

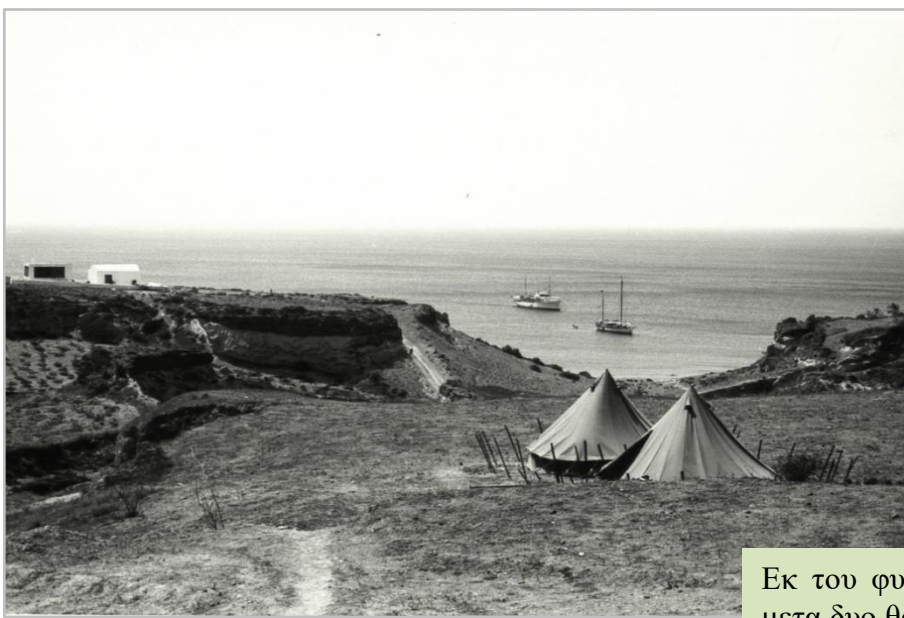
Life with the help of artificial light sources in the prehistoric settlement of Akrotiri, Thira.

Dimitra Spiliopoulou M.A., PhD Candidate FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg, GERMANY

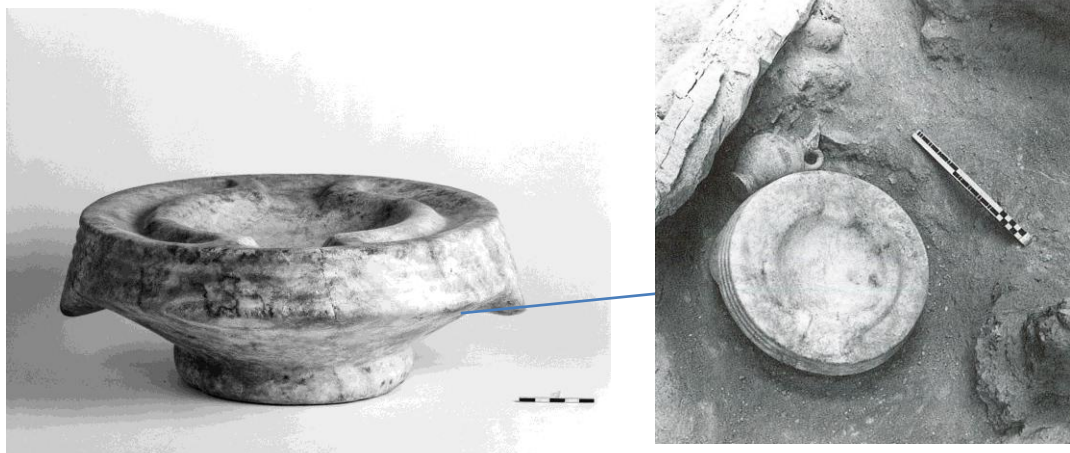
The history of the discovery:

The Bronze Age settlement of Akrotiri, also named for today's village of Akrotiri, which lies south of it, was examined for the first time in 1939 by Spyridon Marinatos. whomade the first cut (Cut I) in the so-called Arvaniti property, according to the directions of the villagers. 33 years had to follow until Marinatos started again his first official campaign in 1967, this time with the financial support of Arxaiologike Etairia. He dug on May 25th in 1967 at a site in Akrotiri, called Favata, on the property of *Mrs. Kalliope Bronos*. The cut was named Bronos 1 and lies on the west side of the deep ravine. The importance of this position has been understood since 1960. This is also noted in his diary. And indeed the first discoveries of pottery, including pottery of the Kamares style and MC pottery came to light. The stone lamps made of porous stone, simply worked and locally made, saw daylight again after almost 3000 years, as the lamp Inv. Nr. 167, Bronos 1.

The lighting vases come from the following areas of the settlement: Xesté 3, the West House, House of the Ladies, from the Delta complex (rooms Δ16 and Δ 18α), the Telchinon Street and to the east of it the rooms Δ1, Δ2 of the Delta complex, the Bronos 2 (dug in 1967 by instruction and please by E. Vermeule) and Arvaniti 1 and 3 plots, as well as the new cuts named as ΝΦΠ made, when in 1999, it was decided to replace the Dexion roof with a bioclimatic.



Εκ του φυλακίου. Τοπίον της ανασκαφής μετα δυο θαλαμηγών καταφονγόντων εις τον όρμον (12_13.9.1969)



Akrotiri, Marmor stand lamp, Room D8a, Section D, Inv. Nr. 1867, (Akrotiri, Photoarchiv)

The lighting vases:

Among the 177 lighting vases (lamps, braziers and fire boxes) that have come to light so far, whole, partially preserved or in sherds, 93 lamps, of which 69 clay and 25 stone, as well as 35 clay braziers and 2 of copper were found. Dumas, however, characterizes them as lamps (Dumas 2004, 413). As well as 12 clay braziers. Stone braziers and fires boxes have not been found in Akrotiri until today.

Most of the lighting vases come from the last phase of life of the settlement (LC I). However, we also have lamps which, based on the respective diagnostic ceramics are chronologically placed in the MK II-III period, were found in Late Cycladic deposits such as the clay sloping braziers (fig. bottom of the Poster, the big red and small brazier together) from D18α, Section D.

The clay lamps have been found as part of household items, along with other vessels and utensils, such as cups, conical cups, cycladic skyphoi, pots, lids, spouted jars and pits, as well as along with stone lamps and other stone objects. Both, the stone and the clay lamps of the settlement are distinguished in: absorption lamps, and floating lamps (Moulou 2002, 2010), as well as portable (the so-called hand lamps) and table/stand lamps.

In Akrotiri so far I have been able to distinguish lamp types based on the typology used by Marthari in her dissertation on volcanic pottery (Marthari 1992) five types and four subcategories. For the stone lamps can be told, that they can be put into the Minoan type 24II according to Warren and its subcategories, which, however, seem to have been made with the exception of the stone lamp from the House (no. 3455) in situ, while their material must have imported to the settlement (Devetzi 2007, p. 120).



Akrotiri, small stone lamp, serpentine, Inv. Nr. 3123 (Akrotiri, Photoarchiv)

Fuels/ illuminates:

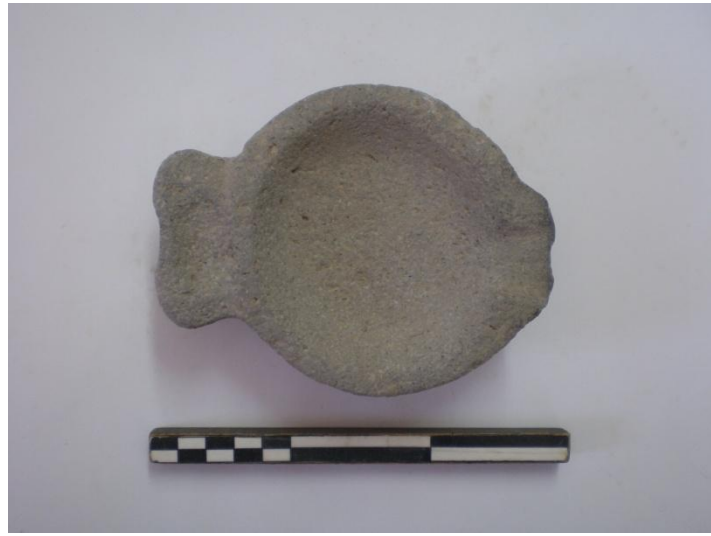
In experiments I have conducted in the past on clay lamps, clearly the depth of the vessel plays an important role in how and how much the wick or luminaire they would use burns.

In the clay lamps of Akrotiri, which are absorption lamps, vases, in which the wick is placed in the muzzle or beaker used the dried flower of a small plant with the name *Ballota* or crateroid (Latin: *Ballota acetabulosa*) otherwise *luminia*, which are in abundance in several places in Santorini and Thirasia, as I could see during my various exploratory walks around the Cape of Ballos, but also in a conversation with Dimitra Douskou and Dorina Moulou (Duskou-Moulou 2015, 2019). Another fuel material would probably be the rope (generally for the fuel materials Moulou 2010, 146). Also threaded thread, twisted and waxed, which sails in oil, would be another way to use a wick.

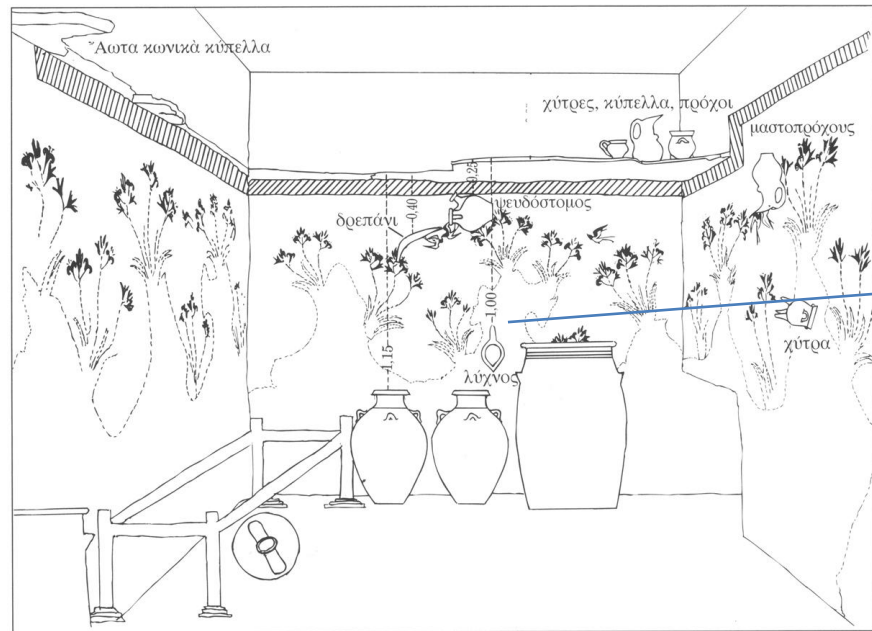
Chemical analysis of clay lamps from the settlement of Akrotiri will give answers to questions about what exactly was used as fuel for lighting the vessels.



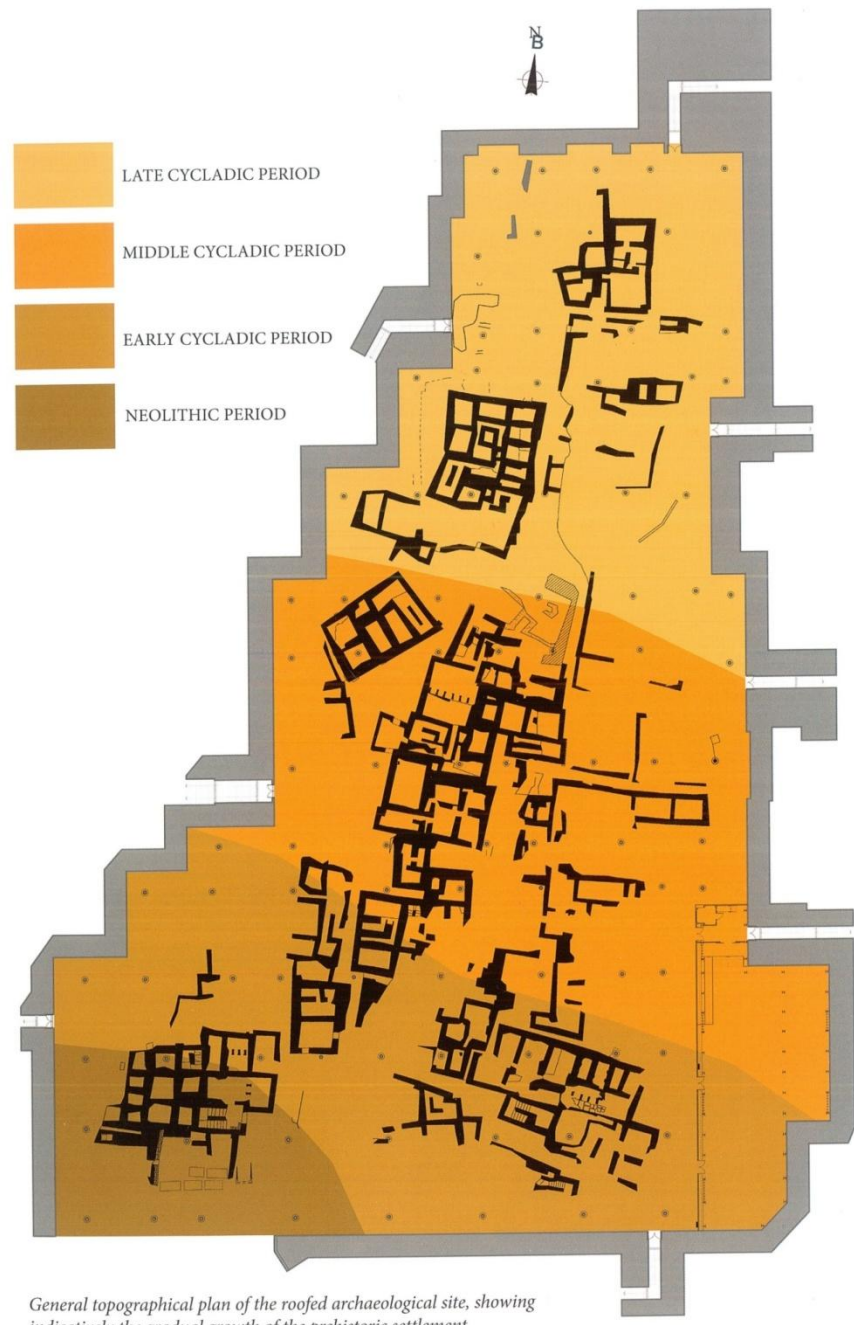
Μπρόνος 1, in situ the small stone lamp with a conical cup (Marinatos Thera I, p. 15, fig. 14).



Akrotiri, Bronos 1, Small stone lamp, Inv. Nr. 167 (photo D. Spiliopoulou)



Drawing of the Room D2, basement, lamp Inv. Nr. 1186, D Section (Μιχαηλίδου 1992, σελ. 319, εικ. 229)



General topographical plan of the prehistoric settlement

Akrotiri, General topographical plan of the prehistoric settlement (Dumas, 2016)



Akrotiri, Generalplan of the prehistoric settlement, Room D2, D Section



The «priestess» of the Room 4 form the 1st floor, West House (Marinatos Thera VI, Col Pl. 5) , Virtual reconstruction of the Room (Cl. Palyvou 2005)



Akrotiri, big footed pottery and stone Lamps form Xesté 3 (Akrotiri, Photoarchiv)



Pottery braziers Akrotiri, Room D 18a (Akrotiri, Photoarchiv)