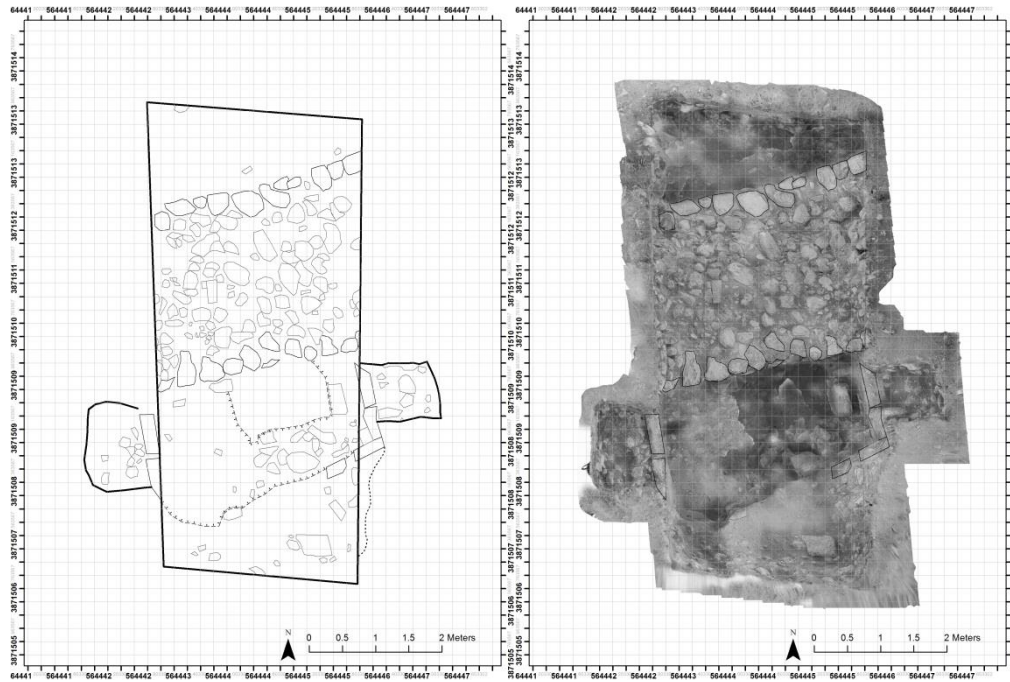


# Vigla: Excavation Unit 16

Trench Supervisor: Dallas DeForest

## Final Plan



### Section 1. Introduction

EU 16 was excavated from 21 May until 7 June 2012 and was originally a 4m x 3m trench, which was subsequently expanded 1 meter to the north and 2 meters to the south. The trench was placed over the northern fortification wall on the Vigla plateau, several meters west of a looter's trench dug in 2010, which exposed a nicely preserved section of the wall.

The most significant feature of EU 16 is 5503\_f1, the fortification wall itself. The fortification wall is substantial. It is built of field stones (predominantly 20-30cm in size, with many smaller and some larger stones also used), some rather roughly cut stones were used for the facing, while the interior is a rubble core, perhaps bound with a mud mortar. The wall is 2.8m in width, runs east to west, and, moreover, seems to have used pottery fragments during its construction process (one can see these in the coursing of the stones). A portion of 5503\_f1 was excavated away early in the field season, since the

excavators mistook portions of the core for tumble. No surfaces of any kind were detected by the excavators that are associated with this wall.

EU 16 also produced a second feature, a slab-lined pit filled with a deposit of ceramics and other materials that will certainly add greatly to our knowledge of the Vigla settlement and Cyprus during the Hellenistic period. The assemblage from this EU comes almost exclusively from this deposit, which seems to have been placed in the purpose built pit. The deposit seems to have been a dump, with some clear lenses of discard. Perhaps it represents a clean-up episode throughout the site, and so materials were brought from different points and placed in the pit. Or, it could have served as a primary dump, where items were thrown continually over a period of time. I tend to favor the former right now. The floor fragments, mortar fragments, the ash layer, and the tremendous range of pottery seem to indicate that materials were brought from across the site during a clean-up episode. The pit itself, which was lined with orthostate sandstone blocks of varying sizes, perhaps was initially a subterranean chamber used for a different purpose, which at present is unknown to us, since we did not reach the bottom due to time constraints. But, whatever the case, it became a dump at some point and encased this deposit. The overall importance of this deposit cannot be stressed enough, since it may contain the largest assemblage of Hellenistic pottery on the island.

## **Section 2. Location, Purpose and Previous Work**

EU 16 was originally a 4m x 3m trench, which was subsequently expanded 1 meter to the north and 2 meters to the south. The trench was laid outside PKAP's grid, so it is somewhat irregular in shape and coordinates, especially after the two small extensions over the orthostates (SUs 5525 and 5526). The final northern points are: NW: N: 3871514.017 and E: 564443.029 and NE: N: 3871513.925 and E: 564446.029. I do not at present have the final southern points (the 2m extension), but Brandon Olson took these in the field; likewise, he has points for the two small east and west extensions over the orthostate blocks.

The trench was placed over the northern fortification wall on the Vigla plateau, several meters west of a looter's trench dug in 2010, which exposed a nicely preserved section of the wall. Excavations in 2008 and 2009 were unable to provide a firm date for the wall, so EU 16 was designed date the fortification wall and its various phases more conclusively.

## **Section 3. Methods of Excavation**

EU 16 was excavated according to the guidelines laid out in the PKAP 2012 Excavation Manual. We used small picks, trowels and a coarse sieve during excavation; we also employed the large pick when necessary. We utilized the large pick to more quickly excavate the tumble layer, which was extensive and contained little cultural material. The

deposit layer was excavated with trowels, since it was so loose and soft. One complication in our excavation involved the tremendously loose, sandy soil we encountered. The trench suffered a scarp collapse, forcing us to extend and cut back the southern scarp for safety reasons and, in the process, lose some spatial control.

Our recording procedures mirror those demanded by the PKAP Manual. We used a Munsell Chart to assign soil color and the “Textural Triangle” to assign soil types. Elevations were taken with a line level and plumb bob but also the total station. Digital photographs were taken at the end of every SU, and a plan view was drawn as well. All features were photographed and drawn, too, and we sieved all of our dirt through the course sifter.

The EU was excavated by Dallas DeForest (supervisor), Kaylee Schofield, Tim Hampton, Steve Kozuhowski, Liz DeForest, and Bill Caraher. The trench was excavated from 21 May until 7 June 2012.

#### **Section 4. Stratigraphy and Harris Matrix**

The stratigraphy of EU 16 is straightforward. Effectively, nearly all SUs fit into the following categories: top soil/fill; tumble; dump-deposit; cleaning SUs.

SUs 5501, 5502, 5510, 5511, 5512, 5515, 5519 all represent top soil/fill. The soil in these SUs was similar: soft, sandy loam, 7.5 YR 4/4 brown, with common pebble inclusions and limited cultural material (almost nothing, in fact). SU 5510, a 1m northern extension, contained somewhat looser soil than the rest, presumably due to the slope of the ridge. These are so numerous simply because of the extensions we made to the trench in the south (5512 .5m, 5515 .5m, 5519 1m), a result of the sandy soil and scarp collapse.

SUs 5503, 5504, 5513, 5518, 5520 represents the tumble layer, as well as a certain portion of the core of the wall. The soil in this layer is soft, sandy clay loam, 7.5 YR 6/6 reddish yellow (though one would say reddish brown by the eye). This soil is consistent across these SUs, and was immediately recognizable once we came down on it. Naturally, this tumble layer contained high quantities of stone, 50% and up by my estimate. We pulled out cobble to boulder commonly, while the screening picked up pebbles. This layer contained little cultural material, and what we did find came from the screen mainly. 5503 is an exception, since we bagged 16 bags of pottery. It seems obvious now that we overdug this SU in the south, and went into the dump-deposit. When we at first came down on the ceramic scatters, we posited that they were stored on the wall itself, perhaps on shelves, and so we concluded that they could feasibly be part of the tumble layer itself, since so little changed otherwise. Nearly all these ceramics came from the south side of the trench, within the spatial parameters of the dump-deposit. SU 5503, along with 5504, also excavated away a portion of the core of the wall, which is now readily visible in final photos. Ultimately, it proved difficult to find facing and the

stones appeared to us to be tumble. In the end, we were able to articulate the southern face in 5503, discover the inner coursing, and discern the wall's "jog" in the trench. 5504 continued with this goal in mind in the north (finding the face), but also excavated some (a more limited amount) of the core away in order to do so. SU 5513, under 5512 (the .5m northern extension), was aborted after its scarp collapsed, too, which necessitated another .5m extension south (5515). It was the tumble layer though—soil and context made this clear. SU 5520 is the tumble layer in the final 1m southern extension. SU 5518, in the north of the trench, is, I think, part of the tumble layer, since it did come down on some large cobble-sized stones, visible in the scarp profiles. Yet its soil was noticeably firmer (the firmest anywhere in the EU, in fact) than what we found in the southern tumble and of a different type: sandy loam. Given the size vertically of this SU, the cultural material here was extraordinarily sparse. We closed it at this arbitrary level because of time.

SUs 5505, 5506, 5508, 5516, 5521, 5522, 5523 represents the dump-deposit. The soil and context throughout these SUs was consistent: very loose (could excavate with a trowel), sandy clay loam, 7/5 YR 6/6 reddish yellow (same color profile as tumble layer), 20%-25% stoniness, mainly pebbles, with limited cobble. SU 5506 is the exception, since it was an ash layer. Its color profile was different (GLY2 5/5PB blueish grey), but in every other respect its soil and context were the same. It's clear that the moisture and soil from other SUs around it bled into the ash and therefore imparted its profile to a high degree here. The cultural material in this deposit is tremendous. It consists primarily of a tremendous amount of ceramics, which date mainly to the Hellenistic period (BRO), but also contain earlier archaic and classical pieces. The largest group is obviously storage vessels—all manner of amphora sherds were found: toes, handles, rims, and large body sherds. The ceramic assemblage also contains a more limited amount of kitchen- and fine-wares; some of the latter are clearly classical and Athenian. The ceramics seem to run the whole gamut of Hellenistic pottery. The deposit also contained numerous stone vessels, some of which preserve painted decoration. These, too, varied greatly, ranging from small cups and vessels to much larger vessels. Bone deposits, presumable from animals, were found in pockets scattered throughout the deposit; so, too, were charcoal flecks, though in a more limited quantity. Spatially, these were found across the whole of the deposit, vertically and horizontally. A limited number of metal objects were found, including two coins (FS 5521\_1001), and also nails and an arrow tip (check with Brandon on this). A small number of shells were found, but some are quite large and well preserved (e.g., a full murex and a conch). One interesting feature of the deposit are the gypsum mortar fragments we pulled out. These match the samples from the wall elsewhere on Vigla, which looked suspiciously late Roman. We can now say with certainty that this type of gypsum mortar was also used during the Hellenistic period. Limited fragments were found and some saved. The deposit also contained common floor fragments, ranging in size from only a few centimeters to 10-20cm in size. Throughout

the deposit small 5-15cm stones were removed commonly. While working in 5508, several large stones fell from the scarp. As a result, we left this SU open and decided that we needed to extend the trench and step the scarp. The sandy soil necessitated this. SU 5522 came down on firmer soil which coincided with the end of the deposit. SU 5523 explored the southern boundary of the deposit, making sure we excavated it fully. In summary, we excavated it fully, and defined it thoroughly. 5523 allowed us to explore the strange, upright stones running east-west across the eastern portion of this area (see top plans and final profile drawing). At first, it seemed to me that they were tumble, a lucky fall. But now it seems certain they bound the pit in the south in something of a haphazard way. They do, in fact, follow the line of the deposit until they end, at which point the deposit spilled out of this area some (see top plan). The spatial similarity cannot be merely coincidence. They must have defined the pit.

SUs 5509 and 5514 are more complex. At the outset, it should be stated clearly that these SUs contain abundant material from the dump-deposit (17 and 23 bags worth, respectively). 5509 was a total scarp cleaning in the southern space that I performed because we had lost so much space to inward trajectory. Naturally, abundant ceramics from the deposit emerged from the scarp itself. But, of course, since it was a scarp cleaning, material from the tumble or top soil could have contaminated the lower dump-deposit layers. SU 5514, which sits under 5513 and 5515 in the first 1m south extension, was designed for safety reasons, to slope and step the scarp. As such, we lost some vertical control. It represents some of the tumble layer, but is, in the main, the dump-deposit (same soil and context). It's unfortunate we couldn't maintain better vertical control here, but the soil simply didn't allow for it and our purpose was to create a safe working environment.

SU 5524 sits under the deposit and was excavated only briefly and not completely—we abandoned it to begin 5525 and 5526. The soil has the same general characteristics as that found in the deposit (sandy clay loam, 7/5 YR 6/6 reddish yellow, 20% stone, pebbles most common), but it is noticeably firmer and doesn't have the cultural material. That said, we excavated a large amphora toe and partial body (FS 5524\_1001) here, our largest fragment. Perhaps, then, this layer was coming down on an earlier phase of use for this space—as storage—and we would have found similar fragments. Or, as seems somewhat likely, the amphora properly belongs with the broader deposit. Its highest ridge was visible in 5522. Ultimately, we cannot say any conclusion at present.

SUs 5525 and 5526 were 1 x 1.4m (5525) and 1 x 1m (5526) extensions over the orthostates in the trench, east and west, on the final day of excavation. Since it was the last day of excavation, and time was running out, we excavated both as single SUs, going through the top soil and into the tumble layer (recognizable from change from brown to reddish brown soil and the appearance of large stones). Ultimately, these SUs proved extremely important, since they demonstrated that our “ashlars” were in fact orthostates,

15cm thick in the west and 20cm thick in the east, on the highest blocks, which are the only ones we excavated. They confirmed that we had excavated a pit, not a robbing trench, and helped us understand the upright blocks noted above in relation to 5523.

SU 5507 and 5517 were cleaning SUs. 5507 was a scarp cleaning of a small portion of the inner fortification wall (5503\_f1). We did so because the facing here seemed to be so poor and ceramics seemed embedded in the coursing. Once we cleaned it, we confirmed that ceramics were embedded in the coursing and so must have been used during the construction process. SU 5517 was a cleaning SU done after 5521 came down to 5516's level; this was necessary due to our southern extension. We cleaned to avoid contamination here.

### **Section 5. Features**

5503\_f1: The fortification wall, which is substantial. It is built of field stones (predominantly 20-30cm in size, with many smaller and some larger stones also used), some rather roughly cut stones were used for the facing, while the interior is a rubble core, perhaps bound with a mud mortar. The wall is 2.8m in width, runs east to west, and, moreover, seems to have used pottery fragments during its construction process (one can see these in the coursing of the stones). A portion of 5503\_f1 was excavated away early in the field season, since the excavators mistook portions of the core for tumble. The fortification wall runs east to west through the trench, at a slight angle (relative to the trench).

*DKP note (6-22-12): In retrospect, our excavation also demonstrated that the southern half of the unit was a storage / rubbish pit filled with thousands of ceramic fragments. We did not define this as a feature during the course of excavation, and it consequently has no feature number, but it does form the other major feature of this trench.*

### **Section 6. Finds**

The assemblage from this trench comes almost exclusively from the dump-deposit. It consists primarily of a tremendous amount of ceramics, which date mainly to the Hellenistic period (BRO), but also contain earlier archaic and classical pieces. The largest group is obviously storage vessels—all manner of amphora sherds were found: toes, handles, rims, and large body sherds. The ceramic assemblage also contains a more limited amount of kitchen- and fine-wares; some of the latter are clearly classical and Athenian. If we summarize the ceramic body, we can say that it seems to run the whole gamut of Hellenistic pottery. The deposit also contained numerous stone vessels, some of which preserve painted decoration. These, too, varied greatly, ranging from small cups and vessels to much larger ones. Bone deposits, presumable from animals, were found in pockets scattered throughout the deposit; so, too, were charcoal flecks, though in a more limited quantity. Spatially, these were found across the whole of the deposit, vertically

and horizontally. Limited metal objects were found, including two coins (FS 5521\_1001), and also nails and an arrow tip (check with Brandon). A limited number of shells were found, but some are quite large and well preserved (e.g., a full murex and a conch). One interesting feature of the deposit are the gypsum mortar fragments we pulled out. These match the samples from the wall, which looked suspiciously late Roman. We can now say that this type of gypsum mortar was used during the Hellenistic period, too, with certainty. Limited fragments were found and some saved. The deposit also contained common floor fragments, ranging in size from only a few centimeters to 10-20cm in size.

The cultural material in the top soil, fill and tumble was limited; the north side produced extremely little cultural material.

FS 5521\_1001: coin; EL: 55.87; N: 3871508.65 E: 564443.76

FS 5524\_1001: amphora toe and body; EL: 54.04; N: 3871509.68 E: 564445.50; ceramic

## **Section 7. Interpretive Conclusions**

EU 16 was designed to clarify the chronology and phasing of the fortification wall encircling Vigla. Ultimately, we were not able to accomplish this. But EU 16 produced something very different, the dump-deposit, which was both welcome and unexpected. *DKP Note: As the pit respects the walls of the fortification wall, it post-dates the wall. It provides, then, a terminus ante quem for the wall.*

It indeed seems to have been a dump, with some clear lenses of discard. Perhaps it represents a clean-up episode throughout the site, and so materials were brought from different points and placed in the pit at one moment in time. Or, it could have served as a primary dump, where items were thrown continually over a period of time. I tend to favor the former right now. The floor fragments, mortar fragments, the ash layer, and the tremendous range of pottery and other materials (metals, bone, shell, etc.) seem to indicate that materials were brought from across the site during a clean-up episode. The pit itself, which was lined with orthostate sandstone blocks of varying sizes, perhaps was initially a subterranean chamber used for a different purpose, which at present is unknown to us, since we did not reach the bottom due to time constraints (we uncovered no surfaces of any kind, which leaves a certain level of uncertainty for us in this area—where was ancient ground level here? Could it have been so much higher, when the rest of the settlement was built on bedrock?) But, whatever the case, it became a dump at some point and encased this deposit. It seems to me unlikely that this space was a cistern, despite the presence of some plaster on the orthostates. What's necessary at this point is a comparative approach, if possible.

The overall importance of this deposit cannot be stressed enough. It could very well be the largest ceramic deposit dated to the Hellenistic period on the island. In any case, it

will allow for a thorough study of society and economy at Vigla and its broader place in the Mediterranean world.

## Section 8. Appendices (Drawings, Photos)

- **Photographs:**

|              |                          |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| 5501_p1-p6   | trench before excavation |
| 5501_p7      | working                  |
| 5501_p8-p12  | bottom SU                |
| 5502_p1-p14  | working                  |
| 5502_p15-p16 | bottom SU                |
| 5503_p1-p3   | working                  |
| 5503_p4-19   | bottom SU                |
| 5504_p1      | working                  |
| 5504_p2-p5   | bottom SU                |
| 5505_p1-p3   | working                  |
| 5505_p4-p7   | bottom SU                |
| 5506_p1-p4   | bottom SU                |
| 5507_p1-p3   | bottom SU                |
| 5508_p1-p4   | bottom SU                |
| 5510_p1-p4   | bottom SU                |
| 5511_p1-p6   | bottom SU                |
| 5512_p1-p4   | bottom SU                |
| 5514_p1-p8   | bottom SU                |
| 5515_p1-p4   | bottom SU                |
| 5516_p1-p3   | bottom SU                |
| 5518_p1-p3   | bottom SU                |
| 5519_p1,p2   | working                  |
| 5519_p3-p5   | bottom SU                |
| 5520_p1      | working                  |
| 5520_p2-p8   | bottom SU                |
| 5521_p1-p3   | bottom SU                |
| 5522_p1-p8   | bottom SU                |
| 5523_p1-p4   | bottom SU                |
| 5524_p1-p5   | bottom SU                |
| 5524_p6-p11  | working                  |
| 5525_p1-p4   | working                  |
| 5525_p5-p9   | bottom SU                |
| 5526_p1,p2   | working                  |
| 5526_p3,p4   | bottom SU                |

Brandon and Bill took some 300 study photos, too, of the wall and the southern area. In addition, there are Agisoft photos as enumerated below.



- **Videos:**

5501\_v1 (working)  
 5501\_v2 (bottom)  
 5502\_v1 (working)  
 5503\_v1 (bottom)  
 5505\_v1 (working)  
 5519\_v1 (working)  
 5524\_v1

- **Agisoft Models:**

\*This may be an incomplete list

Bottom of 5505  
 Bottom of 5506  
 Bottom of 5516, 5520, and 5521  
 Bottom of 5523  
 Bottom of 5526 / bedrock

- **Drawings:**

|         |      |                     |
|---------|------|---------------------|
| 5501_d1 | 1:20 | bottom SU           |
| 5502_d1 | 1:20 | bottom SU           |
| 5503_d1 | 1:20 | bottom SU           |
| 5504_d1 | 1:20 | bottom SU           |
| 5505_d1 | 1:20 | bottom SU           |
| 5506_d1 | 1:20 | bottom SU           |
| 5508_d1 | 1:20 | bottom SU           |
| 5510_d1 | 1:20 | bottom SU           |
| 5511_d1 | 1:20 | bottom SU           |
| 5512_d1 | 1:20 | bottom SU (w/ 5515) |
| 5515_d1 | 1:20 | bottom SU (w/ 5512) |
| 5516_d1 | 1:20 | bottom SU           |
| 5518_d1 | 1:20 | bottom SU           |
| 5519_d1 | 1:25 | bottom SU           |
| 5520_d1 | 1:25 | bottom SU           |
| 5521_d1 | 1:25 | bottom SU           |
| 5522_d1 | 1:25 | bottom SU           |
| 5523_d1 | 1:25 | bottom SU           |
| 5524_d1 | 1:20 | bottom SU           |
| 5525_d1 | 1:25 | bottom SU (w/ 5526) |
| 5526_d1 | 1:25 | bottom SU (w/ 5525) |

|                                  |      |
|----------------------------------|------|
| Scarp, south side, looking west  | 1:20 |
| Scarp, south side, looking east  | 1:20 |
| Scarp, south side, looking south | 1:20 |
| Scarp, north side, looking north | 1:20 |
| Scarp, north side, looking east  | 1:20 |
| Scarp, north side, looking west  | 1:20 |

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Scarp, wall face, inner, looking north | 1:20 |
| Scarp, wall face, outer, looking south | 1:20 |
| Final Top Plan                         | 1:50 |