



Photo: The Caryads | George Tatakis

DIALOGUES

between past and present:

Materials, construction techniques and social identity
through the centuries, from prehistory to the pre-industrial era
in the Balkans and Eastern Mediterranean

ONLINE LECTURE SERIES

Spring 2025 | 1st lecture series

ZOOM LINK:

<https://pantheonsorbonne.zoom.us/j/98350366717?pwd=zQWTO4lpUGh5u2W2gaJsKwJgRZrUy7.1>

A collaboration of

ArScAn – Archéologies et Sciences de l'Antiquité laboratory

School of Architecture, Democritus University of Thrace

Dialogues between past and present:

Materials, construction techniques and social identity
through the centuries, from prehistory to the pre-industrial
era in the Balkans and Eastern Mediterranean

Dates and Times: On Mondays at 18.00 (Greek time)
according to the program

ZOOM Participation Link:

[https://pantheonsorbonne.zoom.us/j/98350366717?
pwd=zQWTO4lpUGh5u2W2gaJsKwJgRZRy7.1](https://pantheonsorbonne.zoom.us/j/98350366717?pwd=zQWTO4lpUGh5u2W2gaJsKwJgRZRy7.1)



Coordination and Organization:

- **Zoi Tsirtsoni**, Research Director at CNRS UMR 7041 ArScAn, Aegean Protohistory Team Co-Director of the Franco-Hellenic Research Program at Dikili Tash
- **Katerina Ritzouli**, dr. architect, historian, Assistant Professor, School of Architectural Engineering, Democritus University of Thrace

Members of the organizing Team:

- **Damiani Karageorgiadou**, PhD candidate D.U.Th.
- **Theodora Maggana**, PhD candidate D.U.Th.
- **Alexandre Pinto**, PhD Paris I

Objective and Scope of the Lecture Series

The "spirit of a place" or *genius loci* embodies a deeper sense of space, granting it unique inherent possibilities. These possibilities are revealed through human activity and preserved in architectural works. This interdisciplinary and collaborative initiative aims to highlight that the processes of habitation and construction are not merely technical endeavors but acts that capture the local identity and distinctive character of a place. A shared geographical focus is established, spanning from the Balkans to the Eastern Mediterranean.

The lecture series, open to public, is co-organized by **the School of Architecture at the Democritus University of Thrace** and the **ArScAn – Archéologies et Sciences de l'Antiquité**, laboratory of the University of Nanterre, Paris. Its ultimate goal is to foster interdisciplinary collaboration and exchange methodologies and expertise in architecture, archaeology, construction technology, materials, and their timeless societal and cultural impact.

The lectures aim to bridge the fields of archaeology, architecture, social anthropology, and related disciplines by focusing on the following research themes in the context of the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean:

Diachronic approaches to construction technology and materials with emphasis on building techniques and material processing from prehistory to the pre-industrial era, while identifying the relationship between construction practices and their geographic and natural environment. This includes exploring the search, use, and importance of local raw materials over time. As a geographical hub, the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean often highlight interactions between diverse cultures, enriching the understanding of cultural heritage.

Historical and cultural documentation by using historical sources to study habitation patterns, construction, and architecture. This involves analyzing archaeological finds, written texts, maps, and archives to comprehend living patterns, lifestyles, and social organization across different historical periods.

Social identity and construction's role in social life, by examining the relationship between construction and societal aspects such as professions, symbolic significance of materials, cultural practices, and social hierarchies.

Program Details

The lecture series will consist of online sessions, free to the public, conducted via the ZOOM platform during the spring semester of the 2024-2025 academic year and the winter semester of the 2025-2026 academic year.

The speakers will include researchers affiliated with ArScAn and the School of Architectural Engineering at the Democritus University of Thrace, presenting topics that broaden the dialogue between architecture, archaeology, and social anthropology, with a focus on material technologies, construction techniques, and their interaction with social practices.

Languages:

The official languages will be **English** and **French**, with the language of each lecture announced in advance.

Organization:

This initiative stems from the collaboration between ArScAn and the Department of Architectural Engineering, supported by the **State Scholarships Foundation (IKY)** under the “2024 IKY Scholarships Program for Collaboration Between Faculty Members of Greek Universities and Cultural Organizations Abroad.” It will receive technical support from the Democritus University of Thrace, with open access to the public.

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About ArScAn:

The **ArScAn – Archéologies et Sciences de l'Antiquité** laboratory is a multidisciplinary research unit co-funded by the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS), Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University, Paris Nanterre University, Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis University, the French Ministry of Culture, and the National Institute for Preventive Archaeological Research (INRAP). It focuses on research, study, and teaching in archaeology, history, and related disciplines (archaeometry, philology, epigraphy, etc.), covering a wide range of regions and periods, from early prehistory to the Middle Ages: <http://www.arscan.fr/arscan-presentation/>. ArScAn comprises over 500 members, including researchers, university professors, technical and support staff, doctoral candidates, and postdoctoral researchers. Its structure includes specialized teams focusing on various geographic, chronological, and thematic activities.

About the School of Architecture, Democritus University of Thrace:

Based in the city of Xanthi, Greece, the Department of Architecture at the Democritus University of Thrace was established in 1999 to advance the fields of Architecture. Its mission is to educate engineers capable of designing, constructing, and managing the built environment with a strong foundation in science, technology, art and culture. <https://arch.duth.gr/>

Upon completion of the lecture series, the sessions are expected to remain accessible to the public through the website of the School of Architectural Engineering of the Democritus University of Thrace and ArScAn.

Program | 1st Lecture Series

Time: 18:00 (Greece time)

28 April 2025

Miryana Iordanova, Architect PhD,

Dep. Of Architecture, New Bulgarian University, Sofia, Bulgaria

The residential architecture of the *place* before the conquest of the Balkans by the Ottoman Empire

5 May 2025

Vasiliki Pachta, dr. Architect, Conservator, LTS

Lab. of Building Materials, School of Civil Engineering, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

Technological evolution of building materials and techniques

19 May 2025

Panos Kostoulas, Architect UP | MSc NTUA

Materials Science & Technology,

“Boulouki” Itinerant Workshop on traditional Building Techniques, Greece

The use of theran earth in the traditional architecture of the Santorini

Archipelago and its itinerary in the Mediterranean from antiquity to the 21th century.

26 May 2025

Zeynep Eres, Assoc. Prof. Architect, PhD

Faculty of Architecture, Architecture Department, Istanbul Technical University, Turkey

An Ethnoarchaeological approach in reading the wooden architectural remains exposed in archaeological excavations: a case study from Eastern Thrace

2 June 2025

George Tatakis, Photographer

Rituals, customs, and traditional architecture of Greece through the photographic lens

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