1. **Introduction**

A sixth season of archaeological excavation is planned to take place at the site of Gerace (province of Enna) between early May and early June 2019, co-sponsored by the University of British Columbia’s Centre for the Study of Ancient Sicily and the Soprintendenza ai Beni Culturali Ambientali di Enna. The proposed excavation will last four weeks, commencing on **Monday 6th May** and ending on **Saturday 1st June 2019**. An excavation permit has been requested from the Sicilian Regional Government for 2019, and permission to dig from the landowner has already been secured.

2. **The excavation site**

The site is that of a Roman villa estate in the heart of Sicily, situated in fertile agricultural land surrounded to the north by an amphitheatre of gentle hills. It was discovered by accident 25 years ago when a drainage ditch burst its banks and cut through one corner of an ancient structure, exposing a mosaic. Subsequent limited excavation discovered the ground plan on the surface of a small Roman villa with five rooms and an irregular L-shaped corridor. Trial trenching descending to floor level suggested that there were geometric mosaic pavements in at least two rooms, well preserved beneath a tile fall at the time of the building’s destruction. This building was further partially investigated in 2007, but still
has not been completely uncovered. It has about a dozen rooms, included a mosaic-paved corridor and
dining room. It was partially uncovered by UBC teams in the 2013, 2015 and 2016 UBC field seasons,
when a new chronology for the building was established: the villa was built c. AD 370/80 and destroyed
a century later by fire. There were signs that it had never been finished. An important deposit in a
storeroom in this villa of several thousand seeds (including wheat, barley, beans, peas and lentils),
carbonized by the fire, was discovered in 2015. Over 280 tiles marked PHILIPPIANI (for one see photo
on p. 4) have been found in the 2013–2018 excavations: eleven different dies are associated with this
production. One of the kilns where these were made was excavated in 2017: the bricks used to build the
kiln bore the same name. Philippianus was clearly the owner of the Gerace estate, who was active in the
second half of the fourth century AD.

In 2012, preliminary investigations at the site, in the form of a geophysical survey, were conducted by a
team from the British School at Rome. This research defined the location of further buildings apart from
the small villa structure. One, 45 m long, has been partially excavated and found to be paved with an
intact stone floor; built c. AD 300, it served as a storehouse for grain and other agricultural produce from
the estate. It collapsed, probably in an earthquake during the 360s AD, and was never rebuilt; it was
partly covered by structures belonging to the late Roman villa. Other buildings were indicated by the
geophysical survey, as well as the position of several kilns, which have added greatly to our knowledge
of the site: the latter sites were explored in 2017 and 2018.

The cleaning of the newly uncovered mosaic of the bath-house by UBC students in 2018

In 2016–2018, excavation has been focusing on a freestanding bath-building, with heated rooms, cold
and hot pools, mosaic pavements and marble lining on the walls. An almost intact geometric mosaic with
an inscription was found in the cold room (frigidarium). The inscription (in Latin) reads: ‘May the
estates of the Philippiani prosper! Joy at the Capitoline (contests in Rome)! May you dedicate more, may
you dedicate better things! Asclepiades, may you grow old with your family!’ Asclepiades was probably
the landowner (Philippianus)’s son. The baths were probably built c. AD 380. They were
decommissioned after an earthquake in the second half of the fifth century, when the building was
stripped of its tiles and its bricks, for use elsewhere – an interesting instance of late Roman recycling. So after a life of about a century the baths were filled in and the ground level raised. A series of Byzantine structures arose on the site in the sixth century: they belong to an agricultural village which was the successor of the élite buildings of the late Roman estate.

An African red slip lamp found in 2017, made in Tunisia in the fifth century AD

The aims of the project in 2019 are:

(a) to complete the excavation of the bath-house by investigating the caldarium (hot room) and an associated hot pool; the remaining cold-water pool opening off the frigidarium will also be excavated.

General view of the mosaic in the frigidarium, uncovered at Gerace in 2018
A cold-water pool in the bath-building, excavated in 2017 and 2018

(b) To open a trench or trenches to the north-west and/or (possibly) the north-east of the bath-house with the intention of locating further Roman structures, thought to lie adjacent to the baths. In particular it is hoped to locate a possible luxury villa designed and built by Phillippianus at the same time as the baths (c. AD 380) for himself and his family.

The project will continue to recover and study ceramic remains (pottery, lamps, amphorae, tile), with a view to learning more about both local ceramic circulation in the Roman period and the extent of imported wares, so as to understand better Gerace’s trading links with other parts of Sicily and of the Mediterranean during the Roman period. It will also continue to recover faunal and carbonized seed remains in order to establish the range of plants grown and animals raised (or at any rate consumed) by the inhabitants of Gerace.

Full details of the 2013, 2015 and 2016 excavations are available in published reports in the journal Mouseion, available on-line in the UBC library through JSTOR (or available from the Director on request). In addition, a paper on the stamped tiles found in the 2013 excavations was published in Journal of Roman Archaeology 27 (2014), pp. 472–86. Excavation did not take place in 2014. A brief summary of the principal results of the 2016 excavations can be found at https://cnrs.ubc.ca/for-
undergraduates/ archaeological-field-schools/sicily-2016/ and for 2017 the same link except for the last digit (7 instead of 6); and for 2018 the same link again except 8/ instead if 6/ at the end.

3. Training excavation

This will be a training excavation (a Field School), and two site supervisors, highly experienced professional archaeologists, will be employed to supervise the excavation and the recording. Training will be given in such skills as trowelling; stratigraphy; context sheets; surveying; planning; interpreting, recording and drawing archaeological sections; identifying and handling small finds; pot-washing and marking; and photography. The excavation will take place for 6 days each week, a total of 24 days. There will be opportunities for three students to stay for ten days longer, at no extra cost, helping with post-excavation work after the conclusion of actual digging. Any student who wishes can enrol on the UBC fieldwork courses, CNRS 335 for undergraduates, CNRS 535 for graduate students: for details of these courses, see http://cnrs.ubc.ca/people/r-j-a-wilson/ and then choose 'Teaching'. The tuition fee for this is not included in the cost stated in section 7 below.

4. Accommodation

Accommodation, within walking distance of the excavation site (approximately 10 minutes), will be in a bed and breakfast (agriturismo) called Il Mandorleto: see www.ilmandorleto.it. Dinner will also be provided there; lunch will be a picnic, eaten under shaded cover in the garden of Il Mandorleto after the conclusion of each morning’s work. Among other amenities, Il Mandorleto has a swimming pool. Internet access is somewhat constricted, and cell-phone coverage does not normally reach Gerace, although patchy contact in certain locations is possible. You have been warned! Successful applicants must expect in advance to be partly or largely without internet or phone contact for the four weeks’ duration of the project.

5. Daily routine

Work begins on site at 0700. Pause on site for ‘second breakfast’ at 0930. Digging stops at 1400. After lunch, siesta until 1615. 1630–1830: one group will wash and mark the day’s finds near the pot-shed; a second, larger group will return to site for further excavation. Dinner 1930. Bed: 2200. As noted above, we will be working a six-day week. On the seventh day there will be optional excursions (at no extra charge) to other archaeological sites in Sicily: to Agrigento, Syracuse, Morgantina, and to the Roman villa near Piazza Armerina.

One of roof tiles stamped ‘Philippiani’, and (right) a brick with his monogram found at Gerace
6. **Numbers**

The group will consist of approximately 22 people, including the director, a draughtsperson, a palaeobotanist, a ceramicist and two experienced site supervisors (hired from MOLA, the professional archaeological field unit in London, UK). There are also up to four workmen (but normally two) who will also be assisting us, as will a mechanical digger when necessary (e.g. to remove the topsoil layer). **There are vacancies for up to 15 UBC students.** Preference will be given to those with prior archaeological experience, but the latter is not essential. No application for a period less than the full excavation season
of four weeks will be considered. Applications are invited on the form in the attached link (see end of this document), which should be sent to me electronically, **not later than 12 noon on Thursday 6th December 2018** at roger.wilson@ubc.ca If you have any questions before you apply, please contact me, Roger Wilson, at that e-mail address or by telephoning 604-221-9407. Please note that applications should **NOT** be sent to Go Global but directly to me. Interviews of applicants will take place in the second and third weeks of January. I hope to let applicants know whether or not they have been accepted by **Wednesday 23rd January 2019**. The Director's decision is of course final.

![The 2018 dig team at Gerace](image)

### 7. **Cost**

The cost for the four weeks will be CDN$2995. All meals and the accommodation are included in this price, except for lunch and dinner on Sundays (see below). GoGlobal offers a grant to support you ($1000 in 2019), provided that you qualify; there is a charge for registration for GoGlobal of $415. To learn if you qualify, see [https://students.ubc.ca/enrolment/finances/awards-scholarships-bursaries/awards-participating-go-global](https://students.ubc.ca/enrolment/finances/awards-scholarships-bursaries/awards-participating-go-global) For the GoGlobal award you also have to be enrolled in CNRS 335a or 535. For those wishing to participate in the project without registering for the CNRS course, payment of the fieldwork cost can be made directly to the Director; otherwise payment will be through GoGlobal. Canadian and US students can enter freely into Italy, so no visas are necessary. Please note that your passport must have at least three months' validity left after you are due to return to Canada. Students will in addition have to make their own way out to Sicily and pay for that. The nearest airport is Catania, from where you should take a bus to Enna Bassa; I will arrange collection from there. There will be no extra charge for the Sunday excursions (see above, § 5), but meals each Sunday will be payable by the participant, irrespective of whether the excursion is taken. Pocket money for incidental expenses, e.g. drinks, ice-creams, postcards, stamps, telephone, should also be borne in mind. Successful applicants are strongly advised to obtain insurance in case of medical emergencies. A tetanus injection is also essential. Neither the Director nor the University of British Columbia can be held responsible for any mishap that may occur either during the excavation or at any time during the whole expedition: you are required to sign an indemnity waiver at the end of the Application Form.
8. *Additional note*

Excavation is exhausting and often tedious work, and the Sicilian heat is intense and oppressive in May and June. Every member of the team is expected to be in reasonable physical shape and capable of sustained manual labour. Excavation is an expensive business, and extracting the maximum possible results within the time and limited resources available will be our unswerving goal. There will be a lot of fun, certainly, but the regime will be a tightly disciplined one. Complete dedication to the excavation programme, and constant and consistent hard work, will be expected. Any intending volunteer who has doubts about this, or who thinks that the expedition to Sicily will be an excuse for a holiday in the sun, should not apply.

9. *Previous years’ excavations*

- Sicily 2018
- Sicily 2017
- Sicily 2016
- Sicily 2015

**Excavations in Sicily 2019 Application Form**