STAVROS NIARCHOS FOUNDATION – FORTH SEMINAR SERIES

Tuesday 5 March 2019
16:00 – 17:00
A. Payatakes Seminar Room

" Aerial approach between Archaeology, History and Ethnography on Cretan Mountains "

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Abstract

Aerial archaeology in Greece is still an exceptional and uncommon practice. Archaeological or historical projects making use of historical or modern aerial photographs can be counted in half dozen so far. The project "Crete from Above" brings prominently the bird eye view in the complex and pluri-stratified Cretan archaeological and historical context. The approach aims at identifying and mapping abandoned and forgotten historical and modern artefacts on the mountainous landscape of the major Greek island. The project originates from the consideration that the space which surrounds us and with which we continuously interact, is not a static entity. It is the result of the complex relations and influences of humans (and their cultures), animals and landscapes. Material and tangible results of such interactions (which often involve many more variables than the above outlined) are normally reshaped, repurposed, obliterated, damaged or endangered in view of the "development" of certain areas. However, sometimes, past standing structures become iconic elements of the landscape of which they are part, in a certain spontaneous monumentalisation process, as almost fossil or fossilized built landscapes. Main goal of the project is therefore to "tag" abandoned and collapsing artifact with archaeological and historical facts, promoting at once the involvement of local communities and (oftentimes) contemporary users of such artefacts (or what remains of them).

The paper will present "views" of the Cretan mountainous landscape through historical and modern aerial photography, highlighting the difficulties of working in such a challenging context and the ongoing activities for community engagement in an attractive and expanding touristic destination.