

Midea: The Megaron Complex and Shrine Area

Excavations on the Lower Terraces 1994–1997

TEXT

by

Gisela Walberg

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Dedicated to
Jeanne F. Stanton and Thomas M. Stanton

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PREFACE

When I was invited to excavate at Midea in 1985, the areas of investigation were divided between the excavators. While K. Demakopoulou excavated at the West Gate and P. Åström at the East Gate, it was agreed that I should investigate the Lower Terraces in the area below and north of the East Gate (Pl. 1). It was also decided that the excavators should publish their finds in separate volumes.

The excavations in the different areas were carried out independently. Thus, the responsibility for the results presented in this (and the previous) volume is entirely my own. In some cases, I arrived at conclusions (for example concerning the stratigraphy and aspects of the LH IIIB and LH IIIC periods), which may differ from those of the other two excavators.

The investigation on the Lower Terraces took place during two different periods: 1985–1991 and 1994–1997. The 1985 and 1987 seasons were preliminary in nature. From 1989, support from the University of Cincinnati made it possible for me to undertake large-scale excavations, which led to the discovery of the sanctuary area on Terrace 9 and the megaron on Terrace 10. During the excavations in 1989, a Byzantine terrace wall and remains of the Middle Helladic settlement were found. Trenches excavated in 1990 on Terrace 9 revealed rooms which later could

be identified as part of a Mycenaean shrine area. The Bronze Age strata were undisturbed and included a LH IIIC stratum as well as a LH IIIB floor, sealed by a stratum of debris. A room and an outdoor area were found on Terrace 10 next to the fortification wall which protects the eastern side of the acropolis of Midea. In 1991 the first nodule with a Linear B inscription was discovered in a trench on Terrace 10, and the northern wall of a large building, later identified as the megaron, appeared. Finds from continued excavations by my team in the shrine area included a fragment of a wheelmade female terracotta figure and a bovine figure as well as a stirrup jar decorated with double axes, horns of consecration, birds, and flower motifs. The results of the 1985–1991 excavations were published in Walberg, *Midea I*.

After three study seasons, the excavations were resumed in 1994. My immediate aim was to obtain information about the sanctuary area and the megaron and their relation to adjacent buildings. The results of these excavations are presented in this volume.

Cincinnati, November 2002
Gisela Walberg

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I am most grateful to the Ephors of the Argolid and the Corinthia, Dr. E. Spathari and her successor Dr. A. Mantis, members of the Ephoreia, and the staff at the Nauplion Museum who gave us help over the years, including Dr. E. Palaiologou-Kourachanes and the museum conservator, Mrs. G. Kapsali. Thanks are also due to Mr. E. Drougas, the guard of the sites of Dendra and Midea, the conservators, Mr. G. Karambalis and Mrs. L. Karambali, and Mr. P. Papageorgopoulos of the village of Midea, who assisted them.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AA</i>	<i>Archäologischer Anzeiger</i>
<i>AEA</i>	<i>Aegean Archaeology</i>
<i>Agora</i>	<i>The Athenian Agora</i>
<i>AJA</i>	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
Åkerström, <i>Berbat</i> II	Å. Åkerström, <i>Berbat</i> II: <i>The Pictorial Pottery</i>
Albers, <i>Spätmykenische Stadtheiligtümer</i>	G. Albers, <i>Spätmykenische Stadtheiligtümer: Systematische Analyse und vergleichende Auswertung der archäologischen Befunde</i>
Ålin, <i>Ende</i>	P. Ålin, <i>Das Ende der mykenischen Fundstätten auf dem griechischen Festland</i>
<i>AR</i>	<i>Archaeological Reports</i>
<i>ArchDelt</i>	<i>Αρχαιολογικόν Δελτίον</i>
<i>ArchEph</i>	<i>Αρχαιολογική Εφημερίς</i>
Åström, <i>Cuirass</i>	P. Åström, <i>The Cuirass Tomb and Other Finds at Dendra</i>
Banks, <i>Lerna</i>	E. Banks, <i>The Early and Middle Helladic Small Objects from Lerna</i>
<i>BAR</i>	<i>British Archaeological Reports</i>
<i>Berbat-Limnes</i>	B. Wells and C.N. Runnels, eds., <i>The Berbat-Limnes Archaeological Survey 1988–1990</i>
Bernabò Brea, <i>Poliochni</i>	L. Bernabò Brea, <i>Poliochni: Città preistorica nell'isola di Lemnos</i>
<i>BICS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies</i>
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<i>BSA</i>	<i>Annual of the British School at Athens</i>
Coleman, <i>Keos</i> I	<i>Kephala: A Late Neolithic Settlement and Cemetery (Keos I)</i>
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- French and French, *Tiryns V*
- Furtwängler and Loeschke,
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- McDonald and Wilkie, *Nichoria II*
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Terms:

BA	Bronze Age	Max.	Maximum
CW	Coarse Ware	MD	Mycenaean Decorated
D.	Diameter	MH	Middle Helladic and Middle Helladic-type wares
DB	Dark Burnished	Min.	Minimum
Dim.	Dimension	MM	Middle Minoan
DOL	Dark on Light	N/A	Not applicable
DS	Dietz Shape	NSC	Nauplion Study Collection
EH	Early Helladic	PBA	Post–Bronze Age
EM	Early Mycenaean (LH IIIA2)	PI	Pithos
Fab	Fabric	Pnt.	Paint
FM	Furumark Motif	PW	Plainware
FS	Furumark Shape	Sl.	Slip
H.	Height	Th.	Thickness
L.	Length	W.	Width
LDW	Lustrous Decorated Ware	WA	West Anatolian
LH	Late Helladic	WD	White on Burnished Dark
LOD	Light-on-Dark		

Midea: The Megaron Complex and Shrine Area

Excavations on the Lower Terraces 1994–1997

FIGURES AND PLATES

by

Gisela Walberg

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