

LEMNIAN GREY WARE*

Laura DANILE

Keywords: *Lemno, Hephaestia, grey ware, Early Iron Age, North Aegean.*

Recent excavations at Hephaestia on Lemno recovered an interesting stratigraphic sequence ranging from the Late Bronze Age to the Archaic period. The layers have produced large quantities of grey ware shards. The study of this pottery and its context has brought the acquisition of new elements which are very important not only for the typology and diffusion of the grey ware but also for the history of the island during the Early Iron Age. The aim of this paper is to introduce Lemnian grey ware and to include it in the wide context of the North-Aegean area.



Fig. 1- The position of Lemno.

* I am grateful to the Director, Prof. E. Greco, for allowing me to study the Lemnian pottery from his excavation. I would like to thank all the team of the Italian School at Athens, in particular L. Mercuri e A. Correale for the cooperation. The pottery drawings are by G. Stelo; the outline map of Lemno in Fig. 2 is by L. Botarelli.



Fig. 2 - Lemno, the sites in which grey ware was found.

THE CONTEXT

The pottery presented in this paper came from excavations conducted at Hephaestia on Lemno (**Fig. 1-2**) by the Italian Archaeological School at Athens from 2003 until 2007, under the direction of Emanuele Greco¹. These excavations yielded a great amount of grey ware shards and permit us to suggest a typology of this pottery, so widespread in the North-Aegean area, and some observations about its chronology².

They were affected in the Area 17 (**Fig. 3**), which is located near the isthmus, and recovered a complex stratigraphic sequence (**Fig. 4**). The layers are in secondary deposition: they must have been taken from elsewhere in the surrounding area and later re-deposited there after the construction of the archaic wall (**Fig. 5-6**)³. This maybe occurred between the end of the 8th and the 7th century B.C., in accordance with the analysis of the shells founded inside the stones of the wall⁴.

The earliest evidence in the area is the Late Bronze Age settlement, probably deserted in the Late Helladic III C and then covered by the above mentioned layers⁵ where we have not found fragments later than 7th century B.C.

Considering the gap in knowledge concerning the archaeology of the island, one can understand the important contribution that the new excavations can offer.

¹ For preliminary reports see *Hephaestia* 2003-2006; for a summary of our work see the papers presented in *Hephaestia* 2000-2006.

² DANILE in *Hephaestia* 2005, p. 958-966.

³ GRECO 2007, p. 160-161.

⁴ CALCAGNILE in *Hephaestia* 2006, p. 998-999.

⁵ *Hephaestia* 2006.

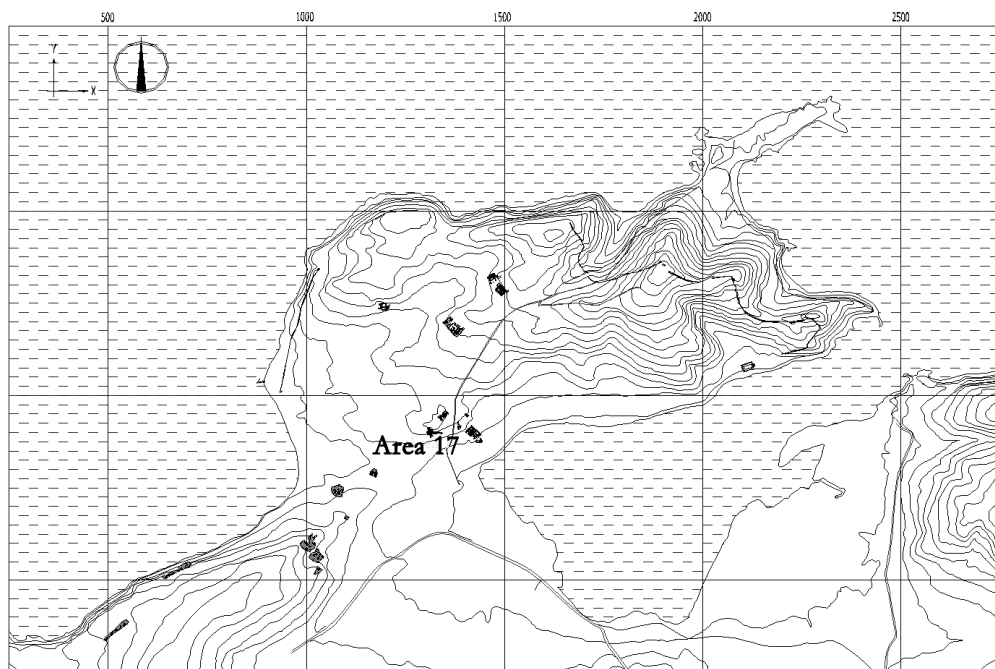


Fig. 3 - Lemno, Hephæstia, the Area 17 (SAIA Archive).

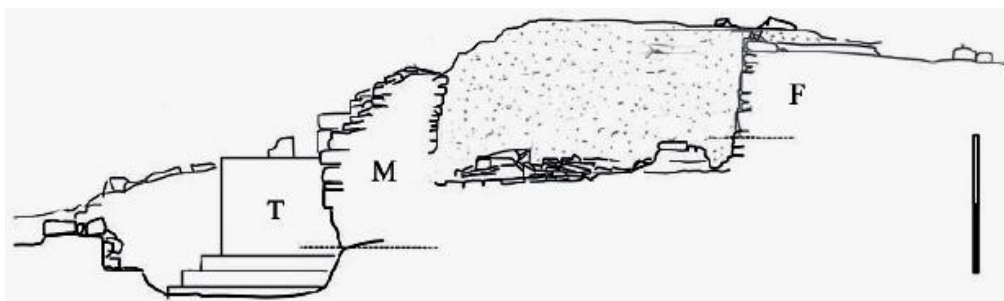


Fig. 4 - Excavation in the Area 17. N-S section (MERCURI 2008, fig. 10 b).



Fig. 5 - Excavation in the Area 17.

Photo of the layers in which the grey ware was found (MERCURI 2008, fig. 5).



Fig. 6 - Excavation in the Area 17, general view (MERCURI 2008, fig. 8).

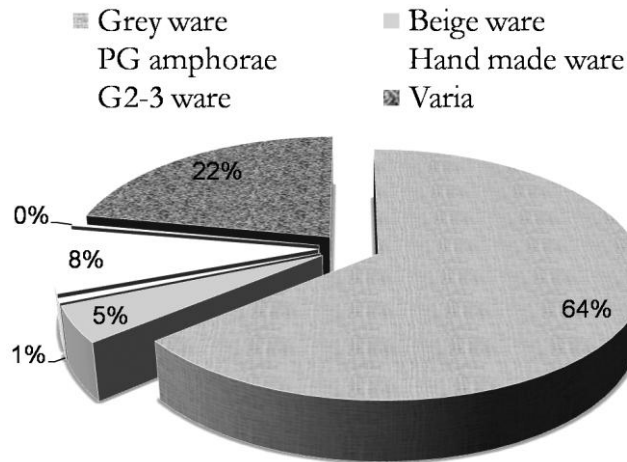


Fig. 7 - Pottery by main category.

Most of the vases are wheelmade. The range of the pottery includes grey (64%), beige (5%) and handmade ware⁶ (8%) with a few fragments of Protogeometric amphora⁷, G 2-3 ware⁸, Late Helladic pottery⁹ (under 1%) and *varia* (Fig. 7)¹⁰.

It is interesting to note close parallels between some forms in beige and in grey ware that appear to share also a common fabric which, on the basis of visual criteria, could suggest the production in the same *ergasterion* (Figg. 8-9). The different colours are probably the result of a controlled reduction or oxidation firing. A relationship between grey and tan ware can be observed in other sites like, for example, Troy¹¹.

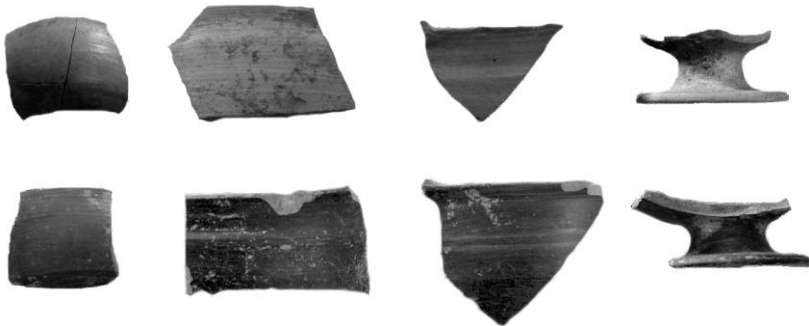


Fig. 8 - Beige and grey ware.

⁶ BENVENUTI in *Hephaestia* 2005, 957.

⁷ CATLING 1998; LENTZ *et alii* 1998; DANILE 2008, p. 40.

⁸ The name of this pottery came from the sector of Troy where many shards have been found; MCMULLEN FISHER 1996 and BESCHI 2006.

⁹ PRIVITERA 2004.

¹⁰ For the context see CORREALE, GASPARRI and MERCURI in *Hephaestia* 2005, p. 952; DANILE 2008; MERCURI 2008.

¹¹ PAVÚK 2005, p. 273-275.

Lemnian grey ware has not received a monothematic study yet and there is not a spectrum of the shapes. My study is not complete but I can give a first summary of the work in progress.

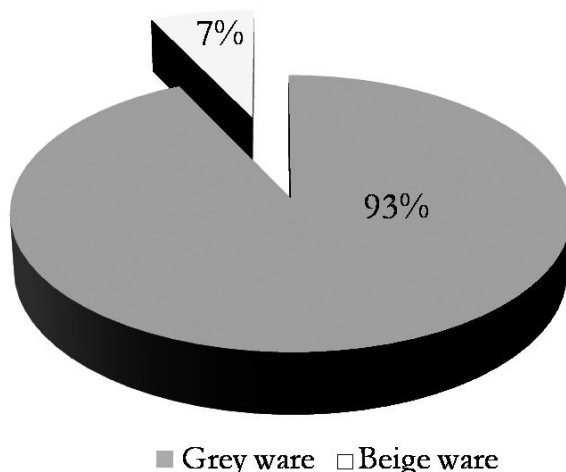


Fig. 9 - Proportion between grey and beige ware.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LEMNIAN GREY WARE

The clay is very fine and well levigated, the colour, from light to dark grey (Munsell colour range of 2.5YR 6/0; 10YR 6/1), is the result of a reduction firing. It contains a few white or yellow inclusions which are normally small to medium-sized, and a lot of fine, silvery mica. Sometimes the fabric is soft and has a surface with a powdery feel. The closed shapes have more hard fabric, with a rough feel because they contain lots of very small inclusions. The pots are baked evenly and usually they are very hard. The surface is smooth and polished and is covered with a dense, shiny and micaceous dark grey or, more often, black slip, with a soapy feel (**Fig. 11**).

Generally there are no decorative elements; seldom they have horizontal ridges or grooves, which are more common on the neck of closed shapes, often grouped closely together (**Fig. 24**).

The most characteristic decoration consists of a combination of horizontal and wavy lines (the so-called *Wellenband*), made by a multiple toothed instrument and incised before firing, while the vase was turned on the wheel, before the handles and the slip were applied (**Fig. 11; 13-14**)¹². This decoration is typical of the grey ware from an old period and it is present, for example, at Troy, Lesbos and Lefkandi, above all on the great open shapes like the craters¹³.

We have no evidence of a pottery kiln and we are waiting for the results of archeometrical analysis but some elements would support the hypothesis of a local origin: the high proportion in relation to the total of the fragments (**Fig. 7**), the particular range of shapes, the correspondence of forms with vases in beige ware.

¹² *Lefkandi* II.1, p. 55.

¹³ BAYNE 2000, p. 153, 209, 228; *Lefkandi* II.1, p. 55; *Troy* IV, p. 44, 177.

There is a wide range of shapes; most of them are not included in the Bayne typology¹⁴ and seem specific of the island, so it is not easy to find exact parallels in others contexts of the North-Aegean area.

A quantitative analysis shows that the open vases account for 86% of the total, while the closed ones are only 14% (**Fig. 10**). Some shapes probably formed a drinking set, such as *kylikes*, cups, craters, amphorae, beakers and jugs.

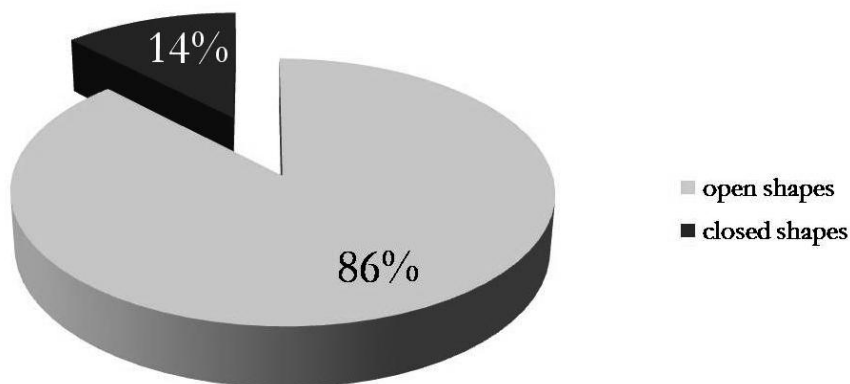


Fig. 10 - Proportion between open and closed shapes.

1. *Open shapes*

There are three main types of crater, distinguished by form and size. The first one has a continuous profile: a simple rounded rim with a diameter of 19-21cm, a hemispherical body, sometimes carinated in the lower part, two horizontal handles, round in section, and *Wellenband* decoration in the upper part of the wall (**Fig. 11**). Only one of these vases is decorated by sets of horizontal grooves on the body and another have unusual wavy walls (**Fig. 12**).

The second type has a mouth of about 20 cm, a high vertical rim, with a concavity on the external side and a deep rounded body, often decorated with incised wavy lines in the upper part (**Fig. 13**)¹⁵.

These craters introduce shapes not otherwise found at Lemnos. Their size is medium between those of big craters and cups however it is very probably that their function was the same as that of small craters¹⁶.

They are rare and very close to the local *skyphoi* in Black Slip Ware from Lefkandi of the Middle Protogeometric-Sub Protogeometric period¹⁷, but they are larger. One fragment of these vases was found at Kyme, in Euboea too¹⁸. I have not found other examples of these vases in the North-Aegean area which could give us more elements for the chronology and diffusion of the shape that until now is attested only at Lemnos and in Euboea.

¹⁴ BAYNE 2000.

¹⁵ DANILE in *Hephaestia* 2005, pl. V, c-d.

¹⁶ *Lefkandi* II.1, p. 23-24; LEMOS 2002, p. 46-47.

¹⁷ *Lefkandi* I, p. 38, 55, nos. 322, 813-815, pls. 18, 27; *Lefkandi* II.1, p. 53-57, nos. 771-793 (*black slip ware*); nos. 795-798 (*monochrome incised ware*), pl. 39; LEMOS 2002, p. 83-84, fig. 99, no. 3.

¹⁸ SAPOUNA SAKELLARAKI 1998, p. 74, fig. 41.5, no. 101.

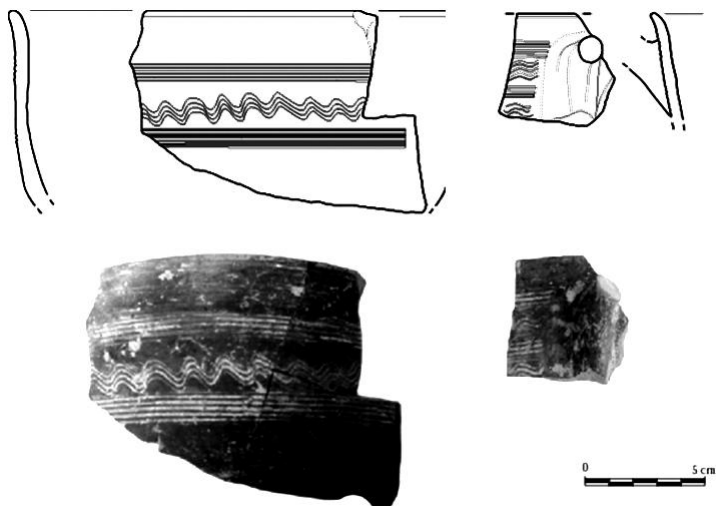


Fig. 11 - Craters type one.

The third kind of crater is more common and has a flat rim, with a large mouth of 25-40 cm (**Fig. 14**). Its body is carinated and deep, with straight walls in the upper part and prominent wheel-marks inside. Some shards have two double handles, round in section, and they are frequently decorated with ribbing and incised *Wellenband*. Presumably this crater was provided with ring base or with high conical foot, both present in our context.

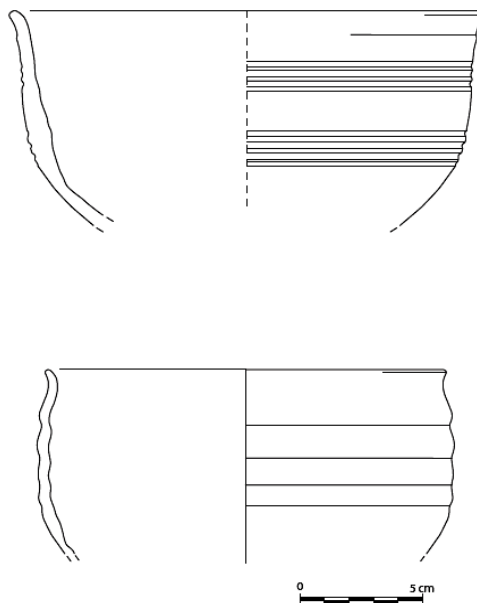


Fig. 12 - Craters type one.

Several fragments of the same type were found during the Adriani excavations at Hephaestia¹⁹ and one came from Thasos²⁰. It could have been imported from Lemnos and can offer evidence of a connection between the two islands in this phase²¹. They have a chronology between the second half of the 8th and the beginning of the 7th century B.C. that we could accept for our examples too.

This type of crater differs from the usual version included in the Bayne typology²², recalls craters of the Late Helladic III C²³ and some examples of Troy VII layers²⁴.

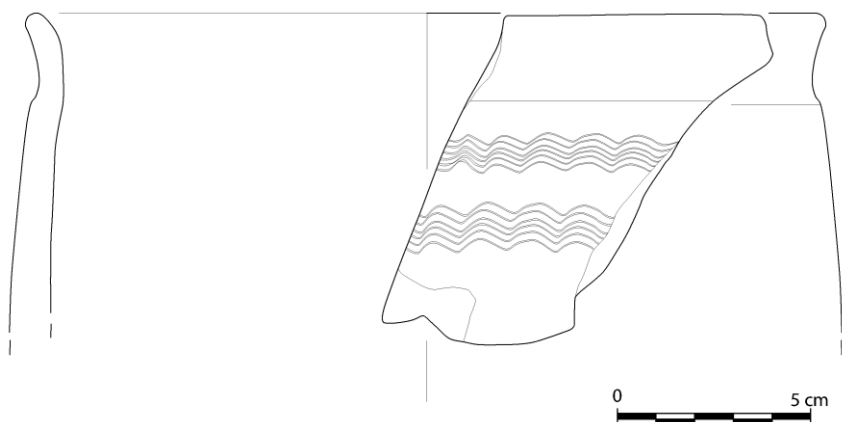


Fig. 13 - Crater type two.

Fragments with openwork triangles are easily identified and they are not very numerous (**Fig. 15**)²⁵. I do not know the specific function of this particular object that is present also at Troy in the same chronological range²⁶; maybe it was used as a stand for other vases, or it was the foot of a larger crater.

¹⁹ MESSINEO 2001, p. 161-164, nos. 158-173, figs. 166-168.

²⁰ BERNARD 1964, fig. 28, no. 98, inv. 60.174.

²¹ The hypothesis is in accordance to BESCHI 1985, p. 56, 59-60.

²² BAYNE 2000, p. 150, fig. 36, no. 12.

²³ FURUMARK 1941, p. 633, form 282.

²⁴ CHABOT ASLAN 2002, p. 100, no. 23, pl. 3; MOUNTJOY 1999, 338, fig. 18, no. 65; *Troy IV*, p. 40-41, 173, fig. 216, forms C 69, C 74; see also PAPADOPOULOS 2005, p. 122, T 48-1, fig. 104, a, pl. 327, a-c for Torone.

²⁵ DANILE in *Hephaestia* 2005, pl. III, a-b.

²⁶ CHABOT ASLAN *supra*; ROSE 1998, figs. 4-5; *Troy IV*, p. 43-44, fig. 217, form D 45.

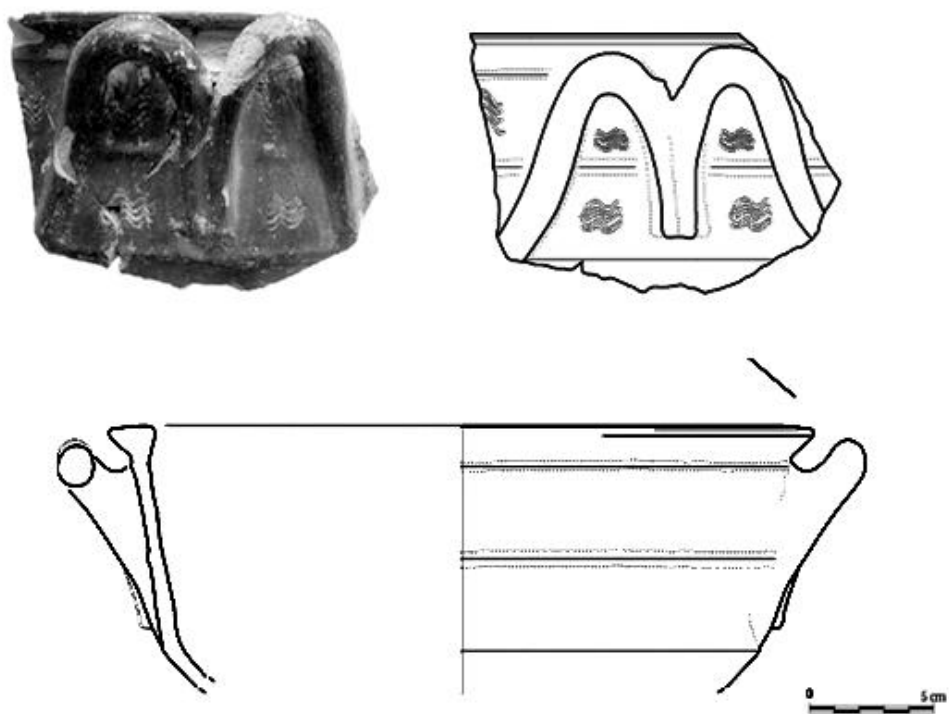


Fig. 14 - Crater type three.

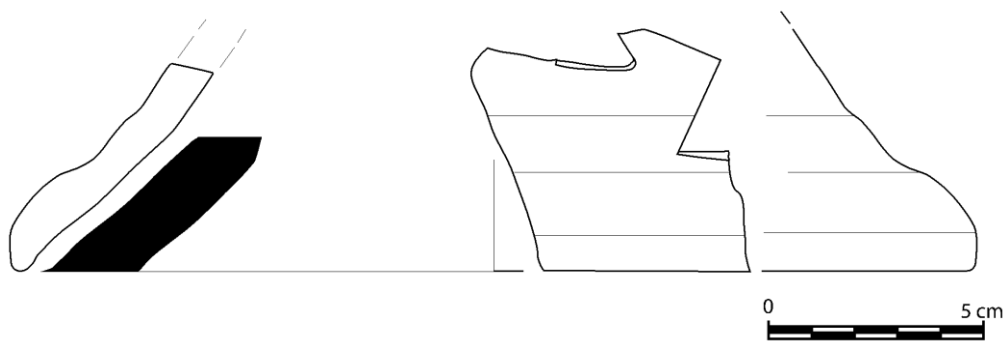


Fig. 15 - Fenestrated stand.

Several shards belong to stemmed *kylix* characterized by horizontal handles, round in section, and a carinated body with an almost vertical upper wall (**Fig. 16**). The rim is slightly offset and has a plain rounded lip with a diameter of 11-16 cm. This shape, very frequent at Hephaestia both in grey and in beige ware²⁷, does not have parallels in the North-Aegean area, except for a *unicum* from the cemetery of Torone in Red Slip ware (**Fig. 16**)²⁸. The vase was employed as ash-urn in a tomb of the early period in which the cemetery was used, at the beginning of the Iron Age²⁹. The profile recalls that of Mycenaean stemmed *kylikes*, but they have vertical handles. While carinated cups are present in Troy VII layers, they stand always on ring feet³⁰.

Another type of stemmed *kylix* with a lower base and without handles finds good comparison in an exemplar from the cemetery of Hephaestia (**Fig. 17**)³¹, and so could be dated to the second half of the 8th or the early 7th century B.C.

The hemispherical cup is very common too, both in grey ware and in beige ware (**Fig. 18**)³². It has a rounded slightly offset rim with a diameter of 12-14 cm, a shallow hemispherical body and probably a conical foot. There is only one exemplar which is stemmed like the carinated *kylikes*³³. The handles are two, horizontal and round in section.

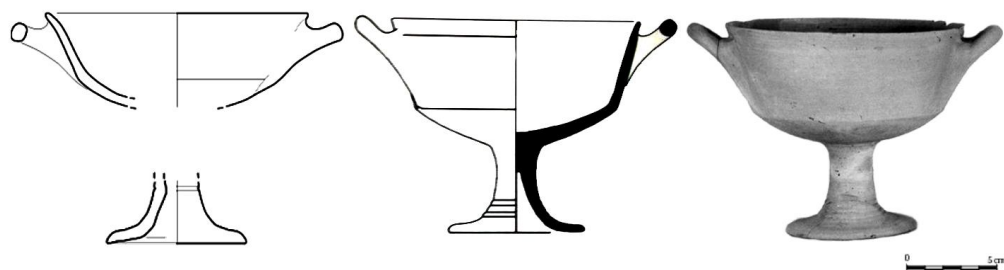


Fig. 16 - Stemmed *kylikes* with the parallel from Torone (PAPADOPOULOS 2005, fig. 167a, no. T 111-1, tav. 400).

²⁷ DANILE in *Hephaestia* 2005, pl. II, c-d for a beige cup.

²⁸ PAPADOPOULOS 2005, p. 198, 484-485, T111-1, fig. 167a, pl. 400.

²⁹ PAPADOPOULOS 2005, p. 484.

³⁰ KOPPENHÖFER 1997, p. 320, pl. 10, no. 6; PAVÚK 2002, p. 61, fig. 16, no. 57; *Troy IV*, fig. 214b, 270, 287, 5, form A 93.

³¹ MUSTILLI 1932-33, p. 49, figs. 10, 64, pl. VI, no. 14 (tomb. A-LXXII).

³² DANILE in *Hephaestia* 2005, pl. XII, c-d.

³³ DANILE in *Hephaestia* 2005, pl. III, c-d.

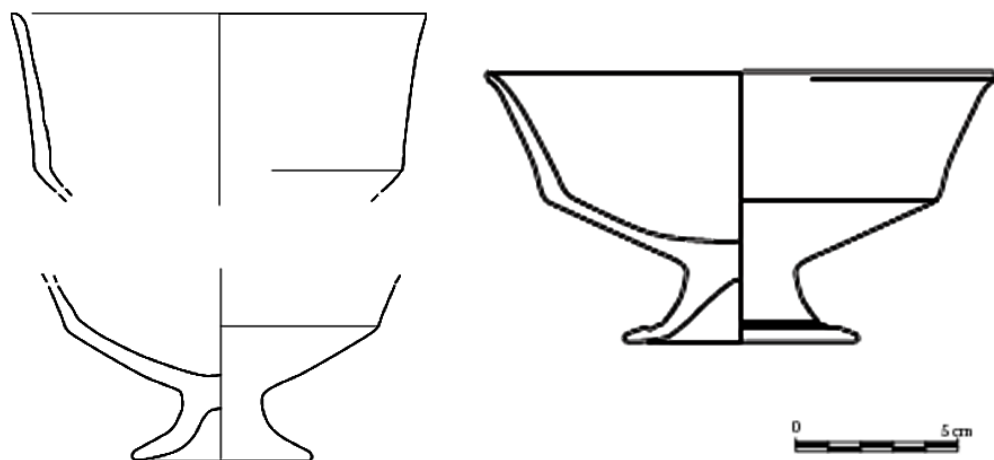


Fig. 17 - Stemmed *kylixes* and the parallel from the cemetery of Hephaestia.

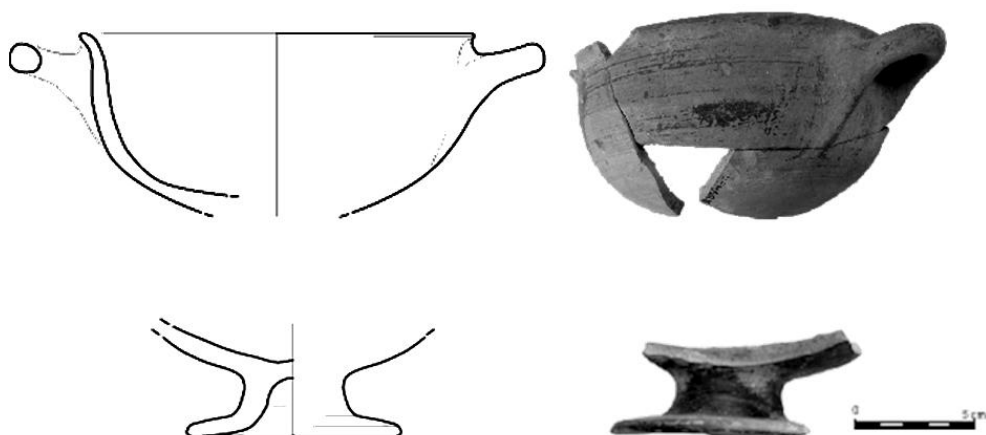


Fig. 18 - Hemispherical cups.

Similar cups from Troy VII have only one vertical handle. The lack of any exact parallel for this shape, which is not included in the Bayne typology and not present in other contexts of the North-Aegean area, makes not simple propose a chronological range for it.

The *kantharos* is a characteristic shape of Thessaly³⁴, Macedonia³⁵ and West-Anatolic coast from the Bronze Age³⁶. There are two main types of *kantharoi* at Hephaestia: the earliest has carinated walls, an offset rim and two vertical handles attached on the rim, with a concavity on the upper face (Fig. 19).

³⁴ CARINGTON SMITH 1991, p. 336-342 with bibliography.

³⁵ Toumba Thessaloniki: CHAVELA 2004, p. 335, fig. 10 b; Verghina: ANDRONIKOS 1969, p. 211-213, fig. 50.

³⁶ PAVÚK 2002, p. 51-52.

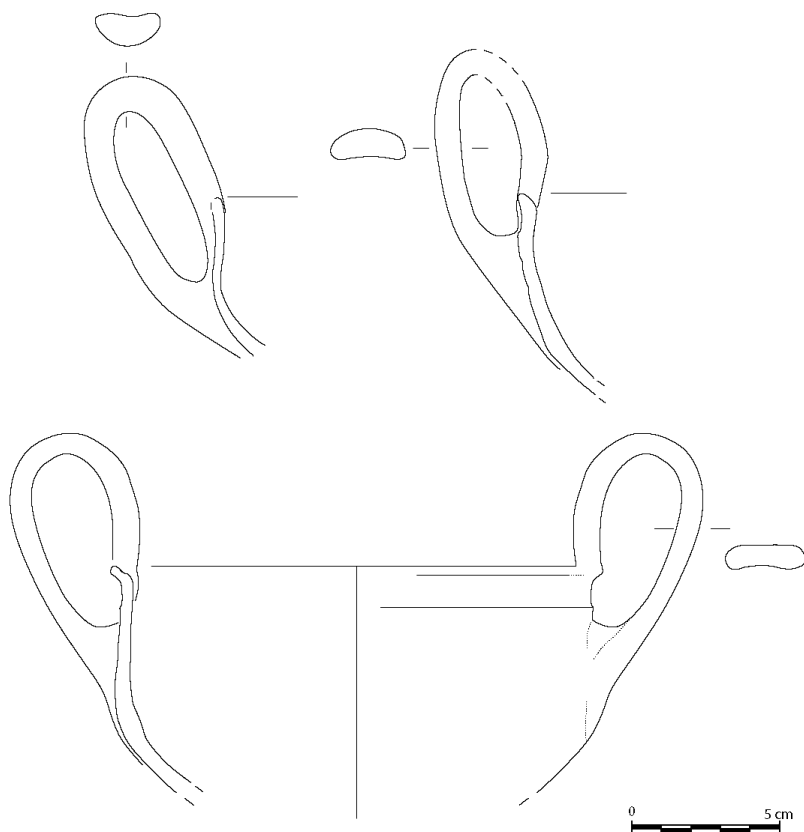


Fig. 19 - Carinated *kantharoi*.

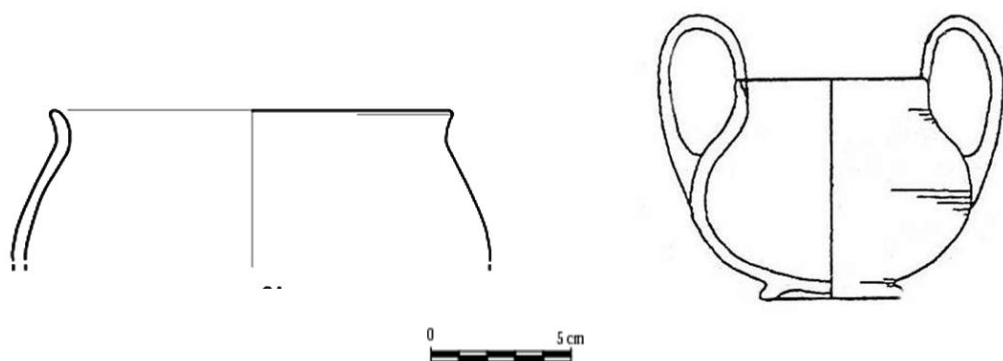


Fig. 20 - Globular *kantharos* with the parallel from Lesbos
(BAYNE 2000, fig. 58, no. 2).

The first examples have a shallow body, which after become deeper and more angular. This latest kind finds close parallels with the early forms of G 2-3 ware from the sanctuary of Chloi³⁷ and could be dated before the end of the 8th century B.C., according to the Beschi typology³⁸. One similar vase was found at Lefkandi in a context of the Protogeometric³⁹.

The second type shows a deep globular body and has closely comparable materials from Chloi⁴⁰, Lesbos⁴¹, Samothrace⁴² and other contexts of the 7th century B.C., both in grey and in G 2-3 ware (**Fig. 20**). Grey ware globular *kantharoi* are frequent also at Larisa⁴³ and Assos⁴⁴, between the end of the 7th and the beginning of the 6th century B.C.

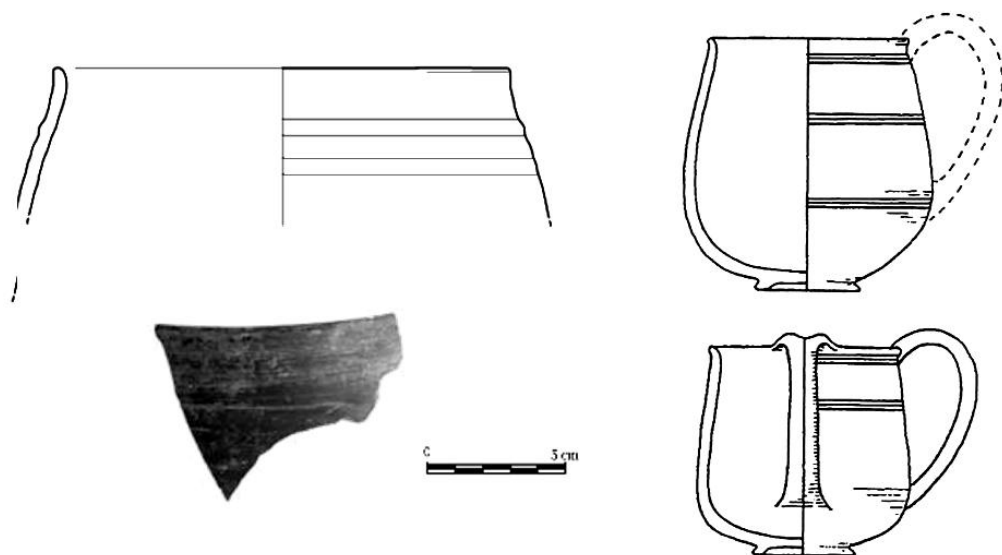


Fig. 21 - Beaker with the parallels from Lesbos
(BAYNE 2000, fig. 62, nos. 1-2).

The profile of other shapes remembers that of beaker⁴⁵, frequently found in the Early Iron Age contexts of Smirne⁴⁶, Lesbos⁴⁷ and Troy⁴⁸. It has a rounded rim wide 14-22 cm, an ovoid body on which decoration is not common, and most likely was provided with a ring base (**Fig. 21**).

³⁷ BESCHI 1996, p. 42, pl. VI, a.

³⁸ BESCHI 1998, p. 71, BESCHI 2006, p. 62.

³⁹ Lefkandi II.1, p. 53, 130, pls. 39, 73, no. 781.

⁴⁰ BESCHI 2003, 335-336

⁴¹ BAYNE 2000, p. 201, figs. 57-58; LAMB 1931-32, fig. 20, nos. 1-5.

⁴² Samothrace 5, p. 336-346, nos. 18-25.

⁴³ GEBAUER 1993, p. 70.

⁴⁴ UTILI 1999, p. 84-85, 248, no. 676, pl. 38.

⁴⁵ BAYNE 2000, p. 140-141, fig. 34, no. 1.

⁴⁶ BAYNE 2000, p. 160, figs. 38-39.

⁴⁷ BAYNE 2000, p. 211, fig. 62, nos. 1-2; LAMB 1931-32, fig. 21, no. 10.

⁴⁸ CHABOT ASLAN 2002, p. 110-112, no. 100, 117, 127, pls. 12, 16.

There are also several fragments with vertical concave rim and deep body. A similar form is present in the Blegen typology but it is bigger⁴⁹.

Few shards belong to a rounded bowl with a small flat rim of 18-22 cm, and two horizontal handles, round in section, set vertically on the rim; often there are small conical elements near them (**Fig. 22**). Presumably it has a ring base. This shape, of Anatolian origin, is present in the cemetery of Hephaestia and is similar to the Blegen form A 60 but is smaller⁵⁰.

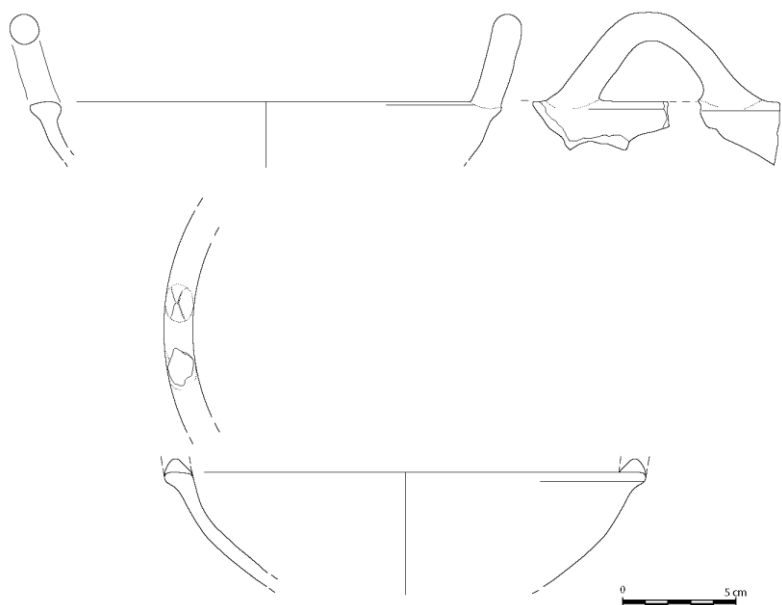


Fig. 22 - Bowls.

Finally there is only one exemplar of shallow hemispherical bowl with rounded lip and flat base that recalls the Blegen form A 73 (**Fig. 23**)⁵¹.

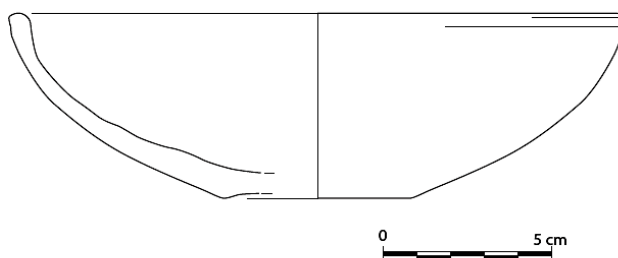


Fig. 23 - Hemispherical bowl.

⁴⁹ BAYNE 2000, p. 143, form 6, fig. 147.

⁵⁰ PAVÚK 2002, p. 42-44, 62, fig. 5, nos. 12-14.

⁵¹ MOUNTJOY 1999, p. 312, no. 28, fig. 7.

2. Closed shapes

The amphora is the most common closed vase in our context and it occurs in a large variety of types. The fragmentary state of the materials impedes a complete reconstruction of profiles, so annotations on this shapes are limited to rim, base and handle forms. There are many kinds of rim, the most common is everted rounded and thickened, sometimes hollowed in, but there are also squared and flat rims. The vertical handles can be round in section or ridged. Generally these vases were provided with a ring foot. Decorative elements are very rare; the junction between neck and shoulder can be marked with a ridge and sometimes there are shallow grooves on the neck⁵².

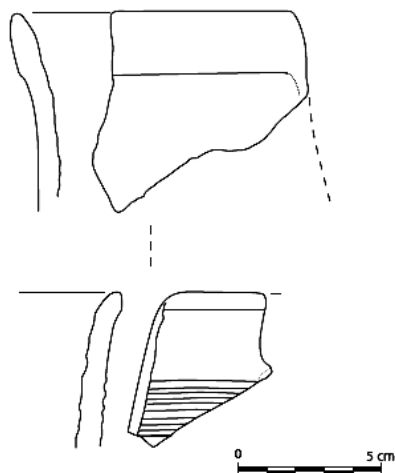


Fig. 24 - Jugs with cut-away necks.



Fig. 25 - Jug with cut-away neck from the cemetery of Hephaestia (MUSTILLI 1932-33, pl. IX, no. 67).

⁵² DANILE in *Hephaestia* 2005, pl. X, a-b.

Jugs with cut-away necks are good represented (**Fig. 24**). They have a slightly thickened rim and a high vertical neck, which is cut away on one side. Frequently it has shallow grooves on the lower part and prominent wheel-marks inside.

The shape is characteristic of the Bronze Age Macedonia⁵³, where it is often handmade, as an example from the cemetery of Hephaestia (**Fig. 25**)⁵⁴. In the Early Iron Age it is widespread in Macedonia⁵⁵, Thessaly⁵⁶, Chalcidike⁵⁷, Euboea⁵⁸ and Skyros⁵⁹. It is not included in the Blegen typology⁶⁰ and I have not found any examples of this grey ware jug outside Lemnos⁶¹.



Fig. 26 - *Amphoriskoi* from the cemetery of Hephaestia (MUSTILLI 1932-33, fig. 146).

Finally we have few fragments of small closed vases, maybe *amphoriskoi* like these from the cemetery of Hephaestia (**Fig. 26**)⁶².

PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE CHRONOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SHAPES

The characteristics of lemnian pottery and its external links are important for understanding the history of the island during the first stage of the Iron Age. Here the grey ware has a peculiar and conservative style with a slow internal development that make difficult to determine an exact chronology for new local shapes, so parallels with other sites can be helpful to anchor the local typology more firmly in time. As has been seen, some shapes are similar to Late

⁵³ HEURTLEY 1939, p. 98, nos. 103-104, fig. 84, pl. XXIII o, q, r, y.

⁵⁴ MUSTILLI 1932-33, p. 172, fig. 38, pl. IX, no. 67 (Tomb A-XXXI).

⁵⁵ Verghina: ANDRONIKOS 1969, p. 194-201; Toumba: CHAVELA 2004, p. 335, figs. 10a, 12; Kastanas: HOCHSTETTER 1984, p. 51-54.

⁵⁶ Marmariane: HEURTLEY-SKEAT 1931, p. 20, nos. 19-21, 31-47; Kapakli: VERDELIS 1958, p. 19-22, fig. 6.

⁵⁷ PAPADOPOULOS 2005, p. 455-456, pl. 332, no. 46.

⁵⁸ ANDREIOMENOU 1998, p. 157, pls. 3-4, 5.1-2, fig. 6. 4-7; *Lefkandi I*, p. 324-325; LEMOS 2002, p. 76-77, 90-91.

⁵⁹ LEMOS 2002, fig. 101.4; VLAVIANOU TSALIKI 1998, p. 138-139.

⁶⁰ BAYNE 2000.

⁶¹ Some shards for previous excavations in MESSINEO 2001, p. 172, nos. 213-214, fig. 176.

⁶² MUSTILLI 1932-33, pl. XI, no. 68.

Helladic III C forms from Troy VII layers and so could represent the transition from Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age forms, like Bayne had suggested in his work⁶³. The craters like that found at Lefkandi and the stemmed *kylikes*, which are very close to the toronean one, can be dated at the beginning of the Iron Age. Few forms that recall G 2-3 vases seem the most recent. We could propose a chronological frame from the late 11th until the beginning of the 7th century B.C. for the grey ware in our context.

In this long period we can see a combination of Macedonian or North-Aegean elements with some influences from the West-Anatolian coast.

There are not imported vases except for the fragments of Protogeometric amphorae (type I B), which are an important chronological sign (**Fig. 27**) and suggest the existence of long-distance trade, that includes also Lemno. The possibility of a connection with the Euboea is a very attractive suggestion too that attends more elements to be proved.

Our material provides a remarkable contribution to knowledge of this class of pottery which has a long tradition and a wide diffusion, from the Prehistory until the Hellenistic period⁶⁴. We could remember for Lemnos some grey ware vases from Koukonisi of the Middle Helladic II/III⁶⁵ and other fragments from the large Bronze Age settlement of Poliochni⁶⁶. For the 1st millennium several previous works had recovered grey ware: the excavations of Adriani in the area of the city⁶⁷ as well as these in the sanctuary⁶⁸, in the cemetery⁶⁹ and in the area of the theatre⁷⁰. Outside Hephaestia a lot of vases of this ware have been found in the sanctuary at Chloi⁷¹ and some of them also on Myrina⁷², today the most important city of the island.

In these contexts it is always accompanied by G 2-3 ware, and then dated between the end of the 8th and the 7th century B.C.⁷³. Moreover in some deposits the grey ware was found with Archaic pottery like in the pit of the sanctuary at Hephaestia⁷⁴. After the 6th century B.C. maybe ceased the use of this class of material in Lemnos.

There was a gap in the archaeological documentation of the island from the end of prehistoric settlements, before the Late Helladic III C period, to the first phase of use of the cemetery at Hephaestia, around the middle of the 8th century B.C.⁷⁵

⁶³ BAYNE 2000, p. 224-225; CULTRARO 2004, p. 223.

⁶⁴ See PAVÚK 2007 for a summary of the problems.

⁶⁵ PETRAKIS-MOUTZOURIDIS in press.

⁶⁶ CULTRARO 2001.

⁶⁷ MESSINEO 2001, p. 155-174.

⁶⁸ BESCHI 2005B, p. 844-861.

⁶⁹ MUSTILLI 1932-33.

⁷⁰ VAVLIAKIS MARI 2004, p. 66.

⁷¹ BESCHI 2006, p. 60.

⁷² BESCHI 2001, p. 215-216.

⁷³ BESCHI 2006, p. 59.

⁷⁴ BESCHI 2005A, p. 107, 110, 119, 135-136, nos. 15, 129-141, pls. XX, a-b, LIII-LIV.

⁷⁵ CULTRARO 2004, 223-224.

The excavations in the Area 17 offers now a pottery sequence from the Early Iron Age to the beginning of the Archaic period. This is a noteworthy acquisition for the island because it can prove a continual occupation of the site and provides new information about an unknown phase. Now we can start to bridge the gap and, even if we still have not found the Early Iron Age settlements, this is a first step to increase our knowledge of the cultural history of Lemnos and to insert it in a wider context.

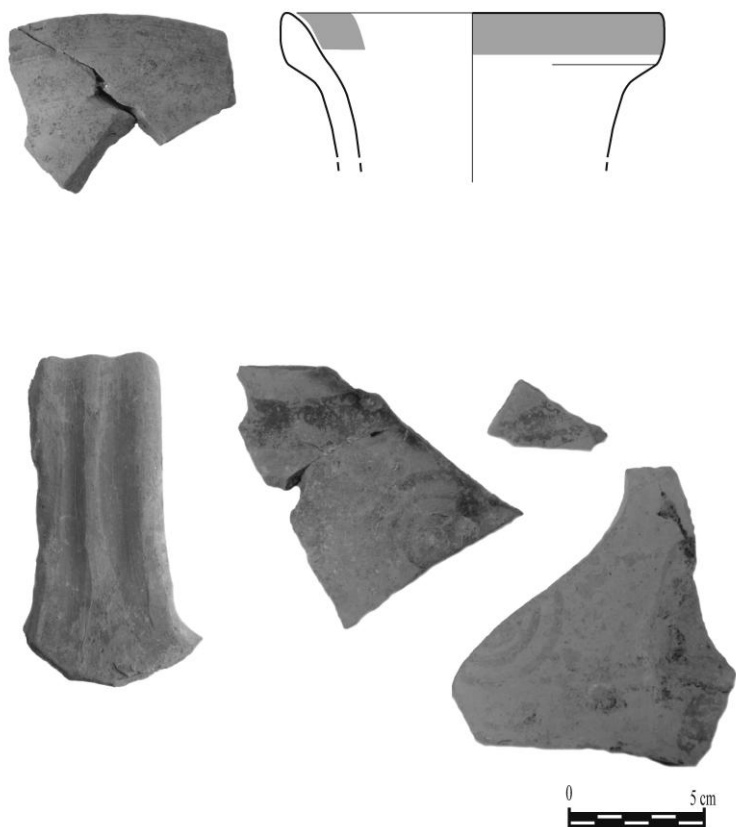


Fig. 27 - Protogeometric amphora.

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