McDONALD INSTITUTE MONOGRAPHS

Boeotia Project, Volume II: The city of Thespiai

Survey at a complex urban site

By John Bintliff, Emeri Farinetti, Božidar Slapšak and Anthony Snodgrass



Boeotia Project, Volume II:
The city of Thespiai



McDONALD INSTITUTE MONOGRAPHS

Boeotia Project, Volume II: The city of Thespiai

Survey at a complex urban site

By John Bintliff, Emeri Farinetti, Božidar Slapšak and Anthony Snodgrass

with contributions from
Philip Bes, Margherita Bonanno Aravantinos, Oliver Dickinson, Lorenzo Gentili, Catherine Grandjean, Machiel Kiel, Uroš Kirn, Chrystalla Loizou, Christel Müller, Robin Osborne, Jerome Poblome, Kalliope Sarri, Vladimir Stissi and Athanasios Vionis

Published by:
McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research
University of Cambridge
Downing Street
Cambridge, UK
CB2 3ER
(0)(1223) 333538
(0)(1223) 339336 (Production Office)
(0)(1223) 333536 (FAX)
eaj31@cam.ac.uk
www.mcdonald.cam.ac.uk

Distributed by Oxbow Books
United Kingdom: Oxbow Books, 10 Hythe Bridge Street, Oxford, OX1 2EW, UK.
Tel: (0)(1865) 241249; Fax: (0)(1865) 794449; www.oxbowbooks.com
USA: Casemate Academic, P.O. Box 511, Oakville, CT 06779, USA.
Tel: 860-945-9329; Fax: 860-945-9468

ISBN: 978-1-902937-81-6
ISSN: 1363-1349 (McDonald Institute)

© 2017 McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research

All rights reserved. No parts of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research.

Cover design by Dora Kemp and Ben Plumridge.
Typesetting and layout by Ben Plumridge.
GIS map illustrations prepared by Emeri Farinetti.

Cover images: (*front*) View of the site of ancient Thespiai (the greener patch in the middle distance) from the south-east; (*back*) The site of ancient Thespiai (middle distance), looking south from the modern village of Thespiés.

Edited for the Institute by Simon Stoddart (Series Acting Editor).

Printed and bound by Short Run Press, Bittern Rd, Sowton Industrial Estate, Exeter, EX2 7LW, UK.

Contents

Contributors viii
Figures ix
Tables xv
Preface xvii

Chapter 1 Introduction: the survey of the city of Thespiai 1

Chapter 2 The site of ancient Thespiai and the early travellers 5

Chapter 3(a) Interpreting the density and period map series: methodology 19
- Introduction: the site in its setting 19
- Choosing the methodology of the Thespiai city survey 23

Chapter 3(b) Interpreting the density and period map series: the analysis 35
- Data recovery and diagnosticity 36
- Summary pie-charts: initial considerations of their significance, with charts and keys in chronological order 39
- The sector analysis 44
- The question of sample size in urban survey 48
- Making a virtue out of error: lessons from duplicated collections 48
- Investigating the structure of the Greco-Roman city 51
- Re-reading the maps 56
- Preliminary observations on the distribution of finds 63
- The categories 'Weathered' [W], 'In' [I], 'Out' [O] and 'Slope-wash' [SW] 63

Chapter 3(c) Interpreting the density and period map series: the final period maps 65
- The prehistoric sequence 66
- The historical Greek periods 85
- The Roman and later periods 114

Chapter 4 The architectural survey 141
- Part I: the architecturally diagnostic fragments 143
- Part II: the evidence for the city's defences 165
- The Thespian theatre: by Uroš Kirn 174
  - Methodology 176
  - The study area 176
  - Applications of the three-dimensional model 178
  - Conclusion 181
- Part III: other discoveries made by the University of Ljubljana team (with an Addendum by members of the 9th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities) 183

Chapter 5 A brief history of independent Thespiai 199
- Boeotia and Thespiai in Archaic times 201
- Boeotia and Thespiai after the Persian Wars, 479–379 BC 205
- The period of the 'Theban League', 378–338 BC 210
- The period of the 'Hellenistic League' 213

Chapter 6 Thespiai: the epigraphic city down to 171 BC 219
Robin Osborne

Chapter 7 The Roman fate of Thespiai (171 BC – fourth century AD) 231
Christel Müller
- Thespiai in the aftermath of the Third Macedonian War (after 168 BC) 231
- Thespiai and the representatives of Rome 234
- The people: Greek Romans and Roman Greeks 236

Chapter 8 The history of Thespiai and Boeotia from Late Antiquity to the Frankish period 241
Athanasios K. Vionis and Chrystalla Loizou
Late Antiquity (fifth to mid-seventh centuries AD) 241
The Byzantine Early Middle Ages (mid-seventh to early ninth centuries) 244
The Middle Byzantine period (mid-ninth to early thirteenth centuries) 247
The Late Byzantine/Frankish era (early thirteenth to mid-fifteenth centuries) 250

Chapter 9 Thespia – Zogra Kobila – Erimokastro – Kaskaveli in the Ottoman Period, according to unpublished or little-known Ottoman Administrative Sources 255
Machiel Kiel
Dara 264
Tatize 264

Chapter 10(a) The Neolithic site at the Thespiai Magoula 267
Kalliope Sarri
Survey seasons and collections 267
Distribution 267
Pottery classification 272
Methodology 273
Neolithic pottery groups 273
The pottery sequence 277
The Neolithic figurines 279

Chapter 10(b) The Bronze Age pottery 281
Oliver Dickinson

Chapter 11 The pottery of the Early Iron Age to the Hellenistic periods 287
Vladimir Stissi
Data quality, possibilities and difficulties 290
Chronological overview 292
Conclusions 315

Chapter 12 Urban Thespiai: the Late Hellenistic to Late Roman pottery 317
Philip Bes and Jeroen Poblome
Methodology, chronology and terminology 317
The data: quantitative and qualitative dimensions 320
An outline of ceramic trends 322
Functional zoning: ceramic assemblages and use 338
Conclusion 348
Acknowledgments 349

Chapter 13 The Byzantine to Early Modern pottery from Thespiai 351
Athanasios K. Vionis
Chronology and terminology 351
Pottery fabrics and production 356
Functional categories by period 363
Concluding remarks 374

Chapter 14 The coins of Thespiai 375
Catherine Grandjean
Coins of the Boeotian Survey: Thespiai, Haliartos and Hyettos 375
Other coins discovered at Thespiai 378
The monetization of Thespiai 381

Chapter 15 Conclusion 387

Bibliography 391

Index 413

Appendices on CD

1. Remaining period maps (Ch.3)
2. 1985 pottery database spreadsheet (Ch.3)
3. 1986 pottery database spreadsheet (Ch.3)
4. The 'Rome Catalogue' (Ch.4)
5. Pottery catalogue to accompany Chapter 12
6. Catalogue of Byzantine to Early Modern pottery to accompany Chapter 13

Additional appendix on CD:

7. Table of artefact density and visibility measurements for Thespiai City (Ch.3b)

Contributors

John Bintliff was Professor of Classical and Mediterranean Archaeology at Universiteit Leiden NL, and is now Honorary Professor in the Department of Archaeology, at the University of Edinburgh (School of History, Classics and Archaeology, Old Medical Building, Teviot Place, Edinburgh EH8 9AG, UK; johnlbintliff@gmail.com).

Emeri Farinetti is a Faculty Member of the Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici, Università di Studi Roma Tre (Via Ostiense, 234, 00146 Roma, IT; emerif@tin.it).

Božidar Slapšak is Professor in the Department of Archaeology, University of Ljubljana (Cankarjeva 9, 1000 Ljubljana, SI; bslapsak@yahoo.com).

Anthony Snodgrass is Laurence Professor Emeritus of Classical Archaeology of the University of Cambridge (Faculty of Classics, Sidgwick Avenue, Cambridge, CB3 9DA, UK; ams1002@cam.ac.uk).

* * * * *

Philip Bes completed his Doctorate at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven BE, and has since held a research appointment at the Rijksuniversiteit, Leiden, NL (Mariastraat 69, 2595 GM Den Haag, NL; philipmbes@gmail.com).

Margherita Bonanno Aravantinos is Professor of Classical Archaeology at the Università Tor Vergata, Rome (Lettere e Filosofia a Tor Vergata, Via Columbia n. 1 – 00133 Roma, IT; margherita.bonanno@uniroma2.it).

Oliver Dickinson is Reader Emeritus in Greek Archaeology of the University of Durham, UK (12 The Village, Haxby, York YO32 3HT, UK; otpkdickinson@googlemail.com).

Lorenzo Gentili is Docente in the Facoltà di Lettere at the Università Tor Vergata, Rome (Lettere e Filosofia a Tor Vergata, Via Columbia n. 1 – 00133 Roma, IT; lorenzo.gentili@uniroma2.it).

Catherine Grandjean is Professeur d'histoire ancienne at the Université François-Rabelais, Tours (Responsable du CeTHiS EA 6298, Universiité François-Rabelais, 3 rue des Tanneurs, F 37000 Tours; catherine.grandjean@univ-tours.fr).

Machiel Kiel was Professor at Universiteit Utrecht, NL, then Director and now Senior Research Fellow of the Netherlands Institute in Turkey (Rhodosstr. 14, D-53177 Bonn; machiel.kiel@googlemail.com).

Uroš Kirn studied at the University of Ljubljana, SI and now runs a digitalisation company in Delft (Kirn Tech Support, Raamstraat 101, 2613RX Delft, NL; ukirn@kirntechsupport.nl).

Chrystalla Loizou is a PhD candidate at the Department of History and Archaeology in the University of Cyprus (Department of History and Archaeology, P.O. Box 20537, Nicosia 1678, CY; loizou.chrystalla@gmail.com).

Christel Müller is Professeure de l'Histoire grecque at the Université Paris Ouest Nanterre (UMR 7041-ArScAn, Maison de l'Archéologie et de l'Ethnologie, 21 allée de l'Université, F 92023 Nanterre Cedex; christel.muller@mae.u-paris10.fr).

Robin Osborne is Professor of Ancient History at the University of Cambridge (King's College, Cambridge, CB2 1ST, UK; ro225@cam.ac.uk).

Jeroen Poblome is a Professor in the Faculty of Arts, University of Leuven and directs the Sagalassos Archaeological Research Project (Blijde-Inkomststraat 21 – Box 3314, 3000 Leuven BE; jeroen.poblome@kuleuven.be).

Kalliope Sarri is Marie Sklodowska-Curie Fellow at the Saxo Institute, University of Copenhagen (Centre for Textile Research, Saxo Institute, University of Copenhagen, Karen Blixensvej 4, DK-2300 Copenhagen S; kalliope.sarri@gmail.com).

Vladimir Stissi is Professor of Classical Archaeology at the University of Amsterdam (Turfdraagsterpad 9, 1012 XT, Amsterdam, NL; V.V.Stissi@uva.nl).

Athanasios Vionis is Assistant Professor in Byzantine Archaeology and Art at the University of Cyprus (Department of History and Archaeology, P.O. Box 20537, Nicosia 1678, CY; vionis@ucy.ac.cy).

Chapter 10(b)

The Bronze Age pottery

Oliver Dickinson

The salient impression is that material of the Bronze Age and the antecedent Final Neolithic (FN) period is spread widely in the city area, but in far smaller quantities than the Early to Late Neolithic material.[1] The distribution of what has been classified as 'Final Neolithic–Early Helladic' (FN–EH) (Fig. 10.19) is particularly striking: concentrations can be detected across the north part of the borderline between Sectors 1 and 2 (see Fig. 3.29 in Chapter 3 for a map of the sectors), in the south of Sector 2, in Sectors 4 and 7, and in the north section of Sector 10, and there are stray finds elsewhere.

Pottery that cannot be more closely defined than as 'prehistoric coarse', but that often seems likely to belong to these early stages rather than later, is generally found in the same or immediately adjacent transects and so, with notable frequency, are blades, flakes or cores of obsidian. Of course, theoretically such finds could be dated anywhere in the Neolithic or Early Helladic phases (much less plausibly later), and the relatively large quantities found at the E end of the Magoula and nearby could easily represent material of mostly if not entirely Neolithic date. But its common occurrence away from the Magoula in association with FN and EH material adds to an impression of wide-ranging activity. In comparison, it may be noted, blades and waste pieces of chert are extraordinarily rare, although chert was in common use throughout the Neolithic and Bronze Age; but we think it quite possible that, to a great extent, this reflects obsidian's greater visibility to survey teams and a corresponding tendency to overlook pieces of chert, mistaking them for natural stones.

Very little can be said about the FN and FN–EH material in detail. The majority of the material is of coarse fabric, including pieces of a thick orange straw-tempered ware, well recognized in the Tanagra survey, where it often seems to belong to jars, and of a thinner red-orange rather gritty ware, which is recovered in such small fragments that nothing more can be said. It seems unlikely that these fabrics can have been so long-lived as to date anywhere within the FN period, for which an extent of well over a millennium (*c.* 4500–3200 BC) has been suggested. They are more likely to represent a later stage within the period and, if they survived into EH, they are unlikely to have been current beyond the subdivision classified as EH I, itself allotted a further half millennium (*c.* 3200–2700 BC).

Even on this more limited view, the finds could still date anywhere within a period of several hundred years, and for this reason it is necessary to exercise caution in interpreting their wide distribution. Rather than representing a whole constellation of small settlements or individual farmsteads established around the Magoula and occupied for long periods, it could reflect the movement of just a few families, settling at particular points for a few generations; some finds might not even represent settlements, but short-lived 'activity areas'. One possible grouping is towards the northern edge of the survey area, in Transects 2002 and 2086–8 of Sector 8, where considerable material of later phases has also been found; here, on the hill slope below the modern village of Leondari, the suggestion of a nearby prehistoric settlement has already been made (see p. 272).

Other notable groupings are in Transects 6–8 of Sector 10, near the eastern edge, where EH material has also been found (Fig. 10.20); and, in the south, in Sector 7, where FN–EH finds have been identified in many Transects but there is little of clearly later date.

All these might have a claim to be established hamlets, but only in the Sector 8 concentration is the material particularly copious. It can at least be said that this wide distribution of finds contributes to the impression that, in the territory around the Magoula, there was a different kind of activity from the likely

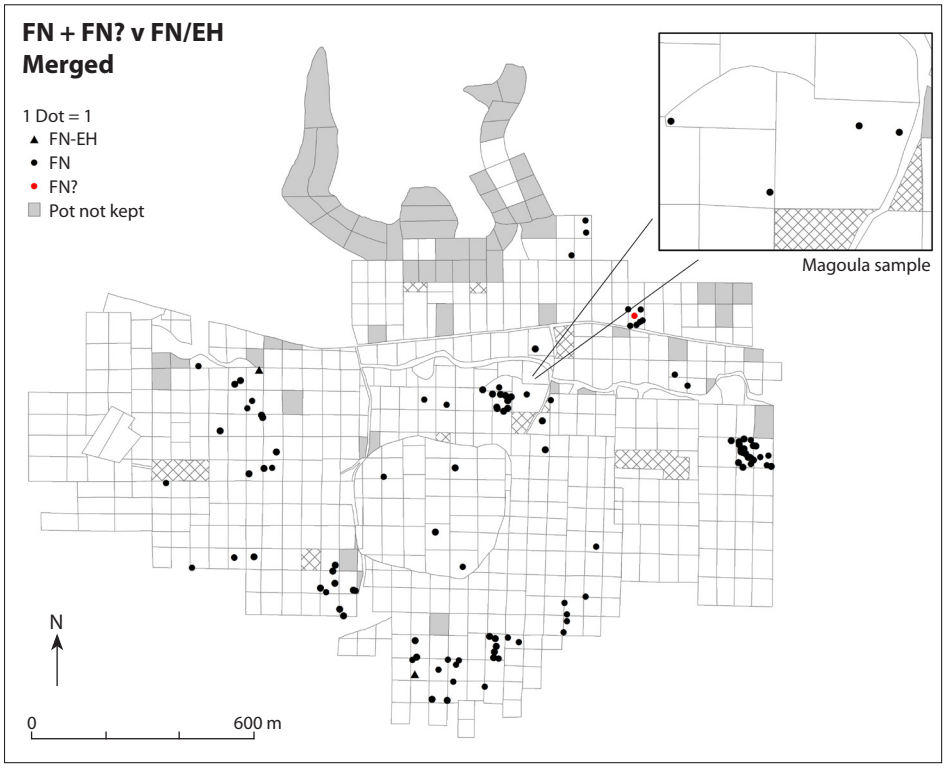


Figure 10.19. *Distribution map, Final Neolithic to Early Helladic sherds.*

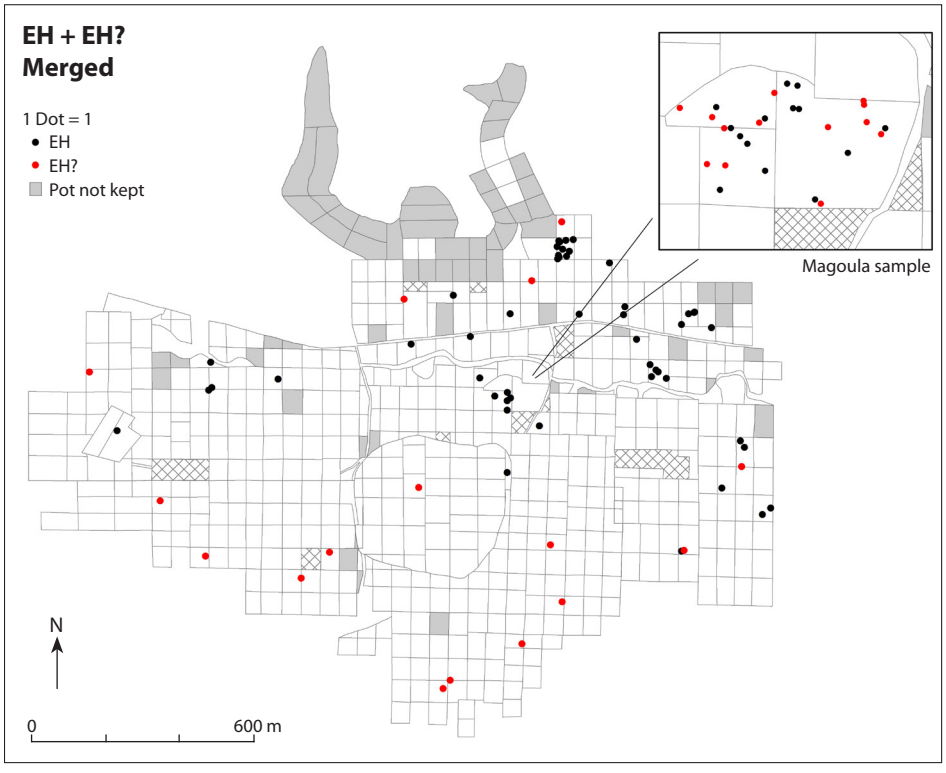


Figure 10.20. *Distribution map of Early Helladic sherds.*

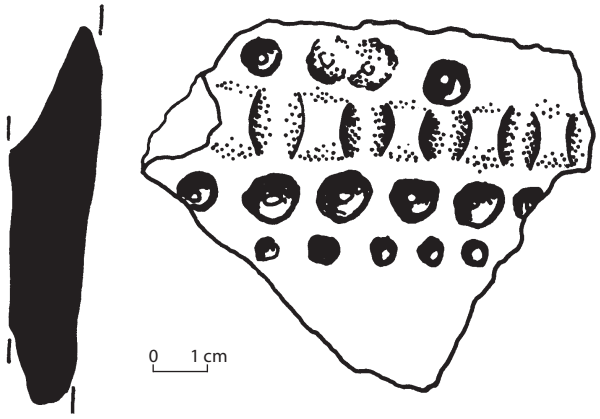


Figure 10.21. *EH body-sherd, from 85 TH Sa. 7.59.*

pattern earlier in the Neolithic period. Yet the Magoula is likely to have remained the main settlement of the neighbourhood, a true village, and possible pieces of the finer EH I wares have mostly been found here (Fig. 10.20 shows the distribution of finds for the EH period as a whole, and Fig. 10.21 a typical body-sherd).

The situation is the same for the phase generally reckoned to represent the peak of the Early Bronze Age development, EH II. Identifying material of this phase outside the Magoula itself has proved effectively impossible. In particular, there are no pieces of the very characteristic diagnostic shapes of the period, sauceboats and small bowls, which were produced in wares of truly fine quality; at most, a few pieces of finer quality that show traces of paint might be EH II. Pieces of this kind have been found on and close to the Magoula, though more in grab samples collected in later years than in the systematic surveys by transects in 1985–6; other finds recovered in this way include two possible pieces of the wheelmade bowls or plates in the 'Anatolian' pottery tradition that became influential in Boeotia, Euboea and various Aegean islands in the late stages of EH II. Rim and handle fragments of substantial bowls and jars, in plain but relatively well-fired wares, have been identified more widely, but there is nothing to support placing them closely within the EH I–II range; similarly, some better made pieces of coarse domestic ware defined as EH might be as late as EH II, but this is not easily demonstrable.

As a result, it has to be said that, although material identified as EH is found quite widely in the city area, with sporadic finds in Sectors 1, 2, 9, and even 5, the *Kastro* (where a little obsidian was also found), it would be very unwise to suppose that the pattern of small satellite settlements, tentatively proposed on the basis of the FN–EH spread, continued into EH II. The best argument for it is in fact that survey work in several parts of the mainland has suggested a general spread of very small EH II settlements as well as more substantial villages; but it remains possible that the likely concentration of population in the Magoula village that is detectable later in the Bronze Age took place at some stage within EH II.

The picture becomes even more obscure with the final phase of the Early Bronze Age, EH III. Apart from one piece from the eastern Magoula that does seem to be EH III, a body sherd with handle from a tankard found in a 1993 grab sample, and a couple of pieces that might be EH III or Middle Helladic (MH) but not earlier, there is nothing. Some material however seems plausibly attributable to 'early' MH, including pieces identified as Dark or coarse Minyan, both from the Magoula and the Sector 8 concentration (Fig. 10.22), so that the possibility of continuous occupation from an early stage of MH, if not continuously from the end of EH II through EH III, is not excluded.

Certainly, good quality Grey Minyan pieces that belong to shapes of the mature to late stages of MH, especially the well-known ring-stemmed goblet, have been found, not merely on and close to the Magoula and in the Sector 8 concentration, but in one case as far away as Sector 3 (Transect 2098) (see Fig. 10.23). Surprisingly, and in marked contrast with the situation earlier, hardly any of the shaped fragments assigned to MH, of whatever fabric, are rims; rather, they are body sherds, often showing evidence of strap-handles, or base and foot fragments.

The presence of good quality Grey Minyan might have more than ordinary significance, for it seems very likely that this was the recognized fine ware of the period, and that the goblet shape in particular was

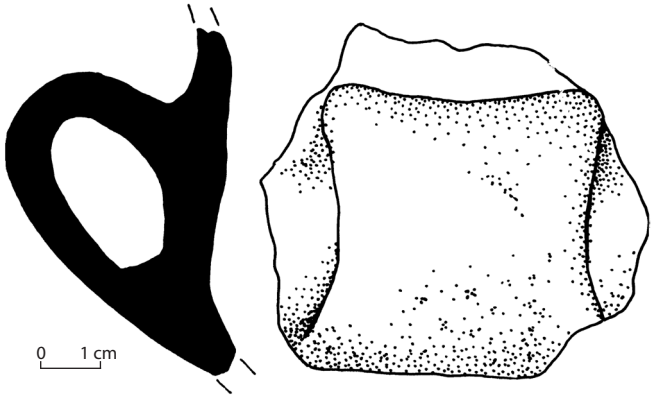


Figure 10.22. *Early MH dark Minyan carinated bowl handle, from 85 TH Tr. 2087.10.*

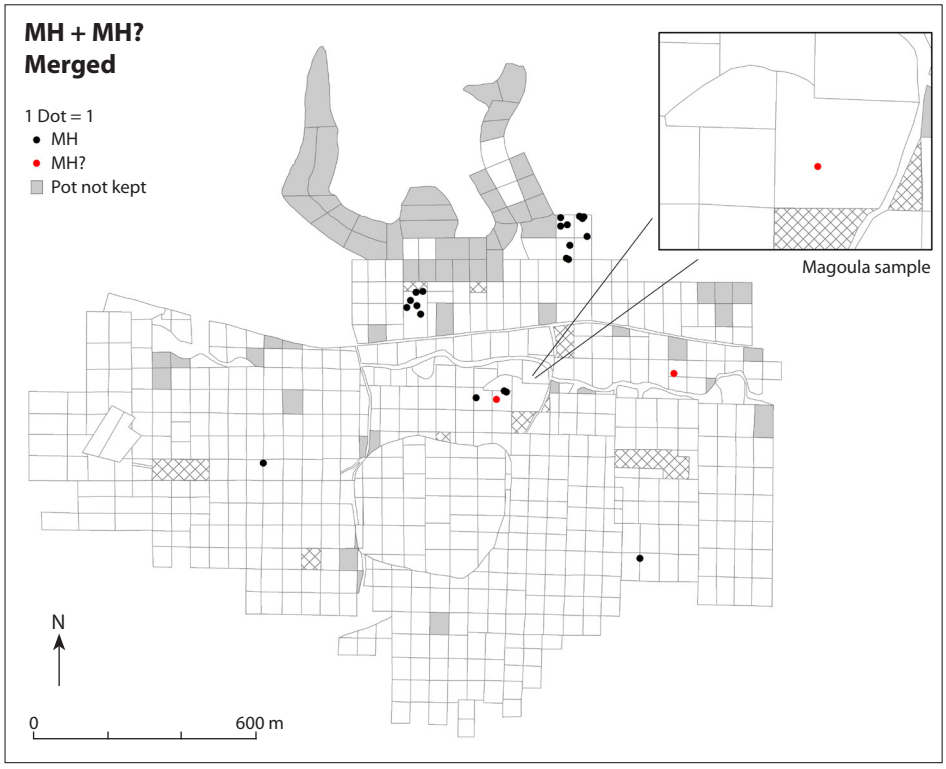


Figure 10.23. *Distribution map of Middle Helladic sherds.*

used in the context of ceremonial feasting. This would suggest that the Thespiai community was substantial, including families that would have been reckoned prosperous by the standards of the period. Indeed, if the Grey Minyan was locally made in the village itself, this would be another sign that it was a leading community; but the evidence is too scanty to allow this to be asserted with confidence. In contrast, it has not proved possible to identify any likely painted wares of MH date; but one piece of a well-made coarse ware jar with knob decoration, a late MH to early Late Helladic (LH) type, was found in the Sector 8 concentration (Fig. 10.24), and a body fragment with handle belonging to a krater or basin from the Magoula was of a ware datable to the final stages of MH or beginning of LH.

There are clearly identifiable LH pieces (Fig. 10.25), but they are conspicuously rare (little over a dozen in all) and the bulk of recognized pieces were found either on the Magoula, or not far to its north in Sector 3 across the Kanavaris river, or to the east and south–east in Sector 9 (as with the goblet foot, Fig. 10.26).

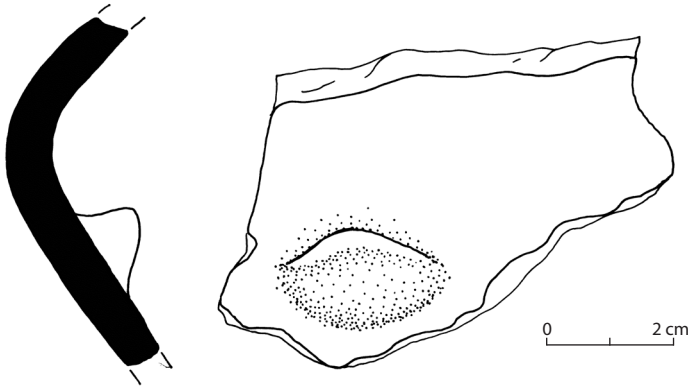


Figure 10.24. *Body-sherd of Late MH/early LH knobbed jar, from 85 TH Tr. 2088.18.*

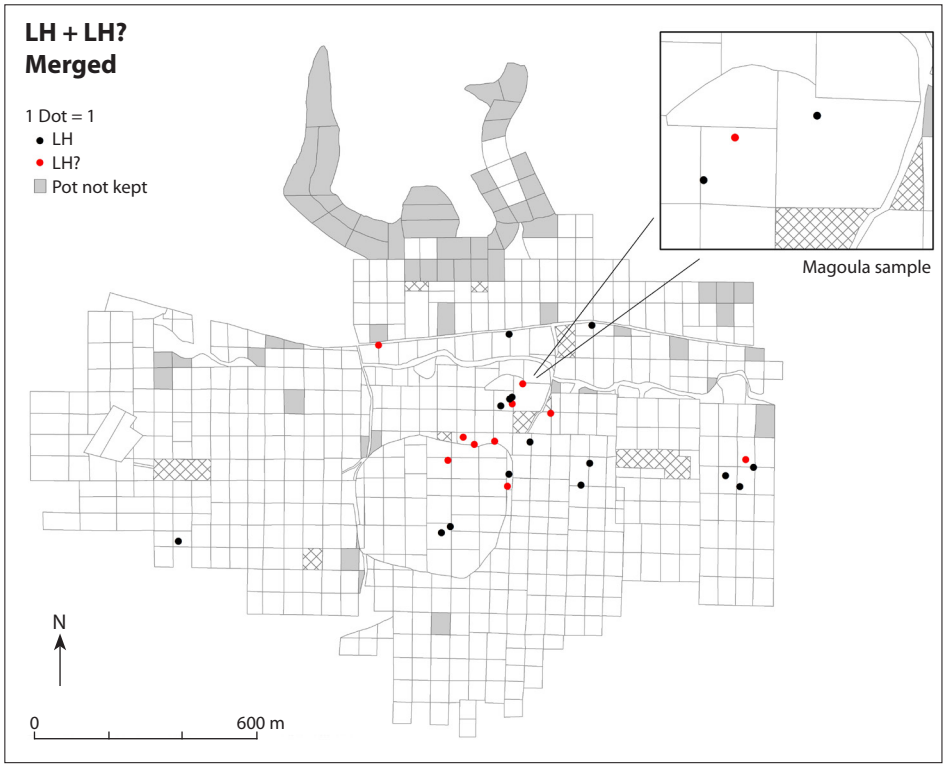


Figure 10.25. *Distribution map of Late Helladic sherds.*

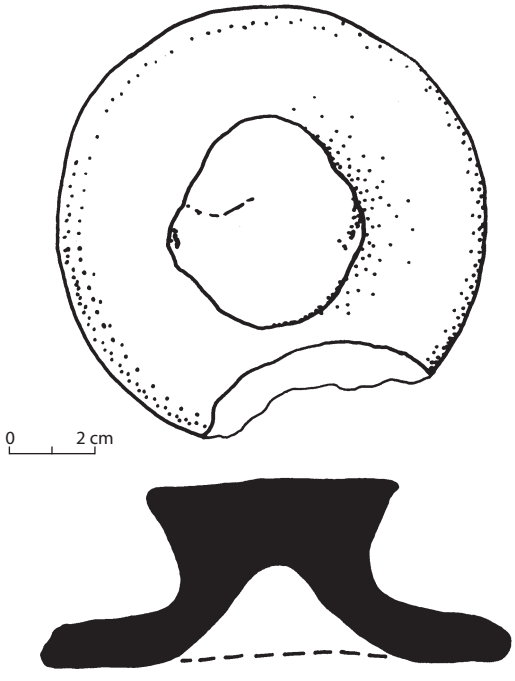


Figure 10.26. *Late Helladic goblet foot, from 85 TH Sa. 73.18.*

Some, however, were found much further away, a fragment of a kylix base in Sector 10, and a piece classified as LH IIIB or conceivably LH IIIC in Sector 7, while one of the best preserved pieces of a shape that would have been decorated, a LH IIIA mug, was actually found to the north-east of the Magoula, in Sector 8 (Transect 2074). Other finds, mostly on or near the Magoula, included an early LH bowl rim, two LH IIIA–B kylix fragments, and some painted, mostly banded, pieces that were certainly or probably LH III, one certainly from a fine closed shape. This rather scanty range of material seems sufficient to suggest continuity of occupation through most of the Mycenaean period, although clearly LH II material is lacking; the most notable feature is the occurrence of good quality painted pottery.

The fact that vases of good quality LH wares were available to and used by some families of the settlement is a strong indication that, as in MH, it was an established village. As with Grey Minyan, it cannot be asserted with certainty that the decorated LH pottery was made in the village; if it was, this would be another indication of its size and significance as a settlement. But while a case can be made for the existence of a subsidiary settlement represented by the Sector 8 concentration, perhaps covering the whole period from FN to

the end of MH, and possibly for others in part of the FN and EH periods, most of the MH and LH pieces found in places far from the Magoula seem more likely to be 'strays'. How they reached the places where they were found must be considered a matter for speculation – perhaps through the constant movement of soil caused by agricultural work, or as part of the matrix used to make mud-bricks, or with domestic refuse taken to the fields for manuring. Such finds do nevertheless fill out the rather scanty evidence from the Magoula itself, to suggest that there was a not very large but permanent settlement (perhaps comparable with Tsoungiza near Nemea?), in continuous occupation from some time in MH, if not earlier, until well into LH IIIA–B.

It would be unwise to draw any conclusions about when, or if, the site was abandoned in the closing stages of the Bronze Age; there is, quite simply, no evidence. This is not unexpected, since diagnostic types that belong exclusively to these final stages are confined to decorated wares that will only be found on the surface of minor sites through great good fortune. In fact, the period in which the survey evidence cannot shed any light on developments at Thespiai was to last from before the end of the Bronze Age until well into the Iron Age.

Notes

1 I would like to thank Anthony Snodgrass and John Bintliff for the opportunity to participate in the Boeotia Survey, and Kalliopi Sarri for her very helpful input into the identification of the pre-LH material.



Boeotia Project, Volume II: The city of Thespiai

Few major Classical cities have disappeared so completely from view, over the centuries, as Thespiai in Central Greece. Only the technique of intensive field survey, carefully adapted to a large urban site and reinforced by historical investigation, has made it possible to recover from oblivion much of its life of seven millennia.

Authors:

John Bintliff was Professor of Classical and Mediterranean Archaeology at Universiteit Leiden NL, and is now Honorary Professor in the Department of Archaeology at the University of Edinburgh.

Emeri Farinetti is a Faculty Member of the Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici, Università di Studi Roma Tre.

Božidar Slapšak is Professor in the Department of Archaeology, University of Ljubljana.

Anthony Snodgrass is Laurence Professor Emeritus of Classical Archaeology of the University of Cambridge.

Published by the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research,
University of Cambridge, Downing Street, Cambridge, CB2 3ER, UK.

The McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research exists to further research by Cambridge archaeologists and their collaborators into all aspects of the human past, across time and space. It supports archaeological fieldwork, archaeological science, material culture studies, and archaeological theory in an interdisciplinary framework. The Institute is committed to supporting new perspectives and ground-breaking research in archaeology and publishes peer-reviewed books of the highest quality across a range of subjects in the form of fieldwork monographs and thematic edited volumes.

Printed by Short Run Press. Distributed by Oxbow Books.
Cover design by Dora Kemp and Ben Plumridge.

ISBN-13: 978-1-902937-81-6

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

9 781902 937816