

RED SEA VIII: COVETED TREASURE

THE ECONOMY OF NATURAL RESOURCES:
EXTRACTION, PROCESSING AND TRADE

International conference on the peoples
of the Red Sea region and their environment

4–9 JULY 2017

Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw
www.redsea8.uw.edu.pl

Warsaw, 25 August 2016

The POLISH CENTRE OF MEDITERRANEAN ARCHAEOLOGY UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW is proud to host the **Red Sea VIII Conference**, previously hosted by the British Museum, University of Southampton, University of Exeter (UK), University of Tabuk (KSA) and University of Naples "L'Orientale" (Italy).

The Polish Centre is a relative newcomer to the field, but already successful as the co-organizer of the American–Polish leg of the Berenike Project on the Egyptian Red Sea coast since 2008. It is excavating now at Aynuna (Leuke Kome?) on the Arabian Red Sea coast and has been actively exploring a number of sites in Kuwait (Bahra 1 and Failaka Island), recently embarking on a project in Oman (Qumayrah).

Exciting discoveries of different kinds of natural resources, including copper in Aynuna and minerals in Berenike, have led us to propose for the theme of the conference issues connected with the economy of natural resources, their extraction, processing and subsequent trade that stood behind a flourishing crafts industry throughout the long history of the region. Ten years after the Red Sea III conference on Natural Resources and Cultural Connections of the Red Sea, held at the British Museum on 27–28 October 2006, we believe enough new data has been made available to warrant another in-depth look at the theme.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Our main theme will concern natural resources, the coveted treasure of ancient economies on the Red Sea. Papers and posters are invited on:

- archaeology of natural resources extraction and processing (mines, workshops, etc.);
- economic significance of commerce in natural resources passing through the Red Sea;
- intermediaries in the natural resources trade ("*Who dun'it*");
- other archaeological categories coexistent with the natural resources trade (pottery, glass etc.)
- language/epigraphy: terms for natural resources: mining and processing/crafts work
- ethnoarchaeological evidence for exploitation and processing of natural resources



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To organize the discussion, we propose to organize the following panels:

Panel 1: Natural resources on the move

The main objective of the archaeological approach will be to work toward a network visualisation of how the different commodities – natural resources specifically –and related finds moved according to different patterns. The results will then be compared to a similar network analysis of comparable commodities traded along the Red Sea, extracted as a list from the *Periplus*, the 1st century AD sailing and trading guide. We shall seek to include in the workshop the different places represented in the *Periplus*, which are currently under excavation.

Panel organizers: Dr. Eivind Seland (University of Bergen), Prof. Steven E. Sidebotham (University of Delaware), Iwona Zych (PCMA UW), Joanna K. Rądkowska (PCMA UW)

Panel 2 (co-organized with the State Archaeological Museum in Warsaw)

Indian steel and other metals: reconstructing the metalworking craft

The panel will take a look at metalworking technologies from prehistoric times to the Islamic period. A workshop organized as part of the session will conduct an experiment aimed at reconstructing the unknown process of melting hypereuctectoid steel, commonly known as Indian steel, in its variant produced in antiquity between 300 BC and AD 600. Participants will observe the preparation of a melting crucible and the actual melting process, as well as see the results — if successful. The discussion and presentations will concern metal as a resource as well as metal objects as a category.

Panel organizers: Marek Woźniak (PCMA UW), Władysław Weker (State Archaeological Museum in Warsaw), Martin Hense (University of Leiden)

Panel 3: On the 'Bead Road'... Studying materials and techniques for the jeweler's craft in the Western Indian Ocean Basin

Long disregarded and overlooked in research, personal adornments are an important aspect of material culture which can contribute significantly to studies of economic, social and even political issues. The aim of this workshop is to provide an overview of ancient jewelry from various periods, beads in particular, circulating in the Red Sea and around the Arabian Peninsula to East Africa and India. In line with the main theme of the conference, we will focus on raw materials and technologies for the production of beads and other personal adornments, their origins and distribution. By highlighting diverse aspects connected with raw material extraction and technologies for making adornments, we intend to bring out the wider chronological and geographical context of the overseas trade in the products themselves, as well as the background commerce in supply materials essential for the pursuance of the craft.

Panel organizers: Dr. Joanna Then-Obtuska (PCMA UW), Dr. Zuzanna Wygnańska (PCMA UW)

Panel 4: Incense trade in the Red Sea

Incense was one of the most important luxury items of trade in antiquity. The **incense trade** flourished from the 8th century BC to approximately the 2nd century AD and linked the incense producing areas of Arabia and Africa with markets as far and wide as the Mediterranean, the Levant, Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Indus and China. This trade led to many wide scale cultural, social, political and economic changes. With this special session we would like to investigate the socio-political and economic implications of this trade on the Red Sea regions, its people and its landscape. We welcome interested researchers from all disciplines to contribute to the discussion and envisage that this session will provide a stimulating setting for enriching discussions and helping promote studies of the impact of the incense trade within a multidisciplinary research arena.

Panel organizer: Dr. Julian Jansen van Rensburg (Dahlem Research School POINT Fellow Excellence Cluster Topoi)

Special session on climate change

In response to a general need expressed at various recent conferences, the organizers propose a separate session to undertake the issues of **climate change** as attested in the archaeological evidence from regularly excavated sites.

Sessions addressing current work in the region will include:

- **Current fieldwork:** recent results, news from the field
- **Conservation and site management** issues
- **Lamps on the Red Sea caravan and coastal routes:** Special session organized in cooperation with the International Lychnological Society (ILA), aimed at supplying an overview of the lamp assemblages from Red Sea sites

Papers and posters are invited on these topics. Proposals should include (see the Registration Form for details):

- Title of the Paper
- Name, affiliation, postal address and email of the proposer(s)
- Title of the session
- A short abstract/description of the theme or subject area of the Paper (not more than 250 words)

Papers should be planned for 30 minutes with time enough at the end of the paper for discussion. **Deadline for submission of abstracts is 3 March 2017.** Abstracts will be reviewed by the Scientific Committee and participants will be notified of acceptance by **16 April 2017.**

For the Organizing Committee

Iwona Zych
Deputy Director
Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology
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