Archaeology of Mountain Landscapes: Interdisciplinary Research Strategies of Agro-Pastoralism in Upland Regions

Agro-pastoral landscapes characterize not only upland plains or irrigated areas around water courses, but they also define most mountain landscapes, sometimes considered as “marginal lands” when the territories of urban centers are concerned. However, at least a fifth of the terrestrial surface could be defined as mountain areas, hosting a fifth of the human population and providing sustenance for a much larger percentage. Bearing this in mind it is not a surprise to know that mountain areas have been transited, inhabited, exploited and conceptualized by humans since the very beginning of the species.

Due to the multiple factors and relationships involved, landscape-shaping - not only in mountain areas - is an extremely complex subject. Landscape studies are part of a wide range of disciplines such as History, Archaeology, Anthropology, Geography, Geology, Ecology, Economics, and Paleoenvironmental Studies. In this research context, interdisciplinary and diachronic approaches have a great potential and they are a practical reality in nowadays research projects about mountain Landscapes.

Fieldwork developed during the last decades has changed our knowledge about the history of mountain environments. The 10th International Visiting Scholar Conference at the Institute for European and Mediterranean Archaeology (IEMA) at the University at Buffalo will gather researchers who in different geographical areas (in both Eurasia and the Americas) have made significant contributions about land-use in mountain areas and human activities in the shaping of mountain cultural landscapes.