

Prehistoric seafaring in the Mediterranean (part II):
to the Early Bronze Age in the Aegean



Experimental archaeology and ethnographic analogy to study Mesolithic and Neolithic seafaring in the Mediterranean region



Harry Tzalas' *papyrella* reconstruction and trials to Melos, the source of obsidian in the Aegean



Why did Harry Tzalas choose to reconstruct a reed (papyrus) boat that is archaeologically unattested in the Mesolithic/Neolithic Mediterranean region, vs. a dugout canoe that is archaeologically attested (Neolithic Lake Marmotta)?



Fig. 5



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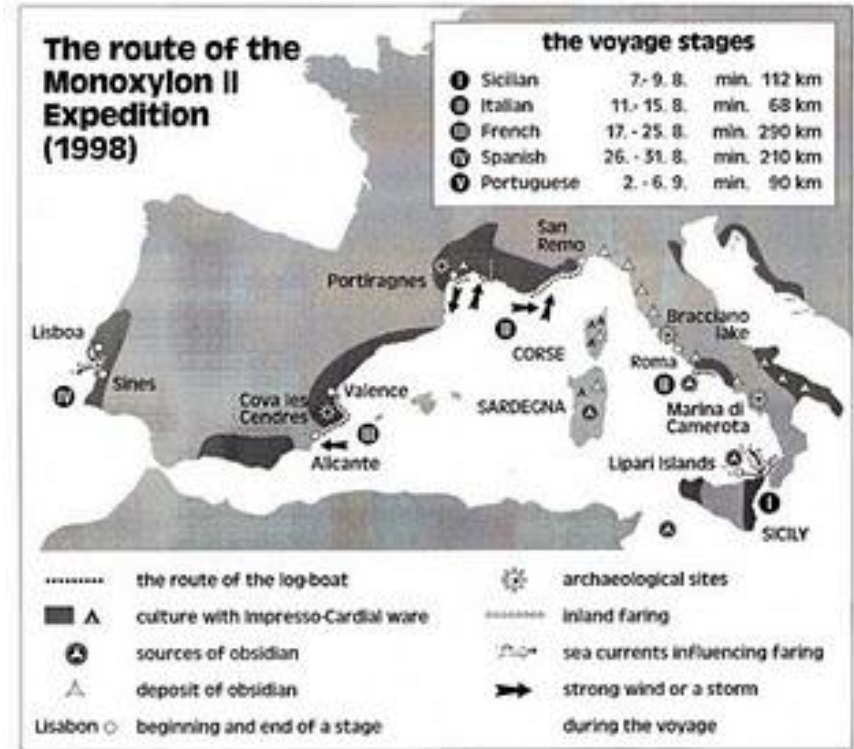


Fig. 5

Tzalas did not believe that dugout canoes were seaworthy

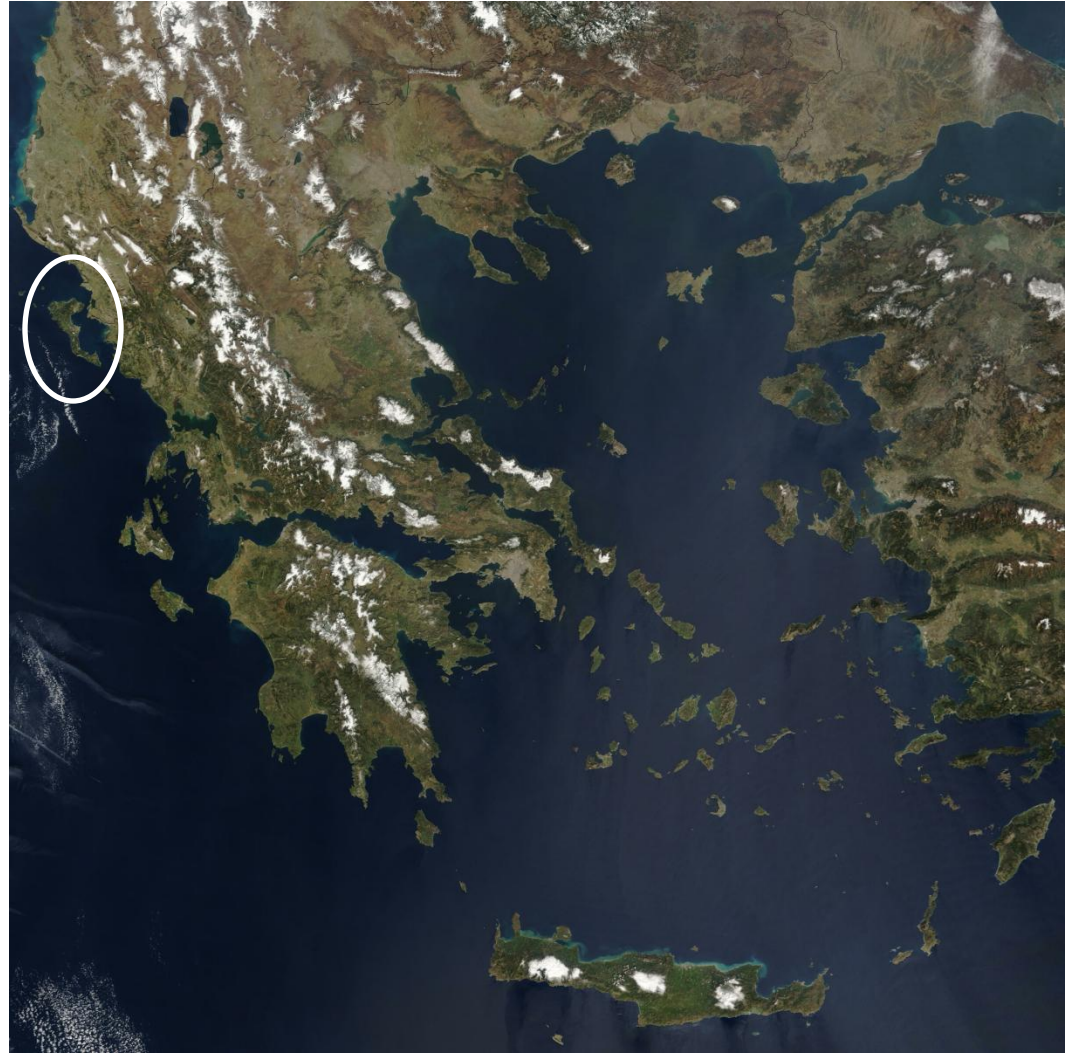


EXPEDICE MONOXYLON / Pocházíme z mladší doby kamenné



...but this was disproven in the later reconstruction and sea trial of 'Monoxylon' (replicating the Lake Bracciano canoe)

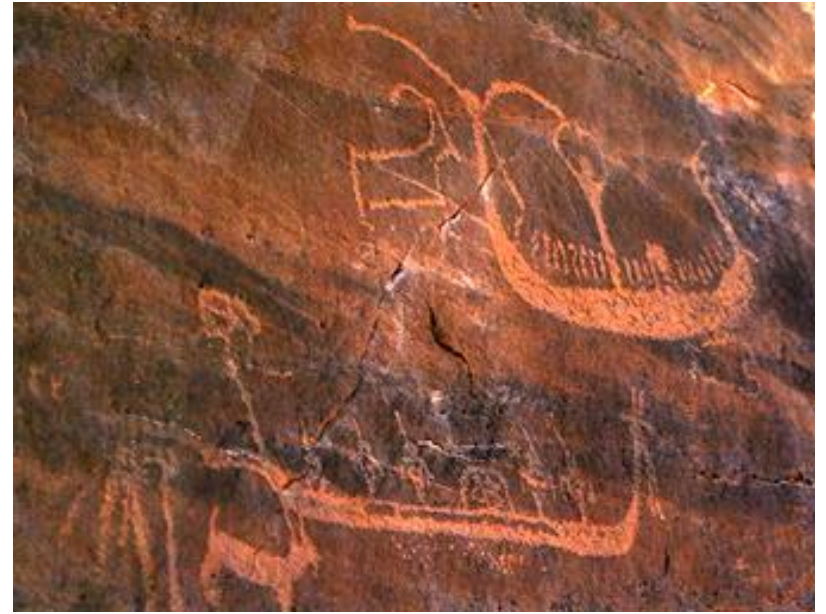
Reed raft tradition existed on the island of Corfu until the early 1970's (the vessel-type is called *papyrella*) but the dugout canoe tradition did not survive in the Mediterranean



Some of the earliest representations of boats in Egypt and Mesopotamia are reed-built

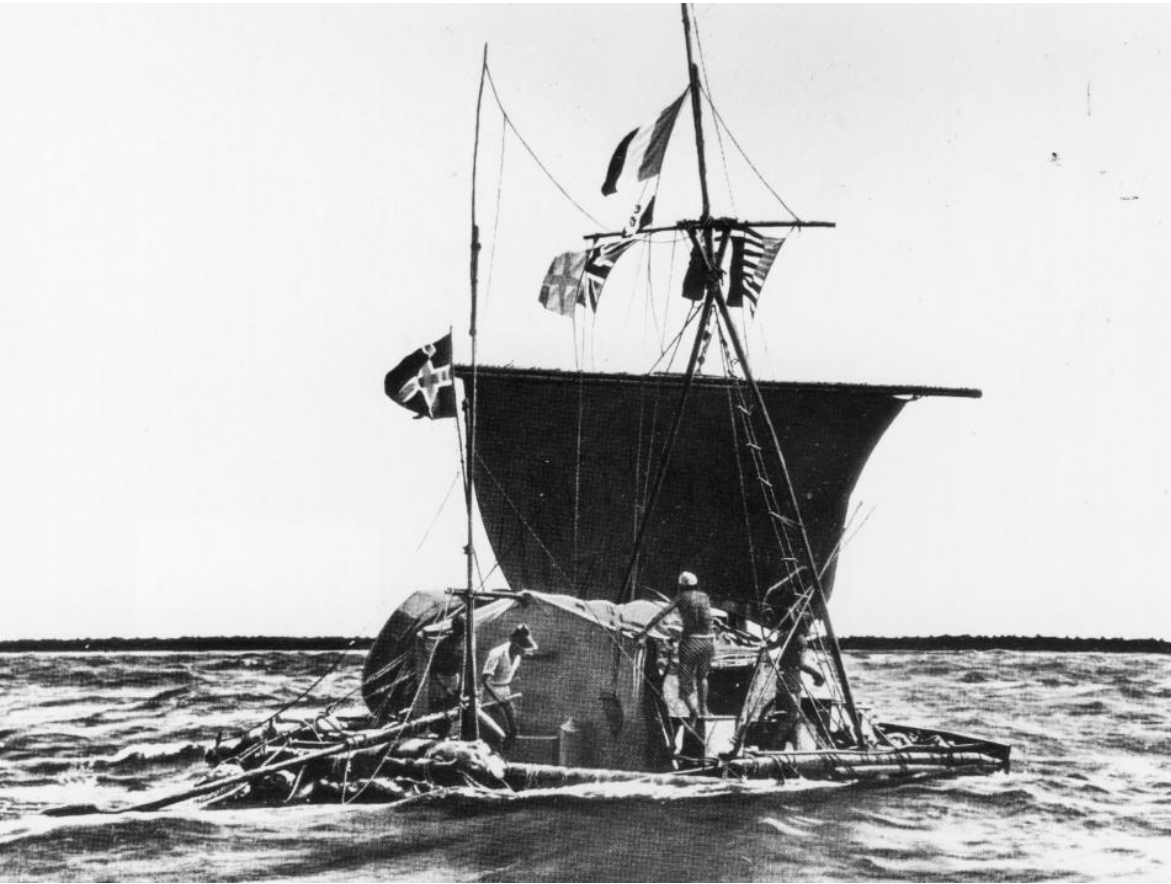


Akkadian boat seal (ca. 2300 BCE)

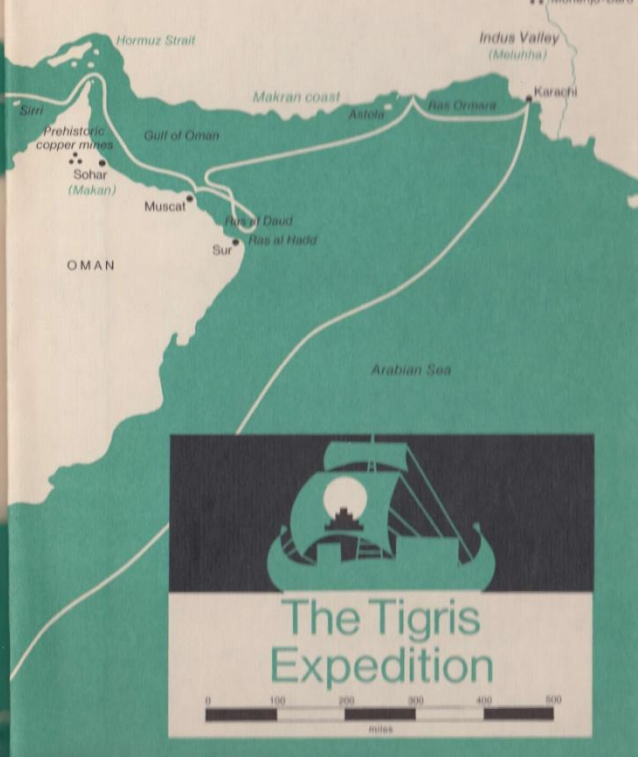
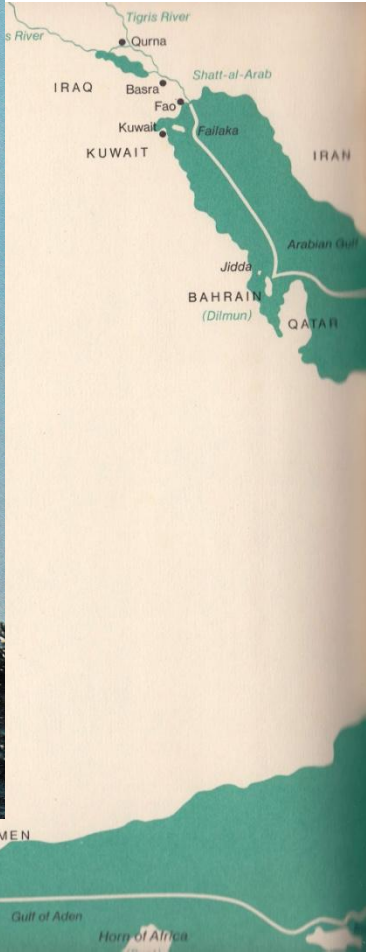


Petroglyphs of reed boats from the eastern desert in Egypt (ca. 3500 BCE)

A precedent had been set with the adventurer Thor Heyerdahl, who achieved fame for his reed boat reconstructions and trials of *Kon-Tiki* and *Tigris* vessels



Kon-Tiki expedition (1947): From Peru to the Polynesian Islands



Tigris expedition (1978): From the marshes of southern Iraq to Djibouti

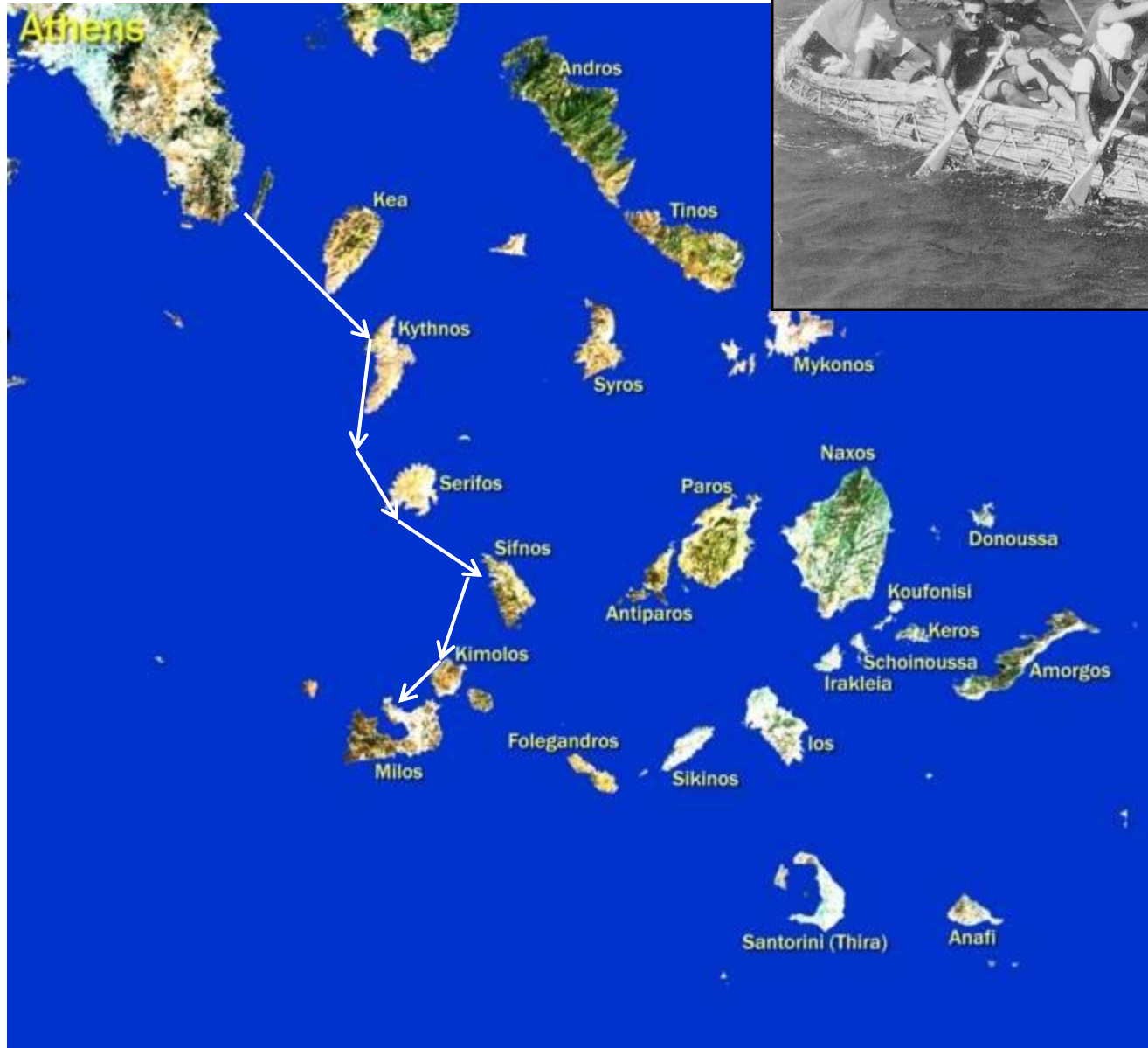
Back to the Mesolithic and Neolithic

Sea trials: paddling a dugout canoe vs. paddling a reed raft



Both could achieve a cruising speed of 1.5 knots, paddling 7 hours a day

Harry Tzalas' *papyrella* reconstruction and trials to Melos, the source of obsidian in the Aegean

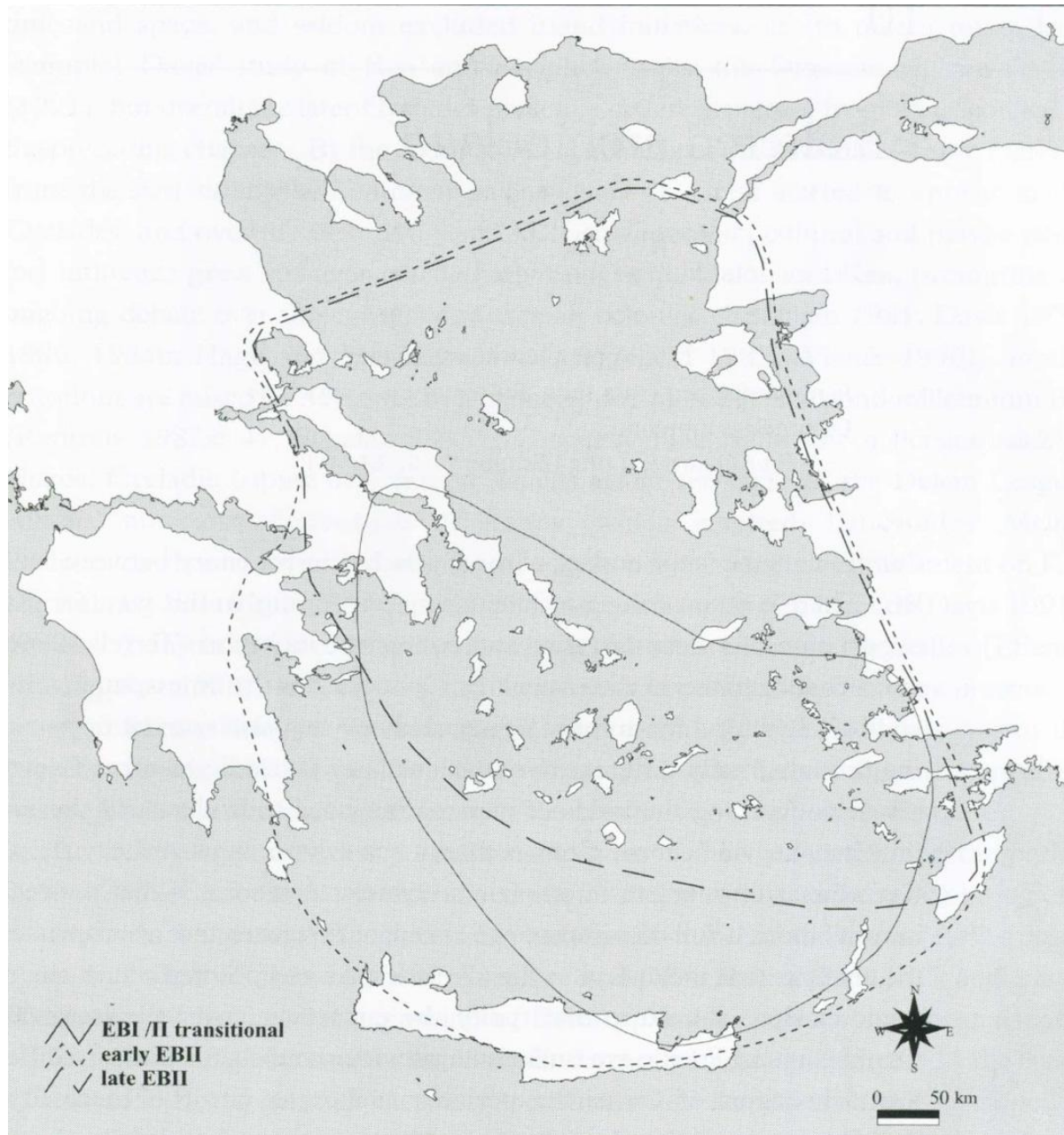
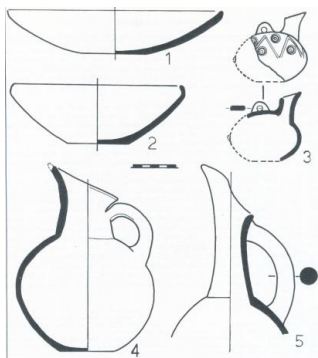
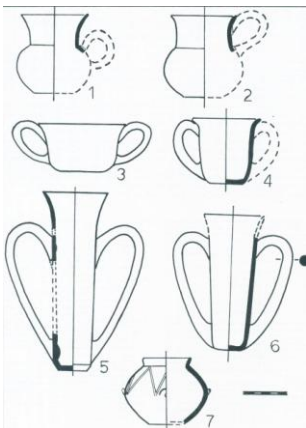


This distance of 72.5 nautical miles was achieved in 51 hours 45 minutes over 7 days

In this region of the Mediterranean maritime archaeologists are dependent upon ethnographic analogy and experimental archaeology until ca. 2500 BCE



And then, at last, a profusion of ship iconography



Did a 'trade' in metal bring them together?



Metal objects intentionally deposited (dedicated) on the Troy III citadel

'Hoards' (dedications) of large volumes of metal in citadels in the Kastri/Lefkandi I interaction zone



From the Poliochni Yellow
'treasure deposits'

