

## 6. The Excavation of Zone 5

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### 1. Introduction<sup>2</sup>

Zone 5, the area on the south-west of the summit of the hill (Trenches BC/BD/BE-76/77/78 and BF/BG/BH/BJ-75/76/77 on the grid in fig. 1.3) was excavated every summer since 2007. Although a preliminary report of the architectural remains and content of the zone discovered during the 2007 and 2008 campaigns was previously published<sup>3</sup>, for the sake of convenience, some aspects are reminded here.

The south limit of the area excavated as Zone 5 is marked by a series of sturdy walls (E1-E5) which mark a sudden rise in level against the south slope of the hill. Here, a large space called the *south area* was partly excavated (fig. 6.1). A series of pits cut in the bedrock were located, one of which contained EM ceramics. More excavation (in the west part of this open area) and further study of the already excavated material are needed, however. Still, it can already be asserted that part of this south zone contained some of the earliest settlement remains on the site, as will be underlined below. The cleaning of the western terrace wall of the south area revealed a thick layer of medium-sized stones. These formed the fill supporting the south-west part of this area, very likely built in connection with the establishment of Building E.

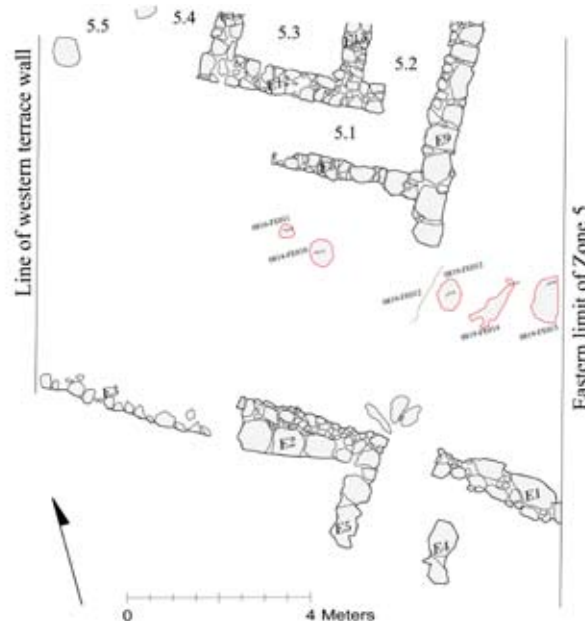


Fig. 6.1. PLAN OF THE SOUTH AREA OF ZONE 5 (P. HACIGÜZELLER/M. DEVOLDER)

A series of accesses lead north from the south area into spaces 5.1, 5.4 and 5.5 of Building E. The entire complex was carefully adapted to local topography, and the spaces follow the natural rise of the hill with a lower (spaces 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5), middle (spaces 5.6, 5.7, 5.8, 5.9, 5.11, 5.12 and 5.13) and upper (spaces 5.14, 5.15 and 5.16, and open space 5.10) terrace (fig. 6.2). The bonding of the walls confirms the unity of the planning of Building E.

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<sup>2</sup> Also participated in the excavations: I. Milidakis (2009) and G. Metaxarakis (2010), as well as V. Bouat (Paris I; 2009-2010), C. Oliveira (Kenyon College; 2009-2010), R. Martin (UToronto; 2010) and C. Bailly (UCLouvain; 2010).

<sup>3</sup> *Sissi I*: 139-156.

## 6. The Excavation of Zone 5

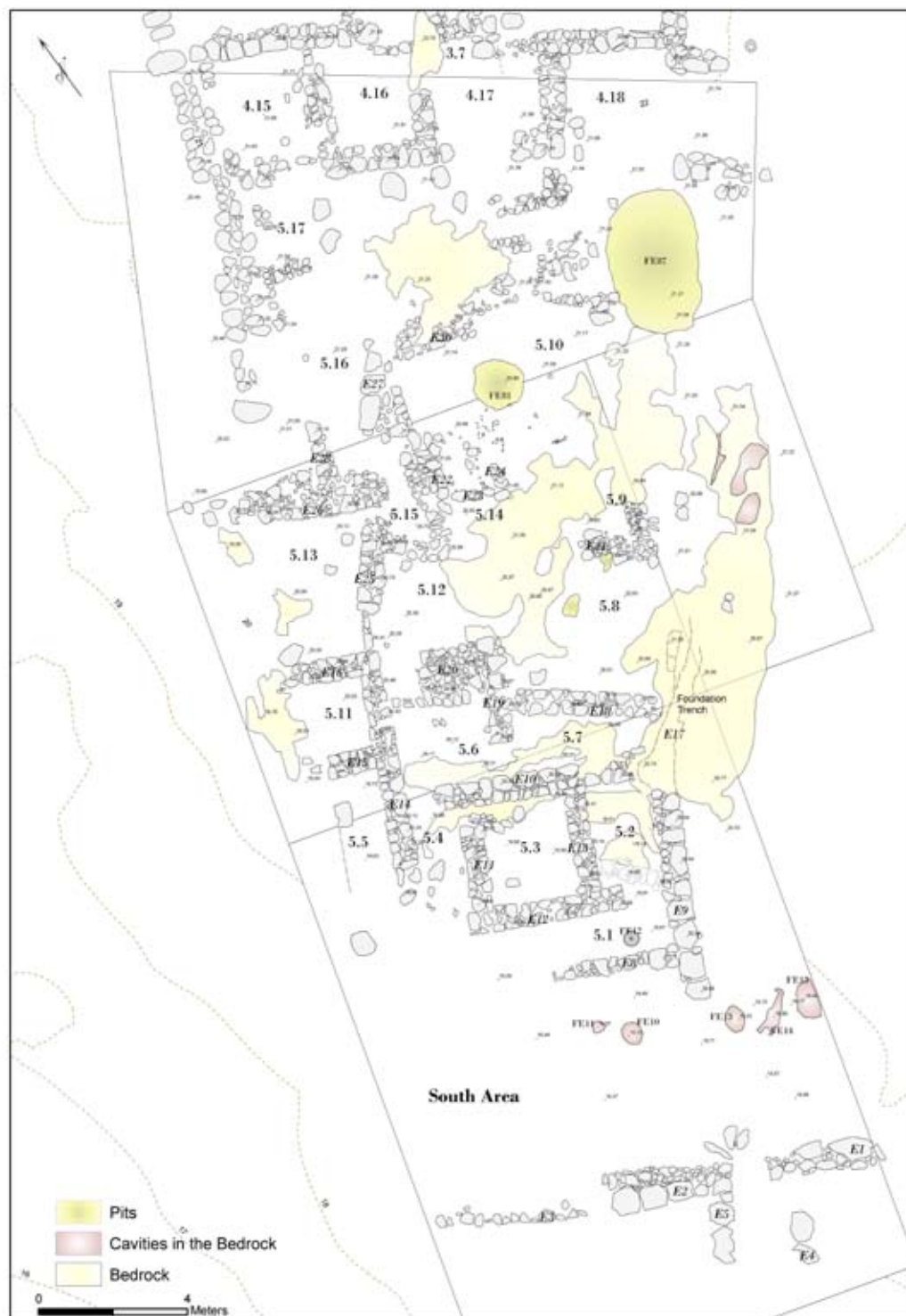


Fig. 6.2. PLAN OF ZONE 5 (P. HACIGÜZELLER/N. KRESS/M. DEVOLDER)

## 2. The excavation of Building E in 2009-2010

The exploration of Zone 5 had different objectives during the 2009 and 2010 campaigns. First, the excavated area needed to be extended to the east and north, in order to find the limits to the building and to clarify its connexion with the structures on the top of the hill in Zones 3 and 4 to the north. Second, within the limits of Building E itself, several spaces had only been superficially investigated before, now needed to be excavated down to floor level. In some cases soundings were conducted in order to clarify the situation and chronology of each space. This would also allow the conservation of the walls.

Beneath the lowest of the three successive floor levels revealed in space 5.2 (08-05-0866-FE024) a red level was reached, similar to the top of a burnt destruction layer. The ceramic content was mixed, but MM II and even some EM sherds were identified. Although burnt mudbricks and charcoal were sampled, it was not a primary destruction deposit. Perhaps the soil and contents were brought in from elsewhere as a fill. This layer was excavated down to bedrock, which supported a wall with a north/north-west orientation, markedly different from the other walls in this building (fig. 6.3).



Fig. 6.3. AERIAL VIEW OF SPACE 5.2, WITH BEDROCK AND OLDER WALL VISIBLE (NORTH TO RIGHT) (L. MANOUSOGIANNAKI/N. KRESS)

Narrow space 5.4 (3.48 x 1.26 m) connects the open area south with spaces 5.6 and 5.3 within Building E. Here, a large patch of plaster which still bore slight traces of paint was found beneath dense tumble. The plaster seems to have been placed to level the surface of the irregular bedrock (fig. 6.4). Against the west wall (E14) a floor level (09-05-0956-FE051) was found, made of a mixture of pebbles and plaster. It belonged to the last phase of occupation within the corridor. Preliminary study of the pottery reveals a mixed content, with LM III as a *terminus post quem*. Beneath the floor level in the south part of the corridor another destruction layer was found which still needs more exploration since no earlier floor level has hitherto been found (cf. fig. 6.7). On excavation, this layer yielded two well-preserved bronze chisels (09-05-0957-OB001 and OB002) (fig. 6.5) immediately south of space 5.4 and south of wall E14. It seems that this layer continues to the west beneath the lowest pebble floor in space 5.5 (fig. 6.7).



Fig. 6.4. BEDROCK, PLASTER AND PEBBLE FLOOR LEVEL 09-05-0956-FE051 IN SPACE 5.4 (M. DEVOLDER)



Fig. 6.5. BRONZE CHISELS 09-05-0957-OB001 AND OB002 FOUND SOUTH OF WALL E14, DURING EXCAVATIONS (M. DEVOLDER)

Further exploration in this area is still needed but it is likely that, after a destruction in space 5.4, the floor needed relaying during LM III. The walls bordering this corridor also show traces of some remodelling with the access towards space 5.3 to the east and space 5.6 to the north made more narrow (fig. 6.6). This made access to this area less easy and modified the initial layout of the building somewhat (see space 5.6 below).

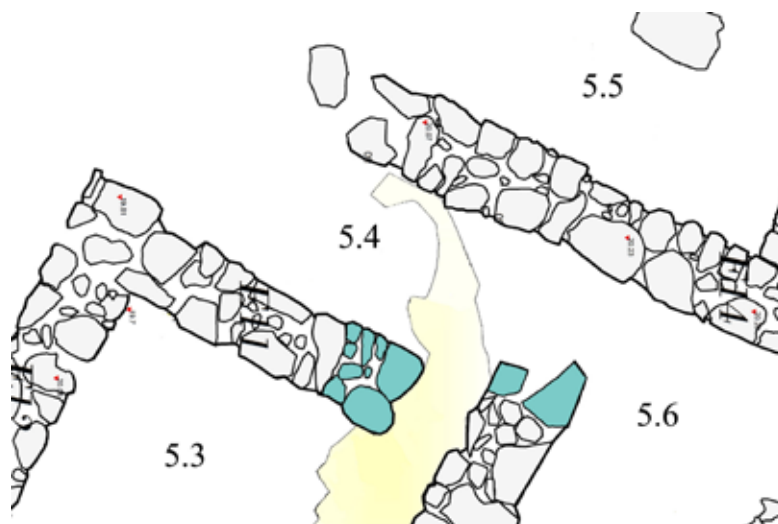


Fig. 6.6. PLAN SHOWING (IN BLUE) THE REDUCTION IN WIDTH OF THE ACCESS BETWEEN SPACES 5.4, 5.3 AND 5.6 (NORTH TO RIGHT) (P. HACIGÜZELLER/M. DEVOLDER)

Space 5.5 to the west of space 5.4 is again quite a narrow room (3.24 x 1.12 m). It is delimited to the east by wall E14 and to the north by wall E15. Its western wall has collapsed to the west, where the limit is, however, clearly marked by a sharp fall in the level of the hill, supported by the western terrace wall. An entrance to space 5.5 existed in its north-west corner, where there may have been built steps or cut in the bedrock or fill, but more exploration is needed at this side. Like space 5.4, it is very likely that space 5.5 was also accessible from the south. On excavation, the stone tumble which formed the surface layer was seen to cover a carefully made pebble floor. Very little material was found on it (a single grindstone and obsidian flake, 08-05-0913-OB001 and 08-05-0911-OB001, respectively). Beneath this latest floor level another pebble floor was traced which yielded an obsidian blade and two obsidian flakes (09-05-0963-OB001 to OB003). As is the case with the successive floor levels in space 5.2, the floors here were basically found empty or had been carefully cleaned before a new floor was laid. This makes the discovery of the two bronze chisels to the south even more surprising in that they were situated right beneath the plaster and pebble floor level in space 5.4.

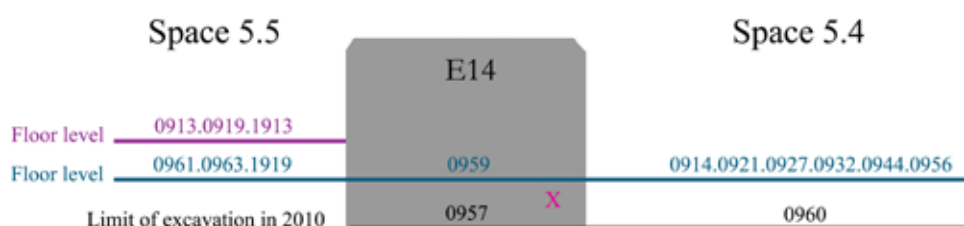


Fig. 6.7. SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF THE STRATIGRAPHY SOUTH OF WALL E14 AND IN SPACES 5.4 AND 5.5. THE PINK X MARKS THE POSITION OF THE BRONZE CHISELS (M. DEVOLDER)

Space 5.11 is located immediately north of 5.5 and is again quite narrow (2.39 x 1.9 m). It is delimited by walls E15, E14 and E16 and does not show any access from its neighbouring spaces (5.5, 5.6, and 5.13). Its western limit has disappeared down the slope, which makes it possible that space 5.11 was accessed from this side. Apart from a pivot stone found on floor level (09-05-0955-OB002), the only feature visible on this west side is the possible adaptation of the initial wall to the bedrock which appears on the western fringe of the space where the pebble floor stops in a regular line against two slight depressions in the bedrock on both sides of a slight ridge. A large quantity of fragmented murex shell was found on this floor level (see chapter 9).



Fig. 6.8. I. MILIDAKIS EXCAVATING IN SPACE 5.11. NOTE THE PEBBLE FLOOR AND THE STIRRUP JAR 09-05-0955-OB001 (M. DEVOLDER)

Space 5.11 yielded a thin destruction layer with fragments of burnt mudbricks and charcoal, covering a carefully made pebble floor (fig. 6.8). It also comprised a few objects, including the upper half of a finely decorated stirrup jar (09-05-0955-OB001), perhaps fallen from higher up, as well as a fragment of a stone vase, a cup and a metal slag (08-05-0919-OB001, 09-05-0954-OB001 and 09-05-0954-OB002, respectively). When the pivot stone in the southwest corner was collected, traces of an earlier plaster floor level were located but this needs further exploration. Preliminary study of the material suggests a LM IIIA2 or early LM IIIB date for the pottery.

Space 5.6 (2.88 x 2.4 m), which could be accessed from corridor 5.4, marks the passage to the middle terrace of Building E. The bedrock was cut to provide access from space 5.4 (fig. 6.6 and 6.9) but the later narrowing of the doorway was placed on top of the cutting. This modification prolonged wall E10, which is the south wall of space 5.6. This space is further limited to the east by wall E19 and an access towards space 5.7, to the north by wall E20 (against which is set a large platform) and a stepped access towards space 5.12, and to the west by wall E14.



Fig. 6.9. VIEW OF THE ACCESS BETWEEN SPACES 5.6 AND 5.4, FROM NORTH. THE CUT BEDROCK MARKS THE INITIAL END OF WALL E10, WHICH WAS LATER PROLONGED TO THE WEST. THE PIT IS VISIBLE IN THE WEST PART OF SPACE 5.6 (M. DEVOLDER)

Beneath a very thick fire destruction deposit, with many burnt mudbricks and remains of charred wood, a floor consisting of bedrock and stamped earth was found (fig. 6.9). In the south-west corner of this space, a pit was found, filled with sherds up to floor level. In the east part of the room were some stones embedded in the floor which may originally have been supporting a higher floor level connected to the rise in bedrock in the southeast corner. It is difficult to say whether a hollow in the rise of the bedrock here is natural or artificial. Its function is uncertain. The objects discovered in the destruction layer of space 5.6 have for the most already been mentioned in the earlier report<sup>4</sup>, but while tracing the floor level, a fragment of a stone vase (09-05-0975-OB001) and a donut shaped object, perhaps a weight (09-05-0983-OB001), were found.

To the north, space 5.12 (3.3 x 2.4 m) was accessible from space 5.6 via a step followed by a narrow corridor-like space. To the south, space 5.12 was delimited by the platform set against wall E20, to the east by an access towards space 5.8 and a rise in bedrock, to the north by the bedrock leading to space 5.14 and a step towards space 5.15, and to the west by wall E25 and an access down to space 5.13 via a wooden threshold supported by small-sized stones (fig. 6.10). Space 5.12 was then a key circulation node within Building E.

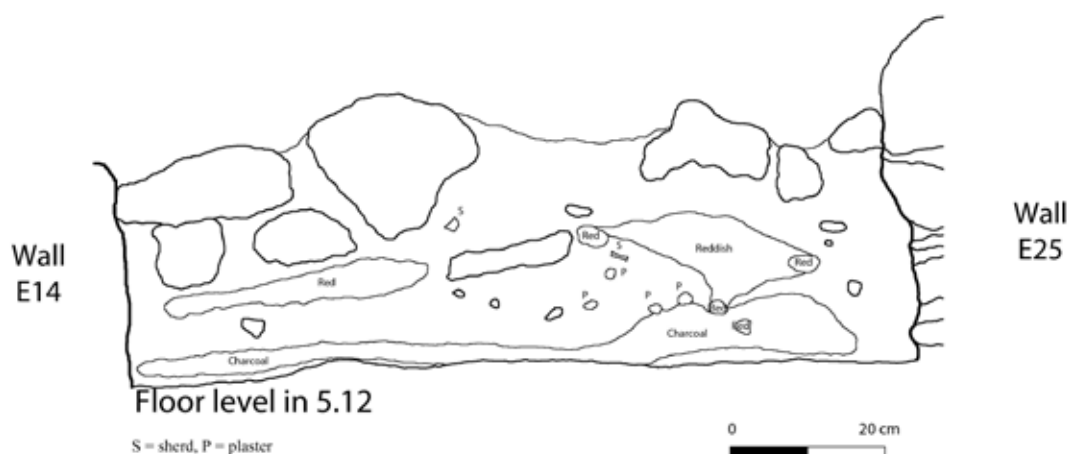


Fig. 6.10. SECTION THROUGH THE DESTRUCTION LAYER IN THE ACCESS BETWEEN SPACES 5.12 AND 5.13. THE CHARCOAL LAYER MAY REPRESENT THE BURNT WOODEN THRESHOLD (M. DEVOLDER)

After the topsoil was removed, a thick black layer became visible, suggesting a fierce destruction by fire. Indeed, burnt mudbricks, plaster and tarazza fragments, together with large amounts of charcoal were discovered. A charred horseshoe-shaped feature in wood was traced (fig. 6.11). The orientation of the wooden fibres suggests that this is the result of the burning and collapse of two distinct wooden pieces. A deposit was found in the northwest corner of the space, slightly above and on the floor level, and it is not excluded that the pots had fallen from a shelf during the destruction (fig. 6.12). The deposit included a terracotta loomweight (09-05-0991-OB001), a lithic tool (09-05-0994-OB001), a round sherd, perhaps deliberately cut from a pot (09-05-0994-OB002), a large terracotta vase (09-05-0994-OB003), two champagne cups (09-05-0994-OB004, 09-05-0994-OB005), an one-handle cup (09-05-0994-OB006), a two-handled pot (09-05-0994-OB011), some other cups (09-05-0994-OB007 to OB009 and 09-05-0994-OB012 and OB013), and a kylix (09-05-0994-OB010). This deposit seems contemporary to those found in 5.11 and 5.13, that is, LM IIIA2 or early LM IIIB.

<sup>4</sup> Sissi I: 150, fig. 7.18.



Fig. 6.11. BURNT WOODEN FEATURE IN SPACE 5.12 (L. MANOUSOGIANNAKI)



Fig. 6.12. DEPOSIT IN THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SPACE 5.12, DURING EXCAVATION (M. DEVOLDER)

East of space 5.12 and accessible from it is space 5.8. This is bordered to the south by wall E18 and to the north by wall E21 and an access to space 5.9. To the east it is closed off by the bedrock which seems to have been properly cut to follow the alignment of a wall foundation (E17) (and in which a *kernos* had been made<sup>5</sup>) and a possible access towards an open area. Indeed, while pushing the limit of Zone 5 more to the east, it seems an access from this side was possible towards space 5.8. The irregular bedrock had been filled in with earth, up to a higher level towards the east, where a pivot hole right in the axis of the first surmised access towards space 5.8 was found. It cannot be excluded that space 5.8 gave access on this side to an open area, as is also suggested by the excavation

<sup>5</sup> *Sissi I*: 151, fig. 7.20.

more to the north (see below)<sup>6</sup>. Despite its size (3.48 x 4.14 m), space 5.8 did not yield evidence for an intermediary roof support. Surrounded by walls as it was, and because of its position next to open spaces (5.10 almost certainly, but very likely also 5.9 and the area to the east), we are tempted to consider it as an enclosed roofed space. It was here that a lead vase (08-05-0934-OB001) was hidden, found during the 2008 campaign<sup>7</sup>.

Beneath the pebble floor (associated with the lead vase) which covered part of this area and which was also cleared in 2008 another floor level was found. An alignment of stones sits in the middle of the west part of the space, in the axis of the bedrock on which the *kernos* was found. The amount of shells (many limpets) collected here was quite striking, and in the northeast corner, immediately west of the *kernos*, a concentration of 16 specimens of *Conus mediterraneus* shells was found (fig. 6.13). Right next to this shell concentration (discussed in detail by R. Veropoulidou in chapter 9, fig. 9.2), in the south-east corner of the space, a stone mortar was found upside down, with the matching grinding tool found stuck between two of the three legs (fig. 6.13 and 6.14) (09-05-1802-OB003 and OB004, respectively)<sup>8</sup>. The mortar seems to have been turned upside down after its use and before the space was relayed. Obsidian flakes and blades (09-05-0995-OB001, 09-05-1801-OB001, 09-05-1805-OB001, OB002 and OB003), stone vase fragments (spout and lid, 09-05-0995-OB002 and OB003, respectively), a terracotta loomweight (09-05-1802-OB001) and two cups (09-05-1802-OB002 and 09-05-1801-OB002) belong to the same context. All this material was on an original pebble floor only preserved in patches here and there, especially in the northwest part of the space. Three pits filled with earth, small stones and sherds were traced in the centre (one) and along wall E21 on the north fringe of the space.



Fig. 6.13. THE SOUTH-EAST CORNER OF SPACE 5.8, WITH THE UPSIDE DOWN MORTAR PARTLY EXCAVATED (RIGHT) AND THE *CONUS MEDITERRANEUS* SHELL CONCENTRATION TO THE LEFT (L. MANOUSOGIANNAKI)

<sup>6</sup> In this zone we reached an irregular level of bedrock and earth, interrupted by pits filled with ceramics, similar to the situation in the area south of Building E. It cannot be excluded that this part of the hill (the area north of space 5.8 possibly including space 5.9), is the continuation to the east of the open area dubbed Space 5.10 described below.

<sup>7</sup> *Sissi I*: 152-153, fig. 7.21.

<sup>8</sup> Evely 1993: 112 and 116, fig. 49.13.



Fig. 6.14. TRIPOD MORTAR 09-05-1802-OB003 (CHR. PAPANIKOLOPOULOS)

Space 5.13 was first examined in 2008. While cleaning the western limit of Zone 5 north of space 5.11, a dense layer of earth and large stones was found, which had eroded away to the west, and which appeared to be a tumble sealing a thick and heavy fire destruction layer. The western eroded part was excavated carefully in order to gather the material which had been buried in the fire destruction, while the limits of the space were identified. In due course space 5.13 developed into quite a large room (3.96 x 2.24 m) bordered to the north by wall E26, to the east by wall E25 and an access from space 5.12 (fig. 6.10) and to the south by wall E13 (fig. 6.15). Some stones which appear perpendicularly to the south of wall E26 may mark the initial western limit of 5.13 but almost all has eroded away down the slope.



Fig. 6.15. VIEW OF SPACE 5.13 AFTER EXCAVATION (L. MANOUSOGIANNAKI)

The top layer tumble, consisting of large to medium-sized stones, was clearly distinct (except where the content of the space had eroded away, to the west) from the thick fire destruction layer and it seems that the walls collapsed quite some time after the fire had taken place. Only a grindstone was found in this tumble (08-05-0937-OB001), while the destruction layer appeared to be one of the richest contexts of Building E. The finds were mixed in a dense red-brownish 35-cm-thick layer. Large amounts of charcoal, whether in flecks or in larger portions (from beams or rafters), were found, attesting to the violence of the destruction, together with many fragments of mudbricks, especially in the northeast part of the room. This destruction layer went down to a carefully made floor, consisting of bedrock, plaster, and pebbles.



Fig. 6.16. CERAMIC DEPOSIT IN COURSE OF EXCAVATION IN SPACE 5.13 (M. DEVOLDER)

The nature and distribution of the finds (fig. 6.16) suggests the likely existence of an upper floor since a painted larnax of which large fragments were found (08-05-0952-OB001 and 09-05-0976-OB002) had literally squashed a tripod cooking pot (09-05-0976-OB001). A snake-tube was found nearby the larnax (09-05-0974-OB002). In the eroded western part of the room, an opium-poppy rhyton was discovered together with more fragments of the larnax (08-05-0952-OB003)<sup>9</sup>. Four loomweights and a spindle-whorl were also found at higher level, in some cases quite high up (09-05-0965-OB001, 09-05-0968-OB001, 09-05-0971-OB001, 09-05-0977-OB002 and 09-05-0977-OB001, respectively). This material contrasts with the objects found on the floor itself, such as a beaked jug (09-05-0974-OB001), still standing nearby the collapsed larnax and snake-tube deposit (fig. 6.17), the above mentioned tripod cooking pot, a storage vase (08-05-0952-OB002), a large globular cup with straight rim (09-05-0978-OB001), a pulled-rim bowl (09-05-0978-OB002), and perhaps two other clay vases (09-05-0976-OB003 and 09-05-0976-OB004). The deposit also comprised one obsidian flake (09-05-0965-OB003) and three blades (09-05-0968-OB003, 09-05-0968-OB006 and 09-05-0973-OB001), one clay cup (09-05-0974-OB003), one clay jar (09-05-0976-OB005), a bronze and two as yet unidentified metal fragments (09-05-0968-OB004 and 09-05-0968-OB005, respectively), a stone blade (08-05-0939-OB001), three stone grinders (08-05-0952-OB004, 09-05-0968-OB002 and 09-05-0978-OB003), a possible grindstone fragment (09-05-0965-OB002), and a fossil (09-05-0978-OB004). Preliminary study of the pottery of this deposit also suggests a LM IIIA2 or early LM IIIB date.



Fig. 6.17. BEAKED JUG 09-05-0974-OB001 STANDING ON FLOOR LEVEL IN SPACE 5.13 (M. DEVOLDER)

<sup>9</sup> *Sissi I*: 154, fig. 7.23 and 7.24.

Northeast of space 5.13, accessed from space 5.12 via a step is space 5.15 which has only been partly excavated. It offers an access from the middle terrace to the upper one, and to space 5.16 and the very large open space 5.10. In it were as yet found no objects but wall plaster appeared in quite large quantities and some of the fragments are painted.

Nort of this series of roofed rooms the upper terrace is formed by a large, irregular open area which may have served to distinguish between what was excavated as Building E and the large building CD on the top of the hill. During the excavation of this area, the south façade of this latter building was actually traced.

### 3. The open area north of Building E

This zone was first recognized in its centre as space 5.10, with 5.16 (though perhaps this was covered) to the west, and an extension of 5.10 to the  It is also very likely that space 5.9 on the middle terrace was part of this open area (fig. 6.18).

Space 5.9 was separated from space 5.8 by wall E21 which also has an access between the two spaces. Wall E21 continues further east where there is a pile of stones but it is not clear yet whether these stones initially formed a wall or simply formed a tumble. To the north of space 5.9, there is an outcrop of bedrock, and it is not excluded that this space was in fact part of the large open area dubbed space 5.10, which occupies the north part of Zone 5 and which was first identified in 2009. An obsidian flake and a lithic tool (09-05-1810-OB001 and 09-05-1810-OB002, respectively) were found on what is interpreted as the occupation level. In its northeast corner, many sherds, probably eroded down from the north, together with a grindstone (08-05-0902-OB001) had gathered in a depression in the bedrock.

Space 5.10 is located north of spaces 5.9, 5.14 and 5.15, and distinguished from the latter by a marked rise in the bedrock. Excavations between 2008 and 2010 suggest that this open space extended perhaps further w  towards the main terrace wall and most certainly to the east in an area excavated as the northeast corner of Zone 5. It seems likely then that the entire upper terrace of Zone 5 was a large open area. That space 5.10 was open is also suggested by the large quantity of snails (R. Veropoulidou pers. com).

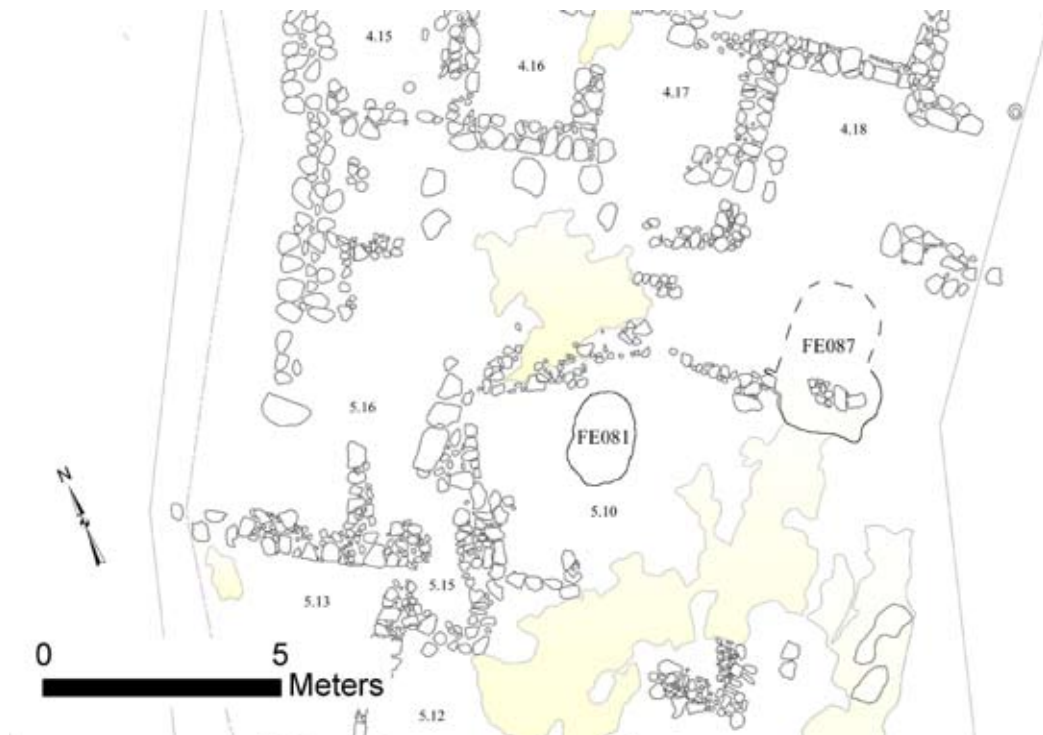


Fig. 6.18. PLAN OF OPEN AREA BETWEEN BUILDING E AND THE BUILDING ON THE TOP OF THE HILL (P. HACIGÜZELLER/M. DEVOLDER)

The entire upper terrace yielded large quantities of pottery, usually of good quality and little eroded. Most seem to belong to both fine drinking vessels and coarse vessels (whether cooking pots and trays or simple containers) and can be dated to LM III, and quite early in the period as the shapes seem to indicate (cf. chapter 8). Several loomweights, a clay human figurine (10-05-1866-OB001), stone tools and architectural fragments complete the assemblage and some of this material may in fact have some connection to the deposit excavated in the pit in the northeast corner of the open area (see below). The sherds kept on appearing in successive, seemingly artificial layers, suggesting an ongoing process of dumping. Some construction material was also found, including *domatochoma* and quantities of the small gravel of the type commonly found in tarazza floors. Such finds do not exclude the possibility that the open area between Buildings E and CD was also the place where materials were stored for diverse building operations. Besides these surface finds, two pits were identified in the open area.

When we first explored the south-central part of what later appeared to be a large open area between Building E and the main building CD in 2008, a heavy concentration of bones and ash was discovered. This was found to be heaped up above a large and deep pit FE081, going down to a level of bedrock, stone slabs and hard earth (fig. 6.19). The pit contained more than 25 kg of pottery of a deposit estimated around 600 litres but also ash, bone (in very large amounts), shell and pumice, together with some architectural elements (mudbricks, plaster and tarazza). The friable, soft brown soil made it easy to trace the borders of the pit. The pottery mainly consists of fine drinking vessels: kylikes, conical, rounded and other shapes of cups were found in large quantities, together with some coarse vessels fragments (mainly cooking vessels with some large storage vase fragments). The material is characteristic of LM IIIA2, with some LM IIIB vessels too and older residual material. The homogeneity of the context and the state of the sherds (in the pit sherds had fresh breaks or were only slightly eroded and mainly dated to LM IIIA2, while on the surface of the open area sherds were described as much worn, and the context was less homogeneous in date) may suggest that the deposit is the result of a single event. Apart from pottery, a fragmentary loomweight was also found (09-05-1831-OB001).



Fig. 6.19. AERIAL VIEW OF THE NORTH PART OF ZONE 5 AT THE END OF THE 2009 EXCAVATION CAMPAIGN, WITH PIT FE081 AT THE CENTRE OF SPACE 5.10 (L. MANOUSOGIANNAKI)

In the northeast corner of Zone 5, a few metres south of the recess of the south façade of building CD, another pit was identified. Although it has only been partially explored, it seems it had a more complex history. Its south part was discovered first (10-05-1863-FE087), marked by the presence of almost pure ash, which formed a small heap on the surface. To the north of the pit is a very large stone heap and the ash continues underneath although in a less dense and homogeneous manner. These south and north parts will be described independently.

The south part of the pit (10-05-1863-FE087) was excavated first. Around and above the pit, somewhat eroded LM IIIA2-LM IIIB sherds were found, together with three stone grinders (10-05-1842-OB001 and 10-05-1863-OB003 and OB004), a closed vessel (10-05-1842-OB002), a rim fragment of a LM IIIA2 decorated cup (10-05-

1842-OB003), a clay loomweight (10-05-1863-OB001) and a bone token (10-05-1863-OB002). These finds were mixed with ash which formed a heap above a large pit which was excavated in five successive layers. This artificial stratigraphy indicated that, on going down, the LM IIIA2 sherds increasingly became mixed with MM II sherds, until at the bottom of the pit MM II material became dominant and LM III sherds intrusive. The upper layer was almost pure ash. The ceramic finds, LM IIIA2 sherds with fresh breaks (kylikes, conical cups, champagne and round/deep cups, cooking dishes, jars, amphorae/jugs but no tripod cooking pots) and a larger clay vessel (10-05-1871-OB003), suggest a single event deposition. Two stone grinders and a clay spindle whorl (10-05-1871-OB001, 10-05-1873-OB001 and 10-05-1871-OB002, respectively) were found in the same deposit. Bone was also collected, together with some mudbrick fragments and pumice, though not in such a quantity as what appeared in the north part of the pit. Going down, the soil was getting browner and harder, and an alignment of stones appeared in the centre of the pit, surrounded by an increasing number of loose stones. These were associated with more and more MM II sherds and at the bottom of the pit handmade ware is dominant alongside MM II carinated vessels. The presence of burnt bone and charcoal suggest a MM II destruction level on which the LM IIIA2 deposit occurred.

This pit continued to the north and this part was excavated separately because of a dense layer of medium- and large-sized stones which covered it (fig. 6.20). These were found mixed with fresh or somewhat eroded sherds of LM IIIA2-LM IIIB date. Kylikes, shallow-bowls and bell-shaped bowls were well-represented shapes. The stones not only formed a dense layer above the pit, but kept on appearing deeper, mixed with an ashy soil similar though not as pure as in FE087 to the south.



Fig. 6.20. VIEW FROM ABOVE OF THE DENSE LAYER OF STONES COVERING THE NORTH PART OF THE PIT IN THE NORTH-EAST CORNER OF ZONE 5. THE LIGHTER SPOT WITH STONES BUILT ON THE BEDROCK, UPPER LEFT, IS THE SOUTH PART OF THE PIT (FE087) AFTER EXCAVATION (L. MANOUSOGIANNAKI)

Plaster, mudbrick and tarazza fragments, a pivot stone and step were found in the pit, finds which suggest its establishment was linked to the cleaning out of a destruction deposit. The discovery amongst the stones of some sandstone ashlar fragments, a feature markedly absent from Building E but better represented in building CD on the top of the hill<sup>10</sup>, suggests a destruction in the main building, the clearance of which was dumped in the open area immediately south of it. It may be interesting to note that high numbers of pumice lumps were collected while excavating the pit which reminds one of their massive presence within some rooms of Building CD<sup>11</sup>. Studies have regularly pointed at its use as an abrasive in craft activities or, in some cases, as roofing material<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> *Sissi I*: 113, fig. 6.22 and fig. 6.33.

<sup>11</sup> That is spaces 3.1 to 3.10, with some spaces producing more than 59% of pumice per liter of soil excavated, *Sissi I*: 127-128, fig. 6.20.

<sup>12</sup> Gaignerot-Driessen & Driessen, forthcoming ; Evely 1993: 112 ; Faure 1971: 425-426 ; Shaw 2009: n. 943.



Fig. 6.21. PIT NORTH OF FE087 DURING EXCAVATIONS. NOTE THE LARGE CUT SANDSTONE BLOCK IN FAR RIGHT, THE STONE TOOLS UNDER IT, AND THE LAYER OF STONES GOING DOWN MIXED WITH CERAMICS (G. MCGUIRE)

The excavation of the north part of the pit is still uncompleted but large amounts of stylistically homogenous LM IIIB ceramics of very good quality have already been collected, including decorated high-stemmed kylikes and deep bowls, and plain champagne cups (10-05-1927-OB008 and 10-05-1932-OB007), stirrup jars (both small and transport ones), pithoi and cooking trays fragments. Most sherds were fresh or slightly eroded<sup>13</sup>. Together with these ceramics, two loomweights were found (10-05-1929-OB001 and 10-05-1932-OB001). The most surprising find, however, is the very large amount of stone tools: in total 57 grinders and 4 grindstones were identified<sup>14</sup>, together with two obsidian blade fragments (10-05-1927-OB010 and OB011) (fig. 6.21). Interestingly, the bedrock reached in some parts of the pit indicated a hollow at one spot, as if it had been artificially abraded. Large tarazza plaques also formed the bottom of the pit. The stone tools were mostly encountered between 7 and 70 cm above the bottom of the pit, and it seems more likely that they were dumped at the same time as the remains of struction deposit. A very large quern stone discovered amongst the stones on the surface above the pit corroborates this hypothesis.



Fig. 6.22. DEPOSIT ALONG THE SOUTH FAÇADE OF THE BUILDING ON THE TOP OF THE HILL, IN THE OPEN AREA (L. MANOUSOGIAN-NAKI)

<sup>13</sup> See the discussion on a similar discovery in neighbouring Quartier Nu at Malia, where Pit 1 has been interpreted as a ceremonial pit, Driessen, Farnoux & Langohr 2008: 197-206.

<sup>14</sup> These are 10-05-1927-OB001 to OB003, 10-05-1927-OB005 to OB006; 10-05-1927-OB009, 10-05-1927-OB013 to OB028, 10-05-1929-OB003 to OB028, 10-05-1929-OB030 to OB037, and 10-05-1932-OB002 to OB006.

In the north-central part of the open area, along the south façade of the Building CD, a deposit was found together with stones clearly identified as fallen from the south façade itself (fig. 6.22). Though upper layers were mixed, the deposit appeared homogeneous in date. LM IIIA1/2 ceramics were found in a good state of preservation. Though some fragments of coarse ware (pithoi and other containers) were found, some clearly imports, the deposit mainly consisted of fine drinking vessels. It also comprised a fragmentary bull figurine in stone and a sealstone (10-05-1877-OB001 and 10-05-1982-OB001, respectively) (fig. 6.23). Two obsidian flakes (10-05-1889-OB001 and 0B003), a stone grinder (10-05-1889-OB002) and a clay loomweight (10-05-1893-OB001) as well as two objects which have been identified as possible model fragments (10-05-1872-OB001 and 10-05-1893-OB002) (fig. 6.24) were also identified. These objects may have fallen from an upper floor situated above rooms 4.15, 4.16 and 4.17 in Building CD<sup>15</sup>.



Fig. 6.23. FRAGMENT OF STONE BULL FIGURINE (10-05-1877-OB001) (CHR. PAPANIKOLOPOULOS)



Fig. 6.24. CLAY MODEL (?) (10-05-1872-OB001) (CHR. PAPANIKOLOPOULOS)

At the very western limit of the open area, a large LM I conical cups deposit was found (fig. 6.25). It was partly covered with stone collapse from the western terrace wall. On excavation, 89 conical cups were objectified (considering that only the complete ones or with more than 50% preserved with whole profile were allocated object numbers) but tens of others will surely be selected when the deposit is studied. The cups were either found in fragments or better preserved and stacked one into the other. In some cases they still preserved their content, which has been sampled for analysis. It seems that the cups were not stored but deposited as the result of a single event.

<sup>15</sup> To be explored more in detail in 2011.

Apart from conical cups, a few other types of cups appear, amongst which a thin-walled plain trefoil-mouthed cup, with a rivet imitating a metal cup (10-05-1906-OB001) (fig. 6.26). It was found inverted on a long bone, and contained burnt material sampled for analysis.



Fig. 6.25. CONICAL CUPS DEPOSIT DURING EXCAVATIONS (M. DEVOLDER)



Fig. 6.26. CUP 10-05-1906-OB001 (CHR. PAPANIKOLOPOULOS)

#### 4. Seal 10-05-1882-OB001

Maria Anastasiadou<sup>16</sup>

A Late Minoan (LM) mottled cream and brown soft stone lentoid (fig. 6.27)<sup>17</sup>. The measurements of the seal are: seal faces – 1,80 cm; stringholes – 0,30 cm; maximal thickness: 0,50 cm.



Fig. 6.27. SOFT STONE SEAL 10-05-1882-OB001 (CHR. PAPANIKOLOPOULOS)

The seal is cut with tools operated freehand<sup>18</sup>. The intaglios are smooth and rather shallow. Their shallowness must be, at least to some extent, due to wear. The piece is worn, as attested by the rounded intaglio edges and one abraded stringhole, possibly abraded by action of the string which has grounded down part of the seal face.

The seal is generally well-preserved. A fine fissure which can be discerned on the seal face and back along the stringhole channel is a result of gluing two pieces together (modern break).

The seal face displays a composition put together from nine elements.<sup>19</sup> In the centre there are two triton shells (*Tritonschnecke*) arranged tête-bêche. To their right (impression) there is one row of dots (*Punktreihe*), above which there is a short single-sided fir branch (*Tannenzweig, einseitig*). In the periphery there are two two-sided fir branches flanking the central composition (*Tannenzweig, zweiseitig*). Above all these elements there is a figure-of-eight-shield (*Achtschild*). To the right of the shield there is an element shaped like a three-fingered glove, reminiscent of the fan-shaped motif (*Fächer*) on CMS II, 3 no. 200, and to a lesser extent CMS II, 3 no. 17. Under it there is an element in the shape of a three-leaved plant (*Dreiblatt*).

The piece does not have exact iconographic parallels in Minoan glyptic. However, its lentoid shape places it securely in LM, whereas both the motifs and the composition suggest a more precise LM I dating. Marine

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<sup>17</sup> Soft stone with parts of steatite? Or steatite? The surface of the seal is rather soapy in texture. Fine splintering on a small part of the seal face would suggest that the piece is not homogeneous steatite. The stone is very seldom encountered in LM soft stone glyptic (Walter Müller, pers. comm.). For steatite and serpentine in Minoan glyptic, see Müller in CMS III, 17–18, 20. I would like to thank Walter Müller for his help with the identification of the material.

<sup>18</sup> For freehand engraving, see Anastasiadou 2011: 38–40.

<sup>19</sup> The terminology used for the denomination of the devices is adopted from the CMS Seal Database. The German terms are also provided, since the English version of the database is not yet available on the internet.

creatures are met in LM I seals, but not after the Neopalatial period<sup>20</sup>. Triton shells in particular are rare, and when encountered, they are mainly found in MM IIB/III seals and to a lesser extent LM I examples<sup>21</sup>. Figure-of-eight shields are more common in LM II/III glyptic, but LM I examples are also encountered<sup>22</sup>. On the other hand, rows of dots like the type represented here, that is rows where the dots run along a line with pointy edges, are most common in LM I glyptic where they usually represent spears (spear, dotted shaft/*Wurfspeer mit Perlschaft*)<sup>23</sup>.

Although the composition is unparalleled in LM seals<sup>24</sup>, the organisation of the different elements on the seal face also suggests a LM I dating for this piece. Attested is the combination of various compositionally, and at first glance also thematically unrelated elements in an image. Among these, only two (i.e. the triton shells) display a correlation that ‘bonds’ them to an image; that is they are organised tête-bêche<sup>25</sup>. Moreover, the two-sided branches flank the lower part of the image, creating a kind of border for it. The loose arrangement of many elements ‘floating’ in the field, combined with the tête-bêche tritons contained in the composition, results in a rather playful image which lacks a notional ground-line and a set structure; these features are characteristic of Neopalatial art<sup>26</sup>.

Symbolic devices and marine creatures, such as the figure-of-eight-shield and the triton shell respectively<sup>27</sup>, as well as various plant motifs constitute the repertoire of LM IB palatial pottery<sup>28</sup>. This strengthens the argument of a LM I date for the Sissi seal. Since LM IB fine pottery was used in cultic contexts and its devices have been convincingly shown to have had a symbolic/cultic significance<sup>29</sup>, it is reasonable to suppose a similar significance for the elements engraved on the Sissi seal.

The piece was recovered from a LM IIIA1/2 ceramic context. It must have therefore been an heirloom or a chance find at the time of its deposition.

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<sup>20</sup> Krzyszkowska, 2005: 208. An exception is perhaps the triton shell on the LB II/IIIA CMS II,3 no. 7, which depicts the shell of the animal used as a ‘tool’ in a cultic (?) context.

<sup>21</sup> MM II/III: CMS II,5 nos. 304–306; CMS II,7 no. 215; CMS II,8 nos. 151–152. LM I: CMS II,7 nos. 18 (?), 128. LM I/II: CMS II,8 no. 241.

<sup>22</sup> LM I: e.g. CMS II,7 nos. 218, 219; CMS II,8 nos. 128, 272. LM II and LM III: e.g. CMS II,6 no. 248; CMS II,8 nos. 419, 511, 529; CMS V Suppl. 1B nos. 228, 268; CMS V Suppl. 3 no. 113. LM I (?); CMS VI no. 466 (triton shells [?]).

<sup>23</sup> E.g. CMS II,3 no. 153; CMS II,6 no. 37; CMS II,7 no. 60; CMS IV no. 278; V Suppl. 3 no. 354; CMS XI nos. 94, 159, 278. Also see the row of dots on CMS XI no. 123 which does not represent a spear. Rows of dots attached to a line but not representing spears are most often encountered in MM II glyptic, e.g. CMS II,1 no. 335; CMS II,5 no. 39; CMS II,8 no. 59; CMS III no. 227 a; CMS VI nos. 24 c, 24 d.

<sup>24</sup> Perhaps somewhat comparable to it are the compositions on CMS II,3 no. 196; CMS VI no. 466.

<sup>25</sup> CMS VI no. 466 is another example which shows two pairs of tête-bêche shells.

<sup>26</sup> See, for example, the Neopalatial frescoes which do have, however, a coherent subject, e.g. Poursat 2008: 179, fig. 232, 186 and pl. XLVI. Also see examples of LM IB palatial pottery with marine decoration, which are characterized by a playful spirit, e.g. ibid. 267 and fig. 378.

<sup>27</sup> Other seals in which triton shells and figure-of-eight shields are combined in an image are CMS II, 8 nos. 128 and 241.

<sup>28</sup> See, for example, Müller 1997: pl. 55 ORh 120; pl. 72 SAI 205 (this also has tête-bêche tritons); pl. 80 XBTa 257a, XBTa 255–258 (in these the figure-of-eight shields are combined with marine elements, e.g. the polyps on the edge of the vases).

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.: 317–322.

## 6. The Excavation of Zone 5

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