

## **Radiocarbon Dating Calcined Bones from the Mt Lykaion Project**

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NSF-Arizona AMS Laboratory has been involved in an NSF-funded project aimed at dating the ash altar of Zeus as part of the Mt Lykaion excavations. The work focused on cross-dating the abundant finds of calcined animal bone against stratigraphically related organic materials. So far, the radiocarbon dates suggest calcined bone behaves as a closed system with respect to carbon exchange, even in the extreme environment of the Mt Lykaion mountain top. The dates have provided a chronological framework to contextualize the abundant ceramic finds associated with the altar, and importantly, the human ritual activity of burning animal bone there. The 30 calcined bones selected for dating represent a miniscule sample of available material. Future work is aimed at corroborating the initial findings and the stunning archaeological implications.