

# Medieval and Post Medieval Archaeology in the Mediterranean ~ an official interest group of the archaeological institute of america

## Minutes: Archaeological Institute of America Annual Meeting 2008

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POSTED BY BILL CARAHER IN MINUTES

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### **Medieval and Post-Medieval Archaeology in Greece (MAPMAG) Interest Group Archaeological Institute of America, Annual Meetings, Chicago, IL**

#### **Attending**

David Pettegrew, R. Scott Moore, Sandra Garvie-Lok, Jack Davis, Ian Begg, Kostis Kourelis, Mark Rose, Maria Georgopoulou, Glenn Bugh, Camilla MacKay, Neathery Batsell Fuller, Michael Fuller, Elizabeth Bevis, Mark D. Hammond, Troels Myrup Kristensen, Jon Frey, Nick Kardulias, Effie Athanassopoulos, Timothy Gregory, Sara Lipenski, Rachel Goldman, Heather Grossman

#### **I. Introduction**

Welcome to the 2008 AIA IG meeting; the two main issues of business: 1) decide on paper session for the 2009 AIA meetings; 2) discuss the idea of a working papers website / internet publication.

Attention was drawn to the MAPMAG sponsored session on Xenitia to be held on the final day of the conference.

#### **II. Report on the Activities of the Group**

Kostis Kourelis reported on the activities of the group in 2007, which included planning for the AIA session on Xenitia, and organizing a paper session for the Byzantine Studies Conference in Toronto in October. The latter, organized by Bill Caraher, centered on the post-Classical archaeology of Cyprus. We hope to continue this tradition of sponsoring sessions at both the AIA and other conferences. To this date, we have sponsored 2 sessions at the AIA, a session at ASOR, and one at the BSC.

Kostis also updated members on the publication of the paper session on the archaeology of abandonment held at the AIA meetings in January 2007. Due to the scheduling of the *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*, the session will not appear in print until late 2009 or early 2010.

#### **III. Future MAPMAG Sessions**

The first major order of business was deciding on future sessions at the AIA and other conferences. Three ideas were proposed, the merits of which members discussed at length:

1. Bill Caraher proposed a roundtable of colloquium session centered on "Teaching the History of the Post-Classical World: Material Culture, Archaeology, and the Master Narrative." The roundtable would focus on introducing the medieval period into the master narrative of Greek history and the archaeology of the Greek world. In particular, the session could examine the methods employed in the study of the medieval period; the role of the medieval period in contextualizing antiquity; and the place of medieval Greece in the development of archaeological metanarratives. MAPMAG members suggested that the session might also incorporate recent textbooks on Byzantium, the effects of new media and blogging, and travel promoted by the formation of the American School of Classical Studies.
2. Jon Frey proposed a session on "Early Travelers to Greece," focusing on how these post-classical texts shed light on Late Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman Greece, and, as importantly, the intellectual influences and frameworks motivating these travelers. How, for instance, might a figure like Colonel Leake be differently motivated than an ancient traveler like Pausanias? Discussion among group members highlighted other potential aspects of the idea such as how the formation of a travel literature contributed to the split between Classical and Medieval archaeology.
3. Effie Athanassopoulos proposed a session on the archaeology of national identity in Greece. Members suggested that this is a significant current topic in ancient and medieval studies and one that has not received a great deal of attention at the AIA.

Members were very supportive of all topics and discussed which ones to move forward with, and whether we should seek to 1) combine the sessions; 2) run them in successive years (e.g., AIA 2009, 2010, 2011); 3) submit them to different conferences (e.g., AIA, BSC); or 4) do multiple sessions at the same conference.

In the end, we decided opinion shifted to running multiple future sessions at the same conference. However, Kostis and Effie reminded the group of the hard work and challenges of putting together a conference session that is due in early March. Publicizing the paper session and finding participants must occur in advance of the session submission deadline. Since the proposed sessions on early travelers and national identity would require some planning, the group decided to support the roundtable (idea #1) for AIA 2009.

#### **IV. Working Papers Idea: SQUINCH Website**

The second major order of business at the meeting was the discussion of a proposal that Bill Caraher produced for a Working Papers website deriving from the success of the Princeton-Stanford Working Papers in Classics Website. The idea for the proposed website was to make public early drafts of papers related to archaeological work on post-Classical Eastern Mediterranean in order to stimulate debate and provide access to data. Authors could post to the website for discussion a manuscript for a paper that was about to be submitted for publication.

The reaction to the proposal was mixed. Some expressed hesitation about being so accessible and submitting an article for peer discussion in rough draft. Others suggested that the potential readership would be very small; a publisher would not accept an article that was already freely available online; and that interpretations about archaeological remains are constantly changing.

Those in favor of the proposal suggested that this is what we do, anyway, when we submit work to colleagues prior to submitting a paper to a journal for review; this was simply a slightly broader audience. And if other fields are already using open access, then it has some merit. Moreover, current technology makes it relatively easy to do. It would be possible with such a website to make some articles (e.g., preliminary archaeological reports, rough notes, annual site reports) accessible to the broader public, and restrict other articles (e.g., rough drafts of methodological papers, comparative analyses, and other original research) to members of the group. Articles would be tagged with key words, and therefore searchable.

Mark Rose suggested that the AIA / APA website could host both a working papers area for the IG or an internet journal, so long as the work was outsourced to non-AIA staff.

Moreover, group members were generally supportive of sharing data. Members work with material and architectural classes (e.g., catalogues of churches or settlements) that it would be impossible to publish elsewhere. It would be excellent to make available archaeological material (as appropriate) to other academics, and reports on fieldwork to broader audiences. The group also supported the long-term idea of an electronic internet journal related to the research of the post-classical eastern Mediterranean.

In the end, we decided to let Bill run with this—informed by the conversation at the meeting. Doing so was consistent with the original rationale behind the SQUINCH group: sharing research, data, and experiences with others working in the field.

## V. Other Business

Jack Davis suggested that everyone introduce themselves so that we could have a sense of the academic structures through which we conduct archaeological work in the eastern Mediterranean.

The two dozen individuals present at the meeting were conducting archaeological fieldwork related to periods from Late Antiquity to the Modern era, and in areas including Greece (Isthmia, Karpathos, Stymphalos, Nemea, Corinth, Kythera, Crete), the Balkans, Macedonia, Italy, Cyprus, Asia Minor, and even Ohio! Those working in Greece had permits through both the American School of Classical Studies at Athens and local ephorias. Members were researching a wide range of topics related to the post-classical world: osteology and populations, regional survey, churches, early modern settlement, castles, textiles, destruction of statuary, architectural reuse, evolution of rural economic systems, Byzantine pottery, and national ideology.

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The meeting lasted one hour.  
Submitted by David K. Pettegrew

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