
September 2011

For the September press release, we are pleased to include an interview with keynote speaker **Emad Khalil**, Director of the Alexandria Centre for Maritime Archaeology and Underwater Cultural Heritage.

A Brief Interview with Emad Khalil



Dr Emad Khalil is the Director of the Centre for Maritime Archaeology and Underwater Cultural Heritage and an Associate Professor in Maritime Archaeology in the Faculty of Arts at Alexandria University, Egypt. Dr Khalil has been involved in maritime and underwater archaeology since the early 1990s.

In the past five years, Dr Khalil has been involved in the creation and the operation of the Alexandria Centre for Maritime Archaeology and Underwater Cultural Heritage. The creation of the centre was a result of an EU Tempus project which involved a number of academic institutions from Egypt, the UK and France and for which Dr Khalil was the coordinator. Dr Khalil has contributed to a number of archaeological projects in Egypt such as the Sadana Island Shipwreck Excavation, the Pharos Project, the Northwest Coast Shipwreck Survey and the Lake Mareotis Research Project. He is also Egypt's national representatives in the International Committee on Underwater Cultural Heritage (ICUCH/ICOMOS).

The Centre for Maritime Archaeology at Alexandria University is partly based on your experiences at the University of Southampton - how have those experiences helped you?

Well, I have studied at the University of Southampton from 2001 until 2005. During that time I got my MA and PhD in Maritime Archaeology. As a staff member at the Alexandria University, my studies in Southampton were funded by a scholarship from the Egyptian Ministry of Higher Education. The reason I had to study in the UK was the fact that studies in maritime archaeology did not exist in Egypt. There were no education programs, at any level, in maritime and underwater archaeology neither in Egypt nor in any other Arab country. Obviously, getting funding to live and study in the UK for four years was not an easy thing and was very competitive.

In order for an important discipline such as maritime archaeology to thrive in Egypt, it was not possible to rely solely on Egyptian archaeologists who are fortunate enough

to study abroad. Education in maritime and underwater archaeology must be available in Egypt to enable development and capacity building in that field. Therefore, since the first days I was in Southampton, I had wished if we could have in Egypt something similar to the Centre for Maritime Archaeology (CMA) in Southampton University. As the time passed and I became familiar with the education program at the CMA and the different courses, modules and teaching methodologies, the vision of an Egyptian version of the CMA became clearer and clearer to me. My professors and colleagues in Southampton were very supportive to the idea of creating a facility in Alexandria University to provide education and training in maritime and underwater archaeology.

Therefore, after finishing my studies in Southampton and returning back to Egypt, I collaborated with Dr Lucy Blue, the Director of the Centre for Maritime Archaeology at the University of Southampton to obtain funding through the EC (Tempus) program in order to create the Alexandria Centre for Maritime Archaeology and Underwater Cultural Heritage as a the first facility in the Arab Region specialized in providing postgraduate education and training in aspects of maritime and underwater archaeology. The centre was established between 2007 and 2009 and it was based in terms of its academic curricula on that of Southampton; that is in addition of course to some region specific courses and modules.

Even now, after the centre has been fully functioning for almost three years, we are still working closely in different research projects and academic activities with the University of Southampton who is represented by Dr Blue in the centre's board.

Many countries in the Eastern Mediterranean and Black Sea region have ratified the UNESCO Convention in recent years - do you expect Egypt to ratify the Convention?

As Egypt's representative in the ICOMOS-ICUCH, over the past years, I have followed closely the different steps that were taken by the Egyptian Antiquities Authority and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs towards the ratification of the convention. However, the bureaucratic system in Egypt is very complicated. Therefore, in order for Egypt to rectify the convention, various authorities have to be consulted, which usually takes quite a long time. After all, what do you expect from a country who invented paper? However, by the beginning of this year, and just before the revolution that took place in Egypt, the convention was going through a final round of approvals before ratification. But unfortunately, with the recent events, everything had to be put on hold. However, I expect that as soon as things settle down following the upcoming parliament elections, the ratification of the convention will take place without difficulty.

Education in maritime archaeology is important - how many students does your program have at present and where are they from?

At present the program has a total of 20 Master students, 12 of which are female students. We have only one international student from Tunisia; however, we have three more applications from international for the January 2012 semester. They are from Serbia, Greece and Ireland. When we started admitting our students, only two out of the 20 were divers; however, at present only two are non-divers. Also what

came as a surprise to me was the number of female students. Usually in Egypt, like in most Arab countries, this kind of study, which involves a lot of practical work and mobility, attracts more male than female students. However, in our case, the situation was different, and I believe that the upcoming semester will even have more female students who are really enthusiastic and excited about studying and practicing maritime and underwater archaeology.

Conference News

Visas for travel to the Philippines: Please visit the link below for the list of the countries under Executive Order 408 whose nationals may be admitted visa free for an initial valid stay of 21 days upon arrival provided he/she presents a passport valid for at least six months beyond the contemplated period of stay and a return ticket to his/her country of origin or a ticket and/or visa to his/her next country of destination. Nationals of countries not included in the list are required to secure an entry visa at a Philippine Foreign Service Post prior to arrival. For the requirements in securing an entry visa, you may address your concern to the Philippine Foreign Service Post of legal residence.

http://immigration.gov.ph/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=16&Itemid=80

Registration is still open: Conference organizers are pleased to announce that more than 290 people from more than 45 countries have registered interest in attending the conference – [to register your interest](#)

Media: Media passes are available for local and international media. For all media enquiries, please contact ejateff@history.sa.gov.au

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