

[CURRENT](#) [ALL ISSUES](#) [ABOUT](#) [BOOKS FOR REVIEW](#)[Search](#)[HOME](#) / [ARCHIVES](#) / [VOL 5 NO 1 \(2018\): JOURNAL OF LITHIC STUDIES](#) / [Reports](#)

## New evidence for the Palaeolithic in Attica, Greece

### Justin Allen Holcomb

Boston University

### Curtis Runnels

Boston University

### Duncan Howitt-Marshall

British School at Athens

### Evangelos Sachperoglou

**KEYWORDS:** Palaeolithic; hominin dispersal; quartz stone tools; Pleistocene; Attica; Greece

### ABSTRACT

Despite Greece's key geographic position between southeast Europe and southwest Asia, and its potential for documenting hominin dispersals, Lower and Middle Palaeolithic sites are rare. This suggests the need for research to identify deposits that may contain Palaeolithic artefacts. Here we describe 165 quartz and quartzite artefacts with Palaeolithic characteristics (based on technical and morphotypological definitions) from a private collection that was made from erosional lag deposits on the southeastern slopes of Mt. Pendeli and the northern edge of the Spata *polje* (a large karstic depression filled with terra rossas) in northeast Attica. Artefacts of the same type occur in the region of Ano Souli, another karstic depression. These karstic depressions are of interest because they resemble artefact-bearing deposits found at similar features such as Kokkinopilos in Epirus that have provided datable geologic contexts for Lower and Middle Palaeolithic artefacts. Our study suggests that Attica was frequented by hominins in the Lower and Middle Palaeolithic and that Pleistocene deposits in karstic depressions in Attica may preserve datable contexts for documenting early human activity. The lithic collection described here provides a glimpse of the potential of the region, and we recommend continued archaeological efforts in Attica to investigate the likelihood for buried Palaeolithic sites.

### AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

#### Justin Allen Holcomb, Boston University

Justin Holcomb is a PhD Candidate within Boston University's Department of Archaeology, and a Predoctoral Fellow at the Malcolm H. Wiener Laboratory for Archaeological Science at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens. Holcomb's research targets key geographic areas representing gaps in the larger narrative of early hominin dispersals, such as the Americas and Greece. He studies geoarchaeology as well as lithics analysis.

#### Curtis Runnels, Boston University

Professor Runnels has been involved in fieldwork in Greece, Turkey, and Albania since 1973, including excavations, surveys, and laboratory

studies. Since 2008 his research has focused on the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic finds from the Plakias region of SW Crete. Before that he was Co-Director of the Greek-American Mesolithic Kandia Survey in the Argolid in 2003, and from 1988 to 1992 the Swedish-American Berbati-Limnes Survey in the Argolid. From 1991 to 1995 he was a staff member on the Boston University's Nikopolis Project, and the 1987 to 1991 Director of the Palaeolithic survey of Thessaly, and from 1979 to 1983 Associate Director of the Stanford University Archaeological and Environmental Survey of the Southern Argolid.

#### **Duncan Howitt-Marshall, British School at Athens**

Duncan Howitt-Marshall is a PhD Candidate at Cambridge University and a specialist in maritime archaeology, Mediterranean prehistory, and the archaeology of islands. His research interests include the origins and development of seafaring, early coastal and island societies, maritime adaptations and social change in the Mesolithic/Epipalaeolithic, Neolithic and Early Bronze Age, and applied methodology in underwater archaeology.

#### **Evangelos Sachperoglou**

Evangelos Sachperoglou is as a scholar of ancient poetry and avocational archaeologist, and is most know for translating C. P. Cavafy's, "The Collected Poems".

## **REFERENCES**

- van Andel, Tj. H. & C. N. Runnels 2005, Karstic wetland dwellers of Middle Palaeolithic Epirus, Greece. *Journal of Field Archaeology*, 30: 367-384. doi:10.1179/009346905791072125
- Magnani, M. 2014, Three-dimensional alternatives to lithic illustration. *Advances in Archaeological Practice*, 2(4): 285-297. doi:10.7183/2326-3768.2.4.285
- Manninen, M. A. 2016, The effect of raw material properties on flake and flake-tool dimensions: a comparison between quartz and chert. *Quaternary International*, 424: 24-31. doi:10.1016/j.quaint.2015.12.096
- Olson, B. R., Gordon, J. M., Runnels, C. N. & Chomyszak, S. 2014, Experimental three-dimensional printing of a Lower Palaeolithic handaxe: an assessment of the technology and analytical value. *Lithic Technology*, 39: 162-172. doi:10.1179/2051618514Y.0000000004
- Runnels, C. N. 2014, Early Palaeolithic on the Greek islands? *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology*, 27(2), 211-230. doi:10.1558/jmea.v27i2.211
- Runnels, C. N. & van Andel, Tj. H. 1993, A handaxe from Kokkinopolis, Epirus, and its implications for the Palaeolithic of Greece. *Journal of Field Archaeology*, 20: 191-203. doi:10.1179/jfa.1993.20.2.191
- Runnels, C. N. & van Andel, Tj. H. 2003, The Early Stone Age of the Nomos of Preveza: Landscape and Settlement. In: *Landscape Archaeology in Southern Epirus, Greece*, (Wiseman, J. & Zachos, K., Eds.), Vol. 32, American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Athens: p. 47-134. doi:10.2307/1354046
- Shea, J. J. 2013, *Stone Tools in the Palaeolithic and Neolithic Near East: A Guide*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 422 p. doi:10.1017/CBO9781139026314
- Tourloukis, V. & P. Karkanas. 2012, The Middle Pleistocene archaeological record of Greece and the role of the Aegean in hominin dispersals: new data and interpretations. *Quaternary Science Reviews*, 43: 1-15. doi:10.1016/j.quascirev.2012.04.004
- Tourloukis, V., Karkanas, P., & Wallinga, J. 2015, Revisiting Kokkinopilos: Middle Pleistocene radiometric dates for stratified archaeological remains in Greece. *Journal of Archaeological Science*, 57: 355-369. doi:10.1016/j.jas.2015.03.012
- Tourloukis, V. & Harvati, K. 2018, The Palaeolithic record of Greece: A synthesis of the evidence and a research agenda for the future. *Quaternary International*, 466: 48-65. doi:10.1016/j.quaint.2017.04.020
- Vergne, R., Pacanowski, R., Barla, P., Granier, X. & Schlick, C. 2010, Radiance scaling for versatile surface enhancement. In: *Proceedings of the 2010 ACM SIGGRAPH symposium on Interactive 3D Graphics and Games*, 19-21 February 2010. ACM, New York: p. 143-150.

ISSN: 2055-0472



# Journal of Lithic Studies

Volume 5

Number 1

2018

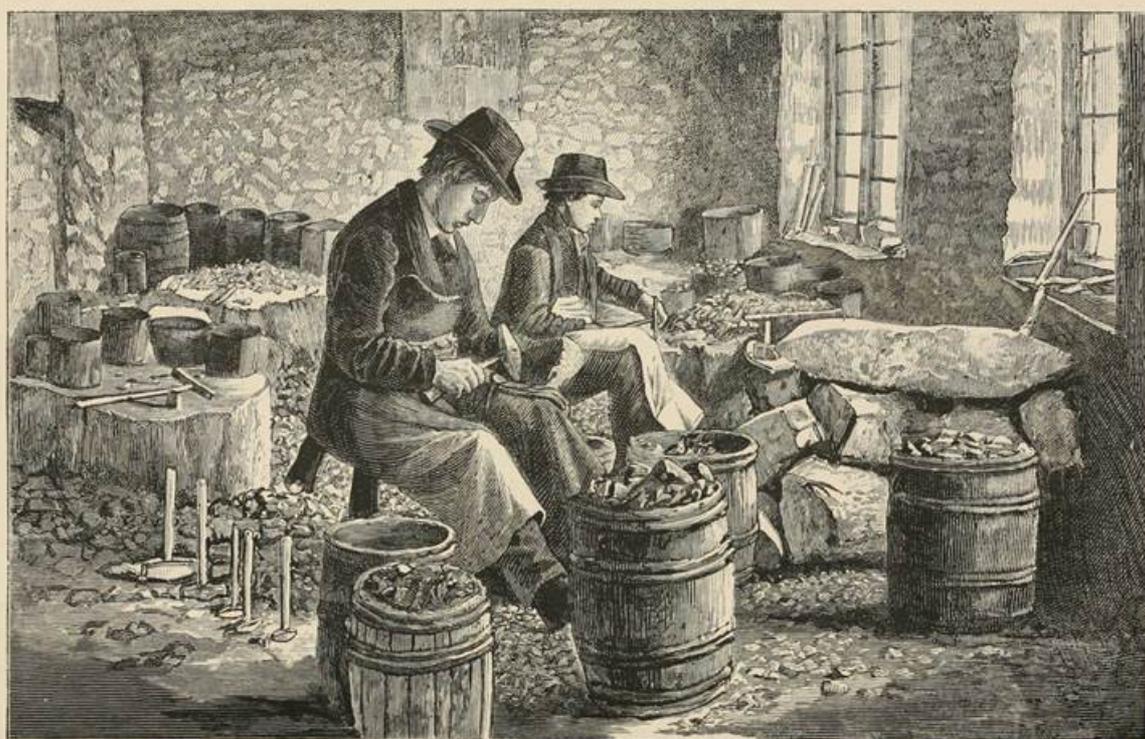


Fig. 13.—*Flaker at Work. Boy knapping in background.*  
(From a Photograph.)

Published by the University of Edinburgh,  
School of History, Classics & Archaeology

 PDF

PUBLISHED

15-Mar-2018

## HOW TO CITE

Holcomb, J., Runnels, C., Howitt-Marshall, D., & Sachperoglou, E. (2018). New evidence for the Palaeolithic in Attica, Greece. *Journal of Lithic Studies*, 5(1). Retrieved from <http://journals.ed.ac.uk/lithicstudies/article/view/2665>

More Citation Formats

## ISSUE

Vol 5 No 1 (2018): Journal of Lithic Studies

### SECTION

Reports



This is an Open Access journal. All material is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) licence, unless otherwise stated.

Please read our Open Access, Copyright and Permissions policies for more information.

## LINKS

[Geoscience e-Journals](#)

## LANGUAGE

[English](#)

[Español \(España\)](#)

[Português \(Portugal\)](#)

[Français \(France\)](#)

## INFORMATION

[For Readers](#)

[For Authors](#)

[For Librarians](#)

## CURRENT ISSUE

[ATOM 1.0](#)

[RSS 2.0](#)

[RSS 1.0](#)

ISSN 2055-0472 (Online)



The Journal of Lithic Studies is an Open Access journal. All material is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) licence, unless otherwise stated.

School of History, Classics and Archaeology

This journal is hosted by the University of Edinburgh Journal Hosting Service.

[Take Down Policy](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Cookies](#)

---