

ABSTRACTS

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OBSERVING THE IONIAN ISLANDS FROM THE MAINLAND. (*EPEIROS*)

From the Archaic to the Classical period, the territory of Epirus maintained relations with the various islands in the Ionian Sea. Although relations were most intense with the island of Coreyra, as written sources, archaeology and epigraphy show, there is also evidence of contacts of various kinds with Leucas, Cephallenia and Zacynthus. In the latter case, the relationship is even articulated through mythical kinships linking the Molossians to Zacynthus through Cassandra, as shown by an inscription discovered at Dodona.

Key words: Epirus, Dodona, Leucas, Cephallenia, Zacynthus.

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LE ISOLE DELLO IONIO NEL CONFRONTO TRA SPARTA E ATENE. DINAMICHE POLITICHE E STRATEGICHE NELLA METÀ DEL V SEC. A.C.)

In their role as hubs in the routes to and from the West, in their mutual relationships, with the surrounding regions and with the main protagonists of the history of ancient Greece, the Ionian Islands present themselves as a sort of laboratory, a microcosm affected by dynamics and phenomena of great interest.

The paper aims particularly at reconstructing the role played by Leucas, Cephallenia, Ithaca and Zacynthus, on a political and strategic level, in the clashes between Athens, Corinth and Sparta from 460 BC to the final years of the Peloponnesian War.

Key words: Leucas, Cephallenia, Zacynthus, Athens, Sparta, Corinth.

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DIE IONISCHEN INSELN UND DIE GRIECHISCHEN
BUNDESSTAATEN

This paper focusses on the relationship between the Ionian Islands (the “almost island” of Leucas, Cephallenia and Zacynthus) and Greek federal states (*koina* of the Achaeans, Aetolians, Acarnanians) on the mainland developed since classical times. The main subjects of this paper are the methods and strategies that islands of foreign ethnic origin, separated from the mainland by the sea, used, when they were politically and ideologically integrated into the “sphere” of mainland federal states and to what extent the island *poleis* were actively involved in this process. In addition, it is discussed whether on the islands federal structures have been introduced.

Key words: Ionian Islands, Greek federal states, Achaeans, Aetolians, Acarnanians.

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EPIRO LE ISOLE IONICHE. PAESAGGI ELLENISTICI A
CONFRONTO

With the reigns of Alexander the Molossian and especially with Pyrrhus and his son Alexander, Epirus significantly expanded its territory. This expansion is evident from archaeological evidence through numerous fortifications that transformed the landscape, allowing for effective management and control, particularly of the road system and productive areas. This new territorial dimension likely included the Ionian Islands as well. The objective of this paper is to analyze the relationship between the Ionian Islands and the kingdom of Epirus during the Hellenistic age and to determine, archaeologically, whether the new territorial management also involved the Ionian islands.

Key words: Epirus, Hellenistic age, fortifications, Ionian Islands, Landscape management.

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DODONA AND THE IONIAN ARCHIPIELAGO

The aim of this essay is to examine the evidence for the presence of people from the Ionian Islands in the Sanctuary of Dodona. Although the paper considers all the neighbouring islands, it focuses mainly on the southern ones. The different testimonies collected show two levels of interaction, firstly the oracular activity and secondly the function of Dodona as a social arena that contributed to the continuous redefinition and consolidation of the hierarchy of each community.

Key words: Dodona, Ionian Islands, Greek oracles, Greek society, Epirus.

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THE IONIAN ISLANDS AND THE REGION OF
ACARNANIA: AN OVERVIEW OF ITS PHYSICAL
ENVIRONMENT

The geographical location of the Ionian Islands and Acarnania is responsible for the main characteristics that make its landscape unique: a strong geophysical activity derived from the mobility of the tectonic plates that has configured an area of rugged mountains and basins, where seismicity is manifested with great intensity; a Mediterranean bio-climatic scenario and finally, an ancient anthropogenic intervention that destabilized the natural environment through deforestation and soil erosion, promoting river accumulation processes that gave way to the construction of deltas and flagrant changes in the layout of the coasts.

Key words: Ionian Islands, Acarnania, natural environment, geographical uniqueness, deforestation, deltas and coasts.

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**LEUKAS. ZUR ANTIKEN BESIEDLUNG UND ZU
DÖRPFELDS ALTFUNDEN**

One hundred years ago, the systematic archaeological exploration of the island of Leucas under the direction of Wilhelm Dörpfeld focused on finding the palace of Odysseus with its associated settlements and necropolises - under the assumption that Leucas was Ithaca -. Although this exploration completely missed its goal, this very structured and carefully carried out work is nevertheless significant, as it provided rich insights into the prehistoric and ancient settlement of the island. With the help of the excavation diaries from that time and of the samples of finds from these regional studies kept in the collection of the German Archaeological Institute at Athens, complexes of finds can be located, sharpen the rural settlement picture and raise further questions about settlement, not only in the city of Leucas, but in plain of Nidri in the middle part of the island, where Dörpfeld and his team explored the so-called royal tombs of Nidri (from the early and middle Bronze Age), excavated several fortified farmstead, located on the edges of the plain, mostly slightly elevated, at a distance of 100 to 500 meters from each other, and studied the integration of the plain into the island's watch and signal post system.

Key words: Dörpfeld, Leucas, Archaeology, settlements.

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**IL RUOLO COMMERCIALE DI LEUCADE E LA PRESENZA
DI STRANIERI NELL'ISOLA**

The city of Leucas prospered due to its strategic location, serving as a transit point between Greece, the Adriatic coast, Italy, and western ports. Beginning with the foundation of Leucas and the construction of the διόρυκτος by the Corinthians, the paper focuses on the archaeological evidence related to the harbour and buildings associated with the productive activities of the ancient Corinthian colony. Finally, inscriptions attesting to the presence of foreigners on the island are examined, also considering the latest archaeological investigations. The analysis of the epigraphic and archaeological material of Leucas demonstrates how the island was

integrated into the commercial flows extending from Massalia to Miletus, offering a glimpse into a city whose commercial vitality is particularly evident from the Hellenistic period onwards.

Key words: Leucas, Epigraphy, Harbours, Economy, Trades.

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THE FLOURISHING PORT OF ANCIENT LEUCAS.
TOPOGRAPHICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA

Based on topographical and excavation data, the port of Leucas exemplified a prosperous city. The port, large and safeguarded by an elongated mole within the Leucas channel, included numerous warehouses unearthed in past decades, where amphorae of wine and oil were stored. Recent excavations have uncovered an expansive commercial space with an imposing public stoa and a katagogion with spaces for accommodation, dining, and entertainment. These findings affirm that the port of Leucas was a crucial trade hub, thus enriching our understanding of its significance in antiquity.

Key words: Leucas, ancient ports, katagogion, public stoa, trade hub.

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IL TEATRO ANTICO DI LEUCADE.
DALL'IDENTIFICAZIONE DEGLI INIZI DEL XX SECOLO AL
RILIEVO E LA RICERCA UN SECOLO DOPO

Leucas' strategic position in antiquity facilitated strong connections with the surrounding regions, fostering significant economic and cultural prosperity. The island played a crucial role in the exchange of people, ideas, and technologies. Its control over vital maritime routes highlights its importance within the context of Corinthian colonization. This importance was further solidified when it became the second capital of the Acarnanian League.

The only systematic excavation ever conducted in the ancient town of Leucas began six years ago in the city's theatre, which is nearing completion

and has unearthed an impressive monument along with many interesting elements. The theatre is fully integrated into the natural geomorphology on the slopes of Koulmos hill, thus providing a panoramic view of the expansive region.

So far, the research has largely uncovered the *koilon*, the *orchestra*, the *euripus*, the *parodoi*, the retaining walls of the *koilon*, and much of the stage, which remains preserved at foundation level. Fragments of stone thrones, adorned with relief decorations including lion paw motifs at the base, along with depictions of dolphins, animal muzzles, lion skins, backward-facing bird heads, and Lesbian cyma, have been found scattered throughout the Euripus area.

The theatre of Leucas is the first big ancient theatre to have come to light in the Ionian Islands. The dating of the monument is still tentative, as both excavation and architectural study are ongoing. Similar to theatres in Aitolokarnania, which were constructed from the 4th century BC, it is likely that the theatre of Leucas also dates to this period of economic prosperity for the city. Completion of the systematic excavation, along with the study of the monument and artifacts, is expected to provide precise insights into its construction date, phases, architectural design, and its potential functions in relation to the historical trajectory of ancient Leucas.

Key words: Leucas, theatre, fourth century BC.

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**TAKING ADVANTAGE OF WIND, SLOPE AND SHADE.
BIOCLIMATIC ADAPTATION OF LEUCAS CITY PLAN AND
HELLENISTIC HOUSES**

The ancient city of Leucas was located on the eastern coast of the island of the same name, a strategic position that allowed to control the maritime traffic through the Leucas Canal. Its location, on the lower hillside of Koulmos Hill, made it possible to take advantage of the slope to permit the functioning of the drainage pipes that ran through the rear passageways of some excavated blocks of the city. In the warmer months, the island of Leucas endures high temperatures with elevated humidity, resulting in sweltering heat. The orientation of the main streets of the ancient city favoured the action of the prevailing winds in summer, which helped to mitigate the heat. It is likely that, in the Hellenistic construction phases of

some excavated houses, the distribution of the building volumes contributed to the casting of shadows over the courtyards, preventing the interior of the dwellings from overheating.

Key words: Leucas, house, urban planning, bioclimatic architecture.

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THE LEUCADIAN *PERAEA*

This work aims to study the *peraea* of the *polis* of Leucas and its importance regarding Leucas' control of the maritime routes crossing the channel between the island and the western continental coast of Greece, particularly the Plagia Peninsula. In this case, we shall identify the different sites involved, the ancient sources available, and apply some GIS tools, as well as focusing on the viewshed from each point, the territory of the *polis* of Leucas and the different routes that Leucas was able to control.

Key words: Ionian Islands, Leucas, *Peraea*, Acarnania, GIS.

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THE CEPHALLENIAN *TETRAPOLIS*: TERRITORY,
POLEIS AND *ETHNOS*

This chapter analyses the manner in which the Cephallenian *poleis* occupied, exploited and defended their territory, and the development of Cephallenia during the Classical Period. We shall also investigate the aspects that shaped the identity and political organisation of the Cephallenians during this period. In this way, whilst the other islands of the Ionian featured just one *polis*, Cephallenia featured four different *poleis*: Same, Crane, Proni and Pale that were unequal in terms of size, importance and wealth. Cephallenia's identity revolved around the tradition of Cephalus as a shared ancestor and eponymous hero of the Cephallenians, also reinforcing their awareness of their Hellenic origin. We are dealing with an ethnic identity, an *ethnos*, but it did not reach the point of constituting a federal state in the Classical Period.

Key words: Ionian islands, Cephallenia, Classical age, *poleis*, ethnicity.

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**IN THE SHADOW OF ODYSSEUS. A HISTORY OF
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH AND CONTRACT
ARCHAEOLOGY IN ITHACA**

This paper offers an account of contract archaeology in Ithaca based on the author's experience over two decades. The first part recounts the history of archaeology in Ithaca, highlighting how the quest for Odysseus has shaped the formation of the published archaeological record. The second part provides an overview of rescue fieldwork undertaken under contract, and discusses the results in their local and regional context.

Key words: Ithaca, archaeology, Odysseus, neglect, landscape.

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**ZACYNTHUS AND THE WESTERN PELOPONNESE:
BETWEEN THE ACHAEAN HELLENISTIC KOINON AND
ROMAN EXPANSION INTO GREECE**

The objective of this paper is to delve into the history of Hellenistic Zacynthus, with a particular focus on the period spanning from the late 3rd century to the early 2nd century BC. Situated strategically between Italy and the Adriatic on one side, and the Peloponnese and the Aegean Sea on the other, the island was disputed among various political entities, *i.e.* Macedonia, Rome, and the Achaean Koinon. Despite limited historical evidence —comprising archaeological findings, epigraphic records, numismatic evidence, and literary texts—this study aims to elucidate Zacynthian ties to the Peloponnese and challenge the prevailing notion that the island's interests were solely directed towards the central Mediterranean from the 4th century onwards.

Key words: Zacynthus, Achaean Koinon, Rome, Hellenistic period, connectivity.

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**DON'T BE SILENT, HOMER: ANTIQUITY FOR LAWRENCE
DURRELL IN THE IONIC ISLANDS LANDSCAPE**

In his literature, Lawrence Durrell approaches the Greek map as if confronting a heraldic reality, replete with emblems that are constructed through a combination of heliocentric visualism and the impact caused by the historical references that have taken place at certain coordinates. In this sense, Antiquity achieves a great predominance to the detriment of later periods. This article examines each of the components of the emblem separately, applying its results to the landscape of the Ionian Islands, focusing especially on two fundamental books by Durrell: "Prospero's Cell" and "The Greek Islands". The aim is to enter into the author's subjectivity with analytical rigour, exploring the consequent hierarchisation of *his* particular geography in this specific area.

Key words: Lawrence Durrell, heraldic reality, heliocentric visualism, Antiquity, Ionian Islands.