Saturday, November 20, 2021
Dr. Florin Curta, Professor of Medieval History and Archaeology at the University of Florida
*The Velestino Hoard: Casting Light on the Byzantine 'Dark Ages'*

This lecture examines the remarkable Velestino hoard, found in Thessaly in the 1920s, and analyses the light that this collection of artifacts sheds on a poorly studied period of Byzantine history, and on largely neglected aspects of Byzantine civilization. This hoard has been the subject of controversy with regards to its authenticity. It contains no gold and no silver, and is in fact a collection of bronze and leaden plaques, some with human, and others with animal or geometric representations. The lecture will discuss three distinct aspects of the hoard: the iconography of its components, the method of its production, and the function of those components. The conclusions reached provide valuable new insights into eighth-century Byzantine culture.

Professor Florin Curta researches the written and archaeological evidence of medieval history on the European continent. His recent studies dealt with such diverse topics as the role and significance of child burials in the earliest church graveyards; culinary practices in early medieval Eastern Europe; coins and commercial exchanges in the sixth and seventh centuries; the image of the Vlachs in the French crusade chronicles; early medieval burials in prehistoric mounds; ethnicity in the Black Sea region in early Byzantine times; the economic and funerary uses of early medieval coin imitations; and cities in Dark-Age Byzantium. An important research theme in his recent work is ethnicity.

Saturday, October 16, 2021 at 12 noon in the historic chapel at Beaches Museum
Dr. Kenneth Sassaman, Professor at the University of Florida
*Silver Glen Springs before "The Yearling"

This lecture discusses the remarkable Velestino hoard, found in Thessaly in the 1920s, and analyses the light that this collection of artifacts sheds on a poorly studied period of Byzantine history, and on largely neglected aspects of Byzantine civilization. This hoard has been the subject of controversy with regards to its authenticity. It contains no gold and no silver, and is in fact a collection of bronze and leaden plaques, some with human, and others with animal or geometric representations. The lecture will discuss three distinct aspects of the hoard: the iconography of its components, the method of its production, and the function of those components. The conclusions reached provide valuable new insights into eighth-century Byzantine culture.

Marjorie Keenan Rawlings' Pulitzer-winning novel *The Yearling* was set in the backwoods of Florida in 1878, near Silver Glen Springs on Lake George. Earlier in the 1870s an anatomist from Harvard University arrived at the mouth of the spring run to document an archaeological landscape much different than the quiet, serene setting of Rawlings' story. Indeed, long before Europeans arrived to change the course of Florida's history, Silver Glen was more of a metropolis than it was a wilderness. That this grandeur of Native America was lost on Rawlings is not surprising considering that most above-ground traces of the past were erased by shell-mining operations in the 1920s. Since 2000, the St. Johns Archaeological Field School of the University of Florida has taken the opportunity to resurrect this lost past.

Saturday, September 18, 2021 at 12 noon
Dr. Jacqueline Meier, Professor at the University of North Florida
*Animals and Domestic Lifeways at Mycenae, Greece*

Dr. Meier will discuss new zooarchaeological findings from the famous site of Mycenae in Greece. While the site is known for being "rich in gold" from the early excavation finds, recent faunal analysis has revealed rich aspects of the everyday lives of Mycenaean craft producers. Dr. Meier will discuss new findings on the herd animals and pets that were a part of domestic life at Petsas House, a ceramic producing household at the site.

Saturday, May 15, 2021 at 12 noon (via webinar)
Dr. James P. Delgado, Senior Vice President of SEARCH, INC.
*Clotilda, the last ship to bring slaves into the United States*

This lecture is about the location of the ship *Clotilda*, the last ship to bring slaves into the United States. It was scuttled and burned in 1859 or 1860 and its location has been the subject of many archaeological investigations.
Saturday, April 17, 2021 at 12 noon (via webinar)
Dr. William Murray, Mary and Gus Stathis Professor of Greek History, University of South Florida
My 40 Year Search for the Battle of Actium

In 31 BC, Octavian defeated Antony and Cleopatra in a naval battle off Cape Actium in Western Greece. A few years later, the victor constructed on the site of his personal camp a grand Victory Monument to commemorate the event. I first visited this site in 1978, and since then, have been trying to explain what I found there: the ruins of a massive rostral display whose complex details preserve evidence for the sizes of Antony’s and Cleopatra’s largest warships.

After a brief attempt to find battle debris in the sea off Cape Actium, I was asked by Dr. Konstantinos Zachos to join his team in analyzing the results of his systematic excavations of the site. His work, conducted over a quarter century, has added much to our knowledge of this important monument—its original design, its elaborately decorated altar, its dedication text, and its period of use.

At the same time, emerging 3D technologies have allowed me to comprehend the rostral display more fully, to visualize the monstrous sizes of the ships that fought in the final naval battle, and to restore the text of the dedication inscription. In this lecture, I will summarize the main results of our research, but do so in a personal manner, in the context of my own 40-year journey of discovery in search of the Battle of Actium.

Saturday, March 20, 2021 at 12 noon (via webinar)
Lisa Duy, Doctoral Candidate at the University of Florida
Using Residue Analysis to Explore Ancient Maya Recipes and Food-Processing Technology

Scientists are curious about what ancient people ate and drank. Archaeologists at the University of Florida are investigating the foods and beverages consumed by the ancient Maya, by analyzing organic chemical residues and starch grains in pottery vessels and on stone grinding tools. These analyses are innovative in that they help identify ancient Maya “recipes” rather than single ingredients. They provide insights into the individual’s choices of ingredients and methods of combining, processing, and serving foods and drinks, using different tools and vessels.

Ms. Duy is currently in progress for a Ph.D. in Anthropology at the University of Florida. She has a M.A., Maya Archaeology, University of Central Florida and B.A., Psychology, University of South Florida. Her research interests include; Maya archaeology, environmental archaeology, organic residue analysis, starch grain analysis, ground stone analysis, zooarchaeology.

Saturday, February 20, 2021 at 12 noon (via webinar)
Dr. Sarah Clayton, Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison
The End of Teotihuacan: Perspectives on Collapse and Regeneration from beyond the Metropolis

Dr. Clayton will discuss the decline of Teotihuacan from the perspective of a settlement called Chicoloapan 40 kilometers south. Research there has helped expand knowledge about the timing of the decline and the effect of that decline on surrounding communities. Chicoloapan’s rapid growth during periods of regional political crisis required transformations in land use, architecture and material culture and new forms of leadership.

At Chicoloapan, Sarah Clayton and her students reconstruct daily life, community organization, and demographic change during the first millennium CE. Chicoloapan grew rapidly in association with the collapse of Teotihuacan. Employing methods including excavation, geophysical prospection, and artifact analysis, their work aims to understand why Chicoloapan prospered even as neighboring settlements were abandoned.

Saturday, January 23, 2021 at 12 noon (via webinar)
Dr. Zack Gilmore, Asst. Professor of Anthropology at Rollins College
Great Gathering Places! Pre-Columbian Ritual and Social Integration at Florida Shell Mounds