

Connectivity and insularity in 1st-millennium southern Euboea: The evidence from the sanctuary of Karystos-Plakari

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Περίληψη

Από το 2010 στη θέση Πλακαρή της νότιας Εύβοιας κοντά στην Κάρυστο πραγματοποιείται συστηματική αρχαιολογική έρευνα. Το πρόγραμμα είναι μια συνεργασία του Πανεπιστημίου του Άμστερνταμ (VU) με την Εφορεία Αρχαιοτήτων Εύβοιας. Στον λόφο της Πλακαρής βρισκόταν ένας λατρευτικός χώρος που ιδρύθηκε κατά την Υπομυκηναϊκή ή την πρώιμη Πρωτογεωμετρική περίοδο. Οι λατρευτικές δραστηριότητες στη θέση εντάθηκαν κατά τη Μέση Γεωμετρική II και Ύστερη Γεωμετρική περίοδο. Μια δεύτερη σημαντική φάση του λατρευτικού χώρου χρονολογείται στην Κλασική περίοδο – ιδιαίτερα στον 4ο αιώνα π.Χ. – όταν ένα μικρό κτήριο για θυσιαστικές τελετουργίες (κτήριο Α) οικοδομήθηκε σε ένα από τα άνθηρά του.

Σε αυτό το άρθρο γίνεται μια επισκόπηση των αποτελεσμάτων των εργασιών που έχουν πραγματοποιηθεί ως τώρα στον λόφο της Πλακαρής και μια προσπάθεια να ενταχτούν αυτά τα αποτελέσματα στο ευρύτερο γεωγραφικό και ιστορικό πλαίσιο. Σχετικά με τη λειτουργία της Πλακαρής σε διαφορετικά επίπεδα (τοπικό και περιφερειακό) και τη μεταβολή της θέσης της με την πάροδο των χρόνων, θα εστιάσουμε στις πληροφορίες που μπορούμε να πάρουμε από τα ευρήματα. Κατά την πρώιμη εποχή του Σιδήρου η Πλακαρή είχε ανεπτυγμένους δεσμούς με την κεντρική Εύβοια, την ενδοχώρα της Αττικής και τον νησιωτικό κόσμο συμπεριλαμβανομένων των δυτικών παραλίων της Μικράς Ασίας. Ιστορικές πηγές αναφέρουν ότι κατά τη διάρκεια του 5ου αιώνα η Καρυστία υπέφερε πολύ από την εγγύτητά της με την ισχυρή, γειτονική Αθήνα. Όταν κατά τον 4ο αιώνα ξεκίνησε μια περίοδος ανάκαμψης, ο λατρευτικός χώρος στον λόφο της Πλακαρής ανακατασκευάστηκε, αλλά διάφορα στοιχεία του σχεδίου του υποδηλώνουν ότι οι Καρυστινοί που χρησιμοποίησαν τη θέση ενδιαφέρονταν περισσότερο για το παρελθόν παρά για τον κόσμο γύρω τους.

Introduction

Much of what we know today about southern Euboea during the 1st millennium BC, we owe to archaeological surveys that have been carried out by Dr Donald Keller and others since 1979.¹ On the basis of these surveys, we have been able to reconstruct a general outline of human occupation, settlement pat-

1. Cullen et al. 2013; Keller 1985; Keller and Hom 2010; Keller and Wallace 1986; 1990; Tankosić and Chidiroglou 2010; Wallace et al. 2006; Wickens 2011.

terns and land use in the Karystia from the Final Neolithic onwards.² In this paper, we present and discuss the first results from our excavations at the site of Karystos-Plakari on the north-west coast of the Bay of Karystos (Fig. 1). The aim is to situate our findings in a wider regional context and against a background of more general archaeological and historical developments that can be reconstructed on the basis of survey data, historical information and archaeological finds from other sites in the area. The focus is on the period from the end of the Bronze Age to the end of the Classical period. More specifically, we attempt to highlight the site's functioning on different scales—namely local, regional and supra-regional—and to identify its changing position through time. Our observations are based on the outcomes of four field-work seasons (2010-2013), which means that they should be considered to be of a preliminary nature.³

Three factors in particular affected the *longue durée* of connectivity and insularity⁴ in the Karystia. Firstly, the Karystia forms a micro-region that is naturally defined by the slopes of Mount Ochi and the hilly Paximadi Peninsula. The alluvial plain known as the Kambos and the foothills of Mount Ochi provide fertile and well-watered areas for agriculture and horticulture. Additional natural resources included timber, metals and marble.⁵ Secondly, the geology, landscape, climate and vegetation link the Karystia with the Cycladic islands rather than with the rest of Euboea. The Mount Ochi massif, which cuts the Karystia off from the rest of the island, makes the Karystia an island within an island, naturally oriented towards the sea and the islands to its south.⁶ Thirdly, the Karystia is located at an important crossroads between the Aegean archipelago—where island-hopping involves a variety of sea routes—and the Euboean Gulf, which forms a secluded passageway for ships, streamlining maritime traffic to central and northern Greece.⁷

Late Bronze Age

We pick up our story during the Late Bronze Age, when the Euboean Gulf may be viewed as a peripheral region which possibly fell within the sphere of influence of the palace of Thebes.⁸ Linear B

2. For prehistoric Karystia, see e.g. Cullen et al. 2011; 2013; Tankosić and Mathioudaki 2011.

3. The fieldwork that has been carried out since 2010 at Karystos-Plakari is a *synergasia* between VU University Amsterdam and the 11th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities. It entails systematic excavations on the Plakari hilltop, geoarchaeological investigations in the area immediately around the site, as well as zooarchaeological and archaeobotanical research. Much progress has been made thanks to the excellent collaboration with the late Maria Kosma, who acted as joint field director, and our colleagues Maria Chidiroglou and Xenia Charalambidou (all of whom presented papers at this conference), the former director of the 11th Ephorate Mrs Amalia Karapaschalidou, and its present director Dr Paraskevi Kalamara, and thanks to the hard work of students at VU University. We are especially grateful to the Faculty of Humanities of VU University Amsterdam, and the Institute for Aegean Prehistory, Philadelphia, for their financial support. For preliminary reports, see Crielaard et al. 2011-2012; 2013; 2014. Maps were made by Jaap Fokkema, and line drawings and photographs by Bert Brouwenstijn.

4. Over the course of the last decade, a vast amount of literature has appeared on Mediterranean connectivity and networks, insularity, island and coastal archaeology, etc.: see e.g. Abulafia 2011; Berg 2010; Broodbank 2000; 2013; Constantakopoulou 2007; Harris 2005; Hodos 2006; Horden and Purcell 2000; Knappett 2013; Knapp 2007; Knapp and Blake 2005; Lätsch 2005; Malkin 2011; Malkin et al. 2009; Morris 2003; Rainbird 2007; Tartaron 2013 Van Dommelen and Knapp 2010.

5. Middle Helladic metallurgical installations at Ayios Nikolaos Mylon: Keller 1985, 128-129, 276-278; Tankosić and Mathioudaki 2011, 134-135. Mining installations from the Late Archaic period onwards: Keller 1985, 192-193. According to R. Jones (in: Popham et al. 1980, 464) gold was found at the island's southern tip. Metal installations at Archampolis: Panagopolou 1995. In antiquity, Euboea was probably quite wooded: Calligas 1990, 79 (with n. 14, for references to timber). Karystian marble: Chidiroglou 2010; Sutherland and Sutherland 2002.

6. Cullen et al. 2013, 109. Also Kolodny 1974, 105; Picard 1979, 210. For more general observations on isolation and connectivity of the Aegean islands, see Constantakopoulou 2007, 3-5, 20-28.

7. Contacts between Karystia, Cyclades and eastern Attica go back to the Neolithic and Early Helladic period: Chidiroglou 2009, 86; Cullen et al. 2013, 104. The use of the Euboean Gulf as a safe passageway to regions more to the north probably goes back to the same period; see Crielaard 2006, 273, n. 6.

8. See Aravantinos et al. 2001, 355-357, with Fossey 1988, 66, 233-243, 257-261; Kramer-Hajos 2008 and elsewhere in this volume.

documents from the Theban palace mention consignments of livestock coming in from *ka-ru-to*,⁹ which is commonly identified as Karystos. However, the Karystia has thus far not yielded any Mycenaean remains, with the exception of a handful of Late Helladic (LH) IIA to IIIA fragments that Donald Keller picked up at the Middle Bronze Age hilltop site of Ayios Nikolaos Mylon.¹⁰ Thus, the identification of *ka-ru-to* with Karystos may be regarded as doubtful.¹¹ Indeed, the extreme paucity of archaeological finds suggests that southern Euboea was uninhabited during the Palatial and Postpalatial Late Bronze Age.

In contrast to many other regions in Greece, the Postpalatial period was a flourishing era for the Euboean Gulf region and some of the larger Cycladic islands—notably Paros and Naxos. A considerable number of coastal localities, especially, continued to be occupied. Iconographic evidence suggests that the region was involved in a number of important innovations in ship construction and design.¹² We find that during the transition from Late Helladic IIIC to the Protogeometric period, occupation in the Euboean Gulf region was interrupted at a considerable number of sites; at the same time, the number of occupied sites and the site density remained largely the same.¹³ During LH IIIC virtually no new sites became occupied, but this started to change in the Protogeometric period, when we witness the start of considerable mobility at both a regional and an interregional level.¹⁴ According to later traditions, Dryopes—who originally lived in the Sperchios Valley in eastern Thessaly—had settled in southern Euboea and on the island of Kythnos. However, one should be cautious about linking this later information to much earlier archaeological data.¹⁵

Early Iron Age and Archaic period

It is in the Early Protogeometric period that the Karystia was settled again, as can be inferred from the earliest Iron Age finds recovered at Plakari. If we are to assume that the region virtually lacked Late Bronze Age habitation, we have to surmise that the new settlement was created *ab ovo* in a virtually empty land, which means that it can almost be considered an act of colonization. The period when southern Euboea was ‘colonized’ concurs with a phase during which Euboeans from the central part of the island intensified contacts with various places in the archipelago and settled in the northern Aegean.¹⁶ In about the same period—the 10th and 9th centuries—new settlements seem to have been founded in the Sporades and Cyclades.¹⁷ What probably attracted settlers to the site of Plakari was a low ridge of schist stone (maximum elevation 85 masl) that provided access to both the sea and the fertile Kambos Plain. In this period, this ridge possibly formed a headland that jutted into the sea. The Livadaki inlet to its south-west is well positioned to have served as a sheltered harbour.¹⁸ The hilltop of-

9. Killen 1994, 71-72 (TH Wu 55.β); Piteros et al. 1990, 153-154.

10. Tankosić and Mathioudaki 2011, 135-136: four fragments of kylix stems and one krater rim, broadly datable to late LH IIA to LH IIIA.

11. See also Palaima 2011, esp. 54, 69, 72-73; further Cullen et al. 2013, 103-104.

12. Crielaard 2000, 59; 2006, 278-280, both with further references.

13. Crielaard 2006, 277-278, with fig. 14.1b and c.

14. Archaeological evidence: Deger-Jalkotzy 1994, 16-17. Later literary traditions: Calligas 1988-1989; 1992; Fossey 1988, 428-430; Mazarakis Ainain 2001, 149—all with refs. Both types of evidence should be treated with caution: see Crielaard 2006, 285-286 (Lefkandi); 2009 (Ionian migration).

15. Hdt. 8.43 (esp. Styra); also Hdt. I. 146.1-2: Dryopes among ‘Ionian’ migrants in Asia Minor. Cautionary remarks: Hall 1997, 74-76; 2002, 69.

16. Lemos 2002, 211-222; Tiverios 2008, 6-17.

17. Skiathos-Kephala: Mazarakis Ainian 2012, 59. Andros: Lemos 2002, 207. Amorgos-Minoa and Arkessini: Lemos 2002, 147; Mermoz 2010, 163, 459-461, 470. Paros-Oikonomos: Mermoz 2010, 455, 458, 475. Melos: Renfrew and Wagstaff 1982, 42-45.

18. See Barbetsea and Groenhuizen in Crielaard et al. 2013, 50-54.

fers an excellent view of both the Karystos Plain and the Bay of Karystos and some of the neighbouring Cycladic islands. As incoming ships first had to traverse the entire Bay of Karystos, it would have been virtually impossible to approach Plakari unnoticed.¹⁹ Thus, Plakari is a naturally defensible site, as well as being ideally suited for both trade and piracy.

The earliest Iron Age material from Plakari consists of Early and Middle Protogeometric pottery and a bronze dress pin that may even date to the Sub-Mycenaean period (Fig. 3c). They are part of a large, open-air *apothē* or, as we prefer to call it, a sacrificial refuse area that was located on the south slope of the hilltop (Fig. 2: area south of architecture). A considerable proportion of this area (83.4 m² in total) was excavated between 2011 and 2013. The yield was more than 32,000 pottery fragments—mostly painted fine wares related to the consumption of drinks and food—over 26,000 fragments of animal bones, and some 475 small finds.²⁰ The chronological range of the pottery suggests that this material can be connected to cultic activities spanning the period from the 10th to the mid-6th century BC, with a peak in the deposition of ceramics during the Middle and Late Geometric period.²¹ The huge quantities of broken pottery suggest that during the Geometric period the hilltop was used for large-scale or frequent sacrificial feasting, accompanied by animal sacrifices and the consumption of meat, as indicated by the discovery of iron knives and large quantities of animal bones. Sheep dominates the bone assemblage, followed at some distance by cattle and pig. Of the animal bone fragments, 18% have been burnt. One interesting finding is the overrepresentation of burnt femur and tailbone fragments, which fits exactly with what literary and iconographic sources tell us about ‘the god’s portion.’ The much larger percentage of unburnt bones suggests that most of the meat was cooked before consumption, probably by those attending the sacrifices.²² The small finds include terracotta figurines of humans and animals (bulls and horses) and, especially, personal ornaments of bronze, iron and gold (Figs. 3 and 4). These personal ornaments, along with terracotta pyxides, may be considered donations from women, perhaps as part of possibly premarital life-cycle rituals.

The Sub-Mycenaean dress pin and Protogeometric pottery indicate that the earliest human activity attested for the Iron Age was cultic in nature. Plakari clearly ranks among the earliest cult sites in the Aegean, but because the area around the hilltop has received scant attention from archaeologists, we do not know whether it began as an isolated, regional cult place or whether it catered for a nearby local settlement right from the start. Chance finds from the area west of the hilltop, which were discovered in 2009, include a spheric element of a bronze dress pin, a gold finger ring and a gold mushroom-shaped earring decorated with zig-zags that has a good parallel in pieces from Lefkandi-Toumba tomb 51 (SPG I, c.900-875 BC).²³ The presence of a large worked stone slab, found a short distance to the east and obviously pushed aside by a bulldozer during the construction of a road, may indicate that tombs were present in the area. If the gold and bronze items originate from a destroyed tomb, this can be taken as an indication that at least from the early 10th century onwards people lived (and died) on the flanks of the Plakari hilltop, and probably used the hilltop as an acropolis and cult centre. Until a late stage in the Archaic period, Plakari seems to be the only habitation site in the Karystia that is large enough to be referred to as a major settlement.²⁴ Surface finds indicate that during the 8th to 5th century, a settle-

19. Crielaard et al. 2011-2012, 88-89, with fig. 6.

20. Crielaard et al. 2013, 37-40; 2014, 3-7, with table 1.

21. Dr Xenia Charalambidou presents a more detailed analysis of this ceramic assemblage in her paper elsewhere in this volume.

22. Preliminary conclusions of Dr Maaïke Groot (VU University), who analysed the zooarchaeological material found during the 2011 and 2012 campaigns; see Groot 2014.

23. cf. Lemos 2002, 127, n. 182; Popham and Lemos 1996, pl. 58: 23-24.

24. More sporadic Geometric finds: possible Geometric sherd at Zoodochos Pigi on the eastern side of the bay (Keller 1985, 187-188), grave 25 of the Papachatzi plot (NW of the modern town) containing LG Euboean-Cycladic skyphos (Chidiroglou 2011, 161, n. 73), architectural remains and burnt pottery of the Geometric period (connected to burial rites?) found

ment of considerable size existed to the north-east of the hill, near the mouth of the Rigia River.²⁵ On the southern, sea side of the hill, the 11th Ephorate excavated several plots with remains of buildings, burials and an area possibly used for cult purposes, dating to the Geometric period and later.²⁶ All in all, it is most likely that this is the site of Archaic Karystos.

Returning to the cult site on the Plakari hilltop, it is likely that during the Protogeometric and Geometric periods the cultic rituals took place on the flat part (the later Terrace 2) immediately north of the sacrificial refuse area and west of the summit, although the earliest architectural remains in this area are somewhat later in date. A long wall running north-south on Terrace 2, and a rectangular stone feature—presumably an altar or offering table—to its south (see Fig. 2: features in dark grey) have not yet been dated precisely, but might be attributed to the Geometric period. An aryballos dating to the third quarter of the 7th century provides a *terminus ante quem* for the rectangular stone feature.²⁷ At some point, presumably during the 6th century BC, the area was enclosed by a peribolos wall (Fig. 2: medium grey walls) made of local schist stone. The space between the western section of the peribolos wall and the earlier ('dark grey') wall was later filled in with large stones. In the southern section, a semicircular stone feature was constructed on top of this fill (Fig. 2: feature west of dark grey wall). This construction served as an altar, as indicated by burnt material found inside and next to this structure. Around the structure lay a number of iron knives, a large iron spear, a terracotta rattle, a bronze phiale *mesomphalos* and a bronze horse figurine,²⁸ suggesting that this was the focal point for a variety of rituals. To the north a series of surfaces were found, again with clear traces of burning. Broken pottery and animal bones show that this area was used for sacrifices and ritual eating and drinking from the late 6th to early 4th century BC.

Imported objects indicate that during the Early Iron Age and Archaic period this open-air sanctuary was part of regional and supra-regional networks, either by way of members of Plakari's community or by way of outsiders visiting the sanctuary. In addition to a host of locally produced ceramics, there is pottery imported from central Euboea, Attica, the Cyclades and the eastern Aegean.²⁹ Small finds of foreign origin include two stone scarabs (one is of Egyptian or Levantine origin, but of Middle Bronze date), a fibula of east Greek origin, bronze beads and a so-called 'jug stopper' (Fig. 3h)³⁰ from the northern Aegean, and fragments of Archaic figurines and bird and siren perfume vases of terracotta from the eastern Aegean. That the site was part of regional or supra-regional networks is also indicated by the story of the Hyperborean gifts that reached Delos after being passed on by cities along the Euboean Gulf, including Karystos (Hdt. 4.33), and the fact that presumably already during the Archaic period the Karystians had an *oikos* or treasury in the Apollo sanctuary on Delos that functioned as the centre of a nesiotic cult network.³¹ To judge from the finds at Plakari, during the later 6th and 5th centuries cultic activity seems to have diminished although good-quality Attic black-figure vases still found their way to the sanctuary.

during salvage excavations north of Palaiochora in the Kokkaloi area, and Geometric sherds discovered by the 23rd Byzantine Ephorate during the construction of the modern road in the area outside the outer surrounding wall of the medieval Castello Rosso.

25. Future excavations in the Rigia River area could corroborate or refute this assumption.

26. Chidioglou 2003-2004, 71-75.

27. Crielaard et al. 2014, 14, fig. 9b: ovoid Protocorinthian aryballos belonging to Neeft's Taranto-Vienna-Thebes (TAV-IETHE) type, dated by him between c.650 and 625 BC; see Neeft 1987, 212-214, 341-342, with fig. 123 for a close parallel.

28. Crielaard et al. 2014, 3-16. Iron knives: see e.g. Crielaard et al. 2013, 43, fig. 3d.

29. See contribution by Charalambidou, this volume.

30. Courtesy of Donald Keller.

31. Constantakopoulou 2007, 52-53. As the author argues, during this period Delos was for island communities an arena for competition and the display of piety and power (Constantakopoulou 2007, 49, 53-58).

Late Archaic and Classical periods

The scarce written sources pertaining to Karystos provide a picture of an independent, medium-sized *polis*³² that flourished during the Archaic period, minted its own coins³³ and provided an Olympian victor in 520 BC.³⁴ Epigraphic and archaeological testimony indicate that during the Classical period the main civic nucleus was situated on the other site of the Karystos Plain at Kokaloi-Palaiochora, south of the medieval Castel Rosso. Graves found in between Palaiochora and the modern town of Karystos could suggest that this settlement shift started as early as the Late Archaic period.³⁵ In addition, Karystos may have experienced a period of decline during the late 6th and 5th centuries. Karystos's distant neighbours Eretria and Athens were partly responsible for this.³⁶ As early as during the late 6th century, Eretria's maritime power extended up to the Petalioi islands situated off the south-west end of Euboea, while towards the end of the 5th century the demos of the Styrians was incorporated into the Eretrian *chora*.³⁷ Moreover, between 490 and 469 BC the city and its territory must have suffered from a series of attacks by Persian and Greek forces, possibly followed by the settlement of Athenian *klerouchoi* in the Karystia. In 480, the Karystians nevertheless dedicated a bronze ox at Delphi as an expression of their gratitude to Apollo because the end of the hostilities meant they could once again cultivate their lands. Karystos contributed 12 talents to the Athenian League in 454/453 BC, indicating that city had not been completely destroyed economically.³⁸ On the other hand, it is also clear that Karystos's strategic location probably did not harmonize with Athens' aspirations of establishing an island empire in the Aegean.³⁹ All this also seems to be reflected in our finds from the Plakari sanctuary, whose importance appears to wane in this period. This might be related to the shift in habitation from Plakari to Palaiochora, as well as more generally with the fact that Karystos went through a phase of crisis and relative isolation.

During the Late Classical period, Karystos and the Karystia began to flourish again. In the early 4th century BC, the cult at Plakari was revitalized. The area of Terrace 2 was levelled. Some of the material taken from the levelled rock was used for the construction of a small, rectangular building in the north-east corner of the Archaic peribolos (Building A).⁴⁰ This building measures approximately 4.6 x 5.6 m (Fig. 2: light grey walls). The area to its south functioned as a forecourt, containing three schist-made cists or bins, a stone platform, and several low division or retaining walls. The small building was probably destroyed by fire in c.325/320 BC and subsequently collapsed. As a result, a large part of the building's contents were found in an excellent state of preservation. It contained two pyrotechnical features (a hearth in the centre of the building and a small oven-like feature close to the entrance), but for the rest storage seem to have been the most important function of the building. A series of fine limestone slabs were uncovered against its northern wall, serving as low tables or shelves.⁴¹ Next to and on top of these slabs was a considerable amount of local, plain and black-glazed pottery that had been used for preparing and consuming food and beverages. Lamps suggest that eating and drinking took

32. Hansen and Nielsen 2004, 71, 1321; also Chapman and Schneider 1993, 39.

33. Keller 1985, 194-195; Tsourti 2006, 188.

34. Chidiroglou 2009, 86-88.

35. Chatzidimitriou 2006; Chidiroglou 2011; 2013. cf. the settlement history of Kephala and 'Palaiskiathos': Mazarakis Ainian 2012, 58.

36. Wallace and Figueira 2011.

37. Chidiroglou 2009, 84-85; Constantakopoulou 2007, 218-219; also Van Wees 2010.

38. Chidiroglou 2009, 88-89; Constantakopoulou 2007, 76-77.

39. Constantakopoulou 2007, 66-75, 257-260.

40. Crielaard et al. 2013, 40-47; 2014, 7-15.

41. Crielaard et al. 2013, 44, fig. 6. cf. inventory of kitchen of house 1B in Eretria's west quarter (first half 2nd century BC), consisting of (intact) pottery amidst stone slabs; Kaltsas et al. 2010, 142, fig. 2.

place at night.⁴² The building's inventory also included bronze items: for example, fibulae, a miniature wheel, and bronze and iron furnishings for doors or furniture.⁴³ Some of the terracotta vases bear graffiti, including monograms (e.g. AII > Apollo?; see Fig. 5)⁴⁴ and the name of the goddess Nikē written on a local, one-handled bowl that can be dated to the late 5th century on the basis of Athenian parallels.⁴⁵ Maria Chidioglou—who is responsible for the study and publication of the pottery from Building A—suggests that the Nikē inscription could be connected to either a religious contest or a military victory won in the final decades of the 5th century, for instance in Karystos's struggles to free itself from the Athenian yoke.⁴⁶ Another possibility is that the inscription refers to a victory in some sort of sympotic contest.⁴⁷ One of the most remarkable finds from Building A is a bronze collar.⁴⁸ This extremely rare object can be identified as a piece of Thraco-Macedonian armour known as a *peritrachilion*.⁴⁹ As was the case with some of the pottery from the building, it was inscribed with the letters hēta and iota (H and I), which are common abbreviations of *hi(eron)* and *hi(eros)*.⁵⁰ Although the two black-glazed cups and the handleless bowl ('salt cellar') inscribed in the same manner may be considered tableware belonging to the inventory of the sanctuary, it is more likely that the *peritrachilion* was declared *hi(eron)* in its capacity of being a dedication.

Part of a large building was excavated at some distance north of Building A. It provided storage for a large number of containers: two rooms yielded a total of almost 5500 amphora fragments (weighing over 70 kg) attributable to the second half of the 4th century BC.⁵¹ Although this could indicate that the building had a commercial function, the fact that it was located within the perimeter of *temenos* wall TW1 may be taken as an indication that it was somehow related to the sanctuary and was roughly contemporary with Building A. If the building dates to the same period as the pottery, we may assume that during the Late Classical period building activities continued and that the Plakari hilltop underwent some very substantial rearrangements in architectural layout.

With the rise in importance of the new civic centre located at Palaiochora, it is likely that the cultic landscape was also redefined. In the 4th century, new peripheral sanctuaries were established, including the 'Dragon House' on the summit of Mount Ochi, which in effect might have been a cult site for Zeus and Hera.⁵² Building A at Plakari dates to this same phase; its pottery finds parallels in that of the 'Dragon House'.⁵³ It is of interest that Building A displays some Archaizing features. First of all, in contrast to many contemporary buildings in the region, instead of stone blocks, slabs of local schist were employed; the fact that terracotta roof tiles were not found at the site may indicate that a kind of covering was used that possibly linked in with earlier traditions. In the courtyard to its south, cists made of schist stone slabs and a stone platform (see Fig. 2: centre of plan) were found that are reminiscent of similar installations in, for instance, 8th-century Zagora or 6th-century Ipsili, both on Andros. Secondly, the building housed a number of finds that predate the rest of the find assemblage, including a *lēkythos* of the early 5th century, a terracotta statuette in the shape of an Archaic *korē* of the mid-6th century, and the lower part of a Late Protocorinthian conical oinochoe of the mid-7th century. It seems

42. Chidioglou 2014; Crielaard et al. 2013, 47, fig. 11b.

43. Crielaard et al. 2013, 47, fig. 11a and c.

44. On the Karystian pantheon, see Chidioglou, this volume.

45. Crielaard et al. 2013, 45, fig. 8

46. Chidioglou 2014, 61-62.

47. cf. Wecowski 2014, 52-53.

48. Crielaard et al. 2013, 46, fig. 10.

49. cf. Phaklaris 1985; also Archibald 1985. Most of the examples found in Macedonia date to the second and third quarters of the 4th century BC (Phaklaris 1985, 13), which also fits our context.

50. See Chidioglou 2014, 59.

51. Crielaard et al. 2013, 48-49, with fig. 12.

52. Hunt 2006; Reber 2001. Dating: Liritzis et al. 2010.

53. Chidioglou 2009, 89, fig. 133; 2014; Hunt 2006.

that these objects—possibly retrieved at the site—had been deposited on purpose. It is also remarkable that, despite meticulous sieving, not a single coin was retrieved.

The rituals related to ceremonial dining that were performed inside and outside the building formed a continuation of early practices, but now also involved a roofed space. The ‘antiques’ found in association with the building may have functioned to emphasize the continuity of the cult, and the Archaizing elements in the way the building was constructed may have conveyed a similar message. In contrast to the earlier setting of the cult in the open air, the presence of a relatively small building could indicate that the cult now involved a group of worshippers that was more limited in size and perhaps also in character. However, in order to be able to draw firmer conclusions about the later history of the sanctuary we must await the excavation of a larger part of the site.⁵⁴

This small group of worshippers, who apparently were also drinking companions, might have included members of an elite with an interest in military matters. The abovementioned bronze *peritrachilion* was a piece of armour worn over a cuirass by cavalrymen.⁵⁵ If the object was indeed a dedication, the question arises as to whether it was put on display in Building A as someone’s personal piece of armour or as a spoil of war. As already mentioned, the type of object originated in northern Greece. From the mid-4th century onwards, Philip II of Macedon tried to bring Euboea within his sphere of influence. For quite some time, pro-Macedonian and pro-Athenian parties struggled for power in the main Euboean cities, although Karystos seemed to have remained allied to Athens.⁵⁶ Karystos also fought on the Athenian side in the (lost) battle of Krannon in Thessaly in 322 BC (Diod. Sic. 18.11; Paus. 1.25.4), after which southern Greece came firmly under Macedonian hegemony.⁵⁷ If Karystos’s sympathies were with the Athenians rather than the Macedonians, the suggestion that the collar was booty seems more likely.

As far as we can judge from the part of the hilltop that we have excavated, human occupation of this part of the site seems to have waned at the end of the Late Classical or the very beginning of the Hellenistic period. The only later remains that we have excavated are of a much later date and seem to belong to a provisionally made structure. The finds it contained were a fragment of an Ottoman tobacco pipe and an Ottoman coin from the late 18th or early 19th century AD, which allows us to speculate that this was an outpost or lookout for the Ottomans, who were based much further inland at the medieval castle of Castel Rosso.⁵⁸

Conclusions

To return to our initial goal—that is, to identify Plakari’s changing position over time and define its functioning on local, regional and supra-regional scales—we may conclude that the findings from Karystos-Plakari can be linked to a long-term history spanning almost a millennium, during which sometimes connectivity and sometimes insularity prevailed.⁵⁹ Karystos’s strong point—its favourable location at a crossroads of maritime seaways—also constituted its weak spot, as powerful neighbours with maritime ambitions within the region tried to curtail its independence. On a local scale, the site figured in a reshuffling of the civic and sacred landscape that took place between the 6th and the 4th century BC. It seems that when the Karystia recovered from the setbacks of the 5th century, it became

54. The excavation of Terrace 1 to the west and north of the hilltop is scheduled for 2014 and 2015.

55. See description of Alexander’s outfit during the battle of Gaugamela in Plut. *Vit. Alex.* 32.5.

56. Cawkwell 1978.

57. Chapman and Schneider 1993, 35–40.

58. cf. Chapman and Schneider 1993, chapters 12–14.

59. cf. Knapp 2007.

rather inward-oriented. The construction of megalithic structures known as ‘Dragon Houses’ is a basically southern Euboean phenomenon, which has virtually no parallel in the rest of the Aegean. At the same time, the canonical, peripteral Greek temple seems to have been a rare occurrence in southern Euboea,⁶⁰ including at Plakari where in the 4th century an elite subset of the population chose to restyle the sanctuary but at the same time felt comfortable wining and dining in and around what must have appeared a small, old-fashioned shed.

60. An early Ionian temple with a colonnade must have existed in Platanistos, located some 10 km east of Karystos as the crow flies. See Papavasileiou 1908.

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Figures

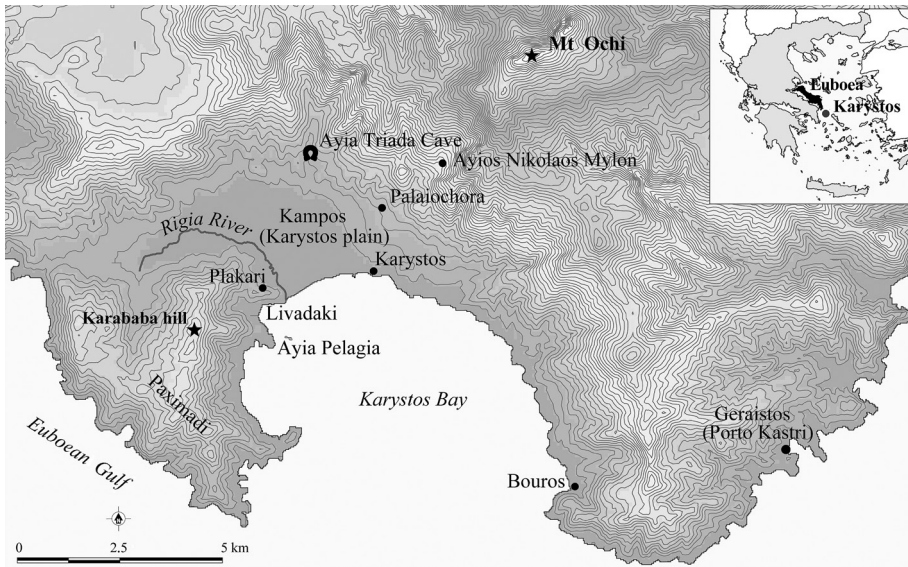


Figure 1:
Map of the Karystia with
place names mentioned
in the text.



Figure 2:
General plan
of sanctuary
on Terrace 2.

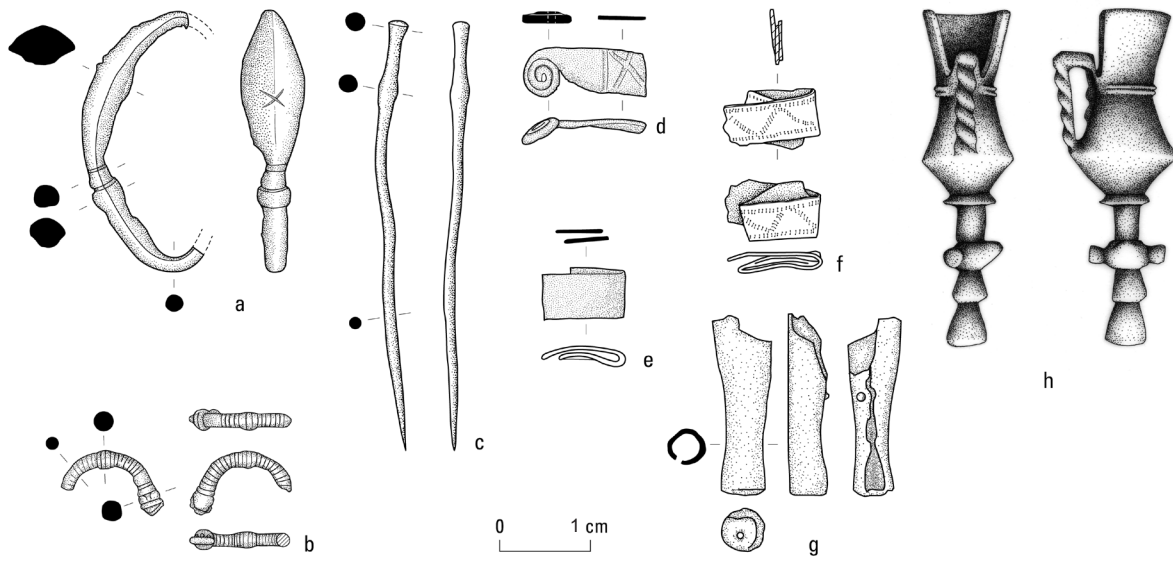


Figure 3: Bronze items from sacrificial refuse area.

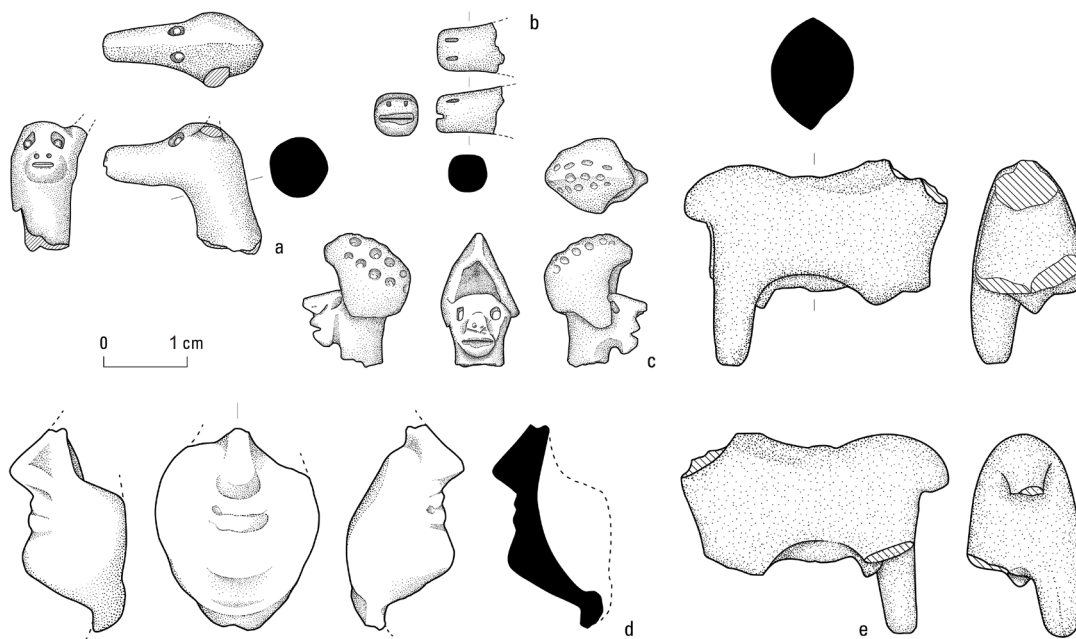


Figure 4: Terracotta figurines from sacrificial refuse area (a-c, e) and forecourt of Building A (d).

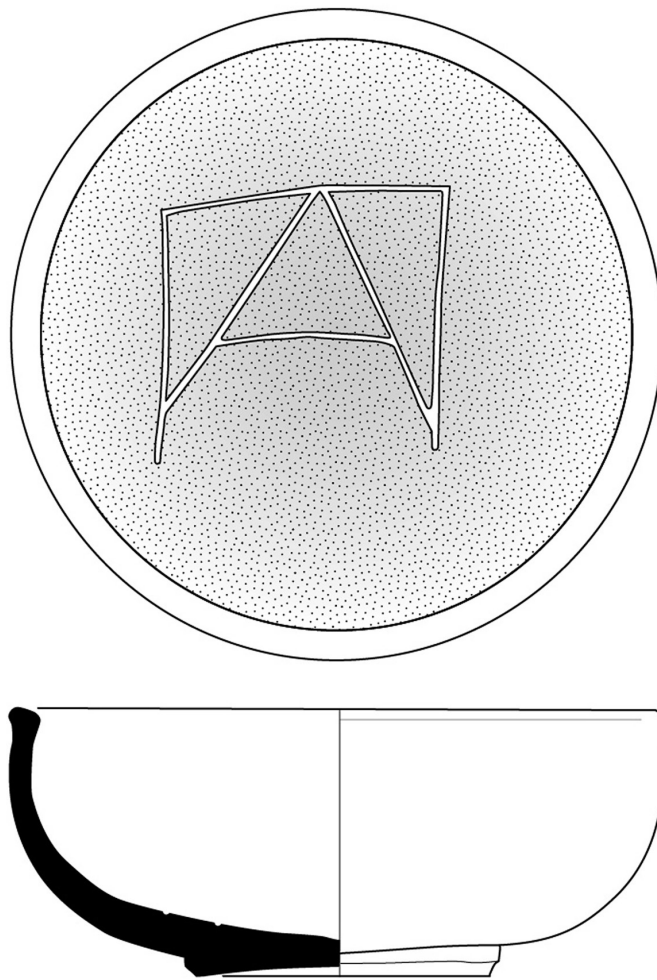


Figure 5: Drinking cup from Building A, inscribed with monogram AII.