

A House for Athena Alea? On Two Fragments of House Models from the Sanctuary at Tegea

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During the recent excavations below the Skopadian temple for Athena Alea at Tegea two fragments of building models were found, both in disturbed layers. It is suggested that they date to the early archaic period, presenting parallels with models from Perachora and the Argive Heraion as well as the Heraion on Samos. The models are suggested to be an expression of *oikos* identity of the élite families during the transition from the Late Geometric period.

During the excavations below the Skopadian temple in the sanctuary of Athena Alea were found a number of terracotta fragments, some of which may have had an architectural function, but which are difficult to both to identify and date with certainty.¹ Among these fragments were also two of terracotta house models, both unfortunately from layers disturbed during the excavations of the early 1900s in the eastern part of the temple trench.

The first fragment, registered in the field as D1/4-19 (Tex no. 288 in the preliminary inventory protocol), consisted of the solid part of a pitched roof with incised decoration marking the roof beam. It measured 7.7 cm in length and 5.6 cm in preserved height. (Figs. 1 and 2) It is made of semi-coarse and well fired, reddish clay. The roof beam of the steeply pitched roof is marked as a ridge, added as a rolled band of clay, with cuttings. Shallow incisions from the roof beam downwards seem to mark some kind of structural detail, such as the rushes and straw forming the roof cover.

A close parallel is provided by a fragment from Perachora of Payne's type B, dated by him to the first half of the 8th century, and now in the National

1. *E.g.* a fragment of a flat object with painted decoration (field registration D1/4-32 = Tex no. 313 in the preliminary inventory) and a tile with a slashed edge (D1/4-20 = Tex no. 289).

Museum, Athens.² (Fig. 3) As in our fragment, the roof beam of the Perachora piece is marked as a ridge, but more rounded in cross section. This beam consisted of two strands of clay, twisted together to form the ridge. The fragment is also said to have traces of an attachment for the long side wall, as well as a prostyle support.

In contrast to this, our fragment is smaller and represents only the very top of the roof. Not enough of it remains to allow for any reconstruction of the lower part of the building.

The second fragment, registered as D1/11-3 (Tex no. 359), also came from a mixed layer, to the east of the 8th century building, but still beneath the classical temple. It is part of a straight-sided, pitched roof, with parts of the substructure attached. It consists of four joining fragments. This is a larger object, measuring 10.4 cm in length and 9.8 cm in preserved height. The surface is smoothly finished, and this model was made of paler and finer clay than the previous one, light yellowish grey in colour. (Fig. 4a-c) On the underside of the fragment some details of the modelling of the building can be distinguished in the form of small lumps, and tool marks indicate that clay lumps had been added to the wet clay model. (Figs. 4b and 5) In the wall are two small, round holes, perhaps used for interior supports or cross beams supporting the model (see Figs. 4b and 5). It seems less likely that they are vent holes to prevent the model from cracking during firing, but that cannot be excluded.

A cutting and a wall turned in right angles suggest either a door opening or a window in the long side wall,³ as in the case of some similar models from Samos.⁴ They may also be understood as traces of a porch, limited by a wall, over which the roof extends, as in the model from the Heraion at Argos.

The Tegea fragment has a straight-sided, saddled roof, as the Heraion model. This fact may tentatively be taken to suggest that the model was rectangular in plan, since the apsidal models tend to have rounded roof profiles, for example the well known Perachora A model, Fig. 6.⁵ Neither fragment has any traces of painted decoration preserved.

In his important study of these building models, Schattner lists about 45 house models from Hera sanctuaries.⁶ In the Heraion on Samos remains were

2. Payne 1940, 35, pls. 117.2 and 118; Schattner 1990, 35-6, Kat. 7, Abb. 9, 10. The fragment, 17.9 cm long, was found in the so-called Hera Akraia sanctuary in the votive deposit by the triglyph altar.

3. For comparanda, see Schattner 1990, 106-8, and *id.* 1997.

4. Schattner 1990, 78, Abb. 47, Kat. 38.

5. Schattner 1990, 33-5, Abb. 6, Taf. 4, with further references.

6. Schattner 1990, 40-88, nos. 10-45, and 97, no. 52, Abb. 45, Taf. 29.2, with further references. For Bronze Age models, see Schoep 1994 and 1997, with further references.

found of at least 35 models, of clay, limestone or poros, dating from the 8th to the 6th century.⁷ Four more from the end of the 9th and early 8th century appeared in the Heraion at Perachora⁸ and one in the Argive Heraion.

To these may be added fragments from sanctuaries where the venerated divinity was not Hera, such as the two examples from the Acropolis of Athens.⁹ In other cases the deity is unknown. Roof fragments, dated by stylistic reasons to the end of the 8th or early 7th century, were found at the Aetos sanctuary on Ithaca.¹⁰

Other models are later than these. Three fragments from Skillous in Elis dating to 550-525 B.C.¹¹ are stray finds. A limestone model from the Artemis Orthia sanctuary at Sparta has a *terminus ante quem* at 570-560 B.C.,¹² and yet another archaic stone model comes from the Parthenos sanctuary at Kavalla.¹³ Further models are reported from Asia Minor¹⁴ and the islands.¹⁵ To these can be added models found in graves at Chaniala Tekke on Crete from the third quarter of the 9th century B.C.¹⁶ and at Sellada on Thera,¹⁷ from ca. 550-525 B.C.

The majority of the models are thus found in sanctuaries, but the exact find circumstances are in most cases unknown. The four pieces from Perachora

7. Drerup 1969, 72; Schattner 1990, *passim*.

8. Payne 1940, 34-51; Drerup 1969, 72-4; Schattner 1990, 33-9, Kat. 6-9, Abb. 6-10, Taf. 4, with further references. Mazarakis Ainian 1997, 64, suggests that they reflect contemporary buildings in the Corinthia, since their decoration suggests that they are of Corinthian manufacture.

9. Schattner 1990, 26, no. 2, and *id.* 1997. He also (1990, 94-6, no. 51) lists the famous 'olive three pediment', found to the E. of Parthenon (Wiegand 1904, 197-204).

10. Robertson 1948, 101, pl. 45; Schattner 1990, 28-31, Abb. 4, Taf. 2.5.

11. Now in the Museum at Olympia, inv. nos. BE 803 (2553) and BE 1167 (2554), and the National Museum, Athens, inv. no. 11120. Yalouris 1972, 92-3, Taf. 42-3. Schattner 1990, 91-2, nos. 47-9, Taf. 25, 26, 27.1,2, with further references; Centre de cultura contemporània de Barcelona 1997, 207-9, nos. 52-4.

12. Drerup 1969, 72; Schattner 1990, 92-4; Catling 1994. Drerup, 1969, 69, also mentions further models from Magna Graecia, e.g. from Sala Consilina and Lucania.

13. Centre de cultura contemporània de Barcelona 1997, 212, no. 59, cf. Bakalakis 1936, 28, no. 16, fig. 38, now in the Kavalla Museum, inv. no. A12. Similar models are found at Thasos; Picard 1913, 48 n. 1, fig. 4.

14. Marble fragment from Sardes: Schattner 1990, 31-2, no. 5, Abb. 5, Taf. 3.1,2, for further references, as well as for an andesite fragment from Larisa at the Hermos, now in the Archaeological Museum of Istanbul, inv. no. 72.4.

15. A probably prehistoric model said to come from the Agiasmata region, NE of Zefiri on Melos, is in the Archaeological Museum of Melos, inv. no. 39: Centre de cultura contemporània de Barcelona 1997, 210, no. 56. Cf. Zaphiropoulou 1969.

16. Drerup 1969, 71-2; Schattner 1990, 27-8, no. 3: Protogeometric.

17. Schattner 1990, 89-91, no. 46, Taf. 24.

appeared in the votive deposit in the so-called Hera Akraia sanctuary, close to the triglyph altar.¹⁸ The preferred placing of the models in the Heraion on Samos seems to be two rather limited areas:¹⁹ one group comprising 11 models was concentrated in the north-eastern corner of the sanctuary, close to the altar at Naiskos 1,²⁰ while a second group consisted of models that were probably once placed in the South Hall.²¹ Three more fragments were found in an area in the southeast that seemed to serve mainly for storage of equipment.²²

Our fragments from Tegea appeared in disturbed layers underneath the classical temple that contained a majority of Late Geometric material, but also material of later date, such as archaic and classical. (Fig. 7) The area had been cut by a trench (possibly a foundation trench) some time during the 7th century, and had also been further disturbed by the early excavators of the sanctuary. The fragments of house models most likely belong to the little known early archaic phase of the sanctuary, of which relatively few traces remains, but their original location is unknown.

The models in the sanctuaries represent various house types, from gabled and straight-sided to apsidal or flat-roofed houses. They are usually taken to reflect actual buildings of the same period. The features of the models, such as the rather small size, the painted clay walls, saddled roofs, the entrance placed usually in the short side with a porch or courtyard in front, are such as we can observe or postulate at for example Nichoria and in the case of our two early Tegean temples. Indeed, the models have often been used in studies of building typology. Schattner, for example, sees in them a chance to establish a typology of buildings: *oikoi*,²³ *oikoi* with a door in the side wall,²⁴ with short antae,²⁵ antae houses,²⁶ tower houses,²⁷ apsidal²⁸ and oval houses.²⁹ Their arrangements of

18. Payne 1940, 30-2.

19. Schattner 1990, 192-4.

20. Schattner 1990, 192-3: Deposits A, B and K.

21. Schattner 1990, 194 n. 400. Deposits C and D appeared in the northern end of the sanctuary (5-7 models), and E and F to the west of the stream along the western side of the sanctuary (6 models).

22. Deposits J, G, and H, which contained one model each: Schattner 1990, 194. Cf. Kopcke 1968.

23. Schattner 1990, 100-6.

24. Schattner 1990, 106-8.

25. Schattner 1990, 109-10.

26. Schattner 1990, 110-3.

27. Schattner 1990, 113-5.

28. Schattner 1990, 116-9; apsidal house with short antae, 118-9.

29. Schattner 1990, 119-23; Drerup 1969; Kalpaxis 1976.

columns, doors, roofs and windows have been studied in order to illuminate contemporary architectural practices.³⁰

The function of the building models is more difficult to analyse, since any typology of the buildings gives little information as to how they were used and for what purpose. The type of long buildings with an entrance at one of the short sides and sometimes an apsidal end, was perhaps established as *one* of the norms for early cult buildings of temple type during the Late Geometric period, whether we call it 'megaron' or not.³¹ It is true that several apsidal houses from the Geometric period have been ascribed a cultic function, for example Unit IV-1, phase 2, at Nichoria, the successor to a rectilinear phase 1 of the same building. Here should also be mentioned the Daphnephoreion and other buildings at Eretria,³² and the so-called temple of Hera Akraia at Perachora, as well as the remains of the two temples at Tegea.³³ But apsidal houses were evidently also used for other purposes.³⁴

However, if Mazarakis Ainian³⁵ is right in seeing the development of the temple as starting from the cult in connection with and in the chieftains' houses, it is meaningless to try to establish an absolute distinction of cultic and secular building types at this early period.

It can therefore be suggested that the variety of types in these models indicate diversity, not of function, but of house types that were used for the same or similar function.³⁶ This is probably the underlying reason why no consensus has been reached whether these models symbolised temples or private houses³⁷ – the functional difference between buildings was not expressed through their architectural shape until the later phases of the archaic period.

Of the many interpretations as to what the buildings represent that have been

30. Schattner 1990, 99-190. See also Kalpaxis 1976 and Drerup 1969.

31. Drerup 1969, 126; Hiller 1996.

32. In the so-called Aphrodite sanctuary and the remains of Building 1 in the northern part of the town: Mazarakis Ainian 1997, 10 and 14-5, fig. 9.

33. Payne 1940, 1; Drerup 1969, 28; Salmon 1972, 163; Mazarakis Ainian 1985, 20; Fagerström 1988, 39; Sinn 1990, 100-1. Another example is the room at Lathouresa in Attica, lined with benches and with a hearth in front of it, rooms I-IV: Lauter 1985, 17-8; Mazarakis Ainian 1988, 112; Fagerström 1988, 48. Mazarakis Ainian, 1985, 39, ascribed a cultic function to an apsidal house (about 15 m long) beneath the Artemis temple at Eleusis, because of the large dimensions of the building and its position beneath the later temple. No finds are, however, reported from it. Cf. Drerup 1969, 27.

34. Lang 1996, 82.

35. Mazarakis Ainian 1985, 39, and *id.* 1988 and 1997.

36. The fragment from Tegea does not allow any specific determination as to house type.

37. Schattner 1990, 210-2: "Obwohl die Bedeutung der meisten Hausmodelle unbestimmt bleiben muss, ... einige vermutlich Tempel, andere Wohnhäuser" (212).

put forward, some are less likely, for example that they are the models or maquettes made for building projects, toys or doll's houses.³⁸ Against the latter functions argues the fact that no finds can be placed in settlement contexts. House models found in the sanctuaries are, as Schattner has shown, most likely votives – but what is their symbolic content?³⁹ Fagerström⁴⁰ suggested, *à propos* the Perachora models, that they were the dedications of colonists setting out on their journey to the new country. This hypothesis, as Mazarakis Ainian⁴¹ rightly points out, is weakened by the fact that most of the models belong to a period before the peak of the colonisation movement, and now also by the finds at an inland site as Tegea – hardly a suitable “Cape Farewell” for the early colonists.

I believe that the models should be considered in a wider context and that their contextual content relates to expressions of symbolic behaviour in élite circles in a changing society, reflecting developments that may be distinguished in many ways during the Late Geometric and Early Archaic period. The emerging sanctuaries and the physical manifestations of cults connected with them became more and more important as an arena for symbolic behaviour during this phase, when various social and ethnic groups wanted to express their identities. The space, the rituals and symbolic contexts that the sanctuaries offered would have been efficient vehicles for such functions. The manifestations may have taken the shape of cult buildings or temples, or as other monuments or votive objects in the sanctuaries; in whatever form they would have filled an important role in the interaction within and between the local élite families and the emerging *polis* states.⁴²

It must in this context be remembered that the term *oikos* designates both dwelling and household, the building as well as the social group of family members and family property that centred on it.⁴³ Expressed in a different way, the *oikos*, the building, can be seen as a physical expression of the *oikos*, the family. The building, especially the monumentalized building, can thus be seen as an expression of a family's social, political and ideological ambitions and identity, the focal

38. For a discussion of these theories, see Schattner 1990, 195-7 (maquettes), 197 (toys). He also discusses the scanty literary evidence for building models (194-5). No certain depictions of house models are known: *ibid.* 197.

39. Schattner 1990, 210-2.

40. Fagerström 1988, 157, n. 188. Cf. Kyrieleis 1980, 92-3, with a discussion of ship models.

41. Mazarakis Ainian 1997, 64. The placing and role of early sanctuaries has been much discussed, see e.g. de Polignac 1984 and 1994; Sourvinou-Inwood 1993; Morgan 1990, 1994 and 1997. Cf. Simon 1997.

42. Morgan 1990; Langdon 1997; Morris 1997. For a discussion of the role of the Dark Age leader/*basileus* and his relation to the *oikoi*, see also Donlan 1997.

43. For a discussion of the term *oikos* in Hesiod, see Edwards 2004, 35 and 83-9.

point of the *oikos*, the basic social unit that, least from the classical period on, came into being through a marriage.⁴⁴ Seen in this context, the models found in the graves, as well as those usually identified with grain silos, fall into place, the latter as repositories for the households produce and property, as expressions of the *oikia*, as well as of the *oikonomia*.⁴⁵ The models are the result of one manifestation, among many, of the ambitions of the aristocratic families in the Late Geometric and Early Archaic period.

When these manifestations became important on a human level, the *oikos* of the deity would have become equally important, as a reflection of the human life and society. Within the cult context, the monumentalization of the *oikos*, now as the cult building or temple, belongs to the same general context of social symbolism: a physical expression of the homes of the deities in a human sphere, and at the same time a visual expression of the process of shaping an identity for the men and women participating in the cult in the sanctuary.

The house models are mostly found in connection with female deities,⁴⁶ with Hera as the predominating recipient. Other goddesses may also receive house models, e.g. Artemis, in the shape of a limestone model from the Orthia sanctuary. Also the finds from Ithaka derive from a sanctuary that has been ascribed to a goddess.⁴⁷ Another limestone model comes from the sanctuary of Parthenos in ancient Neapolis, modern Kavalla⁴⁸ and, similarly, the finds at Tegea suggest a female deity, who we know was later identified with Athena.⁴⁹

How does this history of female recipients fit into our understanding of the social developments of the time? The period is usually perceived as one where members of the élite *oikoi* compete within their local aristocratic group and between the groups through behaviour such as conspicuous consumption, display of wealth and athletic prowess. But within this society the sexes had separate roles to fulfil. Much of the competition seems to have been within the male sphere: the male athletic displays during the games are the best example,⁵⁰ as

44. Pomeroy 1997, 21-2; Lacey 1968, 127-9. See also Foxhall 1980.

45. In Hesiod's *Works and Days*, 30-32, he strongly associated the *oikos* as a building with the storage of grain for the family: the good farmer should have a year's supply of grain stored within the *oikos*. See the discussion by Edwards 2004, 86-9.

46. Schattner 1990, 205-7.

47. Robertson 1948, 123.

48. Centre de cultura contemporània de Barcelona 1997, 212 no. 59, dated to the archaic period; cf. Bakalakis 1936, 28, no. 16, fig. 38. Now in the Kavalla Museum, inv. no. A12.

49. Athena seems also to have received house models at Athens at a later date, at least Schattner 1990, 94-6, suggests that the building on the famous 'Ölbaumgiebel' should be seen as a house model. For further classical models see also Haselberger 1997.

50. For this development, see e.g. Morgan 1990.

well as military displays during cult ceremonies such as later can be seen in the Panathenaia procession. The men's fields of activities and network of contacts extended far beyond the dwelling house, and it is those that have been most studied by modern scholars.

But also the women would by necessity have played a role in the *oikos*, in the élite formation and in the building of aristocratic ideology. Both men and women worked for the *oikos*, even if their spheres were different; they were complementary to each other.⁵¹ Within the élite families, the married woman's sphere would have been the home and the family, her role to identify herself with the ambitions of the *oikos*, the family and the building, and to support the family. As Penelope, her role was to keep her house and stores in order and take care of those, as well as her husband and children and other people belonging to it. Such a model wife is later the chief administrator of the *oikos* in Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*, and it is a role that became especially evident in Spartan society.⁵² A woman's authority, as far as it existed, was connected with and focused on the house.⁵³

Female deities are the supreme, divine, women, the female representatives in the divine house, *oikos*; and it is no surprise, then, that it is Hera, the married woman *par excellence* and the protectress of married women, who during the early archaic period receives so many houses dedicated to her, both in form of models and temples.

The importance of the house of the deity was also expressed in other ways. The epithet *kleidouchos*, key bearer, used as a symbol for power, may go back to the Bronze Age.⁵⁴ The epithet is in the ancient textual evidence connected with several deities, especially Hekate⁵⁵ and Persephone⁵⁶ as guardians of the door to House of Hades, but also Hera and Athena are associated with the term.⁵⁷ It is also used symbolically: Dike carries the keys as guardian between night and day according to Parmenides (1.14). Likewise, the temple of Athena at Troy has a door with a lock and a key that is in the hand of the priestess Theano (Hom. *Il.*

51. Naerebout 1987, esp. 117-8; Pomeroy 1997, esp. 22.

52. Pomeroy 1994; 1997, 39-62; Morris 1997.

53. Naerebout 1987.

54. The Linear B sequence *ka-ra-wi-po-ro* has been identified with *kleidouchos*: Hooker 1980, 111. See further Schattner 1990, 205-6; Roscher 1218 s.v. *Kleidouchos*; DarSag 4.2, 1241-8 s.v. *sera*. Cf. Schattner 205 n. 205.

55. For deities as *kleidouchoi*, see Mantis 1990, 32-9. For Hekate, Kraus 1960, 48-50; Johnston 1990, 39-48.

56. Mantis 1990, 35-6; *Orph. Fr.* 316.

57. For Hera, see Mantis 1990, 32-4; for Athena, *ibid.* 36-8 and 74-5; as Pallas, Ar. *Thesm.* 1139-1142. Cf. Roscher s.v. *Kleidouchos*, 1217-8; cf. Plin. *HN* 34.54.

6.89), and Iphigenia, in her role as priestess of Artemis at Tauris, is often depicted carrying the temple key.⁵⁸ It is significant that the key to the temple door is an element also in the titles of priestesses of goddesses such as Hera and Athena.⁵⁹ Temple keys have also been found: e.g. an early key, 50 cm long, is reported from the temple of Artemis at Luso in Arcadia.⁶⁰ The key-bearer becomes the most frequent types for depiction of priestesses on grave monuments and appears also in other media in the classical period, as shown by Mantis.⁶¹ The key to the house became in this way a powerful symbol for a female authority, that is, a priestess's right and duty to take care of the house of the deity.

Early keys are also said to appear in women's tombs in Sicily from the 10th century B.C.,⁶² and can in such contexts be seen as a symbol of the married woman's right and duty to take care of the household, and, as Penelope, guard the keys (Hom. *Od.* 21.5-7, 46-49). The term may also have had more everyday connotations; in later periods it was used also for key bearers in the private life, to judge from the definition in Hesychius.⁶³ Against this argument can be cited the famous text in Aristophanes, *Thesmophoriazousae* (422f.) where the women complain over their horrible husbands who locked the storage rooms with Laconian keys. But this text can hardly be taken as typical for daily life. Instead it brings up the gluttony and insobriety of the women's orgies during the Thesmophoria, as perceived by the men. It is also possible that the woman's role as guardian of the family stores may have been lost in the notoriously sexist classical Athens. It may also be argued that, as the women's authority generally became more limited, the priestess's right to carry the key to the divine *oikos* would have had an increased symbolic significance.

The Geometric and Early Archaic finds at Tegea suggest that a female deity was venerated. It seems likely that she had the task of representing some form of female authority and power as *despoina* over her house. The finds of house

58. Mantis 1990, 52-6; Kahil 1990, no. 14, 19-25. nos. 14 and 19-25. For Iphigenia as *kleidouchos* of Artemis, Eur. *IT*, 131.

59. Priestesses depicted as *kleidouchoi* are discussed by Mantis 1990, 40-65. He also discusses the origin of the title, *ibid.* 29. For Io as *kleidouchos*, priestess of Hera, Aesch. *Suppl.* 291, cf. Phoronis 4, *IG* II², 974.23 and *IG* III, 172.7; cf. Schattner 1990, 205, n. 454. For Athena, cf. Aesch. *Suppl.* 291.

60. Wilsdorf 1985, cf. Comstock and Vermeule 1971, 435, cat. no. 638. An iron chain identified as a part of a locking device was also found at the "Thorgebäude": Reichel and Wilhelm 1901, 19 and 59. For further finds of keys, see Mantis 1990, 114-5, with further references.

61. Mantis 1990. Male *kleidouchoi* are known only from the Hellenistic period on: *ibid.* 83.

62. James and Thorpe 1994, 469. Keys were also found in female Egyptian tombs: *ibid.*

63. *s.v.* *kleidouchos*. For further discussion, see Schattner 1990, 205-6.

models favour identification of this divinity with goddesses such as Hera or Athena. She had also other aspects: military, as suggested by finds of miniature weapons, and fertility aspects, as Mary Voyatzis⁶⁴ has shown. The building models also indicate that she had the role as protector of the house or *oikos*. Later she was identified with Athena.

Are then these building models to be seen as the models of the divine house, that is, the temple, or its human equivalent? Perhaps the best way of looking at them is both or neither. They should be seen as expressions of the increasing concern for family and group identification or identities, the *oikos* both in its physical and symbolic form, and as identification with the divine house and the goddess who holds the power over both.

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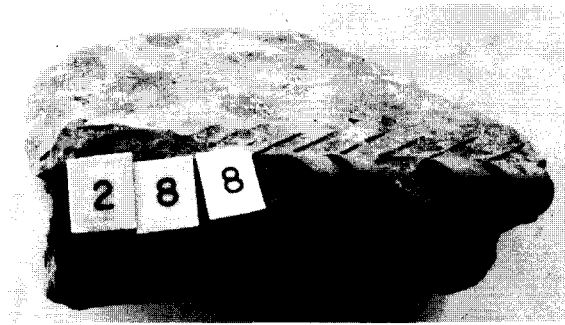


Fig. 1. Fragment of a house model, D1/4-19. (Photo: M. Mauzy.)

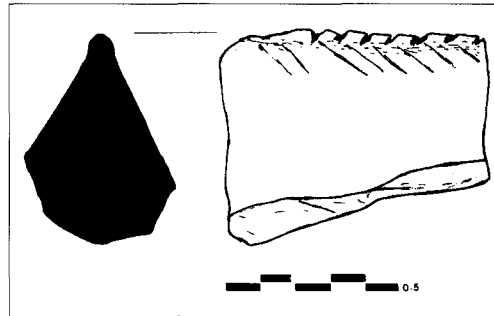


Fig. 2. Fragment of a house model, D1/4-19. (Drawing: author.)

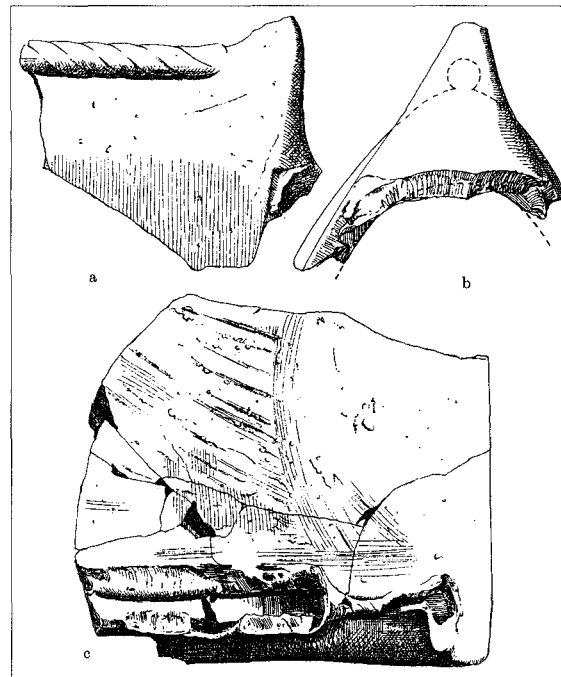


Fig. 3. Fragment of a house model from Perachora. (After Payne 1940, pl. 117.2.)

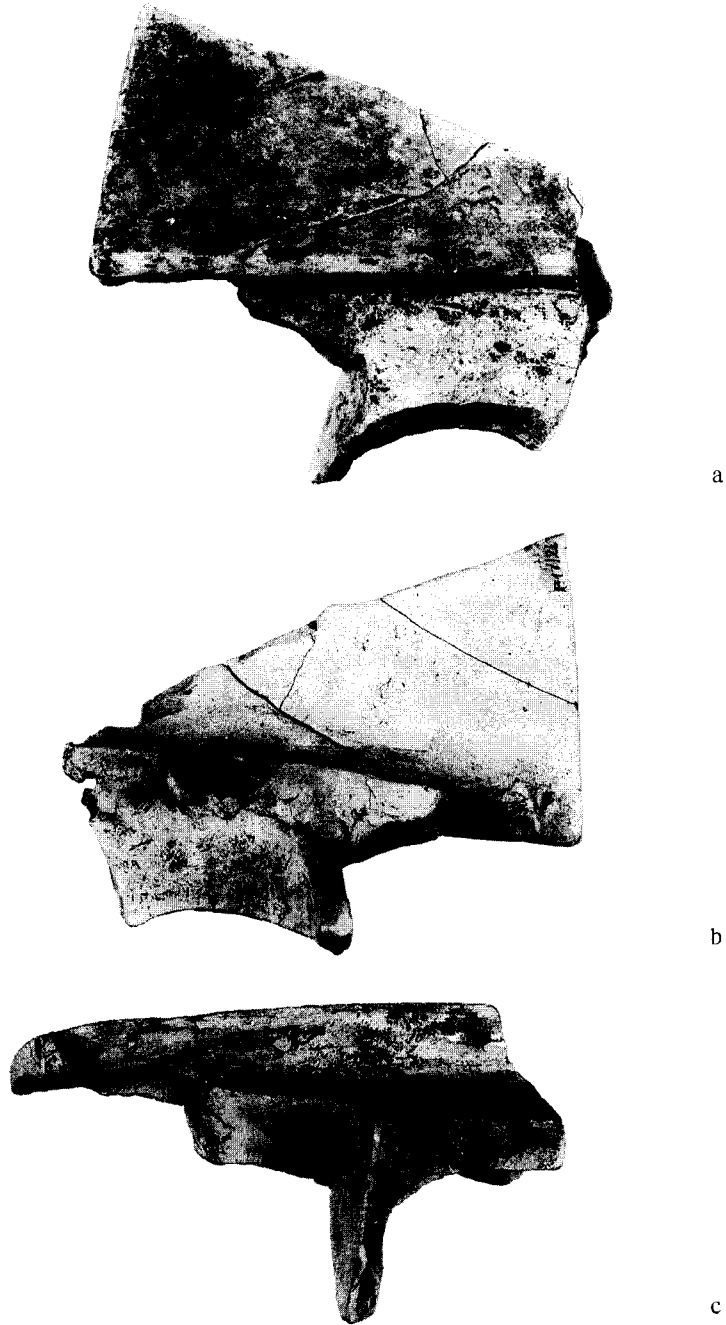


Fig. 4a-c. Fragments of house model D1/11-3. (Photos: M. Mauzy.)

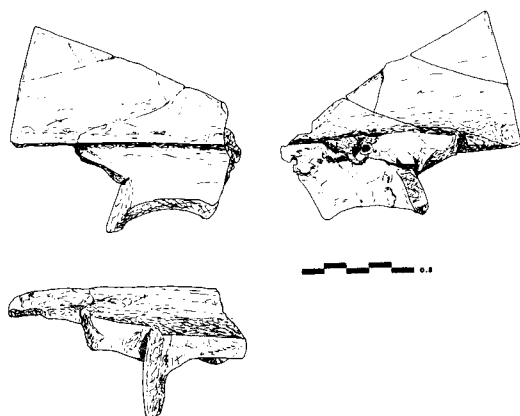


Fig. 5. Fragment of house model, D1/11-3. (Drawing: author.)

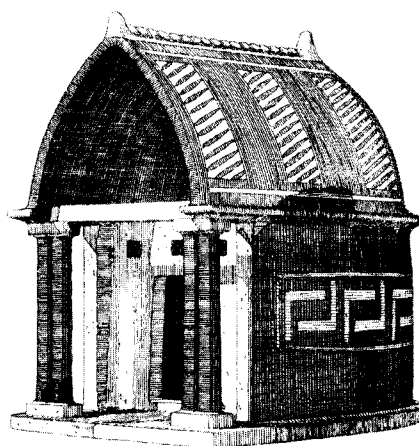


Fig. 6. The Perachora A model. (After Payne 1940, pl. 9 b.)

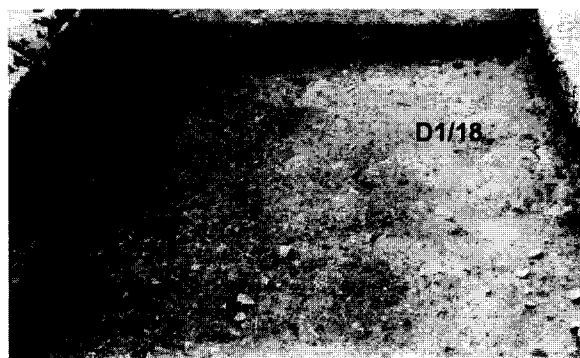


Fig. 7. The mixed layers, stratigraphical units D1/4 and D1/5. The cutting made by the early excavators is located to the left, the surface D1/18 to the right. (Photo: author.)