

ARC 212 ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE AEGEAN

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Course 01: Aegean Palaeolithic



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Aegean Prehistory

Chronology and Terminology

Phase	Date, B.C.
Aceramic Neolithic	ca. 7000/6800–6500
Early Neolithic	ca. 6500–5800
Middle Neolithic	ca. 5800–5300
Late Neolithic	ca. 5300–4500
Final Neolithic ^a	ca. 4500–ca. 3200
Early Bronze/Early Minoan/Early Cycladic ^b	ca. 3100/3200–ca. 2000
Middle Bronze/Middle Minoan/Middle Cycladic	ca. 2000–ca. 1650
Late Bronze/Late Minoan/Late Cycladic	ca. 1650–ca. 1070

Regional Terminologies

Minoan, Helladic, Cycladic, Western Anatolia

Chronological Terminologies

Early, Middle, Late

Aegean Prehistory

Chronology and Terminology

DATE	ANATOLIA			CRETE	GREEK MAINLAND	CYCLADES	EASTERN AEGEAN ISLANDS	TROIA	LÍMAN TEPE AREA - A	LÍMAN TEPE AREA - B	PERIOD		
	Kültepe	Tarsus	Beyce Sultan										
2000 BC.			VIa		Early Helladic III	Middle Cycladic	Heraion V	V		LMT B IV-1	EBA IIIb		
			VIII		Aegina V	Early Cycladic III (Phylakopi I)	Poliochni Brown Heraion IV	IV (?)	?				
11b 12 13	EBA III	XII c	Early Minoan IIB	Lerna IV	Aegina IV	Early Cycladic IIB (Kastri Group)	Heraion III Poliochni Yellow Emborio I	III	LMT A V-1	LMT B V-1a	LMT B IV-2	EBA IIIa	
				Early Helladic II Late				Late				End of EBA II	
				Lerna IIID	Aegina III			II				LMT B V-1b	EBA II Late
				Lefkandi I / Manika Pevkakia VII	Aegina II						LMT A V-2a	LMT B V-2	
2500 BC.		XIII a		Lerna IIIC	Pevkakia VI								
15 16 17 18	EBA II	XVII	Early Minoan IIA Knossos Poros	Early Helladic II Early		Early Cycladic IIA	Poliochni Red Heraion I Thermi V	Early		LMT A V-2b			
				Lerna IIIB			Late	LMT A V-3a	LMT B V-3	EBA II Early			
				Lerna IIIA				LMT A V-3b					
					Aegina I		I	Middle	LMT A VI-1a	LMT B VI-1	EBA I Late		
					Early Helladic I			(Aplomata Group)	Polio. Blue evoluta Emborio IV Polio. Blue Archaic Thermi III	LMT A VI-1b		EBA I Middle	
		XIX	Early Minoan I		Early Cycladic I (?)	Emborio V	Early (?) End of Kumtepe 1b (?)	LMT A VI-1c	?	EBA I Middle / Late			
3000 BC.		XX				Thermi II Thermi I		LMT A VI-1d		EBA I Early / Late Chal. (?)			
	EBA I							LMT A VII					

Chronological Overlaps eg. EB 1 Western Anatolia partly coincides with Early Cycladic II

Renfrews Chronological Scheme

Others

Aegean Paleolithic

Earliest evidence for humans in Greek Mainland comes from the area of Thessaly in northern Greece.

The earliest human skeleton is found at Petralona Cave in Chalkidiki dating to the Lower Paleolithic. (200.000 BP)

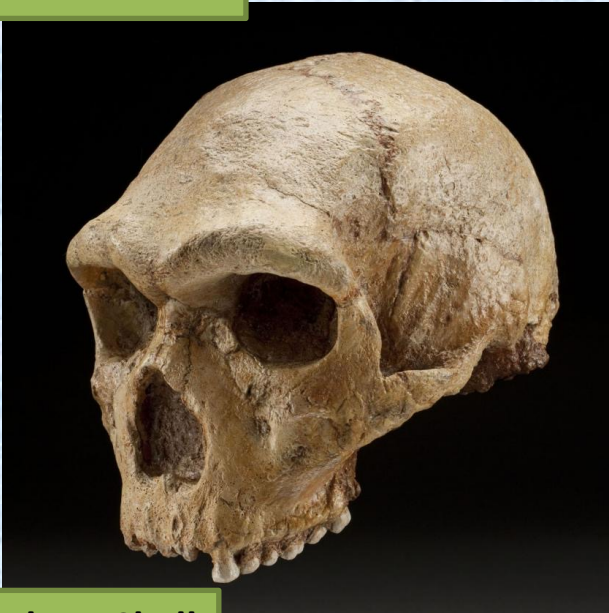
Middle Paleolithic cave sites were also found in Thessaly and in Peloponnesos.

The site numbers rise during Upper Paleolithic and human signs also appears in the islands.



Aegean Paleolithic

Petralona Cave



Petralona Skull

Petralona Cave



Petralona Cave

Aegean Paleolithic

Paleolithic people used caves and areas adjacent to water sources as their favourable open air stations. They were small hunter gatherer communities living in nomadic life styles. Each community consisted of roughly 15-30 people.

By the end of the Ice Age, once the climate begins to warm up, major changes took place on the coasts and probably large plains are currently lying down under the Aegean sea today.



Aegean Paleolithic

Francthi Cave



Francthi Cave which is located in Argolid area of Greek Mainland was continuously inhabited from Upper Paleolithic till the end of the Neolithic.

The site is also important as a key site which housed habitation from the end of the Ice Age until the end of Neolithic which is also a crucial period for humanity.



Aegean Paleolithic

Francthi Cave



Careful Excavations, Comprehensive Publications

Life at Francthi Cave began maybe even more than 20.000 years and continued uninterrupted until into the 3rd Millennium BC. The site is located in and in front of a cave on the coast.

Aegean Paleolithic

Franthi Cave



Franthi Cave Paleolithic Period (c. 20,000 – 8300 BC) (Renfrew's Hunter Gatherer Period)

Inhabitants of the cave were probably seasonal hunter-gatherers. No certain gathering of plant foods is attested before ca. 11,000 BC. The chipped stone industry consists of flint and chert for the most part, although a small amount of obsidian from Melos appears well before the end of the Paleolithic period (ca. 10,900 BC.) Wild plants and undomesticated animal bones have also been found in these deposits. There is no pottery or architecture. No burials have been found.

Aegean Paleolithic

Franchi Cave

Mesolithic Period (c.a. 8300 – 6000 BC) (End of Renfrew's Hunting and Gathering Era)

Although there seem to be a 300-600 years of gap in the occupation history at the cave, the economy of the Early Mesolithic period is in general a continuation of the Paleolithic Period.

The later part of the Mesolithic reflects 2 important changes. The first one is visible in the changing percentages in faunal assemblages. Large fish bones constitute an important part in faunal assemblages during the second part of the Mesolithic.

Second important change is the increase in the number of Melian obsidian in chipped stone assemblages at the site.

These two new developments clearly show that the inhabitants of Franchi Cave were good sailors. They not only managed to travel in the Aegean for 150 km's but also managed to carry out deep / open sea fishing practices during these voyages. There is still no architecture or pottery during this period. An interesting find group however are the mill stones made of andesite which is a stone that was imported to the cave from the Saronic Gulf.



Franchi Cave
Mesolithic Burial

There has been other Paleolithic and Mesolithic finds at different caves around the Greek Mainland. Franchi Cave is the most detailed analysed cave for this period.

Theopetra Cave in Thessaly is another important cave yielding information for these periods.

Aegean Paleolithic

Franchthi Cave

Mesolithic Period (c.a. 8300 – 6000 BC) (End of Renfrew's Hunting and Gathering Era)

The earliest burial found at Franchthi is of Lower Mesolithic date: a 25-year-old male buried in a contracted position in a shallow pit near the mouth of the cave. The pit was covered with fist-sized stones; there were no burial goods; the young man had died from blows to the forehead.

Analysis of the human bone from elsewhere in the cave produced evidence for at least one other Mesolithic burial, this of the Upper Mesolithic phase, in another location, in addition to fragments of another 6 to 25 individuals sprinkled throughout Mesolithic strata within the cave.

Mesolithic sites around Greece reflect certain common aspects.

- 1- They are definitely different and unconnected to the preceding Paleolithic Period.
- 2- They are manifested at Coastal or near coastal areas only.
- 3- They exhibit an unusual focus on marine resources and long-distance maritime acquisition networks involving such raw materials as obsidian and andesite, as well as such food resources as tuna.
- 4- Mesolithic Culture is the first human culture attested in Greece to manifest any concern for the ritualized disposal of its dead.



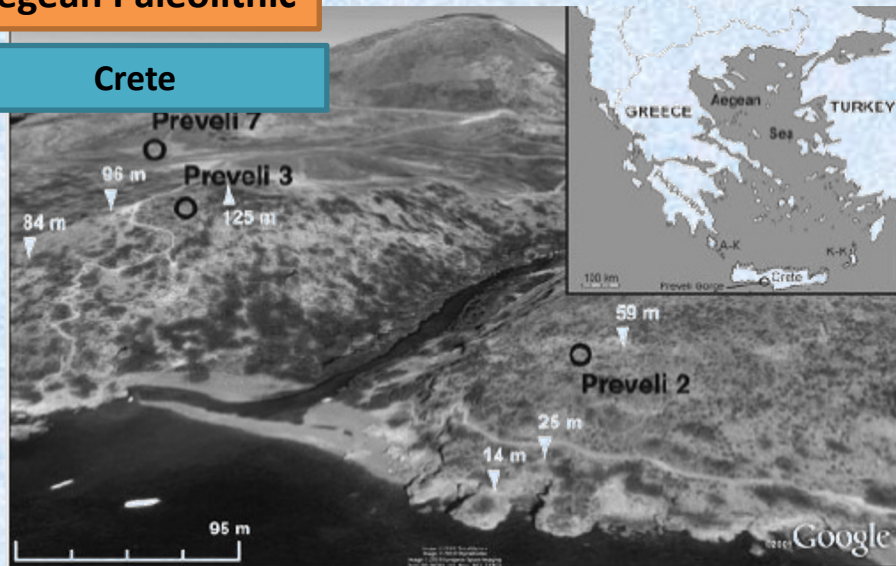
Franchthi Cave
Mesolithic Burial

Mesolithic culture of Greece is usually accepted as an intrusive group approaching the Greek Mainland by water rather than overland and spreading from east to west during the course of the period. This Mesolithic "colonization" of Greece thus represents an episode of demic diffusion from the east that precedes a second such episode about 1500 years later that inaugurates the Neolithic era.

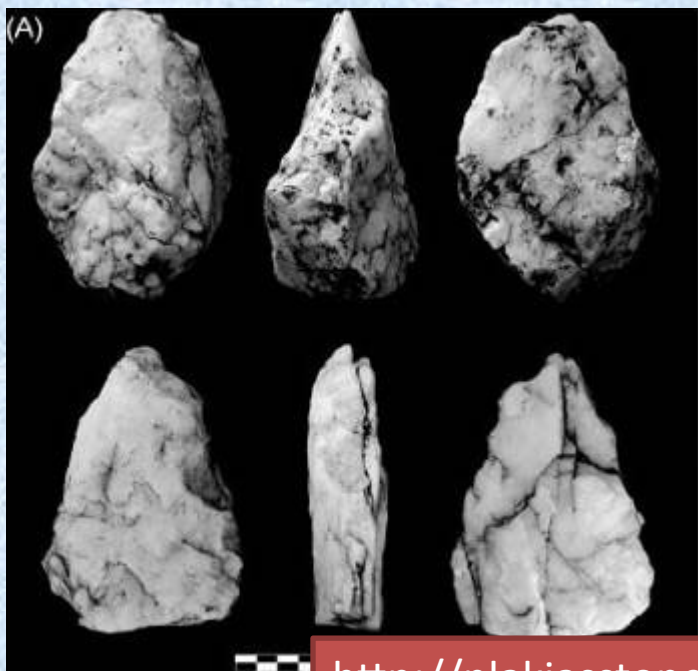


Aegean Paleolithic

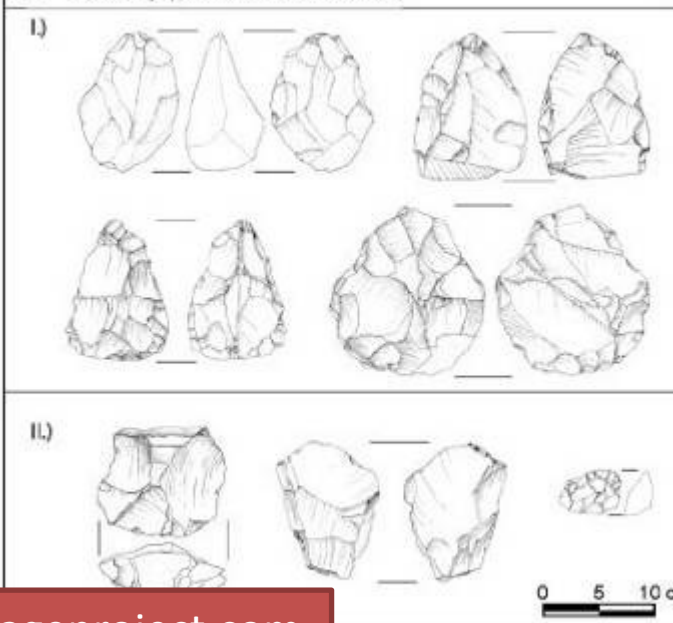
Crete



**PLAKIAS (PREVELI), Crete
Paleolithic Period**



(B) Preveli 2, 3, and 7 - selected lithics



Strasser, T.F. et al, 2011

Aegean Paleolithic

Crete

PLAKIAS (PREVELI), Crete Paleolithic period Bifaced Tools

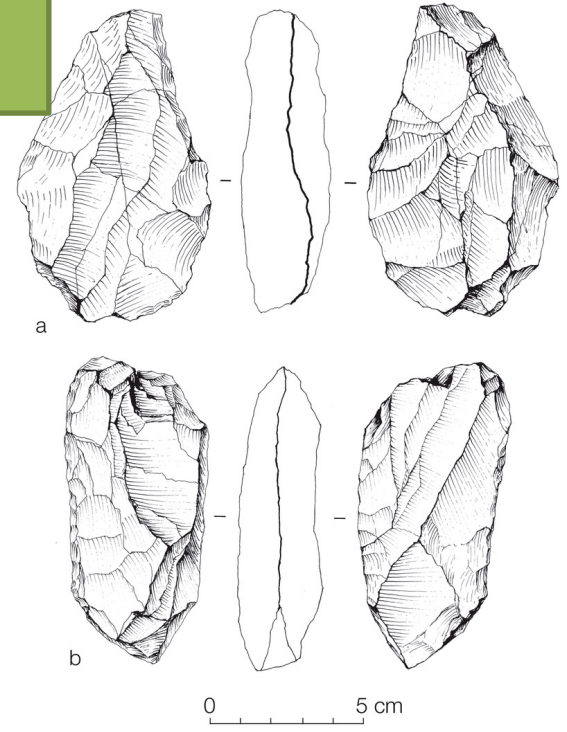


(a)

Gavdos Island, Crete Paleolithic Period



(b)



Gavdos Island, Crete Paleolithic Period

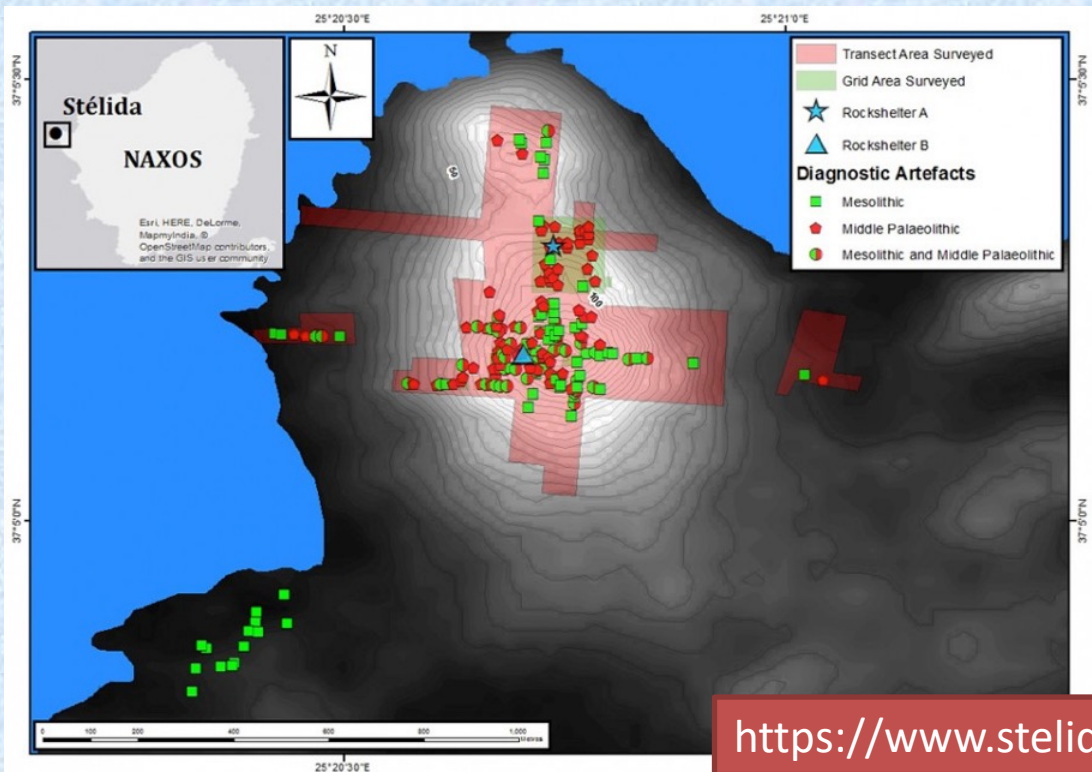
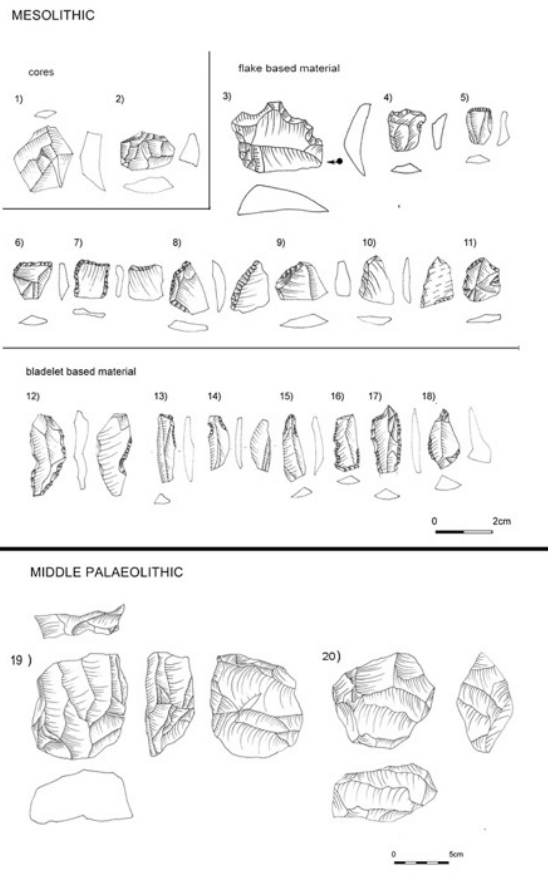


Aegean Paleolithic

Cycladic Islands



**Stélida – NAXOS
Cyclades
Paleolithic
Mesolithic**



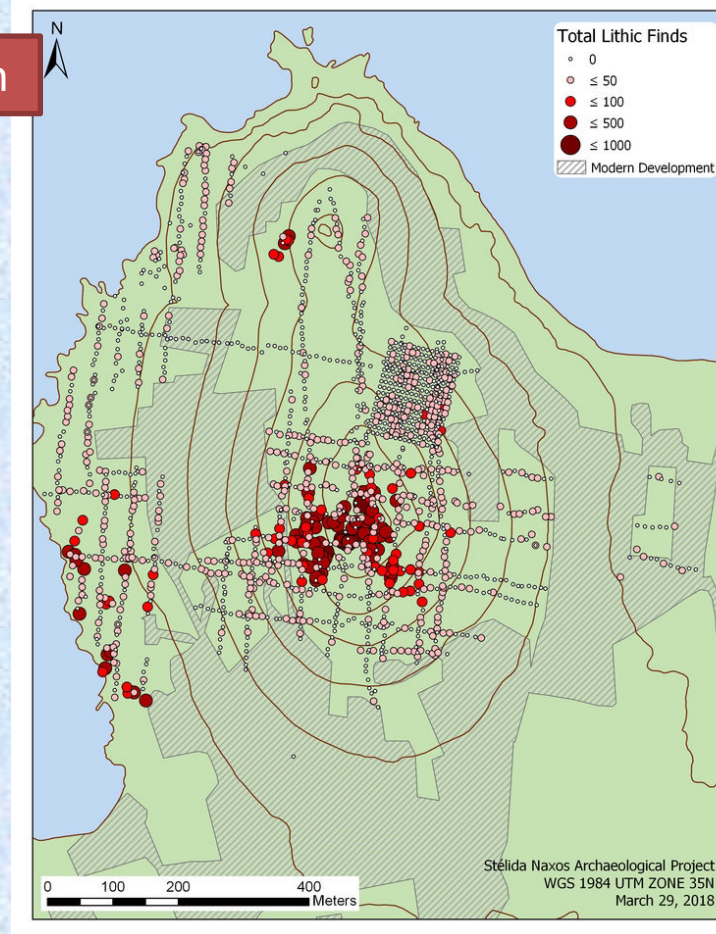
<https://www.stelida.org/english>

Carter et al 2014

Aegean Paleolithic

Cycladic Islands

<https://www.stelida.org/english>

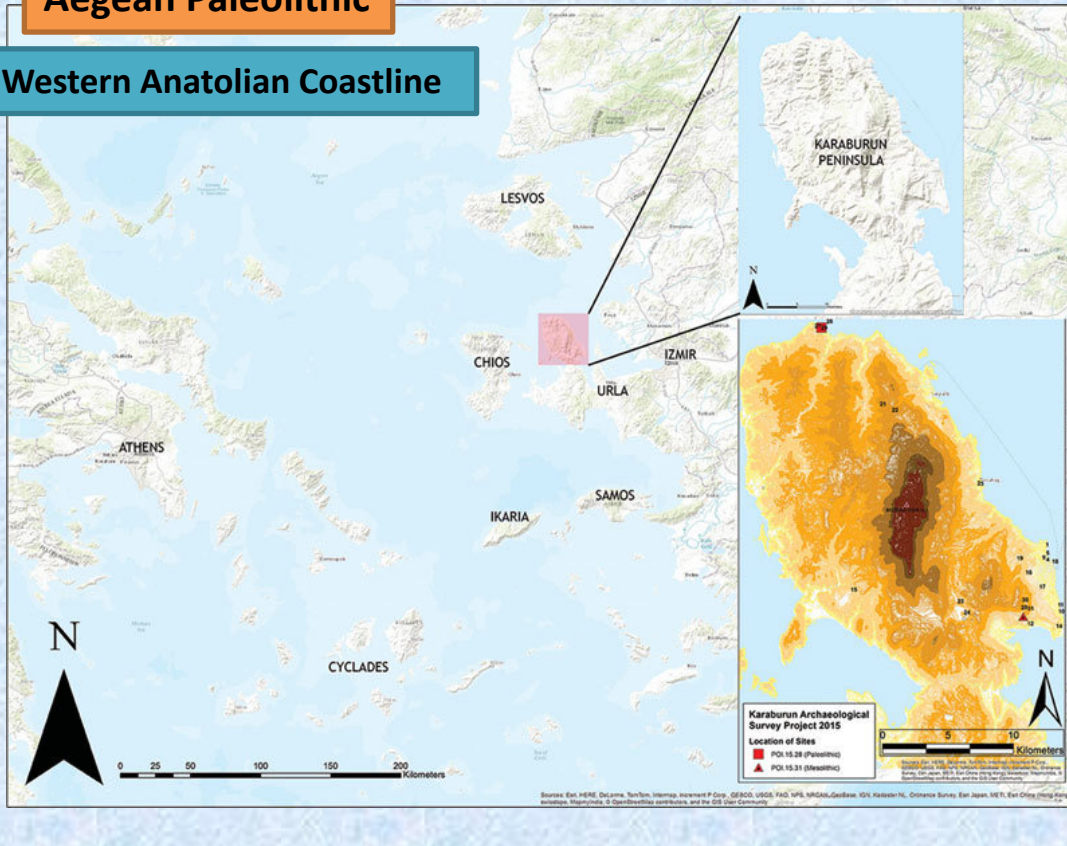


Stélida – NAXOS
Cyclades
Paleolithic
Mesolithic

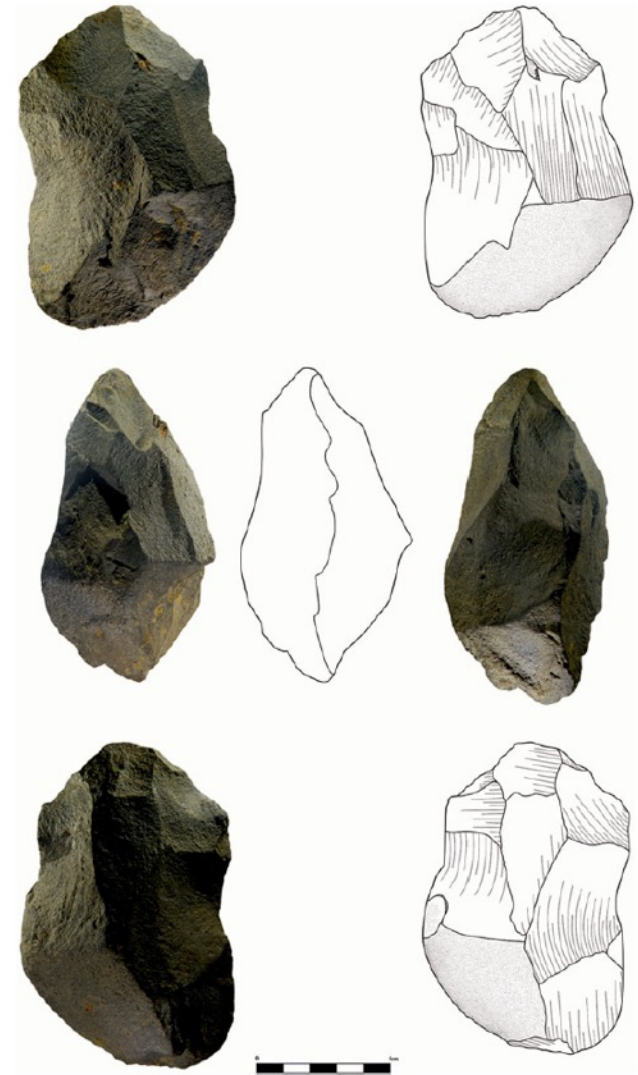


Aegean Paleolithic

Western Anatolian Coastline



Karaburun – İZMİR Western Anatolia Paleolithic Period



<https://karaburunyuzey.wordpress.com>