

WOAM NEWSLETTER

No. 62

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ICOM-CC WORKING GROUP

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1. FROM THE COORDINATOR

In this Newsletter we bring you an update about our forthcoming conference in Mainz in 2023, and also about a meeting held in Cartagena, Spain about the salvage and conservation of the wreck Mazarrón 2, a Phoenician ship. To continue the shipwreck theme, we would introduce you to an excellent series of articles in TINA the Turkish maritime archaeology periodical with articles about the conservation of the fleet shipwrecks which has been at the center of research and will continue to be so, I am sure.

The next WOAM conference was to have taken place in Kazan in Russia in September, but due to the sad circumstances in Ukraine those plans were changed. We are however deeply grateful to Artem Silkin and his team at the State Museum-Reserve, Town-Island of Sviyazhsk for all their work, and for introducing us to their great annual conference of wood which will also take place this year.

We had to find another solution with regards to the conference and are so very thankful to Römisch-Germanish Zentral Museum in Mainz, Germany, who very kindly agreed to become our new host, when we approached them. Our new host sends the greeting below:

Dear colleagues and friends

It is indeed regrettable, for both the organising team and the scientific community, that due to the actual events arising from the war in Ukraine the WOAM Conference cannot be held as originally planned in Kazan this year. In view of this unfortunate situation and the fact that the preparations for Kazan were already well advanced, the ICOM CC WOAM group approached the Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum / Leibniz Institut für Archäologie (RGZM) with the proposal to step in as a venue for the conference at short notice.

The RGZM, of course, is extremely happy to comply with this request and will host the conference in January 2023.

The RGZM, a member of the Leibniz Association, is a globally operating archaeological research institute and museum, with its headquarters in Mainz, Germany, and further locations in Neuwied Monrepos and Mayen. Since its foundation in 1852 the museum has been dedicated to the material legacy of humankind, extending from the Pleistocene to the Middle Ages, with the aim to understand the evolution of human behavior, as well as the development and transformation of societies. To this end, the RGZM maintains a variety of research infrastructures, including laboratories for archaeological sciences, conservation/restoration and traceology, as well as comprehensive collections, one of the largest specialist libraries for archaeology in Europe, and extensive archives. This infrastructure supports research, teaching, and knowledge transfer at national and international levels. As a Leibniz-Research Museum, knowledge transfer via publications, exhibitions and educational programs is a central part of the RGZM's working program.

Our institute with approximately 200 employees houses three Museums in two different cities. One of those, the Museum for Ancient Seafaring in Mainz, was opened in 1994 and is inspired by the discovery of five Late Roman shipwrecks, discovered in 1982. The conservation of waterlogged wooden artefacts has since then been located in this building. For almost two decades now, experience in this field has been built up, which is why the 15th WOAM working Group Conference with its academic exchange on wet organic material is highly appreciated here.

The RGZM is currently undergoing a major phase of transformation - not only in terms of structural changes and the redefinition of our scientific profile and the redesign of our exhibitions - but also due to the relocation of our central institute. Our newly constructed building has been sited immediately opposite the Museum for Ancient Seafaring. The conference will be held in this brand new facility.

Mainz is the capital city of Rhine Palatinate in the southwest of Germany.

It is part of the economically vibrant Rhein-Main region, located approximately 30 km from Frankfurt with its major international airport.

Due to the particular geographical location at the confluence of the river Main with the river Rhine, the Romans chose „Mogontiacum“ to be the capital city of the Roman province of Germania Superior. Because of the mild climate, Mainz is today surrounded by one of the largest wine-growing regions in Germany. You can connect with the historic atmosphere of the restored old town most readily with a glass of the local wine – and don't be too surprised should you encounter strangely costumed people in January. Mainz is famous for its Carnival celebrations.



Markus Wittköpper, RGZM

A cordial welcome to Mainz - we look forward to your visit!

The Römisch-Germanish Zentral Museum will open conference registration 15th of September.

Registration will be through the website <https://conference-service.com/ICOM-CC-WOAM2022> (Do not be confused by the name, it is the correct website).

If you have any questions relating to registration, payment etc. please contact the helpful conference registration team at woam2023@rgzm.de

Bursaries

A number of bursaries are being made available to students and emerging professionals or anyone who has been hard hit by the pandemic, to go towards the conference fee. If you would like to apply for a bursary, please send an application email no later than 15th of October stating your reason for applying to:

icom-cc.woam@conference-service.com

Lifetime Achievement Award

The next Wet Organic Archaeological Materials (WOAM) Working Group's Lifetime Achievement Award will be given out at the conference in Mainz, so please start thinking about who you would like to nominate.

We would like to receive nominations by December 31st 2022. Please email the nomination to:

icom-cc.woam@conference-service.com

and if possible format it to look like the form below.

A short history of the Wet Organic Archaeological Materials working group's lifetime achievement award 2016-2020

The Wet Organic Archaeological Materials (WOAM) Working Group's Lifetime Achievement Award was established in 2016, with the blessing of the then ICOM-CC

Directory Board, as a way of recognising members who had given:

1. Distinguished service to the field of wet organic archaeological materials over the course of the nominee's professional career.
2. Exceptional contributions with significant impact to the functioning or advancement of the study, treatment and preservation of wet organic materials.
3. Dedicated and sustained service to wet organic archaeological materials. This may include: service as a coordinator, assistant coordinator or as chair of one of the local arrangements committees; sustained service as a peer-reviewer for the conference proceedings; service as an editor for one or more conference proceedings.

Recipients can be proposed by any member of the group and the nomination must be supported by two additional letters of support. The award is given at the triennial WOAM Interim meeting.

Typically, the award is accompanied by a speech detailing the individual's contribution and this speech is then published in the Wet Organic Archaeological Materials Working Group newsletter. Three awards can be given each triennium; however, in 2019 we had four exceptional nominations and so, unusually, four awards were given. The recipients to-date are:

JIM SPRIGGS (2016)

CLIFF COOK (2016)

PER HOFFMANN (2016)

IAN GODFREY (2019)

KHOI TRAN (2019)

POUL JENSEN (2019)

TARA GRANT (2019)

**WET ORGANIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL MATERIALS
WORKING GROUP (WOAM) LIFETIME
ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
NOMINATION FORM**

Nominee:

Address:

Email:

Proposer:

Address:

Email:

Sponsors:

1)

2)

Reading Matter: TINA

Tina, the Turkish Maritime Archaeology Periodical, focuses in two issues no.13 and 14 on the conservation of shipwrecks. Ufuk Kocabaş who is heading the conservation of the Yenikapi ships in Istanbul is one of the editors. The seven excellent contributions are:

- Towards Chemical and Physical Stability: A Summary of the Preservation and Research on the Swedish Warship, Vasa by Emma Hocker.
- Standing on the Shoulders of our Predecessors – A Base and A viewpoint. Fifty Years Working with Conservation of Waterlogged Archaeological Shipwrecks in Denmark by Anette Hjelm Petersen and Kristiane Strætkvern.

How to Nominate

1. Please fill in the fields shown to the left and write a letter of support listing the qualifications of the nominee and addressing the criteria listed above.
2. Find two additional sponsors who must also write letters of support.
3. Submit all of the materials to the WOAM Coordinator via email icom-cc.woam@conference-service.com

Deadline: December 31st 2022

- 16th Century Shipwreck from Oslo Harbour. Challenges and Choices during the Process of Conservation, Reconstruction and Exhibition by Hildegard Vangsted, Tori Falck, Monica Hovdan and Pål Thome.
- Excavation and Conservation of the Ma'agan Mikhael Ship by Deborah Cvikel.
- The Conservation of the Boats from Oberstimm/Bavaria by Markus Wittköpper.
- Sulphur Problem in the Conservation of Waterlogged Wood by A. Gökçe Kiliç.
- Fundamental Analyses Performed on Waterlogged Wood by Namik Kiliç.

The benefits of being an ICOM-CC Member

There are a great number of benefits to being a member of ICOM and ICOM-CC. With your membership comes the ICOM card which allows free entrance into a large number of museums the world over and a reduced registration rate at conferences. A memberships also allows you to vote for coordinator candidates or to stand for Working Group Coordinator.



You do not only have a voice through ICOM-CC, but also through your National Committee. Getting involved with your National Committee is a great opportunity to champion conservation and emphasizing to your other museum colleagues that we conservators are an intrinsic part of the museum family.

One does not necessarily have to be employed in a museum to become a member. Many members are employed in universities, conservation labs. or other heritage institutions.

COLLEAGUE'S CORNER

International Meeting of Experts on the extraction and conservation of the ship Mazarrón 2 (Playa de la Isla, Mazarrón, Murcia, Spain)

Milagros Buendía, Soledad Pérez and Rocío Castillo
Conservator, Collections and Documentation curator in charge and archaeologist of the National Museum of Underwater Archeology ARQVA.

The «International Meeting of Experts on the extraction and conservation of the Mazarrón 2 ship» was held on May 5, 6 and 7, 2022, at the ARQVA National Museum of Underwater Archeology (Cartagena, Murcia). It was organized and financed by the Ministry of Culture and Sports (MCD) of Spain, through the Subdirectorate General for Management and Coordination of Cultural Assets and the National Museum of Underwater Archeology ARQVA, together with the Autonomous Community of the Region of Murcia (CARM), through the General Directorate of Cultural Heritage (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. Onsite participants. Archive of the National Museum of Underwater Archaeology. © photographic archive of the National Museum of Underwater Archaeology, Spain

The Mazarrón 2 ship, discovered in 1994, excavated in 2000 and declared an Asset of Cultural Interest¹ in 2015, is preserved *in situ* under a metal protection structure, whose stability has been compromised by the acceleration of the erosive processes of the dynamics coastline in recent years. The recovery and investigation of the Mazarrón 2 ship is considered an opportunity to delve into the knowledge of nautical archeology and the conservation processes of water-soaked wood, with the ultimate goal of exhibiting it and making it known to the public.

¹ Asset of Cultural Interest, with the category of Archaeological Zone (BORM nº 74, 03/31/2015), the highest legal protection for an archaeological asset in Spain.

For this reason, in March 2021, the MCD and the CARM agreed on its extraction and subsequent treatment at ARQVA, as well as the holding of an International Meeting of Experts (RIE). The starting point is the planning of a comprehensive extraction and conservation project from a multidisciplinary approach, following the methodological, ethical and deontological requirements of UNESCO and the ICOM Conservation Committee. Along the lines of the international meetings in Haifa (1999) and Istanbul (2003), other comprehensive projects for the extraction and conservation of ships with characteristics similar to Mazarrón 2 were presented, showing the overall vision that includes the perspective of both disciplines, which they must go in parallel in any global project of underwater archaeological action. Finally, an update was made on the methodology and extraction materials and conservation treatments, as a basis for discussing different alternatives applicable to Mazarrón 2. 23 speakers from Spain, France, Italy, Denmark, Germany, Turkey, Israel participated and USA.

The official inauguration of the RIE was carried out by representatives of different administrations and institutions, pointing out Xing Ku, Deputy General Directorate of UNESCO and Miguel Iceta, Minister of Culture and Sports of Spain, the commitment of Spain with UNESCO in the protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (PCS) and how the Mazarrón project can be a challenge from a scientific and cultural point of view and an example of international cooperation (Fig. 2). The RIE was closed by Rafael Sabio, director of the National Museum of Underwater Archaeology, and Pablo Braquehais, General Director of Cultural Heritage of the CARM.



Fig. 2. From left to right Íñigo Ramírez de Haro, Permanent Spanish Delegation to UNESCO; Miguel Iceta, Minister of Culture and Sports of Spain; Xing Ku, Deputy General Directorate of UNESCO; Andrés Perelló, Director of Casa Mediterráneo and Isaac Sastre, General Director of Cultural Heritage and Fine Arts. Archive of the National Museum of Underwater Archaeology. ©photographic archive of the National Museum of Underwater Archaeology, Spain

Conference sessions

Session 1: Mazarrón 2 situation

The historical perspective of the Mazarrón 2 ship, from its discovery in 1994 to its current situation, and the state of the matter was presented by the archaeologists Rocío Castillo and Carlos de Juan, from the National Museum of Underwater Archeology and the University of Valencia, respectively. The problems of the coastal dynamics of the Playa de la Isla deposit were addressed by engineer José Manuel de la Peña Oliva, from CEDEX. The presentation of ARQVAtec, the ARQVA Conservation-Restoration Laboratory, was given by Milagros Buendía, conservator-restorer of said institution.

Session 2: Ethics and Deontology

The importance of the ethical and deontological principles that should guide the planning of an underwater archaeological action, as a comprehensive project, was shown in the interventions of Ulrike Guérin, jurist and head of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of SCA, and Nanna Bjerregard, conservator-restorer, member of the ICOM Conservation Committee and coordinator of the Nordisk Konservatorforbund-DK Floodlog Working Group, a regional group of IICs.

Session 3: International Projects

International projects for the extraction and conservation of vessels similar to Mazarrón 2 were presented. The Ma'agan Mikhael, dismantled, treated with PEG to saturation and later re-assembled, by Maayan Cohen, an archaeologist from Tel Aviv University. The ships extracted in bulk (Jules Verne 7, Jules Verne 9, Napoli A and Napoli C, Pula 1) and others dismantled and recovered in pieces (Napoli B, Napoli G, Pula 2), presented by Giulia Boetto, archaeologist and director of the Center Camille Jullian (Aix-en-Provence Cedex 2). The Jules Verne 7 boats, treated with PEG and freeze-dried, and Jules Verne 9, impregnated to saturation, by Henri Bernard-Maugiron, conservator-restorer at the Arc-Nucléart center in Grenoble. The Oberstimm 1 and 2 ships, recovered in segments and treated with kauramin, presented by Markus Wittköpper, conservator-restorer at the Central Germanic Museum in Mainz. Finally, in the Yenikappi project, different methods of extraction (in segments or dismantled) and conservation (PEG and lyophilization, in general, or kauramin for the remains in the worst state of conservation) were used, explained Ufuk Kocabas, archaeologist and head of the Istanbul University Department of Conservation and Restoration.

Session 3: Spanish Projects

Spanish projects for the extraction and conservation of ships were shown. Mazarrón 1, extracted in two blocks and treated by partial PEG impregnation and freeze-drying, by Luis Carlos Zambrano, curator-restorer of the Museum of Cádiz (Fig. 3). The Urbieta wreck, extracted in a single block and treated by total impregnation with PEG, presented by Laura García Boullosa, conservator-restorer of the Archaeological Museum of Vizcaya. Finally, the ships of Les Sorres X, Barceloneta and Plaza de Carros, dismantled and preserved with PEG, either by partial impregnation and freeze-drying or by total impregnation and controlled drying, by Caterina Aguer, conservator-restorer linked to the CASC.



Fig. 3. Intervention by Luis Carlos Zambrano. Archive of the National Museum of Underwater Archaeology. © photographic archive of the National Museum of Underwater Archaeology, Spain

Session 3: Extraction

Regarding the methodology for extracting very fragile materials, through the use of intermediate layers between wood and rigid supports, different methods and materials were shown, either with silicone molds, presented by Luis Carlos Zambrano, conservator-restorer of the Museum of Cádiz, well with other materials (carbon fiber sheets) tested in the SASMAP project, by Barbara Davidde, archaeologist of the Italian National Superintendence for the PCS.

In relation to the supports for the extraction and transfer of boats, the following were presented: a three-dimensional structure with a rigid frame, as a proposal for the extraction and transport of the Mazarrón 2 ship, by engineer José Antonio Hernández Cañadas (Polytechnic University of Cartagena); and the structure used for the transfer of the Delta I wreck, presented by the archaeologist Milagros Alzaga, coordinator of the Center for Underwater Archeology of Andalusia.

Session 3: Conservation

Fundamental aspects in the conservation of archaeological ships were raised. The first is linked to analytical techniques and sampling strategy to establish the state of conservation of the ship, by Teresa Doménech Carbó, Professor of Chemistry specializing in Heritage Sciences (Polytechnic University of Valencia). Afterwards, the experience of the Institute of Nautical Archeology (INA) of the University of Texas in the conservation of archaeological ships was explained, presented by the conservator-restorer Christopher Dostal.

Next, the different methods of conservation of the flooded archaeological wood were analyzed. The CUTAWAY Project, led by Ingrid Stelzner, conservator-restorer of the Central Romano-Germanic Museum, allows the evaluation of the different conservation methods and their behavior over time. Partial impregnation with PEG 2000 and lyophilization, planning and criteria to be taken into account, by Kristiane Straetkvern, conservator-restorer of the National Museum of Denmark, who showed her experience in the treatment of Viking ships and conservation problems long-term. In this sense, the importance of monitoring ships is shown to monitor their state of conservation after treatment and their effectiveness, with the example of *coca* in Bremen and the experience of the European Working Group "Monitoring of Preserved Ships" (MoPS), presented by Amandine Colson, independent conservator-restorer and archaeologist, linked to the University of Bamberg.

Two visits were made, to ARQVA and ARQVatec, during which the attendees learned about the facilities of both venues, in terms of equipment and human resources, as well as the collections they preserve (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4. Kristiane Straetkvern and Ida Hovmand examining the wood extracted from Mazarrón 2 in the 2008 documentation campaign. Archive of the National Museum of Underwater Archeology. © photographic archive of the National Museum of Underwater Archaeology, Spain

Monographic round table on Mazarrón 2

Before beginning the final round table, Ida Hovmand made a brief presentation insisting on the need for the future Mazarrón 2 extraction and conservation project to be developed within the framework of ICOM's ethical codes.

Xavier Nieto, archaeologist, moderated the table, which was attended by Giulia Boetto, Ingrid Stelzner and Ida Hovmand (Fig. 5) and later by the rest of the meeting attendees.



Fig. 5. From left to right Ingrid Stelzner, Xavier Nieto, Giulia Boetto and Ida Hovmand. Archive of the National Museum of Underwater Archaeology. © photographic archive of the National Museum of Underwater Archaeology, Spain

The issues raised at the round table were:

- Should the ship be removed en bloc or with minimal fragmentation? is it necessary to dismantle it?
- What preservation method is the most appropriate?
- Exhibition of the ship, as it was located or as it would be when it sailed? in its archaeological position or restoring its forms?
- It is necessary to foresee the monitoring of its state of conservation in the medium and long term.

By way of conclusion, we would like to highlight the success of this meeting, which has brought together national and international experts, who showed their projects,

discussed the different alternatives for the extraction and conservation of Mazarrón 2 and, above all, that they are willing to continue collaborating in the project. This will serve as a contact and collaboration network between professionals with recognized experience and a specific profile in archaeological materials of underwater origin, in the line of cooperation indicated in Rule 8 of the Annex to the 2001 UNESCO Convention.

Official newsletter of the Working Group specialised in Waterlogged Organic Archaeological Materials from the International Council of Museums Committee for Conservation (ICOM-CC).

Editors

Mags Felter, Ida Hovmand

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