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The Annual of the British School at Athens / Volume 11 / November 1905, pp 298 - 300

DOI: 10.1017/S0068245400002677, Published online: 18 October 2013

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0068245400002677

How to cite this article:

R. C. Bosanquet (1905). Excavations at Palaikastro. IV: § 8.—The Temple of Dictaeon Zeus. The Annual of the British School at Athens, 11, pp 298-300 doi:10.1017/S0068245400002677

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EXCAVATIONS AT PALAIKASTRO. IV.

(PLATES XV.-XVI. §§ 8-10.)

§ 8.—THE TEMPLE OF DICTAEAN ZEUS.

THE Temple Area, mentioned several times in these reports,¹ was cleared in the course of our third and fourth seasons. Of the temple itself not a stone was found standing and almost the whole of its materials had been removed, but from fragments of architectural details we may recover some notion of its proportions and decoration. Only one inscription came to light, but that—the Hymn to Dictaeon Zeus—is of capital importance, not only as enabling us to identify the remains with those of the temple mentioned in the Praisos-Itanos frontier-award and to restore to Palai-kastro its ancient name of Heleia (Dittenberger, *Sylloge* 929, l. 78), but as illustrating an obscure side of local religion and ritual. In the present paper I propose to give a brief provisional account of the scanty remains of the temple, and of the votive offerings found round about it, which will be more fully described and illustrated in the final Report on the Excavations. I have made free use of Mr. Dawkins' journal and other notes.

Unlike the Hellenic temples at Troy and Mycenae, the sanctuary of Dictaeon Zeus was not placed on the highest point of the prehistoric town, nor on the site of the prehistoric palace, but on an artificially levelled platform half-way down the south-eastern slope near the termination of the main street. The *τέμενος* extended across the buried and forgotten roadway, embracing most of the area once occupied by π and χ , and was

¹ Located in 1902, trial-trenches with negative results, *B.S.A.* viii. 288. Cut through in following main street in 1903, finds of pottery and bronzes, *B.S.A.* ix. 280. Partly cleared in 1904, important finds, *B.S.A.* x. 246.

enclosed by a wall, of which a few courses survive and were traced by Mr. Dawkins for a distance of 36 metres. It was built of undressed stones, laid without mortar, and followed a tortuous line along the north and north-east face of the slope (see Plate X., 56, 57). It is mentioned in pompous terms by the Magnesian arbitrators—τό τε ἱερὸν καὶ τὸν περίβολον αὐτοῦ ἰδίους σημείους καὶ περιοικοδομήμασιν περιεχόμενον (Dittenberger, 929, l. 75). Outside this wall on the lower ground but few Hellenic objects occurred, while on the other hand inside its line the Hellenic *stratum* reached its greatest depth, about one metre. Nothing Minoan was found at the level of the wall, which was surrounded by dark brown *humus* in sharp contrast to the bright red brick-earth of the Minoan houses below it. The Hellenic objects were scattered over the whole of χ and the greater part of π, but it was only along the inner face of the wall that they lay thick. No continuation of it could be found on the east except for a few yards where it crossed the main street, to the east of the projecting porch of the house χ 1-17, and consisted of roughly dressed freestone blocks, probably taken from a Minoan house. Southwards it may be supposed to have crowned the steep escarpment which bounds the space occupied by the town, but neither here nor on the west was any certain trace of it identified.

Of the other late walls found near the surface of χ, and shewn on the plan little need be said. None of them can be connected with the temple, which seems to have been most effectually demolished by the villagers of Palaikastro about a generation ago. It is remembered that huge blocks of freestone were removed from this field, and a monolithic arched door-head cut from one of them is shewn in one of the cottages. The rectangular structure in χ 46, built of large slabs and measuring internally 1·15 × 90 × 35 m., bears a close resemblance to the oil-tank in the Hellenistic house at Praisos;¹ a large piece of sheet-lead, perhaps part of its lining, was found not far off. Not only the foundations on which the slabs rest but the lower edges of the slabs themselves are sunk in the Minoan *stratum*, as though the structure dated from the beginning of the Hellenic period. But the gradation from Minoan to Hellenic had been obliterated by a process of levelling undertaken probably when the temple was built: in this case there was an abrupt transition from Late Minoan I. to products of the sixth century. The stratification had been further confused

¹ B.S.A. viii. p. 264.

by the recent search for building-materials, so that the shallow Hellenic surface-deposit made no direct contribution to the history of the sanctuary. Even the deep pocket at the east end of χ , which yielded the fragments of the Hymn and some other worked stones, was the result of recent disturbance.

In face of this complete destruction, which leaves even the precise position of the temple undetermined, it is satisfactory that the position of the Altar can be fixed. It was marked by a bed of grey wood-ash, at least 3 m. long and .25 thick, which extended from χ 25-26 across the full width of the underlying main street into π 38-40. Among the objects found immediately round about it were some bronze bowls and miniature shields and an archaic scarabaeoid seal.

§ 9.—THE ARCHITECTURAL TERRACOTTAS.

The Hellenic remains scattered in the surface soil or accumulated behind the temenos-wall included quantities of tiles and architectural terracottas belonging to an earlier and to a later period of the sanctuary. Of those which may be assigned to the archaic entablature the most important are the following :—

(1) Leg of a crouching or running human figure in high relief, probably from the pediment (Fig. 18). The upper part of the thigh is covered with reddish-brown paint representing a tightly-fitting garment, with a white border on which again are dark dots. The bare skin of the lower part of the leg is represented by a white slip, and the muscles are indicated by deep incisions. The foot is lost and its relation to the lower part of the background, which swells out towards the base, is obscure.

(2) Numerous pieces of a *sima*, decorated in low relief with a fine archaic chariot-group (Plate XV.). Two such cornice-blocks have long been exhibited in the Museum at Candia, having been saved by one of the peasants who helped to demolish the temple and used by him as mangers in his stable. There they were seen by a Candia merchant who reported the matter to the Syllogos, and were soon afterwards secured for the Museum by the exertions of Dr. Hatzidakis and Professor Halbherr. The latter gave a brief account of them in the *Antiquary*, 1892, p. 117, and Professor Savignoni has prepared a full discussion of them and their relation to architectural terracottas found elsewhere, which he has kindly consented to