KOMMOS EXCAVATIONS
1978

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Levels taken by G. Bianco

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Excavation began today in Trench 19A under the supervision of M.C. Shaw and with the help of 5 workmen (one of them temporary). The 5 x 5 m. trench was laid out yesterday by G. Bianco, our excavation architect. The trench is located on the slope, between the "Hilltop Houses" (Tr. 14A, 5B, 12, 15) and the complex of rooms to the south, where a household shrine was found in the first season of the kome excavations (Tr. 4A). Two considerations in selecting the location of the trench are to sample the type of buildings between the above mentioned Minoan groups of houses and structures, but also possibly to follow the extension of the Minoan Road skirting the west edge of Trench 2A, if it pursues the northeasterly curve and direction it takes there.

The most outstanding landscape feature is the cedar tree some 10 m N W of Trench 19A, now turned very ingeniously into a hut (see photograph p. 8) by our present site-guard. The tree, which is quite broad and rounded, like a cone, is known locally as To Dévòs or To Xáriá (the tree of the Bronze-Smith) the name gained itself referring to the profession of an early owner of the fields in this area, Kuros. Further information about him can be found in the recorded and transcribed interviews conducted in 1977 by the director of the excavation, J. W. Shaw, with a number of villagers who provided some information.

O kópos toú Xáriá (see p. 9).

Trench 19A - Top surface from S. Roll 5, fr. 9.
about the modern history of our site, especially of the time when it was visited by Sir Arthur Evans (1924-5).

As can be seen from the simple plan of the trench on p. 8, showing levels at various points after some superficial sand had been removed, the surface slope, drawn rather steeply from N to S, and from NW to SE, the heavy rains of last winter have smoothed and hardened the surface.

Excavation starts with: (N) (S)
Pail 1; level 2 to 15.79/15.60 from (N) 16.47/15.50 (see drawing p. 8)
Brown hardish earth with small stones
Sherds: 4,000 grs. Latest sherd, Hellenistic or 4th c. Rest LM IA 2-B or earlier
Other;
Inventoried:

Photographs were taken at the top of level Pail 1 (see p. 8); we remove a thin layer from the entire trench and now concentrate on the northern section in order to even out the difference in levels. An accumulation of stone appears mainly in the NE section of the trench, some of which seem fallen, some possibly intentionally placed there (a few are in a row). The accumulation seems to continue in a south-westerly direction, which suggests they fell on a slope. At this point we change pail and intend to follow these stones. The level of the ground at this point is some 0.50 m lower than the top of pail 1 at the north section but at the bottom of the slope it is practically the same.
Pail 2: Level 2
From 15.79(H) / 15.00(S) to 15.55(H) / 15.00(S)
Brown hardish earth
Sherds: 3.350g; lustre: sherd, MIII B (India)
QUIT worn with few joins
Other: shells; bone
Inventoried: C858: Krater; C859: Lid

Strong westerly winds blow sand into the trench and make digging almost impossible. We quit 10 minutes ahead of time.
June 29, 1978

Three "gembils" of sand removed from the trench before excavation can start. We continue using Pail 2. It becomes clear that many of the small rough stones, found yesterday, sit on earth. They slope down from N to S, and their greatest accumulation is at the NE corner from which a rough row extends towards the center and towards the SE-W section of the trench. We photograph this level and remove stones which sit on earth using Pail 3, level 2, pail associated with Pails 1 and 2, each under removed rubble brownish hardish earth
From 16.10m/1500(2) to c. 15.60m/1500(6)
Sherds: 1700 yrs. Mostly LII, but with some (2) LIII sherd. Sherd, worn other
Inventoried.

(For photo, see p. 14).

A row of some 6 stones, though very roughly laid, is found to be superposed over some other stones below. This row starts at the NE corner of the trench and extends diagonally in a southeasterly direction for c. 1.60m. In back of the first row is a rough row of rough, irregular, small stones making the width of the "wall" some 0.60m. There is no straight face on any of the exposed sides, and as we dig clean we find that the NW corner sits on an earlier wall (?) with a N-S direction which is just emerging from the ground. At this point we change pail.
Pail 4  level 2
Under pails 2/3
From 15.55(N) 15.00(S) to 15.485(E) 15.015(S)
Softish brown earth (1999 gms. fine ware)
Sherds 6950 gms; latest III B but with much represent. of earlier wares EM - LMIII
Other: bone; piece of bronze; shells
Inv. C.867 Frag of Ag. Onouphrios ware

The surface of some three stone blocks set in a N-S direction appear in the western section of the trench.
Having missed excavating yesterday, because of the supervisor's sickness, we continue work today still using Pail 4.

A scatter of small and medium sized stones occurs in the NE corner of the trench around the tentative superficial wall and the N-S "wall" found there. We decide to take down the level before any stones are removed and at this point change into

Pail 5 - Level 2
Under Pail 4
From 15.485(N)/15.00(s) to 15.36(N)/14.95(s)
Brownish softish earth (720 grs. fine).
Shreds: 3500 grs. LM III B and earlier
Sheds worn, few joins.
.other: bone, shells
Inventory

The earth became progressively softer.
We assign at this point the following labels to walls (see sketch p. 18)

1: Superficial wall running diagonally westwards from the NE corner of the trench. It has no real face; consists of some 2-3 rough course and its dimensions are < 1.50 x 0.45 - 0.55 m
2: Possibly wall in a rough N-S direction starting at (as preserved) c. 2.0 m from the N edge of the trench southwest (ca. 1.50 m from the NE corner of the trench)
3: A roughly N-S wall but with a northeasterly direction starting (as preserved) some 0.30 m from the S edge of the trench and running for some 3.65 m northwest. It continues under the north scarp.
These walls will be described in detail once they are properly cleared.

4: A rounded, roughly oval-shaped stone
Trench at level of Pail 6 (see pp. 19-21) looking N.
1, 2, 3: walls as labelled
A: rubble debris around walls 1 and 2
B: two stones running perpendicularly to wall 3
C: stone accumulation W. of wall 3
D: bottom of pail 5 W. of wall 3 (? 15.295 m)
E: stones placed by us to prevent sliding of sand
X: level of stone of wall 3 at 15.35

We remove some of the small stones which are around walls 1-2.
The earth became very soft and had many small stones and numerous sherds.
At this point we discontinue Pail 5 (at level 15.295 m) W. of wall 3
and concentrate digging E of wall 3 with

(2 pails) Pail 6 level 2
soft brownish earth under pail 4 only E of wall 3
from 15.28 (15.25) to 15.24/4.95
Sherds: 16,200 g, much LM I, some LM III
a few LM III A2-13 (1,270 g, PIIa)
Other
Inv. C 868, 869, 870, 871, 872 (= Pimos, cup, jug, cup, jug)

The soft earth with chips of stones occurs mostly under the rubble at the
north section of the trench. Further S, the earth is still softish but of a lighter
tone and rather devoid of sherds.
There are no chips here, though there are occasional small stones. It is not
clear at the moment where the change between soils occurs.
The sherds are so many that we use a second pail 6.
We continue moving stones and the soft darkish earth under them with Pail 6. We are low enough now to know that Wall 1 is a superficial one. We take levels of its top stone (see sketch p. 18) photograph it and dismantle it. Shards from under this wall go into:

2 pails Pail 7 - L. 2
From 15.85 (highest stone) - 15.24
earth under dismantled wall 1
Shards 16270 gms. Latest III B
also some earlier.
Other: frog of quern (left at site); bones; shells
In v. C 893 (Arch. rim); C 894 (Foreign Fabric)

Half a quern turns up among the rubble surrounding the Wall. The earth under the Wall and rubble is soft with numerous shards. We use a second Pail 7. The earth is soft and the rubble. No stone chips under the Wall.

A workman is now put W. of Wall 3 where the accumulation of stones was left unexcavated (see pp. 19, 21). Shards from the removal of the rubble are put in:

Pail 8 - L. 2 under Pail 4
Rubble W. of Wall 3
From level c. 15.60 (top rubble)
to 15.16 m.
Shards 1880 gms. LM III A2 (or B) also earlier.
Other
In v.

Wall 3 is found to have a west face. It has a W. return which continues into the W. scarp. The space between these two walls and the scarp is too small to allow digging in any depth and we discontinue...
digging there with pail 8. level reached here is 15.16 m.

The removal of wall 1 has made it clear that so-called wall 2 is a very young one. Its outline, one not yet clear, not is it certain it is a definite wall. We change from pail 7 into pail 9 which will be used for bringing down the level of the entire trench except for the area W. of wall 3. The level of the ground at this point is 15.14 in the NE section of the trench 15.14 at the centre and 14.95 m at the south.

Pail 9 1. 2
Under pails 6 + 7
Soft brown earth
From 15.24(N) / 14.95(S) → 15.16(N) / 15.395(S)
Sediment 13.700 g, mostly LMM, some LMII A2 or B. 1550 g, fine
Other: bone, shells
In v. C 923 Paros, 2 horiz. bands, below red
drape.

As before the soil gets progressively harder and more difficult in time, with fewer sherdos from midway in the trench and further south. After digging one layer we decide to dig the two types of fill separately: the northern section with the darker brown, lots of small stones and many sherdos with

(3 pails) Pail 10 1. 2
Under Pail 9
Dark soft brown earth
From 15.16(N) / 14.95(S) to 15.04(N)
Sediment: 19, 190 g, mostly LMII A2 or B.
no joins = small frags (180 g, fine)
Other: bones, shells, piece of bronze
In v. C 925: Strange fabric, white slip, burnished with red horizontal lines)
For the soil in the south section we assign:

Pail 11 (S. section of trench)
Under Pail 9 - brown softish earth
From 14.957 to 14.835
Sherds 3880 gr coarse and 370 gr fine
A shard late Hellen or Roman intrusion?
Other: Shells
Ind.

Pail 10 is filled soon and we assign a second pail 10 to the same fill. Much temper rubble in turning up in Pail fill. The delineation between the fills of Pails 10 and 11 is not a clear one. Roughly speaking if we draw a diagonal from the NE to the SW corner the dark fill with rubble (Pail 10) occurs in the N.W. triangle.
Some of the stones seen to form lines or possible man-made structures. Such stones are left in situ until it can be determined by lowering the level whether they were intentionally placed there.

Sherds are so numerous that we use a 3rd Pail 10
We continue using Pail 10. We concentrate on clearing the E. face of wall 3 at its northern end within the trench. There is a great accumulation there which extends to wall 2. Wall 2 itself is not properly speaking a wall, for it is made up of small and medium-sized irregular stones with no face. Reducing of the fallen rubble reveals a curving structure starting 0.8 m from the N. scarp and from the E. face of wall 3 and continuing in the direction of wall 2. While wall 2, it is very tough and its exact outlines are not clear.

Once again we have to take the level of the trench down. In the southern section where the brown, rather sterile, earth occurs we are still using Pail 11.

Pail 10 is replaced by Pail 12 for the type of fill described for the former (see pp. 25-27).

(2 poles) Pail 12 1.2
Under pail 10

0. Soft dirt and earth with rubble
From 13.04 (m)/14.835 to 14.98 (m)/14.825
Fine: Latest III A2 or B. Mostly LM1.
Other: pieces of pumice, bones
In v.

As we dig down the fill of pails 10 and 12 extends more and more towards the southern section, until it is pretty uniform throughout the trench. There are now large numbers of loose stones everywhere. We assign a two pail 12 which includes the area under pail 11. 
It became clear that so-called wall 2 and the adjacent "structure" between it and wall 3 are accidental formations, part of the deep rubble layer which has been dug through. The two features are sketched (see p. 18) photographed and removed sherds in them and directly under them go into:

**Pail 13 1.2**
From under & within two rubble accumulations
Rubble or earth. From c.15.605-14.98
Sherds; 7590 gms. Latest LMI
Other ; bones
Inv. C926 LMI(R) cup

After 1-2 courses we seem to reach the bottom of wall 3. Removal of the rubble accumulation referred to above has revealed a structure, possibly an earlier wall abutting against the N. section of wall 3 and running in the same directions. When wall 3 was in use this stretch of wall just discovered was probably under ground level. No floor has been found E. of wall 3 which suggests that it was a rough outdoors area. In fact the fill continues as above. We assign a new pail to take the level further down.

**3 pails) Pail 14 1.2**
Under pails 13 x12
from 14.98 11/14.82 s to 14.82 11/14.725 s
Soft earth with rubble
Sherds : 3 LMM A sherds. ; 1015
LMI (21,630 gms).
Other ; bones, shells, snails
Inv. C929 (cooking pot)

A second pail was assigned to the above pail (Pail 14) because of the great number of sherds. Group of sherds in SW corner

C929 rim frag. of cooking pot, type B
A water in Pail 28 in an MM III context suggests C932 may also be MM rather than Hellenistic (note in pottery analysis by V J)

C953 Ewer — frags in Pails 16, 17, 18, 22
C952: Alkaline cup — frags in Pail 16/17/20

x C931, LMMIIB sherds; C932: Waterer (Hellenistic?)

= X Pail 15/16/17/22

G. Bianco finds levels of a number of stones of wall 3 as well as of the levels of a number of pails. Sheds & rubble are still extensive. 2 fragmentary querns and a broken saddle quern. The shed & become numerous in the S section of the trench as well. 6 pails are already filled up for the layer of Pail 15.

We change pail and continue taking the level down, while leaving the stone accumulation against the E face of the W end of wall 3 untouched. The pails may well be resting on an earlier wall.

Pail 16 — Inv. 540 fragm. stone ware lid

Pail 16 — Inv. C951 (roof tile), C950 (tripod leg)

4 pails Pail 16 (2)
Under pail 15/
Soft earth & rubble
From 14.65 M to 14.67 M
Sherds: 31 g
Inv 30 (roof tile), 1 sherd III A2 partly
Retaining

C957

C954:

540 stone lids 4 5 (stone bowl), C953* ewer, C952 cup; x
Two pails were already filled by the end of the day. There is now an occasional slab and the rubble accumulation becomes less in the north section of the trench.

x C931: "Sacro Lotus" sherd

July 5

We continue taking the level down with a new pail.

6 pails Pail 15 (2)
Under pail 14
Soft earth & rubble
From 14.62 M to 14.61 M
Sherds: 4 5, 300 g
Latest LMMIIA, LMA2
Most majority is MM III — LMA
Other: 2 brok. querns; 1 piece pumice; bones
Inv. C931, LMMIB sherds; C932: Waterer (Hellenistic?)
July 6

We use a third pail 16 and continue removing the layer started yesterday. A fragment of a saddle quern occurs in the fill in the NE section of the trench near the N scarp. Shards continue being numerous but we may be finishing the rubble layer.

In the northern sector (North third of trench) we seem to be coming down on harder soil with fewer stones. In the south section where the soft earth and stones continue we continue removing the fill using a fourth pail 16.

Frag of a stone? lid is found near SE corner. Aloom weight is also found nearby.

The stone accumulation along the E face of wall 3 continues to be traced further south. It is not yet clear whether it is an earlier wall with a stone accumulation on top or some other kind of a construction.

As we continue digging a definite line emerges. Most of the stones of this structure (retaining wall? terrace wall?) for some 2/3 of its length are roughly at the same level, although not forming a surface. The east line of the structure has a southeasterly direction. Our excavation is now limited to the E of this formation, which reduces the size of the trench to about half. Large stone, not projecting from the new layer here and there, mostly in the southern half. A new pail is assigned.

3 pails Pail 17 - P. 3

Under Pail 16

Medium-hard brownish earth

Shards LMI b or later ?[146]
Other bones: C 1732: Waster

Incident: C 953, C 931, C 952, C 954,
C 930: Terracotta head, C 956 (scale patt. + Pail 17)

V 957: L. Jb. im. more frags. — Pails 18+19, C 957: Pails 17+18

Once again sherdS are numerous, mostly very small. We have to use a second pail (17)
and shortly after a third one. Animal bone, and one or two human teeth turn up. Also at
0.58 m. from the N + NW scarp a tiny terracotta human head occurs in the fill
at the bottom of the stratum represented by Pail 17. (see sketch p. 36.) It is
painted black with traces of white or red. He/she
is wearing a hood.

We start taking the level of each a further stratum down using:

Pail 18 1. 3
Under Pail 17
Brownish earth + small sherds
From 14.585(N) / 14.95(S) to 14.585(N) / 14.49(S)
Sherds: Latest sherds are C 930. Small
unit 15760 gr.

Other: charcoal, bones — C 930: Human head - WC.
Invo. C 954, C 956, C 957 (also pail 17)
(also pails 18+19) — scale patt. (also pail 17)
3 well-cut and beautifully aligned (E-W)
begin to appear at a distance of some
2.2 cm. from the North Scarp. Some
of the stones at the northern end of
the "retaining wall" seem superficial
at this point. The outlines and function
of this "wall" are still unclear:
There is occasional charcoal in the fill
we continue joining part 18 for the general stratum N 5 of the new wall which we shall label N 5. Then we use separate pails:

Pail 19 1 3 (N. of wall 5)
Softish brown earth - under pail 18 from 14 505 to 14 455
Sherds (2100 gr) Latest LM IB - small unit
Other: bones
Inv. C954; C955; C958; miniature cap.
(pails 17 18)
and
Pail 20 1 3 (S. of wall 5)
Softish brown earth - under pail 18 from 14 44 to 14 395
Sherds 4230 gr. Latest sherds are LM I
Other: bones
Inv. C993: Cypro-Minoan bowl rim fr.
C954; C994: head of Figurine
Wall 3, of which the E face and the entire top course have been exposed, can now be described. It has a northeasterly direction and seems to consist of two sections which are differently constructed and with a slightly different orientation. The southern section is the better constructed one with larger stones and a relatively straight face on the E side; smaller stones on the west (N 5 c. 3 00 m; width: 0 60 m.) It continues into the south scarp while at its north end it has a west return (Wall 4) some 0 75 m wide (N 5) and continuing into the W scarp. Wall 3 at this south section just described is preserved for 1 2...
courses and it sits on a layer of relatively small stones. (For levels see p. 34).
The northern section (c. 2.00 m²) is rather poorly constructed. Along the E face
which is the only one exposed, large and medium slabs have been set upright
and constitute the only visible course of the wall. Its width is 0.40 - 0.50 m.
Its lower courses, if any, are hidden by the rubble & slab pile which starts
at about the level of the top of wall 3 at its northern end and
drops in level considerably towards the south. That it is non-rectangular is quite
clear although its construction is so rough that at most it was a retaining wall.
It was partially covered and contiguou, with the rubble dump we have been
digging to the E of wall 3. In fact the retaining wall may have been built
at the same time the the rubble was
dumped. The northern & southern sections of wall 3 were clearly
constructed separately, although they do not have to be far apart in date.

G. Bianco, our excavation architect, takes some levels in Trench 7. Some are
noted in relation to the photograph on p. 34. The three stones of wall 5 are all
at level 15.142 m. There is speculation that this wall may be part of the
'Rampa dal Mare' we are hoping to locate in this trench. This road,
noted earlier, has been located in Trench 9A 2 to our south where at
its highest it is at level 12.62 m.

Digging now proceeds carefully No 5
of the wall 5. Once a layer is
taken down with pails 19 and 20 we shift to new pails:

Pail 21 (3. 3) of wall 5
under pail 19  From 14.35m to 14.36m
Brown earth, somewhat packed 14.395m
Sherds 730 gr. V. small unit, latest sherds LMI
Other: pumice, bones
Inv.

and

Pail 22 (3. 3) of wall 5
under pail 20  From 14.36m to 14.36m
Brown earth, somewhat packed
Sherds 2780 gr. Latest LMI B. A few joins with upper pails
Other: bones, igneous rock cobble
Inv. C953; C931 (pails 15, 19)
(pails 16, 17, 18)

The fill represented by these two pails starts essentially at the level of the top surface of wall 5.

Two large slabs (probably part of an E-W wall) are found at the SE corner of the trench.

After the first layer we stop using Pails 21 and 22. Since the analysis of the pottery so far has presented a peculiar pattern, predominantly LMI with a few LMI B sherds, it is speculated that there may be some intrusion. The only possible derivation (unless it is from sliding sand from above the trench) might be the so-called retaining wall. It is decided to dig a 0.5m strip some 0.50m. wide immediately E of this wall before continuing with the area N & S of wall 5.

To the fill here is assigned:
Pail 23 1.3
Under pails 21-22
From 14.36 to 14.315
Sheeps: (2440gr) Later MMIII Sheeps
worn, scrappy, waste suggests local manufact
Other: charcoal
Inv C959: waster

In the section S. of wall 5 a number
of small stones neatly packed against
each other give an impression of a stone
pavement. This occurs just S. of the S.
face of wall 5. On the W. this surface
goes under the "retaining wall". Its N-S
dimension is ca. 0.60m. It seems to
continue in the unexcavated area S. of wall 5. Directly S. of this
"pavement" is a clay-like surface
with a greyish tinge to it. It is
traced 0.80m S. beyond which we
lose it at the moment. To the N.
of wall 5 we do not find either
the stone "pavement" or the clayily surface.
Instead we find here two more blocks
of wall 5, but of a lower course.
We stop using pail 23 and move
to the area N. of wall 5 and
to the E of the strip we just dug
with pail 23.

Pail 24 1.3 N. of wall 5
Under pail 21
Brown rather packed earth
From 14:395(6)/19.91(N) to 14:30(N)
Sheeps: 1700. Latest Sheeps, CMI.
Small Scrapy unit
Other: charcoal, bones
Inv.

Work has to be limited in this location
since one of my workmen had to work
at the streemers in Pitsidla today.