

ACHAIOS

STUDIES PRESENTED TO PROFESSOR
THANASIS I. PAPADOPOULOS

Edited by

Evangelia Papadopoulou-Chrysikopoulou
Vassilis Chrysikopoulos
Gioulika Christakopoulou

ARCHAEOPRESS ARCHAEOLOGY

ARCHAEOPRESS PUBLISHING LTD

Gordon House
276 Banbury Road
Oxford OX2 7ED

www.archaeopress.com

ISBN 978 1 78491 341 0
ISBN 978 1 78491 342 7 (e-Pdf)

© Archaeopress and the individual authors 2016

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the copyright owners.

Printed in England by Holywell Press, Oxford

This book is available direct from Archaeopress or from our website www.archaeopress.com



TH. PAPADOPOULOS AS PRESIDENT (2000-2002) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY,
SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY, UNIVERSITY OF IOANNINA.

Contents

INTRODUCTION	ix
THANASIS I. PAPADOPOULOS	xi
Professor Emeritus at the University of Ioannina	
BIBLIOGRAPHY 1973 – 2015	xiv
PARTICIPANTS	xix
FUNERARY MONUMENTS AND LANDSCAPE: THE EXAMPLE OF THE MIDDLE HELLADIC TUMULI IN MESSENIA	1
IPPOKRATIS ANGELETOPOULOS	
MYCENAEAN FIGURINES ON CYPRUS	13
† PAUL ÅSTROM	
FOOT OF A BRONZE FIGURE FROM THE MINOAN PEAK SANCTUARY AT AYIOS YEORGIOS STO VOUNO, KYTHERA	19
EMILIA BANOU	
WARRIORS IN MOVEMENT: WARRIOR BURIALS IN EASTERN CRETE DURING LATE MINOAN IIIC	23
DIMITRIS G. BASAKOS	
EIN ZUTRUNK FÜR DEN FREUND	33
† HANS G. BUCHHOLZ	
THE MH CEMETERY AT KOUPHOVOUNO, SPARTA, LAKONIA	45
WILLIAM CAVANAGH AND † CHRISTOPHER MEE	
ATTIC BLACK-FIGURED CUPS FROM AMBELAKI, SALAMIS	53
YANNIS CHAIRETAKIS	
THE PROTOGEOMETRIC SETTLEMENT AT STAMNA, AETOLIA. SOME THOUGHTS ON THE SETTLERS' ORIGIN BASED ON THE TYPOLOGY OF THE GRAVES	59
GIOULIKA CHRISTAKOPOULOU	
A SCARAB AND AN OVOID SEAL PLAQUE: EGYPTIAN OR EGYPTIANIZING OBJECTS FROM A CROSSROADS IN THE JORDAN VALLEY	77
VASSILIS CHRYSIKOPOULOS	
SOME REFLECTIONS ON WESTERN GREECE IN THE LATE BRONZE AND EARLY IRON AGES	81
SØREN DIETZ	
L' ÉGYPTIEN, LE BEDOUIN ET LA TRANSJORDANIE	93
JEAN-CLAUDE GOYON	
NEW ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA FOR EARLY CHRISTIAN AND EARLY BYZANTINE SALAMIS. THE CASE OF A BURIAL COMPLEX AT AIANTEIO	97
GEORGE KAKAVAS AND SOPHIA ZYRBA	
LARGE STORAGE JARS IN THE MYCENAEAN GRAVES OF ACHAEA: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION	103
SOFIA KASKANTIRI	
ON MINERAL AND ARTIFICIAL PIGMENTS OF THEOPHRASTUS OF ERESSOS FROM THE LIBRARY TO THE FIELD RESEARCH	109
THOMAS KATSAROS	
THE MIDDLE NEOLITHIC PATTERN PAINTED POTS FROM THE CAVE OF CYCLOPS: REVIEWING OLDER THEORIES	117
STELLA KATSAROU-TZEVELEKI	

GOLD BULL’S HEAD ORNAMENTS FROM THE TIRYNS HOARD AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE TYPE IN THE LH IIIIC PERIPHERY OF THE MYCENAEAN WORLD	127
ELENI KONSTANTINIDI-SYVRIDI	
RISE IT UP! A CONTRIBUTION TO UNDERSTANDING TELL FORMATION. THE EVIDENCE FROM PARTICLE SIZE ANALYSIS ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEDIMENTS AND BUILDING MATERIALS FROM THE NEOLITHIC TELL SITE AT PALIAMBELLA (N. GREECE).....	137
DIMITRIS KONTOGIORGOS	
NEW EVIDENCE FOR MINOAN RELATIONS WITH ITHACA.....	143
† LITSA KONTORLI-PAPADOPOULOU	
AN OVERVIEW OF TREPANATION IN ANCIENT GREECE	153
MARIA A. LISTON, SHERRY C. FOX & LESLIE P. DAY	
A SHRINE WITHIN THE SOVEREIGN COMPLEX ON THE MYCENAEAN ACROPOLIS OF SALAMIS	159
YANNOS G. LOLOS	
MINOAN PREPALATIAL PERIBOLOS OF AMNISSOS, CRETE	165
STELLA MANDALAKI	
ON MYCENAEAN HYDREA: SHERDS FROM THE ACROPOLIS AT CHORIZA	177
CHRISTINA MARABEA	
WHO OWNS THE ROSETTA STONE? EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES AND “ELGINISM”	185
MARGARITA NICOLAKAKI-KENTROU	
ΤΩ ΑΡΙΣΤΩ ΠΑΤΡΙ. TERRAMARE, MYCENAEAN CENTERS AND THE ROLE OF THE ADRIATIC DURING THE LATE BRONZE AGE: THE INTERCULTURAL ROLE OF THE ADRIATIC: THE “WAY OF THE AMBER” AT THE END OF THE LATE BRONZE AGE SEEN FROM A NAUTICAL POINT OF VIEW	195
STAVROS OIKONOMIDIS	
PREHISTORIC VASES FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION IN JORDAN	203
EVANGELIA PAPADOPOULOU-CHRYSIKOPOULOU	
TIES OF AFFECTION BURIALS OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN IN THE MYCENAEAN CEMETERY OF CLAUSS, NEAR PATRAS.....	207
KONSTANTINOS PASCHALIDIS	
ACHAIA: EASTERN AND WESTERN.....	219
MICHALIS PETROPOULOS	
THE SEREMETI MONKEY	233
JACKIE PHILLIPS	
SOME FRESH THOUGHTS ON THE USE OF THE MINOAN “STRAINER”	241
LEFTERIS PLATON	
MYCENAEAN CERAMIC VASES OF AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL PRIVATE COLLECTION	255
KOSTAS THEODORIDIS	
THE IMPORTANCE OF THE IONIAN AND ALBANIAN COAST FOR MARITIME COMMUNICATION DURING THE BRONZE AGE	261
AKIS TSONOS	
Th. Papadopoulos.....	275

SOME FRESH THOUGHTS ON THE USE OF THE MINOAN “STRAINER”

LEFTERIS PLATON*

It is really strange how little the determination of the function and way of use of clay vessels has engaged the research for the Aegean Prehistory, despite the fact that precisely this matter surely constituted the basic factor for the formation of any typological series. The study of the function for most of the ceramic types is simply omitted, considered as more or less obvious, or, in other cases, not easily determined. On the other hand, better treatment is accorded to by some types whose form suggests a more specific function, the determination of which is hoped to shed light in fields of a wider interest, such as technology, the economy, or even the social behavior of their users. Precisely such a type, one particularly popular in Crete and some of the Aegean islands during the Late Bronze Age, is examined in the present article.

This is a vessel that in the English bibliography is called a “strainer”¹, a term which corresponds to the Greek “ethmos”². This term, basically, determines the function of the vase, e.g. the straining out of a liquid from a mixture with solid matters through a pierced partition (strainer). Greater emphasis on the form of the vessel is given by the composite term “strainer-pyxis”³, precisely corresponding to the Greek “ethmopyxis”⁴. Indeed, the upper half of the vase is usually shaped as a spherical pyxis, with a restricted orifice to accept a small lid (FIG.1). The solid bottom of the “pyxis” is here replaced by the strainer. The lower part of the vessel is shaped as a hollow, conical or cylindrical foot, which, at first sight, appears to function as a support on level surfaces (FIG.2).

Before discussing further the function of this peculiar vessel, let us go back briefly to the views expressed up to date on this matter. The first excavators of Palaikastro, Bosanquet and Dawkins, who brought to light a good number of specimens belonging to this type, called them “sponge-holders”⁵, in this way determining in essence that their purpose was to remove liquids from the solid contents, rather than straining something. Hazzidakis interpreted a similar find from Tylissos as an incense-burner, obviously suggesting that the pierced partition was used for providing oxygen to the fuel within the receptacle⁶. Marinatos classified the richly decorated “ethmopyxides” which he found in the settlement of Akrotiri on Thera as “luxury vessels”, supporting also their ritual function⁷. This idea was further developed by N. Marinatos⁸. Georgiou, in her study of the Kea specimens, although she finds attractive the possibility of their use in cooking, notes the absence of traces of burning on their surfaces and finally concludes that they may have served as receptacles for perishable foodstuffs⁹. Andreadaki-Vlazaki, on the basis of the discovery, in the same tomb, of a richly decorated strainer-pyxis alongside a vase supposedly used in perfume production, also connects the strainer-pyxis with this¹⁰. More recently, Barnard and Brogan admit the suitability of the strainer-pyxis from the Artisan Quarter at Mochlos for eating; they do not exclude, however, that they may have been (also?) used in the perfume industry¹¹. Lastly, Carinci, studying some protopalatial specimens from Festos, supports their “ceremonial” function, suggesting that they were to be used for the production of a liquid similar to the Christian “holy-water”¹². Nevertheless, he finally, admits that the more numerous and various neopalatial specimens, apart from the ceremonial sphere, could be occasionally used in domestic or working activities¹³.

From the above, it is clear that a full interpretation of the vessel’s function has not appeared to date. None of the specimens found had preserved any traces of its

* Warm thanks are due to my collaborators K. Archontaki and M. Zoitopoulos for allowing me access to the catalogue’s data concerning the “strainer” specimens from the Building of the Niches and the East Building, whose full presentation they have undertaken. The description of the rest of the catalogue’s specimens have been drawn from the digital database of the Zakros ceramic material, on which, apart from the above, archaeologists D. Krige and A.K. Christopoulou have worked under my supervision. Information on the excavation context of the specimens is based on the published information of excavation reports and diaries. Thanks are also due to D. Faulmann for the drawings in the plates and to M. Zoitopoulos who photographed the vases and processed the takes published in this article. Finally, I am obliged, once more, to my good friend and colleague A.M. Kasdagli, who willingly read and improved the present English text

¹ Also “waisted strainer” and “urn-strainer”. Bosanquet & Dawkins 1923, 66, 78, 81-2; Boyd-Hawes 40, 44. French: “passoire”. Italian: “vaso-colatío”.

² see f.i. Marinatos 1968, 98 and pl. 75: a; Marinatos 1969, 152 and pl. 225: b; Dumas 1976, 329, fig. 51.

³ Georgiou 1986, 89-90. Andreadaki-Vlazaki 2008, 124.

⁴ Marinatos 1976, 29, pl. 47: a, b and c; Andreadaki-Vlazaki 1987, 56-7, 59-62; 1999b.

⁵ Bosanquet & Dawkins 1923, 66, 78; Sackett & Popham 1970, 224.

⁶ Hazzidakis 1912, 213.

⁷ Marinatos 1976, 29; Marinatos 1972, 15.

⁸ Marinatos 1983, 12-13. N. Marinatos erroneously reports that such a view for these vessels has been expressed by N. Platon, since the Zakros finds described in the bibliographic reference given (Platon 1971, 120) belong to a completely different form. She concludes also that the vases under discussion were (ritually?) used for burning scented substances, adopting in essence Hazzidakis’ view.

⁹ Georgiou 1986, 44.

¹⁰ Andreadaki-Vlazaki 1987, 56, 57, 61; 1999b; 2008, 124.

¹¹ Barnard & Brogan 2003, 67.

¹² Carinci 2011, 110.

¹³ Carinci 2011, 112-3.

LEFTERIS PLATON

contents. Gas chromatography analyses have yet to be made for any specimen of this ceramic type, probably because most of them carry painted decoration, and in such cases sampling is avoided as destructive. The excavation context of the type has not been thoroughly studied yet, and the absence of ethnographic parallels prohibits their classification in a specific industry or social activity. Even less attention has been paid to the morphology of the type, or its occurrence, regarding both quality and quantity, within the limits of settlements or cemeteries. And, finally, the origin and development of the type in relation to its actual geographical distribution in the Bronze Age Aegean have not been absolutely determined.

It seems advisable to begin a short reexamination of the matter from this last point. It will be followed by a detailed presentation of a representative group of finds from the palatial site of Zakros, the object being to answer questions regarding the excavation contexts in which the type is usually found, as well as the distribution of specimens within the bounds of a settlement. However, greater emphasis will be given to the morphology of the vessel itself, since the design of its features would be logically be dictated by the specific needs which the type was meant to cover¹⁴.

CHRONOLOGICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

It has repeatedly been noted that the type of the strainer was particularly popular in Crete during the LMI, a period to which its first specimens in the Aegean islands are also dated. The excavators of Palaikastro report that the vessel probably derived from an older Cretan type, but they do not provide any evidence to support their suggestion¹⁵. The excavators of Phylakopi consider the type “*probably Minoan*” and a similar hypothesis is expressed by Deshayes & Dessenne¹⁶. Marinatos, on the other hand, who brought to light a relatively large number of specimens at Akrotiri, Thera, was certain that the origin of the type is Cycladic¹⁷. Moreover, he notes that is from the Cycladic region that it was introduced into Crete, and more specifically from the eastern part of the island, where it enjoyed its greatest popularity.

Marinatos did not provide further support for his view but it is obvious that he based it on the seemingly earlier dating of the Thera specimens in relation to that of the finds from Crete. Nevertheless, a detailed search in the more recent Cretan bibliography uncovers specimens earlier than the Thera ones and, moreover, that the earliest of them come from the central part of the island. These are four richly decorated vessels from

the first palace of Phaistos, dated to the MMIIIB period¹⁸. Specifically, one of them¹⁹, with a spherical body, restricted orifice with slightly upraised rim, horizontal band-shaped handles on the shoulder and a tall hollow cylindrical foot, presents nearly all the basic features of later specimens, leaving no doubt that it constitutes a forerunner for them. The example closer to the above regarding dating, initially assigned to the so-called “MM IIIB-LM IA” phase (cat. no. 35)²⁰, comes from Zakros. In this particular specimen, the foot is also cylindrical, but is better defined with the addition of a prominent plastic ring at the point where it joins the body. This last feature, combined with the banded formation of the handles, suggests that the vessel imitates metal prototypes. From the same period probably dates another specimen from Zakros²¹, but the stratigraphical and morphological data associated with it are presently not clear. A fragmentary specimen dated to the LM IA period on the basis of the preserved decoration comes from Knossos.²² Boyd also dates to the LM IA one of the specimens from Gournia, a dating based on the sturdier shape of the vase but, mostly, on the selection and execution of its decorative motif. The study of the material from Zakros securely dated to the LM IB period and presented below does not seem to support a dating of the vessel earlier than that of the other specimens from Gournia²³. Small morphological differences, probably due to their local manufacture, appear on the Thera specimens in comparison to those from the LM IB settlements in eastern Crete, where most of the finds in the category under discussion come from²⁴. During the LMI period, the type is standardized. It appears, both in Crete and Thera, in two variants. The first, characterized by a spherical-piriform shape, is the more common. Its features include the presence of a relief ring where the foot is joined to the body, and the conical shaping of the foot flaring out towards the base (**FIG.3**). The vase has two, or more rarely three or four, handles (**FIG.4**) and is equipped with a partition pierced with a number of holes varying from specimen to specimen. Often, vessels belonging to this variant are found in the same contexts with small clay lids, slightly domed or disk-shaped. The rarer second variant is characterized by a cylindrical body and the specimens belonging to it do not present the standardization of form evident in the first. Sometimes they show two horizontal handles, sometimes only a single vertical one, while the presence of the prominent plastic ring outside, at the level of the

¹⁴ Rice 1987, 207.

¹⁵ Bosanquet & Dawkins 1923, 66.

¹⁶ Deshayes & Dessenne 1959, 44.

¹⁷ Marinatos 1969, 36-7.

¹⁸ Levi 1976, pl. 114: d, e, g; Levi & Carinci 1988, 148-9, pl. 65: a, b. Carinci 2011, 103-7.

¹⁹ F. 1038. Levi & Carinci 1988, 148, pl. 65: a. Carinci 2011, 106, fig. 1: C-D, 3: B.

²⁰ On the basis of the context in which it was found. Cf. Evans, PMII, 472, fig. 279. Warren & Hankey 1989, 76-8. The author has recently supported that the greatest part of this assemblage might be attributed to the LMIA phase. Platon 2010, 243-250.

²¹ see below, cat. no. 8.

²² Mountjoy 2003, 70: no 90.

²³ see also Soles 2002, 128.

²⁴ These comprise the palaces, the settlements and the isolated buildings often called “villas”.

SOME FRESH THOUGHTS ON THE USE OF THE MINOAN "STRAINER"

interior partition, seems occasional. During this period, the type approaches the apex of its popularity with finds mostly from eastern Crete but also from the central and western parts of the island, and even from island sites being under Minoan influence such like Phylakopi on Melos²⁵ and Ayia Irene on Kea²⁶. In the latter two cases, the specimens have been made from local clay and they present some peculiarities, which surely have to do, as in the case of the Theran specimens, with aesthetic or other choices or needs of the local inhabitants.

During the LM II and IIIA period the type appears to decline, but is abandoned only gradually. Specimens come both from settlements, as is shown by finds from Mochlos²⁷, Palaikastro²⁸ and Knossos²⁹, and from tombs, as in the cases of Palaikastro³⁰, Tertsa Viannos³¹ Knossos³² and Kamilaria in the Phaistos district³³. It appears that during this time the type is not significantly developed, excepting a tendency for lengthening the foot, probably in order to emphasize its importance³⁴. To date, no specimen has been attributed to the LM IIIB, a period during which the type appears to be abandoned. Outside Crete, only one example, probably a local product, was brought to the light in a Mycenaean tomb in Rhodes, dated, from its context, to the LH IIB-III A period³⁵.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SPECIMENS WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF SETTLEMENTS AND THEIR EXCAVATION CONTEXT. THE CASE OF ZAKROS

A. Catalogue³⁶

Given the practical difficulties presented by the collection of precise data concerning distribution inside the settlements, the dimensions, form and excavation context of the specimens belonging to the type under discussion, the inclusion of the following catalogue, with the related finds from the palace and settlement of Zakros, seems advisable here³⁷. Despite the fact that this catalogue should not be considered conclusive, since many more examples are possibly present in the fragmentary material still being processed, it remains, nevertheless, indicative, including, as it does, the better

preserved specimens of the type, which, significantly, in their majority come from excavation contexts representing a single moment in the history of the site³⁸.

1. MS 3119. H: 0,086m. RD: 0,062m.

Palace. Room XLVII.

Fabric fine, pink, with small inclusions. Conical foot, squat spherical body, slightly upraised rim, two horizontal band-shaped handles. Red slip with white overlaid enrichments.

Upper layer of the fill including burnt bricks, a material probably fallen from upstairs. Found together with many other vessels, among which bridge-spouted jars, juglets, drinking vessels and a bronze shallow bowl.

YM IB.

Platon 1965, 200.

2. MS 560

Palace. Room XLVII

Fabric fine, pink. Fragments from the conical base, the pierced partition and the slightly upraised rim. Red horizontal bands.

Context similar to that of cat. no. 1.

LM IB

Platon 1965, 200.

3. MS 9581. H: 0,195m. RD: 0,094m.

Palace. Room XLIV.

Fabric fine, pink, with small inclusions. Conical foot, squat spherical body, orifice with upraised rim, two horizontal band-shaped handles and, between them, at the same level, two prominent bosses. Traces of black slip.

From the fill of the room, together with many other vessels probably fallen from upstairs: two more strainer pyxides, seven or eight amphorae, two jugs, a deep spouted bowl, a brazier, a disk-shaped lid, a cylindrical vase equipped with strainer, two or three cooking pots, a large number of drinking vessels and several pieces from a tripod cooking tray, a dish, stamnoi, pithoi and a large basin.

LM IB.

Platon 1966, 150-1.

4. MS 504. H: 0,205m. RD: 0,10m.

Palace. Room XLIV.

²⁵ Atkinson et al. 1904, 128, pl. XXIV : 1.

²⁶ Cummer & Schofield 1984, 89, pl. 66; Georgiou 1986, 43-4.

²⁷ Soles 2008, 35, 37.

²⁸ Bosanquet & Dawkins 1923, 81-2.

²⁹ Mountjoy 2003, 128, 138.

³⁰ Bosanquet & Dawkins 1923, 77-8, fig. 61; 101, 111-2, fig. 96.

³¹ Banou & Rethemiotakis 1997, 43-4, figs. 17: 6, 22

³² Hutchinson 1956, 70, 72, fig. 1, pl 6: e .

³³ Levi 1961-62, 37, fig. 34a-b; 40-1, fig. 40.

³⁴ see below, p. 14.

³⁵ Benzi 1992, I, 162.

³⁶ In this catalogue the following abbreviations are used: SM: Siteia Museum. HM: Herakleion Museum. RNZPC: Registration number in the Zakros Pottery Catalogue. H.: Height RD: Rim's diameter. BD: Base's diameter. D: diameter. MHP: Maximum height preserved.

³⁷ It should be noted that the dimensions and the type of fabric of some examples have not yet been included in the digital database used as a source in the present article, because part of the material is still not fully accessible.

³⁸ The catalogue does not include the following specimens which, although identified in the bibliography, it has not been possible to study, to date: a) pieces from the conical foot and the pierced partition of a strainer-pyxis decorated with S-shaped and spiral motifs from Building G, Room II. Platon 1970, 233. b) Part of a similar vase with two handles, a pierced partition and a conical foot from the East Building, inside of the east façade. Platon 1977, 423-4. c) The conical foot and the pierced partition of a strainer-pyxis from House B of the NW hill, Room XV. Platon 1978, 294-6. d) Pieces from the conical foot and the pierced partition of another similar vessel from House B of the NW hill, Room XVII. Platon 1979, 317. e) Pieces of a spherical vase with a wide cylindrical neck and two arched handles and the conical foot probably from the same strainer-pyxis from the House of the Ramp, enclosure in Room Φ. Platon 1979, 301.

LEFTERIS PLATON

Fabric fine, pink. Bi-conical body, upraised rim, conical foot. Horizontal relief ring where the foot joins with the body. Two horizontal band-shaped handles and two button-shaped bosses between them at the same level. Brownish bands on the body. On the shoulder, probably vegetal decoration, non easily discernible.

From the fill of the room. The context similar to that of cat. no. 3.

LM IB

Platon 1966, 150-1.

5. MS 590. H: 0,208m. RD: 0,095m.

Palace. Room XLIV.

Fabric fine, pink, with several small inclusions. Squat spherical body, conical foot, upraised rim and four handles of round section on the shoulder (two vertical and two horizontal). White horizontal bands drawn on a dark slip.

From the fill of the room. The context similar to that of cat. no. 3.

LM IB

Platon 1966, 150-1.

6. MS 511. H: 0,25m. RD: 0,122m.

Palace. Room XLIV.

Fabric fine, yellowish-pink. Squat spherical body, conical foot, two horizontal handles of round section. Between the handles at the same level, two button-shaped bosses. Black horizontal bands with white thinner ones and rows of dots overdrawn on them; dark on light motifs of scrolls, eyed spirals, row of dots and supplementary stylized flowers.

From the fill of the room. The context similar to that of cat. no. 3.

LM IB

Platon 1966, 150-1.

7. MS 915. H: 0,317m. **(FIG.4)**

Building of Pottery Deposits. Room B.

Fabric fine, pink. Squat spherical body, conical foot, upraised rim. On the junction of foot and body, plastic ring. Two horizontal band-shaped handles and among them two vertical ones, band-shaped as well. Peripheral bands, horizontal and wavy, vertical crescents and stylized floral motifs.

Along the east wall of the room. Together with a small tripod cooking pot, pieces of two more cooking pots, two pithoid jars and a big jug, the spout of a stirrup jar and a delicate wide-mouthed vase with a vertical handle. The room was probably used as a workshop (?) On the west corner, enclosure containing grinding stone tools.

LM IB

Platon 1969, 220-1.

8. MS, without a label. MHP: 0,083m.

Building to the North of the Harbor Road. Room A.

Fabric fine, pink, with small inclusions. A piece from the pierced partition and the oblique wall. Inside,

traces of burning. On the exterior decorated with red horizontal bands.

From the fill, probably fallen from upstairs. In the same context a clay drain, a pommel of a dagger made of shell, loom-weights, some pieces of stone vases, tripod braziers, pieces of amphorae, the bottom of a large vessel, upper part of another large vase, a jug, pieces of a pithos, sherds from cooking pots and cups.

MM IIIB-LM IA

Platon 1968, 163-4.

9. HM 2286. MHP: 0,142m. RD: 0,081m.

House J. Partly preserved.

Fabric fine, pink, with a few inclusions. Traces of burning on the outside. Piriform body, upraised rim, two horizontal round-sectioned handles. Pierced partition with twenty small holes. Relief ring outside, at the level of the partition. Two button-shaped bosses between the handles. Brown horizontal bands, foliate band on the shoulder and vertical short lines under the rim.

Precise context unknown.

LM IB

Unpublished.

10. HM 2289. MHP: 0,055m.

House J. Partly preserved.

Fabric fine, orange, with a few inclusions. Conical foot, pierced partition with seven holes irregularly arranged. Undecorated.

Precise context unknown.

LM IB

Unpublished.

11. MS 2940. MHP: 0,063m. RD: 0,11m.

Building of the Niches. Room III.

Fabric fine, orange, with a few inclusions. A piece from the upraised rim and the curved shoulder. Only the one handle, round-sectioned, is preserved. Traces of black horizontal bands.

Together with a three-handled decorated pithamphora, a wide-mouthed pithoid jar, a stone lamp, a small decorated jug and a stone grinder. From the same room, carbonized legumes, peas and small beans.

LM IB

Platon 1975, 358-9.

12. MS 2970

Building of the Niches. Room V.

Conical foot preserving the pierced partition. Red-brownish bands on the exterior.

Probably fallen from upstairs, together with a three-handled pithamphora, pieces of a jug, a stamnos, a wide-mouthed jar, sherds belonging to large vessels and the spout of a stirrup jar.

LM IB.

Platon 1975, 361.

SOME FRESH THOUGHTS ON THE USE OF THE MINOAN "STRAINER"

13. MS, unnumbered. RNZPC Z76024/ VI-10. H: 0,105m. RD: 0,071m.
Building of the Niches. Room VI.
Fabric fine, whitish. Conical foot, spherical body, slightly upraised rim. Dark bands on the foot, the body and the rim, with overlaid thinner white bands, horizontal and wavy. On the body, foliate band with white enrichments. From the floor level, together with cat. nos. 14-17. In the same context a conical cup, a semi-globular cup, a jug, a brazier, a cylindrical bridge-spouted jar, a miniature hole-mouthed jar, a milk-jug, a stone cylindrical vase, pieces of three more stone vases, five stone tools, a flake of obsidian, three loom-weights and a piece of a small bronze saw.
LM IB.
Platon 1976, 423-4.
14. MS, unnumbered. RNZPC Z76024/ VI-12. MHP: 0,091m.
Building of the Niches. Room VI. The conical foot preserving the pierced partition.
Fabric fine, light brownish, with small inclusions. Traces of burning. Red slip on the outside, overlaid with black horizontal bands, and a wavy one, framing successive curved lines. On the dark motifs, overlaid white dots. The context similar to that of cat. no. 13.
LM IB.
Platon 1976, 423-4.
15. MS, unnumbered. RNZPC Z76024/ VI-16. H: 0,091m. RD: 0,068m.
Building of the Niches. Room VI.
Fabric fine, ashy. Brown horizontal bands and a foliate band between them.
The context similar to that of cat. no. 13.
LM IB.
Platon 1976, 423-4.
16. MS, unnumbered. RNZPC Z76024/ VI-11. D: 0,12m.
Building of the Niches. Room VI. Intact lid.
Fabric fine, pink. Traces of burning on the underside. Domed lid of a strainer-pyxis, with an arched round-sectioned handle. Exterior surface covered in red slip. Overlaid white concentric circles. On the ridge of the handle, vertical white short lines.
The context similar to that of cat. no. 13.
LM IB.
Platon 1976, 423-4.
17. MS, unnumbered. RNZPC Z76024/ VI-18. D: 0,138m.
Building of the Niches. Room VI. Lid, partly preserved. Fabric fine, whitish, with small inclusions. Disk-shaped lid, probably from a strainer-pyxis, preserving intact the arched handle. Undecorated.
The context similar to that of cat. no. 13.
LM IB.
Platon 1976, 423-4.
18. MS, unnumbered. RNZPC Z76024/ XII-7). MHP: 0,075μ.
Building of the Niches. Room XII. Foot and the lower part of the body.
Fabric fine, orange. Foot conical, wall flaring upwards. Black-brown slip with a pair of overlaid white bands. From a structured storage space. Together with two storage medium-sized vessels, a basin, four jugs, two alabaster, a small amphora, four cups, a cylindrical side-spouted jar, a stone palette and a band made of a thin sheet of silver.
LM IB.
Platon 1976, 426-7.
19. MS, unnumbered. RNZPC Z76024/ XIII-38. MHP: 0,046m. RD: 0,071m.
Building of the Niches. Room VI. Upper part of the body, preserving intact one of the handles.
Fabric fine, pink-brownish, with small inclusions. Spherical body, upraised rim. Button-shaped boss on the side. Covered in black slip overlaid with a pair of white horizontal bands.
From niche B. Together with a piriform pithos and another medium-sized storage jar, two jugs, a side-spouted jug, an amphora, three rounded and 25 conical cups, an askos, a tripod cooking pot, piece of a rectangular trough, a stone tool and a piece of pumice.
LM IB.
Platon 1976, 428.
20. MS, unnumbered.
East Building. Corridor Δ.
Fabric fine, dark brown. A piece of the wall and the pierced partition. Dark brown slip with overlaid white band.
From the lower levels of the fill. Together with two stone rubbers, a jug, a brick-shaped loom-weight and an obsidian flake.
LM IB.
Platon 1977, 427.
21. MS, unnumbered. H: 0,215m. RD: 0,087m. (FIG. 8)
East Building. Room B.
Fabric fine, light brown, with small inclusions. Surface polished. Spherical body, rim slightly upraised, conical foot, two horizontal round-sectioned handles. On the shoulder, dark wheels enriched with white overlaid dots. On the rest of the surface, dark uneven horizontal bands with overlaid thinner white ones and vertical short lines. Probably fallen from upstairs, together with a considerable quantity of decorated tableware and ritual vessels of table and ritual use, stone and bronze vessels and tools and pieces of ivory pyxides.
LM IB.
Platon 1977, 428-33.
22. MS, unnumbered. MHP: 0,14m.
East Building. Room B.

LEFTERIS PLATON

The foot missing. The wall is distorted by burning. Fabric fine, deep pink, with a few small inclusions. Spherical-piriform body, upraised rim. On a dark slip, overlaid white horizontal bands and a row of small stylized leaves on the shoulder.

Context similar to that of cat. no. 21.

LM IB.

Platon 1977, 428-33.

23. HM 2270. H: 0,16m.

House A, Hogarth's excavation. Room VII.

Fabric fine, pink. Conical foot, piriform body, upraised rim, two horizontal band-shaped handles. Relief ring at the level of the partition. On the shoulder, a row of papyrus-like flowers, placed sideways, framed by small overlaid white dots. On the lower part of the body, brown bands, overlaid with thinner white ones, horizontal and wavy. Around the rim brown zone with overlaid thin white horizontal bands; between them a row of oblique bunches. On the handle, groups of vertical short lines.

From the fill, probably fallen from upstairs, together with a stone lamp or offering table, ten more decorated vases among which the cat. no. 24 strainer-pyxis and a cup-rhyton, a group of bronze tools and an assemblage of about five hundred sealings.

LM IB.

Hogarth 1901, 132-3, fig. 43. Dawkins 1903, 255, fig. 20.

24. HM 2291. H: 0,156m. RD: 0,082m. **(FIG. 2)**

House A, Hogarth's excavation. Room VII.

Fabric fine, reddish. Conical foot, spherical body, upraised rim, arched horizontal band-shaped handles. On the shoulder, foliate band. The rest of the body covered in horizontal red bands, some of them overlaid with white thinner ones.

Context similar to that of cat. no. 23.

LM IB.

Hogarth 1901, 132-3, fig. 43.

25. HM 2315. MHP: 0,081m. RD: 0,066m.

House C, Hogarth's excavation. The foot missing.

Fabric fine, dark brown. Spherical body, upraised rim, horizontal round-sectioned handles. Between the latter, button-shaped bosses. On the shoulder, a row of red bunches and on the rest of the body horizontal bands, one of them overlaid with a pair of white ones. On the handles, vertical short red lines.

Probably in the same context with a group of bronze tools and vessels, as well as other decorated pottery in which small drinking vessels dominate.

LM IB.

Hogarth 1901, 134.

26. SM, unnumbered. RNZPC: Z6206/II 88 and Z6206/II 53. MHP: 0,161m. RD: 0,089m. **(FIG.1)**

Building B, Room II. The greatest part of the foot missing.

Fabric fine, pink. Traces of burning on the outside. Spherical-piriform body, upraised rim. Plastic ring at the junction of the body and the probably conical foot. The pierced partition has only five holes. Two horizontal band-shaped handles. Between them, at the same level, two button-shaped bosses. On the shoulder, indistinct ivy motif. On the rest of the body, broad red-brown horizontal zones.

The room was used for storage. Part of its contents came from the upper floor, as happened with adjacent Rooms Σ and I, and comprises amphorae, shallow plates, basins, fruit-stands, cups, jugs, alabastra, askoi and a small stirrup jar.

LM IB.

Platon 1962, 150-1.

27. SM, unnumbered. RNZPC: Z6206/II 90. BD: 0,12m. Building B, Room II. The foot intact together with a part from the lower half of the body and 25 more pieces from the upper part.

Fabric fine, pink, with small inclusions. Conical foot, spherical body. One handle preserved, of elliptical section. Between foot and body relief ring. Broad brown horizontal zones, overlaid with thin white bands.

The context similar to that of cat. No. 26.

LM IB.

Platon 1962, 150-1.

28. SM, unnumbered. RNZPC: Z6206/II 77.

Building B, Room II. 21 pieces from the wall and the pierced partition of the vessel.

Fabric fine, pink. Between the foot and the body, relief ring. Red-brown broad horizontal zones, overlaid with white bands. On both the outer and inner surfaces, a trickle.

The context similar to that of cat. No. 26.

LM IB.

Platon 1962, 150-1.

29. MS 8869. H: 0,223m. RD: 0,082m. **(FIG. 3)**

Building B. Room Σ .

Fabric fine, pink, with a few inclusions. Traces of burning on the outside. Conical foot, piriform body, upraised rim, two horizontal flattened handles. Between the latter, two button-shaped bosses. Traces of black horizontal bands, a foliate band, a wavy peripheral line and a row of stylized lilies.

The room was used for storage. Part of its contents came from the upper floor, as happened with adjacent Rooms II and I, and comprises, among others, a great many drinking vessels, jugs and juglets, a basin-like vessel, a wide-mouthed jar, bowls and a number of stone tools.

LM IB.

Platon 1962, 151-2.

30. MS, unnumbered. RNZPC: Z.62.06/ Σ 33. RD (estim.): 0,08 μ .

Building B, Room Σ . A fragment from the upraised rim and the curved shoulder of the vessel.

SOME FRESH THOUGHTS ON THE USE OF THE MINOAN "STRAINER"

Fabric fine, red-brown, with a few small inclusions. Dark red slip, overlaid with white decoration consisting of groups of short vertical lines on the rim and thin horizontal and wavy bands on the body.

The context similar to that of cat. no. 29.

LM IB.

Platon 1962, 151-2.

31. MS, unnumbered. RD (estim.): 0,09 μ .

Building B. Room Σ . Fragments from the rim and the shoulder of the vessel.

Fabric fine, pink, with small inclusions. Upraised rim, strongly curved shoulder. Faded black decoration, consisting of a group of broad horizontal bands on the wall and the rim.

The context similar to that of cat. no. 29.

LM IB.

Platon 1962, 151-2.

32. MS, unnumbered. MHP: 0,157m. RD: 0,092m.

The foot is missing.

Fabric fine, pink, with small inclusions. Spherical body, upraised rim, two horizontal band-shaped handles. Red decoration consisting of horizontal bands, a running spiral motif and a foliate band.

LM IB.

Unpublished.

33. HM, unlabeled. MHP: 0,13m.

Hogarth's excavation.

Fabric fine, pink, with a few inclusions. Conical foot and the lower part of the body. The pierced partition has only five holes. Relief ring at the level of the interior partition. Sherds from the upraised rim. Traces of broad red horizontal bands.

LM IB.

Unpublished.

34. HM 2275, unlabeled.

Hogarth's excavation. Partly preserved.

Fabric fine, brownish, with a few inclusions. Conical foot, curved wall, upraised rim, two horizontal band-shaped handles. The pierced partition has only seven holes. Black horizontal bands and overlaid thinner white ones.

LM IB.

Unpublished.

35. HM 2087. H: 0,203m.

SW hill, Pit 1. Hogarth's excavation.

Fabric fine, pink. Cylindrical foot, spherical body, two horizontal band-shaped and strongly upraised rim. Between the handles, two button-shaped bosses. At the height of the partition, on the outside, relief ring. On the foot, two "dark on light" zones, one with a row of crescents, the other with the ripple motif. White horizontal bands, overlaid on the body. At the level of the belly, a broad brown zone, upon which delicate

white flowers have been drawn. On the shoulder, a zone of brown spirals and over it crescents, between which are pairs of hanging semi-circles. On the handles, short vertical white lines drawn on the brown slip.

The vase was included in the deposit of a huge mass of high quality pottery and other objects, probably of a ritual character, in a well carved in the rock, on the top of the SW hill.

MM IIIB-LM IA.

Hogarth 1902, 335-8.

B. Discussion

A first picture gained from the study of the above catalogue concerns the distribution of the finds within the limits of the settlement. Firstly, we notice a concentration inside the palace, and specifically in its South Wing, from which come six specimens. Nevertheless, similar concentrations also appear in important buildings of the settlement, such as Building B on the SW hill (six examples), the Building of the Niches (seven examples) and the East Building (four examples), the last two structures located along the Harbor Road. The discovery of at least one specimen in a large number of buildings spread all over the excavated quarters of the settlement³⁹ indicates an indiscriminate distribution of the type, given the strong possibility of identifying more specimens in the future among the fragmentary material from assemblages still to be studied⁴⁰.

A similar picture is given by the examination of the dispersal of related finds within the limits of other excavated settlements of the same period. At Gournia, the recorded specimens come from different blocks, scattered in different areas of the settlement⁴¹. Something similar occurs at Palaikastro, where the strainer-pyrides appear to come from at least five different blocks⁴². For Mochlos a great concentration of specimens in Block B has been reported⁴³, while some confirmed examples come from at least four other buildings⁴⁴. Moreover, six specimens from two neighboring buildings investigated on the opposite coast in the same site have been recently

³⁹ Building to the North of the Harbor Road, House of the Ramp and House J on the quarter NE of the palace; Building of the Pottery Deposits and Building G, on the sector of the northern slope; Houses A and B on the NW hill quarter.

⁴⁰ Nevertheless, the absence of specimens from the material coming from large buildings already under examination, such as Building N of the NW hill and Building of the NW Quarter, may be significant. However, in both these cases, this could be attributed to the absence of an extensive and undisturbed "destruction layer" of LMIB, the period which witnessed the peak of popularity for the type.

⁴¹ Blocks, C, D, F and the area to the south of BC. Boyd Hawes 1908, 30, 40, 42, 44. Betancourt & Silverman 1991, 76: no 687.

⁴² Blocks B, E, Ξ , N and area to the west of Block Δ . Bosanquet 1903, 283; Dawkins 1904, 205, 208-9, 209-10; Popham, Sackett & Warren 1965, 260, 261. It should be noted that, although the number of specimens from this site should be much larger, a precise find spot has been given only in a few cases. See Bosanquet & Dawkins 1923, 66.

⁴³ Seager 1909, 282.

⁴⁴ Block D and Buildings C1, C3 and B2. Seager 1909, 298; Soles & Davaras 1992, 436, fig. 13; 1994, 408; 1996, 198.

LEFTERIS PLATON

published⁴⁵. Finally, more or less similar, although less clear to date, appears to be the picture in the neighboring settlement of Pseira⁴⁶.

Concerning the excavation contexts of the Zakros specimens, only some general observations are possible. According to the excavators' estimates, but also from the study of the stratigraphy of some assemblages already under examination⁴⁷ in several cases the strainer-pyxides were, in the moment of destruction, on the upper floor. This appears certain in the cases of the examples coming from the South Palace Wing (cat. nos. 1-6) those from Buildings A on the NW hill (cat. nos. 23-24), Building B on the SW hill (cat. nos. 26-31), the East Building (cat. nos. 21-22) and for at least one specimen from the Building of the Niches (cat. no. 12). In most of these cases, vessels and other objects which might be classified as tableware were found together with the strainer-pyxides⁴⁸. These comprise various types of serving and drinking vases, often in quantity (cat. nos. 1-6, 21-22, 26-31), fruit-stands, bowls and basins (cat. nos. 1-2, 16-31) and amphorae (cat. nos. 26-31). More rarely, storing (cat. nos. 12, 36), or even cooking (cat. nos. 3-6) vessels occur in the same contexts. Tools and other workshop equipment were also found together with the strainer-pyxides in two cases (cat. nos. 23-24, 29-31). Ritual equipment occurs in the same context with the type discussed in one case only (cat. nos. 23-24).

In rare cases the strainer-pyxides were found in excavation contexts which could probably be assigned to the contents of the ground floor rooms (cat. nos. 7, 11, 13-15, 18-19). In most of these (cat. nos. 7, 11, 13-15), the specimens come from spacious rooms, in which a variety of activities could have taken place⁴⁹. The other finds from these contexts show great variety. They comprise of storage (cat. no. 11) or cooking (cat. no. 7) vessels, while in only a single case a vessel usually attributed to the perfume industry was identified (cat. nos. 13-15). In two cases (cat. nos. 18, 19), the vessels under discussion were found in deliberately created places for storage (such as a structured deposit place or niche), together with other objects, most of which might be classified as "*table equipment*". Finally, in one case (cat. no. 35), a strainer-pyxis noted for the quality of its craftsmanship and decoration had been placed, probably ritually, in a

large pit, located just outside the limits of the settlement. The same context gave pottery of high quality (a large percentage of which was tableware), but also some clay vases of ceremonial or symbolic use, such as a number of miniature vessels⁵⁰.

There is less information available on the contexts of strainer-pyxides from other settlements⁵¹. At Mochlos, three at least specimens had fallen from the upper floor; the first was found together with a great number of conical cups and a richly decorated pithamphora⁵². The other two belonged to a ritual context from a richly decorated apartment located over the pillar crypt of Building B⁵³. The examples from Building N at Palaikastro also come from the contents of the upper floor, which comprise vessels belonging to various categories⁵⁴. Several of the specimens from Akrotiri on Thera also belonged to the equipment of the upper floor and were found together with luxury objects of secular or ceremonial character⁵⁵.

Five examples from Block B at Palaikastro come from two magazines containing various vessels, which comprise more than five hundred drinking vessels, while only one fire-box has been reported⁵⁶. The contents of Room 14 of Block ξ on the same site show great variety, including tableware as well as some fire-boxes⁵⁷. For Gournia, only once information is given on the contexts of a strainer-pyxis and in that case the finds include richly decorated tableware and stirrup jars⁵⁸. At the coastal buildings in Mochlos two examples come from a room equipped with a bench and were found together with other decorated pottery and two pithoid jars⁵⁹. On the floor of the room, the negative impressions of numerous olive stones were identified and the excavators believe that olives constituted the contents of at least one of the strainers⁶⁰. One of the specimens found in the country house of Zou in Siteia comes from a peculiar installation identified as a pottery kiln or storage space and the only other confirmed find belonging to the same context was a ceremonial jug⁶¹. At Akrotiri, Thera, a strainer-pyxis was

⁴⁵ Barnard & Brogan 2003, 68.

⁴⁶ Since the published pieces mainly come from the sherd material. Banou 1995a, 80; Banou 1995b, 110; Banou 1998, 26; Floyd 1998, 61; Betancourt 1999, 154.

⁴⁷ Such as those from the Building of the Niches, the East Building and Building B of the NW hill.

⁴⁸ For the case of Building B on the SW hill, see Platon 2011, figs. 14.3 & 14.4.

⁴⁹ The case of Room B of the Building of the Pottery Deposits, which the excavator identified as a workroom because of the presence of an enclosure containing a number of grinding stones in its SW corner, is typical. Nevertheless, the objects found alongside the strainer-pyxis should rather be classified as cooking equipment. Platon 1968, 220-1.

⁵⁰ The author has recently suggested that it concerns the ceremonial deposition of damaged and unusable material, which took place on the inauguration of settlement rebuilding activity, probably peaking in the establishment of the new palace. The almost perfect preservation of the strainer-pyxis supports its ritual use in the deposition activity, rather than its inclusion in the pottery already out of use during the ceremony. Platon 2010, 250-5.

⁵¹ The excavation context of the burial finds is not really indicative of the use and meaning of the tomb contents, since it could not be maintained that all the grave goods were the property of a single person, or that they were used together during his lifetime. Andreadaki-Vlazaki 1987, 59.

⁵² From House D. Seager 1909, 298.

⁵³ Soles & Davaras 1994, 408.

⁵⁴ Sackett, Popham & Warren 1965, 260-1.

⁵⁵ Marinatos 1969, 13-4; 1971, 37; Marinatos 1976, 29.

⁵⁶ From rooms β10 and 13. Bosanquet 1903, 283.

⁵⁷ Dawkins 1905, 208-9.

⁵⁸ Boyd Hawes 1908, 44, pl. IX.

⁵⁹ Soles & Davaras 1994, 417.

⁶⁰ Barnard & Brogan 2003, 67.

⁶¹ Platon 1955, 292; 1956, 233, pl. 112: α.

SOME FRESH THOUGHTS ON THE USE OF THE MINOAN "STRAINER"

found placed on a windowsill of a ground floor room in the West House⁶² and two more come from rooms which had apparently been used for storage⁶³. Finally, at Ayia Irini on Kea, in one case, a stainer-pyxis comes from a context including a great number of decorated vessels, a cup-rhyton and a tripod altar among them⁶⁴.

Based on this information, only a few observations are possible. First, that a relatively large number of strainer-pyxises were part of the equipment used in upper floor apartments. At this level, the use of fire would be too risky; therefore, processes in which fire seems to have been indispensable should probably be ruled out. Moreover, the most usual finds recovered alongside strainer-pyxises were tableware items, while there are cases in which they also include ceremonial vases and objects⁶⁵. The presence of strainer-pyxises and equipment probably used in the perfume industry in the same context is relatively rare⁶⁶ and does not indicate an exclusive connection⁶⁷. Finally, in a remarkable case from Zakros (cat. no. 11), the context of the strainer-pyxises also included storage vessels and a quantity of carbonized legumes.

THE FUNCTIONAL ASPECTS OF THE VESSEL'S FORM: IS IT HERE WHERE THE TRUTH SHOULD BE LOOKED FOR?

From all this it becomes clear that the distribution and location of the vessels under discussion may only be used as indications for their significance and function. Consequently, given the lack of known ethnographic parallels, we are obliged to turn to a more detailed analysis of the type's form, which may logically have been determined by the effort of the maker to produce a serviceable creation.

Let us start with a key question: the holes of the pierced partition were used for straining liquids or for ventilation?

On the basis of the position, number and size of the holes (**FIG. 5**), the answer to such a question is rather obvious. If they were only meant for the ventilation of the vessel's contents, they would not be located at the bottom of the receptacle and, even less so, inside a tall hollow foot. It would be much more practical to have them on the upper part of the wall or, even better, on the lid. The position of the pierced partition and the small size of the holes support the view that they were used for straining a substance, after its separation from a mixture including a liquid, which would, when the mixture was introduced from the vessel's orifice, escape from its bottom (**FIG.6:a**). Consequently, the hypothesis that these vessels were used as receptacles for the storage of solid substances requiring ventilation to keep fresh does not appear very strong⁶⁸.

The second important question on the matter could be expressed as follows: what was most significant for the user- the liquid strained out from the vessel through the holes or the solid substances retained in the receptacle after the straining⁶⁹? The overall form of the vase gives a rather clear answer: the shape of the vessel's upper part imitates in essence a pyxis, namely a receptacle for storing contents in a solid state⁷⁰. The usually spherical or piriform shape of the receptacle could indicate an attempt to increase the capacity of the vase (**FIG.6:b**) and, also, to reduce the accessibility of the contents which is reinforced by the addition of a small lid. This latter feature decreases the possibilities of using the vessel for cooking⁷¹.

Consequently, the type seems to be more suitable for draining out a liquid from solid contents than for straining it to clear from useless solid substances⁷². However, which are the limitations regarding shape and volume of the hypothetical contents imposed by the type's form itself? The medium height of the majority of the specimens⁷³ and their relatively narrow orifice suggest limited volume, consisting of small pieces of

⁶² Marinatos 1974, 25. For this particular case, Andreadaki-Vlazaki accepts N. Marinatos' view that the strainer-pyxis played a role similar to that of a fruit-stand, which was found placed on another window sill of the same building. See Andreadaki-Vlazaki 1987, n. 39.

⁶³ Marinatos 1969, 26; Marinatos 1970, 11; Marinatos 1972, 19.

⁶⁴ Cummer & Schofield 1984, 89. Georgiou generally believes that the examination of the context of the Keos examples has nothing to offer in the discussion for the interpretation of the type's function. Georgiou 1986, 43.

⁶⁵ For Zakros, see cat. nos. 21-22, 23-24 and 35.

⁶⁶ In Zakros there is actually only one, that of the Building of the Niches, Room VI (cat. nos. 13-15, 17). In the case of the South Palace Wing, where N. Platon identified a perfume workshop (Platon 1974, 196-9), the strainer-pyxises (cat. nos. 1-2) clearly come from the upper floor apartments and should not, therefore, be associated with its equipment. Andreadaki-Vlazaki 1987, 59. At Palaikastro, two instances have been identified; yet only one of them (that of Block ξ) might have some significance, since in the other the perfume-making vessel was in storage alongside hundreds of other objects, unrelated to it. Bosanquet 1903, 283.

⁶⁷ Cf. the Thera specimens, which have been associated with perfume production on the basis of the interpretation of other vessels of doubtful function, as well as the presence of some objects which might be only loosely connected to such an industry. Andreadaki-Vlazaki 1987, 59-60.

⁶⁸ Andreadaki-Vlazaki 2008, 124. The possibility that the holes would serve in ventilating the fuel associated with scented substances should be excluded, since traces of burning in the interior of the Zakros specimens appear in only one case (cat. no. 8).

⁶⁹ It should be noted here, for instance, that Carinci supports the first possibility, at least regarding the Festian examples. Carinci 2011, 109-10.

⁷⁰ Very instructive on this matter is the comparison between a two-handled pyxis from Gournia with the strainer-pyxises from the same site. Boyd Hawes 1908, pl. VIII: nos 14 and 15. It has been thought that the vessel's shape probably imitates the footed pyxis, a type of the Early Bronze Age. Andreadaki-Vlazaki 1987, 57.

⁷¹ Rice 1987, 239-40.

⁷² In this case, the most suitable term for such a type would be "colander". For a modern "colander" which presents similarities with the type under discussion, see Fig. 7.

⁷³ The examples from Zakros, but also from other Cretan sites (comp. Bosanquet & Dawkins 1923, 66), could be split in two classes, according to size: these with a mean height around 15-25 cm and rim diameter 8-12 cm and those which do not exceed 11 cm in height and 7 cm in rim diameter. Some of the Thera specimens are much larger than the average. Marinatos 1969, 26, 36-7.

LEFTERIS PLATON

relatively small diameter, for their unrestricted removal from the receptacle to be possible. In consequence, the possibilities are confined to the categories of fruit, like grapes or olives, boiled vegetables or legumes, as well as of mixed meals also containing meat⁷⁴.

Slightly in favor of the boiled food is the presence of handles and probably of the foot of the vessel, combined with the addition of a lid. The first two features would make grasping the vase easier, by protecting the user from the heat of the walls of the receptacle, while the lid would keep the contents warm during a meal. Concerning the first possibility expressed above, the lid might be intended for the protection of the contents from insects, although we cannot know how much concern something like that could cause to Bronze Age consumers⁷⁵.

The last question concerns the importance of the type for the meals and the determination of the latter's character. The high quality of the fabric and the presence of decoration in about all the specimens⁷⁶ (FIG.8) confirm that these vessels were also used by their owners for social display. Moreover, the presence of the tall foot which, particularly in the latest examples, is shaped in such a way as to make easier the grasping of the vase in a ceremonial offering gesture⁷⁷, strengthens the impression that they were used in formal meals of secular, or even ritual, significance. This supports the hypothesis that the strainer-pyxides could also function as ceremonial vessels for offering solid foods, a use which is suited to their occasional discovery in ritual, or even burial, contexts, as well as to the fact that they were sometimes decorated with the ceremonial symbol of the double axe⁷⁸.

Finally, the significance of the small-sized examples is not easy to understand. Here, the size is prohibitive for any functional use, since the contents of the receptacle might be very small and their removal from it very

difficult. Their identification with toys does not satisfy⁷⁹, especially since some of them have been found together with examples of ordinary size. A symbolic use at a level of secular, ritual or burial ceremonies⁸⁰ would constitute the most probable interpretation to date, on the basis of what we know from other types of Minoan vessels⁸¹. Such an interpretation does not necessarily undermine the results of the exploration of the original purpose of the type, which has been under investigation here.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Andreadaki-Vlazaki, M. 1987. Ομάδα νεοανακτορικών αγγείων από τον Σταυρωμένο Ρεθύμνης, in *Ειλαπίνη. Τόμος Τιμητικός για τον Καθηγητή Νικόλαο Πλάτονα*, Ηράκλειο Κρήτης: Δήμος Ηρακλείου Κρήτης, 55-68.
- Andreadaki-Vlazaki, M. 1999b. Παραγωγή αιθέριων ελαίων στη μινωική Κρήτη. Η περίπτωση του Χαμαλευρίου, in Tzedakis & Martlew, 48-9.
- Andreadaki-Vlazaki, M. 1999b. Ηθμοσπυξίδα, in Tzedakis & Martlew, 54.
- Andreadaki-Vlazaki, M. 2008. *Strainer Pyxis*, in *From the Land of the Labyrinth. Minoan Crete, 3000-1100 B.C.* Catalogue of the Exhibition held at the Onassis Cultural Center, New York, March 13-September 13, 2008: 124.
- Atkinson, T.D. et al. 1904. *Excavations at Phylakopi in Melos*, London: *The Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies* (Supplementary paper no 4).
- Banou, E.S. 1995a. The pottery, Building AM, in Betancourt, P.Ph. & Davaras, C. (eds.), *Pseira I. The Minoan Buildings on the West Side of Area A*, Philadelphia: The University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, 78-81.
- Banou, E.S. 1995b. The pottery, Building AD Center, in Betancourt, P.Ph. & Davaras, C. (eds.), *Pseira I. The Minoan Buildings on the West Side of Area A*, Philadelphia: The University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, 108-24.
- Banou, E.S. 1998. The pottery, Building AC, in Betancourt, P.Ph. & Davaras, C. (eds.) *Pseira II. Building AC (the 'Shrine') and other buildings in Area A*, Philadelphia. The University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, 13-26.
- Banou, E and Rethemiotakis, G. 1997. Centre and periphery: new evidence for the relations between Knossos and the area of Viannos in the LMII-III A periods, in Driessen, J. et Farnoux, A. (eds.), *La Crète Mycénienne (Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique, supplement 30)*: 23-57.

⁷⁴ The preparation of such meals in Minoan Crete is supported by gas-chromatography analyses in the walls of cooking vessels, the results of which were presented in an exhibition titled "Minoan and Mycenaean Flavors", which took place in the National Archaeological Museum at Athens in 1999. Tzedakis - Martlew 1999, 103-16.

⁷⁵ Nevertheless, the form of some Minoan vessels suggests that such concern really existed amongst the prehistoric inhabitants of Crete, at least regarding some fluid or semi-fluid products. Platon 2002, n. 26. Petrakos 2005, 75.

⁷⁶ Of the 35 specimens included in the catalogue only one (cat. no. 10) did not preserve traces of decoration, but it belonged to the class of the small examples, whose function is harder to understand. The selection of the decoration, on the other hand, cannot really be associated with the function of the vessels, since the geometric and floral motifs used are the ordinary ones appearing on all the decorated ceramic types of this period. Contra Andreadaki-Vlazaki 2008, 124.

⁷⁷ Evans believed that a similar configuration of the lower part of some Minoan amphorae belonging to the MMIII period mirrors an Egyptian fashion, derived from the deposition of ritual vases upon a separately made base. Evans, PMI 416-7, fig. 302: a, b; PMIII, 402, fig. 267: a, b. Nevertheless, the addition of an elegant tall foot to a vessel also served in its ceremonial raising, besides its supporting role.

⁷⁸ Boyd 1908, 40, pl. VII: no 21; Dawkins 1906, 5-6; Bosanquet & Dawkins 1923, 77-8, fig. 61.

⁷⁹ Bosanquet & Dawkins 1923, 66.

⁸⁰ Orton, Tyers & Vince 1993, 227-8.

⁸¹ For instance, the frequent discovery of various types of small sized jug does not counter the main function of the form as a serving vessel used during ordinary meals or ritual feasts.

SOME FRESH THOUGHTS ON THE USE OF THE MINOAN "STRAINER"

- Barnard, K.A. & Brogan, T.M. 2003. *Mochlos IB. Period III. Neopalatial Settlement on the Coast: the Artisan's Quarter and the Farmhouse at Chalinomouri, The Neopalatial Pottery*, Pennsylvania, Philadelphia: INSTAP Academic Press.
- Benzi, M. 1992. *Rodi e la civiltà micenea*. Roma, Gruppo Editoriale Internazionale.
- Betancourt, P.Ph. 1999. The Pottery, Area BR, in Betancourt, P.Ph. & Davaras, C. (eds.), *Pseira IV. Minoan Buildings in Area B, C, D and F*, Philadelphia. The University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, 141-54.
- Betancourt, P.Ph. & Silverman, S.J. 1991. *Pottery from Gournia*, Pennsylvania: The University Museum.
- Boyd Hawes, H. 1908. *Gournia, Vasiliki and Other Prehistoric Sites on the Isthmus of Hierapetra, Crete*, Philadelphia: *The American Exploration Society. Free Museum of Science and Art*.
- Bosanquet, R.C. 1903. Excavations at Palaikastro II, *Annual of the British School at Athens* 9: 274-89.
- Bosanquet, R.C. & Dawkins, M.R. 1923. *The Unpublished Objects from the Palaikastro Excavations, 1902-6*, (*Annual of the British School at Athens*, Supplement I). London.
- Carinci, F. 2011. Strumentazioni per il filtraggio nei contesti di apparato del primo palazzo di Festos, in Carinci, F., Cucuzza, N., Militello, P., Palio, O. (eds.), *Κρήτης Μινωίδος. Tradizione e identità minoica tra produzione artigianale, pratiche cerimoniali e memoria del passato (Studi di Archeologia Cretese 10. Studi offerti a Vincenzo La Rosa per il Suo 70o compleanno)*. Padova, 103-16.
- Cummer, W.W. and Schofield, E. 1984. *Keos III. Ayia Irini: House A*, Mainz on Rhine: Verlag Philipp von Zabern.
- Dawkins, R.M. 1903. Pottery from Zakro, *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 23: 248-260.
- Dawkins, R.M. 1905. Excavations at Palaikastro V, *Annual of the British School at Athens* 12: 1-8.
- Deshayes, J. & Dessenne, A. 1959. *Fouilles exécutées à Mallia. Exploration des maisons et quartiers d'habitation (1948-1954), deuxième fascicule. Études crétoises* 11. Paris : Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner.
- Evans, A., 1921-34 (PM I-IV). *The Palace of Minos at Knossos*. London.
- Floyd, C.R. 1998. The Pottery, in Betancourt, P. Ph. & Davaras, C. (eds.), *Pseira III. The Plateia Building*, Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, 25-76.
- Georgiou, H.S. 1986. *Keos VI. Ayia Irini: Specialized Domestic and Industrial Pottery*, Mainz on Rhine: Verlag Philipp von Zabern.
- Hazzidakis, J. 1912. Τύλισος Μινωική, *Αρχαιολογική Εφημερίς*, 197-233.
- Hogarth, D.G. 1901. Excavations at Zakro, Crete, *Annual of the British School at Athens* 7: 121-49.
- Hogarth, D.G. 1902. *Bronze-Age Vases from Zakro*, *Journal of Hellenique Studies* 22:333-8.
- Hutchinson, R.W. 1956. A Late Minoan tomb at Knossos, *Annual of the British School at Athens*, 51: 68-73.
- Levi, D. 1961-62. La tomba a tholos di Kamilari presso a Festòs, *Annuario della Scuola Archaeologica di Atene e delle Missioni Italiane in Oriente* 39-40: 7-148.
- Levi, D. 1976. *Festòs e la civiltà minoica*, vol. I. Roma.
- Levi, D. & Carinci, F. 1988. *Festòs e la civiltà minoica, II, fascicolo secondo : L' arte festia nell' età protopalatiale*. Roma : Edizioni dell'Ateneo.
- Marinatos, S. 1968-1976. *Excavations at Thera I-VII, Βιβλιοθήκη της Εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*. Athens.
- Marinatos, S. 1972. *Οι Θησαυροί της Θήρας*. Εμπορική Τράπεζα της Ελλάδος. Αθήναι.
- Marinatos, N. 1983. The West House at Akrotiri as a Cult Center, *Attenische Mitteilungen* 98: 1-19.
- Mountjoy, P.A. 2003. *The South House (BSA supp. 54)*. Oxford and Northampton.
- Orton Cl., Tyers, P. & Vince, A. 1993. *Pottery in Archaeology*. Cambridge.
- Petrakos, V.H. 2005. Ζάκρος, *Έργον της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, 74-5.
- Platon, L. 2002. Τα μινωικά αγγεία και το κρασί, in Μυλοποταμιτάκη, Κ.Α. (ed.), *Οίνος παλαιός ηδύποτος (Πρακτικά του Διεθνούς Επιστημονικού Συμποσίου στους Κουνάβους Ηρακλείου, Απρίλιος 1998)*, Iraklio: Υπουργείο Πολιτισμού, Αρχαιολογικό Ινστιτούτο Κρήτης: 5-24.
- Platon, L. 2011. Studying the Character of the Minoan 'Household' within the Limits of the Neopalatial Settlement of Zakros, in Glowacki, T.K & Vogeikoff-Brogan, N. (eds.), *ΣΤΕΙΑ. The Archaeology of Houses and Households in Ancient Crete (Hesperia Supplement 44)*. Princeton, New Jersey, 151-61.
- Platon, L. 2010. On the dating and character of the 'Zakros pits deposit', in Krzyszkowska, O. (ed.), *Cretan Offerings. Studies in honour of Peter Warren (British School at Athens Studies 18)*. London, 243-57.
- Platon, N. 1955. Ανασκαφαί περιοχής Σητείας, *Πρακτικά της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, 288-97.
- Platon, N. 1956. Ανασκαφή μινωικής αγροικίας εις Ζου Σητείας, *Πρακτικά της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, 232-40.
- Platon, N. 1962. Ανασκαφή Ζάκρου, *Πρακτικά της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, 142-68.
- Platon, N. 1965. Ανασκαφαί Ζάκρου, *Πρακτικά της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, 187-224.
- Platon, N. 1966. Ανασκαφαί Ζάκρου, *Πρακτικά της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, 139-73.
- Platon, N. 1968. Ανασκαφή Ζάκρου, *Πρακτικά της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, 149-83.
- Platon, N. 1969. Ανασκαφή Ζάκρου, *Πρακτικά της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, 197-237.
- Platon, N. 1970. Ανασκαφή Ζάκρου, *Πρακτικά της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, 208-51.
- Platon, N. 1971. *Zakro: The Discovery of a Lost Palace of Ancient Crete*. New York.

LEFTERIS PLATON

- Platon, N. 1974. Ζάκρος. *Το νέον μινωϊκόν ανάκτορον*, Athens: Βιβλιοθήκη της Εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας.
- Platon, N. 1975. Ανασκαφή Ζάκρου, *Πρακτικά της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, 343-75.
- Platon, N. 1976. Ανασκαφή Ζάκρου, *Πρακτικά της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, 419-39.
- Platon, N. 1977. Ανασκαφή Ζάκρου, *Πρακτικά της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, 421-46.
- Platon, N. 1978. Ανασκαφή Ζάκρου, *Πρακτικά της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, 259-99.
- Platon, N. 1979. Ανασκαφή Ζάκρου, *Πρακτικά της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, 282-322.
- Rice, P.M. 1987. *Pottery Analysis. A Sourcebook*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Seager, R.B. 1909. Excavations on the Island of Mochlos, Crete, in 1908, *American Journal Archaeology* 13, 3: 273-303.
- Sackett, L.H., Popham, M., Warren, P. 1965. Excavations at Palaikastro VI, *Annual of the British School at Athens* 60: 247-316.
- Sackett, L.H. & Popham, M. 1970. Excavations at Palaikastro VII, *Annual of the British School at Athens* 65: 203-42.
- Soles, J.S. 2002. A central court at Gournia?, in Driessen, J., Schoep, I. & Laffineur, R. (eds.). *Monuments of Minos. Rethinking the Minoan Palaces (Aegaeum 23)*. Liège, 123-32.
- Soles, J.S. 2008. *Mochlos IIA. Period IV. The Mycenaean Settlement and Cemetery. The Sites*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: INSTAP Academic Press.
- Soles, J.S. & Davaras, C. 1992. Excavations at Mochlos, 1989, *Hesperia* 61: 413-45.
- Soles, J.S. & Davaras, C. 1994. Excavations at Mochlos, 1990-1991, *Hesperia* 63: 391-436.
- Soles, J.S. & Davaras, C. 1996. Excavations at Mochlos, 1992-1993, *Hesperia* 65: 175-230.
- Tzedakis, Y. & Martlew, H. 1999. *Μινωϊτών και Μυκηναίων γέυσεις*, Αθήνα: Υπουργείο Πολιτισμού, Γενική Διεύθυνση Αρχαιοτήτων.
- Warren, P. & Hankey, V. 1989, *Aegean Bronze Age Chronology*, Bristol: Bristol Classical Press.



FIG.1. "STRAINER-PYXIS" FROM ZAKROS, BUILDING B



FIG.2. "STRAINER-PYXIS" FROM HOUSE A OF THE NW HILL, ZAKROS.

SOME FRESH THOUGHTS ON THE USE OF THE MINOAN "STRAINER"



FIG.3. "STRAINER-PYXIS" FROM ZAKROS, BUILDING B.



FIG.4. "STRAINER-PYXIS" FROM THE BUILDING OF POTTERY DEPOSITS.



FIG.5. THE INTERIOR OF A "STRAINER-PYXIS".

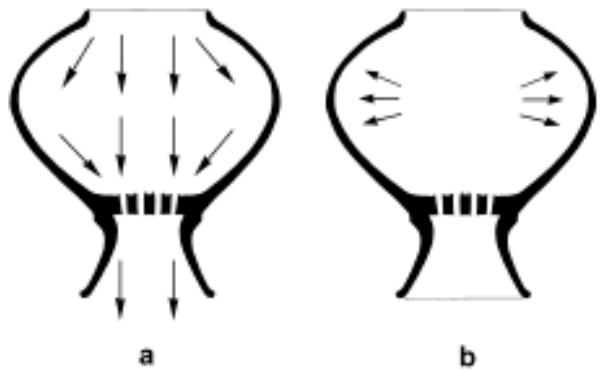


FIG.6A. SKETCH SHOWING THE DIRECTION OF LIQUIDS FROM THE ORIFICE TO THE PIERCED BOTTOM OF THE "STRAINER-PYXIS".

FIG.6B. SKETCH SHOWING THE INCREASE OF CAPACITY OF A "STRAINER-PYXIS".



FIG.7. A MODERN "COLANDER" PRESENTING SIMILARITIES WITH THE "STRAINER-PYXIS".



FIG.8. A BEAUTIFULLY DECORATED "STRAINER-PYXIS".