

SUMMARY REPORT – AGORA 2018

This report has been prepared for the benefit and information of the excavation volunteers of the 2018 season. Written during and immediately following the excavations, it is to be regarded as very tentative as to the results and conclusions presented here.

The excavations were carried out from June 11th to August 3rd, with a team of 73 volunteers, whose hard work and friendly cooperation are gratefully acknowledged here. Excavations were made possible, as always, by the steadfast support of the Packard Humanities Institute and its president, David W. Packard. Other significant help was provided by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation and Randolph-Macon College, George and Judy Marcus, the Behrakis Family Foundation, Jim Demetriades, the Desnick-Herzig family, and George and Ann Colony. Indoor staff consisting of Craig Mauzy, Sylvie Dumont, Bruce Hartzler, Maria Tziotziou, Pia Kvarnström, and George Verigakis all provided essential logistical support, as did architect James Herbst. We also received help and advice from the staff of the A' Ephoreia in the Stoa of Attalos, particularly Kleio Tsoga and Maria Liaska.

Section BΘ East : Plan A and Fig. 1. (Nick Seetin)

On June 26th we uncovered the top of a large marble block just south of the Eridanos river (**Figs. 2-4**). The face of the block carries a dedication by a group of *epimeletai* (overseers) to Leos, one of the 10 Eponymous Heroes of Athens. There are three lines of text at the top, with almost all the letters clearly legible.

[Ο]Ι ΕΠΙΜΕΛΗΤΑΙ ΤΩΙ ΛΕΩΙ ΑΝΕΘΗΣΑΝ

ΣΤΕΦΑΝΩΘΕΝΤΕΣ ΥΠΟ ΤΗΣ ΦΥΛΗΣ

ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗΣ ΕΝΕΚΑ

«The epimeletes dedicated (this) to Leos/ having been crowned by the phyle/ on account of (their) justice».

The block (**Fig. 3, center**), of Pentelic marble (?), measures 0. 42 m. high, by 0. 565 m. across, and 0.565 m. deep. There are no obvious cuttings in the top surface, which is carefully tooled. The other faces are equally well finished, with both sides decorated with low flat reliefs. The underside has a relieving surface around the edges, 0.013- 0.015 m. wide, recessed no more than a millimeter, presumably to prevent damage at the visible joint with a block below. This 'reverse anathyrosis' carefully follows the projection of the reliefs along the two sides.

The letters are ca. 0.015 - 0.018 m. high. The letter forms look 4th century BC, with no serifs .

Another inscription, *IG II² 2818*, provides a very close parallel with our new text, though it includes more information: A. An archon date (357/6 BC), B. The name of the tribe Leontis, and C. The names of the *epimeletes*.

[ΕΠΙ]Μ[Ε]ΛΗΤΑΙ Ο[Ι Ε]Π ΑΓΑΘΟ[ΚΛΕΟΣ Α-]
ΡΧΟΝΤΟΣ ΑΝΕΘΗΣΑΝ ΤΩ[Ι ΛΕΩΙ ΣΤΕ-]
ΦΑΝΩΘΕΝΤΕΣ [Υ]ΠΟ ΤΗΣ ΛΕ[ΩΝΤΙΔΟΣ]
ΦΥΛΗΣ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗΣ Ε[ΝΕΚΑ]

ΧΑΡΙΜΕΝΗΣ	ΦΙΛΟΝΕΩΣ	ΦΛ....
ΛΥΣΑΝΙΟ	ΓΝΑΘΙΟ	[Σ]ΜΙ[Κ....]
ΔΕΙΡΑΔΙΩΤΙΔ[ΗΣ]	ΛΕΥΚΟΝΟΙΕΥΣ	ΑΙΘΑ[ΛΙΔΗΣ]

Translation: «The epimeletes in the archonship of Agathokles dedicated this to Leos having been crowned by the tribe of Leontis on account of their justice.

Charimenes the son of Lysanios of the deme of Deiradiotai (coast)

Philoneus, the son of Gnathios of the deme of Leukonoe (city)

Fl.... son of Smik.... of the deme of Aithalidai (inland)»

On the basis of this and other inscriptions (*IG II² 1151, 1152*), it is generally agreed that each tribe (*φυλή*) had three *epimeletes*, one from each of the three trittyes, the geographical areas which made up a tribe: the city (*asty*), the coast (*paralia*), and the inland (*mesogeion*).

IG II² 2818 was found reused as a step block in a house at the monastery of Daphni, several kilometers northwest of the city center. It is of Pentelic marble, broken at the right, with letters measuring 0.015 m. in height. John Traill, in 1987, located the Leontid city deme of Kettos at Daphni on the basis of an inscribed herm base found there (J. Traill, *Demos and Trittys*, Toronto 1986, p. 81, note 7 and plate 6).

LEOS, LEONTIS, and the LEOKOREION

The new agora base is of special interest because of the reference to the hero Leos, and it joins a growing body of material associated with the tribe of Leontis found along the north side of the agora square (*IG I³ 244*, and Agora inv. nos. I 3068, I 7475, I 7167, and I 7650). Other tribes associated with the agora are Kekropis (deme of Melite) to the west, and Pandionis (deme of Kydathenaion) to the east. The weight of evidence now seems to put the tribe (*phyle*) of Leontis along the north side, without any certain association with a

specific deme, though Skambonidai (*IG I³ 244*) and Cholleidai (agora I 7650) each appear in one of the inscriptions.

In addition, somewhere in this vicinity was the Leokoreion, a sanctuary dedicated to the three daughters of Leos. Aelian (*VH 12. 28*) describes the underlying mythology: *Leokorion was the name given at Athens to the shrine of the daughters of Leos, Praxithea, Theope, and Euboule. The story goes that they met their death for the sake of the city of Athens, Leos giving them up to satisfy the Delphic oracle, which said that the city could not be saved except by their sacrifice.* The danger facing the city is given elsewhere either as plague or famine. The sanctuary was a landmark in Athens, established in the agora, and referred to by 20 ancient authors, among them Thucydides, Demosthenes, Aristotle, Cicero, and Strabo (R.E. Wycherley, *Agora III*, pp. 108-113). It is perhaps best known as the place where Hipparchos, brother of the tyrant Hippias, was assassinated in 514 BC. (Thucydides 6. 57. 1-3).

Thus far there has been little agreement as to the exact location of the shrine, though there has been no shortage of opinions: 18 in the past 180+ years (see bibliography). With this new inscription, that may now change. Pittakys (*L'Ancienne Athènes*, 1835, pp. 77-78) refers to an inscription said to mention the Leokoreion found near the Church of St. Philip, some 25 meters to the east. And the statue of Eukles of Marathon, whose base (I 7650) was found in 2013 (**Fig. 3, bottom**), right next to the new base, was set up by the tribe of Leontis, rather than the *demos* (people) of Athens as a whole, while Eukles' deme of Marathon does not belong to Leontis. As E. Vanderpool said during a debate on the location of the Herakleion at Marathon: «Two inscriptions referring to Herakles from the same location are more than twice as good as one». The same perhaps holds true for Leos and the Leokoreion.

Both the Eukles statue base and the new dedication to Leos are built into a very late structure just southeast of the Eridanos river (**Figs. 3 and 4**). They rest on mortared bricks, suggesting they are part of some sort of crude hydraulic installation, a tank or cistern, measuring ca. 3.00 m. SW/NE by 2.00 m. NW/SE., and perhaps as much as a meter deep as preserved. The brickwork and floor are covered in places with a thick reddish/pink waterproof cement. The fill, which higher up contained large amounts of discarded broken tiles, seems to be largely silt lower down, with few inclusions, and reflects the general and almost complete abandonment of this area in the 7th and 8th centuries AD. Deeper down was material from the late 6th century AD (combed wares, and Phocaean Red Slip Ware, form 10), while below the material seemed largely 4th/5th AD, including an almost complete keel-rimmed bowl (**Fig. 3, top**).

The installation with these reused inscriptions seems itself to be within an enclosure. To both northwest and southwest we have the upper part of a series of limestone orthostates, first noticed last year (**Plan A and Fig. 1, lower right**). Their tops are heavily worn by foot traffic as though they were walked on when the surrounding area had silted up, suggesting they were there for a considerable time. The one fully exposed block measures ca. 0.80 m. high and 0.28-0.35 m. thick. Generally their faces are somewhat rough; where not worn, the surfaces seem to have been finished with a drove. These orthostates rest on

a socle or sill, built of stones, which steps out ca. 0.10 m. At this stage this all seems to be part of an enclosure wall. Thus far we have exposed 5.40 m. of the northwest side, and ca. 1.75 m. along the southwest. The full limits are not known for any side and may extend beyond our trench.

If this enclosure proves to be the Leokoreion, then we should be near the spot where in 514 BC Harmodios and Aristogeiton killed Hipparchos, brother of the tyrant Hippias, according to both Thucydides and Aristotle, an act which led several years later to the founding of the Athenian democracy. That in turn might suggest we are close to where the tyrannicides were later honored by the Athenians with a pair of bronze statues, which had to be replaced with a second pair when the first set was carried off by the Persians in 480 BC.

The find-spot of the new base, almost touching the statue base for Eukles (I 7650), and about six meters east of the trophy statue base (S 3557: *Hesperia* 84, 2016, pp. 499-507), strengthens our assumption that this area, immediately in front of the Stoa Poikile, was the preferred location for the display of honorary and commemorative monuments in the agora.

Section BΘ West (Plan A and Fig. 5). (Allene Seet and Miltos Kylindreas)

From Byzantine fill we have another inscribed fragment (**Fig. 6**), preserving part of the Imperial nomenclature: Emperor (AYTOKPAT[ΩΡ]) and Caesar (ΚΑΙΣΑΡ[ΟΣ]). The letters are large enough (up to ca. 0.02 m.) for a statue or dedication, but are distinguished for being among the sloppiest and most poorly inscribed texts we have referring to a Roman emperor.

Agora coins are generally not well preserved, due to the acidic soil, which usually leads to extensive corrosion, but one exception was a handsome Imperial bronze showing Themistokles, with owl and snake, standing on a warship (**Fig. 7**).

We continued to explore several rooms of the Byzantine settlement which overlie this area a meter or so above the original floor of the stoa. Also in Section BΘ West we exposed the foundations of the southwest corner of the Painted Stoa, which had been backfilled several decades ago.

Section BΖ (Figs. 8-14). (Marcie Handler and Brian Martens)

We continued to add to our knowledge of the *Bronze and Iron Age cemetery* along the course of the ancient road. In deep fill, under the sparse remains of archaic walls, we found a small stone-lined cist (**Fig. 9**), 0.80 m. long, by ca. 0.40 m. wide, oval and oriented north-south, which proved to be a child's burial (J 2: 31). The remains had been laid out on a bedding of stones, with the head oriented towards the south. Two small pots (**Fig. 10**), one an amphoriskos with zig-zag decoration, the other a small cup on a conical foot, suggest that the burial should be Early Iron Age in date, ca. 1,000 BC. A preliminary analysis by Dr. Maria Liston of the bone fragments and minuscule teeth recovered through

water-sieving suggest that there were in fact two infants buried in the tomb, one not more than a month old, the second between 9 and 11 months old.

A second burial, disturbed by later walls, produced a small cup (8th century BC?) with flaring concave sides, and the wing bone of what has been described as 'an exotic bird' (Fig. 11).

We also finished excavating most of the fill in the Mycenaean chamber tomb J 1: 10, and added several more vases to the count of grave goods. (Figs. 12, 13) Most interesting is a rare hybrid piriform stirrup jar. Altogether, no less than twelve pots were part of the collection of offerings, along with stone spindle whorls, beads, and small metal tools.

In all, we have now identified at least ten tombs of varied types (chamber tombs, pit graves, cist tombs) ranging in date from the 14th to the 9th century BC, lining both sides of the road (Fig. 8).

The plan of the late archaic/early Classical buildings east of the road has come into sharper focus as we removed some of the last patches of undisturbed fill in the area. These late archaic levels at the north also continued to produce a fair number of ostraka, several of them with interesting texts or lettering (Fig. 14).

Section Ω (Fig. 15). (Laura Gawlinski)

We worked around the huge Roman house of the 4th century AD, where clearing and restoration work has been carried out recently by the ephoreia. We cleared mostly around an earlier black-and-white mosaic with fish, excavated in the early '70's and dated to the 2nd century AD.

In an area to the southeast of the mosaic we cleaned a surface and exposed a shallow pit (Fig. 16), the edges of which were discolored red, presumably because of fire. Within the pit was a layer of ash, a complete rosette lamp signed by the fabricant Sekoundos (a Corinthian import to judge by the clay), and a bowl (similar to *Agora V*, H 13, though somewhat deeper) (Fig. 17). The purpose of this deposit was not entirely clear, though it may have served briefly as a hearth; the lamp and bowl seem to date to the 2nd century AD.

Other finds perhaps of this period include a handsome Athenian Imperial bronze coin, with the well-preserved head of Athena on the obverse (Fig. 18). The reverse, more worn, was decorated with a bull's head. Also recovered were several pieces of bone styluses, one of them carrying an incised inscription, partially preserved.

In closing, let me once again thank the volunteers, supervisors, and indoor staff at the Stoa for a good and productive season of digging in 2018. Our thanks extend also to the varied supporters who made this work possible.

John McK. Camp II
August 2018

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Plan A. - Section BΘ East & West

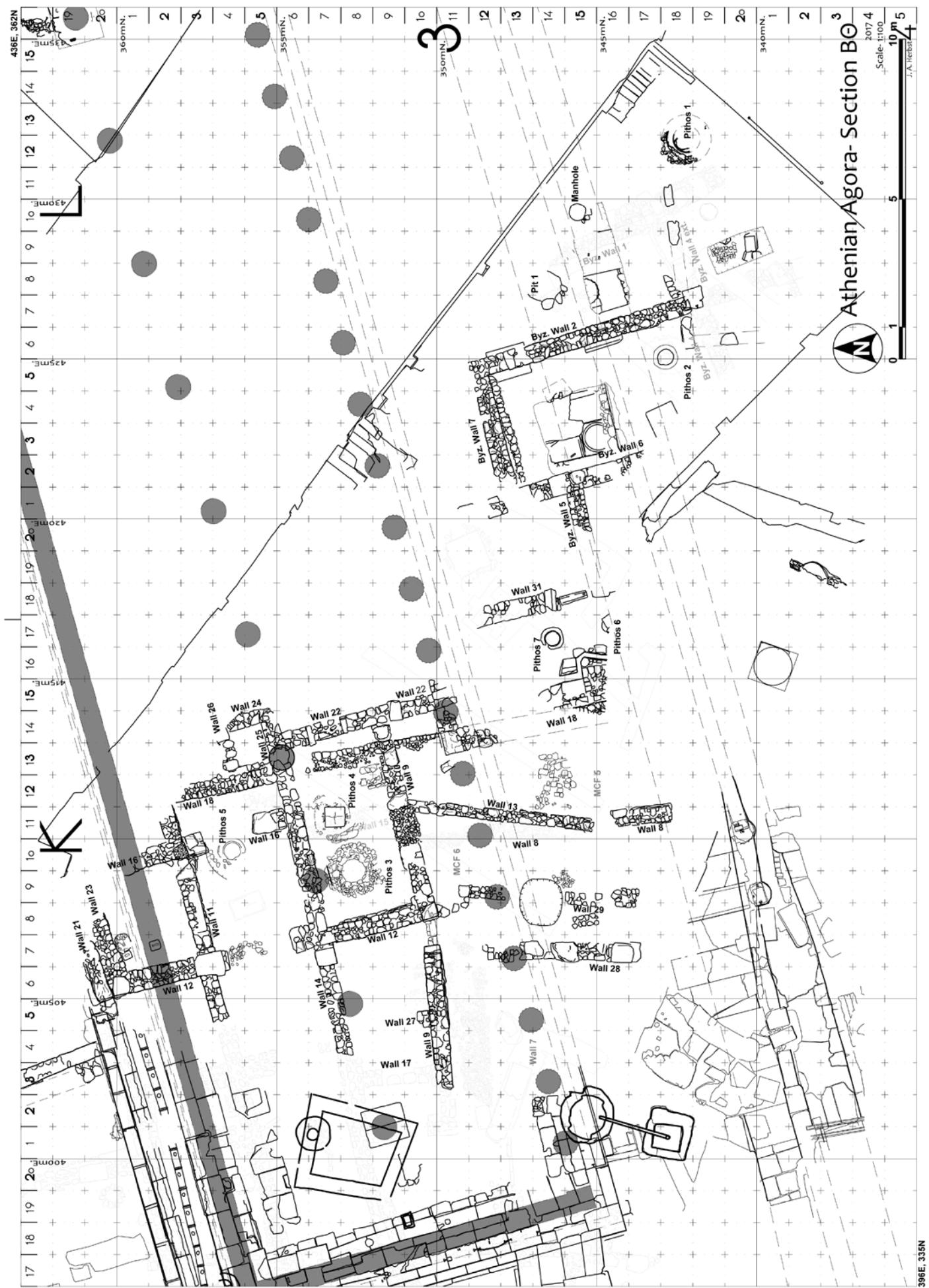




Fig 1. Aerial view of BΘ East.



Fig 2. Inscription with dedication to Leos.



Figs 3 & 4. Inscription and statue bases re-used to form enclosure southeast of Eridanos River.

Fig. 5. Aerial view of Section BΘ West.



Fig. 6. Imperial inscription.



Fig. 7. Imperial bronze coin - Themistokles standing on a trireme with owl & snake.

Fig. 8. Drawing of Early tombs and burials - Section BZ.

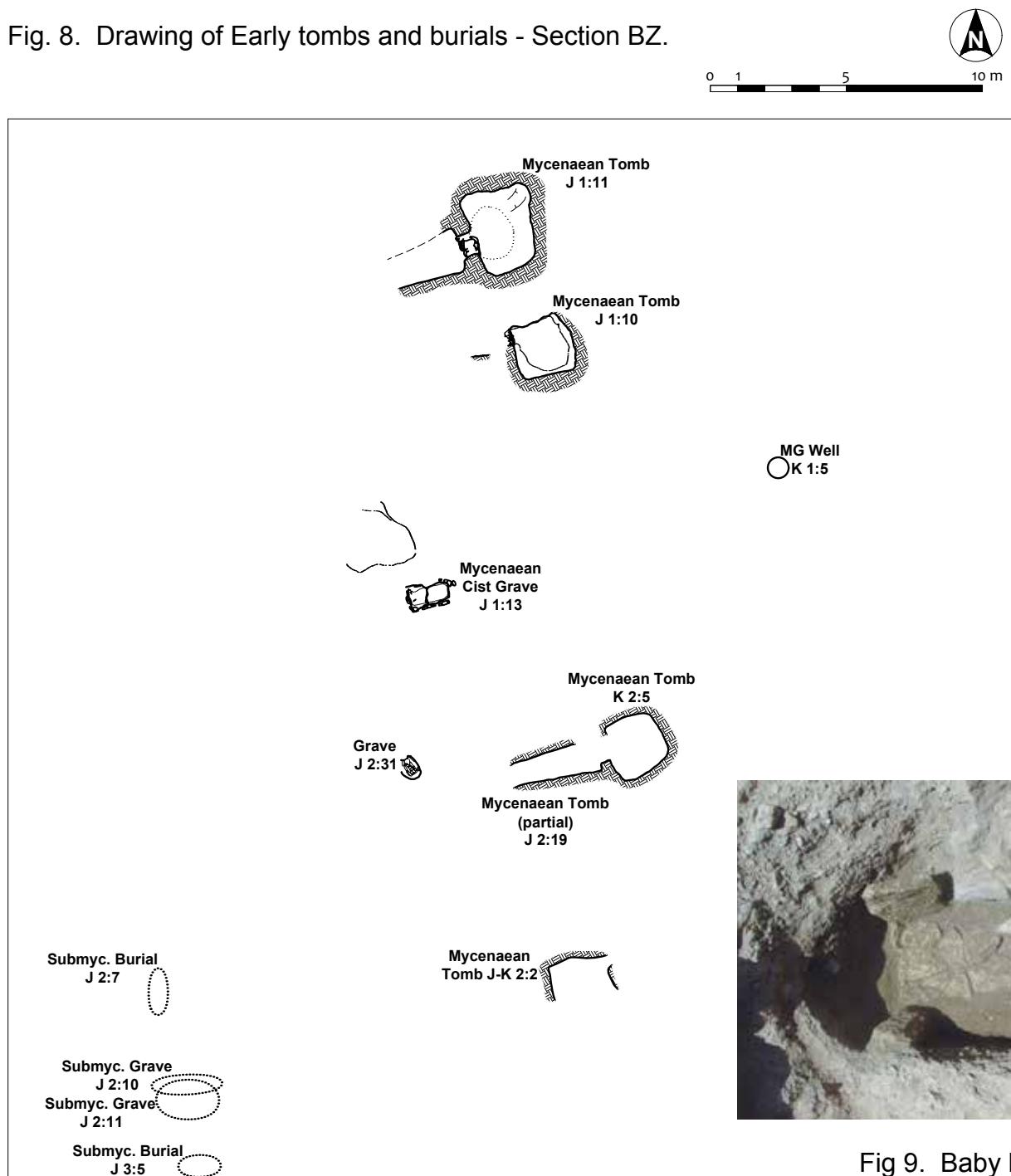


Fig 9. Baby burial J 2: 31.

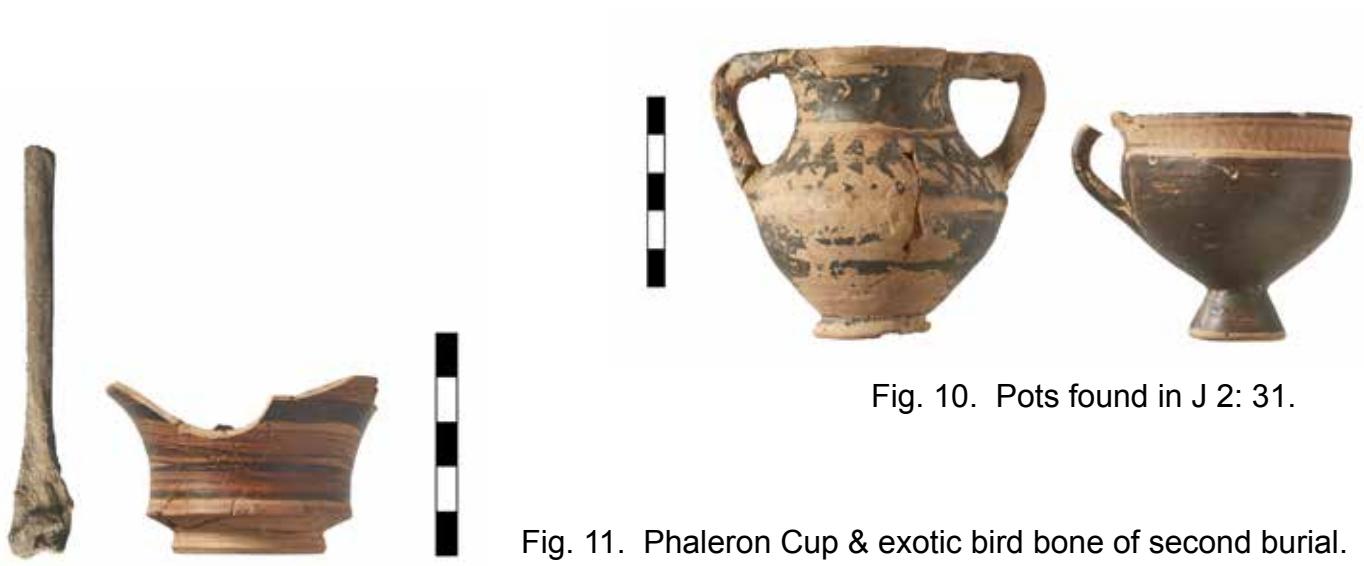


Fig. 10. Pots found in J 2: 31.

Fig. 11. Phaleron Cup & exotic bird bone of second burial.



Fig. 12. View of Mycenaean Tomb J 1: 10, looking west. - Section BZ.



Fig. 13. Pottery from Mycenaean Tomb J 1: 10 - Section BZ. Stirrup jar at top center.



Fig. 14. Ostraka found in late archaic levels east of road - Section BZ West.



Fig. 15. Aerial view of 4th century AD Roman house - Section Ω.



Fig. 16. A pit's progress, top to bottom.



Fig. 17. Three objects found in the deposit.



Fig. 18. Head of Athenian Imperial bronze coin.