The uppermost part of the central apse is entirely faced with well-arranged ashlars divided by a reused cornice. Attached to the NW corner is a monumental cistern. Re-examination of the disposition of Cl–Rom architectural blocks in secondary use as orthostats in locations around the lower acropolis confirmed the outlines of several rectangular buildings which might be either Byz or associated with the diagnostically Fr chambered tower and spolia-built chapel.

A record has been made of the traditional productive installations of the overlying village (Ot Kakosi; renamed Thisve in the 20th Ct). These comprise 8 wine fermentation vats (ληνοί), 15 cobbled threshing floors (including 12 clustered around the lower acropolis) and monumental cisterns.

A survey of Thisve's dam or barrage was completed. There are no traces of the Rom or Byz phases reported by some EMod travellers, who almost certainly misinterpreted overlying spolia-built agricultural terraces, of which traces remain. The interpretation of this dam will be aided by a parallel environmental survey of the enclosed Thisve basin.

Anc. Thisve and Byz Kastorion had several loci of maritime traffic. Between 2 of these, and visually controlling them both, lies an unpublished Cl–Hel tower described by E19th Ct travellers. This was located and surveyed on behalf of the 9th EPCA.

Thespiai. B. Slapšak (Netherlands Institute/Ljubljana) reports on the continuing survey of Thespiae as part of the Ancient Cities of Boeotia Project.

In 2008, geophysical prospection and the plotting of scattered blocks and architectural members continued. Some blocks of the Hel city wall were found *in situ* in the NW sector. An important section of the mud-brick acropolis wall was recorded on the SW slope, 5.5m *h.* and 3.3m *w.* at its top. Of the 29 inscriptions recorded by the team, 2 are of particular interest: one provides the first attestation at Thespiae of the office of the *pentekistologoi*; a second is a bilingual building inscription of Domitian, possibly dated to 86 AD.

EUBOIA
(11th EPCA: 23rd EBA)

Lefkandi Xeropolis. I.S. Lemos (BSA/Oxford) reports on the 6th season of excavation.

The aims for 2008 were to investigate further the LHIIIC and EIA 'megara' in region I and, in region II, to understand the function, extent and date of the 'walls' and to excavate further the structures W of them.

In region I, a LHIIIC (Lefkandi phase 2a) structure was discovered under the LHIIIC 'megaron' (**Fig. 78**). This was equipped with clay bins and pebble floors typical of the period, and is on the same orientation as contemporary houses previously discovered. The building was abandoned and the area reused after a short interval, but with an alteration to the orientation of the building (now N-S), which took place most probably during Lefkandi phase 2b when a number of other houses in this part of the tell maintain the earlier grid lines. The 2nd change was to the plan of the building, which is now a long, rectangular structure. The N end is lost to the erosion of the hill



78. Lefkandi, Xeropolis: LHIIIC 'megaron' and surrounding area.

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and the construction of a LGeo house, and it is therefore unclear whether or not the building was apsidal. The duration of occupation of the LHIIIC 'megaron', as indicated by the pottery, is not yet determined, although it certainly includes White Ware of Lefkandi phase 2b/3, nor is the reason for its abandonment and thorough clearance. Further study is also required to determine the interval between this abandonment and the erection of the EIA successor.

Investigation to the E of the buildings revealed more about the structure termed the 'annex', which seems to follow closely the history of occupation of both the LHIIIC and the EIA 'megara'. Further E, other walls similar in construction imply the existence of further rooms: while these were not investigated, they raise the possibility that there was a series of ancillary rooms or units to serve the needs of the 'megaron' during both its LHIIIC and EIA phases. Finally, to the N and just outside the 'megaron' was the flexed skeleton of a young girl (to judge from the 2 pins found on the shoulders, a conical button and a pierced shell). The date of the burial is hard to determine stratigraphically: it ought to be later than the pre-LHIIIC building, a date which agrees with the LHIIIC M–L date assigned to the pins.

In region II, the 'walls' are now understood as a complementary series of straight, lengthy constructions which defined the W and S edges of the 'hollow' zone (**Fig. 79**). They may delineate the area through which the site was entered from the N, across the low land isthmus and between the possible 2 lagoons to the E and W of Xeropolis. The date of their earlier phases should be primarily within LHIIIC. Excavation has revealed detailed information about the sequence of construction and reconstruction of these walls, the locations of entrances and the insertion of drains. The final abandonment of the S (interior) wall was accompanied by large-scale landscaping to cover the remains.

The so-called 'ritual' zone (at present a term of convenience) was further investigated. Structure A, dating to LHIIIC (Lefkandi phase 1), is the earliest yet recorded. The irregularity of its form and the different construction techniques used indicate a complicated structural history: further excavation is needed to clarify its plan. Two main floor surfaces of yellow clay were separated by a thin layer of intensely carbonized soil, probably not associated with a destructive fire. Above the 2nd floor, a thicker mix of carbonized soil and pisé was observed. The furniture in the rooms is highly distinctive. Associated with the 1st floor are 2 yellow clay drums of different heights set against the middle of the S wall and a red-brown clay bin against the N wall. In the 2nd phase, another and larger yellow clay drum was set in the middle of the room, on the same N-S axis, and with it was found a large and shallow receptacle of reddish clay. On top of the supporting surface for the receptacle, and within its limits, a complete large red-deer antler was carefully set (**Fig. 80**).

Structure B to the S is a rectangular building (4.6m x 3.75m) similar in form to the partially overlying structure C, although its internal furniture and depositional history resemble that of structure A. An intermediate position in both time and building type is indicated. To its W an exterior zone contains perhaps the earliest of the circular 'platforms' and a large shallow pit.



79. Lefkandi, Xeropolis: region II.

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80. Lefkandi, Xeropolis: red-deer antler on receptacle in structure A.

Structure C, a two-phase building, is the latest so far discovered (in use between LHIIIC L and MPGeo): it overlies structure B, but its internal furnishing and depositional history are quite different. It contained circular 'platforms' made of different sized stones and pebbles. A shallow rounded hollow was formed; its edge ringed with medium-sized stones to form a kerb within which similar and smaller stones were laid to make a close-packed ring. Then ever smaller stones, pebbles and near-gravel were sequentially scattered to fill up the cracks. A slightly domed and compacted upper surface is the end result. No ash, burning or bones are associated. A number of spindlewhorls and a few pendants were the only finds. The only intrusive elements are sheets, lumps and flecks of a white plaster. Their appearance (never on a floor, nor attached to a wall or a feature) raises the question of whether structure C was roofed (no postholes were found in or around it). Pottery discovered to the E of structure C includes large to monumental kraters and cooking pots found together with much animal bone. Cooking appears to have taken place where the pots were found: thus eating and drinking took place outside, but close to, structure C.

Although the purpose of these structures is not yet clear, we assume that the whole area associated with the 'walls' was devoted to some kind of ritual activity. Indeed, the recovery in area R and to the N of the 'walls' of a number of high quality figurines may suggest that they originated from the so-called ritual area to the W. Alternatively, the whole area may have been dedicated to the processing of olive oil or wine. In this case the clay drums might have served as rests for the vessels in which olives or grapes were crushed, with receptacles set lower on the floor or on another drum nearby. In order to resolve this, samples have been taken from the dark soils and from the clay drums for testing. Residues from the environmental samples will be further scrutinized for evidence of any fruits discarded.

Eretria. S. Fachard and T. Theurillat (Swiss School) report on a rescue excavation conducted in collaboration with the 11th EPCA (under A. Psalti) on the property (O.T. 737) of P. Vrakas, S of the plot excavated by P. Themelis between 1974 and 1984 (O.T. 740, summarized in *PAE* [1984], 212–28) (**Fig. 81**). The goal was to verify the extension of some structures discovered by P. Themelis and to ascertain the different chronological phases represented on the plot.

In the Geo period, 2 walls to the E protected the sector from intense flooding. M23 served as an embankment wall, preserving the settlement to the W from the sands and pebbles of the river to the E. It was built in ca. 725 BC, abandoned at the end of the 8th Ct and replaced by a 2nd embankment wall (M24). The function of M22 is more difficult to assess, since it seems unlikely to belong to the apsidal building, GG, restored by Themelis. The current absence of floor levels, pits or graves suggests that the area lies on the periphery of this settlement quarter. Occasional finds in the deepest layers include a small Neo serpentine axe and a MGeoII Attic krater (**Fig. 82**).

Ar and Cl layers are rare, to the point that some Hel strata follow Geo layers. This may imply that the sector was scarcely occupied during these periods, although later construction has certainly obliterated earlier layers.

Most of the 2008 discoveries date to the Hel period. Several phases can be distinguished between the very end of the 4th Ct BC and the 1st Ct BC. The N of the plot is occupied by a small street lined with 2 walls (M32 and M1). In a first phase, 2 pits (St33 and St19) of the first half of the 3rd Ct BC were found S of M1. The pottery is mainly domestic in character, with a high proportion of cooking ware (lekanes, chytres, mortars, lopades) and drinking vessels (bowls and kantharoi). Several walls could belong to this first phase of occupation: M30 and probably M20 and M12. The floor level related to this phase is at 3.9masl. In a 2nd phase, M30 and M20 were reused to form a quadrangular building (8m x 6m) composed of deep foundation walls (M4, M11, M16 and M17). The pottery associated with the foundation trench suggests a *tpq* in the M2nd Ct BC.

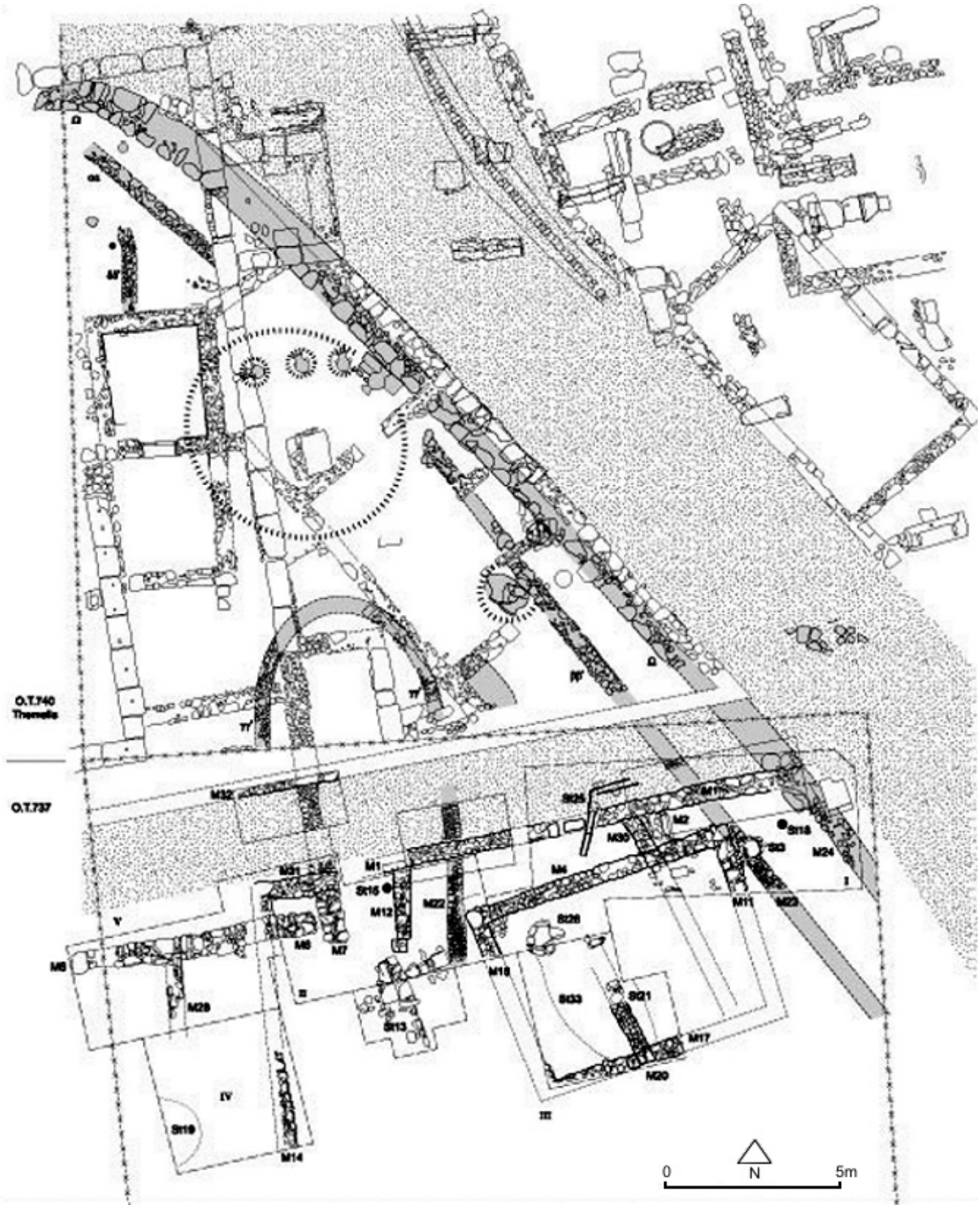
Its function remains unclear since no clearly identifiable structures have been discovered inside. A well (St26) in the NW corner is probably contemporary, although it could also belong to the previous phase. Numerous finds related to metalworking were discovered in the immediate surroundings of the building: a low-shaft furnace (St3), connected with burned layers, slags and iron 'skullcaps', testifies to ore refining. M1 was probably pierced during the same phase, in order to install a threshold and canalization (St25) for the evacuation of waste water in the street. A coin hoard (St15) containing more than 30 badly preserved bronze coins was discovered at the foot of M12; their identification is not possible at present.

Although P. Themelis' excavations showed that the entire quarter was densely occupied in the Rom period, few Rom remains were discovered in 2008. To the W, 2 foundation walls (M6 and M7) can be linked to the monumental building excavated by Themelis. To the E, a thick deposit of the 2nd and 3rd Cts AD seals the Hel occupation. This contains numerous fragments of glass and terracotta figurines, Italian sigillata, several lamps with decorated discuses and 3 coins of the Imperial period.

This first campaign on the O.T. 737 plot confirmed P. Themelis' chronology of the Quarter of the Panathenaic Amphorae (O.T. 740) and supplements the plan of an important urban sector of the town occupied from the Geo to the Rom period.

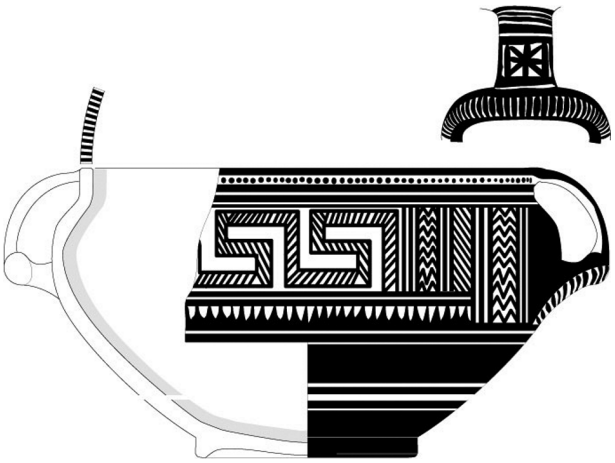
Publication: S. Verdan, A. Kenzlemann Pfyffer and C. Léderrey, *Eretria* XX. *Céramique géométrique d'Érétrie* (Lausanne, Ecole suisse d'archéologie en Grèce 2008).

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81. Eretria: 2008 excavation plan.

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82. Eretria: MGeo II Attic krater.

PHTHIOTIS AND EAST LOKRIS
(14th EPCA: 24th EBA)

Cornell Halai and East Lokris Project (CHELP). J. Coleman (ASCSA/Cornell) reports on continuing study of the Neo architecture and finds (especially pottery) from the acropolis of Halai.

Cleaning and conservation work on the acropolis of Halai continued throughout the season. In area F, cleaning operations focused on the Byz intrusion at the E side of trench F9 first noticed by Virginia Grace in 1931 and on the S sides of trenches F9 and F11, where, during preparations for a path and viewing station for visitors, the probable S wall of Neo building VI was revealed.

Mitrou. E. Zahou (14th EPCA) and A. Van de Moortel (ASCSA/Tennessee) report on the 5th season of excavation in 2008, which focused primarily on 2 areas in the NE and NW of the islet. In addition, 3 outlying trenches were opened in previously unexcavated areas in the NE corner (LR797), at the E sea scarp (LX784) and in the central-E area (LR770) of the islet (**Fig. 83**).

The earliest levels reached dated to EHIIB. In trench LX784, at least 2 EHIIB occupational levels with substantial walls were found, situated close to sea level. EHIIB and EHIII levels were also exposed during cleaning of the W sea scarp of the islet, and EHIII walls were uncovered in trench LR797 in the NE corner of the islet. The EH settlement was therefore extensive. In all these locations, fired roof tiles were found as well as Lefkandi I pottery and EH vessels of the local tradition. Too little was exposed to understand building plans or the layout of the settlement. A clay seal found in the sea NW of the islet may be EHII in date.

The MH settlement may have been equally extensive, with architectural remains identified at the E and W sea scarps as well as in the NE and NW excavation areas. A LMH wall (no. 149) and pebble surface were uncovered E of and below the LHI–LHIIIA2 E monumental building D in the NE excavation area (trench LP783) (**Fig. 84**). These are the first securely dated remains of the MH settlement in this area. In the NW excavation area, at least 5 successive MHI and MHII occupation strata and cist tombs were excavated in 2007. A wooden boat partially excavated in 2007 has now been dated to MHI. In trench LX784, on the E sea scarp, at least 5 successive MHI and MHII strata were likewise uncovered, including 2 rectilinear buildings: building K (MHI–MHII E) and building L (MHI). Too little was exposed to reveal the plan of those buildings. Building K had at least 2 rooms; its northernmost exposed room had a built oval hearth covered with plaster. Substantial amounts of pottery were associated with these MH strata.

Excavation of ELH levels continued in the NE excavation area (**Fig. 84**). The remainder of the W wall of building D was uncovered, revealing that its S part had been robbed out over a distance of ca. 5m. No floor deposits have yet been found inside building D, although the excavation is not finished. The central interior area of building D had been converted into a monumental tomb during its last period of use, and possibly as early as LHIIB. The tomb is rectangular (ca. 5m x 2m) with walls of mud-brick, and lined on the interior with large cut sandstone slabs, ca. 1m *w.* and 1.2m *h.* One slab is preserved intact and fragments of several more were found *in situ.* The tomb had been robbed in antiquity, but some human bones remained, as well as a gold ring, a fragmentary gold bracelet, a bronze ring, a piece of pierced gold foil and a small rock-crystal disk. Possibly at this same time, the exterior walls of building D were rebuilt and widened. The absence of interior faces is remarkable and may indicate that at this time the entire building was filled with debris and turned into a tumulus. Building D was bordered by pebbled streets to the W and N. No street was uncovered E of building D, but remnants were found of LHI, LHIIB and LHIIIA structures that apparently belonged to the same architectural complex as building D, but had much thinner walls. Most of this complex lies outside the excavation area.

In the NE corner of the islet, a grave plot was uncovered with a monumental cist grave (grave 51), ca. 1.8m x 1.5m x 0.9m, built of roughly hewn large limestone slabs. Parallel and perpendicular to this monumental grave were smaller cist graves. All graves of this plot had been robbed, but one cist tomb (grave 50) could be dated to LHI by a bichrome matt-painted amphoriskos contained within it (it also held a small bronze spiral). Study of the pottery continues, but it is likely that all these graves are of ELH date. Two more LHI cist tombs (graves 53 and 56) as well as an MHIII or LHI wall were found in trench LX784 at the E scarp of the islet. Grave 56 belonged to a juvenile buried with an LHI Grey Minyan teacup, a spindle-whorl and an obsidian blade. Fragments (perhaps not *in situ*) of a collapsed MHIII or LHI kiln were found, representing the latest BA occupation in that location.

In trench LR770 in the E-central area of the islet, 2 substantial parallel stone walls bordered a 2m *w.* earth and pebble street. This street runs parallel to that on the N side of building D, ca. 65m further N, and appears to be part of the same orthogonal street pattern. The 2 walls date at least to LHIIB, but may have been constructed earlier. On the latest surface of the street, in a mixed LH/PGeo context, was a small clay figurine of a parturient squatting female, which appears to be of non-local origin (**Fig. 85**). In the NW excavation area, only one trench was opened (LG790), connecting 2 previously excavated trenches. Here walls and surfaces belonged to the same 2 successive LHI occupation levels found in the adjacent trenches in previous years. An earlier cist tomb (grave 72) of a child buried with a Grey Minyan amphoriskos of LHI or MH date was also found. On top of the LHI strata were successive LHIIA and LHIIB levels, including a few walls and a substantial LHIIB burned destruction level with broken pottery and several animal horns. To the NW, these strata were much disturbed, and the stratigraphy of the adjacent trench LF790 will remain unclear until further study is undertaken.

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