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The Annual of the British School at Athens / Volume 11 / November 1905, pp 258 - 260

DOI: 10.1017/S0068245400002604, Published online: 18 October 2013

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0068245400002604

How to cite this article:

R. M. Dawkins (1905). Excavations at Palaikastro. IV: § 1.—The Season's Work. The Annual of the British School at Athens, 11, pp 258-260 doi:10.1017/S0068245400002604

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EXCAVATIONS AT PALAIKASTRO. IV.

(PLATES VIII.—XIV. §§ 1—6.)

§ 1.—THE SEASON'S WORK.

WORK began on March 29th, and continued, with the usual break for Easter, until June 17th, with an average of about sixty to seventy workmen. Mr. W. A. Kirkwood of the University of Toronto was present for the first few weeks, rendering valuable assistance, and later Mr. C. H. Hawes of Trinity College, Cambridge, in the course of a journey in Crete undertaken for anthropological work, came and superintended the excavation of a Middle Minoan ossuary and some larnax-burials at Sarandári, of which his report is given below (§ 7). At the end of the season Mr. Guy Dickins of New College, Oxford, came, and, besides other work, undertook the laborious task of packing the finds for transport to the Candia Museum and there unpacking them. Mr. Sejk came in May, and made full plans of the excavation and a general survey of the district. Owing to the Archaeological Congress at Athens the Director was unable to be present, and I conducted the excavation and was present throughout.

The main object of the season's work was to exhaust the possibilities of the site of the Hellenic temple, but as Block π, on the opposite side of the main street, had not been fully excavated, this was first finished, to provide a convenient dumping-ground. This region however proved both deeper and more important than was expected, and it was not until well on in April that it was finished and the field clear for the discovery of the important archaic Greek remains in terracotta and bronze from the temple and for the investigation of the underlying Minoan strata.

When the rains usual at the beginning of the season made work at Roussolakkos impossible, further trial-pits were made on the slopes of the Kastri, which resulted in the discovery of the Early Minoan ossuary described below (§ 3). Between this and the sea we found and traced the walls of an oblong (12 m. $\times$ 10 m.) Hellenic building, dated by a lamp of the same shape as those common amongst the remains of the temple. An amphora-handle stamped with a monogram was also found.

The main street was traced westwards (see Pl. IX. for Key plan), and proved to be continuous with the piece found last year at Kephalaíki. The average breadth was as usual about two metres, with short lengths of raised side-path and gutter, though not much pavement. Just west of Block δ (square D 4) the walls are destroyed and the street makes a slight deviation to the north. Measuring from the point where the street-wall begins again, for the first twelve metres there is a strip of pavement on the left rising by two sets of steps to a threshold, and just beyond this what seems to be the corner of this house. Nearly opposite, a break in the wall marks the division between two houses. At twenty-two metres the street deviates a little to the left, and then on the same side is the entrance to another house. Three steps lead up from the street into a wider vestibule, the side walls of which are lined with plaster. After four metres there is a set-back in the left wall, and seven metres more bring us to the foot of a flight of five shallow steps (Pl. XIV*b*), by which the street rises to within less than half a metre of the surface. These steps are more than a metre apart, and do not quite reach the left wall, but leave room for a gutter. On the right a threshold opens on the second step. At the top of the flight there seems to be straight in front the entrance to a house, whilst the street itself turns to the left (square B 4) at an angle of about 135° and runs straight to the houses excavated at Kephalaíki, a distance of fifty metres. This latter part was so shallow that the walls had suffered much when the owner cleared this field of stones, and it was not possible always to be certain of the limits of houses. The last few yards are in specially bad condition, but it seems possible that here another street joined it on the left, coming from the south side of Block δ .

Evidence that this region was deserted in the course of the Late Minoan III. period was given by the discovery in this street a few metres from Block δ of a shallow bronze bowl, 30 m. in diameter and 12 m. deep,

with an horizontal handle at the rim. It was upside-down in the middle of the street, as if dropped by a fugitive. Its period is indicated by the discovery of a similar object in the Late Minoan III. tombs at Phaistos (see Savignoni, *Mon. Ant.* 1905, Fig. 27, p. 47). It was so utterly corroded that it was impossible to do more than measure it as it was found.

The season was closed by covering in again the area excavated, with the exception of parts of the main street, and the more important parts of Blocks β , γ , and δ , which have been left open and walled round.

The excavation of a neolithic settlement at Magasá, some three hours' ride from Palaikastro, gave us for the first time an idea of the dwellings and culture of the inhabitants in the period preceding the Minoan age of bronze, and thus, besides increasing our knowledge of the Hellenic period, it has been the good fortune of this last campaign to go further back into the prehistoric part than had yet been possible.

§ 2.—NEOLITHIC SETTLEMENT AT MAGASÁ.

Of the various antiquities found from time to time in the district, which we have been accustomed from the beginning of the excavation to buy for the Candia Museum, by far the greater number have always been neolithic stone axes, some entire, some broken, but nearly all bearing marks of weathering due to exposure on the surface. Thus in 1902 six, in 1903 twenty-one, in 1904 twenty-eight were acquired in this way, and this year, when the habit of noticing them was well established, forty-three. From the first it was noticed that nearly all came from the high limestone plateau that rises south of Palaikastro and forms the centre of the easternmost section of Crete. The glen of Haghios Nikolaos, which pierces the northern edge of this region, running up to the foot of the steep cone of Módhí, and the scanty fields of Karyódhi, Magasá, and Xerolímní, villages hidden in hollows and ravines that seam the high wind-swept waste of broken grey stone, yielded nine-tenths of the total number.¹ This evidence made the existence of neolithic settlements somewhere on these highlands a certainty, and when it was observed this year that considerable numbers came from two localities near Magasá, the clues became very clear.

¹ Of the whole ninety-eight, only nine examples came from the low country of Palaikastro itself.

PALAIKASTRO. KEY PLAN OF THE TOWN.

A

B