

## **Reports from 2019 SPHS fieldwork bursary holders**

During the 2019 field season of the Olynthos Project, I continued in my ongoing role recording the ceramics excavated and recovered by surface survey. During this time, I also revisited previously excavated material to begin collecting data for my research into the plainer ceramics used for preparing and cooking food within the house. The Olynthos Project's Medium and Coarse Ware categories encompass the ceramic forms associated with these tasks. I collected data about the fragmentation characteristics of the relevant Medium and Coarse forms in order to undertake an analysis of temporality, usage and breakage patterns of these ceramics.

Before any fragmentation data could be collected, individual vessels with all joining and associated sherds needed to be identified for an accurate dataset. This involved spreading out and comparing contexts to find joins and associated fragments (with similar form and fabric). Neighbouring and non-neighbouring contexts were examined and compared, including contexts within a room or neighbouring rooms. This process concentrated on the North-East part of the house, as time allowed: Rooms C, D, and E.

The comparison of fragments resulted in the identification of several individual medium and coarse vessels, with joining and associated fragments from a number of contexts (both adjacent and spatially separated) and across several years of excavation. This included several cook-pots (lopas and chytra) and mixing (lekane) forms, as well as numerous storage bins of various sizes. Once these vessels were identified, I recorded the fragmentation or sherd characteristics of those vessels associated with preparing and cooking food: the total number of fragments for each vessels, the types of sherds (whether diagnostic rims, bases or handles; or non-diagnostic body sherds), the number of refits, the number of sherds by size range (S,M,L), and the nature of pre-and post-breakage surface and edge wear. These sherd characteristics help determine the time scale between use and deposition.

Although only the North-East rooms of the house could be addressed this season, results already reveal the varying degrees of fragmentation and range of vessel temporalities in this area of the house alone. A number of vessels were identified with short time-scale between use(s) and final deposition, with a substantial number of joining sherds, mostly medium and large size sherds, and minimal post-breakage surface and edge wear. There are also some vessels with a longer time-scale between use(s) (pre and post breakage) and final deposition, indicative of being caught up in post-breakage activities. These vessels have no or few joining, small worn sherds. Next season I will continue this method for the North-West rooms ('oikos unit' and West Pastas) and the central courtyard of House Bix6.

**Irene Liesk (Birkbeck College, University of London)**

The BSA fieldwork bursary has helped me fund my three weeks of excavations (21 July to 11 August 2019) at the Olynthos Project Excavations. The bursary contributed towards my accommodation at Makis' Taverna (15 euros per night, total 315), lunch at the site (2 euro per meal, total 50), and dinner at Makis' (8 euros per meal, total 144). This totalled to 509 euros.

During the excavations, I participated in a broad range of areas of fieldwork. In the first week, I worked in the Field Survey Team with Dr David Stone, where we searched for ceramics, lithics and special finds in the olive groves surrounding Olynthos, the slopes of South Hill, and the ancient river, with the aim of completing a survey of all the fields within the excavation permit. We collected both random samples within a vacuum and diagnostic grab samples, as well as learning skills such as finding appropriate collection points, improving visibility, identifying finds, labelling them, and recording them on the database. In the afternoons, we washed the finds and did GIS. Starting with Survey was useful since it introduced me to a broad set of skills that were relevant for excavating in the trenches the next weeks. Furthermore, my finds during Survey complemented artefacts found in the South Hill trenches: a decorated pithos sherd I found was very similar to another rare one and allowed for useful comparanda, while multiple loom weights helped understand their density around Olynthos. Overall, this gave me a useful first-hand introduction to the types of materials that are found at Olynthos.

I excavated in the trenches during the second and third weeks. During the former, I worked in Room D of the oikos on North Hill, supervised by Max, where I excavated pottery, took phytolith and soil samples, made a grid, and helped close the room. I also worked in the adjacent "kitchen" with the 'hearth' feature, taking phytolith and soil samples to uncover the floor and subsoil, and interpreting it.

Later, I worked with Professors Lisa Nevett and Zosia Archibald on the façade of the oikos and the "shop" or stables, with the aim of determining whether it had an entrance or threshold opening onto the street, studying the relationship between the house's side wall and the neighbouring house's, and the entrance. In the afternoons, I also worked in Flotation and occasionally passed by special finds, learning the online documentation system.

In the third week, I helped close the excavations by helping with backfill. During the first half, I had the opportunity to work on drawing sections on South Hill in Justine's Trench TR35 with Elisa, thereby learning a whole new archaeological technique and exploring a new part of Olynthos.

These on-site activities were deepened by the evening talk series, which gave me useful insights into my own research. David Smith's talk on the pottery and consumption of the Bronze Age Cyclades at Phylakopi, Melos, gave me useful archaeological data for a paper on Homer and the Cyclades and one of my modules at Durham next year. Furthermore, my conversations on site with supervisors like Zosia, David and others helped me develop my ideas for my BA dissertation on the Chalcidice in Thucydides, the economies of the northern Aegean, and the origins of the Chalcidians. The trip to Potidaia with Ioannis was also very insightful for my dissertation.

Overall, therefore, the fieldwork bursary was invaluable to giving me the opportunity to engage rigorously and gain much from these excavations at Olynthos, alongside making many good friends and connections. I definitely intend to participate in another BSA excavation next year.

**James Hua (Durham University)**