

Time Travel on Giresund Island, 800 B.C. Hercules, the Golden Fur and the Bird Island

Facts

This region is a region of migration, movements and legends. Many groups of people have moved in here and created communities together with the local population, often as a part of a big empire – Greeks, Miletians, Persians, Pontus', Romans, Byzantines, Trebizonds', Ottomans, republic of Turkey. The name Giresun comes from the Greek word for cherry and the town was in the Greek period called Kerasus.

Around 800 B.C. several Scythian groups and Sakas lived in a vast area in Central Asia and Central Anatolia. They were partly nomads and tried to find the best place for their cattle. The word Saka means “related by blood” or “blood brother”.

There are many myths and legends connected to the Black Sea region and Giresun Island. One of them is the story about Hercules and the Argonauts and the search for the Golden Fur. This story starts in a distant kingdom and the fight for power. King Pelias promises to hand over the power to Jason if he can find and come back with the Golden Fur from a sheep. Jason immediately started an expedition. He sailed on a ship, Argo, named after the person who built it, Argus. The men on the ship were called Argonauts, a group of 50 heroes and gods helping Jason in the search for the Golden Fur. One of the Argonauts was Hercules, the son of Zeus, the strongest and bravest of all gods. The Argonauts went through a lot of adventures. At one time they reached an island protected by man-eating birds with beaks of bronze and sharp metallic feathers that could be launched at their victims. Hercules and the others had to use a lot of strength, bow and arrow, to fight the birds.

Giresun Island is very much a bird island, with thousands of birds. On the island are also many remains and stonewalls from the use of the island from several centuries BC and AD. Another legend connected to this region and the Scythians is the story about the Amazons, women warriors who can fight and use the bow like no men.

Scenario: 800 BC, The Golden Fur and Giresun Island

Many Sakas have left their land in Central Anatolia and after several weeks and months they have reached the coast. They like the area; it's green with opportunities for fishing and farming. They start to settle.

But a couple of days the rumors started. The Argonauts are coming. Everybody has heard the story about the Argonauts and Hercules and their search for the Golden Fur. Some say they have seen light on the island. Could that be the Argonauts? Can the Golden Fur be on the island? A fortune? A treasure? We have to look and see.

But all of us are a little bit scared of the island. We know about the big birds that is said to be dangerous and attacking people. And are we going to meet the Argonauts? Are they friendly? What will happen?

We have to do the right kind of ceremonies to be successful.

Roles

You are Sakas from Central Anatolia who have left your homeland because of changing weather conditions and draught. You are looking for a better land where they can stay and settle. You have heard about the Argonauts and the golden fur and are curious. Is there a fortune? Even for us?

Key Questions

Dreams, hopes and happiness

- What/ where is my fortune, my happiness, my dreams, my treasure, my promised land? What is our common fortune? The future and comfort together?

Time Plan, 2½-3 hours

- Welcome, dress up
Facts and scenario, rules, ceremony
- The boat trip is the transition to 800 B.C.
- Go ashore on the island. Argonauts appear
- Activities
- Meal
Performances
- Hercules and the Argonauts leave
- Ending ceremony at the Hamza Stone, wishes
- Reflection
- Walking tour around the island
- Boat trip back

Activities

- Prepare the meal
- Looking for the golden fur
- Try weapons, bow and arrow
- Make jewelry as a memory
- Make a gift/ dress to Hercules and the Argonauts

May/September 2012

Ebbe Westergren and Agrita Ozola, Bridging Ages International organization
Giresun municipality and museum

Time Travel on Giresund Island, 800 B.C.

Hercules, the Golden Fur and the Bird Island

Goal

To make a program that will be interesting and knowledgeable for tourist groups

To give students in school a learning experience on the history of Giresun Island and one of the legends connected to it

Target group

Tourist groups

Students

Facts

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Roles

The participants are persons from Central Anatolia who have left their homeland because of changing weather conditions and draught. They are looking for a better land where they can stay and settle. They have heard about the Argonauts and the golden fur and are curious. Is there a fortune? Even for us?

The Argonauts are looking for the golden fur, the wealth which will make them happy and powerful

Key Questions

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Time Plan 2 ½-3 hours

- Welcome, dress up
Facts and scenario, rules, ceremony
- The boat trip is the transition (participants read the written facts and scenario)
- Go ashore on the island after a tour around the island
Argonauts appear, small chaos, Hercules tell the story
- Activities (preparing meal, looking for the golden fur, try bow and arrow, make jewelry as a memory, make a gift/ dress to Hercules and the Argonauts)
- Meal – one table for participants, one for the Argonauts
Performances (first the Argonauts, then one or two of participants join)
Common dance
- Hercules and the Argonauts leave
- Ending ceremony at the Hamza Stone, wishes

- Reflection
- Walking tour around the island
- Boat trip back

Activities

- Prepare the meal
- Looking for the golden fur
- Try weapons, bow and arrow
- Make jewelry as a memory
- Make a gift/ dress to Hercules and the Argonauts

May/ September 2012

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