

SECTION Ω

1938

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Section Ω lies at the east end of the north slope of the Areopagus, bounded on the south by Apollodoros Street, on the west by Phaidon Street, now destroyed, and Section X, on the north by Section Ψ and on the east by Areopagus Street. The hill slopes sharply down to the north (with a drop of about 5 metres in 45 in the modern levels, and of 7 in the Roman period) and slightly to the east toward the hollow which goes up between the Acropolis and the Areopagus. The eastern boundary is about 50 metres ^{we} east of the Valerian Wall, the northern about 55 metres south of the southern stoa in Section T. Thus it lies well to the southeast of the market square proper, and west of the dromos. As was expected, it was a residential district in classical and early Roman times. Not until the end of the fourth, or early fifth century A.D. are there any traces of buildings other than private houses.

PREHISTORIC TO THE SIXTH CENTURY

No definite mark of habitation before the end of the sixth century has been found. There have been, of course, a few geometric and proto-Attic sherds. However, in the central region, there is a rectangular cutting in bedrock into which the west end of the classical house was set. This cutting extends well below all possible floor levels for the house, which it presumably antedates, and

in some of the fill below, prehistoric coarse ware and grey Minyan sherds were found in disturbed contexts. This region has not yet been explored and may well reveal signs of earlier occupation.

LATE SIXTH AND FIFTH CENTURIES

Ancient
Street

At least by the end of the sixth century, there was a street running diagonally up through the section from northeast to southwest. On the high ground at the southwest corner of the section, where modern houses rested on bedrock, all traces of it have vanished. Its ^{COURSE} ~~corner~~ can be traced for about forty metres in the east and central parts of the section. This is the continuation of the street which lies along the southern edge of AA. It leads from the dromos up over the north shoulder of the Areopagus towards the hollow between the Areopagus and the Pnyx. The latest street fill that has been found in place is of the third century B.C. The modern houses, however, all along its line have been set down below the Roman levels and the heavy south wall of the late Roman building at the north which lines not with its own building, but with the line of the street is sufficient evidence that the street remained in use throughout antiquity. It is five metres wide.

Remains of the classical period north of the street are few because the late Roman building was set back deep into the bedrock slope, cutting away both bedrock and the earlier fill.

Grave at
62/θ

Just north of the projected line of the street at the west a grave of the end of the sixth century was found. This was a rectangular cutting in bedrock 1.70 m. long and 0.60 m. deep from present level of bedrock at south. The north half was cut away by a modern cellar wall and only 0.20 - 0.10 m. of fill was left. At the bottom there was a thick layer of burning and in the fill fragments of a skull which Mr. Angel identifies as an adult, and two small black-figured cock-lekythoi (P 11,988-9) which date from about 510 to 490 B.C.

Pit at
57/KA

Another rectangular pit lies northeast of the grave. It measures 1.05 x 0.80 x 0.80 m. deep. There were traces of burning and a few bones in it; since none of them are recognizably human it is probably a refuse pit rather than a grave. With these were found pottery of the early fifth century including a black-figured lekythos (P 12,069) with the scene of Herakles stealing the tripod, which is to be dated about 480-460 B.C.

Well at
55/KE

A little further to the northeast, just behind the corner of the late Roman building, there is a

well filled at the end of the fifth century. Two blocks of a wall along the north side of the street southeast of the well probably belong to the house with which this well was associated. The well is 1.30 - 1.00 m. in diameter and 13.70 m. deep. Among the finds catalogued the following red-figured pieces may be mentioned: P 12,641, fragments of a very large vase of uncertain shape with the battle of the Centaurs and Lapiths on one side; P 12,640, fragment of a bell crater with a seated figure probably Dionysos; P 12,632, a squat lekythos with a scene of women in a garden; P 13,094, a fragment of a small Anthesteria oinochoe with a satyr's head on an inverted amphora; P 13,096, fragments from a vase with some scene of Eros and Aphrodite on which the inscription Αφροδίτη is preserved. In this same well there was a fragment of a mould (T 1721) for a terracotta figurine of a seated woman holding a faun. There was also a fragmentary piece of iron, IL 662, found with some pieces of bronze, which seems to be the crossbar set in the top of a public measure.

South of the street in the centre of the section more classical fill is preserved. The area has been considerably disturbed in Roman, Turkish and modern times, but there are scraps of walls, and floors to go with them that clearly belong to a house or houses of

Classical
House
(House D)

the classical period. Until further study and investigation, all conclusions must be considered most tentative.

An area 16 metres from east to west, and at least 14 metres from north to south is occupied by a complex mass of rooms of which there are several periods of rebuilding. The northern boundary is given by the south side of the street, and the western by a rise in bedrock at the edge of the cutting, mentioned above, which probably antedates the house and the eastern by a well-preserved wall. Further east modern disturbance went down to about the level of the floor. There is however a good deal of ancient fill left here which remains to be investigated. The southwest corner is again established by a rise in bedrock, but the line of the original south wall is as yet unknown.

The walls are about 0.45 m. wide, built for the most part of relatively small pieces of limestone set in clay. These rubble walls were presumably only a socle on which a mud brick superstructure was set. The floors are of clay; where best preserved a thin layer of red clay has been spread on the grey clay fill below and rolled, giving a firm smooth level.

The earliest walls and floor preserved are at the northeast where both the north wall and the floor were covered with a fill of the early fifth century, dating part of the house at least in pre-Persian times.

There was considerable rebuilding and filling at the end of the fifth century, to which period most of the fill that we have dug belongs.

In the southern half of the section west of this limited area practically nothing of antiquity has been left on the higher level, where the modern and Turkish houses were set on bedrock. East of the house there is still much work to be done, but in the northern part modern disturbance has gone down to about the level of the floor and at the southeast a late Roman building has probably destroyed all classical fill.

FOURTH TO FIRST CENTURIES B. C.

House D

The slope continued to be inhabited. At some time perhaps late in the fourth or in the early third century the classical house was rebuilt with higher floor levels and some change in the walls. To the southeast the house was enlarged and part of a room with a pebble mosaic floor is preserved. The well and cisterns in the house seem to belong to this period of reconstruction.

Well at
67/ΔΓ

620:3

The lowest fill in the well, which was 15.55 m. deep is of the early third century. From this lowest fill 18 lamps of types VII to IX were catalogued. The upper fill seems to be somewhat later, at least as late as the second half of the

third century and is contemporary with the fills found in the cistern and on the upper floors. The rectangular clay plaque (SS 8080) with the stamp of Xenokles, the inspector of police, was found in this upper fill.

Cisterns at
63/AA, 70/ΑΣΤ
and 65/MA

There are three connecting cisterns associated with the house. The ^{EASTERN} center one (65/MA) has not yet been cleared, but a small channel leading towards it from the channel which connects the other two, suggests that it was part of the same system.

Both the others are the usual bell-shaped variety; the southern one (70/ΑΣΤ) is 6.85 m. deep, the northern one (63/AA) only 4.97 deep from the present level of bedrock. They are connected by a channel 6.40 m. long, 1.35 to 1.55 m. high. That at 70/ΑΣΤ had a consistent third century fill. The other, however, had been disturbed twice, first in early Roman times, and second in modern times by a cesspool. Fortunately, in neither case was the ^{CISTERN} interior cleaned out. The Romans left 0.10 to 0.15 cm. of third century fill on the floor, and the moderns left about 1.30 m. of the early Roman fill.

Some general reorganization or rebuilding of this region seems to have taken place at about the end of the third century. As has been seen, the house and the cisterns connected with it passed out of use at this time, and the same is true of most of the other cisterns in ^{The} this

section. No house walls have been found in connection with these because of the lowering of levels in later periods.

Cisterns 67/IH
and 68/IAT

In the southeast^{west} part of the section there is a bell-shaped cistern (67/IH) with a connecting drawshaft (68/IAT), 4.60 m. deep. The drawshaft had been cleared to bottom in the eighteenth or nineteenth century, and some of the fill in the main chamber removed. In the fill that remained, there were many fragments of Megarian bowls of early type, and other pottery of the late third century.

Cistern at
60/IE

A cistern, north of the street, at 60/IE also was filled in the late third century. It is a bell-shaped cistern, 3.55 m. deep from the present level of bedrock with a channel, 1.65 m. high and 4.60 m. long, leading to a dead end against bedrock. This channel runs north with a slight curve to the east and looks as though it was intended to meet a channel which started west from the cistern at 53/KF. After starting both channels, the builders for some reason gave up the plan, leaving them unconnected. If this be true, the cistern at 53/KF which was disturbed in late Roman times is contemporary with that at 60/IE.

Cistern at
64/Γ

No evidence for the date of construction or abandonment of a cistern at the extreme west edge of the section

(64/Γ) is available, for a Roman tile well was set down through it and the cistern chamber packed with amphoras.

Conglomerate
Wall

At the southeast corner of the section a heavy retaining wall of conglomerate blocks is set against bedrock at the south. The wall is .90 - 1.20 m. wide, and at one point five courses are preserved to a height of 2.50 m. It passes out of the ^{section} cistern at the southeast corner. No certain evidence for its date has as yet been collected. It was used by the late Romans when they built here, but clearly antedates the late Roman building. Some Hellenistic sherds in the disturbed fill on its eastern end, and its general appearance suggest that it may belong to the Hellenistic period. Whether it was built as a retaining wall for a terrace above, or for a terrace below or both cannot be decided until the region to the south and east are excavated.

Practically no fill of the second century B.C. has been found. This is to be explained probably by the destruction caused by Roman and later builders, not as an indication that the slope was uninhabited.

Hellenistic House
(House E)

At the west edge, north of the street, there is a scrap of a house wall and a bit of a marble chip floor set against its north face. This was probably in use in late Hellenistic times, for many pieces of the same floor

were found in a cistern excavated last year in Section X, about 6.00 m. northwest of the wall. The cistern fill dates from about the third quarter of the first century B.C. and so gives a terminus for the destruction of the house.

Cistern at
74/H

A cistern at the southwest was filled at about the same time, the third quarter of the first century. Of the sixty-four coins from it, the largest single group are thirteen Athenian new style coins dated circa 88 B.C. Except for one Athenian Imperial coin, which is ^{possibly} probably an intrusion, the rest are all earlier.

FIRST TO MIDDLE OF THIRD CENTURY A.D.

Though no walls remain that can be assigned with certainty to the early Roman period, the tile wells scattered throughout the section are ample evidence of continued occupation. Of the six tile wells and the one from which the tiles have probably been removed, two were certainly in use in the first century A.D., one in the second, two in the second and early third; the remaining two were cleared out and re-used by the builders of the modern houses.

Well at
74/I

A tile well at the southwest corner, 22.90 m. deep, was disturbed by a modern cesspool to 4.20 m. Below the modern disturbance, there was a stratified fill from the fifth to the first century A.D. The overflow channel from the cistern at the west (74/H) has been traced only

as far as this well; because of the disturbance of the modern cesspool, it is impossible to decide whether it originally continued further east or not. If this is the well into which the cistern overflowed, the original construction of the well then must be earlier than the first century A.D. A bronze herm (B 551) and a handle of a bronze vase with a mask on it (B 552) came from third century fill at a depth of 14.50 m.

Well at
52/I

A tile well at the northwest, 18.00 m. deep from the present top, contained stratified fill from latest Roman times to the first century A.D. This well was cut down and re-used in the late Roman period, in connection with the water channel.

Well at
64/I

A tile well at the west, 14.95 m. deep, was set down through a cistern. The floor of the cistern is at 2.90 metres. When the well was built, the lower part of the cistern chamber behind the well tiles was filled with large wine amphoras, of which eighteen whole ones were found. This fill behind the tiles is of early Roman date. The fill in the well ranges from the latest Roman times to the second century A.D. A human skeleton, identified as female by Angel, was found at a depth of 13.50 m., at the point where the pottery changes from the late third or fourth century to the early third. The skeleton may have been thrown in when the Heruli sacked the city.

Well at
52/ΑΣΤ

A tile well in the northern late Roman building in the room with the apse; at the close of the season a depth of 33.15 m. but not the bottom had been reached. A low marble curbing is still in place at the top of the well and a poros well head which rested on this ^{were} were found nearby. The top was covered by a large stone, and the well had never been filled after the last period of use. Water stood to within two metres of the top and the first fill was at 23 metres. From ~~22~~³ to 25 metres the well was filled with pottery, mainly water jars of varying sizes, dating from the fifth or perhaps sixth centuries. Below this point, there is much less pottery, and the last few baskets show clearly that the well was in use at least as early as the first half of the third century. Thus it antedates the building, and so its asymmetrical placing in relation to the apse is explained. Among the catalogued objects, a head of a herm (Ω 943) of archaistic style may be mentioned.

Well at
56/KZ

A large hole just south of the south wall of the northern late Roman building, work abandoned at a depth of 13.30 metres. A modern cesspool had disturbed all fill to 13.00 metres. The next thirty centimetres, however, contained pottery of the second and early third centuries. At this point, the diameter of the irregular hole, in which perhaps the tiles had collapsed, was 3.30 m., and it was too dangerous to continue work.

Wells at
76/KZ, 56/IF

The two Roman tile wells (76/KZ, 56/IF) which had been cleared in modern times were 19.54 and 19.70 deep respectively.

LATE ROMAN PERIOD

Most of the walls still standing belong to this period.

Just as in the central market square, so here on the slopes a large building program was carried out at the end of the fourth or early fifth century A.D. The ancient street continued in use and continued to divide the section into an upper or southern and a lower northern half.

Late Roman
Building at
North
(Buildings B
and C)

At the north, a building too massive in construction and too large in scale for a private house was set back into the bedrock slope. The northern part of the building lies in Section Ψ. Between the two rooms at the west a projecting tongue of bedrock, four to five metres wide, has been left, which perhaps represents a ramp leading up to the higher street level at the south. There is no symmetry in the plan. At about the center of the section there is an oblong room, 8 X 9 metres, with an apse with three niches at the southern end. Northeast of this there is a court with a peristyle about 12 metres wide (the northern half of this court lies in Section Ψ). The marble stylobate of the peristyle is in parts well preserved. The main walls of the building are built of

alternating courses of stone and brick set in mortar. The south wall of the rooms at the east, which served also as a retaining wall for the street above, is built largely of conglomerate building blocks. The building continues east under the unexcavated edge of the section.

For water supply the earlier wells were re-used; that at 52/ΛΣΤ and the one south of the building at 56/ΚΖ, to which an entrance is built through the south wall. Some use was also made of the cistern and cistern channels at 53/ΚΓ; further investigation is needed before the exact use can be determined. The line of the channel coming northeast from this cistern is preserved in a niche in the west wall of room 1 and again in a break in the cross-wall between rooms 1 and 2.

Water Channel

West of the building the early Roman well (52/I) was re-used in connection with a vaulted water channel leading ^{west}northeast into Section Ψ. The top of the well was cut down and a vaulted brick chamber 1.68 X 1.73 X 2.60 m. high was set above it. The chamber was entered from the north by very shallow steps. The entrance is so poor as to suggest that it was used only for occasional cleaning and that the water normally stood high enough to flow into the channel without help.

Late Roman Building
at Southeast

Conglomerate Wall Bldg
? sketch plan
+ not built

South of the road in the southeast corner, the terrace originally cut at the time of the conglomerate wall was apparently lowered a little more and used for a large building. The line of the conglomerate retaining wall, after several jogs, is continued to the west with a heavy Roman rubble wall and continues beyond the north-south wall which at present seems to be the west wall of the main building. This west wall continues north for about 20 metres, where it is broken away at a point about 4 metres south of the street.

The building continues east, beyond the edge of this year's excavation, and much work remains to be done before any conclusions can be reached. Six rooms are partially cleared. It will perhaps measure 24 to 30 metres from north to south and at least 16 metres from east to west.

House A

West of this terrace at a slightly higher level there are traces of Roman walls which seem to belong to a building of more moderate proportions, almost certainly a private house, parts of which seem to be earlier than the two big buildings.

Latrine

Just west of the big building at the southeast there are the foundations of a pi-shaped water channel 6 metres from east to west, which are probably to be interpreted as a public latrine contemporary with the two late Roman buildings.

Re-use of the
Late Roman
Buildings

These buildings do not seem to have remained in use for long in their original form, for there are traces of rebuilding and re-use which must be dated still in the period of late antiquity, perhaps the sixth century. Not much can be made of the shabby walls which were added to the building at the north, including a wall which closed off the apse. The period of use of this second period must also have been relatively short, for the entire building is covered with a mass of fill, in some cases two metres thick, of the sixth or seventh century.

Kiln

The changes in the southeast building, however, are clearer. Here some sort of an industrial establishment was placed. The main lines of the late Roman building were still followed, though the line of one wall at least was shifted, and a large kiln built. The interior diameter is 2.00 m.; the walls of packed clay are preserved for about 2 metres, and there is a brick built vaulted door, 1.35 m. high, leading in from the east. Its use has not yet been established, though the probability is that it was for burning lime. There is only a little of the customary powdery lime deposit on the walls; under the probable floor line, there is a hard-packed deposit rather like pebbles which contain a great deal of lime. Pieces of slag found in the debris, however, contain a considerable amount of iron. There are two contemporary pits nearby which were

certainly used for burning of some sort, but not for lime.

House F

Further west the southern half at least of the late Roman house (House A) was rebuilt at about this same time.

Osteotheke

This whole southeast corner was covered by a mass of destruction debris dating from latest antiquity, i.e. the seventh or eighth century. Some time in these centuries an osteotheke was built just south of the kiln. This is a rectangular pit, 2.40 X 1.87 m., filled with skeletons of which at least eight skulls were identified. With them there was a coin of Heraclius (610-647), eleven jugs which can be dated in the seventh or eight centuries, and several fragments of simple bronze earrings. An infant burial with a similar jug was found in the doorway of the kiln; the kiln then had passed out of use before the osteotheke was used.

BYZANTINE TO MODERN TIMES

It seems doubtful if the area was built up in Byzantine times. There is a certain amount of early Byzantine fill overlying the late Roman at the southeast, but no signs of actual habitation have been found. The Turkish, and in most cases late Turkish, and modern houses rested directly on the late Roman fill at the north and southeast, on classical and Hellenistic in the center, and on bedrock in the southwest.

SKETCH PLAN OF SECTION Omega.

