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The Annual of the British School at Athens / Volume 16 / November 1910, pp 15 - 17

DOI: 10.1017/S0068245400001623, Published online: 18 October 2013

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0068245400001623

How to cite this article:

R. M. Dawkins (1910). I.—Excavations at Sparta, 1910: § 4.—Artemis Orthia: The Excavation of 1910. The Annual of the British School at Athens, 16, pp 15-17 doi:10.1017/S0068245400001623

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LACONIA.

I.—EXCAVATIONS AT SPARTA, 1910.

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§ 4.—ARTEMIS ORTHIA : THE EXCAVATION OF 1910.

(PLATES IV AND VI)

ALTHOUGH it was thought in 1909 that no more work was required at the Sanctuary of Artemis Orthia, a few men were employed there this year, mainly in testing outlying parts of the site. In this way a series of pits was made at the foot of the cliff which rises to the south of the hieron, and the ground behind the temple was further explored ; the former yielded no results, and the latter only confirmed the conclusions already reached as to the history of this region. The only finds were pottery, a number of lead figurines, and some pieces of carved bone, all of the kind found in previous years in similar deposits of the sixth century. Below them there was, as usual, a little Laconian I and Geometric pottery.

The most important finds were two inscribed bases of statues of *Bomonikai*, boys victorious in the contest of endurance (Pl. VI). These were taken out of the lowest part of the foundation of the theatre near Ray VII. They had been partly visible for some years, one since 1906 in the edge of the preliminary cutting called Trench B, and the other since 1907 in the curved edge of the arena. When at last they were taken out, their importance was at once evident. Like the other marbles and inscriptions found in the foundation of the theatre, they belonged to an earlier period of the hieron, and, when the theatre was built, were thrown down and used for rubble. The inscriptions, numbered 2720 and 2721, are published by Mr. Woodward on pp. 54 ff. of this volume. The top of one base, No. 2720

(Plate VI, *a*), with the archaistic inscription, shews clearly the traces of the feet of the statue, and between them, of the groove in which the *stèle* was set, on which the victor's own dedication of his prize was inscribed. The top of the other, No. 2721 (Plate VI, *b*), has a great confusion of marks, which shew that it has been used more than once, and this is supported by the existence of four lines of carefully erased writing on the opposite side to that which bears the present inscription. Among the marks on its surface a trace of a foot can be distinguished, pointing downwards in the photograph, and towards the erased inscription; it belonged to the statue for which the base was first used. Mr. Woodward dates them both to the last quarter of the second century A.D.

The last piece of work was concerned with the examination of the outer edge of the foundation of the theatre. The eastern part of this towards the river had never been completely cleared, and, although the whole surface of this region had been destroyed by the mill-stream, it was still desirable to trace the outer line of the foundation in search for any

FIG. 1.—LACONIAN V VASE-FRAGMENT WITH FIGURE OF ORTHIA.

possible irregularity, then to remove such of it as still existed, in the hope of finding inscriptions, and lastly, to examine the lower strata. The yield of inscriptions was limited to the three minute fragments, Nos. 2717–2719, now published on p. 57 below, by Mr. Woodward, and the line of the foundation continued on its regular curve up to the point where it was destroyed by the river. The results of the work below the level of the foundation appear on the plan of the site (Pl. IV). It was discovered that the houses found in 1908 to the east of the hieron extended to this region, and still further into the undug ground to the east between this and the river.¹ The finds were of the same character, except that more Hellenistic and less Laconian V and VI pottery was found, the greater part being black-glazed, often with incised lines or white ornament on the black ground. In the lowest levels there was a little Geometric pottery,

¹ The account of these houses is in *B.S.A.* xiv, pp. 7–12.

and between this and the Hellenistic a few sherds of Laconian V and VI. The most interesting find was the fragment of the stalk of a kylix with the lower part of the figure of Orthia with a snake on either side, which she was probably holding in her hands. It is in the Laconian V style, and belongs therefore to the fifth century. The design is shewn in Fig. 1 as if rolled out flat. The only other find of importance was a bronze sphinx, hollow at the back and with a hook in front of the figure, which suggests that it formed one half of a clasp.

A water-channel and a finely made basin, both of terracotta, and a well in this house, point to some domestic or industrial purpose, probably connected with the service of the Sanctuary. The upper part of the well was lined with stones; below this there were three cylindrical sections of terracotta, each with a square hole to serve as a foothold.

R. M. DAWKINS.

b

a

a

b

SPARTA: BASES FOR STATUES OF BOMONIKAI; *a* = No. 2720. *b* = No. 2721. (SCALE ca. 5 : 8.)