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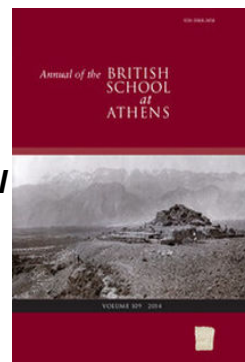
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## Excavations at Palaikastro. III: § 5.—Block ξ

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an early look. The restoration<sup>1</sup> of the horns of the *ἀργίμη*, whose head is not a spout, to form a handle, is due to a suggestion of Mr. Bosanquet. Without this junction for the horns the head would merely be a useless ornament. A good many such horns in clay have been found separately, especially in Blocks *σ* and *υ*, broken at both ends, as if they had served as the handles of vases.

This house yielded also the two largest hoards of clay weights yet found. One consisted mostly of spherical pierced lumps of clay, the other of 71 roughly cubical lumps, each pierced with four parallel holes. Some of these showed a circular seal-impression of a quadruped with a spray of leaves filling the field above its back. The ear of an ox in steatite was also found, with a dowel-peg to fasten it to the head. As the ear measures .045 m. in length, this head must have been of considerable size.

#### § 5.—BLOCK ξ.

This large block, covering about 650 sq. m., lies to the south of Block *ε* on the slope of the hillock that overlooks the town on the south. Bounded on three sides by streets, towards the south the remains become gradually thinner, disappearing with the rise of the ground and the shallower soil. The superposition of one wall upon another, and the objects found at different levels, enable us to distinguish at least three separate strata of habitation. To begin from the top, a few finds point to houses as late as Late Minoan III. *β*, that is, to the period of the latest floor-deposits in Block *γ*.<sup>2</sup> Thus near the surface were found a few sherds of this style, two decorated with the arms of the degenerate octopus characteristic of this late ware, and a flat gourd-shaped vase with a ring-base and two handles, one on each side of the neck, ornamented with flowers drawn in a linear style like that of the late Mycenaean pottery of Tel-el-Amarna. A plain lentoid bead of dark steatite found near the surface belongs to this series of objects. With these we must connect the latest set of walls. These remain in sufficient quantity to form a house only in the middle of

<sup>1</sup> Further examination shows that the tips of the horns did not join the vase exactly as suggested in the figure, for the broken projection, drawn as the tip of the horns, is shown to have been another small handle by the presence of a similar complete handle on the opposite side of the vase. It is probable that the horns were not actually joined at the tips, as the rim shows hardly any possibility of such a junction.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *B.S.A.* ix. p. 291, and p. 317, § 14.

the northern part of the block (rooms **2-7** on the key plan). Its entrance is on Street  $\epsilon$ - $\xi$  at a level some way above that of the paved roadway, from which a flight of steps, of which the bottom two remain *in situ*, led up to the threshold. Corresponding to this rise in the level is a flight of steps blocking Street  $\xi$ - $\pi$  near its northern end and leading up to the threshold of a house of the same late period, remains of which are the few high-level walls found in the north-east quarter of the block (rooms  $\xi$  **20-25** on the plan).

Below this is the main mass of walls, which belong to houses deserted after a fire at the same time as Block  $\beta$ . A few Late Minoan III. *a* sherds occurred in the southern part of the block, where no traces of fire were found, but the greater part is proved by its contents to have been deserted, like  $\beta$  and the houses at Zakro, in the Late Minoan II. period. The block at this time formed five, or rather four (for the space **20-25** was certainly at this time not built upon) small houses, opening on the surrounding streets. No ashlar, except a few blocks facing Street  $\epsilon$ - $\xi$  and belonging probably to the later house, is used, just as it is absent from the contemporary Block  $\beta$ . With this contrast its use in  $\gamma$  and especially  $\delta$  with their later deposits. None of the walls can be called megalithic. The houses are small and present no features of particular interest. No pillar bases were found and paved rooms were rare. Nor was much painted plaster found.

The most important finds, both in themselves and as indications of the date of the house, occurred in rooms **5** and **14**. In the latter a large bronze vase, .55 m. high, was found lying on its side just inside the outer wall. Its shape is almost exactly that of the copper jug from the Fourth Shaft Grave at Mycenae, figured by Tsountas and Manatt, *The Mycenaean Age*, p. 72, Fig. 17, an oinochoe with one vertical handle on the shoulder and an auxiliary horizontal handle near the foot. The handle, with its three rivets attaching it to the spreading rim and its bold curve, is exactly that of the oinochoe with the strainer-mouth found last year in  $\beta$  **22** (*B.S.A.* ix. p. 287). The general shape of the two vessels is also similar. The part of Block  $\epsilon$  dug this year yielded, amongst its mass of Late Minoan II. ware, half a large earthenware pitcher with a similar horizontal handle set low down, a necessity for conveniently pouring from these large heavy vessels.

Room **14** in the same house was full of vases, all pointing to the same

date. Round the walls on stone slabs, set in the earthen floor expressly no doubt to support their weight, were plain pithoi, and mixed up with these and quantities of charcoal and burned brick were a great number of vases, mostly plain. Twenty-eight were got out complete, all of the shapes usually found in Late Minoan II. deposits, such as those analysed by Mr. Bosanquet in *B.S.A.* ix. p. 283. Thus here were found the fire-boxes, strainers with two handles, trefoil-lipped jugs, handleless cups of the shape shown in *B.S.A.* ix. p. 302, Fig. 1, No. 13, and small cups with three notches on the rim, mentioned above as found amongst the similar vases in  $\epsilon$  36-43, that are typical of such deposits. A bronze chisel-shaped tool, 25 m. long, was found amongst these vases.

Of the Late Minoan I. period that precedes this, and is represented at Palaikastro by the earlier strata in  $\beta$  10 and 13, no floor-deposits were found, but a great many sherds in the north-east part of this block (20-25 on the plan), which contains no Middle Minoan II. walls. We may therefore conclude that this region was not occupied by any building at this time, whilst the other houses deserted at the same time as  $\beta$  1-22, were already built, certainly as early as the Late Minoan I. period, and their débris accumulated in this open space. The sherds are many of them extremely fine, and give a lively idea of what the ware of this period must have been like. It resembles in many points the contemporary pottery from the pits at Zakro, and the tendril pattern, so abundant there, is found here also quite frequently.<sup>1</sup> The style is already characterized by the prevalence of dark-on-light decoration, but retains from Middle Minoan times the free use of white paint. Red also is often added in stripes to the dark-on-light design, usually the friable red of the 'Kamáres' technique, but occasionally a red variety of the black glaze-paint. These sherds with red paint seem earlier than the others, and possibly represent the Middle Minoan III. period, the latest stage of the polychrome Middle Minoan style. The 'ripple' or 'wood-pattern' so common in the Zakro pits is abundant. Of the splendid effect of these vases when complete, we get some idea from the lower part of a big vase from this area, decorated with the 'ripple' pattern and a bold design of leaves and stalks in reddish glaze-paint upon a fine orange slip. Still more gorgeous are the remains of a strainer of this style, found in a trial trench east of Block  $\delta$ . Only the lower part is preserved, but when complete it must have been

<sup>1</sup> See *J.H.S.* xxiii. p. 249, Figs. 1 and 3.

the largest of its class yet found at Palaikastro. It is covered with an orange slip, decorated immediately above the waist with a band of tendril pattern in reddish-brown glaze. Above this is a dark band bearing a twig-pattern in white paint. Between this and the break is a band of spirals each with a large eye relieved by a cluster of white dots. This last is a very characteristic pattern.

The next stage lower down both of walls and pottery is represented by certain floor-deposits belonging to the walls at the lowest level, which are thus proved to belong to Middle Minoan houses. Of these the most important is the hoard of vases found in the north-east area of the block, between § 20 and § 1, a deposit which tells us much that is new about Middle Minoan II. pottery. These vases were all found close together, and for the most part fairly complete. Though no wall quite close by could be said to belong to them, their character clearly associates them with the other Middle Minoan deposits found beneath the later floors in this block, and in connexion with the earliest walls. Forty-eight vases were got out complete, falling into the following groups:—

I. Ten cups of the 'Vaphio' type, generally covered with a poor black glaze; cf. *B.S.A.* ix., p. 302, Fig. 1, Nos. 11 and 11a. Four cups of the shape shown in *B.S.A.* ix., p. 302, Fig. 1, No. 10. Nine handleless cups of the same shape.

These are thus vases that are identical with those of Class B of last year's report (p. 304), *i.e.* vases of poor 'Kamáres' technique, and assigned there to a later period than the good vases from the cemeteries. The presence here of these vases shows that we have to deal with a late 'Kamáres' deposit.

II. Certain vases of various shapes resembling those found in the cemeteries. Amongst these are a small bucket-shaped cup (cf. *B.S.A.* viii, p. 293, Fig. 7, vase on left of the bottom row), a three-handled jar, some small bowls supported by three legs, etc. These are of no great importance, but have mostly been found elsewhere in similar deposits.

III. Four very fine vases which are of great importance in determining the character of the pottery of this period.

(a) A cup of the 'Vaphio' shape, of delicate fabric, .07 m. high, with a pale slip, decorated round the body with a belt of black stripes, and the rest of the body covered with the 'ripple' pattern in vertical lines. This pattern also ornaments the flat handles, and covers the bottom of the cup with radial stripes

(b) A small bowl .14 m. in diameter, covered inside and out with a marbled decoration of brown paint, grained by the brush into zigzag waves. The lip is covered with the 'ripple' pattern.

(c) A similar bowl, .15 m. in diameter, with the same decoration, except that the marbling covers the lip also.

(d) A basin, diameter .135 m., height .65 m., covered with similar brown

paint grained in horizontal lines. A similar, but later, mug was found in the Zakro pit. The style of these last three vases is quite new at Palaikastro. With them falls a fragment of a much larger bowl (diameter about '28 m.) of the same stout ware found in a Middle Minoan deposit this year in  $\delta$  48. The decoration consisted of 'ripple' pattern on the lip, and on the rest of the bowl zigzag marbled paint interrupted by concentric bands of solid colour. A saucer of the same style came from the Megaron of the older house in Block  $\delta$ ; it was found in digging beneath the Late Minoan pavement.

(e) A bowl, of which no more than half could be recovered, of very fine egg-shell ware. The reddish clay is extraordinarily pure, and the surface, covered with a thin coat of brownish-black glaze, delicately smooth and regular. The uniform thickness of the walls of the bowl is about that of the shell of an ostrich egg. The decoration, unfortunately much perished, consists of a delicate pattern of white wavy lines, centering about the base of the bowl, and circles of white dots. The shape is exactly that of the eggshell bowls from Knossos, of which one is shown in *J.H.S.* xxiii., Pl. V., No. 1, a vase of the finest polychrome style. The polychrome decoration of these similar Knossian bowls brings this whole deposit into connexion with the finest polychrome Middle Minoan ware, with the full range of colours, red, yellow and white, and with designs already becoming naturalistic. Of this style a bowl was found in Block  $\delta$  this year with a pattern of large white rosettes with a red centre on the black ground, connected by bands of orange-yellow, and with the interspaces filled by crocuses in white.

This deposit thus shows that, instead of the finest ware of the Cemeteries being followed by a Second Middle Minoan period of decadence, a continual progress introduced more colours, a more delicate technique and freer designs. That this ware is a step towards the Late Minoan I. style is indicated by the use of the 'ripple' pattern and the appearance on elegant vessels of the dark-on-light style, a few other examples<sup>1</sup> of which were found under the floors in this block, and so are hardly later than this deposit. Lastly it contained a fragment of a bowl of the same shape as those so common in the pits at Zakro, with the handle bearing the characteristic clay 'rivet' at the top.

Several other floor deposits were found belonging to the Middle Minoan walls. Of these the earliest in character was that in room 9 in the North-West corner of the block. It comprised cups like those of the earlier 'Class A' ware from the ossuaries, a clay lamp with the very open bowl noted above as an early characteristic, and two headless female figurines with bell-skirts of the kind found at Petsofá.

These deposits carry us back as far probably as any of the walls in this block. Even earlier habitation is indicated by the discovery at the lowest

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* a cup with horizontal bands and a neat twig-pattern in dark paint with touches of white on the rim was found below the north wall of Room 2.

levels of a few hand-made sherds of grey clay incised with dots and curvilinear designs, of a kind occasionally found in the ossuaries.

### § 6.—BLOCK π.

South-east of the part of this block now excavated, the ground falls away rapidly in a terraced slope, and all remains seem to have disappeared. *In this direction a limit, or at all events a break, in the continuity of the town has been reached.*

Of the first house all that is left is a row of rooms on the East side of Street ξ—π. These rooms go down to a considerable depth, and the remains in them are of the Late Minoan I period, although traces of floor levels some way up the walls show that they formed part of a house occupied at a later date. Above them at the north end of the row is a room at a higher level, probably belonging to the latest period of the town when the rise in level had led to the building of the steps that block the street just north of this point. Its only notable yield was a curious male figurine,<sup>1</sup> 185 m. high, of red clay covered with a red coating. The shoulders are extravagantly broad, measuring across half the height of the figure. The dress consists of a double leaf-shaped apron that falls from the belt before and behind. The hair is elaborately dressed with three flat curls on the crown, and three long tresses, one falling down the back, and one on each side over the breast. This arrangement is notable, as it exactly reproduces the hair of one of the men of Keftiu in the Rekhmara tomb at Thebes, shown on the Frontispiece of H. R. Hall's *Oldest Civilization of Greece*. Another Keftiu man (*B.S.A.* ix. p. 171, Fig. 2) shows the row of three curls.

The lower level rooms yielded a good many objects, but the most interesting was the lower part of a cup, cut out of rock crystal. This was very clearly in a Late Minoan I stratum. It was a straight-sided, flat-bottomed, round mug, 106 m. in diameter, with the walls about 1008 m. thick. The bottom of a similar cup of about the same size, but more highly polished, came from Block χ. When complete these cups probably had metal handles.<sup>2</sup>

Separate from these rooms are the two houses 7-16 and 17-22, built above the scanty remains of a Middle Minoan house, of which a trace

<sup>1</sup> The figure may be earlier than the walls, as it was found near their foundation, and may belong to the Late Minoan II period.

<sup>2</sup> Stone vases found at Knossos possess attachments for such handles, *B.S.A.* vi. p. 31.