



AMERICAN  
UNIVERSITY  
OF BEIRUT



*Archaeological Museum*

# NEWSLETTER

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Published by The Society of the Friends of the Museum  
December 2024 | vol. XXXVIII



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# INTRODUCTION

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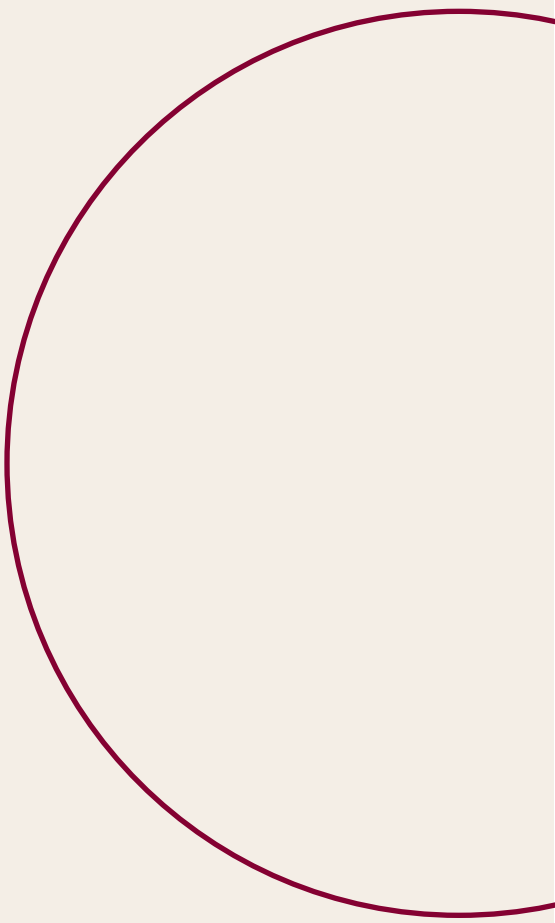
Welcome to the Fall edition of the Friends of the AUB Archaeological Museum Newsletter.

We find ourselves sharing this update during a critical time, as Lebanon grapples with immense violence and widespread displacement. We are deeply grateful that our beloved museum, along with its staff, friends, and supporters, remain safe. Yet, our hearts are heavy for those enduring instability and hardship.

Despite the abrupt curtailing of our program for the year, we feel it is important to reflect on the events of 2024 thus far. Among these were four captivating lectures, an International Museum Day that exceeded expectations, and two artistic events that beautifully enriched our museum's offerings.

We also expanded our outreach through the Children's Program, introducing new topics, and extended our educational initiatives with both

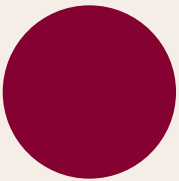





university and high school students. On the local front, we embarked on a meaningful trip to northern Lebanon, where our group explored ancient Christian archaeological sites. While it wasn't the grand, epic journey we had long anticipated—like our eagerly awaited trip to Al Ula, which has been postponed once again—this local adventure offered its own rich discoveries close to home.

The fame of our extraordinary shattered glass project continues to spread. Curator Nadine Panayot undertook a whirlwind trip to the National Museum of China in Beijing where 3-D facsimiles of our miraculous restored vessels were proudly displayed as best practice, and published in the United Nations Year of Glass book.

However, our reality has shifted once again. We now find ourselves adapting to a new emergency plan that must balance the desire for normalcy—






especially with the hybrid resumption of classes at the museum—with the pressing need to safeguard our collections in the face of a growing conflict. This challenging situation has prompted us to implement new protective measures and glean valuable lessons that will guide us in the days ahead.

While much remains planned for the future, that will have to wait for now.

On behalf of Dr. Panayot, the staff, and the Friends of the Museum, we wish you all well and look forward to brighter days when we can gather again.





# LECTURES

The AUB Archaeological Museum hosted or otherwise participated in a series of lectures across a range of topics.

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March 27, 2024

***Crusader Anfeh. A Tale of War and Peace, presented by Dr. Patricia Antaki***

***[Click here](#)***



Dr. Patricia Antaki

Following the arrival of the Crusaders in the Holy Land in 1099, their capture of Jerusalem that same year and their subsequent conquest of Tripoli a decade later, the town of Anfeh was seemingly seized by the Western armies. Shortly thereafter, it was integrated into the County of Tripoli as a lordship known as Nephin and remained as such for about two centuries.





## **The tale of war**

### **The historical accounts**

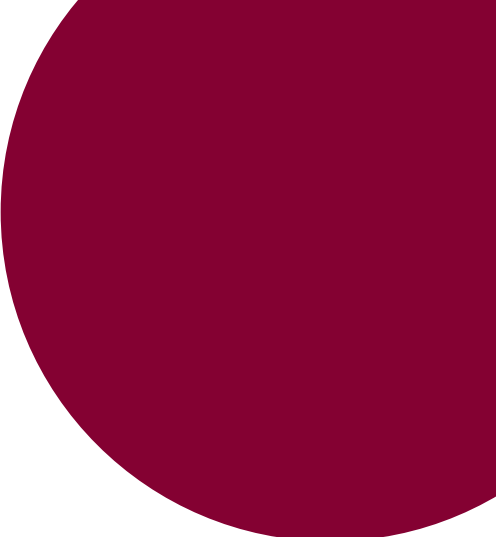
During this period, two battles stand out, as depicted by historical accounts each narrating a battle revolving around Anfeh. The first one occurred in 1205 when the lord of Nephin, Raynouard, had to renounce his fief and cede it to his overlord Bohemond IV, the count of Tripoli. The second fight lasted for seven years, from 1276 until 1282; it was marked by the confrontation between the count of Tripoli, at that time Bohemond VII, against his rivals, the knights Templars and their allies. Once more, the count of Tripoli emerged victorious and had his opponents imprisoned in a pit of the fortress of Anfeh, where they perished of starvation.

The final blow which led to the escape and departure of the Crusaders from Nephin (and the entire Holy Land) occurred in 1289, the year in which Tripoli fell to the Mamluk sultan Qalawun. Less than two months after the Mamluks' victory, all fortresses and towns fell into their hands.

According to the sources, Anfeh was







captured without any resistance. It seems that the Mamluks dismantled most of the fortress since some Crusaders briefly attempted to rebuild it ten years later in the vain hope of recapturing Tripoli. The place was subsequently abandoned.

## The archaeological evidence

The state of war and turmoil which characterizes this period entailed the need for protection through several means of defense:

The first defense line one would encounter in towns of this period is the city wall which enclosed the town. However, regrettably, no such feature has survived in Anfeh.

The second feature which ensured the protection of a town was its citadel, which housed the garrison and, sometimes, its governor. This monument is well known in Anfeh, as evidenced by the textual evidence. Several pilgrims have indeed mentioned the fortress, such as Burchard of Mount-Sion, who described it as entirely built in the sea and equipped with twelve towers.

The surviving archaeological evidence

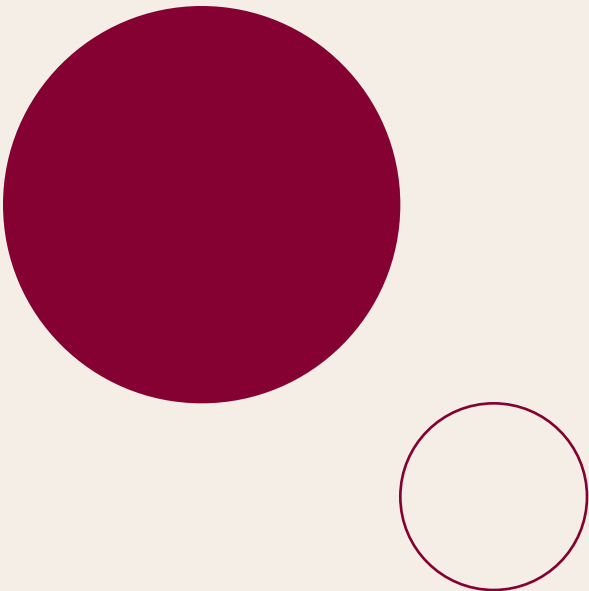


supports the texts and confirms that the fortress was erected on the peninsula, known today as Ras al Qalaat. Its outer wall was built on the edges of the rocky base on the seaside and on the rocky platforms that overlook the moats on the land side. Surviving sections of the walls show these were massive ones, some three meters thick; their linear negative imprints can also be observed in several places all over the edge of the peninsula.



Uncovering massive fortress walls with the help of an excavator





The fortress needed further protection from the landside where the peninsula connects with the mainland. To this end, three huge moats were dug across the peninsula and are today the most impressive features of the site. These moats are cut into the solid limestone rock, and are about 70 m long and 10 m wide. Timber bridges were needed to cross these spaces. The bridges have vanished, but a stone needle, 5 meters high, that carried one of them, still stands in the first moat.



The first moat and its bridge support



An interesting feature related to the second moat was discovered during the latest excavations in 2022: a long stairway connecting the second moat with an upper space.

In addition to these defensive features, a huge set of about 200 round stone projectiles was found adjoining one of the defensive walls. These missiles were usually employed in the most powerful siege engines of that time, the trebuchet or *manjaniq*.



The stone missiles at the time of their discovery





The trebuchet as represented in a miniature from the 13th c. Maciejowski Bible

## **The peace tale**

As for the peace period which was the prevailing one, the insight we get of it is related to two fields: the industrial one and the religious one.

## **Artisanal productions**

Three and possibly four artisanal activities were carried out in Anfeh.


- Oil production comes as no surprise in an area still planted with olive groves. The archaeological investigation has indeed revealed several oil presses. Three complete ones can be found on

the peninsula, in addition to numerous press elements scattered throughout the area. However, some of them have been dated to the Byzantine period (5th and 6th centuries) but seem to have been reused in the medieval period as indicated by the uncovered material.



The recently uncovered rock-cut Byzantine oil press







The fame of Anfeh was not only due to its oil production but also to its wine production, which was documented by 13th-century visitors who praised the good quality of the wine of Anfeh and its neighborhood. The excavations have yielded wine jars, recognizable by a hole at the bottom of their neck. Some of these were imported from Beirut, but others seem to have been produced locally.

Anfeh seems to have had its own pottery workshops, as attested by the presence among the excavated ceramic material of kiln bars used as supports for vessels, tripod stilts, which were used as spacers, and pottery wasters.

Another possible product is sugar. This is also an expected staple in an area known for its sugarcane plantations and sugar refineries throughout the medieval period, from the 11th century up until the 15th century.



As a matter of fact, this was the place where Crusaders discovered sugarcane for the first time. The presence of a sugar refinery in Anfeh can be likely inferred by the presence, although in very few numbers, of specific vessels used during the final processing stage of sugar production. These are the conical sugar molds that were pierced at the base and placed on top of the molasses jars.

## **The religious buildings**

The inhabitants of Anfeh and its neighborhood, mostly Christians, could practice their religious rituals in several places.

Within Anfeh, in Saint Catherine church, which displays on its façade typical Western Romanesque features; in Saydet el Rih or Our Lady of the Winds' chapel, decorated with mural paintings and whose excavation has revealed it was built on top of an older Byzantine chapel; in Saints Simeon and Michael church, next to St. Catherine and rebuilt in the Ottoman period; and possibly also in Mar Edna, in Saydet el Kharayeb; in the ancient St. Georges' church which has been replaced by the new one; in Saint John the Baptist monastery, and in the chapel of Deir el Ahmar.

In Anfeh's surroundings, worshippers could offer their devotions in the rock-shelter of Saint Marina in Qalamun, with ornate mural paintings representing the saint's life; in the monastery of Belmont founded by Cistercian monks in the 12th century, or in the church of Saint Barbara in Barghoun, which is currently being investigated.



Angel fresco from the apse of St Barbara church



## **Artefacts related to the cult**


Oil lamps were commonly found inside churches, and in many other places. The excavations have yielded two major types: the saucer type with an oil reservoir, assigned to the 12th and 13th centuries; and the same type bearing, instead of the reservoir, a small ring or no ring at all, dating back to the Mamluk period.

Six pierced scallop shells were found during the excavations. These were protective badges worn by pilgrims who had been to Santiago de Compostela. They were either worn around their necks or attached to their clothing, such as their tunic, hat, or purse. Hordes of pilgrims used to visit Jerusalem and the Holy Land at this time and seem to have stopped by Anfeh on their way.



## Conclusion

This tale of war and peace gives an insight into Nephin, a modest lordship of the county of Tripoli, during this time. It illustrates what most cities endured in times of war and how they protected themselves with city walls, fortresses, moats, and stone projectiles. It also highlights the way town dwellers lived and performed their religious duties and devotions in a large array of hallowed places, from rock-shelter oratories to churches and monasteries; also how they performed several economic and industrial activities in their workshops such as oil, wine and pottery production but also possibly sugar refining. The varied ceramic material reflects a substantial trade both nearby and far away.



However, despite the considerable amount of work that has already been achieved since excavations started in 2011 by the Department of Archaeology and Museology of the University of Balamand and, in 2022, in collaboration with the AUB Museum, many questions remain. The adventure in search of Anfeh's past is still at its threshold.



April 9, 2024

***Connecting Archaeological Thinking  
With The Sociology Of Post-Colonial  
France, presented by  
Dr. John Veugelers***

This lecture was a collaboration between the AUB Archaeological Museum and the Department of Political Studies & Public Administration at the AUB Faculty of Arts and Science. Dr. Veugelers is a Professor of Sociology at the University of Toronto.



**AMERICAN  
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Cordially invite you to attend a presentation  
on

**CONNECTING  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
THINKING WITH  
THE SOCIOLOGY  
OF POST-COLONIAL  
FRANCE** \_\_\_\_\_

By

**DR. JOHN VEUGELERS**  
Professor of Sociology  
at the University of Toronto

**TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 2024 | 12:30 PM**  
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM**



April 17, 2024

# An Outstanding Heritage: Churches And Icons Of Tripoli And Koura, presented by Dr. Ray Jabre Mouawad





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Sheikh Zayed Chair for Arabic  
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Cordially Invite you to a Lecture entitled

**AN OUTSTANDING  
HERITAGE:  
CHURCHES AND  
ICONS OF TRIPOLI  
AND KOURA**

Speaker

**Dr. Ray Jabre Mouawad**

Tripoli and the adjacent Koura plain have the largest concentration of medieval churches, built in the XIth and XIIIth centuries during the Crusades. In the later Ottoman period, local Orthodox communities added magnificent iconostases to these churches, commissioning the work to painters from Aleppo, Jerusalem and Crete. Their icons constitute a precious artistic heritage for Lebanon, as well as an unexpected source on the history of Tripoli and its region during the Ottoman era.

Ray Jabre Mouawad (PhD.) is one of the founders of the Association for the Restoration and Study of Medieval Frescoes of Lebanon, and currently an active member at the Center for Documentation and Arab Christian Research at Saint-Joseph University in Beirut. She published several books: The Maronites (2009 Brepols); The Abillama Emirs of the Metn: 13th-19th Century in association with Pr. Levon Nordigulan (2012 Al-Nahar), and Icônes et Eglises de Tripoli – Liban (2023).

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17, 2024 | 5:30 PM

AUB ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

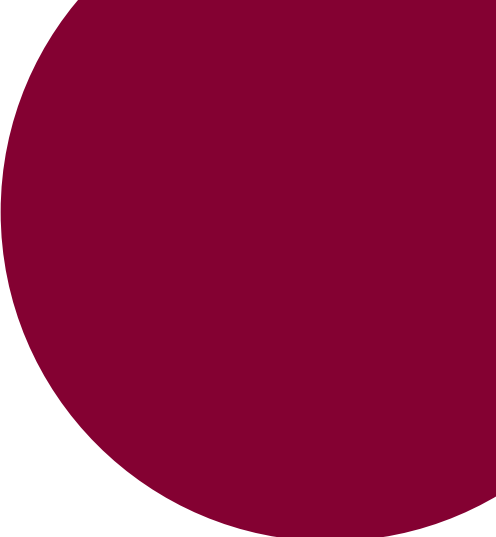
Followed by a reception



A photograph showing Dr. Ray Jabre Mouawad seated at a table covered with a purple cloth, signing books. Two men are standing in front of her, looking at a large display case filled with Paleolithic artifacts. The display case is labeled 'THE PALEOLITHIC PERIOD' and 'Lower Paleolithic' and 'Middle Paleolithic'. The setting appears to be a museum or gallery.


Book signing by Dr. Ray Jabre Mouawad





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Tripoli and the villages of the Koura district east of the city have the largest Greek Orthodox communities in Lebanon. During the Ottoman period they built their churches with a structure inherited from Byzantium that separates the sanctuary, only accessible to the clergy, from the nave where the faithful stand. The structure, known as an iconostasis, houses icons placed in it according to a specific spiritual configuration, with the cross of the Golgotha on the summit down to icons beside the Royal Door.





Iconostasis of the church of Saint-George,  
Mina – Tripoli

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Dergham [www.dergham.com](http://www.dergham.com)



## The icon of Keftun

So far, it seems that the oldest icon of the area – and perhaps Lebanon - belongs to the Orthodox monastery of Our Lady of Keftun (XIIIth c.). The icon may have been painted in an icon workshop within the Frankish County of Tripoli. It is two sided: on one side the Virgin *Hodigitria*, or “Guide,” points towards the child Jesus, and on the reverse side is a rare representation of the Baptism of Christ that bears inscriptions in three languages: Greek, Syriac, and Arabic. Lebanon was already multilingual at the time.

## The icon of Balamand

The second oldest icon belongs to the monastery of Our Lady of Balamand. It is also a Virgin *Hodigitria*. The dedication inscription at the bottom gives us a date, 1318, which is precious information as this is probably the year that the Greek Orthodox monks arrived in Balamand after the Mamluks conquered Tripoli from the Crusaders.

## **Neemet and Hanania al-Musawwir**

The Ottoman period witnessed a renaissance in icon painting when two great iconographers from Aleppo, Neemet al-Musawwir and his son Hanania, were invited to Balamand and commissioned to paint icons by the abbots of the monastery. Their icons can still be viewed in Balamand today.

In the XVIIIth century, the enthusiasm for icons spread from Balamand to the churches in Koura and Tripoli. In 1702, Makarios, the bishop of Tripoli, commissioned Neemet al-Musawwir to paint several icons for Saint-Nicolas Cathedral, located under the Tripoli citadel.

One of these icons is of particular interest. It represents Saints Peter and Paul, the two pillars of the Church. Peter holds his keys (of Paradise) and Paul holds a holy book. Curiously, together the two apostles also hold a church with minarets and Islamic ornamental features! This special icon is in fact a homage to Saint-Sophia,

the famous basilica built by Byzantine emperor Justinian in Constantinople in the VIth century. It became a mosque after the Ottoman conquest in 1453, but no matter what, the heart of the Christian Orthodox of Northern Lebanon was still beating for the lost Byzantine Empire.



Saint Peter and Paul, 1702, attributed to Neemet al-Musawwir, church of Saint-Nicolas, Tripoli



Four years after his father's death (1724), Hanania al-Musawwir was invited to paint icons for the church of Deir Sayyidat al-Natour. This lovely little monastery on the shore of the Mediterranean probably dates back to the XIIth century. Only three icons remain from Hanania's works among which a "Virgin of the Sea" (my title) is seated on a throne, holding the Christ child. Her veil and the circular shape of the throne give the impression that she and her son are floating above the water, in the heart of a storm. At the bottom left of the icon, a small ship appears about to capsize. From its deck the sailors implore Our Lady to grant them her protection. She extends a soothing hand towards them while the Christ child blesses them.

## **Hanna al-Qudsi**

The Aleppan Musawwirs were followed to Tripoli by Hanna al-Qudsi, an iconographer from al-Quds (Jerusalem).



Between 1721-1745 the Tripoli bishops commissioned many icons from Hanna al-Qudsi. These were financed by the wealthier Tripolitan Greek Orthodox families who occupied important economical and administrative positions in the city as merchants, translators, accountants, or custom officers.

Hanna al-Qudsi's style differs from the classical Musawwirs, and resembles the pilgrimage icons brought back to Tripoli by Orthodox pilgrims to the Holy Land. These pilgrimage icons portray fascinating spiritual Christian maps of Palestine. Very animated, with lots of different narratives, one of them can still be seen in the medieval church of Mar-Yaaqub Akhou al-Rabb in Kfarhazir - Koura.



Pilgrimage icon, XVIIIth c., church of Mar-Yaaqub, Kfarhazir – Koura



## Bishop Parthenios

Parthénios, the fourth iconographer, was bishop of Tripoli. He painted fascinating icons for Saint-Nicolas cathedral below the citadel, and for the monastery of Mar-Elias Shuwayya in the Metn province where he was summoned by Abbot Sophronios after an earthquake had nearly destroyed his church (1759). The works of Parthénios depict a strong personality and a deep faith. They can be seen in Saint-Nicolas and in Mar-Elias.




The good shepherd icon by Parthénios, the bishop of Tripoli, Saint-Nicolas cathedral – Tripoli

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[www.dergham.com](http://www.dergham.com)

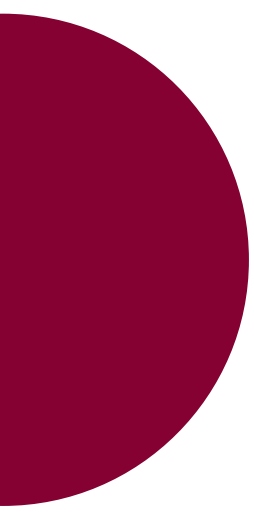


## Michael the Cretan

The last great iconographer, Michael Polychronis the Cretan, opened his workshop in Tripoli in 1815. His arrival in the city is linked to a dramatic event: the destruction of the ancient Saint-Nicolas Cathedral by the troops of Youssef Pasha the Ottoman governor of Damascus. While Youssef Pasha was trying to dislodge Barbar Agha, the governor of Tripoli, his soldiers pillaged the old city sparing neither khans, nor consulates, nor mosques. After Barbar's eviction, the Orthodox clergy and the people of Tripoli, witnessed their centennial cathedral in ruin. With the help of Muslim notabilities from Tripoli, they built a new church, the current Saint-Nicolas, in exchange for ceding their old cathedral that became a mosque. The bishop of Tripoli called upon Mikhail Polychronis the Cretan, a foreign iconographer who worked in Damascus for the Patriarch of Antioch. At the time, the prestige of Cretan icon painters was immense, both in Venice and in the East.



Michael the Cretan painted more than fifty icons for the new cathedral, financed by the families of the town. While perpetuating the tradition of Byzantine icons, the Cretan depicted his own style in icons representing the life of Jesus and that of his Virgin Mother. Although a foreigner, he showed himself to be committed to communicating with the Eastern faithful, having the Greek titles of the icons translated into Arabic, and providing each of them with explanatory inscriptions in that language. The icons of Michael the Cretan were later copied by dozens of iconographers after his return to Crete in 1820. He became very famous in the Orient.



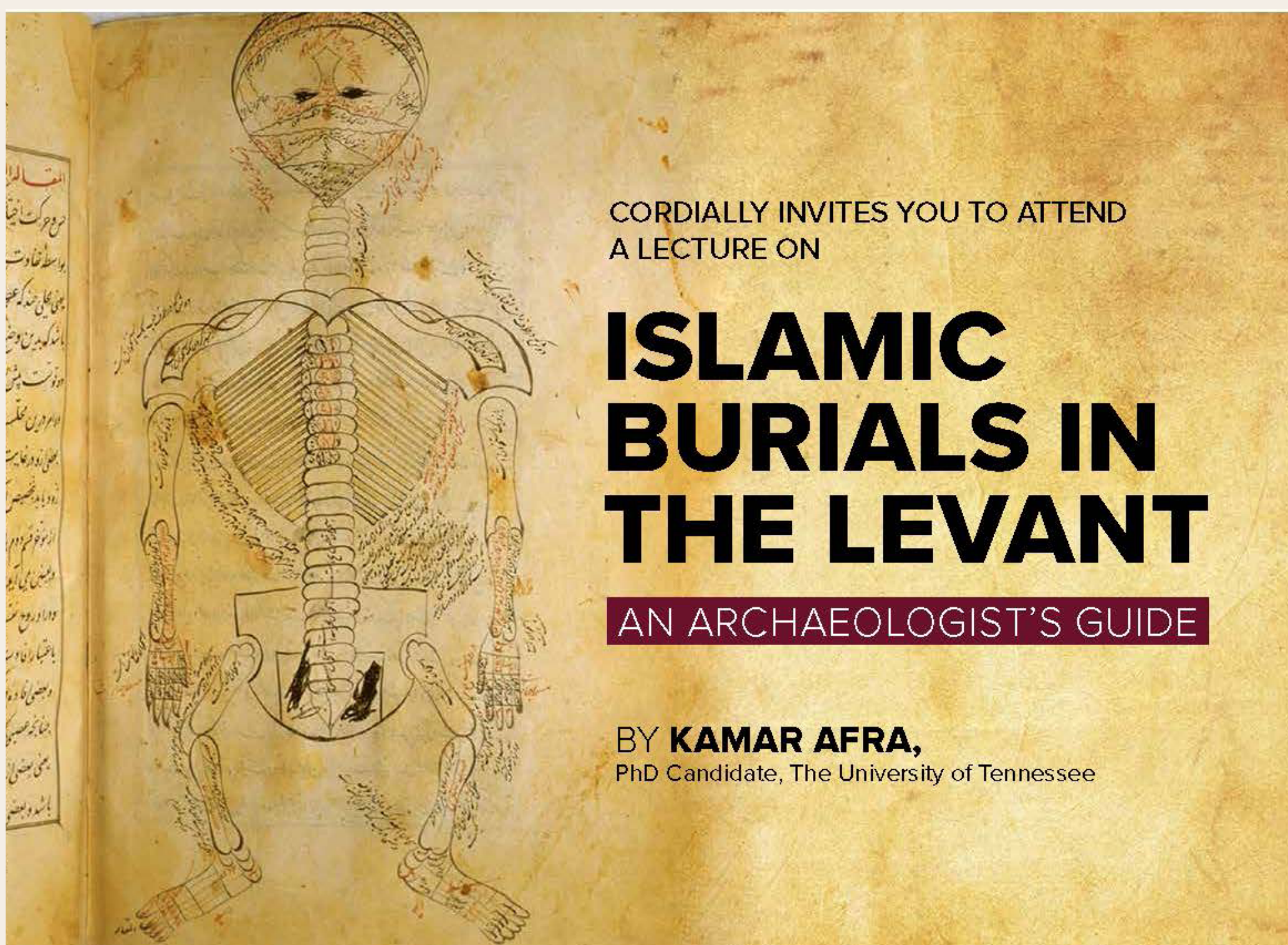


May 8, 2024

***Islamic Burials In The Levant. An Archaeologist's Guide*, presented by Karma Afra**



Dr. Samar Afra beginning her lecture






## **Islamic Civilization in the Levant and Death**

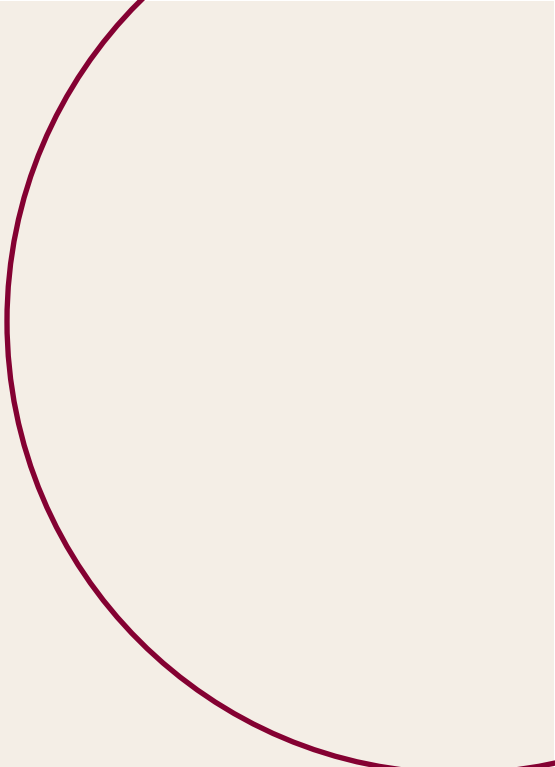
The early Islamic conquests that brought Muslim rule to the Levant included pivotal battles and political changes. The first presence of Muslims in the Levant was with the Caliphate Rashidun in 634 AD. As with any life cycle, there is death, and as such, there are burials. One of the earliest documented Islamic burials in the Levant was found in South Syria going back to the Ummayyad period (665-768 AD) (Srigyan et al., 2022). The Islamic dynasties occupied the region until the Ottoman Empire (1517-1920 CE). The succession of ruling power shaped historically Islamic culture from its advent until modern times within this region. However, despite such contributions to the cultural landscape, Islamic funerary practices sustained consistency within the performed rites and minor changes due to material availability, special circumstances, and geographical location.



## What Is an Islamic Body?

Consistency in Islamic funerary rites celebrates the collective identity cherished by Muslims based on their shared beliefs, practices, and traditions. Culture and collective identity contributed to consistent burial rites among Muslims in the Levant. While discussing mortuary rituals, one should connect it back to the definition of a body. A body is a sense of one's body as a fundamental product of the human mind. A body has agency and symbolism. The individual body can be used as a resistance and social change vehicle. Body ownership is driven through agency to control one's body movements and, through them, events in the external environment. Thus, a body can create a meaningful and material effect. In Islam, a body cannot be bound by a physical agentic body but also by a symbol. A *symbolic body* is a social body representing core values. This social entity connects the body to Islam, eventually leading to a connection between agency and symbolism. These different views of the

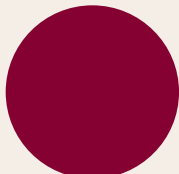




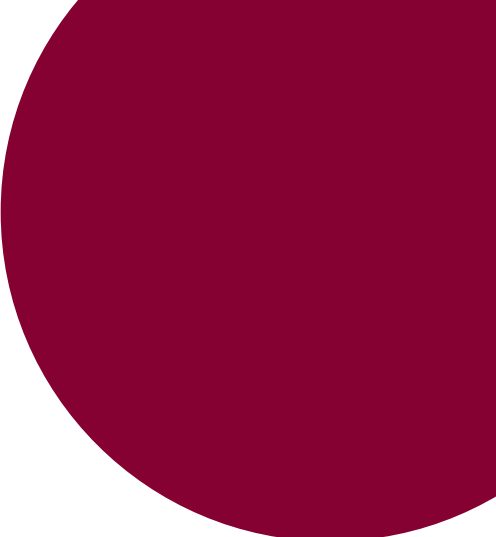
body as an autonomous entity versus a symbolic representation within cultural or religious contexts highlight the connection between religion, culture, and the person.

## **Management of the Body after Death in Islam**

The physical body is considered dead when it has no pulse, breathing, reflex, or papillary contraction. From a medical perspective, this person is considered dead. Still, in Islam, death is regarded as a state, a vehicle to transport the soul to its final destination, the afterlife. According to the Islamic faith, the physical body undergoes a series of preparations for the person to succeed in passing on the right side of the afterlife. Through this process, known as Islamic funerary rites, the body of the person undergoes a washing (*Gusl*), shrouding (*Kafan*), and a funeral (*Janaza*) to be placed in the burial (*Kabr*) looking at *Kaaba/Kibla* (Halevi, 2011; Kabbara, 2013). The different sections of these funerary practices highlighted modesty (*Hayaa*) and purity




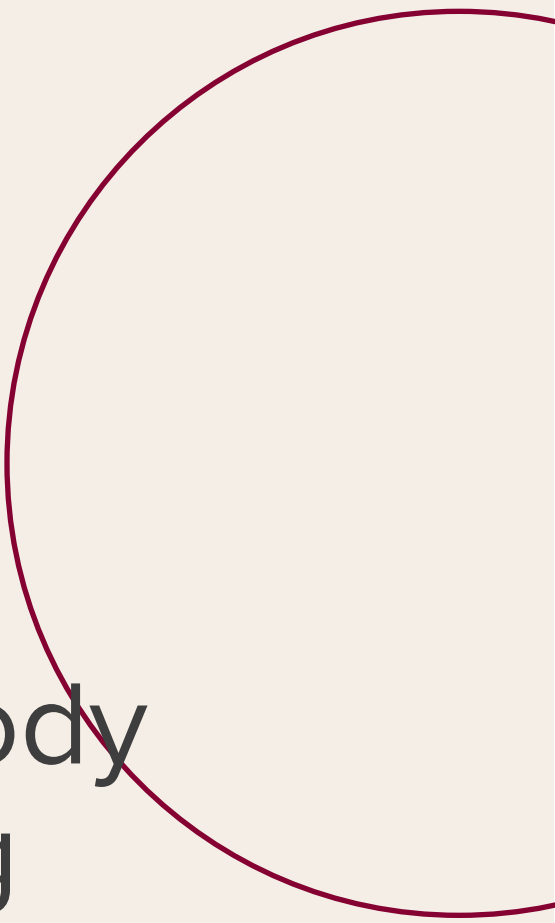




(*Tahara*) for the deceased's body. A body washer performs the washing and shrouding (Moussa, 2007; Kabbara, 2013). Even though the physical body is a vessel for the soul, Islam rectified the essence of the dignity of the dead (Al-Dawoody et al., 2021; AlQahtani & Adserias-Garriga, 2019).

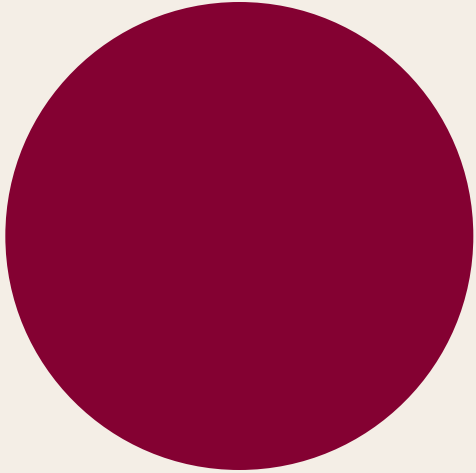
The physical body goes through taphonomic changes. Postmortem taphonomy includes rigor mortis (muscle contraction), liver mortis (saturation of blood due to gravity), and algor mortis (drop of temperature). Once early “fresh” stages pass, the body starts with active decomposition and bloating, and insect activities in advanced stages can lead to mummification or skeletonization. These stages can be affected by whether the body was buried or not, whether the body was in a casket or shrouded. (Emmons et al., 2021a; Alfsdotter et al. 2022).





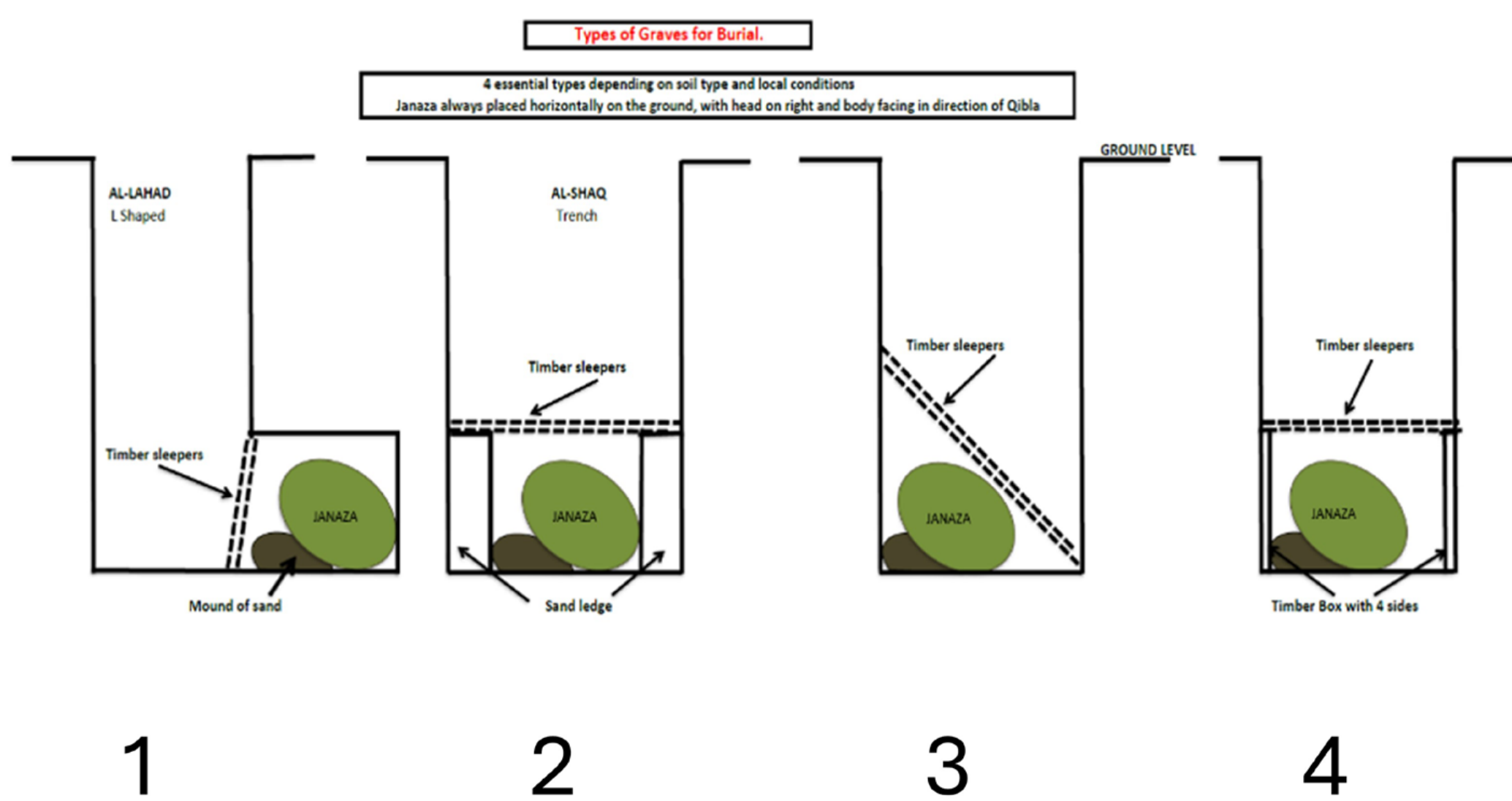
In Islamic funerary practices, if the body is already decomposing, the washing and shrouding can be completed as necessary. Extra shrouds are usually added to keep the dignity of the body and prevent any foul smells while adding some of the traditional funerary herbs such as camphor, *sidr*, and non-alcoholic essence (*Attar*) oil (Kabbara, 2013).

The *Janaza* itself recreates the essence of the Islamic social body where a community congregation gathers to perform a *Janaza* prayer for the dead. Finally, the body is carefully positioned in the grave on the right side, pointing to the *Kibla* (Halevi, 2011). The grave itself can have distinct feature layouts. For example, in Beirut, as early as the Rashidun Dynasty period, the *Al Shaq* method was employed, and it is still used due to the type of soil and sediments. *Al Lahad* is another method that is mainly observed in the Arabic peninsula. There have been some variations in the layout of the grave.





Still, it always has the body positioned on the right side, with its face toward *Kaaba/Kibla*, and a sleeper covering it, held by two ledgers if necessary. Across Islamic dynasties, traditional Islamic burials persisted with the same layout variations and changed materials depending on availability during that period.



The different variations of an Islamic burial: 1 represents the *Al-Lahad* layout, 2 represents the *Al-Shaq* method, and 3 and 4 represent variations of the *Al-Shaq* method.



## **Special circumstances: Tips for Recognizing an Islamic Burial**

Funerary practices adapted under unique conditions across time. We observed different distinctions in burials on special circumstances. There were some differences in burial practices based on locality and geography, where urban burials differed from rural ones. In highly condensed areas with low land availability, Islamic burials were used multiple times as family burials through special Islamic judicial laws. However, the lower population density and vast land in rural areas encouraged a more traditional route with one person per burial. However, we also observe slightly different layouts in rural areas influenced by neighboring cultures and traditions during colonial periods, such as burial rooms.


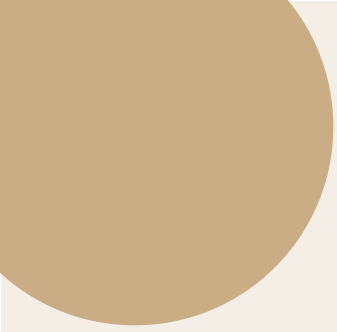






A final view of family burial found in an urban city.



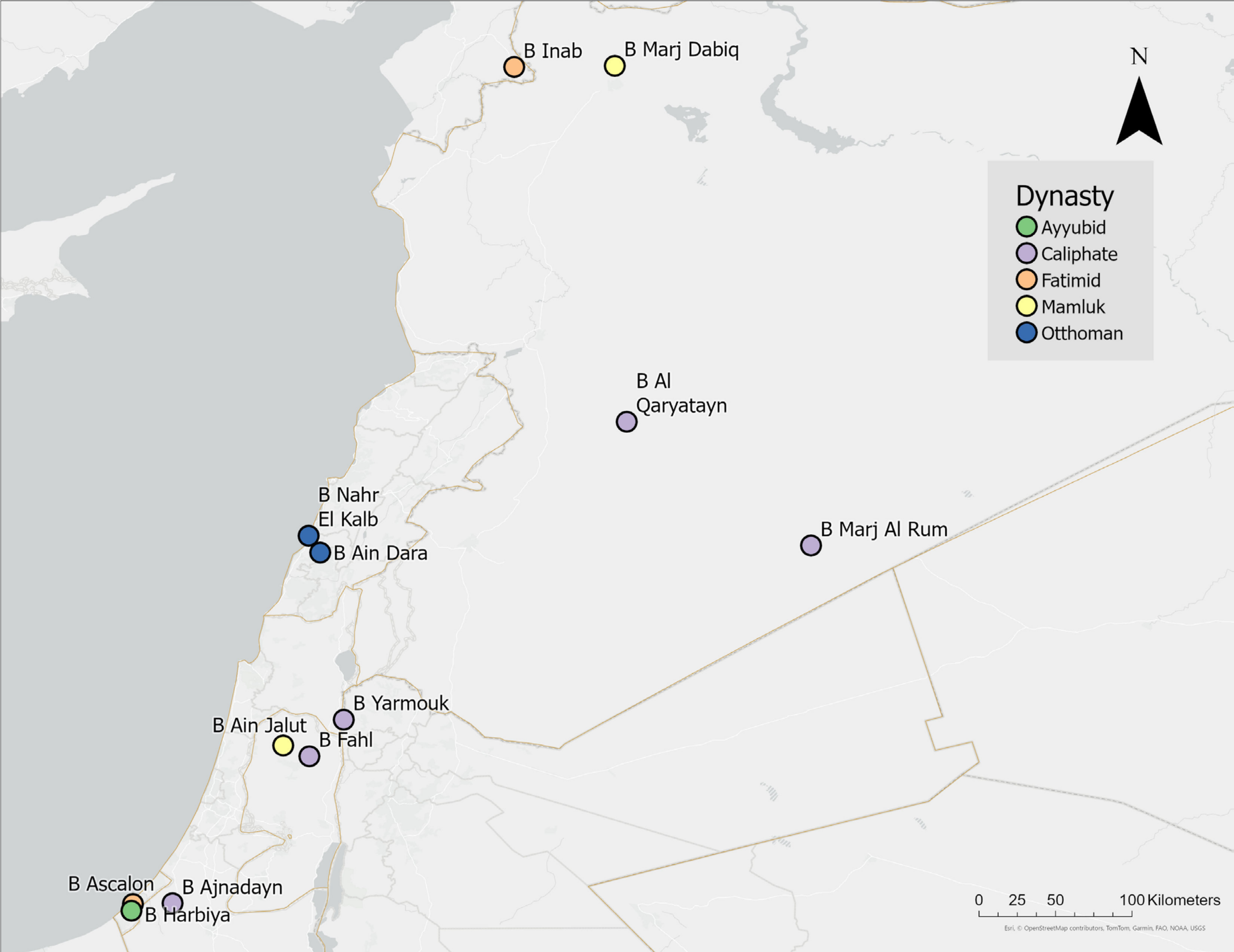
A final view of communal burial found in a village.



War and battles are another special circumstance that leads to a different layout in an Islamic burial. During these times, the treatment of the dead during and post conflict differs from regular times. The person who dies as a warrior is considered a martyr (*Shaheed*), and thus, they are automatically pure (*Taher*) with no need for washing or shrouding (Moussa, 2007). We often observe the presence of clothing and battle gear with the skeleton in an archeological context. However, their body would be positioned on the right side with their head toward *Kibla*. These individuals can be in individual or communal graves. In these situations, further investigation is required, including looking at contextual information through archival data for any battle sites near the burial location to test the hypothesis of the burial of a warrior/soldier. For example, there are several locations in the Levant where battles occurred during the different dynasties, and having such informational maps can help contextualize any archeological findings.

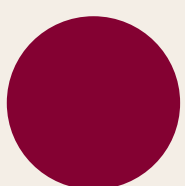







A map showing the different Battle sites that occurred during the different Islamic Dynasties.


Another unique burial layout can be observed during a pandemic or a plague. The bodies of the sick can be buried in communal graves to adjust to widespread illness and higher levels of death while keeping in mind the safety of the living (including the washer). Sometimes, with the large numbers of dead and the fear for the safety of the washer, washing and shrouding are not performed (Pradines, 2021). This unique burial can be observed in a modern case of the COVID-19 pandemic (Al-Dawoody, 2021). However, the bodies are always on their right side and facing *Kibla*.





Lastly, another unique burial can be related to “Extraordinary Bodies.” Even though, according to the teaching and *Sunnah* of the prophet, a burial should have minimal or no tombstone with dirt covering the surface, some “outliers” such as martyrs or saints are considered more holy to local culture provoking special Islamic burials, leading to a positioned shrine (Halevi, 2011). These shrines sometimes hold different types and colors of shrouds, like green instead of white, representing their holiness. Such representation reflects the local culture rather than the religion itself, such as in the case of Imam Ouzai in Lebanon (Fakhoury, 2018).

However, all these special types of burials have extrinsic contextual bubbles that lead archeologists and bioarcheologists to determine such unique situations. The focus on the study of ancient remains using modern technology helps gain insights into past lives and death practices.








## **Public Engagement for Sites with Islamic Burials and the Role of Archeologists with Religious Leaders**

Public engagement is part of public archaeology, which connects the community and the archeologist. Communities have distinct social values, structures, group alliances, common geographical location, and cultural identities. Thus, archeologists need to understand the community they are working with. To establish a connection, archeologists must be thoughtful in how they connect with their audience. They should respect the community's heritage while acknowledging their own situated knowledge and bias (Atalay, 2012).

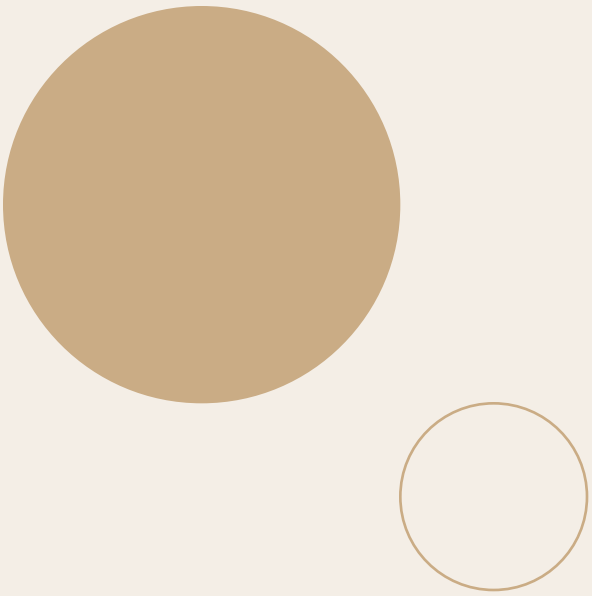
In a case study, archival data presented three historic cemeteries in Beirut, Lebanon (Shabaro, 2017). Bashura's cemetery is currently active and found in the middle of modern-day Beirut. It was the biggest cemetery in Beirut before the creation of the Martyr's cemetery in 1958 (Fakhoury, 2018). Al Kharijiyah cemetery was designated for foreigners regardless of their faith.




Santieh Cemetery was known as a smaller cemetery used mainly for Muslim locals. According to maps from the early 20th century to the current period, the last two cemeteries (Santieh and Kharijiyah) are no longer present; instead, development took place. The cemetery of Santieh provides an example of the mismanagement of public archeology in preserving its findings and the community's heritage.

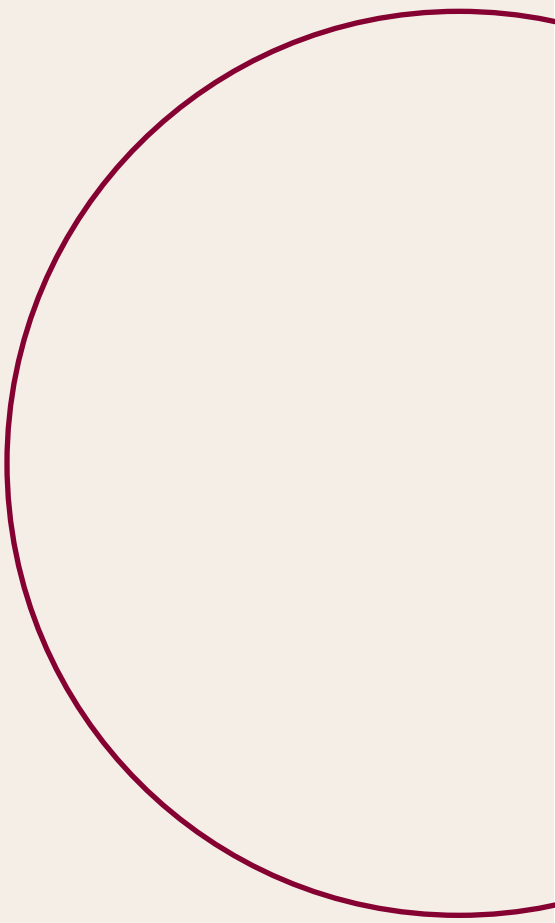
After the Civil War in the 1990s, and due to structural development, the cemetery was bought as land for later use. Unfortunately, prior to the excavations, foreign archeologists failed to properly document the information of the deceased buried there as part of the cultural resources management during a rescue excavation. Alas, the community lost the remains of their loved ones; they were told that the remains had drifted to sea, no longer available, and with no proper reburial.





That was until Dar el Fatwa (the Muslim Sunni religious leadership) intervened and designated the land as part of the land of the Muslims, allowing no one to interfere with it. However, the community had already suffered. Not knowing where the remains of their ancestors were, the descendants of the deceased lacked closure. The lack of transparency and respect toward the community created a negative association with foreign archeologists and Islamic burials. Currently, when an Islamic burial is found, onerous processes must be completed, sometimes hindering the true purpose of an archeological dig. Both parties, Muslim leadership and archeologists, are now anxious about the presence of a possible Islamic burial to prevent any mishaps.

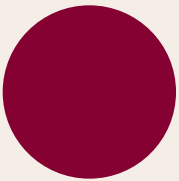




We observed similar cases that yielded different positive results in other parts of the world where the need for Indigenous communities was put in front of archeologists' need, such as Ireland and Australia (Crooke, 2010; Greer, 2010).

## **Conclusion**

Cemeteries are part of the heritage of a community. They are to be respected as the body of the dead. Thus, it is empirical to set strategies involving communities in archeological projects and collaboration between scientists and faith leaders. Islamic burials constitute a collective identity. The dignity of the dead is a priority in Islamic funerary rites. Islamic funerary rites are based on purity and modesty, all while preserving the health of the living. Thus, some theoretical practices differ slightly from practical ones depending on special circumstances, culture, and geography.





May 29, 2024

***Écriture Phénicienne: Recherches  
et Découvertes, presented by Prof.  
Françoise Briquel Chatonnet, Directrice  
de recherche au CNRS***

***[Click here](#)***



This presentation of new research in Phoenician epigraphy covers both new documents and new readings or interpretations of ancient documents.

## Discovering new documents

The documents studied here are not all spectacular. There has been no recent discovery of prestigious inscriptions like that of the sarcophagi of Eshmunazor or Ahirôm. But they are interesting in that they lift the veil on little-known aspects of Phoenician culture.

## Sidon

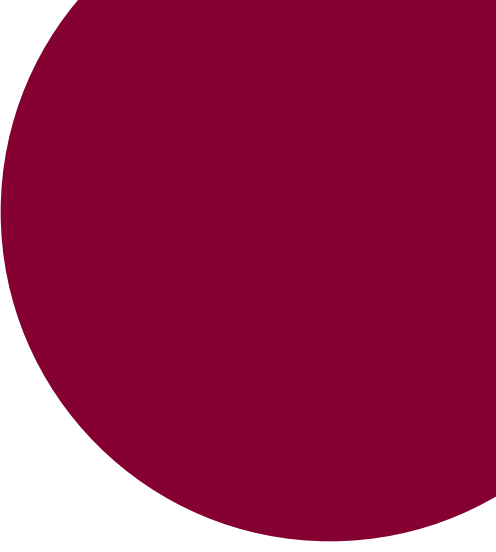
While nothing was known to predate the Persian period, in the 6th century, such as the sarcophagi of Tabnit and Eshmunazor, these new discoveries give evidence of Phoenician writing back to the period of the Phoenician kingdoms. This is not in itself a surprise - we suspected that writing was already being done before the 6th century - but it is important to have evidence of it.



- **The inscribed sherd from Sidon at the College Site.** This was found by Claude Doumet-Serhal on the site known as College Site in Sidon, in the rubbish dump of a cult building. According to the paleography and in parallel with an inscription on a bronze bowl bearing a dedication to Baal of Lebanon, it may date back to the first half of the 7th century. It mentions sacrificial altars, which are linked to an 'Abday character, perhaps a sacrificer, a priest or even a scribe.




Inscribed sherd from Sidon, College Site,  
from P. Bordreuil and Cl. Doumet Serhal,  
“Un nouveau temple phénicien à Sidon”,  
CRAI 2013, p. 91.



- The Sidon inscriptions at the “Saint Joseph de l’apparition” College. M. Khreich who did the study which is in press in BAAL has authorized me to talk about it here. These are eight objects bearing inscriptions in Phoenician found during Myriam Ziade’s excavations in 2017-2018. They are the oldest Phoenician inscriptions found in southern Lebanon and date from between the ninth and seventh centuries. We can only hope that they will soon be published.

## **Tell Kazel**

These fragmentary epigraphs were published in the volume *Nuit de Pleine Lune sur Amurru* dedicated to Dr. Leila Badre. The first, which mentions a quantity of a product and includes a proper name, probably refers to a delivery. It is particularly interesting because its spelling is contemporary with the archaic inscriptions of Byblos (early ninth century?). The second dates back from the same period. These inscriptions are especially important because they confirm the spread of Phoenician writing from the beginning of the first millennium well to the north of Byblos, in the plain of ‘Akkar, where Phoenician was written throughout the Phoenician period.





The presence of archaic Phoenician writing on common ceramics also shows that Phoenician writing was in common use very early on, outside of royal display (Byblos inscriptions) or symbolic use (arrowheads).



Sherd from Tell Kazel from F. Biquel Chatonnet and E. Gubel, in *Pleine Lune sur Amurru*



## **Chypre : kingdom of Kition and Idalion**

The most spectacular discovery came from the Maria Hadjicosti excavations. This is the first archive of Phoenician documents to be published by the late M.G. Amadasi Guzzo and J.A. Zamora. The ostraca were discovered in 1992 and excavations were completed in 2012, unearthing 733 documents, 31 of which are in Cypriot syllabic Greek and the rest in Phoenician. Most of them are inscribed in ink, either on pottery sherds or on stone plaques. They can be dated to the 4th century BC, mentioning the reigns of Milkiyaton and Ptolemy.

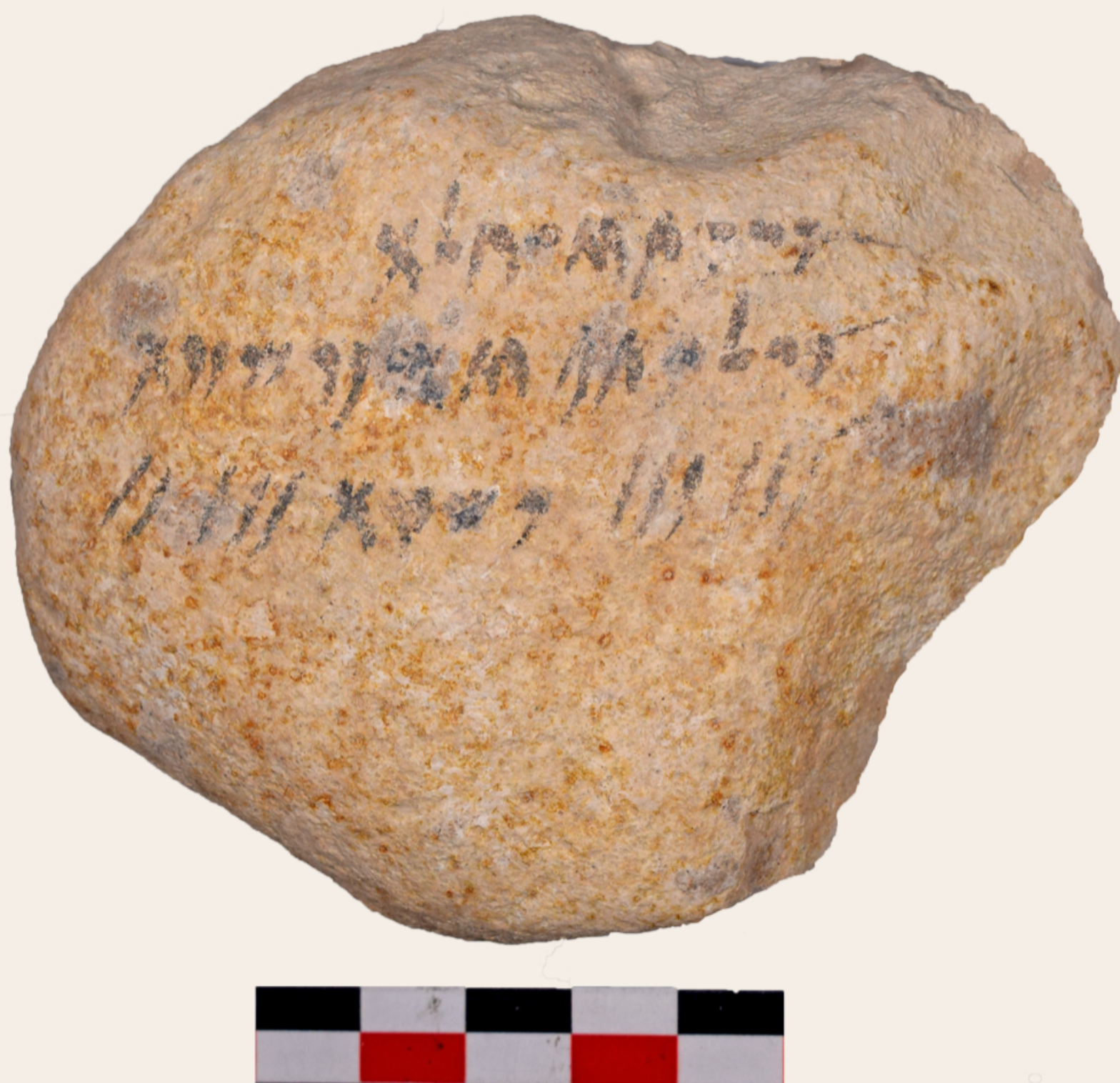
The content is administrative and economic. But it is difficult to decipher because the ink is often faded, the cursive script not always well traced and the type of content is new, containing unknown words not used in stone inscriptions. The text is very formal, with a lot of implicit meaning (like an actual invoice). Numbers are read, but without specifying what they count. Other signs may be numerals or abbreviations.



## Kition

In Larnaca, ancient Phoenician Kition, the French team excavating the site, led by Sabine Fourrier and Pauline Maillard, found around 80 ostraca in 2021 and 2022, which are currently being published. They are from the same period, in the same script as those from Idalion, and have a similar content.

These documents are exceptional in that they provide an insight into an area of knowledge that has so far eluded us. Once published, they will provide access to information on the administration and economy of the Phoenician kingdom of Kition and Idalion.



Kition, inscribed pebble KEF 1595 (© Alexandre Rabot, Mission archéologique de Kition).



## Re-examination of known inscriptions

### Umm el 'Amed

The first inscription from Umm el 'Amed was found by the Renan mission in April 1861, on the southern slope of the hill. The syntagm BPLG L'DK, translated 'in the district of Laodicea', has long been questioned. It was thought to refer to 'Laodicea which is in Canaan' mentioned on coins, a name once given to Beirut, but not at that time. Moreover, it is hard to see how Umm el 'Amed could belong to Beirut and the inscription be dated by the era of Tyre. A recent re-examination I did with Catherine Apicella showed that it is more likely the name of a man or woman (Laodikos or Laodikè) who owned an estate (meaning of the word PLG) where the sanctuary would have been built.



Umm el 'Amed 1 (FBC)






## Sidon

A new study also proposed a more satisfactory interpretation of the inscription on a white marble stela in the shape of an obelisk found in Sidon in 1890 (Louvre AO 1759+1762).

It was translated

1. ‘This is the offering made by ‘Abdmiskār, *acting* head of the assembly.
2. *second-in-command*, son of Ba’lsaloh to his lord in Šalmān. May he bless him.’

The reinterpretation of the expression RB ‘BR LSPT proposed by C. Apicella and myself as: ‘chief from beyond the shore’, the philological demonstration of which I will skip here, allows us to postulate that ‘Abdmiskar was the second Philocles, king of Sidon attested from 286 to 271, in his role of overseeing a maritime Confederation.


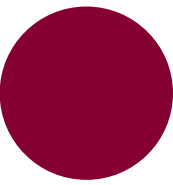






## Tartous

The study focused on a white marble slab found in 1896. It comes from the area around Tell Ghamqé, a site on land opposite the island of Ar-Ruad, south of Tartous. It was probably the necropolis of Arwad, where sarcophagi were found ( Louvre AO 3080).

It is a small plaque that must have been inserted into a monument, perhaps a stele. This monument, most probably funerary, was erected by a figure called HRMYS (Ἑρμαῖος) whose name is at the head. This is followed by the phrase ‘what he erected for...’. The last line is the mention of the dedicatee. I proposed to see in DMD the anthroponym Δημάδης, a Greek name therefore. The patronymic T’ŠL resists identification for the moment; it is probably of foreign origin. But we can see that it is the erection of a monument by a person with a Greek name to another also with a Greek name. In the Tartous inscription, the dedicator was careful to put his name first and to emphasize the gesture of piety he had made for a deceased companion.







In any case, it is significant that the only Phoenician inscription found on Arabian territory, apart from the very late bilingual one written in a completely different context, seems to have come from a foreigner.

### **Cippe de Malte**

Another type of reinterpretation can be found in the Phoenician-Greek inscribed cippi (decorative columns) from Tyrians discovered in Malta in the 17th century AD, one of which is in the Louvre and the other in Valletta (Malta). In this case, it's not a question of reinterpreting the inscription, but the monument. In fact, it is not certain that they were made in Malta, where they may have been brought in modern times. The other bilingual inscriptions all come from the eastern Mediterranean. In addition, the cippi and pedestals undoubtedly had a different history and function originally. The inscriptions were engraved in the 2nd century BC on stone plinths, which may have been used to support objects made of bronze, for example.



Two centuries later, the bronze having disappeared, they were probably reused to support columns that seem to date back to the early Roman period.

The new inscriptions presented here are not spectacular, and the reinterpretations are sometimes a matter of detail. But they all add new pieces to the jigsaw puzzle of our study of Phoenician civilization, taking us into the day-to-day economic, political, and religious life of the inhabitants of the Phoenician world.

The two cippi of Malta, reunited in Louvre Abu Dhabi, sept. 2023 (FBC)








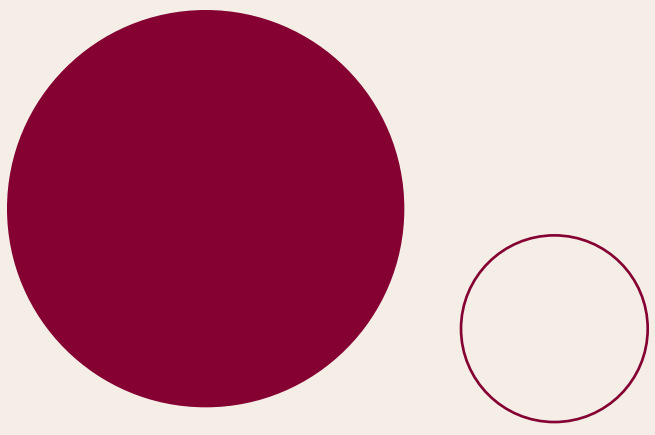
## HOPE

Dr. Briquel Chatonnet's lecture was followed by the unveiling in the Museum of artist Nayla Romanos Iliya's sculpture: **HOPE** generously donated to the museum as a contemporary interpretation of Phoenician script.

Nayla Romanos Iliya is a Lebanese architect and artist, with a diverse portfolio encompassing architecture, renovation and interior design projects. Leaving Lebanon towards the end of the civil war, Romanos Iliya's path took her through Paris, London, Hong Kong, and Dubai. Immersed in these vibrant metropolises, she absorbed the richness of each culture, broadening her horizons and nurturing her artistic sensibilities. In 2011, she unearthed her passion for sculpting, fully dedicating herself to her art since then.

Drawing from her architectural background, Romanos Iliya approaches sculpture with a distinctive perspective, working across disciplines and exploring a wide range of scales, from monumental public installations to wearable art. Her work, which blends intuition with form, is profoundly influenced by her upbringing amidst



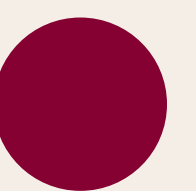


war-torn Lebanon, and her subsequent cross-cultural experiences. It delves into themes of identity and social concern, embracing her own unique, optimistic aesthetic that transcends boundaries and resonates with audiences worldwide.


Her work can be found in public collections, such as the Institut du Monde Arabe and the Bagri foundation, as well as numerous private ones. Currently, she resides and works between London and Beirut.

## HOPE

Romanos Iliya's artistic journey into Phoenician civilization began in Dubai, at a time when she set out on a quest for self-identity. Going back in history. Soon she became intrigued by the ancient Phoenician civilization, and fascinated by their most significant contribution to humanity—the Phoenician alphabet, origin of most modern alphabets used today. She started by sculpting each of the twenty-two Phoenician letters, influenced by their modern shapes and symbolic meanings. She then combined characters into words and narratives that embraced contemporary modes of



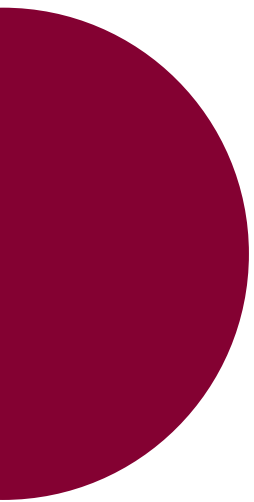




abstraction, weaving together past and present. This evolved into her debut collection, the Phoenician Alphabet series.

The first sculptures were created in 2012. She continued to expand the series while working on other bodies of works until August 2020, when she entered a period of “emotional and creative coma” triggered by the devastating Beirut Blast. It was not until 2023 that Romanos Iliya broke this creative silence, crafting new works focused on hope. These sculptures are centered around the Phoenician letters *Heth*, *Ayin*, *Peh*, and *Hé*, origin of Latin letters H, O, P, E, and which meanings carry symbolic weight.

The ***Hope*** sculpture delicately balances these symbols, showcasing the fragile nature of hope. The choice of materials adds another layer to the work: the bronze figures are finished with a white patina, embodying hope, while the mirrored stainless steel pedestal nods to the Phoenicians’ maritime legacy.

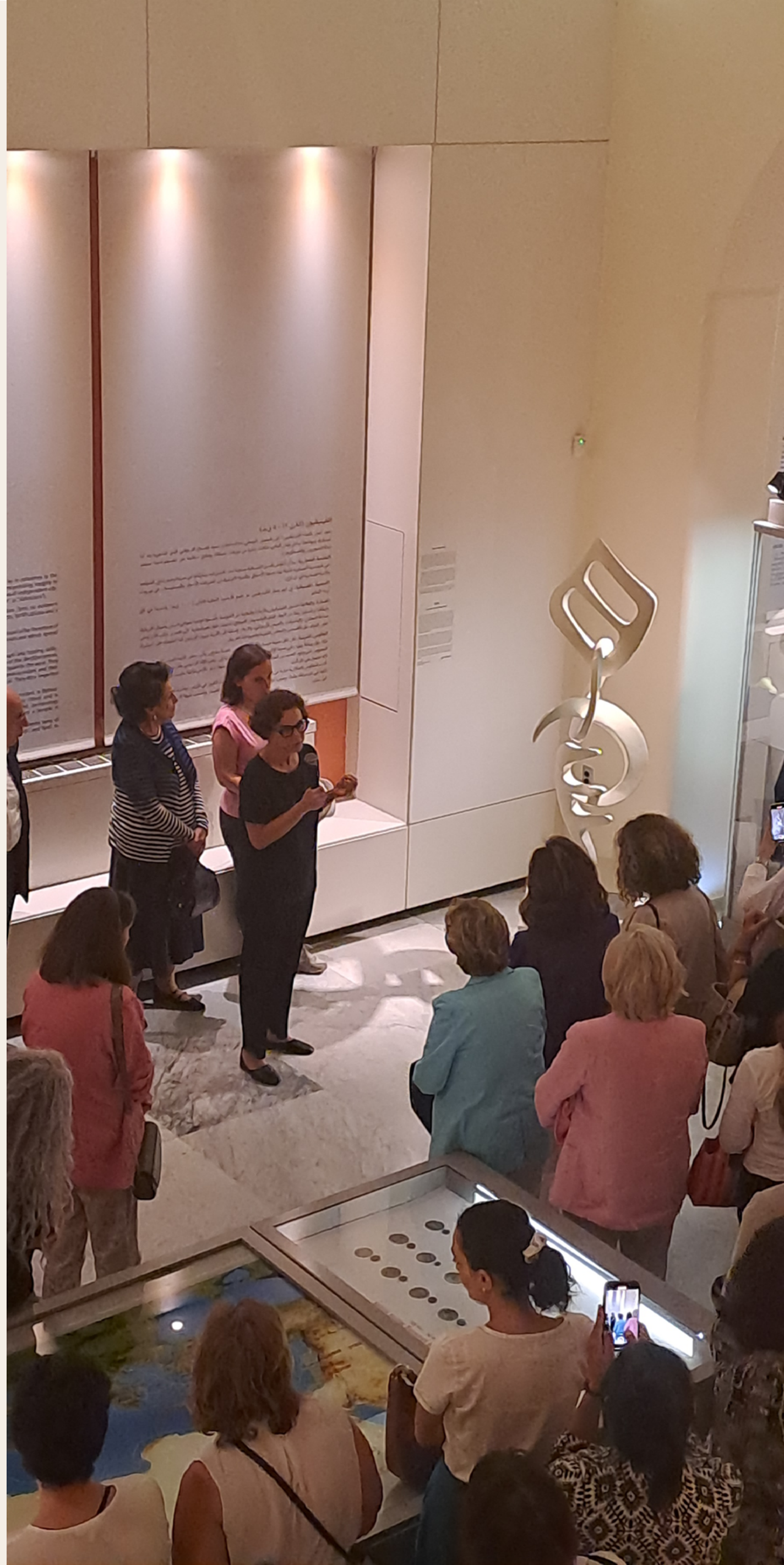






HOPE, 2023  
Bronze, on mirrored stainless steel





Inauguration of the sculpture



Audience attending the inauguration of the *Hope* sculpture





*Hope* with artist Nayla Romanos Iliya and curator Nadine Panayot



Iliya Romanos showcases Phoenician letters



June 12, 2024

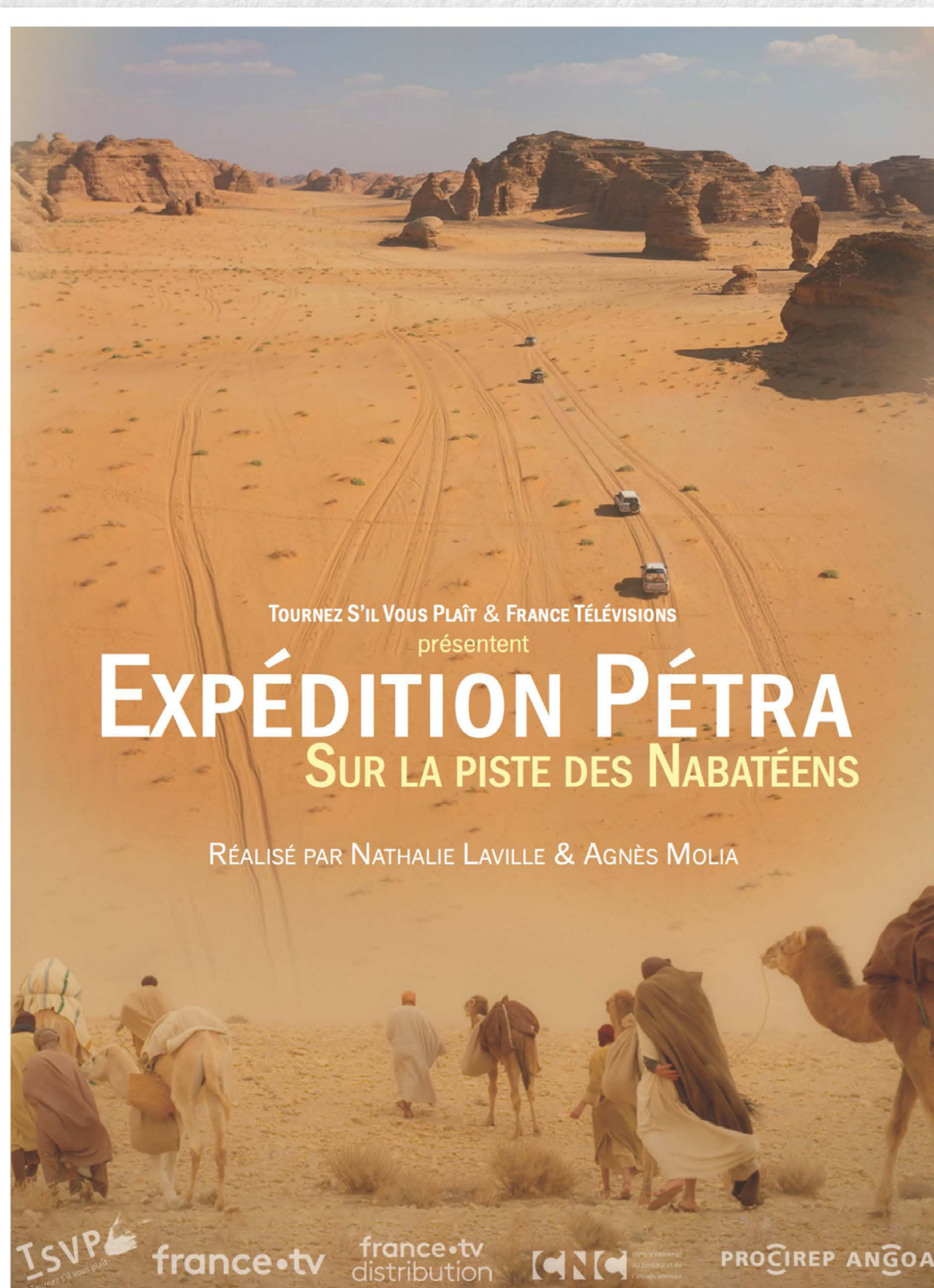


**AMERICAN  
UNIVERSITY  
OF BEIRUT**

**Archaeological Museum**



**THE SOCIETY OF THE FRIENDS OF THE AUB MUSEUM  
& BEIRUT ART FILM FESTIVAL (BAFF)**  
CORDIALLY INVITE YOU TO WATCH A FILM



Followed by a discussion with  
**DR. LAILA NEHME, Senior research fellow at the CNRS, Paris**  
Lead by  
**DR. NADINE PANAYOT, Curator of the Archaeological Museum**


**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12, 2024 | 5:30 PM**  
**Archaeological Museum, American University of Beirut**

The event is in French and open to all, no registration required

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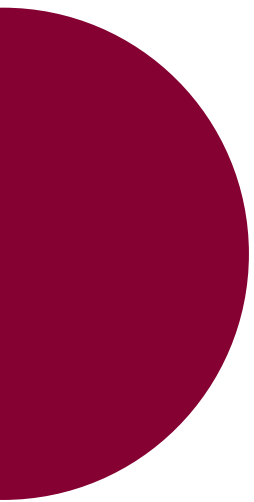






The Friends of the American University of Beirut Museum and the Beirut Art Film Festival (BAFF) organized a screening of the film “ Expédition Pétra, sur la piste des Nabatéens” directed by Agnès Laville and Agnès Molia. This screening was followed by a discussion with Laila Nehmé, a member of the filmed expedition, Nadine Panayot, curator of the Archaeological Museum, and the audience on that day.

Laila Nehmé, born in Beirut, is a notable figure in Nabataean studies and Middle Eastern archaeology. She has been co-director of annual excavations at Madâ'in Sâlih, which includes the ancient Nabataean cities of Hegra and Al Ula.



A team of French archaeologists, led by Laila Nehmé, successfully traced the ancient incense route from Medina to Petra, overcoming significant challenges. They utilized historical writings from a Nabataean caravan leader to identify caravan paths across a vast desert landscape. The expedition, captured in a documentary “ Expédition Pétra, sur la piste des Nabatéens”, showcases archaeological discoveries at sites like



Hegra and Petra and features a road-trip format that combines research with re-enactments of caravan life. This groundbreaking work revealed the exact routes used by the Nabataeans for trade over 2,000 years ago, highlighting the team's expertise and local knowledge.

Laila and her team succeeded in their ambitious goal. It is astonishing to think that a single Nabataean caravan marked its passage at each campsite, leaving visible traces to this day. The expedition was a success, and now the world can learn about one of the exact routes taken by the Nabataeans on the incense road.



Dr. Laila Nehme on Zoom from Paris





# CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

Once again the Children's Program hosted a popular event, new to the program, entitled Lamps and Lantern.

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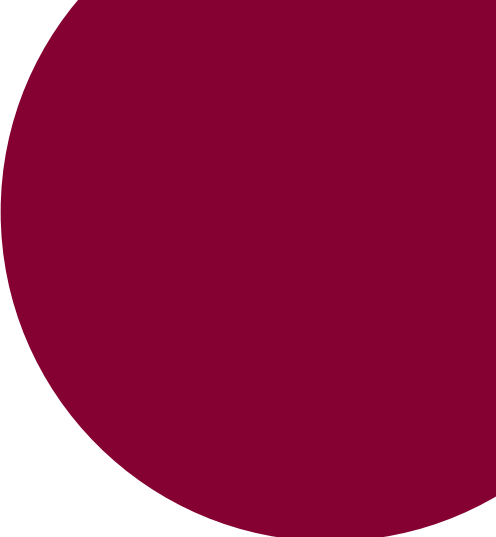
April 21, 2024

## *Lamps and Lanterns*

Designed to ignite curiosity and creativity, our children's program on Lamps and Lanterns offered a fascinating journey through the history and artistry of illumination.


As always, the children who participated exuded boundless enthusiasm from start to finish. The program began with an engaging PowerPoint presentation that captivated their imaginations with vivid

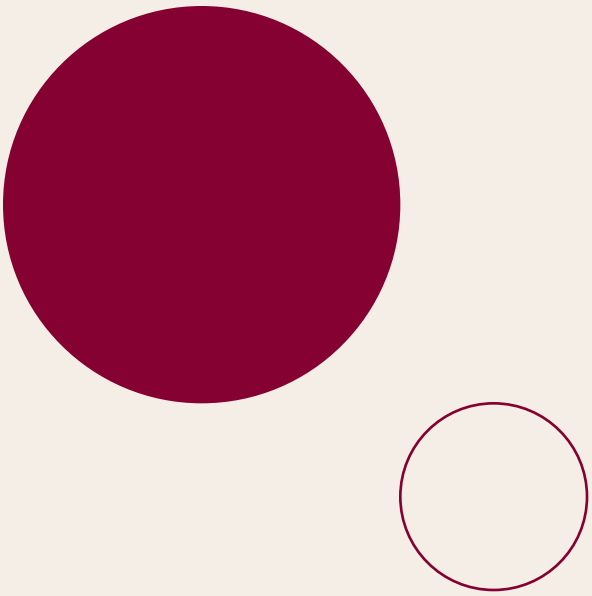




images and intriguing stories about the discovery of light, and its importance to human life. The children explored the evolution of lighting devices through the centuries, from the prehistoric period with the firebrands or torches and the shell devices to the emergence of lamps made from clay and other materials. They were very curious and asked insightful questions. Their eyes widened with wonder as they learned about the function of ancient oil lamps and the ornate beauty of lanterns.


The excitement increased during their visit to the Museum, where they immersed themselves in a historical journey surrounded by the Museum's rich collection of lamps and lanterns. They eagerly explored artifacts that illuminated the past, from clay and metal lamps of early civilizations to the intricately designed lanterns from the Byzantine era.






Reine Mady, museum assistant, who presented the materials and guided the children, was very happy to see their excitement when they started pointing to lamps saying, “Look, these are some of the ones we saw in the PowerPoint presentation. Look, it’s the Roman lamp decorated with the god Zeus! And here is the glazed Islamic lamp!” Their curiosity was palpable as they examined each piece, marveling at the craftsmanship behind each luminous artifact.

The highlight of the day, as always, was the hands-on activity, where the children transformed their inspiration into creation. Armed with vibrant colored paper and glue, they enthusiastically embarked on crafting their own lanterns. Guided by skilled instructors, they cut, folded, and glued their beautiful lanterns. They also painted clay lamps with various decorations, infusing their designs with personal flair and artistic expression.








In order to light their lamps, children learned the candle making process using wick and wax. Laughter filled the room as they shared ideas and techniques, each child bringing their unique vision to life.

At the end of the workshop, the room glowed not only with the light of their beautifully decorated lamps and lanterns but also with the radiant smiles of proud young artists. During the Lamps and Lanterns program the children not only gained hands-on crafting experience, they also developed a deeper appreciation of cultural heritage and the significance of light in human history. Their enthusiasm and creativity are a testament to the program's success in inspiring a new generation to cherish and celebrate the artistry of lamps and lanterns.







Learning about the history of lamps and lanterns through the ages



Exploring the lamp and lantern collections at the Archaeological Museum





Deep concentration as the children create  
their paper lanterns





The artistic touch as the children paint their lamps





Making candles with wicks and wax





Lamps and lanterns ready to illuminate



# EXPLORING THE HIDDEN STORIES OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

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Music: The Discourse of Hearts, and Gibran's  
Reflections by Reine Mady and Hussein Sleiman

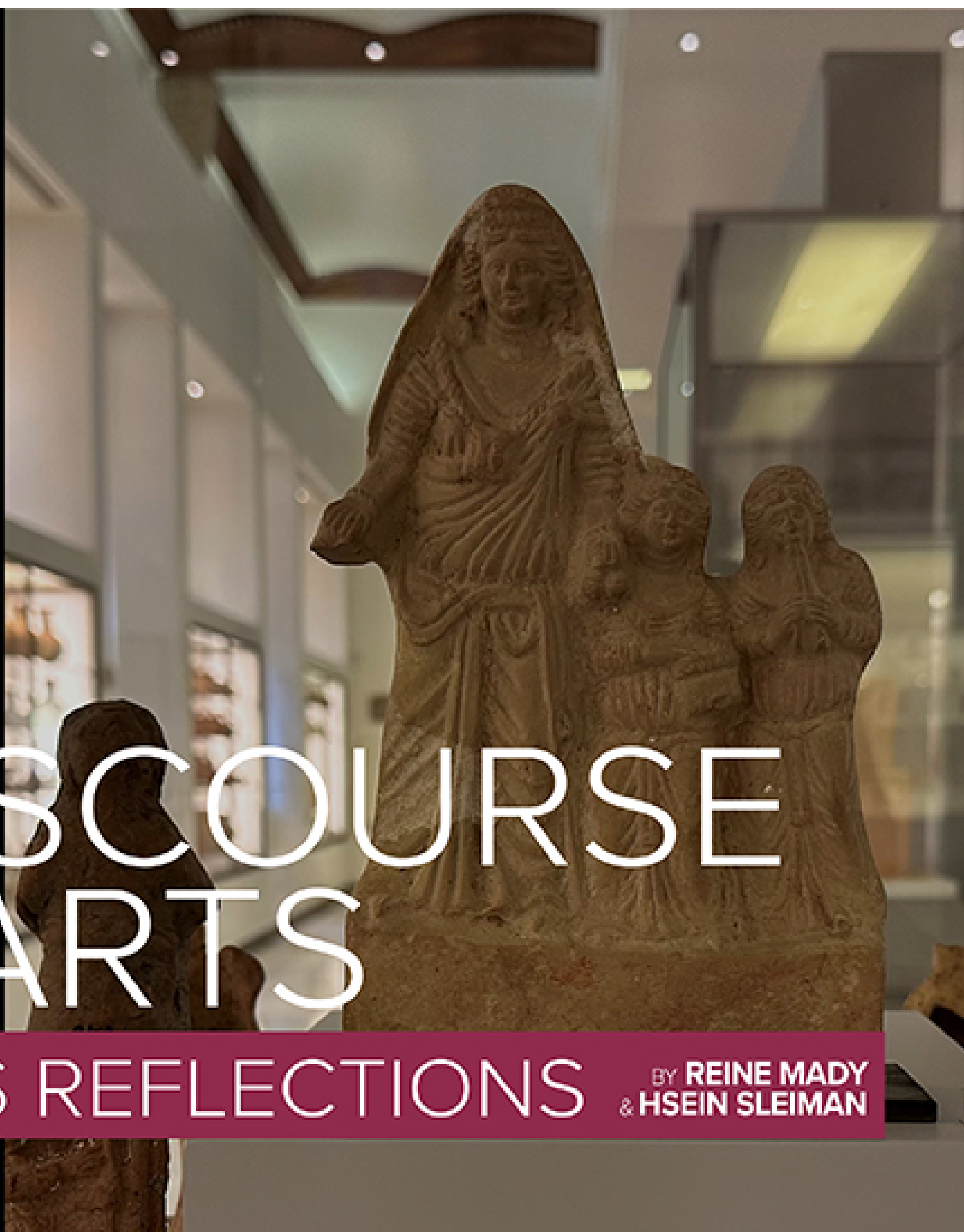
[Click here](#)

The hidden stories  
*of the* ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
MUSEUM

MUSIC  
THE DISCOURSE  
OF HEARTS

AND GIBRAN'S REFLECTIONS

BY REINE MADY  
& HSEIN SLEIMAN



# EXHIBITION

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June 6, 2024

## ***Salvaged from the Shadows, Protecting Cultural Heritage at The National Museum of China in Beijing***

Under the auspices of the ALIPH foundation, the International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage in Conflict Areas, and the National Museum of China in Beijing, the exhibition ***Salvaged From the Shadows, Protecting Cultural Heritage*** highlighted the efforts of organizations and individuals dedicated to protecting cultural heritage in conflict situations.

The AUB Archaeological Museum of Beirut, was invited to participate in the exhibition by showcasing replicas of the Museum's shattered and restored glass vessels rescued after the devastating Beirut 2020 port explosion, and recreated in China, using 3D scanning and printing.



Curator Dr. Nadine Panayot made a whirlwind trip to Beijing to represent our Museum at the prestigious exhibition.



Dr. Panayot explores the impressive National Museum of China, showcasing the AUB replica glass collection





Restored and replicated, glass items from  
the AUB museum



Museum of China exhibition illustrates ways of  
saving heritage from the shadows

## Video

***“Exhibition at National Museum shows  
efforts to save heritage from shadows”  
by LIN QI***





June 6 – end of July 2024

## ***Mimesis and Abstraction at the AUB Archaeological Museum***

In the spirit of artistic dialogue and cultural exchange, the Friends of the Museum hosted a one-off summer exhibition of works produced by the Lebanese Artists Association. Entitled ***Mimesis and Abstraction***, the exhibition featured paintings and sculptures inspired by the Museum's collections. Some 19 artists spent time absorbing the aesthetic and cultural impact of the Museum and its collections before returning to their studios to interpret their impressions in a range of styles and media.


Dr. Nadine Panayot opened the exhibition on June 6th with the following words: “Today, we gather to celebrate a unique exhibition that bridges the ancient with the contemporary, the realistic with the abstract, and the traditional with the avant-garde. It is a true testament to the power of art in connecting us across time and space.



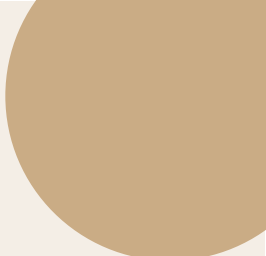


This exhibition, organized by the Lebanese Artist Association—the largest union of artists in Lebanon—offers a fresh and vibrant look at the treasures of the AUB Archaeological Museum. Through meticulous craftsmanship and artistic dedication, talented artists have created pieces that closely replicate the friezes and artifacts from our esteemed collections. These works highlight the extraordinary skill of ancient artisans and invite us to appreciate the timeless beauty and significance of our cultural heritage.

In addition to these detailed and realistic works, we are proud to present pieces that push the boundaries of traditional aesthetics. These abstract creations challenge our perceptions and celebrate the diverse expressions of artistic vision. By doing so, they enrich our understanding of art and culture, demonstrating that creativity knows no bounds and that every form of expression has a valuable story to tell.








‘Mimesis and Abstraction’ has been graciously hosted by the Committee of the Friends of the AUB Museum as an inclusive celebration of artistic diversity.

It encourages each of us to explore, appreciate, and connect with the myriad ways in which human creativity manifests itself. We not only honor our past but also inspire future generations to continue the dialogue between history and modernity.

We are deeply grateful to the Lebanese Artist Association for their generous support and to all the artists who have contributed their exceptional works. Their dedication and passion have made this exhibition possible, and their art invites us all to see the world through new and enriching perspectives.

Thank you for joining us today. Let us embark on this artistic journey together, exploring the continuum from mimesis to abstraction.”







AMERICAN  
UNIVERSITY  
OF BEIRUT  
Archaeological Museum



LAAPS



ixSiR

THE SOCIETY OF THE FRIENDS  
OF THE AUB MUSEUM  
CORDIALLY INVITES YOU  
TO AN **EXHIBITION** ORGANIZED BY  
THE LEBANESE ARTISTS ASSOCIATION

# **MIMESIS AND ABSTRACTION**

AT THE AUB ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

**WEDNESDAY  
JUNE 26, 2024  
6:00 PM  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM**

**FOLLOWED BY A RECEPTION**

Part of the proceeds from this exhibition  
will support the museum

The exhibition will run  
until the end of July, 2024  
8:00 am–3:00 pm



Dr. Nadine Panayot with artists Jacqueline Ohanian, Charles Khoury and Michel Rouhana, President of The Lebanese Artists Association





Artist and member of the Friends of the Museum, Jacqueline Ohanian



The artist Michel Rouhana,  
President of The Lebanese Artists Association





Mimesis: Two Sculptures by artist Chahine Raffoul





Group of artists and visitors



Dr. Jack Nurpetlian's a professor of Numismatic at AUB, with his paintings






# INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM DAY 2024

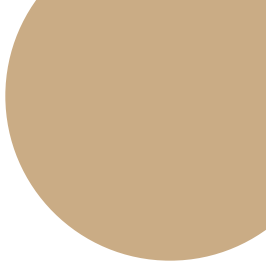
May 18, 2024

Adopting the 2024 International Museum Day theme, *Museums for Education and Research*, the AUB Archaeological Museum and the Department of Earth Sciences Geological Museum joined forces to devise and host an outstanding Open Museum Day entitled *Be An Archaeologist and A Geoscientist for a Day* with activities for children and adults available every hour on the hour. It proved to be a roaring success.

Children from 3 to 13 years old, along with their parents, explored the Archaeological Museum, excavated outside to uncover objects, learned about their historical timeline, and deciphered and wrote in Phoenician script.





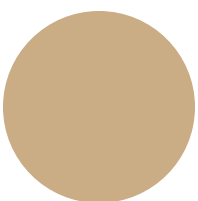


As geoscientists, they enjoyed various geology-related activities. The participants were divided into groups between the Archaeological Museum and the Geological Museum “Earth Sciences.”

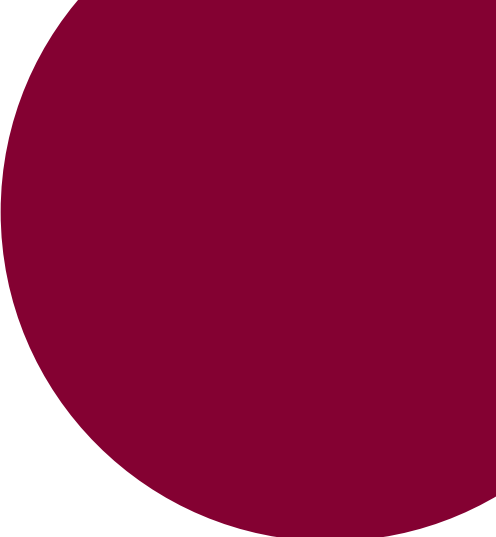
- The program at the Museum began with a brief explanation of stratigraphy, illustrating how different layers of soil can reveal the history of a site, using the Ksar Akil Stratigraphy reproduction in the AUB Archaeological Museum.

- This was followed by a brief tour through the Museum highlighting objects from various periods to help the participants understand timelines and dating, as well to introduce them to our Museum.

- The participants then moved to the area outside the Museum, where they were introduced to the common archaeological tools. After this they began excavating to uncover buried objects, imitating a real dig. The artifacts they unearthed were placed on chronological timelines that had been imaginatively laid out on the surrounds of the Museum, helping them to understand the importance of context and the process of dating.







On a table set up outside the Museum, the participants learned and enjoyed writing their names in Phoenician letters.

Later, for those interested, there were further guided tours of the Museum.

- Meanwhile, at the Earth Sciences department the groups participated in station-based activities focusing on the rock cycle, fossils, Pangea during the times of dinosaurs, and experimented with volcanoes under the guidance of staff from the Geology department.

AUB and Lebanese University students helped with the program. Some explained the archaeological tools, others helped the participants in the excavation and with the timelines.

Guided tours for all ages ran hourly between the Archaeological and Geological Museums.

***[Click here](#)***





The program was very successful, such that educators from IC School requested a similar program which was repeated In May and June, with 700 students from Elementary and Middle School (see below).



Learning about the stratigraphy at the Museum



Tour at the Museum





Discovering the different excavation tools





Enjoying excavation





Discovering objects



Learning the importance of the historical timeline





Children writing their names in Phoenician letters



Learning about the water cycle at the Geology department





Special thanks to students from AUB and the  
Lebanese University for their contribution to this  
successful program



# INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM DAY SHOP EVENT

May 18, 2024

On the occasion of the International Museum Day, the Museum Shop held an extremely successful discounted sale on selected items.



FIND THE PERFECT GIFT  
&  
SUPPORT THE MUSEUM!

MAY 18, 2024 | 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

ON THE OCCASION OF  
INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM DAY 2024

DISCOUNT ON SELECTED ITEMS






# CONSERVATION

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July 2024

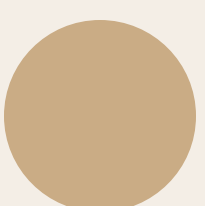
The AUB Archaeological Museum's ongoing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Institut National du Patrimoine (INP) initially included plans for a field school focused on stone conservation. Unfortunately, due to increasing security concerns in Lebanon, the INP was unable to send their students to Beirut. Nevertheless, the conservation and cleaning of the stones displayed at the entrance of the Museum have been carried out under the guidance of Marie-Anne Loeper-Attia, a conservator from the INP.







The architectural stone elements that are displayed outside the Museum had become caked with dirt and blackened with time, prompting the need for conservation intervention. Following the guidance from INP conservator Marie-Anne Loeper-Attia, the AUB Museum team, under the supervision of Museum Assistant Reine Madi, followed a strict procedure to restore the stone objects.





# TRIP TO NORTH LEBANON

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June 15, 2024

Amelia Yousef and Aimée Bou Rizk share their impressions of a highly informative excursion. Teaming up for the day, Amelia narrates the journey, while Aimée explores the archaeological information.

On a beautiful, perfectly sunny June 15th morning, a “Goldilocks” type of day, the Society of Friends of the AUB Archaeological Museum boarded a bus and set off northwards, climbing above the shimmering blue Mediterranean, to visit three fascinating archeological sites.

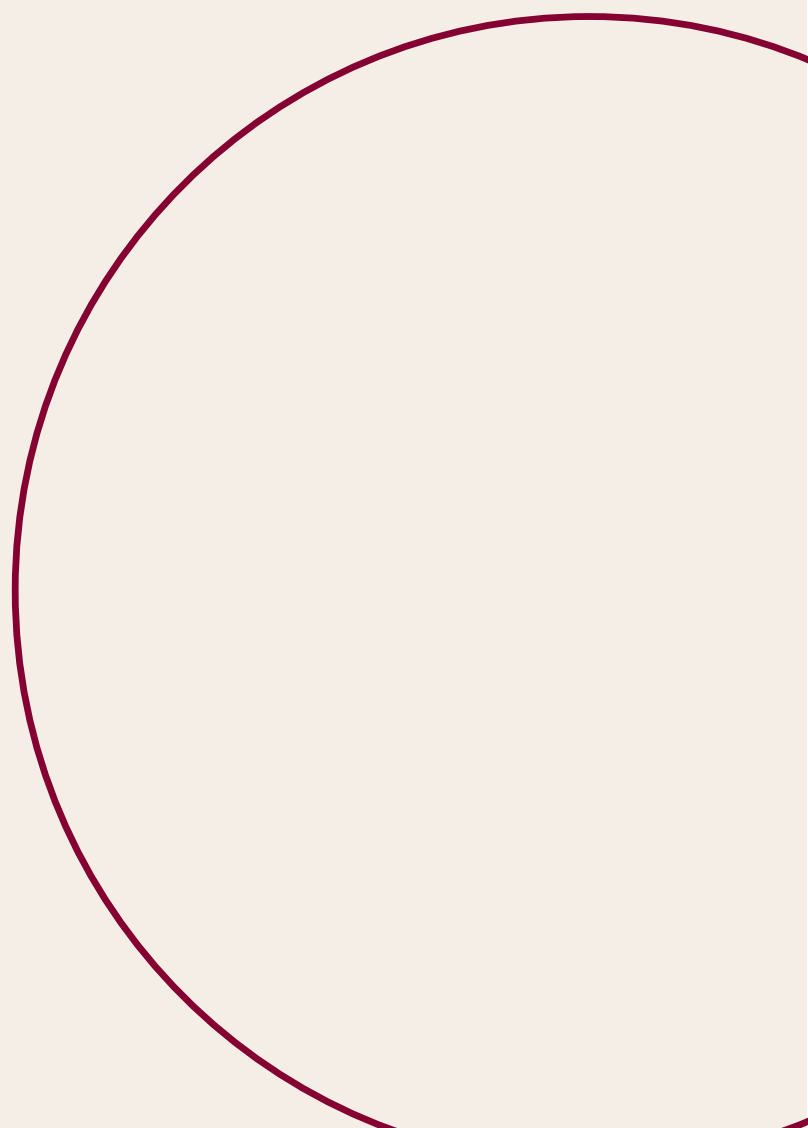
Our first stop was Saint Charbel church in Maad. I feel lucky to have been there to hear renowned and now retired, Archaeology Professor Levon Nordiguian’s passionate descriptions of the history of the church. Here we were walking on an intact 2,300-year-old floor, so grandiose, breathtaking. What were even more mesmerizing



were the almost one-meter-diameter limestone columns throughout the church.

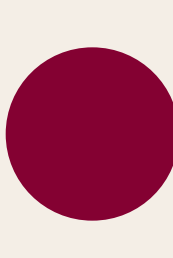






They bore the markings of previous floors indicating that before becoming a church, this was the site of a Roman temple, it having potentially replaced a Phoenician temple. Probably a Byzantine church followed, then a Crusader church (12th-13th century), with subsequent modifications in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The condition, colors, and size of the frescos are out of this world. The stories they portray about saints and clergy are so revealing. I found it fascinating how different peoples adopted the same sacred places and built one civilization on top of the other. It leaves me thinking if today we are as tolerant.





## Mar Charbel Church

Dedicated to Mar Charbel the Elder, a converted pagan priest martyred along with his sister Bebaia in Edessa under Emperor Trajan, the church follows a basilica plan with two rows of ancient limestone columns with capitals supporting semicircular arches, dividing the interior into three naves. An eastern apse houses frescoes of seven saints, featuring a bishop with the apostles Peter and Paul and the four evangelists in a strictly local style.



The church's west side includes a raised porch displaying artifacts uncovered during 1947 and 1970s excavations.





On the eastern side, two doors lead to rooms containing remnants of the ancient temple and layered frescoes. These frescoes illustrate a complex iconography: the Dormition of the Virgin surrounded by the 12 apostles on the south wall and Archangel Michael in a Last Judgment scene on the north wall, all suggesting funerary symbolism. Donor figures also appear, indicating this place served as an ex-voto for soul salvation. The art style—marked by frontality, rigid expressions, and oriental facial features—dates to the mid-13th century. The frescoes of the north wall surround a dormer window that once held the relics of Mar Charbel of Edessa. These frescoes were restored in 2008-2009 thanks to the AREFML and the financial support of the Philippe Jabre Association.





I left the church with a heavy heart, reluctant to turn my feet away from that Hellenistic/Roman imperfectly flat floor, which seemed so perfect to me!

We boarded the bus again, climbing uphill away from the brilliant blue sea, to reach our next, most vibrant archaeologist, the gracious Professor Patricia Antaki waiting to give us a tour of the Church of Saint Barbara of Barghoun, a property under the auspices of the Patriarchate of the Balamand Monastery.



## The Church of Saint Barbara of Barghoun

The Church is still under excavation in parallel with restoration works. Though small it contains clear remains of a medieval church. Its well-preserved central apse features a unique wall painting depicting the Virgin as Orans, with her hands raised in the traditional gesture of prayer, flanked by two angels.





The excavations have primarily focused on the surrounding exterior which uncovered several tombs currently under study, along with the church's foundational structures. What fascinated me the most was the cemetery that has been uncovered behind the church, with skeletons so intact and complete. I counted at least ten!



We bid goodbye to Professor Antaki and hopped back on the bus heading uphill to reach Our Lady of Balamand Monastery. The monks were eagerly awaiting our visit. They had prepared an explanatory PowerPoint of the Deir el Balamand museum, before guiding us through the nascent museum and its behind-the-scenes artifacts.




## **Deir el Balamand Museum**

The Deir el Balamand Museum project began in 2007 when our curator, Nadine Panayot, then Chair of the University of Balamand's Department of Archaeology and Museology, took the initiative to catalog and conserve cultural artifacts scattered throughout the monastery and its gardens. Many of these artifacts were in a severe state of neglect. While teaching at the University of Balamand, Panayot meticulously located, cataloged, cleaned, documented, and digitally recorded each item discovered.

Dr. Panayot collaborated with three architects to design an expanded space for a site museum within the monastery. Amid the Syrian war, she envisioned the Balamand Monastery as a center not only for preserving the site's archaeology but also for housing the broader Antiochian heritage, particularly Orthodox manuscripts. Unfortunately, this vision did not come to fruition following the passing of Patriarch Ignatius IV.





Years later, under the leadership of Dr. Antaki and with the support of the Dean of Alba Fadlallah Dagher, a scaled-down version of the original museum was inaugurated on December 17, 2023, following five months of dedicated work. This event marked a significant milestone in the monastery's modern history. The museum's collection is now housed in one of the monastery's grand medieval rooms in the southwestern corner, an area that was once isolated, enhancing the collection's historical and cultural significance.

The museum presents around 50 artifacts carefully selected from the monastery's rich collection, each meticulously labeled and accompanied by informative texts, plans, drawings, and quotes, offering visitors an in-depth understanding of the history behind these pieces. This thoughtfully curated exhibition guides visitors on a journey through time, extending back to the 17th century and immersing them in the monastery's history. The museum is divided into three main sections:



1. **Introduction:** this section includes a historical timeline of the monastery and its surroundings, along with the earliest Byzantine artifacts—a pair of Byzantine-style bread stamps used for Communion bread.

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A HILL AND ITS SURROUNDINGS  
INHABITED SINCE ANTIQUITY

عصور ما قبل التاريخ  
1 مليون سنة  
**Prehistoric Times**  
1 million years

الحقبة الكنعانية  
(1200-3200 ق.م.)  
**The Canaanite Period**  
(3200 - 1200 BC)

تَلّ وجواره  
مأهولان منذ العصور القديمة

الحقبة العثمانية:  
الإرث الأرثوذكسي  
(من القرن 17 حتى القرن 20)  
**The Ottoman Period:  
Orthodox Legacy**  
(17<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries)

الحقبة البيزنطية  
(القرنان 5-6)  
**The Byzantine Period**  
(5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> centuries)

الحقبة الهلنستية  
(332-64 ق.م.)  
**The Hellenistic Period**  
(332 - 64 BC)

العصر النحاسي  
(4500-3000 ق.م.)  
**The Chalcolithic Period**  
(4500 - 3200 BC)

الحقبة الفينيقية  
(1200-332 ق.م.)  
**The Phoenician  
Period**  
(1200 - 332 BC)

الحقبة الرومانية  
(395-64 ق.م.)  
**The Roman Period**  
(64 BC-AD 395)

الحقبة الصليبية:  
عصر الرهبان السيستريسين  
(القرنان 12-13)  
**The Crusader Period:  
The Era of  
Cistercian Monks**  
(12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries)

"May grain abound throughout the land;  
on the tops of the hills may it sway.  
May the crops flourish like Lebanon and thrive like the grass of the field."  
(Psalms 72:16)

متحف دير البلمند  
MUSEUM OF DER EL BALMAND

02

2 - طابع للفرمان  
طابع للفرمان - رصاص - نموذجي للفترة البيزنطية. يستخدم لخبز  
خبز الفطير. وهو مخصص إلى مريمات صغيرة معطوية بشكل  
جزء الدائرة. على طرف الدائرة نقشاً يونانياً معكونة. هذه لها  
الرب يسوع المسيح ربنا يا من بارك الحنات الشمس وأشبع منها  
الجنسية الآتية.  
استعمل المخلصي الخلفاء (أولاً) كنيسة وهو من بين بطون زهير  
الحقبة العثمانية.

1

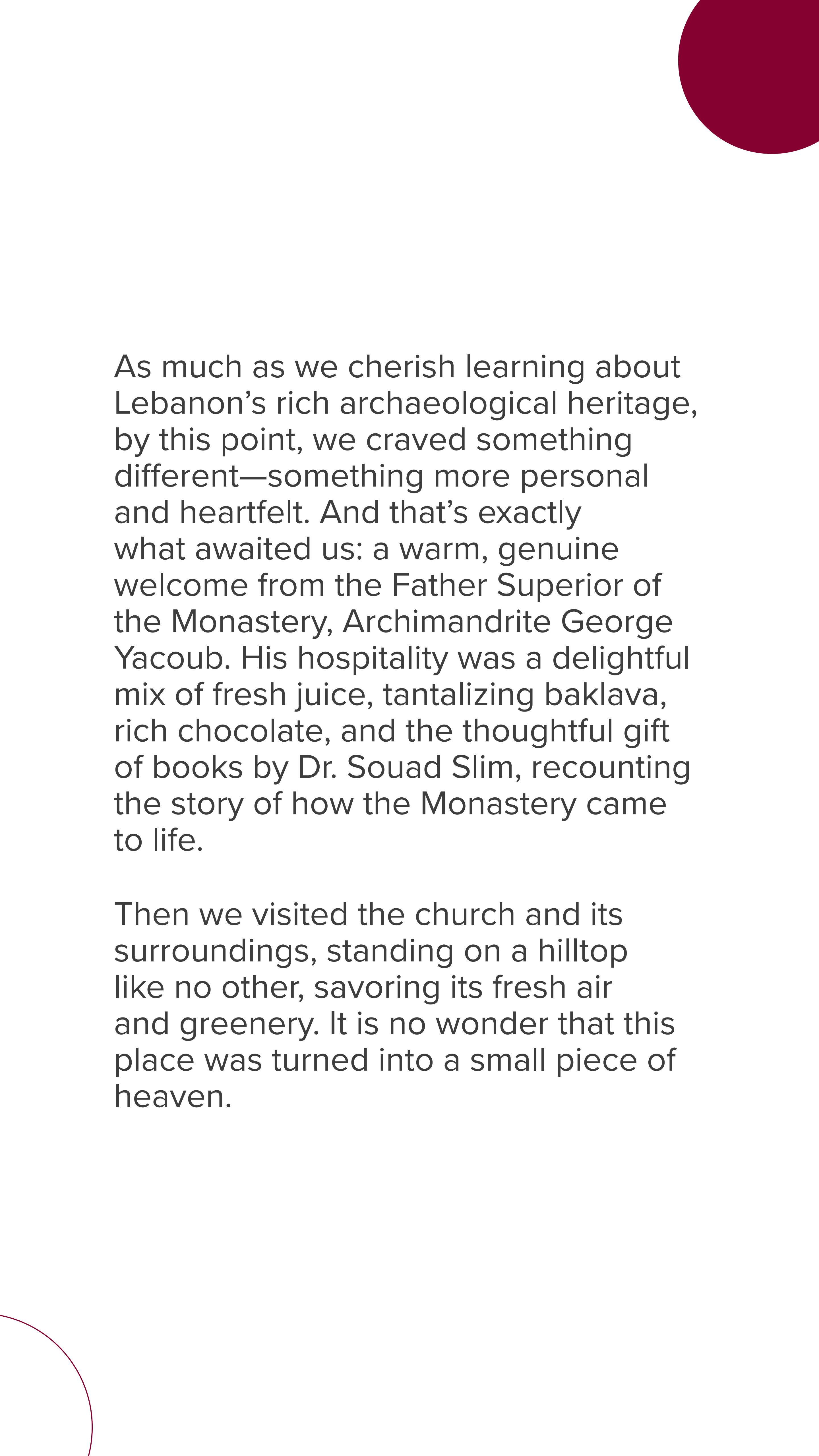


**2. Medieval Period:** showcasing decorative architectural stone elements from the Romanesque (12th century) and Gothic (13th century) styles, this section offers a glimpse into the monastery's medieval architectural heritage.

**3. Ottoman Period:** the largest section, dedicated to the Ottoman era, is organized into thematic displays. Following an introduction about the site's revival in 1603 by the Orthodox community, various themes are introduced, including funerary stones, Damascus ceramic tiles, manuscripts, illuminated texts, icons, a liturgical garment, and various liturgical objects such as crosses, chalices, patens, buckles, and oil lamps. Additionally, the private collection of Patriarch Gregory IV is on display, adding a personal dimension to the museum's historical narrative.







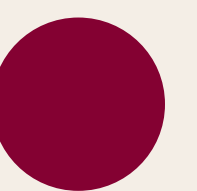
As much as we cherish learning about Lebanon's rich archaeological heritage, by this point, we craved something different—something more personal and heartfelt. And that's exactly what awaited us: a warm, genuine welcome from the Father Superior of the Monastery, Archimandrite George Yacoub. His hospitality was a delightful mix of fresh juice, tantalizing baklava, rich chocolate, and the thoughtful gift of books by Dr. Souad Slim, recounting the story of how the Monastery came to life.

Then we visited the church and its surroundings, standing on a hilltop like no other, savoring its fresh air and greenery. It is no wonder that this place was turned into a small piece of heaven.





But we had to leave. Lunch awaited us before we were due to head back to Beirut, following the bright blue shoreline back into the city. How lucky we are to have this beautiful blue sea and the stunning green mountains!







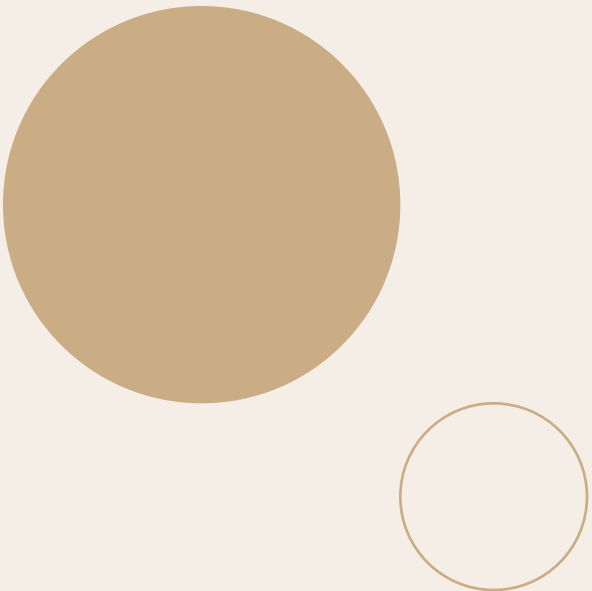
# NEW INITIATIVES AND COLLABORATIONS

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## *Connecting Collections Initiative*

Connecting Collections, an initiative founded by leading US university museums, highlights and promotes relationships between museum collections across the globe through the production of shared social media content. This initiative includes over 20 institutions around the world. It comprises thematic monthly stories shared on social media sites such as Instagram and Facebook and promoted by partnering institutions to increase public awareness of the collective works. AUB Archaeological Museum continues to take part in this initiative.






Museum assistant Reine Mady collates the AUB stories and follows up on this initiative through social media.

The AUB Archaeological Museum has graciously agreed to take over the lead on #ConnectingCollections and social media posts for the upcoming year.

The #connecting collection's themes were:

#World Music Day (June 21, 2024):  
***Click here***





## ***Educational Collaboration and School Visits***

May 2024

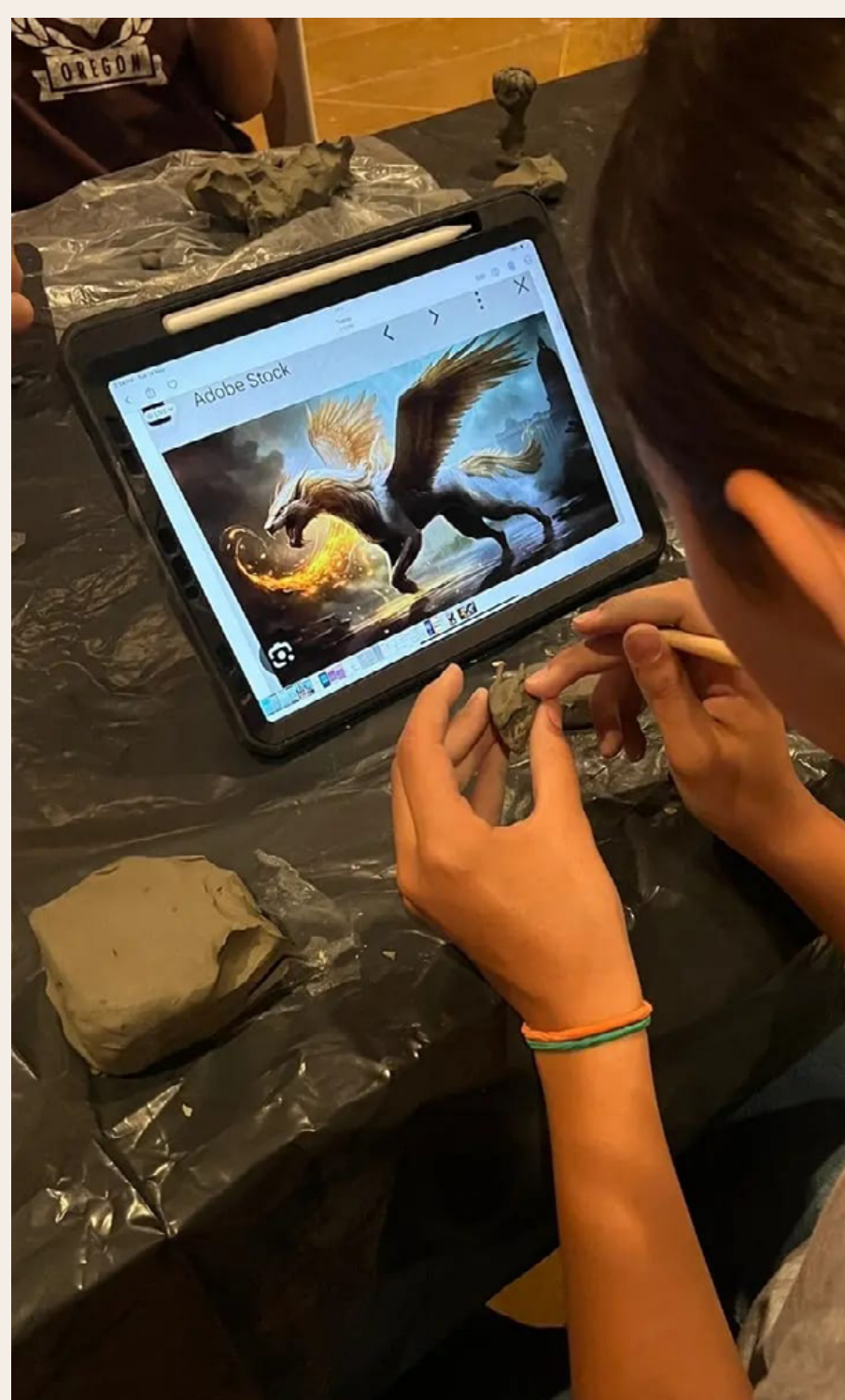
As part of the elective course “History of Art in the Mediterranean,” 13 students from the International College (IC) participated in a hands-on clay workshop at the Archaeological Museum.

The students created beautiful artworks inspired by the Museum Collection.

The workshop was an engaging and creative experience for all!

***Click here***

***Click here***







Hands on manipulation of clay to produce a range of objects





Now comes the fun part, how many colors shall we use?





Vivid colors and vivid designs, the workshop was enjoyed by all







May 30 - June 2024

Following the success of the International Museum day program ***Be an Archaeologist for a Day***, the AUB Archaeological Museum team, with the assistance of Lebanese University students, offered International College (IC) students adapted version of the program as an educational activity and interactive experience in archaeology, combining theoretical knowledge with practical application. Some 700 students were introduced to the concept of stratigraphy and its importance in archaeology, excavation tools and techniques, and the process of dating artifacts within historical timelines.

The program started with a brief explanation of stratigraphy, to describe how different layers of soil can tell us about the history of a site using the Ksar Akil Stratigraphy reproduction at the AUB Archaeological Museum section. Students understood how layers are formed over time and how archaeologists use these layers to determine the age of artifacts.



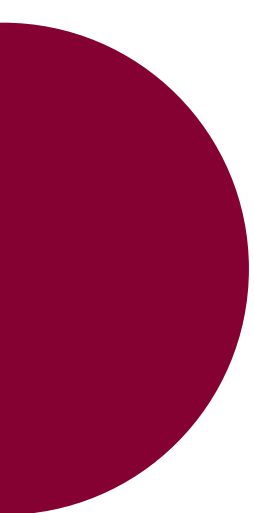




A brief tour through the Museum followed, highlighting objects from various periods to help the students further understand timelines and dating.

From there the students moved to a hands-on excavation site set up outside the museum. They were introduced to the common archaeological tools such as trowels, brushes, measuring tapes, and sieves and discussed the importance of careful excavation and documentation and techniques used in archaeology.

Students then participated in a simulated excavation using the archaeological tools to uncover buried objects placed in different layers, mimicking a real archaeological dig.



The final segment involved teaching students how archaeologists use artifacts to build timelines of past civilizations. This step helped students understand the concept of chronology and how to place artifacts on a historical timeline. Students also understood how to date artifacts and the importance of context in archaeological findings.



By the end of this activity, students had a hands-on understanding of archaeological practices, the importance of stratigraphy, and how artifacts are used to construct historical timelines.



Learning theory before getting down to practice





Hands-on digging down to unearth hidden treasures





Look what we found, now we need to place them on the timeline






March 31, 2024

***Gendered Narratives in History  
workshop: A Journey of Women's  
Representations over Time***

During a ***Gendered Narratives in History*** workshop facilitated by Dr. Nadine Panayot, participants from AUB-MEPI scholarship program explored depictions ranging from ancient fertility figurines to warrior roles, gaining valuable insights into the portrayal of women throughout history. The discussion delved into the transition from possible past societies centered around females to patriarchal structures, and how religion influenced the evolution of gender roles.







Deciphering gender roles through the ages



# NEWS:

## Insights into Recent Extra Mural Museum Activities

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In her capacity as curator and archaeologist, Dr. Nadine Panayot participated in a number of events outside the AUB Archaeological Museum

April 26, 2024

***L'art Chrétien dans le patriarcat d'Antioche. Regards sur un patrimoine culturel. Journée d'étude.***

On April 26, 2024, Dr. Nadine Panayot, Curator of the AUB Archaeological Museum, moderated a session on ***Patrimoine iconographique: caractéristiques et échanges.***



# L'art chrétien dans le patriarcat d'antioche

## Regards sur un patrimoine culturel

Le Patriarcat d'Antioche a joué un rôle fondamental dans l'évolution de l'art chrétien au cours de l'histoire. En tant que centre religieux et culturel de grande importance, cette région a été un berceau du christianisme et un foyer de création artistique religieuse. Cette journée d'études a pour objectif principal d'explorer l'ensemble des périodes historiques pour mettre en lumière la contribution et la singularité de l'art chrétien antiochien.



Saint Jean Damascène (Sarbel, Ordre Basiliens-Alépin 953, fol. 1v)



## Journée d'étude

Sous le patronage et en présence de Sa Béatitudo Youssef  
Patriarche d'Antioche et de tout l'Orient des Grecs Melkites Catholiques  
26 avril 2024  
Centre Liqaa – Raboueh

## L'art chrétien dans le patriarcat d'antioche regards sur un patrimoine culturel



### programme

- 9h00 Accueil  
9h30 Discours d'ouverture Sa Béatitudo Youssef  
9h45 Introduction et présentation du programme P. Charbel Nassif
- CONFÉRENCE INAUGURALE**
- 10h00 L'art chrétien du Proche-Orient : perceptions, périmètres, dénominations d'un champ d'études en constant développement aux XX<sup>e</sup> et XXI<sup>e</sup> siècles Raphaëlle Ziadé (Petit Palais Paris)  
11h00 Pause
- SESSION 1**
- Vestiges archéologiques et architecturaux: entre exploration et réutilisation**  
Modératrice : Carole Roche-Hawley (Institut français du Proche-Orient Beyrouth)
- 11h30 D'un sacré à l'autre. Les origines antiques des colonnettes dites guérisseuses de quelques lieux de culte libanais Patricia Antaki (Université de Balamand Koura)  
12h00 L'émergence du christianisme en Syrie centrale : l'exemple des villages basaltiques de Homs Patricia Ghamimé (Université Libanaise, Branche II, III Fanar & Tripoli)  
12h30 L'église Mar Charbel de Maad, évolution architecturale Lévon Nordiguian (Université Saint-Joseph Beyrouth)  
13h00-15h00 Pause déjeuner
- SESSION 2**
- Patrimoine iconographique : caractéristiques et échanges**  
Modératrice : Nadine Panayot (American University of Beirut Beyrouth)
- 15h00 Les peintures murales chrétiennes médiévales au Liban et à Chypre. Une collaboration fructueuse ? Mai Immerzeel (Leiden University Leyde ; Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam -Amsterdam)  
15h30 Autour de trois portraits de figures imberbes dans des peintures murales du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle au Mont Liban Nada Hélou (Université Libanaise, Branche II – Fanar)  
16h00 Les inscriptions arabes sur les icônes melkites alépiennes Charbel Nassif (Institut d'Études Sud-Est Européennes Bucarest ; Université Saint-Joseph Beyrouth)  
16h30 Pause
- SESSION 3**
- Préservation du patrimoine: architecture, icônes et manuscrits**  
Modératrice : Grace Homs (Université Libanaise, Branche II – Fanar)
- 17h00 L'architecture des églises mononefs entre le XVI<sup>e</sup> et le XIX<sup>e</sup> au Liban, vers un modèle unifié ? Hany Kahwagi-Janho (Université Saint-Esprit – Kaslik)  
17h30 Sauvegarde des icônes des deux cathédrales melkites à Yabroud et Homs Nada Sarkis (Direction générale des Antiquités et des Musées Damas)  
18h00 Les femmes et la tradition manuscrite melkite aux XVII<sup>e</sup>-XIX<sup>e</sup> s. – Marie-Thérèse Elia (Université Saint-Esprit – Kaslik)  
18h30 Pause
- 19h00 Remise de la Décoration de la Sainte Croix de Jérusalem par Sa Béatitudo Youssef à Nada Hélou, Raphaëlle Ziadé et Lévon Nordiguian

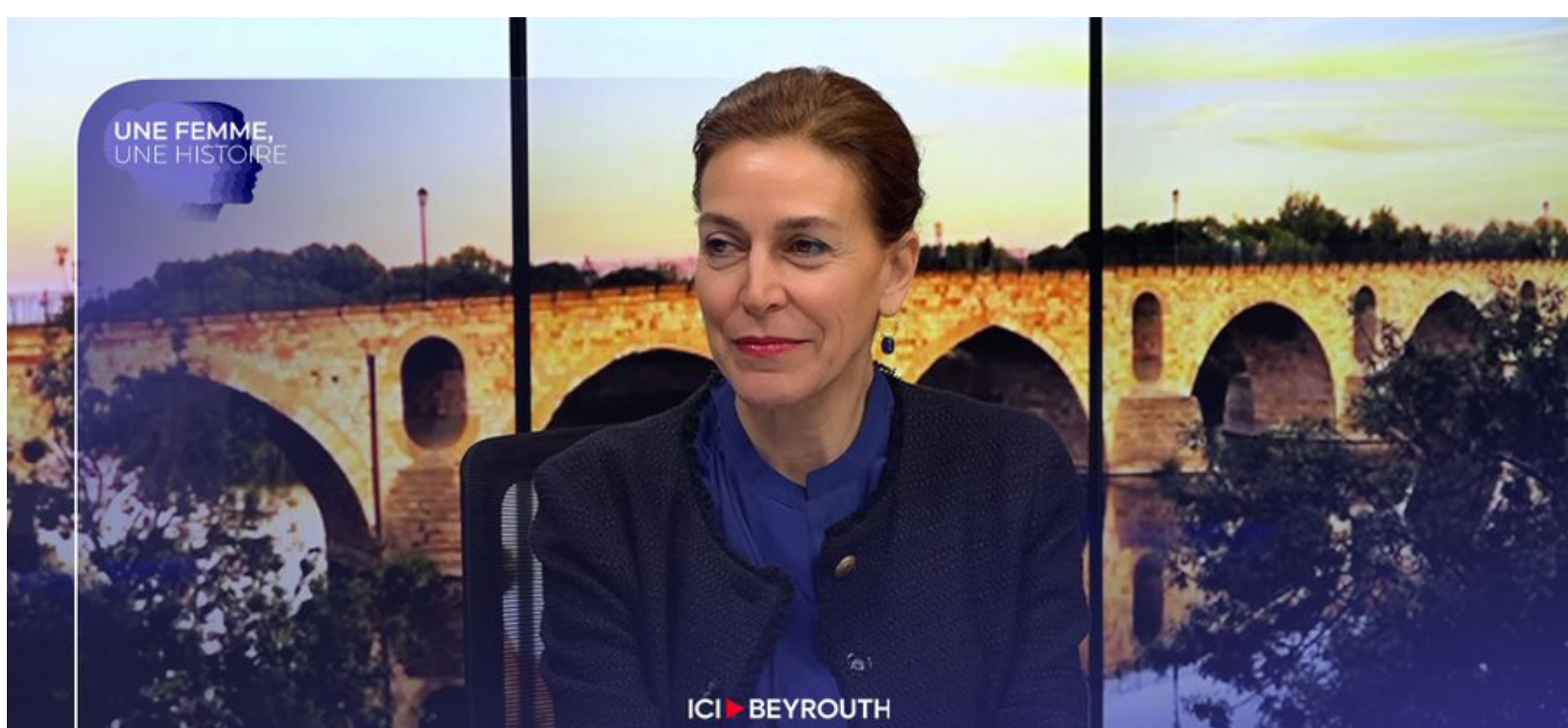


Other events of interest included:

May 8, 2024

Interview with Dr. Nadine Panayot, Associate Professor and Curator of AUB's Archaeological Museum, entitled *Gathering the scattered shards of our history and pursuing our mission.*

In the episode Une Femme Une Histoire, Dr. Nadine Panayot, shares her experience, and the challenges faced by the AUB Archaeological Museum after the port explosion of Beirut as well as introducing the conservation project in the Anfeh region.

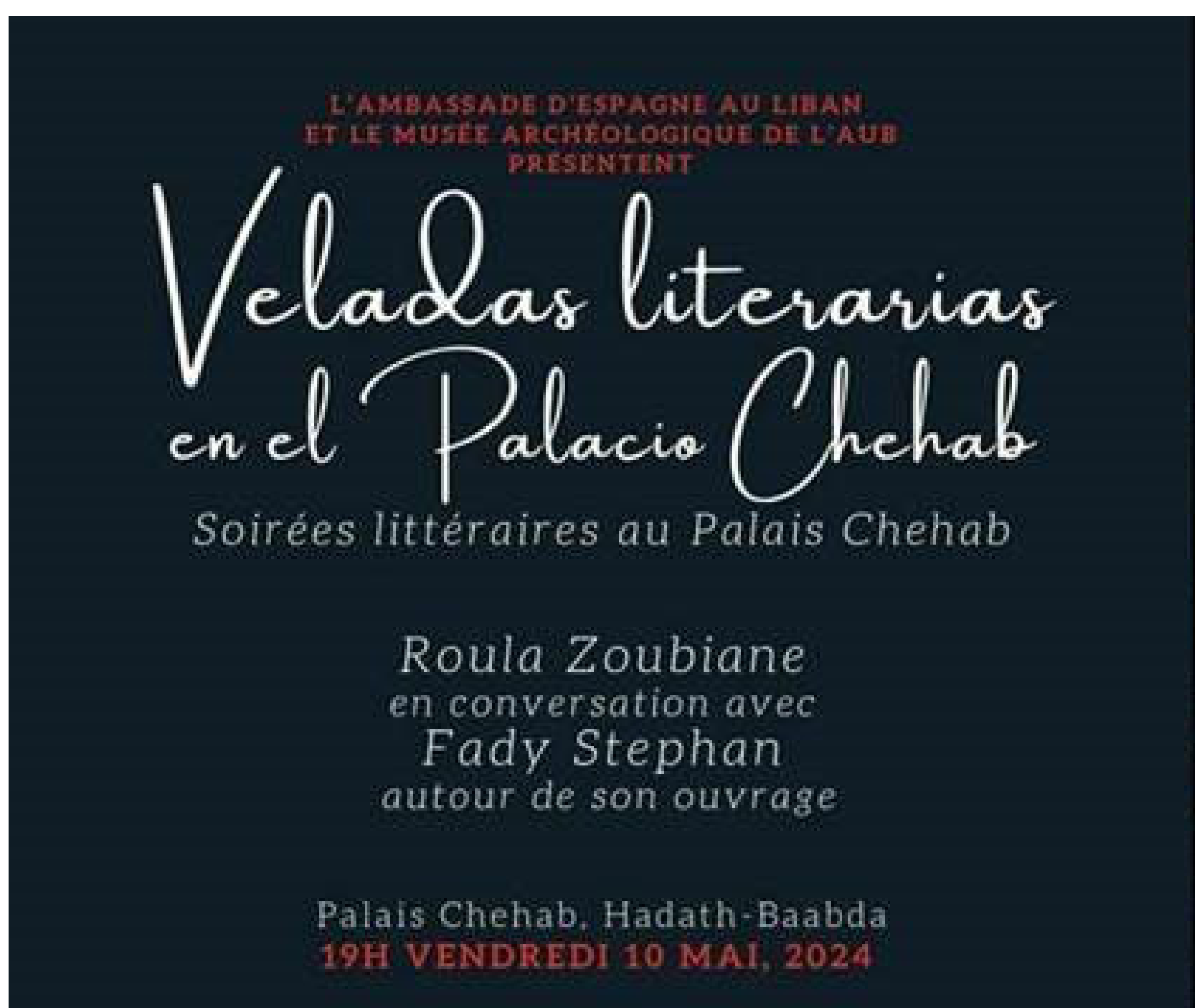




May 10, 2024

The Archaeological Museum of the American University of Beirut in collaboration with the Spanish Embassy in Lebanon continues the cycle of “Veladas Literarias” (literary evenings) at the Chéhab Palace with the intervention of Mr. Fady Stephan, archaeologist, philologist and Lebanese writer, professor in the Department of Art and Archeology at the Lebanese University from 1978 to 2007, in conversation with Madame Roula Zoubiane, Africanist, translator, and professor of French and Francophone literature at the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences - section I at the Lebanese University.

***Check article***






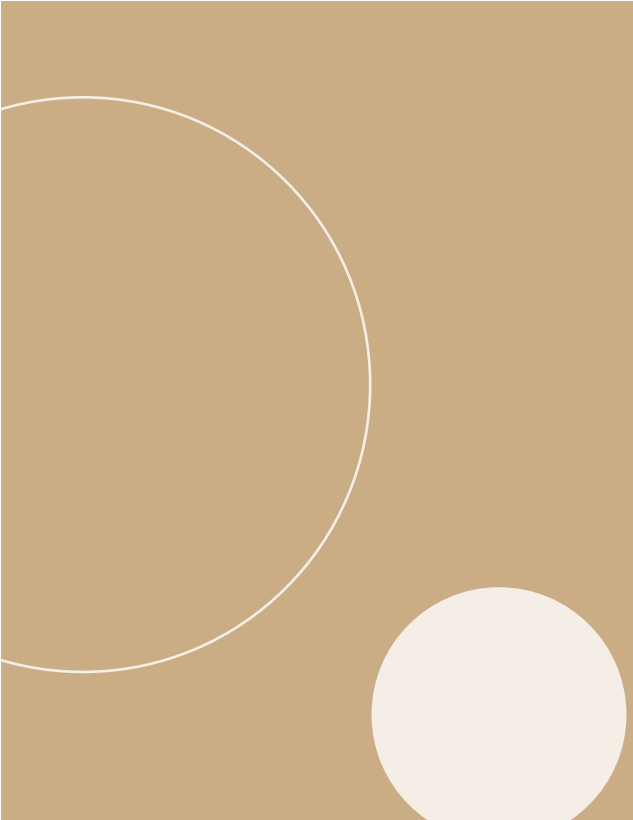


# LATEST PUBLICATIONS

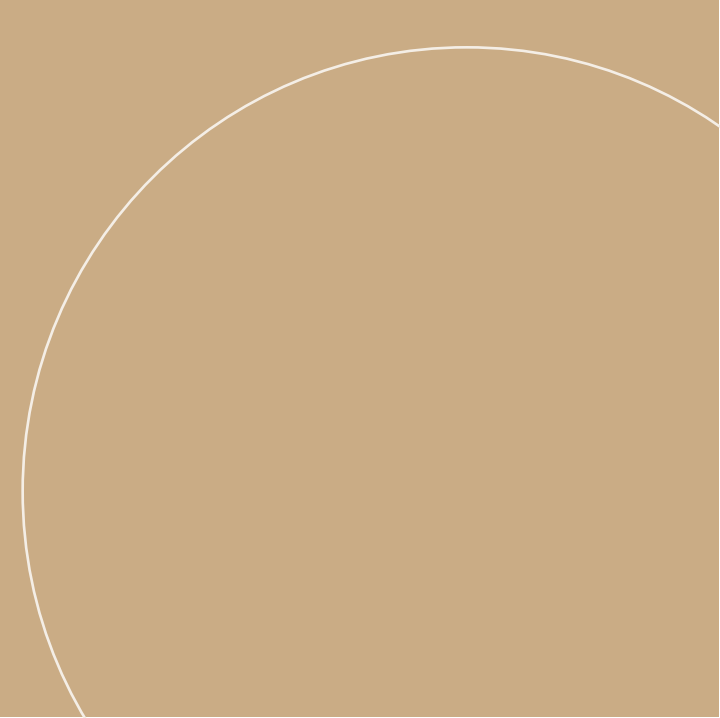
1. Glass in art and museums:  
“Promoting a tangible and intangible heritage for the well-being of communities,” by Teresa Medici (Glass Reconstructive Collaboration after the 2020 Beirut Post Explosion by Nadine Panayot, pp. 236-243) in Celebrating Glass, Achieving Sustainability, Inspiring Transformation. A Report on the Activities Undertaken for the United Nations International Year of Glass 2022. Alicia Durán and John M. Parker editors. CSIC, 2024, pp. 219-244



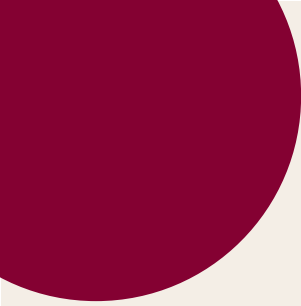




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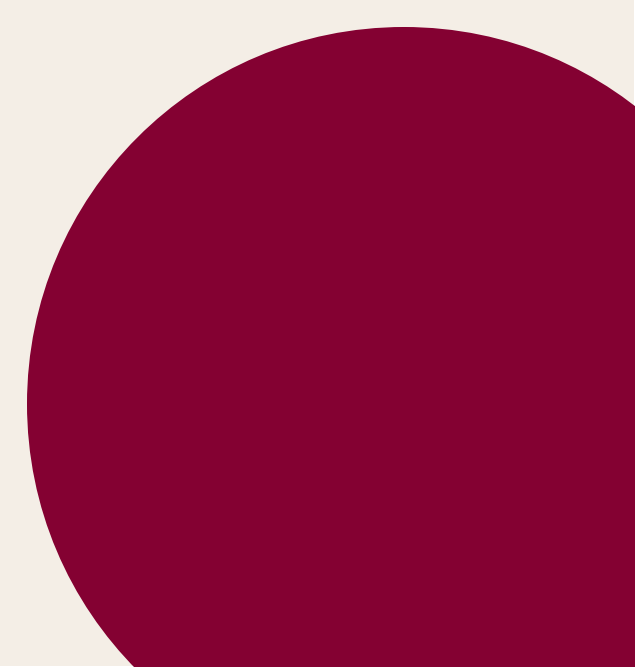


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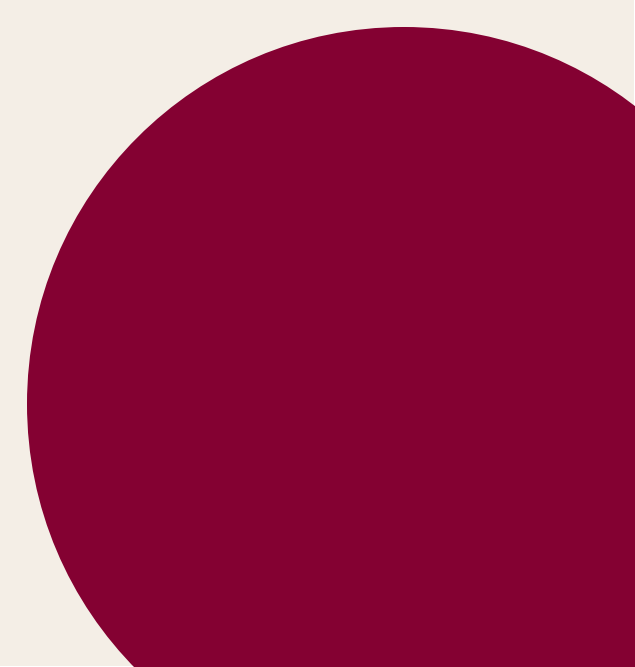


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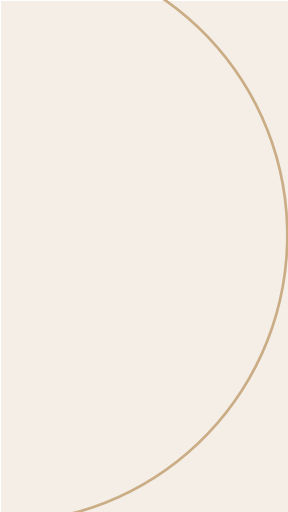
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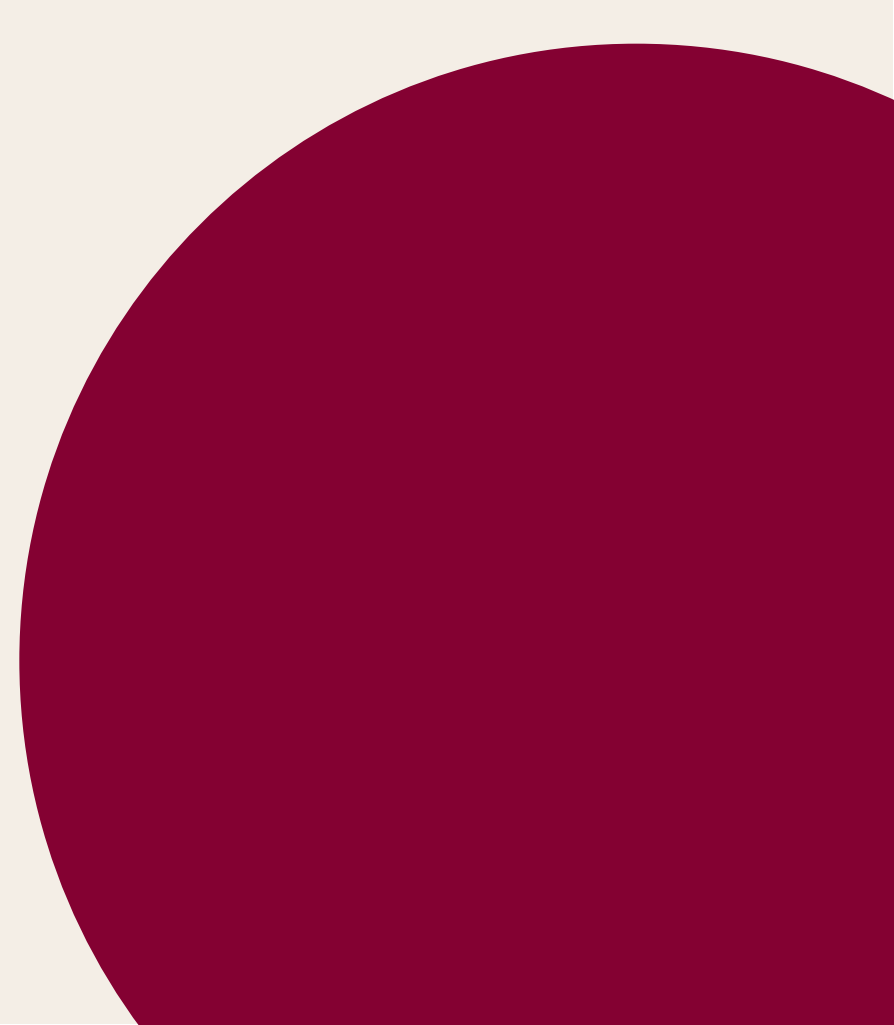
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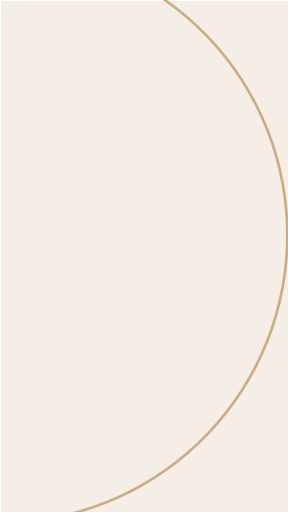
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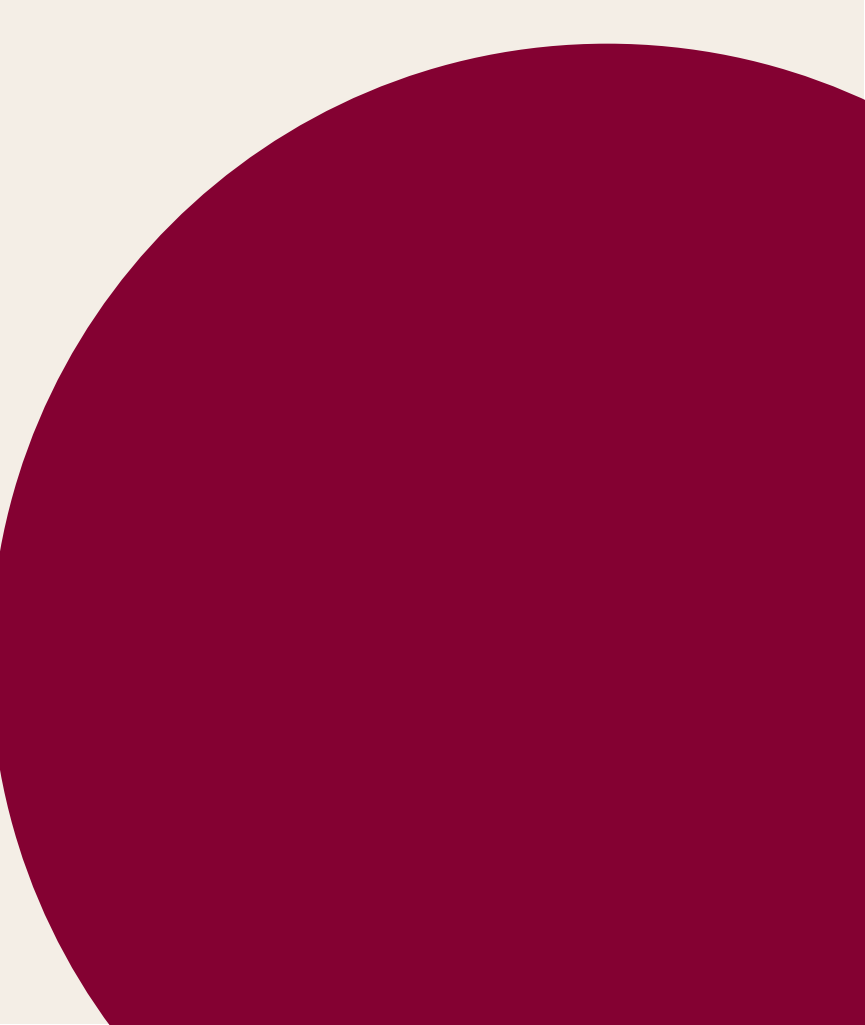
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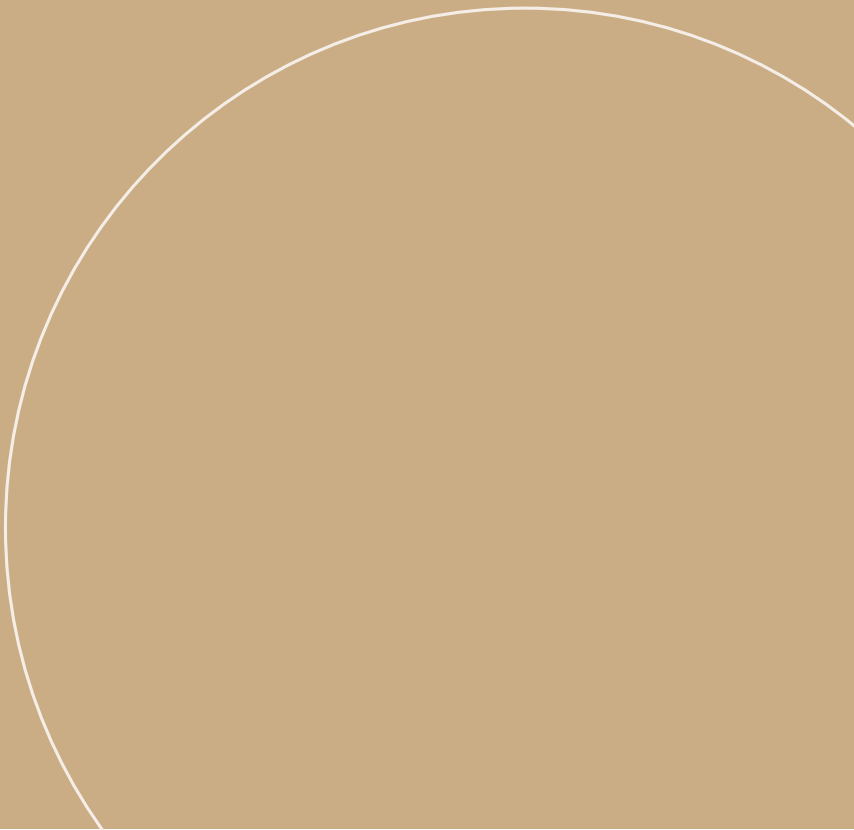
Founded in 1979 to encourage public support and use of the museum, members in the Society participate in many activities including lectures, children’s activities, cultural trips and excursions as well as many social events. All society members receive a subscription to the Museum Newsletter.

**We would like to invite you to renew your membership for the year 2024–25.**

Your continued support would be much appreciated.

## Annual Membership fees for the years 2024–2025:

Member	\$50
Family	\$100
Fellow	\$150
Patrons	\$200
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The Museum Recovery Fund:

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