Publikationen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts

Panagiotis Michalopoulos

Cultural Crossroads in the Corinthian Gulf during the EBA: Insights into a Ceramic Assemblage from Aigion

Archäologischer Anzeiger 2. Halbband 2023, 1–48 (§)

https://doi.org/10.34780/6be3-3r6a

Herausgebende Institution / Publisher:
Deutsches Archäologisches Institut

IMPRESSUM

Archäologischer Anzeiger
erscheint seit 1889/*published since 1889*

AA 2023/2 • 312 Seiten/*pages* mit/*with* 247 Abbildungen/*illustrations*

Herausgeber/*Editors*
Friederike Fless • Philipp von Rummel
Deutsches Archäologisches Institut
Zentrale
Podbielskiallee 69–71
14195 Berlin
Deutschland
www.dainst.org

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Alle für den Archäologischen Anzeiger eingereichten Beiträge werden einem doppelblinden Peer-Review-Verfahren durch internationale Fachgutachterinnen und -gutachter unterzogen./*All articles submitted to the Archäologischer Anzeiger are reviewed by international experts in a double-blind peer review process.*

Redaktion und Layout/*Editing and Typesetting*
Gesamtverantwortliche Redaktion/*Publishing editor*:
Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Redaktion der Zentralen Wissenschaftlichen Dienste, Berlin
(https://www.dainst.org/standort/zentrale/redaktion), redaktion.zentrale@dainst.de
Für Manuskripteinreichungen siehe/*For manuscript submission, see*: https://publications.dainst.org/journals/index.php/aa/about/submissions
Redaktionelle Bearbeitung/*Editing*: Dorothee Fillies, Berlin
Satz/*Typesetting*: le-tex publishing services GmbH, Leipzig
Corporate Design, Layoutgestaltung/*Layout design*: LMK Büro für Kommunikationsdesign, Berlin

Umschlagfoto/*Cover illustration*: DAI Rom, Fotothek, D-DAI-ROM-32.36, arachne.dainst.org/entity/3443740 (Foto: Cesare Faraglia).
Gestaltung Catrin Gerlach nach Vorlage von Tanja Lemke-Mahdavi.

Druckausgabe/*Printed edition*

Druck und Vertrieb/*Printing and Distribution*: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag Wiesbaden (www.reichert-verlag.de)

P-ISSN: 0003-8105 – ISBN: 978-3-7520-0822-7

Druck und Bindung in Deutschland/*Printed and bound in Germany*

Digitale Ausgabe/*Digital edition*

Webdesign/*Webdesign*: LMK Büro für Kommunikationsdesign, Berlin
XML-Export, Konvertierung/*XML-Export, Conversion*: digital publishing competence, München
Programmiertechnische Anpassung des Viewers/*Viewer Customization*: LEAN BAKERY, München

E-ISSN: 2510-4713 – DOI: https://doi.org/10.34780/g9le-f7eb
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ABSTRACT

Cultural Crossroads in the Corinthian Gulf during the EBA

Insights into a Ceramic Assemblage from Aigion

Panagiotis Michalopoulos

The Corinthian Gulf offers valuable information with regard to the effort to understand the cultural interactions of the late 3rd millennium when major changes occurred in southern mainland Greece, including Eastern Achaea (Aigialeia). To this end, the settlement of Aigion is particularly important because of its positioning and the special features of its pottery, illustrated by the ceramic assemblage from the Minasian plot. Despite limitations, this assemblage provides significant evidence of the local ceramic tradition, the associated changes and the chronological synchronisms and possible interactions with other sites. Based on this evidence an attempt to associate Aigion with a network of settlements around the Corinthian Gulf sheds some light on its role in an interconnected environment, within which a large part of the contemporary transformations in the Aegean took place.

KEYWORDS

Corinthian Gulf, Aigialeia, Aigion, early Helladic pottery, ›coastscape‹

Cultural Crossroads in the Corinthian Gulf during the EBA

Insights into a Ceramic Assemblage from Aigion

Introduction

1 Aigion in Achaea, inhabited throughout the prehistoric period[1], shows significant evidence of activity during the late EBA period based on the pottery of the Minasian plot, which is indicative of interaction with other contemporary settlements. In this paper, other than the importance of the Anatolianizing influences and its manifestation in this assemblage[2], the focus is set on the context of the Corinthian Gulf. In this scope, a brief overview of the wider topographical and archaeological context of EBA Aigion, necessary to the comprehension of interaction, is followed by a short presentation of the context of the assemblage and the related methodological decisions. The various ceramic classes and shapes are then presented[3], followed by a summary of the various changes, which suggest relative synchronisms with other sites and indicate possible networks of interaction, in which Aigion was an active participant.

The Topographical and Archaeological Context of Aigion

2 The Corinthian Gulf, between central Greece and the Peloponnese, is delimited to the west by the Rio-Antirrio strait and to the east by the Alkyonides Gulf. Aigialeia along its southern shore occupied the area between the river Sythas (east)[4], Ziria (west),

1 Kolia 2005, 363; Papazoglou-Manioudaki 1998; Papazoglou-Manioudaki 2010; Papazoglou-Manioudaki 2015 (especially 314); Papazoglou-Manioudaki 2020.

2 Michalopoulos 2022.

3 Abbreviations: EBA = Early Bronze Age; EH = Early Helladic. The use of abbreviations in the description of classes, shapes and decoration is limited to the associated figures and only where this is considered necessary. Abbreviations: for classes-surface treatment: DP = Dark-Painted; DonL = Dark on Light; LonD = Light on Dark; NC = Non-classified; PP = Pattern-Painted; Unp = Unpainted; YM = Yellow-Mottled; for macro fabrics: f = fine; m = medium coarse; c = coarse; for shapes: N.A. = non applicable; D. = Diameter; R. Diam. = Rim Diameter; H. = Height; Th. = thickness.

4 In this paper, Aigeira is considered the eastern limit, in accordance with the modern limits of the region.

Mount Helmos and Erymanthos (south) excluding the area of Kalavryta (south)[5]. Along the coast from Lampiri to Krathion are several small bays open to the rest of the Corinthian Gulf, a feature shared with western Corinthia, but contrasting with the more complex shoreline of the rest of the gulf, which features numerous semi-closed and closed bays. The rivers and torrents running through Aigialeia towards the Corinthian Gulf, vital for the development of settlements, connect the coastal and the mountainous inland areas and function as landmarks for possible boundaries of territories, a concept suggested for other EBA mainland sites[6]. Fertile plains can be found across Aigialea, with the largest extending eastwards from Aigion[7].

3 Achaea has generally been recognized as an area of non-random EH activity relatively early in the existing bibliography[8]. In western Achaea, recent work confirms this recognition[9] while in Eastern Achaea or Aigialeia, besides some work on EBA sites[10], most of the settlements, including Aigion, are not fully published and remain relatively unknown. Most of the EBA archaeological evidence comes from rescue and systematic excavations, supported by surveys[11] (Fig. 1).

4 The EBA settlement of Aigion, situated in the northeastern part of the modern town, on an elongated hill, 60 m above sea level is accessible from the south, while to the north, a cliff sets the limits of the settlement and a narrow strip of land separates it from the coast, where the old and modern harbor lie. The location of the site offers views across Aigialeia and the Corinthian Gulf, reaching the mountains of central Greece. Concurrently, the settlement is a landmark visible to outsiders, possibly stating the existence of a territory[12].

5 The archaeological information published mostly in preliminary reports derives from rescue excavations (Fig. 2), characterized by notable constraints, revealing fragmented remains. However, the EBA settlement, going back to the FN (Fig. 2. 3), seems to have covered an area of fewer than sixteen hectares, most likely between eight to twelve hectares. Given the size of other contemporary southern Greek mainland settlements, it was most likely a small-sized settlement, at least compared to EBA Keryneia, which was larger than twenty hectares[13], considering the latest evidence[14].

6 Aigion, despite displaying several aspects of a large-scale EBA settlement, does not seem to have served in this way, even if one considers the evidence from the Mycenean occupation of the site[15] or the continuous and modern inhabitation of the site, which has played some role in its preservation. Based on the evidence from the rest of Aigialeia, however, the existence of pairs of settlements, one to the hinterland and another closer to the sea is possible. In the case of Helike, it has been suggested that it served as the harbor of the larger settlement of Keryneia[16], though together they could have formed a larger settlement as well. Kassaneva in southeastern Aigialeia could have been related to the latest ekistics evidence from the coastal site of Platanos[17]. Likewise, at

5 Kolia 2012, 324.

6 Weiberg 2011, 48–54.

7 Gadolou 2008, 45.

8 Åström 1964, 110.

9 See indicatively Gazis 2018; Aktipi 2020.

10 Katsonopoulou – Katsarou 2017; Kolia – Spiroulias 2017; Kolia – Spiroulias 2020; Pontrandolfo 2016.

11 In addition to the surveys depicted in Fig. 1, EBA findings are cited in Petropoulos 1995, 231; Petropoulos 2006, 49 fig. 15, originating from a survey conducted along the west bank of the river Foinix without specific mention of particular newly discovered EBA sites.

12 For a reference in a broader context, see Weiberg – Finné 2013, 17.

13 Kolia 2015, 67.

14 Katsarou forthcoming.

15 Papazoglou-Manioudaki 2015, 314 fig. 1.

16 Kolia 2015, 67.

17 Katsarou forthcoming.

Label	Site/Settlement	Date	Reference
Site 1	Lampiri	EH II	Personal communication with Dr. A. Vordos and N. Petropoulos
Site 2	Kamares – Petropoulos Plot	EBA; EH II	Kolia 2005, 365; Kolia 2012, 325 fig. 645
Site 3	Aigion	FN–EH II	Fig. 2
Site 4	Keryneia	EH II–III	Kolia 2015; Kolia – Spiroulias 2017 and 2020
Site 5	Helike (Rizomylos)	EH II–III	Marinatos 1960 and 1968; Edgerton – Throckmorton 1970; Katsonopoulou 2011; Katsarou 2011; Soter – Katsonopoulou 2011; Katsonopoulou – Katsarou 2017
Site 6	Platanos	EH II	Katsarou (forthcoming)
Site 7a	Krathion	EH II	Mastrokostas 1967
Site 7b	Akrata (coast area)	EH II	Katsarou (forthcoming)
Site 8	Aigeira	FN–EH I; EH III–MH I	Alram Stern 2006, 19–88; Alram Stern 2010, 144
Site 9	Kassaneva	EH II (Lerna IIIB–C)	Pontrandolfo 2016; De Caro et al. 2016; De Feo – Granese 2016
Site 10	Synevro	EH II	Katsarou 2012, 282–286. 425–429
Site a	Kamares-Xeriko	EH II	Åström 1964, 109
Site b	Kamares-Paliomylos	EBA	Papadopoulos 1978/1979, 34; Kolonas 1996/1997, 485
Site c	Ampelokipoi: Agios Ioannis-Sarakinovouni	EH II	De Caro et al. 2016, 123–127
Site d	Chrysanthio: Vlachos	EH II	De Caro et al. 2016, 141–144
Site e	Aiges: Plakopetra	EH II	De Caro et al. 2016, 179 f.
Site f	Oasi: Kampos	EH II	De Caro et al. 2016, 168 f.
Site g	Monastiri: Kouros	EH II	De Caro et al. 2016, 195

Fig. 1: EBA sites in Aigialeia: excavated (1–10); identified during surveys (a–g)

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the western frontier of Aigialeia, Lampiri and Kamares might have developed a similar association. Aigion, accordingly, could have been closely associated with another, possibly larger, settlement that once existed in the hinterland closer to the plain.

7 The relationship between such possible pairs of settlements, or even wider and more complex associations, remains open. Accordingly, a hierarchical relationship cannot yet be proven, though a two-level hierarchy, as has been proposed before for the EH II settlements of the region of Hermionid[18], remains worthy of consideration. Any

18 Pullen 1985, 357.

Label	Plot/Road	Description	Bibliography
1	Minasian Plot (Dodekanison 18)	EH II walls and findings	Papazoglou-Manioudaki 1984, 95. 98; Papazoglou-Manioudaki 1998, 19; Michalopoulos 2019; 2022
2	Dodekanison 16 plot	EH II walls and findings	Personal communication with excavator Evgenia Poulimenou.
3	Panagopoulos plot (Dodekanison 12)	Superimposed walls and pottery of EBA date. Possible FN remains	Kolia 2005, 363
4	Diamantopoulos plot (Dodekanison 6)	Possible EH sherds	Vordos 1998, 276
5	Plastira 7	Possible EH wall and findings	Petropoulos 1990, 137
6	Tsinoukas plot (Aristeidou 2)	EH II architecture, pottery, a bone seal and other findings	Papazoglou-Manioudaki 1984, 94 f; Papazoglou-Manioudaki 1998, 19
7	Ermou Road + Metzelopoulos plot	Possible EH pottery	Mastrokostas 1967, 214–216
8	K. Palaiologou Road	Possible EH pottery	Mastrokostas 1968, 136

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Fig. 2: Plots and roads in Aigion with EBA material

further remarks in this direction, however, remain risky and demand the integration of far more information from other sites.

The Minasian Plot

8 The rescue excavation in the Minasian plot was conducted in a limited area and uncovered poorly-preserved remains; some contamination is observable, especially in the upper layers. Moreover, the continuous habitation during the EH II period, as several superimposed layers indicate, affects the preservation of the lower and older habitation levels.

9 Several layers and contexts identified during the excavation, including destruction layers, parts of floors and associated floor deposits, pits, fills and a fixed hearth, have been interrelated, with many of them linked to specific walls[19], resulting in the formation of ten stratigraphic stages[20]. Observations on the stratigraphy and architecture of these stages align with the distinction of two separate architectural periods (A and B), marked by a destruction[21].

10 More specifically, the walls associated with Period A (Stages 1–5) are highly fragmented and their paths cannot be defined. Notably, a curvilinear wall identified during Stage 5 is associated with a building or house of apsidal form[22]. Following the destruction in Stage 5, from Stage 6 onwards (Period B), walls are generally stronger compared to those of Period A. They are associated with buildings or rooms that follow approximately the same orientation concurrently pointing to a possible plan repetition, a trend not observed during Stages 1–5[23].

11 Unfortunately, there are no intact buildings or rooms, as many layers consist of deposits, and artifacts are rarely preserved *in situ*. With regard to the EBA pottery, only a handful of cases were largely intact or restorable, while post-excavation preservation work was affected by issues such as poor storage conditions. Consequently, the study of the assemblage was mainly based on sherds, several of them highly fragmented, making it a challenge to identify the exact shapes or whether several sherds belong to the same vessel.

12 Despite the problems, stratigraphic preservation is generally better than other cases on the site. The identification of several superimposed layers played a crucial role in the construction of a chronological framework for the assemblage. Furthermore, the systematic collection of all the sherds during the excavation process, contrary to the usual excavation practices of the time, is considered a good case for the first systematic study of a generally unknown ceramic group. Consequently, this assemblage is valuable evidence in the effort to explore the EH II pottery of Aigion.

13 At this point, it is important to notice that any remarks concerning the chronological divisions proposed here are related to the material from the Minasian plot: it does not necessarily apply to the settlement of Aigion as a whole and it is not in contrast with the prehistoric phases that Papazoglou-Manioudaki has proposed for the prehistoric settlement of Aigion[24].

Classification System and Methodology

14 The Minasian assemblage has been studied and presented through a ware-based classification system[25]; considering the technological orientation of this approach[26], sherds were assigned into categories based on two or more common features (surface treatment and macro-fabric composition) and the existence of limited information about shapes. Experience, however, has indicated that this system can be rigid under certain circumstances, including the interconnection of ceramic attributes, future

19 For an analysis of the architecture and the stratigraphy of the site, see: Papazoglou-Manioudaki 1984, 95. 98; Papazoglou-Manioudaki 1998, 19. 22. 25; Papazoglou-Manioudaki 2010, 131; Michalopoulos 2019, 58–92 figs. 1–16; illustrations 1–6. For a synoptic reference, see Michalopoulos 2022, 45 f.

20 The architectural subphases discerned by Papazoglou-Manioudaki have been modified and reorganized into stratigraphic stages in Michalopoulos 2019, 59. 67–86.

21 Papazoglou-Manioudaki 1998, 19. 25; Michalopoulos 2019, 77; Michalopoulos 2022, 46 tab. 1.

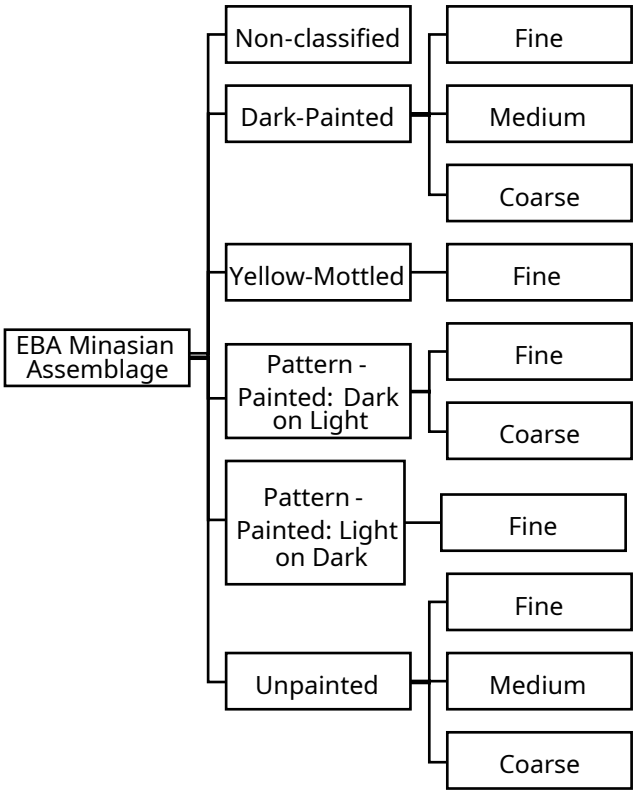
22 Papazoglou-Manioudaki 1998, 25; Michalopoulos 2019, 73–77.

23 Michalopoulos 2019, 89–91.

24 Papazoglou-Manioudaki 1998, 22.

25 Michalopoulos 2019 and Michalopoulos 2022.

26 Wilson – Day 1994, 2.



3

Fig. 3: The division of the EBA pottery of the Minasian assemblage into classes

accession of new assemblages, incorporation of information from microscopic fabric and cross-referencing with other assemblages.

15 For such reasons, and related to the ambiguities and the uniformity characterizing this method, Rutter proposed a class-based approach that is clear and easily replicated, based on the existence/absence and type of painted decoration, basic macroscopic fabric features, surface finish and color[27], applied in important EBA materials[28]. Accordingly, the Minasian assemblage will be presented and reorganized according to a class-based system (Fig. 3)[29]. However, one of the issues that this approach could not consider is a large amount of poorly preserved sherds labeled as non-classified units. This matter might raise some questions about the importance and validity of the unit counts but, given that counts are based both on diagnostic and non-diagnostic sherds, as will be further explained below, and the low number of non-classified sherds in the body of diagnostics, any result can be cross-checked.

16 According to the particularities of this assemblage and the adaptation of a class-based taxonomy, specific methodological decisions proved necessary, including the broad distinction of surface treatments due to the inherent variation of the associated terms[30], the application of varied techniques in the same vessel or surface and the similar effect of different techniques as the result of several stages of manufacture. Procedures like paddling and paring described by Rutter[31], the stage of drying[32], the application of a slip and the stage of firing can affect the appearance of the finish. The macroscopic fabric (macro-fabric) is classified into broad macro-fabric groups based on size, shape, color and density of inclusions. A broad distinction into fine, medium and coarse fabrics has been applied according to other assemblages, including that of Lerna[33]. The color of the surface, fracture and core are described in general terms. Furthermore, counts include both diagnostic and non-diagnostic units[34]. Rim sherds are mainly considered diagnostic for shapes, but in underrepresented cases, other form accessories closely assigned to a shape are included.

17 Regarding ceramic periodization, an attempt to trace possible remarkable changes in pottery production involved examining several stratigraphic stages as potential chronological turning points. This investigation included Stage 6, marking the beginning of architectural Period B. In this instance, some variations are observed in ceramic classes, though those related to shapes are not particularly pronounced. However, from Stage 7 onward, variations in ceramic classes become more evident,

27 Rutter 1995, 11–14.

28 Wiencke 2000; Pullen 2011.

29 In each class references to the previous ware-based categories aim to eliminate issues of inconsistency.

30 However, efforts for the systematic description do exist: Berger 2010; Rutter 1995, 55–58; Spencer 2007, 95 f. fig. 3, 17; Wiencke 2000, 319 f.

31 Rutter 1995, 55 f.

32 Martineau 2010.

33 Wiencke 2000, 317.

34 Not all the catalogued units are diagnostic of shapes. Shape accessories not closely assigned to specific shapes, catalogued and uncatalogued body sherds comprise the non-diagnostic units.

accompanied by several notable changes in shapes[35], as will be further developed. Consequently, two distinct ceramic phases are identified, Phase I (Stages 1–6) and Phase II (Stages 7–10), independent of the architectural periods, but interconnected through the stratigraphic stages[36]. It must be noted that several units could not be securely assigned to any stratigraphic stage and, as such, they are not included in the associated tables (Fig. 6. 7. 9. 10. 17). Additionally, Anatolianizing and hybrid shapes (Helladic tankards) have already been discussed and their significance from a chrono-cultural perspective has been raised[37]. Here, those are included only in the related charts, without any further analysis.

18 The main point of reference is Lerna III because of the good preservation of the pottery, the comprehensive presentation, and the systematic documentation of parallels from other sites, along with comments on their variations[38]. References to other contemporary sites are restricted, not due to lack of similarities, but for a synoptic presentation.

Analysis of the Minasian Assemblage

The EBA Ceramic Classes

(Fig. 4. 5. 6. 7)

19 *Fine: dark-painted* is the most common class in this assemblage, with two main variations: one with black-dark gray colored slips and another with brown-red colored slips. The latter is often roughly applied, thin and diluted, in lighter hues, similar to later Lerna III[39], at Romanos[40] and Nafpaktos[41].

20 In the *fine: yellow-mottled* class, gray blots on the surface are typical. The term ›yellow-mottled‹ is preferred to ›light-painted‹ and to ›yellow blue slipped and polished‹. The former does not truly indicate the most striking features of the associated sherds at Aigion, while the latter includes a specific finish. Sherds associated with this class can be misidentified as unpainted, but in such cases, the existence of a grey core with clear limits in the fracture is a yellow-mottled feature. The slip is usually ›warm‹, a feature related to Lerna IIIC–D[42].

21 In the *fine: unpainted* class, the application of a self-slip is not excluded. A slip different from the clay of the vessel has, however, not been identified. Non-diagnostic sherds should be considered carefully when reading the counts of this class as unpainted surfaces from poorly preserved sherds could belong to other classes as well. Both diagnostic and non-diagnostic sherds, however, indicate a significant rise in the numbers of this class, as at other mainland sites.

22 The *fine: pattern-painted: dark-on-light* class is represented by only a few extremely fragmented sherds, while the *fine: pattern-painted: light-on-dark* class is identified only in a tiny sherd with such decoration, dated to Phase I, but its excavation group suffered from some contamination.

23 The *medium: dark-painted* class consists of a very small group whose macrofabric is varied. On the contrary, the *medium: unpainted class*, the outcome of merging

35 Michalopoulos 2019, 293; Michalopoulos 2022, 46.
36 Michalopoulos 2022, tab. 1.
37 Michalopoulos 2022, 46.
38 Wiencke 2000.
39 Wiencke 2000, 326.
40 Rambach 2018, 226.
41 Saranti 2018, 65.
42 Wiencke 2000, 321.

Class	Surface Treatment	Extent of Paint	Macrofabric	Parallels	Equivalent to Michalopoulos 2019
DP	Slipped & Polished; Wiped; Burnished	Solidly; Partly (linear-or-band painted: Pullen 2011, 166)	Fine 1 & 2	Lerna III: Wiencke 2000, 326 f.; Thebes: Konsola 1981, 120 f.; Psaraki 2014, 105; Proskynas: Zachou 2009, 88 f.	120–125. 170–173
				Brown-Red slip: Lerna III: Wiencke 2000, 325; Tsoungiza: Pullen 2011, 167; Phaleron: Kakavakis – Skiadaresi 2020, 50; Nea Kephissia: Georgousopoulou 2020, 310	159 f.; 178–180
YM	Slipped & Polished; Wiped	Solidly; Partly	Fine 1	Tsoungiza: Pullen 2011, 342–344; Romanos: Rambach 2018, 226 f.; Lithares: Tzavella-Evjen 1984, 156; Eutresis: Goldman 1931, 97 f.; Proskynas: Zahou 2009, 89 f.; Korori, Merenda, Askitario, Raphina, Agios Kosmas: Douni 2020, 283. 286 fig. 3	208–211
Unp	Polished; Burnished; Wiped	–	Fine 1	Tsoungiza: Pullen 2011, 338 tab. 4, 10; Helike: Katsarou 2011, 106; Kirra: Dor et al. 1960, 66; Askitario, Agios Kosmas, Koropi, Merenda and Raphina (light slipped class): Douni 2020, 283 fig. 6	195–197
PP DonL	Painted & Polished; Wiped	Patterns	Fine 1	Lerna III: Wiencke 2000, 324 f.	221 f.
PP LonD	Painted & Polished	Pattern	NC	Lerna III: Wiencke 2000, 323 f.	
DP	Slipped; Polished; Burnished; Wiped	Solidly; Partly	Medium 1	Lerna III: Wiencke 2000, 325 f.	188–190
Unp	Usually Wiped and Burnished, occasionally Polished, rarely Scraped	–	Medium 2–4	Tsoungiza: Pullen 2011, 338; Ayios Dhimitrios: Zachos 2008, 67	227–230. 247–249
DP	Slipped; Wiped	Solidly	Coarse 1	Lerna III: Wiencke 2000, 327; Thebes: Psaraki 2014, 65; Latoufi: Psaraki 2016, 767	255
Unp	Wiped	–	Coarse 1	Lerna III: Wiencke 2000, 328; Ayios Dhimitrios: Zachos 2008, 67	253–258
PP DonL	Painted; Wiped	Pattern	Coarse 1	Lerna III: Wiencke 2000, 324 f.	

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Fig. 4: The EBA ceramic classes of the Minasian assemblage and their main attributes

three different wares, comprises a large part of this material. The surface and fracture colors vary significantly, while sherd counts indicate changes related to the different macro-fabric groups.

24 The *coarse: dark-painted* class includes a small number of sherds. The color of the fabric, the usual blackening of the surface and the poor preservation hinder the identification of a slip, which is usually diluted. These are some of the reasons this class was initially treated as part of a broader coarse ware and unfortunately, its counts are based solely on the diagnostic sherds, but the original number of the non-diagnostic sherds should be limited as well. On the contrary, c*oarse: unpainted class* is the main coarse class of the Minasian assemblage. In some cases, the application of a light-colored slip, poorly applied, possibly a self-slip/ wash, cannot be excluded. Finally, the *coarse: pattern-painted: dark-on-light* class is represented by only one sherd.

The EBA Shapes

25 Shapes are presented in alphabetical order in the associated figures, which include the most important information on common shapes of this assemblage (Fig. 8), counts of units per shape (Fig. 9. 10) and illustrations of several well-preserved cases

Group	Main Inclusions	Fracture	Core	Th. (cm)	Coarseness (scale 1–6)
Fine 1	few (>2 mm) white subrounded and rounded; few (>1 mm) red & dark angular; some silver mica (>1 mm)	Brown-Red	Often Gray	0.4–0.7	1
Fine 2	few (>2 mm) white subrounded and rounded	Pale olive	No visible core	–	1
Medium 1	variability: many white rounded and subrounded (>3 mm); organic-straw (>4 mm); silver mica (>1 mm); occasional dark subangular and angular inclusions (>3 mm)	Light Red to Pale Brown	Gray	0.4–1	2
Medium 2	many white rounded and subrounded (>3 mm); silver mica (>1 mm)	Red-Gray	Gray, Gray between red zones	0.6–1.2	4
Medium 3	variability: many white rounded and subrounded (>3 mm), random dark (>4 mm), occasional organic-straw (3–5 mm) inclusions silver mica (>1 mm)	Red-Brown	Gray	0.6–1.1	3
Medium 4	some white rounded and subrounded (1–3 mm); organic-straw (3–5 mm); some dark angular and subangular (>2 mm); silver mica (>1 mm)	Light Brown-Red	Gray to Black	0.6–1.2	5
Coarse 1	many dark angular & subangular (>7 mm); few white rounded & subrounded (>3 mm); silver mica (>1 mm) Pithoi: additional organic-straw inclusions (>5 mm) subcategory: additional many rounded & subrounded gray to white (> 2 mm); no organic inclusions	Red-Very Dark Gray	Gray to Very Dark Gray	0.5–1.7	6

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Class	Diagnostic		Non-Diagnostic	
	Phase I	Phase II	Phase I	Phase II
DP (f)	183 (43.5%)	88 (37.3%)	569 (32.1%)	429 (31.1%)
YM (f)	29 (6.9%)	7 (3.0%)	32 (1.8%)	29 (2.1%)
Unp (f)	24 (5.7%)	32 (13.6%)	51 (2.9%)	102 (7.4%)
PP DonL(f)	0 (0%)	0 (%)	4 (0.2%)	6 (0.4%)
PP Lond (f)	0 (0%)	0 (%)	1 (0.1%)	0 (0%)
DP (m)	15 (3.6%)	3 (1.3%)	38 (2.1%)	23 (1.7%)
Unp (m)	50 (11.9%)	44 (18.6%)	310 (17.5%)	280 (20.3%)
DP (c)	8 (1.9%)	6 (2.5%)	–	–
Unp (c)	78 (18.5%)	34 (14.4%)	266 (15.0%)	134 (9.7%)
PP DonL (c)	0 (0%)	1 (0.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
NC	34 (8.1%)	21 (8.9%)	503 (28.4%)	376 (27.3%)
Total	421 (100%)	236 (100%)	1774 (100%)	1379 (100%)

6

Macro-fabric	Diagnostic		NonDiagnostic	
	Phase I	Phase II	Phase I	Phase II
Fine 1	206 (48.9%)	126 (53.4%)	520 (29.3%)	505 (36.6%)
Fine 2	30 (7.1%)	1 (0.4%)	136 (7.7%)	61 (4.4%)
Medium 1	15 (3.6%)	3 (1.3%)	38 (2.1%)	23 (1.7%)
Medium 2	19 (4.5%)	29 (12.3%)	26 (1.5%)	194 (14.1%)
Medium 3	5 (1.2%)	7 (3.0%)	19 (1.1%)	7 (0.5%)
Medium 4	26 (6.2%)	8 (3.4%)	265 (14.9%)	79 (5.7%)
Coarse 1	86 (20.4%)	41 (17.4%)	266 (15.0%)	134 (9.7%)
NC	34 (8.1%)	21 (8.9%)	504 (28.4%)	376 (27.3%)
Total	421 (100%)	236 (100%)	1774 (100%)	1379 (100%)

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Fig. 5: Macroscopic fabric description of the pottery

Fig. 6: Ceramic classes by phase in the Minasian assemblage

Fig. 7: Macro-fabric groups by phase in the Minasian assemblage

Shape	Main features & measurements (in cm)		Parallels
Amphora Fig. 11 a–b	**Necks**: biconical; **Handles**: wide horizontal; vertical **Size**: H.: -Rim D.: 8–13		Lerna III: jar type 5 & 6: Wiencke 2000, 564 f. fig. II.86
Baking pan Fig. 11 d–e	**Outline**: circular (Fig. 11 d) **Size**: H.: 4.5 Rim D.: <30 Wall Th.: <1		Tsoungiza variant: Pullen 2011, 426 fig. 5.113; 592
	Outline: oval/circular: (Fig. 11 e) **Size**: Rim D.: >30 Wall Th.: >1		Lerna III: Wiencke 2000, 535 f. fig. II.74 Ayios Dhimitrios: Zachos 2008, 71 f.
Basin Fig. 11 f–k	**Rims**: thickened; T-shaped; rounded; **Handles**: horizontal; **Lugs**; rarely occurring; **Bases**: ring form **Size**: medium-large: Rim D.: 20–44		Lerna III type 4 but mostly type 5: Wiencke 2000, 542. 544 fig. II.75 Lithares *Phialai* type B & ΣT: Tzavella-Evjen 1984, 150–153 σχ. 5. 8 Kassaneva: few parallels De Feo – Granese 2016, 250
Lopas Fig. 13 a–n	**Rims**: variety; **Walls**: slightly or sharply incurved; **Handles**: rarely occurring; **Knobs**: rarely occurring; **Bases**: mostly ring form. **Decoration**: taenia type below rim. **Size**: small: Rim D.: 10–15 H.: 14; medium: Rim D.: 16–25 H.: 24 large: Rim D.: 26–42 H.: –		Lerna III: Wiencke 2000, 548–550 fig. II.79 Tsoungiza: Pullen 2011, 360
Pithos Fig. 14 a–g	Convex: (Fig. 14 a–c): T-rim Necked: (Fig. 14 d–g) e. g **D18/22/18**	H.: -RimD.: >40	Kassaneva: De Feo – Granese 2016, 256 fig. 77 b–d Lerna III: Wiencke 2000, 579 fig. II.90 Kassaneva: De Feo – Granese et al. 2016, 256 fig. 78
Sauceboat Fig. 15 d–q	Best preserved cases: **D18/68/14** (Fig. 15 d): Phase I; **D18/16/21** (Fig. 15 e): Phase II **Spouts** (Fig. 15 h–m): out-turned flattened lip & pointed triangular ears exc. **D18/43/3**; **Handles**: horizontal & vertical but varied (Fig. 15 o–p), including: vertical strap handles (Fig. 15 q); **Bases**: ring & raised conical H.: 13.5–17 Rim D.: N.A		Mainly similarities with Lerna III type 2 & 4 but closer to central Greek cases type III island class: Wiencke 2000, 587–590 fig. II.92; Tzavella-Evjen 1984, 156; Fahy 1962
Saucer Fig. 16	Slightly incurved (parallel to Lerna III Early type 1 Lerna III) (Fig. 16 a–c; 17)		Lerna III: Wiencke 2000, 595 fig. II.93
	Size: medium: H.: 5.8–6.9 Rim D.: 9–17; large: H.: -Rim D.: 18–27	Incurved-Inturned (Fig. 16 d–n; 17)	Lerna III late type 2: Wiencke 2000, 596 f. fig. II.93 Tsoungiza EH II developed: Pullen 2011, 354–356 fig. 5.71 Kassaneva: De Feo – Granese 2016, 260 f. fig. 83 c–d
		Concavely carinated (Fig. 16 o–p; 17)	Lerna III: Wiencke 2000, 596 f. fig. II.93 Tsoungiza: Pullen 2011, 356 fig. 5.71
		Straight-walled (Fig. 16 q–s; 17)	Lerna III late type 1: Wiencke 2000, 596 f. fig. II.93 Tsoungiza type 5: Pullen 2011, 353 Kassaneva: De Feo – Granese 2016, 262 fig. 83 e–g Romanos: Rambach 2018, 223 fig. 15 a–n

8

Fig. 8: Main features of common shapes in the Minasian assemblage with parallels

and sherds[43]. Here, only information concerning the representation of each shape, some clarifications on poorly represented shapes and evidence from not closely assigned sherds are listed.

26 The pottery of the Minasian assemblage includes most of the known EH II shapes. *Amphoras* (jars) (Fig. 11 a. b) are mainly represented by neck fragments, partly restored with the contribution of individual handles from medium coarse fabric. The *askos* is known from a few questionable sherds (Fig. 11 c), while some partly preserved handles, possibly related to the shape, are not included in the charts. *Baking pans* (Fig. 11 d. e) are represented by a small number of sherds in the coarse unpainted class with burnished surface and *basins* (Fig. 11 f–k) are identified from medium coarse rim sherds, often with well-finished surfaces, morphologically restored by individual handles and ring-form bases. *Bass bowls* of the Minasian assemblage have been

43 Pottery with yellow-mottled surface is illustrated with a distinctive dotted pattern after Wiencke 2000.

Shape	Class	Phase	
		I	II
Amphora	DP (m)	5	2
	Unp (m)	14	10
	Unp (c)	2	0
	NC	5	1
Anatolianizing	DP (f)	1	1
	YM (f)	0	1
	Unp (f)	1	1
	NC	1	0
Askos	DP (f)	0	1
	YM (f)	2	1
	Unp (m)	2	1
	NC	1	0
Baking Pan	Unp (m)	2	0
	Unp (c)	8	3
	NC	2	0
Basin	DP (f)	3	2
	DP (m)	6	0
	NC	3	0
	Unp (m)	11	10
Bass Bowl (one-handled)	DP (f)	0	5
Bass Bowl (two-handled)	Unp (f)	1	0
	Unp (m)	1	0
	NC	1	0
Fruitstand	PP DonL (c)	0	1
	Unp (c)	1	0
	NC	1	0
Hearth	Unp (c)	1	0
	DP (c)	1	0
Helladic Tankard	DP (f)	9	15
	Unp (f)	0	3
	YM (f)	0	1
Hybrid Sauceboat	DP (f)	1	0
Hydria	Unp (m)	0	1
Lopas	DP (f)	1	0
	DP (m)	3	1
	Unp (m)	12	21
	DP (c)	4	6
	Unp (c)	47	22
	NC	2	0
Pithos	Unp (m)	0	1
	DP (c)	3	0
	Unp (c)	13	8
	NC	1	1
Pyxis	DP (f)	4	0
	Unp (f)	1	0
Sauceboat	DP (f)	71	26
	YM (f)	16	1
	Unp (f)	4	3
	Unp (c)	0	1
	NC	4	1
Saucer	DP (f)	93	38
	YM (f)	11	3
	Unp (f)	17	25
	DP (m)	1	0
	Unp (m)	8	0
	NC	13	18
Stand	Unp (c)	6	0
Total		421	236

Fig. 9: Pottery shapes by class and phase in the Minasian assemblage

Shape	Phase I	Phase II
Amphora	26 (6.2%)	13 (5.5%)
Anatolianizing	3 (0.7%)	3 (1.3%)
Askos	5 (1.2%)	3 (1.3%)
Baking Pan	12 (2.9%)	3 (1.3%)
Basin	23 (5.5%)	12 (5.1%)
Bass Bowl	3 (0.7%)	5 (1.3%)
Fruitstand	2 (0.5%)	1 (0.4%)
Hearth	2 (0.5%)	0 (0%)
Helladic Tankard	9 (2.1%)	19 (8.1%)
Hybrid Sauceboat	1 (0.2%)	0 (0%)
Hydria	0 (0%)	1 (0.4%)
Lopas	69 (16.4%)	50 (21.2%)
Pithos	17 (4.0%)	10 (4.2%)
Pyxis	5 (1.2%)	0 (0%)
Sauceboat	95 (22.6%)	32 (13.6%)
Saucer	143 (34.0%)	84 (35.6%)
Stand	6 (1.4%)	0 (0%)
Total	421 (100%)	236 (100%)

Fig. 10: Pottery shapes by phase in the Minasian assemblage

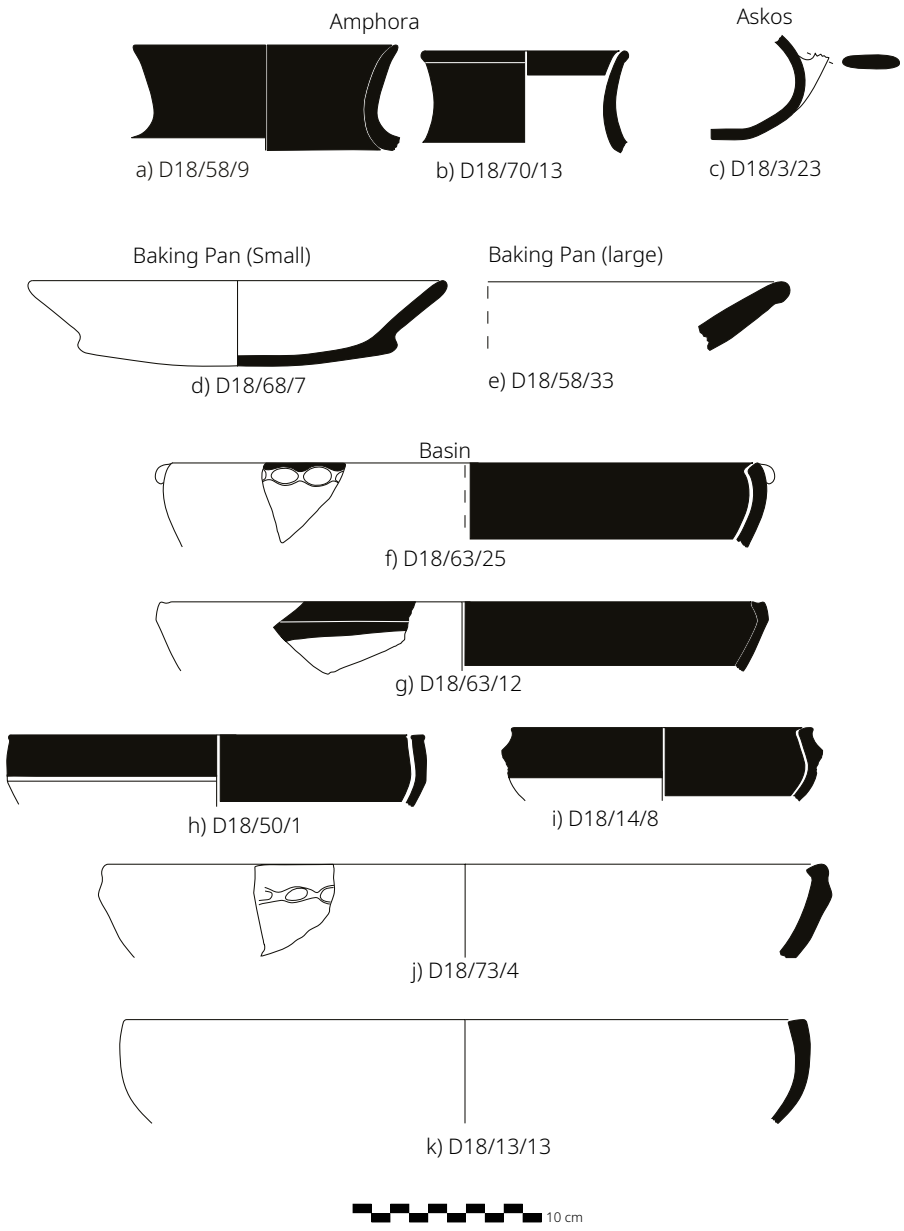
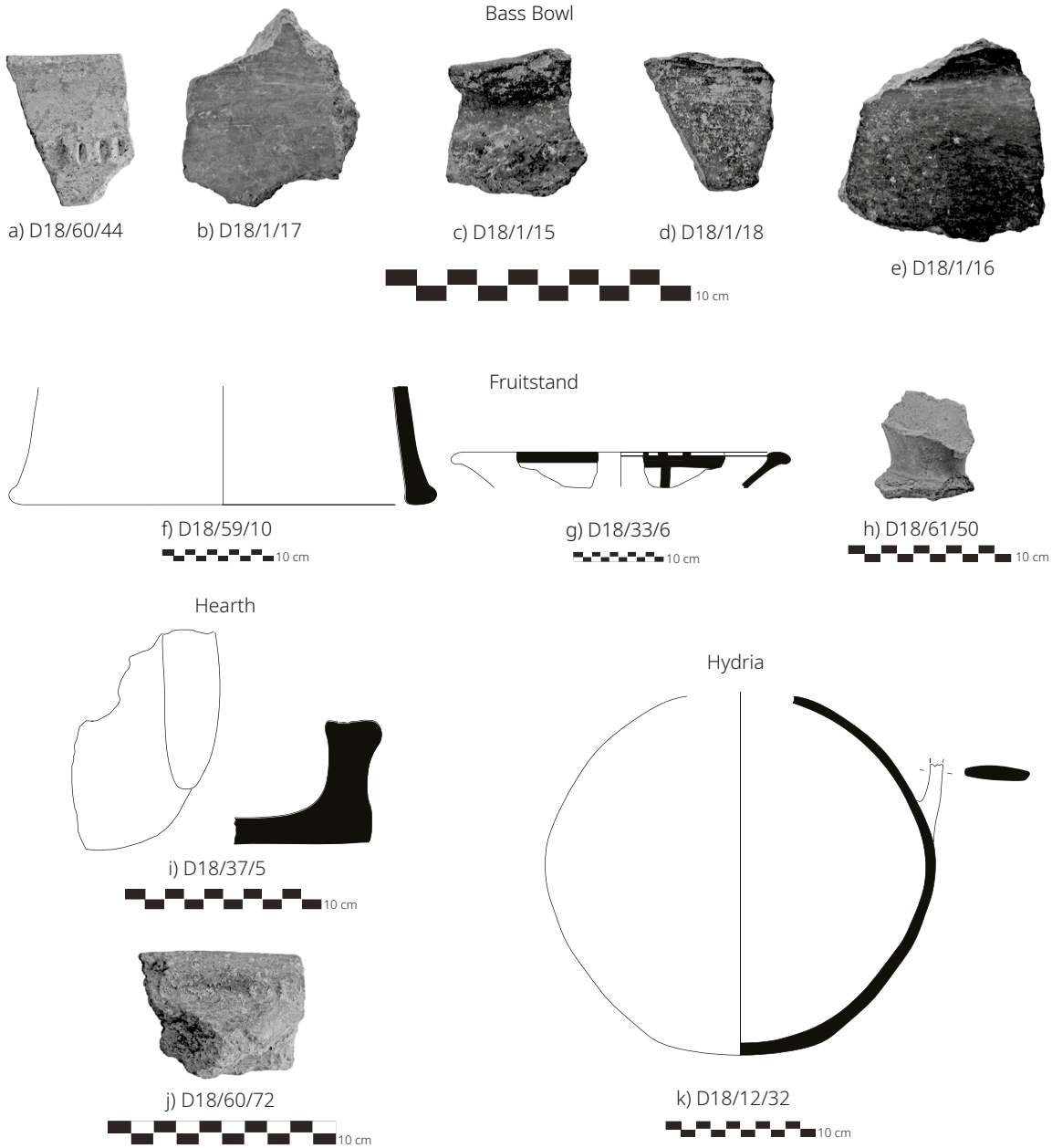


Fig. 11: Selected amphora (a–b), askos (c), baking pan (d–e) and basin (f–k) sherds from the Minasian assemblage

11

partly presented elsewhere[44]. Included here is one Phase I case with tactile decoration (Fig. 12 a) and some much more fragmented unstratified sherds with dark-burnished surfaces and medium coarse fabric (Fig. 12 b–e). There are only a few examples of *fruitstand* sherds (Fig. 12 f–h). On the contrary, the shape is well documented at Ayios Dhimitrios[45]. It is attested in Lerna IIIC–D[46] and Kassaneva too[47]. *Hearths* (Fig. 12 i. j) are represented only by two sherds from Phase I and can be assigned to the high type of Lerna III[48]. Furthermore, one large fragment of a *hydria* (Fig. 12 k) parallel to the type 8 of Lerna III jars[49] comes from Phase II. The *lopas*[50] (Fig. 13) is represented mainly by rim sherds typically in *coarse: unpainted* and *medium coarse* classes, often difficult to discern

44 Michalopoulos 2022, 46 fig. 3.
45 Zachos 2008, 70 f. with a discussion on its existence in other sites.
46 Wiencke 2000, 555 f.
47 De Feo – Granese 2016, 254 fig. 71.
48 Wiencke 2000, 557.
49 Wiencke 2000, 565. 568 fig. II.86.
50 After Aggelopoulou 2014, 141.



12

Fig. 12: Selected bass bowl (a–e), fruitstand (f–h), hearth (i–j) and hydria (k) units from the Minasian assemblage

from rim sherds of basins. *Pithoi* (Fig. 14) are usually found represented in the *coarse: unpainted* class, are underrepresented and often rim sherds are indistinguishable from the coarser rims from *lopas*, so body sherds and base sherds associated with pithoi are incorporated into the diagnostics units. There are a few cases of *pyxis* (Fig. 15 a–c) dated to Phase I including a vertical double rim (Fig. 15 a) found in a pyxis from Steno[51] and a vertical rim (Fig. 15 b) similar to Lernaean cases[52]. *Sauceboats* (Fig. 15 d–q) are very common in this assemblage, based on a couple of well-preserved cases, several rim sherds and spouts, usually under *fine: dark-painted* and *yellow-mottled* classes. Accordingly, *Saucers* are represented by large numbers of rim sherds and some well-preserved cases (Fig. 16). Several of them can provide typological information (Fig. 17). Sherds of

51 Dörpfeld 1927, 302 suppl. 64, 4.

52 Wiencke 2000, 581 f. fig. II.91.

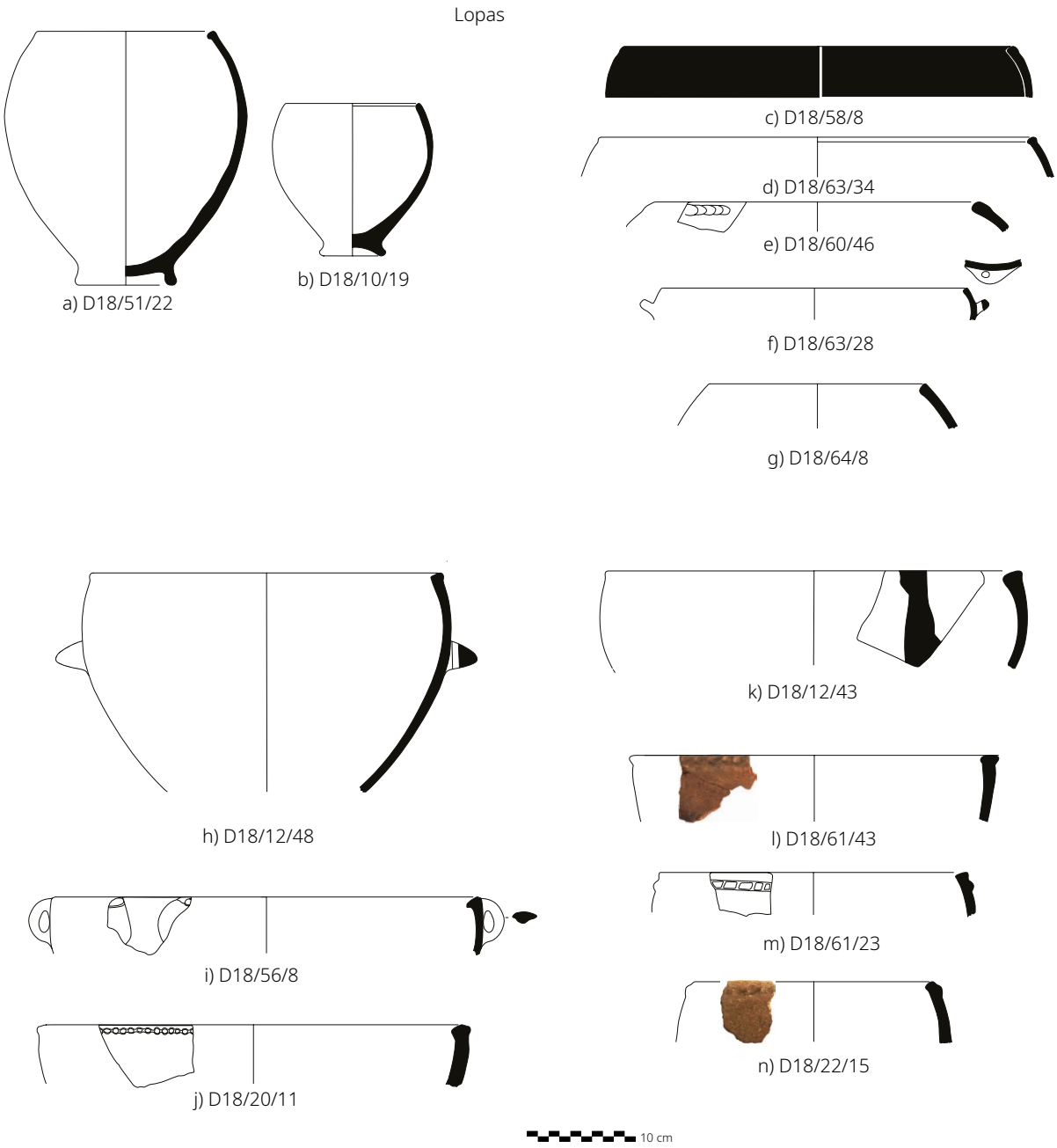
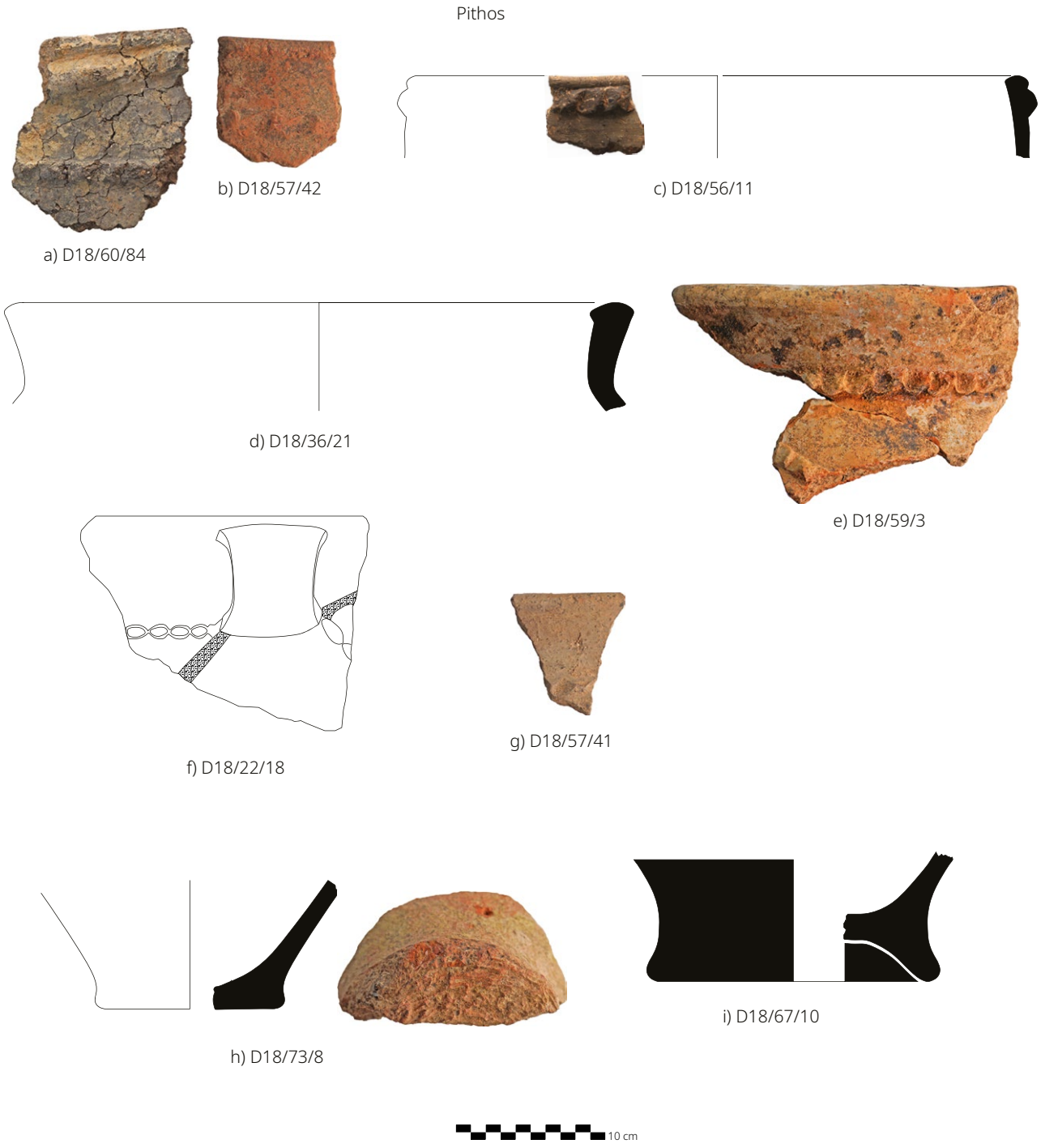


Fig. 13: Selected lopas (bowl) units from the Minasian assemblage

stands (firedogs) (Fig. 18) from the Minasian assemblage are limited to Stages 1 and 2 of Phase I and are probably related to one vessel similar to *Krateutai* from Lithares[53].

27 Furthermore, some EH II shapes known from other sites are not identified in the Minasian assemblage, possibly related to the state of preservation, use of space and chronological aspects. Some sherds which have not been specifically assigned could be related to these shapes, but the evidence is not sturdy enough. More specifically, the *collared bowl*, presumably an early Peloponnesian adaptation of the central Greek Bass bowl associated with Lerna IIIC–D[54], might be represented here by one rim-sherd from Phase I, in *medium: dark-painted* (Fig. 19 a). Apart from the type termed *amphora*, only a rim sherd (Fig. 19 b) could be related to type 3 of the jars from Lerna III[55] and

53 Tzavella-Evjen 1984, 172 f. pls. 88, β–η. 89.
54 Wiencke 2000, 552–554.
55 Wiencke 2000, 563 f. fig. II.86.

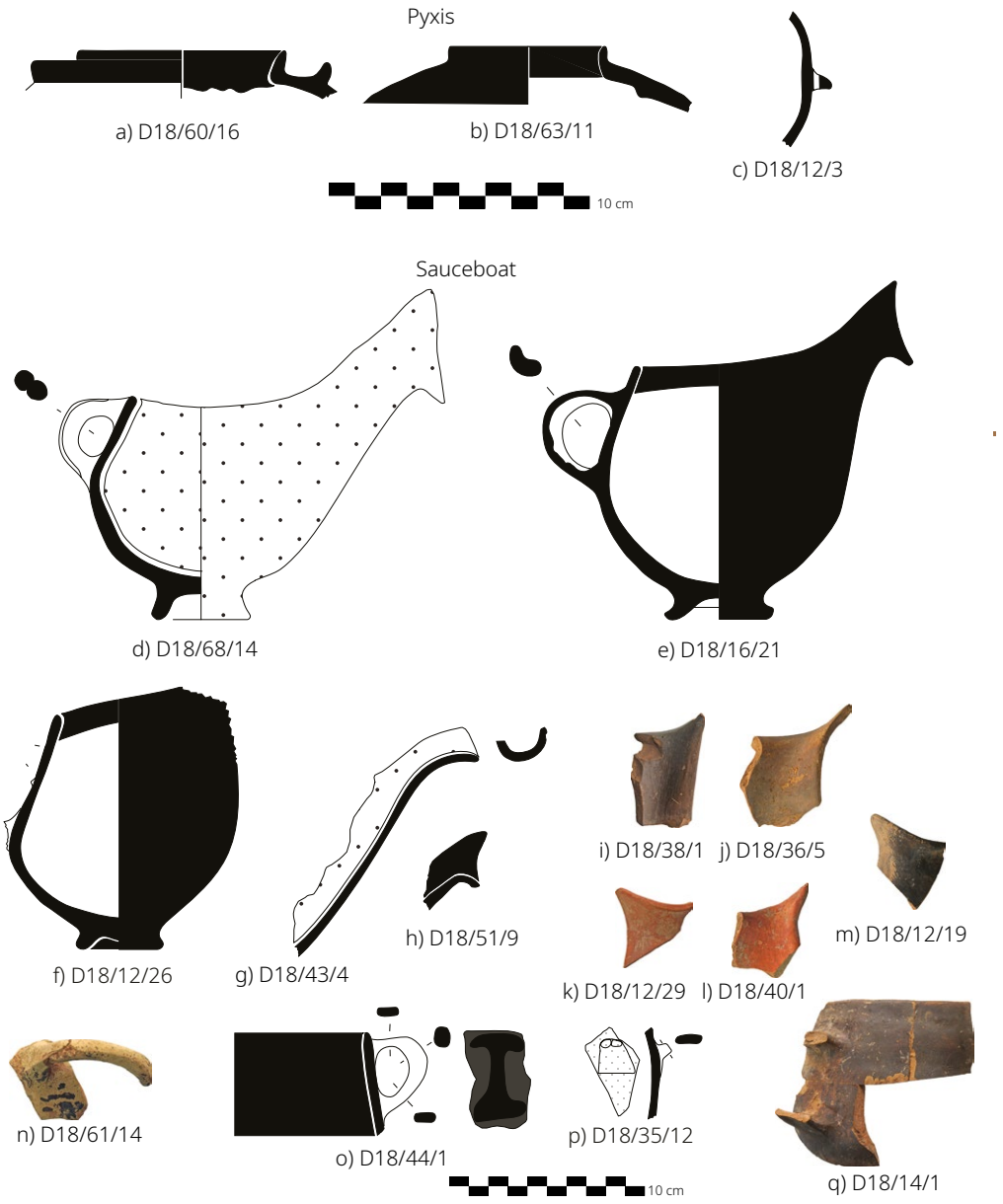


14

Fig. 14: Selected pithos sherds from the Minasian assemblage

to form 15 of EH II Tsoungiza[56]. Its form with the dark-painted exterior surface is an early EH II feature, in line with its dating to Phase I. *Jugs*, considered absent in the Minasian assemblage, could be associated with two twisted handles (Fig. 19 c. d) and two vertical handles (Fig. 19 e. f), while a few fragmented spouts (Fig. 19 g–j) are either related to jugs or some other kind of spouted vessel, while a rim-sherd (Fig. 19 k) could be associated with a jug or with an askoid vessel. Other sherds that provide some information on specific shapes include an incurving rim-sherd (Fig. 19 l) with parallels from

56 Pullen 2011, 362 f. fig. 5, 72.

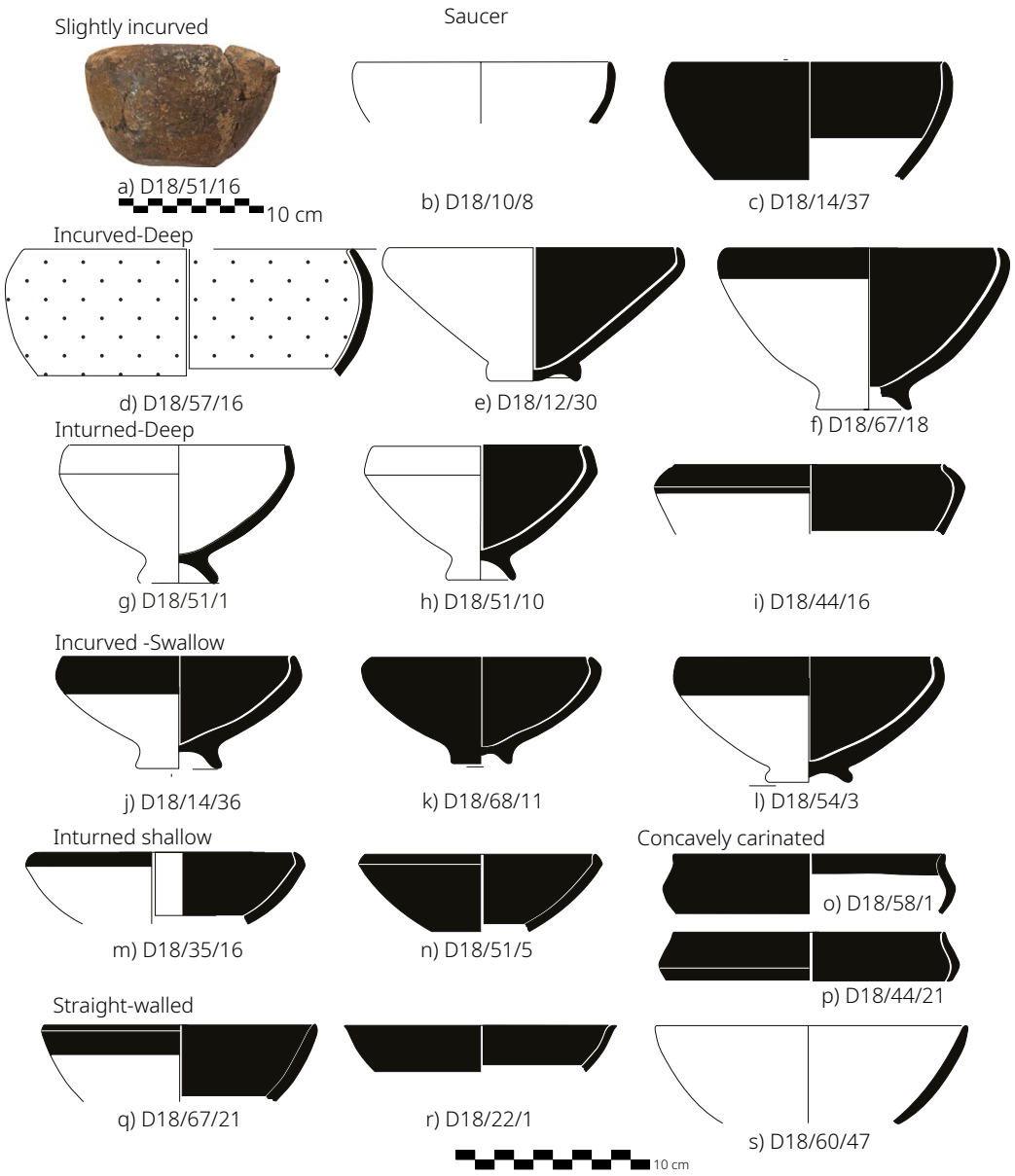


15

Fig. 15: Selected pyxis (a–c) and sauceboats (d–q) from the Minasian assemblage

Makrovouni[57] and Tsoungiza[58], while another (Fig. 19 m) is parallel to an EH I–II jar from Perachora[59]. Finally, a pierced knob (Fig. 19 n) of Phase I could be related to a spout of a necked pithos similar to that from Nidri[60]. With regards to individual shape accessories, a rough association of vertical handles of vessels related to coarse and medium coarse macro-fabrics with earlier EH II stages and horizontal handles with later EH II stages is chronologically interesting. Bases in the whole range of macro-fabrics are usually ring-shaped, though raised and flat bases also exist.

57 Dousougli 1987, 189 fig. 19, 98.
58 Pullen 2011, 229 fig. 4, 43; 334.
59 Fossey 1969, 62 fig. 4, 16.
60 Kilian-Dirlmeier 2005, 94. 102 pl. 15, 1.



16

Fig. 16: Selected saucers from the Minasian assemblage

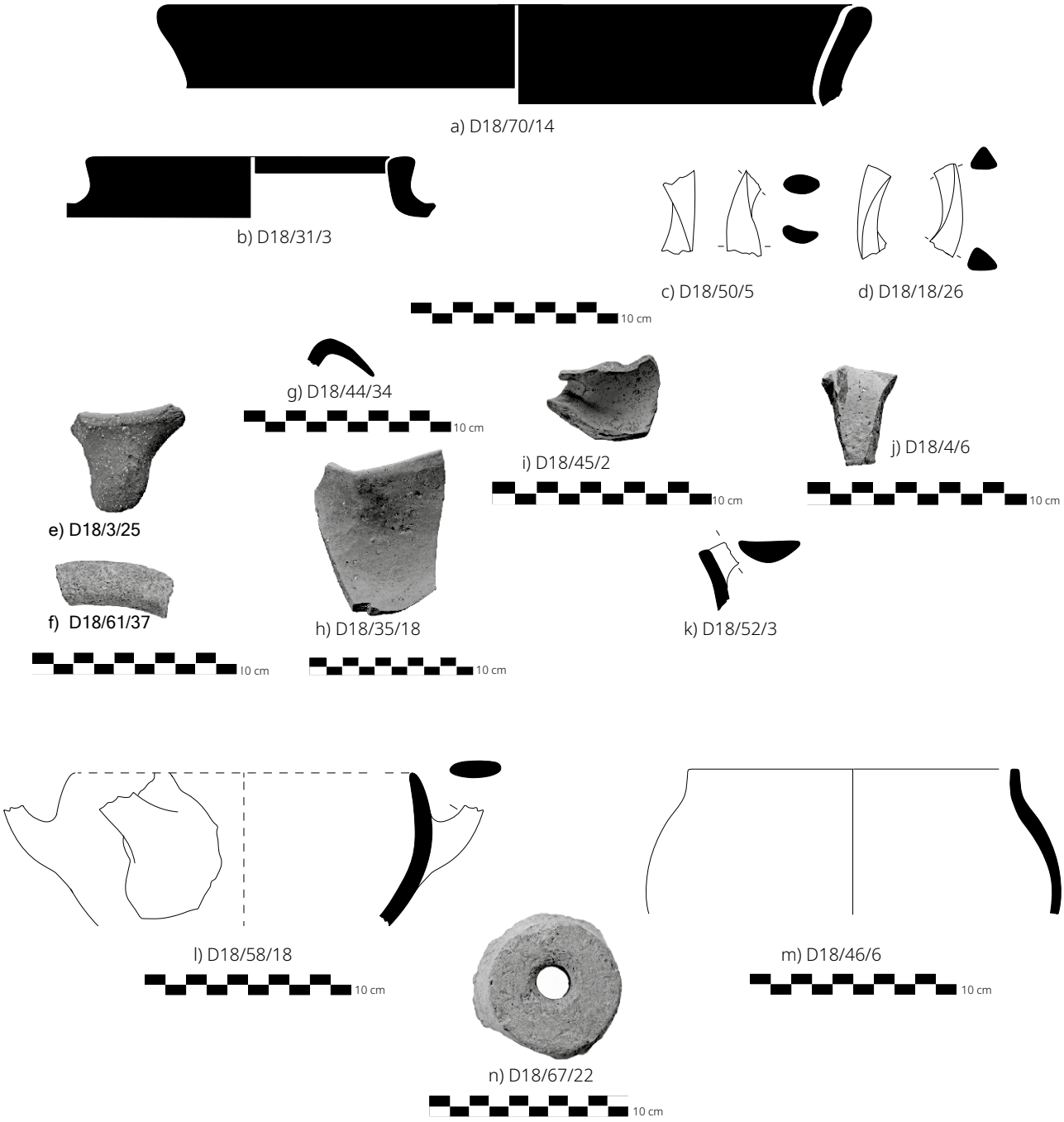
Fig. 17: Counts of saucers in the Minasian assemblage according to rim-wall formation per phase

Fig. 18: Stand sherds from the Minasian assemblage

Form	Phase I	Phase II
Slightly incurved rim	28 (23.0%)	10 (13.5%)
Inturned/ Incurved rim	66 (54.1%)	56 (75.7%)
Concavely carinated	15 (12.3%)	1 (1.4%)
Straight-walled	13 (10.7%)	7 (9.5%)
Total	122	74

17

18



19

Fig. 19: Not closely assigned pottery from the Minasian assemblage

Types of Decoration

28 *Patterned-painted: dark-on-light*, though identified in some extremely fragmented sherds, often derive from troubling contexts and any remarks remain open to future evaluation in comparison with other assemblages[61]. This decoration is associated mostly with fine fabrics, except for a *fruitstand* sherd (Fig. 12 g). The two identified styles include one closer to EH II patterns (Fig. 20 a–c) and another with both EH II and possible EH III features (Fig. 20 d–m)[62]. *Fine: pattern-painted* traditions are completed with a

61 In a few cases, the existence of a motif could not be verified and, as a result, these cases were not included in this class.

62 These sherds possibly come from three different vessels: 1) Fig. 20 d–h, 2) Fig. 20 i–j, 3) Fig. 20 k–m.

20

Fig. 20: Pattern-painted: dark on light sherds (a–m), pattern-painted: light on dark sherd (n) and other types of decoration (o–v) addressed in the Minasian assemblage

tiny *light-on-dark* decorated body sherd (Fig. 20 n) either related to the EH II tradition[63] or an EH III intrusion of the Ayia Marina ware[64].

29 Tactile decoration is common, attested mainly on *basins*, *lopas* and *pithoi*, mostly associated with type C, according to Pullen's classification[65] and only a few cases differ. Other types of decoration include impressed triangles (Fig. 20 o), impressions

63 Wiencke 2000, 323.

64 Sotiriadis 1912, 271–290; Rutter 1995, 18 f.

65 Pullen 2011, 169–171.

along the rim (Fig. 20 p–s), an impressed herring-bone motif (Fig. 20 t), plastic (Fig. 20 u) and incised decoration (Fig. 20 v).

Summary of the Changes in the Minasian Assemblage

30 Beyond any issues raised, several changes, usually variations, can be traced in all of the attributes of this assemblage. A notable increase/decrease in counts of a shape, a form or a shape accessory is typical. Rarely does a shape or form disappear during Phase I, while none is introduced during Phase II (Fig. 21). Accordingly, during Phase II none of the classes disappeared, nor were any new ones introduced (Fig. 22). In fine pottery, some surface treatment/class variations are associated with specific shapes (Fig. 23). Among other shapes, *saucers* show some interesting changes, partly related to general changes in the associated classes. Both *saucers* and *sauceboats* answer as rim-painted and partially painted, especially during Phase II. Changes in macro-fabric composition (Fig. 7), though previously associated with changes in wares[66], indicate that *fine macro-fabric* 2, similar to a greenish-yellow fabric identified in Corinthia[67], is mostly associated with Phase I, but variations are mostly visible in *medium* and *coarse* macro-fabrics. More specifically, the rise of *medium: macro-fabric* 2, the drop of *medium*: *macro-fabric* 4 and *coarse*: *macro-fabric* 1 during Phase II suggest a taste for less coarse fabrics.

31 The available information on decorative styles is limited and ambiguous. Phase I *pattern-painted: dark on light* sherds are related to EH II motifs, while Phase II cases show features that can be attributed both to the known motifs of EH II and the EH III. Parallel EH III motifs are dated in Lerna IV, 1–2, while the Minasian Phase II sherds derive mainly from the final stages (9–10). In non-painted decoration, the correlation of Phase I with more intensive variability is possible. At the same time, the drop of *lopas* with tactile decoration is significant in Phase II, especially from Stage 9, when it is almost absent. This could further associate Stage 9 with the EH III period at Lerna, wherein handless bowls believed to be cooking pots do not bear any tactile decoration[68].

32 Consequently, changes occur gradually, more clearly traced between Stages 1–6 (Phase I) and Stages 7–10 (Phase II), they are numerous, mostly in morphological features, lesser in macroscopic composition and observable mainly through variations in percentages.

66 Michalopoulos 2019, 294–296.
67 Alram-Stern 2018, 169.
68 Rutter 1995, 388–390.

Shape	Chronological correlations		Association with other Greek mainland sites	Reference
Amphora	Phase I		Lerna IIIC type 5	Wiencke 2000, 564 f. fig. II.86 tab. 16 a. b
	Phase II		Lerna IIID type 6	
	Phase I: vertical & wide handles:		Lerna III type 5	
	Phase II: horizontal crescent and triangular handles in medium coarse fabric		Towards Lerna IIID increasingly	
Baking Pan	Phase I: common		Lerna III: reducing towards later EH II	Wiencke 2000, 536
Hel.Tankard	Phase II: rise			Michalopoulos 2022, 46. 50–52 fig. 8
Lopas	Sharply incurved	Phase I: low number	Lerna IIIC–D: straighter type	Wiencke 2000, 549
		Phase II: decrease*		
	Tactile decoration:	Phase II: decrease		
Pithos: necked	Phase I: mostly			
Pyxis	Phase I-mainly Stage 1		Lerna IIID: absent	
			Ayios Dhimitrios IIb: drop	Zachos 2008, 73
Sauceboat	Phase II: drop		Thebes & Latoufi Group B: absent	
	Horizontal handles	Phase I		
	Vertical handles (ovoid, divided, double cylindrical)	Phase I		
	Vertical strap handles	Phase II		
Bass Bowl	Two-handled**	Phase I		
	One-handled	Phase II Stages 9–10		
Saucer	Large-sized	Phase I: mostly	Lerna III: after IIIB only survivals	Wiencke 2000, 601
	Deeper-Slighlty Incurved	Phase I: mostly	Lerna III	Wiencke 2000, 596 f.
	Concavely carinated	Phase I	Lerna III: random in Lerna IIIC late; absent in Lerna IIID	
			Tsoungiza: EH II developed	Pullen 2011, 356
	Incurved	Phase II: rise		
	Inturned	Phase I: mostly	Midea: Lerna IIIB –Tsoungiza developed period context	Alram-Stern 2018, 172 fig. 9

* Phase I: 15.3% and in Phase II: 7.7% (based on the cases that preserve this information).
** The distinction between one-handled and two-handled Bass bowls in this assemblage is based on fragmented cases and further evaluation is necessary.

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Fig. 21: Notable chronological correlations of specific shapes/ forms with Phase I and Phase II

Classes	Change in Phase II	Association with other Greek mainland sites
DP (f)	Black-dark gray slip: drop	Late EH II Latoufi: Psaraki 2016, 767; EH II developed – EH II developed-late Pazaraki: Kalogeropoulos 2019, 177 f.
	Red-brown slip: notable increase	
	Partially painted: Increase	Late EH II Kirra: Dor et al. 1960, 66; Lerna III: Wiencke 2000, 597
DP (m)	Significant drop	
YM (f)	Possible drop	Lerna IIID: Wiencke 2000, 322; Ayios Dhimitrios Period IIb: Zachos 2008, 66; Thorikos: Nazou 2014, 250 tab. 30
Unp (f) & Unp (m)	Significant rise	Lerna IIIC late–D mainly in medium coarse: Wiencke 2000, 326 f.
		Ayios Dhimitrios Period IIb (all fabrics): Zachos 2008, 67
Unp (c)	Notable drop	
DP (c)	Possible rise	Lerna III later: Wiencke 2000, 327

Fig. 22: Notable changes from Phase I to Phase II in classes/ surface treatment addressed in the Minasian assemblage and similar events/situations from other sites in southern Mainland Greece

22

Shape	Class/ Surface treatment	Association with other Greek mainland sites
Amphora	DP (m): more common in Phase I	
	Unp (m): rise in Phase II	Lerna IIIC–D: Wiencke 2000, 564 f. tab. 16 a. f
Basin	DP (m): mostly Phase I usually partially painted	Lerna IIIC: Wiencke 2000, 544
Pithos	DP (c): mainly in Phase I	
Pyxis	DP (f): in Phase I	Lerna IIIB–C: Wiencke 2000, 581
Lopas	Unp (m) with light surface: rise in Phase II	Lerna IIIC–D: Wiencke 2000, 565
Sauceboat	DP (f): black-gray slip: drop	
	YM (f): drop	Lerna IIID: Wiencke 2000, tab. 22 a
	DP (f): red – brown slip: rise	
	Unp (f): rise	Lerna IIID: Wiencke 2000, 591
	Rim-painted rise during Phase II	
Saucer	DP (f) Incurved/ Inturned: mainly related to Phase I	Lerna III: Wiencke 2000, 597; Tiryns
	Inturned/ Incurved rim-painted & partially painted: increase in Phase II*	Lerna IIIC–D: Wiencke 2000, 597; Midea EH II developed or later: Alram-Stern 2018, 166 fig. 5
	Unp (f): increase in Phase II	Lerna IIID: Wiencke 2000, 597; Tiryns 9: Weisshaar 1983, 346
	Finish variation during Phase II	Lerna IIIC–D: Wiencke 2000, 596 f.
	DP large saucers: mainly in Phase I	Lerna III early: Wiencke 2000, 602
Concavely carinated	DP (f): usually solidly painted in Phase I	

* In the Minasian assemblage rim-painted/solidly painted slightly outnumber the solidly painted, but in general, partly painted easily outnumber the solidly painted. During Phase II, solidly dark-painted count only a few cases, rim painted/solidly painted consist one third and in general partly painted dominate.

Fig. 23: Significant changes in the Minasian assemblage shapes relative to specific classes/surface treatment

23

Relative Synchronisms with Other Settlements

33 Based on the previous summary, some relative synchronisms can be suggested (Fig. 24)[69]. Any chronological remarks, however, represent the situation of the specific plot and not necessarily of the settlement.

34 Since Anatolianizing shapes derive from both phases and hybrid shapes already exist from Stage 1, the assemblage can be correlated mostly with the EH IIB period, equal to the EH II late. Any effort for a more detailed phasing is mainly based on Lerna, as the most representative, systematically published, and well-presented of the EH II–III periods. The material from Tsoungiza derives from the periods before and after the EH IIB. Although, in a relative framework, the parallels presented here function as a marker for the existence of early features in the Minasian assemblage and possible further chronological variations during the EH IIB.

35 Phase I can be generally associated with Lerna IIIC, mainly with its late part, synchronous to the appearance of the Anatolianizing ceramics in southern Greece[70]. Phase II is related to Lerna IIID, but Stages 9 and 10 of this Phase might intrude into the EH III period, based on the presence of the one-handled *Bass bowl*, the changes in the *pattern-painted: dark on light* decoration and the polish of *dark-painted Helladic tankards*

69 A general scheme has already been proposed: Michalopoulos 2022, 45 f. and 55 f. tab. 3.

70 Manning 1995, 58 f.

Relative Chronology	Minasian assemblage			Representative mainland sites
	Stratigraphic Stages	Architectural Periods	Ceramic Phases	
Late EH II (EH IIB)	1	A	Phase I	Lerna IIIC late; Tiryns Fundhorizont 8b; Lefkandi I, Thebes B; Ayia Irini III
	2			
	3			
	4			
	5			
	6	B		
	7		Phase II	Lerna IIID; Lefkandi I; Thebes B; Ayia Irini III
	8			
EH III	9			Lerna IV.1; Tiryns Fundhorizont 9; Thebes Γ; Ayia Irini gap
	10			

24

Fig. 24: Suggestions of chronological associations of the Minasian assemblage with important EBA sites

almost identical with that of the EH III *pattern painted: Light-on-Dark* from Orchomenos[71]. A few sherds with dark-burnished surfaces, probably from *Bass Bowls* retrieved from a mixed layer, reinforce an EH III synchronism of a habitation level. However, even the pottery of Stages 9 and 10 of Phase II includes mostly EH II features. Those of the EH III are limited in number, related to troubling contexts, and need further evaluation. But, in such a case, a transition similar to Tiryns: ›Übergangssphase‹, with EH II and EH III ceramics coexisting[72], might be proved to be closer to EBA Aigion than what happens in Lerna IV[73].

Peloponnesian and Central Greek Features of the Minasian Assemblage

36 Any attempts to classify local ceramic production/ traditions into dualistic categories are conventional but useful[74]. The cultural trait of an area is usually complicated by the co-existence of several micro-traditions, but the choice to focus on the Peloponnese and Central Greece in correlation with Aigion as a place of cross-cultural processes is based on specific evidence, including the location of the settlement by the Corinthian Gulf, close to the province of Phocis, the abundance of ceramic features of the Korakou culture and sufficient evidence for the cultural exchanges with sites of central Greece based on specific shapes, such as the Anatolianizing ceramics, the *Bass bowl* and the hybrid shapes of the Minasian assemblage, already discussed[75].

37 Regarding surface treatment, red-brown colored slips, present in this assemblage from Phase I, show a notable increase during Phase II, similar to central Greek settlements (Fig. 22). The *yellow-mottled* class, though strongly related to Attic sites where Mesogaia has been considered a production area[76], is relatively unknown in southern Central Greece. Perhaps, in Thebes and Latoufi, pots and sherds of this class might have

71 Kunze 1934, 34 pl. 13, 1–11.
72 Weiberg – Lindblom 2014, 385. 387.
73 Rutter 1995, 646.
74 Michalopoulos 2022, 44 f.
75 Michalopoulos 2022.
76 Nazou 2014, 260.

been considered part of a wider *dark-painted* group rather than absent. However, the numbers of this class in the Peloponnese are closer to the picture in Aigion[77].

38 Shapes support further interactions. Carinated *saucers* of Phase I seem mainly associated with the Peloponnese. Also, *saucers* with incurved/inturned rims in EH IIB are more common in the Peloponnese, while straight-walled *saucers* are more common in various central mainland sites[78]. Concerning *saucers*, partial painting, and specifically rim-painting, could be more easily associated with the Peloponnese. *Sauceboats* are not attested in EH IIB contexts in some Boeotian sites like Thebes and Latoufi, but are present in others like Lithares. Their survival at Aigion during Phase II seems more of a Peloponnesian choice than an influence from Boeotia or Phokis. However, associating *sauceboats* from this assemblage with the types of Lerna is difficult, but the similarities with central Greek cases are rather interesting.

39 Some shapes are absent or not recognized in this assemblage. The *cup*, common in central Greece, including Attica and Boeotia, is not popular in EH IIB Peloponnesian contexts[79]. Also, *pithoid* ceramics with conical rims are usual in EH IIB Thebes[80], except bottom right, Latoufi[81] and exist even further north in Pefkakia[82], but are absent in EH IIB Peloponnesian contexts. On the other hand, some shapes known from the Peloponnese like the ladle, mainly an Argolid-Corinthian shape[83], have not been recognized yet at Aigion. Nevertheless, such evidence must be treated with caution as it could reflect only the current state of research and could also be affected by chronological aspects.

Aigion and the Corinthian Gulf

39 To place Aigion into the wider context of the Corinthian Gulf, adopting the concept of ›coastscape‹ can prove useful, highlighting the role of coastal settlements and focusing on their socio-economic aspects[84]. Under this concept, Aigion can be considered a member of a Corinthian Gulf network, possibly consisting of several overlapping networks that acted during the EBA, similar to EBA coastal settlements of the Saronic Gulf[85].

40 In this direction, clear indications of connectivity between Aigion and central Greek settlements have been presented, without excluding short-scale population movements from the area of central Greece, as from Phocis[86]. These are not embodied only through the Anatolianizing and hybrid ceramics, but through features that are more usual in central Greece than in the Peloponnese, as well.

41 Most choices in ceramic production and consumption, however, suggest a persistence in features closely related to EH II Peloponnesian sites. This is indicated not only by the limited number of features linked to central Greek traditions but by the survival into the final stratigraphic stages of ceramic features that can be considered among the signatures of EH II pottery found in Peloponnesian sites. Furthermore, it is important to notice that the connection with the Cyclades, which is manifested through the obsidian products found in the Minasian plot and a fragment of a Cycladic stone

77 Pullen 2011, 342–344.
78 Wiencke 2000, 601.
79 Wiencke 2000, 555.
80 Psaraki 2014, 104 fig. 3, 17–19; fig. 5.
81 Psaraki 2016, 767 fig. 6, A43.
82 e.g.: Christmann 1996, pl. 36, 10. The best-preserved cases have horizontal or vertical handles but, in several cases, usually fragmented, the existence of handles remains questionable.
83 Wiencke 2000, 574.
84 Pullen 2023, 336 f.
85 Pullen 2023, 341.
86 Michalopoulos 2022, 56–58.

vessel with incised decoration from another plot[87], would have been possible through Attica and Corinthia. Direct interactions with the latter are not clear, but features such as *fine macro-fabric* group 2 and Peloponnesian characteristics, such as concavely *carinated saucers* and partially *painted saucers*, could be mainly related to interactions with this region. It is also necessary to underline the importance of networks that were developed in the hinterland and were affecting the coastal settlements. In the case of Aigialeia, the similarities observed in pottery production between Kassaneva and Aigion could be an indication of such interactions.

42 Aigion, and other sites of Aigialeia, including Helike (Rizomylos), Platanos and Kamares, could have been involved in a coastal network as several EH II sites around the Corinthian Gulf, situated no more than 2 km from the shore (Fig. 25). The southern shores of the Corinthian Gulf seem better documented than the northern shores. Regarding boat travel, small paddle canoes, covering a maximum distance of 20 km, and longboats, covering a maximum distance of 40 km in one day, indicate possible trips between settlements[88]. Specifically, given that the settlements in the southern shore of the Corinthian Gulf do not exceed a distance of 20 km and that several trips among settlements of the Peloponnese and Central Greece, like Aigion-Anemokampi, Krathion-Kirra, Helike-Kirra, are around 30 km, it can be suggested that small paddled canoes were favorable for trips across the shoreline, while longboats could have been used for one day trips from one side of the Corinthian Gulf to the other.

43 Some of the sites addressed are not considered strictly as coastal sites (Fig. 25 I. S. T), but alterations of the coastline are quite possible, while several sites were easily reached via land routes. In such a ›coastscape‹ network, a combined use of land and sea routes was possible, if not typical. Also, under specific circumstances, where the choice of one of the two ways was prohibitive, the existence of the alternative would be profitable and would offer stability to this network, in contrast to other networks based exclusively on sea or land routes, which would be vulnerable for various reasons.

Conclusions

44 Based on the evidence from pottery and topography, Aigion was in constant contact with settlements of this network. However, the changes observed between Phase I and Phase II in the Minasian assemblage, apart from being related to cultural hybridization[89], suggest a shift in this network concerning Aigion. During Phase II, the interaction with central Greece is intensified, while during the preceding Phase I, interaction with the Peloponnese is stronger. Interaction with Corinthia, especially neighboring the Argolid, Megarid, Attica and part of the Saronic Gulf ›coastscape‹, must have been important. Whether such a shift affected several settlements of this network, or if was just the settlement of Aigion, cannot be answered. Meanwhile, what happens during the EH III period, how all the changes and destructions observed in several settlements influence its activity, and how such evidence would add to the discussion on the disturbances of this final EBA period is indeed an intriguing matter concerning this network.

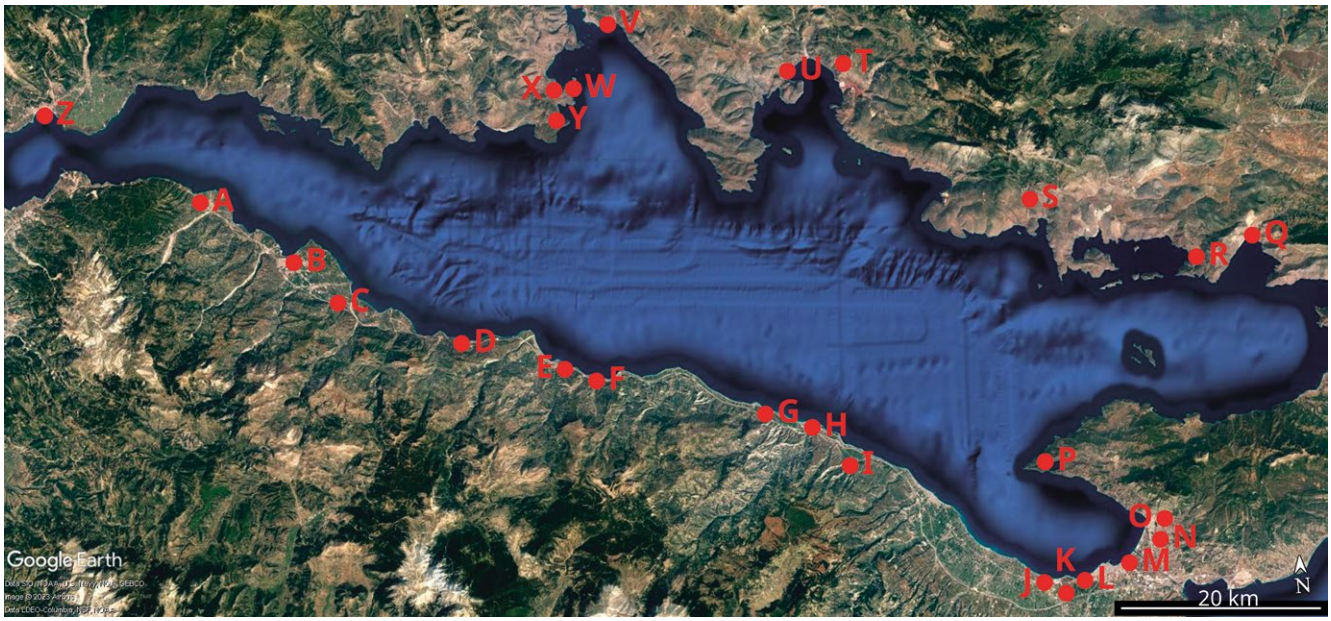
45 The aforementioned changes, however, occur gradually, without synchronous changes in other areas of the material culture. So, what has been described as a transition[90] accurately fits this case, and external influences are only part of such

87 Papazoglou-Manioudaki 2010, 131.

88 Broodbank 2000, 101 f. tab. 3; Pullen – Tartaron 2007, 153 f.; Pullen 2023, 338 f.

89 Michalopoulos 2022, 53. 55.

90 Galaty – Rutter 2022, 428.



Site		Reference
A	Kamares	Fig. 1
B	Aigion	Fig. 1. 2
C	Helike	Fig. 1
D	Platanos	Fig. 1
E	Krathion	Fig. 1
F	Derveni	Sarri 2013, 465-468
G	Kamari	Papathanasiou 2015, 371 f
H	Xylokastro	Papathanasiou 2015, 369 f
I	Thalero	Hope-Simpson 1981, 37
J	Agios Gerasimos	Hope-Simpson 1981, 33
K	Corinth	Lavezzi 2003, 72-74 plan 4.5-4.6
L	Korakou	Blegen 1927
M	Poseidonia-Canal	Hope-Simpson 1981, 33
N	Aspra Chomata	Hope-Simpson 1981, 38
O	Loutraki	Hope-Simpson – Dickinson 1979, 71
P	Perachora-Vouliagmeni	Fossey 1969; Hope-Simpson 1981, 38
Q	Kreusis	Mylonopoulos 2013, 1, 3
R	Aliki	Fossey 1988, 168; Farinetti 2011, 173; Mylonopoulos 2013, 1, 3
S	Korsiai	Morin 2004
T	Medeon	Vatin 1969, 37
U	Antikyra	Sideris 2014, 29
V	Kirra	Dor et al. 1960
W	Apsifia	Vatin 1964; Baziotopoulou – Valavanis 2003, 12
X	Galaxidi	Vatin 1964; Baziotopoulou – Valavanis 2003, 12
Y	Anemokampi	Vatin 1964; Baziotopoulou – Valavanis 2003, 12
Z	Nafpaktos	Saranti 2018

Fig. 25: EH II sites around the Corinthian Gulf

processes. Several features of the Korakou culture that characterize both phases, elsewhere associated with cultural resistance to ceramic novelties from central Greece[91], can be further associated with a relatively stable network.

46 However, pottery is only a part of the products that were circulating. Apart from finished goods, it can be suggested that raw materials, like obsidian and human resources, including workmen and craftsmen, were circulated through such a network. Consequently, knowledge and traditions were transmitted through this ›coastscape‹ network, which played a vital role in the interactions between the northern Peloponnese and southern central Greece, with plenty of other extensions through sea and mountain routes to the central and southern Peloponnese, Thessaly, the Cyclades, the Ionian Islands and western Greece.

47 Based on the evidence presented here, the scene of the Corinthian Gulf can be interpreted as a melting pot of different micro-traditions. This network could be a small world, similar to those suggested for the Cyclades[92], the Attic-Euboean Gulf[93], the Argolid and the Saronic Gulfs[94], or the common ground for several small worlds. Cultural variations need further investigation to understand the function of the associated network/s and the role of its actors. Aigion, as one of them, can contribute decisively towards this aim, as its pottery reveals, through an intensification of the study of pottery and the rest of its material world.

Acknowledgments

48 Much information, mostly primary data, is associated with my PhD dissertation, financed by the State Scholarships Foundation (IKY), to which I am grateful. My sincere appreciation to Dr. Lena Papazoglou-Manioudaki for her permission to study the material from the excavation which she conducted at Aigion. Also, special thanks go to all the personnel of the Museum of Aigion, where part of the work was carried out. Particular thanks are owed to Dr. Andreas Vordos for sharing primary information about Aigialeia. I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. Daniel Pullen for his valuable comments. I am more than grateful to Laetitia Chardon for proofreading the present paper. I am also deeply appreciative of Dr. Aphrodite Hassiakou for her continuous support and advice. Sincere thanks are extended to Prof. Yannis Papadatos for his valuable advice throughout the study of the Minasian assemblage, as well as for his assistance with numerous pottery drawings, along with Kalliope Theodoropoulou, to whom I am also grateful. Nonetheless, I acknowledge sole responsibility for any mistakes and omissions.

91 Michalopoulos 2022, 58.
92 Broodbank 2000, 207–211.
93 Pullen 2023, 339.
94 Pullen 2023, 338.

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CONTACT

Dr. Panagiotis Michalopoulos
National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, School of Philosophy, Department of History and Archaeology
15784 Athens
Greece
panmich89@gmail.com
ORCID-iD: https://orcid.org/0009-0002-6291-7132
ROR ID: https://ror.org/04gnjpq42

METADATA

Titel/*Title*: Cultural Crossroads in the Corinthian Gulf during the EBA. Insights into a Ceramic Assemblage from Aigion

Band/*Issue*: 2023/2

Bitte zitieren Sie diesen Beitrag folgenderweise/*Please cite the article as follows*: P. Michalopoulos, Cultural Crossroads in the Corinthian Gulf during the EBA. Insights into a Ceramic Assemblage from Aigion, AA 2023/2, § 1–48, https://doi.org/10.34780/6be3-3r6a

Online veröffentlicht am/*Online published on*: 06.05.2024

DOI: https://doi.org/10.34780/6be3-3r6a

Schlagwörter/*Keywords*: Corinthian Gulf, Aigialeia, Aigion, early Helladic pottery, ›coastscape‹

Bibliographischer Datensatz/*Bibliographic reference*: https://zenon.dainst.org/Record/003063551