

Çaltılar Archaeology Project 2013

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With Belgin Aksoy, Andrew Brown, Pedar Foss and
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Between 2008 and 2012, the Çaltılar Archaeology Project conducted intensive surface sampling, geophysical survey, topographical survey and geomorphological investigations of the two höyüks of Çaltılar and Seki-Eceler in the highlands of Lycia. Then under the direction of Nicoletta Momigliano, this research gave valuable new insights into the pre-Classical settlement of the region. In 2013 our objectives were to complete that survey and bring it to publication, and also to build on the outcomes of the successful Turkey-EU Intercultural Dialogue for Museums (ICD-MUSE) partnership between Fethiye Museum and the University of Liverpool – Illuminating the Land of Lights.

The aims of the Çaltılar Archaeology Project are to provide substantial new knowledge about the settlement history, material culture and environment of pre-Classical northern Lycia (Chalcolithic to Early Iron Age, ca fourth to early first millennium BC) and to explore the role of this region within the context of broader eastern Mediterranean-Anatolian-Aegean interactions in these early periods. In October 2013 we continued to work towards these objectives with two weeks of study in the depot in Çaltılar village where the materials collected during three seasons of intensive pottery collection at Çaltılar (2008, 2009) and Seki-Eceler (2012) are stored.

The project's research lead for prehistoric materials, Belgin Aksoy, made a detailed study of the pottery and other



artefacts recovered from both sites, including a decorated spindle whorl (left). In particular, her work focused on cataloguing the material and identifying differences in the artefact collec-

tions from the two sites. She also considered how the results of ceramic analysis of pottery samples taken in previous seasons could be related to the macroscopic identification of different pottery types. All the lithics were re-drawn and photographed ready for publication.

Meanwhile, Andrew Brown led research into the Iron Age pottery, which represents the largest group of material from both sites; he focused on the ceramic assemblages collected at Seki-Eceler Höyük in 2012 in particular, in order to identify diagnostic material, fabric groups and potential chronological indicators. All surveyed material was examined with diagnostic material removed for illustration and photography. Several distinctive fabrics were identified that macroscopically appear characteristic for the bulk of

material at Seki-Eceler Höyük, and samples of these were taken for further scientific analysis by ceramic petrography. Although a small quantity of highly diagnostic late Roman material has been identified at Seki-Eceler, as yet there appears to be no material that might securely be dated to the intervening Classical and Hellenistic periods.

For our second objective – developing the outcomes of the Illuminating the Land of Lights project – we conducted both fieldwork and education activities.

In the field, we used Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI) photography to create interactive photographic images of reliefs and inscriptions. RTI is a non-contact technology that uses a series of flash photographs to emphasise surface relief. It is a useful tool for assisting in the interpretation of eroded artefacts where surface detail has been lost and also has value for conservation where monuments cannot easily or safely be removed to museums for safe-keeping.

For this study we chose artefacts that represent a challenge to standard methods of interpretation, recording and conservation. These were an altar carved with a relief image of a veiled goddess, two rock-relief stelae near Yayla Esenköy village, a relief of a shield and a single stele at Seki-Eceler, a rock relief of the Dioskouroi flanking a veiled goddess at Seki-Eceler and an inscription on a column in the garden of the mosque in Yayla Esenköy village (see photo below), all dating from the Roman period. The reliefs were studied by Catherine Draycott and the inscriptions by Nilhan Tüner.



Our education activities included a public meeting, a photographic exhibition and the relaunch of our website and Facebook group. The meeting in our research and education centre was attended by 30 people and included short presentations by me, the research team and Fethiye Museum staff. We also continued the development of the Heritage Education Centre established by the Illuminating the Land of Lights project, which features fun archaeological puzzles and educational games for the children of the village.

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