



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Tyres ancient Phoenician harbour finally found

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Abstract

On the archaeological site of Tyre, in southern Lebanon (Phoenicia), only Roman and Hellenistic harbours had been discovered so far. Our scientific team carried out a coring campaign to probe the eastern sector of the ancient Phoenician island on which Tyre was built, and which is now silted up. Offshore, we discovered a long harbour structure 180 metres long, submerged in 2 metres deep water, similar in style to the Phoenician breakwater built in the 6th-4th centuries BCE along Tyre's north coast. Onshore, we collected 15-metre-deep cores that reveal the presence of sediment typically settling in harbour basins, deposited behind the newly identified breakwater. Samples of these sediments have been radiocarbon dated to the Phoenician period. As the depth of this stratigraphic unit is similar to that of the submerged structure, these two elements (structure and sediment) confirm the presence of the lost Phoenician southern harbour which could have covered an area of up to one hectare (100 x 100 m) south of the Roman baths complex. We suggest that the southern harbour had to be abandoned owing to the rapid growth of a massive sandy isthmus during the centuries which followed the erection of Alexander's causeway.

Keywords

Tyre, Phoenicia, Ancient port, Egyptian harbour, Alexander-the-Great

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