KOMMOS EXCAVATION

AREA A

1985

TRENCH 63

EXCAVATED BY ERIC CSAPO
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The trenches are laid out. Trench 63A is the northern tip of a projection of unexcavated and partially excavated earth towering over the courtyard of Building T just south of the Greek temples. It lies just west of the ends of the long southern wall of Building T discovered in 1984 and the northern wall of Building P found in the same season.

To the south Trench 63A is defined by the north face of the temenos retaining wall associated with Temple C. The wall itself is located in Trench 64A which will be dug to the south of 63A. All the other sides of the trench are defined by the lines of previous trenches: to the north by Trenches 52A and 34A2; to the east by Trench 56; to the west by Trenches 51A and Trench 34A2 and overlapped most of the northern half of 63A and removed the topsoil.

The purpose of Trench 63A is to provide more information about activity south of the Greek temples and in the courtyard south of building T and west of building P.

We will call the temenos wall Wall 6 as named in 51A.

The grid co-ordinates of 63A are:

**NE** 990.80 x, 1099.68y
**SE** 992.07 x, 1093.99y
**SW** 983.75 y, 1091.53y
**NW** 982.39 y, 1097.61y

Jog at north center = Southern point = 985.83 x, 1098.28y
Jog at center = Northern point = 985.73 x, 1098.64y
Anney in west = N 981.60 x, 1097.48y
S 982.80 x, 1090.95y
We clear the stones and rubble on top of the trench and photograph (Roll 1, etc.). Unfortunately the film was spoiled.

We start digging the western half of the trench first (see diagram on page 8) in order to facilitate the removal of earth through the eastern part of Trench 64. No samples are taken in clearing accumulated sand and earth from the top. When we reach solid earth we change levels and dig with:

Pail 2:1
Under pails 24 in Trench 34A1 and 16 in Trench 34A.

From depth of 5.76 m. (SC) - 5.30 m. (SW) to 5.43 m. (NC) - 5.26 m. (SW). See diagram on page 10.

Soil: much more compact, hard, sandy earth of a light brown colour

Pottery: coarse and fine, medium and small sized pieces. Mostly Iron Age, some Minoan. Many 'trip cup' fragments ranging in date from 4th - 2nd B.C. ca. 700 sherds

Other: a bronze pin, 3 bags of bone, shell, roof tiles, fragments of a stone bowl(?), charcoal

Inventoried:
- C 7671 - sculpture, bull's leg, hollow
- C 7672 - complete miniature votive (?) cup
- B 289 - bronze pin
- S 1594 - fragment of a stone bowl
A bronze pin appears in the south centre of the trench. In the south centre (southeast corner of the half-trench) we come across a spill of stones. We dig around them (see diagram, page 12). In the north and north centre of the trench are a few burnt patches, but the burning is only superficial. We soon come upon a darker, denser layer of earth and follow it through the trench. This new layer is associated with large black and blue beach pebbles. In the west we find some hard lumps of burnt red earth, one with a bit of adhering charcoal.

25.6.85

We continue the search for the harder earth we found in the south centre of the trench, but without much success as we move north. I assign a new bucket to the harder, darker clay and earth in the southern section of the half-trench.

Pail 2:2 (southern half of western half of 63A)
Under pail 2:1

From level 5.37 m (sc) - 5.26 m (sw) to
5.25 m (sc) - 5.15 m (sw)

Earth: darker with some grey clay content

Pottery: about 80 mixed coarse and fine, a few large, mostly small sherds. 'Tulip cup' parts date to 5th c BC - 4th c BC, also a black glazed skyphos handle dates to 5th c BC.

Other: several lumps of iron, 2 samples of burnt earth, 2 bags of bone, shell, pumice, charcoal, bull’s leg
Inventoried: C 3658 - votive bull's leg
M 168 - iron fragments

We come across a deposit of iron lumps with a large patch of burnt earth around it (see diagram, page 14). There is some charcoal and much bone nearby. In the south centre of the trench near the stone spill is harder clay.

We will dig down to the level of the top of the layer of iron fragments and end pail 2:2.

We now dig the northern part of the half-trench with:

Pail 2:3
Under pail 2:1

From level 5.43 m. (NC) - 5.22 m. (CW) to 5.28 m. (NC) - 5.20 m. (C)

Earth: compact brown sandy earth without the burnt material found to the south in pail 2:2.

Pottery: ca. 80 coarse and fine, some large, most medium to small sherds. Not closely datable but the "tulip cup" bases indicate a 5th - 3rd c. B.C. date.

Other: bone, charcoal, fragment of iron blade.
Inventoried:
Mi. 167 - fragment of an iron blade

A little burnt patch of earth appears towards the northwest corner of the trench and close by is an iron blade fragment. As we dig towards the northwest corner of the half-trench the soil grows slightly greyer and denser (more clay content).

We photograph: Roll / Tr. 19, 20 on page 16.

26.6.85

An investigation of the iron deposit in the south is undertaken with

Pail 2:4
Under pail 2:2
From level 5.26m. - 5.16m.

Soil: dark and hard with signs of burning

Pottery: some 15 Iron Age sherds.

Other: bone, iron

Inventoryed:

From about 1-3 centimetres below the iron deposit is a thin burnt layer at most a centimetre wide. We dig down a few centimetres
Bottom of pails 2 and 3 seen from the northeast.

to determine that the iron deposit is only superficial and so abandon pail 2:4. The
clayey of this pail leaves a small island in the southern section of the trench. We ignore it for the moment and continue digging
the rest of the trench with

Pail 2:5
Under pails 2 and 3
From level 5.28 (nc) - 5.16 (sw) to

Earth: compacted sand on the extreme
north fringe; elsewhere brown earth
with large stone chips and small stones.

Pottery: mixed coarse and fine, medium to small
sized Iron Age sherds with a fair number of
joins. Plain and black-slipped, Tulip cups, plates,
Kommos cup, basse. Tulip cup, basse from 5th-4th BC.

Other: 5 bags of bone, charcoal, worked
stone, worked bone, pumice and shell

Inventoried: C 7673 - ladle, used as lamp, visible
burning marks, half-preserved
C 7674 - closed vessel (? hydria?) with decoration
C 7675 - bull’s leg (hoof) with small cavity in
the bottom-centre
8052 - ivory or worked bone (?)

As we dig north of Wall 6 (the temenos retaining
wall) we uncover the line of what appears to be an
earlier phase of the wall, projecting as much as 4.85 m.
to the north of the later wall in the southwest corner.
This projection of the lower wall is also visible on the
north face of Wall 6 in Trench 51A, though there
it is considerably less pronounced.

After lunch we find a small piece of ivory or
(more probably) worked bone in the very centre
of the half-trench. After one pass pail 2:5 is completed. With pail 2:6 we remove the spill of stones in the southeast corner of the half-trench.

Pail 2:6
Under pail 2:1
From level 5.76 m. to 5.20 m.

Soil: stone spill with hard brown earth and some clay content

Pottery: ca. 70 sherds, coarse and fine with many joins, medium to small. Black glazed cups. 5th - 4th BC

Other: bone, pumice

Inventoryed: another rim piece from C 7674 (pail 2:5), C 7687 - cup

We also use a separate pail to take down the island of iron fragments formed by pail 2:4.

Pail 2:7
Under pail 2:2
From level 5.25 m. to 5.16 m.

Soil: thick with fragments of decomposed iron.

Pottery: only 7 sherds. 2 joining sherds of a red glazed kantharos 4th BC

Other: 2 bags of iron fragments and one sample of earth and iron as found

Inventoryed:
C 7688 - kantharos
We begin to dig the entire trench once again. At the same time we change levels.

Pail 3:8
Under pails 2:5, 2:6, 2:7
From level BC (NC) - 5.12 m (SC) to
5.21 m. (NC) - 5.11 m. (SC). See p. 22.

Soil: light brown sandy earth with large stone chips in the south, turning gradually harder in the north and breaking into large clumps

Pottery: ca. 200 large and small coarse and fine sherds with some joins: Kommos cups, Tulip cups, transport amphora, kantharos. Joins with pails 2:7 (kantharos) and 2:6 latest date 3rd c. B.C.

Other: a large quantity of bone (4 bags), shell, pumice, a tooth, and several fragments of a large ceramic bulb

Inventoried:
C 7690 - complete profile of black glazed miniature jug
C 7690 - closed vessel, probably imported, Oriental
C 7696, C 7697 - bull's legs; C 7629 - lamp stand

27.6.85

Yesterday and today we found several fragments of a ceramic bull scattered throughout the trench but mainly concentrated in the east/south-centre! There are several adjoining fragments of the largest bull's leg. It is much larger than any found so far at Kommos.

We begin to clean the north face of the
temenos wall (Wall 6) with:

Pail 1-3: 9
Under pails 1, 2 and 5
From level 5.83 m. to 5.11 m.

Soil: mud and rubble packing of temenos wall (Wall 6)

Pottery: ca. 120 grams scraps to 4th – 3rd BC.

Other:
Inventoryed:

We dug the entire western half of the trench with:

Pail 3:10
Under pail 3:8
From level 5.21 m. (NC) - 5.11 m. (SE) to
  5.11 m. (NC) - 4.92 m. (SW). See p. 22.

Soil: soft, dry, light brown

Pottery: ca. 150 grams of scraps to late 5th c. BC - 4th c. BC.

Other: bone

Inventoryed:

Immediately upon beginning the pail we came upon the surface upon which the temenos wall (Wall 6) is built. It is characterized by a general strewn of stone chips, beach pebbles
and bone. This surface continues the pebble surface of Trench 34A2 (see notebook, page 59).

We clean the surface and photograph, taking two polaroid shots and two regular shots from the North beside the south wall of the temple (Roll 2, Fr. 7-8).

We begin to dig the eastern half of Trench 63A (see diagram, page 8) with:

Pail 2:11
Under pail 16 of Trench 34A.
From level 5.90 m. (EC) - 5.89 m. (NC) to 5.63 m. (SE) - 5.47 m. (CC)

Soil: compacted sand, rubble and earth. The color of the earth is Munsell 2.5Y 6/4 'light yellowish brown'.

Pottery: 12,750 gr. Scrappy but rich deposit. Some Iron Age but much Classical down to mid 4th c. B.C. with some possibly late sherds. Start of Classical dump with Hellenistic admixture. Cf. pails 12-16.

Other: petrified oyster, bone, pumice, head of bronze pin or nail, a nearly complete bronze nail, shell.

Inventory:
- C 7702 - lamp stand
- B 291 - head of bronze nail
- B 292 - bronze nail
- S 1596 - fragment of a stone basin
- Sh 8 - ostrich eggshell
- C 7787 - basin
- C 7788 - pithos
- C 7790 - basin
We begin digging the eastern half-trench from the north. Here we appear to be already on a surface characterized by very large pottery fragments and many fine ware cups. In the southern half of this section of the trench there is still hard, barren sand from an upper stratum presumably removed in the north by the excavation of Trench 34 A. This upper stratum in the south we decide to dig with a separate pail before continuing with 2:11. Before pausing for the new pail, we find a petrified oyster near the middle of the half-trench. The south eastern quarter of Trench 63 A is dug with:

**Pail 1:12**

*Under no previous pails*

*From level 5.90 m. (SE) - 5.68 m. (c) to 5.81 m. (SE) - 5.62 m. (c). See page 26.*

**Soil:** Sand accumulation

**Pottery:** ca. 200 sherds, coarse and fine, mixed 9th-8th B.C., Hellenistic and early Roman

Mainly Hellenistic 1st c. B.C.: amphorae, storage fragments, 1 lonium shard

**Other:** Shell, bone

**Inventoried:**

C 7901 - Red glazed plate, rim sherd, imported 1st c. B.C. - 1st c. A.D.

28.6.85

We continue digging pail 1:12 southwards in the southeastern quarter of the trench. The removal of the topsand in this area reveals a large hole beginning 1.2 m. north of our mid-point in the south and extending 1.15 m. northwards, 1.2 m. eastwards (see diagram, page 26).
Once the layer of bucket 2:11 can be found in the southwest of the trench, we continue digging the eastern half of the trench with 2:11. In the south-centre of the half-trench the head of a bronze nail appears, followed soon after by a better preserved nail slightly lower and further to the east.

29.6.85

The dumpy level is moved down to the southwest of the site where it will remain for some time. Levels are read with reference to point 583 (4.64 m. above sea level).

In the scarp of Trench 56 there are a number of stones forming a rough line. We dig down to this point and change buckets. Nevertheless there has been no significant change in soil, though we have been collecting few sherds. We now dig with:

Pail 2:13
Under pail 2:11
From level 5.63 m (SE) - 5.47 m. (c) to
5.63 m. (SE) - 5.36 m. (c) See pp. 26, 28.

Soil: plenty of larger rocks, chips, earth same as pail 2:11.

Pottery: 17,900 yrs. Part of rich Classical dump
( pails 11, 13, 16) Mixed 5th and 4th c. B.C.
based on black-glaze cup-based.

Other: large quantities of bone, shell, iron, pumice, worked shell?
In the north-centre of the trench we find a complete Kommos cup almost immediately upon starting the bucket. Upon cleaning by the conservator, the cup is found to be full of small, smooth, round pebbles and also a trace of cattlefish. The cup is photographed before and after cleaning.

The same stone spill found in the southeast of the western half of 63A reappears in the southwest of the present half-trench. The sherds are copious and large, but when we dig down to the surface upon which the roots in the South are resting, we find relatively fewer sherds. We change pails.

1.7.85

Pail 2:14

Under pail 2:13

From level 5.47 m. (EC) - 5.34 (NC) to 5.45 m. (SE) - 5.24 m. (SC). See page 28.

Soil: fewer and smaller stones; fewer sherds.

Munsell colour 2.5 Y 5/2 'greyish brown'

Pottery: 9,280 gr. Part of rich Classical dump (cf. pails 11, 13 - 16). Mixed 5th and 4th c. B.C.

Other: bone, shell, charcoal, iron, small stone tools

Inventoryed: C7778 - Crete Kantharos, 4th c. B.C.; C7783 - B & cup, 5th c. B.C.; C7791 - bowl; C7792 - bowl; C7793 - krater; C7802 - Athenian skyphos; C7840 - Fr. of bull figurine

During the first pass in the east centre of the trench we find another fragment of the large ceramic bulls found in the other half of the trench (see pail 3:8).