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70. Pre-Mykenaeen Athens.

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Nous voici à la fin de nos remarques qui j'ose l'espérer ne seront pas trouvées inutiles : il me semble que l'hypothèse de l'origine libyenne s'accorde mieux avec les faits que l'hypothèse boiteuse de MM. MacIver et Wilkin faisant des concessions pour les retirer immédiatement (voir notamment, p. 108).

Cependant je craindrais d'avoir en quoi que ce soit amoindri la haute valeur des "Libyan Notes" qui malgré ce que les travaux ultérieurs pourront faire découvrir resteront toujours dans la matière un livre capital qui aura eu notamment le mérite de poser la question sur son véritable terrain.

JEAN CAPART.

P.S.—Je renvoie les lecteurs, pour le développement de tous les points qui précèdent, à l'admirable livre du professeur Sergi, *The Mediterranean Race: a Study of the Origin of European Peoples*, reçu pendant la correction des épreuves de mon article.

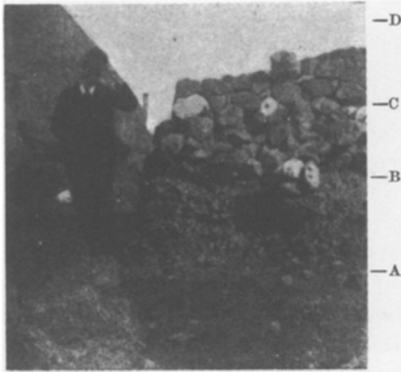
Greece : Prehistoric.

Myres.

Pre-Mykenæan Athens. By John L. Myres, M.A., F.S.A.

70

It is now some years since I noted on the south side of the Acropolis of Athens the traces of a very early settlement underlying the fragments of Mykenæan walls which lie in the open space behind the back wall of the Stoa of Eumenes, between the Odeion of Herodes Atticus on the west and the Asklepieion and the Dionysiac Theatre on the east. But it is only because I have failed hitherto to find any reference to these remains in any of the current books of reference that I venture to put on record what must have been visible to very many students of antiquity, and very likely has escaped record merely because it was patent.



VIEW, LOOKING WEST.

The whole of the area below the steep face of the Akropolis, and between the Odeion and the Asklepieion, was cleared of *débris* down to the rock at the same time as the rest of the south side of the hill ; but very

few buildings or monuments were found either of Hellenic or Græco-Roman date. There occur, however, numerous fragments of house-walls of Mykenæan date, and these are fully recorded on the current ground plans of the site. What has not, however, been noted is, that these walls themselves stand upon a distinct layer of "made-earth," which must be of earlier date, and is, in fact, full of the *débris* of a very much more primitive settlement. This pre-Mykenæan stratum is in some places as much as a metre in depth ; but as its existence appears to have been ignored during the excavation, the only remains of it now are the narrow strips on which the Mykenæan walls stand, and these are already attenuated by the action of the weather.

Still, enough remains to give a general idea of the character of the settlement, which belongs, to all appearance, to the end of the Neolithic Age, or, perhaps, to the very beginning of the Bronze Age, and is comparable in many respects of its culture to the "Second Town" in the far finer series at Hissarlik. The made-earth already mentioned is full of fragments of rough, hand-made, unpainted pottery, made of the dark unlevigated mud of the Ilissos valley, full of fragments of the local schists ; not of the tawny and much less gritty clay of the Kerameikos and the Kephissos valley, on the other side of the site of Athens. There are also rare fragments of a light-coloured

ware, more like the clay of the Kerameikos, one of which showed traces of lustreless brown paint; but it was not quite clear to me in some cases whether these had not slipped down from the Mykenæan layer, where light-coloured and painted fragments of various fabrics abound. The pre-Mykenæan layer yields also fragments of ashes and cinders, and of animal bones, together with obsidian flakes, and occasional rubbed pebbles, which may have been potter's burnishers. That the pots were made near the site is also clear from their composition, and from the presence in one of them of a fragment of worked obsidian, which does not occur *in situ* in the Ilissos valley, or, indeed, in Attica at all. Similar very rude pottery is to be found on the surface on the east face of the Mouseion Hill, and on the unexcavated west slope of the Akropolis.

Vessels of "Hissarlik" types are already known from the excavations on the Akropolis itself; but it is a distinct point gained to know that in primitive, as in Mykenæan times, there was a regular settlement under cover of that natural fortress; more especially when it is remembered that the plot of ground in which both have been found is commonly identified with the "Pelasgikon" or "prehistoric site" which is mentioned by Thucydides (II., 17) as a tabu-plot of uncanny waste in the heart of fifth-century Athens. It is, perhaps, worth noting further that immediately above the best preserved bits of Mykenæan wall are the worst ravages of that "quarrying in the Pelasgikon," which had to be forbidden in the fifth century by the well-known Eleusinian Psephisma (Dittenberger, *Sylloge*, 13).

The photograph shows one of the best-preserved sections of the stratum in question. The letter A in the margin marks the surface of the hard red rock of the Akropolis; B, the upper surface of the pre-Mykenæan layer; C, the fragmentary Mykenæan wall, with bits of Mykenæan pottery in the crannies; D, the steep face of the Akropolis, with the fifth century fortress-wall above the Asklepion, in the background.

J. L. MYRES.

Malta: Prehistoric.

Myres.

Prehistoric Pottery in the Valletta Museum in Malta. By John L. Myres, M.A., F.S.A. **71**

The vases which stand prominently in the centre of the photograph overleaf are said to have come from rock-tombs in the Bengemma Hills in the north-west part of Malta. They are composed of a rough native clay of dark colour, the result of the disintegration of the soft limestone of the island; they are hand-made, and they bear the warm red hæmatitic surface with bright burnished lustre, which is common to so many early fabrics of pottery in the Mediterranean coast-lands.

The larger vessel, in the lower part of the photograph is comparatively simple in form. The body is nearly spherical, slightly flattened for stability below; the neck is wide, and slightly expanded above, but without distinct rim: the handles are set vertically rather low down on the body; and there is a small *mamilla* on the shoulder half-way between them. The general type is well-known among the early Bronze Age "red-ware" of Cyprus (*Cyprus Museum Catalogue*, Pl. II., 194, 200, 206), but the particular form of this vase is not Cypriote: neither does it occur among the pre-dynastic "red-ware" of Egypt (Petrie, *Nagada and Ballas*, passim), nor among the very scanty series from the Tunisian dolmens (*Bardo Museum*, unpublished), nor in the pottery of the Sicilian Bronze Age (*Syracuse Museum*: cf. Orsi, *Quattro Anni di Esplorazione Sicule*, passim).

The composite vase on the upper shelf in the photograph is remarkable first for its fine technique and for the perfection of its red surface, and then for its form. It consists of three high gourd-shaped vessels in contact with each other below, and connected also