

ANNUAL REPORT: PRANE SIDDI (ITALY) 2013 FIELD SCHOOL

Director: Dr. Emily Holt, Oberlin College (US)



Students Denee & Corryn recording a *nuraghe*

GENERAL

A five-week IFR Field School at Siddi, Sardinia (Italy), took place between June 16th and July 20th 2013. This field school formed part of the inaugural season of the Pran'e Siddi Landscape Project, which was established to investigate the changing relationships between settlement patterns and environmental and climate change in the area around the modern town of Siddi, located in south-central Sardinia. The five IFR field school students who worked with the Pran'e Siddi Landscape Project were directed by Dr. Emily Holt (Oberlin College) with the collaboration of Mauro Perra (Museo Genna Maria). Geoarchaeological survey was headed by Anke Marsh (University College London). The project included two additional staff members, Christina Perry Sampson (University of Michigan) and Bridgid Purcell (Trinity College, Dublin), and two affiliated researchers, Michael Kraus (University of Cincinnati) and Jaykob Wood (University of Michigan).

Our daily routine included fieldwork and lab work from 8am-5pm with an hour break for lunch. Twice a week students attended lectures from 6-7pm, and weekends included field trips and guest lectures such as:

- A guided tour of UNESCO World Heritage site Nuraghe Su Nuraxi (Barumini)
- A guided tour of Nuraghe Santu Antine (Torralba) and a visit to the famous well temple of Santa Cristina (Paulilatino)
- A trip to the National Archaeological Museum in Cagliari
- A guided tour of Nuraghe Genna Maria and guest lecture by Mauro Perra

Highlights of the season included the team's participation in the festival of Siddi's patron saint, Sa Gloriosa, and our trips to the beaches at Poetto and Is Arutas.

RESEARCH GOALS

The settlement history in the Siddi area is representative of settlement patterns in much of inland Sardinia and includes late Neolithic and Eneolithic occupations, the development of the Nuragic culture in the Middle through Final Bronze Age, settlements showing Phoenician and Roman influence, and late antique through medieval and Renaissance settlements. Because of the representativeness of occupational history in the Siddi area, the Pran'e Siddi Landscape Project has the opportunity to investigate broad patterns of settlement change that have been observed to occur throughout Sardinia as well as specifically local variations in these broad patterns.

The Pran'e Siddi Landscape Project combines a variety of survey techniques to reconstruct changes in environment, climate, and settlement patterns over time. Our three main research goals are 1) to establish correlations between environmental changes and shifts in settlement patterns, 2) to identify and test for mechanisms and processes that can provide causal links between environmental change and human responses, and 3) to reconstruct the changing landscape of power through detailed site analysis.

GEOARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Geoarchaeological analysis will include analysis of satellite imagery and topographic maps, ground survey, and trenching to reconstruct local changes in geology, soil formation and use, agricultural strategies and wild flora, as well as broader changes in climate and hydrology. During the 2013 season, field school students examined satellite imagery and topographic maps for evidence of alluvial fans, terraces, and palaeochannels to identify potentially fruitful areas of research. Students then examined these areas on the ground, evaluating their potential as sites for geoarchaeological trenches and learning about sedimentation, erosional and depositional contexts, and sediment and soil identification and classification. This season's reconnaissance paved the way for a more intensive ground survey and selection of trenching sites in 2014.

SITE SURVEY

Site survey incorporated a variety of methodologies to begin to locate and document evidence of occupation in the area. We began by documenting and describing known sites, particularly the seventeen Middle Bronze Age sites located on top of the Siddi Plateau. The team documented six of these sites: five dry masonry towers and one monumental tomb dating to the early Nuragic culture. The team also documented additional sites located in the lowlands around the plateau, including two towers dating to the Late Bronze Age, another monumental tomb dating to the Eneolithic through Middle Bronze Age, and two medieval churches. During the coming year, we will use the data from these documented sites to begin building the project database.

The team also began field survey to locate additional sites and develop a better understanding of patterns of land use through time. We will focus on expanding our field survey in the 2014 season.

CERAMIC ANALYSIS

Field school students participated in the analysis of ceramics from Progetto Pran'e Siddi (2009-2011; Perra and Holt, directors). These ceramics were excavated at the site of Sa Conca Sa Cresia, one of the Middle Bronze Age towers on the Siddi Plateau. Working with the ceramics from Sa Conca Sa Cresia helped students develop the familiarity necessary to identify ceramics during field survey as well as

allowed them to contribute to our growing understanding of pottery making techniques and technologies during an important period of occupation in the Siddi area.

Overall, the Pran'e Siddi Landscape Project had a very productive first season, and we are looking forward to returning to the field in 2014.