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PRINIATIKOS PYRGOS AND THE CLASSICAL PERIOD IN EASTERN CRETE: Feasting and Island Identities

Author(s): Brice L. Erickson

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# PRINIATIKOS PYRGOS AND THE CLASSICAL PERIOD IN EASTERN CRETE

## FEASTING AND ISLAND IDENTITIES

### ABSTRACT

Classical Crete is still poorly understood archaeologically, although recent work on local ceramic sequences has begun to change the traditional picture of isolation and decline in the 5th century B.C. At Priniatikos Pyrgos in the Mirabello region of eastern Crete, relatively rich phases of Classical occupation provide a detailed view of local ceramic development. A large deposit of fine wares mixed with ash and bone may indicate public feasting. The evidence also casts light on the local economy, revealing connections with Gortyn, Azoria, and other Cretan cities, as well as extensive contacts overseas.

### INTRODUCTION

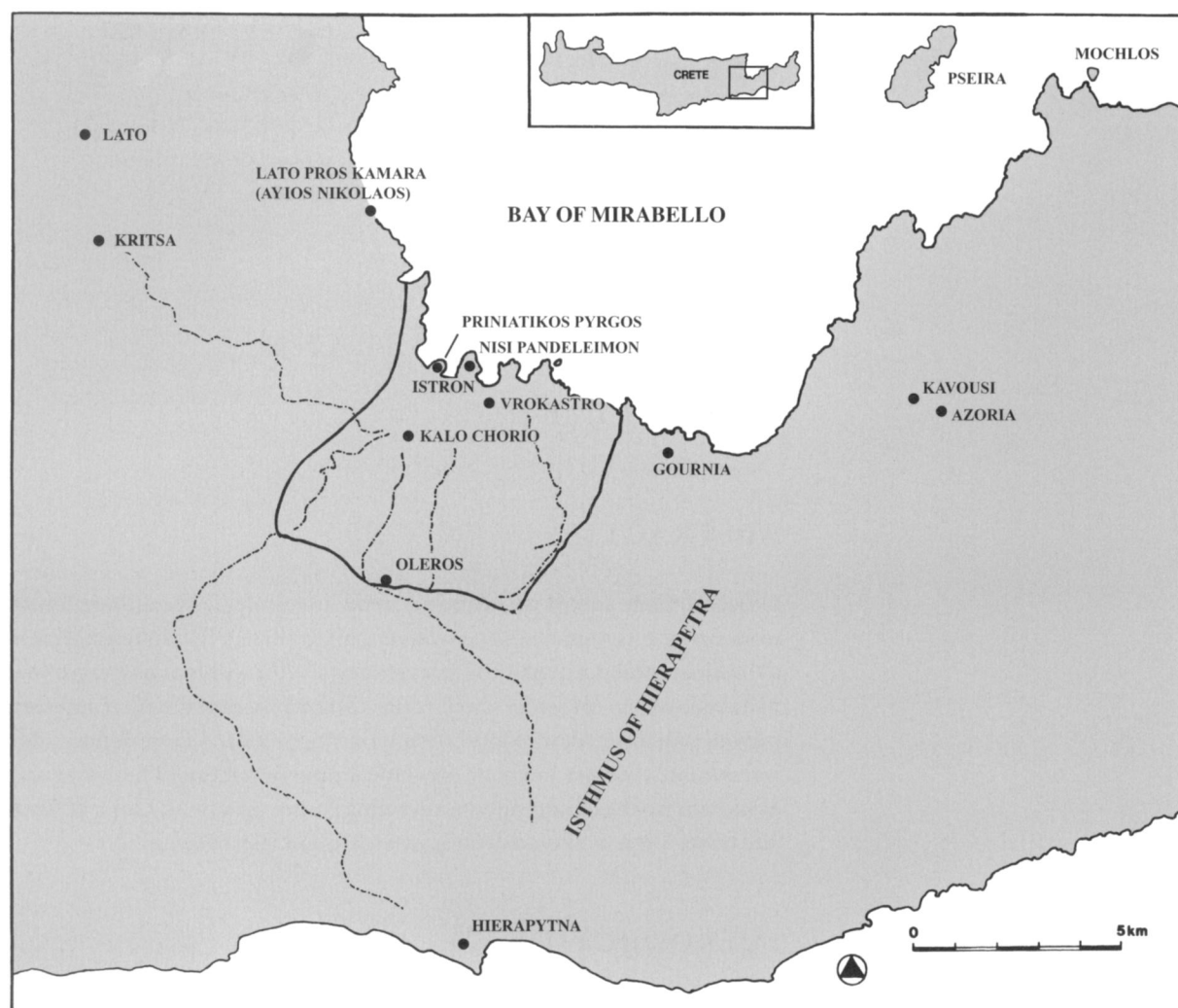
Archaeologists who work in Crete have traditionally focused on the Bronze Age.<sup>1</sup> Post-Minoan history and archaeology have received much less attention, although growing interest in historical Crete has promoted efforts to reclaim once marginalized periods such as the Archaic and Classical. Major historical and epigraphic studies of Archaic Crete appeared in the 1940s and 1950s,<sup>2</sup> but they did not lead to new excavations targeting these periods, and by the 1980s it had become clear that there was a serious problem in Cretan archaeology. Nikolaos Stampolidis rightly described this as a “period of silence” with little or no documented activity from settlements, graves, or

1. I would like to thank Barbara Hayden and Metaxia Tsipopoulou for inviting me to publish the Archaic and Classical pottery from the 2005–2006 excavations at Priniatikos Pyrgos. Heidi Dierckx was the excavator of the trench that produced most of the relevant deposits. My thanks also go to Barry Molloy for the invitation to publish contemporaneous material from the second phase of excavation, which

began in 2007 and is ongoing. I am indebted to Stavroula Apostolakou, Vasso Zographaki, and the staff of the 24th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities for their help in securing permits, and to Ralph Gallucci, Heather Graybehl, Barbara Hayden, Valasia Isaakidou, John Lee, Barry Molloy, and the two anonymous *Hesperia* reviewers for their helpful comments on earlier drafts. I have also profited from

numerous discussions with Donald Haggis and Margaret Mook about the material from Azoria. My research assistant, Sara Jones, deserves special thanks for contributions large and small. All of the profile drawings are by the author, with the exception of Fig. 8.1, which is by Douglas Faulmann. All dates other than modern are B.C.

2. E.g., Kirsten 1942; Demargne 1947; Willetts 1955.



**Figure 1. Map of the Isthmus of Hierapetra and the Kalo Chorio area, eastern Crete, showing the boundary of the Vrokastro survey area.**

After Hayden 2004, fig. 30:a

sanctuaries.<sup>3</sup> Although it appeared that Crete had gone into a steep cultural and economic decline, the archaeological record was defective. Knossos, which was presumed to be a representative site, had 5th-century deposits, but nothing dating to the 6th century, a gap that reinforced the suggestion of an island-wide decline.<sup>4</sup>

Recent work, however, has begun to overturn this picture of demographic collapse and economic stagnation. In 2004, Paula Perlman's reexamination of the epigraphic evidence at Eleutherna revealed a more sophisticated economy than previously expected for an Archaic Cretan polis, with specialized structures for trade.<sup>5</sup> The same year also saw the publication of the initial results of a new excavation conducted by Donald Haggis and Margaret Mook at Azoria, a settlement in eastern Crete with destruction levels dating to ca. 500–480.<sup>6</sup>

3. Stampolidis 1990, p. 400. For the problem of archaeological visibility in the 6th century, see Whitley 1997, pp. 659–661; Morris 1998, pp. 65–68.

4. Coldstream and Huxley (1999, pp. 297, 303) limited their discussion

to Knossos and its territory. Boardman (1982, p. 230), however, presented a picture of island-wide demographic and economic decline. See also Morris 1992, p. 157.

5. Perlman 2004a.

6. Haggis et al. 2004. Results of the 2003–2006 seasons are presented in Haggis et al. 2007a, 2007b, forthcoming; preliminary reports on subsequent seasons are available at <http://www.unc.edu/~dchaggis>.

While these studies have paved the way for a more sophisticated analysis of the island's archaeological record, problems of ceramic identification and chronology persist. Archaeologists are only beginning to document the ceramic styles of many local producers and so must still rely on Knossos as a type-site for 5th-century Crete.<sup>7</sup> Publication of Classical deposits from other sites can provide a different perspective. The evidence from a port town like Priniatikos Pyrgos may also contribute to debates about the local economy and possible Cretan participation in overseas markets. Moreover, Classical archaeologists working in the Mirabello region can profit from previous studies of Bronze Age fabrics, which provide a foundation for identifying local wares and formulating models of production and consumption.<sup>8</sup>

Priniatikos Pyrgos is a small limestone headland on a broad bay at the mouth of the Istron River in eastern Crete (Fig. 1). The river empties into the sea some 250 m east of the site in a marshy estuary between Priniatikos Pyrgos and the promontory of Nisi Pandeimon. A dense concentration of surface remains at Nisi Pandeimon indicates an ancient population center, identified by Barbara Hayden and Jennifer Moody as the Classical polis of Istron.<sup>9</sup> Although surface survey in the 1980s gave the impression of a separate settlement at Priniatikos Pyrgos, it now seems that the two sites belonged to a single urban community that spread along the bay and inland between Nisi Pandeimon and Priniatikos Pyrgos.<sup>10</sup> The small headland perhaps constituted a western suburb of Istron.

Rescue excavations conducted by Metaxia Tsipopoulou and Hayden in 2005–2006 revealed a harbor settlement at Priniatikos Pyrgos with occupation from the Final Neolithic to the Ottoman period. This site underwent several major building phases in the second and first millennia B.C.; the remains include large rooms and buildings, paved streets and courts, and an industrial sector with kilns for ceramic production. The results of this initial excavation seemed promising, so the project was expanded in 2007 under the direction of Barry Molloy of the Irish Institute of Hellenic Studies.<sup>11</sup> A plan of the site as of 2010 is shown in Figure 2.

It is clear from the results of the first five years of excavation that Priniatikos Pyrgos served in antiquity as an emporium or gateway community for the Mirabello region. This port town linked the rural hinterland to other parts of the island and connected Crete to the wider Aegean world. In addition, trade fostered the development of local distribution networks and more complex political systems. An intensive survey of the Vrokastro area undertaken in the 1980s produced information about changing settlement patterns and the rural economy, enabling developments at Priniatikos Pyrgos to be placed in a regional context.<sup>12</sup> Until recently, archaeologists

7. Kanta (1991, p. 500) and Callaghan (1992, p. 133) first called attention to the problem of ceramic recognition in studies of Archaic and Classical Crete. For a synopsis of work on the ceramic sequences at Knossos, see Coldstream and Eiring 2001. See also my publications of pottery from Gortyn, Aphrati/Kato Symi, and Eleutherna (Erickson 2001, 2002, and

2005, respectively), and my forthcoming volume on Archaic and Classical Cretan ceramic sequences (Erickson, forthcoming).

8. For summaries of fabric studies in eastern Crete, see Jones 1986, pp. 54–56; Haggis and Mook 1993, pp. 270–271; Haggis 2005, pp. 44–45; Day et al. 2006, pp. 137–139.

9. Hayden 2004, p. 168.

10. Kalpaxis et al. 2006, pp. 173–180.

11. Preliminary reports of the Irish excavations are available at <http://www.priniatikos.net>.

12. Publications of this survey include a preliminary report on Archaic settlement patterns, and separate volumes on settlement history and pottery; see Hayden 1997, 2004, and 2005.

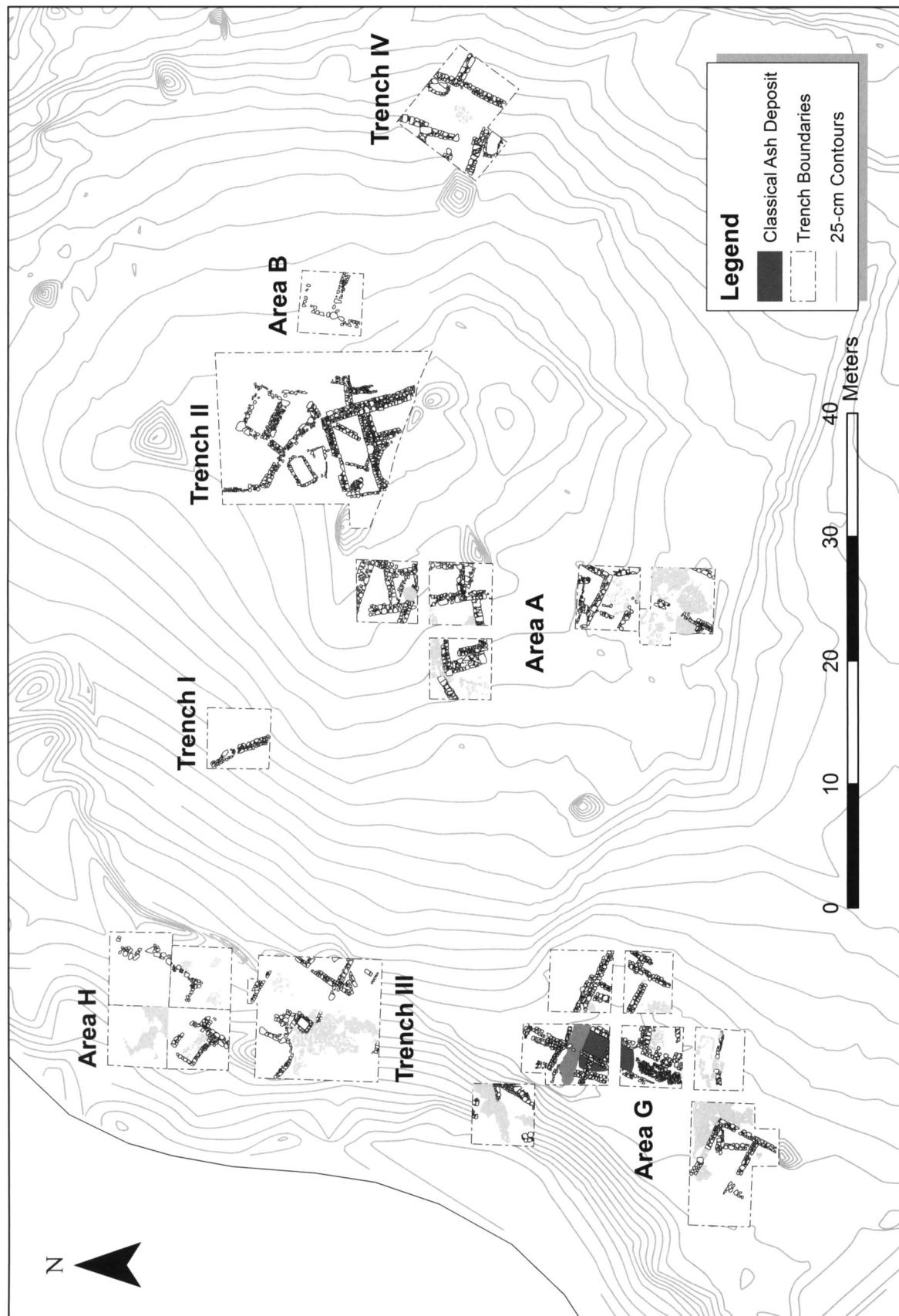


Figure 2. Priniatikos Pyrgos, site plan, 2010. W. Megarry. Courtesy the Priniatikos Pyrgos Project



in eastern Crete had few excavated urban centers with stratified deposits to aid them in establishing settlement histories. Since Priniatikos Pyrgos has both Minoan and Classical occupational phases, it may reveal differences in commercial outlook and political strategies between these two cultural horizons.

This article focuses on the Classical pottery from the first two years of excavation and is intended as a complement to the preliminary site report in preparation by Hayden, which will present an overview of all periods.<sup>13</sup> One aim of the present study is to establish a local ceramic typology and chronology; another is to use this new evidence to attempt to understand local feasting practices and social identities. Since excavation is still in progress and study of the deposits is at a preliminary stage, historical conclusions are necessarily tentative and will need to be tested as further evidence becomes available.

## THE CLASSICAL ASH DEPOSIT

By far the most important Classical deposit so far discovered at Priniatikos Pyrgos is a large dump of bone (sheep/goat), shell, corroded iron, and pottery in ashy soil, found in area G on the southwestern side of the headland (Figs. 2, 3).<sup>14</sup> The bone (1 kg) and pottery (50 kg, comprising over 5,000 fragments) constitute most of the material recovered. Located in trenches G2000 and G5000, the deposit had an average thickness of 29 cm and extended over an area of ca. 6.7 m<sup>2</sup>, for a total volume of ca. 1.94 m<sup>3</sup>. It was laid on fairly level ground and sloped slightly downward from east to west. In most places it lay ca. 20–30 cm below the foundation courses of Early Hellenistic structures (Figs. 3, 4). On its northwestern side it overlay a small patch of a Classical pebble surface (G2026/G2029); at an even lower elevation, the excavators exposed another surface made of white plaster (G2059) when they removed a nearby Hellenistic cross-wall. Both of these surfaces produced additional Classical pottery (discussed below). The only architectural feature found at the same elevation as the ash deposit was a short stretch of Classical wall, oriented northwest–southeast, in the southern balk of trench G2000. The evidence is too scanty to determine the relationship between the ash deposit and any Classical buildings.

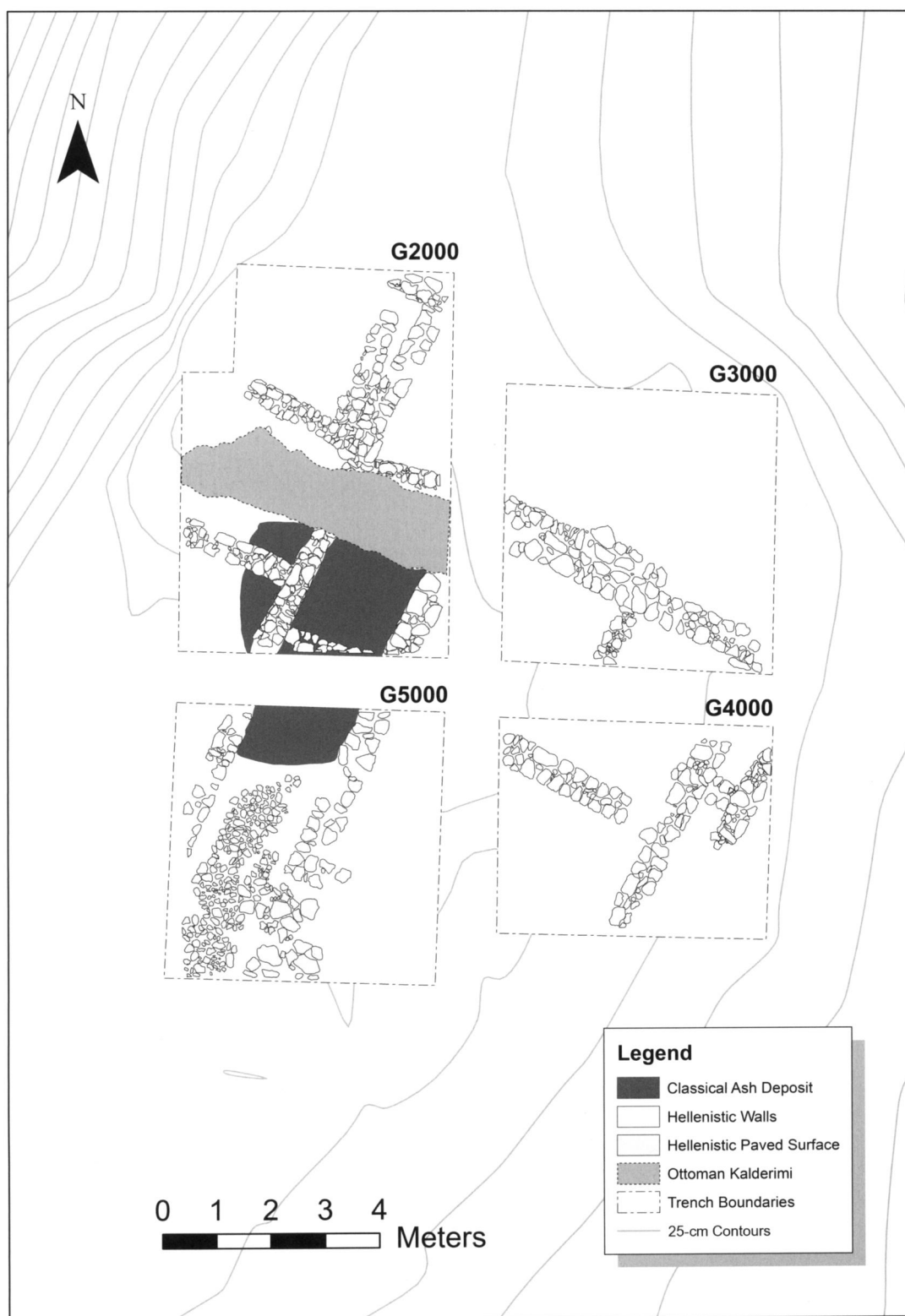
Overseas imports and local cup bases provide the clearest indication of the deposit's date. Imports include the rim of a Lakonian krater (Fig. 5:1),

13. Hayden's report (in prep.) will describe the architectural and stratigraphic phases of the 2005–2006 excavations. Results of the geoarchaeological survey of Istron are published in Kalpaxis et al. 2006.

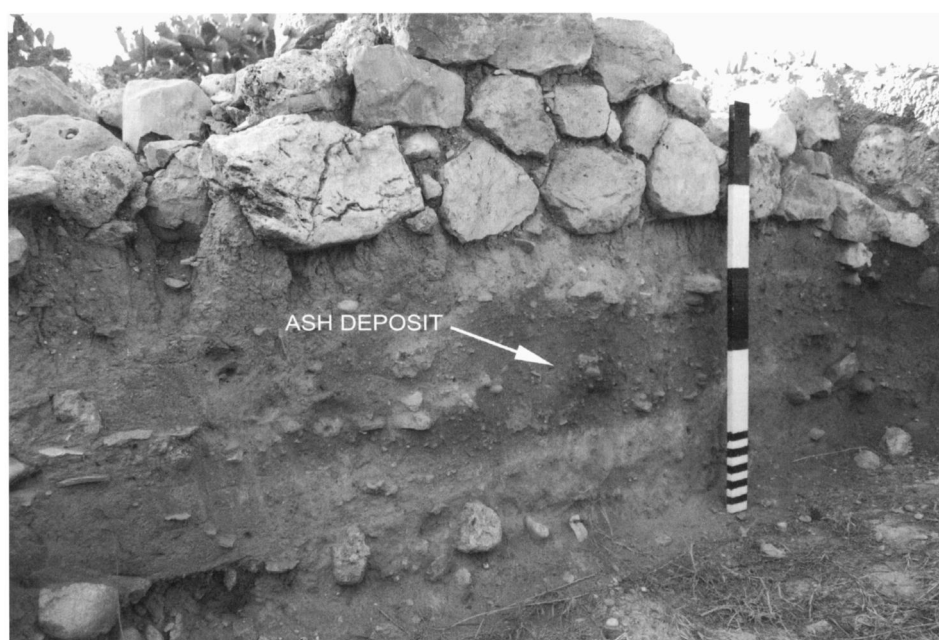
14. During the first two years of excavations (2005–2006), trenches were laid out in three areas, labeled A, G, and H, in conformity with a previous

geophysical survey. Within each area the trenches, usually separated by one-meter balks, were numbered in intervals of one thousand (G1000, G2000, G3000, etc.), so that loci and pails could be assigned a unique number from 1 to 999. Thus, G2001.1 refers to area G, trench 2000, locus 1, pail 1. (The Irish excavations from 2007 to the present have used a different system of

open trenches, numbered I–IV, and a different context/subcontext system.) The ash deposit comprises the following units: G2008, G2013.1–6, G2016.1–2, G2017.1–3, G2018.1, G2023.1, G2033.1–2, G5019.1, G5020.1–7. The deposit was not excavated where it extends beneath a Hellenistic foundation wall (G2012) and the balk between trenches.



**Figure 3. Plan of area G, showing Hellenistic walls and the Classical ash deposit.** W. Megarry. Courtesy the Priniatikos Pyrgos Project



**Figure 4.** Section under wall G2012, from the west, showing the Classical ash deposit. Half-meter scale bar.

Photo W. Megarry

five bases from Attic skyphoi (Fig. 5:2–5), a base from an Attic cup-skyphos (Fig. 5:6), a base from a Corinthian kotyliskos (Fig. 5:7), an Attic lamp (Howland type 21b) (Fig. 5:8), and the neck of a transport amphora from southern Ionia (Fig. 5:9).<sup>15</sup> An intact Corinthian kotyliskos from a mixed deposit (G2065) gives a better sense of this miniature form (see Fig. 14:13, below). These imports can be dated to ca. 500–480.

There are reasons, however, for preferring a slightly later date of ca. 475–450 for the deposit. Local cup bases indistinguishable from those in this deposit were found in other contexts as well, in one case with an Attic saltcellar datable to the 460s and in another with a Pheidias cup datable to ca. 450 (see Figs. 13:14 and 15:3, below). A similar date is suggested by the head of a figurine rendered in the Severe Style (Fig. 6).<sup>16</sup> This dating also makes better sense of the local cup bases themselves, which seem to illustrate a later stage of development than the most advanced cups at Azoria, datable to ca. 500–480. The cups at Priniatikos Pyrgos, which are discussed in detail below, have higher bases with splayed edges (Fig. 7:4–9)

15. In addition to the imports illustrated in Fig. 5, the ash deposit contained four other Attic skyphos bases, eight Attic cup fragments, an Attic saltcellar rim, two Attic lamp rims, a second Corinthian kotyliskos base, and two Corinthian exaleiptron rims. The two kotyliskos bases are identical to examples from a votive deposit at Olous, discussed below, n. 122. There is a second Lakonian krater rim from H4002 and a krater base from G2025. Another amphora fragment in the same fabric as that shown in Fig. 5:9 comes from G2026/G2029. Intact examples in

a similar micaceous fabric have been found at Azoria; see Haggis et al. 2007a, p. 280, fig. 25:1–3 (Samian or Milesian types). Wine amphoras from Archaic and Classical Cretan contexts have not been systematically examined. For a Chian amphora in a Knossian deposit dated to ca. 500–480, see Coldstream 1973b, p. 60, no. L111, fig. 13, pl. 25. The characteristic bulging neck of a Chian amphora also came to light in an early-5th-century context at Priniatikos Pyrgos during the 2009 season (trench III, context 519).

16. The head of a figurine of about

the same date from Knossos has a similar pointed cap; see Higgins 1973, p. 59, no. 16, pl. 33. The figurine from the ash deposit at Priniatikos Pyrgos seems to be of local manufacture, judging from the black angular inclusions in the fabric. Two fragments of Late Archaic figurines of the enthroned goddess type found elsewhere at the site (in H4002.1 and trench III, context 597) likewise suggest a local coroplastic tradition, for both came from the same mold and have fabrics with local characteristics, including granodiorite and gold mica inclusions.



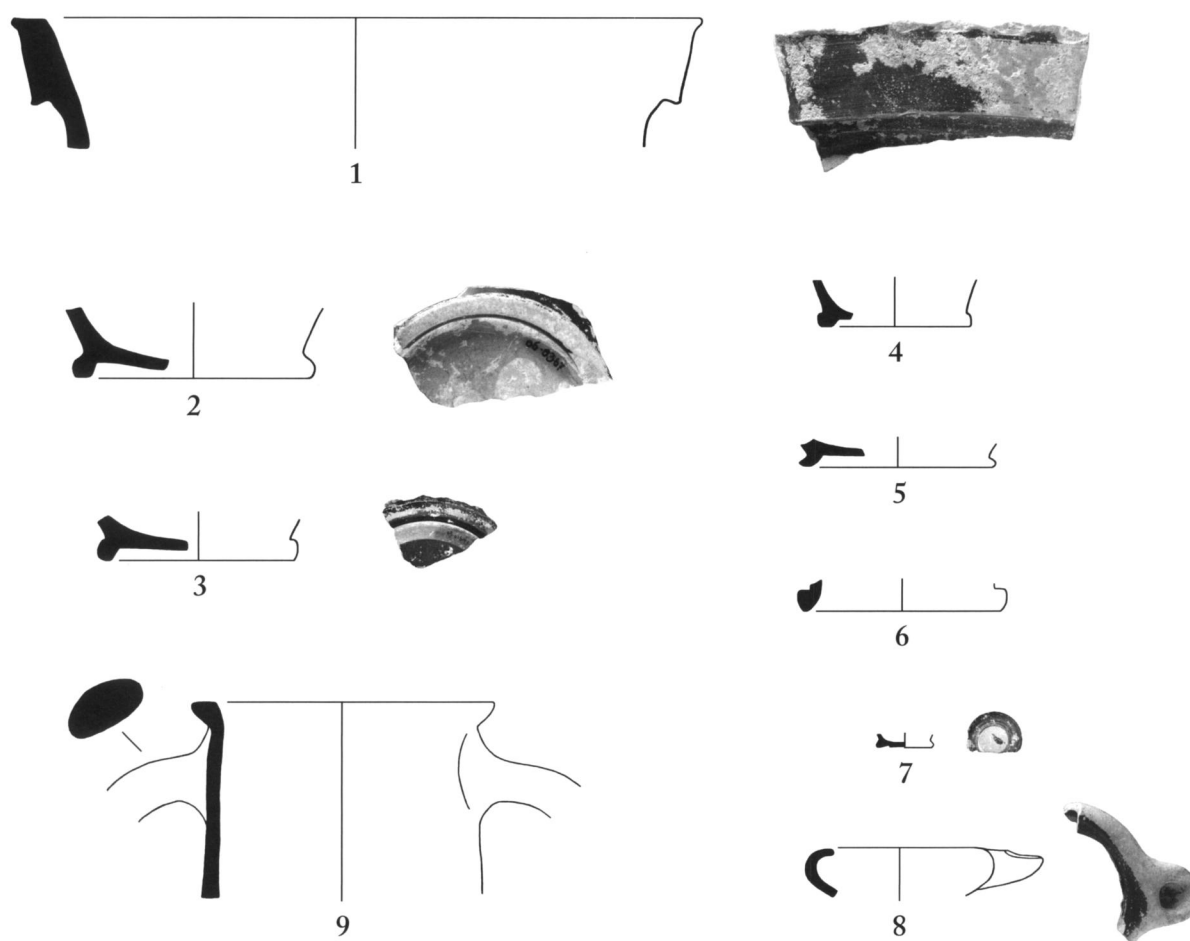


Figure 5. Overseas imports from the ash deposit, ca. 500–480. Scale 1:3. Photos M. Wisniewski

and are comparable to Knossian cups from the middle of the 5th century.<sup>17</sup> The latest bases in the ash deposit should be dated before ca. 450–425, for by then local potters were making bases with a higher stand and a narrower point of attachment, as illustrated by two examples from other deposits at the site (see Figs. 14:4, 17:2, below; from trench III, context 72, and H4002.4, respectively). Another base (Fig. 14:5; from G2065) illustrates an even later stage of development, ca. 425–400.

On the evidence of both imports and local products, then, the ash deposit can be dated to ca. 475–450. Although the deposit includes a few local pots datable to the 7th century and imports datable to ca. 500–480, most of the contents seem to belong to the second quarter of the 5th century and to illustrate a hitherto undocumented stage of ceramic development in eastern Crete.

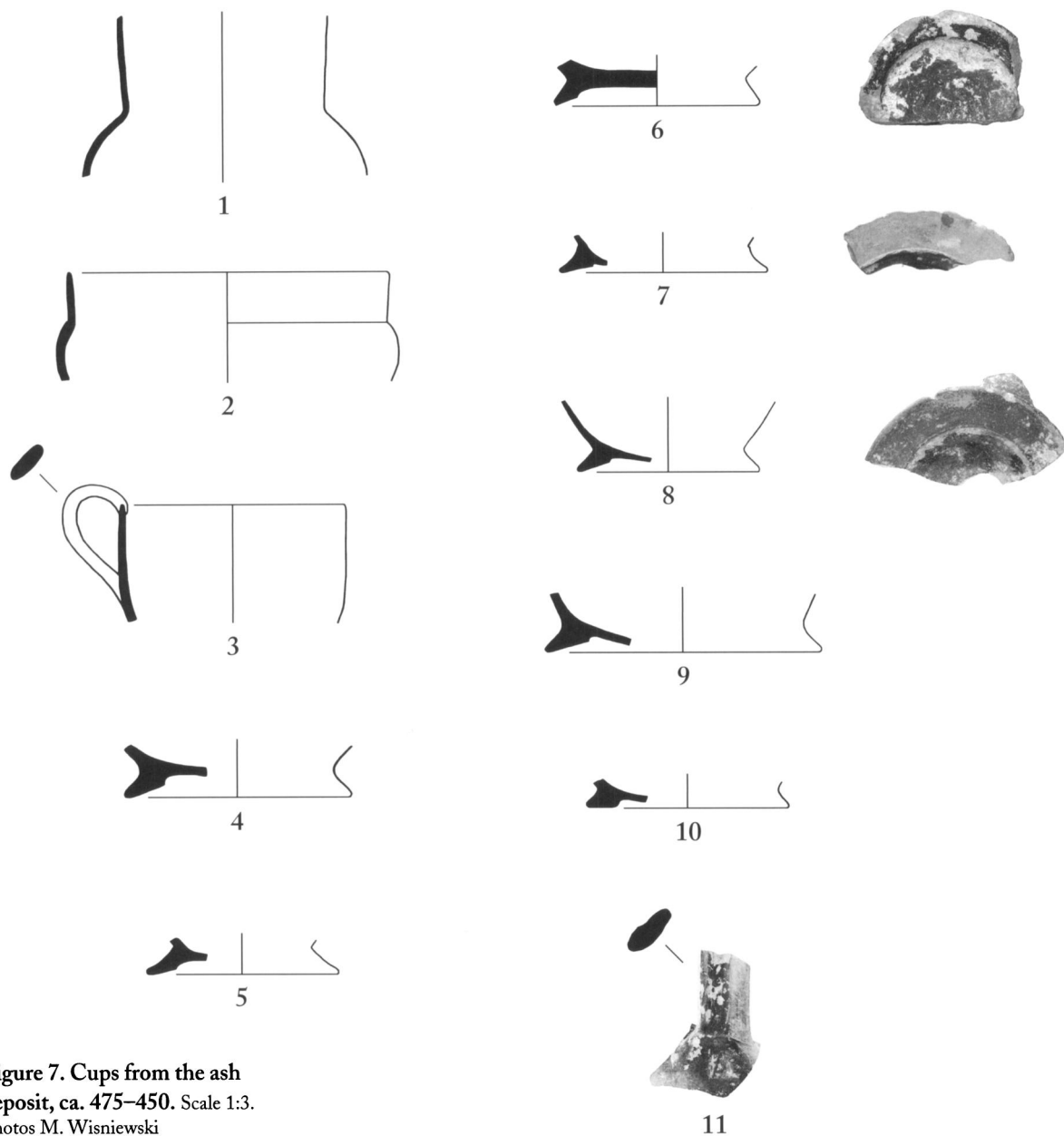
The standard drinking cup of Classical Crete, the high-necked cup, is well represented in the deposit, with more than 110 bases from different

17. For the development of the Knossian high-necked cup in the 5th century, see Coldstream and Eiring 2001, p. 78. By the end of the 5th century, Knossian cups had acquired a high

conical base that is nothing like the forms found in the ash deposit at Priatikos Pyrgos. For late-5th-century developments at Aphrati and Kato Symi, see Erickson 2002, p. 59.



Figure 6. Head of terracotta figurine from the ash deposit, ca. 475–450. Photo C. Papanikolopoulos



**Figure 7. Cups from the ash deposit, ca. 475-450.** Scale 1:3.  
Photos M. Wisniewski

vessels and over 500 body fragments (Fig. 7:1, 4-11). This cup is a deep form with an inset rim and a single vertical handle attached at the rim and shoulder. The rim is relatively high (p.H. 4.2-5.9 cm) in comparison to cups from Knossos (3.2-4.5 cm), and the preserved dimensions of contemporary cups from other deposits at Priniatikos Pyrgos suggest a squat body with a high rim accounting for approximately a third of the total height of the vessel (see, e.g., Fig. 16:1, 2, below).

The high-necked cup can be distinguished from a less popular form, a low-necked cup, which appears only five times in the ash deposit. One example (Fig. 7:2) has a rim height of 2.1 cm and a broader and presumably shallower body than that of the high-necked cup. Another shape, the tulip cup, makes a single appearance in the deposit (Fig. 7:3).

The high-necked cups share a similar base, with a splayed outer edge and angled ring underfoot. Other shapes at Priniatikos Pyrgos, including jugs and bowls, have bases with the same features, but this style is not common elsewhere; among other Classical sites on Crete, perhaps only Gortyn produced a similar base.<sup>18</sup> Another cup in the ash deposit (Fig. 7:10), possibly imported, has a slightly different base with a fine lustrous gloss and an orange to reddish brown fabric consistent with Gortynian manufacture.<sup>19</sup> Most cups at Priniatikos Pyrgos received a coat of dull black gloss, with the base fully coated underneath, but there are exceptions, including a particularly fine base with the outer ring left in reserve underneath and semilustrous gloss in the center (Fig. 7:7).

The characteristic fabric of fine wares from this and other Classical deposits at the site is an orange-brown or pale brown clay ranging from Munsell 5YR 6/3 through 7.5YR 6/4–6/6 to 10YR 6/3. Gold mica, quartz/feldspar, and unidentified black angular inclusions are often visible under magnification, but granodiorite, a signature trait of pottery produced in this part of the Mirabello region, seldom appears in these well-levigated fabrics. Although rare, its occasional appearance (see, e.g., Figs. 12:1, 3; 14:2, 10; 16:6; 18:12, below) nevertheless helps to distinguish wares at Priniatikos Pyrgos from the phyllite/quartz fabrics found at sites only a short distance to the east around the Isthmus of Hierapetra, including Azoria.<sup>20</sup>

The fine wares from Priniatikos Pyrgos are almost certainly local, meaning they were produced either at this site or somewhere nearby in the Kalo Chorio area. The discovery of an apparent kiln waster in the form of a misshapen cup base (Fig. 14:1) in disturbed surface levels (H4007) near a Minoan kiln suggests production of at least some cups at Priniatikos Pyrgos. The waster has an angled ring underfoot similar to the bases from the ash deposit and can be dated stylistically to ca. 500–450. Perhaps a Classical kiln was located on the west side of the headland, where firing chambers might have taken advantage of strong winds.<sup>21</sup> This evidence for local cup production, however slight, is important, since we know so little about Classical production sites and have no excavated kilns for the period ca. 600–400.<sup>22</sup> Further investigation of production sites and materials will be needed for a better understanding of the social life of Cretan pottery and the often complex relationship between production and consumption.<sup>23</sup>

18. Unpublished cups from a spring sanctuary at Gortyn (see below, n. 38) are the closest parallels to those from Priniatikos Pyrgos. For a similar cup base from Azoria with an angled ring underfoot, see Haggis et al. 2004, p. 359, fig. 13:11.

19. For the range of Gortynian fine-ware fabrics in the Classical and Hellenistic periods, see Papadopoulos 1988, p. 170; Erickson 2001, pp. 235–236. Gortynian pottery was exported to other Cretan sites in the 5th century, including Eleutherna and Itanos; see

Apostolakou et al. 2004–2005, p. 994; and below, n. 124.

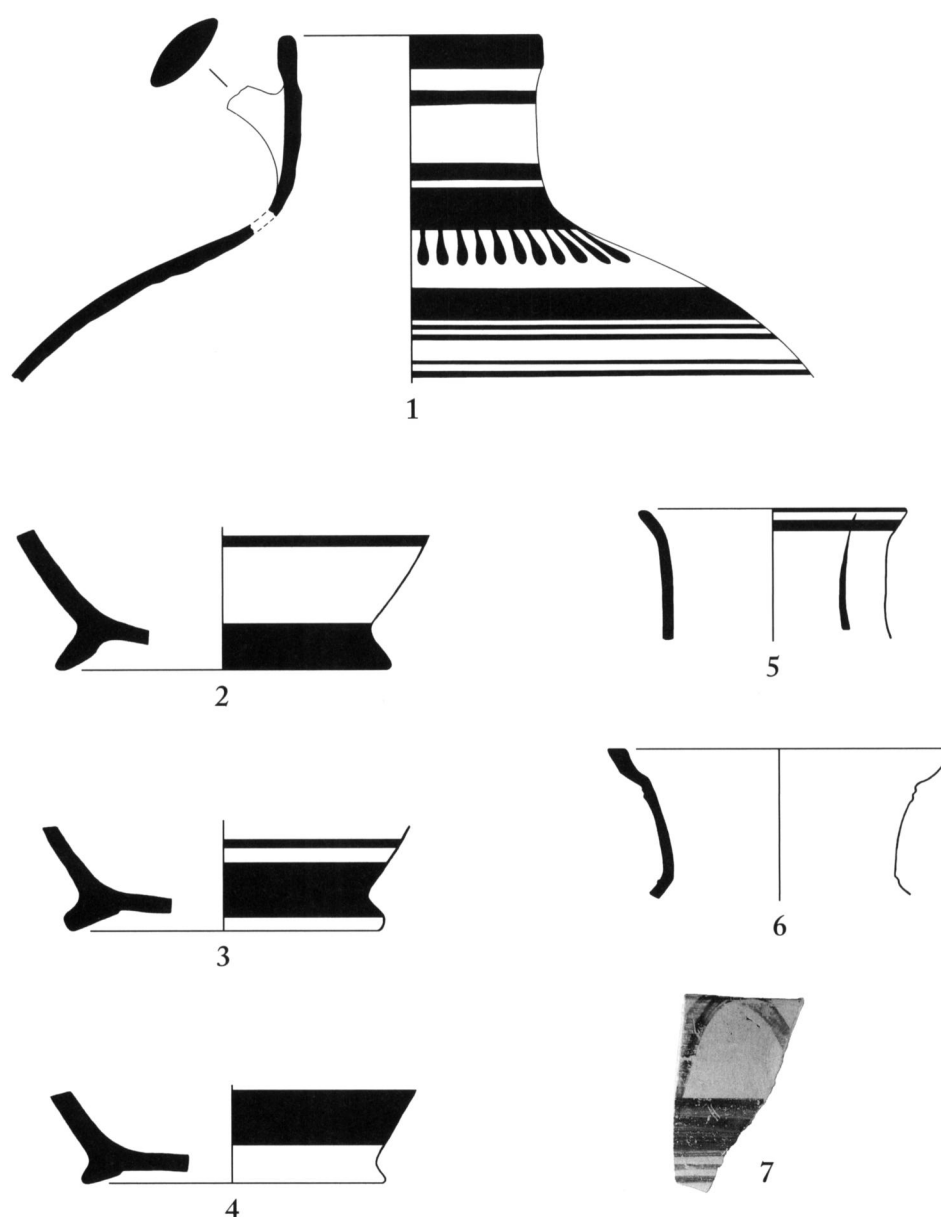
20. For the distribution of granodiorite fabrics, see Hayden 2004, pp. 227, 234, n. 86. For the phyllite/quartz fabrics of Azoria, see Haggis et al. 2007a, p. 277.

21. Kalpaxis et al. (2006, p. 157) counted the prevailing northwest winds as a factor in the development of the western headland as an industrial sector. The cup identified as a kiln waster has an evenly gray, slightly overfired fabric, not an irregular burned surface

that would suggest exposure to extreme heat during its later life. A second possible kiln waster was found in another 5th-century deposit (G2049).

22. The discovery at Knossos of two kilns on either side of this chronological range, however, provides useful information; see Hasaki 2002, pp. 338, 360. Three Archaic kilns were also found in close proximity to an ancient sanctuary at Lato; see Sjögren 2003, pp. 76, 87.

23. Stissi (1999, pp. 95–102) has emphasized the role of consumers in the distribution of decorated Attic



**Figure 8.** Hydriai and jug from the ash deposit, ca. 475–450. Scale 1:3.  
Photo M. Wisniewski

The ash deposit contained 48 bases and 17 rims from banded hydriai. Unlike the high-necked cups, the hydriai in this deposit are not found at many Classical Cretan sites. The base is essentially a larger version of the high-necked cup base, with a less pronounced angular ring and no gloss underneath (Fig. 8:2–4). The bottom half of the vessel has decoration in alternating broad and narrow bands, with pattern decoration on the shoulder in a wave or a simple linear motif, such as languettes (narrow tongues) (Fig. 8:1). Hydriai with a different base but a similar decorative scheme have come to light at Azoria in contexts dated to ca. 500–480.<sup>24</sup> The

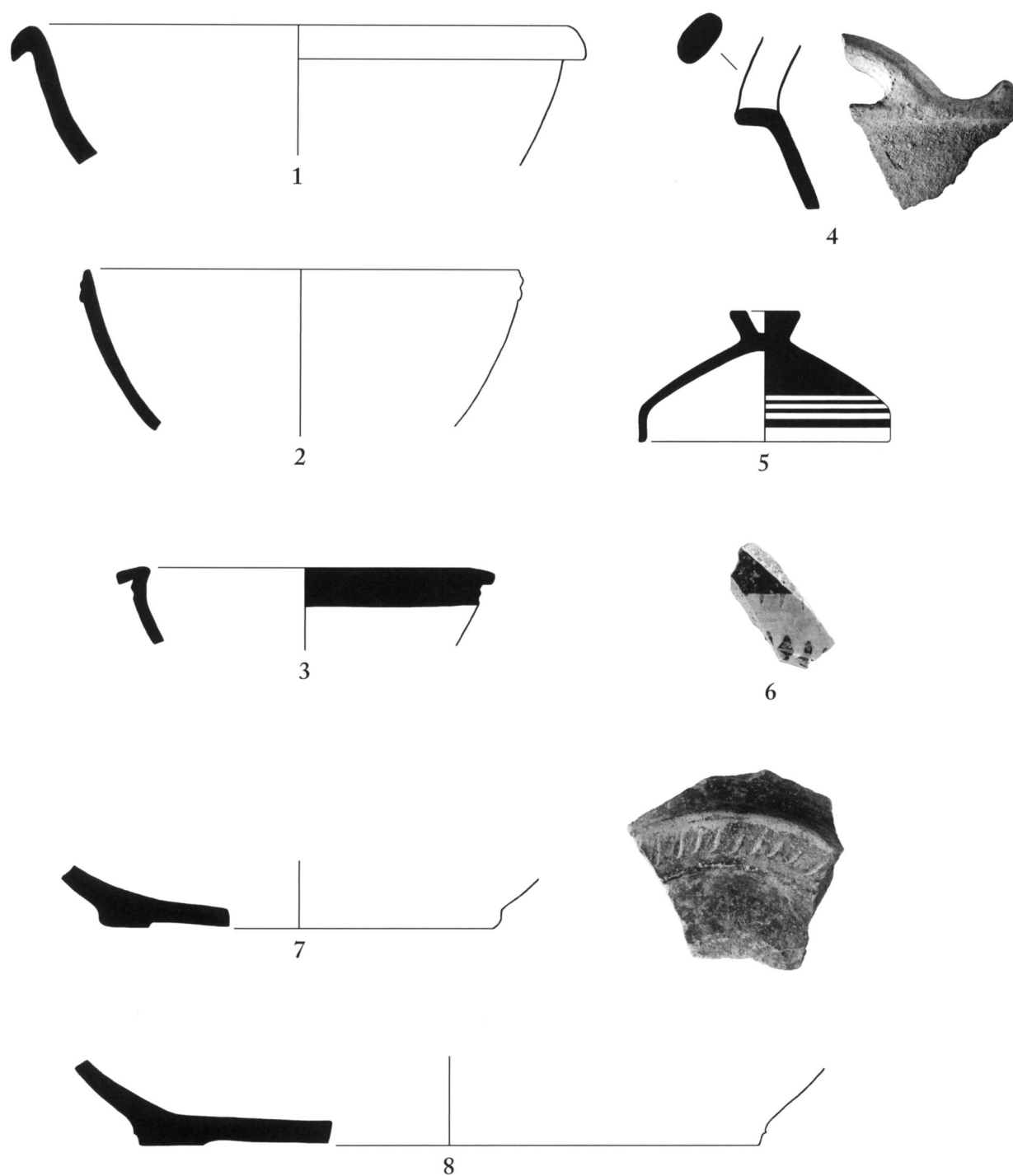
pottery in Etruria and Hallstatt Europe. As Dietler and Herbich (1998, pp. 254–256) observed, contexts of

production and consumption need to be understood before we can address other questions, such as whether pottery

styles also express social identity.

24. Haggis et al. 2007a, pp. 278–280, fig. 25:4.





**Figure 9. Lekanoi and lekanis lid from the ash deposit, ca. 475–450.**  
Scale 1:3. Photos M. Wisniewski

phyllite/quartz fabric distinguishes the Azoria examples from the hydriai at Priniatikos Pyrgos. Although produced at different places, these vessels are remarkably similar. The examples from the ash deposit, however, have less complex decorative schemes, without the ivy leaves and net decoration of the most elaborate hydriai from Azoria, and should be dated a generation later, to ca. 475–450. Hydriai from 5th-century deposits at Knossos also

Figure 10. Interior surface of a lekane from deposit G2049, showing glazing characteristics.  
Photo M. Wisniewski



have banded decoration in similar patterns; those with pendant languettes at the shoulder seem to date after ca. 475.<sup>25</sup>

Lekanai and bowls also appear in the ash deposit (15 bases and 85 rims). Rims are either rolled (Fig. 9:1), collared (Fig. 9:2), or everted (Fig. 9:3, 4). There is also a domed lekanis lid in fine fabric (Fig. 9:5) with banded decoration and knob in the form of inverted cone hollowed out above.<sup>26</sup> Two other bases (Fig. 9:7, 8) belong to a special category of lekane seen in many examples at Priniatikos Pyrgos. This is the base of a large vessel, fully coated inside and out with a distinctive red or reddish brown dilute gloss (cf. Fig. 10, from deposit G2049), and with an impressed foliate band on the bottom ring of the base that presumably would not have been visible during normal use.<sup>27</sup> Some rims from the same type of lekane have a foliate band on the exterior edge. This type is found in smaller sizes with the same glazing characteristics, some of which have a foliate design only on the rim. There are also unglazed versions.

Large lekanai bases similar to the illustrated examples have been found at survey sites in the Vrokastro area. Hayden has suggested a date for these in the 7th or 6th century.<sup>28</sup> The lekanai from the ash deposit may represent their 5th-century descendants, made by potters working in the same tradition, or perhaps the dating of the survey pottery should be revised to accommodate the new evidence from the excavation. It is clear, however, that the manufacture of such lekanai continued for a long time, as local

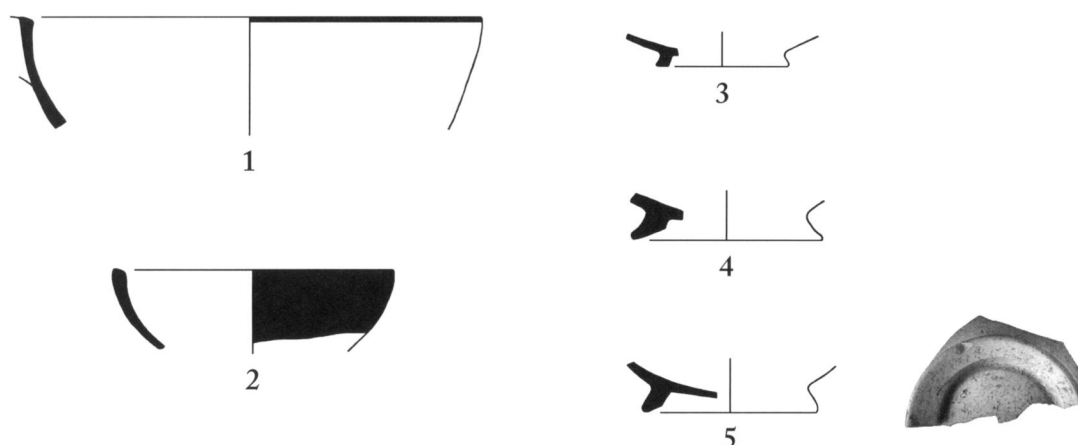
25. For Knossian hydriai dated to ca. 500–480, see Coldstream 1973b, p. 47, fig. 5, pl. 18 (especially no. L8 for the net pattern on the neck). For examples with languettes, see Callaghan 1992, p. 92, deposit H4, no. 7, pl. 75; Coldstream and Macdonald 1997, p. 222, no. K7, pl. 43; Coldstream and Eiring 2001, p. 85, fig. 2.5:b.

26. The knob recalls Attic house-

hold lekanides (*Agora* XII, p. 197), a cruder version of the standard type, but the smaller size and finer fabric of the example from the ash deposit distinguish it from such household forms.

27. One base (Fig. 9:7) has the additional decorative touch of a reserved area in the middle underneath the base, perhaps enlivened near the center (now missing) with concentric bands.

28. Hayden (2005, p. 52) compared the lekanai from the survey to examples from an Archaic kiln deposit at Lato, for which see Ducrey and Picard 1969, pp. 810–811, 815, nos. 261, 299, 358, 365, fig. 21. The base and rim patterns include teardrop, wreath, and chevron impressions, some framed by lines on either side.



**Figure 11. Small bowls from the ash deposit, ca. 475–450. Scale 1:3.**  
Photo M. Wisniewski

potters were producing an almost identical form in the Hellenistic period. A similar base with foliate decoration (see Fig. 14:11, below) came from a deposit (G6010) dated no earlier than ca. 325–300; this vessel has the same hard fabric and fine slip as other Hellenistic vessels in the deposit. These lekanai document a strong conservative streak in the local ceramic workshops.

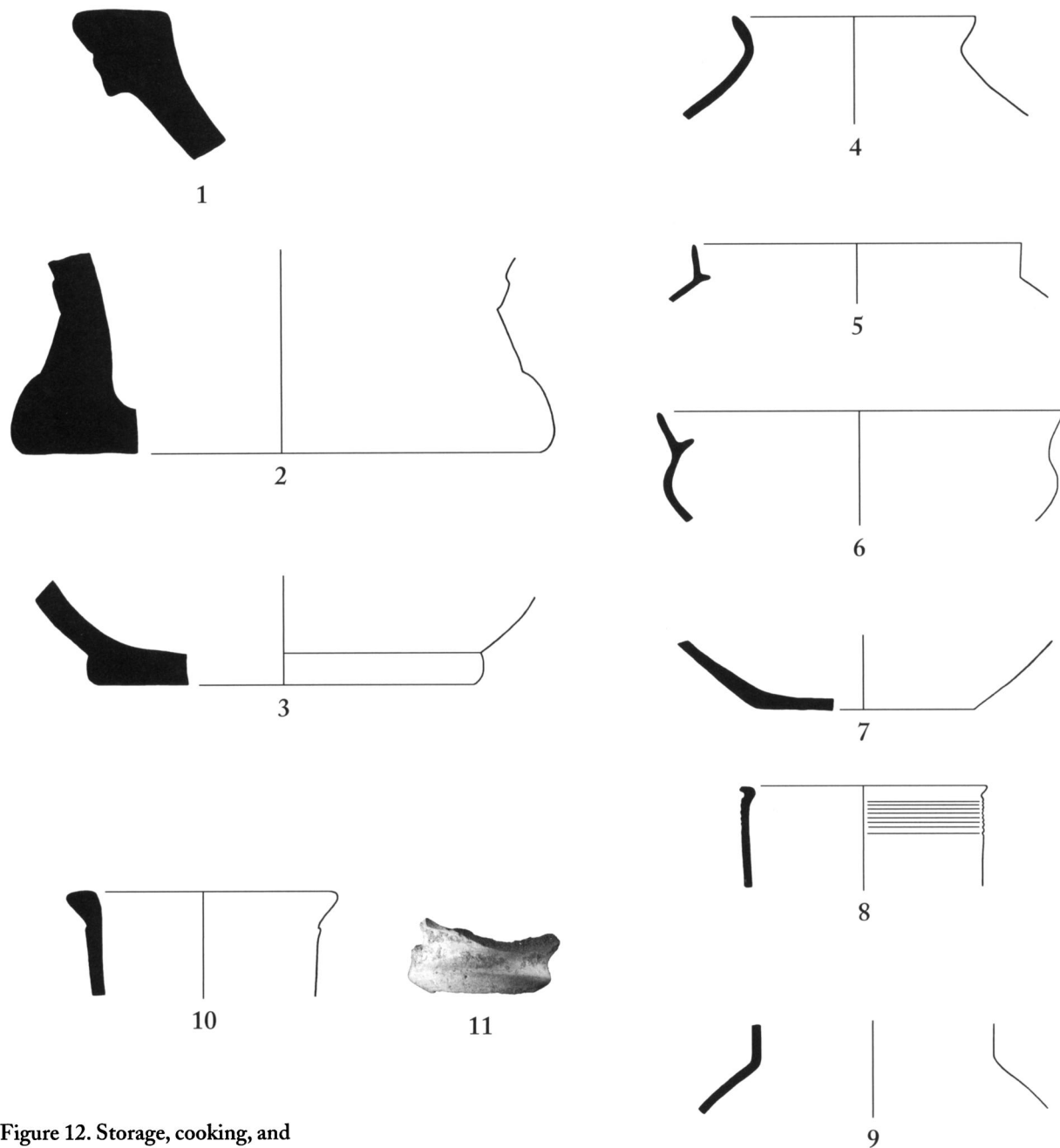
Small tableware bowls with a simple convex profile and no defined rim are represented in the deposit by 45 bases and 42 rims.<sup>29</sup> This shape seems to have had delicate skyphos-like handles, but surviving examples are usually detached from the bowl. Glazing characteristics vary: one type is fully coated inside and out, even underneath the base, while another has gloss only on the exterior rim and upper body (Fig. 11:2). The bowl shown in Figure 11:1 is one of two possible Gortynian imports, both with a reddish fabric (Munsell 10R 5/6 to 2.5YR 5/6) that lacks the typical inclusions of even the most refined local products. The imported bowls are larger than the local examples and have a different decorative scheme, with red gloss along the rim and a band inside the bowl. While the bases of fully glazed bowls can be difficult to distinguish from those of cups, they are generally smaller, with a low pedestal stand (Fig. 11:3). Some bowls, however, have bases modeled after those of cups, with a splayed outer edge and angled ring underfoot (Fig. 11:4, 5). When the bases lack gloss underneath, as in these examples, they can be distinguished from cup bases, which are almost always glazed.

Storage and cooking wares (Fig. 12) are not as well represented as fine wares in the ash deposit.<sup>30</sup> Table 1 shows the percentages of fine, medium, coarse, and cooking wares, as a function of both number and weight. Diagnostic sherds from storage vessels include a rim from a mortar (Fig. 12:1), a large coarse-ware base from a pithos or similar storage jar

29. A similar small bowl from Knossos has a plain base and dates to ca. 475–450; see Callaghan 1992, p. 92, deposit H4, no. 6, pl. 75.

30. Diagnostic sherds not illustrated here include the bases of two other basins, nine other coarse-ware rims,

two coarse-ware handles, six other transport amphora rims, two other transport amphora toes, ten other cooking-ware rims, six cooking-ware bases, four cooking-ware handles, two other cooking jug rims, and two cooking pot lids.



**Figure 12. Storage, cooking, and transport vessels from the ash deposit, ca. 475–450. Scale 1:3.**  
Photo M. Wisniewski

31. A local origin for these amphoras is proposed on the basis of macroscopic analysis of the fabric; it awaits confirmation by petrographic and/or chemical analysis. If, as suspected, they are local products, they copy northern Greek types.

(Fig. 12:2), and a smaller coarse-ware base (Fig. 12:3). The rim and the smaller base both have granodiorite inclusions, indicating a local origin. A rim and a toe from transport amphoras (Fig. 12:10, 11) are also apparently made of the local fabric.<sup>31</sup>

The five cooking-ware fragments illustrated here include two rims from chytrai, one of which (Fig. 12:4) is a round-bodied, lidless form, while the other (Fig. 12:5) is a relatively wide-mouthed vessel with provision for a lid. At Athens, the earliest lidded forms appear ca. 500; the example from Priniatikos Pyrgos is similar to Attic chytrai from deposits dated to the



**TABLE 1. COMPOSITION OF THE ASH DEPOSIT BY WARE GROUPS**

<i>Ware</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Weight (kg)</i>
Fine	2,067 (40.63%)	12.76 (25.43%)
Medium	2,685 (52.78%)	25.80 (51.40%)
Coarse	133 (2.62%)	9.05 (18.03%)
Cooking	202 (3.97%)	2.58 (5.14%)
Total	5,087	50.19

first half of the 5th century.<sup>32</sup> Also present are the rim and upper body of a lopus (Fig. 12:6) and a cooking-ware rim with grooves that may be from a jug (Fig. 12:8), a shape also suggested by a fragmentary junction of rim and shoulder (Fig. 12:9).<sup>33</sup> The cooking pots from this deposit have a silver micaceous fabric incompatible with a local origin. Perhaps they came from another Cretan production center outside the Mirabello region.<sup>34</sup> Cooking wares from all other 5th-century deposits at Priniatikos Pyrgos seem to be imports as well. Not until the Hellenistic period do cooking pots appear in a fabric that is certainly local.

## OTHER CLASSICAL DEPOSITS

Five other deposits in area G (G2015, G2026/G2029, G2049, G2059, G5014) can also be dated to the 5th century. Three of these are from floors found in close proximity to the ash deposit, but at lower levels: G2026/G2029 and G2049 were associated with pebble surfaces, G2059 with a plaster surface. The largest of these deposits (G2059) contains more than 50 diagnostic shapes; the rest have fewer than 20 each.

The contents of deposit G2059 have enough in common with pottery from the ash deposit itself to suggest a comparable date of ca. 475–450. This material includes a cup base (Fig. 13:1), a hydria base (Fig. 13:3), a tableware bowl (Fig. 13:8), and lekanai with foliate decoration (Fig. 13:6, 7). Another cup base (Fig. 13:2) represents an earlier stage of development for the high-necked cup, characterized by a stouter body and low base with minimal splay. Parallels with cups from Azoria suggest a date of ca. 500–480 for this base.<sup>35</sup> Similar early cup bases from other deposits are illustrated in Figure 14:2 (G2026/G2029) and 14:3 (G5017). A bowl with a high pedestal stand (Fig. 13:4) from G2059 has no exact parallel from the ash deposit. A rim with a fine buff slip and banded decoration in a reddish brown gloss with simplified vegetal motifs (Fig. 13:5) is even more peculiar.

32. See, e.g., *Agora* XII, p. 373, nos. 1951–1955.

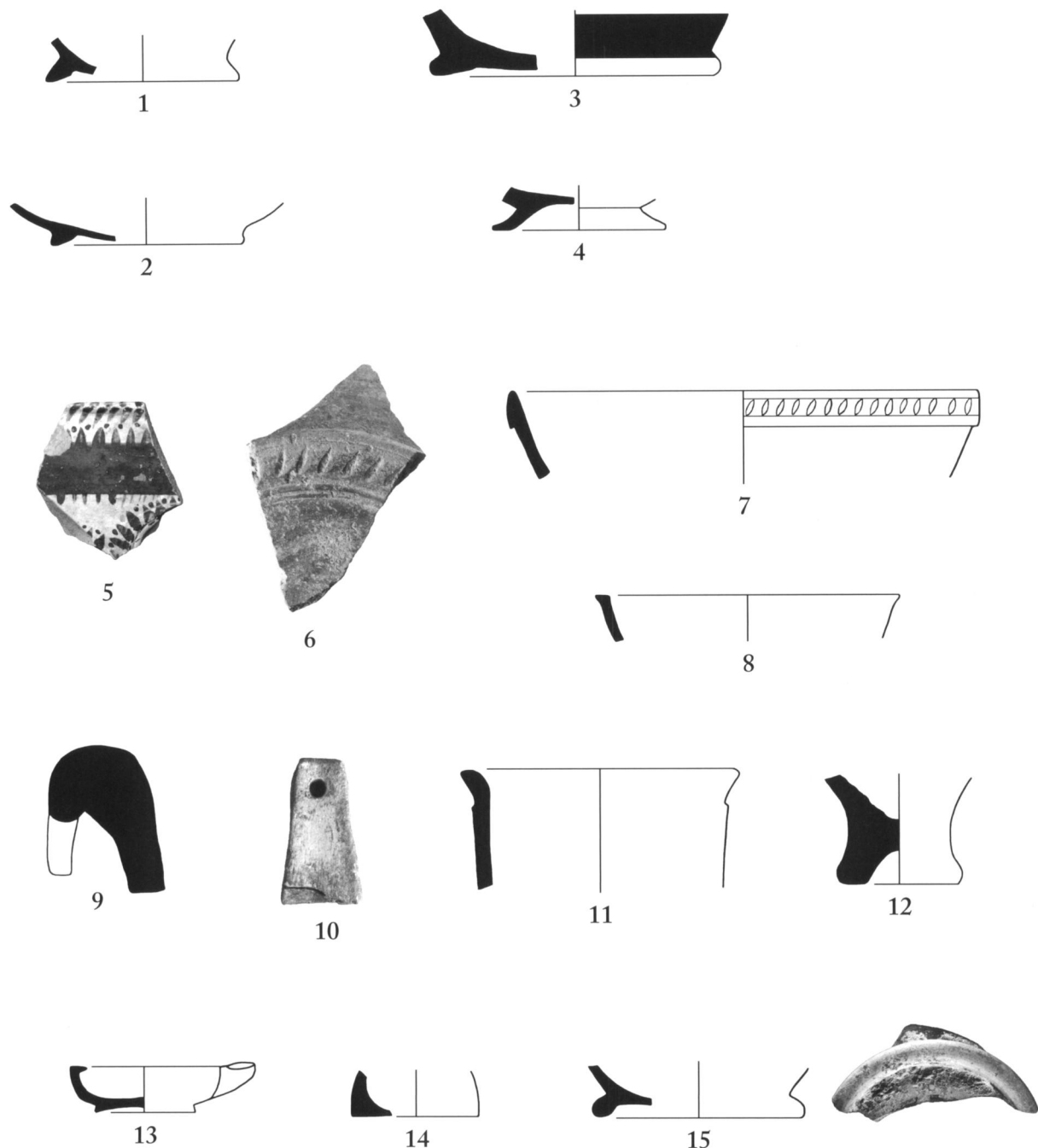
33. Although the lopus in Athens is generally a shape of the later 5th century, examples contemporary with the deposit at Priniatikos Pyrgos are known (e.g., *Agora* XII, p. 374, no. 1971). Jugs in a cooking fabric are also attested at Athens; see *Agora* XII, pp. 351–352,

nos. 1633–1662. An intact cooking jug from Knossos, dated to ca. 475–450, has a rim of the same diameter and form as the example shown here; see Callaghan 1992, p. 91, deposit H3, no. 8, pl. 75.

34. Cooking vessels or supplies of bulk clay of unknown origin were also imported to Knossos in the Classical

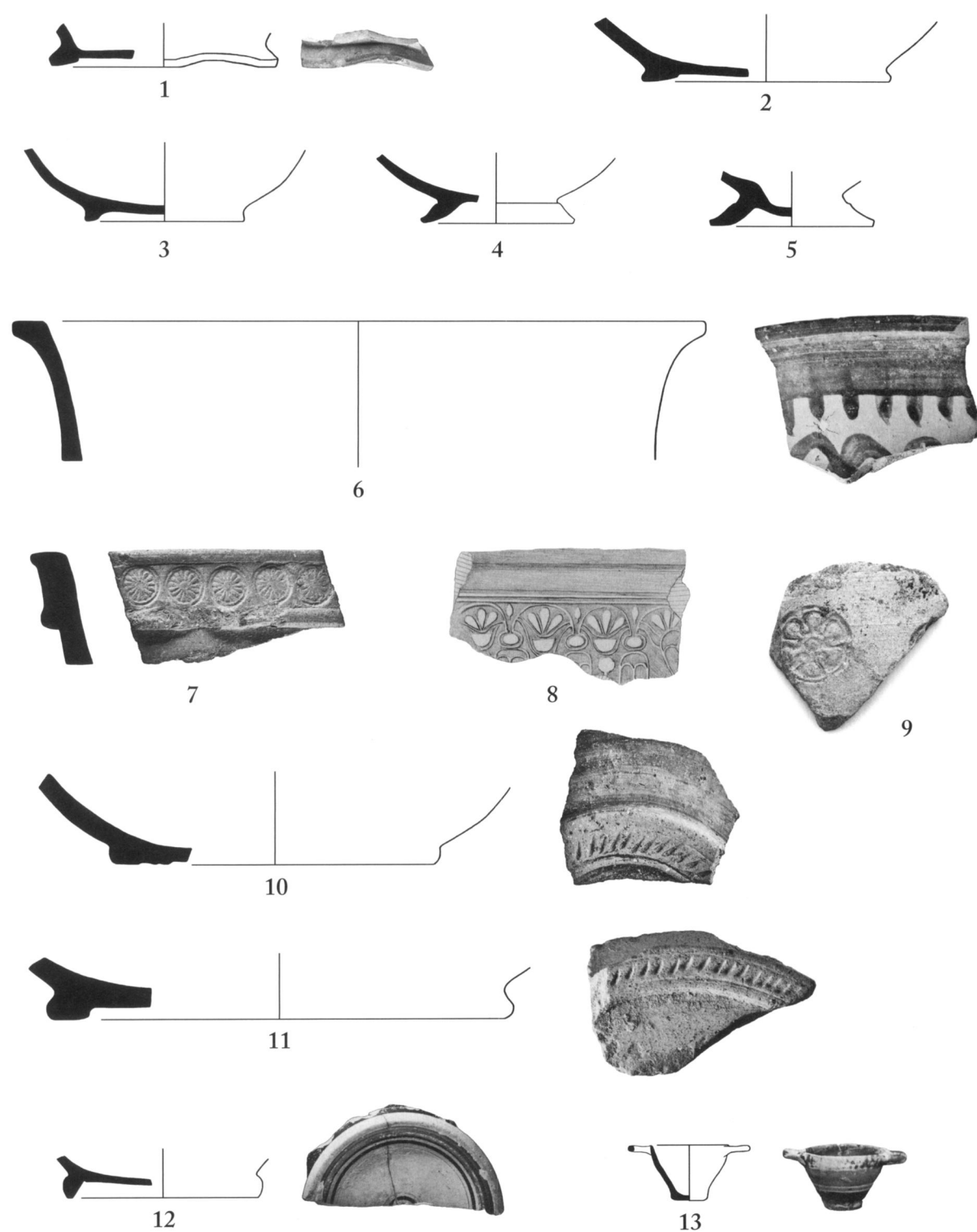
period; see Coldstream and Eiring 2001, p. 87.

35. For the Azoria parallels, see Haggis et al. 2004, p. 362, fig. 17:1; 2007a, p. 251, fig. 6:1, p. 279, fig. 26:6, 7. The early cup bases from Priniatikos Pyrgos do not have the angled ring underfoot characteristic of cups dated to ca. 475–450 and later.



**Figure 13. Pottery from floor deposit G2059, ca. 475–450.**  
Scale 1:3. Photos M. Wisniewski

The semicircular sprig pattern below the band outlines a hole in the vessel, with gloss inside the hole. This rim is from a large vessel resembling a krater, but the hole through the wall suggests some other form. Vessels with identical slip, fabric, and holes outlined with the same motif were found in the ash deposit (Fig. 9:6) and in deposit G2049 (Fig. 15:7), a sign that these deposits are contemporary. Similar in form and decoration is a krater rim from the ash deposit (Fig. 14:6). I can find no precise parallel for this krater or for the similar vessels from other deposits. These four pieces are exceptional, at least by Cretan standards, for their fine slip and



**Figure 14. Classical and Hellenistic pottery from various deposits.**  
Scale 1:3. Photos M. Wisniewski

decoration.<sup>36</sup> Also from deposit G2059 are the rim of a storage vessel (Fig. 13:9) and an amphora toe (Fig. 13:12), both apparently local products.

An Attic lamp from the same floor deposit (Fig. 13:13) can be dated ca. 525–480, while an Attic saltcellar (Fig. 13:14) resembles published examples from the Athenian Agora dated to ca. 475–450, with convex walls, flat bottoms, and no gloss underneath.<sup>37</sup> The deposit also contained a skyphos base (Fig. 13:15) that differs from Attic examples in fabric and finish. The best parallels are unpublished skyphoi from a spring sanctuary at Gortyn, which copy Attic forms and decorative touches such as the concentric circles underfoot, but lack the red slip underfoot typical of Attic examples.<sup>38</sup> Another skyphos base (Fig. 14:12) from a different context (trench III, context 36) has concentric circles underneath, no slip, and a pale fabric unusual for Attic skyphoi. Unlike most Attic prototypes, both of these bases have no gloss on the outer edge of the torus foot.<sup>39</sup> They may be imports from Gortyn.

A second substantial floor deposit, G2049, contained cup bases (Fig. 15:1, 2) and a hydria base (Fig. 15:4) identical to examples from the ash deposit.<sup>40</sup> Another jug or hydria base, however, has a high stand (Fig. 15:5), an unusual form not seen in the ash deposit. Also from G2049 are a lekane with foliate decoration on the rim (Fig. 15:6) and a grooved cooking-ware rim, possibly from a jug (Fig. 15:8), both shapes paralleled in other deposits. The base of an Attic Pheidias cup (Fig. 15:3) supplies one of the latest external indications of date for a 5th-century floor at the site (ca. 450).<sup>41</sup>

Even the smaller deposits contribute to an understanding of local pottery styles. Deposit G5014 contained two high-necked cups (Fig. 16:1, 2) that are better preserved than any vessels from the ash deposit. The cup bases (one of which is shown in Fig. 16:3) are indistinguishable from those in the ash deposit, as is a small glazed bowl (Fig. 16:5). A base and lower

36. The closest parallels for the decoration are bowls with bands, olive sprays, and wheel patterns from late-5th- or early-4th-century contexts at the sanctuary of Demeter at Knossos, for which see Coldstream 1973a, p. 24, no. B7, pl. 11, and pp. 26–27, nos. C12–14, pl. 12.

37. For the lamp, see *Agora* IV, pp. 39–43, type 19, pls. 5, 33. Attic saltcellars with flat bottoms replaced versions with a recessed profile underneath after ca. 480 B.C. The best parallel for the example from this deposit is *Agora* XII, p. 299, no. 894, which has a plain flat base and dates to the 460s (see fig. 9, pl. 34).

38. For the votive deposit from the spring sanctuary, see Di Vita 1985, p. 40; Sporn 2002, pp. 163–165. Excavations in the area of the Odeion at Gortyn have also produced bases of

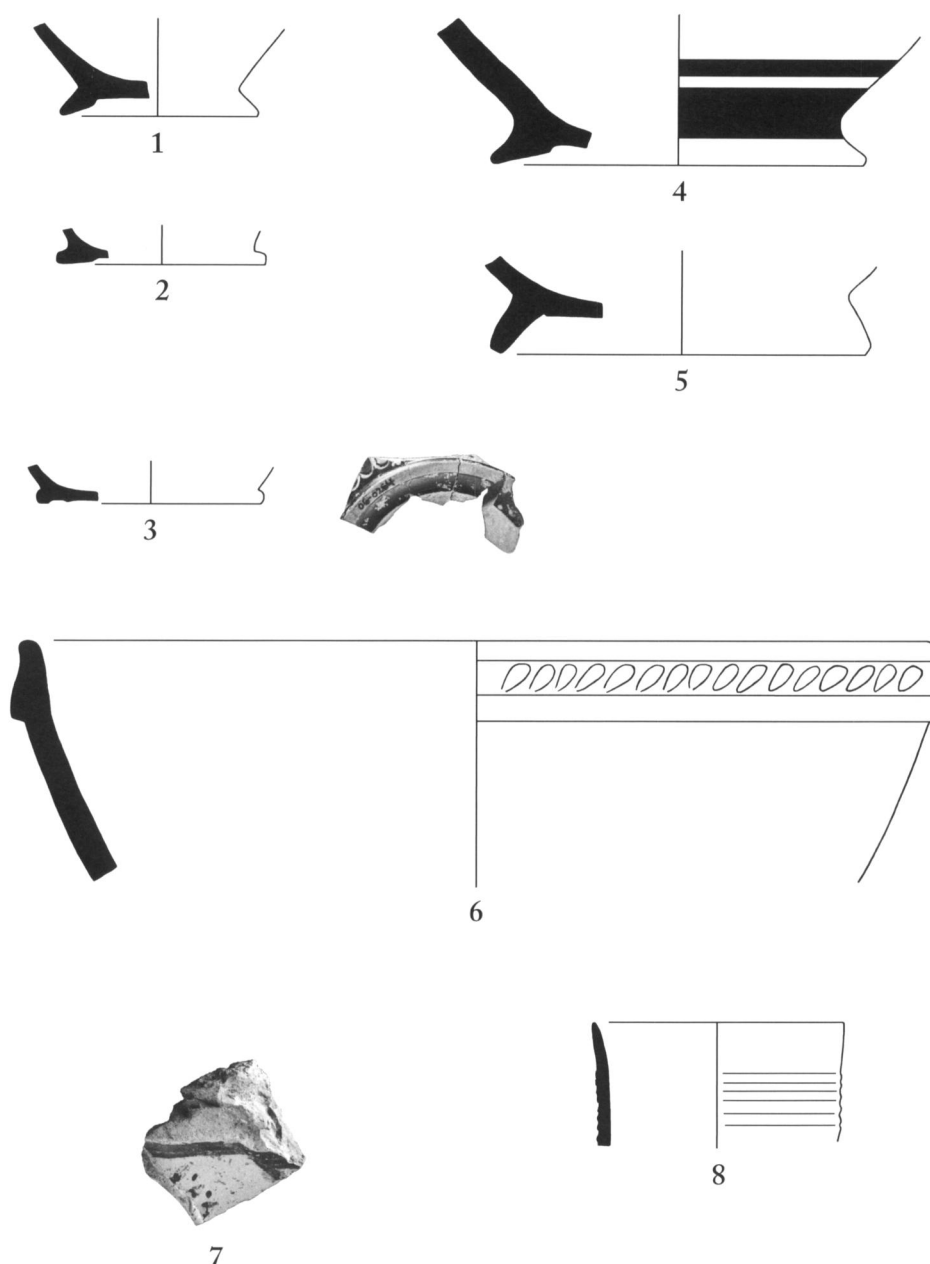
Atticizing skyphoi, which I have dated to the last quarter of the 5th and the 4th century (Erickson 2001, p. 241).

39. Attic skyphoi with a reserved outer face of the base are very rare; examples are listed in *Agora* XII, p. 259, under no. 338.

40. This deposit was found above a stratum of pebbles at roughly the same elevation as G2026/G2029, but farther north. It is possible that some of the material was not from the floor surface but part of the ash deposit, for the excavators observed ashy soil in two pails at this locus.

41. The earliest Pheidias cups date to the 460s. The example from deposit G2049 seems to be an early form, but not the earliest, having a base with a concave molding underneath and black gloss on its inner face (cf. *Agora* XII, p. 250, nos. 204, 205, pl. 11).





**Figure 15. Pottery from floor deposit G2049, ca. 475–450.** Scale 1:3. Photos M. Wisniewski

body of a jug or hydria (Fig. 16:4) have different glazing characteristics (drip gloss) than the banded wares in other deposits, but this form too can be dated to ca. 475–450. The same deposit also produced a lekane with a squared rim (Fig. 16:6).<sup>42</sup>

42. Not illustrated, but worth noting, are several pieces from the other two Classical deposits mentioned above. Deposit G2026/G2029 has a cup base with a broad, low form and minimal splay, which can be dated to ca. 500–480, although other cup bases from this

deposit are comparable to examples in the ash deposit and therefore datable to ca. 475–450. A grooved rim from a cooking-ware vessel is likewise similar to an example in the ash deposit. The same deposit also contains an unusual high-necked cup, unglazed, with a

silver micaceous fabric from outside the Kalo Chorio area. Deposit G2015 includes a hydria base that is slightly more splayed than examples from the ash deposit, as well as a tableware bowl with an extruded rim. This deposit may be slightly later than the ash deposit.

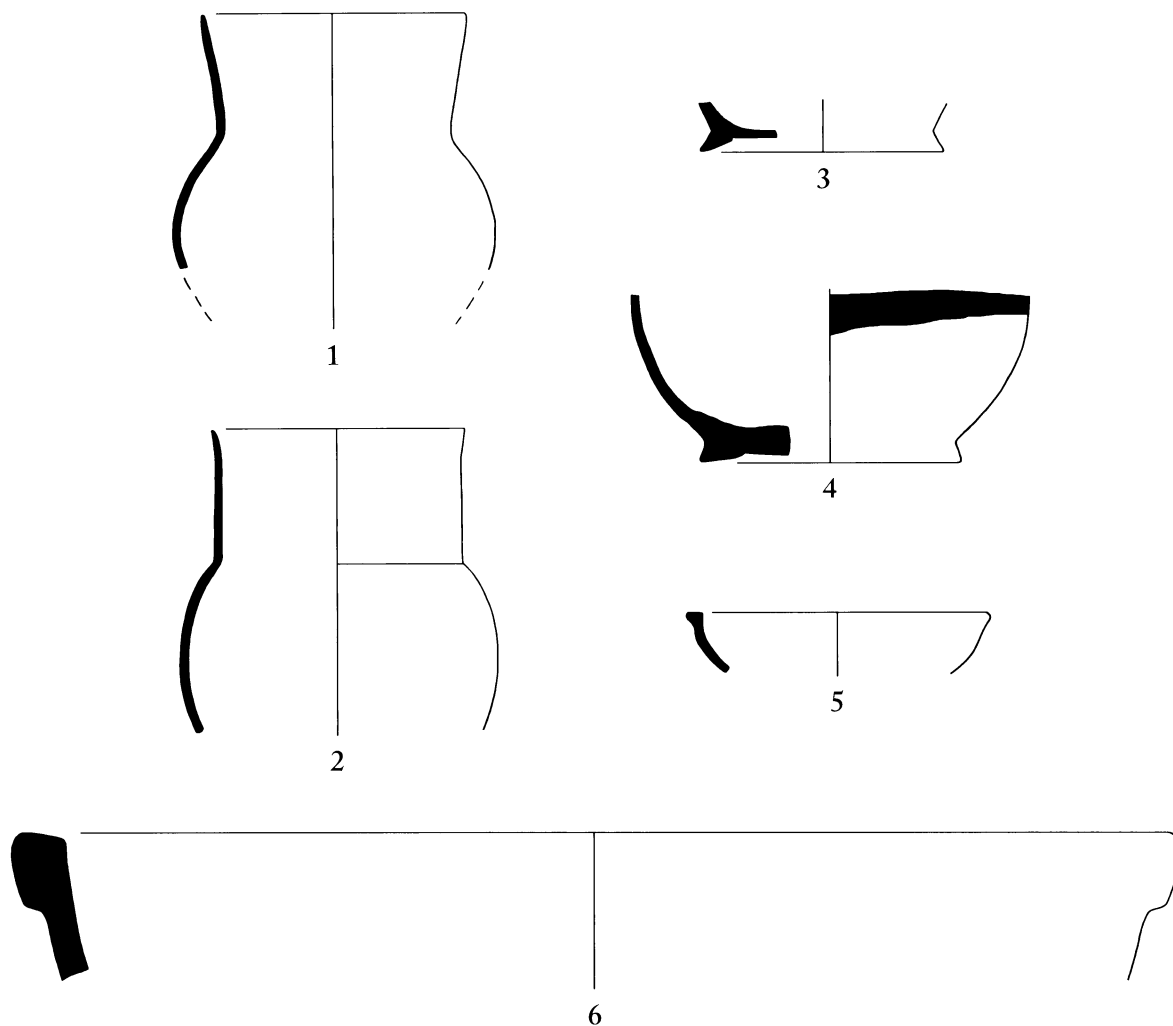


Figure 16. Pottery from deposit G5014, ca. 475–450. Scale 1:3

With so many deposits dated to ca. 475–450 or slightly later, it is surprising to find little material at Priniatikos Pyrgos from the rest of the Classical period. The only exception, a sizable deposit from area A datable to the 4th century, is discussed below. Unless later discoveries fill in this gap, local ceramic development from the middle of the 5th to the middle of the 4th century will be difficult to determine. A small deposit (H4002.4) that may date to the second half of the 5th century has a high-necked cup with streamlined proportions and a fine red gloss not found in earlier examples (Fig. 17:1). A base from the same deposit (Fig. 17:2) is similar to one (from another context—trench III, context 72) with a splayed form dated to ca. 450–425 (Fig. 14:4). A jug or hydria base (Fig. 17:3) from yet another deposit (H4002.2) has a foot that is narrower and higher than any in the ash deposit. Other jug or hydria bases from G2065, with a coat of black gloss underneath rather than the reserved area of earlier banded wares, are possibly even later. A lekane from H4002.2 (Fig. 17:4) has an extruded rim similar to an example from the ash deposit (Fig. 9:4), but a different configuration of the handles, which curve upward from the wall and are attached to the rim rather than rising from the rim as in earlier lekanai.

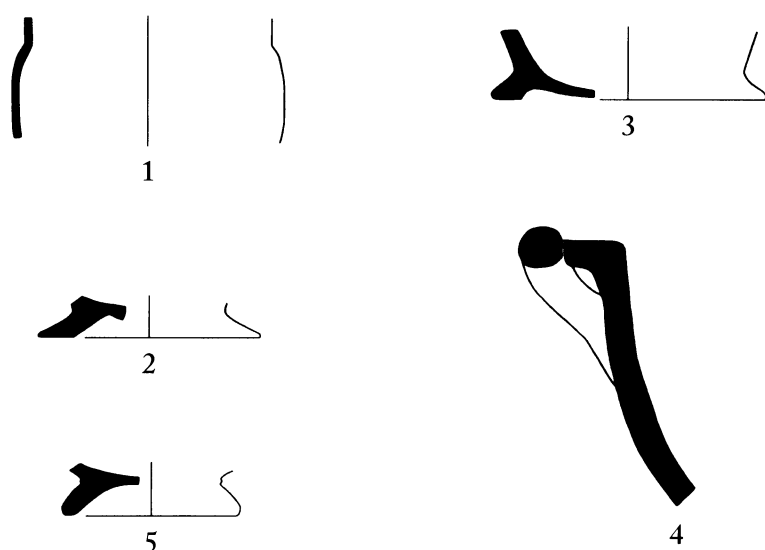


Figure 17. Pottery from deposits H4002.2 and H4002.4, ca. 450–400. Scale 1:3

Prior to the Hellenistic period, only one substantial deposit at Prinitikos Pyrgos can be securely dated to the 4th century (A2005). Imports suggesting this date include an Attic bowl with an incurving rim (Fig. 18:9) and an Attic lekane with a projecting, squared rim (Fig. 18:10).<sup>43</sup> A local bowl (Fig. 18:8) displays a carinated profile unlike any example in the ash deposit, but similar bowls have appeared in Hellenistic contexts (ca. 325–300).<sup>44</sup> Another small bowl (Fig. 18:7) has an extended horizontal rim, a feature almost unknown in the 5th-century repertoire of tablewares. A large lekane (Fig. 18:12) has an extended horizontal rim with a slight downturn that seems to anticipate the more angular and elaborate rim forms of Hellenistic potters. An almost intact krateriskos (Fig. 18:5) provides the only hint of a votive character in the deposit and probably dates to the 4th century.<sup>45</sup> In general, the cups, jugs, and bowls in A2005 have thinner walls and more evenly applied gloss than their counterparts in 5th-century deposits. Many shapes seem to occupy a middle ground in development between the ash deposit and Early Hellenistic contexts and may date to ca. 375–325.

The high-necked cups from deposit A2005, however, are exceptions (Fig. 18:1–4). Although most have an angled ring underfoot like their predecessors (albeit with a wider ring), these broad and low bases resemble examples from the early 5th century more than the splayed forms from the ash deposit or the high conical supports of Hellenistic cups. Indeed, the cup bases from A2005 have an even greater width-to-height ratio than bases dated to ca. 500–475. A nearly intact cup (Fig. 18:1) has a curiously

43. Cf. *Agora* XII, p. 363, no. 1816, from a context dated to ca. 370–330.

44. Hellenistic deposits A2004.2 and G2064.3 have bowls with more sharply carinated profiles and flaring rims. For the type at Knossos, see Eiring 2001, pp. 102–104, fig. 3:5. Deposit A2004.2 includes an Attic

kantharos suggesting a date early in the Hellenistic period.

45. Krateriskoi and other miniature vessels become common in the sanctuary of Demeter at Knossos in the 4th century, but they also appear as early as the late 5th century; see Coldstream 1973a, p. 183.

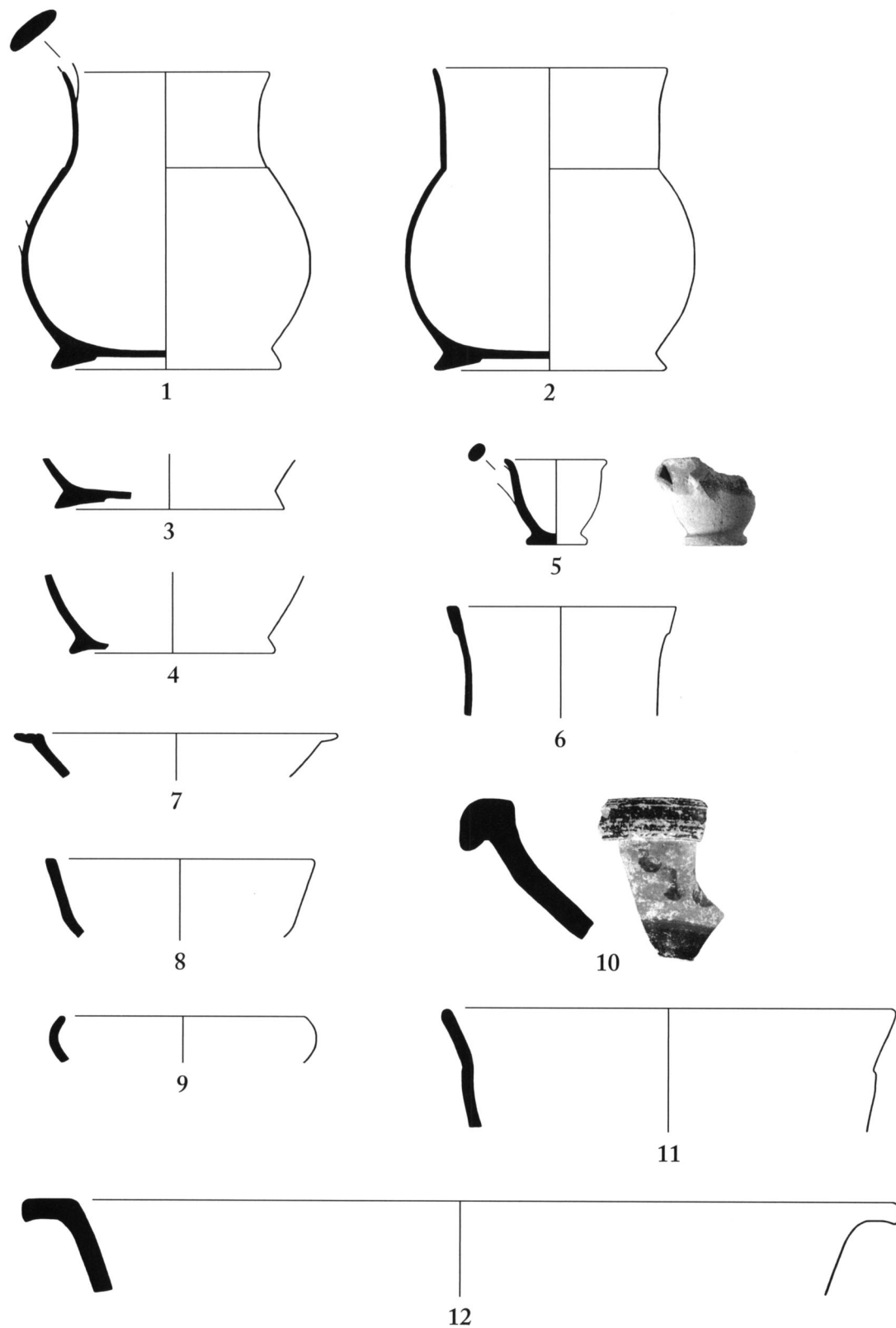


Figure 18. Pottery from deposit  
A2005, ca. 375–325. Scale 1:3.  
Photos M. Wisniewski



old-fashioned form with a low center of gravity and a tapering shoulder and rim. Another cup (Fig. 18:2) has an almost identical base and rim, but without the droopy appearance of the first. For at least some cup makers, the 4th century was apparently a regressive period.<sup>46</sup> It is difficult to distinguish cups with such a conservative form from their 5th-century predecessors, although the 4th-century examples are uniformly larger and have a different range of diameters and heights.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, red or reddish brown gloss is more common than black in the 4th century, and the coat is applied more evenly than on earlier bases. This uniformity in dimensions and glazing characteristics may indicate production within a single workshop during the period ca. 375–325.

## PUBLIC FEASTING AND SOCIAL IDENTITY

The contents of the ash deposit could represent the remains of a feast, whether from a domestic, civic, or religious occasion. Further study of the faunal remains may reveal evidence for dining, butchery, or sacrificial practices.<sup>48</sup> The ceramic contents of the deposit can also provide clues to the type of feasting. The ash deposit differs from most floor deposits at Priniatikos Pyrgos, in which cooking wares, large lekanai and mortars, and storage vessels including pithoi appear in greater concentrations. In the ash deposit, fine glazed tablewares constitute 41% of the ceramic assemblage by number and 25% by weight (Table 1). If medium-fine vessels, a category that includes lekanai and many undiagnostic tableware fragments, are combined with the glazed tablewares, these two groups make up 93% of the assemblage by number and 77% by weight. By contrast, coarse and cooking wares together make up only 7% of the assemblage by number and 23% by weight. Another distinguishing feature of the ash deposit is the high concentration of cups, hydriai, and small bowls, which together constitute 87% of the fine-ware assemblage (Table 2). These numbers are based on minimum-count estimates for each shape.<sup>49</sup>

46. The Early Iron Age pottery from Vrokastro also exhibits a conservative style, with droopy, globular shapes; see Hayden 2003, p. 12.

47. There are few exceptions in the 4th century to a base diameter between 10 and 14 cm. Steven Karacic has undertaken a statistical study of the high-necked cup bases from Priniatikos Pyrgos. On the basis of a preliminary analysis of 59 bases from Classical deposits, he found the following differences in the average diameter and height of the bases over time: ca. 475–450, Diam. 9.16 cm, H. 0.98 cm; ca. 450–400, Diam. 8.25 cm, H. 0.95 cm; ca. 375–325, Diam. 10.69 cm, H. 0.89 cm.

48. Valasia Isaakidou will publish the animal bones from Priniatikos Pyrgos. Her initial assessment, based on field study in 2009, is that the ash deposit includes fragments of sheep, goat, pig, cow, and dog, but no articulated skeletons and no clear signs of feasting. By contrast, a study by Dabney, Halstead, and Thomas (2004, p. 201) of a Mycenaean deposit on the hill of Tsoungiza at Nemea documented enough cattle bones to postulate a major feast or series of feasts. Halstead and Isaakidou (2004, pp. 136–142) and Hamilakis and Konsolaki (2004, pp. 141–145) summarize the attempts of prehistorians and Classical archaeologists to distinguish between

the meaty parts of animals and sacrificial debris. For the distinction between sacrificial remains at altars and dining debris from hearth buildings at Early Iron Age Kommos, see Shaw 2000, pp. 678–684.

49. For minimum estimates, two or more fragments that joined or appeared to belong to the same pot were counted as one. Bases of different diameters and/or shapes, even if very fragmentary, were assumed to belong to different pots. For high-necked cups and hydriai, the bases provided the minimum estimates, since the body sherds, which were much more numerous (525 cups, 415 hydriai), were not unique to any particular vessel and could have come

TABLE 2. FINE-WARE SHAPES IN LATE ARCHAIC AND CLASSICAL DEPOSITS

<i>Deposit</i>	<i>Hydriai</i>	<i>Kraters</i>	<i>Bowls</i>	<i>Jugs</i>	<i>Cups</i>	<i>Lamps</i>	<i>Other</i>
Priniatikos Pyrgos, ash deposit	48 (18.68%)	2 (0.78%)	45 (17.51%)	11 (4.28%)	111 high-necked (43.19%) 5 low-necked (1.95%) 1 tulip (0.39%) 9 skyphoi (3.50%) 5 cups (1.95%)	5 (1.95%)	15 (5.84%)
Aphrati, Classical house	1 (3.70%)	1 (3.70%)	2 (7.41%)	4 (14.81%)	14 high-necked (51.87%) 1 low-necked (3.70%)	4 (14.81%)	—
Knossos, Late Archaic well (Royal Road)	8 (4.60%)	8 (4.60%)	15 (8.62%)	13 (7.47%)	80 high-necked (45.98%) 7 bellied (4.02%) 28 cups (16.10%)	6 (3.45%)	9 (5.16%)
Knossos, Southwest Houses, deposit K	17 (27.87%)	9 (14.75%)	11 (18.03%)	4 (6.56%)	11 high-necked (18.03%) 3 skyphoi (4.92%) 1 cup (1.64%)	2 (3.28%)	3 (4.92%)
Knossos, Unexplored Mansion, deposits H1–H5	5 (11.35%)	3 (6.82%)	3 (6.82%)	10 (22.73%)	14 high-necked (31.82%) 2 bellied (4.55%) 1 skyphos (2.27%) 1 cup (2.27%)	3 (6.82%)	2 (4.55%)

How does the ash deposit compare to other 5th-century Cretan deposits? Table 2 summarizes the contents of several roughly contemporary assemblages of pottery from the island. Unfortunately, no other deposits have been published in sufficient detail to provide a full comparison. The figures reported in Table 2 for deposits at Knossos are based on older publications with catalogues limited to complete and nearly complete vessels; the excavators presumably either did not save or excluded from publication many smaller diagnostic fragments.<sup>50</sup> They probably also focused on fine wares at the expense of coarse and cooking wares. This does not prevent a comparison of fine-ware shapes from each deposit, although uncertainty about what may have been excluded should discourage us from emphasizing minute differences in the range of shapes. Nevertheless, comparisons may still be useful, if only to generate questions that later projects using more precise quantification methods can attempt to answer.

At Aphrati, debris from what was probably a house destroyed in the final quarter of the 5th century contained a dozen or so intact or almost intact drinking cups, as well as a krater, a hydria, and a few jugs and bowls.<sup>51</sup> These pots came from the corner of a large rectangular room

from far fewer pots. For the fine-ware bowls, there were almost as many different bases (45) as rim forms (42). The counts for fine wares do not include lekanai, even though they are occasionally glazed and may have functioned as table service. More sophisticated formulas involving weights or ratios of rim

and body sherds might have increased the counts for each shape, but such methods were not used here. For quantification of pottery from a Late Archaic fort in Euboea and comparison of shapes from other sites, see Coulton et al. 2002, pp. 92–96.

50. As an aside, I confess that my

own publication of the pottery from Aphrati (Erickson 2002) is as deficient in numbers as the much earlier Knossos reports.

51. For the building, see Lebessi 1970, p. 459, fig. 2; for the pottery, see Erickson 2002. See also Westgate 2007, p. 446.

connected to the rest of the building through an anteroom, a configuration suitable for a private dining room. The Aphrati deposit is similar in composition to the fill of a well at Knossos dated to ca. 500–480.<sup>52</sup> The well deposit contains the same shapes in approximately the same percentages, although it is five or more times larger than the Aphrati deposit, perhaps because it resulted from the discarding of several complete symposium sets.<sup>53</sup> Compared to these two assemblages, the ash deposit at Priniatikos Pyrgos has twice the concentration of bowls and four times the percentage of hydriai. The krater, however, the centerpiece of the Greek symposium, is represented by only two examples, one a plain Lakonian import.<sup>54</sup> This assemblage resembles those from domestic deposits at Knossos, such as deposit K from the Southwest Houses, with high concentrations of hydriai and bowls.<sup>55</sup>

Further study of the stratigraphy of the ash deposit and quantitative analysis of the volume of soil relative to the pottery and bones may reveal whether it was the result of a single event, the slow accumulation of material, or the clearance of debris from other parts of the site.<sup>56</sup> It seems certain, however, that an episode of burning produced a soil matrix with a heavy ash component and many burned pots and bones, the latter showing signs of calcination from extreme heat.<sup>57</sup> Although the narrow chronological range of most of the pottery would be compatible with a single event, that alone is not decisive, since in social terms 25 years is a long time. One might expect the primary refuse of a feast to include many intact or well-preserved pots, but the pottery from the deposit is fragmentary, with worn breaks. Did the banqueters deliberately destroy the vessels after the event, or was the deposit a product of clean-up and disposal following accidental breakage? From a comment in the field notebook it appears that many of the bases were found upside down and tilted at an angle from east to west, suggesting that the pots had been thrown to the ground from the east in a quasi-ceremonial fashion. The “killing” of pottery in this manner, however, is more often associated with funerary rituals of earlier periods than with

52. For this deposit, see Coldstream 1973b, pp. 45–61. Fine wares constitute 93% of the published ceramic assemblage.

53. According to Lynch (forthcoming), a deposit from a Late Archaic house on the edge of the Athenian Agora (J 2:4) included more than one set of sympotic vessels. The vessels from the well at Knossos, which similarly appear to represent multiple sets, may also have come from a single house.

54. Plain black Lakonian kraters are the most popular category of ceramic imports at Eleutherna in the 6th century; see Erickson 2005, pp. 630–633, fig. 5. The ratio of kraters to cups may be an important criterion for distinguishing sympotic activity from other

modes of drinking. According to Luke (1994, p. 29), the ratio of kraters to skyphoi in a dump associated with the Stoa Basileios in Athens is just over 1:10 and signals sympotic drinking.

A red-figure deposit from an Athenian house (Agora N 7:3) has 2 kraters and 25 cups, for a ratio of 1:13; see Steiner 2007, p. 303, n. 7. The ratio of kraters to cups in the Knossian well deposit is 8:115, or approximately 1:14, while that in the deposit at Aphrati is 1:15. In the ash deposit at Priniatikos Pyrgos, however, the ratio of kraters to cups is only 1:66.

55. For deposit K, see Coldstream and Macdonald 1997, pp. 222–227. Fine wares constitute 91% of the assemblage. For domestic deposits from the area of the Unexplored Mansion,

see Callaghan 1992, pp. 90–94. Fine wares constitute 90% of assemblages H1–H5.

56. The calculated sherd density of the deposit was 25.86 kg/m<sup>3</sup>. This might support the assumption that it was the product of a single event. A more gradual process of disposal would probably have resulted in more soil in the matrix or successive layers of deposition; see Dabney, Halstead, and Thomas 2004, pp. 203–204; Pappa et al. 2004, pp. 19–22. The possibility that other streams of waste entered the deposit cannot be ruled out, however, since it also included eight cup bases of 7th-century date (not included in the fine-ware counts in Table 2).

57. I thank Valasia Isaakidou for this observation.

Classical feasts.<sup>58</sup> Even after its initial study, the ash deposit remains one of the most enigmatic features of the site.

If the 117 local and 14 imported cups from the deposit did indeed come from a single feast—by no means certain—what might this suggest about the number of participants? Again, there are no clear answers. Classical Athens provides abundant literary, iconographic, and archaeological testimony that can be used to reconstruct sets of sympotic vessels and calculate the size of typical gatherings, but the picture becomes less clear when archaeological evidence alone is the basis for such conclusions. Prehistorians have identified symposium sets for as few as four diners as well as assemblages from large feasts with hundreds of participants.<sup>59</sup> The size of the ash deposit at Priniatikos Pyrgos gives the impression of large-scale feasting, whether on one or more occasions. The number of vessels—131 cups, 48 hydriai, 45 fine bowls, and 85 lekanai—is larger by an order of magnitude than an assemblage characteristic of a private symposium. In Athens, 100 cups would not necessarily indicate 100 drinkers, since participants might have used different shapes (deeper or more shallow) at different stages of the symposium.<sup>60</sup> The 111 high-necked cups in the ash deposit at Priniatikos Pyrgos, however, are almost monotonously uniform in shape and decoration; presumably each drinker would have no need for more than one such cup. The number of high-necked cups, therefore, might give an idea of the minimum number of participants in the feast or series of feasts represented by this assemblage. Hayden estimated that the total population of Istron and its territory was around 1,000 to 1,500.<sup>61</sup> If half of the population lived in the town, 100 participants might represent 20% of the urban community.

Is the ash deposit a remnant of feasting associated with a sanctuary? At Knossos, cups and jugs form the bulk of the ceramic assemblage (excluding terracottas) in the sanctuary of Demeter, while the “Shrine of Glaukos” has provided one of the most extensive records of the development of ceramic forms connected with wine.<sup>62</sup> Since the cups and serving vessels from these

58. Assemblages of intact or deliberately smashed vessels have been associated with funerary meals from Bronze Age and Early Iron Age contexts; see Hamilakis 1998, pp. 119–126. Early Iron Age Asine provides a particularly convincing case; see Wells 1983, p. 34. Cretan archaeologists have documented unusual disposal methods for feasts at Early Iron Age Sybrita, where over 54 pits were dug into the bedrock near a building on the summit of the later acropolis and filled with ash, bone, and ceramic debris; see D’Agata 2001. For a general discussion of depositional practices associated with feasts, see Dabney, Halstead, and Thomas 2004, p. 202; Steel 2004, p. 290.

59. Rutter (2008, pp. 468–469) identified ceramic drinking sets in

Early Bronze Age Greece based on decorative links and the number of cups relative to beverage dispensers. He distinguished smaller sets at Early Helladic Lerna, with as few as four participants, from the large-scale feasting with mass-produced cups seen in many Minoan and Mycenaean contexts. For drinking sets and large feasts in Late Bronze Age Cyprus, see Steel 2004, p. 292. Kotsonas (2008, pp. 316–317) identified skyphoi and kraters as the main components of drinking sets at Early Iron Age Eleutherna. Some of his proposed cup sets were actually found packed inside kraters.

60. See Sparkes 1996, p. 86; Davidson 1997, p. 63; Neer 2002, pp. 9–26. For the evidence equating painted pottery with sympotic contexts, see Steiner 2007, pp. 232–236.

61. Hayden 2004, p. 173. This figure may need to be revised upward if, as is now suspected, the entire area between Priniatikos Pyrgos and Nisi Pandeileimon was inhabited.

62. For Classical drinking vessels from the sanctuary of Demeter at Knossos, see Coldstream 1973a, pp. 3–22. The cups from the “Shrine of Glaukos” are discussed in Callaghan 1978, pp. 3–11, 22. At Kato Symi, cups and jugs predominate in the Archaic and Classical assemblage; see Erickson 2002, pp. 54–70. The spring sanctuary at Gortyn (see n. 38, above) yielded scores of cups dating from ca. 525 to ca. 325, but few other shapes. The acropolis sanctuary at Gortyn has a more diverse assemblage including kraters, cups, hydriai, and oinochoai; see Johannowsky 2002, pp. 56–57.

sanctuaries are indistinguishable from those used on other occasions, a ritual interpretation depends on the appearance of other objects with indisputable cultic significance, such as plaques, figurines, and votive miniatures. The ash deposit contains almost nothing that is unequivocally votive.<sup>63</sup> Nevertheless, a religious origin for the deposit cannot be excluded, especially since the west-central part of the headland has been so little investigated and the architectural remains of a sanctuary may yet be discovered there.<sup>64</sup>

Another possibility deserves consideration. The ash deposit may represent the remains of a civic feast or feasts from an *andreion*, or dining hall, perhaps a small-scale version of the public messes described by Late Classical and Hellenistic writers.<sup>65</sup> Cretan archaeologists have had difficulty identifying such buildings, although a promising candidate has recently come to light at Azoria, where the excavators have identified a pair of 6th-century buildings (A800 and A2000) as dining rooms within a larger complex of kitchens and storage areas.<sup>66</sup> Fenestrated stands found scattered around a column base on the floor of building A800 hint at the consumption of wine, although kraters are absent from this room and cups appear in small concentrations.<sup>67</sup> With the exception of the clay stands, the small assemblage of pottery from this floor is comparable to that from the ash deposit at Priniatikos Pyrgos, for it includes high-necked cups and at least one jug or hydria. This is not enough, however, to distinguish feasting in a civic *andreion* from that which occurred in a sanctuary or domestic context.<sup>68</sup> Nor, as noted above, should we assume just one mode of civic feasting, even at a single site or building. Indeed, a monumental civic building (D500) at Azoria seems to have been another setting for public feasts of a character distinct from those in the *andreion*, and perhaps differing in their arrangements on different occasions.<sup>69</sup> Another possible *andreion* with 6th-century architectural phases has come to light at Itanos,

63. The only possible candidates are two Corinthian kotyliskoi (one shown in Fig. 5:7), three local miniature cups, and the head of a figurine (Fig. 6). Another indicator of sanctuary deposits is a large number of lamps (see Sporn 2002, p. 356, table 19), but the ash deposit contained only two local and three Attic lamp fragments (one shown in Fig. 5:8).

64. The main public buildings at Istron were probably located on Nisi Pandeimon. Epigraphically attested structures include a sanctuary of Athena Polias and a *prytaneion*; see Hayden 2004, p. 229; Perlman 2004b, p. 1167.

65. These writers include Aristotle, Dosiadas, Ephoros, and Plato. There are no contemporary accounts of Archaic and Early Classical Cretan feasts. Another problem is that the literary tradition seems to reflect a biased, Athenocentric perspective; see

the critical assessment of the sources by Perlman (1992, 2005). It is generally assumed that all citizens, rich and poor, participated in the Cretan messes, and that each polis possessed a single *andreion* building, just as each city possessed a single *prytaneion* and *bouleuterion*. Since it would have been impractical to accommodate the entire citizen body of a large polis in a single structure, however, perhaps each clan or *betaireia* had its own building. Alternatively, some may have dined in temporary structures. For *andreion* buildings and the question of their number, see Link 1994, p. 18, n. 36; Prent 2005, pp. 451–452. There may have been different modes of public feasting, not all as formal or monumental as the events described by ancient authors.

66. Haggis et al. 2004, pp. 387–390; 2007a, pp. 253–265. For buildings elsewhere identified as *andreia*, see Viviers 1994, pp. 244–249; Mazarakis

Ainian 1997, pp. 224–231; Shaw 2000, pp. 680–681; Sjögren 2003, pp. 61–64; Prent 2005, pp. 450–467.

67. For the drinking vessels from A800, see Haggis et al. 2004, pp. 379–381, fig. 39. Cups, small kraters, an exaleiptron, table amphoras, and a fenestrated stand were found on the floor of A2000; see Haggis et al. 2007a, p. 253, figs. 8, 9.

68. Domestic dining is attested at Azoria in Late Archaic house B100, which yielded extensive signs of food preparation and consumption, including a built hearth, a paved store-room, fragmentary cooking pots, and a collection of black-gloss tableware; see Haggis et al. 2004, p. 359, fig. 13.

69. The building is approximately 20 m long (north–south) and has a stepped bench running along the interior on three sides; see Haggis et al. 2007a, pp. 295–301, fig. 40.



although it has been announced only in a brief preliminary report.<sup>70</sup> The eventual publication of the contents of this building may shed further light on Archaic Cretan feasting practices.

The presence or absence in Cretan assemblages of vessel types known from sympotic contexts on the Greek mainland may, however, convey only limited information about Cretan feasts, because of significant differences in the way in which common shapes were used on the island. For example, Dosiadas (*FGrH* 458 F2; Ath. 4.143) describes a feast in an *andreion* in which Cretans used drinking vessels similar to those used by mainland Greeks, but in unexpected ways. The men in the *andreion* were seated at different tables, and each table received a communal cup of wine. Because Dosiadas does not reveal the number of tables, except for the two reserved for guests, we do not know how many cups were set. He also states that the boys all drank from a communal krater.<sup>71</sup> Such a feast might leave an archaeological footprint similar to that of a mainland Greek symposium, even though drinking customs differed significantly.

The only other vessels mentioned by ancient sources in connection with an *andreion* are the 50 jugs of wine (*prochoi*) provided as an annuity to a scribe and his descendants in a decree of ca. 500 B.C. (*SEG* XXVII 631). Literary descriptions of *andreia* stress the equality of portions and suggest methods of rationing, with officials perhaps distributing rations in wine vessels. Jugs were not used this way in mainland symposia. Cretans might have used other shapes in different ways too. Drinkers on the mainland employed hydriai as water vessels when mixing water and wine in kraters, but this role seems unlikely for the hydriai found in the ash deposit at Priniatikos Pyrgos, where there are almost no table amphoras.<sup>72</sup> Perhaps some of the hydriai functioned as wine containers, with allotments of wine distributed to subdivisions of the mess group or apportioned in some other way. The Cretan hydriai are notable for their decoration; they are the only exceptions to monotone black tablewares.<sup>73</sup> Indeed, hydriai have a higher profile in this deposit than we would expect if their purpose was simply to convey water to the feast and prepare wine for the tables.<sup>74</sup> This makes one hesitant to extrapolate the functions of vessels in Cretan contexts from those in mainland Greek symposia.<sup>75</sup>

70. Greco et al. 2002, pp. 581–582.

71. It might be possible, by considering vessel size and shape, to distinguish kraters used as mixing vessels from those used as drinking vessels. For example, a Lakonian krater with its projecting rim is not a suitable drinking vessel, but a Cretan bell krater from Aphrati (Erickson 2002, p. 66, fig. 19) has a lip suitable for drinking and is not much larger than the cups in the same deposit. This is a 5th-century krater, although if the literary description has any basis in reality, it presumably should be sought in 4th- or 3rd-century assemblages contemporary with Dosiadas.

72. A comprehensive examination of the deposit led to the identification of only five table amphora rims, most of which were too fragmentary to permit certain identification of the shape.

73. Crete may have been known for these hydriai abroad, for two decorated examples appear among the collection of 6th-century Cretan pottery exported to Tocra; see Boardman and Hayes 1966, pp. 78–80, nos. 921, 922, pl. 55. This reinforces the impression that decorated hydriai were valued as objects of display.

74. For the absence of hydriai in Athenian depictions of symposia, see Steiner 2007, pp. 238–239. Sowder

(2009), however, contended that archaeologists have underestimated the importance of hydriai in banqueting and other contexts. Even hydriai with depictions of women at fountains may have been designed for use at the symposium; see Boardman 2003, p. 113.

75. The Cretan skyphos is another problematic vessel. At Azoria, Haggis et al. (2007a, p. 278) interpreted skyphoi found with high-necked cups not as wine vessels but as containers for food. There are no examples of this shape at Priniatikos Pyrgos; perhaps the small tableware bowls served a similar function.

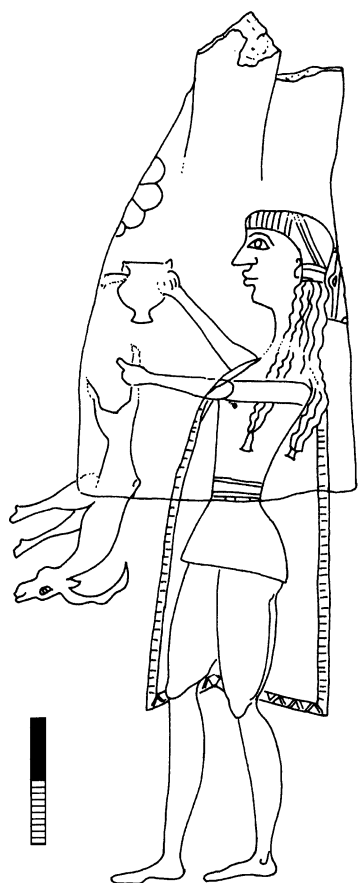


Figure 19. Vessel fragment from Gortyn depicting a youth with a cup and a sacrificial victim, late 7th century. After Shaw 1983, p. 450, fig. 4

Other evidence suggests that cups played a more significant role than kraters in expressions of male identity at Cretan sanctuaries and public feasts.<sup>76</sup> A bronze figurine of Geometric style from the sanctuary of Hermes and Aphrodite at Kato Symi depicts a male figure holding a cup.<sup>77</sup> Was the cup understood to be a dedication or an allusion to drinking ceremonies at the sanctuary? A fragment of a 7th-century vessel from the acropolis sanctuary at Gortyn depicts a youth holding in either hand a cup and a sacrificial victim (Fig. 19).<sup>78</sup> This image recalls Strabo's description (10.4.21 [C 483–484]) of a Cretan initiation ceremony in which a young

76. Where the symposium was a cornerstone of elite education and civic identity, drinking vessels could acquire an ideological significance in defining the group. Lissarrague (1990, pp. 19–46) took what might be regarded as an extreme position with respect to a single shape, the krater, seeing it not only as the centerpiece of the symposium itself and a compositional anchor in Attic depictions of symposia, but also as a symbol of commensality that defined Greek and barbarian through the opposition of mixed and neat wine. In other periods and cultures, kraters may

also have served as symbolic and decorative centerpieces at feasts; see Steel 2004, pp. 293–294, for examples from prehistoric Cyprus. For Whitley (2001, pp. 251–252), an alleged absence of kraters in Cretan contexts and the absence of figural decoration on any shapes point to a mode of feasting fundamentally different from the symposium. Literary testimony (Ath. 4.143) to the effect that Cretans dined while seated, presumably on public occasions, implies an opposition to reclined, sympotic drinking. It does not, however, support the view that a state

monopoly of feasts prevented private symposia. A similar bias has affected our understanding of Spartan drinking customs. Bowie (1990, p. 225, n. 16) proposed a historical progression from aristocratic symposia to the Spartan mess halls in the 6th century. For objections to a single, archetypal mode of feasting in Classical Sparta, see Hodkinson 1997, pp. 90–91.

77. Prent 2005, p. 578, pl. 68:a. The figure is similar to a 7th-century clay figurine, also from Kato Symi (Herakleion Museum, inv. 20026).

78. Shaw 1983, p. 450, fig. 4.

man returning to the city after a stay in the countryside was provided by his *erastes* with a cloak, a drinking cup, and an ox, although the pot from Gortyn substitutes a goat for an ox.<sup>79</sup> In Strabo's account, the cup is a gift on the occasion of a youth's introduction to the *andreion*. The cup presumably symbolized manhood as well as the bond between the older and younger man.<sup>80</sup>

## POTTERY AND CRETAN IDENTITY

A premise of recent scholarship on feasting is that larger ceremonial gatherings and feasts helped to define communities and codify power relationships among their members. Anthropologists have long connected food and feasting practices with concepts of political, social, and ethnic identity, and archaeologists have explored ways in which material culture contributed to local and regional identities.<sup>81</sup> Identity is no longer seen as a stable entity, but rather as an ongoing negotiation, in which some objects are charged with greater significance than others, some occasions are more important than others, and some periods are marked by more intensive efforts to signal identity than others.<sup>82</sup> New social contacts and tensions can lead groups to reconfigure their identities. This discursive framework for identity construction has implications for archaeology, for it removes any direct link between cultural forms and identity and requires archaeologists to differentiate between objects without attributed meanings and active symbols.<sup>83</sup>

If, as Cretan literary and iconographic sources suggest, public feasts were important venues for expressions of personal and group identity, the pottery used and displayed on these occasions may have had a greater symbolic value than in other contexts.<sup>84</sup> The situation was undoubtedly complex. In addition to class affiliation, a typical Cretan may have had multiple political, social, and ethnic identities. Moreover, as Bernard Knapp

79. Koehl (1986, p. 109; 1997, p. 138; 2000, p. 134) interpreted this ceremony as a Minoan or Indo-European ritual. I side with Bremmer (1980, p. 283) in seeing it as a creation of the Early Iron Age, but not necessarily a Dorian invention.

80. According to Athenaios (11.502b), this cup was a bronze vessel of a special shape, a pledge cup with two stubby handles. Davidson (2007, p. 560) assumed that a handle on either side made it easier to pass the cup between drinkers. This would rule out a high-necked cup, but detailed descriptions of the pledge cup date to the Hellenistic period and refer only to the form used at Gortyn, not to a more common Cretan type. Almost all ceramic cups in the Archaic and

Classical periods have a single handle.

81. In a review of the anthropological and archaeological literature, Hamilakis (1998, p. 116) went so far as to say that "humans as social entities make themselves through the consumption of food and drink." For feasts as occasions for negotiating identity, see Borgna 2004, pp. 265–269; Rethemiotakis and Christakis 2004, p. 169; Steel 2004, pp. 282–283; Wright 2004, p. 135; Haggis 2007, pp. 757–759.

82. For reviews of recent theoretical frameworks for social and ethnic identity relevant to Mediterranean prehistory and classical antiquity, see Hall 1997, pp. 1–3, 131–138; 2002, pp. 9–19; Knapp 2008, pp. 31–47; Luraghi 2008, pp. 9–10.

83. Barth (1969, p. 14) concluded

that some cultural features are used as signals and emblems of cultural similarities and differences, while others are ignored. In his view (p. 35), most material culture has no relevance to maintaining group identity. Hall (1997, p. 138; 2002, pp. 19–24) is pessimistic about the potential of archaeology to reveal ethnic markers in the absence of literary documentation. See also Knapp 2008, p. 34; Morgan 2009, pp. 19–20.

84. Of course, pottery styles do not necessarily mark ethnic or social boundaries, since political considerations and exchange systems can determine their distribution; see Emberling 1997, pp. 311–319; Lucy 2005, pp. 102–105; Knapp 2008, p. 39.

observed in a study of prehistoric Cyprus, island communities tend to develop a strong common identity in opposition to outsiders.<sup>85</sup> According to Christy Constantakopoulou, Classical Greeks too saw islands as distinct entities, and islanders often presented themselves as inhabitants of their islands rather than as citizens of an individual polis.<sup>86</sup> Constantakopoulou regarded Crete as an ambiguous case, more a miniature continent than an island, the size of which prevented the development of a common identity except in diluted form.<sup>87</sup> An indication to the contrary, however, is found in a passage of Herodotos (7.169) concerning a Greek embassy sent to the island to seek assistance in the fight against the Persians. In this account, the Cretans formulate a common response, as if they regularly functioned as a political unit. Constantakopoulou and others have interpreted this as an outsider's view, an *etic* description that may or may not correspond to the *emic* perceptions of the Cretans themselves.<sup>88</sup> In the absence of other documentation, archaeology is the only way to reconstruct the way such communities viewed themselves, their neighbors, and the outside world.

Did local ceramic styles on the island reflect or reinforce oppositions between poleis or regions? As far as Archaic and Classical tablewares are concerned, it is difficult to draw meaningful distinctions between sites. Almost all Cretan producers specialized in the high-necked cup, with little or no variation in the basic form.<sup>89</sup> Local products can sometimes be distinguished by fabric or by the manner of decoration under the base, although these are minute differences that few apart from pottery specialists are likely to appreciate. Cups from Aphrati, for example, differ from their neighbors by having a higher rim and a groove underneath the foot.<sup>90</sup> Other local variations are even less pronounced, and they should not be exaggerated in order to make Classical Cretan pottery conform to the traditional tripartite division of the island into western, central, and eastern ceramic styles. During this period there is nothing like the variation documented by Coldstream for the 8th and 7th centuries, with a clear divide between central and eastern Crete in the Mirabello region.<sup>91</sup>

A Classical style so homogeneous is unusual for an island the size of Crete. It suggests that local feasting groups defined themselves on

85. Knapp 2008, p. 29. Broodbank (2000, pp. 9–35) has also examined the tendency in the historiographic tradition to view islands as self-contained systems, but with an emphasis on external perceptions rather than the way in which islanders viewed themselves.

86. Constantakopoulou (2005, pp. 3–5, 8–13) based her argument on a range of evidence, including the dedicatory practices of islanders, common island coinages, group assessments in the Athenian tribute lists, and participation at pan-island religious centers.

87. Constantakopoulou 2007, p. 15.

88. Constantakopoulou 2005, p. 6. For the question of Cretan unity in the Classical period, see also Perlman 1992, p. 201; Chaniotis 1996, pp. 6–7.

89. Moreover, idiosyncratic shapes such as the tulip cup—which I have suggested may be a central Cretan specialty (Erickson 2000, p. 372)—have been found as far east as Azoria and are present at Priniatikos Pyrgos.

90. Erickson 2002, p. 64. For minor decorative variations among other producers, see Erickson 2000, pp. 370–371.

91. Coldstream (1968, p. 259) identified a homogeneous regional style in the east, but this style does not coincide with political or ethnic boundaries. See also Whitley 1998, pp. 28–32. For ceramic regionalism during the Bronze Age, see Betancourt 1985; Hallager 2003, pp. 261–265; Knappett and Cunningham 2003, pp. 172–173; Haggis 2007, p. 750.

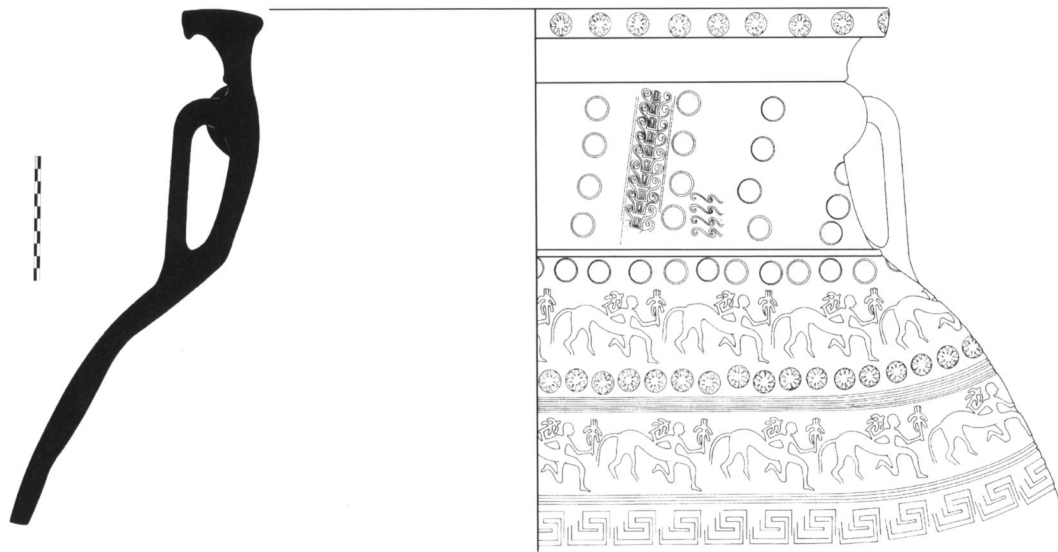


Figure 20. Pithos with stamped decoration from Oleros (Vrokastro survey site OL3), late 7th or early 6th century. After Hayden 2005, fig. 86

perceived common ground as Cretans, a broad definition that encompassed different regions, ethnic groups, and political divisions, and implied a basic distinction between islanders and outsiders.<sup>92</sup> If so, this might be a case of identity constructed through the denial of differences. Social and political life on this large and geographically diverse island almost certainly took a number of different forms, and there is growing evidence that the rivalries and border disputes between poleis known from Hellenistic inscriptions and literary sources had their roots in the Archaic period.<sup>93</sup> One might expect these tensions to foster collective identities.<sup>94</sup>

The picture presented by the tablewares is far from complete, and the inhabitants of the region may have found other ways to emphasize local identities. Perhaps the large storage vessels with impressed decoration from Priniatikos Pyrgos (Fig. 14:8, 9), Oleros (Fig. 20), and Azoria were displayed at public feasts and conveyed local status.<sup>95</sup> Such vessels may have had a high profile elsewhere too. Vance Watrous and Despoina Hadzi-Vallianou, for example, have interpreted storage jars in the Mesara in political terms, as a sign of the polis exercising control over the storage

92. Archaeologists in Greece have often considered figural styles and tableware shapes expressions of local or regional identities; see Arafat and Morgan 1994, p. 108; Morgan 2003, pp. 165–167. Whitley (2006, p. 610), however, found no correlation between pottery styles and local or ethnic identities at Archaic and Classical Praisos. The apparent absence of local and regional pottery styles on Crete during this period is surprising, for regionalism is a noteworthy feature of the epigraphic record and extends to minor differences in script; see Jeffery 1990, p. 310.

93. As Sjögren (2003, p. 97) observed, the hundred poleis of Homeric

tradition imply a high settlement density for Early Iron Age Crete, and a crowded landscape can spark competition for scarce resources. Archaeological evidence tentatively suggests that internal warfare became more destructive in the Archaic period. Azoria, where a widespread destruction level of ca. 500–480 can be attributed to human agency, is a case in point.

94. For the effect of war and violence on the creation of collective identities, see Malkin 2003, p. 63; Crielaard 2009, pp. 58–60.

95. Ebbinghaus (2005, pp. 52–58) interpreted Archaic relief pithoi as a form of conspicuous storage in houses rather than a craft inspired by funerary

or votive needs. The pithos with stamped decoration from Oleros (Fig. 20; Hayden 2005, no. 2139, site OL3, fig. 86, pl. 21) has a file of centaurs identical to, and probably produced by the same stamp as, a pithos from Azoria (Haggis et al. 2007a, p. 281, fig. 29:10). The Oleros pithos also has a vertical register with antithetical spirals or volutes almost identical to another pithos from Azoria (Haggis et al. 2004, p. 355, fig. 11). Many sites in the Vrokastro survey area yielded pithoi with impressed decoration, although it is uncertain whether their makers used such decoration to distinguish their products from others.



and distribution of agricultural surplus at the end of the 7th century.<sup>96</sup> The suspected importance of these containers in antiquity should encourage studies of local variation in their decoration.

The only tableware vessels from Priniatikos Pyrgos distinctive enough to be considered expressions of local identity are the lekanai with foliate decoration. The shape is common at other sites, but not the impressed decoration underneath the base and on the rim. An example from the ash deposit (Fig. 9:8) is the largest bowl in the assemblage, although its glazing is more like that of the smaller fine wares, with a full coat inside and out and even underneath the base. Similar bowls appear in the floor deposits, suggesting that they played a role in domestic dining as well as community feasting.

Hayden also encountered bowls of this type in the Vrokastro survey, but only at sites identified as components of urban centers (Istron and Oleros). They do not appear at lower-order sites such as villages or farmsteads.<sup>97</sup> Urban users apparently dressed up a utilitarian shape normally associated with food production and storage, thereby giving it a special meaning. The only other site known to have produced this type is Lato, where examples in granodiorite fabric were found in a deposit of Archaic material from kilns associated with an urban sanctuary.<sup>98</sup> Haggis and his colleagues identified another example from Azoria (ca. 500–480) as an import, perhaps from the Kalo Chorio area.<sup>99</sup> The discovery of two lekane rims and a base with foliate decoration in an apparently local fabric from the Galatas district may suggest another production site in central Crete.<sup>100</sup> The vast majority of these vessels, however, have been found in the Mirabello region. Later examples from Priniatikos Pyrgos reveal extraordinary longevity in production, with Hellenistic bowls almost indistinguishable from the Archaic examples. This bowl was one of the few constants in the Archaic–Hellenistic feasts of the Kalo Chorio area and was a traditional element unusual enough to make local feasts distinctive.<sup>101</sup>

The “conservatism” exhibited in the form of this local vessel may have had an important social function.<sup>102</sup> In a study of the prehistoric and

96. Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou 2004, pp. 342–344. The Galatas survey project in central Crete has identified another regional producer of stamped storage vessels; even in fragments, these jars are among the clearest markers of Archaic activity. (I will be publishing the Early Iron Age through Classical pottery from this survey.)

97. Vrokastro survey sites with these bowls are NP1, OL1A, OL3, OL10, and SK1. There is overlap with the more extensive list of sites that produced fine-ware shapes also known from Priniatikos Pyrgos: KK1, NP1, OL1A, OL1B, OL3, OL7e, OL8, PI4, SK1, SK11, and VK6/8.

98. See above, n. 28. According to Hayden (2004, p. 227), the granodiorite

used to make them may have come from a source on the road between Ayios Nikolaos and Kritsa. This is the westernmost point at which granodiorite deposits have been found.

99. See Haggis et al. 2007a, p. 277, n. 83, and p. 288, fig. 34:2, where it is described it as having a granodiorite fabric. Another lekane in a granodiorite fabric at Azoria (Haggis et al. 2007a, p. 281, fig. 29:4) has an exact parallel at Priniatikos Pyrgos (Fig. 14:7; from trench III, context 36), with the same framed rosettes of 15 petals on the rim.

100. These three examples come from the two largest Early Iron Age settlements in the survey district, Astritsi and Choumeri. Another lekane rim with foliate decoration was found

in a 5th-century context at Knossos, but it is not clear whether this is local or an import; see Coldstream and MacDonald 1997, p. 227, no. 66, fig. 18, pl. 45. There is also a bowl of unknown origin with foliate decoration on the rim from Augousti, a Classical and earlier survey site on the Lasithi plateau; see Watrous 1982, p. 22, pl. 20:d.

101. According to Emberling (1997, p. 319), objects produced on a small scale and distributed within a territory are more likely to be distinctive and serve as identity markers than mass-produced, widely distributed objects.

102. Barth (1969, p. 35) laid the theoretical groundwork for this kind of interpretation by noting that political leaders can revive selected traits and

historical Chumash of the California coast, Lynn Gamble has identified large and elaborately decorated stone ollas and mortars as feasting equipment, also noting considerable consistency in the form and decoration of these vessels over time.<sup>103</sup> The Kalo Chorio bowls may have staked a similar claim to tradition by the use of stable utilitarian forms that received special elaboration, a message not conveyed by the rapidly evolving cups and other drinking vessels.

Another way in which potters could give a common shape a distinctive local identity was by dressing it down instead of up. Perhaps this explains the peculiar, unglazed high-necked cups with a gritty fabric that have been attributed to a 5th-century production center at Lyktos.<sup>104</sup> Local drinkers would have noticed the crude surface of unglazed forms that elsewhere, almost as a rule, received gloss. These cups look more like cooking wares than proper drinking equipment. Lyktos seems to have had a tradition of making cups and other fine wares in this way, and these vessels can be placed in a context of other manifestations of local identity. The Lyktians apparently went to great lengths to distinguish themselves from their neighbors: as early as the 4th century, outsiders report their claim of a distinctive Cretan identity as the source of traditional customs and institutions.<sup>105</sup> The distinctive style of their fine-ware pottery may therefore reflect a deliberate attempt to project an image of conservatism and simplicity.

## LOCAL ECONOMY AND OVERSEAS TRADE

One of the most controversial topics in Archaic and Classical Cretan archaeology is the nature and extent of the island's overseas connections. Skeptics claim that overseas trade mattered little in the local economies of Cretan poleis until the Hellenistic period, when irrefutable evidence of such commerce appears in the form of transport amphoras and inscribed treaties with commercial clauses.<sup>106</sup> Historians of the past century presupposed a cultural and commercial isolation of Crete from mainland Greece, arguing that the Dorian aristocracy on the island suppressed market production and

historical traditions to justify actions and ethnic definitions. Deliberate conservatism of material forms is not, however, well documented in antiquity. A possible example comes from the Ulu-burun shipwreck. Eighteen Cypriot pots found packed in a pithos on the wreck exhibit a "rough-hewn, rustic style" that Syrian customers may have recognized as a Cypriot specialty, in which case the distinctive style may have enhanced their value; see Bass 1987, p. 711.

103. Gamble 2008, pp. 186, 246, 272. Another instance of bowls and other large, open shapes playing a prominent role in the display of food at

feasts comes from prehistoric Cyprus; see Steel 2004, p. 285.

104. I have suggested a Lyktian origin for 5th-century cups and other vessels from Kato Symi and Aphrati (Erickson 2002, pp. 70–74, nos. 91–106, figs. 24–26), and Callaghan and Jones (1985, pp. 14–15) documented similar Hellenistic pottery from Lyktos. The clay is common to that from the Pediada district and may have been used by other Classical and Hellenistic producers as well; see Rethemiotakis and Christakis 2004, pp. 169–170.

105. Perlman (1992, p. 198; 2005, p. 286) contended that outsiders derived much of their information

about Crete from Lyktos. According to Guizzi (1999, pp. 277–284), the Lyktians preserved a good deal of the character of the Archaic *syssition* into the Roman Imperial period.

106. The fundamental study of Cretan amphoras traced local production back only to the Late Hellenistic period; see Marangou-Lerat 1995, pp. 61–64; Marangou 1999, p. 270. Vogeikoff-Brogan and Apostolakou (2004) adduced new evidence for amphora production in eastern Crete as early as the late 3rd century B.C., but this is still not early enough to make a case for an export economy in the Classical period.

trade, a policy that resulted in a subsistence economy.<sup>107</sup> Some, however, have questioned this paradigm. Didier Viviers, for example, has considered possible alternative political and economic strategies in the Classical period, and Paula Perlman has suggested that Archaic Eleutherna shows signs of an emerging market, although there is no assurance that any surpluses were directed outside the community.<sup>108</sup> Against this background, excavations at Priniatikos Pyrgos were undertaken in part with the aim of refining our understanding of economic interactions both within the island and outside it.

Even before excavation, the settlement history of the Kalo Chorio area suggested a move from defensible inland locations to the coast, a change plausibly explained as a reaction to new commercial opportunities. Hayden saw the 7th century as a major turning point for settlement in the region, as the Early Iron Age site at Vrokastro lost population and was eventually abandoned in favor of new settlements at Istron and Oleros.<sup>109</sup> Istron was evidently a larger and more densely settled town than Oleros in the Classical period, with the sea providing an economic basis for nucleated settlement.<sup>110</sup>

The 5th century has left more substantial traces of activity at Priniatikos Pyrgos than any other period after the Bronze Age.<sup>111</sup> While this may be a function of building histories and depositional practices, the timing is suggestive. From an Aegean perspective, the period beginning ca. 500 B.C. has been seen as transformative for local economies and overseas trade. Archaeologists point to an increase in the number and variety of imports as well as the number of sites receiving them.<sup>112</sup> Ian Morris has described this as an “economic take-off,” with repercussions not limited to trade goods; living standards also improved.<sup>113</sup> On Crete, the pulse of overseas trade seems to have quickened at the western and eastern ends of the island around the beginning of the 5th century, when ceramic imports appear in greater numbers and in a wider variety of contexts.<sup>114</sup> Thus, we might expect the early 5th century to be a boom period for Cretan communities whose livelihood depended on seaborne trade.

107. For this traditional view of Cretan isolation and economic stagnation, see Willetts 1955; Link 1994; Chaniotis 1999b.

108. Viviers 1999, pp. 222, 231; Perlman 2004a, pp. 104–108. See also Wallace 2003, p. 623; Erickson 2005, pp. 627–641.

109. Hayden 2004, p. 191. According to Haggis (2005, p. 86), coastal towns emerged in the Mediterranean in the second half of the first millennium in response to the poor agricultural resources of their hinterlands. This development does not necessarily imply, however, that every new coastal foundation engaged in maritime trade; see Vlassopoulos 2007, pp. 161–164.

110. Unlike other Cretan port towns

that were subject to inland poleis (e.g., Lato pros Kamara [Ayios Nikolaos], a subsidiary of Lato), Istron does not appear to have been a political dependency of Oleros; see Hayden 2004, p. 225.

111. The earliest signs of post-Bronze Age activity are Late Geometric or Early Orientalizing cups found in disturbed later contexts. These have simple decoration in bands and compass-drawn circles, similar to that of a krater from Vrokastro (Hayden 2003, p. 71, no. 193, fig. 46, pl. 30). Material from the 7th century constitutes much of the “background noise” at the site prior to the earliest definable contexts in the 5th century.

112. Osborne (2007, pp. 289–290)

distinguished trade beginning ca. 500 from that of earlier periods as being more regular, implying better knowledge of local markets, and moving staples as well as luxury goods.

113. Morris 2007, pp. 212, 228. He places this upswing at a slightly earlier date, ca. 550–500, and examines various manifestations of improving economic performance, including house size and construction standards.

114. For the record of imports at Kydonia, Kastello Varypetrou (a cemetery site near Kydonia), Eleutherna, Olous, and Itanos, see Erickson 2005, pp. 636–641. Imports at Itanos are also discussed in Apostolakou et al. 2004–2005, pp. 993–999. For Phalasarna, see Stefanakis 2006, pp. 44–47.

If Priniatikos Pyrgos served as a gateway community linking the Kalo Chorio area to overseas networks, perhaps it not only brought imports into the region but also created new conditions for economic specialization at home. Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell have challenged the traditional model of ancient cities as consumption centers in a closed system, dependent on subsistence agriculture in their territories.<sup>115</sup> Specialization in cash crops can create surpluses for trade. Such activity need not be seen only as redistribution or a way of hedging bets in the unpredictable microenvironments of the Mediterranean. We already have glimpses of economic structures at Priniatikos Pyrgos, although so far this evidence has come from secondary consumption contexts (the ash deposit and floors presumably from houses) rather than direct indicators of economic activity, such as the warehouses and harbor facilities to be expected in a port town.

Although indirect, the ceramic evidence nevertheless has some interesting implications. For example, since all cooking pots found so far in 5th-century contexts were imported from outside the Kalo Chorio area, the inhabitants of Priniatikos Pyrgos in the Early Classical period must have relied on distribution networks for the equipment they used to prepare their food. They were not unusual in this respect, since the special properties of cooking-ware clay encouraged a niche market in either the raw material or the finished products, as documented for Classical Athens.<sup>116</sup> Looking further afield, of the overseas imports found at Priniatikos Pyrgos, the most unusual are the transport amphoras resembling Milesian and Samian types (e.g., Fig. 5:9), which presumably come from another producer in southern Ionia. Azoria received jars in the same fabric, but they have not appeared elsewhere on Crete. If their Cretan distribution was as limited as it now appears to be, they may best be explained as cargo from small-scale tramping voyages along the northeast coast of the island.<sup>117</sup> Two other amphoras from surface levels, one with a distinctive red fabric (Fig. 21:1; from G5007.1), the other with a pale tan fabric (Fig. 21:2; from A5007.1), are associated with unidentified northern Aegean producers.<sup>118</sup> Transport amphoras in a presumably local fabric have also been found at Priniatikos Pyrgos (e.g., Figs. 12:10, 11; 13:12) and suggest that market access steered production

115. Horden and Purcell 2000, pp. 105–108. In a detailed study of the economy of the Attic deme Euonymon, Moreno (2007, p. 68) calculated that subsistence agriculture would barely have sustained Euonymon, whereas specialization in the cash crops of olive and honey alone could have fed three times its estimated population, assuming market access.

116. Petrographic analysis revealed an Aiginetan origin for cooking pots in a gritty or sandy brown fabric found in the Athenian Agora; see Farnsworth 1964, pp. 223–224.

117. Perhaps they were carried on Ionian ships. Recently discovered 5th-

century shipwrecks along the coast of Turkey point to the activities of Ionian traders and local networks of exchange; see Carlson 2003 for a ship carrying pseudo-Samian amphoras (from Erythrai?), which sank ca. 440–425. Ionians were not just trading with each other, however, for a document from Elephantine in Egypt recording customs dues from a port on the Nile delta in 475 B.C. lists more ships from Ionian Greek poleis than anywhere else; see Horden and Purcell 2000, p. 149; Morris 2003, pp. 45–46. The cargoes included wine, oil, and wood.

118. Both amphoras have a pointed rim. Mark Lawall (pers. comm.) iden-

tified the first as a type commonly imported to Athens in the middle of the 5th century. For these red clay amphoras, see Virginia Grace's comments in Boulter 1953, pp. 105–106, nos. 153–156, pl. 39; Mattingly 1981, p. 86; Figueira 1998, p. 305. Lawall identified the second, with its short neck and splayed handles, as a type datable to ca. 500–450. One of its handles preserves the clay impression of a complete fingerprint. For earlier examples, see Roberts 1986, pp. 68–70, nos. 423–430, fig. 43, pl. 17; for this class in general, see Lawall 1995. Grace (in Boulter 1953, p. 106, nos. 158–160, pl. 39) described them as “buff oval jars.”





Figure 21. Transport amphorae from G5007.1 (1) and A5007.1 (2), ca. 500–450. Photos M. Wisniewski

to cash crops. It is even possible that inhabitants exported local wines to pay for better vintages from northern Greece and southern Ionia.<sup>119</sup>

Did this intensification of trade in the first half of the 5th century affect life in other ways? At their feasts, many Cretan communities used imported tablewares, as demonstrated by the ash deposit from Priniatikos Pyrgos, where Attic skyphoi constitute nearly 7% of the cups. Most Attic imports in the ash deposit are plain black examples, but the assemblage includes several black-figure cups as well (Fig. 22:1, 2).<sup>120</sup> From a surface context also comes a fragment of a red-figure krater contemporary with the ash deposit (Fig. 22:4).<sup>121</sup> At Knossos, most imported fine wares are also Attic and typically make up 5%–10% of the total published ceramic assemblage.<sup>122</sup> These figures reveal a selective use of foreign items, with skyphoi offering perhaps the best approximation of the deep cup shapes favored on the island.

Even when they appear in small quantities, imported cups may have played an unusually prominent role in drinking ceremonies. Some scholars have regarded Attic imports in similar contexts as status objects, and local imitations of Attic types as an acknowledgement of their prestige.<sup>123</sup>

119. This scenario is possible if the amphorae contained wine. Foley et al. (2009, p. 294) discuss other possible contents (olives, olive oil) in the context of a shipwreck with Chian amphorae.

120. John Oakley (pers. comm.) identified Fig. 22:2 as a fragment of a cup-skyphos or skyphos depicting the legs of horses drawing a quadriga, attributable in style to the Haimon Group and its contemporaries, ca. 480–470. For similar black-figure skyphoi from Azoria, see Haggis et al. 2007a, p. 283, fig. 31:1–3.

121. According to Oakley (pers. comm.), this krater depicts a mantled youth and is roughly contemporary with mantled subjects by the Villa Giulia Painter, ca. 460–450.

122. In the Late Archaic well at Knossos, imports constitute 19% of the catalogued pots, a far greater percentage than that exhibited by any other deposit at the site large enough for statistical analysis. More typical is deposit K from the Southwest Houses, where the percentage of Attic and Corinthian pottery is less than half that found in the well. An Archaic and Classical votive deposit from Olous, however, reveals a fundamentally different pattern. The assemblage is remarkable for the complete absence of high-necked cups and almost all other local ceramic forms. Instead, worshippers left behind Corinthian oil containers, cups, and lamps; Attic cups, saltcellars, and lamps; and Cycladic cups, creating the island's

richest record of overseas imports. For a brief preliminary report of the excavations, see Platon 1960, p. 259. The terracotta figurines from this deposit are also unusual. Local workshops copied almost every known 5th-century Rhodian type; see Higgins 1967, p. 59. Overall, Olous gives the impression of having been a cosmopolitan Aegean port town.

123. Miller (1997, p. 151) distinguished imitations from adaptations and derivatives as the most self-conscious form of borrowing. Imitations reveal more about status when they occur in peripheral territories or in places enmeshed in unequal power relationships with the core that provided the model.



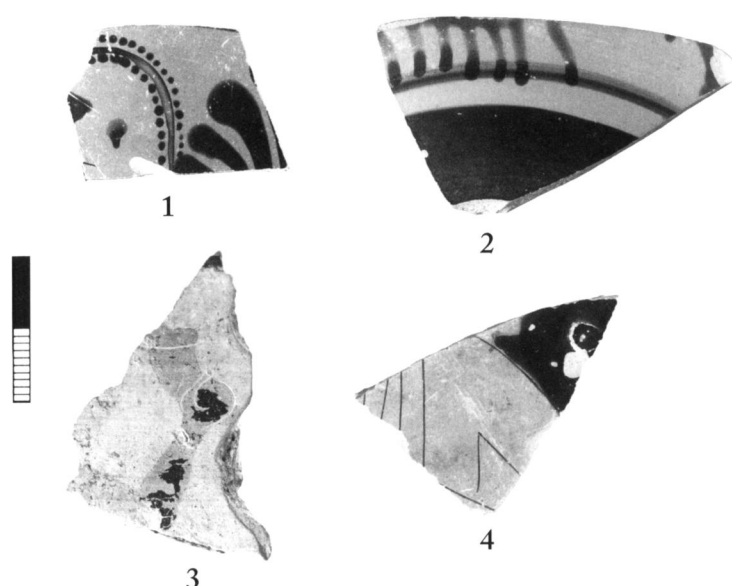


Figure 22. Late Archaic black-figure pottery from the ash deposit (1–3) and Early Classical red-figure krater from trench III, context 501 (4).

Photos M. Wisniewski

The connection between import and imitation at Priniatikos Pyrgos is more complex than usual, since the imitation skyphoi may themselves be imports from Gortyn, an example of specialized production feeding into intra-island trade networks.<sup>124</sup> The homogeneity of local Cretan pottery styles presupposes good communications within the island, and these communications may have improved with the expanding overseas networks. Since Priniatikos Pyrgos is situated on a major coastal route, it would have been a convenient stop for overland traffic as well as for the movement of goods by short coastal voyages. It is even possible that increasing contact with the outside world in the early 5th century triggered a reaction and encouraged efforts to define a common Cretan identity.

It is remarkable that, with so much activity at Priniatikos Pyrgos in the years around 475–450, the archaeological record is so meager thereafter, at least until the Hellenistic period. Excavations since 2007 have only accentuated this pattern, revealing parts of the site with structures dating to ca. 475–450 and stratigraphically documented subphases that all fall within the same short period of activity. It is as if a window of opportunity opened in the early 5th century and then suddenly closed. Because only a fraction of the headland has been excavated, and Priniatikos Pyrgos itself was only a small part of Istron, we do not know if this picture is representative of the site as a whole.<sup>125</sup> If the pattern is confirmed by future excavation, however, its historical implications will need to be carefully considered. Perhaps the population of Istron expanded suddenly with the arrival of

124. Specialization is also suggested by the long period of production (ca. 475–325) for the Gortynian imitations; such longevity gives the impression of established workshops. Imports of other Gortynian cups (but not the imitations of Attic) to Eleutherna in the 5th century further substantiate a link between fine-ware

production and export; see Erickson 2005, p. 646, fig. 11. Imitations of Attic skyphoi discovered in the survey of Nisi Pandeimon (Hayden 2005, pp. 83–84, nos. 2356, 2357, 2370, figs. 80, 81, pl. 21) need not be local. They may be Gortynian products as well.

125. A reexamination of the survey material from Nisi Pandeimon found

cup and hydria bases dated to ca. 475–450, with some earlier (ca. 500–480) Attic imports and a few 4th-century pieces. This is consistent with the phasing at Priniatikos Pyrgos and makes it difficult to argue that the horizon ca. 475–450 reflects a temporary expansion of one part of Istron at the expense of others.

survivors displaced by the destruction of Azoria, ca. 500–480. In ceramic terms, the main period of Classical activity at Priniatikos Pyrgos seems to follow immediately upon the end of Azoria, and this study has documented many points of contact between the two sites.<sup>126</sup>

Another possibility also deserves consideration. I have argued elsewhere that an interruption of ceramic imports from mainland Greece to Crete in the period ca. 460–400 reflects a lapse in external contacts resulting from Athenian economic intervention or a reconfiguration of Aegean trade routes.<sup>127</sup> If new routes bypassed Crete after ca. 460, this change would have had negative repercussions for Priniatikos Pyrgos and other port towns.<sup>128</sup> Istron may have been the victim of an unforeseen economic downturn that was all the more surprising because it cut short one of the most profitable periods in the settlement's history.

126. These points of contact between Priniatikos Pyrgos and Azoria, as well as those between Priniatikos Pyrgos and inland sites recorded in the Vrokastro survey, undermine Sjögren's contention (2008, pp. 207–214) that spatial identity in the Mirabello region was relatively fragmented, an argument based on geographic variability and the ancient perceptions assumed to arise from this variability.

127. Erickson 2005, pp. 648–657. An argument against prolonged Athe-

nian interference in the trade of other states is that the aggressive actions recorded in the literary sources all seem to be temporary wartime measures. Moreno (2007, pp. 126–140), however, has adduced new archaeological evidence indicating that the grain trade was a central concern of Athens in its relations with Euboia throughout much of the 5th century. A more active Athenian stance is consistent with the hypothesis of Athenian intervention in the Peloponnesian grain route from

North Africa between ca. 460 and 400, with Crete affected as an intermediary.

128. Phalasarna, a port town at the western tip of the island, was an active trader in the Late Archaic and Early Classical periods, but shows no sign of activity ca. 460–400. The gap in the sequence of burials gives every indication of being the product of a real decline, as nothing else from the site requires a date in the second half of the 5th century; see Gondicas 1988, pp. 115–116.

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**Brice L. Erickson**

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA

DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS

4080 HSSB, MAIL CODE 3120

SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93106

berickson@classics.ucsb.edu