

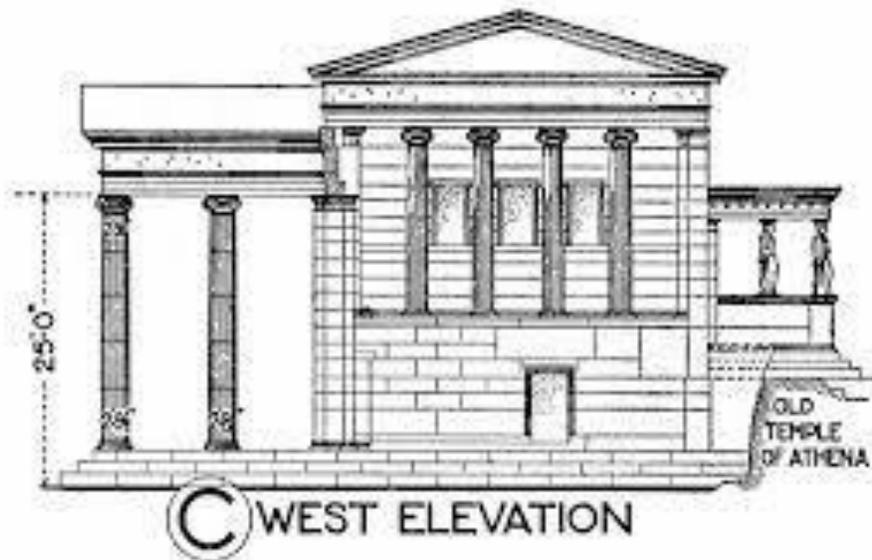
*The Archaeological Institute of America Toronto Society and the
UofT Archaeology Centre present an illustrated lecture:*



“A Landscape of Identity: The Iconography of Autochthony in Late Fifth Century BC Athens”

By Dr. Jacquelyn H. Clements,

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**Tuesday
November 22, 2016
at 6:00 pm
Location: Anthropology
Building AP130
19 Russell Street,
University of Toronto**

A concept known as autochthony, the belief in an earthborn ancestry, was developed in the fifth century BC as an imperialistic “claim to fame” that linked the Athenian people to the

land of Attica, and became a popular motif in Athenian vase painting. During the Peloponnesian wars in the late fifth century, however, this conviction took on a new twist: autochthony became expressed not only through a standard iconography of images, but their symbolic visual placement in the Athenian landscape also became increasingly potent. This talk considers autochthony within its topographical context, particularly through the visual dimensions of the **Erechtheion**, the small temple on the Acropolis that was the last to be built during the Classical period. I contend that as their land was threatened by Spartan invasion, the Athenians found solace and strength in the visual enunciation of their ideas of autochthony as a means of understanding their own identity. The iconography of autochthony celebrates the mythological ancestry of the Athenians in a time where the stability of their genealogical roots was of prime significance. In addition, the Athenians were keen to express their autochthonous roots in imagery on a monumental scale that was closely integrated with the landscape from which they believed they had been born. Drawing on the understanding of autochthony across other cultures and in modern times, we can begin to comprehend a “topography of autochthony” that was consciously and conscientiously designed by the Athenians in the late fifth century BC.

Free lecture, all welcome. For more information see www.aiatoronto.ca

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