

November 25, 2017



EATON THEATRE
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Thalassa: Underwater Archaeology in the Ancient East Mediterranean

SYMPOSIUM

Find out what innovations in underwater archaeology and new approaches to maritime connectivity are telling us about the ancient east Mediterranean. Once one of the most intensely travelled seascapes on the planet - and still one of the busiest today - ports and harbours from Egypt and the Levant to Cyprus and Crete and Rhodes supported constant mobility and trade. While these patterns have long been the subject of scholarly interest, recent advances have offered fresh observations on these significant seascapes. Specialists working at the cutting-edge of these pioneering developments bring you a day of engaging presentations and lively discussion.

FREE WITH RSVP

Program Partner: University of Toronto
Generously supported by the A.G. Leventis Foundation
& The Hellenic Republic

Continued next page...

EATON THEATRE

8:45 AM - Opening Remarks

9:00 AM

Pirates and Piracy in the Bronze Age Mediterranean?

Prof. A. Bernard Knapp
Emeritus Professor of Mediterranean Archaeology,
University of Glasgow

Piracy is likely as old as the emergence of sailing ships on the high seas, with some even suggesting that the Mediterranean was the birthplace of piracy. The practice(s) of piracy required at least some people who had essential maritime skills. The lesson we may take from many historical examples is that piracy would have offered to certain seafaring peoples a way to enter the lucrative commerce of the eastern Mediterranean during the Late Bronze Age. The literature on piracy during the Bronze Age, however, is limited, controversial and often contradictory.

Moreover, despite a great deal of archaeological manoeuvring to establish their existence, there is no mention in any Late Bronze Age cuneiform or Linear B document of 'piracy' or 'pirates' per se – or of any words translated as such. The conclusion is twofold: (1) there is no unequivocal association between the wide sweep of material culture linked to Bronze Age piracy and a 'culture of piracy', and (2) there is little correlation between sea-based encounters as known from later periods and the actions or representations called into evidence for the Bronze Age. Thus the terms 'piracy' or 'pirates', when used in prehistoric contexts, should be used with more caution and less hyperbole.

Continued next page...

9:45 AM - Coffee Break

10:15 AM

A Beacon of Light? New Insights into the Maritime Connections of Greece's "Dark Ages"

Dr. Catherine Pratt

Department of Classics, Western University

Often perceived as a time of severe decline in all facets of human existence, the Greek "Dark Age" was thought to be especially detrimental to maritime connections with eastern neighbors. This picture, however, is rapidly changing as more recent excavations bring to light evidence for continued contact abroad. One of the most prominent examples is the recognition of a standardized type of amphora used increasingly as maritime networks expanded throughout the eastern Mediterranean from the 10th to the 8th centuries BCE. This lecture explores the role of this amphora as a "beacon of light" connecting the Bronze Age to the so-called renaissance of the Archaic period.

11:00 AM

Old and Recent Underwater Archaeological Investigation in Crete

Theotokis Theodoulou

Department of Underwater Antiquities of Crete, Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports

This fascinating lecture will present a review of the most important underwater and foreshore investigations that have taken place

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around the island of Crete from the 1950s up to the present days. The first such investigation was conducted by the British School at Athens in 1955, followed by Captain Cousteau's mission in 1976, the mapping of the famous shipwreck of La Thérèse, the ongoing excavation of Phalasarua harbour, and the investigation of the Minoan cargo of Pseira by scientists from the Ephorate of Underwater Antiquities (Ministry of Culture, Greece). In 2010 a Department of the Ephorate was established in Herakleion, inaugurating an intensive and systematic approach to the underwater heritage of the island. Up to now, a map of the underwater heritage has been created and is constantly updated, with systematic surveys of the gulf of Herakleion, Dia Island, the gulf of Kissamos and Elounda bay, as well as many other sites located or documented in rescue operations associated with building works.

11:45 AM - 1:15 PM - Lunch (on own)

1:15 PM

Exchange in the Age of Lyric Poetry: The 6th Century BCE Shipwreck at Pabuç Burnu, Turkey

Dr. Elizabeth S. Greene
Department of Classics, Brock University

In the first half of the sixth century BCE a ship sank off the coast of Pabuç Burnu, Turkey, southeast of Bodrum, or ancient Halicarnassus. Excavated by the Institute of Nautical Archaeology in 2002 and 2003, the vessel's preserved cargo provides evidence for the development of production and exchange systems in the Archaic world. The circulation of agricultural products in a moderate-sized merchant vessel speaks for a practice of local transport designed to operate in a rather

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different framework of consumption from the exchange of luxury items catalogued by early Greek lyric poets or the optimized mechanisms utilized in the markets of Classical Athens. Ongoing research on the ship's cargo and construction aims to shed light on the growing commercial environment of standardized quality and quantity in the Archaic eastern Mediterranean.

2:00 PM

The Sanctuary of Apollo at Tamassos-Frangissa

Dr. Matthias Recke
Institute Archaeological Studies
Goethe University, Frankfurt

It is well known that Cyprus' geographic location in the eastern part of the Mediterranean Sea has made the island a cultural crossroad throughout the ages. The evidence of long distance trade and settlement routes using the island as junction and stopover is not only attested by shipwrecks, but also witnessed in the material culture of its abundant heritage of settlements, cemeteries and sanctuaries. A large group of votive sculptures, found in the Sanctuary of Apollo at Tamassos-Frangissa, are now on display in the ROM's A. G. Leventis Gallery of Ancient Cyprus. This lecture focuses on this important findspot as a case study to demonstrate how a 'cultural mosaic' is presented from Archaic to Hellenistic eras. Through adopting Greek and Phoenician influences and merging their different features, a uniquely Cypriot form of votive sculpture was created.

2:45 PM - Coffee Break

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3:15 PM

Shipwrecks and the Transport of Luxury in the Roman Mediterranean

Dr. Carrie Fulton

Department of Classics, University of Toronto

The ancient Romans had a voracious appetite for importing luxury objects from around the Mediterranean: spices from the Arabian Peninsula, sculpture and bronze items from Greece, glassware from Egypt and the Near East, and textiles from India, to list a few examples. Some of these so-termed luxuries have been preserved in shipwrecks in the Mediterranean, yet these objects only represent a small portion of an overall cargo. By examining several Roman shipwrecks (c. 200 BCE- 200 CE) with examples of these objects in the cargo, this lecture will explore how these assemblages force us to re-evaluate static definitions of luxury and instead consider the impact of mobility upon shifting social importance in multi-scalar networks.

Continued next page...

4:00 PM

Between East and West at the End of Antiquity: the “Church Wreck” at Marzamemi, Sicily

Justin Leidwanger

Department of Classics, Stanford University

Among the dozens of ancient shipwrecks that foundered off Sicily, the large vessel that sank near Marzamemi in the 6th century CE stands out. Since 2012, new investigations have shed light on this monumental cargo of more than a hundred tons of partially prefabricated religious architectural elements, almost certainly en route from the east for decoration of some new, or newly renovated, Christian basilica in the west. This peculiar site, the so-called Marzamemi “church wreck,” serves as vivid testimony to the struggle for integration—religious, economic, and political—among the disparate fragments of the once unified Roman world.

4:45 PM - Closing Remarks

5:00 PM - Event Ends