

Plan 178: AG-AH-AJ,22-23-24 - Overview

There is one rock-cut installation which may be as early as Stratum 5. The other installations are not found in relation to any other architecture, and so cannot be assigned to particular strata. They likely cover a span of use from Strata 4 to 2, which is vague to be sure. The few wall fragments cannot be grouped into rooms, let alone buildings.

Evaluation -

The SE corner of this area (AJ24) was excavated in 1926, the rest in 1927. The NW corner was left unexcavated because of rubble heaps and high bedrock there. In the first two seasons artifact recording was minimal; only rich tombs or cisterns of special note had their contents recorded in a systematic manner. Bedrock was close to the surface, which means that erosion took a heavy toll on the built-up architecture; only wall fragments were found, and not even the plan of one building can be reconstructed. The only features which survived intact are the thirty-two numbered and eleven unnumbered rock-cut installations, and what appears to be an unnumbered oven.

There are no elevations at all for the 1926 features; the 1927 features do have top and bottom elevations. Photographs are almost nonexistent. Only Ci 49 received adequate coverage. The rest are only documented on the plan. For the above reasons, little can be learned from this area.

Wall Fragments -

The wall fragments in AG24 are discussed above in Plan 161 because

they are associated with other remains in that area. In AG23 are three single-stone wall fragments. Those toward the middle of the square might belong to the same building as they could form a corner. In AJ24 is another single-stone fragment, completely isolated. In AJ22 are three fragments of double-stone work. The two on the N are at different alignments and too close together to belong to the same building. The center and S segments are on the same line, and far enough apart, to suggest they might be related.

Rock-Cut Installations -

There is little which can be noted concerning these features. Like their counter parts in the N they were probably cut in Stratum 4, some probably went out of use at the end of that stratum, others may have continued in use as late as Stratum 2. A few of these installations cut each other and so reveal some sub-phasing. Ci 49 seems to cut into Si 43 to the S and Si 57 to the N, indicating that the former is later than the other two. The 1947 report suggests that Ci 49 was of the bottle-shaped variety.⁹⁶ Similarly, Ci 63's mouth cuts into Ci 61, and a short passage was cut to connect it with Ci 62. Ci 170 has three openings and two chambers which were connected at some time by a narrow tunnel. Openings "A" and "B" are in the larger oval chamber, "C" is in the smaller circular one. Si 169 bears some resemblance to Si 315 in Plan 123, and to Ca 244 in Plan 74, both of which contained EB I material. It is a narrow rock chamber. Opening "A" may be the original entrance, with "B" dug later, or perhaps even the result of a partial roof collapse. Near the W edge of AH23 on the plan are two concentric circles. Usually such a configuration indicates a stone basin or an oven. Stone basins most often contain hatching, so this may be an oven, perhaps Ov 136

⁹⁶I, 129 n. 1.

which is not otherwise indicated on the plan, though photographs exist for it.

The numbered cisterns in this area are: Ci 36, Ci 49, Ci 61, Ci 62, Ci 63, Ci 65, Ci 66, Ci 70, Ci 147, Ci 149, Ci 152, Ci 153 and Ci 170. The silos include: Si 28, Si 40, Si 42, Si 55, Si 56, Si 58, Si 59, Si 64, Si 67, Si 68, Si 69, Si 145, Si 150, Si 151, Si 154, Si 164 and Si 169.

It is natural to compare this area, with its high density of rock-cut installations, with the N part of the site where a similar density occurs (P 81, for example, shows the moth of Ci 36). In both area there are large and small cisterns and large and small silos. The striking difference is that there are no rock-cut presses or "cup-marks" or anything else suggestive of the processing of agricultural products on this plan, though "cup-marks" do occur in Plan 195 to the S.