

POTTERY FINDS FROM THE HOUSE OF AION (NORTHERN SECTOR)

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The most important strata excavated in the 2006 season were found in the western part of the northern sector of the House of Aion (HA).¹ Earlier archeological research in the area covered Room 12E, partly excavated in 1990 and discussed in the literature (Daszewski 1991: 80-81; Papuci-Władyka 1995: 87-93; Lichočka, Meyza 2001: 172-176; Meyza 2007: 81, 126, Pl. 15: K8 = 31.1 cat. 5 (1895)). Room 12W situated further to the west was explored partly in 1986, but it was impossible in the upper levels to discern this room from the Corridor=Room 4E; the dividing wall between the two was preserved below Floor I (Daszewski 1987: 687-688; 1992: 312-315; Papuci-Władyka 1995: 94-99; Lichočka, Meyza 2001: 177-178, Fig. 3.9 = Meyza 2007: 125, Pl. 3: CRSW?, Cat. 2 (1945); the Cypriot Red Slip doubtful piece may in fact have been found in room N of Corridor (Courtyard 36)). Room 33 was dug partly in 1995 (Daszewski 1996: 99), when a small strip along the southern wall of the next unit to the north, Courtyard 36, was also uncovered. The sequence of strata has been described by B. Lichočka and the present author (2001).

A layer of crushed but complete or almost complete vessels together with

a large quantity of coins was found 0.30-0.48 m below the top of the wall dividing Room 12 from Rooms 7 and 14, i.e., NEH from HA (excluding a narrow strip along this wall, corresponding to the trench visible in the section where contemporary finds go deeper). The pottery included a complete bowl of Phocaeian ware (LRC) Vaag form B2 = no clear corresponding form in Hayes' typology, perhaps 1/9 (Vaag 2000: Pl. 6; Johnson 1988: Figs 7-8.131; Hayes 1972: 325-327, 342, Figs 65 A, 70: 9.1) [Fig. 1] and amphorae of Late Roman date (Meyza forthcoming a). The latter include: 4th/5th century Keay 25.2/spatheion 1 of African production (intermediate form, with dia. c. 22 cm but button foot, seen by M. Bonifay and classified as early



Fig. 1. Bowl of Phocaeian ware (LRC)
(Photo W. Jerke)

¹ The northern part was described by the present author as a separate building, the North-eastern House (NEH), in Lichočka, Meyza 2001: 169.



Fig. 2. *Spatheion*, 4th/5th century
(Photo W. Jerke)

5th century, cf. Bonifay 2005: 452, Fig. 2 = Joncheray 1975 : Pl. II; Ghalia, Bonifay, Capelli 2005: 495-507) [Fig. 2], late miniature pinched-handle amphora of type Agora V, M234 in dark red, Cilician fabric (Robinson 1959; M239, Lund 2005; Williams and Lund forthcoming),² at least two micaceous amphorae LRA 3A3 (Pieri 2005 : 95-101), amphora Agora V, M273 (Robinson 1959: 109-110, Pls 29, 58; Opait 1996: 210-211; 2004: 293-308, 302, Fig. 24; Williams 1997: 235, Fig. 1), another Agora V, 334 from Akko (Mezza forthcoming b: Fig. 2; Lichocka, Mezza 2001: 172, n. 78, Fig. 4:6 (from NEH Room 20, floor), identified as Keay LII; Reynolds 1999: 109, Cat. 311, Fig. 249, = Ag V 334, fabric FAM 7. Eiring, Lund 2004: 13, Fig. 1 = Reynolds 2005: 571-572, Fig. 2: BH carrot type, 104-112).

Also found was a crater similar to African ware and form as Buff ware (Mezza forthcoming b: Fig. 10).³ In the same stratum, a thin-walled plain (?) mug was also found (basically 3rd century type, late revival?, cf. Hayes 1997: 68-71; Gebhard *et alii* 1998: 453, Fig. 17:48) [Fig. 5]. Its paste is fired dark grey at the core, the upper part is roughly wet-smoothed with beige surface, while the lower body is reddish and even more roughly shaved.

The series of coins found with the pottery have not all been cleaned and can be only tentatively identified on the grounds of photographs. The latest ones were issued by Valentinian II and (no. 880) dated to AD 383-392 or (no. 890) c. 382-395?. Other finds included lamps, a complete Tripolitanian one (see above, Fig. 3 on p. 509). The floor corresponding to these finds was a poor daub surface.

2 It should be noted that the chemical analysis of amphorae, discussed in Daszkiewicz *et alii* 1997), was done by wavelength dispersive X-ray fluorescent spectrometry WD XRF and not XRD

3 M. Bonifay, who has seen the vessel, was not ready to identify the paste and the form as African. Petrographic analyses are underway.

Below this floor, the finds are clearly from a different period. The latest pieces include a bowl of Cypriot Sigillata form P22A [Fig. 3], dated probably to the beginning of the 1st century AD (Hayes 1991: 43, 181, Fig. 61:22, from Well 18:22, at depth 4.0-5.0 m; deeper examples are closer to early form P21, cf. Hayes 1991: 42, 150, Fig. 52:19 from ΟΔ ? :19, layer 10 E). If intrusions occur, as in the case of isolated 4th century coins, they seem to be due to the imperfect separation of cut fills along later walls, as e.g. the wall separating Rooms 12W and 33. On the other hand, dispersed fragments of vessels

were found above the ash layer, mostly in ashes or on an earlier floor. A section made west-east across Rooms 12W and 12E has shown that a layer of ash on reddish burnt daub sloped eastward from the preserved top of the wall dividing these rooms. These



Fig. 3. Bowl of Cypriot Sigillata from P22A (Photo W. Jerke)



Fig. 4. White Painted lagynos (Photo W. Jerke)

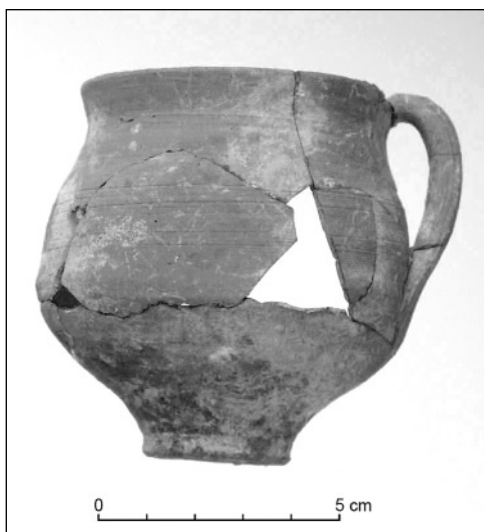


Fig. 5. Mug (Photo W. Jerke)

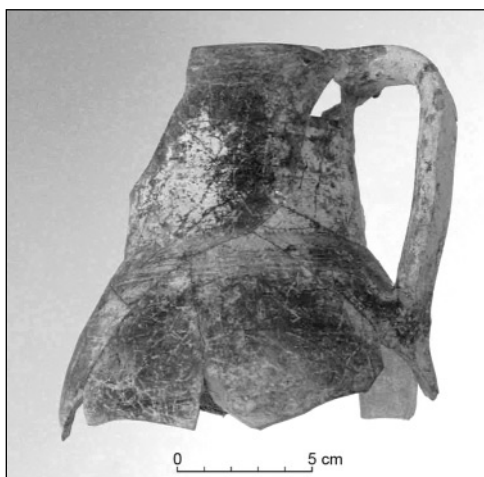


Fig. 6. Red Slip jug (Photo W. Jerke)

remains of a conflagration formed in the center of Room 12W a depression, which suggests that the underlying floor was used sufficiently long to subside in relation to its perimeter supported by the walls.

Numerous fragments of Rhodian and other amphorae, including stamped handles were found in the ash and preceding daub (Sztetylko forthcoming). A Red Slip jug seems transitional between the 2nd and 1st century BC forms. It has a wide neck as rilled-neck series (here it is plain) and a rim hollowed at the top, but the red slip is very thin and absorbed as in later pieces (Hayes 1991: 28, 31, 121, 159, 168, Figs XVI:1, 2, LIV:27, LIX:9, Cistern 3:19, Well 11:47, Well 20:9; Papuci-Władyka 1995: 54, 216, No. 412, Pl. 54) [Fig. 6]. Other typically Hellenistic pottery objects included a large section of a White Painted lagynos made of pinkish clay, with angular shoulder, cream slipped and painted brownish-red, the motif being three

branches with long narrow leaves or needles. The fabric best fits Hayes' series 7, possibly Knidian (Hayes 1991: 21, Fig. 11, Pl. 5:5; Mandel 2000: 179-188, 93-94) [Fig. 4].

Another 1st century BC piece is a large Black Gloss Pergamene or (rather not) Campana A(?) plate Lamboglia 36, quite similar to a smaller example from the House of Dionysos, differing only in the faint roulette on the external lower wall (dia. 27.4 cm; Hayes 1991: 170, Fig. IV: bottom 1, from Well 17:3 at 5.0-6.0 m depth).

These finds occurred above the next floor (II) and parts of them were found in the ashy deposit filling the subsided central part of this floor. The floor was removed to an arbitrary level corresponding to the reconstructed (wooden) floor levels in rooms to the south (i.e., House of Aion Rooms 7, 13, 14, 15). No excavation was made below this level.

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