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The Annual of the British School at Athens / Volume 11 / November 1905, pp 293 - 297

DOI: 10.1017/S0068245400002665, Published online: 18 October 2013

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0068245400002665

How to cite this article:

Charles H. Hawes (1905). Excavations at Palaikastro. IV: 7.—Larnax Burials at Sarandári. The Annual of the British School at Athens, 11, pp 293-297 doi:10.1017/S0068245400002665

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EXCAVATIONS AT PALAIKASTRO. IV.

§ 7.—LARNAX BURIALS AT SARANDÁRI.

I VISITED Crete in the spring of 1905 chiefly for the purpose of making anthropometrical observations on living subjects. At Palaikastro I hoped to obtain fresh data also from ancient skeletons or *crania* and made some trial-excavations with men put at my disposal by Mr. Dawkins, first without result among the plundered ossuaries on the slopes of Kastri, then with more success in the plain. A *larnax* had been discovered some years before at a spot called Sarandári, midway between Kastri and Rousso-lakkos, where a low knoll of conglomerate breaks the level of the surrounding fields.¹ Its bare rocky surface shows through a scanty covering of wild thyme and sage, and is fringed by lentisk-bushes and carob-trees. Fig. 4, No. 4, p. 270, gives a plan of the whole, to the north-east the house-like walls of the ossuaries, to the south-west the *larnakes* described below.

On top of the ridge we found remains of Middle Minoan ossuaries of normal type. The soil was shallow, and the finds correspondingly insignificant, but enough was found in the shape of bones, plain vases, and sherds to make it clear that these compartments were not houses but ossuaries like those on the gravel ridge and the slope of Kastri, and dating from the same period. With the pottery the usual small stone bowls were found.

The *larnax*-burials were found on the margin of the hill in recesses or 'rock-shelters' scooped out under the conglomerate. The first was

¹ The ridge of Σαρανδάρι, and the position of the *larnax*, marked by a cross, are shewn on Mr. Comyn's map, *B.S.A.* viii. Pl. XV.

located after an hour's search, and in the next five days I was rewarded by the discovery of four more and portions of several others. In each case they were tub-shaped, elliptical in plan, the sides sloping upwards and outwards from the base. Vases found with them leave no doubt that they belong to the Late Minoan III. period.

Outside *larnax* α (at the extreme north-west of the plan given above, Fig. 4, p. 270) at the north end was found another of those interesting and somewhat mysterious vases with an internal funnel and three small handles. Of the two previously discovered one was from Roussolakkos (*B.S.A.* ix. p. 285, Fig. 4) and the other from Zakro (*J.H.S.* xxiii. p. 253, Fig. 16), both from Late Minoan I. deposits. The survival of the form is noteworthy. Together with this were a

FIG. 17.—LARNAX BUKIAL, SHOWING VASE LAID AMONG RE-INTERRED BONES.

bronze knife, fragments of a human tibia, femur, and humerus, and the ulna of a hare. Inside, the only osseous remains were a portion of a human tibia, phalanges, and a hare's mandible. The femur was large and stout with a moderately developed *linea aspera*, evidently that of a man, and the humerus so small as to suggest a child's.

About forty metres south-east from this find, I came upon *larnax* β , Fig. 17, its base 2.70 metres below the surface; and on our way down to this portions of three more were met with. At first, the workmen, who were now getting used to this reversal of things, found a hare's bone in the *larnax* and a skull outside. Later however a portion of a human humerus and some rib-bones appeared, and finally at the bottom and north end, we struck a cranium upside down with the facial part missing, the orbits intact, and the mandible resting on a vase close by. On either side of the skull, vase, and bowl were laid the long bones, but mixed, so that a left femur

lay with the right tibia and radius and vice-versa. The cephalic or breadth index was 75.9. The crushed and weathered condition of the cranium and the absence of the zygomatic arches made it difficult to make reliable deductions, but the slightness of the lower maxillary, the lack of definition of the supra-orbital ridges, and the form of the occiput induced me to conclude that it was a woman's. A careful study of the basilar and sagittal sutures could not be made, but the evidence such as it was and the condition of the teeth led me to suppose an adult of between thirty and thirty-five. The bones were under-sized, and allowing as best I could for fracture of the articular ends, I arrived at the low stature of 1463 mm. or 4 ft. 9½ in. Outside this larnax was a bronze vase which fell to pieces and disclosed three or four natural shells and one carved in crystal, an exact copy of the others and well finished. Close to this lay a much crushed cranium, yielding no measurements, with a fragment of a humerus, both apparently belonging to a child which, judging by the teeth, I should say was ten years old, and had a possible height of 1320 mm. or 4 ft. 4 in.

Midway between and in contrast to these two *larnakes*, *larnax* γ was found within a foot or two of the surface, where a narrow track used by cattle and goats passed over it. Outside were found at the north end a bronze mirror and a *bügelkanne*, at the south end a smaller *bügelkanne*. A miniature twin *bügelkanne* was found inside together with some gold beads and human remains. The latter consisted of fragments of two crania, unmeasurable but one evidently a man's, and a few fragments of long bones including a right and left femur, a tibia, and right and left humeri. These were somewhat muscular and may have belonged to the man's cranium, whereas fragments of a smaller and slighter tibia and humerus probably appertained to the other skull, which may have been that of a woman or youth.

Ten feet to the north-west of γ was found another *larnax*, only 25 inches long, which however fell to pieces in the process of excavation. Fragments of three crania lay outside it.

About twenty feet to the east of *larnax* β, considerable fragments of another *larnax* δ (shewn in the extreme south-east of the plan in Fig. 4) were found, and outside of it lay the facial portions of a skull and a half section of another which I concluded to be respectively that of a man and a woman. Several portions of long bones, femora, tibiae, fibulae, humeri, etc. lay near, accounting at least for three individuals, of whom one was a child.

As with the other *larnax*-burials found in this district, all the facts point to the practice of secondary interment. The unusual¹ position of the skulls, outside rather than inside the *larnakes*, may be explained by supposing that the tombs have been rifled. The gold beads in *larnax* γ may be a trace of their former wealth. The one exception affords some confirmation of this. Every Cretan excavator knows the patience and skill needed to dig out and empty a *larnax* without cracking, chipping, or fracturing it. Now *larnax* β was the only one among these which was absolutely perfect, and this contained the skull and all the long bones of a

¹ The numerous skulls found outside a *larnax* this year by Mr. Dawkins are the result of the repeated use of the one *larnax*, inside which also several skulls were found.

skeleton, suggesting a careful and undisturbed post-interment; but not a direct interment, as the bones were not in their relative positions.

I may here note that although the shelves of rock against or under which the larnakes were found trended in different directions, these latter were longitudinally orientated north and south. To be quite exact

α was orientated 2° W. of N.

β „ „ 16° „

γ „ „ 26° „

Unfortunately the conditions of burial at Sarandári were not those of a true rock-shelter. At best these human remains were only sheltered from storms from one point of the compass, and were therefore exposed to considerable weathering influences, in addition to being crushed by the fall of soil. For this reason few data are to be obtained from them. Of the crania only one found in *larnax* β (Late Minoan III.) gave a reliable breadth index (75.9), which just escapes being dolicho-cephalic, whereas another from Kastri (Middle Minoan), whose measurements were not absolutely reliable, was distinctly dolicho-cephalic with an index of 71.8.

By the kindness of Miss H. A. Boyd, Dr. A. J. Evans, Professor Halbherr, and Mr. Xanthoudides, who allowed me to measure thirteen crania excavated by them and placed in the Candia Museum since Dr. Duckworth's visit to Crete, I am able to add slightly to the number mentioned above. Unfortunately again, several of these were too much crushed to be of use and three only, yielded satisfactory measurements and four more, rather uncertain results. Of the former, one from Sphoungaría rock-shelter near Gourniá gave an index of 80.3, and another of the same period (Late Minoan III.), from the tombs on the hillside near Knossos, yielded 80.5. The third, and from its age the most interesting, since it claims to be Early Minoan, is from Koumása and gives an index of 76.2. Of the four slightly uncertain in their measurements, one from Haghia Triadha (tholos tomb, Early Minoan II.) supplies us with an index of 77.3, and the other three from Sphoungaría 87.6, 79.0, and 77.0.

These discoveries are obviously too few to warrant any general conclusion. On the whole they do not contradict Dr. Duckworth's deductions made upon a much wider basis, that dolichocephaly was more the rule in Minoan times than it is to-day, but that even in those times brachycephalic forms

were present. From Palaikastro I accompanied Mr. Dawkins on his first excavation of the neolithic site near Magasá, and finally left on May 3rd to prosecute my anthropometrical observations on living subjects throughout the island. Each *eparkhia* was visited in turn except those of Kissamos and Selinon in the extreme west, and before I left the island on August 3rd more than 1400 individuals had been measured and examined.

CHARLES H. HAWES.