CYA Syllabus

ARCX 326
Excavating Prehistory on an Aegean Island: Gourimadi Archaeological Project
Summer 2024
2 June – 28 June 2024

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1. Course Description

This course will take place as part of the Gourimadi Archaeological Project (GAP), an international prehistoric research excavation on the southern tip of the Aegean Island of Euboea (modern *Evia*). The course is designed to provide advanced archaeological field experience to undergraduate students, as well as a theoretical and methodological background regarding excavation techniques and Aegean Archaeology. The course will introduce the students to modern excavation, recording, and documentation methods, and the knowledge gained will translate well in other areas of the world and time periods.

2. Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of both the fieldwork (8 AM - 3 PM) and class lecture (one-hour sessions on weekdays, 7 PM) sections of the course, the students will have learned how to:

- stratigraphically excavate an archaeological site;
- document their own excavation units in writing and sketch drawings;
- create *Harris matrices* of their own trenches;
- analyze architectural remains;
- fly a drone to obtain aerial imagery and *orthomaps* of an archaeological site;
- create photogrammetrical 3D models of trenches and small finds, using a DSLR camera;
- process small finds and ceramics in the project *apothiki* (storeroom/lab);
- carry out floatation in order to collect archaeobotanical finds;
- set up a *total station* and use it for spatial documentation.

In addition to these practical skills, they will also acquire academic knowledge on:

- excavation methodologies;
- remote-sensing techniques;
- history of archaeological documentation;
- Aegean prehistory from the Palaeolithic to the end of the Bronze Age;
- GIS applications in archaeological excavations and surveys;
- archaeobotany and other disciplines of archaeological sciences;
- introductory pottery and small finds illustration.

3. Course Requirements & Grading

Fieldwork – 50%: Participation in fieldwork will be the most important part of the course. Each student will need to learn and successfully complete a series of excavation-related tasks, including—but not limited to—handmade sketch drawings of the trench that they are working in, filling the digital excavation unit form on the project tablets on the field, setting up and recording with the Total Station. Timely attendance of fieldwork and following the directions of the project directors and trench supervisors will be essential for the successful completion of the course.
Final Exam – 35%: A two-hour long Final Exam on the last day of the project will be based on

the evening lectures and will test the student's academic knowledge regarding archaeological theory and methodology.
Class Participation and Attendance – 15%: Attendance at evening lectures is mandatory. The frequency and quality of the questions raised and contributions to in-class discussions will determine your class participation grade.

4. Gourimadi Archaeological Project

GAP includes the systematic excavation of a Late Neolithic - Early Bronze Age site near Karystos in Southern Euboea and its scientific analysis and publication. The project is organized by the Norwegian Institute at Athens and conducted under a permit from the Greek Ministry of Culture and Tourism with the supervision of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Euboea. GAP is directed by Dr. Žarko Tankosić and co-directed by Drs. Fanis Mavridis and Paschalis Zafeiriadis.

The site of Gourimadi, meaning "Big Rock" in the local Arvanitiki language, lies on the outskirts of the Katsaronio plain, about 6 km from the modern town of Karystos in southern Euboea.

The prehistoric habitation extended over a natural hill with excellent defensive properties and a key position in the local landscape, which offered unobstructed vistas not only of its immediate surroundings but also of the neighboring regions of eastern Attica and the northern Cyclades (Andros, Tinos, Mykonos, Giaros, and Kea).

The project aims to investigate the earliest farmers in southern Euboea, who may have played an essential role in the eventual colonization of the central Aegean islands. As a multi-period site, spanning as much as two and a half millennia, from the Late Neolithic to the Early Bronze Age, Gourimadi will also play a crucial role in our understanding of the transition to the age of metals. Its peculiar location in the local topography, hundreds of arrowheads found during excavations, and its enigmatic architecture all indicate a special function for the site, as opposed to an ordinary farming village. Adobe (earthen) architecture attested in some of our deepest trenches is likely the earliest found in the region.

The methodology employed in GAP is based on the removal of stratigraphic units (termed "excavation units") which, wherever possible, correspond to natural and anthropogenic episodes of archaeological deposition. For faster and more precise measurements, a Total Station device is used throughout the excavation procedure (planning, excavating, and recording), including all elevation points taken for moveable artifacts, architectural features, and excavated units. All the excavated soil is dry-sieved and standardized flotation samples were systematically collected from each excavation unit. All written recordings (excavated units and their specifications, unearthed features, all artifactual categories, and coordinates) are paperless and are logged in a customized digital database using iPads on the field. The visual recording includes hand-drawn sketches, photogrammetrical 3D models of excavation units, and drone-based 3D modeling of the entire excavation area. The spatial information is integrated and analyzed in the project GIS. By the end of the project, the CYA students will be familiar with all these aspects of an archaeological excavation.

Class Schedule
Weekdays, 6:30 p.m.

Week 1	
June 2	**Arrival to Karystos, General Project Meeting at 7 p.m.**
June 3	**Basic Principles of Archaeological Stratigraphy** Single Context vs. Spits Harris Matrix Harris 1989 Pavel 2010, p. 51-58.
June 4	**Introduction to Aegean Prehistory** Palaeolithic & Mesolithic Bintliff 2012, pp. 28-29, 35-36 Rutter, Lesson 1
June 5	**Agricultural Revolution** Neolithic in the Near East, Anatolia, and Greece Hofmanová et al. 2016 Runnels and Murray 2001, p. 41-64
June 6	**Documentation of archaeological fieldwork** Archaeological Fordism: The paper form revolution Archaeological databases Tablet-based field recording Connolly 2009 Pavel 2010, p. 10-14, 142-148. Roosevelt et al. 2015
June 7	**Photogrammetry**

	3D recording and field archaeology Architectural Illustration & Photogrammetry Boyd et al. 2021 Sapirstein and Murray 2017
Week 2	
June 10	**Neolithic in Central Greece, Euboea, and the Cyclades** Contextualizing Gourimadi Mavridis and Tankosić 2016 Rutter, Lesson 2 Tankosić and Katsianis 2017
June 11	**Pottery Studies** Why and how to study pottery? Introduction to pottery illustration Orton and Hughes 2013, p. 24-38
June 12	**Archaeological GIS I** Basic Concepts of archaeological GIS and spatial recording Conolly and Lake 2006, Chapter 2 Renfrew and Bahn 2020, p. 93-97
June 13	**Remote Sensing in Archaeology** Geophysical Methods of Remote Sensing LIDAR Thermal Imaging Satellite Imagery Renfrew and Bahn 2020, p. 81-92
June 14	**Archaeological Sciences I** Archaeobotany, zooarchaeology, physical anthropology, isotope analysis Wiener Lab | Research | ASCSA
Week 3	
June 17	**Final Neolithic & Early Bronze Age in the Aegean** Arrival of Metallurgy Chronological Problems EBA in Euboea and the Cyclades Rutter, Lesson 3 Berg 2019, Chapter 3
June 18	**The Use of Drones in Archaeology** History of aerial photography and archaeology Aerial imagery as a remote sensing tool Drone-based orthomaps & photogrammetry Campana 2017 Musson et al. 2013
June 19	**Archaeological Sciences II** Geoarchaeology & Micromorphology Absolute Chronology and Dating Methods Renfrew and Bahn 2020, Chapter 4
June 20	**Archaeological Ethics** The Legacy of Colonialist Archaeology Problems of Digital Archaeology Ethics of Burial Excavations Morgan 2022 Sandis 2014, Chapter 7
June 21	**Archaeological Sciences III** Ancient-DNA Revolution and a new understanding of the human past

	Archaeological critique Reich 2018, Chapter 12 Callaway 2018
Week 4	
June 24	**Archaeological GIS II** Gourimadi Project GIS
June 25	**Bronze Age Archaeology of the Aegean** MBA, LBA, BA Collapse Stansbury-O'Donnell 2015, p. 32-67
June 26	**Lithics Studies** General Introduction to stone tool industries Lithics at Gourimadi
June 27	**Final Review & Discussion** Why Study the Ancient World?
June 28	**Final Exam**

Bibliography

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