



AIA *News from the* NEW YORK SOCIETY

NEW YEAR AND NEW BEGINNINGS

The New Year often comes with “resolutions”—“New Beginnings.” Yes “change is the only constant”—a well-worn cliché that is not only true but should also lead us to ask questions about “beginnings.” For all change, despite its roots, starts somewhere or with something. In my past President’s Letters I have explored the adventure of archaeology both in the field and in the laboratory upon return from the field. I have noted that frontiers exist for both the natural and social sciences and that frontiers play a special role in archaeology. Above all, I have tried to convey a sense of the adventure of archaeological exploration. But how does it start and what keeps it going?

To some extent archaeological exploration has always been with mankind. True, in earlier centuries such exploration was more “treasure hunting” rather than disciplined investigation. But some kind of “start” is necessary. In this Newsletter you will find articles about “new beginnings.”

The AIA-NY Society just launched a new program, the *AIA-NY Society Scholars Program*. The Program’s goals are to support young NY City scholars in their archaeological studies, to link them to the AIA and especially to the NY Society and to connect the NY Society to faculty across NY City. The Program provides for up to six awardees a free membership in the AIA, a free subscription to the *American Journal of Archaeology*, and a number of other free costs inclusive of hosting the awardees to dinner with our lecture speakers. Significantly, the awardees become eligible to apply for a \$1,500 scholarship which will be awarded in the spring to one of the six to help defray expenses for an archaeological fieldwork experience.

In October we announced our six awardees. Herein you will see their pictures along with a their acad-

emic affiliation, and a short statement of their career goals. This is a “new beginning” for them and for your society. Your membership and the support of our Friends group is what makes this scholarship possible.

“New beginnings” is also a hallmark of the AIA in the past. In the Newsletter you will find an article about the American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE), the premiere Egyptological organization in the US. The article includes the connection of the AIA to ARCE’s founding in 1948 and the remarkable archaeological and conservational work that ARCE and its members are doing in Egypt. ARCE was a “new beginning” after WW II but one whose dynamism continues today.

The forthcoming lecture season, listed in the Newsletter, includes different kinds of “new beginnings.” Our first lecture on January 16 will be at the Italian Cultural Institute, a new venue for the NY Society. Dr. Gretchen Meyers will give us insight into the ancient Etruscans. Please note the included link for the required RSVP. On February 20 at the institute for the Study of the Ancient World (ISAW) Dr. Bernadette Cap will discuss the recent discovery of ancient Maya markets, a discovery that “has caused major changes to our understandings of the complex ways the Maya interacted and were integrated.” In March Dr. John Hopkins will examine the after-life of the biographies of archaeological finds. And in April Dr. Lisa Trever will take us to the world of the Moche, a pre-Inca peoples whose visual expression is among the most exciting in the ancient Americas. The lectures should be exciting; please mark your calendars to attend.

-Jeffrey Lamia
President, AIA New York Society

AIA NEW YORK SOCIETY SPRING 2020 LECTURE SERIES

Seeing is Believing: Communal Religion at the Sanctuary of Poggio Colla

Gretchen Meyers

Associate Professor of Classics, Franklin & Marshall College

The Etruscan hilltop site of Poggio Colla, located in the Mugello Valley approximately 22 miles north east of Florence, provides unique evidence for a community within an important sanctuary setting. Excavation from 1995–2015 revealed this major sacred space in Northern Etruria with a sequence of monumental buildings stretching from the seventh to the second centuries B.C.E. A number of votive depositions indicate varied acts of religious devotion at the sanctuary throughout its history, including several dedications from women. The recent discovery of a stele dating to the sixth century B.C.E. inscribed multiple times with visible texts that have been interpreted as sacred in nature further confirms a long history of cult continuity at the site. Excavated evidence for habitation and a significant ceramic and roof tile production center on the hillside in a region known as the Podere Funghi serves as an example of such a satellite community.

This lecture examines the archaeological remains from Poggio Colla to reconstruct a community shaped by its geography, architecture or economic growth. In addition the different types of votive actions testify to a steady stream of diverse worshippers and suggest that Poggio Colla can be viewed as a community of individuals joined by common beliefs, as much as by its built structures.

(AIA-NY Society Haupt Lecture; Co-sponsored by the Italian Cultural Institute)



January 16 at 6:00 pm

Italian Cultural Institute, 686 Park Avenue (between 68th & 69th Streets)



RSVP is required to attend Dr. Meyers' lecture. Register to attend this event through the Italian Cultural Institute website (https://iicnewyork.esteri.it/iic_newyork/en/gli_eventi/).

Ancient Maya Marketplaces: Hubs of Interaction and Integration

Bernadette Cap

University of Texas at San Antonio

The identification of marketplaces among the Classic Maya has come late for several reasons, one of which is that they were most often open-air events in which perishable, temporary stalls were created and thus challenging to find archaeologically. Their discovery however, has caused major changes to our understandings of the complex ways in the Maya interacted and were integrated. This lecture explores the ways in which Classic Maya marketplaces (AD 500–900) served to provide staple goods for households and could be influential in the political strategies of Maya rulers. Marketplaces at the sites of Buenavista del Cayo and Xunantunich located 5km from each other in the Mopan River valley of Belize are discussed in detail. The extensive research strategy applied at these sites has contributed to settling the debate as to the existence of Classic Maya marketplaces and addresses questions about their diversity.

(Brush National Lecture; Co-sponsored by the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World)



February 20 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. Cap's lecture. Details of the RSVP will be posted on our website (<http://aia-nysociety.org/events>) and sent via email to AIA-NY Society members.

Decapitated: Reassembling the Biographies of Ancient Mediterranean Objects

John North Hopkins

Assistant Professor, Department of Art History & The Institute of Fine Arts, NYU

Ancient objects typically have long and complex lives. Their many uses (and re-uses) in Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Greek or Roman contexts imbue them with extraordinary significance for the study of the past, but their modern rediscoveries and uses by looters, dealers, collectors, museums and academics often provide further twist to their (hi)stories. Often, important moments from their biographies are lost or purposefully hidden. While such obscurity can limit their value and do irreparable harm, new methods and perspectives in archaeological and museological research have opened some interesting doors. This talk will introduce a large-scale project to reassemble the biographies of ancient Mediterranean objects held at the Menil Collection, a prestigious art museum in Houston. After an overview of the purposes, practices and initial results, I will focus on one example from the collection and the value regained by opening up archives, acquisition records and museum files in a collaborative new effort between museums and the academic community. One example from the collection and the value regained by opening up archives, acquisition records and museum files in a collaborative new effort between museums and the academic community.

(Co-sponsored by the Department of Classics and Oriental Studies, Hunter College)



March 24 at 6:30 pm

Hemmerdinger Screening Room, Room 708, Hunter College, Lexington & 68th Street

Majesty, Myth, and Monsters in Moche Art of Ancient Peru

Lisa Trever

Lisa and Bernard Selz Associate Professor in Pre-Columbian Art History and Archaeology, Columbia University

Moche art of northern Peru has often been singled out as one of the most expressive visual traditions of ancient Latin America. From highly naturalistic ceramic portrait vessels, to sumptuous works of metal, mosaic, and textiles made for royal patrons, to complex iconography including ancient stories of divine heroes battling monstrous creatures, Moche art and material culture has had a place in museums and art-historical scholarship for more than a century. In this illustrated lecture, Trever will discuss recent developments in archaeology and art history that have dramatically expanded our understanding of this important artistic tradition and the world of its creators.

(Co-Sponsored by the Columbia Department of Anthropology and the Center for Archaeology)



April 21 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.*



AIA-NY SOCIETY SCHOLARS, 2019–20 ANNOUNCED

The AIA-NY Society is pleased to announce the awardees of its inaugural new program, the AIA-NY Society Scholars Program. The Program seeks to promote young scholars in their study of archaeology by engaging them in the AIA and the activities of the AIA-New York Society and by supporting their participation in fieldwork projects. Designed specifically for the benefit of college students in New York City, the program is wholly administered and overseen by the New York Society.



Abdul-Alim Farook is a first-year student at the CUNY Graduate Center, majoring in Liberal Arts with a focus in archaeology. He spent the month of June 2018 analyzing obsidian samples in El Baul, Guatemala. Also, In July of the same year, he excavated at the 5th century site of Las Mesas in the Copan Valley, Honduras, under the supervision of Dr. Cameron McNeil. Currently, his goal is to study the caves which he explored during his time in Copan.



Kelly McLafferty is in her Senior year at Queens College, where she is a double major in Anthropology and German. She is mainly interested in human environment interaction, more specifically how people use their environment for crafts and tool making. She plans to continue her studies in archaeology at the graduate level and investigate Viking settlements in Scotland. This summer she completed her first field season at the Maya site of Nixtun Ch'ich', in Guatemala.



Max Meyer is a junior at the College of Arts and Science at NYU, where he studies ancient art history and material culture. He is particularly interested in pan-Nile trading of pottery, as well as early Roman architecture and the built environment. Max has excavated the Latin site of Gabii and will be joining NYU's team at Aphrodisias next summer, and hopes to continue his study of ancient art and archaeology in graduate school in the coming years.



LaShanté (Lala) St. Fleur is a first-year graduate student in the Archaeology concentration of the M.A. Program in Liberal Studies at the Graduate Center, the City University of New York. Previously as an undergraduate at Brooklyn College, CUNY, she majored in archaeological anthropology, with a double minor in classics and history.



Christina Stefanou is a first-year graduate student at the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World at New York University. She is interested in the archaeology of the Aegean and the Mediterranean and more specifically in cultural interaction between the Aegean and the East Mediterranean, especially during the Early Iron Age. She has wide-ranging fieldwork experience in Greece and Italy and she recently worked on Early Iron Age to Hellenistic pottery from Knossos under the supervision of Professor Antonis Kotsonas. In her future research, she plans to explore the cultural and social transformations related to population movement and interregional interaction, and questions of the ways in which imported and Orient influenced artefacts are used in the social and material expression of local communities.



Dylan G. Winchell is a senior at NYU studying Anthropology and Classics. Having excavated in Spain and Cyprus, he is now narrowing down his specific area of focus to Mediterranean prehistory and Roman archaeology; at the moment, his work focuses on the small maritime networks which connected the separated local communities which made up these societies. He hopes to be accepted into a PhD program in the New York metropolitan area for the Fall 2020 semester, in order to continue his archaeological studies.



Feature: AIA-NY Society Scholars' Research

Four of Our 2019–20 Scholars Share Their Archaeological Experiences

Excavating a Maya Ball Court



During the summer of 2019, I worked on a site called Nixtun-Chi'ch'. This site is located on the western edge of Lake Petén Itzá in Guatemala. I excavated the south side of Structure I 1/2, which is one of ball-courts on the site. This ball-court is un-

der investigation because it is the second largest ball-court in Mesoamerica, as well as likely the largest ball-court in Preclassic Mesoamerica. The excavation of Structure I 1/2 was eight meters long, north to south. The purpose of this excavation was to find the southern wall of Structure I 1/2, as well as investigate whether if at any time Sixth Street ran along the southern side of the structure.

Throughout the excavation pieces of obsidian, stone tools, and various ceramics were collected. However, probably the most intriguing discoveries were apart from the ball-court structure. An interesting configuration of caliza stones were discovered and appeared to be a feature of some sort. However, the identification or function of these stones are still unknown. Since we were curious about this unidentifiable feature, we opened the excavation to the west. The expansion to the west led to the discovery of stone-eating termites. The

termites had caused significant damage in the form of giant holes, and we have reason to believe that they ate much of the caliza that we were searching for. Based on our observations, we believe that the 12th and 13th floors are proof that Sixth Street was located on the southern side of Structure I 1/2. Below the 13th floor we found Wall 2, which was built with small limestone blocks, resembling bricks. Both the floor at the base of the wall and the filling dated to the Preclassic period, thus the 12th and 13th floors are thought to be parts of a plaza or Sixth Street.

- Kelly McLafferty

Developing Skills at Gabii Field School

This summer, I had the opportunity to travel to Rome to be a student volunteer on the Gabii Project, an archaeological project and field school run through the University of Michigan. During my five weeks in Rome, I met students, ranging from freshmen to post-docs, coming from several countries, as well as forming close professional relationships with many of the directors.



In laboratory rotations, I had the opportunity to float dirt in the environmental lab, looking for charred seeds and bits of charcoal from soil samples from Gabii, as well as other digs in and around Rome that had enlisted the help of our labs. I also spent several days with the finds staff, washing pottery sherds and learning proper documentation and drawing methods for finds. The finds staff also presented a well-curated array of objects found in previous seasons to use as study materials for various lectures and workshops, including a particularly interesting trimetallic statue of Alexander the Great (*see photo, above*).

Of particular note was my work with the topography department. With the limited amount of space and equipment the department has, rotations were limited to a small group of students, which I was lucky enough to make my way into. I quickly developed a close professional relationship with Dr. Rachel Opitz from the University of Glasgow, who introduced me to her work with the site database, as well as giving me a foundation in ArcGIS. I ended up working for a week and a half with the topo team, often after-hours and on lunch breaks.

I was assigned to Trench G, working on what is thought to be a private residence, ornately decorated and with several confusing and unique features. Towards the end of the season, I uncovered a polychromatic mosaic floor layer; together with my trenchmates, we painstakingly swept off the layer of organic materials above the mosaic to reveal the most intricate design found this season.

- Max Meyer

Investigating Cult Continuity at Knossos

This past summer, I spent three weeks at Knossos, studying Early Iron Age to Hellenistic pottery under the supervision of Professor Antonis Kotsonas (ISAW/NYU). The pottery derives from the fieldwork of Dr. Athanasia Kanta (23rd Ephorate of Antiquities) at the Religious Centre of Knossos, which is supported by the Institute for Aegean Prehistory. Our research addressed the question of continuity of cult in this important area, which presents evidence for long-lasting occupation,

ranging from the Middle Bronze Age (Minoan) to the Roman period (18th century BCE to the 2nd century AD). This research proved to be a particularly fruitful experience. For the first time, I had the opportunity to get actively involved in the study of archaeological material for the purposes of a major academic publication. After doing preparatory readings on Cretan pottery and receiving hands-on training by Professor Kotsonas, I embarked on a careful examination of a few hundred pottery fragments, defining and describing them with reference to fabric, shape and decoration, and dating them on the basis of these attributes. This process was very beneficial, since I learnt to identify a variety of pottery styles and shapes and to use specialized equipment (like the Munsell color chart). Most importantly, by the end of the season, I was able to properly date each pottery fragment and understand the significance of the pottery of different stratigraphic units for the purposes of reconstructing past activity at the site. Even though I had worked before in projects on Crete, I had never been exposed to this stage of the research process. This new experience not only helped me develop a range of practical skills and exposed me to a variety of methodologies and research problems, but it also stimulated my interest in the archaeology of Crete and inspired my enthusiasm for the study of the material culture of less well-researched periods in the island, such as the Early Iron Age and the Archaic (ca. 1100–500 BCE). This experience was a milestone for my professional development, and will inform my future participating in projects elsewhere in Crete, such as Lyktos, from next summer onward.

- Christina Stefanou

Studying the Transmission of Knowledge

My most recent research has been as a member of the African Paleosciences Laboratory at New York University, operating a small part of an experimental archaeology project run by Dr. Justin Pargeter. The project's main goal is to observe the correla-

tion between language and behavioral learning in modern humans and our ancestors. Our methodology is to use multiple control groups of individuals and give them varying degrees of training in flintknapping before allowing them to attempt to knap on their own. Certain groups received a significant amount of teaching by an experienced knapper in their native language, while other groups were only allowed to watch a knapper at work, without talking to them, before attempting the same task. Some groups were allowed to converse about the task at hand whilst attempting it, while others were told that they should either be silent or to keep their talking to minimal small talk. This produced varying results which myself and others are beginning to catalogue and analyze under Dr. Pargeter. It is hoped that the results of the project can be compared to extant Paleolithic assemblages in order to gain insight as to how technological learning may have happened in the distant past, and whether or not language played a significant role in this.

- Dylan G. Winchell



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 several events this past fall including a visit to the Rubin Museum to view exhibition *Relics from an Ancient Stupa*, and a special

private tour of NYU | Institute for the Study of the Ancient World exhibition *A Wonder to Behold*, guided by Rachel Herschman. Our upcoming Spring event is a special lecture by Dr. Gary Farney of Rutgers University to discuss his excavation and project entitled *The Upper Sabina Tiberina Project* which is located in Vacone, Italy. We also have planned a visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art to learn about Rayyane Tabet's project and the archaeological site Tell Halaf.

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*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
Heidi James-Fisher (hjames@studiolxiv.com).*



Spotlight on...

For New York's "Ancient" Organizations, Entwined Pasts Become Present

The American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE) is the premier American organization supporting research on Egyptian history and culture, fostering broader knowledge on Egyptian history and culture, and working to strengthen American-Egyptian cultural ties. Founded in 1948, ARCE is both a membership organization as well as a consortium that represents numerous universities and institutions in both the U.S. and Egypt, which currently conduct more than 40 archaeological and conservation projects in Egypt. Since 1994, ARCE itself has implemented more than 80 conservation, documentation, ground water lowering, and capacity building projects in partnership with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities. ARCE also supports an ongoing fellowship program that to date has supported more than 500 American researchers on topics covering all time periods of Egyptian history.

ARCE also shares an intertwined past with the Archaeological Institute of America (AIA). In 2018 both ARCE and Archaeology Magazine celebrated their 70th anniversaries. This is no coincidence, as these organizations were cut from the same cloth by the same man. In 1948 Sterling Dow, then President of the AIA, observed in *Archaeology Magazine*:

Before the war our country sent to Egypt archaeological expeditions which, taken together, were more elaborate in their equipment, more ambitious in their objectives, and more generously financed, than any archaeological expeditions sent by any country to any area. Now all the big expeditions have ended. [...]

For the sake of our standing in Egyptian archaeology, and for the future of the subject in America, and in Egypt, and else-

where, all American Egyptologists have felt an impulse to act together.

Some sort of School in Egypt, like those which the Institute founded long since in Athens, Rome, Jerusalem, Baghdad, and Santa Fe, [...] would go far to do what the Metropolitan Museum, the Oriental Institute, the Museum of Fine Arts, and other organizations, can no longer do separately.

With this reasoning and the support of the AIA, Dow and other distinguished scholars and enthusiasts founded ARCE. Today, ARCE is a dynamic and much expanded organization. The AIA-New York Society looks forward to continued collaboration with ARCE's New York Chapter.



*Cleaning of the painted wall reliefs
at the Khonsu Temple at Karnak*

One of the core goals of ARCE's mission has always been to strengthen relationships between Egypt and the U.S., with archaeological research and conservation as a key area of focus. Since its founding, ARCE has taken strides towards creating sustainable practices within our projects by working with Egyptian citizens and training them to inspect, conserve, and maintain the sites that are their own proud cultural heritage.

An excellent example of this is from ARCE's recent work in Luxor. From 2007 until 2018 ARCE conducted successful conservation field schools at Khonsu Temple. The temple is dedicated to the god Khonsu, a lunar god, son of Amun and Mut, the triad of Luxor (ancient Thebes). They each had their impressive temples in the city on the eastern

bank of the Nile, forming the core of the complex of the major sacred site of Karnak. Most of the temple was originally built and decorated during the later part of the New Kingdom, during which Khonsu is described as ‘the Greatest God of the Great Gods.’ In fact, it’s one of the best preserved and most complete of the New Kingdom temples standing in present-day Egypt.

During the project, ARCE trained over 75 Ministry of Antiquities conservators and supervisors to carry out archaeological conservation. These trainees cleaned and conserved most of the chapels of Khonsu Temple, as well as recorded before and after conditions of the interior of the chapels. Field school attendees were also taught to prepare maps of damage and diagnose and submit treatment proposal forms for each chapel.

The work was painstaking and extensive, but Khonsu Temple now shines as one of the finest examples of ARCE’s conservation work to date. On September 8, 2019, ARCE was joined by its partners USAID and the Ministry of Antiquities to celebrate the completion of projects in Luxor at

Dra Abu El Naga and Khonsu Temple. A total of 11,000,000EGP was invested into the conservation of Khonsu Temple. Thanks to the work done by ARCE and the support of USAID, this exemplar of New Kingdom temple architecture will live on as it has for two millennia, enriching our knowledge of Ancient Egyptian religious practices and ideologies for generations to come.

- *Louise Bertini*

Executive Director, ARCE

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