

mediterranean archaeology day

HARMONIEGEBOUW

16/01/2023 10.30-16.30 HRS

Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat 26

Groningen

Room: 1314.0026

www.tijdschrift.mediterrane-archeologie.nl

www.platformargos.org



programme

MEDITERRANEAN ARCHAEOLOGY DAY

MORNING

10.00 Walk in, coffee & tea available

10.30 Welcome on behalf of the Groningen Institute of Archaeology

10.35 Welcome on behalf of TMA and Platform Argos

10.45 Daniel Fallu - Geoarchaeology of Bronze Age burial practices (Greece)

11.00 Dario Monti - Landscapes of choice (Central Italy)

11.15 Marcello de Vos – Tappino valley project updates (Central Apennines/Matese)

11.30-11.45 Coffee and tea break

11.45 Anderson Carter - Domestication of Pigeons (Cyprus)

12.00 Sarah Hutchinson - Zooarchaeological analysis (Sardis)

12.15 Eleni Kaisidou - Purple dye production (Murex)

12.30 Marcel van Tuinen - Human-bird interactions (Alalakh)

LUNCH BREAK

12.45-14.00 (self-provided lunch)

AFTERNOON

14.00 Astrid van Oyen - Social archaeology of inequality

14.15 Vladimir Stissi - The Halos project in a wider perspective

14.30 Laurien de Gelder - Human remains in Van Loon Collection

14.45-15.00 Coffee and tea break

15.00-16.30 Discussion session - Future Mediterranean Archaeologies in the Netherlands: threats and opportunities. Moderated by Lidewijde de Jong.

NEW YEAR'S DRINK

abstracts

Anderson Carter

My research masters thesis studied the domestication of pigeons on Cyprus during the Late Bronze Age through stable isotope analysis of specimens from Hala Sultan Tekke. It's currently in the publication process with Antiquity.

Affiliation: University of Groningen.

Sara Hutchinson

My current research is a zooarchaeological analysis conducted at Sardis on a remarkably well-preserved Achaemenid-period pit excavated in Field 49. Drawing on faunal identification, MNI/MNE quantification, LSI measurements, and meat-weight calculations, this research establishes the assemblage as the product of a single, rapid deposition event. The pit is dominated by caprines (many large-bodied and likely castrated males) alongside cattle, pigs, fowl, and limited wild taxa. Butchery patterns, %MAU distributions, and species composition collectively suggest the remains of a substantial feasting event consistent with courtly Achaemenid practice. The unusual placement of this deposit within a downtown area otherwise abandoned after the Persian conquest raises questions about the activities of military or administrative groups occupying the site at that time. This analysis provides a foundational dataset for future comparative work on Lydian and Persian foodways and highlights the importance of Sardis for understanding Achaemenid-period consumption practices.

Affiliation: I am a ReMA Student at the University of Groningen and the Exploration of Sardis is funded by Harvard University.

Eleni Kaisidou

After the fall of the Byzantine Empire, the production of purple dye decreased, yet murex shells (*Hexaplex trunculus*) from the Athenian Agora prove different. This study records material from the BK 2024 and BK 2025 Murex context, as well as the BH 2003 Murex-ash deposit. The assemblages represent waste from purple dye production rather than food waste. Basket and net fishing, or hand collection, could have been used by more than one team of fishermen exploiting the Saronikos Gulf. These findings suggest that murex dye continued after the fall of the Byzantine Empire, and the Agora shells provide valuable insights into fishing strategies and resource exploitation.

Affiliation: University of Groningen.

Marcel van Tuinen

I will share my ideas for providing additional context to human-bird interactions at Bronze Age Alalakh, Turkey. This is a follow-up study from the avifaunal bronze age report at this site.

Affiliation: I am PhD student Zooarchaeology, Groningen Institute for Archaeology, University of Groningen.

Astrid Van Oyen

I would like to pitch my forthcoming monograph "Living Precariously in the Roman World: A Social Archaeology of Inequality", to be published by Cambridge University Press in May 2026. I would probably present the overall approach and perhaps a brief case study, depending on the allotted time. The Roman world was profoundly unequal but what did this mean for people at the bottom of the hierarchy? This book investigates their lived experiences through qualitative analysis of archaeological data. Infused with theoretical insights from the material turn, development economics, and feminist studies, the lens of precarity crosscuts the experiences of people, contexts, and themes rarely considered together, including workers, the enslaved, women, and conquered populations.

Affiliation: Radboud University

Daniel Fallu

Geoarchaeology of Bronze Age Burial Practices in Greece:

The research presented in this pitch, part of the MSCA-funded project GRABEn, demonstrates the ability of high-intensity geoarchaeological analysis to provide the basis for reconstructing funerary practices. The case study presented, the North Cemetery of Ayios Vasileios, represents an important transitional period in Greek prehistory (1700-1400 BCE), comprising the foundation of the Bronze Age palaces and the early monumentalization of burials. GRABEn applies a suite of geoarchaeological analyses, including micromorphology, geochemical analysis, and luminescence profiling, to understand the movement and alteration of sediments in burial fills. Preliminary results show distinct differences in primary and secondary burial deposits, as well as apparent disturbed burials. In particular, the relationship between phosphate and calcium in the soils appears related to the degree of disturbance in the graves. It is hoped that these observations will allow for better interpretation of mortuary evidence and a greater understanding of this transition in Greek funerary practice.

Affiliation: Groningen Institute of Archaeology, University of Groningen.

Dario Monti

Landscapes of Choice: Environment and Social Organisation in pre-Roman Sabina (Central Italy) - This pitch discusses a post-doctoral research project that addresses one of archaeology's most persistent theoretical questions: how environmental constraints and cultural choices interact in the long-term production of social organisation. Using the pre-Roman historical region of Sabina as a case study, the project challenges urban-centred evolutionary and environmentally deterministic paradigms that have long framed Mediterranean mountain societies as marginal or residual. Grounded in a materialist theoretical framework and landscape archaeology, the research conceptualises environment and society as dialectically co-produced rather than causally opposed. GIS-based environmental modelling is employed not as a predictive tool, but as a heuristic device to explore how ecological diversity structured economic practices, mobility, and social differentiation across time. The pitch is conceived as an open theoretical discussion of the post-doctoral project in progress, focusing on its conceptual assumptions, analytical categories, and broader implications for Mediterranean archaeology.

Affiliation: UCLouvain.

Marcello de Vos

In this pitch I will present the ongoing Remote Sensing investigations of the KNIR in the Central Apennines, Molise region, which are part of the Tappino valley project. I will also briefly go into our now expanding efforts to map higher mountainous regions in the area, particularly the Matese massive.

Affiliation: Groningen Institute of Archaeology, University of Groningen, Sapienza University of Rome, KNIR.

Laurien de Gelder

Giving New Life to Old Collections of Human Remains at Allard Pierson: A Case Study from Selenkahiye, Bronze Age Syria. Osteoarchaeological research has been done on the Bronze Age skeletal sample of Selenkahiye, which was excavated by prof. Maurits van Loon (University of Amsterdam) and his team in northern Syria between 1967 and 1975. As this collection has been largely overlooked since its arrival in the Netherlands, their work aims to make this sample accessible for research, ensuring its preservation while highlighting its scientific value.

Affiliation: Allard Pierson, University of Amsterdam

Vladimir Stissi

The Halos project in a wider perspective

Affiliation: University of Amsterdam