The Plakari Archaeological Project

Preliminary report on the third field season (2012)

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Abstract

During the 2012 fieldwork campaign at Karystos-Plakari in southern Euboia, the excavation of the open-air sacrificial refuse area was continued. This yielded over 22,000 pottery fragments of the Protogeometric and, especially, Geometric and Sub-Geometric periods and 289 small finds, in addition to large quantities of animal bones. This confirms the earlier hypothesis that the western part of the Plakari hilltop was used for large-scale or frequent sacrificial feasting and consumption of meat and wine, accompanied by animal sacrifices. Some of the votives seem to belong to the female sphere and may be connected to transitory rites performed within the sanctuary. Further investigations of Late Classical Building A ('hestiatorion') and its forecourt on the terrace directly above the sacrificial refuse area brought to light complete vessels of the late 5th and 4th centuries BC, as well as personal ornaments and other objects of metal. In the southwest corner of the terrace, strata and features were uncovered representing the Archaic period, including the possible remains of a stone platform and a stone bench; next to the latter were a bronze horse figurine, two aryballoi of the later 7th century, an iron sword and a terracotta rattle.

Keywords

Karystos-Plakari – southern Euboia – Early Iron Age – Archaic period – Classical period.

Introduction

In 2009, VU University Amsterdam initiated a fieldwork project, in collaboration with the 11th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities, centring on the archaeological site of Plakari near Karystos in southern Euboia, and its immediate surroundings. The Plakari Archaeological Project is multidisciplinary in scope, combining systematic excavations with geoarchaeological landscape and palaeo-ecological research, archaeobotany and zooarchaeology. The project aims to understand the character of human occupation in and around Plakari, and to investigate

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how the site functioned in various periods on a local, a regional and a supra-regional level.

The primary goal of the first field campaign in 2010 was to produce a detailed digital map and 3D elevation of the hilltop and the surrounding area. Find locations known from previous surveys, along with ancient terrace walls and other visible archaeological remains, were plotted on this map.[1] During the first excavation season (2011), investigations were concentrated in three trenches on the west side of the Plakari hilltop.[2] In Trench 1a on the southern limits of Terrace 1, part of a large deposition of material was excavated. This consisted not only of small finds of metal, stone and terracotta that can be interpreted as *ex-votos*, but also of large numbers of Early Iron Age pottery sherds and animal bones, which are likely to be the remains of sacrificial feasting. Trench 2c on Terrace 2 brought to light a small, rectangular building of dry stone masonry, using local schist stone. It was built against Terrace Wall 2, which probably functioned as a temenos wall. A series of fine limestone slabs were uncovered against the inner face of the building's northern wall, probably serving as low tables or shelves. Next to and on top of these slabs we found a considerable amount of local, plain and black glazed pottery that had been used for preparing and consuming food and beverages.

Items of bronze and iron were also part of the building's inventory, as were a considerable number of terracotta lamps.[3] The latter suggest that feasting was taking place at night time. Some of the pots were inscribed with the letters *hēta* and *iota*, which are common abbreviations of *hi(eron)* and *hi(eros)*, others with monograms or the name of the goddess Nikē.[4] One of the most remarkable finds is a bronze collar.[5] This extremely rare object has now been identified as a piece of Thraco-Macedonian armour known as *peritrachilion*.[6] On the basis of its inventory and the presence of a hearth, the building has been dubbed a *hestiatorion* and appears to have been in use from the late 5th century to ca. 325/320 BC, when the building was destroyed. As a result, its inventory was more or less completely preserved and many individual objects were found in an excellent state of preservation. In Trench 3, which is located in the northwest corner of Terrace 1, two rooms of a building were brought to light that had been used for storage, judging

[1] Crielaard et al. 2011-2012; p. 85 fig. 2 reproduces the site map.
[2] Preliminary report in Crielaard et al. 2013.
[3] Crielaard et al. 2013, 47 fig. 11.
[4] For a discussion of selected pottery, inscriptions and lamps from this building, see Chidiroglou elsewhere in this volume (= Chidiroglou 2014).
[5] Crielaard et al. 2013, 46, fig. 10.
[6] Faklaris 1985; also Archibald 1985. Most of the examples found in Macedonia date to the second and third quarters of the 4th century BC (Faklaris 1985, 13), a date which also fits our context. According to Plutarch (*Life of Alexander* 32.5) Alexander the Great wore an iron *peritrachilion* set with precious stones during the battle of Gaugamela.

from the find of almost 5,500 amphora fragments and a possible bronze scale pan. The former can be provisionally dated to the second half of the 4th century BC.

In addition to the excavations, in 2011 geoarchaeological research was carried out on the coastal plains to the southwest and northeast of Plakari by means of coring, in order to study landscape formation processes, land use and sea level changes.[7] After the fieldwork, the samples were analysed in the laboratories of the VU University's faculty of Earth and Life Sciences. This included grain size analysis, thermographimetric analysis and micropaleontological analysis; pollen analysis was carried out on selected core samples from the Rigia river valley, which lies to the northeast of the Plakari hill. This part of the project is expected to be completed in the course of 2013.

The 2012 excavations

During the 2012 field season (16 July–14 August), we continued our excavations on the west side of the hilltop. Of the trenches dug in 2011, Trench 1 was enlarged, while in Trench 2 work was concentrated in sections 2a and 2c (see Figure 1: 1a-b, 2a, c). The excavations in Trench 3 in the north-west corner of Terrace 1 were not continued.[8]

Trench 1 a-b

Trench 1 is located on the southern slope of the Plakari hilltop. This is the area where the southern section of Terrace Wall (TW) 1 can be traced over a distance of several metres until it reaches the point where it has partly collapsed due to the bulldozing of the A2 road to its south. As a result of this collapse, a large deposit of pottery, bone and other finds had become visible in the scarp of the road. This deposit has been interpreted as a sacrificial refuse pit (*apothetēs* or *bothros*), supposedly dug in a peripheral part of the sanctuary, against TW 1.[9]

[7] Crielaard et al. 2013, 50-54.

[8] Jan Paul Crielaard acted as project coordinator and, together with Maria Kosma, as field director. The trench supervisors were VU University students Alline Sinke (Trench 1a-b), Stefan Kooi (Trench 2a) and Ruben Brugge (Trench 2c). Jaap Fokkema (VU University) was responsible for survey work and for mapping and drawing the architectural remains. The work in the museum was coordinated by Filiz Songu (VU University), who was also responsible for recording the finds and studying pottery and small finds. Dr Xenia Charalambidou (Fitch Laboratory, British School at Athens) coordinated and conducted the research project on the Early Iron Age pottery, Dr Maria Chidiroglou studied the Classical pottery from Building A. Bert Brouwenstijn (VU University) was responsible for drawing and photographing the archaeological finds. Birgit Konnemann drew a large selection of Early Iron Age sherds. A team of 13 VU University students assisted in the field and the museum.

[9] Crielaard et al. 2013, 37-40. *Apothetēs* in road scarp, see Crielaard et al. 2011-2012, 90 fig. 8.

Figure 1. Map of Plakari showing location of 2012 trenches (Tr. 1a-b, 2a, c)

In 2012, the previous year's Trench 1a was dug down to bedrock and then considerably expanded (= Trench 1b) until the two trenches together covered an area of 77.38 m^2 (Figure 2). Here, the primary aim of our activities was to retrieve as much pottery and as many small finds and animal bones and botanical macro-remains as possible, in order to obtain more information about the cult, the cult activities, the people participating in these rituals, and the chronological span of these cultic activities. As in 2011, the collection of finds was maximized with the help of dry-sieving and wet-sieving, using a flotation machine.[10] In total, we retrieved in 2012 some 22,000 pottery fragments, almost all datable to the Protogeometric, Geometric and Sub-Geometric periods, no less than 289 small finds (see Table 1 below) and again large quantities of animal bones. A few objects are of a later date, including two oil flasks in the shape of a bird and a *sirene*, respectively (mid-6th century, see Figure 3).[11] This shows that ceremonial activities continued down to an advanced stage of the Archaic period.

[10] About 5,140 litres were dry-sieved; 1/3 of this was subsequently wet-sieved.
[11] Siren vases: cf. e.g. Higgins 1954, pl. 16 nos 75-77; Boardman & Hayes 1966, pls 100 no. 50 and, esp., 101 no. 68; Dragendorf 1903, 27, fig. 67 no. 14.

Figure 2. Plan of Trenches 1a-b, 2a and 2c

Table 1. Trench 1a–b: number of finds per find category recovered in 2012

	Sheet metal	Finger / ear rings	Pins / needles	Fibulae	Beads	Knives / blades	Arrowhead	Figurines	Figure vases	Scarabs	Spindle whorls	Fragments (unidentified)	Other	Total
Gold		1												1
Bronze	5	56	19	11	1							7	3	102
Iron		4	75	3		22	1					26	4	135
Lead		1										1		2
Stone					1			1[1)]		1		1	4[2)]	8
Terracotta					1			14	5		3	12	4	39
Shell (worked)													1	1
Bone													1	1
Total	5	62	94	14	3	22	1	15	5	1	3	47	17	289

[1)] Final Neolithic/Early Bronze Age figurine. [2)] Incl. two Final Neolithic/Early Bronze Age axes.

One of the main questions of this campaign was whether we could discern patterns in the distribution of the *bothros* material, or indeed identify where the *bothros* was originally located. According to the preliminary conclusion we had drawn in the previous year, votives and other sacrificial material had washed down the hill slope together with large quantities of gravel, possibly from Terrace 2, which is located immediately to its north. Due to the much larger area that was exposed during the 2012 campaign, we were able to establish that this was only partly the case. In the northern part of Trench 1b, we touched upon a part of Terrace Wall 2, of which the lower courses were intact (see Figure 2: un. 4). It was standing on a thin but clearly discernable stratum containing sacrificial debris (see Figure 2: un. 5), apparently a levelling layer or the fill of a foundation trench. This stratigraphical sequence indicates that TW2 was built after sacrificial refuse material had been deposited and is thus likely to be post-Geometric in date. Moreover, we found that in several places on the hill slope certain categories of finds were clustered together, for instance small concentrations of dress pins, or sherds from

Figure 3. Terracotta bird vase of the Archaic period from Trench 1b

the same vessel (see Figure 12c). This clustering was even clearer in the case of collections of parts of large iron objects that had been buried in two adjacent cavities (Figure 4). On the other hand, in a number of cases it could be established that joining sherds had been found in very different locations, suggesting that some of the Early Iron Age pottery had been deliberately broken before being left on the hill slope. It seems, then, that some objects had been deliberately deposited in a specific spot, whereas others — notably pottery fragments — had been spread over the hill slope in a more random fashion. Thus, 'sacrificial refuse area' is a more appropriate term than *bothros*. Some of the material had slid down the hillside and was halted either by the uneven surface of the natural rock or by Terrace Wall 1. The thick gravel layer can be seen as erosive material that has mixed with the artifacts.

Trench 2

Trench 2 is situated to the north of Trench 1 and immediately to the west of the highest part of the hilltop (Figure 1). This is the area of Terrace 2 (T2), the smaller of the two terraces, which is delineated on three sides by Terrace Wall 2. Perhaps TW2 set apart the section of the sanctuary that was more sacred and that gave

Figure 4. Parts of large iron objects found buried in cavity in Trench 1b

access to the area of the rock-cut niches a little more to the east.[12] In 2011, our excavations focused on Building A in Trench 2c (Figure 2). This building, interpreted as a *hestiatorion*,[13] measures approximately 4.65 m (N-S) by 5.20+ m (W-E); we did not excavate its eastern wall, but for stratigraphical observations decided to leave a section in place. In 2012, we continued our work in Trench 2c. Our main aims were to complete the excavation of Building A, make a reconstruction of the building's inventory by plotting and recording the artifacts and their find spots as precisely as possible, and establish a date for the use and construction and use of Building A and TW2. In addition to artifacts, also archaeobotanical macroremains were collected by means of dry and wet sieving.

As can be seen in Figure 2, the northern wall of Building A (un. 61) abuts on its western wall (un. 56), suggesting that the two were not constructed at the same time; the former was probably built at a later stage, although it is difficult to

[12] Crielaard et al. 2011-2012, 93 fig. 11.
[13] Future studies will make clear how Building A is related to contemporary *hestiatoria* which generally seem to concern buildings of larger dimensions.

Figure 5. Photograph of Building A (Trench 2c), from west

establish how much later. The rock surface inside Building A was levelled, however, creating an uneven surface (Figure 5). In the south-western and central-northern parts of the room material was deposited to level the surface (Figure 2: un. 70 and 71). A floor of beaten earth (un. 63 and 72) was for the greater part constructed on top of these levelling layers, except for the area close to the building's entrance in the southern part of the building, where the floor lay directly upon the rock surface. More or less in the centre of the room, a large, flattish, semi-circular stone was present, showing traces of intense burning (Figure 2: stone inside un. 70). This might have functioned as a stone base for a wooden roof support. To the west of this was found an area with charcoal, ashy material and burnt stones (un. 65 and 66) together with a concentration of ash (un. 68), probably constituting the remains of a hearth ('fire place' is a more appropriate designation, as it was not delineated by stones). Much charcoal was also found, either lying on top of the ancient surface or included in the floor matrix. It is not always clear whether these charcoal fragments originate from the hearth or are burnt parts of the roof structure (some pieces are quite big, and appear to be charred branches or beams). The relatively small quantity of stones found both inside and outside the building suggests that the building's superstructure was made not of stone but of, for instance, mud bricks. There are no indications that it had a tiled roof.

Just as in the previous season, Building A yielded a rich collection of plain and black-glazed pottery principally of the 4th century[14] and a variety of metal objects. The latter included bronze fibulae and other personal ornaments, four bronze arrows, a lead disc with bronze fittings and two iron appliques of a shape resembling a Boeotian shield (Figure 6). Rather surprising were the finds of two objects dating to much earlier periods, namely a Late Protocorinthian conical *oinochoe* from the mid 7th century BC[15] and a terracotta *korē* figurine from the second half of the 6th century (Figure 7); the latter was found next to the possible stone base. In 2011, we found in this trench a black-glazed, probably locally made *lekythos* datable to the late 6th or early 5th-century.[16]

The limestone slabs found against the inner face of the northern wall (un. 61) had probably served as shelves. They must have been attached to the wall, as pottery was also found under them. At the same time, it was clear that the collapsing shelves had not caused much damage to the pots underneath them.[17] Many of the building's portable items had been stored against the northern and western walls, whereas the parts near the southern wall (un. 52) and the central and south-eastern parts of the room seem to have constituted free space. A large slab found close to the entrance (see Figure 2) is probably not in its original position. Next to it lay a large tray of clay that had been fired at a low temperature. Just inside the room, a small area of hard-baked clay surrounded by charcoal (un. 69) was found; this is probably the remnants of a pyrotechnical feature, perhaps a small oven.

The main aims of the excavations in Trench 2a were to establish the relationship between this part of T2 and Building A to its north and Trench 1 to its south, and to find indications of the internal organization of this part of the sanctuary. It appeared that the area functioned as a kind of forecourt for Building A. Figure 2 shows Trench 2a (in its final stage, i.e. excavated down to the levelled bedrock) and the so-called southern extension between Trench 2a proper and Trench 1a-b (indicated are the levels and features representing the earliest phase uncovered so far in Trench 2; see below). More than one surface was detected, un. 119 representing the most recent surface that was retrieved in the southern extension (Figure 2). Underneath this we found the remains of an earlier surface (un. 104, 113) and a number of features associated with it, including a stone platform (Figure 2: un. 108) with a large, smooth stone immediately west of it, two schist-made cists or bins (Figure 2: un. 106) and a partly preserved bin immediately east

[14] Chidiroglou elsewhere in this volume (= Chidiroglou 2014).
[15] Ibid. cat. no. 1.
[16] Ibid. cat. no. 16.
[17] Crielaard et al. 2013, 44, fig. 6. Cf. inventory of Room B (kitchen or pantry) of house 1B in Eretria's West Quarter (first half 2nd century BC): (intact) pottery lying upside down amidst stone slabs, probably fallen from shelves; Reber 1988, 57, with fig. 7; Kaltsas et al. 2010, 142, fig. 2.

Figure 6. Iron applique of shape resembling Boeotian shield from Building A (Trench 2c)

of un. 108, several low division or retaining walls (un. 102, 110), and wall un. 107 delineating this open space in the east. There are no clues to the function of the bins, as they contained soil with insignificant quantities of pottery, bone fragments, small stones and charcoal but no artifacts or organic material. The most obvious parallels for the stone bins and platforms are found in cultic contexts of the Early Iron Age and Archaic period in Zarakes in southern Euboia and on some of the Cycladic islands.[18] However, the stratigraphy and building style of the walls show that the forecourt and stone-built installations are contemporary with the late 5th/4th-century Building A. It is clear that before the building and its forecourt were constructed, the natural rock was levelled and the entire area thoroughly cleaned. With the exception of a single Geometric sherd, no earlier material was found. On the whole, we recovered surprisingly few finds from this forecourt, not even from the period that Building A was in use. Among the few finds was the lower part of the face of an Archaic terracotta statuette (Figure 8).

[18] Zarakes: Chadzidimitriou 2003-2004, 58 with fig. 6: stone platform. Zagora on Andros: Cambitoglou et al. 1992, 26: hearths and bins made of upright schist slabs; Cambitoglou et al. 1988, 80: squarish structure in H19. Also Mazarakis Ainian 1997, 186, with figs 323, 325: Koukounaries (Paros), House of the Seals, Temple of Athena: bin and platform; ibid. 185-186, 192, with figs 340-1: Tsikalario (Naxos), Building A: bin. Later contexts, see e.g. ibid. 177-178, with fig. 311: Xobourgo (Tenos): pit lined with schist slabs in Room IV of Building I-VI; Hypsili on Andros: Televantou 2008, 41 fig. 53a-b, 44-5 fig. 55a, 47-8 figs. 57-59: hearths and benches.

Figure 7. Archaic terracotta korē figurine found inside the Building A (Trench 2c)

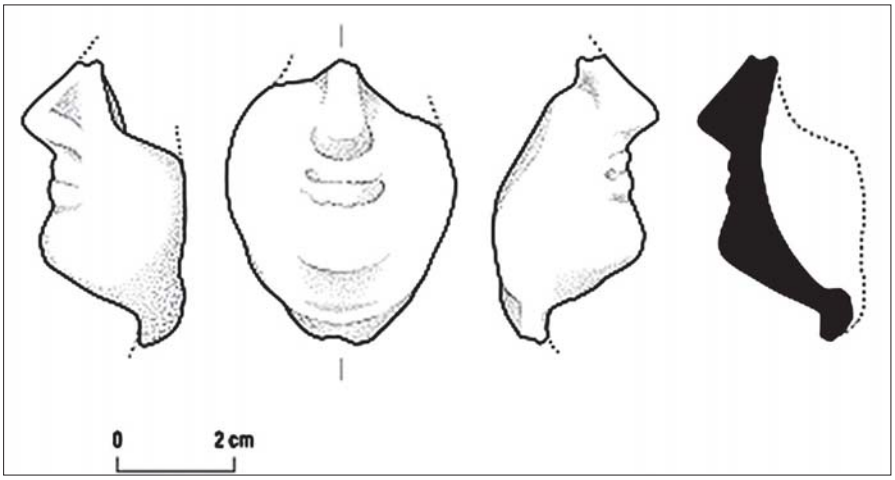

Figure 8. Fragment of an Archaic terracotta statuette from Trench 2a

In the southwestern part of Trench 2a and its southern extension, strata and features were uncovered representing an earlier phase of the cult area. These came to light beneath the above mentioned un. 113 (surface) and un. 102 and un. 127 (levelling material). Un. 127, together with un. 125, consisted of loose soil between and on top of a stone concentration in the western part of the southern extension (see Figure 2), which is preliminarily interpreted as stone tumble or rather as part of a stone platform. The three units just mentioned (un. 102, 125, 127) yielded finds that are datable to the Archaic period, including a bronze bead (un. 102), a possibly East Greek aryballos (un. 102; Figure 9a)[19] and an ovoid Protocorinthian aryballos (un. 127; Figure 9b),[20] found immediately north of a rectangular stone structure (Figure 2: un. 128) that may be interpreted as a stone bench. To the west of the latter feature and within un. 125 a concentration of metal objects was uncovered, including a bronze grooved ellipsoidal object with a ring attached to its short side, a bronze button, iron pins, an iron hook, two fragments of an iron spear, with right next to it a terracotta rattle in the shape of bird (Figure 10)[21] and,

[19] The possibly East Greek aryballos is globular to slightly piriform in shape (handle missing). Reddish brown clay; mouthplate decorated with red dots, body with added white bands and two bands of red dots.

[20] The ovoid Protocorinthian aryballos belongs to Neeft's TAVIETHE (Taranto-Vienna-Thebes) Type, dated between ca. 650-625 BC, see Neeft 1987, 212-214; 341-342, with fig. 123 for a close parallel.

[21] Comparable terracotta birds sitting on a 'stem', cf. Vierneisel-Schlörb 1997, 176-177 nos. 592-593 (from Kerameikos; both late 6th c.); Blinkenberg 1931, pl. 88 no. 1971.

Figure 9. a. 'Rhodian' aryballos; b. Protocorinthian aryballos; both from Trench 2a

Figure 10. Iron spear and terracotta rattle from Trench 2a

finally, a remarkably well preserved bronze horse figurine (Figure 11). The horse is attached by its four feet and tail to a flat rectangular base. It is somewhat reminiscent of a horse figurine found in Eretria that possibly dates to the second half of the 3rd century.[22] However, our horse, which on stylistic grounds seems to be earlier in date, has an iron element traversing the central part of its body. Directly in line with this, there is hole in the base also containing traces of iron, suggesting that originally a vertical iron rod was part of the statuette . There is no sign that it originally carried a rider, so it may have acted as a support for something quite different, perhaps a 'candelabrum' or incense burner.[23]

[22] Kassapoglou 1988, 265-266 no. 3; Pruvot et al. 2010, 136, 176-7 no. 137. In the same room of Building II of the West Quarter at Eretria other bronze figurines and a miniature wheel were found; these are interpreted as attributes belonging to a domestic cult.

[23] Iron elements were sometimes used for making bronze statuary, serving e.g. as armatures and other supports; however, these are most of the time related to producing larger, hollow cast bronzes, whereas our horse statuette is small and solid cast.

Figure 11. Bronze horse figurine from Trench 2a

Preliminary conclusions

Our preliminary conclusion is that from the 11th or 10th century BC onwards, the western part of the hilltop was used for cultic activities. It is likely that the part of the hill slope south of the later Terrace 2 (area of Trench 1a-b) functioned as an open-air sacrificial refuse area,[24] delineated to the south by TW 1, which can be regarded as a (freestanding) temenos wall. The huge quantities of broken pottery suggest that during the Early Iron Age, this area was used for large-scale or frequent sacrificial feasting, accompanied by animal sacrifices and the consumption of meat, as indicated by the find of large quantities of animal bones and iron knives, which were probably used for sacrificial purposes. The dedication of diadems, finger or hair rings, dress pins, fibulae[25] and other, especially female

[24] Dispersed votive deposits seem to be a widespread phenomenon, attested in e.g. Kythnos (set against the fortification wall) and Paros-Koukounaries (area below Athena temple) (Alexander Mazarakis Ainian, pers. comm.), but also in Miletos (Archaic Aphrodite sanctuary at Zeytintepe, where votive material and remains of sacrificial meals had been dumped on the sides of the hill where the sanctuary was located; in some cases, sets of personal ornaments were found together; see Senff 2003, esp. 16ff, 19; Panteleon & Senff 2008. For a later example, see the broken pottery deposited on the hill side next to the altar of Thesmophorion II on the acropolis of Eretria: Metzger 1985, 9 with pl. 3: 3-6; Pruvot 2010, 220-221.

[25] Crielaard et al. 2011-2102, 102 fig. 14; 2013, 42 fig. 3.

personal ornaments and fragments of terracotta pyxides may be connected to the female sphere and perhaps to such lifecycle rituals as the later *proteleia*, that is, pre-wedding sacrifices that were part of rites of passage before marriage.[26]

For the moment it seems that we can identify two periods of intense cultic activities, namely the 8th and the 4th century. At this point, it is not possible to determine whether cult activities during the Early Iron Age took place in the open air — like they did at, for instance, contemporary Zagora (Andros), Koukounaries (Paros) and Hyria (Naxos)[27] — or whether the area housed one or more cult buildings. A first glimpse of cult installations dating to an early phase of the sanctuary is provided by this year's discovery of a stone bench or altar (Figure 2: un. 128), and what seem to be dedications and cultic equipment lying more or less in situ (horse figurine, sword, aryballoi, rattle). We expect that further excavations in this area will shed more light on the nature of this context representing the Archaic period.

Terrace 2 was constructed or refurbished in the late 5th or early 4th century BC, after the area that it encloses had been thoroughly cleaned. It seems that the western part of T2 contains Archaic remains that bridge the period between the Early Iron Age, represented by the sacrificial refuse material, and the (Late) Classical period, evidenced by Building A and its forecourt. The present gap of the 6th and 5th centuries is filled by such finds as the above *korē* figurine from Trench 2c, bird and *sirene* vases from Trench 1b, and some black- and red-figure fragments from Trench 2a. There are few of them, but they still hint at the continuity of cult. It should be noted that the tradition of sacrificial feasting was continued in Building A. Graffiti on pottery indicate that these celebrations honoured the goddess Nikē and probably also Apollo. The cult installations in the building's forecourt (bins and stone platform) followed a model that had a history going back to the Early Iron Age. A number of antiques were also preserved in Building A (Late Protocorinthian oinochoe, Archaic korē figurine, early 5th-century lekythos). Perhaps these were valued as tangible links with the earlier cultic history of the spot.

Study of the Early Iron Age pottery

So far, about 28,500 pottery fragments have been collected from Trench 1a-b (see Table 2). The bulk of these sherds consists of decorated and monochrome fine wares dating to the Protogeometric and, especially, Geometric periods (Figures

[26] Dillon 2003, 215ff.
[27] Zagora: Cambitoglou et al. 1988, 170-1, 174; Mazarakis Ainian 1997, 174. Koukounaries: Mazarakis Ainian 1997, 186. Hyria: Simantoni-Bournia 2002, 270.

Table 2. Number of finds per type of material from Trench 1a–b

Trench 1 a–b	Metal (gold, bronze, iron)	Glass	Stone, bone, shell (worked)	Terra-cotta: figurine frs.	Terra-cotta: other	Total	EIA pottery frs.
Earlier research (1979–2009)	22	3	9	7	4	45	?
2011 excavations	82	2	2	18	8	112	6,500
2012 excavations	240	--	10	19	20	289	22,000
Total	345	5	18	38	35	441	28,500

12a-g, 13a-b). Another important group comprises coarse ware sherds attributable to the same chronological time frame; these show a variety of surface treatments and decorations and belong, for instance, to coarse vessels bearing incised motifs (Figure 13c-e). A rather small number of vessel fragments of later periods (mainly Archaic and a few possibly Classical sherds) should also be noted. The ceramics from Trench 1a-b are being studied for final publication by Dr Xenia Charalambidou.

Dr Charalambidou was in Karystos from 28 July to 18 August to conduct research on the pottery that was found in these trenches during the 2011 and 2012 campaigns. A first and essential step was to establish possible criteria for recognizing local Karystian ceramic products and imported wares from other Euboean centres and Aegean regions. To this end, during the 2012 campaign, emphasis was placed on the macroscopic examination of the ceramic material, which included the identification of fabric groups, manufacturing techniques, vessel shapes and types' classification, vessel surface treatment and decoration and vessel sizes. A large number of representative sherds was selected and catalogued with the help of index numbers. Birgit Konnemann drew, inked and digitized 130 sherds of the representative pottery, most of which were photographed by Dr Charalambidou.

Furthermore, a first part of the pottery catalogue containing full details of size, fabric, shape, decoration and dating was prepared for final publication. In addition, a first selection of pottery fragments was made for the petrographic and chemical analysis, scheduled to begin by the end of 2015/beginning of 2016.

The next stage of the study will be the continuation of macroscopic and quantitative analysis of the ceramic material so as to estimate frequencies of fabric groups, shapes and types that can be related to e.g. the preparation of (ritual) feasting and the consumption of food and drink or even to changes in ritual behaviour. The use of ceramics in the cultic context at Plakari and the inherent

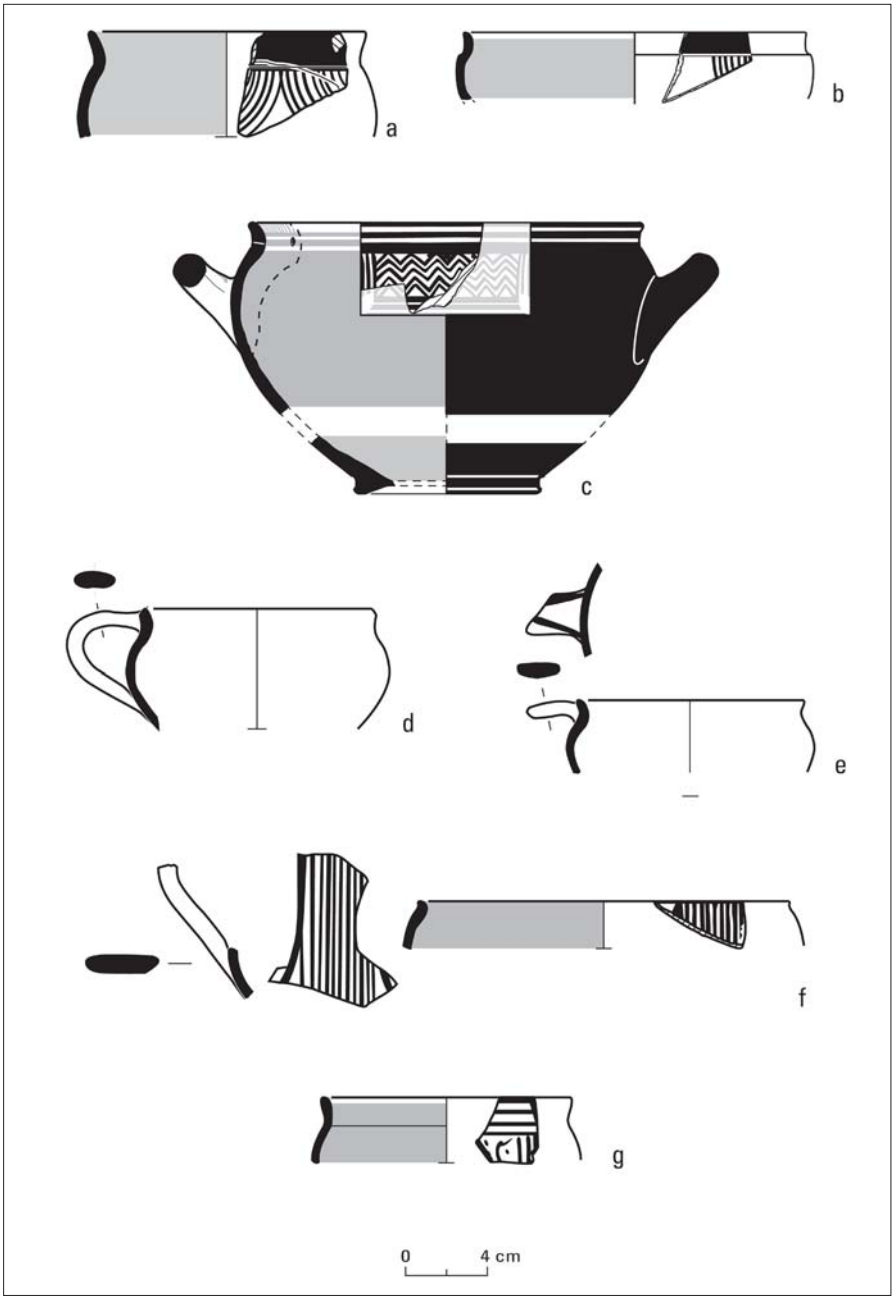

Figure 12. Some representative Early Iron Age vessel fragments. Fine wares: a-c. skyphoi; d-e. one-handled cups; f. kantharos; g. skyphos or kantharos

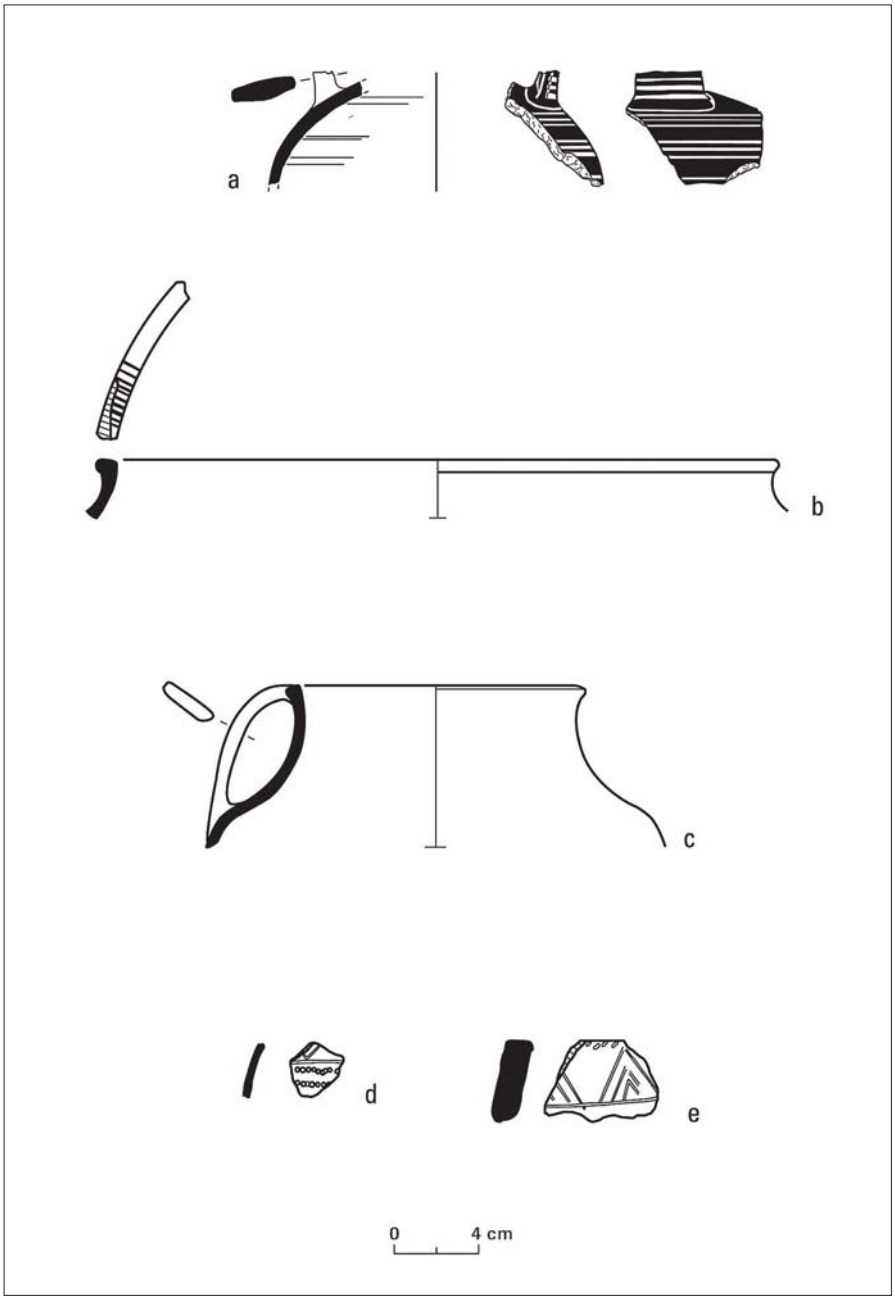

Figure 13. Some representative Early Iron Age vessel fragments. Fine wares: a. pouring vessel; b. krater. Coarse wares: c-d. closed vessels; e. foot or stand

symbolism will be considered in relation to the origin of ceramics: the goal is to examine whether certain shapes/types were preferred, and understand the production and consumption patterns with possible reference to the social groups that visited the sanctuary.

Study of Early Iron Age small finds

A study of the Early Iron Age small finds was performed by Filiz Songu throughout the six-week campaign (13 July–22 August). Her study covers both the small finds discovered between 1979 and 2009 and those from the more recent excavation campaigns. The number of Early Iron Age small finds has increased substantially since last year's campaign (see Table 2). A digital database and catalogue were created; both include descriptions, photos and line drawings of the objects. Bert Brouwenstijn made drawings and took photographs of the objects.

Study of ceramics from Building A

Dr Maria Chidiroglou spent three weeks (16 July-3 August) at the Archaeological Museum of Karystos, cataloguing and describing the late 5th- and 4th-century complete vases from Building A. A first preliminary report on the Classical and Late Classical pottery is presented elsewhere in this volume.

Conservation and restoration

Mrs Maria Kontaki and Mr Pantelis Feleris spent two weeks (17-28 September) working at the Archaeological Museum of Karystos on the conservation and restoration of bronze and iron objects. This year the emphasis was on items from Building A, as some of these were in a bad condition, although the conservators also treated a number of Early Iron Age dress pins and fibulae from Trench 1a-b. In 2013, the Early Iron Age material will be given priority.

Selected pieces of pottery and small objects of terracotta were restored by Mrs Stamatina Koutouvali, who worked at the Karystos museum for one week (13-17 July).

Analysis of faunal remains

From 7 to 16 August 2012, the animal remains collected during the 2011 and 2012 excavation seasons were studied by Dr Maaike Groot at the Archaeological Museum of Karystos. A total of 26,592 fragments were analysed; the vast majority of these had been retrieved from Trench 1a-b. In November-December 2012,

Dr Groot stayed at the Fitch Laboratory at the British School in Athens (made possible by a Senior Visiting Fellowship) in order to analyse the small number of fragments that required a reference collection, and to conduct a literature study and a preliminary analysis of the data. The analysis was focused on skeletal element representation and burning. A report on the preliminary results of her studies is presented elsewhere in this volume. All faunal remains collected during the field-work carried out in the coming three years will be analysed in the last excavation season in 2015. A final report on the faunal remains will be written at that time.

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