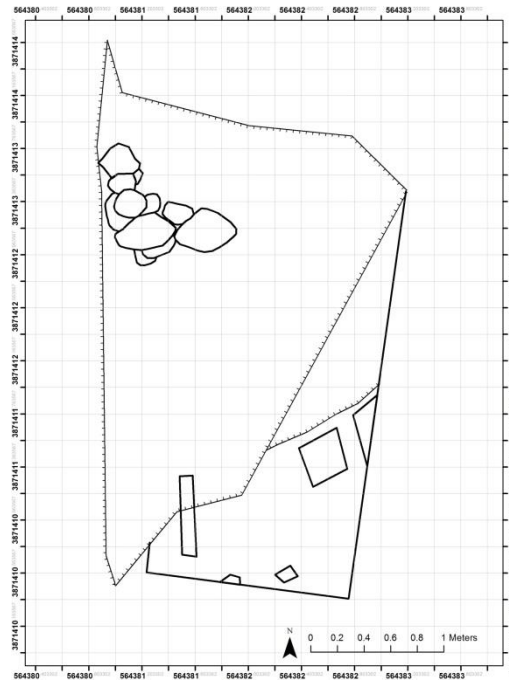


Vigla: Excavation Unit 17

Trench Supervisor: Jon Crowley

Final Plan



Section 1. Introduction

This trench sits on the southwestern side of the Vigla plateau. The larger excavation area, but not the area of the trench specifically, is open on its western exposure after partial collapse from the Vigla cliff face. This collapsed face was clearly visible to both the road up to Vigla and the dirt road that passes north to Pyla village and was evidently subjected to looting and additional erosion between 2008 and 2012. These events exposed a clearly defined scarp, an assemblage of rather well-preserved pottery, a cave-like void in the western side of Vigla, and the remains of two walls. The vulnerability of the area both to natural erosion and looters prompted us to conduct a sounding in the area to document as much of the area as possible before further collapse occurred.

Section 2. Location, Purpose, and Previous Work in the Area

Earlier work in the area included geophysical prospecting with ground penetrating radar that revealed several orthogonal anomalies. Looting activities in 2008 produced a small, well-preserved deposit of Hellenistic ceramics that had tumbled out of an irregularly excavated scarp.

The purpose of this trench was to investigate an area disturbed by looters in 2008 on the south western side of the Vigla plateau. In the summer of 2008, we collected a small assemblage of well-preserved

pottery from the slope below the disturbed area and this suggested that some cultural activity took place on the southern slope of the hill. Erosion or perhaps more looting prior to the summer of 2011 revealed two sections of architecture including what appeared to be a neatly cut block. Excavations in 2012 sought to determine whether this cut block formed part of a significant architectural feature. We also sought to ascertain whether the ragged void exposed by looting activities in 2008 was eroded remains of a tomb.

Section 3. Methods of excavation

The methodology used in EU 17 is outlined in the PKAP 2012 excavation manual and was adhered to with several exceptions.

First, only 50% of SU 5901 was screened due to time constraints on the cleaning of the collapsed section of the 'Vigla Tomb'.

Second, the excavations in EU 17 did not always follow the rule of "newest context excavated". SU 5906 was excavated before SU 5908 despite it being a newer deposit due to an earlier working hypothesis, namely, that the strata revealed in the southern half of EU 17 was earlier than the strata in the north. This hypothesis was later rejected once the stone wall in the eastern scarp was revealed.

Other than these two exceptions, the excavations at EU 17 followed the PKAP 2012 excavation manual. This includes a stratigraphic excavation where the newest deposits were excavated first with a 100% sifting method using 1cm screens. The unit was mapped on the first few days of excavation by using a total station to outline the excavation area as well as the exposed features that had been revealed by the collapse and possible looting of 2008. A total station was used to give an elevation datum as well as bottom and top elevations for the first two SUs due to concerns for safety on the collapsed section of EU 17. Excavation proceeded until the trench was closed after SU 5909.

The trench of EU 17 was aligned to the edge of *Vigla*. This meant that it did not have a true North-South orientation. The excavation began on May 21 and ended on June 2 with 9 days of excavation. The people who excavated at EU-17 were Bill Caraher, Jeff Cheng, and Laura Goodling, with special assistance on two mornings from Brandon Olson and Aaron Barth. The primary excavators were Jeff Cheng and Laura Goodling.

Section 4. Stratigraphy and Harris Matrix

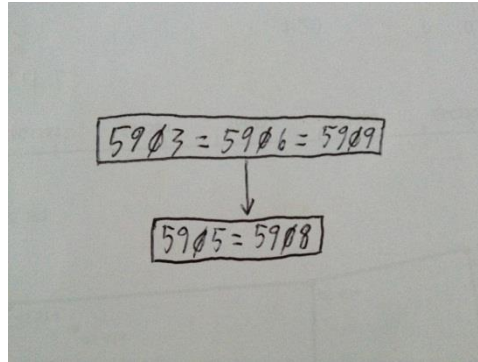
The trench of EU-17 consists of five stratified SUs with two distinct strata. SUs 5903, 5906, and 5909 form the latest deposit and consist of soil that has been washed down the south face of *Vigla*. This surface wash gives way to a distinct soil difference after about 25cm on the northern half of EU 17. The different soil is assigned as SU 5905 (dark soil in the north of EU 17).

Beneath SU 5905 was SU 5908, another SU within the same strata which we ended after roughly 20 cm to prevent accidental contamination from SU 5906 in the southern half of EU 17. A similar arbitrary break was made between SU 5906 and SU 5909 for the same goal of preventing any contamination between strata.

After removing SU 5909, EU 17 was closed due to the two primary research questions being answered. These questions were:

1. Is there evidence of burials on the slopes of Vigla?
2. Is the large cut stone block in the southwest corner of EU 17 associated with a larger wall.

We were able to answer yes to the first question and no to the second question by the end of SU 5909.



Section 5. Features

The only architectural feature uncovered by the excavations at EU 17 is a wall that can be seen in the eastern scarp wall. Due to this wall's apparent northeast-southwest orientation, only a side profile is available. The stones used are classified as cobble and boulder sized stones in a random course configuration according to the 2012 PKAP excavation manual. This wall also had a flat slab roughly 50 cm by 8 cm used within it. This slab could be a sarcophagus lid in reuse. This wall did not use mortar.

There is an additional architectural feature that was exposed in the 2007-2008 collapse that was cleaned and mapped in SU-5901. This feature is a separate stone wall consisting of boulder sized stones, no mortar, random course configuration, has a north-south orientation and is at a significantly lower elevation.

These two architectural features are not believed to be related due to the differences in elevation and orientation.

It is worth noting that there is also a densely packed stratum in the northern half of EU 17. This stratum is interpreted as an ancient looter's pit and is significantly different from the stratified layers found in other EUs on Vigla. The unusual orientation of this stratum can be seen in the scarp drawing 5902_d1 as well as the final scarp drawing for EU 17. *DKP Note (6-22-12): We do not know for certain that this pit was an ancient "looter's pit." Our excavations in 2012 really did not provide enough information to demonstrate this.*

Section 6. Finds

The majority of the finds in EU-17 were ceramic, with the most common type being coarse ware and amphora sherds. We also discovered two sling bullets, several unidentified metal items, a small bronze ring, a projectile point, a sarcophagus lid fragment, and many bones given the relatively small excavation

area. The most diagnostic artifacts were Classical-Hellenistic black-glazed fragments, which were found in most of the SUs in EU 17.

Some of the more significant finds were issued individual find spots:

FS5905_1001 - Sarcophagus lid fragment

-North = 3871412.05

-East = 564382.83

-Elevation = 45.548m

FS5906_1001 - Sling Bullet

-North = 3871411.86

-East = 564382.50

-Elevation = 45.488m

FS5908_1001a,b,c,d - Bronze Nail?

-North = 3871411.95

-East = 564382.49

-Elevation = 45.398m

FS5908_1002 - Sling Bullet

-North = 3871411.91

-East = 564382.56

-Elevation = 45.408m

Section 7. Interpretive conclusions

During the 2008 field season, the Pyla-Koutsopetria Archaeological Project directors noticed what appeared to be a collapsing tomb along the southwest ridge of Vigla. The date of this collapse has been narrowed down to between June 2007 and May 2008 due to the annual field seasons that PKAP has organized. This collapse was given the feature name of 'Vigla Tomb' due to the square feature that was exposed. *DKP Note (6-22-12): There was no proof, however, that this was in fact a tomb.*

At the time excavation began on May 21, 2012, the exposed 'Vigla Tomb' had slumped but had not otherwise changed in its overall shape since its collapse in 2008. This led the PKAP team to conclude that the collapse was likely due to a new looters pit that was cut too close to the edge of the ridge and cause a collapse shortly after.

During the course of excavating EU 17, a fragment of a sarcophagus lid was discovered and a very compact fill context that could represent an ancient pit, possibly a looters' pit. The ceramics generated by that context would mean that the ancient pit was no earlier than the Hellenistic period. This is a very unique situation where it appears that two pits, two millennia apart intersect at the exact same point on the ridge of Vigla.

In addition to the apparent pits, a wall was discovered in the eastern scarp of EU-17. Based on the stratigraphy, this wall is newer than the 'ancient looters pit' as it is cut into it and have a small (5-10cm) layer of soil between the 'ancient looters pit' and the wall. This interpretation would suggest a wall, possibly for terracing, that was built sometime after the 'ancient looters pit' was refilled.

The wall within the eastern scarp of EU-17 appears to have a stone sarcophagus lid in reuse within the wall. This sarcophagus lid is made of stone, undecorated, and measures 50 cm by 8 cm. The type of stone and lack of decoration made it different from the fragment that was collected as FS5905_1001.

The conclusions drawn must be prefaced with the fact that EU-17 did not hit bedrock nor a culturally sterile strata. It is possible that deeper strata would change the interpretation of these finds and further excavation is recommended for a stronger conclusion to be formed.

Section 8. Appendices: drawings, photographs, videos

- **Drawings**

- 5901_d1: boundary of cleaning SU 5901
- 5902_d1: scarp drawing after SU 5902 was finished
- 5903_d1: bottom of SU 5903
- 5905_d1: bottom of SU 5905
- 5906_d1: bottom of SU 5906
- 5908_d1: bottom of SU 5908
- 5909_d1: bottom of SU 5909
- East Scarp Profile

- **Photographs**

- 5901_p1-p6 (working)
- 5901_p7-p9 (Bill's find)
- 5901_p10-p16 (bottom)
- 5902_p1-8 (bottom)
- 5903_p1-p2 (top)
- 5903_p3-p6 (working)
- 5903_p7-p10 (bottom)
- 5904_p1-3 (bottom)
- 5905_p1-p2 (working)
- 5905_p3-p6 (slab)
- 5905_p7-p8 (bottom)
- 5906_p1-p5 (bottom)
- 5908_p1-p5 (bottom)
- 5909_p1-p13 (bottom)

- **Videos**

- 5903_v1-v2 (working)

5905_v1
5909_v1