Kommos
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N.B. pocket: 2 plans

Excavator: M. C. Shaw
June 22, 1981

Excavation starts officially tomorrow but I went to the site to participate in some preliminary work. One of my activities was to help lay out a couple of trenches, the other to go over the architectural plan of the "North House," at the Hilltop and check it against the actual remains.

Workmen had the job of cleaning the site today, removing weeds which have grown on walls and floors and sand that has drifted in during the winter. There is in fact surprisingly little sand accumulation and cleaning went very fast—luckily for tomorrow, on the first day of excavation a group of distinguished visitors are coming to Kommos on the occasion of the Centennial celebrations of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens.

Some preliminary information can be given here about the present Trench 42A. It is 4.50m E-W and 8.00m N-S. It is located directly east of the east facade of Temple C (Room 2 of Building A, in the plans) its north line 5.00m south of the south wall of Burnt Building B. Its co-ordinates are: NW corner: 984.17x1114.05y; NE corner: 988.58x1110.04y; SE corner: 980.15x1102.02y; SW corner: 965.74x1101.51y (see p. 12413)
The top fills of this area have already been excavated in previous seasons in Trenches 34A2, 34A and 34A3. A sketch on p.10 shows the location and previous pertinent trenches. Previous excavation has brought down the level to just below the bottom of the two benches flanking the entrance to the temple. The fill up to that point having been sand and earth and labelled level 1. Except for a small squarish stone enclosure, apparently used as a hearth next to the north end of the southern bench there have been no other architectural features found, or for that matter a proper surface. Nevertheless, there was abundant pottery and a pile of sheep-goat bones; the latter presumably remnants of sacrificial offerings. The latest fill used in the last trench (Tr. 34A3) was 1:75 and this was characterized by 4th c. B.C. pottery. Directly above it (pail 1:72) pottery was of the 1st c. B.C. - 1st c. A.D.

Levels in this trench will be taken in reference to P177 which is at 6.83 m.

--- outline of Tr. 42A
******** - outline of earlier trenches

* level - levels taken on June 22, before excavation began
levels on the two benches:
  N. Bench: 6.32 m
  S. Bench: NE corner: 6.43 m
  S. stone, 2nd course from top: 6.40 m
Excavation starts officially today. The area to be covered by Trench 42A is cleared and prepared for photography. It is subdivided into a north and a south section, each 4.00 m N-S, the E-W dimensions as indicated on the plan, p.10 above. Three b/w photographs are taken, looking south and excavation starts in the southern section. Levels, as taken early this morning are indicated on the plan, p.10.

Plan 1:1 (Southern Half)
Under Plan 1:75 of Tr. 34A3
From level 5.89 - 5.73 m to
Sandy earth
5.73
Sherds: 4050 g, many classical survivals - cooking + other of usual votive range - 4th c. - 1st B.C.
Other: bones; gypsum; charcoal; plaster
B183: red rod
In v. C3617: flaring bowl c. 150-125 B.C.
C3618: goblet frag c. 150-100 B.C.

As the earth is sandy still we continue describing the starting level as 1.

It should be noted here that although, as yet, the trench is 4.58 m E-W we extend the area another c. 0.37 m to bring excavation all the way to the line of the southern bench. The southern section then is essentially 5.00 m wide. When we move in the northern section we shall similarly extend west, as will be described then. (For new co-ordinate, as opposed to those on p. 9, see p. 12)

Adjustment of west co-ordinate with the extension of the trench up to the line of the N+S benches of Temple C (see pp. 9 and 12)
NW corner: 983.68 x 1107.05 y and at SW corner 985.25 x 110121 y
Location of chunk of marble* near SE corner of trench
Sc. ca. 1:20 m

Upon closer examination at the showroom it seems more likely to be gypsum.

The starting level is quite flat.

The fill hardly has any stones, even little ones. There is an occasional compacted mass of soil, as if burnt, and some charcoal, bones. A chunk of disintegrating white marble is found in the SE corner and just below the surface at which excavation started. Its location can be seen in the sketch, p. 14. Also a part of a bronze ? nail and a couple of pieces of plaster. As far as I can tell there is no original marble surface left.

After one pass we decide to change pail. The fill now is less sandy and since pottery had already changed from Roman to 4th + 3rd c. in pail 75 of Tr. 34A3 it would make sense to give the next level a new number, namely level 2.

Pail 2: E Southern Half
Under pail 1:1
From level 5.73 to 5.675
Earth
Sherds: 3300 gr. Large amount of 4th c.
A few Hell. + 1 6th c. 4th - 2nd c. B.C.
Other: bones

Inv.: C3619: Arch. cup, B+82 Bronze
     E nail, B036: worked bone frag.

The fill is uneven: a burnt patch here and there, occasional small pockets of sand, earth, we dig a pass or so and then seems to be a change in fill. There are stretches of
burnt soil, bits of charcoal and accumulation of sherd. To be on the safe side we change into:

Pail 2:3 [Southern Half]
Under pail 2:2
From level 5.675 to 5.59 m
Burnt patches; unburnt fill
Sherds: 4,500 gr. Much Bg 400-350 range
but also 1st c. 13 C. Deposition not completed before 50 B.C.
Other: bones
Inv. C3620 - 3 cup bases; C3624: Class. lamp
  C3625: Jug base; C3626-7: Bowl rims
We decide to keep (at least temporarily) a small martisan of burnt fill at
the centre of the north edge of the trench

Inv. (cont'd)
3621: cup base; C3622 + C323: cup bases
June 24

From 6:00 - 11:00 a.m. the trench was run by the director, J.W. Shaw, since I had to go to Moires on some necessary errands. Not much happened during that time. Pail 2:3, started yesterday, was continued for a while and then changed arbitrarily into Pail 2:4 [Southern Half].

Under pail 2:3
From 5.59 to 5.45 m
Brownish earth
Sherds: 2800 g. Some links w. 42A/2:3
Seems Class. w. 1 pair. E. Hall: 4th c.

Other bones:

Inv. B184: bronze ? handle; C3628:00-
itive leaf; C3629-30: cup base; C3631: jug base
Near the southeast corner but loose in the fill were found a carved bronze handle of a small vessel (?) and a small votive cup with two handles.

Then as we dig down things begin to happen. In the center and eastern section of the trench there are stone chips. The area to which they spread is not yet defined. In the western section and from the line of the bench eastwards there is a beige/yellowish surface. It seems to die out where the stone chips begin. A medium-sized stone appears in the western area, its much top more or less level with the yellow surface.
which is marked here and
there by an occasional small
pebble. The stone enclosure (hearth)
excavated last year directly north of
the trench is surrounded at its
SE corner and along its
east slab by small rough stones,
roughly placed. The stones are on
the surface but the slab seems
to penetrate further down. We
shall know as we take the level
down.

What we decide to do now is
to scrape the level reached,
expose as much of the yellow
surface as possible and outline
the spread of the stone chips.
As part of the cleaning we
decide now to take down the
martyr left yesterday against
the north scarp. It will be
excavated with

Pail 2 5' [ Southern Half ]
Under pail 1 2', equivalent
to pails 2 3-4
Brown earth or some burning
From 5.59 m to 5.45 m
Shreds 500 grom. Class. Hell.
4% c.
Other: bones

Inv. C 3652: early 4th c. B.C. cupbase

A rough measurement is taken of
the yellow surface at 5.46 m. Just
a little while ago J. McEnroe found
a surface directly south of the
temple in Trench 4 4A marked by
some pebbles. This is at 5.42 m.
We may be dealing with the same
surface. Photographs taken. See p. 20

Trench A 4, E. section seen from East at
the level of stone chips and a yellowish surface
(bottom of pail 2 4)
A few comments should at this point be made of the slab enclosure. From last season's report it appears that it had two stages of use, an earlier one characterized by burnt clay, a later one with no burning but with burnt bones within a sandy fill. In the earlier stage the enclosure was larger (0.60 x 0.50) than in the later one (0.40 x 0.35). The bottom of the earlier phase was 5.46 m, i.e. that of the yellowish surface on one spot near the bench as taken today.

As there is a chance we may be at the level of the earliest courtyard floor connected with Temple C it now seems like a good idea not to dig any farther in the southern section of the trench, but rather to bring first the level of the northern half to that of the yellowish surface. As mentioned earlier the excavation here will include the strip between the two benches and to the east of the line (N-S) of the east foundations of Temple C. The level of the foundation at the entrance is at 5.25 m with slight variations south and north.
levels are taken of the courtyard yellowish surface and other features

Near the line of the bench the surface is at 5.45 m. The ground slopes down towards the east and there the surface is characterized by the chips. It is possible that the paving ran out in that direction and the chip layer acted as a rough compact surface.

The next project is to remove sand from inside the slab enclosure/hearth and from the robber's trench in preparation of digging the northern half of the trench. These areas were excavated last year and sand was thrown there later to level the area. The N-S strip between the two benches, however, on the other hand, has not been excavated and will be included in the next report. This is:

NORTHERN SECTION
Pail 1-2: 6
Under Pail 1:75 of Tr. 34 A3
From c. 5.83 to 5.71
Sandy earth + darkest earth
Sherds: Scrappy, mixed - latest sherds, 1st c. B.C.
Other: bones

Inv.

The max. E-W dimension of the trench here is ca. 5.33 m.

We clear a thin first pass of sandy fill, mostly accumulation

over the winter time, it seems, for it is devoid of any sheds, and in so doing we find the bottom of the earlier phase of the northern bench, at the NW corner of the trench. The stones sit on earth which belongs to a stratum excavated last year (Pail 75 of Tr. 34A3).

We shall dig one more pase with pail 6 as we may still have some contamination. This pase turns out to be darkish, though soft, earth.

Directly south of the northern bench is a lovely cut block 0.49 m N-S, 0.44 m E-W with a circular cutting in the centre 0.13 m in diam. and 0.05 m deep. The hole is flat at the bottom, its sides show no tapering. In other words it is cylindrical. Around the hole are tool marks forming a circular depression with the hole in its centre. The diam. of the depression is ca. 0.30 - 0.32 m. The height of the block, as seen in the now scraped west scarp is c. 0.30 m, and this face is rough.

The block seems to been fitted with an object on top, of cylindrical shape and a cylindrical tenon, a column? a perranteion? The placement of the block suggests that it lined up with the northern doorjamb of the temple immediately to the right as one walked and with it, west wall quiet against the jamb.
The distance between the block and the slab enclosure to the south is ca. 1.50m, which is presumably the width of the doorway.

The height of the block suggests that it may have been built on top of the court surface we found yesterday like the slab enclosure/hearth. Incidentally the surface of the little bit of fill left unexcavated within the enclosure is marked by a few stone chips.

It is quite likely that the top of the temple threshold was at the level of the top of the block with the circular socket.

Sandy fill is found to dip down slightly more than elsewhere in the NW corner of the trench. Having cleared this we change into:

Pail 27 [North Half]
Under pail 6
Brownish - dark softish earth
From 5.71m to 5.60
Sherds: 4250 gms. - Mostly Class. II [Hell. mixed]: 3rd - 2nd c. tulip cup
To 2nd or 1st c. B.C.
Other: bones

In U. C 6992 - 93: Bg. cup bases of 2nd c. B.C.

The dark earth is concentrated in the NE corner of the trench. Elsewhere the fill is patchy, brownish earth or darkish brownish earth. We dig the dark fill of the NE corner separately
in case it turns to be a specific localised feature, but do not yet label. We are not yet sure. The separation makes sense.

As we continue excavation there are other areas now marked by dark fill, especially in the east and southern sections. The sherdsp of the unlabelled pail are lofted with pail 7. The fill looks like a dump. There is not much pottery and animal bones continue.

A few loose small stones appear in the NE angle and are removed. Later on, an accumulation of stones appears here in a rough N-S line. They could be part of a wall.

The fill continues to be the same and thus we still retain Pail 7. However, we start to come down upon a surface of greyish colour of compacted debris. Here and there is a pebble. This is above the one found yesterday and it either runs out or was missed in the southern section of the trench.

Tomorrow we shall clean down to the level of the greyish surface and then change pail.

A very hot day at the site today.
The Temi's surface peters out c. 1.45 east of the northern bench, while it continues irregularly south to the edge of the northern section of the trench. We bring the rest of the trench to the same level, record levels, photograph and resume taking down the level with

Pail P2:8 (North half of Trench)
Under pail P2:7
Patches of Temi's earth and stone chips
From 5.60m to 5.48m
Sherds: 4,850 gms. Mixed deposit. Some Iron Age but also much Cm & Hellenistic. Late 2nd c. B.C.
Other: bones; piece of bronze sheet B187
Inv. C3655: Aryballos frags
C3656: Frg. w. "Aphro" def. etc.

We are now essentially at the level at which we started digging with pail 2:9 in the southern section. At the NW corner the Temi is at c. 5.50m.

The accumulation of stones at the NE section of the trench turns out to be accidental. They sit on earth and stone chips which are beginning to be found in this area at level c. 5.57m. This stone chip layer seems to slope down towards the south. To the west of the stone accumulation is a layer of stone with sherds interspersed.

As the level is lowered we reach the bottom of the black with me round cutting at the top. At that level begin to appear...
(near the entrance to the temple)
a number of stones, some apparently cut, with flat surfaces
we decide to divide the north section of the trench in two halves
and dig the western one first
to determine the role of the stones
we assign to this area.

Pail 2: 9 (2 Pails) (North half / W. Sec.)
Under pail 8
Brown earth: small stones
From 5.48 m to 5.40 m
Sherds: 8200 yrs. Much iron age 8-7th c.
but also some 4th c. imported Smyrnis
Other: bones C372 (pails 15, 17, 25, 29)
In P C3657: Bq cup base; C3658: late Gem
smyrnis; C3694: large vess. Frag. 6 relics

In the eastern section we have
stopped digging at the level of
the small stones, the top of
the stone chip layer and below
the bottom of the accumulation
of stones. We shall dig this area
later on.

In the fill of pail 9 there are
quite a few smallish stones
and more sherds than we had
been finding higher up. Bones
continue. A long narrow
slab running in a northeasterly
direction begins to appear.
Like the rest of the stones its top
is flat with only a slight
slope down towards the south.

We leave a small area unexcavated
directly north of the slab enclosure/hearth
to avoid the collapse of the north
side till it can be consolidated (see p.34)
we continue excavating the NW sector of the trench with pail 9. this section is 2.90 m wide E-W. a drawing is made of the accumulation of stones in the NE corner so that it can be eventually removed. Its max. dimensions are c. 0.55 E-W X 0.85m N-S. It consists of one "course." Top levels (taken yesterday) are shown in the sketch, p. 36. it is located c. 1.00 m from the N. scarp, 0.20 m from the east one. Photograph taken (see p. 36).

we start using a second pail 9 on the first one is now full. the layer is characterised by small, loose, rubble and flat cut blocks of various shapes. one noted yesterday with a northeasterly orientation and located roughly at the centre of the entire trench is 0.98 m long (N-S) but cut back for a length of c. 0.45 m so that its width is c. 0.30 m and 0.22 m (the latter where it is cut back. Its orientation is not unlike that of prehistoric temple B. we clear around the various stones and discontinue using pail 9.

we shall now bring the level of the northeastern sector down to that of pail 9. the equivalent pail here is (N. half - E. section) 2 pails at top

Pail 2:10 (same level as 9)
Earth + stones + rubble.
Firm 5.55 m to 5.47 m.
Sherds: 5,650 qrs. Mostly Iron Age down to 4th c. but 1 base fragment of Late 5th - early 4th century.
Polaroid photograph down below shows the trench at the same level as the drawing (from S.E.)

North section of trench at level of bottom of pails 9-10 (see also p. 40). SC. 1:50 m.
--- : line of division in NW + NE sectors. Numbers indicate levels.
Other levels:
Bottom of block with socket: 5.495
Bottom of earlier northern bench: at N. end: 5.865
at S. end: 5.815

Pail 10 (cont. d) Specular hematite
Other: pieces of metal ore; bones

In v. C3659: Amphora neck; C3660: "Pie crust edge"

The accumulation of stones (see plan p. 36) is dismantled. The stones rest on the layer belonging to pail 10.

The situation here is as in the new sector except that the rubble layer seems to slope up slightly towards the N. and towards the E. and no cut blocks are visible, although some may occur deeper down.

We clean now around the rubble and stones, and prepare the northern half of the trench for photography.

It should be noted here that no foundation trench is recognizable for the foundations of Temple B. This has also been the condition elsewhere in previous trenches.

Photographs of taken at the bottom of pails 9-10 (see p. 40) and close up views of the block with the round socket as well as the hearth/slab enclosure. Next levels are taken throughout the trench (see p. 38)

It is now decided to revert to digging the southern section of the trench. Perhaps we shall find here the stone debris we at a sloping down level, lower than to the north.
Roll 1  (Also in colour)

Fr. 26: Level of cut stones + rubble from SE
   (also frs. 27, 28)

Fr. 29 - Block w. round socket
    from SE.

Fr. 30 - Slab enclosure/hearth - From E.

Fr. 31: Block with round socket
    from S.

The last trial used earlier here
was Pail 2:4. We replace this now
with:

Pail 3:11 [S. half of Trench]
Under pails 4 (+ 5)
Brown earth + stone chips.
From 5.45 to 5.30 m
Sheds: 2850 gr. Most 7th c. but 1
laddle fig. suggests late intrusion.
Lingy W. 210
Hydraulic gray
Other: piece of bronze; 2 metal cisterns
    In U.
    Oyster shell
    Specular
    Mit 78 (Hemihita)

A measured drawing is begun of the
north section of the trench to show the
distribution of rubble and stones (see p. 38)

The layer of stone chips encountered
easier in the southern half of the
trench, mainly from 40-50 c. and on to the
east is very characteristic and thick in
Pail 3:11. To the W. there are fewer
stone chips. Large stones, some cut
begin to appear concentrated, as further
north near the facade of Temple C.
Some 3 blocks in an E-W line east
of the location of the slab enclosure/hearth
may even be a wall.

It appears now that what we have here
in the level present before the construction
of Temple C: cut blocks, probably from
dismantled earlier structures and worked stone
chips from the dressing of stones to be used in the
temple. The location of the latter at some
distance east of the temple makes sense.
The light surface found in the north
part of the trench appears now to be the
floor associated with the temple C. Since
the yellowish surface found in the southeast
half also represent covered the same
kind of debris the two must be
one and the same floor, located
near the facade and kitering out
towards the east. This earliest outside 'floor' sloped down from N-S from 5.60 to c. 5.45 m, the block with the round socket, being roughly at the centre of the west edge of the trench resting on the intermediate level 5.50 m.

The cess's floor was taken down with pail 1:8 in the W. section, succeeded by pails 2:9 +10 for west and east parts of the same section. These brought us down to the earlier debris. Pail 8 should be considered a transitional phase, 9 +10 represents the top of the new level, although ignorance of the fact at the time led to their being labelled as level 2. Pail 11, like pail 8 is a transitional one. Sheds belong to the yellowish surface and the layer of stone chips.

Pail 11 will be used a little longer till all stone chips are removed and then we shall start cleaning around the now emerging stone debris from earlier structures.

One other fact which has emerged is that the earliest of the two northern floor benches was built when the level had risen to about the top of a little higher than the block with the round socket which may have carried a periphery. In fact the southernmost stone of this bench rested on the edge of the block. As the bottom of the bench sloped down from N-S (5.965 - 5.815 m) it was obviously built on a sloping surface.
Pail 11 is used a bit longer to clean the layer overlying the rubble and stones found in the southern half of the trench on June 27. Then it is replaced by pail 3:12 with which we shall be cleaning around the stones and bringing the level down in the rest of the section of the trench.

4 pails

Pail 3:12 [S. half of Trench]
Brown earth, some rubble, blocks
Under pail 11
From c. 5.30 to 5.25 Am.
Sherds: 18,800 gms. Good 7th c. B.C. but some Clay. Hell.

Other: pieces of iron from "Maltese cross"
Ino. bowls; sherds, one cup/s.

levels are also taken with the machine.

The stones found earlier east of the slab enclosure/hearth line up for a length of 1.37 m to form an E-W wall. At the east end are two superimposed stones. The max. width is 0.43 m, although no north face has been found yet.

The fill around the stones is soft earth with large amounts of pottery. Cup frags and frags of large shapes are recognizable. Below the softest fill we are beginning to hit a level with small stones, chips, at least part of the wall. This will be