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Excavations at Palaikastro. IV: § 4.—Temple Site (Block χ)

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Minoan vases. Reference meanwhile may be made to Miss Hall's full publication of the material from Gourniá mentioned above.

The immediate succession of this style to the red-surfaced ware classed by Dr. Evans as Early Minoan II., of which a large number of vases has been found at Basilikí near Gourniá,¹ and its precedence to the earliest Middle Minoan style that marks the big ossuaries at Patema (V., Fig. 4, No. 5) and on the gravel ridge (VII) will be discussed below in the account of the strata in Block χ . It is of interest here as shewing the length and continuity of the series of these burials, ossuary II. described in *B.S.A.* x. p. 197, containing E. M. II ware, this one, E. M. III., and the others nothing with few exceptions earlier than Middle Minoan, but of this, vases marking both its earlier and later divisions. As the contents of I. are earlier than those of II. and may in part be classed as Early Minoan I., we have the interesting fact that the custom of secondary interments in these ossuaries lasted from the very beginning of the Bronze Age right through Early and Middle Minoan times.

The other objects found were two bronze daggers, whose earliness is proved by other examples found elsewhere in Crete, an oval marble palette, .09 x .05 m., with one side flat and surrounded by a groove, and the other convex, a small alabaster bowl, the spout of a marble bowl, obsidian knives and a cowry shell.

§ 4.—TEMPLE SITE (BLOCK χ).

This block of buildings, covering some 1300 sq. m. (see Key plan, Pl. IX.), has now been fully excavated, and although no more Greek inscriptions or anything in the nature of a Minoan shrine were found, a layer, in some places as much as a metre thick, of archaic terra-cotta architectural fragments and bronze objects and the lower courses of what was probably a *temenos*-wall of the temple were uncovered, whilst the Minoan strata were deeper than anywhere else on the site, except parts of Block π , and ranged from Early Minoan to the end of Late Minoan. Plan and sections are given on Plates X. and XI.

If we take these strata in order beginning with the earliest, we find first the scanty remains of a large building with very thick walls, belonging to the Early Minoan period, built of small unhewn stones. Associated

¹ Published by Mr. Seager.

with them were sherds of the characteristic pottery with polished red or mottled surface found in the American excavation at Vasilikí, and classed by Dr. Evans as Early Minoan II. Although no complete vases were recovered, the sherds were sufficient to prove the presence of all the usual shapes, specimens of which were found last year in the lower strata in δ 32, and in the ossuary II. (for plan see Fig. 4, No. 1, above) at τὰ Ἑλληνικά (*B.S.A.* x. p. 200 and p. 197 with Fig. 1). Among the sherds was a very rude unpainted clay figurine, the body a mere column and the arms short stumps projecting at the level of the face, on which only the nose and eyes are marked. There are no indications of sex, nor are the neck, waist or legs marked at all. It stands on a small base, with a total height of .09 m. These deposits were richest in rooms 39 and 32, but isolated sherds were common at the lowest level just above the virgin soil.

The next stratum consisted of the deposits of Early Minoan III. ware referred to in the description above in §3 of the ossuary (III.) of this period. The same stratification of these two styles was noticed last year in the deposits in δ 32, and was found also at Vasilikí, where Mr. Seager's Periods III. and IV.¹ are marked respectively, the former by Early Minoan II. red-faced ware and the latter by this Early Minoan III. geometric style. The immediate succession of the one to the other is proved by the presence of a certain amount of the older early Minoan II. ware persisting into Mr. Seager's Period IV., whilst among the enormous mass of Early Minoan III. fragments examined by Miss Hall at Gourniá the earlier style did not occur.²

These deposits were found amongst the Middle Minoan foundations which occupy the centre of the block, and especially in 39, at a higher level than the remains of the large Early Minoan building, though it was not possible to associate them definitely with any set of walls. The richest deposit, 2.50 m. thick, was found under the Late Minoan II. floor in room 59. With the painted sherds, which were more frequent and finer at the higher levels, a great many plain pieces were found. Five or six painted cups were practically complete.

Besides, as at Vasilikí, a few surviving sherds of the earlier Early Minoan III. style, all through this deposit, in isolated sherds at the bottom and only at the top in any frequency, where little else was found, occurred

¹ *Transactions, Department of Archaeology, University of Pennsylvania*, Vol. I. Part III. p. 13.

² One or two sherds only I believe were found.

fragments of Middle Minoan I. cups.¹ Fig. 5 *d* gives a characteristic form restored from a fragment. Yellow paint, and above all the festoon-pattern that marks Middle Minoan I. appear, but the latter is combined with a hatching of parallel lines belonging to the earlier style. The finely purified clay and more lustrous ground of these fragments belongs to the Middle Minoan fabrics, and it looks as if the two wares came from different workshops. This deposit thus agrees with the stratification observed elsewhere, and gives us the geometrical light-on-dark Early Minoan III. style in its historical position between the red-faced pottery of Vasilikí and that of the Middle Minoan Period.

The stratum next above this consists of a network of walls occupying the area between the two Late Minoan II. houses described below, and associated with Middle Minoan pottery. This was mostly much broken, but a rich deposit, with many complete vases, was found at the west end of χ 18. The masonry was of small stones roughly dressed. This stratum brings us to the time of some great change at Palaikastro, when the ossuaries went out of use, and the town was largely rebuilt; a deduction from the fact that in many places in the town where Middle Minoan pottery is found, the associated walls stand in no connexion with those above them. Thus the street east of House χ 51-66 was only opened after the Middle Minoan period, and one of the corners of the Middle Minoan building that occupied the site of the later House χ 1-17 may be seen in the plan to block the course of the later street. This agrees with the many traces of a general catastrophe at the end of Middle Minoan II. that Dr. Evans discovers at Knossos, and with the fact that nothing Middle Minoan was found at Kato Zakro. The founding of the settlement there was contemporary with a great rebuilding of Palaikastro, and it is with this that the long period Late Minoan I. and II. begins.

During this period no general catastrophe took place, and consequently floor-deposits are rare and its accumulated heaps of sherds are the chief source for its ceramic history, which is briefly the gradual disappearance of the old light-on-dark technique, and the degeneration of the dark-on-light glaze-paint of the ordinary painted ware, by the side of occasional very fine examples. Magnificence and poverty are found side by side in Late

¹ The shapes are those shewn in *B.S.A.* ix. p. 302, Fig. 1, Nos. 1 to 6, described there as Class A Kamáres and identified in *B.S.A.* x. p. 193 as corresponding to M.M.I. of the Knossian scheme.

Minoan II., just as in the contemporary Zakro Houses Mr. Hogarth found the splendid filler published in *J.H.S.* xxii. Pl. XII. 1, by the side of very poor vases, whilst among Late Minoan I. ware it is hard to find a poor piece of dark-on-light work. At that time it was the earlier Kamáres light-on-dark that was in process of degeneration.

The length of this period is proved by the quantity of refuse accumulated. The deposit in π 42 was more than a metre thick, and the

FIG. 6a.

FIG. 6b.

VASES OF THE EARLIER LATE MINOAN I. STYLE (1:3).

total mass of painted fragments from various parts of the site is very considerable. For its architecture we have the houses as finally burned and deserted, and for the finer masonry of its earlier years scattered specimens that survived until the time of general destruction. Of these the clearest are the walls marked L. M. I. in the plan and sections of

Block π on Plates XII. and XIII., and the remains of the Western House in Block χ , 51–66, as well as the walls near the main street between the two large houses χ 1–17 and 51–66, which are the earliest part of this block after the Middle Minoan remains. Contrary to what is often observed, these latter walls follow fairly closely the lines of the preceding constructions. The style of building is however different: the small irregular stones have given way to fairly regular courses, in which the limestone from Capo Sidhero is largely employed. To the fortunate circumstance that this area was early ruined and not occupied during Late Minoan II. times, we owe the two largest floor-deposits of Late Minoan I. vases from the site, which give us in complete examples what we have elsewhere only in fragments. One of these was in 30 and the other in 43, where above and mixed with the vases were great quantities of crushed murex shells.

FIG. 7.—BOWLS OF THE EARLIER LATE MINOAN I. STYLE (1 : 3).

This latter yielded hundreds of small plain cups and saucers,¹ descendants of Middle Minoan forms, and some fine painted vases, two of which are shewn in Fig. 6. These are exactly contemporary with the vases from the pits at Zakro. The bowl, Fig. 6 *a*, painted inside and out with a floral pattern in a fine reddish-brown glaze-paint, is just like the bowls described in *J.H.S.* xxiii. p. 251, and the tall jar (Fig. 6 *b*) has the same combination of dark-on-light with light-on-dark decoration as the vases from Zakro published in *J.H.S.* xxii. Plate XII. Nos. 2 and 3. Of this shape there were fragments of four or five vases. As also at Zakro, cups of the Vaphio shape and bowls (*J.H.S.* xxiii. p. 249, Figs. 1 and 3) in the light-on-dark technique were extremely common, repeating several of the characteristic Zakro patterns. Fig. 7 gives two painted bowls of the same period found this year in χ 18. They are painted inside with a plain dark wash.

Room 48 yielded the stone bed of an olive-press (Fig. 8), which, as it was nearly as deep as the vases in 43, must belong to this same period, as, though not *in situ*, it was below the foundation of the Late Minoan III. walls. It is .52 m. in diameter and .16 thick, with a circular runnel on the upper face, and rim raised above the central part. This rim is a good deal

¹ For these cup-like Saucers see the footnote below in § 5, p. 288.

broken away, and the outlet is not preserved. For a square olive-press found at Knossos see *B.S.A.* vii. p. 82.¹

The next stratum is represented by the two large houses χ East (1-17) and West (51-66), of which separate plans are given in Figs. 9 and 13, containing floor-deposits which point to desertion at the same time as B 1-22 and the Zakro houses, that is, at the end of this second period of the town's

FIG. 8.—STONE BED OF OLIVE-PRESS.

a, Plan; *b*, Section (1 : 10).

existence. The earlier of the two in construction is clearly χ West (51-66), the masonry of which resembles in its use of regular courses the earlier walls of this period. Its irregular plan also contrasts with the rectangularity shewn by χ East and B 1-22.

It stands free from other buildings, with a roughly square plan, opening on the street, which divides it on the west from Block β . South is the main street; north and east, though it stood free, no street pavement

¹ For the subject in general see Paton and Myres, *J.H.S.* xviii. p. 209.

was found. Everywhere, except along the main street, the walls were destroyed right down to the floors, leaving only the foundations. Thus the numerous finds were all on a level with the tops of these foundation-walls. The floors of **64** and **66** were particularly well marked. The centre of the former consisted of a large slab of fine limestone measuring 1.95×1.30 m.,

FIG. 9.—LATE MINOAN HOUSE (51-66) IN BLOCK X.

below which were some earlier walls, whilst the latter had an ornament formed of lines of stucco, laid apparently in earth, making a Greek cross set in a square. As the plan shews, it was almost complete. It recalls the floors of rooms in the private quarters of the Palace of Phaestos, which have lines of coloured plaster laid between stone slabs, and especially the floor of the portico with a similar cross-pattern (*Mon. Ant.* xiv. p. 75,

Fig. 27 and Pl. VII). These two spaces were clearly rooms; the rest are too small, and it seems likely that the foundations supported pillars.

The wall of the main street was standing to a height of 1.50 m., and shewed a masonry of regular courses, with many of the squared blocks of Cape Sidhero limestone. This style of building occurs in both Block χ and Block π in connexion with Late Minoan I. pottery, and seems to mark the earliest elements of the buildings constructed after Middle Minoan times. The irregularity of the plan of this house also points to its having been built earlier than the eastern house χ 1-17 and its contemporary B 1-22. The use of ashlar of poros-stone in the eastern wall is exceptional, as this usually marks Late Minoan III. structures.

It was in making a preliminary trench, to determine the limit of the Hellenic deposit, that we first came upon evidence of the richness of this

FIG. 10.—LATE MINOAN STONE BOWL (1:2).

house in the shape of a hoard of some thirty-five stone vases, lying in burned earth above the foundation-walls marked 61 and 62. Subsequent finds in this house raised the number to forty-six; eight cups, seven small squat bowls, eleven bowls of other forms, five covers were found, and other vessels of less usual shapes, amongst them a fine pear-shaped filler and a grey marble hammer, like the one from "Αγία Τριάδα" figured in *Mon. Ant.* xiv. p. 56, Fig. 26. Three bowls were of the pattern shewn in Fig. 10, with edge and upright handles carved with a cord-pattern. These are of thin section and beautifully finished. Two large steatite lamps were so much injured by fire that it was not possible to do more than sketch them as they were. One was .25 m. high by .33 m. across, the other, of which the bowl

was edged by a pattern of drooping leaves, was .22 m. high by .24 m. in greatest diameter. The materials used for these vases were steatite, breccia, and, most usually, a hard dark-blue stone.

This find made it clear that the house must be completely excavated, and it was near the heap of stone vases that we afterwards came upon the finest vase of the year (Fig. 11). This was an oinochoe which, when mended

FIG. 11.—LATE MINOAN II. OINOCHOE (1:3).

and restored, for unfortunately only about half of it was recovered, proved to be exactly of the same shape as the fine vase with papyrus ornament discovered two years ago in β 22, except that it had no strainer in the mouth. The handle was entirely lost except for a little piece of its lower attachment, but its existence is certain. The ornament is in parts identical with that of the vase from Mycenae published by Mr. Bosanquet, *J.H.S.* xxiv. Pl. XIII. It has the same branches ending in a flower and the subsidiary *Füll-ornamente* are the same. No added white is employed. The paint is well preserved, and, as the lost parts are fairly evenly distrib-

uted, the pattern in all its parts can be restored with certainty. The paint is a reddish-brown, the ground a warm buff, and the clay of a characteristic pink colour. This vase in shape and style is excelled by none found at Palaikastro.

The other pottery of importance came from room 57. Besides fourteen plain or coarsely painted vases, there were three finely painted examples. One was a three-handled *Bügelkanne* (Fig. 12 *a*) with a very

FIG. 12 *a*. FIG. 12 *b*.

LATE MINOAN II. VASES FROM X 57 (1:3).

open mouth, or exactly the shape of the one from the bath-room in House β (*B.S.A.* viii. p. 313, Fig. 26). The pattern is a later modification of a kind of spiral common on L. M. I. vases. Another was a painted jug (Fig. 12 *b*) of a shape found in β 22 (*B.S.A.* ix. p. 313, Fig. 11). The third was a large round-bodied spouted jug decorated on the shoulder with four-leaved whorls of black paint, the leaves of which are diversified with twigs and bars in white. Below are bands of black, white, and red. This alone of these objects looks earlier than the bulk of the L. M. II. deposits, and

resembles rather the L. M. I. sherds that accumulated during the period of the habitation of these houses.¹

A similar vase was found in the lower stratum in β 10 (*B.S.A.* ix, p. 285, Fig. 5), but this stratum is now shewn by the deposits in π 38-40, 42 and 24 described below to belong not to the period of the pits of Zakro, but to the later rather than to the earlier part of Late Minoan I. Their presence in Late Minoan

FIG. 13.—LATE MINOAN II. HOUSE (1-17) IN BLOCK X.

II. deposits means no more than that vases of slightly different ages, or perhaps only traditions, were in use in the same house, and such preservation of finely painted ware is only natural. A third example was found in a Late Minoan II. deposit in Block ϵ (*B.S.A.* ix, p. 204).

Of bronze there were found two chisels, two heavy double axes, and a fine bronze sword-blade 40 m. long, which was attached to the hilt by three rivets,

¹ The Museum at Thera contains a vase of this shape: it is a clear imitation of Cretan work and amongst native copies of L. M. I. ware.

the heads of which are plated with silver. In form it is intermediate between the short daggers of earlier times and the long slender Late Minoan III. swords found by Dr. Evans at Knossos. No such fine weapon had been found before at Palaikastro.

Built somewhat later, to judge from its masonry and regular plan, was the large house, **1-17**, that occupies the eastern part of this block, of which a separate plan is given in Fig. 13. It covers the site of massive middle Minoan and Late Minoan I. buildings, but at a slightly different angle. The Middle Minoan building ran out into what later on was the street, one of the differences between the earlier and later plans of the town mentioned above.

The plan of the L. M. II. house is regular and consists of two wings separated by a projecting room. This is as it was built originally; as it stands it shews marks of much remodelling. It will be noticed from the plan that whilst rooms **1-9** are well paved and provided with doors, both pavement and doors are almost entirely wanting in the west wing. The pottery shews a corresponding difference; rooms **10** to **17** yielded Late Minoan II. ware of the poor glaze and style¹ that marks the inferior painted vases of this period, whilst **1-9** contained Late Minoan III. pottery. It seems therefore that rooms **10-17** represent the foundations and cellars of the original house, and the centre and east wing a late occupation and remodelling. A small deposit of sherds was found amongst burned earth under a floor at the foot of the stairs in room **15**. These sherds resemble those from the earlier burned stratum in **β 10** and **13**, and serve to put back the original building of the house to the same period as the building of House **β 1-22**. The masonry, where original, is characteristic. In the west wing the regular courses of the earlier style preserved in House **χ 51-66** have given way to an irregular manner of building, whilst the centre and east wing contain much ashlar masonry, which is rare earlier, and generally marks Late Minoan III. buildings.

Of the earlier half of the house the only parts of the plan, of interest are room **17** with two stone benches and the staircase **15**, at the foot of which was the earlier deposit referred to.

The most important finds from this area were a series of carvings in ivory of excellent workmanship and very fine preservation. Room **15**

¹ This 'inferior glaze' was remarked by Mr. Hogarth in the pottery of the contemporary houses at Zakro, *B.S.A.* vii. p. 145.

yielded a plaque (·06 × ·04 m.) decorated with a pattern of scattered lilies with recurved petals in intaglio (Fig. 14 *b*). This came from the lower burned stratum and is therefore earlier than the others.

Room 10 yielded a plaque (·11 × ·038 to ·027 m.) carved with emblems in relief, probably of religious import. On one side is a circular coronal, and on the other two tassel-like objects and a double axe. Instead of a shaft this has a spreading treble tassel and above a loop seemingly of plaited cord. The general effect is that of the Egyptian *ankh*. It is in fact the same figure that appears on a gold signet ring from the Vaphio tomb figured by Dr. Evans, *Mycenaean Tree and Pillar Cult*, *J.H.S.* xxi. p. 176, Fig. 52, who gives (Fig. 54) the allied forms, and suggests the crossing with the double axe symbol, which in this instance is very clearly shewn. The axe-blades have the decoration of transverse lines common on Cretan representations of the double axe. From the same room came a heavy bronze double axe.

From 16 came what may be the back of an ivory comb, and from 17 a plaque (·07 × ·03 m.) bearing in relief a flying peacock, with above and below a band of the rockwork pattern like that on the cups from Vaphio (Fig. 14 *a*). The bird is shewn descending with uplifted wings as if about to perch. The attitude is that of birds on contemporary cups from Phylakopi, and adds another to the numerous links between Crete and Melos (*Phylakopi*, Pl. xvi. 1, 2, and 4). The three holes seen in the side of the plaque pass right through its breadth and together with the incompleteness of the design on both sides suggest that it was strung with others to form perhaps a belt. The finding of a rough piece of ivory from the centre of a tusk makes it probable that these objects are the work of local artists.

This latter room yielded also a bronze sickle, a clay 'firebox,' stone weights, the pommel of a sword or sceptre in marble, and two stone vessels. Fallen painted plaster, noted especially in 16 and 17, indicated the usual style of Late Minoan wall-decoration.

The plan of the rooms 1–9, the part of the house re-occupied in Late Minoan III. times, after the general desertion of the site at the end of L. M. II., offers more of interest. The entrance is into room 1 from a colonnaded portico with paved floor. The bases of two of the columns were found *in situ* and indications of the former position of the other two. Outside the projecting room 2 there exists the beginning of an external staircase, which may have led to an upper storey. From 1 a door on the

left leads to **2**, where is the main staircase. Room **8** also has a stair. The centre of the whole building is **3**, with its two circular column bases. Near them is a square block fallen from above. Besides a good deal of broken pottery serving to date the period of desertion, the most important finds were a fine stone lamp, edged with a pattern of carved leaves in room **7**, a tall standard lamp, found last year, of the same red stone in room **5**, and, in the doorway between **3** and **7**, a small pair of 'horns-of-consecration' made of sandstone.

A number of other walls in this block belong to the same period

FIG. 14 a.

FIG. 14 b.

CARVED IVORY PLAQUES (1:1).

(Late Minoan III.) as the remodelling of this east wing, and were deserted at the same time. Thus later buildings were constructed on the centre of the block and on part of the site of House **51-66**, all agreeing in the character of the pottery and the use of ashlar masonry. These buildings were all much destroyed, no doubt by the building of the Hellenic Temple, which involved the levelling of the upper, i.e. the western part of this region: whereas in other parts of the site, where habitation ceased after the Minoan age, the Late Minoan III. buildings are usually well preserved. With this third period the existence of the town, already twice ruined and

rebuilt, came finally to an end, and nothing remained but the traditional sanctity of the spot, evidenced by the remains of the Greek temple.

§ 5.—BLOCK π.

The completion of work on this block consisted almost entirely of examining lower strata in the northern and eastern quarters. Whilst in one part of the block (**26** on Plates XII. and XIII.) the rocky subsoil rises so high as to have led to the total destruction of all remains, in the immediately adjacent regions to the north and east it sinks so low as to leave some three or four metres of deposit with four clearly separate strata of walls. Plate XII. gives a plan shewing the two earlier sets, Middle Minoan and, above this, but on different lines, Late Minoan I., and Plate XIII. the Late Minoan II. structures, which especially in **7-22** are closely followed by the Late Minoan III. walls.

In last year's report (*B.S.A.* x. p. 212) an account was given of Houses **1-6**, **7-16**, **17-22**. The remains in the two latter were mostly Late Minoan III., over the remains of Late Minoan II. houses. This year more rooms (see Pl. XIII.) (**27**, **28**, and **23-25**) of this second period have been explored, though the yield was only enough pottery to fix their relations. Of these **23-25** belonged to a house, the rest of which, lying probably to the east, has perished by the denudation of the slope, since there seems to be a party-wall between them and **20-22**.

More extensive remains are preserved of the Late Minoan III. House **29-37** (Pl. XII.), which opens on the main street by a narrow vestibule (**29**) with four steps. From this one passes to the stairs (**30**), leading to an upper storey of which no other trace is left. Right and left of this vestibule were other rooms, **31-33** and **34-37**, the former following the lines of an earlier Late Minoan I. building.

Beyond a good deal of the characteristic pottery, all much broken, nothing was found in this stratum. This however, with the masonry and free use of ashlar, clearly fixes the period.

Of Late Minoan II. very little pottery and correspondingly little wall was found this year in this block, and the next important stratum below the Late Minoan III. described above belongs to the period of rebuilding after Middle Minoan times. Here the finds of pottery consisted of deep accumulations formed during the period between the rebuilding of the

PALAIKASTRO. KEY PLAN OF THE TOWN.

ROUSSOLAKKOS

(Palaikastro) CRETE

Block X—Temple Site

SCALE 1:200

- EARLY MINOAN
- MIDDLE MINOAN
- LATE MINOAN I.
- LATE MINOAN II.
- LATE MINOAN III.
- HELLENIC

SECTION ON LINE A-B
LOOKING WEST

- EARLY MINOAN
- MIDDLE MINOAN
- LATE MINOAN I.
- LATE MINOAN II.
- LATE MINOAN III.
- HELLENIC

SECTION ON LINE C-D
LOOKING NORTH

PALAIKASTRO. SECTIONS IN BLOCK X. TEMPLE SITE.

SMALL FIGURES MARK
METRES ABOVE SEA-LEVEL

PALAIKASTRO. BLOCK π . MIDDLE MINOAN AND LATE MINOAN WALLS.

PALAIKASTRO. BLOCK π. LATE MINOAN I. AND LATE MINOAN II. WALLS.