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Yeronisos Island Expedition – June 2017

Jane C. Waldbaum Scholarship

This past summer I began my archaeological career with the Yeronisos Island Expedition sponsored by New York University with many thanks owed to the Jane C. Waldbaum Scholarship. This island sits just off the western coast of Agios Georgios in Cyprus (fig. 1). 27 years of Excavations lead by Professor Joan Connelly have revealed this island be a Hellenistic hotspot of activity along with earlier chalcolithic and later byzantine activity. During our one month stay in Cyprus, we were able to gather first hand information about these periods while learning proper archaeological method.

Every day began at 5 A.M. so we could make our 6 A.M. boat ride with our aptly named fisherman and captain, Herakles. Work began as soon as we climbed to the top of the island. In the first days of the dig we learned to make ourselves a shelter from plants available on the island, proper technique for taking elevations, trowel and picking methods, and how to responsibly record finds and keep field books. In my time on Yeronisos, I was able to participate in the digging of three different trenches. As we dug, we learned the difficult science of calling soil changes and level differences. We also learned to take measurements not only on the X and Y axis of each trench but also measurements of depth with our theodolite telescope (fig. 2).

I became supervisor of my final trench, N19 N&E (fig. 3), near the end of the excavation. This trench became more complicated as we delved deeper into the earth. The stratigraphy was difficult to understand and a large byzantine rubble wall required slower, more careful digging. This challenging trench definitely deepened my scientific

understanding of archaeology as I discussed solutions for my trench with my more seasoned superiors. This trench became particularly interesting on the last day of digging when we realized that a Hellenistic wall was running beneath the later byzantine wall. On our final day of digging we lifted a hoard of Hellenistic pottery and I was able to learn the proper way to remove this material from the earth (fig 4A-B).

We did not do all of our learning on the island, however. Our afternoons were filled with lectures by Professor Connelly and also by visiting scholars (fig. 5). These scholars included Dimitris Plantzos and the team from the University of Haifa. I was also able to converse with these scholars with out nightly team meals. On days when the sea was too treacherous to make it out to Yeronisos, Professor Connelly would arrange trips to other sites on Cyprus. Through these outings, I was able to see how other sites on Cyprus could relate to our site and also appreciate the wide breadth of archaeological material on this island.

## Figures



Fig. 1. View of the Island from Agios Georgios



Fig. 2. Byzantine wall, which I excavated in N19 N&E



Fig. 3. My fellow diggers taking a measurement with out theodolite telescope



4A. Some Photos of myself lifting pottery at the end of the season



4B. A photo of my fellow digger inspecting the Hellenistic pottery that he had just lifted.



5. The 2017 Yeronisos Island Expedition Team