



The Cost of Sustainability

Archaeology and Maritime Dispossession in the Eastern Mediterranean

Clore Lecture Theatre
6pm, November 11, 2026
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Sustainability, commonly presented as a self-evident good, has been a prominent theme in the political and academic spheres. In the Eastern Mediterranean, a region characterised by both rapid heritage deterioration and ongoing conflict, the intentions and impacts of pursuing heritage and environmental sustainability invite us to reconsider the term and its impact on local communities.

Dr Andreou's paper examines this tension through maritime heritage, using examples from Gaza and Cyprus. In Gaza, 'sustainable' rubble management plans envisioning artificial coastlines and islands built from war debris risk devastating underwater, marine ecosystems, resources, and coastal livelihoods, while perpetuating the sea-grab that severed Palestinians from maritime space and identity. In Cyprus, maritime projects aimed at documenting at-risk underwater heritage promote grey areas in the interpretation of the Hague Convention. This ambiguity can be exacerbated by the impacts of climate change, inviting us to reconsider the real cost of sustainability.



Speaker Georgia Andreou is a Lecturer in Archaeology and Sustainability at the University of Southampton.



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