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INAUGURATING THE COURT-CENTRED BUILDING? A MM IIIB FEASTING DEPOSIT AT NEOPALATIAL SISSI, NORTH-CENTRAL CRETE

Ilaria Caloi

Summary

Recent excavations undertaken at Sissi, North-Central Crete, by the Belgian School at Athens uncovered parts of a court-centred building, whose function has been interpreted as largely ceremonial. In the east wing of this building, a Neopalatial deposit was found, comprising 176 entire and fragmentary objects. This deposit is very significant for two reasons. First, it is a closed and structured deposit assigned to the Middle Minoan IIIB phase, and hence its chronology is important in reconstructing both the local and North-Central Crete ceramic sequences. Second, the stratigraphic position of the deposit and the composition of the assemblage, including a high number of conical cups, two imports and ritual equipment, suggest that it is the result of ceremonial consumption. The pottery analysis has allowed to interpret it as a feasting deposit, resulting from a communal ceremonial event. In this paper, first the ceramic material of the deposit is presented, then the chronology and the function/s of the deposit are discussed. I will argue that the deposit constitutes a terminus ad quem for the construction date of the east wing of the court-centred building at Neopalatial Sissi.

INTRODUCTION

Recent excavations (2007-2011, 2015-2018) undertaken at Sissi, North-Central Crete, by the Belgian School at Athens uncovered parts of a court-centred building. Located on the south-east summit of the Kephali hill (Figs. 1-2), the complex, under excavation since 2015, includes a central court (max width 15,60 m; max length 33,50 m) of which the floor is made of plaster and pebbles, and is bordered by ashlar facades on the east and west sides. The variety of ritual features observed allows an interpretation of the function of the building as largely ceremonial (Driessen 2016; 2018a). In the east wing of this building, a Neopalatial deposit was found (Jusseret 2011; 2012), comprising 176 entire and fragmentary objects. This deposit is highly significant for two reasons. First, it is a closed and structured deposit assigned to the Middle Minoan (MM) IIIB phase, and hence its chronology is important in reconstructing both the local and North-Central Crete ceramic sequences. Second, the stratigraphic position of the deposit and the composition of the assemblage, comprising a high number of conical cups, two imports and ritual equipment, suggest that it is the result of ceremonial consumption. The pottery study conducted between 2013 and 2015 has allowed to propose an interpretation as a feasting deposit, resulting from a communal ceremonial event, which was probably held on the nearby central court. In this paper, first the ceramic material of the deposit is presented and then the chronology and the meaning of the deposit are discussed. I will argue that the deposit constitutes a terminus ad quem for the foundation date of the east wing of the court-centred building at Neopalatial Sissi.

THE CONTEXT: THE NEOPALATIAL F30 DEPOSIT OF BUILDING F

From 2008, the south-east summit of the Kephali hill, also known as Zone 6, has been under excavation.¹ This revealed architectural remains labelled Building F (Fig. 2) comprising considerable reoccupation in Late Minoan

¹ Zone 6 or Building F was originally excavated under the supervision of Simon Jusseret (2008-2011). During the 2nd five-year programme, the entire area is explored under the direction of Simon Jusseret (2015), Sylviane Déderix (2015), Maud Devolder (2015-2016, 2018), Thérèse Claeys (2016), Ophélie Mouthuy (2016-2017), Théo Terrana (2017) and Emilie Hayter (2017).



Fig. 1. Map of Crete with indication of Sissi and other Minoan sites mentioned in the text.



Fig. 2. Aerial photo of the Sissi settlement with location of the Neopalatial court-centred building and of Building F (©EBSA; photo: N. Kress).

non-ceramic material includes two stone tools (11-06-2149-OB015 and 11-06-2183-OB006), a few animal bones and shells.

The deposit includes both intact and fragmentary ceramic material (Figs. 5-6). The only vases found intact are handleless conical cups (henceforth conical cups), some of which were found in stacks (Fig. 5). Other vases were partially or entirely reconstructed from joining fragments coming from different layers in the deposit, which

(LM) IIIB, which has obliterated considerable parts of earlier structures and deposits. Localised soundings produced evidence of a Neopalatial occupation phase of the building, however (Jusseret 2012, 136-138). Continued excavation during 2015-2017 clarified that Building F originally formed the east wing of a larger complex, organised around a court. During the Neopalatial period, this east wing would have been accessible from a wide doorway next to which a large *kernos* is situated on the court (Jusseret 2012, 144, fig. 6.11; 148, fig. 6.18; see Fig. 3a).

During cleaning operations along the south-east angle of Building F in 2011, the removal of the topsoil brought to light an extensive Neopalatial pottery deposit accommodated against wall F30 (Figs. 3a-b, 4), after which the deposit was named (Jusseret 2012, 137). The upper course of an earlier wall (*i.e.* wall F52; Fig. 3b) was apparently modified in order to place the deposit in a box-like structure, against a major wall of the Neopalatial building (Fig. 3a-b). Plaster fragments found mixed with the vases may imply that the deposit was originally kept within an above-ground plastered bench.

The stratigraphical units that produced the material from F30 deposit were: 11-06-2134, -2138, -2149, -2181, -2183, -2193, -4004. Most of the material is ceramic, while

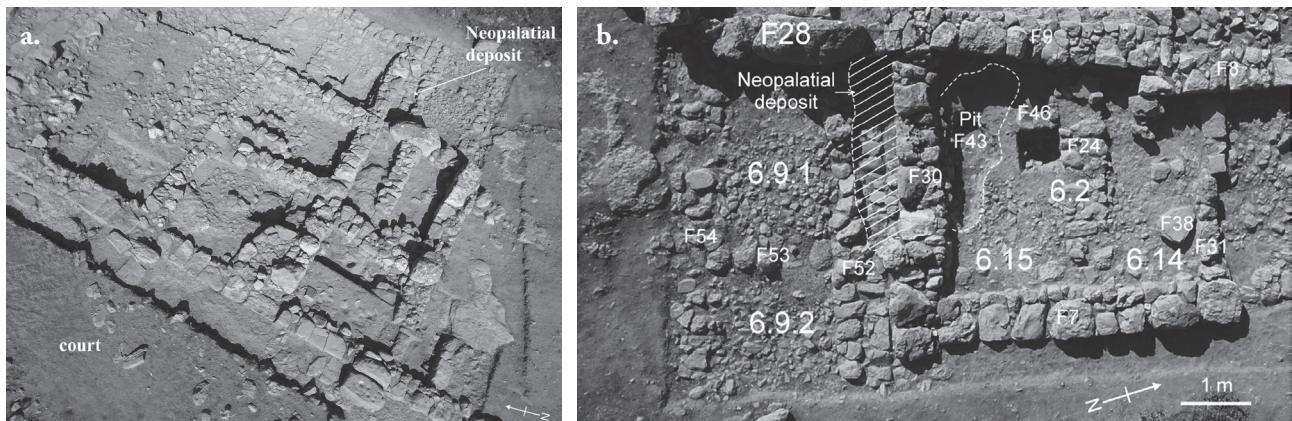


Fig. 3a-b. Aerial photos showing Building F (©EBSA; a: photo C. Gaston; b: after Jussieret 2012, 137, fig. 6.2, courtesy S. Jussieret) with location of the F30 Neopalatial deposit.

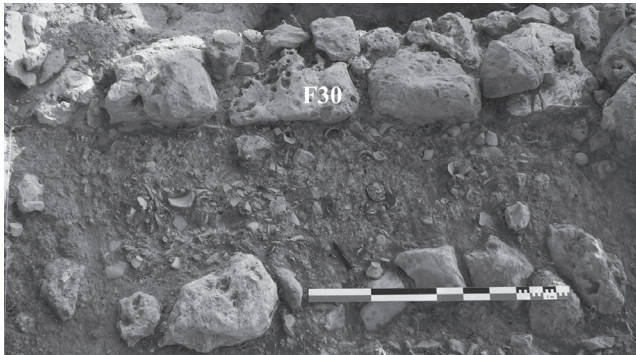


Fig. 4. View of the F30 deposit accommodated against wall F30 of Building F (©EBSA; photo S. Jussieret).

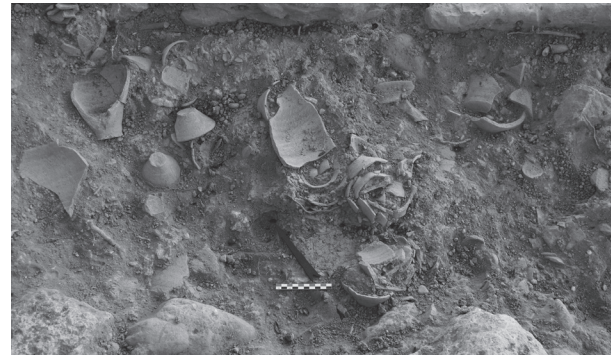


Fig. 5. View of the F30 deposit, showing fragmentary pouring vessels and stacked conical cups (©EBSA; photo S. Jussieret).

suggests that the assemblage is best interpreted as a secondary fill, deposited as a single event. The deposit is closed and structured, for which I mean that it includes entire and fragmentary objects deliberately deposited in a horizontal way or in stacks. The good conditions of its pottery, which is neither worn nor eroded, rule out the possibility that the deposit has been exposed or disturbed after its deposition. Most of the broken vases, however, are not entirely mendable and are recomposed of small fragments (of which some show also incrustated cross-sections), implying that they could have been deliberately broken and then deposited as fragmentary vessels or as pieces.

The total number of diagnostic ceramic objects is 176. 134 objects have been catalogued, while 42 bases of conical cups have not been included in the catalogue. Most vessels are drinking vases (156), but there are also five bowls (one deep and four conical), three basins (*lekane*s), four pouring vessels, four cooking pots, and one lamp. Ritual vessels include a *rhyton*, a miniature vase, and part of a clay figurine which represents a snake. The three



Fig. 6. View of the F30 deposit, showing intact and reconstructable conical cups (©EBSA; photo S. Jussieret).

*lekane*s, however, have deliberately cut bases and could also have been used for ritual purposes. A small applique in the shape of a spiral was also found, but not catalogued (from unit 11-06-2138). The deposit also comprised a few Protopalatial sherds (likely MM IIB) but these probably belong to the Protopalatial structures that have been identified beneath Building F (Jusseret 2012).²

THE WARE GROUPS OF NEOPALATIAL DEPOSIT F30

Fabrics, surface treatments and slips, as well as decoration patterns (if present) can differentiate the ware groups of the F30 deposit, which, in general, agrees with a local sphere of production, with fabrics that mirror those attested in other Neopalatial deposits at Sissi or at nearby Malia (Langohr *et al.* 2018; Alberti *et al.* forthcoming; see also Liard 2012). Only two imports can be identified: *rhyton* no. 1 and pouring vessel no. 15 (see *infra*). Most other vessels in the deposit are produced in two local fabrics: the first one is light-coloured soft-sandy, porous, and fine to semifine, while the second one is soft, fine to semi-coarse, with the colour ranging from pinkish-orange to red. The latter is the most frequent, used both for Fine/Semifine Dark-on-Light and Monochrome wares, and for Semifine/Semi-coarse Plain Wares, included the Cooking Ware. The represented ware groups of the deposit are the following: the Fine Dark-on-Light Lustrous Ware, the Fine/Semifine Dark-on-Light Ware, the Monochrome Ware, the Semifine Plain Ware, the Semi-coarse Plain Ware and the Cooking Ware.

Fine Dark-on-Light Lustrous Ware

The Fine Dark-on-light Lustrous Ware in the deposit is only represented by an almost entirely reconstructed *rhyton* (no. 1, Fig. 7) produced in a fine pinkish fabric, which does not appear local. It could be a Knossian import.³ It has a globular profile, a short neck with two ridges at its base and a flaring mouth. Its surface has a lustrous finish, with a glossy sheen. It is decorated in brownish-red paint. The neck is solid painted on the exterior, while has a large band on the rim interior. On the shoulder is a zone of tangent spirals with central blob tied with two crossing lines, while the lower part is decorated with a tortoise-shell ripple whose upper limit is defined by three horizontal bands.

The best comparison, both for shape and decorative pattern, comes from Bastion E of the Malia palace (Chapoutier, Demargne 1942, 41-42, fig. 18, pl. XLVIII, 2). The globular *rhyton* is similar in shape also to one example from Gournia (Koehl 2006, 98, no. 170, fig. 8), which has been dated to LM IA (see Koehl 2006, 98 with bibliography). Despite being more typical of LM IA, the ripple and spiral decoration visible on the globular *rhyton* is already attested on a fragmentary vase (a bridge-spouted jar?) from a MM III floor deposit found in Building Epsilon 3 (Room B) at Zakros (Platon, Gerontakou 2013, 210-211, fig. 18.34).

1. (11-06-2183-OB022 and 11-06-2149-OB025). *Rhyton* (fig. 7).

Almost entirely preserved, rec. from many frs (also from units 11-06-2134, -2193). H. 14,7; rim diam. 6,3; max diam. 14; base diam. 5,6.

Globular profile with a flat bottom with a hole on the side; lustrous finish, decorated in brownish-red paint; low neck with two ridges at its base, flaring mouth and thick, bevelled rim, solid painted on the exterior, decorated on the rim interior with a brownish-red band; shoulder decorated with one zone of five tangent spirals with central blob, connected each other with two crossing lines; below the spirals three horizontal bands and a tortoise-shell ripple decoration; the bottom is decorated with a circular band. Fine pinkish fabric.

2 Among the Protopalatial sherds are two bases of cups with black dripping on the interior and a black monochrome surface outside (11-06-2138-OB005 and -OB007) and two black-painted fragments belonging respectively to a spouted jar and a jug (sherds found in unit 11-06-2138). Also some small fragments belonging to cups and conical cups come from unit 11-06-2145.

3 I want to thank Iro Mathioudaki for this information.



Fig. 7. Lustrous Fine Dark-on-Light Ware *rhyton* no. 1 from the F30 deposit (©EBSA; photos: C. Papanikolopoulos; drawing: H. Joris).

Fine and Semifine Dark-on-Light Ware

The Dark-on-Light Ware is found in light-coloured fine fabric and in red or light-red semifine fabric. The latter includes two bell-shaped examples – one handleless cup and one one-handed cup – and a ledge-rim bowl, while the Fine Dark-on-Light Ware is only represented by a fragmentary S-profile cup (Fig. 8). The colour of the decoration ranges from orange to brown or black.

The bell-shaped handleless cup no. 2 (Fig. 8) is decorated in orange with a thick ripple, descending from a rim band. It finds its best comparison in a fragmentary bowl from Baulk II - Level A3δ (Rethemiotakis, Warren 2014, pl. 10a) of the Vlachakis plot at Knossos, which has been dated to Transitional MM IIIB/LM IA (Rethemiotakis, Warren 2014, 74). Bell-shaped handleless cups with similar decoration are also found in the MM IIIB-LM IA deposit from the North House at Knossos (Warren 1991, 328, fig. 10k).

The ledge-rim bowl no. 3 (Fig. 8) is decorated in brownish-orange paint with a ripple motif, limited by two horizontal bands, one on the rim and one across the base. The shape of the ledge-rim bowl finds a counterpart at Sissi, in a MM IIIB deposit from the open area in Zone 5, on the hilltop of the Sissi plateau (*i.e.* Context 5.16c: Langohr *et al.* 2018, 308, fig. 6.2.4 l). The best parallels, however, come from Knossos (*e.g.* the MM IIIB KS178 Group: Hatzaki 2007, 166, fig. 5.6, 1) and Alonaki, Juktas (Karetsou 2013, 83, fig. 7.21, #24). A good comparison is also provided by the Transitional MM IIIB/LM IA level (Baulk II - Level A3ε) of the Vlachakis plot, Knossos (Rethemiotakis, Warren 2014, 23, fig. 3.4, pl. 11b, 74).

The bell-shaped one-handed cup no. 4 (Fig. 8) is decorated with brown trickles and splashes. A similar example is seen at Sissi, in the MM IIIB deposit found against the megalithic wall at the foot of the hill in Zone 7 (Langohr *et al.* 2018, 310, fig. 6.2.6 g). Good parallels come from a number of MM III deposits from various North-Central Crete sites: the MM IIIB KS178 Group at Knossos (Hatzaki 2007, 166, fig. 5.6, 3; see also Popham 1984, pl. 141, 15-16), the MM IIIB deposits of Galatas (Rethemiotakis, Christakis 2013, 101, fig. 8.11 left), and the MM III levels at Alonaki, Juktas (Karetsou 2013, 86, fig. 7.26, # 588, 766). The MM IIIB floor deposit (Deposit 10A) in Room LXXIII of the Houses South of the palace at Phaistos (Girella 2010, 85, pl. XVII, F. 2702a, F. 2707) has also provided comparanda.

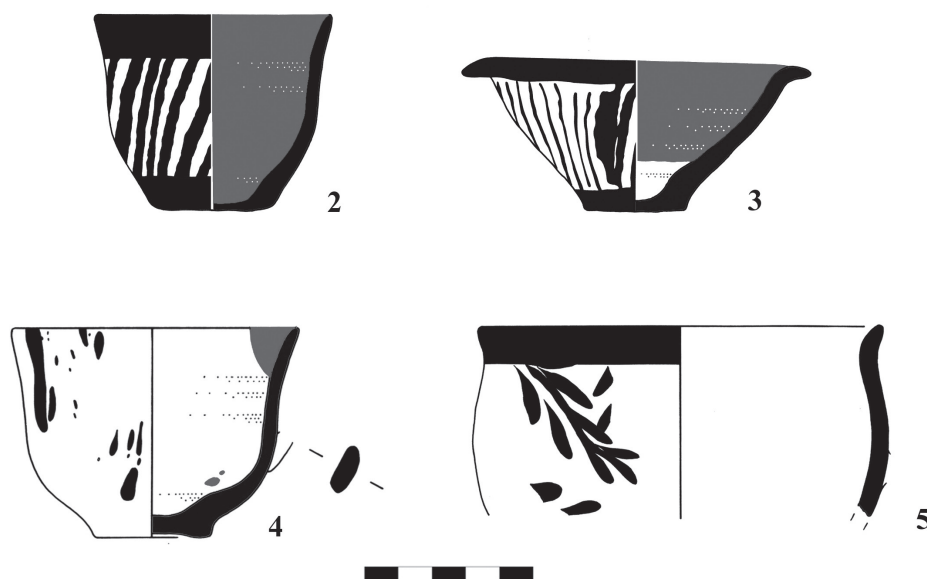


Fig. 8. Fine and Semifine Dark-on-on-Light Ware from the F30 deposit: the bell-shaped handleless cup no. 2, the ledge-rim bowl no. 3, the bell-shaped cup no. 4, and the S-profile cup no. 5 (©EBSA; drawings: H. Joris).

The Fine Dark-on Light-Ware is only represented by a single S-profile cup with flaring rim (no. 5, Fig. 8), which is preserved in fragments. It is decorated with one schematic branch running diagonally on the body; more, differently directed branches should have decorated the cup. Its shape mirrors that of the S-profile cups of the MM IIIB deposit (in Pit 1) of Room 19 in *Quartier Pi*, at Malia (Alberti *et al.* forthcoming). The best comparison for its decoration comes from the “leaf sprays” painted on the shoulder of a barrel-shaped jug found in the MM IIIB-LM IA deposit from the North House at Knossos (Warren 1991, 322-323, 325, fig. 6A). The diagonal branch of the cup n. 5 also reminds that depicted on the interior walls of two straight-sided cups coming from two LM IA contexts respectively of Palaikastro (Building 6, B2/R2 deposit: Knappett, Cunningham 2003, 162, 166, fig. 43, 406) and Zakros (Zakros Pits: Dawkins 1903, 251, fig. 14).

Bell-shaped handleless cups

2. (11-06-2138-OB003) Bell-shaped handleless cup (Fig. 8).

1/3 preserved, rec. from three frs. H. 5,7; rim diam. 7; base diam. 3,5.

Bell-shaped profile with walls flaring to the rim; decorated with an orange band below the rim and across the base, in between a thick ripple motif. Light-red semifine fabric.

Ledge-rim bowls

3. (11-06-2138-OB002) Ledge-rim bowl (Fig. 8).

1/4 preserved. H. 4,3; rim diam. rec. 9,6-10; base diam. 3.

Ledge-rim bowl decorated in orange/brownish-orange with ripple decoration, limited by two bands: one on the rim and below it outside, and one above the base; brownish-orange painted bottom exterior; orange painted interior. Light-red semifine fabric.

Bell-shaped cups

4. (11-06-2183-OB009) Bell-shaped cup (Fig. 8).

2/3 preserved, rec. from three frs. H. 6,1; rim diam. 8,5; base diam. 3,6.

Squat bell-shaped profile on a raised base with walls slightly flaring to the rim; brown trickles and splashes on the exterior wall; handle attachment above the max rim diameter. Red semifine fabric.

S-profile cups

5. (11-06-2138-OB006) S-profile cup (Fig. 8).

Two non-joining frs. preserved: rim fr. and body fr. with handle attachment. H. max 5; rim. diam. rec. 11,2.

S-profile with flaring rim; rim exterior decorated with a black band; one black branch runs diagonally from the rim band; other possible branches. Light-coloured fine fabric.

Monochrome Ware

The Monochrome Ware of the F30 deposit is found in soft, fine to semifine fabric, with a colour ranging from pinkish-orange to light-brown or from light-red to red. It is represented by seven fragmentary vessels: two one-handled cups with tall and convex profile (nos. **6-7**), a straight-sided cup (no. **8**), a carinated cup (no. **9**), a conical cup (no. **10**), a deep bowl (no. **11**) and a miniature collared jar (no. **12**) (Fig. 9).

The closest parallels for the two tall convex cups (nos. **6-7**, Fig. 9) are found at Sissi itself and at Malia. The MM III fill found in Room 10.6 of the West Wing of the court-centred complex at Sissi has revealed a similar specimen (Langohr *et al.* 2018, 311, fig. 6.2.7 b). Comparanda from Malia are seen in the MM IIIB deposit from Pit 1 of Room 19 in *Quartier Pi* (Alberti *et al.* forthcoming); in particular, no. **6**, with its slightly incurving rim (fig. 9), is similar to the specimen 1.018.062, whereas the profile of no. **7** (Fig. 9), which is taller and bigger, recalls the example 4029.15 (Alberti *et al.* forthcoming). A comparable example is found also in the MM IIIB Context 6.2 from Block M at Palaikastro (Knappett, Cunningham 2012, 159-160, fig. 5.20, 359).

The straight-sided cup no. **8** (fig. 9) with flaring walls and thin rim finds its best comparisons at Sissi itself, in the MM IIIB deposit of the megalithic wall in Zone 7 (*e.g.* the unpublished example 09-07-3021-OB008; for the deposit see Jusseret 2011, 173-177 and Langohr *et al.* 2018, 310), as well as in the MM III deposits of Alonaki, Juktas (Karetso 2013, 84, no. 345, fig. 7.25). Examples with similar profiles are also found at Palaikastro, in the B6 R1/3 deposit from Building 6 dated to MM IIIB (Knappett, Cunningham 2003, 125, fig. 12, 120).

The carinated cup no. **9** with rounded carination (Fig. 9) finds its closest parallel in the abovementioned MM IIIB deposit in Zone 5 at Sissi (*i.e.* Context 5.16c: Langohr *et al.* 2018, 308, fig. 6.2.4 a). Comparanda are also found in MM IIIB deposits at Phaistos (*e.g.* Deposit 10a: Girella 2010, pl. XVII, no number).

The painted conical cup no. **10** has a conical profile and straight walls. Its shape does not fit perfectly in one of the three groups of undecorated conical cups identified in the deposit (see Table 1), but it could be a smaller version of type 2a (see for example no. **82**, Fig. 14).

The deep bowl no. **11** shows flaring walls and thin rim. It generally mirrors examples found in the MM IIIB KS178 Group (*e.g.* Hatzaki 2007, 168, fig. 5.7, 1) and in the MM IIIA level in S.VII 4 from the Southwest Houses (Macdonald 2013, 217, fig. 2.6, 1983) at Knossos.

The form of the miniature collared jar no. **12** (Fig. 9) recalls the bridge-spouted jars with a raised rim attested in Eastern Crete in MM IIIB (see examples from Context 8.5 of Block M at Palaikastro: Knappett, Cunningham 2013, 165, fig. 5.25, 449 and 451).

Tall convex one-handled cups

6. (11-06-4004-OB002). Tall convex cup (Fig. 9).

Large fr. with handle, rec. from two frs. H. max 5,6; rim diam. rec. 8,2.

Tall and convex profile with walls incurving inwards to the rim; black-painted inside and outside. Light-coloured fine fabric.

7. (11-06-2181-OB022). Tall convex cup (Fig. 9).

$\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from four frs. H. 8; rim diam. rec. 9,5; base diam. 4,2.

Tall and convex profile with thin rim; red-painted inside and outside. Pinkish-orange semifine fabric.

Straight-sided cups

8. (11-06-2183-OB028). Straight-sided cup (Fig. 9).

$\frac{1}{4}$ preserved, rec. from two frs. H. 6,9; rim diam. rec. 9; base diam. 5,2.

Straight-sided profile with walls flaring to the rim; strap handle; black-painted inside and outside. Light-brown fine fabric.



Fig. 9. Monochrome Ware from the F30 deposit: the deep bowl no. 11, the tall, convex cups nos. 6-7, the straight-sided cup no. 8, the carinated cup no. 9, the conical cup no. 10, and the miniature collared jar no. 12 (©EBSA; photos: C. Papanikolopoulos; drawings: H. Joris).

Carinated cups

9. (11-06-4004-OB003). Carinated cup (Fig. 9).

$\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from many frs.

H. 6; rim diam. 8,4; base diam. 3,8.

Carinated profile with rounded carination on a slightly raised base; black-painted inside and outside. Pinkish-orange fine fabric.

Conical cups

10. (11-06-2149-OB005). Conical cup (Fig. 9).

$\frac{3}{4}$ preserved, rec. from four frs. H. 4,4; rim diam. 8,7; base diam. 3,4.

Conical profile with regular and straight walls on a regular base; red/black-painted inside and outside. Pinkish-orange semifine fabric, with big white and gray inclusions.

Deep bowls

11. (11-06-2149-OB032). Deep bowl (Fig. 9).

Large fr. of rim, rec. from four frs. H. max 9,2; rim diam. rec. 16.

Conical profile with straight walls slightly flaring to the rim; red-painted inside and outside; strong rilling on the interior. Red semifine fabric.

Miniature vases

12. (11-06-2193-OB027). Miniature vase (Fig. 9).

Rim and shoulder with one handle attachment, rec. from two frs. H. max 3,2; rim diam. rec. 4,5.

Collared jar with ovoidal profile; traces of red paint outside and on the interior rim, no more readable. Light-brown fine fabric.

Semifine Plain Ware

With 158 pieces out of 175, most of the vases from the deposit are in Semifine Plain Ware. This ware includes vases produced in light-coloured and in orange/red semifine fabric. Included in this group is also a pouring vessel in Semifine Plain Ware (no. **15**, Fig. 10), which is, however, produced in an odd fabric that is surely non-local.

The Semifine Plain Ware is mainly represented by conical cups (98 catalogued, plus 42 non catalogued), but also includes four pouring vessels (three jugs and one open-spouted jar; nos. **13-16**, Fig. 10), 12 bowls of different size, shape and function (nos. **17-28**, Fig. 11), one basin or *lekane* (no. **29**, Fig. 17), and one lamp (no. **30**, Fig. 11). Before dealing with the numerous conical cups of the deposit, I focus on the other shapes in this ware.

Two jugs (nos. **13-14**, Fig. 10) have a piriform and elongated profile; the first finds comparisons in the MM IIIB KS178 Group of Knossos (Hatzaki 2007, 169, fig. 5.8, 4), in the MM III levels at Alonaki, Juktas (Karetsou 2013, 81, Fig. 7.18), as well as in the MM IIIB Deposit 10A from Phaistos (Girella 2010, 86, F 2816, pl. XIX). The second one is more fragmentary and shows the handle attachment at mid height of the vase.

The third pouring vessel is a handleless jug with narrow, cylindrical neck and flaring mouth (no. **15**, Fig. 10) produced in yellowish semifine clay, with very small inclusions, including also mica. Petrographic analyses are not available yet, but the jug is produced in a non-local fabric.

The F30 deposit has revealed a large fragment of an open-spouted jar (or bowl?) (no. **16**, Fig. 10) that finds good parallels in spouted bowls from the MM IIIB Deposit 10A at Phaistos (*e.g.* Girella 2010, 85, F. 2708, pl. XVII).

Concerning the 12 bowls, four are conical bowls (nos. **17-20**, Fig. 11). The first example (no. **17**), preserving the upper part, has a flaring and thick rim. It finds close parallels in examples from MM IIIB deposits of Ayia Triada (*e.g.* Girella 2010, no. 89, pl. LXV). Conical bowls no. **18** and no. **19** present a regular conical profile and thick walls. The example no. **20** reminds no. **17**, but has irregular walls with strong rilling marks. Among the other eight smaller examples, there are three ledge-rim bowls (two certain and one uncertain: nos. **21-23**, Fig. 11) and five hemispherical bowls (nos. **24-28**, Fig. 11). The first ledge-rim bowl (no. **21**) has convex walls and is very much like those coming from the MM IIIB deposits respectively from Zone 7 at Sissi (Langohr *et al.* 2018, 310, fig. 6.2.6 f) and from Knossos (Hatzaki 2007, 166, fig. 5.6, 2). Also the MM IIIB “Special Deposit” found in Room 48 on the Central Hillside at Kommos (Betancourt 2013, 147, fig. 12.2, C4437) has provided a good parallel. The second one (no. **22**), consisting only of a large fragment, has an everted and bevelled rim, which does not find easy comparisons. The third could be a ledge-rim bowl too, but preserves only the lower part (no. **23**).

The hemispherical bowls of the deposit are large and tall (h. 6,4-6,9 cm; nos. **24-28**, Fig. 11). Despite having more convex walls than the Knossian examples, they remind both the hemispherical bowls of the MM IIIB KS178 Group (here called ogival bowls: Hatzaki 2007, 166, fig. 5.6, 10; see also Popham 1984, pl. 144, 21) and the rounded bowls found in Baulk II – Level A3δ of the Vlachakis plot (*e.g.* Rethemiotakis, Warren 2015, 21-22, fig. 3.3, 56), which are dated to Transitional MM IIIB/LM IA. In North-Central Crete they are seen in the MM IIIB deposits of Galatas (Rethemiotakis, Christakis 2013, 101, fig. 8.11) and at Alonaki, Juktas (Karetsou, Mathioudaki 2012, 92, 95, fig. 17), while in Southern Crete comparanda exist in the MM IIIB deposits at Phaistos (here called conical cups; see Deposit 10A in Girella 2010, 84-85, pl. XVII, s.n., F. 2831a, F. 2713) and in the MM IIIB “Special Deposit” of Room 48 at Kommos as well (Betancourt 2013, 147, fig. 12.2, C4435).

The basin or *lekane* no. **29** – illustrated in Fig. 17, together with the other semi-coarse *lekane*s of the deposit – preserves only the lower part, which has been reconstructed from several fragments. Its interest is in the fact that its bottom has been deliberately cut, but the cut-out fragment was not deposited together with the rest of the vase.

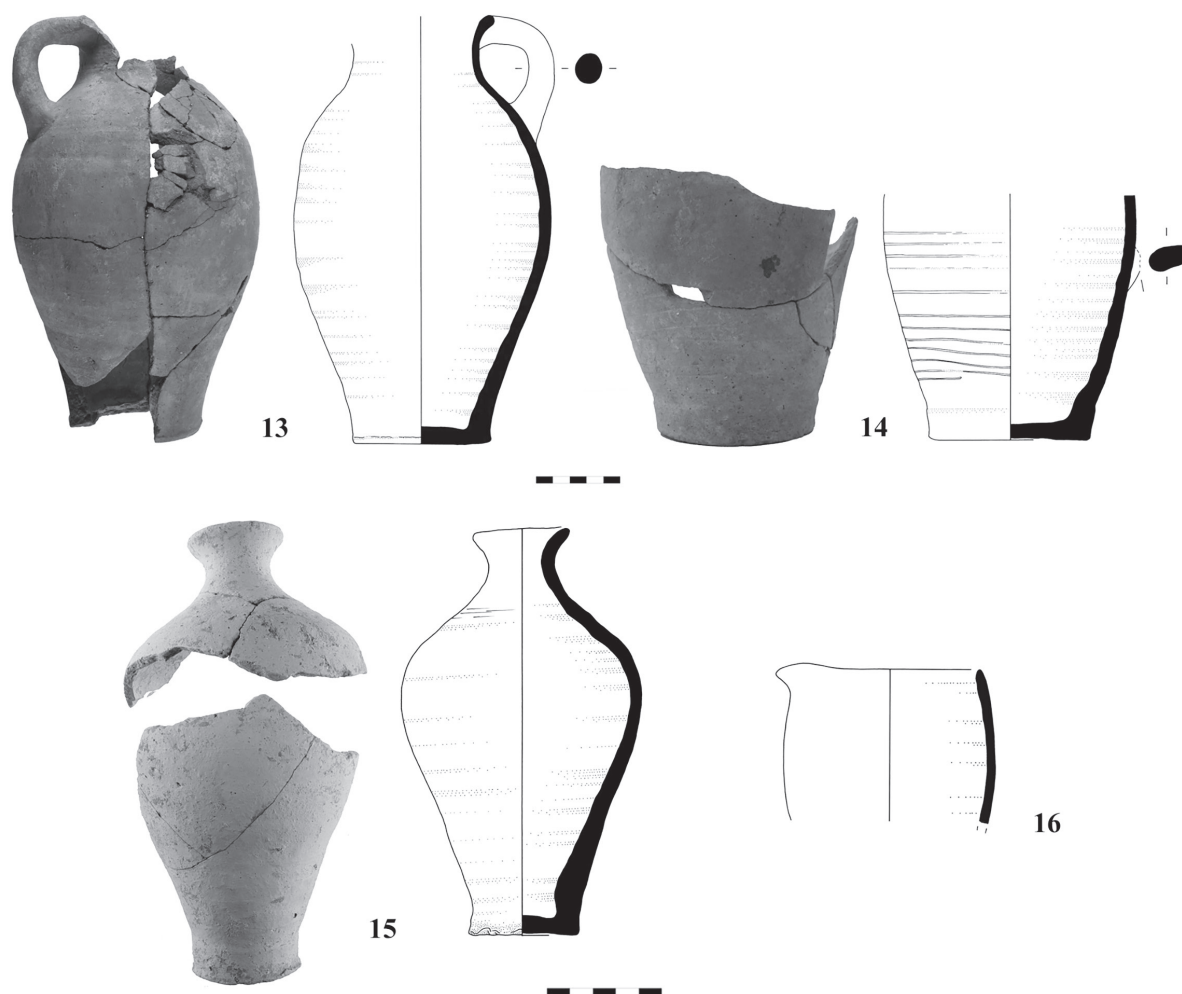


Fig. 10. Pouring vessels in Semifine Plain Ware from the F30 deposit: the jugs nos. 13-15, and the spouted jar no. 16 (©EBSA; photos: C. Papanikolopoulos; drawings: H. Joris).

Jugs

13. (11-06-2149-OB020). Jug (Fig. 10).

Rec. from ten frs (also from unit 11-06-2181). H. 27,3; base diam. 9,6; max diam. 16,3.

Piriform profile; strong rilling marks on the interior walls. Light-red semifine fabric, with gray and white inclusions.

14. (11-06-2183-OB008). Jug (Fig. 10).

½ preserved, rec. from four frs; handle attachment preserved. H. max 15,7; base diam. 10,2; max diam. 16.

Piriform profile on a large base; strong rilling marks on the interior walls. Pinkish-orange semifine fabric, with gray and white inclusions.

15. (11-06-2183-OB004). Jug (Fig. 10).

¾ preserved, rec. from seven frs. H. rec. 21; rim diam. 5; base diam. 5,8; max diam. 12,5.

Piriform profile with narrow, cylindrical neck terminating with flaring mouth; rilling on the interior and exterior. Light-coloured, semifine fabric with small and medium, gray and red inclusions; mica.

Open-spouted jars (or bowls?)

16. (11-06-2149-OB024). Open-spouted jar (or bowl?) (Fig. 10).

Large rim sherd with spout, rec. from ten frs (also from 11-06-2183, -4004). H. max 6,8; rim diam. 9.
Ovoidal profil with a spout on the rim; oval mouth. Pinkish-orange semifine fabric.

Conical bowls

17. (11-06-2149-OB030). Conical bowl (Fig. 11).

Rim, rec. from three frs. H. max 5,6; rim d. 17,4.

Conical profile with straight and thick walls flaring to the rim; strong rilling on the exterior and interior. Red semifine fabric.

18. (11-06-2145-OB007). Conical bowl (Fig. 11).

Base and wall preserved. H. max 7,8; base diam. 6,8.

Conical profile with thick walls on a raised base. Red semifine fabric.

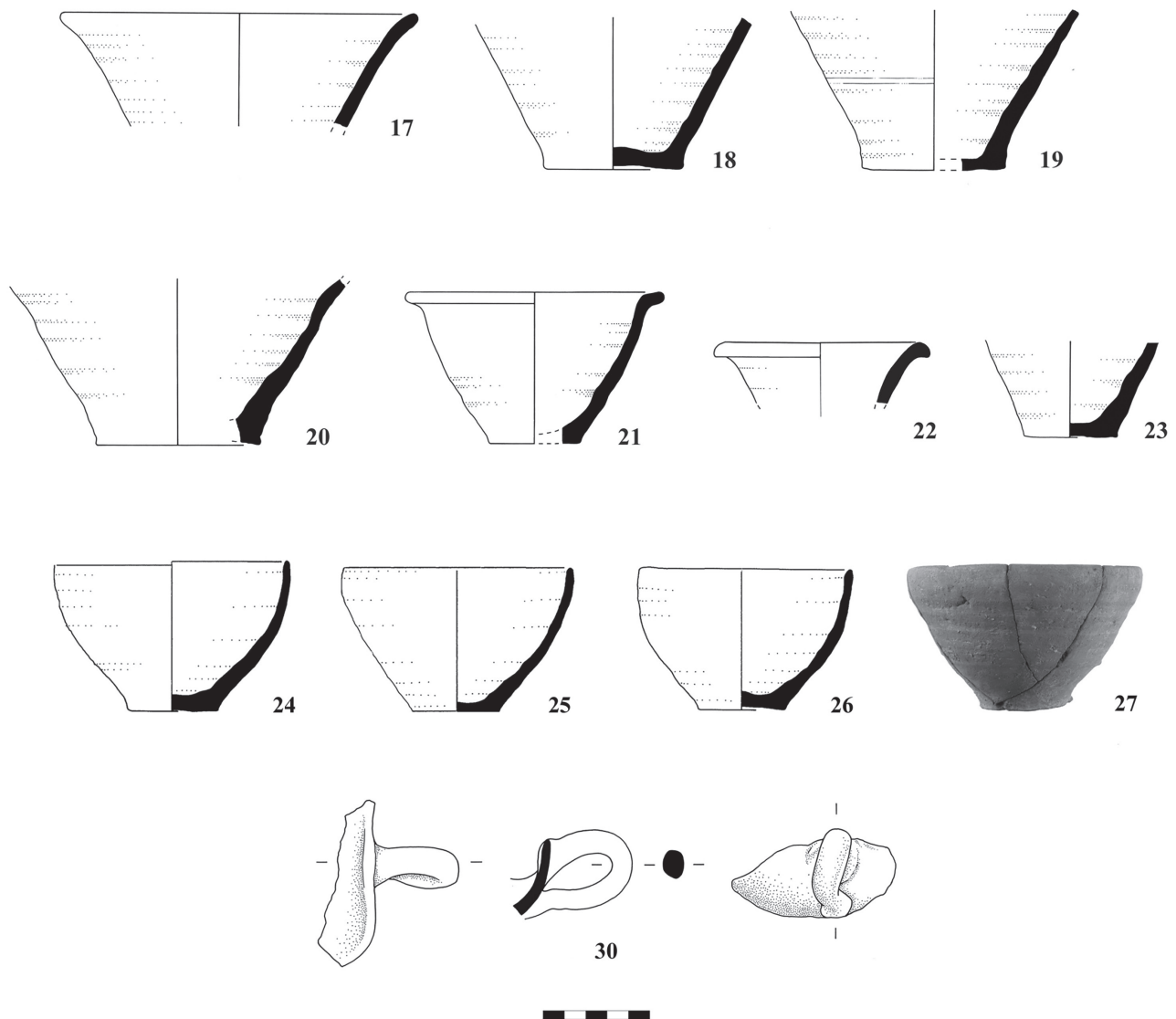


Fig. 11. Semifine Plain Ware from the F30 deposit: the conical bowls nos. 17-20, the ledge-rim bowls nos. 21-23 (the latter uncertain), the hemispherical bowls nos. 24-27, and the lamp no. 30 (©EBSA; photo: C. Papanikolopoulos; drawings: H. Joris).

19. (11-06-2149-OB033). Conical bowl (Fig. 11).

$\frac{1}{3}$ preserved, bottom and wall from two frs. H. max 8,3; base diam. 7.

Conical profile on a raised base with straight walls. Red semifine fabric.

20. (11-06-2183-OB035). Conical bowl (Fig. 11).

$\frac{1}{4}$ preserved. H. max 8,5; base diam. 8.

Conical profile on a raised base with flaring walls; strong rilling marks on the interior and exterior. Pinkish-orange semifine fabric.

Ledge-rim bowls

21. (11-06-2183-OB027). Ledge-rim bowl (Fig. 11).

$\frac{1}{4}$ preserved, rec. from two frs. H. 7,3; rim diam. rec. 12; base diam. 5.

Conical profile on a slightly raised base with convex walls and ledge-rim. Red semifine fabric.

22. (11-06-2149-OB031). Ledge-rim bowl (Fig. 11).

Rim sherd, rec. from three frs. H. max 3,8; rim diam. 11,2.

Conical profile with flaring walls to the ledge, bevelled rim. Pinkish-orange semifine fabric, with white and gray inclusions.

23. (11-06-2145-OB006). Ledge-rim (?) bowl (Fig. 11).

Base and wall preserved. H. max 4,5; base diam. 4,5.

Conical profile with thick walls. Red semifine fabric, with white and gray inclusions.

Hemispherical bowls

24. (11-06-2149-OB013). Hemispherical bowl (Fig. 11)

$\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, from four frs. H. 6,7; rim diam. 11; base diam. 4,2-4,4.

Tall, hemispherical profile with convex walls on a slightly raised and irregular base. Red semifine fabric.

25. (11-06-2183-OB003). Hemispherical bowl (Fig. 11)

$\frac{3}{4}$ preserved, rec. from four frs. H. 6,9; rim diam. 11; base diam. 4,2.

Tall, hemispherical profile with convex walls, slightly incurving towards the rim. Red semifine fabric, with big, white and gray inclusions.

26. (11-06-2183-OB011). Hemispherical bowl (Fig. 11)

$\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from four frs. H. 6,7; rim diam. 10,3; base diam. 4,1.

Tall, hemispherical profile with convex walls on a slightly raised base. Red semifine fabric, with big, white and gray inclusions.

27. (11-06-2181-OB021). Hemispherical bowl (Fig. 11)

$\frac{3}{4}$ preserved, rec. from six frs. H. 6,4; rim diam. 10,7; base diam. 4,2.

Tall, hemispherical profile with convex walls, slightly incurving to the rim; raised and irregular base; light-red semifine fabric.

28. (11-06-2149-OB019). Hemispherical bowl

$\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from 11 frs. H. 6,8; rim diam. 10; base diam. 4,2.

Tall, hemispherical profile with convex walls, slightly incurving to the rim. Light-red semifine fabric, with big, white and gray inclusions.

Basins (*lekane*s)

29. (11-06-2149-OB034). Basin (*lekane*) (Fig. 17).

Base, rec. from six frs. H. max 4; base diam. 10,5; diam. hole 6,5.

Base with a large central hole, deliberately cut; fragments with incrustated cross-sections. Pinkish-orange semifine fabric.

Lamps

30. (11-06-2145-OB001). Lamp (Fig. 11).

Rim with half spout and handle are preserved, rec. from two frs. H. max 4,4; max length 8.

Convex profil, with oval (?) mouth; lateral, surmounting handle. Pinkish-orange semifine fabric.

The plain conical cups are represented by 140 specimens, of which 97 were catalogued (nos. **31-127**). An attempt was made to detect groups among the 97 examples which resulted into three types, each subdivided into two sub-types – a and b –, on the basis of morphological and technological traits. These three groups are illustrated below (Table 1) and discussed in the next pages. Only two conical cups, which are rather hemispherical in shape, were not included in these groups (nos. **126-127**).

Most conical cups are represented by type 1 (45 examples), that is small and with conical profile, followed by type 2 (31 examples), which is large, with strict conical profile and prominent wheel marks, and by type 3 (19 examples), which is tall and has a bell-shaped profile.

Some conical cups show marks at the lip to indicate wick burning; it is therefore likely that they were used as lamps (*e.g.* no. 37, fig. 12; no. 80, fig. 14; no. 95, fig. 15).

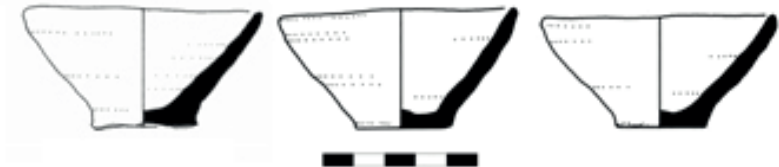
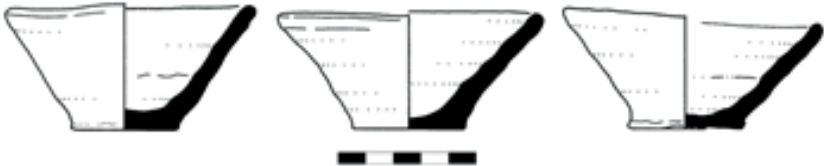
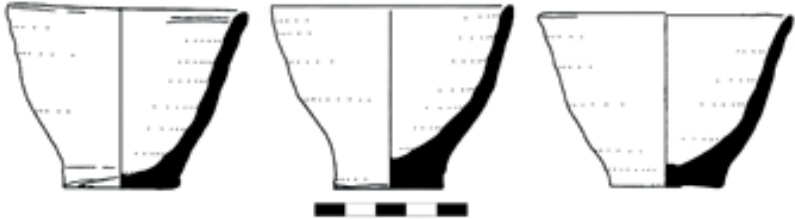
Types	Sub-types	Profiles
Type 1	Sub-type 1a	
	Sub-type 1b	
Type 2	Sub-type 2a	
	Sub-type 2b	
Type 3	Sub-type 3a	
	Sub-type 3b	

Table 1. Types and sub-types of the plain conical cups from the F30 deposit.

TYPE 1

Type 1 is a small, compact cup with conical profile. It is manufactured in light-red semifine fabric, with small gray inclusions and middle-sized white inclusions. It is wheelmade and well finished. It is represented by 45 examples (nos. **31-75**, Figs. 12-13). Type 1 can be subdivided into two sub-varieties: type 1a and type 1b. The first has more convex walls, slightly incurving toward the rim, while type 1b is taller (h. 3,7-4,1), has straight and thick walls, as well as a raised, thick, and irregular base.

Type 1a is represented by 31 examples (nos. **31-61**, Fig. 12). Most of them are regular in shape, but there are also some examples that show uneven height and walls, as well as irregular rims (nos. **34-36**, Fig. 12). Despite being similar to the LM IA examples from Malia (*Quartier Pi*: Langohr *et al.* 2018, 313, fig. 6.2.9; *Abords Nord Est*: Darcque *et al.* 2015, pl. 78f), type 1a is already attested in MM IIIB deposits both at Malia itself (*i.e.* Pit 1 in Room 19, in *Quartier Pi*: Alberti *et al.* 2018 forthcoming) and at Sissi (Context 5.16c: Langohr *et al.* 2018, 308, fig. 6.24 i). Its shape mirrors also some examples from the MM IIIB deposit of KS178 at Knossos (*e.g.* Hatzaki 2007, 166, fig. 5.6, 13).

Type 1b is represented by 14 examples (nos. **62-75**, Fig. 13). It finds good comparisons in the MM IIIB deposit of Zone 5 at Sissi (*i.e.* Context 5.16c: Langohr *et al.* 2018, 308, fig. 6.2.4 f, h). Comparanda are also found at Phaistos in the MM IIIB Deposit 26 of Chàlara (Girella 2010, 26A/3, pl. XXXIII).

Conical cups, Type 1a

Average dimensions: h. 3,3-4 cm; rim diam. 7,6-8,1 cm; base diam. 3,1-3,8 cm; rim thickness: 0,3-0,4.

31. (11-06-2149-OB012). Complete. H. 3,5; rim diam. 7,6; base diam. 3,4 (Fig. 12).
32. (11-06-2181-OB011). Complete. H. 3,3; rim diam. 7,6; base diam. 3,4 (Fig. 12).
33. (11-06-2181-OB014). Complete. H. 3,8; rim diam. 7,7; base diam. 3,1 (Fig. 12).
34. (11-06-2183-OB002). Complete. H. 3,9; rim diam. 7,6-8,1; base diam. 3,3 (Fig. 12).
35. (11-06-2193-OB015). Almost entirely rec. from 10 frs. H. 3,8; rim diam. 7,9; base diam. 3,3 (Fig. 12).
36. (11-06-2193-OB016). $\frac{3}{4}$ preserved, rec. from seven frs. H. 3,6; rim diam. 7,6; base diam. 3,1 (Fig. 12).
37. (11-06-2193-OB003). Almost complete. H. 3,5-3,9; rim diam. 7,6; base diam. 3,4 (Fig. 12).
38. (11-06-2193-OB019). Complete. H. 3,7; rim diam. 8; base diam. 3,3 (Fig. 12).
39. (11-06-2193-OB002). Almost entirely rec. from two frs. H. 3,6-3,7; rim diam. 7,6; base diam. 3,4 (Fig. 12).
40. (11-06-2193-OB006). Complete. H. 3,3-3,7; rim diam. 8; base diam. 3,4 (Fig. 12).
41. (11-06-2193-OB017). Almost entirely rec. from three frs. H. 3,9-4,3; rim diam. 8,1; base diam. 3,5 (Fig. 12).
42. (11-06-2149-OB001). Almost entirely rec. from six frs. H. 3,9; rim diam. 7,9; base diam. 3,5 (Fig. 12).
43. (11-06-2193-OB012). Almost entirely rec. from five frs. H. 3,7; rim diam. 8; base diam. 3,3 (Fig. 12).
44. (11-06-2193-OB018). $\frac{3}{4}$ preserved. H. 3,7; rim diam. 8; base diam. 3,3 (Fig. 12).
45. (11-06-2181-OB013). Almost entirely rec. from seven frs. H. 4; rim diam. 7,5; base diam. 3,8 (Fig. 12).
46. (11-06-2183-OB030). $\frac{1}{2}$ preserved, rec. from five frs. H. 3,8; rim diam. rec. 8; base diam. rec. 3,8 (Fig. 12).
47. (11-06-4004-OB006). $\frac{1}{3}$ preserved. H. 3,7-3,8; rim diam. 7,8; base diam. 3,7 (Fig. 12).
48. (11-06-2181-OB017). $\frac{3}{4}$ preserved, rec. from many frs. H. 4; rim diam. rec. 7,9; base diam. 3,4 (Fig. 12).
49. (11-06-2183-OB023). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from two frs. H. 3,8; rim diam. 7,8; base diam. 3,4.
50. (11-06-2138-OB004). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from four frs. H. 3,8; rim diam. 7,8; base diam. 3,5.
51. (11-06-2145-OB004). $\frac{1}{3}$ preserved. H. 3,7; rim diam. 7,8; base diam. 3,3.
52. (11-06-2193-OB024). $\frac{1}{3}$ preserved, rec. from two frs. H. 3,3; rim diam. rec. 7,5; base diam. rec. 3,6.
53. (11-06-2193-OB025). $\frac{1}{3}$ preserved, rec. from two frs. H. 3,7; rim diam. rec. 7,6; base diam. 3,4.
54. (11-06-2145-OB003). $\frac{3}{4}$ preserved. H. 4; rim diam. 7,8; base diam. 3,3.

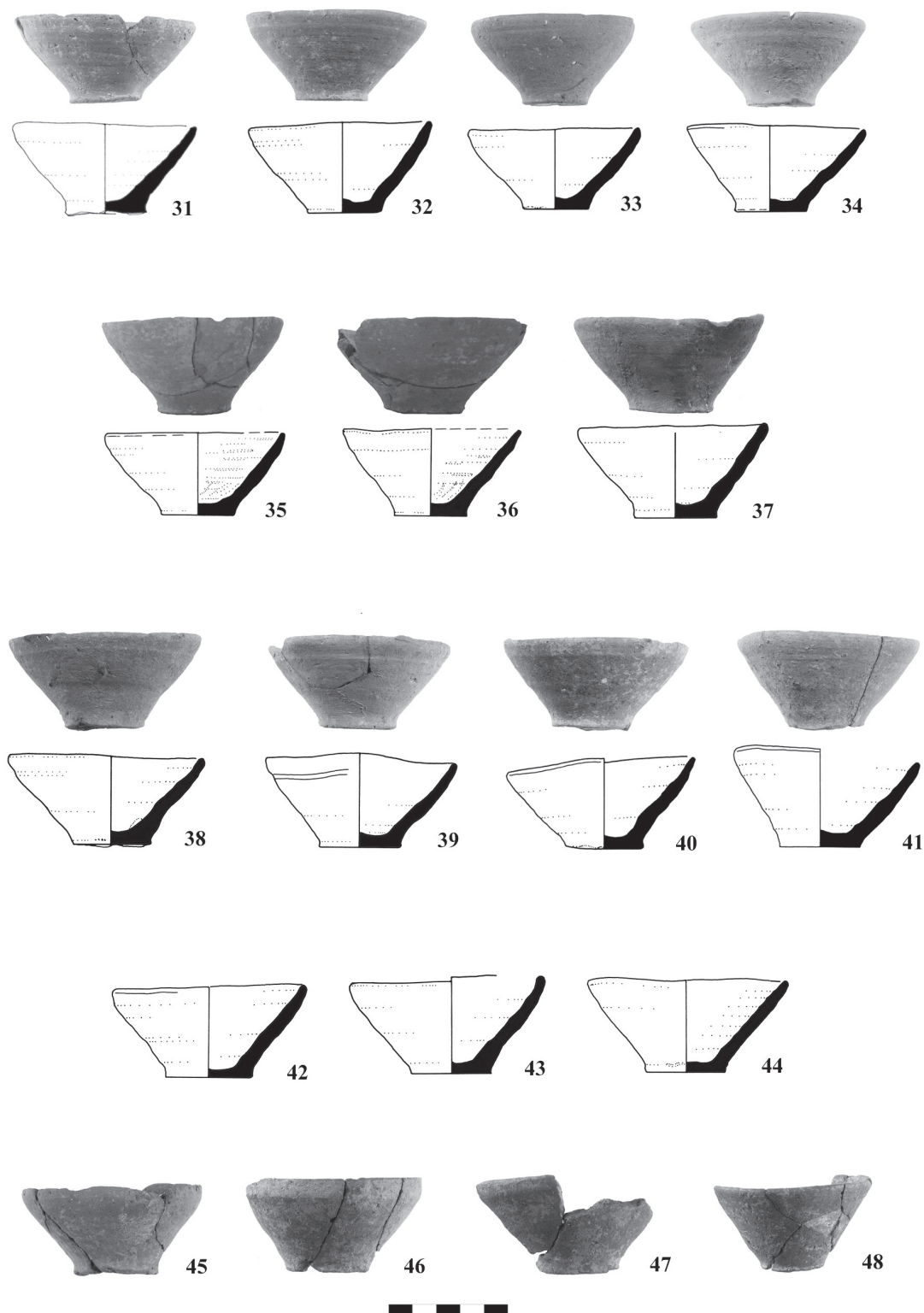


Fig. 12. Plain conical cups of type 1a from the F30 deposit: nos. 31-48 (©EBSA; photos: C. Papanikolopoulos; drawings: H. Joris and B. Konnemann).

55. (11-06-2181-OB015). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from two frs. H. 4; rim d. 8; base d. 3,6.
 56. (11-06-2145-OB005). $\frac{1}{3}$ preserved. H. 4; rim diam. 8; base diam. 3,4.
 57. (11-06-2181-OB019). $\frac{1}{3}$ preserved, rec. from two frs. H. 3,8; rim diam. rec. 7,9; base diam. 3,3.
 58. (11-06-2183-OB029). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from two frs. H. 3,9; rim diam. 8; base diam. 3,3.
 59. (11-06-2183-OB014). $\frac{1}{3}$ preserved. H. 3,9; rim diam. rec. 8; base diam. 3,5.
 60. (11-06-4004-OB004). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved from two frs. H. 3,7; rim diam. 7,6; base diam. 3,5.
 61. (11-06-2181-OB018). $\frac{1}{3}$ preserved, rec. from three frs. H. max 3; rim diam. rec. 8.

Conical cups, Type 1b

Average dimensions: H. 3,7-4,1; rim diam. 7,8-8,2; base diam. 3,2-3,8.

62. (11-06-2149-OB017). Complete. H. 3,8; rim diam. 8; base diam. 3,3 (Fig. 13).
 63. (11-06-2183-OB020). Almost entirely rec. from seven frs. H. 4,1; rim diam. 8,2; base diam. 3,8 (Fig. 13).
 64. (11-06-2183-OB024). Almost complete, rec. from four frs. H. 4,1; rim diam. 7,8; base diam. 3,8 (Fig. 13).
 65. (11-06-2183-OB025). Rec. from three frs. H. 3,8; rim diam. 7,8; base diam. 3,4 (Fig. 13).
 66. (11-06-2193-OB020). Rec. from four frs. H. 3,7-3,8; rim diam. 7,8; base diam. 3,7 (Fig. 13).
 67. (11-06-2193-OB004). $\frac{3}{4}$ preserved. H. 3,8; rim diam. 8; base diam. 3,6 (Fig. 13).
 68. (11-06-2193-OB010). $\frac{3}{4}$ preserved. H. 3,7; rim diam. 7,8; base diam. 3,3 (Fig. 13).
 69. (11-06-2193-OB011). $\frac{3}{4}$ preserved. H. 3,7; rim diam. 8; base diam. 3,3 (Fig. 13).
 70. (11-06-2193-OB009). $\frac{3}{4}$ preserved. H. 4,1; rim diam. 7,8; base diam. 3,6 (Fig. 13).
 71. (11-06-2193-OB022). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from two frs. H. 4; rim diam. 7,7; base diam. 3,5 (Fig. 13).
 72. (11-06-2193-OB021). Almost complete, rec. from three frs. H. 4; rim diam. 8; base diam. 4.
 73. (11-06-2193-OB023). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, two non-jointed frs. H. 3,7; rim diam. 7,8; base diam. 3,3.
 74. (11-06-2149-OB002). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from four frs. H. 4; rim diam. rec. 8,2; base diam. 3,2.
 75. (11-06-2193-OB008). Almost entirely rec. from three frs. H. 4,1; rim diam. 7,6; base diam. 3,4.

TYPE 2

Type 2 is a conical cup with strict conical profile, straight and thick walls and thick rim as well (0,4-0,5). It is produced in red or light-red semifine fabric with big, white inclusions. It is wheelmade and not well finished, with prominent wheel marks. Type 2 is represented by 31 examples (nos. **76-106**, Figs. 14-15). It can be subdivided into sub-types a and b, where the latter represents the short and squat variety of the type.

Type 2a is exemplified by 18 conical cups (nos. **76-93**, Fig. 14). It is also found with flaring walls and a rim diameter reaching the 9,4-9,9 cm (nos. **81, 84, 85**, Fig. 14). This type is well attested in the MM IIIB deposit of Zone 5 at Sissi (Context 5.16c: Langohr *et al.* 2018, 308, fig. 6.2.4 g) and in the MM IIIB deposit of Room 19 (Pit 1) in *Quartier Pi* at Malia (Alberti *et al.* forthcoming). Large conical cups with strict conical profile and straight walls are seen also in MM IIIB deposits at Galatas (Rethemiotakis, Christakis 2013, 100, fig. 8.10) and at Palaikastro, especially from Block M (*e.g.* Context 11a.2 from Room 11a: Knappett, Cunningham 2013, 193, fig. 17.15, 483, 489). The MM III ceramic deposits of the Kamilari necropolis have revealed comparable examples too (Girella 2013b, 153-154, fig. 13.6).

Type 2b is represented by 13 examples (nos. **94-106**, Fig. 15). The height of most of them is the same as the diameter of their base. This variation of the type 2 is common in the two abovementioned MM IIIB deposits of Sissi (Context 5.16c and Zone 7: Langohr *et al.* 2018, 308, fig. 6.2.4 I; 310, fig. 6.2.6 e). Comparisons can be drawn between this type and examples from the MM IIIB deposit of Room 19 (Pit 1) in *Quartier Pi* (Alberti *et al.* forthcoming) and from *Abords Nord Est* at Malia (Darcque *et al.* 2015, pl. 78b, nos. 0707/041 and 0708/010). The

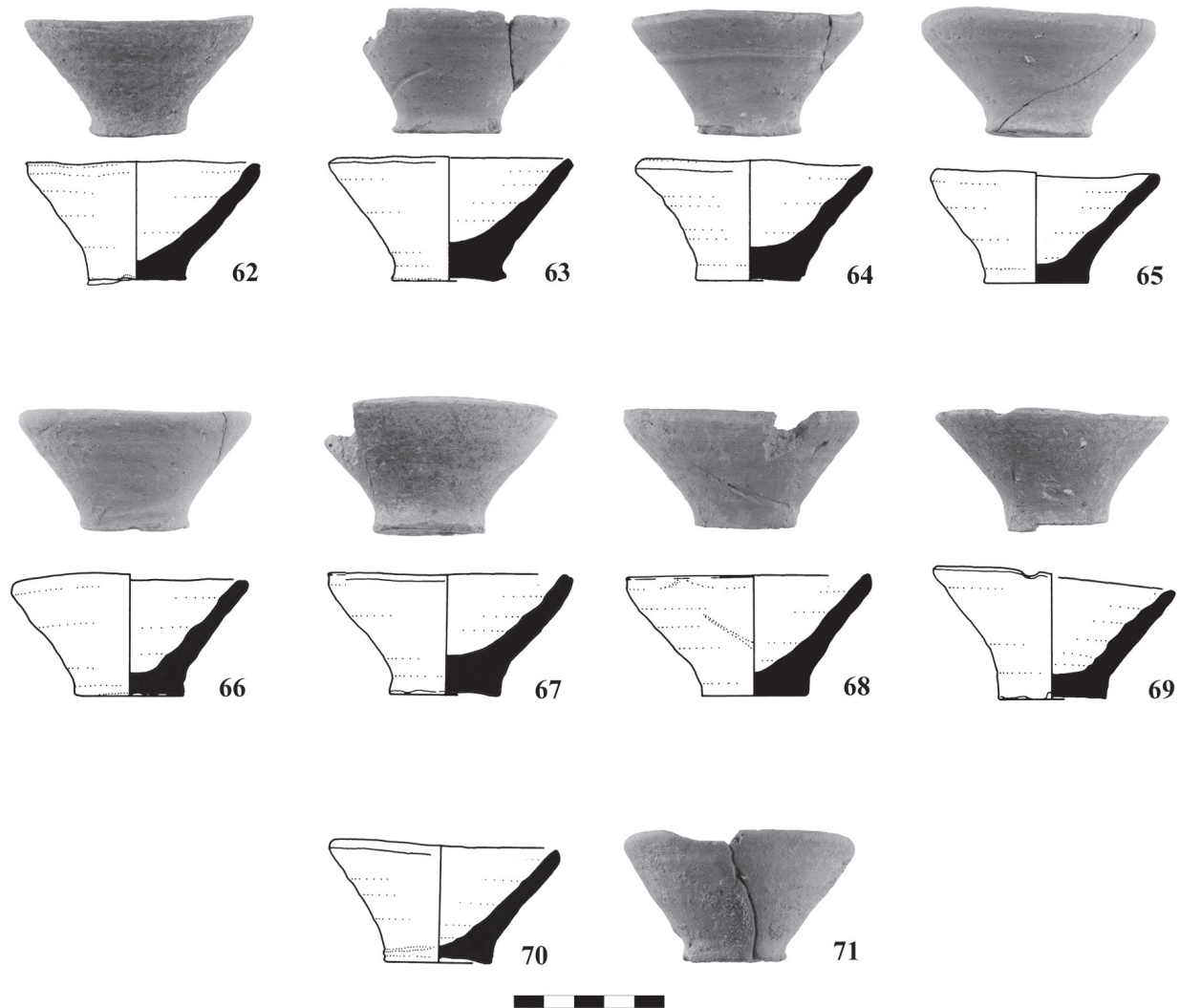


Fig. 13. Plain conical cups of type 1b from the F30 deposit: nos. 62-71 (©EBSA; photos: C. Papanikolopoulos; drawings: H. Joris and B. Konnemann).

MM IIIB deposits of Phaistos and Ayia Triada also have comparanda for this variety of conical cups (Girella 2010, 26A/8, 26A/5 and 26A/4b, pl. XXXIII; Girella 2013a, 129, fig. 10.4, p, y).

Conical cups, Type 2a

Average dimensions: H. 4,1-4,9; rim diam. 8,5-9,9; base diam. 3,7-4,4.

76. (11-06-2149-OB010). Almost entirely rec. from three frs. H. 4,4; rim diam. 8,8; base diam. 4 (Fig. 14).

77. (11-06-2181-OB008). Complete. H. 4,3; rim diam. 9,2; base diam. 4,4 (Fig. 14).

78. (11-06-2181-OB002). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved. H. 4,5; rim diam. 9,3; base diam. 4 (Fig. 14).

79. (11-06-2183-OB031). $\frac{1}{2}$ preserved. H. 4,4; rim diam. 9,6; base diam. 4,5.

80. (11-06-2181-OB004). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from two frs. H. 4,3; rim diam. 8,5; base diam. 3,7 (Fig. 14).

81. (11-06-2181-OB003). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved. H. 4,3-4,4; rim diam. 9,6; base diam. 4,3 (Fig. 14).

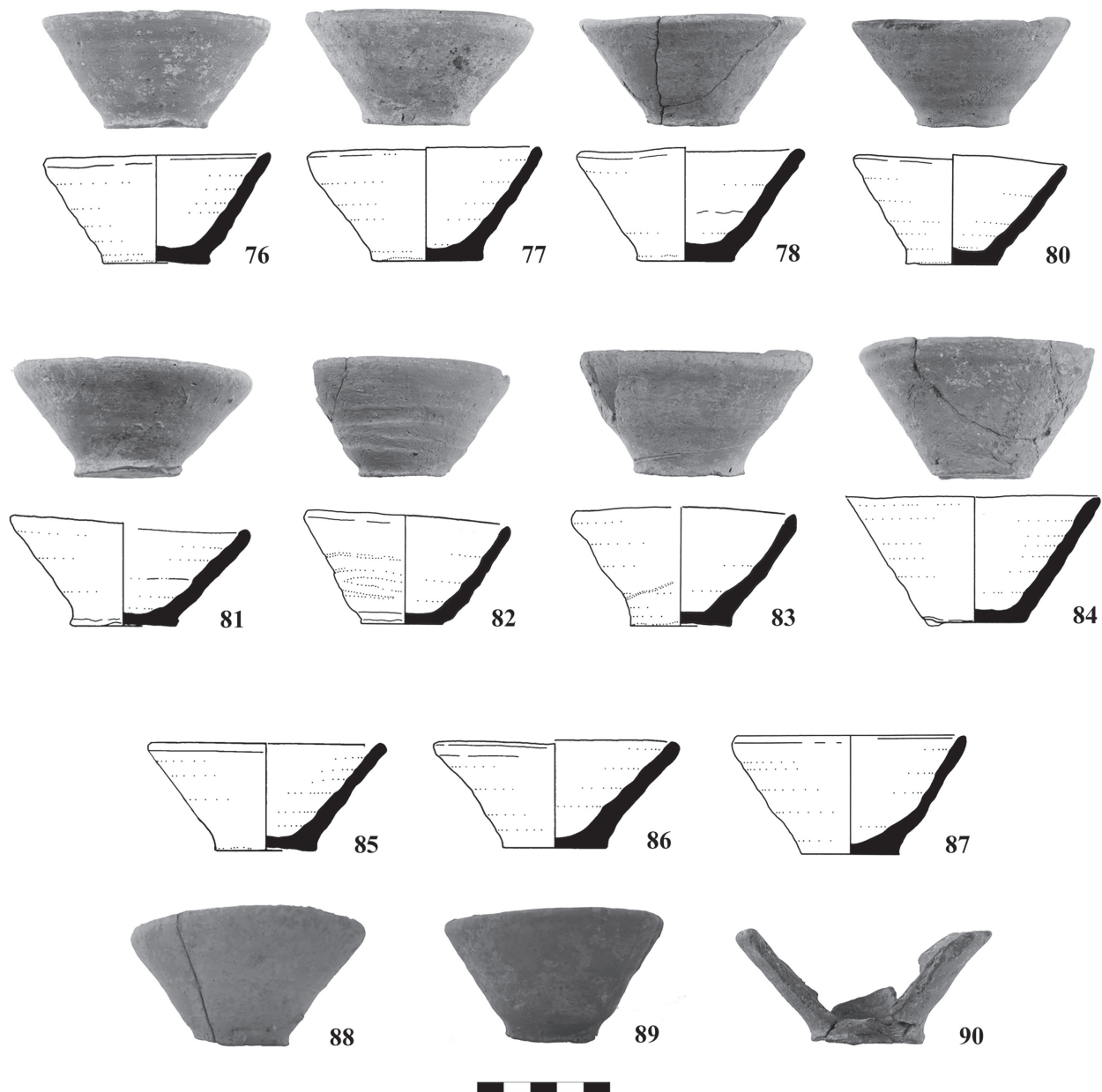


Fig. 14. Plain conical cups of type 2a from the F30 deposit: nos. 76-78, 80-90 (©EBSA; photos: C. Papanikolopoulos; drawings: H. Joris and B. Konnemann).

82. (11-06-2181-OB009). $\frac{3}{4}$ preserved. H. 4,3; rim diam. 8,5; base diam. 3,7 (Fig. 14).

83. (11-06-2149-OB006). $\frac{3}{4}$ preserved, rec. from two frs. H. 4,4; rim diam. 8,5; base diam. 4 (Fig. 14).

84. (11-06-2181-OB007). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved. H. 4,9; rim diam. 9,9; base diam. 4 (Fig. 14).

85. (11-06-2193-OB001). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from three frs. H. 4,3; rim diam. 9,6; base diam. 4 (Fig. 14).

86. (11-06-2183-OB010). $\frac{3}{4}$ preserved, rec. from two frs. H. 4,2; rim diam. 9,2; base diam. 4,2 (Fig. 14).

87. (11-06-2183-OB013). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from four frs. H. 4,8; rim diam. 9; base diam. 3,9 (Fig. 14).

88. (11-06-2149-OB009). Almost entirely rec. from two frs. H. 4,7; rim diam. 8,7; base diam. 3,8 (Fig. 14).
 89. (11-06-2183-OB017). $\frac{1}{2}$ preserved. H. 4,6; rim diam. 8,6; base diam. 3,8 (Fig. 14).
 90. (11-06-2149-OB028). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from seven frs. H. 4,2; rim diam. 9,4; base diam. 4 (Fig. 14).
 91. (11-06-2183-OB001). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved. H. 4,4; rim diam. 9,4; base diam. 3,8.
 92. (11-06-2149-OB003). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved. H. 4,1; rim diam. 8,4; base diam. 3,7.
 93. (11-06-2149-OB004). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved. H. 4,1; rim diam. 8,5; base diam. 3,7.

Conical cups, Type 2b

Average dimensions: H. 3,6-4; rim d. 7,6-8,3; base d. 3,6-4,2; rim thickness: 0,4-0,5.

94. (11-06-2149-OB008). Complete. H. 3,7; rim diam. 7,6; base diam. 3,6 (Fig. 15).
 95. (11-06-2183-OB005). Almost entirely rec. from two frs. H. 4,1; rim diam. 8; base diam. 4,2 (Fig. 15).
 96. (11-06-2183-OB015). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from two frs. H. 3,8; rim diam. 7,9; base diam. 3,6 (Fig. 15).
 97. (11-06-2193-OB013). Almost entirely preserved. H. 3,6; rim diam. 8,2; base diam. 3,7 (Fig. 15).
 98. (11-06-2183-OB018). Complete. H. 4; rim diam. 7,7; base diam. 3,8 (Fig. 15).
 99. (11-06-2183-OB016). Almost entirely rec. from two frs. H. 4,1; rim d. 8,2; base d. 3,8 (Fig. 15).
 100. (11-06-2181-OB005). $\frac{3}{4}$ preserved. H. 3,8; rim d. 8,2; base d. 4,2 (Fig. 15).
 101. (11-06-2183-OB032). $\frac{3}{4}$ preserved, rec. from four frs. H. 3,9; rim diam. 8; base diam. 3,9.
 102. (11-06-2145-OB002). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from two frs. H. 3,7; rim diam. 7,9; base diam. 3,7.
 103. (11-06-2149-OB011). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from three frs. H. 3,7; rim diam. 8; base diam. 3,8.
 104. (11-06-2181-OB016). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from three frs. H. 3,7; rim diam. rec. 8,2-8,8; base diam. 3,8.
 105. (11-06-2183-OB012). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from two frs. H. 3,7; rim diam. 8; base diam. 3,6.
 106. (11-06-4004-OB005). $\frac{1}{3}$ preserved. H. 3,7; rim diam. 8,3; base diam. 3,5.

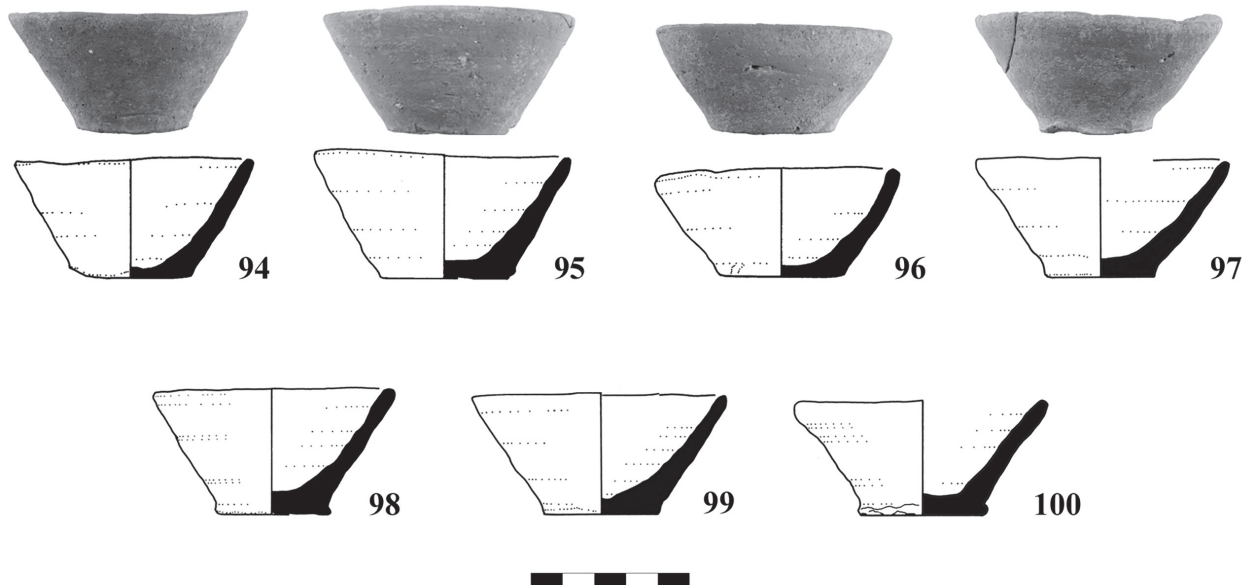


Fig. 15. Plain conical cups of type 2b from the F30 deposit: nos. 94-100 (©EBSA; photos: C. Papanikolopoulos; drawings: H. Joris and B. Konnemann).

TYPE 3

Type 3 is a tall conical cup with bell-shaped profile. It is mainly produced in pinkish-orange semifine fabric and is wheelmade. It is represented by 19 examples (nos. **107-125**, Fig. 16). It is subdivided into sub-types a and b, where the former is narrower than sub-type 3b and has a flaring rim.

Type 3a is found in six examples (nos. **102-107**, Fig. 16). Comparanda exist in the MM IIIB deposits of the Villa at Ayia Triada (*e.g.* Deposit 5 in Girella 2013a, 129, fig. 10.4, aa, bb).

Type 3b is represented by 13 examples (nos. **107-125**, Fig. 16). This type is also attested in two other MM IIIB deposits/levels identified at Sissi (Langohr *et al.* 2018, 308, fig. 6.2.4 b; 311, fig. 6.2.7 c). The MM IIIB deposit of Room 19 (Pit 1) in *Quartier Pi* at Malia has similar specimens (Alberti *et al.* forthcoming). The bell-shaped type 3b is also seen in the MM IIIB KS178 Group of Knossos (Popham 1984, pl. 128a; see also table 5.3a in Hatzaki 2007, 156 with revised Knossian deposits). Similar variations of conical cups are found in the MM IIIB Contexts 6.2 (Room 6) and 11a.2 (Room 11a) from Block M at Palaikastro (Knappett, Cunningham 2012, 159-160, fig. 5.20, 353, 355; 170-171, fig. 5.28, 487, 490; see also Knappett, Cunningham 2013, fig. 7.15).

Conical cups, Type 3a

Average dimensions: H. 5,7-6,5; rim diam. 7,3-8,3; base diam. 3,6-4,2; rim thickness: 0,3-0,4.

- 107.** (11-06-2183-OB019). Entirely rec. from six frs. H. 6; rim diam. 8; base diam. 3,8 (Fig. 16).
- 108.** (11-06-2193-OB005). $\frac{3}{4}$ preserved, rec. from three frs. H. 6,3; rim diam. 7,3; base diam. 3,8 (Fig. 16).
- 109.** (11-06-2181-OB001). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from two frs. H. 5,8; rim diam. 8,3; base diam. 3,6 (Fig. 16).
- 110.** (11-06-2149-OB027). $\frac{3}{4}$ preserved, rec. from four frs. H. 6,1; rim diam. 7,7; base diam. 3,6 (Fig. 16).
- 111.** (11-06-2149-OB016). Almost entirely rec. from four frs. H. 6,5; rim diam. 8; base diam. 3,7.
- 112.** (11-06-2183-OB007). $\frac{3}{4}$ preserved. H. 5,7; rim diam. 8; base diam. 4,2.

Conical cups, Type 3b

Average dimensions: H. 5,8-6,3; rim diam. 7,4-8,2; base diam. 3,3-4,1; rim thickness: 0,3-0,4.

- 113.** (11-06-2149-OB018). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from two frs. H. 6,2; rim diam. 7,6; base diam. 4,1 (Fig. 16).
- 114.** (11-06-2181-OB010). Almost entirely preserved. H. 6,1; rim diam. 7,4; base diam. 3,8 (Fig. 16).
- 115.** (11-06-2193-OB007). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from eight frs. H. 5,8; rim diam. 7,6; base diam. 3,7 (Fig. 16).
- 116.** (11-06-2181-OB006). Almost entirely rec. from four frs. H. 5,9; rim diam. 8; base diam. 3,3 (Fig. 16).
- 117.** (11-06-2183-OB021). $\frac{3}{4}$ preserved, rec. from seven frs. H. 6,3; rim diam. 8,2; base diam. 3,4 (Fig. 16).
- 118.** (11-06-2193-OB014). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from eight frs. H. 5,9; rim diam. 7,6; base diam. 4 (Fig. 16).
- 119.** (11-06-2181-OB012). $\frac{1}{3}$ preserved, from three frs. H. 6,2; rim diam. rec. 8,2; base diam. rec. 3,5 (Fig. 16).
- 120.** (11-06-2149-OB029). $\frac{1}{2}$ preserved, rec. from two frs. H. max 4,7; base diam. 3,8.
- 121.** (11-06-2149-OB007). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from two frs. H. 5,8; rim d. 8; base diam. 3,6.
- 122.** (11-06-2183-OB033). $\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from two frs. H. max 4,6; base diam. 3,6.
- 123.** (11-06-2149-OB014). $\frac{3}{4}$ preserved, rec. from three frs. H. 6; rim diam. 7,8; base diam. 3,6.
- 124.** (11-06-2181-OB020). $\frac{1}{3}$ preserved, rec. from three frs. H. 6,1; rim diam. rec. 8,2; base diam. 4.
- 125.** (11-06-2193-OB026). $\frac{1}{3}$ preserved. H. 6,2; rim diam. rec. 7,8; base diam. 3,8.

Two fragmentary conical cups (nos. **126-127**) with a hemispherical profile on a large, raised base do not fit in the three abovementioned groups.

- 126.** (11-06-2149-OB021). $\frac{1}{3}$ preserved, rec. from two frs. H. 4,4; rim diam. rec. 9,4; base diam. 4,5.
- 127.** (11-06-2149-OB022). $\frac{1}{2}$ preserved, rec. from three frs. H. 4,1; rim diam. 9,2; base diam. 4,4.

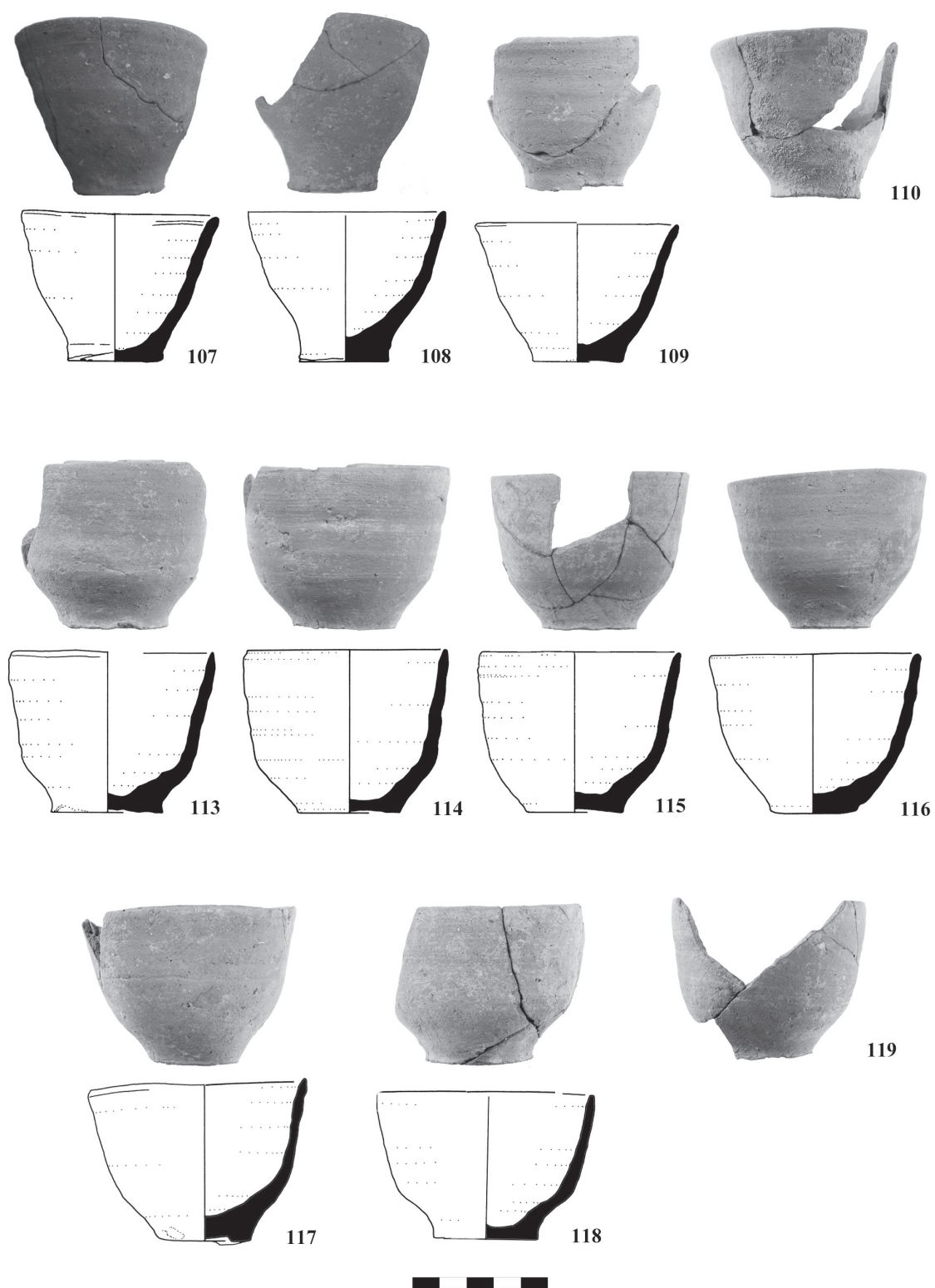


Fig. 16. Plain conical cups of type 3 from the F30 deposit: nos. 107-110 of type 3a and nos. 113-119 of type 3b (©EBSA; photos: C. Papanikolopoulos; drawings: H. Joris and B. Konnemann).

Semi-coarse Plain Ware

The Semi-coarse Plain Ware is produced in light-red, semi-coarse fabric, with large, white inclusions. It includes two fragmentary basins or *lekane*s (nos. **128-129**, Fig. 17), only partially reconstructed from many small fragments. Both examples have a conical profile with thick walls and base. The first one (no. **128**, Fig. 17) has flaring walls and a ledge rim. Comparanda exist in the MM IIIB deposit from Room 19 (Pit 1) in *Quartier Pi* at Malia (Alberti *et al.* forthcoming) and in the MM IIIB Deposit 15 from Ayia Triada (Girella 2010, pl. LXXIII, no number). Also the MM IIIB deposit B2 R1/3 from Building 6 at Palaikastro has provided similar examples, but with a larger base (Knappett, Cunningham 2003, 137, fig. 22, 185 and 138, fig. 23, 186). The second one (no. **129**, Fig. 17), with its thick and slightly flaring rim, is reminiscent of some examples in the Transitional MM IIIB/LM IA deposits of the Vlachakis plot at Knossos (see Rethemiotakis, Warren 2014, 21, fig. 3.3, 73), as well as in the MM IIIB deposits of Palaikastro (*e.g.* Context 6.5 from Block M: Knappett, Cunningham 2012, 163, fig. 5.23, 414) and Ayia Triada (*e.g.* Deposit 15: Girella 2010, pl. LXV, 89). Both *lekane*s have deliberately cut bases, the cut fragments of which were deposited together with the rest of the vases (Fig. 17).

Basins (*lekane*s)

128. (11-06-2149-OB023). Ledge-rim *lekane* (Fig. 17).

$\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, H. 14; rim diam. 33; base diam. 8,6.

Large deep bowl, with conical profile, with flaring and thick walls and a ledge rim; decorated below the rim with some horizontal grooves; interior base with two circular grooves. Light-red coarse fabric, with many, gray and white inclusions. Semi-coarse red fabric.

129. (11-06-2183-OB026). *Lekane* (also from units 11-06-2145, -2181, -4004) (Fig. 17).

$\frac{2}{3}$ preserved, rec. from many frs. H. 10,8; rim diam. 20; base diam. 11,5.

Deep bowl, with conical profile, with thick walls and thick, slightly flaring rim; light-red semi-coarse fabric, with many, gray and white inclusions.

Cooking Ware

The Cooking Ware is mainly found in red, semi-coarse fabric, with big, white and gray inclusions. Only one fragmentary cooking pot is produced in a gray semifine fabric (no. **133**, Fig. 17). The Cooking Ware is represented by four, very fragmentary cooking pots (nos. **130-133**, Fig. 17), of which three are surely tripod, while one is uncertain (no. **133**). The latter (Fig. 17), which preserves only the upper part, is decorated with two horizontal grooves below the rim. Also the example n. **130** (see *infra*) shows some horizontal grooves on the lower part of the body, which could be equally decorative. Good comparisons are seen in the MM III deposits from Alonaki, Juktas (Karetso, Mathioudaki 2012, 99, fig. 23, 940).

Only no. **130** has a reconstructable profile (Fig. 17), but comprises many non-joining fragments. It has convex, incurving and thick walls. Its profile is similar to that of some examples in MM IIIB deposits at Knossos (*e.g.* Hatzaki 2007, 168, fig. 5.7, 3).

The other two tripod cooking pots (nos. **131-132**) are very fragmentary, preserving only some non-joining fragments.

Cooking pots

130. (11-06-2149-OB026). Tripod cooking pot (also from units 11-06-2145, -2181, -2183, -2193) (Fig. 17).

$\frac{1}{3}$ preserved, rec. from many frs.; one preserved handle; two foot attachments. H. max 23; rim. diam. 17; max diam. 18,5.

Profile with convex, thick walls, incurving inwards; four horizontal grooves on the wall exterior toward the base; thin rim; red semi-coarse fabric.

131. (11-06-2181-OB024). Tripod cooking pot.

$\frac{1}{3}$ preserved; non-joining frs: frs. of rim, wall and base with foot attachment. H. max 9; dim. max 15x10.

Upper part with incurving walls to the flat, thick rim; red semi-coarse fabric, with big white and gray inclusions.

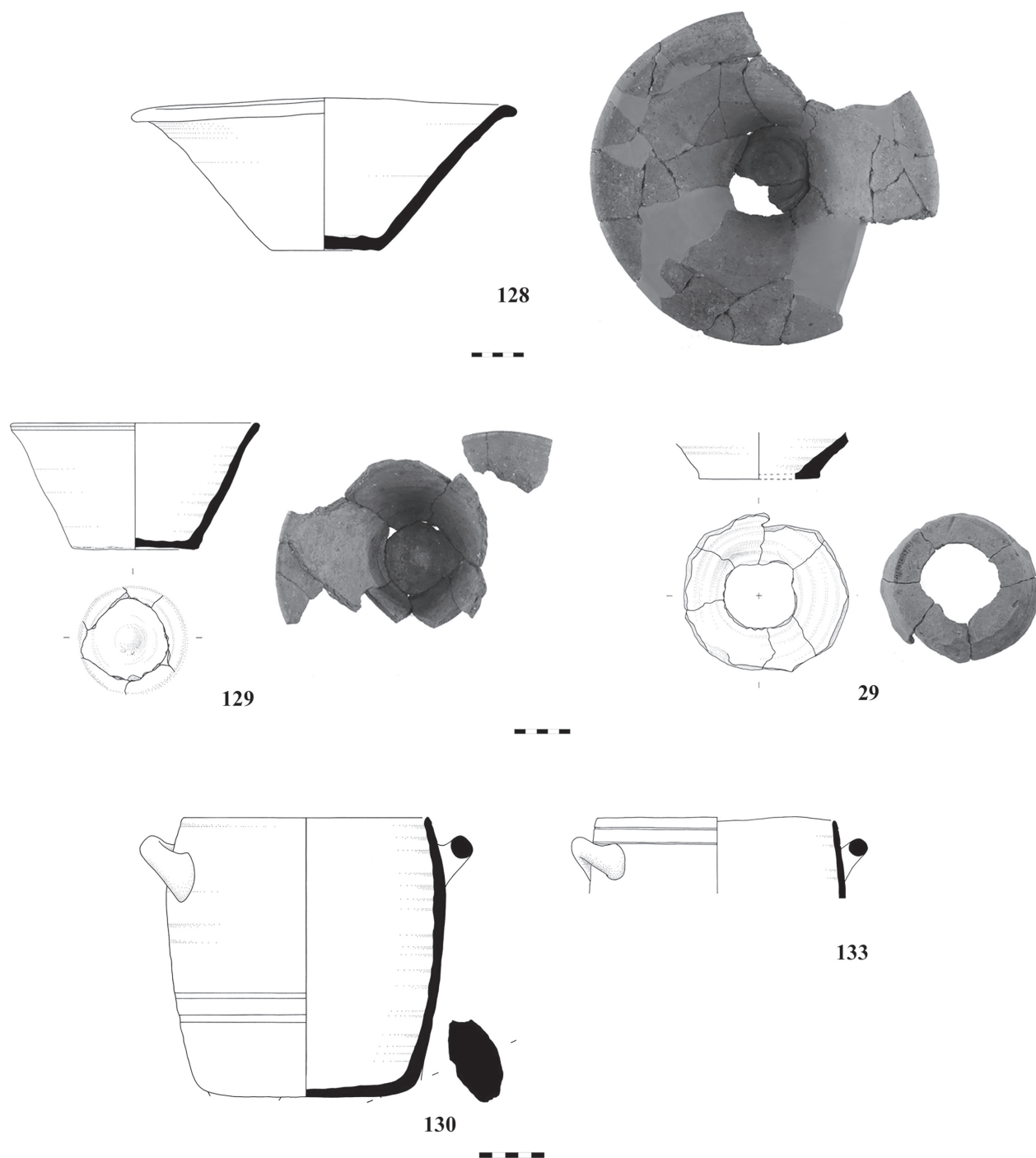


Fig. 17. Plain pottery from the F30 deposit: *lekane*s nos. **128-129** in Plain Semi-coarse Ware; *lekane* no. **29** in Plain Semifine Ware; cooking pots nos. **130** and **133** in Cooking Ware (©EBSA; photos: C. Papanikolopoulos; drawings: H. Joris).

132. (11-06-2181-OB023). Tripod cooking pot (also from units 11-06-2183, -2193).

Base and wall frs. with three foot attachments. H. max 13.

Frs. with convex walls; red semi-coarse fabric, with big white and gray inclusions.

133. (11-06-2181-OB025). Cooking pot (also from units 11-06-2145, -2149, -2193) (Fig. 17).

Rim rec. from many frs; handles preserved. H. max 8; rim diam. 20.

Fr. with two horizontal handles below the rim; decorated with two horizontal grooves below the rim. Gray semifine fabric with small, white inclusions.

Clay figurine

A fragment of a clay figurine in the shape of a snake was also found in the F30 deposit (no. **134**, Fig. 18). It is made of fine pinkish clay and hand-modelled with a few details made with accuracy as to underline the anatomic characteristics of the snake: the flat and triangular-shaped head, the pronounced supraocular scales and the multifaceted body. The front part of the snake's body is painted red.

The figurine is broken in its lower extremity and the possibility exists that was deliberately broken off something larger and deposited together with the vases. It recalls votive offerings left at peak sanctuaries and both the one on Juktas and on Vrysinas have yielded snake figurines dating to MM IIB (Karetsou 2018, 221, fig. 4; see also Karetsou 1974, 237, fig. 176δ). The best comparison is, however, provided by the serpents held by the so-called Snake Goddess, a faience figurine found in the Temple Repositories. The latter too was deliberately broken and deposited (Hatzaki 2009, 29; see also Simandiraki-Grimshaw, Stevens 2013) into what has recently been interpreted as a building deposit (Hatzaki 2009; 2011).

134. (11-06-4004-OB001). Figurine (Fig. 18).

Fragmentary; H. max 5,1.

Snake figurine; hand-made; front part paint in red; fine pinkish fabric.

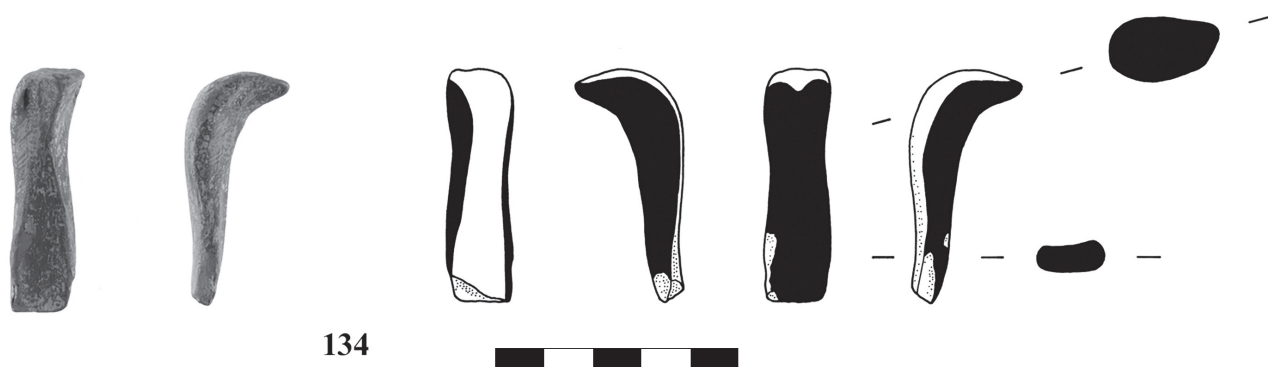


Fig. 18. The clay figurine in the shape of a snake no. **134** from the F30 deposit (©EBSA; photos: C. Papanikolopoulos; drawings: H. Joris).

THE NEOPALATIAL DEPOSIT F30: CHRONOLOGY, CONTENT AND FUNCTION

Chronology

Recent studies and publications of MM IIIB deposits from various Cretan sites present numerous comparanda for the pottery of the F30 deposit.⁴ Its chronology seems hence consistent with a MM IIIB date in Knossian terms (see Table 2). Cretan deposits which in the literature were once referred to as ‘Transitional MM IIIB/LM IA’, can now confidently be called MM IIIB deposits (Hatzaki 2007; Girella 2007; 2010; Betancourt 2013).

Since the elaboration of a local Neopalatial ceramic sequence at Sissi is an ongoing process (see Langohr *et al.* 2018), here only a few observations are given for the MM IIIB phase at the site. The preliminary presentation of two homogeneous MM IIIB deposits from Sissi (Langohr *et al.* 2018; see Table 2) stressed how some shapes are also shared also by the F30 deposit, suggesting that they are representative of the local MM IIIB phase at Sissi. These shapes are the bell-shaped cups, the ledge-rim bowls (both short and tall), the straight-sided cups with flaring walls and thin rim, and some varieties of conical cups, *i.e.* small and convex (Type 1), big and strict conical (Type 2) and bell-shaped (Type 3). The carinated cup with rounded carination (Fig. 9), attested both in the F30 deposit and Context 5.16c at Sissi, is at home in this phase. Broad and shallow cups, which are found in Context 5.16c of Sissi (Langohr *et al.* 2018, 308, fig. 6.2.4 c, e), are not present in the F30 deposit. Since this shape appears to continue from previous MM IIIA (Langohr *et al.* 2018, 305, fig. 6.2.3 f), its absence may well be a chronological indicator of a later date for the F30 pottery within the same MM IIIB phase. The ongoing study by Charlotte Langohr and Iro Mathioudaki will help in defining the MM III ceramic sequence at Sissi, where are attested both MM IIIA and MM IIIB deposits. Hitherto, it seems that the MM IIIA ceramic phase is in strong continuity with the MM IIB phase on the site, whereas the MM IIIB phase shows new shapes that foreshadow LM IA examples (Langohr *et al.* 2018, 304, 307). We have already observed that also the F30 deposit contains some vases that foreshadow LM IA specimens, *i.e.* the *rhyton* no. 1, the fragmentary S-profile cup no. 5 and conical cups of Type 1a.

It has recently been pointed out that Malia and Sissi share many fabrics and shapes and this since Prepalatial times and continuing through the Neopalatial period (see Caloi 2018; Langohr *et al.* 2018). That formal links exist between the F30 deposit of Sissi and the recently identified MM IIIB deposits at Malia, especially in *Quartier Pi* (Alberti *et al.* forthcoming), is hence not surprising. It is here worth underlining that the best parallel for the *rhyton* no. 1 comes from the palace of Malia (Chapoutier, Demargne 1942, pl. XLVIII, 2). The excavation of important Neopalatial quarters at Malia, such as *Quartiers Nu* and *Pi* (Devolder 2012-2013; Gomrée *et al.* 2012; Pomadère, Langohr 2007), and the publication of associated pottery and preliminary ceramic sequences (Darcque *et al.* 2015; Van de Moortel 2011) now offer the opportunity to draw comparisons between fineware pottery from Sissi and Malia and to argue for regional connections and dynamics within North-Central Crete during the Neopalatial period.

Despite the scarcity of decorated vessels in the F30 deposit, the attested Dark-on-Light Ware cups (Fig. 8) neatly fit in the productions of MM IIIB deposits of Knossos and Galatas (Table 2). These MM IIIB deposits also offer the best comparanda for ledge-rim and hemispherical bowls, different varieties of conical cups, piriform pouring vessels and cooking pots. The MM III pottery deposits from Alonaki, Juktas have also produced good comparanda, but only further study will confirm whether the two identified destruction levels can be respectively dated to MM IIIA and MM IIIB. This confirms the strong regionalism of early Neopalatial pottery production in North-Central Crete. Moreover, the increase in the number of MM III (A and B) deposits in this region is significant as this may suggest that the earthquake, which affected Knossos in MM IIIA, had a similar impact on other Cretan sites.⁵ As regards the relationship of Sissi with Knossos in the early Neopalatial period, only further study

4 Stratified and/or homogeneous MM IIIB deposits have been recently published from Knossos (Hatzaki 2007; Rethemiotakis, Warren 2014), Galatas (Rethemiotakis, Christakis 2013), Palaikastro (Knappett, Cunningham 2003; 2012; 2013), Kommos (Betancourt 2013), Phaistos (Girella 2007; 2010), Ayia Triada (Girella 2010; 2013a) and Kamilarí (Girella 2013b).

5 On Minoan earthquakes in the Neopalatial period and on their role as important catalysts for major changes in palatial sites, like Knossos, see Macdonald 2017.

	Site	MM IIIB deposits/levels comparable with the F30 deposit from Building F at Sissi	Bibliographic references
North-Central Crete	Sissi	Zone 5, open area, Context 5.16c (MM IIIB)	Langohr <i>et al.</i> 2018
		Zone 7, Megalithic wall deposit (MM IIIB)	Langohr <i>et al.</i> 2018
	Malia	<i>Quartier Pi</i> , Room 19, Pit 1 (MM IIIB)	Alberti <i>et al.</i> forthcoming
		<i>Abords Nord Est</i> , Niveau 8 (MM III-LM I level)	Darcque <i>et al.</i> 2015
	Knossos	KS178 Group (MM IIIB)	Hatzaki 2007
		Vlachakis Plot, Baulk II, Trench A, levels 3a-ε (Transitional MM IIIB/LM IA)	Rethemiotakis, Warren 2014
Eastern Crete	Galatas	Palace (foundation deposits in the East and West Wing; East Magazines) (MM IIIB)	Rethemiotakis, Christakis 2013
	Palaikastro	Block M, SE Building, Room 6, Contexts 6.2, 6.3, 6.5 and Room 11a, Context 11a.2 (MM IIIB)	Knappett, Cunningham 2012; 2013
		Building 6, deposit B6 R1/3 (MM IIIB)	Knappett, Cunningham 2003
Southern Crete	Phaistos	Houses South of the palace, Room LXXIII, Deposit 10A (MM IIIB)	Girella 2010
		Chalara quarter, area of Room ι', Deposit 26A (MM IIIB)	Girella 2010
		Villa, below Rooms 62, 65a and 66a, Deposit 5 (MM IIIB fill)	Girella 2010
	Ayia Triada	N-E Sector, Trench M3/M4, Deposit 15 (MM IIIB dump with MM IIIA pottery)	Girella 2010; 2013a
	Kommos	Central Hillside, Room 48, "Special Deposit" (MM IIIB)	Betancourt 2013
	Kamilari necropolis	Tholos A and Tholos B deposits (MM IIIA-B)	Girella 2013b

Table 2. MM IIIB deposits from Cretan sites that offer pottery comparable with that found in the F30 deposit.

of the MM III (A and B) and LM I (A and B) ceramic deposits from Sissi will help to understand whether the site had a specific relation with Knossos, and, if this can be shown, a diachronic appreciation may clarify whether this relation was limited in time or covered the different phases of the Neopalatial period.

In Eastern Crete, useful synchronisms are found in the MM IIIB deposits of Block M at Palaikastro (Knappett, Cunningham 2012; 2013), while Gournia has offered comparanda only for the *rhyton* no. 1, which could foreshadow LM IA examples.

In Southern Crete, the MM IIIB deposits of Phaistos (Girella 2010, Deposits 10A and 26A) and Ayia Triada (Girella 2010, Deposits 5 and 15) provide the soundest correlations. Recent revision of the "Special Deposit" in Room 48 on the Central Hillside at Kommos has also produced useful synchronisms with Sissi (Betancourt 2013). Comparanda are offered by the conspicuous MM III depositions of the Kamilari cemetery as well (Girella 2013b).

Content and function

The striking features of the F30 deposit are (1) the high percentage of undecorated vessels in comparison with decorated (*i.e.* dark-on-light and monochrome) ones; (2) the high concentration of conical cups (Figs. 19-20); (3) the occurrence of imports and special ritual implements.

Decorated vessels are present in a very small percentage (6%) in comparison to undecorated ones (94%). Dark-on-light vessels are represented by one *rhyton* and four drinking vases, while monochrome vessels comprise a large deep bowl, four drinking vases and a miniature vase (see Table 3). Most of the material is, instead, represented by undecorated vessels (both in Semifine and Semi-coarse Plain wares), with 162 examples out of 175.

Where the frequency of vessels in the deposit is concerned, drinking vases are the most frequent with 156 out of a total of 175 diagnostic vases (*ca.* 89%); 141 of these are conical cups. In comparison, pouring vessels are rare: one *rhyton*, three jugs, and one spouted jar (*ca.* 3%). Large open vessels (both bowls and *lekane*s) are represented by

8 examples (*ca.* 5%), while only four cooking pots are attested (*ca.* 2%). Finally, the remaining 1% is represented by the lamp and the miniature vase.

Among the ritual implements in the deposit, one can notice the imported and elaborate *rhyton*, the miniature collared jar and the snake figurine. The *lekane*s of which the bottoms were deliberately cut to obtain a big hole may be considered as special vessels (Fig. 17), implying that they could have been used for ritual purposes, perhaps libations. The presence of these specialised vessels points to the ritual (*i.e.* non ordinary) nature of the deposit, opening the possibility that the hoarded paraphernalia were first used in a special event before being deposited within Building F. The deposit is interpreted as ritual not only because it contains some ritual implements, but especially because it was intentionally redeposited in a box-like structure to be kept as memorandum.

Since very few animal bones were retrieved from the deposit, it cannot be considered as a concentration of food debris or discard. Hence if the original event was a feast that involved eating, the food remains must either have been placed or thrown away elsewhere, or the cooking pots were not used to prepare meat, but other kinds of foods (legumes?). One could also interpret the deposit as the store of pottery ready for a future feast and this interpretation would explain the absence of feasting refuse, such as animal bones; if this were the case, however, the material would have been largely intact or entirely mendable. On the contrary, the variable completeness of the vases (many intact conical cups and some broken large vases) makes it more likely that these vases were first used in a consumption event, likely held in the nearby court of the court-centred building, and soon after deposited in a box-like structure against a wall of Building F. It may be noted that the MM IIIB deposit from Context 5.16c in Zone 5 at Sissi (Devolder 2011, 158-159, figs. 6.25-6.26), which also seems to result from a single (feasting?) event, equally produced few animal bones, associated with more than one hundred plain conical cups (some found in stacks). With the latter were also several one-handled cups and tripod cooking pots (see Langohr *et al.* 2018).

		Dark-on-Light Ware (lustrous and non)	Monochrome Ware	Semifine Plain Ware	Semi-coarse Ware	Cooking Ware	Totals
Drinking vessels (156)	Ledge-rim bowls	1		3			4
	Hemispherical bowls			5			5
	Bell-shaped cups	2					2
	S-profile cups	1					1
	Tall convex cups		2				2
	Straight-sided cups		1				1
	Handleless conical cups		1	140 (42 non-catalogued)			141
Pouring vessels (4)	Jugs			3			3
	Open-spouted jars			1			1
Open vessels (8)	Bowls		1	4			5
	Basins (<i>lekane</i> s)			1	2		3
Cooking vessels (4)	Cooking pot					1	1
	Tripod cooking pots					3	3
Ritual/other vessels (3)	<i>Rhyton</i>	1 (lustrous)					1
	Miniature vase		1				1
	Lamp			1			1
Figurines (1)	Snake		1				1
Totals		5	7	158	2	4	176

Table 3. Frequency and typology of ceramic vessels and objects from the F30 deposit.



Fig. 19. The different types of plain conical cups represented in the F30 deposit, side view (©EBSA; photos: C. Papanikolopoulos).

It is suggested here that the composition of the assemblage and the stratigraphic position of the F30 deposit within Building F agree well with an interpretation as a feasting deposit, accompanying a construction event so that it can also be labelled a building deposit. With this I mean that, on the construction of Building F, a feasting event was held of which the paraphernalia were deliberately deposited in a special container placed against a major wall of the building. Its dating to the MM IIIB would give a terminus ad quem for the foundation of the building.

Given the ceremonial nature of the event, two questions present themselves: how many people took part and who arranged the feast?

If the assemblage is a feasting hoard, it is likely that the deposited paraphernalia, although fragmented, represent the original vessels used in the event. Since there are 156 drinking vases, the total number of participants could have been 156. What is striking in the deposit is the low number of decorated cups in comparison to the undecorated ones: eight out of a total of 156. Of these eight, the shape of which differs one from another, four are cups in Dark-on-Light Ware and four in Monochrome Ware. The undecorated vases are represented by three small ledge-rim bowls (the third one is uncertain), five hemispherical bowls and 140 conical cups (Table 3).

I wonder whether a kind of pottery hierarchy could exist in this deposit. This would be much simplified and only based on the evidence of drinking pots, which are characterized by a few decorated (8) and an almost 20 times higher number of undecorated (148) vases.⁶ It is of course tempting to view this pottery hierarchy in terms of social relations and specifically as reflections of the status of the people that took part in the feasting event. May we reconstruct a feast with a relatively limited difference between the participants? A small group of higher status or grade, represented by eight people and a second, larger group, represented by 148 people? If we take the pottery hierarchy a bit further, other hypotheses are possible. We observed that the 148 undecorated cups/bowls were attested in a considerable variety of shapes. Besides the eight bowls (ledge-rim and hemispherical), there are three varieties of conical cups, each subdivided into two sub-types (for a total of six sub-types: see Table 1). The three varieties are produced through different recipes and ways of finishing (Figs. 19-20). For example, Type 1 is manufactured using a red, semifine fabric, with rather small or medium-sized inclusions, is wheelmade and well finished. Type 2 is broad, strict conical and is produced using a light-red semifine fabric with big, white inclusions. It is wheelmade and not accurately finished; the finishing is so bad as to make the wheel marks well visible. The

⁶ The pottery hierarchy hypothesised for the F30 deposit from Sissi is not comparable with the pyramidal one reconstructed, for example, in the MM IB deposit from Early Magazine A at Knossos (Macdonald, Knappett 2007, 161-165), where it is reflected by the presence of identical shapes in different qualities and quantities.



Fig. 20. The different types of plain conical cups represented in the F30 deposit, top view (©EBSA; photos: C. Papanikolopoulos).

bell-shaped cups (Type 3) are produced in a pinkish-orange fabric, which is more orange than the other conical cup fabrics, are wheelmade and well finished.

Since we are dealing with a consumption deposit – and not with a production one – it is quite difficult to find a ratio in the morphological and technological variety of undecorated drinking pots. It seems, however, reasonable to suggest that the diversity observed in the morphology, recipes and finishing techniques of drinking pots could well reflect the diversity in the social groups who participated in the feasting event. Were there eight groups, each with their higher status chief, participating in the feast?

If the deposit was really connected to the foundation of Neopalatial Building F, which, by extension, formed part of the court-centred complex, it is tempting to explain it as resulting from a work feast, as defined and discussed by Dietler and Herbich (2001, 241-244). Despite the difficulties in defining the typology of a feasting because “the same feasting event can embody diacritical elements but it can also lead to reciprocal exchanges of labour or reaffirm and strengthen patron-client relationships” (Hamilakis, Sherratt 2012), two options may be considered. The feast could have been sponsored by some kind of ‘palatial’ elite, in exchange for the labour provided by the groups for a specific project, such as the foundation of Building F – a top-down perspective. However, the work feast could also have been an intra-community event, where different groups participated in the celebrations because they provided labour for a communal construction project – a bottom-up perspective (on the subject see Driessen 2018b). Considering the presence of a high number and variety of drinking pots, this second possibility seems more likely since in the first case one would rather expect a single type of drinking vase to have been provided by the organizing body while here it almost looks like each group brought its own vase.

The feasting deposit of Building F is comparable to a number of Late Bronze Age Cretan cases, including the ritual deposit of Nopigeia-Drapanias in Western Crete, which, however, is interpreted as the result of multiple dumpings (Hamilakis, Harris 2011); there are also ceremonial pits at Neopalatial Malia (Driessen *et al.* 2008, 197-205) and in the Dark Age settlement of Thronos/Kephala (D’Agata 1997-2000, 45-59). However, the best

comparanda are given by the Neopalatial building deposits that are present all over the island. In Southern Crete, good examples are represented by the deposit found in a stone-lined cist (known also as *casella*) beneath the Neopalatial Room 50 in the palace at Phaistos and containing 115 conical cups and many animal bones (La Rosa 2002, 39); another one was found beneath Neopalatial Room 49 at Ayia Triada (La Rosa 2002, 41 with bibliography). Very similar is also the ritual deposit in a sealed space recently discovered in Room 13 of the South-West wing of the palace at Neopalatial Gournia, which the excavators associated with the MM IIIA foundation of the palace (Watrous *et al.* 2015, 431-433).

At Galatas, besides the MM IIIB foundation deposits in the East and North wings of the palace (Rethemiotakis, Christakis 2013, 94, 99, fig. 8.1, nos. 5-6), a deposit sealed by a plastered floor in the area of the altar and *bothros* of the North Court exists (Rethemiotakis, Christakis 2013, 100). Like the F30 deposit, this closed deposit has been interpreted as the result of a feasting episode on the occasion of the palace rebuilding in MM IIIB.

The most famous case, however, is represented by the Temple Repositories, recently interpreted as a building deposit: the "...elaborate ritual performed could have been linked to the inauguration, or the completion, of building work..." (Hatzaki 2009, 28; see also Hatzaki 2011). Without comparing the luxurious faience Snake Figurines from the Temple Repositories with the clay snake figurine from the F30 deposit, the latter could also have been broken and deposited within Building F as a commemorative act (Hatzaki 2009; see also Miller Bonney 2011).

All the building deposits mentioned were found in built, underground structures, which were constructed to inaugurate superimposed rooms, areas or buildings. The Sissi deposit is, however, not underground, but accommodated in a box-like structure (a bench?) built against a major wall of Building F. As such it is comparable with the visible and commemorative filled-in bench or platform deposits found at Protopalatial Phaistos, where they were constructed in crucial areas/rooms of the First Palace in order to memorialise the foundation of new wings or buildings (Caloi 2017; forthcoming; see also Caloi 2012). The memory of the feasting event for the MM IIIB foundation of Building F would have then been perpetuated through the visible box-like structure. Together with the rebuilding activities occurring at contemporary Knossos and Galatas, the building or re-building of the court-centred complex at Sissi in the MM IIIB phase testifies a new phase of the early Neopalatial period in North-Central Crete.

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