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EXCAVATIONS ON GERONISOS ISLAND:
SECOND REPORT, THE CENTRAL SOUTH COMPLEX

Reprinted from the

Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, 2005

N 22, N 23, N 24, N 25, O 22, O 23, O 24, O 25, P 23 and P 24. From 1992-1996, these squares were excavated as 4×4m. trenches, leaving 1m. baulks on all sides.⁸ These baulks were removed during the 2004 season.⁹ In 2005, the excavated area was extended all the way to the circuit wall that skirts the very southern edge of the island, visible at ground level along the cliff's edge (Figs 3, 4). The baulk bordering the inner face of this wall was removed along the M/N grid line from squares 21 through 25.¹⁰ This makes for a total of

I warmly thank the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus and its Directors under whom we have been licensed to excavate, including Dr Athanasios Papageorghiou, Dr Demos Christou, Dr Sophocles Hadjisavvas, and Dr Pavlos Flourentzos. We are also indebted to Dr Stathis Raptou and the staff of the Pafos Museum, as well as Eftymios Shaftacolas for his kind help in preparing this report for the RDAC.

We thank the three hundred strong Friends of Yeronisos who have financed our work in the field, especially James Ottaway, Jr., Salvatore S. Ranieri, William J. Murray, Carl S. Forsythe III and the de Coizart Perpetual Charitable Trust, the Board of Directors of the Coca Cola Hellenic Bottling Corporation, especially George David and Samir Toubassy, Nicholas S. Zoullas, Martha Sutherland, William R. Rhodes, Michael and Judy Steinhardt, George Lucas, Lloyd Cotsen, Savvas Tsivicos and the Pan Paphian Association of America, Inc., the Explorers Club, and our honorary chairmen, the Hon. John Brademas, and Ambassador and Mrs. Andrew Jacovides. I am further indebted to the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation for generous support of my work during the years of excavation and study.

I warmly thank the members of the Yeronisos Island Expedition team for their extraordinary hard work and dedication, especially *assistant field director* George Marshall Peters; *architects* Richard Anderson, Mariusz Burdajewicz, Andrew Wixom; *ecologists* Peter P. Blanchard III, Simon Dimitropoulos; *artists* Mariusz Burdajewicz, Julia Burdajewicz, George Marshall Peters; *photographers* Socratis Mavrommatis, Benjamin Fraker, M. Philip Kahl; *numismatist* Anne DeStrooper Georgiades; *pottery specialists* Jolanta Młynarczyk, Christine Cummings, Erin Hayes; *lamp study* Jolanta Młynarczyk; *epigraphists* Roger Bagnall, Bonnie Bazemore; *amulet study* Dimitris Plantzos; *human skeletal analysis* George Maat; *animal bone study* Paul Croft; *shell study* David Reese; *Chalcolithic chipped stone, ground stone, and ceramic study* Carole McCartney; *glass study* David Grose, Mariusz Burdajewicz; *water supply study* Andrew Wilson; *conservators* Andreas Georgiades, Julia Burdajewicz, Brigitte Bourgeois, Raphaele de Cointet, Sharon Taylor Papadopoulou, Dana Heminway, Wendy Partridge, Marc Walton; *wall consolidation* Paul Croft, Lydia Brandt; *geomagnetic survey* Glen Dash; *underwater survey* Jonathan Cole, Andrea DeGeorgi; *computing and database* Rebecca Schindler, Marina Thoma-

tos, Lauren Pierson, Scott Lasak, Ben Schwaid; *registrars* Mary Di Lucia, Casey Seideman, Alicia Cahill, Adrienne Gordon, Sarah Reason, Elizabeth Doering; *boatmen* Andreas Siampis, Lefkos Kapitzi, Savvas Theodosiou, George Tsefoutis; *foreman* Andreas Michaelides; *field assistant* Jason Governale; *trench supervisors*: Lauren Aurricchio, Paul Croft, Simret Dhesi, Megan Forbes, Benjamin Fraker, Adrienne Gordon, Erin Hayes, Lijie Huang, Ann Marie Knoblauch, Christine Koutnouyan, Andrew Lacovara, Thomas Milbank, Liam Moriarty, George Marshall Peters, Zach Santucci, Mark Smith, Benjamin Schwaid, McKensy Smith, Marina Thomatos, Rhys Townsend, Brian Shelburne, Pippa Vanderstar; *trench assistants*: George Anastasian, Baccari Antonellis, Norbert Baer, Jr., Brigitte Bourgeois, Lydia Brandt, Benjamin Britton, Alicia Cahill, Per Chilstrom, Max Davies, Claire Fitzgerald, Adrienne Gordon, Will Holden, Roger Kamholz, Lina Kassianides, Katie Kryda, George Maat, Ludovich Lustier, Helen Park, Gregory Pepin, Anastasia Seeley, Casey Seideman, Evan Sung, Joseph Termini, Marina Thomatos and Laura Wooley; *excavators*: Matthew Bogdanos, Linda Carter, Emily Chang, Barnaby Conrad III, Simon Dimitropoulos, Suzie Georges, David M. Porter, David Goodall, Alicia M. Grace, Edwin La Mance, Carol Neville, James Ottaway, Jr., Sherie Jacobsen, William R. Rhodes, Kenneth Silver, Clarke Slade, Martha Sutherland, A. Richard Turner, Deborah Warner, John B. Watts III, Richard Wiese, Susan Georges; *study season assistants*: Jessica Hornach, Erin Hayes, Johanna Goldfeld, Diana Ng, Ashley Parrish, Lauren Pearson, Marina Thomatos, Tiffany Tsu, Michael Eng, Marissa Macari, Derek Kelly, Emily Talbot, Jean Tsao, Sara Wytrycze, Scott Lasak, Jori Klein, Amy Clark, Nicole Parr, Sabrina Wirth, Molly Frame, Danielle Norris, and John Randolph. We are indebted to the following *consultants* and friends who gave valued advice on site and on finds: A.H.S. Megaw, Charalambos Barkirtzis, Demetra Papanikola-Barkirtzi, Michael Savvides, Hans Gunter Buchholz, G.R.H. Wright, Stuart Swiny, Jean Francois Salles, John Hayes, Henry Maguire, Timothy Gregory, Andreas Dimitropoulos, George Petrides, Costas Xenophonos, Phryne Hadjichristophi, and Sandrine Marquie. Athena and Stravros Stavrou, and their children, George, Stella and Andreas, have looked after us throughout many happy seasons in residence at the West End Hotel in Agios Georgios-tis-Pegeias. We thank them for their friendship and thoughtful care.

We are grateful to New York University for its support and thank President John Sexton, Dean Richard Foley, Dean Jonathan Lipman, Dean Matthew Santirocco, Prof. Edward Sullivan, Prof. Kenneth Silver, Prof. A. Richard Turner, and Prof. Norbert Baer.

8. In 1992: Trenches N 23, O 23; 1993: N 22, O 22, P 23, N 24, O 24; 1994: N 25, O 25, P 24, N 24/O 24 baulk; 1996: baulk P 22se/O 22-O 23BN/P 23-O 23.
9. In 2004: Baulks N 22/N 23, N 22/O 22, N 23/N 24, N 23/O 23, N24 /O 24, O 22/O 23, O 23/O 24, O 24/P 24, P 22/P 23, P 23/P 24; Trenches M 21, N 21/N 22WB/M 21NB/M 22NWB/O 21SB/O 22SWB.
10. In 2005: Trenches M 21, N 21/N 22WB/M 21NB/M 22NWB/O 21SB/O 22SWB, M 22n/M 22/N 22 Baulk, M 23n/M 23/N 23 Baulk, M 24n/M 24/N 24Baulk, M 25n/M 25/N 25Baulk.

some 15 grid squares, or partial squares, that have been excavated throughout the area. The limits of the Central South Complex have not yet been established. Its walls can be seen to continue into unexcavated areas to the north, south, east, and west. Only further excavation will enable us to define the full ground plan of this structure.

ORGANISATION OF SPACE, ARCHITECTURAL PHASES, CONSTRUCTION AND CONSOLIDATION

The Central South Complex comprises a series of square rooms at centre, flanked at east and west by relatively large open courtyards (Figs 3, 4, 5). The original ground plan clearly extended further to the south where the edge of the island has collapsed into the sea. One of the most important discoveries of the 2005 season was that good Hellenistic floors and part of a Hellenistic wall extend beneath and beyond the later southern circuit wall. This can be observed in the M 23n/M 23/N 23 baulk and in the M 24n/M 24/N 24 baulk (Fig. 5). We cannot know how much of the original contour of the island has been lost but, judging from the scar in the southern cliffs, it could be as much as 5m. or more. Any number of earthquakes may have contributed to this collapse, but it seems likely that the intense series of quakes during the 4th century A.D. had a significant impact in changing the shape of Geronisos. The southern circuit wall that can be seen today at ground level (to a height of approximately 20.80m. above sea level) appears to have been put up in Early Byzantine times (*ca* 6th century A.D.) to keep visitors, and perhaps grazing animals, from the newly cut-off cliff's edge.¹¹ It is preserved here for a considerable stretch of some 37m. (Fig. 5).¹²

The Hellenistic wall foundations of the Central South Complex are made from calcarenite stones, quarried from the large open pit carved into the bedrock at the western end of the island (Fig. 3). This quarry measures some 27.50m. in diameter and provided a local source for building materials, not only stone, but also the clay marl

that lies beneath, used for mortar and other purposes.¹³ The rubble foundations of the Central South Complex show small and medium sized stones set with a dry earth mortar to a height of two to four courses. Fragmentary bits of mud-brick or mud pisé may give some indication of the superstructure that was once supported by these foundations. Chunks of white plaster preserving impressions of cane batten or bamboo suggest roofing of wood, mud, plaster, and cane. The significant number of roof tiles unearthed across the Complex indicates that at least certain parts of the structure supported substantial tiled roofs. Very fragmentary bits of wall plaster showing white, black, and red pigment reflect the original quality of decoration for the interior spaces. Fragmentary as this evidence may be, it does point to a rather high end, if not wholly luxurious, level of construction and embellishment for the building and its inner rooms.

As we have seen elsewhere on Geronisos, Hellenistic builders had little depth of soil into which they could sink wall foundations, so they scraped down bedrock and built directly upon it.¹⁴ In several places where bedrock rises to a high level, it was cut to serve as a footing for walls, as can be seen in squares N 22 and P 23 (Figs 6, 9).¹⁵ This reflects the economy and ingenuity of the ancient builders who opted for the simplest solutions for construction on this challenging site. Gravel fill was, in some places, spread up against and out from the wall founda-

11. Connelly and Wilson (2002) 285-86, 289 suggest that a small group of monks from the mainland basilicas may have maintained sheep and/or goats, as well as a small garden and grove of olive trees, on the island during the 6th century A.D.

12. I thank Mariusz Burdajewicz for his drawing of this wall (Fig. 5) and for his enormous contribution to the Geronisos Island Expedition.

13. Connelly (2002) 255.

14. Connelly (2002) 255.

15. For the use of bedrock as wall foundation see R. White and G.R.H. Wright, "The East Fort at Apollonia," *Libyan Studies* 29 (1998).

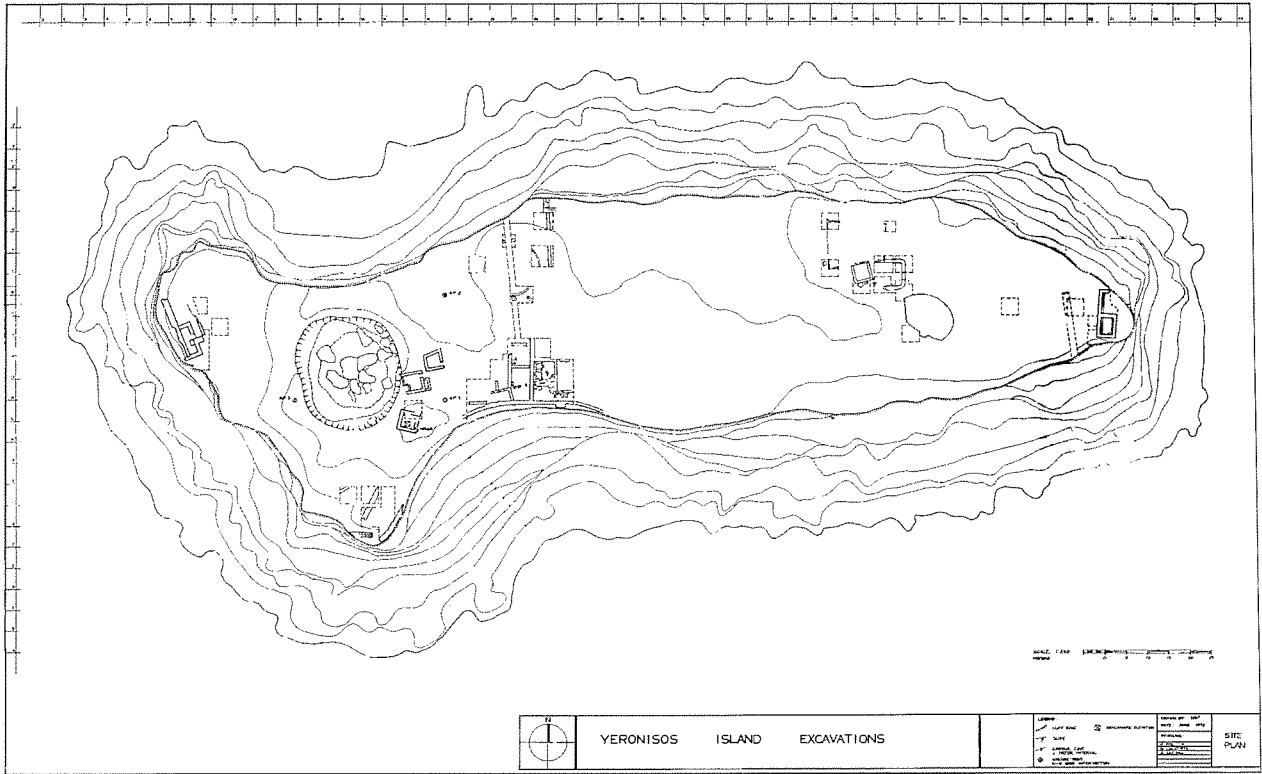


Fig. 3. State Plan of Geronisos.



Fig. 4. Aerial View of Geronisos, Central South Complex, from north.

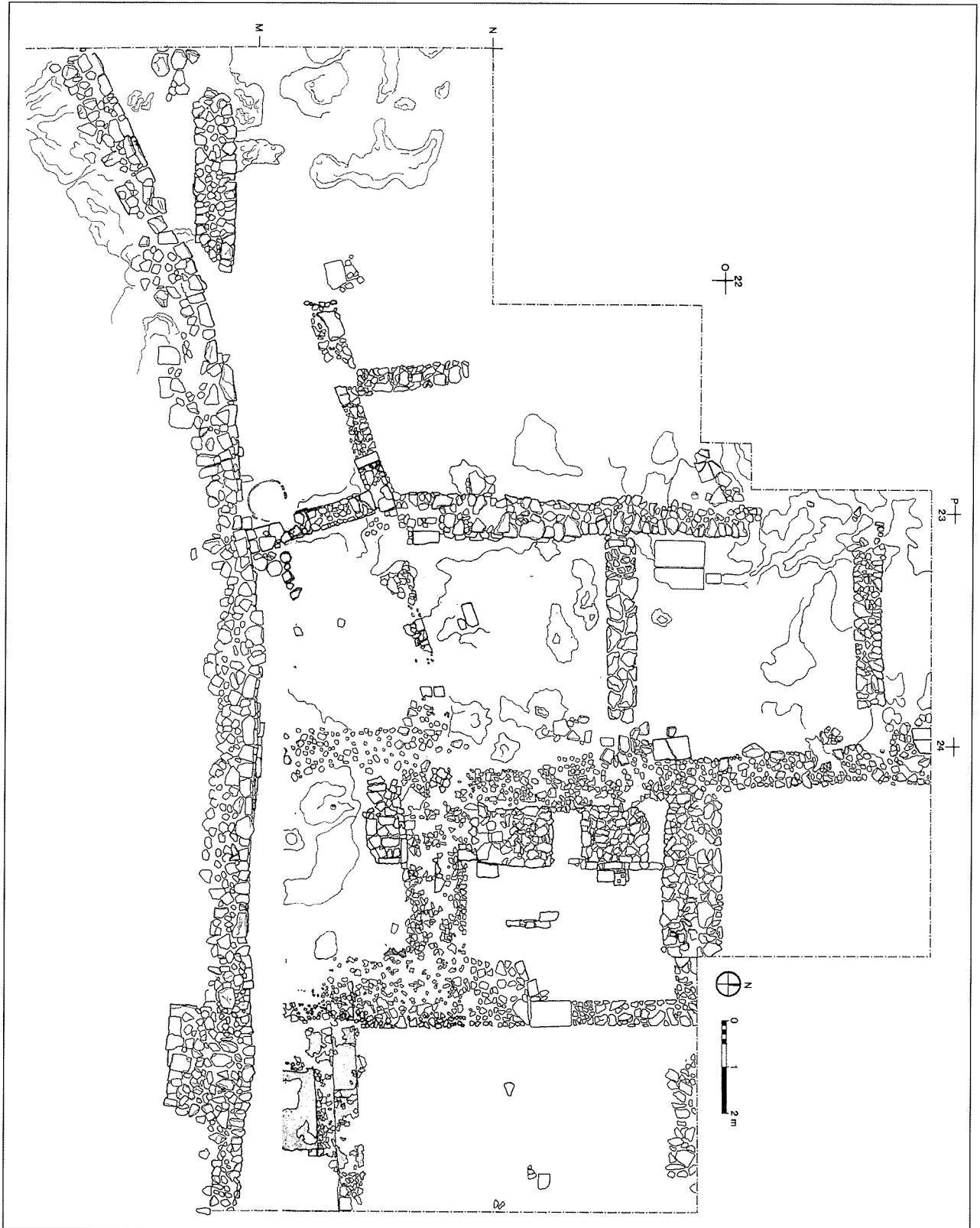


Fig. 5. State Plan of Central South Complex.

tions as a leveling course above bedrock, as can be seen in squares M 22 and N 22.

Two building phases can be discerned for the Central South Complex. The earliest phase is represented by a Diagonal Wall that can be traced for some 10m. running from SW to NE through grid squares N 22, N 23, and N 24 (Figs 3, 4-7).¹⁶ This relatively well-built wall is preserved in places to a height of 0.55m. and ranges in width from 0.49-0.53m. In grid square N 22, it preserves a door jamb consisting of a large rectangular block of limestone set at the east side of the doorway, backed by several courses of medium sized stones (Figs 6-7, 17). The doorway opens into a small room to the north (northeast corner of N 22) where evidence of food preparation gives some indication of the function of the space. To the south of the doorway, what appears to be a circular washing basin or *pliterio* was set into the floor level, just along the M 22/N 22 grid line (Fig. 5). This might suggest that we have a veranda or open courtyard here, facing south out onto the sea. The doorway of the Diagonal Wall in N 22 preserves one of the few clear indicators of direction for circulation and movement within the Central South Complex. Indeed, thresholds and doorjambes are rarely preserved across the Complex where later robbing has left only scant remains of the original plan. In the stretch of the Diagonal Wall that extends into N 23, a re-used architectural moulding fragment (StA.92.10) was found, pointing to an even earlier phase in construction on Hellenistic Geronisos, as yet to be fully defined.

A long wall extending to the north for some 8.5m. along grid line N 22/N 23 was built up against and respecting the north face of the Diagonal Wall (Figs 4-7). This substantial foundation and the walls that relate to it, all built on a north-south/east-west axes, seem to be of very slightly later date than the Diagonal Wall. The material associated with these N-S/E-W walls and their floors is virtually indistinguishable from the material associated with the Diagonal Wall and its adjoining rooms. The North-South wall mea-

sures roughly 0.90 in width for some 3.50m., but narrows to *ca* 0.70m. in width as it extends through O 23 (Fig. 5). This seems to represent yet another separate building effort within the same construction phase. As we have seen for the Diagonal Wall, the North-South wall contains some re-used materials from earlier Hellenistic building phases on Geronisos. Found close to the wall and, apparently fallen from it in O 23, was a fragment of a limestone pediment that shows a dentilled moulding (St.04.07, Fig. 8). This block appears to have been unfinished on top, or perhaps intentionally left rough in order to receive some additional element on its upper surface.¹⁷

Since the walls of the Complex carry on into unexcavated areas, it is impossible to discuss the full ground plan of the structure. Still, two complete rooms can be defined. One of these lies at the north of the excavated area in grid squares O 23 and P 23 (Figs 4, 5, 9). It measures approximately 4.50×4.50m. square. Its east-west wall foundation in P 23 shows just two courses of stone preserved to a height of 0.30m. Traces of a buff green sandy mortar can be seen between the stones, possibly remnants of greenish marl quarried from the island. The wall sits directly on bedrock. The east-west foundation in O 23, which presumably held the southern wall of the room, stands to a height of 0.30-0.50m. and has a width of 0.60m. It shows a slightly different construction technique with no trace of the green sandy mortar but only soil between the stones. It is built up of small stones chinked in at the lowest level and sits on earth rather than bedrock.

In the southwest corner of room, two large limestone slabs were found set side by side up

16. The top of this wall is beginning to appear in trench M 21/N 21 at the time of this writing, but it will have to wait until the 2006 season for full excavation.

17. I thank Socratis Mavrommatis for this observation and for his extraordinary contribution in photographing the finds from Geronisos. A second limestone pediment, similar in size and shape, was recovered from the rocks at sea level along the south shore of the island in 2004 (St.04.08).



Fig. 6. Diagonal Wall in N 22, N 23, from west.



Fig. 7. North-South wall along 22/23 grid line, from south.



Fig. 8. St.A.04.07, Pediment with dentilled cornice moulding (Photo: S. Mavrommatis).



Fig. 9. Room in O 23/P 23, from north.



Fig. 10. Slabs inscribed HG, in O 23, from west.

against the wall foundations (Figs 4, 5, 10). These measure $1.05 \times 0.60\text{m.}$ and $1.05 \times 0.43\text{m.}$, respectively, and are roughly 0.15m. in thickness. Each bears an inscription of two letters: *eta gamma*. These letters, which may represent a monogram, have also been found on a few blocks recovered at the eastern end of the island, from the fill of the 6th c. A.D. cistern (Cistern II), where they appear to have been re-used.¹⁸ In the opposite corner of the room, at the southeast, another stone slab can be seen snuggled up against the walls (Figs 4, 5). Since these slabs are positioned in the corners of the room and not within the wall foundations, they cannot have functioned as threshold blocks. Instead, they seem to have been intentionally positioned in the corners as resting surfaces or low benches. It is difficult to discern just where the doorway for this room was and how it may have communicated with the rooms and courtyards adjoining it. Ten medium sized worked blocks found scattered across the floor may have originally been part of the superstructure or a doorway. These seem to have been left behind by the scavengers who came to the site in search of building blocks in later centuries.

A second complete room, also measuring approximately $4.50 \times 4.50\text{m.}$, has been excavated in grid square O 24 (Figs 4, 5, 11, 12).¹⁹ This space was accessed through a doorway marked with a limestone threshold block (measuring $0.52 \times 0.84 \times 0.09\text{m.}$) which communicates with an open courtyard to the east, extending through grids N 25 and O 25 (Figs 4, 5, 13, 14). The square room in O 24 preserves two rubble-built installations that resemble podia or platforms (Figs 4, 5, 11, 12). They rise up off the floor to a height of $0.30\text{-}0.45\text{m.}$ The northernmost platform is separated from the northwest corner of the room by a long rectangular niche. The southernmost platform is built right up against the corner walls at the southwest. These platforms, or benches, are made of calcarenite rubble which incorporates some re-used worked Hellenistic blocks as well as a few Chalcolithic ground stone tools. Fragmentary mud pisé found atop and

around the platforms suggest that they may have originally been smoothed over with a clay topping.

The northwest platform measures 1.75m. wide by 1.20m. in depth. Several blocks set in front of it show square and rectangular cuttings that indicated they were re-used in this position. The podium in the southwest corner measures 1.80m. in width and 1.20m. deep. A similar platform was unearthed in another room, just to the south in N 24 (Figs 4, 5, 11).²⁰ Again, this bench is constructed of rubble masonry and is built right into the corner of the room. It is slightly smaller than the two platforms in O 24, measuring just 1m. wide and 1.10m. deep. The south wall of this room has not been found and its hard packed whitish floor can be seen to carry on to the south beneath the Early Byzantine circuit wall. We cannot know, therefore, whether the podium was one of a pair, as we have seen in O 24. We might surmise from the organisation of space in O 24 and P 23, that this room also measured $4.50 \times 4.50\text{m.}$ and that it may have contained a pair of benches tucked into opposite corners. The corner slabs of P 23 may have functioned similarly to the podia of O 24 and N 24.

Just what this function was remains unclear. Still, we know that these installations were the focal point of intense activity. The whole of O 24 was filled with cooking pots and casseroles, juglets, drinking cups, including one miniature cup, lamps and lamp holders, coins, glass bowl fragments, limestone dice, amulets, limestone and terracotta pierced disks, stone basins, bits of lead, bronze nails, and needles.

To the east of the rooms, an open courtyard extends through grid squares N 25 and O 25 (Figs 4, 5, 13, 14). It measures some 7.20m. in length and has been excavated to a width of 4m. , though it clearly extends into the unexcavated area to the

18. Connelly and Wilson (2002) 283.

19. Connelly and Młynarczyk (2002) 299-301, 303-305.

20. Connelly and Młynarczyk (2002) 301-303.



Fig. 11. Rooms with podia, in N 24 and O 24, from east.



Fig. 12. Rooms with podia, in N 24 and O 24, from north.



Fig. 14. Courtyard in N 25, O 25, from south, with setting beds.



Fig. 13. Courtyard in N 25, O 25, from north.



Fig. 15. Detail of plaster setting beds, from north.

east. The courtyard shows a hard packed floor, whitened by the presence of lime and gravel. Quantities of pottery and bronze bits were retrieved from across its surface. Along the southern edge of the courtyard, great stretches of plaster setting beds can be seen running east-west through trenches N 24 and N 25 (Figs 4, 5, 14, 15).²¹ The sparkling white plaster, rich with mica, is sometimes referred to as gypsum mortar. The setting beds preserve the imprints of great ashlar blocks that, apparently, were robbed out in Early Byzantine times when building materials were needed for the construction of the basilicas just across the channel. The setting beds are encountered at a depth of 20.24m. above sea level. Impressions of ashlar blocks in the plaster surface show that they measured as much as 1.40m. in length by 0.60m. in width. The blocks were set two deep and the space between them was filled with a core of small stones (Fig. 15). The thickness of this wall is impressive, measuring some 1.70m. in width and running for a length of some 4.50m. before turning south and carrying on towards the M 25/N 25 grid line. It is not clear what structure these walls define, but it was certainly substantial, perhaps a circuit wall or even a tower.

To the north, in square P 24, a large number of unused roof tiles were found stacked carefully against the wall foundations at the east sides of the grid (Figs 4, 5). The tiles are in pristine condition and seem to have been new and ready for use (T.94.01, Fig. 16). The Central South Complex may have been under construction or receiving repairs at the time of the earthquake of 17 B.C. which seems to have brought down the buildings of Hellenistic Geronisos.

A high priority has been placed on the *in situ* conservation of the rubble walls across the Complex. From 1992-2004 all trenches were backfilled in order to ensure the highest possible level of protection for the foundations beneath. This required intense labour in the annual un-backfilling and re-backfilling of certain areas that needed to be studied, drawn, and photographed. In 2004, the entire Central South Complex was un-

backfilled to make way for the excavation of the remaining baulks. At this time, a comprehensive programme of wall consolidation was initiated, under the direction of Dr Paul Croft of the Lempa Archaeological Field Unit.²² Earth was removed from around the stones and, working from drawings and photographs made at the time of excavation, mortar was introduced to consolidate the walls exactly as they appeared when first unearthed. This mortar consists of five parts red sand, 1.5 parts lime, and 3/4 part white cement. These proportions are those recommended by Mr Sotiris Chrysanthou of the Pafos Museum.²³ Following consolidation, walls and plaster setting beds have been covered with geotextile and several centimetres of earth backfill.

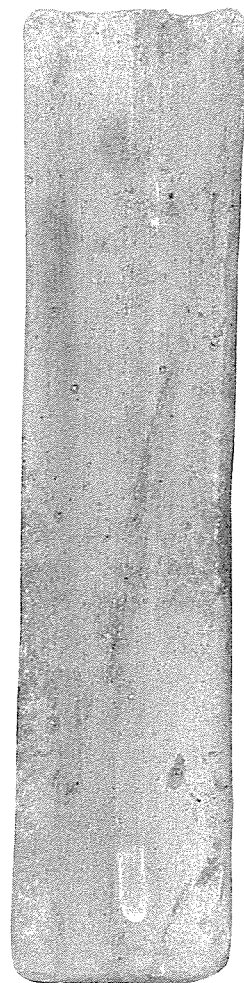


Fig. 16. T.94.01, roof tile from P 24.

STRATIGRAPHIC SEQUENCE

The stratigraphy is fairly consistent across the Central South Complex. The most frequently

21. Connolly and McCartney (2004) 20, 47, fig. 11.

22. We thank Dr Croft for his heroic assistance and very welcome collaboration in this enterprise.

23. Clean red sand was brought in from the Tombs of the Kings site. Up to 20% white sand can be substituted for red. We thank Mr Chrysanthou for his helpful advice on wall consolidation.

encountered sequence is as follows: Level 1, a dark topsoil; Level 2, a sandy brown accumulated fill; Level 3, a destruction level of mixed earth made up of decomposed mud brick, white lime plaster, stones and tiles; Level 4, an occupation level of stamped earthen floors with some lime containing Hellenistic cultural material; Level 5, a dark red earth containing much Chalcolithic material, lying above *terra rosa* and bedrock. In some areas, a Level 6, made up of deep reddish-purple earth, was cleared away just above bedrock. The stratigraphic section cut through the eastern baulk of grid square N 22 (C-C') is fairly characteristic of the sequence as it shows itself throughout the Complex (Fig. 17). This section illustrates the relationship of the Diagonal Wall to the destruction levels and occupation levels associated with it. White plaster from walls or ceilings appears to have collapsed, together with a tiled roof, directly upon the stone basin and cooking pots that rest on the floor of the Hellenistic occupation level.

Certain variations in this stratigraphic sequence can be discerned. Grid squares cut by the Test Trench A', excavated by Dr Sophocles Hadjisavvas in 1982 for the Department of Antiquities, have an additional level at the beginning of

the sequence, designated as "dump from Hadjisavvas' test trench".²⁴ This level is encountered in trenches N 23, O 23, and P 23 where Hadjisavvas' 0.60m. long slit trench cut clear across the island from north to south to a width of roughly 1m. Hadjisavvas also traced the southern circuit wall with a trench measuring *ca* 0.75m. in width, running for a length of some 25m. through grid squares M 21, M 22, M 23, M 24, and M 25 (Fig. 5). A top level designated as "dump from Hadjisavvas' test trench" is added to the sequence in these grid squares as well.

A stratum of gravel is localized within grid squares M 21, N 21, O 21, and O 22, and seems to represent an artificial leveling course introduced above bedrock. Quantities of badly broken up pottery within this gravel level appear to have been dumped in from elsewhere, as part of the effort to grade the surface area. Similarly, in N 23, up against the eastern face of the North-South Wall, a fill that includes quantities of very

24. S. Hadjisavvas, "An Archaeological Survey and Trial Excavations on the Small Island 'Geronisos', off the Paphos Coast", in V. Karageorghis, *Report of the Director of Antiquities of Cyprus* (1983), 39-40.

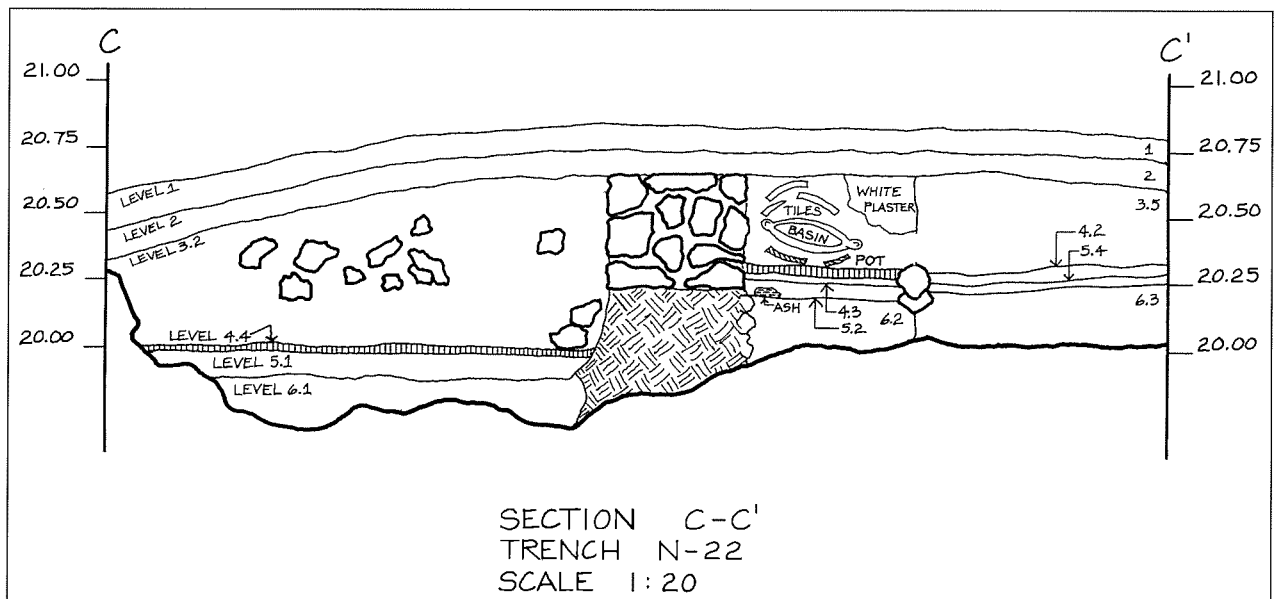


Fig. 17. Section C-C', Trench N 22, facing east.

abraded pottery appears to have been dumped in from elsewhere in order to raise the ground level above bedrock. Another highly localised stratum can be recognized in a strip of earth, *ca* 1.50-3m. in width, that stretches across the southernmost section of grid squares N 22, N 23, N 24, and N 25 and runs for some 17m. east-west. This is comprised of very distinctive sandy, moist red earth with white lime flakes. The red sand appears to have been imported from elsewhere and is unlike any of the accumulated earth encountered throughout the rest of the Complex. Since it was found sitting directly atop the white plaster setting beds for the robbed out Hellenistic ashlar in N 25 (Figs 5, 14, 15), this red earth appears to represent the fill of an Early Byzantine robbing trench.

CONTEXTS AND DISTRIBUTION OF CULTURAL MATERIAL

The Central South Complex is characterised by a density of cultural material, found on good floors and clustered near stone slabs, podia, and threshold blocks. The material is highly consistent and repetitive.²⁵ Quantities of fine ware bowls, including those in our local Pink Powdery Ware, Eastern Sigillata A, and Cypriote Sigillata dominate the ceramic sequence (Figs 28-30).²⁶ Lagynoi (Fig. 31), jugs (Fig. 21), and juglets have been found in some number, as have spouted strainers (Fig. 32) and secondary strainers (Fig. 33). A very few Eastern Sigillata fishplates have been recovered. Many cooking pots (Fig. 20) and pot stands (Fig. 22) fashioned from re-used amphora necks have been found. Casseroles are represented in smaller numbers (Fig. 27). Transport amphoras are relatively rare.

What is fascinating is the manner in which this material is deposited. We have noted in the discussion of architectural remains that a number of limestone slabs have been found set up against wall foundations. Cultural material is found deposited close to these slabs, in what appear to be deliberate acts. Distribution of material across the Central South Complex is plotted in Figs 18

and 19, with a key to material following at the end of the text. Let us first consider the arrangement of finds in the N 23/O 23 Baulk (Figs 18, 20). Here, a flat rectangular slab with smoothed surface (0.50m. in length \times 0.22m. in width) was set upon floor level. Just beside it, to the south, a smaller block (0.20m. \times 0.15m.) was placed. To the north of the large stone, a one-handled cooking pot (P.04.05) was found positioned beside a pot stand (P.04.04) fashioned from a re-used amphora neck that was cut off just above the shoulder. To the south of the larger block in N 23, and snuggled up against the smaller block, a biconical jug (P.04.06) was unearthed (Figs 20, 21). The cooking pot, pot stand, and jug all seem to belong to the same enterprise of food preparation and consumption.

All across the Complex we find what appear to be individualised cooking and dining areas similar to this one. A half dozen amphora necks have been found re-used as pot stands, sitting upright on floors and, in some cases, preserving cooking pots, still nesting within them. One of the sturdiest examples of a pot stand is the Dressel Type 1 amphora neck set upright on the floor of the inner room of N 22 (P.93.26, Fig. 22). It was found shimmed into place with small stones, encircled by three blocks with smoothed surfaces, a pocket of ash, and five chipped stone blades. This seems to define a working space, no doubt for cooking. A Cypriote Sigillata jug (P.93.53), fragments of a moulded relief bowl, and the rim of a stone basin (St.93.25) found nearby complete the picture of food preparation, dining, and drinking. Deposited with these vessels was a small limestone amulet with incised decorations (A.93.03), one of 15 such pendants

25. Occupation levels are generally reached at elevations ranging from 20.30 to 20.10m. above sea level.

26. This discussion relies heavily on the work of Jolanta Młynarczyk who is preparing a full study of the Geronisos pottery. I warmly thank Dr Młynarczyk for her valued contribution and friendship.

found on Geronisos to be considered in detail below (Figs 37-41).

In grid square O 23, a cluster of vessels was found deposited near the two limestone slabs inscribed *eta gamma*. These include a cooking ware bowl (P.96.60), a hemispherical bowl (P.92.01, Fig. 30), and a shallow bowl (P.92.03). Just beside the slabs at the north, a greenish-black steatite scarab showing the Egyptian goddess Sekhmet (St.96.44, Fig. 23) was found. Sekhmet is known to have looked after affairs of war, medicine, and motherhood. Like the Geronisos amulets, this scarab is pierced for suspension and would have been worn as a pendant, presumably to bring good luck. Its presence near the slabs and drinking bowls suggests that it may have served a function similar to that of the amulets that have been found deposited in comparable contexts across the site. In the southeast corner of the room, material was similarly

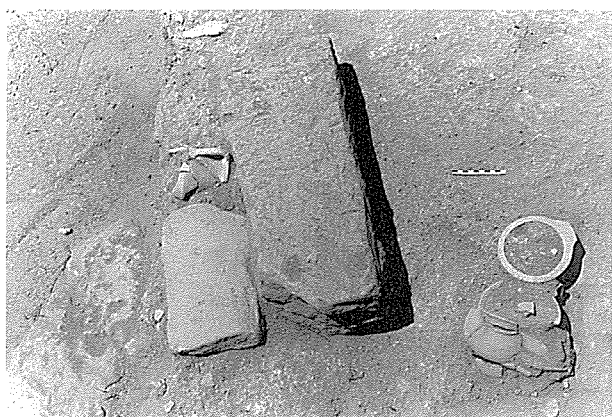


Fig. 20. N 22/O 22 Baulk, Rectangular stones with pots *in situ*, from east.



Fig. 23. St.96.44, Scarab showing Sekhmet (Photo: S. Mavrommatis).



Fig. 24. L.04.01, Egyptian Lamp, imitation Knidian (Photo: S. Mavrommatis).

grouped against a rectangular limestone slab (Fig. 18). Cooking pot fragments, two small juglets (P.04.14, P.04.29), a hemispherical bowl (P.04.30), the rim of plate (P.04.16), and a grey Egyptian lamp (L.04.04, Fig. 24), one that imitates Knidian types of the 2nd-1st c. B.C., were carefully placed up against the slab.²⁷ Beneath the scatter of sherds, a large shell (Sh.04.01) was found, one of several unearthed across the Central South Complex that appear to have been imported to the island and deposited beside cooking pots and drinking vessels.²⁸ Fragments of glass bowls (G.92.07, G.92.08), bits of lead (ML.04.01), and an amphora neck (with strainer) re-used as a pot stand (P.04.09) were found nearby.

27. I thank Jolanta Młynarczyk for this information.

28. David Reese is studying the shells of Geronisos.



Fig. 21. P.04.06, Biconical Jug (Photo: S. Mavrommatis).

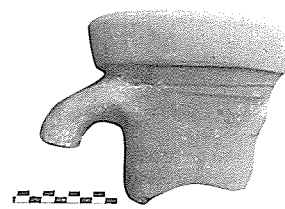


Fig. 22. Dressel Type 1 amphora, re-used as pot stand.



Fig. 25. P 23/P 24 Baulk, with vessels *in situ*, from east.

Just to the north, in the P 23/P 24 baulk, another assemblage of pottery shows a deliberate arrangement of vessels (Fig. 25). A large common ware table amphora (P.04.03) was found set just beside a casserole (P.04.12) with its lid (P.04.07), and an Eastern Sigillata form 23 cup with flaring rim (P.04.02, Fig. 26). Again, the grouping of these vessels seems to suggest a 'personal' cooking and dining set, perhaps brought to the island for use by an individual pilgrim. Nearby rested a moulded relief bowl (P.04.01), a stone basin rim (St.04.06), a stone bowl fragment (St.04.01) and a fragment of a glass bowl (G.04.01).

The most impressive assemblages of material are those deliberately deposited within the long rectangular niches beside the rubble platforms in O 24 (Figs 4, 5, 11, 12, 19). The niche in the very northeast corner of the room measures roughly 1.50m. in length and 0.40m. in width. It contained two coins, one of Cleopatra VII (C.93.02, 44-30 B.C.) and one of Cleopatra VII and Ptolemy XV Caesar (C.93.01, 47-44 B.C.), a locally made lamp (L.93.10) dated to the 1st century B.C., a stone lamp holder (St.93.43), a casserole with its lid (P.93.02, P.93.03, Fig. 27), an Eastern Sigillata A footed bowl (P.93.01, Fig. 28), a pierced stone disk (St.93.42), and a Chalcolithic chipped stone blade (ST.93.41). The casserole and footed bowl (Figs 27-28) are among the best preserved pots recovered from Geronisos, attesting to the effectiveness of the niche as a secure storage space.

The niche further to the south that separates the two podia was similarly filled with material. Here, three 1st century B.C. lamps of local manufacture were found (L.93.01, L.93.02, L.93.03) together with a fragment of a glass bowl (G.93.10).²⁹ Right up on top of the platform to the south, a small stone bowl with vertically incised leaf patterns was placed (St.94.18). The area just behind this podium contained the greatest density of material found in the entire room. Here, quantities of glass bowl fragments (G.94.04, G.94.08, G.94.11-12), some 25 pieces

of lead (ML.94.03, 4), a terracotta pierced disk (TC.94.04), and a bronze needle (MB.94.32), were deposited. A stone die (St.94.19) was also recovered here, one of two found in the Complex, the other deposited in the room to the south in N 24 (St.93.01). Also behind the podium were found two extraordinary ceramic pieces: a miniature slipped cup (P.93.08) showing a profile that resembles the blossom of a flower and an Italian thin-walled beaker with dot-festooned barbotine decoration (P.94.25).³⁰

In the room to the south, in N 24 (Fig. 19), a pair of lamps were found placed near a pocket of ash set just in front of the third podium (L.93.05, L.93.11). Nearby, two coins, one of Ptolemy King of Cyprus (C.93.05) and one of Cleopatra and Ptolemy XV Caesar (C.93.06) were found. The floor of this room showed a full repertory of pottery, including two amphorae, a casserole (P.93.06), a fusiform unguentarium (P.94.02), a colour coated bowl, and fragments of a coarse krater (P.93.12) with broad horizontal lip of a type sometimes associated with use as a chamber pot.³¹ Fragments of cast glass bowls and two bronze needles (MB.93.08, MB.94.36) were also recovered from the floor. Right on top of the podium, a lamp was found (L.93.12) together with an unfinished limestone amulet (A.93.04).

The courtyard at the eastern side of the Complex (grid squares N 25 and O 25) produced quantities of fine ware pottery, many of Eastern Sigillata A fabric, including a fish plate (P.94.04), a smaller plate (P.94.26) and a mould-made bowl (P.94.32). A fine ware amphora (P.94.24), a lagynos (P.94.23), a spouted jug (P.94.03, Fig. 32) and a slipped hemispherical bowl (P.94.17) attest to drinking activity here. Stone and terracotta finds point to food preparation and storage. These include a grinding stone (St.94.09), a jar stopper

29. Connelly and Młynarczyk (2002) 312, figs 16b and 16c.

30. Miniature slipped cup P.93.08, Connelly and Młynarczyk (2002) 312, fig. 19.

31. Personal communication with John Hayes whom I thank for his valued insights on the Geronisos ceramic sequence.

(St.94.06), bowl (St.94.07), basins (St.94.04, St.94.22, St.94.23) and two terracotta jar stoppers (TC.94.01, TC.94.06). A large number of metal finds were scattered across the southern half of the courtyard, among them a bronze needle (MB.94.31), two bronze nails (MB.94.03, MB.94.11), 28 small fragments of bronze, and two small pieces of iron. Tile fragments recovered from the area, together with pieces of painted wall plaster showing red and black pigment on a white background, suggest a fairly well decorated structure with tiled roof. This would represent a rare extravagance in late Ptolemaic Cyprus for which such levels of refinement are scarcely attested in surviving architecture.

The chronological context of the Central South Complex is well established. Nine coins have been found here, the earliest of which (C.92.01) belongs to Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II (170-164/3 and sole reign 146/5-117/6 B.C.).³² Two coins (C.93.05, C.93.07) dating to the reign of Ptolemy King of Cyprus (80-50 B.C.) have been recovered, along with five coins (C.93.01, C.93.04, C.93.06, C.94.01, C.94.02) dating to the reign of Cleopatra VII and Ptolemy XV Caesar (47-44 B.C.) and two coins (C.93.02, C.93.03) dating to Cleopatra VII's sole reign (44-30 B.C.). These are wholly consistent with other numismatic material from Geronisos, including the two coins of Cleopatra VII and Ptolemy XV Caesar found at the Circular Structure to the north and the one of the same type found at West Building.³³ Other datable material points to the 1st century B.C. as well. A stamped amphora handle (SAH.92.01) from N 22 preserves the first four letters of the month *Agrianos*. It is Rhodian and can be dated from the second half of the second century into the first century B.C.³⁴ Some 28 lamps and lamp fragments have been recovered from across the Central South Complex, the majority of which were locally produced within a time frame of 75-25 B.C. Imported lamps show a slightly broader chronological range from the 2nd to 1st centuries B.C.³⁵

CERAMIC ASSEMBLAGE

During the 1992-1996 seasons, prior to the removal of the baulks, a total of 19,142 sherds was recovered from across the Central South Complex. Chalcolithic wares make up 7.59% of the total, a markedly higher percentage than was recovered from excavations at the western end of the island.³⁶ From the total number of Hellenistic sherds counted for the Central South Complex, an estimate of some 868 vessels can be reconstructed. Fine wares make up 59.44% of the total, cooking wares represent 26.50%, and coarse and storage wares make up 14.06%. Analysis of Hellenistic ceramic shapes shows that for the fine wares, 45.35% of all vessels are bowls, while 16.8% are plates, and 18.8% are jugs. We find that 70% of bowls are made of our local color coated fabric, designated as Pink Powdery Ware by Jolanta Młynarczyk, while the rest are mostly of imported Eastern Sigillata A fabric.³⁷ Eastern Sigillata A types include hemispherical bowls (P.93.09, Fig. 29),³⁸ footed bowls (P.93.01, Fig. 28), echinus bowls, and moulded bowls (P.92.21, P.94.32, P.93.01). Our local colour coated ware bowls, which imitate the Eastern Sigillata sequence, show three shapes: hemispherical (P.92.01, Fig. 30), footed, and those with incurved rim. A relatively large number of spouted jugs (P.94.03, Fig. 32), strainers (P.94.18) and strainer juglets (P.94.16, Fig. 33), some in secondary use, point to the consumption of infused

32. The Geronisos coins have been identified by Dr Anne DeStrooper Georgiades of the French School at Athens who is preparing their publication. We thank her for her valued contribution to the Geronisos Island Expedition.

33. Connelly (2002) 264-67.

34. Z. Sztetyłło, *Nea Paphos I, Les Timbres Céramiques (1965-1973)* (Warsaw 1976) 35, no. 42.

35. Młynarczyk in Connelly and Młynarczyk (2002) 298-99.

36. Connelly (2002) 262, 266; Connelly and McCartney (2004) 21-22.

37. J. Młynarczyk, "The 'Pink Powdery Ware' at Yeronisos: A Local West Cypriote Ware of the Late Hellenistic Period", *Études et Travaux* 20 (forthcoming).

38. The example illustrated is from grid square H 16 in the Southwest Sector.



Fig. 26. P.04.02, ESA form 23 cup (Photo: S. Mavrommatis).



Fig. 27. P.93.02, P.93.03, Casserole and lid.



Fig. 28. P.93.01, Eastern Sigillata A footed bowl (Photo: S. Mavrommatis).

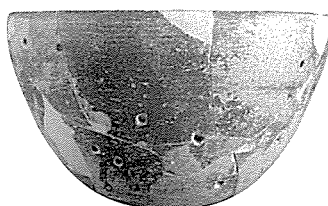


Fig. 29. P.93.09, ESA Hemispherical bowl (Photo: S. Mavrommatis).



Fig. 30. P.92.01, local colour coated hemispherical bowl.

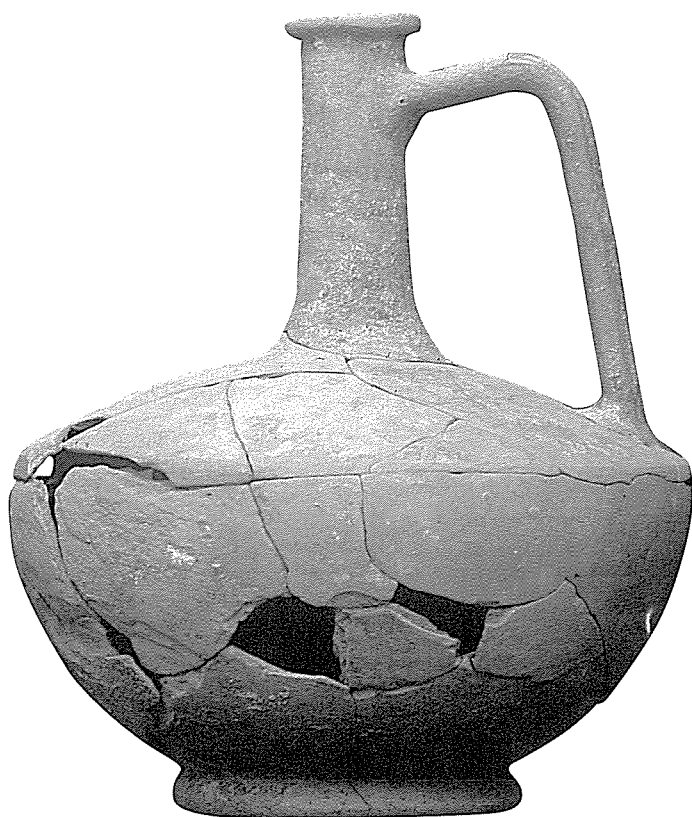


Fig. 31. P.92.06, local colour coated ware lagynos.



Fig. 32. P.94.03, spouted jug (Photo: S. Mavrommatis).



Fig. 33. P.94.16, secondary strainer juglet.

drinks on the island, the exact nature of which is not yet known.

Most remarkable is the rich repertory of early Cypriote sigillata forms, including hemispherical bowls with flaring rims, plain rims, gauged vertical decorations, and gauged diagonal decorations (P.92.27, P. 92.54, P.93.13, P.93.47-50).³⁹ Fragments of two-handled Cypriote Sigillata cups have been recovered, including one example of the early black Cypriote Sigillata (P.93.51). While the most popular shape represented for Cypriote Sigillata is the bowl, we also have a cylindrical juglet (P.93.53) and a lagynos (P.93.52). Geronisos has produced a large number of Cypriote Sigillata forms that John Hayes regards as quite rare. These include at least five examples of hemispherical bowls (form P 16 from Pafos and elsewhere) and four examples of Cypriote Sigillata form P 33.⁴⁰

The Geronisos ceramic sequence is being studied by Jolanta Młynarczyk of the University of Warsaw. She has identified our local colour coated fabric as Pink Powdery Ware, a pale pink to pink/yellow fabric, occasionally fired with a grey core and always with a soft powdery surface.⁴¹ The slip is mat dull red. The large number of forms represented in this ware, including open shapes like bowls and plates, and closed shapes, like lagynoi (P.92.06, Fig. 31) and strainers (Fig. 32), argues for a centre of manufacture nearby, possibly in the vicinity of modern day Pegeia.

Importantly, Dr Młynarczyk has established a close relationship between our local Pink Powdery Ware and Cypriote Sigillata. The similarity of the fabrics, as well as a striking overlap in shapes, argue strongly for a western Cypriot origin for Cypriote Sigillata. Geronisos gives us the very rare shape of the mastos cup, represented both in local Pink Powdery Ware (P.04.10) as well as in Cypriote Sigillata (P.93.11).⁴² The all important link, however, can be found in the lagynoi. The nearly complete lagynos made from our local Pink Powdery Ware (P.92.06, Fig. 31) is very closely related to Cypriote Sigillata lagynoi excavated from Geronisos (P.93.52). It may be

that Cypriote sigillata represents a refined version of what is fundamentally our local or regional clay, fired to a thicker and glossier surface glaze.

An overview of the ceramic material from the Central Southern Complex shows only a small handful of sherds that date to the early and middle Hellenistic periods. These may be residual. They include one or two fragments of Attic black gloss, a few fragments of imitation West Slope ware (P.94.29), and two or three fragments of wheel-made Rhodian lamps. Only at the end of the 2nd century does pottery become more plentiful, culminating in a rich period of representation during the second and especially the third quarter of the 1st century B.C. The repertory of forms represented on Geronisos is best paralleled by finds from late Hellenistic contexts excavated at the House of Dionysos in Nea Pafos and from the area excavated by the Polish Mission to the south of the House of Dionysos.⁴³

AMULETS AND THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF RITUAL ON GERONISOS

The toponym Geronisos, formed through a combination of *hiera*, meaning “holy”, and *nissos*, meaning “island”, suggests a sacred character for the site which was probably known by this name already in antiquity. In listing the small islands of the Eastern Mediterranean, Pliny (*N.H.* 5.129-131) speaks of the four Cleides “off the cape fac-

39. I owe this observation to Jolanta Młynarczyk.

40. I owe these observations to J. Młynarczyk. See J.W. Hayes, “Sigillate Orientali”, *Atlante delle forme ceramiche II* (Rome 1985), 1-96.

41. Młynarczyk’s analysis will appear in a forthcoming *RDAC* article. See Młynarczyk, *Études et Travaux* 20 (forthcoming).

42. Connelly (2002) 261, fig. 19.

43. J.W. Hayes, *Pafos: The Hellenistic and Roman Pottery*, vol. III (Nicosia 1991) and “Sigillate Orientali”, *Atlante delle forme ceramiche II* (Rome 1985), 1-96; W. Daszewski and Z. Sztybel, “La regione Maloutena avant la construction de la villa de Thesee”, *RDAC* (1988, Part 2), 195-203.

ing Syria” and two islands toward Pafos, one named *Hiera* and the other named *Cepia*.⁴⁴ It is tempting to think of Pliny’s island *Hiera* as one and the same as our present day Geronisos.⁴⁵

With no water source of its own and cut off from the mainland by steep cliffs and strong currents, Geronisos was never an attractive site for settlement. Indeed, the late Hellenistic building initiative was preceded by some 35 centuries of abandonment. Not since Early Chalcolithic times had Geronisos seen any significant level of occupation.⁴⁶ A stone figurine, intentionally damaged and deliberately deposited at the eastern end of the island in a sealed pit, together with ash, ground stone tools, and heat cracked stones, suggests that Chalcolithic visitors invested the island with some sort of symbolic significance.⁴⁷ The Hellenistic pilgrims, of course, cannot have known this. But they, too, may have been struck by the island’s natural beauty and compelled by the process of “purification” experienced by crossing the water to reach its magical shores. Impractical and wholly challenging, the site must have held some very strong motivation for those who ventured out to build and banquet upon it. That this motivation was sacred in nature seems highly likely.

While it is not yet clear exactly what took place on Hellenistic Geronisos, it does look as if it was a single-use site, developed for a very specific purpose which, for Cyprus, may prove to be unique. First of all, Geronisos gives us the only Ptolemaic ostraka found to date on Cyprus.⁴⁸ One must ask, why? These ostraka include incised and painted sherds showing both block letters and cursive script. The Central South Complex has been particularly rich in these. One ostrakon (O.92.03), reconstituted from four joining rim fragments of an Eastern Sigillata A bowl, shows a four line inscription carefully written in plain capital letters.⁴⁹ Each line consists of one syllable of three letters, a space, and then the same two letter word repeated in each line:

TPI	EN
NOY	EN
TPI	EN
PIEN	EN

To the right, the surface is well preserved without any trace of letters. The letters EN are thus probably not the preposition “in” but more likely the word “one”.⁵⁰ In this case, the preceding letters could refer to objects or names of individuals. We may have here an inventory list of commodities, or perhaps, the names of the individuals who offered them.

To whom these offerings may have been made is not clear. Tantalising yet inconclusive evidence from within the room of the double podia, in O 24, may point the way (Fig. 19). Here, in the northeast corner, was found a fragment of an amphora (O.94.01, Fig. 34) bearing the incised letters ΑΠΟΛΛΩ, with *omega* raised above line level to indicate abbreviation. One could resolve the abbreviation as a form of the name of the god Apollo. It must be said, however, that it is also possible to resolve this as a proper name, like Apollonios.⁵¹ Whatever the case

44. Strabo (*Geographies* 14.6.4) tells us that Demastes of Sigeum (470-420 B.C.) measured the length of Cyprus from a place called “Hierocepis” in the north to the Cleides islands at the south. This seems to combine the two islands named by Pliny, “Hiero” and “Cepia”, into one. This “Hierocepis” is sometimes confused with Geroskipou, the village on the mainland to the east of Pafos named for Aphrodite’s “Sacred Garden”. However, it is clear that both Strabo and Pliny are discussing offshore islands that provide an axis along which the length of Cyprus can be measured, not mainland sites like Geroskipou. Strabo cautions that Eratosthenes (280-60 B.C.) corrected Demastes’ geography, placing Hierocepis not on the north but on the southern coast of Cyprus. He further corrects the two earlier writers, placing Hierocepis neither on the north nor on the south but instead on the west of Cyprus “where are Paphos and Akamas”.

45. Whether “Cepia” can be identified as the small rocky island of Maniki, just to the south of Geronisos, is unclear. This word may be related to the word *Sypies*, or “cuttlefish”, which can be found in these waters in quantity to this day.

46. Connelly and McCartney (2004) 19-51.

47. Connelly and McCartney (2004) 22-23, 34-35, 46-47, figs 5-10, page 50, figs 37-38.

48. These are being published by Roger Bagnall of Columbia University whom I thank for the observations presented here as well as for his valued contribution to the Geronisos Island Expedition.

49. Connelly (2002) 312, fig. 23.

50. According to Roger Bagnall.

51. As pointed out by Roger Bagnall.



Fig. 34. O.94.01, ostrakon with Apollo inscription.

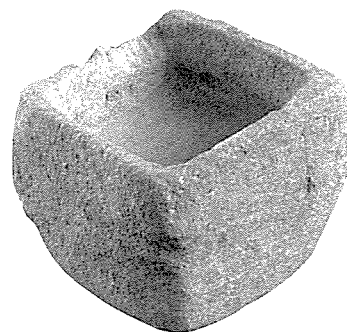


Fig. 35. St.04.04, Stone offering tray (Photo: S. Mavrommatis).

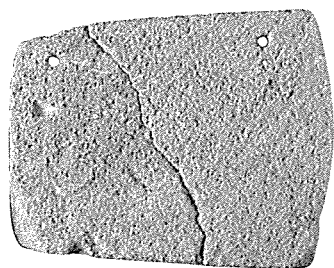


Fig. 36. St.96.17, Stone votive plaque (Photo: S. Mavrommatis).



Fig. 37. A.94.02, Amulet with die motif.



Fig. 38. A.92.01, Amulet with bird (Photo: S. Mavrommatis).



Fig. 39. A.92.01, Amulet with figure wearing Egyptian double crown (Photo: S. Mavrommatis).



Fig. 40. A.93.07, Amulet with royal portrait (Photo: S. Mavrommatis).



Fig. 41. A.93.06, Amulet with Isis crown (Photo: S. Mavrommatis).

may be, it is attractive to think that the god Apollo, born on the holy island of Delos, may have enjoyed local worship here on another Holy Island during the very last years of Ptolemaic rule.

Other objects excavated from Geronisos point to ritual activity. Small stone offering trays, some with square compartments and others round (Yer 82/34), suggest that gifts of grain or other food stuffs may have been offered. One single-compartmented square tray was found within the Central South Complex (St.04.04, Fig. 35).⁵² Flat stone votive plaques, or *pinakes* (St.96.17, Fig. 36), showing holes for suspension, may have once recorded the prayers and dedications of those who sailed out to worship.⁵³ Re-used pot sherds, smoothed at the edges and pierced for suspension, may also have had a ritual use.⁵⁴

The most direct evidence for the cultic function of the island, however, comes from a series of objects unique to Geronisos.⁵⁵ These are the Geronisos amulets, 14 of which have been found in the Central South Complex, resting on floors, on top of and beside podia, and next to fine ware bowls, cooking pots, pierced disks, and lamps.⁵⁶ Shaped like loom weights, these objects could be classified as seals since all but two bear incised decoration on their resting surfaces. Most of them are pierced for suspension and, apparently, were meant to be worn as pendants. The amulets show a variety of forms, and can be long and rectangular (A.94.02, Fig. 37), squat and pyramidal, or round and conical in shape. Thirteen show inscribed decoration on their resting surface, while five examples have characters decorating their sides as well.

The example illustrated (Fig. 37) is decorated on five of its surfaces. It shows die motifs on the bottom and on one of its long sides, and an anchor motif on another. The anchor design is known from Knidian amphora stamps at Salamis and at Nea Pafos and is dated to after 86 B.C.⁵⁷ The die motifs could be magical in nature and may contribute to the talismanic function of the amulet, bringing protection or good luck to its wearer.

The Geronisos amulets show age-old Cypriot designs as well as motifs drawn from the Ptolemaic Egyptian repertory. Examples taken from traditional Cypriot iconography include the tree of life (A.93.01), the labyrinth (A.04.01), quadrupeds, perhaps representing dogs (A.92.02, A.04.03?), the swastika (A.93.02), the bird (A.92.01, Fig. 38, and A.04.03?), as well as what might be the Cypro-syllabic character for the letter *alpha* (A.92.01). Motifs from the Ptolemaic Egyptian repertory include the eagle (A.94.01), the Isis crown (A. 93.06, Fig. 41), and two royal portraits (A.93.07, Fig. 40; A.92.01, Fig. 39).

Motifs from the two traditions can be seen combined on a single amulet that shows the Cypriot bird (A.92.01, Fig. 38), the Cypro-syllabic *alpha* symbol, and a Ptolemaic royal portrait (Fig. 39). After the adoption of the Greek

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52. The excavations of Sophocles Hadjisavvas in 1982 yielded one tray with round holes and another with square compartments, inventoried as Yer. 82/34. The offering tray excavated by the NYU Geronisos Island Expedition, St.04.04, was found in the O 23/O 34 Baulk.
53. The plaque illustrated, and a matching example, St.96.33, were not found in the Central South Complex, but to the north, within the Circular Structure. Hadjisavvas found a small votive plaque in the vicinity of West Building, inventoried together with the offering tray as Yer. 82.34.
54. P.93.17, P.93.18. Connelly (2002) 259, fig. 17.
55. Connelly (2002) 267-68; Connelly and Młynarczyk (2002) 303-304, 308; Connelly, forthcoming, in *Egypt and Cyprus in Antiquity*, Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute and the University of Cyprus, Archaeological Research Unit (Nicosia); Connelly, forthcoming, in *From Evagoras I to the Ptolemies: The Transition from the Classical to the Hellenistic Period* (Nicosia 2006). Photographs of the amulets have been shown to the late Edith Porada, as well as to John Boardman, and Andreas Reyes. All agreed that these objects are unique.
56. A forthcoming article on the Geronisos amulets and their contexts is being prepared for the *RDAC* by Prof. Dimitris Plantzos, University of the Peloponnese, and J.B. Connelly. I owe many of the observations presented here to his work and thank him for his extraordinary contribution to the Geronisos Island Expedition.
57. Connelly (2002) 261, fig. 21. See Zofia Sztetyłko, *Nea Paphos I, Les Timbres Ceramiques, 1965-1973* (Warsaw 1976) 358, Inv. No. 256/E. For Salamis example, see Y. Calvet, *Salamine de Chypre III: Les timbres amphoriques (1965-1970)* (Paris, 1972) 65, no. 135.

alphabet in Cyprus, Cypro-syllabic was rarely used and thereafter is found almost exclusively in religious contexts, as at Kafizin where dedications in Cypro-syllabic script appear as late as 225-218 B.C.⁵⁸ Cypro-syllabic characters are very rare after the 3rd century, though twenty-two sealings found beneath the House of Dionysos at Nea Pafos show syllabic characters that date to the late 2nd and 1st century B.C. Twelve of these sealings show single characters and, of these, three show the *alpha* sign, just like the Geronisos amulet.⁵⁹

The royal portrait presented on the same amulet as the bird motif (Figs 38-39) is of great interest, as it shows a skinny young man with pointed nose and prominent chin wearing the *pschent*, the double crown of the Egyptian pharaoh. This image finds its closest parallels among the seal-impressions from Edfu in Egypt.⁶⁰ Dr Dimitri Plantzos of the University of the Peloponnese, who is preparing the publication of the Edfu hoard as well as the Geronisos amulets, has suggested that this may be a portrait of the young Ptolemy XII Auletes, father of Cleopatra VII, or perhaps one of his male descendents, Cleopatra's brothers Ptolemies XIII and XIV, or even Cleopatra's son Ptolemy XV Caesar.⁶¹

A second amulet presents the portrait of an earlier Ptolemaic ruler wearing a diadem (A.93.07, Fig. 40). The man has curly hair, deep-set eyes, great jowly cheeks and a double chin, reflecting the heavy features of the late Ptolemies after *ca* 150 B.C. This image also finds parallels among the Edfu seal-impressions (A.93.07, Fig. 40).⁶² Dr Plantzos believes that the features are consistent with those representing Ptolemy XIII Physkon, and that they could equally represent either of his two sons, Ptolemy IX Soter II (nicknamed Lathyros, 116-107 and 88-80 B.C.), or Ptolemy X Alexandros I (107-88 B.C.).

The Isis crown shown on the resting surface of yet another amulet (A.93.06, Fig. 41) may point to the orbit of Cleopatra VII. It shows a sun disk flanked by two small horns. A seal-impression from the Edfu hoard, again, presents a direct

match.⁶³ This motif can be associated with Cleopatra VII who adopted the epithets and head-dress of Isis on her coinage following the birth of Ptolemy XV Caesar, her son with Julius Caesar, in 47 B.C.⁶⁴ The motif reflected her new status as

58. T.B. Mitford, *The Nymphaeum at Kafizin: The Inscribed Pottery* (Berlin and New York 1980).

59. I. Michaelidou-Nikolaou, *The Coins from the House of Dionysos, Paphos*, vol. II (1990) 345-347, nos. 6434, 6437, 6495.

60. Here, some 700 clay sealings were excavated in 1905, now divided between the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto and the Allard Pierson Museum in Amsterdam. The Edfu archive seems to have been in use from the reign of Ptolemy V Epiphanes to that of Cleopatra VII (*ca* 200 - 30 B.C.). See J.G. Milne, "Ptolemaic Seal Impressions," *JHS* 36 (1916) 87-101 and M.A. Murray, *Ptolemaic Clay Sealings*, *ZA* (44) 1907, 62-70 for early discussion of the Toronto part of the hoard. For recent discussion see D. Plantzos, "Female Portrait Types from the Edfu hoard of Clay Seal-Impressions" in M.-F. Boussac and A. Invernizzi (eds), *Archives et sceaux du monde hellénistique*, *BCH* Supplement 29 (Athens 1996) 307-13 which deals with the sealings in Amsterdam, and D. Plantzos, *Hellenistic Engraved Gems* (Oxford 1999) 27-29 for a brief account of the Edfu and Nea Paphos hoards, along with bibliography (see also pages 44-47 for general discussion of evidence from engraved gems and seal-impressions); H. Kyrieleis, "Ptolemäische Porträts auf Siegelabdrücken aus Nea Paphos (Zypern)" in Boussac-Invernizzi (1996) 315-20, and *Bildnisse der Ptolemaer* (Berlin 1975); P.E. Stanwick, *Portraits of the Ptolemies; Greek Kings as Egyptian Pharaohs* (Austin 2002). I am indebted to D. Plantzos for these references. Dr Plantzos points out that the Geronisos portrait showing a young man wearing the Egyptian double crown compares with Royal Ontario Museum inv. no. 906.12.122 which shows a male figure wearing diadem, double crown, and Egyptian cuirass; Milne (1916) no. 126; Kyrieleis (1975) 65, pl. 68.5; Walker-Higgs (2001) no. 156; Plantzos (1996) pls 49.8 and 50.13. I thank D. Plantzos for this information.

61. I am indebted to Dr Plantzos for much of the discussion presented here and thank him for his extraordinary contribution to the Geronisos Island Expedition.

62. Dr Plantzos compares it with Royal Ontario Museum inv. no. 906.12.142 which shows a male figure wearing a wide diadem and chlamys; Milne (1916) no. 162.

63. Dr Plantzos has drawn this to my attention: Allard Pierson Museum inv. no. 8177-128 which shows the disc-and-horns crown with double feathers and uraeus.

64. G. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire* (London 2001) 290. See gold finger ring with engraved portrait of Cleopatra VII wearing Isis crown, Victoria and Albert Museum M.88.1963, illustrated in *Cleopatra of Egypt: From Myth to History*, S. Walker and P. Higgs (eds) (Princeton 2001) 217, cat. no. 195.

a mother and symbol of fertility and prosperity.⁶⁵

Though the Geronisos amulets are without exact parallels, they do look very similar to seal pendants depicted on limestone votive statues of so-called ‘temple boys’, the majority of which were dedicated in Cypriot sanctuaries of Apollo.⁶⁶ The statues show pendants suspended from strings that hang diagonally across the boys’ chests, often grouped with other charms and talismans, including bevel rings and pierced disks.⁶⁷ These votive sculptures date from the fifth century B.C. into the Hellenistic period and may reflect a Cypriot ritual practice by which boys were placed under the care of Apollo during the transitional time of their weaning at age three to four.⁶⁸ This may have included a period during which the boys actually slept in the sanctuary, before returning home taking their places within the male community of their households. If these amulets bear witness to the presence of small boys on Geronisos, they may open the way to our deeper understanding of the unique character of the site and its role in boys’ transition rituals.⁶⁹

The fact that two of the amulets are unfinished and undecorated, together with the somewhat informal character of carving, argue for their manufacture on Geronisos itself. It seems unlikely that any of the seal amulets were actually used for stamping, as they show no signs of wear, and as many of the characters are inscribed only to a very shallow depth that would hardly have made an impression in clay. The amulets clearly attest to the integration of traditional Cypriot practices with newly introduced Ptolemaic Egyptian iconographies. Our understanding of the precise nature of cult activity on Geronisos lies directly with these intriguing objects.

FUNCTION OF CENTRAL SOUTH COMPLEX

It is clear that the Central South Complex was a centre for food preparation and consumption. A number of individualised cooking locations found throughout the complex, as well as what appears to be a hearth unearthed in the M 23n/M

23/N 23 baulk, show pockets of ash, cooking pots, pot stands, drinking cups, lamps, coins, a few clam shells, and pierced disks. Near the hearth, pots and bowls appeared to be stacked within one another, as if for storage. What appears to be a washing basin or *pliterio* was set into the floor of the neighbouring room, in the M 22n/M 22/N 22 baulk (Fig. 5). It is made up of broken amphora sherds set in a circular, concave construction, smeared on the interior with several layers of baked clay. The installation measures

65. See Connelly, forthcoming, in “Twilight of the Ptolemies: Egyptian Presence on Late Hellenistic Yeronisos”, *Egypt and Cyprus in Antiquity*, Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute and the University of Cyprus, Archaeological Research Unit (Nicosia).
66. C. Beer, *Temple-Boys: A Study of Cypriote Votive Sculpture*, Part 1. Catalogue, *SIMA* 113 (Jonsered 1994); cat. no. 213, plate 45; cat. no. 238, plate 153, from Kourion; cat. no. 198, plate 154, from Kourion; cat. no. 195, plate 155, from Kourion; cat. no. 196, plate 164, from Kourion; cat. no. 243, plate 166, from Kourion; cat. no. 168, plate 49; cat. no. 194, plate 176, from Kourion; cat. no. 175, plate 177, from sanctuary of “Reshef-Mikal-Apollo-Amyklos” excavated by R. Hamilton Lang; cat. no. 219, plate 179, from Golgoi; Appendix B, no. 2, plate 202; Appendix B, no. 4, plate 202, from Golgoi. Beer (1994). Some ‘temple boys’ have been found in sanctuaries of Aphrodite-Kourotrophos, Beer (1994) 15, 28, 38, 39, 41; see examples from Idalion (cat. 110-113, 116, 123) and at Chytroi (cat. 66), and from the temple of Aphrodite-Astarte at Tamassos (cat. 117). Temple boys have also been found at the sanctuaries of Apollo at Voni, Potamia, Lefkoniko, Golgoi and Athienou. See also, R. Laffineur, “A propos des ‘temple boys’” in *Cypriote Stone Sculpture: Proceedings of the Second International Conference of Cypriote Studies*, F. Vandebecle and R. Laffineur (eds) (Brussels 1997) 141-48; T. Hadzistelliou-Price, “The Type of the Crouching Child and the ‘Temple Boys’”, *BSA* 64 (1969) 108.
67. See Beer (1994), cat. no. 194, plate 176, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 74.51.2754, from Kourion; cat. no. 175, plate 177, London, British Museum C 164, sanctuary of “Reshef-Mikal-Apollo-Amyklos”; Appendix B, no. 2, pl. 201, Istanbul Archaeological Museums 3322, unknown provenience; Appendix B, no.4, plate 202, Paris, Musée du Louvre, AM 3004, Golgoi.
68. In an unpublished papyrus from Berenike, a woman reproaches her son for not writing, saying that after she had carried him for 10 months and nursed him for three years, he should at least write her a letter. I thank Roger Bagnall for drawing this to my attention.
69. See Connelly, forthcoming, in *Egypt and Cyprus in Antiquity* (Nicosia).

some 0.90m. in diameter, with a clay lining of some 3cm. in thickness. Thus, we find cooking and washing facilities located close to the southern cliff, perhaps positioned in the open air or on a veranda.

Food was prepared very close to the place in which it was consumed. The series of small rooms measuring *ca* 4.50m. square may have served as dining locations. The raised rubble platforms and limestone slabs tucked in the corners of these rooms could have served as benches or couches for banqueting, *albeit* for very small individuals, possibly children. The fairly luxurious character of the pottery, with its very high proportion of fine table wares, both regional/local colour-coated fabrics and importations, indicate a relatively upscale level of dining. Quantities of fragments of glass drinking bowls recovered from within these rooms, again, attests to a certain luxury. These vessels show profiles consistent with the widely dispersed conical and hemispherical glass bowls that were used throughout the Eastern Mediterranean and Italy during the late 2nd and early 1st centuries B.C. They are generally thought to have originated along the Syro-Palestine coast.⁷⁰

The dominance of drinking cups and bowls and the relatively high numbers of strainers and spouted jugs recovered from Geronisos attest to a diet rich in liquid foods and soups. The spouted strainer jugs and juglets, sometimes known as 'baby feeders', give evidence for infused drinks. One can only wonder what kind of herbs or other substances may have been brewed in them. The neck of one large jug (P.04.09) is equipped with a strainer and attests to the preparation of a relatively large quantity of herbal drink or potion. The miniature blossom cup (P.93.08) found in N 24 is so small that looks as if it might have held a dose of medicine.⁷¹

Interpretation of this material is not easy. On the one hand, the small size of the bowls (some with diameters of just 10cm.), casseroles, cooking pots, and juglets may suggest that they were used by children. They certainly were made for

individual portions and it is possible that visitors to the island came with their own personal vessels for cooking and drinking. On the other hand, it is possible that the small size of the vessels was related to their votive function. The relative paucity of transport amphoras suggests that wine was not the main drink on Geronisos. Whatever was brewed in the spouted strainer jugs was the drink of choice. Was it a strained beverage for toddlers? Or could it have been an herbal remedy for the sick?

The Geronisos ostraka may hold some clues. One example gives a list of male names, among them Chariton, Thrasayes, Nikon and Xaireas.⁷² This could support an interpretation that argues for the presence of boys on the island.⁷³ Two other ostraka, both from the Central South Complex, show evidence of writing exercises by children. On one (O.92.01) the letter *nu* is written repeatedly, the letter *tau* is written twice, one broken bar *alpha* is inscribed, and what appears to be an *alpha* and a *rho* are written together, along with 4 vertical strokes. These letters do not form lines, and the most natural interpretation of the sherd is that it represents writing exercises inscribed by a learner.⁷⁴ A body sherd of an amphora (O.92.02) similarly shows a number of letters and stray marks, including a lunate *epsilon*, a *pi*, a *delta*, a *kappa*, what appears to be an *iota* and a box shaped *theta*.

A small limestone plaque (I.92.01, Fig. 42), retrieved from just in front of the Diagonal Wall in N 22, is inscribed with the words TPIT, TETPA, ΠΕΜΠΗ. The first and third of these words appear to be the Greek ordinal numerals for third and fifth. The second word is not an

70. According to our beloved colleague David Grose who was preparing the publication of the Geronisos glass at the time of his death in October 2004.

71. I thank Jolanta Młynarczyk for her insights on this material.

72. Yer. 82/16. As read by Roger Bagnall.

73. See Connelly, forthcoming, in *Egypt and Cyprus in Antiquity* (Nicosia).

74. According to Roger Bagnall.



Fig. 42. I.92.01, Inscribed stone plaque.

ordinal adjective but, instead, the ordinal adverb.⁷⁵ From the same area, a stone fragment (I.92.03), possibly broken from the same plaque, reads ENNEA, the Greek cardinal number nine. Could these plaques be related to counting lessons, undertaken alongside the writing lessons of children? Or are they instead part of gaming boards or, perhaps, record-keeping devices?

A third inscription, found in the room of N 23, is engraved on a pierced limestone disk (I.92.02, Fig. 43). Around the circle surrounding its central hole, the letter *rho* has been inscribed 13 times. This pierced disk is one of 20 such objects found across Geronisos, most in the Central South Complex. Thirteen of these are made from stone (St.05.01, Fig. 44) and seven of terracotta. The pierced disks resemble loom weights or fish net weights, but their disposition suggests that they served another function, not yet clearly understood. Single disks are found deposited next to cooking pots, lamps, amulets, and other objects. If we choose to understand Geronisos as a place where young boys came for their rites of passage, the disks might be interpreted as their toys, possibly rollers or disks to spin on a string.⁷⁶ We cannot know the meaning of the 13 *rhos* inscribed on the example illustrated (Fig. 43), but it may well hold the key to our better understanding these objects.



Fig. 44. ST.05.01, Pierced stone disk (Photo: S. Mavrommatis).



Fig. 43. I.92.02, Inscribed pierced stone disk.

It is far too early to come to firm conclusions about the precise function of the Central South Complex. In many ways the deposition of pottery, some of which is miniature in size, together with lamps and pockets of ash up against wall foundations, recalls the arrangement of material in the so-called ‘ceremonial pyres’ known from the Agora, Areopagus, Kerameikos, and other locations across Athens.⁷⁷ While little is known about the religious practice behind these pyres, they are clearly found in settlements rather than in public or sacred spaces. They may represent sacrificial foundation deposits related to the construction or renovation of private buildings by their owners.⁷⁸ While Geronisos clearly seems to be a sacred space rather than one of settlement, the parallels with the ‘ceremonial pyres’ must be acknowledged. It is just possible that the depositions of vessels and lamps on Geronisos may consecrate the re-use of structures in some sort of second phase. However, at Geronisos the deposits sit on floors rather than beneath them, and are so

75. As observed by Roger Bagnall.

76. See Connelly, forthcoming, in *Egypt and Cyprus in Antiquity* (Nicosia).

77. I thank Dimitri Plantzos for this observation. See N. Stampolidis *et al.*, *Athens: The City Beneath the City*, Antiquities from the Metropolitan Railway Excavation (Athens 2000) 92-103. For ceremonial pyres see D.R. Jordan and S.I. Rotroff, “A Curse in a Chytridion: A Contribution to the Study of Athenian Pyres”, *Hesperia* 68 (1999) 147-54.

78. Stampolidis *et al.* (2000) 92.

widespread that they virtually fill the entire Central South Complex.

It should be said that the Geronisos pottery assemblage is characterised by widespread re-use and mending. Amphoras, kraters, frying pans, bowls, juglets, and cups from across the site show multiple mend holes, some few with their lead clamps still in them. Several pots show so many holes that one wonders whether the mending was worth the cost of the lead (Fig. 29). It is possible that some were mended with leather strings which would have expanded, when wet, to seal the gaps. Bases of bowls and cups, both stone and ceramic, also show signs of re-use in the shaving down of their upper edges. Amphora necks have been refashioned into pot stands. Broken pot handles have been smoothed down into cylindrical rollers. Body sherds have been reworked into triangles and circles that resemble gaming pieces. We must ask why the residents of Geronisos were compelled to mend and rework their pottery so extensively, and why they could not, or chose not, to bring in new vessels? The answer to these questions may give us important insight into the nature of activity during the final phase of late Hellenistic Geronisos.

The destruction that toppled the buildings of the Central South Complex is best associated with the earthquake that struck Pafos in 17 B.C.⁷⁹ Despite evidence for a violent collapse, no human

remains have been found in the destruction level. It is likely that pre-shocks gave warning of what was to come and people had the opportunity to leave safely before the great quake. Cultural material was found resting upon floors just beneath the debris and, for the most part, seems to sit in its place of last use. As we have seen, most of the material recovered from Geronisos can be dated to a narrow chronological span between 80-30 B.C. A shorter time frame rather than a longer one is likely, and it is during the third quarter of the first century that the island enjoyed its most intense period of activity. By the time the earthquake struck, it is likely that Geronisos was in a period of decline, following the end of Ptolemaic rule with the defeat and death of Cleopatra in 30 B.C. Only further excavation will enable us to understand better the motivation for building the Central South Complex, and the motivation of those who sailed out to cook, dine, and drink within its walls.

79. Recorded by Dio Cassius 54.23.7 (late 3rd cent. A.D.) and Eusebius, *Hieron. Chronicon* 166c. See I. Guidoboni *et al.*, *Catalogue of ancient earthquakes in the Mediterranean area up to the 10th Century*, Istituto Nazionale di Geofisica (Rome 1994) 177-78.

KEY TO DISTRIBUTION OF FINDS

Fig. 18. Distribution of material in Central South Complex (west).

1. ST.93.09	Chalcolithic ground stone tool	50. P.96.60	Cooking ware bowl
2. G.93.05	Glass fragment	51. ST.96.44	Diorite scarab showing Sekmet
3. G.04.04	Glass fragment	52.	Pithos fragments
4.	Amphora sherd scatter	53. P.92.01	Hemispherical bowl
5. A.93.02	Amulet with 'pinwheel' design	54. P.92.03	Slipped fish plate
6. ST.93.07	Stone bowl rim	55. G.92.07	Glass fragment
7. P.93.43	ESA moulded relief bowl fragment	56. G.92.08	Glass fragment
8.	Coan amphora neck	57. P.92.04	Bowl fragments
9. G.93.04	Glass fragment	58. ML.04.01	Lead bits
10. G.93.03	Glass fragment	59. ST.04.04	Votive offering tray
11. G.93.02	Glass fragment	60. L.04.01	Lamp, Egyptian imitation of Knidian
12. ST.93.25	Chalcolithic green bead	61. P.04.09	Amphora neck with strainer, re-used as pot stand
13. P.93.27	Dressel Type 1 Amphora neck/pot stand	62. P.92.37	Storage jar
14. A.93.03	Amulet with Isis Crown	63. P.92.20	Jar lid
15. StA.93.01	Architectural moulding fragment	64. P.92.15	Trefoil mouthed oinochoe
16.	Amphoriskos fragment	65. O.92.02	Ostrakon
17. ST.93.21	Stone rim fragment	66. L.92.06	Lamp, Geronisos ware
18.	Coan amphora handle	67. P.92.30	Jug
19. ST.93.05	Pierced disk	68. TC.92.	Terracotta pierced disk
20. ST.93.13	Stone bowl	69. ST.92.17	Stone jar lid
21. StA.93.02	Architectural moulding fragment	70. G.92.06	Glass fragment
22. ST.93.11	Stone slab	71. G.92.11	Glass fragment
23. ST.93.12	Stone mortar	72. MB.92.04	Bronze bits
24. P.93.13	Cypriot sigillata bowl	73. A.92.01	Amulet with Ptolemaic royal portrait/double crown
25. P.93.05	Echinus bowl, Egyptian	74. ST.92.24	Mortar
26. ST.93.18	Stone basin	75. TC.92.02	Terracotta pierced disk
27. L.93.07	Lamp nozzle fragment, local fabric	76. P.92.34	Amphora fragments
28. MB.93.01	Bronze nail head	77.	Pithos fragments
29. ST.93.31	Chipped stone blade	78. TC.04.01	Terracotta pierced disk
30. A.93.01	Amulet with 'tree of life'	79.	Cooking pot fragments
31. G.93.07	Glass fragment	80. P.04.04	Amphora neck reused as pot stand
32. P.04.13	Drinking bowl	81. P.04.05	Cooking pot
33.	Cooking pot fragments	82. P.04.06	Biconical juglet
34. A.04.01	Large amulet with floral (?) design	83. ST.04.05	Stone basin
35.	Tile scatter	84.	Base of ceramic bowl
36. ST.04.03	Stone gaming piece (?)	85. I.92.02	Stone pierced disk inscribed with <i>rho</i> 's
37. MI.93.04	Iron fragments	86.	Coan amphora handle
38. MB.93.06	Bronze hook or nail fragment	87. G.92.05	Glass fragment
39. G.93.26	Glass fragment	88. ST.92.34	Stone lamp holder
40. TC.93.03	Terracotta disk	89. P.92.06	Cooking pot fragments
41. A.95.07	Amulet with Ptolemaic male portrait/diadem	90.	Coan amphora handle
42. ML.93.02	Lead sheet	91.	Cooking pot
43. ST.93.65	Worked stone (shaped like anchor?)	92.	Ceramic bowl fragments
44. ST.93.61	Stone tool	93. P.92.04	Echinus bowl
45. P.04.03	Common ware table amphora	94.	Cluster of sea pebbles
46. P.04.12	Casserole	95. O.92.03	Inscribed ESA bowl fragment
47. P.04.07	Casserole lid	96. P.92.76	Cooking pot
48. P.04.02	ESA form 23 cup	97. STA.92.10	Moulding fragment
49. G.04.01	Glass fragment	98. ST.92.17	Stone basin
		99. G.92.12	Glass fragment
		100. G.04.09	Glass fragments

101. G.92.04	Glass fragment	35. ST.93.16	Stone jar stopper
102.	Coan amphora handle	36. TC.93.02	Terracotta jar stopper
103. I.92.01	Stone plaque with numbering	37. ST.94.19	Stone die
104. L.92.04	Lamp, local fabric	38. ML.94.03	Lead fragment
105. ST.92.01	Stone pierced disk	39. ST.94.21	Stone moulding
106. ML.92.02	Lead hook	40. P.93.08	Slipped miniature cup
107. MB.92.03	Bronze hook	41. ST.94.18	Stone bowl
108. G.92.10	Glass fragment	42. G.94.08	Glass fragment
109. P.92.05	Echinus bowl	43. TC.94.04	Terracotta pierced disk
110. C.92.01	Coin, Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II	44. MB.94.32	Bronze needle fragment
111. L.92.03	Lamp, local fabric	45. ST.94.20	Stone basin
112. L.92.02	Lamp, local fabric	46. ML.94.04	Lead fragment
113. ST.92.12	Stone lamp holder	47. P.94.25	Early Roman barbotine thin-walled beaker
114. ML.92.01	Lead bits	48. A.93.06	Amulet with Isis crown
115. P.92.60	Globular juglet	49. P.94.16	Juglet
116. A.92.02	Amulet with cursory scratches	50. MB.94.33	Nail fragment

Fig. 19. Distribution of material in Central South Complex (east).

1. StA.94.25	Stone moulding fragment	51. MB.94.34	Nail fragment
2. ST.94.26	Stone moulding fragment	52. G.94.09	Glass fragment
3. TC.94.05	Terracotta pierced disk	53. ST.93.42	Stone lamp holder
4. C.94.02	Coin, Cleopatra VII and Ptolemy XV Caesar	54. G.93.25	Glass fragment
5. ST.94.28	Stone basin	55. MB.93.07	Bronze nail
6. MB.94.29	Bronze nail	56. G.94.10	Glass fragment
7. ST.94.25	Stone moulding	57. ST.94.30	Stone bead
8. G.94.07	Glass fragment	58. P.94.02	Delian lagynos
9. ST.94.31	Stone tool	60. C.93.03	Coin, Cleopatra VII
10. MI.94.09	Iron nail	61. ML.94.04	Lead bits
11. ST.94.32	Stone tool	62. ST.94.33	Stone pierced disk
12. L.93.10	Lamp, local fabric	63. L.94.01	Lamp fragment
13. C.93.01	Coin, Cleopatra VII and Ptolemy XV Caesar	64. MB.94.36	Bronze needle
14. C.93.02	Coin, Cleopatra VII	65. C.93.07	Coin, Ptolemy King of Cyprus
15. P.93.02	Casserole	66. G.93.23	Glass fragment
16. P.93.03	Casserole lid	67. G.93.19	Glass fragment
17. ST.93.41	Chipped stone blade	68. G.93.16	Glass fragment
18. P.93.01	ESA footed bowl	69. MB.93.05	Bronze nail
19. ST.93.42	Stone pierced disk	70. G.93.23	Glass fragment
20. ST.93.43	Stone lamp holder	71. P.93.12	Krater/chamber pot
21. C.94.01	Cleopatra VII and Ptolemy XV Caesar	72. L.93.11	Pink powdery ware lamp
22. L.93.08	Regional ware lamp	73. L.93.05	Geronisos ware lamp
23. MI.93.01	Amorphous iron bit	74. A.93.04	Unworked amulet
24. O.94.01	Ostrakon with ΑΠΟΛΛΩ	75. MB.93.64	Bronze fragment
25. ST.93.17	Chalcolithic chisel	76.	Cooking pot fragments
26. G.93.09	Glass fragment	77. MI.93.01	Iron bits
27. MB.93.02	Bronze bit	78. MI.93.06	Iron nail shaft
28. ST.93.24	Chalcolithic tool	79. MB.93.08	Bronze needle
29. ST.93.22	Stone pierced disk	80. G.93.18	Glass fragment
30. L.93.03	Regional ware lamp	81. G.93.15	Glass fragment
31. ST.93.10	Stone pierced disk	82. G.93.20	Glass fragment
32. L.93.02	Geronisos ware lamp	83. G.93.22	Glass fragment
33. L.93.01	Geronisos ware lamp	84. ST.93.01	Stone die
34. G.93.10	Glass fragment	85. C.93.05	Coin, Ptolemy King of Cyprus
		86. C.93.02	Coin, Cleopatra VII and Ptolemy XV Caesar
		87. P.94.02	Fusiform unguentarium
		88. ST.93.01	Casserole
		89. P.23.28	Amphora
		90. P.93.06	Casserole

91. ST.93.64	Small stone slabs	127. P.94.21	Amphora
92. P.94.22	Delian lagynos	128. G.94.03	Glass
93. G.93.21	Glass fragment	129. G.94.04	Glass
94. A.05.01	Amulet with labyrinth motif	130. G.94.05	Glass
95. P.94.29	Imitation west slope ware fragment	131. MB.94.03	Bronze nail
96. ST.94.23	Stone basin fragment	132. ST.94.08	Stone fragment
97. StA.94.23	Stone moulding fragment	133. TC.94.03	Terracotta pierced disk
98. ST.94.24	Decorated stone	134. MB.94.06	Bronze fragment
99. T.94.15	Worked marble	135. MB.94.18	Bronze fragment
100. ST.94.11	Stone moulding fragment	136. MB.94.10	Bronze fragment
101. ST.94.22	Stone basin	137. MB.94.22	Bronze fragment
102. ST.94.27	Stone basin	138. MB.94.07	Bronze fragment
103. P.94.23	Lagynos	139. MB.94.09	Bronze fragment
104. P.94.03	Spouted jug	140. MB.94.08	Bronze fragment
105. P.94.17	Slipped hemispherical bowl	141. MB.94.05	Bronze fragment
106. P.94.30	ESA fragment	142. MB.94.04	Bronze fragment
107. ST.94.13	Moulding fragment	143. ST.94.13	Stone moulding
108. P.94.24	Fine amphora	144. ST.94.12	Stone moulding
109. P.94.04	ESA Plate	145. A.94.01	Amulet with Ptolemaic eagle motif
110. ST.94.14	Stone moulding fragment	146. MB.94.23	Bronze fragment
111. G.94.06	Glass fragment	147. MB.94.27	Bronze fragment
112. MB.94.31	Bronze bit	148. MB.94.20	Bronze fragment
113. MB.94.28	Bronze needle fragment	149. MB.94.19	Bronze fragment
114. StA.94.23	Stone block with moulding	150. MB.94.21	Bronze fragment
115. A.94.02	Amulet, motif with anchor/die/cartouche?	151. MB.94.24	Bronze fragment
116. MB.94.30	Bronze bit	152. MB.94.25	Bronze fragment
117.	Stone moulding fragment	153. MB.94.12	Bronze fragment
118. P.94.19	Amphora with many mend holes	154. MB.94.14	Bronze fragments
119. TC.94.06	Terracotta jar stopper	155. ST.94.09	Grinding stone
120. TC.94.02	Terracotta pierced disk	156. MB.94.15	Bronze fragment
121. StA.94.22	Stone moulding	157. ST.94.05	Stone basin
122. ST.94.07	Stone bowl base	158. MB.94.26	Bronze fragment
123. P.94.28	Amphora base	159. G.94.02	Glass fragment
124. P.94.59	Cooking pot	160. MB.94.02	Bronze fragment
125. P.94.26	ESA plate	161.	Chalcolithic mortar
126. ST.94.01	Chalcolithic ground stone tool	162.	Stone rim

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ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Οι ανασκαφές του Πανεπιστημίου της Νέας Υόρκης στο Νησί Γερόνησος έχουν αποκαλύψει ένα σύμπλεγμα δωματίων και αυλών, χώρων οι οποίοι λειτουργούσαν ως κουζίνες και τραπεζαρίες για τους προσκυνητές που επισκέπτονταν το νησί κατά την Ελληνιστική περίοδο. Ο χώρος αυτός, ο οποίος έχει οριστεί ως το Νότιο Κεντρικό σύμπλεγμα, αποτελεί τον μεγαλύτερο σε έκταση ανεσκαμμένο χώρο στη Γερόνησο με διαστάσεις 25×15μ. Τα κατάλοιπα των θεμελίων σχηματίζουν μικρά τετράγωνα δωμάτια εξοπλισμένα με χαμηλά θρανία και πάγκους από λίθινες πλάκες που ίσως να χρησιμοποιούνταν σαν καθίσματα τραπεζαρίας. Έχουν διατηρηθεί ίχνη στάχτης, μαγειρικά σκεύη, βάσεις αγγείων, κύπελλα, λύχνοι και διάτρητοι δίσκοι. Κατά μήκος της νότιας άκρης του νησιού έχει αποκαλυφθεί κάτι που μοιάζει με γούρνα (*pliterio*), βυθισμένη σε δάπεδο και επιχρισμένη με ψημένο πηλό.

Στα είδη κεραμικής υπερισχύουν τα κύπελλα φτιαγμένα από τον χαρακτηριστικό τοπικό πηλό, Ανατολική Sigillata A, και Κυπριακή Sigillata. Κύπελλα, λάγνηνοι, οινοχόες, σουρωτήρια με προχόες, φιάλες (“fish plates”), χύτρες και μαγειρικά σκεύη έχουν ανευρεθεί σε μεγάλες ποσότητες και υποδηλώνουν διατροφή στην οποία σημαντική θέση έχουν τα υγρά ή τα στραγγισμένα φαγητά και τα αφειήματα.

Μέσα στο σύμπλεγμα ανευρέθηκαν δεκατέσσερα φυλαχτά από ασβεστόλιθο τα οποία έχουν το σχήμα υφαντικών βαριδίων και είναι διακοσμημένα με παραδοσιακά κυπριακά μοτίβα όπως το πουλί, το δέντρο της ζωής και τον αγκυλωτό σταυρό, αλλά και Πτολεμαϊκά και Αιγυπτιακά μοτίβα όπως τον αετό και το στέμμα της Ίσιδος. Τα φυλαχτά φέρουν επίσης και προτομές ηγεμόνων με διάδημα και το διπλό στέμμα των Αιγυπτίων φαραώ. Τα μοτίβα αυτά μπορούν να παραλληλιστούν με αυτά των πήλινων σφραγίδων από την Edfu στην Αίγυπτο. Οι σφραγίδες/φυλαχτά ομοιάζουν πολύ με τα φυλαχτά που απεικονίζονται στα αναθηματικά αγαλματίδια νεοκόρων (“temple boys”) τα οποία αποτελούν αφιερώματα σε κυπριακά ιερά του Απόλλωνα.

Με βάση τα μέχρι τώρα δεδομένα θα μπορούσε να θεωρηθεί ότι στη Γερόνησο υπήρχε ιερό αφιερωμένο στον Απόλλωνα, στο οποίο οι οικογένειες συνόδευαν νεαρά αγόρια ηλικίας τριών με τεσσάρων ετών, για το μεταβατικό στάδιο της διακοπής του θηλασμού. Πτολεμαϊκά όστρακα, τα οποία είναι τα μόνα που έχουν ανευρεθεί μέχρι στιγμής στην Κύπρο, φέρουν την επιγραφή ‘ΑΠΟΛΛΩ’, όπως και κατάλογο με ανδρικά ονόματα αλλά και πιθανές παιδικές ασκήσεις γραφής. Τα στοιχεία αυτά αποτελούν ενδείξεις για την παρουσία στη Γερόνησο παιδιών αρσενικού φύλου και για την ύπαρξη ιερού του Απόλλωνα. Τα φυλαχτά αποτελούν την ισχυρότερη ένδειξη του λατρευτικού χαρακτήρα της ‘Ιεράς Νήσου’ και πιθανόν να συμβάλουν σε μια πιο ολοκληρωμένη κατανόηση της φύσης της τοπικής λατρείας.

Έχουν ανευρεθεί εννέα χάλκινα νομίσματα στο Νότιο Κεντρικό σύμπλεγμα: ένα του Πτολεμαίου Η’ Ευεργέτη Β’, δύο του Πτολεμαίου Βασιλέως Κύπρου, πέντε της Κλεοπάτρας Ζ’ και Πτολεμαίου Καίσαρος και δύο της Κλεοπάτρας Ζ’. Οι ενσφράγιστες λαβές αμφορέων, οι λύχνοι και οι επιγραφές δίνουν μια χρονολόγηση στα τέλη της Πτολεμαϊκής ηγεμονίας. Είναι πιο πιθανόν το χρονικό πλαίσιο να είναι μικρότερο παρά μεγαλύτερο και είναι κατά το τρίτο τέταρτο του 1^{ου} αιώνα π.Χ. που η Γερόνησος απολάμβανε την περίοδο της μεγαλύτερης της ακμής. Η παρακμή του ιερού είχε ήδη αρχίσει όταν αυτό πλήγηκε από το σεισμό του 17 π.Χ. Με την ήττα και το θάνατο της Κλεοπάτρας το 30 π.Χ. και το τέλος της Πτολεμαϊκής ηγεμονίας χάθηκε και το ενδιαφέρον για τη διατήρηση του ιερού στη Γερόνησο.