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Faunal remains

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(N = 3). These were mostly small flakes and waste from different stages of production. Representation of obsidian was higher: 20 blades from the main production phase (*plein débitage*), 28 flakes, some of which belonged to the preparation phase and some to the rejuvenation phase, four tablets from the rejuvenation of the striking platform, nine core fragments, and six debris.

Although formal tools were rare, all the products had been used as well as the majority of the blades: a drill on a small obsidian flake (**ACS7**), a retouched blade (**ACS8**), an obsidian truncated blade, a *pièce esquillée* on a flake, and a notched obsidian flake (**ACS2**). The majority of the obsidian blades exhibit techno-morphometric characteristics typical of Early Bronze Age prismatic blade production (symmetrical, parallel margins and dorsal ridges, retention of overhang during the preparation of blade detachment). Three secondary crested blades had been struck (e.g. **ACS4**) but, in spite of this, no primary crested blade was found. Equally, no cores were recovered, although there are fragments of cores in secondary use (**ACS1**).

The presence of cortex was limited to a few flakes. All the same, blocks of raw material with large cortical surfaces or cortical flakes from the decortification phase were not recovered.

In general, the material derived from Area A was not very rich, either numerically or technologically; the obsidian specimens were products from blade production, but the incomplete picture of this industry, as well as the very worn character of the majority of the specimens, indicates that products were discarded in this part of the site.

ACS1 A0009.9.1. Obsidian core fragment, from a core of the flat type L. 20.5. W. 14. Th. 9.

ACS2 A0003.5.5. Obsidian notched flake. L. 22. W. 15. Th. 4.

ACS3 A0003.5.1. Curved distal end of an obsidian blade. L. 31. W. 9. Th. 3.

ACS4 A0004.28. Secondary crested blade of obsidian broken into two pieces. L. 58. W. 15. Th. 3.5.

ACS5 A0004.28. Whole tablet of grey-black radiolite for rejuvenating the striking platform. L. 47. W. 37. Th. 11.

ACS6 A0002.8.5. Partial obsidian tablet for rejuvenating the striking platform. L. 19. W.15. Th. 3.

ACS7 A0009.13.2. Drill on an obsidian flake. L. 16. W. 11.5. Th. 1.5.

ACS8 A0004.82.2. Glossed retouched blade made of obsidian. L. 30. W. 6. Th. 2.

ACS9 A0004.82.1. Distal obsidian blade fragment truncated on the break. L. 40. W. 16. Th. 3.

FAUNAL REMAINS

The bones from the stratigraphic contexts in this area were sorted according to species and anatomy by layer. Nevertheless, given the mixed origin of the surface levels, only the bones from the two securest and best dated layers have been taken into account.⁵⁰

Context 0004

This context contained an assemblage of 437 bone and dental remains, of which only 33.9% could be identified both anatomically and by species (TABLE 5). There was a significant degree of fragmentation in the material, no doubt as a result of the taphonomic conditions, over and above the effects of human and animal consumption.

⁵⁰ Consequently the two levels 0002 and 0003 have not been included in the statistics.

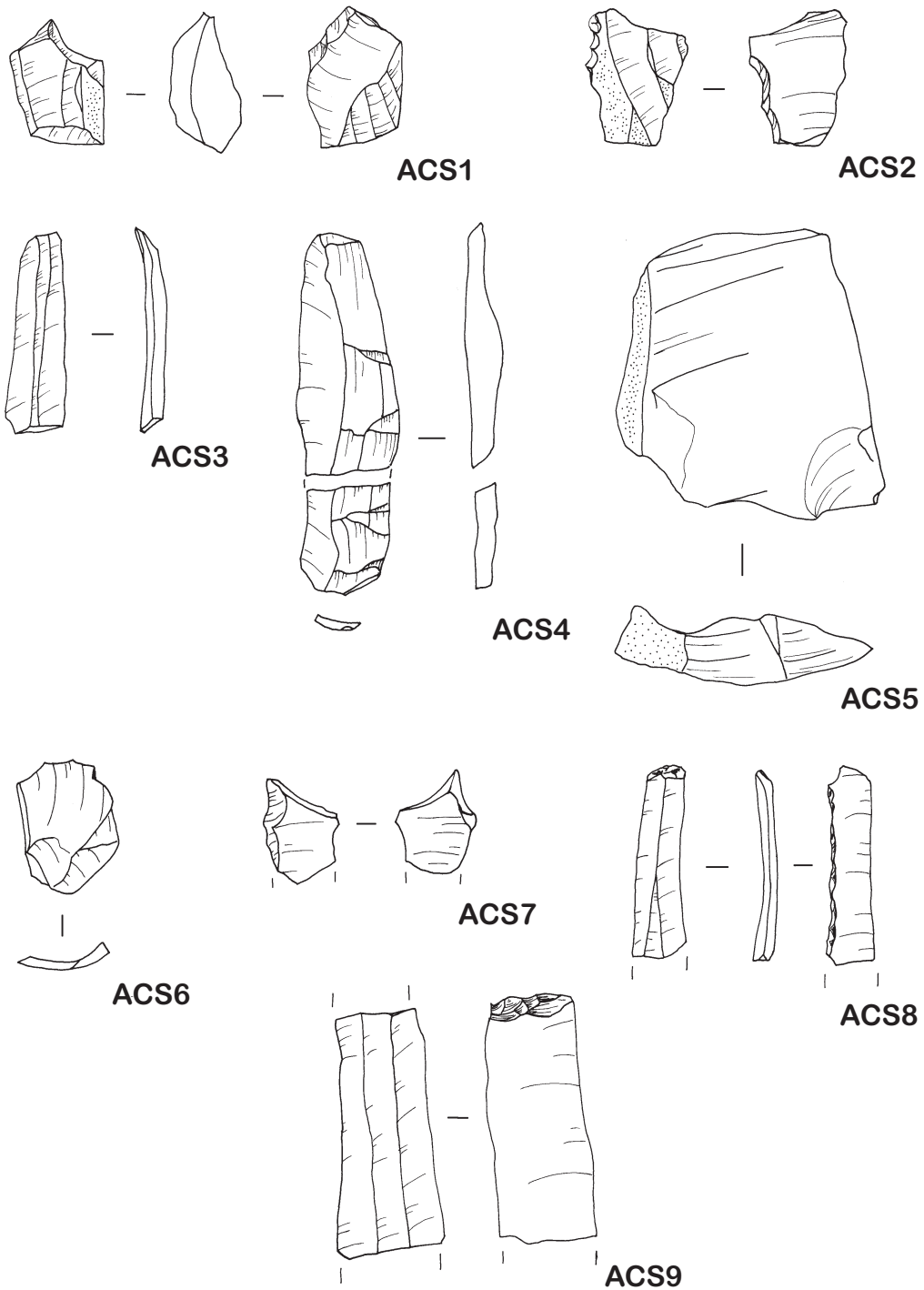


FIG. 21. Area A: chipped stone. Scale 1:1.

TABLE 5. Animal remains from Area A.

Area A	Cattle c.0004	Cattle c.0009	Pig c.0004	Pig c.0009	Pig c.0004	Ovicaprids c.0009	Aves sp. c.0004	Aves sp. c.0009	Lepus sp. c.0004	Lepus sp. c.0009
No. of specimens	29	6	73	5	45	9		1	1	
Individuals										
Very young										
Young			1	1	1					
Young adults		1	2							
Adult		1	2	1	4	1		1	1	
Old	1		2							
Total MNI	1	2	7	2	5	1	0	1	1	0

The impact of carnivores and small rodents is apparent on the surface of 24 specimens. This observation, combined with the marked fragmentation of the bones, argues for an accumulation of food remains subject to the intervention of small scavengers after their deposition. The two principal species represented are animals of medium size: pigs and ovicaprids (both sheep and goats).⁵¹ Despite the presence of the coxal fragment of a hare, it appears that only domesticated animals provided the meat products for subsistence. The presence of just one ox, clearly killed at an advanced age (a superannuated animal retired from agricultural work) raises the question of choice and constraint in subsistence which, in the area of husbandry, balances the option of slaughtering animals against their potential secondary products (labour, transport, milk, wool, leather). In particular, those animals distinguished as 'meat' animals were eaten young for the quality of their meat, or as adults, for their ability to reproduce.

The techniques of butchery and discard, which were used by the occupants of the site, mixed breaking up the carcass by percussion with fine, precise cutting probably using worked tools. All the same, butchery marks are not common enough (18 occurrences) to permit a reliable reconstruction of procedures for the butchery and discard of the carcasses. They confirm food production and the evident intention to portion the animals with the aim of consuming them, as well as a secondary result, as use of the bones as a raw material (confirmed by the presence of bone artefacts from the site). Finally these traces demonstrate the use of different tools, depending on whether the aim was to crack the bones (large, heavy hammers) or to cut the meat (chipped-stone blades or flakes).

In terms of the anatomical distribution, there is nothing of special note, given the complex taphonomy of the context: this observation could be related to the breaking up and fragmentation which largely constrain zoological identification, but also to an irregular process of disposal, whereby no coherent grouping (association, connection, homogeneity whether by individual or species) emerges. Furthermore, the relationship between MNI and NISP⁵² and their disparity across the skeleton indicate various phases of deposition, either during various events over time, or due to contemporary actions but from various different sources (different houses, for example).

The lack of elements such as ribs, vertebrae, small bones such as carpals, tarsals and

⁵¹ Two adult goats and two sheep on the basis of respectively 2 and 6 bone remains.

phalanges, can be accounted for through the action of small rodents and the difficulty of recognizing species given their fragmentation. The same applies to the fragments of long bones, which form a large proportion of the undiagnostic material, whilst the identified bones consist largely of the articular extremities. It is in taking account of these questions of differential conservation and indeed differential identification that the profiles of anatomical representation are presented (TABLE 5)

Cattle: relatively regular occurrence in spite of under-representation of the back (ribs and vertebrae), carpals and phalanges. The back leg is almost absent among the butchered remains but present among the tarsals, metatarsals and phalanges, which are the elements most commonly with cut-marks.

Pigs: frequent occurrence of cranial fragments and long leg-bones. Notable was the absence of the extremities of the legs and of the back, which must have been discarded after the cutting up and dismemberment of the animal. The good state of preservation of the pig jaws, especially the mandibles, is frequently attested in faunal assemblages; the mandibles here are the bones bearing striations from cutting, which underline the interest of the consumers in the head.⁵³ No doubt this part of the animal was particularly prized.

Ovicaprids (sheep and goats together): the ratio between skull and leg-bones is more even, and the ends of the feet are always absent, but the skeletal profile is, overall, regular, apart from a slight disparity between fore- and hind-limbs (which one could equally observe of the pork bones). These differences are related to discard and the initial partition of the animal carcass. The elements present are those which were butchered and hence meaty and exploitable (scapula, humerus, femur)

All these observations together lead to the interpretation that this assemblage resulted from a succession of dumps of waste from meals. It would have been interesting to identify zones of deposition in relation to contemporary occupation, because it is always the question of the treatment of domestic rubbish which allows us to associate these archaeological contexts with the way of life. In reality, the pit was not exclusively intended for organic or food remains, because the relationship between its volume (7 m³) and the number of bones fragments (528 for the two main layers and 33 in the two upper layers) is disproportionate. Furthermore, the archaeological finds are very varied: much pottery, mudbrick, burnt clay, and stone. Note that the uses of this pit were multiple, which appears to confirm a series of events and not a single process of fill.

Context 0009

The faunal material in the grave consists of a small group of animal remains, probably not directly related to the act of interment. The mixed and distinct nature of this assemblage underlines the absence of a specific deposition in the strict sense:⁵⁴ no whole bones, no

⁵² MNI: Minimum Number of Individuals, NISP: Number of Identified Specimens.

⁵³ The cheeks, the tongue, and traces of skinning.

⁵⁴ A. Gardeisen, 'Interprétation des restes fauniques dans les tombes protohistoriques du sud de la France', in

Colloque en hommage à J. F. Salinier, Pratiques funéraires protohistoriques entre Massif central et Pyrénées: nouvelles données. Puy-laurens (Tarn), 15-16 janvier 2000 = Archéologie Tarnaise, 12 (2004), 211-15.

anatomical connections or articulation, absence of osteological connection between the various elements, which were anyway very fragmentary, large number of individuals for so small a sample of specimens (TABLE 5). Two examples have traces of burning and four others have been gnawed by rodents. No anthropogenic marks were observed such as cut-marks, defleshing, or fragmentation of the animal. The species represented include the standard domesticated types: cattle, ovicaprids, pigs as well as an unidentified wild bird.⁵⁵ In all, then, there were 91 specimens, of which 70 could not be identified according to species for a total of six animals (TABLE 5).

In the absence of interpretable deposits and given the poor preservation of the material, one can posit that these bones were introduced to the grave independently of the burial. Such faunal assemblages, poorly characterized and numerically unrepresentative, are frequently introduced with a fill distinct from the interment.⁵⁶ This theory is based on the collection of unidentified bones, the great majority slivers of long bones belonging to animals of medium size (pigs or ovicaprids) which underline, by their preservation, the importance of the pre-depositional processes of fragmentation. This implies that the state and the nature of this material has no direct link with the burial, but is derived from another context, more or less contemporary, whose contents were reused in the creation of the tomb.

Conclusion

The animals in Area A are almost all domesticates, with the unusual examples of a hare and a bird. Whether the goats were domesticated or wild has not been confirmed, but on the basis of the form of the relevant animal, it is the domesticated goat. On the same basis, some isolated bones could indicate the presence of a boar or a very fat pig. The nature of subsistence implied by the bone assemblages points to a diet based almost exclusively on the raising of domesticated cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs. The current contexts do not allow further interpretation of these finds for husbandry in the Early Bronze Age period. On the other hand, beyond a meat diet, they indicate that the rubbish deposits were organized close to the living areas, and that a number of fills or other layers containing traces of domestic activity could have been used in the course of various reorganisations of the site (here a grave).

HUMAN REMAINS

Grave 0009 (FIG. 6)

This grave contained the human skeletal remains of two individuals, a middle-aged adult (0009a) and an infant (0009b). The grave consisted of a rectangular structure of stones delimiting the space of the adult. The ground on which the skeletons lay has considerable inclination, resulting in the feet of the adult lying at a higher level than the skull (approximately 40 cm of a difference in height). Most elements of the adult skeleton were

⁵⁵ This piece has been examined by Luis García, Zoological Museum of Barcelona, who is a specialist in avian fauna.

⁵⁶ Observation made when strewing the bone material from the burials in collaboration with A. Lagia.

⁵⁷ The area between the skeleton and the stones delimiting the eastern wall of the grave, where the infant remains were found, was thoroughly excavated.

⁵⁸ A. Bouwman, J. Prag, K. Brown, and T. Brown, 'Middle Helladic kinship: families, faces and DNA at Mycenae', in G. Touchais, A. P. Touchais, S. Voutsaki, and