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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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1. Introduction

Li SKORBA is the name of a group of fields on the slope of a hill overlooking Żebbieh, a hamlet in the parish of Mgarr, 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

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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.

excavated in 1961–3, the subject of this report. The temple of Mgarr lies a little over half a mile to the west, with Gnejna 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. 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. 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. Sherdso 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 1961 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, 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 April 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 October 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, 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
erection, later alterations, ruin and reoccupation, and final destruction of the temple will be considered in turn below. Fig. 3 gives the plan and pl. IIIa a general view.

To anticipate the discussion on the sequence, four of the phases to be described in sections 8 and following are required at this stage in the argument. They are the Ggantija, Safieni, Tarxien, and Tarxien Spring 1961 Autumn 1961 Spring 1962 Autumn 1962 Spring 1963

This temple was based on a simple D-shaped plan enclosing a three-lobed chamber connected to the centre of a concave façade by a stone-paved entrance passage.

Cultivation of the lower field had removed all trace of the façade to the west of the entrance. East of it, packing stones round the feet of the missing orthostats, (pl. IIb) even on occasion the socket of an orthostat itself, indicated clearly a concave façade of the type well represented at other better-preserved temple sites in the island. The length of this façade across the arc would have been about 22 m.

At its centre a passage 1.60 m. wide and 3.70 m. long gave access to the interior. Its floor (pl. IIb), consisted of six slabs running the whole width and measuring respectively 35, 65, 78, 65, and 84 cm., the last one forming the threshold of the central court. The three wider slabs were perforated each with two holes, of an average diameter of 15 cm., though one of these was barely marked out and never pierced. Though a serious impediment to ingress and egress, the holes are closely paralleled in the passage between

Fig. 2. Skorba, layout of the trenches, showing also the course of the excavation.

Cemetery phases: ID, un-numbered, Ie and IIa in the latest Evans scheme. Safieni was by then already suspected and the other three clearly defined. To avoid confusion with the sites after which they are named, and at the same time the difficulties of the IA, IB, Ic system to be explained later, these phases will be referred to below in abbreviated form throughout, i.e. Gg., Saf., Tx., and TC. respectively.

The Gg. temple. During the Gg. phase, a long-lived settlement which had built up some 2 m. depth of cultural debris was redeveloped, to use a town-planner's phrase, as a sacred site. Owing to the natural slope, a considerable quantity of soil had to be dug out at the back and built up into a terrace at the front to make a level foundation for the temple building.1 This temple was based on a simple D-shaped plan enclosing a three-lobed chamber connected to the centre of a concave façade by a stone-paved entrance passage.

1 See p. 8, below.
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 Ggantija 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.

Entrance p, usa91: Central Court 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

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.
On the east side, part of the Ġg. wall was removed in the process, and patched with smaller blocks, pl. viia.

The doorway was framed by uprights of globigerina limestone measuring 1·90 (from floor) x 1·40 x 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 where 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 1 1/2 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. viib). This that 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. viia, 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. xxxb.

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. 2ia and 1va. 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. 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. 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

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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. vi\(\text{v}\)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, plgs. \(v\alpha\) and \(v\beta\). Masonry was also built up by the eastern door jamb to further narrow the entrance, one of its blocks 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.

The 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

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**Fig. 5.** Restored drawing of eastern apse of the West Temple; cf. pl. \(v\alpha\). Drawing by T. Bussutil.
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. xxxii b.

Final destruction. Apart from one Borg 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-
liberate destruction began. This is most clearly evident in the area of the entrance, where the surviving ortho-
stats all bear plain signs of the picked slots where they were split up by wedges, pl. iiib. 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 Gg. period, fig. 3.

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

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. Trenches M and MA behind this confirmed that the lowest level held back by this wall contained mixed material down to Gg. 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 re-
placed 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 probably after only a short interval, two smaller rooms were added against its west side, figs. 3 and 6 and pl. viia. 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...
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 Gg. was giving place to Safl, the second room was added to the west, and later still was refloored at a 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 Gg.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 appearance. 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, allowing its construction to be studied, fig. 7 and pl. xib. 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 orthostats, or probably pilasters as the left one was simply the undemolished end of the West Temple's boundary wall. The short passage ending in a threshold slab led to the inner apses.

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. xib 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. ixza. 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, 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. xii b. 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. xiii a. 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: Ghar Dalam (GhD. = Evans IA), Grey Skorba (Gsk.), Red Skorba (RSk.), Zebug (Zb. = Ic), Mgarr (Mg. = Ii) and Ggantija (Gg. = I). It was in the course of Gg. that the site was converted to ritual use.

5b. The GhD. Wall

In the area immediately in front of the temple outbuildings, and only discovered because of the destruction of their southern halves, fig. 6 and pls. xii a and xii b, 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. xii b. 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, 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 GhD. Hut

To the south-east of the RSk. shrine, see below, p. 11, and fig. 9 and pl. xiii b, 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 43 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 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. xx1a. 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. xivα.

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. xv1a. Its eastern end was damaged by a much later trench, pl. xv1a, 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,

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 xviiib. 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 b. None survived in position on the walls. The disinctive 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 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 with a rubble fill, fig. 11 and pl. xvii b. 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 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-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 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.° Chert flakes were common. Domestic animal bones were in abundance, almost equalling the pottery in volume. 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.a. They remind one of chess or halma pieces and may possibly have been stood up as phallic symbols. 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.a, 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.

5f. Žb. Huts

Though no complete hut of Žb. 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

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Fig. 14. Section of the stratified deposits behind the West Temple, north face of trenches OD–UC–PC.
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 had been 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. xxiib. The charcoal provided one of the carbon samples for dating, p. 48.

Its date is fixed in the Gg. phase by the occupation debris on its floor, left to lie there when it was destroyed by fire. Structurally, however, it is obviously 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 Gg., it shows many details of continuity from Mg. and will be discussed from this point of view later.¹

5h. The Ġg. ‘Hut of the Queros’

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. xxiib. 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

![Fig. 15. Section of deposits beneath the East Temple, north face of trenches VB-BC-AD.](image-url)
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 Gg. 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 Gg. 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 Mg. 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. xxivb). 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 Gg. 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 mudbrick. 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 Zb. sherds, and charcoal fragments sufficient to provide a sample for dating. It contained also the remains of huts described in the previous section. Mg. 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 Mg., probably refuse from that hut, but a large number of Zb. and earlier sherds were mixed in.

Similarly the highest level below ploughsoil, though securely dated to Gg. 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 Gg., stratified between Zb. and the pure Gg. of the hut floor.

These stratigraphies all end with Gg., 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 Gg. 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, Borg in-Nadur and Bahrija, 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 was much less simple. At that time GSk. had been found and doubts of Evans’s sequence (GhD.-Mg.-Zb.-Gg.-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 Gg., it could throw no light on the problem in hand, and the new ones it had raised were left over until the autumn.

Miqarr. 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. Zb. 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. 41f, 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 Zb. 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.-Zb. 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

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2 In I the section showed GhD. under GSk., Zb., Gg., with no sign of Mg. except in the last. Actually RSk. was also missing, 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 Žb. 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 Žb., 1 Mg., 7 Gg.

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 Mgarr temples can be drawn together.

The construction of the eastern temple is securely bracketed by the floor deposit A5 containing Saf. material, and the level passing beneath its wall, F7, containing Gg. 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. Mgarr East then was built in Gg. or Saf., almost certainly the latter. The date of

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.
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 quern*. 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

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**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.

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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 quern*. The same is true in the case of level H2, but here the *terminus post quern* 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 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 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

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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. 17b, 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 Zb,\(^2\) 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 Zb. 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 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 Zb. phases (described below). The three phases before and the five after the break 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>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
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<th>Evans</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>Gidar Dalam</td>
<td>GhD.</td>
<td>3800</td>
<td>Ia</td>
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<td>Saf.</td>
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<td>TC.</td>
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<td>Borg in-Nadur</td>
<td>BN.</td>
<td>1450</td>
<td>Ia</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bahrija</td>
<td>Bah.</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>Ia</td>
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1 Beginning of Baht.; BN. continues alongside it until both disappeared under Phoenician influence.

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1 Compare the lowest floors in Mgarr 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
4 Evans, 1953, actually published in June 1954. See also Evans, 1959.
5 Trump, 'Later Prehistory'.

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**Table I.**

**Sequence**
survive to so late a date\(^1\) 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

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<tr>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Shape B" /></td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image5.png" alt="Shape E" /></td>
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![Shape F](image6.png)

Fig. 18. G\(\text{D}\). 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 Zb. to Tx.

The following period is best described as Bronze/Iron Age because its middle phase, Borg in-Nadur (BN.), survives alongside the third, Bahrija (Bah.), 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

9. G\(\text{D}\).

The pottery of this phase\(^3\) 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

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 horizontally, in one case apparently both, fig. 19d. 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 Dalam\(^1\) was a life-like but damaged cow muzzle found on the surface of the north field. One further sherd is worthy of note, 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. xxm\(a\), 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. (\(\ddagger\))]
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) impressed ware in particular, have never yet been recorded from Malta. They include true cardial 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 gypsum— 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 Mgarr 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 Evans 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 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 simple form with straight or slightly curved walls, tronco-conic or in deeper examples cup-like, fig. 18d and c. One or two rim sherds of heavy ovoid and insloping 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. 18f. 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. 19a. Several are partly recessed into the wall as semi-tunnel handles, fig. 19h, 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

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1 This is found commonly in small pieces in the blue clay.
2 Evans, 1953, pl. vii. 5; 1959, pl. 35a.
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 Ġnejna 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. 21b. 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. 26e, 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. 22a, 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
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 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

Fig. 21. Bonework, various phases. (a–d) awls; (e) burnisher; (f) grooved slip; (g) tube. (†)
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. A second important handle, fig. 23c, 24d, g, and h, is derived from the GhD. pinched-top one, see p. 22.

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. transitional 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 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

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**Fig. 22.** Flaked stonework, various phases. (a) obsidian; (g and h) chert; rest flint. (f)
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,

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![Image](image2.png)

**Fig. 23. GSk. pottery shapes.**

![Image](image3.png)

**Fig. 24. GSk. handles. (§)**

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. 25b. 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
one vessel from here, a vase with small splayed GSk.
lugs, had the RSk. slip, fig. 27e. Such signs of transi-
tion include carinated bowls, fig. 27b, the few decorated
sherd (excepting the three mentioned in the last
paragraph), the fully developed M-handles, and the
course ware to be described below. These in combina-
tion 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-
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. 29g) and a knob and a C in star and cres-
cent 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
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. 21g. 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. 26b, 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. xxmlb).
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-
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. It is of a hard green-black non-local stone. A chip of much paler green stone from PC7, fig. 26j, is also 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, 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

3 *Antiquity*, 1963, p. 203. See also Table IV.
4 Examples are most frequent in tombs—Zebug (Zb.), Xemxija (mainly Gg.), and above all the Hypogeum (Gg., 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 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 vari-coloured 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.
form of the M-handle whose ancestry has been already traced (p. 26), fig. 28a 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. 28c, represented by only two sherds, is narrower with an undivided tip bent in and nicked like a hand or an 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. 27g.

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. 27h. 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. 28d and pl. xxvb. 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. 26f. The base is usually flat. Another characteristic handle is found on it, a wide splayed trumpet lug, fig 28f. 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

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

No. 1 (fig. 30a and pl. xxviiib). 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. 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. xxviiib. 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 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 (c). 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
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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 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 Mgarr.

Another object of terracotta from the North Room, also roughly conical though of larger size, is too particularly well preserved (fig. 26a and pl. xxiii). 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. 26i) was also for suspension as an amulet or pendant. This was one new bone type, the other is a cow toe bone with the three projecting points of its proximal joint ground off (fig. 30g and pl. xxviii). 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

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. 31b). A much finer whorl, the first deliberately made one, is spherical, 6·5 cm. diameter (fig. 31a). 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. 26h). 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. 26k), 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. Žb.

With the next phase we come on to those already described by Evans. 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. 33b and an attempt to imitate the row of impressions round a jar neck in paint, fig. 33f. 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

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<tr>
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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 Žb. and Mg. 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, Mg., 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 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. 20d). The spoons, ring-handled and rod-handled, attributed to the Mg. phase are both common in this.

Secondly, an earlier version of Zb. 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 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 Zb. is fully developed. This early Zb., 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 Zb. must be sought. The painted ware especially must be of foreign inspiration.

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 Gnejna Bay where it was first found, associated with Gg. pottery. In origin, however, Pellegrin ware goes back to Zb., where it springs from the coarser buff ware of that phase already described by Evans. 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 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. 32i 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. Zb. levels contain its first sherds but it becomes much commoner in Mg. and Gg. 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. 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. xxixb, one much damaged, originally roughly 14 by 8 cm., from GA7. Their stone is not local, being

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

metamorphic or igneous. The PC3 axe resembles a porcellanite, that from GA7 a basalt. 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, 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 cannonbone, 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. Mg.

Although considerably more material of this phase has been recovered, only one level, OBS/UC4/OD5, the occupation level on the Mg. hut floor, could be called a pure one. In other levels the Mg. pottery was accompanied by equal or greater proportions of Zb. or Gg. 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 Gg. 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 Zb. is that the white filling to the lines is often given an additional wash of red ochre, leading to the ochre-only filling of Gg. 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 Evans\(^2\) was securely stratified in a fill beneath the Mg. hut floor, but the majority comes from early Mg. levels, with which phase it will be considered.

Owing to the poverty of Mg. levels, bone and stone work is depressingly scarce. The only pieces worth mention are two hard pebble grinders from the floor build of the Mg. 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. Gg.

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 Mg. 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, distinctly 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 Mg. and the main body of Gg. This is too early to affect the temple story. The Gg. 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 Mg. 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 Zb. 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 Mg. shapes 4 and 5 as redefined above, and the hemispheric bowl. One small jar had a sharp carination and a straight shoulder.

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\(^1\) 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 Mg. and early Gg. patterns. Survival well into Gg. is shown not only by the associations in the trenches but by the fact that two sherds are both painted and scratched in Gg. 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.

Commonly associated with the painted ware is the second group, fig. 39, of sherds decorated in the usual Mg. technique of broad cut-out, better described as gouged, lines with fringes. These are more carefully executed, with narrower bands and designs noticeably similar to Gg. 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 Mg. into Gg.
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 Gg. levels is of proved Gg. date. Two RSk. figurine fragments are in fact proved otherwise. Similarly two spindle whorls are very like the ones noted in Zb., work included a plaque made of a 7-cm. section of sheep/goat rib perforated at either end, fig. 26f; 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. 40b.

![Fig. 38. Mg.-Gg. transitional, painted ware. (i)](image)

![Fig. 39. Mg.-Gg. transitional, gouged ware. (a and b) (i), (c) (i)](image)

fig. 31d. A rectangular block with large perforations and decoration, fig. 41a, 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 Zb. 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. 41b. 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 outbuildings, the pit in the north-east field, the earlier temple floors at Mgarr 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 Gg. 22 and leading this time to Tx. 36. The other is a semi-hole-mouthed jar, the vessel called by Evans the Saflieni 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 Gg., 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 Gg. 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

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. 20k, 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. 36e.

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, Saflieni 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. 41e, 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. 26m. Two high conical spindle whorls were also recovered, fig. 31e, 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. 22i 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. 40c to h. The most noteworthy object was a smoothed plaque 7 by 8 cm. with two engraved drawings of temple façades, pl. xxxb, 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. xxxa, 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,¹⁴ one of shape 80, a pyriform jar, one a miniature version of 81, a globular juglet, fig. 20j and pl. xxxib. Two others are of a form not recorded previously, a jar with a vertical or slightly convex neck, fig. 36f. 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 Xaghra tombs Gg. 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.
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 Bah.


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. (!)

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 time there were three traditions current in association, foreign Bah. (cut-out meanders, false relief bands, red on buff geometric painted, carinated cups with high handles, bronze, etc.), locally derived Bah. (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.

¹ Trump, 'Later Prehistory'.

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. The 'Diana' trumpet lugs noticed by Evans 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 Zb. mixed, two in later even more mixed 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 Zb., 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. xxxtc. It is from the rim of a beaker with a short vertical lip. The ware is not very different

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. xxxtc, 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 unhatched tip. The ware is unlike any local one, being too compact and fine-grained for Zb. 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 southwestern 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.

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, 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.
44c 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
shers.6 Prior to the work at Skobra 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.1 In the Central Mediterranean
examples occur at Capo Graziano, Castelluccio, and
recently at Ognina.2

1 L. Bernabo Brea, Sicily before the Greeks and Malignis-
Lipara I.
2 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.
3 Respectively in the Lipari Museum, the Syracuse Museum,
and information from Professor L. Bernabo 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 pedestal bowl
came from a Tx. deposit into which it could hardly
have infiltrated subsequently in one piece.

At Skobra 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
have been copied locally (the TC. jar with dotted
triangles on the lip).

Mycenae. To be recalled to complete the record is
the Myc. IIa 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. IIb 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 pres-
ent 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 Saff. 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.

1 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.
2 Evans, 1953, p. 72 and pl. xiv, no. 1.
4 Bullettino di Paletnologia Italiana, xxix, pl. x. 3 and 5; pl. xi.
6; B.P.I. xix, p. 299, fig. 95.
21. The Temple Sequence

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temple Development</th>
<th>Mg.</th>
<th>Gg.</th>
<th>Saf., early Tx.</th>
<th>Tx.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rock-cut tombs</td>
<td>Xemxija</td>
<td>Xemxija</td>
<td>Xagħra?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lobed temples</td>
<td>Kordin III E.</td>
<td>Mgarr E.?</td>
<td>Mgarr E.?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trefoil temples</td>
<td>Mgarr W.</td>
<td>Kordin III W.</td>
<td>Mgarr E.?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-apse temples</td>
<td>Ggantija S.</td>
<td>Tarxien FE.</td>
<td>Hagar Qim N.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-apse temples</td>
<td>Ggantija N.</td>
<td>Tarxien S.</td>
<td>Mnajdra C.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-apse temple</td>
<td>Hal Ġinwi</td>
<td>Tai Qadd</td>
<td>Concezzione</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anomalous forms</td>
<td>Borg il-Mramma</td>
<td>Borg il-Mramma</td>
<td>Borg il-Mramma</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first of these and the last three remain unaltered. Mgarr East is now, p. 18 above, of Saf., or at earliest Gg., date. The only other good lobed example was Kordin III East, dated to Gg. by Evans himself. The trefoils are also all of Gg. date now that Mgarr West has been moved to that phase. Others are Kordin III West, Buġibba, probably Santa Verna and Ggantija South in its earlier form if Evans is right in supposing that the outer apses were later additions. 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 closing in the innermost of the three apses, and re-examination of the other standing trefoils, Mgarr 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 Ggantija South, Hagar Qim North, or the 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 Gg. phase at some future date may be required.

1 Evans, 1959, pp. 84 et seq.
2 Evans, 1959, p. 84.
3 Note that he considered Mg. earlier than Zb.
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 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 Mgarr 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, and 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 stratigraphically earlier Zb. examples. This charcoal, spread across the whole hut floor, is certainly 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 Mg. date like the building it came from, Mgarr East. As the trenches in 1961 showed, p. 17 above, this was not so. The carbon-bearing level was a clay containing predominantly Zb. 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 Zb. or Ġg., the date obtained strongly suggesting the latter when compared with the others.

The carbon results give us then a good date for Zb., 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 1500 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.

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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. Zb. 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. Gg. 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 overseas 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 unmistakable 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 Gg. 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 Gg. 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 Mycenean 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.
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 |
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GhD.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lipari</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pantelleria</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Imitation of Sicilian traits is less obvious, the best example being the decoration inside rims taken over by Zb. 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, Zb., 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 suggested\(^2\) 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

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\(^3\) *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. 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.

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 pottery 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. We now know that by the later Bronze Age at least the island's vegetation was much as it is today, virtually treeless. 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. 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.

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.
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
Royal Malta University

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. 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 6¾ to 7½ 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. 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: 3½ to 4½ 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: 3½ to 4½ 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 4½. 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 parietales, 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)

DR. H. HELBAEK
Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen

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

DR. C. R. METCALFE
Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

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.

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

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

pl. x2, 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)

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