

ISAW NEWSLETTER
Issue II, December 2009



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INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF THE ANCIENT WORLD
New York University

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Roger Bagnall

Director

The difference between the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World as it was a year ago and as it stands today could be felt in the building at the start of September. Much has happened since our last Newsletter—so much, in fact, that we have been too busy until now to produce its successor—but the biggest change is the arrival of our first three graduate students, along with our third permanent faculty member, Beate Pongratz-Leisten. We have also introduced our first research seminars, one led by each of the three permanent faculty members. Participants include students, visiting research scholars, and other members of the university and New York communities. The once-quiet building is humming, with morning coffee, afternoon tea, and lunch in the newly decorated dining room in the basement. The backyard has been turned into a beautiful garden and patio, and the solarium on the sixth floor has been rehabilitated for use as a space for meetings and socializing.

But our community still has some growing to do, not only through new classes of graduate students who will join us in the years ahead, but also through another five faculty members to be appointed. In addition to the public events listed in this Newsletter, during the course of the fall we have scheduled a number of lectures by candidates for the three positions we advertised this summer. (Please check our web site for specific information on these lectures.) Our hard-working search committee will continue to be busy. Moreover, ISAW's second exhibition has opened to the public. An account of this remarkable show is given in the pages to follow.

At a less public level, but hardly less important, activity continues on a variety of elements crucial to our infrastructure. Work began this fall on a permanent web site to replace the temporary site we launched during our first year. This and many other initiatives on the digital front will be described in the next issue. The library has also been developing steadily (and sometimes more than steadily). Altogether, the Institute is beginning to look more like an institution and less like a start-up. Most of all, I find myself constantly struck by the feeling that our deepest objective, scholarly connectivity, is being realized on a daily basis, as doctoral students and visiting scholars from diverse backgrounds discover common interests—often linkages that I had not even guessed at, despite having read all of their applications. It was for this that ISAW was founded.

I hope that all who read this Newsletter will take advantage of our growing library and our expanding calendar of public events during the coming year, and I look forward to seeing you in the Institute's building whenever possible.



NEW FACULTY AT ISAW



Beate Pongratz-Leisten, Associate Professor of Ancient Near Eastern Studies, joined the faculty on September 1. She specializes in the cultural and religious history of the ancient Near East and has published two books in this area. The first (P. von Zabern, 1994) is concerned with the translation of the world view into the New Year festival and its realization in the cultic topography of the capitals and other major cultic centers of Babylonia and Assyria: *Ina Šulmi Īrub. Die kulttopographische und ideologische Programmatik der akītu-Prozession in Babylonien und Assyrien im 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr. (The Cultic Topography and the Ideological Program of the Akītu Procession in Babylonia and Assyria in the First Millennium BC)*. Her second publication (Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 1999) discusses the aspect of divination as it serves the pragmatics of rulership and scrutinizes the divinatory techniques of astrology, dream oracle, extispicy, and prophecy as ways of communication between the gods and the king, with a focus on the operational aspect of exchanges between ancient scholars and the king: *Herrschaftswissen in Mesopotamien. Formen der Kommunikation zwischen Gott und König im 2. und 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr. (Knowledge of Rulership in Mesopotamia. Forms of Communication between God and King in the Second and First Millennia BC)*. Her current research focuses on cosmology and kingship in Mesopotamia, and investigates

cooperation between elites and the king in shaping the ideal image of the latter, as well as formation of the divine and divine agency in Mesopotamia. In 2007 Professor Pongratz-Leisten organized the international conference “Reconsidering the Concept of Revolutionary Monotheism” at Princeton University, the proceedings of which will be published by Eisenbrauns. The various contributions analyze the notion of divinity in the ancient Near East and the conceptual shift in belief systems that occurred in a long historical process that required changes at all levels of society. Rather than maintaining the two poles of continuity and change, at least some of the contributions in this volume are dedicated to tracing the microprocesses that occurred in the cultures of the ancient Near East, and that in the Hebrew Bible are represented as a single radical shift in belief systems. Another aspect of Professor Pongratz-Leisten’s current research is the production of knowledge in the ancient world. Her research seminar in the academic year 2009/10, “Globalization of Knowledge in the Multilingual and Multiethnic Societies of the Ancient Near East,” explores the spread of cuneiform culture, the notion of an international artistic style, and the nature of knowledge that was based on a common curriculum as well as the social agency behind its production, compilation, and transmittance over three thousand years of history.

GRADUATE STUDIES AT ISAW

The Institute for the Study of the Ancient World is delighted to welcome the first class of doctoral students to its new graduate program in the Ancient World. Distinctive in its flexibility and breadth, the program embraces the disciplines relevant to a comprehensive understanding of the entire Old World in antiquity.

Zoë Misiewicz received her BSc in Mathematics and Classics from the University of Toronto in 2006, and received her MA in Classics, also from Toronto, in 2008.



Unsurprisingly, her research interests lie in the area of ancient mathematics. Her MA research focused on Archimedes and his concept of mathematical proof. At ISAW, Zoë will expand her research beyond Greek mathematics, to look at the interaction between Greek and Near Eastern mathematical ideas.

Martin Reznick received his BA in History and Classics from Columbia University in 2000. He earned his MA in Politics from New York University in 2004, where he specialized in quantitative political methodology, especially noncooperative game theory and econometrics. At ISAW, Martin will explore the political economy of Roman Egypt by combining rational-choice models with the techniques of traditional historical research. Through an analysis of microcosmic cross-sections of Egypt, he hopes to shed light on questions relevant both to ancient studies and to the political economy of contemporary developing nations.

Mehrnoush Soroush received her MA in Architecture from the College of Fine Arts at the University of Tehran. In her thesis and professional experiences, she has focused on the conservation of historic sites and monuments, especially the historic hydraulic sites of Shushtar (named as Iran's tenth world-heritage site in 2009). Turning her focus from the practice to the preconditions of conservation, she began researching the traditional water management of Shushtar, and then extended her research to other parts of Iran. As a PhD student at ISAW, Mehrnoush intends to continue her studies on the traditional knowledge of water management.

Further information on ISAW's doctoral program can be found online at <http://www.nyu.edu/isaw/graduateprogram.htm>



VISITING RESEARCH SCHOLARS

Each year the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World appoints eight to twelve visiting research scholars. The scope of their research includes the history, archaeology, and culture of the entire Old World, including Asia and Africa, from late prehistoric times to the eighth century AD. This year's scholars include:

Nicola Aravecchia

(PhD, University of Minnesota)

Muriel Debié

(PhD, Université Paris IV-Sorbonne)

Damián Fernández

(PhD, Princeton University)

David Klotz

(PhD, Yale University)

Xiaoli Ouyang

(PhD, Harvard University)

Christine Proust

(PhD, Université Paris Diderot-Paris 7)

Darrel Rutkin

(PhD, Indiana University)

Caroline Sauvage

(PhD, Université Lumière Lyon 2)

Oleksandr Symonenko

(PhD, Institute of Archaeology NAS of Ukraine)

David Taylor

(DPhil, Oxford University)

Wu Xin

(PhD, University of Pennsylvania)

Mantha Zarmakoupi

(DPhil, Oxford University)

Each of our visiting scholars will deliver a lecture on their research during the course of the 2009/10 academic year. More information on ISAW's visiting scholars and their research projects can be found at [http:// www.nyu.edu/isaw/scholars.htm](http://www.nyu.edu/isaw/scholars.htm)

CURRENT RESEARCH AT ISAW

Alexander Jones

Professor of the History of the Exact Sciences in Antiquity

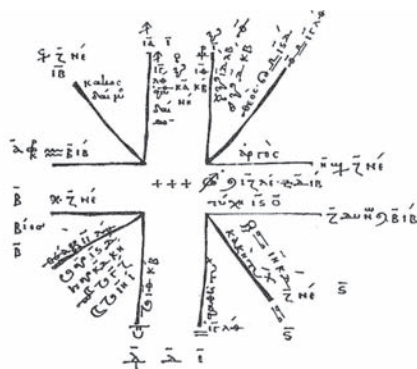
Horoscopic astrology originated in the Hellenistic world as a fusion of techniques of Babylonian and late-Egyptian divination with concepts from Greek philosophical cosmology and mathematical astronomy. During the first millennium of our era, it spread virally through much of the Old World, and along with astrology were transmitted its tools, planetary astronomy, and a repertoire of mathematical resources such as trigonometry.

The basic principle of horoscopic astrology was that conditions and events pertaining to human lives could be predicted from the positions of the sun, moon, and planets relative to the signs of the zodiac and to the horizon at a specific place and time, most commonly those of an individual's birth. An astrologer typically produced a written record of the positions of the heavenly bodies, which we call a "horoscope," and gave the client an oral interpretation of their significance. Many ancient horoscopes have survived as part of the theoretical literature on astrology handed down through the medieval manuscript tradition, but the best evidence we have for the practice of astrology in its first centuries comes from original horoscope documents from Greco-Roman Egypt. Well over a hundred horoscopes in Greek and Demotic Egyptian have turned up on papyri and ostraca to date. As part of a long-term project investigating archaeologically recovered astronomical and astrological texts, I have been keeping an eye out for further horoscopes, both to broaden our statistical base and to discover details of astrological practice and how it evolved.

Dr. Fabian Reiter of the Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, Berlin, recently drew my attention to several unpublished Greek astrological and astronomical papyri, among which I found two horoscopes that are of exceptional interest in different ways. One of them, of unknown provenance, is written

on a small ticket of papyrus in a tiny, sometimes illegible hand, using frequent abbreviations. It does not contain the name of the individual or the date of nativity, and is typical of the majority of papyrus horoscopes in stating only the sign of the zodiac occupied by each heavenly body, without giving the latter's precise position in degrees. Nevertheless, this is enough information to allow us to estimate that the horoscope was calculated for a date in 29 BC. This is nearly two decades before the earliest nativity date previously known for a papyrus horoscope, narrowing the interval between the formation of horoscopic astrology (probably not long before 100 BC) and its appearance as a popular practice in provincial Egypt.

The other new horoscope could hardly offer a greater contrast! It consists of nearly two meters of a papyrus roll, and even at that is not quite complete, since the introduction, the section on the sun, and most of the section on the moon are missing. This is an exceptionally well preserved example of a comparatively rare type of "deluxe" horoscope, in which each heavenly body is allotted an extended passage of prose, giving not only the precise position in degrees and minutes within the zodiacal sign but also a wealth of astrologically significant consequences of



The Horoscope of Eutocius expressed as a diagram (11th century)

that position. The nativity date is in AD 319, and the horoscope establishes several lines of continuity between much-earlier deluxe horoscopes on papyrus rolls (from about AD 100) and the elaborate horoscopes from late antiquity found in medieval codices, such as the horoscope from AD 497 ascribed to the mathematician Eutocius of Ascalon. But the most surprising aspect of this newly discovered horoscope is the accuracy of its astronomical data: the stated positions of the sun, moon, and planets are in most cases

less than one degree in error. The only astronomical tables known to have been available at this period and that offered a similar level of accuracy were Ptolemy's (published in the second century of our era), but the positions in the horoscope do not match those obtained by his tables. The revelation of a hitherto unsuspected set of high-quality astronomical tables shows how little we know about a period of ancient science that once was considered a time of decadence and mediocrity.

David Klotz

Visiting Research Scholar



Nadura Temple, viewed from the southeast of Dendera



Relief from Nadura Temple: the god Bes plays the tambourine for the goddess Mut

In my doctoral dissertation, which I am preparing for publication, I studied the history of Egyptian temples in Thebes (modern Luxor) during the Roman Period. While my research primarily employed temple inscriptions and archaeological evidence, I have since become increasingly interested in the mechanisms through which indigenous priests maintained their traditional religious customs—building massive temples such as Dendera and composing new hymns in the increasingly arcane hieroglyphic script—while interacting with their foreign rulers politically, economically, and culturally.

My current project involves an extreme example of the resilience of Pharaonic culture in the final years of pagan Egyptian religion. Since 2009, I have worked at the temple of Nadura in the Khargeh Oasis, roughly three hundred kilometers west of Luxor. The decora-

tion and construction date exclusively to the reigns of the Roman emperors Hadrian and Antoninus Pius (c. 117–161 CE), making Nadura one of the last traditional temples built in Egypt. Despite its relatively late date, the walls are covered with beautifully executed reliefs and inscriptions (now badly damaged) depicting unique variations on traditional Egyptian temple rites and celebrations, including several scenes of gods, goddesses, children, and even baboons playing drums, dancing, and singing for the god Chonsu and his mother Mut. In the midst of these typically Pharaonic two-dimensional reliefs, one finds a curious bas-relief tableau unparalleled in Egyptian temple architecture: two Graeco-Roman figures (previously identified as Castor and Pollux), in markedly non-Egyptian frontal, contrapposto poses, stand on either side of a Doric temple. This unusual decoration bespeaks a surprisingly sophisticated level

of intercultural discourse at this remote oasis temple, but the figures remain difficult to interpret. By copying and translating the surviving hieroglyphic inscriptions, I hope to uncover new information regarding the local theology and function of the temple. At the same time, excavations at the surrounding site will inevitably shed light on Nadura's connection to other Roman Period temples, fortresses, and settlements in Khargeh Oasis and the Nile Valley.

In addition to my field research, I also study inscribed statues of Egyptian priests and administrators active during periods of foreign domination, primarily in the Persian and Ptolemaic Periods (c. 525–31 BCE). The biographies that appear on these Late Period statues are valuable historical sources, particularly since they present Egyptian perspectives on an era traditionally dominated by classical historians and Greek documentary papyri. Nonetheless, because of many difficulties in their semicryptographic hieroglyphic inscriptions, these objects have only recently begun to attract serious scholarly

attention. I am currently translating the texts from a number of previously unpublished statues at museums and in private collections in the United States (Metropolitan Museum of Art, Nelson-Atkins Museum, Peabody Museum of Natural History at Yale University, Portland Museum of Art, Rosicrucian Museum) and Europe (British Museum, August Kestner Museum). Highlights include sculptures belonging to two native Egyptian priests, Horpakhepesh and Harkhebi, who attained the high rank of prime minister (dioiketes) within the predominantly Macedonian Ptolemaic court. The lengthy autobiographical inscriptions outline the priests' important positions within the administration and detail how they wielded political influence to bring financial support to local temples. Another statue belongs to an important general who served under Nectanebo I (c. 380–362 BCE). The general's autobiography recounts his role defending Egypt from the Persian army and his personal contributions to rebuild the important religious centers of Busiris and Abydos.

Xiaoli Ouyang

Visiting Research Scholar

My project at ISAW targets temple treasury records from Umma, an ancient Mesopotamian site dating to the Ur III period (c. 2112–2004 BCE). These records often feature luxury items made of gems and precious metals not indigenous to Mesopotamia. My study will provide insight into the distribution, circulation, and deposition of these valuable materials in Ur III Umma, and in turn help to reconstruct the administration of temple households there, a subject about which we now understand little. These records will also serve as a lens through which to examine the interaction mechanism that connected local powers and the Ur III central government.

The Ur III period is unprecedented in the history of civilization for the staggering amount of written evidence left behind, most of which pertains to administrative issues. The latest estimate puts the total of its records at around



An Umma tablet dated to the ninth month of the second regnal year of Ibbsi-Sin, the last king of the Ur III Dynasty. It records a copper object dedicated to the god Shara

90,000, and this number continues to grow, on a weekly if not daily basis. Boasting nearly 28,000 documents, Umma has so far produced the largest number of records among all Ur III sites. In contrast to the extraordinary textual evidence, the Ur III period has seen only a small number of artifacts brought to light, as rising water tables preclude excavations at many sites. Therefore, written records present the best evidence for study of the use-life of precious materials during this period.

Compared with similar records from other periods in Mesopotamian history, or from other areas in the ancient Near East, the Umma treasury records are not only greater in number but also communicate more information. They often name, and in some cases identify professionally or by family relationship, those who donated, received, guarded, or disbursed ex-voto gifts. This information, combined with current knowledge of the local administration in Umma, will allow me to conduct a prosopography of the people attested in the treasury records, identify their roles in the Umma province at large, and shed light upon the operation of Umma temple households vis-à-vis their de facto control by the governor or king.

The results of the prosopographic study will further enable me to compare Umma with other Ur III provinces in terms of gubernatorial control over temple households and the appointment of governors. Such a comparison



Column Capital, UMMA

will provide critical evidence for evaluating the relative success of Ur III kings at co-opting local institutions, such as temple households, into the state organization, and reveal the checks and balances between local powers and the central government during the Ur III period.

Mantha Zarmakoupi

Visiting Research Scholar

The urban growth of late Hellenistic Delos is the focus of my research at ISAW. Home of the sanctuary of Apollo since the archaic period, Delos underwent a period of rapid economic development between 167/66 BC and the sacks of 87 and 69 BC. During this period, the Romans placed the island under Athenian dominion and turned it into a commercial base that, while continuing to address regional economic needs, played an

intermediary role in the development of Rome's commercial relationships with the Hellenistic east. As a result of this economic development and the unprecedented demographic growth it generated, urbanization markedly accelerated—demonstrated by the formation of new neighborhoods and a boom in the redevelopment of the island's existing urban and port areas.



View of the Excavations in Delos

My research project focuses on one of these newly formed neighborhoods, the Quartier du Stade, a mixed-use residential and manufacturing neighborhood that attests to the cultural and religious diversity on the island and serves as a good case study of the ties between economic development and urbanization. The project will examine the Quartier du Stade as a microcosm of the developments that Delos underwent during the late Hellenistic period, and address the neighborhood as one area of wide-ranging urban growth on the island. In addition, the project will develop a three-dimensional digital model that will present the existing state of the structures of the Quartier du Stade, incorporating data from past and ongoing fieldwork (architectural structures, GIS and geophysical survey, finds), and propose a reconstruction of the neighborhood. This research project will thus contribute to the field of urban studies in antiquity through its examination of rapid urbanization, a central concept in the field of contemporary urban studies, and to the field

of computer applications in archaeology by using 3D, GIS, and CAD tools as a means to advance the discipline's research objectives.

During my year at ISAW, I will also finish revisions to my book manuscript *Designing for Luxury on the Bay of Naples: Villas and Landscapes (c. 100 BCE–79 CE)*, which received the 2009 James Ackerman Award in the history of architecture.

<http://www.premioackerman.it>

Nicola Aravecchia

Visiting Research Scholar

While at ISAW I will be involved in the development and implementation of a gazetteer of archaeological sites in Late Antique Egypt. This online, freely accessible database will serve the needs of scholars, students, and other interested persons, therefore promoting the study of Egyptian Christian art and architecture. The gazetteer will consist of introductory texts that present each known site and monument in a clear but scientifically accurate fashion, accompanied by a bibliography, various kinds of visual documentation (photographs, maps, plans, and drawings), and links to textual evidence—when available—and related web sites. The digital platform for the database will be provided by Pleiades (a joint project of ISAW, the Ancient World Mapping Center, and the Stoa Consortium for Electronic Publication in the Humanities: <http://pleiades.stoa.org/>). The ultimate goal of the project is to create a community in which scholars, particularly those directly involved in archaeological excavation, survey, or conservation at Christian sites in Egypt, contribute directly to the online gazetteer by writing texts and

providing plans and images. We also anticipate that other scholars will contribute entries for archaeological sites in other parts of the ancient world.

Over the course of the year, I will also work toward the publication of the final report of the 2006–8 excavations at Ain el-Gedida, in the Dakhla Oasis of Upper Egypt. The excavations revealed consistent remains of a fourth-century Christian site, possibly an episkopion, i.e., a small rural center associated with the management of a large agricultural estate. Among the most impressive and historically significant structures that were unearthed and documented are a church, characterized by an unusual layout and linked to a set of interconnected rooms, and what seems to have been, based on comparative evidence, a pagan temple that during the fourth century was converted into a ceramic workshop. I will be responsible for writing several chapters of the report and editing the contributions of experts involved in the project.



Ain El Gedida: Overview of the excavation



NEWS AND UPDATES ON PREVIOUS VISITING RESEARCH SCHOLARS

Lindsay Allen (08–09)

Lindsay Allen has spent the last couple of months under the mantle of ISAW researching the dispersal of excavated Persepolis reliefs in North America at a series of archives in New York, Philadelphia, Washington, and Chicago. A report on this work has been made at the annual meeting of the American Schools of Oriental Research. She is returning to a full teaching load at King's College London in the new academic year, and is looking forward to teaching her new undergraduate course, "Persia and the Achaemenid Empire."

Ari Bryen (08–09)

Ari Bryen is at Georgetown this year as a Visiting Assistant Professor. The next issue of *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* will include his article on a second-century papyrus that deals with accusations of magic and the evil eye in rural Egypt.

Sabine Huebner (07–08)

Following her fellowship at ISAW, Sabine Huebner has continued her research as a Marie Curie Fellow of the European Commission at Columbia University, and in 2010 will be a member at the Institute of Advanced Study in Princeton, NJ. In early 2009 her co-edited volume *Growing up Fatherless in Antiquity* was published by Cambridge University Press; she is currently completing her second monograph, *Intergenerational Solidarity in the Ancient Eastern Mediterranean*, and co-editing the new *Blackwell Encyclopedia of Ancient History*, which will be published in thirteen volumes in early 2011.

Jinyu Liu (07–08)

Jinyu Liu completed a preliminary manuscript for *Collegia Centonariorum, The Guilds of Textile Dealers in the Roman West*, while she was a visiting scholar at ISAW. The book was published by Brill late this summer. Her continued interest in professional associations and guilds in the Roman world has also led to a chapter on professional associations forthcoming in the *Cambridge Companion to Ancient Rome* (edited by Paul Erdkamp). Over the past two years, she has been studying the relationships and interactions among epigraphic culture, public space, and local politics in the Western cities of the Roman Empire. In addition, she is working on a book-length project on the translation history of Graeco-Roman classics in China (to be published by Duckworth).

Rachel Mairs (07–08)

Rachel Mairs is currently a Junior Research Fellow at Merton College, Oxford University, where she will remain until September 2011. She is working on a monograph entitled *Interpreters and Their Social Context in the Graeco-Roman World* with another ISAW alumna, Maya Muratov.

Giovanni Ruffini (07–08)

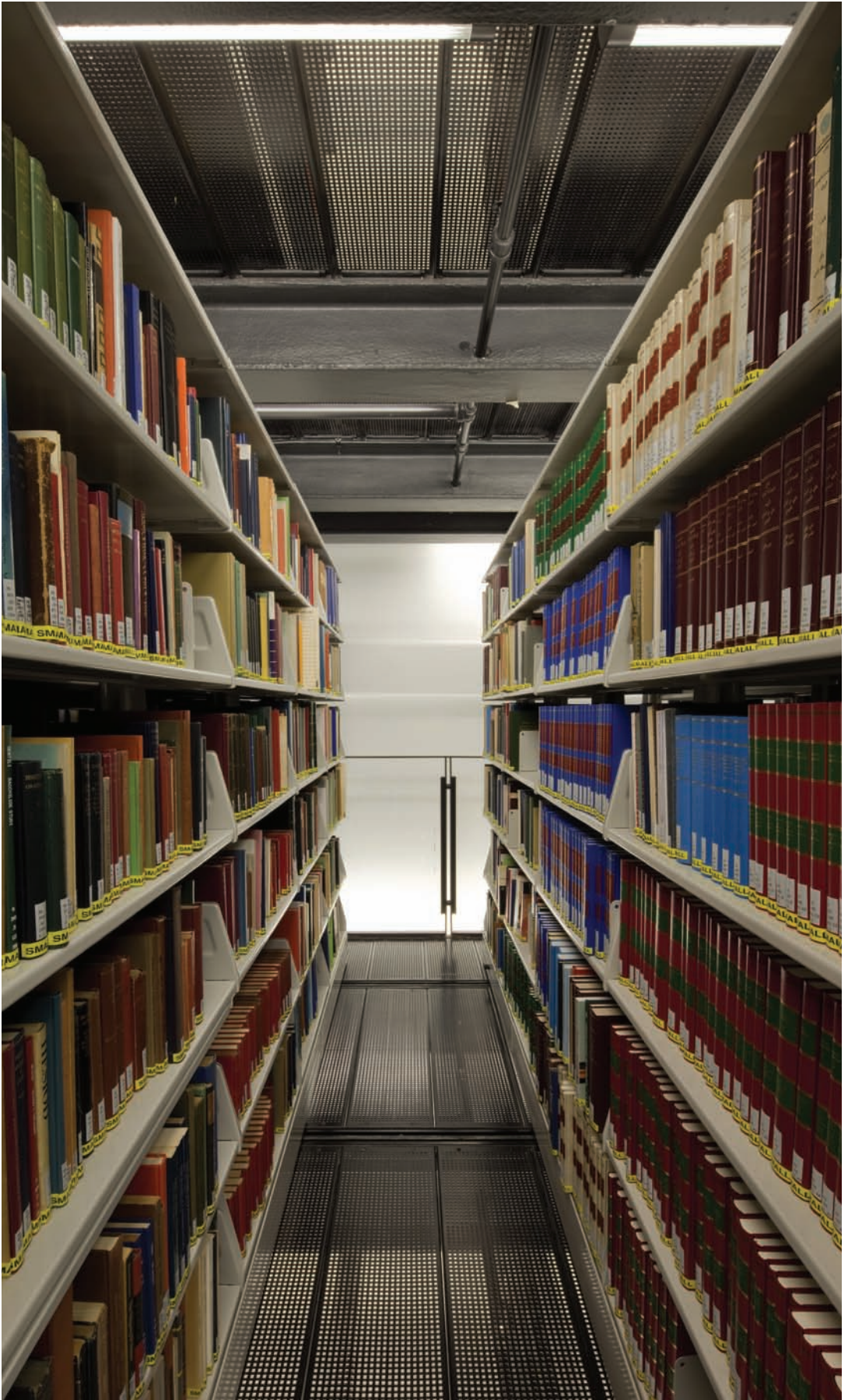
Giovanni Ruffini is now an Assistant Professor in History and Classical Studies at Fairfield University, CT, which this year awarded him a summer research grant to study texts from Christian Nubia. His book, *Social Networks in Byzantine Egypt*, was published by Cambridge University Press in 2008.

Kevin van Bladel (08–09)

Kevin van Bladel has returned to the University of Southern California, where he is Assistant Professor of Classics. His first book, *The Arabic Hermes*, was published by Oxford University Press in July of this year, and he is preparing the sequel, a catalog of the Arabic Hermetica. His article on the reception of Sanskrit works in Arabic during the eighth century, "The Bactrian Background of the Barmakids," will appear this winter in *Islam and Tibet*, published by Ashgate.

Alice Yao (08–09)

Alice Yao has been appointed Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Toronto.





LIBRARY

Charles E. Jones

Head Librarian

The Library of the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World has been open for a full year. We have seen increased use of the collection by ISAW faculty, staff, and students, by other divisions of New York University, and by the larger New York academic community. Our facilities continue to improve as ISAW and its requirements grow, and as we learn how best to use our comfortable library spaces. With the beginning of the new academic year and the influx of the first class of graduate students and the third group of Visiting Research Scholars, we are pleased to be ready to serve their needs.

Collection development efforts have focused on acquiring core collections representing the various disciplines within ISAW's academic scope, and in areas that are not yet well represented in libraries in the New York University Library system, within which our library is an integral component.

We have completed cataloguing the collections that were in-house as of the end of 2008: the Egyptological library of Alan May;

the Stanford Place library of classical material culture; a library of Asian art focused on art of India and Southeast Asia; and the collection of Emily and Cornelius Vermeule. We have also acquired and processed the publications of the Institut für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften in Frankfurt, and a wide variety of other recent publications necessary for the support of research by faculty and staff.

During the first half of 2009 we have been fortunate to acquire several additional significant and useful collections:

A large and important lot of books from the library of the Ancient India and Iran Trust in Cambridge, England. This very rich collection provides us with essential resources for the study of ancient Iran and Central Asia, and it will be a solid core from which to build our collection in this area.

A small but distinguished lot of books on ancient art and architecture from the collection of John H. Stubbs of New York.

The complete Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients (TAVO), an essential geographical and historical resource for the ancient, medieval, and modern Near and Middle East.

The library of the late Professor Frank William Walbank, a scholar of ancient history, particularly the history of Polybius. He studied Classics at Peterhouse College, Cambridge, and from 1951 to 1977 was Rathbone Professor of Ancient History and Classical Archaeology at the University of Liverpool. Following his retirement he took up residence in Cambridge, where he remained actively engaged as an Honorary Fellow of Peterhouse until his death in 2008. His rich library is a valuable collection for the study of ancient classical history.

The library of the late Professor Charles Richard Whittaker, also of Cambridge. After graduating from St. John's College, Cambridge, in 1953, he was named Assistant Master in Classics at King William's College, Isle of Man. He then assumed a post at Glasgow Academy before becoming Lecturer in Ancient History at the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland from 1961–66. This was followed by research work at King's College, Cambridge, and then posts at the University of Ghana (1967–69) and the University of Alberta (1969–71). Following his appointment to a University Lectureship in the Faculty of Classics at Churchill College, Cambridge, he was elected to a Fellowship in 1971, and he remained at Churchill until his retirement. The Whittaker and Walbank libraries together provide ISAW with a collection of great strength in Hellenistic and Roman history.

The library of a distinguished German archaeologist, including an extensive list of early and essential publications on the archaeology of Mesopotamia.

A substantial part of the library of Professor Robert D. Biggs, of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. As I write we have just successfully concluded negotiations to acquire this collection, with

extensive holdings in the literatures of Assyriology and the intellectual traditions of the ancient Near East. The intake and cataloguing of these collections, as well as others for which we are now negotiating, will keep the library staff very busy in the coming months.

We have made substantial progress in the development of a plan to build an Ancient World Digital Library (AWDL). Working in close cooperation with Roger Bagnall, ISAW Director, and Tom Elliott, Associate Director for Digital Programs, we have written and circulated a document outlining the goals for the project. We are now gathering support from peer institutions and developing the partnerships necessary for the project to succeed, and we expect to be able to demonstrate significant progress on the AWDL over the next few months. In the meantime two projects that organize and curate existing digital resources for the study of the ancient world are fully embedded in the ISAW Library:

Abzu: a guide to networked open-access data relevant to the study and public presentation of the ancient Near East and the ancient Mediterranean world.
(<http://www.etana.org/abzu/>)

AWOL: The Ancient World Online.
(<http://ancientworldonline.blogspot.com/>)

Readers of the ISAW Newsletter are invited to use these tools and to communicate their reactions and suggestions to me at:
chuck.jones@nyu.edu

Finally, it is my great pleasure to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the staff of the ISAW Library, without whom nothing would function: Dawn Gross, who coordinates the cataloguing team, and Anna Kogan, Sara Roemer, and Jessica Shapiro. Together they have undertaken to catalogue the collections we have acquired and to work carefully and thoroughly to improve the cataloguing of older material, not only for the benefit of ISAW but also for the benefit of the worldwide academic community. Their skills and commitment are an essential part of the work we do.



Globular Vessel with Lid; Fired Clay; Cucuteni, Scânteia, 4200–4050 BC
Moldova National Museum Complex, Iași: 17266, 19266
Photo: Marius Amarie

EXHIBITIONS AND PUBLIC PROGRAMS

The Lost World of Old Europe: The Danube Valley 5000–3500 BC

November 11, 2009–April 10, 2010

Jennifer Chi

Associate Director for Exhibitions and Public Programs

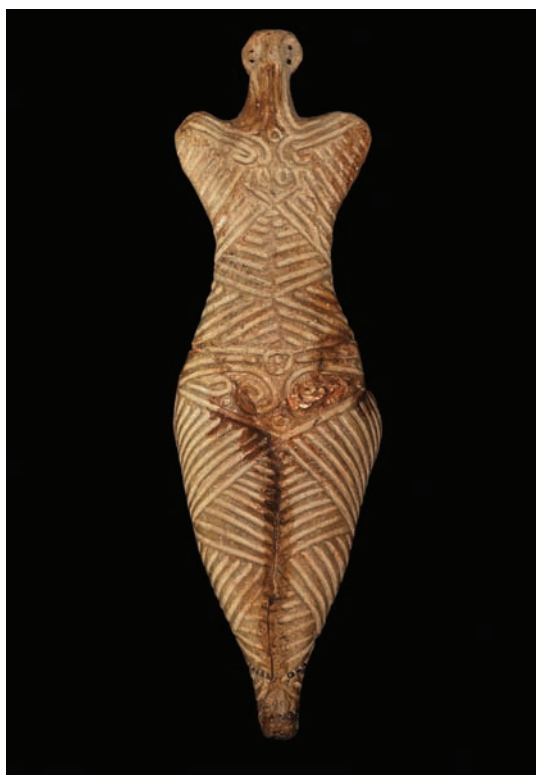
The Lost World of Old Europe: The Danube Valley, 5000–3500 BC is the second international loan exhibition organized by the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World at New York University. For many, the region and its historical context, as well as its material culture, may be largely unfamiliar. Discussions of Western civilization often move from the Venus of Willendorf to the Lascaux cave paintings and then on to Egypt and Mesopotamia, without ever mentioning the art and culture of what is known as Old Europe, an area corresponding geographically to modern-day southeastern Europe and defined by a series of distinct cultural groups that attained an astonishing level of sophistication in the fifth and fourth millennia BC. *The Lost World of Old Europe* attempts to redefine commonly held notions of the development of Western civilization by

presenting the little-known artistic and technological achievements made by these still enigmatic peoples—from their extraordinary figurines to their vast variety of copper and gold objects and their stunning pottery types.

Perhaps the most widely known category of objects from Old Europe is the “mother-goddess” figurine (figure 3). Fashioned by virtually every Old European cultural group, these striking miniaturized representations of



Spondylus Bracelets, Spondylus, Hamangia, Cernavodă, 5000–4600 BC, National History Museum of Romania, Bucharest and National History and Archaeology Museum, Constanța: 4275, 11666
Photo: Marius Amarie



Female Figurine, Fired Clay, Cucuteni, Drăgușeni, 4050–3900 BC, Botoșani County Museum, Botoșani: 7558
Photo: Marius Amarie

females are frequently characterized by abstraction, with truncated, elongated, or emphasized body parts and a surface decorated with incised or painted geometric and abstract patterns. The figurines' heightened sense of female corporeality has led some scholars to identify them as representations of a powerful mother goddess. The great variety of contexts in which the figurines are found, however, has led more recently to individualized readings rather than to a single, overarching interpretation.

The technological advances made during this 1,500-year period are manifest in the copper and gold objects that comprise a significant component of the exhibition. The earliest major assemblage of gold artifacts to be unearthed anywhere in the world comes from the Varna cemetery, located in what is now Bulgaria, and dates to the first half of the fifth millennium BC. Interred in the graves are the bodies of individuals who may have been chieftains, adorned with as much as five kilograms of gold objects, including exquisitely crafted headdresses, necklaces, appliqués, and ceremonial axes. Indeed, it is in Old Europe that one sees the first large-scale mining of precious metals, the development of advanced metallurgical practices such as smelting, and the trade of objects made from these materials.

The most striking material traded throughout much of southeastern Europe is the Spondylus shell. Found in the Aegean Sea, Spondylus was carved into objects of personal adornment in Greece from at least the early Neolithic period forward. The creamy-white-colored shell is known to have been traded as far as the modern United Kingdom by the fifth millennium BC. Many of the most common forms are on display in this exhibition and include elaborate beaded necklaces, tubular bracelets (figure 2), and pendants or amulets. The shells can perhaps be read as markers of a common origin or as indicators of the owner's elite position in society.

Within their homes Old Europeans stored an impressive array of pottery that has been methodically studied over the last hundred years by many southeast-European archaeologists. Bold geometric designs—including

concentric circles, diagonal lines, and checkboard patterns—distinguish the pottery made by the Cucuteni culture, examples of which are featured in the exhibition (figure 1). Part of the pottery's allure is the resonance of its composition and design to a modern aesthetic. Indeed, one could easily envision a Cucuteni vessel displayed in a contemporary home.

Exhibitions at ISAW are meant not only to illustrate connections among ancient cultures, but also to question preexisting and sometimes static notions of the ancient world. With *The Lost World of Old Europe*, it is our desire to show that a rich and complex world can be found when looking beyond traditional and narrow definitions of antiquity, and indeed beyond standard depictions of the development of Western civilization.

The Institute for the Study of the Ancient World is presenting a series of special events and public programs to accompany the exhibition, with the goal of furthering the understanding and appreciation of Romanian, Bulgarian, and Moldovan culture. Public programs will include a Romanian film series, music nights, a demonstration by a Romanian pottery artist, and a scholarly lecture series that will further elucidate topics explored in the exhibition and public tours.

The Lost World of Old Europe was organized in collaboration with the National History Museum of Romania and with the participation of the Varna Museum of Archaeology, Bulgaria, and the National Museum of History and Archaeology in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova. The exhibition catalogue, *The Lost World of Old Europe: The Danube Valley 5,000-3,500 BC*, edited by David Anthony and Jennifer Chi, is published by Princeton University Press and available for purchase at: <http://press.princeton.edu/titles/9052.html>.

Further information on the exhibition is also available online at: <http://www.nyu.edu/isaw/exhibitions/oldeurope/>

The Sarcophagus East and West

October 2–3, 2009

Kate Lawson

Academic Program Coordinator



A conference hosted by ISAW on October 2–3, “The Sarcophagus East and West” sought to encourage discourse among scholars on both sides of this broad geographical area, within a period spanning from around the second century BCE to the third century CE, and to examine simultaneously the materials, influences, and development of these objects—usually studied separately—in an effort to deepen and expand our understanding of this fascinating aspect of funerary ritual. Participants approached the topic from a variety of angles, including discoveries made at excavation sites as well as more formal analyses drawing on historical and textual sources.

Professors Wu Hung from the University of Chicago and Jas’ Elsner from Oxford University were co-organizers of this event, and their scholarly collaboration embodied the goals of the conference. Professor Hung, a specialist in Early Chinese Art who is especially interested in the relationships among visual forms, presented on Han sarcophagi in eastern Asia, and Professor Elsner, who focuses on relationships between text and image in Roman and Early Christian Art, spoke on pagan and Christian sarcophagi of the West. These first presentations set

the tone for the entire conference, which grouped papers into pairs, one focusing on the East and the other on the West, in an endeavor to foster new ideas and connections.

A variety of themes were addressed, including the interaction between text and image, relations to the body held within the sarcophagus, public and private connections to sarcophagi, and depictions of the deceased. The presenters included Janet Huskinson (Open University), Richard Neer (University of Chicago), Verity Platt (University of Chicago), Edmund Thomas (Durham Center for Roman Culture), Alain Thote (École Pratique des Hautes Études), Lillian Tseng (Yale University), Eugene Wang (Harvard University), Zheng Yan (Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing), and Paul Zanker (Scuole Normale Superiore di Pisa). Discussion was led by Jonathan Hay (IFA), T. J. Clark (University of California, Berkeley), Wu Hung, Barry Flood (New York University), Chris Hallett (University of California, Berkeley), and Jas’ Elsner, with each contributing their own observations on the illuminations resulting from the pairings as well as inviting comments and questions from the audience.

2009 – 2010 ACADEMIC CALENDAR



The Institute for the Study of the Ancient World is pleased to have a public presence to match its vision, in part so as to make more visible the work of its scholarly community. Conferences, exhibitions, public lectures, publications, and other programs reflect the Institute's ideal of study that bridges disciplines and ancient peoples. An updated academic program calendar is available below and online at: <http://www.nyu.edu/isaw/events.htm>

Conferences

Friday–Saturday, October 2–3

The Sarcophagus East and West

Organizers: Wu Hung, University of Chicago
Jas' Elsner, Oxford University

<http://www.nyu.edu/isaw/events/sarcophagus.htm>

Lectures

Tuesday, October 20 | 6:00 pm

The Temple of Osiris in Abydos during the Late Period

David Klotz, Visiting Research Scholar
Institute for the Study of the Ancient World

Thursday, November 5 | 6:00 pm

**3rd Annual Leon Levy Lecture:
A View from Central Eurasia**

Nicola Di Cosmo, Institute for Advanced Study

Thursday, November 12 | 6:00 pm

The Birth of European Painting in the Sands of Egypt

Thomas Matthews, John Langeloth Loeb Professor Emeritus of the History of Art, Institute of Fine Arts

Monday, November 30 | 6:00 pm

Bringing the Frontier to the Center: Empires and Nomads from Achaemenid Persia to Tang China

Wu Xin, Visiting Research Scholar
Institute for the Study of the Ancient World

Monday, December 7 | 6:00 pm

The Eurasian Currents of Transmission and Adaptation: Four Case Studies

Anthony Barbieri-Low, Associate Professor
Department of History, University of California, Santa Barbara

Tuesday, December 8 | 6:00 pm

Decoration, Astrology, and Empire: A Textile of Han China Unearthed from the Taklamakan Desert

Lilian Tseng, Associate Professor
Department of Art History, Yale University

Wednesday, December 9 | 6:00 pm

**Alexander the Great and Dionysios in India:
The Greek Interaction with Early Indian Buddhist Art**

Osmund Bopearachchi, Director
French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS Paris)

Thursday, December 10 | 6:00 pm

Attic Pottery in Scythian Graves?

Friederike Fless, Professor
TOPOI, Free University of Berlin

Friday, December 11 | 6:00 pm

"So that all the cultivated lands of Bukhara would be inside those walls" –

New Research Perspectives on Western Central Asian Oasis Walls and Territorial Fortifications

Sören Stark, Junior Fellow
TOPOI, Free University of Berlin

Tuesday, December 15 | 6:00 pm

**Comparing Cultural Configurations:
Astrology and Divination in Cicero's
De divinatione and Thomas Aquinas's
Summa Theologiae**

Darrel Rutkin, Visiting Research Scholar
Institute for the Study of the Ancient World

Wednesday, December 16 | 6:00 pm

**ISAW & the American Research Center in Egypt Present
Body Parts: Ancient Egyptian Fragments and Amulets**

Yekaterina Barbash, Assistant Curator
Ancient Arts of Egypt, Brooklyn Museum of Art

Tuesday, January 19 | 6:00 pm
Living in the Heights: Hilltop Settlement and the Changing Landscape of Northern Iberia in Late Antiquity'
Damián Fernández, Visiting Research Scholar
Institute for the Study of the Ancient World

Tuesday, February 2 | 6:00 pm
The Temple Treasury and Local Politics in a Mesopotamian Province during the 21st Century BCE
Xiaoli Ouyang, Visiting Research Scholar
Institute for the Study of the Ancient World

Tuesday, March 2 | 6:00 pm
Lecture
Nicola Aravecchia, Visiting Research Scholar
Institute for the Study of the Ancient World

Tuesday, March 16 | 6:00 pm
Lecture
Oleksandr Symonenko, Visiting Research Scholar
Institute for the Study of the Ancient World

Thursday, March 25 | 6:00 pm
The Delphic Oracle
John Hale, Professor of Archaeology
University of Louisville, Kentucky

Tuesday, April 20 | 6:00 pm
Lecture
Mantha Zarmakoupi, Visiting Research Scholar
Institute for the Study of the Ancient World

Tuesday, May 18 | 6:00 pm
Lecture
Caroline Sauvage, Visiting Research Scholar
Institute for the Study of the Ancient World

The Rostovtzeff Lecture Series
Martin Kern, Professor of Chinese Literature
Princeton University
Monday, May 3 | 6:00 pm
Monday, May 10 | 6:00 pm
Monday, May 17 | 6:00 pm
Monday, May 24 | 6:00 pm

**All lectures will be held in the second floor Lecture Hall.*

Exhibitions Public Programming

ISAW is presenting a series of special events and public programs to accompany the exhibition *The Lost World of Old Europe*, with the goal of furthering the understanding and appreciation of Romanian, Bulgarian, and Moldovan culture. All events are free and open to the public; seating available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Free guided tours are also available every Friday at 6 pm.

Thursday, November 11 | 11:00 am
The Lost World of Old Europe:
The Danube Valley 5000–3500 BC
Exhibition opens to the public

Thursday, December 3 | 6:00 pm
The Rise and Fall of Old Europe
David Anthony, Professor of Anthropology,
Hartwick College
and Guest Curator, *The Lost World of Old Europe:*
The Danube Valley, 5000-3500 BC

Thursday, January 21 | 6:00 pm
The Late Copper Age in the East Balkans and the Case of Varna
Vladimir Slavchev, Scientific Associate
Varna Regional Museum of History

Friday, January 22 | 7:00 pm
Musical performance:
Christine Ghezso and Company
Romanian singer, Christine Ghezso, along with a pianist, flautist and violinist, will perform traditional and ritual songs from Romania.

Thursday, January 28 | 7:00 pm
Film: Morometii (The Journey) (1987)
Directed by Stere Gulea
151 min, Rating: NR

Thursday, February 11 | 6:00 pm
Deconstructing the Myth of the Great Mother Goddess: Masking and Breaking the Human Body in Old Europe
Peter Biehl, Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, University at Buffalo

Thursday, February 18 | 7:00 pm
Film: Wasps' Nest (Cuibul de Viespi) (1986)
Directed by Horea Popescu
115 min, Rating: NR

Thursday, March 4 | 7:00 pm
Reenactment (Reconstituirea) (1968)
Directed by Lucian Pintilie
100 min, Rating: NR

Thursday, April 1 | 7:00 pm
Film: 12:08 East of Bucharest (A fost sau n-a fost?) (2006)
Directed by Corneliu Porumboiu
89 min, Rating: NR
**Courtesy of Palisades Tartan*

Thursday, April 8 | 7:00 pm
Musical performance: Georgy Valdchev & Lora Tchekorotova
Traditional Bulgarian music from the late 19th century and early 20th century

Newsletter Credits:
Editor: Roger Bagnall
Managing Editor: Suzan Toma
Copyeditor: Mary Cason
Designers: Susanne Schaal (Code. New York Inc.)
**with contributions by Roberta Casagrande-Kim*
Space and Events Photography: Andrea Brizzi and Watt Sriboonruang

ISAW

ISAW is a center for advanced scholarly research and graduate education, intended to cultivate comparative and connective investigations of the ancient world. It features doctoral and postdoctoral programs, with the aim of training a new generation of scholars who will enter the global academic community and become intellectual leaders. In an effort to embrace a truly inclusive geographical scope while maintaining continuity and coherence, the Institute focuses on the shared and overlapping periods in the development of cultures and civilizations around the Mediterranean basin, and across central Asia to the Pacific Ocean.



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