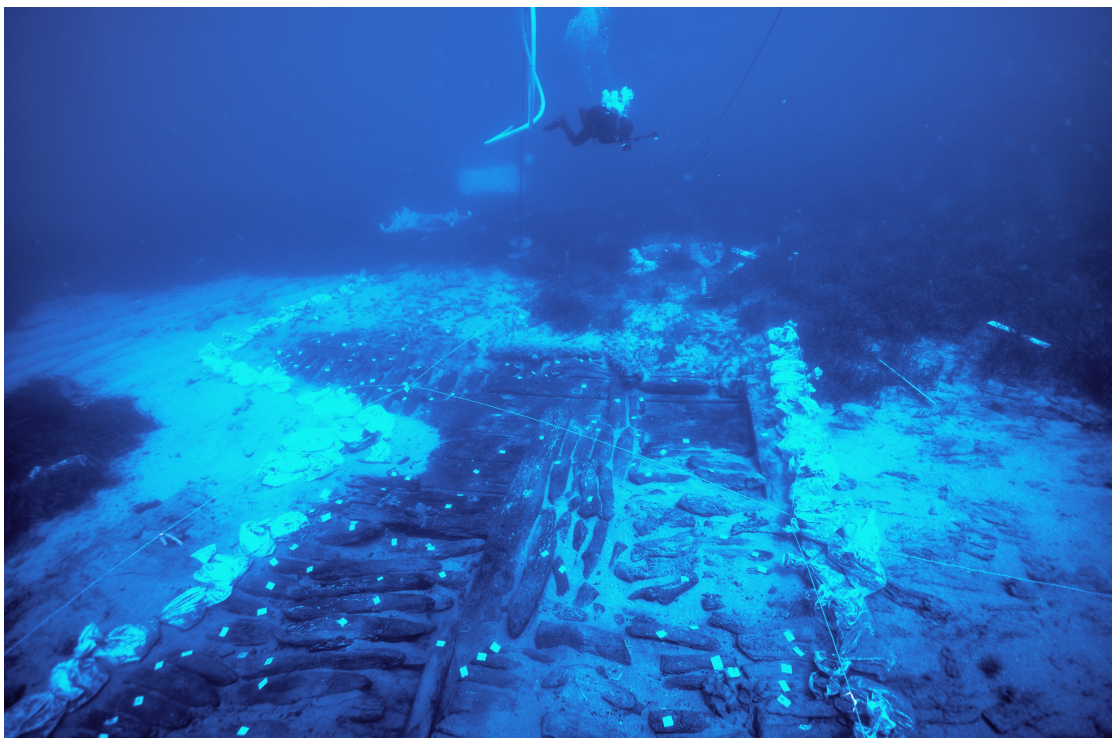


**The Nissia Shipwreck Project  
2017 Field season  
Report**



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**The Nissia Shipwreck Excavation project**

The Nissia Shipwreck site was chosen for MARELab's 2017 fieldwork and the third Field School in Underwater Archaeology, in collaboration with NAS, as part of the HFF funded project *Training the Next Generation*. The site was appropriate for the latter because (i) the depth was safe for young divers, (ii) a considerable part of the ship's wooden remains was preserved, and (iii) the sediment above the hull is less than 20cm thick, so in two weeks-time it would be possible to make significant progress. Moreover, it had been already three years since the first field season in September 2014 and important questions regarding the site's assessment remained open, i.e. the site's dating and the ship's type and size.

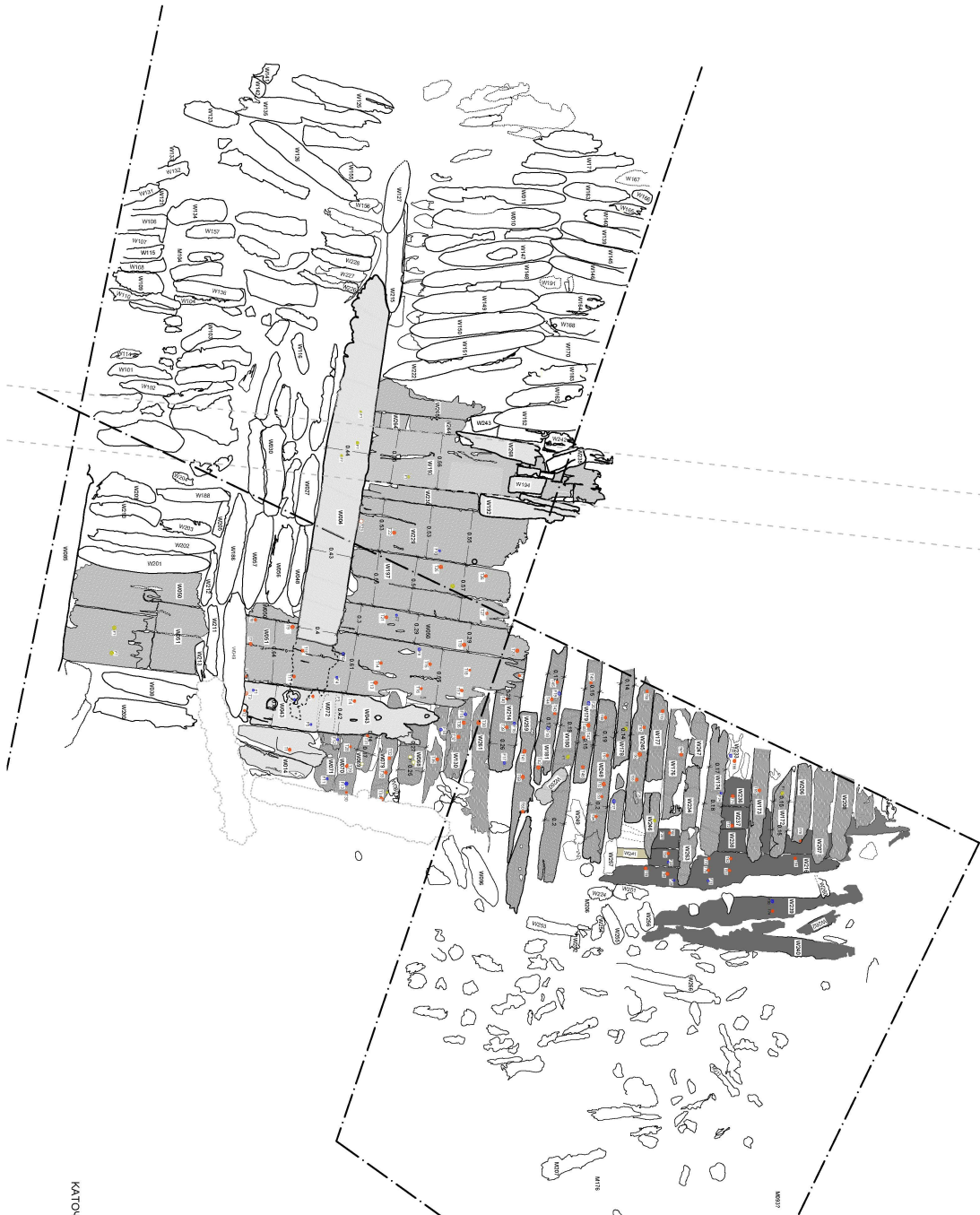
The 2017 field season lasted 23 days, from the 4 - 26 July 2017. Three trenches were opened (**Fig. 1**), thus expanding the excavation west and north of the 2014 trial trench. The team was comprised of 34 members: two associates from the Nautical Archaeological Society, twelve research students and associates, eight volunteer divers trained in the 2016 field school at Mazotos, and 12 trainees from Cyprus and abroad. In total 231 dives were conducted, corresponding to approximately 79 hours underwater.

The excavation trenches were opened within a zone that ran transversally through the site, targeted to expose diagnostic parts of the ship. This was accomplished to a very satisfactory degree, as the ship's keelson, ceiling planks, frames and parts of two hull planks were revealed. Although only a small part of the keelson was excavated (sided 55-56cm), it was enough to establish the ship's orientation, in a northeast-southwest direction, almost along the longitudinal axis of the site (**Fig. 2**). The limber-boards were also exposed on both sides of the keelson, whereas on top of it, just at the limit of one of the trenches, a mast-step was found, in a rather disturbed condition (**Fig. 3**). A timber protruding from the seabed, which had been partly documented in 2014, seems to be a rider, running on top of the keelson; at least two more similar timbers in size and parallel to it have been located in the still unexcavated part of the site. Five ceiling planks of considerable size (average 57x8cm) were also exposed. Along the eastern end of the excavation area, we were able to document 26 frames (average dimensions: sided 14-15. 18-20 and 25-27cm) (**Fig. 4**).

The dimensions of the ship's different parts indicate a vessel of considerable size (possibly longer than 30m), but its function remains uncertain. The fact that no cargo has been found thus far may indicate organic merchandise, if of course it was a merchant vessel. The four do not seem to indicate a warship. Given the extensive looting that the site has undergone, however, it is not certain if this number is representative of the original amount of ordnance. Apart from the ship itself, several movable finds were recovered, including musket and cannon balls, pottery sherds, and numerous iron parts (nails, bolts and possibly pipes).

Based on fragments of ottoman pipes the shipwreck should be dated to the nineteenth century.

# Figures



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Figure 1. The three trenches opened at the site, during the 2017 field season (Plan: Andri Evripidou)

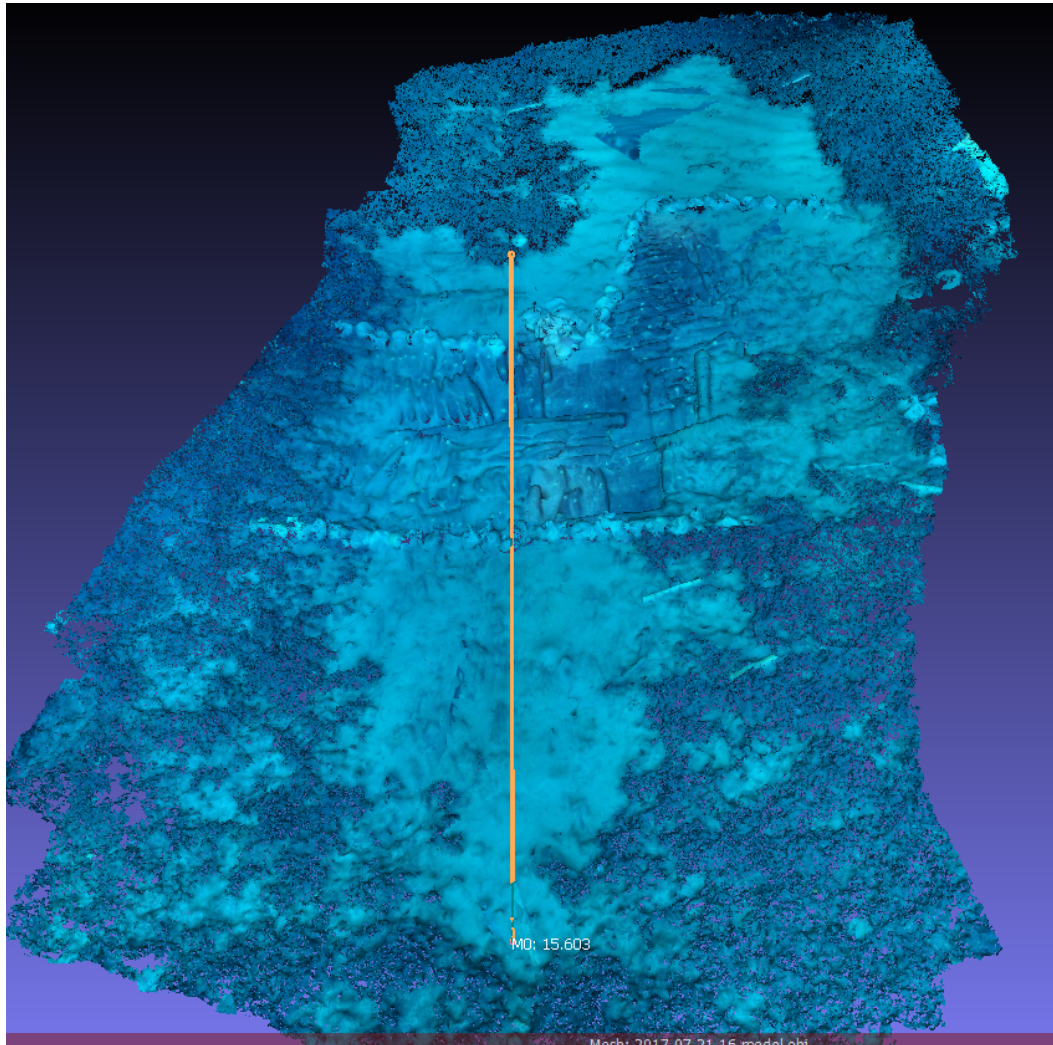


Figure 2. The 3D point cloud of the site. The yellow line shows the location and direction of the keelson (preserved at a length of at least 15.6m)

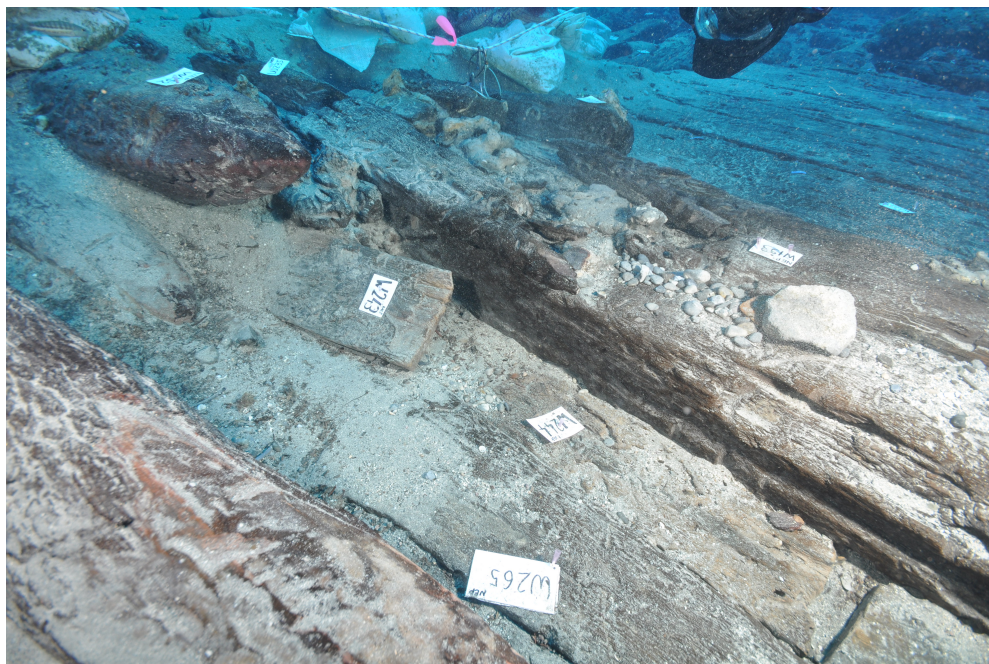


Figure 3. The keelson and the mast-step (on the top left)



Figure 4. Excavation of the ship's frames.