



APRIL - 2021

PRESERVATION ♦ EDUCATION ♦ RESEARCH ♦ INSPIRE

Dear Member:

We are pleased to announce the winners of the **2021 Cornelia Futor Memorial Student Paper Competition**. We had five very good papers this year and the judges had a difficult time deciding the best. This is a good thing and proves that archaeology/anthropology is thriving. Please join us on April 21 for their lectures.

If you haven't been to our website, www.timesifters.org, or our YouTube channel, please check them out for the latest society information and other interesting stuff from the world of Archaeology.

Thank you for being a Time Sifters member.

Darwin "Smitty" Smith, President

hmsbeagle22@gmail.com

2021 Cornelia Futor Memorial Student Paper Winners

Time Sifters is pleased to present the winners of this year's Cornelia Futor Memorial Student Paper Competition. These graduate students will present via ZOOM at our April meeting. Their presentations will be recorded and posted on both our YouTube site and our web page.



First Place Winner

Madeleine Kraft

University of South Florida

"Virtualization of the Chiurazzi Sculpture Collection at the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art"

Madeleine Kraft is a first year Masters student in the History Dept. at the University of South Florida (USF) in Tampa. Her focus of study is in Ancient History with special interest in the late Roman Empire, Roman Sicily and Digital Humanities. Madeleine has had the pleasure of working with the USF's Institute of Digital Exploration (IDEx) during her graduate studies at USF. After finishing her Masters degree, she is looking to pursue a PhD in History at USF specializing in Digital Humanities in order to continue to use digital methods to increase access to cultural heritage knowledge.



Photo: Ringling Museum of Art

The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art in Sarasota contains a variety of works of art of historic and archaeological value. The collections span diverse periods of time. Of particular interest, the Ringling Museum owns several copies of Roman and

Hellenistic statues which were made by the Fonderia Chiurazzi in the early 20th Century. John Ringling purchased the statues in 1936 and they are currently on display at the museum. In the Fall of 2020, the IDEx at the USF, in coordination with the Ringling Museum, began **the process of digitizing these statues using digital photogrammetry**. The project aims to document the collection and to make accessible these statues to those who may have interest in them. This also allows those unable to travel the opportunity to view these incredible statues in a 3D environment. The final models will be disseminated to a global public via digital collections platforms and can aid in future research endeavors for the scholars seeking to better understand these works.



Second Place Winner

Anastasia Temkina
University of South Florida

“The Early Medieval Transition: Diet Reconstruction, Mobility, and Culture Contact in the Ravenna Countryside, Northern Italy

Anastasia Temkina is a 2nd year Applied Anthropology Master’s student at the USF, focusing on bioarcheology and stable isotope analysis. She is currently working on her thesis that investigates dietary change related to migration and culture contact in Northern Italy during the Early Medieval period. In Fall 2021, after graduating from her MA, she plans to begin her PhD. program with a new research project involving the study of the Bubonic Plaque in Medieval Italy. Her ultimate goal is to become an Anthropology



professor, teach future students about bioarcheology and its applications and continue dietary and Plague research.

This research project evaluates the effects of increased mobility and culture contact on dietary practices of people buried at two northern Italian sites, Chiunsano di Ficarolo

and Chiesazza di Ficarolo, located near the ancient Roman capital of Ravenna and dating 4th-7th century CE. The Early Medieval period was a time of change, political instability, migration and invasion of the “barbarian” tribes, and diet was not unaffected. It is hypothesized that a new staple crop, millet, was introduced and that pork consumption had increased. In this study, human bone samples from these sites were used for stable isotope analyses of bone apatite and collagen to reconstruct the diet of the individuals who lived during this transitional period. Through dietary analysis, this research asks how local and migrant populations interacted with each other, examines potential power struggles, and explores if there was hybridization or segregation of cultural practices.

Honorable Mentions



McKenna Douglass
University of South Florida
“More Than a Little Pot: Minoan Ceramics in the Eastern Mediterranean”



Kristen Vogel
University of South Florida
“An African Women’s Empowerment: Listening to Ghana’s Matriarchs”



Crystal Wright
University of South Florida
“An Edgefield Ceramic Assemblage from the Lost Town of St. Joseph, FL”

Instructions for real time viewing:

Register in advance for this meeting:

Go to the Time Sifters website, www.timesifters.org and click on the registration url.

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Notes from a Time Sifter

The Invention of Writing

By Evelyn Mangie, Time Sifters Board Member

The invention of writing was crucial to the development of civilization (cities). The small egalitarian Neolithic villages that began to develop ca. 12000 BCE **functioned without a physical record-keeping system** but the need for written recording grew when some of those small villages grew into towns and cities. When they did that, they also developed characteristics that are different from village life. Historians identify those characteristics that define a city as having an organized central government, large public buildings, specialized labor, symbolic art, the ability to produce a surplus, and a way to keep records (writing). This happened independently all over the world, though at different times. **Historians believe it happened first in Mesopotamia sometime after 4000 BCE, slightly later in the Nile Valley, in the Indus Valley ca. 2500 BCE, in China ca. 1500 BCE, and in Central America ca. 1200 BCE.** Cities continued to develop in other areas of the world as trade stretched farther away, until cities became universal.

Not every agricultural village became a city, but those that grew very large were forced into new ways to live that included the characteristics mentioned above. The large population required the development of a stratified leader class that formed a central government. Monumental architecture gave legitimacy to leaders and art gave rise to symbolic expression. Specialized labor freed some from farming to allow the development of innovative technology. Producing a surplus created an accumulation of wealth that necessitated the ability to keep records to mark ownership and for trade of the surplus. The most critical of the characteristics is the



Photos: British Museum. Wikipedia.

ability to keep records because wealth, social stratification, and trade were dependent on it.

Historians long believed that the **first writing system was cuneiform**, developed in Mesopotamia by the people of the Sumerian cities (Eridu, Uruk, Ur, Larsa, Isin, Adab, Kullah, Lagash, Nippur, and Kish) in the southern Tigris-Euphrates valley in what is now Iraq. However, new information now indicates that an earlier writing system may have been developed by the people of **the Vinča culture**, (aka Turdaș culture or Turdaș-Vinča culture) in South-eastern Europe that dates to ca. 5,500-4,500 BCE, a thousand years before the Sumerians invented their writing system. That would change what historians have accepted for the time of the development of cities and writing.



The evidence for believing that the birth of cities was first done in Mesopotamia was because European scholars believed that the Bible was authentic history, and because some of the characteristics of civilization were still visible to 19th century historians.

The Ziggurats of the Sumerian cities remain because they were made of clay bricks that survived in the arid climate of southern Iraq. These monumental buildings drew 19th century archaeologists to find the other characteristics of cities,

like planned streets, expressive art, writing, and so forth. None of those were obvious anywhere in Europe until 1908 when a large Neolithic settlement was found in **the village of Vinča** in the southern Danube valley in what is known today as the Balkans (Bosnia, Serbia, Croatia,



Continued on page 4 ...

Writing ...

Romania). The ancient remains there were not visible because the buildings were made of mud-covered wood that had rotted away in the damp European climate, unlike the baked clay of the buildings in the dry climate of southern Mesopotamia. Because of WWI, excavation of the Vinča culture did not begin until 1918 and they dug until 1934. During that time, archaeologists found several similar cities of the same culture, all large urban towns with streets lined with multiple-story houses of several rooms where residents lived and produced sophisticated goods.

They had stratified social structures with sophisticated economic and religious systems and created beautiful ceramic vessels and images decorated with symbolic marks. They used the wheel, produced pottery, wove cloth, processed leather, and were skilled metallurgists.

That created a surplus that was traded with neighboring cities in a prosperous trade network. It is likely that they invented some kind of record-keeping system.

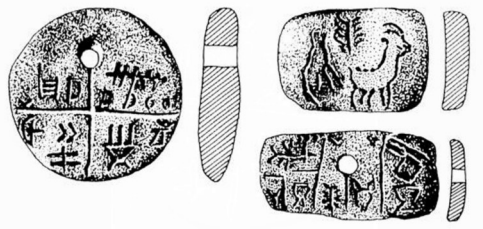
Excavation was interrupted by WWII but resumed afterwards and in 1961, archaeologists found possible fortification features and, most interesting, three small clay tablets (**the Tărtăria tablets**) bearing symbols that appear to be a Vinča writing system that dates to ca. 5300 BCE. Disputes immediately began; some claimed forgery, some insisted dating was impossible, some called the markings "scribbles", denying that the Vinča people could have invented a writing system a thousand years before the

Sumerians did. It is difficult to change long-standing ideas, so the debate continues but there is no doubt that the Vinča cities

who needed to keep track of the agricultural wealth of the city-states.

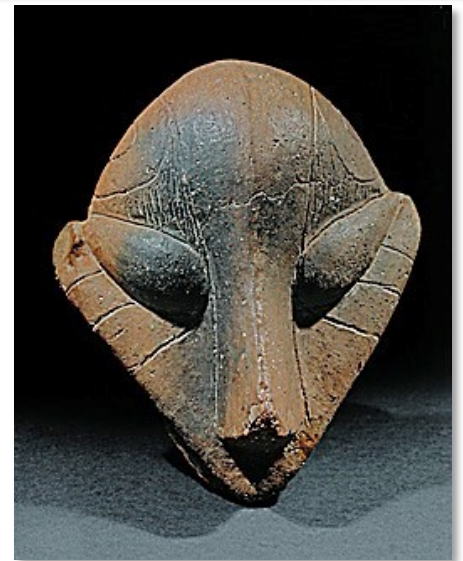


Photos: Ancient Pages, British Museum, Wikipedia.



were stratified societies that conducted trade which needed a record-keeping system. Archaeology will eventually reveal the evidence.

Agriculture required expertise and detailed recordkeeping, two elements that led directly to the invention of writing, historians say. It was born out of economic necessity and was a tool of the theocratic (priestly) ruling elite



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