

INTRODUCTION

by

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In *GSE I*, there was a paragraph headed “How to read this book” (pp. 25-26) with some essential information concerning the entire excavation. In the Introduction to *GSE II* (pp. 14-15) and *GSE III* (pp. 11-13), some additional and practical information was given and here it is appropriate to repeat this information with the necessary small changes.

More than anything else, the Greek-Swedish Excavation (GSE) has been a stratigraphic excavation. More than 7,000 stratified units have been unearthed. In dating an excavated unit, our principle has been to date the whole unit according to the latest finds in the deposit or to the period in which it must be dated according to the stratigraphy. For example, when a levelling deposit between two floors of the 20th century AD contained nothing later than LM IIIB pottery, the deposit was included in the Modern Greek levels. This example is obvious, while in other cases they may be less so. For example, in several instances, deposits which contained late LM III pottery also contained one or two, later, diagnostic sherds. In such a case, the overlying layer may not have been cleaned well enough at the time of the excavation or the sherds may have found their way into a “wrong” basket, but when we had no way of being sure of this, the deposit was dated to the period of the latest diagnostic find.

In one way or another, each excavated deposit bears witness to the activity at the time it was deposited, whether it was a floor deposit, a rubbish pit or a dump. And the assemblage of finds also forms a unit. In this volume, in the analytical chapter on the pottery, there are references to early and late deposits in both LM IIIA:2 and LM IIIB:1. It is not possible to divide these two periods into an early and a late ceramic phase. When a large pit as, for example, 19-Pit Q (cf. p. 144) has been dug through many floors of the LM IIIB:1 constructions it is obviously one of the latest LM IIIB:1 deposits. The division is thus based on stratigraphic, not ceramic, evidence.

We have found that the only responsible way to publish the GSE is to present each item in its find context, i.e. all finds are mentioned in the context in which they were discovered, while some of them, with the discussions about them, will be presented in later volumes, where it would be natural to discuss them. This concerns EM and MM pottery, which will be discussed in Vol. VII, and LM I pottery, which will be discussed in Vol. VI. The pithoi will be discussed in Vol. V and for this reason they are given catalogue descriptions here regardless of date. Other groups of finds like seals, sealings, shells and organic remains will receive special attention

in the forthcoming Vol. V. Concerning the organic remains it will often be noted in the descriptions of the architectural remains (AR and some TC) – both in this and the previous volumes – that they have impressions from different crops. This is a result of a study of all architectural remains found until 1987 by Dr Walter L. Friedrich and his team of MA students from the Department of Geology at the University of Aarhus.

Description of deposits

The aim of the publication is to present and to comment upon each deposit, as far as possible, in chronological order. In principle, each deposit will thus contain the following information: description of the position in the grid system of the Excavation and heights above sea-level; an indication of its stratigraphic position, compared with overlying and underlying deposits, and a description of soil or construction in the case of walls and floors; the date of the items discovered in the deposit and the weighed amount of pottery excavated. In the catalogue, the term “basket” means the contents of the “container” (bag or basket) into which the pottery was collected. When possible, there will also be an indication of how much pottery has been inventoried, compared with the total amount excavated, and at some entries the number of counted shapes is given (see further Appendix, pp. 445-446). Then follows the catalogue of inventoried items. All the small finds have been inventoried, while the pottery was subject to a selection process. Of the calculated 1,000,000 sherds, c. 17,000 were inventoried during the years 1970-1987 and 2001. After the catalogue of the pottery, there often follows a list of “outside joins” – sherds which are joined to other sherds from a different context. The catalogue description of the vases will occur in the oldest context; referred to by date and Vol. no., while cross-references will be found in the later one(s). The catalogue ends with a summary of the bones and shells found. After the catalogue come comments on the deposit, where the often-found expression “natural join” means that the sherd joins with sherd(s) from the same general area from a slightly higher or lower level.

The above description of how a deposit is described here in principle requires a few practical comments. Concerning the dates of the contents of the deposit, it should be noted, for the benefit of those who wish to go into detail, that they do not always correspond to the preliminary dates given in

the Excavation notebooks. Many of these preliminary dates had to be corrected in the light of later studies. Moreover, it was not always possible to give the amount of pottery excavated or the percentage of inventoried pottery. The weighing of pottery started only during the middle of the 1973 campaign. Concerning the grid system, it should be noted that two different systems were used in the Excavation. From the start in 1970, the excavated area was divided into 1-metre squares with indications in Greek letters $\Gamma\alpha, \beta \dots \kappa, \Delta\alpha, \beta \dots \kappa$, etc. along the Y-axis, while Arabic numbers were given to the X-axis. Thus, the indication of a find spot would be $\Delta\alpha/511$, i.e. within the square 511-512/719-720. This system was changed in 1977, when an ordinary grid system was adopted using numbers on both axes, and this enabled us to pinpoint any location within the Excavation. Thus, for example, the position 518.00/701.30/9.31 means that the numbers before the first slash indicate the position along the X-axis, the number between the two slashes the position along the Y-axis, while the last number is the elevation. The two different systems are presented in *Pls. 1* and *8*. Whenever possible, the ordinary grid system is used throughout the publication.

Conventions used in catalogue descriptions

Should any reader want more detailed information on the criteria and conventions used in the catalogue descriptions – including the typology for pithoi, spindle whorls, loom weights, stone tools and obsidian – they will be found in *GSE II* (pp. 24-31) and *GSE I* (pp. 45-47 [obsidian]). Here only two items of general information about the catalogue are repeated:

(1) Throughout the publication, measurements are given in metres and weights in kilograms and

(2) When an object has been tested by chemical, spectrographic or other analysis for investigation of origin or composition, this is noted in the catalogue as “Analysed” (followed by the results) and will be further discussed in appendices and analytical chapters.

Furthermore, it should be noted that Munsell numbers have been avoided for the colour identification of paint and fabrics. In more cases than not, one colour on a pottery sherd has different shades – and which one is light to chose? In our opinion the Munsell numbers do not give a more objective view of the colour of the fabric than a written description, especially when the description is completed by one person who knows all the material. Concerning fabrics, we have in the present and previous volumes, mostly restricted ourselves to what (to the eye) seem to be of local origin and imports – all categories of which are defined and discussed under separate headings. In these classifications scientific analyses have been helpful, and we hope to take more advantage of such analyses in connection with future research.

References to GSE publications

Concerning references to the publications of the Greek-Swedish Excavations 1970-1987 and 2001, we shall refer to the published volumes as *GSE I, II, III, IV*, while the planned volumes will be referred to only as *Vol. V, VI, and VII*. The different volumes are thus referred to as follows:

<i>GSE I</i>	From the Geometric to the Modern Greek period
<i>GSE II</i>	The Late Minoan IIIC settlement
<i>GSE III</i>	The Late Minoan IIIB:2 settlement
<i>GSE IV</i>	The Late Minoan IIIB:1 and IIIA:2 settlements
Vol. V	The Late Minoan IIIA:1 and LM II settlements
Vol. VI	The Neopalatial settlement
Vol. VII	The Middle Minoan, Early Minoan and Final Neolithic settlements and general conclusions of the Excavation

Plans and sections

Whenever possible, the plans with the LM IIIB:1 and LM IIIA:2 remains and sections in the figures are reproduced on a scale of 1:50, but in all cases the 1-metre grid system is given, and with that also the scale. If nothing else is indicated, north is always upwards. It should also be mentioned that most of the sections in the figures have been reconstructed from the horizontal excavation and that they are primarily intended to give the stratigraphical position of the deposit under discussion. The indications of levels are given in absolute heights above sea-level. On the plans, they are printed in italics, for example, *10.12/9.87*, where the numbers before the slash are the top of the level and the numbers after the slash indicate the bottom of the level at the same spot.

All plans and sections of the Excavation are ultimately based on drawings on a scale of 1:20 made during the Excavation. The plans have been re-drawn many times, while almost all sections represented (*Pls. 15-25*) are the original ones, in which we have kept the original numbering.

The plates

The plates of the pottery and the small finds are arranged according to their find contexts, while the drawings have been arranged according to dates and shapes.

Drawings of pottery are reproduced on a scale of 1:3 unless otherwise stated. The small finds (*Pls. 217-232* and *263-266*), the Linear B tablets and the potter's marks (*Pls. 277-279*) are reproduced, unless otherwise stated, on a scale of 1:1, while the Linear B inscriptions on pottery (*Pls. 270-276*) are reproduced on a scale of 1:2. Photographs of pottery and small finds always include a measuring rod.

All illustrations have been produced by the staff of the Excavation team. All drawings of plans and sections of the Excavation and the inscriptions were made by Erik Hallager. Those of the pottery were made by Birgitta P. Hallager, with some contributions by Ann-Louise Schallin and Margareta Sjöblom. The small finds were drawn by Ann-Louise Schallin, Margit Bendtsen, Margareta Sjöblom, Harriet Blitzer, and Sascha B. Olinsson. Drawings of the motifs on seals, sealings, roundels and stoppers are those of the *CMS*.

Photographs of the excavation were taken by Erik Hallager, with contributions from Pontus Hellström, Göran Söderberg and Lennart Palmquist. The plates of the pottery were photographed by Birgitta P. Hallager, while the pithoi and small finds were photographed by Erik Hallager and the obsidian by Efi Karantzali.

Numbering systems

We have – against better advice – chosen throughout the publication to keep the excavation numbers for pottery and small finds. The small finds, however, also have sequential numbers. They are the ones to be found in square brackets ([]) in the first line of a catalogue entry, and they are the numbers referred to in the distribution maps (*Figs. 3-88 and Pls. 2-7, 9-14*). In an excavation number, the first two numbers indicate the year of excavation, then the abbreviation for the category of material follows in capital letter(s) (see p. 18), after which the numbers are in sequence. The numbers written on the finds are thus the same as the published ones. Some of the more important finds have Museum numbers, which are also found both on the object and in the publication (see Concordance list, p. 472).

Names of walls, pits and floors

The names given to walls, pits and to a certain extent to floors are those given during the excavation. Thus, for example, 20-Pit B is Pit B of Trench 20 and 11-Wall 3 is wall 3 of Trench 11. All “names” of walls will be found on *Pl. 1* and *8*, while individual pits and walls will be found in *Figs. 3-88*. Names for floors follow the same rule, i.e. they get numbers in the order they are found. This means that when there are several floors within one room or space the numbers need not be in sequential order.

The 2001 supplementary excavation

During five weeks in June-July 2001, we carried out a supplementary excavation within the Agia Aikaterini Square.

This excavation revealed new and important information concerning the LM III settlements and it was decided that the results of the 2001 excavations should be included in the forthcoming *GSE* volumes. When the shells and obsidian for 2001 have been studied, the layers above LM IIIB:2 (i.e. LM IIIC to the Modern Greek period, will be included in the supplementary publication on *GSE I-II*, which we plan to give in *Opuscula*, Annual of the Swedish Institutes at Athens and Rome. Concerning the pottery, some joins were made between the 2001 material and sherds in this volume. They are listed as “*GSE I-II, Suppl.*” under “outside joins”, which refers to the above mentioned supplementary publication.

Our main concern for the present volume – and also for previous and future volumes of the *GSE* – is to make the excavated material available to scholars in an intelligible way. We do not pretend to have solved all the problems presented by this material and opinions expressed by the different authors in the analytical chapters are not necessarily the opinions of the editors.

As editors, we would like to thank the general directors of the excavation, Dr Yannis Tzedakis and Professor Carl-Gustaf Styrenius, for entrusting us with this work. We would also like to thank the contributors to this volume for their excellent collaboration and for their always positive efforts to meet deadlines. We greatly appreciated the valuable comments made by Ms Cathrine Parnell while revising the English text. Last but not least, we want to express our editorial gratitude to Dr Jenni Hjothman, who competently pinpointed our oversights. Needless to say, any that still remain are our responsibility.