

THE LATEST PREPALATIAL PERIOD AND THE FOUNDATION OF
THE FIRST PALACE AT PHAISTOS:
A STRATIGRAPHIC AND CHRONOLOGICAL RE-ASSESSMENT

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ABSTRACT

The dating of the first palace at Phaistos has been particularly problematic because the architectural complex is comprised of two blocks that were set at different levels on the slope of the hill, and they have been dated to different ceramic phases due to the lack of accuracy in the selection of the relevant deposits, and a rather loose application of Evans' chronological system. The materials retrieved from the sub-floor excavations that were conducted in the area between piazzale I and cortile 40 of the palace have proved to be a major problem. They consist of a few fully preserved vases that were found either on red floors and paved areas, or within stone or wood enclosures or within benches and apart from having been dated to different phases of the Early and Middle Minoan periods, have also been attributed either to structures that preceded the first palace or to the palace itself. This article aims to clarify the formation processes of these deposits and the relationship that they had with one other, and with those found beneath the southern block of the first palace, and to define their chronological position with reference to the settlement history of the site, as recently re-assessed by the author, and to the Knossian sequence.