

STANFORD UNIVERSITY EXCAVATIONS ON THE
ACROPOLIS OF MONTE POLIZZO, SICILY, II:
PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE 2001 SEASON

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1. Introduction

Monte Polizzo is 6 km northwest of Salemi, in Trapani province, western Sicily (37° 56' N, 12° 46' E; fig. 1). The site consists of an interconnected group of ridges (fig. 2). The highest point is 725.9 m above sea level.

When Vincenzo Tusa took over as Superintendent of Archaeology for western Sicily in 1963, there was very little evidence from inland western Sicily, and the few sites that were known were cemeteries.¹ In 1970 Professor Tusa launched an ambitious campaign to remedy this situation. He excavated trial trenches at Monte Polizzo, uncovering Iron Age settlement remains.² In 1996 Sebastiano Tusa, Superintendent of Prehistoric Archaeology for Trapani province and Professor of Archaeology at the University of Naples, entered into collaboration with Kristian Kristiansen, Professor of Archaeology at the University of Göteborg, to explore Monte Polizzo in more detail. Their initial goals were (1) to understand interactions between the indigenous population and Greek and Phoenician colonists; (2) to clarify the formation of Elymian ethnic identity; and (3) to produce stratigraphic correlations between datable Greek pottery and local wares.

The Monte Polizzo Acropolis excavation was made possible by the generous support of the Superintendency of Archaeology for Trapani province and by the City of Salemi. We wish to thank our many friends in Salemi—particularly Dr. Nicòla Spagnolo, Mr. Baldo Terranova, Mayor Luigi Crimi, and Nino, Emanuela, and Leonardo Bascone—for their generosity and hospitality. The project is funded by Stanford University's Tressider and Hoskins Funds in the Department of Classics and a generous grant from the Office of the Vice-Provost for Undergraduate Education, through the Undergraduate Research Program. The American Academy in Rome sponsors the project.

We would like to thank the directors of the other teams involved in archaeological research around Salemi—Michael Kolb (Northern Illinois University), Kristian Kristiansen (University of Göteborg), Christopher Prescott (University of Oslo), and Jen Trimble (Stanford University)—for their help and advice, as well as the members of the Stanford excavation team (Reed Adam, Mark Alonge, Chris Andrews, Brian Ball, Leila Ben-Youssef, Meg Butler, Tara Carter [UCLA], Liz Clevenger, Franco De Angelis [Calgary], Sharon DiChiara, Anne Gjeffle [Oslo], Brien Garnand [Chicago], Aaron

Goynshor, Erica Grijalva, Will Hartwell, Laura Hiatt, Jeanette Kamell, Allison Lewis, Tony New, Marden Nichols, Stewart Nielson, Johnny Openshaw, David Platt, Gautam Raghavan, Jason Rosensweig, Betsey Rubio, Kathy St. John, Josh Samuels, Johannes Siapkis [Uppsala], David Smith, Eric Thu, Sonya Trinh, Liz Wellington, Marisa Wilson [Berkeley], Chris Witmore, and Alexandra Zsigmond) for their energy and enthusiasm. Mauro LoCastro provided invaluable help on site, and Pierfrancesco Vecchio with the pottery analysis. Karin Olsson drew some of the artifacts. Ian Morris was director of the excavation, Trinity Jackman was assistant director, Emma Blake was director of artifact analysis, Anne Gjeffle directed artifact conservation, Bengt Westergaard and Chris Sevara directed the digital recording, and Brien Garnand was project manager. Malcolm Bell read an earlier version of the manuscript and gave valuable comments.

¹ V. Tusa 1968–1969, 439; see also V. Tusa et al. 1992, 618–620.

² V. Tusa 1972; 1972–1973, 445; Nenci and Vallet 1977–, 10:435.



Fig. 1. Major sites in western Sicily mentioned in the text.

Fig. 2. Aerial photograph of Monte Polizzo.



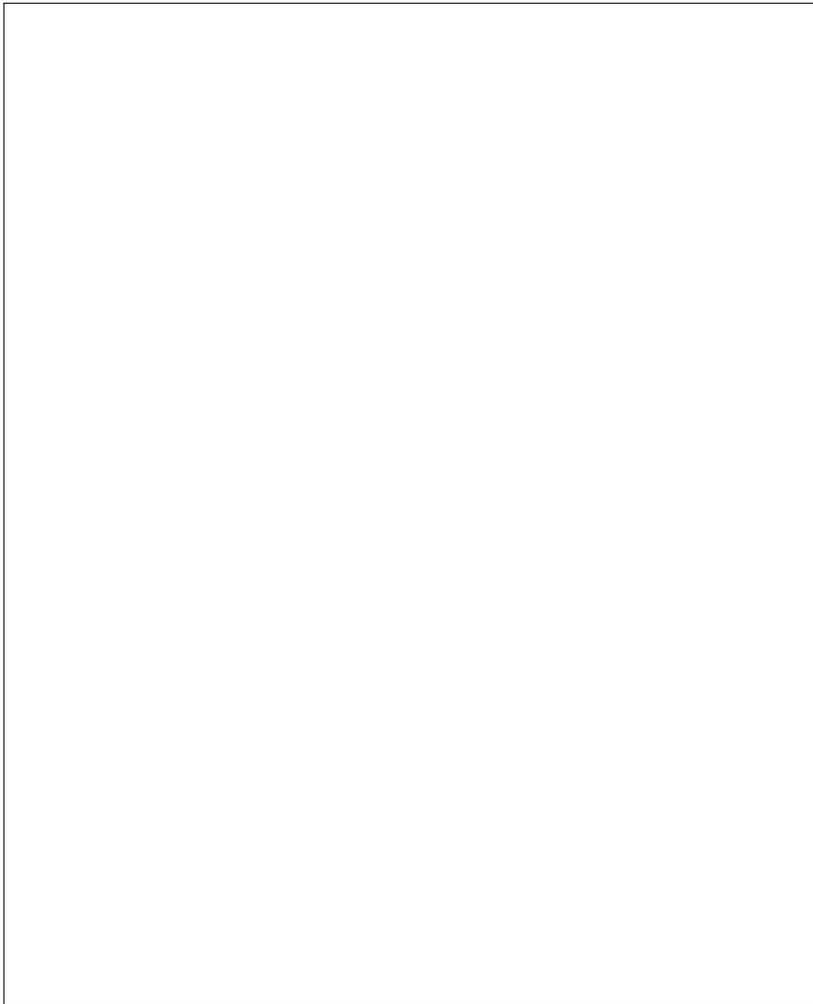


Fig. 3. Excavation areas on Monte Polizzo.

Fieldwork began in 1998. Christopher Prescott of the University of Oslo excavated a mid-sixth-century B.C. building (House I) in 1998–2001, a deeply stratified Iron Age deposit (the Profile) in 1998–1999, and a series of soundings on the northwest slope of the acropolis in 1999.³ Sebastiano Tusa excavated sixth-century building remains at the Portella Sant’Anna in 1999–2000 (see fig. 3 for all locations within Monte Polizzo). Michael Kolb of Northern Illinois University surveyed around Monte Polizzo and the Bronze Age site of Mokarta in 1998–2000, excavated a Bronze Age tomb at Pitrazzi on Montagna Grande in 2000–2001, and in 2001 excavated two trenches in Salemi, finding medieval and fourth-century B.C. deposits.⁴

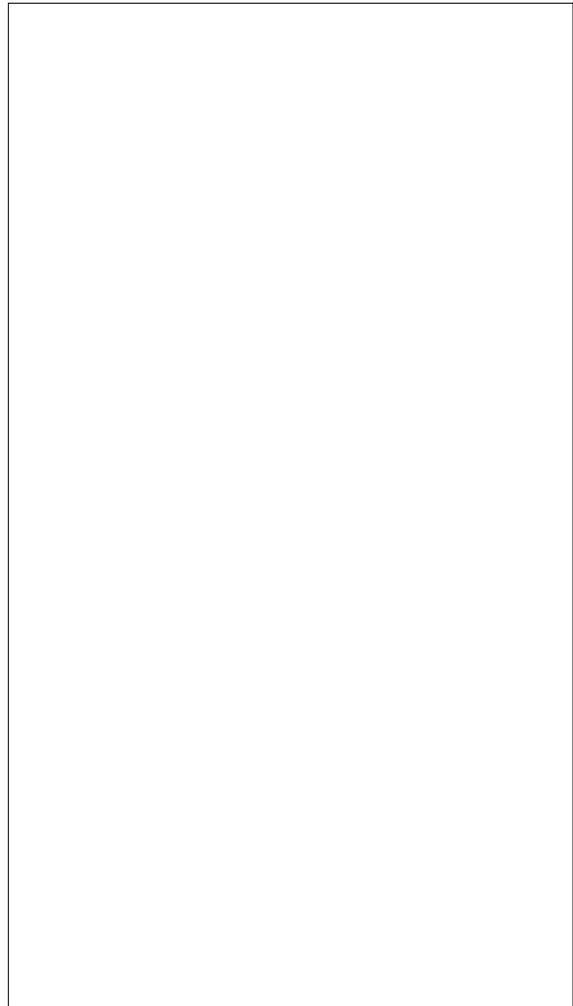
Stanford University joined the project in 1999 and began excavations on the acropolis of Monte Polizzo in 2000.⁵ Our major goal on the acropolis is to collect evidence from the core of the sixth-century town, particularly its ritual centers, so that we can assess theories about “Hellenization” in Iron Age Sicily and, if necessary, develop alternative models of social change.

³ Prescott et al. 2001; Mühlenbock and Prescott 2001; [anthro/programelymi.htm](http://www.hf.uio.no/iakk/sicilia).
<http://www.hf.uio.no/iakk/sicilia>.

⁵ See Morris et al. 2001; summary in De Angelis 2001,

⁴ Kolb and Tusa 2001; <http://www3.niu.edu/acad/> 197.

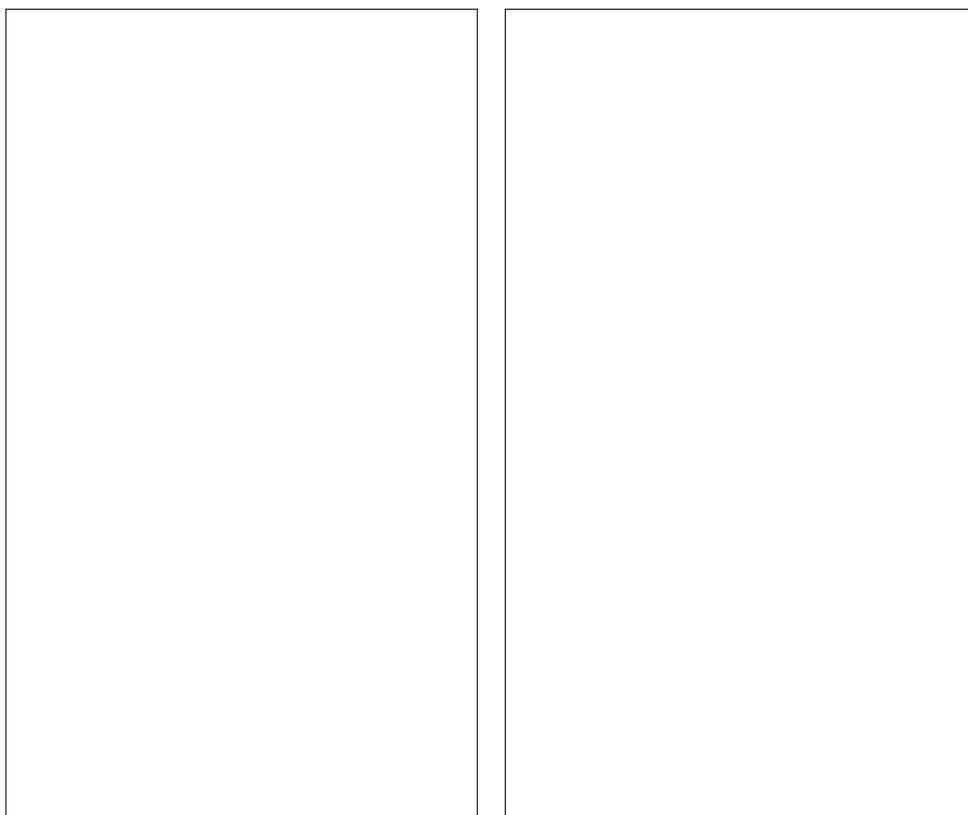
Fig. 4. Excavation zones in the acropolis area at Monte Polizzo.



We hope to advance the study of Iron Age Sicily by pursuing a six-part methodology:

1. Excavating on a large scale;
2. Quantifying the data and publishing them in detail;
3. Focusing on close stratigraphic analysis;
4. Examining the use of space and how it changed through time;
5. Making extensive use of natural-science techniques;
6. Integrating data from excavations in several parts of the same settlement.

In 2000 the acropolis excavation concentrated on two points, zones A and B (fig. 4). This revealed parts of two structures, curvilinear A1 and rectilinear B1. Only topsoil and rubble collapse deposits were excavated around A1 in 2000. The finds suggested that A1 was used in the sixth and fourth centuries B.C., perhaps as a shrine. Building B1 was dated to the eleventh–twelfth century A.D., with an earlier phase in the sixth century B.C. In 2001 we expanded the excavation in zones A and B; opened a trench in zone C, between building B1 and a house excavated by Vincenzo Tusa some 75 m to the south; and cleared part of what may be an Iron Age staircase. Professor Jennifer Trimble carried out a magnetometer survey of two parts of the site, to be published separately.



*Fig. 5 (far left).
Findspots of phase I
(Bronze Age) material.*

*Fig. 6 (near left).
Findspots of phase II
(c. 575–475 B.C.)
material.*

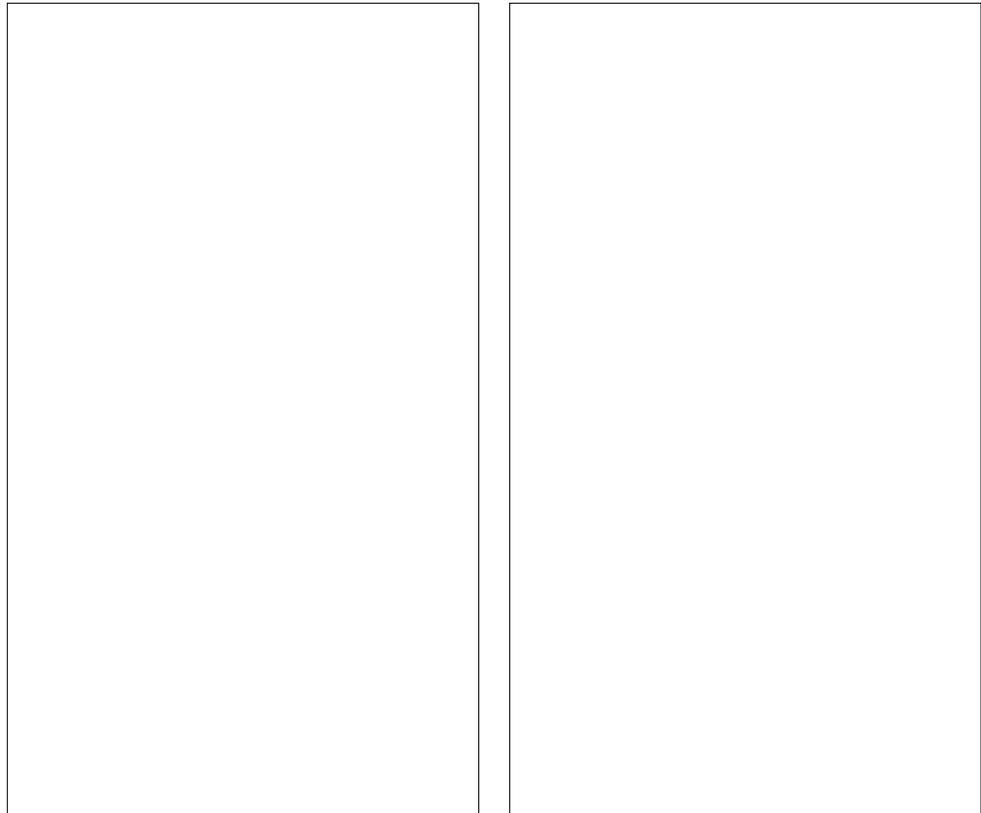
2. Summary of Results

We have tentatively identified five phases of activity on the acropolis, spanning 3,500 years:

- I. *Bronze Age* (c. 1500–800 B.C.; fig. 5). Fragments of four Bronze Age vessels have been identified, spanning the Middle through Final Bronze Age. All came from Iron Age deposits. No secure Bronze Age contexts have yet been found.
- II. *Sixth century B.C.* (fig. 6). Initial study of the finds suggests that phase II can be broken down into three subphases. Phase II.a is characterized by Corinthian and some East Greek imports, probably dating c. 575–550 B.C.; II.b, by East Greek imports and some Corinthian, probably dating c. 550–525; and II.c, characterized by Attic black glaze and East Greek imports, dating c. 525–475. The main occupation currently seems to belong to phase II.b. In **zone A** a possible floor in trench M100 (see fig. 4 for trench numbering) dating to phase II.b is the earliest deposit excavated so far. The associated finds include just one Greek sherd, from an East Greek Type B1 kylix of the early sixth century. Zone A was substantially rebuilt, probably in phase II.b, with use continuing through phase II.c. After the 2001 excavation A1 appears to be a semicircular structure, with wall **a** extending to the north. The mudbrick upper parts of A1 decayed gradually between about 475 and 350 B.C. Structure A2, perhaps an open-air altar, probably belongs to phase II.b but could be earlier. After A2 went out of use, a huge pottery deposit accumulated immediately to its north, containing 20+ storage vessels, animal bones and antlers, fragments of iron, and a small amount of fine ware (fig. 23). Most of the datable pots belong to phase II.c, though

*Fig. 7 (near right).
Findspots of phase III
(c. 350–300 B.C.)
material.*

*Fig. 8 (far right).
Findspots of phase IV
(c. A.D. 950–1200)
material.*



a few sherds belong in phase III. A2 may have changed functions from a sacrificial area to a storage area or dump during the sixth century. **Zone B** saw extensive activity in phases II.b and II.c. The surviving part of room B1/2 includes a paved floor, probably in phase II.c, and beneath it a large deposit of ash, storage vessels, some fine ware, bone, and antler. This dates to phase II.b. It may be the remains of the collapse of a burned house into its basement. It is not yet clear whether the areas north of B1/2 constituted an internal or external space. The area south of B1/2 was an external space with a stone drain, though parts of an earlier room may also survive. In **zone C**, trench N/O 113–114 revealed remains of a rectilinear building, also destroyed by fire in phase II.a. House I, excavated by the Oslo-Göteborg team, dates to phase II.b. The house excavated by Vincenzo Tusa in 1970, 75 m to the south, is on the same alignment as B1/2 and probably also belongs to phase II.b. The staircase partially exposed in trench S107 most likely also dates to phase II.

- III. *Late fourth century B.C.* (fig. 7). Structure A3, perhaps a small shrine, was built on the ruins of A1. Finds include a Punic stele and four bronze Punic-Sicilian coins. So far, phase III is only represented in zone A.
- IV. *Tenth through thirteenth century A.D.* (fig. 8). The 1,500-year-old ruins of room B1/2 were rebuilt and reused, and room B1/1 added to the northeast. The medieval occupation in B1/2 is poorly preserved. The functions of structure B1 are not yet clear. So far, phase IV is only represented in zone B.
- V. *Late twentieth century A.D.* (fig. 9). In the 1950s furrows for tree planting were deep-



Fig. 9. Findspots of phase V
(c. A.D. 1950–2000) material.



Fig. 10.
Structural
remains in zone
A. Phase II
structures (A1,
A2) are shaded;
phase IV (A3)
stippled; phase V
(A4) plain. Line
 α - α marks the
position of the
profile drawing
shown in fig. 11;
 β - β , that in fig.
13; γ - γ , that in
fig. 17; and δ - δ ,
that in fig. 22.

plowed around the entire hill, and in the 1970s a stone shelter (A4) was built at the summit, severely damaging phase III structure A3.

Further excavation may lead us to modify these phases. In the main part of this report, we present the finds from zones A, B, and C in turn, in each case proceeding from the earliest to the latest deposits.

3. Zone A (fig. 10)

STRUCTURE A1

Phase II. The first cultural deposit detected so far in association with A1 is a pebbly layer in M100 containing a few undiagnostic sherds, probably a floor (layer 9 in fig. 11). It was covered by a dense, heavily burned, red clay deposit, containing pockets of ash and some large pieces of charcoal (layer 8). This is probably a use deposit accumulated on floor 9, preserving traces of small sacrificial fires. Only small parts of layers 8 and 9 have been excavated.

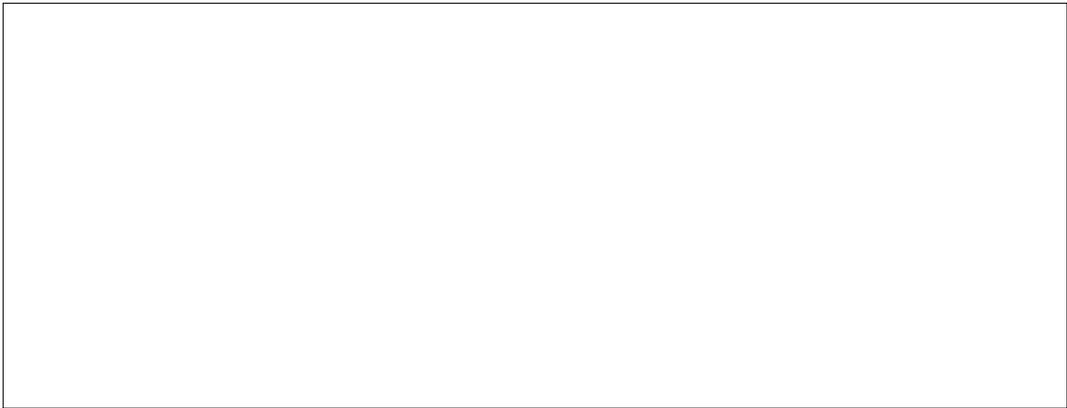


Fig. 11. North-south profile along the east balk of trench M100 (line a-a in fig. 10).

Fig. 12. The junction between A1 walls c (at right) and d (at left) in trench M100, facing north. Note that wall d was built on top of layer 8 (see fig. 11), while wall c postdates layer 8 (photo I. Morris).



Nearly all the finds from layer 8 belong to indigenous cooking pots and typical Iron Age gray ware, including joining sherds from the handle and body of a dipper of Caterina Trombi's Type D1. She assigns this to the period c. 730–630 B.C.⁶ Only one Greek sherd has been identified, from an Ionic Type B1 cup.⁷ These are normally dated to the first half of the sixth century⁸ but may continue slightly later at Monte Polizzo. A human tooth was also found in layer 8.⁹

A1 was built on layer 9 but predates layer 8 (figs. 11, 12). In 2000, we assumed that the excavated part of A1 was the southern half of a round building. In 2001, however, we found that curved wall **c** extended only a few cm north beyond the 2000 trenches, forming a semi-circle. We have not reached the level of the lowest course in all parts of M99, so it remains possible that wall **c** was originally a full circle and was then partly robbed. However, we have not detected a robber trench in layer 11. Blocks of wall **a** are preserved in situ running to the north for 4.0 m, and a thin deposit of tiny white chips in trench N99 suggests that there was

⁶ Trombi 1999, 283 and table LXXXII.

⁸ See Pierro 1984, 14–17; Boldrini 1994, 158–159.

⁷ Cf. Di Stephano et al. 1998, I1, pp. 301, 304, 305, from Palermo. ⁹ Reference M100.18 SF 18 = TS 71608.

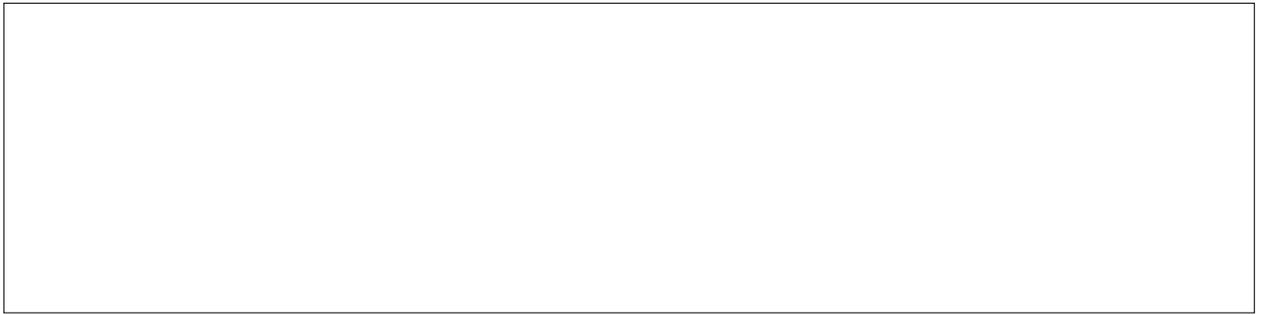


Fig. 13. East-west profile along the north balk of trenches M99 and N99 (line β - β in fig. 10).



Fig. 14. The acropolis at Polizzello (adapted from De Miro 1988–1989, fig. 3).

at least one more stone to the north, now missing. Fragments of stone visible in the north balk may belong to a continuation of wall **a** (fig. 13). A deposit of building stone in the north part of trench N99 (layers 13 and 14 in fig. 13) suggests that A1 is disturbed in this area.

The east end of wall **b** does not bond with **c**, but the two walls are carefully fitted together. We are currently assuming that walls **a**, **b**, and **c** were all built at the same time. The south wall of fourth-century structure A3 makes it difficult to excavate between walls **b** and **c**, but the south face of A1 wall **b** was carefully dressed, suggesting that it was originally visible. Space A1/3 between walls **b** and **c** would in that case have been very small, no more than 3.75×1.1 m.

If wall **c** seems only a half circle (diameter 6.4 m), A1 was a very unusual structure. Semi-circular acropolis building C at Polizzello, 90 km east of Monte Polizzo (figs. 1 and 14), is

Fig. 15. Clay basin sunk into the phase II.c floor of A1 (trench N99, facing southwest; photo I. Morris).

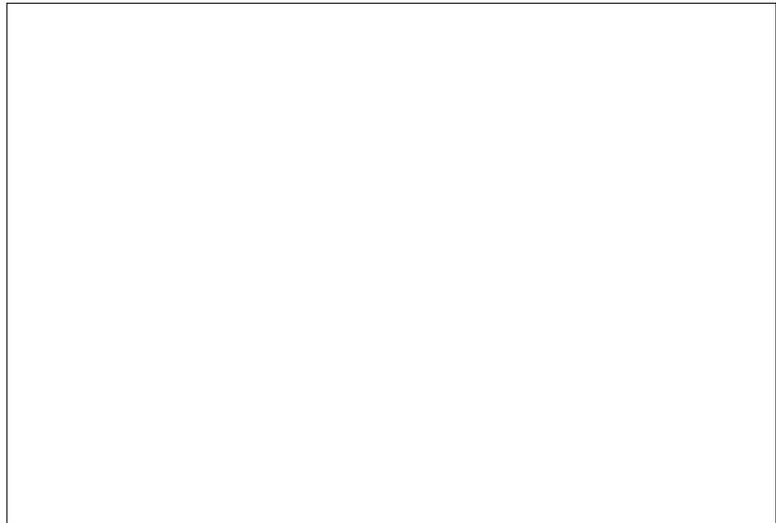


Fig. 16. Semilunate iron cleaver from A1 (M99 layer 15 [see fig. 13]), c. 500 B.C. (photo D. Connolly).



roughly contemporary, but there are some significant differences: the Polizzello building is larger (diameter c. 15 m), encloses a small room (6 × 4.5 m), and appears to be complete, while the semicircular wall **c** at Monte Polizzo is part of a larger group of walls.¹⁰

Wall **d** appears to be later than wall **c** since **d** rests directly on layer 8, while **c** was in position before layer 8 was formed (figs. 11, 12). We found only two courses of wall **d**, and since wall **c** immediately next to it survives seven courses high, we can safely assume that **d** was originally only a low foundation for a light wall, perhaps around an enclosure. Polizzello acropolis building B has a similar curving enclosure wall.

The central part of the area north of A1 was disturbed by the modern shelter A4 (see figs. 13 and 17), but on either side of it, A1 had pebble floors (at the north balk of trenches M–N99, shown in fig. 13, excavation has not yet reached the floors). This sloped very slightly (gradient about 1 percent) from east to west. In the eastern part (N99), we exposed part of a round clay basin (diameter 64 cm), sunk slightly into the pebble floor and heaped up with

¹⁰ See De Miro 1988–1989, 33, 35.

fine gray ash (fig. 15). The ash deposit, 15 cm thick over the center of the basin, contained heavily burned bones, a few sherds, and dense clusters of charcoal. Among the sherds was a handle from a black glaze kylix of the Class of Athens 1104, one of the commonest Attic cup types of the mid-sixth century B.C.¹¹ Other finds included sherds of an indigenous krater. Fragments of a very similar krater were found 9 m away in the large pottery deposit in trench M101 (see below, under structure A2). On both sides of A1 wall **a** there were deposits of clay mixed with ash and charcoal, belonging to A1's abandonment phase (visible in the western part of the profile in fig. 13 as layers 15 and 16). The finds in M99 layer 15 included a semilunate iron cleaver (fig. 16), presumably used in sacrifices, as well as a fragment of a black-painted lamp. Both have parallels dating around 500 B.C. Layer 15 also yielded an incised loom weight and three more pieces of iron; layer 16 included eight more fragments of metal (including three bronze ring beads and a biconical bronze bead) and a carnelian bead with a close parallel from early sixth-century gr. 218 at Palermo.¹² East of wall **a**, a very similar deposit included another four loom weights. Southwest of A1, in trench M100, flakes of bronze, five bone beads, and a Phoenician blue glass bead came from burned deposits belonging to the abandonment phase of A1, along with sherds of a louterion.¹³

In the northeast part of N99 a pile of rubble spilled out across the abandonment layers, continuing into the north balk (fig. 13, layers 13 and 14), although as yet no walls have been found in this direction. The deposit included East Greek sherds of the mid-sixth century and sherds from a local gray ware plate very similar in shape to Attic lekanides of about 550–525 B.C.¹⁴ All these deposits were then buried under up to 25 cm of clay (layers 11 and 12 in fig. 13; white in the northern part of M99, yellow and brown elsewhere). This probably represents the disintegration of mudbrick walls standing on the excavated stone foundations. The yellow clay deposits in A1/1 and A1/2 excavated in 2000 belong to the same mudbrick collapse phase.

It seems that A1 was abandoned peacefully in the first half of the fifth century. The substantial ash deposits in M99 and N99 seem to belong to the use of the building, not to a destruction by fire. The mudbrick upper parts of walls **a**, **b**, and **c** gradually decayed in the later fifth and earlier fourth centuries.

A trial excavation in N98 revealed a substantial deposit of topsoil (up to 25 cm deep) and a layer of limestone slabs, many of them lying flat. These stones may belong to a pavement. This deposit seems to be earth removed when the interior part of modern shelter A4 was dug out (see fig. 17). Layer 2, directly above the stone layer 3, is ancient. One sherd from this layer belongs to the rim of a Sicilian imitation of a very distinctive Massaliote amphora, in which the rim folds outward to touch the neck of the vessel, creating a gap between the

¹¹ Cf. Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 88–89, nos. 378–386, with pl. 18 and fig. 4, from Athens. al. 2001, 261, fig. 8b).

¹² Cleaver: cf. Di Stefano et al. 1998, 146 and 388, no. 131, from Palermo tomb 117, c. 500 B.C., 20 × 6 cm; wt. 395 g. Lamp: cf. Vassallo 1999, 238–239, no. 447, with fig. 233, from Colle Madore. The loom weight has some similarities to a more elaborate example found in the topsoil in structure B1 in 2000: Morris et al. 2001, 265, fig. 12. Carnelian bead: Di Stefano et al. 1998, 131 and 189, no. 39. The necklace that this bead was in also included two Phoenician eye beads like the example found in the rubble collapse of structure A1 in 2000 (Morris et

¹³ The louterion has a sixth-century parallel from Himera (Allegro 1982, 115), but the shapes changed little between the eighth century and the fourth (cf. Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 218–219, with nn. 4, 5).

¹⁴ Cf. Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 164–165 and pl. 40, no. 1216; Di Stefano et al. 1998, 136 and 179, nos. 68 and 69, from Palermo gr. 157. Monte Polizzo House I plate F11888, dating to the early sixth century, is very similar (Mühlenbock and Prescott 2001, 30, fig. 30).

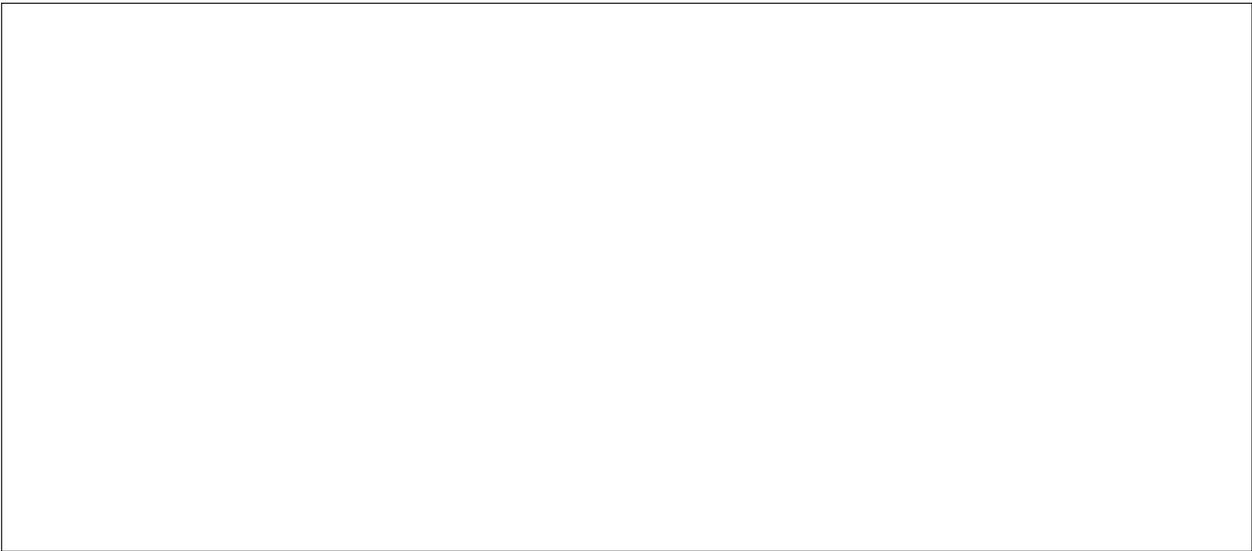


Fig. 17. Profile through phase V shelter A4 (line γ - γ in fig. 10), showing the original levels of the phase II (A1) and phase III (A3) floors before the modern pit was dug.



Fig. 18. Findspots of phase III artifacts scattered around structure A3.



Fig. 19. Punic stele, c. 350–300 B.C., found built into shelter A4 wall a (photo D. Connolly).

rim and the neck. The Massaliote original is normally dated c. 525–450 B.C.¹⁵ Interestingly, a joining sherd was found in trench L106, some 45 m to the south, showing how far erosion can move material in the topsoil at this site. At the north end of N98 we encountered bed-rock 15 cm under the possible pavement.

¹⁵ Cf. Nenci et al. 1995, 945 and pl. 148.4.

Phase III. The area of building A1 was abandoned for 100 to 150 years. Cleaning in 2001 showed that A3, a small rectangular structure with thick walls (the external dimensions of the surviving parts are 3.5 × 2.9 m, and the walls approximately 70 cm thick) was built on top of the ruins. Parts of the walls of A1 were visible when A3 was constructed. A3 is poorly preserved, partly because of erosion but chiefly because the 1970s shelter A4 severely disturbed it. The center of A4's floor was dug down about 50 cm below the modern surface, to an elevation of 725.37 m (fig. 13, layers 1, 2, 4). This destroyed most of the floor associated with A3, which was originally around 725.50 m above sea level (fig. 17). However, even in those parts of A3 not disturbed by A4, the fourth-century deposits were virtually on the modern ground surface. Further damage was caused by a pit dug all the way to bedrock (at 725.15 m) against wall **b** of A4, perhaps to pull up stones from A1 wall **a**. Layers 8–10 in figure 13 date to the fourth century, but many phase III artifacts were found scattered through topsoil layers 5–7 in figure 13, west of A3, and in the rubble collapse south of A3 (fig. 18). Only small pockets of the phase III abandonment survive more or less intact, trapped under A4 wall **d**.

The topsoil and rubble layers contain post-1950 material, including glass from bottles, shotgun cartridges, and a battery. Most of the datable ancient material belongs to late fourth century B.C., including many fragments of wine amphoras (mostly of Magna Graecia-Sicilia types I–III but including some Punic) and drinking cups¹⁶ and at least five bronze ornaments. A few objects from the same layers date to the late sixth century, including part of the base of an Attic Type C black glaze cup and indigenous cooking pots of a type well known at Palermo and Mozia.¹⁷ These are probably residual, churned up by shelter A4 from the sixth-century layers associated with A1.

The most interesting finds were a small Punic limestone stele, a group of four Punic bronze coins, and three fragmentary limestone dice, all from the west side of A1. The stele (17 × 15 × 4.5 cm; fig. 19) had been reused as a building stone in the foundation course of A4 wall **a**. The stele represents a shrine with a Greek-style tympanum and a wide carved betel on the doors. The general form is common in the fourth and third centuries B.C. at Sulcis, where marble or limestone stelai were often inserted into larger sandstone blocks. Stelai of this kind are known from sanctuaries and tophets on Punic sites in Sicily and Sardinia.¹⁸ Normally they are found in larger groups; a single find is unusual. In the rubble collapse in trench M100, just 1.5 m southwest of wall **c**, we uncovered a large, slightly tapered stone block, measuring 78 × 40 × 37 cm. This is so much larger than the wall stones, which were normally less than 8 cm thick, that we have to assume it had significance. However, because it was found out of its original position, we cannot know whether it was used in phase II or phase III (or both).

The four coins are practically identical, roughly 1.5 cm in diameter and each weighing slightly less than 4 g. They belong to a very common type, with the head of a young woman on one side and a horse in front of a palm tree on the other, dating 350–275 B.C. (fig. 20).

¹⁶ The amphoras include both Graeco-Italian (Art. 1419; cf. Di Stefano et al. 1998, R8, pp. 327, 332, and 334; Polizzi 1997, 101–102, no. 18) and Punic (Art. 1360; cf. Di Stefano et al. 1998, R17, p. 320). The cups include an Attic black glaze skyphos (cf. Di Stefano 1993, fig. 36.5), fragments from the body and grooved ring handle of one or more Attic black glaze cup-kantharoi or mug-kantharoi (Arts. 1375, 1420; cf. Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 11, 75, 117–118, nos. 225, 672, 678), and a carinated cup (cf. Di Stefano et al.

1998, 169 and 185, no. 306, from gr. 106).

¹⁷ Type C cup, cf. Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 91–92, 263–265, nos. 398–431. Cooking pot, cf. Di Stefano et al. 1998, 178, 181, 310, nos. 50, 127, and 140, from grs. 12A, 15, and 117; Bevilacqua et al. 1972, grs. 14 and 43.

¹⁸ Cf. Moscati 1988, 372–376; Bartoloni 1989, fig. 67; and generally, Moscati 1992.



Fig. 20. Punic bronze tetradrachm (L99 layer 2 SF 3), c. 350–300 B.C.: (far left) head of young woman; (near left) horse in front of palm tree (photos D. Connolly).

Fig. 22 (below). East-west profile along north edge of structure A2 (line δ-δ in fig. 10).

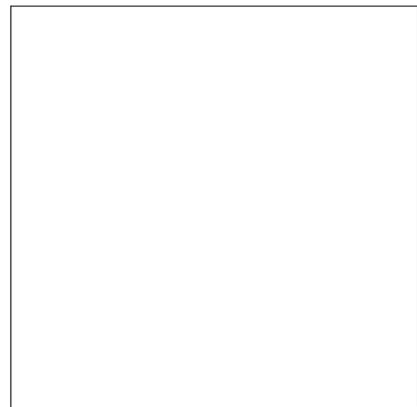
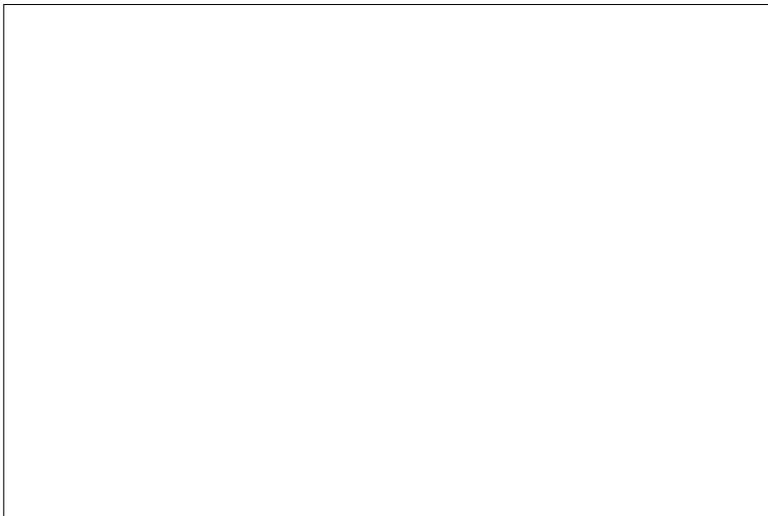


Fig. 21. Structure A4, facing west (photo I. Morris).

They were probably minted in both Sicily and Carthage and are common in western Sicily. Similar coins were found in Northern Illinois University's excavations in Salemi in 2001.¹⁹

Stone and clay dice are known from classical contexts on several Greek sites, and there are classical and Hellenistic examples on Sicily at Monte Iato and Morgantina.²⁰ Our examples are between 1.5 and 1.7 cm square.

Phase V. When the Forestale converted Monte Polizzo into a woodland in the 1950s, the entire hill was plowed with continuous oval trenches, and saplings were then planted in the cuttings. The plow furrows vary from 20 to 75 cm in depth and 30 to 50 cm in width at the surface. They are typically 1–1.5 m apart, but their paths wander, and they often cut across each other. They generally contain few stones. As the plow pulled up stones, the forestry teams placed them immediately downslope of the furrow, creating shallow terrace walls.

¹⁹ Calciati 1987, 393, no. 20; Buttrey 1989, no. 436, and p. 150; Manfredi 1995, 243; Soprintendenza 1997, 24, 142–144, 327–330; Di Stefano et al. 1998, 143, 174, 351, 358, nos. 115, 372–375, M55; and general discussion in Acquaro et al. 1991, 11–26, 59–70.

²⁰ E.g., Davidson 1952, 218 and 221, nos. 1737–1752, with pl. 100; Robinson 1941, 504 and n. 78, no. 2570, with pl. 164; Isler 1994, 20 and 25, fig. 36; Bell 2000.

Only one tree trench was plowed in this part of the site (layer 3 in fig. 13), but A4, a dry-stone shelter with a dug-out floor (fig. 21), was dug deep into the ruins of A3 and A1. Our informants disagree about A4's date. Some interpret it as a German lookout post from 1943, but the only datable finds are a 50-lire coin from 1978 and a 200-lire coin from 1979, plus fragments of several Heineken bottles, which have been common in western Sicily since the 1980s. A magazine, probably dating from the 1990s, was found concealed in the upper courses of wall **d**, but given the considerable difference between the careful construction of the lower six courses and the looseness of the top five or six courses (see fig. 21), this provides no firm evidence for the shelter's construction date. The topsoil inside A4 contained small pieces of charcoal and four spent shotgun cartridges, confirming testimony that rabbit hunters used the shelter in the 1990s.

With the permission of the superintendent, we removed all the above-ground courses of A4 before the season began. Wall **b** turned out to be resting on the contemporary surface, as did the external faces of walls **a** and **c**. These were completely removed. The internal faces of walls **a** and **c**, and both faces of wall **d**, had been dug down beneath the contemporary surface. Walls **a** and **c** had been cut deeply into layers 11 and 12 (fig. 13), the clay deposits created by the decay of the mudbrick walls of A1, and A4 wall **c** rested in part on A1 wall **a** (fig. 10). The foundations of wall **d** rested on intact phase III deposits.

STRUCTURE A2

Phase I. Two Bronze Age sherds were identified. One is an incised herringbone body sherd of the Final Bronze Age (tenth–ninth century).²¹ Both came from a large deposit of Iron Age pottery. There are no intact Bronze Age deposits, and we do not know whether the Bronze Age material was originally deposited here or came from another part of the site.

Phase II. In 2000, we excavated to bedrock in trenches N105 and O105 without encountering any intact deposits and removed the topsoil in O104 and O103, revealing eroded bedrock. We surmised that the area between zones A and B was probably an open space in antiquity.²² In 2001 we opened a 1 × 4 m trench along the west edge of square N101 to test this theory and immediately uncovered large sandstone blocks. We eventually excavated 39 m² around structure A2. The structure probably originally had a lower course of six sandstone blocks, forming a rectangle 2.05 × 1.02 m, but two of the slabs on the south side have been robbed. Fragments of one of them were still in place, however. The slabs were 16–20 cm thick and rested directly on a sterile of loose sandstone and pebbles (layer 19 in fig. 22). Intense heat had turned all the stones pink on the outer faces but not the inner faces or the top. A scatter of sandstone fragments, mixed with charcoal and small pieces of heavily burned bone, extended for 54 cm to the north of A2 (layer 17 in fig. 22). The broken fragments showed that the sandstone had been burned pink to a depth of 3–4 cm. At the east end of A2, a limestone slab had been added. This sat on top of layer 19, the burned sandstone fragments from the original structure. A2 was then subjected to more heat, which turned the limestone block pink on the outside and shattered it into at least 9 pieces.

Shallow layers of very hard earth mixed with round pebbles from the natural matrix of

²¹ Art. 1391; cf. Fatta 1983, 90, pls. 11–13.

²² Morris et al. 2001, 268.

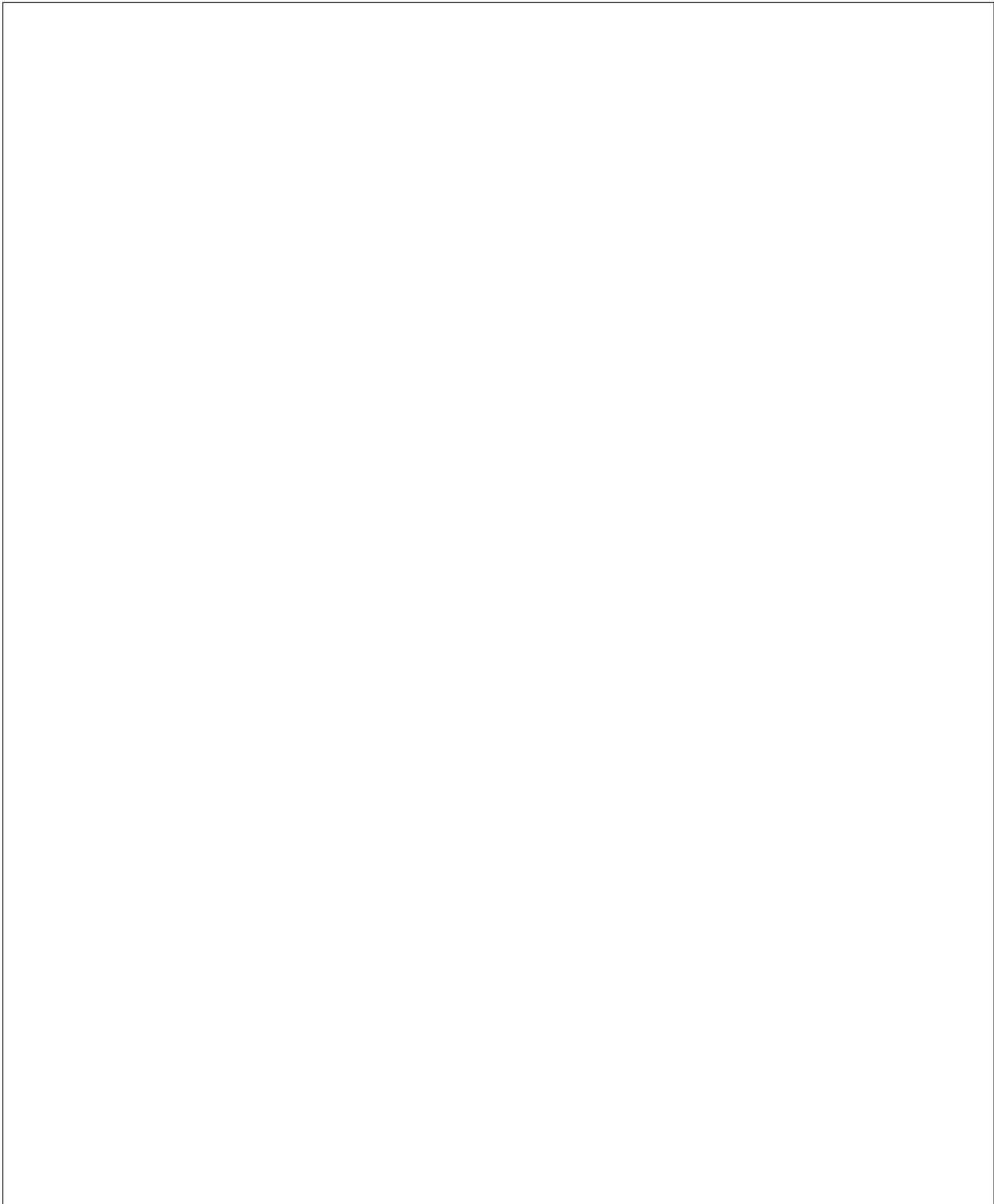


Fig. 23. Pottery scatter north of structure A2. Bone and antler fragments marked in black.

the hill run up against A2. These contained small, undiagnostic sherds, heavily burned bone, antler, and charcoal fragments, and (north of A2) small pockets of ash.

These deposits postdate the construction of A2 but contain no datable finds. Layer 3, an enormous deposit of pottery against the north face of A2, contains mostly sixth-century material, although a few sherds date to the late fourth century, when A3 was in use (just 5 m to the north). We have no *terminus post quem* for A2, but several squared sandstone blocks found in the rubble from A1 probably provide a *terminus ante quem*. Since A2 is the only structure excavated to date made of dressed sandstone blocks, we assume that these stones were robbed from A2, which must therefore have gone out of use before this part of A1 was built. If this assumption is correct, then A2 was built in phase II.a or II.b and was the scene of repeated and intense burning. It was abandoned before the end of phase II.b. Some blocks were robbed for A1, and the space immediately north of A2 was used as a storage area or dump. The original structure of A2 was at least two courses high, and possibly three (i.e., some 50–60 cm tall).

North of A2, an enormous deposit of pottery, in places 15 cm thick, extended roughly 9 m east-west and 3 m north-south. The deposit was particularly dense just north of A2 (fig. 23). Preliminary study suggests that it included at least 20 large storage vessels (pithoi and amphoras), four clay weights, small pieces of iron and lead, two carved bone needles or punches, and many fragments of antler, some with cut marks. There was also a little fine ware.

This deposit was in places 15 cm thick, but there was no obvious stratification within it. Sherds from a single vessel could be found at all depths in the deposit. We are therefore treating it as a single deposit, either formed gradually by the slow decay of pots in an open-air storage area or by a single dump of material from A1. We removed the material in a series of “sheets” of pottery, each 2–3 cm thick, planning all finds in each sheet. Figure 23 is a composite drawing based on these plans. The two Bronze Age sherds came from its lower parts, but all other finds in these levels date to the Iron Age. The latest find, probably dating to the fourth century,²³ was just 4 cm above the Bronze Age sherds. The upper part of the deposit also included the root of a triple handle with close parallels from House I, in phase II.b, as well as one of the few definite fifth-century finds, part of the rim and handle of an Attic Type A skyphos of c. 480–400 B.C.²⁴

4. Zone B (fig. 24)

PHASE I

Two Bronze Age sherds have been identified, from M108 and M109. The first of these, a coarseware lug handle, came from the topsoil. The second, several joining fragments from a cordoned straight-sided pot with a triangular lug handle, came from a sixth-century context.²⁵ The good preservation of the cordoned pot suggests that there might be intact Bronze Age deposits nearby.

²³ Inv. 1389, the neck of a large jug. Cf. Vassallo 1999, 174–175, no. 253.

²⁴ Art. 1418; cf. Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 84–85, no. 349, with pl. 16 and fig. 4.

²⁵ The handle has similarities to Middle Bronze Age examples from Mozia (Spatafora 2000, pl. 186, no. 99), and the cordoned pot has Thapsos-period parallels from Marcita and Giacomobello (S. Tusa 1997, 81, fig. 17; Spatafora 1997b, 1277 and pl. CCLV.10).



Fig. 24. Structural remains in zone B. Line α - α marks the position of the profile drawing shown in fig. 27; β - β , that in fig. 33.

Fig. 25. B1/2 wall d, facing northeast. Note the different building styles visible in the wall (photo D. Connolly).



PHASE II

Wall **h** is the earliest structural remain exposed in zone B, probably dating early in phase II.b, around 550 B.C. We have not yet reached the bottom course of **h**, but nine courses have been exposed, to a height of 80 cm. Its excavated length is 6.32 m. To the north, it disappears under wall **e**. Wall **h** is interrupted by a doorway 1.08 m wide and survives for 3.50 m south of the doorway. This southern part of wall **h** was built as two separate stretches. There is a distinct seam 1.66 m south of the door through wall **h**. North of the seam, wall **h** is built mainly of flat limestone slabs; south of the seam, there are more rounded boulders. Further digging may clarify the construction sequence here. The doorway makes it unlikely that wall **h** was originally a terrace, but the functions of the spaces on either side of it are not yet clear.

Nearly all the pottery found west of wall **h** is indigenous, of types common in other parts of Monte Polizzo, including a gray ware bowl similar to Greek lekanides (see n. 14 above, from trench M99 and House I). There is a high proportion of fine ware, including several indigenous painted sherds. In contrast to most sixth-century inland west Sicilian sites, where painted wares are commoner than stamped and incised,²⁶ painted wares are unusual on the acropolis at Monte Polizzo, although good parallels were excavated in 1998–1999 at the “Profile.”²⁷ The few Greek sherds include fragments of two Ionic or Sicilian imitation B2 cups²⁸ but no black glaze, suggesting a date in phase II.b. The deposits excavated west of wall **h** so far seem to have eroded downslope from the area east of the wall.

Room B1/2 postdates wall **h**, since B1 wall **e** rests on top of **h**. The doorway in **h** was deliberately blocked before the construction of B1/2, and the ground level raised by a dumped fill of earth and large round stones. Among the finds in this dumped fill was what might be part of a broken limestone stele.

We have identified two rooms in B1: B1/1 (excavated in 2000), measuring 8.1 × 2.6 m (internal), and B1/2, 6.5 × 2.6 m (internal). B1/2 was built in the Iron Age. The walls of B1/1 and the upper parts of the walls of B1/2 are bonded. However, the walls of B1/2 were rebuilt at least once (fig. 25). Layers 10–16 (fig. 26) fix the construction of the earliest walls of B1/2 in the sixth century (probably phase II.c) but have no direct stratigraphic relation to the second phase of the walls. Since no intact Iron Age deposits were found in the excavated part of B1/1 in 2000, the most economical explanation is that B1/2 was built in the sixth century B.C. Then, after falling into ruins, it was renovated in the tenth century A.D., and B1/1 added on. Because B1/1 is on exactly the same alignment as the Tusa House, we surmised in 2000 that B1/1 was an Iron Age room, reused in the Middle Ages. In the light of this season’s finds, we now suggest that B1/2 and the Tusa House were roughly contemporary and were built on the same alignment. When Monte Polizzo was reoccupied around A.D. 950, the settlers rebuilt B1/2 and added on B1/1. The stonework of B1/1 and the upper courses of the walls of B1/2 are very similar to those of the upper parts of the Tusa House, and the final phase of the Tusa House was probably also medieval.²⁹

There were two phases of use in B1/2 in the Iron Age. Layer 11 in figure 24 is a paved floor, preserved only in the northeastern part of the room. In the north corner of B1/2 there

²⁶ E.g., Guglielmino 1997, 925–926 (Entella); Spatafora 1988–1989, 298; 1991, 10 (Monte Maranfusa).

²⁷ Prescott et al. 2001, 75–77.

²⁸ Arts. 1476 and 1617. Ionic B2 cups and imitations occur on inland Sicilian sites from about 575 B.C. and are

common after 550. Recent research has pushed the end of their period of use down to the early fifth century: Pierro 1984, 52–53; Caflish 1991, 24–32; Boldrini 1994, 162–163.

²⁹ We thank Nanni Scimemi for sharing his recollections of the 1970 excavation.

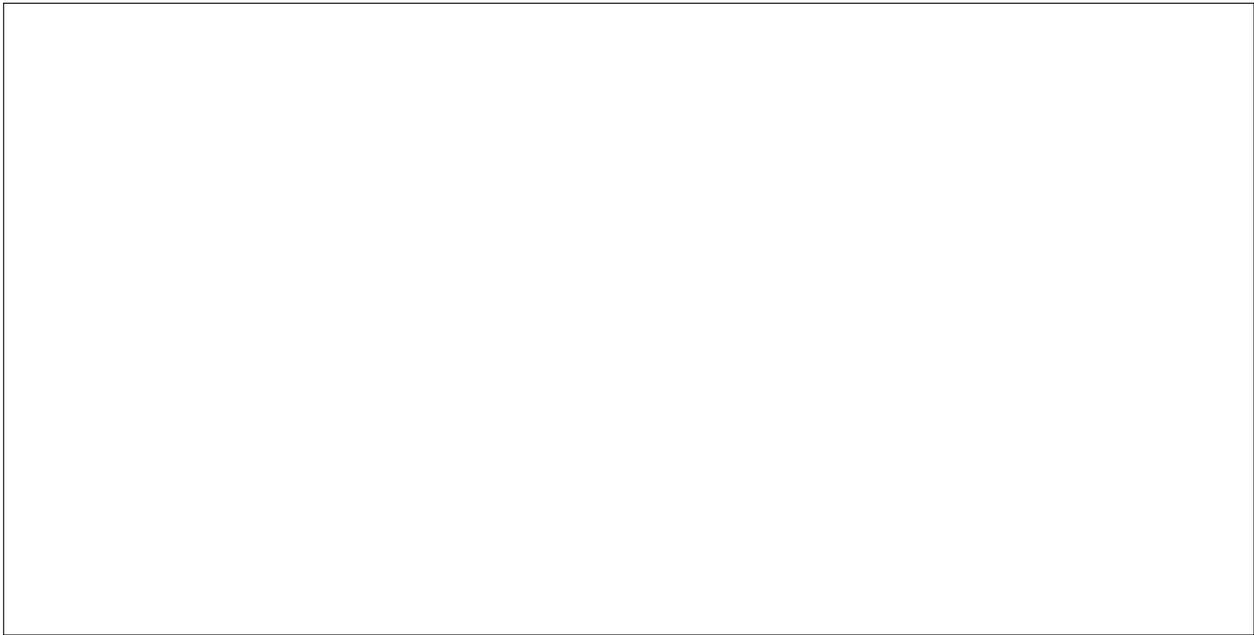


Fig. 26. Northeast-southwest profile through room B1/2.



Fig. 27. Vertical view of large flat paving slab in the north corner of room B1/2 (photo D. Connolly).



Fig. 28 (above). Matt-painted carinated cup from B1/2 layer 13 (see fig. 26), c. 550–525 B.C. Artifact no. 1733 (photo A. Gjeffe).



Fig. 29 (left). Fragment of a terracotta relief plaque, showing an animal's eye. From B1/2 layer 14 (see fig. 26), c. 550–525 B.C. Artifact no. 1563 (photo D. Connolly).

was a large, slightly trapezoidal slab measuring 80 × 50–60 × 12 cm, its surface marked by more than a dozen small round depressions (see fig. 27). The paved area sloped down from this slab (elevation 719.75 m) at a gradient of roughly 1 in 10 until it met the short, partially excavated wall **y**. Southwest of the wall, this floor has been lost to erosion (layers 8 and 9). Layer 10 is the remains of the abandonment deposit of B1/2, containing bones and sherds. Of the 204 fine ware sherds, 21 were Greek or imitation Greek pottery; 4 of these 21 were Attic black glaze, and the other 17 probably come from Ionic cups. Floor layer 11 was contemporary with a stone installation (walls **k** and **l**, apparently some kind of storage bin).

At the northeast end of the trench, floor 11 rested directly on layer 16, a sandy deposit of eroded bedrock and some undiagnostic sherds lying directly above bedrock. Farther southwest, layer 11 was stratified above layers 12–14, thick burned deposits with much pottery. Installation **k–l** also rested directly on the surface of layer 12. Most of the sherds in layers 12–14 come from large storage vessels and indigenous gray plates, but there are also some fine incised and matt-painted pots (fig. 28), mixed with fragments of Ionic B2 cups, loom weights, a small fragment of a clay relief plaque showing the eye of an animal (fig. 29), pieces of iron blades, bronze and bone ornaments, iron, animal bone, and much antler. All the finds were badly jumbled. Pot bases were tipped at various angles and mixed with body sherds, giving the impression of having fallen or been thrown into this area. Since B1/2 has no doors, it might have been a basement. It is not yet clear whether layers 12–14 predate B1/2 walls **a** and **b**, in which case they may represent a dump, with B1/2 built on top of it, or whether they postdate the walls, in which case they may represent remains from upper floors of B1/2 that collapsed into a basement. In the second scenario, B1/2 had two episodes of Iron Age use. In the first episode, in phase II.b, B1/2 had a basement and wooden floors; in the second (phase II.c), the former basement was full of destruction debris, and floor layer 11 was added.

At the far southwest end of B1/2, a small area of clay was exposed (layer 15), predating the ashy deposits 12–14.

We found no deposits in B1 like the dense clay layers interpreted as collapsed mudbrick walls in zone A, which might mean that B1 had all-stone walls. Nor did we find sixth-century roof tiles. B1 may have had a pitched roof, covered by reeds or thatch, or a flat roof of clay over thin stone slabs, supported by wooden beams. So far we have found no traces of roof material, so a reed/thatch construction seems more likely. A stone block with a depression probably caused by a doorpost was found in the topsoil of trench M108. It probably came from B1/2, but there is no way to tell whether it is Iron Age or medieval.

South of B1/2, in trench M108 (see fig. 24), was an open area with a stone drain. The drain sloped slightly downhill from B1/2 wall **b** toward wall **h** and allowed the water to pour out over the western face of wall **h**, meaning that in phases II.b and II.c the area west of **h** was also open. At the eastern edge of M108 a separate deposit of indigenous pottery was excavated (fig. 30). This included many fragments of amphora and substantial parts of a gray ware plate with incised bands on the lip and the upper part of a fine closed vessel with bands incised on its shoulder (fig. 31).³⁰ This deposit has many similarities with the phase II.b finds from House I, although it contained no Greek sherds. A large medieval pit cut through the area between the deposit shown in figure 30 and the drain (see fig. 24), so their chronological relationship is not yet clear.

North of B1/2, wall **e** runs for 8.7 m before disappearing into the unexcavated trench K106. It seems to be a retaining wall. We do not know yet whether the spaces northeast of wall **e**, in

³⁰ Art. 4431.

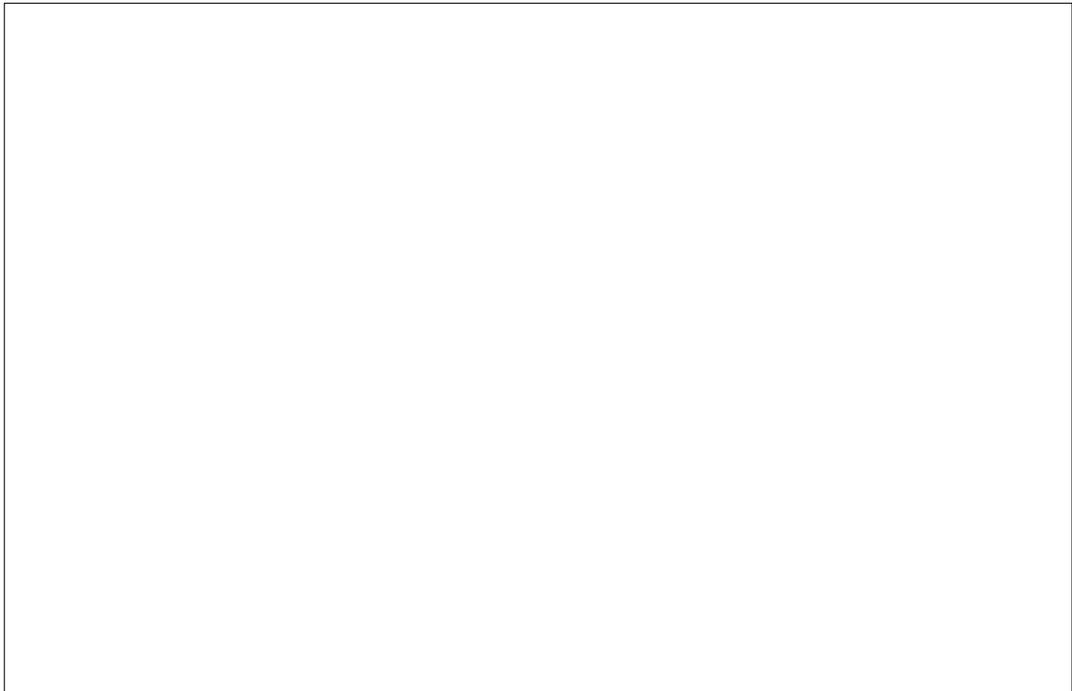


Fig. 30. Iron Age floor deposit (probably phase II.a or II.b), east edge of trench M108.

Fig. 31. Closed vessel from floor deposit shown in fig. 30, probably mid-sixth century B.C. Artifact no. 4431 (photo A. Gjeffe).



L106–107, were roofed or open. A small area immediately northwest of B1/2 in L107 was partially paved, with only a gentle slope from northeast to southwest. There were very few finds here compared to B1/2 or House I, which may mean that it was an open area. Among the artifacts from layer 13, the abandonment deposit, were a body sherd with base rays from a Corinthian kotyle and the foot of an Ionic kylix, perhaps indicating a date in phase II.a.³¹ Layer 13 in L107 included several fragments of charcoal but much less evidence for burning than B1/2.

Wall **n-p** divided L106–107 into two spaces, with a doorway 1.54 m wide. The building

³¹ For the kotyle (Art. 1517), cf. Dehl-von Kaenel 1995, Talcott 1970, 262, no. 378, from Athens. no. 2670, from Selinunte; for the kylix, cf. Sparkes and

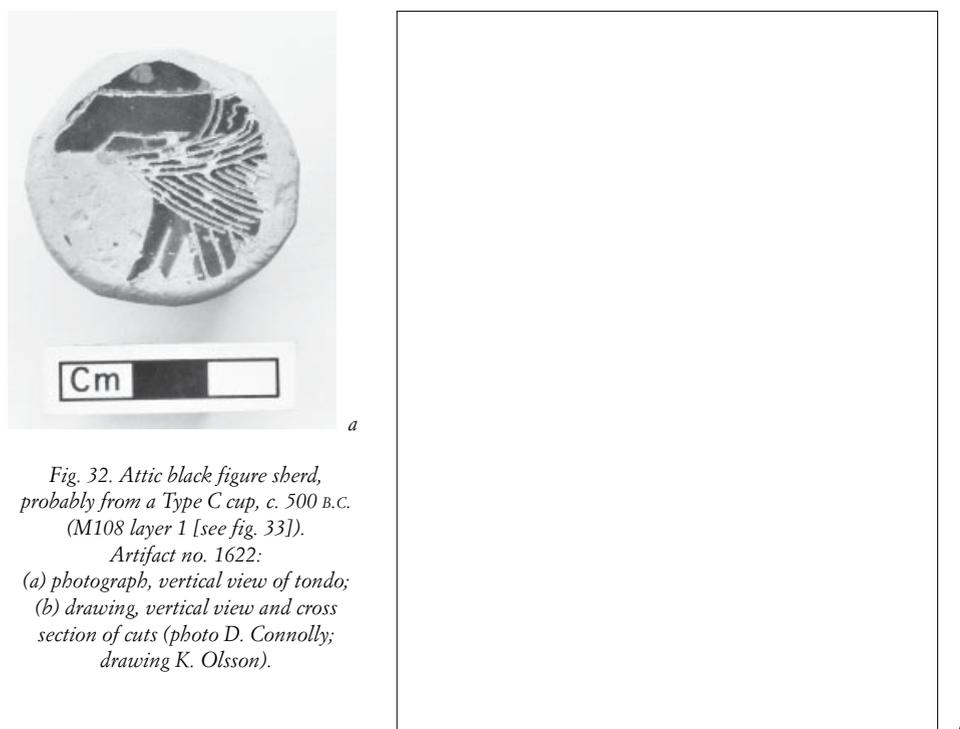


Fig. 32. Attic black figure sherd, probably from a Type C cup, c. 500 B.C. (M108 layer 1 [see fig. 33]).

Artifact no. 1622:

(a) photograph, vertical view of tondo;
 (b) drawing, vertical view and cross section of cuts (photo D. Connolly; drawing K. Olsson).

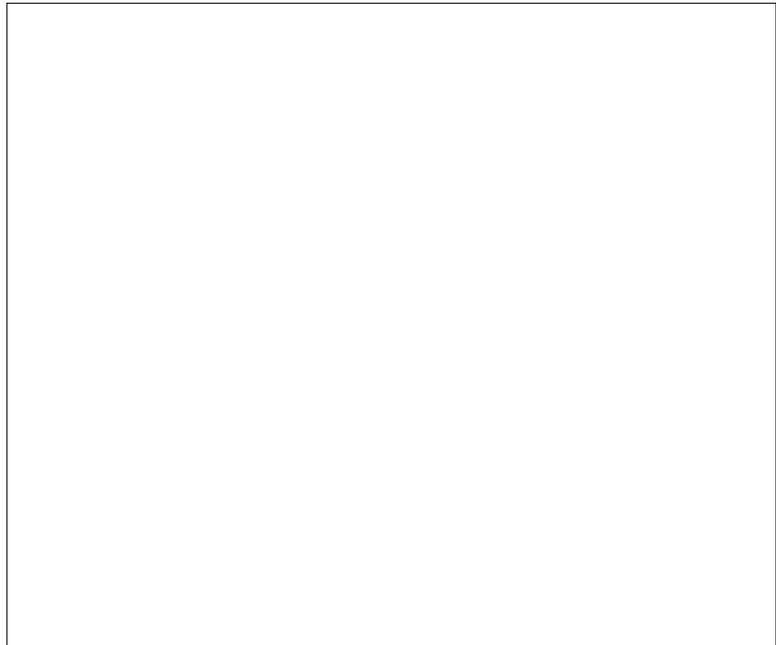
sequence here is complex and needs further study. The southwestern end of wall **p** seems to rest on wall **z**, which may have been a retaining wall. Wall **z** has a clear southwestern face but no obvious northeastern face; and immediately in front of it, wall **q** was added later, also with a clear southwestern face but no northeastern face. Possibly wall **q** gave extra support to **p**. The excavated stretch of wall **q**, just 1.48 m, seems to represent its full original extent; neither **q** nor **z** can have bounded a room, reinforcing the case for their having been supporting walls for **p**. Wall **n** is not bonded with **e** but clearly belongs with it, probably in phase II. There is no good evidence yet for the function of the area northwest of wall **n-p**, although four loom weights were found near the east balk of L106. There was a substantial deposit of ash at the northwest end of wall **q** but otherwise—as in trench M108—much less evidence for burning than in B1/2 or C1.

Trench K107 slopes steeply from northeast to southwest. Wall **i** runs for 6 m parallel to wall **e**, at a distance of some 2.4 m, before disappearing into the unexcavated trench K106. Only one course survives. The ancient deposits in the area between walls **e** and **i** have been lost to erosion, and a modern rubble collapse filled this area. Wall **i** appears to be a retaining wall. The bedrock slopes steeply between **e** and **i**, but if wall **i** had stood to a height of 90 cm or more in the late sixth century, it could have supported a level area, perhaps a path running gently up the slope from the northwest. Alternatively, this may have been a narrow room.

Numerous Attic black glaze sherds, generally dating around 500, were found in the upper levels in zone B in 2000 and 2001, including a fragment from a Type C cup. The most interesting was part of a black figure tondo, probably also from a Type C cup, from M108.³² The sherd had been cut into a circle, perhaps for use as a game piece. Part of the cup's stem was preserved, providing a base that the game piece could stand on (fig. 32). The sherd is too

³² Art. 1622.

Fig. 33. Northwest-southeast profile along east balk of trench M108 (see fig. 24).



small for us to be sure what the painting represented. Nor is it clear whether the sherd came from the phase II.c use of B1/2 or eroded down from zone A.

PHASE IV (FIG. 7)

After being abandoned in the late sixth or early fifth century B.C., zone B lay in ruins for some 1,500 years. When it was reoccupied, large amounts of rubble were removed, B1/2 was rebuilt, and B1/1 was probably added to it. Fragments of Arab-Norman pottery and roof tiles were recovered from beneath the paved floor of B1/1, suggesting that there were earlier medieval structures in the area.³³

The medieval abandonment deposits are poorly preserved. As figure 26 shows, erosion and the tree trench layer 1 destroyed most of the remains. Layer 6, containing many animal bones and fragments of charcoal, is the only surviving patch. It is difficult to tell much about the medieval use of B1/2 from this, though bin k–l was certainly reused. The tops of walls **k** and **l** were visible in the Middle Ages, and there were medieval finds inside the bin. As in B1/1, the fill beneath the only identifiable medieval floor (layer 7) itself contained medieval artifacts.

Southeast of B1/2, in trenches M108–109, the medieval occupants removed much Iron Age debris since no rubble separates the medieval layer 4 from the Iron Age layer 5 (fig. 33). We distinguished three medieval phases in M108. The earliest, layer 4 in figure 33, produced a scattering of pottery and roof tiles directly above the Iron Age abandonment deposits. Wall **j**, a single course of round boulders running for 2.1 m parallel to B1 wall **b** at a distance of 1.95 m, belonged with phase IV.a. The second medieval episode in M108 was the digging of a large pit, layer 3. Farther to the west than the balk shown in figure 33, this cut all the way to bedrock. It contained many roof tiles. At its northern edge, the pit disturbed the sixth-century B.C. drain, perhaps dislodging one of its stones. The final medieval activity, phase IV.c, is represented by layer 2 in figure 33 and again produced large numbers of roof tiles.

³³ Morris et al. 2001, 266–268.

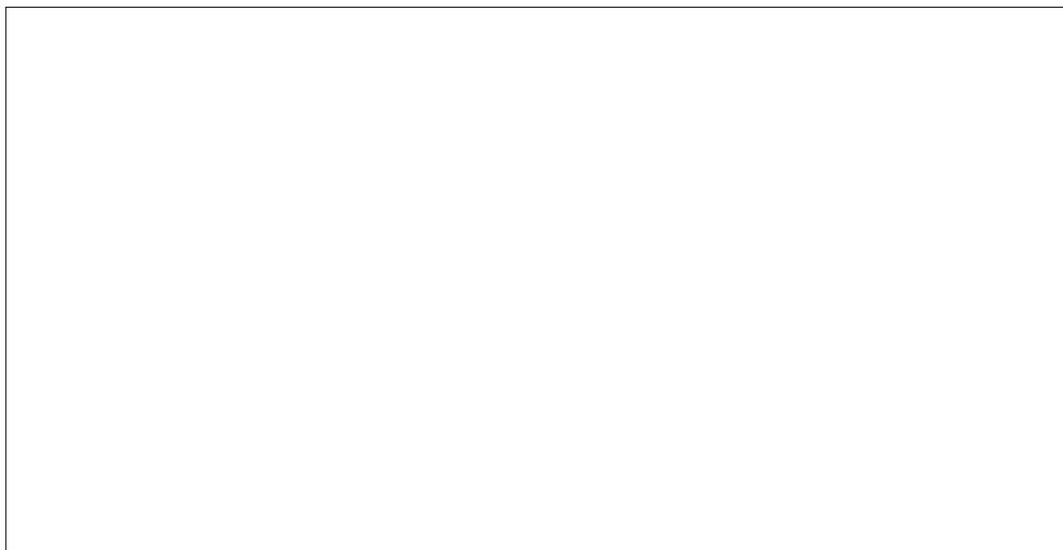


Fig. 34. Carinated glazed bowl from trench M108 layer 2 (see fig. 24), c. A.D. 950–1000. Artifact no. 1417 (drawing I. Morris).

Archaeologists only began to distinguish phases within a broader “Arab-Norman” period with any confidence in the 1990s,³⁴ and even now there is much controversy. The most datable finds come from rubble layer 1 south of building B1. The earliest is a sherd from a carinated bowl with a grooved rim, decorated with a white glaze background and green and black glaze designs (fig. 34). This dates c. 950–1000, while the occupation deposit in B1/1 excavated in 2000 probably dates to the eleventh or twelfth century.³⁵ An almost complete bowl, glazed white on the outside and green on the inside with a black glaze design on the interior, was found in M109.³⁶

We suggested in 2000 that B1/1 might have been an animal shelter, but the range of pottery in the upper layers of M108 hardly seems consistent with this. Alternatively, there may have been a more substantial medieval building somewhere in N/O 108–109, from which the fine wares eroded into M108. Whatever its nature, the medieval occupation apparently ended with no trace of fire.

PHASE V

Zone B was much more heavily disturbed by the tree trenches than zone A (fig. 9). The plow cut V-shaped grooves up to 1 m deep through B1/2 walls **a** and **b**. Where it encountered ancient walls at a narrower angle, as in wall **e**, the plow apparently scraped along the top of the wall without removing many stones. The depth of accumulated rubble meant that most of the time the plow did not reach the Iron Age floors, although in areas where erosion had

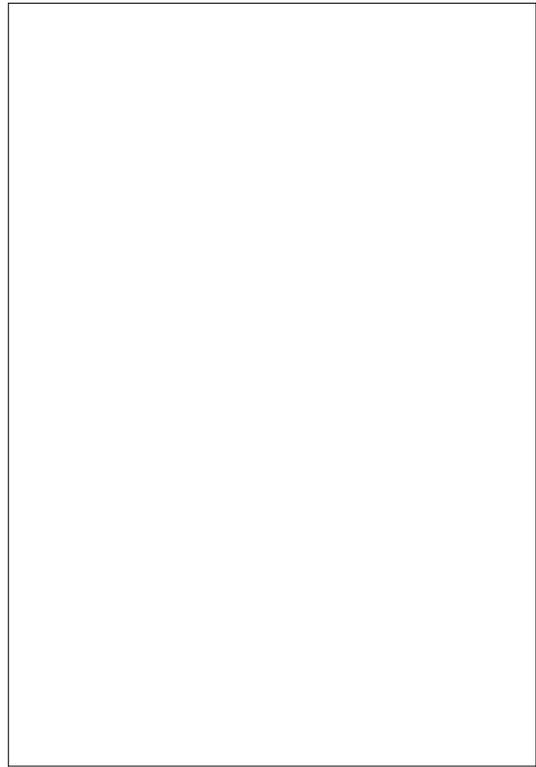
³⁴ See particularly Molinari 1992.

³⁵ Morris et al. 2001, 263–268.

³⁶ Carinated bowl (Art. 1417), cf. Molinari 1992, 504–505, nos. 1, 2, with pl. 58; D’Angelo 1996, no. 2. Molinari

and D’Angelo date this bowl type c. 950–1000, but Scuto (1990) suggests c. 1100. Isler (1988, 48–49, fig. 26 a, b) describes a similar vessel only as “Arab-Norman.” Second bowl (Art. 1603), cf. D’Angelo 1996, no. 4, c. A.D. 1000. Scuto again suggests a date a century later. Roof tiles: D’Angelo 1989.

*Fig. 35. Trench N/O 113–114, facing southeast.
Structure C1 (photo I. Morris).*



already removed this buildup, as in trench M109, the tree trenches cut deep into earlier occupation deposits.

The only structural remains that probably date to postmedieval times are walls **g** and **m** in trench L107, the former built directly against Iron Age wall **e**, and the latter just a few centimeters from Iron Age wall **f**. Both rest in the topsoil, and only small amounts of medieval pottery and tile were recovered from this area.

5. Zone C

PHASE II

Several archaeologists have suggested that west Sicilians started laying out their houses on regular grid plans in the late sixth century, as part of a process of Hellenization.³⁷ The Tusa House and acropolis building B1 are on exactly the same alignment. In 2002 we plan to excavate a 70-meter-long sounding from M109 to the Tusa House to test the theory that the whole upper west slope of the acropolis was laid out on a regular grid. In 2001 we began with a 5 × 2 m trench in N/O 113–114. This revealed three roughly straight walls, and we expanded it to 5 × 3 m to examine these (fig. 35). The walls were poorly preserved and may not all belong to the same period of occupation as the rich deposits of pottery. Wall **t**, bounding the southwest side of the structure, was separated from the paved floor by 3–5 cm of soil, and its southwest face was difficult to define.

³⁷ E.g., Spatafora 1997a.

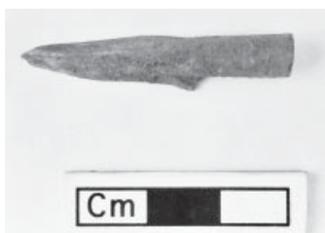


Fig. 36. Bronze arrowhead from trench N/O 113–114 (photo D. Connolly).

Beneath substantial topsoil we found thick deposits from the fiery destruction of building C1. Layers 7–13 were characterized by very dense concentrations of charcoal, ash, and burned mud, probably from mudbrick walls. A thick line of charcoal almost 50 cm long in layer 13 may represent the remains of a roof beam.

Layer 17 was a destruction deposit, lying on 18, a paved floor. The finds from 17 included Type A Corinthian wine amphora fragments, local gray ware bowls with “dente di lupo” decoration, a gray ware spool, and fragments of two Middle–Late Corinthian cups. There are very few sherds of Ionic cups and no black glaze. The destruction of building C1 falls in phase II.a, c. 575–550, and may be the earliest deposit yet excavated at Monte Polizzo.³⁸ In layer 18, from the soil between the paving stones, came part of the neck and handle of a Chiot amphora. The abandonment layers southwest of wall t have a different character, however, with much less evidence of burning, and may belong to an external space. A bronze arrowhead was found in this area (fig. 36).

PHASE IV

A substantial concentration of medieval pottery was found in rubble layer 4. No structural features definitely date to this phase, though there may be part of a wall visible in the north balk of the trench.

6. Discussion

PHASE I

So far we can say little. The handful of sherds spans 1400–800 B.C. The fact that they come from both zones A and B may mean that this whole area was settled, but, given the joins between Iron Age sherds from trenches N98 and L106, we cannot take this for granted.

PHASE II

The project is focusing on phase II, and at this point in the excavation our questions about the sixth-century B.C. site are better defined than those about other phases. We therefore discuss this period at much greater length.

Sicilian Iron Age archaeology has long been dominated by the issue of Hellenization. This concept is rarely defined precisely, but in both popular and academic discourse it generally seems to mean the mixture of Greek culture (and sometimes genetic material) with native

³⁸ Amphora, cf. Koehler 1979, pl. 2, fig. 13, no. p; Di Sandro 1986, 25, table 3, sg. 50; Di Stefano et al. 1998, R1, pp. 329, 333. House I finds, Mühlenbock and Prescott 2001, 27–31; for Type A amphoras, p. 29, and broader context in Albanese-Procelli 1996, 95–99.

forms. Some authors think that this made Sicily culturally Greek; others, that it produced a distinct culture. Either way, according to this model Hellenization made Sicily and southern Italy different from the rest of mainland Italy and was the first major episode in a series of invasions that, by the twelfth century A.D., had created a unique multicultural society. Since at least the sixteenth century,³⁹ Hellenization is thus normally defined as the beginning of Sicilian history, both in the sense that the Greeks produced the first surviving written sources and in the sense that it began a particular trajectory that shaped Sicilian identity.⁴⁰ It finds its strongest expressions in popular and semipopular accounts. John Julius Norwich's fascinating account of Norman Sicily is unusual only for its explicitly gendered representation:

The island of Sicily is the largest in the Mediterranean. It has also proved, over the centuries, to be the most unhappy. The stepping-stone between Europe and Africa, the gateway between the East and the West, the link between the Latin world and the Greek, at once a stronghold, observation-point, and clearing-house, it has been fought over and occupied in turn by all the great powers that have at various times striven to extend their domination across the Middle Sea. It has belonged to them all—and yet has properly been part of none; for the number and variety of its conquerors, while preventing the development of any strong national individuality of its own, have endowed it with a kaleidoscopic heritage of experience which can never allow it to become completely assimilated. Even today, despite the beauty of its landscape, the fertility of its fields and the perpetual benediction of its climate, there lingers everywhere some dark, brooding quality—some underlying sorrow of which poverty, Church influence, the Mafia and all the other popular modern scapegoats may be the manifestations but are certainly not the cause. It is the sorrow of a long, unhappy experience, of opportunity lost and promise unfulfilled; the sorrow, perhaps, of a beautiful woman who has been raped too often and betrayed too often and is no longer fit for love or marriage. Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Goths, Byzantines, Arabs, Normans, Germans, Spaniards, French—all have left their mark. Today, a century after being received into her Italian home, Sicily is probably less unhappy than she has been for many centuries; but though no longer lost she still seems lonely, always seeking an identity which she can never entirely find.⁴¹

Until Vincenzo Tusa began his excavations in the interior of western Sicily (see nn. 2 and 3), archaeologists interested in Hellenization concentrated on the Greek sites of the coastal plains rather than indigenous sites in the hilly interior.⁴² Since the 1970s research on inland sites has exploded, but our first two seasons of work at Monte Polizzo suggest that the dominant model of Hellenization and its use as an overarching research framework may need modification.

The first problem is that few scholars provide formal expressions of what they mean by Hellenization. Michael Dietler suggests that French archaeologists use it to mean “a sort of progressive general emulation of ‘civilized’ customs by ‘barbarians’ as a natural and inevitable response to contact.”⁴³ This sense seems to be common in the literature on Sicily, and Jonathan Hall notes “a curious double standard that sometimes operates in the assessment of Greek material culture.” Classical archaeologists interpret Greek imitations of Near Eastern objects as evidence of the Greeks’ active and creative appropriation of foreign ideas but see

³⁹ See Ceserani 2000.

⁴¹ Norwich 1967, 49–50.

⁴⁰ See the three-volume history written by Finley and Mack Smith (1968) and the ten volumes edited by R. Romeo (1977).

⁴² See Giannitrapani 1998.

⁴³ Dietler 1990a, 356.

the arrival of Greek styles in Sicily as evidence of the subordination of the indigenous culture to Greek culture, even though “there is little evidence to indicate that adoption of the external trappings of Hellenism was necessarily internally perceived as cultural assimilation.”⁴⁴

Much of the time, the arrival of Greek fine wares on west Sicilian sites in the sixth century is taken as a sign that Hellenization (in the sense sketched by Dietler) was going on. There is some consensus that by 500 the Elymians and Sicans⁴⁵ were heavily Hellenized, and that many Greeks were living in inland towns. Although our work at Monte Polizzo is still at a very early stage, we believe that the processes at work were rather more complex.

We take our lead from work done in southern France in the last twenty years. There too finds of Greek pottery have normally been equated with Hellenization, but Jean Paul Morel and Michael Dietler found that a more precise approach to pottery led to different conclusions.⁴⁶ Morel observed that sixth-century Gallic sites had different assemblages of Etruscan pottery from those in Sardinia and North Africa and argued that the selection of vases was driven by local ritual practices, with Gauls taking only pots that fit into their traditional drinking ceremonies. Dietler expanded the analysis of Greek pottery in France and went further, suggesting that Gallic chiefs switched over from beer- to wine-drinking and from local ceramics to Greek in order to distance themselves from the rest of the population. Hellenization, as conventionally defined, does not describe very well what was going on in the Rhône valley in the sixth and fifth centuries. In its place Dietler speaks of changes in the political economy of commensality.⁴⁷

The pattern of finds in southern France is not unique. Grazia Semeraro has quantified Greek imports into Salento, which were also very selective and dominated by drinking vessels.⁴⁸ Finds from older excavations in eastern Sicily cannot be quantified so precisely, but Tamar Hodos and Carla Antonaccio independently argue for similar patterns there.⁴⁹

Despite the quantity and quality of excavation in inland western Sicily in the last thirty years, we do not yet have enough detail about the data to pursue the ideas developed by Morel and Dietler. Our study is still at an early stage, but some of the issues that they identified in Gaul also seem relevant to Monte Polizzo. First, in B1/2, the only part of the site to be thoroughly quantified so far, Greek pottery⁵⁰ made up a small part of the assemblage. In layers 12–14 (phase II.b, c. 550–525; see fig. 26) they constitute just 2.0 percent of the assemblage, and in layers 10 and 11 (phase II.c, c. 525–500), 10.3 percent.⁵¹ The few roughly quantified deposits from other sixth-century sites produce higher scores: Greek pottery made up 20–40 percent of a sixth- and fifth-century deposit at Entella, perhaps from a ritual feasting area in a cemetery, and 20–30 percent of the assemblage in houses dating 550–475 at Monte Maranfusa.⁵²

⁴⁴ Hall 2002, 106–107.

⁴⁹ Hodos 2000; Antonaccio 2001, 129–130.

⁴⁵ These ethnic terms are used by a number of Greek authors but particularly Thucydides (6.2). It is not clear whether they reflect indigenous self-identifications or whether they are purely Greek descriptions (for the Elymians, see particularly Nenci 1989). Few archaeologists now believe that these ethnic designations map onto west Sicilian material culture in any straightforward way.

⁵⁰ Defined here as vases imported from the Aegean and versions produced in Sicily.

⁴⁶ Morel 1981 and 1983; Dietler 1990a; 1990b; 1997.

⁵¹ Percentages by sherd counts. The figures exclude large storage vessels since this entire class, almost by definition, was made on the site itself. Including storage vessels, the percentages made up by Greek vessels fall to 1.0 percent in layers 12–14 ($n = 2199$) and 4.5 percent in layers 10 and 11 ($n = 471$).

⁴⁷ Dietler 1999.

⁵² Entella: Nenci 1991, 36; Guglielmino 1997. Monte Maranfusa: Spatafora 1988–1989, 298; 1991, 10.

⁴⁸ Semeraro 1998.

Fig. 37. Fragment of an incised plate for suspension. Artifact no. 1518 (photo D. Connolly).



Monte Polizzo covers 10–20 hectares and probably had a population well over 1,000, making it a large town for this region. And judging from the hundreds of kilograms of pottery found in House I, B1/2, and building C1, at least some of its inhabitants were well provided with goods. There is no obvious reason why it should have been any more difficult to get Greek pottery at Monte Polizzo than at Entella or Monte Marafusa. Unless the differences between sites turn out to be caused by different classificatory systems, we should seriously consider the possibility that some Sicilian communities were more receptive to Greek culture than others and that Monte Polizzo was conservative in this regard. It may also be relevant that while indigenous stamped and incised styles generally give way to matt-painted styles after 600 (at Entella, 60–80 percent of the fine wares are matt-painted),⁵³ on the acropolis at Monte Polizzo stamped and incised wares dominate. We need to pay close attention both to variations between communities in receptivity to new ideas and to the political economy of variations within communities.

Second—again like the Gallic assemblages—most imports are cups, with smaller quantities of kraters, amphoras, and jugs. It is not yet clear whether the Phoenicians and Greeks introduced wine-drinking to Sicily. Strainers are common on earlier Iron Age sites and may mean that beer dominated until c. 700–650.⁵⁴ More detailed quantification of vessel types from earlier Iron Age sites is needed. Nor is it clear whether the introduction of wine had the kind of effects that Dietler sees in Gaul. We need close contextual analysis of the social settings of wine-drinking to tell whether it involved new forms of commensality or was easily absorbed into preexisting drinking systems, and, if the former, what the consequences were.

Third, we need to study whether Greek material culture drove out local traditions in the sixth century or was merely one facet of a broader elaboration of style. Some indigenous sherds from phase II contexts are literally covered with incision (e.g., fig. 37), suggesting that investment in decoration increased overall, perhaps in response to the arrival of Greek wares; but on the other hand, the complete or nearly complete indigenous vessels tend to be fairly plain, most often being gray ware plates with simple incised bands on their lips. If the more elaborate sherds

⁵³ Nenci 1991, 36. Generally, see Spatafora 1996; Guglielmino 1997; Trombi 1999.

⁵⁴ The only Iron Age botanical evidence is a single grape seed from Morgantina, which resembles wild varieties (Leighton 1999, 244).

are residual from disturbed pre-575 B.C. layers, possibly native traditions were dying out in the face of Greek competition. This question too calls for close quantitative analysis.

Fourth, we need to combine questions about Hellenization with questions about the apparent absence of “Phoenicianization” in material culture. So far, all that the phase II deposits have produced is a single sherd from B1/2 that seems to be from a red-slipped miniature dish (although the fabric is different from those found at Mozia)⁵⁵ and several sherds from a sixth-century Punic amphora (L108).

But in addition to raising these questions about the pottery, we believe that we need four further categories of information before we can begin serious analysis of Hellenization:

1. Detailed analyses not only of the pottery assemblage but also of other evidence for cultural/economic change in the sixth century, particularly in the use of space, forms of ritual, and diet. We comment on space and ritual below; we do not yet have enough results from faunal and floral analysis to comment on diet.
2. Detailed evidence from pre-sixth-century west Sicilian inland settlements, to assess exactly what changed as interaction with Greeks and Phoenicians increased.
3. Quantified data from recognized Greek and Phoenician sites in Sicily so that we can make direct comparisons. Currently, despite the excellence of many recent site reports, the only quantified comparison case is the archaic settlement at Megara Hyblaea.⁵⁶ The excavators did not publish the native pottery in detail, but it clearly made up a much smaller proportion of the assemblage than imported Greek wares or locally made pottery closely similar to Greek imports. However, just as in Gaul, Salento, Morgantina, and Monte Polizzo, the Greek pottery consisted very largely of drinking shapes: some 70 percent of the published finds were cups, 10 percent jugs, and 4 percent kraters. The use of Greek vessel types in indigenous sites may in fact closely parallel that in Greek settlements.
4. Detailed studies of multiple contexts within the same site. The publication of pottery from the Malophoros sanctuary at Selinunte underlines just how much pottery use varied from one context to another within Greek communities.⁵⁷ In contrast to Megara Hyblaea, here cups made up only 36 percent of the assemblage, and kraters just 1 percent. Jugs made up 19 percent, but bowls—a negligible category at Megara Hyblaea—accounted for 15 percent of the vessels, pyxides for 11 percent, aryballoi for 10 percent, and alabastra for another 5 percent.

House forms and settlement plan have also received attention as indices of Hellenization. In archaic Greece, rectilinear houses were normal. In the Bronze and Early Iron ages, west Sicilians preferred round houses, but rectilinear ones dominated by the sixth century.⁵⁸ We have not excavated any complete houses yet on the acropolis, but all the structures apart from A1 are clearly rectilinear. Yet beyond being rectilinear, there is nothing particularly Greek about sixth-century west Sicilian houses, which lack the standard features of either the courtyard houses that were normal in the Aegean or the variants popular in Greek Sicily.⁵⁹ The western part of Monte Polizzo House I, according to Christian Mühlenbock and Christopher

⁵⁵ We thank Pierfrancesco Vecchio and Brien Garnand for discussions of this sherd, as well as Marisa Famà for providing access to the collections at Mozia.

⁵⁸ See S. Tusa 1992, 471–478, 508–518, 530–534, 582–592, 654–663; Isler et al. 1997; Leighton 1999, 150–162, 249–261.

⁵⁶ Vallet and Villard 1964.

⁵⁹ Nevett 1999; Cordsen 1995.

⁵⁷ Dehl-von Kaenel 1995.



Fig. 38. Reconstruction of Monte Polizzo House I (adapted from Mühlenbock and Prescott 2001, fig. 13).

Prescott's tentative reconstruction (fig. 38), has some similarity to the archaic "corridor house" type identified by Clemens Krause, consisting of two rooms opening off a frontal corridor.⁶⁰ However, as figure 38 shows, even here the similarities do not go very deep. The excavation units only took in part of the built area, and the full extent of the house remains unclear. If House I did originally have a plan like that in figure 38, some serious differences remain between it and Greek pastas houses. Most obviously, room 1 in House I seems to have been the major activity area, rather than a corridor, and is so large that it may have been an open space. And by the time House I was built, around 550 B.C., Aegean settlements were in any case dominated by courtyard houses. Further, at least some Sicilians were living in rectilinear houses in ninth-century Monte Finestrelle, well before Greeks settled at Selinunte, and examples from Dessueri and Scirinda may be even earlier.⁶¹ Overall, the house forms at Monte Polizzo do not seem very Greek.

Some archaeologists have also argued that west Sicilians began to lay out their towns on Greek-style grid plans in the sixth century. Monte Maranfusa is the best-documented example.⁶² At Monte Polizzo, B1/2 and the Tusa House are on almost exactly the same

⁶⁰ Mühlenbock and Prescott 2001, fig. 13; Krause 1977. Panvini 1993–1994a, 812–813 (Dessueri); Castellana 1992, 192–195 (Scirinda).

⁶¹ De Cesare and Gargini 1997; <http://www.sns.it/html/Groups/Archeo/Lab/MF.html> (Monte Finestrelle); ⁶² Spatafora 1991; 1993–1994; 1997a.

alignment, although they are 70 m apart, which might indicate communal grid planning by 525. However, building C1, on a direct line between B1/2 and the Tusa House, is aligned differently. It was probably destroyed before B1/2 was built, and a grid might have been laid out around burned-out ruins; alternatively, sixth-century builders at Monte Polizzo may have laid out their houses relative to the topography of the spot where they were building, with the roughly continuous slope of the southwest edge of the acropolis ridge doing more to account for the alignment of the houses than borrowing Greek grid plans. However, we have little evidence yet, and in 2002 we plan to excavate a trench between B1/2 and the Tusa House to examine this theory.

Ritual is a third area where archaeologists have seen Hellenization. Here the definitional problems are particularly complex. “Ritual” is a notoriously vague idea in archaeology. In the most sustained analysis, Colin Renfrew has suggested that we can recognize its presence when we observe four main components:

— *Focusing of attention* The act of worship both demands and induces a state of heightened awareness or religious excitement in the human celebrant. In communal acts of worship, this invariably requires a range of attention-focusing devices, including the use of a sacred location, architecture (e.g., temples), light, sounds, and smell to ensure that all eyes are directed to the crucial ritual acts.

— *Boundary zone between this world and the next* The focus of ritual activity is the boundary between this world and the Other World. It is a special and mysterious region with hidden dangers. There are risks of pollution and of failing to comply with the appropriate procedures: ritual washing and cleanliness are therefore emphasized.

— *Presence of the deity* For effective ritual, the deity or transcendent force must in some sense be present, or be induced to be present. It is the divine as well as human attention that needs to be heightened. In most societies, the deity is symbolized by some material form or image: this need be no more than a very simple symbol—for instance, the outline of a sign or container whose contents are not seen—or it may be a three-dimensional cult image.

— *Participation and offering* Worship makes demands on the celebrant. These include not only words and gestures of prayer and respect, but often active participation involving movement, perhaps eating and drinking. Frequently, it involves also the offering of material things to the deity, both by sacrifice and gift.⁶³

This kind of cross-cultural generalization necessarily works at a very abstract level, but it is a good starting place for thinking about zone A. We currently do not really know what indigenous worship of the gods looked like in the ninth and eighth centuries or what kinds of concepts of the sacred existed. Whatever people did in their spiritual lives produced none of the kinds of material traces that Renfrew focuses on.⁶⁴ Only after 700 B.C. do distinct ritual spaces and practices begin to become apparent. Most archaeologists see a group of late eighth-century round buildings at Montagnoli as the first examples of a tradition of “hut-shrines.” Similar buildings appear at several sites in the seventh century. They commonly have internal benches, ash deposits, animal bones, Greek and indigenous pottery, bronze and silver ornaments, and sometimes small open-air stone structures that may have been sacrificial altars.⁶⁵

⁶³ Renfrew and Bahn 1991, 359; more fully in Renfrew 1985.

⁶⁴ Most archaeologists assume that bronze hoards were utilitarian (Leighton 1999, 210–215).

⁶⁵ Montagnoli: Castellana 1988–1989; 1992, 195–198; 2000. A radiocarbon sample from hut 7 was dated 751–723 B.C. (Castellana 2000, 263). The report does not say whether the date is calibrated, but given the flatness of the calibration curve between the eighth and

Fig. 39. View from Monte Polizzo acropolis zone A, facing east.



The lack of detailed publications of other parts of settlements prevents us from seeing how far the hut-shrines satisfy the criteria Renfrew identifies: we need to know whether the eating and drinking that went on in them was unusual and how special their assemblages of goods were. We can make a strong case, though, that the hut-shrines were places where this world and the other world met. In communities of hill dwellers, the hut-shrines invariably occupied the highest point, which seems likely to have been symbolically significant. In an era when rectilinear houses had become normal, only the hut-shrines continued the tradition of round buildings going back into the Bronze Age, and indeed some examples are so like Bronze Age houses that the continuity seems deliberate and self-conscious. Some of the religious areas are bounded spatially by enclosure walls (e.g., fig. 14). There is not much convincing evidence for material symbols representing supernatural beings, but the finds at Polizzello and Sabucina do suggest that both sacrifice and the deliberate deposition of unusual objects was going on.

The finds at Monte Polizzo fit this general pattern. A1 stands at the town's highest point, with a commanding view (fig. 39). It is a curvilinear building, with clear signs of animal sacrifice. It has produced more bronze, stone, and bone beads than other parts of the site; A2 was probably an open-air altar; and Greek wine-drinking paraphernalia is more common here than in zones B or C.⁶⁶ A1 wall **d** may also be an enclosure like that outside Polizzello hut B. But on the other hand, A1 is unique in having internal walls **a** and **b** forming three spaces without benches and in its small size (diameter 6.4 m, as opposed to 10+ m elsewhere). If it is in fact semicircular, that will be even more unusual. Currently there is no evidence that it was part of a larger religious complex, but we have only excavated a small area around it (see fig. 6). And if A1 was indeed built c. 550–525, it is also the latest known curvilinear building.

There were important changes in indigenous concepts of the sacred and mankind's relation to the other world after 700 B.C., as well as new rituals that produced distinctive material remains. Renfrew's definitions highlight the changes that need to be explained. However, most discussions of native religion focus on parallels between the new practices and Greek cult activity. There are some important similarities (animal sacrifice, wine-drinking, open-air altars, and bounded spaces) but also striking differences (round indigenous vs. rectilinear

the fourth centuries B.C., it probably is not. Other sites: Sabucina (De Miro 1983), Polizzello (De Miro 1988–1989; 1999), Caltabellotta (Panvini 1988–1989; 1993–1994b, 760), Colle Madore (Vassallo 1999), and possi-

bly Monte San Giuliano near Caltanissetta (Panvini 1993–1994b, 755–767).

⁶⁶ We have not yet calculated the precise proportions.

Greek cult buildings, small-scale indigenous vs. large-scale Greek votive activity, varied indigenous arrangements of space vs. Greek canonical east-west orientation of temples with altars to the east). Rather than treating Greek material culture as a package and the archaeologist's job as cataloguing its transmission to Sicilians, we believe that understanding sixth-century religion and changing conceptions of the sacred calls for the same methods and evidence as the analysis of Hellenization more generally and above all precise quantification and comparisons between sites and between areas within sites. Some of the most important comparison cases have not been well published, and even at Colle Madore, the relative proportions of different kinds of objects are not quantified. Ritual practices, like ceramic traditions, varied from site to site; and if seventh- and sixth-century indigenous cult practices are a form of Hellenization, they took a quite un-Hellenic form.

Robert Leighton has suggested another way forward, seeing the increasing archaeological visibility of the worship of the gods as part of a process of state-formation. In the ninth and eighth centuries, he suggests, Sicilian religion was archaeologically invisible, though "doubtless no less important and diffuse in everyday life," while in the seventh and sixth "the elaboration of cult practice and its physical manifestations in the form of shrines and cult objects was encouraged by the development of more complex social and political formations, essentially early states, in which religious practices were developing into a form of state institution."⁶⁷

Leighton uses "the state" in the sense, developed by Anglo-American archaeologists since the 1960s, of an advanced stage of sociopolitical complexity. Italian discussions of the Elymian state instead concentrate on the emergence of a sense of Elymian identity and its geographical boundaries.⁶⁸ Since the 1980s Anglo-American archaeologists have been increasingly critical of neo-evolutionary models, and this line of thought seems to have particular trouble accounting for Greek political structures.⁶⁹ We might do better in the Mediterranean to follow political scientists and early-modern historians in thinking of state-formation as an ongoing process in which individuals create and occupy central offices, seeking to legitimate their powers and extend them, and the conflicts this creates.⁷⁰ Here religion, social complexity, and Hellenization all come together. The people who built curvilinear A1 at Monte Polizzo were following in traditions going back 150 years, but some northwest Sicilians had started setting up rectilinear *sacella* that looked much more like Greek temples. Monte Iato probably had a quite Greek-looking temple as early as 550, and Erice a stone temple by 500. But the most remarkable structure of all is the enormous Doric temple in contrada Mango at Segesta, probably dating between 550 and 450 B.C.⁷¹ At 56×28 m,⁷² it is roughly the same size as Selinunte temples C, D, E, and F, the temple of Heracles at Agrigento, that of Nike at Himera, and those of Athena and Olympian Zeus at Syracuse. Only the vast temple G at Selinunte (110×50 m) and Olympieion at Agrigento (110×53 m) are larger, and they stand alone.

Anthony Snodgrass has shown that the elites of the cities of Greek Sicily were using temple-building as a way to compete in this period. We suggest that some people in late sixth-

⁶⁷ Leighton 1999, 262.

⁶⁸ See Anello 1997 and De Vido 1997, with references.

⁶⁹ Morris 1997.

⁷⁰ See, e.g., Steinmetz 1999; Braddick 2000.

⁷¹ Romeo 1989; Vassallo 1999 (*sacella*); Isler 1984, 11–

116 (Monte Iato); Coarelli and Torelli 1997, 56–57 (Erice); V. Tusa 1961; Tusa et al. 1992 (Segesta). The contrada Mango temple at Segesta is dated largely by architectural style, and it could belong in the first half of the fifth century rather than the later sixth.

⁷² Tusa et al. 1992, 623. The enclosure wall measures 83×48 m, but the temple only occupied part of this area.

or early fifth-century Segesta saw themselves as peers of the Greek tyrants and joined their competitions by building a recognizably Greek temple. Franco De Angelis has estimated the cost of Selinunte temples C, D, and F at 136–181, 112–149, and 98–130 talents respectively. The contrada Mango temple probably cost something like 100–150 talents, depending on the distance the stone had to be moved. Using John Salmon’s calculations for Greek temples, if the work of quarrying stone for the contrada Mango temple, moving it, finishing it, cutting wood, and fitting the roof was spread out over a 30-year generation, it would have required a gang of about 50 men working full-time across this whole period. If the work was finished in a decade, the gang would have averaged 150 men on any given day.⁷³

To play in the same league as the rulers of Selinunte, Agrigento, and Himera, someone at Segesta had to centralize resources and labor on a never-before-seen scale. Maybe one or a few families gained control over unprecedented wealth, or maybe a ruling elite centralized institutions and power to the point that they could extract more revenue than ever before (or maybe both these processes were going on at once). Whether the people behind the temple collected the revenues to pay for it through taxes (direct or indirect, in kind or coin), rents, or voluntary contributions, given the low level of ancient technology they must have been channeling the surplus production of several thousand people into this project. Whatever the details behind the temple’s construction, the tempo of state-formation had accelerated, and resources were being centralized in new ways. Segesta’s massive temple claimed a place on a large stage, where no other indigenous community in northwestern Sicily could appear. We still know very little about archaic Segesta,⁷⁴ but this was probably a new development in the later sixth or earlier fifth century.

Religious changes merged Hellenization and state-formation. If prior to the contrada Mango temple religious practice at Segesta had not been too different from that in the other native communities, then zone A at Monte Polizzo provides evidence not only for Hellenization and religious practice but also for attitudes toward Segesta’s emergence as the dominant community, and perhaps also for changes in hierarchy more generally. Some communities set up their own Greek-looking temples, albeit far smaller than that at Segesta. Perhaps they were centralizing power and institutions at the local level in the late sixth and early fifth century. To assess this we need more evidence from other parts of the settlements for inequalities in housing and diet or changes in commensality. Other communities did not, apparently, build new-style temples. At Sabucina, an early round hut shrine was replaced with a precocious seventh-century rectilinear *sacellum*, only to be replaced in turn by a new hut-shrine in the sixth, then new rectilinear buildings in the fifth.⁷⁵ Here we might see uncertainty and even anxiety over the changes taking place. At Monte Polizzo, where there is so far no sign of a movement toward the new styles, even as late as c. 500–475 B.C., we might see a conservative community clinging to older ways as the world about it changed.

In a very important paper, Stefano Vassallo has pointed out that after “una generale ricchezza a livello non solo di cultura materiale, ma anche di sviluppo demografico”⁷⁶ in the sixth century, inland western Sicily experienced a demographic and economic collapse in the early fifth (fig. 40). He explains the sixth-century peak as a result of Sicilians exploiting their central position between the Phoenician and Greek cities. In the process, he suggests, the

⁷³ Snodgrass 1986; De Angelis 2002, chap. 7; Salmon 2001, 202.

⁷⁵ De Miro 1983.

⁷⁶ Vassallo 2000, 994.

⁷⁴ See de la Gernière 1988.

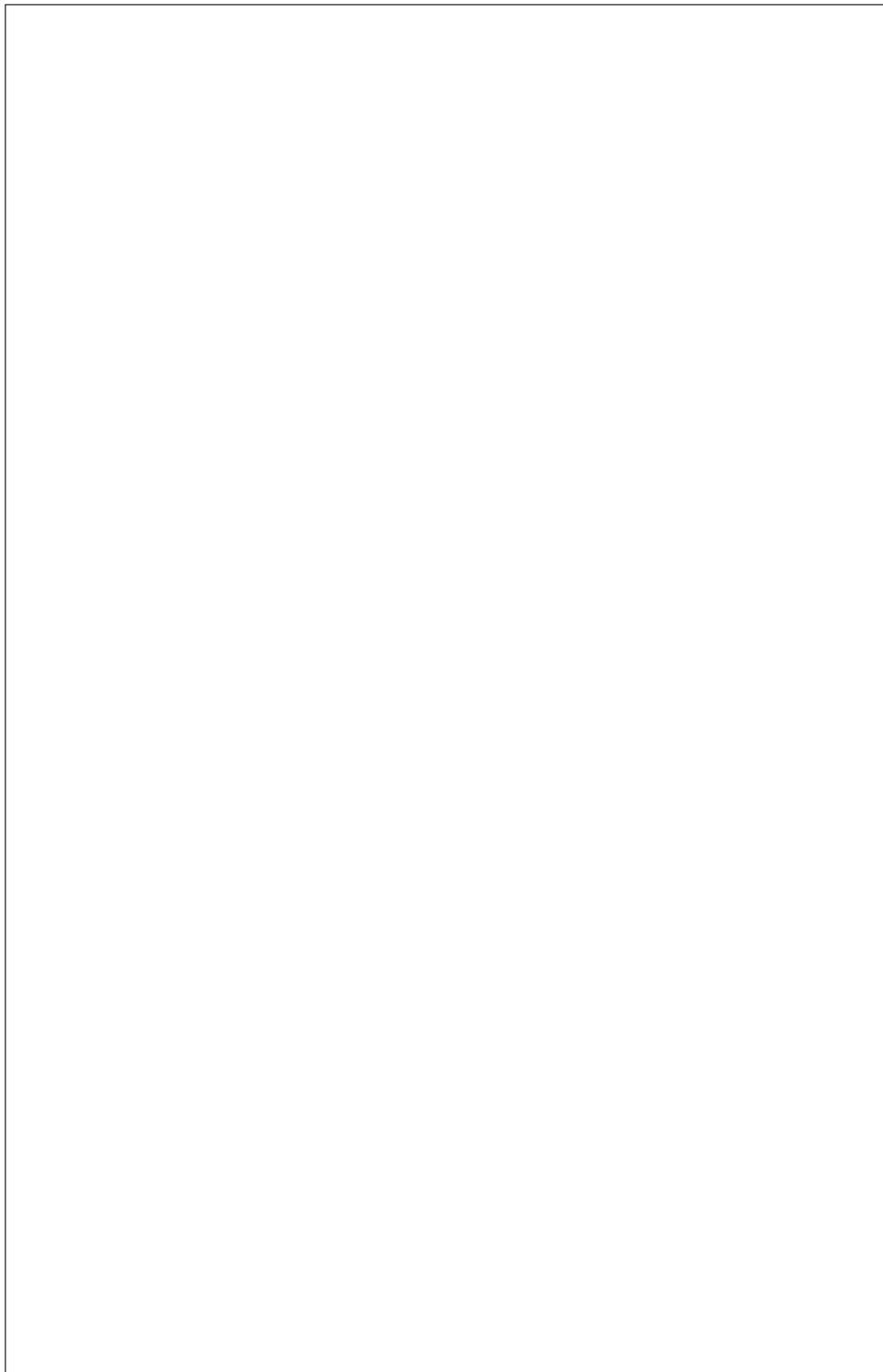


Fig. 40. Settlement distributions in western Sicily: (a) c. 550 B.C., and (b) c. 450 B.C. (adapted from Vassallo 2000, table 192).

native populations became increasingly dangerous to the Greeks, leading the tyrants of Selinunte and Agrigento to take increasingly aggressive steps against them, until in 483 Theron of Agrigento's decision to depose the pro-Punic Terillos of Himera in turn drew Carthage to intervene. The Greek victory at Himera in 480 destroyed the equilibrium that had favored growth in the interior, leading to a collapse and the decline of Iron Age cultural traditions. By the end of the fifth century, Greek and Punic material culture had largely replaced indigenous forms.

Vassallo adduced Vincenzo Tusa's 1970 finds at Monte Polizzo as part of this pattern.⁷⁷ The excavations since 1998 confirm this. After flourishing c. 550–525 the site was abandoned over the next half-century, with A1 perhaps receiving visitors as late as c. 475–450. Following Vassallo's arguments, we might set up three competing hypotheses about the fifth-century decline in settlement evidence in western Sicily:

1. There was a collapse after the battle of Himera in 480 B.C.
2. There was a shift in settlement patterns, with population concentrating on a few larger centers, particularly Segesta. Hypotheses 1 and 2 are not mutually exclusive: people may have abandoned outlying towns and moved to Segesta in response to greater insecurity.
3. The decline in evidence for activity in fifth-century western Sicily is part of a larger pattern, extending from Lazio to Carthage. We might be dealing not with a problem in social and economic history but with a technical issue of archaeological visibility.⁷⁸ If there really was a crisis affecting this whole area, we need explanations relevant to the whole central Mediterranean basin.

At the moment, hypothesis 3 seems the least likely, for three reasons. First, a recent collection of essays shows tremendous local variation in the relative frequency of fifth- and fourth-century Attic pottery in the western Mediterranean,⁷⁹ suggesting that we are not dealing with a single general pattern. Second, as figure 40 shows, the dearth of fifth-century settlement is very localized, with sites continuing to flourish less than 100 km to the east in the Salsa and Imera valleys. Third, there is as yet no reason to think that there are any low-visibility fifth-century deposits in the excavated parts of the acropolis. Continuing close study of our finds should show whether low-visibility deposits continued across the fifth century, being hard to identify against a background of higher-visibility sixth-century residual pottery characterized by East Greek and Athenian imports⁸⁰ or whether the acropolis really was abandoned between c. 475 and 350 B.C.

Vassallo suggests that the settlement at Segesta also contracted in the fifth century,⁸¹ which would count against hypothesis 2, but at this point we do not know enough about the archaic settlement to evaluate this. By Vassallo's count the number of sites west of the Salsa-Imera valley fell by 62 percent between c. 525 and 450, and the typical size of communities also declined. Such demographic catastrophes are unusual and are normally disease-driven rather than being responses to political changes.⁸² The coarse chronological resolution of archaeological data also makes it particularly difficult to relate them to political narratives of this kind.⁸³ We suggest that the rural decline may have been part of a longer process between about 550 and 450, involving migration (not only to Segesta, Halikyai, Erice, and Entella but

⁷⁷ Vassallo 2000, 985.

⁸¹ Vassallo 2000, 985.

⁷⁸ Morel 1984; Bondi 1999.

⁸² Scheidel, forthcoming. On Elymian demography, see Gallo 1994.

⁷⁹ Sabattini 2000.

⁸³ Snodgrass 1987, 36–66.

⁸⁰ Erickson (2000) provides an excellent example of how to analyze low ceramic visibility in fifth-century Crete.

also to the Greek cities and Carthage) as much as changes in mortality and fertility rates. The battle of Himera surely played a part in this, but so too may have Segestan state-formation. In just this period, not only the Greek tyrants but also the Sikel leader Ducetius built state power by relocating populations, sometimes forcibly.⁸⁴ We suggested above that the would-be leaders of an Elymian state at Segesta, like Ducetius farther east, used religious monuments to set one town above all possible rivals. On present evidence, it seems more reasonable to imagine Segestan equivalents to Ducetius in the late sixth and early fifth century than to see the absence of evidence from Monte Polizzo and so many other sites as a demographic collapse or merely a problem in archaeological visibility.

PHASE III

Only zone A has evidence from the later fourth century. Wine-drinking went on in the small structure A3, and people dedicated or dropped bronze coins, ornaments, an animal figurine, fine ware cups, and stone dice. A3 differs strikingly from any part of the site in phase II in the prominence of Punic finds. In this, it fits into a larger pattern in inland western Sicily. Carthage destroyed Selinunte in 409. Sometime between the peace treaty with Syracuse in 405/404 and the battle of Kronion (probably in 374/373), Carthage gained political control over much of western Sicily, and Punic material culture for the first time became significant. Many of the hill- and mountaintop sites favored in the sixth century were now reoccupied. It is commonly suggested that the small sites with Punic artifacts were lookout posts to keep a potentially hostile population under surveillance.⁸⁵ Sandro Bondi has argued that Carthage significantly reoriented agricultural production in the late fourth century, drawing the hinterland into a direct market relationship with Palermo, Solunto, Lilybaion, and Carthage itself.⁸⁶ He bases this suggestion on the high numbers of amphora sherds found on many of the inland sites. Monte Polizzo fits this pattern: the share of the assemblage accounted for by amphora jumps by 25–30 percent between the sixth-century layers associated with A1 and those of the fourth century with A3.⁸⁷

On the other hand, the Monte Polizzo assemblage also has much in common with deposits normally seen as religious. They parallel, on a much smaller scale, those at Monte Adranone, where two sanctuaries were rebuilt in the fourth century in a combination of Greek and Punic styles, with dedications including 200 Punic coins.⁸⁸ Punic stelai normally occur in sanctuaries in groups, not singly as at Monte Polizzo, and structure A3 has little in common architecturally with the fourth-century Punic temples at Monte Adranone or Selinunte. But both these discrepancies may be a result of Monte Polizzo's smallness.⁸⁹

As with the arguments about Hellenization, precision is required. "Punicization" clearly requires the same kind of multilevel, detailed comparison between contexts and sites.

⁸⁴ Hdt. 7.153–156; Diod. Sic. 11.49, 78, 88–90; Demand 1990, 45–58.

⁸⁵ Anello (1986) argues against the dominant view that 409 marked the turning point (e.g., Hans 1983, 119), instead suggesting that there was no Carthaginian *eparchia* until c. 375. See the discussions in V. Tusa et al. 1990–1991. On the archaeological data, Lauro 1997; Mertens 1997; Vaggioli 2001.

⁸⁶ Bondi 1988–1989, 420.

⁸⁷ Amphora sherds increase from 22 percent of the assemblage in deposits associated with A1 to 30 percent with A3 when reckoned by sherd count ($n = 3,875$), and from 22 percent with A1 to 31 percent with A3 when reckoned by weight (total = 81.773 kg).

⁸⁸ Fiorentini 1995; 1998.

⁸⁹ See Fourmont 1982–1983.

PHASE IV

Building B1 was reoccupied and renovated in the Middle Ages. Iron Age room B1/2 was cleaned out and rebuilt. A new room, B1/1, was added, as well as a stone drain in the small courtyard between walls **b** and **j**. The interpretation suggested after the 2000 season—that B1 was used as an animal shelter—remains possible, but the amount of fine ware found in 2001 counts against it. The finest pottery came mainly from topsoil and rubble contexts and may have been carried into zone B by erosion from more substantial medieval buildings as yet unexcavated.

Among the most interesting finds were two bowls from trenches M108 and M109. Although there is still debate over the chronology of Arab-Norman pottery, a late tenth-century dating seems most likely. Recent surveys around Monreale and Segesta, as well as Northern Illinois University's 1999–2000 survey around Monte Polizzo and Mokarta, suggest that rural settlement began expanding in just this period.⁹⁰ The difficulty of identifying pottery datable between 700 and 950 probably explains part of the pattern, but the textual sources make the archaeological picture seem plausible. Under the Kalbites Palermo developed into the major market in the western Mediterranean, stimulating expansion of settlement into the island's interior to feed the booming city. Some of the settlers were enslaved Sicilians, but there was also substantial immigration from North Africa. By 1050 there may have been half a million Moslems in Sicily, concentrated in the west.⁹¹ According to Ferdinando Maurici, "A quell'epoca, la Sicilia occidentale, da Trapani a Termini ad Agrigento (il cosiddetto Val di Mazara), sarà una terra quasi del tutto musulmana."⁹²

The survey and textual evidence both suggest that settlement continued expanding through the twelfth century.⁹³ The floor deposit from B1/1 dates to the eleventh or twelfth century, and the deposits in B1/1, B1/2, and M108 suggest two or even three phases of activity.

PHASE V

The pattern of use of the acropolis in the past fifty years is now much clearer. The entire hill was systematically deep-plowed, and saplings planted in the trenches. Shelter A4 at the summit may have been built as recently as c. 1980, and the walls show two construction phases.

7. Conclusion

Occupation at Monte Polizzo stretches back three and a half millennia. We can say little yet about phase I (Bronze Age), but in phase II (sixth century B.C.), Monte Polizzo was a substantial town. Questions about Hellenization, state-formation, and the creation of Elymian identity have dominated debates about Iron Age western Sicily in the secondary literature. Monte Polizzo is highly relevant to all three, and we have drawn two main conclusions from our first two seasons. First, we need more sophisticated models of these processes; and second, we need to deploy large-scale work in several parts of the site, carefully quantifying the results, paying close attention to stratigraphy, and publishing the data in detail. This should significantly improve our understanding of sixth-century Sicily.

⁹⁰ Johns 1997, 414–416; Bernardini et al. 2000, 121–124; Stevens-Block and Vecchio 2002.

⁹² Maurici 1995, 68.

⁹³ Peri 1978, part 1; Molinari 1994; and n. 81 above.

⁹¹ Ahmad 1975, 37.

So far, evidence for occupation in phase III (later fourth century B.C.) is limited to a single poorly preserved structure, A3. This fits into a larger pattern of the expansion of Punic material culture in western Sicily. The phase IV deposits suggest that Monte Polizzo was reoccupied in the later tenth century A.D. and abandoned around 1200. This again fits a larger pattern, of the expansion of settlement back into interior Sicily in the Arab period and its contraction in the economic crises of Swabian times. Finally, the phase V activity also forms part of a larger pattern, of postwar economic growth.

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