

ISAW Newsletter 10
Spring 2014



INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF THE ANCIENT WORLD
New York University

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

Along with the normal mixture of news from all of the usual quarters in our community, this issue of the Newsletter highlights ISAW's program of Visiting Research Scholars. This very distinctive activity was part of the original mission as envisioned by Shelby White and Leon Levy. Most of the basic plan goes back to conversations I had with Shelby White and Dan Fleming when they visited me in the Dakhla Oasis in early 2007, even before my appointment as director was official.

Whereas our doctoral program looks to form future scholars from the outset in an intellectual milieu where ISAW's wide definition of the ancient world and openness to all disciplines is taken for granted, the visiting scholar program brings together individuals who have already completed their doctoral training and gives them a chance to be a part of ISAW's community for a year or two. We hope, one might say, that our approach to the study of antiquity will infect them and that they will then carry it wherever they go. The majority of our visiting scholars have been within a few years of the doctorate, but some have been mid-career and a couple of them retired from distinguished careers (but still very active in writing). Our experience is that the more senior members of the group serve in many cases as informal mentors to those earlier in their career, just as the postdoctoral scholars connect with and help build the scholarly networks of our graduate students.

What we could not foresee in early 2007, of course, was how seriously the economic downturn of 2008-2009 would affect the academic job market, making the visiting scholar program, more pragmatically, an attractive opportunity for recent doctorates to stay in the academic world while gaining experience, getting their dissertation work published, and looking for more permanent employment. In response to the crisis, we decided to convert up to two new appointments each year as visiting assistant professor for a two-year term, allowing promising young scholars to get some teaching experience, both graduate and undergraduate, while having most of their time to work on publications. This initiative has so far worked out well, benefiting both the university and the individuals. But we are reminded every year of the scale of the job-market problem, which even the partial recovery of the last few years has not removed. The 2014 applicant pool for the Visiting Scholar program included 245 individuals for six places (and about 145 for the two two-year places; I thank my colleagues for their herculean work in reading the applications). Most are early-career scholars, most look good, and many look brilliant. Making choices is excruciating. But the task of nurturing at least a few of them is important and often exciting. The rewards for us are both their presence at ISAW and their continuing connection to the community; the results for them you can see in the list of recent publications in this issue (pp. 4-7) and as they get permanent jobs. Today, as I was about to write this letter, I received an email from Sabine Huebner (2007-8) announcing that she had received the offer of a professorial position at the University of Basel (p. 12).

Roger Bagnall
Leon Levy Director

*Cover: Iron Age bronze boat model from Sardinia (Bultei) with a stag's head at the prow and quadrupeds and birds on the gunwales. Photo courtesy of the Archaeological Service at Cagliari (Sardinia).
Right: ISAW conference room*



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NEWS & PUBLICATIONS

Recent Publications

A selection of 2013-2014 academic year publications by members of the ISAW community.

Faculty

Roger Bagnall

Eine Wüstenstadt. Leben und Kultur in einer ägyptischen Oase im 4. Jahrhundert n. Chr. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2013.

Eds. Rodney Ast, et al. *Papyrological Texts in Honor of Roger S. Bagnall.* Durham: American Society of Papyrologists, 2013.

Roderick Campbell

“Erligang in Regional and Diachronic Context.” In *The Art and Archaeology of Erligang*, ed. K. Steinke. Princeton: Tang Center, 2013.

Lorenzo d’Alfonso

with C. Mora. “Missione archeologica a Kınık Höyük. Uno sguardo d’insieme a donclusione della seconda campagna di scavo (2012).” *Athenaeum* (2013): 693-708.

“Excavations at Kınık Höyük: a preliminary report on the first campaign (Aug – Oct 2011).” *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı* 34 (2013): 387-397.

Daniel T. Potts

with Dahl, J.L. and Petrie, C.A. “Chronological parameters of the earliest writing system in Iran.” In *Ancient Iran and Its Neighbours: Local Developments and Long-Range Interactions in the Fourth Millennium BC*, ed. C. A. Petrie, 353-378. Oxford: Oxbow, 2013.

The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Iran. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

with D. Martin, et al. “Neonates, infant mortality and the pre-Islamic Arabian amuletic tradition at Tell Abraq.” *Liwa* 5/9 (2013): 3-14.

Beate Pongratz-Leisten

“All the King’s Men: Authority, Kingship, and the Rise of the Elites in Assyria.” In *Experiencing Power, Generating Authority. Cosmos, Politics, and the Ideology of Kingship in Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia*, eds. J.A. Hill, P. Jones, and A.J. Morales, 286-307. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 2013.

“From Pictograph to Pictogram: The Solarization of Kingship in Syro-Anatolia and Assyria.” In *Cultures in Contact. From Mesopotamia to the Mediterranean in the Second Millennium B.C.*, eds. J. Aruz, S. B. Graff and Y. Rakic, 298-309. New York: The Metropolitan Museum, 2013.

Masters of Fire: Copper Age Art from Israel



Exhibition Catalogue

Eds. M. Sabbone, et al. *Masters Of Fire: Copper Age Art from Israel.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, forthcoming 2014.

Digital Articles and Books from ISAW

Tom Elliott

Associate Director for Digital Programs

Sebastian Heath

Clinical Assistant Professor of Ancient Studies

Digital publications at ISAW reinforce and extend the Institute’s mission to encourage the connective study of ancient cultures. Scholarly communication- once dominated by individually authored prose, print dissemination, and long timespans- is now a hybrid enterprise in which these well-established, valuable

forms coexist with a fecund and rapidly changing mix of collaborative, data-oriented, and tightly iterative modes of information exchange. Accordingly, ISAW’s digital publications reflect the joint efforts of its scholarly departments (library, academics, exhibitions, and digital programs) and extramural colleagues to prepare research findings and scholarly reference materials for dissemination both in print and online, with an emphasis on techniques that facilitate their longevity, relevance, and re-use in the digital age.

Two initiatives that purposefully adapt existing modes of scholarly communication to the online environment are the digital journal *ISAW Papers* and the continuing publication of book-length scholarship that appears both online and as printed volumes under the joint

Visiting Research Scholars

Victor Alonso (Spring 2013)

Ed., with Edward M. Anson. *After Alexander: The Time of the Diadochi*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Jonathan Ben-Dov (2010-11)

Ed., with Seth Sanders. *Ancient Jewish Sciences and the History of Knowledge in Second Temple Literature*. New York: NYU Press, 2013.

Gilles Bransbourg (2010-11)

“Les états de l’inflation.” *Revue Numismatique* 170, (2013): 503-547.

“Fides et Pecunia Numerata. Part 2: The Currencies of the Republic.” *American Journal of Numismatics Second Series* 25 (2013): 177-240.

Jan Bremmer (2012-13)

“The Representation of Priests and Priestesses in the Pagan and Christian Greek Novel.” In *Priests and Prophets among Pagans, Jews and Christians*, eds. B. Dignas et al. 136-61. Leuven: Peeters, 2013.

“Walter F. Otto’s Dionysos (1933).” In *Redefining Dionysos*, eds. A. Bernabé et al., 4-22. Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 2013.

“Local Mythography: The Pride of Halicarnassus.” In *Writing Myth: Mythography in the Ancient World*, eds. S.M. Trzaskoma and R.S. Smith, 55-73. Leuven: Peeters, 2013.

Tamara Chin (VRS 2008-09)

“The Invention of the Silk Road., 1877.” *Critical Inquiry* 40.1 (2013): 194-219.

Lidewijde de Jong (2010-11)

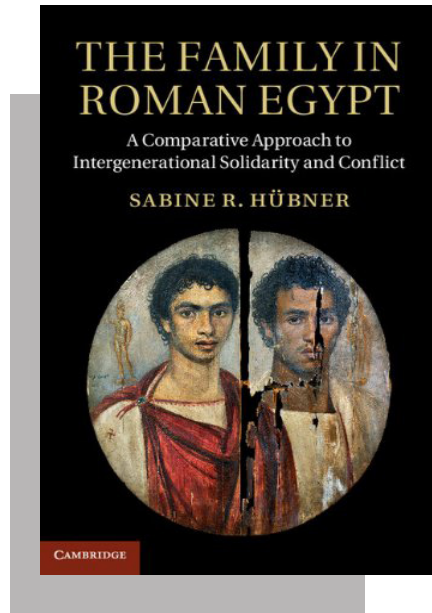
Ed., “Lokale identiteit in een globale wereld: archeologisch onderzoek in het oostmediterrane gebied tussen 300 voor Christus en 300 na Christus.” In *Tijdschrift voor Mediterrane Archeologie* 50 (2013).

with J.A. Ur, et al. “Ancient Cities and Landscapes in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq: The Erbil Plain Archaeological Survey 2012 Season.” *Iraq* 75 (2013).

imprint of ISAW and the NYU Press. To date, six *ISAW Papers* have been published, covering topics ranging from ancient astronomy to Syriac geographical knowledge. The most recent in the series is Mantha Zarmakoupi’s report on recent archaeological fieldwork on the Aegean island of Delos. At the time of this newsletter, ISAW has published three born-digital books and more are in pre-production. The newest title is *Ancient Jewish Sciences and the History of Knowledge in Second Temple Literature*, itself the outcome of a conference organized at ISAW by former Visiting Research Scholars Jonathan Ben-Dov and Seth Sanders.

A third initiative, the Pleiades gazetteer, engages volunteers around the world in continuous improve-

“Resettling the Steppe: the Archaeology of the Balikh Valley in the Early Islamic Period.” *Proceedings of the 7th International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East 2* (2012): 517-31.



Sabine Huebner (2007-08)

The Family in Roman Egypt – A Comparative Approach to Intergenerational Solidarity. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

“Adoption and Fosterage in the Ancient Eastern Mediterranean.” In *Oxford Handbook on Children in the Ancient World*, eds. J. Evans Grubbs and T. Parkin, 510-531. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

David Klotz (2009-10)

“Who was with Antiochos III at Raphia? Revisiting the Hieroglyphic Versions of the Raphia Decree (CG 31008 and 50048).” *Chronique d’Égypte* 88 (2013): 45-59.

“A Theban Devotee of Seth from the Late Period – Now Missing: Hannover, Ex-Museum August Kestner, Inv. S. 0366.” *Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur* 42 (2013).

ment of a freely re-useable digital dataset for ancient geography. Jointly published online by ISAW and the Ancient World Mapping Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Pleiades is rigorously overseen by an expert editorial board and serves not only the interests of individuals but also the emerging needs of digital libraries, websites, and other online publications. These needs include: on-the-fly display of custom maps, on-demand aggregation of information from third-party databases on the basis of shared geography, and easily installed code for pulling short geographical glosses from Pleiades into any website. Recently, Pleiades expanded its core competence in the Greek and Roman world by adding over 2,600 historical placenames and sites that pertain to the ancient Near East.

“The Earliest Representation of a Potter’s Kick-Wheel in Egypt.” *Égypte Nilotique et Méditerranéenne* 6 (2013): 169-176.

Judith Lerner (2010-11)

“Yidu: A Sino-Sogdian Tomb?” In *Sogdians, Their Precursors, Contemporaries and Heirs* (Согдийцы, их предшественники, современники и наследники), eds. I. Asan, et al., 129-146. St. Petersburg: “Trudy Gosudarstvennogo Ermitazha,” 2013.

Jinyu Liu (2007-08)

“Associations and Gifts: New Insights in the Urban Life Under the Roman Empire.” In *New History: Ancient Science and Modern Civilization* 10, eds. C. Heng and G. Xiangxin, 325-342. Daxiang Publishing House, 2013.

“Trade, Traders and guilds (?) in Textiles: The Case of Southern Gaul and Northern Italy (First-Third Centuries).” In *Making Textiles in pre-Roman and Roman Times: People, Places, Identities*, eds. M. Gleba and J. Pásztkai-Szeőke, 126-141. Oxbow, 2013.

“Professional Collegia.” In *Cambridge Companion to the City of Rome*, ed. P. Erdkamp, 352-368. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

Rita Lucarelli (2011-12)

“Towards a Comparative Approach to Demonology in Antiquity: The Case of Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia,” introduction for “Evil Spirits, Monsters and Benevolent Protectors: Demonology in Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia.” In *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 14 (2013): 11-25. <http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/afgs.2013.14.issue-1/issue-files/afgs.2013.14.issue-1.xml>.

Annalisa Marzano (2010-11)

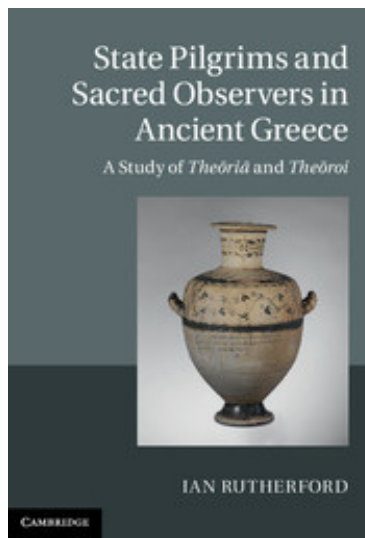
Harvesting the Sea. The Exploitation of Marine Resources in the Roman Mediterranean. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

“Agricultural Production in the Hinterland of Rome: Wine and Olive Oil.” In *The Roman Agricultural Economy. Organization, Investment, and Production*, eds. A. Bowman and A. Wilson, 85-106. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

“Capital Investment and Agriculture: Multi-press facilities from Gaul, Iberian Peninsula and the Black Sea Region.” In *The Roman Agricultural Economy. Organization, Investment, and Production*, eds. A. Bowman and A. Wilson, 107-142. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Christine Proust (2009-10)

“Du calcul flottant en Mésopotamie.” In *La Gazette des Mathématiciens* 138 (2013): 23-48. http://smf4.emath.fr/Publications/Gazette/2013/138/smf_gazette_138_23-48.pdf.



Ian Rutherford (2013-14)

State Pilgrims and Sacred Observers in Ancient Greece: A Study of Theōriā and Theōroi. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Darrel Rutkin (2009-10)

“The Physics and Metaphysics of Talismans (Imagines Astronomicae): A Case Study in (Neo)Platonism, Aristotelianism and the Esoteric Tradition.” In *Platonismus und Esoterik in Byzantinischem Mittelalter und Italienischer Renaissance*, ed. H. Seng, 149-173. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2013.

“Astrology and Magic.” In *A Companion to Albert the Great: Theology, Philosophy and the Sciences*, ed. I. M. Resnick, 451-505. Leiden: Brill, 2013.

“Astrologia e divinazione in Tommaso d’Aquino.” In *Il Linguaggio dei Cieli: Astri e Simboli nel Rinascimento*, eds. Germana Ernst and Guido Giglioli, 23-37. Frecce: Carocci Editore, 2012.

Caroline Sauvage (2009 -10)

Review of G. Saadé, “Ougarit et Son Royaume, des Origines à Sa Destruction.” eds. M. Yon and L. Badre. *BAH* 193, IFPO. 2011. *Histara-les comptes rendus*, 2013. <http://histara.sorbonne.fr/cr.php?cr=1377>.

with C. Newton, et al. “On the Origins and Spread of *Olea europaea* L. (olive) domestication: evidence for shape variation of olive stones at Ugarit, Late Bronze Age, Syria; a window on the Mediterranean Basin and on the westward diffusion of olive varieties.” In *Vegetation History and Archaeobotany* (2013). <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00334-013-04124>.

with V. Renson, et al. “Lead isotope analysis on White Slip II sherds from Late Bronze Age sites in Cyprus (Hala Sultan Tekke, Sanidha) and Syria (Ugarit) and their potential raw material sources.” In *Applied Geochemistry* 28 (2013): 220-234.

with R. Hawley. "Une fusaiöle inscrite d'Ougarit conservée dans les collections du MAN." In *Études Ougaritiques III*, RSO, ed. V. Matoian, 365-394. Leuven: Peeters, 2013.

Oleksandr Symonenko (2009-10)

Roman and Provincial Import for the Sarmatians of North Pontic Region. Typology and Chronology. Saarbrücken: Palmarium Academic Publishing, 2013.

"The Polychrome Horse Trappings of the Late Sarmatian Time from Sarmatia and Pantikapaion." In *The Barbarian World of the North Pontic Lands During the Sarmatian Epoche*, ed. A. Dzygovski, 235-248. Kiev, 2013.

"Trade and Trophy: Near East Imports in the Sarmatian Culture." In "Bronze and Iron Age Graves from Eurasia – Gender between Archaeology and Anthropology." In *Proceedings of the 13th*

International Colloquium of Funerary Archaeology. Buzău-Romania, 17th-21th October 2012 (Mousaios 2013 XVIII), 303-324.

Mantha Zarmakoupi (2009-10)

"Designing for Luxury on the Bay of Naples (c. 100 BCE – 79 CE): Villas and Landscapes." In *Oxford Studies in Ancient Culture and Representation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

"The Quartier du Stade on Late Hellenistic Delos: a case study of rapid urbanisation." *ISAW Papers* 6 (2013). <http://dlib.nyu.edu/awdl/isaw/isaw-papers/6>.

"The City of Late Hellenistic Delos and the Integration of Economic Activities in the Domestic Sphere." *CHS Research Bulletin* 1/2 (2013). <http://wp.chs.harvard.edu/chs-fellows/2013/10/25/the-city-of-late-hellenistic-delos/>.

Sarah Laursen (Visiting Assistant Professor 2011-12)

**Assistant Professor of History of Art & Architecture, Middlebury College
Curator of Asian Art, Middlebury College Museum of Art**

In January of 2013, I arrived at Middlebury College to take up a joint position teaching East Asian art history and curating the collection of Asian art at the Middlebury College Museum of Art. Upon entering the Museum's Robert F. Reiff Gallery of Asian Art for the first time, I noticed a majestic three-foot-tall stele of the Hindu god Vishnu standing in an architectural setting that evoked an Indian temple. I stood back and considered the cool slate gray archway and surrounding wall, and then turned to our museum designer and said, "I think this wall should be a warm sandstone pink." Thus began the transformation of the Reiff Gallery, whose reinstatement

will be complete by February of 2014, in time for the start of the spring semester.

When the Middlebury College Museum of Art was established in 1992, the permanent collection consisted primarily of antiquities, European and American art to the year 1900, and Modern and Contemporary art—especially photography. However, a generous gift from Middlebury alumnus Robert P. Youngman supported the 2003 hire of the first curator of Asian art, the building of the Asian collection, and the 2005 opening of the Reiff Gallery, which was named for the art history professor who had inspired Youngman to become a devoted collector later in life.

After assessing roughly 300 objects in the Asian collections and surveying the needs of faculty in various departments, I decided to shift the display's emphasis away from the Chinese literati aesthetic of the previous installation, toward a more inclusive view of Asia. An important first step was augmenting the collection in certain key areas, including early Korean and Japanese ceramics. A few long-neglected loans and items in the permanent collection will also be brought on view for the first time. The South and Southeast Asian portion of the gallery now features a ninth or tenth century stone sculpture of the elephant-headed god Ganesha, which was previously misidentified as a late Indian work but is now attributed to the kingdom of Champa in Vietnam.



Sarah Laursen, ISAW visiting assistant professor 2011-12, stands in the newly reinstalled Robert F. Reiff Gallery of Asian Art at the Middlebury College Museum of Art. Photo by Aimee Diehl.

Following the repainting of the sandstone temple wall, the remaining powder blue walls were darkened to a dramatic teal, making an aesthetic signal of the transition from temple to tomb. Four arched text panels distributed throughout the gallery, which were written collaboratively with faculty in Middlebury College's Religion and History departments, introduce visitors to the major religions of Asia. The remaining cases are configured thematically, addressing subjects such as the spread of Buddhism, early ceramic technology, conceptions of the after-life, and the impact of steppe cultures on the arts of Asia.

Kevin van Bladel (Visiting Research Scholar 2008-09)

Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Near Eastern Languages
Ohio State University

This year I joined the department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at the Ohio State University as its chair. My latest research continues to focus on learned traditions from ancient Iran, especially on their later survival and syntheses with other traditions.



Kevin van Bladel in his office in the department of Near Eastern Languages at Ohio State University. Photo by Kevin van Bladel.

My most recent publication is an article which appeared as "The Arabic History of Science of Abū Sahl ibn Nawbakht (fl. ca 770-809) and Its Middle Persian Sources." In *Islamic Philosophy, Science, Culture, and Religion: Studies in Honor of Dimitri Gutas*, eds. D. Reisman and F. Opwis, 41-62. Leiden: Brill, 2012. It investigates the ancient Iranian sources, Avestan and Middle Persian, of the earliest extant history of science in Arabic, written by a Persian court astrologer of al-Mansūr. The study sheds light on the background to the formation of the Denkard, a ninth-century Zoroastrian compendium of religious lore.

Among these, the display devoted to funerary offerings features a variety of grave goods typical of East Asian tombs from the third to seventh century CE. In addition to a selection of carved jades, bronze mirrors, and glazed ceramic vessels, this case will include a Sasanian silver lobed bowl, a gold Roman thumb ring with a carnelian intaglio, and a group of early West Asian glass beads. By highlighting the presence of imported objects from the West, as well as the material culture of the nomads of North and Central Asia, I aim to impart an appreciation for the cross-cultural exchange that was active in Asia from the very earliest times.

I am awaiting the publication of another finished article, "Eighth-Century Indian Astronomy in the Two Cities of Peace," which explains the initial eighth-century Arabic reception of Sanskrit traditions of mathematical astronomy as closely related to the caliph al-Mansūr's foreign relations with the Tang Chinese court, where patronage of Indian astronomical methods flourished. It also deemphasizes the prevailing theory that this reception was conditioned mainly by the prior Sasanian Middle Persian reception of Sanskrit astronomy.

At present, I am finishing an article on the early history of the Mandaean, a small and reclusive sect of baptizers, popularly but misleadingly construed as "gnostic," which originated under the Sasanid dynasty and which survives tenuously in Iran, Iraq, and in diaspora into the present. Using several sources that have either entirely or almost entirely escaped the attention of previous scholarship on the Mandaeans, I am able to offer firm testimonial to their conspicuous existence in Sasanian Mesopotamia in the early sixth century along with a substantial and sympathetic account of Mandaean villagers and their social life dating to the early tenth century. I also address the fraught question of Mandaean origins.

Meanwhile I happily continue to supervise doctoral students working on the late antique Near East, who are conducting research with sources in different languages, and to teach lecture surveys on ancient Iran, as well as courses in rarely taught ancient Iranian languages for smaller groups of students interested in historical and philological research, lately Avestan, Middle Persian, and Parthian.

To my colleagues at ISAW, I send my greetings, with fond memories of my three semesters there.

Fiona Kidd (Visiting Research Scholar 2011-12)

Assistant Curator, Department of Ancient Near Eastern Art
Metropolitan Museum of Art

As a Central Asian archaeologist, my focus is typically on 'big picture' issues reflecting the complex web of interactions that has shaped this dynamic region over millennia. People inhabiting the oasis and desert/steppe are considered as a population, but rarely as individuals. The detailed documentation - specifically tracing - of monumental wall paintings from a ceremonial building at Akchakhan-kala, Khorezm, however, has given me ample opportunity to closely observe the work of individuals to an extent that is unusual in the ancient world.

Perhaps the best preserved corpus of early Central Asian mural art, the first century BCE Akchakhan-kala paintings facilitate micro-perspectives on the artistic environment in which artists and craftspeople operated; when seen comparatively - at other sites and in other regions - these perspectives can generate new insights on local and long distance exchanges beyond the formal, political realm. One of the aims of our work is to build a database of artistic details and techniques manifest in the paintings to encourage such comparative studies.

A snapshot of the daily work of wall painters is found in a pigment preparation area close to the center of the ceremonial building. Charcoal, lime or gypsum, and chunks of red and yellow ochre - all locally available - were scattered over the floor; exactly these colors, and mixtures thereof, are found in the paintings. Highly corroded copper alloy pieces were also found here - perhaps once a vessel for the pigments?

Tracing has also illuminated some very human aspects of the painting process: small (and not so



Tracing wall painting and moulded plaster fragments in the field at Akchakhan-kala. Photo courtesy of the Karakalpak-Australian Archaeological Expedition.

small!) flecks of paint imply painters were not always as careful as one would assume when working in an elite building. Moreover, a few fragments preserve faint traces of grey next to black lines, possibly the remains of pigment incorrectly applied and then erased. Other evidence of apparent carelessness is seen in color bleeding beyond the black outline. Nor is it unusual to observe thin red/brown 'sketch' lines under the black contours: probably drawn by a 'master', these lines acted as guides for the apprentices who filled them in.

The Akchakhan-kala paintings also present opportunities to define individual hands. The repetition of schematized 'portrait' figures means we can compare the way specific features - eyebrows, noses or ears - were painted across numerous examples. Small but consistent differences may point to the work of different hands. Research is ongoing, and will be presented as part of the first final report on fully treated fragments from Akchakhan-kala, to be submitted for publication later this year. Akchakhan-kala is excavated by the Karakalpak-Australian Expedition to Chorasmia, funded largely by the Australian Research Council.

In Spring 2014, I will be a guest presenter in Professor Sören Stark's seminar at ISAW on Central Asian wall paintings. The manuscript of our co-edited Oxford Handbook of Central Asian Archaeology is nearing completion.



Wall painting fragment showing color bleeding beyond the black outline. Photo courtesy of the Karakalpak-Australian Archaeological Expedition.

EXHIBITIONS

Questions Drawn from the Discovery of Israel's Copper Age Art

Jennifer Chi

ISAW Exhibitions Director and Chief Curator

Daniel Master

Wheaton College, Co-Curator of *Masters of Fire: Copper Age Art From Israel*

On March 22, 1961, Pessah Bar-Adon lowered himself into a cave in the cliffs high above the Dead Sea. “Looks like objects of copper!” he underlined in his journal. His team began to investigate what would later become known as the “Cave of the Treasure,” located by the Nahal Mishmar, a dry riverbed. Excavators first discovered fifty copper vessels, then textiles, and then the number of copper vessels exploded to more than four hundred. Bar-Adon struggled to even describe, much less comprehend, all that he was finding. But while he claimed to have found the first hoard dating to the Copper Age (4500–3600 BCE), many scholars did not believe that a society just learning to smelt copper tools could produce such finely crafted objects of ancient art.

For the last five decades, archaeologists studying the sites and material culture of the Copper Age in the Southern Levant have concluded that these spectacular findings not only further our knowledge of ancient metallurgy but, more importantly, of the cultural and political milieu that produced them. Archaeological evidence attests that it was during the Copper Age that families moved to organized villages headed by tribal chiefs. By pooling their resources and diversifying the workforce, they created structured communities formed by highly advanced specialists in agriculture, crafts, and rituals. They learned how to exploit the environment, no matter how naturally hostile to human settlements, by irrigating fields and, for the first time, by generating wool, cheese, olives, and dates on a large scale. They dedicated sanctuaries, creating spaces and architecture devoted to cults and rituals, and imported raw metals from great distances to forge tools for everyday subsistence as well as to create objects of status. This innovative society invented a way of life that would sustain the entire Near East for six thousand years.

Masters of Fire: Copper Age Art from Israel investigates this formative period in the history of humankind by exhibiting a comprehensive group of objects that illustrate the most diverse aspects of the life and death of Copper Age communities in the Southern Levant.



If the objects comprising the hoard found at the Cave of the Treasure prove that ancient artisans mastered sophisticated techniques to mix different metals and cast them in a wide array of utilitarian and symbolic tools, Copper Age funerary art speaks for a society that developed all aspects of its life, even those extending beyond the final moments. The most complete evidence for the existence of specific funerary traditions comes again from a chance discovery. In 1995, in the village of Peqi'in, located in the shadow of Galilee's tallest mountain, a contractor excavating the foundation of a new building broke through the top of a natural burial chamber. The cave contained hundreds of burials in ornate clay containers, or ossuaries. These objects—displayed outside Israel for the first time in this exhibit—show that the elites of the Copper Age not only had access to rare copper scepters and “crowns” such as those assembled at the Cave of Treasure, but they were also treated differently in death. Indeed, the bones placed inside the ossuaries deposited inside this cave belong primarily to adult male individuals who constituted a social group that was distinct from the rest of the population, whose members were instead interred in the ground. Vo-

tive objects—ivories, figurines, pottery, beads, and shells—inserted inside the ossuaries and set around them, were brought from great distances to add prestige to the scene.

Many of these prestige objects, especially figurines and miniature vessels, have also been discovered within cultic complexes, large enclosed areas where rituals seemed to have primarily taken place around symbols of fertility connected to an early pantheon of partly anthropomorphic, partly zoomorphic divinities. On display at ISAW are objects from two of the main religious centers of the Southern Levant: En-Gedi, on the shores of the Dead Sea, and Gilat, in the sands of the Negev Desert in the south of Israel. Both sites suggest that architecture played a key role in the development of ritual traditions, and that the same elites who controlled resources and technological knowledge may also have been in charge of the religious life of the communities they ruled.

The idea of elites or chiefs was a concept new to the Copper Age, and no one is sure how a special group of people began to be treated in this exceptional way. Was this just an elaboration of family or tribal ties? Were these the most successful merchants or entrepreneurs? Or is it possible that control over the discovery of copper technology itself allowed certain individuals to gain power as chiefs and attract a

retinue? *Masters of Fire* attempts to address these questions by assembling the full range of objects, materials, and iconographic motifs that characterized the lives of the communities settled in the Southern Levant. We are all aware that technological changes are often accompanied by social upheaval. As modern as this sounds, it also is the background for a prehistoric Copper Age that transformed the ancient world.

Masters of Fire: Copper Age Art from Israel opens to the public on Friday, February 14, 2014 and runs through June 8th, 2014. The exhibition is open Tuesday through Sunday from 11 am to 6 pm with a late closure at 8 pm on Fridays. There is a guided tour each Friday starting at 6 pm.

The *Masters of Fire: Copper Age Art from Israel* catalogue is available for sale in person at the ISAW galleries for \$49.95.

Photo Credits
Opposite: "Crown" with Building-Facade Decoration and Vultures. Copper. Nahal Mishmar, 4500–3600 BCE, IAA: 1961-177. Exhibited at IMJ.

Below: Anthropomorphic Ossuary with Prominent Male Face. Clay. Peqi'in, 4500–3600 BCE. IAA: 2002-1038. Exhibited at Eretz Israel Museum

Stylized Head of Ram, taken by Clara Amit.



Masters of Fire: Copper Age Art from Israel Lecture Series

February 13

Life of the Spirit: The Chalcolithic Culture, 6500 Years Ago in the Southern Levant
Osnat Misch Brandel
Israel Museum, Jerusalem

March 27

New Rituals, New Religion? Death's Dominion During the Copper Age of the Southern Levant
Yorke Rowan
Oriental Institute, University of Chicago

May 8

Exploring Chalcolithic Copper Production through Excavations and Ethnoarchaeology
Thomas Levy
University of California, San Diego

RSVP required to rsvp_isaw_lectures@nyu.edu. All lectures are held in the Lecture Hall and are open to the public. Admission closes 10 minutes after the scheduled start time.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcoming David Ratzan, ISAW's New Head Librarian



David Ratzan will join ISAW this Spring as Head of the Library. David did his B.A. in Greek Literature from Yale University, was a Paul Mellon Fellow from Yale College to Clare College, Cambridge University, and did his Ph.D. in Classical Studies at Columbia University, writing his dissertation on contract

norms and enforcement in Graeco-Roman Egypt. He is currently Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Greek and Roman Classics at Temple University.

He co-edited with Sabine R. Huebner *Growing up Fatherless in Antiquity* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), and has co-edited with Uri Yiftach-Firan-ko and Dennis Kehoe *Law and Transaction Costs in the Ancient Economy* (University of Michigan Press, 2014). He served as Curator of Papyri in Columbia University's Rare Book and Manuscript Library (2011-13) and is involved in an ongoing interdisciplinary project investigating the chemical composition and history of ancient inks via Raman spectroscopy.

Sabine Huebner (Visiting Research Scholar 2007-08) Offered Professorship at University of Basel

Sabine Huebner, who was one of ISAW's inaugural group of visiting research scholars in 2007-08, and who is currently Privatdozentin at Freie Universität Berlin and recipient of the prestigious Heisenberg grant, has been offered a professorship in ancient history at the University of Basel, Switzerland.

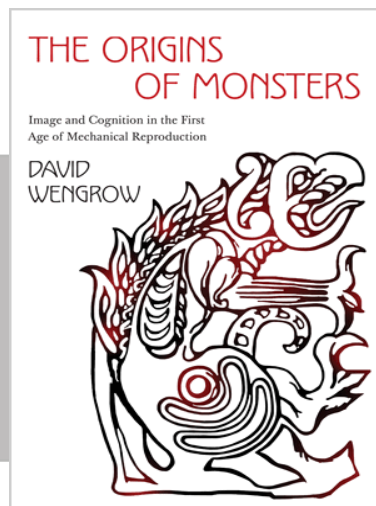
Professor Huebner is author and editor of several books in ancient social and economic history, the most recent of which is *The Family in Roman Egypt* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), and is one of the general editors of the *Encyclopedia of Ancient History*.

First Publication on ISAW's Annual M.I. Rostovtzeff Lectures

We are very happy to announce the publication of the first volume to come from our M.I. Rostovtzeff series. David Wengrow, Professor of Comparative Archaeology at University College London, was the second presenter in the series and his talks were edited for the new book, *The Origins of Monsters: Image and Cognition in the First Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, published by Princeton University Press this year. Launched in 2010, the M.I. Rostovtzeff Lecture Series presents four lectures each spring by a mid-career scholar whose work displays the kind of breadth encompassed in the scholarship of Michael Rostovtzeff, who was Sterling Professor of Ancient History at Yale University and embodied the mission of ISAW by crossing disciplinary, geographical, and chronological lines.

In a departure from traditional approaches to the subject, Prof. Wengrow's book uses aspects of psychology and cognitive science to examine the connections between images and cognition in an

effort to explain the origins and dissemination of monsters, or "composites" as he terms them, across cultures of the ancient world and to find reasons behind the connections, patterns, adoptions, and adaptations found in each.



LECTURES AND CONFERENCES

The Fifth Annual M.I. Rostovtzeff Lecture Series

Displacements: Migration, Mobility and Material Culture in the West Mediterranean

Peter van Dommelen

Joukowsky Family Professor of Archaeology and Professor of Anthropology,
Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World, Brown University

March 10, 17, 24, and 31

Migration has long constituted a major topic in archaeology, because people have moved over shorter and longer distances since early prehistory, as they continue to do today. The Mediterranean is no exception in this respect and similarities in material culture between distant regions as well as straightforward transfers of particular objects have long been seized upon as evidence of prehistoric migrations. For classical and later times, written sources bear direct witness to migrations from, for instance, mainland Greece to the South Italian and Sicilian shores, and thus leave us in no doubt whether migrations took place. They clearly did.

As it is therefore no exaggeration to claim that migrations may be seen as the stuff that (pre)history was made of, there has been remarkably little archaeological interest in this topic in recent decades. As theoretical agendas have shifted attention to local developments and indigenous agency, migration and external influences were downplayed by prehistorians and they were simply not an issue for archaeologists and historians studying later periods. As a result, past migrations remain a poorly understood and, as I will argue, underrated phenomenon, as research has not kept up with recent insights in and innovative approaches to contemporary migration.

At the same time, or perhaps as a result, few scholars of modern migration studies are aware of the deep (pre)histories of the processes they investigate in the modern world.

It is my intention in this lecture series first of all

to take a fresh look at past migration. In doing so, it is not so much my aim to find 'hard evidence' of new migrations by resorting to new scientific techniques, even if such aspects may come into play when considering the range and variability of large-scale movements and migrant networks; it rather is my aim to examine the consequences of migration for both migrant and host societies. In short, this lecture series is about exploring the diversity and complexity of connectivity, mobility and migration in the past, both recent and distant, and about investigating the many dimensions of these

broad processes. The emphasis thus falls as much on local actors, communities, practices and contexts as on overarching networks and long-distance connections in order to highlight the social and economic dimensions of migration and mobility of, within and between communities.

Because of the relative cultural coherence and connectivity of the Mediterranean throughout its (pre)-history as well as the region's rich archaeological and documentary records, I focus my attention on the



*Burial site in Cala d'Hort, Ibiza.
Photo by Peter van Dommelen.*

shores and islands of this region. I pay particular attention to the western basin, because it witnessed a series of major and minor migratory processes, not least those of Greeks and Phoenicians in Antiquity and in recent centuries of French settlers and African refugees. As I will argue, a crucial step change in mobility and connectivity occurred in the first millennium BCE and this period will thus feature prominently in my lectures, without losing sight, however, of earlier and, especially, later, including modern, instances of mobility and migration.

Spring Workshops at ISAW

February 8

News in Central Asian Archaeology

This workshop, organized by ISAW Professor Sören Stark, is a follow-up to a meeting held last year at Hofstra University. It will bring together scholars on the east coast to share and discuss the results of ongoing research immediately relevant to all aspects of Central Asian archaeology and art (from prehistory to the Mongol period).

March 29

Prehistoric Metallurgy of Xinjiang

Organized by ISAW visiting research scholar Liangren Zhang, this workshop will bring together a group of specialists to share data from other sites in Central Asia, West Asia, Mongolia, and Northwest China and their thoughts in order to allow a more complete understanding of the prehistoric metallurgy of Xinjiang and the role it played in the trade, migration, and transmission of technology across these regions.

April 11

Borders in the Archeology of Pre-classical Anatolia and the South Caucasus

With The American Turkish Society, ISAW will be presenting a lecture and workshop on April 10-11, organized by Lorenzo d'Alfonso and Karen Rubinson. The workshop, taking place on April 11th, will explore the concept of borders within the landscape of pre-classical Anatolia and the South Caucasus, ar-

The Annual M.I. Rostovtzeff Lecture Series will be held each Monday in March, 2014.

March 10: Out of Place: Migrations of Past and Present

March 17: Going Local

March 24: Rural Connections

March 31: Connected Communities

The lectures are free and open to the public. Seating is limited, and registration required to isaw@nyu.edu.

reas with highly varied physical geographies and both past and recent political borders that have biased interpretation of archaeological information. Recent text-based studies on the historical geography of the region encourage the reconsideration of the correspondence between the written and archaeological records. Data from this area has been studied by a variety of scholars, some of whom look at it from “outside” and some from “inside,” to different effects. This workshop will bring some of these perspectives together.

The workshop will be preceded by a lecture on Thursday, April 10th at 6:00pm with Drs. Mehmet Işikli and Marcella Frangipane presenting on their excavations at Arslantepe/Malatya and Ayanis.

May 9

Ancient Near Eastern Literature: Topics, Issues, and Approaches

Organized by ISAW Prof. Beate Pongratz-Leisten, this workshop intends to investigate what constituted literary works of the Ancient Near East, how literary works became part of the stream of tradition, how they affected and were affected by historical conditions, and how they entered intertextual and intermedial relations.

ISAW's Spring workshops are free and open to the public. Seating is limited, and registration required to isaw@nyu.edu.



A recent reception held in Oak Library of the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World following a lecture.

Spring 2014 Public Events

January 23

Landscape and Regionalism in Old Kingdom Egypt
Deborah Vischak, Queens College
ARCE Lecture

January 28

The Archaeology of Water in Mesopotamia
Emily Hammer, ISAW Visiting Asst. Professor

February 4[†]

Father and Son at the Beginning of Chinese History
(ca. 1300 BC)
Adam Schwartz, ISAW Visiting Asst. Professor

February 8

*News in Central Asian Archaeology**
Workshop, organized by Sören Stark (ISAW)
9:00am – 6:00pm

February 25

Watching Them Watching Us: Learning to Look at the Earliest Monastic Portraits from Egypt
Thelma Thomas, ISAW Visiting Research Scholar

February 27

Death and Decay: The Salvage of the Monuments of Ancient Egypt
Lanny Bell, Brown University
ARCE Lecture

March 4

Balkh: Coin Finds, Urban History, and Methodological Challenges
Stefan Heidemann, University of Hamburg

March 6

Women in the Iron Age – Weavers of Destiny
Hrvoje Potrebica, University of Zagreb
AIA Lecture
6:30pm

March 10

The Fifth Annual M. I. Rostovtzeff Lecture Series*
Out of Place: Migrations Past and Present
Peter van Dommelen, Brown University

March 11

Exchanging Views: Cultural Interrelation in the Levantine Artistic Production in the Late Bronze Age
Anna Lanaro, ISAW Visiting Research Scholar

March 17

The Fifth Annual M. I. Rostovtzeff Lecture Series*
Going Local
Peter van Dommelen, Brown University

March 24

The Fifth Annual M. I. Rostovtzeff Lecture Series*
Rural Connections
Peter van Dommelen, Brown University

March 25

The Babylonians and the Rational: Analogical Reasoning in Contexts of Rationality
Francesca Rochberg, ISAW Visiting Research Scholar

March 29

Prehistoric Metallurgy of Xinjiang†*
Workshop, organized by Liangren Zhang
ISAW Visiting Research Scholar

March 31

The Fifth Annual M. I. Rostovtzeff Lecture Series*
Connected Communities
Peter van Dommelen, Brown University

April 8

The Elusive Persian Phoenix: On the Identification of the Simurgh and Khvarenah in the Art of Pre-Islamic Iran
Matteo Compareti, ISAW Visiting Research Scholar

April 10

Excavations at Arslantepe/Malatya and Ayanis
Mehmet İşikli, Atatürk University
Marcella Frangipane, Sapienza University of Rome

April 11

Borders in the Archaeology of Pre-classical Anatolia and the South Caucasus (BA-IA)†
Workshop, organized by Lorenzo d'Alfonso (ISAW) and Karen Rubinson (ISAW)

May 1

Ancient Egyptian Conviviality: A Gap in Modern Knowledge?
John Baines, Oxford University†
ARCE Lecture

May 9

*ANE Literature: Topics, Issues, Approaches**
Workshop, organized by Beate Pongratz-Leisten (ISAW)

All lectures are held in the 2nd floor lecture hall and begin at 6 pm unless otherwise noted.

Admission to lectures closes 10 minutes after scheduled start time. *Registration is required to isaw@nyu.edu

†Please check isaw.nyu.edu for event updates. †Postponed.

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 links for 'Jobs', 'Contribute', 'News', and 'Log In'. The main header reads 'INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF THE ANCIENT WORLD' and 'NEW YORK UNIVERSITY'. A vertical sidebar on the left contains a menu with the letters 'I', 'S', 'A', 'W' and links to 'ABOUT ISAW', 'GRADUATE PROGRAM', 'VISITING SCHOLAR PROGRAM', 'EVENTS', 'EXHIBITIONS', 'LIBRARY', 'RESEARCH', 'PUBLICATIONS', 'ONLINE RESOURCES', 'PEOPLE', and 'SUPPORT ISAW'. Below the sidebar, there is a section for 'Next Exhibition: Masters of Fire' with a photo of a building and text about the exhibition. To the right, there is a section for 'Upcoming Events' with a photo of a globe and text about an event on January 23, 2014. At the bottom, there is a footer with links for 'NYU Home', 'Privacy Policy', 'Site Map', and 'RSS Feed'.