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# INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

Newsletter 13 Fall 2015



NYU | ISAW

# From the Director

As ISAW begins its ninth year, life at 15 East 84th Street has never been busier. That much will be obvious to any reader of this Newsletter. Our internal address list contains seventy-five names, which for me form a striking contrast to our first days in the summer of 2007, when the total population could have fit into a telephone booth. That image, of course, betrays my age. Next summer I will accordingly step down as Director. The search committee for my successor is at work, chaired by Daniel Fleming, the long-time chair of our advisory committee.

Since the last newsletter, ISAW has for the first time promoted to tenure a faculty member originally appointed as a beginning assistant professor. This is Lorenzo d'Alfonso, and he gives us in this issue (p. 5) a brief account of his exciting fieldwork in Turkey. There are few more important moments in the life of an academic institution than the tenuring of a young faculty member. Not only is this a long-term commitment and investment in the future of ISAW, it is an opportunity to share the critical burdens of managing the institution with another colleague! Lorenzo has promptly been given charge of the selection process for our visiting research scholars for this year.

This year has also brought important developments in ISAW's role in NYU's global enterprise. Lillian Tseng launched a multi-year research program on the extraordinary sculptures from Xi'an, involving not only ISAW but NYU Shanghai and the Center for Ancient Studies at Washington Square (p. 4). And Armin Selbitschka was appointed to the faculty of NYU Shanghai, the first scholar of antiquity to join that young institution. Both Armin and Fiona Kidd (NYU Abu Dhabi) are now Global Network Faculty and can take active roles in ISAW's doctoral program. This fall, Fiona is also co-teaching an undergraduate course with Sören Stark, with classrooms in both New York and Abu Dhabi and students from both campuses. Given time-zone differences, such classes are not simple matters to arrange, but we view this as an important opportunity to test-drive the technologies that will help knit the Global Network University together and give ISAW an important role in it.

The past twelve months have also seen many acts of generosity on the part of individuals and foundations, enhancing ISAW's work and giving me confidence that my successor will be able to pursue many of the opportunities that lie before us. Our exhibitions program has received strong external support this year as it continues its dazzlingly original work. The friends to whom we owe so much are listed on our web site (<http://isaw.nyu.edu/support-isaw/friends-of-isaw>), and I take this opportunity to thank them again. A particularly happy development was the recent receipt of an anonymous gift of \$500,000 to support excavation work in the countries around the Mediterranean.

I hope you will join us for many of our rich offerings of lectures this fall; and do not miss the quite exceptional photographic exhibition that opens on October 22 (p. 12).

Roger Bagnall  
Leon Levy Director

## **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.

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# Faculty Focus

## Art, Archaeology, and the First Emperor: A Global Approach

Lillian Tseng

Associate Professor of East Asian Art and Archaeology

The 1974 discovery in Xi'an, China, near the mausoleum of the First Emperor (r. 221-210 BCE) of an army of terracotta warriors surprised and dazzled the world. Over 8,000 life-size soldiers from three pits challenged the accepted notion that Chinese artisans had not paid attention to human form in art until the introduction of Buddhist sculpture in the third and fourth centuries of our era. Even after the discovery, scholars thought that the development of anthropomorphic art in the reign of the First Emperor was a Chinese phenomenon that had nothing to do with the rest of the world.

New discoveries at the site in the past decade, including particularly statues of entertainers, have called that view into question. Some specialists have seen these statues as having close connections to the art of the Hellenistic world. However, the potential interconnections between China and the Mediterranean world, presumably through Central Asia, cannot be properly understood and evaluated without the collaboration of specialists from all the related cultural areas. Therefore I am leading a multi-year research project that invites scholars in Chinese, Central Asian, and Greco-Roman studies to examine together the archaeological sites and finds in Xi'an and to exchange ideas and research results at NYU's campuses in Shanghai and in New York. In addition, the project includes a series of methodological workshops that explore ways to tackle the complexity of "archaic globalization" in the ancient world. A core group of NYU faculty, both from ISAW and from other parts of the university, along with several advanced graduate students and faculty from other institutions, provide continuity through the years.

The project began with an on-site workshop in the Museum of the Mausoleum of the First Emperor at Lintong, approximately twenty



Photo courtesy of Lillian Tseng

The ISAW team at Pit 1

miles east of Xi'an, China, in the summer of 2015. We took advantage of the permanent exhibitions that resulted from on-site preservation, including the renowned three pits of terracotta warriors and the lately acclaimed pit of entertainers. We also benefited from a special exhibition that featured many precious painted figurines, which gave us better ideas of how colors were used. We enjoyed the privilege of closely inspecting the figurines under conservation in Pit 1 and Pit K9901. Through extensive discussions with local archaeologists, we learned firsthand the on-going excavations and the updated understanding of the environment, the domain, and the structure of the mausoleum. Armed with the substantial observation and new knowledge from the field, the team will share preliminary thoughts in a workshop at NYU-Shanghai in 2016.



Photo courtesy of Lillian Tseng

Detail of Pit 1, Mausoleum of the First Emperor, Lintong, China

## Celebrating Five Years of Excavating Kınık Höyük

Lorenzo d'Alfonso

Associate Professor of West Asian Archaeology and History

Spring and summer 2015 were a particularly intense and fruitful season. I received notice of tenure from NYU in March for the coming academic year, and that gave me even more energy and push to teach, present the results of my research at congresses and, above all, to have a strong excavation campaign 2015 at Kınık Höyük, Turkey during June and July.

As the campaign completed the first five year cycle of investigation at the site, it was the right time to start working on the publication of the first volume of the final site report. Therefore a group of scholars participated in the excavation to plan this monograph and start analysis of its materials. This volume will investigate the Hellenistic occupation of the site. Knowing that it will be the first such work for the entire Hellenistic kingdom of Cappadocia, it was wonderful to have Irene Soto (PhD, ISAW) working on the ceramic typology of the Hellenistic period, as well as Kathryn Morgan (PhD, UPenn) studying the rich collection of textile production tools from the citadel and the lower town of Kınık. The emphasis on the Hellenistic occupation also dictated the strategy for the main excavation area on the citadel, namely Operation B.

Here two months of excavation provided us with the reconstruction of a new and quite unusual spatial organization on the citadel. We now know that the top of the mound was likely encircled by a 1m thick defensive wall; houses and other buildings developed along the wall. In a niche on a wall of one of these mud-brick buildings we found a large vessel likely connected with wine drinking in a ritual context. Given the rarity of the find, this became front page news for the site of the Turkish ministry of culture and tourism for almost three weeks! Beneath the buildings, the mound core was almost empty and eventually was used as a huge dump area. Since so little is known about the planimetry of the small Hellenistic centers in inner Anatolia, and classical authors claimed that even with a large number of inhabitants most of them could not be called a polis, this discovery provides us with new evidence about how those towns were structured. In the northwestern portion of the summit of the mound Andrea Trameri's (PhD, ISAW) team kept working on the sacred area of the site. Beyond the Hellenistic level, they brought to light an earlier occupation, likely dating to the Achaemenid period, which possibly had the same function as the previous one. Amazing finds came to light from the area, including a fragmentary zoomorphic rhyton of the Achaemenid tradition.

Investigation of the pre-classical occupation continued also on the citadel walls and the lower town. While Nancy Highcock (PhD, ANEES/

NYU) and Erkan Akbulut (MA, ANEES/NYU) studied the diachronic occupation of the lower town, reaching the levels dating to the 7th-6th century BCE (KH-Period IV), Anna Lanaro (Research Associate, ISAW) and Lorenzo Castellano (PhD, ISAW), Marco De Pietri (MA, Pavia University), and Phillip Stroschal (MA, ANEES/NYU) reopened Operation C, investigating the citadel walls on the southwestern slope of the mound. Lorenzo excavated a small sounding trench inside the walls, in order to reach and explore the Bronze Age occupation in the citadel. Carbon 14 analyses are ongoing; they will tell us whether this 5m deep trench reached that level. For sure the structure he found, the western wall of a huge pit coated with vegetal (possibly straw?) remains, came as a surprise, immediately reminiscent of huge underground silos of Hittite sites, such as those uncovered at Sarissa Kuşaklı.



Photo courtesy of Alessio Mantovan

Prof. Lorenzo d'Alfonso and his team at Kınık Höyük, Turkey, June 2015

The team led by Anna, Marco and Phillip had the biggest visual impact. They were able to expose some 40m of the perfectly preserved stone socle of the citadel fortification, as well as an imposing 6 x 6 meter tower protruding from the walls. A sounding into the masonry demonstrated that a huge fortification such as that of Kınık is not made with only one technique, and that repairs and adjustments are multiple, on both inner and outer faces. One of these phases had a post quem dating provided by a beautiful example of Alışar IV ceramic, with the typical deer represented in a silhouette style. The presence of this excellent production is one more clue to the importance of the site in the early first millennium BCE. As usual, the good results of one campaign instill in the archaeologist the desire to dig more and more.

# Faculty Focus

## Ritual and Narrative: Texts in Performance in the Ancient Near East

Beate Pongratz-Leisten

Professor of Ancient Near Eastern Studies

The workshop *Ritual and Narrative: Texts in Performance in the Ancient Near East*, held at the end of the spring research seminar on ancient Near Eastern ritual texts, investigated the relationship between ritual texts and ritual performance. As in previous years, the workshop included four ancient Near Eastern specialists from around the world who are on the cusp of research related to ritual and performance. Their expertise spans nearly three millennia, multiple languages and cultures, and multiple text genres.

Textual records related to ritual performance are multifaceted but often limited in the types of information they reveal. They may emphasize particular aspects of a ritual performance but rarely render anything approximating a whole picture. Extant texts include records of, scripts for, or speculations about ritual performance, reflecting the various perceived functions of texts in antiquity. Motivations for writing down a particular ritual were, it seems, wide-ranging. An example of ritual recording for administrative purposes is offered by the various versions of the Late Bronze Age (13th century BCE) "Installation of the High Priestess of the Storm God" at the city of Emar (modern Tell Meskene in Syria). As discussed by Daniel Fleming (NYU), the surviving texts reflect multiple occasions during which a new priestess was installed. The versions differ primarily with respect to the specific allocations or payments made to the various cultic participants, especially the diviner who oversaw ritual proceedings and maintained the archive that housed the ritual texts. One of the central motivations for these various versions then may indeed have been to record the differing amounts of these allocations. While the diviner was especially interested in payments, references to songs or other verbal performances are rare. In fact, the ritual text recording the installation of the mašartu priestess contains the only spelled

out verbal recitation. As the installation festival of the Storm God's priestess lasted nine days, it is hard to imagine that it was not accompanied by prayers and incantations as known from other Mesopotamian consecration rituals.

While our seminar focused mainly on Akkadian ritual texts from the second and first millennium BCE, two Sumerologists joined the workshop to discuss evidence from the third millennium and first half of the second millennium BCE. Piotr Michalowski (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor) pointed out that while there is hardly any evidence of ritual texts before 1740 BCE, the layout of important ancient city-states such as Uruk and Ur in southern Mesopotamia with their monumental ceremonial institutions reveal that ritual lay at the core of the structure of ancient cities. Inscribed in the topography of the city states these institutions reflect a notion of kingship as a form of ritual as much as a political institution. Aside from the local ritual texts dated to ca. 2450 BCE found at Ebla (Tell Mardikh) in Northern Syria, third millennium textual records related to ritual performance include only incantations. Incantations are related to therapeutic or exorcistic rituals and are attested from Fara and Abu Salabikh in southern Mesopotamia. Duplicates from Ebla attest to the dynamics of the spread of cuneiform culture during the third millennium BCE. Michalowski further emphasized that during the first half of the second millennium incantations may have been performed in Sumerian, Akkadian, Hurrian, and Elamite, suggesting that the emphasis was on the rhythmic patterning of the languages rather than comprehensibility.

The discussion of language use in ritual continued with the talk of Paul Delnero (Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore). Delnero shifted the focus to ritual performance in the daily and festive cult, discussing the central aspect of mourning as expressed not only in lamenting the death of family members but the destruction of entire communities as extant in Sumerian cultic lamentations mourning the destruction of former cultic centers of Sumer. Cultic lamentations were performed by lamentation singers (Sumerian *gala*; Akkadian *kalû*) in an artificial Sumerian language known as Emesal. While cultic lamentations were written down only at the end of the 18th century, attestations for the *gala*-priests exist as early as the third millennium BCE. Gudea's famous hymn celebrating the restoration of the temple of the god Ningirsu in Lagash mentions three different kinds of drums that played continuously to ensure the successful and effective performance of ritual. Further, Delnero showed that Old Babylonian



Photo courtesy of Beate Pongratz-Leisten

Professor Beate Pongratz-Leisten



Photo courtesy of Beate Pongratz-Leisten

Enheduana Disc from Ur, ca. 2300 BCE

Emesal-songs were written phonetically in order to aid the oral performance of the lamentations by bringing out the pronunciation of the words and thus enhancing the effectiveness of language and its ability to evoke emotions. As the content of the lamentations dealt with the appeasing of the gods, they were also of communicative nature. An important point made by Delnero was that the code-switching from Emesal to Sumerian in phonetically written texts did not reflect the performance style; rather the expert knew the respective Emesal of the Sumerian text to be performed which needed not be written down.

Uri Gabbay (Hebrew University, Jerusalem) shifted the focus to the Late Babylonian period (5th century BCE) and discussed the highly complicated matter of theological and mythological implications of ritual performance by drawing on Assyro-Babylonian commentary texts that explain ritual performance. Gabbay focused on the late first millennium BCE Achaemenid ritual for the fabrication of the lilissu-drum from the hide of a bull, a musical instrument attested since the third millennium BCE in cultic performance. He used first millennium

BCE commentaries to the creation account Enuma elish to demonstrate that the writing of this instrument (lilissu, with the determinative for divinity) not only meant that it was considered divine, but that it was identified with the heart of the god Enlil. Enlil belonged to the older generation of gods who were demoted by the Babylonian god Marduk. Whereas the ritual instruction only says “you will burn its (the bull’s) heart” before the lilissu-drum, explanatory commentaries interpret this ritual action as reflecting the killing of Enlil. The playing of the drum evoked the presence of the slain god and the beating of his heart.

The workshop was overwhelmingly well received and greatly contributed to everyone’s learning. The discussions focused on the connections between the periods, unrecorded aspects of ritual like musical performance, and the efficacy of language. Attendees included students from Johns Hopkins University, The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, and the New York City area, plus members of the public.

# Scholar Feature

Claire Bubb

Visiting Assistant Professor

Galen of Pergamon describes a day in Rome in the middle of the second century A.D. on which he and many of his fellow doctors “thronged” to the dissection of a newly killed elephant. There, hands plunged into the gore, they hotly debated the ramifications of what they saw for the various anatomical theories that they supported. Galen’s description evokes a crowded, contentious, and blood-bespeckled scene, including not just the doctors but also some imperial cooks, who make away in the end with choice cuts of the meat.

From as early as the 5th century B.C. the dissection of animals played an important role in the development and defense of Greek medical theories. Authors appeal to what can be seen in dissections as evidence for the claims that they are making about the workings of the human body. For a brief period in Hellenistic Alexandria, they even report the results of human dissections, which led to major leaps forward in anatomical and physiological knowledge. Galen is our main source for the practice of dissection in the Roman Empire, and he provides an abundance of colorful material on the subject, like the paragraph discussed above. Beyond just describing such scenes, he also offers instructions for how to recreate them, assuming that his readers will be as eager as he is to manipulate the viscera of dead animals in a quest for scientific understanding.

My current research is focused on the practices, attitudes, and agendas required for and revealed by the activity of dissection as practiced by Galen, those around him, and those who followed him. Not only did doctors attend the public dissection of animals, non-medical individuals of various stripes could also be found there. He



© Marie-Lan Nguyen / Wikimedia Commons

Mosaic with an elephant. Part of Statio 14 (for Sabratha office) of the Piazzale delle Corporazioni, Ostia Antica, Latium, Italy

mentions audience members ranging from consuls to freedmen, from philosophers to women of wealth. This puts dissection at a unique crossroads between science and entertainment, and I consider the ways in which it intersects with both categories. On the one hand, the spectacle of some of the dissections must have been striking, especially when performed with the panache that Galen describes, and the procurement of the material needs, particularly the animals, would have led to overlap with other forms of entertainment. On the other hand, the intentions of the dissectors were far from frivolous, and Galen is urgent about the absolute necessity of anatomical skills for the furtherance of medical knowledge. I explore how the differing halves of this duality led to a variable history for the practice of Galenic dissection, ranging from near obsolescence in the 5th-10th centuries to a triumphant resurgence in the 16th century, when it sparked the beginning of the dissection practices still deployed in medical schools today.

# Digital Programs

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Tom Elliott

Associate Director for Digital Programs

A report on three significant developments in ISAW's digital programs.

## Delmas Foundation Funds The AWOL Index

With generous support from the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation, ISAW has recently published *The AWOL Index* (<http://isaw.nyu.edu/publications/awol-index/>). A new, structured bibliography of ancient-world resources on the world-wide web, this experimental digital publication is co-authored by ISAW Senior Fellow Charles E. Jones and myself. The Index is programmatically extracted from the contents of *The Ancient World Online*, a blog that Jones has been authoring since 2009. The work is part of a much larger collaboration with the ISAW Library and the NYU Digital Library Technology Services team. It will be used to inform and supply a variety of discovery and digital preservation initiatives now in incubation.

*The AWOL Index* is published under an open license to facilitate the widest possible application and reuse of the data, a policy that has already borne fruit. The open license encouraged and permitted Ryan Baumann (a Digital Humanities Developer with the Duke Collaboratory for Classics and Computing) to write a computer program to check the Internet Archive for resources listed in the Index and add them where they were missing. You can read more about it on his blog at [https://ryanfb.github.io/etc/2015/08/18/archiving\\_the\\_awol\\_index.html](https://ryanfb.github.io/etc/2015/08/18/archiving_the_awol_index.html).

## Website Upgrades

Over the past year, we have been engaged in a significant effort to improve the Institute's website (<http://isaw.nyu.edu>). In August we reached an important milestone in that effort: the rollout of a new visual design. More than just a fresh look, the new design is now responsive: page layout is automatically reconfigured to provide an optimal viewing experience on tablets and phones. Visitors will notice other enhancements as well. We've made it easier to find information they are looking for: the four most popular sections of the site (graduate studies, visiting scholars, exhibitions, and events) are colorfully emphasized at the top of each page. Gallery and library hours appear in the footer on each page. Navigation menus have been made easier to understand and use, particularly on mobile devices. Search result listings have been streamlined and improved. The events section is now more than a simple list; users have the option of viewing events on a weekly or monthly calendar. The news blog has been given a more modern layout. We have also made it possible for individual departments to create their own blogs on the site. The Library blog is the first example of this new capability. See page 16 for a screen shot of the new website.

Behind the scenes, several other improvements have been made. The website is now running on a new, up-to-date server. The software framework we use (an open-source content management system called Plone) has also been upgraded. These upgrades will deliver better performance, reliability, and security. Internally, ISAW

personnel have better tools for creating, revising, and reviewing the content that appears on the website.

A completely overhauled "Employee Guide" presents new ISAW students and scholars as well as ISAW veterans with better, easier-to-find information about policies, procedures, community resources, and more. New mechanisms for including images and streaming video have been added as well, so watch for more visual content on the site in coming months.

We invite comments and suggestions about the new website design at [tom.elliott@nyu.edu](mailto:tom.elliott@nyu.edu).

## Major Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities

At the beginning of August, the National Endowment for the Humanities announced the award of a \$322,615 grant for major upgrades and improvements to the *Pleiades* gazetteer of ancient places (<http://pleiades.stoa.org>). Hosted and operated by ISAW in collaboration with the Ancient World Mapping Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, *Pleiades* provides free and open access to the most comprehensive geospatial dataset for antiquity available today. It serves as an indispensable component of at least 40 other important digital humanities projects, ranging from online editions of primary sources for students to expert systems supporting advanced research in fields like archaeology, epigraphy, and numismatics. It also constitutes a core resource for classroom activities — at ISAW and beyond — focused on ancient geography.

Over the next three years, ISAW will use these funds to retool the software that now underpins *Pleiades* to provide consistent performance at faster speeds to make it easier to use with tablet and mobile devices and to accelerate and enable support for the broader ancient and early medieval worlds. Additional enhancements will make it easier for us to expand *Pleiades* content in a manner consistent with ISAW's connective and comparative mission: extending cultural and geographic coverage to the Ancient Near East and Central Asia and temporal coverage through the Byzantine and Early Islamic Empires.

We are grateful for the support of the NEH, its Office of Digital Humanities, and its scholarly reviewers. With this new grant, total NEH support since 2006 for *Pleiades* and closely allied projects at ISAW, AWMC, and other institutions totals \$1.2 million.

Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

# Library

David M. Ratzan  
Head Librarian

I am very pleased to report that the past six months have been active and rewarding ones for the ISAW Library. We made great strides in collection development (particularly in Assyriology, Central Asia, and ancient China) while all but eliminating our cataloging backlog; yet our most noteworthy achievement—and our most promising developments—were in the digital realm.

## Ancient World Digital Library (AWDL)

Pride of place in this update belongs to the long-awaited and successful retooling of the Ancient World Digital Library (AWDL), which we relaunched in May. AWDL is a joint project of ISAW and the NYU Division of Libraries, which aims to collect, curate, and sustain a digital library of important materials and scholarship for the cross-boundary and interdisciplinary research pursued at ISAW. Beyond its specific curatorial focus, AWDL also distinguishes itself by partnering with scholars, institutions, and publishers to collect and serve digitized content that is either still in-print or under copyright, in addition to older material no longer under copyright. The new AWDL portal boasts a much more user-friendly interface as well as several new features, including an improved book viewer and the ability to browse items geographically via an interactive map called the AWDL Atlas. We also took this opportunity to publish 121 titles to AWDL from our partner Brill and the entire run of the *Newsletter of the Circle for Inner Asian Art*, the predecessor of the *Journal of Inner Asian Art and Archaeology* (co-edited by ISAW's Judith Lerner and Sören Stark). We have more material scheduled for publication this autumn and I invite you all to explore the new AWDL, which you may find under "Finding Resources" tab on the ISAW Library webpage.

## Digital Humanities

Besides the continued development and expansion of AWDL, another of the Library's strategic goals for the next two years will be to deepen its partnership with Digital Programs, in an effort to bring greater institutional coherence to ISAW's impressive digital humanities portfolio. This is a multifaceted initiative, which includes the creation of a sequence of courses and curricular support for digital approaches to antiquity; the hosting of regular events and workshops for graduate students and advanced practitioners (the first of which will take place this October); and the integration of various existing digital projects with the new discovery and preservation services being developed

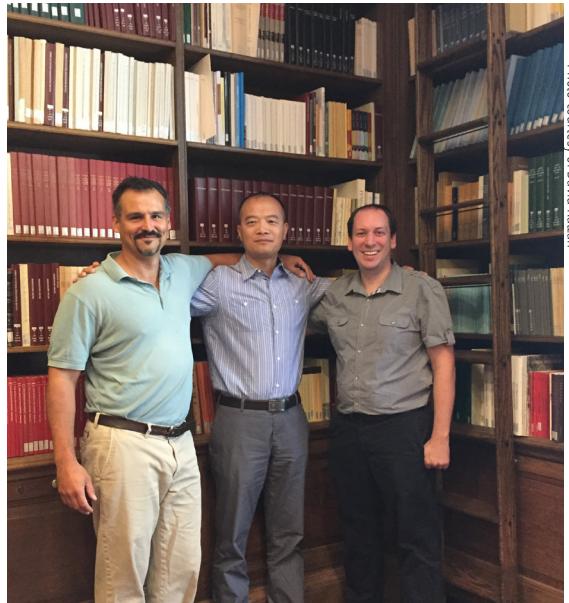


Photo courtesy of David Ratzan

Head Librarian David Ratzan with Assistant Research Scholars and Catalogers Junli Diao and Gabriel McKee

by the Division of Libraries. You may follow our activities between Newsletters—from monthly updates on new acquisitions to news about our digital projects—on the ISAW Library Blog or the ISAW Library Facebook or Twitter accounts.

## Staff Updates

Finally, with growth there is always change. One of those changes is the departure of Junli Diao, our indefatigable Chinese-language bibliographer and cataloger. Junli joined ISAW in September 2012 with the brief to help us build a core collection of primary source material and scholarship on ancient China. Three years and thousands of volumes later, we have a small, but comprehensive and up-to-date study collection of textual editions, catalogs, and archaeological reports spanning the Neolithic to the Tang dynasty. We are deeply grateful for unstinting labor, and all who worked with him will miss his obvious devotion to our faculty, students, and scholars. 祝好运, Junli!

# Community

## Visiting Research Scholars 2015-16

### Frederic Clark

Visiting Assistant Professor, Ph.D., Princeton University, *Dividing Time: The Making of Historical Periodization in Early Modern Europe, c.1500-1750; The First Pagan Historian: The Fortunes of a Fraud from Antiquity to Enlightenment*

### Pam Crabtree (Fall 2015)

NYU, Anthropology, *Early Medieval Britain: The Rebirth of Towns in the Post-Roman West*

### Jue Guo

Barnard College, *A Life on Display: Reconstructing the Worlds of a Chu Official in Early China*

### Arnulf Hausleiter

German Archaeological Institute (DAI), *Re-defining Northwest Arabia in the 2nd Millennium BC: Culture, Economy and Political Organization in a Key Contact Zone of Ancient Western Asia*

### Annette Juliano

Rutgers University, *Northern Zhou Buddhist Sculpture and Painting (557-581): Reconsidered*

### Gina Konstantopoulos

Visiting Assistant Professor, Ph.D., University of Michigan, *Elsewhere is a Negative Country: The Role of Supernatural Figures and the Construction of Imaginary and Abstracted Lands in the Ancient Near East*

### Elizabeth Murphy

Visiting Assistant Professor, Ph.D., Brown University, *At the Intersection of Work, Economy, and Society: A Cross-industry Analysis of Production, Labor, and Work in the Roman Eastern Mediterranean*

### Franziska Naether

University of Leipzig, *Cult Practice in Ancient Egyptian Literature*

### Parvaneh Pourshariati

New York City College of Technology (CUNY), *Merchants and Ideologies in The Late Antique Middle East (500-900 C.E.): The Arab Conquest of Iran and the Fertile Crescent and its Aftermath*

### Jonathan Skaff

Shippensburg University, *Silk Roads and Steppe Roads of Medieval China*

### Zeev Weiss (Spring 2016)

Hebrew University of Jerusalem, *Sepphoris: A Cultural Mosaic from Alexander to Muhammad*

## Incoming Graduate Students

### Christine Roughtan

I received my BA in Classics with a minor in Physics in 2014 at the College of the Holy Cross. During my time at Holy Cross, research with the Homer Multitext project inspired my interest in textual transmission and digital representation; I later brought this experience to bear upon my undergraduate research with Archimedes. As a Fulbright researcher at the University of Leipzig from 2014 to 2015, I investigated the potential of digital methods to effectively represent the complicated written and printed transmission of Euclid's Elements. At ISAW I will further pursue ancient mathematical and scientific texts and diagrams as they cross temporal, spatial, and cultural boundaries, while keeping in mind the evolving digital methods that seek to preserve, analyze, and share them today.

### Georgios Tsolakis

I received my BA in History and Archaeology from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece, going on to complete my MA in the Department of Ancient Greek and Roman History. In my MA thesis, entitled 'Public Life and Family Tradition in the Greek Cities of Asia Minor: The Case of Aphrodisias', I attempted to synthesize my research interests on the concepts of ethnic and civic situational identity with reference to the Greek polis. The thesis aimed to introduce a critical discourse analysis of civic identity and the importance of family relations among Aphrodisias's citizens through the examination of epigraphical texts and the civic honors received. At ISAW, I intend to extend this research into the associated axes of identities, memory and ethnicity. The semantic field of the word 'identity' shares themes with collective consciousness, cultural community, otherness, the definition of the self in relation to the Other, as well as matters of ethnicity. In particular, I would like to focus on the cross-scale interaction of individual, communal and ethnic

identities, and their diachronic representation across both epigraphic and literary sources.

### Alice Wang

I graduated summa cum laude from UCLA in 2013 with a degree in Anthropology. At UCLA, I worked closely with professors in all four subdisciplines of Anthropology, in particular the physical anthropologists and Chinese archaeologists of the Cotsen Institute of Archaeology. I completed an undergraduate thesis that developed alternate light source imaging techniques for detecting tattooing on mummified remains and formulated a project centered on studying the skeletal remains of human sacrifice victims from Shang Dynasty China. After graduation, I worked as a research assistant focused on the "evolution of religion and morality" in Vanuatu at the Department of Psychology, University of Auckland. I have done archaeological fieldwork in the Chincha Valley, Peru, and Yangguzhai, China. At ISAW, I plan to study structural violence, inequality, state formation, ancient health, bioarchaeology, and paleopathology.

### Fanghan Wang

I received my BA in Art History from China Central Academy of Fine Arts, where I studied stone reliefs of the Han Dynasty as my primary area of focus. Later, I continued my studies at China Central Academy of Fine Arts and received my MA in Cultural Heritage and Art Archaeology. My MA thesis focused on how the concept of "stone sculpture" is framed within the system of modern art in China, from the end of the 19th century to the 1950s. At ISAW, I would like to expand my research into the interactive relationships between ancient Chinese and the foreigners living around China with an emphasis on art history and archaeology, drawing upon my academic background in art historical studies.

## Visiting Research Scholars Alumni News

**Gilles Bransbourg**, Research Associate, VRS 2010-11, was named a “Chevalier dans l’Ordre des Palmes Académiques” by decree of the French Prime Minister.

**Claire Bubb**, VRS 2014-15, was appointed Faculty Fellow in the NYU Classics Department for the 2015-16 academic year.

**Maria Doerfler**, VRS 2014-15, was appointed Director of the Center for Late Ancient Studies at Duke University and the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

**Hallie Franks**, VRS 2012-13, was promoted to Associate Professor of Ancient Studies with tenure at NYU’s Gallatin School of Individualized Study. Additionally, she was awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities fellowship to conduct research at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens on her current book project, *Mosaics and Movement in the Greek Andron*.

**Jinyu Liu**, VRS 2007-2008, co-organized the Dickinson College Commentaries (DCC) Seminar in June 2015, in collaboration with Christopher Francese and Marc Mastrangelo, both Professors of Classical Studies at Dickinson College. The concrete results of the seminar were searchable, open-access Latin-Chinese and Greek-Chinese core vocabulary lexica. The DCC Seminar was part of a series of Classics events that Jinyu Liu organized during with support from the SHNU Guangqi International Center for Scholars.

**Rita Lucarelli**, VRS 2011-12, was awarded a Collaborative Research Grant by Digital Humanities at Berkeley for a project entitled “The Book of the Dead in 3D: Mapping Texts and Images on Ancient Egyptian Objects.”

**Perrine Pilette**, VRS 2014-15, was appointed “Chargée de Recherches” at the Fonds National de la Recherche Scientifique (F.R.S.-FNRS) and the Université Catholique de Louvain in Louvain-la-Neuve.

**Christine Proust**, VRS 2009-10, was honored as “Chevalier de la Légion d’Honneur.”

**J. Nicholas Reid**, VRS 2014-15, was appointed Professor of Old Testament at Reformation Bible College in Sanford, Florida.

**Francesca Rochberg**, VRS 2013-14, was awarded a fellowship for the spring of 2016 from the Excellence Cluster Topoi in Berlin to work on a project to explore the representation of empirical phenomena in Babylonian astronomical models as evidence for scientific model-making and for thinking about the world with models.

**H. Darrel Rutkin**, VRS 2009-10, was appointed Associate Lecturer in the History of Science in the Unit for History and Philosophy of Science at the University of Sydney, Australia.

**Mantha Zarmakoupi**, VRS 2009-10, was appointed external research associate in the Section of Greek & Roman Antiquity of the Institute of Historical Research of the National Hellenic Research Foundation. In addition, she initiated an underwater fieldwork project in Delos as part of her research regarding the city planning of Delos (Cyclades, Greece) during the Late Hellenistic period, a collaboration between the National Hellenic Research Foundation and the Ephorate of Underwater Antiquities.

## Visiting Student Feature

Wei Yu, 2014-15

Fudan University

From January 2014 through January 2015, Wei Yu, a PhD candidate at the National Institute for Advanced Humanistic Studies of Fudan University in Shanghai, China, was a visiting student at ISAW. Reflecting on her 12 months in New York, Wei notes that her experience at ISAW “expanded my vision and offered me the opportunity to learn from international scholars through classes, lectures, seminars, and visits to wonderful museums in New York City.” One of the highlights of Wei’s experience at ISAW was working closely with Associate Professor Lillian Tseng and Assistant Professor Sören Stark. Prof. Tseng’s “thought-provoking questions and suggestions” provided Wei with insights that led her to view her dissertation “from a new perspective.” Prof. Stark helped guide Wei through one of the most difficult aspects of her research, the component dealing with Central Asia. Wei’s research also benefited from the “excellent Chinese collection and services” of the ISAW Library, where she was able to gain access to a number of books that were not available to her at her home university in China. Wei expects to complete her dissertation, entitled “Buddhist Reliquaries in Sui and Tang Dynasty,” in December 2015.



Photo courtesy of Wei Yu

# Exhibitions

## *Eye of the Shah: Qajar Court Photography and the Persian Past*

October 22, 2015 - January 17, 2016

Jennifer M. Babcock

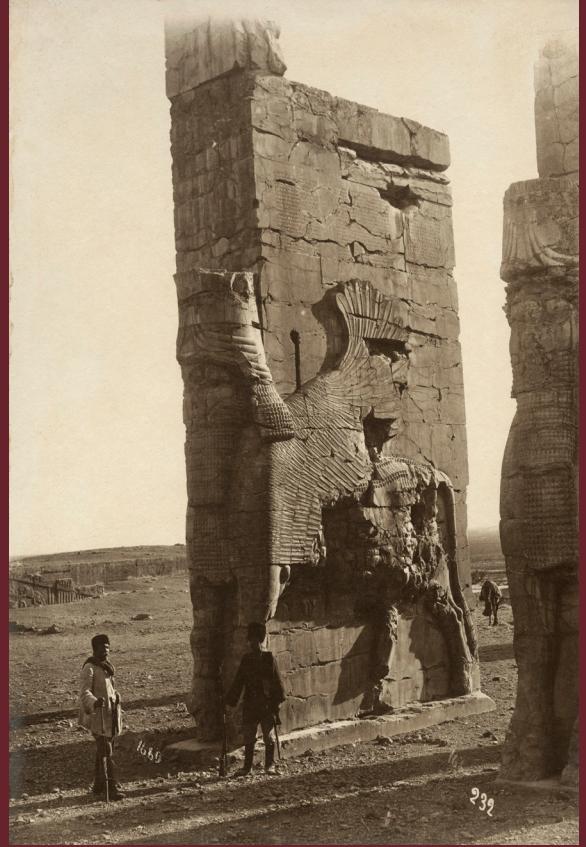
Curatorial Postdoctoral Associate

*The Eye of the Shah: Qajar Court Photography and the Persian Past* presents some 200 photographs taken by royal photographers engaged by Naser al-Din Shah Qajar (r. 1848-1896), the longest reigning Shah of Iran's Qajar Dynasty (1785-1925). The majority of these photographs have never been exhibited in the West, though the photographs were created at a time when Iran was opening itself to the Western world, and were intended to create a portrait of the country for both foreigners and Iranians themselves.

Naser al-Din Shah became fascinated with photography after receiving two early photographic cameras from Queen Victoria and Tsar Nicholas I while he was the crown prince of Iran. He learned how to use these cameras and became an amateur photographer himself, taking portraits of his numerous wives and capturing scenes of the royal harem. Additionally, Naser al-Din Shah hired court photographers, designated photo studios within the Golestan palace complex, and established Dar al-Fonun (the House of Arts and Sciences), where photography was formally taught.

A highlight of *The Eye of the Shah* is a group of unprecedented, captivating images of life in the royal court in Tehran, with subjects including the Shah, his wives and children, court entertainers, and more. In addition to photographs, there are also photograph albums exhibited, with one album containing portraits of the Shah's wives, which were taken by Naser al-Din himself. The Shah's adoption of Western modernizing initiatives is revealed through pictures of the military and the railway, while other photographs of shopkeepers, street vendors, and field workers portray the daily lives of the Iranian people.

Also shown are images of ancient monuments that capture the grand and eloquent beauty of such iconic Iranian sites as Persepolis, Taq-e



Bostan and Naqsh-e Rostam, which were intended to evoke Iran's rich history and to help introduce the country to the West. These photographs are complemented by European pre-photographic material, such as books and engravings dating as far back as the 16th century, to show how the West represented Iran and its ancient sites prior to the invention of photography and its introduction to Iran.

*The Eye of the Shah* also includes work by two modern-day Iranian photographers, incorporated into the installation. Bahman Jalali (1944-2010) is represented by photomontages created from glass-plate negatives from the Qajar Dynasty, and Shadi Ghadirian (b. 1974) by images from her series *Qajar*, comprising staged photographs of women that evoke the Qajar Dynasty but also include quotidian objects of modern life.

*The Eye of the Shah: Qajar Court Photography and the Persian Past* opens to the public on Thursday, October 22, 2015 and runs through Sunday, January 17, 2016. The exhibition is open Wednesday to Sunday from 11 to 6 pm with a late closure at 8 pm on Fridays. A free guided tour is offered each Friday starting at 6 pm.





The catalogue of the show, *The Eye of the Shah: Qajar Court Photography and the Persian Past*, will be available for sale at the ISAW galleries.

Photo Credits

Opposite: *Colossal Winged Human-Headed Bulls of the "Gate of All Lands"*  
Antoin Sevruguin

Photograph, H. 22.6 cm; W. 16.5cm

ca. 1902–5

Collection of Azita Bina and Elmar W. Seibel

*Naser al-Din Shah Qajar and Two of His Wives*

Reza 'Akasbashi

Albumen print, H. 12.5 cm; W. 15.9 cm

ca. 1880

Kimia Foundation

Left: *Untitled (#3)*, Qajar Series

Shadi Ghadirian (Iranian, born 1974)

C-print photograph

H. 48.3; W. 33 cm

1998

Collection of Azita Bina and Elmar W. Seibel

## Exhibition Event Series

**October 29**

*Nasseredin Shah and his 84 Wives*, Film Screening  
Beate Petersen, Film Director and Producer

**November 24**

*The Discursive Spaces of Qajar Photography*  
Mirjam Brusius, University of Oxford

**December 3**

*Qajar Photography and Contemporary Iranian Art*  
Layla S. Diba, Independent Scholar and Art Advisor

**December 17**

*Ancient Persianisms: Persepolitan Motifs in 19th Century Qajar Persia*  
Judith A. Lerner, ISAW Research Associate

RSVP required at [isaw.nyu.edu/rsvp](http://isaw.nyu.edu/rsvp) or to 212.992.7800. All events are at 6pm and are followed by a reception. Events are held in the Lecture Hall and are open to the public. Admission closes 10 minutes after the scheduled start time.

### Upcoming Exhibition: *Designing Identity: The Power of Textiles in Late Antiquity*

February 25- May 22, 2016

ISAW's Spring exhibition, *Designing Identity: The Power of Textiles in Late Antiquity*, explores decorative motifs on textiles as indicators of social, religious, and cultural ideals for men, women, and children living in the Mediterranean World. As garments played a fundamental role in the definition and visual expression of an individual's social status and

rank, *Designing Identity* will feature over 50 textiles woven in different materials and decorated with diverse motifs to illuminate the complex social and cultural implications of the symbols associated with ancient costume tradition.

# Lectures and Conferences

Ninth Annual Leon Levy Lecture  
supported by The Peter Jay Sharp Foundation

*Scythian Elite Burial Mounds in the Eurasian Steppes: New Discoveries for a Deeper Understanding*

Hermann Parzinger

President of the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation

November 6, 2015

During the first millennium BCE, the cultures in the Eurasian steppe belt went through a deep transformation. From the 8th/7th century BCE on, nomadic tribes emerged throughout that region. We know them as Scythian or Sakas, but it is hardly possible to identify archaeological materials with concrete names of tribes. Significant changes in the economy, in the way of living and fighting, but also in the arts and the social structure, are typical for these early nomadic groups between the river Yenisei in the east and the lower Danube in the west. The social structure of Scythians and other groups in the Eurasian steppe is mainly reflected by their graves, burial mounds, which are called “kurgans.” There are monumental kurgans with rich inventories, including golden objects and imports, and Herodotus



Photo courtesy of Hermann Parzinger

Excavation of a Scythian “Ice Mummy”, Summer 2006,  
Mongolian Altay



© SPK / Bildaction

Prof. Dr. Hermann Parzinger, President of the Prussian  
Cultural Heritage Foundation

wrote about Scythian kings in the steppe to the north of the Black Sea, buried in these huge kurgans. In this region, burial mounds have been excavated since the late 19th century and have yielded many golden objects of an extraordinary technical and artistic quality. Although the grave inventories are quite well known and have been sufficiently investigated, we lack data concerning the structure of these monumental kurgans. Our excavations during the last 20 years in different parts of Russia, from Siberia in the far east to southern Russia in the west, have yielded significant new information and have led to a rather new understanding of the phenomenon of elite kurgans, showing that they are not only burial places of the leading social group, but also places for memory and numerous and rather different ritual practices: elite kurgans are rituals that became architecture.

About the Speaker: Hermann Parzinger has been President of the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation since 2008. From 1990 he was active at the German Archaeological Institute (DAI), from 2003 to 2008 as its president. Today he directs several excavation and research projects and publishes regularly. He has received numerous national and international prizes.

*Additional funding provided by the Leon Levy Foundation.*

*This event is free and open to the public. Seating is limited; registration required at [isaw.nyu.edu/rsvp](http://isaw.nyu.edu/rsvp) or to 212.992.7800.*

## South Caucasus Colloquium

Karen Rubinson, Research Associate

December 12, 2015

Organized by ISAW Research Associate Karen Rubinson, the South Caucasus Colloquium is a day-long, informal gathering of professors and students from universities in the region who work in the countries of the South Caucasus — Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia — and directly adjacent regions. Now in its fourth year, it is an

opportunity for scholars who work in many disciplines and time periods to share results of their work, logistical issues and contacts in an area of the world with a distinctive history. The colloquium is by invitation only.

# Public Events

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## September 28

*Arabia at the Crossroads of Cultures: The Oasis of Tayma* †  
Arnulf Hausleiter, ISAW Visiting Research Scholar  
AIA Lecture, 6:30pm

## September 29

*Wizard Wunderkinder and Vengeful Women: Cult Practices in Ancient Egyptian Literature* †  
Franziska Naether, ISAW Visiting Research Scholar

## October 6

*The First Pagan Historian: Dares Phrygius and the History of Forgery* †  
Frederic Clark, ISAW Visiting Assistant Professor

## October 13

*The Emporia and the Re-birth of Towns in Anglo-Saxon England: Evidence from Ipswich* †  
Pam Crabtree, ISAW Visiting Research Scholar

## October 19

Prospective Student Open House, 10:30am \*

## October 26

*A Sanctuary of the Hellenistic Period at Torbulok (Tadjikistan): Excavations in 2014 and 2015*  
Gunvor Lindström, German Archaeological Institute

## October 27

*Statues of Amun: The Post-Amarna Period from an Art Historical Perspective*  
Marianne Eaton-Krauss, Independent Scholar

## October 29

*Nasseredin Shah and his 84 Wives* \* †  
Film Screening  
Beate Petersen, Film Director and Producer

## November 3

*Defining Elsewhere: the Abstraction and Othering of the Liminal in the Ancient Near East* †  
Gina Konstantopoulos, ISAW Visiting Assistant Professor

## November 6

**Ninth Annual Leon Levy Lecture  
supported by The Peter Jay Sharp Foundation**  
*Scythian Elite Burial Mounds in the Eurasian Steppes: New Discoveries for a Deeper Understanding* \* †  
Hermann Parzinger, President, Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation

## November 17

*Not in God's Path: A Revised Chronology of the "Origins of Islam"* †  
Parvaneh Pourshariati, ISAW Visiting Research Scholar

## November 24

*The Discursive Spaces of Qajar Photography* \* †  
Mirjam Brusius, University of Oxford

## December 1

*Empire, Personhood, and Child Sacrifice: A Case for Africa's "Romanization"*  
Matthew M. McCarty, The University of British Columbia

## December 3

*Qajar Photography and Contemporary Iranian Art* \* †  
Layla S. Diba, Independent Scholar and Art Advisor

## December 17

*Ancient Persianisms: Persepolitan Motifs in 19th Century Qajar Persia* \* †  
Judith A. Lerner, ISAW Research Associate

\*Registration is required at [isaw.nyu.edu/rsvp](http://isaw.nyu.edu/rsvp) or to 212.992.7800

†Reception to follow

All events are held in the ISAW Lecture Hall and begin at 6 pm unless otherwise noted.

Admission to lectures closes 10 minutes after scheduled start time. Please visit [isaw.nyu.edu](http://isaw.nyu.edu) for event updates.

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## SCHOLARLY RESEARCH & GRADUATE EDUCATION

ISAW is an independent research center within NYU that cultivates comparative and connective investigations of the ancient old world from the Mediterranean to East Asia. It was founded by Shelby White and the Leon Levy Foundation in 2006.

## WEBSITE UPGRADE

ISAW's redesigned website features improved navigation menus, easier-to-find information for visitors and staff, and a responsive layout that works equally well on desktops, laptops, tablets, and phones. Behind-the-scenes improvements have boosted security and performance, and have made it easier for ISAW personnel to create and edit the content that appears on the site. See page 8 for more details.

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.