**Anglo-Turkish Society hybrid lecture, 2 December 2025, 6.00 pm** (UK time)
Speaker: Dr Debbie Challis
Venue: Royal Anthropological Institute, 50 Fitzroy St, Fitzrovia, London W1T 5BT
Title: 'Diplomacy before Archaeology: Charles Thomas Newton on Lesvos, Rhodes and the Crimean War 1852-56'

In January 1852, Charles Thomas Newton accepted the position of Vice-Consul to Mytilene on the Island of Lesbos (Lesvos – then part of the Ottoman Empire), resolving to leave England by 14 February. Newton had been at the British Museum for almost twelve years. It was an opportunity to leave the 'intolerable condition' of his museum work behind and to explore the Levant. This talk explores the years before Newton led the major excavations on the west coast of Turkey at Bodrom and Knidos that made him famous. Newton's decision to leave the museum and go to the Levant was the beginning of a lifelong attachment to and relationship with the lands of Turkey and Greece and Dr Challis will draw attention to how a later visit informed his account of those years.

Booking essential: https://debbie-challis-presentation.eventbrite.co.uk

Contact: contact@angloturkishsociety.org.uk



Charles Thomas Newton leaving Rhodes by Mary Severn Newton from 1863, Birkenhead Collection - Severn Family Archive (Private)



Dr Debbie Challis (FRHistS) is Creative Producer of the Portico Library Manchester (UK) and a cultural historian. She is an Honorary Fellow at the University of Liverpool as part of the research team Milesian. She has published widely, including two books, and is currently co-editing a book on the life and work of archaeologist Charles Thomas Newton for UCL Press. She has curated the pop-up exhibition Holiday Sketches on travel to the Ottoman Empire as well as a zine that you can read online. She is resident expert on Alex Andreou's Podyssey, a new podcast about the myths and complex legacy of Ancient Greece (Season One April – August 2025). See her website for more: https://www.debbiechallis.com.