Maritime Archaeology as Interdisciplinary Research: the Late Bronze Age Uluburun shipwreck as a case study
1. generating the data (fieldwork and conservation)
2. generating/contextualizing the data: relative and absolute dating, provenience (material analyses, typological studies)
3. contextualizing the data from external sources (iconography, texts)
4. interpreting the data (including through reconstructions)
5. disseminating the data, reconstructions, interpretations

Less than 10% of the time and resources spent in a shipwreck project is spent on the fieldwork.
Generating the data through archaeological fieldwork and conservation

11 seasons of fieldwork:
22,500 dives (1984-1994)
Archaeological conservation: all materials from the Uluburun shipwreck (not on display in museums) are being stored and conserved in Bodrum, Turkey.

Material culture recovered from underwater contexts requires more urgent conservation than material culture from any other kind of ‘terrestrial’ context.
Contextualizing the data by generating more data: materials analysis to determine absolute dates and provenience of materials

‘Hard’ dates

Dendrochronological dates recovered from logs on the Uluburun ship date to ca. 1300 BCE

Radiocarbon ($^{14}$C) dates from organic materials recovered from the Uluburun shipwreck (ca. 1300 BCE)
Contextualizing the data by generating more data: materials analysis to determine absolute dates and provenience of materials

Provenience studies on Uluburun material

Petrographic analysis on Canaanite Jars

Lead Isotope analysis on copper ingots
Contextualizing the shipwreck through typological/chronological studies of pottery

Determining ‘relative dates’ and the likely trajectory of the ship
Contextualizing and interpreting the shipwreck with external sources (source material that does not share comparanda with material from the shipwreck: i.e. contemporary texts or iconography)

Tribute bearing Syrians represented in the 18th Dynasty Egyptian tomb of Rekhmire
Interpreting/reconstructing the shipwreck with external sources (source material that does not share comparanda with material from the shipwreck: i.e. contemporary texts or iconography)

Depiction of Syrian merchants and merchant ships from the Egyptian tomb of Kenamun (Amenhotep III—1391-1353 BCE)
“And now my brother is going to see the things that I have dispatched to my brother. Thus I will dispatch to my brother [gifts].”

(*Amarna Letter* III 61-3, royal diplomatic correspondence contemporary with the Uluburun shipwreck)

Types of objects from the Uluburun shipwreck that are listed in Amarna gift inventories.
Academic archaeologists spend far more time in the place on the left.
Disseminating the data, interpretations, and reconstructions

The Uluburun shipwreck as something to teach with in the world’s great academies

Exhibit of the Uluburun shipwreck in the Met (New York)

Sailing trials as high profile media events
17 years after the final archaeological dive on the Uluburun shipwreck work continues

Prof. Cemal Pulak, director of the Uluburun project