



The Peraia of Samothrace project: report on the 2020–2021 fieldwork campaign

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ABSTRACT

The Peraia of Samothrace Project (HFRI-FM17-750) is a multi-disciplinary archaeological fieldwork project to investigate the diachronic settlement patterns from Prehistory to the Modern Era of the coastal and inland landscape opposite the island of Samothrace in the northern Aegean Sea. It uses integrated and non-invasive methods such as remote sensing, geophysical prospection, and intensive pedestrian field walking to explore the regional topography and the diversity of human occupation. One important aspect of the project addresses the question of Samothracian settlements mentioned in the written sources. This paper presents the results of the 2020–2021 fieldwork campaign, including the methodological framework of the survey, an overview of ancient literary sources and previous archaeological work in the region, and a preliminary report of the archaeological survey as well as a general discussion of the combined outcome of the results.

KEYWORDS

Peraia of Samothrace, Aegean Thrace, pedestrian survey, geophysics, remote sensing

Introduction

The Peraia of Samothrace Project (PSP) is a multi-disciplinary archaeological fieldwork project to investigate the diachronic patterns of human occupation within the coastal and inland land-

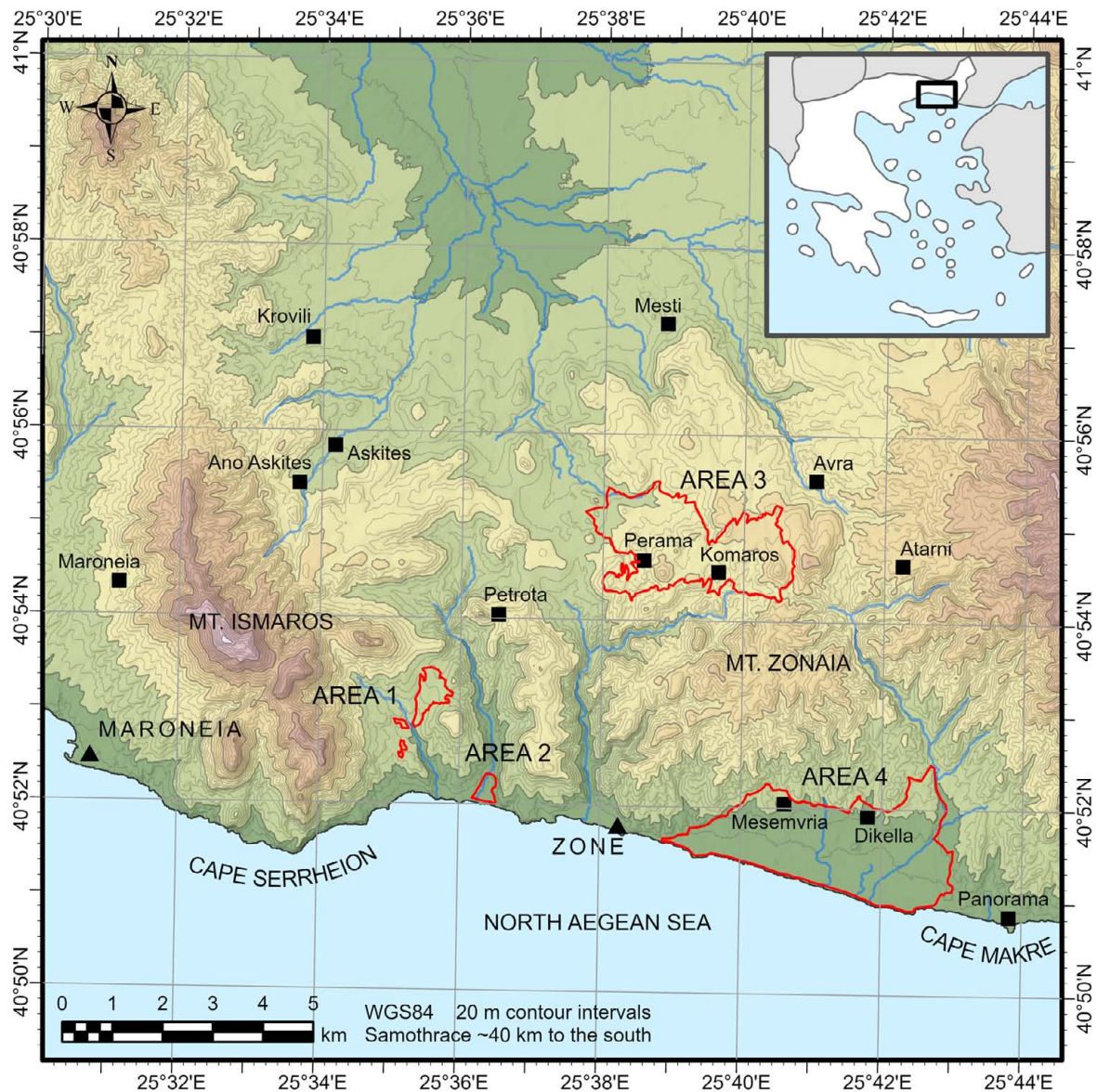


Fig. 1. Map of the coastline opposite the island of Samothrace in the northern Aegean Sea. PSP survey areas are indicated in red (figure by J.C. Donati)

Обр. 1. Карта на бреговата линия срещу остров Самотраки в северно Егейско море. Проучваните райони са посочени в червено (автор J.C. Donati)

scape opposite the island of Samothrace in the northern Aegean. In classical antiquity, this region was known in the literary sources as the Peraia of Samothrace because of the fortified settlements of Zone, Drys, Mesemvria, Sale, Tempyra, and Charakoma established there by the island beginning in the sixth century BC. Compared to other Greek colonies in the northern Aegean (e.g., Abdera, Ainos, and Maroneia), the settlements of the Peraia did not have large commercial harbours nor an extended *chora* for agricultural exploitation. On the other hand, they were located at strategic points leading into the Thracian hinterlands, controlling large stretches of wooded forestry, natural resources (e.g., stone quarries, minerals, and precious metals), water sources, and passageways to the sea including the eventual locale of the Roman Via Egnatia. Of the six settlements mentioned in the literary sources, only Zone has been securely identified based on excavations carried out at the fortified harbour town 20 km west of Alexandroupoli. The remainder of the settlement landscape in the Peraia remains poorly understood up through the Roman period (Lazaridis 1971; Meyer 1976; Markov 1980; Isaac

1986, 125–140; Loukopoulou 2004; Loukopoulou, Psoma 2008; Zahrnt 2008; Tsatsopoulou-Kaloudi et al. 2015; Vlachopoulos, Tsiafaki 2017, 474–547. On Aegean Thrace, e.g., Bakalakis 1959; 1961; Samsaris 1980; Triantafyllos 1991; Tiverios 2008; Tsiafaki 2020; Porozhanov 2021).

The purpose of PSP is to initiate an intensive archaeological survey that will help us gain a better understanding of the region's human presence, settlement patterns, and land use from Prehistory to the twentieth century (fig. 1). In the broader context of Thrace, the Peraia served as the crossroads between Europe and Asia and the Northern Aegean and the Black Sea. It became a melting pot of prehistoric populations, local Thracians, Greek colonists, Persian soldiers, Macedonian and Roman victors, and Christian and Muslim inhabitants. On a more targeted level, the project aims to provide insights into the Thracians and their habitation patterns in the Peraia, as well as their relationships with the Greek colonists. It is hoped that we can contribute to the long-standing issues concerning the identification of Samothracian settlements mentioned in the written sources and the confusing topography between Mt Ismaros and the Evros river (Tsatsopoulou-Kaloudi et al. 2015, 39–67; Garyfallopoulos 2022). Lastly, another goal is to develop an appreciation of the Byzantine and Ottoman landscape of the Peraia.

The fieldwork adopts an integrated approach in the use of various non-invasive methods of archaeological exploration. Our main approaches comprise satellite and aerial remote sensing, geophysical prospection, and intensive pedestrian field walking. In our inaugural year, the 2020 fieldwork campaign was severely curtailed by the COVID-19 pandemic. We managed to complete a brief preliminary survey of the area from 27 June to 2 July 2020, but the pedestrian campaigns planned in autumn 2020 were limited to a single day before the enactment of a general pandemic lockdown; geophysics had to be rescheduled altogether. The second half of the following year proved to be better. The 2021 pedestrian survey took place over three weeks spread into three campaigns: 27 June 2021 to 2 July 2021, 17–27 October 2021, and 19–26 November 2021. Geophysical prospection was carried out in one week from 21–28 October 2021. The project is a collaboration between the Democritus University of Thrace, the Ephorates of Antiquities of Rhodope and Evros, and the Laboratory of Geophysical – Satellite Remote Sensing & Archaeoenvironment of the Foundation of Research and Technology, Hellas (FORTH). During the first two years, the Peraia of Samothrace Project included almost 30 staff members, postdoctoral and doctoral researchers, and student participants mainly from Greek universities but also from the United States.

In the following sections, we provide a short description of the landscape and topography of the areas surveyed, along with an overview of previous archaeological work and relevant literary sources. The main part of this article presents the methodologies used and offers a preliminary report on the 2020–2021 fieldwork campaign along with a discussion of the current results.

The landscape and environmental context

The area under examination stretches approximately from the ancient city of Maroneia to the modern city of Alexandroupoli and from the Northern Aegean Sea to the southern extension of the Rhodope mountains. The natural environment is incredibly diverse and alternates between narrow coastal zones with small coves, highland streams that feed into river gorges, rugged hills covered with dense vegetation, and a limited number of upland plateaus (Astaras, Lambrinos 1988) (fig. 2). Before the middle of the twentieth century, much of the mountainous landscape framing the Peraia was covered with thick forests (Triantafyllos 1991, 292; Tsatsopoulou-Kaloudi et al. 2015, 17–18). Today, the landscape opposite Samothrace remains undeveloped compared to elsewhere in the Northern Aegean (itself an underdeveloped part of Greece) and the region is largely rural with a scattering of villages inland and pockets of tourist development along the coast. Arable fields are



*Fig. 2. The rugged landscape around Area 1 looking north towards the outcrop of Ai-Giorgis Petrota
(photo J.C. Donati)*

*Обр. 2. Пресеченият терен около зона 1, гледащ на север към оголената скала на Ai-Giorgis Petrota
(снимка J.C. Donati)*

interspersed within the hilly terrain and intermittingly along the shoreline, providing better opportunities for pasture rather than agriculture. Where available the arable land produces cotton, tobacco, and wheat, but also certain fruits and vegetables. Olive groves, vineyards, and orchards complete the agricultural landscape, but they are predominately limited to certain coastal areas.

The Zonaia mountains define the southern extension of the Rhodope range in the region, ending quite abruptly into the Northern Aegean Sea. The land is geologically rich and variable and stone quarries have been in use since antiquity notably for building material at ancient Zone, the most well-documented colony of Samothrace (Tsatsopoulou-Kaloudi et al. 2015, 18–27; Kokkorou-Alevra et al. 2014, nos. 280–282 [Zone]; nos. 278–279, 283 [Maroneia]; no. 277 [Makre]; no. 294 [Petrota]). A prehistoric flint quarry has been identified near the village of Petrota (Fotiadis et al. 2014; Fotiadis 2016. On the petrography of Petrota, see Astaras, Lambrinos 1988; Arikas et al. 2004). In more recent times, the Petrota quarry was exploited for the production of millstones in the early twentieth century and gold mines are currently marked for development near the village of Perama by the Eldorado Gold Corporation and Thracian Gold Mining S.A. Natural harbours along the seashore are scarce and Zone arguably has the most favourable setting. Although today largely underwater (Tsatsopoulou-Kaloudi et al. 2015, 26–27, 67–103), Zone’s harbour contributed significantly to its commercial growth in the middle of the first millennium BC. Smaller bays can be found today at Petrota beach and further east at Dikella, but they are not hospitable for docking without artificial harbour installations.

Literary sources

The Samothracian Peraia is a rare topic in Greek and Roman literary sources, epigraphical testimonia, and ancient prosopography. In general, any topographical references appear coincidentally woven into the description of important historical events. The sources consist of works dating to the Late Archaic and Classical periods, of accounts describing events of the Hellenistic period until the appearance of Rome, and of Late Antique sources, including Roman *itineraria*. The identification of settlements is a complex issue because of the varied dates of our sources, the rather contradictory topographical references, and the lack of securely recognized archaeological sites in the region.¹

The oldest reference to the Peraia comes from Hekataios of Miletus (F160-161), quoted by the much later Stephanos of Byzantion. In the corresponding entries, the lexicographer describes Drys as a Thracian polis and Zone as a polis of the Thracian tribe of Kikones. That the coastline opposite Samothrace was populated by Greek settlements as early as the sixth century BC is made clear by Herodotus (7.59; 7.108), who narrates how Xerxes' army sidestepped the 'Samothracian forts' while marching through Northern Greece. It is generally accepted that the Greek term forts (*teichea*) by Herodotus indicates the defensive character of these settlements which presumably had circuit walls. The historian also mentions Sale and Zone as coastal settlements; Mesemvria as the westernmost foundation of Samothrace; and Drys as being near Cape Serrheion, identified today with the southern extension of Mt Ismaros (Triantafyllos 1987–1990; Mottas 1989, 88; Parissaki 2000–2003, 353–354). Following Herodotus, Skylax (69) reports that the island of Samothrace had trading posts (*emporía*) on the opposite coast and specifically mentions Drys and Zone. Of all these sites, only the fortified town of Zone has been identified with certainty through systematic excavations (see below). Furthermore, Mesemvria is mentioned only by Herodotus with no other topographical indication that would allow us to place the town either on the coast or further inland, leading some scholars to doubt its existence and attribute the reference as a mistake by the historian (Zahrnt 2008; cf. Tsatsopoulou 1996; Tsatsopoulou-Kaloudi et al. 2015, 59–61 for an overview of the debate and a new suggestion, away from the coast).

Another significant piece of evidence comes from the Athenian Tribute Lists of 421/20 BC (*IG* I³ 77 V 27–31). In the document, Drys and Zone, both allies of Athens in the fifth century BC, are positioned by [Cape] Serrheion and they are mentioned along with Sale. From the same period around the Peloponnesian War, an honorary decree found at Zone describes how a certain Polyaratos, son of Histiaios, was granted free docking and setting off (*eisploun* and *ekploun*) from Drys (Loukopoulou et al. 2005, 502–504, E400; Psoma 2008, 121–122). This information unambiguously places Drys, if not a harbour city, near the coast. Much later, Polyainos (*Strategemata* 2.22.3) describes a bold move by the Spartan general Ischolaos when he was under siege at Drys by the Athenian Chavrias in 375 BC. To urge his men to fight courageously and defy the Athenian battering rams, Ischolaos intentionally dismantled part of Drys' fortification walls. Based on the above sources, Drys was likely a fortified town near Cape Serrheion with direct access to a commercial harbour.

Besides Drys and Mesemvria, the identification of Sale and another city called Orthagoreia is equally challenging. Strabo (7.1.48) locates Sale somewhere between Maroneia and [Cape] Serrheion, but it is not mentioned in the account of Herodotus. In the past, scholars have identified Sale with the modern port city of Alexandroupoli, while nowadays an identification with Makre seems more plausible (Kazarow 1918; Muller 1975, 3; Pantos 1983, 173; Isaac 1986, 131; Avramea, Kara-

1 Thrakikos Elektronikos Thesaurus is an indispensable tool that includes all sources and bibliographical references on Thracian sites; for discussions, see Loukopoulou 2004; Tsatsopoulou 2007; Loukopoulou, Psoma 2008; Tsatsopoulou-Kaloudi et al. 2015, 39–67; Tsatsopoulou-Kaloudi 2017, 543–544; Triantafyllos 2017, 531–533; Garyfalopoulos 2022). For a detailed list of publications, see the project's webpage: www.peraiasamothraceproject.gr.

nastassi 1993, 51; Mottas 1989; cf. Loukopoulou et al. 2005, 129–132; Psoma 2008, 125–126; Tsatsopoulou-Kaloudi et al. 2015, 46–48; Parissaki 2020, 193–194). The earliest evidence of Orthagoreia comes from its own silver and bronze coinage dating to the middle of the fourth century BC discovered at Zone, Abdera, and Maroneia (Gaebler 1935, 92–93; Head 1977, 203). Pliny (*NH* 4.11.43) identifies Orthagoreia with Maroneia, while later sources place it further east at Makre or even as far away as Stageira in Chalkidike (Hierokles *Synekdemos* App. 1.17; 3.114). Some scholars have suggested a location between Mt Ismaros and Zone, while others have argued that Orthagoreia was not part of the Peraia of Samothrace but an autonomous city (Lazaridis 1972, 45–47 [Vrysi Mousa]; Isaac 1986, 123; Samsaris 1980, 168 [*emporio* or *kome*]; Saba 2018).

The Samothracian Peraia continues to appear in Hellenistic and Roman literary and epigraphic records, but compared to earlier sources, the coastal towns are rarely referenced by name. For example, in a third-century BC decree from the Sanctuary of the Great Gods, the Samothracians honour king Lysimachos of Macedon for having restored to them lands on the coast, originally a gift by Philip II (or III) and his son, Alexander III (or IV) (McCredie 1968, 220–221, no. 65.843). Two more Samothracian honorary decrees mention a fort and a settlement (*ochyroma* and *chorion*) on the opposite coast. Land ownership of Samothrace on the Peraia is further attested by a Roman *horos* stone found at the harbour of Alexandroupoli, describing the territory as the ‘sacred land of the gods’ (Loukopoulou et al. 2005, 106–109, TE 63, TE 64).

The absence of named settlements in the Samothracian Peraia in the Hellenistic and Roman sources is quite noticeable and indicative of the changes that must have occurred over time. Selene Psoma (2008, 127–134) has convincingly argued that Zone and Drys were probably destroyed by Gallic incursions between 280–278/7 BC. Indeed, Strabo (7.48) associates Samothrace with two new settlements, Tempyra and Charakoma, calling them ‘settlements of Samothrace’ (*polichnia ton Samothrakon*). Charakoma is mentioned only by Strabo, who locates it between Tempyra and Doriskos (Loukopoulou et al. 2005, 136). On the other hand, Tempyra is encountered in the account of Titus Livius (38.41.1–12), a poem by Ovid (*Tristia* 1.10–19–21), as well as in Roman *itineraria*. It is also described as a station on the Via Egnatia approximately 8–9 miles west from Adrianopolis (*Itinerarium of Antoninus* 320–322, *Hierosolymitikon* 602–603), which is why scholars have identified it in the past at Alexandroupoli (Mottas 1989, 94; Zahrnt 2008, 98).

Overall, the literary and epigraphical evidence allows us to discern a shift in the lands controlled by Samothrace from the Classical through the Hellenistic periods. The island’s influence no longer extended westward from Zone to Mt Ismaros; instead, it shifted eastwards to the territory beyond the Cape of Makre where scholars usually place ancient Sale. This shift probably took place by the second century BC, since Sale belonged by that time to the *chora* of Maroneia according to Titus Livius (31.16.1–7; 38.41.1–12). As argued by Gabriella Parissaki (2018), the area from Mt Ismaros to the Cape of Makre (Sale) was under the influence of Maroneia and not of Samothrace during the Late Hellenistic and Roman era. She further suggests that the passage at Mt Zonaia, between the modern villages of Meste and Dikella, should be identified with the Straits of the Korpilloi, a Thracian tribe mentioned several times in the Roman sources. Parissaki (2020) argues further that the Korpilike Strategia of the Thracian client state extended from Mt Zonaia to the Northern Aegean Sea and to the Evros River, reaching all the way up to Didymoteichon to the north, and did not include the Samothracian Peraia.

Medieval and Ottoman traveling accounts of Aegean Thrace are few and rarely contain information on the Peraia of Samothrace. The first such account dates to 1433 and includes sites visited by the Duke of Burgundy Bertrandon la Broquière. Among various settlements, he mentions Makre (Macry) and its destroyed Byzantine castle (La Broquière 1892, 167–203), a landmark also mentioned by Lorenzo Bernardo in 1591 (Cavazza 1886, 33–45) and Evliya Çelebi in his travel logs of

1667–1670 (Spatharis 1934; on the traveller, see Dankoff, Sooyong 2011). Makre (Macry) appears again in the 1665 account of Robert de Dreux (1925, 17–90), where the traveller notes an inscribed Roman sarcophagus and a cult stone also mentioned by Evliya Çelebi. In 1470, Giovan-Maria Angiolello visited Aegean Thrace and made a brief mention in his itinerary of Maroneia (Mercanovo), Komotini (Gumulgina), and the ‘Mountain of God’ or Monte Dedio (i.e., modern Mt Papikion, known colloquially then as Despotska Planina and Despot Daği), where ‘silver is mined in quantities’ and two large villages inhabited by ‘Macedonians’ are located (Reinhard 1913, 37; Voyatzis 1996). Over a century later, the French geographer Nicolas de Nicolay documented the daily activities and customs of the people in the region, preserving valuable information on the rural life in the Ottoman era (Nicolay 1577, 262–264).

Of particular interest is the account of Evliya Çelebi, who contrary to western travellers does not choose the coastal route but moves parallel to the Via Egnatia in the hinterland, occupied in his day primarily by Muslim populations. Evliya Çelebi’s eighth travel book is an invaluable source of information on seventeenth century Thrace as a whole, while, in reference to our project, it offers important insights for the village of Musa Çelebi in the hinterland of the Samothracian Peraia. The traveller reports that the village was named after the son of Bayezid I (1389–1402), who was killed by the locals to earn the favour of the new sultan, Mehmed I. Their behaviour had the exact opposite effect: the sultan was appalled by their actions and ordered the killing of the villagers. Musa Çelebi is identified today with the village of Komaros, known before as Musa Köy or Mousakion (*Parartemates Efemeridos* 1921, 11), and is included in our archaeological survey (see below Area 3).

Previous archaeological fieldwork

Archaeological fieldwork in and around the Samothracian Peraia has documented a diverse range of material culture representative of the important role the area served through the ages. Most prominent are the excavations at Makre, Maroneia, and Zone with finds ranging from Prehistoric to Roman and Byzantine. Occupation near the cave of Makre dates to the Neolithic period, followed by an Iron Age settlement tell, a Greek trading post and traces of Roman and Byzantine activity (Efstratiou, Kallintzi 1996; Efstratiou 2017; Matsas 2017, 527–528). Excavations at Maroneia, west of Cape Serrheion, have revealed numerous finds dating to the Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine eras (Bakirtzis, Chatzimichalis 1991; Psoma et al. 2008; Karadima 2017, 517–522; Matsas 2017, 512–515;), including a theatre, large houses, harbour facilities, and a basilica. In addition, several sites have been documented on the slopes and hilltops of Mt Ismaros, such as the Iron Age settlement at Kremasto (Assar-Tepe) on the northwest side of the mountain. Of importance is also the site of Agios Georgios with habitation from the Neolithic to the Byzantine era (Triantafyllos 1991, 284–289; Matsas 2017, 478–479, 506–511, 526–530; Marke 1989, 343–358 on Early Christian and Gothic burials; Soustal 1991 on the Church of Ai-Giorgis. For surveys north of Petrota, see Ammerman et al. 1994).

The most thoroughly studied site in the area is Zone, a Greek colony preserving houses, sanctuaries, burials, and impressive fortifications, confirming the importance of the site from the Archaic through the Hellenistic periods (Tsatsopoulou-Kaloudi et al. 2015). Of note is also the site of Vrysi Mousa, 1 km west of Zone, which produced pottery from at least the eighth century BC onwards, with the remains of a medieval tower still visible on the coast (Tsatsopoulou-Kaloudi et al. 2015, 51–52). Lastly, one should mention that the landscape of the Peraia of Samothrace, as most of the Northern Aegean region, was affected by the events of World War I and the Balkan Wars, including the opening of trenches, excavations by military personnel, and the removal of antiquities (Tsatsopoulou-Kaloudi et al. 2015, 67–68).

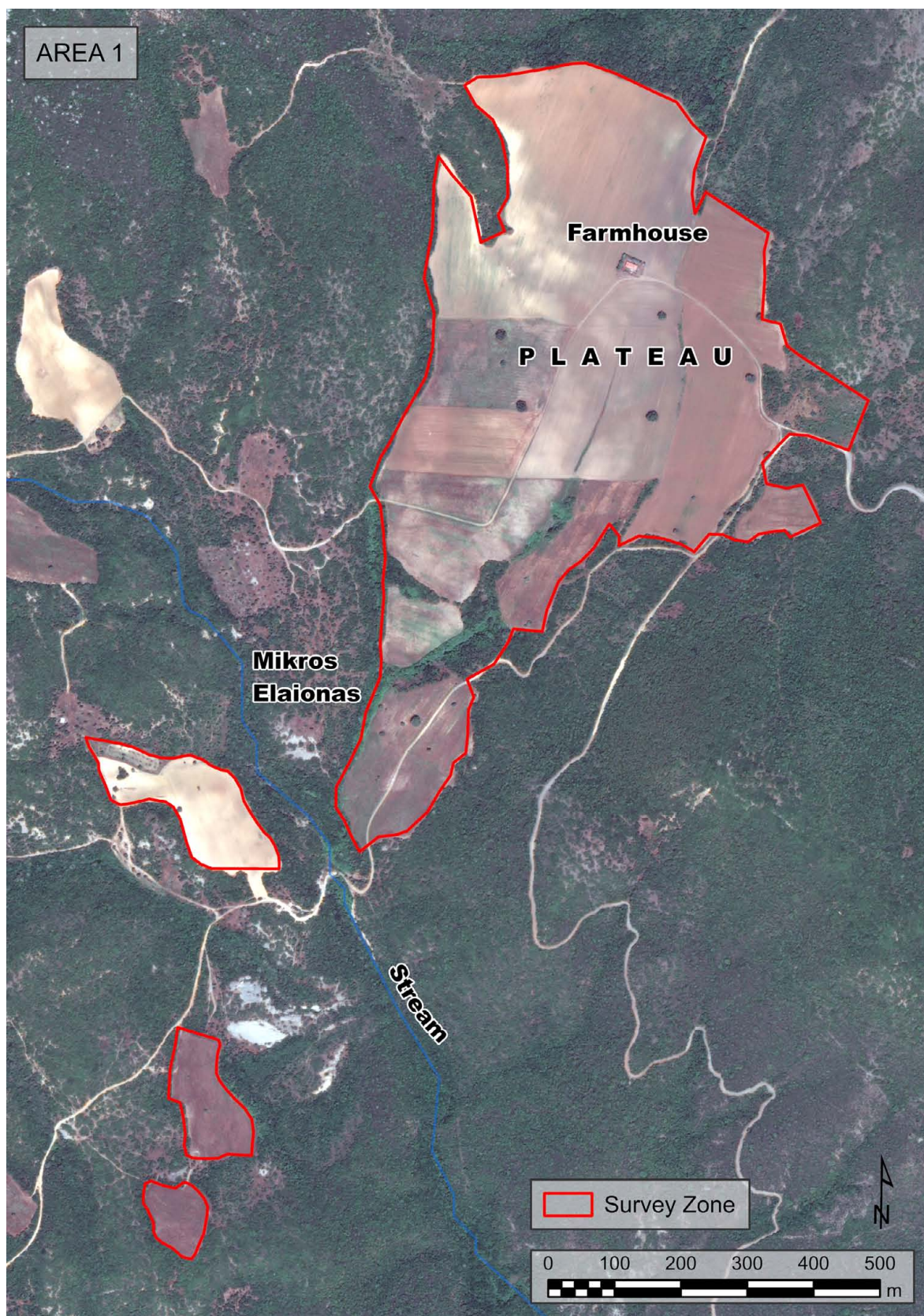


Fig. 3. PSP Area 1 (orthophoto J.C. Donati)
Обр. 3. Проучвана зона 1 (ортофото J.C. Donati)

Topography of areas surveyed

The project has marked four areas of interest of varied size and diverse topographical characteristics from which to carry out archaeological investigations. One issue in determining the most appropriate places to examine is the overall ruggedness of the region characterized by precipitous hills and oftentimes covered with dense vegetation. For practical reasons, such terrain would not have been appropriate for pedestrian field surveying and geophysical prospection. For this reason, we chose to target predominately agricultural zones. A brief description of each area follows below.

Area 1

The westernmost of the study areas, Area 1 is located 1.5 km southwest of Petrota village on an upland plateau (90–135 masl) which inclines gradually southward towards the sea (fig. 3). The local toponym of the plateau is sometimes referred to as Exochi or Elaionas. Though olive trees are rarely found here today, the latter toponym in Greek (Elaionas = olive orchard) implies the presence of olive cultivation in the past. The location is rather isolated and only accessible by 4×4 vehicle on a coarse dirt road. Area 1 is approximately 0.49 sq km in size and includes most arable fields in the vicinity. The plateau comprises one large open area subdivided into irregular plots (wheat and cotton) with a solitary farmhouse used today as a storage facility for farming equipment (see fig. 2). The clusters of cultivated (wheat and cotton) and fallow fields below the plateau (60–85 masl) are also included in Area 1. These are scattered among hills covered in shrubs and the convergence of seasonal streams. From the plateau, the sea is clearly visible – but not the shoreline – at around 2 km.

Along the eastern slopes of Mt Ismaros and the Chlomo and Odontoto hills, previous fieldwork around Area 1 has brought to light Thracian sites, collapsed fortification walls, and pottery (Triantafyllos 1973–1974, 814–815; 1987–1990, 303–304; 1991, 291–292; Skarlatidou 1980, 433). Investigations at the difficult-to-access acropolis of Ai-Giorgis Petrota have produced indications for cult activity and continuous occupation from Prehistory through the Ottoman period (Triantafyllos 1991, 293–294). On the eastern slopes of Mt Ismaros, at a site known as Mikros Elaionas, short excavation campaigns brought to light a cluster of Classical era structures, identified as a small settlement (Pentazos, Triantafyllos 1978, 308; Pantos 1983, 171 [suggesting Orthagoreia]; Tsatsopoulou-Kaloudi et al. 2015, 52–54), while about 1 km inland from Petrota beach, Roman buildings and burials have been noted (Triantafyllos 1973–1974; Pentazos, Triantafyllos 1978, 308). North of Area 1, the impressive rock formations of Petrota and the acropolis of Ai-Giorgis have produced significant finds related to prehistoric and Thracian activity, as well as Byzantine remains (Tsimpidis-Pentazos 1971; Triantafyllos 1973–1974; Triantafyllos 1987–1990, 304–306; Fotiadis et al. 2014 on the Petrota prehistoric pyrite quarry).

Area 2

At Petrota beach, Area 2 is the smallest of the four study areas (0.17 sq km) (fig. 4). It is located approximately 2 km southeast of Area 1 and around 2.5 km west of Zone. The area is isolated being accessible only from an unpaved (and rough) coastal road or a circuitous, yet much better inland pass through the Zonaia foothills via Petrota village. The locale is characterized as a narrow fertile plain no more than 600 m wide formed by the Yialou Rema river that runs south from the acropolis of Ai Giorgis Petrota into the Northern Aegean Sea. The terrain is mostly flat except for a small plateau (17–20 masl) 350 m from the seashore at the northeast which rises as much as 10–15 m above the plain. Small summer residences and agricultural fields (wheat, olive, some fallow) comprise the area today. Previous roadworks destroyed significant sections of the hillsides surrounding Petrota beach and much rock debris has since fallen at the eastern side.

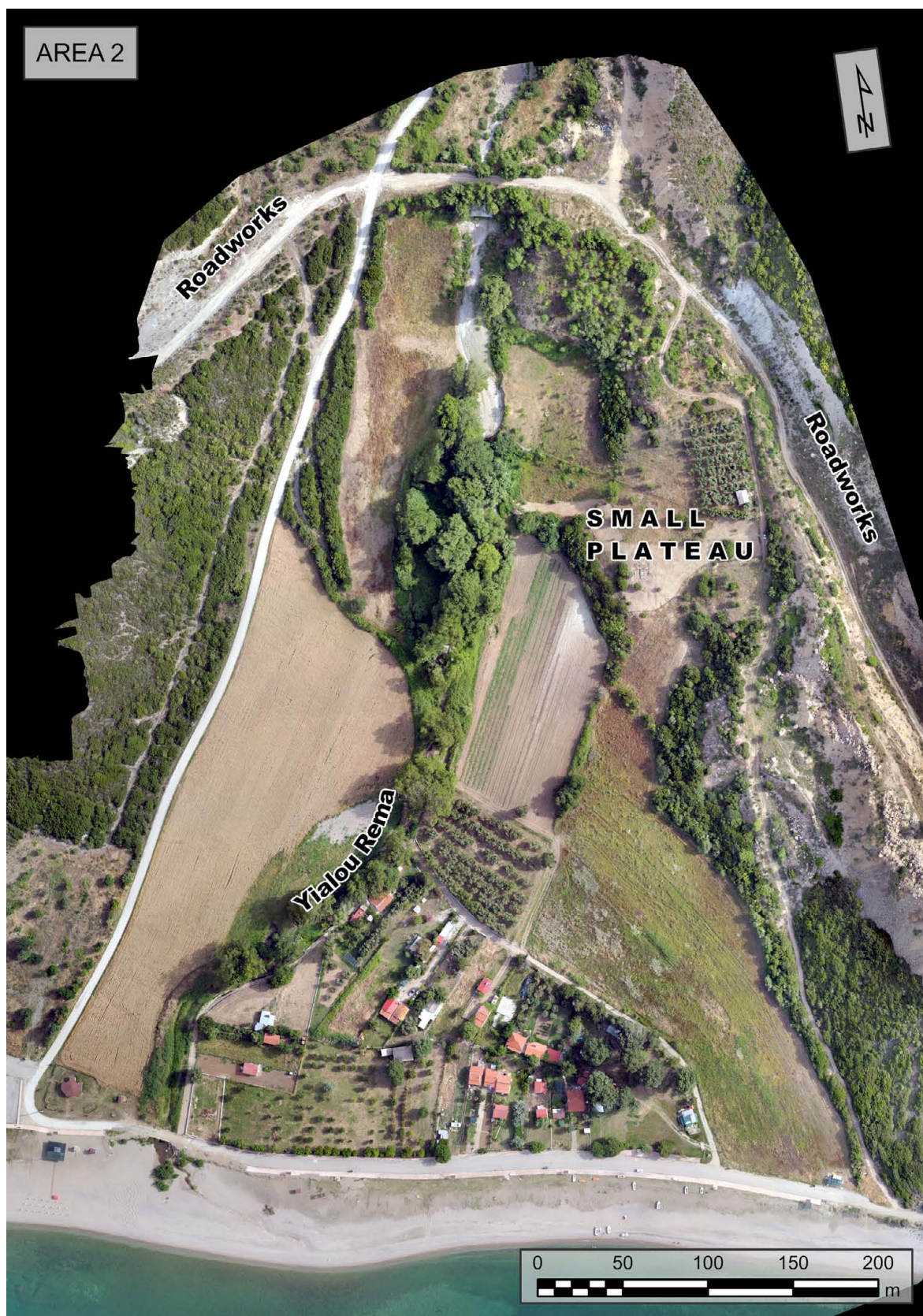


Fig. 4. PSP Area 2 (figure by J.C. Donati)
Обр. 4. Проучвана зона 2 (автор J.C. Donati)

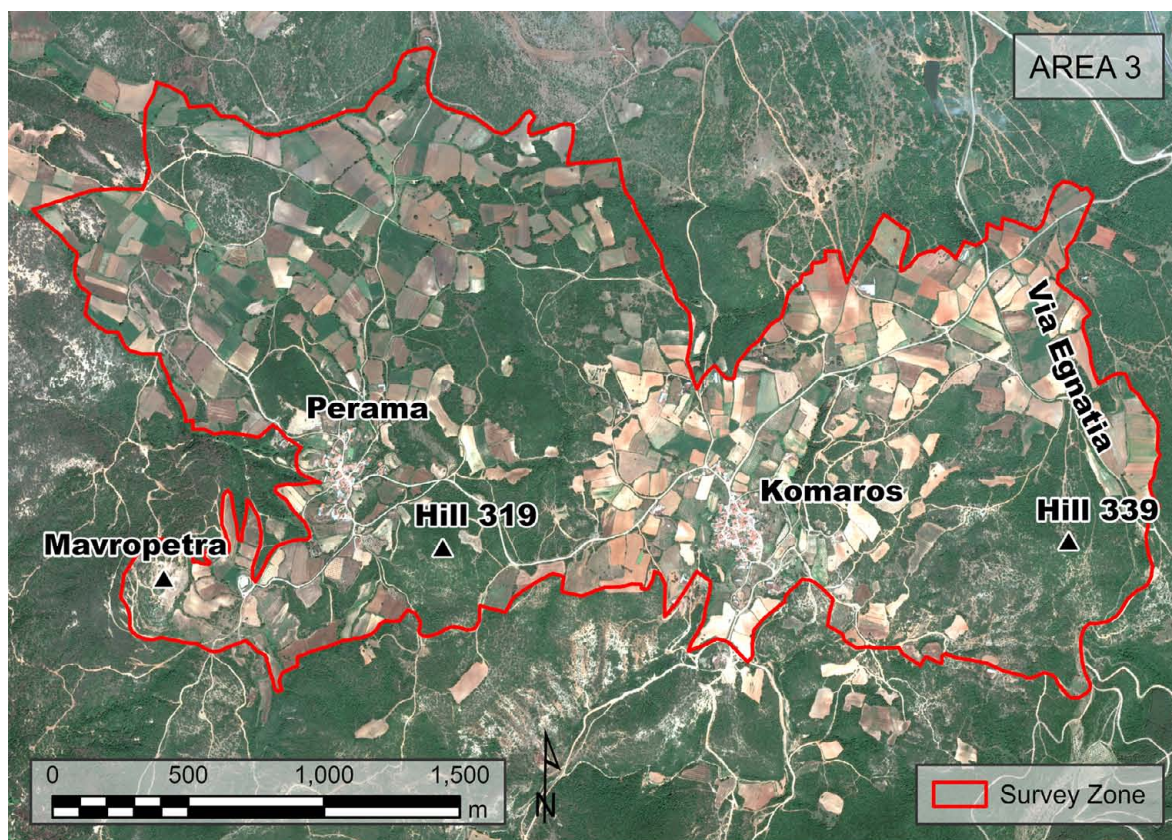


Fig. 5. Structure (perhaps a temple) atop the plateau of Area 2 (orthophoto J.C. Donati)
Обр. 5. Структура (вероятно храм) на върха на платото в зона 2 (ортофото J.C. Donati)

In 1976, Pantos Pantos discovered pottery and wall remains of a prehistoric installation on the cliff west of Petrota beach, while on the small plateau at Yialou Rema, he noted worked stones and assumed the existence of a building (Pantos 1976). This was further investigated two years later by Evangelos Pentazos, who revealed the western side of a rectangular two-roomed structure (width: 7.91 m; partial length: 9.32 m) with an east-west orientation and fragmentary walls of other buildings during rescue excavations in 1978. The small finds recovered included Hellenistic and Roman pottery and roof tiles, but few diagnostics were found to adequately date the buildings or determine their function(s). Because of its size and orientation, Pentazos (Pentazos, Triantafyllos 1978) tentatively suggested that the rectangular structure could be a temple. Today, the putative temple building is still visible as well as the scattered remains of other structures and architectural members both *in situ* and disturbed (fig. 5). Elsewhere in Area 2, a section of a wall was found near the shoreline during rescue excavations in the previous century, while various finds have been discovered by the locals in the sea, such as millstones and even a marble statue of Eros housed today at the Archaeological Museum in Komotini (ATK 3085).

Area 3

Area 3 is a much larger area (5.75 sq km) located 5 km inland from Zone within the Zonaia



1

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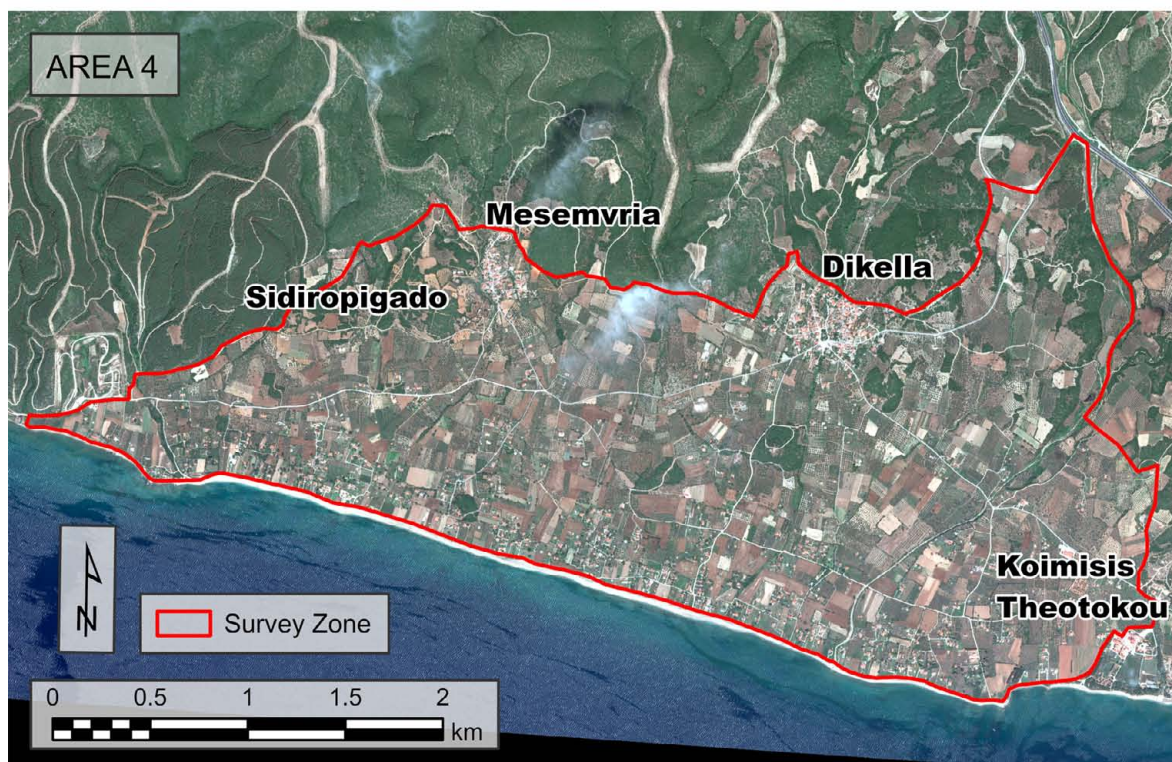


Fig. 6. 1. PSP Area 3; 2. PSP Area 4 (figures by J.C. Donati)
Обр. 6. 1. Проучвана зона 3; 2. Проучвана зона 4 (автор J.C. Donati)

mountains (fig. 6.1). Though hilly with a range of elevations (128–300 masl) and pocketed by stream beds and ravines, the terrain is nevertheless intensely cultivated for a variety of crops including cotton, wheat, and tobacco. Two farming villages, Perama and Komaros, attest to the agricultural exploitation of the land. The topography is dominated by three summits: (i.) Mavropetra hill (248 masl) southwest of Perama also known as Acropolis 4; (ii.) Hill 319 or Sykorachi (319 masl) between the two villages also known as Acropolis 5; and (iii.) Hill 339 (343 masl) directly east of Komaros also known as Acropolis 6. In previous reports these hills are sometimes labelled as acropoleis, a term which implies the existence of a settlement below; however, there is thus far no clear indication for such activity prior to our fieldwork project. Excavations on Mavropetra hill in anticipation of the expansion of gold mining in the area, produced mostly Thracian pottery and material related to the cult of the Thracian Horseman, but no recognizable architecture. On the other hand, *in situ* architecture and collapsed walls on the summit of Hill 319 are likely from structures and/or fortifications. This evidence along with the absence of Thracian pottery has led some scholars to see a possible connection with one of the Samothracian settlements mentioned in the sources or even a later Macedonian fort (Pantos 1974, 7–17; Triantafyllos 1973–1974, 825, figs. 612a–b). Recently, Tsatsopoulou-Kaloudi (Tsatsopoulou-Kaloudi et al. 2015, 55–61) suggested that the zone between the villages of Perama and Komaros, framed by the three hills, could be identified with the elusive, westernmost colony of Samothrace, Mesemvria (see above Literary Sources).

Elsewhere in Area 3 sections of the Via Egnatia, the Roman road that connected Dyrrachium on the Adriatic Sea to Byzantium have been exposed east of Komaros and north and southeast of Hill 339 (Tsatsopoulou 2004; 2005; Lolos 2008; Tsatsopoulou-Kaloudi et al. 2015, 44–59). Hill 339 itself has a commanding view of the terrain to the north and west but rather poor visibility towards the sea. Sections of walls and fallen stone debris are preserved on the hilltop, as well as fragments of Thracian and plain pottery.

Area 4

This area is an expansive and arable coastal plain (8.31 sq km) between Zone and the village of Makre (fig. 6.2). The hilly northern rim of the survey area (30–90 masl) is defined by the agricultural communities of Mesemvria and Dikella which command the coastal plain and shoreline approximately 1 km away. The remainder of the plain is rather flat as it gradually descends southward to Dikella beach; the only topographical anomalies here are a group of four rounded and oblong knolls which rise 5–10 m above the valley floor. The Monastery of the Dormition (Koimisis Theotokou) frames the eastern end of Dikella beach. In the middle of the twentieth century the coastline was virtually unspoiled being used almost exclusively for cultivation, but in recent years summer houses and tourism businesses have altered the landscape. Where arable land is available now, olive orchards predominate.

Along the coastal zone between Zone and Dikella, the Ephorate of Antiquities has documented some sites with Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine material, of which Sidiropigado stands out, as it has been tentatively identified with the Roman station *Melalico* (Tsatsopoulou 1987–1990, 329; 2004, 13; Loukopoulou et al. 2005, 502, no. 3; cf. Kazarow 1918, 33, 52–55; Avramea, Karanastassi 1993). Portable Roman antiquities have also been unearthed near Dikella, including a Hero-Rider relief (Kokkotaki 2005, 884, fig. 10).

Methodologies

From the beginning, the Peraia of Samothrace Project adopted a hybrid approach to studying the landscape of the Samothracian Peraia through non-destructive fieldwork. The aim was to



Fig. 7. Survey grids in the northern section of Area 1 (top) (figure by J.C. Donati); fieldwalkers in formation (bottom) (photo A. Avramidou)

Обр. 7. Квадратна мрежа на проучването в северната част на зона 1 (горе) (автор J.C. Donati); обхождане на терен (долу) (снимка A. Avramidou)

combine complimentary methods of research, carried out both onsite and remotely, while embracing and streamlining born-digital systems of data collection and artefact analysis within a finite budget. Large-scale and rapid methods of landscape analysis, such as remote sensing and geophysics, were combined with intensive pedestrian field walking. All survey data, whether collected in the field or analysed off-site, were combined in the project's geographic information system (GIS) database. A brief description of our methods is summarized below.

Geodatabase

Prior to onsite fieldwork, various datasets were consolidated in the project's geodatabase using ESRI ArcGIS Pro. These include the following: (i.) a high-resolution (0.5 m) multispectral WorldView-3 satellite image from 10 June 2020 covering over 100 sq km of the Peraia; (ii.) CORONA satellite imagery of the same area from 23 July 1970 at a resolution of 1.80 m; (iii.) historical aerial photographs from the archives of the Hellenic Military Geographical Service (GYS) and the British School at Athens (BSA); the earliest of these photographs are from 1938 and they are of particularly high quality, considering their age, at a scale of 1:20000; other datasets include (iv.) 1:5000 scale topographical maps from GYS; and (v.) a digital elevation model (DEM) from the TanDEM-X radar imaging satellite with a horizontal resolution of 12.5 m, and a second DEM from the Hellenic National Cadastre (Ktimatologio) with a horizontal resolution of 5 m. Many additional datasets were created in GIS based on the terrain models. These comprise hillshade and slope models, cost surface and aspect models, contour lines, and hydrological features by calculating parameters such as flow direction and flow accumulation.

In addition, several new vector datasets were added to the geodatabase. These include: (i.) the four areas of interest (i.e., Areas 1–4), the location of known prehistoric and historic settlements, as well as other features of archaeological interest, such as ancient quarries; (ii.) modern roadways, railways, and settlements in the region, and (iii.) polygons that indicate the current land division and land use. The latter is important for assessing recent anthropogenic land-use patterns like the classification of crops and vegetation. A digital format of field boundaries is also critical for the practical implementation of the pedestrian and geophysical surveys.

Remote Sensing

The identification of surface anomalies from satellite and aerial remote sensing is important for gaining a more complete picture of the wider historical landscape. Various image enhancement and processing techniques, such as the calculation of vegetation indices, were applied to the multispectral bands of the WorldView-3 satellite image to contribute to the detection of ground features. By visual analysis, dozens of surface anomalies were identified in the study area, generally consisting of (i.) paleochannels, (ii.) former field boundaries, (iii.) terracing walls, and (iv.) features of potential archaeological interest. In some cases, clusters of linear anomalies are perhaps the residues of buried structures or roadways, which need to be confirmed with geophysical prospection or another method of ground truthing. In general, the dense ground vegetation, steep topography, and limited areas of flat arable land, present challenges in satellite and aerial remote sensing in the Samothracian Peraia. In a future phase of the project, LiDAR or Aerial Laser Scanning (ALS) would likely be a good option in these conditions. For now, the high cost of LiDAR was the main determining factor in not implementing this method in the project's initial workflow.

Supplementing the satellite and aerial datasets, an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) or drone was used onsite for recording the landscape regime at a high ground resolution and in the creation

6. Total Results 1059	
Pottery (count) 22	Pottery (weight) (kg) 1.44
Tile/Brick (count) 329	Tile/Brick (weight) 7.63
Diagnostics (collected) * Count all material taken from the field 19	Lithics (count) 0
Coins (count) 0	Other small finds (count) 4
Other finds in survey unit Check all that apply	

6 of 7

Fig. 8. PSP Survey123 form used for data collection in the field (figure by J.C. Donati)
Обр. 8. Формуляр 123, използван за събиране на данни на терен (автор J.C. Donati)

of orthophotos and DEMs of specific areas of interest. UAV surveying also proved quite useful for ground reconnaissance during the pedestrian field survey since it provided quick real-time imagery of the ground conditions and crops of nearby fields without having to mobilize the survey team to check beforehand. This saved precious time and allowed the survey team to maximize the number of survey units covered per day.

Pedestrian field survey

The practical aspects of the pedestrian field survey (survey units, walker lines, stakeout points) were prepared beforehand using the project geodatabase in consultation with satellite and aerial imagery and terrain models. The standard survey unit (SU) in Areas 1 and 2 is a grid of 50 m x 50 m (2,500 sq m) to accommodate five field walkers spaced 10 m apart (fig. 7). SUs on field edges might be modified but none is more than 3,000 sq m to maintain a consistent sampling resolution. The diversity of field systems in Area 3 and Area 4 requires SUs adapted to the morphology of fields for up to seven walkers spaced 10 m.² Here, units were subdivided into smaller SUs if the field was larger than 6,000 sq m. In Area 3, for example, the average SU is 3,397 sq m. Once finalized in the geodatabase, the survey data was then transferred to mobile devices for use in the field. Onsite, Em-lid Reach RS2 GNSS receivers are employed for quickly laying out the survey grids as well as the precise positioning of fieldwalkers. The Reach units are linked to a CORS network, Metrica HxGN, which provides a Real Time Kinematic (RTK) survey with centimetre accuracy. The efficiency of the RTK GNSS setup makes it possible for the survey team to focus on fieldwalking and data recording

² In tree orchards, the spacing of fieldwalkers was sometimes reduced to better accommodate their positioning between rows.

and not the time-consuming task of onsite planning and manual layout of SUs. The GNSS receivers also are used for recording features discovered during surveying (e.g., stone architecture, millstones, wells) as well as for extracting ground control points (GCPs) used in the processing of drone imagery.

Fieldwalkers collected all ceramics, tiles, small worked stones, and other material of potential interest within a two-metre-wide tract. After completing the SU, the material was then carefully examined, counted, and weighed by the field supervisor(s). Any diagnostic finds were collected and stored at the Archaeological Museum of Komotini for analysis while anything remaining is discarded in the field. For data recording, we created customized XLS survey forms using ESRI Survey123 (fig. 8). The forms document everything from field conditions, location and elevation of survey units, and ceramics and tile counted and collected by each walker. Any photographs taken on site were directly added to the relevant SU entry. The born-digital approach has the added advantage of being directly integrated into the geodatabase and our custom-built FileMaker Pro database. Therefore, spatial, and quantitative calculations of the data can be analysed the same day they are collected in the field.

Geophysics

To compliment the remote sensing and pedestrian field survey, magnetics and ground-penetrating radar (GPR) are employed to detect and map buried archaeological features in a non-destructive manner by measuring differences in the physical properties of the Earth's subsurface. For rapid and large area coverage, we use a multi-sensor magnetometer (SENSYS Magnetometer MX) with an array of eight fluxgate gradiometers spaced 50 cm apart that is towed by a quad bike. Attached to the frame of the magnetometer, a Javid GNSS receiver (rover) communicates with a stationary Javid GNSS receiver (base) linked to a CORS network for centimetre accuracy RTK surveying. For more targeted investigations, we use a single channel GPR (Sensors and Software NOGGIN Plus-Smart Cart) fitted with a 250 MHz antenna. The GPR is light weight, operated by a single person, and flexible in demanding topographical conditions. However, survey grids must be laid out with additional personnel which reduces the speed of data acquisition.

Fieldwork results

Area 1

Linear anomalies between 30–100 m in length are visible in the WorldView-3 satellite image and the related products (fig. 9). They are predominately confined to the southern edge of the plateau (SU1145–1147, SU1152–1153, SU1155, SU1169, SU1172); elsewhere, a solitary anomaly nearly 75 m long is found in the west-central area (SU1142, SU1125).³ The rectilinear nature of the features is suggestive of something anthropogenic beneath the ground, but a natural occurrence such as a paleo-channel cannot be excluded. Based on historical aerial photographs from the middle of the twentieth century, the solitary anomaly at the centre is likely from an old field boundary. In a 1945 photograph one notes around six field subdivisions demarcated with stones and/or vegetation at the western side of the plateau, none of which are visible today on the surface. The group of anomalies at the southern end are less likely attributed to old field boundary systems because they do not correspond to field subdivisions in the historical aerial photographs. Most interesting are the shared alignments and spacing of three parallel anomalies: (i.) orientations are close to true north, and (ii.) spacing is regular at ca. 35 m intervals. Far from being conclusive, such anomalies could plausibly be the partial

³ For the location of SUs see the interactive WebGIS database from the project's main webpage: www.peraiasamothraceproject.gr.



*Fig. 9. Results of magnetics survey and satellite remote sensing from Area 1
(figure by J.C. Donati and N. Papadopoulos)*

*Обр. 9. Резултати от магнитно изследване и сателитно дистанционно наблюдение в зона 1
(автору J.C. Donati и N. Papadopoulos)*

remains of a buried road system (although the geophysical results suggest otherwise; see below).

The magnetic survey in Area 1 covered more than 11 ha on the northern part of the site and a smaller section of about 1.5 ha at the southern end. The unharvested cotton fields between the northern and southern sections prohibited the complete coverage of Area 1 during the first phase of geophysical investigations in October 2021. The magnetics data were subjected to a systematic processing workflow by removing the extreme high and low magnetic gradients due to scattered metallic fragments, the overlapping points, and the equalization of the magnetic values of the adjacent grids. The magnetic map distinguishes areas of highly disturbed magnetic signals in relation to the relatively stable background which indicates minimum subsurface magnetic activity, as we move from the eastern side of the plateau towards the northwest along the northern section. Features related to long linear and curvilinear negative magnetic anomalies suggest an intense past superficial activity of streams. The water flow accumulates magnetic soil along preferential paths, which are attributed in the respective map as intense magnetic gradients. However, these discrete magnetic signatures seem to fade towards the northwest probably due to surface erosion episodes. Clusters of magnetic dipolar features to the central-west and central-east sections, occupying an area of ~5,000 sq m (see fig. 9, no. 1) and ~1,000 sq m (see fig. 9, no. 2) correspondingly, are indicative of the accumulation of magnetic rocky fragments that could suggest workshop activities. The southern section of the plateau shows a similar magnetic image consisting of several linear magnetic anomalies that fade out towards the northwest. Two of these anomalies are the same ones identified in the satellite imagery (see fig. 9, no. 3). Most form a parallel system along a southeast-northwest direction. Although the anomalies could represent the outline of roads owing to their strict linear character and shared orientations, the fact that they exhibit comparable magnetic signatures with the respective anomalies to the north hints that they are related to the flow of superficial streams.

On the pedestrian field survey in Area 1, we intensively studied 78 SUs covering an area of almost 16 ha. Ceramic finds and tiles were widely scattered throughout the survey area with chronological horizons stretching from the Iron Age through the Byzantine era. No *in situ* architectural features or built remains were noted, although a handful of cut blocks and grinding stones were identified as discarded material along the field edges. At the southernmost section of Area 1, between SU1213 and SU1215, we found traces of round cavities carved into the natural rock, a feature common at Thracian sites. Also of note was the high concentration of flints, blades, and stone-cores which likely attest to prehistoric activity in Area 1. We recorded a diverse assortment of stones and minerals, such as pyrites and quartz, especially in the southern end (SU1077, SU1085, SU1155, SU1199, SU1202, SU1208, SU1213–1216). The collected tools and processed stones are indicative of how people exploited the natural resources of the region, and such activity should be investigated in conjunction to the known flint quarry near Petrota village.

The overall density of ceramic surface finds (represented as sherds per square metre) indicates concentrations of material at the northcentre of the survey area, around the modern farmhouse, and at the southern periphery of the plateau, extending into the smaller fields, further south (fig. 10). The tile density map diverges somewhat from the ceramics data. There is still a high concentration of tiles at the northcentre of the site, but we documented noticeably less tiles towards the south (fig. 11). In terms of the kinds of material collected, Thracian pottery was present in the majority of SUs with concentrations especially south and west of the farmhouse and at the southern region of the survey area (e.g., SU1078–1079, SU1083–1085, SU1091, SU1120–1121, SU1150, SU1152–1155, SU1200–1205, SU1207–1208, SU1210, SU1213–1218). Quite significant was the discovery of fine, black-glaze pottery, such as fragments of classical cups and kraters, albeit much worn, at the southwestern part of the plateau (e.g., SU1139, SU1145, SU1151–1152, SU1155).

In general, nodes of classical and Hellenistic pottery were limited to the southern region of the

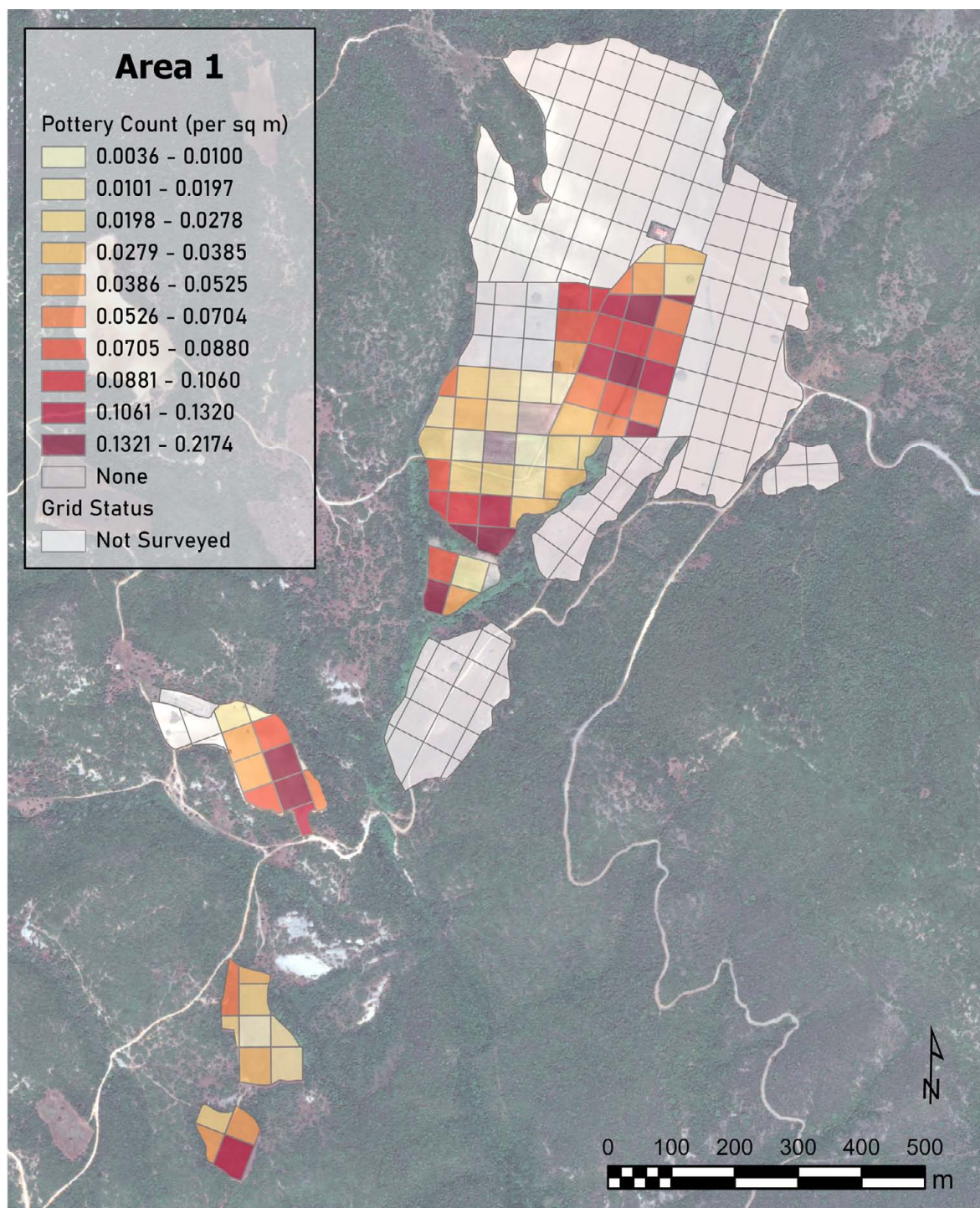


Fig. 10. Ceramics density map (sherds per square metre) from Area 1 (figure by J.C. Donati)
Обр. 10. Карта на концентрацията на керамика (фрагменти на квадратен метър) в зона 1
(автор J.C. Donati)

plateau, an area that overlaps with the linear anomalies identified by remote sensing and geophysics. A limited amount of classical and Hellenistic material was also observed within the smaller fields to the south. Note that these areas lie in proximity to Mikros Elaionas, where earlier investigations revealed possible structures and pottery dating to the Classical period. Early Roman pottery appears in larger numbers and is found approximately in the same SUs as the classical and Hellenistic material.

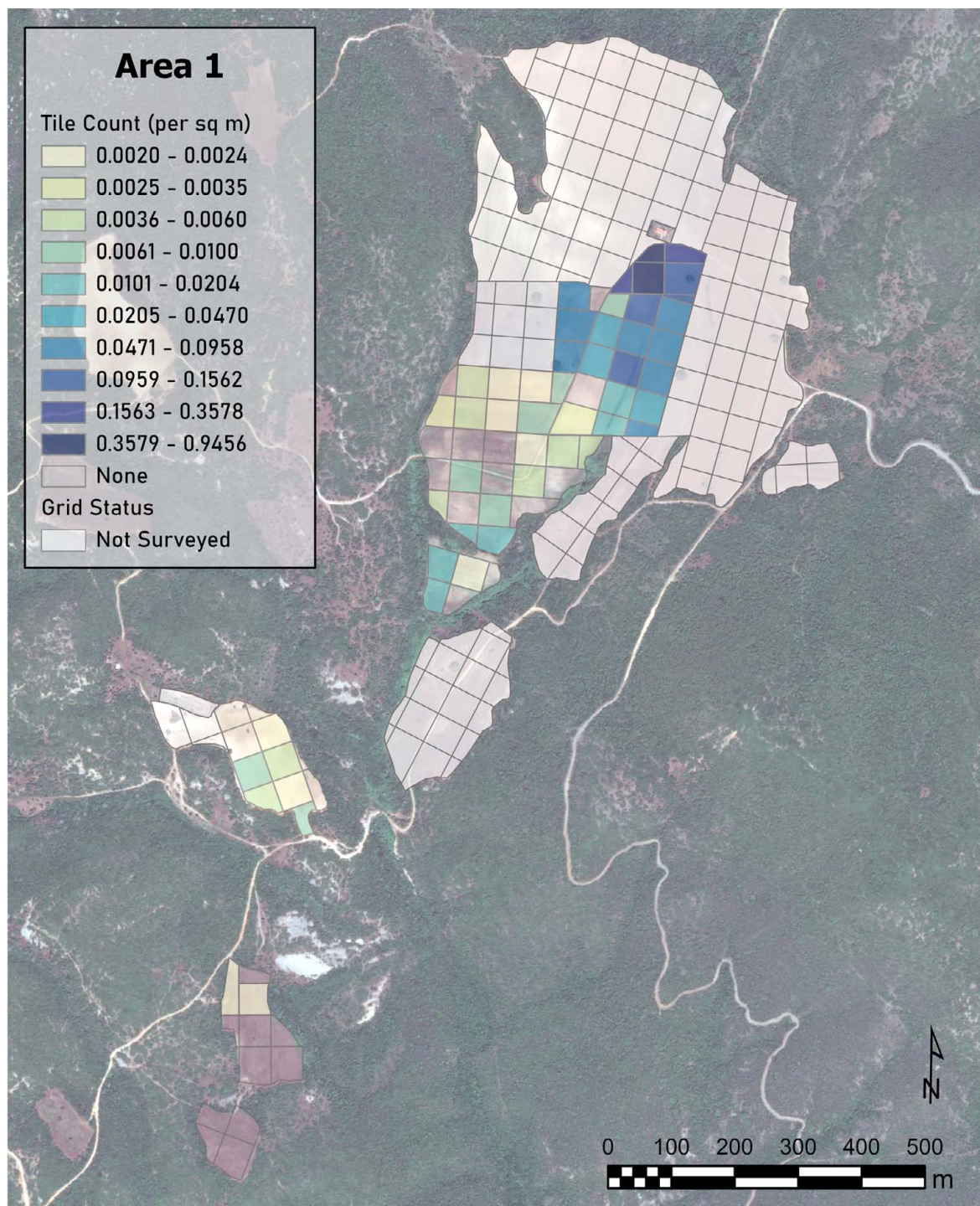


Fig.11. Tile density map (tiles per square metre) from Area 1 (figure by J.C. Donati)
 Обр. 11. Карта на концентрацията на керемиди (на квадратен метър) в зона 1 (автор J.C. Donati)

Of interest is the shift that occurs with the Late Roman and Byzantine finds, as they clearly cluster at the north-centre of the plateau around the farmhouse. This is the same location where the highest density of tiles was observed.

Area 2

The area around Petrota beach was reserved in part for defensive military positions in the first

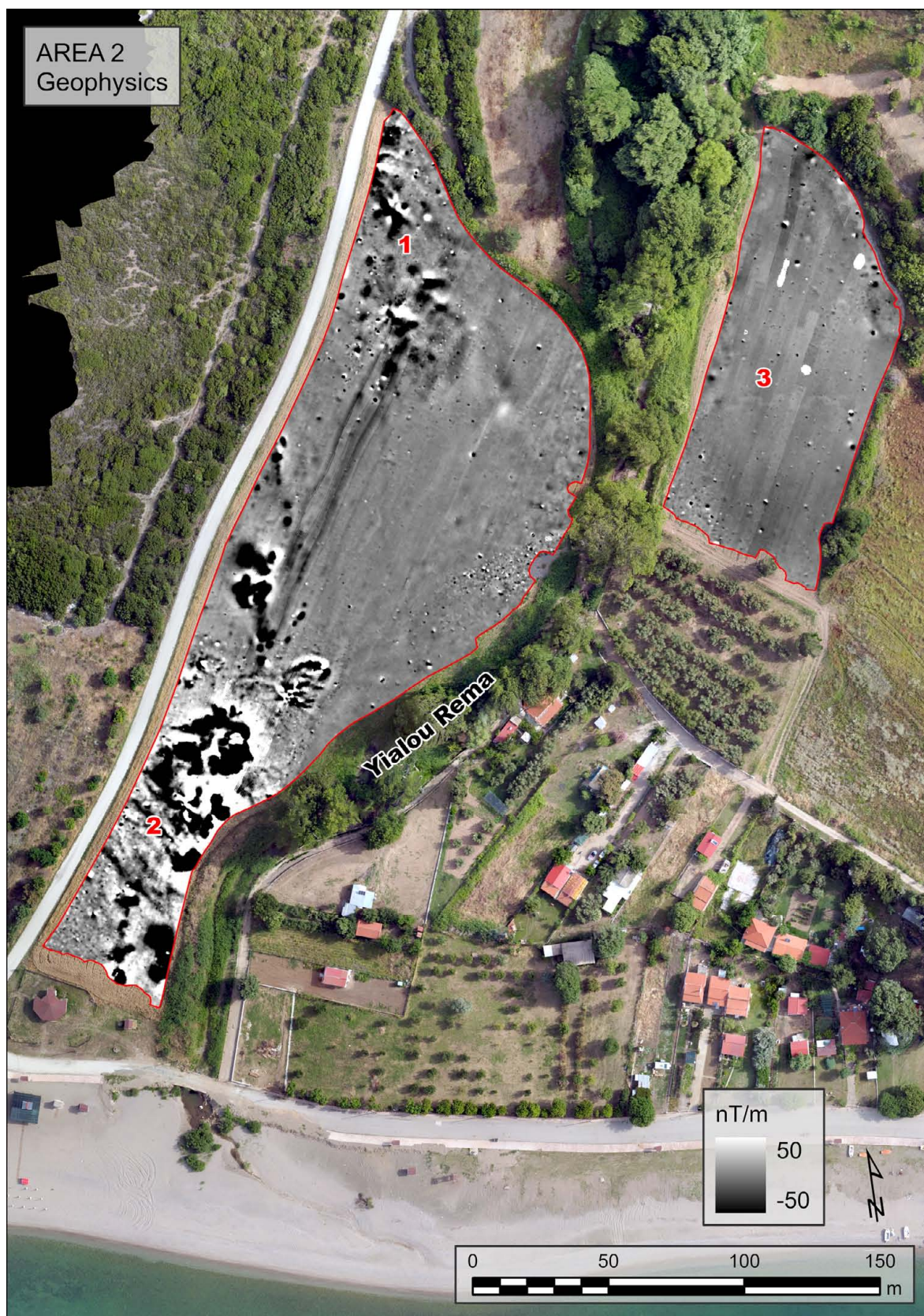


Fig. 12. Results of magnetics survey from Area 2 (figure by J.C. Donati and N. Papadopoulos)
Обр. 12. Резултати от магнитно изследване в зона 2 (автори J.C. Donati и N. Papadopoulos)

half of the twentieth century before the Second World War. Aerial photographs from 1938 show an extensive network of zig-zag trenches in the rugged terrain west of Petrota beach as well as within agricultural fields of the coastal plain (SU2025–2027, SU2042–2043). Although less clear in the photographs, there appears to be a related enclosure approximately 2,000 sq m in size on an outcrop (81 masl) some 500 m northwest of Petrota beach. These military constructions probably date from the First World War and today they are no longer visible. It is known, for example, that the Bulgarian Army carried out a project of digging up the Thracian coastline to repel an Allied sea-invasion during the War (Tsatsopoulou-Kaloudi et al. 2015, 67). Elsewhere, the satellite imagery shows undulating anomalies around the Yialou Rema river which are indications of previous paths of the river and/or past flooding episodes. One such anomaly is noticeable in fields more than 60 m to the west of the current course of the river. The evidence gives some indication of the greater impact the river once effected on the plain of Petrota beach than would appear today.

Geophysics in Area 2 was undertaken on the small plateau where the putative temple stands, as well as within fields along the western and eastern banks of the Yialou Rema. Magnetics covered more than 2 ha around the river, but it was not employed on the plateau because of the unevenness of the terrain. GPR grids were distributed in different parts of the site, including around the putative temple, to enhance the subsurface information context and retrieve extra insights on any anthropogenic properties. In general, the fields below the plateau produced no clear traces of buildings, despite the large concentration of ceramics and tiles discovered here during the pedestrian survey (fig. 12). The soil deposits covering the large field at the west of the river resulted in relatively quiet magnetic gradients with small variations of the local magnetic field ca. 80–100 m from the Yialou Rema. However, the southwest and northwest corners of the field exhibit intense magnetic values that are probably related to the igneous rocky outcrops (see fig. 12, nos. 1–2). The magnetic map east of the river is again relatively quiet except for a faint anomaly exhibiting a stepped-pattern following an east-west direction (see fig. 12, no. 3). This specific magnetic signature is an eastern continuation of the same military trench noted west of the river in the 1938 aerial photograph. The quiet magnetic background at both sides of the Yialou Rema may be indicative of colluvial deposits in the region due to past flooding episodes.

On the small plateau, GPR horizontal depth slices show structural elements and building foundations around 1 m below the surface (fig. 13). A large building or complex of adjoining buildings is located north and northeast of the putative temple. The northern complex at an east-west orientation is nearly 30 m in length and almost 9 m in width, being subdivided into three or more rooms of various sizes (see fig. 13, no. 1). It is joined to an eastern complex with a north-south orientation that is approximately 15 m in length and 7 m wide (see fig. 13, no. 2). Although less clear in the GPR slices, the eastern complex also seems to have internal subdivisions. It is notable that both the northern and eastern complexes share the same alignment of the putative temple, and they seemingly are meant to partly surround it. Further to the east, there appear to be other (faint) structural elements (see fig. 13, no. 3). Elsewhere, a rectangular reflector (ca. 6.5 m x 3.0 m) is noted approximately 20 m east-southeast from the putative temple (see fig. 13, no. 4), as well as another square anomaly (ca. 4.0 x 3.5 m) at the extreme northwest corner of the survey (see fig. 13, no. 5). The terrain immediately around the putative temple was difficult to completely survey; however, a reflector about 3.5 m in length may reasonably be interpreted as an eastern extension of the building's southern wall (see fig. 13, no. 6), providing an estimation of ca. 18 m for the complete length of the structure.

During the pedestrian survey, architectural blocks both roughly hewn and well-cut, and many *in situ* or collapsed, have been noted around the small plateau. Using the GNSS receivers, these architectural members were carefully mapped and documented to help visualize their spatial distribution (fig. 14). Although more blocks remain to be mapped, the initial results show that the small plateau



Fig. 13. Results of GPR survey (depth slice 0.80–0.90 m) on plateau of Area 2 (top); interpretation of the results showing possible buried architecture (bottom) (figure by J.C. Donati and N. Papadopoulos)

Обр. 13. Резултати от GPR проучване (дълбочина 0,80–0,90 m) на плато в зона 2 (горе); интерпретация на резултатите, показваща възможна затрупана архитектура (долу) (автори J.C. Donati и N. Papadopoulos)

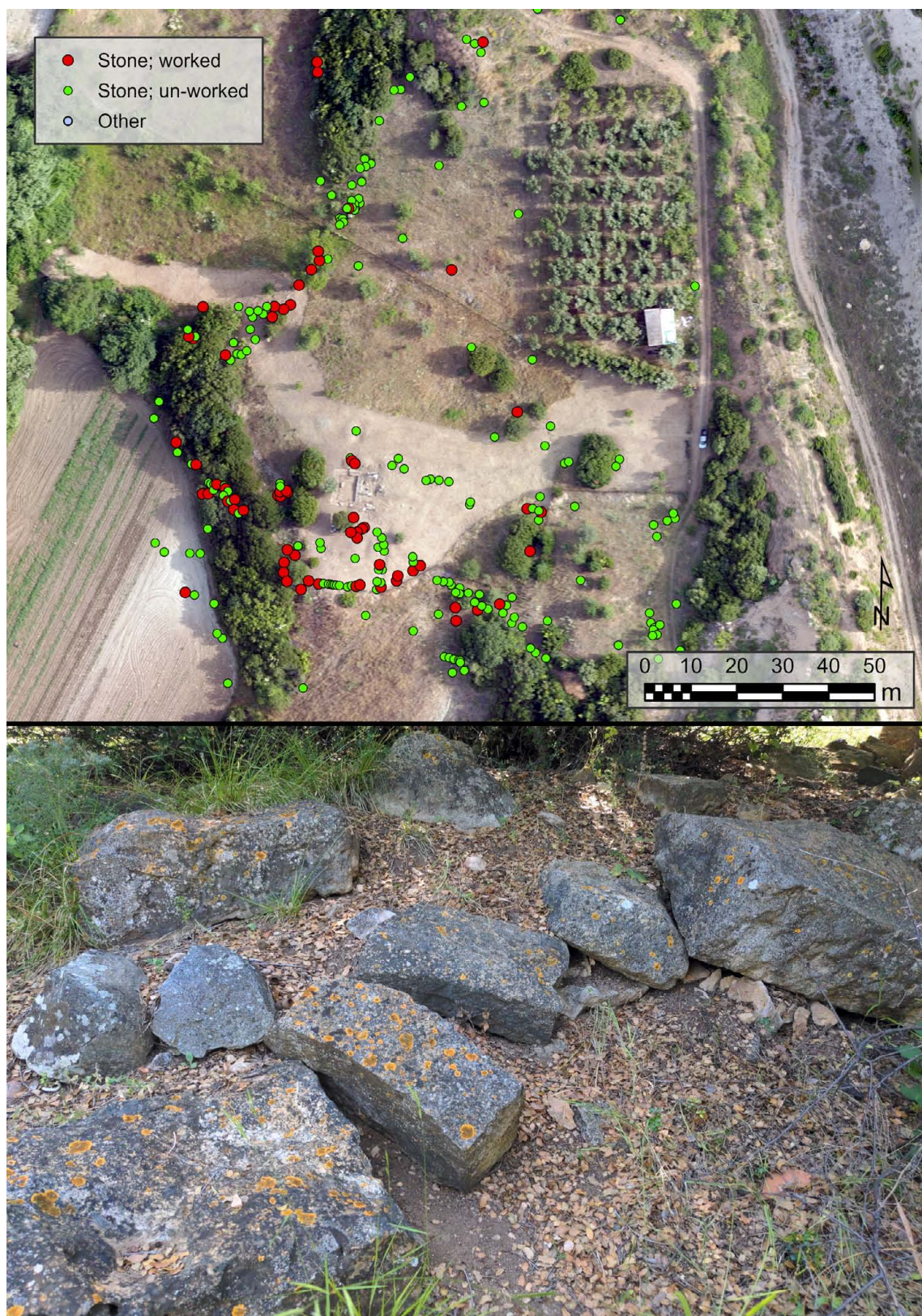


Fig. 14. Location of stone material, both worked and un-worked, around the plateau of Area 2 (top); group of stones possibly from a peribolos wall (bottom) (figure and photo J.C. Donati)

Обр. 14. Разположение на обработен и необработен каменен материал около платото в зона 2 (горе); група камъни, вероятно от периболос – оградна стена (долу)
(илюстрация и снимка J.C. Donati)

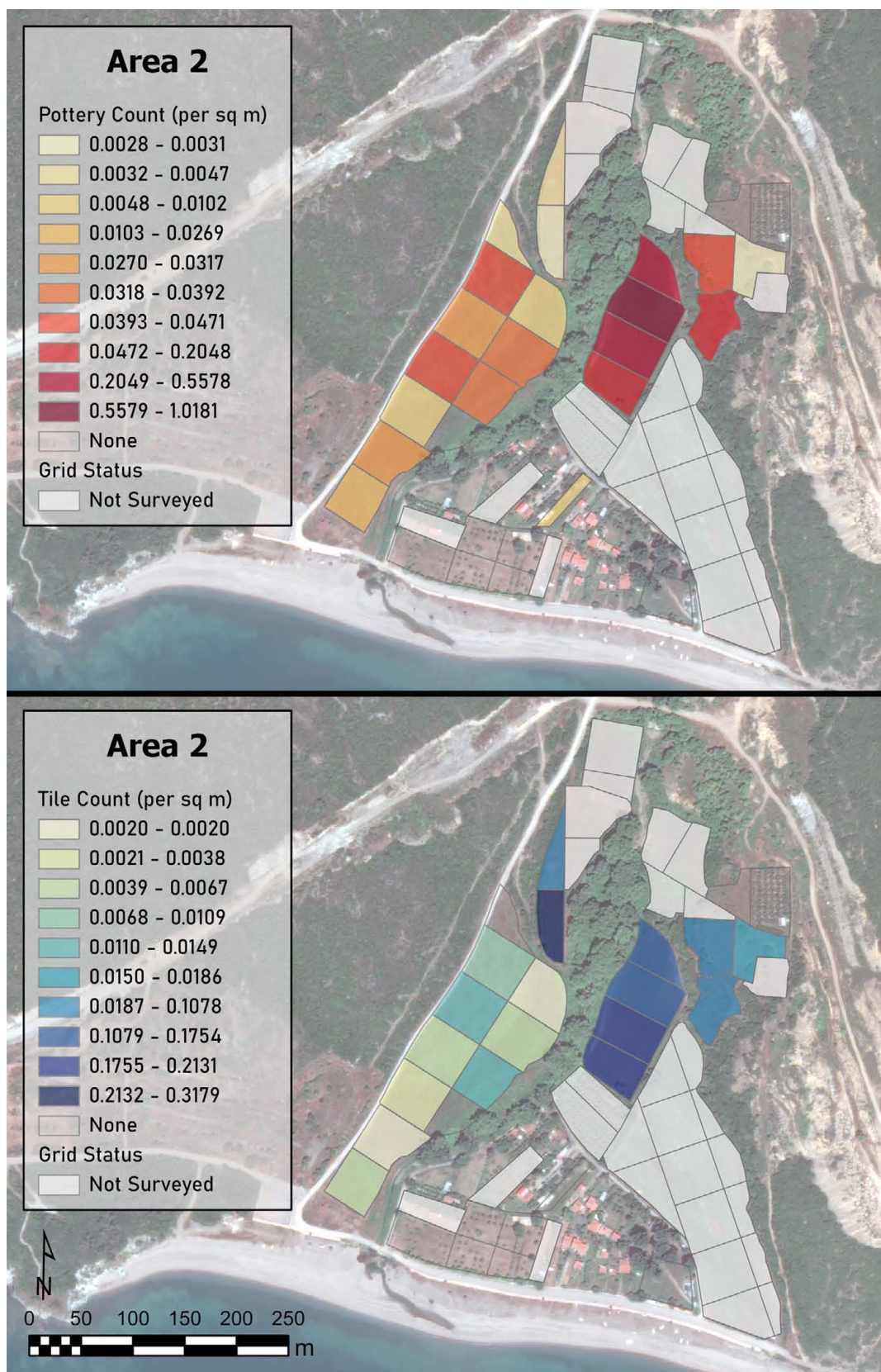


Fig. 15. Ceramics density map (sherds per square metre) from Area 2 (top); tile density map (tiles per square metre) from Area 2 (bottom) (figure by J.C. Donati)

Обр. 15. Карта на концентрацията на керамиката (на квадратен метър) в зона 2 (горе); карта на плътността на керемиди (на квадратен метър) в зона 2 (долу) (автор J.C. Donati)



Fig. 16. (1) Neolithic ceramics from SU3187 in Area 3; (2) Pointed amphoriskos from SU2028 in Area 2 (A); stamped amphora handle from SU2018 in Area 2; (B); (3) Roman terra sigillata fineware from SU3279 in Area 3 (photos A. Avramidou)

Обр. 16. 1. Неолитна керамика от SU3187 в зона 3; 2. Остродънен амфориск от SU2028 в зона 2 (A); щампована дръжка от амфора от SU2018 в зона 2; (B); (3) Римски фино terra sigillata от SU3279 в зона 3 (снимки A. Avramidou)

at its north-western, western, and southern limits was surrounded by a peribolos or retaining wall; however, it cannot be dismissed that some blocks come from buildings. Judging from the location of the architectural members, we estimate the preserved perimeter of the wall to be approximately 180 m. Unfortunately, the northern and eastern sections of the small plateau are disturbed due to the construction of the roadway that was never completed. It is therefore not possible to know whether such a peribolos wall, if we are correct to interpret it as one, surrounded the plateau. The study of orthophotos, historical aerial photographs, and satellite images provides no secure indication on whether sections of this wall continued south towards the water.

The intensive survey completed 29 SUs in Area 2 covering some 5.8 ha. Most areas west of the Yialou Rema were surveyed, as well as a large field being cultivated for watermelons east of the river and below the plateau. In addition, the survey team was able to complete a few areas of the plateau itself around the putative temple and some residential plots along the waterfront. High vegetation from fallow fields prevented us from completing the remaining survey units during the 2021 campaign. The highest concentration of both ceramics and tiles was found in the watermelon field below the plateau (SU2017–2020), although material was still well-distributed in SUs west of the river (fig. 15).

One clear distinction between Area 2 and Area 1 is that here there is sparse evidence for Thracian pottery, limited to only three SUs (SU2004, SU2018, SU2032). Moreover, only one tool (SU2013) and no flints have been recovered here to date. Equally notable is the near absence of Byzantine and later

ceramics. Instead, the survey has found large amounts of Hellenistic and Roman pottery. Among the finds, noteworthy are the considerable numbers of transport amphoras, storage vessels (e.g., pithoi), and cooking, serving (e.g., oinochoai), drinking and dining wares (plates, bowls, cups). We have documented both plain and fine local and imported wares (e.g., black-glaze, West Slope, 'Megarian,' terra sigillata). The Hellenistic and Roman chronology of the diagnostic ceramics agrees with Pentazos' (Pentazos, Triantafyllos 1978) finds from the excavations on the plateau, namely what he referred to as 'Hellenistic and Arretine pottery.' Of interest is a stamped amphora handle (SU2018), while the discovery of a pointed amphoriskos (SU2028) and a (possible) stone relief fragment (SU2020) are indicative of the existence of the Hero-Rider cult during the Roman period (fig. 16.2A-B). Isolated earlier fragments do exist, such as a black-glaze handle (SU2016), but, compared to Area 1, there is little evidence so far of much activity at this location prior to the Hellenistic period.

Area 3

Remote sensing has identified only a limited number of potential features of interest to date. In fields (SU3044, SU3045) approximately 1 km north of Perama, the WorldView-3 satellite image identified a series of parallel linear anomalies with northwest-southeast orientations. Of these anomalies, one has a three-sided rectilinear outline. The features are unlikely from twentieth century field boundaries since aerial photographs do not show any changes in the field systems. In a future fieldwork campaign, these anomalies will be a target of geophysical prospection.

Intensive pedestrian surveying was conducted at 80 SUs dispersed around the village of Perama amounting to about 29 ha (fig. 17). In general, ceramics and tiles were noted in most fields surveyed, but there were several nodes of denser material at various locations: (i.) 600 m northwest of Perama (SU3169, SU3177, SU3187); (ii.) 400 m north of Hill 319 (SU3276–3279); and (iii.) a scattering of fields 700–1000 m north of Perama (SU3017, SU3030, SU3032, SU3250). Survey units produced ceramics largely of the Late Roman and Byzantine era, but also material extending into the Ottoman period. A concentration of Neolithic pottery was identified in a field northwest of Perama (SU3187) and it is the earliest ceramics material recovered by the survey (fig. 16.1). In SUs investigated near Hill 319 between the villages of Perama and Komaros, we documented significant quantities of pottery, flints, and tools (e.g., SU3030, SU3250, SU3279), and even a snail-fossil from SU3276. Considerable numbers of Thracian and Roman pottery were found around Hill 319 (e.g., SU3272–3281) and comprised primarily of cookware, storage, and terra sigillata, the latter dating between the second and sixth century CE (fig. 16.3). Unique so far, is the discovery from the same survey area of an inscribed pottery sherd (SU3279) and the graffito of a worn pithos fragment (SU3278).

Discussion

Based on our current fieldwork data, we can proceed to some preliminary observations regarding the archaeological landscape of the Peraia. Starting with Area 1, we find clear traces of Thracian material in most areas surveyed. Towards the southern end of the plateau and around Mikros Elaionas, Thracian finds overlap with a concentration of Greek and Early Roman material. This indicates that there was recurrent use of the southern region of Area 1 for much of the first millennium BC and into the first few centuries of the Common Era.⁴ Besides the classical walls previously identified at Mikros Elaionas, there are no clear architectural remains from a settlement in areas surveyed beyond some blocks left aside at field edges; if such remains are to be found, then they are probably

4 A detailed study of the pottery and the stratigraphy of future test-trenches will help finetune the chronological span of the ceramics, especially the relation between Greek and Thracian.

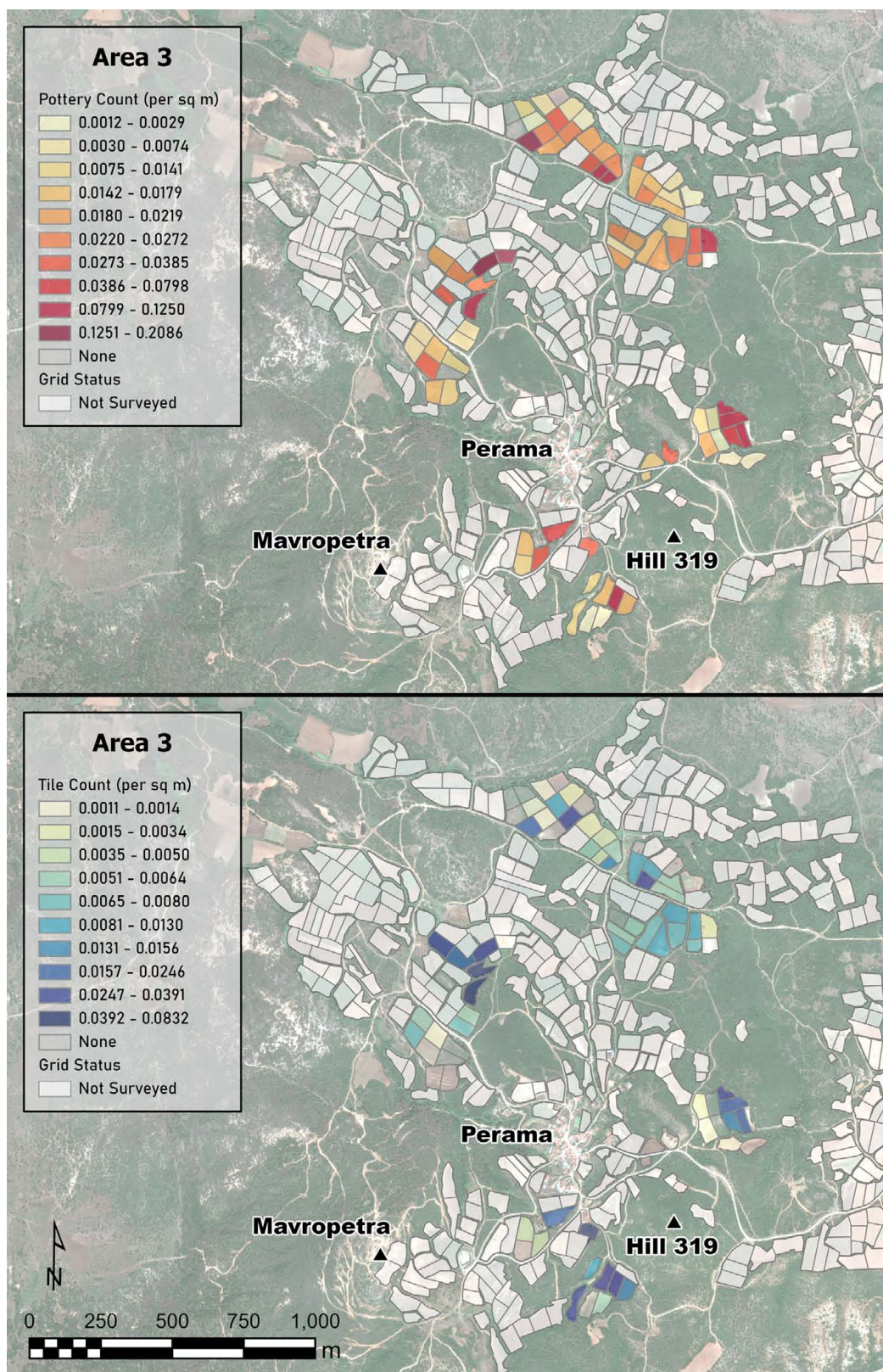


Fig. 17. Ceramics density map (sherds per square metre) from Area 3 (top); tile density map (tiles per square metre) from Area 3 (bottom) (figure by J.C. Donati)

Обр. 17. Карта на концентрацията на керамика (на квадратен метър) в Зона 3 (горе); карта на плътността на керемиди (на квадратен метър) в зона 3 (долу) (автор J.C. Donati)

within the surrounding hills and knolls covered by vegetation, including Mikros Elaionas. Moreover, geophysics has yet to survey much of the southern end of the plateau, and future results may provide clearer evidence of buried structures. During the Late Roman and Byzantine periods, the concentration of finds indicates that activity in Area 1 transferred some 300–400 m towards the north around the modern farmhouse. The distribution of this later material is still uncertain because other areas of the central and northern portions of the plateau remain to be surveyed, including the ~5,000 sq m cluster of magnetic dipolar features identified with geophysics.

In Area 2, the quantity and the type of pottery collected, along with large amounts of tiles, support the likelihood of a Hellenistic and Roman harbour settlement between the putative temple and the coastline. The fact that geophysics produced no traces of structures in fields below the plateau can be explained by a series of natural causes from flooding episodes, which have disturbed the archaeological layers. The large numbers of amphora fragments collected and the proximity of the site to the sea, enhance the site's commercial character. Between Cape Serrheion and Zone, Petrota beach is the only shoreline where a small harbour could be located thanks to the small fertile plain created by the Yialou Rema. In the twentieth century, Petrota beach was used as a harbour when millstones and large blocks were laden onto ships docked off the coast. Several of these millstones are displayed today in the gardens of waterfront houses. The geophysical survey on the small plateau reveal that the putative temple was not an isolated structure but accompanied by additional buildings. A large stoa-like complex seems to surround the possible temple along its northern and eastern sides. Even though the true nature of these buildings and their chronology and usage can only be confirmed with excavations, the preliminary evidence suggests that a sanctuary surrounded by a peribolos wall was located at the highest point of the settlement.

A combined overview of Area 1 and Area 2 indicates that the main Thracian settlement between Ai-Giorgis Petrota and Petrota beach was located at the upland plateau east of Mt Ismaros, where prehistoric activity has also been attested. A possible Greek settlement seems to have existed by the slopes of Mt Ismaros at Mikros Elaionas, on either side of the stream that runs along Area 1; activity lasts through the Hellenistic and Early Roman period. Elsewhere, a second Hellenistic and Roman settlement developed on the coast at Petrota beach, only a few kilometres west of Zone. Whether there was an earlier phase to the harbour settlement remains open as the collected finds are not enough to support a pre-Hellenistic phase. In the Late Roman and Byzantine periods, activity seems to shift exclusively to the central and northern regions of the plateau in Area 1.

Fieldwork in Area 3 is still in its initial stages; however, the types of ceramics indicate the existence of a Roman installation (perhaps a farmhouse) north of Hill 319, a hypothesis further supported by its location overlooking the valley to the west and in proximity to the Via Egnatia to the east. The finds suggest occupation at the same location during the Byzantine period as well. Apart from the discovery of Neolithic pottery northwest of Perama, fields around the periphery of the village produced exclusively later material (Late Roman and after). Finds were sparse in certain areas and more concentrated elsewhere, indicating the diachronic agricultural character of the area with occasional occupation during the Late Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman periods. Preliminary visits to the three hilltops in Area 3 west of Perama and east of Komaros (Mavropetra Hill and Hill 339) were instructive of the interconnectedness of the hills and the differences within the local topography, i.e., mountain setting vis-à-vis coastal zone. Hill 319 has good visibility of the valley to the north and west, as well as to the east towards Hill 339. Both hills are oriented towards the interior, focusing on the protection and control of the valley and the passages to and from the sea. In this respect, the earlier interpretation of Hill 319 by Pantos and Triantafyllos as a Greek fortified outpost of a coastal settlement seems to be confirmed (Pantos 1974, 7–17; Triantafyllos 1973–1974), especially, if we consider its location right between the Thracian sites of Mavropetra and Hill 339.

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Turning to the question of Samothracian settlements, based on our research and the local topography, there are two sites eligible for identification with Greek settlements between Cape Ser-rheion and Zone: (i.) the area around Mikros Elaionas in Area 1, and (ii.) the small coastal plain at Petrota beach in Area 2. Whether either of them could be identified with the mysterious Mesemvria of Herodotus, the better attested harbour settlement of Drys, or the elusive Orthagoreia is a question to be answered through future excavations. The settlement at Area 2 extends over a stretch of land parallel to the territory of Zone, bridging the Thracian hinterland with the Northern Aegean Sea, while shielding at the same time the larger harbour city of Zone from the west. This formation potentially creates a multi-layered fortification system that expands from core/large settlements to satellites/smaller ones. This co-dependence and interconnectivity of the coastal sites acts as a buffer-zone, formed through settlement arrangement and the integration of the local topography.

The study of the literary sources leads to similar observations: (i.) Samothracian foundations had to be built by necessity along the coast to maintain a desirable distance from the Thracian hilltop settlements to the north and to safeguard the connection to the sea; (ii.) the choice of words in Herodotus' passage (7.108) (*teichea*, i.e., forts) implies on the one hand that the Samothracian settlements were fortified but also that their close formation along the coast resembled a fortification wall. Such a tight web of settlements aimed to increase their defensiveness and capitalize on the local topography and its rather limited coastal space. Their setting recalls Herodotus' metaphor of *teicheon kithones* (7.139.3), i.e., layers of fortifications resembling the folds of a chiton. The metaphor describes the multiple walls of the Corinthian Isthmus and creates a powerful image that could also be applied to the Peraia and the 'Samothracian forts.'

Conclusion

Overall, the 2021–2022 fieldwork campaigns of the Peraia of Samothrace Project were successfully concluded, and our team managed to overcome the limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The results of the pedestrian survey, geophysical prospection, and remote sensing produced significant data on the local topography, the archaeological record, and the diachronic land use of the region. In 2022, we plan to return to Area 1 with another round of intensive pedestrian and geophysical surveys, investigating the remaining survey units. Furthermore, our research will expand to additional sections of Area 3, while we will pursue a more targeted approach for Area 4. Upon completion of our project, we hope to have highlighted the diversity of the landscape and the rich history and archaeology of this unique region of Aegean Thrace.

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Проектът Самотракийската перее: отчет за теренната работа през 2020–2021 г.

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(резюме)

Проектът „Самотракийската перее“ е мултидисциплинарен археологически проект за изследване на диахронни селищни модели от праисторията до съвременната епоха по крайбрежието и хинтерланда срещу остров Самотраки в северно Егейско море (обр. 1). Той използва интегрирани и неинвазивни методи като дистанционно наблюдение, геофизично измерване и интензивно теренно обхождане, за да изследва регионалната топография и форми-

те на човешко обитаване. Важен аспект на проекта е въпросът за самотракийските селища, споменати в писмените източници. Тази статия представя резултатите от теренната кампания през 2020–2021 г. Тя включва методическата рамка на проучването, преглед на древните литературни източници и предишни археологически проучвания в региона, предварителен отчет на теренната работа, както и обща дискусия върху резултатите от проведените изследвания.

Разглежданият район се простира приблизително от древния град Маронея до съвременния град Александруполис и от северното крайбрежие на Егейско море до южното продължение на Родопите. Природната среда е изключително разнообразна и включва тесни крайбрежни зони с малки заливчета, високопланински потоци, които се вливат в речни клисури, скалисти хълмове, покрити с гъста растителност и ограничен брой планински плата (обр. 2).

Самотракийската перееа е рядка тема в гръцките и римските литературни и епиграфски източници. Като цяло всички топографски препратки се появяват случайно и са вплетени в описанието на важни исторически събития. Източниците включват произведения, датиращи от късния архаичен и класически период, разкази, описващи събития от елинистическия период до появата на Рим и късноантични източници, включително римски пътеводители. Идентифицирането на селищата е сложен въпрос поради разнообразните дати на източниците, доста противоречивите топографски препратки и липсата на сигурно разпознати археологически обекти в региона.

Археологически теренни проучвания в и около Самотракийската перееа са документирали богата и разнообразна материалната култура, свидетелстваща за важната роля на този район през вековете. Най-известни са разкопките в Макри, Маронея и Зоне с находки от праисторията до римския и византийски период.

Проектът идентифицира четири потенциални района с различни размери и топографски характеристики, в които биха могли да се извършват археологически проучвания (обр. 3–4, 6). От самото начало възприехме хибриден подход в изучаване на ландшафта на Самотракийската перееа, който включва недеструктивно теренно проучване. Целта е да се съчетаят взаимно допълващи се методи на изследване, извършвани както на място, така и дистанционно, като същевременно се възприемат и рационализират създадени дигитални системи за събиране на данни и анализ на артефакти в рамките на ограничен бюджет. Мащабните и бързи методи за анализ на ландшафта, като дистанционно наблюдение и геофизика, бяха комбинирани с интензивно теренно обхождане. Всички данни от проучването, независимо дали са събрани на място или анализирани извън обекта, бяха комбинирани в базата данни на географската информационна система (ГИС) на проекта (обр. 5, 7–8).

Въз основа на текущите ни данни от теренната работа, можем да предложим някои предварителни наблюдения относно археологическия ландшафт на Перееа. Започвайки от зона 1, където откриваме ясни следи от тракийски материал в повечето изследвани площи. Към южния край на платото и около Микрос Елеонас тракийските находки се припокриват с концентрация на гръцки и ранноримски материал. Това показва продължаващо използване на южния регион на зона 1 през голяма част от първото хилядолетие пр.н.е. и през първите няколко века от нашата ера. Освен античните стени, идентифицирани по-рано в Микрос Елеонас, няма ясни архитектурни останки от селища в изследваните площи. Все още няма геофизично проучване на голяма част от южния край на платото и бъдещите резултати могат да предоставят по-ясни доказателства за евентуални археологически структури (обр. 9). През късноримския и византийския период концентрацията на находки показва, че дейността в зона 1 се е прехвърлила на около 300–400 m на север около съвременна ферма (обр. 10–11).

В зона 2 количеството и видът на събраната керамика, заедно с големи количества керемиди, подкрепят вероятността за елинистическо и римско пристанищно селище между пред-

полагаемия храм и бреговата линия. Фактът, че геофизичните замервания не откриват следи от структури в подножието на платото може да се обясни с поредица от природни епизоди като наводнения, които са нарушили археологическите слоеве (обр. 12–14). Големият брой събрани фрагменти от амфори и близостта на обекта до морето показват търговския характер на обекта. Между нос Серейон и Зоне плажът Петрота е единствената брегова линия, където може да бъде разположено малко пристанище благодарение на малката плодородна равнина, създадена от Ялоу Рема (обр.15). Геофизичното проучване на малкото плато разкри, че предполагаемият храм не е изолирана структура, а е придружен от допълнителни сгради. Въпреки че естеството на тези сгради, тяхната хронология и употреба могат да бъдат потвърдени само с разкопки, предварителните сведения сочат, че на най-високата точка на селището се е намирало светилище, заобиколено от периболос (оградна стена).

Теренната работа в зона 3 все още е в начален етап, но керамиката показва съществуването на римска инсталация на север от възвишение 319. Тази хипотеза е допълнително подкрепена от местоположението ѝ с изглед към долината (на запад) и в близост до *Via Egnatia* (на изток). Находките предполагат обитаване на същото място и през византийския период. Освен откриването на неолитна керамика северозападно от Перама, в нивите около периферията на селото се открива и по-късен материал (късноримски и последващ) (обр. 16–17). Находките са оскъдни в определени райони и по-концентрирани другаде, което показва диахронен земеделски характер на района със случайни обитания през късноримския, византийския и османския период. Предварителните посещения на трите възвишения в зона 3, западно от Перама и източно от Комарос (респективно Мавропетра, възвишения 319 и 339), бяха показателни за взаимосвързаността между планинския ландшафт и крайбрежната зона. Те са ориентирани към вътрешността с фокус върху защитата и контрола на долината и проходите към и от морето.

Заклучителни бележки по въпроса за самотракийските селища. Въз основа на нашите изследвания и местната топография има два обекта, които могат да бъдат интерпретирани като гръцки селища между нос Серейон и Зоне: а) районът около Микрос Елеонас в зона 1; б) малката крайбрежна равнина на плажа Петрота в зона 2. Дали някое от тези селища може да бъде идентифицирано като мистериозната Месемврия на Херодот, добре засвидетелстваното пристанищно селище Дрис или неуловимата Ортагорей е въпрос, чийто отговор зависи от бъдещите разкопки. Селището в зона 2 се простира върху терен, успореден на територията на Зоне, свързвайки тракийския хинтерланд със северно Егейско море, като в същото време защитава по-големия пристанищен град Зоне от запад. Тази формация потенциално създава многопластова укрепителна система, която се разширява от ядро/големи селища до сателити/по-малки селища. Крайбрежните селища (с регистрираната зависимост и взаимосвързаност между тях) действат като буферна зона, формирана чрез поддръждане на селищата с адаптиране към местната топография.