–294.

Andrikou 2000b

E. Ανδρίκου, Νέα στοιχεία για την κατοίκηση στη Θήβα την Πρώιμη Εποχή του Χαλκού: αγιδωτό κτήριο στο οικόπεδο του Δημοτικού Συνεδριακού Κέντρου Θηβαίων, in: B. Αραβαντινός (ed.), Γ' Διεθνές Συνέδριο Βοιωτικών Μελετών, Θήβα, 4–8 Σεπτεμβρίου 1996, *Επετηρίς της Εταιρείας Βοιωτικών Μελετών* 3, α' (Athens 2000) 173–191.

Andrikou 2003

E. Ανδρίκου, Έξι μυκηναϊκές σφραγίδες από τη Θήβα, in: Vlachopoulos – Birtacha 2003, 609–618.

Andrikou 2004

E. Andrikou, CMS V. Suppl. 3, Neufunde aus Griechenland und der westlichen Türkei (Mainz 2004).

Andrikou 2006

E. Andrikou, The Late Helladic III pottery, in: E. Andrikou – V. L. Aravantinos – L. Godart – A. Sacconi – J. Vroom, Thèbes. Fouilles de la Cadmée 2, 2. Les tablettes en linéaire B de la Odos Pelopidou. Le contexte archéologique, la céramique de la Odos Pelopidou et la chronologie du linéaire B, *Biblioteca di «Pasiphae»* 2, 2 (Pisa, Rome 2006) 11–179.

Andrikou 2007

E. Andrikou, New evidence on Mycenaean bronze corselets from Thebes in Boeotia and the Bronze Age sequence of corselets in Greece and Europe, in: I. Galanaki – H. Tomas – Y. Galanakis – R. Laffineur (eds.), *Between the Aegean and Baltic Seas. Prehistory Across Borders. Proceedings of the International Conference “Bronze and Early Iron Age Interconnections and Contemporary Developments between the Aegean and the Regions of the Balkan Peninsula, Central and Northern Europe”*, University of Zagreb, 11–14 April 2005, *Aegaeum* 27 (Liège, Austin 2007) 401–412.

Andrikou, forthcoming

E. Andrikou, Μυκηναϊκή ανακτορική και μετανακτορική εγκατάσταση στο ΒΔ άκρο της Καδμείας στη Θήβα. Το οικόπεδο του Δημοτικού Συνεδριακού Κέντρου Θηβών, *Δημοσιεύματα Αρχαιολογικού Δελτίου* (Athens, forthcoming).

Aravantinos et al. 2001

V. L. Aravantinos – L. Godart – A. Sacconi, Thèbes. Fouilles de la Cadmée 1. Les tablettes en linéaire B de la Odos Pelopidou. Édition et commentaire, *Biblioteca di «Pasiphae»* 1 (Pisa, Rome 2001).

Aravantinos et al. 2002

V. L. Aravantinos – L. Godart – A. Sacconi, Thèbes. Fouilles de la Cadmée 3. Corpus des documents d'archives en linéaire B de Thèbes (1–433), *Biblioteca di «Pasiphae»* 3 (Pisa, Rome 2002).

Aravantinos et al. 2005

V. L. Aravantinos – M. Del Frio – L. Godart – A. Sacconi, Thèbes. Fouilles de la Cadmée 4. Les textes de Thèbes (1–433). Translittération et tableaux des scribes, *Biblioteca di «Pasiphae»* 4 (Pisa, Rome 2005).

Baumann 2007

M. Baumann, The Late Helladic coarse wares, in: Walberg 2007, 154–162.

Blegen 1928

C. W. Blegen, Zygouries. A Prehistoric Settlement in the Valley of Cleonae (Cambridge, Massachusetts 1928).

Blegen – Rawson 1966

C. W. Blegen – M. Rawson, The Palace of Nestor at Pylos in Western Messenia 1. The Buildings and Their Contents (Princeton 1966).

Catling et al. 1980

H. W. Catling – J. F. Cherry – R. E. Jones – J. T. Killen, The Linear B inscribed stirrup jars and West Crete, *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 75, 1980, 49–113.

Chadwick 1963

J. Chadwick (ed.), *The Mycenae Tablets 3*, Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, New Series 52, 1962 (Philadelphia 1963).

Dakouri-Hild 2001

A. Dakouri-Hild, *The House of Kadmos in Mycenaean Thebes reconsidered: architecture, chronology, and context*, *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 96, 2001, 81–122.

Dalinghaus 1998

M. Dalinghaus, *The domestic pottery*, in: Walberg 1998, 133–137.

Daniilidou 2008

Δ. Δανιηλίδου, *Ανασκαφές Μυκηθών 2. Το “εργαστήριο” των Μυκηθών*, Βιβλιοθήκη της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας 258 (Athens 2008).

Deligianni 2003

E.-E. Δελιγιάννη, *Ένας πτηνόμορφος ασκός από τη Θήβα*, in: Vlachopoulos – Birtacha 2003, 599–608.

Demakopoulou 1974

K. Δημακοπούλου, *Μυκηναϊκόν ανακτορικόν εργαστήριον εις Θήβας*, *Αρχαιολογικά Ανάλεκτα εξ Αθηνών* 7, 1974, 162–173.

Demakopoulou 1979

K. Δημακοπούλου, *Οδός Πινδάρου 29*, *Αρχαιολογικόν Δελτίον* 29/1973/1974, 1979, Β', 430–433.

Demakopoulou 2003

K. Demakopoulou, *The pottery from the destruction layers in Midea: Late Helladic III B2 Late or Transitional Late Helladic III B2/Late Helladic III C Early?*, in: S. Deger-Jalkotzy – M. Zavadil (eds.), *LH III C Chronology and Synchronisms. Proceedings of the International Workshop Held at the Austrian Academy of Sciences at Vienna, May 7th and 8th, 2001*, *Veröffentlichungen der Mykenischen Kommission* 20 (Vienna 2003) 77–92.

Demakopoulou – Divari-Valakou 1994

K. Demakopoulou – N. Divari-Valakou, *A. Excavation in the area of the West Gate, 1990–1991*, in: K. Demakopoulou – N. Divari-Valakou – G. Walberg, *Excavations and restoration work in Midea 1990–1992*, *Opuscula Atheniensi* 20, 1994, 19–34.

Demakopoulou – Divari-Valakou 1997

K. Demakopoulou – N. Divari-Valakou, *A. Excavation in the area of the West Gate*, in: K. Demakopoulou – N. Divari-Valakou – P. Åström – G. Walberg, *Excavations in Midea 1994*, *Opuscula Atheniensi* 21/1996, 1997, 13–24.

Demakopoulou – Divari-Valakou 1999

K. Demakopoulou – N. Divari-Valakou, *A. Excavation in the area of the West Gate*, in: K. Demakopoulou – N. Divari-Valakou – P. Åström – G. Walberg, *Excavations in Midea 1995–1996*, *Opuscula Atheniensi* 22–23/1997/1998, 1999, 57–90.

Demakopoulou – Divari-Valakou 2001

K. Demakopoulou – N. Divari-Valakou, *A. West Gate Area*, in: K. Demakopoulou – N. Divari-Valakou – P. Åström – G. Walberg, *Work in Midea 1997–1999. Excavation, conservation, restoration*, *Opuscula Atheniensi* 25–26/2000/2001, 2001, 35–50.

Demakopoulou – Divari-Valakou 2010

K. Δημακοπούλου – N. Διβάρη-Βαλάκου, *Η μυκηναϊκή ακρόπολη της Μιδέας. Οδηγός* (Athens 2010).

Döhl 1973

H. Döhl, *Iria. Die Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen 1939*, in: U. Jantzen (ed.), *Tiryns* 6 (Mainz 1973) 127–194.

French 1967

E. French, *Pottery from Late Helladic IIIB 1 destruction contexts at Mycenae*, *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 62, 1967, 149–193.

French 1969

E. French, A group of Late Helladic IIIB 2 pottery from Mycenae, *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 64, 1969, 71–93.

French 2011

E. B. French, *The Post-Palatial Levels, Well Built Mycenae 16–17* (Oxford 2011).

French – Stockhammer 2009

E. B. French – Ph. Stockhammer, Mycenae and Tiryns: the pottery of the second half of the thirteenth century BC – contexts and definitions (with a contribution by U. Damm-Meinhardt), *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 104, 2009, 175–232.

French – Taylour 2007

E. B. French – W. D. Taylour, *The Service Areas of the Cult Centre, Well Built Mycenae 13* (Oxford 2007).

Giering 1998

K. L. Giering, The LH IIIB pottery, in: Walberg 1998, 119–133.

Giering 2007

K. L. Giering, The LH IIIB decorated pottery, in: Walberg 2007, 121–138.

Grossmann – Schäffer 1971

P. Grossmann – J. Schäffer, Tiryns: Unterburg, Grabungen 1965, *Tiryns* 5 (Mainz 1971) 41–76.

Hiesel 1982

G. Hiesel, Bericht zur unbemalten mykenischen Keramik von Tiryns, *Archäologischer Anzeiger* 1982, 431–439.

Hruby 2006

J. A. Hruby, *Feasting and Ceramics: A View from the Palace of Nestor at Pylos* (PhD Diss., University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati 2006). Online <http://rave.ohiolink.edu/etdc/view?acc_num=ucin1155830535> (last access 11 July 2020).

Iakovidis 1989

Σ. Ε. Ιακωβίδης, Γλας 1. Η ανασκαφή 1955–1961, Βιβλιοθήκη της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας 107 (Athens 1989).

Iakovidis 1998

Σ. Ε. Ιακωβίδης, Γλας 2. Η ανασκαφή 1981–1991, Βιβλιοθήκη της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας 173 (Athens 1998).

Iakovidis 2006

Σ. Ε. Ιακωβίδης, Ανασκαφές Μυκηνών 1. Η βορειοδυτική συνοικία, Βιβλιοθήκη της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας 244 (Athens 2006).

Iakovidis 2013

Σ. Ε. Ιακωβίδης, Ανασκαφές Μυκηνών 4. Η Οικία στις Πλάκες, Βιβλιοθήκη της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας 288 (Athens 2013).

Iakovidis et al. 2013

Σ. Ε. Ιακωβίδης και συνεργάτες, Ανασκαφές Μυκηνών 3. Η νοτιοδυτική συνοικία, Βιβλιοθήκη της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας 278 (Athens 2013).

Immerwahr 1971

S. A. Immerwahr, *The Athenian Agora. Results of Excavations Conducted by the American School of Classical Studies at Athens* 13. The Neolithic and Bronze Ages (Princeton 1971).

Jung 2017

R. Jung, Ταξικοί αγώνες και η πτώση των μυκηναϊκών ανακτόρων, *Κρίση* 1, 2017, 78–126.

Karakitsou 2000

Ε. Καρακίτσου, Σύνολο ειδωλίων κλασικών χρόνων από τη Θήβα, in: Β. Αραβαντινός (ed.), Γ' Διεθνές Συνέδριο Βοιωτικών Μελετών, Θήβα, 4–8 Σεπτεμβρίου 1996, *Επετηρίς της Εταιρείας Βοιωτικών Μελετών* 3, α' (Athens 2000) 565–591.

Kardamaki 2015

E. Kardamaki, Conclusions from the new deposit at the Western Staircase terrace at Tiryns, in: A.-L. Schallin – I. Tournavitou (eds.), *Mycenaens Up to Date. The Archaeology of the North-Eastern Peloponnese – Current Concepts and New Directions* (Stockholm 2015) 79–97.

Keramopoulos 1909

A. Δ. Κεραμόπουλλος, Η οικία του Κάδμου, *Εφημερίς Αρχαιολογική* 1909, 57–122.

Keramopoulos 1917

A. Δ. Κεραμόπουλλος, Θηβαϊκά, *Αρχαιολογικόν Δελτίον* 3, 1917.

Keramopoulos 1930

A. Δ. Κεραμόπουλλος, Αι βιομηχανίαι και το εμπόριον του Κάδμου, *Αρχαιολογική Εφημερίς* 1930, 29–58.

Koilakou 1992

Χ. Κοιλιάκου, Οικόπεδο Πνευματικού Κέντρου, *Αρχαιολογικόν Δελτίον* 42/1987, 1992, Β', 118–119.

Koilakou 2000

Χ. Κοιλιάκου, Οδός Λουκά Μπέλλου (Ο.Τ. 377, οικόπεδο Πολιτιστικού Κέντρου), *Αρχαιολογικόν Δελτίον* 50/1995, 2000, Β', 77–80.

Marabea 2010

Χρ. Μαραμπέα, Το ανατολικό κτηριακό συγκρότημα ΙΑ-ΙΒ-ΙΔ στη μυκηναϊκή ακρόπολη στα Κανάκια Σαλαμίνας: Περιεχόμενο και λειτουργία (PhD Diss., University of Ioannina, Ioannina 2010) (doi: 10.12681/eadd/21813).

Maran 2010

J. Maran, The crisis years? Reflections on signs of instability in the last decades of the Mycenaean palaces, *Scienze dell'antichità, Storia archeologia antropologia* 15/2009, 2010, 241–262.

Maran – Papadimitriou 2017

J. Maran – A. Papadimitriou, Gegen den Strom der Geschichte. Die nördliche Unterstadt von Tiryns: ein gescheitertes Urbanisierungsprojekt der mykenischen Nachpalastzeit, *Archäologischer Anzeiger* 2/2016, 2017, 19–118.

Mommsen – Maran 2000/2001

H. Mommsen – J. Maran, Production places of some Mycenaean pictorial vessels: the contribution of chemical pottery analysis, *Opuscula Atheniensi* 25–26, 2000/2001, 2001, 95–106.

Mountjoy 1976

P. A. Mountjoy, Late Helladic III B 1 pottery dating the construction of the South House at Mycenae, *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 71, 1976, 77–111.

Mountjoy 1983

P. A. Mountjoy, Orchomenos V. Mycenaean Pottery from Orchomenos, Eutresis and Other Boeotian Sites (Munich 1983).

Mountjoy 1995

P. A. Mountjoy, Thorikos mine no. 3: the Mycenaean pottery, *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 90, 1995, 195–227.

Mountjoy 1997

P. A. Mountjoy, The destruction of the Palace at Pylos reconsidered, *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 92, 1997, 109–137.

Mountjoy 1999

P. A. Mountjoy, Regional Mycenaean Decorated Pottery 1–2 (Rahden/Westf. 1999).

Mylonas 1959

G. E. Mylonas, Aghios Kosmas. An Early Bronze Age Settlement and Cemetery in Attica (Princeton 1959).

Mylonas Shear 1987

I. Mylonas Shear, The Panagia Houses at Mycenae, *University Museum Monograph* 68 (Philadelphia 1987).

Onassoglou 1995

A. Ωνάσογλου, Η Οικία του Τάφου των Τριπόδων στις Μυκίνες, Βιβλιοθήκη της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας 147 (Athens 1995).

Piteros 1988

Χρ. Πιτερός, Οδός Οιδίποδος 1 (οικόπεδο Δημ. Λιάγκα), Αρχαιολογικόν Δελτίον 36/1981, 1988, Β', 191.

Piteros 1989

Χρ. Πιτερός, Οδός Οιδίποδος 1 (οικόπεδο Δημ. Λιάγκα), Αρχαιολογικόν Δελτίον 38/1983, 1989, Β', 131–134.

Piteros et al. 1990

C. Piteros – J.-P. Olivier – J. L. Melena, Les inscriptions en linéaire B des nodules de Thebès (1982): la fouille, les documents, les possibilités d'interprétation, Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique 114, 1990, 103–184.

Pliatsika 2000

Β. Πλιάτσικα, Μυκηναϊκή κεραμική εικονιστικού ρυθμού από τη Θήβα, in: Β. Αραβαντινός (ed.), Γ' Διεθνές Συνέδριο Βοιωτικών Μελετών, Θήβα, 4–8 Σεπτεμβρίου 1996, Επετηρίς της Εταιρείας Βοιωτικών Μελετών 3, α' (Athens 2000) 286–297.

Podzuweit 1979

Ch. Podzuweit, Bericht zur spätmykenischen Keramik, Ausgrabungen in Tiryns 1977, Archäologischer Anzeiger 1979, 412–440.

Podzuweit 2007

Ch. Podzuweit, Studien zur spätmykenischen Keramik, Tiryns 14 (Wiesbaden 2007).

Raison 1968

J. Raison, Les vases à inscriptions peintes de l'âge mycénien et leur contexte archéologique, Incunabula Graeca 19 (Rome 1968).

Sabetai – Karakitsou 2016

Β. Σαμπετάϊ – Ε. Καρακίτσου, Κεραμική και τμήμα κεράμωσης των κλασικών χρόνων από τη θηβαϊκή Καδμεία: διάσπαρτα τεκμήρια ενός ιερού, Αρχαιολογικόν Δελτίον 65–66/2010/2011, 2016, Α', 263–280.

Stockhammer 2008

Ph. W. Stockhammer, Kontinuität und Wandel. Die Keramik der Nachpalastzeit aus der Unterstadt von Tiryns 1–2 (PhD Diss., University of Heidelberg, Heidelberg 2008) (doi: 10.11588/heidok.00008612).

Spyropoulos – Chadwick 1975

Th. G. Spyropoulos – J. Chadwick, The Thebes Tablets 2, Minos Suppl. 4 (Salamanca 1975).

Symeonoglou 1973

S. Symeonoglou, Kadmeia 1. Mycenaean Finds from Thebes, Greece. Excavation at 14 Oedipus St., Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology 35 (Gothenburg 1973).

Symeonoglou 1985

S. Symeonoglou, The Topography of Thebes from the Bronze Age to Modern Times (Princeton 1985).

Taylor 1963

W. Taylor, The Citadel House, in: Chadwick 1963, 35–46.

Thomas 2005

P. M. Thomas, A deposit of Late Helladic IIIB1 pottery from Tsoungiza, Hesperia 74, 2005, 451–573.

Tournavitou 1995

I. Tournavitou, The "Ivory Houses" at Mycenae, The British School at Athens Suppl. 24 (London 1995).

Verdelis 1963

N. M. Verdelis, The West House, in: Chadwick 1963, 13–29.

Verstraete 2007

J. Verstraete, The plain Late Helladic pottery, in: Walberg 2007, 151–153.

Vitale 2006

S. Vitale, The LH IIIB–LH IIIC transition on the Mycenaean mainland. *Ceramic phases and terminology*, *Hesperia* 75, 2006, 177–204.

Vlachopoulos – Birtacha 2003

A. Βλαχόπουλος – Κ. Μπίρταχα (eds.), *Αργοναύτης. Τιμητικός τόμος για τον καθηγητή Χρίστο Γ. Ντούμα από τους μαθητές του στο Πανεπιστήμιο Αθηνών (1980–2000)* (Athens 2003).

Voigtländer 2003

W. Voigtländer, *Die Palastkeramik, Tiryns 10* (Mainz 2003).

Walberg 1998

G. Walberg, *Excavations on the Acropolis of Midea. Results of the Greek-Swedish Excavations under the Direction of Katie Demakopoulou and Paul Åström 1. The Excavations on the Lower Terraces, 1985–1991* (Stockholm 1998).

Walberg 2007

G. Walberg, *Midea: The Megaron Complex and Shrine Area. Excavations on the Lower Terraces 1994–1997*, *Prehistory Monographs* 20 (Philadelphia 2007).

Wardle 1969

K. A. Wardle, A group of Late Helladic IIIB 1 pottery from within the citadel at Mycenae, *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 64, 1969, 261–297.

Wardle 1973

K. A. Wardle, A group of Late Helladic IIIB 2 pottery from within the citadel at Mycenae: ‘The Causeway deposit’, *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 68, 1973, 297–342.