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Athen**

*Ancient maps, wayfinding and spatial cognition.
How would the Greeks have done it?*

ABSTRACT

Most modern societies rely heavily on geographical maps, that is, geographically accurate representations of space in a two dimensional format seen from above. Archaeologists are perhaps especially guilty in this respect. Although the knowledge of such maps existed in ancient Greece, they are unlikely to have been in common use. This talk investigates the knowledge of maps in ancient Greece, what type of maps existed, what they included, how they were used and when. Integrating anthropological data and modern scholarship on spatial cognition I argue that thinking in, and understanding one's environment through geographical maps is an early modern phenomenon. The default wayfinding strategy has for most of history been based on nodes, easily recognisable places that can be used as fix points when navigating. The environment is seen from the human's perspective rather than an abstract two-dimensional perspective, we move in the landscape, not on the landscape, as Tim Ingold has neatly put it. As a result, the hegemony of geographical maps as a basis of archaeological interpretation can rightfully be questioned.

The lecture takes place Wednesday January 11, 2022 at 19h Athens time, at the Swedish Institute at Athens, Mitseon 9.

Warmly welcome!