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Sample Geomorph Report

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During the third week of the survey, survey teams moved uphill onto rockier, steeper colluvial deposits and out of the last of the floodplain deposits. A topic of much discussion was a long linear feature which is well-defined on aerial photographs. This 20 to 25 m wide feature crosses the field area from NW to SE and continues beyond on either side. It is defined by changes in soil color and topography: it is generally a flat area cut into the hillslope and exposes the whiter, more calcium carbonate rich subsurface soil. Whereas the feature is easily picked out on aerial photographs, its boundaries on the ground are often less clearly defined. However, the archaeologists agreed to survey it separately from the surroundings and we are labeling it as a separate feature geomorphologically.

Another area of note lay just south of the top of Rachi Bosca, where a shallow drainage has been filled with soil to create a level field. This fill is much whiter and rockier than the surrounding soil but is identical to that on top of Rachi Bosca. Geomorphological suspicions were confirmed when we were told that the source of the fill is a bulldozed cut on the top of Rachi Bosca and that it happened very recently. As anticipated, artifacts counts and dating are similar to those from where the soil came. This is an excellent example of the need to consider the soils and geomorphology of an area during survey and to be aware of the context of finds. While artifact locations alone would indicate a focus of activity at the base of Rachi Bosca in addition to the top, this is only an illusion created by modern anthropogenic soil transport. When processes are older or less well defined, it is equally important to be aware of the forces that have acted on artifacts.

The fourth week of the survey started on the top of Rachi Bosca and moved down the terraced slopes to the north, into the floodplain below and up the next slope towards the Ayos Dimitrios and Kromnia ridges. Pliocene marine bedrock is exposed on the northern edge of the rachi. The north slope of Rachi Bosca contains terraces of different ages and conditions, some of which are cut into bedrock. It possible that the upper parts of the slope have been quarried. The terraces vary in width and perhaps some of the broader treads were built by cutting upslope and filling downslope. We divided the slope into different geomorphic units from east to west according to changes in aspect, accounting for differences in fall line and potentially in artifact movement.

The colluvium from the rachi extends across the asphalt road into the Perdikaria area where it quickly reaches an eastward sloping floodplain. A large pit dug near a garbage dump nicely demonstrates the active depositional nature of the floodplain and its extensive fine red clayey deposits. On the north side of the floodplain is a long high terrace running parallel to the floodplain. This linear feature was not formed by natural processes and it is supported by a wall containing large stone blocks. The riser and the very flat tread above it are continuous across and beyond the survey area although the amount and size of the stones in the wall vary. The slope upward toward Kromnia Ridge transitions from alluvium to colluvium and contains many terraces with small risers and very broad treads. The survey swath up Ayos Dimitrios, in contrast, rises steeply up to marine terrace cliffs.