KEOS IX.2

AYIA IRINI: PERIODS I–III

THE NEOLITHIC AND EARLY BRONZE AGE SETTLEMENTS

PART 2: THE ARCHITECTURE AND STRATIGRAPHY

DAVID E. WILSON, MARY ELIOT,† AND WHITNEY POWELL-CUMMER

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PART 2

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BY
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Dedicated to the memory of Elizabeth Schofield

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PREFACE

The University of Cincinnati excavations of the Bronze Age harbor town of Ayia Irini on Kea under the direction of John L. Caskey began in the summer of 1960. The archaeological promise of the site had already been known for some time prior to this (Caskey 1962, 266–268, n. 6), on the basis of wall remains and sherds eroding from the exposed scarps of the promontory and the modern road cutting through the northern periphery of the prehistoric settlement. Surface sherds of Early Bronze Age (EBA) date had been noted even before excavations began (Scholes 1956, 11); Caskey's own special interest in this period would not be disappointed by the subsequent finds made at the site between 1961 and 1976.

The first full season of excavation in 1961, after the preliminary tests of the previous year, opened a deep sounding in the Western Sector of the site adjacent to Late Bronze Age (LBA) House C. This test reached Early Bronze II (EB II) levels in Room 2 of House E that included a well-stratified sequence of floor levels and associated deposits. This sounding, begun by Elizabeth Schofield in 1961, was continued by John C. Overbeck in 1963. He removed Middle Bronze Age (MBA) and LBA strata to expose further the deeply stratified EB II remains in this area, including rooms of Period II House E (E.1 and E.2) and floor paving and walls of Period III House D immediately above.

In 1967 Caskey made a deep exploration on the eastern side of the site (Eastern Sector) beneath the lane between LBA House A and the Temple. The space afforded by the lane was too narrow to allow for more than a very limited investigation of earlier strata, but digging did reach a thick and distinct deposit of late EB II. It was this deposit found beneath Temple Lane that Caskey used as the basis for defining the late EB II ceramic phase at Ayia Irini, Period III (Caskey 1972, 370–372).

Full campaigns in 1968, 1969, and 1970 included further excavation in the Western Sector where the best-preserved remains of the EB II settlement had been found in earlier seasons. Mary Eliot continued in 1968 and 1969 the work begun by Schofield and Overbeck, in the area bounded by LBA Houses C to the southwest and F to the northeast; EB II levels were taken down to bedrock, and the rich stratigraphic sequence of at least five successive building phases was further revealed, comprising the Period II Houses E, EC, EF, and Period III Houses ED and D. Eliot completed in 1971 the excavation of almost all the remaining deposits of the EB II houses in the Western Sector, where they could be reached. The walls of these houses were now clearly defined and cleaned so that more detailed drawings could be made by the site architect Roger Holzen.

In this same area just to the southwest of LBA House F, Leslie Preston (Day), in 1969 and 1970, excavated portions of the late EB II (Period III) Houses ED and D (Rooms ED.2, ED.4, and D.3), as well as scanty remains of drains and paving beneath the basement floors of House F itself, belonging to the earliest settlement phase of EB II Ayia Irini (Period IIa). In these same years, immediately to the northwest of the EB II houses, William Kittredge excavated a complex sequence of retaining walls, fills, and road surfaces that buried and covered over a very deep cleft in the bedrock (the Main Cleft). These remains were initially labeled as "Building XI," but later study resolved these finds into a large ramped and stepped entrance way (Western Road and Roadway) that led to the center of the settlement from the area of the Spring Chamber to the west.

In two seasons of limited supplementary excavation, further discoveries of the EB II settlement were made in the southeastern area of the promontory. In 1972 Overbeck, while investigating an MBA room beneath Room 3 of LBA House A, in the Southeastern Sector of the site, found beneath it remnants of an EB II house wall and associated deposits. This added to the deposits and fragments of walls of EB II date broadly distributed beneath the basement rooms of LBA House A that had been excavated by Elizabeth Caskey between 1961 and 1964. In 1976, Aliki Bikaki excavated a deep deposit of late EB II Period III beneath the alley between LBA Houses A and B. From beneath Room 2 of House B itself, she also discovered another extensive deposit and house walls

of the same period; this Period III deposit was mainly beneath modern water level at the southeastern edge of the promontory.

The brief preceding summary of the history of excavation of the EB II settlement remains at Ayia Irini highlights the number of project members responsible for this work in the field and the span of years over which it took place (1961–1976). The authors of this volume are indebted to them for the care they took in both the excavations themselves and their detailed recording of the finds; we relied heavily upon the excavation notebooks, end-of-season reports, and preliminary analysis of levels and finds of the numerous excavators involved. Many of these (Bikaki, Overbeck, Schofield) we were able to consult with directly about the EBA remains during six summer study seasons at Ayia Irini from 1982 to 1987. Mention of EBA walls and deposits have appeared in earlier volumes of the Keos series in their stratigraphic relation to later periods at Ayia Irini, and these have been referenced throughout this volume (Overbeck 1989: MBA Period IV; Davis 1986: later MBA Period V; Cummer and Schofield 1984: LBA House A; Schofield 2011: late MBA and LB I–II Periods V–VII in the Western Sector; Abell 2021: Alley AB and House B).

Another indispensable part of the excavation record is the detailed architectural plans of EBA walls, largely drawn by the site architects Roger Holzen and Lloyd E. Cotsen in the field, whose expert observations were an invaluable addition to those of the excavators. These plans and drawings formed the basis for Whitney Powell-Cummer's final plans and sections that are an integral part of this volume; they have been finalized and inked by Rosemary Robertson. The architectural plans and sections are further supplemented by hundreds of photographs, most taken by Caskey, both during the course of excavation and in subsequent cleaning and consolidation of the wall remains. A selection of these photos is published here, carefully chosen as the most illustrative of the wall and building remains and their associated deposits.

Caskey had intended to publish himself the latest Neolithic (Period I) and EB II (Periods II–III) settlement remains and associated finds from Ayia Irini; after his death in 1981, the responsibility for publication was undertaken by Mary Eliot and David Wilson. Eliot and Wilson collaborated closely on all aspects of the project during the six intensive summer study seasons. They were joined in their collaboration by Powell-Cummer in the second season, who worked closely with them over the next five summers drafting the final plans and sections that appear in this volume. To expedite the publication of the EBA settlement study, Wilson published the first of two planned volumes in 1999 (Wilson 1999: Keos IX.1), which presented the pottery and small finds from the Periods I–III settlements. A list of all the Periods I–III deposits was included in that volume, giving a tabular summary of their ceramic contents (minimum vessel numbers by ware and shape) and small finds (Wilson 1999, deposit content summaries: 167–226, small finds: 144–226). This second volume, Keos IX.2, comprising the architectural and stratigraphic analysis of the Periods I–III settlements, completes the publication of this study, providing a detailed analysis of the stratigraphic context and associated rooms and buildings to which they belong. Not included in Keos IX.1–2 are the EB II finds from beneath Temple Lane and the House B alley and Room 2; the final publication of these will be presented in the Temple volume (in progress) and have already been included in the House B volume (Abell 2021). The current volume had been substantially drafted and some sections finalized before Eliot's death in 2016; the coauthors were in general agreement on the phasing and interpretation of the settlement sequence as it is presented here.

We would like to thank two people in particular, Elizabeth (Liz) Schofield and Elizabeth Tucker Blackburn, for the invaluable help and support they provided us from the start of this project both in the initial field study at Ayia Irini and in the subsequent writing of this volume. Liz was always more than generous of her time in facilitating the EBA study during her tenure (1982–2005) as director of the Ayia Irini Excavations. Before her untimely death in 2005, Liz had given us lengthy and very detailed comments on an early version of this volume and was of special help in suggesting alternate interpretations of the evidence that we had not considered before. We very gratefully acknowledge the important contribution her support made: this is a better volume for it. There was no more selfless member of the Ayia Irini excavation team than Tucker, who worked tirelessly as assistant to Caskey and then Schofield until her retirement in 2002 as excavation archivist in Cincinnati and editor of the Keos series. The support she gave to all the team members, including the coauthors of this volume, was enormous.

We gratefully acknowledge the continued permissions granted by the Greek Archaeological Service over the long period of excavation and field study at Ayia Irini (1960–1987) and the unfailing support of the K' and KA'

Ephoreias and their successive ephors; this project would not have been possible without the generosity and goodwill of our Greek colleagues and friends. The Ayia Irini excavation and study seasons were carried out under the auspices of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens; the school directors, assistant directors, and administrative staff facilitated and supported in innumerable ways the execution of this field project. Last but not least we extend our thanks to the Department of Classics of the University of Cincinnati under whose sponsorship the Ayia Irini Excavations have been undertaken and supported over the many years since their inception. We would like to single out specially two other members of the Department at Cincinnati for their role in seeing the publication of the EBA project through to completion: Jack Davis, current director-of-record for the Ayia Irini Excavations and until recently head of the department; and the current Ayia Irini publication editor Carol Hershenson.

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