World's Oldest Shipwreck Awarded in Paestum

Roberta Cutillo (November 04, 2019)

The ''oldest intact shipwreck in the world'' wins the 2019 International Archaeological Discovery ''Khaled al-Asaad'' Award. The ceremony will take place on November 14-17 in the UNESCO world heritage site of Paestum.

The 22nd edition of the Mediterranean Exchange of Archaeological Tourism (BMTA) [2] awards the 2019 International Archaelogical Discovery Award - named after Khaled al-Asaad [3], the Syrian director of the Palmyra Archaeological Area and Museum from 1963 to 2003 publicly executed by ISIS on August 18, 2015 - to the world's oldest intact shipwreck.

The awarding jury is comprised of Archeo [4], Italy's leading archaeological publication, as well as BMTA's other media partners: Antike Welt (Germany), Archéologia (France), Archaologie der Schweiz (Switzerland), Current Archaeology (UK), and Dossiers d'Archéologie (France.)

The wreck, a wooden ship dating back 2,400 years ago, was found 2 km (aprox. 1.2 miles, ed.) down

in the Black Sea off the Bulgarian coast by the [Black Sea Maritime Archaeology Project](#) [5] (MAP) in 2018.

Researchers believe these to be the remains of an ancient Greek trading ship of a type that had previously only been seen depicted in pottery, for example in the British Museum's "Siren Vase," an object dating back to the same period, which displays Odysseus' encounter with the dangerous mythical creatures.

Though older Egyptian ritual boats have been found in excavations, this one was named the oldest complete shipwreck found at sea. It features intact structural elements including the mast and the planks for the rowers, which had never before been found on such an ancient vessel. It measures about 23 meters (75 feet, ed.) in length and has been kept intact by the unusual chemical composition of the water and the lack of oxygen below 180 meters (590 feet, ed.)

The exploration lasted 3 years and led to the discovery of over 60 historic finds. MAP researchers "inspected" the submerged ship using remotely operated vehicles (ROVs) with video cameras. They also extracted a fragment of the relic and analysed using carbon dating techniques in order to date it back to the fifth century BCE.

Jonathan Adams, the head of MAP, will accept the award on November 15 in the presence of Fayrouz, the daughter of Asaad, herself an archaeologist.

Additionally, a special award for the discovery with the biggest Facebook support will go out to the ''oldest bread in the world,'' (dating back to about 14,000 years ago) found in Jordan's Black Desert by a group of researchers from the universities of Copenhagen, Cambridge, and University College of London (UCL.)

Other contendants included an ancient mummification workshop in Saqqara, Egypt, inscriptions and luxury homes in Pompeii, and Europe's oldest metallic hand found in Switzerland.

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