



# AIA *News from the* NEW YORK SOCIETY

## UNDERSTANDING & METHOD: ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

What can we know and how do we know it? These questions which inform daily headlines are also questions with which researchers in every natural and cultural science wrestle. The New York Society's forthcoming lectures offer a special angle on these questions.

Almost 20 years ago Manfred Korfmann, a well-respected archaeologist, mounted an exhibit in Tübingen, Germany, entitled 'Troy - Dream or Reality' in which he presented what had been learned after many years of excavation of the Bronze Age sections of this many layered city. And then all hell broke loose!

Among the many aspects of the controversy were the size and importance of Troy. Korfmann's perspective had many supporters. It also had many critics, among which the fiercest were ancient historians. What became explicit in the debate was a seeming tension of method, commonly noted as between textual evidence and the evidence of material culture. I would suggest that, in the final analysis, they both aid the search to understand past civilizations.

'Facts' do not speak for themselves! Research, testing and epistemological reflection make clear, I think, that 'facts' are such because they are part of a framework. No, not everything is opinion but making clear the 'how' we know, the evidence and our understanding of the evidence become crucial. Scholarly training, then, is fundamental. Archaeology seeks to understand past civilizations through the material record. Texts which are fundamental to historical work are part of the material record.

Historians never take texts at face value but rather are trained in complex methods of understanding. Training in complex methods of understanding also characterizes archaeologists. True, archaeological training and method does differ from that of historians. For example, it is hard to imagine that a history department might offer a course entitled "Thing Theory" as was recently done by an archaeological department at a major university. The two disciplines have a different method and training but these are, in my view, not in conflict but different avenues toward the same end, understanding the life of past civilizations. So what happened to the controversy at Tübingen?

Korfmann returned to Troy, now armed with ground penetrating technology and confirmed the exhibition's hypothesis that Troy was indeed larger, much larger than previously known. Korfmann's trained expertise in archaeological method bore fruit. I would suggest and certainly hope that historians and archaeologists see their perspectives as aiding each other.

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The forthcoming NY Society lectures provide a window on these angles. In January, Dr. Neiman will present the latest archaeological discoveries revolutionizing our understanding of Jefferson's plantation, Monticello. Jefferson left an extensive textual record but now Dr. Neiman adds a new archaeological dimension demonstrating dramatic changes in the life of the plantation, especially for its slaves. Text and physical remains aid each other. But what if there are no texts? In February, Dr. Wright will give us her archaeological understanding of a culture without texts, the Indus Valley civilizations which together with Egypt and Mesopotamia constitute the three great Bronze Age societies. In April, Dr. D'Altroy will discuss ancient Inka political structure as a reflection of

the Inka's cosmological worldview. Texts?—Few and above all requiring complex interpretation. So here the on-the-ground work of archaeologists becomes critical. Inka imperialism is not as well-known as that of ancient Rome but even for Rome Dr. Gensheimer will show in March how the material record of Roman baths can give us a new perspective on Roman imperialism.

So please see the listing of the lectures included here. Also please enjoy the other articles about heritage and about archaeology in our own backyard here in New York City.

-Jeffrey Lamia

President, AIA New York Society



## Heritage Matters

### *War-Torn: Afghanistan's Heritage*

Why should cultural heritage projects be funded when there are so many human needs? This question was posed by an audience member during a recent talk by Dr. Laura Tedesco at The Explorer's Club in New York City. Dr. Tedesco is the Cultural Heritage Program Manager for the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.

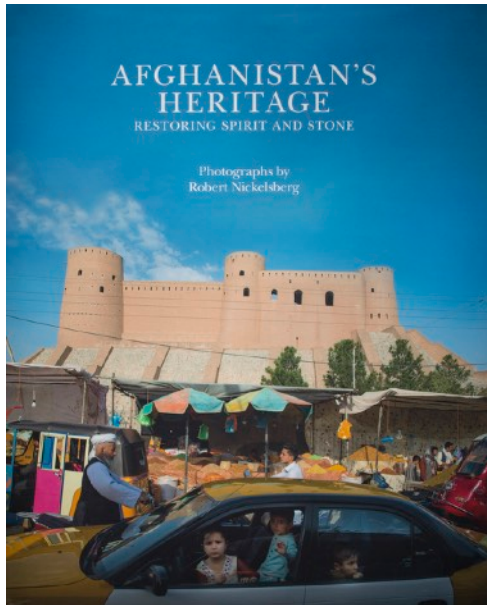
The debate regarding the protection of human life over cultural heritage is continually considered by academics, human rights activists, and heritage experts in conversations regarding the preservation of cultural heritage, especially in war-torn countries. Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, Syria, and Egypt all have important targeted cultural heritage, which has been battered by violence and violated by ongoing destruction and looting. To restore and rebuild heritage positively impacts both reestablishing infrastructure and stabilizing human lives. Archaeological sites or architecture should never be prioritized over issues of humanity, but rebuilding, pre-

serving and protecting cultural heritage does enhance human life economically as well as life within a community. Even Michèle Coninsx, the Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED) of the United Nations has stated that entire communities should be empowered. This empowerment must also include the protection and preservation of cultural heritage.

Dr. Tedesco attempted to answer the question posed to her by reminding the audience that funding often comes from multiple different sources, and financing allocated for heritage does not necessarily mean less funding that would otherwise be available for local hospitals and schools, or for rebuilding critical infrastructure.

Cultural heritage is very much part of the foundation of ancient places. Cultural heritage matters, and its ruin can engender painful recollections of local inhabitants' memories of places such as pre-war Afghanistan. Resident populations of Afghanistan engage with cultural heritage in their everyday life, such as areas where a simple food market intersects with a citadel from the 4th century BCE. The Qal'a-i Ikhtiyar al-Din Citadel in

Herat, Afghanistan is a UNESCO World Heritage site candidate that dates to the 6th–4th centuries BCE and stood during the period of Alexander the Great. Photojournalist Robert Nickelsberg ([www.robertnickelsberg.com](http://www.robertnickelsberg.com)) has documented the beauty of rebuilding and restoring Afghanistan's heritage in a new book entitled *Afghanistan's Heritage: Restoring Spirit and Stone*, which presents the intersection between war, heritage, and daily life.



Between March of 2016 and October 2017, The Freer|Sackler Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C. presented an exhibition entitled *Artists Transforming Afghanistan*. The gallery exhibition presented the work supported by Turquoise Mountain, which is a non-governmental organization ([www.turquoisemountain.org](http://www.turquoisemountain.org)) which aims to preserve and regenerate historic areas and communities with rich cultural heritage traditions.

Historic Murad Khani, in the old city of Kabul, is one such project that is developing and supporting hopeful Afghani artisans by creating local and global markets for them to make and sell their crafts. The artisans endeavor to revive long-standing traditions in local arts and crafts and recreate artistic communities in Afghanistan and reestablish local Afghani skilled artisans after decades of war. To date, Turquoise Mountain has supported craftspeople and labor that have restored over 150 buildings and trained 6000 plus artisans. Turquoise Mountain was established in 2006 and is a supported charity of HRH The Prince of Wales, and supports current projects in Afghanistan, Myanmar, and Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Mahmoud Saikal, The Ambassador and Permanent Representative of I.R. of Afghanistan to the United Nations, when asked “why put money into heritage,” merely stated “we need a conference room.” The significance is, Afghanistan needs their existing buildings and other infrastructure to function for the growth of their future. In Afghanistan, and other ancient continuously inhabited places, a structure might be thousands of years old, but if it is restored, it can be reclaimed for renewed use in the future. Cultural heritage preservation funding and protection are crucial in helping rebuild ancient cities that have been torn apart by war. Cultural heritage experts and activists are not only concerned about destroyed heritage sites and buildings, but also the communities that live among and with the ruins.

- Heidi James-Fisher

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### *Corrigendum*

Tina Bakkali-Poio, a contributor to the September 2018 issue of this newsletter, was misidentified therein as the recipient of the AIA-NY Society's Waldbaum Scholarship. Though Ms. Bakkali-Poio is a New York-based student (at Hunter College), her work on Etruscan sites in Orvieto was not supported financially by the Society. We appreciate her contribution and regret any confusion. - ed.

## AIA NEW YORK SOCIETY SPRING 2019 LECTURE SERIES

### **Changes in Agriculture at Jefferson's Home and Its Effect on Slavery: New Archaeological Discoveries**

**Fraser Neiman**

Director of Archaeology, Monticello

Recent archaeological research at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello is revolutionizing our understanding of the plantation landscape and the lives of Jefferson and the enslaved people who created it. Archaeological evidence reveals dynamic changes in agricultural ecology, slave labor routines, settlement patterns, and household organization during the century that followed the demographic expansion of Old-World people into the region in the early-eighteenth century. These changes were the outcome of the often conflicting social and economic strategies adopted by slave owners and enslaved people, as they struggled to improve their families' lives in face of unpredictable Atlantic markets and political competition, as well the unforeseen local consequences of their own past behavior.

*(Co-sponsored by the M.A. Program in Liberal Studies)*



January 28 at 6:30 pm (Reception to follow in Room 4108)  
Segal Theater, The Graduate Center, CUNY, 365 Fifth Avenue

### **An Early State Revisited: The Indus Civilization**

**Rita Wright**

Professor Emeritus of Anthropology, NYU

The third millennium BCE saw the emergence of the world's first cities and states in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and the Indus Valley. In this lecture, I briefly describe their pathways to state formation and focus for the bulk of my talk on the Indus, using its urban plans and productive activities as indicators of different forms of leadership at three of its major cities.

*(Co-sponsored by the Department of Classics and Oriental Studies)*



February 27 at 6:30 pm (Reception to follow)  
8th Floor Faculty Dining Room, Hunter College, Lexington & 68th Street

## Discourses on Empire: Roman Baths Here, There, and Everywhere

**Maryl B. Gensheimer**

Assistant Professor of Roman Art and Archaeology,  
Department of Art History and Archaeology, University of Maryland

Throughout the Roman Empire, bathing was a highlight of the day and a major social event. Ubiquitous literary and epigraphical evidence conveys the significance of bathing facilities to people's daily routines and relationships. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that in cities across the Empire, from Britain to Morocco and from Spain to Syria, one finds literally thousands of examples of public baths. These buildings are all the more important for being among the most ambitious and sophisticated examples of large-scale architectural patronage in Greco-Roman antiquity.

This lecture examines the reasons for baths' popularity in ancient Rome on the part of a diverse audience: elite and subaltern, male and female, free and enslaved. It also explores the specific mechanisms through which imperial patrons could use the endowment of public baths as a means of simultaneously consolidating and upsetting the social hierarchies that were rigidly maintained elsewhere in the Roman public sphere. Even while baths consciously provided luxury and recreation for a broad spectrum of the population, the emperor could adroitly exploit his patronage to emphasize his own unique sociopolitical position. Thus, this lecture suggests that the ubiquity of Roman baths here, there, and everywhere was as much a means of entertaining the populace as an unprecedented tool with which to articulate discourses on imperial power and privilege.

*(Co-sponsored by the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World)*



March 14 at 6:00 pm (Reception to follow)  
Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, 15 East 84th Street



RSVP is required to attend Dr. Gensheimer's lecture.  
Register to attend this event on ISAW's website (<http://isaw.nyu.edu/rsvp>).

## The Cosmopolitics of Inka Imperial Rule

**Terrence D'Altroy**

Loubat Professor of American Archaeology, Department of Anthropology, Columbia University

In the last century or so before the Spanish invasion of 1532, the Inkas created the largest empire ever seen in the independent Americas. As the Inkas saw it, humanity shared the world with living ancestors and a social space populated by sentient mountains, living rock, and willful water—and a past that never went away. This talk explores how they sought to be successful in such a land, civilizing both humanity and everything else they could draw into their domain. It will draw on evidence from Cuzco, Machu Picchu, and the Sacred Valley for illustration.

*(Co-Sponsored by the Columbia Center for Archaeology and the Department of Art History and Archaeology.)*



April 1 at 6:30 pm (Refreshments to precede lecture at 6:00)  
Schermerhorn Hall, Room 612, Columbia University

*As always, please check your email or consult our website  
(<http://aia-nysociety.org/events>) for any last-minute program changes.*



## FRIENDS OF THE NEW YORK SOCIETY

The Friends of the New York Society is a group of professionals and lay archaeological enthusiasts who support all the work of the New York Society. For their crucial support, the Friends benefit from special private programs at which they can mix with professionals and those of similar interests.

The Friends enjoyed three exciting events this fall. We started off with a private tour of the New York City Archaeological Repository led by Amanda Sutphin, the Director of Archaeology at New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission. Our next event was an informative and fascinating lecture by Dr. Matthew C. Reilly entitled *Archaeologies of the African Diasporas: A View from the Caribbean and West Africa*. The event enjoyed the warmth of the hospitality in the home of Friends co-chair, Heidi

James-Fisher. The audience was intrigued by his projects that broaden the scope of African diasporic archaeology.

In early December the Friends also visited the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian at One Bowling Green in Manhattan. For most members, this was the first time they had visited the museum, which has a sizable and impressive collection. In early February we have a special tour organized by Dr. Hannelore Roemich, the Professor of Conservation Science at The Institute of Fine Arts, New York University. In the late spring, we also have an exclusive tour of the new exhibition, *Between Rome and Parthia*, at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. So, a successful and interesting season for the Friends group!

### Patron

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George & Joan Schiele, Ethel Scully, plus one anonymous donor*

*In addition to the above, the Society from time to time receives contributions from  
members and friends to support our activities or underwrite specific programs.*

*To inquire about joining the Friends please email  
Elizabeth Macaulay-Lewis ([emacaulay\\_lewis@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:emacaulay_lewis@gc.cuny.edu))  
or Heidi James-Fisher ([hjames@studiolxiv.com](mailto:hjames@studiolxiv.com)).*

## Spotlight on...

### *NYC Archaeological Repository: The Nan A. Rothschild Research Center*

People have been living in what is now New York City for thousands of years, although the city itself is almost 400 years old. We can learn a great deal about our predecessors and the events that occurred here through the physical artifacts they have left behind. In 2014, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) opened an archaeological repository to curate some of the most significant archaeological collections that have been excavated by archaeologists on city land.

Over the last 40 years, archaeologists have conducted hundreds of archaeological projects within the city. These projects have been done under the supervision of LPC, the only city agency with archaeologists on staff, and have produced over 1,800 archaeological reports (accessible online at <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/lpc/about/archaeology-reports.page>).

The NYC Archaeological Repository: The Nan A. Rothschild Research Center, located at 114 West

47th Street, Manhattan, in a space donated by The Durst Organization, curates hundreds of thousands of artifacts from over 32 sites throughout the city. They come from all five boroughs and range in age from 8,000 years ago to the 20th-century. The mission of the Repository is to preserve the city's significant collections for study and exhibition and it is open by appointment to researchers and university classes.

LPC also created a digital archive and website for the repository in 2016 to make these collections accessible to as wide an audience as possible (<http://archaeology.cityofnewyork.us>). Geared toward researchers, teachers, and the public, it includes digital exhibitions, archaeological quizzes, information about projects, and the ability to search for specific artifacts. Currently, 15 collections have been integrated into the database and can be searched and accessed. LPC plans to include the remainder as funding allows and will continue to add newly discovered collections as they become available.

- Amanda Sutphin

Director of Archaeology,  
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission

*Some of the artifacts in the Repository's collections include:*



#### ***Pre-contact Coarse Earthenware with Cord-marked Exterior (ca. 700–900 C.E.)***

*Recovered from College Point in Queens by Dr. Ralph Solecki and Stanley Wisniewski, this is an example of Windsor Brushed ceramics. Its exterior was finished with a toothed or ridged implement such as a scallop shell.*



#### ***Walter Raleigh Smoking Pipe Stem (ca. 1630–1640)***

*From the Stadt Huys project led by Dr. Nan Rothschild and Dr. Diana Wall, this pipe stem is made of white ball clay and is decorated on both sides depicting a toothed sea creature.*



**Covered Vessel (ca. 1825–1900)**

*From the Van Cortlandt Project led by Dr. Arthur Bankoff and Dr. Frederick Winter as a Brooklyn College archaeological field school, this is a covered brown Transferware covered vessel with Romantic imagery. Interestingly, because one side of the vessel which may have had a handle is broken, it cannot be determined if this was a covered food vessel or a chamber pot.*



**Glass Toy Teacup (ca. 1900–2006)**

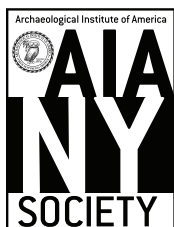
*From the South Ferry Station project in Battery Park led by Linda Stone, AKRF, and URS Corporation (now AECOM). It was made by the Akro Toy Company.*

*For more information about the Landmarks Preservation Commission, see their website:*

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/lpc/index.page>

*A PDF of the LPC review process and guidance is also available online at:*

[https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/lpc/downloads/pdf/2018\\_Guidelines%20for%20Archaeology\\_Final\\_high%20res.pdf](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/lpc/downloads/pdf/2018_Guidelines%20for%20Archaeology_Final_high%20res.pdf)



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