

Alexandria under the Mediterranean

CEAlex (Jean-Yves EMPEREUR)

Report of the *Alexandria under the Mediterranean* publication project (2015 grant)

Thanks to the grant provided by the Honor Frost Foundation, the CEAlex published in 2015 a book dedicated to the memory of Honor Frost: *Alexandria under the Mediterranean. Archaeological studies in memory of Honor Frost*, G. Soukiassian ed., *Etudes Alexandrines* 36, Alexandria, 2015.

The book features her archaeological bibliography plus a previously unpublished article. Following a presentation by an oceanographic team from the University of Patras of the underwater context of Alexandria, its geomorphology and the dangers for navigators, the volume includes a catalogue of anchors discovered along the Alexandrian coast.

Honor Frost

Anchors – especially stone anchors – were one of Honor Frost's favourite research fields. Her first studies of the subject appeared at the beginning of the 1960s and she was still engaged in 2008. This passion for anchors is reflected in the more than 40 articles that she published on the subject. This is why we decided to publish a complete bibliography of her work and a previously unpublished article of Honor. This article was originally destined to appear in the Tropis conference proceedings organised by Harry Tzalas. It covers two points of interest that she followed throughout her life: Byblos and its relations with Egypt.

The underwater environment of Alexandria

The article lays out the underwater context. It is the work of seven campaigns *in situ* from 1999 to 2006 by a team of geomorphologists from Patras University under the leadership of George Papatheodorou. The results of the analyses are clear: bathymetric charts, side scan sonar readings and a sub-bottom seismic profiling all point with certainty to the presence of a paleoshoreline at minus 8 metres depth dating to the Hellenistic period, to Ridge -I further out at minus 12 metres and to a tombolo, other

than that which has been created between the ancient isle of Pharos and the present coastline.

The catalogue of anchors of Alexandria

The book presents a catalogue of anchors that have been discovered in recent years along some 15 km of Alexandrian coast, from the Pharos until Maamura.

This includes the results of a study managed the previous year: in 2014, the Honor Frost Foundation generously provided a grant to finance the “Anchors of Alexandria” project that was designed to undertake a study of the anchors lying off the Eastern Harbour of Alexandria, which had been discovered during underwater excavations and surveys led by Jean-Yves Empereur.

The catalogue also integrates anchors discovered to the east of el-Silsileh by the Greek underwater archaeological mission to Alexandria, directed by Harry Tzalas, and also the anchors of Maamura recorded by Mohamed Mustapha Abdel Meguid, director of the underwater archaeology department of the Egyptian Ministry of State for Antiquities. This is the biggest collection of anchors ever to be published in Alexandria and perhaps the Mediterranean, not only in terms of numbers but also in terms of typological and chronological variety.

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