

Excavating in the Aegean: The Despotiko Field School Paros, Antiparos

27 May – 22 June 2019

Dr. Alexandra Alexandridou



The course aims at introducing students to archaeological fieldwork methods and theory through active participation in the systematic excavation of the site of “Mandra”, where the most important sanctuary of the Cyclades, after Delos, was founded during the 6th century BC.

Despotiko is today an uninhabited islet, west of Antiparos in the centre of the Aegean Sea.



The course will provide students with the opportunity to unveil the history of the site and the different phases and types of human activity that occurred there, mostly of ritual character. The excavation season of 2019 will focus on the systematic excavation of one or more edifices both inside and outside the sacred precinct, which were first detected by CYA students during the excavation of 2018.

(See <https://www.culture.gr/en/Information/SitePages/view.aspx?nID=2328> for the fruitful results of 2018).

During the first three weeks at the site, students will familiarize themselves with the entire excavation procedure. They will be taught the basic methods of stratigraphical excavation, onsite documentation, and the recording and processing of finds. Work at the site will be combined with a number of activities in the afternoons, including detailed documentation of the activities at the site, preparation of architectural plans and, more importantly, of the excavation diary.

Students will have the opportunity to meet and talk with experts from all over the world, and members of the research team include architects, photographers, geologists, and conservators.

Moreover, a series of lectures will be given on issues concerning archaeological theory and methods and various types of archaeological evidence, with a focus on the material from Despotiko, ancient religious practices and rituals, and the birth and development of Greek sanctuaries, particularly those in the Cyclades. The aim of these lectures is to enable students to fully comprehend the purposes of a systematic excavation and to place the sanctuary and its material culture into a theoretical context. Optional study trips to the islands of Naxos and Delos, where some of the most important sanctuaries of the Aegean were situated, are also scheduled.



The fourth week of the course will be spent on the island of Paros and in the storage rooms of the Archaeological Museum of Paros. There, students will work on the material discovered during the previous weeks at the site. They will be trained in detailed processing of the finds, mostly pottery, figurines, and other minor objects. They will learn how to clean, sort, catalogue, draw, and photograph the material. They will therefore become acquainted with the process which enables the detailed study, interpretation, and publication of excavated material.

Morning work at the museum will be combined with afternoon classes focusing on the nature of the various objects coming from the site, with a special focus on the clay vases, clay figurines, and other clay or metal finds. Students will be provided with supplementary information on the examined material through discussions adapted to the nature of the finds processed at the museum.

The final exam, scheduled for the last day, aims at testing the knowledge gained by students throughout the experience at the site and the museum as well as from the bibliography studied during the same time period.



REQUIREMENTS

Antiparos-Despotiko

Participation in the excavation (25%)

Disciplined, enthusiastic participation in the excavation is a basic parameter for the successful completion of the course. Everyday on-time attendance and respect for the schedule rules set by the director of the excavation are required. Each student will serve as a trench-master for a number of days, being responsible for the excavation diary and everyday recording of finds. Careful reading of the assignments and the afternoon classes will provide the basis for this responsibility.

Class participation (25%)

Attendance of the afternoon classes is compulsory. The study of the suggested bibliography and students' active participation will contribute substantially towards the final grade.

Paros

Participation in the activities in the storage rooms of the Archaeological Museum of Paros (25%).

The final grade will take into account participation in the processing work at the museum.

Final Examination (25%)

The two-hour written exam is based on the three-week excavation experience at the site of Despotiko, the study week at the museum of Paros, and the material provided during the course.



COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

27 May-2 June 2019

Introduction to Archaeological Methods

M. May 27	13.30 15.30 18.00	Arrival at the Port of Antiparos Transfer to the hotel Orientation
T. May 28	07.30-14.30 15.00 19.00	On-site Excavation Lunch Lecture: Discovering Despotiko Introduction to documentation of the excavation
W. May 29	07.30-14.30 15.00 19.00	On-site Excavation Lunch Lecture: Introduction. Theoretical approaches to Classical Archaeology [Renfrew & Bahn: Introduction & Chapter 1; Haggis & Antonaccio 2015] Preparation of the Excavation Diary
T. May 30	07.30-14.30 15.00 19.00	On-site Excavation Lunch Lecture: Discovering an Archaeological Site: Project Development and Excavation Methods [Renfrew & Bahn: Chapter 3] Preparation of the Excavation Diary
F. May 31	07.30-14.30 15.00 19.00	On-site Excavation Lunch Lecture: Processing, Classification and Recording, Artefact Categories [Renfrew & Bahn : Chapter 2] Preparation of the Excavation Diary
S. June 1		Optional study trip to the sanctuaries on the island of Naxos



WEEK 2
3-9 June 2019

Greek Sanctuaries

M. June 3	07.30-14.30 15.00 19.00	On-site Excavation Lunch Lecture: Chronology and Periodization [Renfrew & Bahn: Chapter 4] Preparation of the Excavation Diary
T. June 4	07.30-14.30 15.00 19.00	On-site Excavation Lunch Lecture: Introduction to Greek Sanctuaries [Pedley Chapters IV-VI] Preparation of the Excavation Diary
W. June 5	07.30-14.30 15.00 19.00	On-site Excavation Lunch Lecture: Birth of the Greek Sanctuaries & Ritual Dining Preparation of the Excavation Diary
T. June 6	07.30-14.30 15.00 19.00	On-site Excavation Lunch Lecture: Ritual Practices & Sacrifice Preparation of the Excavation Diary

W. June 12	07.30-14.30 15.00 19.00	On-site Excavation Lunch Lecture: Delos [e-book: http://www.latsisfoundation.org/megazine/publish/ebook.php?book=24&preloader=1] Preparation of the Excavation Diary
T. June 13	07.30-14.30 15.00 19.00	On-site Excavation Lunch Lecture: The Sanctuaries of the Cyclades: Kythnos [Prof. A. Mazarakis Ainian] Preparation of the Excavation Diary
F. June 14	7.30-14.30 15.00 19.00	On-site Excavation Lunch Lecture: The Geology of Despotiko, Antiparos & Paros [Dr. Erich Draganits] Preparation of the Excavation Diary



WEEK 4

17-21 June 2019

Archaeological Museum of Paros

M. June 17	07.30-14.30 15.00 19.00	Material Processing Lunch Lecture: Introduction to Cycladic ceramics
T. June 18	07.30-14.30 15.00 19.00	Material Processing Lunch Lecture: Shapes & Uses, Typologies & Utilities
W. June 19	07.30-14.30 15.00 19.00	Material Processing Lunch Lecture: Pots & Images
T. June 20	07.30-14.30 15.00 19.00	Material Processing Lunch Lecture: Clay Figurines & various Clay Objects
F. June 21	07.30-14.30 15.00 18.00	Material Processing Lunch Final Exam



BIBLIOGRAPHY

Despotiko

Kourayos, Y., 2012. *Despotiko. The Sanctuary of Apollo*, Athens.

Kourayos, Y., 2018. *Despotiko, a Journey in Time. 20 years of Research at the Sanctuary of Apollo*, Antiparos.

Archaeology & Methods

Haggis, D. & Antonaccio, C., 2015. *Classical Archaeology in Context Theory and Practice in Excavation in the Greek World*, Berlin.

Renfrew, C. & Bahn, P., 2004. *Archaeology: Theories, Methods and Practice*,⁴ London.

Sanctuaries

Mazarakis Ainian, A., 2012-2013. Archaic Sanctuaries of the Cyclades. Research of the Last Decade, *Archaeological Reports*, 96-102.

Pedley, J.G., 2005. *Sanctuaries and the sacred in the ancient Greek world*, Cambridge.

Sanctuaries & Cults in the Cyclades: <http://cs.ha.uth.gr>

Greek Pottery

Boardman, J., 2001. *The history of Greek vases*, London.

MAPS



Greece and the Asia Minor coast



The Cyclades Basic Greek Chronology

