Letter from the President

Elisabetta Cova, Associate Professor
University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee

Dear AIA-Milwaukee Society Members,

I would like to welcome you to the Spring 2018 edition of The Artifact, our members-only newsletter. There are some exciting lectures planned for you over the next months. They will focus on Bronze Age Mycenaean architecture and stone-carving techniques, the ethnic groups and culture of ancient Crimea, and Egyptian nightmares.

On February 11, Nicholas Blackwell, Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Classical Studies at Indiana University, will discuss tool marks found on Mycenaean monuments, including the famous Lion Gate, and what they tell us about construction phases, stone-cutting techniques and tool types used by masons and sculptors at Mycenae. He will also address the question of the level of state control over these monumental construction projects. On March 4, Adam Rabinowitz, Associate Professor in the Department of Classics at the University of Texas, will present on demographic and cultural transformations in the Crimean peninsula from the 7th to 4th centuries, highlighting interactions between Greeks, Scythians and Taurians. The lecture will focus on the results of fieldwork carried out in the Greek city of Chersonesos on the western side of the Crimean peninsula by the University of Texas’s Institute of Classical Archaeology between 2002 and 2011. Finally, on April 15, Kasia Szpakowska, Associate Professor of Egyptology and Director of the Ancient Egyptian Demonology Project at Swansea University, in England, will explore the world of dreams and nightmares in Ancient Egypt, their relationship with demons, deities and the dead, as well as the Egyptians’ apotropaic measures to ward them off. You will find a more detailed description of each lecture in the following pages of the newsletter.

All lectures are held at 3:00 pm in Room G90, Sabin Hall, 3413 North Downer Ave on the UWM campus. They are followed by discussion and refreshments and are free and open to the public.

2017-2018 Milwaukee Society Officers and Volunteers

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Our celebrations for International Archaeology Day (IAD) this past October successfully brought together local archaeologists, allowing them to present their research and share their passion for archaeology with members of the community. A special thank you to our vice-president Adrienne Frie and to all the presenters who dedicated their time to make sure the event was a success.

This year the city of Boston hosted the joint annual meeting of the Archaeological Institute of America and the Society for Classical Studies from January 4 to 7, which also happened to coincide with an epic snow storm. In the following pages, AIA trustee and former AIA-Milwaukee president Derek Counts (who made it there safely!) gives us a brief recap of this ‘unusual’ meeting.

Inside this Artifact, you will also find two interesting articles: one by Emily Stanton, a UWM PhD Student in Anthropology and a presenter at this last IAD, on the importance of experimental archaeology to gain a better understanding of ancient swords, and the other by Richard Kubicek on the digitization of La Tène collections in American museums (working with Bettina Arnold, UWM Professor of Anthropology and invaluable AIA-Milwaukee society member, as well as refreshment provider at our Sunday lectures!).

Finally, I invite everyone to attend our lecture program this spring and I thank you all for your support as AIA-Milwaukee members.

Elisabetta Cova

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Welcome New Members
Joined Since September 2017
Melody Abbott Scott Hansen
Lawrence Gums Paul Moriarty
Lauren Jones
We are very happy you joined us!
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Monumental Construction at Mycenae: Implications of Late Bronze Age Stone Working

A Lecture by Nicholas Blackwell
Indiana University

Sunday, February 11th, 2018
Sabin Hall, Room G90, 3:00 p.m.

This presentation highlights the technology and tool types that masons and sculptors employed at Mycenae to produce several of the most well-known monuments in the Aegean Bronze Age. Analysis of preserved tool marks on the Lion Gate relief, Treasury of Atreus, and the Tomb of Klytemnestra reveals multiple phases of construction, specific artisan choices, and variable stone-cutting techniques.

Nicholas Blackwell will discuss Mycenaean drilling and sawing technology, including the sophisticated pendulum saw. He deduces the use of this machine from cuttings on the three monuments referenced above as well as other masonry/architectural features found throughout the Mycenae and Tiryns citadels. He will discuss the mechanics and operation of the pendulum saw following modern experiments with a reconstructed device. The lecture will also probe the degree to which monumental stone-working projects at Mycenae were controlled/managed by state-level authorities. Analysis of Mycenaean tool patterns reveals that palatial centers managed metal resources at the end of the Bronze Age, including finished products like tools. A natural question stemming from this observation is whether or not masons at Mycenae experienced some autonomy. Or did the state micromanage them and their projects—as the disbursement of work implements might imply?

Nicholas Blackwell is the Schrader Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Classical Studies at Indiana University, Bloomington. With a PhD in Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology from Bryn Mawr College, he has been a research fellow at the W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research in Jerusalem, the Assistant Director of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens (ASCSA), and a Postdoctoral Teaching Scholar in the Department of...
History at NC State University. His research addresses the archaeology and material culture of Greece and Cyprus, particularly during the Bronze and Early Iron Ages. Dr. Blackwell’s doctoral and postdoctoral focus on metal tools, technology, craftsmanship, stone-cutting techniques, and metallurgy highlights his desire to better understand intercultural relations and connections across the Aegean, eastern Mediterranean and Near East during the latter half of the second millennium BC. Dr. Blackwell’s articles and book reviews have appeared in Antiquity, the American Journal of Archaeology, the Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology, the Journal of Near Eastern Studies, and the Bryn Mawr Classical Review. He is currently working on a book project entitled Before Daedalus: Tools and Elite Stone Working in the Mycenaean World.

For more about Nicholas Blackwell: https://indiana.academia.edu/NicholasBlackwell

**Between the Steppe and the Sea: Scythians, Taurians, and Greeks in Crimea**

*A Lecture by Adam Rabinowitz*  
*University of Texas at Austin*

**Sunday, March 4th, 2018**  
*Sabin Hall, Room G90, 3:00 p.m.*

For more than three thousand years, the Crimean peninsula has been a meeting point for different worlds: the nomadic world of the great Central Asian steppe, the trade routes leading over land from the Middle East and Anatolia through the ranges of the Taurus and Caucasus, and the interconnected maritime environment of the Mediterranean. These diverse currents were particularly entangled during the Iron Age, when the local population – known to the Greeks through Herodotus and Euripides as the bloodthirsty Taurians – met, on the steppe side, increasingly sedentary Scythian horsemen, and on the sea side, wave after wave of Greek sailors establishing cities and trading posts along the coast. And these Greeks and Scythians met each other, too, eventually forming hybrid societies like the Bosporan Kingdom in eastern Crimea.

This talk will discuss the demographic and cultural transformations that took place in Crimea between the 7th and the 4th centuries BC, transformations that saw some of the most spectacular works of Greek metal smiths deposited in the kurgan burials of Scythian princes. The talk will present the effects of culture contact on these diverse societies, with a particular focus on the western side of the peninsula, where, as part of UT’s Institute of Classical Archaeology, Dr. Rabinowitz carried out fieldwork and heritage management at the Greek city of Chersonesos between 2002 and 2011. Dr. Rabinowitz will also explore some of the more recent cultural interactions in Crimea, which finds itself once again contested between cultural forces both opposed to and deeply entangled with each other.

**Adam Rabinowitz** is Associate Professor in the Department of Classics at the University of Texas, as well as Assistant Director of the Institute of Classical Archaeology there. He holds his degrees from the University of Michigan (PhD and MAs) and Swarthmore College, and his research interests are Greek colonization, cultural interaction, ancient food and drink, archaeology of daily life, and digital approaches to archaeology. He is a field archaeologist with twenty-five years of archaeological field experience at Greek, Roman, and Byzantine sites in Italy, England, Israel, Tunisia, and Ukraine, and has published extensively. Professor Rabinowitz is also involved in several digital humanities projects related to the linking and visualization of information about the Classical past, including Pleiades, GeoDia, Hestia 2, and PeriodO.

For more about Adam Rabinowitz: https://utexas.academia.edu/AdamRabinowitz

**Demons in the Dark: Nightmares in Ancient Egypt**

*A Lecture by Kasia Szpakowska*

**Sunday, April 15th, 2018**  
*Sabin Hall, Room G90, 3:00 p.m.*

The dream in ancient Egypt functioned as a liminal zone between the land of the living and the afterlife. However, the dream was also a phenomenon over which the dreamer had little control, and its permeable boundaries allowed both the divine and the demonic inhabitants of the beyond access to the visible world. Sometimes the result was a positive beneficial experience, as is attested in royal texts and elite hymns that relate the awe-inspiring contact a dreamer could have with a god or a goddess. But another more disturbing belief was that dreams could allow the vulnerable sleeper to be watched or even assaulted by the hostile dead. While today we
call these events ‘anxiety dreams’ or ‘nightmares’ and consider them psychological phenomena, the Egyptians blamed them on external monsters or demons crossing over from the other side. These entities included the dead, and here it appears that the line between the justified transfigured dead and the malevolent unjustified dead might not have been an immutable one. Drawing upon both textual and material evidence primarily from the New Kingdom, the lecture explores the identity and nature of the hostile entities who dared to disturb the sleep of the living. Surviving prescriptions, and apotropaic devices attest to the prevalent fear of nightmares while the intricate steps one could take to ensure safety in the night emphasize the tangible nature of these fears. To protect themselves against such demons of the dark, sleeping mortals could access the same potent energies that restored order and kept at bay the chaotic enemies of the sun-god himself.

Kasia Szpakowska is Associate Professor of Egyptology at the University of Swansea, and Director of the Ancient Egyptian Demonology Project: 2K BCE. She holds her degrees from the University of California, Los Angeles (Ph.D. and M.A.) and San Francisco State University. Her research interests are the demonology of ancient Egypt, the archaeology of religion and ritual figures, Egyptian extra-temple ritual and religious practices (primarily the Middle Kingdom through the Third Intermediate Period), gender and daily life in the Late Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom, and dreams and nightmares in ancient Egypt. She is also conducting the experimental archaeology Ancient Egyptian Cobra Project. Dr. Szpakowska's recent publications include “Feet of Fury: Demon Warrior Dancers of the New Kingdom” (in Rich in Years, Great in Victories. Studies in Honour of Anthony J. Spalinger on the Occasion of his 70th Feast of Thoth, edited by R. Landgráfová and J. Mynářová, Charles University in Prague, 2016) and “Infancy in a Rural Community: A Case Study of Early Childhood at Lahun” (in The Proceedings of the Xth International Congress of Egyptologists, ed. P. Kousoulis and N. Lazardis, Peeters 2016); she is also the author of Daily Life in Ancient Egypt: Reconstructing Lahun (Blackwell Publishing, 2008) and Behind Closed Eyes: Dreams and Nightmares in Ancient Egypt (The Classical Press of Wales 2003).

For more about Kasia Szpakowska: https://swansea.academia.edu/KasiaSzpakowska

International Archaeology Day

Down Home Archaeology: Digging into the Past with Local Archaeologists

By Adrienne Frie

In celebration of International Archaeology Day 2017 our local society hosted “Down Home Archaeology: Digging into the Past with Local Archaeologists.” Milwaukee and the surrounding areas have a large archaeological community, with archaeologists working all over the world on a variety of cultures and with a vast number of materials. The AIA Milwaukee society, along with University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee’s Departments of Anthropology, Art History, and FLL/Classics put together a wonderful program of activities and demonstrations to highlight the work of local archaeologists. Alexis Jordan taught visitors how osteological analysis is done, while Jason Sherman and Cheri Price showed visitors all types of ceramic analysis, from petrography to typological analysis, to reconstructing ceramics. Visitors also got to see the work of our president, Elsbetetta Cova, identifying ancient home renovations at Pompeii, and our treasurer Alice Kehoe discuss excavating piskuns to reconstruct Blackfoot bison drives. Kevin Garstki and Derek Counts demonstrated how artifacts are 3D scanned, and taught our younger visitors how to produce a scientific illustration. Emily Stanton explained how she is producing replica swords with experimental archaeology, and many epic swordfights ensued in the hallways of Sabin! Josh Driscoll and Ann Eberwein presented their work on foodways in ancient Europe, from ancient brewing, to food preserved from Neolithic Switzerland that is now kept at our local Milwaukee Public Museum. Our junior archaeologists also showed off their skills analyzing coins from around the world, learning ancient alphabets, and making their own headdresses and archaeological art to take home! We cannot thank our volunteers and visitors enough, we all had a wonderful time learning new things, and showcasing our vibrant archaeological community!
AIA’s 119th Annual Meeting in Boston, MA
January 4-7, 2018

By Derek Counts

It’s safe to say that this year’s Annual Meeting of the AIA in Boston was a little different than most.

I rarely tell people that I am lucky to have a meeting! However, in advance of Snowpocalypse 2018 (a.k.a., the “bomb cyclone” or “snowicane”)—which rocked the eastern seaboard of the US in early January—a meeting of the Governing Board of AIA on Thursday, January 4th prompted me to arrive in Boston a day earlier and, therefore, miss the air traffic chaos that ensued all day Thursday and most of Friday (fellow AIA-Milwaukee member and Governing Board member, Dave Adam made it, too!). Cancellations across the US (and overseas) meant that many annual meeting participants were never able to make it to Boston; others were content to arrive on Friday evening or even Saturday morning.

Thus, on Friday AM it was not a total surprise that I was one of only 2 presenters who made it to Boston for our organized workshop: “Probing, Publishing, and Promoting the Use of Digital Archaeological Data”!! In fact, most Friday sessions were a little thin on content (for lack of speakers) and participation (for lack of audience).

Nevertheless, the AIA could not let a little snow storm ruin a 100+ year tradition! As in past years, the program was packed full with a wide range of paper sessions, informal workshops, poster presentations, and committee meetings. This year I noticed a particular interest in “digital archaeology” – broadly conceived. In addition to my own event mentioned above, other sessions discussed the collection and archiving of digital data, the use of digital tools in the field and in the lab, emerging technologies for analysis of artifacts and sites: in general, this array reflects well the digital turn in archaeology that has characterized the last 5-7 years. Still, one could also find sessions on fieldworks in Greece and Italy, Roman provincial archaeology, eating and drinking in the Ancient World, ancient harbors, and Athenian painted pottery. Following a trend of the last few years, several sessions were devoted to the “edges” of the Classical Mediterranean world – both chronological and topographical edges – resulting in sessions looking at the Medieval countryside, Roman catacombs, and the Archaeology of Venice. If you are interested in seeing the full range of sessions and topics, the program can be downloaded here: https://www.archaeological.org/news/annualmeeting/26850

As in past years, I was also busy with a variety of other duties, including committee meetings and the Advisory Board meeting of the American Journal of Archaeology. Significantly, the annual AIA Council Meeting was cut short because of a lack of a quorum, which meant that annual balloting for positions in AIA had to be postponed and moved to an online format. While the flow of this year’s meeting hit an obstacle or two, those who made it to Boston had a great time talking about archaeology, networking with friends and colleagues, and learning about the latest discoveries in our field.

Collections from the Swiss Site of La Tène in US Natural History Museums

By Richard Kubicek

The type site for the late Iron Age in Western Europe is called La Tène. The site, composed of a massive lake-deposit of metal and other items, is located on the northern shore of Lake Neuchatel, in northwestern Switzerland. During the late 19th and early 20th century objects recovered from the site were swept up in the international fascination with Swiss lake dwelling sites. The ardor for assembling comprehensive collections from the complete range of lake dwelling contexts meant that institutions endeavored to collect archetypal samples
from the stone (Paleo- and Neolithic), Bronze, and Iron Age sites surrounding many Alpine European lakes. Large collections were invariably divided up into representative assemblages and sold, traded, or loaned internationally. At least six institutions in the United States alone acquired items from the eponymous Iron Age site of La Tène during this period.

The make-up of the US-based La Tène collections, coupled with its complex transactional history, is the focus of a monograph that will be part of a multi-volume publication series sponsored by the University of Neuchâtel. UWM Anthropology Department faculty and staff Bettina Arnold and Ricky Kubicek, with the assistance of T. Homer Hruby, are contributing to the series by cataloging and documenting the history of those items that found their way into American museums. The present project builds upon two Master’s theses completed in 2008 at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee under the supervision of Bettina Arnold: Richard Kubicek’s investigation of the La Tène material from the Field Museum and Erin Farley’s analysis of the Logan Museum’s La Tène collection. In the course of the effort to document all that is known about this famous Iron Age site, the team has been analyzing and documenting collections from the American Museum of Natural History in New York, the Field Museum in Chicago, the Logan Museum in Beloit, the Harvard Peabody Museum in Cambridge, MA and the Yale Peabody Museum in New Haven. Every object from each institution recorded as originating from La Tène is processed in a similar manner: the items are photographed, measured, and observations particular to each are recorded. The photographs are digitally manipulated to remove any background noise, and then processed to publication standards. The measurements and notes for each object are compared with standard references to create an object catalogue.

The second, but equally important methodology, involves a deep dive into institutional archives. The archival thread is the key component in attempting to reconstruct the provenience and authenticity of each collection. Documentation concerning the history of the assemblages has been gathered, including the initial artifact collection, divisions, negotiations, sale, transport, curation, and museum exhibition. High-quality scans of this documentation will be included in the publication following the lead of previous Swiss publications. Many of the collections have passed through a complex path of collectors, brokers, middlemen, couriers, and curators on the path to their present location. The culmination of these data indicates whether or not- or even the degree to which- the assemblage from a particular institution should be included in the overall La Tène site catalogue. By assembling and publishing the data from these various institutions in a form of e-patriation, the team hopes to contribute to an international effort to reconstruct the complete catalog from this important site.

Working at the Field Museum in Chicago. Photo: Bettina Arnold

Studies in Steel: Swords and Experimental Archaeology

By Emily R. Stanton

Cledyf eurdwrn ar y glun a racllawyn eur itaw.
A gold-hilted sword at his hip and a golden point upon it.
(Translated by the author.)

The Middle Welsh legendary tale of Culhwch and Olwen provides a catalogue of Culhwch’s weapons – two spears, a lance or battle-axe, a shield, and a sword. Unfortunately, the description of the sword, quoted above, does not tell us much about the weapon itself. The hilt of the sword is adorned with gold. The “point” of the sword is gold as well; this likely refers to the metal fitting (chape) at the end of the sword scabbard or sheath.

Since sword sheaths are often made of organic materials such as leather or wood, they do not usually survive in the archaeological record. Thus, typically, archaeologists find the chape during excavations. Such artifacts are of great importance in reconstructing weapons and armor from the past for several reasons. Artifacts provide information about the materials and methods used in creating them. Indeed, by calling them artifacts, we in some sense acknowledge the processes that brought them into being, even if these processes often tend to be overlooked. As theorist David Summers notes, “The word ‘artifact’ couples art with the idea of making, or of having been made. ‘Facture’ is from the past participle of the Latin facio, facere, to make or do…to consider an artifact in terms of its facture is to consider it as a record of its own making” (2003: 74).
One issue with the majority of ancient and modern literary descriptions of swords is that they seldom provide any information on how the weapons were actually used. For example, Swords and Hilt Weapons (2005) is a beautiful book, full of gorgeous photographs and illustrations. The focus of the book is largely historical, with the chapters divided by regions. Swords are placed into typologies, such as “cutting-” or “thrusting-weapons.” However, little discussion exists of how to actually wield, say, a Viking sword. In Europe, it is not until roughly the 14th century that sword-fighting manuals appear. The most famous of these early “fencing manuals” is by the German master Johannes Liechtenauer. Analogous to a modern YouTube Tutorial, the text details many forms of fighting, including how to wield a longsword. However, it is worth remembering that not everyone in the Middle Ages could read. Thus, Liechtenauer’s text was principally aimed at the literate middle to upper classes. Scholars and swordsmiths have supposed that ordinary soldiers probably would not have been familiar with Liechtenauer’s complicated system of swordplay, though there is some debate on this issue.

Archaeologists find and excavate the remains of prehistoric or historic weapons; often these are rather deteriorated, and only fragments of the full weapon survive. For some weapons, like my replica Iron Age Celtic sword, there are no texts that tell us how the actual sword would have been used or made; thus we have to hypothesize and examine actual swords in museums. Experimental archaeology aims to re-create aspects of past societies, such as weapons or clothing, in order to test hypotheses or assumptions about that society in the past. This practical method of archaeological interpretation involves using modern replicas of historic artifacts and testing these objects in a controlled setting to see how they might have “worked” in the past. Often, experimental archaeologists will attempt to recreate ancient conditions using known techniques and materials available to the past culture in question. Overall, the goal of these experimental methods is to test the validity of a hypothesis.

Several variants of experimental archaeology exist, one being historical re-enactment. In this context, historical re-enactment is a re-creation of a past culture, or one part of it. The aim is the testing of theories about certain aspects of a culture, such as building construction, or the creation of clothing or weaponry. This form of experimental archaeology is certainly the most common. Historical re-enactment has the advantage of allowing researchers to repeat experiments in controlled settings to yield scientifically valid results. Closely related to historical re-enactment is reconstruction archaeology, where researchers create replicas of sites, tools, or weapons, using only historically accurate materials and technologies. This research method offers archaeologists and swordsmiths alike insights into a number of details such as blade material, blade geometry, forging techniques, and weighting of the blade, hilt, and pommel.

These experiments in steel allow scholars to approach swords from a more holistic perspective, combining literary descriptions, artistic depictions, and the archaeological evidence. Consequently, we can offer answers to questions such as how this sword might have been made or used and what methods and materials were available during a certain time period or in a certain place. Arguably, events by SCA (Society for Creative Anachronisms) and HEMA (Historical European Martial Arts) offer current working contexts – an ethnoarchaeology of sorts – for scholars to explore topics such as wear patterns on blades and replica armor, or the stamina and skill needed to wield historic swords. As both a fencer and an archaeologist, I hope to see increased interdisciplinary collaboration between academics and re-enactors in the future.

References:
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AIA-Milwaukee Society
Spring Calendar
PLEASE KEEP
Spring 2018

February 11       Sunday, February 11, 2018 3:00 pm. Lecture
Nicholas Blackwell, Monumental Construction at Mycenae: Implications of Late Bronze Age
Stone Working

March 4          Sunday, March 4, 2018 3:00 pm. Lecture
Adam Rabinowitz, Between the Steppe and the Sea: Scythians, Taurians, and Greeks in Crimea

April 15        Sunday, April 15, 2018 3:00 pm. Lecture
Kasia Szpakowska, Demons in the Dark: Nightmares in Ancient Egypt

All lectures will take place in room G90 of Sabin Hall on the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee campus unless otherwise noted. Sabin Hall is located at 3413 N. Downer Ave. Free street parking on Sundays.