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Πληροφοριακό Δελτίο της Ελληνικής Αρχαιομετρικής Εταιρείας

- Αύγουστος 2017 -

**Educating the mind without educating the heart is no
education at all.**

[Aristotle (384-322 BC)]

Newsletter of the Hellenic Society of Archaeometry

- August 2017 -

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ΣΥΝΕΔΡΙΑ - CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS

ΠΡΟΚΗΡΥΞΗ 2^{ΟΥ} ΠΑΝΕΛΛΗΝΙΟΥ ΣΥΝΕΔΡΙΟΥ ΨΗΦΙΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΤΙΚΗΣ ΚΛΗΡΟΝΟΜΙΑΣ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΜΟΣ, ΠΑΙΔΕΙΑ, ΕΡΕΥΝΑ, ΚΑΙΝΟΤΟΜΙΑ, ΨΗΦΙΑΚΕΣ ΤΕΧΝΟΛΟΓΙΕΣ, ΤΟΥΡΙΣΜΟΣ, ΒΟΛΟΣ, ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΘΕΣΣΑΛΙΑΣ, ΠΑΡΑΛΙΑΚΟ ΣΥΓΚΡΟΤΗΜΑ "ΠΑΠΑΣΤΡΑΤΟΥ", 1-3 ΔΕΚΕΜΒΡΙΟΥ, 2017

Αγαπητοί Συνάδελφοι,

Έχουμε την τιμή να σας προσκαλέσουμε στο **2ο Πανελλήνιο Συνέδριο Ψηφιοποίησης Πολιτιστικής Κληρονομιάς - 2017** ("2nd Pan-Hellenic Conference on Digital Cultural Heritage-EuroMed 2017"), που θα γίνει στην Ελλάδα, στην όμορφη πόλη του Βόλου κατά το χρονικό διάστημα από την **Παρασκευή 1 έως και Κυριακή 3 Δεκεμβρίου 2017**.

Το 2ο Συνέδριο για την Ψηφιοποίηση της Πολιτιστικής Κληρονομιάς 2017, είναι αποτέλεσμα μιας μεγάλης συνεργασίας Πανεπιστημιακών Φορέων, Πολιτείας και Οργανώσεων της Κοινωνίας των Πολιτών, Ελλάδας και Κύπρου εδώ και πολλά χρόνια, συνδυάζεται με τα παγκόσμια Συνέδρια EuroMed που διοργανώνει το ΤΕ.ΠΑ.Κ. στην Κύπρο κάθε δύο χρόνια, και συνδιοργανώνεται από τους:

- **Τεχνολογικό Πανεπιστήμιο Κύπρου** -Εργαστήριο Ψηφιακής Πολιτιστικής Κληρονομιάς (ΤΕ.ΠΑ.Κ.),
- **ΑΕΙ ΠΕΙΡΑΙΑ Τ.Τ.**- Εργαστήριο Μη Καταστροφικών Τεχνικών Σχολής Τεχνολογικών Εφαρμογών
- **Πανεπιστήμιο Θεσσαλίας** -Εργαστήριο Αρχαιολογίας του Τμήματος Ιστορίας, Αρχαιολογίας και Κοινωνικής Ανθρωπολογίας και
- **Παγκόσμιο Δίκτυο "Περραιβία"**-Δευτεροβάθμιος Φορέας Πολιτισμού και Επιστημών ,

και έχει την υποστήριξη της Πρεσβείας της Κυπριακής Δημοκρατίας στην Αθήνα, πολλών Κρατικών Φορέων ,Υπουργείων, Κρατικών Υπηρεσιών ,της Περιφέρειας Θεσσαλίας , ICOMOS Ελλάδος και Κύπρου, της επιστημονικής κοινότητας από την Ελλάδα και την Κύπρο, του Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλίας, του Τεχνολογικού Πανεπιστημίου Κύπρου (Λεμεσός), του ΑΕΙ Πειραιά Τ.Τ., πολλών Ιδρυμάτων, Φορέων Πανελληνίας εμβέλειας, του Δικτύου Μη Κυβερνητικών Οργανώσεων Θεσσαλίας, αλλά και πολλών άλλων συλλογικών Φορέων από όλη την Ελλάδα και της Θεσσαλίας (Επιμελητήρια, Μητροπόλεις, Αναπτυξιακές Εταιρίες κ.ά.).

Σημειώνεται ότι το Συνέδριο θα τελεί υπό την Αιγίδα της Κυπριακής Πρεσβείας στην Αθήνα και πολλών σημαντικών Πολιτειακών και Κρατικών Φορέων, των οποίων η απάντηση αναμένεται και θα ανακοινωθούν σύντομα.

Στο τριήμερο του Συνεδρίου θα υπάρξουν πολλές ευκαιρίες να επιτευχθεί ανταλλαγή γνώσης και εμπειριών για τα αποτελέσματα της έρευνας στην πολιτιστική κληρονομιά και τις ψηφιακές τεχνολογίες και να συζητηθούν οι τρέχουσες και οι μελλοντικές εξελίξεις στον τομέα αυτό σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο και να δημιουργήσουμε τις απαραίτητες συνέργειες μεταξύ Φορέων της Ελλάδας και της Κύπρου για την καλύτερη αξιοποίηση των ίσων ευκαιριών μέσα στην Ευρώπη και πρόσβαση σε ευρωπαϊκούς πόρους που προορίζονται για τον Πολιτισμό, ιδιαίτερα εν όψει του Ευρωπαϊκού έτους Πολιτιστικής Κληρονομιάς 2018.

Επίσης , στο Συνέδριο αυτό θα συμμετέχουν ως εισηγητές εκπρόσωποι Ελληνικών και Κυπριακών Υπουργείων, Ελληνικών και Κυπριακών Πανεπιστημίων, ερευνητικών κέντρων ,αλλά και σημαντικότεροι ανεξάρτητοι επιστήμονες και ερευνητές απ' όλο τον κόσμο ,που εμπλέκονται με κάθε τρόπο στο μεγάλο θέμα της μελέτης ,έρευνας και διάσωσης της πολιτιστικής μας κληρονομιάς , παρουσιάζοντας ,μάλιστα ,τις τελευταίες εξελίξεις στο θέμα των τεχνολογιών αιχμής και έξυπνων συστημάτων, τα χρηματοδοτικά εργαλεία μεγάλων ερευνητικών προγραμμάτων και διακρατικών συνεργασιών στο μεγάλο θέμα της Ψηφιοποίησης της Πολιτιστικής μας Κληρονομιάς.

Το συνέδριο θα πραγματοποιηθεί , στο Βόλο από την Παρασκευή 1 έως και Κυριακή 3 Δεκεμβρίου 2017, στους φιλόξενους χώρους του Παραλιακού Συγκροτήματος "Παπαστράτου" του Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλίας, στα αμφιθέατρα «Γ. Κορδάτος» και «Γ. Σαράτσης», που διαθέτουν σύγχρονα μέσα βιντεοπροβολών και τηλεπικοινωνίας (Wi-Fi κτλ.), ενώ θα μεταδοθεί ζωντανά σε όλο τον κόσμο, όπως συνέβη και στο 1ο Συνέδριο το έτος 2015, ταξιδεύοντας εικόνες του Ελληνικού Πολιτισμού σε όλη την Υφήλιο.

Φιλοδοξία του συνεδρίου είναι η συνάντηση και η αλληλογνωριμία επιστημόνων και επαγγελματιών που εργάζονται στον πολιτισμό, την παιδεία, την έρευνα, τις ψηφιακές τεχνολογίες και τον τουρισμό, τομείς που αποτελούν ζητήματα αιχμής για την Ελλάδα και την Ευρώπη στην παρούσα συγκυρία.

Ο ρόλος της έρευνας για την πολιτιστική κληρονομιά στο σύγχρονο κόσμο της διάχυσης της πληροφορίας είναι εξαιρετικά σημαντικός.

Οι πολιτικές της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης για την προστασία, την αποκατάσταση, τη συντήρηση και την ψηφιακή τεκμηρίωση της πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς, καθώς και οι πηγές της χρηματοδότησης της έρευνας αυτής μπορούν και πρέπει να αποτιμηθούν ως προς τη συμβολή τους στη δημιουργία νέας γνώσης και νέων θέσεων εργασίας ,μέσα από την αξιοποίηση Ευρωπαϊκών Προγραμμάτων και πόρων και ***είμαστε βέβαιοι ότι μέσα από το Συνέδριο θα προκύψουν μεγάλες συνέργειες, έτσι ώστε να μπορέσουμε να διεκδικήσουμε το μέλλον από καλύτερες θέσεις.***

Η αξιολόγηση των υπαρχόντων ερευνητικών υποδομών και των αποτελεσμάτων τους, η παρουσίαση ιδεών και οραμάτων για νέες ψηφιακές μεθόδους, η συζήτηση για την καθιέρωση μοντέλων και προτύπων στον τομέα της πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς, η εξέταση του σχετικού νομοθετικού πλαισίου που αφορά στην πολιτιστική κληρονομιά,

την πολιτισμική διαχείριση και τη συντήρηση αρχαιοτήτων και έργων τέχνης, η διερεύνηση του ρόλου των τρεχόντων εξελίξεων στις διεθνείς δραστηριότητες, τις συμφωνίες και τις συνεργασίες σε θέματα πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς και της ψηφιοποίησής της, η αναζήτηση των ηθικών διαστάσεων του τομέα των πληροφοριακών συστημάτων για την πολιτιστική κληρονομιά, είναι ορισμένοι μόνον από τους τομείς στους οποίους σκοπεύει να επικεντρωθεί το συνέδριο.

Οι ενδεικτικοί θεματικοί άξονες προβληματισμού του Συνεδρίου είναι οι ακόλουθοι:

1. Νέες τεχνολογίες στις ανθρωπιστικές επιστήμες
2. Η ψηφιοποίηση στην Αρχαιολογία και τον τουρισμό
3. Ψηφιακή Πολιτιστική κληρονομιά και η διαχείριση της
4. Συντήρηση, Προστασία και ανάδειξη της πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς στο ψηφιακό πολυμεσικό περιβάλλον και διαδίκτυο (Εκπαίδευση, Τουρισμό, κτλ)
5. Νομικό πλαίσιο και ψηφιοποίηση της Πολιτιστικής Κληρονομιάς (συμβάσεις, προγράμματα, πνευματικά δικαιώματα)
6. Εμπειρίες, νέες προκλήσεις και προοπτικές για την ψηφιακή κοινωνία της Πολιτιστικής Κληρονομιάς.

Για συμπληρωματικές πληροφορίες, παρακαλούμε να επισκέπτεστε την πλατφόρμα του συνεδρίου: www.euromed2017.eu, μέσα από τον οποίο θα λαμβάνετε όλη την ενημέρωση για κάθε τι νεώτερο που θα αφορά τη Διοργάνωση του συνεδρίου και τους συνέδρους . (θα λειτουργήσει πολύ σύντομα και θα υποστηρίζει μηχανογραφικά όλο το Συνέδριο).

Στους συμμετέχοντες θα δοθεί ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΤΙΚΟ συμμετοχής .

ΠΡΟΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΙΣΜΟΣ ΥΠΟΒΟΛΗΣ ΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΟΝΙΚΩΝ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΩΝ

30 Σεπτεμβρίου 2017	Καταληκτική ημερομηνία υποβολής περιλήψεων εργασιών ή POSTERS από τους συγγραφείς
Α' δεκαπενθήμερο Οκτ 2017	Αξιολόγηση εργασιών από Επιστημονική Επιτροπή
15 Οκτωβρίου 2017	Ενημέρωση συγγραφέων σχετικά με αποδοχή εργασιών από την Επιστημονική Επιτροπή
30 Οκτ 2017	Καταληκτική ημερομηνία υποβολής full paper από τους συγγραφείς
Α' 10ήμερο Νοε2017	Αξιολόγηση εργασιών από Επιστημονική Επιτροπή
10 Νοεμβρίου 2017	Ενημέρωση συγγραφέων σχετικά με σχόλια / διορθώσεις από την Επιστημονική Επιτροπή
20 Νοεμβρίου 2017	Υποβολή Τελικών κειμένων εργασιών -Διαμόρφωση τελικού προγράμματος συνεδρίου

Αγαπητοί μας,

Είμαστε βέβαιοι ότι και το 2ο Πανελλήνιο Συνέδριο θα είναι εξαιρετικά επιτυχημένο ,όπως συνέβη με το 1ο Συνέδριο , στο οποίο συμμετείχαν πάνω από 400 σύνεδροι όλων των ειδικοτήτων και των Επιστημών, που είχαν την ευκαιρία να συναντηθούν μεταξύ τους σημαντικότετοι επιστήμονες της Ψηφιοποίησης, να ανταλλάξουν απόψεις και να σχεδιάσουν το μέλλον τους μέσα στην έρευνα και στην επιστήμη. Τα αποτελέσματα του 1ου Συνεδρίου στον τομέα των συνεργασιών ήταν εντυπωσιακά.

Τον ίδιο σημαντικό ρόλο θα επιτελέσει και το 2ο Συνέδριο , που καθιερώνεται ,πλέον, ως θεσμός για την Ελλάδα και θα αποτελεί κάθε δύο (2) χρόνια το μεγάλο ραντεβού

όλων των Ελλήνων και Κυπρίων επιστημόνων απ' όλο τον κόσμο ,με σκοπό την μελέτη, έρευνα, διάσωση, προστασία και ανάδειξη της Πολιτιστικής μας Κληρονομιάς.

Με Εκτίμηση

Η Οργανωτική Επιτροπή του Συνεδρίου

- ΜΑΡΙΝΟΣ ΙΩΑΝΝΙΔΗΣ -ΚΥΠΡΟΣ
- ΘΕΟΔ.ΓΚΑΝΕΤΣΟΣ -ΕΛΛΑΔΑ
- ΙΩΑΝΝΗΣ ΒΑΡΑΛΗΣ-ΕΛΛΑΔΑ
- ΗΛΙΑΣ ΝΟΜΠΙΛΑΚΗΣ-ΕΛΛΑΔΑ
- ΚΩΝ/ΝΟΣ ΣΚΡΙΑΠΑΣ -ΕΛΛΑΔΑ

• ΣΤΟΙΧΕΙΑ ΟΡΓΑΝΩΤΙΚΗΣ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗΣ

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**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE “BEYOND
ALL BOUNDARIES: ANATOLIA IN THE 1ST
MILLENNIUM B.C.”**
**17-22 JUNE 2018, CONFERENCE CENTER
MONTE VERITÀ, ASCONA, SWITZERLAND,**
CALL FOR PAPERS

Ancient Anatolia held a unique role as a bridge between Ancient Near Eastern and Classical Tradition, and because of this is singularly suited to interdisciplinary approaches, yet accounts of her cultures, languages, history and archaeology in the 1st millennium BC remain separated by disciplinary boundaries between the respective academic fields. Further, many areas under consideration do not even belong to currently established fields of research. Differing methodologies in the disciplines involved, and a focus on minutiae rather than the larger picture mean that the potential of integrating the results of widely different modern research areas to form a coherent picture has been far from fully explored. This situation is mirrored by the available publications: outside of focus areas such as publications pertaining to a specific archaeological site, these are widely scattered and, moreover, often seriously out of date.

The aim of the proposed five-day conference is two-fold:

- 1) to bring together, for the first time, a large number of scholars currently active in the relevant fields, with a special focus on scholars in the early stages of their career, and
- 2) to publish the proceeds as a companion volume to Anatolia in the 1st millennium BC, thus filling a large gap in the scholarly record and providing a much needed appraisal of the current state of research.

Organization

Annick Payne, Universität Bern
Jorit Wintjes, Universität Würzburg

Contact us: <mailto:ascona2018@gmail.com>

For more information, visit our website:

http://www.iaw.unibe.ch/ueber_uns/aktuell/ascona_2018/index_ger.html#pane579657

Guest Speakers

Lorenzo d'Alfonso, New York University

Mary Bachvarova, Willamette University

Birgit Christiansen, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München
Massimiliano Marazzi, Università degli Studi Suor Orsola Benincasa, Napoli
Mirko Novák, Universität Bern

Robert Rollinger, Universität Innsbruck
David Sasseville, Universität Marburg
Matilde Serangeli, Københavns Universitet
Šárka Velhartická, Univerzita Hradec Králové
Mark Weeden, University of London

Conference

The conference will be organized with a framework designed specifically to allow for and facilitate intensive exchange on both field-internal and interdisciplinary level.

Contributions will take several different forms:

- (1) key note lectures by guest speakers,
- (2) presentations by participants addressing specific topics,
- (3) panel-led discussion of new research and points raised in (2), with active participation of the audience,
- (4) workshops with presentations.

We are inviting papers for presentations. Papers should address one of the following topics. If you would like to present a paper on a different aspect relevant to the conference theme, please also get in touch. We will consider all papers that fit the general topic of the conference.

Presentation Topics

- Archaeologies of Space
- History Across Boundaries
- Local History
- Language & Text
- Materiality of Writing
- Archaeology & Art History
- Technology & Culture
- International Relations
- Political History
- Trade & Economy

Paper Length: 20 mins

Languages: English, German, Italian, French

Submission Deadline: 1.9.2017.

Send paper title and abstract of no more than 250 wds to: <mailto:ascona2018@gmail.com>. Results will be announced by 1.10.2017.

All participants will be required to hand in a short summary of their paper (max. 1 page) by May 15th 2018 for prior consultation by panel leaders.

We have a limited number of bursaries available. Please contact us if you require financial assistance.

Young scholars (max. age 33, max. 3 years after completion of PhD) may also compete for the CSF award; see the information on the conference website.

EA-AMS-7, ABSTRACT SUBMISSION **DEADLINE EXTENSION**

Dear Colleagues,

Now, many colleagues are busy for preparing the AMS14 conference and ask for the extension of the Abstract Submission Deadline of EA-AMS-7.

So we would like to inform you that the abstract and registration form submission deadline for EA-AMS-7 **has been extended once again to August 31,2017**. This will be your last chance to submit an abstract !!

We also updated some information in circular and invitation letter, which could be used for visa application.

Thank you to everyone who already submitted their abstracts.

Feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

We look forward to hosting you in Guilin,

Yours Sincerely,

On behalf of the Organizing Committee of EA-AMS-7
Director of the GXN-AMS Lab
Prof. Hongtao Shen
Department of Physics,
Guangxi Normal University,
15 Yucai Road,Guilin 541004, P. R. China
Mobile:+86 13207735516
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ΘΕΣΕΙΣ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑΣ/ΥΠΟΤΡΟΦΙΕΣ –
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Please visit the site: <http://www.fulbright.gr/en/scholarships-for-greek-citizens>

FUNDED PHD OPPORTUNITY, CENTRE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AT STAFFORDSHIRE UNIVERSITY, UK

Dear all

The Centre of Archaeology at Staffordshire University is currently offering a fully funded PhD focused on the development and application of novel, cross-disciplinary approaches to the investigation of 20th and 21st century conflict or genocide. The proposal will hopefully be of interest to candidates with expertise in a wide range of fields. The full call for proposals and details of the scholarship can be found here: <http://blogs.staffs.ac.uk/archaeology/postgraduate-studies/phd-scholarships/>

If you could circulate this amongst your networks and share it with your students, it would be very much appreciated. If you or anyone you know has any questions, do feel free to get in touch,

Best wishes

Caroline

Dr. Caroline Sturdy Colls
PhD, MPhil(B), BA(Hons), MCIFA, MCSFS, PgCHPE, FHEA
Associate Professor of Forensic Archaeology and Genocide Investigation, and Research Lead

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ΑΝΑΚΟΙΝΩΣΕΙΣ - ANNOUNCEMENTS

ΜΕΤΑΠΤΥΧΙΑΚΟ ΠΡΟΓΡΑΜΜΑ ΣΠΟΥΔΩΝ: "ΕΦΑΡΜΟΣΜΕΝΕΣ ΑΡΧΑΙΟΛΟΓΙΚΕΣ ΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΕΣ" ΤΟΥ ΤΜΗΜΑΤΟΣ ΜΕΣΟΓΕΙΑΚΩΝ ΣΠΟΥΔΩΝ ΤΟΥ ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟΥ ΑΙΓΑΙΟΥ ΤΗΣ ΣΧΟΛΗΣ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΙΣΤΙΚΩΝ ΣΠΟΥΔΩΝ, ΡΟΔΟΣ

Σας ενημερώνουμε ότι το Μεταπτυχιακό Πρόγραμμα Σπουδών: "Εφαρμοσμένες Αρχαιολογικές Επιστήμες" του Τμήματος Μεσογειακών Σπουδών του Πανεπιστημίου Αιγαίου της Σχολής Ανθρωπιστικών Σπουδών θα εισάγει νέους φοιτητές για το ακαδημαϊκό έτος 2017-2018 τον μήνα Φεβρουάριο του έτους 2018 με περίοδο εγγραφών από 24/07/2017 έως 01/12/2017 με ηλεκτρονική υποβολή στο <https://nautilus.aegean.gr> και με έντυπη υποβολή με ταχυδρομική συστημένη αποστολή των απαραίτητων δικαιολογητικών στο Πανεπιστήμιο Αιγαίου, Τμήμα Μεσογειακών Σπουδών, ΠΜΣ: "Εφαρμοσμένες Αρχαιολογικές Επιστήμες", Λεωφ. Δημοκρατίας 1, Κτίριο 7ης Μαρτίου, Ρόδος-85132, τηλ. 2241099388, 6944595966

Σχετικές πληροφορίες θα βρείτε στο <http://archsci.aegean.gr/>

Αθηνά Λιόλιου

Γραμματειακή Υποστήριξη Μεταπτυχιακού Προγράμματος Σπουδών "Εφαρμοσμένες Αρχαιολογικές Επιστήμες"

Τμήμα Μεσογειακών Σπουδών

Πανεπιστήμιο Αιγαίου

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INTERNET SITES

SINAI PALIMPSESTS PROJECT

The Sinai Palimpsests Project is using state-of-the-art spectral imaging to recover erased texts from palimpsest manuscripts in the library of St. Catherine's Monastery of the Sinai, the world's oldest continually operating monastery. The monastery holds an exceptional collection of more than 160 palimpsests, the erased layers of which preserve unstudied texts from the 4th to the 12th century. An online research library, now in development, will make the palimpsests of Sinai globally accessible for study.

Please visit the site: <http://sinaipalimpsests.org/> see some amazing details here: <http://sinaipalimpsests.org/galleries/palimpsests-%E2%80%94-beforeafter>

BRITISH MUSEUM UPLOADS 3D MODEL OF THE ROSETTA STONE - NOW YOU CAN EXAMINE THE 196 BCE STONE STELA IN ALL ITS TEXTURAL GLORY

We now have unprecedented open access to the Rosetta Stone thanks to the digital technicians at the British Museum, who last week uploaded the very first 3D model of the stone slab. Residing on Sketchfab, the model allows you to examine the gray stela from all angles and zoom in to study its inscribed characters and varying textures from up close. One of the museum's most famous objects, the stone is typically kept in a glass case that allows you to view it from all sides, but crowds can make getting near it difficult.

“This scan was part of our larger attempt to capture as many of our iconic pieces from the collection — and indeed the unseen in store objects — and make them available for people to view in 3D or in more tactile forms,” Daniel Pett, the museum's senior digital humanities manager, told Digital Trends, which first reported the project.

Published last week, the scan coincides with the 218th anniversary of the stone's discovery in 1799 by Napoleon's troops at Fort St. Julien in Egypt. The museum also took advantage of Sketchfab's new integrated audio feature so a brief description of the stone's history automatically plays when you load the model.

Dating to 196 BCE, the stone was the key for scholars to decipher and consequently read hieroglyphs, as the ancient Egyptian script appears alongside identical texts in Demotic and ancient Greek, which they could understand. The message relayed thrice over was a copy of a decree passed by a council of priests on the first anniversary of king Ptolemy V's coronation to affirm his reign. The 14 lines of hieroglyphs appear at the fractured top of the stone, which is a broken portion of a larger slab. Below it are 32 lines in Demotic and 53 in ancient Greek that collectively cover the entire face of the stela.

The 3D model joins over 200 objects from the museum's collection that it has uploaded so far on Sketchfab, from the 9,500-year-old Jericho Skull to a sculpture of the Pacific god A'a. All are also available to view in virtual reality if you have access to a headset such as Google Cardboard.

Please visit the site: <https://hyperallergic.com/391501/rosetta-stone-3d-model-british-museum/> [Go there to rotate pix]

ΝΕΕΣ ΕΚΔΟΣΕΙΣ – NEW PUBLICATIONS

THE HORSE IN THE ANCIENT WORLD: FROM BUCEPHALUS TO THE HIPPODROME, CAROLYN WILLEKES

Bryn Mawr Classical Review 2017.07.05

Carolyn Willekes, *The Horse in the Ancient World: From Bucephalus to the Hippodrome*. Library of classical studies, 10. London: I. B. Tauris, 2016. Pp. 304. ISBN 9781784533663. \$95.00.

Reviewed by Jacqueline Frost DiBiasie Sammons, The University of Mississippi (dibiasiej@gmail.com)

As this book demonstrates, horses and humans have had a long and complicated relationship. Indeed, the introduction foregrounds the interdependence of humans and horses. While horses have aided many human endeavors including communication and trade, humans have also enabled domestic equids to flourish as a species. Rather than a study concerning the interactions of humans and horses, this book emphasizes the horse itself and focuses on the development and characteristics of the animal throughout the ancient world. Willekes' approach is to examine the conformation of the horse and the effect this conformation had on the function and use of each type of horse in the ancient world. Often, the horse is treated as a homogeneous animal, unchanging across time and space. This book shows how the horse adapted to different environments and how these adaptations were used by the ancient peoples of these regions.

"Methodology" outlines the focus on the work, which, through an analysis of artistic, literary, and archaeological evidence, seeks to "establish a typology for the horses of the ancient world". Willekes prefers the term "type" to the more familiar "breed" as specialized breeding occurred infrequently in antiquity. Horse types developed from adaptation to the environment, rather than artificial selection by humans.

Willekes begins the book by examining the evolution and behavioral characteristics of the horse. The horse is a prey animal with a strong flight response. As Willekes demonstrates, an understanding of these characteristics elucidates the behaviors of horses in ancient literature. The unusual, aggressive behavior of Alexander the Great's famous horse Bucephalus is more understandable when we view this aggression as a response to fear (of his shadow) and inability to flee this fear. The natural equine response is to flee from danger and so aggression must be trained in a horse. The rest of the chapter describes the ideal horse from literature. Five Greek and Roman authors supply a description of the ideal horse: Xenophon, Varro, Virgil, Oppian, and Columella. Willekes notes that these descriptions are strikingly similar. At this point, it would have been useful to discuss whether the later authors were influenced by Xenophon or another author like Simon of Athens, whose work is mentioned in Xenophon. This portion of the book is the most useful for a classical and, in particular, philological audience. Scholars working on the aforementioned authors may find it useful to compare those works to

Willekes' explication and discussion of the parts of the horse. The author includes details from her experience as an equestrian, which aid in clarifying the passages of literature.

Chapter Three, "Prehistoric Horses" is less useful for the non-specialist. Here, Willekes discusses previous classifications of early or "ancestral" equines, from which domestic horses developed. Among the various classification hypotheses, Willekes settles on four main types, which resulted from adaptation to environmental conditions: the Northern European pony, the Northern Steppe horse, the Southern Steppe horse, and the Iberian/Mediterranean horse. She then discusses each ancestral type through case studies of modern horse breeds (Exmoor pony, Przewalski's Horse, Akhal Teke, and Asturian and Sorraia). She comprehensively discusses the conformation, history, and physical characteristics of each modern breed and connection to its ancestral equivalent. This chapter needs a conclusion, especially to emphasize the development of these modern breeds from the ancestral types. One wonders, for example, what intermediary steps there were between the ancestral horse type and the modern breed.

The next chapter, "The Ancient Horse Types," describes horse types from several regions of the world (Central Asian Horse, Near Eastern Horse, Mediterranean Horse). However, no introduction makes clear the relationship between the ancestral types and these regional "ancient horse types." Are these "ancient types" an intermediate step between the ancestral types and modern equine breeds? Here, the author discusses the environment, lifestyle conditions, and appearance of each horse type and, in doing so, clearly explains ancient practices for non-equestrians. For example, the author considers the practice of castration of Scythian and Sarmatian horses, as cited by Strabo. She cites supporting archaeological evidence and then discusses this practice from the view of animal husbandry. These horses were kept in large herds on the grassland, so castration made the herd more manageable. Willekes' experience conducting experimental archaeology is very helpful in this regard. Her understanding of modern practices enables her to explicate ancient ones. She continues each section with a discussion of the appearance of the ancient horse type by body part (head, shoulder, hindquarters, etc.). This section seems to be based on a combination of evidence from ancient literature and deduction from modern counterparts, but this is not made clear. It would be useful for the author to cite the passages of ancient literature that inform her understanding of the appearance of each horse type. Furthermore, this section could be bolstered by more evidence from artistic depictions. Only two artistic examples (both vase painting) are included as illustrations of the Mediterranean Horse type. Given the ubiquity of the horse in ancient art, as the author emphasizes in the introduction, more examples should have been included here.

The next chapter's focus is on the horse in the military. This chapter is substantial (55 pages), providing a sense of the importance of this equine function in antiquity. Given the strong flight response of the horse, extensive training was required to prepare the animal to face battle. Willekes discusses the training of the horse, primarily using Xenophon, and explains his precepts using her equestrian experience. She then considers the horse's role in warfare of three areas (Central Asia, Near East, Mediterranean) in accordance with the tactics used by groups in that region. For example, in Central Asia mounted archers proved very difficult for Macedonian and Roman troops. The Steppe horse is small, which enabled the rider to control him easily while shooting a bow. This small size, though, made them impractical for close combat. The environmental conditions (rocky, harsh terrain) produced a small and sure-footed horse, which was then

used for a particular type of combat by the groups of this region. This chapter is bolstered by the frequent inclusions of passages of literature, chiefly of Greek and Roman authors. The sound grounding in (classical) literary passages makes this chapter useful reading for anyone working on horses in Greek or Roman warfare. It could be strengthened by the inclusion of passages from sources other than Greek and Roman authors and by additional archaeological and artistic evidence.

Chapter Six, "The Sport Horse," takes a similar tactic. Willekes discusses various horse sports and relevant passages of Greek and Roman literature. After a discussion of training goals this chapter is broken into sports of the Greek world and the Roman world. She begins with the Olympic sports, including the tethrippon (four-horse chariot), keles (ridden horse race) and the kalpe (ridden race for mares in which the rider would dismount and run besides the horse), among others. Willekes stresses the connection between each athletic event and related warfare tasks. This was not sport for sport's sake, but to prepare horses and riders for the challenges of war. Discussion of the Roman world focuses on chariot racing. Epigraphic evidence is used to describe the types of races that occurred, racing tactics, and careers of some charioteers. As in the previous chapter, this chapter is exclusively about the Greek and Roman worlds. It provides a good summary of the use of horse in sport and the relevant sources. One wishes, though, given the title of the book, that the chapter had been expanded to consider equine sports such as polo in other areas of the world.

The book's greatest strength is the author's experience as an equestrian as well as classicist and the nuanced analysis this background enables. The author travelled around the world to meet and ride horses from each region and has included this practical experience in her discussion of the function of each type. The author deftly explicates literary passages to explain the context they describe.

This book could be strengthened by the inclusion of more archaeological and artistic evidence. It also could use many more and better quality illustrations. Several figures are difficult to see.¹ In other cases images are needed, especially of archaeological materials. For example, Willekes makes the point that the Alexander Mosaic from the House of the Faun in Pompeii depicts the Italian/Greek horse type pulling Darius' chariot rather than the Nesaeon horse as described in literature. Without illustration, this point is difficult to evaluate. The color plates are of good quality, but are not mentioned in the body of the text, so they cannot be incorporated into one's reading.

In conclusion, this book is a sound typology of horses in antiquity. The unique environmental challenges in several areas of the ancient world created horses suited to these conditions. Ancient peoples used these unique traits to their advantage, especially in war.

Notes:

1. Figure 4 "Upper Palaeolithic 'bâton percé'" and Figure 2.5 "Detail of the Nike brand on the Artemision horse" are nearly impossible to discern.

Please visit the site: <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2017/2017-07-05.html>

VINE AND WINE IN THE ANCIENT GREEK WORLD, STAVROULA KOURAKOU- DRAGONA

Bryn Mawr Classical Review 2017.07.48

Stavroula Kourakou-Dragona, *Vine and Wine in the Ancient Greek World*. Translated by Maria Relaki. Athens: Foinikas Publications, 2015. Pp. 294. ISBN 9789606849510. €80.00.

Reviewed by Michael Fontaine and Justine Vanden Heuvel, Cornell University Department of Classics; Cornell University Program on Viticulture and Enology (fontaine@cornell.edu; jev32@cornell.edu)

This gorgeous book—large and lavishly illustrated—collects twenty scholarly papers on the subject of wine in ancient Greece and ancient Greek literature by Stavroula Kourakou-Dragona, a scholar whose career is unlike anything we typically see in BMCR.

A retired oenologist, Kourakou-Dragona spent her career in Athens at the “Wine Institute, one of the research foundations of the then Ministry of Agriculture.” Later rising to Director, she represented Greece in the International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV), an intergovernmental organization that coordinates and negotiates all aspects of wine and viticulture worldwide. In that connection, she had to do her homework (p. x):

Naturally, it was a vital necessity that I become familiar with Greek viticultural zones, the history and peculiarities of the wines from each region, so as to be in a position to champion the interests of Greek wine production in the international decision-making forums. In order to come into close contact with the rural population and take advantage of the experiences of the elder inhabitants, I read, before visiting each region, anything that had been written about the vines and wines of that particular area: folklore and travel literature, traditional songs, ampelographies, archaeological publications etc.

The fruit of these astonishing labors is on display in the 20 essays that follow. Kourakou-Dragona commands all the ancient literature about Greek wine known to us and quite a bit more. Channeling the rhetoric of a classical historian, she explains the genesis of those essays in her preface (p. x):

So when, following a period of intense scientific activity, the time had come to retire after 35 years of service, I had the idea of completing all the collected wealth of information and memories with a retrospection on the distant Past: to see the roots of lesser known ancient Greek wines, to research the technical knowledge of the ancient winemakers based on the surviving records of mainly ancient Greek scholarship and to attempt to interpret through modern scientific knowledge the secrets of their art, which allowed Greek wines to travel along the sea routes as a precious merchandise.

After long years of study, I collected worthwhile material, but I also discovered crucial mistakes made by renowned, mainly foreign, scholars, on ancient treatises and translations published during the 20th and 21st centuries, mistakes that were perpetuated by repetition, resulting in erroneous interpretations and often serious misconceptions.

The 20 papers that document these claims were originally presented at conferences in Greece and abroad, often in Greek, and hence limited to a restricted audience. The papers are all newly revised and translated here into English (sometimes, as these extracts show, not entirely idiomatic, but always intelligible). Greek and French editions of the book are being simultaneously published, too.

The chapters are not connected but they do ask and answer many interesting questions, ranging from investigations of familiar passages of classical Greek literature to actual winegrowing regions of Greece in antiquity and today. For example:

- Could the delicious wine that Odysseus gave the Cyclops have really been simultaneously sweet and high-alcohol? (Answer: no.) (Chapter 1).
- What is or are the Pramnian wines of Iliad 11 and Odyssey 10, and why are they served sprinkled with goat's cheese, barley, and honey? (Answer: Like the colloquial use of the word champagne to describe almost any sparkling wine, "Pramnian" is a generic term for a type of high-alcohol wine, rather than the name of a wine that comes from a particular locale—but unlike Champagne, whose name memorializes its region of origin, Pramnian wines were produced in several different regions.) (Chapter 2).
- If Hesiod knew the method of producing homemade sweet wine from grapes, how is it that—despite his poverty—he also drank imported biblinos wine, which came from Phoenicia or Thrace? (Answer: Actually, he was probably drinking homemade biblinos wine he produced himself from biblinos grapes growing on the slopes of Mount Helicon.) (Chapter 3).

In making such arguments and weighing probabilities, Kourakou-Dragona invokes literature, etymology, climate, and her personal experience and scientific expertise.

After these early chapters on epic, the central chapters provide strong technical background on grape growing and winemaking processes in ancient Greece and Rome. Topics include the color of grapes and the winemaking processes required in antiquity to produce differing colors of wines, the techniques used to replicate the wines produced or mixed with saltwater when made a distance from the coast, the scientific basis for separately referring to several varieties that varied in color but that we now know to be the same variety, how grape pomace was crushed with and without the use of rocks, how ancient vineyards were protected from pests, and a technical discussion of the fumigation or smoking used to artificially age Roman wines. We also get a viticultural interpretation of an ancient law of Thasos intended for protection of winegrape growers.

Elsewhere Kourakou-Dragona draws our attention to interesting novelties that throw light on everyday life. In a "Satire of Wine Tasting" (chapter 7), she demonstrates that a fragment of the 5th c. comic poet Hermippus (fr. 77 KA [incert.]) is a satire—the only example of its kind—of exaggerated boasts of the sort that sommeliers today tend to make of their own abilities.

Students of wine culture may benefit most from Kourakou-Dragona's social and biological explanations of myth. In "The Interpretation of Dionysiac Viticultural Myths" (chapter 16), the emergence of Dionysus from Zeus' thigh is put into perspective with the phenological development of the vine, where the new shoot (which will bear clusters) emerges directly from the cane above a node. The text is well supported by photographs, such as an old vine during dormancy with a title comparing it to Semele ("like a dry

trunk hit by lightning”). In similar fashion, local details in mythic stories, such as that of Icarus of Athens, are explained via the actual wine-growing properties of those locales.

In the credit column, we applaud the many vases, maps, statues, and photographs of modern vineyards that are reproduced in color on nearly every page. Some are merely decorative, but in general these images are well chosen and help illuminate the arguments. In the demerit column, a few problems of translation will limit the book’s potential audience. Ancient Greek is often quoted to make a point but is not translated (or even transliterated) into English—and some of the vocabulary used in those passages is rare or technical indeed. The book also presumes familiarity with the ancient authors; hence readers are not routinely told when (say) Arcestratus or Nonnus or Columella lived. Nonspecialists might also be troubled by some oddities and inconsistencies in transliterating Greek names and toponyms; hence Maron in Odyssey 9 is called Maro in chapter 1 and Maron in chapter 2, Eustathius is called Eustace (p. 31), Helicon is called Elicon (p. 39), and so on.

But make no mistake. There are very few people in the world who could have written this book; most scholars have either the technical knowledge or the classical background but not both. The impressive harmony with which these two perspectives are synthesized makes *Vine and Wine in the Ancient Greek World* a treasure house of information and a monumental capstone to an impressive career. We recommend it highly.

Please visit the site: <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2017/2017-07-48.html>

ΕΙΔΗΣΕΙΣ - NEWS RELEASE

GREEK ARCHAEOLOGIST DISCOVERS ANCIENT BUILDINGS IN ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT, BY PHILIP CHRYSOPOULOS

Greek archaeologist Kalliopi Papakostas has discovered ancient buildings and a bridge in the Shalallat Gardens area in Alexandria, Egypt.

According to the Athens Macedonia News Agency, excavations in the area had started 21 years ago. Now archaeologists have discovered a long carved tunnel that sheds new light to the huge ancient building that has been found so far.

The 2015 findings by the Hellenic Institute for the Research of Alexandrian Culture, directed by Papakostas include a large public building from the Ptolemaic period. The new discovery is a carved tunnel at a depth of 10 meters.

“This is a significant discovery because the site belongs to the Royal Quarters of the Ptolemae and we have information about these buildings from the ancient times,” Papakostas told AMNA.

The archaeologist said that these excavations are the result of a private initiative, as the funding of the excavations is mainly based on private institutions and sponsors, the most important of which is to date the Greek company KLEOS SA and the Egyptian company Reliance Group of Companies, along with the Moheb Kassabgui Foundation.

Please visit the site: <http://world.greekreporter.com/2017/07/10/greek-archaeologist-discovers-ancient-buildings-in-alexandria-egypt/>

NEW ROOMS DISCOVERED AT CONSTANTINE'S MOTHER'S HOUSE HELEN'S DOMUS AT SANTA CROCE IN GERUSALEMME

New rooms have been discovered in the domus (house) of Empress St. Helena, the mother of the Roman Emperor Constantine the Great, in the bowels of the basilica of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme in Rome, officials said Friday.

"These are nothing less than the living quarters of Helen's court ladies," said superintendent Francesco Prosperetti.

"We have shed more light on the main entrance into the domus and better established the divisions between the various rooms," said archaeologist Anna De Santis.

The Basilica di Santa Croce in Gerusalemme or Basilica of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem is a Roman Catholic minor basilica and titular church in the Esquilino district of Rome.

According to tradition, the basilica was consecrated circa 325 to house the relics of the Passion of Christ, including parts of the True Cross, brought to Rome from the Holy Land by Helena. At that time, the Basilica's floor was covered with soil from Jerusalem.

Helena ranks as an important figure in the history of Christianity and of the world due to her major influence on her son, who legalised Christianity, helping make it the dominant religion of the Roman Empire. photo: Basilica of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme

Please visit the site: http://www.ansa.it/english/news/2017/07/07/new-rooms-discovered-at-constantines-mothers-house_a19d5d0b-85e6-4e74-a5f0-8eac77fe1c8d.html

THE DORMOUSE-FATTENING JARS OF ANCIENT ROME - FOR THE PLUMPEST, TASTIEST RODENTS, BY CARLY SILVER

THE ANCIENT ROMANS CONSUMED SOME strange foods, ranging from sow's womb to dormice, which were known as glires in Latin. Astute Italians got their rodents mouth-ready by sticking them in a special container called a glirarium or vivarium in doliis (enclosed animal habitats in jars); it was designed to be a temporary home—a rodent Airbnb—where the animal could pig out. Humans would then cook up the dormouse once they judged it to be at prime plumpness.

Just a note: Romans didn't eat the kind of mice that gnaw your wires. Instead, they chowed down on “edible dormice,” which were a lot bigger and substantive than their modern house-mouse counterparts. These were long considered extravagances; in 115 BC, consul Marcus Aemilius Scaurus passed a law that prohibited serving exotic avians, mollusks, and dormice, according to Pliny the Elder. But it's likely that nobody listened to Scaurus' legislation—the rodents were too tasty.

On their country estates, prominent Romans reared some animals just for consumption. In his *On Agriculture*, Roman scholar Varro noted that country gentlemen raised tiny critters like snails to eat, bees for honey, and dormice inside their villas. Ancient gourmand Fluvius Hirpinus (whose name was probably a misspelling) popularized eating snails and started the practice of fattening dormice for the table in the mid-first century BC.

Dormice became a food of the upper classes. Varro cites the example of a rich guy named Titus Pompeius, who had a vast domain in Transalpine Gaul (modern France/Belgium), probably sometime in the first century BC. On his private hunting preserve, Pompeius bred captive critters in a four-square-mile enclosure, in which there were “usually kept places for snails and beehives, and also casks in which dormice are kept confined.” This was an ancient version of farm-to-table eating, in which you bred, raised, and slaughtered your own food. Archaeological evidence indicates that Average Joe farmers might have raised dormice on their own properties, then sold them to rich people as a side-hustle.

In *On Agriculture*, Varro describes the unusual quirks of a glirarium. It looked like a regular, short storage vessel on the outside and resembled an artificial burrow on the inside. When building clay containers for dormice, potters used a different plan than when making regular ones; for one, the dolium, or jar, was ventilated. In addition, there were “channels along the sides” and “a hollow for holding the food.” These food trays could be refilled from the outside, with light and air holes to keep the dormice alive.

The channels allowed the dormice to scurry along the sides of their new home (as classicist Mary Beard quipped, they created an ancient version of a hamster's wheel). To fatten the dormice, “in such a jar acorns, walnuts, or chestnuts are placed; and when a cover is placed over the jars they grow fat in the dark.” That made sense, since all the dormice could really do in that restricted habitat was eat, jog a bit, and sleep.

Once the dormice were deemed sufficiently chubby, they were killed and cooked up for banquets. Ammianus Marcellinus reported that, at dinner parties, hosts would order their fish, dormice, and other meats to be weighed on scales and the results recorded. As many as 30 scribes would jot down and drone on and on about the animal weights at any given feast. Heavy meats were points of pride for rich Romans; the fatter your dormice, the more money you were able to spend on idle pursuits, and the wealthier you were.

A number of ancient Roman recipes and dormice dish descriptors still survive. In a famous banquet scene the *Satyricon*, one of ancient Rome's first novels, hosted by the nouveau riche Trimalchio, "dormice seasoned with honey and poppy-seed" were served as hors d'oeuvres. *De Re Coquinaria*, one of the world's oldest surviving cookbooks—attributed to ancient foodie Apicius—lists some tasty dormouse recipes. There's dormouse stuffed with pork and its own trimmings, then pounded out with pepper, laser (the juice of a giant fennel plant), broth, and nuts; after, this concoction is put in a casserole dish, roasted, or boiled. Not a bad way to chow down—especially considering the mice were extra-succulent after hanging out in their own special jar.

Please visit the site: <http://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/dormouse-jars-glirarium-rome> [Go there for pix]

TRIPADVISOR FOR THE ANCIENT WORLD: ARCHAEOLOGISTS STUDYING 2,000-YEAR- OLD GRAFFITI DISCOVER REVIEWS FROM TOURISTS CARVED INTO THE STONE OF THE TOMB OF KING RAMESSES VI, BY TIM COLLINS

Tourists left reviews carved into stone in Egypt that have been compared by experts to an ancient version of Trip Advisor.

The marks have been studied by archaeologists working in the Valley of the Kings, where visitors etched their thoughts into artworks and on walls millennia ago.

Among the carvings were the phrases 'I visited and I did not like anything except the sarcophagus!', 'I admired!', and 'I can not read the hieroglyphs!'

The findings could reveal more about what travellers to one of the world's oldest attractions thought of the memorials to long-dead rulers.

Some were found to be the equivalent of 'John Smith was here', with the names of people who visited the tomb written in Greek or, less frequently, in Latin.

But others read like reviews found on popular travel forums and social media sites, according to the team.

Phrases included 'I visited and I did not like anything except the sarcophagus!', 'I admired!', and 'I can not read the hieroglyphs!'

In a written statement Professor Adam Lukaszewicz, an archaeologist from the university who led the research, said: 'The Valley of the Kings was a tourist destination already in antiquity.

'Like today, tourists often signed their names in the places they visited.

'Among the more than sixty tombs in this area, in at least ten there are inscriptions made by ancient travellers.

'The greatest number of inscriptions come from the Greek-Roman period, that is, from the time of the conquest of Egypt by Alexander the Great to the division of the Roman Empire in the fourth century.'

As well as their names, visitors also often added their place of origin and occupation.

Travellers came to the site over two thousand years ago from Egypt and its neighbouring countries, as well as further afield in Athens and Syria.

Some were physicians and philosophers, including cynics and Platonists.

Among the visiting dignitaries to the tomb were prefects from the Roman empire who administrated the region, as well as an Armenian prince named Chosroes in the fourth century AD.

One of the most famous visitors was Amr ibn al-As, the Arab conqueror of Egypt following the collapse of the Roman empire, who marked his presence in 10 inch (25 cm) tall letters in the seventh century AD.

The first European visitors to the site, which followed the crusades, were offered sharp objects to make their own marks by Arab tour guides, according to memoirs from the time.

The team surmise that there may have been a similar practice for thousands of years.

The researchers also noted that much of the graffiti had been written in a well thought out manner, including one creative inscription at the centre of a solar disc which represented one of the gods.

Conversations between some of the visitors have also been uncovered.

In one location they read that a person had admired the tomb and read the hieroglyphics.

Another visitor wrote below: 'I can not read this writing!'

Below this, a third traveller had commented: 'Why do you care that you can not read the hieroglyphs, I do not understand your concern!'

THE VALLEY OF THE KINGS

The Valley of the Kings in upper Egypt is one of the main tourist attractions of the country, next to the Giza pyramid complex.

The majority of the pharaohs of the 18th to 20th dynasties, who ruled from 1550 to 1069 BC, rested in the tombs which were cut into the local rock.

The most famous pharaoh at the site is Tutankhamen, whose tomb was discovered in 1922.

Preserved to this day, in the tomb are original decorations of sacred imagery from, among others, the Book of Gates or the Book of Caverns.

These are among the most important funeral texts found on the walls of ancient Egyptian tombs.

ANCIENT GRAFFITI

Researchers from the University of Warsaw have been examining marks carved into stone in Egypt that have been compared by experts to an ancient version of Trip Advisor.

The inscriptions, some of which were made over 2,000 years ago, reveal what travellers to one of the world's oldest attractions thought of the memorials to long-dead rulers in the Valley of the Kings.

The tomb of Ramesses VI was studied in particular detail, due to the rich variety and high number of the messages it contains.

Archaeologists uncovered over 1,000 inscriptions found throughout a 300 foot (100 metre) long tomb cut deep in the rocks.

Researchers from Institute of Archaeology at the University of Warsaw have been examining the scrawlings in closer detail.

They are viewed by some as vandalism of priceless historical sites, but the Polish team believe that they are scientifically valuable in opening a window into the past.

The tomb of Ramesses VI, who reigned from 1145 to 1137 BC, was chosen due to the rich variety and high number of the messages in contained.

Experts found over 1,000 inscriptions throughout the 300 foot (100 metre) long tomb cut into the rock bed.

Please visit the site: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-4664012/Archaeologists-study-2-000-year-old-graffiti-Egypt.html>

SISTER OF THE EARLIEST COMPLETE OLD TESTAMENT DISCOVERED, TYNDALE HOUSE, CAMBRIDGE, ENGLAND

Discovery published in the Tyndale Bulletin 68.1 (2017) 1-29

Tyndale House, Cambridge, announces a new discovery made by young researcher Dr Kim Phillips published in its latest Tyndale Bulletin.

Tyndale House Research Associate Dr Kim Phillips identifies the writing style of Samuel ben Jacob in newly published digitised photographs of a manuscript from the Firkowich collection in the depths of the National Library of Russia archives of St Petersburg. Locked away from the eyes of interested researchers for a number of years these microfilms have recently been posted online by the National Library of Israel. Due to painstaking work in the unusual practices of this scribe Dr Phillips has been able to identify that this is Samuel ben Jacob's work despite there not being any identifying colophon, or signed publication note, on the text. The mystery of who wrote these texts has been decoded.

Samuel ben Jacob is the scribe who wrote the Leningrad Codex, the earliest complete copy of the Old Testament which is reproduced in the Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia. This manuscript is behind most modern translations.

Identifying this piece of work to be by the same scribe will allow scholars to check the accuracy of tiny details in the manuscript behind most modern Bible translations. This will then contribute to future scholarly Bibles.

"For the first time (for scholars outside Israel and Russia) it is possible to contextualise the readings of L [the Leningrad Codex] against the background of equivalent readings in other manuscripts known to have been written by Samuel b. Jacob" Dr Kim Phillips Tyndale Bulletin 68.1 pp. 19-20

The Article is available online at www.tyndale.cam.ac.uk/tyndale-bulletin.

Please visit the site: <http://tinyurl.com/y98agzt5>

SCIENTISTS EXPLAIN ANCIENT ROME'S LONG-LASTING CONCRETE, BY MATT MCGRATH

Scientists examined samples from this ancient Roman pier with very high-powered X-rays. Researchers have unlocked the chemistry of Roman concrete which has resisted the elements for thousands of years.

Ancient sea walls built by the Romans used a concrete made from lime and volcanic ash to bind with rocks.

Now scientists have discovered that elements within the volcanic material reacted with sea water to strengthen the construction.

They believe the discovery could lead to more environmentally friendly building materials.

Unlike the modern concrete mixture which erodes over time, the Roman substance has long puzzled researchers.

Rather than eroding, particularly in the presence of sea water, the material seems to gain strength from the exposure.

In previous tests with samples from ancient Roman sea walls and harbours, researchers learned that the concrete contained a rare mineral called aluminosilicate.

They believe that this strengthening substance crystallised in the lime as the Roman mixture generated heat when exposed to sea water.

Researchers have now carried out a more detailed examination of the harbour samples using an electron microscope to map the distribution of elements. They also used two other techniques, X-ray micro-diffraction and Raman spectroscopy, to gain a deeper understanding of the chemistry at play.

This new study says the scientists found significant amounts of aluminosilicate growing through the fabric of the concrete, with a related, porous mineral called phillipsite.

The researchers say that the long-term exposure to sea water helped these crystals to keep on growing over time, reinforcing the concrete and preventing cracks from developing.

"Contrary to the principles of modern cement-based concrete," said lead author Marie Jackson from the University of Utah, US, "the Romans created a rock-like concrete that thrives in open chemical exchange with seawater."

The ancient mixture differs greatly from the current approach. Modern buildings are constructed with concrete based on Portland cement.

This involves heating and crushing a mixture of several ingredients including limestone, sandstone, ash, chalk, iron and clay. The fine material is then mixed with "aggregates", such as rocks or sand, to build concrete structures.

The process of making cement has a heavy environmental penalty, being responsible for around 5% of global emissions of CO₂.

So could the greater understanding of the ancient Roman mixture lead to greener building materials?

Prof Jackson is testing new materials using sea water and volcanic rock from the western United States. Speaking to the BBC earlier this year, she argued that the planned Swansea tidal lagoon should be built using the ancient Roman knowledge of concrete.

"Their technique was based on building very massive structures that are really quite environmentally sustainable and very long-lasting," she said.

"I think Roman concrete or a type of it would be a very good choice [for Swansea]. That project is going to require 120 years of service life to amortise [pay back] the investment.

"We know that Portland cement concretes contain steel reinforcements. Those will surely corrode in at least half of that service lifetime."

There are a number of limiting factors that make the revival of the Roman approach very challenging. One is the lack of suitable volcanic rocks. The Romans, the scientists say, were fortunate that the right materials were on their doorstep.

Another drawback is the lack of the precise mixture that the Romans followed. It might take years of experimenting to discover the full formula.

The research has been published in the journal *American Mineralogist*.

Please visit the site: <http://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-40494248> [Go there for pix]

SIXTH CENTURY MEDICAL RECIPE
UNCOVERED IN ST CATHERINE'S
MONASTERY - THE MEDICAL RECIPE
UNCOVERED IS ONE OF THE RENOWNED
GREEK PHYSICIAN HIPPOCRATES,
BY NEVINE EL-AREF

In a ceremony held at his ministry's headquarters, Minister of Antiquities Khaled El-Enany announced the discovery of a very important medical manuscript uncovered by the monks of St Catherine's Monastery in South Sinai during restoration works carried out in the monastery's library.

The ceremony was attended by Greek Minister of Digital Policy, Telecommunications and Media Nikos Pappas, the Archbishop of Saint Catherine's Monastery, Egyptian Cultural Minister Helmy El-Namnam, Egyptian Minister of Communication and Information Technology Yasser El-Kadi, Egyptian Minister of Tourism Yehia Rashid, and South Sinai Governor Major General Khalid Fouada.

Mohammed Abdel-Latif, assistant minister of antiquities for archaeological sites, explained that the discovered manuscript is one of those known as "Palmesit" manuscripts, dating to the 6th century AD. The manuscript is written on leather and bears parts of a medical recipe of the renowned Greek physician Hippocrates.

The manuscript has also three other medical recipes written by an anonymous scribe, one of which contains drawings of medicinal herbs of the Greek recipe.

The second layer of writing found on the manuscript is a text of the Bible known as the "Sinaitic manuscript," which spread during the Middle Ages.

Ahmed Al-Nimer, supervisor of Coptic archeology documentation at the ministry, told Ahram Online that "Palmesit manuscripts" are a very well-known type of manuscript written on leather and formed of two layers. The first one, he explained, was previously erased in order to be re-written on the leather again. "This was done due to the high cost of leather at that time," Al-Nimr pointed out.

The monastery of Sainte Catherine's contains many "Palmesit" manuscripts in addition to a library containing 6,000 manuscripts, among them 600 manuscripts written in Arabic, Greek, Ethiopian, Coptic, Armenian and Syriac. They are mainly historical, geographical and philosophical manuscripts and the oldest dates to the 4th century AD.

Please visit the site:

<http://english.ahram.org/NewsContent/9/41/273085/Heritage/GrecoRoman/Sixth-century-medical-recipe-uncovered-in-St-Cathe.aspx>

REMAINS OF 20 CIRCULAR BUILDINGS UNCOVERED AT CYPRUS' OLDEST VILLAGE

Archaeologists have uncovered the remains of more than 20 round buildings with a diameter of between 3 and 6 metres during excavations at the site of Ayios Tychonas-Klimonas in Limassol, the earliest known village in Cyprus, they said on Tuesday.

According to the Antiquities Department, the buildings were constructed on small terraces, notched into a gentle slope facing the sea. The walls were built with earth and strengthened with wooden poles and the floors were often plastered.

In most buildings large hearths were discovered, sometimes accompanied by a 30-50 kg millstone.

“These buildings were probably frequently reconstructed, as seen by the multiple layers of remains that were found, one above the other, on the terraces,” the department said.

The buildings are situated around a circular, 10 metre communal building, that was excavated between 2011-2012. The building dates to between 11,200 and 10,600 years BP (Before Present).

The surveys and excavations that have been conducted since, have shown that the village would have covered an area of at least half a hectare.

“This is the earliest known village in Cyprus, and is more than twenty centuries older than Chirokitia,” the department said.

Large quantities of stone tools, stone vessels, stone and shell beads or pendants were also found there.

The animal bones indicate that domestic dogs and cats were already introduced to Cyprus, and that the villagers hunted a small Cypriot wild boar and birds. Intensive sieving provided strong evidence for the cultivation of emmer wheat: a primitive cereal introduced from the continent. At this time, the Ayios Tychonas-Klimonas villagers were hunter-cultivators who did not produce pottery.

The organisation of the village, its architecture, the stone tools and the presence of agriculture and hunting are elements that are very similar to those that have already been identified in the early Pre-Pottery Neolithic Levant, between 11,500 and 10,500 years BP.

“This is the earliest manifestation of an agricultural and village way of life known to date, worldwide,” the department said.

“Ayios Tychonas-Klimonas has demonstrated that, even though Cyprus was separated from the continent by more than 70 km of sea, the island was part of broader Near Eastern Neolithic developments.

The excavations were supported by the department of antiquities, the French School at Athens, the French Ministère des Affaires Etrangères et du Développement International,

the CNRS, the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, the French Institute for Rescue Archaeological Research (INRAP) and the Ayios Tychonas Community Council.

Please visit the site: <http://cyprus-mail.com/2016/07/12/remains-20-ancient-circular-buildings-uncovered-cyprus-oldest-village/>

**UNKNOWN MONUMENTAL PALACE
REWRITES ANCIENT GREEK HISTORY -
MASSIVE BUILDINGS, EARLY WRITING
SHOW IKLAINA WASN'T A BACKWATER AS
THOUGHT, BUT A CENTER OF
MYCENAEAN RULE THAT WAS
DESTROYED BY THE PALACE OF NESTOR,
ARCHAEOLOGISTS SAY,
BY PHILIPPE BOHSTROM**

Monumental discoveries in Iklaina, including an open-air pagan sanctuary, have reinforced the view that this ancient Greek town was no backwater as had been thought, but a major center of Mycenaean culture – that throws back the formation of the earliest complex states in ancient Greece by hundreds of years.

Iklaina was made legendary by Homer's Iliad, which romanticizes the town's war with Troy. Until now the town, which indeed dates to the Mycenaean period (1500 to 1100 B.C.E.), had been considered to be something of a backwater. Evidently, it wasn't.

The true lofty status of ancient Iklaina now coming to light is based on discovery of a monumental palace and other massive buildings that apparently served as administrative centers; a tablet with the earliest-known government record in Europe, discovered in 2011; and newly uncovered sprawling public spaces such as the sanctuary, the archaeologists explain.

Complex states feature centralized political administration, specialized administrative organization, complex social ranking, advanced economic organization, and formalized institutions. If until now, the earliest complex state in ancient Greece had been thought to have arisen around 3,100 years ago, the evidence from Iklaina indicates that the complex states were taking form as long as 3,400 years ago, though that was thousands of years after these forms of government began to arise in Mesopotamia, going by the solid evidence.

“It appears that Iklaina was the capital of an independent state for a good part of the Mycenaean period, in competition with the other major site in the area, the Palace of Nestor in Pylos,” says Prof. Michael Cosmopoulos of the University of Missouri-St. Louis, head of the excavations.

Apparently, Iklaina was ultimately vanquished by that next-door bitter rival. It was destroyed by enemy attack at the same time that the Palace of Nestor expanded, Cosmopoulos explains: “It appears that the two events were connected, and that it was the ruler of the Palace of Nestor who took over Iklaina.”

The excavations at Iklaina brought to light massive walls, several administrative buildings, open-air shrine, murals, a surprisingly advanced drainage system with massive stone-built sewers, and an elaborate water delivery system with clay pipes that was far ahead of its time. The tablet the Iklaina archaeologists discovered, which they believe to be 3400 to 3500 years old, also throws back the advent of widespread literacy across this region of the eastern Mediterranean Basin.

The legend of Nestor

Nestor is one of the main figures in the Homeric tale of Troy. After King Menelaos' beautiful wife Helene was abducted by the Trojan prince Paris, who also plundered the palace treasures while about it, the king set out to gain revenge, first turning to his brother, the powerful king of Mycenae, Agamemnon.

The two together went to plead before the old king Nestor, the most experienced of all humans, because he had seen two generations sink into the grave and now reigned with unbroken force over the third. Nestor willingly helped the two brothers muster allies among the Greek lords and heroes.

There is no archaeological evidence of Nestor to back the Homeric writings, but Cosmopoulos does not rule him out as a historical figure.

“Quite a bit of what is described in Homer's Iliad and Odyssey is based on the historical reality of the Mycenaean world: this applies to artifacts described by Homer, to citadels like Mycenae and Pylos, which archaeologists have found,” he says.

That said, Homer wrote his epics about 400 years after the Mycenaeans. The epics therefore contain anachronisms, elements contemporary to Homer which did not exist in the Mycenaean period, for example the use of iron or cremating the dead, Cosmopoulos explains.

The so-called "Palace of Nestor" in Pylos, some 10 kilometers from Iklaina, may or may not have housed the legendary wise king, but it definitely was a major palace of the Mycenaean period. The Pylos site has yielded over 1,000 Linear B tablets containing government records, dating 150 to 200 years later than the Iklaina tablet.

Giant Cyclopean Terrace

Eight years of excavations ending in late 2016 unearthed more of an enormous building that the archaeologist labeled the Cyclopean Terrace, which dominates the entire site. The terrace consists of worked limestone boulders fitted roughly together, with smaller chunks placed between them.

(The ancients coming some generations after the walls had been built did not believe that such massive structures could have been built by humans, but had to have been the work of gigantic beings such as the Cyclops. The term “Cyclopean” has come to refer to that particular type of Mycenaean large-scale architecture.)

Whoever built it, the massive Cyclopean Terrace had supported a two- or three-storey building. Unfortunately, the part of the building that once stood on the terrace (as with

the stepped-stone structure in the City of David in Jerusalem) is gone forever. However, rooms of the same building complex survive on the plateau to the south, which give a good idea of the date and function of this Cyclopean Terrace complex.

In theory the massive structure could be a Mycenaean temple or fortress, Cosmopoulos admits, but analysis of the finds led him to conclude that it was a powerful palace or administrative center.

"It appears that it was the buildings where the ruler and his family resided, part of the 'administrative center' of the site. It was built sometime between 1350 and 1300 B.C.E.," Cosmopoulos told Haaretz.

No massive structure like this, the construction of which required abundant resources and a great capacity to plan and execute, would have been built in an out-of-the-way and remote settlement. These buildings are monumental and formal, and suggest that Iklaina was the capital of an independent state for a long part of the Mycenaean period – before such states were thought to exist in ancient Greece.

Cosmopoulos' conclusion is bolstered by the earlier discovery of the tablet containing a bureaucratic record, written in Linear B.

Linear B is a form of writing thought to have descended from an older, still undeciphered writing system known as Linear A, that was used on the island of Crete. Archeologists think Linear A is related to the yet older hieroglyph system used by the ancient Egyptians.

"The tablet has inscriptions on both sides, on one side a list of male names with numbers (possibly a personnel list), and on the other a list of products - only the heading is preserved, which reads 'manufactured' or 'assembled'. But the tablet is broken and the actual list is missing," Cosmopoulos said.

The discovery makes it the earliest-known government record in Europe, he says, adding: "But until the final study, we don't know whether it dates to the period when Iklaina was an independent capital."

The humiliation of Iklaina

Mainland Greece in the Late Bronze Age (ca. 1600-1100 B.C.E.) was divided into independent kingdoms, connected in some kind of loose association, which developed into complex states. All were Mycenaean Greeks and they shared common cultural elements, including architectural types, pottery, religious beliefs, and language, written in Linear B. Iklaina turns out to have been an early example of such a state.

"It appears that the formation of those states was the product of military conflict between powerful rulers. As some rulers became more powerful than others, they started to annex the territories of their neighbors, creating larger and more complex states," Michael Cosmopoulos told Haaretz.

In any case, after the town's destruction apparently by the Palace of Nestor, Iklaina was downgraded into an industrial center. Evidence of agricultural produce such as wheat and barley, stock raising of pigs, sheep and goats as well as metallurgy and, possibly, linen production have all been found on site.

Illiterate in Israel?

As for Iklaina's Linear B tablet, which precedes all others in the region, its discovery has led scholars to revise the assumption that writing was limited to the elite and to the major ruling centers of the time.

Literacy – and mainly, bureaucracy – evidently appeared earlier, and were more widespread across Greece, than had been assumed until now.

It bears mention that other writing systems elsewhere are much older. For example, writings found in China, Mesopotamia, and Egypt are thought to date as far back as 3,000 B.C.E. – over 5,000 years ago. But writing had not been considered widespread in ancient Greece in the 14th century B.C.E. The existence of the tablet, containing government information, not, say, sacred texts legible only to high priests, begs the thought that literacy was not uncommon at the time.

If literacy was, after all, widespread in Greece in the 14th century B.C.E. and there is evidence of writing from Mesopotamia and Egypt from the 3rd millennium B.C.E, one might ask: Why did Israel and Judah remain illiterate?

One who thinks they didn't is Allan Millard, professor of Hebrew and ancient Semitic languages at Liverpool University. He even contends that some parts of the Bible could date as far back as the 13th century B.C.E., and that writing was widespread across the kingdoms of Israel and Judah in the 8th and 7th centuries B.C.E.

“There are scores of brief notes, messages and lists written on potsherds, the ancient scrap paper, from the 8th to early 6th centuries B.C.E. There are a few pieces of writing that may be Hebrew from the 10th and 9th centuries, but the script does not yet have clearly Hebrew features and the texts are too short to be certainly Hebrew. They, along with others, show scribal activity in those centuries,” he told Haaretz.

The sheer number of sites, the quantity of ephemeral texts and the multitude of seals and impressions bearing owners' names should dispel any notion that writing was rare in early Israel and Judah, Millard argues. And if scribes were employed for legal and administrative duties such as making lists, setting out legal deals and writing letters, it is reasonable to expect some to have spent time writing other texts, as in Mesopotamia and Egypt.

Please visit the site: <http://www.haaretz.com/archaeology/1.768416>

PIRATES, OR STORMS? ARCHAEOLOGISTS FIND 'SHIPS GRAVEYARD' IN GREEK ARCHIPELAGO - EIGHT MORE ANCIENT WRECKS FOUND AT FOURNI, BRINGING TOTAL IN WHAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN SAFE HARBOR IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA TO 53 ANCIENT SUNKEN SHIPS, BY PHILIPPE BOHSTROM

Another eight ancient shipwrecks have been found at the Fourni archipelago off Greece, bringing the number of ruined ships found there to 53. The discovery begs explanation, given that the sunken wrecks were found in just 17 square miles, and that Fourni was never home to any large settlement.

Yet the marine archaeologists have found the largest cluster of sunken ships known in the Mediterranean.

Fourni (or Fournoi Korseon) is a complex of 13 small Greek islands and islets between Ikaria and Samos. One explanation could lie in the weather.

Archaeologists and the ROV robot work to recover an ancient North African amphora.
Vasilis Mentogianis

“The area around Fourni, Ikaria and Samos, is the most dangerous part of the Aegean Sea,” says Peter Campbell, co-director of the project from the RPM Nautical Foundation. Storms there can turn violent and lacking other natural harbors, Fourni was the only place sailors could find safe anchorage, he says.

Relatively safe, perhaps. Presumably the captains would anchor their ships in spots sheltered from blasts from the northwest winds. But come a rare southern gust, which happens, ships would be caught off guard and crash against the rocks. Or there could be another explanation.

Given that there were large settlements on the nearby islands, a glance at the map shows that ships would have had to pass by the main island of Fourni. “This resulted in a high volume of traffic Fourni was infamous for piracy from ancient times through to the 19th century,” Campbell told Haaretz.

Joseph Georgirenes, the bishop of Samos and Ikaria, described Fourni in 1678, writing, “Three Miles distant from the Island [Ikaria], on the South-side towards Patmos, lye some small Islands uninhabited; but know by the name of Furny, and furnish’d with good Harbours, capacious enough for all sorts of vessels. Here the Corsairs of Malta, and other Christians, us’d to lay in wait for Ships that trade from Scio [Chios] to Rhodes.” By “corsairs of Malta,” Georgirenes was referring to pirate ships.

Archaeologists and the ROV robot clear sediment from a Roman North African amphora.
Vasilis Mentogianis

“The last pirate, named Mitikas, was executed on Fourni in the 1860s. His great-grandson is a free diver on the island who is a key member of the project for locating shipwrecks,” Campbell added.

To be fair, pirates are often indistinguishable from regular mariners in the historical record. Sometimes the nature of the beast is a question of who wrote the history.

Merchants marine

The dates of the shipwrecks range from the late Greek Archaic period (around 2500 years ago) to the Early Modern period (1750-1850 C.E.). Nearly all the old ships the diving archaeologists found at Fourni were carrying amphorae, large pottery jugs that were the delivery containers of the ancient world.

“They are big piles of hundreds of broken amphorae,” Campbell told Haaretz. They also found an Ottoman-era wreck that had been bearing tiles, and which left stacks of tiles on the seafloor.

The divers also found gear belonging to the mariners, including cooking pots and lamps, as well as anchors dating from the Archaic Period through the Byzantine Period, composed of stone, lead, and iron. While timbers remain from the two modern wooden wrecks from the 18th or 19th century, any organic remains from the older vessels are long gone. However, their cargo indicates they were merchant ships, Campbell says.

Of the 53 ships, six clearly were from the classical period (510-323 B.C.E) and bear cargo of Aegean origin, he adds. One bore a set of amphorae from the Greek island of Chios dating back to the classical period. Later ships bore cargoes from the Black Sea, for instance.

Ironically, the one ship on record as sinking in Fourni hasn't been found.

“There is a historical account of a 17th century French shipwreck in one of the bay, which we hope to find in future years,” says Campbell. Also, a British aircraft crashed in the sea near Fourni during World War II. They haven't found that either.

The primary focus of the archaeologists in the present season, and in the fourth season to come, is more survey and documentation than fresh exploration. But just as sinking by Fourni had evidently been – with all due respect to vicious pirates – a matter of weather and serendipity, so may the discovery of more ancient wrecks in the depths.

Please visit the site: <http://www.haaretz.com/archaeology/1.801529> [Go there for pix]

MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO ARCHAEOLOGY IMPROVES RESEARCH FINDINGS - JORDANIAN EXPERT, BY SAEB RAWASHDEH

"Archaeology has moved forward from a standalone scientific approach to a multidisciplinary approach, where archaeology intertwines with other sciences," noted Catreena Hamarneh, a Jordanian archaeologist working at the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology in Amman.

"This approach helps to reconstruct and better understand past civilisations and conditions that prevailed and dictated their decisions," she continued.

With her background in geology and archaeology, Hamarneh has worked at different sites in Jordan including Madaba, Jerash, Qasr Mushatta and, more recently, in Petra.

"In 2010, Professor Johannes Cramer from Technische Universitat Berlin, who was heading the Mushatta Conservation Project at the time, approached me asking about my expertise in studying a hoard of mosaic tesserae, which was found during our work at the site. This discovery was quite exciting although not unique," she said.

Mushatta, a desert palace and mosque built during the reign of caliph Al Walid II (743-744 AD), around 30km south of Amman, is known for its carved façade, which is displayed at the Pergamon Museum in Berlin, Hamarneh explained, adding that the palace construction was abruptly terminated. There is a dispute amongst archaeologist on whether it was partially occupied or not, she noted.

"The discovery of stone and glass tesserae [cut cubes] informs us of the fact that there had been mosaic decoration at the site, but, with archaeometry, our knowledge expands," the scholar stressed.

With the petrographic analysis and scanning electron microscope, among others, several facts have been established, the archaeologist said.

"Comparing the remnants of mortar [the adhesive material] found on the tesserae with those remaining at different architecture parts of the palace, I have managed to establish that these tesserae had once covered the palace walls," Hamarneh explained.

"With archaeometry, we learned that the stone supply was local, she underlined, adding "this could even indicate that the artist labouring at the site could have been a local artist, which means that the Umayyads encouraged local artisans and recruited them on constant bases."

Although Jordan has very well-established scientific institutions, a lot of analysis still needs to be outsourced, she said, noting that scientific funds are mainly restricted to scientist and academics working at Jordanian institutions, therefore excluding a group of independent Jordanian scholars, students and postgraduates who are deprived of funding.

Hamarneh described this trend as "unfortunate", as it could enrich the scientific research in Jordan.

Currently, Hamarneh's research is focused on landscape archaeology, studying ancient terraces in the hinterlands of Petra.

"In 2015, my research took me to landscape archaeology. Benefiting from my joint background in geology and archaeology, I joined a team of researchers that worked on studying the role of ancient terraces in modifying surface run-off," the expert pointed out.

Although this project had finished in 2016, it raised her interest in ancient dry stone terraces which she now devotes her time to.

"My research is concentrated in the hinterlands of Petra, focusing on understanding the various functions of terraces, their methods of construction, their origins and period of use," Hamarneh highlighted.

Although her research is only in its beginning, with most of the data and analysis currently being processed abroad, she said "it is opening a whole new world about resource management of the ancient settlers and the modifications they have made to the city's morphology and the environment".

"The aim of the research is not only to understand these ancient technologies, but also to revive them as climatic conditions are starting to resemble the dry climate of the past, which our ancestors not only managed to surpass, but also turn into a green paradise that astonished caravans," the archaeologist noted.

Please visit the site: <http://tinyurl.com/v7ndttxq> [Go there for pix]

IMPRESSIVE 2,700-YEAR-OLD WATER SYSTEM DISCOVERED NEAR ROSH HA- AYIN

An impressively large 2,700-year-old water system was recently exposed at Israel Antiquities Authority excavations near Rosh Ha-Ayin with the help of students majoring in the Education Ministry's Land of Israel and Archaeology studies. The excavation precedes the construction of a new residential neighborhood initiated by the Ministry of Construction and Housing.

According to Gilad Itach, director of excavations for the IAA, "It is difficult not to be impressed by the sight of the immense underground reservoir quarried out so many years ago. In antiquity, rainwater collection and storage was a fundamental necessity. With an annual rainfall of 500 mm, the region's winter rains would easily have filled the huge reservoir. On its walls, near the entrance, we identified engravings of human figures, crosses, and a vegetal motif that were probably carved by passersby in a later period. Overall, we identified seven figures measuring 15–30 cm. Most have outstretched arms and a few appear to be holding some kind of object."

The water system exposed is nearly 20 m long and reaches a depth of over 4 m. The excavations reveal that the reservoir was built beneath a large structure with walls that are all nearly 50 m long. Some of the potsherds found on the floors of the rooms probably belonged to vessels used to draw water from the reservoir. It is highly likely that the structure and the reservoir were built at the end of the Iron Age (late eighth or early seventh century BCE), but whereas the building was abandoned during the Persian period the reservoir was still in use until modern times.

In recent years, a number of other farmsteads built at the end of the First Temple period have been discovered near Rosh Ha-Ayin. They were probably erected after the destruction of the Kingdom of Israel in 720 BCE, when the Assyrian empire dominated the region. The establishment of farmhouses in this area is interesting, given the fact that many regions within the decimated Kingdom of Israel remained desolate. Some scholars believe that the establishment of the farmsteads was motivated by the empire's wish to settle the area, which lay on an international route and near the western border of the Assyrian empire. According to Itach, "The structure exposed in this excavation is different from most of the previously discovered farmsteads. Its orderly plan, vast area, strong walls, and the impressive water reservoir hewn beneath it suggest that the site was administrative in nature and it may well have controlled the surrounding farmsteads."

High-school students majoring in the Education Ministry's Land of Israel and Archaeology track participated in the Rosh Ha-Ayin excavations as part of the Ministry and the IAA's new educational program, which is designed to connect students with the past and train the archaeologists of tomorrow. Students opting for this track as part of their chosen matriculation assessment join an excavation for a week. They experience the various tasks involved in the excavation, discuss the research questions and archaeological considerations, and document the dig in the excavation journal as part of their research work.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Construction and Housing and Rosh Ha-Ayin Municipality, the Israel Antiquities Authority has plans for the site to remain an open area accessible to the public adjacent to the new residential neighborhood.

Please visit the site:

http://www.antiquities.org.il/Article_eng.aspx?sec_id=25&subj_id=240&id=4299

[Go there for brief video]

EXCAVATIONS IN TURKEY'S SOUTHEAST **REVEAL 10000-YEAR-OLD BELIEF IN** **AFTERLIFE**

An excavation in the Dargeçit district of the southeastern region of Turkey, which will soon be left under the reservoir waters of the Ilisu Dam, has revealed crucial information about the North Mesopotamian people's social life 10 millennia ago, particularly about burial rituals and the ancient belief in life after death.

Bodies buried in the fetal position, with their knees pulled up to their stomach, were found in the basements of houses in the site, symbolizing the position of a baby in the womb, according to information provided by Nihat Erdoğan, the manager of the Mardin Museum who conducts the excavation of the site.

The findings point at belief in rebirth after death, Erdoğan told the Doğan News Agency.

The decades-old Ilisu Dam project, which was first planned under Southeastern Anatolia Project's investments in the 1960s, was first tendered in 1997. The potential damage caused by the dam's construction, which is planned to be finalized this year, has been discussed for a quarter of a century.

Archaeologists have been carrying out intense work since 2008 in the large area, which includes the site known as "Boncuklu Tarla," literally meaning "beady field" in English.

Houses with quarry stone walls and stiffened clay floors from the Aceramic Neolithic Age, which date back to 10,000 B.C. and 7,000 B.C., were found during the excavations at the site in Dargeçit.

"Since those times, people have used totems or amulets for thousands of years for abundance or spells, as part of their beliefs or as ornaments. Ornaments were made of colorful stones and natural materials such as animal teeth, horn, bone and nails or sea shells that were rubbed, scratched, drilled and strung together," said Erdoğan.

"The specific triangular pendants that were found at Boncuklu Tarla shows that the form of amulets, which have been believed to protect people from bad things and illnesses or to bring good luck, have not changed for 10,000 years," he said.

Along with thousands of beads used in ornaments, obsidian or flint blades, waste from ornament making and stone chipping tools were found at the site.

The tools include blades, gimlets, arrowheads and microliths, said Erdoğan.

Traces of the Neolithic age have been found in several spots in Anatolia, where food production and settled societies had begun, he noted.

The foundations of today's civilization were laid during the Neolithic Age, when the socio-economic structures and social classes were formed, triggering rooted changes in human life, he said.

The Boncuklu Tarla site was discovered in 2008, during a field survey. Its first excavations started in 2012.

This year's excavation, which began last week, will last until the end of October and the uncovered artifacts will be exhibited at the Mardin Museum.

Please visit the site:

<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/.aspx?pageID=238&nID=115695> [Go there for pix]

THE CITRUS ROUTE REVEALED: FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA INTO THE MEDITERRANEAN, BY DAFNA LANGGUT

The Laboratory of Archaeobotany and Ancient Environments, The Sonia and Marco Nadler Institute of Archaeology, Tel Aviv University, Israel

Abstract

Today, citrus orchards are a major component of the Mediterranean landscape and one of the most important cultivated fruits in the region; however, citrus is not native to the Mediterranean Basin, but originated in Southeast Asia. Here, the route of the spread and diversification of citrus is traced through the use of reliable historical information (ancient texts, art, and artifacts such as wall paintings and coins) and archaeobotanical remains such as fossil pollen grains, charcoals, seeds, and other fruit remains. These botanical remains are evaluated for their reliability (in terms of identification, archaeological context, and dating) and possible interpretations.

Citrus medica (citron) was the first citrus to spread west, apparently through Persia and the Southern Levant (remains were found in a Persian royal garden near Jerusalem dated to the fifth and fourth centuries BC) and then to the western Mediterranean (early Roman period, ≈third and second centuries BC). In the latter region, seeds and pollen remains of citron were found in gardens owned by the affluent in the Vesuvius area and Rome. The earliest lemon (*C. limon*) botanical remains were found in the Forum Romanum (Rome) and are dated to the late first century BC/early first century AD. It seems, therefore, that lemon was the second citrus species introduced to the Mediterranean.

The contexts of the botanical remains, in relation to elite gardens, show that in antiquity, both citrus and lemon were products representing high social status. Sour orange (*C. aurantium*), lime (*C. aurantifolia*), and pummelo (*C. maxima*) did not reach the Mediterranean until the 10th century AD, after the Islamic conquest. Sweet orange (*C. sinensis*) was introduced during the second half of the 15th century AD, probably via the trade route established by the Genoese, and later (16th century AD) by the Portuguese. The mandarin (*C. reticulata*) reached the Mediterranean only in the early 19th century. While citron and lemon arrived in the Mediterranean as elite products, all other citrus fruit most probably spread for economic reasons.

Please visit the site: <http://hortsci.ashspublications.org/content/52/6/814.abstract>
[Go there for link to purchasable article] [See also at
<https://www.livescience.com/59896-ancient-citrus-trade-routes.html>]

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN RECORDS INDICATE PHILISTINES WEREN'T AEGEAN PIRATES AFTER ALL NEW STUDY OF 3,200-YEAR- OLD DOCUMENTS FROM RAMSES III SUGGESTS THE MUCH-REVEILED PHILISTINES WERE NOT ALIEN BELLIGERENTS BUT NATIVE MIDDLE EASTERNS, BY ARIEL DAVID

Research into ancient Egyptian records from the 12th century B.C.E. is shedding new light on a mystery archaeologists have been debating for decades: the origin of the Philistines and other marauding “Sea Peoples” that appeared in the Levant during the late Bronze Age. The research, and other recent discoveries, suggest the enigmatic Philistines may have been a native Middle Eastern population, rather than invading pirates from the Aegean islands, as traditional scholarship holds. The Philistines may also have played a much less nefarious role than previously thought in the sudden and unexplained collapse of great civilizations – including the Hittite empire, Egypt and Mycenae – that occurred around the 12th century BCE.

“We shouldn’t think of the Philistines and the other Sea Peoples as this huge coalition of Mediterranean fighters who whoosh through the land and destroy everything in their way,” says Shirly Ben-Dor Evian, the curator of Egyptian archaeology at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, whose doctoral research at Tel Aviv University resulted in the article published last week in the Oxford Journal of Archaeology.

The study reinterprets ancient Egyptian records from the reign of Pharaoh Ramses III, which have long been known to researchers and have formed the basis of what we know about the early history of the Sea Peoples, of which the Philistines were just one group.

The so-called Harris Papyrus, a biography of Ramses III written under his son and successor Ramses IV, tells us that the pharaoh defeated the "Peleset" – as the Egyptians called the Philistines and other Sea Peoples early in his reign (around 1190 B.C.E.) and brought them back as captives to his lands.

Historians have used this document to explain how the Philistines first settled on the southern coastal plain of Canaan: They were brought there as prisoners and then gained independence when Egyptian control over Canaan waned a few decades later, just in time to become the wicked archenemies of the Israelites described in the Bible.

But there is a problem with that interpretation, Ben-Dor Evian notes. The papyrus literally says the defeated foes were “brought as captives to Egypt,” not Canaan, and “settled in strongholds” there. Previous generations of scholars may have been too eager to interpret Egyptian texts to fit the Biblical narrative, she says. “We know from the Bible that the Philistines lived in five main cities – Gaza, Ekron, Gath, Ashkelon and

Ashdod, and we know that Gaza used to be an Egyptian fortress so we put two and two together and say: ‘Aha, Ramses settled them in Gaza,’” Ben-Dor Evian explains. “But this papyrus was written in the 12th century B.C.E., while the Bible, most scholars today agree, was probably written much later.” Resettling prisoners in the heartland of the empire, rather than in peripheral areas like Canaan, was common Egyptian practice, Ben-Dor Evian says (and the Israelites would experience similar treatment at the hands of the Babylonians centuries later).

There is evidence that the captives “from the Great Green” – one of the terms with which the Egyptians referred to the Sea Peoples – were probably resettled in the west of the Nile Delta region, and may have even been pressed into military service. A different papyrus from Ramses’ time tells us that the pharaoh mobilized 100 Philistines and 200 Sherden (another of the Sea Peoples) to help deal with a Libyan rebellion to the west of Egypt. This would only make sense if the warriors were close at hand – rather than far off to the east in Canaan, Ben-Dor Evian argues.

But where did those defeated Philistines originally hail from? The answer may come from inscriptions and reliefs found at Medinet Habu, Ramses’ funerary temple, which describe the pharaoh’s campaigns against the Sea Peoples, depicting two large battles, one at land and one at sea. The reliefs do not give names for their locations, and traditional scholarship held the battles were coordinated assaults that occurred almost at the same time in northern Sinai and the mouths of the Nile. But not all agree. “There was this vision of a coordinated attack from land and sea,” Ben-Dor Evian says. “It’s part of the allure of the Sea Peoples: they were so good that they could coordinate their attacks on Egypt on land and sea at a time when there was no instant communication.”

But the battle reliefs at Medinet Habu are not connected; they are interrupted by a scene of Ramses hunting lions, suggesting the two encounters probably happened at very different places and times. Furthermore, the land battle scene is accompanied by depictions of humped oxen and carts carrying women and children.

These images, previously interpreted as further evidence of a mass migration of the Sea Peoples from foreign lands, are actually standard iconography used to identify locations in Syria and the northern Levant, Ben-Dor Evian says. “Egyptian war reliefs don’t contain a location for a battle, because the reliefs are on the outside of the temple, and most people can’t read so there’s no point in writing,” she told Haaretz in an interview. “They used artistic conventions, icons, just like we do.” Further confirming the northern context of the land battle is an inscription at the temple, describing the Sea Peoples as a scourge that had made a camp in Amurru after laying waste to Hatti (the Hittite empire), Alashiya, Carchemish and Arzawa.

All these kingdoms – except for Alashiya, which was in Cyprus – were located between modern-day southeast Turkey and northern Syria.

This list of terrifying deeds is likely historically inaccurate, Ben-Dor Evian notes: the Hittite empire had already fallen decades before Ramses’ campaign, while Carchemish is one of the few cities that was not destroyed during the Bronze Age collapse.

Perhaps Ramses was trying to justify his decision to go to war, or was making his foes look more powerful than they were to aggrandize his victory. If so, his propaganda effort worked so well that thousands of years later this inscription is still the basis for viewing

the Sea Peoples as an all-powerful military machine that swept, barbarian-invasion-style, through the entire Mediterranean.

Ben-Dor Evian suggests that while piracy by the Sea Peoples and warfare may have contributed to weaken the great empires of the age, we need to look elsewhere for the main causes of the Bronze Age collapse, such as the increasing complexity of those civilizations and the difficulties centralized powers faced in sustaining them. In 2013, a study by Tel Aviv University added climate fluctuation to the list of possible culprits, showing a long period of drought in the late Bronze Age that may have driven mass migration and conflict.

As for the origins of the Philistines, Ben-Dor Evian says it seems likely the people Ramses III defeated may have been simply locals from Syria or Anatolia who filled the vacuum created by the fall of the Hittite empire. A Levantine origin for the Philistines is further supported, she says, by the fact that the Medinet Habu inscriptions identify the Sea Peoples as *teher* – the same term reserved to describe Syrian or Anatolian warriors allied with the Hittites during the battle of Kadesh, the great clash that Ramses II had won against his northern foes around 1274 B.C.E., nearly a century earlier. “So, they were not this unknown group that suddenly appeared out of nowhere,” Ben-Dor Evian concludes.

Some archeological discoveries also seem to support this view. The presence at Philistine sites of Aegean-style pottery, long seen as evidence of their Greek origin, has now been shown to be a local imitation of Cypriot earthenware. Meanwhile, the discovery at Tel Tayinat, in southeastern Turkey, of several inscriptions referring to the kingdom of “Palastin” or “Palasatini” also suggests the Philistines may have started as a neo-Hittite power in the northern Levant and later migrated south as the Egyptians lost control of Canaan in the mid 12th century. That does not mean that the Aegean hypothesis has completely lost steam. Archeologists who last year uncovered the first Philistine cemetery ever found, in ancient Ashkelon, have described the burials there as typically Aegean.

It is likely that the Philistine culture that emerged in southern Canaan was the result of various influences and migratory waves from different locations across the Mediterranean, says Aren Maeir, a professor of archaeology at Bar-Ilan University who heads the excavation at Tell es-Safi, the site of ancient Gath. “In the material culture of the early Philistines we see something from Greece, from Cyprus, from Crete, from western Anatolia,” Maeir told Haaretz in a telephone interview. The archaeologist does agree with Ben-Dor Evian that the Philistines appeared earlier than previously thought and have been unfairly characterized as particularly warlike invaders. “We see many people of different origins who settled aside the Canaanite inhabitants,” he said. “Despite some localized destruction, most of the Canaanite sites continue to exist peacefully alongside the Philistine ones.”

Please visit the site: <http://www.haaretz.com/archaeology/1.802928>

SILK TEXTILES IN THE SOUTHERN LEVANT, BY ORIT SHAMIR AND ALISA BAGINSKI

Silk, natural protein fibers produced by insect larvae, is first known from archaeology in China by the fourth millennium BCE. Valued for its drape, sheen, and ability to be dyed and woven into intricate patterns, silk spread widely across the Old World. But this process was related not only to the silk's properties but the spread of peoples, trade, and other technologies, some seemingly unrelated.

The Hebrew word for silk, meshi, is mentioned in the Bible only once (Ezekiel 16:10; 16:13). Although Jewish historical sources of the Roman and Byzantine periods mention silk many times, there are few archaeological finds besides imported textiles from the Byzantine period. A turning point in the history of the Negev occurred around 400 CE, a period of prosperity related to the advent of Christianity and pilgrimage, which enabled the purchase of imported silk textiles. These were probably produced in Egypt where linen textiles were decorated with wool or in more rare cases – in silk.

At Nessana, four small silk fragments in compound weave were found in the ruins of a Byzantine house. One has an upper part of a roundel with a pearl border, a pair of reversed birds of prey with spread wings and pearl collar standing on half palmettos among ivy leaves. A single silk textile from the late Byzantine period (no later than 636 CE) was also found in a building at 'Avdat, some 50 kilometers south of Be'er Sheva. The main field of the fragment is divided by light-colored double stripes into panels which contain cartouches with floral devices.

The textile was produced in Egypt, since 'Avdat served as a way station on the road connecting Egypt with Syria. This silk textile resembles a group of decorated silk tunics found at Antinoë in Egypt and serves as an important benchmark demonstrating the high degree of weaving skills in the region just before the Islamic conquest.

The Early Islamic period (seventh-eighth centuries CE) yielded three silk textiles from Nahal 'Omer. The site is located approximately 40 kilometers northwest of Petra on the western edge of the 'Aravah. Two hundred fifty one textiles were found at the site made of cotton, linen, wool, hair and silk.

Nahal 'Omer appears to have been a farming village on the Spice Routes joining Petra, in the Edom Mountains of modern Jordan, and the mercantile outlets on the Mediterranean Sea, notably Gaza and El Arish. These routes also led to Egypt, the Arabian Peninsula, Yemen, parts of the Persian Gulf, and the sea-routes to India, as well as to Mesopotamia, Central Asia, and from there all the way to China. The caravans carried a variety of trade goods as well as spices, which were a major commodity during the Roman, Byzantine, and Early Islamic periods.

Sixty one textile fragments, most made of wool, and 10 small bundles of woolen fibers, were also uncovered at 'En Marzev, dated to the Early Islamic period (late seventh–ninth centuries CE), a date confirmed by Carbon-14 analysis (787–896 CE). One example, a

white cotton textile, was decorated with red cotton bands alternating with shiny silk threads wound with silver strips that have disintegrated. It appears that precious metals may have been used in combination with fibers in order to produce luxury fabrics for political and religious elites.

Some of the differences in quality between the textile finds from Nahal 'Omer and 'En Marzev may be attributed to their findspots. While the finds from 'En Marzev originated in structures that were abandoned in an orderly fashion, those from Nahal 'Omer were found in a waste dump, representing an accumulation of objects discarded over years of habitation.

The most important silk textiles assemblage in the Southern Levant to date was found near Jericho at Qarantal Cave 38 and dates to the Medieval period (9th-13th centuries CE). Textiles were found only in one of the cave's connected spaces.

Among the 800 textiles the most significant are the silk fragments. The textile remains are torn, cut, and patched, and many have been reused, sometimes more than once. It can be assumed that most of these fragments were parts of clothing such as tunics, trousers, and coifs although no complete garments were found. Others could be recognized as bags, wrappers, and strips for tying. Textiles in antiquity were too costly to throw away. When a garment reached a state where patching was no longer feasible, it was cut into pieces and remade into another garment or used as patches or in decorations (as a majority of the reused ones in Cave 38 were).

Many such textiles originating in Egypt have been dated to the tenth and eleventh centuries CE. These were all luxury fabrics woven on sophisticated looms such as the drawloom, a technical apparatus for mechanical patterning. Such products have been discovered in Egypt, for example at Antinoë.

During the Byzantine period and after the Islamic conquest, centers in Syria already produced compound textiles; some have even been preserved as relic covers in the treasuries of European churches. A few were found in excavations near Rayy (Iran) together with other compound silk fragments attributed to Byzantium, Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Iran. The craftsmanship is very fine, indicating that they were expensive luxury items affordable only by the upper classes. The Cave 38 silk fabrics could have been imported from Syria, Byzantium, Mesopotamia, or Persia. A few other medieval textile assemblages have been discovered, for example, at 'Avdat, Kasr el-Yahud and at Judean Desert caves. However, none of these assemblages is as rich and diverse as the one in Cave 38 and none of them have silk textiles.

Cave 38, Silk, weft-faced compound tabby, octagon with stylized plant and geometric motifs.

Why was such a large quantity of used and reused textiles stored in the cave? It can be assumed that the people who stored them were rag collectors or merchants who collected them for the paper-making industry. Paper had been introduced by the Arabs from China through Central Asia in the eighth century CE. It became popular in the Middle East using mainly textiles as its raw material, along with date-palm leaves and fibers from basketry and cordage. The paper was made by breaking down different organic materials into fibers, which were then soaked in water and separated using a fine netted sieve.

The principles for manufacturing paper were known in China but for a long period the secret of its discovery stayed within the borders of the Chinese Empire. It was only the wake of the Islamic conquests that the paper industry expanded, first to the Near East, and later Europe. The Arabs' massive use of cotton as a raw material in the paper-making industry was one of the most important changes, which utilized the waste products of the local cotton-based textile industry. Though this industry is likely to have consumed most textiles in antiquity, we are fortunate that samples have been preserved in sites like Cave 38.

Orit Shamir is Curator of Organic Materials, Israel Antiquities Authority. Alisa Baginski is retired senior lecturer of textile history and retired curator of the textile study collection, Shenkar College of Textile Technology and Fashion, Israel.

Please visit the site: <http://asorblog.org/2017/07/25/silk-textiles-southern-levant/> [Go there for pix & maps]

HUMANS HUNTED FRESHWATER TURTLES **IN ISRAEL 60,000 YEARS AGO,** **BY DANIEL K. EISENBUD**

A Hebrew University of Jerusalem doctoral candidate made an unprecedented discovery during excavations in the Hula Valley, proving humans hunted freshwater turtles in Israel 60,000 years ago.

The findings, published in the Journal of Archeological Science: Reports, were made by Rebecca Biton following years of excavations and analysis of the turtle remains from the Middle Paleolithic site, adjacent to the paleo-Lake Hula and swamps, located in the northern Jordan Valley.

Biton, who made international headlines three years ago after discovering the remains of an extinct frog species in the country, studies at the university's Institute of Archeology.

She's including the recent analysis as a chapter in her dissertation, which she is submitting next week.

According to the young researcher, the earliest evidence known of humans exploiting freshwater turtles for sustenance dated 1 million years ago in Africa, making her discovery a quantum leap in her field of study.

"I'm studying amphibians and reptiles from the Hula Valley and looking at various sites, the oldest of which is from 800,000 years ago," Biton said on Tuesday. "I was looking at the bones of the amphibians and reptiles to understand which species were in the Hula Valley 60,000 years ago, and if the humans back then exploited them somehow."

Biton noted that there are two known species of turtles indigenous to the area: the Mediterranean spur-thighed tortoise, which lives on land; and the Western Caspian turtle (freshwater turtle), which inhabits water.

However, while it's well-documented that tortoises were consumed by humans in Israel, there was never evidence until Biton discovered more than 300 bones from both species during digs at the site every summer between 2008 and 2014.

"In Israel, at every archeological site you will find some evidence of the exploitation of tortoises, which do not have much meat, but were consumed," she said, adding that deer, gazelle and cows were also well-known food staples during the Middle Paleolithic Period.

"This is the first time that we found any clear evidence in Israel that freshwater turtles were also exploited for food," Biton said.

Among the bones unearthed in the three-to-four-meter digs near the water, Biton said 60 were identified as freshwater turtle remains.

“This is important because it shows that humans not only exploited animals on land, like the tortoise; but also from the Hula Lake and swamps,” she said. “They not only hunted on land, but also in the water before learning to fish.”

Biton said the remains illustrate that humans shattered the turtles’ shell and carefully removed the meat using a flint knife.

“They took the turtle and smashed the shell and cooked whatever meat they could extract,” she said.

Biton’s adviser, Dr. Rivka Rabinovich, curator and manager of HU’s paleontology collection, praised the PhD candidate, whose dissertation is titled: “An Archeozoological Study of Amphibians and Reptiles from Pleistocene Archeological Sites in the Hula Valley.”

“Rebecca also made an important discovery that made a lot of noise three years ago when she identified the bones of the extinct Lagonia frog in the Hula Valley,” said Rabinovich.

“She is going to be a great researcher,” added Rabinovich. “I believe in her.”

Please visit the site: <http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Humans-hunted-freshwater-turtles-in-Israel-60000-years-ago-500757>
