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Excavations in 2012 at the enclosure of king Khasekhemwy at Abydos, Egypt.
Photo Walter "Gus" Gusciora.

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Message from the Director

Welcome to the third issue of *IFA Archaeology Journal*. The photographs and first-hand accounts on these pages transport us from our Beaux-Arts home in New York City to our important ancient sites around the world. We are thrilled to report on the notable discoveries and significant progress made at each of our archaeological projects this season.

At Aphrodisias in Turkey, major conservation and documentation advances were made at the Hadrianic Baths, while the Samothrace team fortuitously uncovered lost plans of the South Nekropolis, which they have digitized and made available on our website. In Sicily, fragments excavated from the Archaic floor of Temple R at Selinunte revealed an animal sacrifice; this discovery has contributed to a better understanding of both the dating and attribution of the temple. While ongoing political unrest in Egypt prevented a normal field season at Abydos, our resolute team took the opportunity to refine their goals for the future as stability returns to the country.

Archaeological fieldwork is an invaluable component of the Institute's curriculum. These opportunities expand our students' horizons and prepare them for whatever paths they may pursue in the future. We are so very grateful for your continuing support. It is the critical component that allows us to make these experiences a reality for so many of our talented students. We hope you will enjoy taking this journey with us as we reflect on the past and look to the future with great excitement.

Patricia Rubin

Patricia Rubin
Judy and Michael Steinhardt Director
Institute of Fine Arts

Abydos, Egypt



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

In recent years the Abydos project has sometimes been confronted by new challenges that are part of contemporary Egypt. Prudence in the context of ongoing political uncertainty in late 2013 and early 2014 made a regular field season inadvisable. Nevertheless, this has been an important time for the project.

A feature article entitled “The Buried: Excavating the Egyptian Revolution,” by noted writer Peter Hessler appeared in the November 18, 2013 issue of *The New Yorker*. He spent considerable time with the Abydos team during its 2013 field season, and presents the project’s work, particularly its response to the looting that occurred during and after Egypt’s 2011 revolution, in the complex context of Egypt today.

Without the demands of a field season in 2014, the project directors have been focused on planning for the future, including fundraising. One of the project’s most important goals is the completion of its pioneering program of architectural conservation at the monument of king Khasekhemwy, ca. 2700 BCE, which was included on the World Monuments Fund 2008 Watch List of the world’s most significant and endangered sites. Khasekhemwy was the last of the early kings to be buried at Abydos, and he, like his predecessors, built a monumental mudbrick walled enclosure at Abydos in which rituals of the royal cult were conducted, including those associated with his funeral. His is the only one to survive as a standing structure. These unique early royal monuments are a major research focus for the project, and preserving this sole surviving example is the aim of the conservation program. To date, more than half the essential conservation measures have been successfully implemented, greatly improving its overall stability. Nevertheless, significant parts remain untreated and at great risk. The project is committed to completing the conservation of the monument and to raising the funds needed to do so.

The project’s work over many years in different components of the ancient site has produced a unique and rich collection of archaeological study material. This very richness has come to be a challenge. Recent support from the Institute of Bioarchaeology at the British Museum permitted the construction of dedicated storage and analysis facilities for bioarchaeological material, primarily human and animal remains. The project has now been awarded a grant from the American Research Center in Egypt for a major new storeroom to house other components of the collection, as well as a dedicated conservation lab, to be built in early 2015. With this support, the existing collection can be appropriately accommodated, and the project will be well positioned to absorb the likely results of future work.

With stability returning to Egypt, the Abydos project is looking ahead to resuming its regular winter field seasons, to continuing to provide unique field training and research opportunities to IFA students, and to carrying on with the research that is shedding important light on the long history of one of ancient Egypt’s most important places.

Figure 1: Interior of the enclosure of king Khasekhemwy at Abydos. Photo Greg Maka.

Figure 2: Architectural conservation work in 2012 at the enclosure of king Khasekhemwy at Abydos. Photo Greg Maka.

Figure 3: Skeleton from a Dynasty 1 (ca. 3000 BCE) burial, laid out for documentation and analysis in the new bioarchaeology lab at the Abydos field house. Photo Walter “Gus” Gusciora.

Figure 4: Remains of a painted cartonnage broad collar, part of a deposit of discarded later cultic objects inside the enclosure of king Khasekhemwy. Photo Amanda Kirkpatrick.

Figure 5: Abydos Project mason Ramadan Mohamed Suleyman repairing a large hole at the monument of king Khasekhemwy at Abydos. Photo Greg Maka.

Aphrodisias, Turkey

Aphrodisias illuminates brilliantly the trajectory of cities in the eastern Mediterranean, from the Roman Empire into the complex post-classical world. The Aphrodisias team worked this year on four major field projects in July and August.

The Tetrapylon Street runs north-south from the Tetrapylon to the Sebasteion, and its excavation is designed to investigate the history of Byzantine, Seljuk, and Ottoman Aphrodisias. This year a single large trench (34x12 m) worked from modern village layers down to Roman street level. A Byzantine workshop was found to contain hundreds of fragments of glass slag, glass jewelry, and larger glass cups. Its primary glass production was made from Roman and late antique cullet. High-quality lead seals from the same context are evidence of the importance of Byzantine Aphrodisias. The removal of the seventh-century debris layer over the street revealed the remains of the colonnade and brick arches from its upper storey, collapsed onto the Roman paving.

The Mica and Ahmet Ertegun South Agora project exposed important medieval remains in a large trench (52x37 m) across the eastern half of the pool. Further trenches explored the planting beds for the palm grove outside the pool and the chronology of the north stoa. Major advances were made in the architectural documentation of the pool and in recording the unusually dense body of graffiti and gameboards inscribed on the colonnades and on the pool edge. The central area of this grand shaded complex was a locus of intense social interaction and prolonged leisure time.

Major conservation and documentation in the Hadrianic Baths made excellent progress. The sloping collapse of the marble floor in Room 5 was stabilized and conserved for presentation. In Room 12, the painstaking work on the shattered marble paving of the circular hot pool was completed. Large information panels were prepared for installation in Room 6, and four fully-restored chambers of the baths will soon be open to the public.

The Sebasteion Propylon was an extravagant columnar entrance to the Sebasteion imperial cult complex. In 2014, work concentrated on the northern part of the structure. Its projecting podia were repaired, reinforced, and made ready to support the columns and their superstructure. The column bases, drums, capitals, and architraves were conserved and repaired to function again as load-bearing members. Missing parts were restored in artificial steel-reinforced stone and then hand-carved. The re-erecting of the first-storey columns over the northern part of the foundation was carried out in September.

Documentation and publication projects were pursued on the Basilica, Bouleuterion, Stadium, Temple of Aphrodite, sarcophagi, late antique statues, inscriptions, coins, and environmental remains. Epigraphic finds included a new fragment of Diocletian's Currency Edict of AD 301, an important imperial law attested only at Aphrodisias.

Figure 1: South Agora and pool, Trench 14.1, from east (2014).

Figure 2: Reconstruction drawing of statue of champion boxer Piseas, from south analemma wall of Theatre (2014).

Figure 3: Civil Basilica, composite pier capital from South Hall with newly identified and restored bull's head from depot (2014).

Figure 4: Sebasteion Propylon, anastylosis, columns and architrave-friezes (2014).

Figure 5: South Agora, Trench 2, 2014, between pool and north stoa, from west (2014).

Figure 6: Hadrianic Baths, Room 12: after work on shattered marble floor of circular hot pool (2013-14).

All Aphrodisias images © IFA – NYU.



Fig. 1

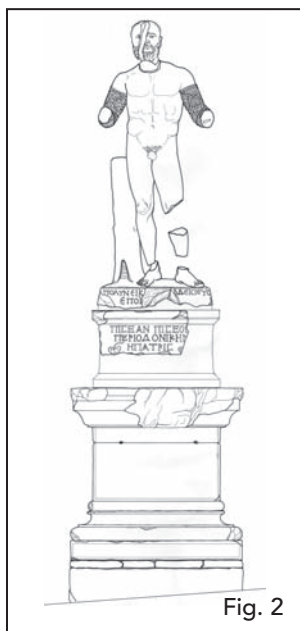


Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6

Samothrace, Greece

Over the course of the past year, the Winged Victory of Samothrace underwent a major restoration, and members of the Samothrace team were directly involved in the process. Last season, we three-dimensionally scanned the major fragments belonging to the Rhodian marble prow that forms the base of the monument. The fragments were then “printed” this year in Paris, in a lightweight plastic that allowed large and small fragments to be moved around. While the prow was disassembled, we were able to find the joins between each of the Samothracian fragments and their parent blocks in the Louvre (Figure 1). The “prints” were then cast in plaster to be integrated in the restored prow. The cleaned and reassembled statue (without the modern intermediate block) has now been returned to view at the top of the Daru Staircase (Figure 3).

We continue to work on the setting of the statue within the Sanctuary. The highly evocative fountain setting proposed by Karl Lehmann must be set aside, but there is little evidence to determine whether the statue was originally set within a building or in an open peribolos. We are experimenting with both possibilities, and offer tentative visualization of each option here (Figure 2).

We have good news to report for the South Nekropolis as well. IFA graduate Elsbeth Dusenbery devoted her research career to the excavation and publication of the nekropoleis near the Sanctuary of the Great Gods. In 1998 she published *Samothrace. Excavations Conducted by the Institute of Fine Arts of New York University*, volume 11, *The Nekropoleis*. Although the large South Nekropolis was extensively documented with reference to an excavation grid, the volume appeared without a plan of the area. By happy coincidence, at the close of the 2013 season, conservation student Kathryn Brugioni found an envelope containing photocopies of 37 plan sheets, which had slipped behind boxes of supplies in the conservation lab. The drawings were immediately recognized as the lost plan of the South Nekropolis. During the 2014 season, we joined the sheets into a single plan, which we then verified against the visible remains at the site. We have made the plan available in a layered PDF with additional information. Excavation numbers, catalogue numbers and color-coding according to Dusenbery’s chronology, highlight the development and density of this important cemetery, which was used from the sixth century BCE through the Roman imperial period. The plan is now available for download on our website.¹

As part of our project to model the Sanctuary three-dimensionally, we experimented this summer with the photogrammetry program Agisoft Photoscan (Figure 4). This method of recording effectively captures vertical surfaces, and the images can be integrated into a larger 3D spatial environment such as AutoCAD or 3dsMax. We are using the images to enhance our 3D model of the site. They also serve as valuable documents recording, photo-realistically as well as spatially, the current state of each monument.

Each year one of our central responsibilities has been to work with Greek colleagues to maintain and enhance the site, both for the conservation of monuments and the enjoyment of visitors. This summer, for the first time since they were re-erected by the IFA in 1956, the columns of the Hieron were again covered in scaffolding, as conservators worked to clean the marble, seal small fissures, and repair a larger crack in the epistyle (Figure 5). By the time the *Journal* appears, the scaffolding will be down and the columns will once again be the visual highlight of the Sanctuary. Our conservation team worked intensively to prepare the proposal for the Phase II of the comprehensive site management plan, which addresses the western region of the Sanctuary. The proposed plan focuses on the conservation of the existing monuments from the Nike Precinct to the Milesian Banquet Hall, and also offers a new system of pathways and a reorganization of key architectural material to enhance the visitors’ experience of this richly complex region of the Sanctuary.

¹ www.samothrace.emory.edu or <http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/fineart/academics/samothrace/samothrace.htm>

Figure 1: Bonna Wescoat and Ludovic Laugier fit “printed” fragments of the oarbox into place. Photo N. Bruhière.

Figure 2: Photographic sketch reconstruction of the Nike Monument in a covered building or an open peribolos. C. Jordan.

Figure 3: The cleaned statue back in position, 2014. Photo Musée du Louvre.

Figure 4: Photogrammetry of a tomb in the South Nekropolis. M. C. Page.

Figure 5: Hieron in scaffolding as team repairs the columns and epistyle. Photo B. D. Wescoat.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4a

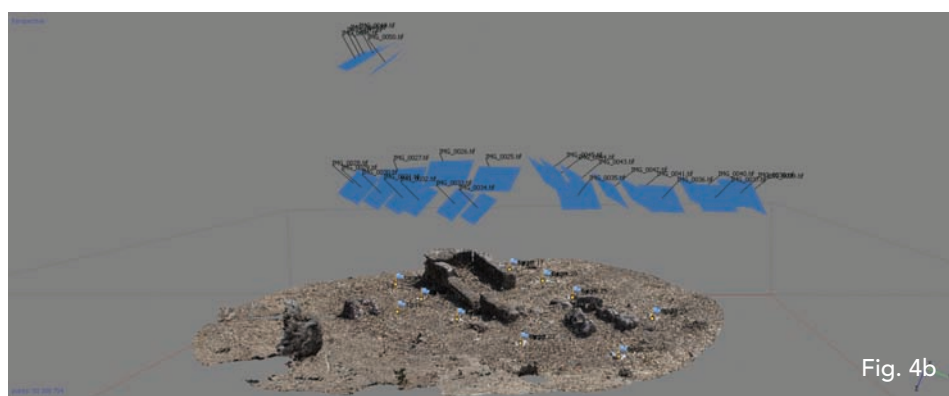


Fig. 4b



Fig. 5

Selinunte, Sicily



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

In May and June 2014 we carried out our eighth campaign of excavation in the main urban sanctuary. This season has produced important new findings in the adyton of Temple R, which contribute significantly to our understanding of not only this particular building, but of important aspects of Greek cult practice.

Work this season consisted of the continued excavation of Trench P, opened in the previous year in the adyton of Temple R (Figure 1). By the end of the season, the Classical and Archaic levels in the trench were excavated, down to the floor of an earlier structure datable to the seventh century BCE. The *adyton* ("not to be entered") is the innermost chamber of a Greek temple. Widely attested in South Italy and Sicily, particularly at Selinunte, this special room housed the cult statue and precious votive offerings. The *adyton* of Temple R can now be regarded as one of the best preserved and documented of its kind in Sicily. Our excavations provide substantial new evidence toward the determination of the functions and uses of this room in the Archaic and Classical periods.

Our first finding this season was a wide looting pit dug into the center of the *adyton*, which reached all the way down to the bedrock, cutting through the stratigraphy associated with the earlier phases (Figure 2). This pit was sealed by the late fifth-century floor excavated in 2013, and thus is best associated with the Carthaginian conquest of Selinunte in 409 BCE. Fragments of precious votive offerings (including gold, silver and bone) (Figure 3) from the cut and fill of the pit suggest that it may have served for the looting of a foundation deposit placed in the center of the *adyton*. In this operation, the floor against the north and south interior walls was left untouched. The excavation of this floor revealed the complete absence of votive offerings underneath, showing that while in the *cella* votive depositions were generally lined against the interior walls, the practice in the *adyton* was quite the opposite. Of particular significance was the discovery of dozens of loom weights in the fill of the looting pit (Figure 4).

Under the burnt layer corresponding to the Carthaginian destruction of 409 BCE, we excavated a thick layer (ca. 1 m high) of stone chips (from the dressing of the ashlar blocks of our building) that served as the foundation for the Archaic floor of Temple R. The materials from this layer confirm the dating of the construction of our building to ca. 580 BCE. Particularly notable has been the discovery of the remains of an animal sacrifice, consisting of a thin layer of ash and bones and deposited directly upon the limestone chips (Figure 5).

The latter bore clear signs of burning, suggesting a primary sacrifice. The bone fragments (burnt at a temperature exceeding 600° F) belong to a ram (including a large horn fragment), two sheep, and one goat. This was likely a sacrifice associated with the construction of Temple R, which has particular significance in consideration of the attribution of this building to Demeter and Kore, and the strong connection of the ram with the cult of Persephone.

Finally, under the layer of stone chips, we found the remains of a large structure taking most of the area of the trench. Evidence for this structure consists mainly of a clay floor (pierced by five pits of varying width and depth) similar to the one excavated in 2010 in trench L, but thicker; this, along with the distance between the two floors, may point to two separate structures, both dated to the first generation of life of the Greek colony. Finally, it may be noted that in the excavation of the fill of the looting pit, particularly towards the bottom, we have identified a significant number of fragments of Late Bronze Age pottery.

The fact that the Orientalizing, and possibly Bronze Age layers in the *adyton* are still untouched makes us very hopeful about next year's campaign, which could lead to major discoveries regarding the early stages of life of the colony, which was originally settled in this area, as evidenced by our findings in the previous campaigns.

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to our sponsors, to the Sicilian Ministry of Culture, and to the Director of the Archaeological Park of Selinunte, Dr. Giovanni Leto Barone. We are very grateful to all those students, experts and colleagues who have contributed to the success of this year's season: in particular, Marya Fisher, Andrew Ward, Sonia Rohrer, Lee Ambrozy, Madeleine Glennon, Rachel Hirt, Jessica Walthew, Rebecca Gridley, Elizabeth Trepton, Lindsay Dobrovolsky, Amy Miranda, Alison Hight, and Flavio Ferlito, Ferdinando Lentini, Roberto Micciché, Debora Messina, Nino Vultaggio, David Scahill and Massimo Limoncelli, Anna Serotta and Caroline Roberts, Lorenzo Lazzarini, Massimo Cultraro, Valeria Tardo, Caterina Trombi, Martha Kokkidou, Katerina Karatasaki, Filippo Pisciotta, and Raffaele Franco.

Figure 1: Aerial view of Temple R at the end of the 2014 excavation.

Figure 2: View of looting pit.

Figure 3: Fragment of bone fibula.

Figure 4: Excavation of the bottom of the looting pit.

Figure 5: Excavation of the remains of animal sacrifice in the foundations of the floor of Temple R.

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This list includes contributions to the projects received from September 1, 2013 - October 1, 2014.



Theatre hill, retaining wall, South Agora, and pool, Aphrodisias, Turkey (2014). (© IFA – NYU.)

For information on how you can support the IFA Archaeology Program,
contact Christina Tripi at christina.tripi@nyu.edu or 212-992-5837.



Remains of seventh century building in the area of the adyton at Selinunte, Sicily. (© IFA – NYU.)



Donor Spotlight: Alumna Mary Lee Baranger (Ph.D. '60)

Alumna Mary Lee Baranger (Ph.D. '60), who supported all four sites this season, explains why the IFA Archaeological Program is important to her:

"How do we know what we know about the ancient world? Starting with the gritty dusty work of digging, the finds can be humble: some potsherds, fragments of stone, chunks of painted plaster, abraded coins, a few letters of an inscription...these are the fruits of my season as a trench master in the late 1950s at Samothrace. As a Ph.D. candidate under Karl Lehman I had the basic exposure to excavation. My career as a college professor of Greek and Roman art history was rooted in this first-hand experience. I could visit other digs, and archaeological museums, evaluate publications for my students and share with them the excitement of discovery."

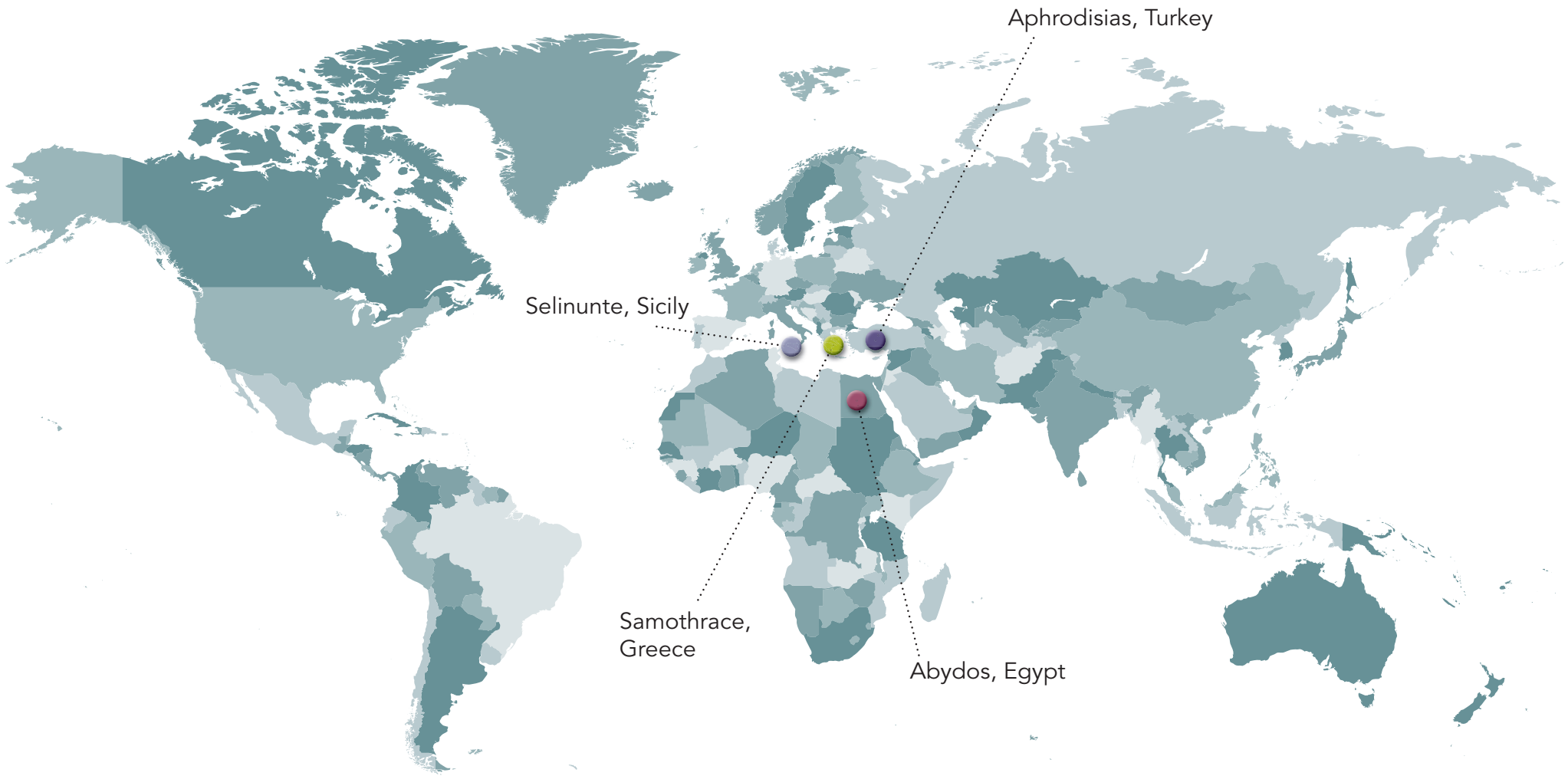
Student Voices: Chelsea Blance

This past summer, I was thrilled to be able to participate in the excavations at Aphrodisias in Turkey. While I had not worked at any archaeological sites prior to arriving in Turkey, my position as a trench supervisor enabled me to learn more about the field of archaeology than I had anticipated. As supervisors, we had many different responsibilities, such as drawing marble revetment and fragments to scale, monitoring stratigraphic units, interpreting structures that were found, as well as simply keeping a record of our daily activities. The most important skill that I used, and the one that will be most important for my future research and job prospects, was the ability to adapt and rapidly change perspectives on the structures that were found. I also had the opportunity to visit other local archaeological sites, and was therefore able to learn many different theories relating to the practice of modern architecture. As an art historian, I am accustomed to seeing objects after they have been preserved, many years after they were found *in situ*. Seeing non-conserved objects in their original locations has given me a new appreciation of the many lives of art objects, from their original intended usages to their placements within a museum setting.



Chelsea Blance is a second-year M.A. student.

IFA Archaeology Excavation Site Countries



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