

Warwick-Knossos Archaeological Fieldwork Project

Report for IATL: Project Award

Title: *Warwick-Knossos Archaeological Fieldwork Project*

Dates: July 7-22, 2022

Location: The Knossos Research Centre of the British School at Athens, Crete.

Co-Creators:

- Dr Conor Trainor (PI, Department of Classics & Ancient History, University of Warwick)
- Cameron Heagney (Student Researcher, University of Warwick, Class of 2023)
- William Vernon (Student Researcher, University of Warwick, Class of 2023)

Outputs:

- An embodied learning experience involving archaeological research for four Warwick Students Researchers (complete).
- A Twitter feed (@KLASP2022) which ran during the project and presented the on-going activities of the team. This feed garnered 16,855 impressions over the 2-week period of the module and the associated project (complete).
- A 1,000-word report (this report).
- A co-created video by the Warwick Student Researchers aimed at communicating the scope of the module/project. This can also be used for outreach/recruitment purposes (attached).
- A digital story about the wider research project by C. Trainor that will be used for similar outreach/recruitment purposes (attached).
- Creation of a page for IATL's Sharing Practice Pages (pending receiving the URL for the page).

Project Overview and Emerging Results:

The *Warwick-Knossos Archaeological Fieldwork Project* involved a five-person team consisting of the PI (Trainor) and four Warwick-based student researchers (Heagney, Vernon and two other Student Researchers, L. Armitage and G. Roffe). Between July 7-22, the Warwick team catalogued, recorded and analysed the archaeological remains of a 1st Century BC pottery kiln at the ancient site of Knossos on the island of Crete (**Fig 1**).

The project was part of a wider research framework entitled the *Knossos Legacies and Sustainable Archaeology Project* which was run in conjunction with Tulane University (USA) and University College Dublin (Ireland). While the Warwick, Tulane and UCD teams each worked on separate bodies of archaeological material, all three teams shared the resources of the Knossos Research Centre. This set-up provided the Warwick students with opportunities to form international collaborations with students/specialist researchers from Ireland and the USA as each team worked on complementary archaeological datasets.

Prior to the project, only one Warwick Student Researcher (Roffe) had any experience working with archaeological artefacts. Lectures and skills-building sessions on the history of Crete, the topography of Knossos, cataloguing ancient artefacts, and on archaeological illustration were provided to the Student Researchers ensuring that they were all familiar with the foundations of what we would be doing. With the training complete, the Warwick team then began working with archaeological artefacts (**Fig 2**). Over the 2-week period, we were able to analyse 69 separate archaeological assemblages, and record an impressive 2,569 archaeological artefacts from the kiln complex and the surrounding area.

The emerging results of our study indicate that the kiln was likely constructed as a response to the Roman conquest of Crete in 67BC. The kiln appears to have specialised in producing basins (lekanai), ceramic beehives, ceramic stands, and amphorae (ceramic vessels for shipping foodstuffs around the ancient Mediterranean) (**Fig 3**). The major product of the kiln appears to have been amphorae that were most likely created for shipping wine from Knossos (Crete) to the Bay of Naples, and to Rome during the latter years of the 1st century BC. We also found evidence of pottery workshops in the immediate vicinity of the kiln, including vitrified tiles, clay plaques for use in ancient religious rituals, and a 1st century BC mould that would have been used for making bowls that would have featured a Medusa motif at their centre (**Fig 4**).

In addition to recording and analysing ancient artefact assemblages, the Warwick Team also went on several fieldtrips to regional sites and museums in order to provide a wider contextual basis for interpreting the remains at Knossos. We visited Palace of Knossos, the Herakleion Archaeological Museum, and the archaeological sites of Gorytn, Lato (**Fig 5**) and Gournia. In addition to these, we were given special permission to access sites that are closed to the public including the Villa Dionysus and the Little Palace of Knossos.

The *Warwick-Knossos Archaeological Fieldwork Project* provided the Student Researchers with unique opportunities to apply what they have learned during the course of their degrees at Warwick to original archaeological remains at a world-leading research centre. It also provided them with unique opportunities to foster international collaborations, to add to their educational experience by visiting and studying sites and material from around central and eastern Crete, to hone the digital storytelling skills that they developed on our second-year core module (Hellenistic World). and to apply these in a real-world setting to making a short film about our time at Knossos. Without the general support from an IATL Project Award, none of this would have been possible.

Next Steps

The Warwick Team completed the objectives of the *Warwick-Knossos Archaeological Fieldwork Project* in 2022. At this stage C. Trainor is in the consultation process for identifying new material for the next phase of the project that will facilitate a new group of Warwick students gaining this range of experience. The potential funding bodies for the next phase of the project include the Gerda Hinkel Foundation, the Loeb Classical Library Foundation, and the Wenner Gren Foundation.

Budgetary Considerations

Total Funds Awarded by IATL: £2308

- Student Accommodation at the British School at Athens (Knossos) Hostel: **£1408**
- Student Membership for the British School at Athens (Knossos): **£100**
- (both of these were paid by Donna Davies from an invoice)
- Student dinners (filed through Concur on 20/7/2022 & on 12/8/2022): **£655.96**

Total Spend: **£2163.96**

Total Remaining (Underspend): **£144.04***

*This underspend happened because the IATL award came through just before the project was set to begin and as a result we did not have time to order the requested microphone in the original budget in time for the project. I therefore used my own personal research funds to purchase a camera to enable us to make the video outputs for this project.

Figures

Fig 1. Knossos



Fig 2. The Warwick Team at Work

(L. to R. Louisa Armitage, William Vernon, George Roffe and Cameron Heagney)



Fig 3. A 1st Century Amphora



Fig 4. A Mould with a Medusa-face motif



Fig 5. The Warwick, UCD and Tulane teams at the Archaeological site of Lato

