

HOUSE X AT KOMMOS

A Minoan Mansion near the Sea

Part 1. Architecture, Stratigraphy, and Selected Finds

*An Excavation on the South Coast of Crete
by the University of Toronto*





Restoration of the Lily Fresco from House X, Space 1. Digital rendering by Anne Chapin, with earlier restoration work by Élise Alloin, Giuliana Bianco, and Maria C. Shaw.

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edited by

Maria C. Shaw and Joseph W. Shaw

with contributions by

Maria C. Shaw, Joseph W. Shaw, Deborah Ruscillo, Anne P. Chapin, and John G. Younger



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Dedicated to
our son, Alexander, our daughter, Robin,
and our grandchildren,
William and Joseph Shaw
and
Elias and Zoë McKeon-Shaw

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Preface

This study of House X, a work that has been some years in the making, fulfills to a large extent our obligation to publish a record and interpretation of the archaeological remains at Kommos. Its completion was delayed by the considerable job of preparing the Kommos volumes published earlier in the Princeton University Press series (Shaw and Shaw, eds., 1995, 1996, 2000, 2006). An extensive preliminary report on the 1991–1992 seasons appeared previously in *Hesperia* (Shaw and Shaw 1993). Although the publication task is nearly finished, efforts to safeguard the site, which will require future vigilance, still continue.

Owing to the size and complexity of House X, its publication has been split into two parts, the present volume, Part 1, and another on the pottery, Part 2, being written by Jeremy B. Rutter. Fortunately we have been able to draw upon Rutter's extensive preparatory study, complete with deposit numbers and stratigraphic and chronological information, for our own tasks herein. Other studies on pottery from Kommos have been carried out by Philip Betancourt (1990), Betancourt with Eleni Banou (unpublished), and L. Vance Watrous (1992).

Maria and I are particularly grateful to three experts who contributed to this publication, Anne Chapin (frescoes), John Younger (seals), and Deborah Ruscillo, the last for writing the entire section on fauna here and for contributing substantially to the faunal section in our Volume V about the Kommos site. Ruscillo was also among those who came to us first as students (Eric Csapo, Mary Dabney, Debi Harlan, John McEnroe, Lucia Nixon, Katherine Schwab, Aleydis Van de Moortel, Helene Whittaker, James Wright, and others) and who, later, departed as seasoned colleagues, having contributed substantially to both our excavation and publication efforts.

Many hands other than those of the main authors have contributed to the production of this report. From the beginning of the excavations at Kommos, the architectural drawings were executed by our talented excavation architect, Giuliana Bianco, whose unsurpassable plans, sections, and reconstructions convey more than words can say. While most of the photographs of

the architecture and some of the finds were taken by Joseph W. Shaw, Taylor Dabney, Alexander Shaw, and Chronis Papanikolopoulos are responsible for many of the object photographs (for a more specific list, see Shaw and Shaw, eds., 2006, 3). Niki Holmes Kantzios wrote many of the original catalog entries, and Joseph Clarke made many of the object drawings. Cy Strom has been our general editor in Toronto, aided by Josée Sabourin, Mary Markou, Jennifer Lockie, and Peggy Haist. Martin Ahermaa has made the index.

We would like to thank Barbara Hamann, Katharine Hall, and Élise Alloin, members of the Kommos Excavation team, for their contributions to the conservation of the plasters. Giuliana Bianco made sketches and drawings of a number of the plaster fragments both in the field and, following restorative work, in watercolor copies and reconstructions prepared in consultation with Maria Shaw and published in this volume. Some of the many photographs and slides taken over the years by our excavation photographers are reproduced here, while others served as pictorial documents that aided the process of writing. Anne Chapin graciously contributed her study of the Lily Fresco and prepared the digital color picture of the Frontispiece, using the two main segments of plasters **Fr 1** and **Fr 2** partially restored by the conservators and Maria Shaw, along with another and fuller restoration of the same composition discussed in her section of the text below.

In the field two foremen, the late George Beladakis and Sifis Fasoulakis were in charge of groups of workmen from Pitsidia and other nearby villages. Lucia Nixon first “discovered” the mansion in a deep exploratory trench below meters of sand in 1977, and then, as excavation expanded, Steven Shubert, Robert Henrickson, Josée Sabourin, and Maria C. Shaw served as trenchmasters.

During the period of preparation we were substantially aided by grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (recently Grants 410-2003-0653 and 410-2006-2399) and the Institute for Aegean Prehistory. We are indebted to the staff at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens for obtaining our excavation permit from the Greek Archaeological Service and also to the University of Toronto for providing a base for our research.

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Joseph W. Shaw

List of Abbreviations

B	bronze registration number	J	jewelry catalog number
Bo	bone catalog number	Juv.	juvenile animal
C	clay registration number	kg	kilogram
ca.	circa	L	lead registration number
Cl	clay catalog number	L.	length
cm	centimeter	LC	Late Cycladic
d.	diameter	LH	Late Helladic
dim.	dimension	LM	Late Minoan
DP	Deciduous premolar	Lw	loomweight catalog number
EH	Early Helladic	m	meter
EM	Early Minoan	M	molar (faunal tables)
esp.	especially	max.	maximum
est.	estimated	min.	minimum
Excav.	excavation	Me	metal catalog number
ext.	exterior	Misc	miscellaneous
F	figurine catalog number	mm	millimeter
Fr	fresco catalog number	MM	Middle Minoan
frag(s).	fragment(s)	MNI	minimum number of individuals
g	gram	NISP	number of individual specimens present
GS	ground stone tool registration number	P	plaster registration number
h.	height	PM	premolar
Imm.	immature animal	pres.	preserved
Imm.+	immature or older animal	S	stone registration number
int.	interior	Sh	shell catalog number

St	stone catalog number	w.	width
Sp	spindle whorl catalog number	wt.	weight
sp.	species	ww	waterworn shell
th.	thickness		