

«BEYOND THE PARNON RANGE, SPARTA LAY REMOTE»¹.
NEW INSIGHTS ON THE 7TH-C. LACONIAN POTTERY
FROM THE AMYKLAION

ADRIEN DELAHAYE – CHRISTIAN MAZET

Riassunto. Mentre la ceramica laconica del VI sec. a.C., ampiamente distribuita nel bacino del Mediterraneo, ha ricevuto molta attenzione da parte degli studiosi, le produzioni locali del secolo precedente sono state oggetto di un interesse minore. Questo è dovuto in parte alla loro scarsa documentazione in contesti ben stratificati. Finora le cronologie proposte da Arthur Lane negli anni '30, in parte riviste da John Boardman, rappresentano ancora un punto di riferimento. Sulla base del materiale noto dai nuovi scavi archeologici nel santuario di Apollo ad Amykles, il presente lavoro intende proporre, in modo preliminare, spunti di riflessione sulle produzioni delle officine ceramiche laconiche del VII sec. a.C., dal Tardo Geometrico al primo Laconico II, concentrandosi sull'emergere dello stile orientalizzante (Laconico I) e sulle più recenti ricerche relative alle fasi iniziali della distribuzione della produzione laconica nel Mediterraneo arcaico.

Περίληψη. Παρόλο που η λακωνική κεραμική του 6^{ου} αι. π.Χ., ευρέως διαδεδομένη σε όλη τη λεκάνη της Μεσογείου, έχει τύχει μεγάλης προσοχής από τους ερευνητές, δεν συνέβη το ίδιο με τις τοπικές παραγωγές του προηγούμενου αιώνα. Αυτό οφείλεται εν μέρει στην απουσία στρωματογραφημένων τεκμηρίων. Μέχρι τώρα η έρευνα εξακολουθεί να ανατρέχει στο χρονολογικό σχήμα που πρότεινε ο Arthur Lane τη δεκαετία του 1930, το οποίο αναθεωρήθηκε μερικώς από τον John Boardman. Βασισμένο στο υλικό από τις πρόσφατες ανασκαφές στο ιερό του Απόλλωνα στις Αμύκλες, το παρόν άρθρο στοχεύει στην προκαταρκτική παρουσίαση στοιχείων σχετικά με τις παραγωγές των λακωνικών εργαστηρίων κεραμικής του 7^{ου} αι. π.Χ., από την Ύστερη Γεωμετρική περίοδο έως τις αρχές της Πρώιμης Λακωνικής II εστιάζοντας στην εμφάνιση της ανατολίζουσας τεχνοτροπίας (Λακωνική I) και στις πιο πρόσφατες έρευνες σχετικά με τα αρχικά στάδια της εξάπλωσης της λακωνικής παραγωγής στην αρχαϊκή Μεσόγειο.

Abstract. While Laconian pottery from the 6th c. BC, widely distributed throughout the Mediterranean basin, has received significant attention from researchers, the local productions of the preceding century have garnered considerably less interest. This is partly due to their limited documentation within well-stratified contexts. Current understanding still relies on the chronologies proposed by Arthur Lane in the 1930s, partially revised by John Boardman. Drawing on material unearthed from recent archaeological excavations at the sanctuary of Apollo in Amykles, this paper aims to provide new preliminary evidence regarding the productions of Laconian ceramic workshops during the 7th c. BC. This period spans from the Late Geometric to the early Laconian II, with a particular focus on the emergence of the Orientalising style (Laconian I). Additionally, it explores the latest research concerning the initial phases of Laconian production distribution in the archaic Mediterranean.

There is undoubtedly still a lot of knowledge to be gained from pottery remains of the 7th c. BC in Laconia². While Laconian pottery of the 6th c. BC, widely distributed throughout the Mediterranean basin, has received some attention, the local productions from the preceding century have been largely neglected for three main reasons³. Firstly, they are less attested and therefore less documented. Secondly, they were scarcely exported, making them unfamiliar to archaeologists and difficult to date following evidence from contexts in the western Mediterranean. This stands in contrast to the well-studied 6th-c. wares analyzed by Paola Pelagatti, Conrad Stibbe, Maria Pipili, and Gerald Schaus⁴. Thirdly, they exhibit less standardisation compared to vases of the 6th and 5th c. BC, which complicates their identification.

¹ LANE 1933/34, 100.

² Our thanks go to Prof. Stravos Vlizos (Ionian University of Corfu – Archaeological Society at Athens) for entrusting the authors, since 2017 and within the framework of the *Amykles Research Project*, with the study of the archaic and classical material excavated from the Amyklaion since 2005, to the Ephorate of Antiquities of Laconia for its collaboration, the École française d'Athènes and the Mediterranean Archaeological Trust for their support, Vicky Vlachou for sharing

her material, Gerry Schaus and Florentia Fragkopoulou for their comments, Russell Webb for his proofreading and Guillaume Fuchs (EFA) for his help in formatting the figures.

³ Symptomatically, 7th-c. BC Orientalising pottery production does not appear as a sub-chapter in COULIÉ 2013.

⁴ STIBBE 1972; PIPILI 1987; PELAGATTI 1989; 1992; PIPILI 2001; 2004; STIBBE 2004; SCHAUS 2015; 2020.

In 1929, John Percival Droop introduced a typo-chronology for Laconian pottery, drawing from the material and stratigraphy discovered at the sanctuary of *Orthia* during the excavations conducted by the British School at Athens⁵. This system still serves as the fundamental framework used today for the study of Laconian pottery, as well as for the broader Laconian material culture, spanning from Laconian I to VI. However, scholars are increasingly questioning and even denying the validity of the later phases, particularly Laconian VI. A few years later, Edward Arthur Lane conducted a pioneering study building upon Droop's classification and the stratigraphy of *Orthia*. Lane's work introduced a new stylistic approach for a better understanding of Laconian pottery⁶. In regard to the earlier periods, his perspective reflected the prevailing ideas of his time: he suggested an initial Geometric period characterized by the predominant influence of pottery centers in Corinth and Argos on all the Peloponnese. Subsequently, he depicted a 7th c. BC in which the ceramic workshops of Sparta emerged as isolated entities, showing limited receptivity to Corinthian influences. Lane's statement encapsulates this perception: «Beyond the Parnon range, Sparta lay remote»⁷. Nevertheless, he acknowledged the possibility that Protocorinthian imports could have influenced Laconian pottery during the 7th c. BC⁸, but still noted that the local production in Laconia required time to adjust to the technical innovations and the repertoire of Corinthian pottery. It wasn't until the last quarter of the century that Laconian pottery fully embraced the black-figure style, which Lane described as a «second wave of Corinthian influence».

It was Lane, building upon the earlier work of Droop, who extensively elaborated on the characteristics of the stylistic phases of 7th c. BC Laconian pottery: the Late Geometric, the Transitional phase, Laconian I, and Laconian II. However, proposed dates were reassessed and adjusted downwards by John Boardman in 1963, based on a new interpretation of the stratigraphy of the sanctuary of *Orthia*. According to this revised chronological sequence, the emergence of the Laconian I animal and vegetal style is now situated around the middle of the 7th c. and it persists for only a few decades before giving way to the Corinthian incision, marking the onset of the proper black-figure style of Laconian II. This transition occurs shortly after the last quarter of the century, around 610 BC⁹. No compelling alternatives have been put forward since then, therefore we continue to depend on this chronological classification. However, it's worth noting that the reliability of the stratigraphic analysis of the deposits from the sanctuary of *Orthia*, particularly regarding the sand layer and the sealing of previous activity, has been questioned¹⁰. These uncertainties have frequently created the impression of a significant hiatus within Laconian material culture, which is more closely related to stratigraphic issues than with historical development. Ingrid Margreiter's research, which expands her investigation of Laconian Protogeometric and Geometric production into the Archaic period, has played a dual role: while it has aided in identifying elements of continuity between earlier periods and Laconian I, it has also contributed to the disassociation of Laconian I from subsequent productions¹¹. On the other hand, the foundational typological research conducted by Conrad Stibbe and Paola Pelagatti primarily focuses on the black-figured and black-glazed wares of the 6th and 5th c. BC. As a result, their work doesn't thoroughly deal with the 7th c. BC. However, they have occasionally revisited this period in the context of typological studies and examinations of specific vessel forms. For instance, in the *Bollettino d'Arte*, they have discussed the characteristics and evolution of the bell krater¹². More recently, Maria Pipili has provided a comprehensive synthesis of Laconian Pottery, with valuable insights, in her contribution to the *Companion to Sparta*¹³. Additionally, Gerald Schaus has published the Laconian pottery from Miletus, which deeply renews our knowledge of Laconian II vases and their distribution¹⁴.

To address these concerns about the evolution of Laconian pottery during the 7th c. BC, this paper aims to provide a comprehensive overview of Laconian pottery production, from the Late Geometric to the early Laconian II period, by combining existing knowledge with new recent findings from the Amyklaion¹⁵.

⁵ DROOP 1929.

⁶ LANE 1933/34, who clearly states that his approach is mainly stylistic and that his conclusions differ from those of Droop, especially for the ceramics of the 6th c. BC.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 100.

⁸ New data will be provided on the Protocorinthian imports in Sparta with the ongoing work carried out by the authors on the Amyklaion's pottery finds.

⁹ Dating after SCHAUS 2015, 40; 2020, 15, revising BOARDMAN 1963, 2.

¹⁰ FRAGKOPOULOU 2011, 120-121.

¹¹ MARGREITER 1988.

¹² PELAGATTI-STIBBE 1988.

¹³ PIPILI 2018.

¹⁴ SCHAUS 2020. Also, a forthcoming article by Gerald Schaus on the production and distribution of Laconian II productions, in HODKINSON-DELAHAYE forth.

¹⁵ For a preliminary overview see DELAHAYE-MAZET 2023.



Fig. 1. Aerial view of the Amyklaion site (© Amykles Research Project).

THE AMYKLAION: A BRIEF HISTORY OF RESEARCH AND THE ARCHAIC CONTEXTS OF THE SOUTH SECTOR

The sanctuary of Apollo *Amyklaios* is situated atop the low hill of Agia Kyriaki, approximately 5 km S of present-day Sparta, at the heart of the Eurotas plain. It lies about 600 m E of the contemporary village of Amykles (Fig. 1). The sanctuary was renowned in ancient times for its temple of Apollo, constructed by Bathykles of Magnesia and famously referred to as the “Throne”. At its heart stood the cult statue of the god, situated above the tomb of Hyakinthos. Additionally, the sanctuary was known for hosting the collective festivities of the Hyakinthia.

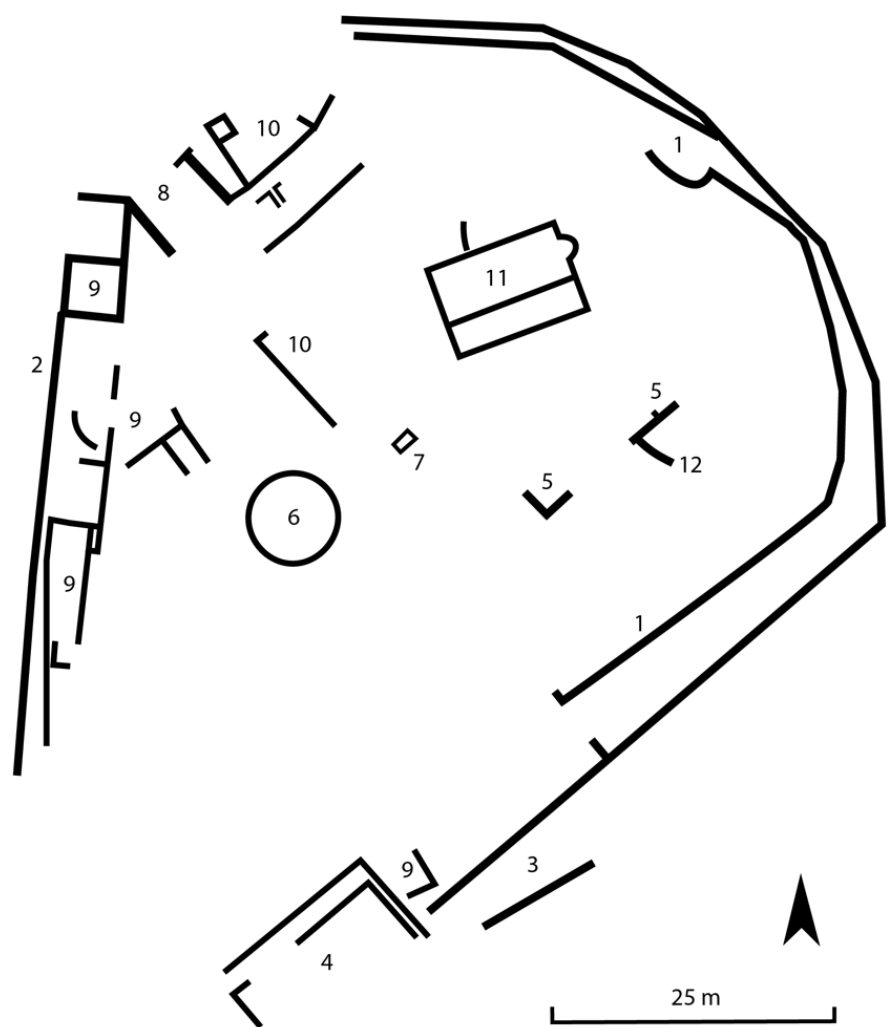
Several travellers of the 18th and 19th c. already suspected that the sanctuary was that of Apollo *Amyklaios*¹⁶, but this was definitively confirmed during the first excavations conducted in 1889-1890 by Christos Tsountas, under the auspices of the Archaeological Society at Athens, with the discovery of stamped tiles bearing the inscription of the name of Apollo *Amyklaios*¹⁷. Two subsequent campaigns took place in 1904 and 1907, led by Adolf Furtwängler and his assistant Ernst Fiechter, who published the conclusions of their research in 1918¹⁸. Up to this point, the initial excavations confirmed the existence of a circular stepped altar and unveiled the foundations and the *krepis* of the Throne of Apollo. While only a small portion of the small finds was published, the primary focus of these excavations was to identify the throne and its architectural components. A third campaign, led by Ernst Buschor under the auspices of the German Archaeological Institute, took place in 1925¹⁹. On the basis of the conclusions drawn from the analysis of the stratigraphy outside the SE corner of the Archaic *peribolos*, Buschor attempted to establish the chronological sequence of the sanctuary. The pottery analysis, however, only partially aligns with the proposed chronological phases. Consequently, the proposed stratigraphic sequence and dating cannot be considered reliable, especially for the Archaic period. This excavation is notably the first to provide a proper publication of the material, in particular pottery, accompanied by photographic and technical documentation. Nevertheless, this data does not correlate with the typological and chronological sequences later established by Droop and Lane.

¹⁶ MATALAS 2012.

¹⁷ ΤΣΟΥΝΤΑΣ 1890; 1892.

¹⁸ FIECHTER 2018.

¹⁹ BUSCHOR-VON MASSOW 1927.



- 1. Late geometric *peribolos*
- 2. Archaic *peribolos*
- 3. Late geometric / proto-archaic southern terrace
- 4. South archaic structure
- 5. *In situ* remains of the Archaic Temple of Apollo (Throne)
- 6. Archaic circular stepped altar
- 7. Base of the cult statue
- 8. Archaic north entrance
- 9. Late Antique structures (4th-5th BC)
- 10. Protobyzantine structures (5th-6th BC)
- 11. Modern church of Agia Kyriaki
- 12. Remains of the previous modern church of Agia Kyriaki

Fig. 2. Schematic drawing of the sanctuary of Apollo at Amykles
(drawing A. Delahaye after an orthophotography of N. Nenci; © Amykles Research Project).

Since 2005, the Amykles Research Project has undertaken new excavations at the Amyklaion, led by Angelos Delivorrias and then by Stavros Vlizon, initially under the auspices of the Benaki Museum and subsequently under that of the Archaeological Society at Athens²⁰. The northeastern part of the Agia Kyriaki hill initially accomodated an Early Helladic settlement before turning into an open-air sanctuary during the Mycenaean, Protogeometric, and Geometric periods (Fig. 2). A first *peribolos* was constructed around the hill towards the end of the 8th c. BC. However, it wasn't until the latter half of the 6th c. BC

²⁰ ΒΑΙΖΟΣ 2010; 2011; 2012; VΛΙΖΟΣ 2012; ΒΑΙΖΟΣ 2013; 2018a; 2018b; 2019a; 2019b; 2020a; 2020b; 2021. Summary reports are available on the project's website: <https://amyklaion.gr/gr/research/reports/>.

that the hilltop underwent a significant process of monumentalisation. During this period, a new *peribolos* was erected, encompassing the pre-existing geometric enclosure. Additionally, it functioned as a retaining wall for a terrace, thereby expanding the available surface area at the summit of the hill. This expansion facilitated the construction of the temple of Apollo and the circular altar. Following that, the space enclosed within the *peribolos* saw no major alterations until the 5th c. AD and beyond.

Compared to the substantial amount of Geometric pottery unearthed at the site, the known Archaic finds initially appeared relatively modest. Until the excavation of the South Sector between 2017 and 2021, the majority of the Archaic material originated from the hilltop area surrounding the circular altar. However, the taphonomy and post-depositional processes affecting this part of the site have rendered the stratigraphy challenging to interpret. The hilltop has been subject to various remodeling operations, erosion, prior excavation campaigns, and agricultural cultivation. Consequently, nearly all Archaic material found in this area comes from highly disturbed surface layers. The recent excavations conducted from 2017 to 2021 on the southern slope of the hill have nevertheless unveiled rich Archaic levels that are relatively homogenous and well-stratified. A Π-shaped structure dating from the end of the 6th to the beginning of the 5th c. BC was discovered, alongside a segment of a retaining wall dated to the beginning of the 7th c. BC, oriented E-W and aligning with the 6th-c. *peribolos*. Adjacent to this retaining wall, the fill of a circulatory terrace (referred to as the “corridor”) yielded an assemblage comprising a diverse array of *aryballoi*, drinking vessels, black-glazed and black-figured Laconian wares, as well as Orientalising imports and substantial concentrations of miniature vases²¹. In addition to pottery, the excavations unearthed ashes and faunal remains, some of which showed signs of exposure to fire. The discoveries also included ivory, carved bone, bronze, and lead offerings. These findings suggest a potential ritual cleansing of the sacrificial area surrounding the circular altar. The remnants may have been thrown away beyond the *peribolos* and used as fill for terracing activities²². The stratigraphy provides a dating of the layer between the beginning of the 7th and the middle of the 6th c. BC.

With this recent data from the Amyklaion excavations, new insights into the stylistic evolution of Laconian pottery of the 7th c. can be suggested. However, it's important to note that the study of the pottery is still ongoing, and further analysis may refine or alter some of the proposed reflections.

THE LATE GEOMETRIC AND TRANSITIONAL PHASES

Late Geometric Laconian pottery, whose production spanned from the middle of the 8th c. BC onwards, endured for more than a century. This phase is characterised by influences from Argive and Corinthian pottery traditions. The work conducted by Margreiter and, more recently, by Vicky Vlachou on the material from the Amyklaion site is particularly significant in understanding this phase of production²³. One of the valuable contributions of Margreiter's study is her reconstruction of the evolution of Geometric pottery. She emphasises the emergence of new closed shapes during the Late Geometric period, such as large amphorae, which were likely associated with the transportation and storage needs of worshipers at the sanctuary. Additionally, Margreiter noted the development of a figurative style during this period, with scenes depicted on skyphoi and kraters. For instance, a very intriguing fragment of a Late Geometric krater (Fig. 3)²⁴ depicts a pair of male dancers, possibly athletes, moving to the right. This piece can be compared to a Protoattic lebes from the Subdipylon group, dated to the end of the 8th c. BC, which features female figures walking in long strides²⁵. This comparison allows us to propose a dating of the fragment to the end of the 8th c. BC, or perhaps the first decades of the 7th c. BC. However, precision is limited as we primarily rely on filling contexts from sanctuaries to date Geometric and Orientalising Laconian pottery. Nonetheless, the decoration system of the krater features the primary motifs of Late Geometric vessels as well as the use of creamy slip which endured in Laconian pottery for an extended period thereafter.

²¹ So far, 7121 artifacts have been counted (MNI), 6680 (including 94% of *aryballoi*) of which come from the Archaic layer of the circulatory terrace's fill. See DELAHAYE-MAZET 2023.

²² For an overview, BAIZOS 2018a; 2018b; 2019a; 2019b; 2020a; 2021.

²³ MARGREITER 1988; VLACHOU 2012.

²⁴ AM/KT305.

²⁵ VLACHOU 2012, fig. 5, fn. 61, compared to NM 810 (atelier d'Athènes MN 894), COULIÉ 2013, 90-91, fig. 63: «Le chaudron

MN 810 [...] avec ses figures féminines échevelées marchant à grandes enjambées, traduit une énergie nouvelle, qui atteste que la peinture attique de la fin de l'époque géométrique s'est désormais lancée à la conquête du mouvement et de la vie». This “energetic style” is also present in the atticising expressions of the Argive Late Geometric Pottery: *ibid.*, 95, fig. 70: Krater from Argos, Archaeological Museum, inv. C 201, dated back to the end of 8th c. BC.



Fig. 3. Fragmentary Late Geometric krater with figured decoration (after VLACHOU 2015; © Amykles Research Project).



Fig. 4. Fragmentary Transitional/Early Orientalising Laconian krater with figured decoration, inv. AM/KT326 (© Amykles Research Project).



Fig. 5. Fragmentary Transitional/Early Orientalising Laconian closed shape with Corinthianising rays, inv. AM/KT1831 (© Amykles Research Project).

Another example of this transitional figured style from the Amyklaion material is found on a deep and curved krater adorned with checkerboard patterns above the characteristic creamy slip. This vessel also includes a metopal zone with the depiction of a crouching lion, identifiable by its paw (Fig. 4)²⁶. This stage can be viewed as preparatory for the emergence of the animal style in the second half of the 7th c. BC. In this phase of the Transitional/Early Orientalising Laconian period, a fragment of a closed vase, likely another krater crafted from a finely textured beige-pinkish clay (Munsell 5YR 7/4), with a faded white slip, is adorned with proto-Corinthianising rays (Fig. 5)²⁷. Understanding this phase of Laconian pottery remains challenging. As Robert Cook noted, Laconian vase-painters «did not show much enthusiasm for the Orientalizing Style», and mostly copied in an «unpretentious» but, nevertheless, in an «independent» manner, the proto-Corinthian pottery, «in an assortment of Subgeometric and Early Orientalizing,

²⁶ AM/KT326.

²⁷ AM/KT1831 (2016 excavation campaign).

not yet understood»²⁸. However, the discovery of these few fragments from the Amyklaion, along with potential future findings, are likely to provide nuance to this assertion.

THE LACONIAN I, A PHASE OF EXPERIMENTS

According to the accepted chronology, the transitional Laconian phase is followed for only a few decades, from 650 to about 620 BC, by the Laconian I phase, which Pipili rightly described as «The Age of Experiment», before the appearance of the Corinthianising incision shortly after the last quarter of the century²⁹. This innovative phase is distinguished by the adoption of a strong orientalising spirit, characterised by vegetal motifs and animal friezes executed in outline and in silhouette, with lions and bovids, but also figures that at first glance are representative of Greek-Eastern pottery, such as wild goats and the more unusual motifs of hunting hares and fantastic animals. Lane suggested that Laconian I had been created by a single craftsman³⁰, but this hypothesis does not stand up to close analysis of the corpus, which is characterised above all by its stylistic eclecticism. In general, for this phase, we can say that pottery became more delicate, the walls became thinner – perhaps imitating metalwork – and painters continued the now systematic use of white slip. Several Laconian I figured vases are known from previous excavations at the main sanctuaries of Sparta (Artemis *Orthia*, the Menelaion) and of Amykles (Apollo *Amyklaios*, Agamemnon and Cassandra). Other finds from rescue excavations in the modern city of Sparta have also been recently presented by the Ephorate of Antiquities of Laconia³¹.

The material from the Amyklaion completes the finds of Buschor, with 113 items catalogued – so far – for the Laconia I and II in the project's database, including some pieces of particular interest³². A first one is a cup fragment that bears a goat in silhouette on its white slipped belly, while the lip is decorated with a distinctive purple band (Fig. 6)³³. A second one is a fragmentary globular aryballos that depicts two dogs which are probably part of a hare-hunting scene clearly inspired by Milesian pottery (Fig. 7)³⁴. The representation of dogs finds a parallel in the oinochoe of the Malibu Painter, which is also close to the Painter of the Oinochoe Levy of the Louvre of the South Ionian A1c³⁵. Hare-hunting scenes are known on several Laconian I pieces, for instance on the lip of a lakaina from the sanctuary of *Orthia* (Fig. 8a)³⁶ and on a bell krater from the sanctuary of Agamemnon and Cassandra, where a hunt dog also presents the peculiarity of having a kind of muzzle (Fig. 8b)³⁷, which is anything but common in the Greek Orientalising repertoire. One can also note on the Amyklaion aryballos the peculiar pattern of empty sigmas in the secondary frieze at the junction between the body and the shoulder³⁸, that can be compared to another bell krater from the Menelaion, with an animalistic frieze in *silhouette* with a bull and a lion (Fig. 8c)³⁹.

Thus, sustaining the definition of this Eastern Greek trend, a representation of a bearded sphinx discovered by the British excavators in a deposit of the Acropolis of Sparta, near the sanctuary of Athena *Chalkioikos*, presents a profile with Eastern Greek features (Fig. 9)⁴⁰. These include the large almond-shaped eye, the chin underlined by a fine beard, the very rounded design of the nose formed by a loop whose end underlines the nostril, and the strange headdress that ends in a notched scroll. All these details could evoke a stylistic affiliation with northern Anatolia, perhaps with Aeolian pottery. But it is not only the Eastern

²⁸ COOK 1997, 88-89.

²⁹ DROOP 1929, 70 dated the category earlier in the 7th c., around 700-635 BC; LANE 1933/34, 115-116. Lakonian I, fine ware. «For convenience of classification, the name Lakonian I is applied to all vases made from the introduction of Orientalising motives based on plant forms, down to the appearance of an incised black figure style, that is, ca. 700-630 B.C.»; BOARDMAN 1963, 2 lowered the dating to around 650-620 BC on the basis of the revised stratigraphic sequence of *Orthia*'s sanctuary; SCHAUS 2015, 40; 2020, 15 lowered the beginning of Laconian II around 615/610 BC, a date until which we could extend Laconian I.

³⁰ LANE 1933/34, 116: «A single master potter perhaps invented the style, and it achieved immediate popularity with worshippers who wished to dedicate a vase at a Lakonian sanctuary». See also CAROCCI 1986, 174 for the hypothesis of an immigrant in Laconia.

³¹ Forthcoming synthesis in TSOULI forth.

³² BUSCHOR-VON MASSOW 1927, pl. XIII, Gefässe des VII. und VI. Jahrhunderts.

³³ AM/KT1755 (2012 excavation campaign).

³⁴ AM/KT1892 (2022 excavation campaign).

³⁵ Malibu, Getty Museum, inv. 81.AE.83 (11402), dated around 625 BC; COULÉ 2013, 160-161, fig. 151. See also the Thasian production, for example the plate of the Horse Painter of the Artemision of Thasos (Thasos, Archaeological Museum, inv. 2057π), dated around 620 BC: *ibid.*, 259, fig. 261.

³⁶ LANE 1933/34, pl. 26f.

³⁷ Sparta, Archaeological Museum, without inv. No.: PELAGATTI-STIBBE 1988, 16-17, figs. 6-7, 22, cat. 2.

³⁸ For the sigma frieze see STIBBE 2000, 191, fig. 51 (empty sigmas Pyxis B2).

³⁹ Sparta, Archaeological Museum, inv. 1738: PELAGATTI-STIBBE 1988, 16, figs. 5, 31, 21-22, cat. 1.

⁴⁰ DROOP 1927, 57, fig. 4, said to be Subgeometric; LANE 1933/34, 121, pl. 23j, who noted that the face had «a Semitic-looking nose». VERDELIS 1951, 26-27 states that «sur les vases du Laconien I, le motif du sphinx est inconnu». Nor is the fragment considered by Nota Kourou in her 1978 thesis on the sphinx in Archaic Greek art.

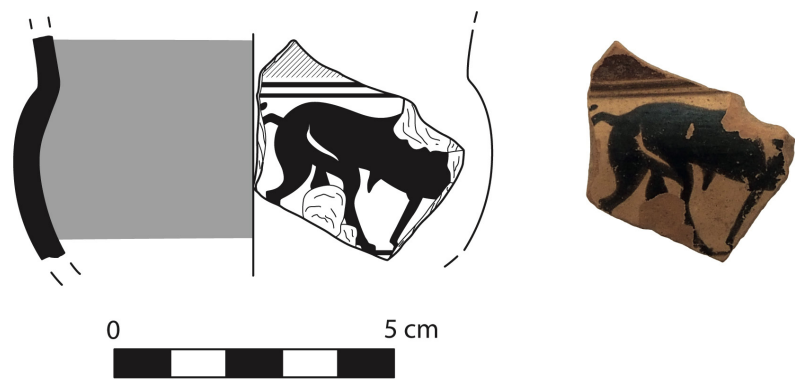


Fig. 6. Laconian I cup, inv. AM/KT1755 (drawing Y. Nakas; © Amykles Research Project).

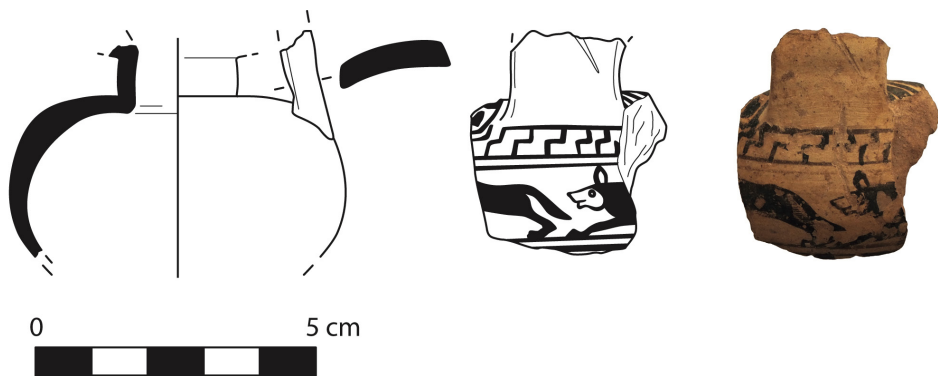


Fig. 7. Laconian I aryballos, inv. AM/KT1892 (drawing Y. Nakas; © Amykles Research Project).

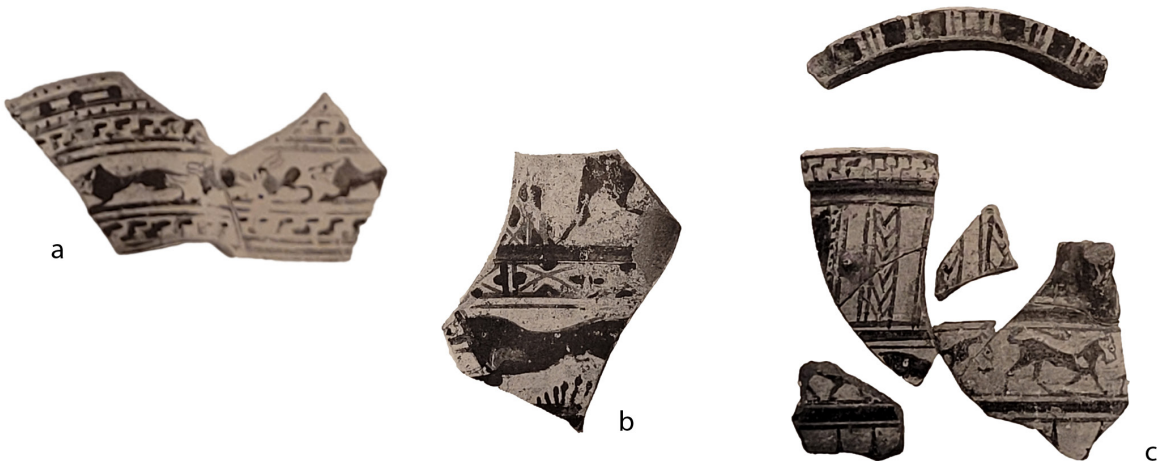


Fig. 8. Hare huntings of Laconian I pottery: a) lakaina from the sanctuary of *Orthia*; b) bell krater from the sanctuary of Agamemnon and Cassandra; c) bell krater from the Menelaion (a. after LANE 1933/34; b-c. after PELAGATTI-STIBBE 1988).

Greek influence that can be detected: after Lane, Pelagatti was one of the first to assert, at the end of the 1960s when she analysed the material from the museum of Taranto, the stylistic versatility of Laconian I, which was influenced by both Eastern Greek and Cycladic pottery⁴¹. This Cycladic inspiration is particularly striking on a lakaina from the sanctuary of *Orthia* (Fig. 10), which depicts on its high lip, in a metopal zone between vertical bands of interlocking triangles, at least two female *protomai* facing each other and

⁴¹ PELAGATTI 1955/56, 10: «[...] Si dovrà giungere agli inizi dello stile orientalizzante per osservare, nei piccoli animali disegnati a contorno, nei motivi curvilinei e nella decorazione floreale, le prime notevoli influenze dall'esterno, in particolare cicladiche e greco-orientali».



Fig. 9. Archaeological Museum of Sparta. Fragment of a Laconian Orientalising closed shape. From the Acropolis of Sparta, deposit near the sanctuary of Athena *Chalkioikos*. (photo Christian Mazet; © Hellenic Ministry of Culture, Ephorate of Antiquities of Lakonia).



Fig. 10. Archaeological Museum of Sparta. Laconian I lakaina from the sanctuary of *Orthia*, Mask pit area (photo Christian Mazet; © Hellenic Ministry of Culture, Ephorate of Antiquities of Lakonia).



Fig. 11. Fragments of a Laconian I closed shape, invv. AM/KT2293, AM/KT2081 (© Amykles Research Project).



Fig. 12. Laconian I closed shape from the sanctuary of *Orthia* (after DAWKINS 1929; recomposition of the square pattern by Ch. Mazet).

seen in profile, executed in *silhouette*⁴². The inspiration is clearly Cycladic, taking up the female prototypes of the Parian production, mostly known thanks to the finds from the Rheneia purification pit⁴³. And as well as in the Parian production, these Laconian I *protomai* could also be male⁴⁴. The colourful pattern of alternating red and black pending tongues on the body of the vase is also documented on the shoulder of a fragmentary Laconian I closed shape from the Amyklaion, probably an oinochoe, which also belongs to this experimental phase of Laconian I (Fig. 11)⁴⁵.

Moreover, the mouth of a closed vase from the sanctuary of *Orthia*, linked to Laconian I by its secondary decoration of pointed squares, presents on the neck these female *protomai* in plastic additions, which could be proof of a possible permeation, in the Laconian workshop, of the painting and coroplastic work (Fig. 12)⁴⁶. The same pattern of the frieze of imbricated squares is also found on a fragment from the recent excavations at the Amyklaion, whose curved shape, unusual in Laconian pottery, and its pictorial

⁴² DAWKINS 1929, fig. 41c; LANE 1933/34, pl. 25, who already noted that the female *protomai* of the lakaina «have a very “Melian” appearance».

⁴³ ZAPHEIROPOULOU 2003. See also pottery of the Artemision of Thasos and the local production of the Northern Greek settlement: COULIÉ 2013, 258-267, especially figs. 165, 260, 264 and 253-258 for some examples of Parian *protomai*.

⁴⁴ Two fragments from the shoulder of a closed vase (from the acropolis), published as an oinochoe, with the notched beard, neckline and ear of a man: DROOP 1927, 56, fig. 3f; LANE 1933/34, pl. 23g. Another

fragment shows the full profile of the bearded figure: *ibid.*, pl. 23h.

⁴⁵ Composed of two fragments AM/KT2293 and AM/KT2081 (2018 excavation campaign).

⁴⁶ DROOP 1929, 68, fig. 41c precised that «The style and technique of all these heads are those of the corresponding terracotta figurines found in the upper Geometric layers. They are probably to be traced earlier than the Sub-Geometric style proper». During her work in the storerooms of the Archaeological Museum of Sparta, Francesca Luongo found fragments related to the same vase, linked to stratigraphic data: LUONGO 2013, 117-119.



Fig. 13. Laconian Orientalising fragment of a statue (?), inv. AM/KT1035 (drawing Y. Nakas; © Amykles Research Project).

composition raise a few questions (Fig. 13)⁴⁷. It could be either part of an *epinetron* or of a dress decorated with animalistic registers belonging to a seated statue made of clay⁴⁸, like the full-length wheel-made Cycladic examples from Siphnos or Despotiko linked to the iconography of the *potnia* or *potnios theron*⁴⁹. Indeed, on its flat surface covered with a creamy slip, it shows mainly two partial figured animal registers, where one of the animals' skin (maybe a lion or a panther) is polychrome, painted in a pinkish orange colour. We may situate chronologically this object in a phase of experimentation contemporary with other polychrome attempts in Orientalising Greece, around the first part to the middle of the 7th c. BC. The floral motif ending in a scroll, hanging from the filet, is reminiscent of the filling motifs of Cycladic, Protoattic and Protocorinthian pottery⁵⁰. The filling motif in the upper left-hand corner of one of the areas depicted, in the form of an arrow made up of a square and a triangle arising from two spirals, painted in white and probably inspired by Cycladic pottery⁵¹, appears to be a hitherto unrecorded creation from the Laconian Orientalising repertoire.

Another vase that presents this stylistic mix is a fragment from the sanctuary of *Orthia*, first published by Droop then by Lane, illustrating a more ambitious scene, probably narrative, of a chariot race or an apotheosis (Fig. 14)⁵². In an area below the rip in the handle, two male figures, with heads seen in profile but busts seen from the front, are pointing in opposite directions. The figure on the left, a young man, wears a tunic decorated with meanders and is belted at the waist. The position of his arms indicates that he is holding an object horizontally, presumably the reins of a horse, since one plausible explanation is that

⁴⁷ AM/KT1035 (2012 excavation campaign).

⁴⁸ One of the clues supporting this hypothesis is the way in which the upper part of the fragment, oriented flat, rises slightly upwards, as if to mark the slope of the torso. The rounded part would correspond to the statue's right knee. As far as we know, the shape of the *epinetron* is not attested in Laconian pottery.

⁴⁹ See ΚΟΥΡΟΥ 2000 (Siphnos), ALEXANDRIDOU 2018 (Despotiko). Also ΚΟΥΡΟΥ 2002. In the context of the sanctuary of Apollo in Amykles we might recall the case of the two heads of terracotta statues discovered by Tsountas, dated to the end of the 8th to the early 7th c. BC, of a complete height recomposed to approximately 40 cm: Athens, National Archaeological Museum, inv. 4381 (male head with helmet, H. 11 cm) and 4282 (female head with polos, H. 8.5 cm):

ΤΣΟΥΝΤΑΣ 1892, 14, pls. 4a, 5; and more recently VLACHOU 2017, 25-31, figs. 15-16; also for the interpretation of the clay statues as representative offerings of the youths and maidens belonging to the worshippers community of the Amyklaion.

⁵⁰ From the Amyklaion pottery assemblage is also documented a fragment of a round aryballos, undoubtedly of Corinthian very pale brown clay, representing in a very similar style the motif of the lion's legs in silhouette, inv. AM/KT2244 (2918 excavation campaign).

⁵¹ See for example COULIÉ 2013, fig. 228: NAM 912, Parian amphora attributed to the Rider Painter, around 670-650 BC.

⁵² DROOP 1929, 68, fig. 41a; LANE 1933/34, 121.



Fig. 14. Fragment from the sanctuary of *Orthia* (after DROOP 1929).



Fig. 15. Laconian I conical foot of a cup, inv. AM/KT1269 (drawing Y. Nakas; © Amykles Research Project).

he is a charioteer. The figure on the left is a bearded man with long hair tied back. His right arm, with a bent elbow, is placed in front of a long cloak which must also have been decorated with meanders. It is difficult to clearly interpret the object hanging between the two figures, perhaps chains or an element of harness. Here too, the parallels that come to mind should be placed within the framework of Cycladic and Protoattic figurative productions, both of which, as Giulia Rocco has well demonstrated, are intrinsically linked by the phenomenon of craftsman mobility⁵³. It is also within the last generation of the Middle Protoattic period that the careers of the Painter of the Pairs and the Painter of the Protomes are situated. Both of these painters show a strong Cycladic imprint in their works⁵⁴. In any case, a closer examination of the fragment will certainly confirm that it is made of Laconian clay.

As far as decorative motifs are concerned, the Laconian production of the second half of the 7th c. BC has inherited the repertoire of the Late Geometric and Transitional ceramics of the first half of the century⁵⁵. New “secondary” decorative elements and filling motifs also emerged⁵⁶, indicating an Orientalising influence that draws from other contemporary productions, *i.e.* Cycladic or Eastern Greek. They indeed find convincing parallels in the Milesian and Chian pottery of the Wild goat style. On the lip of open forms, especially cups, skyphoi and lakainai, a new motif was invented: the frieze of black squares between two rows of dots. This motif is believed to have derived from the rows of dots present on the lip of some vases of the Geometric period⁵⁷, however it has also been compared by Boardman to the dividing bands on late 7th-c. BC Eastern Greek vases⁵⁸. Some vegetal motifs, although less common, also appear with analogies to Eastern Greek productions, such as palmettes arising from scrolls and spirals⁵⁹. At the Amyklaion, an interesting conical foot of a cup illustrates these trends: it features a squared rhombus motif forming four rhombuses, with the center varnished and the reserved area to the left being filled with dots (Fig. 15)⁶⁰. The motif was probably integrated into a developed floral pattern and finds a close parallel in the Chian production⁶¹.

⁵³ See Rocco 2008. We can cite, as an example, the chariot scene with a bearded man and a charioteer that adorns the body of the eponymous amphora of the Painter of Kynosarges, whose Cycladic influences have already been highlighted (COULIÉ 2013, 217, fig. 214; Athens, NAM, inv. 14497, around 640 BC).

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 217-218.

⁵⁵ For example, we find the series of horizontal parallel bands and fillets decorating the handles, necks or basins of the closed and open shapes, the checkerboard areas that can either cover a large part of the vases, or decorate *metopes* areas or, on rare occasions, the handles.

⁵⁶ Such as friezes of ribbons disjointed or not, motifs of oblique crosses arranged vertically or in horizontal friezes, underlined by glazed triangles or dots. At the bottom of the body, one can also see on some pieces the appearance of large rays drawn with a simple net, sometimes

pointed or enhanced with filling motifs. Later, with the development of the Corinthianising vein in the Laconian II, from the last two decades of the 7th c., these traced ray friezes can be transformed into the plain ray pattern so appreciated by the painters of the Transitional Corinthian pottery.

⁵⁷ LANE 1933/34, 117.

⁵⁸ BOARDMAN 1963, 2-3.

⁵⁹ LANE 1933/34, pls. 23e, 25d. As for the filling motifs, in the Laconian I productions, we can find globular and small crosses, imbricated rhombuses with curved lines and ends enhanced by a small cross, or also strange anchor-shaped motifs with quadrangular handles.

⁶⁰ AM/KT1269 (2019 excavation campaign).

⁶¹ See for instance a cup from Vulci held in Würzburg, Martin von Wagner Museum, inv. Ha 244, COULIÉ 2013, figs. 175, 181.

THE TRANSITION BETWEEN LACONIAN I AND LACONIAN II

The excavations at the Amyklaion complete the *dossier* of Orientalising Laconian wares with vases that can be classified between Laconian I and Laconian II. These show a more pronounced relationship with Corinthian productions. The removal, in 2015, of a superficial layer in the western sector of the hill uncovered a rather exceptional Corinthianising piriform aryballos (Fig. 16)⁶². It shows on its belly a frieze depicting a group of at least four warriors facing left, perhaps forming a hoplitic *phalanx*⁶³? The compositional system of the frieze imposes a scene unfolded horizontally, with human figures following each other to the left, without any close junction between the warriors. It is therefore difficult to discern the very essence of the *phalanx*, i.e., the close-knit, united grouping of heavy infantrymen frontally facing another group, as can be seen on the olpe Chigi⁶⁴. However, the two best preserved warriors are carrying a large circular shield – *aspis*⁶⁵ – that covers «thighs, shins below, chest, and shoulders»⁶⁶. The one on the right, completely preserved, is also wearing a helmet with an incised «plumed crest»⁶⁷. The two central elements that characterise a hoplite – the helmet and the circular shield – are thus represented. Both figures are also shown in a characteristic position of hoplitic combat, brandishing a spear downwards with their right arm. In other words, despite the absence of a coherent collective structure, these warriors have nevertheless the individual equipment and attitude of hoplites.

The leftmost warrior is kneeling, a position that may suggest ambush as much as submission. Under the outstretched left arm of the most complete hoplite, close to the ground line, the face with a round eye of another human figure can be distinguished. This figure appears to be lying on the ground, with its head slightly raised and its face turned upwards. This character stands out from the others by its position and also its attire, since it is not wearing a crested helmet, but rather a possible triangular headdress of the *pilos* type. Its gaze is turned towards a possible fifth hoplite, whose chin can barely be discerned above the dead body. Facing away from the frieze of warriors, the lying figure may be seen as a fallen enemy on the ground. Finally, a non-joining fragment of the shoulder of the vase may depict the figure in *silhouette* of a reclining griffin, from what appears to be an eagle beak.

The piriform or pointed aryballos shape, which appears as early as the Late Protocorinthian period, in addition to the presence of rays and the use of incision technique, all indicate an undeniable inspiration from Corinthian pottery. The representation of warriors armed with a round shield has been known in Greek art since the Geometric period. However, the depiction of a group of hoplites engaged in a collective movement only really emerges for the first time in Corinthian imagery in the middle of the 7th c. BC. This appears in particular in the works attributed to the Chigi Group⁶⁸, which also include depictions of the enemy lying on the ground, as in the miniature frieze of the female-headed aryballos in the Louvre⁶⁹ and on the famous Macmillan aryballos in the British Museum⁷⁰. Such a date for the Amyklaion's aryballos would make it roughly contemporary to the Second Messenian War and the elegiac poems of Tyrtaeus, often held up as an indication of the development of hoplitic warfare in Sparta. But it's a long way from seeing this scene as a visual representation of such a historical event, the dating of which is itself open to question; this is therefore a step we won't be taking here. It should also be remembered that war imagery is not a matter of historical realism, but of representations⁷¹. Therefore, it may not be necessary to look for the depiction of a *phalanx* on a piriform aryballos of this size. Rather, it may be more pertinent to consider it as a warfare semiotic which can diverge from historical reality of warfare techniques. The representation of this image on an aryballos found in a cult context raises nevertheless questions about the potential

⁶² AM/KT1894, found in layer I-6 Σ1, located outside the Archaic western *peribolos* and which contained mainly Geometric material mixed with some Archaic finds and late Roman contamination, probably a secondary deposit from the sacrificial waste area around the stepped circular altar.

⁶³ The emergence of the *phalanx* and its iconographic depiction are still an issue in scholarship and there is no need for repetition here. For a summary: ECHEVERRÍA 2015, esp. 59. On the many iconographic variations in relation to a hoplitic ideal: LISSARRAGUE 1990.

⁶⁴ On the solidarity between combatants induced by *phalanx* combat, see the verses of TYRT., fr. 11, vv. 29-34 (West). LISSARRAGUE 1999, 14 observes that although this is the oldest known representation of hoplites organised in *phalanx*, it generally remains the only one. On the olpe Chigi: D'ACUNTO 2013.

⁶⁵ It is the word *ἄσπις*, and not *ἐπλον*, that is used in TYRT., fr. 11, vv. 4, 24, 28, 35; fr. 12, v. 25; fr. 19, vv. 7, 15 (West).

⁶⁶ TYRT., fr. 11, vv. 23-24 (West).

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, v. 26 (West).

⁶⁸ The hoplite *phalanx* was thought to have originated between 720 and 650 BC. See VAN WEES 2004, 152, 166-183. DETIENNE 1968 remains a seminal article on the question of the so-called hoplitic revolution. See CARTLEDGE 1977 for the specific case of Sparta.

⁶⁹ Paris, musée du Louvre, inv. CA 931, around 640 BC.

⁷⁰ London, British Museum, inv. 1889,0418.1, around 640 BC. Frieze scenes of warriors in arms are found in other Greek orientalising wares. For Protoattic pottery see ROCCO 2008.

⁷¹ LISSARRAGUE 1984.

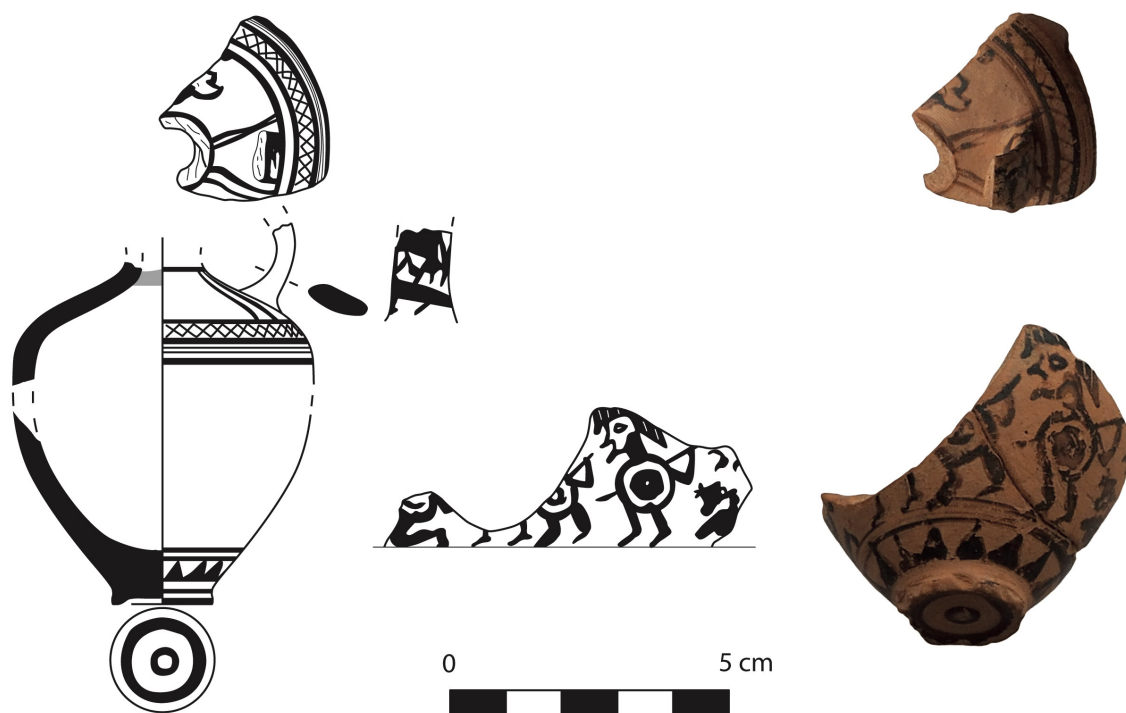


Fig. 16. Laconian Corinthianising pointed aryballos, inv. AM/KT1894 (drawing Y. Nakas; © Amykles Research Project).

communication strategy behind it, especially if one considers the importance of the votive category of the aryballos shape at the Amyklaion⁷².

In summary, the Laconian orientalising vein of the 7th c. BC, prior to the appearance of the Corinthian-influenced incision, is characterised, like so many other regional styles, by the eclecticism of its inspirations: the Argive, Attic and Corinthian styles from the end of the Geometric to the Transitional phases, the East-Greek and Cycladic styles during the third quarter of the 7th c. BC. In this way, Laconian I cannot be interpreted in isolation. A second Corinthianising wave, also testified by the imports to Sparta of the Transitional Corinthian and the Early Corinthian pottery, appears in the last decades of the 7th c. BC, at a time when Laconian workshops also started exporting their productions.

LACONIAN II AND THE BEGINNING OF EXPORTS

The last quarter of the 7th c. BC is characterised by a new stylistic and morphological development, known as Laconian II, dated from 610 to 580 BC⁷³. This stylistic reconfiguration is contemporary with the one that affected Corinthian productions between 630 and 620 BC, during the transition from Early to Middle Corinthian.

The eclecticism of Laconian I tends to fade, both in terms of decoration and shapes, to give way to a process of standardisation based on established conventions shared between the Laconian workshops. The decorative distinction between large and small vases is no longer applied, the forms become more slender and standardised making them easily recognisable, while the probable influence of metal vases seems more obvious. Among the most characteristic shapes, the lakaina, which existed since the Late Geometric period, becomes the most iconic drinking vase in Laconia – hence its name –, but with a progressive flaring of the mouth and a growing ring foot⁷⁴. One could also mention the small goblets (flared or straight), their

⁷² See *infra* and DELAHAYE-MAZET 2023.

⁷³ DROOP 1929, 72-73 inventing the category, dated it to the last quarter of the 7th c. BC; LANE 1933/34, 122 proposed the dates 630-590 BC; BOARDMAN 1963 lowered it to 620-580 BC, a

dating generally accepted until SCHAUS 2015, 40; 2020, 15 suggested 615/610-580/575 BC.

⁷⁴ STIBBE 2000, 19-20.

counterparts the mugs – also known as kothones –, the two handled cups (with a much fuller bowl and a convex and less deep lip), the chalice, the bell krater and the numerous decorated aryballoi, all of which are characteristic of this period. Among these, the aryballoi were massively produced and exported, and their life span probably exceeded that of the rest of the Laconian II production.

The diverse and varied experiments of Laconian I gave way to new, strongly geometric compositions, which take up Corinthian motifs in a more systematised way, giving the whole a particular and identifiable character. Simultaneously, Subgeometric motifs tend to disappear. The decorative system builds upon the large black glazed areas of the body and the appearance, under the outer lip, of fillets framing friezes of dots and squares. This combination of motifs first appeared during Laconian I but is particularly characteristic of Laconian II, when the spacing between black dots became wider. Whereas figurative scenes remain rare, incised decorations make their appearance and vegetal and animalistic experiments come to an end, even though some Corinthian inspired vegetal motives such as rosettes and pomegranates occasionally survive.

While the developments between the Late Geometric and Laconian I periods are not easy to characterise, Laconian II constitutes in sharp contrast an obvious and convenient marker for dating the often-destroyed structures of the Archaic period in Sparta and Laconia. Well attested both in Laconia and overseas, the Laconian decorated aryballoi are discovered in large numbers at the Amyklaion. Their main features seem to be established during Laconian II, but they persist for much longer, at least until the third quarter of the 6th c. BC according to Stibbe's typology⁷⁵. While the piriform aryballos with hoplites appears to be a *unicum*, and a rather isolated experiment characteristic of Laconian I, the grammar governing the aesthetic conventions of Laconian II is much more clearly established, with significantly greater quantities. There are no fewer than 388 entries falling into Stibbe's typological categories for Laconian aryballoi, for an estimated MNI of 128. For example, 27 items (MNI) of the group G aryballoi, covered with a white slip on the body and glazed from the shoulder to the neck, have been found and catalogued (including 2 with the entire body preserved) (Fig. 17). Although they cannot be used to determine the chronology of the group as it stands, they do confirm the typological framework established on the basis of other sites. The main thing to note is the high degree of homogeneity of this production, well diffused throughout the Mediterranean, albeit some noticeable variations in detail within the categories and a few rare one-off experiments.

Another vase characteristic of Laconian II is a cylindrical mug (Fig. 18), which can be seen as a predecessor to the one-handed mug or “*kothon*”⁷⁶. While the lip and body are glazed in black, a band of creamy slip under the offset lip is decorated with a band of alternating glazed and reserved squares, framed by two lines of dots. There is also a band of purple highlights over an engobed area on the glazed body. The Amyklaion example belongs to Stibbe's group B, defined by the offset rim and the presence of a frieze of dots and squares underneath⁷⁷. The slightly concave side upwards indicates that it probably belongs within the lower limit of Laconian II, that is at the beginning of the 6th c. BC. But the most extraordinary feature is the *graffito* on the belly, in retrograde script: [... ΛΟΝΟ.] for ΑΠΟΛΛΟΝΟΣ, a dedicatory inscription attested on several occasions on the site⁷⁸. This provides an opportunity – relatively rare in Laconian pottery – to cross-reference epigraphic and pottery evidence. The vase can be dated to the first quarter of the 6th c. BC, whereas dating the inscription, like the Laconian dialect in general, poses greater difficulty. If the *omicron* is of little help, the early *nu* is more likely to be dated before 550 BC rather than after⁷⁹. These two dates make it one of the oldest dedication inscriptions in honour of Apollo and the oldest *graffito* on a pottery sherd⁸⁰.

The stylistic and morphologic evolution of Laconian II coincides with the beginning of a phenomenon of large-scale exporting throughout the Aegean⁸¹. One may oppose that the first attested exports of Laconian pottery started way before, since Paola Pelagatti's research on the collections of the Museum of

⁷⁵ The recent publication of the Laconian pottery from Miletus by SCHAUS 2020 provided 23 Laconian decorated aryballoi, including at least 2 of group G, dated to 575-525 BC. In Cyrene, MEI 2013, Nos. 41-44, pl. X.41-44 counts 4 of them.

⁷⁶ STIBBE 1994, 40.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 41, 134, Cylindrical mugs, B4, fig. 55. Parallels from the sanctuary of Agamemnon and Cassandra at Amyklai: A2, C3. For a close parallel from Cyrene, see MEI 2013, pl. XVI.8.

⁷⁸ For an introduction: ZAVVOU-THEMOS 2012. For parallels:

BUSCHOR-VON MASSOW 1927, 64.

⁷⁹ We thank here Alan Johnston for his kind help and his expertise.

⁸⁰ The earliest mentions a Dorkonida(s) or Dorkoilida(s) dedicating to Apollo (ΑΠΕΛΟΝΙ ΔΟΡΚΟΝΙΔΑ), incised on a hollow bronze handle. The object is dated to the 7th c. BC and the inscription to the late 7th - early 6th c. BC. See BUSCHOR-VON MASSOW 1927, 34, 63, No. 6, pl. VIII, 15; SEG XI.689; JEFFERY 1990, «Lakonia», No. 5, 188, pl. 35.5.

⁸¹ See SCHAUS forth.



Fig. 17. Amyklaion. Stibbe group G aryballos (575/525 BC), inv. AM/KT956 (drawing Y. Nakas; © Amykles Research Project).

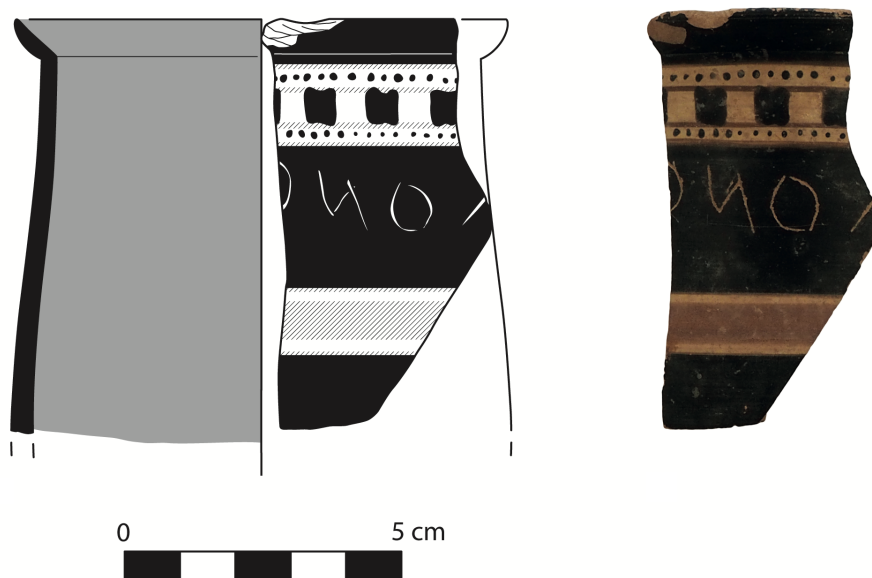


Fig. 18. Amyklaion. Laconian II mug, inv. AM/KT1036 (drawing Y. Nakas; © Amykles Research Project).

Taranto revealed two Late Geometric fragments from the 1900 excavations of Scoglio del Tonno⁸². But the scarcity of these very early exports raises questions about their interpretation as indicators of trade. Rather, they tend to appear as an isolated phenomenon, potentially linked to the *apoikia* of Taranto by Sparta.

It is during the Laconian II period (610-580 BC) that occur more consistent export flows of Laconian pottery. Material from the 7th c. BC remains rarely attested outside Laconia, with few exceptions. Laconian I artifacts are mainly found in Taranto/Saturo, Samos and in Cyrenaica⁸³, but are generally not distinguished from Laconian II objects in countings, because of the frequent use of different chronological categories (Tab. 1)⁸⁴.

The export take-off occurs during the beginning of the 6th c. BC, reaching its peak between 575 and 525 BC⁸⁵. Outside Laconia, Laconian II material can be found in the Aegean in Olympia, Samos and

⁸² PELAGATTI 1955/56, 7-9, figs. 1-2.

⁸³ Among the recent published data, MEI 2013, 43-45, Nos. 1-7, pl. XV, graphics 87-88 dates 7 fragments to Laconian I (650-610 BC). We could add the Laconian I *kothon* No. 45, which is quite archaic in its curved profile, its frieze of squares (without dots) and the rosette of rays on the underside of the base. In his review of the book, SCHAUS 2016 estimates though that the earliest are Laconian II and are dated ca. 600 BC. STUCCHI 1965, 37-38; SCHAUS 1985, 16 also mention

a Laconian I cup fragment dating to before 630 BC but MEI 2013, 34-35, pl. IIIc has since then dismissed this hypothesis, by identifying a Corinthian kotyle.

⁸⁴ COUDIN 2009 uses STIBBE 1989 chrono-categories (650-600; 600-575; 575-550), while MEI 2013 regroups the data of Laconian I and II in a wide category (650-575) and SCHAUS 2020 does not always separate Laconian I from Laconian II.

⁸⁵ See COUDIN 2009, 223 graphics 1-2.

Thasos⁸⁶; in the West, in Taranto/Saturo, at Caere and Gravisca; but also in Sicily, in Naucratis, in Cyrenaica in Cyrene and Tocra and in the Black Sea in Berezan⁸⁷. Gerald Schaus’ publication of the Miletus material has completely renewed the general picture by providing an unequalled number of Laconian II fragments⁸⁸.

	Olympia	Crete	Salento	Samos	Miletus	Etruria	Sicily	Cyrenaica	Naucratis	Berezan
650-575 BC	14	2	80	25	85	18	82	81	9	4
Total overseas	400									

Tab. 1. Countings of the distribution of Laconian pottery 650-575 BC⁸⁹.

This raises the question of the distributors of Laconian pottery. The theory of a special relationship between the latter and Sparta was widely accepted since Paul Cartledge’s 1982 article on the subject⁹⁰. Samian merchants were perceived as the privileged traders of Laconian pottery on the basis of the over-representation of Laconian finds in the sanctuaries of Samos and the relations attested by written sources between the elites of the island and those of Sparta. This assertion is no longer tenable, or must at the very least be strongly relativised. The publication of material from Miletus could as well establish the centrality of this city and its traders in the distribution networks for fineware pottery from Laconia and Chios in the Aegean region, and even far beyond, towards the North Aegean, Cyrenaica, Egypt and even the West. The view of Schaus thus adheres to that of Cook, who was sceptical about the correlation between the circulation of objects and the close diplomatic relations between the elites of the Samian and Spartan cities⁹¹. On the contrary, Schaus emphasises the strength of the relationship between the Lacedemonian city and Miletus⁹². This new “privileged relationship”, or rather the polarisation of flows by Miletus, while far from obvious from the Laconian III period onwards, is nevertheless credible for the distribution of Laconian II products.

We will not go into further detail on this question of distribution, which will be dealt with in the forthcoming synthesis by Gerald Schaus who integrates all these new data. We will simply add that, in our opinion, one of the main question marks concerning the distribution of 7th-c. BC Laconian pottery in Western Mediterranean arises from the material from the excavations of Saturo near Taranto, which is still largely unpublished.

In conclusion, the Laconian pottery of the 7th c. BC, often classified as secondary regional style, proves to be of significant interest when viewed as a laboratory of ideas and experiments. While Late Geometric Laconian pottery has been considered as a rather isolated production, from the central decades of the 7th c. BC onwards we certainly witness an artistic revival. During this period, potters and image-makers draw inspiration from several sources, not merely imitating but actively rearranging and recomposing Corinthian, Ionian and Cycladic elements. This creative process paves the way for the development of a distinct, cohesive and exportable archaic Laconian production in the 6th c. BC.

adrien.delahaye@univ-montp3.fr
Université de Montpellier Paul-Valéry

CMazet@britishmuseum.org
The British Museum, Department of Greece and Rome

⁸⁶ STIBBE 2004, 231, 233, Nos. 242-243, 259; COUDIN 2009, 223 graphic 2, 240-241, maps 1-2; SCHAUS 2020, 16-19 and fn. 89; MEI 2013, graphics 87-88. The material in Thasos remains to be published by Anne Tichit.
⁸⁷ Berezan: DUPONT *et alii* 2011, 9-14, Nos. OGIM A-30684; OGIM A-32224; OGIM A-43019; OGIM A-54331; OGIM without inv. No. (ex 88820); OGIM A-43146; OGIM A-36777; OGIM without inv. No. (fig. 12); OGIM without inv. No. (fig. 13); OGIM without inv. No. (fig. 14); Hermitage B. 68-27.
⁸⁸ The 40 Laconian I and II artefacts in SCHAUS 2020 only concern the catalogued entries, as the total estimated number of Laconian II objects is over 200 (14-19, figs. 6, 8, 9). This high number enabled Schaus to revisit the productions of the Taranto Fish Painter, whose corpus has grown from 13 to 38 vases. Schaus convincingly argues that

it is no longer possible to consider this workshop as secondary and as that of an artisan who had emigrated to Taranto: see *Id.* 2015.
⁸⁹ Calculations based on COUDIN 2009, 223, 230-239, 244-245, graphics 2, 15-34, maps 1-2, updated with MEI 2013 for Cyrenaica, SCHAUS 2020, 14-19, tab. 3b for Miletus (only catalogue entries have been included, the estimated MNI for the uncatalogued ones being 100), BERGERON 2016 for Naucratis, DUPONT *et alii* 2011 for Berezan and ERICKSON 2010 for Crete. For a more detailed and updated counting, see SCHAUS *forth.*
⁹⁰ CARTLEDGE 1982. The hypothesis was first expressed by LANE 1933/34, 179. See also NAFISSI 1991, 256, fn. 72; PIPILI 2000 and FRAGKOPOULOU 2012 with an up-to-date bibliography.
⁹¹ PIPILI 2000.
⁹² SCHAUS 2020, 19-20.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ALEXANDRIDOU A. 2018, «The 'Lady of Despotiko' reconsidered: Cult image or cult utensil?», E. Angliker - J. Tully (eds.), *Cycladic Archaeology: New Approaches and Discoveries*, Oxford, 87-100.
- BERGERON M. 2017, «Laconian pottery», A. Villing - M. Bergeron - G. Bourogiannis - A. Johnston - F. Leclère - A. Masson - R. Thomas, *Naukratis: Greeks in Egypt*, London, 2-16, <http://www.britishmuseum.org/naukratis>.
- BOARDMAN J. 1963, «Artemis Orthia and chronology», *BSA* 58, 1-7.
- BUSCHOR E. - VON MASSOW W. 1927, «Vom Amyklaion», *MdI* 52, 1-85.
- CAROCCHI F. 1986, «Centro e periferia nelle attività delle botteghe laconiche», F. Pompili (a cura di), *Studi sulla ceramica laconica. Atti del Seminario* (Perugia, 23-24 febbraio 1981), Perugia, 173-176.
- CARTLEDGE P.A. 1977, «Hoplites and Heroes. Sparta's Contribution to the Technique of Ancient Warfare», *JHS* 97, 11-27.
- CARTLEDGE P.A. 1982, «Sparta and Samos. A special relationship?», *CQ* 32, 243-265.
- COOK R.M. 1997³, *Greek Painted Pottery*, London.
- COUDIN F. 2009, *Les Laconiens et la Méditerranée à l'époque archaïque*, Naples.
- COULIÉ A. 2013, *La céramique grecque aux époques géométrique et orientalisante: XIe-VIe siècle av. J.-C.* (LES MANUELS D'ART ET D'ARCHÉOLOGIE ANTIQUES - CÉRAMIQUE GRECQUE 1), Paris.
- D'ACUNTO M. 2013, *Il mondo del vaso Chigi. Pittura, guerra e società a Corinto alla metà del VII secolo a.C.*, Berlino.
- DAWKINS R.M. (ed.) 1929, *The sanctuary of Artemis Orthia at Sparta. Excavated and Described by Members of the British School at Athens 1906-1910*, London.
- DELAHAYE A. - MAZET C. 2023, «Sanctuaire d'Apollon amycléen - Sparte / Amykles I: Rapport sur la mission d'étude du mobilier céramique archaïque et classique de l'Amyklaion», *Bulletin archéologique des Écoles françaises à l'étranger*, <http://journals.openedition.org/baefe/9380>.
- DETENNE M. 1968, «La phalange. Problèmes et controverses», J.-P. Vernant (éd.), *Problèmes de la guerre en Grèce ancienne*, Paris, 119-142.
- DROOP J. 1927, «Excavations at Sparta, 1927: § 4. - The Native Pottery from the Acropolis», *BSA* 28, 49-81.
- DROOP J.P. 1929, «The Laconian Pottery», R.M. Dawkins (ed.), *The sanctuary of Artemis Orthia at Sparta. Excavated and Described by Members of the British School at Athens 1906-1910*, London, 52-116.
- DUPONT P. - LUNGU V. - OKHOTNIKOV S. 2011, «Vases laconiens de Berezan au musée archéologique d'Odessa», *Eirene* 1, 47, 9-14.
- ECHVERRÍA F. 2015, «Heroic Fiction, Combat Scenes, and the Scholarly Reconstruction of Archaic Greek Warfare», *BICS* 58.1, 33-60.
- ERICKSON B. 2010, *Crete in Transition: Pottery Styles and Island History in the Archaic and Classical Periods*, Princeton.
- FIECHTER E. 1918, «Amyklæ. Der Thron des Apollon», *JdI* 33, 107-245.
- FRAGKOPOULOU F. 2011, *Spartan sanctuaries and Laconian identity between 1200 and 600 BC*, PhD dissertation, King's College, London.
- FRAGKOPOULOU F. 2012, «Lakonia and Samos during the Early Iron Age: a Revised Look at the Messenian War Dates», N. Stampolidis - A. Kanta - A. Giannikouri (eds.), *Athanasia: the earthly, the celestial and the underworld in the Mediterranean from the Late Bronze and the Early Iron age. International Archaeological Conference* (Rhodes, 28-31 May 2009), Heraklion, 101-110.
- HODKINSON S. - DELAHAYE A. (ed.) forth., *Archaeology and Sparta*, Swansea.
- JEFFERY L.H. 1990², *The Local Scripts of Archaic Greece, A Study of the Origin of the Greek Alphabet and its Development from the Eighth to the Fifth Centuries B.C.* Revised edition by A.W. Johnston (OXFORD MONOGRAPHS ON CLASSICAL ARCHAEOLOGY) Oxford.
- KOUROU N. 2002, «Aegean and Cypriot Wheel-made Terracotta Figures of the Early Iron Age. Continuity and Disjunction», A. Braun-Holzinger - H. Matthäus (Hrsg.), *Die nahöstlichen Kulturen und Griechenland an der Wende vom 2. zum 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr. Kontinuität und Wandel von Strukturen und Mechanismen kultureller Interaktion; Kolloquium des Sonderforschungsbereiches 295 'Kulturelle und sprachliche Kontakte' der Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz*, 11-12. Dezember 1998, Mainz, 11-38.
- LANE E.A. 1933/34, «Lakonian vase-painting», *BSA* 34, 99-189.
- LISSARRAGUE F. 1984, «Autour du guerrier», C. Bérard (éd.), *La Cité des images. Religion et société en Grèce antique*, Paris, 34-47.
- LISSARRAGUE F. 1990, *L'autre guerrier: archers, peltastes, cavaliers dans l'imagerie attique*, Paris.
- LISSARRAGUE F. 1999, *Vases grecs. Les Athéniens et leurs images*, Paris.
- LUONGO F. 2013, *Il santuario di Artemis Orthia a Sparta. Una nuova lettura stratigrafica, monumentale e cronologica*, tesi di dottorato, Università degli studi di Salerno.
- MARGREITER I. 1988, *Frühe lakonische Keramik von geometrischer bis zu archaischer Zeit (10. bis 6. Jahrhundert v. Chr.)*, Waldsassen.
- MATALAS P. 2012, «Searching for the Amyklaion: For a History of the 'Discovery' of the Sanctuary in the Modern Era», A. Delivorrias - S. Vlizos (eds.), *Amykles Research Project: Works 2005-2010*, Athens, 169-177.
- MEI O. 2013, *Cirene e la ceramica laconica*, Roma.
- NAFISSI M. 1991, *La nascita del kosmos*, Napoli.
- PELAGATTI P. 1955/56, «La ceramica laconica del Museo di Taranto», *ASAtene* XXXIII-XXXIV, 7-44.
- PELAGATTI P. 1989, «Ceramica laconica in Sicilia e a Lipari. Materiali per una carta di distribuzione», *BdA* 54, 1-62.
- PELAGATTI P. 1992, «Ceramica laconica in Sicilia e a Lipari», P. Pelagatti - C. Stibbe (a cura di), *Lakonikà: ricerche e nuovi materiali di ceramica laconica*, *BdA* Suppl. 64, 123-247.
- PELAGATTI P. - STIBBE C. 1988, «Una forma poco conosciuta di vaso laconico: il cratere a campana», *BdA* 52, 13-26.

- PIPILI M. 1987, *Laconian iconography of the sixth century B.C.*, Oxford.
- PIPILI M. 2000, «Vases from the Samian Heraion: shapes and iconography», P. Linant de Bellefonds (éd.), *Ἀγαθος δαίμων: mythes et cultes. Études d'iconographie en l'honneur de Lilly Kahil*, Athènes-Paris, 409-421.
- PIPILI M. 2001, «Samos, the Artemis sanctuary: the Laconian pottery», *JdI* 116, 17-102.
- PIPILI M. 2004, «Lakonische Vasen aus der Westnekropole von Samos: Ein erneuter Blick auf alte Funde», *AM* 119, 91-105.
- PIPILI M. 2018, «Laconian Pottery», A. Powell (ed.), *A Companion to Sparta*, Hoboken, 124-151.
- ROCCO G. 2008, *La ceramografia protoattica: pittori e botteghe (710-630 a.C.)* (INTERNATIONALE ARCHÄOLOGIE 111), Rahden.
- SCHAUS G.P. 1985, *The extramural sanctuary of Demeter and Persephone at Cyrene. Final reports. II. The East Greek, Island, and Laconian pottery* (UNIVERSITY MUSEUM MONOGRAPH 56), Philadelphia.
- SCHAUS G.P. 2015, «The Painter of the Taranto Fish: an early Laconian Black-Figure Vase Painter», *JdI* 130, 1-73.
- SCHAUS G.P. 2016, Review of: O. Mei, *Cirene e la ceramica laconica* (CIRENE "ATENE D'AFRICA" VI; MONOGRAFIE DI ARCHEOLOGIA LIBICA 35), Roma 2013, *Mouseion* 13.1, 156-158.
- SCHAUS G.P. 2020, *Laconian and Chian Fine Ware Pottery at Miletus* (FUNDE AUS MILET IV), Wiesbaden.
- SCHAUS G.P. forth., «The production and distribution of Laconian II pottery (ca. 615/610-580/575 BC)», S. Hodkinson - A. Delahaye (eds.), *Archaeology and Sparta*, Swansea.
- STIBBE C.M. 1972, *Lakonische Vasenmaler des sechsten Jahrhunderts v. Chr.*, Amsterdam.
- STIBBE C.M. 1989, *Laconian black-glazed pottery. 1. Laconian mixing bowls: a history of the Krater Lakonikos from the seventh to the fifth century B.C.*, Amsterdam.
- STIBBE C.M. 1994, *Laconian black-glazed pottery. 2. Laconian drinking vessels and other open shapes*, Amsterdam.
- STIBBE C.M. 2000, *Laconian black-glazed pottery. 3. Laconian oil flasks and other closed shapes*, Amsterdam.
- STIBBE C.M. 2004, *Lakonische Vasenmaler des sechsten Jahrhunderts v. Chr.: Supplement*, Mainz.
- STUCCHI S. 1965, *L'Agorà di Cirene*, Roma.
- TSOULI M. forth., «Archaic Sparta revisited: new evidence, new interpretations», S. Hodkinson - A. Delahaye (eds.), *Archaeology and Sparta*, Swansea.
- VERDELIS N.M. 1951, «L'apparition du sphinx dans l'art grec aux VIIIe et VIIe siècles avant J.-C.», *BCH* 75, 1-37.
- VLACHOU V. 2015, «The Spartan Amyklaion: The Early Iron Age Pottery from the Sanctuary», A. Delivorrias - S. Vlizos (eds.), *Amykles Research Project: Works 2005-2010*, Athens, 113-123.
- VLACHOU V. 2017, «From Mycenaean Cult Practice to the Hyakinthia Festival of the Spartan Polis. Cult Images, Textiles and Ritual Activity at Amykles: An Archaeological Perspective», A. Tsingarida - I. Lemos (eds.), *Constructing Social Identities in Early Iron Age and Archaic Greece* (ÉTUDES D'ARCHÉOLOGIE 12), Bruxelles, 11-42.
- VLIZOS V. 2012, «Amykles Research Project: Excavation Works 2005-2010», A. Delivorrias - S. Vlizos (eds.), *Amykles Research Project: Works 2005-2010*, Athens, 91103.
- VAN WEES H. 2004, *Greek warfare myths and realities*, London.
- ZAPHEIROPOULOU PH. 2003, *La céramique "mélienne"* (DÉLOS XLI), Athens.
- ZANVOU E. - THEMOS A. 2012, «The Epigraphic Evidence of the Sanctuary of Apollo Amyklaïos», A. Delivorrias - S. Vlizos (eds.), *Amykles Research Project: Works 2005-2010*, Athens, 149-152.
- ΒΑΙΖΟΣ Σ. 2010, «Ιερό του Αμυκλαίου Απόλλωνα στις Αμύκλες», *ArchDelt* 65, B1, 577-579.
- ΒΑΙΖΟΣ Σ. 2011, «Ιερό του Αμυκλαίου Απόλλωνα στις Αμύκλες», *ArchDelt* 66, B1, 201-202.
- ΒΑΙΖΟΣ Σ. 2012, «Ιερό του Αμυκλαίου Απόλλωνα στις Αμύκλες», *ArchDelt* 67, B1, 125-126.
- ΒΑΙΖΟΣ Σ. 2013, «Ιερό του Αμυκλαίου Απόλλωνα στις Αμύκλες», *ArchDelt* 68, B1, 179-182.
- ΒΑΙΖΟΣ Σ. 2018a, «Αμύκλαι», *Ergon* 65, 24-26.
- ΒΑΙΖΟΣ Σ. 2018b, «Ανασκαφή στο ιερό του Απόλλωνος Αμυκλαίου», *Prakt* 173, 106-117.
- ΒΑΙΖΟΣ Σ. 2019a, «Ανασκαφή στο ιερό του Απόλλωνος Αμυκλαίου», *Prakt* 174, 101-108.
- ΒΑΙΖΟΣ Σ. 2019b, «Αμύκλαι», *Ergon* 66, 29-33.
- ΒΑΙΖΟΣ Σ. 2020a, «Αμύκλαι», *Ergon* 67, 13-17.
- ΒΑΙΖΟΣ Σ. 2020b, «Ανασκαφή στο ιερό του Απόλλωνος Αμυκλαίου», *Prakt* 175, 85-94.
- ΒΑΙΖΟΣ Σ. 2021, «Αμύκλαι», *Ergon* 68, 27-30.
- ΚΟΥΡΟΥ Ν. 2000, «Τα είδωλα της Σίφνου. Από τη Μεγάλη Θεά στην Πότνια Θηρών και την Αρτέμιδα», *Πρακτικά Α' Διεθνούς Σιφναϊκού Συμποσίου* (Σίφνος, 25-28 Ιουνίου 1998), vol. I, Αθήνα, 351-370.
- ΤΣΟΥΝΤΑΣ ΧΡ. 1890, «Ανασκαφαί εν τῷ Αμυκλαίῳ», *Prakt*, 36-37.
- ΤΣΟΥΝΤΑΣ ΧΡ. 1892, «Εκ του Αμυκλαίου», *ArchEph*, 1-26.