

Gournia: 2010 Excavation

In 2010 we excavated four trenches (Fig. 1):

Trench 1. About 25 meters west of the palace, we dug a 5 by 5 meter trench in H. Hawes's dump to see what she discarded. We found that Hawes regularly discarded many large sherds of every date, i.e. EM II through LM IIIB. This was the only trench to produce substantial amounts of LM III pottery, including many fragments of decorated LM IIIB pithoi, that may have implications for the nature of Mycenaean Gournia. Other finds include a fragment of a rock crystal vase, part of a LM I Palace Style jar, and a Knossian LM IB vase.

Trench 2. In 1904 E. Hall excavated "about 200 baskets of pottery" of a large dump she called the North Trench Deposit. In 2010 we excavated in excess of two tons of pottery of this MM IA North Trench pottery whose deposition marks the beginning of the Middle Minoan town of Gournia. The deposit lies on bedrock next to a wall, called Wall X—X by Hall. This Middle Minoan IB wall actually continues to the east and may be a large circuit wall for the Protopalatial town.

Trench 3. Hawes identified "Early House Remains" immediately northwest of the slab-paved court of House Ea. In this area we found an open court, leading north into the doorway of a Protopalatial house. This structure is still mostly unexcavated to the north. To the south it runs underneath House Ea. The house appears to have been destroyed in Middle Minoan IIB. It produced a floor deposit—a clay water channel, pithoi, stone tools, cups, a basin, and loomweights—and an upper level (consisting of domestic wares probably fallen from a second storey) that resemble the pottery from the Middle Minoan IIB destruction level at Quartier Mu at Malia.

Trench 4. The sloping area north of the excavated town is lined with heavy east-west terrace walls. The meter-thick fill in this area contains mostly MM IIB sherds—presumably a result of a major destruction of the settlement at that time. We found an artificial terrace created by a massive retaining structure constructed of casement-like walls designed to shore up the slope where it falls off sharply. A two-room Late Minoan IB atelier was built abutting this retaining wall. Two ground floor rooms served as a work space and storage area for this small workshop that apparently specialized in the production of olive oil. What might be a small foundation deposit in the floor contained a Triton shell, ash, and animal bones. The size of the walls and a fallen clay chimney indicate the structure had a second storey. Destroyed by fire in LM IB, the workshop floors yielded a deposit of industrial artifacts and complete vases, including pithoi, an amphora, large stirrup jars, a rhyton, conical cups, and a large storage vase inscribed with a Linear A inscription.

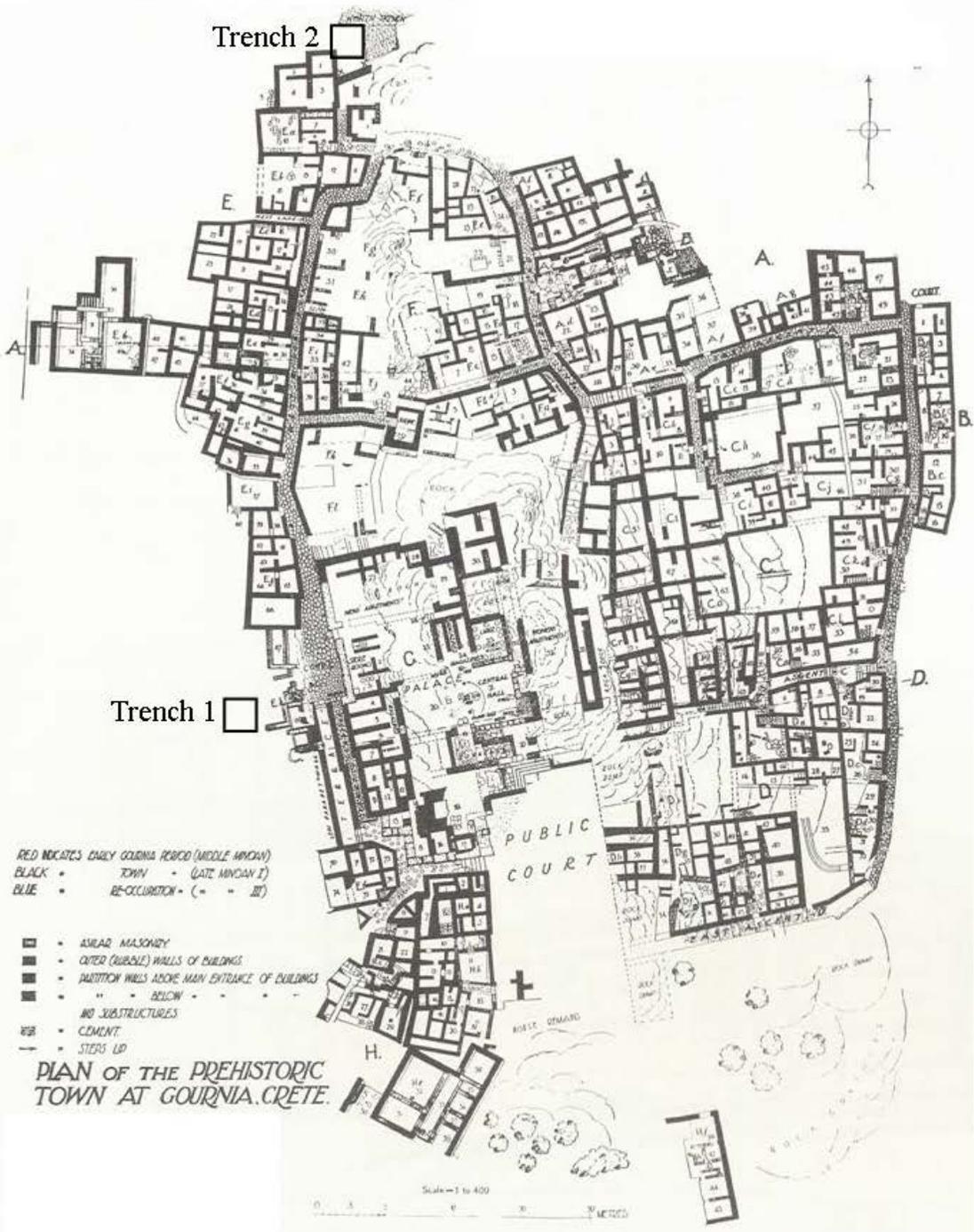
Fig. 1: 2010 Gournia Trench Plan.

Trench 4

Trench 3

Trench 2

Trench 1



Town of Gournia