



**BEIRUT / OPENING OF EXHIBITION AND CONFERENCE
ON 20 YEARS OF POLISH–LEBANESE COOPERATION
IN ARCHAEOLOGY AND CONSERVATION**

On Tuesday, 20th September 2016, an exhibition on the achievements of the Polish–Lebanese archaeological and conservation mission in Lebanon opened in the gardens of the French Embassy in Beirut. The research, conducted since 1996 by the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw and the Directorate General of Antiquities of Lebanon, focused on ancient settlement around Sidon, one of the major cities on the Phoenician coast.

The exhibition was inaugurated by the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Beirut, Mr. Wojciech Bożek. In his speech, the Ambassador pointed out that the present anniversary was proof for the strength of Polish–Lebanese relations and the key role of the University of Warsaw archaeologists and the conservators from the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw in promoting Poland's image in Lebanon.

Among the numerous guests of the opening were representatives of the Lebanese Ministry of Culture, the Director of the Directorate General of Antiquities of Lebanon, Dr Sarkis Khoury, the Director of the Institut Francais du Proche-Orient, Dr Frederic Alpi, Dr Cristina Menegazzi representing the UNESCO Beirut office, as well as members of Beirut's research community, from among others the American University in Beirut, Universite Saint-Joseph, Lebanese University and Lebanese American University.

The exhibition was accompanied by a scientific conference with presentations by members of the archaeological and conservation teams. They provided a background for the issues presented at the exhibition, and highlighted some discoveries that were not covered in the exhibition plates. The seven presentations touched upon such topics as the conservation of ancient mosaics in Lebanon, the iconography of spectacular wall paintings from Jiyeh, methods of investigating late Antique domestic architecture and the information that can be harvested from analyzing the thousands of artifacts recovered during an archaeological dig.

Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw coordinates Polish archaeological research in the Eastern Mediterranean since 1959 (since 1990 under the present name). In recent years it broadened its scope of interest into the Arabian Peninsula and the Caucasus. Currently about 30 projects in Egypt, Sudan, Cyprus, Lebanon, Iraqi Kurdistan, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Georgia and Armenia. It also manages a Research Centre in Cairo.

For more information on the PCMA go to: www.pcma.uw.edu.pl/en/ ; www.facebook.com/pcma.uw/

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