

# Crete in the Period of Arab Expansion (7th–10th Century): An Island and Era Full of People and Questions



Case study: Crete in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> c. A. D.

Emirate of Crete

*Iqritish*

A.D. 824/7 – 961





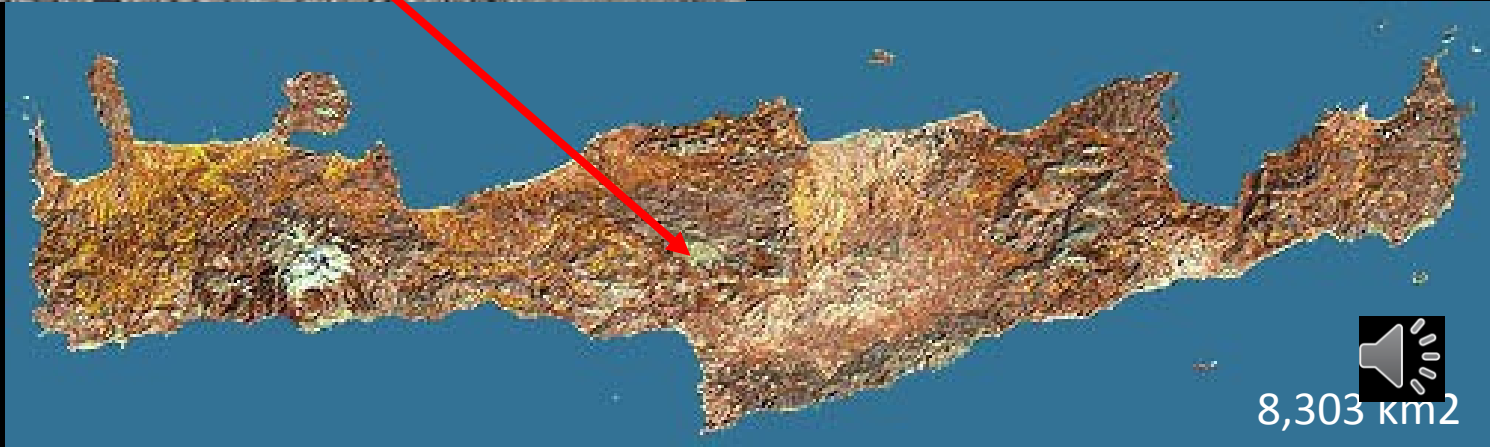
## Report structure:

1. Environment, natural conditions, and geology
2. Primary historical sources: an overview
3. History according to written sources
4. Archaeological data
5. Questions, perspectives and methodologies





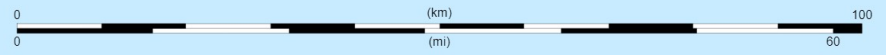
2,456 m (8,057 feet)



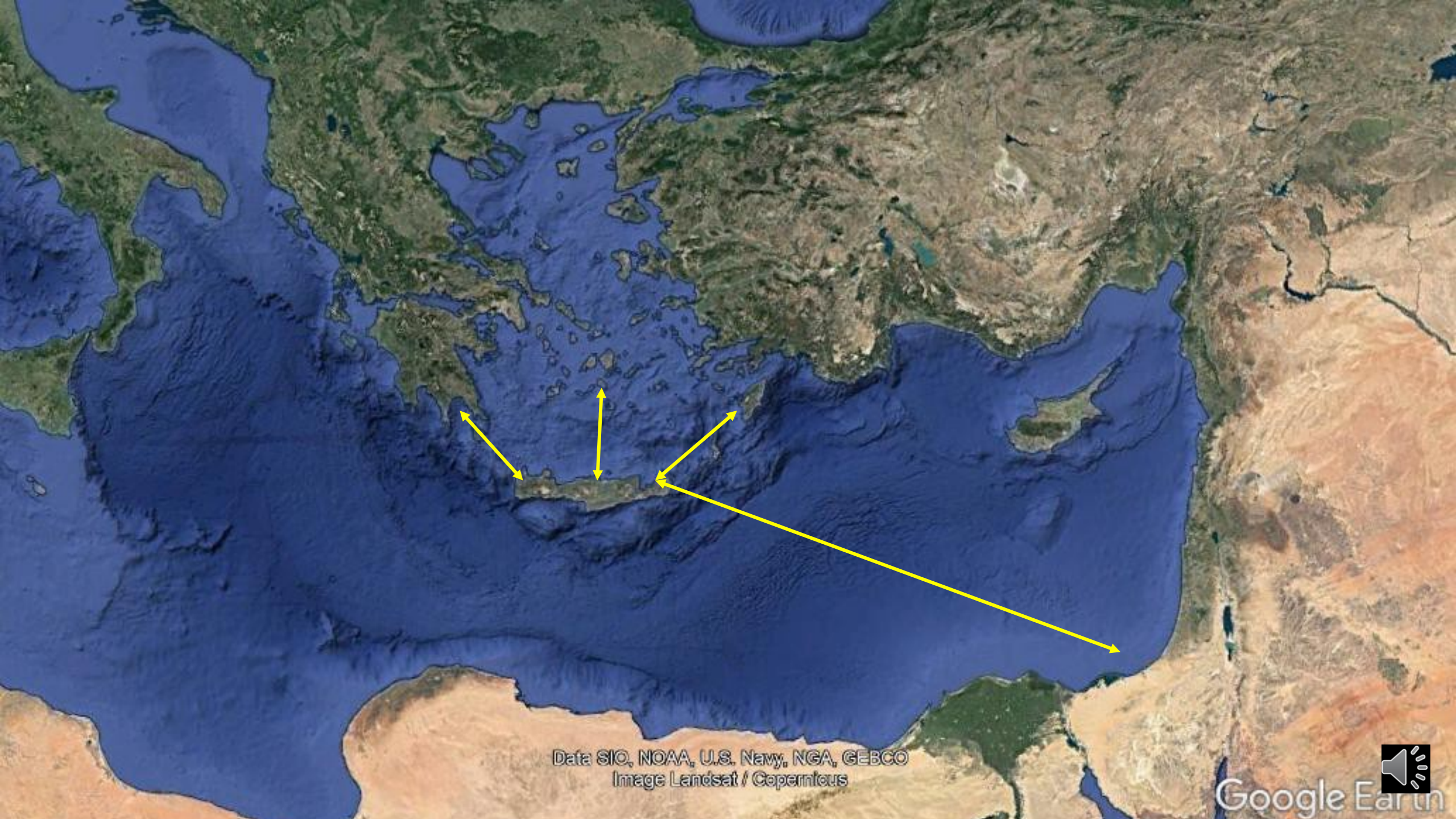
8,303 km<sup>2</sup>







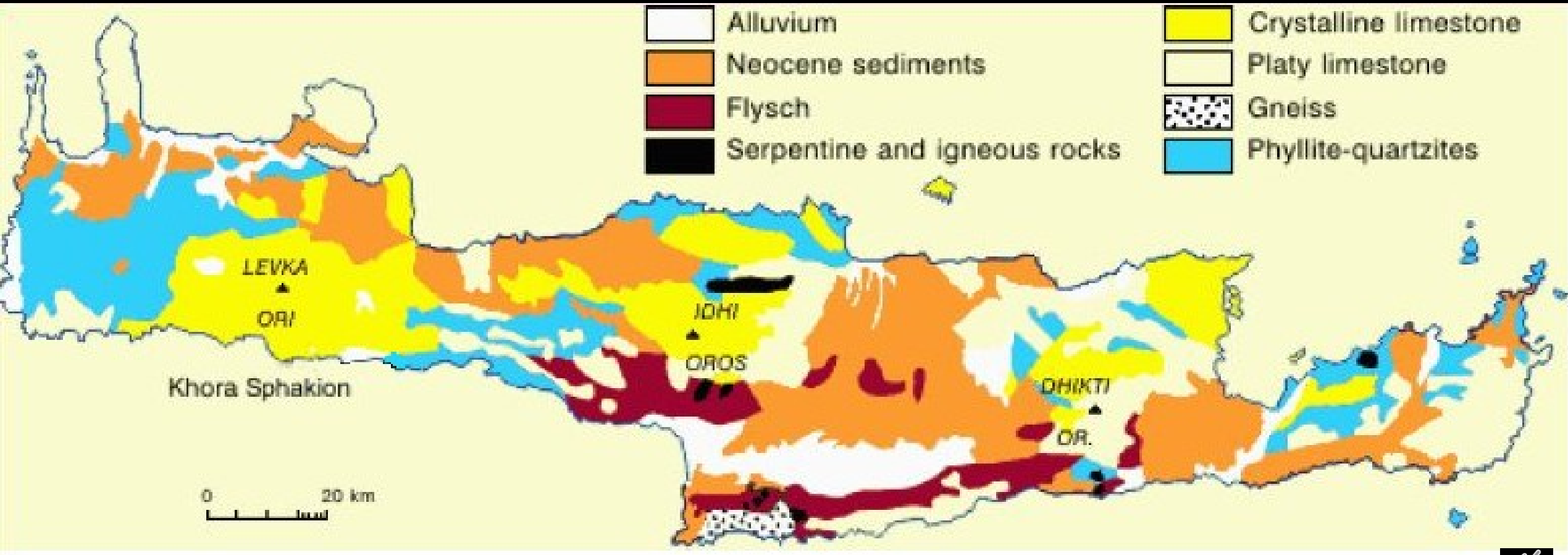


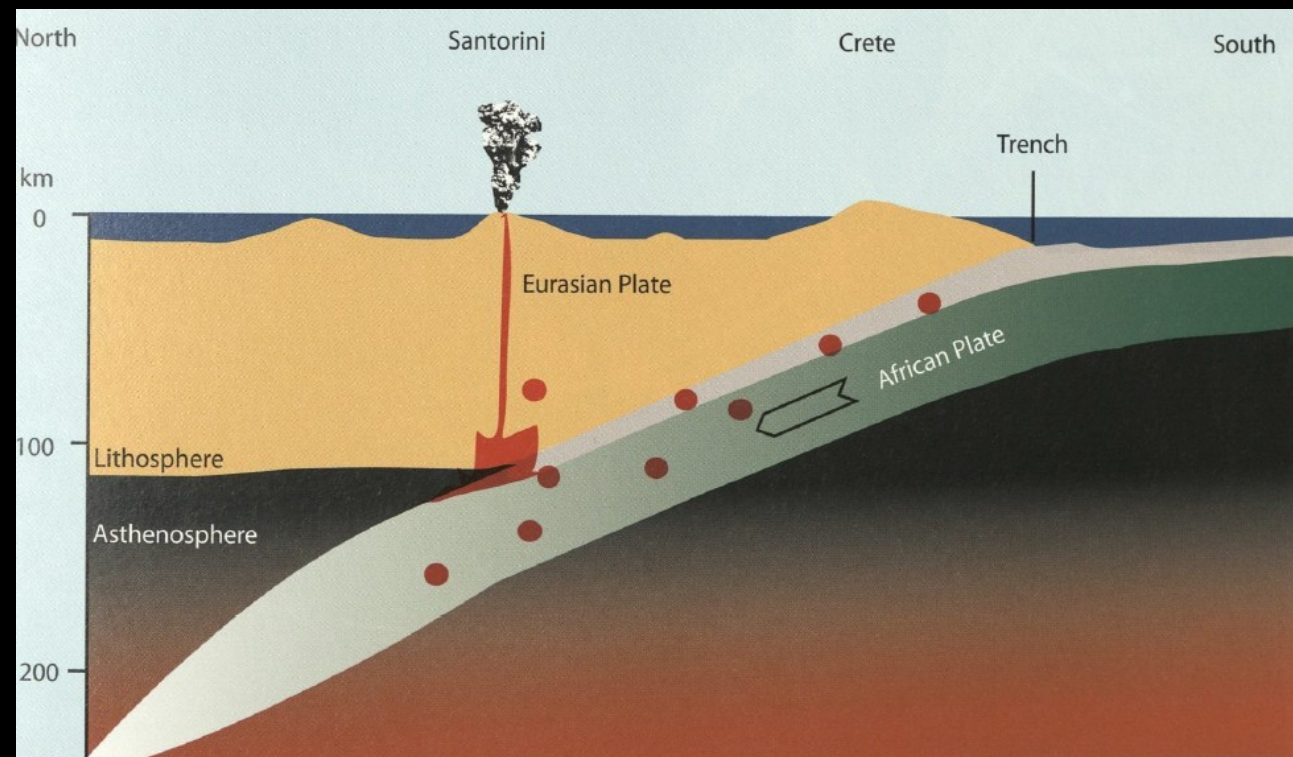
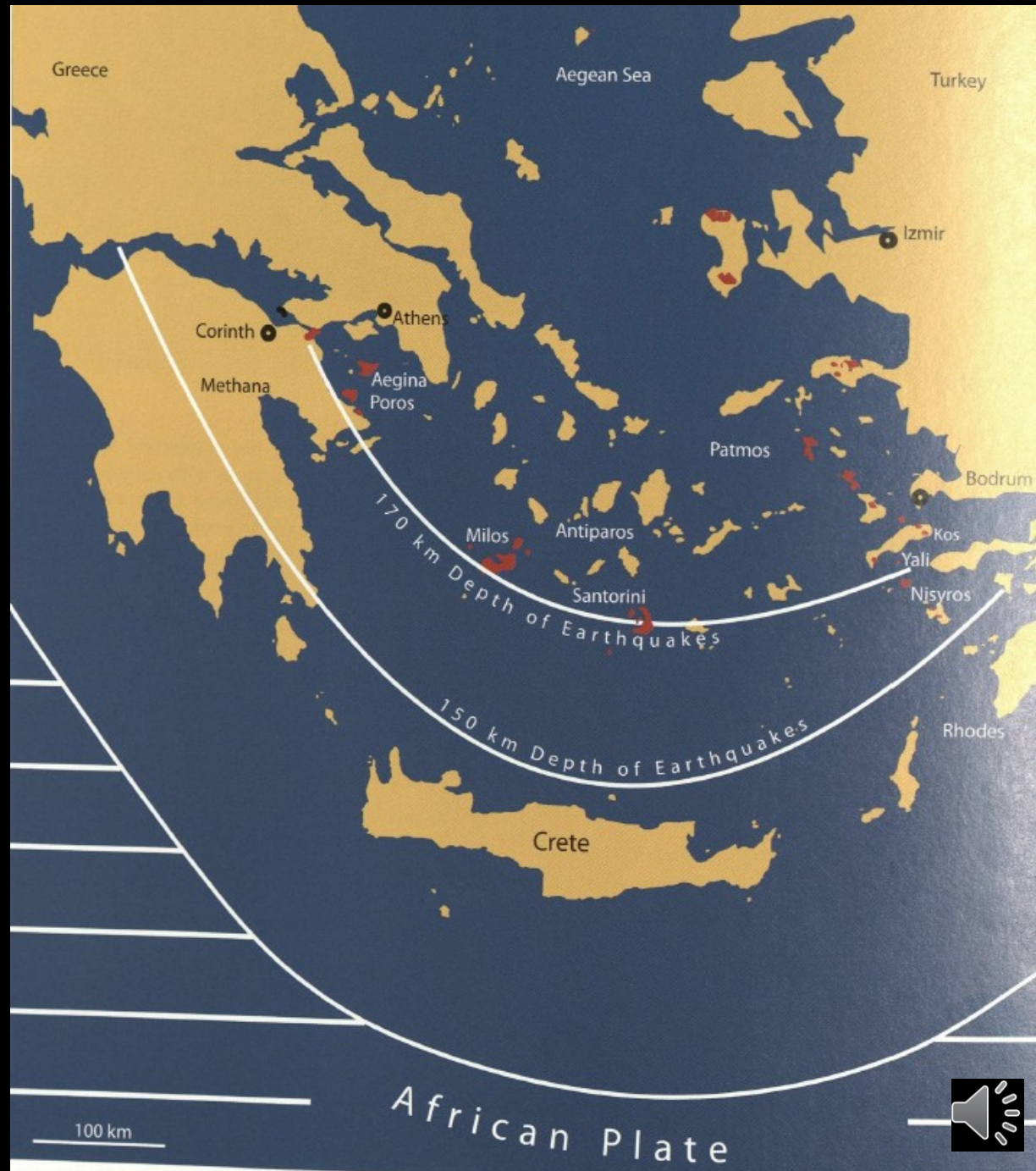
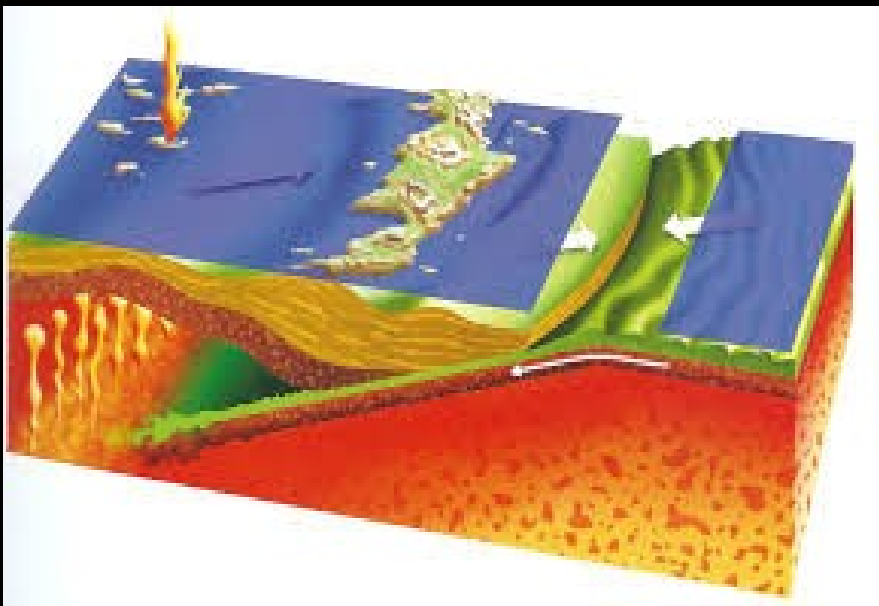


Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO  
Image Landsat / Copernicus



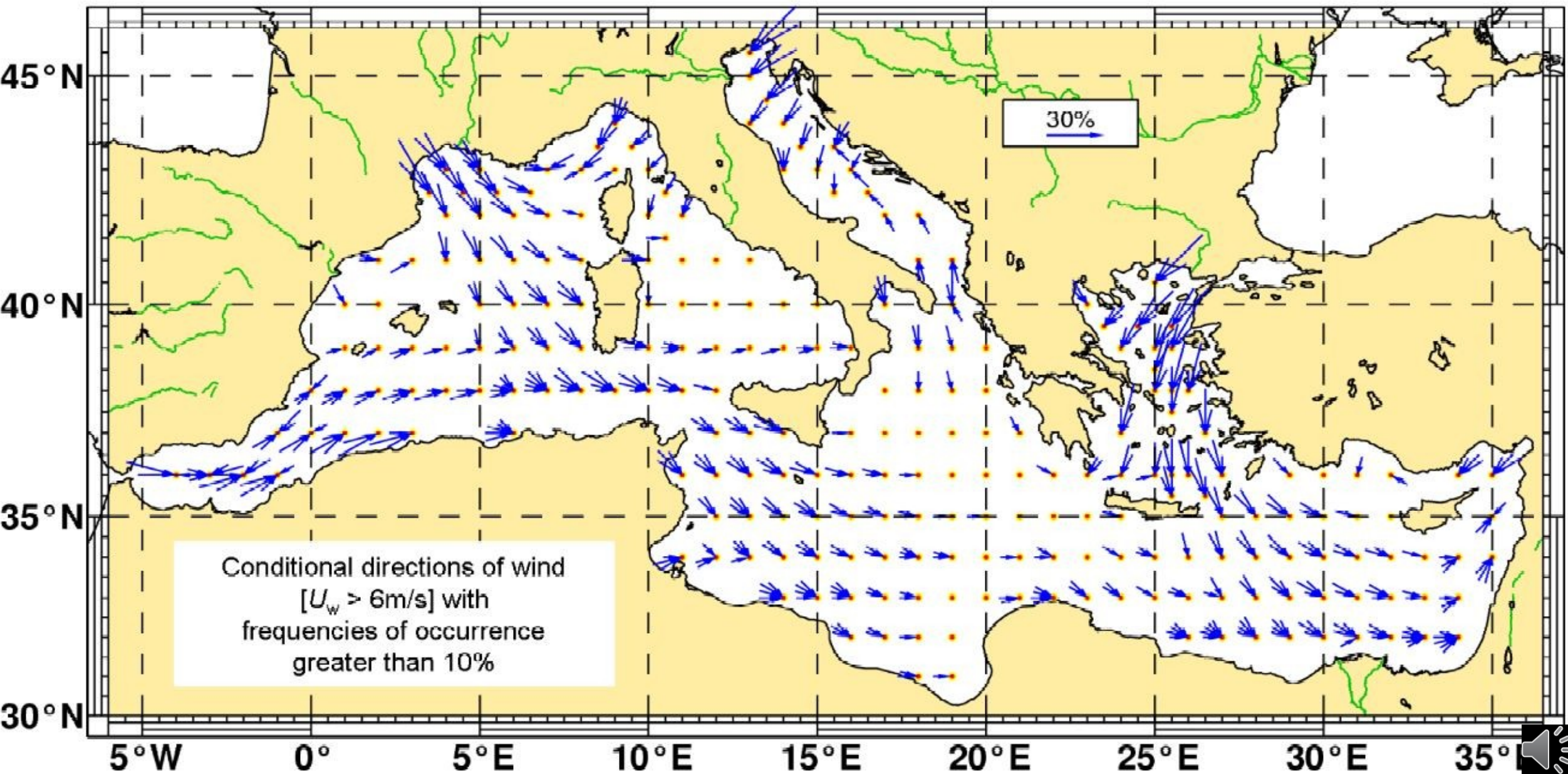
# Geological map

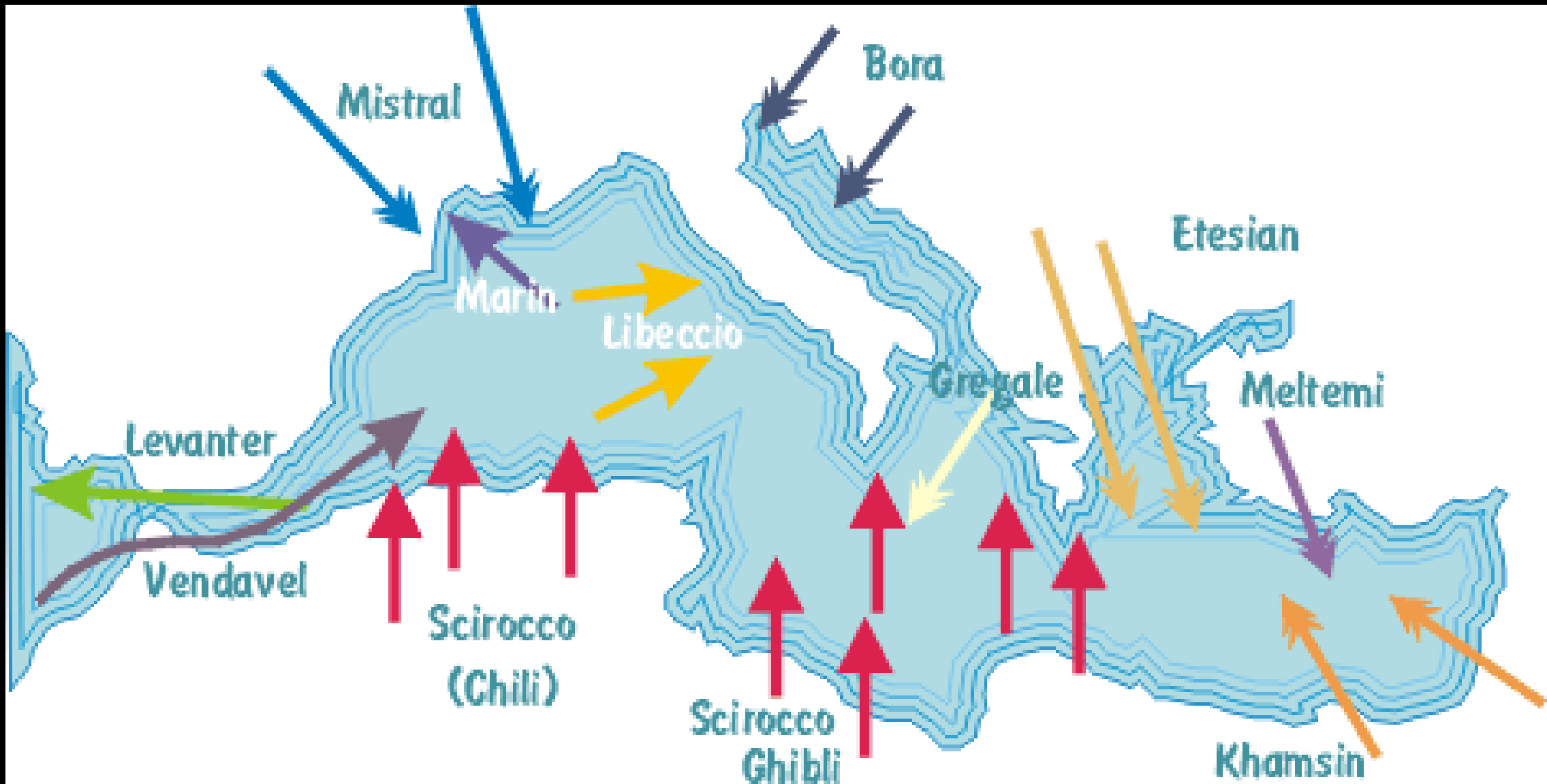






## Spatial distribution of wind directionality. Winter



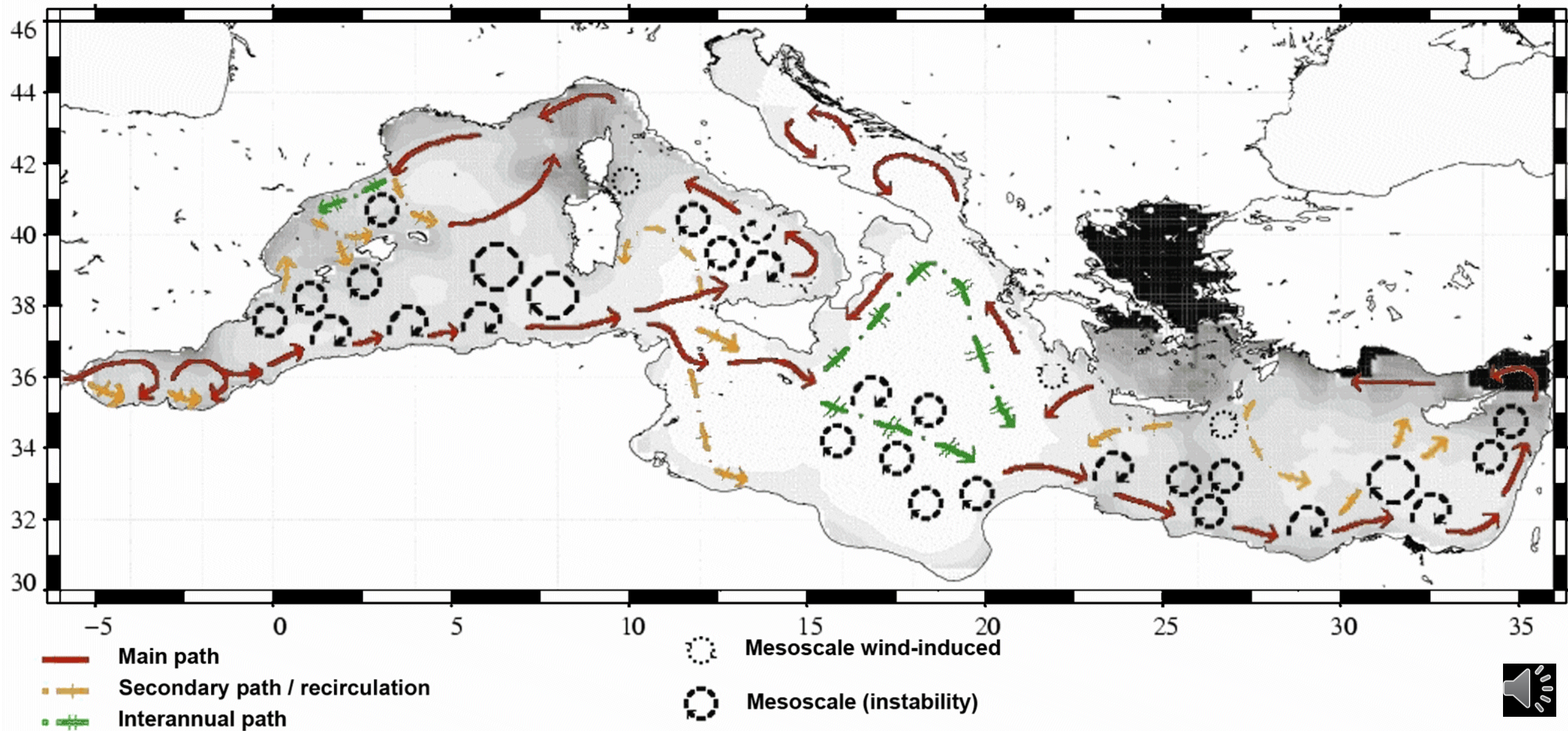


Sailing  
winds





# Sea currents



# Historical Sources - Greek

## Chronicles

- Georgios Monachos
- Genesios
- Theophanes, the Confesor
- Theophanes Continuatus
- Cenderos
- Teodosios Diaconos (Deacon)
- Logothete Chronicle
- Caminiates
- De cerimoniis
- Taktikon Uspensky
- Leon Deacon
- De Admistrando Imperio
- George Sphrantzes
- Ioannis Skylitzes

## Lives of Saints & ecclesiastical documents

- Vita Andreae Cretensis
- Passio Desem Martyrorum in Creta
- Vita S. Nicoli Metanoeite
- Vita Theokteste lesbiae
- Vita S. Apostoli Titi
- Life of St Nicolas the Studite
- Le Synodicon d' Orthodoxie (1967)
- Le Synodicon de Sybrita et les métropolités de Crète aux (Xe-XIIIe siècle)(1933)





# Historical sources - Arabic

- Ibn-al-Manqalí
- Ibn-al-Faradí (with part of Marwán bn. 'Abd al-Makik)
- Ibn Hawqal (traveleler)
- Masúdí, Abúl-Huyayn
- Nuwayrí, Abúl-'Abbás Ahmad bn. 'Abd al-Wahháb
- Yáqút, bn. 'Abd Alláh al-Hamawí
- Baládhurí, Ahmad bn. Yahyá bn. Jábir
- Tabarí, Muhammad bn. Jarír
- Ibn al-Athír, 'Izz ad-Dín Abú-Hasan 'Ali
- Maqrízí, Ahmad bn. 'Ali
- Ibn Khaldún, Walí ad-Dín 'Abd ar/Rahmán
- Kindí, Abú 'Umar Muhammad
- Ibn al-Abbár
- Himyárí, Ibn 'Abd al-Mun'im
- 'Abd al-Wahid
- Al-Mújib fí Talkhis Ashbár al-Maghrib
- Istakhrí
- Ibn Hawqal
- Ibn al-Mamátí
- Abd-al-Latif al-Baghdadí

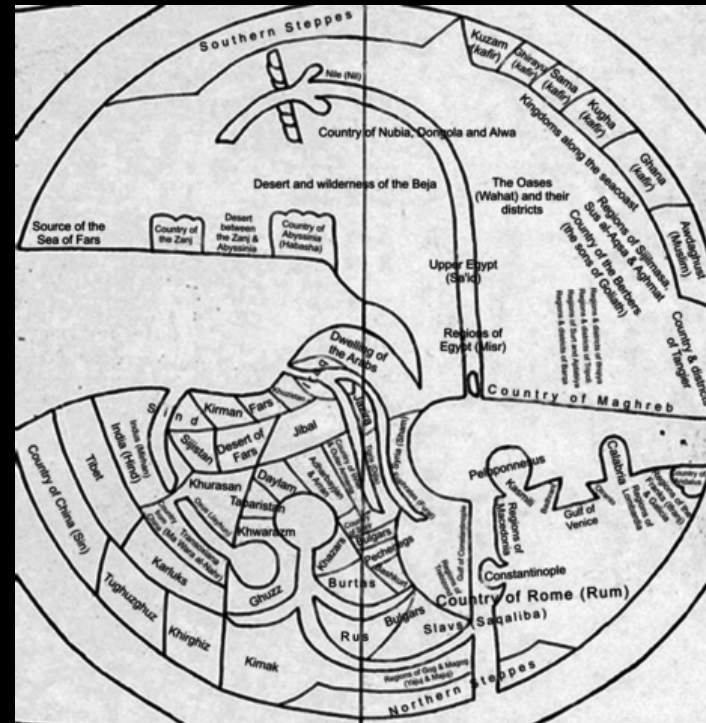


# Other written sources

- Naval manuals – Greek and Arabic
- Arabic poetry
- Arabic Hagiographical works
- Sources in other languages:  
Michael the Syrian, Johannis Chron. Venetum



Al-Balkhi map (10<sup>th</sup> century)



Ibn Hawqal map (10<sup>th</sup> cen





# Main Historical Syntheses

- **Tsougarakis, D. 1988a:** *Byzantine Crete. From the 5th Century to the Venetian Conquest.* Athens.
- **Christides, V. 1984:** *The conquest of Crete. A turning point in the struggle between Byzantium and Islam.* Athens.



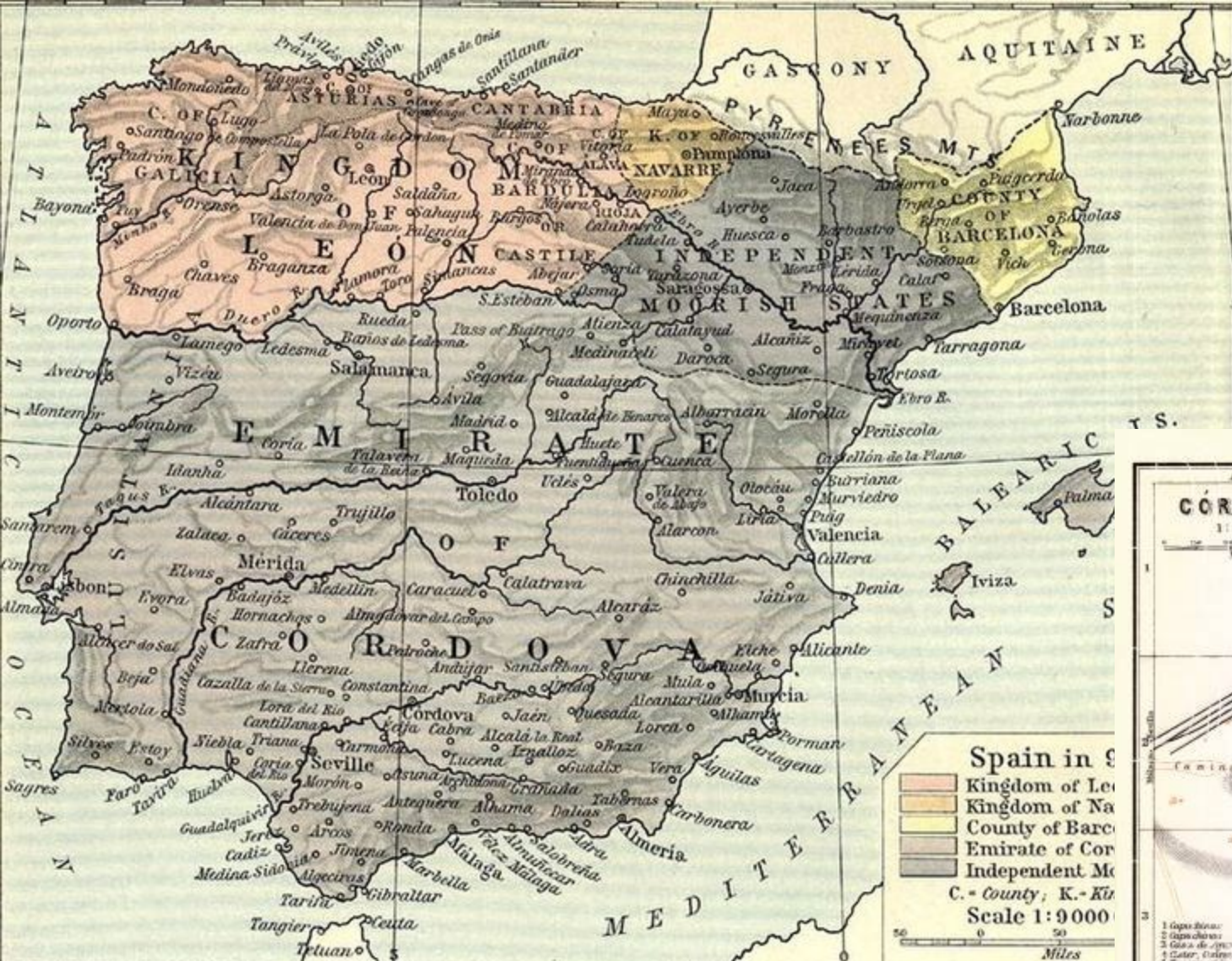




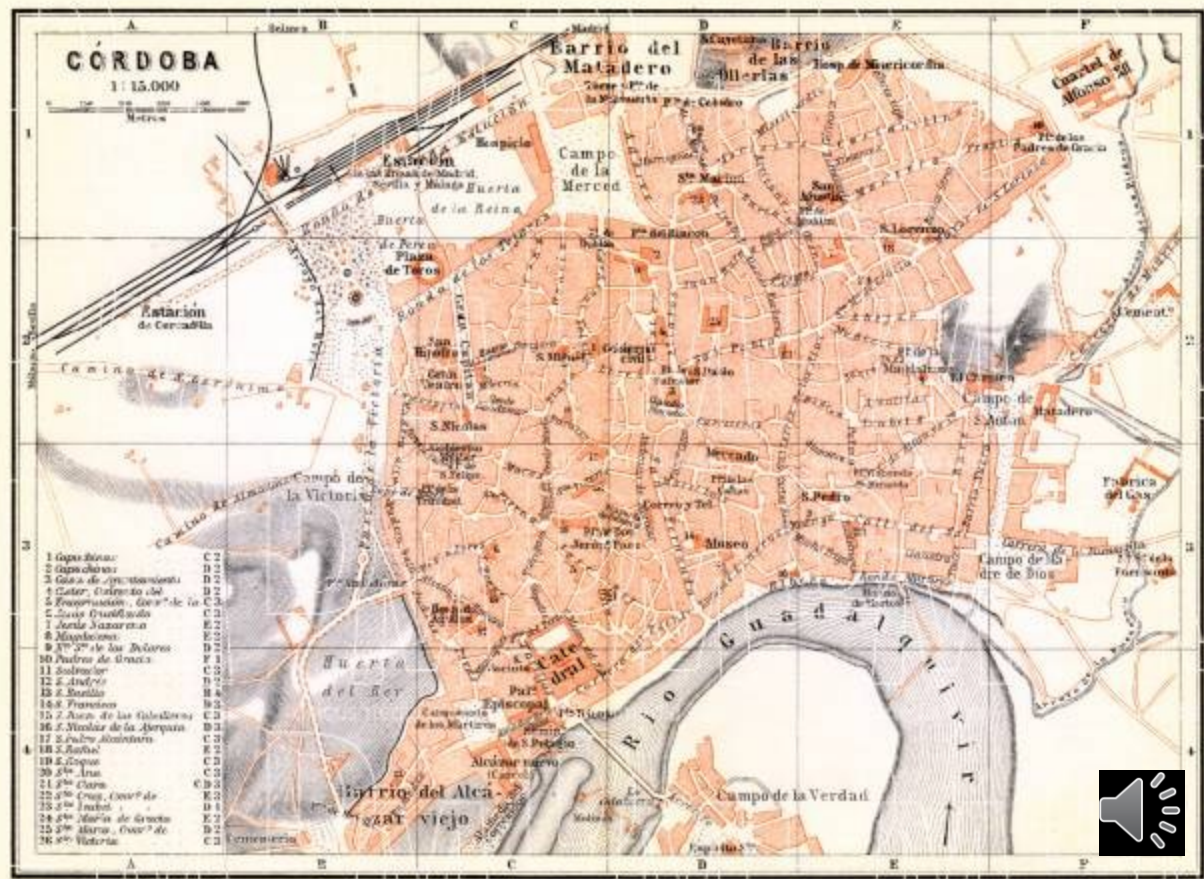
The Great Mosque at Cordoba







T.S.







Cordoba

Toledo

Almeria

Fez

Alexandria





# The Arabs of Iberia address their leader Abu Hafs

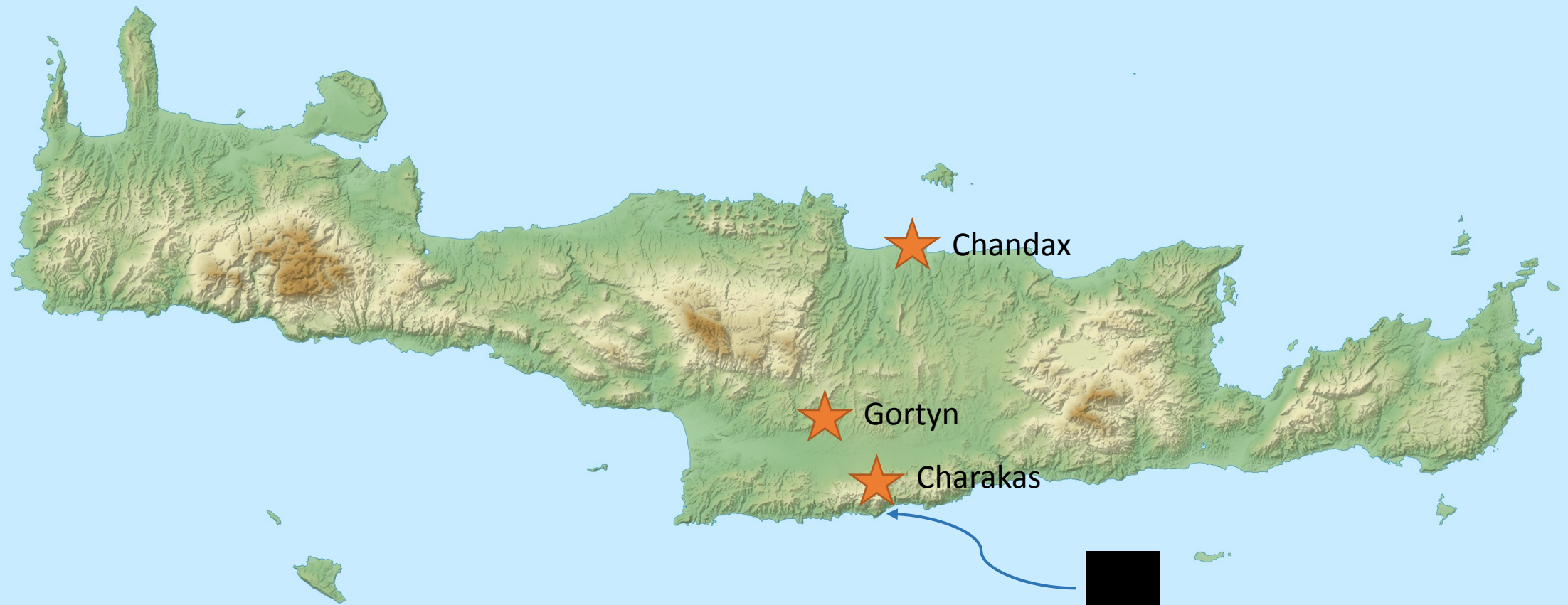




# Arabs sailing to the Aegean









Herákleion Ηράκλειο

Μόλια

Κριτί

Spathi

Matala Μάταλα

Tsoutsouros







A Monk show the Arabs the fort of Chandax

Arabs defeat the Byzantines





# The Byzantine Expedition Against the Arabs in Crete

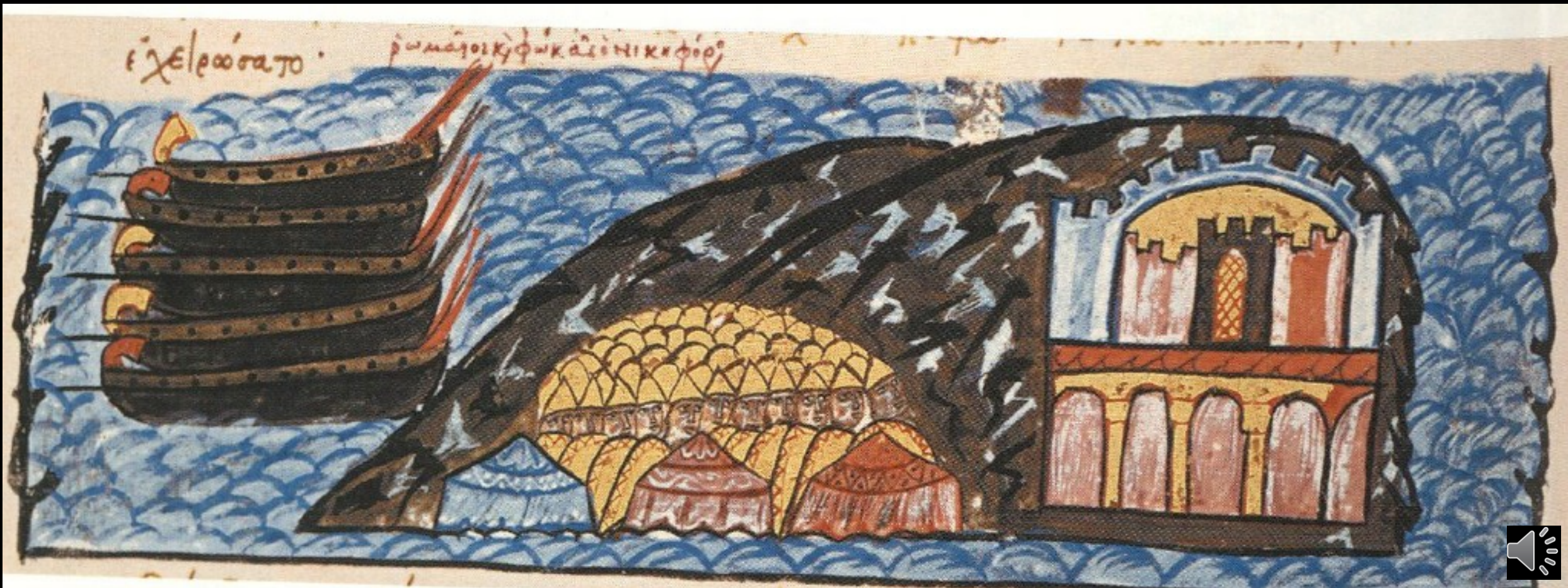
- Photeios & Damianos
- Krateros
- Ooryphas
- Logothete Theoktestos (A.D. 843)
- Niketas Ooryphas

Arabs pursue Krateros and hang him on island of Kos.





# Nikephoros Phocas camp and fortress of Chandax





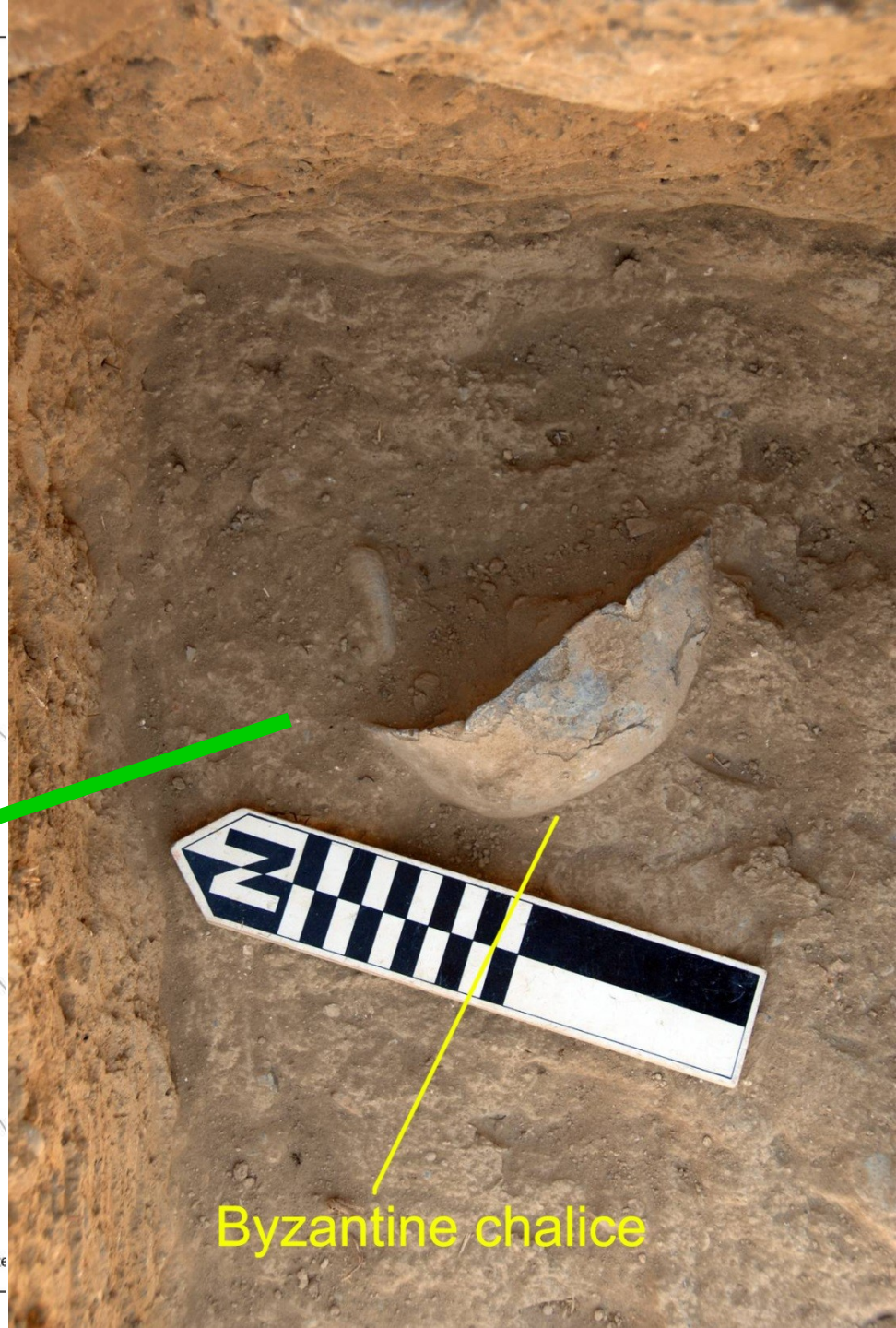
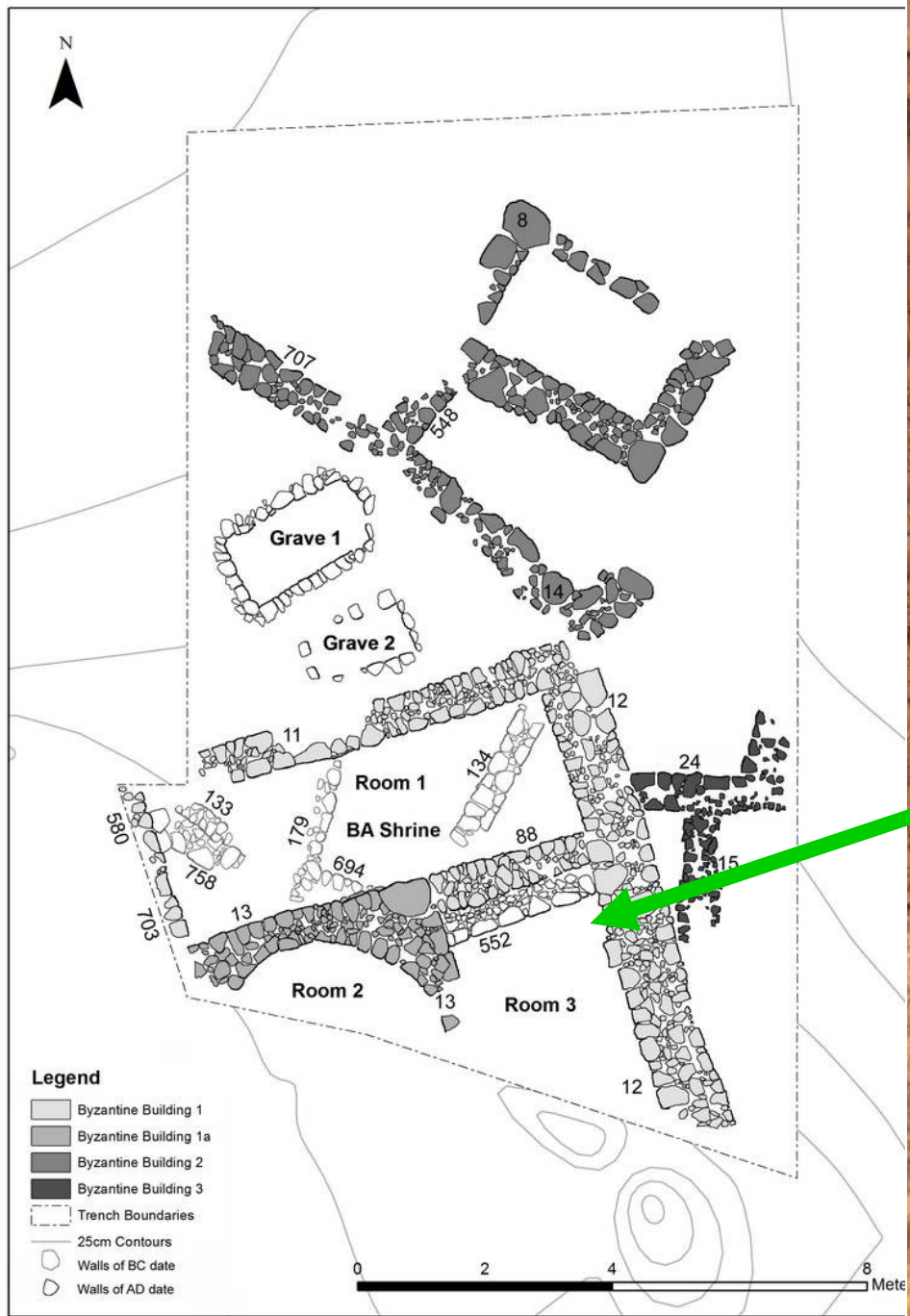
# Priniatikos Pyrgos



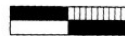






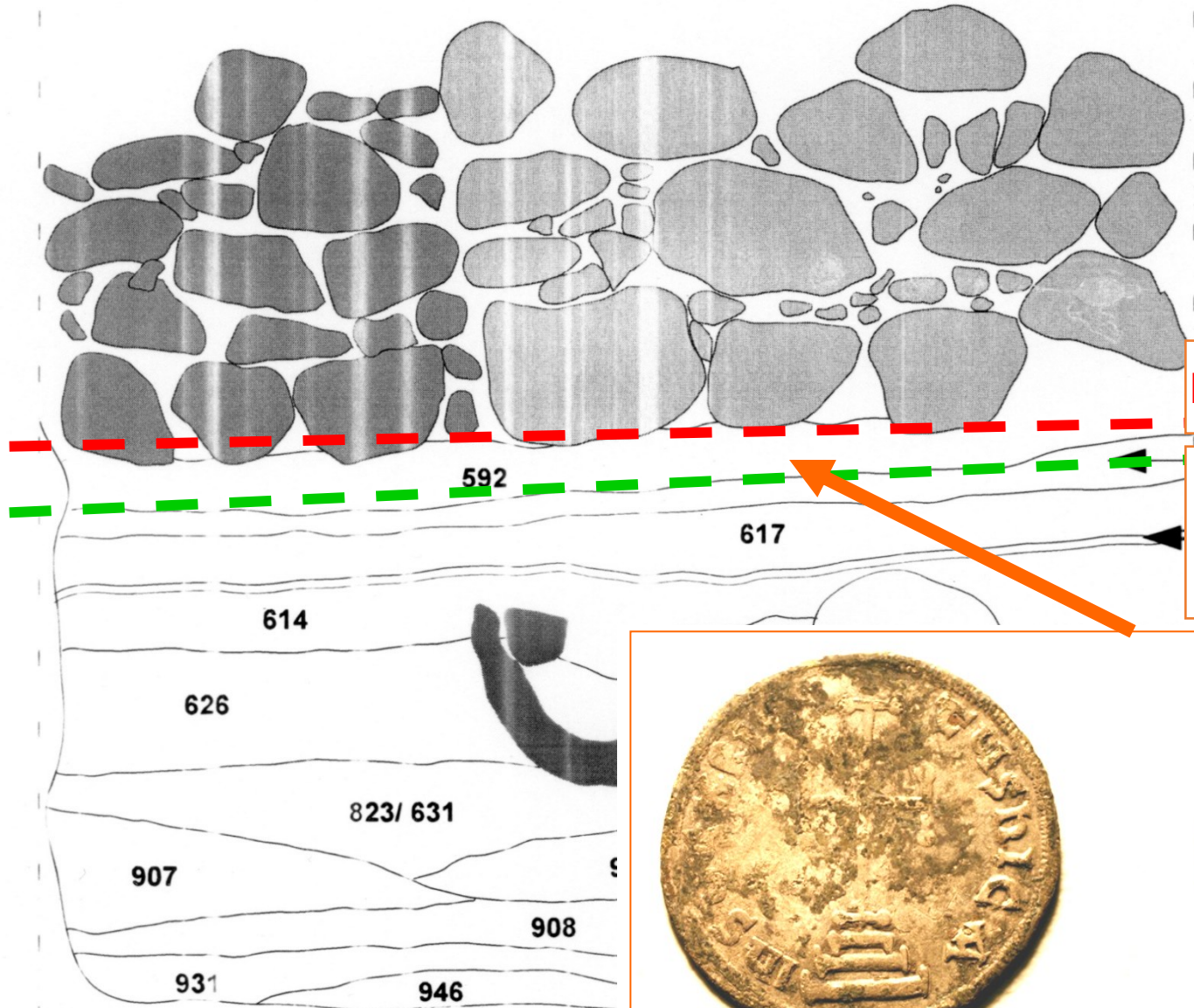






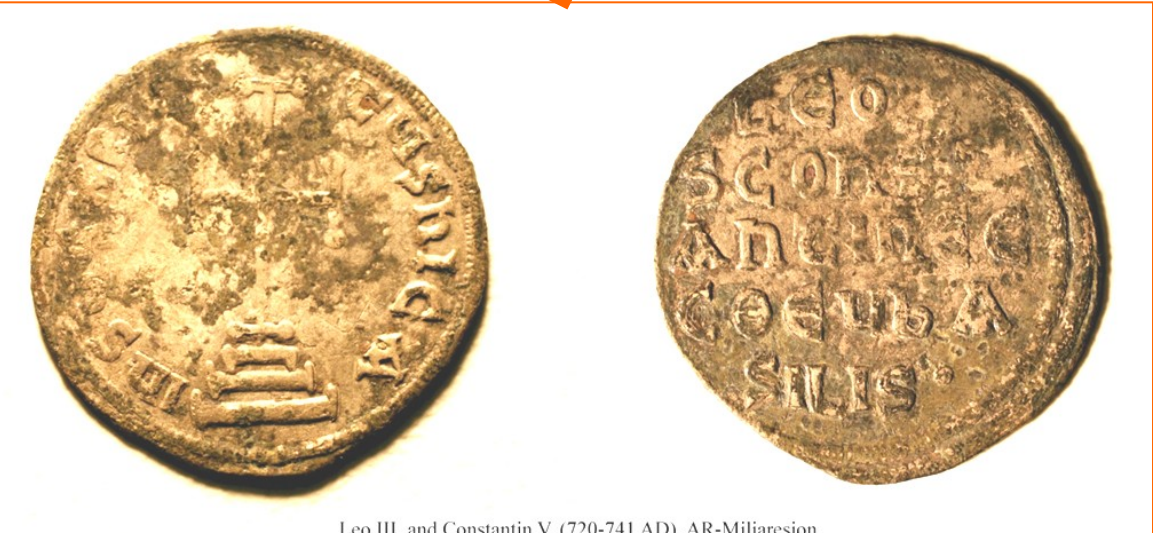
N

S



Floor level of C26(592)

Floor level of C 87 (616,617)



Leo III. and Constantin V. (720-741 AD). AR-Miliaresion





Floor C26(592) level

PP009 8/7  
C582 post  
exc.  
C592 pre  
exc.







[+] ΙΩΑΝΝ  
Η ΠΑΤΡΚ[.]  
ΙΩ ΜΑΓΙΣΤΡ(Ο)  
Σ ΚΟΜΙΤΗ  
Τ ΚΟΡΤΗΣ

John Petrikios  
Magistros  
Count of the  
Tent





8<sup>th</sup> – beginning of  
9<sup>th</sup> century  
amphorae



Priniatikos Pyrgos

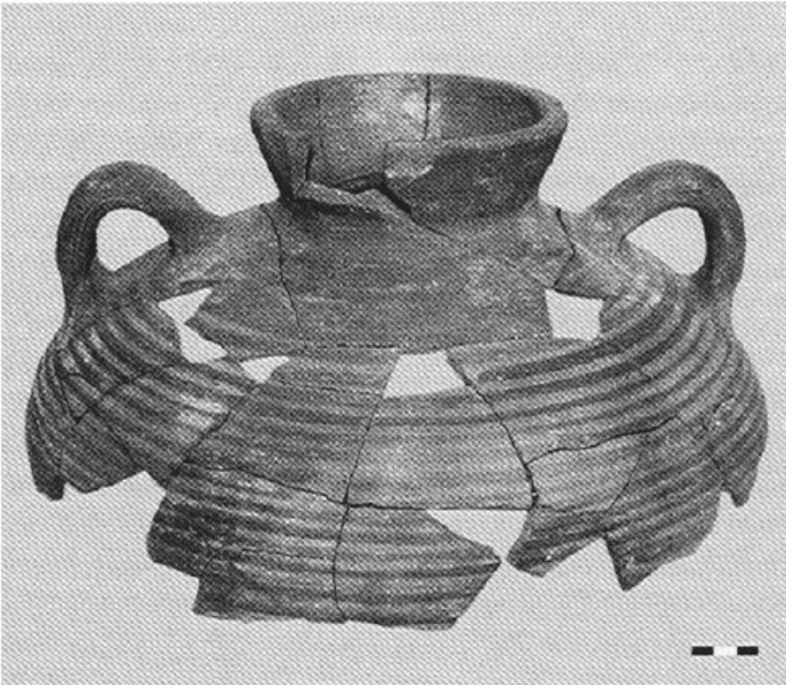


Pseira





# Arabic period pottery



Upper part of wine amphora from Palestine.



Glazed pitcher with gouged decoration, covered by dark green glaze



Semi-globular bowl with painted multicolor glazed decoration, imported from Cordoba region.



# Knossos

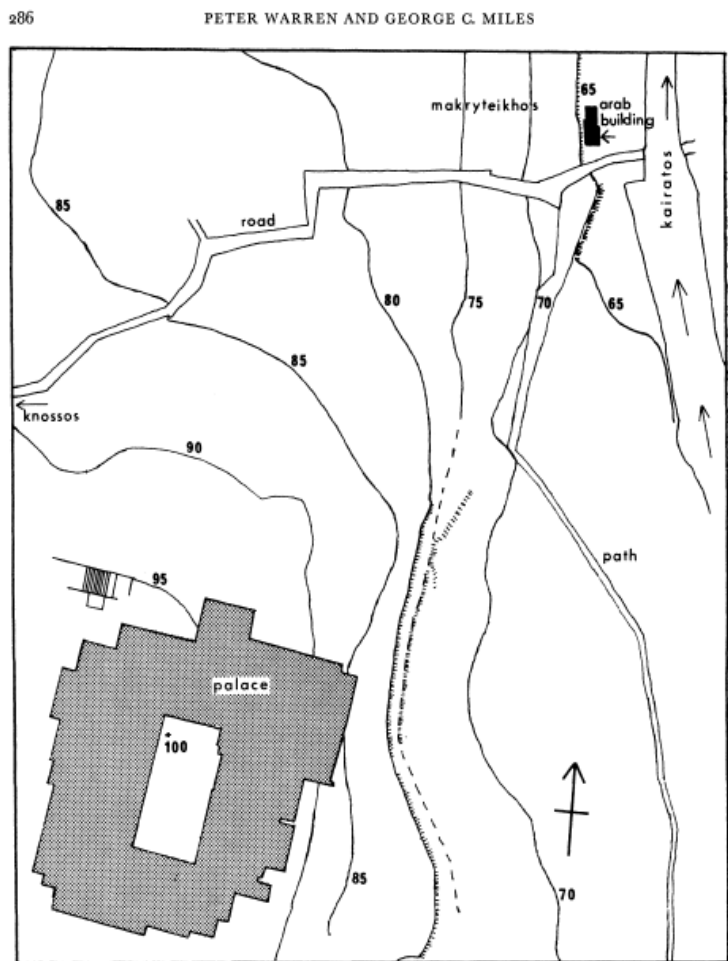


FIG. 1. LOCATION OF SITE. Scale 1:2,000. Contours at 5-metre intervals relate to datum of 100 in the Central Court of the Palace. From Knossos Survey by G. D. Sykes and P. Quin

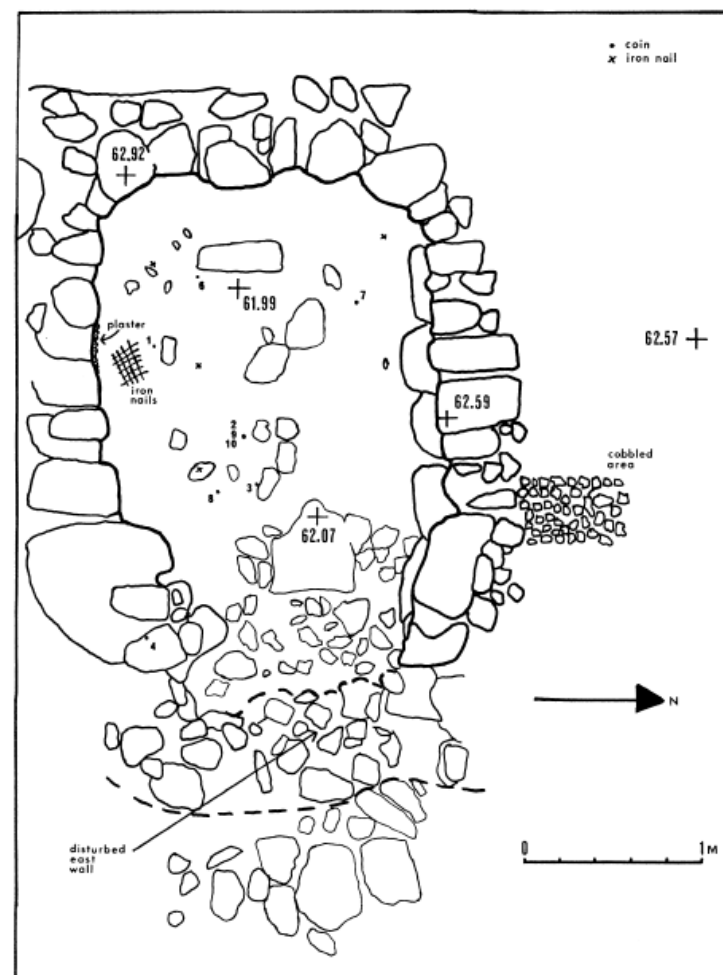
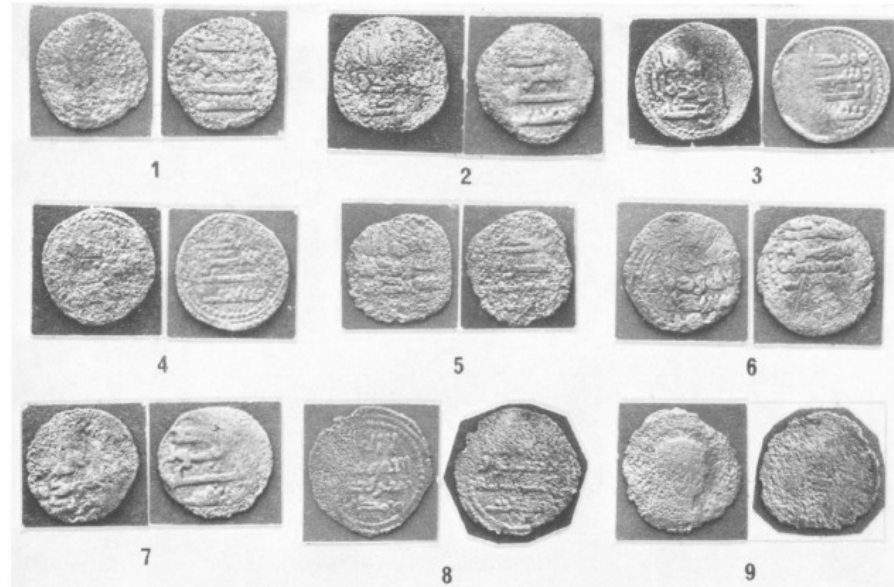


FIG. 3. ARAB BUILDING.

C 9008

Warren and Miles 1972



(a)



(b)

AN ARAB BUILDING AT KNOSSOS

(a) 1-8: Arab coins nos. 1 and 3-9; 9: Roman coin no. 10; (b) Roman or Arab period sherds from Arab building floor level



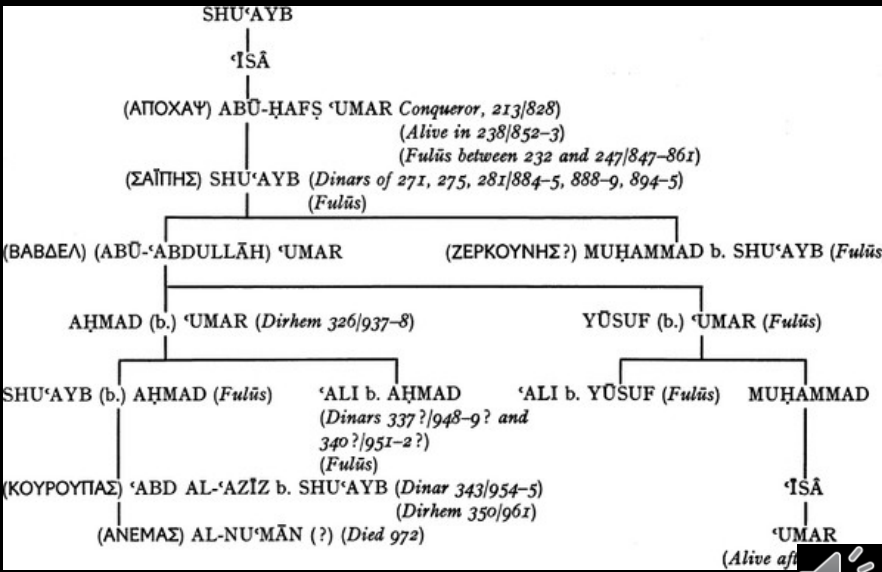
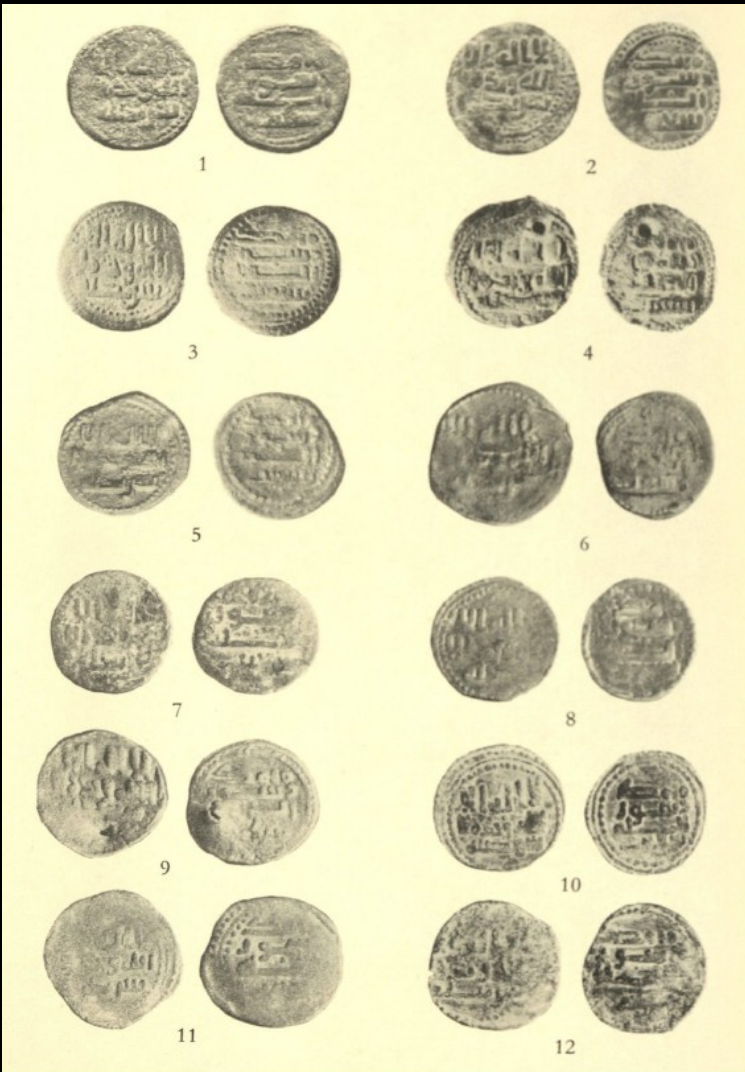
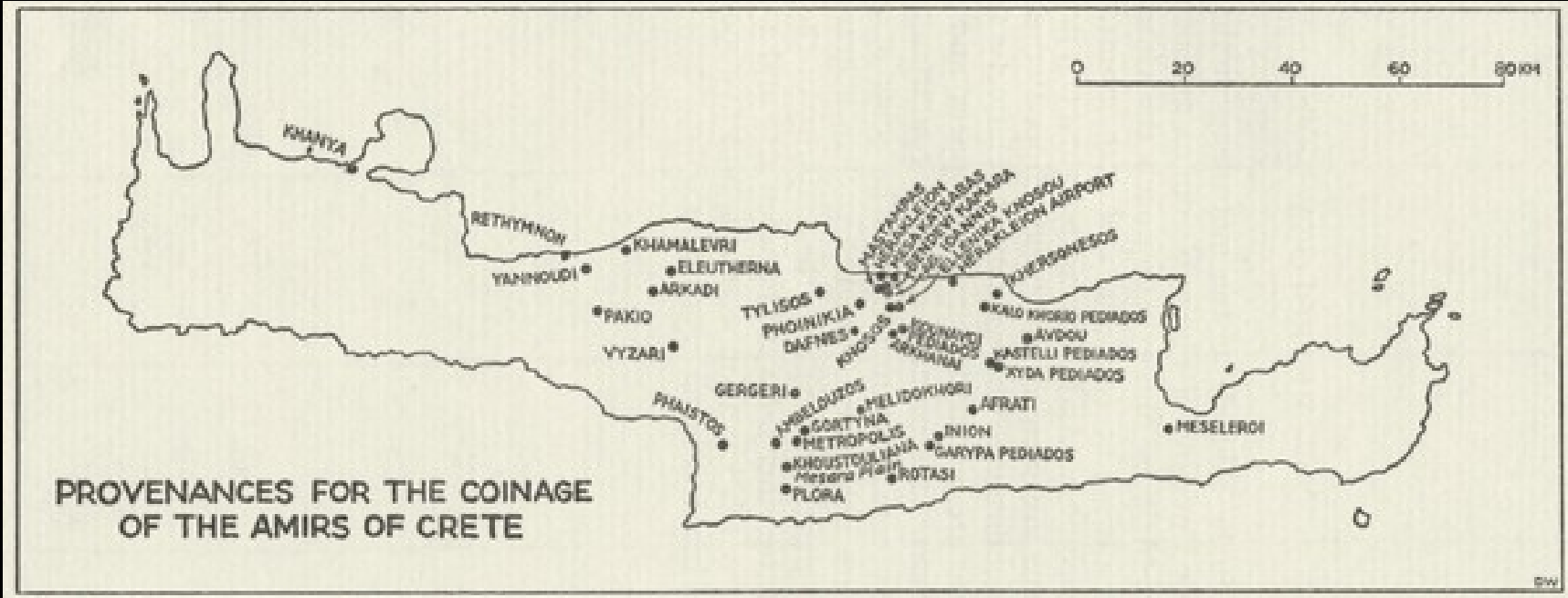


# Hoard - Crete

- 10th Century
- Stathatos collection, National Archaeological Museum, Athens

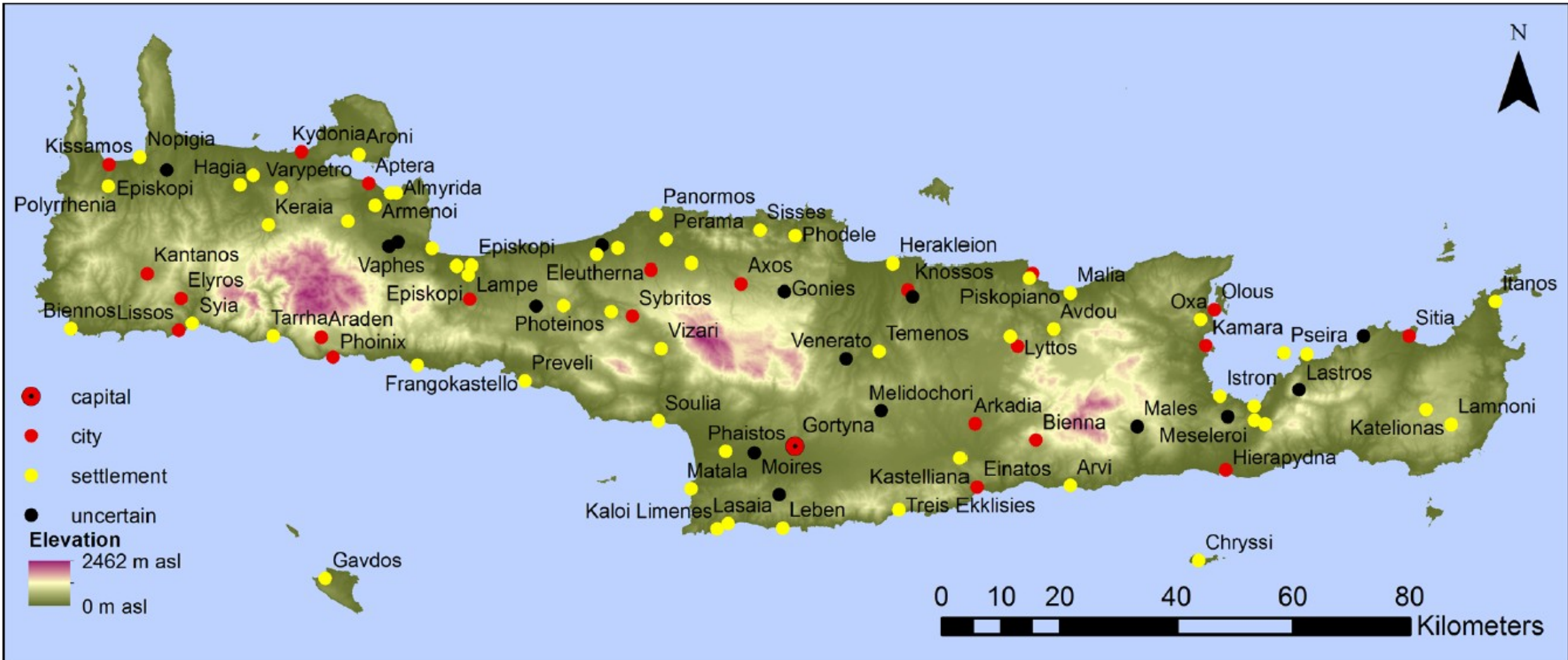


# Coins





# Early Byzantine Sites



# *Where are all the good people?*

- Pirate nest (?)
- Emigration (?)
- Settlements and cemeteries destroyed (?)
- Still not found (?) Why (?)

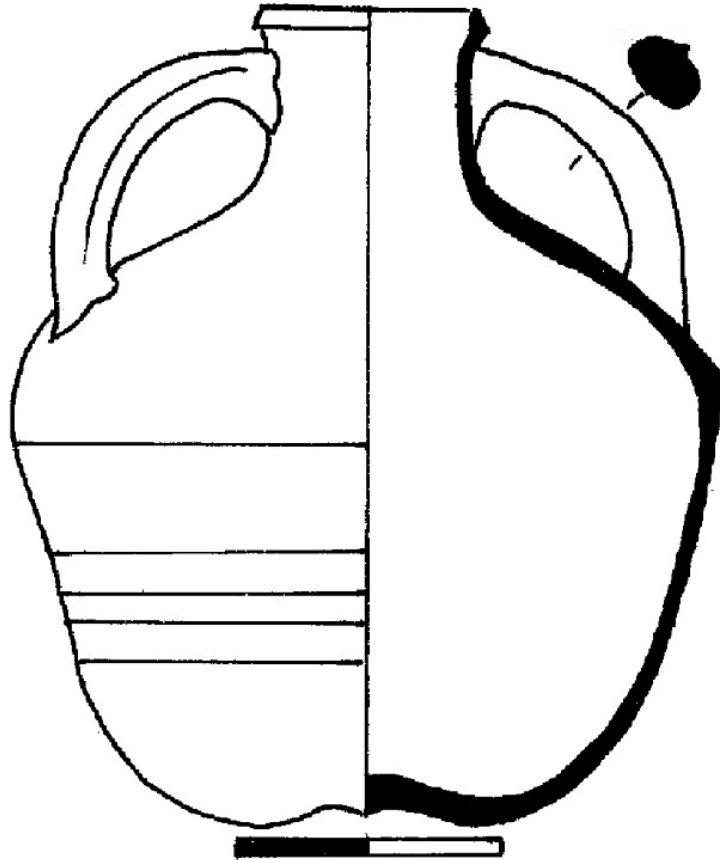


Fatimid cemetery, Asouan, 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> century. Reconstruct  
Björnesjö and Speiser 2014

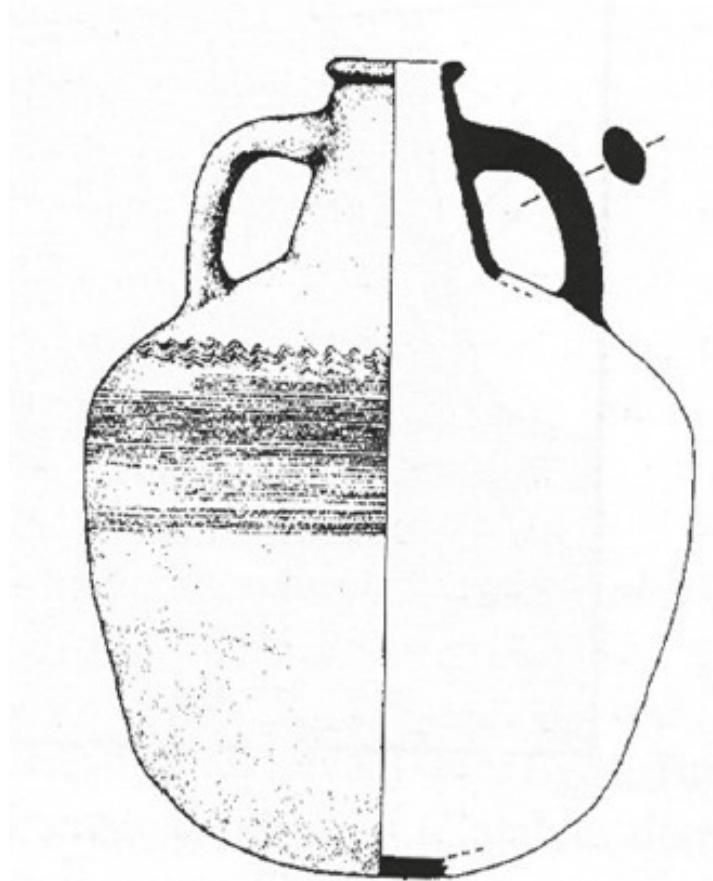




19th C water jar



Early Byzantine "Cretan" amphora



Yassi Ada Shipwreck



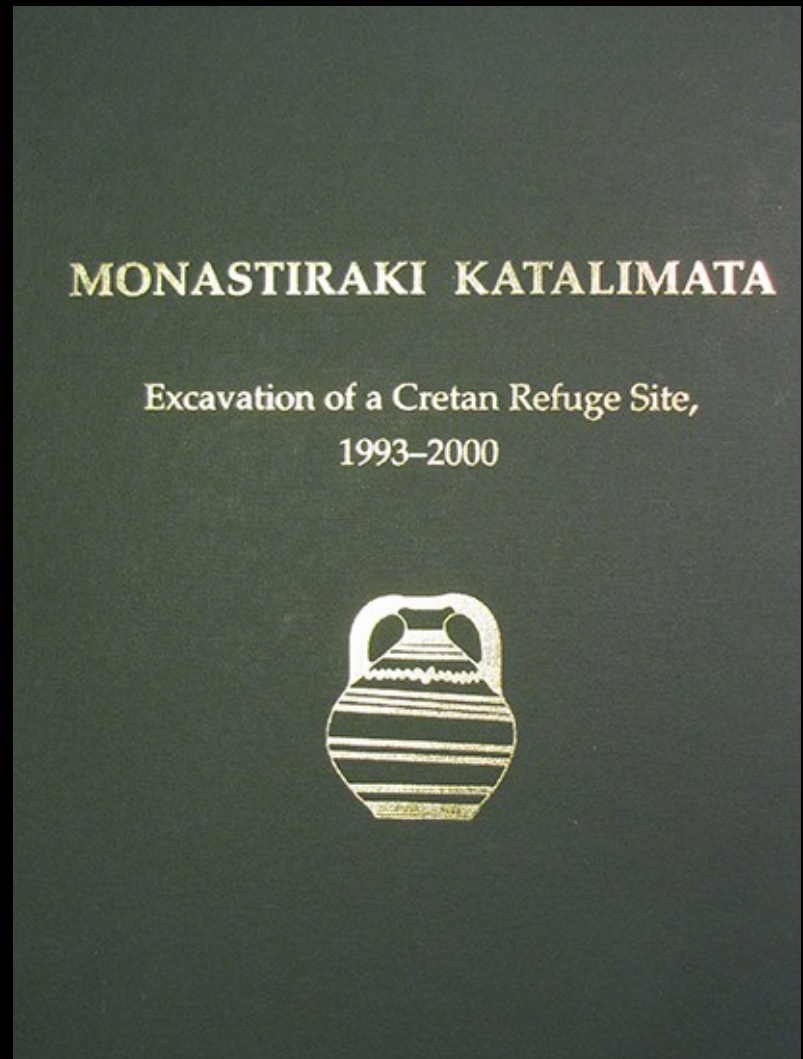
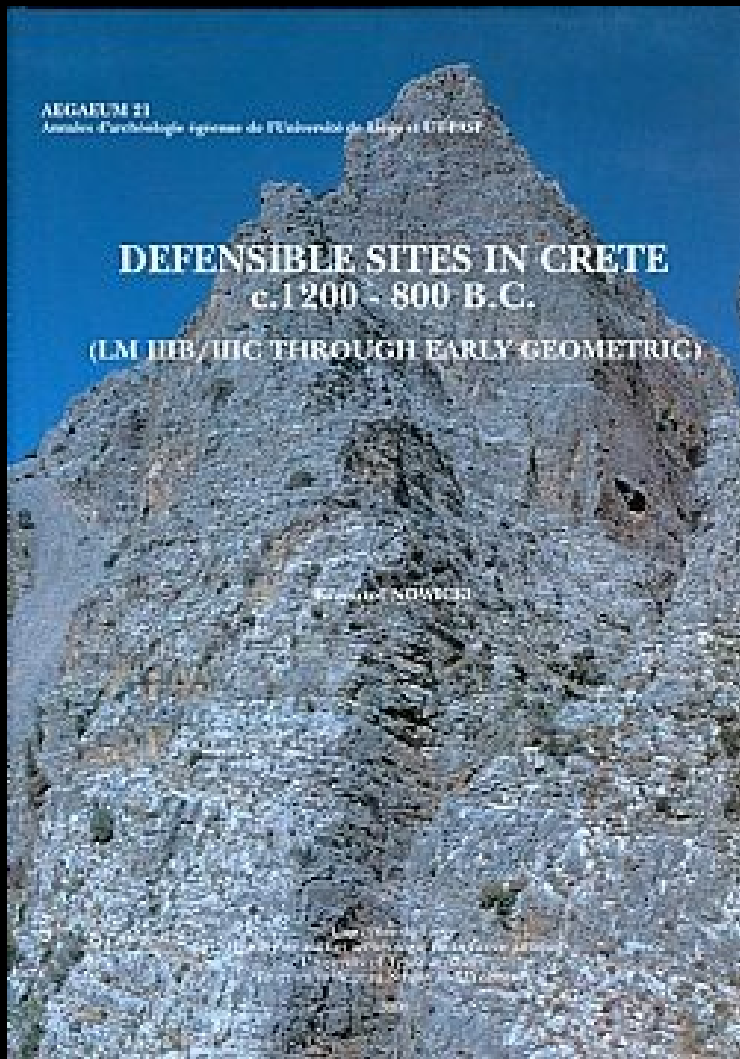


# Sarakina Gorge





# Krzysztof Nowicki





# Cha Gorge (Monastiraki – Katalimata)





# LM IIIC Settlements

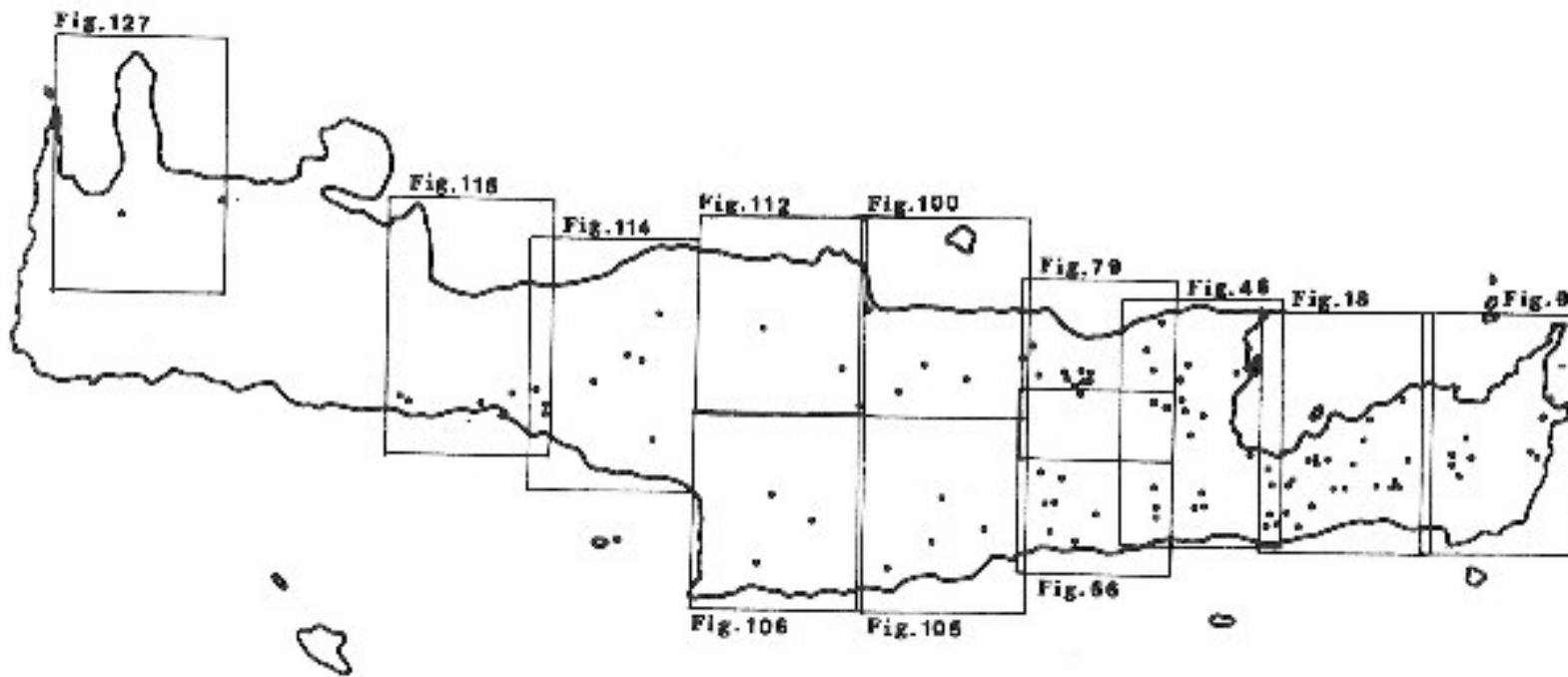
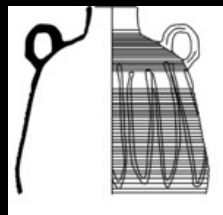
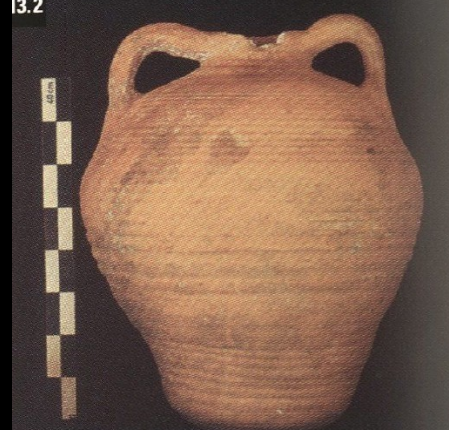
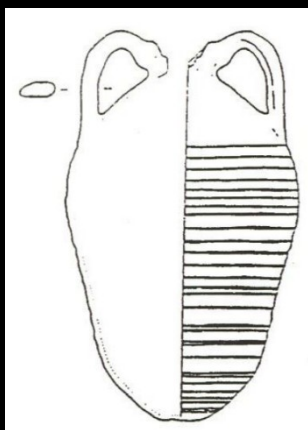
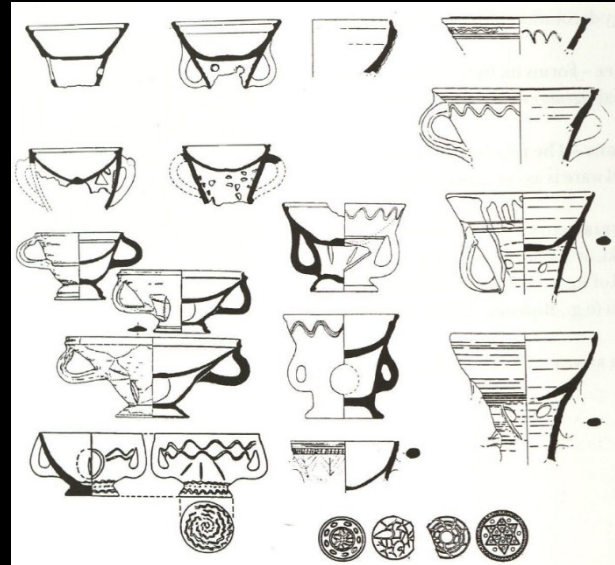
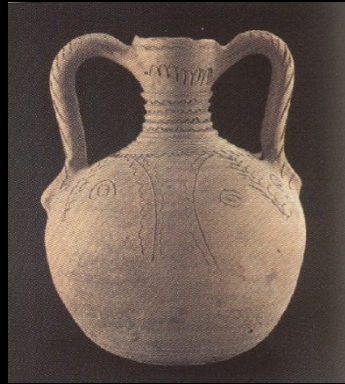
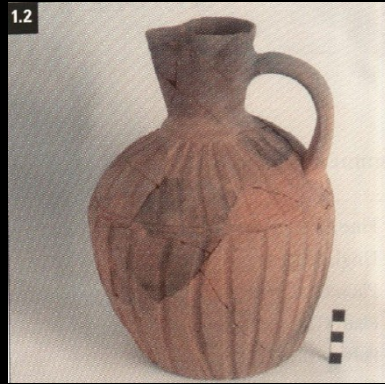


Fig. 3. Crete divided into geographical areas

# Pottery which possibly can be found



- Fine orange-red burnished gouged ware (since mid-10<sup>th</sup> c.)
- Unglazed incised ware (late 9<sup>th</sup> c.)
- Glazed on red and grey fabric (late 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> c.)
- Plain glazed ware in a white fabric (8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> c)
- Early polychrome ware (late 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> c.)
- Late Roman Amphora 5 and 6
- Günsenine I amphora/Hayes 54 (10<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> c.)
- Sarachane/Hayes 55 – 67











Adam  
Geisler





# Varipetro





























# Malathyros

















# Oxa



**Manolis Klontzas**







Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO  
Image © 2013 DigitalGlobe  
Image © 2013 TerraMetrics

Google earth



































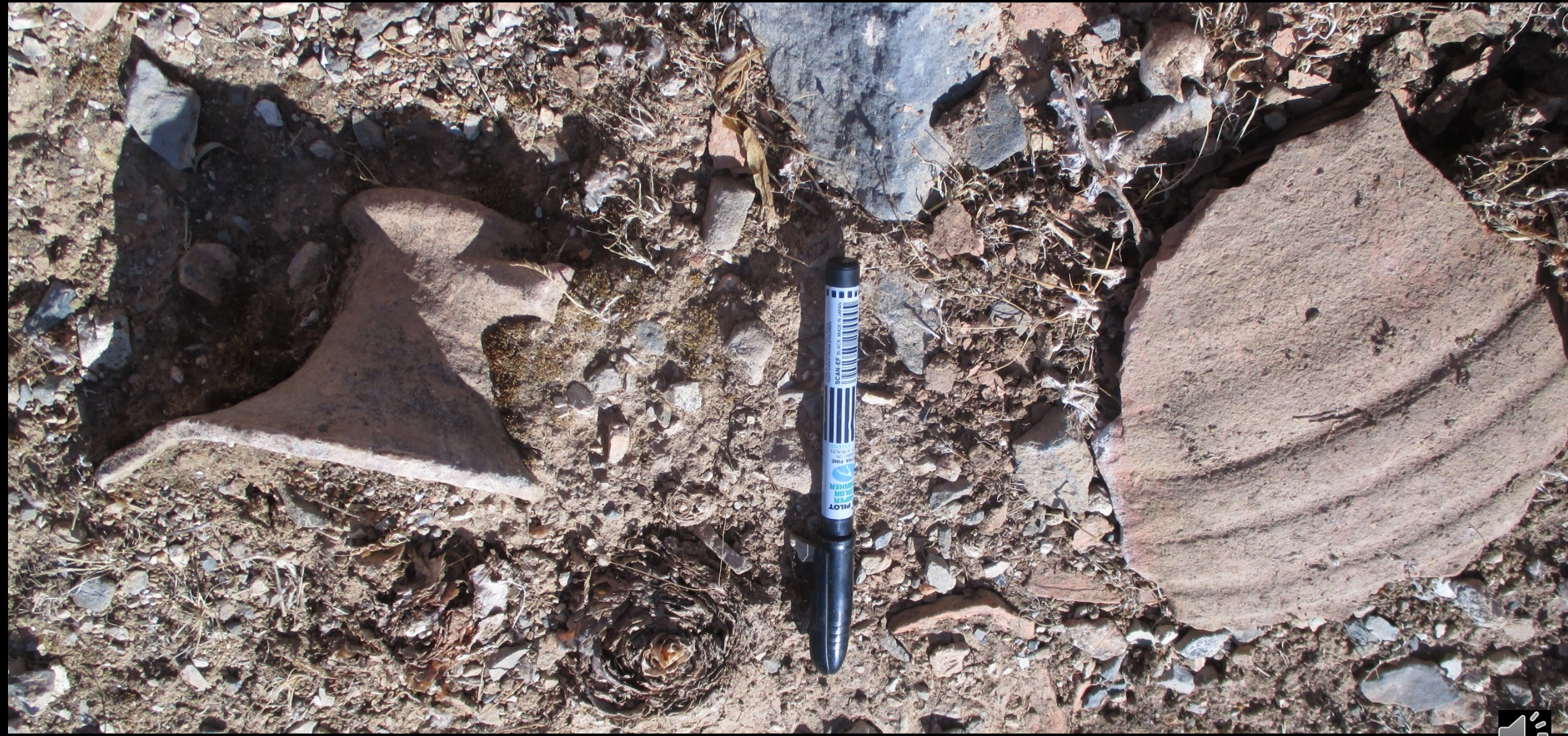














# Kerato



















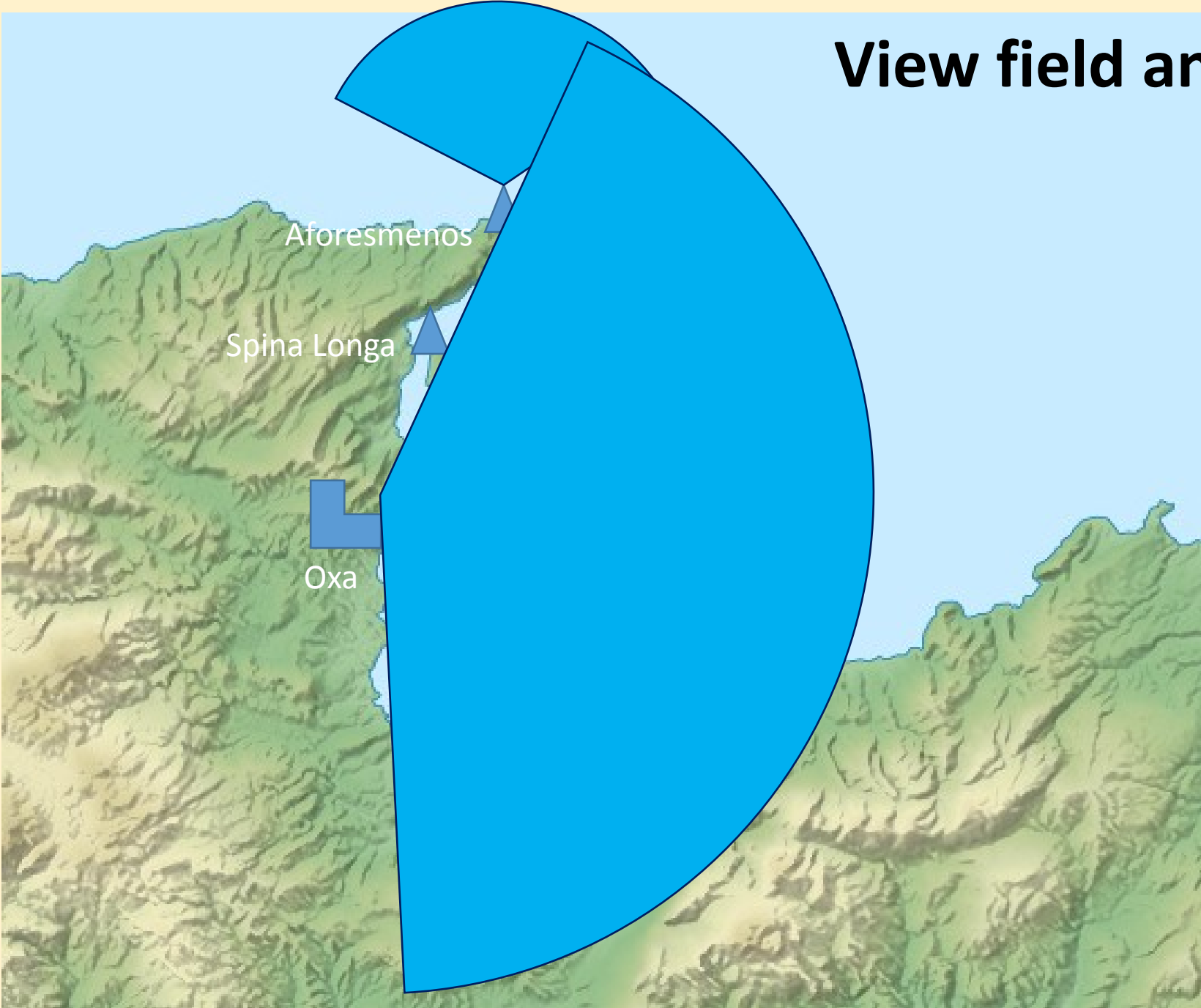
Liopetro







# View field angle





- Coastal mountain chain
- Naturally restricted access from the coast
- Excellent view of two bays
- Site well visible from a broad region (display of power)
- Excellent visibility from the sea
- Plateau or valley convenient for agricultural activities





# Nivica, Albania





# Vegetation



Rackham, O. and Moody, J. 1996: **The making of the Cretan landscape.**





# Acknowledgments

- Barbara Hayden
- IHSA (Barry Molloy, Jo Day, Christina Haywood)
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- Archaeological Ephorate - Agios Nikolaos (Georgia Moschovi)
- Sue Bridgefort
- Prof Vassilios Christides
- All my students, colleagues and cooperators
- INSTAP study center for East Crete
- Masaryk University
- Dumbarton Oaks





Thank you for  
your attention!



Malathyros: Western Crete  
On the summit of one of the possible 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> c. A.D. fortresses.

