The prehistoric pottery reviewed in this section dates from the Final Neolithic period (only two sherds, C-PH 1–2) to one sherd, C-PH 8, which may possibly date to the late Middle Helladic or early Late Helladic period. 13 Early Helladic sherds attest to a certain degree of continuity during the Early Bronze Age, although all this material was recovered out of context. At the very least, Tegea can be added to a group of temple sites where much earlier activities can be documented.1

Turning to the finer details of the Early Helladic material, the frequency with which incisions were used to decorate the rims of open vessels is quite striking. The use of direct incision appears to be more common on EH I than EH II pottery, with the exception of askoi and handles, at least in the Peloponnese.2 However, at the site of Pevkakia in Thessaly, a similar predilection for decorative incision can be noted during late EH II.3 Furthermore, the ceramics from two Boeotian sites, Eutresis and Lithares, seem to feature rim incisions during both EH I and II.

C-PH 3–6 are assigned a more general date in EH I or II, as they did not have any preserved traits that would admit a more precise dating. The plain body sherd with multiple zigzag incisions C-PH 7 is highly unusual, at least outside of Arcadia. A fairly close parallel was recently found at the prehistoric site Kolonna on Aigina, but it was recovered from a non-stratigraphic context.4 We know from earlier research that Aigina was very influential during Early Helladic times as an “emporio”, or transmitter of new pottery styles from southwestern Anatolia and the Cyclades to the Peloponnese;3 this decorative motif of multiple zigzags likely originated in the Cyclades. A later type of incised decoration dating to EH III – the so-called fine incised and impressed decoration – always appears on a burnished surface.5 Incisions on so-called “Adriatic ware” are usually quite different in terms of both pattern and execution.6 Somewhat similar incisions to those on C-PH 7 are found on pieces from Prosymna and the Franchthi cave in Argolis, but the incisions are placed just beneath the rim, and the sherds are Late or Final Neolithic in date.

Four vessels can be dated to the EH II period (C-PH 9–12), on the assumption that C-PH 11–12 do indeed have plastic bands with overlapping incised discs.

The final phase of the Early Helladic period is represented by the three sherds C-PH 13–15. The body sherd of a large, wide-mouthed jar C-PH 14 is identical to examples found at Asea Paleokastro. Rutter states that this type of jar is “attested throughout EH III at Lerna although considerably more common after late phase 2 than previously”.7 C-PH 15, which may represent a narrow-necked jar, has a dark-on-light painted pattern that resembles Rutter’s cross-hatched rectangles on shoulders (pattern IXc).8 However, the pattern on our sherd is interrupted by vertical lines, unlike the examples found at Lerna.

Finally, the two most enigmatic sherds of the 16 presented here are C-PH 8 and 16. The neck of Rutter’s shape III.2 is much shorter than that of C-PH 16, and the smallest tankards found at Lerna are 3.6–3.8 cm in diameter, which is 8 mm larger than C-PH 16. The morphological differences are therefore notable. I believe, however, that the fabric and surface finish indicate that C-PH 16 falls into Rutter’s “Medium Coarse Unburnished” class.9 We had difficulty finding any parallels for the shallow bowl with a well-burnished, very pale brown surface and a large loop handle on the rim (C-PH 8). One potentially comparable piece is a bowl that Fossey found at Perachora,10

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1 In addition to the pottery, a few Early Helladic bronze pins found in the northern sector (BrN-P 1–4) support this conclusion. For the pins, see Tegea II, section IX (Voyatzis), 165 and 168.
2 Wiencke 2000, 620–1.
although this bowl is described as “smooth pink ware”. Phelps dates all three phases (X–Z) at Perachora to EH I.11 Dousougli equates late Early Helladic I with Perachora (X’–) Y–Z.12 The excavators – Fossey, and more recently Wiencke – date the majority of the material to late Early Helladic I, but some also to early EH II.13 The handle on C-PH 8 is also problematic, because handles on rims are particularly common during the Middle Helladic period. In Nordquist’s unpublished manuscript from Asine, she presents a broad-rimmed bowl that is similar to C-PH 8 in both fabric colour and shape, but it does not have a handle; moreover, it is matt-painted.14 Zerner writes that light yellow or buff surfaces became more popular at the end of the Middle Helladic and in the early Late Helladic, when they began to replace grey surfaces.15 The pottery is also burnished or polished. This is the “fine pottery” described by Zerner.16 Some probable Middle Helladic sherds were observed during the excavation, and have been reported from the following stratigraphical units: B1Sa/7; B1T/4, /17, /20; C1a/31, /61; C1d/20; D1/78. These sherds have not been catalogued. See section ii (Nordquist) for the relevant units.

### Catalogue: Neolithic and Early Helladic pottery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C-PH 1</th>
<th>Fig. 1; Pl. 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rim from a deep bowl, thickened towards the exterior; flat rim. Plain. Fabric: dark grey (10YR 4/1); secondary burning on exterior?). small to medium white inclusions. Preserved dimensions: 2.95 H × 2.4 W cm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inv. no. 5028. Location, F. no.: E1S/125-12 (bothros, Level B-5). Date: FN</td>
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<td>Parallels: Vitelli 1999, 74, fig. 54.1 (shape).</td>
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<th>C-PH 2</th>
<th>Fig. 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>Rim from a deep bowl. Part of hole drilled through the wall; lumpy rim. Incisions made by short nails on exterior edge of lip. Fabric: pink (5YR 7/4), small white and dark inclusions. Preserved dimensions: 3.5 H × 3.75 W cm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inv. no. 5069. Location, F. no.: E1S/127-24 (bothros, Level B-4). Date: FN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parallels: Vitelli 1999, 67, 78, figs 59.c–d, 62.b (and the index for references to drilled mending holes); K. Zachos, Ayios Dhimitrios, a prehistoric settlement in the southwestern Peloponnese: The Neolithic and Early Helladic periods (BAR-IS 1770), Oxford 2008, 29 no. 42/81, fig. 18.</td>
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<th>C-PH 3</th>
<th>Fig. 1; Pl. 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pithos or large bowl rim. In-sloping wall, rim thickened on exterior. Plain, undecorated except for vertical incised lines all along lip. Fabric: reddish yellow (7.5YR 7/6), numerous small, white inclusions and stones. Preserved dimensions: 1.9 H × 4.1 W cm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inv. no. 4510. Location, F. no.: B1Sc/4-5 (debris above Building 1). Date: EH I–II</td>
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<th>C-PH 4</th>
<th>Fig. 1</th>
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<td>Rim from an incurving bowl. Rim thickened towards the interior. Burnished exterior surface; flat lip has short incisions. Fabric: very pale brown (10YR 7/3), medium brown and white inclusions. Preserved dimensions: 3.2 L × 1.25 H × 1.5 W cm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inv. no. 4944. Location, F. no.: E1S/114-15 (bothros, Level B-2). Date: EH I–II</td>
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<td>Parallels: Pullen 1985, 154 no. 113 (shape of rim); Tzavella-Evjen 1985, 22 fig. 8, pl. 12.e.</td>
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<th>C-PH 5</th>
<th>Fig. 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>Rim from a shallow bowl, thickened towards the interior. Horizontal and vertical incisions on plain, flat lip. Fabric: light reddish brown (5YR 6/4), many grey and white inclusions. Preserved dimensions: 3.2 L × 1.25 H × 1.5 W cm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inv. no. 4995. Location, F. no.: E1S/120-8 (bothros, Level B-3). Date: EH I–II</td>
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<td>Parallels: Pullen 1985, 152 no. 76 (shape); Tzavella-Evjen 1985, 22 fig. 8.</td>
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<th>C-PH 6</th>
<th>Fig. 1</th>
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<td>Rim from a large incurving bowl, with rim thickened towards the interior. Plain, incised vertical and horizontal lines on flat lip. Fabric: light reddish brown (5YR 6/4), small to medium white inclusions. Preserved dimensions: 3.1 H × 2.1 W cm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inv. no. 5067. Location, F. no.: E1S/127-22 (bothros, Level B-4). Date: EH I–II</td>
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<td>Parallels: Pullen 1985, 155 no. 125 (shape).</td>
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Figure 1. Neolithic and Early Helladic sherds (C-PH 1–8). (Drawing: L. Kain)
Figure 2. Early Helladic sherd (C-PH 9–14). (Drawing: L. Kain)
C-PH 7

Body sherd, probably from a closed vessel. Large, stacked multiple zigzags incised on exterior. Plain, very coarse ware. Fabric: reddish yellow (5YR 7/6), many small and medium dark inclusions. Preserved dimensions: 3.6 H × 3.7 W cm.

Inv. no. 4557. Location, F. no.: BIT/20-1 (outside Building 2).
Date: EH I–II
Parallels: E.J. Holmberg, *The Swedish excavations at Asea in Arcadia (SkRRom 4°, 11)*, Lund and Leipzig 1944, 57–8, fig. 61;i; 81 fig. 83;i; 82–3, fig. 84.a; Felten and Hiller 1996, 61, pl. 13.1.

C-PH 8

Large loop handle set horizontally on rim of a shallow bowl. Burnished exterior and interior surface. Fabric: very pale brown (10YR 8/3), core pink (5YR 7/4), very smooth; small pieces of mica. Preserved dimensions: 10.4 L × 7.1 W cm.

Inv. no. 5029. Location, F. no.: E1S/125-13 (bothros, Level B-5).
Date: EH I or early II (or late MH? see discussion above).
Parallels: Fossey 1969, 66–7, fig. 6 (phase Z, bowl no. 2).

C-PH 9

Jug or jar handle from a vessel with diagonal slashing. Plain. Fabric: light red (2.5YR 7/6), medium-sized white and coarse inclusions. Preserved dimensions: 3.65 H × 1.6 W cm.

Inv. no. 5197. Location, F. no.: E1S/133-8 (bothros, Level B-8b).
Date: EH II early
Parallels: Dousougli 1987, 193 nos. 109–110, fig. 20; Wiencke 2000, 388 no. P455, fig. II.24; 620 (Lerna IIIIB).

C-PH 10

Rim from a small, incurving bowl. Incurving rim thickened and flattened lip bevelled towards the interior. Short incised lines around inner edge of lip. Plain. Fabric: reddish yellow (5YR 7/6), many small to medium dark inclusions. Preserved dimensions: 3.4 H × 2.4 W; D 15–16 cm.

Inv. no. 5068. Location, F. no.: E1S/127-23 (bothros, Level B-4).
Date: EH II
Parallels: Pullen 1985, 161 no. 229 (shape).

C-PH 11

Rim of open vessel bevelled towards the interior. Taenia on exterior with short vertical incisions; upper edge pinched like a pie crust. Plain fabric: light brown (10YR 6/3), large and medium white inclusions. Preserved dimensions: 1.5 H × 1.9 W cm.

Inv. no. 4969. Location, F. no.: E1S/116-18 (bothros, Level B-2).
Date: EH I or II
Parallels: Pullen 1985, 11–2, 15, 155 no. 119.

C-PH 12

Rim from a deep bowl with possible taenia band of overlapping discs to right. Hint of dark brown paint on exterior surface. Fabric: reddish yellow (5YR 7/6), many grey inclusions and pieces of mica. Preserved dimensions: 1.45 H × 2.2 W cm.

Inv. no. 4988. Location, F. no.: E1S/119-12 (bothros, Level B-3).
Date: EH II late

C-PH 13


Inv. no. 4942. Location, F. no.: E1S/114-13 (bothros, Level B-2).
Date: EH III
Parallels: Rutter 1995, 159 no. P703, fig. 43; 404–9 (probably shape XVII.1).

C-PH 14

Body sherd of a large, wide-mouthed jar. Burnished exterior surface. Fabric: reddish yellow (5YR 7/6), core light brownish grey (10 YR 6/2); medium to large, dark inclusions. Preserved dimensions: 12.6 H × 7.1 W; Th 1.0 cm.

Inv. no. 5045. Location, F. no.: E1S/126-17 (bothros, Level B-6).
Date: EH III2–3

C-PH 15

Shoulder of a narrow-necked jar. Dark on light pattern of cross-hatched rectangles on shoulder next to three vertical lines and below two horizontal lines. Fabric: light grey (2.5Y 7/2), a little porous. Preserved dimensions: 3.4 H × 3.75 W cm.

Inv. no. 5108. Location, F. no.: E1S/129-34 (bothros, Level B-7).
Date: EH III
Parallels: Felten and Hiller 1996, 58, pl. 12.3.

C-PH 16

Small shoulder-handled tankard (11 pieces, including neck and rim). Smoothed exterior surface; no decoration. Fabric: light grey (10YR 7/1), unevenly fired; many brown and white inclusions. Preserved dimensions: 3.0 H × 2.8 W; D 2.8 cm.

Inv. no. 4943. Location, F. no.: E1S/114-14 (bothros, Level B-2).
Date: EH III?
Parallels: Rutter 1995, 27; 226 no. P1143, fig. 94; 285 tab. S.96 (shape III.2, small).

Literature:


Plate 1. Neolithic and Early Helladic sherds.