



PHOENIX CHRONICLES

PHOENIX ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT PERIODICAL PUBLICATION



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Project Team

Dr. Asil Yaman - Founder & Director
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Koray Konuk - Co-Director
Dr. Anna M. Sitz - Epigraphic Studies
Dr. Taylan Doğan - Cult Studies
Dr. Işıl Gürsu - Community Archaeology
Dr. Elif Denel - ARIT
Merve Yeşil - Ceramic Studies
İlayda Alikaya - Archive Management
Zeynep Okyay - Curator
Aslıhan Güçlü - Archaeologist & Artist
Aslı Dinç - Artist
Ayşe Özyayın - Artist
M. Serhat Aydemir - Mapping Engineer
Z. İlkan Gözcüoğlu - Social Media
Dilara Takı - Turkish Studies
Sergül Özçelik Uçan - PAAM Staff
Pınar Pişkin - PAAM Staff
İsa Uçan - PAAM Staff

Supporting Institutes

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İlayda Alikaya
M. Rumeysa Çakan
Zeynep Yılmaztürk
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Koray Konuk

What is the Phoenix Archaeological Project?

The Phoenix Archaeological Project (PAP) is a multidisciplinary scientific project, located in the heart of the Bozburun Peninsula in Marmaris, Muğla, Türkiye, that is based on innovative archaeological and cultural approaches. Field surveys have started with the permission of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Türkiye. Together with an international team, the project aims to identify and document the tangible and intangible cultural heritage in Taşlıca, Söğüt and their surroundings. In addition to archaeological research, with the preservation of cultural heritage and the fostering of a sustainable future, PAP has initiated social responsibility projects for cultural and environmental education especially aimed at children. With all these goals in mind, the PAP started its long-term programs in 2021 in the fields of archaeology, archaeometry, history, sociology, ecology, cultural heritage, architecture and contemporary art programs. Fieldwork data processing and office activities take place in the old primary school building in Taşlıca. This idle building has been turned into the Phoenix Archaeological Research Center (PAAM). The PAAM will host research activities, workshops, educational and art programs. In addition, the PAAM, with its library, central building and courtyard, is also a great place for local people to meet.



2021, Phoenix team. Photo: Ayşe Özyayın

Greetings from the Fieldwork!

With the official permission of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Türkiye, we started our archaeological fieldwork in ancient Phoenix in Taşlıca, Marmaris, Muğla and its surroundings, and completed the first stage of a new generation archaeological work. In 2021, we carried out fieldwork in an 82-hectare area that includes the town center, Hisar Tepe, Tülü Tepe, Burgaz Tepe and their surroundings. Several scholars, artists, professionals, and postgraduate students, from home and abroad, joined our fieldwork which took place between 06.09.2021 – 06.10.2021. In our first year, the representative of the Ministry, Ms. Tuba Konuk from Bilecik Museum joined us during our fieldwork.

Archaeological Field Survey

In our first season, we carried out the Ancient Phoenix archaeological field survey in three different areas: Apollo sanctuary (Kızlan Church), Burgaz Tepe and Tülü Tepe (North and East necropolis), Hisar Tepe and its surroundings (Acropolis).

Apollo Sanctuary (Kızlan Church)

The Apollo sanctuary is located about 2.5 km southwest of Taşlıca, on the northern slope of the Acropolis (Hisar Tepe). The sanctuary was built outside the city, next to the Kızlan stream, which flows in a southeast-northwest direction. Dr. Taylan Doğan, a faculty member of Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University, and archaeologists Merve Yeşil and İlayda Alikaya conducted a field survey of the area. They carried out architectural examinations



Top view of the Apollo Sanctuary (Kızlan Church). Photo: Asil Yaman



Western facade of the Apollo Sanctuary (Kızlan Church). Photo: Asil Yaman

of documented the architectural findings within the boundaries of the sacred area.

Based on the work carried out in the area and the available data, it is believed that the Apollo sanctuary has two phases. The inscription found on one of the northern jamb blocks of the north nave

door of the structure indicates that it was used as a temple to Apollo. Examining the current plan of the structure, it becomes apparent that it lost its function as a temple probably between the end of the 4th century CE and the first quarter of the 5th century CE, like many temples in Western

Anatolia, with the Theodosian Code, and was converted into a three-nave basilica. The structure, which was used as a church in its final phase, was named the 'Apollo Sanctuary Kızlan Church,' referring to the Kızlan stream next to the structure. It is believed that the structure served as a church from the 5th century CE onwards. Large stone blocks were used in the structure, and the limestone used may have come from a local quarry. The material used for the roof and doors of the structure might have been wood, as no data on this has been found. Although the plan of the Hellenistic period temple, which represents the first phase of the structure, was examined, archaeological excavations are needed to obtain more precise data. However, the absence of data on the crepidoma in the foundation to the southwest of the structure and the podium blocks suggest that the entrance to the temple was from the short

west side. The data obtained suggest that the Hellenistic temple might have been planned as a Templum in Antis or Prostylos. The archaeological excavations planned for the future will be an important step towards improving the existing knowledge. The fieldwork carried out in 2021, completed the documentation of all the finds identified in the Apollo sanctuary and its surroundings. In addition to the temple and temple-related architectural blocks, architectural blocks associated with olive press stones and production equipment were identified. The data suggest that there were workshops producing olive oil or wine in the area. The planned archaeological excavations will help to obtain more information about the area.

Burgaz Tepe and Tülü Tepe (North and East Necropolis)

During our fieldwork Burgaz Tepe and Tülü Tepe, we identified

various terraces, 28 of which were funerary with stepped pyramidal tomb blocks. Our team members, including Assoc. Prof. Koray Konuk from the Ausonius Institute in Bordeaux, Art Historian Dilara Takı, and Archaeologist İlayda Alikaya, meticulously documented the coordinates and plans of the funerary terraces using Cors GPS, and we express our gratitude for their excellent work.

We examined the stone walls and identified three main types: bossage, polygonal, and rectangular. The use of bossage and Rhodian amphora sherds dating back to the Hellenistic period found in the vicinity indicate that these funerary terraces, as well as the north and east necropolis, were used throughout the Hellenistic period. We identified and documented stepped pyramid tomb blocks that were on the terrace in situ or had fallen down for various reasons towards the slopes.



Western facade of the Apollo Sanctuary (Kızlan Church). Photo: Aslıhan Güçlü

These tomb blocks were made of local limestone that matches the region's karstic structure. The stepped tomb blocks reflect the unique burial practices of Bozburun Peninsula (Karian Chersonese) settlements. Based on the measurements, morphological differences, and profiles between the blocks, we have created a

typology. Taking into account the density of architectural blocks and funerary terraces, we defined the area between Hisar Tepe and the western slopes of the Kızlan Church as the 'North Necropolis' and the area between Hisar Tepe and Tülü Tepe's western slopes as the 'East Necropolis.'

Fieldwork at Hisar Tepe and its Surroundings (Acropolis)

In 2021, as part of our fieldwork at Hisar Tepe, which encompasses the Acropolis of ancient Phoenix, we documented the surrounding walls, partially preserved building remains, and associated portable cultural objects. Through our investigation, we discovered that the acropolis walls were constructed during the Archaic period (700-500 BCE) and were subsequently reorganized during the Hellenistic and the Middle to Late Byzantine periods.

In the eastern part of the Acropolis, we identified an inscription that had previously been published, indicating the presence of a Dionysus sanctuary. Based on the documentation work conducted by Assoc. Prof. Koray Konuk and Heidelberg University Researcher Dr. Anna Sitz, we now understand that there was indeed a Dionysus sanctuary in this area. We also discovered exedra blocks and rock-carved niches in the southeast of the Acropolis, that had once served as statue pedestals. We believe that this well-preserved area had a religious- public function. Our findings and preliminary work suggest that this area may be one of the sanctuaries of Athena, Aphrodite, or Zeus whose presence in the city is known, but whose locations have not yet been identified. During our work on the Acropolis, we identified and documented five public cisterns that were carved into the bedrock. During our archaeological field surveys in 2021, we also identified three cultural assets and structures outside the study areas. We reported these sites to the Muğla Regional Directorate for the Protection of Cultural Assets,



Stepped pyramidal tomb block. Lidar scan: Aslı Dinç



Stepped tomb blocks. Photo: Dilara Taki



Top view of the Acropolis. Photo: Asil Yaman

together with registration forms and the necessary documents, that we had prepared with our Ministry representative, Ms. Tuba Konuk, with the aim of protecting and registering these sites.

Ceramic Studies and Documentation

During our intensive field survey in 2021, we discovered numerous ceramic sherds. We extend our thanks to archaeologist Merve Yeşil, who conducted the fieldwork, and to archaeologist and photographer Aslihan Güçlü and artist Ayşe Özeydin, who assisted us in photographing the artifacts found in the field. On the basis of the data obtained, we have compiled a catalog. Studies

of ceramic documentation are crucial for understanding the ceramic chronology, food and drink culture, and trade-related connections of the city. In this context, the body fragment, which probably belongs to a kotyle, is an important piece of information for the chronology of the city. Dating back to the early 6th century BCE, the fragment, along with architectural data, is another important finding indicating the existence of ancient Phoenix in the Archaic period. During our intensive fieldwork, we also found many pieces of mushroom-type amphora sherds, dating from the second half of to the end of the 4th century BCE, originating from the South Aegean. These data are

essential in establishing the trade and economic connections of the city with other settlements in the region during the Late Classical-Early Hellenistic period.

Another group of finds we have come across extensively are the amphoras which were probably made in Rhodes and its surroundings, dating back to the end of the 4th century BCE and the beginning of the 3rd century BCE. These pieces indicate the continuity of the city in the Hellenistic period. It is assumed that the amphorae carrying wine from the Western Mediterranean to Ancient Phoenix reached the Bozburun Peninsula, which held an important place in trade routes. During our investigations,

we also found red-slipped pottery known to have been produced in the workshops of Phocaea, as well as red-slipped ceramics produced in Cyprus or Southern Anatolia (Pamphylia or Pisidia regions). The dating of these indicate the 5th century CE which is important evidence of the city's presence in the Late Roman-Early Byzantine periods. In addition, the glazed ceramics discovered during fieldwork on the Acropolis of the city, Hisar Tepe, are evidence that there was life in Phoenix during the Middle and Late Byzantine periods. These finds contribute to our understanding of the long history of the city and its cultural and commercial links with other regions.



Ceramic documentation by archaeologist Merve Yeşil. Photo: Aslıhan Güçlü

Mapping and Photogrammetry

Mapping the area was one of the most important aspects of the fieldwork we conducted in and around ancient Phoenix. Our work relied on large-scale maps and mapping information production regulations. Thanks to the exceptional efforts of our mapping engineer, M. Serhat

Aydemir, we were able to produce 3D base maps at a scale of 1/1000 for all the areas planned for 2021. We created a coordinate grid system with 25x25 meter grids on the existing map and plotted all intensive field data on these grids with coordinates. We also obtained

orthophoto and 3D modeling data covering the area of Hisar Tepe, Tülü Tepe, Burgaz Tepe, and their surroundings. Coordinated point clouds were created for all these areas to provide a basis for future work.

Oral History and Turkish-Islamic Studies

We have conducted various studies in the region to collect data on the Turkish period. Dr. Asil Yaman and art historian Dilara Takı focused their studies on Taşlıca, specifically in Aşağı Fenaket, Yukarı Fenaket, Sindilli Ovası, and Büğüş areas. We began with oral history interviews with the villagers and then conducted fieldwork. Thanks are due to Erol and Zeliha Demircan and the Headman of Taşlıca, Mr. Emin Özçelik, for participating in our efforts and for their support. During our research, we identified civil and religious architecture,



Mapping engineer M. Serhat Aydemir is giving updates on mapping works.

Photo: Aslıhan Güçlü



Architectural documentation process.
Photo: Asil Yaman

Aşağı and Yukarı Fenaket, located in the southern part of Hisar Tepe on Sindilli Ovası, where the locals lived before moving to Taşlıca. During our investigation of the area, we found numerous houses and associated structures. Our initial observations suggest that these single-storey, one-room houses, where people carried out their daily lives, resemble the 'megaron' houses of ancient Anatolian architecture. Many houses were built side by side, sharing walls of rubble stone and mixed brickwork. We discovered that ancient wall blocks and tombstones were used as spolia in some structures. The presence of beam nests in some structures showed us that wooden materials were used as roof coverings. We also identified multiple cisterns and oil mills in the area where we found ceramics dating back to the 11th and 13th centuries. This data suggests that the region was occupied after the Byzantine period during the Beylik and Ottoman times.

Through oral history interviews, we obtained information about a building in Aşağı Fenaket where



Yokuşbaşı Ottoman graveyard.
Photo: Dilara Takı

water structures, tombstones, ceramic finds, and conducted oral history research. We interviewed the oldest resident of Taşlıca, Kemal Bulucu, and his wife Hanife Bulucu, and found out that there was once a mosque on the site of the current primary school of Taşlıca. However, it was demolished in 1971, and the school building was erected in its place.

We continued our research in

an imam used to teach children. This situation suggests that the educational structure might also have been used as a mosque. We found a cemetery in Yokuşbaşı Mevkii, about 1 km north of Aşağı and Yukarı Fenaket, where two gravestones with fez-shaped headstone from the Ottoman period were identified. The fact that the fez types in which the slices are wrapped around the inner slices became widespread between 1902-1923 suggests that the gravestones could be dated after 1902. The presence of various types of buildings such as houses, mosques, cemeteries, and cisterns provides important information about the medieval settlement and distribution of this region. We believe that there was an Ottoman period settlement in the area between Sindilli Plain and Yokuşbaşı Cemetery. There are a total of 67 cisterns carved into the bedrock in Kırk Kuyular, the area located on the side of Taşlıca road. We think that the cisterns have been used continuously



Oral history interviews. Photo: Dilara Takı

from ancient times to the present day. Considering the distance between Kirk Kuyular and Aşağı and Yukarı Fenaket, we believe that the cisterns served as primary water sources during the Ottoman period as well.

Epigraphic Studies

Associate Professor Koray Konuk and Dr. Anna Sitz conducted our epigraphic studies during the fieldwork and identified previously unpublished inscriptions. These inscriptions provided written information about important families in the area dating back to the 3rd century BCE. In addition to gathering new data, we also thoroughly examined, identified and re-documented previously published works. We plan to continue our epigraphic research and documentation efforts in the coming years with the aim of publishing our findings.

Cultural Heritage Education for Children

As part of the Phoenix Archaeology Project, we provided cultural and ecological heritage education to fourth and fifth-grade students from September 27 to October 8, 2021. The objective of the program was to raise awareness among local children and create a sustainable future with the cultural assets in the area. Under the leadership of expert Ms. Gül Bulut and with the support of Müzede Drama, we conducted our lessons with creative theater activities. We express our gratitude to Ms. Gül Bulut for her generous voluntary support during the process. One hundred students participated in the education program, which took place at the Muğla Marmaris Söğüt Vacide Tugay Primary School



Epigraphic documentation process by Assoc. Prof. Koray Konuk and Dr. Anna Sitz. Photo: Asil Yaman

and the Marmaris Archaeology Museum. The educational events that we have carried out within the framework of the protocol we signed with the Marmaris District National Education Directorate, have an important mission in terms of preserving the heritage in the region. We thank the Governor of Marmaris Governor, Mr. Ertuğ Şevket Aksoy, and the Director of National Education of the District of Marmari, Ms. Sibel Kısa, for their official permission and support in carrying out these activities. Throughout the educational program, we used the power of creative drama to raise awareness about “museum” and “archaeological science.” The project consisted of five different sessions, conducted in three phases: before, during and after the museum visit. We plan to continue our program in the coming years and diversify it with various activities.

Environmental Education Program

The devastating fire that occurred in Marmaris in 2021 had a profound impact on the local community. In an effort to raise awareness of the fire’s impact and promote conservation measures, we collaborated with the Mediterranean Conservation Society to conduct environmental education activities with a total of 100 students from grades 4 to 8 at Muğla Marmaris Söğüt Vacide Tugay Elementary and Middle School from October 1-6, 2021. During the program, we educated the students about the region’s unique fauna and flora, emphasizing the importance of preserving the ecological heritage. We extend our gratitude to Mr. Zafer Kızılkaya, President of the Mediterranean Conservation Society, and all the members of the society for making this Environmental Education Program possible.



Cultural heritage education program for children. Photo: Merve Yeşil

Contemporary Art Program Studies

The Yukarı Şehir Art Initiative was established by curator Zeynep Okyay, archaeologist and artist Aslıhan Güçlü, independent researcher and artist Aslı Dinç, and academic and artist Ayşe Özyayın with the aim of bringing together art and archaeology in the context of the Phoenix ancient city (Taşlıca Village) to facilitate research activities and experiential artistic production practices. Yukarı Şehir Art Initiative, in collaboration with the Phoenix Archaeological Project (PAP) which continues its work in Taşlıca Village, aims to use scientific data obtained from archaeological research as source material for artistic endeavors and bring together local residents and scientists under the same roof. With the formation of this platform, the goal is to realize artistic activities in the Taşlıca region through a genuine dialogue arising from the interaction between artists, scientists, and the local community.

In line with its goals set for 2021, the Yukarı Şehir Art Initiative initiated a series of interviews with local residents and researchers to explore the connection between the past and the present. Data collection started regarding the cultural ties between the ancient city and the village through discussions on the history of settlement, cultural heritage, micro-memory, social change, economic activities, and migration history. It was noted that the rural life and culture of the village of Taşlıca, which has continued uninterrupted from ancient times to the present day, are under threat due to the migration of the local population for economic



Gülten. Photo: Aslı Dinç



Tapınak. Photo: Aslıhan Güçlü

reasons. Therefore, discussions were conducted with the aim of preserving the components and continuity of the culture between the local community and artists. This process, documented visually, in writing, and through audio recordings by the artists, runs parallel to the collection of artistic materials within the PAP project. In 2021, the Yukarı Şehir Art Initiative focused on familiarizing itself with the area of Taşlıca

village, conducting research, and outlining the general framework of the project. The initiative prepared project drafts for future years, including exhibitions, a website, and a residency program, and shared them with the PAP executive team.

Documentation of Rural Architecture (Taşlıca)

As part of the Phoenix Archaeology Project, we conducted a study to

document the rural architecture in Old Taşlıca, previously known as “Fenaket,” possibly derived from “Phoinikoudi,” a Greek settlement in the early 20th century. After World War I, the village was abandoned and later moved to its current location known as “Taşlıca Mahallesi.” The aim of our fieldwork in these two settlements was to identify and document rural architecture. In the first year of the project, we conducted preliminary work, which involved interviewing local residents to gather information about the geographical, social, and economic structures of the area. Based on these findings, we created tangible and intangible descriptions of the area.

What Are We Planning for 2022 in PAP?

We have successfully completed our fieldwork for 2021 in an 82-hectare area that was earmarked for our project, and have carried out several sub-projects from various disciplines. Our sincerest thanks go to Dr. Işıl Gürsu and Dr. Elif Denel, who supported the fieldwork and led the Public Archaeology Program. We also express our gratitude to Serkan Mercan and Didem Erişkin, who launched the project’s official website, social media expert and archaeologist Zeynep İ. Gözcüoğlu, and the PAAM staff, including Sergül Özçelik Uçan, Pınar Pişkin, and İsa Uçan. We would like to acknowledge the hardworking Phoenix team who successfully carried out the challenging fieldwork, as well as our Ministry representative, Ms. Tuba Konuk, for her valuable feedback, and all the institutions and organizations



Architectural documentation by İlayda Alikaya and Merve Yeşil. Photo: Aslıhan Güçlü

that granted us permission and support without hesitation. In 2022, we plan to conduct field surveys in rural areas in the southeast of the city. We hope that all the sub-projects, planned with the help of national and international scholars, artists, and graduate students, will continue with new sub-programs.



PAP 2021, project team in front of the Phoenix Archaeological Research Center. Photo: Ayşe Özyayın

We are grateful for your support. Thank you!

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Phoenix Arkeolojik Araştırma Merkezi (PAAM)
No:12b, 48700, Taşlıca Mahallesi, Marmaris, Muğla

Contact:

info@phoenixprojesi.com

www.phoenixprojesi.com



phoenixprojesi



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Our scientific research, which we continue with modest means, awaits your financial and moral support.