

EMILY ANDERSON *Classics, Johns Hopkins University*

THE PATH FROM TOMB TO PALACE: RE-INVENTION OF POPULAR SOCIOPOLITICAL PRACTICE IN EARLY CRETE

(Session 1 | Thursday, 12:30)

ABSTRACT: The transition from a “pre-palatial” to “palatial” landscape on the island of Crete at the turn of the second millennium BCE has received an incredible amount of scholarly attention, yet remains one of the most challenging and misunderstood aspects of Aegean Bronze archaeology. In part this is because framing it as a transition increasingly seems flawed. The first so-called palaces on the island—monumental building complexes defined in part by their integration of large open courts—were in many cases preceded, sometimes in precisely the same spots, by earlier large buildings with courts. With this realization, the idea of a sudden, dramatic overhaul in sociocultural life taking place on the island at this time, expressed in part in the establishment of these novel central places, is fundamentally rattled. We are now faced with new, complex questions concerning what the nature of social change might have been and how developments in social experience may have actually occurred. Part of this requires us to think not just about change, but also about continuity—and about how the two are not opposed or exhaustive notions. In this paper I aim to consider this situation through a corpus of objects—zoomorphic and anthropomorphic pouring vessels (*rhyta* and *askoi*)—by probing their peculiar affordances and contributions to sociopolitical practice. I am specifically interested in how the contexts in which these distinctive objects were engaged altered over the course of what we describe as the later Prepalatial and Protopalatial periods, moving from local to regional venues on the island, and how, simultaneous with these recontextualizations, subtle but significant changes in the form and mechanics of the vessels also occurred. I consider these spatial and material factors as socially innovative developments. Through these entangled alterations in location and the physical character of focal objects, explicitly familiar collective ritual actions made new corporeal claims on participants and recast crucial performative dynamics of the events. Close consideration of these innovated engagements of humans and things sheds light on crucial reformulations in the sociopolitical emphasis of these collective practices.

BIO: Emily S. K. Anderson is an assistant professor in the Department of Classics at Johns Hopkins University. Her research primarily concerns the material and visual cultures of the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean Bronze Age with a focus on the ways in which objects are involved in the relations, negotiations, and unfolding of sociocultural life. Her fieldwork focuses on the Aegean world, spanning time periods from the Final Neolithic to the early Classical and centering primarily on the Early-Late Bronze Age. Her first book, *Seals, Craft and Community in Bronze Age Crete*, came out in 2016 (Cambridge University Press). She is presently working on a second book project concerning human engagements with non-human animals in Minoan Crete enacted through material culture.

MARGARET ANDREWS *History, University of Chicago*

CITY AND SOUL: MARIAN PROCESSIONS IN EARLY MEDIEVAL ROME

(Session 2 | Thursday, 4:15)

ABSTRACT: This paper discusses the dynamics and significance of papal processions mainly in early medieval Rome (eighth–ninth centuries), specifically liturgical processions that coursed between the ancient Forum and the basilica of S. Maria Maggiore.

Four regular processions were held each year on each of the Marian holidays (Purification, Nativity, Assumption, and Annunciation), and additional processions were added in times of civic crisis. I pay special attention to the performance of contrition that became a feature of these processions since their origins in times of crisis in the seventh century and show how it later became associated with Mary, even when divorced from such moments of acute civic need. The rather unique dynamics of the processions, which were held at night and in which participants walked barefoot, can be connected to these origins, and I explore how such performative aspects worked to impart a specifically Marian sanctity to the urban landscape that the processions traversed. Indeed, these processions were deeply connected to the idea of Rome as a physical city, and I argue that they would have been understood as expressions of papal power and protection, via Mary, over the city and its populace as a whole. In the nascent papal state of early medieval Rome, spiritual and civic leadership became one, and these processions reinforced multiple times a year the papacy's newfound stewardship of both city and soul.

BIO: Margaret M. Andrews is assistant professor of Roman history at the University of Chicago. She received her BA in classics at Princeton University in 2005 and her PhD in Roman archaeology at the University of Pennsylvania in 2015. Prior to Chicago, she taught at the Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology at Brown University as a visiting assistant professor of classical archaeology. Her work focuses on the intersection of Roman social history and material culture over the longue durée, and she is currently preparing a monograph on the archaeology and social history of a neighborhood in Rome from the Iron Age to the Early Middle Ages (ca. 850 BCE–850 CE). She has held a number of fellowships and published multiple articles and chapters based on her research and fieldwork in Rome and central Italy.

JEAN M. EVANS Respondent, *The Oriental Institute, University of Chicago*

BIO: Jean M. Evans is chief curator and deputy director of the Oriental Institute Museum. Her current research project, "Sacred Objects, Sacred Spaces: Mesopotamian Religious Practice at Tuttub," is a study of sacred gifting practice at the intersection of materiality, place, and the sacred. She is also the author of *The Lives of Sumerian Sculpture: An Archaeology of the Early Dynastic Temple* (Cambridge University Press, 2012). She has held previous appointments at Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and worked on numerous excavations in Syria and Turkey.

GARY FEINMAN and LINDA NICHOLAS *Anthropology, The Field Museum*

RETHINKING POLITICS IN THE DEEP PAST

(Introduction | Thursday, 9:30)

ABSTRACT: For decades, anthropological perspectives on preindustrial social formations have focused on models derived from Karl Marx, Karl Polanyi, and Karl Wittfogel. These frames have stressed kingship, elaborate palaces, despotic rule, centralized political control of production and exchange, high degrees of inequality, subsistence economies, and oppressive taxation. Subaltern voice and actions are rarely considered. Yet novel theoretical investigations and perspectives, reconsiderations of classic studies, and new empirically based comparisons all call this unimodal frame of historic times into question. Although autocracy and kings were certainly significant in many contexts in the deep past, it should not be unilaterally presumed that all ancient polities were organized in the highly centralized, top-down way that much of our theory presumes. In fact, in one of the macroregions where we research, Mesoamerica, some of the largest and most enduring prehispanic polities—such as those centered at Teotihuacan and

Monte Albán—were clearly not dominated by despotic rulers and, rather, were organized more collectively with apparent checks on the hegemony of rulers and muted degrees of inequality in life and at death. This emerging realization raises important new theoretical questions concerning the causes of historical change over time and variation across space, demands novel vantages as to the ways in which we probe and interpret the archaeological record, and even throws into question long-held truisms concerning supposed differences between “the West and the rest” as well as the role of “modernization” in the expansion of subaltern voice.

BIO, FEINMAN: Gary M. Feinman is the MacArthur curator of anthropology at the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, IL, USA. He has codirected long-term archaeological field programs in Oaxaca (Mexico) and Shandong (China). Feinman is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and received the Presidential Recognition Award from the Society for American Archaeology.

BIO, NICHOLAS: Linda Nicholas is adjunct curator of anthropology at the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, IL. She has codirected long-term archaeological field projects in the Valley of Oaxaca (Mexico) and Shandong Province (China). She has published extensively on her field investigations in these regions.

MARCELLA FRANGIPANE *Ancient Studies, Sapienza University of Rome*

NEW FORMS OF POLITICAL EXPRESSIONS AND IDEOLOGICAL MANIPULATION AT THE DAWN OF STATE FORMATION: THE EVIDENCE FROM FOURTH MILLENNIUM ARSLANTEPE, TURKEY (Session 3 | Friday, 11:30)

ABSTRACT: The transformation that took place at Arslantepe in the Upper Euphrates region in the second half of the fourth millennium BCE is emblematic of a profound change in the political performance of the ruling elites and the ways in which they manipulated ideological relations with the population during the crucial phase of state formation. New interactions between the emerging powerful rulers and their subjects arose to maintain and reinforce consensus in a non-religious environment. Public spaces changed radically, creating new types of architectural contexts for ceremonial acts stressing, on the one hand, the submission to power by audience members and, on the other hand, the physical display of authority by political rulers. The arrangement of the public areas in the form of functionally and architecturally diversified spaces—economic, administrative, political, and ritual—all interconnected with each other and, communicating directly with the elite residences on the top of the mound, shaped a very early full-fledged palace, which was the seat of this new political interaction. Monumentality, specifically intended spaces for the performance of codified political acts, and imagery—exhibited both in wall paintings aimed at impressing those who entered the palace, and in seal designs used in administrative practices involving large sectors of the population—were the ideological vehicles and tools for granting legitimacy and consensus to these new types of top-down relations. In contrast to what had happened in religious contexts, the audience was now really and ideologically excluded from participation in political spectacle, being more passive viewers than actual participants. The possible increasing awareness of this exclusion, together with the absence of urbanization and the lack of a traditional stratified social and economic structure at Arslantepe, seems to have generated the perception of conflicting interests and created resistance from various sectors of the population, bringing the system to collapse.

BIO: Marcella Frangipane is professor of prehistory and protohistory of the Near and Middle East at the Sapienza University of Rome. She is a foreign associate member of the National Academy of Sciences (USA), and a corresponding member of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut in Berlin, the Italian Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, and the Archaeological Institute of America. She is also the editor-in-chief of the journal *Origini* and the editor of two monograph series,

Arslantepe and *Studi di Preistoria Orientale* (SPO), all published by the Sapienza University of Rome.

She has participated in field research in Mexico, Italy, Egypt, and Turkey, serving as assistant field director of the Sapienza excavations at the Late Predynastic site of Maadi (Egypt), and, since 1990, director of the Italian Archaeological Project in Eastern Anatolia (*Arslantepe-Malatya* and *Zeytinli Bahçe-Urfa* excavations, Turkey). The *Arslantepe* Project, where Frangipane has worked for more than forty years, is the core of her research activity and the main inspiration of her interest in such themes as the early development of hierarchical and unequal societies and the rise of centralized economies, bureaucracy, and the State in the ancient Near East, with particular reference to the Mesopotamian and Anatolian environments.

For her research at *Arslantepe*, Frangipane has received the Discovery Award by the Shanghai Archaeology Forum (China 2015); the Vittorio De Sica Prize for Science (Archaeology) (Italy 2015); and Rotondi Prize to Art Saviors (Italy 2017). She has also been awarded two honorary titles by the president of the Italian Republic and an honorary PhD by the University of Malatya.

AMIR GILAN *Archaeology and Ancient Near Eastern Cultures, Tel Aviv University*

"I WILL NOT AGAIN INTERCHANGE THE SPRING AND AUTUMN FESTIVALS": HITTITE KINGS BETWEEN RELIGIOUS PIETY AND POLITICAL PERFORMANCE (Session 2 | Thursday, 2:15)

ABSTRACT: With a few notable exceptions, Hittite kings took the cult very seriously. A substantial number of the texts excavated so far in Hattuša, as well as in various Hittite provincial towns, relate to the proper practice, administration, and maintenance of the cult. The relatively high percentage of cult-related texts in the Hittite royal archives may even suggest that Hittite administration was primarily cult administration—the upkeep of the cult the main *raison d'être* of the Hittite state. Numerous Hittite texts document royal concern for the cult. These include numerous festival texts of various types, royal prayers, votive texts, royal instructions, endowments, cult foundations, and cult inventories. Oracular investigations were often conducted in order to establish the correct practice of the cult or to detect possible neglect.

Recent ritual theory adds another perspective to the study of the Hittite state cult, suggesting that it also had an important political component. According to Bell (1997, p. 128), political rituals constructed, displayed, and promoted the power of political institutions. In the Hittite case, this was the institution of kingship. In participation with the lower echelons of Hittite society, the Hittite state cult, in which numerous deities were venerated and cared for by a hierarchical, carefully orchestrated social effort headed by the king, achieved precisely that. In fact, the king's appearance in the rituals did not merely represent, symbolize, or legitimate royal power—it was royal power.

The present contribution scrutinizes several illuminative cases of cult neglect by Hittite kings and their consequences. It also argues that religious intention and political motivation were often contradictory. Some of these tensions between religious piety and political performance are explored. How, for example, was the political need of the king to appear in public reconciled with the need to guarantee his security, to avoid compromising his purity, and with the general aversion of crowds found in various purification rituals? Were Hittite state festivals ever intentionally conceived as performances by their "creators," or "exploited" for any purposes other than the straightforward one—the dutiful veneration of the gods? And if so, who were the audiences that were to benefit from these performances?

Bio: Amir Gilan is senior lecturer in Hittite and Anatolian studies in the faculty of archaeology and ancient Near Eastern cultures at Tel Aviv University, Israel. He has published widely on Hittite literature, history, and culture, with a particular interest in political performance and the concept of kingship. Current research topics include historical consciousness in Hittite Anatolia, Hittite magic, an anthology of Old Hittite historical texts, and the religious world of King Hattusili III.

KATJA GOEBS *Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, University of Toronto*

BOTCHED, TWEAKED, REINTERPRETED: THREE CASE STUDIES OF ROYAL RITUAL BEHAVIOR IN ANCIENT EGYPT (Session 2 | Thursday, 2:45)

ABSTRACT: It is common knowledge that the Egyptian king was believed to straddle the divine and terrestrial spheres. This belief was underpinned, among other things, by declaring him a descendant of the sun god—the head of the pantheon from third millennium BCE onwards—and to have been placed on the throne by him to maintain state and cosmic order, abstracted in the Egyptian concept Maat. This latter feat was accomplished by means of numerous rituals, performed before the general public, select audiences, or, in some cases, shielded from the public eye. Many of these rituals can be said to have reenacted, or at the very least drawn upon, mythical episodes that served to align the ruler with divine actors and provided a sense of universal validity to his actions by emulating perceived divine precedent. Yet, some sources reveal that rituals could go wrong, or that received tradition was manipulated to fit a changed social or political reality. Such cases highlight that important ritual performances were witnessed by an audience, and that this audience had to be convinced that the desired effect of contributing to the maintenance of cosmic order/Maat was in fact achieved. The paper presents three case studies—from different periods of Egyptian history—that demonstrate how Egyptian royal rituals were adapted to fit personal, social, or political needs.

BIO: Katja Goebis is associate professor of Egyptology in the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations at the University of Toronto. Her research focuses primarily on the history and functions of Egyptian religion and the institution of kingship, as well as the interface between the two (such as in the “myths” of kingship, and the shared iconography of gods and kings, etc.). Current research projects include the significance of the concept of “Divine Light” in Egypt and Mesopotamia as well as the relationship between Egyptian text and image as expressed in metaphorical language.

CATHERINE KEARNS *Classics, University of Chicago*

PERFORMING COMMUNITY: RITUAL, COPPER PRODUCTION, AND LOCAL POLITICS IN ARCHAIC CYPRUS (Session 2 | Thursday, 3:45)

ABSTRACT: This paper explores long-term connections in the eastern Mediterranean between polity formation, mining and metal production, and religion. Throughout the ancient Greek and Near Eastern worlds, evidence for cultic practices surfaces in mining landscapes, suggesting intimate ties between the acts of excavating materials out of the ground, transforming ores into new objects and valued commodities, and the powers of certain deities and divine beings who mediate these industrial practices. Often, such “metamorphic” ritual spaces appear at the boundaries of states, in the liminal geological zones and nonurban settled landscapes where metal ores are located, inviting inquiry into the ways in which ritual acts belonged to and helped forge political community. While scholars have previously interpreted extrurban sanctuaries as places that helped solidify the power of the ruling elite through the representation of authorities and the storage of decrees, this paper investigates the instrumentality of rural, semi-industrial sacred spaces in creating and maintaining social boundaries at local scales, and their connections to broader cultural shifts in ritual practice, to economic markets, and to the construction of smaller-scale hierarchies and political affiliations. Using the case study of Iron Age Cyprus, where copper was a major exported commodity and where mining landscapes often include features of ritual, such as shrines and votive deposits, this paper advances the claim that mining sites became one nexus for establishing, performing, and cultivating a type of community outside the urban center in a period of dramatic sociopolitical transformation—one that was both tied to elite institutions in urban centers but also salient to the development of

local political norms. In so doing, it offers opportunities for contesting our assumptions about the relationships between sacred space and political territory, and for elucidating the interface between religion and sociopolitical change.

BIO: Catherine Kearns received her doctorate from Cornell University and is an assistant professor of classics at the University of Chicago. Her research focuses on ancient human-environment relationships, concepts of space and place in antiquity, and socioeconomic change during the Archaic period in the eastern Mediterranean. She codirects the Kalavassos and Maroni Built Environments Project in south-central Cyprus, where she investigates nonurban settlements, landscapes, and ecological change during the Iron Age.

AUGUSTA MCMAHON *Archaeology, University of Cambridge*

SPACIOUS OR EMPTY? MAKING COURTYARDS IN MESOPOTAMIA (Session 1 | Thursday, 10:30)

ABSTRACT: Internal courtyards feature in many Mesopotamian buildings, from houses through monumental temples and palaces. While house courtyards were intensively used—for cooking, crafting, visiting, and sleeping—the uses of courtyards of monumental structures are more ambiguous and varied across any day, week or year. Temple courtyards framed the performance of rituals and held large audiences but also captured empty and awe-inspiring space. Palace courtyards could be gathering spaces, but they could also isolate and intimidate individuals. How might the visuality and acoustic qualities of courtyards have affected users' experience and manipulated their reactions and memories? How did the contrasts provided by crowded and complex urban settings contribute to those experiences?

BIO: Augusta McMahon is a reader in Mesopotamian archaeology in the Department of Archaeology at the University of Cambridge, UK. Her PhD from the University of Chicago (1993) examined the contrast between political history and material culture in the third millennium BC through excavations at Nippur (southern Iraq). Her current research focuses on rethinking urbanism and complexity in the fourth and third millennia BC in southern and northern Mesopotamia, including issues of violent conflict, managed versus private labor, and settlement sustainability. She has excavated extensively across the Middle East (Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Yemen, and Egypt) and is currently field director for the Tell Brak excavation in Syria (suspended) and the al-Hiba excavation in Iraq (beginning 2019).

KATHRYN R. MORGAN *Organizer, The Oriental Institute, University of Chicago*

FUMBLING TOWARDS COMPLEXITY: COLLECTIVE ACTION AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AT EARLY PHRYGIAN GORDION (Session 3 | Friday, 9:30)

ABSTRACT: The archaeological site of Gordion in central Anatolia is best known as the seat of King Midas of Phrygia, he of the mythical "golden touch," whose reign is documented in Assyrian texts dating to the late eighth century BCE. But while Midas is the only historically attested ruler of Phrygia, the site itself is a multiperiod settlement mound, surrounded by over 100 monumental earthen burial mounds, or tumuli. Archaeological excavation of these remains supports the notion that a complex polity based at Gordion was established and thrived there over the course of the Early and Middle Iron Ages, ca. 1200–600 BCE. Relatively little work has been done to elucidate the sociopolitical organization or development of such a polity, however, beyond the simplistic reconstruction of a dynasty of kings whose royal burials are preserved in the tumulus fields; nor have its interactions with the wider Near Eastern world received much scrutiny. In this paper, I reexamine the evidence for sociopolitical formation at the Gordion citadel mound in

the centuries before Midas. I place particular emphasis on the evolution of the city's urban plan, which underwent a period of rapid expansion and monumentalization between ca. 950–825 BCE, contemporary with major urbanization programs in the better-known Syro-Hittite region to the south. This process at Gordion was only briefly interrupted when a massive fire swept through the city at the end of the ninth century BCE, destroying many of its buildings and preserving their rich contents *in situ*. Using archaeological evidence from the citadel and a theoretical approach based in feasting and performance studies, I reconstruct the suite of collective practices taking place in the city at the time of the destruction, arguing that they can help us understand the subsequent emergence of a distinctly Phrygian cultural identity. I conclude that we can more usefully conceive of Gordion, at this transformative moment in the city's history, as a central place for the negotiation of group identity in the context of communal feasts, rather than the seat of an autocratic ruler. That these negotiations were ongoing and contested is further hinted at by the case of a little-known, stylistically unique group of relief-carved architectural orthostats, which were made, erected, and discarded in rapid succession over the course of Gordion's century-long urban expansion. I seek to demonstrate that from this brief and curious interlude, we can begin to get a sense of how diverse local constituencies engaged with and influenced the construction of Phrygia's iconographic and monumental urban identities.

BIO: Kathryn R. Morgan, organizer, is the 2018–2020 Oriental Institute Postdoctoral Fellow. She is an archaeologist of the ancient Near East, focusing on Anatolia, Assyria, and the northern Levant in the second and first millennia BCE. In her work, she seeks to reevaluate conventional narratives of sociopolitical organization and development, focusing on non-elite contributions to sociopolitical transformation, and drawing on anthropological theory and historical criticism alongside traditional archaeological analysis. She received her PhD from the University of Pennsylvania in 2018, and is assistant director of the Chicago-Tübingen Expedition to Zincirli, where she has excavated since 2008.

JAMES OSBORNE *The Oriental Institute, University of Chicago*

THE GREAT SILENCE: POLITICS AND RESISTANCE IN THE SYRO-ANATOLIAN CULTURE COMPLEX (Session 3 | Friday, 10:30)

ABSTRACT: This paper uses a suite of architectural spatial analyses collectively referred to as space syntax to analyze domestic architecture from the Syro-Anatolian Culture Complex (SACC), a collection of city-states that surrounded the northeast corner of the Mediterranean Sea during the Iron Age (ca. 1200–600 BCE). In recent years, these polities have been scrutinized with respect to questions of space and power. Yet as this conference's call for papers emphasizes, the nature of our existing archaeological evidence has necessarily restricted this scrutiny to these kingdoms' upper echelons, with precious little attention being devoted to the spatial nature of power as it was experienced by common citizens. The past two decades have seen what used to be an almost insignificant amount of data from lower cities, towns, and villages grow into a reasonably large corpus of published domestic architecture, and in sites from all parts of SACC, including Kilise Tepe, Tell Mastuma, Tille Höyük, and Zincirli. Combining this data with an earlier generation of published architecture, especially from the site of Çatal Höyük, offers the chance to analyze the expression and experience of power not just by political elites, but by the subjects themselves. Although not themselves venues of political spectacles, spatial analysis of domestic residences from SACC provide insight into the social values that governed daily life in the household. In the process, therefore, we can gain access into the ability, and likelihood, of resistance to political elites on the part of their subjects. Specifically, space syntax reduces buildings to their patterns of accessibility, on the assumption that buildings with greater or lesser accessibility throughout their rooms reflect corresponding social structures of exclusivity or inclusivity. In conjunction with known practices of political resistance, especially the chronic destruction of political monuments, the results indicate a scenario in which acts of

political resistance run surprisingly counter to the relatively conservative sociopolitical world that was inhabited by most Iron Age people as indicated by the spatial properties of their domestic architecture, emphasizing the stakes that such acts of resistance must have held.

BIO: James Osborne is an archaeologist who works in the eastern Mediterranean and ancient Near East focusing on the Bronze and Iron Ages. He concentrates especially on Anatolia—a region that is today within the Republic of Turkey—during the late second and early first millennium BCE. Most of James' publications have concentrated on the intersection of space and power, using analyses of Anatolian monumental buildings, cities, and settlement patterns during the Iron Age as his primary subject matter. Methodologically, he incorporates quantitative methods like GIS, space syntax, and geochemical ceramic analysis with native historical and iconographic sources.

ANNE PORTER *Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, University of Toronto*

SCHISM: AUDIENCE ADHERENCE TO CONTESTED POWER AT TELL BANAT, SYRIA

(Session 1 | Thursday, 10:00)

ABSTRACT: Two mounds, each enclosing generations of the dead, both simultaneously transformed on three separate occasions. But each different in construction and constituents. One stands tall on the open plain outside the settlement, one is seated within it. One looms larger than the other. At the same time, access to one seems open, unconstrained, while access to the other is mediated by an elaborate façade. And yet both share one prime characteristic: visibility. These monumental constructions, the bodies inside them, and traces of associated ritual practices, raise critical questions about the engagement of the populace in the performance of power in the third millennium BCE. Both represent considerable labor investment and control of resources; both are markers of a social identity in one way or another. But do they represent distributed or contested power? And does one group eventually emerge as dominant over the other?

BIO: Anne Porter, University of Toronto, was codirector of the Euphrates Salvage Project at the Tell Banat Settlement Complex, Syria, and is currently in charge of the Banat Publication Project. She is the author of *Mobile Pastoralism and the Formation of Near Eastern Civilizations: Weaving Together Society* (Cambridge University Press) and coeditor with Glenn Schwartz of *Sacred Killing: Human and Animal Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East* (Eisenbrauns).

SETH RICHARDSON *Respondent, The Oriental Institute, University of Chicago*

Bio: Seth Richardson is a historian of the ancient Near East, specializing in the analysis of cuneiform texts from Mesopotamia's Old Babylonian period (2000–1600 BCE). His work has centered around political-economic questions about institutions, warfare, and prosopography, as well as the problem of violence and its role in the rise of the ancient state. He is an associate at the Oriental Institute and has been managing editor of the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* since 2011.

LAUREN RISTVET *Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania*

AN IMPERIAL AUDIENCE: THE PROVINCIAL RECEPTION OF ASSYRIAN POLITICAL RHETORIC

(Session 3 | Friday, 10:00)

ABSTRACT: Assyrian political performance and the construction of an imperial ideology are well-established topics of research in Assyriology, art history, and archaeology. Yet, much of this work has taken a top-down approach, focusing particularly on the relief programs in royal palaces, royal inscriptions, seals, and large-scale landscape modification such as Sennacherib's canal. In most cases, the audiences for these ideological productions have been assumed to be elite members of the empire, particularly the royal family, royal officials, envoys, and the scribal classes. There has been less attention to whether or not other people within the empire were audiences for state ideological projects and if they were how they may have received, reproduced, or contested these practices. This paper focuses on those other audiences and their role within these processes. How were the political performances of Assyrian provincial elites related to those in the imperial capitals? How did these individuals receive, reproduce, alter, and/or construct imperial messages? How did elite families in Assur engage with ideology? How did poor families? What about other individuals in villages in the Assyrian heartland? Provincial capitals? Other settlements within the empire? In order to excavate these processes, I consider a wide-range of archaeological and textual sources, including wall paintings, figurines, burials, administrative texts, provincial literary archives, faunal materials, archaeobotanical remains, urban layouts, and settlement patterns.

BIO: Lauren Ristvet is associate professor of anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania, and the Robert H. Dyson, Jr. associate curator of the Near East section at the Penn Museum. She is the author of *Ritual, Performance, and Politics in the Ancient Near East* (Cambridge, 2015) and *In the Beginning* (McGraw-Hill, 2007). She has also curated or co-curated several exhibits at the Penn Museum including the Middle East Galleries, Cultures in the Crossfire: Stories from Syria and Iraq, and Sex: A History in 30 Objects.

MONICA SMITH *Anthropology, University of California, Los Angeles*

SIGN/SIGNAL: ETHNIC ENCLAVES AND THE CREATION OF FAMILIARITY FOR URBAN MIGRANTS PAST AND PRESENT (Session 1 | Thursday, 11:30)

ABSTRACT: Cities were created through migration, and we know from contemporary studies of cities that migrants selectively integrate the materiality of their origins into their new urban areas of residence. Within cities, zones of “nested spatiality” provide a series of performative opportunities for individuals who selectively engage with both tangible and intangible cultures of expression in their adopted urban environments. Archaeologically, we can see nested spatiality as individuals circulate from the confines of the home to the distinct public spaces and monuments of urban environments, sometimes emphasizing and sometimes de-emphasizing their origins through artifacts and architecture. Durable remains serve as a proxy for verbal communication about appropriate standards of behavior that are imposed upon people in different types of public spaces, while gateways and formal thresholds provide points of liminality in the performance of identity as people move in and around the urban environment. The paper examines the role of artifacts and architecture in the eastern coastal region of India in the early centuries BCE/CE, using data from the walled urban center of Sisupalgarh compared to the smaller contemporaneous site of Talapada.

BIO: Monica L. Smith is a professor in the Department of Anthropology and the Institute of the Environment and Sustainability at UCLA, and directs the South Asian Laboratory at the

UCLA Cotsen Institute of Archaeology. Her books include *A Prehistory of Ordinary People* and the edited volumes *Abundance: The Archaeology of Plenitude* and *The Social Construction of Ancient Cities*. She and her colleague Rabindra Kumar Mohanty of India's Deccan College have been conducting a long-running archaeological project in the eastern state of Odisha focused on the ancient city of Sisupalgarh.

GIL STEIN Respondent, *The Oriental Institute, University of Chicago*

BIO: Gil Stein is professor of Near Eastern archaeology at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago and senior advisor to the provost for cultural heritage. From 2002 to 2017 he served as director of the Oriental Institute. He received his BA in archaeology from Yale University and his PhD in anthropology from the University of Pennsylvania. His research investigates ancient economies, the archaeology of colonialism, inter-regional interaction, the development of the earliest cities and states in the Near East, zooarchaeology, and the preservation of cultural heritage. He has directed excavations at the Uruk-period Mesopotamian trading colony of Hacinebi in Turkey (3700 BC), at the Halaf- and Ubaid-period site of Tell Zeidan in Syria (ca. 5300–3800 BC), and at the 7,000-year-old town of Surezha in the Kurdistan region of Northeast Iraq. Since 2012 he has led the US State Department-funded partnership between the Oriental Institute and the National Museum of Afghanistan in Kabul. This project is rebuilding the museum's infrastructure by training curators, developing a computer database, and conducting the first full inventory of the museum's collections. In fall 2017 he started a new cultural heritage preservation project in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, aimed at training museum conservators from all five of the post-soviet Central Asian Republics. His most recent publication is the coedited book *Preserving the Cultural Heritage of Afghanistan* (<https://oi.uchicago.edu/article/new-publication-preserving-cultural-heritage-afghanistan>).