

Judy in the sixties: an inspiration

CHRISTINE ESLICK and DAVID FRANKEL

Sydney University, March 1965. The theatre dims and a single, glowing light reflects upward, highlighting a wild, cloaked figure, staff in hand. It is a dramatic scene, but not the opening of the Scottish play. This *Weird Sister* from St Andrews is conjuring different visions, challenging the audience to follow her as she kindles remote pasts to life. Judy in Latin I is stimulating and capturing another generation of first year Archaeology students.

From initial classes through to postgraduate study Judy introduced us and many others to the masochistic joys of research, of continual questioning and of all facets of archaeology: data, theory and practice. Her lectures on the Near East opened a whole new world, made all the more exciting because of her obvious enthusiasm and fascination with the subject, while the introduction she gave us to ‘method and theory’ took us where few Old World archaeologists of the time had gone.

From 1967 Judy’s excavations at Irrawang became a focal point of archaeology at Sydney, dominating our lives for several years (Birmingham 1976; Frankel 1968). This was not only the first major historical archaeology excavation in the Sydney region; it was also a training dig. It gave us experience of digging and also—thanks to Judy’s hands-off approach—of



Fig. 3: Excavating at Irrawang, 1968.

organising and directing an expedition of up to 30 people, all of whom had to be fed, housed and provided with rudimentary hygiene facilities. We were then fortunate to consolidate our excavation skills under her guidance at a very different site, at Zagora on the Greek island of Andros, where she was field director in the initial seasons (Cambitoglou et al. 1971).

In the 1960s and early 1970s Judy was the only female lecturer in the Department of Archaeology (as it was then) and inevitably became a role model for any woman who wanted to work as an archaeologist, especially in the Near East. But men, too, were influenced by her role. As the first archaeologist to appear before students there was little chance that even the most conventional young man could maintain an old-fashioned and inappropriately gendered view of what an archaeologist should be like.

Judy’s archaeological interests have had a rare breadth, in terms of both period and area. In the days before India and Australian historical archaeology absorbed her energies, Judy worked in Turkey and Cyprus. Her 1963 survey in south-western Turkey provided an insight into an area that was, at the time, almost completely unknown archaeologically, while her attack on the Iron Age in Cyprus was a pioneering attempt to reconfigure that domain (Birmingham 1961, 1963). By



Fig. 1: Waterlogged Irrawang excavations, 1968.



Fig. 2: Judy at work. Baling water from a puddling mill at Irrawang, 1968.



Fig. 4: Marilyn Truscott at the Irrawang exhibition, Fisher Library, Sydney University 1968.



Fig. 5: Running late, as always: Judy and Christine Eslick in the early morning at Menites, Andros.



Fig. 7: Judy in the lab at Menites, Andros.



Fig. 6: Judy in the field at Zagora, 1969.



Fig. 8: Judy with David Frankel, John Wade and Peter Callaghan on the ferry from Andros at the end of the 1969 season at Zagora.

introducing us to the archaeology of these two areas she determined much of the course of our own research (indeed, of much of our lives) and ultimately those of our students and their students in turn. For this we have much to thank her, and offer this brief note as a small tribute to our most inspiring teacher.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- BIRMINGHAM, J. 1961. 'The overland route across Anatolia in the eighth and seventh centuries B.C.', *Anatolian Studies* XI:185–195.
- BIRMINGHAM, J. 1963. 'The chronology of some Early and Middle Cypriot Iron Age sites', *American Journal of Archaeology* 67:15–42.

- BIRMINGHAM, J. 1976. 'The archaeological contribution to nineteenth-century history: some Australian examples', *World Archaeology* 7:306–317.
- CAMBITOGLU, A., J.J. COULTON, J. BIRMINGHAM and J.R. GREEN. 1971. *Zagora 1. Excavation of a Geometric settlement on the island of Andros, Greece*, Australian Academy of the Humanities Monograph 2, Sydney University Press, Sydney.
- FRANKEL, D. 1968. 'An early colonial pottery works in the Hunter Valley. Sydney University Archaeological Society excavations at Irrawang', *The Union Recorder* XLVIII (16):188–189.