

Çaltılar Archaeology Project 2015

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The Çaltılar Archaeology Project (ÇAP) applies various archaeological research techniques across the region of southwest Turkey known in antiquity as Lycia. Our international and interdisciplinary project aims to understand the ancient settlement history and environment of the upland (*vayla*) region of Lycia in particular. We work in partnership with academics from universities and museums in the UK, Turkey and the USA. Since 2008, we have conducted intensive archaeological surveys at the prehistoric settlement mounds (*höyüks*) at Çaltılar and Seki-Eceler.

Çaltılar Höyük is located just to the south of the modern village. Although small in size, our research shows that the site has a long history of settlement from the Chalcolithic period to the Early Iron Age (ca 5000 to 500 BC). Finds from the site suggest that it was well-connected in the Iron Age, with quality pottery imported from across a wide area. In 2012–2014 we surveyed at the site of Eceler, near Seki. This is a large, but relatively flat *höyük* next to a river. It is similar in character to Çaltılar, but has a longer occupation history – spanning ca 5000 BC to AD 500. Finds from the site suggest that it too was well connected in the Iron Age. Sedimentology cores taken nearby will give us further details about the site's immediate environment.

In addition to our fieldwork activities, we have been a partner, with Fethiye Museum, in an education and conservation project aimed at challenging illicit looting and vandalism at archaeological sites. We have also established a research and education centre in Çaltılar village and welcome visitors and school groups whenever we are working there.

The project is now entering its final writing-up phase with the entire team working together to prepare a monograph that will present the results of fieldwork and research conducted since 2008. In 2015, our activities in Turkey focused on two main areas of interest: geomorphological research led by Namık Çağatay of Istanbul Technical University (ITU) and the preparation of a heritage management plan by B. Nilgün Öz of the Middle East Technical University, Ankara.

In order to understand the wider environmental context, Professor Çağatay visited the Lycian highlands to observe the landscape and take notes and photographs. These observations will be vital to our understanding of the areas immediately adjacent to the Çaltılar Archaeology Project study area and will provide insights into their own geological and environmental histories. For example, Professor Çağatay was able to visit the fascinating site of Yazır Gölü in neighbouring Burdur province which a previous British survey team had identified as having been, at least partly, created by people who controlled the level of the lake by manipulating a natural sinkhole.



Çaylaklitepe: on the border between the Muğla, Burdur and Antalya provinces, this mountain is the site of a sacred cave, investigated by the research team in 2012

In 2015, B. Nilgün Öz began work on an assessment of the long-term heritage management needs of Çaltılar and its environs, building on previous seasons' public meetings with the village community as well as informal meetings with other stakeholders and desktop research. Together, this information will be used to form the first draft of CHAMP – the Çaltılar Höyük Archaeological Management Plan. This will provide a framework for development of the archaeological resources in Çaltılar village and its surrounding area with a view to protecting them and using them to benefit the local community. It is hoped that this plan will also provide a basis for future research at the site.

Our outreach activities this year included redesigning and updating the website to include all the individual projects the team members have been working on in Lycia that fall under the broad umbrella of the Çaltılar Archaeology Project, including our previous archaeological surveys, museum projects and educational activities. Team members have also presented lectures in the UK and Turkey, raising awareness of our work within the international academic community.

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Namık Çağatay and colleagues at the Yazır Gölü sinkhole in Burdur province