EMERGING NEOLITHIC AND EARLY CYCLADIC SETTLEMENTS IN PAROS: KOUKOUNARIES AND SKLAVOUNA[1]

INTRODUCTION

ALTHOUGH a central and comparatively large Cycladic island, Paros is still unknown territory for the Neolithic. The only published Neolithic site is Kastro at Paroikia, which was excavated in the early 20th century.[2] Three more sites, Saliagos,[3] now a separate islet off the island's south-west coast, and two sites on Antiparos (Vouni,[4] Cave), should not of course be ignored, as they all belonged to a united island in antiquity, that of 'Greater Paros',[5] including modern Paros, Antiparos, and Despotiko. Still, however, our knowledge of the Neolithic of Paros is very poor, as, apart from the well documented intra-site analysis of Saliagos, the big fertile modern island is an empty Neolithic landscape giving no hint of the cultural and economic distribution of Neolithic populations and their site networks within it.

This current image of an empty landscape should not of course be misinterpreted as evidence for a sparse population in the Neolithic. To a very large degree the phenomenon, well attested in all the Cyclades, should be the outcome of a lack of systematic research in association with taphonomic factors which did not favour the preservation of the makeshift Neolithic settlement structures. Where islands have been systematically surveyed, e.g.

[1] Discussion in this article is preliminary; the detailed study of the material is in progress for the final publication. All the material discussed here is kept in the Museum of Paros at Paroikia. The excavation campaigns and study have been possible thanks to the generous financial support of the Greek Archaeological Society (Athens), the Paros and Cyclades Institute of Archaeology (Athens), the Institute for the Aegean Prehistory (Philadelphia), the Shelby White and Leon Levy Foundation (Boston), and the Mediterranean Archaeological Trust (London). Many warm thanks are due to the 21st Ephorate for the Antiquities of the Cyclades, and personally to the Director, Dr M. Marthari, for permissions to the research team. Also to Mr Y. Kourayos, responsible archaeologist of the Ephorate for Paros, and to the staff of the Museum for all facilities and hospitality. Special thanks should go to the BSA Editor Dr Virginia Webb for her willingness to consider this article for publication in the *Annual*, as well as to the anonymous referee for invaluable comments and suggestions. Last but not least warm thanks should go to Mrs Christina Xanthopoulou for translating the text into English.

Special abbreviations:

ΝΠ = *Νεολιθικός Πολιτισμός στην Ελλάδα* (N. P. Goulandris Foundation, Museum of Cycladic Art; Athens, 1996).

Ορίζων = *Ορίζων: A Colloquium on the Prehistory of the Cyclades, Cambridge, March 25–28, 2004* (Cambridge, in press).

Schilardi 1975 = D. U. Schilardi, "Ἀρχαιολογικαὶ ἔρευναι ἐν Πάρῳ", *PAE* 1975, 197–211.

Schilardi 1977 = D. U. Schilardi, "Ἀνασκαφὲς στὴν Πάρο", *PAE* 1977, 363–77.

Schilardi 1981 = D. U. Schilardi, "Ἀνασκαφὴ Κουκουναριῶν Πάρου", *PAE* 1981, 269–92.

Schilardi 1982 = D. U. Schilardi, "Ἀνασκαφή στην Πάρο", *PAE* 1982, 232–52.

Schilardi 1984 = D. U. Schilardi, "Ἀνασκαφή στην Πάρο", *PAE* 1984, 263–300.

Schilardi 1988 = D. U. Schilardi, "Ἀνασκαφή Πάρου", *PAE* 1988, 184–207.

Schilardi 1989 = D. U. Schilardi, "Ἀνασκαφή Πάρου", *PAE* 1989, 253–66.

Schilardi 1990 = D. U. Schilardi, "Ἀνασκαφή Πάρου", *PAE* 1990, 209–23.

Schilardi 1991 = D. U. Schilardi, "Ἀνασκαφή Πάρου", *PAE* 1991, 230–55.

Sotirakopoulo = P. Sotirakopoulo, *Ακρωτήρι Θήρας: Η Νεολιθική και η Πρώιμη Εποχή του Καλκού επί τη βάσει της κεραμεικής* (Athens, 1999).

[2] O. Rubensohn, 'Paros, ii', *AM* 26 (1901), 194; id. 'Die prähistorischen und frühgeschichtlichen Funde auf dem Burghügel von Paros', *AM* 42 (1917), 1–96, esp. 3–10; J. C. Overbeck, *The Bronze Age Pottery from the Kastro at Paros* (Jonsered, 1989).

[3] J. D. Evans and C. Renfrew, *Excavations at Saliagos near Antiparos* (BSA Supp. 5; London, 1968).

[4] Ibid., 74.

[5] C. Broodbank, *An Island Archaeology of the Early Cyclades* (Cambridge, 2000), frontispiece.

FIG. 1. Main Neolithic and EBA sites on Paros and adjacent islets.

Melos,[6] the detailed documentation of collected finds, mainly ceramics and lithics, has strongly helped to bring invisible Neolithic sites to light.

The same reasons probably account for the rarity of the known settlements in the Early Cycladic period, especially in comparison to cemeteries. In Paros, only five[7] of the known EC sites (FIG. 1) are identified with settlements (Kastro at Paroikia, Avysos, Pyrgos, Koukounaries, and Sklavouna).[8] On the other hand known cemeteries or individual graves are more than three times more numerous (Dryos, Glyfa, Plastiras, Panagia, Kampos, Pyrgos, Mnemouria, Galana Krimna, Avysos, Marapas, Kamari, Episkopiana, Messada, Lefkes, Kostos, Pounta, Tsimpido).[9] Another ten EC cemeteries are reported from Antiparos,[10] and five more from Despotiko[11] compared to only three known EC settlements from those

[6] J. Cherry, 'A preliminary definition of site distribution on Melos', in C. Renfrew and M. Wagstaff, *An Island Polity: The Archaeology of Exploitation in Melos* (Cambridge, 1982), 13 tabl. 2.1.

[7] Some more possible EC findspots have also been located on the coast of the bay of Naousa, see D. U. Schilardi, 'Paros, report II: the 1973 campaign', *JFA* 2 (1975), 83–96.

[8] Ch. Tsountas, "Κυκλαδικά", *Arch. Eph.* 1898, 160, 168–75; C. Doumas, 'Notes on Early Cycladic architecture', *AA* 87 (1972), 151–2, 157. See also n. 2.

[9] Tsountas (n. 8), 139–40, 155–60, 175–6; Rubensohn 1917 (n. 2), 3–10; E. A. Varoucha, "Κυκλαδικοί τάφοι της Πάρου", *Arch. Eph.* 1925/6, 98–114; C. Renfrew, *The Emergence of Civilisation: The Cyclades and the Aegean in the Third Millennium B.C.* (London, 1972), 514–5; Ch. Doumas, *Early Bronze Age Burial Habits in the Cyclades* (SIMA 48; Göteborg, 1977), 96–100; D. U. Schilardi, "Πάρος", *Μεγάλη Σοβιετική Έγκυκλοπαίδεια* (Athens, 1981), xxvii. 133–40; Ph. Zapheiropoulou, *Πάρος* (Athens, 1997), 7; Y. Kourayos and S. Detoratou, "Πάρος: Η αρχαιολογική έρευνα των τελευταίων δεκαετιών", *Περίαπτο*, 2 (2000), 37–49; Y. Kourayos, 'Recent finds from Paros dating to the Early Cycladic period, in *Ορίζων*, with complete bibliography.

[10] Kourayos (n. 9).

[11] Ibid.

islands.[12] The reason why EC tombs are so favoured compared to settlements should partly lie in differences in the quality of construction between the two in antiquity. Thus graves, usually arranged in small clusters on low, rolling slopes overlooking the sea, constitute underground stone structures which, when spared by subsequent human activity (especially agriculture and building), are far more likely to survive through the centuries as compared with settlements, which are built above the ground, are made of perishable materials and, therefore, are more vulnerable to repeated land use and physical wear and tear.

In this respect, the excavation of stratified settlement deposits of the Neolithic and EC period on Koukounaries provides a rare opportunity to explore the life circumstances of Paros from the fifth to the third millennium BC, on the economic, cultural, and technological level.

KOUKOUNARIES

The hill of Koukounaries has an altitude of around 75 m and lies by the coast on the south-western end of the bay of Naousa (FIG. 2). It forms part of an arid, barren and rocky ridge barring the fertile valley of Kamares north and north-west. The hill consists of grey granite,[13] unlike the rest of the ridge which consists of schist and gneiss.[14] Extending westwards the valley of Kamares is traversed by a small river discharging into the bay at the foothills of Koukounaries and forming a rich delta waterland. The alluvial deposits are responsible for the fertility of the soil which makes this valley one of the island's current major farming areas for wheat, legumes and fruits.

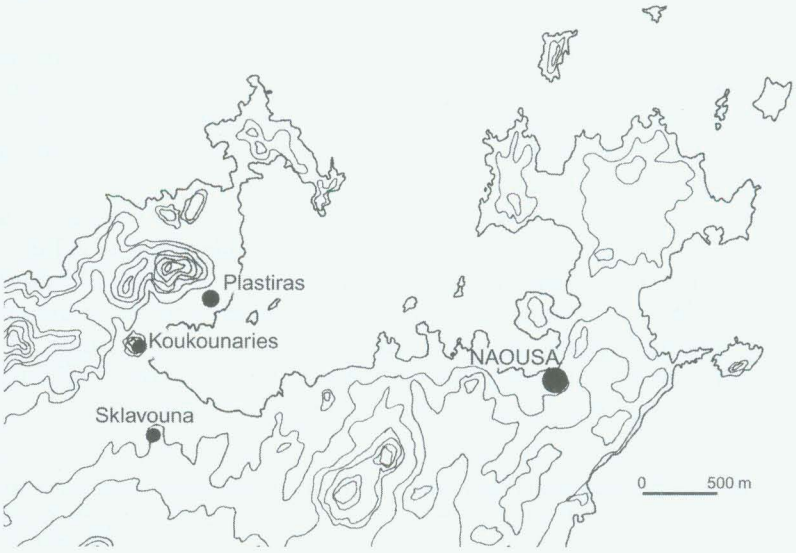

FIG. 2. Position of prehistoric sites around the bay of Naousa.

[12] Ibid.

[13] D. J. Papanikolaou, 'Contribution to the geology of the Aegean sea: the island of Paros', *Annales géologiques des pays helléniques*, 30 (1979), 65–96.

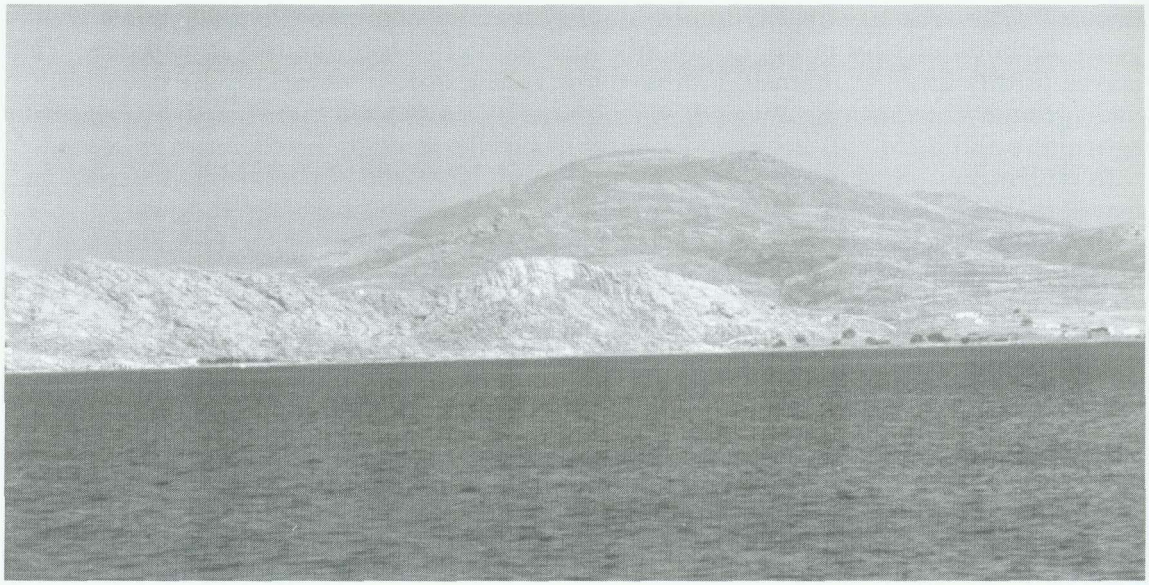

FIG. 3. The hill of Koukounaries; view from W.

The hill of Koukounaries is steep and rugged with only two pathways of ascent situated in two small gullies, one north and one south (FIG. 3). The granite rocks are deeply eroded by wind and sea. The hill forms several plateaux at various altitudes (FIG. 4): the Lower Plateau eastwards (40–50 m), the Middle Plateau southwards (60–65 m) and the Upper Plateau on the hilltop (75 m). Narrow natural terraces supported by ancient retaining walls can be seen high on the hillsides. From the hilltop the panorama is complete not only over the bay of Naousa and the sea as far as the eye can see east and north-east (Naxos), but also over the hinterland.

Being quite prominent, the hill was naturally known to locals who grew small crops on the ancient remains until recently.[15] The extent of its archaeological value was realized in the early 1970s and it was included in the research projects of the Greek Archaeological Society. The excavations (1974–92) brought to light dense remains of important buildings all over the hill, suggesting its intensive and constant use as place of worship and administrative centre for about 600 years between the Late Bronze Age (first decades of the twelfth century BC) and the Archaic period (seventh century BC).[16]

[14] Apart from Koukounaries, the deposition of igneous rocks in the area includes two more granite outcrops, the famous Kolymbithres beach to the north of the hill, where weathering has carved natural basins, and another inland granite outcrop at the southern side of Kamares valley, which may continue below the alluvial deposits. See Papanikolaou (n. 13).

[15] Schilardi (n. 7), 89.

[16] On the excavations of Koukounaries, see annual reports by Schilardi in *PAE* between 1975 and 1991 listed in abbreviations above. On the LBA and later periods, see general assessments in D. U. Schilardi, 'The LH III period at the Koukounaries acropolis', in J. A. MacGillivray and R. L. N. Barber (eds), *The Prehistoric Cyclades: Contributions to a Workshop on Cycladic Chronology* (Edinburgh, 1984), 184–204; id. 'Paros and the Cyclades after the fall of the Mycenaean palaces', in J.-P. Olivier (ed.), *MYKHNAÏKA: Actes du IX^e colloque international sur les textes mycéniens et égéens organisé par le KERA et l'EFA, Athènes, 2–6 octobre 1990* (BCH Supp. 25; Athens, 1992), 621–39; id. 'Il culto di Atena a Koukounaries e considerazioni sulla topografia di Paros nel VII sec. a.C.', in E. Lanzillota and D. U. Schilardi (eds), *Le Cicladi ed il mondo Egeo* (Rome, 1996), 33–64.

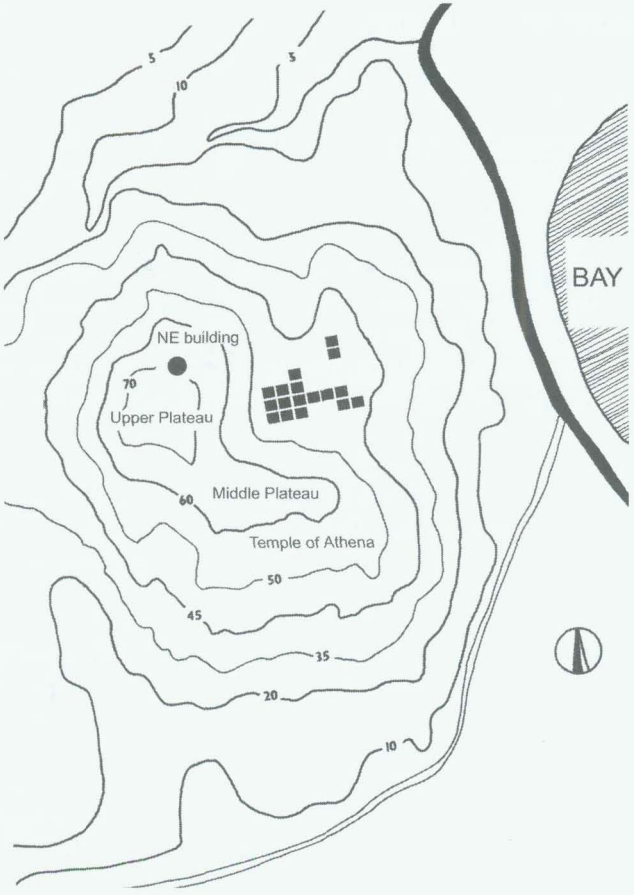

FIG. 4. Map of the hill of Koukounaries with plateaux and terraces.

The first indications that the area was used before the LBA emerged with the discovery of sporadic EC objects beneath the LH III C mansion on the Upper Plateau,[17] and of disturbed strata in the area of the Archaic Temple of Athena and the ancient olive press on the north-eastern hillside. However, crucial to the reconstitution of the EC and Neolithic age at Koukounaries was the discovery of stratigraphic deposits from these periods at the NE building on the hilltop[18] and on the Lower Plateau[19] where subsequent users wreaked less havoc. The reassessment of all the information from the stratigraphy of the pre-Mycenaean horizon and the study of its finds began systematically in 1998 and points to Koukounaries as an important new pre-Mycenaean site in Aegean prehistory.

[17] Schilardi 1977, 370–1; Schilardi 1982, 242–3.
[18] Schilardi 1982, 244–5; Schilardi 1991, 230–7.
[19] Schilardi 1988, 202; Schilardi 1989, 263–6; Schilardi 1990, 215–23; Schilardi 1991, 238–53.

UPPER PLATEAU AND NE BUILDING

Central Upper Plateau

Sporadic EC finds brought to light from the deposits filling the ruins of the LH, Protogeometric and Geometric, mansion[20] suggest the presence of a pre-Mycenaean horizon on Koukounaries hilltop which was disturbed, if not destroyed, by later intensive building activity.

The most significant finds from the Upper Plateau are two marble figurines found in the basements of the Mycenaean compound in a destruction deposit from the LH III C.

The first one (FIG. 5 *a*)[21] is schematic, measuring 15.5 cm, and almost entirely intact, with only a small chip or a manufacture defect on the lower part. It is an oblong object with two opposite triangular arm stumps in the middle. Between them the front part of the figurine is slightly curved inwards. Above the stumps, a pair of opposed symmetrical notches indicates the neck, which ends in a trapezoid head with rounded edges. The left side of the head protrudes asymmetrically compared with the right. A small triangular knob at the centre of the head suggests the nose. The lower part of the body is an oblong rectangle of prismatic formation with rounded edges and flat surface. The rear of the figurine is equally flat.

It belongs to the so-called 'Apeiranthos type' of EC II abstract-schematic figurines according to the classification by Renfrew and Thimme[22] followed by modern scholars.[23] A distinctive element concordant with this type and period of classification is the separation of the schematic head from the torso, a separation lacking in earlier abstract figurines. Several examples of this type occur in the Cyclades mainly at Chalandriani, Skarkos, and Akrotiri, also in Naxos and Keros,[24] but it was also found in Paros before, in the earlier excavations by Tsountas.[25] A few examples also occur in mainland Greece, such as at Agios Kosmas[26] and Manika.[27]

The head of a second marble figurine[28] was found in the foundations of a wall in a basement room at the southern side of the Mycenaean building (FIG. 5 *b*). It measures 3.8 cm and has an oblong oval form. The nose is indicated by a longitudinal relief, the mouth by a thin horizontal incision, and the eyes by two very small cavities. The facial details may have been painted in antiquity. The head is tilted backwards and was broken at the union with the neck. The entire figurine must have measured approximately 16 cm. It is made of white fine-grained marble, probably local. The shape of the head and the features of the face suggest the EC II, but the missing torso makes it impossible to further classify the find in any typological subdivision.

[20] See Schilardi 1977 and 1982.

[21] Schilardi 1977, 370; pl. 188 *a*.

[22] C. Renfrew, 'The development and chronology of the Early Cycladic figurines', *AJA* 73 (1969), 14–15; id. 'The typology and chronology of Cycladic sculpture', in J. Thimme, P. Getz-Preziosi, and B. Otto (eds), *Art and Culture of the Cyclades in the 3rd Millennium BC* (Chicago and London, 1977), 59–71 and 434–5; nos. 57–62.

[23] P. Sotirakopoulou, 'The Early Bronze Age stone figurines form Akrotiri on Thera and their significance for the Early Cycladic settlement', *BSA* 93 (1998), 119–21.

[24] Ibid., 119–20, with bibliography.

[25] Tsountas (n. 8), 161, pl. 11. 12; Renfrew 1969 (n. 22), 14 nos. 15–17.

[26] G. E. Mylonas, *Agios Kosmas: An Early Bronze Age Settlement and Cemetery in Attica* (Princeton, 1959), 77–8, 138; fig. 163.

[27] A. Sampson, *Μάνικα*, ii. *Ο πρωτοελλαδικός οικισμός και το νεκροταφείο* (Athens, 1988), 32, 70; fig. 87.

[28] Schilardi 1982, 242; pl. 151 *a*.

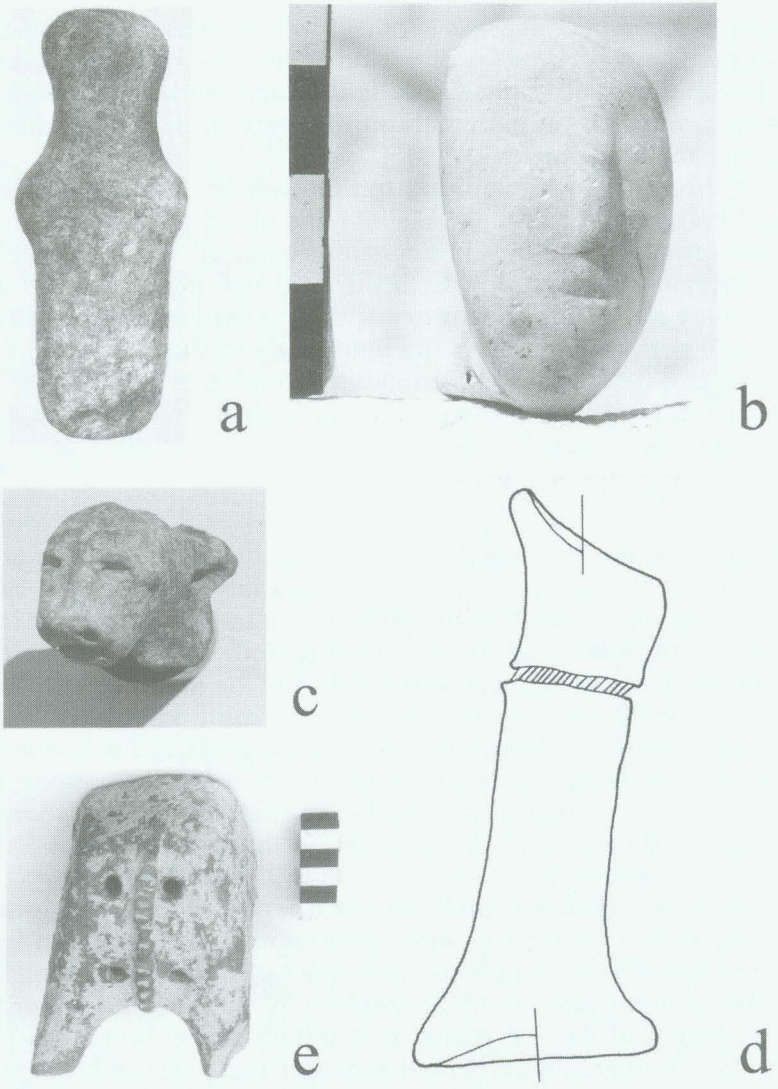

FIG. 5. (*a–b*) EC II figurines from Upper Plateau; (*c*) EC II figurine from Lower Plateau; (*d*) spool-like object from Upper Plateau; (*e*) EC II 'mask' from Sklavouna.

Though it cannot be excluded that the two EC figurines found in the Mycenaean strata had been accidentally moved up from lower levels, it is most likely that the Mycenaean settlers at Koukounaries collected these figurines from earlier deposits and incorporated them in their socio-ideological setting ascribing their own meanings to them, for instance as sacred objects or ancestral symbols. A similar view has been expressed[29] with regard to

[29] Sotirakopoulou (n. 23), 158.

some EC figurines found in later deposits in other Cycladic sites such as the LC I destruction layer at Akrotiri on Thera,[30] House A of period V in Ayia Irini on Keos,[31] Vassiliki and Archanes in Crete.[32] Especially noteworthy is the marking of the mouth of the second figurine by incision, which is an extremely rare feature in the EC period, and could be explained as a later modification.

Among the pre-Mycenaean finds found underneath the building on the summit, we should also select for comment an unusual spool-like object made of coarse brown clay. It is 25 cm high and around 5 cm thick in diameter (FIG. 5 *d*). The main cylindrical body is solid and both sides are convex from the inside, but one is sloping and the other is flat like a base, as if some object was meant to stand on it. Around 8 cm from the top of the sloping face, a large perforation crosses the main body of the cylinder. The dating of the item is rather insecure; it could have been either Neolithic or EC. Whatever its date, the form is apparently unusual, and the function of such object, either on its own (spool?), or in combination with one or more similar items (pedestals?), is still a matter of discussion.

NE building

The major evidence for pre-Mycenaean presence on the Upper Plateau at Koukounaries is the structure on the NE hilltop, which constitutes the only ordered EC architectural construction preserved on the hill. It is an independent building, set apart from the central structural remains of the LBA and the historical period. Its foundations lie north–south partly on the flat area of the plateau and partly on the slope overlooking the bay of Naousa (FIG. 6). Part of the structure to the north and south must have been swept away, which makes it impossible to identify the exact ground plan, but it is assumed to have been rectangular. Its remaining part is quite high (FIG. 7) and shows alternating occupation phases dating from the Mycenaean and the Geometric Period,[33] in addition to the EC. Indeed, it is thanks to the reuse of the structure in those periods that foundations have been preserved up to this height.

What we can see now includes a solid outer wall 1.10–1.40 m wide, running east–west, and inner dividing walls 0.50–0.70 m wide crossing at right angles and forming internal rectangular rooms and narrow supplementary spaces. A similar long and narrow space whose western part is not extant lies at the southern part of the existing ground plan. The presence of such long and narrow rooms is common in the architecture of the period especially in the Greek mainland, and their function and purpose has been the object of debate. There are several reports of long and narrow rooms in houses at Zygouries,[34] Lerna,[35] Asine,[36] and Manika,[37] usually without door openings and interpreted as storage and food-processing areas. To explain the absence of doors, it has been suggested[38] that these rooms might not have been built-in all the way up to the ceiling, but this would not justify the thickness of the dividing walls.

[30] Ibid., 158.

[31] J. Davis, *Keos*, v: *Ayia Irini: Period V* (Mainz, 1986), 97.

[32] A. Zois, "Ανασκαφὴ εἰς Βασιλικὴν Ιεράπετρας, 1970 καὶ 1972", *PAE* 1972, 282–3; pl. 255 *α–β*; Y. Sakellarakis and E. Sakellarakis, "Ανασκαφή Ἀρχανῶν", *PAE* 1980, 400; pl. 223 *β*.

[33] Schilardi 1982, 245; id. 1991 (n. 18), 233.

[34] C. W. Blegen, *Zygouries: A Prehistoric Settlement in the Valley of Cleonai* (Cambridge, 1928), pl. ii.

[35] J. L. Caskey, 'Excavations at Lerna, 1954', *Hesp.* 24 (1955), 38, fig. 3.

[36] O. Frödin and A. Persson, *Asine: Results of the Swedish Excavations 1922–1930* (Stockholm, 1938), fig. 42.

[37] A. Sampson, *Μάνικα*, i: *Μια πρωτοελλαδική πόλη στη Χαλκίδα* (Athens, 1985), 28 fig. 2. I, II.

[38] Ibid. 325.

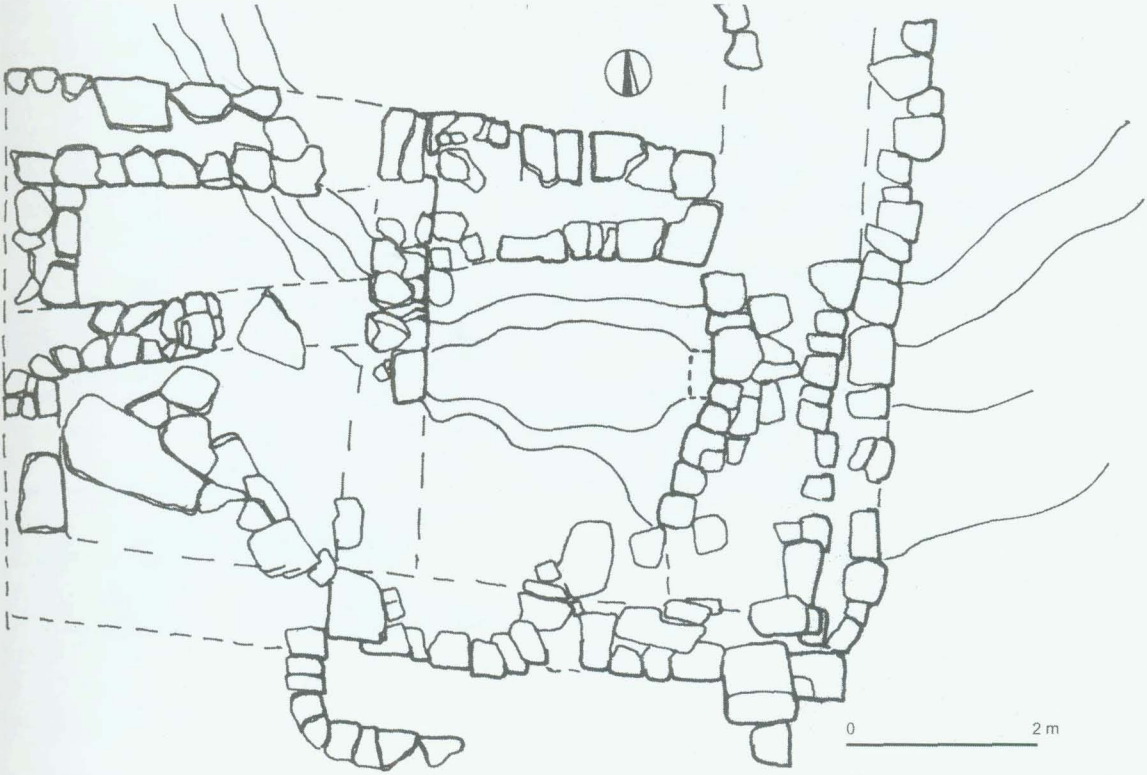

FIG. 6. Plan of EC II building on the NE Upper Plateau.

The size of the outer wall of the building at Koukounaries may suggest that the extant areas were basements and there was also an upper floor. The walls are made of small schist and granite slabs set without mortar but exceptionally well fitted. The excellent craftsmanship of masonry on the inner face of the thick outer wall is striking. These walls might have been coated internally with some sort of slip.[39]

The upper structure may have been made either of mudbricks or timberwork as was the rule at the time,[40] especially since the upper surface of the stone walls is flat and was laid with carefully chosen slabs as if they were meant to support structures made of different materials.[41] However, the building may have also been made entirely of stone, as was the

[39] Evidence on wall plasters comes from Lerna, Eutresis, and Agios Kosmas.

[40] The absence of stone deposits inside the EBA buildings has led to the conclusion that upper structures were made by perishable mudbricks or timberwork. There is a case of an EH building at Malthi, Messenia, where such a wooden upper stucture is strongly suggested. The House of Tiles in Lerna is the most typical example for mudbuilt construction. It is quite possible that mudbricks were used in combination with timber. See details in J. C. Overbeck, 'A Study of Early Helladic Architecture' (Ph.D., University of Cincinnati, 1963).

[41] Similar observations concerning the upper finishing of the preserved walls were made at the EH settlement of Kalogerovrysi, see A. Sampson, *Καλογερόβρυση: Ένας οικισμός της Εποχής του Χαλκού στα Φύλλα της Εύβοιας* (Athens, 1993), 125.

FIG. 7. NE Building, the drainage; view from SE.

case with the houses at Skarkos on Ios.[42] Actually, the hypothesis of stone-made houses or stone-made houses with wooden frameworks can also be supported in some examples of architecture in mainland Greece according to Overbeck[43] and Sampson.[44]

Remarkably, a 0.30 m square-cut conduit was provided for in the construction of the building to drain rainwater that would otherwise flood the basement owing to the steep gradient of the ground. The conduit's outlet is situated near the meeting-point of the outer wall with a northern dividing wall (FIG. 7).[45] Another EC example of a drainage system within a settlement comes from Ayia Irini.[46] This element indicates that the building was constructed with some kind of planning in mind dictated by the particular formation of the land. Such planning would allocate the use of individual areas to better serve the needs of the occupants.

At least two consecutive EC occupation phases were identified in the building, as suggested by the evidence on two alternating floors.[47] Both are made partly of thickly set

[42] M. Marthari, "Σκάρκος: Ἕνας πρωτοκυκλαδικός οικισμός στην Ἰο", in *Ἵδρυμα Ν. Π. Γουλανδρή, Μουσείο Κυκλαδικής Τέχνης: Διαλέξεις 1986–1989* (Athens, 1990).

[43] Overbeck (n. 40).

[44] Cf. evidence from Manika, Sampson (n. 37), 322; also Kalogerovrysi, Sampson (n. 41), 14, 125.

[45] Schilardi 1991, 228 fig. 3, 235; pl. 148 *β*.

[46] Many thanks to Dr E. Schofield for pointing this out to us.

[47] Schilardi 1991, 237.

schist slabs and partly of compact earth,[48] but the lower one also contains some pebbles.[49] Future study will show which part of each floor corresponds to open areas and which to internal rooms. As a matter of fact, slabs are very popular in EBA architecture; they are found equally in internal areas as in open courtyards, and their purpose was to provide drainage and protection from natural soil moisture. Simple earth floors are equally popular, and sometimes they are laid on top of the slab floors.[50] Finally, pebbled floors are not as common. A typical example of such a floor was identified in the EH II Euboea,[51] but it can be totally absent from entire settlements.

The EC deposits in the NE building at Koukounaries contained abundant pottery with a big variety of shapes and decoration types, such as incised pyxides,[52] large basins,[53] open bowls with lugs near the rim,[54] deep bowls with plastic and incised patterns,[55] and incised horizontal handles.[56] Additionally, a small number of stone grinders were recovered along with some obsidian tools, a stone cylindrical bead,[57] and dietary remains. The ceramic typological features suggest that the occupation of the building should be dated to the Keros–Syros phase of the EC II.

The EC layers in the NE building at Koukounaries are sealed by a destruction layer with traces of fire,[58] suggesting the edifice collapsed as a result of a violent incident and was abandoned. Similar destruction episodes and abandonment of settlements are also reported from other EC II sites, such as Panormos on Naxos, Kynthos on Delos and Ayia Irini III on Keos,[59] though they usually concern a slightly later period, i.e. the end of the following Kastri phase. Similar episodes occurred in waves also on the Greek mainland (e.g. Lerna IV, Eutresis, Thebes B),[60] starting at the same period when the Koukounaries building was abandoned.

LOWER PLATEAU

It extends immediately to the east of the Upper Plateau, at an approximately 20 m lower altitude (FIG. 4). It has a surface of 2,500 m^2 and steep gradients at the western, northern, and north-eastern margins where rocks from the Upper Plateau have accumulated. It was investigated quite thoroughly by way of 17 excavation squares measuring 4.50 × 4.50 m each, with 0.50 m reserved baulks in between (FIGS. 8, 9).

The excavation brought to light deposits dating from the Archaic to the Late Bronze Age, about 1.00–1.50 m thick in total, including retaining walls[61] which should be associated with agropastoral activities rather than with extended residential use. A LH III C solid wall, which was identified at the centre of the plateau running north–south, was perhaps built to fortify the defences of the eastern side of the Upper Plateau.[62] The lower part of

[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid., 233.
[50] Cf. Kalogerovrysi, Sampson (n. 41), 125.
[51] A. Sampson, "Ἀνασκαφή στὸν ΠΕΙ ΙΙ οἰκισμό τῆς Μουρτερῆς Κύμης", *AAA* 11 (1979), 245–56.
[52] Cf. Sotirakopoulou, 186–9.
[53] Ibid., 113–15.
[54] Ibid., 91–4.
[55] Ibid., 109–13.
[56] Ibid., 210–2.
[57] Schilardi 1982, 245.
[58] Schilardi 1991, 237.
[59] Ch. Doumas, 'EBA in the Cyclades: continuity or discontinuity?', in E. B. French and K. A. Wardle (eds), *Problems in Greek Prehistory: Papers Presented at the Centenary Conference of the British School of Archaeology at Athens, Manchester, April 1986* (Oxford, 1988), 21–9; P. Sotirakopoulou, 'The chronology of the "Kastri Group" reconsidered', *BSA* 88 (1993), 5–20; Sotirakopoulou, 236–48.
[60] Sampson (n. 27), 76–9; id. (n. 41), 146–50.
[61] Schilardi 1990, 213 fig. 2, 216 fig. 3.
[62] Schilardi 1981, 288–9; Schilardi 1988, 200–1; Schilardi 1989, 265–6; Schilardi 1990, 223.

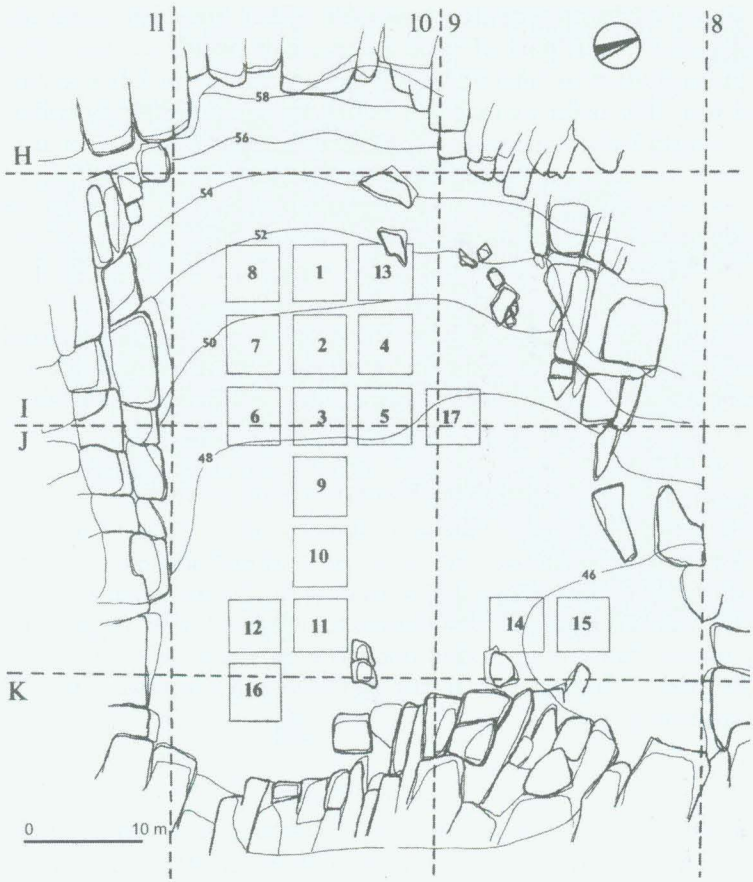

FIG. 8. Lower Plateau, excavation grid.

those later strata immediately above the pre-Mycenaean deposits is partly disturbed for 0.25–0.30 m and contains mixed later and EBA pottery. The underlying pre-Mycenaean horizon consists of four main stratigraphic entities (strata 1–4) dating from the EC II to LN I. These layers run almost throughout the plateau with varying thickness, but get more solid in the middle (0.30–0.50 m thick each).

EC II

The upper layer (stratum 1) is dated to the Keros–Syros phase and is contemporary with the NE building on the hilltop. It lies at a depth of around 1.50 m, is loose, grey-brown and its thickness ranges between 0.25 and 0.30 m. It occurs sporadically at the northern margins of the plateau in areas of steep gradients, as well as at the centre where it becomes horizontal. There are no signs of destruction between this stratum and later ones, contrary to the evidence of the north-east building on the Upper Plateau.

FIG. 9. Lower Plateau; view from W.

The EC II stratum yielded a variety of shapes among which many are identical to those found in the north-east building. Most characteristic are the in-curving-rim bowls,[63] the biconical pyxides, in one case bearing a vertical tubular lug on the carination,[64] the triangular and T rims,[65] the incised handles,[66] and various vertically perforated lugs on open or deep bowls. A big concentration of fragments belongs to pithoids.[67] Additionally there is a considerable number of pieces from tripod pots.[68] Some samples bear chronologically distinct decoration features, such as incised plastic zones, grooved patterns and schematized roped motifs.[69]

The fabric is coarse, with uniform light brown colouring surface to the core. It is hard and gives off a metallic sound, suggesting firing at a high temperature. Macroscopically, it looks identical to the material from the north-east building, which could justify the attribution of both assemblages to the same workshop. Other than that, it shares obvious similar macroscopic characteristics with the handmade ceramics (cooking vessels, pithoids)

[63] Also known as 'saucers'; see Sotirakopoulou, 99.
[64] Ibid., 183.
[65] Cf. J. L. Caskey and E. G. Caskey, 'The earliest settlements at Eutresis: supplementary excavations, 1958, *Hesp.* 29 (1960), 142; Sampson (n. 37), 120 tabl. 9; id. (n. 41), 52 tabl. 1; Sotirakopoulou, 112; E. Yiannouli, 'Kat' Akrotiri on Amorgos: surface pottery from an Early Cycladic acropolis', *BSA* 97 (2002), 30–2.
[66] Sotirakopoulou, 210–2.
[67] Ibid., 147–60.
[68] Ibid., 146.
[69] Ibid., 214–22.

of the local Mycenaean period. Actually, such similarity is normally expected since the raw materials are the same, possibly collected in the nearby geographical zone. Apart from this fabric, there is a minor group of light and porous fabric with very distinct orange-red colour.[70]

A small clay animal head, measuring just 3 cm, is the only object of symbolic content from the EC layers of the Lower Plateau (FIG 5 *c*).[71] It was found at the western margins of the Plateau down to a depth of 1.70 m. According to one view, it represents a bovine head; in another view, the head of a dog. The rendering of facial features (nostrils, eyes) and expression (open mouth) is very vivid. The Koukounaries example confirms that, unlike the abstract illustration of human figurines, the rendering of animal figurines during the EC is naturalistic with a meticulous study of detail.[72] Perhaps the head was part of the plastic decoration on a ceramic vessel.[73] The most commonly illustrated animals of Cycladic art are birds. The bovine form prevails in animal figurines of the Greek mainland, even compared to sheep and goats, which is seen as an indication of the increasing importance of bovines in pastoral economy.[74] Dogs on the other hand are depicted very seldom.[75]

Marble vessels—popular valuable objects with the EC settlers in the nearby Plastiras cemetery[76]—were not found at the Lower Plateau EC stratum or any other stratum anywhere on the hill, despite the abundance of Paros' marble deposits.

Late Neolithic II—The Neolithic-to-EBA transition

Beneath stratum 1 lies a thick stratigraphic horizon which is LN II and possibly transitional (stratum 3), overlain by a layer (stratum 2) with mixed EC and LN elements. Stratum 3 is thick and dense and spreads quite consistently over a large area of the plateau without interruptions. It is in fact a stratigraphic whole of many distinct types of deposits, mostly dark coloured, rich in rubble stones, with sporadic traces of burnings, and abounding in ceramics and lithics. Occupation associated with these layers is mainly dated to LN II, but possibly lasts until a stage slightly later than the LN terminal, which can be called sub-Neolithic[77] or transitional; it thus expands roughly along the fourth millennium BC. Yet, despite the presence of transitional features, the elusive EC I cannot be identified, which suggests that there is a habitation gap before the hill is resettled in EC II.

Stratum 3 is the hill's major pre-Mycenaean horizon. It slopes steeply at the northern margins of the plateau, but becomes horizontal at the centre. The stratum contained few scattered indications of architectural arrangements: at the north-western margins, it yielded a round structure of schist stones that was perhaps part of a hearth, part of a stone foundation made of three coarse granite blocks set in a north-east–south-western row, and part of a floor paved with schist slabs. Towards the middle of the plateau, the stratum yielded three post-holes in the compact earth floor,[78] arranged on two axes crossing at

[70] Similar fabrics were also observed in Saliagos, cf. Evans and Renfrew (n. 3), 36.

[71] Schilardi 1991, 239–41; pl. 150 *α–β*.

[72] Ch. Marangou, *ΕΙΔΩΛΙΑ: Figurines et miniatures du Néolithique récent et du Bronze ancien en Grèce* (BAR S576; Oxford, 1992), 167.

[73] Ibid., 168.

[74] Ibid., 164, 167–8.

[75] Four are reported, see ibid., 167.

[76] Doumas (n. 9), 96–100.

[77] The term was already used in the 1930s in regard to some pottery from Palati in Naxos; see G. Karo, 'Archäologische Funde auf dem Jahre 1929 und der ersten Hälfte von 1930', *AA* 45 (1930), 134: 'subneolithischen'; see also Sotirakopoulou, 226.

[78] Schilardi 1990, 220; Schilardi 1991, 238 fig. 7, 250–1.

right angles. They are ellipsoid of 10–12 cm maximum length and 30 cm maximum depth, which indicates that they may have served for the installation of a light wooden shelter.

Pottery exists in larger quantities than in the EC layers. The fabric is coarse with big inclusions, and brittle, producing a dull sound which indicates firing at lower temperatures than the preceding wares. As a rule, it is dark (brown, brown-red, or brown-black) with a grey core suggesting that oxidizing was incomplete. Apart from that, there is also evidence of a finer and higher-fired fabric, of uniform colouring in surface and core. Pot surfaces are rarely left coarse and unprocessed, but are usually slipped and/or burnished, most of the time very strongly. The action of the burnishing tool is quite visible and the wares still maintain a strong sheen. [79] There are no examples of patterned burnished decoration at Koukounaries.

In a large number of vessels extra red slip was applied on the burnished surface. The technique is a variety of crusted ware, a widespread trend in LN Aegean[80] and mainland Greece (Rachmani culture).[81] Apart from red, the crust can also be white or pinkish, or can be patterned. Though plain crust is considered to be a final Neolithic feature, its origins lie as early as the first half of the fifth millennium BC, as indicated by such early finds in Ftelia, occurring along with the local patterned polychrome crusted.[82] In Koukounaries the preservation of the red crust is minimal, and no such patterns have so far been observed.

The slip was applied on the burnished surface in a post firing stage, resulting in loose adhesion with the body of the pot owing to the underlying polish. As weathering should have been quick, an interesting hypothesis is that the slip was eventually repainted each time the old one exfoliated, perhaps by way of refiring as suggested by Vitelli[83] with regard to the samples from Franchthi, and by Aloupi[84] with regard to the polychrome crusted ware of Ftelia. It has been argued[85] that the application of crust in a post firing stage was advantageous as for the fact that the colour was more vivid compared to the fired slips, and that the task of pot decoration was made easier in this period of increased ceramic production.

The LN II stratum yielded plenty of middle-sized hemispherical or conical bowls with thin walls ending in straight, cylindrical, in- or out-curving rims. Various perforated lugs and small handles (FIG. 10. 13–17) are very often found on the upper body of the pots. A fair number of ceramic fragments belong to deep broad vases with roped motifs (FIG. 10. 10–12) and incised zones along the rim (FIG. 10. 9), such as those from Kephala[86] and

[79] Preservation of slip or burnishing within the better-fired fabric group is though very poor.

[80] See Saliagos: Evans and Renfrew (n. 3), 36; Kephala: J. E. Coleman, *Keos*, i: *Kephala: A Late Neolithic Settlement and Cemetery* (Princeton, 1977), 10–11, 24, 71–3; Grotta: O. Hadjianastasiou, 'A Late Neolithic settlement at Grotta Naxos', in French and Wardle (n. 59), 17; Zas cave: K. Zachos, "Η νεολιθική εποχή στη Νάξο", in L. Marangou (ed.), *Κυκλαδικός Πολιτισμός: Η Νάξος στην 3η π.Χ. χιλιετία* (Athens, 1990), 30, 35; Ftelia: N. Voutiropoulos, 'The polychrome ware from Ftelia', in A. Sampson, *The Neolithic Settlement at Ftelia, Mykonos* (Rhodes, 2002), 131; Emporio: S. Hood, *Excavations in Chios 1938–1955: Prehistoric Emporio and Ayio Gala*, i (BSA Supp. 15; London, 1981), 225, 227; Tigani: R. C. S. Felsch, *Samos*, ii: *Das Kastro Tigani: Die spätneolithische und chalkolithische Siedlung* (Bonn, 1988), 57, 59–60.

[81] K. Gallis, "Θεσσαλία, Βόρειες Σποράδες", in *NII*, "Κεραμική", 122; A. Dousougli, "Πελοπόννησος", ibid., 128.

[82] Voutiropoulos (n. 80), 131.

[83] K. D. Vitelli, *Franchthi Neolithic Pottery*, ii (Excavations at Franchthi Cave, Greece, 10; Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1999), 70.

[84] E. Aloupi, personal communication. Cf. also ead. 'Pottery analysis from the Late Neolithic settlement at Ftelia, Mykonos (Cyclades): Provenance, technological and functional considerations', in Sampson (n. 80), 284.

[85] Vitelli (n. 83), 68.

[86] Coleman (n. 80), pl. 44 *a–h*.

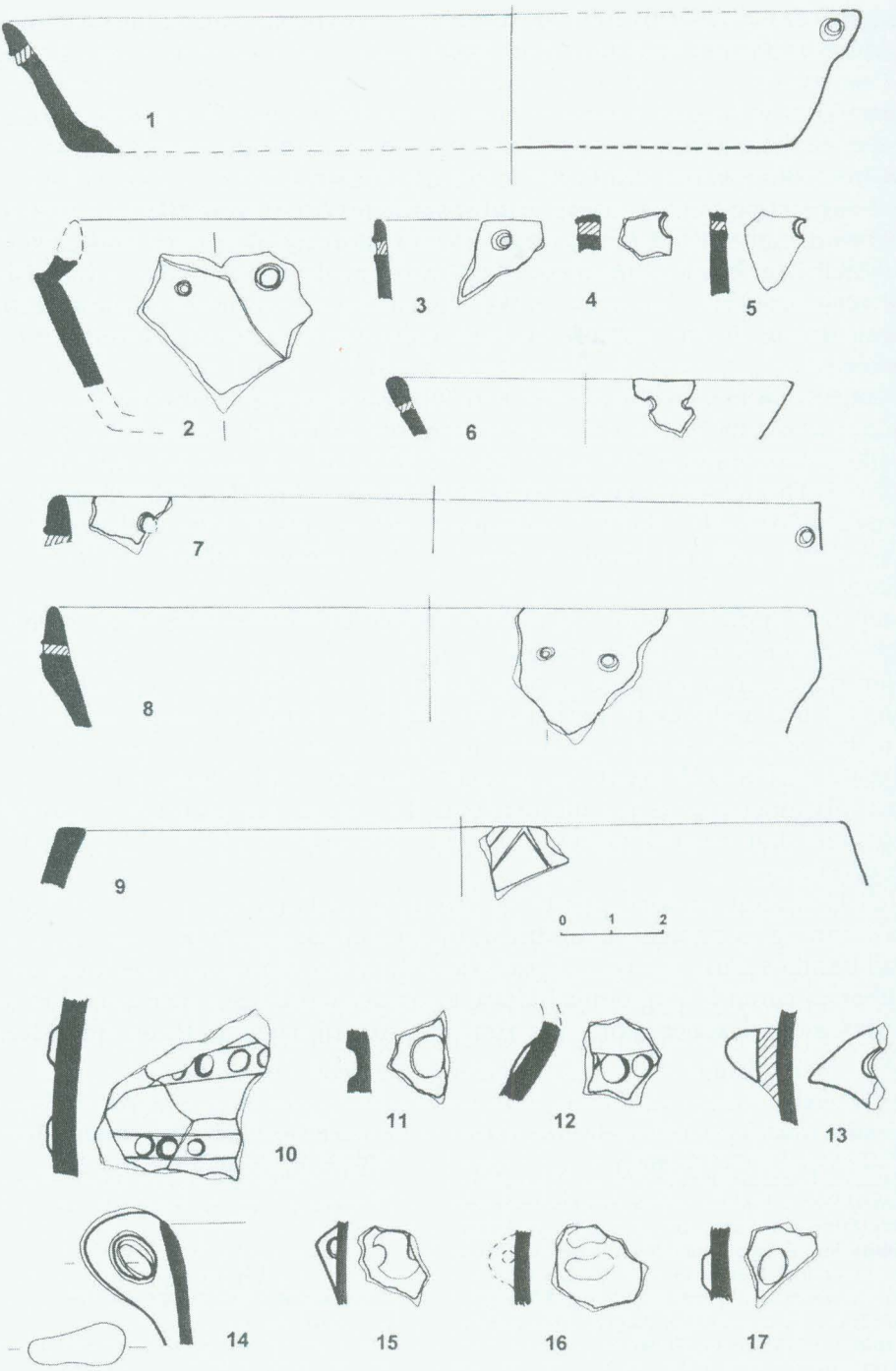

FIG. 10. Lower Plateau, selected pottery of LN II.

Ftelia.[87] Bases are mainly flat or slightly raised. Most distinct though are two pottery forms, the 'cheese-pots' and the rolled-rim bowls.

The 'cheese-pots' (FIG. 10. 1–7), identified by their perforated rims, are described as big shallow coarse basins, around 40 cm wide, which are found in big concentrations in LN II sites, mainly in the Aegean islands[88] and western Anatolia.[89] Similarly to crusted wares, though thought to be a final Neolithic form, the 'cheese-pot' must have originated from an earlier phase (LN I) given that, in Emporio[90] and Ftelia, it is present already in the fifth millennium BC.[91] Ftelia, in particular, is perhaps the only site where 'cheese-pots' are found in so many numbers and variations. Compared to the abundance of the Aegean examples, their presence in mainland Greece is insignificant in terms of numbers, though they are consistently found in all LN II sites.[92]

The perforated rims disappear in mainland Greece at the end of the Neolithic.[93] By contrast, in the Aegean islands and western Anatolia the perforated rims are still present in EBA contexts, such as Amorgos,[94] Heraion and Tigani on Samos,[95] Emporio on Chios,[96] Thermi on Lesbos,[97] and Troy I.[98] Given, however, that the reconstruction of the whole vessel from the perforated rim is ambiguous, it is likely that the EBA samples belong to a different shape from the typical Neolithic 'cheese-pot' large basin.

The rolled rims are associated with big bowls of a diameter of more than 20–30 cm. At Koukounaries these vessels are usually covered with thick red or black slip, and are intensely burnished on both the exterior and the interior surface. The exact dating of the rolled-rim feature has been a subject of debate among scholars; the type appears in the latest Neolithic in the Greek mainland,[99] the Aegean islands[100] including Paros,[101] but it is only in the Cyclades that it persists further into the EBA,[102] even as far as the EC III. The fact that the type coexists with EC I crescent lugs on some vases from Naxos is, according to Sotirakopoulou,[103] a chronological link with the Plastiras culture. Also on the mainland, they were still produced in the very beginning of the EH,[104] but do not last much into the EBA.

[87] Sampson (n. 80), 73–5, figs. 68–70.

[88] See A. Sampson, *Η νεολιθική περίοδος στα Δωδεκάνησα* (Athens, 1987), 30, 81, 89; id. *Η νεολιθική κατοίκηση στο Γυαλί της Νισύρου* (Athens, 1988), 96–102, with extensive bibliography. As for the Cyclades, see in particular Kephala: Coleman (n. 80) 17–18; Ftelia: Sampson (n. 80), 61–70; Ayia Irini I: D. E. Wilson, *Keos*, IX. *Ayia Irini, Periods I–III: The Neolithic and Early Bronze Age Settlements* (Mainz am Rhein, 1999), pls. 41–2.

[89] Sampson 1988 (n. 88), 102.

[90] Hood (n. 80), 38 fig. 19.

[91] Sampson (n. 80), 65.

[92] See references collected in A. Sampson, *Σκοτεινή Θαρρουνίων: Το σπήλαιο, ο οικισμός και το νεκροταφείο* (Athens, 1993), 166, 184–5.

[93] Ibid., 185.

[94] Yiannouli (n. 65), 29–30.

[95] Felsch (n. 80), 110; V. Milojcic, *Samos*, I. *Die prähistorische Siedlung unter dem Heraion: Grabung 1953 und 1955* (Bonn, 1961), 57.

[96] Hood (n. 80), 174.

[97] W. Lamb, *Excavations at Thermi in Lesbos* (Cambridge, 1936), pl. 29. 2.

[98] C. Blegen, J. L. Caskey, M. Rason, and J. Sperling, *Troy*, I. *The First and Second Settlement* (Princeton, 1950), 56, 75; D23.

[99] The thick stratigraphic deposits of LN II at the Skoteini cave at Tharrounia have enabled researchers to locate the exact appearance of the type within the latest Neolithic millennium, and differentiate latest LN II from early LN II; see Sampson (n. 92), 161–2, with full bibliography.

[100] e.g. Ayia Irini I: Wilson (n. 88), pl. 43. I–169. Also in Poliochni I, Kum Tepe Ib, but totally absent from the Dodecanese; see Sampson (n. 92), 162.

[101] Overbeck (n. 2), 5 no 1; Sotirakopoulou, 100–1.

[102] Cf. Ag. Sostis on Siphnos: H. Gropengiesser, 'Siphnos, Kap Agios Sostis: keramische prähistorische Zeugnisse aus dem Gruben- und Hüttenrevier', *AM* 102 (1987), fig. 4. 19; Akrotiri on Thera: Sotirakopoulou, 100–1; Palati on Naxos: E. Karantzali, *Le Bronze Ancien dans les Cyclades et en Crète* (BAR S631; Oxford, 1996), 41; Kat' Akrotiri on Amorgos: Yannouli (n. 65), 23.

[103] Sotirakopoulou, 101–2.

[104] Cf. samples from Boeotia, see H. Tzavella-Evjen, *Λιθαρές* (Athens, 1984), 150; Caskey and Caskey (n. 65), 136, fig. 4. Groups II–III.

As a matter of fact, the study of the Koukounaries material, though still at a preliminary stage, has distinguished within the typical latest Neolithic pottery several sub-Neolithic markers which lead us to suspect that this period of occupation did not cease with the end of the Neolithic. Such features are the perforated and the rolled rims, generally associated with the Neolithic-to-EBA contexts, the strong burnished surfaces of the open pots, and some early EC lug types, as well as the presence of the well-fired light-coloured fabric. These are separate from the main bulk of the low-fired Neolithic wares. A certain proportion of the perforated and the rolled rims is also found in this particular fabric.

The data are still too poor and unsafe for us to decide whether a period that may be called either 'transitional' or 'sub-Neolithic' exists at Koukounaries. The impression that such a pattern exists is, however, strong and should not be ignored, even if support evidence is still not clear.[105]

LN I

A deeper stratigraphic layer (stratum 4) was identified mainly at the western and north-west margins of the plateau.[106] It is of yellowish to grey colour, and of sandy consistency with scattered burnings and burnt animal bones. It sits on the granite rocks which the settlers had probably taken advantage of as complementary architectural elements. The stratum is dated to an earlier Neolithic stage compared to stratum 3, which should be put around the middle of the fifth millennium BC (late LN I). However, it is not yet clear whether there is a hiatus of occupation between the periods corresponding to those two strata.

Few open vessels and certain types of lugs and plastic features serve as chronological hallmarks associating this layer to Saliagos and Ftelia cultures of the first half of the fifth millennium BC. Most characteristic is a small marble pendant illustrating a seated woman with folded legs.[107] It has naturalistic features and bears a clear typological resemblance to the familiar marble figurine of the 'Fat Lady of Saliagos'.[108] The steatopygic female features are rooted in the early Neolithic age and share common models with south-eastern Europe and the Middle East associating woman with fertility. However, the Saliagos and Koukounaries figurines are later echoes of these ancient symbols and should be dated to the fifth millennium BC.[109]

Tools and dietary remains

To make their chipped tools,[110] the Neolithic and EC settlers of the Lower Plateau depended on obsidian from Melos[111] and marginally on local flint. Remarkably, contrary to Saliagos, no obsidian samples from Antiparos[112] were found at Koukounaries. The presence of

[105] See discussion in S. Katsarou and D. U. Schilardi, 'Some reflexions on the EC domestic space arising from observation at Koukounaries, Paros', in *Ορίζων*.

[106] Schilardi 1991, 238.

[107] Schilardi 1990, 222; pl. 131 *στ*.

[108] Evans and Renfrew (n. 3), 86; pl. xlii.

[109] Note the context of the 'Fat Lady of Saliagos' containing typical LN figurines, Evans and Renfrew (n. 3), 62–5; K. Zachos, "Νησιά του Αιγαίου", in *ΝΠ*, "Ειδωλοπλαστική", 156.

[110] This is a preliminary note on the lithic assemblage.

[111] At Koukounaries, the use of obsidian is diachronic: not only was it used in the Neolithic and the EBA, but also during the LBA and the later settlements up to the Archaic period. Therefore Koukounaries can serve as case study for the comparison of tool types and functions throughout the period of time covered by the site.

[112] J. R. Cann and J. E. Dixon, 'Appendix IV. The sources of the Saliagos obsidian', in Evans and Renfrew (n. 3), 106.

finished cores and hundreds of debitage and waste products[113] from both the Neolithic and the EBA indicates that the tools were processed locally. In both periods, the assemblage shows considerable increase at the boulders of the plateau, which may suggest that processing sites were possibly located there. The obsidian was possibly imported to Koukounaries in the form of roughly decorticated pieces.[114] The Neolithic tool types fabricated out of these pieces include typical tanged and leaf-shaped points, as well as several blades and bladelets bearing immediate affinities with the obsidian industries of Saliagos[115] and Ftelia,[116] although of much more limited variability. The tanged points, in particular, are a distinct hallmark of tool-making in the mature LN both in the Cyclades as well as in mainland Greece.[117] These artefacts were destined for food-gathering activities by the island settlers (hunting, fishing) as parts of complex tools[118] whose form and use are to be clarified by the detailed examination of the material. It is not unlikely, however, that some of them were not purely utilitarian, but were invested with a symbolic value[119] the extent of which is still a matter of interpretation.

Very few implements for polishing tools such as millstones and grinders were collected from the pre-Mycenaean layers of the hill. In particular, only a few marble grinders and small shapeless marble and porous stone fragments, whose role is unknown, were identified, either in the Neolithic and the EC layers.[120] Large millstones such as those found habitually in the Dodecanese[121] and in mainland Greece[122] were not identified at Koukounaries in any pre-Mycenaean layer. Local granite had probably replaced them, yet no suitably fashioned grinding implements, not even of granite, were found. On the contrary, several large millstones, made of schist and gneiss, have been reported at Saliagos; although the latter are thought to be imported.[123]

Among the stone finds of the final neolithic layers there are a few lumps of pumice, some with smoothed sides suggesting they were used as some kind of tools. The origin of the raw material is unknown. Evans and Renfrew suggest Thera as the source of similar shapeless or fashioned fragments found at Saliagos.[124]

Finally, small marble pebbles were found in large numbers at the latest Neolithic of the Lower Plateau, just as at Saliagos and other mainland or island sites, probably collected from the nearby beach. Perhaps they were used in floor pavements. However, the Saliagos excavators suggest that in the EC period such natural objects were slightly processed or simply smoothed to function as symbolic objects parallel to stone figurines. They point out that similar finds were misinterpreted during the excavations of Cycladic graves by Bent in the late nineteenth century and discarded as irrelevant.[125]

Along with ceramics and implements there were abundant dietary remains[126] consisting mainly of sheep and goat bones and few seashells. It is noteworthy that bovine bones were rarely, if at all, found at Koukounaries at a time when their economic value soared

[113] Schilardi 1991, 251, 253.

[114] Cf. N. Galanidou, 'The chipped stone industry of Ftelia: an introduction', in Sampson (n. 80), 318.

[115] Evans and Renfrew (n. 3), 84.

[116] Galanidou (n. 114), 317.

[117] See discussion ibid., 321.

[118] Ibid.

[119] A. Moundrea-Agrafioti, "Οστέινα, λίθινα", in *ΝΠ*, "Εργαλεία", 104.

[120] The majority of Saliagos grinders are also made of marble, see Evans and Renfrew (n. 3), 71.

[121] Sampson 1987 (n. 88), 48, 83; id. 1988 (n. 88), 164–210.

[122] Id. (n. 27), 80–103; id (n. 92), 199–202.

[123] Evans and Renfrew (n. 3), 71.

[124] Ibid., 73.

[125] Ibid., 66.

[126] Schilardi 1991, 239, 242.

in mainland Greece.[127] Equally surprising is the lack of fish finds although the location is on the coast.[128]

GENERAL ASSESSMENT OF THE KOUKOUNARIES PRE-MYCENAEAN SETTLEMENTS

The hill of Koukounaries constitutes an ideal location for settlement considering its prominent position, the vicinity to the coast, its fortified nature and easy access to water, fertile land, and pastures in the proximal area. These attributes are typical of several Neolithic and EC settlements and are thought to constitute a model settlement for the prehistoric Cyclades.[129] Koukounaries perfectly fits the model.

It may be concluded, therefore, that prior to the advent of the Mycenaeans, the hill of Koukounaries was populated in three different episodes: the first in LN I or the first half of the fifth millennium BC, the second and most active during the latest Neolithic and the transition to the EBA, i.e. roughly throughout the fourth millennium BC, and the latest dated to the Keros–Syros phase of the EC II.

During the Keros–Syros phase the Koukounaries settlers expanded their occupation to the hilltop, the Lower Plateau, and possibly other terraces of the hill, such as the area of the Archaic temple of Athena, as future study of this spot—now just beginning—is expected to show. However, it is only the Lower Plateau and the NE hilltop where EC II settlements have survived later disturbance; while it is actually thanks to such later resettlement that the unique EC building of Koukounaries was preserved in the latter area.

The distinct feature of this phase is that the architecture on the Upper and the Lower Plateau shows different construction features. The building compound of the Upper Plateau NE fringe, the earliest composite edifice on the hill, not only differs by being of stone from the makeshift huts of the Lower Plateau, but also differs in degree of complexity (several levels, prescribed plan to satisfy certain separate functions for e.g. residence, storage, water drainage). Such differences may result from some economic differentiation involving storable riches, perhaps associated with some administrative function of this building, and/or from social differentiation, if the building belonged to a prominent 'family'.

The previous settlers of the hill occupied Koukounaries up to the end of the Neolithic, which suggests that there is a gap of several hundreds years between them and Keros–Syros phase. So far their settlement has only been located on the Lower Plateau, although it is very likely that they had also occupied the hilltop and the hillsides, but later activity has destroyed any evidence.

This phase needs some further chronological discussion, because of the fact that it seems to extend beyond the Neolithic-to-EBA boundary—to a period called sub-Neolithic or transitional—as compared with a number of other Neolithic island sites with a more definite Neolithic boundary, such as the sites of the Euboea–Attica–Kefala and the Dodecanese cultures.[130] This period though cannot be called EC I, and does not correspond to the Plastiras phase, at least as far as the present study of Koukounaries can indicate, but

[127] P. Halstead, 'Counting sheep in Neolithic and Bronze Age Greece', in I. Hodder and I. Hammond (eds), *Patterns of the Past: Studies in Honour of David Clarke* (Cambridge, 1981), 324.

[128] It should be noted though that the deposits did not go through any sieving.

[129] Doumas (n. 9), 13; Broodbank (n. 5), 86–7.

[130] Nevertheless, Sampson believes that 'the Yali-Partheni–Alimnia culture possibly continues in the Dodecanese in the years corresponding to EBA I'; see Sampson 1988 (n. 88), 226.

seems to be a stage before EC I. It is therefore possible that the latest Neolithic phase at Koukounaries is comparable with those island sites where the gap to the EBA is covered smoothly by evolution, such as Grotta on Naxos,[131] the Zas cave in Naxos,[132] possibly Akrotiri on Thera,[133] Kolona in Aigina,[134] as well as the subneolithic of Crete.[135] At the same time, uninterrupted habitation is identified at Poliochni[136] and Emporio on Chios.[137] In mainland Greece, signs of the smooth transition to the EBA through consecutive stages of evolution are identified at Eutresis[138] to the south, and possibly Sitagroi III–IV and Dikili Tash IIC–IIA further north.[139] The new impressive data from the fortified settlement at Strofilas on Andros[140] could be very helpful in pinpointing the transition. The co-occurrence of Neolithic and EC features (bronze objects, fortification wall, rock art) could very well suggest an intermediate position for this settlement between the Neolithic and the EBA. It is quite possible that such a phase, bridging the end of the Neolithic with the EBA, exists in several known LN II sites, but remains to be identified in our schemes of relative chronology.

The excavation of LN and EC settlements at Koukounaries has also given scholars high expectations for the discovery of the settlement corresponding to the Plastiras cemetery. As mentioned above, so far the Plastiras phase is not visible at the site. However, even if future study proves that Koukounaries was really occupied at the time of Plastiras, the two sites could not have been a settlement-cemetery pair, as the distance between them (more than 500 m) is too big for that. Given that EBA cemeteries were usually adjacent to settlements,[141] the Plastiras settlement should be rather sought in the immediate proximity of the cemetery.

The earliest Neolithic horizon of the hill should be dated to at least a millennium earlier, i.e. to late LN I or the first half of the fifth millennium BC. It should be ascribed to the cultural horizon of Saliagos and Ftelia along with a few other sites such as the Zas cave on Naxos,[142] Mavrispilia on Mykonos,[143] Akrotiri on Thera,[144] and sites on Melos.[145] Occupation of the hill at this phase seems dense, and patterns of architecture do not differ

[131] R. L. N. Barber, *The Cyclades in the Bronze Age* (London, 1987), 22; Hadjianastasiou (n. 80), 11–20.

[132] K. Zachos, "Το σπήλαιο του Ζα στη Νάξο", in *ΝΠ*, "Κατοίκηση", 88–9.

[133] Sotirakopoulou, 227.

[134] H. Walter and F. Felten, *Alt-Aigina*, iii/1: *Die vorgeschichtliche Stadt: Befestigungen, Häuser, Funde* (Mainz, 1981); K. Zachos, "Κυκλάδες, νησιά του βορειοανατολικού Αιγαίου", in *ΝΠ*, "Κατοίκηση", 86.

[135] Ayia Irini I has also for long been regarded as a transitional site although the earliest pottery comes from unstratified deposits, see J. E. Coleman, 'The chronology and interconnections of the Cycladic islands in the Neolithic period and the Early Bronze Age', *AJA* 78 (1974), 333–44; Sotirakopoulou, 91, 226. However, the recent final publication has put an end to the debate by clarifying that Ayia Irini I does not bridge the hiatus between LN and EBA (Ayia Irini II belongs to late EC II), see Wilson (n. 88), 6–7. See also Zachos (n. 134), 86.

[136] Poliochni II: B. Bernabò-Brea, *Poliochni I. Città preistorica nell'isola di Lemnos* (Rome, 1964).

[137] Emporio VII–VI: Hood (n. 80), 300–50.

[138] Eutresis IV: Caskey and Caskey (n. 65), 126–67.

[139] See discussion by S. Papadopoulos, 'Η Νεότερη Νεολιθική και η Πρώιμη Εποχή του Χαλκού στην Ανατολική Μακεδονία: Η μεταβολή της κεραμεικής' (Ph.D.; Thessaloniki, 1997), 12–16.

[140] C. Televantou, 'Strofilas: a Neolithic settlement on Andros', in *Ορίζων*.

[141] Cf. for example the distance between corresponding settlements and cemeteries at Chalandriani on Syros, Avyssos and Pyrgos on Paros, Doumas (n. 9), 29; also see Manika: Sampson (n. 27), fig. 2.

[142] Zachos (n. 80), 29–38; id. (n. 132), 88.

[143] J. C. Belmont and C. Renfrew, 'Two prehistoric sites on Mykonos', *AJA* 68 (1964), 395–400.

[144] P. Sotirakopoulou, 'Akrotiri, Thera: the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age phases in the light of the recent excavations at the site', in *Ορίζων*.

[145] J. Cherry and R. Torrence, 'The earliest prehistory of Melos', in Renfrew and Wagstaff (n. 6), 24–34.

from those of the latest Neolithic. The evidence suggests that they had to flatten out the rocky substratum to establish themselves, and that they took advantage of the natural cavities and the lie of the land by adding structures of perishable materials.

In socio-economic terms, the Koukounaries settlers of all these phases should be regarded as a basically agropastoral population relying mainly on the proximal local environment, with less reliance on marine resources than on farming and herding. Judging by the data accumulated so far, the riches of these settlements were not based on trade, though imports of raw materials (e.g. obsidian) show that the settlers of Koukounaries were in contact with the main supply and distribution networks. Nevertheless, the sea must have played a fundamental role in their lives since it would ensure their communication with the outside world.

The pottery industry is equally local; the macroscopic observation of the ceramic fabric suggests local geology as the source of raw materials based on inclusions of muscovite, quartz, schist, and granite that can be seen even with the naked eye in the section of the vessels. Its manufacture demonstrates expertise and know-how, as does the chipped stone industry, also locally processed. These qualities could not have been achieved without the support of specialization mechanisms—even on a partial basis;—thus the time investment by the pot and tool manufacturer was permitted by an adequate socioeconomic potential (sufficient surplus). At the same time, apart from their practical preoccupations and economic strategies the Koukounaries settlers also created forms of metaphorical significance (figurines), suggesting a space for symbolism and life perceptions that still remain hard to penetrate for modern scholars.

Sklavouna

Sklavouna (FIGS. 1, 2) lies opposite Koukounaries to the south, in the south-western part of the Kamares valley. It is different from Koukounaries: a low hill about 45 m in height with smooth slopes of fertile soil and a small longitudinal rocky ridge. Today, the distance from the coast is approximately 600 m. The central road to Naousa runs around its south-western edge. The two hills are in direct visual contact and Sklavouna, despite its lower altitude, offers equally unobstructed views to the bay northwards, which opens up to the bay of Naousa, and to the hinterland. Basically, the main difference is that Sklavouna is less prominent and visible from afar (from the sea or the interior) as compared with Koukounaries.

Surface surveys and collections carried out simultaneously with the Koukounaries excavations yielded a plethora of EC II and LBA finds from the hilltop and, in particular, the northern and north-eastern slopes.[146] The area is still farmland today, which has certainly caused disturbance of ancient layers. The deposits are locally very thin and the bedrock is denuded.

The EC II finds contain large quantities of pottery fragments and stone tools, as well as abundant dietary remains (animal bones and shells) indicating that the site was intensely used. Pottery displays the typical features of this period sharing a great many similarities with neighbouring Koukounaries, such as the triangular (FIG. 11. 22) or T rims, the

[146] Schilardi 1975, 210; Schilardi 1984, 264; Schilardi 1991, 253–5.

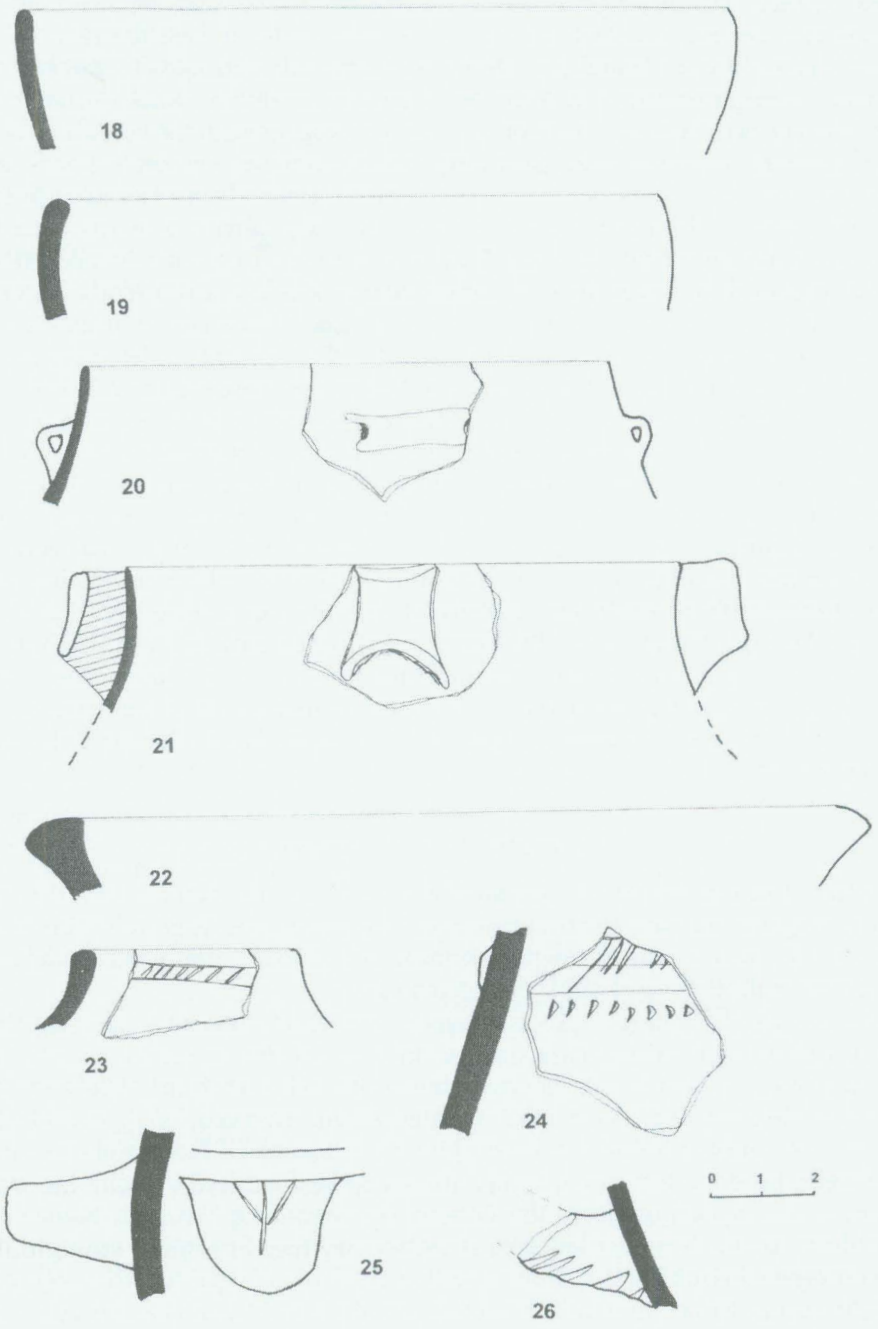

FIG. 11. Sklavouna, selected EBA pottery.

perforated lugs on the upper part of open bowls or broad vases (FIG. 11. 20, 21) and the incised patterns on the handles (FIG. 11. 26) and body of vessels (FIG. 11. 23–4). The shapes point to utilitarian functions. Deep broad-mouthed pots with thick walls and wide flat bottoms were probably intended for storage purposes, while smaller open bowls constitute mainly crockery or short-term food-keeping or mixing vessels (FIG. 11. 18–19). There are several tripod vessels probably functioning as cookers. There are also rare potters' marks (FIG. 11. 25). Clay is coarse-grained, relatively well fired and light-coloured on the surface and in the core, very similar to the clay fabrics of Koukounaries.

Prominent among the finds is a rare clay object in the form of a 'mask' (FIG. 5 *e*).[147] It is rectangular and hollow inside with rounded edges. The front is slightly bulging and ends in two oblique legs that resemble animal hind legs. The front midline is marked by a vertical roped zone in low relief, on either side of which are four holes ordered in horizontal pairs. Only one similar object is known from Naxos and dates to the EC I–II.[148] According to recent suggestions, these objects are likely to be some sort of pot-stands.

Chronological indications show that Sklavouna was inhabited during the Keros–Syros phase simultaneously with the corresponding period at Koukounaries. There are no signs from the EC I, while LN traces are dubious. The finds at Sklavouna suggest the presence of a small permanent settlement on the hill organized in buildings that were partly made of stone, if we are to judge from the amount of scattered schists and other rubble stones originating perhaps from buildings destroyed by subsequent intensive land use. Farming and stock raising must have been the basic subsistence strategies of this settlement since the hill itself and the immediate surrounding area in every direction offer excellent conditions for sowing and pasturing. The unobstructed views, prominent location, direct access to the sea, access to freshwater sources and fertile land, all create the conditions for a considerable site.

Concluding Remarks

The prehistoric finds at Koukounaries and Sklavouna, in association with the rich cemetery at Plastiras, suggest that the northeastern part of Paros was a zone of increasing human activity from the fifth to the third millennium BC, offering many advantages in terms of location, geomorphology and subsistence resources.

Nevertheless, the EC finds at Koukounaries and Sklavouna indicate that these were by comparison rather small 'rural' sites on the sidelines of the sweeping structural changes in economy and society, which were manifested in the EBA and are visible in the big urban centres of the Aegean (e.g. Ayia Irini, Chalandriani, Skarkos, etc.), reaching settlements such as these two only as remote echoes. The EC building of Koukounaries, though stone-made and well planned, does not actually constitute real evidence of change, since complex architecture is already known from the Aegean Neolithic (e.g. Strofilas, Ftelia). Additionally, material culture from those settlements is rather modest. Strangely enough, though these structural changes do not seem to have affected the two settlements, they acted as a catalyst in the neighbouring EC cemetery at Plastiras—where they had started in an earlier period—and the other burial grounds of Paros, where new, rich, and symbolic material forms abound.

[147] It measures 0.095 × 0.085 × 0.077 m. The find was submitted to the Museum of Paros at Paroikia in 1991, from where it was stolen in 1992. See Schilardi 1991, 254–5.

[148] Marangou (n. 80), 56 no. 22.

Therefore, the question that arises is not whether these changes occurred, since cemeteries show that they obviously did, but rather how we, as scholars, can recognize them also in the EBA settlement environment. To meet this challenge, EBA research should probably expand its methods of analysis by examining every part of material culture under a very penetrating eye, and by orientating its theoretical framework to the comparison between the two eras—rather than the individual description of each one—as the only means to 'read' this change and interpret how it has evolved.

Hellenic Ministry of Culture
Second Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities
56, Ermou str., Athens 10563, Greece

STELLA KATSAROU
DEMETRIUS U. SCHILARDI

APPENDIX

CATALOGUE OF FINDS (FIGS. 10, 11)

Koukounaries (FIG. 10)

1. Fragment of straight perforated rim, out-curving body and flat base; part of 'cheese-pot'; coarse dark brown clay, surface unslipped. D. (rim) 34 cm, (base) 28 cm, H. (max.) 5 cm.
2. Fragment of carinated rim and body; perforations on the carination; part of 'cheese-pot'; coarse red-brown clay, surface unslipped. D. (rim) unidentified. H. (max.) 5.6 cm.
3. Fragment of straight perforated rim and vertical body; part of 'cheese-pot'; coarse dark brown clay, surface unslipped. D. (rim) unidentified. H. (max.) 3.1 cm.
4. Fragment of perforated body; part of 'cheese-pot'; coarse red-brown clay, surface unslipped. H. (max.) 1.2 cm.
5. Fragment of perforated body; part of 'cheese-pot'; coarse dark brown clay, surface unslipped. H. (max.) 3.6 cm.
6. Fragment of straight perforated rim and out-curving body; part of 'cheese-pot'; coarse dark brown clay, surface unslipped. D. (rim) 16 cm, H. (max.) 3 cm.
7. Fragment of vertical perforated rim; part of 'cheese-pot'; coarse brown clay, surface unslipped. D. (rim) 29.2 cm, H. (max.) 1.1 cm.
8. Fragment of thick perforated rim of long triangular section and thin-walled body; part of 'cheese-pot'; coarse brown clay, surface unslipped. D. (rim) 30, H. (max.) 3.6 cm.
9. Fragment of flat thick rim from broad vessel with incurving walls; band of incisions along the rim; coarse red brown clay, surface polished. D. (rim) 31 cm, H. (max.) 2.4 cm.
10. Fragment of body with two horizontal bands of roped decoration; coarse red clay. H. (max.) 6.2 cm.
11. Fragment of body with hollow; coarse grey clay. H. (max.) 2.6 cm.
12. Fragment of body (shoulder) with one horizontal band of roped decoration; coarse red clay. H. (max.) 3.6 cm.
13. Horizontal triangular lug; vertical perforation; coarse brown clay. H. (max.) 4.8 cm.
14. Fragment of thin out-curving rim with attached stripe handle; coarse red clay. D. (rim) unidentified, H. (max.) 3.2 cm.
15. Fragment of body with vertical lug handle; horizontal perforation; coarse red brown clay. H. (max.) 3 cm.
16. Fragment of body with traces of vertical lug handle; horizontal perforation; coarse red clay. H. (max.) 2.8 cm.
17. Fragment of body with flat knob; coarse red clay. H. (max.) 2.7 cm.

Sklavouna (FIG. 11)

18. Fragment of rim from open bowl; coarse light brown clay; surface slipped. D. (rim). 26 cm, H. (max.) 5.2 cm.

19. Fragment of in-curving rim from open bowl; coarse light brown clay, surface unslipped. D. (rim). 22 cm, H. (max.) 5 cm.

20. Fragment of convex neck and rim from deep broad vase; coarse light brown clay, surface unslipped. D. (rim). 22 cm, H. (max.) 5.4 cm.

21. Fragment of convex neck and rim from deep broad vase; stripe handle attached on rim; coarse light brown clay, surface slipped. D. (rim). 23.2 cm, H. (max.) 4.8 cm.

22. Fragment of triangular rim from deep bowl; coarse grey brown clay, surface unslipped. D. (rim). 31 cm, H. (max.) 3 cm.

23. Fragment of convex neck and rim from deep broad vase; horizontal incised band under the rim; coarse light brown clay, surface slipped. D. (rim). 9 cm, H. (max.) 3 cm.

24. Fragment of body (shoulder) from thick-walled vase; plain plastic horizontal band in the middle of horizontal rows of incisions; coarse light grey clay, surface unslipped. H. (max.) 8 cm.

25. Horizontal unperforated lug with flat surfaces; potter's mark on the upper surface; coarse light grey clay, surface unslipped. H. (max.) 7.8 cm, L. (lug) 5 cm.

26. Fragment of arched horizontal handle with incisions on the outer surface; coarse light brown clay, surface unslipped. L. (max.) 4.7 cm.