KOMMOS EXCAVATIONS
AREA A
1977 Season
Notebook #10

By
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Dates excavated, excavator

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Before describing the excavations done by myself (WPC) and Bette C. in Trench 1DA, the discovery and first trial excavation of the architectural features in the SW corner of Area A must be described. This was done during the sand clearing directed by J. W. S. in May/June 1977. What follows is a summary of the relevant portion of Notebook 8, which describes the entire clearing operation.

On May 21, 1977, approx. 3.20 m. of a wall running approx. N/S was uncovered. The wall was constructed of limestones blocks laid without cement, apparently using mud mortar. About three of its corners were brought to light. The top of the wall stood in the sand level; its base was in a foundation trench dug into the more solid earth. (Book 8 p. 31 for discovery of well 28 for its location almost due N of SW boundary marker). It is important to note that the foundation trench of the N/S wall, though dug into earth, contained sand. A similar situation is revealed by the section of the adjacent E/W wall (Book 8 p. 63). The presence of sand in the foundation trench of both walls
shows that sand was present in the area at the time of the construction of the building and may serve to date the beginning of the deep accumulation of sand which buried the site.

Next to be found was "Burned Building B," to the east of the two wells mentioned above which were considered part of Building A. A burned level was discovered south of the building (Book 8 p. 31). An almost complete plan of the outlines of the recoverable portion of the building is given on p. 32 (Book 8). The north wall proved to have been set into a cutting made in the side of the ancient hillside (Book 8 p. 33), thus it has no proper outer face. The upper face is constructed of fairly regular course of limestone slabs. Because a minor tripod leg was found in the cutting at the NW corner of the building, it was suggested that Building B was built into earlier levels (Book 8 p. 33).

The building was found to consist of two rooms with separate entrances (i.e., no means of passage between them) which, save at northern and a dividing wall (see plan 26 this book). The building was filled with sand, of the same type which covered all
of area A, medium coarse amphora body sherd and one black glazed sherd were found. Less sherd were reported from inside the building than to the south of it.

The robber's trench which was centered on the south west corner of the building was located and attributed to monks from Povode who are said to have come and quarried the site. (Book 8, p.35)

On May 26 (Book 8, p.35) the next architectural unit was discovered. Originally thought to be the corner of another building (Building C, Book 8, p.37) it was subsequently found to be a ca. 60 m. thick wall. This wall runs north/south from a point ca. 6.82 m. south of Burned Building B into the southern scarp. The western edge of the wall (Building C) is aligned with the eastern edge of "Burned Building B" (sketch plan, Book 8, p.34).

Next to be uncovered was the circular building D located just to the east of Building B. (Book 8, p.38) Though the possibility that Building D might prove to be a capsule was realized, further excavation proved it to be circular in shape.
The outer wall of the building was reported at 0.60 m. wide. Black burnt sand of the same type as that found south of Building B was found inside Building D (Book 8, p. 41). The complete circumference of the building was not located. Besides digging within Building D, a stratum of yellowish earth 5 ft. 6 in. thick was sampled (p. 43). As this pottery belongs to an earlier level, it may be more helpful in dating D.

There is a slight indication that the door in Building D may be located near the southeast corner of Block B (Book 8, p. 47).

I am clearing the sand to the east of Building D in the SE corner of Area A. Large stones were discovered in association with a layer of clay sandwiched between two sand layers. This clay layer (visible in the scarp at the southern edge of the cleared area) is the only evidence for an interruption or variation in the sand accumulation at the site. The origin of the clay deposit is unknown. The stones discovered in association with the clay layer turned out to be part of a structure in Building E (Book 8, p. 57).
The northern wall is ca. 3.25m. long and 1-2 course, have been uncovered. The eastern and western walls have been uncovered for a length of 1.30m. each. The north west corner of the building was formed by an upright slab (possibly re-used threshold block) and the north east corner by a probable Minoan jamb base. (Book 8, p. 57 and sketch of jamb base, p. 52). The location of Building E is given on the sketch plan p. 60, Book 8.

On June 3 work was resumed around Building A. The robbers' trench N of the wall discovered May 31 was found as were remnants of the E/W running N wall mentioned on p. 7 of this Book. The robbers' trench is now filled with sand and bordered on both sides by earth. The presence of traces of the old N. wall of Building A in the trench prove that the wall's alignment coincided with the trench, which was filled with sand after the stones were removed. South of the robbers' trench were found stones, a burned layer like those found with Bldgs. B, D and E and the same type of coarse ware. The section p. 68, Book 8 illustrates the N. wall of "Bldg A" and its construction against a cutting in the slope is described on p. 69.
Four workmen (Michaelis, George the thin, Georgis—last years guard, and Yannis the son of George the Foreman) began shoveling clearing of sand around the outside of Burned Building “B” and inside the building as well. Down to burned level outside the building and down to stone fill inside. They were joined after noon by Andreas and Tafus.

For the initial clearing of sand in the area of Burned Building “B” (BB “B”), see Notebook #8 pages 29 ff., and the diagram at the beginning of this notebook.

Sand removed from inside and around the building was dumped to the E: near the scarp at the southern property line.

Paid 1, L.1: 60 sherds, half roof tile frags. Fine ware sherds, jar, plate & bowl amphora, 2 black glaze pieces, Hellenistic and later?

Paid 2: 50 sherds, 1/3 roof tile frags. Hellenistic, later?

Paid 3, L.1: 50 roof tile, mixed lot—MM, archaic, and Hellenistic Large Amphora neck C. 141 shell groundstone, Bone, charcoal, yellow marble.

Paid 4, L.1: Mixed—Minoan classical black glaze, later material shell.

Paid 5, L.1: Several large roof tile frags. Little fine ware, datable shell, charcoal.

Paid 1, 2: Level 1 Surface sand remaining after total clearing. Sherd from outside building on S. side.

* Paid 3: Inside W. room
* Paid 4: Inside E. room
* Paid 5: Outside building to east (over circular building)

* all level 1
Sand was cleared for approx. 2m strip along the S. side of the building in all piles.

Most of the sherds were apparently coarse. Many of them show tile fragments. However, one possible human cup base fragment was found in the W. room (April 3, 2, 1) and 2 black glazed shards.

Some evidence of burned material found include m. sh. — a yellow ochreous substance (April 3, 2, 1). In the same room were found shells, bone, charcoal, and a 'groundstone tool', all on April 3, 2, 1.

A possible threshold was uncovered at the western end (as preserved) of the S. wall of the building. The S.W. corner of the building was apparently quarried by the monks who came to Karmouz c. 50 years ago to take stone blocks to build a monastery. The threshold block itself has been broken off at the W. end, and the edge of the pit dug into the earth. On the monks can be seen close to the threshold block was uncovered c. 30 cm below the burned layer, outside the building. As preserved, the block measures 42 cm x 50 cm (See sketch).
By 1 cm thick. Traces of plaster can be seen 10 cm from the E end of the block, perhaps used to protect a wooden door frame (side frame).

Inside the W room, an amphora neck and a roof tile were uncovered, on the top of the stone fill, in the case of the roof tile, and in? the stone fill for the amphora—that is, the amphora was lower, below lower than the roof tile, but still well above the floor level. See levels indicated on sketch p. 18. Levels were also taken on the tops of the south wall of the building at five points.

A large (rib of cow?) bone was found near the roof tile.
14 June 1977

Sand clearing continues in both E and W rooms of Building B and outside Building to the N and E. By noon both rooms are ready to be photographed, before removal of stone fill.

Roll 2: Threshold and Robbing Trench

In addition, Area B of BB"B" in circular building has been cleared down to reddish brown, pazed (burned) with charcoal black patches. Many suggestions have already been made as to the use of the round building; kiln, swimming pool, etc. Temple, dancing floor, skating rink (!).

Added to Roll 3: Burnt wood, yellow burned substance.

Roll 4: (Continuing) Shell (L.1)

Roll 5: Burnt wood, Shell (L.1)

Roll 6: Outside to W of BB"B"

At c. 2 m from inside of W wall, joining E-W wall is found inner wall, judge to be on a line with inner E-W wall of next building to the E, thus forming a pre-existing wall. This inner wall is c. 2.10 m from the North of the E-W line of the F wall.
Building "B". The foundation block of wall No. 35 cm thick, rests on 2 thin blocks, with a drain underneath. The foundation block shows evidence of burning on exposed (A) face.

I (WFC) took over direction of the excavation in Tr. 10A from Betty Comstock in the afternoon of 14/6/77. The sand clearing to the west of "BB B" (Paul 6 L.1) was continued down to the underlying earth level, sand also visible in the baulk west of the robbed-out portion of the western wall of "BB B". This suggests that the foundation trench for "BB B", western wall may have been dug through sand and the underlying earth in the trench at the time of the wall's construction. In either case, the date of the wall's construction may serve to date the beginning of the sand accumulation in the area.

JWS located a possible bolt hole in the eastern face of the door into the eastern wall of a room of "BB B".
Clearance was begun today of the pile of rock heaped up by the top border against the northern wall & the western half of B. Shards from this clearance were put in the same pail as yesterday (Pail 3, L.1) since this pile of rock was an artificial feature, not natural wall collapse. The pile of rock was removed without finding any architectural remains. Next we began clearing away the collapse of the wall which spread out from an apex in the NE corner of what later proved to be room A1. A new pail was started to contain shards and other material from this collapsed wall. Pail 8, L.2 under Pail 3. We are now in L.3 for we have completed surface clearance in the area and are within the level of collapsed walls. Pieces of at least one restorable amphora were found. Along with stones, sand and shards earth was found in the wall collapse. This earth could represent roof collapse C base for the roof tiles or mortar for the wall stones. The position of the shards from the restorable pot (see photo 28) suggests that it fell from an upper story on the roof level for it is well above the expected floor level.

To keep the men busy while

Paid 8, L.2: Many roof tiles, large shapes include basin and amphora. Some black glaze including lamp frag C 281. Join with Pail 15 jug C 245. Many join for 2 amphorai. Some remains of some classical.
Overview Room A, B, B. "B"

Details of "restorable pot" (amphora)
Room A

Amphora neck with sharply angled handle (C141)
Room A

After the break we continued to clear the fallen rocks of the wall collapse in the NE of what later was found to be Room A1. We removed these stones down to a level of ca. 6.60 without finding any discernible architectural features. A piece of one (bronze?) was found as were more sherds of the body of an amphora (6, Pail 8, L12, 2nd of 3). The soil was mostly sand. The broken half of a quern was found in the wall collapse of the NE corner, it had most likely been reused in the wall construction.

Except for the cluster of sherds in the area of the restorable amphora (see photos 27) the fill of the wall collapse was quite sterile of artifact and consisted for the most part of stone and sand, in the upper 6 layers.
We continued clearing away stones from the N. wall of Room A. Today, sherds were placed in Pail 18, 12, 3.

Next we sank a test sounding directly in front of the threshold (see page 20) at the entrance to Room A to determine the floor level of the building. A second flat slab was found, ca. 14 cm below the first.

This new slab had a square hole ca. 5 cm deep in its center (see page 26 for location). This hole would most likely have been the base for a wooden beam to which the door would have been attached. This slab may represent the floor level or it may be another step down to reach the floor. The soil directly north of the new slab seems rather soft to be a floor. Sherds were placed in Pail 10.

The lowest threshold is at level 57, 6.13 m.

Next clearance was begun on the stairway to the SE corner of Room A (p. 26). We found it to be covered by a domino arrangement of fallen stones, the topmost of which appears to be a large sill (?) stone or stair slab.

The sherds from this clearance were placed in aid 8.

The wall collapse well above the ancient living surface.
The domino arrangement goes:

The fallen stones against the east wall, north of the stairs were removed first. Some stone slabs seemed at first to be part of a structure, but they were found to stand on sand and form no discernible pattern and were removed. Shards from here were also put in.

A small pile of gravel-like beach pebbles were found in the SW corner of the wall around A1 and a similar pile was found lying on soil against the N. wall of A1 2 m west of the east wall. The first pile was left in situ the second removed and sorted. The pottery and other material (including one) from around the outside wall of room A1 was put in PAH II, L3.

Fallen roof tiles resting in rather solid brown soil were found south of A1 at elevation 6.30 and west of A1 at elevation 6.35.

George the foreman continued.
removing rubble from the stair well 8(#3) George the ex-guard and Tosi began clearing stone and sand from Room 13, east of Room A. BB "B9. They were given Pail 12, L 2 for the material. Work in Room A now concentrated in the area west of A1 where brown roof tiles began appearing. This area was cleared, and as we stayed above the roof tiles, Pail 11 L 2 was retained for the sherds. Roof tiles on a hard, brown soil surface have begun appearing in this area. Between A1 and the stairs also sherds from above the tiles are being placed in Pail 8(#3) when we get down into the level of the roof tiles, presumably near the floor level at the time of destruction. Tomorrow, we will change to L 3.

Pail 12. box, shell, carbon

Pail 12, L 2: mixed lot; many roof tiles, some Minoan cooking ware, a sizable amount of other cooking ware, latest sherds, two red glazed Roman pieces (1st C. AD ?) A cup rim (C 283) catalogued. Fine ware includes sherds of a classical or Hellenistic lamp (C 282) and a large lamp with ridged handle (C 255), C 455 amphora
17 June, 1977

We continued cleaning the area Room A lying west of A1. Staying above 602 tile flags, which seem to be lying on a level roughly equal to that of the floor threshold with the square hole (G. 13 m) Retained Pail 11 L. 2 for this material. George, the foreman, removed the domino arrangement from the stairway (see photo p. 35) and found another step at an elevation of 6.485. This level roughly corresponds to the level of sandy soil covering the roof tile, which in turn should rest on a level near the third floor. George Pail 8 (third) L. 2 was retained for material down to this level of this step and the sandy layer and below.

George continued following the stairs and found another step at elevation 6.705. The soil changed from sandy to a dark, ashy level and a new pail was used, Pail 14 L. 3. The earth was dry sifted but did not turn up anything new. The sifted material was placed with the rest of Pail 14.

Two men began working in Room A1, staying above roof tile or bridging. These stone and earth were removed. Used a new pail
Tr. 10A, "chicken burial" against E. wall Room A1, B B "B" (before partial removal)

Roll 4

Pail 15: olive pits, carbon, shell, bone and soil sample

Pail 15: whole amphora rim (G 271) catalogued: Box shell carbon, bronze

Pail 15: weakly painted jug, C 245 catalogued: Little fine ware; generally small, coarse sherds; some black glaze.

Depth Pail 13: 6.50 - 6.40 m.

Pail 13: 2 whole amphora rim (G 271) catalogued: Box shell carbon, bronze

Pail 13: 2 whole amphora rim (G 271) catalogued: Box shell carbon, bronze

Pail 13: under Pail 15, 1.2 pottery content: latest fine painted Black glaze. Amphora sherd. The digging in the area west of Room A1 reached a layer containing charcoal and more roof tile, appeared. A new pail was given:

Pail 15: 1.3 under Pail 15, 1.2 type of soil: hard brown with charcoal, street, elevation: ca. 6.35 - 6.12 pottery content: mostly coarse, rather mixed but, not later than Hellenistic.

This area produced several carbonized olive pits. The soil was dry, sifted without producing anything.

Pail 15: 1.3 signifies that we are now approaching floor level, if it has not been reached. Next, a "chicken burial" against the eastern wall A1 was cleared and partially dismantled. Roof tile and some coarse ware sherd were found within the dismantled portion suggesting it was simply a collapse of the wall of A1. Yet the portion against the east wall seems more cohesive and regular, and has been left. Is it a later structure of some kind?

We have now reached a level containing roof tile and charcoal in Room A1. We are switching to a new pail.