54. The Maritime World of the Early Bronze Age Levant through Space and Time

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Maritime spaces partake in a dynamic assemblage of relations, grounded in material practices. These spaces emerge from processes characterised by rhythmical movements of wind, water, ships, people, etc. Yet they are not present in isolation. Land and sea seamlessly merge shaping waterfronts that are marked by human activities. Coastlines and their archaeological record are paramount for unravelling processes of human engagement with the sea. Our knowledge of human engagement with maritime spaces is growing, yet much still remains concealed. Through a consolidation of maritime-related material culture that equally brings to light small-scale and large-scale activities, and mapping maritime processes, we can reach a better understanding of lived maritime spaces. The Early Bronze Age (EBA) (ca. 3600-2000 BC) in the Levant conventionally marks the first urban period. The Levantine littoral played a major role during the mid-third millennium BC, when maritime connections, particularly with Egypt, became vital. Although archaeological narratives have attempted to explain maritime affairs and social complexity of the EBA Levant, most do not appraise the constitutive role of maritime activities and spaces, nor re-institute that region in its sea and land, land and sea narrative. This paper aims to discuss and analyse the coastal Levant during the EBA as a relational maritime space grounded in activities on land and on water. It builds on a rhythmical and a time-space analysis of the performance of seafaring in the Levantine basin, and of the EBA maritime archaeological record of the area, in order to move beyond the hegemony of tasks and events to rhythmical social processes, and to understand better human engagement with the sea during the EBA on the Levantine littoral.

55. Mariners, Maritime Connectivity and the ‘Ritual’ of Sea Travel in Early Neolithic Cyprus

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This paper provides an overview of the archaeological evidence for maritime connectivity and the lifeway of mariners and coastal communities on Cyprus in the PPNA (Pre-Pottery Neolithic A) and Early Aceramic Neolithic (EAN), ca. 9000-6800 BC. Throughout the Neolithic eastern Mediterranean, the movement and circulation of both functional and ‘prestigious’ goods, including cereals, legumes, marble and obsidian was controlled by small groups of seafaring specialists. On Cyprus, the transportation of people and raw materials, and the introduction of new wild and domestic animals from the mainland required advanced navigational skills and the use of large, sophisticated boats. Controlled voyages between Cyprus and the mainland imply that mariners had developed a deep understanding of maritime space and distance by the early
Neolithic, which may have been accorded cosmological or ideological significance by coastal or island-dwelling communities. These skills were developed over many generations and arguably had their origins in the Palaeolithic. A survey of early Neolithic coastal sites on Cyprus suggests the existence of groups of specialised mariners, perhaps living separately from the main population centres, who were experienced in boatbuilding and navigating across the open sea. Their long-distance voyages became part of a much larger maritime interaction sphere that connected the island to the wider surrounding world. Knowledge of seafaring and the procurement of prestige goods from faraway places would have imbued mariners with a special status within early Neolithic society. As such, the study of sea travel provides important clues to social organisation and the creation of a new island identity on Cyprus. This paper affirms that the sea was as much a facilitator as a barrier to the people living either side of the maritime straits that separated the island from the mainland, and that, over time, seafaring may have assumed an ideological or ritualised/symbolic context.

56. Reconnecting the Maritime Levant at the Dawn of the Middle Bronze Age

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The beginning of the Middle Bronze Age IIa (MB IIA; 1950-1750 BC) in the Levant is characterized by the resumption of maritime trade after a hiatus following the demise of the Egyptian Old Kingdom and southern Levantine urban culture. The resettlement of the MBA southern Levant was a lowland phenomenon, primarily in the coastal plain, where sites were arrayed along often navigable rivers and on the coastline, typically near natural anchorages. These latter sites could interface with the longshore maritime traffic, which had resumed at least by 1908 BC, when sea-borne expeditions to the northern Levant are attested in the Annals of Amenemhet II and whose importance is underscored by the evidence for a ‘cedar trade war’ between Middle Kingdom Egypt and Byblos during the reign of Senwosret III some decades later. Material remains for these and other long distance maritime connections can be found in Egypt, but evidence for the involvement of the southern Levant has long been sparse and limited to the latter part of the period. Study of remains from the MB IIA site of Tel Ifshar in the central coastal plain of Israel has revealed extensive evidence of ceramic imports from Egypt, the Lebanon and Syria, as well as the regular import of cedar wood, all occurring in the earliest phases of Tel Ifshar. The early appearance and quantity of these ceramic finds, which include both transport containers and fancy drinking wares, have the potential to shed light on the longshore relations between the southern and northern Levant and may be indicative of the much more profound connections between the cultures of this region. A petrographic analysis demonstrates the various material cultural provinces whence these finds originate and the potential for identifying networks of cabotage.
57. Pre-Middle Bronze Age Maritime Exchange Networks between the Aegean and the Levant: An Anatolian Perspective

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The earliest direct contacts between the Aegean and the Levant have been dated traditionally to the late third millennium BC, in association with the introduction of sailing technology and with the consequent reduction of travel times and increased cargo capabilities. Among the reasons for this conceptual understanding are the scarcity of excavated Early Bronze Age sites along the southern Anatolian and northern Cypriot coasts, and the lack of synthetic studies of west-central Anatolian archaeological assemblages. The paper aims to provide the first coherent assessment of the archaeological evidence for pre-Middle Bronze Age maritime networks in the area, analysing a range of finished products, raw materials and technological know-how shared between Anatolia, the Aegean and the Levant. A detailed chronological assessment of the retrieval contexts enables re-dating of the earliest contacts to the late fourth millennium BC. An in-depth study of consumption contexts further shows that Levantine products and innovations are generally restricted to elite milieus and specialized metallurgical workshops, suggesting that access to the vast amount of Anatolian metal resources might have been an important rationale behind the establishment of such networks. This paper also suggests that the southern and western Anatolian seaboard acted not only as a mediator between the Aegean and the Levant, but also as a region where technologies and behaviours were intensely re-elaborated and absorbed into the fabric of the local communities before being transferred to groups farther west and east.

58. Piracy in the Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean?

A. Bernard Knapp (Archaeology, Department of Humanities, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, Scotland)

Piracy is likely as ancient as the emergence of sailing ships on the high seas, and some suggest that the Mediterranean was the birthplace of piracy. Later, historical examples indicate that piracy could have offered to certain mobile, seafaring peoples a way to enter the lucrative commerce of the eastern Mediterranean Late Bronze Age (LBA). The archaeological literature on ‘piracy’ during the Bronze Age, however, is in most cases limited in scope, controversial and often contradictory. And all this archaeological manoeuvring does little to instil confidence in our ability to establish the existence of pirates or piratical activity in the material record of the Bronze Age. Moreover, there is no mention in any LBA cuneiform or Linear B document of ‘piracy’ or ‘pirates’ per se – or of any words translated as such. Indeed, the Greek word that reflects ‘pirates’ – πειρατῆς, peiratis – is not attested until the fourth or third centuries BC. This paper considers a wide range of LBA textual and archaeological evidence from Cyprus, Egypt, Anatolia and the Levant and concludes that (1) there is no unequivocal association between the wide sweep of material culture that has been linked to LBA piracy and what has been termed a ‘culture of piracy’, and (2) there is little correlation between piratical activity (i.e. sea-based encounters) as known from any later period and the actions or representations called into evidence for the Late Bronze Age. Thus if we use such terms as ‘piracy’ or ‘pirates’ in
prehistoric contexts, we should do so with more caution and less hyperbole.

59. Levantine Connectivities

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Current research recognizes a significant bias in our understanding of Mediterranean connectivity in antiquity, emanating from persistent scholarly focus on large artificial harbours, regular long-distance routes, and high-value goods, shipped on board big, sophisticated ships during a carefully observed sailing season. Left out of the picture are the small ships of *cabotage*, carrying a great variety of goods, and travelling throughout the year along short, mutable routes with frequent stops. These are Horden and Purcell’s ‘proletarians of the sea’, and their routine often involved small anchorages, natural or slightly modified. In the southern Levant, notorious for its unwelcoming coastline, it was the sites of Akko-Ptolemais during the Hellenistic period, and Caesarea Maritima during the Roman period, that detracted scholarly attention from numerous smaller coastal sites, undeveloped and unregulated by centralized control, and often scarcely documented. It is also for this reason that the area between Tyre and Gaza is still little represented in general discussions of Mediterranean connectivity, and is yet to be examined against prevailing paradigms, including that of ‘connectivities’, which aims to examine regional interactions in a holistic way, acknowledging the diversity of possible ways, extents and dimensions of connections within the Mediterranean. This paper focuses on the late Hellenistic and early Roman period. From a micro-regional perspective, it is not only along the coastline that greater importance should be accorded to the economic significance of smaller sites. To the extent that they too were ‘corrupted’ by the sea, the inland should also be incorporated into the examination of the southern Levant’s part within Mediterranean networks. Material culture is naturally the key for such an evaluation, and using such indicators as the circulation of ceramics, building materials and technological innovations, the southern Levant may be portrayed as a highly connected Mediterranean micro-region.

60. Making Connectivity Visible: A Study in Maritime Interactions in the Eastern Mediterranean from the Late Bronze Age to the Archaic Period

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The importance of the Mediterranean as a connecting force has already been analyzed in many past and present studies, among them highly influential ones such as Fernand Braudel’s *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (1949); Horden and Purcell’s *The Corrupting Sea* (2000) and Cyprian Broodbank’s *The Making of the Middle Sea* (2013). This paper seeks to shed light on a particular aspect of connectivity — namely, the dependency on a functional maritime network to sustain growing communities — by looking at the evidence from shipwrecks and building upon the works of the aforementioned authors. Is such a dependency visible in the archaeological record? What strategies might have been
employed to sustain trade subsystems in a time of Mediterranean history that has seen important changes such as the rise of the classical *polis*? To answer such questions, shipwrecks serve as a particularly noteworthy category of evidence. Shipwrecks, through their synchronic value, remain a unique source of information about seaborne activities. They are homogeneous in terms of event, conditions and agents, albeit intrusive material can be found and organic material is less likely to survive. In Braudelian terms, a shipwreck belongs to the *histoire événementielle* and this ‘event’ can be used to interpret larger economic or cultural processes. They are an exceptionally valuable type of evidence for understanding the different economic and social systems in which exchange was undertaken. Their cargo was assembled intentionally, thus reflecting a specific behavior. Sailing patterns inform us about contact between regions and assess the structure and nature of maritime networks. Cargo composition gives evidence of demand and supply with each wreck being a node in a wider network.

61. Points of Intersection – ‘Emporia’ and Their Archaeological Remains

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Improvements in ancient shipbuilding made ships faster and voyages safer. As soon as the Greeks adopted new innovations from the Phoenicians, their maritime expansion benefited from it. As a result, Greece’s trade in the ancient Mediterranean increased rapidly. A central element in the organisation of ancient trade and the exchange of goods in the Mediterranean was the development of the so-called ‘emporia’. This was certainly a first step towards a new era of mingling in the Mediterranean, emerging artificial harbour constructions and security strategies. Subsequently, the construction of artificial harbour installations played an important role in constituting a vibrant maritime trade and cross-cultural exchange. However, the phenomenon ‘emporion’ remains unclear in the current theoretical discourses and lacks a coherent definition. Therefore, a systematic study of the archaeological record not only offers a way out of the definitional dilemma regarding this type of harbour, but also analyses architectural, cultural and institutional aspects and the material culture of trade networks in the ancient Mediterranean. In order to understand the interdependencies of human impact and social networks, archaeological case studies will analyse socio-spatial and socio-economic dimensions of trade networks in ancient Greece and its colonies in Asia Minor and Magna Graecia.

62. Maritime Connectivity Network Analysis via a Case Study of the Metallic Assemblage from Rochelongue Shipwreck Site (eight-sixth century BC) West Languedoc, France

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The analysis of material culture has proven to be essential in tracing cultural interactions and understanding socio-economic changes and processes in culture contacts and colonial settings. The research project discussed in this paper uses such an approach, based on cultural material
distributions, to investigate the so-called Rochelongue (France) shipwreck, maritime networks within west Languedoc, and connectivity with the broader Mediterranean world. During the eighth to sixth centuries BC, Early Iron Age communities along the western Languedoc coast of France, part of a widespread continental cultural tradition, became increasingly entangled with Mediterranean peoples who were arriving by sea and, thus, experienced social and cultural transformations. The underwater site, excavated in the 1960s at Rochelongue, near Cap d’Agde, sits squarely within this milieu, both temporally and geographically. Artefacts represented at this underwater site have been found also in central Mediterranean and ‘oriental’ sanctuaries such as in Sicily and at Perachora in Corinth. The Rochelongue site yielded an assortment of mostly metallic objects of native and foreign cultural provenance that provides an opportunity to investigate connectivity in the western Mediterranean through the lens of regional and long-distance maritime trade networks, to be reconstructed from provenance studies and geographical and contextual distributions of similar material. Within the framework of this network model, this paper explores the repercussions of this connectivity in terms of cultural and technological influences, social dynamics and the cognitive consequences of such.