Director's Notebook

2001
25 June 2001, Monday

Another study season begins. This one with the raising of the second group of the ASCSA summer session around the site in the early morning. MCS [MCS took the first group around on the previous Friday]. For staff this year, arriving at intervals, there will be:

Drs. Directors,
MCS, Assistant Directors
Jeremy Rite, ceramic analyst
Alegdia Van de Moortel
Maire Goodwin (replacing Leda Castori as Chief Cataloger)
Winn Bowe, photographie [August]
and local site profile (daily)
Dodson Morgan [August]
Eliza Albion, conservation
Silvio Fasoulaicos, foreman/guard

Visitors
Peter Collaghan [on Hellinistic Pottery]
Debi Roscello [on fauna]
Robin Shaw (with MCS)

Our aims are to complete all field work for Volume V (AVDM + HR are complete; MCS must complete the plasters and the bit on the fishvines) as well as, hopefully, the texts so that I can begin to meld + include my chapter along with theirs. Also, for HR to complete House X pottery; with MCS to begin on the archeological data X. AVDM will
reside for more substantial publication one of
our min. depositories from east of the Round Buildings
(published earlier by PB in Kamos II).
This season will be a longer one. Then instead of
MCS-HAD are staying on for the Otolithological Congress
in Elounda in early October. So the stone-
room will close at the end of August.

The NBCSA group was shipped around
by block for two hours in the morning. Leda C.,
Marie G., and Declan C. arrived as scheduled.
Apostrophes 2 (below the office) had some sur-
pries, namely that as we opened it there was
a great stench, and as the stored furniture was
unmoved there were found animal parts all over,
plastic bags scattered, plastic and sticks fallen,
personal belongings hanging from a box cov-
ered with filth, with more filth on the floor.
2 dead, dry rats, one sheep (goat?) hair,
clutter feathers as examples. The lack of
Shelobes (Tolkien)? Hardly, but the home of
2 golden weasels about a foot and a
half long which had come in through a poorly
open window (my fault). One was checked
out by Manolis Kadiannides, the other we
hope leave tonight.

One hidden advantage of the above-
incident is that connected with the alarm
system installed in Apollo 1 during this
winter. Namely, since the system will be
extended in the next few weeks to
Apollon 2, 3, and 4, and 2 and 3 have
been in recent with no troubles, and
the alarm can be set off by the
highest motion, then the program of
riddling the rooms of rats that I had
planned may, after all, not be necessary since
they were eradicated by the weasels. I have
set a large rat trap in Apoth. 3 to test out
the hypothesis.

26 June 2001

Trap in Apoth. 3 not touched, which may mean
that 2 and 8 are rather.

Pat C. begins to study notebooks (reprints of
10A/11A [Bill Cox]) from 1974 in search of pottery
from the Hellenistic/Roman interface. LCS
continues her careful combing of the evidence
for plaster – she has now completed the
northern part of T, also P1-2, and now has
to complete P3-6 (and underlying T) and
the South Slope. When the last is done, she
will hopefully be in a position to write the
text and fill in the various tables for
the chapter which will really make a
substantial addition to our record book.

Linda spends time explaining the running
of the storeroom to Marie Goodwin.
The saga of the study permit and the consolidation of the site must be recorded here.

In 1998/1999 we submitted the major "preliminary" report prepared by James Strescu on the Kommos Archaeological Park. This was originally given to Alexandra Kaceta, Ephor of the Heracleion, Home and Director of the Heracleion Museum, who in turn submitted it to KAE in Athens. At that point it was 'lost' and was not then approved or was it in the Kommos file. Thus Klaas Polyvoza inquired in the late spring: two copies were subsequently sent by me to replace the 'lost' one, which turned out to have been kept by KAE.

In the fall (September) when we returned to Athens, we received our study permit for that summer with the stipulation that a report be prepared on various "archaeological" questions that should be corrected. (A visitor, head of KAE, Dr. Zern, came as a number of a committee to evaluate the designation of the site Kommos / Kittio area as Area A classification.) I then applied for the study permit for this year (2001). I also contacted Klaas Polyvoza, friend and architect, requesting that he prepare the requisite report — and as time went on it appeared that she would write the report during the summer when she would be in Crete anyway. This proved to be too optimistic. In the secretary of the ASCSA contacted me to say that
I did try to make an appointment, but it was an inconvenient time for him.
The report was actually needed, and thus was
written April 19th early that 19th. More 19th
Maria, Charles Fales, and I put
a report together in less than a week (imagine
the study season being postponed/cancelled
and the ensuing problems!) and sent it in
February to e-mail and its speed. From then
it was decided, apparently, that the sand
dumping and the question of site conservation
were separate, so the former is in the pro-
cess of being approved and the latter has
been sent again to KAE.

One odd fact is that there is some am-
biguity as to what was actually being
complained about. In our report we
covered just about everything, but the more
that I visit the site, the more that I
think that it must be the low walls that
we built near scarp to prevent water from
flowing over them. I did not talk to her,
and everyone seems afraid to talk to him -
perhaps that is just as well for it could
have led to even more problems, for he
is known (e.g., Nemya where Steve
Miller has a project to restore parts of the
Nemya Temple) for being narrow, private,
and contentious.

This brings us to the present situation.
One of the scarp, a high one just east
of the east facade of TIP, is in bad shape,
and we have known this for some time.
Indeed, Sifia suggested that we build a
high stone wall against it, and for
that reason we had brought over
five truckloads of stone that were dumped over the eastern fence last year in August so as to be ready for use in 2001. Since then some large sections of the same scarp have collapsed down into the trench. Along the edge of the same scarp runs one of the new walls in question.

Given the situation that we are still being "tested" by KAE, the best defensive posture would be to do nothing; some perhaps remaining The superficial "new" wall. On the other hand, we have no idea of what, or even if, we will have a response from KAE, and the scarp will no doubt collapse further during the next rains. For the well-being of the site, therefore, building the new supporting wall is certainly the better alternative. Just as we supported both of the temple walls from below during the early 1980's, and then without guidance from KAE in the Archaeological Service, all by their own, including the clearing of the site, could be completed by the end of June. The clearing of the site, in any case, is to begin this coming Monday, the day that the season begins as well.
2 July 2003

MDM arrivers, also lovely balgzate, profits. The annual sisitio begins, also workers at the site to begin the annual cleanup, fence mending and replacement, and eventual wall building. On the site in the morning I take some photos of the head of the severely eroded scarp where I plan to build the supporting wall.

Elise the conservator called on a Saturday from France to say that she was in the hospital, and we all had visions of brown bears from a paragliding episode (her hobby). The good news is that she called the storeroom today and talked to MCS, telling him that the canister was some kind of stomach infection and that she might be here in a week, she in sending food and supplies, due to arrive in a week or so.

Bertie Gelbard, old friend, driven down from a conference in Reithigun to see our charge and the site. Great to see him, but so much is happening that the good, long talks she envisaged simply didn't happen.
Dr. reworking the very latest material in the Southern Area, with the thoughts of determining the latest LM III B, identifying new imports (especially the Samian wares in the Nave), as well as fitting the IIIB into comparative contexts at other sites.

Now re-examining her Cyprus jars, I will see her shortly if she is working on her IV text and, at least, where she stands.

PC working on an article detailing how Deposit Group 55 (mostly in Building B) fits into the Late Hellenistic/Early Roman contexts at the site (Herazera article, we presume).

Debi Roscillo has arrived with a helper, aiming to re-examine the question of extracting dye and dyes with the sacs from the murex animals, so prevalent during various periods at the Kommos site. Her challenge will be to attract and collect the animals, then to remove the sacs (is there a season for this?), then to create the dye, then the dyeing itself.
8 July 2001

From trip to Molyvos (northern route), then return (Southern route) - almost all of the staff go to a party to celebrate the wedding of Carol Hall (our conservator for three years) and the 'instep' artist/architect. Great drinking and my right arm aches from the strains. On the way we stop briefly at Melia where I test out my hypotheses of a western colonade along the Central Coast, now included within the western wing. We also stopped at Akris south of Vanoise, site of a nice beach and a few good restaurants.

13 July 2001

Some positive news on different fronts:

- An unidentified group of early L.M. figures was discovered on the island of Gavdos. This connection first made possible by NUPM, then the visit by Katrina Kopacza who has done the exploration of that island, and with a student, confirms the identification. This means, from a historical point of view, that Kamos Link was important then (and why not later?). This could have ramifications down through the later civilizations as well.

- I call Claire Palyvou who is still in Athens, and she tells me that she will be coming down to Crete in early August. She also tells me that
Epimelitis George. Pettryminiaires of the
Ananclearon, Euphont, will approve the plan
we submitted for the conservation of the site.
This could mean that we will be able to go
ahead with the more focussed survey of the
site during the winter. If so, it puts the
schedule for approvals much further ahead
than in the past. If so, and Claire can
do the study during the winter, then the
overall plan might be put into effect by
2003.

- A big box of materials sent by Elize
for plastic conservation has arrived in
Tymbaccal. The project of storing the plastic
on a permanent matrix will begin soon.
Elize herself arrived a few days ago,
having been delayed in France by some
kind of stomach infection.

- Debi and assistant Liz have had
some success in "trapping" morex in basket
or jar. The southern end of the Komvros
beach has not been useful for her poisons,
but the southern end of the Natafka bay
has given them what they need, their
quotas of 1000 will certainly be met. Also,
they have located the digen gland on the
animal — the liquid does not turn
purple until it is exposed to air. Setting
up shop under the admiring gaze at the Komvros
site, with a few chairs and Table, and the
cooking wares bought in Thieves, she has
been mixing up the sample for the
actual digestion process that will begin
9 days after the batch has been
prepared (Plym).
The workmen at the site are completing the usual site cleaning but also fitting out the perimeter fence with sections of wire 'mats' strengthened with new fence posts, all of galvanized steel, to prevent people from entering the site easily. George Bobolietaros from Tanga has also been called in to help. He should be able to finish the fence work within a week and then turn to the major project of building the steep reinforcing wall just east of the eastern façade of T/L. During the winter, Sipho Faso- lacca, our part-time guide, succeeded in planting aloes in the north-western part of the Southern Area — though still small, these are now a dozen, actually growing larger. Sipho and the water access granted to us by the Ditsiaka community. This is a first — there have been at least two failures in previous years. Also, he has been using cases strapped to the fence to lower the sound effect east of the fence, thus promoting his planting. As a result, very little sand drifted onto the site in this most crucial place for preventing further sand build-up.
19 July 2001

HR has gone for two weeks to Turkey to get first-hand information on the Atekon (Pygmy) pottery from the Ulu Buran wreck at Kaş, he will be publishing it. Dr. Jutta und Wendy are working hard on the drawing of pottery from Tomb X, helped by AVDM, but she is not used to the amount of measuring that must be done.

DWS has completed and checked his part of the Volumen II concordance, into which will be slotted othn (and missing) information from ceramics with AVDM & JR.

Marie catalogues away, has no trouble with DBase, and believes that we should bring our DBase files up-to-date with another program before the older program is out of date. This, she thinks, can be done during the winter as long as she has the Kommer PC with her in Pennsylvania.

I talk seriously to AVDM about her many projects: completing the II text, publishing an article on one of the British Museum’s de pots near the Rand Building, and doing a "hands" study of the skin potting while it is slick in the apotheke and available. On the first I tell her that...
Visitors Michael Cosmoportus (wife: Delia Roscillo) and Delia's parents (Mary, Peter)

Cecile Obourou, studying at the
Sorbonne BA metalworking. She is looking
carefully at the materials in I(1)
published by Harriet Blitzen as well as
the Latin materiae.