

SEARCH NOA

SEA Routes and Coastline Historiography of the North Aegean

Maritime landscapes of the Northeast Aegean: coastal evolution and changing boundaries

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SEARCH NOA is an independent research that aims to investigate the use of maritime space and the coastal zone of the North Aegean Sea in an interdisciplinary manner from early prehistory to the beginning of the 20th century. The research is based on archaeological data, historical evidence from various sources (ancient Greek and Latin literature, medieval and ecclesiastical sources, historical cartography etc.) and environmental studies related to sea-level fluctuations and the dynamics of coastline formation.

SEARCH NOA is a step forward from my PhD thesis "Coastal and insular communities of the northeastern Aegean during the 5th and 4th Millennium BC: aspects of maritime landscape". The emphasis of the thesis was the Neolithic background under the perspective of maritime archaeology. The spatial distribution and the archaeological data of the so far identified Neolithic coastal and insular sites of the northeastern Aegean were examined in conjunction with the geomorphological features, the paleoclimatic and the oceanographic data from this region.

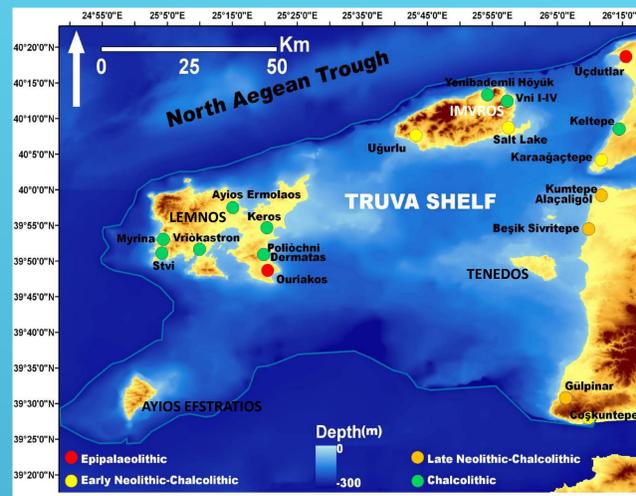
Sea Routes and Coastal Historiography of the North Aegean

Χαλκιάτη Αρετή

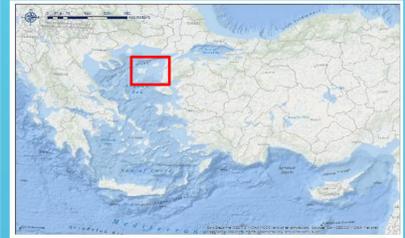
Amongst the primary goals of **SEARCH NOA** is the creation of a database regarding:

- > bibliography,
- > archaeological sites,
- > artifacts,
- > radiocarbon assays,
- > historical maps and written sources linked to maritime activities
- > Environmental studies

The purpose is a compilation of all the available sources illuminating aspects of past maritime landscapes, such as continuity and change of maritime space, changing maritime networks, nodal points of maritime interaction.

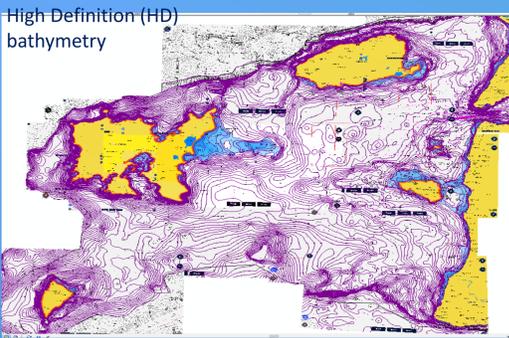


The focus of this Poster is a part of the Northeast Aegean, delineated by the west coast of the Gelibolu (Gallipoli) Peninsula, the islands of Imvros, Lemnos, Ayios Efstratios, Tenedos and the Northwest coastline of Turkey. It addresses the changes underwent in the maritime landscape of this area the last 20 ka years with the help of maps.



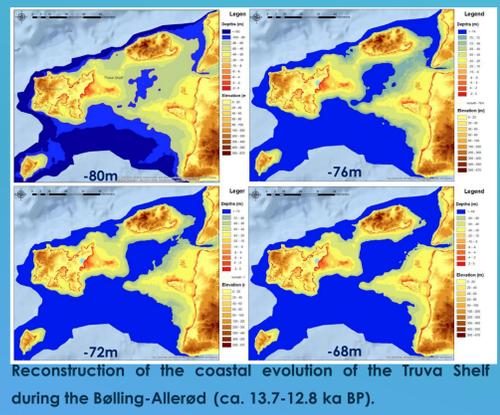
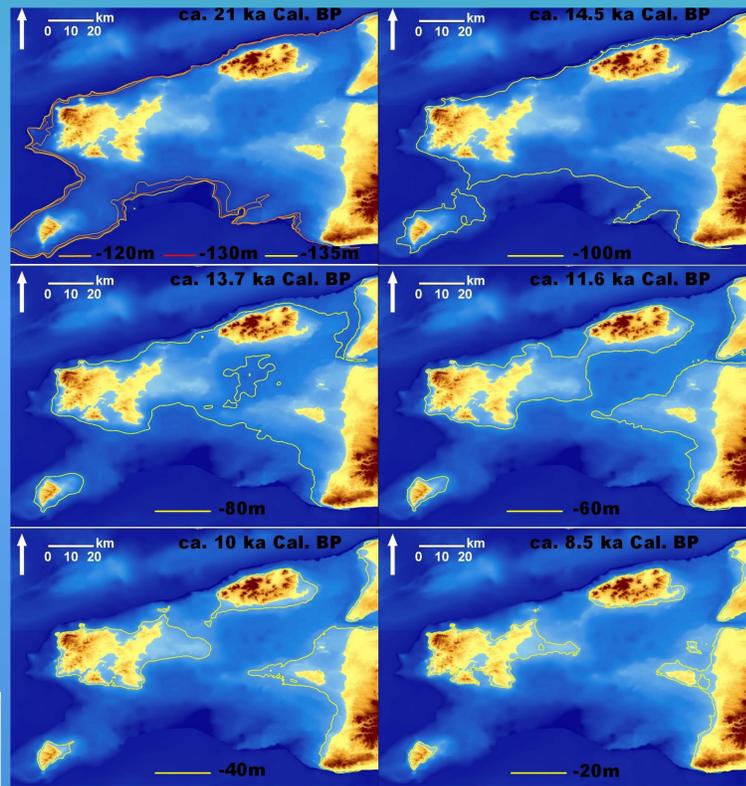
The outlined maritime area is the Truva Shelf, a relatively smooth continental shelf, on the northern break of which extends the North Aegean Trough (NAT), with depths reaching 1532 m. The islands in this maritime region are quite distinct between one another. The largest one, **Lemnos** on the northwest edge of Truva Shelf, is characterized by a unified landscape with gentle inclinations and an abundance of good anchorages. On the other hand **Imvros** is hilly with a more abrupt and diverse landscape and a lack of good anchorages, particularly on the northern side that borders with the NAT. **Ayios Efstratios** is a small volcanic island with narrow valleys on its northeastern and western side, quite isolated from other islands or mainland coasts. **Tenedos** lays very close to the Anatolian mainland. It has a low, plane landscape with a few hills, but its coasts are generally rocky. This small island served for millennia as a stopping point in anticipation of favorable maritime conditions for ships sailing north to the Dardanelles Strait (Chalkioti, 2013).

The baseline of the analysis are reconstructions of the evolutionary coastal configuration, based on the global sea-level trends and on sonar charts depicting the local



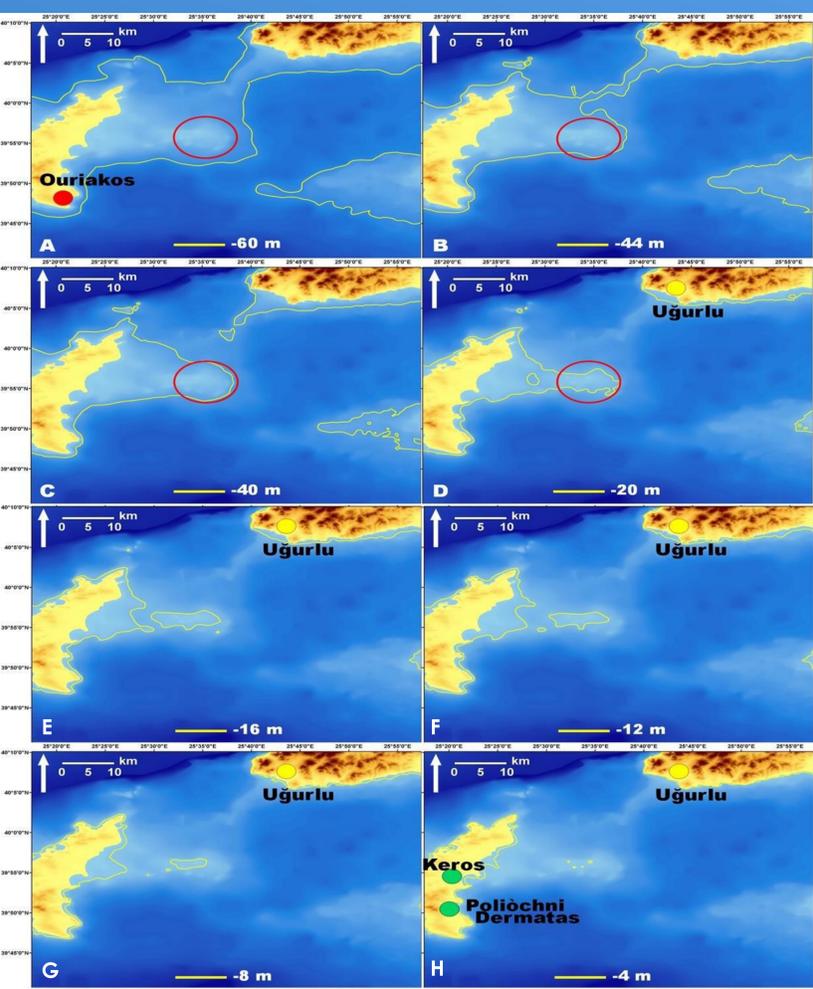
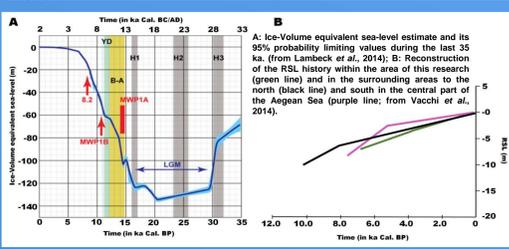
A bathymetric Digital Terrain Model (DTM) of the area of interest was created after the digitization of the isobaths from georeferenced sonar charts, with the use of Geographic Information System (GIS) software (Chalkioti, 2016). This DTM served as the basis upon which the Relative Sea-Level (RSL) was represented at particular time intervals extracted from recent sea-level studies (Lambeck et al., 2014; Pavlopoulos et al., 2013; Vacchi et al., 2014).

A series of maps was thus created covering the time-frame between the Last Glacial Maximum and the Middle Holocene, with the purpose to highlight initially the evolution of the local maritime landscape of this part of the Northeast Aegean.

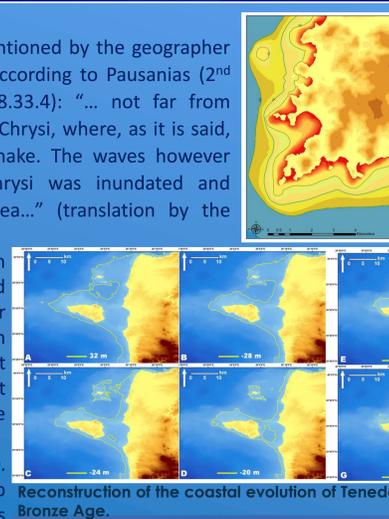


At a second stage the goal is to diachronically present geographically strategic locations with the following features: land-bridges connecting islands and islands with the mainland, narrow straits and maritime areas with small islets that could be used as stepping stones facilitating coastal maritime voyaging.

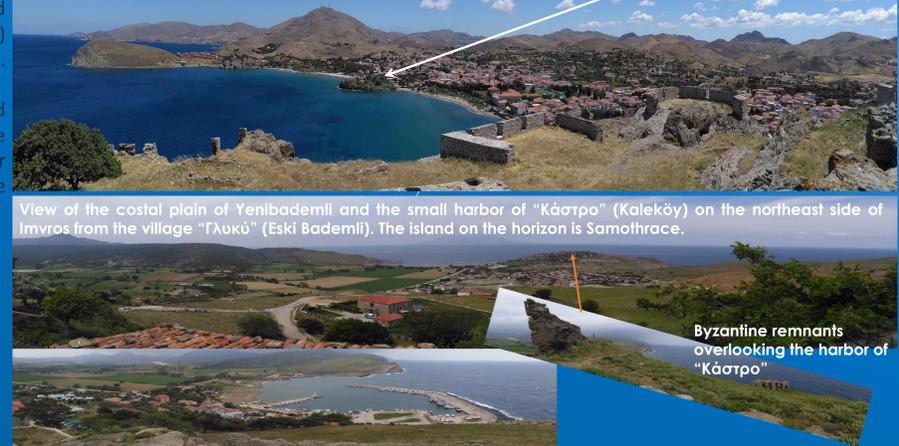
Larger scale maps were created for this purpose, depicting the temporal evolution of such locations in the area of study in conjunction with the existing archaeological evidence regarding prehistoric sites. This process can help us identify nodal points of the maritime landscape, potential promising locations for future underwater archaeological investigations.



The Example of Chrysi (Χρυσή)
Chrysi was an islet east of Lemnos mentioned by the geographer Pausanias that was lost underwater. According to Pausanias (2nd century AD) ("Ελλάδος περιήγησις" 8.33.4): "... not far from Lemnos there was one-time an island, Chrysi, where, as it is said, Philoctetes was injured by a water snake. The waves however covered entirely the island, and Chrysi was inundated and disappeared in the depths of the sea..." (translation by the author).
Underwater remnants have been reported in an area of shallows and reefs (reefs Mythones or Charos, near the rock islet Anatoli, Kharos bank in British navy charts) not far from the east coast of Lemnos (red circle on the left map) as early as the 18th century by the French traveler Choiseul-Guffier (1785). In 1912 the Greek Navy Officer D. Mpakopoulos, from the war ship "Κανάρης" that was setting minefields in the area reports: "...on the east of the island an underwater city was discovered next to the Charos bank, the remnants of which appear to be in good state" (translation by the author) (Νέος Ελληνομνήμων, τ. 9/1912, σ. 489).
Underwater archaeological and geomorphological surveys in these shoals, could be fruitful in the search for potential early sites as well as for the detailed evolution of this coastline.



View of Myrina and the small bay of "Ρωμείκος Γιαλός" (Romeikos Gialos) and the coast "Ρηχά Νερά" (Richa Nera) from the Castle of Myrina. The small peninsula of the Meteorological Station separates Romeikos Gialos from Richa Nera where prehistoric Myrina is located. The oldest occupational levels of Myrina (Final Neolithic) have been identified on the peninsula of the Meteorological Station.



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Byzantine remnants overlooking the harbor of "Κάστρο"