“Why Did Early Greeks Build Temples?”

Professor Catherine Morgan  
Director, The British School of Athens

Temples are nowadays taken for granted as essential features of Greek sanctuaries. Yet following the collapse of the Mycenaean palaces, the nature and function of buildings at cult sites varied greatly - and many sanctuaries were entirely open air. From the eighth century onwards, a marked increase in the number of buildings has led to discussion of how and why the idea of a temple arose and was widely adopted. Far from being a simple progression the variety of Early Iron Age buildings found in recent years suggests a series of local decisions, which can only be understood in the context of previous cult practice. In turn, the development of consensus views about building form and decoration is a distinct further step, which raises additional questions. This lecture will draw on extensive new discoveries and studies over the past decade to explore how and why the notion of a temple emerged as widely as it did. While evidence from across Greece will be considered, special attention will be paid to the area of the Corinthian Gulf, where complex economic and social linkages by land and sea cut across city-state boundaries, contributing to the sharing of ideas and to deliberate patterns of emulation and differentiation.

Professor Catherine Morgan is the Director of The British School at Athens, and has lectured in Classical Archaeology at King’s College London since 1997 (where she has been Professor since 2004). Her most recent archaeological fieldwork projects include the Meganisi Archipelago Project; the Ancient theatre of Sparta; and the Stavros Valley Project in Ithaka. She is the 2012 Annual Australian Archaeological Institute at Athens (AAIA) Visiting Professor, and her visit to Melbourne is sponsored in part by the Classical Association of Victoria.

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6.30pm – 8.00pm

Theatre A  
Elisabeth Murdoch Building  
The University of Melbourne  
PARKVILLE VIC 3010

Admission is free.  
Bookings are required.  
Seating is limited.

To register visit:  
http://alumni.online.unimelb.edu.au/  
catherinemorgan

For further information please contact  
Dr K.O. Chong-Gossard  
koc@unimelb.edu.au  
or phone 8344 4078.