

ISAW NEWSLETTER 6

Spring 2012



I
S
A
W

INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF THE ANCIENT WORLD
New York University

FROM THE DIRECTOR

I write this preface from the Dakhla Oasis in Egypt, where our archaeological project at Amheida (ancient Trimithis) is embarked on its ninth season of excavation. A year ago the Egyptian revolution was five days old, and I was beginning the discussions with NYU administrators that led to our team's evacuation on February 1st. This year, as Egypt continues to struggle toward a stable and democratic future, things are much calmer, and our beautiful oasis, which was always calm, remains a hospitable site for fieldwork. Our dig house, rated five stars by those experienced in the privations of other projects, accommodates the thirty-some participants in comfort (as long as your idea of comfort doesn't require heating!). Thanks to our DSL connection, ISAW administrative work follows me here without more than a few seconds delay.

At home we are embarked on our ninth and (for the present) final faculty search, focusing on the archaeology and art of the early Near East, and we will soon be interviewing the shortlisted candidates. Before you read this, I shall have made a trip to New York for those interviews, along with those of prospective doctoral students for next year. Our graduate program is thriving, thanks in part to the constant spirit of self-examination that both faculty and students bring to it. We have had a number of discussions this year, as our first cohort of students heads toward their comprehensive examinations, about how to embed more cross-field learning without simply piling on requirements, and next year we will begin a series of informal faculty presentations over lunch to make sure that all of our students get to know the work of all of the faculty. We all know the value of serendipity in our academic lives, and this is one more attempt to give it a helping hand.

In March we will open our new exhibition and begin our third year of the series of Rostovtzeff Lectures. Articles in this Newsletter give all of the details about these and much more that is going on at ISAW. I hope that you will come to see this remarkable exhibition and join us for as many of our events as possible.

Roger S. Bagnall
Leon Levy Director



INSIDE

ISAW Community News	
Recent Publications	4
Incoming Faculty	6
Research & Teaching	
Scholars	7
Libraries	9
Digital Programs	10
Exhibitions	
Current Exhibition	11
Exhibition Lecture Series	13
Lectures and Conferences	13

This page: ISAW library stacks

Cover: ISAW stairwell, looking into the 4th floor library

Recent Publications

A selection of 2011-2012 academic year publications by members of the ISAW community.

Faculty

Roger Bagnall

with James Keenan and Leslie S.B. MacCoull, eds. *A sixth-century tax register from the Hermapolite Nome*. American studies in papyrology vol. 51. Durham, NC : American Society of Papyrologists, 2011.

with Giovanni Ruffini, Rafaella Criore, and Günter Vittmann. *Amheida I. Ostraka from Trimithis, Volume 1: Texts from the 2004-2007 seasons*. New York: Institute for the Study of the Ancient World and New York University Press, 2011. <http://dlib.nyu.edu/awdl/isaw/amheida-i-otrim-1>.

Lorenzo d'Alfonso

"Archaeological Survey in Northern Tyantitis: Final Report." *Araştırma Sonuçları Toplantısı* 3(28), 2011.

"Seeking A Political Space. Some Thoughts on the Formative Stage of the Hittite Administration in Syria." *Altorientalische Forschungen* 38(2), forthcoming.

with M. Işıklı. *Kıvık Höyük, Kapadokya'da bir yeni kazı*. Beyoglu-Istanbul: Arkeoloji ve Sanat, forthcoming.

Roderick Campbell

with Zhipeng Li, Yuling He and Yuan Jing. "Consumption, exchange and production at the Great Settlement Shang: bone-working at Tiesanlu, Anyang." *Antiquity* 85: 1279-1297.

(as Jiang Yude) "Guo zhi dashi: Shangdai wanqi zhong de lizhi gailiang" (The Great Affairs of the State: the Late Shang Ritual Reforms). In *Yinxu kexuefajue 80 nian xueshu jinianhui*, ed. Tang Jigen. Beijing: Science Press, 2012.

(as Jiang Yude) with Li Zhipeng and He Yuling. "Yinxu wan Shang zhigu zuofang yu zhigu shougongye de yanjiu huigu yu tantao" (Research on Late Shang bone workshops and the bone working industry at Yinxu). *Sandai Kaogu* 4:471-480.

Alexander Jones

with John M. Steele. "A New Discovery of a Component of Greek Astrology in Babylonian Tablets: The 'Terms.'" *ISAW Papers* 1 (2011). <http://dlib.nyu.edu/awdl/isaw/isaw-papers/1>.

Beate Pongratz-Leisten

Ed., *Reconsidering the Concept of Revolutionary Monotheism*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011.

Sören Stark

"Siedlungswüstungen, Kurgane und Felsbilder – archäologische Feldforschungen im Hochgebirge Tadschikistans (Turkestan-Kette)." In *Nomaden in unserer Welt*, eds. J. Gertel and S. Calkins, 116-125. Bielefeld: [transcript], 2011.

"Some Remarks on the Headgear of the Royal Türks." *Journal of Inner Asian Art and Archaeology* 4 (2010): 119-133. (Released in June 2011.)

Lillian Tseng

"Positioning the Heavenly Horses on Han Mirrors." In *The Lloyd Cotsen Study Collection of Chinese Bronze Mirrors, Volume II: Studies*, ed. L. von Falkenhausen, 90-99. Los Angeles: UCLA Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press, 2011.

Exhibitions

Peter De Staebler

with Christopher Ratté. "Survey Evidence for Late Antique Settlement in the Region around Aphrodisias." In *Archaeology and the Cities of Asia Minor in Late Antiquity*, eds. C. Ratté and O. Dally, Kelsey Museum Publication 6, 122-136. Ann Arbor, MI: Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, 2011.

Visiting Research Scholars

Alexander Dale

"Alcaeus on the Career of Myrsilos: Greeks, Lydians, and Luwians at the East Aegean-West Anatolian Interface." *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 131 (2011): 15-24.

"A Cypriot Curser at Mytilene." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 179 (2011): 189–198.

"Sapphica." *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 106, forthcoming.

Rita Lucarelli

"Demonology during the Late Pharaonic and Greco-Roman Periods in Egypt." *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions*, 11(2):109-125.

Research Associates

Judith Lerner

"Zoroastrian Funerary Beliefs and Practices Known from the Sino-Sogdian Tombs in China." *The Silk Road* 9 (2011): 18-25.

Coeditor, *Journal of Inner Asian Art and Archaeology* Vol. 5, forthcoming. (Journal based at ISAW.)

Naomi Miller

with Katherine M. Moore and Kathleen Ryan, eds. *Sustainable Lifeways: Cultural Persistence in an Ever-changing Environment*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum, 2011.

"Managing Predictable Unpredictability: The Question of Agricultural Sustainability at Gordion." In *Sustainable Lifeways: Cultural Persistence in an Ever-changing Environment*, eds. N. Miller, K. Moore, and K. Ryan, 310–324. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum, 2011.

"Reconciling Nature and Culture after Naisance des divinités / naissance d'agriculture." *Paléorient*, forthcoming.

Karen Rubinson

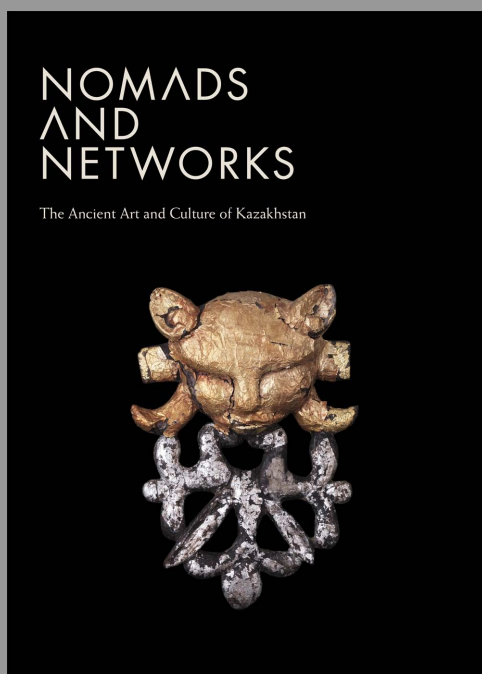
"Museum Exhibitions and Technical Studies: Opportunities to Study Caucasian Art and History." In *The Caucasus: Georgia on the Crossroads. Cultural Exchanges Across the Europe and Beyond: Proceedings*, eds. P. Skinner, D. Tumashvili, and A. Shanshiashvili, 196-198. Tbilisi: Georgian Art and Culture Center, 2011.

"Urartian Belts and Some Antecedents." In *Bianili-Urartu*, eds. S. Kroll, C. Gruber, U. Hellway, M. Roaf, and P. Zimansky, Acta Iranica vol. 51. Leiden: Brill, forthcoming.

"Burial Practices and Social Roles of Iron Age Mobile Pastoralists." In *Nomads and Networks: Ancient Art and Culture of Kazakhstan*, eds. S. Stark and K. Rubinson with Z. Samashev and J. Chi. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012.

Rita Watson

with Wayne Horowitz. *Writing Science before the Greeks: A Naturalistic Analysis of the Babylonian Treatise MUL.APIN*. Culture and History of the Ancient Near East, vol. 48. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2011.



The catalog for ISAW's latest exhibition, *Nomads and Networks: Ancient Art and Culture of Kazakhstan*, features contributions from ISAW Professor Sören Stark and Research Associate Karen Rubinson, as well as Exhibitions Director and Chief Curator Jennifer Chi. The catalog will be available for purchase at ISAW and from Princeton University Press after the exhibition's March 7th opening.

Nomads and Networks: Ancient Art and Culture of Kazakhstan Edited by Sören Stark and Karen S. Rubinson with Zainolla S. Samashev and Jennifer Y. Chi. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012.

For more on this exhibition, see page 11.

ISAW Welcomes Robert Hoyland to the Faculty

Kathryn Lawson

Assistant Director for Academic Affairs

The Institute for the Study of the Ancient World at New York University is pleased to announce the appointment of Robert G. Hoyland as Professor of Late Antique and Early Islamic Middle Eastern History.

Professor Hoyland studied early Islamic history at the University of Oxford where he earned his DPhil in 1994. Prior to his appointment at ISAW he was Professor of Islamic History at the University of Oxford. He also held previous positions at St. Andrews University and UCLA, and was both a Fulbright (Princeton University) and an Erasmus scholar (Groningen University). His wide range of scholarly interests includes the history, languages, and literature of the late antique and early Islamic Middle East, more specifically the relations between Muslims, Jews, and Christians, as well as the links between identity, religion, and ethnicity (in particular, the forging of an Arab identity).

In the latter area, Professor Hoyland is most well-known for his book *Seeing Islam as Others Saw it: A survey and analysis of the Christian, Jewish, and Zoroastrian writings on Islam* (1997), a historiographic survey of accounts from the non-Muslim population of the early Islamic period. He is also interested in the transmission of knowledge from the Ancient world to the Islamic world and the emergence of an Islamic style of art and architecture, and the use of Arabic inscriptions for understanding Islamic history and culture. Concerning these subjects he is the author of *Arabia and the Arabs from*

the Bronze Age to the Coming of Islam (2001), *Theophilus of Edessa's Chronicle and the Circulation of Historical Knowledge in Late Antiquity and Early Islam* (2011) and *Doctrine and Debate in the East Christian World, 300-1500* (with Averil Cameron, 2011). Further proof of the wide range of his scholarship can be seen in his publications on Medieval swords and sword-making and Polemon's physiognomy.

A strong command of both Syriac and Arabic, among other languages, has aided Professor Hoyland in the study of a wide scope of material. His considerable experience with editing and translating texts in these languages led him to become a member of the editorial committee of the Library of Arabic Literature, which aims to establish a Loeb-style translation series for Arabic texts, to be published by NYU Press. Funded by the NYU Abu Dhabi Institute, the project seeks to publish classical texts in a wide range of disciplines including religion, poetry, history, and fiction.

Professor Hoyland is also active in the archaeological field. He was previously involved in the excavation of Khirbat Shuwayka, a Byzantine/Early Islamic town in Palestine, and undertook an epigraphic survey of Jabal Says in the Syrian Harra. He is currently involved in the Oxford excavation of Andarin, a Byzantine/Early Islamic town in Syria.

Please join us in welcoming Professor Hoyland to our community in the fall.

Prof. Hoyland on site in Syria.



RESEARCH & TEACHING

Merging Boundaries between Desert and Oasis in Central Asia

Fiona Kidd

ISAW Associate Research Scholar

Australian Research Council Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Sydney

The final centuries BCE witnessed the gradual opening up of Central Asia along the east-west exchange routes connecting China and the Mediterranean. The dynamic role played by the nomadic populations of the Eurasian steppes in these exchanges underlines the significance of Central Asia as a critical nexus on these routes. The interaction between nomadic and sedentary populations is a fundamental historical process, which has shaped Central Asian history over several millennia. Yet, while Central Asia has always been in the purview of world historians, too often the role of the sedentary populations in these exchanges has been privileged over that of nomadic groups.

The recent discovery of a rich, first century BCE corpus of wall paintings in the 'desert wastes' of Khorezm in Central Asia provides a new platform to explore cross-cultural interactions at the desert-oasis interface. An oasis of the Amu Darya delta, where it meets the Aral Sea, and encircled by the Kyzylkum and the Karakum deserts, Khorezm formed the northern border of the Achaemenid Empire, and is the most northerly of the Central Asian oases. Historically its outlook has always been towards the steppe.

Despite – or perhaps because of – its active ties with pastoralist populations, Greco-Roman and Chinese textual sources are almost silent concerning Khorezm. This silence not only conveys the false perception of the oasis as isolated, but contradicts extensive archaeological evidence,

obtained by the Soviet era Khorezm Expedition, showing a flourishing region in the second half of the first millennium BCE. Moreover, Islamic period textual sources also attest to Khorezm's significance in Eurasian trade as a gateway between the oases and the steppe.

Wall paintings from the monumental site of Akchakhan-kala in eastern Khorezm offer new perspectives on these interactions. The paintings include a procession scene and a remarkable "portrait" gallery of individually framed bust figures, together with snapshots of other figurative and floral motifs. These images reinforce Khorezm's historical and political connections across Eurasia.

As the largest site in eastern Khorezm (covering almost 50 hectares), Akchakhan-kala may have functioned as a ruling center in the final centuries BCE. The paintings are among the best preserved, early mural art in Central Asia, and present a microcosm of influences found across Western Asia during this period: Mesopotamian, Iranian (Achaemenid, Parthian), Hellenic and steppe, interwoven with indigenous Khorezmian traits. Akchakhan-kala is currently being excavated by the Karakalpak-Australian Expedition, which is funded largely by the Australian Research Council.

While at ISAW, I am producing a study of cross-cultural exchanges based on the Akchakhan-kala wall paintings. Of particular note are the



In-field photo showing a "portrait" fragment at Akchakhan-kala.

paintings' bust figures that indicate close ties with the steppe inside the oasis. Who were these figures and why were they depicted at Akchakhan-kala? Hellenic influence in the paintings raises further critical questions: did such influence come via Parthia, or from a southern area such as Bactria? Broader historical connections, in particular those with the Assyrian and Achaemenid Empires, make it possible to explore how rulers incorporated the past in political messages.

My study also aims to understand the artistic environment which produced the Akchakhan-

kala paintings. Evidence of Parthian influence here is intriguing: did Parthian trained artisans work at Akchakhan-kala? Were Khorezmian specialists trained in a Parthian environment? Were the Khorezmians trying to emulate certain Parthian styles? Artistic exchange features prominently across Eurasian history, making the diverse influences not surprising in this context. But what was the indigenous Khorezmian contribution to the paintings? The Akchakhan-kala material offers new opportunities to consider not only indigenous Central Asian art, but also Central Asian perspectives on the connectedness of Eurasia.

Blessings and Alms: Christian Gifts in Early Byzantium

Daniel Caner

ISAW Visiting Scholar

Associate Professor of History and Classics, University of Connecticut, Storrs

The use of Christian gifts in the Eastern Mediterranean during the Late Antique/Early Byzantine period is a fertile area for study. What different ideals or concerns were associated with alms, charity, blessings, fruit-bearings, and offerings? What accounts for the distinctions between such gifts, and more importantly, what can this tell us about Early Byzantine notions of philanthropy, social order, sin, salvation, or the relation of wealth to Christian traditions of leadership and holiness based on material renunciations? Such questions evolved out of my study of radical ascetic poverty in the late fourth and fifth centuries (see *Wandering, Begging Monks: Spiritual Authority and the Promotion of Monasticism in Late Antiquity*, 2002).

My main goal at ISAW is to write portions of a sequel to that monograph. Tentatively entitled, "The Rich & the Pure: Christian Gifts and Religious Society in Early Byzantium," this book

will focus on the rise of clerics and monks as a professional and aristocratic class within the late Roman Empire of the East ca. 450-750, and will provide a social history of the period defined by the different gifts exchanged between this class, its patrons, and the poor.

At the heart of my work is a gift called a "blessing." Scholars in the past have noted the prominence of blessings as preserved in the form of lead or clay flasks given out to pilgrims by holy people or shrines of the East during this period. However, these represent only one manifestation of a blessing in this period; much more common were those given out by monks or lay people in the form of bread or money. As evidenced by Paul's description of a material donation given to support Christian "holy ones" in 2 Cor 9:5-12, by the sixth century a blessing was understood to be a pure type of gift given by God through humans to promote his charitable goals. As such, a blessing was considered especially appropriate as a means of support for clerics and monks and became the basis for conceptualizing their religious wealth as well as the responsibilities that came with it. My current work explores the differences between these blessings and the more familiar charitable gift of alms.

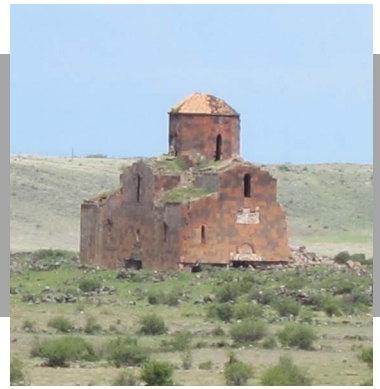
I am also devoting time at ISAW to two other projects. The first is a translation and introduction to the *Life of Symeon Stylites the Younger*, a late sixth-century hagiography that describes an important early Byzantine healing shrine, its patron saint, and associated monastic community. The second is the organization of an international effort to preserve the late Roman/early Armenian



Pilgrim flask representing St. Menas with two camels. From the area of Alexandria, Egypt. Louvre Museum. Photograph: Marie-Lan Nguyen. (Reprinted under the Creative Commons BY 3.0 license.)

cathedral of Mren in eastern Turkey. Built in the early seventh century, this monument features a unique relief of the return of the True Cross to Jerusalem by the Emperor Heraclius after his defeat of the Sassanian Empire. However, it is located in a military zone and survives in a dire state of neglect and near collapse. I am mobilizing a team of experts, contacts, and funding opportunities to begin preservation efforts.

*Mren Cathedral,
Eastern Turkey.
Photograph:
Daniel Caner*



Libraries

Charles E. Jones

ISAW Head Librarian

As of December 2011, the ISAW Library holds 17,800 titles representing over 21,000 volumes in the main stacks. In the Oak Library, the ISAW Library holds nearly 400 titles in 4,300 volumes. While we do not have exact figures on circulation, we estimate that about one thousand volumes are checked out to faculty offices, scholars' workspaces, and classrooms in ISAW at any given time. A year ago NYU libraries initiated a program allowing ISAW residents to request books and interlibrary loan materials from other NYU collections – in particular from NYU's Bobst Library and the offsite facility – for delivery on site at ISAW. During the autumn semester almost 800 books were delivered to ISAW using this process. In house, members of the community scan hundreds of pages of books and journals each week using the Bookeye scanner in the course of their research.

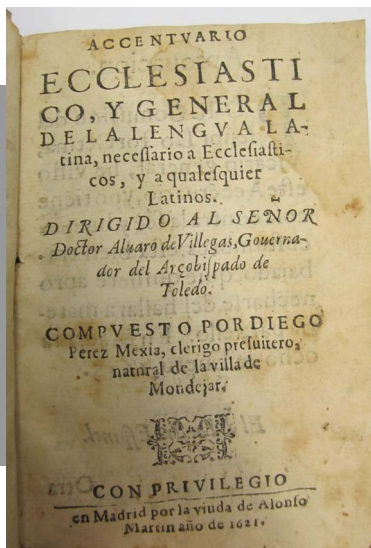
The implementation of the book delivery service and the inauguration of the Manhattan Research Library Initiative, or MaRLI, over the course of the past year have allowed us to think more strategically about our collection development policies. That the entire circulating collection of NYU libraries is much more conveniently accessible to us on 84th Street means that we can safely focus our collection development in areas where we have strength, without the requirement to duplicate resources already available in other NYU libraries.

Two of these areas of strength are represented by collections now being processed. The extraordinarily rich collection of Paul Åström, acquired two years ago, continues to produce unexpected and welcome treasures focusing on the archaeology, material, and intellectual traditions of the Eastern Mediterranean, Cyprus and Anatolia in the Bronze and Iron Ages. We expect to complete the processing of the Åström

collection in the next few months. In December we began processing the Emmy Bunker collection, containing the acquisitions of a lifetime of scholarship on the art, archaeology, and material culture of the Central Asian Steppes, which was generously donated to ISAW in 2011. A third collection, The Library of Hayyim and Miriam Tadmor, is currently in storage; we hope to begin processing it within the next year. The Tadmor library has great strengths in First Millennium Mesopotamian texts and history as well as in Northwest Semitic Philology, Bible, and Israeli orientalist publications of the twentieth century. It is also rich in excavation reports for sites in Palestine.

A great deal of collection development effort is going into the identification of areas of weakness and lacunae in the NYU libraries in areas required to support the faculty and programs at ISAW. We have been negotiating for additional collections in areas of antiquity not yet well represented at ISAW or the libraries of NYU, and we hope to announce these soon. It is not always easy to find copies of the older or out of print scholarly titles that would fill in our collection; we nevertheless continue to seek and acquire the resources needed to support ISAW scholarship.

The ISAW library continues to develop its digital and online projects. The book reader developed last year by NYU's Digital Library Technology Services to serve the needs of the Ancient World Digital Library (AWDL) has been adapted to serve the needs of ISAW's own digital publications. Records for each of the items in the AWDL (<http://dlib.nyu.edu/awdl/>), as well as for each of ISAW's Online Resources (<http://isaw.nyu.edu/online-resources/>), are now in the NYU library catalogue (<http://bobcat.library.nyu.edu/>), which is also the primary search and discovery



Title page of rare Latin grammar published in 17th century Spain.

*ISAW Main Collection
PA2077.P47
1621*

tool for ISAW's paper-based collections. We are experimenting with bundling the full set of records for digital items and offering them for inclusion in the catalogues of other libraries, as well as investigating how best to facilitate access within library discovery tools to the growing corpus of scholarly material served in open formats from around the globe. We also continue to add to AWOL: The Ancient World Online (<http://ancientworldonline.blogspot.com>); the list of Open Access Journals in Ancient Studies stands at 1,071 titles at the time of writing.

The Library Staff welcomes any and all visitors. For further information see the ISAW Library web page (<http://isaw.nyu.edu/library>).

Digital Programs

Tom Elliott, Associate Director for Digital Programs

Hugh Cayless, Digital Library Programmer/Analyst, NYU Libraries

Sebastian Heath, Clinical Assistant Professor of Archaeology

The digital programs team continues work on a wide variety of information resources for ancient studies. Summaries and links can be found at <http://isaw.nyu.edu/online-resources>.

Over the past few months we have sharpened our cross-project focus with an emphasis on Linked Open Data (LOD), a method for publishing structured data on the World-Wide Web first proposed in 2006 by Tim Berners-Lee, the Director of the World-Wide Web Consortium. The LOD approach – which we are applying across all our digital efforts – builds on two complementary ideas. First, we put our information online in such a way that a person can explore it all with a web browser by clicking on links (in other words, users don't have to know what to search for!). Second, we structure our data using standard formats so that computer programs can retrieve and process it without human intervention. This allows third parties to reuse our data and build their own resources.

We are working toward mature LOD publications that are released under open licenses, use stable, simple web addresses to uniquely identify each data record and referenced concept, and provide rich links to similar identifiers in other complementary or related resources. These provisions ensure free, universal access as well as the highest probability of reuse, interoperability, and longevity.

The first fruits of this methodology can be seen in a number of our projects. Our online gazetteer of ancient geography (<http://pleiades.stoa.org>), has emerged as a common point of reference for a growing number of third-party websites including the Perseus Digital Library, Arachne (the object database of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut), and the Fasti Online archaeological database. Thanks to our collaboration with the UK-funded PELAGIOS project, the coming year will see the development of cross-project search, browse, and mapping tools based on this shared LOD foundation (see <http://pelagios-project.blogspot.com/>). You can already see pictures of ancient sites, published on Flickr.com via our Ancient World Image Bank project, appearing on Pleiades place pages and on the Google Ancient Places Viewer at <http://nrabinowitz.github.com/gapvis/>. Papyri.info and ISAW Papers will also become part of this LOD network in the near future.

In recognition of our leadership and experience in this area, the National Endowment for the Humanities has given us a two-year grant to bring together and train others in LOD techniques in the Linked Ancient World Data Institute (see pg. 15 for details).

We invite you to learn more about our team and its goals and plans at <http://isaw.nyu.edu/about/departments/digital-programs>.

EXHIBITIONS

Nomads and Networks: The Ancient Art and Culture of Kazakhstan

Sören Stark, Assistant Professor of Central Asian Art and Archaeology

Karen Rubinson, ISAW Research Associate

Jennifer Chi, Exhibitions Director and Chief Curator

Peter De Staebler, Assistant Curator

March 7 - June 3, 2012

Mobile Pastoralism

Nomads—from the Greek *νομάς*, “roaming about for pasture”—have shaped the cultural landscape of the Eurasian steppes for at least three millennia. Because of their mobile way of life, nomads are often perceived as living in a stage of development between hunter-gatherer and agrarian societies. Instead, nomadism is a highly sophisticated subsistence strategy perfectly adapted to the ecological conditions of the steppe’s extensive, but only seasonally productive, grasslands. By following seasonally determined migratory routes in a year-round cycle, nomads avoided overgrazing and made optimal use of rangeland resources for livestock production. Via their herding animals, nomads “transmuted” the scant resources of otherwise uninhabitable regions into meat, milk products, wool, and hides. In addition, multiple regional and supra-regional networks enabled them to supplement and diversify their economic basis with various agricultural products, handicrafts and mineral resources.

In southern and eastern Kazakhstan, ancient migratory routes frequently combined lowland steppe pastures and alpine highlands into a single, sustainable system known as “vertical nomadism.” This rhythm structured the social life of communities: in summer the pastoralists dispersed into small upland herding units, but during late autumn and winter, they assembled in larger lowland camps. During this time, rituals revived communal identities at larger social and political levels.

This exhibition is the first comprehensive look at the ancient nomadic heritage of the Altai and Tianshan mountain regions of eastern and southern Kazakhstan during the Iron Age. The specific cultures illustrated in the exhibition arose in the early first millennium BCE and featured an elite force whose horse-riding warfare was a key organizing element of society and yielded the magnificent material culture displayed here.



Round Tray on Conical Stand with Figures of Seated Man and Standing Horse in Center
Bronze, H. 27.6; Diam. 25.5 cm.

*Semirechye/Zhetisu (Almaty region),
5th–3rd century BCE.*

Central State Museum, KP 8591

*Photography © The Central State Museum of the
Republic of Kazakhstan, Almaty*

The Exhibition

Nomads and Networks helps the viewer understand the nomadic way of life by giving a sense of the importance of landscape in the overall formulation of a nomadic world order, one that highlights broad networks of cultural exchange both within the nomadic world and with powerful foreign neighbors.

The exhibition begins with a presentation of recently excavated finds from Berel, the most important Pazyryk culture site in Kazakhstan, located near the border with Russia, Mongolia, and China. Prominent among the finds are expertly carved tin- and gold-foil covered wood and deer horn appliqué that decorated elaborate sets of ceremonial horse tack. Decorated in the Scytho-Siberian animal style, they illustrate the importance nomads placed on their relationships with horses and the animal world. Representations include both real animals, such as horned sheep and goats, and fantastical ones, such as elk-horned eagle griffins. The sets of decoration served to “transform” a horse, a deliberate action probably with a ritual purpose, although the exact meaning of the transformation remains unknown. Additional finds include a beautifully embroidered saddle showing tigers attacking elk (displayed here for the first time, with the conservation just completed in December) and a bronze pipe for smoking hemp that exactly follows the description recorded by the Greek historian Herodotus.

The main gallery is organized around the themes Environment, Society, Ritual, and Networks. The display includes a series of petroglyphs, or rock-cut images, that once embellished the nomadic landscape and may have demarcated sacral places within the environment. Other objects, such as plaques in the form of fish, boar and camels, illustrate that, beyond the nomads’ herding animals, both water and land animals were important as sources of food and as beasts of burden. Objects related to communal ritual activities are in the center of the gallery and include a group of massive bronze cauldrons and elaborately decorated bronze stands. The cauldrons may have been used to cook food at ritual meals, while the stands are more enigmatic; the decoration is highly varied, ranging from processions of animals or animals interacting with one another to a man seated in front of a horse, and they have been interpreted as incense burners or altars.

The nomadic societies featured in the exhibition were also tightly interconnected with their neighbors through networks of exchange, and many of the valuable luxury goods or artistic motifs that became markers of prestige within nomadic communities are directly inspired by contacts with other nomadic societies or with the sedentary worlds to the west, south and east. Two spectacular examples of cultural and aesthetic interaction are the minutely decorated gold belt plaques from the “Zhalauli Treasure” and the exquisite gold “diadem” from Kargaly. The “diadem,” a spectacular open work piece with both figural and landscape imagery articulated with semiprecious stones, shows a mixing of form and content drawn directly from Chinese celestial iconography. These objects demonstrate that the adornment of many of the nomadic elite must have been striking in its brilliance.

For more information about *Nomads and Networks: The Ancient Art and Culture of Kazakhstan*, please visit isaw.nyu.edu/exhibitions. A catalogue accompanying the exhibition is available for purchase (see pg. 5).

Nomads and Networks: The Ancient Art and Culture of Kazakhstan has been organized by the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World at New York University in collaboration with the Central State Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Presidential Center of Culture, the A. Kh. Margulan Institute of Archaeology, the Museum of Archaeology, and the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the United States. The exhibition has been made possible through the generous support of the Leon Levy Foundation.

Next page:

*Plaque of Facing Elk-Griffin Heads
Horn (Siberian Red Deer), H. 6.4; W. 5.3; D. 0.6 cm.
Berel, Kurgan 36, late 4th– early 3rd century BCE. A.
Kh. Margulan Institute of Archaeology, B36-21.
Photography by Y. Cherkashin © A. Kh. Margulan
Institute of Archaeology, Almaty*

LECTURES & CONFERENCES

The Third Annual M.I. Rostovtzeff Lectures *Shifting Narratives in Egyptian Christian Visual Culture*

Elizabeth Bolman

Associate Professor, Art History, Tyler School of Art, Temple University

March 1, 8, 15, and 22, 2012. 6 pm.

Though the Nile valley played a major role in the Roman empire, Egyptian Christian art and architecture outside of Alexandria have typically been seen as backward and peripheral to the culture of the greater Mediterranean region. Recent conservation and archaeological projects at the Red and White Monasteries near Sohag, in Upper Egypt, have revealed paintings that completely overturn this traditional view. The monuments at these sites attest to the wealth and power of these two ascetic communities in the fifth and sixth centuries.

In four lectures, Elizabeth Bolman will explore some of the rich material and textual evidence from late antique Egypt, with an emphasis on recent finds from the Red and White Monasteries. She will draw on new paradigms, themes and methods that scholars in religious studies and practitioners of the “new art history” have developed. These include an interest in the body, gender, identity construction, ritual performance, decorum, visuality, memory, and the agency of art and architecture.

The lectures are free and open to the public. A reception will follow the March 22 lecture. Please RSVP to isaw@nyu.edu.

March 1: *Upper Egypt and the Roman Empire in Late Antiquity*

March 8: *Death, Decorum and the Making of a Saint at the White Monastery*

March 15: *Masculinity, Animals and Asceticism*

March 22: *Imitating Saints, Painting Identities*

About the Series:

Michael I. Rostovtzeff, a Russian ancient historian, came to the U.S. after the Russian Revolution and taught for many years at Yale University as Sterling Professor of Ancient History. Rostovtzeff's prodigious energies and sprawling interests led him to write on an almost unimaginable range of subjects. ISAW's Rostovtzeff series presents scholarship that embodies its aspirations to foster work that crosses disciplinary, geographical, and chronological lines. The lectures will be published by Princeton University Press.

Nomads and Networks Lecture Series



March 29 *Formative and Transformative “Ecumenes”: Nomadic Worlds of Kazakhstan during the Bronze and Iron Ages*
Michael Frachetti, Washington University (St. Louis)

April 26 *Immortals in a Foreign Land: The Kargali Diadem*
Kathleen M. Lindluff, University of Pittsburgh

May 10 *The Ideology of Power: Elites, Herders, and Farmers during the Iron Age in Southeastern Kazakhstan*
Claudia Chang, Sweet Briar College

May 24 *From the Excavation of a Frozen Tomb to the Writing of History: The Berel’ 11 Barrow Project (Kazakhstan, Altai, Third Century BCE)*

Henri-Paul Francfort, Maison René Ginouvès, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique

All lectures begin at 6 pm in the ISAW Lecture Hall.

Seating is limited and available on a first come first serve basis.

For more details, visit isaw.nyu.edu/exhibitions/nomads-and-networks.

Discussion with Craig Clunas: Approaches to Visual and Material Cultures

March 27, 2012 2-6 pm.

Craig Clunas, Professor of the History of Art at Oxford University, will deliver the prestigious Andrew W. Mellon Lecture Series at the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C. this March. Hosted by ISAW Associate Professor Lillian Tseng, this workshop will explore new trends

and methods of studying artifacts through his scholarship, with an emphasis on interdisciplinary and cross-cultural studies.

The workshop is free and open to the public. Please email isaw@nyu.edu to register.

The Aegeo-Anatolian Interface: Evidence and Implications *April 13, 2012*

This workshop, presented by Visiting Research Scholar Alexander Dale, seeks to bring together several preeminent scholars in the fields of Greek, Anatolian, and Near Eastern Studies to assess the evidence (in the areas of language, literature, archaeology, ritual, and cult practice) for interaction and integration between Anatolian, Greek, and Near Eastern population

groups from the late Bronze Age through to the archaic period, as well as the reflection of this syncretism in the cultural memory of the regions in question.

Seating is limited; please email isaw@nyu.edu to register.

Evil Spirits, Monsters and Benevolent Protectors: Demonology in Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia

April 23, 2012

The origin, nature, and function of supernatural beings, conventionally called "demons," in ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, has not yet been clearly defined. This workshop, organized by ISAW Research Scholar Rita Lucarelli, brings together scholars of Egyptology, History of Religion, and Near Eastern Studies to perform a

cross-cultural analysis of textual, iconographical, and material sources in an attempt to further develop a comparative study of demonology focused on the ancient Middle East.

Attendance at this workshop is by invitation only.

Between Belief and Science: The Contribution of Writing and Law to Ancient Religious Thought

May 19, 2012

Presented by Professor Beate Pongratz-Leisten, this workshop will investigate how the organizational aspects of writing, reading signs, divination, and law intersect to arrive at a new approach to ancient Near Eastern religions. Most modern scholarship has defined a culture's religion through the lens of ritual and the cult of the gods. Rather than stressing *action* in the communication with the divine world, the exegetical side of communication will be emphasized, investigating how cognitive capacities for object recognition, categorization and conceptualization, along with the relationship

between written language (cuneiform) and the natural world, shaped how ancient religious experts recorded and interpreted the divine world. As the word *kittu* is used both for justice and the regularity of the course of the stars, the roles of the law in defining social organization and of the king in securing cosmic order through civil order, as well as the concept of nature, need to be re-examined.

Seating is limited; please email isaw@nyu.edu to register.

Linked Ancient World Data Institute

May 31 - June 2, 2012

This summer, ISAW will host the Linked Ancient World Data Institute (LAWDI), bringing together an international faculty of leading practitioners in the field of Digital Humanities with 20 applicants who are creating, or planning to create, high-quality internet-based resources for the study of the Ancient World. Selected applicants will include university staff, faculty, graduate students, archivists, librarians, and museum professionals from North America and overseas. All disciplines that contribute to the study of the Ancient World - including archaeology, history, textual studies, numismatics, geography, and papyrology - will be represented.

The purpose of LAWDI is to promote the use of

stable, standards-based resources by encouraging linking between them. Such reuse falls under the rubric of "Linked Open Data" (LOD), an approach to the publication of digital resources that is proving to be a successful framework for encouraging the discovery of diverse materials. ISAW is involved in many digital projects that embrace LOD so that it is a natural host for discussions that will lead to the Internet being a richer environment for advanced scholarly research.

Attendance at this conference is by invitation only. Through the generous support of the NEH, the Institute will continue with a second conference at Drew University in Spring of 2013.

ISAW Public Lecture Series, Spring 2012

Facing the Indian Ocean: The Sāsānids and the "Late Antique South"

George Hatke, Research Scholar

January 24

The Making of Sumerians: Language, Literature, and Politics

Gonzalo Rubio, Penn State University

January 30

Objects, Agency, and the Mesopotamian Temple: Materializing Cultic Practice in the Third Millennium BC

K. Aslihan Yener, Koç University

and University of Chicago

February 16

Food Practices as a Heuristic Tool for the Study of the "Transformation of the Roman World"

Emmanuelle Raga, Visiting Scholar

February 28

Merging the boundaries: Central Asian oases and the pastoralist world

Fiona Kidd, Research Scholar

March 20

Monks, Manuscripts, and Muslims: Early Christian Reactions to the Rise of Islam

Michael Penn, Research Scholar

April 3

Sacred Spaces and Human Sacrifice: The Nasca Lines in their Cultural and Religious Context

Christina Conlee, Texas State University, San Marcos (AIA Brush Lecture)

April 11

On the Edge of an Empire: Kyzyltepa Project (2010-2011 Seasons)

Wu Xin, Research Associate

April 16

All lectures begin at 6:00 p.m. in the Lecture Hall and run approximately one hour. For additional information and conference schedules, visit our website

isaw.nyu.edu/events

Save the Date

September 28

The Reception of Antiquity:
China and Europe
Conference by Lillian Tseng

November 1

Sixth Annual Leon Levy Lecture
Michael Puett, Harvard University

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

isaw.nyu.edu

ISAW.NYU.EDU

ISAW's website provides information on our public lectures and exhibits, our academic courses, our digital and library resources and projects, and our people. Visit our news blog for updates on ISAW projects or subscribe to our mailing list and receive news and event reminders delivered directly to your email.

ABOUT ISAW

The creation of the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World (ISAW) at New York University 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 connections among ancient civilizations across geographic, chronological, and disciplinary boundaries.

The Institute, established in 2006, is an independent center for scholarly research and graduate education.

The screenshot shows the ISAW website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Jobs', 'News', and 'Log In' links, along with a search bar. Below this is the main header: 'INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF THE ANCIENT WORLD - NEW YORK UNIVERSITY'. A vertical navigation menu on the left lists: ABOUT ISAW, ACADEMIC PROGRAMS, EVENTS, EXHIBITIONS, LIBRARY, RESEARCH, PUBLICATIONS, ONLINE RESOURCES, and PEOPLE. The main content area features a large image of a building facade. To the right of the image is the article 'Edge of Empires: Pagans, Jews, and Christians at Roman Dura-Europos' by Sarah Laursen, dated September 23, 2011 - January 8, 2012. Below this is the 'Upcoming Events' section, listing two events: '18 October 2011: Visiting Research Scholar Lecture - Leaves of Gold: Head Ornaments from Xianbei Tombs in Northeast China' and '25 October 2011: New Dated - Polytheism, Monotheism, and the Grey Areas in between: Antioch in the Fourth Century'. A 'now on exhibit' section on the right features a portrait of Heliodoros and a caption: 'Portrait of Heliodoros, an Achaean, an Adorned Clay, with a Layer of Painted Plaster From the House of the Sorbes, Dura-Europos, 200-250 CE Yale University Art Gallery, Yale-French Excavations at Dura-Europos, 1933-1937 Photography © 2011 Yale University Art Gallery. All rights reserved.' At the bottom, there is a footer with links for 'NYU Home', 'Privacy Policy', 'Site Map', and 'RSS Feed'.