

# Making Memories: The Strange Case of the Mycenaean "Ossuary" at Final Neolithic Ksagounaki, Mani, Greece

Professor Michael Galaty (University of Michigan)



In 2013, Diros Project members excavating at Final Neolithic Ksagounaki (occupied 4250-3800 BC), located outside the remarkable Neolithic cave site of Alepotrypa in Mani, Greece, revealed a circular monument that had been inserted into the existing settlement/mortuary complex, truncating several

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burials. To our surprise, the monument - an "ossuary" - was filled with secondarily deposited bones and Mycenaean artifacts from the Late Helladic III A-B phase (circa 1400-1200 BC). We now believe the ossuary was built in a single construction phase and that the builders had some knowledge of Ksagounaki, which attracted them to the location, and, perhaps, a cultural memory of the cave, which had been destroyed by an earthquake and sealed shut sometime after 3800 BC, almost 3000 years earlier. The Ksagounaki ossuary is unique in the Mycenaean world, and the origin of the bones and artifacts found within remains a mystery, deepened by the fact that there are no known Mycenaean sites anywhere in the Inner Mani.

**Michael Galaty** is Director of the University of Michigan Museum of Anthropological Archaeology and Professor of Anthropology and Classical Studies at the University of Michigan.

“**Making Memories**” is part of an ongoing series of archaeology talks presented by the Kentucky Society of the Archaeological Institute of America with support from the University of Louisville Departments of Anthropology and History. For more information about the series, visit <http://www.kyarchaeology.com/>.

**6:00 PM**

**University of  
Louisville Center  
for Archaeology  
and Cultural  
Heritage**

1606 Rowan St.

Louisville, KY 40203

Special thanks to the University of Louisville Department of Anthropology for hosting this event at their new **Center for Archaeology and Cultural Heritage**. Don't miss the opportunity to check out this new facility, which just opened in the spring of 2019!



**Save the date!** Our next talk will be Thursday, October 3 (6:00 PM in the Chao Auditorium at Ekstrom Library, UofL). [Professor Amanuel Beyin](#) from the University of Louisville Department of Anthropology will discuss his recent fieldwork tracing hominin dispersal pathways along the Red Sea coast. Hope to see you there!

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