

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Life takes precedence over reporting on it, and this *Newsletter* therefore comes to you later than we would have hoped. So much has happened at ISAW in the last ten months that we have found it hard to get the time to describe it. We have added two new regular faculty, Lillian Tseng and Sören Stark, of whom brief profiles appear in this issue, as well as appointing Sebastian Heath to a clinical faculty position to lead our development of a digital publishing program. Last year's exhibition on the "Lost World of Old Europe" drew large crowds, mostly new to ISAW, and generated extensive positive news coverage. As I write, the last touches are being put on the newly built-out sixth floor, where offices have been created to give productive homes to our exhibitions and digital teams, long squished into too-few offices and carrels. The willingness of the Leon Levy Foundation to make this additional investment in our beautiful building has been a great boost to ISAW's development.

Another development, in its infancy when we put our last *Newsletter* to bed, is the creation of our common lunch program. Food is as fundamental a physical need as we have, apart from breathing, but eating together has from early times been much more than that. The community-building benefits of our shared meals have been part of the ongoing creation of ISAW as an intellectual community. Librarians, faculty, administrators, students, and visiting scholars are all part of the common enterprise and talk with one another over the simple but excellent meals our new chef, Kathy McEwen, is preparing for us. Anyone who has been to lectures or seminars in the past year has seen that with more than forty people now calling ISAW their working home at any given moment, and a steady stream of visitors at events, we have a lively basis for discussion on almost any subject that can come up. We invite all of you to keep an eye on our Events page and join us as your schedule permits. Before long our new website will come on line and allow us to keep information about the Institute far more current as well as providing a steadily richer gateway to digital resources of all kinds; Tom Elliott talks about a few of our projects in his column this issue, but there will be much more to come.

Roger Bagnall

ISAW COMMUNITY NEWS

New Faculty at ISAW

Sören Stark
Assistant Professor of Central Asian Art and Archaeology

Sören Stark studied Oriental archaeology and art history, ancient history and (European) art history at Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg. He received his doctorate in 2005 with a study on the archaeology and history of the pre-Muslim Turks in Central and Inner Asia which was published in 2008 as *Die Alttürkenzeit in Mittel- und Zentralasien. Archäologische und historische Studien (Nomaden und Sesshafte 6)*, Wiesbaden: Ludwig-Reichert-Verlag. His other works range chronologically from the Iron Age up to the pre-Mongol Middle Ages and deal with various aspects of archaeology, art history and history in Central and Inner Asia as well as in neighboring cultural areas.

From 2005 to 2008 he led archaeological surveys and excavations in Northern Tajikistan (near Shahrison and Istaravshan/Urotepä). Before joining the faculty of ISAW he was junior fellow at the Excellence Cluster TOPOI and teaching at the Freie Universität in Berlin.

His main research focus lies on the political and cultural interrelations between pastoral nomads in Central and Inner Asia and their sedentary neighbors. Currently, he is preparing a book on territorial fortifications in Western Central Asia (with forthcoming fieldwork in Uzbekistan). He is also co-editor of a *Handbook of Central Asian Archaeology and Art* which is presently under preparation for Oxford University Press.

Lillian Lan-ying Tseng
Associate Professor of East Asian Art and Archaeology

Lillian Tseng specializes in ancient Chinese art and archaeology. Prior to joining ISAW in 2010, she served as associate professor in the Department of the History of Art at Yale University. She received her B.A. and M.A. in history from National Taiwan University (1988, 1992), and her Ph.D. in history of art and architecture from Harvard University (2001). She was awarded a post-doctoral fellowship from the Getty Foun-



ation, a Morse Junior Faculty Fellowship from Yale, and two fellowships from the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange.

Professor Tseng is interested in exploring the interface of art history and cultural history. She is the author of *Picturing Heaven in Early China* (Harvard University Press, 2011), and has published a number of articles concerned with diverse cultural issues in Chinese art, such as history and memory, visual replication and political persuasion, pictorial representation and historical writing, and the interchangeability of the self and the other. She is currently at work on two book projects: one investigates the reception of antiquity and its impact on visual production in eighteenth-century China while the other examines frontiers and visual imaginations in Han China. She is also editing a scholarly volume entitled *Representing Things: Visuality and Materiality in East Asia*.

Sebastian Heath
Clinical Assistant Professor of Ancient Studies

Sebastian Heath has an A.B. from Brown University in medieval studies and received his Ph.D. in classical art and archaeology from the University of Michigan. His research interests include Roman pottery, numismatics and the application of digital technologies to the study of the ancient world. The focus of his work at ISAW is the role of technology in scholarly communication and publication. He has participated in excavations and surveys in Cyprus, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Tunisia, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. Current field work includes publication of Roman pottery from the Lower City at Troy in Turkey. Much of his work ap-

pears in digital form. He is co-editor with Billur Tekkök of the digital publication *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Pottery at Ilion (Troia)* and also co-edits *The Pylos Regional Archaeological Project: Internet Edition*. Recent articles and chapters include "Legal Threats to Cultural Exchange of Archaeological Materials" in the *American Journal of Archaeology* (2009) and "Diversity and Reuse of Digital Resources for Ancient Mediterranean Material Culture" in the volume *Digital Research in the Study of Classical Antiquity*, Bodard and Mahony, eds. (2010). In 2009, Dr. Heath was elected vice-president for professional responsibilities of the Archaeological Institute of America. He came to ISAW from the American Numismatic Society, where he remains a research scientist.

Incoming Graduate Students

Randolph Ford

Randolph Ford received his B.A. and M.A. from the University of Wisconsin in Scandinavian studies. With a focus on Old Icelandic/Old English literature and medieval history, he also took courses in classics and East Asian studies. Between his B.A. and M.A. degrees, he spent several years studying in Sichuan, China. At ISAW, he intends to pursue comparative study of Greco-Roman and Chinese ethnographic traditions and strategies of cultural and political accommodation between empires and tribal confederations.

Erik Hermans

Erik Hermans received his B.A. in classics from the University of Nijmegen (the Netherlands) in 2007, and received his M.Phil. in classics from the same university in 2009. He has also studied at the University of Amsterdam, the University of Ghent (Belgium) and the University of Oxford, where his master's thesis was co-supervised. His primary interests lie in the influence classical culture has exercised on all kinds of societies from Late Antiquity onwards. In his master's thesis and other projects, he has focused on Late Antiquity and the Byzantine empire in particular. At ISAW Erik will study classical Arabic and hopes to compare how the classical heritage was dealt with in the Carolingian empire, the Byzantine empire and in the Arabic caliphate in the period 500-900 A.D.

Current Faculty and Administrative News

Beate Pongratz-Leisten has received tenure as professor of ancient Near Eastern studies. Before joining the faculty of ISAW in the fall of 2009, she taught at Tübingen University and Freiburg University in Germany, as well as at Princeton, Yale, the University of Pennsylvania, and Princeton Theological Seminary. She received her doctorate and habilitation in ancient Near Eastern studies, Egyptology, and religious studies at Tübingen University and also studied at Harvard University.

Diane Bennett has joined the ISAW administrative team as associate director for administration. Diane comes to ISAW from the Development Research Institute within the NYU Faculty of Arts and Science Economics Department, where she has served as the executive director since 2008. She is also the co-founder and former executive director of Servant's Heart, an international NGO working in South Sudan. She holds a B.A. from Wheaton College and an M.A. from Ball State University.

Dawn Gross has been promoted from head cataloguer to assistant head of the library at ISAW. Dawn has been leading the cataloging project at ISAW since 2007 and was previously an adjunct cataloger in Technical Services for NYU Libraries. She has her B.A. from NYU (1987) and received her MSLIS from the Palmer School in 2006.

In Memoriam

One of ISAW's first research associates, John Britton, died of a cardiac arrest on June 8, 2010, aged 71. After receiving a Ph.D. in history of science at Yale in 1966, John entered the investment management business, but in the 1980s he returned to active research in the history of ancient astronomy, working as an independent scholar. His publications, comprising a monograph on Ptolemy's *Almagest* and about twenty papers, established him as the foremost scholar on the relationship of observation and mathematical theory in ancient Babylonian and Greek astronomy.

During John's few months with us he was an enthusiastic and generous member of our community.



Visiting Research Scholars

For the 2010-2011 academic year, ISAW has appointed 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.

Jonathan Ben-Dov
(PhD, Hebrew University)

Gilles Bransbourg
(PhD expected Nov. 2010, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales)

Lidewijde de Jong
(PhD, Stanford University)

Jacco Dieleman
(PhD, Leiden University)

Günter Dreyer
(PhD, Free University Berlin)

Bryan Hanks
(PhD, University of Cambridge)

Judith Lerner
(PhD, Harvard University)

Annalisa Marzano
(PhD, Columbia University)

Mathieu Ossendrijver
(PhD, University of Utrecht)

Seth Sanders
(PhD, Johns Hopkins University)

Karen Sonik
(PhD, University of Pennsylvania)

Joan Westenholz
(PhD, University of Chicago)

Updates from ISAW Alumni

Anna Boozer, formerly on the administrative staff at ISAW, is now a Lecturer at the University of Reading, UK.

Ari Bryan (VRS 08-09) has accepted a two year ACLS New Faculty Fellowship. During this time, he will be jointly appointed in the rhetoric and classics departments at UC Berkeley.

Damian Fernandez (VRS 09-10) has been appointed assistant professor in the History Department at Northern Illinois University.

Xiaoli Ouyang (VRS 09-10) and **Wu Xin** (VRS 08-10) have both been awarded Noble Group fellowships at the W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research in Jerusalem.

Caroline Sauvage (VRS 09-10) has been appointed visiting assistant professor at NYU for the spring semester. She will be teaching courses at ISAW and the Hebrew and Judaic Studies Department.



RESEARCH & TEACHING

Faculty

Globalization of Knowledge: An Interdisciplinary Seminar

Beate Pongratz-Leisten

Professor of Ancient Near Eastern Studies

In the 2009-10 academic year I taught my first research seminar at ISAW over two semesters on the topic of *Globalization of Knowledge in the Ancient Near East*. The seminar was dedicated to the spread of cuneiform culture in the ancient Near East and its impact on the cultural and political interaction of the various peoples in the region during the nearly three millennia BCE since the invention of writing.

Cultural contact was approached as occurring as a dynamic process within networking systems; one of the main questions was to explain the process of the cuneiform writing system gaining predominance in the ancient Near East shortly after its invention. Culture in the making conceives of the ancient Near East as an intellectual community that, despite linguistic, regional, and local distinctions, displays features of cultural cohesion, drawing upon a common reservoir of religious practices, tropes, ideas, and cultural strategies and institutions generated by intense and repeated demographic shifts throughout its history. The political geography of the region, empire-building, commerce, and diplomacy all encouraged interconnectivity between the great powers, contributing to the creation of an osmotic cultural space in which the multilingual education of the scholarly elites nurtured intense communication and allowed for the diffusion, as well as the conscious reception, of languages and ideas. Change from below, such as expanded trade and improved communications, permitted change from above and promoted a relatively wide circulation of religious tenets, texts, and religious experts. The dissemination of writing systems, ideas, and ideological frameworks, however, was not absolutely dependent on trade.

The intention of the seminar was to demonstrate that the intellectual and political elites of the Eastern Mediterranean world were also linked to various degrees across political and cultural boundaries as they sought expressions of their distinct social status. In addition to the tangible

evidence of contact, as represented by objects of material culture, technical know-how, style, iconography, and ritual practices, there also circulated conceptual and ideological frameworks, writing systems, texts, languages, and concepts of the divine.

The seminar was dedicated to the spread of cuneiform writing as a carrier of such conceptual knowledge. Transmission of knowledge is a given in human cognition and our awareness of the mechanisms of cultural history is characteristic of any given period. However, according to historical circumstances and particular structures of societal organization these might have looked very different, particularly with regard to the relationship between power and scholarly authority. Thus, the question of how institutions and their agents favor or confine the spread of knowledge formed the obvious backbone of our seminar.

To illustrate the key notion of “networks” of intellectuals who promoted the spread of knowledge in antiquity and to provide a sense of their mobility, I first introduced material evidence and presented the very tangible aspect of the diffusion of prestigious goods in the ancient Near East and the elites as the driving forces and the agency behind it. By reviewing the archaeological evidence of libraries and archives and the difference between them, their owners, and their contents, I invited participants to tackle the more complex aspects of understanding the spread of the cuneiform writing system from the south, -- Uruk, where we have the first evidence in accounting tablets -- throughout the entire ancient Near East including today's Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Iran and the Levant into Egypt, and its application to written Sumerian, Eblaite, Akkadian, Hurrian, Hittite and in simplified form, Ugaritic and Old Persian.

We discussed further the development of the curriculum constructed by the scribes in the ancient cultural centers of Nippur and Ur, as well

as the early evidence for cultural competition between them. Tablet typology and the relation between composition and shape of the tablet as well as the relation between teacher's and pupil's writing in various forms of exercise tablets formed part of this discussion.

Societies in the ancient Near East have always been multilingual because of demographic shifts due to famine and drought and later massive deportations during times of war. The political development of southern Mesopotamia revolved around city states, which always strove for privileges and independence even under the unified control of the first dynasty of Akkad and the Ur III empire. To some degree this shows in the local curriculum. However, in its steps towards acquiring proficiency beyond the basic knowledge of writing, the curriculum of the ancient scribes and scholars was fairly uniform throughout the region. In spite of a long-existing Semitic component since the third millennium BCE it also kept the monolingual format of lexical lists in Sumerian language, of which the respective meaning in Akkadian was transmitted only orally. Such ways of learning could be demonstrated by occasional Akkadian glosses in the texts. However, monolingual lists lasted only until the end of the Old Babylonian period around 1600 BCE. Many factors might have contributed to the emergence of bilingual and multilingual lists and the urge towards compilation and standardization during the second millennium BCE. One of them certainly was the death of Sumerian as a spoken language, the moment of which is controversially discussed in Sumerology.

The phenomenon of multilingualism and the complex relationship between language and ethnicity led us to discuss also the choice of one particular language, such as Akkadian, as lingua franca and bureaucratic language since the second millennium BCE. Further sessions touched upon the bilingualism in the administrations of the Assyrian, Babylonian and Persian empires with the growing dominance of Aramaic as a bureaucratic though not cultural language. Several sessions were dedicated to what was considered as a body of cultural knowledge, and whether the notion of science is applicable in antiquity. For these questions we scrutinized lexicography and divination as represented in queries, reports, letters, and omen compendia as well as clay models in more depth.

The sessions threw light on particular cultural strategies, such as the arrangement of a text according to graphemic principles rather than content; the fact that modes of thoughts, such as the "if ... then" clause, might be governed by graphemic principles of the cuneiform writing system and phonetic and semantic connections rather than necessarily empirical truth; and the use of lists instead of expository narrative for building an argument. Cooperation with Christine Proust, a specialist in ancient mathematics, showed that some strategies – such as the combination of the possible, the thinkable and purely hypothetical – were equally applied to omen compendia and mathematical series texts. Finally, cultural strategies such as the use of logographic writing in divinatory texts and the ancient scholars' insistence on the exclusivity of the knowledge expressed in subscripts of series they administered led us to the discussion of prestige and secrecy linked with the transmission of cultural knowledge, which tended to be kept within the family and close circle of specialists in the service of the ruler.

The group of participants included faculty and graduate students from ISAW, NYU and Columbia, as well as visiting research scholars at ISAW. The disciplines represented by the participants ranged from ancient Near Eastern studies with emphasis on philology or archaeology, Central Asian studies, classics, Egyptology, ancient mathematics, cognitive sciences and psychology. The varied backgrounds of the scholars contributed to vivid and sometimes controversial discussions, in which our graduate students participated with enthusiasm.

Thanks to the diversity of the participants and their constructive input, I enjoyed the experience of a cooperation between scientists and scholars of the humanities, an endeavor I intend to pursue in future research particularly within cognitive sciences. I also intend to develop similar seminars in the coming years. The next one will be dedicated to *Shaping the Divine in the Ancient Near East* in the spring semester of 2011, which will be accompanied by a workshop on *The Materiality of the Divine* in April.

Scholars

Social Perception and Status of Late Bronze Age Ships within Eastern Mediterranean Society

Caroline Sauvage

Visiting Assistant Professor, VRS Alumna (2009-2010)

As a VRS, I studied the status of boats in the eastern Mediterranean Late Bronze Age. This period is known for its vast maritime exchange system and is described as an international age. The major powers of the time (Egypt, Hatti, Mittani, and Babylon) had intense relationships marked by exchanges of official letters. A concurrent augmentation of trade is documented by archaeological material and by ancient texts, which include private or official letters, administrative documents, and tales or stories. In the sources, prestige items (copper, ivory, glass, wood) are dominant, but these were certainly shipped alongside open shape ceramics and perishables. Besides these "common" goods, texts also indicate that boats, or parts of boats, were traded between Egypt, Cyprus, and the Levant. The aim of my study was to determine the impact of ships on the society and the way ships were perceived within different social groups. To do so, I have been looking at sources related to boats from a "sociological" point of view: who were the consumers and why did they "consume" ship imagery? Particularly relevant to this study were the mentions of ships in ancient texts and the context of ship representations, rather than the possible accuracy of the representations, or the technical aspects of the ships.

Boats were essential for longer distance international trade, which allowed participating states to keep their status while acquiring long distance prestige goods. Given the vitality of boats to the States, it is not surprising that the use of boats was restricted. Indeed in Ugarit, long-distance trading ships belonged to the state and were a royal privilege. In Egypt, merchantmen ships were probably built in state dependent shipyards, with imported wood such as cedar.

Late Bronze Age seafaring ships satisfy all definitions of prestige items: they were difficult to produce, sometimes made with foreign raw materials, costly to maintain, and highly restricted through royal agreement. However, the significance of ships as prestige items is apparently contradicted by surprisingly few representations

in the Levant and Cyprus. This lack may be characteristic of social group ideologies. Indeed, material culture is part of people's identity and therefore pictorial representations are the echo of selection processes reflecting their owner's world-view and their place within society: images reflect social structures and construct or confer prestige.

Representations of ships in the Levant and Cyprus appear on a limited number of items mainly dated to the end of the Late Bronze Age (seals, seal impressions, ceramics, graffiti on buildings or objects). Therefore during the Late Bronze Age, representations of ships may not have characterized individuals or social groups, which corroborates the silence of texts about private ship-owners. If boats were controlled by and belonged to the state, no social group able to leave behind tangible archaeological traces could have been interested in expressing itself through the possession of ship imagery.

However at the end of the Bronze Age, a shift is visible, with an "increasing" number of representations at the end of the 13th or 12th-11th c. B.C. This may reflect a change in the society



Drawing of the impression of a faience scaraboid seal from Ugarit (Syria), after Schaeffer 1962, Ugaritica IV, fig. 114; courtesy of Mission de Ras Shamra-Ougarit.

and a possible increased access to ships. The development of single ship motifs in the Levant and Cyprus at the end of the period on personal objects could be a manifestation of the emergence of private traders and ship-owners while the centralized powers collapsed.

Digital Programs

Tom Elliott

Associate Director for Digital Programs

As the institute matures and expands, so do its digital programs. We are developing innovative digital resources that support the needs of our faculty, visiting scholars and students, as well as a broader public made up of researchers and students from around the world.

ISAW recently began publishing free digital images of ancient sites and monuments on the world-wide web. The **Ancient World Image Bank (AWIB)**, has already distributed over a thousand images documenting a variety of ancient sites. These include a number of images provided by the Amheida Excavations team, which depict the site under investigation as well as other poorly published Roman and Coptic sites in Egypt. Irene Soto has donated a number of photographs of ancient graffiti from Egypt, and

In parallel, I have been working on a project funded by a Shelby White – Leon Levy grant for archaeological publication (2008-2011). It concerns the publication of the material preserved in the archaeological museum of Saint-Germain-en-Laye (France) and excavated by C.F.A. Schaeffer at Minet el-Beida and Ugarit (Syria) during the first years of work there.

we have also begun publishing images rescued from a 1990s slide and negative digitization project at the University of North Carolina that was never fully published. Highlights include a series of close-ups of the Roman emperor Trajan's arch at Benevento in Italy, photographed by George W. Houston (emeritus professor of classics at UNC-CH) in the 1960s. John Sarlitto and Nate Nagy, two Columbia undergraduate classics students, have been spearheading the project and are continuing to add images.

AWIB may be found at <http://www.nyu.edu/isaw/publications/awib/>. The images are hosted via Flickr.com, a photo sharing service, and are also being deposited into NYU's Faculty Digital Archive to ensure their long-term accessibility.

Pleiades is an online, collaborative gazetteer for ancient geography, which we operate jointly with the Ancient World Mapping Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Through its web site (<http://pleiades.stoa.org>), Pleiades lets anyone worldwide use, create, and share information about ancient geographic places. It also serves as a digital reference backbone for geography in all of our other digital resources. AWIB, for example, uses Pleiades resources to unambiguously identify the sites it depicts. Soon, Papyri.info (see next section) will do the same for all the places where papyrus documents have been found. Recent online epigraphic publications prepared at Kings College London similarly use links to Pleiades and <http://geonames.org> to indicate not only "place of finding" but also "presumed original location" and "last observed location" for each inscription (see, for example, <http://irt.kcl.ac.uk/irt2009/>). Thanks to a generous three-year grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), our team is now hard at work improving the system and adding information about over 50,000

ancient geographic features gleaned from the compilation records of the *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World* (R. Talbert, ed., Princeton, 2000). This work is overseen by Pleiades senior editors Professors Roger Bagnall and Richard Talbert and carried out on a day-to-day basis by Dr. Brian Turner (AWMC Director) and myself (as Pleiades co-managing editors) with the assistance of Sean Gillies (Chief Engineer). We're also working closely with our new Associate Editor, Professor Michael McCormick, and his team at Harvard, who developed the *Digital Atlas of Roman and Medieval Civilization* (<http://darmc.harvard.edu>). Our aim is to collate and share the datasets assembled by both projects and to cross-link our web applications, which will enrich users' experience by making available more data and a variety of map views. This will bring more accurate coordinates for many features into Pleiades, as well as a number of new features that will expand our time horizon into the middle ages. I'm also happy to report that Pleiades is supporting the work of two research teams that have just received funding from Google's first round of Digital Humanities Research Awards: Elton Barker, Eric Kansa and Leif Isaksen's "Google Ancient Places: Discovering Historic Geographical Entities in the Google Books Corpus" and David Mimmo and David Blei, "The Open Encyclopedia of Classical Sites."

I've recently blogged more extensively about work underway on Pleiades (see <http://horrothesia.blogspot.com/search/label/pleiades>). Interested parties are invited to follow all Pleiades-related updates and announcements via the *Pleiades News and Views* page (<http://planet.atlantides.org/pleiades/>) or to search or browse Pleiades itself for content. To participate, please visit <http://www.atlantides.org/trac/pleiades/wiki/PleiadesCommunity>.

Two years ago, I reported plans to move a significant element of the emerging digital infrastructure for papyrological and epigraphic study to NYU. Thanks to the efforts of Dr. Hugh Cayless, our collaborator on the NYU Digital Libraries team, <http://papyri.info> is now developed and hosted at NYU, with support from the NEH and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. This system enables users to browse, search and analyze the full content of three interrelated resources for papyrological study: the Duke Databank of



Papyri.info display for a second-century CE Greek document on papyrus from Egypt, including information drawn from all participating databases.

Documentary Papyri (DDBDP), the *Heidelberger Gesamtverzeichnis der griechischen Papyrusurkunden Ägyptens* (HGV) and the Advanced Papyrological Information System (APIS). It also links with the Trismegistos Portal of Papyrological and Epigraphical Resources (<http://www.trismegistos.org/>). Together, these resources provide full texts, translations, descriptive information, and images of over 80,000 papyri. The website now also boasts an interactive editor (<http://papyri.info/editor>), developed at the University of Kentucky under the auspices of the Integrating Digital Papyrology project, a joint effort led by Prof. Joshua Sosin at Duke University (see <http://idp.atlantides.org>). This editor permits papyrologists world-wide to contribute new and improved information to the DDBDP and HGV.

Recent developments include the conversion of the APIS records, which document the papyrological holdings of over 20 museums and libraries, to the EpiDoc encoding system, already used by DDBDP and HGV (<http://epidoc.sf.net>). EpiDoc is a key component in ISAW's digital strategy, which aims at improving the sustainability and usefulness of digital scholarly resources by driving down content costs through collaboration, promoting in-



Place and variant name resources from Pleiades for the ancient site of Aphrodisias in Turkey: <http://pleiades.stoa.org/places/638753>

teroperability with standards and reusable software, and enabling unfettered scholarly inquiry via open access licensing. You can read more about our philosophy, and the role of EpiDoc and papyrological resources therein, in a recent paper by Roger Bagnall ("Integrating Digital Papyrology" in J. McGann, ed., *Online Humanities Scholarship: The Shape of Things to Come, Proceedings of the Mellon Foundation Online Humanities Scholarship Conference*, University of Virginia, March 26-28, 2010, Houston: 2010, http://rup.rice.edu/cnx_content/shape/m34320.html).

Our team has also completed a series of **epigraphic** workshops with the *Epigraphische Datenbank Heidelberg* (EDH; <http://www.uni-heidelberg.de/institute/sonst/adw/edh/>). These

Libraries

Charles E. Jones

Head of the Library at ISAW

Acquisitions

The ISAW Library is fortunate to have acquired the library of Paul Åström. Professor Åström studied archaeology in Sweden, first at Uppsala University and subsequently at Lund University where he received his doctoral degree in 1958. That same year he became director of the Swedish Institute at Athens where he remained until 1963. He went on to teach at the University of Missouri (1963-1964) and to direct the Swedish Institute at Rome (1967-1969). In 1969 he became professor at University of Gothenburg where he remained for 24 years until his retirement.

Åström established a publishing company, Astrom Editions, in 1962. He co-directed the Greek-Swedish excavations at Midea in Argolis (1983-1999) and conducted excavations in Dendra together with Nicolaos Verdalis. He held honorary doctorates from University of Vienna (1994), University of Athens (1995) and University of Ioannina (2001).

A life-long bibliophile, he collected an extraordinarily rich personal library which was acquired by ISAW early in 2010. Focusing on the archaeology of the Eastern Mediterranean with particular strength in the archaeology of Cyprus, he developed an exchange program through Astrom Editions and acquired an unparalleled assemblage of archaeological journals produced in the

workshops, jointly funded by the NEH and the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*, focused on identifying the steps necessary to enable inter-operation and information exchange between EDH, Pleiades and other software and publications that make use of the EpiDoc standard. First fruits of this collaboration include the introduction of stable, application independent web identifiers for each inscription in the EDH corpus (e.g., <http://edh-www.adw.uni-heidelberg.de/EDH/inschrift/059004>) and the deployment of a new Pleiades user interface to facilitate matching placenames in the EDH database with geographic resources in Pleiades (<http://pleiades.stoa.org/places/@@place-match-form>). Future plans call for extensive cross-links between the two resources, as well as dynamic mapping and geographic queries in EDH, as additional funding allows.

Mediterranean basin. We are making excellent progress in integrating the Åström Library into the collections on the shelves at ISAW for use by our students, faculty, and scholars.

I will report on two additional significant acquisitions in the next newsletter.

AWOL - The Ancient World Online

ISSN 2156-2253

<http://ancientworldonline.blogspot.com/>

This project began with a series of entries under the heading AWOL on the Ancient World Bloggers Group Blog. I moved it to its own space (at the web address above) in 2009.

The primary focus of the project is to notice and comment on open access material relating to the ancient world, but I will also include other kinds of networked information as it comes available.

In mid-2009 I initiated an e-mail subscription service, allowing interested readers to receive notification whenever I made updates to AWOL. This service has been more successful than I would have predicted: at this moment there are over 1,700 subscribers.

Readers of the ISAW Newsletter are welcome and encouraged to subscribe by visiting the AWOL website and entering their email address.

FALL EVENTS & EXHIBITIONS

The Fourth Annual Leon Levy Lecture

Francesca Rochberg

Catherine and William L. Magistretti Distinguished Professor of Near Eastern Studies, University of California, Berkeley

Thursday, November 4. 6 p.m.

The Cultural Dynamism of Astral Science in the Hellenistic Age

More than any other part of cuneiform scribal culture, Babylonian astronomy and astrology entered the ambit of science in the Hellenistic world. Ancient testimony to the penetration of the boundaries of Hellenism by cuneiform culture was long known, but not until the modern recovery of Babylonian astronomical and astrological texts was it possible to give an account of the history of this earliest transmission of science. Babylonian astronomical methods were instrumental and formative for Western astronomy and astrology, but the significance of Babylonian science in the Hellenistic world is not limited to the imprint of its astronomical methods alone. These were part of a broader cultural matrix of ideas providing both ground and motivation for interchange between East and West. Recognition of the profoundly cultural nature of science affords not only another perspective on the transmission and reception of astral science in the Hellenistic Age, but mitigates easy dichotomies between science and non-science, reason and superstition, East and West.



Late Babylonian Omen Text with Drawings of Constellations, 3rd-2nd century BC, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Vorderasiatisches Museum, VAT 7487

About the Speaker

Francesca Rochberg received a B.A. in Oriental studies from the University of Pennsylvania and the Ph.D. in Near Eastern languages and civilizations from the University of Chicago. Currently she is Catherine and William L. Magistretti distinguished professor of Near Eastern studies in the Department of Near Eastern Studies and the Office for the History of Science and Technology at the University of California, Berkeley. She is also a member of the Graduate Group in Ancient History and Mediterranean Archaeology at the University of California, Berkeley. She has published widely on Babylonian celestial sciences and produced editions of cuneiform texts that set Babylonian science in various contexts, from cultural to cognitive history. Her research on ancient Mesopotamian and Greco-Roman traditions in astronomy and astrology has introduced the evidence of ancient cuneiform science into the philosophy of science through investigations of empiricism, prediction, logic, and reasoning. She is the author of *Aspects of Babylonian Celestial Divination: The Lunar Eclipse Tablets of Enu-ma Anu Enlil, Archiv für Orientforschung Beiheft 22* (Horn: Ferdinand Berger und Söhne, 1988), *Babylonian Horoscopes*, Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, Vol.88, Pt.1 (American Philosophical Society, 1998), *The Heavenly Writing: Divination, Horoscopy and Astronomy in Mesopotamian Culture* (Cambridge UP, 2004, paperback edition 2007), and *In the Path of the Moon: Babylonian Celestial Divination and Its Legacy, Studies in Ancient Magic and Divination* (E.J. Brill, 2010).

The lecture will begin at 6 p.m. in ISAW's Oak Library, with a reception to follow. Reservations are required through 212-992-7800 or isaw@nyu.edu.

A Mathematician's Journeys: Otto Neugebauer Between History and Practice of The Exact Sciences

Christine Proust (CNRS-NYU)

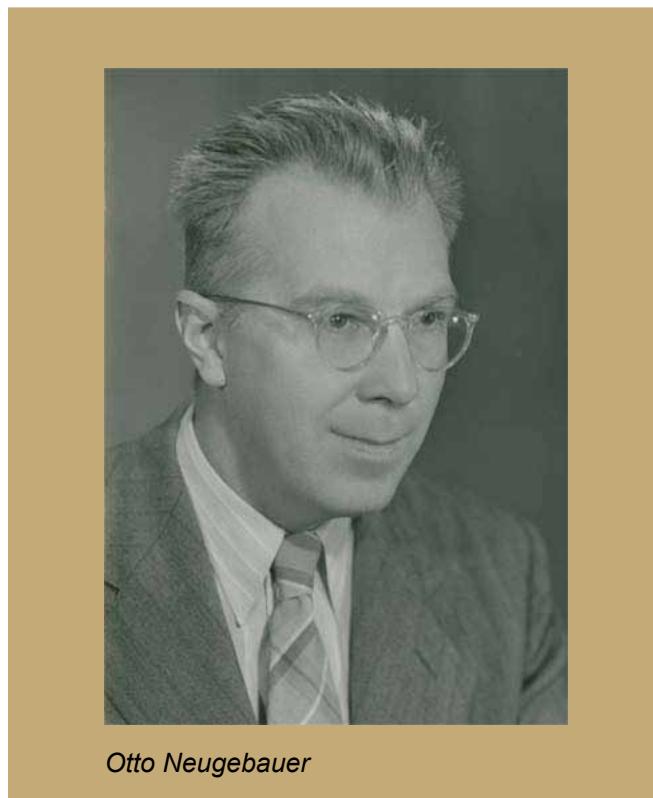
Alexander Jones (ISAW)

John Steele (Brown University)

Friday, November 12 and Saturday, November 13

2010 will mark the 20th anniversary of Otto Neugebauer's death (May 26, 1899 – February 19, 1990). Neugebauer, more than any other 20th Century scholar, shaped the way we perceive and study ancient science. His publications, devoted to the interpretation and dissemination of Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Greek, Ethiopic, Sanskrit, Arabic, Hebrew, Byzantine and Latin scientific and pseudoscientific texts, are essential works that entirely changed our understanding of ancient mathematics and astronomy. Neugebauer defined the goal of the study of the exact sciences as "to discover the relationships between different civilizations." Combining insights and methods characteristic of a mathematician with editorial technique and a rigorous approach to historical evidence, he pioneered the study of ancient mathematical texts in Egyptian papyri and Mesopotamian cuneiform tablets, profoundly deepened our understanding of Babylonian mathematical astronomy, and explored the connections between the Near Eastern and Greek mathematical sciences. He traced the use of astronomical parameters and computational techniques from Babylon, through Greece, into India, and back to the Islamic world. His broad view of ancient intellectual history currently enjoys a wide acceptance today and constitutes a significant change from the era before his work. Since Neugebauer's death, there has been an important evolution in the fields that Neugebauer created and established, and a new generation of specialists has now begun to construct a historiographical overview of the new trends in ancient mathematics and astronomy.

Less known among historians of science is his role in the contemporary mathematical community. Though he only coauthored a single mathematical paper, Neugebauer's career was at the heart of mathematical life during the period before, during, and after World War II. He was a founding editor of both of the mathematical reviewing journals, the *Zentralblatt für Mathematik* from 1931 to 1938, and *Mathematical Reviews* after 1939. He was very close to Rich-



Otto Neugebauer

ard Courant, his mentor and friend, to whom he dedicated his seminal book *The Exact Sciences in Antiquity* (1952). The two scholars followed parallel paths from Göttingen during the rise of Nazism to two of the greatest American universities. While tracing ancient transmission and globalization of the mathematical sciences, Neugebauer was himself part of a modern stage of these processes, and his career as much as his scholarship responded to his conviction that mathematical reasoning was a phenomenon unlimited by nationality, language, or culture.

In this conference, we propose to cast new light on the many facets of Neugebauer's career, his impact on the history and practice of mathematics, and the ways in which his legacy has been preserved or transformed in recent decades, looking ahead to the directions in which the study of the history of science will head in the

21st century. Divided into four sessions, the first two sessions offer complementary perspectives on Neugebauer's activity up to the 1940s: on the one hand, his transition from mathematics to the history of mathematics during his doctoral studies at Göttingen and the discovery of the mathematics of early second millennium BC Mesopotamia, and on the other, his activity in the service of modern mathematics, which was instrumental in his departure from Nazi Germany and eventual invitation to the US, where his historical work was perceived as valuable but his organizational abilities as indispensable.

The remaining sessions on the second day are devoted to two aspects of the study of astronomy that predominated in his work (and that of

his colleagues and students) from the 1950s on: the monumental edition of the late Babylonian tablets of mathematical astronomy that was his most profound and characteristic work of analytical and philological scholarship and the exploration of the paths of transmission and transformation of the methods and concepts of astronomy and related disciplines pervading the Old World through more than two millennia.

The conference proceedings will be held in ISAW's 2nd floor Lecture Hall and are open to the public. For further information about the conference, including the full program, please visit the conference website at <https://sites.google.com/site/neugebauerconference2010/>.

Exhibition

Before Pythagoras:

The Culture of Old Babylonian Mathematics

Alexander Jones, Professor of the History of Exact Sciences in Antiquity

Christine Proust, VRS Alumna (2009-10)

with Jennifer Chi

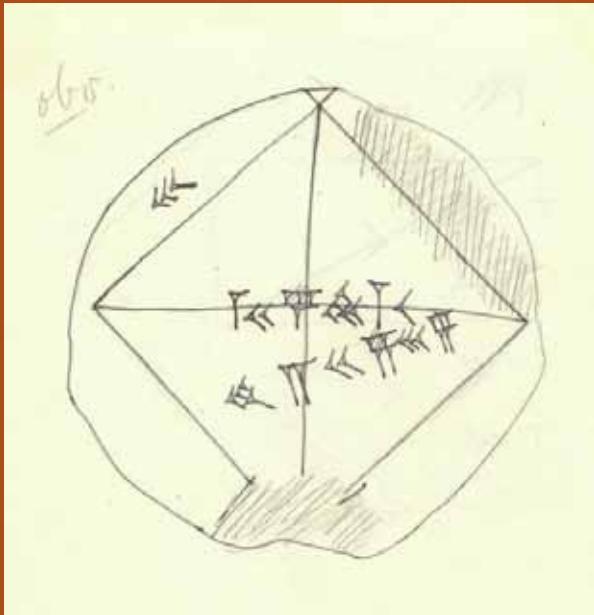
Open November 12 - December 17

Since the nineteenth century, thousands of cuneiform tablets dating to the Old Babylonian Period (c. 1900-1700 BCE) have come to light at various sites in ancient Mesopotamia (modern Iraq). A significant number record mathematical tables, problems, and calculations. In the 1920s these tablets began to be systematically studied by Otto Neugebauer, who spent two decades transcribing and interpreting tablets housed in European and American museums. His labors, and those of his associates, rivals, and successors, have revealed a rich culture of mathematical practice and education that flourished more than a thousand years before the Greek sages Thales and Pythagoras with whom histories of mathematics used to begin.

This exhibition is the first to explore the world of Old Babylonian mathematics through cuneiform tablets covering the full spectrum of mathematical activity, from arithmetical tables copied out by young scribes-in-training to sophisticated work on topics that would now be classified as number theory and algebra. The pioneering research of Neugebauer and his contemporaries concentrated on the mathematical content of



Yale Babylonian Collection YBC 7289, an Old Babylonian "hand tablet" illustrating Pythagoras' Theorem and an approximation of the square root of two. Photo by West Semitic Research.



Neugebauer's hand copy of YBC 7289, early 1940s, John Britton collection

the advanced texts; a selection of archival manuscripts and correspondence offers a glimpse of Neugebauer's research methods and his central role in this "heroic age."

The cuneiform tablets illustrate three major themes: arithmetic exploiting a notation of numbers based entirely on two basic symbols; the scribal schools of Nippur; and advanced training. Many of the latter problems were much more difficult than any that they would have to deal with in professional scribal careers, and their solutions depended on principles that, before the rediscovery of the Babylonian tablets, were believed to have been discovered by the Greeks of the sixth century BCE and later.

Before Pythagoras: The Culture of Old Babylonian Mathematics is curated by Alexander Jones and Christine Proust and is on view at ISAW from November 12 through December 17. It is the first in a series of exhibitions that will highlight research areas being explored by ISAW's faculty, visiting research scholars and graduate students. www.nyu.edu/isaw/exhibitions.htm.

Visiting Research Scholar Lecture Series, Fall 2010

The Artemis Liturgical Papyrus
Jacco Dieleman
October 5

Religions in Contact: The Mesopotamian Goddess Nanaya at the Crossroads
Joan Westenholz
November 16

The Astronomical Book of Enoch - Jewish Apocalypticism and the History of Science
Jonathan Ben-Dov
October 19

Late Roman Taxation: The East/West Divide
Gilles Bransbourg
November 30

Babylonian Mathematical Astronomy - Science in Action
Mathieu Ossendrijver
November 2

Death in the Province: Mortuary Practices and Roman Imperialism in Syria and Lebanon
Lidewijde de Jong
December 14

All lectures begin at 6:00 p.m. in the Lecture Hall and run approximately one hour.
A reception will be held in the Oak Library following each lecture.
No reservations are required.

The Lost World of Old Europe: The Danube Valley, 5000-3000 BC International Exhibition Tour

Jennifer Chi, Associate Director for Exhibitions and Public Programming
Linda Stubbs, Exhibition Registrar



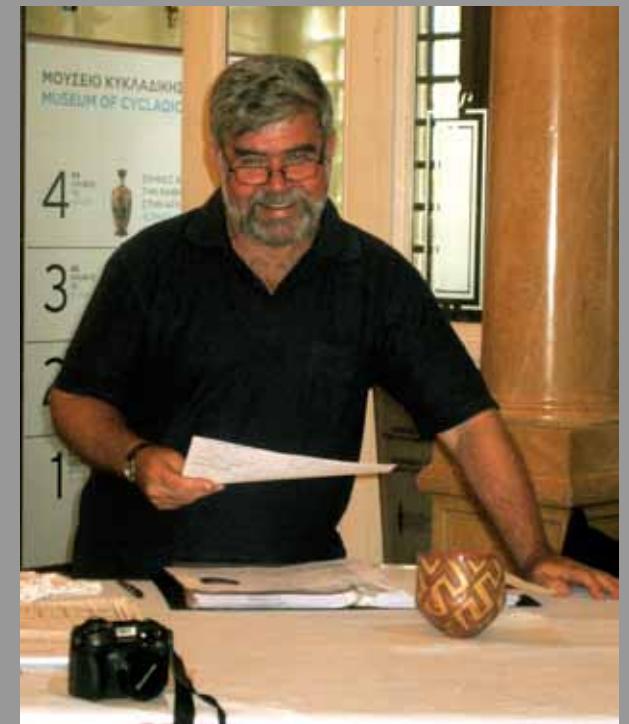
The Lost World of Old Europe: The Danube Valley 5,000–3,500BC, organized by ISAW in collaboration with the National History Museum of Romania, and displayed in its galleries from November 11, 2009 through April 25, 2010, brought in a record number of visitors to ISAW's East 84th street galleries as well as for its series of public programs, which included film, lectures, and concerts. Objects were generously lent by 20 national and regional historical museums in Romania, Bulgaria, and the Republic of Moldova with the exhibition featuring exuberant ceramic vessels, enigmatic goddess figurines, and an array of gold, copper, and spondylus or shell implements.

Guest curated by David Anthony, Professor of Anthropology at Hartwick College, for ISAW's

installation, the exhibition moved to the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford (May 20 – August 15, 2010) where it was the inaugural exhibition in the Ashmolean's newly transformed galleries.

The exhibition's third and final venue is the Museum of Cycladic Art in Athens where it is currently on view until January 10, 2011. In Athens, the *Lost World* is organized under the aegis of the Greek foreign ministry as part of its presidency of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC). In addition to objects lent by Romania, Bulgaria and Moldova, the Museum of Cycladic art has included a comparative gallery of Greek Neolithic objects.

Lost World of Old Europe: The Danube Valley 5,000–3,500 BC is organized by the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World at New York University in collaboration with the National History Museum of Romania, Bucharest, and with the participation of the Varna Regional Museum of History, Bulgaria, and the National Museum of Archaeology and History of Moldova, Chişinău. www.nyu.edu/isaw/exhibitions/oldeurope/.



Dr. Dragomir Popovici, General Curator, National History Museum of Romania, checks the condition of a ceramic vessel during the installation at the Museum of Cycladic Art.

UPCOMING EVENTS

A World of Cities

March 25, 2011

This spring, ISAW will host a conference on early cities, the first day of which is open to the public. Organized by ISAW Senior Fellow Norman Yoffee, the conference will consider the evolution and nature of early cities in worldwide perspective. Main themes include cities as creations, cities as arenas of performance, admin-

istrative technologies and cities, the distribution of power in cities, cities and their countrysides as landscapes, imperial cities, and the history of the study of ancient cities. The proceedings of the conference will be published as Volume 3, "A World of Cities," in a new nine volume *Cambridge History of the World*.

The 2nd Annual M.I. Rostovtzeff Lectures

David Wengrow

Reader in Comparative Archaeology

Institute of Archaeology, University College London

April 20, 21, 26, and 28, 2011

**The Origin of Monsters:
Image, Cognition, and State Formation in the
Ancient World**

The cultural realization of monsters—as images combining incongruous parts of human and/or animal anatomy—is often assumed to be a human universal, expressing anxiety over social difference, cultural remoteness, or unforeseen transformation. It has often been noted, however, that images of this kind are remarkably scarce in the known record of Old World prehistoric (Paleolithic and Neolithic) art, becoming common and widespread only with the emergence of the first cities, states, and social elites in the ancient Near East and neighboring regions, beginning around five millennia ago. The striking, cross-cultural distribution of particular composite figures in the subsequent Bronze and Iron Ages—extending from the Mediterranean to Central Asia—was in fact one of the less well-known interests of the ancient historian Mikhail Rostovtzeff, for whom these lectures are named.

Today, distributions of images that might be deemed cognitively “counter-intuitive”—of which biologically impossible composites are a good example—are a focus of new theoretical work on the cusp of evolutionary psychology, anthropology, and archaeology. On the basis of ethnographic case-studies and experimental work in the field of cognition, it has been argued that counter-intuitive representations constitute robust vehicles for the cultural transmission of

ideas relating to supernatural beings and forces. These lectures will assess the validity of those explanatory frameworks against empirical distributions of “monstrous” imagery in the visual record of the western Old World, as viewed across a large chronological and spatial range, extending from early prehistory to the Iron Age. While their focus is upon the ancient Near East and Eastern Mediterranean, comparative studies of similar material in Bronze Age China and medieval Europe will also be taken into account.

The four lectures will be entitled: “The Sumerian Innovation” (outlining Rostovtzeff’s contribution, and assessing the earliest evidence for composite beings in Old World art), “The Cultural Ecology of Monsters” (elucidating long-term patterns in the transmission and reception of composite forms during the Bronze and Iron Ages), “Fantastic Creatures between Nature and Nurture” (evaluating explanatory models from cognitive anthropology, and exploring alternatives), and “The Demonic State” (considering archaeological and written evidence for the institutional contexts in which monstrous figures were given special prominence). At the broadest level, they ask: what is the role of cognition in the historical process? To what extent can observable distributions of counter-intuitive imagery be accounted for in universalistic terms, as the outcome of innate cognitive biases? To what extent should they be otherwise explained in terms of contingent factors—historical, institutional, and technological?



SAVE THE DATE

Spring 2011 Public Events at ISAW

January

25
VRS Lecture
Judith Lerner

February

15
VRS Lecture
Karen Sonik

22
VRS Lecture
Annalisa Marzano

March

3
VRS Lecture
Seth Sanders

7
Guest Lecture
Wu Hung
(Univ. of Chicago)

21
ISAW/American
Turkish Society
Lecture
Kutal Gorkay

25
A World of Cities
Conference

29
VRS Lecture
Bryan Hanks

April

12
VRS Lecture
Günter Dreyer

20, 21, 26, 28
2nd Annual
M.I. Rostovtzeff
Lectures
David Wengrow

May

5
Liturgical Papyri
in Ptolemaic and
Roman Egypt
Colloquium

Details and additional events
will be posted on the ISAW
website as they become avail-
able.

www.nyu.edu/isaw/events

ABOUT ISAW

The Institute for the Study of the Ancient World (ISAW) at New York University, established in 2006 by Shelby White with funds from the Leon Levy Foundation, is an independent center for scholarly research and graduate education.

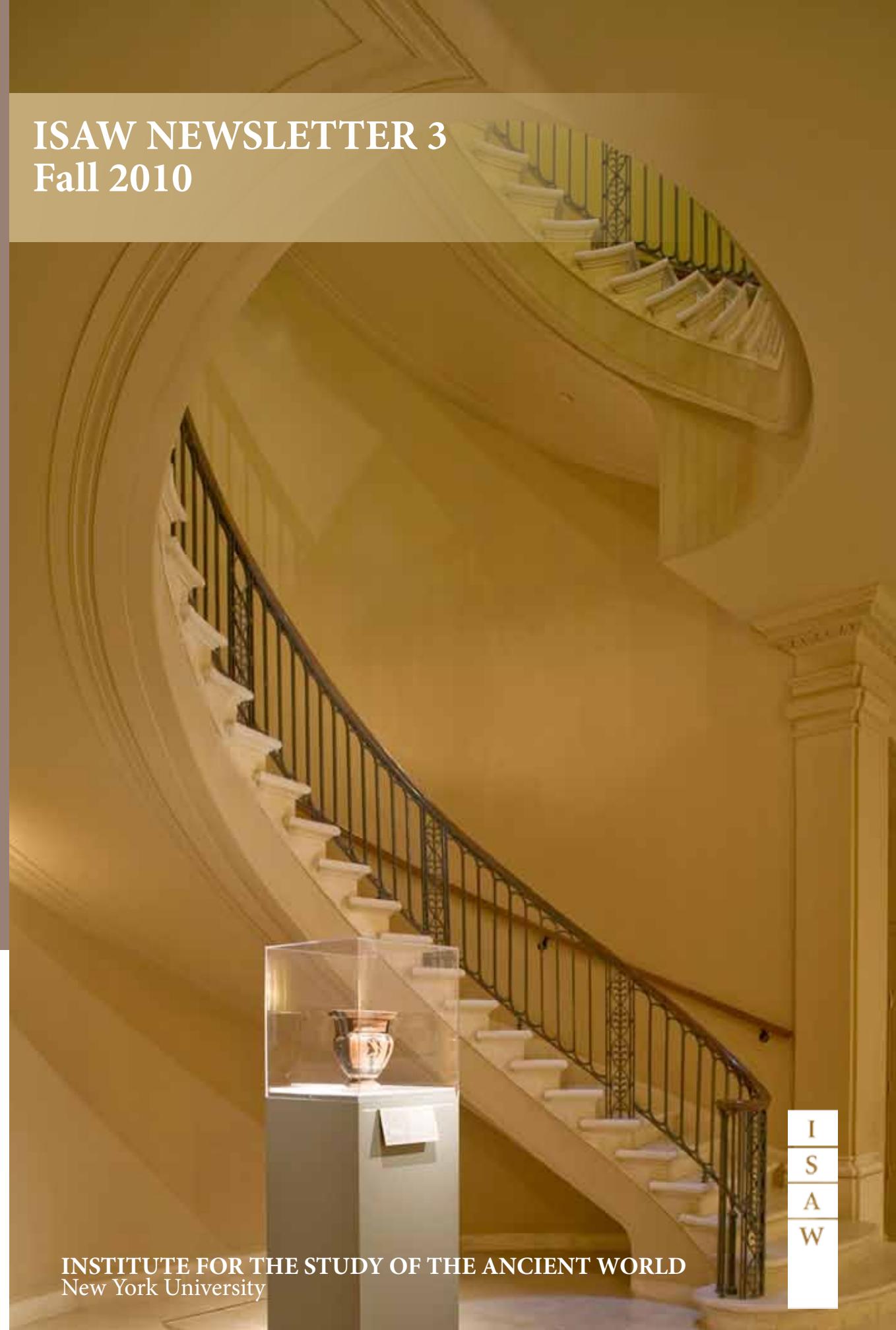
The creation of the Institute had its roots in the passion of Shelby White and Leon Levy for the art and history of the ancient world, which led them to envision an institute that would encourage the study of the economic, religious, political, and cultural boundaries among ancient civilizations across geographic, chronological, and disciplinary boundaries.



ISAW NEWSLETTER 3 Fall 2010

INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF THE ANCIENT WORLD
New York University

15 E. 84th St., New York, NY 10028
Tel. 212-992-7800, Fax 212-992-7809
www.nyu.edu/isaw



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