

The American-Turkish Society & the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, NYU  
**Borders in the Archaeology of Anatolia and the South Caucasus  
(Bronze and Iron Ages)**

April, 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014, ISAW, New York

**9:30 Greetings; Introduction: Borders in Contexts: Anatolia and the South Caucasus from the EBA to the IA**, Lorenzo d'Alfonso & Karen Rubinson (ISAW, New York University)

**10:00 Aeolia and Phrygia in the Iron Age**, C. Brian Rose (University of Pennsylvania)

Iron Age settlements in the northeast Aegean are usually attributed to Aeolian colonists who journeyed across the Aegean from Thessaly, Boeotia, Achaea, or a combination of all three. This talk reviews the literary accounts of the migration and presents the relevant archaeological evidence, with a focus on the new material from Troy. No one area played a dominant role in colonizing Aeolis, nor is such a widespread colonization supported by the archaeological record. But the aggressive promotion of migration accounts after the Persian Wars proved mutually beneficial to both sides of the Aegean and justified the composition of the Delian League. Phrygia serves as an excellent contrast to Aeolis, in that as the settlement of Troy was steadily diminishing, the site of Gordion was rapidly increasing in size and population. This included, by the early 8th century BCE, an outer fortification system that featured mudbrick walls at least 4 meters high within a defensive ditch immediately in front of them, and the area under protection reached nearly 255,000 sq. m. The remote sensing activities carried out on and around the citadel mound during the last five years have significantly altered our understanding of the beginning of the Middle Phrygian settlement.

**10:30 Coffee break**

**11:00 Were there “borders” in pre- and protohistoric times? Upper Euphrates early centralized societies and Northern Anatolian communities: a long history of interaction in the 4th and early 3rd millennium BCE**, Marcella Frangipane (La Sapienza University, Rome),

The paper will start discussing the concept of “borders” and its being unsuitable to be used in the context of non-centralized and poorly structured political societies. The assumption is that territorial borders started to be traced out when central political entities started to economically (and hence politically) control their hinterlands, bringing about the necessity to define the areas and settlements from which and to which the flow of goods should go. Then the paper will examine the case of the Upper Euphrates emerging centers in the 4th millennium BCE, with particular reference to Arslantepe and its powerful centralized system. This is an area of cultural “border” between very different societies in terms of both political and economic structure, as well as territorial organization: the Mesopotamian Late Uruk world to the south and the mobile, probably pastoral, communities of the mountains to the north. The absence of real territorial borders made the boundaries of these societies quite faded, flexible and unstable, but the growing capacity to control the basic economy of the population by new centers such as Arslantepe spurred them to expand their sphere of action towards neighboring areas and communities. The needs for new goods and raw materials to be put into the redistribution circuits of these centers pushed their elites to interact with other communities and at the same time made them attractive for these communities.

The paper will stress the important role played by the relationships Arslantepe and other Upper Euphrates centers established with Central-Northern Anatolian communities in the 4th millennium, examining the impact these interactions also had on the creation of a network of mutual east-west relations along the mountainous ranges south of the Black Sea coasts, well visible in the shift that occurred towards East/North-east at the beginning of the 3rd millennium, with the so-called Kura-Araxes culture expansion.

**11:30 Comparing Borders: Written and Material Culture Approaches to the Interpretation of Ancient Frontiers, Gojko Barjamovic (Harvard University)**

Comparing archaeological and textual evidence from early Middle Bronze Age Central Anatolia, this paper explores ancient notions of border and territory. The contrast between sharply demarcated political and fiscal boundaries, and more permeable, or perhaps vague, notions of cultural, ethnic, linguistic and economic frontiers is used to address a current scholarly emphasis on the non-contiguous nature of early states. Views imposed by ancient texts on the landscape raise important questions about the visibility of borders in the archeological record. Being primarily ideological and arbitrary constructs linked to concepts of political or social dominion, borders do not invariably conform to landscape features or follow cultural assemblages. However, the density of textual and the archaeological record of MBA Central Anatolia provides an opportunity to identify and compare boundaries in the two datasets, and so to test the extent to which ancient political borders can be identified on the base of archaeological assemblages alone within regions of culturally linked micro-polities.

**12:00 Zones, horizons, landmarks and borders. Defining territoriality in Central Anatolia between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 1<sup>st</sup> Millennium BCE, Lorenzo d'Alfonso (ISAW, New York University)**

Once they accept that pots do neither equal people nor polities, and that geographically well-defined state borders are a projection of modern political thought over antiquity, the archaeologist and the historian must nonetheless confront issues concerning the interaction between individuals, groups, polities and space. In the study of LBA and IA Anatolia different solutions have been sought, depending on the set of primary sources taken into account; they are represented by the terms 'zones', 'horizons', 'landmarks' and 'borders' in the title. The recent article by C. Glatz (2009) provides a new overall approach to territoriality and borders in pre-classical Anatolia, based on the case study of the Hittite empire. Starting from that seminal work, the paper will discuss some specific case studies dealing with contested territories and circulation of ideas, that –I hope-, will allow me to implement Glatz's model, adding to it motion and dialectics by taking into account different possible perspectives of representational spaces.

**12:30 Lunch**

**14:00 The concept of 'Border' and its problems in the context of the Kura-Araxes phenomenon, Mehmet Işıklı (Atatürk University, Erzurum)**

Discussing "borders" in archaeology is subject to critical complexities, and notably in this case, it becomes more complicated because of the lack of written sources from the societies of Prehistoric periods. When borders are dependent upon the provenance of archaeological material alone, such as pottery, burial traditions and settlement patterns etc., the idea becomes unrealistic and problematic. Undoubtedly, the Kura-Araxes Cultural Phenomenon, which is one

of the most expansive regions in Near Eastern Archaeology, will provide a striking case study when debating this topic. This cultural phenomenon, which characterizes the Early Bronze Age of the northern mountain zone, has a serious and chronic problem in identification of its boundaries, especially as the discussion centers around nomadic and semi-nomadic pastoral groups. At this point, both cultural and natural borders should be kept in mind. Although the culture is seen as being determined by its position in the mountainous region between the Taurus and Caucasus mountain belts, our knowledge regarding cultural and natural borders is very scanty. If we consider today's political borders, the expansion of the Kura-Araxes Culture covered almost 10 countries. For this reason we can assume that the natural borders (high, rugged, snow-capped mountains and deep river valleys) are most effective for this culture. The other prominent feature of this culture is its "regionalism", which is very normal when considering its vast expanse – and there are several sub-cultural regions across this huge territory. However the borders of these sub-cultural regions create another serious problem within the Kura-Araxes Culture. Archaeologists and historians who work on the Kura-Araxes culture are of one mind about these problems which arise from its geographical and chronological immensity, and without doubt, one of the most significant problems is its boundaries. Perhaps with this border problem solved, other chronic problems of this cultural complex can be solved as well. The main aim of this study is not to resolve the border problem of the Kura-Araxes Culture, but just to present this problem in full and to indicate possible solution suggestions.

**14:30 Boundaries in Time and Space: The Middle-Late Bronze Transition in the South Caucasus and Eastern Anatolia, Karen S. Rubinson (ISAW, New York University),**

The Middle Bronze Age in Eastern Anatolia and the South Caucasus has been characterized both by bi-chrome and polychrome painted pottery and the appearance of kurgan burials. The pottery of the Late Bronze Age consists of unpainted pottery in dark grey and black and the burials are defined primarily as cromlechs. The Middle Bronze Age is also known as having mostly fugitive settlements indicative of a primarily mobile population, while in the Late Bronze Age, the appearance of fortress sites and clustering of burials nearby indicate a change in the political organization towards what is apparently more centralized control. How do we define the borders diachronically and spatially? Certainly there is no fixed border that was crossed in a sudden leap; the changes were gradual processes. By looking as closely as the data allow, I will try to map patternings of distribution that may elucidate centers of continuity and transformation during the period from ca. 2000 – ca. 1500/1400 BCE, as well as areas of sameness and difference in material culture, particularly pottery and mortuary types. From these data we may see territorial and/or cultural boundaries that have been previously occluded by the most decorative pottery or most outstanding features of the landscapes.

**15:00 Social Bounds and Seasonal Rounds: Territorial Implications of LBA Interaction and Obligation in the Tsaghkahovit Plain, Armenia, Ian Lindsay (Purdue University)**

This paper examines territoriality during the mid-2nd millennium BCE in Armenia through spatial and socioeconomic relationships between hilltop forts and semi-mobile agro-pastoralists. The construction of monumental fortresses across much of southern Caucasia during the Late Bronze Age (LBA, ca. 1500–1150 BCE) marks a profound transformation in the constitution of political authority and the ways social relations were mediated through the built environment. As forts replaced kurgans as the dominant manifestation of authority on the landscape, residents of the region shifted away from centuries of nomadic pastoralism toward the

incorporation of residential stability. While farming and fortresses are defining characteristics of the LBA, however, several lines of evidence from research on Armenia's Tsaghkahovit Plain suggest that mobile pastoralism continued to shape the region's political economy, social identity of local communities, and territorial claims of fortress authorities. But how does one track geographical control when much of a subject population may be living "on the hoof"? This paper engages with recent calls in archaeology to reevaluate the notion of territories as tightly regimented sovereign spaces, and examine the role of boundaries through relational ties and obligations reflected in a variety of activities—material production, population movement, religious activity—taking place among significant locales including fortresses, shrines, and settlements.

**15:30 Tea break**

**16:00 Urartu's Araxes Frontier, Paul Zimansky (SUNY Stony Brook)**

The boundaries of Urartu's political control and the spread of the state's material culture both within and beyond those boundaries are best known along its southern frontier, where historical documentation is relatively rich. This contribution will review the models of the Urartian frontier in general, including those of the west and north, and assess them in the light of the new evidence that has come from area of the Araxes. At issue is whether a single model of frontiers can be applied to the whole kingdom of Biainili, or whether quite different factors were at work in different geographical areas.

**16:30 Territorial Control and Routes at the Eastern Edges of the Kingdom of Urartu, Emily Hammer (ISAW, New York University)**

The kingdom of Biainili (Urartu) of mid-first millennium BC eastern Anatolia, northwestern Iran, and the south Caucasus incorporated areas with highly uneven topography and variable agricultural potential. The position of Urartian fortresses and rock inscriptions has suggested that the kingdom primarily focused its control on areas of agricultural production, creating a network between the small fertile plains of the region. Populations outside of these plains may have retained autonomy. As such, noncontiguous territoriality characterized the Urartu and it is impossible to define circumscribed "borders" for the kingdom. Taking these conclusions of previous scholarship one step forward, I argue that routes between various fertile areas structured the fringes of the empire, and that the territorial strategies of the Urartians hinged on these routes more than on principles of areal control. As a case study, I focus on how the eastern fringes of the Urartian empire may have been structured by routes between two of the areas with particularly good textual and material evidence for Urartian control through fortress construction—the low-lying Araxes River Valley (along Turkey's eastern border in the vicinity of Mount Ararat) and the highland southern shores of Lake Sevan. The position and content of Urartian inscriptions has suggested at least two routes between the Araxes and Lake Sevan. Recent archaeological work along the Arpa River in Naxçıvan (Azerbaijan) and Armenia has recovered large Middle Iron Age fortresses and pairs of inter-visible forts with Urartian material culture as well as long fortification lines that are likely infrastructure associated with a third Iron Age and possibly Urartian route between the these areas. Unlike the other proposed routes, rock-cut inscriptions do not mark the Arpa River corridor. I intend to evaluate several possible interpretations for why the corridor may have not been marked by texts.

**17:00 In the nick: creating space/time borders at Oğlanqala, Hilary Gopnik (Emory University)**

Oğlanqala, Naxçıvan is quintessentially a border site. The people living at Oğlanqala seem to have negotiated their identity in terms of the surrounding empires but probably were never fully subsumed by any of these states. Zimansky has called Urartu “a terrestrial archipelago,” and it is this island effect created by the mountains, valleys, and rivers of the southern Caucasus that both isolated Oğlanqala and drew it into the political sphere of its powerful neighbors. The material culture of Oğlanqala in both Period IV (8<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> century BCE) and Period III (4<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE) seems to lie between worlds as the pottery and architecture is clearly linked to the Urartian and Seleucid empires that surrounds it while at the same time displaying hybrid stylistic features that distinguishes it from these states. Part of the reason that the material remains at Oğlanqala appear so unusual is the site’s location near the Araxes river which formed a natural border, but it is also the result of an intellectual history that defined the ceramic and architectural sequences in terms of the surrounding empires that were in turn defined in large part by ancient Urartian, Assyrian, Greek, and Roman texts. The inhabitants of Oğlanqala may have avoided imperial structures during their lives only to have it imposed on their legacy. Ironically, the people who built Oğlanqala seem to have been fully conscious of their place in history as the builders of the Period IV fort allude to earlier architecture, and the builders of the Period III citadel go to a great degree of trouble to tie their palace into both the Period IV Urartian and Achaemenid material culture traditions. In a sense, the people of Oğlanqala deliberately created their own geographic and temporal borders through their material culture. This presentation will review the role of material culture entanglements in the ongoing process of cultural definition at Oğlanqala.

**17:30 Discussion**

**18:00 End of Workshop**