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REACH Newsletter #4 *December 2023*

Welcome to the latest edition of REACH newsletter!

We're excited to share with you some updates and news from our project.



TRAINING AT ASA AND UART

From 11th to 22th September 2023 two restorers from the University of Bologna and University of Urbino, **Arianna Buffagni** and **Angela Graziano**, carried out the training in the [ASA](#) and [UART](#) laboratories which are based in Tirana.

During the two-week training, they set up the work with the Albanian teachers, in order to have the laboratories operational for the second week of the [REACH International Summer School](#).



INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL “HANDS-ON: SCIENCE AND PRACTICE FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE

The Reach summer school began on October 1st with the arrival of Albanian, Italian, and Spanish students, in Apollonia. The plane from Italy landed with a strong delay, thus the bus was only able to leave from Tirana airport late in the evening. Students travelled at night with **Pjeter Guralumi**, the REACH, the REACH Project coordinator, and the Scientific Directors of the School **Belisa Muka** from ASA and **Aurora Dibra** from UNISHK. **Alvaro Arizaga** and **Pablo Porrall** from ESCRBCCG and Fondazione Flaminia staff were also traveling with them.

Both students and teachers stayed at the **House of the Archaeologist**, inside the Apollonia Archaeological Park sharing rooms with a Spartan spirit.



Phase 1 - Apollonia

The following day, Belisa Muka accompanied the group to an extensive “discovery” of the site. Later the Director of the park, **Ornela Durmishaj**,

the study group was extensive, embracing many branches of research as per the vast spectrum of school objectives: **Brikena Shkodra Rrugia, Sabina Veseli, Fjoralba Perzhita** from ASA, Angela Graziano and Arianna Buffagni.



On 3rd October, Admir Xhelaj, Head of the **Museum at the Monastery**, talked about practices for the recovery and maintenance of frescoes and finds. The talk took place at the beautiful **Church of Apollonia** site to complete the study tour of Apollonia site.



Local TV conducted interviews with not only scientists but also international lecturers and students! [These are still available on REACH website.](#)



moved to Shkodra by bus on the morning of 4th of October and visited the famous Mesi bridge accompanied by the archaeologist **Helidon Sokoli** of the **Institute of Cultural Monuments** and **Besara Podgorica**, the Director of the **Regional Office of Cultural Heritage of Shkodra**.

Phase 2 - Shkodra

Until 6th October the group was accompanied by Aurora Dibra to countless study visits in the area: the historical and turistic street Kole Idromeno, the Municipality of Shkodra, the **Site of Witness and Memory**, the **Historical Museum of Shkodra**, the **Atelie Youth Centre, Art Gallery**, and the **Castel of Rozafa in Shkodra** together with the **Historical Museum**. Besara Podgorica, joined again the group on their journey to discover the Illyrian fortification of Rozafa Castle.



The last day in Shkodra started with a visit in the space of the Reach Lab in the Faculty of Natural Science and the study visit in the **National Museum of Photography Marubi**.

During the day of travelling to Tirana the group stopped in **Lezhe**, the old city was called Lissus before. There the group of students and researchers visited **Church of St. Venerable Sh. Premtë in Baldren** and then the Memorial of Skanderbeg. The city is famous for the history of Beselidhja e Lezhes, where in 1444 the Albanian princes gathered around their Assembly, and where the hero Gjergj Kastrioti Skenderbeu was buried.

After the group stopped in Kruja and visited **Kruja Castle** and the **National Historical Museum of Scanderbeg**.



In addition to the many study visits, the students took many theoretical lessons during phase 2 in Shkodra: the effects of climate change on cultural heritage, techniques and scientific methods for analysing archaeological finds

management of cultural heritage, Albanian traditional painting, and techniques of painting restoration.



Unfortunately, the instruments purchased within the framework of the project to equip experimental laboratories in UPT and UNISHK had yet to be delivered, therefore the planned practical activities could not be conducted as per the schedule originally designed. Nonetheless, the international team of teachers was able to jointly devise alternative hands-on programming for this phase: in Shkodra the students worked on defining a diagnostic projects with the supervision of the EU and Albanian partners.

Mariangela Vandini from UNIBO, Alvaro Arizaga and Pablo Porral from ESCRBCG discussed theoretical and methodological steps with students and Albanian teachers and experts: **Besara Podgorica** and the restorer **Petrit Bilali** (DRTK) and Aurora Dibra (UNISHK).



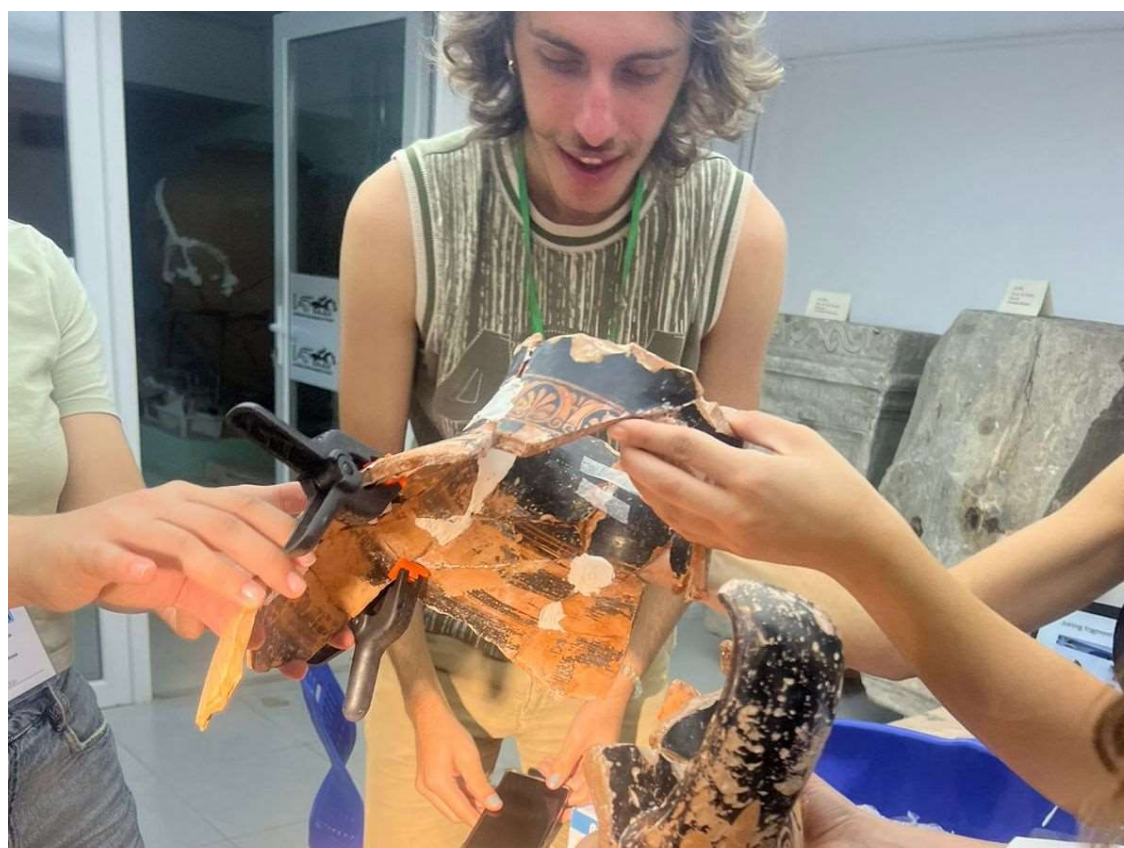
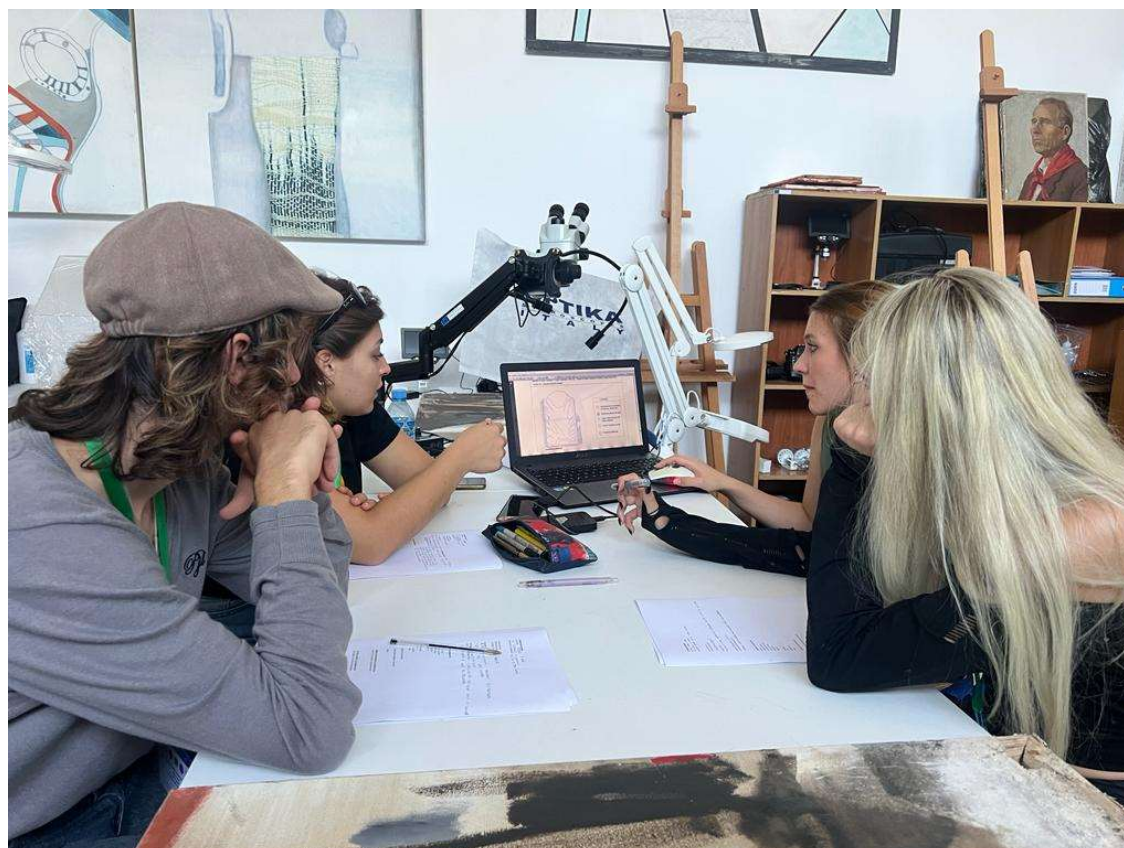


Phase 3 - Tirana

Following their transfer to Tirana, the students were **split into 3 groups** to continue hands-on activities at UPT, UART and ASA, where **Francesca Gasparetto** from UNIURB organised workshops on the survey and documentation of cultural heritage at UPT and on restoration methodologies at UART and ASA.



The Albanian lecturers, **Mikel Temo** (UART), **Fjoralba Perzhita** (ASA) and **Entela Daci** (UPT), and the lecturers from the Italian and Spanish partner institutions **Arianna Buffagni** and **Angela Graziano** (UNIURB - UNIBO), **Fabio Planu** (UNIURB), **Francesca Gasparetto** (UNIURB) and **Pablo Porral** (ESCRBBCCG), carried on the work defined based on their pilot case studies.





[Watch students interviews !](#)

Group works presentation on ERASMUS DAYS

After two intensive days of group work on the design of a restoration plan under the supervision of lecturers from ASA, UNIBO, UNIURB and ESRCBBCCG, the students proudly presented their ideas on 13th October and during the final day which was organised in conjunction with the last of the **ERASMUS DAYS 2023** at the Tonin Harapi Lectorium of the University of Arts.



The closing ceremony

directors Belisa and Aurora, marked one of the most gratifying and inspiring moments of the journey for both the REACH International Summer School students and the Albanian, Italian, and Spanish staff who supported them throughout this extensive and multifaceted experience.



The group of students, despite being diverse in their field of study and previous experience, soon came up with a way to combine fun with study. We saw them dancing, singing, and playing cards, they also were together for dinners, coffees and seeing football too, in line with **the spirit of international exchange in all Erasmus projects.**



[Click here for watching the Summer School Video Summary](#)



The REACH Summer School in the social media

The Flaminia Foundation supported supervising the activities and highlighting the daily development of the Summer School on REACH social networks. The posts and videos on REACH Facebook and Instagram accounts were viewed by over **2,500** people, **30% of whom were in the young age group.**

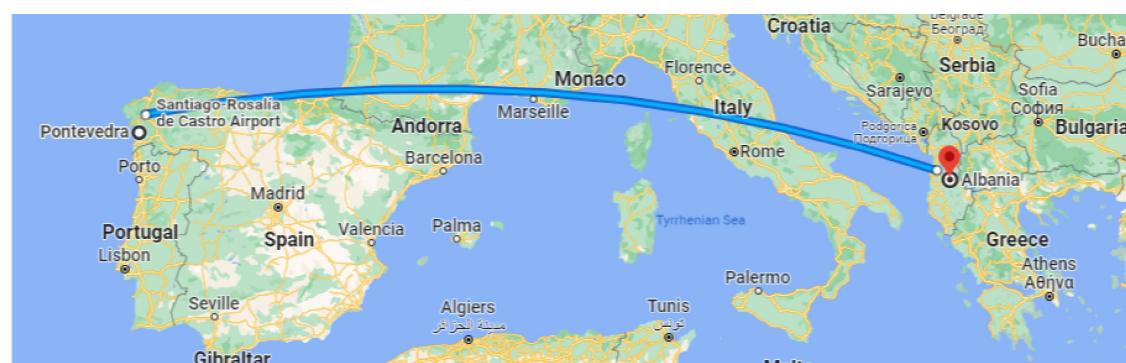
A sign that encourages us to think that a subject such as heritage protection may be of interest to future generations.



Prof. Vandini from the University of Bologna was interviewed by the Flaminia Foundation while she was in Shkodra during the REACH International Summer School .

Interested in watching?

Next REACH meeting will be in Pontevedra on 14th and 15th Decemer.



Follow us on the REACH project Social Media !





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