Book of Abstracts

22nd Postgraduate Cypriot Archaeology Meeting

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University of Cyprus
Archaeological Research Unit

University of Cyprus
Department of History and Archaeology

PoCA 2025

22ND Postgraduate Cypriot Archaeology Meeting

9TH - 12TH October

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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Department of History and Archaeology

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PoCA 2025

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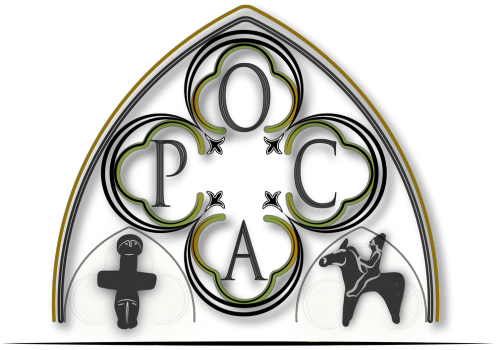

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Keynote Lecture

Archaeology and Colonization in the Eastern Mediterranean: Reflection, Despair, and Hope in Times of Genocide

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In this talk, I will be reflecting on current research on the links between archaeology, coloniality and colonization in the Eastern Mediterranean, in the past two centuries. I will be suggesting that while in the last few decades research focused primarily on nationalism and archaeology, in more recent years we see a shift towards broader but related issues such as colonialism but also race and racialization, and their entanglements with archaeological traces and archaeological practices. This welcoming development allows us to connect with broader global discussions which interrogate the position of archaeology within the western regime of coloniality and white supremacy, and explore the possibilities of a decolonial archaeology. Such an archaeology is often inspired by indigenous thinking and cosmological understanding from the Global South. I will be suggesting that the Eastern Mediterranean and its official as well as indigenous archaeologies, viewed within this global framework, have much to offer to the debate, complicating the binarisms between the West and the Rest, and colonizer and colonized. And while the current moment we are all experiencing, witnessing the on-going genocide in Palestine (in which archaeology is deeply implicated), can often cause despair and paralysis, I will be ending with a more hopeful message: a message that celebrates the communal endeavor for a decolonial archaeology of refusal, care, and repair.

Revisiting Pyrgoteles: Tracing the Shadow of a Shipyard in Hellenistic Paphos

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Pyrgoteles was a naval architect, for whom Ptolemy I Soter (367 BC - 282 BC) dedicated a statue in the sanctuary of Aphrodite Paphia. The inscription complimenting the statue thanked Pyrgoteles for developing the triakonteres (thirty) and the eikoseres (twenty). These were the largest and most impressive warships the Mediterranean had seen – up until the colossal 'forty' of Ptolemy IV Philopator (244BC - 204 BC). Pyrgoteles' identity was contested at first, but recent scholarship confidently claimed the island to be his birthplace. This paper agrees with the previous statement, but questions whether the find-spot of the inscription is enough of an indicator to support that Pyrgoteles' work took place in Cyprus, specifically, in (Nea) Paphos. Considering written, material, and spatial evidence, this research explores the necessary infrastructure and resources needed for Paphos to support the development of some of the largest warships known in the ancient world. Even though Cypriot shipwrights are both visible and praised in written sources of the period, keeping up with the naval developments of the 3rd century BC required more than knowledge and craftsmanship. Paphos, on the other hand, a 'gateway' centre since its establishment, and bibliographically portrayed as flourishing off trade and export, seems ideal. Work on harbour infrastructure of the area was carried out in the past, but for the first time, this paper will bring into focus the, still invisible, shipyards of the city and ask whether or how we should look for them.

Keywords: Epigraphy, Paphos, Shipyards, Warships, Hellenistic.

Water Threads: Current Research and Emerging Questions Toward a Diachronic Understanding of Human Engagement with Freshwater in Prehistoric and Protohistoric Cyprus

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Freshwater played a subtle yet pivotal role in shaping archaeological interpretations of human engagement with space in Prehistoric and Protohistoric Cyprus, particularly in relation to settlement patterns, mobility, and land use. In the early 20th century, interpretations of settlement dynamics were strongly informed by the assumption that human habitation was closely tied to the availability of perennial water sources — a premise that proved both fruitful and enduring. Nonetheless, the role of water has largely remained peripheral in scholarly discourse, most often framed in terms of the strategic function of major river valleys as catalysts for regional territorial organisation, inter-site connectivity, and resource procurement. Comprehensive studies addressing the broader socio-cultural, productive, and geopolitical dimensions of water are still rare, and a diachronic, island-wide analysis of the relationship between hydrology, water management systems, and socio-economic development remains notably lacking. When water-related topics do emerge, they are often constrained by narrow chronological, thematic, or geographical scopes. While water alone cannot fully explain the multifaceted nature of human–environment interactions, it offers an important analytical lens through which to examine the interdependencies between environmental factors, cultural practices, and human relationships with lived landscapes. This paper provides a concise overview of current research on freshwater in Cypriot archaeology, situating it within broader trends in the Archaeology of Water. As part of an ongoing doctoral project, it also investigates the relationships between hydrological features, settlement systems, and water management practices, and explores future research directions that integrate both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

Keywords: Freshwater, Water Management, Settlement Patterns, Archaeology of Water, Cyprus Prehistory and Protohistory.

Mapping Settlement Pattern Changes: The Case of the MC III-LC I in Cyprus's Northwest

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This paper examines settlement pattern changes at the transition from the Middle to Late Cypriot periods (MC III-LC IA) (ca. 1800/1750-1550 BCE) through Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis. While these shifts have been traditionally linked to growing demand for copper and its trade at coastal ports (Georgiou 2007), recent studies (e.g., Webb 2018; Webb and Knapp 2021) have shed light on the importance of long-term connectivity in shaping these developments. What role, then, does 'connectivity' play in the Middle to Late Cypriot transition and the location of new settlements? Focusing on the north coast and the area around Morphou Bay, I generate a focal mobility network and corridor analyses to model general patterns of movement across the landscape. These methods build upon traditional Least Coast Path analyses by generating multiple potential routes, rather than a single optimal path between fixed points. In turn, we gain a more nuanced reconstruction of Bronze Age transportation networks and their influence on settlement locations. Preliminary results suggest that despite shifts in settlement location at the MC III-LC I transition, communities remained near or on optimal movement corridors. This continuity underscores a desire to sustain established networks, offering us insight into the diachronic social and economic strategies leveraged by Bronze Age communities.

Keywords: Connectivity, Geographic Information System (GIS), Late Bronze Age, Middle Bronze Age, Settlement Patterns.

Let Them Laugh: Social Change Negotiated Through Humour as Evidenced by Figurines in Ancient Cyprus

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When Malinowski said, “Anthropology is the science of the sense of humour” in 1966, the theories of the study of humour itself were still being developed, and yet he so clearly summarises why it is important to find our shared funny bones. Through humour we gain sympathetic understandings with each other in a way that goes beyond words. This need to laugh has been utilised by humanity to deliver strong social messages and can be used to process changes in environment. I propose that the changing social dynamics and domestic environments of Chalcolithic Cyprus were ripe with opportunities to find the funny side of life, and a strong social need to do so. Therefore, in this paper I seek to utilise the theories of 'benign violation’ by McGraw & Warren (2010) and Apter’s ‘reversal’ theory from 1982 to explore how humour can illuminate response to social change through the manipulation of birthing imagery in ancient Cyprus. My aims are to establish that it is through applying criteria with which to identify humour that we can incorporate its function into the ancient material dialect and to explain why objects could have been funny and may have acted as powerful social tools, catering to our strong psychological drive to laugh. Therefore, through this research I aim to demonstrate that objects such as the Pierides Man use the intentional manipulation of birthing imagery and interactive qualities to create an object with strong social agency and effective communication even when their immediate social frameworks are lost.

Keywords: Chalcolithic, Neolithic, Humour, Social Chance.

Drinking Wine "à la Phénicienne" in the Eastern Mediterranean. Understanding the Role and Distribution of Phoenician Wine During the Cypro-Classical Period in the Eastern Mediterranean

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In this study, we propose an analysis of Phoenician wine from a multi-geographical perspective, with the aim of understanding its social and economic role during the Cypro-Classical Period, particularly in Cyprus. Phoenician Maritime Transport Containers (the primary vessels in which Phoenician wine was transported) were widely distributed throughout the Eastern Mediterranean during this period, particularly in the Levant — its presumed place of origin — as well as in Egypt and Cyprus. A comparative study of their distribution and function, based on archaeological remains and textual sources, allows us to understand the role Phoenician wine played within these societies under the influence of the Achaemenid Persian Empire. Some of the questions addressed in this research are: Who consumed Phoenician wine? In what contexts was it consumed, and what value did it hold? What was its role in comparison to wine imported from the Aegean? Are there regional differences in its consumption? What commercial dynamics are revealed by its distribution?

Keywords: Wine, Phoenician, Maritime Transport Containers, Trade, Cypro-Classical Period.

The Earth and Ocean Motif in the House of Eustolios

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The House of Eustolios, located in the ancient site of Kourion, stands as one of Cyprus' most unique and significant monuments of the Early Christian era. The importance of this monument lies in the opulent mosaics and tessellated inscriptions that adorn its floors. Arguably, these mosaics document the city's transition from Greco-Roman paganism to Christianity in the early fifth century AD following the devastating earthquakes of the late fourth century AD. Moreover, the House of Eustolios is the only non-religious building belonging to the Early Christian period to contain such well-preserved iconic mosaics of a Christian character on the island. Out of all the figural mosaics that survive in the House of Eustolios, one of the most conspicuous is the southernmost panel in the East Portico of the courtyard. Few attempts have been made to unravel the meaning or intent behind the figural scheme of this particular mosaic, especially in conjunction with recent studies on the tessellated inscriptions from the House of Eustolios or from studies of Early Christian mosaics from the Eastern Mediterranean region. Through a comparative analysis, the southernmost panel in the East Portico of the House of Eustolios may be shown to fit within the known "Earth and Ocean" motif of Early Christian mosaics proposed by Henry Maguire in his seminal work, Earth and Ocean: The Terrestrial World in Early Byzantine Art.

Keywords: House of Eustolios, Early Christianity, Mosaics, Symbolism.

Investigating Cords and Their Use in the *Pithoi* Production in Amathus During the Cypro-Classical Period

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This paper presents the preliminary results of an analysis of the use of cords in the production of the Amathousian ceramics. The main focus is the investigation of the use of cords in the production of the type III *pithoi* to reinforce the walls during the shaping process and the drying phases. These cords were rolled up once or twice around the circumference of the *pithos* and then gradually removed during the shaping process. The type III *pithos* is attested during the Classical period, spanning from the late sixth century or early fifth century BCE to the end of the kingdom at the outset of the Hellenistic period, of the Amathus palace storerooms. The study of textile and cord imprints used in sealing practices, food preservation in containers, and production processes of large ceramic containers such as *pithoi*, is a new approach on technical textiles developed by Agata Ulanowska. Our interest lies in the use of cords in the production process of *pithoi* in Amathus. Using the non-invasive study protocol developed by Agata Ulanowska, the close examination of the rope imprints left on *pithoi* fragments can provide us with some information about the structure of the cord and hopefully the type of fibre used, which would give us some insight on the natural resources and the technique used for cord making in Amathus during the Cypro-Classical period.

Keywords: Ceramic, *Pithos*, Textile, Cord Imprint, Cypro-Classic.

Constructing and Negotiating Sacred Landscapes in Cyprus and Sardinia During the Later 3rd and 2nd Millennia BCE

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Employing a Cypro-centric and a Sardino-centric approach, this paper will explore how sacred landscapes were constructed and negotiated in Cyprus and Sardinia during the later 3rd and 2nd millennia BCE. In Cyprus, Early and Middle Bronze Age (c. 2500–1650 BCE) ritual activity is seen in elaborate rock-cut tombs and communal feasting at sites like Vounous, Lapithos, and Karmi, with decorated pottery and terracotta horned animal models. Urban cultic structures emerged later, during the Late Bronze Age (c. 1650–1050 BCE), particularly in the 13th – 12th centuries BCE. At Enkomi, cult buildings with bronze statuettes were built over earlier residential ashlar buildings and ashlar-built tombs, while megalithic open-air temene with ashlar blocks and horns of consecration emerged at Kition, and Kouklia. In Sardinia, during the Middle and Recent Bronze Age (c. 1800–1150 BCE), sacred landscapes were shaped by mortuary practices focused on monumental Giants' Tombs with orthostatic slabs, central steles, and semicircular exedrae. Finds like pottery, faunal remains, and standing stones indicate ancestor worship rituals. Around 1200 BCE, corridor tombs without exedrae appeared, signaling a decline in funerary rituals as ritual focus shifted to cult buildings. Sites like Domu de Orgìa feature rectilinear structures with basins and altars, while sacred wells and 'federal' sanctuaries such as Santa Cristina and Santa Vittoria were marked by monumental masonry and bronze votive offerings. This study highlights parallel and distinct ritual trajectories that culminated around 1200 BCE, arguing that sacred landscapes in both Mediterranean islands were active agents in socio-economic change rather than static or purely religious places.

Keywords: Bronze Age, Sacred Landscape, Mediterranean Islands, Insularity.

Small-Scale Copper Production in Late Roman Pyrga, Cyprus: Ecclesiastical Influence on Technology

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Copper was central to the economy of Late Roman Cyprus, with large slag heaps, indicating large-scale operations. While large-scale production is well documented, small-scale sites such as Pyrga in the Pouzis Valley, Southeast Cyprus, remain understudied. This study redirects focus to Pyrga, examining its copper production technology through an analysis of traces left in the landscape in the Stavrovouni area. The Hala Sultan Tekke Hinterland Survey Project (2021 – ongoing) conducted intensive surveys, revealing dispersed slag heaps, ceramic clusters, and potential church remains. This paper examines the physical evidence of copper production at Pyrga, focusing on slag deposits and potential mining traces within the surrounding landscape. By combining survey data with slag analysis, the study provides insights into smelting techniques, furnace conditions, and material procurement strategies. Findings highlight the sophistication of small-scale copper production and its potential integration into a centrally organised network. Moreover, the presence of a potential church structure raises questions ecclesiastical involvement in copper production, particularly in economic administration and taxation. This study explores the impact of this administrative control on technological aspects of production and the potential of small-scale production sites operating within a centralised system, providing new insights into the relationship between ecclesiastical power and the copper economy of Late Roman Cyprus.

Keywords: Late Roman, Copper smelting, Slag Heaps, Metal Slag Analysis, Ecclesiastical influence.

Of Sea and Stone: Using Statistical and GIS Analyses to Understand the Rituality of Stone Anchors at Kition, Area II

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The sea has always been both a place of anxiety and danger, and opportunity; the use of this natural environment created groups of people, from seafarers and fisherman, to boatbuilders and merchants. The widespread association of cultural activities with the water led ancient religions in the Mediterranean to include some form of ritual connected to the sea. While Cyprus would have been no exception to this rule, dependent as the island was on overseas merchant enterprise, we have limited evidence for the maritime ritual activities of this region in the Late Bronze Age. This is why the anchor assemblage found at the sea-side religious complex of Kition-Kathari (Area II) is of particular note. This thesis provides insight into how anchors may have been used in a ritual setting, providing specific evidence for maritime religious associations at Kition. Through measurements based on published drawings and statistical and GIS analyses, patterns in the chronological and practical use of anchors at Kition are demonstrated. This work, placed in the greater context of ritual activity at Kition, reveals a subset of ritual activity at this Cypriot site which emphasized a maritime element. This analytical exploration of anchors at Kition also better places them in a wider Mediterranean context.

Keywords: Stone Anchors, Late Bronze Age, Maritime Ritual, GIS.

Influence of Decantation on Mediterranean Clay: An Experimental Archaeological Approach

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Clay processing can deeply affect the characteristics of a base clay, having an important effect on both provenance studies and technological issues in ceramic examinations. Decantation is one of those clay processing techniques that has been used for cleaning the clay from the impurities (coarser fraction) found in the sediment. The influence of this processing is assessed experimentally by delving into the effects it has on a mineralogical, elemental, and microscopic level. Thirteen clayey materials were sampled from different geographic location in the Mediterranean basin (Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Sudan) to undergo a multi-analytical approach before and after they were depurated. X-ray Fluorescence and X-ray Powder Diffraction were used to interpret the chemical and mineralogical changes, respectively, of the base clay underwent, as well as laser granulometry to establish the changes in terms of grain-size distribution pre- and post-processing (depuration for sedimentation in calm water). The samples were also fired at 400°C facilitating thin section production enabling microscopic analysis. Digital imaging analysis using the Scanning Electron Microscope with backscattered electron images was used to complement the observations done by optical microscopy. Finally, Atterberg limits were measured to explore the impact of decantation on clay plasticity, giving information on changes in mineral type content and organic material. The samples are to be further tested in the close future for isotopic analysis and ICP-MS. By addressing these changes, the study aims to deepen our understanding of clay behavior, therefore helping develop our insights into ceramic production techniques and facilitating provenance studies of ancient ceramics.

Keywords: Clay Processing, Archaeometry, XRF, XRPD, SEM.

The Schoene V Amphora and Related Types: Considerations Regarding a Local Production in Nea Paphos

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The Schoene V amphora is a transport amphora whose production has so far been confirmed in the eastern Cilicia and mostly supposed in the northern Syria. Numerous examples of this container have been found in Alexandria, Beirut, Kition, as well as, in smaller quantities, in Pompeii and Athens. In the site that is known as “Sanctuary of Apollo at Toumballos”, in Nea Paphos, thousands of, mostly unpublished, fragments of transport amphorae were found by the Archaeological Mission of the University of Catania, since 1988: these offer a very interesting cross-section of the presence of transport amphorae, from Hellenism to the Late Roman-Early Byzantine time, in the city. In my PhD, I could study them and, particularly, the finds from the archaeological excavations of the period 1988-1999, and I had the opportunity to ascertain how the Schoene V amphora appears to be attested with several dozen fragments, in various fabrics and typological variants, in the area. In this contribution, the results of the macroscopic and with portable XRF analyzer examinations, that were carried out, among others, on the clays of a selection of the fragments of this amphora, will be presented, together with interesting new reflections on the production of the type - that is considered in fact the precursor of the LRA 1 - according to which it would seem that Nea Paphos itself was involved in the process, at least in its later phases.

Keywords: Amphora, Production, Typology, Fabric.

Egyptianizing Sacred Figures of the Cypro-Archaic and Cypro-Classical Periods: The Cases of Bes-like Images in Comparison with the Hathoric Effigy

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This is a part of my PhD research held in the University of the Aegean. The title of my research is "Egyptianizing Sacred Figures and Symbols of the Cypro-Archaic and Cypro-Classical Periods: An Archaeological and Historical Analysis". In this paper I will explain the term 'Egyptianizing', the chronological scope, the classification method of the objects in question, and the categories falling into this research. Examples of the categories under study are the hathoric Egyptianizing Sacred Figures of the Cypro-Archaic and Cypro-Classical periods: The cases of Bes-like images in comparison with the hathoric effigy. effigy, the Bes-like images, the Ptah-Pataikos statuettes, the Ammon-Zeus forms, the Egyptianizing votive statuary, the Egyptianizing metal statuettes, and objects bearing Egyptian or Egyptianizing symbols like, the winged disc motif, the inverted crescent symbol and other relevant symbols represented in various materials. A large part of this presentation will be devoted to the Bes-like images and will be compared with the hathoric images (already studied in a previous stage) in different aspects like quantity, space, chronology, context and material. So far both figures (Bes-like and hathoric images) seem to enjoy the most popularity in Amathus especially in CAII period, followed by a number of sites located mainly in the central and southern part of the island; however, we still don't know the reason for this geographical and chronological distribution.

Keywords: Cypriot Egyptianizing Art, Cypro-Archaic Period, Cypro-Classical Period, Bes-like Images, Hathor-like Effigy.

Revisiting the Metal Artifacts Excavated by the French Expedition at Enkomi

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The French Expedition conducted archaeological excavations at the site of Enkomi in Cyprus, starting in 1934 and resuming in 1946 until 1974. Even though a good portion of the many metal artifacts from these excavations have been published, numerous other examples had not undergone any conservation or study and, therefore, remained unpublished. The repertoire of the unearthed copper-based artifacts is varied, including numerous types of tools (adzes, axes, awls, chisels, drills, knives, shovels, and sickles), weapons (arrowheads, daggers, spearheads, and swords), vessels (mainly hemispherical bowls), objects of personal use (bracelets, fibulae, mirrors, pins, razors, rings, spiral rings, and tweezers), statuettes, and even fragments of copper ingots. There is an additional problem in this situation that the excavation records do not provide sufficient information of their context. This is why a thorough revision of these bronzes, stored in the Cyprus Museum in Nicosia, including detailed presentation, measurements, metal analysis, and interpretation of well-preserved objects, will largely contribute to the understanding and reconstruction of the social and cultural environment of Enkomi and, given the importance of this site, for Cyprus in general. To achieve the most reliable results, it is important to include and combine traditional methods and available typological studies, together with more advanced methodological and scientific approaches, as applied in the study of archaeological material. With the use of non-destructive X-ray fluorescence analysis (XRF) in this research, it will be possible to obtain crucial data on the elemental composition of the copper-based artifacts, which will provide new insights into metalworking activities, technological achievements, and social dynamics during the Late Bronze Age in Cyprus.

Keywords: Enkomi, Late Bronze Age, French Expedition, Copper-based Material, XRF Analysis.

Exploring the Potential of Multispectral Satellite Imagery for Automated Detection of Submerged Archaeological Objects: Early Observations from Cyprus

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Satellite data are widely used in archaeology, primarily due to their regional coverage, which enables researchers to study sites in a broader environmental context. These data are easily accessible and offer the ability to investigate even remote or hazardous areas, whether due to environmental or political conditions. Multispectral or hyperspectral, can further capture spectral information beyond human vision. Since different materials reflect electromagnetic radiation in specific ways, they possess unique spectral signatures, allowing not only for their classification but also for their detection. Despite this potential, satellite data has been predominantly applied to terrestrial contexts. Applications in submerged environments remain rare, primarily due to significant environmental and physical challenges posed by the marine context, such as water depth, turbidity, surface reflection, sea state, and biofouling. This paper presents early results from efforts to detect submerged archaeological features using multispectral satellite data, focusing on the coastal zone of Cyprus. It outlines attempts to extract spectral signatures of underwater cultural materials, address technical and environmental constraints, and evaluate workflows for distinguishing anthropogenic from natural substrates. The study builds on a successful case study from Israel, where submerged archaeological features were spectrally distinguishable from the surrounding environment. The primary dataset is Sentinel-2 imagery, supplemented by OrbView-3 and WorldView-4, processed through Google Earth Engine. The goal is to create a spectral library of submerged archaeological materials and a repeatable detection methodology. Preliminary findings also raise critical questions about how underwater conditions affect the spectral properties of archaeological materials compared to those on land.

Keywords: Maritime Archaeology, Eastern Mediterranean, Satellite Remote Sensing, Sentinel-2, Spectral Signature Analysis.

Objects that Impress: Examining the Identification of Cylinder 'Seals' in Late Cypriot Society

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While the identification of cylinder seals in Late Bronze Age Cyprus (ca. 1650–1750 BCE) would seem obvious, recent work examining their contextual associations and materiality (Humphrey 2023; Donald 2024) has raised important questions about how these objects were viewed (literally and figuratively) in Late Cypriot (LC) society. This paper builds upon my doctoral research and recent work by Donald on aniconic seals to investigate how they were conceptualised as objects in LC society. Given the significant variability in design beyond the Elaborate, Derivative, and Common Styles, as well as the apparent lack of sphragistic evidence from LBA Cyprus suggests that their iconography was perhaps the least important of their features. This paper examines seals from funerary, ceremonial, and settlement contexts, exploring their materiality and their varied trajectories to determine what, if any, prerequisites existed for an object to be considered a cylinder seal by Late Cypriot audiences and the attendant implications for their use.

Keywords: Gyptic, Late Cypriot, Materiality.

Building a Palace: An Archaeometric Study of Ancient Composite Building Materials from the Hill of Ampelleri in Idalion

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The archaeological site on Hill of Ampelleri in ancient Idalion has been identified as the palatial complex and the administrative center of the ancient city-kingdom which prospered during the Classical Period of Cyprus (475B.C.- 310B.C.). In the site, several architectural structures with different functions have been excavated such us: administrative rooms, production sites, storage rooms & water cisterns. In this research we examine plasters and mortars, with the use of different archaeometric techniques, to identify their physio-chemical characteristics. In total 18 samples were studied that were applied as: roof, floor, and wall plasters, plasters from water cisterns/reservoirs, and plasters from cisterns used in different production areas. Using macroscopic observations, optical microscopy, mineralogical analysis with X-ray diffraction analysis (XRD), thermal analysis (DTA-TG), porosimetry and other archaeometric techniques we can identify the different materials and recipes (binders, aggregates, additives) and building techniques (possible hydraulicity) that builders of that chronological period implemented for the construction of Idalion. These architectural complexes were built with a variety of lime-based and gypsum-based plasters and mortars. From this research it is apparent that different types of mortars were applied for specific functions, that builders were intentionally using certain additives (i.e. ceramics) and local raw materials in their recipes and that the building techniques were of very advanced knowledge, since they were applying plasters with precision. The fact that this level of construction is done on this construction shows the important role the palatial complex and administrative center played the ancient city-kingdom of Idalion.

Keywords: Ancient Idalion, Hill of Ampelleri, Ancient Mortars, Cyprio-Classic Period.

A Review of the Application of GIS in Cypriot Archaeology and the Gap of the Prehistoric Bronze Age

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Since their appearance in the 1980s, Geographical Information Systems (GIS) have become essential tools in archaeology. In Cyprus, GIS and broader Digital Humanities methodologies are increasingly used to address archaeological questions across different periods and regions. This paper begins with a brief review of their application on the island, highlighting their broad spatial and thematic use in areas such as visibility analyses, predictive modelling, and spatial patterning. The majority of these studies focus on the Holocene, Iron Age, Hellenistic, and Roman periods. Similar research on the Prehistoric Bronze Age, however, remains limited and underrepresented. To address this gap, the present paper outlines a new GIS-based approach focused on the Early and Middle Bronze Age, through the study of six selected sites. As the research is at an early stage, this paper presents the objectives and the methodological approach rather than providing definitive answers. The study seeks to explore how topographical factors and landscape settings influenced the spatial development of these sites. In terms of methodology, spatial network analysis, detailed topographical assessments and least cost path analyses will be employed to investigate the location and development of sites, movement corridors, inter-site relationships, regional interactions, and patterns of connectivity and centrality within the broader landscape. By applying new technologies to this less-explored chronological framework, the study intends to shed light on how these sites contributed to shaping the socio-cultural narrative of the period.

Keywords: GIS, Cypriot Archaeology, Review, Prehistoric Bronze Age, Early and Middle Bronze Age.

A Re-appreciation of the Dea Gravida: Imagining Pregnancy and Motherhood on Archaic Cyprus

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Among the rich variety of the Cypro-Archaic coroplastic record, the type known as the Dea Gravida is often overlooked. It depicts an enthroned, richly dressed woman with one hand resting on her swollen abdomen, and is highly unusual in its explicit depiction of pregnancy. Originally from Phoenicia, the type was adopted and adapted by Cypriot coroplasts in the 6th and 5th centuries BC, who made an uniquely Cypriot variation by adding an infant to the expectant mother's arms. The only study focused exclusively on the type of the Dea Gravida is now over 50 years old (Culican 1969), and only briefly mentions the Cypriot pieces. More recent studies of terracotta figurines, especially those associated with Kition, have included brief discussions of the type (including Maillard 2021; Yon and Caubet 1989; Vandenabeele 1988), but they largely concern themselves with questions of production, typology, and the identification of workshops. These figurines, however, have the potential to provide answers to a wider array of questions than the largely technical ones that have been posed so far. Focusing on the iconography, context, and use of the full corpus of Deae Gravidae from Cyprus, as well as on their relationship to other types of female imagery, this paper examines what these figurines can tell us about issues surrounding the adoption of foreign childbirth imagery, its adaptation to Cypriot tastes and needs, and the intersection of biological and social motherhood, so that the Dea Gravida may return to her well-deserved position within the Cypro-Archaic coroplastic record.

Keywords: Dea Gravida, Figurines, Motherhood, Pregnancy, Coroplastic Art.

The Palace of Amathus: Local Fine Ware, Between Indigenous, Greek and Achaemenid Influences

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Within the storage units of the Amathus Palace, the production of common and tableware pottery has revealed a distinctive category known as local fine ware. Not documented elsewhere outside of Amathus, many of its characteristics bear striking similarities to Assyrian "Palace Ware." This previously unpublished assemblage reveals an intriguing blend of influences. While its manufacturing methods appear to be rooted in Assyrian techniques dating from the 9th to the end of the 7th centuries BCE, its manifestation in Amathus differs, and the morphological preferences exhibit a fascinating mix of indigenous, Achaemenid, and Greek influences. Additionally, some specific types incorporate skeuomorphism, further highlighting the diverse interactions at play.

Keywords: Amathus, Palace, Pottery, Common Ware, Influences.

Decolonising a Museum Collection: The Dynamics of the Cypriot Middle Ages Through Funerary Slabs

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Is a museum dedicated to the Middle Ages, such as Limassol Castle, merely a space frozen in time? Or can it offer insights into the broader historical trajectory of Cyprus through the centuries? This paper explores the significance of tombstones as historical artefacts capable of narrating stories not only related to life and death in the distant past, but also to the ways in which these monuments were perceived by the successive rulers of the island. The first objective is to examine what these slabs – with all their constituent elements (effigies, coats of arms, inscriptions, material) – meant for the society that produced them in the Middle Ages, focusing on aspects of coexistence and cross-cultural interaction. The second aim is to analyse how these works were treated from the Venetian period to the present day. This involves notions of destruction, appropriation, politicisation of art, and the ways in which medieval Cypriot funerary sculpture was received both by colonial powers and by local Christian and Muslim communities in the late 19th and 20th centuries, within British colonial narratives. These monuments shed light on medieval Cyprus – a period during which the island was an independent state – and reveal how art has served as a privileged field for the exercise of power and the legitimisation of foreign rule, including the promotion of intercommunal division within modern political contexts (19th–20th centuries). This paper seeks to highlight (i) the biases that have shaped the treatment of these historical/artistic material evidence; (ii) the role of Western colonial presence in preserving/promoting medieval tombstones; and (iii) the potential of these monuments to offer visitors to Limassol Castle a more holistic understanding not only of the Cypriot Middle Ages, but also of Cyprus's complex and multilayered modern history.

Keywords: Sculpture, Tombstones, Decolonisation, Identity, Museum.

Pegeia: An Anonymous and Forgotten Pilgrimage Hub

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The site of Agios Georgios tis Pegeias, on the west coast of Cyprus to the north of the city of Nea Paphos, is a vast Early-Byzantine urban settlement whose identification remains enigmatic. Indeed, despite the discovery of at least three basilicas adorned with Prokonnesian marble, one of which included a hypothetical baptismal complex, the site is unknown in written sources. As a result, and given the current state of knowledge, the settlement of Pegeia cannot claim to be a city or an episcopal see. However, its geographical location and architectural features suggest a site of major economic importance, as highlighted by the excavators Arthur Megaw and Charalambos Bakirtzis. What's more, the liturgical furnishings unearthed, including fragments of an ambo and, above all, a rich, yet unpublished reliquary, indicate a major pilgrimage destination, particularly for Basilica A. As part of my doctoral thesis on the cult of relics, which aimed to characterise the expressions of this veneration in Cyprus by examining written and archaeological sources, I was particularly interested in this hypothetical role as a stopover port for pilgrims, like others along the Cypriot coast. Like several of these other sites, such as the Campanopetra of Salamis-Constantia or Katalymata tôn Plakotôn on the Akrotiri peninsula, the absence of written evidence relating to Pegeia raises various questions regarding the dedication and role of these coastal settlements. What relic could be enshrined in the miniature reliquary in Basilica A in Pegeia? How do we explain the late dedication to Saint George? If Basilica A had a votive function, what kind of pilgrims were welcomed there? These are just some of the questions I've been able to explore by comparing all the sources at my disposal and recontextualising the site within the context of the island and the eastern Mediterranean.

Keywords: Early Christianity, Late Antiquity, Basilicas, Pilgrimages, Relics.

Technologies of Tradition: A Compositional, Technological and Experimental Investigation into Utilitarian Ceramics from Late Bronze Age Enkomi, Cyprus

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The Late Bronze Age (c. 1650 to 1100 BCE) is typified by major social, economic and political changes on the island of Cyprus, including the establishment of coastal trading hubs as well as the development of ceramic technology including the introduction of the potter's wheel. At the site of Enkomi, one of these prominent trading centres, previous research into the ceramics of the site have tended to focus on the finely decorated wares such as White Slip, Bichrome, Base Ring or White Painted Wheelmade Ware III, and much less on the utilitarian pottery. This research then focuses on legacy material from the site of Enkomi, at which and to date, there has been no exhaustive archaeometric study of utilitarian pottery from the site. As such this paper presents part of my PhD research which is a technological and compositional investigation into the raw materials used to produce Plain White and Red/Black Slip ware from the Late Cypriot I-IIB period (c. 1650-1450 BCE). In order to study these wares, it employed the combination of ceramic petrography and geochemical methods (hh-XRF, SEM-EDS, ICP-MS) with experimental archaeology, the results of which are a comprehensive analysis of utilitarian pottery. By focusing on the earlier stages of the chaîne opératoire (raw material selection and processing), this paper will explore the role of the environment in the evolving potting technologies on the island of Cyprus for the production of the understudied plain or utilitarian ceramics during the Late Cypriot period.

Keywords: Late Bronze Age, Cyprus, Ceramic Technology, Archaeometry, Experimental Archaeology.

Characterization of Mortars from a Watermill in Cyprus

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In Cyprus, there are over 650 watermills scattered across the island. Most of these have been in use until the middle of the 20th century. However, despite their abundance, systematic studies of their building materials, including mortars, remain scarce. The current study focuses on the assessment of four mortar samples received from the Vartalis watermill, which is situated within the administrative boundaries of Klirou, Malounta and Agios Ioannis villages, in Nicosia district (Cyprus). Macroscopic observations and laboratory analytical experimental techniques, which included semi-quantitative X-Ray Diffraction (XRD) analysis on the binder/aggregate fractions separately, and Thermogravimetric and Differential Thermal Analysis (TG-DTA) on the bulk samples were employed for the detailed study and characterization of the mortars. The results showed that all four mortar samples were consistent, with densely packed river sand as aggregate material and occasional presence of lime lumps and coal. They also revealed the presence of calcite and crushed ceramic in the binder fraction, and quartz and plagioclase in the aggregate fraction. Notably, the CO2/H2O ratio of the samples ranged between 1.2 and 3, suggesting that these may be classified as strongly hydraulic lime mortars. Hydraulic mortars consisting of aerated lime and fired clay brick powder were used in the past, since antiquity, in structures where protection from water and humidity was required. In fact, the utilization of crushed brick-lime hydraulic mortars in Cyprus traces back to the Late Bronze Age.

Keywords: Watermills, Lime Mortars, XRD, TG-DTA.

“…as is chanted by the Cypriots…”
Chanting Art and Tradition in Cyprus.
First approach Through the Byzantine Music Manuscripts of Cyprus

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Chanting art is one of the most significant and important aspects of the cultural production in the Byzantine and the post byzantine period. Many famous personalities were composers of music chants, that are saved and in use until nowadays. Constantinople was always the center of this production but, especially after the 1453, some other areas had also a remarkable contribution and development. Mount Athos, Crete, Serbia and Cyprus were the most important of them. Cyprus was emerged as a regional center of chanting art. The first well known Cypriot composer of chanting art is Nikolaos Petropoulos who lived in the 14th century. Some other well-known Cypriot composers were also John and Thomas Kordokotos, Jeronymo Tragoudistes, Andreas Stellon and many others. These composers had fundamental contribution to promote and develop the Cypriot tradition in chanting art. This tradition can be now found in many manuscripts, kept in libraries in Cyprus and abroad. Evidence of this tradition are phrases that accompany the hymns, such as «μέλος κυπριακόν», «καθῶς ψάλλεται παρὰ τῶν Κυπραίων», «ἐκ τῆς Κύπρου». This tradition, which is our main academic research topic, we aim to present, through the Cypriot byzantine music manuscripts, in order to offer another small contribution to the efforts of presenting the Cypriot tradition of chanting art.

Keywords: Chanting Art, Manuscripts, Cyprus, Tradition.

Dromoi of Cypriot Rock-cut Chamber Tombs and Their Architectural Design as a Space for Ritual Activity

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The so-called royal tombs of Salamis are particularly well-known for their enormous dromoi with abundant finds suggesting elaborate funerary rites being performed there. However, in much smaller dromoi of rock-cut chamber tombs across Cyprus, similar phenomena can be observed, such as deposits of vessels and objects, animal bones, and sometimes even remains of pyres. Furthermore, a number of dromoi feature specific architectural elements, such as benches, platforms, or niches. The long- term objective of the research is to collect data from all published Cypriot chamber tombs dating CG I – CC II in order to assess indicators of funerary rites in the dromoi, such as the deposition of vessels, as well as studying the architectural design of the dromoi. While both aspects are evaluated separately first, the overarching objective is to determine whether they might be interconnected and if indicators of architectural designs supporting ritual practices can be identified. Another key aspect is the comparison to the richer built tombs and to assess whether in smaller rock-cut tombs practices and architecture might be imitated. As results of my master thesis, the presentation covers an early stage of research and highlights findings from a representative sample of tombs from across the island. It focuses on assessing the placement of deposits (Where? How? Which types of vessels or objects? How can they be interpreted in the light of multiple burial periods in the chamber?) and evaluating the architectural features of benches and platforms. Regional as well as chronological similarities and differences are examined.

Keywords: Funerary Rites, Dromos, Rock-cut Chamber Tombs, Architectural Design.

Beyond Souvlaki – Pig Iconography in the Cypriot Bronze Age and Early Iron Age

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Following the first introduction of the species Sus scrofa (domesticus) to Cyprus in the Late Epipalaeolithic and Neolithic, the predominant function of pigs was as a source of nutrition, as evidenced by the (zoo)archaeological data. It was during the Bronze Age and the subsequent periods, that first evidence of iconographical material of pigs emerged such as the Red Polished Ware. One of them was found in a tomb at Vounous. Additionally, pig representations also occur on bronze objects. This makes the Cypriot Bronze Age and the transition to the Early Iron Age an intriguing period for study, as it is the first period in Cypriot history to have both faunal reports and iconographical material. The aim of this study is to integrate a variety of types of data in order to examine the role of pigs and their depictions in Bronze Age Cyprus and Early Iron Age by looking beyond their functions as a source of nutrition.

Keywords: Pigs, Cyprus, Iconography, Bronze Age.

Trygos – Traditional Grape Harvest in Cyprus, a Historical and Ethnographic Analysis

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The cultivation of the grape has been an important part of Cypriot agriculture and economy from antiquity to the present day. The grape harvesting process, known as trygos, remained largely unchanged from the descriptions provided by ancient authors such as Hesiod, Cato and Varro, until the 1960s and 1970s, when modern technologies, such as trucks, were introduced. The poverty of the rural population was the determining factor for the viticultural choices that had to be made to attain the most productive yield that would ensure the economic survival of the family, as evidenced by oral testimonies and folk songs. In the Krasochoria region, the harvest begins on September 14, coinciding with the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Furthermore, the harvest was also a significant social event, fostering cooperation among families and strengthening community bonds. This study will present an overview of the harvesting process, specifically, the members of the team, the tools, the transport animals as well as the customs, songs, and superstitions. The examination of this historical practice will be supplemented by a review of archival sources, newspapers, and photographs, as well as oral testimonies from old farmers. Additionally, the investigation will explore planting practices, focusing on grape varieties, their flowering patterns, and their productivity, which were critical factors in their cultivation. An ethnoarchaeological approach supports this research, utilizing a case study of a vineyard in the Arsos-Laona locality, planted in 1920 by my great-great-grandfather, Kostantis Kedaritis (Tzearkotis), and harvested by family members on September 7, 2024.

Keywords: Ethnoarchaeology, Viticulture, Traditional Agricultural Practices, Oral History, Rural Life.

Portraying Elite Patronage: Similarities and Differences in the Representation of Supplicants in Medieval Cyprus and Southern Italy (13th –15th Century)

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This paper investigates the iconographical similarities, recurring schemes, and notable differences in the representation of individual supplicants or donor groups—particularly female figures—in icon panels and wall paintings located primarily in churches in the countryside of Cyprus and southern Italy. The study focuses on the placement of supplicants' portraits within the architectural context of the church, the layout of the iconographic program, and the position of lay figures in relation to holy figures as well as to one another. While the majority of these visual arrangements reflect hierarchical structures within family groups, such as marital or kinship bonds, particular emphasis will be placed on cases where female supplicants occupy prominent positions, challenging some established visual conventions. In addition, critical are the gestures of the depicted figures, the objects they hold, and the presence of inscriptions. These elements offer insights into the agency and social roles of lay supplicants in the commissioning of ecclesiastical art. In select cases, representations of supplicants in icon panels serve as comparative material, allowing for a broader understanding of shared visual traditions and regional specificities. The attire of the figures is also examined, including vestments and attributes, embroidered decorations, and textile textures—wherever such details are preserved. Ultimately, this paper seeks to contribute to the ongoing discourse on cultural and artistic exchange between the two regions by highlighting the role of painted supplicant imagery in expressing cross-cultural interactions and situating these representations within the framework of local material culture and social identity.

Keywords: Southern Italy, Cyprus, Late Middle Ages, Female Agency, Donors' Portraits.

Between Sound and Script: <E> and <H> Interchanges in Hellenistic and Roman Alphabetic Inscriptions from Cyprus

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This paper examines the recurring instances of interchange between <E> and <H> in the alphabetic inscriptions of Cyprus dating to the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Previous scholars have attributed these, along with <Ω> ~ <O> interchanges from Kafizin, to deviant spellings related to vowel quantity and interference from the local syllabic script, which did not indicate vowel quantity and continued alongside the alphabetic script at Kafizin in the last quarter of 3rd century BC. However, closer analysis reveals that most examples from Kafizin occur in the same phonetic environments as those from the Roman period. This latter era saw the abandonment of syllabic script and the full adoption of the alphabetic system, making scribal confusion due to script transition unlikely. Moreover, <E> ~ <H> interchanges frequently appear in the same words at other Cypriot sites and outside Cyprus, where syllabic writing was never used. This suggests such cases are not merely orthographic errors. Instead, many can be explained as phonological phenomena likely connected to earlier and later phases of Greek in Cyprus. This paper argues that the <E> ~ <H> interchanges may reflect either the retention of an earlier open vowel pronunciation adjacent to liquids—that is, inhibition of the raising of /ɛː/ to /iː/ (<H>)—or the lowering of /i/ to /e/ in the vicinity of liquids and nasals. Such phonetic tendencies may potentially be paralleled in Medieval and Modern Cypriot Greek, as evidenced in forms such as εἰσσοδέματα (< εἰσοδήματα) and σκλερός (< σκληρός).

Keywords: Epigraphy, Linguistics, Phonology, Alphabetic Inscriptions, History of Greek in Cyprus.

The Anatolian Context of Philia Period Burial Types in Cyprus

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The mid-third millennium BCE marks the first major globalization episode in the Eastern Mediterranean, during which Cyprus underwent a cultural transformation that resulted in the advent of the Cypriot Bronze Age. The transitional period between the Late Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age is known as the Philia period and is defined by changes associated with increasing connectivity with the mainland. Among these changes is an upheaval in mortuary practices characterized by extramural cemeteries composed of rock-cut chamber tombs that feature multiple internments and metal-rich grave good assemblages. Past models of Philia period causality based on hypotheses of external migration have overemphasized the intrusive elements of these new mortuary changes without any systematic, inter-regional comparison of mortuary data to test Cyprus's articulation with the mainland. This study fills said gap by contextualizing Philia period mortuary practices with inter-regional mortuary trends on the mainland by comparing burial type between Cyprus and West, Central, and Southeast Anatolia and Northern Syria during the EBA I-II periods. By comparing inter-regional burial type variability, this study distinguishes which aspects of Philia period mortuary practice may relate to connectivity and which reflect continuities with the preceding Chalcolithic. This study's results demonstrate that Philia period rock-cut chamber tombs are generally dissimilar to Anatolia, instead comparing closer to local, Chalcolithic antecedents. Yet, Cypriot mortuary practices as a whole compare well on a modular level to the mainland, featuring a unique combination of local, Chalcolithic continuities and novel innovations likely related to inter-regional connectivity, in turn constituting a hybridized mortuary program.

Keywords: Philia, Mortuary Practice, Connectivity, Anatolia.

The Developed Palaiologan Style in Cypriot Wall Paintings of the First Half of the 15th Century

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The presence of the developed Palaiologan style in Cypriot art can be tracked down to the second half of the 14th century. It was used in the painted decorations of many churches of Famagusta, which were adorned with murals after the Genoese conquest of the city in 1373. As the most important artistic center of Cyprus at the turn of the 14th and 15th centuries, Famagusta played a key role in disseminating the new style throughout the island. The developed Palaiologan style can be found in the wall paintings of several churches whose decorations were previously believed to belong to a later period. Prominent examples include the murals in the Church of Panagia Pantanassa in Choulou and the Church of the Holy Cross in Kouka. In general, the paintings in these churches share common features with the style of Famagustan murals. Among them, particular attention should be given to the phenomenon of the interpenetration of the Byzantine painting tradition with elements of Western origin, and to the emphasis placed on the Passion cycle. The notable stylistic and iconographic similarities provide further support for this hypothesis. The numerous parallels with the art of Famagusta suggest that the murals in the churches of Choulou and Kouka may have been created in the first half of the 15th century. These decorations exemplify the phenomenon of the dissemination of Famagustan art, the study of which may contribute to a better understanding of the artistic landscape of Cyprus during the last phase of Lusignan rule.

Keywords: Choulou, Kouka, Famagusta, Murals.

Late Aceramic Neolithic, Khirokitia Culture-An Anomaly, a Genderless Society or a Non-binary One?

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Figurines are among the artifacts that shed light on gender perception in ancient times. The well-known Mother Goddess theory, which developed in response to the abundance of the female representations during the Neolithic Period, led many scholars to view the society as matriarchal and female centered. Whilst figurines with prominent female anatomical features were widespread in Anatolian and Near Eastern contexts, Cyprus during the Aceramic Neolithic (9000-5200 BCE) yielded a different picture. The archaeological data attest to the evidence of female imagery in the earliest phases of the period, as well as cultural connections and mobility with the surrounding mainland. In contrast, asexual and "phallic"-shaped figurines dominated the Late Aceramic Neolithic (7000/6800-5200 BCE). This poster aims to examine, present and discuss the transition in gender representation observed in Late Aceramic Neolithic Cyprus. Based on the archaeological record, it seeks to broaden the analysis on gender visibility and lay the groundwork for further research and new interpretations.

Keywords: Aceramic Neolithic, Cyprus, Gender Archaeology.

Presenting the Project 'Non-invasive Analysis of Cypriot Composite Icons'

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This poster presents the research objectives and methods of the grant “Non-Invasive Analysis of Cypriot Composite Icons,” funded by the National Science Centre, Poland (2024/53/N/HS2/01549). The project focuses on composite icons: two-panel icons often created in different periods and subsequently joined via various insertion techniques. First described by Panayotis L. Vocotopoulos, composite icons are rare and typically discussed in the context of conservation. However, the diversity of insertion techniques and the variety of motivations of those who created them suggest more complex functions. The project investigates the materials, techniques, and history of a group of 16th-century Cypriot composite icons, and examines modifications and restorations over time. By combining advanced digital imaging techniques and spectroscopic methods, including ultraviolet fluorescence (UVF), infrared reflected imaging (IR), infrared false color processing (IRFC), infrared reflectography (IRR), reflectance transformation imaging (RTI), x-ray radiography (XRR), x-ray fluorescence (XRF), and Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR), the research offers new insights into these unusual artworks. The integrated approach seeks to enhance our understanding of the composite icon’s form, the diverse techniques used in their creation, and the purposes behind their production, modification, and reuse over centuries.

Keywords: Icon Painting, Composite Icons, Post-Byzantine Art, Technical Analysis, Non-invasive Methods.

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ΣΥΝΔΕΣΜΟΣ ΚΥΠΡΙΩΝ ΑΡΧΑΙΟΛΟΓΩΝ

ΙΕΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ ΚΥΠΡΟΥ
HOLY ARCHBISHOPRIC OF CYPRUS