

ANNUAL REPORT: GREECE-KEPHALLENIA2015 FIELD SCHOOL

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Corridor swimming along the southern coast of the Island of Kephallenia

THE PROJECT: Archaeological Shoreline Research is an interdisciplinary project set up to explore the historical significance of the coastal zone. The project runs in collaboration with the National Centre of Scientific Research “Demokritos” and the Hellenic Centre of Marine Research. The Initiative for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage supported this project during years 2014-2015. The research design explores the interrelations between archaeology and earth sciences, geology and oceanography in particular, through the application of standard survey methodology. A four-week IFR Field School took place on the Island of Kephallenia between June 29th – July 26th 2015. All students realized the emphatic role of the different disciplines for the understanding of material culture in its original setting and the importance of an integrated frame for material culture management. All students realized the importance of teamwork. Despite the economic crisis and the ensuing capital controls that caused an ad hoc rescheduling of the programmed activities, the programme went forward.

Experts in the field this year included:

- Dr Yannis Bassiakos, Geology, Geochronology, Palaeoenvironment (H.C.S.R. «Demokritos»)
- Professor George Theodorou, Palaeontology (Athens University)
- Dr EviVardala, Marine Biology (Gaia Environmental Centre, Goulandris Natural History Museum, Athens)
- Dr EftychiaYannouli, Zooarchaeology, Landscape and Marine Fauna, Palaeoenvironment
- Dr Eleni Philippaki, Geology-Geochemistry (H.C.S.R. «Demokritos»)
- Maria Kazantzaki Ph.D. candidate, Metallurgy (H.C.S.R. «Demokritos»)
- Vangelis Tsakalos, Ph.D. candidate, Geology/Geochronology (H.C.S.R. «Demokritos»)
- Stelios Petrakis (MSc.) Ph.D. candidate, Marine Geology, Athens University (TA)
- Glenn Martin (MA) Ph.D. candidate, History and Cultural Management, Kent University (TA)

Week 1 was dedicated to intensive teaching in class and in the field regarding project aims and methods focusing on the basic concepts, research tools and terms to be used. During weeks 2-4

students took part in the survey of the coastal zone designed concurrently on land and sea. Work started at 8.00 am followed by the lunch break at 2.00 pm. Work was resumed in the lab between 5.30 – 8.30 pm.

All students took part in educational activities. Trips were organized to a prehistoric cave site with stalagmites and stalactites, a sinkhole with evidence of cult of the archaic period, the modern city of Same and the highest range of the island trekking on the summit of Mt Ainos. A lecture on Mycenaean tholoi was delivered at the tomb site of our base in Poros. A guest lecturer, Dr Geoffery Schmalz, presented an account on Ancient Greek Pottery with reference to his excavations in the nearby cemetery of the city-state of Pronnoi.

Students' achievements and contribution: Students acquired a background on project related topics through lectures on Archaeology in Greece from the Pleistocene to the end of the Bronze Age, Kephallenia in the Ionian Sea, Zooarchaeology, Maritime Archaeology and Aquatic Zoology, Geologic time and Quaternary Cycles, Beach Formation Processes, a seminar on Palaeontology in Greece conducted by a leading expert in the field as well as ad hoc discussions on the advantage and challenges of interdisciplinary research. Practicals were designed to enable students identify the geomorphology of coasts and the basic aspects of lithic and ceramic typology. Students were thus able to survey on land and sea, identify, record, measure and discuss survey finds and features and use an underwater camera. They also participated in the identification of fundamental coastal formation processes, such as sedimentation and grain-size analysis, the location of faults, sea level rise, the typology and documentation of notches, sedimentary arrows, sand dunes and sea currents, land contours and isobaths. One student opted for the systematic recording of sea notches using standard measuring techniques, an underwater camera with in-built applications and GPS measurements uploaded on a GIS platform of documentation. During lab work students documented features using Q-GIS and plug-ins for Google satellite, learnt how to import/export images and create features within a base map. In all, students realized the impact that earth formation processes have on the type and state of the archaeological evidence on shores, calling for a systematic and extensive record of geoarchaeological documentation.

Research accomplishments: More than 33 km of shores were surveyed during the first phase of this project (2011-2015) on the island of Kephallenia. A vast array of finds, sites and features were recorded. More than six km of coasts were investigated during the current field season extending between Skala, south of Poros, and Kateleios, an anchorage of the south coast. Finds range from the Prehistoric to the Byzantine Eras. Typical prehistoric data include a semi-submerged oval structure and stone tools. A workshop site of three kilns and other features date to the Byzantine Period. Some pottery shards and a fair number of tiles also fall within the Roman-Byzantine time periods. Some finds were recorded for the first time on Kephallenia and/or the Ionian Sea. A major find this year had to do with work on the fossilized remnants of a large vertebrate, evidently a mastodon. Being the first instance of such a discovery in the Ionian Sea, its study is expected to raise a number of issues relating to its palaeogeographic and palaeoenvironmental context and perhaps its cultural context.

Dissemination of results: A brief presentation of the IFR-Kephallenia 2015 teamwork took place at Poros on our lab premises, following the conclusion of this year's research. In March 2015 the Maritime Antiquities Service, the Ministry of Culture, invited us to present under the Innovative Research Projects Session some of our finds and methods in a conference celebrating 40 years of Maritime Archaeology in Greece, 1976-2014, at the Acropolis Museum, Athens (in Greek).

The Archaeological Shoreline Research investigation platform will be included in a forthcoming publication of conference proceedings by B.A.R. Oxbow Books (in English).