

from – 1.74 (E6, south side) to – 2.14 (D7 and E7, north side). **Finds:** fine pottery fragments, painted (274 frgs; catalogued: **CN-Arch 34–35, CN-MinII 5**) and unpainted (407 frgs); coarse pottery (101 frgs); 2 tile fragments; terracotta; mud-brick (325 g); plaster (10 g); bones, of medium dimensions and with traces of burning; many small pieces of charcoal; fragments of chipped flint and obsidian (catalogued: **StN 7, 16, 28, 53**); very small bronze fragments. **Date:** second half 6th c. (fine Late Archaic pottery: 1 frg. of a kalathos rim; 2 frgs of black-glazed mugs **CN-Arch 34–35**; 1 frg. of an Archaic band kalathos; 1 frg. of a Laconian lakaina; 1 Corinthian bowl base). (Fig. 21)

*Postholes and clay lenses: descriptions of the stratigraphical units*

**D6/33:** oval cut filled by friable, dark brown-black soil. Covered by and cutting E6/20. Horizontal diameter max. 0.09 m; level at the top – 1.81.

**D6/43:** oval cut filled by friable, dark brown-black soil. Covered by and cutting D6/07. Horizontal diameter max. 0.065 m, 0.03 m deep; level at the top – 1.81.

**D6/45:** rectangular cut filled by friable, dark brown-black soil. Covered by and cutting D6/07. Horizontal dimensions 0.08 × 0.05 m, 0.025 m deep; level at the top – 1.80.

**D7/30:** circular lens of compact brown-black soil. Covered by D7/29; fills D7/31. Horizontal diameter 0.09 m, 0.025 m deep; level at the top – 2.08.

**D7/31:** posthole covered by and cutting D7/29; filled by D7/30, same dimensions.

**D7/32:** lens of yellow clay, of square shape, clearly recognizable in the surface but not in the section; can be interpreted as one of the clayey components of the layer, perhaps from a disintegrated mud-brick. Covered by and covers D7/28. Horizontal dimensions 0.10 × 0.10 m; level at the top – 2.11.

**D7/33:** lens of yellow clay, of rectangular shape, clearly recognizable in the surface but not in the section; can be interpreted as one of the clayey components of the layer, perhaps from a disintegrated mud-brick. Covered by and covers D7/28. Horizontal dimensions 0.07 × 0.02 m; level at the top – 2.16.

**D7/35:** circular lens of compact brown-black soil. Covered by D7/29; fills D7/36. Horizontal diameter 0.10 m, 0.02 m deep; level at the top – 2.08.

**D7/36:** posthole covered by and cutting D7/29; filled by D7/35, same dimensions.

**D7/37:** circular lens of compact brown-black soil. Covered by D7/29; fills D7/38. Horizontal diameter 0.06 m, 0.035 m deep; level at the top – 2.08.

**D7/38:** posthole covered by and cutting D7/29; filled by D7/37, same dimensions. (Fig. 22)



**Figure 22.** The posthole D7/38 in the second walking surface. (Photo: Tarditi)

**D7/39:** circular lens of compact brown-black soil. Covered by D7/29; fills D7/40. Horizontal diameter 0.08 m, 0.045 m deep; level at the top – 2.08.

**D7/40:** posthole covered by and cutting D7/29; filled by D7/39, same dimensions.

**D7/41:** circular lens of compact brown-black soil. Covered by D7/29; fills D7/42. Horizontal diameter 0.085 m, 0.03 m deep; level at the top – 2.09.

**D7/42:** posthole covered by and cutting D7/29; filled by D7/41, same dimensions.

**D7/51:** oval hole, filled by friable, dark brown-black soil. Covered by and cutting D7/50. Horizontal diameter max. 0.08 m, 0.04 m deep; level at the top – 2.11.

**D7/53:** circular hole filled by friable, dark brown-black soil. Covered by and cutting D7/50. Horizontal diameter 0.06 m, 0.04 m deep; level at the top – 2.03.

**D7/54:** circular hole filled by friable, dark brown-black soil. Covered by and cutting D7/50. Horizontal diameter 0.085 m, 0.035 m deep; level at the top – 2.02.

**D7/55:** irregularly circular hole, filled by friable, dark brown-black soil. Covered by and cutting D7/50. Horizontal diameter 0.09 m, 0.045 m deep; level at the top – 2.02.

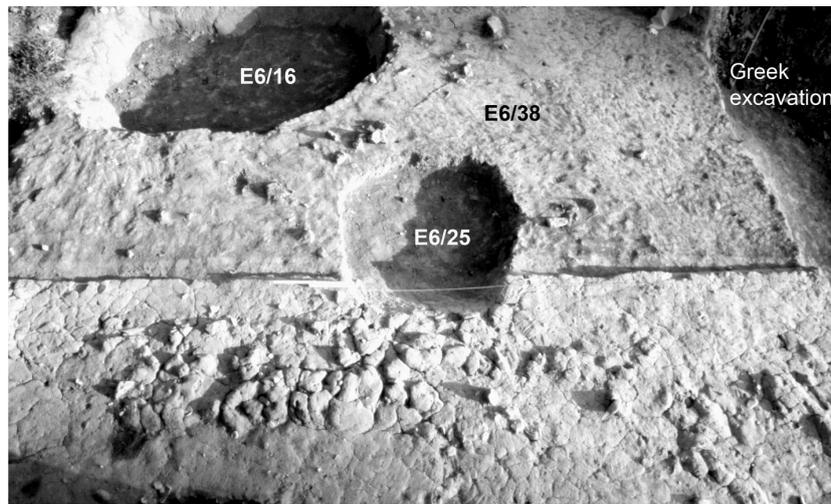
**D7/56:** rectangular hole filled by friable, dark brown-black soil. Covered by and cutting D7/50. Horizontal dimensions 0.105 × 0.04 m, 0.045 m deep; level at the top – 2.04.

**D7/57:** circular hole filled by friable, dark brown-black soil. Covered by and cutting D7/50. Horizontal diameter 0.05 m, 0.03 m deep; level at the top – 1.96.

**D7/61:** oval cut filled by friable, dark brown-black soil. Covered by and cutting D7/59. Horizontal diameter max. 0.08 m; level at the top – 2.16.



Figure 23. Plan of Archaic layers and structures in the squares C-E 6-7. Scale 1 : 75. (Prepared by E. Østby, after drawings by N. Masturzo)



**Figure 24.** The mud-brick wall E6/36 and the floor E6/37 on both sides of it, seen from the north. The surface E6/38, at a slightly lower level, and the pit E6/25 are also seen. (Photo: E. Østby)

**D7/62:** circular cut filled by friable, dark brown-black soil. Covered by and cutting D7/59. Horizontal diameter 0.07 m; level at the top – 2.11.

**D7/63:** rectangular cut filled by friable, dark brown-black soil. Covered by and cutting D7/58. Horizontal dimensions 0.06 × 0.05 m, 0.03 m deep; level at the top – 1.97.

#### **The mud-brick wall**

In the northern part of square E6 the layer E6/35 directly covered a cluster of lenses of very fine yellow clay (s.u. E6/36), with an east–west orientation, ca. 0.60 m wide and at least 5 m long, extending over the entire width of the square. This group has been interpreted as the lowest course of a mud-brick wall, which was removed and cut down when the walking surface E6/35 came into use; this surface is very thin at this point, only as thick as the sherds mixed with some soil on the surface of the clay lenses. (Figs 23–25)

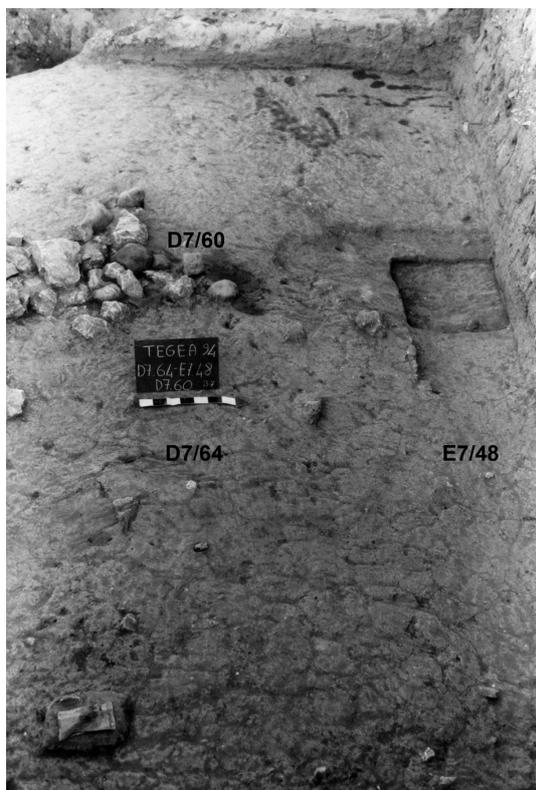
It is probable that the wall continued towards east and west: the eastern and western limits were probably destroyed respectively by the modern pit E6/13 in the east and by the trench opened by Dr Steinhauer in D6 toward the west.

During the excavation we dedicated great care to this structure, trying to establish the precise dimensions of each lens, in order to better define the shape of each mud-brick. Unfortunately they were too poorly preserved for a standard dimension to be identified. It was nevertheless possible to verify that the wall was constructed directly on the soil, without any particular preparation or a stone foundation:<sup>26</sup> the wall rested on a floor beneath it (s.u.



**Figure 25.** The mud-brick wall E6/36 and the floor E6/37 on both sides of it, seen from the east. (Photo: E. Østby)

<sup>26</sup> This building technique seems characteristic at Tegea, as attested by



**Figure 26.** The third walking surface, units D7/64 and E7/48; the group of stones D7/60 to the left. (Photo: Tarditi)

E6/37) which was at first the level on which the wall was constructed, and afterwards also the surface of use connected with the life of the wall. The sherds collected during the excavation indicate a date about the mid-6th century: the wall was probably built at this time, and destroyed some time during the second half of the same century.

We found no evidence for other elements connected with the wall which might suggest that it was part of a building. If the wall really was independent, its east–west orientation, parallel to the Archaic temple, may indicate that it served as the northern limit of the sanctuary, like a temenos wall.<sup>27</sup>

#### *Mud-brick wall: description of the stratigraphical unit*

**E6/36:** lenses of compact yellow clay, very fine, arranged to make a strip 0.60 m wide, with east–west orientation, extending through the width of the square. Covered by E6/20, covers E6/37; E6/35 and E7/46 lean on it. Horizontal

the discoveries in the temple sector, where the Geometric cult buildings of wattle and daub did not have any particular foundation. See *Tegea* I, sections i (Østby), 22–3, and ii (Nordquist), 114 and 150–1.

<sup>27</sup> This supposition is supported by the presence in the lowest layers of similar structures with the same orientation, discussed below.

dimensions ca. 5 × 0.60 m; 0.02–0.03 m thick; level at the top – 1.82 to – 1.83. **Finds:** on the surface very small sherds (none diagnostic) and fragments of burnt bone. (Figs 24–25)

#### *Third walking surface*

The walking surface connected with this phase was also recognized in squares D7 (D7/64) and E7 (E7/48). That the surface was used for walking is clearly indicated by the presence of small stones, fine gravel, fragments of pottery and burnt bones, also of significant dimensions, all in a horizontal position on the surface; the quantity of finds definitely decreases below the first 0.02–0.03 m of the layer. (Fig. 26)

It is interesting to observe that in square E6 the find material came mostly from the eastern half of the excavated area,<sup>28</sup> east of the alignment of stones observed on the surface of unit E6/35, although there is no difference to be recognized in the character of the soil.

In grid square D7, upon excavating unit D7/64, we found other stones connected with those observed in unit D7/60 and discussed below.

#### *Third walking surface: descriptions of the stratigraphical units*

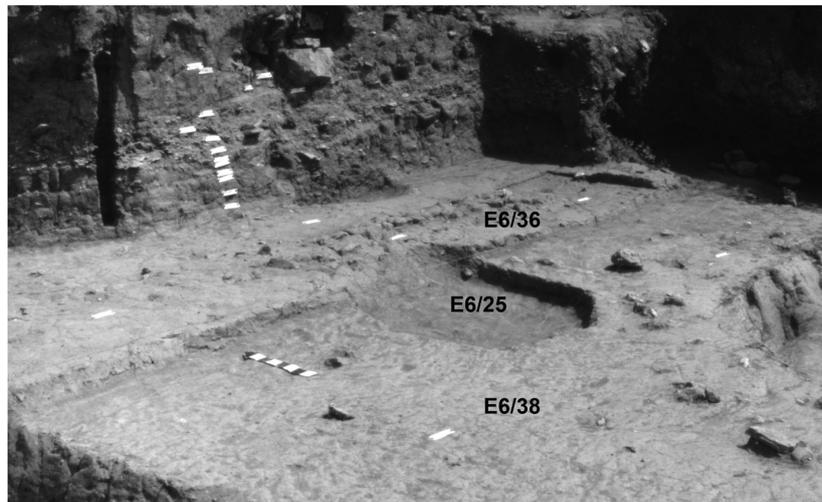
**D7/64, E6/37, E7/48:** layer of friable reddish-brown soil, with mixed composition, with small lenses of yellow clay and fine gravel. Covered by D7/58, E6/35, E7/46 and E6/36, covers D7/65, E6/38 and E7/49; leans on D7/60. 0.04–0.12 m thick; level at the top from – 1.78 (E6, south side) to – 2.23 (D7 – E7, north side). Unit E6/37 was excavated up to the line  $y = 29$  m, ca. 0.30 m south of the mud-brick wall E6/36. **Finds:** fine pottery fragments, painted (307 frgs; catalogued: **CN-CI 38**) and not painted (286 frgs); coarse pottery (54 frgs); fragments of tiles; terracotta (750 g mud-brick); plaster (10 g); burnt bones and pieces of charcoal; fragments of bronze, iron (nails), obsidian and flint (5 frgs). Bronze pin **BrN-P 18**; bronze ring **BrN-R 68**; bronze sheets **BrN-Sh 5, 29**; rim of a small bronze bowl (not catalogued, Tex no. 635); flint and obsidian blades **StN 12, 29, 39, 43, 49**. **Date:** mid-6th c. (pottery frgs; one base fragment of a Late Corinthian pyxis). (Fig. 26)

#### *Fourth walking surface*

Another walking surface, preceding this phase, was found all over the investigated area. On this surface there were small stones, sherds, fragments of terracotta and of burnt bones, some also of medium dimensions (length ca. 0.15 m). During the excavation we also collected fragments of mud-bricks and burnt terracotta.

The soil here is more reddish, fairly dry and friable, with some sand mixed with it. In this layer more stones appeared of the group already recognized in unit D7/60. (Fig. 28)

<sup>28</sup> More or less along the line  $x = 21$ ,  $y = 26$ –28 m;  $x = 22$ ,  $y = 29$  m;  $x = 23$ ,  $y = 29$  m.



**Figure 27.** The fourth walking surface in square E6 (unit E6/38), seen from south-west. In the background, the mud-brick wall E6/36. (Photo: E. Østby)



**Figure 28.** The group of stones D7/60 on the debris layer D7/66, seen from the east. (Photo: E. Østby)

The finds suggest a date in the first half of the 6th century. The layer was completely excavated over almost the entire area of the squares D7 (where only a strip on the north side was left) and E6, except for the northern part where the wall E6/36 was preserved together with part of the floor E6/37 (along the line  $y = 29$  m). (Fig. 27)

In square E6, after unit E6/38 had been excavated and the surface of the underlying layer E6/39 cleaned, we concentrated our activity on defining the individual bricks of the wall E6/36, focusing the work in square D7 and the western part of E7.

#### *Fourth walking surface: descriptions of the stratigraphical units*

**D7/65, E6/38, E7/49:** layer of friable reddish soil, fairly dry, mixed with sand; some stones of small and medium dimensions, some of them clearly burnt, are scattered on the surface, mostly in E6. Covered by D7/64, E6/37 and E7/48, covers D7/66, E6/39 and E7/50; leans on D7/60. 0.04–0.15 m thick; level at the top from – 1.87 (E6, south side) to – 2.26 (D7, north side). Fragments of terracotta, bone and charcoal. **Finds:** fine pottery fragments, painted (155 frgs; catalogued: **CN-G 7, CN-SG 9**) and not painted (273 frgs); coarse pottery (119 frgs); 2 tile fragments; burnt bones; small pieces of charcoal; terracotta (1,130 g mud-bricks); plaster (4 g); bronze fragments (sheets, pin). 1 fragment of a horse figurine of terracotta (not catalogued). Bronze sheet



**Figure 29.** The collapsed group of stones C7/123, /127, /133, seen from the north. (Photo: E. Østby)

**BrN-Sh 25;** bronze fibula **BrN-Fi 3;** fragments of a small bronze bowl **BrN-V 7;** small plaque of bone **BoN 10;** flint flake **StN 40.** **Date:** first half of 6th c. (pottery frgs: 1 frg. of a Corinthian kalathos rim; 1 frg. of a Laconian black-glazed vase with a purple band; small Laconian frgs). (Fig. 27)

**E6/39:** layer of friable reddish, “dry” soil; not excavated. Covered by E6/38. Level at the top – 1.80.

#### *Grid squares C7, D7: the groups of stones*

When the excavation of the layer D7/65 – E7/49 was complete, it was then possible to expose also the lower part of the group of stones (D7/60) which had barely appeared in unit D7/58. It consists of a group of limestone rocks of small and medium size and some pebbles, mixed with soil; in some points we observed that two or more stones overlapped.

Upon excavating the layers partially leaning on and partially covering unit D7/60 it was possible to observe that this was a cluster of stones. (Figs 23, 28) Originally they overlapped on at least two or three levels, an arrangement now lost because of the disintegration of the pile; but this is indicated by some stones which were found in the upper layers, where they could have been deposited after falling down from their original standing position. This group of stones might represent the destroyed and shattered remains of a fairly impressive structure, such as the foundation of a wall that rested on the surface of unit D7/66 beneath. Such a structure would have been constructed during the period when surface D7/66 was in use, between the end of the 7th and the beginning of the 6th century.

#### *First group of stones: description of the stratigraphical unit*

**D7/60:** irregularly rectangular cluster of stones, of small and medium dimensions, and small pebbles, all mixed with soil; the arrangement is discontinuous, with two or more stones overlapping at some points. Covered by D7/50, /58, /59, /64 and /65, covers D7/66. 0.25–0.30 m thick; horizontal dimensions ca. 2 × 1 m; level at the top from – 1.90 to – 2.18. (Fig. 28)

A similar group of stones, in a similar stratigraphical position, was discovered in square C7. The scattered cluster seems to go beneath the layers C7/113, /119 and /126, and the excavation in square C7 ceased when this group of stones had been cleaned. (Figs 23, 29) Continued excavation also in square C6 might better reveal the nature and function of this group of stones.

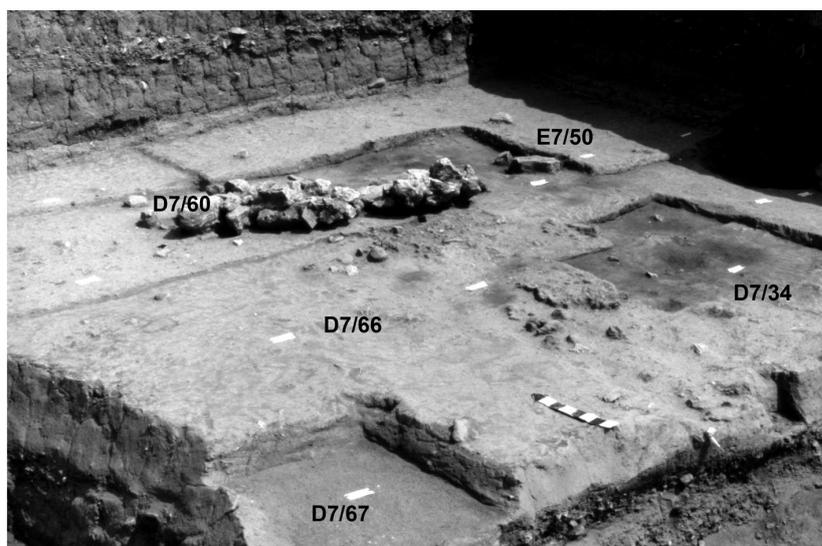
#### *Second group of stones: description of the stratigraphical units*

**C7/123, /127, /133:** covered by C7/113, /119, /126. Ca. 0.10–0.20 m thick; horizontal dimensions ca. 2 × 1 m; level at the top from – 1.81 to – 1.95. Concentration of stones and pebbles in the south-western part of square C7. **Finds:** fragment of Archaic terracotta sima **ArchN-Tc 3.** (Fig. 29)

#### *Third period: The 7th century*

##### *Grid squares D7, E7: the debris layer*

The excavation of the layer D7/65 – E7/49 brought to light the surface of the underlying layer D7/66 – E7/50,



**Figure 30.** The square D7 at the end of the excavation, with the 7th-century surfaces D7/34, /66 and E7/50, and the group of stones D7/60. In the foreground, the small excavated part of unit D7/67. (Photo: E. Østby)

characterized by a great quantity of burnt terracotta fragments, mixed with charcoal and a few sherds. The dating of the materials collected on the top suggests that the surface was used between the end of the 7th and the beginning of the 6th century.

This layer was partially excavated in the south-eastern quadrant of square D7 during a sounding made in 1992; it was then named D7/34, and was excavated only in its upper part. As we understood that the material was connected with a destruction, we decided to postpone the excavation to a moment when it would be possible to expose the entire surface of the sector. Thus the excavation was resumed here in 1994, over the entire area of square D7. (Fig 30)

This layer essentially consists of terracotta fragments with clear traces of burning, often with remains of plaster, and in many cases with the impressions of light materials such as straw or reeds, along with many pieces of charcoal. The concentration of these materials is stronger in the central part of the square than in the northern and southern parts, where there is more soil.

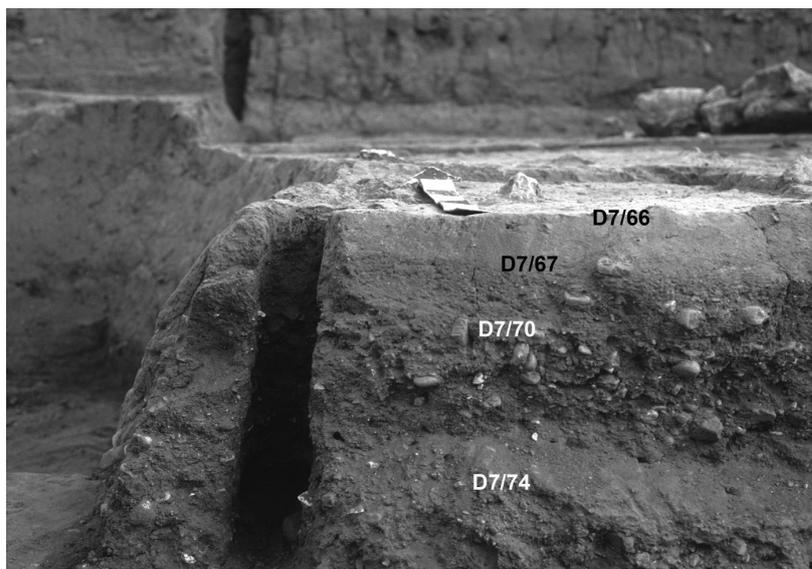
*The debris layer: descriptions of the stratigraphical units*

**D7/34:** layer consisting of a great quantity of terracotta fragments with clear traces of fire, mixed with friable and dry, reddish soil. Covered by D7/28 – /29, covers D7/67. Excavated in 1992 in the south-eastern quadrant of square D7. Horizontal dimensions 2 × 2.5 m (not completely excavated); level at the top from – 2.12 to – 2.20. **Finds:** many terracotta fragments, with traces of fire; in some cases the surface preserves remains of a thin white covering of plaster. Fragments of fine painted pottery (catalogued: CN-

PC 2), charcoal, many bronze and iron objects, complete or fragmentary (pins, sheets). Fragment of bronze sheet **BrN-Sh 35**; bronze discs **BrN-Di 6–7**; bronze bowls **BrN-V 2–3**. **Date:** second half of 7th c. (one frg. of a Protocorinthian aryballos **CN-PC 2**). (Fig. 30)

**D7/66, E7/50:** layer consisting of a great quantity of terracotta fragments with clear traces of burning, mixed with reddish soil, friable, perhaps from disintegrated terracotta. Covered by D7/60, /65 and E7/49, covers D7/67 – /69. Partially excavated in 1994 in squares D7 and E7. Ca. 0.09–0.15 m thick; level at the top from – 2.07 to – 2.43. **Finds:** many terracotta fragments, with traces of burning; frequently the surface preserves remains of a thin white coating of plaster (6,415 g mud-brick, 240 g plaster). Fine pottery fragments, painted (47 frgs; catalogued: **CN-LacPG 3**, **CN-PC 4–5**, **CN-SG 2, 8**) and unpainted (44 frgs); coarse pottery (19 frgs); 1 pithos (11 frgs); tiles (3 frgs); many pieces of charcoal, also of medium dimensions; fragments of bone; many bronze and iron objects, complete or fragmentary (sheets, pins, nails); 1 gold fragment; glass fragments. Bronze pin **BrN-P 84**; bronze sheet **BrN-Sh 2**; fragments of bronze bowls **BrN-V 4, 8**; small handle of bronze **BrN-V 19**; fragment of gold sheet **GdN 1**; bone objects **BoN 6** (model of double-axe), **13** (pin head); flint chip **StN 50**. **Date:** the surface was used until the beginning of the 6th c. (sherds: 1 frg. of pottery with compact, fairly shiny black glaze; 2 frgs of a Protocorinthian aryballos with matt and cracked glaze, not catalogued; Protocorinthian sherds **CN-PC 4–5**). The layer: end of the 7th c. (pottery: Subgeometric sherds **CN-SG 2, 8**). (Fig. 30)

The excavation of the layer D7/34 – D7/66 – E7/50 demonstrated that it consisted of debris mixed with soil; the debris came from a building of mud-brick where one side of the wall had been covered with white plaster. The building had probably been destroyed by a fire, as the traces of burning indicate. The layer was only partly



**Figure 31.** The southern trench wall of square D7, below the surface D7/66. The unit D7/66 has not yet been completely excavated; the layer of sand D7/67, the alluvial deposit D7/70 and the soil layer D7/74 are visible underneath. (Photo: Tarditi)

excavated. The collected finds can be dated to the 7th century: among the materials mixed with the debris there are important bronze and iron votive objects (sheets, pins, rims, bowls, etc.), in some cases with traces of fire, and for the first time in the northern sector they seem to be, at least to some extent, contemporary with the layer and not earlier. From this layer also came the only gold fragment found in the northern sector (**GdN 1**). We can conclude that the layer consists of debris and materials of the 7th century, and that its surface was used from the end of the 7th to the beginning of the 6th century, as indicated by the latest materials found on it.

We know from the excavation in the temple sector that in the early 7th century the sanctuary was damaged by a fire that destroyed the second Late Geometric temple, Building 1.<sup>29</sup> The votive objects collected during the excavation all over the sanctuary area indicate an abrupt and significant quantitative increase of dedications starting from the second half of the 8th and continuing particularly during the 7th century, following the general trend of Greek sanctuaries. The abundance of Orientalizing materials collected in the later layers of the northern sector demonstrates that during this time the sanctuary of Athena Alea was continuously used and frequented.

The excavations inside the Classical temple have shown that an intermediate building probably existed after the destruction of the Late Geometric Building 1 and before the construction of the monumental Archaic temple.<sup>30</sup> The evidence we have suggests that the northern sector was used to dispose of the debris of a

building which probably had a cultic function (as the connected objects and the care used on the building suggest); it was used during the 7th century and then destroyed by a fire. It is possible that the debris came from this intermediate building, which was then replaced by the more impressive Archaic temple towards the end of the century. During the monumental reorganization of the sanctuary at that time the debris of the intermediate building was discarded in the area immediately to the north of the temples, creating the surface that was used until the beginning of the 6th century.

Together with the other cluster in square C7 the cluster of stones found on this surface was intentionally deposited, probably as a foundation for an important structure, as indicated by the use of stone as building material. This use of stone in the sanctuary began by the end of the 7th century. This is attested not only by the Archaic temple, but also by the group of stones D7/60.<sup>31</sup>

#### ***Grid square D7: structures visible in the section***

The interpretation of the layer D7/34, /66 and E7/50 was made easier by some observations made in the sections of the layers beneath it, as they could be seen in the cuttings in the western (the Byzantine pit C6-C7/59) and southern (the Steinhauer trench) sides of square D7.

In the southern section it was possible to observe two layers below unit D7/66, each consisting of sand and

<sup>29</sup> See *Tegea* I, section ii (Nordquist), 112–3, 141 and 155. Building 2 had been destroyed in the same way.

<sup>30</sup> See *Tegea* I, sections i (Østby), 31–5, and ii (Nordquist), 73–6.

<sup>31</sup> See *Tegea* I, section i (Østby), 32 for the possibility that already the “intermediate” 7th-century temple building had a stone foundation. The Geometric cult buildings 1 and 2 of wattle and daub had no specific foundations; see *Tegea* I, section ii (Nordquist), 114 and 150.

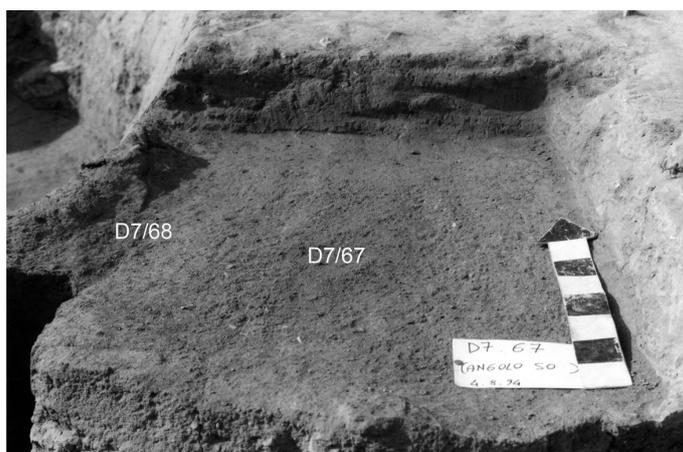


Figure 32. The surface of unit D7/67, in the south-western corner of the square. The cutting D7/68 can be seen to the left. (Photo: Tarditi)

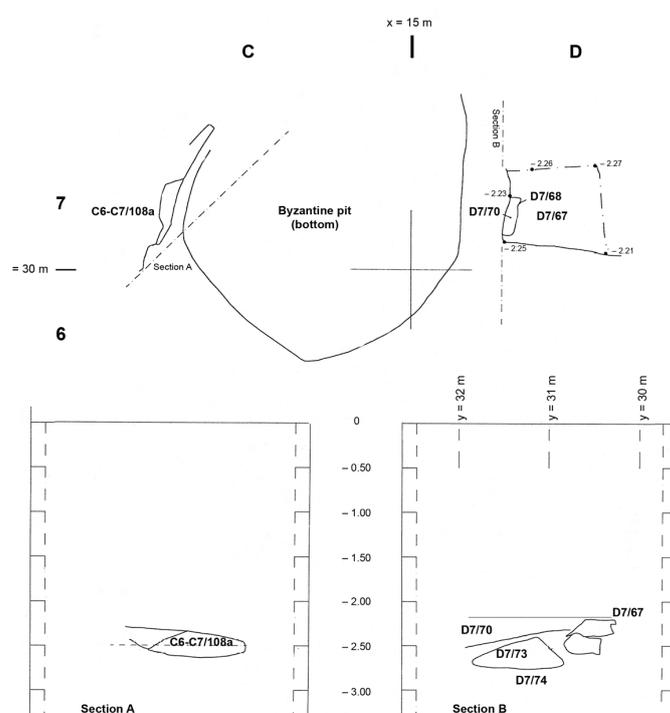


Figure 33. Early layers and structures identified in the walls of the Byzantine pit. Scale 1 : 75. (Drawings prepared by N. Masturzo and E. Østby)

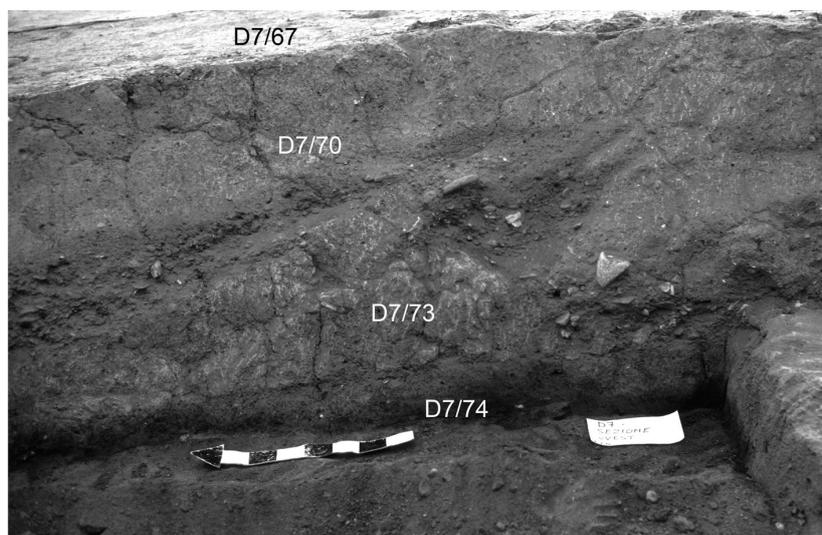
pebbles. They can be explained as the results of two different, successive floods, which had occurred with only a short interval in between. (Fig. 31)

In the western section, the first layer of sand (D7/67) under D7/66 has a regular, vertical cut (D7/68) with a fill (D7/69) where the soil and materials are similar to unit D7/66, which covers it. (Figs 32–33)

In order to explore the nature and the direction of the cutting D7/68 and of the connected fill D7/69 we made a small sounding in the south-west corner of D7, where we

excavated unit D7/66 entirely and cleaned the top of the underlying sand in unit D7/67. (Figs 30, 32)

We observed that the cutting D7/68 and its fill D7/69 do not continue towards the east, but stop on a slightly oblique line; they are then ca. 0.06 m deep to the south and 0.10 m deep to the north, and 0.32 m wide. What we found is the east end of a cutting and its filling that must continue towards the west; and in fact, in the western wall of the large Byzantine pit (in the eastern section of square C7) we could identify a cutting going in a vertical



**Figure 34.** The western trench wall of square D7, with the early triangular structure D7/73 between the units D7/70 and /74. (Photo: Tarditi)

direction, in a position corresponding to the cutting D7/68, with the same dimensions and the same kind of fill. (See the plan and sections, *Fig. 33*) Unit D7/66 probably covered this structure completely, since we found that layer both south and north of it, and it partially filled the evident slope towards the north. From the western section of square D7 we observed that this episode, with the cutting D7/68 and its fill D7/69, is the latest, in chronological order, of a group of three similar structures.

In fact, underneath D7/67 a similar situation can be observed, since there is another vertical cutting (D7/71) here in the sand layer unit D7/70, and this cutting is also filled with soil mixed with debris (unit D7/72).

Covered probably by D7/70 (less likely by D7/67) we have a third structure, slightly further to the north than the others; it is made of yellow clay, and has a triangular shape: D7/73. (*Figs 33–34*) All these elements are parts of a structure with an east–west orientation, and the structure D7/73 is clearly recognizable also in the western wall of the Byzantine pit (C6-C7/108a).

This structure of yellow clay, which was probably made of mud-brick and rests directly on a thick layer of dark brown soil (D7/74 = D6/15), was already observed in all sections of square D6, where it seems to be covered by the first (in chronological order) of the alluvial layers of sand and pebbles. (See the stratigraphical photo and drawing at the end of the text, *Figs 36–37*)

*Cuttings and fills under D7/66: descriptions of the stratigraphical units*

**D7/67:** layer of medium grey sand, of not very fine texture; in the bottom part of the layer the sand is mixed with small

pebbles. Covered by D7/66, covers D7/70 and /72; cut by D7/68. Level at the top from – 2.21 to – 2.26. The layer is excavated in the south-western corner of square D7, and is visible in the western and southern sections of square D7 and in all the sections of square D6: it can be explained as an alluvial deposit. (*Figs 30–33*)

**D7/68:** cutting of trapezoidal shape, with the southern wall almost vertical, visible in the western section of square D7; continues towards east, slightly oblique, for only a few centimetres. Covered by D7/66, cuts D7/67; filled by D7/69. Width 0.32 (top) to 0.50 m (bottom); preserved depth max. 0.09 m; level at the top – 2.25. (*Figs 32–33*)

**D7/69:** fill of fairly friable and dry, reddish soil, very similar to the soil of D7/66. Covered by D7/66, fills D7/68; width 0.32 (top) to 0.50 m (bottom), 0.08–0.10 m thick.

**D7/70:** layer of medium grey sand, of not very thin texture: in the bottom part of the layer the sand is mixed with small pebbles. Covered by D7/67, covers D7/73 – /74; cut by D7/71. The unit is visible in the section on the southern and western side of D7 and in the side of D6. It can be explained as an alluvial deposit. (*Figs 31, 33–34*)

**D7/71:** rectangular cutting with vertical southern wall. Covered by D7/67; cuts D7/70; filled by D7/72. The unit is visible in the section on the southern and western side of D7. Depth 0.18, width max. 0.42 m (bottom); level at the top – 2.42.

**D7/72:** fill of D7/71, consisting of reddish soil, mixed with some fragments of burnt terracotta. Covered by D7/67; fills D7/71. Depth max. 0.22, width max. 0.42 m (bottom); level of the top from – 2.36 to – 2.42.

**D7/73:** structure of triangular section, made of yellow clay, visible in the western section of square D7. Covered by D7/70, covers D7/74. Depth 0.35, width 1.02 m. (*Figs 33–34*)



Figure 35. Sounding in deeper layers in square D6, in the 1994 season. (Photo: E. Østby)

**C6-C7/108:** structure of triangular section, made of yellow clay, visible in the eastern section of square C7 (the Byzantine pit C7/59). Dimensions, position and level of the top as D7/73. (Fig. 33)

**D7/74:** layer of very fat dark brown soil, visible in the western and southern sections of square D7 and recognizable in all the sections of square D6 (D6/15). Covered by D7/70 and /73. Level at the top from  $-2.63$  (south side) to  $-2.72$  (west side). (Figs 31, 33–34)

In order to better understand the nature and chronology of unit D7/74 we made a small test trench in square D6. We cleaned the surface of D6/15 (where Dr Steinhauer had concluded his excavation) and excavated a small rectangular area in the north-western corner of the square, 1 m long (from  $x = 16.00$  to  $17.00$  m) and 0.22 m wide (from  $y = 29.78$  to  $30.00$  m).<sup>32</sup> The finds (small sherds, charcoal and small bone fragments) provide a date for the units D6/15 = D7/74 in the Late Geometric period.

The structure with triangular section D7/73 – C6-C7/108, which was probably destroyed by the flood attested by the thick deposit of sand and pebbles D7/70, could also be dated to this period.

After this destruction, a structure with a similar east-west orientation was built slightly further to the south, and a cutting (D7/71) was made for it in the alluvial deposit and filled with mixed material, probably debris (D7/72).

This structure was destroyed by another flood (which left the layer of sand and pebbles D7/67), and it was then rebuilt in the same position and with the same technique,

including a cutting in the alluvial layer (D7/68) filled with the same kind of mixed materials, soil and debris (D7/69).

Both were very simple structures, built with debris and were not very thick (ca. 0.30–0.35 m). Probably they were mixed structures, such as a kind of bedding on the soil for a wooden fence.

The final structure was eventually covered by what seems to be a large fill (D7/66), that filled in at least partially the evident downward slope towards the north. As we saw, the finds indicate that the surface of this fill was used between the end of the 7th and the beginning of the 6th century.

It is very difficult to interpret these structures, since they are so poorly preserved. They all appeared in the same position and with the same alignment, and if they continued in the same way to the west in square C7, we may suggest that they represent a kind of northern limit of the sanctuary area: first they were made of mud-brick, in the Late Geometric period; later, they were twice rebuilt with simpler materials, apparently in a period of crisis; and finally they were covered by a thick filling by the end of the 7th century. In the same period the sanctuary flourished, as attested by the construction of the first peripteral temple and by the great quantity of votive objects found during the excavations (bronze pins, lead figurines, fine pottery, etc.). The fill covering the ancient structures may suggest that the sanctuary was enlarged towards the north when the Archaic temple was constructed.

The mud-brick wall identified in square E6, and dated to the second half of the 6th century, has the same east-west orientation but is located slightly to the south of those structures, as if now this was once again the limit of the sanctuary area.

<sup>32</sup> Coordinates: 1:  $x = 16.00$ ,  $y = 30.00$ ,  $z = -2.63$  m; 2:  $x = 16.00$ ,  $y = 29.78$ ,  $z = -2.59$  m; 3:  $x = 17.00$ ,  $y = 30.00$ ,  $z = -2.64$  m; 4:  $x = 17.00$ ,  $y = 29.78$ ,  $z = -2.73$  m. See Figs 1 and 23.

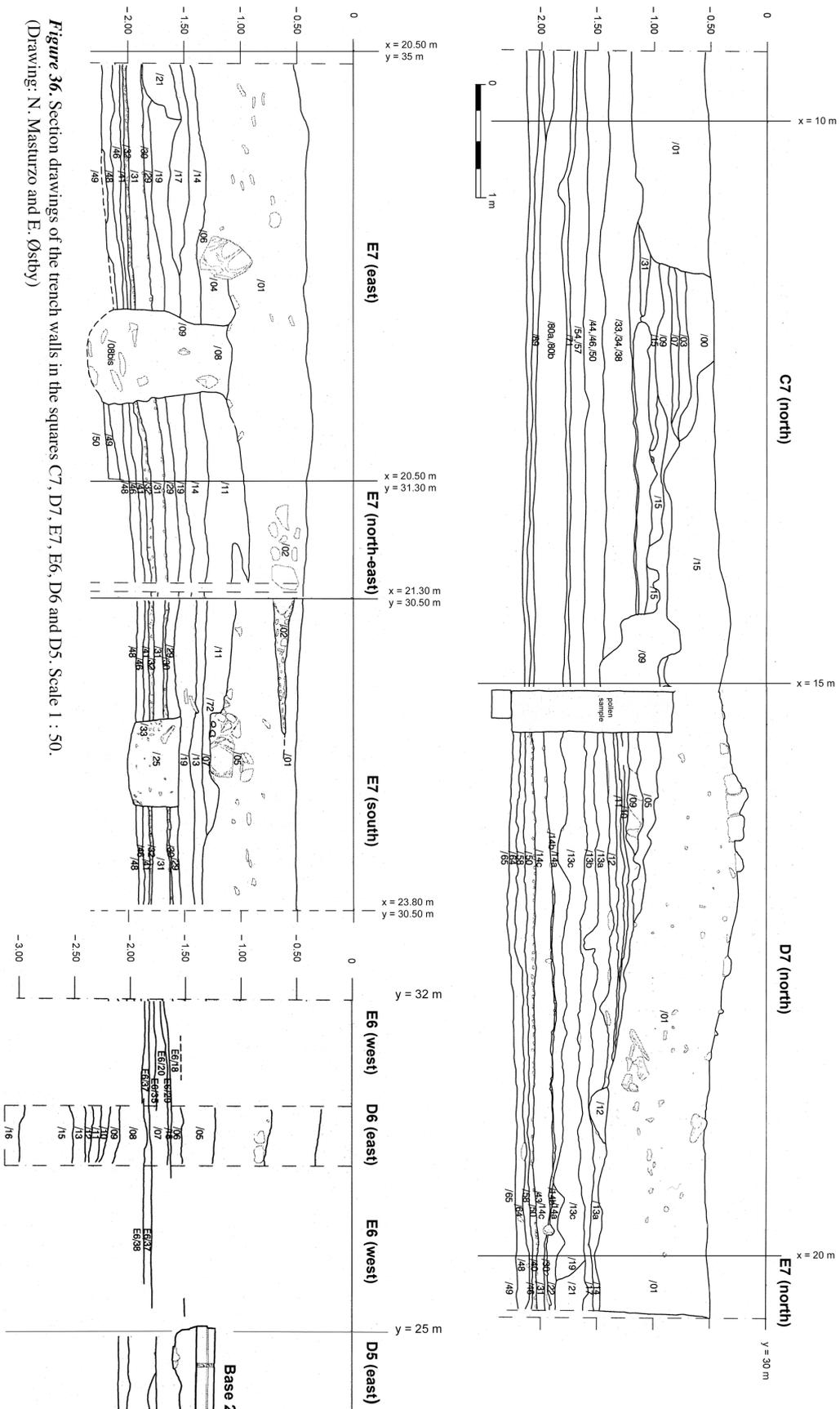


Figure 36. Section drawings of the trench walls in the squares C7, D7, E7, E6, D6 and D5. Scale 1 : 50. (Drawing: N. Masturzo and E. Østby)

### *Fourth period: The Geometric epoch*

#### *Preliminary observations*

The sounding on the northern side of square D6 was started in order to check the chronology of unit D6/15, and was continued in order to verify Dr Steinhauer's stratigraphical sequence in the south-eastern corner of the square. (*Fig. 35*)

The dark brown layer is fairly thick (ca. 0.40–0.50 m), with small variations in the concentrations of sherds or small pieces of charcoal. Only by excavating it over a larger area will it be possible to identify different stratigraphical units.

Below this Late Geometric layer there is another layer, characterized by a great quantity of yellow clay; Dr Steinhauer indicated that it was sterile (D6/16: 0.20–0.25 m thick). We collected some very small pottery fragments, not chronologically significant. Below this (at – 3.36) we found a pebble layer (D6/20), from which we also collected a few small pottery fragments, not diagnostic.

Below the level – 3.46 the sounding was continued only with core-drillings, which testified to the presence of a thick clay layer. The drillings were carried down to – 4.01: at – 3.96 a small terracotta fragment turned up, as evidence for human presence at the site.

These drillings made clear that this is a pluri-stratified site, where some layers have been deposited by a sequence of different floods, connected with the hydro-morphological situation of the area and with the action of the Sarandapotamos river close by.<sup>33</sup>

#### *Conclusions*

Our research in the northern sector of the sanctuary of Athena Alea has identified an unbroken stratigraphical sequence that starts from the Geometric period, the most ancient phase reached by the excavation.

At present, we do not completely understand how this area was used during the Geometric period (for cult or for dwelling?). The votive objects demonstrate that in the 7th century this area was certainly directly connected with the sanctuary, although we cannot identify its exact function.

The northern sector was an open space, with a slight downwards slope towards the north. In the southern part of square D7 we have evidence for three successive structures, all with the same east–west orientation, practically overlapping each other on the same alignment. They were destroyed by floods, as attested by the deposition of thick layers of sand and pebbles; after each destruction another similar structure was constructed.

Awaiting from future excavations further evidence

that could explain more precisely the use of the area to the north of these structures, we may suggest that they indicate the northern limit of the sanctuary during the 7th century since they were repeatedly constructed in the same place. The last of these modest structures was covered by the layer of debris dated to the end of the 7th century; on its surface a new structure was built, somewhat further north, but substantially in the same position as the earlier and smaller, linear structures. This new structure was made with far greater care, as attested by the group of stones which is now very disintegrated, but was once of important dimensions.

The importance of this wall is demonstrated by the use of stone as a building material. The date at the end of the 7th century coincides with a time of extensive building activity in the sanctuary. This is attested by the construction of the Archaic temple, the first cult building at the site where we know that stone was used. The stone wall may have been important for another reason if it defined the northern limit of the sanctuary, and it was now built in a way that reflected the new monumentality which was also evident in the Archaic temple.

During the 6th century other floods occurred, probably caused by the nearby river Sarandapotamos. These floods are attested by the significant rise of the soil level, about 0.20 m in approximately 50 years. After each flood a new walking surface was formed, the use of which is attested by the materials found on it (mostly sherds and fragments of animal bones).

About the mid-6th century a mud-brick wall was built in this area, of large dimensions (more than 5 m long and ca. 0.60 m wide), which crossed this part of the sanctuary in an east–west direction. This wall is preserved only in the lowest course of mud-bricks, and there is no evidence for another wall being connected with it or covering it. Moreover, there is apparently no difference in the use of the surface north and south of it. Probably the wall was intentionally cut and destroyed, as indicated by its regular surface, and its top was used as part of the second walking surface by the end of the 6th century. Since the direction and the position of this mud-brick wall coincide with the earlier and simpler structures of the 7th century and with the cluster of stones, the mud-brick wall may perhaps be understood as another reorganization of the northern limit of the sanctuary; by the mid-6th century it became necessary to reconstruct or partially replace the stone wall with this mud-brick wall on the same orientation.

At the end of the 6th century the sanctuary was probably enlarged towards the north, as attested by the destruction of the mud-brick wall and by the homogeneous use of the entire area, which seems always to have been left open. Two regular pits north of the mud-brick wall, probably for bases of objects of large dimensions (votive monuments?), confirm that this part of the northern sector was now inside the sanctuary.

Modest structures connected with the use of the

<sup>33</sup> Further discussed in section ii (Ødegård and Klempe).

walking surfaces are attested by the groups of post-holes, of small dimensions, that could be identified at different levels (but never on the floor with which they are connected). Some of these postholes, all of which are at almost identical levels, are grouped into a semicircular shape of ca. 2.5 m diameter. The dimensions of the posts suggest that this was a modest structure, uncovered or with only a very light roof, and not made for long-term use since the posts were intentionally removed and not left in position. It could have been a kind of temporary fence or shelter made for a festival or ceremony.

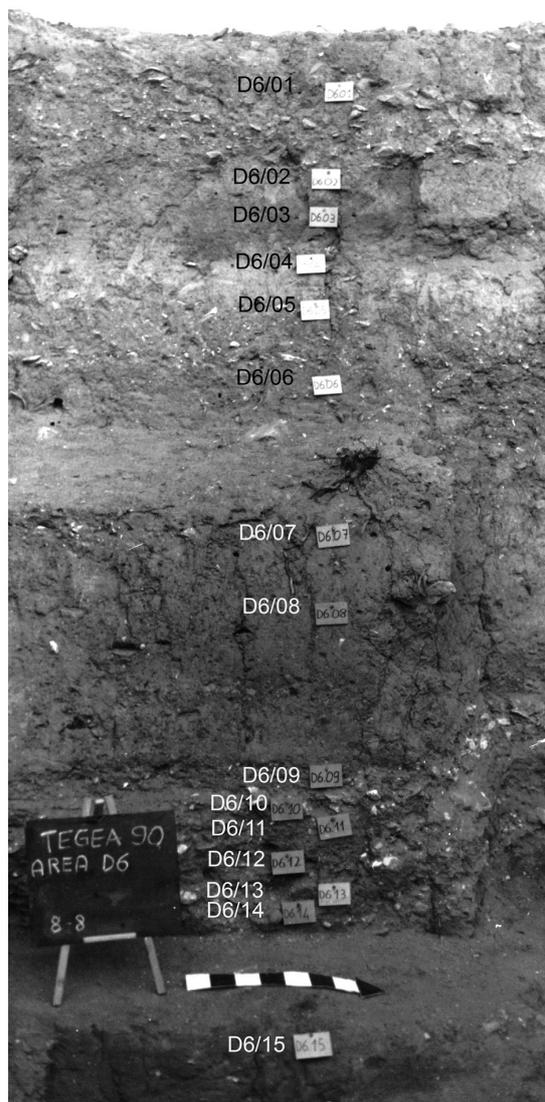
At the end of the 6th or the beginning of the 5th century a new floor was created in this area, with pebbles of small and medium dimensions; it is attested in all parts of the excavation. The floor was uniform and regular, and extended all over the open area. This pebble floor was in use throughout the 5th and part of the 4th century. Its surface preserved no particular evidence of use, neither in the form of materials deposited on it nor by any structure. However, it is possible that this floor was the surface connected with the light, curved structure attested by the postholes.

The pebble floor was followed by layers directly connected with the building of the Late Classical temple: soil containing bronze objects, probably from the excavation of the foundation trenches for the temple, was deposited on this floor. This northern area was perfectly suited for the disposal of a great quantity of soil, since it was very close by and free of structures. With this fill the natural northwards slope was then slightly reduced. A similar function of filling and levelling was repeated by the marble chip layer that was made of waste material from the final work on the marble blocks of the temple. Since we have not found traces of the construction site, the blocks were probably worked elsewhere; nevertheless the chips were discarded here, perhaps because there was a specific intention to reduce the slope at this point and/or to create a solid surface.

After this fill, it seems that no further building activity took place in this part of the sanctuary, with the exception of the Late Classical monument bases 1 and 2 discovered by the French archaeologists at the southern limit, immediately above the layer of marble chips.

We did not find any evidence to suggest that the function and purpose of the projecting foundation on the northern flank of the temple could be connected with some feature in the northern area.

The surface of the marble chips layer remained exposed for a long time, certainly for many centuries, as attested by the materials of Late Hellenistic and Early Imperial date which were found on it. Strangely, this long exposure did not create a homogeneous and compact floor



**Figure 37.** The layer sequence in the western trench wall of the Greek excavation in square D6, documented in 1990. (Photo: Tarditi)

that could be easily identified by the materials deposited on the surface or by its compact consistency. It is difficult to explain this situation. It is possible that this open area was periodically cleaned up, with any trace connected with its use being regularly removed – or, more simply, this may have been a part of the sanctuary which had no specific use, as the absence of any structure seems to indicate.