

For five weeks between May 19th and June 21st, my home was in the small village of Agios Georgios in Cyprus. Every afternoon we walked from the villas to the Apothiki where the heart of the project was stored—old Peter Megaw’s house and the storage room. The inside held artifacts, blocks, and Dr. Jolanta Mlynarczyk, who spoke enthusiastically about the pottery she worked on.

When we dug in the mainland, it was at Maniki Harbour—so close to the sea we risked being sprayed by a particularly angry wave. There, a pottery dump had been used to level the ground: the trench which I supervised, S9N-T9S, wielded a stunning amount of pottery fragments (fig.1), which kept the volunteer pottery washers and us quite busy in the afternoon. The wind blew strongly there, and smelled of summer: it was violent, and warm, and exhilarating. Most importantly, it cooled our bodies from the scorching June sun. As I dug, I could never stop wondering whether it was that very same wind that relieved the very same sun from the workers at the harbor, whose material remains we unearthed throughout the season. How close I felt to them! In the Harbor, I learned how to open a trench, use the digging tools, and how to keep tidy records of all that was done throughout the day with the trench book assigned to me, which I hope will guide the next season of diggers.

No matter how many fragments we uncovered in the morning, we were never bored washing them in the afternoon, as an army of retired British expatriates both helped and entertained—stories were told, poetry recited, and books discussed. These were the hours when the sun started its descent, with the sea coming greet it. The colorful hues of the day began to vanish, and a white sun reflecting into the vast sea turned it into a luminous pool of molten silver, on which Yeronisos sailed peacefully.

At any given point in Agios Georgios, we could spot Yeronisos island, which we excavated in the last two weeks. The days started at 6am on the island, as a boat had to be taken to reach it. Our apt captain Herakles behaved as Pan might have: jumping swiftly from rock to rock with equipment, ensuring our safe passage from island to mainland, navigating the tricky landing on the island even through an angry sea, and displaying the free-spirited and kind nature of the people of Agios Georgios. On top of Yeronisos, with the perpetual choral of seagulls above our heads, one could look out into the mainland and see the Akamas Peninsula untouched by civilization, and echoing what the very first men and women who came to Cyprus must have seen.

Outside the trenches I conducted my own project under Professor Pieter Brouke, whose tutelage I greatly appreciated. I searched through both publications and trench books to find architecture stone moldings found on two walls on the island and located them in the storeroom with the means to create a catalogue. This was meant to help Professor Connelly define which of the two walls was built earlier to further decipher the architecture of Yeronisos. To my luck while digging on the island, I came across a molding along the wall, exactly like the ones I had been researching (fig.2), which gave the project a new meaningful dimension.

The earth wielded not only secrets of an ancient past—to me, digging in Cyprus unveiled the ways of life of a society far removed from my own reality. To spend five weeks working

there was to be invited into a timeless consciousness of something greater than myself. When I think of the time I spent in Cyprus, I will remember most vividly the locally made dinners with the team every night, visits to museums and the nearby cities, site visits under Professor Connelly's instruction, and a very meaningful visit to the nearby monastery. These five weeks taught me about archaeological methods and history, but above all I learned to live with a kind of vigor and joy that is only found at Yeronisos.

I greatly thank the AIA and the Jane C. Waldbaum Archaeological Field School Scholarship for enabling me to participate in this life-changing experience. I leave the Yeronisos Island Expedition with lessons and memories which I will carry with me throughout my life.

With the sincerest gratitude,

Sophia B. Andrade



Fig. 1 Trench S9N-T9S at Maniki Harbor



Fig. 2 The molding fragment found at Yeronisos Island



Fig. 3 Myself with a particularly large fragment lifted from trench S9N-T9S



Fig 4. 2024 YIE team photo



Fig 5. Professor Connelly, Professor Brouke and I with the found molding fragment



Fig. 6 team photo with the explorers club flag and the project Land Rover