

Foreword

Carlos Cabrera Tejedor

Oxford Centre for Maritime Archaeology, University of Oxford

carlos.cabrera.tejedor@gmail.com

The papers presented in this monograph are the result of a two-day conference held at the University of Oxford and sponsored by the Honor Frost Foundation (HFF) and the Oxford Centre for Maritime Archaeology (OCMA). The Maritime Archaeology Graduate Symposium, or MAGS, was conceived as a place of encounter for graduate students and early career researchers in Maritime Archaeology. It was hosted, for the first time, at the University of Oxford on February 3 and 4, 2018.

MAGS was originally envisaged to be a low-key event, short of a day of colleagues exchanging ideas without the peer pressure existing at more senior symposia or academic meetings. It was initially conceived to be a national gathering (UK based) but we decided to make an open call of papers so friends from other countries would not feel unwelcome. It was to our initial surprise, and later on pride, that the 'low-key event' that we originally planned ended up lasting two full days, gathering about 70 attendees, including 28 speakers, that came to Oxford from at least twelve different countries distributed among four different continents.

The papers presented at the conference showed a wide range of topics within the framework of the growing Maritime Archaeology field. Within the attendees, most of the sub-fields and the different disciplines that accompany the Maritime Archaeology field (e.g. shipbuilding, GIS, archaeometry, wood studies, anthropology, classical studies, naval history, conservation, etc.) were represented at some degree or level. The papers presented in this volume are a selection, yet provide a good example, of those discussed during the two days of MAGS 2018. It is not the intention of this foreword, and it would be impossible, to summarise in just a few lines the main contributions discussed in these papers, but I consider there are some points that should be emphasised.

These papers contain something that is, usually, rare to find in other more senior publications or academic journals: that is, enthusiasm. These papers show, in my humble opinion, the eagerness of their authors to contribute to a field that they are passionate about. That is, in my view, priceless since usually academic and disciplinary constraints often end up dissolving the passion and energy with which the papers presented here are written. If only because of that, I would argue that MAGS 2018 was a success that contributes to the field of Maritime Archaeology by

bringing a refreshing approach. This enthusiastic style is perceived in some founding works such as those of Honor Frost and her contemporary pioneers, but has been largely lost in many other monographs and proceedings through which Maritime Archaeology has consolidated its position as an academic field in the last decades.

Perhaps the best contribution of the MAGS conference is the facilitation of synergies among early career specialist eager to contribute to their fields and meet other colleagues with the same passion. I know that the same opportunity is offered in other senior symposia and international conferences but, in my opinion, in those meetings (as it happens with their presentations and proceedings) other factors such as seniority, politics, academic 'clans', diplomacy, etc., play an important role in the interactions among attendees. It is not that MAGS was completely free of those academic idiosyncrasies, but certainly their influence was less.

I believe that the MAGS 2018 conference, and the papers presented in these proceedings that derived directly from it, are brave, academically bright, vibrant, and a suggestive compilation of heterogeneous maritime archaeology studies in different fields and geographic spaces. Based on my personal experience, I believe (and hope) that the MAGS would be destined to become an essential academic meeting for 'friends and colleagues' who, nearly free from academic constraints, aspire to overcome the contrast between underwater and maritime, between shipwreck and landscape, between artefacts and history.

It is therefore a great pleasure knowing that MAGS 2019, hosted at the University of Southampton, was another successful 'low-key' academic meeting with again an international attendance. At the time I am writing these lines, the MAGS 2020, to be hosted at the University of Oxford, is in preparation and looks to be a successful continuation of the two previous meetings.

To conclude, we must acknowledge the Honor Frost Foundation as well as the Oxford Centre for Maritime Archaeology for generously supporting this first meeting in Oxford without which MAGS would have never become a reality. And from these entities, Lucy Blue and Damian Robison are the individuals to whom we must express our gratitude in particular. For their contribution to MAGS 2018, we must also thank the two keynote speakers Dr

Jon Henderson and Professor Robin Allaby who provided the conference with two enlightening talks. I finally would like to acknowledge the friends and colleagues that worked very hard planning, organising, coordinating, and delivering the event, making MAGS 2018 a reality: Crystal El Safadi, Veronica Walker Vadillo, Lisa Briggs, Ziad Morsy, Naseem Raad, Peter Fiske and myself. It is largely because of them, their endless enthusiasm, teamwork, humour, professionalism, diplomacy, resilience, and hard work that MAGS 2018 was, in the words of many of the attendees, a great success.

I personally have had the immense privilege to briefly meet some of the international forefathers and pioneers of the field of Maritime Archaeology. It has been an honour learning directly from some of the world-leading experts (in different countries and research institutions) who, in recent decades, have gained our field (international recognition) within the wider academic world. Meeting early career colleagues full of enthusiasm and passion about what they want to study provides a different yet equally impressive and uplifting experience. We must, therefore, look forward to the contributions of those new generations that are arriving to the field of Maritime Archaeology, as they will not only consolidate and strengthen our field of research, but also take it to a new stage.



Figure 1. MAGS 2018 organising committee. From left to right, Veronica Walker Vadillo, Carlos Cabrera Tejedor, Lisa Briggs, Peter Fiske, Ziad Morsy, Crystal El Safadi and Naseem Raad.

Introduction

Lucy Blue¹ and Naseem Raad²

¹*Maritime Archaeological Director, Honor Frost Foundation*
LucyBlue@honorfrostfoundation.org

²*University of Southampton*
nnraad@gmail.com

This volume entitled *Ships, Boats, Ports, Trade, and War in the Mediterranean and Beyond*, is the product of a symposium held in 2018 that was initially conceived as a forum to encourage early career researchers to discuss a variety of topics related to maritime archaeology in the eastern Mediterranean. The premise revolved around a co-operation between the University of Southampton and the University of Oxford for students and early career researchers to exchange ideas in a supportive environment. This initial concept grew into a more substantial event that saw interest beyond UK institutions, sparking the development of *The Maritime Archaeology Graduate Symposium* (MAGS). The symposium was inspired and sponsored by the Honor Frost Foundation (HFF), and organised by a team of HFF scholars from the Centre for Maritime Archaeology at the University of Southampton, along with colleagues from the Oxford Centre for Maritime Archaeology.

MAGS was founded to promote the collaboration between early-career researchers working on topics related to maritime archaeology, with a particular focus on the eastern Mediterranean. The organisers sent out the call for papers with this core concept in mind, anticipating a response from regional institutions within the UK. Several weeks later, they realised that they had underestimated the potential scale and scope of the event, with submissions from numerous international scholars expressing an interest in participating. What initially was conceived as an afternoon with a few colleagues chatting about maritime archaeology in a relaxed environment, gradually emerged into a two-day conference involving multiple international organisations.

The symposium proved to be a success, with 25 speakers sharing their research on a variety of topics and engaging one another in lively discourse. Beyond strictly academic collaboration, Masters students, Doctoral candidates and Postdoctoral researchers became familiar with an emerging generation of maritime archaeologists from all over the world, including Spain, Peru, Lebanon, America, France, South Korea and Greece, among others. Students at an earlier stage of their academic career could gain valuable experience by presenting their work in a professional setting, while those at a more advanced stage

of their career could network with other similarly placed scholars. The first day focused on eastern Mediterranean maritime archaeology, and was divided into three sessions: ships and cargoes, maritime movement and trade, and the interpretation and reception of maritime archaeology in the eastern Mediterranean. The second day focused more broadly on methodological approaches, and maritime heritage and legislation. Throughout the weekend, it was clear that presenters were eager to publish their research in a self-contained and comprehensive volume.

Thus, the first MAGS publication was established. This volume strives to characterise the central philosophy of the conference, reflecting the complexity of eastern Mediterranean archaeology and maritime archaeology as a whole. Thirteen papers are presented by international authors, and have been divided into four sections: ‘ships and boats’, ‘ports and port-systems’, ‘maritime economics’ and ‘legislation, management and the perception of maritime archaeology’. All unified by the general theme of maritime archaeology as presented at MAGS, these works mirror the diversity of methodological approaches and foci of modern archaeology.

The first section takes us through the potential of ship and cargo analysis, iconographic studies and digital reconstruction. Each paper gives a glimpse into Bronze Age, Iron Age and Classical shipbuilding techniques to shed light on the processes involved in maritime transportation through the ages. This is followed by a characterisation of the harbours that sheltered ships and boats and facilitated interconnected maritime networks. This section embodies an interdisciplinary approach that incorporates geomorphology, material culture and urban analysis to provide a comprehensive examination of ports and port systems. The third section centres on some of the economic systems within which ships and harbours operated. Themes such as indicators of interpreting ancient maritime commerce, including amphorae, shipwrecks and ancient texts, are discussed. The final three works in this volume tackle broad concepts related to heritage management and the perception of maritime culture in the modern world. Within today’s dynamic political geography, it is important to reflect on the role that maritime archaeologists should play in the preservation

of underwater cultural heritage, as well as the ways it is perceived and presented in museums, in popular culture and across different countries.

The range of topics and methods depicted in the symposium and this volume, demonstrates the high degree of specialisation in current day maritime archaeology. As will be seen, the authors utilise archaeometric techniques, geomorphological analyses, and network analysis, among other tools, to explore multifaceted questions. Each paper provides a unique perspective on complex maritime archaeological issues throughout the Mediterranean and beyond, incorporating multiple lines of evidence in a holistic approach. As a number of these authors are still at an early stage in their academic careers, it is the hope that the works presented here will continue to grow and expand into significant research with far-reaching implications.

In this regard, the Honor Frost Foundation, in cooperation with the University of Oxford, strives to fuel this growth by helping establish MAGS as a yearly event. By promoting communication not simply across geographic space but across disciplines, it is possible to help early-career researchers build a network of scholars for academic collaboration as well as disseminate publications and results in meaningful ways. By centring the symposium around the general theme of eastern Mediterranean maritime archaeology, it becomes possible to have discussions between divers, architects, archaeobotanists, zoologists and 3D modellers amongst other scholars, from all over the world. Since the pioneering days of Honor Frost, the field of maritime archaeology has expanded and evolved extensively, technology can now get us deeper, we can document faster and more accurately, and are able to digitally visualise and model archaeological finds to an extent that permits greater interpretation and access. Although this humble publication represents a small step in the development of maritime archaeology, it will hopefully spark further discussion and continued engagement between young scholars who, inspired and supported by this symposium, will progress to become the maritime archaeologists of the future.