



Poles in the Near East

Archaeological conference

2022

We are calling for papers for the archaeological conference Poles in the Near East (June 8th–10th, 2022) – deadline for submissions has been extended to April, 15th.

At the conference, we welcome papers concerning archaeological research, conservation and heritage protection and promotion in the Near East, Cyprus, the Gulf and the Caucasus. This year, there will be three special thematic panels (in English).

Details on registration and deadlines can be found at the end of this circular.



Panel 1

Marble use, trade and distribution in the Eastern Mediterranean during the Late Antiquity

Organizers:

Mariusz Gwiazda (PCMA UW) and Dagmara Wielgosz-Rondolino (FA UW)

The main goal of the panel is to determine the importance of marble use in the eastern parts of the Late Antique Mediterranean world (4th–7th century AD), with special focus on the Levant. In the ancient world “marble” was a much broader term denoting not only metamorphic but also sedimentary and magmatic rocks. This precious sculptural and building material did not occur naturally everywhere, so it had to be imported, sometimes even from very distant areas of the Mediterranean world. Several crucial questions are therefore connected to the use of marble in Late Antiquity. The most evident is why it was being imported? Then, what were the mechanisms of distribution, what was the character of orders (private or imperial), and what was the nature of the places of display (public, e.g., baths, or private, e.g., residential buildings). Eventually, one should ask about the impact of the large-scale building activity (churches) in the Eastern Mediterranean in Late Antiquity on the import, or local production, of specific marble items such as liturgical equipment and architectural details. Although marble was one of the most expensive building materials in Antiquity, the issue of its use between the 4th and 7th century is still largely unrecognized. Filling this research gap is important for understanding the significance of this material and trading it in Late Antiquity.

Geographical scope:

- Levant, Asia Minor, Balkans, Egypt, Cyrenaica, and Cyprus.

Themes of the panel:

- new discoveries,
- archaeometric provenance studies,
- social dimension,
- distribution of marble and marble artefacts.





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Panel 2

Deciphering ancient stonecutters: archaeology of the masons' marks

Organizers:

Anna U. Kordas (FCA UW) and Marcin M. Romaniuk (IMOC PAS)

So-called masons' marks, usually carved or painted on the architectural stone elements, constitute a common phenomenon at the archaeological sites of the Mediterranean Basin. Last over half of the century brought to the public some synthetic works on this topic, to mention only those by Roland Martin or Margherita Guarducci, offering interpretations and a systematic categorization of masons' marks according to their meaning, provenance, and role in the building process. The variety of distinguished categories – construction marks, identity marks, accounting marks and others – reflects the complexity of the way the stone elements had to go through from the quarry to their place in new construction, including their production, storage, transport, sale, and final use. Considering this, the proper interpretation of masons' marks at the archaeological sites may provide a deep insight into different dimensions of building activity in the investigated area, especially its technological, but also socio-economical aspects, constituting at the same time a powerful tool for reconstruction of collapsed ancient constructions. However, the interpretation of the marks is still problematic and requires a well-thought-out methodology and an interdisciplinary approach having knowledge both in local archaeology, architectural engineering and epigraphy. Hopefully, the interest in masons' marks become more and more popular among researchers, which results in a rising number of publications on this topic in recent years. The aim of this panel is to bring together all interested in studies on the masons' marks, who would like to share their experiences on the methodology and information they have discovered through their studies. Presentations of the technical aspect of the research and architectural reconstructions based on masons' marks will be especially welcome.

Geographical and chronological scope:

- the Mediterranean Basin in Antiquity

Themes of the panel:

- methodological approaches to studying masons' marks,
- new discoveries of the masons' marks,
- technical aspect of the research,
- architectural reconstructions based on masons' marks.



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Panel 3

The socio-cultural landscape of Urartian and post-Urartian North-East between 8th and 6th century BC.

Organizers:

Mateusz Iskra (PCMA UW) and Krzysztof Jakubiak (FA UW)

The Urartian expansion towards *Etiuni* lands has profoundly changed the socio-political and cultural complexity of the region located between the Araxes, the Lesser Caucasus and

Lake Sevan. Almost two centuries of Urartian dominance over the region is marked by regularly built stone fortresses, the introduction of a writing system, together with the emergence of new styles in pottery and metal production as well as a broader appearance of cremation. However, these new features, well attested in several main sites located in the Araxes valley and on the shores of Lake Sevan, are not so evident in mountainous fortresses or smaller lowland settlements forming the initial hinterland of the Urartian North-East during the 8th and 7th century BC. In contrast to such sites as Argištikhinili, Erebuni or Teišebaini, hinterland settlements were inhabited mainly by an indigenous population with their own social organization and distinct material culture dating back to the Late Bronze Age. Interrelations between the locals and the newcomers in the Urartian and post-Urartian North-East is one of the most crucial and thus intensely debated problems in modern south-Caucasian archaeology. Especially now, when recent excavations and regional studies put more attention to understanding the place of local communities in provincial society and their role in socio-cultural changes that appeared after the downfall of Urartian administration in the region. Therefore, the main aim of the panel is to characterize socio-cultural complexity of the region through multifaceted analysis of interactions between local and Urartian societies reflected in the archaeological and anthropological evidences. One of the most important element of the panel will be a discussion about the post-Urartian period, especially in the context of further evolution of provincial society within the frames of possible political fragmentation. Other crucial issues are connected with the problem of Urartian legacy in the regional culture in 6th century BC and alleged external (e.g. Iranian, Scythian, North Caucasian) features.

Geographical scope:

-Armenia, eastern Turkey, Nakhchivan

Themes of the panel:

- new discoveries
- cross-cultural analysis
- regional studies
- pottery analysis
- anthropological research



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Conference: *Poles in the Near East* 2022

All submissions – both for the main sessions and for the thematic panels should be submitted via the Google form: <https://forms.gle/L1SkX2HqyTuz26py5>

Each submission must include:

- title of the paper;
- information on the language of the paper;
- information about the corresponding author, including his/her e-mail address;
- name, surname, academic degree and affiliation of each of the authors;
- abstract (up to 1500 characters with spaces);
- keywords: 4–8 terms that will help to group the papers into sessions.

Articles based on conference presentations may be submitted for publication in the journal “Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean”. Regarding the publication of the thematic panels, contact panel organizers.

The conference will be open to all registered participants.

Date:

8th–10th June, 2020

Place:

on-line (technical details
in the next circular)

Length of presentations:

Presentation: 20 minutes
Communiqué: 10 minutes

Submission deadline:

15th April, 2022

Acceptance deadline:

1st May 2022

Contact:

konferencja.PnBW@uw.edu.pl

About the conference:

Previous programs, abstracts, circulars on
PCMA UW website
(<https://pcma.uw.edu.pl/en/?s=poles+in+the+near+east>)

Organizing committee:

Coordinator: Agnieszka Szymczak (PCMA UW)
Dr hab. Anna Smogorzewska (FA UW)
Dr hab. Arkadiusz Sołtysiak (FA UW)
Dr Mariusz Gwiazda (PCMA UW)
Dr Francisco J. Núñez (PCMA UW)
Dr Emilia Smagur (PCMA UW)
Dr Urszula Wicenciak-Núñez (PCMA UW)
Anna Kordas (FCA UW)
Agnieszka Szulc-Kajak (PCMA UW)