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Excavations at Palaikastro. II: § 4.—The Houses. Block β

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which left this lower deposit on the floor of β 10 and β 13, and probably occasioned the rebuilding of the house.

§ 4.—THE HOUSES. BLOCK β .

This *Insula* is now seen to contain five houses, (i) 1-22, (ii) 23-25, (iii) 28-31, (iv) 26, 27 and 32-39, (v) 40-47. The partial excavation of 1-36 was described in *B.S.A.* viii. pp. 310-316.

Rooms 1-22—The continued investigation of this house yielded some interesting results. In the courtyard (11) we uncovered the remains of a verandah, the wooden pillars of which rested on round limestone bases (diam. .38 m., ht. .18) distant 1.40 m. from the walls of rooms 10 and 12. On the East, rectangular bases alternated with the round ones, as in the courts of the palaces at Phaistos and Gournià; these probably supported piers of brickwork or stone. A quantity of charred wood, brick-earth, and freestone blocks reddened and disintegrated by fire, lay over and round about the bases. At the West end of 13, where the plan shews a double wall, part of the later one .55 m. thick was removed, exposing a face of well-finished small ashlar coated with white plaster. The precisely similar masonry of a small house on the South of the Ridge was shown by the pottery found in it to be as old as the Middle Minôan period. 15 may be explained as a bath-room; its entrance was at the N.W., screened as usual by a cross-wall, not at the S.E. angle where the previous plan shewed it; its carefully plastered floor (*Palaiakastro* I. p. 315) was level with the adjoining floors, as was that of the bath-room in the Queen's Megaron at Knossos. Further knife-work in 22, a square closet under the stairs which had yielded a quantity of rustic pottery in 1902, brought to light four large jars in a row against the back-wall, and two—one telescoped into the other as though originally placed on top of it—on the left. The floor is of pebble-concrete. Besides broken vases of types found in rooms 10 and 13, there were a clay 'fire-box,' a bronze sickle, a bundle of five needles (?) and three painted vases which seemed to have fallen from a shelf—a four-handled pyxis with a band of spots like the pseudamphora *B.S.A.* viii. p. 313, Fig. 26, the beaked jug figured on p. 285, and another like it. Two much finer vases had been packed away inside one of the *pithoi*. The uppermost, a flask decorated with polyyps, coral and shells, was much crushed; the other, a magnificent oenochoe with a curious strainer-mouth, painted with two groups of three papyrus-like flowers, was broken only at the neck.¹ Both belong to an interesting class of early Mycenaean vases, the slip of which varies from warm yellow to a greenish grey, and the paint in like manner from warm brown to black; the greenish-grey and intense black tones are due to overfiring, and when they are found together the paint is always very friable. The contents of this room were probably buried at the same time as those of 10 and 13.

Rooms 23-25 originally formed an open court (24) from which opened a single room (25), perhaps a stable, the two rooms which encroach on the court

¹ Like a flattened gourd with wheel-shaped body, elliptical mouth, and two small handles high on the shoulder. I know only three other examples of this rare form, found at Knossos, Psychro, and Phylakopi, all fragmentary. It is a forerunner of the spherical gourd (p. 316, Fig. 15 below), of which an early example was found in the Cave at Psychro.

being of later construction. The level of the court had been raised by filling it up with miscellaneous materials brought probably from some rubbish-heap; possibly it was liable to be flooded by the water which, as other indications show, flowed away down the adjacent street. Among the finds made here this year were a nodule of liparite, a small spouted steatite bowl, a small steatite lid, a bone awl, a quantity of small cups, fragments of wall-plaster (red-brown, yellow, dark blue, and white), and a large lentoid gem of late form and design: numerous fragments of 'rustic' pottery, but few of painted ware.

Rooms 28-31 form a separate house, with a door probably at the S.E. angle. No fresh finds were made here.

Rooms 26, 27, and 32-39 form another house, partially excavated in 1902. What was then taken for the threshold proves to be a stone bench, the actual threshold being hard by, facing up the street towards γ and δ . The level of the door-sill had been raised and a rough causeway, about 40 m. wide, 45 high, built from it along the street; and at the north end of the street, where it turns sharply to the W., a kerb had been built to guide surface-waters round the corner. These precautions, and the raising of the floor of β 24, noted above, indicate that after heavy rain the drainage of the southern part of the town escaped down this street. The paved vestibule with stone bench in a recess on the left repeats a familiar arrangement (cp. β 8, γ 1, δ 47, and Zakro G); beyond the bench is a cupboard containing four plain jars. Next comes 32, the main living-room, which gave access to 26, 27, and probably also to 33, 35, 36, and 37, though the position of their doors is uncertain. The deposit of vases in 26 (*B.S.A.* viii. 316) belongs to a later period than any in β 1-22; on the other hand the group of large pithoi in 33, which stood at a lower floor-level, may have survived from the earlier period of destruction, since the decoration of the painted example (sprays, double-axes, and four-leaf whorls) is in a meticulous style precisely like that of the local painted ware in the Zakro houses and in β 13. Some olive-stones were found on the floor of 32, and in 37 there is a group of jars which probably played a part in the manufacture of oil, consisting of an earthenware tub with a spout projecting over a pithos, the spout being flush with the bottom of the tub like that of the Hellenistic oil-separator at Praesos (*B.S.A.* viii. 268); similar groups were found at Zakro and at Gournià. In this case the 'separator' stands on a raised stone platform, and the recipient is not sunk in the ground. Among the earth in the latter was a steatite prism-seal (man, goat, ox-head). A quantity of carbonised matter was noted near the floor-level. The minor finds were a bronze axe-and-adze, a plain jug with flat base of the type found in α 4, a scrap of lead, and a *dolium*-shell. 35 yielded part of a clay lamp-stand like Fig. 24. 36 contains a stone trough, and a squared block in the middle of the floor, below the pavement, which probably served as base for a wooden pillar, as in 29. In 38 there were found an engraved amygdaloid gem, a bronze hook with twisted shank of a type already represented in the Candia Museum, and a hone; this room had two floor-levels, both originally paved but much disturbed.

Immediately N. of 36 and 39, in square G 3 of the plan, there is a space which seems to have been vacant in the later Mycenaean age. A pit sunk here revealed a considerable accumulation of Mycenaean pottery and below that, after an interval, a very compact bed of Kamàres sherds, of early types. Between the two there is an ancient floor-level and the footings of a wall are preserved. The sherds rest on virgin soil and stop short against a face of virgin soil to the N.

The accompanying diagram prepared by Mr. Dawkins (Fig. 6) explains the stratification. See his remarks, p. 298.

Rooms 40-47 may prove to have been entered from the courtyard of the main house, β 1-22. In some of them the subsoil rises about .60 m. above the level of the adjoining street and there is no depth of soil; the whole northern half of the house is much destroyed and was only superficially excavated. 40 contained a remarkable deposit of 59 small Kamáres vases, resting on the raised subsoil; they must have been protected by a floor above them of which no trace remains. Ten of them are

FIG. 6.—DIAGRAM SHEWING STRATIFICATION OF PIT IN G 3.

jugs with bridged spouts, the remainder beaked jugs, cups, and tumblers (see Mr. Dawkins' remarks, p. 307 below, and Fig. 7). 42 contained a trough with three cup-like depressions, possibly a 'table of offerings,' since near it was a miniature pair of horns (Fig. 2, in foreground), and two pieces of stalactite brought perhaps from some cave-sanctuary. 43 yielded a big clay scoop, and 47 part of a steatite lamp and of a steatite cruet-stand with three cups and a loop-handle. 43 and 47 have floors of pebble-concrete, and in the latter there is a central column-base.

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