

Fig. 3b Lame d'obsidienne noire
découverte en surface du site BK2

Site BK3. Cette petite grotte est à faible distance de BK2 et à environ 25m d'élévation. L'extérieur est ceinturé par une muraille de pierre de construction récente. Plusieurs éclats de taille (une pièce en obsidienne, une en cherte verte, une autre en cherte noire et le reste en silex rougeâtre) et un fragment d'os calciné furent notés. Les dépôts de l'intérieur sont rocaillieux.

Site BK4. Il s'agit, exceptionnellement, d'une station de plein air, vraisemblablement d'âge néolithique, découverte fortuitement en examinant et en cherchant la provenance des débris lithiques abondants en surface, dérivés du même site. Elle est située sur un plateau, en direction de *Pávlon* et domine à la fois le bassin copaïque et une vallée intérieure. Les observations indiquent le caractère néolithique de la majorité des vestiges de surface, tout comme le site choisi. Ce site est de grande dimension avec des dépôts de faible profondeur toutefois. Les vestiges lithiques ou céramiques (figure 4) sont nombreux et dispersés sur une grande superficie. Notons, outre des pièces de silex et d'obsidienne en grande abondance, un fragment de hache polie, des tessons dont certains semblent néolithiques et plusieurs amoncellements artificiels de pierres. Le site a peut-être été utilisé de façon continue depuis les temps préhistoriques, tel que le suggèrent les tessons de diverses époques, les murettes de pierres de date incertaine et des traces actuelles d'occupation par des bergers. Il est vraisemblable que des stations de même type et dans une situation comparable abondent dans la région mais demeurent peu visibles, sauf dans le cas d'explorations systématiques.

Site BK5. Cet abri sous roche de bonne dimension (30 x 30m.) est situé sur la bordure sud, cette fois, du bassin copaïque, à environ 5m. d'élévation et 200m. à l'est de *Seïdi*, en direction de Thèbes et à 2 km. à l'est d'*Aliartos*. La station, non loin de la route, est

présentement utilisée par des bergers. Plusieurs éclats, une lame de silex et des tessons non diagnostiques ont été notés sur la faible pente prolongeant la surface intérieure de l'abri, laquelle est recouverte de dépôts sans doute peu profonds.

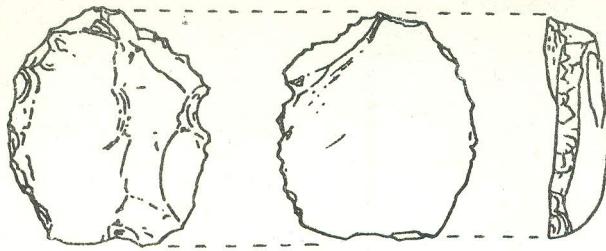
Autres sites possibles à l'extérieur de la ville de Levádheia

Deux grottes de grande dimension, aisément accessibles à l'extérieur de *Levádheia* à l'abord des collines, ont été notées sans pouvoir être visitées de façon méthodique. Le talus de la première, à environ 15m. du sentier conduisant dans la vallée au bas des collines, contenait plusieurs tessons. La seconde grotte peut être rejointe par un sentier grimpant le flanc de la colline et est d'altitude considérablement plus élevée.

SOMMAIRE ET CONCLUSIONS.

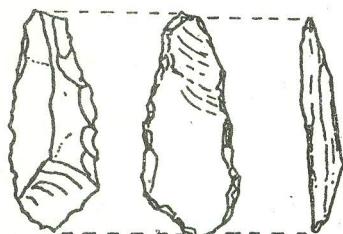
Les résultats obtenus pour la saison de 1980 confirment une présence non-négligeable de populations de l'Age de la Pierre en Grèce Centrale, compte tenu des objectifs et moyens limités que comporte un projet-pilote, de même que de circonstances parfois difficiles. L'information obtenue pour le moment, bien qu'incomplète et de caractère préliminaire, demeure probablement représentative de ce qui reste à découvrir. Il reste maintenant à exploiter de façon systématique ces indications et, éventuellement, à examiner les paramètres écologiques, paléogéographiques, technologiques et socio-économiques liés à l'occupation humaine au cours du Pléistocène Supérieur et début du Holocène, dans la mesure où les méthodes de l'archéologie et des études du Quaternaire permettent de les reconstruire.

Le nombre des documents appartenant vraisemblablement à l'Age de la Pierre qui ont pu être détectés à date est modeste et les indications de surface des stations ne fournissent qu'un très faible échantillonnage. Il semble justifié de conclure que les documents en question appartiennent au Néolithique et peut-être même aux phases avancées du Paléolithique Supérieur et au Mésolithique. La tradition de l'outillage lithique qui



GRATTOIR
EN SILEX BRUN

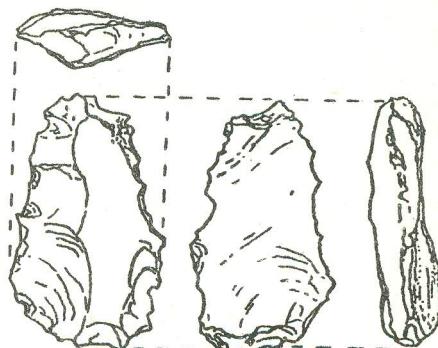
LAMES



SILEX BLANCHI

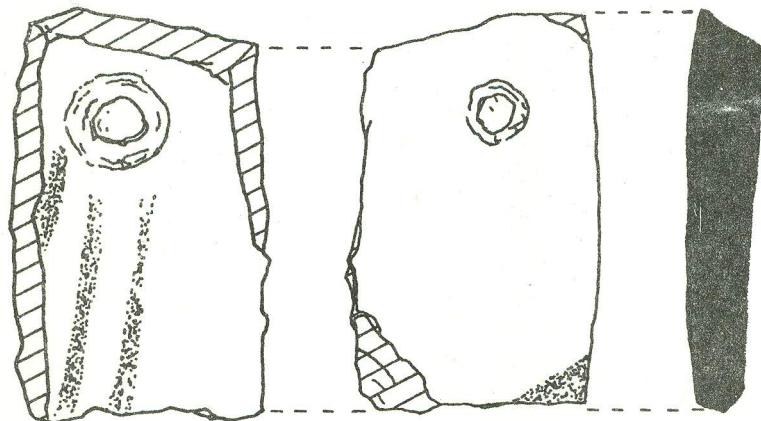


SILEX
BRUN PALE



SILEX BRUN

POTERIE SPIRALEE (coil-made) ORANGEE PALE
A MOTIFS PEINTS EN BRUN SUR FOND ROUGE



0 5 cm

39

Fig. 4 Exemplaires de produits techniques trouvés en surface du site BK4
KB 17. IX.80

est probablement représentée dans le Paléolithique Supérieur devrait se rattacher à la variante méditerranéenne et balkanique du Gravettien Oriental (au sens descriptif du terme), advenant confirmation de sa présence par des sondages ou des fouilles. Cet horizon a déjà été identifié dans la région avec le matériel de la grotte de *Seïdi*, celui de *Frankhthi* en Argolide, de *Kastritsa* et *Asprokháliko* en Epire.

L'absence, pour le moment, de vestiges du Paléolithique Moyen dans la région est à noter. Cette constatation ne devrait pas surprendre, ce stade du Paléolithique demeurant rare dans les stations et grottes de la Grèce (*Asprokháliko* en Epire, *Kephallária* en Argolide et peut-être *Petalóna* dans la péninsule de Chalcidique). Il serait toutefois prématuré de conclure que la Grèce Centrale n'était pas occupée lors du Paléolithique Moyen tant que la prospection des stations de surface, particulièrement dans les formations de 'sols rouges' n'aura pas été entreprise dans la région. Le Paléolithique Moyen de ce type de stations pourrait être antérieur à l'occupation des grottes et abris. Parmi les facteurs pouvant rendre compte de la rareté de stations en grottes ou abris, mentionnons ceux (a) d'ordre géomorphologique, i.e. dispersion par action mécanique des documents par 'vidange' des dépôts et (b) d'ordre paléogéographique, i.e. par évolution structurale du paysage et localisation différentielle des ressources vivrières. Le Paléolithique Inférieur, comme ailleurs en Grèce et dans les Balkans, demeure absent ou très rare.

DIRECTIVES POUR DE FUTURS TRAVAUX SUR LE TERRAIN DANS LA REGION.

La campagne de 1980 devrait déboucher de façon logique dans deux directions de recherche sur le terrain. Celles-ci pourraient être poursuivies simultanément ou successivement, les considérations logistiques ou les préférences déterminant l'ordre de priorité.

I. *Fouilles préliminaires de sites enregistrés.* Des sondages archéologiques semblent justifiés dans le cas d'au moins deux des stations enregistrées à date, afin d'en déterminer le contenu et la profondeur stratigraphique i.e. si des horizons du Paléolithique s'y trouvent de

fait, de même que la répartition spatiale et la densité des vestiges d'occupation. Les meilleurs candidats à cet effet seraient le site FA1 du bassin d'*Amphíklia* et BK2 dans le bassin de *Levádheia/Kopáïs*. Cette dernière station, pourvu que des sondages en justifient l'importance, offrirait également d'intéressantes perspectives de recherches de paléoécologie humaine, dans le contexte d'un habitat en bordure d'un lac du Pléistocène tardif, possédant vraisemblablement une biomasse riche, et pourrait contenir une séquence analogue à celle de *Seïdi*. La station de plein air BK4 offrirait des possibilités additionnelles, en procédant par une collecte systématique intensive de surface, un enregistrement cartographique complet et des sondages localisés.

II. Relevés topographiques et reconnaissances systématiques intensifs.
Cet aspect du travail sur le terrain devrait fournir suffisamment d'information pour permettre l'esquisse d'une étude distributionnelle spatiale et peut-être diachronique de l'occupation humaine dans les bassins du *Kephissós* et du *Kopáïs* au cours du Paléolithique et du Mésolithique, pourvu qu'il soit réalisé dans les conditions suivantes:

- (a) disposer d'un véhicule (jeep ou landrover) permettant de parcourir des terrains difficiles et, autrement, inaccessibles, et d'explorer des formations topographiques plus distantes;
- (b) posséder des cartes topographiques plus détaillées, à une échelle de 1:50,000;
- (c) une équipe plus nombreuse, pouvant être répartie en sous-groupes, selon les besoins, et comportant au moins un individu possédant une connaissance solide de la langue grecque;
- (d) posséder deux paires de lunettes d'approche à haute puissance;
- (e) accorder une partie du temps et des moyens disponibles à la prospection des 'sols rouges';

(f) ajouter, si possible, à la composition de l'équipe de recherche sur le terrain la participation d'un géomorphologue pouvant se consacrer à l'étude des 'sols rouges' et de l'évolution structurale du bassin copaïque et de ses conséquences sur les développements karstiques et de l'influence de ces divers facteurs sur l'utilisation du milieu par les populations humaines préhistoriques.

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[OHIO BOIOTIA EXPEDITION: FIELD SEASONS 1979-1980.
PRELIMINARY REPORT.]

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With financial support from The Ohio State University, the Ohio Boiotia Expedition undertook its first two field seasons during 1979 and 1980 in the area of ancient Thisbe in southwestern Boiotia. In all aspects of this undertaking the Ohio Expedition coordinated its activities with those of the Cambridge/Bradford Boiotia Expedition, and the two teams used the same field procedures, equipment, housing and artifact processing facilities. All appropriate permissions and full cooperation were provided by the Greek Archaeological Service and the classical ephoreia at Thebes and the Byzantine ephoreia at Athens.

Systematic Archaeological Survey: 1979

During August of 1979 the Ohio Expedition began a surface archaeological exploration of the Thisbe Basin, starting in the ancient city centre and working outward into the surrounding plain. This approach was selected for several reasons: to provide experience in surveying a city site, to test and improve procedures for field survey before attacking large pieces of territory, and because the walls and other archaeological features of Thisbe are plainly visible and it seemed unreasonable to ignore them and begin operations at some other place.

Modern Thisbe lies on the southern slopes of Mt. Helikon, in the hollow between *Palaiókastro* and the flat plateau to the southeast (figure 1). The modern village occupies the site of the ancient city centre, and inscriptions and reused ancient blocks are built into the walls of many houses and churches. A primary objective of the first year's survey was to test the continuity of ancient settlement in the area covered by the

modern villages of *Thisbe* (*Kakkosi*) and *Dhomvraina*: ancient artifacts have been reported from the far extremities of both villages and it is conceivable that the ancient settlement extended along the entire distance from the outskirts of one village to those of the other. Since it was obviously impossible to survey thoroughly within the confines of the villages, it was decided to investigate the area immediately south of the inhabited zone, along the plateau and into the plain beyond, under the assumption that evidence of habitation there would bear some relationship to that in the lower settlement: continuity of artifact spread on the plateau would suggest continuity in the lower city. Accordingly, a rectangle was laid out, approximately 1250 m. east-west and 1000 m. north-south, with its northern side along the edge of the plateau and bounded by modern roads on the west and south and the village of *Dhomvraina* on the west. This area was then intensively and systematically examined for evidence of ancient habitation and use (Figure 2).

Exploration was carried out using a transect system whereby members of the team were stationed at five meter intervals. Since the exploration of the *Thisbe* area started within the walls of a known site, the normal procedure for the identification of sites was reversed and team members looked, not for concentration of artifacts, but for significant breaks or changes in the continuity of artifact distribution. After thoroughly surveying the fortified area on the plateau, transects were set out eastward and artifact discontinuity was noted at a point some 162 m. from the northeast tower, thus representing the eastern edge of the "site". This site boundary was further explored with other transects and this is shown on Figure 2.

Sampling Procedures

Once the general outlines of the site were determined, sampling procedures were instituted to discover the artifact density of the site

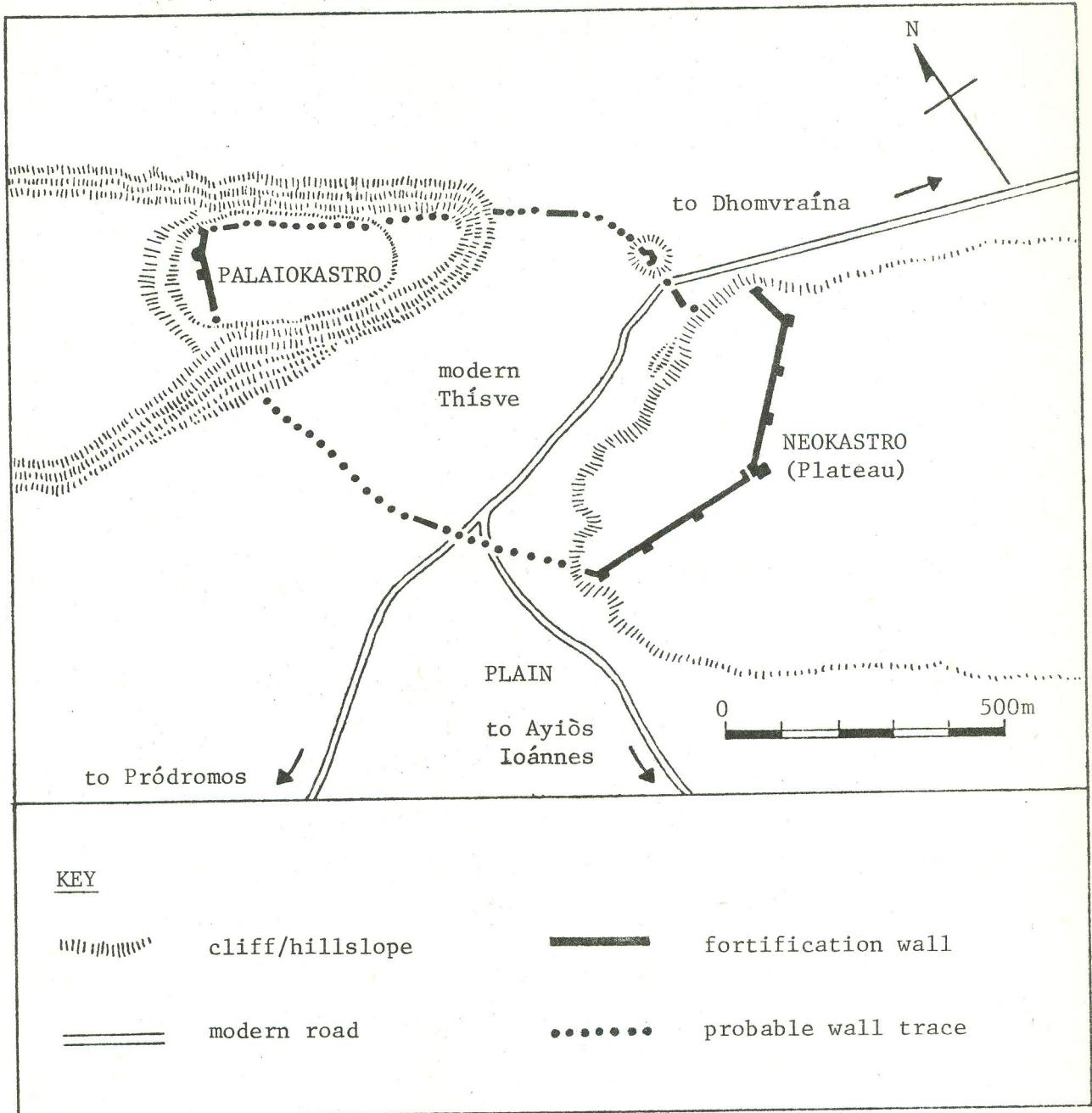
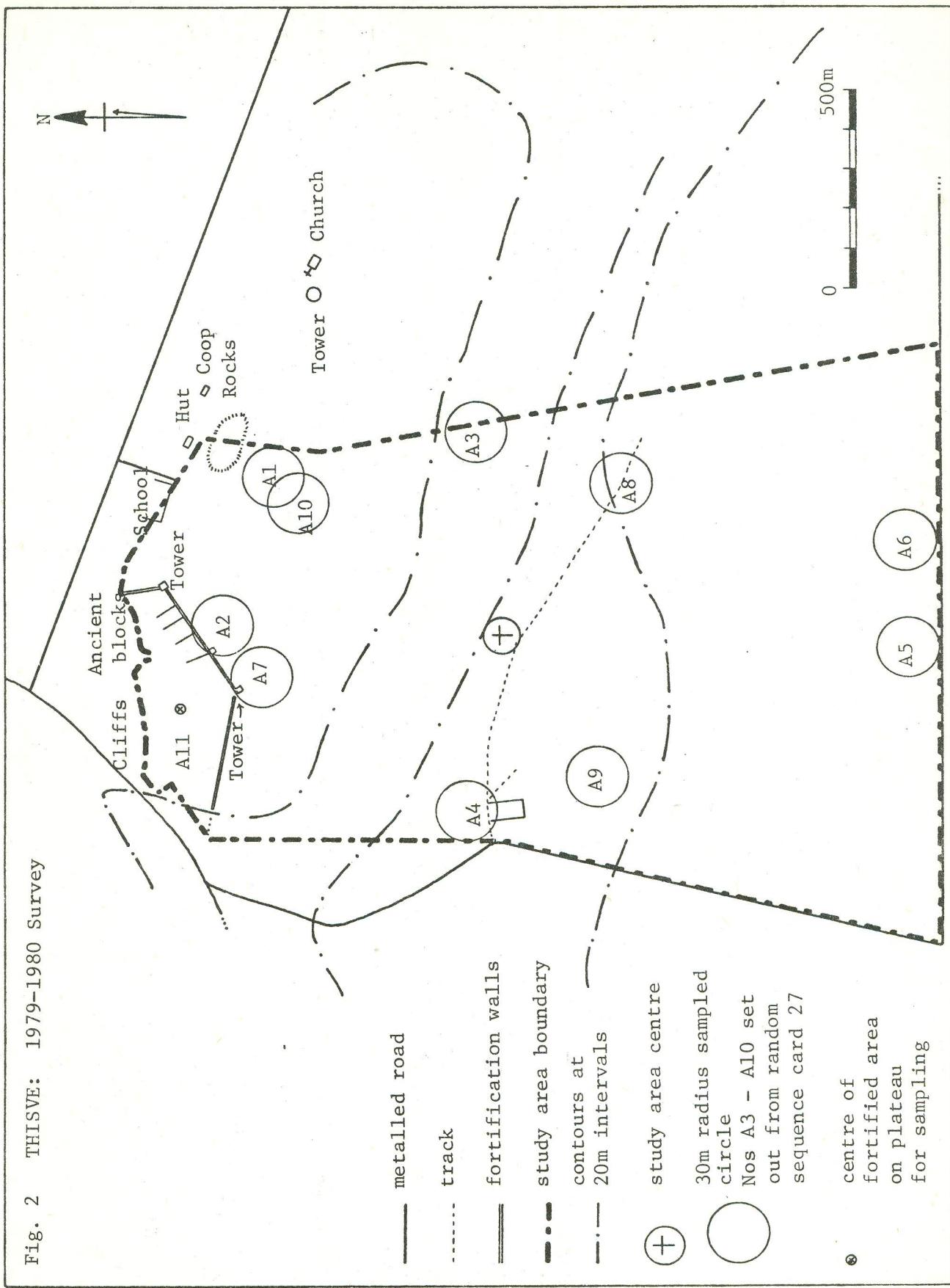


Fig. 1 THISVE/KAKKOSI: based on Maier, *Athen. Mittheil.* 1958

Fig. 2 THISWE: 1979-1980 Survey



as a whole and its various parts. First, two samples were taken at points where transecting had suggested significant differences in artifact density. One of these points (Thisbe A/1) was located where it seemed that density decreased to background scatter. The second sample (A/2) was taken at a point where density seemed to decline from "very heavy" to "moderate". Full study of these samples is still underway, but preliminary examination suggests that the first (A/1) does indicate notable density decline, while interpretation of the second is more difficult.

Sampling was then carried out over the site as a whole. This was done by establishing eight 30-meter circles at random points over the site and collecting samples from each of these (A/3-A/10). Since none of these random points fell within the fortified area on the plateau, another sampling circle was set out there (A/11).

For each of the sampling areas (A/1-A/11) between 16 and 32 separate individual samples were collected, randomly distributed to give an idea of artifact density in those areas. In addition, once the random sample was collected, a systematic search was made for diagnostic artifacts and these were also collected and reserved for further study: the two procedures provide a good idea of the chronological life of the site. Final statistical analysis of all the material collected at Thisbe has not been completed, but preliminary examination of the pottery has been carried out and it is possible to make a few tentative conclusions. Artifact density, for example, varied considerably over the site, from a high of 46.25 artifacts/m.² at A/11, to 0.11 artifacts/m.² at A/3, a difference great enough to suggest that this method of analysis will allow discussion of intra-site (as well as inter-site) variability.

Naturally, most of the material collected was coarse and apparently undiagnostic: only about 2 per cent of the sherds were readily datable. The pottery, however, clearly reveals habitation or use from the

Mycenaean period onward, with no significant historical period unrepresented. Early sherds (through Archaic) are extremely rare and there can be little doubt that the main periods of habitation on the Thisbe plateau were the Late Classical, Hellenistic, Roman and Medieval ages. Greater precision on this question will have to await completion of the ongoing analysis of the pottery.

Reconnaissance

The Ohio Expedition naturally did not fail to examine the architectural evidence preserved in the Thisbe area, both on the plateau and elsewhere in the vicinity. These included several problematic but probably medieval structures. In addition, a beginning was made in the investigation of the walls of the ancient city. These have already been published by Maier [*Athen. Mittheil.* 1958: 17-25], but preliminary examination has shown the need for considerable revision of this work. Another important feature noted in the first field season is the vast network of post-classical walls and paving spread over the plateau. Some of these are apparently threshing floors, perhaps twenty-five in number, but the careful arrangement of blocks and irregular shapes suggest other functions for some of the structures.

Investigation was carried out at the two harbours of ancient Thisbe, at *Ayids Ioánnes* and *Vathý*. Both of these preserve evidence of ancient use, although surviving evidence at *Vathý* suggests that it may have been the more important of the two, at least in certain periods. Perched above the entrance to this harbour, for example, are the foundations of a Hellenic watchtower of good construction. This tower must have communicated with other stations since it is completely invisible from Thisbe itself, but its exact role in the fortification system of southwestern Boiotia still remains uncertain. In an attempt to elucidate this problem, a team from the Ohio Expedition investigated the slopes of Mt. *Khivadió* to the south

of Thisbe. This failed to locate a second tower, but it did identify what may have been a Spartan advance camp near the top of the mountain. It is ca. 20 m. x 18 m., constructed of good dry rubble walls about a meter thick, and it should be compared to the similar structure identified by Fossey atop Mt. *Mavrovoíni* to the east [BSA 1970: 243-263].

Similar non-systematic reconnaissance was carried out in the area of *Palaiókastro* and the Thisbe plain. An attempt to take a pollen core in the plain was frustrated by the hard surface soil, but this operation led to the discovery of a large (ca. 250 m. on a side) artifact concentration on the southwestern slope of the plain. Another smaller "site" was discovered near the centre of the plain, suggesting that this area at least could have been inhabited during antiquity. These chance finds confirm the expectation that smaller settlements once existed in the plain outside Thisbe, and these will form the primary focus of investigation in future seasons.

Another object of the 1979 campaign was the preliminary investigation of the islands immediately offshore in the Gulf of *Dhomvraina*. Time permitted only the examination of one of these: *Kouvéli*, which lies about 3 km. from the port of *Áyios Ioánnes*. The small team which investigated *Kouveli* discovered two single-period sites, each with architecture in good repair, diagnostic pottery, and an unpublished inscription. Particularly significant is the realization that one of these represents a Byzantine Dark Age settlement, something that is all but unknown on the Greek mainland. Pottery from this site includes wares previously unpublished from Greece and said to be absent from this region.

Environmental Reconnaissance

Teams from the Ohio Expedition and the Cambridge/Bradford Expedition combined to investigate the environment around Thisbe, including a full botanical description of the area. Particularly noteworthy in this regard are the near-desert conditions observed on several southern-facing slopes

such as that below the Thisbe plateau and the hills overlooking the city's ports. The Thisbe plain, on the other hand, is especially rich, with rich brown soils predominating except at the edges. The plain is presently sown almost exclusively in winter wheat, although olive trees are interspersed along the flanks.

In the absence of any significant section exposure in the area, geological exploration was limited to surface observation and description and the confirmation of previous geological studies of the area. Further geological exploration will form a major part of future investigation.

The 1980 Season

Other commitments of Ohio Expedition team members required that the 1980 season be very restricted in scope. Several exploratory investigations were carried out, including an architectural examination of the water control device across the plain and its ancient bridge. The major undertaking of the 1980 season was a project of low-level balloon photography carried out by Field Projects in Archaeology of Michigan State University, under the direction of Professor J. Wilson Myers. These photographs, taken at altitudes of from 50 to 600 m., will be of considerable help in the investigation of the area and the discovery of structures and land patterns not visible on the ground. One of these pictures, illustrating the modern village of *Thisve/Kakkósi* between its twin akropoleis, is reproduced here (pl. 1).

Conclusions and Prospects

Although the physical area systematically investigated during the first two seasons was relatively small, the results of the survey and the experience in technique confirm the wisdom of a practical and small-scale beginning to the project. From the evidence of this phase of the project it is possible to suggest that ancient habitation along the southern side of the city extended outside the walls and spilled into the plain below,

apparently, however, avoiding the steep and barren slope directly under the plateau. Further investigation will determine the extent of this habitation: does it, for example, continue in a broad band around the edges of the plain?

Further conclusions relate to the chronology of settlement at Thisbe. As mentioned above, preliminary examination confirms the hypothesis that the plateau was intensively inhabited only beginning in the Classical age and that *Palaiókastro* was the Myceanaean and probably Archaic akropolis. A considerable surprise was the vast amount of medieval material at Thisbe. The ruins of churches (at least four of mediaeval date), a fortification, a large building on *Palaiókastro*, all suggest that Thisbe was particularly important during the later medieval period. Further work on the chronology (Byzantine, Crusader, Catalan) as well as the architecture, will be necessary before anything like a clear picture can emerge. Study of the mediaeval buildings will have the further advantage that it will allow research into the ancient public buildings of Thisbe since many identifiable architectural pieces are built into these structures.

The second phase of the Ohio Boiotia Expedition is the full systematic survey of the plain and the citadel of *Palaiókastro*, along with detailed studies on such problems as the walls on the plateau, the mediaeval architecture, and the "anthropology" of the threshing floors. All of these are planned to begin with the 1981 season.