Trench 34A2.

The great debate begins again today as we decided to cut once more into the sounding on the west side of 34A2 to determine whether we have in fact reached bedrock.

We level the entire surface some 25 cm without any change in fill and without a single shard. There still seems to be stone packing beneath the column base continuing to lower levels so in the north half we reduce the level still another 20 cm. We encounter no change in fill but do reach ground water which represents a clear terminus for operations. The sounding is cleaned and photographed and can be filled in on Monday.

With 34A2 + 3 finished we are now in a position to turn our attention to the Temple: packing in various places for evidence of construction sequences and dating. These projects can begin on Monday.

34A2 - Final Plan (after 88th sounding extension).

Roll 8 Frame 34

Overview of N.W. corner at finish of trench. From South.
Trench 34A2
Once final levels were taken the sapping along the west side of the trench could be backfilled to the level of the pebble floor. With this under way we were free to turn our attention to the temple.

Trench 34A4

The first project with respect to the temples is a small sounding at the west end of the latest temple, beneath a section of the foundations. The area overlooks what is assumed to be the east-west axis of the archaic temple and it is hoped that digging in this area will enable us to better define the west wall of this building (the exterior face of which was excavated by MCS as part of Trench 37A) by uncovering its inner face. It is also hoped that enough interior space may be exposed to permit us to consider the character of the structure between the tri-pilar altar and the rear wall. During the winter sounding within 29A1 during 1979 a great deal of pottery was recovered from the space west of the altar block such we may expect some sign of this deposit to continue into our present sounding.

Unusually, eight foundation blocks were removed (as indicated opposite) to give us some initial space in which to dig. The clay packing immediately beneath these blocks, but overlying the archaic wall, was removed as a preliminary pool in which we expect intrusions.

Pit 76 Level 1

Underfill

From depth of 5.20
Type of soil: clay packing
Pottery: 20 sherds, little distinctive; probably late 7th

Other:

Inventario:
With this spoil we level the surface at the top of the archaic wall. In order to provide ourselves with the widest possible working space, it is decided to undermine the later structure base a little to the east. This space is not likely to be contaminated and is collected as a separate spoil.

Part 77 Level 2
Upper spoil
From depth: 5.20
Type of soil: hard grey-brown clay beneath some stone chips
Pottery: 40 sherds; Orienteering; 7th-8th C. A.D.
Other: Carbon, Shell

Inventoryed: C.3461, bowl; C.3465, bowl; C.3466, cup; C.3472, high neck cup rim.

This digging revealed a fairly consistent level of sherds running beneath the statue base. Their level (about 5.00 m) compares favorably with the level of the upper surface on the Tripillar slab and is associated with a small class of painted clay, a patch of which was collected for analysis. Originally this stratum may have extended over to the archaic wall but the line of the latter foundations now blocks it.

With the surface now level we are prepared to excavate below the top of the archaic wall.

Part 78 Level 2
Under spoils 76 & 77
From depth:
Type of soil: packed brown clay
Pottery: 25 sherds, wavy; probably post-Minoan

Other: Carbon, Glass, Soil samples, Lime, Shell

Inventoryed:
we cleared off the archaic wall to reveal its inner face. Its width is about 70 - 78 cm. The exposed length (15m) is constructed of two parallel lines of blocks; those on the exterior being larger and reaching a greater height. We know that the exterior face consists of only one course set on stone chips foundation above sand. It will be interesting to see if the interior face is any more substantiated.

After the shallow passage a patch of burned clay similar in appearance to that noted above was uncovered. It was more extensive than that at the higher level but still did not fill the space being excavated. In fact, south of this patch the clay has gradually given way to dark sandy fill which may correspond to the same upon which the archaic wall is founded. Nevertheless some associated sherds at the level of the burned clay imply that we are at a definite surface and we will change pads to continue.

Pail 79 Level 3
Under pail 78
From depth of:
Type of soil: some light brown clay, but mostly darker brown sandy earth.
Pottery: 25 shards; mixed wares; lowest 7th BC.
Other: Surface material: charcoal, Bone, Shell
Inventario:

A chunk of the burned clay was kept for analysis. Beneath it the fill becomes considerably more sandy with the clay of the higher levels being confined now only to a strip along the east.

It was hoped that by this point we would have reached an sunset interior bench against the back wall of the interior temple but none seems forthcoming. Nevertheless it is reasonable to expect some sort of temple furniture on the axis at this point. We must wait to see what tomorrow holds.
Trench 34A 4

A shallow pass through the sounding removes the last traces of the clay fill and leaves us with only soft sandy earth. The inner face of the arched wall bottoms out in this sand, at the same level as the exterior face. It is set on a sparse layer of stone chips.

A further pass brings us down to a row of stones and clearing defines these as a series of five horizontal plates, one of which is set at a higher level than the others, and each are resting independently in the fill. Several pieces of bone came from the north end of the sounding at this level.

The surface is cleared in preparation for photographs.

With these taken these slabs which do could be removed without greatly undermining the scarp were taken only digging proceeded.

Fall 80 Level 4
Underfill 79
Prominent of
Type of fill: brown sandy earth
Pottery, M.M.III/IV frags will have fragment extension
From robbers' trench
Other: Shell
Inert material:

A shallow pass beneath the slabs an even more extensive spread of rubble. Although some of the base stones may be set horizontally, for the most part this seems to be just a heap of debris. Some of the stones will be removed tomorrow so that digging may proceed but it seems unlikely that enough open space will be available to progress much further.

Meanwhile, the robbers' trench to the north was cleared in preparation for dismantling the corner of the temple bench and probing beneath it. It is hoped that this project may be carried out without a hitch tomorrow.
Trench 34A5

Some 30 cm of floor stone and soft sand was removed from the sounding beneath the temple foundations before it was decided that no present further digging would serve no purpose. The fill of sand and rubble was identical to that removed from Trench 37A to the west, so sherds were present in our area, and the space was becoming increasingly cramped. These three factors argue for closing the trench.

Photos were taken and the sounding was backfilled. The stones of the temple foundations will be replaced when the fill has sufficiently settled.

Trench 34A5

The final project for this season is to clean and clarify the north-west corner of the Hellenistic temple. This space had been in use since it was found. As left after last season (Trench 39A, parts 39-42) the corner was understood as a small closet blocked by a column drum, reared on its side, with several phases of bench running behind the closet to fill the corner. It was known that in its earliest phase the slab floor of the temple extended right to the north-west corner.

Discontinuing the corner began on the west side near the statue base. Although it is difficult to exercise any control over the collection of sherds, not knowing what phases the various bits of packing belong to, we nevertheless open a pit for anything which is not an obvious intrusion.

Pet 91 Level 2
Under pit: ---
From depth of:
Type of soil: rubble packing
Pozition: latest phase 1st AD

Other; Carbon
Inventoried: O3613 lamp; S166 marble
The moulding at base moulding of the statue base was known to turn along the north side but above it was found to be unfinished, judging that this area was unseen. A rough rubble wall which forms a small rectangular space against the north side of the statue base and the west wall of the Temple accounts for this unfinished moulding. It seems that the slabs of the temple floors do not extend within this space either, amounting to strong evidence that there was a prototype for the clairvoyant corner from the time of the building's initial construction. The lower slabs of this clairvoyant clairvoyant change in appearance from the upper course so that the space may have been removed once before it was filled in.

North of this area, as already noted, the slabs of the floor do continue into the corner. Immediately in the corner, along the north wall there are three slabs set in a line higher than floor level. The wear on the surface of the central slab suggests that it was once trod upon frequently and the possibility was considered that a second door had served the Temple through this corner. Since only one of the three slabs shows any wear, however, it seems more likely that this was received elsewhere and that the slab is in reuse as we find it.

At East of this line a large 100 slab set vertically through the floor represents the west end of a northern bench which must belong to the 'final temple phase.' The packing between the face of this bench and the later bench line was partially removed to reveal the fine surface of floor slabs which the rebuilding had concealed. An important constituent of this packing was a number of rooftiles which suggests that a collapse of the roof had prompted the redesign of the Temple. This likelihood is enhanced by traces of burning on the surface of some of the corner slabs which may represent the partial destruction of the first building.

Today is the last scheduled day of excavation but the corner still will merit some cleaning tomorrow to prepare it for photographs.
Everything was cleaned and photographed, the portion of temple foundations which had been removed for pds, the sounding was replaced, and the robbers' trench was partially backfilled in the north-west corner. Otherwise the last day at the site was available for studying details and writing.
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