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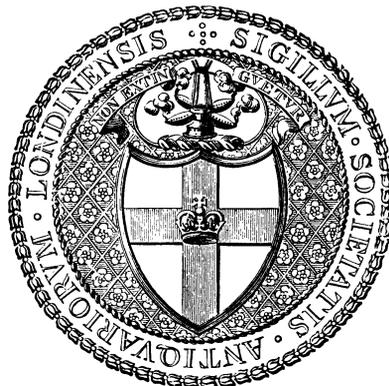
Published in conjunction with the National Museum of Malta

SKORBA

By D. H. Trump

Excavations carried out on behalf of the
National Museum of Malta

1961-1963



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FOREWORD

BETWEEN March 1961 and September 1963, excavations under the direction of the author were carried out by the National Museum of Malta on the site known as Li Skorba, in the north-west of the island. They revealed the remains of two adjacent temples of the well-known Maltese type, the study of which has yielded useful evidence on this class of monument. Of even greater value was the information obtained from the deposits built up by a village which had existed on the site until its long life was closed by the construction of the temples. Material recovered from the successive levels of occupation records in detail the early prehistory of the Maltese islands. With the help of a series of radiocarbon dates and of connexions with other areas, an assessment of the importance of the evidence recovered from Skorba to the prehistory of the Central Mediterranean generally is attempted.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THE excavations at Skorba were carried out by the writer on behalf of the National Museum of Malta, where he held at the time the appointment of Curator of Archaeology. The Director of the Museum Department, Capt. C. G. Zammit, F.S.A., gave constant help and encouragement, assuming full responsibility for the administrative side of the work. Mr. J. Spiteri and other members of the museum staff assisted in many ways.

The Excavation Fund was formed from grants received from the Society of Antiquaries of London, the British Academy, and the Malta Archaeological Circle. The latter's contribution was raised by subscription among its members, including a handsome anonymous donation acknowledged with special gratitude. Mrs. D. I. Ainley gave considerable help when the last campaign closed with a deficit. The total income of the fund was a little under £200.

The results recorded here could never have been achieved without considerable help in kind from many people and organizations, particularly Mr. S. Mangion and the Public Works Department, Col. Cleasby Thomson, M.B.E., M.C., and the Royal Engineers, and Mr. A. Debono. The names of the many volunteer assistants on whom fell the brunt of the actual digging are recorded in a footnote to each campaign in the following pages. Mrs. V. Greer and, above all, my wife, Mrs. B. A. V. Trump, merit special and grateful mention. Responsibility for adequate publication of the results has been accepted by the Society of Antiquaries and made possible by a very generous grant from the Wenner Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research. All these must share fully in the credit for the Skorba excavations. Professor J. D. Evans read the text in typescript and made valuable suggestions.

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SKORBA AND THE PREHISTORY OF MALTA

1. Introduction

LI SKORBA is the name of a group of fields on the slope of a hill overlooking Żebbieħ, a hamlet in the parish of Mġarr, north-west Malta (see map, fig. 1). The hill itself is part of the Bidnija Ridge composed

of Upper Coralline limestone, and looks across a wide valley of the same, produced by faulting, to the higher Bengemma Ridge to the south.¹ At the grid point 439756,² and at an altitude of 375 feet above sea level (the hill rises to 410 feet) stands the temple site

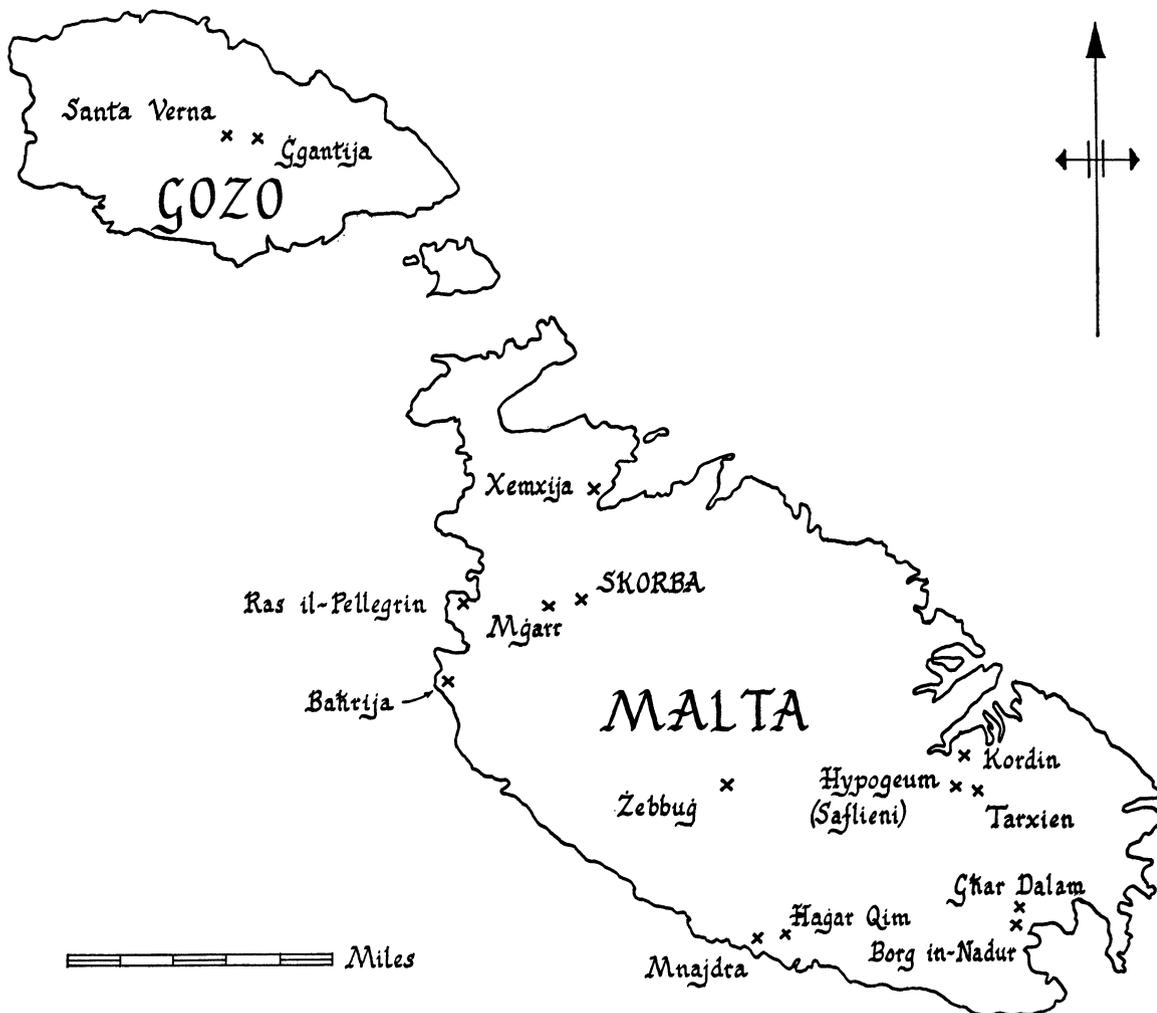


FIG. 1. Malta, with the more important sites mentioned.

¹ The five main geological strata in Malta, the uppermost first, are (1) upper coralline limestone, a comparatively hard crystalline rock, (2) greensand, (3) blue clay, most important for the springs issuing above it, (4) globigerina limestone, easily cut for use, (5) lower coralline limestone. (1), (3), and (4) were all

employed at Skorba for various purposes. All five date from the Miocene. See H. P. T. Hyde, *The Geology of the Maltese Islands*, Malta, 1955.

² On the 1 D.O.S., M. 898 sheet, 1962; 439753 on GSGS no. 3859, 1958.

excavated in 1961–3, the subject of this report. The temple of Mgarr lies a little over half a mile to the west, with Ġnejna Bay, suitable for small boats, a mile and a half beyond. The choice of the site was probably influenced by the good cultivable soil in the valleys to north and south and the spring in the former, a few hundred yards off.

A standing block of coralline limestone 4 m. high was recorded here early this century as a menhir, of which four others are known in the Maltese islands. However, in 1937 Captain C. G. Zammit, then Curator of Archaeology, noted other blocks built into surrounding field walls and a scatter of prehistoric potsherds.¹ He opened a trench nearby which came upon a recumbent slab of globigerina limestone bearing pitted decoration (the step to the eastern apse), a characteristic feature of the Maltese megalithic temples. The immediate object achieved, and no resources for further work being available, the trench was refilled, the site classified as a suspected temple, and the area acquired by Government to preserve the remains (pl. 1b).

By 1961 it was felt that the time had come for the site to be properly excavated. Over twenty years had passed since the last temple had been examined, during which time not only had general techniques of excavation improved but J. D. Evans's sequence of the Maltese prehistoric material had provided a framework for further research.² The work was undertaken with three principal objectives in mind. First, the excavation of an undisturbed temple site promised further information about the religion and ritual of the Maltese temples. Secondly, much new light might be thrown on the early phases of the sequence, which were poorly represented in the museum collections and therefore little understood. Sherds collected on the surface included early types and gave hope of the existence of undisturbed early levels below. Finally, it was hoped that a sufficient number of samples for radio-carbon dating might be found, particularly in the earlier levels, to put the prehistoric chronology of the islands on a firm basis.

Though no funds had yet been raised, a five-week campaign in March–April 1961³ confirmed the existence of a trefoil temple of the Ġgantija phase which

had been altered in the later Tarxien phase and still later reused by the Tarxien Cemetery people. Beneath it lay pure levels of the Ghar Dalam and Żebbuġ phases, with, between them, deposits containing pottery of a type not previously recognized, which was therefore called Skorba Ware. Further work was made possible by grants received at this juncture from the bodies recorded in the acknowledgements.

The second campaign, intended to elucidate the problem of priority between the Skorba and Mgarr phases, consisted of isolated trenches cut at Skorba and other early sites, Mgarr, Kordin III, and Santa Verna, during the summer of 1961. The Skorba temple was not tackled again until October,⁴ when another five weeks' work confirmed the new sequence, and enabled us to complete the clearance of the first temple, continue the investigation of the outbuildings located in June, and identify a second major building to the east.

In 1962 work was resumed for the month of April⁵ on the early wall in the south-west, the pre-temple occupation in the north-west, and such of the eastern buildings as fell within the government-owned field. The completion of the eastern edge of the site was held up by ownership difficulties until the autumn. In October⁶ was completed the clearance of the Ġgantija phase hut in the west and the East Temple. Trenches in the field to the east came directly upon rich deposits and structural remains of the three earliest phases. The last major campaign, in May 1963,⁷ investigated the early buildings to the east of the temples. Minor trenching later in that summer to tidy up certain corners of the site completed the excavation.

All structures were investigated as fully as superpositions allowed. Although much more material, particularly refuse from the village, could be recovered from further trenches to the north, the reward in terms of information would be unlikely to repay the effort at this juncture.

2. The West Temple

The centre of the site is clearly the trefoil temple on which excavation first began. Its history falls into five sections. The first, the pre-temple occupation of the site, will be dealt with in detail later. The others, the

¹ *Annual Report of the Museum Department* (hereafter *M.A.R.*), 1937–8, p. ii.

² J. D. Evans, 'The Prehistoric Culture Sequence in the Maltese Archipelago', *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society (P.P.S.)*, xix, 1953, p. 41 (hereafter Evans, 1953); 'The Dolmens of Malta and the Origins of the Tarxien Cemetery Culture', *P.P.S.* xxii, 1956, p. 85 (Evans, 1956); *Malta, Ancient Peoples and Places*, no. 11, London, 1959 (Evans, 1959).

³ With the assistance of Mrs. V. Greer (and all subsequent campaigns), F. Mallia, other local helpers (and all later campaigns), Mrs. I. Ainley, Mrs. B. Gibson, Miss B. Wilson (and,

as Mrs. D. H. Trump, on all subsequent campaigns), Miss C. Williams, G. E. Chambers, W. Phelps, C. Higham, J. Nandris, and two labourers. Fig. 2 shows the progress of work in the various campaigns.

⁴ Those mentioned above, W. Marschall, three labourers.

⁵ Miss B. Johnson, Miss S. Whinney, D. Coombs, A. Fleming, E. Ortenau, A. Priddy, two labourers.

⁶ Miss R. Lukas, Miss N. Waterford, one labourer.

⁷ Miss M. Rohweder, Miss C. Gullin, Miss U. Skoglund, Mr. and Mrs. F. Petersen, R. Boyd, G. Philip, N. Bird, two labourers.

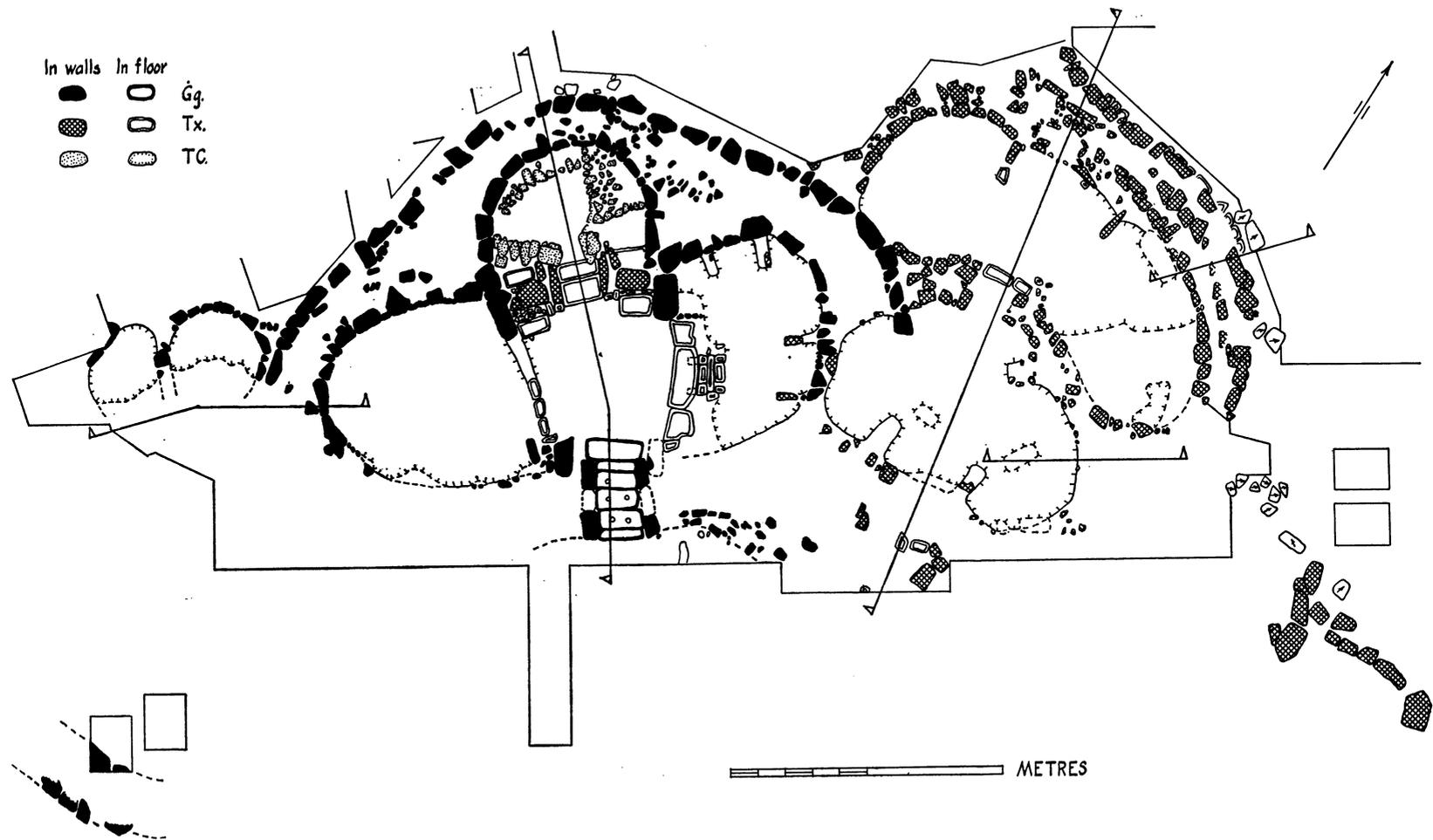


FIG. 3. Skorba, the West and East Temples, showing the building phases and the position of the drawn sections.

the first and second pairs of apses in the Ġgantija South temple, less closely in the side shrines at Tarxien. In use they may have been closed with wooden plugs. Certainty is impossible, but the best guess as to their function is that they were intended to carry libations to chthonic deities. The passage was originally flanked by three orthostats on either side. The end ones had been felled almost to original floor level by wedge splitting, and the centre pair had been removed outright. One minor feature to notice was a small block about 10 cm. across with a deep pit set at the eastern side of the entrance, possibly a socket for the missing door. However, none has been found at any other site in this position.

of an underlying clay level without further treatment. Where the later floor was damaged near the mouth of the eastern apse, part of a low, 8 cm., stone step was found cutting off its northern edge, which was floored at this higher level with torba.¹ No direct evidence was found on how the building was roofed at this time.

The only hints of internal fittings of this date, or at least earlier than the Tx. alterations, were from stones reused at that time. One, pl. xxxa, found in the packing behind the inner west altar, was an ochred fragment of a stone bowl with pitted decoration, which probably stood at the centre of the temple in the manner of examples surviving at Tarxien. Larger pitted slabs rebuilt into the Tx. step into the eastern

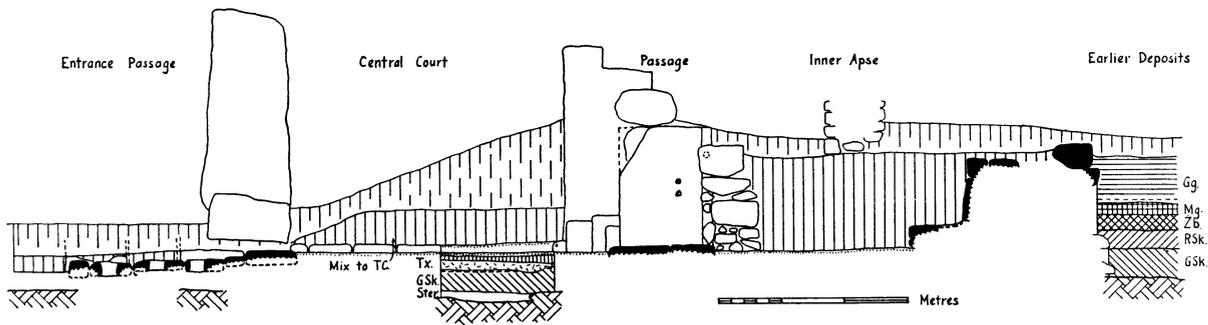


FIG. 4. Main section of the West Temple looking west.

The inner end of the passage was flanked by a pair of massive orthostats, the western one, the so-called 'menhir', standing to a height of 3.90 m. Beside these and set a little back was a smaller pair, of which the stump of the western one remains. On the inner side of the court opposite the passage were two more large orthostats parallel to the axis of passage and temple, these now standing to 3.20 and 3.25 m. Between these fixed points the walls curved deeply back, symmetrically in the western and central apses, dented from the south-east in the eastern one. The widths and depths of these three apses, measuring between the orthostats and from these lines to the innermost walls were 3.90 and 7.10, 5.10 and 6.60, 3.90, and 5.45 m. respectively. These walls survived to a height of some 1.50 m. where the upper field terrace had protected them, that is, from the middle of the side apses to the back of the building, but in front of this line they had disappeared almost entirely. The masonry of these walls can best be described as cyclopean, being of irregular blocks of medium size. The interstices were probably packed with smaller stones and plastered, as in the Red Room to the west (p. 8).

The floor apparently consisted of the pared surface

¹ Torba is a cement-like material produced by repeated watering and pounding of globigerina limestone chippings. It makes a very hard and durable floor surface.

apse, pl. IIIa, must have come from an earlier decorated shrine, whose form and position can only be guessed at. It is unlikely that a horizontal surface exposed to wear would have been so decorated, still less that the pitting should have been carried across its under surface.

The boundary wall of the temple had been free-standing above the modern ground level on all sides, but had been destroyed above this level everywhere except for a short stretch on the west side protected by the outbuildings against it. What survives is a single rather irregular course of large blocks around the rear of the temple, little more than a foundation for the missing upper walls. It was interrupted on the east by the encroachment of the eastern temple, see p. 9, below.

Tx. alterations. There is no direct evidence for activity here in the Saf. phase, but the whole building was drastically remodelled in Tx.

The main change had as its object the closing off of the central apse, as shown in figs. 3 and 4 and pl. ivb. A wall consisting primarily of single orthostatic slabs either side of a trilithon doorway, and continued upwards in horizontal courses, spanned the apse between the Ġg. orthostats, level with their inner ends.

On the east side, part of the Ġg. wall was removed in the process, and patched with smaller blocks, pl. *via*. The doorway was framed by uprights of globigerina limestone measuring 1.90 (from floor) × 1.40 × 0.35 m. In their opposed faces were fine pairs of V-perforations and their inner ends were rebated and equipped with bar-holes to hold and secure a door of some sort. The lintel had one end broken and had fallen forward into the court, probably damaging the upper corners of the uprights in the process. The floor was paved with massive stones. The doorway was separated from the wall by a gap of 20–30 cm. on either side which had been filled with smaller stones and plastered. Its inner end was flanked by another smaller pair of orthostats.

The use of globigerina limestone in the construction of this doorway is noteworthy. The site stands on upper coralline, overlying in turn the blue clay and globigerina strata, the latter being nowhere visible on the surface, either *in situ* or naturally erratic, within a mile of Skorba. The nearest points as the crow flies are in the sides of the valleys north and east of the site, but these are 200 to 300 feet lower in altitude. The most likely source is the lower flanks of the Bengemma Ridge, where the faulting has brought it to the surface. This is only slightly further off and is at a very similar altitude. However, to transport blocks estimated to weigh about 1½ tons across a mile of open country is no mean feat. It demonstrates how much this more easily worked stone was prized at this time for any position where the finished appearance mattered, such as doorways, altars and steps.

The Tx. wall created four corners where it abutted on the Ġg. apse walls at either end, into each of which an altar was inserted. The outer altars were rectangular globigerina blocks. Beside them, set closely round the feet of the door jambs, were smaller well-cut blocks, while another, with a V-perforation in its tip, projected from beneath the western altar (pl. *vib*). That this was for tethering an animal awaiting sacrifice is a not unreasonable supposition. These block altars stood free of the walls with the spaces behind them packed with fragments of previously worked stone. The inner left altar was similarly constructed, the packing here including the piece of pitted stone bowl mentioned above. The fourth altar, pl. *via*, inner right, was of completely different build, possibly due to the more constricted space. It consisted of roughly built rubble extending, rather surprisingly, beneath the orthostat flanking the doorway. It had then been coated with red clay, covered with a

layer of broken pottery, and then plastered. Sherds in this altar dated it, and presumably the wall behind. An interesting find here was a smoothed stone plaque scratched with a rough drawing of a temple façade, pl. *xxxib*.

Certainly in the same phase and probably at the same time the side apses were also marked off from the central courtyard, though less completely, by the addition of stone steps. Court and apses were then refloored in torba at a level a few centimetres above that of the original clay floor, Saf. and Tx. sherds being recovered from the upper floor foundations. The western step was a simple low one, but the eastern one was more elaborate, consisting of three large reused blocks, pls. *iii a* and *iv a*. The northern one was apparently plain, the second bore traces of original pitting in places where it had been protected from wear, and the third, due probably to the protection of the now-missing orthostat, was pitted all over, including the face and underside.

Immediately behind the centre of this step were the stumps of some structure since destroyed to floor level. The thin transverse slab, 1.30 by 16 cm., with its outer face pitted, was probably a portal slab of the kind quite frequent in Maltese temple sites.¹ Two unworn patches on the step in front would then be the only trace of an original trilithon frame to the doorway, as elsewhere. As these portal structures are never found free-standing, the rest of the apse entrance must have been closed off in some way. A row of decorated blocks as at Tarxien might have been the answer, as shown in the tentative reconstruction drawing, fig. 5.

At the eastern and northern sides of this apse were the stumps of two trilithon altars. These might go back to the Ġg. temple but might equally well form part of the Tx. rebuilding.

Evidence for roofing was slight but important in view of its extreme scarcity on other sites. It is clear that masonry as rough as that in the apse walls here could never have supported the weight of a corbelled vault in stone. Its roughness excludes equally the horizontal arch.² Any roofing must have been in some lighter construction. In part of the west apse the stratigraphy in the 15 or 20 cm. above the floor was illuminating. Immediately overlying the torba were about 8 cm. of hard compacted grey clay, an accumulation of trampled dirt on the floor as everywhere else within the building. Between this and the stone and dust filling of the temple ruins was a sterile level

¹ These consist of a rectangular slab of stone on edge pierced by a rectangular hole to serve as a doorway. Good examples survive at Mnajdra and Haġar Qim.

² This unusual architectural device was certainly employed in

the later temples, as the inward tilt of the blocks shows; in the corbel, the tendency is to tilt outwards. Well-cut blocks are as essential as in the vertical arch and for the same reason, so that they should lock firmly against each other.

of crumbled orange clay. This is presumably the decayed remains of a roof of clay-on-brush.¹

At this time also part of the eastern boundary wall of the temple was dismantled, but this belongs rather to the history of the East Temple, p. 9, below.

TC. reoccupation. There is something in the nature of an interlude before the next chapter opens. The

inner left altar was walled off, pl. viii*a*, a substantial fragment of a TC. bowl being incorporated in the masonry. An angle at the other side of the apse was also walled off completely, the wall overlying chips of plaster from the ruined inner right altar, pls. va and vb. Masonry was also built up by the eastern door jamb to further narrow the entrance, one of its blocks

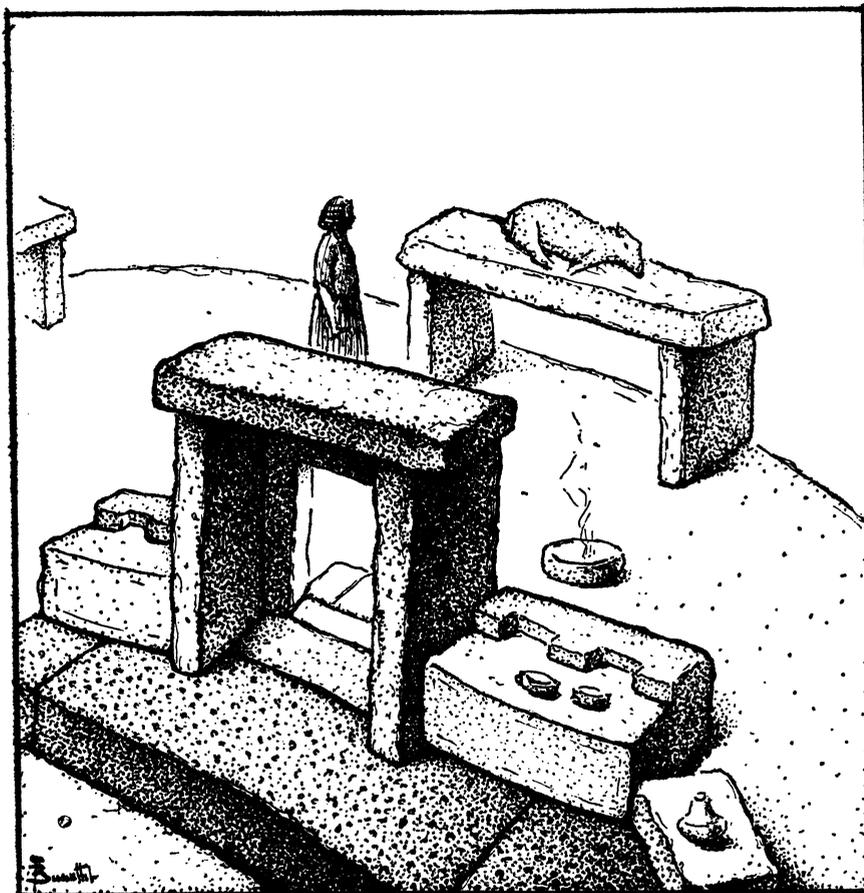


FIG. 5. Restored drawing of eastern apse of the West Temple; cf. pl. iv*a*. Drawing by T. Bussutil.

temple fell into complete ruin. The collapse of the roof has been already mentioned. Two other events which we can certainly place here are the disintegration of the plastered altar in the inner apse and the removal of a large flake of stone from the eastern jamb of the inner doorway. Its lintel, however, was still in position. The length of time which this period of decay covered cannot be determined.

Then the site was reoccupied, further structural alterations being carried out to make it habitable. The inner apse was, in fact, converted into a dwelling for squatters in the ruins. The corner containing the

¹ A good example of later date was excavated in 1960, *M.A.R.* A defence tower of the third century A.D., Ta' Gawhar, had been roofed with beams, brush, clay, and plaster. The fire which

overlapping the flake scar in that jamb. The stonework of this date is all rougher and of smaller blocks than those of the original temple. Finally a low stone bench was added around the remaining wall of the apse, its mud-plaster facing extending on to the wall at its east end.

The narrowing of the entrance was clearly intentional and the bench also serves an obvious purpose, but the purpose of the walls is less evident. A possibility is that by this time the inhabitants were finding more difficulty in obtaining roof timbers long enough to span the width of the apse.

destroyed it had preserved the first three as charcoal, ash, and poor terracotta in the lowest debris inside the building.

TC. material was plentiful on the floors, particularly in the smaller of the two rooms. It was also sprinkled freely through the debris in the outer apses, which seemed to have served simply as rubbish tips. Notable finds were a small juglet, a bone pin, and a fragment of a bronze saw, the only metal found, lying in a level 40 cm. above the step of the west apse, pl. xxxib.

Final destruction. Apart from one Borġ in-Nadur sherd in a pit in HB and a handful of Roman and modern sherds in the surface soil, no material later than TC. was recovered. The site was abandoned at that time and never reoccupied. It was, however, reused.

After a long period of gradual natural decay, de-

To provide a forecourt for the temple the earlier material cut away during its construction was deposited in front and retained by a wall of megalithic blocks to form a terrace, pl. viii^b.¹ Trenches M and MA behind this confirmed that the lowest level held back by this wall contained mixed material down to Ġg. A few sherds of the same came from the level below, passing beneath the wall. East of this point the original terrace wall had disappeared and been replaced in small rubble masonry in recent times. Trench C, south of the temple entrance, showed modern disturbance extending right down to bed rock.

Subsequent to the building of the temple itself, but

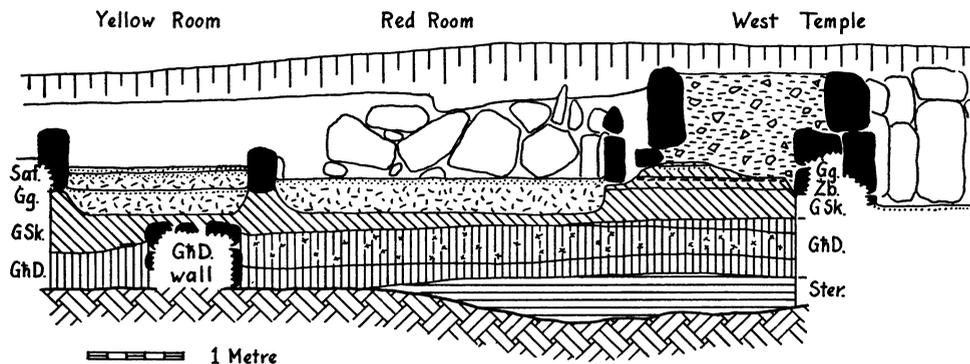


FIG. 6. Section across outbuildings and outer wall of West Temple, with underlying deposits.

liberate destruction began. This is most clearly evident in the area of the entrance, where the surviving orthostats all bear plain signs of the picked slots where they were split up by wedges, pl. iii^b. Considering how plentiful stone is in these islands, the main object can only have been to extend the cultivable area of the field. Where the blocks were not so deeply buried, as in the façade, the front of the apses, the East Temple, &c., they were removed entirely, but direct evidence is of course lacking.

Best mentioned here, though not actually occurring within the West Temple, is another form of recent disturbance of the site. The exceptional depth of soil in this area was known to the local farmers, who used it for burying the carcasses of deceased domestic animals. A number of sheep, calf, and mule skeletons was found in pits in the area of the Ghar Dalam wall and in the East Temple. They were dated by sherds of modern china and other glazed ware.

3. External Structures

Besides the temple itself described in the last section, two other structures closely associated with it belonged to the Ġg. period, fig. 3.

¹ The Ġgantija and Mnajdra temples were provided with similar terraces.

probably after only a short interval, two smaller rooms were added against its west side, figs. 3 and 6 and pl. viii^a.² The first was apparently circular in plan with a diameter of some 3 m. Its northern half had been well preserved under the upper field terrace, but to the south it had been cut away by the cultivation of the lower field. Its wall stood to a height of 80 cm. and was of the same style of masonry as the temple. Gaps in the masonry and holes in the coralline blocks had been carefully plugged with small stones and then plastered over. A small patch of the original plaster surface painted with red ochre survived at one point. The torba floor, laid on a rubble foundation, had also been heavily ochred, which led to our calling this the Red Room. There had been little accumulation on the floor before the ruin of the building, unlike in the temple, since the torba had in several places been cracked or dented by falling blocks. A gap in the wall at the west side appeared at first to be a doorway to the second room, but this proved not to have been the case. The entrances to both must have been in their destroyed southern ends.

The second or Yellow Room (it was unochred) to the west was less well preserved. Enough of its floor

² Similar subsidiary buildings occur at Mnajdra and Haġar Qim.

survived to show an oval plan on a NW.-SE. axis. Its original torba floor on the same level as that of the Red Room had been damaged and replaced by another 22 cm. higher, which had in turn been patched without further rubble foundations, pl. viib. Its walls, stone to the east, part rubble and mud to the north and west, were poorly preserved.

The history of these buildings was as follows. At or shortly after the time the main temple was built earlier levels were scarped back for the erection of the Red Room. Hut floors dating from earlier in the same phase were buried in the process. Later, when Ġg. was giving place to Saf., the second room was added to the west, and later still was refloored at a

pearance. The entrance had fared very little better. The slabs flanking it on the inner side are, for example, represented only by breaks in the torba floor where they once stood.

The outer apses, 10.30 m. from end to end, are comparatively small and are floored in torba on a rubble foundation spread directly on earlier deposits. This had already been pierced in four places by recent graves for animals,² allowing its construction to be studied, fig. 7 and pl. xb. In some places it had been renewed at a higher level. The walls of these apses had been destroyed to within a few centimetres of the floor where they had not disappeared entirely. Flanking the inner passage were again two projecting

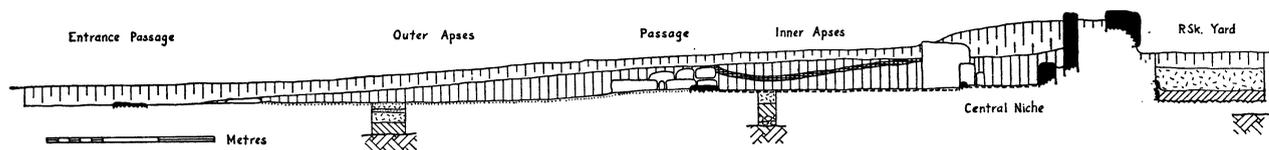


FIG. 7. Main section of East Temple looking west.

higher level. Both, however, fell out of use and were filled with rubble and rubbish before Tx. pottery came into fashion.

4. The East Temple

During the Tx. phase a second temple was added to the east of the first. Whether this was before, contemporary with, or after the alterations within the West Temple in this same phase is not clear. The immediate juxtaposition of two temples of different dates is curious but the rule rather than the exception on Maltese sites of this class.

This later temple is built on a different plan from the first, fig. 3, a plan first appearing later in Ġg.¹ and general in temples of the Tx. phase. Whereas the early temples consist basically of three apses opening from a court, the later ones are composed of four apses in two opposed pairs connected by a corridor. The Ġgantija South shows the intermediate form where a second pair of apses has been added in front of the trefoil, but the terminal one has not yet been reduced to the vestigial proportions soon to become the rule. This plan could be adapted to the circumstances of each site. Here the attempt to build the Tx. temple as closely as possible against the already existing Ġg. one led not only to the dismantling of the front corner of the latter, but also to a considerable deformation of the basic plan.

Of the façade nothing survives; better-preserved remains on other sites and the plaque from the West Temple altar give the only clues to its original ap-

pearance. The entrance had fared very little better. The slabs flanking it on the inner side are, for example, represented only by breaks in the torba floor where they once stood.

Contrary to the usual practice these were appreciably larger than the outer ones, particularly that on the east, as shown on the plan fig. 3. Pl. ixb gives their appearance. They measured 14.70 m. from end to end. The floor consisted of a poor clay surface only, not all of it even on a rubble foundation. The inner walls were better preserved than any in the outer apses, but still nowhere exceeded 1 m. in height. The masonry was of the same rough cyclopean type as in the West Temple, not the well-squared globigerina work of most temples of this date. In fact, the whole appearance of this temple is markedly inferior to its contemporaries, and even to its much older immediate neighbour.

One of the most obvious pieces of evidence for this is the marked asymmetry of the orthostats flanking the central niche, the easterly one being some 1.65 m. too far from the centre line. The niche itself is irregular and a mere 1.60 m. across, pl. ix a. In its west corner was lying the skeleton of a large bird. By its step was a rough stone bowl, found inverted.

The boundary wall of this temple was apparently free-standing along its whole east side. Still surviving for most of this is a low projecting stone foundation and the first course of orthostats. In places the characteristic 'long and short work' is clearly visible,

¹ At the Ġgantija South. The development of the temple plans is discussed in section 21.

² From north-west to south-east a sheep, a sheep, a calf, a sheep. At the inner end of the second apse right was a mule.

in which the blocks are placed on end alternately face out and edge out, pl. x1b. The wall is interrupted towards the front by subsequent destruction, revealing floors of earlier date, to be described below.

More large stones, apparently undisturbed, stand to the south-east, built into modern field walls, pl. x1a. Their function is not clear and cannot be clarified by excavation as the surrounding deposits have already been removed by erosion and agriculture to below the original ground level. A likely explanation is that this was an external shrine like the two which flank the façade of Tarxien South in the same relative position.

This East Temple, probably due to its poorer construction and its destruction by fire, providing incidentally good samples for dating, was even more thoroughly ruined and was not reoccupied in the TC. phase. Though the small volume of deposit surviving on its floors was quite extraordinarily rich in pottery, no single sherd of Bronze Age date came to light. Apart from a few earlier strays, probably out of the crumbling walls, it was pure Tx.

5a. The Village

During the excavation of the temples and the deep stratified deposits (see section 6) evidence accumulated that the site of Skorba had been in occupation as a settlement over a considerable period before the erection of the temples. These, being partly recessed into the ground, had cut away most of the relevant deposits over the centre of the site, though fragments remained in the thickness of the West Temple walls (trenches B and I, fig. 6) and beneath the south-east corner of the East Temple. Further evidence on the structures of the village had to be sought outside the areas thus disturbed, Figs. 8 and 9, mainly to the west and east.

The importance of these remains lies in the fact that they are of the only village yet located in Malta older than the Bronze Age. A point deserving emphasis in advance is the discovery that mud-brick was extensively used in building construction of this period. In a country where soil is so scarce and stone so common this was indeed surprising. The structures will be described here in chronological order for convenience, the evidence for the sequence being reserved for the next section.

The life of the village covers a long period before the erection of the temples, so that the earlier phases of the Maltese sequence must now be brought into the discussion. As before, the phases will be abbreviated to distinguish them from the sites after which they were originally named. This is particularly necessary in the case of the two first found here. Accordingly we get

the following scheme: Għar Dalam (GħD. = Evans IA), Grey Skorba (GSk.), Red Skorba (RSk.), Żebbuġ (Zb. = Ic), Mġarr (Mġ. = Ib) and Ġgantija (Ġg. = Id). It was in the course of Ġg. that the site was converted to ritual use.

5b. The GħD. Wall

In the area immediately in front of the temple out-buildings, and only discovered because of the destruction of their southern halves, fig. 6 and pls. x11a and x11b, was the earliest structure identified on the site. This consisted of a nearly straight length of wall, 11 m. of which were exposed. It varied in solidity and was not located in either of the outer trenches which crossed its line, Y and E. A hint of a cross-wall to the north, confused by two modern sheep burials at this point, could not be confirmed without destroying part of the overlying apse and wall of the West Temple. The comparative richness of finds on its north side suggests that this was its inner face, but again confirmation is lacking. There was no clear evidence of a floor on either side.

The wall itself was indeed founded firmly on the rock, pl. x11b. In its better sections it consisted of two faces of stones, mainly on edge, filled with rubble between, the over-all thickness being 60 to 80 cm. Neither construction nor width were constant, however. Amongst the domestic rubbish on its north side, which included charcoal and carbonized grain,¹ were several fragments of daub, accidentally baked. Whether these were parts of the wall's own superstructure, or more likely of huts enclosed by it which have left no other trace, cannot now be determined. On this depends the entire interpretation of the structure, either as a long rectangular dwelling or as an enclosure wall to a group of more lightly constructed buildings.

5c. The GħD. Hut

To the south east of the RSk. shrine, see below, p. 11, and fig. 9 and pl. x11b, and partly cut away by it, traces of a smaller and earlier building came to light. Its floor was very little below the bottom of ploughsoil, fig. 10, and only its western walls survived. Interpretation is in consequence not easy. The hut seems oval, on a south-west-north-east axis, 4.20 m. wide internally and at least 6 m. long, of which only a little over 4 m. was cleared. The walls, only 0.70 m. thick, could not have supported a superstructure of any weight. Even mud-brick could not have been carried to any height on them. The floor was poor, pebbly or clayey. At its centre lay an inverted quern, possibly employed as the base of a wooden column. Three fragments of human jaw bone lay in the debris on this

¹ See Appendixes IV and V.

floor, apparently of two individuals, children of $4\frac{1}{2}$ and 7 years old. Adult human skull fragments came from a refuse deposit in EF, probably associated with this hut. This skeletal material is described in Appendixes I and II.

Dating depends on the rather scanty pottery. The bulk of this was undoubtedly of GhD. wares, probably

the stones forming a real division. It is unfortunate that nothing further can be said of it as it was the only structure which could be attributed to this phase.

5e. The RSk. Shrine

When the East Temple was being cleared, three additional trenches were dug in the field to the east to

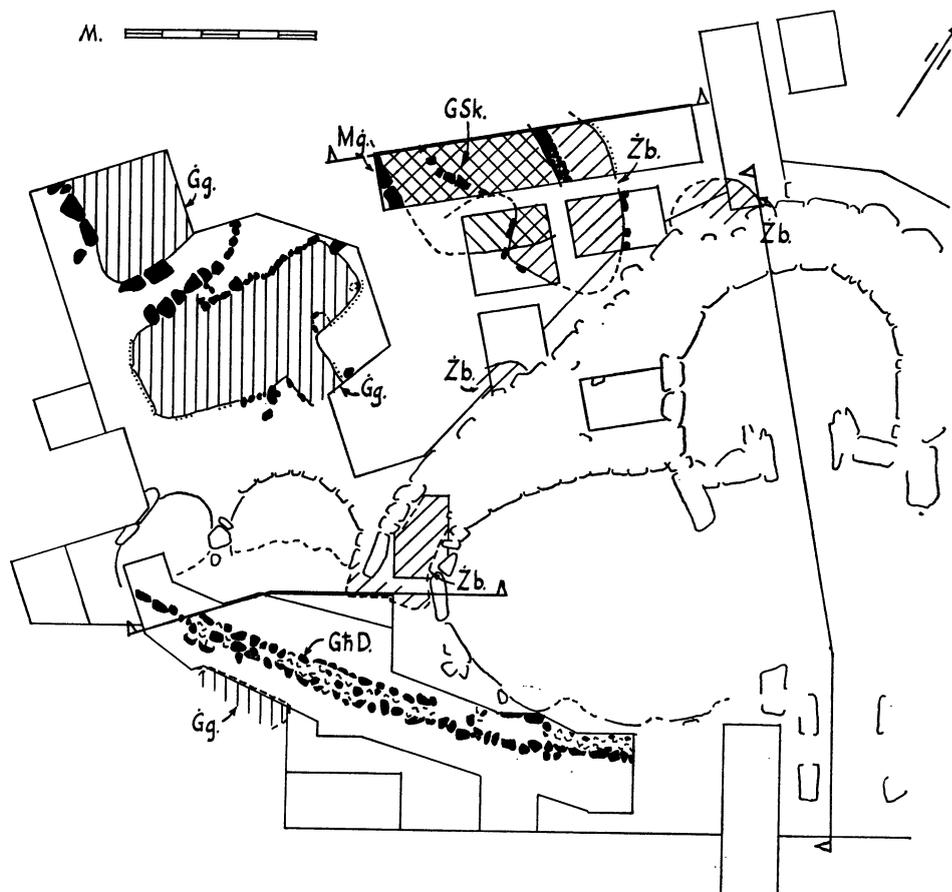


FIG. 8. Skorba, the underlying village, western sector.

late in that phase. A few GSk. sherds not definitely associated with the floor deposit need imply only accumulation of later refuse after the hut had gone out of use.

5d. The GSk. Wall

Beneath the huts in OD to be described below was a feature of GSk. date but of little importance. Standing on the sterile natural red clay was a straight setting of irregular largish stones, pl. xxiii*a*. They too may be natural but are more likely the scanty remains of a structure almost totally ruined. It was noticed that the deposits on either side of them were of different colours,

check that there were no outlying structures like those found on the west. The central one of these, MC, struck the face of a much earlier wall. When this building was cleared it proved to be the largest and most puzzling feature of the village, fig. 9 and pl. xiv*a*.

There are four parts to the structure. The main room is oval, maximum dimensions 8.40 by 5.40 m. internally, with an entrance at its western end, pl. xvii*a*. Its eastern end was damaged by a much later trench, pl. xviii*a*, but in part at least the impress of its wall was preserved in the firm fill. South of this room, a smaller D-shaped one measured 5.60 by 3.20 m. This room had no entrance at the surviving level. Outside these

to east and west were courtyards, probably open to the sky. Neither of these could be fully studied, the western one because of the overlying East Temple, the eastern one because of destruction by the plough, there being very much less depth of soil towards that

despite its great irregularity, fig. 11 and pl. xvib. Even in the deepest gulleys there was no sign of leveling up with soil or anything else. The substantial sherds of restorable vessels coming from well down in them would also exclude flooring of organic materials,

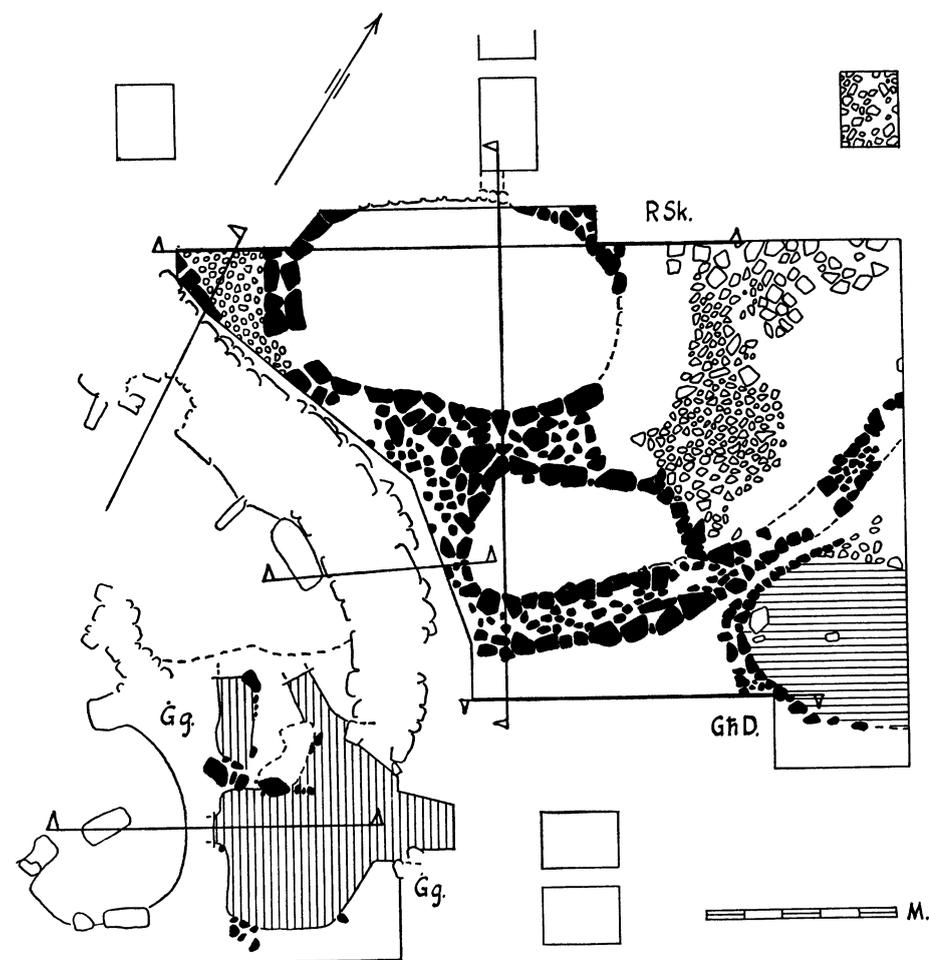


FIG. 9. Skorba, the RSk. Shrine and other structures of the village, eastern sector.

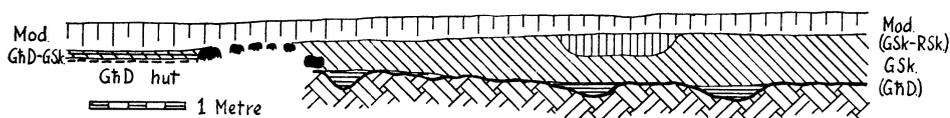


FIG. 10. Section of the GhD. Hut and adjacent deposits, south face of trenches QD and MD.

end of the site. The original shape of these two courtyards is therefore problematical.

Nor is this by any means the only problem. The courtyards are stone-paved, the eastern one rather irregularly with largish blocks up to 50 cm. across, the western one more evenly with smaller pebble-cobbles, pls. xivb and xvib. But the rooms had no prepared floors, bed-rock apparently having served the purpose

planking, straw, or fleeces, since decayed. The cobbled surface of the western court sloped down gently to meet the bed-rock in the doorway of the North Room, excluding the possibility of a wooden floor at a higher level.

From the small amount of stone in the fill, the walls cannot have continued much, if at all, above their present height of 70 cm. on average. (There is too

much stone available in Malta for wall-robbing to be likely.) Above this they were built in mud brick, nodules of which survived in the fill near the rock, though higher it had completely disintegrated through weathering to a crumbly clayey deposit, pl. xviii. None survived in position on the walls. The distinc-

with a rubble fill, fig. 11 and pl. xv. Its outer face was not, however, visible since the deposits against it were of older date, GhD. to GSk. A foundation trench was distinguishable at the western end where its fill was much more orange than the earlier deposits; elsewhere this was not so clear. The wall north of the North

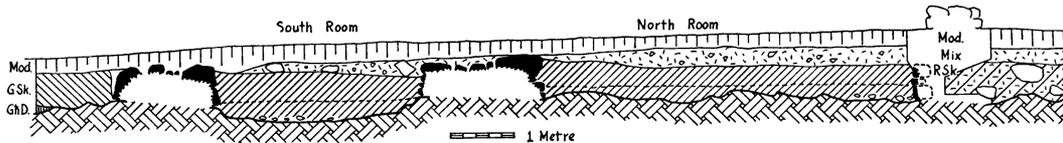


FIG. 11. Section of the RSk. Shrine looking west, trenches MD to OE.

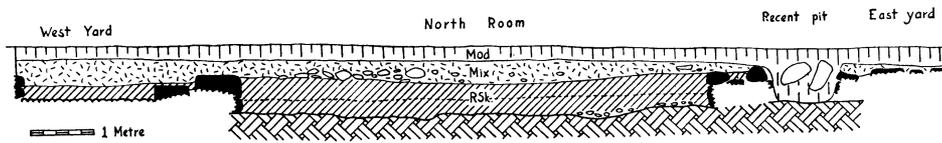


FIG. 12. Section of the RSk. Shrine looking north, trenches NE to RD.

tive blue-grey colour, the absence of charcoal, and the texture show that this is not an ash deposit—no hearth was found in either room incidentally—but a derivative of the natural blue clay of Malta. The nearest outcrops of this are at the head of the Wied

Room served an identical purpose, that of retaining earlier deposits, here of RSk. date. Probing southwards from the nearest trench in the north-east field confirmed that it consisted of only one face, making it seem somewhat inadequate as a footing for the mud-

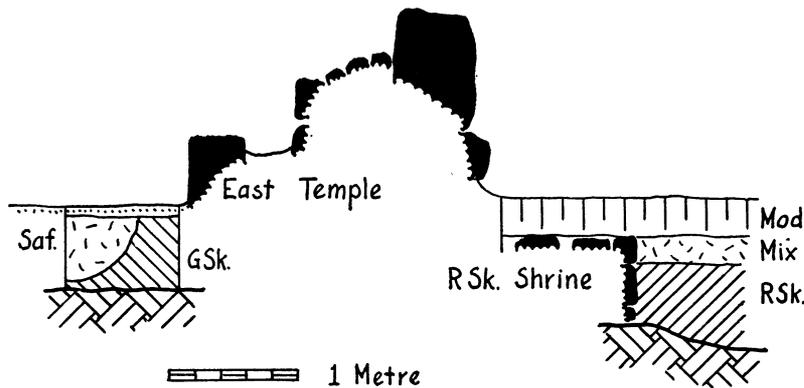


FIG. 13. Section of the East Temple and RSk. Shrine walls to show their relative positions looking north, trenches CD to DF.

Qanotta, nearly a mile to the north-east, and on the slopes of the Bengemma Ridge, a mile to the south.

The puzzling feature of the walls is that they are all of different build. The most impressive, bounding the South Room and the East Court on the south-east, is 1.50 m. thick. It consists of two faces of large blocks

brick superstructure. Between the North Room and the West Court was a free-standing two-face wall thin enough for a rubble fill to be unnecessary. The wall between the two rooms was also freestanding, but differed from the others in that its two faces were planned in relation to the two rooms rather than to

each other. The result is a wall varying in width from 1.65 to 3 m. Eastwards the structure of the wall appears to merge imperceptibly with the paving of the East Court at the level of its top. This is clearest at the east end of the South Room, the later trench having cut most of it away further north. On the west, the outer face of the wall was not found as it ran under the East Temple, fig. 13.

A few facts about the finds from the two rooms are needed for an assessment of their function. A great quantity of broken pottery of pure RSk. type, including a number of restorable vessels, was recovered from the level immediately above rock in both rooms. It became noticeably less frequent towards the western

still far from proven. The interpretation that the building was some sort of shrine for votive offerings rather than a temple for public worship seems to meet more of the difficulties than any alternative theory, above all that of the irregular floor. It would explain also the poverty of the deposit immediately inside the doorway of the North Room.

5f. Żb. Huts

Though no complete hut of Żb. date was cleared, fragments of floors were met with at a number of points. Beneath the walls of the West Temple, in trenches B and I, scraps of clay floor of this date came to light, fig. 6. More extensive remains, as shown in

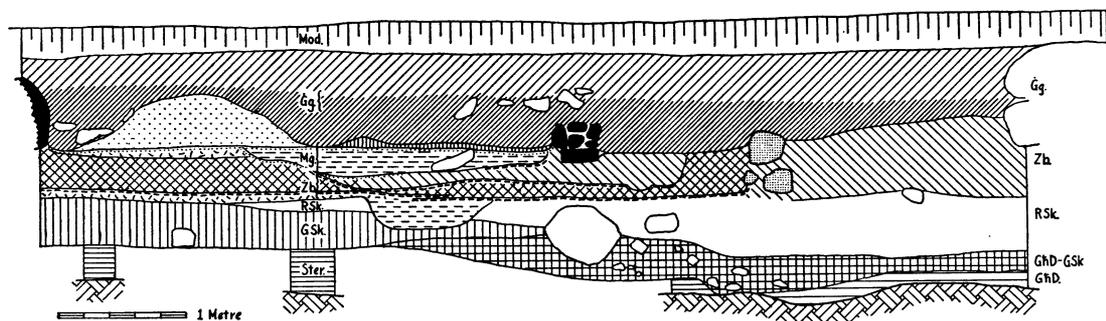


FIG. 14. Section of the stratified deposits behind the West Temple, north face of trenches OD-UC-PC.

end of the North Room and very much scarcer higher in the fill everywhere. In the North Room were found fragments of figurines, four of terracotta, one nearly complete, and one of stone, all showing the same stylized female figure, fig. 30 and pl. xxvii.¹ Chert flakes were common. Domestic animal bones were in abundance, almost equalling the pottery in volume.² The only signs of bone-working, however, were in the tarsals of cows. Many of these from the North Room had been ground smooth on the lower face, one being further decorated with a grooved cross, pl. xxviii. They remind one of chess or halma pieces and may possibly have been stood up as phallic symbols.³ Finally some half-dozen goat skulls had been very oddly treated. The cranium of each, with its long fairly straight horns, was complete, but the facial bones from the upper edge of the orbits had been knocked away. Two skulls in this state lay side by side on the floor of the North Room, pl. xviii, the rest being scattered through both.

A funerary function is excluded by the absence of human bone. Domestic use is made unlikely by the irregularity of the floor, the absence of hearths and the unnecessarily large southern wall. A religious purpose is supported by more than mere elimination—the figurines, the goat skulls, the ‘halma men’—though

the plan fig. 8, appeared in the deep trenches behind the West Temple, but they were insufficient for any reliable plans to emerge. A hut in ZA was cut into a RSk. deposit to a depth of 40 cm. and had traces of a stone wall along the lip of the cutting. A second covered the whole of trenches OD and UC and a part of OB. Its floor had been made up at least three times, fig. 14. The lowest was associated on its east with a wall constructed entirely of mud-brick at the eastern end of UC, while the upper floors stopped at the remains of a stone wall on a slightly different line further west. Corners of others were found in PA and GA.

All these floors were of clay, either laid for the purpose or in some cases simply the trodden surface of a clayey underlying deposit of RSk. or GSk. date. The huts in ZA and OD both had clearly defined hearth hollows.

5g. Mg. Hut

Only one hut attributable to this phase was found. The greater part of it was cleared in trenches OB, UC, and OD, showing its sub-rectangular plan, 4 m. across, see fig. 8. The earliest version of its floor appeared as a thin red streak of clay in the section, fig. 14. It ran to a substantial stone wall in OD,

¹ Described on p. 33.

² See Appendix III.

³ See p. 34.

pl. xixb, and to the stump of a more poorly preserved one across UC, pl. xixa. In its eastern half it had been made up later in torba, running to the same wall. The western limit of the torba had been destroyed by the cutting of a pit now filled with soft grey ash.

The hut was then refloored at a higher level, partly in clay, partly in torba. The original west wall was retained but a new one was built on the east parallel to the older and some 20 cm. further out. This wall has since disappeared, the floor edge, half overlapping the superseded wall, showing where it ran. Internal features included a small circular bowl with a lip all round built into the floor and made of the same material, here a thick layer of plaster. It was 30 cm.

thickness, 6 cm. The floor was of beaten earth or clay, patched in places with a thin layer of torba.

The lowest level of fill in it was extremely rich in charcoal and pottery, the latter including two small unbroken vessels and some ten others restorable from the surviving sherds, pl. xxixc. No less than eleven querns, all of the local coralline limestone, were found here too, most notably a large one with its rubber beside it in the angle of the wall repair, pl. xxib. The charcoal provided one of the carbon samples for dating, p. 48.

Its date is fixed in the Ġg. phase by the occupation debris on its floor, left to lie there when it was destroyed by fire. Structurally, however, it is obviously

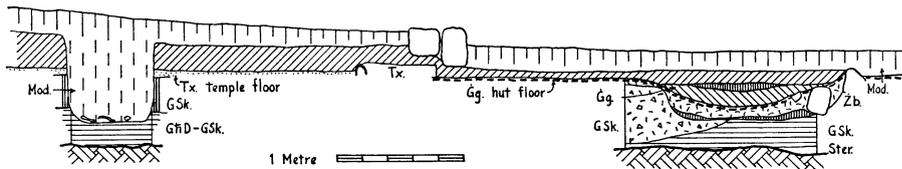


FIG. 15. Section of deposits beneath the East Temple, north face of trenches VB-BC-AD.

in diameter and 8 cm. deep from the top of the lip. Near it lay a rectangular stone tray, 46 by 22 cm. and also lipped, though less markedly. These are shown in position in pl. xixb.

5h. The Ġg. 'Hut of the Querns'

The most substantial example of an individual hut came to light in the area north of the West Temple outbuildings and was cleared completely, fig. 8 and pl. xxb. It was roughly rectangular in form, 6 by 3 m., on a NE.-SW. alignment. The shape was partly obscured by the fact that the northern half of the stone wall dividing it from a second hut only partly cleared to its north-west had apparently collapsed at some time. It had then been rebuilt encroaching a little on the north corner of the hut, as can be seen clearly in the Plate. The entrance passage opened onto the centre of the long south-east side. There was a small 'keeping place' outlined in stones just inside the door and another even smaller pit in the eastern corner, pl. xxia, which contained 130 shells of *Venus* sp. and one limpet, very tightly packed. There was no permanent hearth.

The importance of this hut lay in three facts, its construction, its contents, and its date. Even more clearly than in the Żb. hut mentioned above, it was built largely in mud-brick; apart from its north side, all its walls were of this material or pisé. Fragments of individual bricks were recognized in the debris filling it, though too small to give dimensions other than

earlier than the temple outbuildings, since these sea off all access to its entrance passage. It would be tempting to suppose that it was deliberately destroyed to clear the site for the temple. A further point on its date, obvious but important, is that material within its wall-thickness, particularly trenches DB and MB, must be earlier still. Though this is still within Ġg., it shows many details of continuity from Mġ. and will be discussed from this point of view later.¹

5i. The Ġg. 'Hut of the Hollow'

Although, as mentioned above, the foundations of the two temples had cut away all antecedent structures over the greater part of their area, further substantial remains of Ġg. date had survived under the south-east corner of the East Temple, seen in the foreground of pl. ixb. Here the natural slope of the hill explained both the lower level of the huts relative to the temple floors and also the destruction of the overlying building allowing their exploration. Even so, the area exposed was not great.

The clay floor of one hut was revealed almost in its entirety, measuring 3.90 by 3.60 m., then extending east for at least a further 2 m. At its centre was a pronounced depression 1.45 m. across and 25 cm. deep, clay surfaced like the floor, fig. 15. Subsidence into a hollow underneath was suspected but not confirmed by sectioning. The rock surface, 60 cm. below the general level of the floor, passed beneath it without feature. North and south-westward from this

¹ See p. 38.

room ran narrow passages, both of them 75 cm. wide, but neither could be adequately investigated without destroying part of the East Temple. Another patch of floor to the west of the northward passage was probably the edge of a second hut or room extending under the temple's outer apse and central passage.

This group of floors was dated to the Ġg. phase by sherds beneath them. The thin level of deposit which separated them from the make-up of the temple floors above, see section in fig. 15, showed that they remained in use into Saf. There was also a pit containing sherds down to Saf. beneath the innermost part of the second apse right of the East Temple, fig. 13, sealed by the temple floor and only revealed by the recent grave of a mule against the wall. It seems, therefore, that only the western half of the village went out of occupation when the West Temple was built, these huts in the east continuing in use into the next phase.

6. Stratigraphies

The third major result of the excavations at Skorba, the temples and the village being the first two, was the discovery of pure levels of all known phases of the earlier Maltese prehistoric sequence, plus two unknown ones, in stratigraphic succession. Previously, pure levels and stratigraphies had begun only with the Ġg. phase. Their occurrence at Skorba was due to two factors. The continuity of occupation of the site produced the material, mainly domestic refuse accumulating over the centuries, with substantial remains of the actual dwellings in addition. Then, although the building of the temples had cut away the greater part of the deposits in their immediate area, their walls had served as a retaining terrace to prevent further erosion of the deposits not interfered with. To find up to 2.50 m. of undisturbed earth in Malta on a hill slope like that of Skorba is quite exceptional and extremely fortunate.

The levels of the different phases were by no means continuous, owing partly to blank areas in their accumulation, more often to subsequent removal by later occupants of the village. As a result no single trench contained every phase. Three contiguous trenches, however, PC, UC, and OD, showed them all in a single section, fig. 14. In one trench, PA, all were present but the Mġ. level was not pure. In three more, GA, OB, and the outlying JB, only one phase was missing, a different one in each case (pl. xxii*b*). Two phases or more in stratified succession appeared in many trenches from end to end of the site, never incompatible with the order in PC/UC/OD. This will be described in more detail to serve as the standard stratigraphy for the site and Malta as a whole down to Ġg. Additional information from other trenches is appended.

Bed rock in this area was fairly level, covered by sterile red clay, 'hamrija', the insoluble residue of the local limestone. This increased in depth from nil in the east to 35 cm. in the west. Conversely the lower cultural levels were clear in the east, less so in the west. PC had a pure though poor GhD. deposit, in UC and OD GhD. and GSk. were mixed. This mixture may not be accidental since it was noted again in JB, above the GhD. wall in the south-west and outside the RSk. shrine and GhD. hut in the east field (trenches MC, QC, KD, MD, and QD). Wherever it occurs both phases are poor in quality, GhD. decoration is scarce, GSk. lugs absent, and besides the characteristic wares of each a high proportion of coarser ware not distinctive of either is also present. The coarser ware occurs only rarely in pure levels of the two phases. Further, in trench AF there were two pure GhD. levels of which the lower had 1 decorated sherd to 4.7 undecorated (17 per cent of 104), whereas in the upper level the proportion had dropped to 1 to 9.8 (9 per cent of 313). The implication is that there is a true transitional zone in which the more distinctive features of GhD. have disappeared and only the simplest of GSk. ones, above all the speckled ware, have come in in their place.

In PC and OD the next level up had a clear though still poor GSk. content. Here the level was orange and stony, but over much of the site GSk. levels were a uniform grey stoneless clay, probably decayed mud-brick. The RSk. level above was also orange and stony, and in this form was characteristic of most of the area of the deep trenches. A level in the east field, filling a depression south of the RSk. shrine in MC, QC, and MD, had material of even more obviously transitional form, between GSk. and RSk., overlying pure GSk. but covered directly by ploughsoil. It will be discussed in the section on the pottery.

A thick level in all three trenches, predominantly grey, dusty, and stony, contained great quantities of Żb. sherds, and charcoal fragments sufficient to provide a sample for dating. It contained also the remains of huts described in the previous section. Mġ. levels were very scarce at Skorba, the only pure ones being in and on the floors of a hut extending through OD, UC, and OB. East of this, as far as LB, a rubbish level contained material down to Mġ., probably refuse from that hut, but a large number of Żb. and earlier sherds were mixed in.

Similarly the highest level below ploughsoil, though securely dated to Ġg. by the majority of its sherds, was far from pure. This suggests that it may at least in part consist of the spoil dug out during the building of the temple, as the very similar fill behind the terrace wall in trenches M and MA certainly did. Though mixed, no single sherd of later type was present. Pure

deposits of this date were found immediately on the floor of the Hut of the Querns. This hut's southern wall contained another group of sherds of transitional appearance, Mg. to Ġg., stratified between Żb. and the pure Ġg. of the hut floor.

These stratigraphies all end with Ġg., any later accumulation having been subsequently eroded off. There is no single section to set the later phases firmly in order. Later levels tend to be mixed, owing to the upheavals of earlier material when building the temples. The phases therefore have to be sorted out by the order in which their pottery appears, with some confirmation from fragmentary stratigraphies. This is shown most clearly in the case of Saf.

In the Red Room, trench X, the floors contained nothing later than Ġg. After the room's abandonment the rubble which filled it included a fair proportion of Saf. also, though again nothing later. The pit in the north-east field (trenches QE and SE) had also been filled before Tx. times.

Tx. was found stratified above Saf. in the huts under the East Temple, but both deposits were very thin with ploughsoil dangerously close. However, this order was strongly supported by the fact that the great wealth of Tx. material from the East Temple did contain Saf. sherds along with the meagre number of sherds from all the previous phases. The two Saf. deposits mentioned in the last paragraph, on the contrary, produced no Tx. sherd.

Nothing of TC. date came to light in the Tx. deposit in the East Temple, whereas sherds were common in the reoccupied West Temple. Here the later appearance of TC. could be demonstrated stratigraphically in the smaller Bronze Age room, LA. The rubble altar contained pure Tx. material, TC. appearing only in the level above that containing plaster and clay derived from the altar's surface.

The argument for this sequence has been built up without reference to the typology of the pottery. This will be described below but is fortunately not essential since its shortcomings for the construction of sequences have been so recently and graphically demonstrated.

For the later Bronze Age succession stratigraphies from other sites, Borġ in-Nadur and Baħrija, have to take over the story as Skorba was by then abandoned.¹

7. Work at Other Sites

The last section condensed the stratigraphic results on the earlier levels at Skorba from all the campaigns there. The situation after the first campaign

¹ D. H. Trump, 'The Later Prehistory of Malta', *P.P.S.* xxvii, 1961, p. 253 (hereafter 'Later Prehistory').

² In I the section showed GhD. under GSk., Żb., Ġg., with no sign of Mg. except in the last. Actually RSk. was also missing,

was much less simple. At that time GSk. had been found and doubts of Evans's sequence (GhD.-Mg.-Żb.-Ġg.-Tx.) had only just begun to appear.² A serious attempt was made at a number of sites to elucidate this point during the summer of 1961, before the next major campaign at Skorba. Though the complete sequence did not emerge until the autumn, other results of these subsidiary trenches were of considerable importance.

Skorba. In the hope of finding an undisturbed stratigraphy outside the immediate area of the temple trench W was sunk to the west of it in June. It located the out-buildings and the earlier wall dealt with on pp. 8 and 10. As it showed GSk. immediately overlain by Ġg., it could throw no light on the problem in hand, and the new ones it had raised were left over until the autumn.

*Mġarr.*³ Five trenches were dug in June, one in July, and three in November, fig. 16. None of them gave any help with the problems of the sequence.

Trench A in the right-hand apse of the eastern temple passed through a series of successive floors of the temple, fig. 17c, three of torba, three of clay, all on rubble foundations or immediately overlying their predecessors. Beneath these the original floor consisted of the untreated surface of an underlying clay deposit, long ante-dating the temple. The rubble beneath the upper floors contained few sherds, and these small and of very mixed date. Żb. was much the commonest and was probably imported with the floor clay from a deposit outside the temple. Later sherds came down to Tx. or Saf. The fragment of terracotta figurine, fig. 41e, lay beneath the highest clay floor. More important for dating the temple was a genuine floor deposit on the lowest floor. Of the two restorable vessels recovered from it, one was Pellegrin ware,⁴ the other characteristic Saf. (fig. 42a). The lowest floor contained many charcoal fragments and Żb. sherds as its latest, but passed down imperceptibly into GhD., one GSk. lug being present too. The significance of these findings will be discussed shortly, but the continued lack of an Mg.-Żb. stratigraphy is obvious.

Trench B in the thickness of the western temple wall was intended to check Evans's date for that temple, in view of the contradictory evidence from the other. It was soon abandoned as it consisted of loose stones of large size and therefore seriously liable to contamination.

Trench C, section fig. 17d, was therefore opened in the central apse. In the apse floor the deposit was disturbed down to sterile clay or bed rock. A probe

but this was nowhere recognized until GA was dug five months later.

³ *M.A.R.* 1916; *Bulletin of the Museum*, i, 1929, p. 5.

⁴ For a description of this newly identified ware see p. 36.

beneath the wall produced two levels similar to the lowest ones in A. Inside the wall was found Żb. material in the small space accessible, and beneath it pure GhD.

D and E, outside the temple to the south-east and west, produced nothing of value.

In July trench F was cut in the western apse of the eastern temple to check its date. The section here, fig. 17e, was more complicated. A pit with many

Saf. but this could be rejected as dating evidence for the temple on the grounds that the bench might have been renewed at a date subsequent to its building. H was the conclusive trench. It was in the thickness of the wall east of the entrance, fig. 17f. A loose rubble fill, fortunately of smaller pieces and more tightly packed than in B, ran down to a depth of 1.40 m., containing in the lower part the following sherds—6 Żb., 1 Mġ., 7 Ġg.

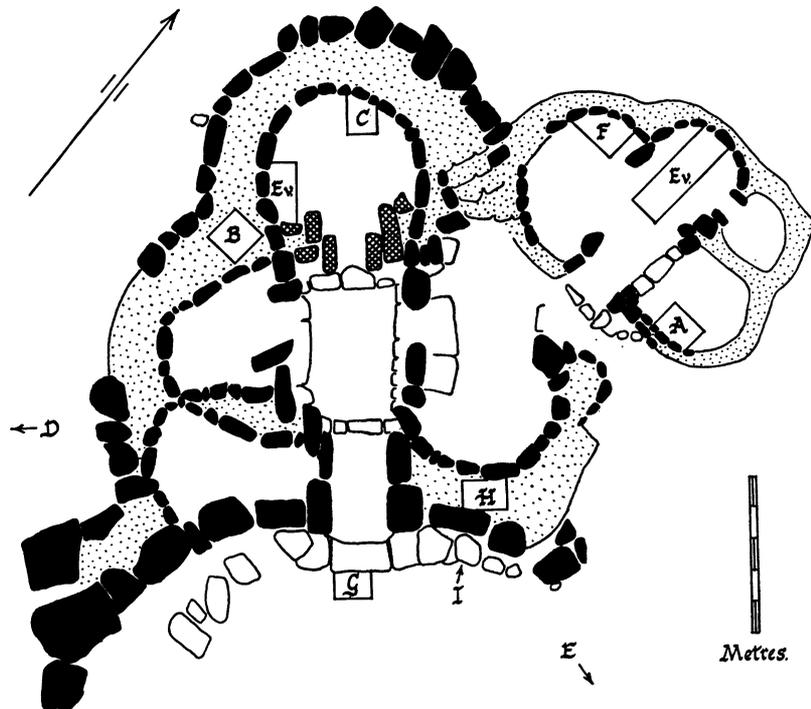


FIG. 16. Mġarr temples, showing position of trenches.

Tx. sherds cut two torba floors, the upper with Tx. also, the lower without sherds but overlying a patch of clay containing 4 Żb., 1 Mġ., 7 Pell., 2 Ġg., and 1 Saf. Below the lower floor and passing beneath the temple wall was a level in which were found 3 Żb. sherds, 3 Mġ., 3 Pell., and 1 Ġg. Over sterile clay was the same GhD. level with some Żb. trodden into it.

The three trenches in November were intended to re-examine the date of the western temple. G, beneath the steps of the entrance, showed that the lower two were recent additions, Sir Themistocles Zammit having cut well below the original ground level in the 1927 excavation. The threshold block was let into a Żb. level overlying GhD. and sterile levels. Trench I was merely a scrape beneath one of the blocks of the bench round the façade. The only identifiable sherd from here was

¹ Note that the build of a floor will give only a *terminus post quem* for the date of the building, possibly as here a distant one.

The conclusions to be drawn from the above trenches, especially A, F, and H, are vital to our understanding of the development of the Maltese temples, and will be discussed from that point of view below, p. 47. Here, however, the evidence from the excavations for the dates of the two Mġarr temples can be drawn together.

The construction of the eastern temple is securely bracketed by the floor deposit¹ A5 containing Saf. material, and the level passing beneath its wall, F7, containing Ġg. Furthermore the section of F, fig. 17e, shows that, unless an original floor was cut away when F5 was laid, this is itself the original floor. Though no sherds were found in it, it overlay F6, which again held Saf. Mġarr East then was built in Ġg. or Saf., almost certainly the latter. The date of

A genuine floor deposit gives an exact date for the abandonment of that floor and a *terminus ante quem* for the building.

Mg. affixed to it by Evans was due primarily to misfortune in not striking levels corresponding to the significant ones A5 and F7, and secondarily to misunderstanding of the material in the upper floors, giving at best a *terminus post quem*. For the same reason the C14 sample tested from a level corresponding exactly with A6, of Zb. date, was mistakenly attributed to the Mg. phase.¹

of Evans's main one, were cut about 5 m. north of the rear wall of the eastern temple, trench B through the paving of the forecourt. All can be briefly dismissed. B gave a paving of smaller cobbles beneath the exposed one, both with sherds down to Tx. Lower levels produced Gg., Mg., and Zb. sherds mixed in varying proportions. A and C were more useful, a succession of floors and soil changes showing a gradual transition

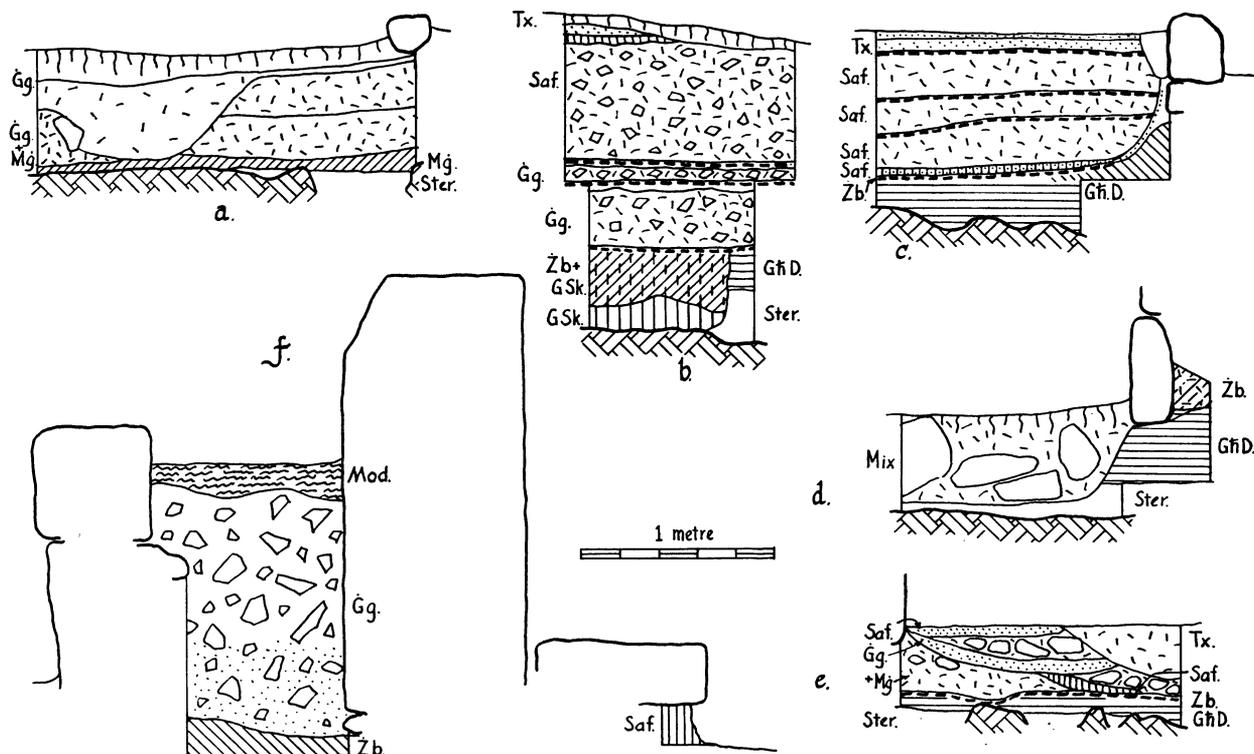


FIG. 17. Trench sections on other sites: (a) Kordin III, north face of trench A; (b) Santa Verna, north face of trench A; (c) Mgarr, east face of trench A; (d) Mgarr, west face of trench C; (e) Mgarr, east face of trench F; (f) Mgarr, east faces of trenches H and I.

Mgarr West was dated to Zb. on evidence identical with that from trench C, which was held to confirm it. Only the anomaly of a comparatively advanced temple so much earlier than any other raised doubts. Actually the level C2 was a pre-temple deposit not completely cut away within the walls, as happened also at Skorba.² It gave only a *terminus post quem*. The same is true in the case of level H2, but here the *terminus post quem* was Gg., the same date as the comparable temples Kordin III West and Skorba West.

*Kordin III.*³ In July we returned to the major problem of the sequence of GSk., Mg., and Zb. in three trenches at Kordin III. Trenches A and C, either side

from Mg. to Gg., fig. 17a, Zb. occurring as a small and misleading, since obviously extraneous, element.

*Santa Verna.*⁴ Though Kordin had gone far to prove the priority of Zb., one further attempt was made in August at Santa Verna in Gozo. The original excavation, producing much standard Tx. pottery, had stopped at the uppermost torba floor. Our three trenches below this found only the earlier version of Tx. already partly distinguished by Evans⁵ as Saf., and here well enough represented to be separated entirely. Below this in all three trenches were two lower clay floors containing nothing later than Gg., followed by one consisting of the untreated surface of underlying

¹ BM. 100, *Antiquity*, 1961, p. 143. The provenance was confirmed in conversation.

² Levels Sk. B5, I3 (fig. 6), TA3, etc.

³ *Papers of the British School at Rome*, vi, 1913, p. 34.

⁴ *Idem.* p. 105.

⁵ Evans, 1953, p. 60.

clay.¹ This was sterile in C and contained a little GhD. and GSk. mixed in B. In A, fig. 17*b*, it was partly a very poor GhD. level over sterile clay, partly a pit cut into the same and filled over a period of time covering GSk. and the beginning of Żb.,² the lowest level being GSk. only. Apart from confirmation of this part of the sequence as already found at Skorba, and the interesting group of early Żb. sherds, it threw no light on the position of Mg.³

8. The Culture Sequence

The discovery of the stratigraphies described in section 6 calls for a reappraisal of the Maltese prehistoric culture sequence. Not only is the order of the

each show unmistakable continuity, but there is hardly more connexion between these two groups than between the second of them and the group of Bronze Age phases beginning with TC. In other words, the phases from GhD. to Tx. can now be seen to fall into two distinct periods instead of the single period postulated by Evans. (See Table I.) Similarly the ordering of the phases by letters, introduced in 1954 and altered in 1958, is again thrown out by the latest work.

The solution here offered is to abandon the scheme of numbered periods and lettered phases. A third series within twelve years would only add to the confusion. Further, although the recognition of transi-

TABLE I
Sequence

Period	Phase	Abbreviation	Suggested date	Evans	
				1954	1959
Neolithic	Għar Dalam	GhD.	3800	Ia1 early	IA
	Grey Skorba	GSk.	3600
	Red Skorba	RSk.	3400
Copper Age	Żebbuġ	Żb.	3200	Ia2	Ic
	Mġarr	Mg.	2900	Ia1 late	Ib
	Ġgantija	Gg.	2850	Ib	Id
	Saffieni	Saf.	2450
	Tarxien	Tx.	2400	Ic	Ie
Bronze/Iron Age	Tarxien Cemetery	TC.	2000	IIa	IIA
	Borġ in-Nadur	BN.	1450	IIb	IIb
	Bahrija	Bah.	900 ¹	IIc	IIc
			800		

¹ Beginning of Bah.; BN. continues alongside it until both disappeared under Phoenician influence.

phases now stratigraphically proven, but the content of each has become very much clearer with the study of pure and rich levels.

The starting-point of this discussion must obviously be the sequence published by Professor J. D. Evans in 1954.⁴ Before that date, though differences between the Bronze Age phases had been noted, everything earlier was an undivided, indigestible whole. The details of the Bronze Age sequence were further revised by the present writer in 1960,⁵ and in any case this largely falls after the period of occupation of Skorba. Phases in which no alterations are called for will be referred to only briefly, to complete the sequence, and readers are referred to the cited works for information on them. Phases not adequately discussed previously will be described in comparable detail.

The most important single result of the stratified sequence is to reveal a clear break in the development between the RSk. and Żb. phases (described below). The three phases before and the five after the break

¹ Compare the lowest floors in Mġarr East and Skorba West.

² See p. 36. It yielded three probably imported sherds also, treated on p. 45.

³ Two sherd scatters near this site, pointed out by Inspector J. Attard, Malta Police, deserve investigation. About 50 m. to the east is one consisting of nothing but GhD. material. The

tional zones between the phases renders it unlikely that new phases will be inserted into the present sequence, the possibility cannot be completely excluded.

The naming of the phases now offers no problem, since they are simply known by their type sites as before, or if introduced for the first time have had suitable ones found for them. The convenience of using the abbreviated form where the old number and letter is no longer permissible will have become apparent already. Not only does it avoid the sometimes lengthy phase names, e.g. Tarxien Cemetery, it prevents ambiguities between sites and phases where both are under discussion. The disadvantage that the relative positions of the phases are no longer immediately obvious is unavoidable when the possibility of future additions must be considered. However, it should fade rapidly as their names, in full or abbreviated, and order become familiar.

Evans rejected the earlier terms of Neolithic and Bronze Age for the periods on the grounds that both second, 100 m. to the north, has sherds of all phases. No structural remains are visible at either, implying lightly built village sites.

⁴ Evans, 1953, actually published in June 1954. See also Evans, 1959.

⁵ Trump, 'Later Prehistory'.

survive to so late a date¹ that although copper and iron respectively are never found in them, this showed more the inadequacy of negative evidence than anything else. If the inhabitants of Malta did not know of copper and iron by then, when both were already in common use in Sicily, they should have done. If the negative evidence is disregarded, there is no longer objection to the use of Neolithic to describe the first three Maltese phases, unless it be to the Three Age system altogether, which seems to the writer too useful when used with caution to be entirely rejected. These

9. GhD.

The pottery of this phase³ falls into two classes distinct in ware, shape, and decoration. The proportions of the two are difficult to estimate because of doubtful intermediate sherds, and in any case vary in different deposits. An overall estimate would be roughly one-quarter fine to three-quarters coarse.

The fine ware has usually a smooth homogeneous fabric, occasionally with medium to small grits visible in it. Sometimes it decays inside, the more resistant

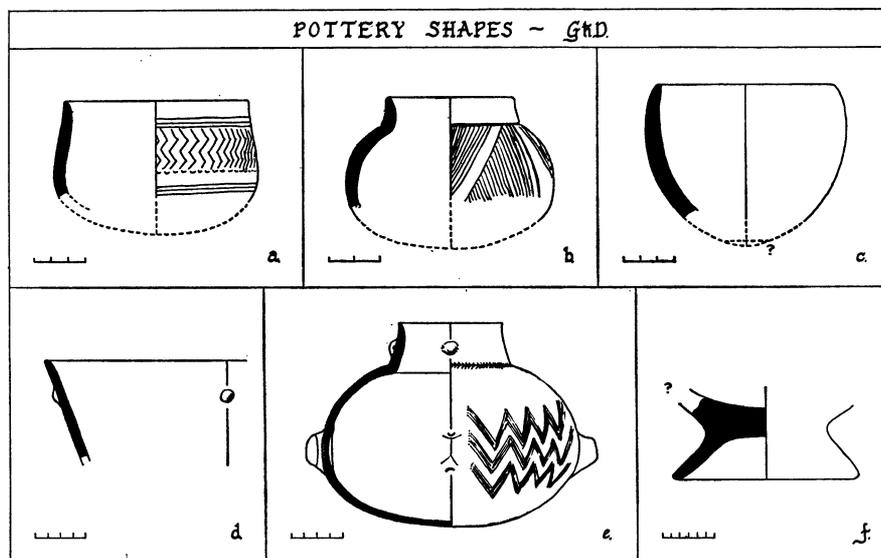


FIG. 18. GhD. pottery shapes (scale in cm.).

phases show many points of contact with the corresponding Neolithic ones in Sicily.

Similarly the next five, though to a decreasing extent after the first, relate to the Copper Age sequence of Sicily, and the succeeding ones to the Bronze Age there. Although no copper has yet been found on sites of the second period in Malta,² it is felt that the two considerations—need to mark the break from the first period adequately, and relations with the Three Age phases in Sicily—are sufficient to introduce the term Copper Age to describe the second period in Malta, from Żb. to Tx.

The following period is best described as Bronze/Iron Age because its middle phase, Borġ in-Nadur (BN.), survives alongside the third, Bahrija (Baĥ.), the two being related respectively to Middle Bronze and Iron Age cultures to the north. In other words, there is no real break here and the Three Age system is not sufficient excuse for making one.

¹ The raising of the absolute dates, see section 22, does not affect the issue as relatively to Sicily they remain unaltered.

² Though the gold inlay in the ring from Tarxien, Evans,

polished surfaces flaking off. It can be dark or milky grey, less often a brownish colour. The surfaces are always highly polished, usually grey, more rarely yellow. A characteristic shade never found in any other phase is a creamy grey. Sherds vary in thickness from 3 to 14 mm., the average being about 8 mm.

Two shapes outnumber all others by far. One is a globular jar with a distinct angle to a short straight neck, vertical or insloping, fig. 18*b* and *e*. This often bears a pair of horizontally pierced lugs, the shoulder having two larger vertically pierced ones, or tunnel handles, at the other quarters, fig. 19*d* and *h*. The second is a small deep bowl or vase with walls again vertical or insloping, fig. 18*a*. Though normally without handles, two sherds with broad strap ones seem to be of this form, fig. 19*e*. A few sherds are of open tronco-conic dishes, but these are often less well burnished and the shape is more characteristic of the poorer ware, cf. fig. 18*d*. Flat bases are present but so

1959, pl. 84, should be recalled.

³ Evans, 1953, p. 44; 1959, also p. 44.

few, a half-dozen all told, that there seems a strong probability that many vessels were round-bottomed. Though no certain example was noted, an undecorated sherd from a round base would be easily mistaken for a wall sherd, whereas one from a flat base would be unmistakable.

Handles are puzzling, fig. 19. Much the commonest are small bosses simply perforated vertically or

c, presumably part of a handle but of a form nowhere else recognized, asymmetric in every plane and so at present inexplicable.

Decoration is common on this ware, pl. xxiii, appearing on about a third of all sherds. Allowing for plain areas on decorated vessels, as many as half the pots might have been ornamented. Although clearly a branch of the impressed ware widespread throughout

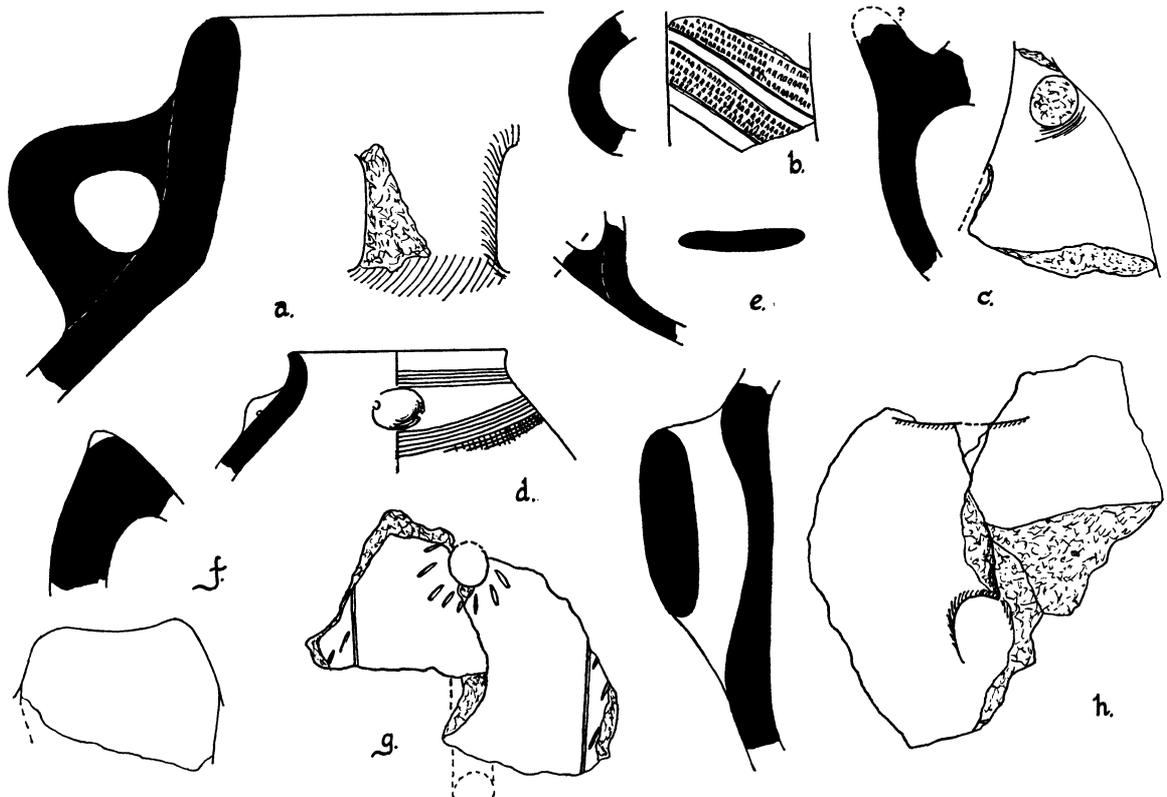


FIG. 19. GhD. handles. (1/2)

horizontally, in one case apparently both, fig. 19*d*. There are a few normal strap handles, *b* and *e*, very broad and thin in section, two of them decorated. One, *f*, a border-line case to the coarser ware, had a pinched end. It was undistinguished itself but important as the start of a line of development extending through the next two phases. Four small tunnel-handles came from these levels, their attribution confirmed by characteristic GhD. decoration in every case, *g*. Two simple ledge lugs only were found, rectangular and D-shaped respectively. No knobs occurred on this ware. The only animal protome like the two known from Ghar Dalam¹ was a life-like but damaged cow muzzle found on the surface of the north field. One further sherd is worthy of note,

the Mediterranean, simple impressions were only a secondary element in it. The only place where these occur alone is in a band round the base of a jar neck, or more rarely round the lip of a small bowl, even here usually with line decoration lower on the wall. Small impressed C's form scalloped edging to hatched areas or to a continuous line on a number of pieces. Dots can be used in the former way but more frequently border a continuous line or parallels. Dots or dashes in single or multiple lines may fill a band between two parallel lines but this is not common.

Line decoration is much more frequent than impressed, although on some pieces it can be seen that the line itself is impressed into the surface by means of a notched edge. In no case could a definite shell edge

¹ Evans, 1959, pl. 72.

be recognized. Mostly the lines are continuous, grooved rather than incised. Whether grooved or impressed they are used only in close-set hatching—in chevrons open at the ends or bounded by crosslines, in transversely or diagonally hatched bands, in groups of two to four parallels (rarely more), or in cross-hatched triangles or bands. Despite this, the designs are bold in their simplicity. It is worth pointing out explicitly that certain techniques associated with impressed ware in general and Sicilian (Stentinello)

always dark grey to black but the colour is variable at the surface—greys, dark browns, buff, even pink is not uncommon. This can be either left rough or more often poorly polished, the lines of the burnisher remaining clearly apparent. It is generally rather thicker than the finer ware, 7 to 35 mm., average about 12 mm. A very thick but soft and corky variety occurred, particularly in KD (the GhD. hut). It seems too friable to have been part of a portable vessel.

The commonest shape in this ware is a bowl of very

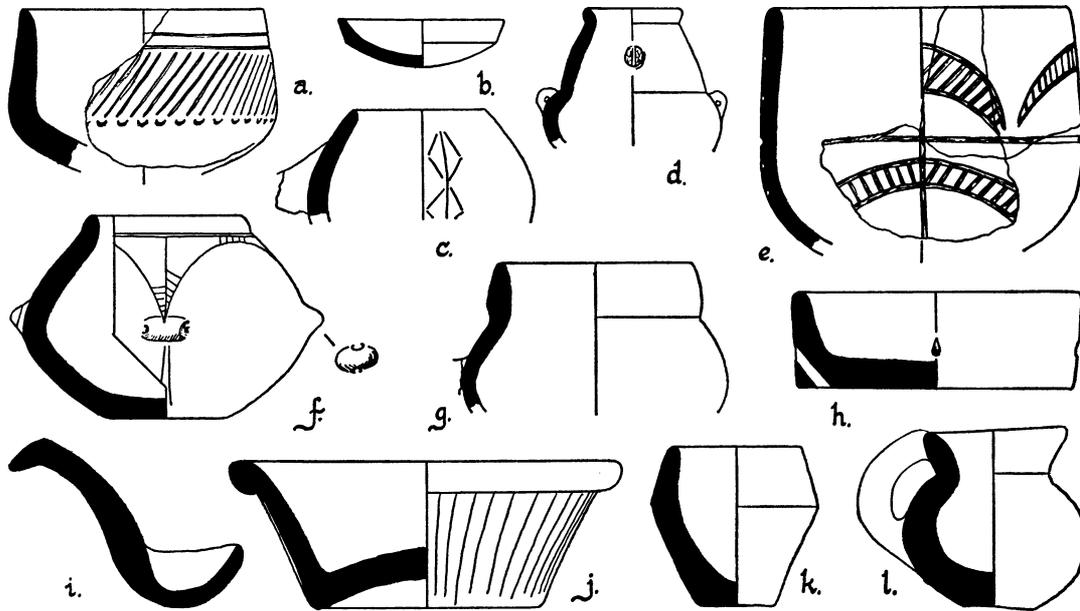


FIG. 20. Miniature vessels. (a) GhD.; (b and c) RSk.; (d) Žb.; (e) Mġ.; (f-h) Ġg.; (i-k) Tx.; (l) TC. (½)

impressed ware in particular, have never yet been recorded from Malta. They include true cardinal impressions, rocker decoration, and lozenge stamps.

Lines and impressions were probably always filled with a white inlay, though this does not often survive. Being made of the local gypsum¹—a plaster of Paris in fact—this is not surprising. One sherd at least showed traces of an ochre wash over the white filling. Another from Mġarr had diagonal hatching (turning back beyond the edge of the sherd as chevrons?) of which every third intermediate band had been chiselled out. The result after filling would have been alternate broad and narrow lines of white across the grey polished surface. Though a common design in Stentinello, this and the example illustrated by Evans² are the only two from Malta.

The coarser ware is often very gritty and breaks much more irregularly than the finer, but does not suffer from disintegration inside. The core is nearly

simple form with straight or slightly curved walls, tronco-conic or in deeper examples cup-like, fig. 18*d* and *c*. One or two rim sherds of heavy ovoid and in-sloping necked jars occur. Flat bases are again rare—one cup certainly had one, whereas a second was almost certainly round—but heavy pedestals, 4 to 8 cm. high, are frequent, fig. 18*f*. The slope of wall above the septum suggests that this continued up into a tronco-conic dish.

Handles are not uncommon, vertical or horizontal, always large and ungainly, fig. 19*a*. Several are partly recessed into the wall as semi-tunnel handles, fig. 19*h*, asymmetric and so certainly vertical. One is from the shoulder of a heavy jar, and the root of another survives on an open dish; both of these are, however, horizontal. A few unpierced knobs occur, simple or double, some large enough to be considered lugs.

Decoration is very much rarer than on the fine ware, as little as one sherd in thirty. It is also much simpler

¹ This is found commonly in small pieces in the blue clay.

² Evans, 1953, pl. vii. 5; 1959, pl. 35*a*.

and rougher. Knobs have been already mentioned; on small sherds it is impossible to tell if they were functional, to improve the grip, or decorative. Two certainly decorative techniques are recorded. The most frequent is incision before firing. On many sherds this seems no more than haphazard slashing, but again the small size of the sherds may give a misleading impression. Three have lines following 1 to 3 cm. below the rim of an open bowl, and of these one has pendent verticals, a second perhaps a hatched triangle, below this. Two combine incision with knobs. Four sherds, two each from Skorba and Mgarr, have a series of thumb and forefinger pinches in the wet clay falling into lines. Two have incised lines in addition, one knobs as well. There is no surviving trace of inlay.

Before leaving the pottery, a word more must be said about evidence for development within the phase. As mentioned in the section on stratigraphy, p. 16 above, in one trench, AF, two fairly rich GhD. levels were distinguishable. In the upper the proportion of decorated sherds, of both fine and coarse ware, had dropped sharply. In the upper level the fine ware sherds, both plain and decorated, were also more frequently gritty than in the lower, approaching GSk. fabric. In other trenches levels appearing to be truly transitional between GhD. and GSk. were found. In these the coarse tronco-conic dishes tended to have thinner lips, though no finer in fabric, knobs were more common on them but decoration rare or absent. Correspondingly some sherds of undoubted GSk. fabric (see below) were already present, though distinctive forms like splayed lugs, short pedestals, and S-bowls were not yet in evidence. The pinched-top handle mentioned above continues, with definitely saddled tip. From this evidence the writer is fully satisfied that GSk. is locally derived out of GhD.

Since the various phases of Maltese prehistory are defined solely in terms of their pottery it is not always possible to date other artefacts directly, i.e. most GhD. sherds will be recognizable as such even if found in much later levels, but a GhD. flint would not. Certain clear correlations will emerge in the succeeding sections, but otherwise non-ceramic artefacts have been assumed to belong to the same phase as the latest material associated with them. As they change little from phase to phase, this is less misleading than it might have been. In any case, the difficulty does not arise in GhD., there being no earlier phase for material to survive from.

¹ The nearest points on the shore are Gnejna and St. Paul's Bays, 2 miles west and 1½ miles north of the site.

² This was generally accepted on the macroscopic evidence and confirmed spectrographically by C. Renfrew. However, Professor A. Cornaggia di Castiglione at the Rome Congress of

The cow-head in terracotta, probably part of a handle, has been already mentioned. The only other finds in this material are fragments of clay daub bearing the imprint of the wattle on to which they had been smeared. Apart from this, the evidence on buildings is too scanty in this, or any phase before Ġg., for general conclusions. The details of the individual structures have been given already (p. 10).

Worked bone has so far proved almost equally scanty. Two fine awls are the sum total, fig. 21*b*. A considerable quantity of unworked bone has been recovered in which all the domestic species one might expect are already present—sheep/goat, cow, pig, and dog. Appendix III analyses them further. Sea-shells are not uncommon also,¹ one apparently pierced for suspension, cf. fig. 26*e*, the rest brought to the site for food. Fortunately evidence on crops has also come to light, barley, wheat, and lentils, preserved by charring, see Appendix IV.

Compared with later periods, stonework was scanty. Four materials were used for flaking, in varying proportions in the different phases. In this first one, a translucent grey obsidian, since identified as from the source on Lipari,² seems to have been the commonest, followed closely by flint in many colours (from Sicily), and greeny-yellow chert (local, in the globigerina limestone). Rather rarer was a more opaque obsidian with a distinct green or khaki tinge imported from Pantelleria. The distribution in time of the two obsidians is of interest, this being summarized in Table IV.

The great majority of pieces show no secondary working. The obsidian particularly is usually in small shapeless scraps, hardly surprising considering the distance of its sources. Larger pieces were too valuable to discard. Only four objects deserve mention, two fine utilized bladelets, fig. 22*a*, of Lipari obsidian and brown-red flint, a blade of buff flint blunted to form a rough awl point, and an irregular flake of chert roughly worked into scraping edges at two points on its periphery.

To be associated with the evidence of the carbonized grain is the quern from the floor of the GhD. hut, a rectangular block of coralline limestone 40 by 30 cm., slightly hollowed on one face.

10. GSk.

The characteristic fabric of the pottery of this phase is a compact dark grey ware with frequent small white grits due to inclusion of powdered gypsum in the clay

Prehistoric Studies in 1962 attributed this obsidian on the same evidence to Melos. The author, Renfrew, and Cornaggia agreed on the identification of the variety mentioned below as Pantellerian. J. R. Cann and C. Renfrew, *P.P.S.* xxx, 1964 p. 111.

for tempering. The surfaces are unslipped and highly polished, of variable grey colour. Not counting the survival of some GhD. and transitional coarse wares in small quantities in GSk. levels, there are two other fabrics, which will be described in turn later.

Two shapes alone account for over three-quarters of the GSk. sherds found. The simplest is a straight-sided or slightly convex open tronco-conic bowl. Smaller examples seem to have been round-bottomed

a round bottom. This need not, of course, be the case in all other examples.

Two other rarer shapes complete the selection, a necked and an ovoid jar. The former appears in several varieties, the neck being separate and cylindrical, sometimes with everted lip, a markedly in-sloping S-curve, or simply a slight upturn to the lip of an ovoid jar. One vessel had sherds giving the complete profile, including a slightly concave base,

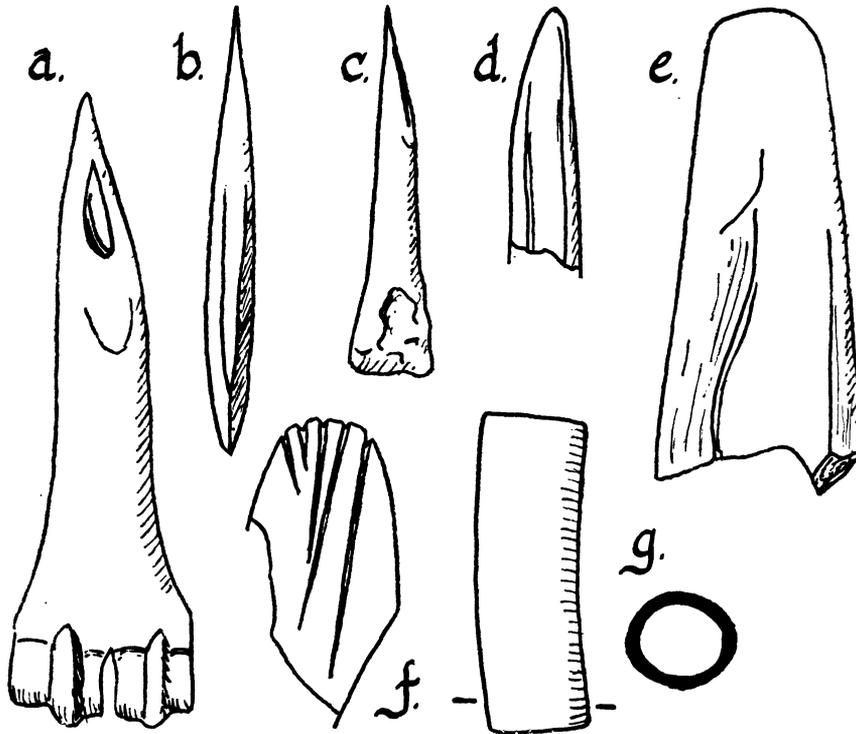


FIG. 21. Bonework, various phases. (a-d) awls; (e) burnisher; (f) grooved slip; (g) tube. (1/3)

with large handles, fig. 23c (see below), serving as ladles or dippers. Larger ones occasionally show scars of horizontally pierced splayed lugs low on their outer walls. One is beginning to thicken at the bottom as if to join a pedestal base, and the bowl curves of some pedestalled sherds, not complete to the rim, would agree better with this group than the next, fig. 23d.

This second shape is another bowl, usually deeper in proportion and distinguished by a slight S-curve to its wall, fig. 23a and b. It is very variable in detail. Some are so nearly straight as to run naturally into the last form, in others the S-curve can be vertical or slope either in or out. In some the lip is thickened internally and may be angled to the shoulder, giving a separate lip, or on the shoulder, making a carination. No complete section survives, though in three sherds the shape can be seen so close to the centre line as to imply

fig. 23e. The ovoid jars are of the simplest, usually small, and could perhaps be considered merely extreme forms of the convex-walled deeper dishes.

Base sherds show a complete range from flat or hollowed through a projecting foot or disk form, again flat or hollow, to foot-rings, on through low straight or concave pedestals, and higher pedestals, to concave and S-curved ones. The simpler pedestals are much commoner than either complicated ones or flat bases, fig. 23d.

Various types of handle occur, falling into certain well-defined categories. The most notable combined distinctiveness with commonness to such an extent that they soon became known as 'Skorba lugs', fig. 24a, b, and f, a name there is no reason to change. These are horizontal slightly to strongly splayed lugs varying in length from 2 to 7 cm. (the longest complete one) or more. Some are pierced through their length and some

are imperforate, but many of the latter have pits at their ends, skeuomorphic of a true perforation. Of those on sherds with a recognizable profile, three are on S-bowls, one on a straight bowl (other sherds occur with a handle probably of this form broken away), one on a carination. On smaller sherds where the shape is less certain the S-bowl appears the commonest.

A second important handle, fig. 23c, 24d, g, and h, is derived from the GhD. pinched-top one, see p. 22.

tional and later mixed levels, take us to the final form current in the next phase, where it will be more fully described. The whole series can be called M-handles since their outline retains this form throughout its successive changes.

Another handle with antecedents (see p. 22) and descendants is the tunnel lug or subcutaneous handle, fig. 19h. One end is nearly always cut off more sharply than the other, implying a vertical orientation

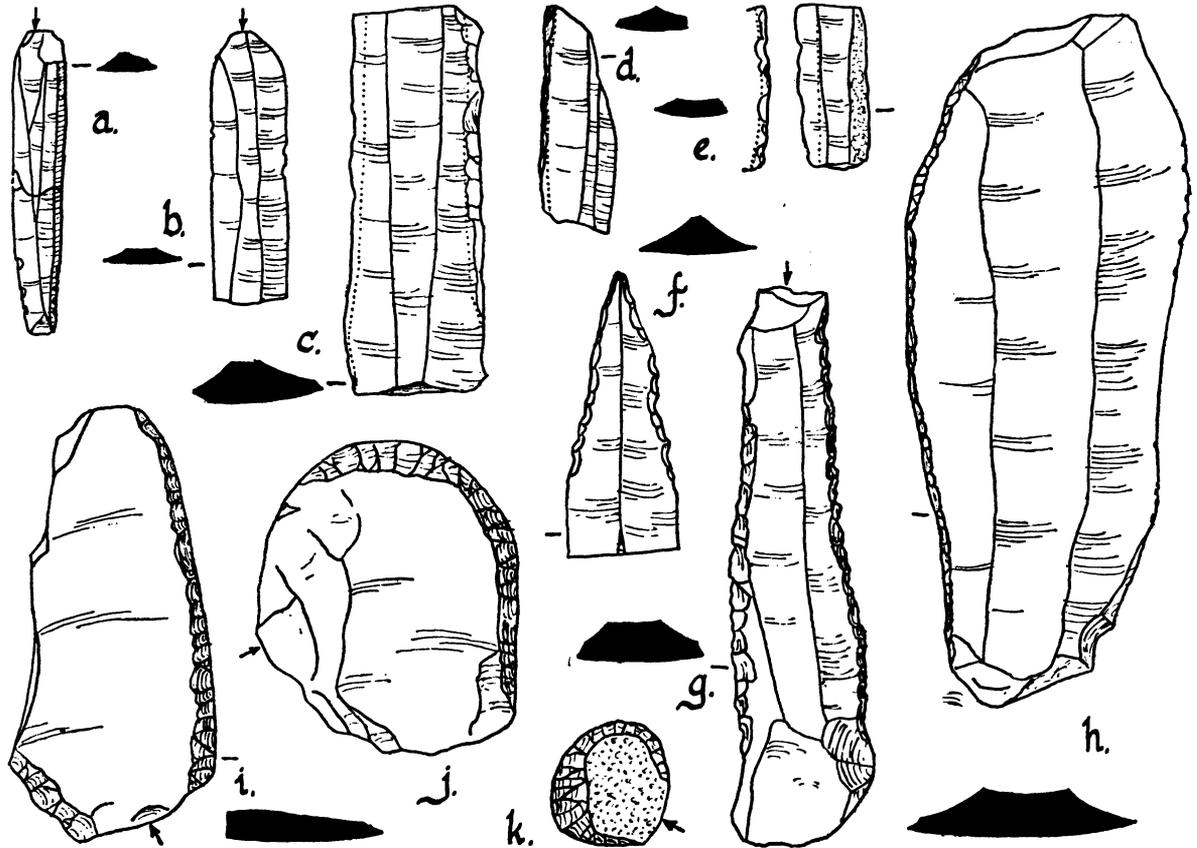


FIG. 22. Flaked stonework, various phases. (a) obsidian; (g and h) chert; rest flint. (3)

It shows considerable development during the phase, though this could be correlated with the stratigraphy only in the most general terms. Early ones are high, broad, strap handles sweeping up from the wall of a ladle and bending sharply down from a saddled peak to the rim. One has a long peak above the handle hole and could be described as an axe handle. Two have a knob below the saddle on the bowl side. In intermediate forms the outer bar of the strap handle is much reduced, rejoining the inner bar near or above the level of the rim. The final form in this phase, and the most frequent, has the handle reduced to a mere pierced lug, in one case not even pierced, at the base of the saddle of what is now a trapezoidal projection of the lip. Two sherds, respectively from RSk. transi-

in the shoulder of a jar. It is not, however, very common in the fine grey ware. Sherds are almost always pink, with the same white grits, slightly coarser and unpolished. Oddly no rim or base sherds of this ware have been recognized, and few wall sherds, so the form of the vessel bearing these handles remains unknown.

A few wide but thin strap-handle sherds could be from early M-handles, though a limited number of more normal strap handles or large perforated lugs does occur, fig. 24i. Several examples are known near the lips of straight-walled bowls. An unusual sherd is of a broad rectangular lip projection with two, possibly more, 'windows', fig. 24c. A second sherd could be of the same type. Finally there is a variable group of lugs, ledges, bosses, horizontal or diagonal ribs, short

wedges (one pierced through the higher end), and one resembling lumpy Skorba lugs with two vertical perforations, fig. 24e. The total of these, however, is still small compared with the standard splayed lugs.

PC4 (a RSk. level, though the ware of this piece seems certainly GSk.) has a series of closely spaced incised chevrons, nearer GhD. style than anything later. An S-bowl of GSk. shape and fabric, fig. 25a,

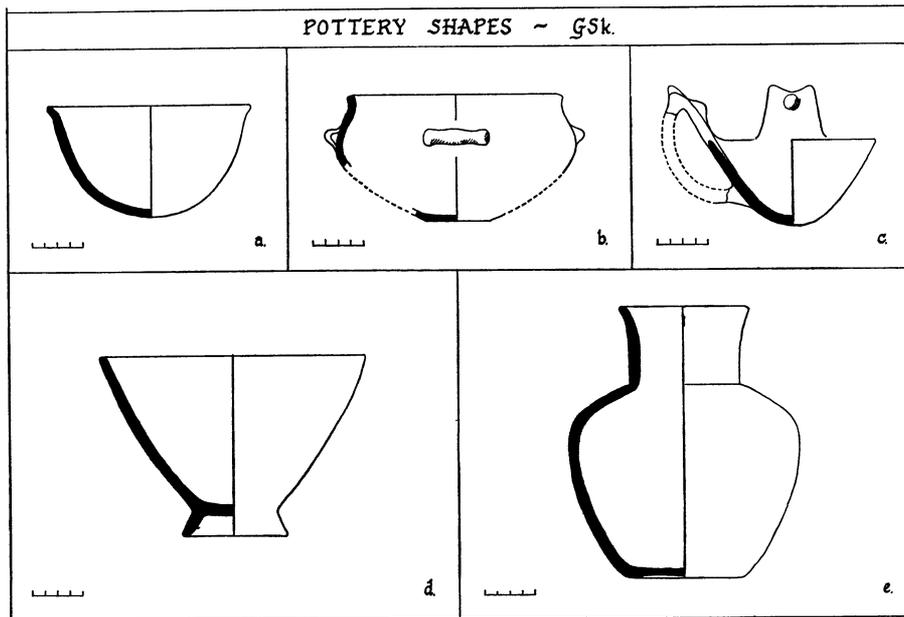


FIG. 23. GSk. pottery shapes.

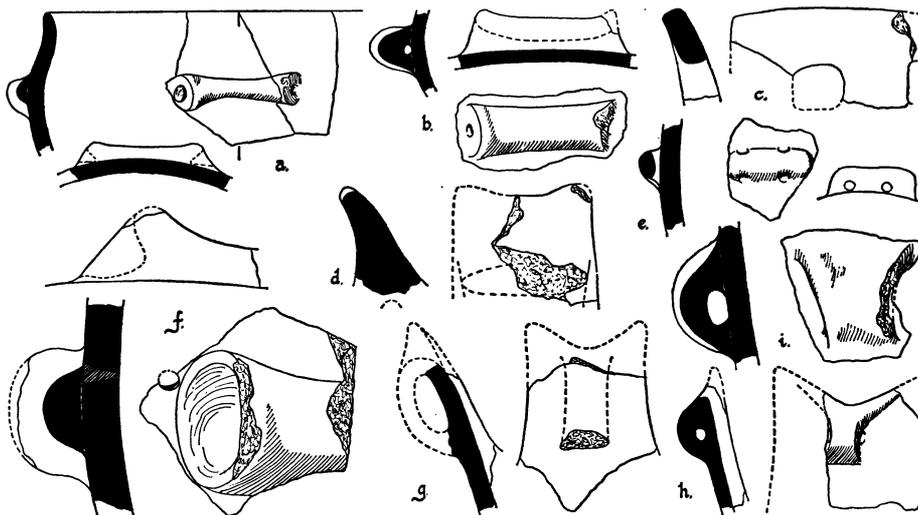


FIG. 24. GSk. handles. (1/3)

Decoration is extraordinarily scarce and its absence must be considered one of the main characteristics of this phase, since it occurs freely in all others in Malta. A few sherds have scratched designs recognizably related to RSk. ones and usually from levels showing other transitional traits. Three only deserve special mention. The base and lower part of a jar wall from

has on the shoulder two pendent arcs five times repeated in vertical files. This foreshadows the designs based on C's common on RSk. carinated bowls. It came from low in MD2 which was pure GSk. though the top of this level produced transitional material. Finally a small inverted lip bowl, a shape not exactly paralleled elsewhere, had a single incised line with

traces of white filling running round the shoulder, this decoration being also unparalleled, fig. 25*b*. Its fabric and the place where it was found, TE4, suggest that it belongs to this phase.

Brief reference has already been made to transitional material. A number of traits closely foreshadowing RSk. ones though in characteristic GSk. fabric turned up in association with each other in certain deposits. The upper level of the fill south of the RSk. shrine (MC2, QC2, MD2) is the best example of this. At least

ever, a number of sherds have cordons in various patterns, some apparently intended as functional lugs, some more obviously decorative. These include a possibly zoomorphic figure, a wavy line hanging from the lip (fig. 29*g*) and a knob and a C in star and crescent arrangement (sideways C's recur alone). This ware survives only sporadically in RSk.

Terracotta was even less employed for other purposes than in GhD. No daub was noticed, but this is in any case only accidentally preserved. One sherd

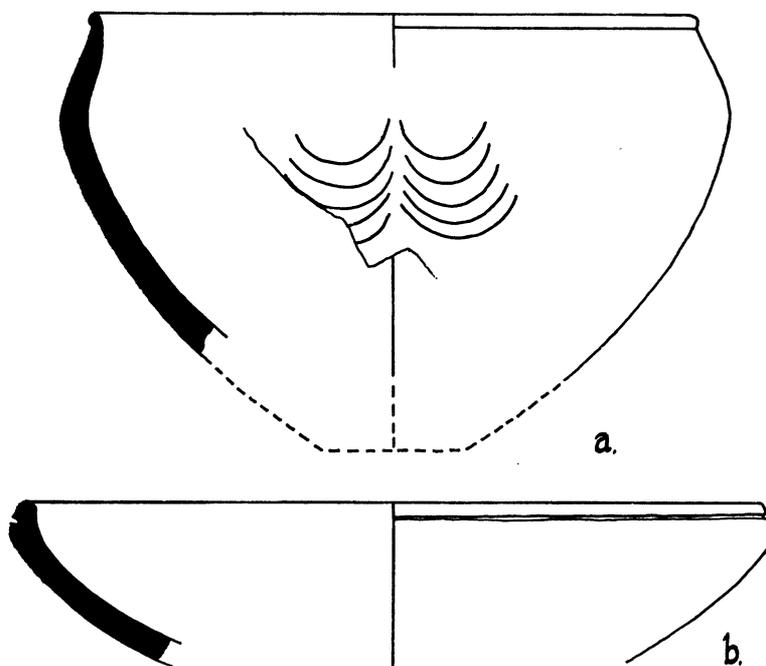


FIG. 25. GSk. decorated vessels (MD2 and TE4). (§)

one vessel from here, a vase with small splayed GSk. lugs, had the RSk. slip, fig. 27*e*. Such signs of transition include carinated bowls, fig. 27*b*, the few decorated sherds (excepting the three mentioned in the last paragraph), the fully developed M-handles, and the coarse ware to be described below. These in combination form a transitional zone like that between GhD. and GSk., giving proof of the derivation of the later phase from the earlier, and of the completeness of this part of the sequence.

The coarse ware can be briefly dismissed since the QC2, etc. deposit was the only one where it occurred at all commonly. The ware is in fact more compact than earlier coarse wares, its coarseness lying more in its surface finish than in its fabric. It is completely unpolished, and usually an orange-buff colour, often irregularly fired to give grey-black blotches. The shapes are simple large ovoid jars with thick lips. Flat bases have been recognized but no handles. How-

appeared to have been chipped into a disk and perforated for use as a spindle whorl, though the chipping was too rough for this to be certain.

Bonework is still infrequent: three awls, a curious grooved slip of unknown use, and a well-worked tube, perhaps for cosmetics, fig. 21*g*. One cow incisor, a cockle (*Cardium* sp.), and a cowrie (*Cyprea* sp.) had been perforated for suspension, in each case by a different method—by drilling through the root, by grinding off the umbo, and by sawing through the shell near one end respectively, fig. 26*b*, *c*, and *g*.

Stonework on the other hand is very much more in evidence. Obsidian remains rare with the important exception of two large cores in level VE4 (pl. xxiii*b*). One, weighing 1 kg. 700 gm., was from Pantelleria, the other, of 400 gm., from Lipari. Disregarding the core, the number of Pantellerian fragments is so markedly reduced as to suggest that the trade thence had already ended, some scraps remaining for a while in circula-

tion.¹ Flint remains scarce also and occurs mainly in the form of broken blades. Only three require further notice. One is a single-piece sickle blade, now 6.8 cm. long, with secondary working and gloss from use in grass or corn cutting, fig. 22c. The other two also have sickle gloss but are smaller blades, elements in a compound sickle. One is unworked, the other notched into a saw-edge. In the absence of actual grains these

small minority compared with those which, to all appearances, were thrown aside unused.)

Alongside flaking, grinding of stone is now securely attested, if only rarely. The blade end of an axe-, or better adze-, amulet came to light in OB10, fig. 26l, a surprisingly early occurrence of a long-lived type.² It is of a hard green-black non-local stone. A chip of much paler green stone from PC7, fig. 26j, is also

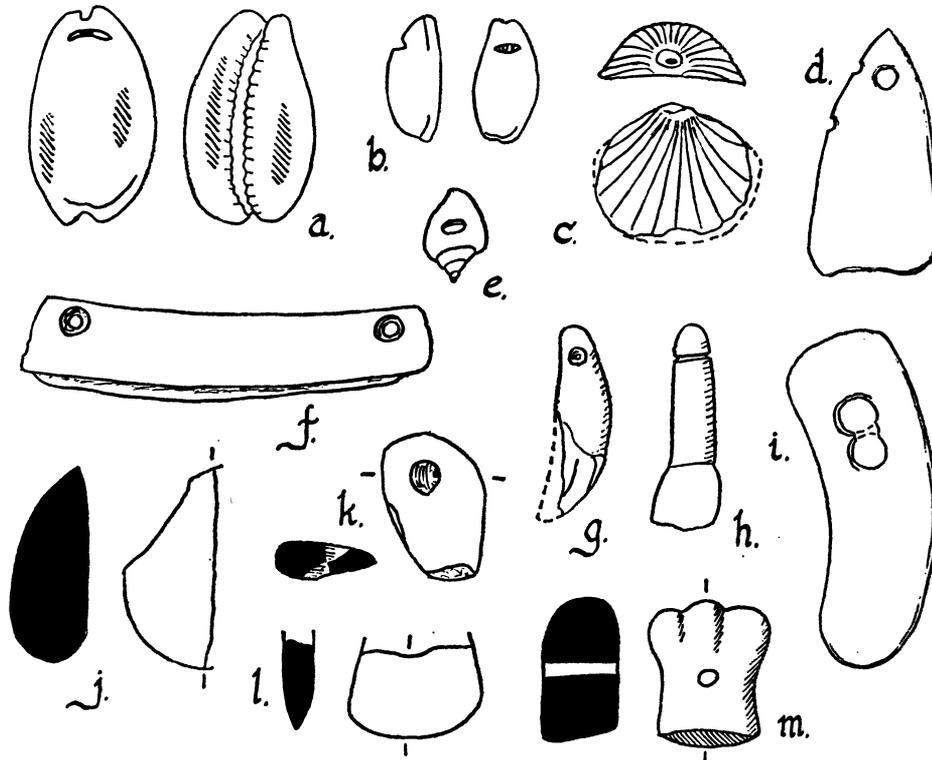


FIG. 26. Amulets, various phases. (a-e) shell; (f) bone; (g-i) tooth; (j-l) stone; (m) terracotta. (3)

are useful evidence for the continuation of cereal cultivation.

By contrast chert is extremely frequent, several levels producing more flakes than potsherds. The pieces are very irregular in form, rough flakes of varying size and shape. Few are even true blades. They seem to have been struck in enormous quantity—there is no shortage of raw material—and as readily discarded. (For precision tools the imported flint or obsidian was employed. Only two have secondary working which seems deliberate, to produce an end and a side scraper, but their irregularity and the number of flakes with more or fewer utilization spalls cast a certain doubt. Even utilized flakes are in a

polished and could be from another. It was in any case an import since the nearest outcrops of metamorphic rock are in the Messina corner of Sicily. The source of these two pieces has not been identified and may be much further off.

Occurring in many deposits of this phase, and particularly common in VE, are slingbolts carved from globigerina limestone, Pl. xxiii d, some two dozen in all. Their length varies from 5 to 7.5 cm., with an average weight of 65 gm. Two flint nodules were hammered into spheres of the same weight, and some twenty rounded sea-pebbles of similar weight and shape were brought up to the site presumably for the same purpose. One of the latter was naturally perforated

¹ *Antiquity*, 1963, p. 203. See also Table IV.

² Examples are most frequent in tombs—Zebbug (Zb.),

Xemxija (mainly Ġg.), and above all the Hypogeum (Ġg., Saf., and Tx.).

through one end. No slingstone was found in a pure GhD. level, and so few in RSk. and later ones that they must there be considered sporadic from GSk. They therefore form a stone type limited to a single phase.¹

One last material to mention is something between pumice and slag in appearance, probably an Etna lava. It was found scattered in small pieces in GSk.

Vessel shapes, fig. 27, can again be grouped in rough order of commonness into carinated dishes, straight-walled vessels, necked jars and vases approaching biconical form, though most of these groups are capable of great variety within themselves.

The carinated dishes, pl. xxva, vary in three factors, apart from decoration. The slope above the carination

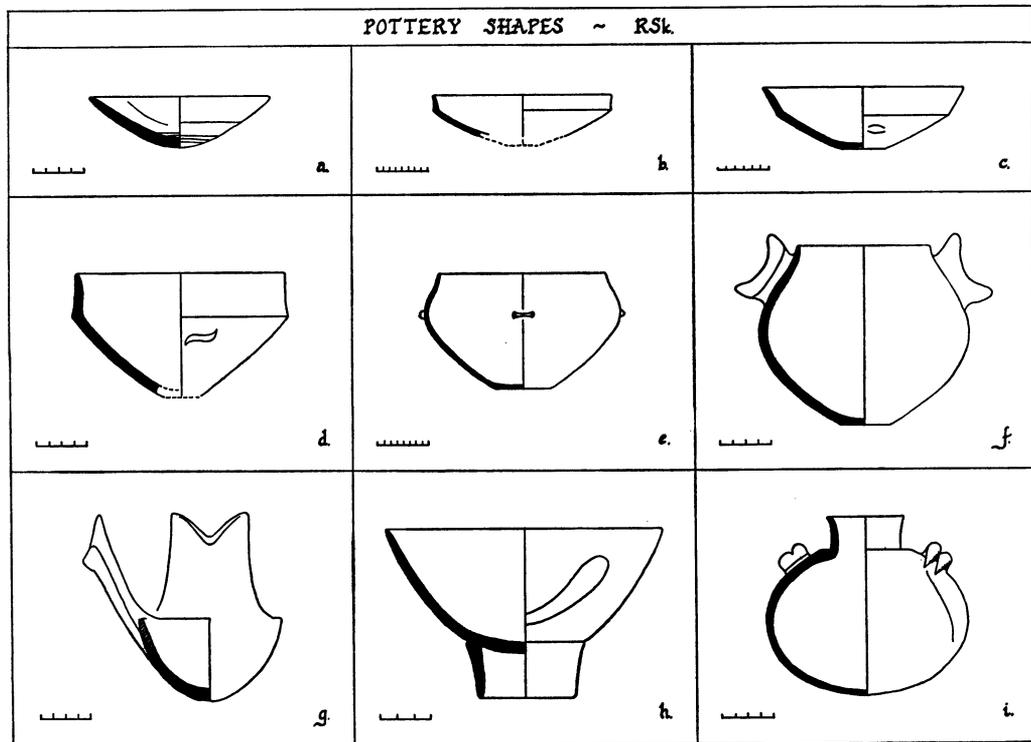


FIG. 27. RSk. pottery shapes.

levels above the GhD. wall in the south-west. For what purpose it was imported is not known.

11. RSk.

The fact that the last phase and this one have had to take their names from the same site, not having been found in quantity at any other, helps to emphasize a real similarity. The white-speckled grey fabric of the two styles of pottery is identical and the vessel-shapes and handle forms, although distinct, repeatedly show continuity. The two major changes are the application of a differently coloured slip to the surface, and the great increase in decoration. Of these the slip is the more general and provides the simpler name. While GSk. is never slipped and nearly always grey, RSk. is almost invariably slipped. Red, often a brilliant red, is the predominant colour, though varicoloured and black sherds occur quite commonly.

¹ A point worth noting as they were common at Ghar Dalam, whence a few GSk. sherds have now been identified. Slingstones reappear in Tx. but in a much larger size.

can be anything from vertical to widely outplayed, and either slightly concave or straight. One sherd of a large bowl with high insloping wall was exceptional. Further, it had a long splayed lug handle, whereas no other had a handle of any kind. Secondly the size ranges widely between diameters of 5 and 50 cm. Thirdly the proportions are far from constant, from a shallow dish to a deep bowl (*c* and *d*). Decoration is fairly common, usually built up of incised C's, or occasionally rectilinear. It is further described below. The bases are flat and rather small in proportion.

Four varieties of the simple open bowl occur. The simplest and rarest is a small shallow saucer-like dish with a round bottom and no handle (*a*). It can be scratch-decorated inside and out with pendent loops or, in one clear example, concentric circles.

More distinctive is a soup ladle, pl. xxiva, also with rounded base though deeper, which bears the final

form of the M-handle whose ancestry has been already traced (p. 26), fig. 28*a* and *b*. This is a long forked tongue rising from the lip, having the bottom of the V in its tip thickened into a rib on the outer side. This usually forms a continuous angled bar below the V, but may be separated by a valley at the centre into two bars. It is the last vestige of the strap handle on the back of the projection. A variant form, fig. 28*c*, represented by only two sherds, is narrower with an undivided tip bent in and nicked like a hand or an

convex walls must be included, though uncommon and with little homogeneity. Deeper ones could be called ovoid jars, shallower and more open ones sugar-bowls. Their base form is unknown.

The next major group is again variable. The most general form is a squat globular jar with a small flat or hollow base, fig. 27*i*. The neck turns up sharply from, or is even occasionally recessed slightly into, a more or less marked shoulder. It can be cylindrical, or slope either in or out. It is basically straight but

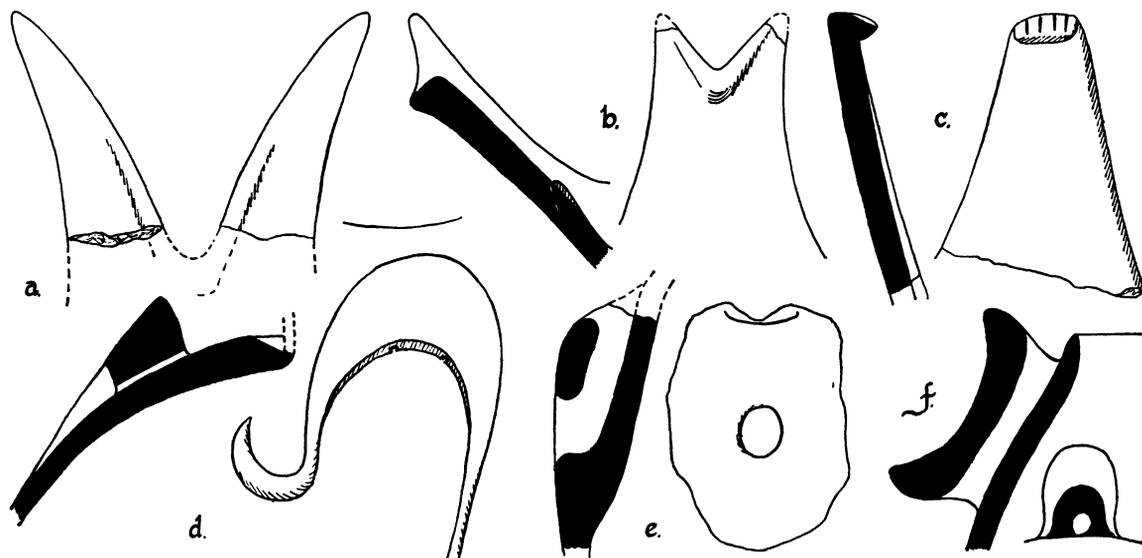


FIG. 28. RSk. handles (*e*) ($\frac{1}{2}$), rest ($\frac{1}{3}$).

old-fashioned back-scratcher. The diameters of ladles recognized from sherds ranges from 6 to 11 cm. but certain handle fragments of large size imply ladles much larger than this, indistinguishable in sherd form from the next type. One restored ladle showed wear on its lip which could only have been caused by its being used as a dipper, fig. 27*g*.

The most frequent variety of open bowl had a straight or slightly convex wall from 15 to 50 cm. diameter standing on a high pedestal, fig. 27*h*. It is again quite commonly decorated, this time with designs based on loops. The pedestal, however, is much the most distinctive feature. It is fairly high with a smooth S-curve having the diameter of its base usually appreciably less than that of its junction with the bowl. This of course is contrary to the whole principle of pedestals, normally designed to give as stable a base to a round-bottomed vessel as possible. A few examples have circular holes through the pedestal wall. No handles are found on them.

Finally a group of shapes having in common more

often with an everted lip. The neck diameter ranges from 4 to 10 cm. Handles are varied—horizontal splayed lugs, vertical ribs, vertical tunnel handles or, the most usual, horseshoe lugs with two vertical perforations standing on the shoulder. These lugs are often flattened on the outer face. A large example from OE4 had a relief design continuing from the ends of the lug into a crescent on one side, an uncertain shape on the other, fig. 28*d* and pl. xxv*b*. Yet another type consists of two adjacent horizontal ribs with tapering ends and a single vertical perforation. It finds a close parallel on a Serra d'Alto Ware jar from the funerary cleft below the Grotta dei Pipistrelli, Matera.¹

The final group is much scarcer. Intermediate in proportions between a jar and a bowl, it can be described as a vase. Its profile is rounded biconical, some examples having an everted lip in addition, fig. 26*f*. The base is usually flat. Another characteristic handle is found on it, a wide splayed trumpet lug, fig 28*f*. Though derived from the horizontal GSk.

¹ Museo Nazionale D. Ridola, Matera.

splayed lugs and the horizontal Sicilian Diana ones, every RSk. example with certain orientation, a half-dozen or so, is set vertically on a vase shoulder. In one restorable vessel there were two such handles, pl. xxivb. A surprisingly close parallel occurs on a jar from Troy I-II.¹

The decoration requires further description, fig. 29.

though simple spiral, free at either end, of at most two turns (a).

In a second class the C's have become V's, (b) the resultant lozenges being distributed in exactly similar ways, single or double, across or below carinations, etc. One or two other varieties occur rarely, a palm-leaf, diagonals, zigzags (on a spindle whorl), a cross

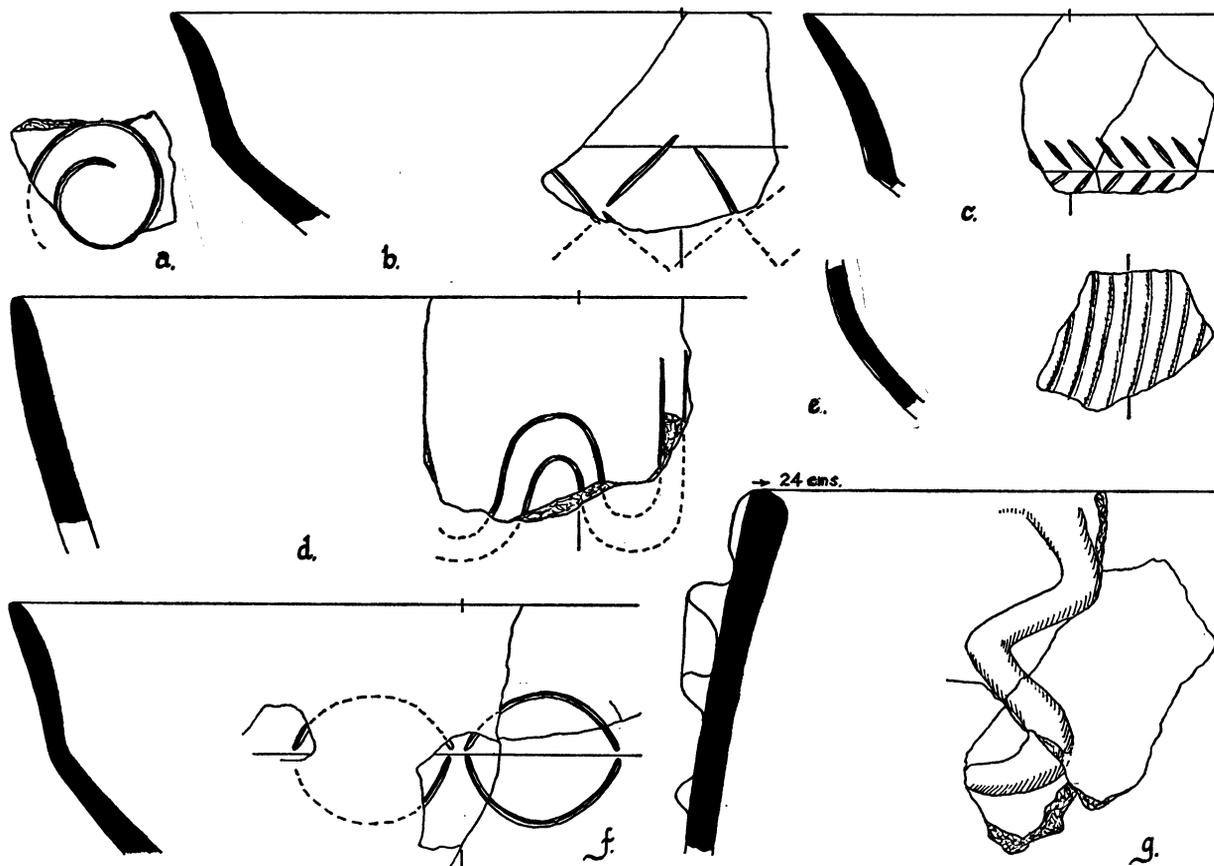


FIG. 29. RSk. pottery decoration. (½)

The standard form on carinated bowls is based on C's incised immediately before firing, pl. xxva. There are many different arrangements. Commonest are single or double, in one case treble, C's pendent from the carination or lower on the wall. One C below may be fronted by one above, (f, and fig. 27c.) giving an eye shape, even more obvious when two such pairs lie adjacent. These can span the carination or lie horizontally below it. One example with two pairs vertically placed was also exceptional in being on a pedestalled bowl. Other variants have the C's back to back, standing on end, or joined end to end in S- (fig. 27d.) or O- form. A noteworthy version, of which five examples were found, was elaborated into a true

(on flat bases). A different form of rectilinear design consists of short dashes repeated in two sloping rows, like an ear of corn (c). This can span a carination or run vertically on a pedestal bowl. Two vertical dashes alone are again found below a carination or on a pedestal.

The loops on pedestalled bowls are less easy to classify. Being of much larger size, sherds usually show only a small section of the design, which is correspondingly more difficult to interpret. The three main forms seem to be much-enlarged C's, a sea-serpent curve running round the wall, not always continuous (d), and asymmetric loops like water-wings or half a yin-yang (fig. 27h). All these can be single or

¹ H. Schmidt, *Trojanischer Altertümer*, p. 107, no. 2288. (½)

multiple, up to quadruple. One yin-yang has a dotted background. On only one sherd, possibly accidental, does one curve branch from another. Where the vessel shape is recognizable it is invariably a pedestalled bowl or open saucer.

One final sherd to mention is from a thin-walled jar or vase with closely spaced diagonal fluting (*e*). Though unique, it is of typical RSk. fabric. It was found in KE2.

Passing on from the vessels to other objects of

No. 3. Another lower half. On one leg a simple foot survives, attached directly to the 'knee'. Height 4.2 cm., breadth of hips 4.6 cm.

No. 4. (*e*) and pl. xxviii*b*. Upper half, very roughly carved from globigerina limestone. It survives from the lower edge of the girdle to the neck. Being so rough it is not possible to tell if the breasts were later damaged or were never present. There is similarly no sign of necklace. Height 7.7 cm., breadth 9.8 cm.

No. 5. Head presumed from a similar figure (see

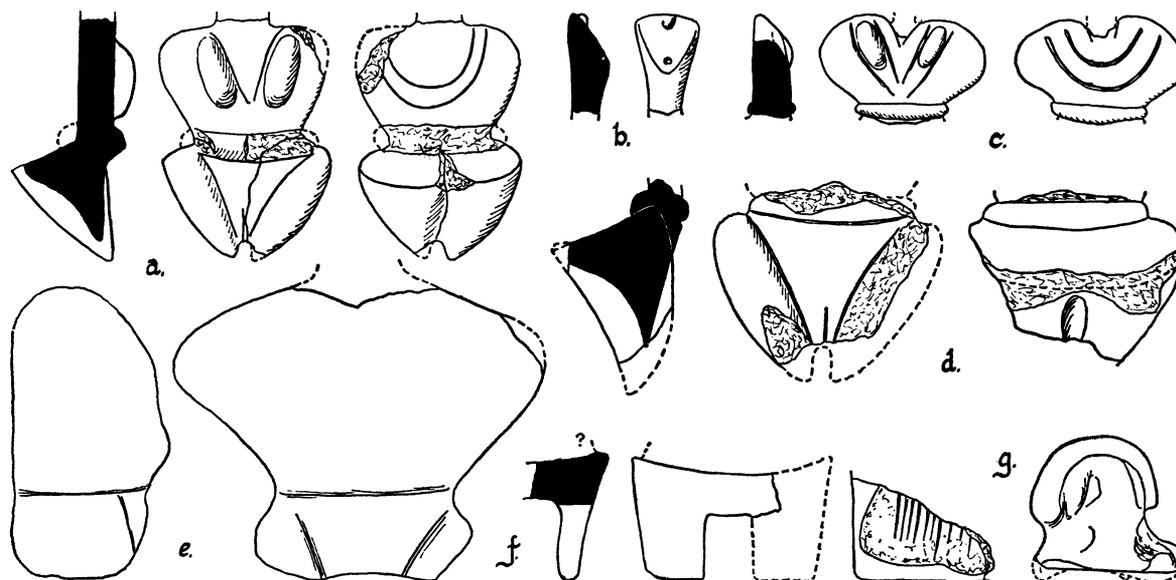


FIG. 30. RSk. figurines. (*b*) GA2, (*c*) UC12, rest North Room of RSk. Shrine; (*g*) is of ground bone. ($\frac{1}{2}$)

pottery we come first to an extremely important series of figurines representing a standing steatopygous female figure (fig. 30 and pl. xxviii*a*). All but no. 4 are in characteristic RSk. ware. They are worth describing in some detail.

No. 1 (fig. 30*a* and pl. xxviii*b*). Though found in three pieces this is the most complete; it lacks only the head. The chest is flat with round shoulders but no arms, the breasts being represented by two oblique ridges with straight lines following their inner edges. On the back are two incised concentric curves, probably a necklace. A girdle round the waist made of a cordon of clay has largely broken away. The female triangle is much enlarged, as is the upper part of the thighs, which project backwards to form an oval shelf behind. At the bottom, however, they come to a point at the knees, the lower legs not being shown at all. Dimensions—overall height 6.3 cm., neck to waist 3.3 cm., waist to 'feet' 3.0 cm., breadth of chest 4.4 cm., of hips 4.4 cm.

No. 2 (*d*). A lower half broken immediately above the girdle. Height 5.0 cm., breadth of hips 6.0 cm.

also no. 9). It is tall and cylindrical with the face represented by an oblique flattening of the tip with a dot at each corner of the triangle so formed to represent eyes and mouth. Height 2.5 cm. Nos. 1–5 all come from the North Room of the RSk. shrine.

No. 6 (*e*). Upper half including the girdle. It is flat and heartshaped. The breasts are shown as oblique ridges between incised lines. Two curves are incised on the back. The head, its neck somewhat recessed into the shoulders, is missing. The arms were never present. It came from a pure RSk. level, PC7. Height 2.8 cm., width of chest 4.3 cm.

No. 7. Upper half not including the girdle. The breasts are small knobs, the lines above them curved, those on the back two concentric V's. It is rather more damaged. Height 3.8 cm., width of chest (restored) 5.8 cm. It came from a later mixed level like the next two.

No. 8. Lower quarter, a right leg, broken at the lower edge of the girdle and along the centre line of the triangle. It is in effect a simple cone, having a dimple at the centre of its circular end. It was not recognized

until nos. 1–3 came to light. Height 2·7 cm., breadth of hips (restored) 3·4 cm.

No. 9 (*b* and pl. xxvii*a*). A head, much better modelled than no. 5. A tilted triangular face, with a knob for nose in the centre of the upper edge and a pit for mouth near the lower point. It narrows into a cylindrical neck, leaving a slight chin. Height 2·8 cm.

A larger example, exactly like a half of no. 6 but measuring 6 cm. to the centre line has been recognized from the old excavations at Mġarr.

Another object of terracotta from the North Room, also roughly conical though of larger size, is too

particularly well preserved (fig. 26*a* and pl. xxiii*c*). On its under side a smooth facet had been worn as a result of long-continued friction against its original owner's chest or shirt.¹ A slip of boar tusk with a double perforation, now broken, near one end (fig. 26*i*) was also for suspension as an amulet or pendant. This was one new bone type, the other is a cow toe joint ground off (fig. 30*g* and pl. xxviii*a*). Twenty of these came from the North Room, along with some unground ones. None was found elsewhere. They are remarkably uniform apart from one on which the

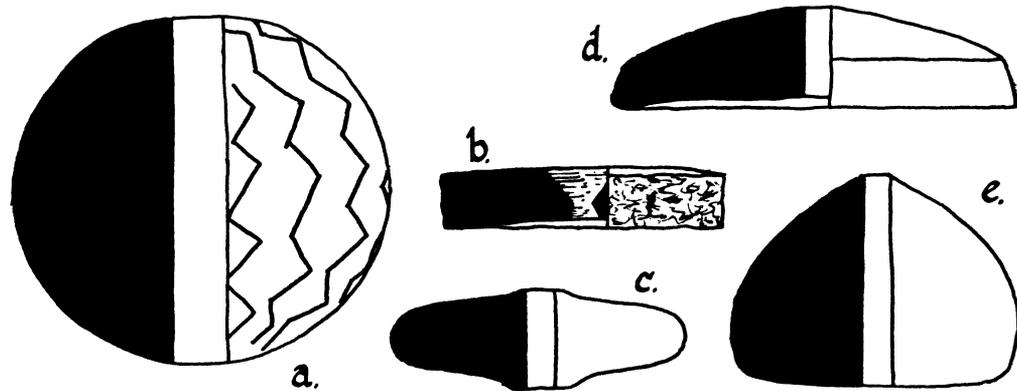


FIG. 31. Spindle whorls. (*a* and *b*) RSk.; (*c*) Žb.; (*d*) Ġg.; (*e*) Tx. (‡)

damaged to be definitely identified. It is probably a figurine, but not of the same type as the rest. A second is even more problematical, consisting of a cylindrical rod broken at one end and expanding into a disk at the other. A third, from OD, is best explained as the angle and one leg of a model bed (*f*) from the top of which some figure has broken off. The identification is doubtless coloured by the famous figurines from the Hypogeum, the 'sleeping lady' in particular, but no obvious alternative offers itself. The height of this object is 3·1 cm., the breadth 5·2 cm., and the surviving length 2·8 cm.

Other objects can be briefly dismissed—one lump of wattle-marked daub from PC, four chipped-*sherd* spindle whorls, much better made than the GSk. one, from the North Room, from 3 to 6 cm. diameter (fig. 31*b*). A much finer whorl, the first deliberately made one, is spherical, 6·5 cm. diameter (fig. 31*a*). It is slipped, polished, and decorated with a number of rather irregular incised zigzags running vertically down it. Like the chipped ones, only a half survives.

Many of the earlier forms in the bonework continue: four awls, a pierced cowrie, cockle and winkle, and a cow tooth, also for a necklace but grooved round the root instead of perforated (fig. 26*h*). The cowrie was

grinding had proceeded further than usual, two on which it had not been taken so far, and one with a grooved cross on its base. Two possible explanations occur to mind. That they were for grinding or polishing something else can be ruled out by the uniformity of wear, their absence from all deposits but one, and their awkward three-pointed shape when first used. Their association with the figurines in a religious building suggests an alternative. It is not too fanciful to see in them a phallic significance, their bases being ground to enable them to stand upright like chessmen. Gaming pieces seem a little far-fetched in the absence of any supporting evidence. Phallic symbols in stone are well known in the later temples.

Ground stone is represented by a perforated fragment of greenstone, perhaps a reworked broken axe amulet (fig. 26*k*), and a similar but unperforated chisel-shaped oval slip of marbled grey to white metamorphic stone. Two fragments of carved globigerina bowls also turned up.

Flaked stone, fig. 22, is much as in the preceding phase, obsidian (now almost entirely of the Lipari variety) and flint (sundry blades, two showing sickle gloss, and an awl) in small quantities, chert extremely plentiful but with secondary working as scarce as

¹ I have to thank Dr. A. P. Austin for this observation.

before. The better flakes, however, tend to be much longer than in GSk.

One fragment of pumice came to light, probably from Lipari but not necessarily deliberately imported as it is occasionally floated to Malta by natural agencies.

12. Żb.

With the next phase we come on to those already described by Evans.¹ All that is required here then are

recurring in the other. The best examples of the last are a 'little man' of crossed hooks, or better, in view of the wavy line body, a 'spook' in paint, fig. 33*b* and an attempt to imitate the row of impressions round a jar neck² in paint, fig. 33*f*. The milled rim in this phase can be distinguished from later ones by its being dimpled rather than scratched.

Additions have been made in four quarters. Firstly, several new shapes were recognized, all shown in fig. 32. The vessel with rolled rim mentioned by Evans

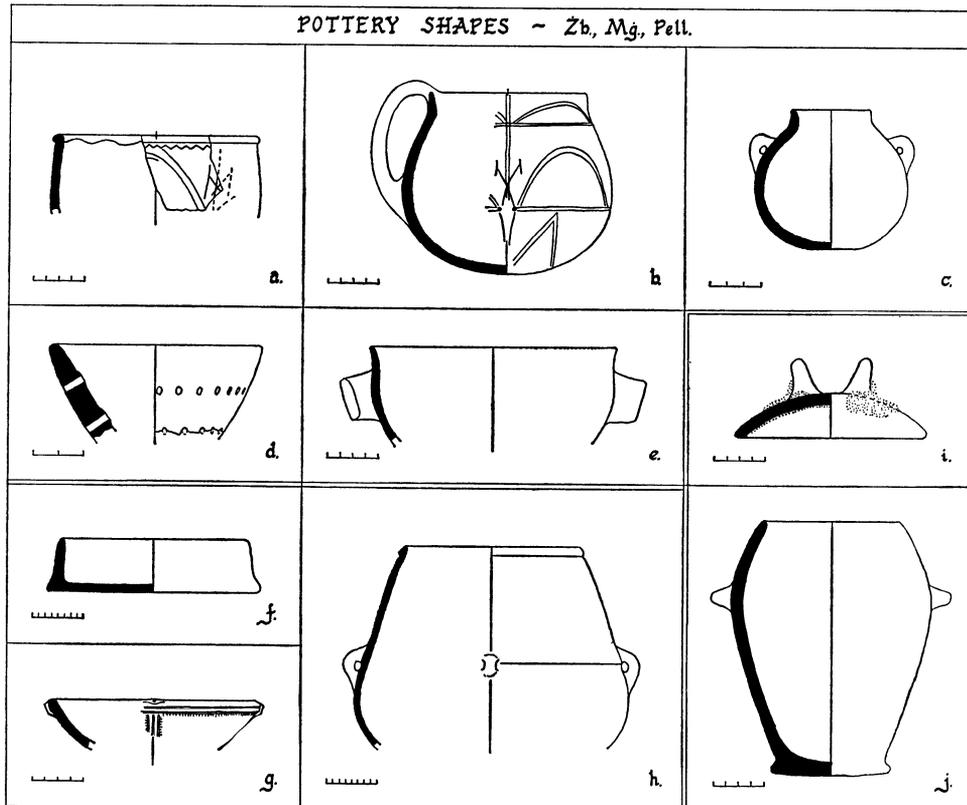


FIG. 32. Early Copper Age pottery shapes.

such alterations and additions as have become necessary as a result of the Skorba excavations and other recent work.

The continuity Evans observed between Żb. and Mġ. remains fully valid, despite the change of order. The only subtraction to be made is of the 'grey-white on dark' painted ware, which appears first in the next phase. That both broad and narrow red-on-cream painting fall in this phase has been confirmed, the possibility of broad paint going with broad cut-out, Mġ., not having been borne out. The association of painted and scratched decoration has been fully substantiated, by stratigraphy, by the two techniques occurring on single sherds, and by all the motifs in one

but not illustrated turned up frequently, unfortunately still without a complete profile. A single-handled jug was restored from fragments in OD9, showing the use of the vertical strap-handle with a scratched line running down it, and the lines internally on the rim, pl. xxix*a*. From the number of identical handles it must be quite a common form. Another not given by Evans is also frequent, an open basin with (two ?) horizontal strap handles on or near the rim. Though otherwise undecorated, the upper edge of the handles and the rim are dimpled. A coarse conical rim with horizontal rows of perforations, some form of strainer, was represented by a single sherd. Two painted examples of Evans shape 17 were restored (fig. 33), also a

¹ Evans, 1953, p. 48.

² Idem, p. 51, fig. 3. 2 and 4.

miniature of the same form, undecorated (fig. 20*d*). The spoons, ring-handled and rod-handled, attributed to the Mg. phase are both common in this.

Secondly, an earlier version of Żb. has become apparent, fig. 34. It is best represented at Santa Verna in levels A9 and 10, and in disturbed levels above the RSk. shrine at Skorba. The characteristic vessel is a deep tronco-conic bowl with simple lip decorated with one or two hatched bands consisting of coalesced triangles on the inside, and with two narrow parallel

Thirdly, a new but long-lived ware has been recognized in the course of the recent work. It has been named after a sherd-scatter on the slope of the Qala il-Pellegrin above Ġnejna Bay where it was first found, associated with Ġg. pottery. In origin, however, Pellegrin ware goes back to Żb., where it springs from the coarser buff ware of that phase already described by Evans.¹ It is a coarse, over-fired, bright red ware, occasionally of deeper purplish colour, often having a thick plastery outer layer. It is never decorated or

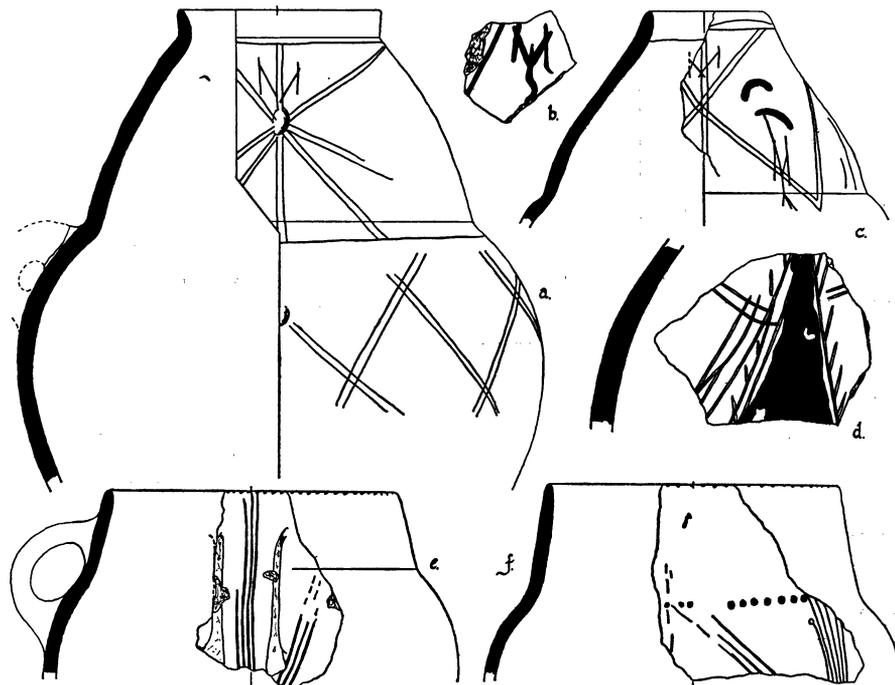


FIG. 33. Żb. painted vessels. (c) (♯), rest (♮).

oblique straight lines externally fringed with chipped triangles on the outside. A lightly scratched zigzag with dashes at each angle is another design not occurring later. One sherd from Santa Verna is definitely not scratched but soft incised, though the design and ware are the same. Other simple thinly scratched and painted designs occur too, but no 'little men', handles, or impressed rims, these not appearing until Żb. is fully developed. This early Żb., it must be emphasized, is not distinct enough to qualify as a separate phase, and, though perhaps a transitional zone, has nothing whatsoever in common with RSk. A parallel for the vessel shape and the internal hatched triangles has already been noticed from Trefontane in Sicily (see p. 45 below), and it is in that direction, particularly the San Cono-Piano Notaro culture, that antecedents for Żb. must be sought. The painted ware especially must be of foreign inspiration.

¹ An even coarser corky ware similar to that noted in GhD. also occurs.

handled, though rough lugs appear not infrequently. The only shapes recognized are ovoid or slightly S-profile jars with heavy flat bases, and a domed and lugged lid, fig. 32*i* and *j*. It has every mark of being a purely domestic cooking ware, rarely to be found on temple sites and so hitherto escaping notice. Żb. levels contain its first sherds but it becomes much commoner in Mg. and Ġg. Domestic deposits at Skorba stop at that point, but an example was found in 1960 in a cave below Bahrija which otherwise contained nothing earlier than Tx.² It therefore probably continued in domestic contexts to the end of the Copper Age.

Finally, pure levels have given more evidence on the non-ceramic artefacts of the phase. The most important are two polished stone axes, one complete, 7.9 cm. long, 4.9 cm. broad, from PC3, fig. 35 and pl. xxix*b*, one much damaged, originally roughly 14 by 8 cm., from GA7. Their stone is not local, being

² *Museum Annual Report*, 1960.

metamorphic or igneous. The PC3 axe resembles a porcellanite, that from GA7 a basalt.¹ Another piece of reddish metamorphic rock appears to have served

been heavily worn in use as a burnisher, perhaps for the pottery. A small cowrie, groove-perforated for suspension like the GSk. example, came from XB4,

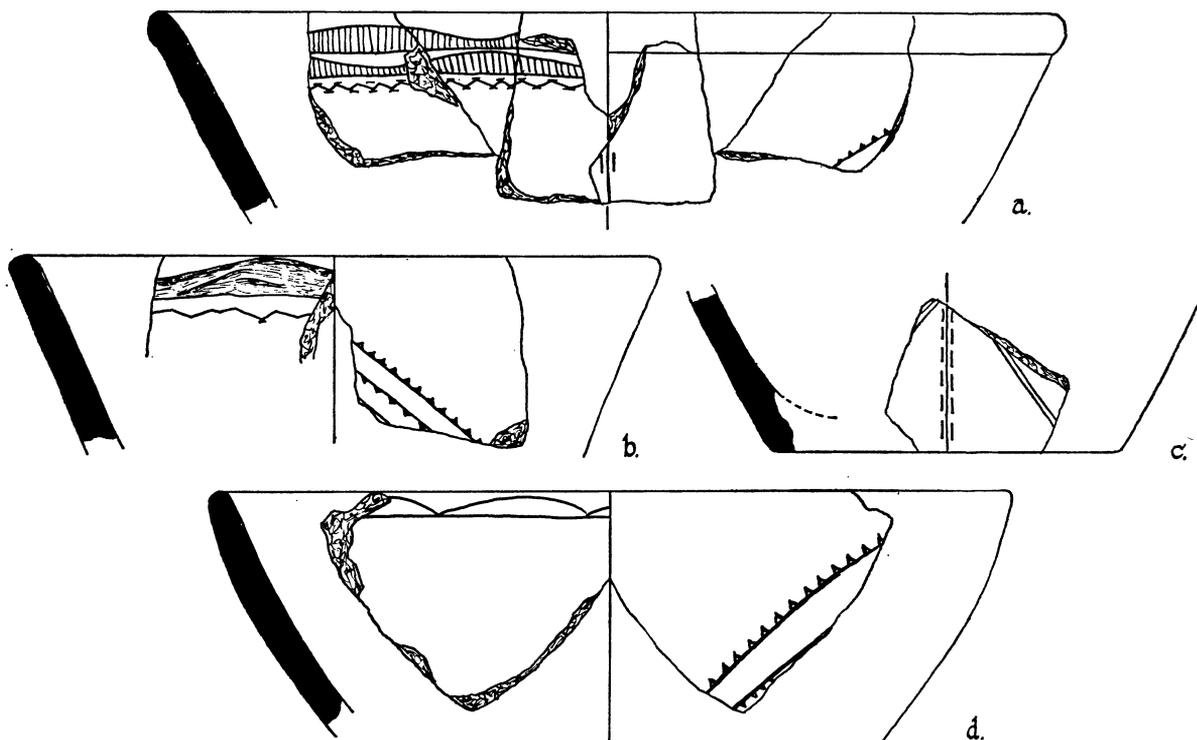


FIG. 34. Żb., characteristic early sherds. (a) Santa Verna A9; (b-d) above RSk. shrine. (3)

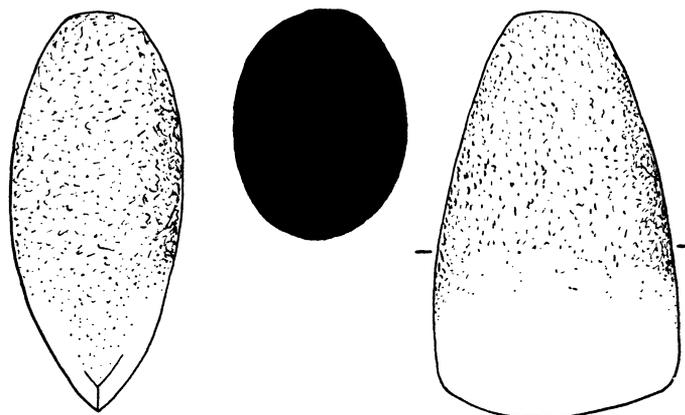


FIG. 35. Żb., polished axe from PC3. (3)

as a hone, not of course necessarily for metal. Querns of coralline limestone continue freely. A lump of pumice bears a groove probably worn by grinding bone awls to shape.

One such awl, a fine example on a sheep cannon-bone, was found. Another slip of cow long bone had

and two fragments of shell perforated likewise were recovered, fig. 26.

In chipped stone, Lipari obsidian and flint continue as before, but chert in much smaller quantities than in the preceding phases. No piece calls for special note.

The only objects of terracotta were two broken

¹ Stone identifications are all non-specialist guesses. Petrological analysis of all foreign stone found in Malta would yield most interesting results.

spindle whorls of flat oval to biconical shape, deliberately made and not reworked from a broken sherd as most of the RSk. ones were, fig. 31c.

13. Mġ.

Although considerably more material of this phase has been recovered, only one level, OB5/UC4/OD5, the occupation level on the Mġ. hut floor, could be called a pure one. In other levels the Mġ. pottery was accompanied by equal or greater proportions of Żb. or Ġg. However, that one level is sufficient to prove the validity of the phase, even if the information given below is largely taken from more or less mixed deposits.

New light is thrown on all of Evans's shapes.¹ Four complete profiles of the cylindrical dish, his no. 2, have turned up, giving it lower, sometimes much lower, proportions than there shown. Wear inside the lip of some examples and the decoration of others show that these were used as lids to the large jars. Their wall remains vertical even when the angle to the base is externally thickened as in no. 3. The upper wall of 3 does not belong, being taken from a second vessel closely related to no. 4. 4 is the commonest shape, though the carination is unusual. There are several versions of lip form. 5 is quite frequent too, its shoulder normally much less marked, the lip often thickened on the outside. Two larger splayed handles alternate with two smaller at the base of the neck. Additionally there is a globular jar with upturned lip, which becomes much commoner in early Ġg., and a small hemispheric bowl with disk base and simple or thickened lip. The partly pierced lugs occur on both this and shape 4. All these forms are illustrated in fig. 32. Spoons have not been confirmed in this phase. The 'Diana' lugs are now classed as local RSk. ware.

An innovation since Żb. is that the white filling to the lines is often given an additional wash of red ochre, leading to the ochre-only filling of Ġg. decoration. Scratch-nicked rims replace the dimpled ones entirely, and continue into the next phase. One sherd of the curious painted ware briefly mentioned by Evans² was securely stratified in a fill beneath the Mġ. hut floor, but the majority comes from early Ġg. levels, with which phase it will be considered.

Owing to the poverty of Mġ. levels, bone and stone work is depressingly scarce. The only pieces worth mention are two hard pebble grinders from the floor build of the Mġ. hut and, more distinguished, the 'tea-tray' on it, referred to on p. 15, above. This was a rectangular tray of globigerina, 46 by 22 cm. and a mere 5 cm. thick. A lip 2 cm. wide, barely above the level of the surface, ran round all four sides excepting only a narrow gap for draining in the middle of one end.

14. Ġg.

Of this phase Evans had pure levels to study in addition to the great quantities of material from the earlier excavations.³ Most of that from Skorba was of the standard forms he had described, pl. xxixc. He himself clarified the two puzzling vessel shapes 21 and 32 in the excavation of the Xemxija tombs in 1955,⁴ showing them to be hanging bowls, low cylindrical (deriving from the Mġ. shape no. 2), and flanged globular respectively.

A new shape to illustrate is the 'ovoid neckless jar with heavily thickened rim' of Evans's text, fig. 36b, represented by a number of restorable vessels from the Hut of the Querns. It has two vertically pierced lugs on the shoulder and is undecorated. It seems another domestic type, though less coarse than the now common Pellegrin jars. Another shape common enough to be considered a distinct type is the open dish, fig. 36c. One sherd of a small spouted vessel came to light. Two sherds, fig. 20g, distantly recalled the cups from the Xaghra tombs which Evans believed to be of TC. date. The scratched decoration, devolved lugs on the pots, even more the shape of the tombs and the plentiful use of red ochre in them, would seem to place this group firmly in the Copper Age, probably in this phase. The lack of close parallels for the vessel shapes could imply a small intrusive group.

A subdivision of this phase would be highly desirable to date the various stages of the development of the temples, considered in section 21. Despite its obvious length, the only signs of cleavage yet discernible in it are between a group of material transitional from Mġ. and the main body of Ġg. This is too early to affect the temple story. The Ġg. levels dug at Skorba were almost entirely early in the phase, pre-temple huts, pre-temple rubbish incorporated in its walls, etc. Further work at other sites may yield the required evidence.

The transitional material contains two important groups. The first is an oddly painted ware appearing tentatively in Mġ. but reaching its peak in this transitional zone between the two, as in the walls of the Hut of the Querns. Its origin seems to lie in an attempt to continue the Żb. painting on the dark burnished ware. That it did not survive long is hardly surprising since it rarely shows up clearly on the dark surface, sometimes barely at all. It is not really a light on dark technique so much as a medium to dark on dark one. The paint has often an encrusted appearance and is always matt against the polished background. Vessel shapes so painted include Mġ. shapes 4 and 5 as redefined above, and the hemispheric bowl. One small jar had a sharp carination and a straight shoulder.

¹ Evans, 1953, p. 45 and fig. 6.

² Idem, p. 52.

³ Idem, p. 53.

⁴ *M.A.R.* 1955-6; Evans, 1959, fig. 10a-c.

Handles are frequently edged with lines of paint. Designs are always similar to common Mġ. and early Ġg. patterns. Survival well into Ġg. is shown not only

Commonly associated with the painted ware is the second group, fig. 39, of sherds decorated in the usual Mġ. technique of broad cut-out, better described as

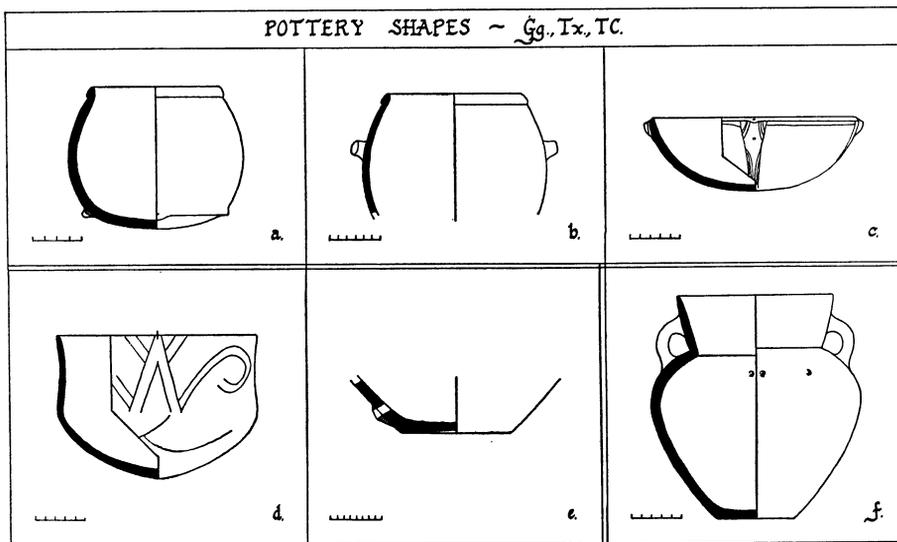


FIG. 36. Later Copper Age pottery shapes.

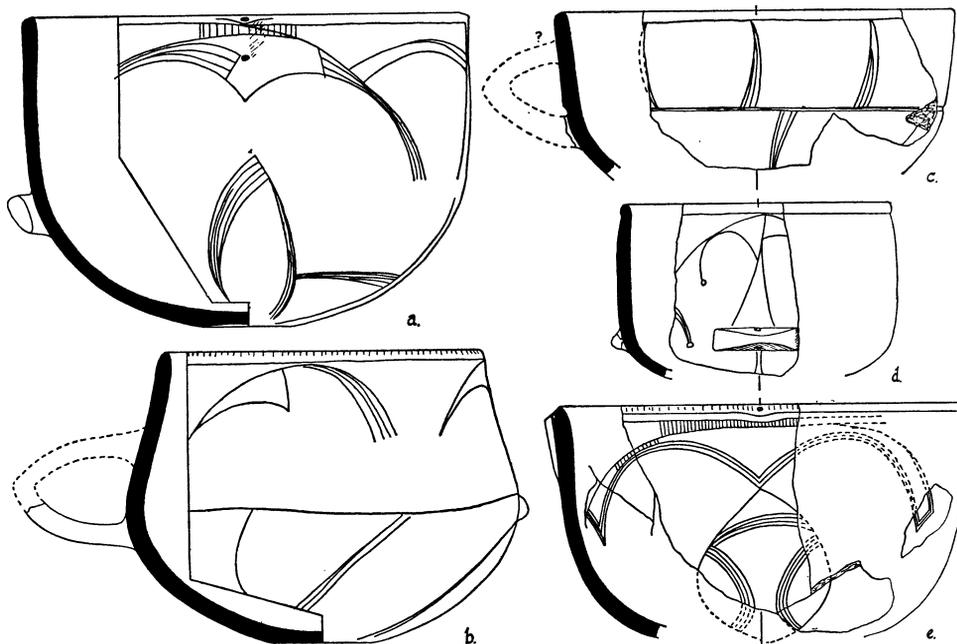


FIG. 37. Ġg. decorated vessels from the Hut of the Querns. (3)

by the associations in the trenches but by the fact that two sherds are both painted and scratched in Ġg. fashion. In one the two techniques had been used to produce entirely different designs, in the other the painted design had been gone over in scratched lines, including a typical ring-headed line.

gouged, lines with fringes. These are more carefully executed, with narrower bands and designs noticeably similar to Ġg. ones, though not yet with the competence and vigour characteristic of that phase. These are even more clearly transitional, and represent the period when renewed development was turning Mġ. into Ġg.

The amount of earlier admixture in these levels casts some doubt on the non-ceramic evidence. For example, none of the eight terracotta objects from Ġg. levels is of proved Ġg. date. Two RSk. figurine fragments are in fact proved otherwise. Similarly two spindle whorls are very like the ones noted in Żb.,

work included a plaque made of a 7-cm. section of sheep/goat rib perforated at either end, fig. 26*f*, seven awls (two on bird bones), a perforated cowrie, and a small shell disk.

Two small objects carved in stone are unexplained, strips with a triangular rib across the tip, fig. 40*b*.

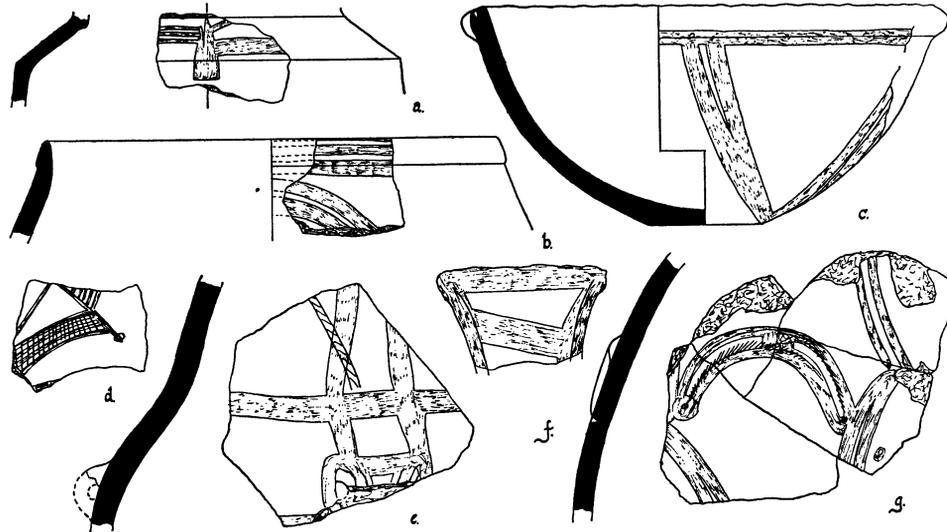


FIG. 38. Mg.-Ġg. transitional, painted ware. (‡)

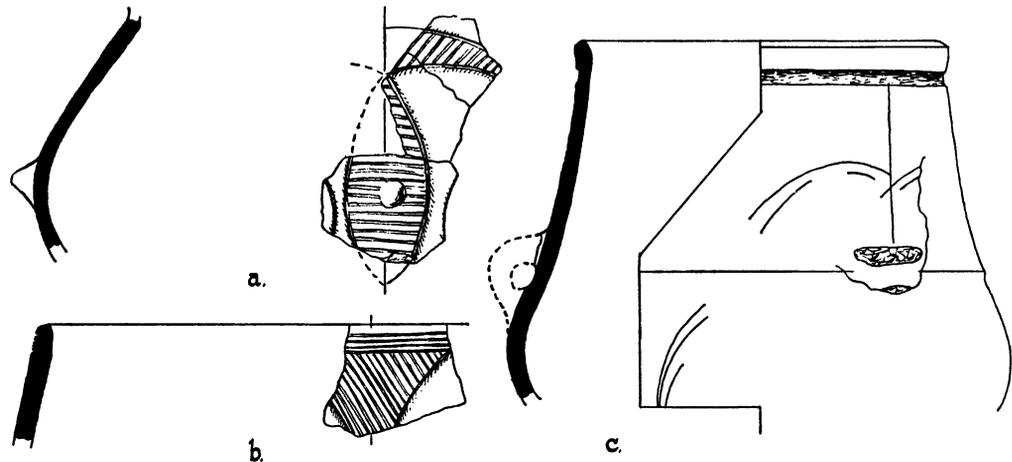


FIG. 39. Mg.-Ġg. transitional, gouged ware. (a and b) (‡), (c) (‡)

fig. 31*d*. A rectangular block with large perforations and decoration, fig. 41*a*, has a good parallel at Kordin III. It could be part of an offering table. An object consisting of a spade-shaped projection with a central perforation was possibly an unusual handle form. From its ware it could again be Żb. A convex bobbin had splayed ends, of which one is missing. Finally a very puzzling concave cylindrical object, 5.7 cm. long, had a sort of hood, now broken, rising from the back and a pitted knob below it, fig. 41*b*. Bone-

Flint and obsidian remain very much as before, with chert little more frequent than the other two. Two flints showed sickle gloss. Of coralline limestone were a great number of querns, grinders, and rubbers of various sorts. One hard pebble looked more like a hone than a polisher.

15. Saf.

This phase was recognized by Evans as something different, but in the absence of clear deposits it could

not then be satisfactorily distinguished from Tx., of which it was assumed to be an early form. With the discovery of levels in which it is well represented antedating the appearance of Tx.—in the western out-buildings, the pit in the north-east field, the earlier temple floors at Mġarr and Santa Verna—enough evidence is now available to separate it off as a phase in its own right, fig. 42. This does not prevent its

already quite dead, and the attempts to revive it in other techniques do not begin until the following phase, Tx.

The next two shapes are linked by their decoration, a number of back-to-back curves connected by fine hatching or flecking, giving a light on dark effect as of a pudding-stone with a dark matrix. One is a splaying flat-bottomed dish, again derived from Ġg. 22 and

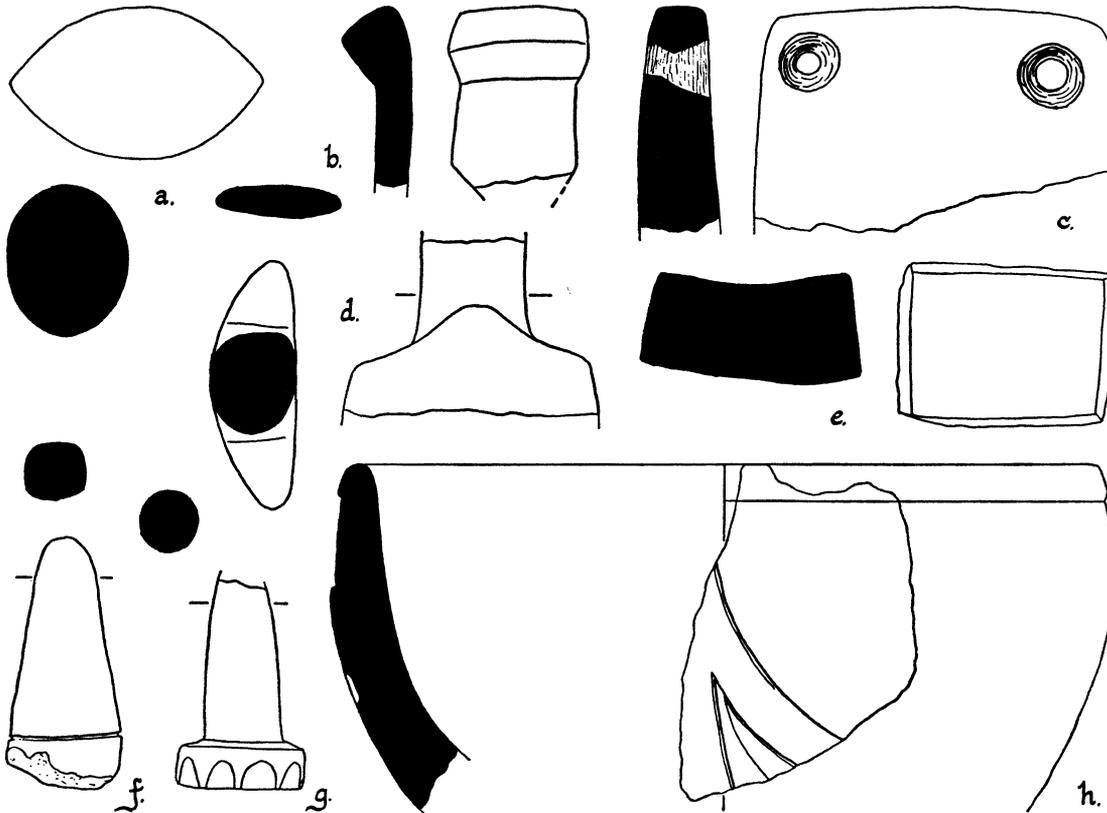


FIG. 40. Carved limestone. (a) GSk. slingbolt; (b) Ġg.; rest Tx. (§)

forming in a very real sense a transition between Ġg. and Tx.

The commonest shape is a deep (pl. xxxia) or splayed open bowl in which can be seen both a derivative of the Ġg. shapes 22 and 23 and an ancestor of the Tx. shape 41. The fabric of this vessel is slightly different from either, being usually thinner, especially at the lip, and harder, almost metallic. The long horizontal lug of the Ġg. bowl 22 survives, now without the perforation, but it is the nose-handle of 23 which lasts into Tx. In the decoration, the encircling rim and bulge lines have disappeared completely. The wall bears pairs of diagonal lines, straight or curving, usually one of each, some clearly foreshadowing the Tx. volutes. Particularly characteristic is an inverted V containing a parabola. The Ġg. exuberance is

leading this time to Tx. 36. The other is a semi-hole-mouthed jar, the vessel called by Evans the Saffieni bowl, shape 52. The earliest form is small and deep, its neck divided into chequers alternately void and filled, a decoration taken over from the globular hanging bowls. These probably fall late in Ġg., being found, for example, in the Xemxija tombs mainly of that phase. The examples recently discovered with 'pudding-stone' decoration are placed firmly in Saf. by their contexts. The chequer design continues, however, on larger and proportionally shallower vessels from the Hypogeum, still Saf. Some with volutes clearly fall within Tx., perhaps most of the tunnel-handled ones too.

Probably developing from the Ġg. ovoid jars and certainly giving rise to Tx. shape 57 is a coarser ovoid

jar with incised arcs sometimes filled with surface rustication. The Tx. S-neck, rosette flutes and dividing vertical cordons are not yet found. Finally an un-

broad T-rim from a jar and a small lid with perforations for suspension.

The only innovation in the stonework is the first

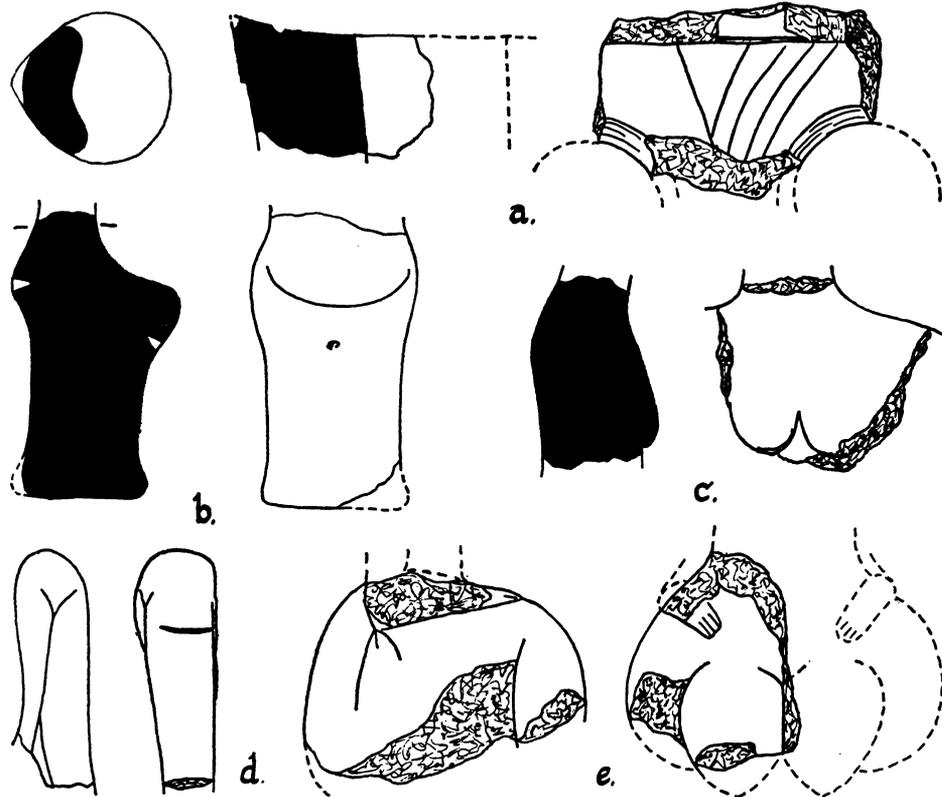


FIG. 41. Terracotta. (a-b) Gg.; (c-e) Tx.; (e) from Mg. (A3). (3)

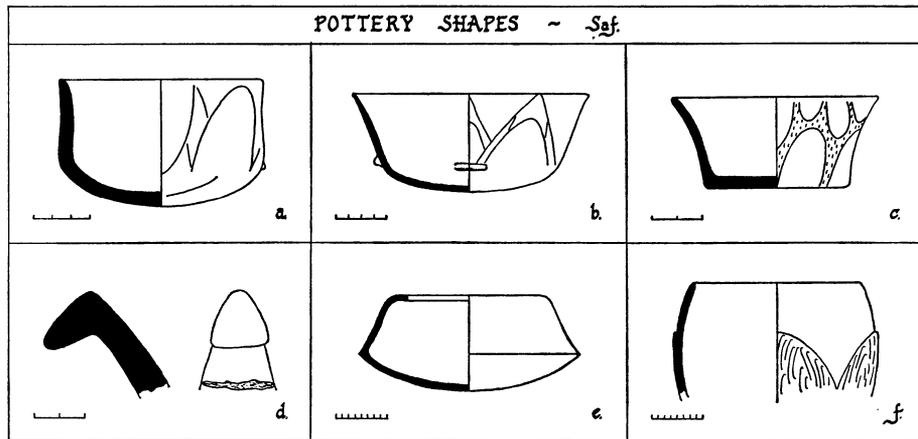


FIG. 42. Pottery shapes, Saf.

decorated version of the bowl shape occasionally has a long projection from the rim turning sharply down to a short axe edge. No prototype in Gg. yet offers itself, but the handles of Tx. 45 and 46 are obvious descendants. Two unique sherds deserve mention, a very

appearance of a grey-buff flint (from the Monti Iblei?) which becomes extremely common in Tx., superseding all other flints and largely displacing the local chert. As in that phase, it is used almost invariably for finely worked scrapers.

16. Tx.

Despite the quantity of material of the last Copper Age phase recovered from the East Temple (almost as much as from all other parts of the site and all other phases together) and because of the great amount already known and studied from Tarxien, Skorba has added little to our knowledge of Tx. pottery.¹ Two new shapes appeared, but as each was represented by a sole example they hardly qualify as new types. A miniature biconical vessel, fig. 20*k*, came from the East Temple. From the altar in LA was the lower wall of a large jar of uncertain shape distinguished by a spout-hole very close to the base, presumably to take a spigot, fig. 36*e*.

Worth recording, however, is evidence from subsidiary trenches at Tarxien in 1959 and 1960 for an early version of Tx.² The material was scanty but indicated a period when lattice, 'boat'³ and very simple volute designs were scratched on carinated bowls shape 41 (the Evans numbering), and the rolled rim bowls 62, Saffieni bowls 52, and fluted jars 57 were already common. By contrast triangular strap handles (as on shapes 45–47), the coarse scoop-lipped basin 40, elaborate forms like 64 and most noticeably decorations such as developed scratched volutes, red in buff inlay, dotted, jabbed, studded, dimpled, and all other new Tx. decorative techniques had not yet appeared. Further excavation of relevant levels will be needed to define this sub-phase fully. Continuity is too strong to suggest that it can ever be separated as an independent phase.

In terracotta four new figurines, all fragmentary, were added—part of an obese seated figure from Mgarr, fig. 41*e*, of a female torso, *c*, a bent leg, *d*, and a long cow horn from Skorba East. A phalange-shaped object transversely perforated and only 2.5 cm. long, probably amuletic, came from Skorba West, fig. 26*m*. Two high conical spindle whorls were also recovered, fig. 31*e*, contrasting with the low biconical shape hitherto, though numbers are too few for this to be taken as a general rule.

Bone was less interesting, one bird bone and four other awls completing the tally. Of chipped stone were a great number, over a score, of finely worked scrapers in grey-buff flint, less commonly in chert, fig. 22*i* to *k*. Waste flakes of either were negligible. This contrasts markedly with all phases before Saf., where the tendency is beginning to show. Ground stone is represented by a single broken dark green axe amulet.

Carved globigerina provides more variety than in any previous phase, fig. 40*c* to *h*. The most noteworthy object was a smoothed plaque 7 by 8 cm. with two

engraved drawings of temple façades, pl. xxx*b*, one unfinished. Other pieces include half a second plaque perforated at the corners and undecorated, a small rectangular block 5.7 by 4.4 by 2.8 cm. heavily ochred, a fragment of a large cylindrical bowl with pitted decoration also ochred, pl. xxx*a*, three chips of a globular bowl approximately 10 cm. diameter with bead rim and relief spirals, a broken piece of unknown form resembling the shoulders and half the handle of a cricket bat, a slim cylindrical pillar standing on a short base decorated with arcs and ochre 5.6 cm. high and almost certainly phallic, and three much rougher examples of the same general form.

Of heavier objects, pieces of rough cups and bowls of globigerina are markedly more frequent than before, confirming the implication of the last paragraph that stone carving had increased greatly in importance. Querns and rubbers of coralline limestone, however, continue in unabated numbers.

17. TC.

Skorba produced very little material of the post-temple TC. period, which opens the Maltese Bronze Age. What little there was came from the reoccupation level in the West Temple, p. 7.

Of the complete or restorable vessels recovered, all had everted lips. One was clearly of Evans's shape 74, a globular bowl,⁴ one of shape 80, a pyriform jar, one a miniature version of 81, a globular juglet, fig. 20*l* and pl. xxx*ib*. Two others are of a form not recorded previously, a jar with a vertical or slightly convex neck, fig. 36*f*. One of these had had its neck cracked and repaired in antiquity.

Decorated wares were found in fairly small sherds only. They included a number of the secondary ware reported by Evans with dotted triangles on internally thickened lips. Whether genuinely imported or a local imitation, its source is in the Aegean rather than in Italy. It will be dealt with more fully in the section on imports below.

The reasons for considering the Xagħra tombs Ġg. rather than TC. were given on p. 38. With three burial rites securely attested for the latter phase, in urnfield cemeteries, dolmens, and cairns, all be it noted by cremation, inhumation in ochre in rock-cut chamber tombs would be completely foreign to the tradition.

Three terracotta figurine fragments shown on fig. 43 came from the mixed TC. level and are firmly dated by their ware. The first two have typical rectilinear decoration in addition. One is the rather stumpy foot of a figurine, the knobs of the ankle joint clearly

¹ Evans, 1953, p. 58 and fig. 9.

² In connexion with restoration work, *M.A.R.* 1958–9 and 1959–60.

³ A design in which a long curve, concave above, has two short lines branching inside its tips at either end.

⁴ Evans, 1953, p. 65 and fig. 10.

shown. Its length is 5.9 cm. and surviving height 5.8 cm. The second is from higher on the leg of the same figure. It cannot be paralleled in Malta. The third is a small and very simple disk figurine, 4.1 cm. across, its neck and lower body broken away. The only features are the breasts.

A bone pin and a clay bead, perforated off-centre, lay with the complete juglet in K. Associated with

the second lay beneath one in which the third was intimately associated with Bañ.

19. Bañ.

The relative importance of this phase has been much reduced. It cannot start before the beginning of the tenth century and must close during the ninth. Even through that period BN. survived alongside it. At that

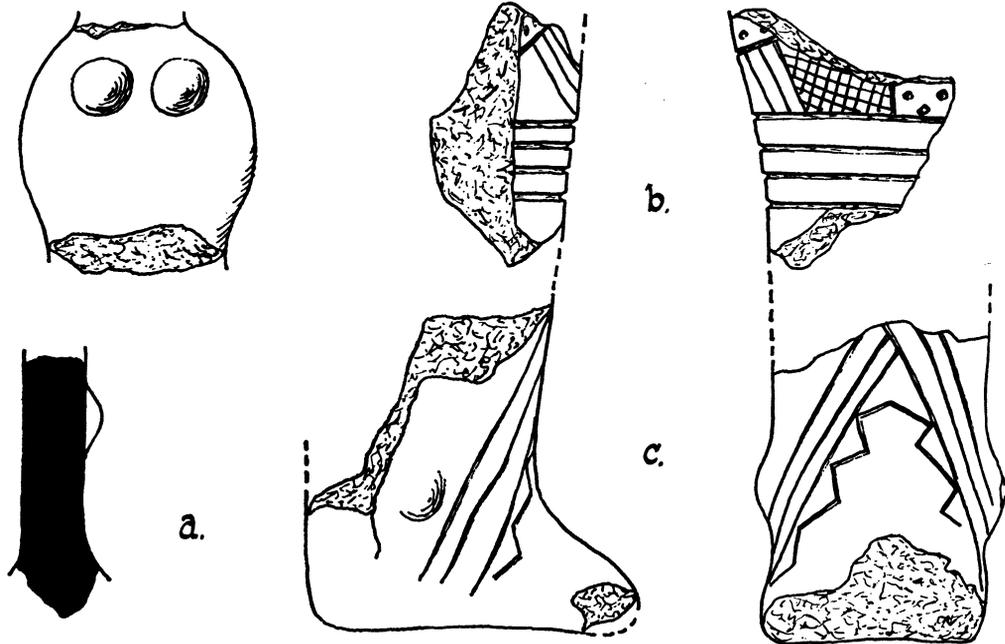


FIG. 43. Terracotta figurines, TC. LA5, DA1, and Q3. (3)

them was found the only metal recovered from the site, a small fragment of a bronze saw, pl. xxxib.

18. BN.

Though one sherd from a mixed level was all that Skorba had to show for this and the next phase, they must be mentioned briefly to complete the sequence. Excavations in 1959 at the type sites have given some minor revisions of the Evans sequence.¹ In particular, BN. can be split into three closely related sub-phases, confirmed by both typology and stratigraphy.

The first, probably short, has highly burnished red ware, cut-out decoration, and applied ribs. The second and main one has less well-burnished pottery, often blotchily fired, proportionately less cut-out decoration, but a good deal of soft incised. The ware in the third has deteriorated still further, usually dark, rarely burnished or decorated. Levels of the first and huts of the second and third sub-phases were investigated at Borg in-Nadur. At Bahrija a deposit of

¹ Trump, 'Later Prehistory'.

time there were three traditions current in association, foreign Bañ. (cut-out meanders, false relief bands, red on buff geometric painted, carinated cups with high handles, bronze, etc.), locally derived Bañ. (also black slipped, cut-out dovetails, simple undecorated carinated bowls) and BN. survival (red to brown slip, splayed handles, coarse wares). All were rapidly superseded by imported Phoenician wares at a date not yet exactly fixed. Evidence for overlap between the native and imported wares is slight.²

20. Imported Sherds

Considering the great quantity of pottery recovered from this site, and the rest of Malta, the number of sherds of non-local provenance is remarkably small. There is a possibility that at least some of the pieces in styles introduced by immigrants, GhD., Żb. and the Bronze Age groups, were made abroad and brought in with the settlers, but there is no way of distinguishing these typologically from the later local production.

² The only secure case was a burial cairn in Racecourse Street, Victoria, Gozo. *M.A.R.* 1923-4, p. 11.

The only clay analyses so far done have indicated local origin.¹ The 'Diana' trumpet lugs noticed by Evans² have now been provided with a local context in RSk. and can no longer be regarded as foreign, but see the section on Diana below. The Xaghra tomb groups, with one or two sherds from Tal Qadi, do not fit into any local phase but in the absence of foreign parallels cannot necessarily be taken as imports yet.

western slopes of Etna. Unfortunately it was a very mixed site so gives no chronological link for the Maltese material. The Trefontane sherd, a single one, may also be imported from the real but as yet unidentified home of this ware somewhere else in Sicily.

One of the five Maltese sherds was in a pure GSk. level, AF3, two in the pit at Santa Verna with GSk. and early Żb. mixed, two in later even more mixed

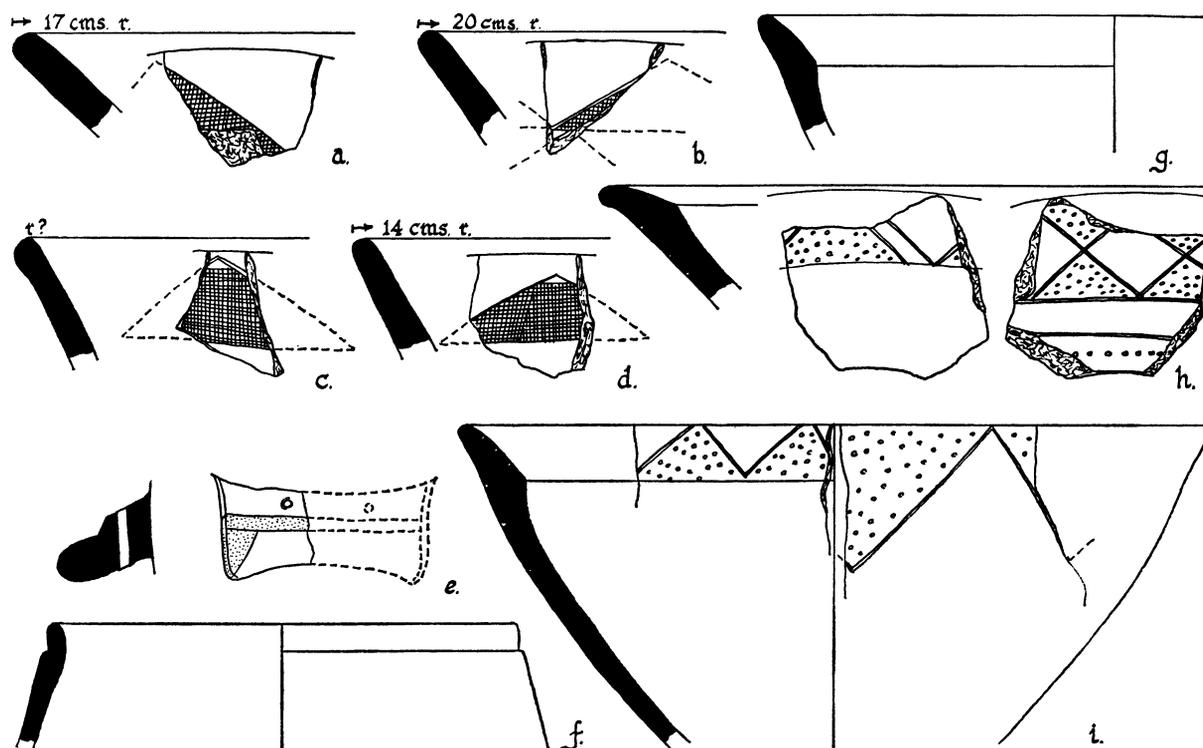


FIG. 44. Imported sherds. (a-d) Trefontane type, AF3, MA5, Santa Verna A9 and 10; (e) Serra d'Alto type, LE2; (f) Diana type, CE2; (g-i) Thermi type, LA6, OA2, and NA2. (1/2)

Leaving these aside, there remain five groups which do not seem to have been made in Malta. They will be examined in turn.

Trefontane. Three sherds from Skorba and two from Santa Verna, fig. 44 and pl. xxxic, have in common the characteristic feature of very finely cross-hatched triangles erect inside the lip of a straight open bowl of fairly large size. In two the triangles are then outlined, in two they have a small un-hatched tip.³ The ware is unlike any local one, being too compact and fine-grained for Żb. and without the white grits of GSk.

One sherd of the same type was noted in the Syracuse Museum from the site of Trefontane on the south-

levels. The type appears in the Middle Neolithic then. The Santa Verna context is the more interesting, however, and not only for the puzzling absence of RSk. These sherds provide convincing prototypes for the hatched triangles inside the lips of straight-walled dishes in early Żb., and thence for the other straight and wavy lines inside later vessels of diverse form of that phase. Such lines are not found in the ancestral San Cono-Piano Notaro pottery.

Diana. One sherd from a level above the GhD. hut, containing material of all three Neolithic phases, cannot be paralleled for shape in any of them, fig. 44f and the third in pl. xxxic. It is from the rim of a beaker with a short vertical lip. The ware is not very different

¹ Of one Tx. sherd, one Roman, and a small sample of local clay.

² Evans, 1953, p. 47.

³ In the other three the tip of the triangle is missing.

from RSk. but the core is nearly black right up to the surface, it has less obvious grits, and the slip is a rather pinky red.

All these features suggest the Diana ware of Lipari,¹ Late Neolithic and parallel to RSk. in many general respects—red slip, trumpet lugs, etc. This ware is widely distributed in Sicily and Italy, so the sherd need not necessarily have come from Lipari itself. The obsidian, however, indicates at least indirect contacts with that island.

Serra d'Alto. A single sherd of this well-known and widespread style appeared in LE2. The level was mainly of RSk. material, overlying the Shrine's eastern courtyard. Though there was contamination from the overlying ploughsoil, this context seems quite satisfactory.

The sherd is half a lug of pale grey ware, with one of two vertical perforations, painted in brown-purple. This and the step on the upper surface, see fig. 44e and the fourth in pl. xxxic, though simple features, relate it to the Serra d'Alto ware of east Sicily and southern Italy.

Serraferlicchio. Again represented by a single sherd only, this ware is distinguished by an intense black paint on a crimson red surface. The sherd was recognized by Evans in material from the Borg in-Nadur temple, not more closely datable. It is recalled here for completeness' sake.

Thermi. Another group noticed by Evans is far commoner than these, totalling perhaps two score sherds.² Prior to the work at Skorba it was not securely placed in the Maltese sequence nor were its foreign relationships chronologically acceptable. Their dating will be discussed later.

They are nearly all sherds of tronco-conic bowls with lips internally thickened. The lip nearly always bears incised standing triangles filled with dots or, more rarely, diagonal hatching. The outside is occasionally decorated with incised designs also. A few sherds possibly of larger bowls or jars with dotted bands are more probably related to these than to the Apennine Ware of Bronze Age Italy. The bowls had flat bases, though a complete one from Tarxien, pl. xxxid, stood on a high pedestal.

The foreign parallels are ultimately to be found in the Early Bronze Age of the North Aegean, particularly Thermi and Troy I.³ In the Central Mediterranean examples occur at Capo Graziano, Castelluccio, and recently at Ognina.⁴

¹ L. Bernabò Brea, *Sicily before the Greeks and Meligunis-Lipara I.*

² Evans, 1953, p. 68.

³ W. Lamb, *Excavations at Thermi in Lesbos*, pls. 15 and 16, various; W. Schmidt, *Trojanische Altertümer*, nos. 13 and 14; C. W. Blegen, *Troy* (Ancient Peoples series), pl. 16.

⁴ Respectively in the Lipari Museum, the Syracuse Museum, and information from Professor L. Bernabò Brea.

This ware is so far the only thing to span the gulf between the Copper Age temple civilization and the Bronze Age cultures which replaced it. Sherds previously were nearly always associated with TC. material, though never in closed contexts. An exception was a vessel from the Tarxien Cemetery itself, which had Thermi triangles on the lip of a TC. decorated jar. However, the Tarxien pedestalled bowl came from a Tx. deposit into which it could hardly have infiltrated subsequently in one piece.⁵

At Skorba two sherds have come from levels in the upper field containing nothing later than Gg. and one was sealed inside the Tx. altar in LA. Other sherds occurred in mixed levels in the West Temple along with TC. material. It seems therefore that a few pieces of this ware were finding their way into Malta through the later Copper Age, but it did not become at all common until the Early Bronze Age, when it may even have been copied locally (the TC. jar with dotted triangles on the lip).

Mycenae. To be recalled to complete the record is the Myc. IIIB sherd from Borg in-Nadur.⁶ The site produced Tx., TC., and BN., the latter the commonest and most likely context. The association of BN. and the same Myc. IIIB in tombs at Thapsos near Syracuse provides corroboration (see below).

Exports. Maltese pottery found outside the islands is scarcer still. One sherd of GSk. fabric though of unusual shape, a jar shoulder, is in the Syracuse Museum from the site of Stentinello. More may be found in Sicily to provide the necessary bridge there between Stentinello (= GhD.) and Marmo (= RSk.) which could make this a Sicilian manufacture too. It can count only as a possible export in the light of present knowledge.

The next point of contact is between Malta and Sardinia in the later Copper Age. Tunnel handles of probably Maltese origin have long been recognized there, and W. Bray has since recognized several other traits of Saf. and Tx. date as prototypes for Sardinian ones.⁷ These are only suggestions of influence; actual sherds of Maltese make have yet to come to light.

The surest case is the BN. pedestal bowls from Thapsos culture tombs in cemeteries around Syracuse, with typical decoration.⁸ These are still not certain, however, in that BN. is an immigrant culture in Malta, and its unidentified place of origin may have exported pottery to Syracuse too.

⁵ It was found in the temple wall fill when the altar in the first apse right of Tarxien South was removed to the National Museum in 1958.

⁶ Evans, 1953, p. 72 and pl. xiv, no. 1.

⁷ W. Bray, *Rivista di Scienze Preistoriche*, xviii, 1963, p. 173.

⁸ *Bullettino di Paleontologia Italiana*, xxix, pl. x. 3 and 5; pl. xi. 6; *B.P.I.* xxx, p. 299, fig. 95.

21. The Temple Sequence

Professor Evans's thesis on the development of the Maltese temples¹ requires some reconsideration, particularly as a result of the lower dating of the two at Mġarr.² Briefly, he believed the sequence to be—rock-cut chamber tombs (earliest known, Xemxija, Mġ.)³—lobed temples (earliest Mġarr East, Mġ.)—trefoils (earliest Mġarr West, Żb.)—five apses (several examples, all Ġg.)—four apses and niche (Ġgantija North in Ġg., many in Tx.)—six apses and niche (Tarxien Central, late Tx.).

closing in the innermost of the three apses, and re-examination of the other standing trefoils, Mġarr West and Kordin III West, shows that similar alterations, there undated, had been made at each. The object was apparently to divide the temple into a private inner part (the central apse) and a public outer part (the side apses) in accordance with some change of ritual. In the five-apse temples privacy was given to the whole of the inner trefoil by the central passage, the outer apses being open to the public as before. Consequently there was no need to wall off the central apse of the Ġgantija South, Haġar Qim North,⁷ or the

TABLE II
Temple Development

	Mġ.	Ġg.	Saf., early Tx.	Tx.
Rock-cut tombs ¹	Xemxija	Xemxija Bengemma Xagħira?		
Lobed temples		Kordin III E. Mġarr E?	Mġarr E.?	
Trefoil temples		Mġarr W. Kordin III W. Skorba W. Buġibba Santa Verna Mnajdra E. Ġgantija S.?		
5-apse temples		Ġgantija S. Tarxien FE. Haġar Qim N. „ C.?		
4-apse temples		Ġgantija N.	Tarxien S. „ E. Mnajdra S.	Skorba E. Mnajdra C. Xrobb il-Għagin Borġ in-Nadur
6-apse temple				Tarxien C.
Anomalous forms		Hal Ġinwi Tal Qadi		Concezzione Borġ li-Mramma Il Magħtab

¹ Chambered tombs only. Those like Żebbuġ, Buqana, and Busbezija of uncertain original form are not included.

The first of these and the last three remain unaltered. Mġarr East is now, p. 18 above, of Saf., or at earliest Ġg., date. The only other good lobed example was Kordin III East, dated to Ġg. by Evans himself.⁴ The trefoils are also all of Ġg. date now that Mġarr West has been moved to that phase. Others are Kordin III West, Buġibba, probably Santa Verna⁵ and Ġgantija South in its earlier form if Evans is right in supposing that the outer apses were later additions.⁶ To these Skorba West has now been added. Skorba East joins the numerous four apses and a niche group in Tx.

An explanation of the sequence three, five, four apses is suggested by the history of Skorba West. This was altered in Tx. by the addition of a wall

easternmost temple at Tarxien. However, the area of the inner three apses, compared with the one of the trefoils, was apparently greater than was needed, so in later examples the central one was reduced to a simple altar niche, producing the four-apse plan. Tarxien Central remains anomalous, but the same division between a 'public' first pair of apses and 'private' inner ones is clearly marked by the spiral-decorated septal slab.

Although Evans's sequence of the styles of temple plan is no longer confirmable from associated pottery for every stage, it remains the most convincing explanation, even if in the last resort mainly typological. Subdivision of the Ġg. phase at some future date may

Ashby and T. E. Peet in 1911, *Papers of the British School at Rome*, vi, 1913, p. 105.

⁶ Evans, 1959, p. 98.

⁷ Haġar Qim Central is anomalous in having an external door in place of the central niche.

¹ Evans, 1959, pp. 84 et seq.

² See p. 17, above.

³ Note that he considered Mġ. earlier than Żb.

⁴ Evans, 1959, p. 95.

⁵ Suggested by the plan of the torba floor recovered by T.

give the three stages, lobed—trefoil—five apse, the same chronological validity as the others. The only alternative to local development from the rock-cut tomb is to suppose import of the trefoil plan temple from some unidentified foreign source, followed by later divergence of the others.

The massing of the temples in Ġg., Table II, including virtually the whole of their development, argues for a comparatively long duration of that phase.

22. Chronology

In section 8 relations between Malta and Sicily were referred to in the discussion on the terminology of the

from a burnt roof, again quite possibly old heartwood from its timbers. The statistical scatter could also be invoked in this case.

B.M. 100 is a little more complicated. Its excavator considered it to be of Mġ. date like the building it came from, Mġarr East. As the trenches in 1961 showed, p. 17 above, this was not so. The carbon-bearing level was a clay containing predominantly Żb. sherds dug from a deposit elsewhere to make the first floor of the temple in the Ġg., possibly even Saf., phase. Its charcoal could therefore equally well be Żb. or Ġg., the date obtained strongly suggesting the latter when compared with the others.

TABLE III
Carbon Samples

B.M. no.	Site	Phase	Result B.C. ± 150	Material	Excavator	Publication Antiquity
101	Tarxien	TC.	2535	Wood	T. Zammit	..
141	"	TC.	1930	Horsebeans	"	xxxvii, 1963, p. 302.
143	Skorba	Tx.	2430	Wood	Trump	"
142	"	Ġg.	3290	"	"	"
100	Mġarr	Mġ ¹	2690	"	Evans	xxxv, 1961, p. 143.
145	Skorba	Żb.	3190	"	Trump	xxxvii, 1963, p. 302.
147	"	"	3050	"	"	"
148	"	RSk.	3225	"	"	"
..	..	GhD.	..	"	"	Under test.

¹ So Evans, *Antiquity* xxxv, 1961, p. 143, but see discussion on this page.

Maltese sequence, and the few imported sherds were described in section 20. These will be further dealt with in more general terms in the next section. In view of the uncertainties of dating in these other regions, they give at best a relative chronology only. With the determination of C14 dates for Malta, the absolute chronology is now better founded there than anywhere with which it was in direct contact. Malta is now so much better off than its neighbours for dates that it is in a position to export them.

At the time of writing, the results of testing five samples from Skorba, two from Tarxien, and one from Mġarr have been released by the British Museum Research Laboratory, for whose assistance we are very deeply indebted. They are listed in Table III. One more from Skorba is in hand.

It is immediately clear that three of these are inconsistent with the rest, but even these can be reconciled with no great difficulty. B.M. 101 is impossibly high. However, being from a piece of burnt heavy timber, it could have been old wood when felled for use in the temple roof, later becoming incorporated in the cemetery level. It agrees closely with B.M. 143. B.M. 142, from charcoal found in the Ġg. Hut of the Querns, is again too high compared with the two stratigraphically earlier Żb. examples. This charcoal, spread across the whole hut floor, is certainly

The carbon results give us then a good date for Żb., based on the three closely agreeing samples 145, 147, and 148, a consistent date for Ġg., 100 and 142 (as amended in each case), a good date for Tx., samples 101 (amended) and 143, and a consistent date for TC., 141. Though the latter is definitely high compared with the archaeological estimate, the sample, domestic beans, cannot be more than a year or two older than its cultural context, probably less. The ± figure must always be borne in mind, but any attempt to lower the date of TC. is going to lengthen Tx., already well stretched, or open a hiatus between them, unlikely in a desirable island like Malta.

Looking at the three periods in greater detail, TC. is now very thinly spread to cover roughly the first half of the second millennium, since its end is fixed by the faience beads which it imported in quantity. But BN. is already required to cover a good deal longer, from soon after 1500¹ to the arrival of the Phoenicians in about the ninth century. The quantity of its material known is greater than that of TC., but by no very great margin. TC. is an immigrant culture, apparently into a near-deserted island. The immigrants were probably few, taking a long time to build up a population of any size. For the succeeding phases Skorba has given no new information, the conclusions of the writer's 1961 article remaining unaltered.

¹ With faience beads at the end of TC. instead of at its beginning there is no need to compress BN. In Trump, 'Later Prehistory' a slightly higher date than Evans's of 1350 was suggested.

The other dates for the Copper Age in Table I are estimates pure and simple within the carbon-date framework. Mg. and Saf. are represented by very much less material than the others and could be considered little more than transitional zones between them. The rest, on the other hand, all show evidence for length. Żb. is long enough to undergo internal development, described above, to leave plenty of material on many sites and to erect successive huts at Skorba. It must be considered a long phase of population increase from immigrant origins to the great period of temple-building. Ġg. shows less changes in its pottery but includes the whole development of the temples, from simplest lobed to final four-apse form. This must surely have taken a considerable time. The quantity of material of this phase is even larger. Still greater is that from Tx., which again shows internal changes. Though the number of temples of this phase is less, and the only new form to appear is the Tarxien six-apse, all the earlier ones remain in use, many of them like Skorba West with alterations and additions. Here the carbon dates themselves, accepting B.M. 141 as very early in TC. and rejecting the idea of a hiatus of any length, argue for a long life for Tx.

The Neolithic poses a different problem. Until the further carbon dates are made known, estimates can be made only on the basis of dead reckoning before the RSk. figure. Two centuries apiece for its three phases is claimed as no more than a wild guess.

23. Foreign Connexions

Examples of stray pot fragments of foreign manufacture found in Malta have already been listed, and conversely the few and doubtful exported pieces. There are of course several other ways in which over-sea connexions can be shown, of which three are important—direct immigration, local imitation of alien traits, and import of foreign raw materials. More significant, however, is the direction of these connexions, so it is from the geographical point of view that they will be discussed here.

The Aegean and the East. Contacts in this direction are few and widely scattered through the sequence.

A bone tube from a GSk. level above the GhD hut recalls examples from the Cyclades, but since it is not decorated in the style characteristic of the Aegean ones the analogy cannot be closely pressed.

In RSk. the figurines described on p. 33 above show strong eastern influence. The heads have the un-

mistakable triangular shape and backward nose-in-air tilt of the long series from the Cycladic Islands, although their date here is high compared with the Aegean ones. The bodies, with their marked steatopygy, have vaguer and wider associations extending into Anatolia. The RSk. fabric, however, leaves no doubt of their local manufacture. The similarity between the RSk. trumpet lug and the example quoted from Troy may be mere coincidence.¹

Hints of Minoan contact are provided by the Mnajdra pillar altars² and the Tarxien relief spirals.³ Though clearly made in Malta, there are no obvious antecedents for either within the island. There is a big jump from the Tx. volutes, thorny, fish-tailed, of at most a turn and a half, to the carved relief spirals, smooth, pointed, with anything up to six turns. The former derive from Ġg. curves on the pottery, through intermediate Saf. forms, but provide no more than a favourable atmosphere for the acceptance of the true spirals, foreign in form and technique.

The only concrete imports are the Thermi bowl fragments, scattered sparsely through Ġg. and Tx., frequent in TC. Their increase in numbers during the TC. phase is easily explained since this culture is itself immigrant from the east. Its origin in the Middle Helladic of western Greece has been already noted.⁴ This seems in fact to be the moment in time when the long-headed Mediterranean stock of the Copper Age was replaced by the round-headed population, probably Dinaric, which survives to the present day, unaffected by later and lesser immigrations.⁵

Apart from the last, a very obvious bodily transference of population bringing a completely alien culture, all these contacts can be explained in terms of casual trade or even accident. For example, if Odysseus was really wrecked on Ogygia-Gozo, what Aegean traits might he not have introduced into Calypso's household? Where trade is postulated, and the Thermi and Mycenaean sherds are best explained in this prosaic fashion, it probably came via Sicilian ports, where both occur. It therefore provides a natural transition to the next group of contacts, northwards.

Sicily and the north. Here all the forms of contact are present, little surprising as it is Malta's nearest neighbour and visible on days of special clarity. Imports of manufactured objects have been already dealt with.

Raw materials include obsidian from Lipari,⁶ in GhD. from Pantelleria too. Pumice is from Lipari also, but this floats and can wash up on the island

¹ See p. 32, n. 1.

² In which the horizontal slab is supported not by upright rectangular slabs at the ends but by a single one of circular cross-section at the centre.

³ Evans, 1959, pls. 23–26, 28.

⁴ Evans, 1956; Brea in *Antiquity*, xxxiv, 1960, p. 134.

⁵ L. H. Dudley Buxton, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, lii, 1922, p. 164.

⁶ See p. 24, footnote 2.

naturally. Others cannot be so securely identified. The grey-buff flint is probably from the Monti Iblei behind Syracuse, varieties of other colours coming from further afield. Lava for querns was occasionally imported from Etna. Alabaster for figurines could have come from Agrigento or northern Calabria. Metamorphic rocks are found behind Messina and in the Sila of Calabria, including in the latter area greenstone as used for the axe amulets. Ochre is found widely in Sicily. The Bronze Age metal sources are much more distant, helping to explain its rarity in the island—Sardinia, Tuscany, Austria, Cyprus.

TABLE IV
Distribution of Obsidian

	GhD.	GSk.	RSk.	b.	Mg.	Gg.	Saf.	Tx.
Lipari	99	29	70	23	2	33	7	8
Pantelleria	21	11	1	3	..	4	1	..

Imitation of Sicilian traits is less obvious, the best example being the decoration inside rims taken over by Żb. from Trefontane, or wherever its real home was. The Tx. spirals may link with Castelluccio rather than directly with the orient,¹ or conversely they could have passed on to Castelluccio or travelled independently to the two. Cases of parallelism are more usually due to transplantation of culture.

GhD. is indistinguishable from much of the Sicilian Stentinello, differences of detail apparently being due to separate development into GSk. before the introduction of late Stentinello traits like lozenge stamps, rim faces, large curved bowls, or the appearance of painted decoration in this corner of Sicily. On the other hand, everything in GhD. can be paralleled in Stentinello, and through that is related to the wide impressed-ware province generally.

The second immigration, Żb., is less clear-cut. This culture is only generically related to San Cono-Piano Notaro, as at present known, being far from identical. Its immediate ancestral home has yet to be found, but must be somewhere in close touch with Piano Notaro in southern Sicily.

BN. presents a similar state of affairs. Here related cultures are known in several places, Thapsos in the Syracuse area, Milazzese on Lipari and the north coast of Sicily, La Mursia on Pantelleria. The only identical material, from some of the Thapsos cemeteries, is under suspicion of being imported from Malta. The Agrigento region has been suggested² as a source, though this remains so far unconfirmed.

Bah. is little better off. Though similarities to most of the elements not deriving locally from BN. can be

¹ L. Bernabò Brea, *Sicily*, pl. 33.

² Mainly on the evidence of its red slip, Evans, 1953, p. 89.

found in the Fossa-Grave Culture of Campania and Calabria, notably the cemetery of Canale Janchina, there is no question of identity.³

The general connexions are very uneven then, clearly apparent in raw materials, very slight for cultural traits, better but rarely entirely satisfactory for immigrations. This is odd as, unlike vague 'influences', materials have to be paid for. Until the Late Bronze Age we have no idea what Malta could have exported in return. From then on Maltese textiles had a high reputation, which may have begun unrecorded much earlier.

The West. Connexions with lands beyond the Sicilian-Tunisian straits are tantalizingly vague. The evidence from Sardinia is the most important and has been already referred to, p. 46. There is also a strong feeling that megalithic architecture in Malta, its most easterly manifestation, must be closely linked in some way with its main area of distribution in Western Europe. For example, the concave temple façades and forecourts recall strongly tomb plans in places as far afield as Sardinia and Ireland. The common factor here, however, may be in ritual rather than in architecture. The higher dates given to Malta by C14 have raised the problem again in acuter form, though Brittany still has earlier ones.

Unfortunately except in Sardinia there is so far absolutely nothing to support these vague hints of even vaguer influences. It remains for future work to prove or disprove, to clarify or reject.

24. Conclusion

The three main results of the excavations at Skorba in 1961 to 1963 have been described in detail above. They are the exploration of two new temples of the well-known Maltese prehistoric type, the discovery and investigation for the first time of a village of the temple period or earlier in Malta, and the much fuller and better-documented version of the prehistoric culture sequence. Of these the last is the most important—it has revealed an unsuspected break between what are now called the Neolithic and Copper Age periods of the sequence, it has given what is confidently believed to be a complete and final series of phases in each period, and it has produced a series of C14 dates to give at least the framework of an absolute chronology.

Three other points, one cannot claim them as results, require some further discussion in closing.

One which struck the excavators frequently in the course of the work was the number of traits formerly believed to be of late Copper Age date which have now been found back in the Neolithic, but still not in

³ *Monumenti antichi*, xxxi, col. 5.

the intervening period. As examples one could mention tunnel-handles, slingbolts, terracotta figurines, in particular the RSk. 'bed' if such it really is, axe amulets. If this is coincidence it is a fairly extreme example. If not, it is difficult to find an explanation of the phenomenon.

A second point which has frequently given rise to controversy is the general interpretation of the temple civilization.¹ Some authorities, impressed by the number and size of the temples against the small area of the islands, have assumed that external manpower must have been necessary, that pilgrimages to Malta from a wide area must have been organized to help with the temple-construction programme. Others have accepted that the necessary physical power was available but that the spiritual driving force for a great development of this kind could not have arisen in isolation, that Malta was an international centre, religious or commercial, where foreign ideas could meet, combine, and produce the temple civilization as a result. Finally others have pointed to the uniqueness of the temples, and isolation geographically and culturally of the islands, and supposed that the whole development and execution must be considered local.²

The evidence from Skorba strongly favours the last suggestion. That the wealth of new material has yielded only seven imported sherds in the Neolithic period and raised the total in the Copper Age to only five would seem to be fairly conclusive. No large numbers of visitors, pilgrims, or traders, could have passed through Malta leaving so little trace. Until the mid-sea routes were opened up by the Phoenicians there was in any case nowhere to pass through to; Malta's sole route was to or from south-east Sicily. The non-local raw materials were almost certainly imported thence in Maltese craft.

The third point links indirectly with the last. The collapse of the temple civilization has been attributed to war, famine, or pestilence. These probably all played a part but none is sufficient explanation alone. Skorba has served to confirm emphatically the complete break between Tx. and TC. and, by giving the latter a much longer time span, to underline its poverty and presumably small population. Reinterpretation of the Copper Age pottery³ suggests a contributory factor, that the temple civilization was

already past its peak. Whereas the traditional scratched designs of Ġg. are extremely varied and vigorous, those of Tx. tend to be very stereotyped. New kinds of decoration outside the previous tradition are tried—lattice-scratched, studded, fluted, etc.—but fail to rekindle the lost inspiration. The temples themselves tell the same story, experimental in Ġg., with one exception standardized in Tx. What is more, the Skorba evidence offers one reason for this change. The cutting off of the inner trefoil apse, or inner pair of quatrefoil apses, implies an entrenched, possibly unpopular, priesthood, content with matters as they are rather than as they might be.

The root factors, however, were probably natural ones. We know that Malta supported a large population at the time of the temples, assuming from the evidence mentioned above that it was the inhabitants who built them, and that by the Bronze Age the population was very much reduced. We know that timber in large size and considerable quantity was employed in temple construction, and it is most unlikely all to have been imported for the purpose from Sicily.⁴ We now know that by the later Bronze Age at least the island's vegetation was much as it is today, virtually treeless.⁵ The interpretation here suggested is that deforestation and soil exhaustion led to instability of climate, soil erosion, drought, and crop failure, in an interlocking mesh of cause and effect. Famine, war, and disease would naturally follow. With civilization in decline, these would be quite sufficient to destroy it. If the drought persisted long enough for the island's springs to fail, then survivors would be forced to leave or die.⁶ After the drought had broken, the next year or year after, Malta would have been vacant for unopposed occupation by the TC. immigrants. No continuity of cultural traits would be expected, whereas any partial catastrophe must have left a few survivors, who would have left some mark in the succeeding cultural record.

So Skorba gives not only the history of the gradual development of culture in Malta, leading eventually to the brilliant period of the temples, but also a few hints on the baffling problem of how such a civilization could be swept away without trace, until its dead bones were resurrected by the archaeologists of four thousand years later.

1960 was analysed for pollen by Professor H. Godwin of the Cambridge Botany School. Pollen was scanty, largely of Compositae, Plantago, and other arable weeds. *Pinus* was present but very scarce. *Olea*, wild or cultivated, also occurred. *M.A.R.* 1959-60, 1960, and 1961.

⁶ It would be tempting to suppose the Maltese traits appearing suddenly in Sardinia to have been carried there by refugees.

¹ L. M. Ugolini, *Malta: origine della civiltà mediterranea*, 1934; Evans, 1953 and 1959; Brea, *Antiquity*, xxxiv, 1960, p. 132; Evans, idem, p. 218; Trump, *Antiquity*, xxxv, 1961, p. 300.

² Easter Island offers an extreme example.

³ *British Journal of Aesthetics*, iii, 1963, p. 237.

⁴ See Appendix V.

⁵ A clay sample from a late BN. water cistern near Luqa in

APPENDIX I

REPORT ON HUMAN JAW FRAGMENTS FROM THE FLOOR OF THE GHD. HUT (*condensed*)

PROFESSOR J. J. MANGION

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Fragment A, of the upper left maxilla, bears the first and second deciduous molar teeth with parts of the socket of the left central permanent incisor to the first permanent molar.¹ The teeth are fully formed and bear some wear facets on their occlusal surfaces. Normal resorption of bone about the necks of the teeth prior to shedding has taken place. X-rays revealed the unerupted lateral permanent incisor, canine, and first and second premolar teeth. All except the last have completed the enamel of their crowns but have not yet formed roots. The probable age at death was $6\frac{1}{2}$ to $7\frac{1}{2}$ years.

Fragment B, of the right body of the mandible, bears a second deciduous molar with wear facets on its occlusal surface, although its cusps are still well defined. The bone extends to the empty socket of the developing second permanent molar. On the X-rays the developing crown of the second permanent premolar could be seen enclosed by the deciduous molar's roots.¹ Calcification is in its early stages and has so far affected only the cusps. Distal to these two

teeth is the unerupted first permanent molar. The enamel of its crown is fully calcified but the roots are not yet formed. Probable age: $3\frac{1}{2}$ to $4\frac{1}{2}$ years.

Fragment C, of the symphysis area of the mandible, bears the lower left central and lateral deciduous incisor teeth, with parts of the sockets of all incisors and canines, left and right, deciduous and permanent. The incisal surfaces of both teeth show evidence of normal attrition. There appears to have been some drifting apart of these teeth without, however, pocket formation in the supporting bone or periodontal disease. Some bone loss on the buccal aspect of the two teeth is due to early resorption. Both unerupted permanent central incisor teeth show on the X-rays their crowns not yet fully calcified nor their roots formed. Probable age: $3\frac{1}{2}$ to $4\frac{1}{2}$ years.

No caries or pathology was present in any specimen.

Professor Mangion concludes that at least two individuals were represented, A of about 7 years and B+C of about $4\frac{1}{2}$. B and C may of course have belonged to two different children.

APPENDIX II

REPORT ON THE SKULL FRAGMENTS FROM EF5 (GHD. PHASE)

Six adjoining fragments of human skull, the longest 6.6 cm., were found in the stony debris making up level EF5. Four were of the frontal bone and one each of the right and left parietals, the latter including the angle between the frontal and sagittal sutures.

The curvature of the vault shows that the skull was fully adult, so cannot have belonged to the same individual as any of the jaw fragments from CE2

referred to in Appendix I. Indeed the size could be taken to imply male rather than female, though no other corroborative features survive. However, the open state of the sutures suggests that their owner had died in early adulthood. Too little remains to give clues on the cephalic index or other racially significant features.

¹ The two milk molars overlie the permanent premolars, not the first and second permanent molars.

APPENDIX III

PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE ANIMAL BONES

PROFESSOR DR. O.-F. GANDERT

Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte, West-Berlin

The following animals were present; goat, sheep, cattle, pig, and a small canid. Goat and sheep were the commonest, in about equal numbers. The cattle were remarkable for their large size. The canid was represented by two small teeth only, possibly fox, jackal, or a small house dog. Otherwise there were no

wild-animal bones. The marine mollusca are awaiting specialist examination.

Bones were recovered freely from all periods with little sign of significant changes, though the cattle seemed to be more frequent in the earlier phases.

A full statistical report is in preparation.

APPENDIX IV

REPORT ON CARBONIZED GRAIN FROM AF5 (GHD. PHASE)

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The specimen consists of 40 c.c. barley and 3.5 c.c. of wheat. Additionally there are five seeds of lentil (*Lens esculenta*) of Neolithic Anatolian type (2.60–3.25 mm. diameter), one seed of Field Madder (*Sherardia arvensis*) and one seed of Caterpillar (*Scorpiurus* sp.).

Being severely distorted the barley grains do not permit of a thorough analysis. Whether they are of a 6-row or a 2-row spike or both cannot be ascertained; but few have traces of paleas left so I can only say that some of them are of the hulled variety. On the other

hand, there is no definite evidence in the palea-less grains which could be taken for proof of the naked variety.

The wheat grains also are very badly preserved, but it is certain that the bulk of them belong to Emmer (*Triticum dicoccum*), and that two (three?) are of a naked wheat, most probably Club Wheat (*T. compactum*) as they are small, short, and squat. Because of puffing the possibility of some grains being Einkorn cannot be determined.

APPENDIX V

REPORT ON THE BOTANICAL DETERMINATION OF CHARCOAL SAMPLES

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Of ten samples from the Early Neolithic level (GhD., AF5), six are certainly *Cercis siliquastrum* (Judas tree) and two more possibly. Some of the diagnostic microscopical characters of the remaining two are very obscure. One sample is probably *Crataegus* sp.

(Hawthorn), a second, more surprisingly, appears to be Ash (*Fraxinus* sp.).¹

The ten samples of Copper Age material (Tx., East Temple) are all Olive (*Olea europea*). It is quite impossible to distinguish wild from cultivated material of this kind from microscopical characters.²

¹ This material was interpreted as refuse from domestic fires, a view supported by the identifications.

² The samples came from the destruction level of the temple,

pl. xa, and must represent the timberwork of its roof. The implication is that they were from well-grown olive trees, not from the wild scrub olive.

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(a) Skorba from the east before excavation. (2 m. poles marked in 20 cm. lengths)



(b) Skorba before excavation began, oblique air photograph from the north-west. Note the cart-ruts in the extreme top left corner. *By courtesy of H.M.S. Falcon; Crown copyright*

PLATE II



(a) The West Temple from the south-east after clearance



(b) The West Temple, entrance and façade from above



(a) The West Temple, the pitted slab built into the step of the eastern apse



(b) The West Temple, entrance passage showing libation holes

PLATE IV



(a) The eastern apse of the West Temple, cf. fig. 5



(b) The entrance to the central apse, with Tx. and TC. blocking walls

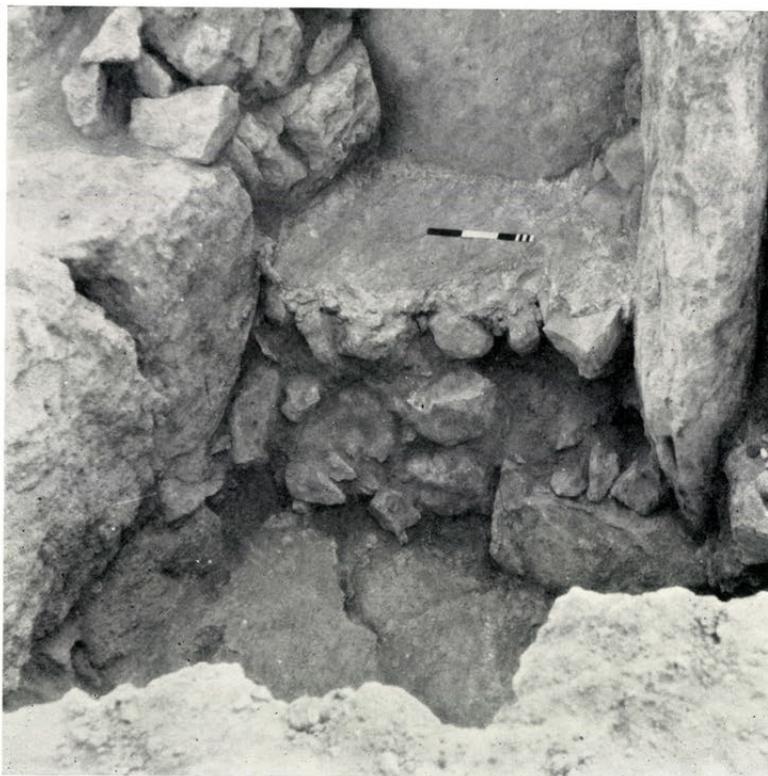
After the first campaign



(a) The inner apse of the West Temple with TC. additions



(b) The West Temple from the north-east after clearance



(a) The Tx. altar in LA



(b) The Tx. altar in K



(a) The western outbuildings with the West Temple behind

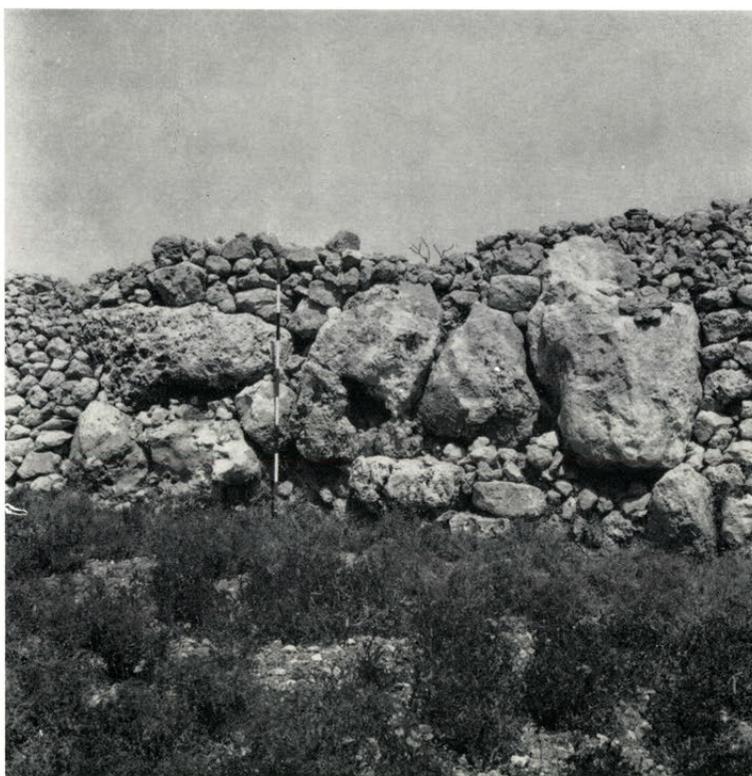


(b) Floor levels in the western outbuildings, the top of the GhD. wall just appearing, trench W

PLATE VIII



(a) The Tx. doorway and TC. blocking wall in D



(b) Megalithic blocks in the retaining wall of the terrace-forecourt



(a) The central niche of the East Temple, looking east

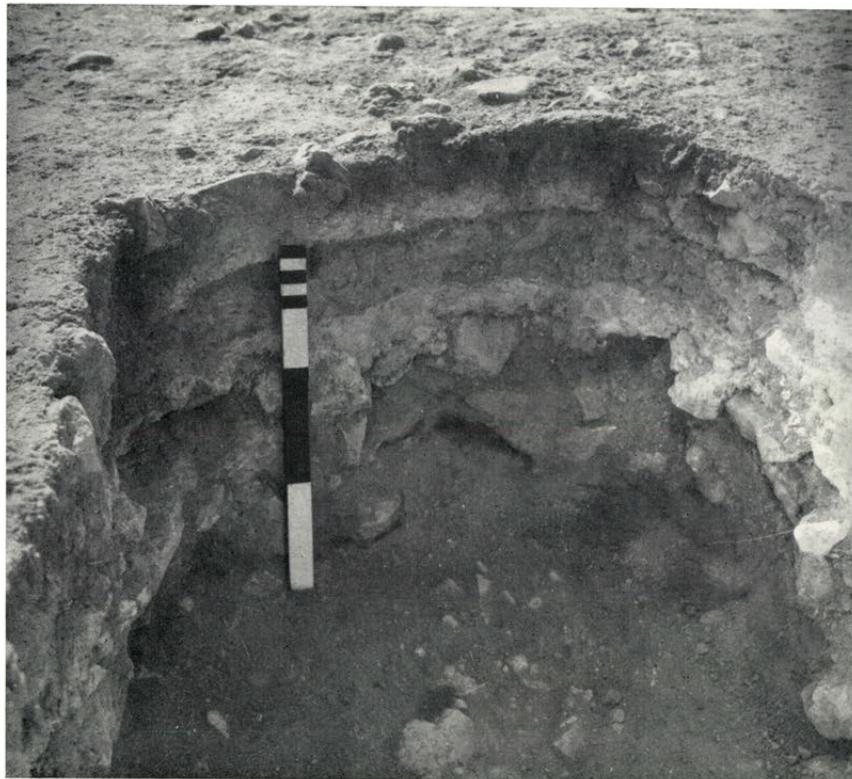


(b) The East Temple from the east after clearance; underlying hut floors in the foreground, the West Temple behind

PLATE X



(a) The debris in the East Temple. Note the line of ash 30 cms. above the floor. North and east faces of trench QB



(b) The build of the East Temple floor, the present surface 10 cms. above an earlier one West side of the sheep pit in EB



(a) The external shrine at the east end of the East Temple façade



(b) The boundary wall of the East Temple built into the wall of the East Field. Characteristic 'long and short' work

PLATE XII



(a) The GhD. wall looking east, trenches W to CC



(b) The GhD. wall, close up view, trench SB



(a) The GhD. Hut looking east, end of 1962, trench KD



(b) The GhD. Hut in the east field, looking south



(a) The RSk. Shrine, general view from the south



(b) The RSk. Shrine, general view from the east



(a) The wall between the two rooms and the East Yard beyond. The line of the North Room's eastern end has been restored in loose rubble



(b) The south wall of the RSk. Shrine, end of 1962

PLATE XVI



(a) The doorway to the North Room of the RSk. Shrine. The outer wall of the East Temple stands above



(b) The west end of the North Room looking north. Note the extremely irregular bed rock floor



(a) The North Room before the removal of the last balk. The stony rubble on the left fills the recent pit which had destroyed the room's eastern end



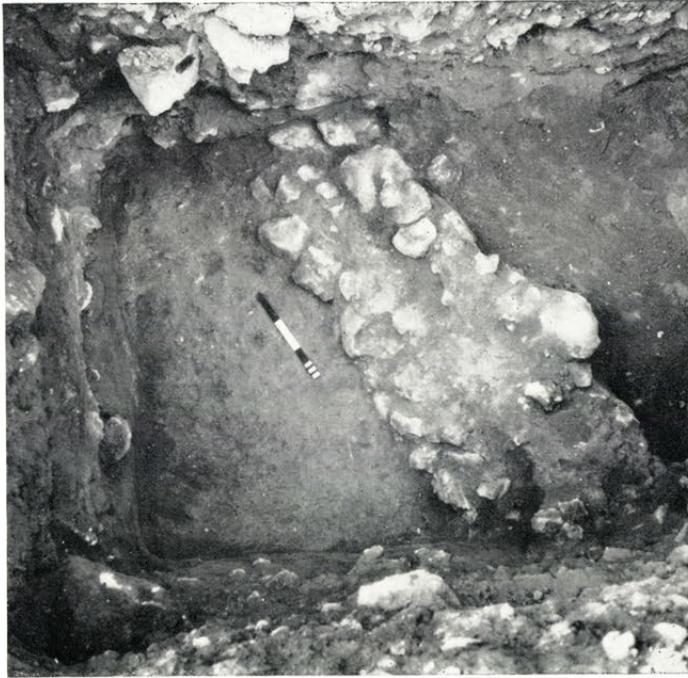
(b) The stratigraphy in the RSk. Shrine—bed rock, decayed brick, stony rubble and ploughsoil. West face of trench IE



(a) Two of the goat skulls on the North Room floor, trench YD



(b) The West Yard, seen from above



(a) The eastern wall of the Mg. Hut, UC, vertical view



(b) The 'tea-tray', plaster bowl and western wall of the Mg. Hut, OD



(a) The Ġg. hut floors beneath the south east corner of the East Temple



(b) The Ġg. Hut of the Querns from the west



(a) Pit with sea-shells at the east end of the Hut of the Querns, OC



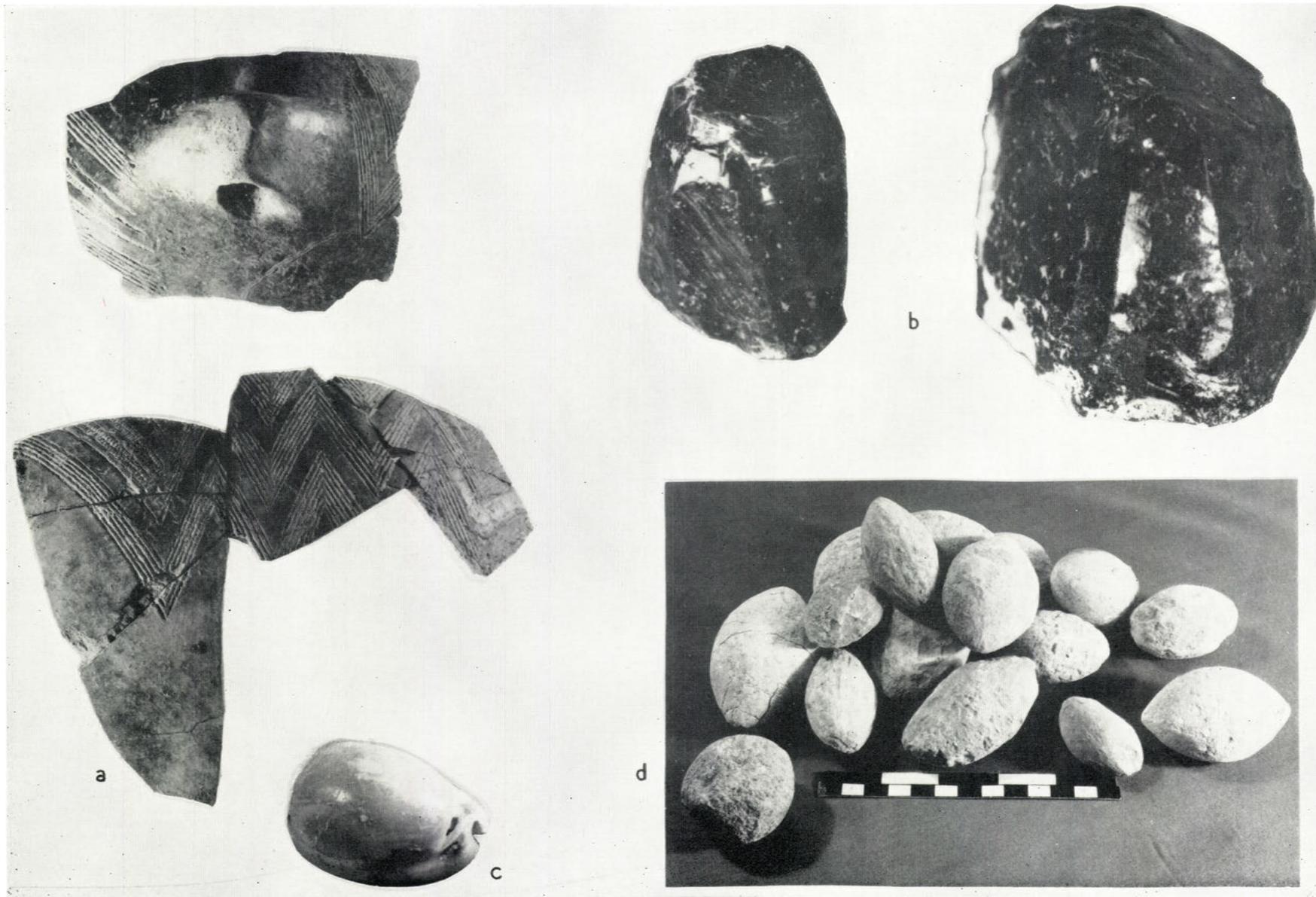
(b) Saddle quern and rubber in position against the north wall of the Hut of the Querns, RB



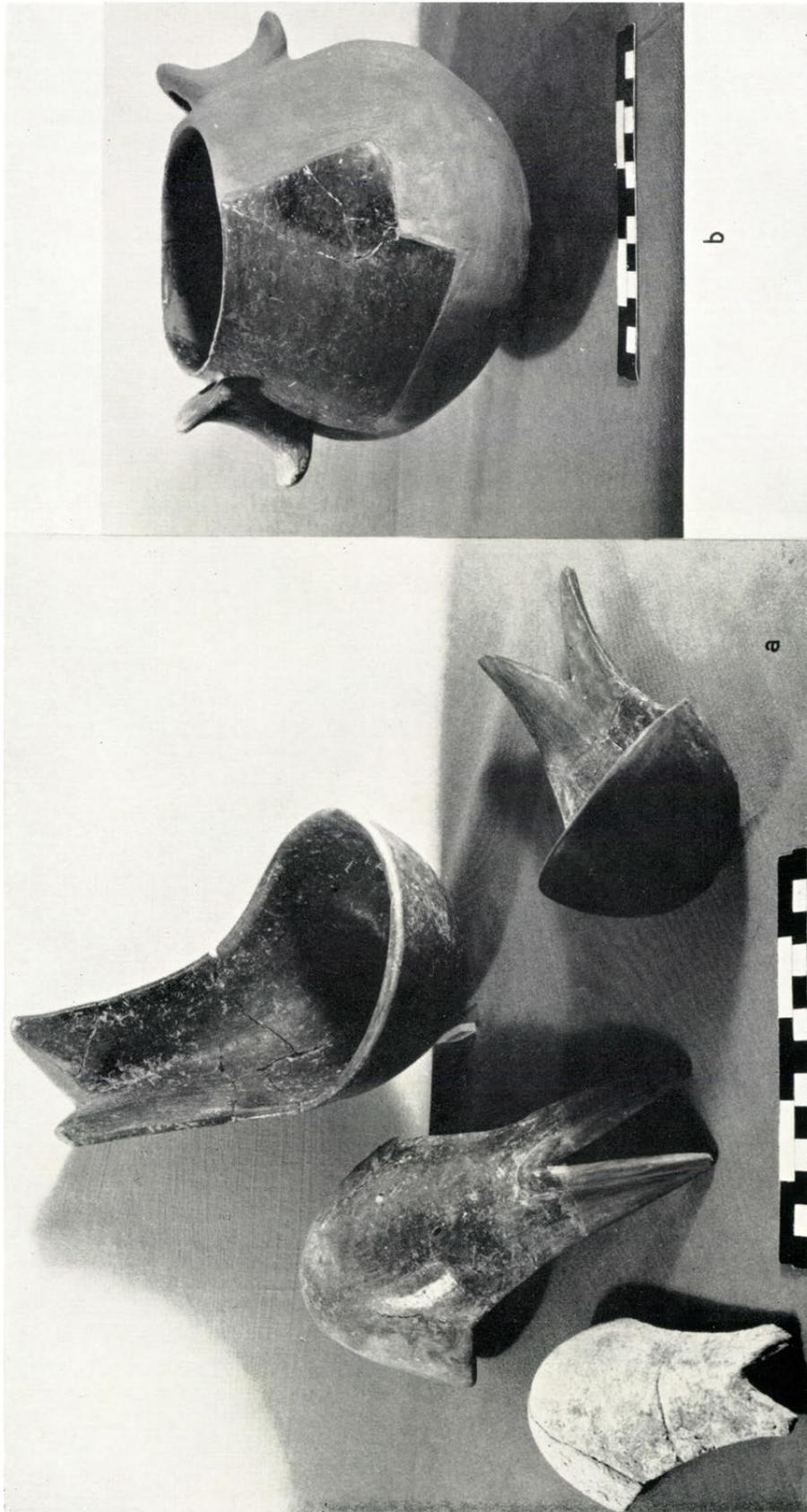
(a) The setting of stones in the GSk. level of trench OD, vertical view



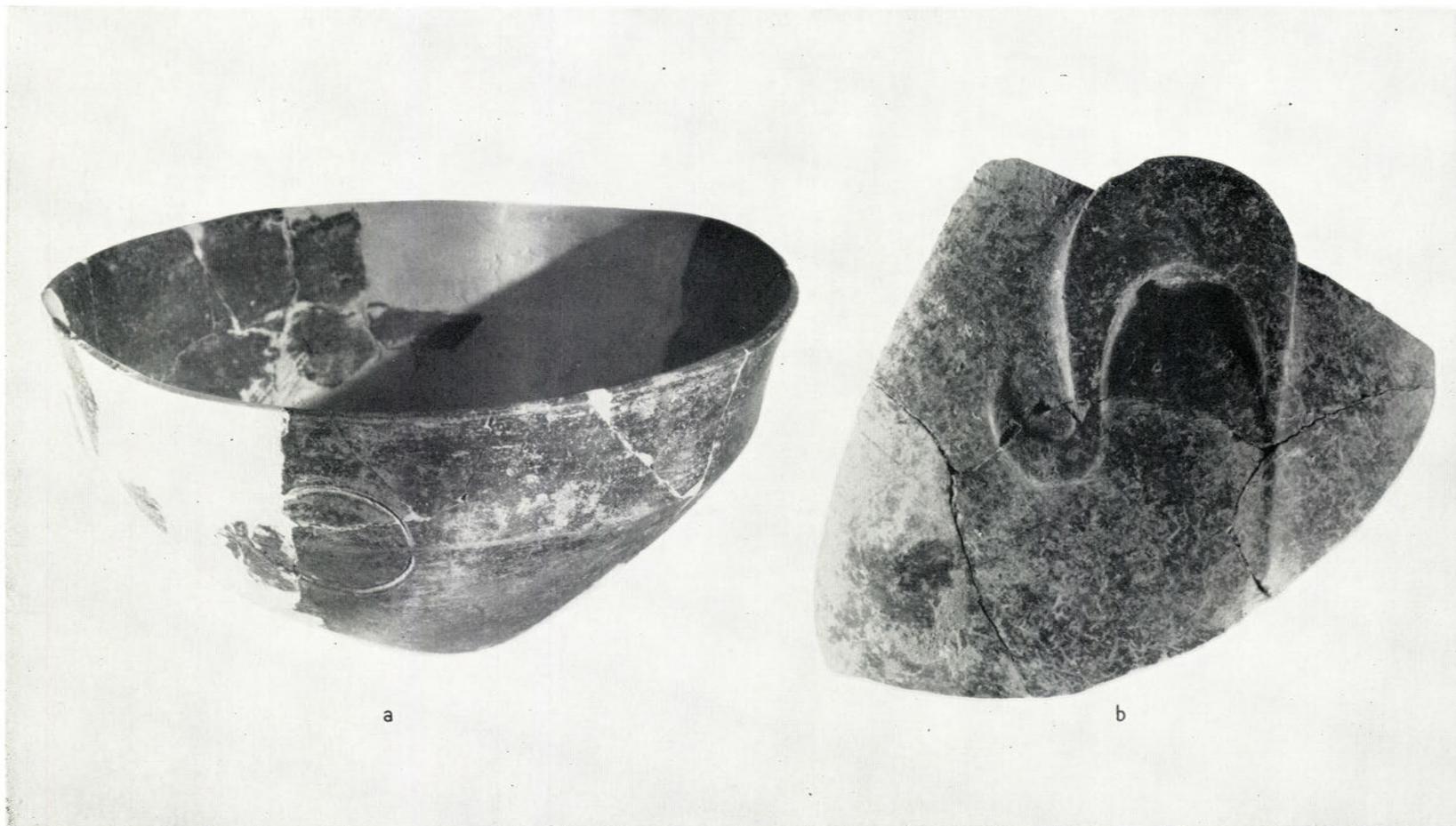
(b) Two metres of deposit, the east face of trench OB



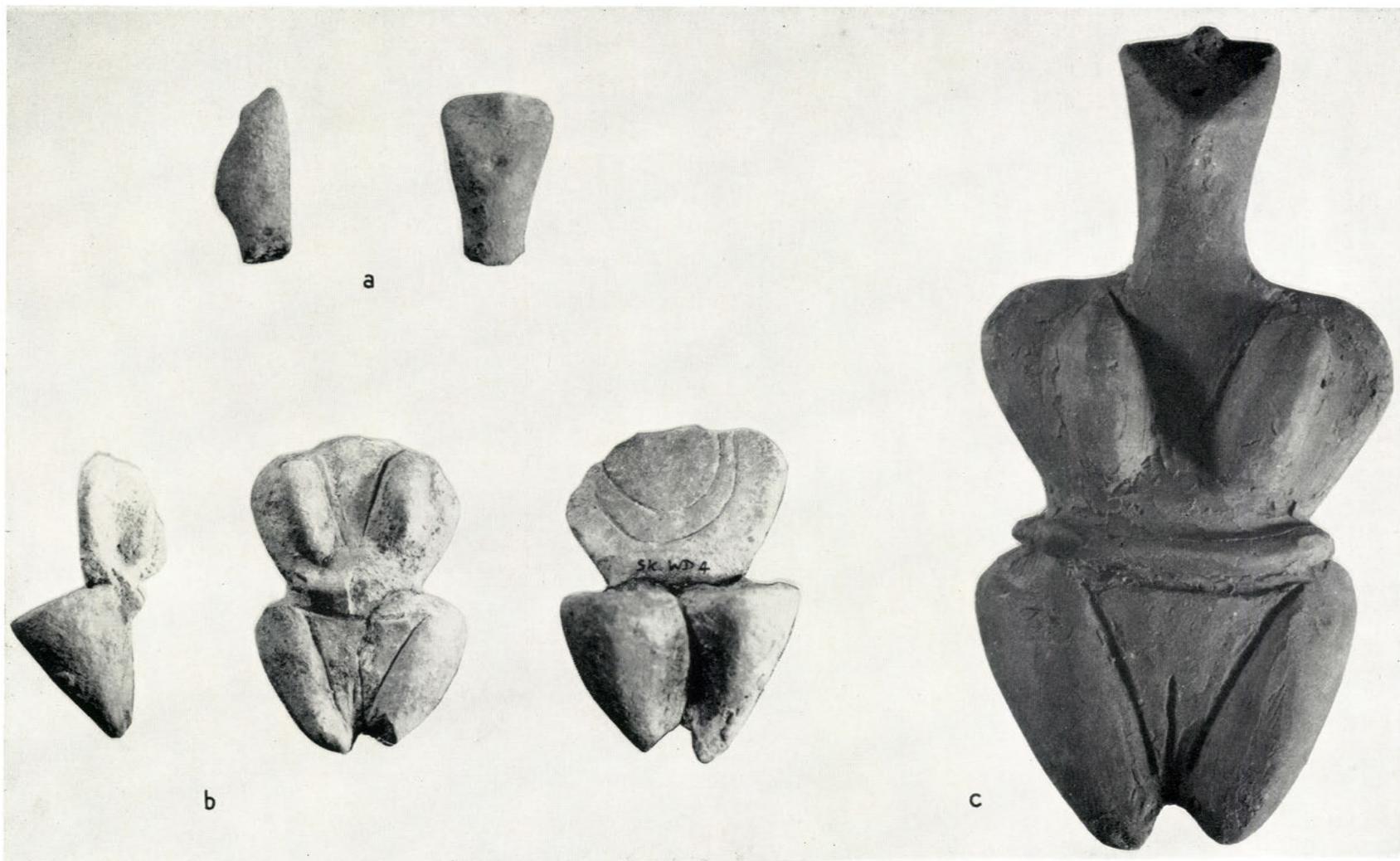
(a) GħD. vessel from GħD. wall area, width of handle sherd 6.7 cms.; (b) Obsidian cores from VE4 (GSk.), left Lipari, right Pantelleria, heights 7.8 and 8.6 cms.; (c) perforated cowry shell from the RSk. Shrine, length 3.5 cms.; (d) GSk. slingbolts, mostly VE4



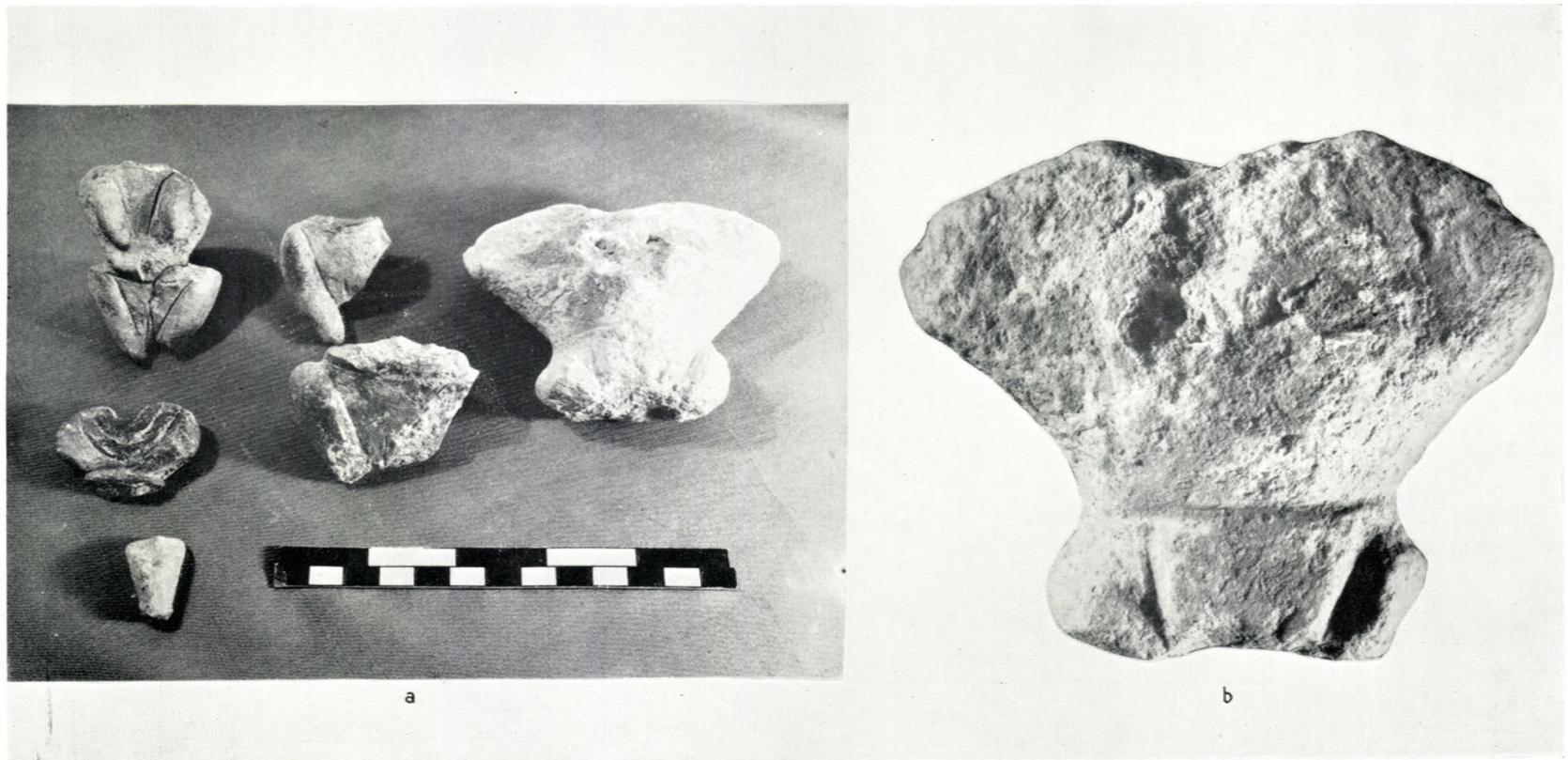
RSk. pottery. (a) Ladles; (b) vase with trumpet lugs, OE4, diameter 15 cms.



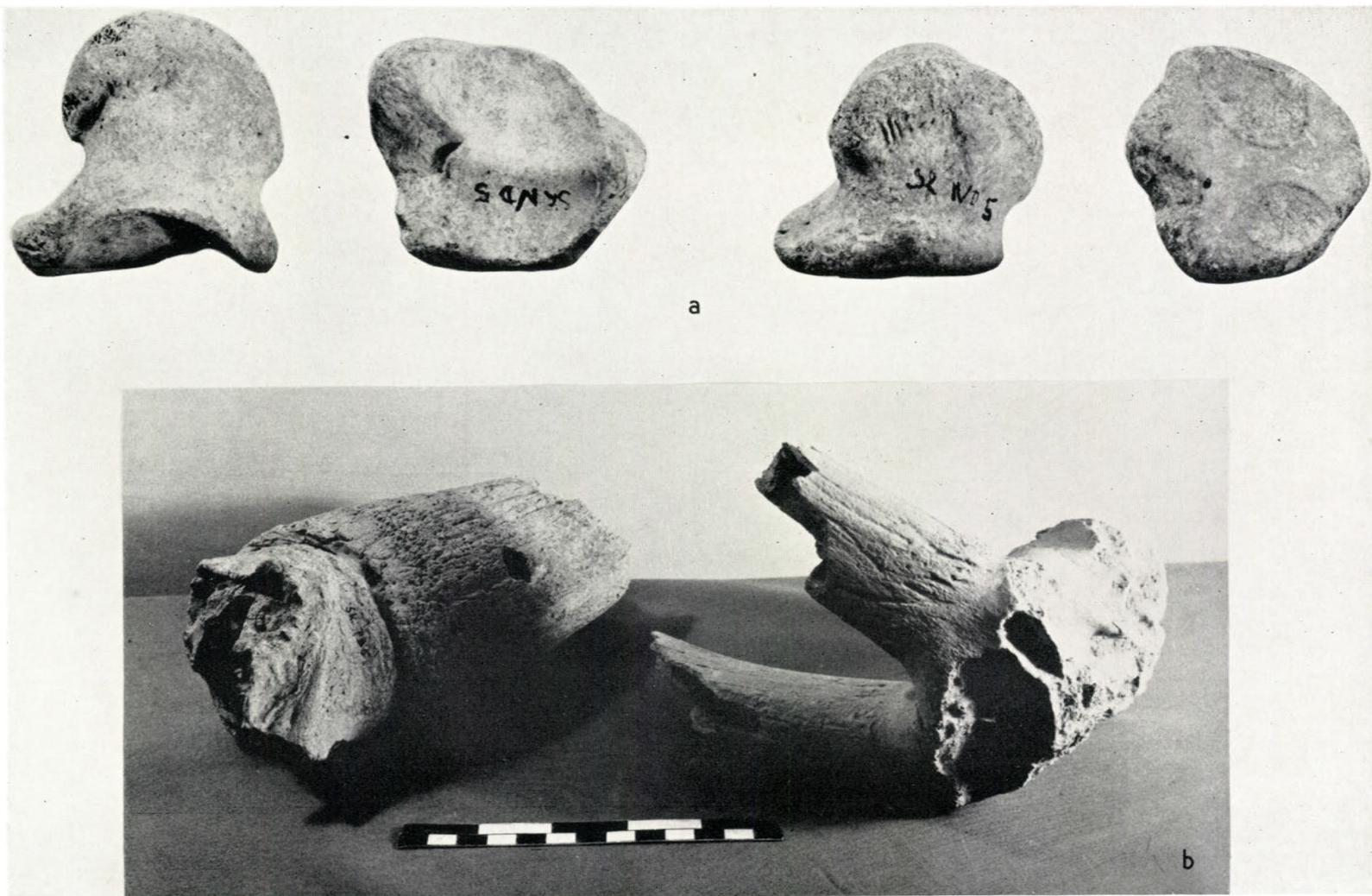
(a) Carinated bowl, LD5, diameter 28.6 cms.; (b) horseshoe lug from globular jar, OE4, height of sherd 11.7 cms.



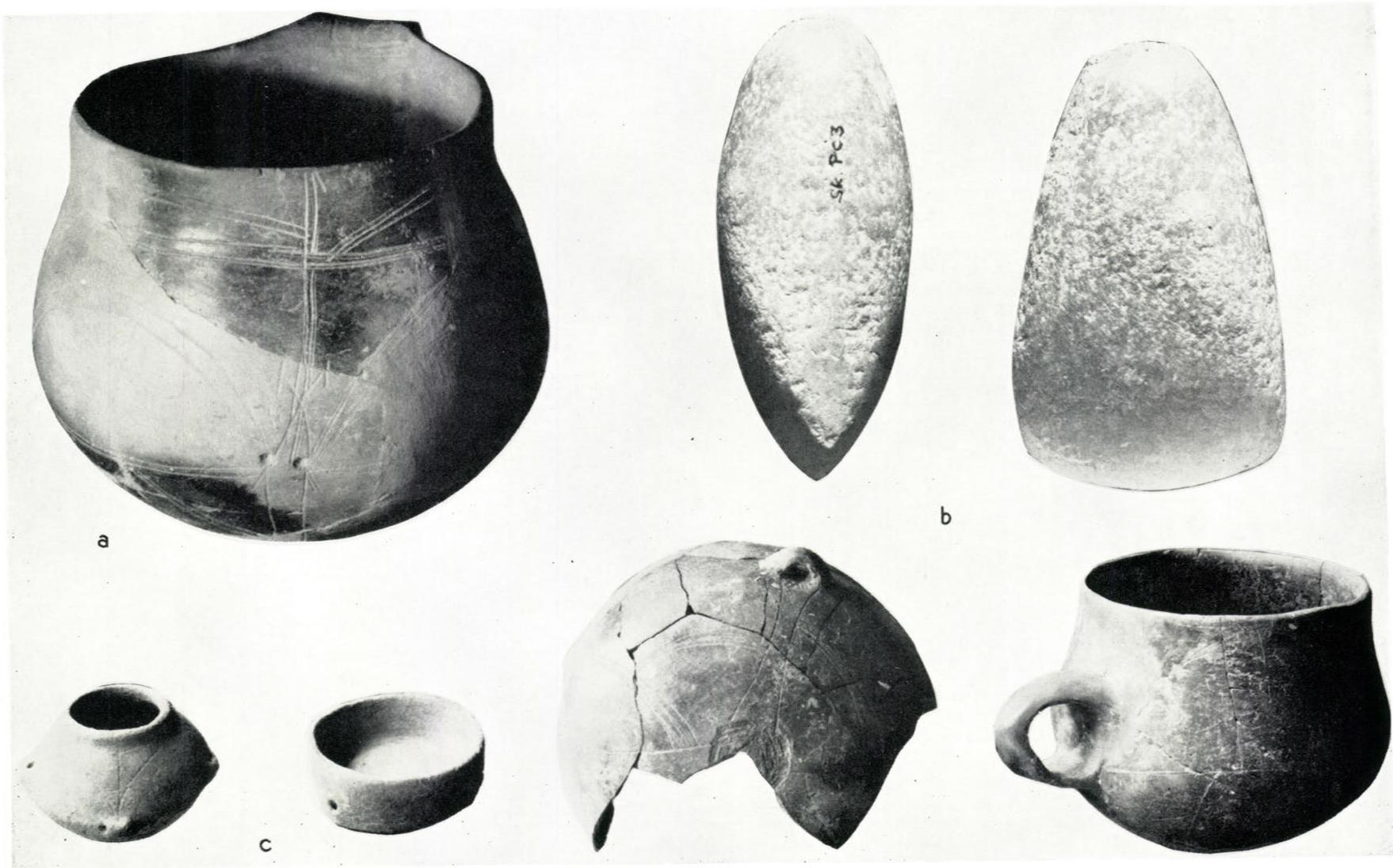
RSk. figurines. (a) Head from GA2; height 2.3 cms.; (b) body from WD4, height 5.7 cms.; (c) restoration in plasticine based on the last



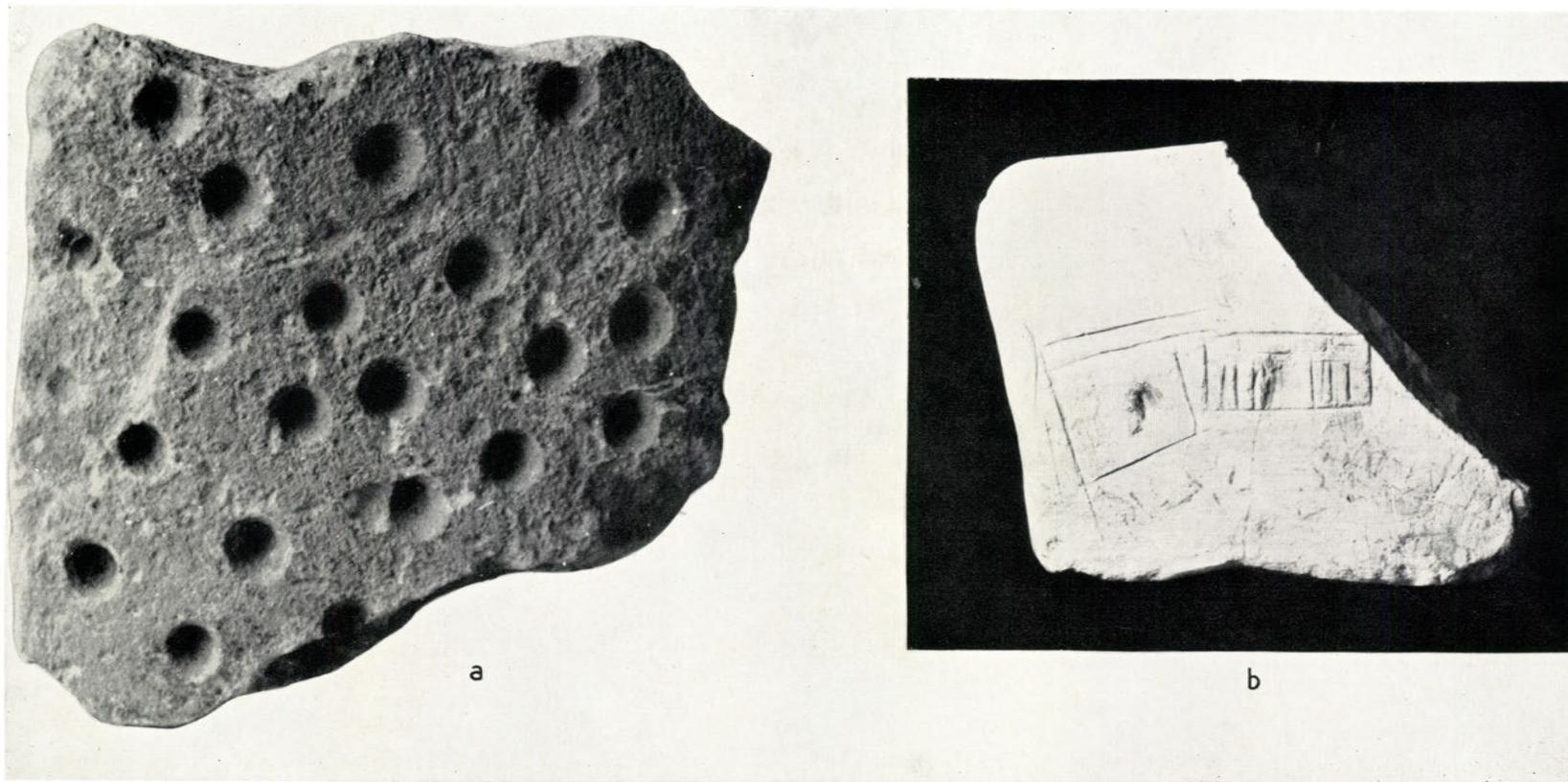
RSk. figurines. (a) Group of fragments found at Skorba; (b) example in stone from RE3, height 8.7 cms.



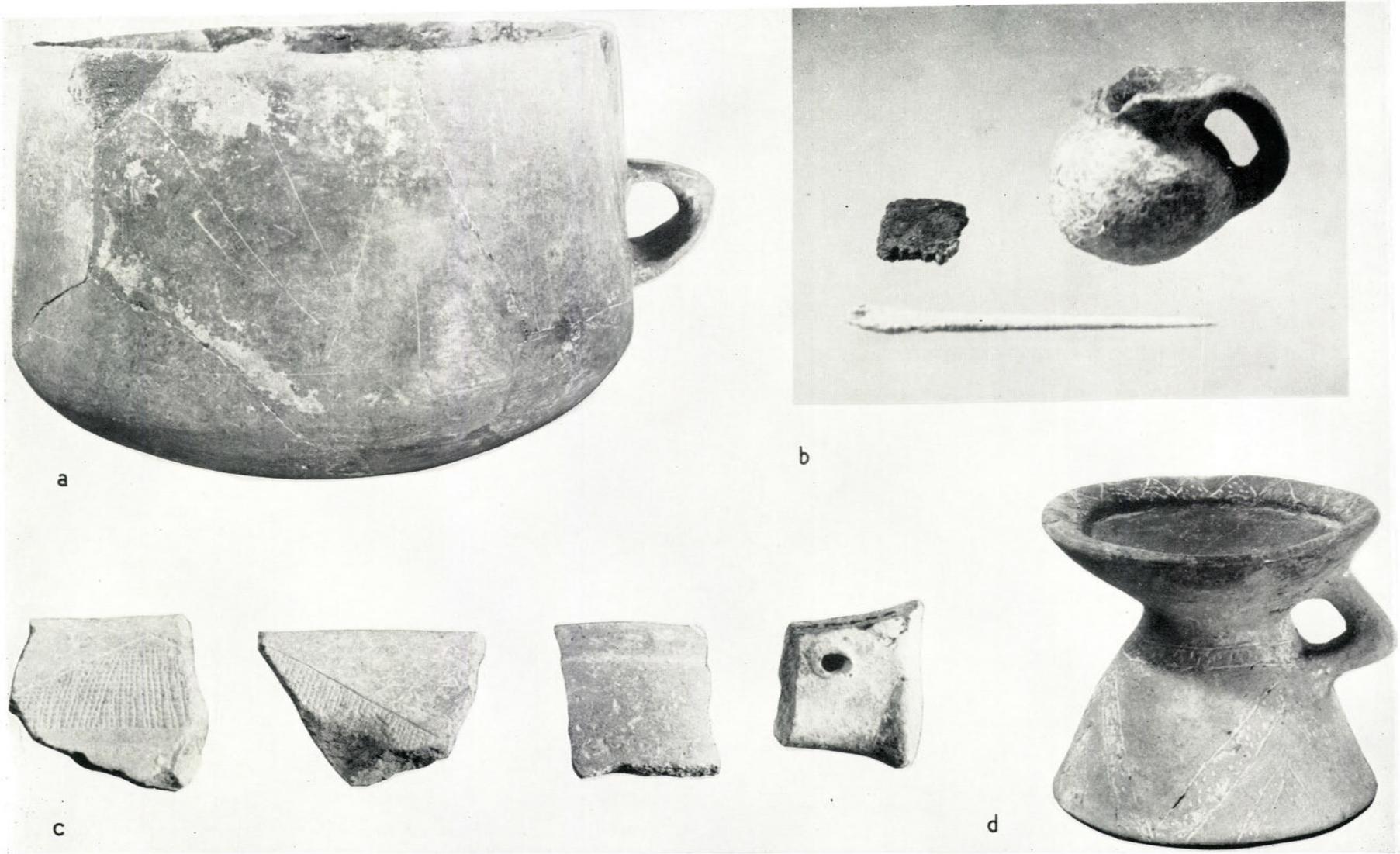
RSk. bones. (a) Toe bones of cows, basal and side views, left untreated, right with ground bases, heights vary around 3 cms.; (b) ox horn on left, goat skull on right, from the Shrine



(a) Zb. jug with anthropomorphic figure, OD9, height 11.6 cms.; (b) Zb. axe-head, PC3, length 9.2 cms.; (c) group of Gg. vessels from the Hut of the Querns, UA4 etc., diameter of largest 15 cms., rest to scale



Stone fragments. (a) From a pitted bowl, V3, probably $\hat{C}g.$, height 12.2 cms.; (b) plaque engraved with temple façades, LA6, Tx., height 6.7 cms.



(a) Saf. bowl from Kordin III, diameter 17.8 cms.; (b) TC. group from K2, bronze saw fragment, small handled jar and bone pin (length 7.9 cms.); (c) imported sherds, Trefontane (height 2.7 cms.), Trefontane, Diana and Serra d'Alto; (d) Thermi bowl on pedestal, from Tarxien, height 10 cms.

