

INVENTORY

NEWS FROM THE JOUKOWSKY INSTITUTE FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE ANCIENT WORLD

ALL FUN & GAMES UNTIL SOMEONE GETS STUNG BY A BEE

One very fixed general perception about archaeologists is that they disappear in the summer and go have fun. Such a view is common among our families, our friends and our (obviously envious) colleagues.

Like George Washington, we cannot tell a lie – they are quite right – but we can perhaps nuance the story by describing just two of the less joyous aspects of life in the field.

Poisonous Plants

There are certain eternal verities in archaeological life, one of which is that whenever you wish to see the ground – for the purposes of surface reconnaissance, geophysical investigation or mapping in an excavation unit – there will be some form of vegetation upon it of the most inconvenient and often painful variety. This can range from Mediterranean maquis (a shrubland biome of dense and sullenly obstructive evergreens) to amber waves of grain (great for local farmers, a ‘no go’ zone for archaeologists). Denizens of the JIAAW will face such perils and frustrations this summer on various projects in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta, Sardinia, Serbia, Tunisia, and Turkey.

It could be worse, however. Colleagues on the Caribbean island of Montserrat encounter a flowering member of the spurge family, the manchineel. While providing excellent windbreaks to prevent beach erosion, its fruit is known as the *manzanilla de la muerte*, the ‘little apple of death’. The manchineel is among the most poisonous trees in the world; its very sap can (and has) burned, blistered and (temporarily) blinded. For those of us who work in more desert climes (Egypt, Jordan, the Sudan) the relative dearth of ground cover may leave us unshaded but



not unthreatened – leading us to our second category.

Menacing Animals

Staying clean in the remoter reaches of the Sudan, for example, can invite the possibility of sharing your bath water with Nile crocodiles, the second largest extant reptile in the world. Archaeologists in dry regions also learn that ‘size



matters’: little scorpions can hurt you a lot more than big ones, and they all love to live under the rocks you are moving.

Snake sightings always lead to yells in the field, but by far the majority are harmless.

The ones that aren’t meet a quick and nasty end (by machete or stick).

Bee stings do happen (if not usually immediately after the team member gets off the plane, as already occurred this

summer), and the rumor that poisonous toads are to be found in the Caribbean has been partially debunked.

Dogs will bark but (sadly) are conditioned to flee if you pretend to pick up a stone to throw. Goats can get in the way (and make an endless series of remarkably rude sounds), but nothing is cuter than a kid. And my playing round-a-round the mulberry bush hiding from a seriously annoyed bull in Armenia



– some ten years on – now simply makes a good story to tell.

Okay, We Admit It...

Fieldwork can lead you to hillsides which smell wondrously of rosemary and thyme or to meadows dotted with wild flowers. You might spot the fabulous blue lizard of the Middle East or come across a cave full of eight roly-poly puppies.

The moral of the story? Archaeological fieldwork doesn’t happen in an insulated academic bubble, and we have to be, and are, careful, smart, and prepared – before we disappear in the summer, and go have FUN.



Sue Alcock

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USING SCIENCE TO FIND THE FAKES, PART I

The term “Luristan bronzes” is generally used to refer to bronzes from the Luristan region of western Iran that date to 1300-650 BCE. These tiny, often pretty objects are part of many museum collections – in fact, Brown University’s Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology holds twenty Luristan bronzes and the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) Museum has over one hundred. However, because of illegal excavations, widespread forgery, and art market popularity, the provenance of many museums’ collections of Luristan bronzes is often clouded.

Over the course of this past year, the Joukowsky Institute’s Müge Durusu-Tanrıöver (doctoral candidate), Brett Kaufman (postdoctoral fellow), and David Elitzer (undergraduate student) worked with staff in the RISD and Haffenreffer Museums to conduct stylistic, archival, and scientific analyses on the two museums’ holdings, to determine the authenticity of their (so-called?) Luristan bronzes. Fully aware of the rampant forgery



of “Luristan bronzes”, both museums have been very supportive of this study, which will help clarify the character of their Luristan collections, and have been extraordinarily generous in either loaning or making available objects from their collections for testing.

In order to judge the authenticity of the artifacts in the

Haffenreffer and RISD collections, over forty bronzes from the two museums were analyzed using a portable X-ray fluorescence (pXRF) spectroscopy instrument, a non-invasive and non-destructive technique that can determine an object’s elemental signature. The pXRF results are being compared to known historical alloys from the region and to the results of chemical analyses



done on bronzes recovered from primary contexts in recent excavations in the Luristan region, for example from Iranian sites such as Sangtarashan. In addition to this scientific line of inquiry, stylistic analysis was also employed.

The Joukowsky Institute hopes to display some of these bronzes in Rhode Island Hall in the Spring of 2016 as part of a small exhibition about this project. The project team also plans to share their findings through articles and publications.

A special acknowledgment is due for the support of the RISD Museum’s Gina Borromeo and Ingrid Neuman, the Haffenreffer Museum’s Kevin Smith and Robert Preucel, and David Murray at Brown’s Department of Earth, Environmental, and Planetary Sciences in helping to form and develop this collaborative project.

Verdict: Mixed... Stay tuned for details!

USING SCIENCE TO FIND THE FAKES, PART II

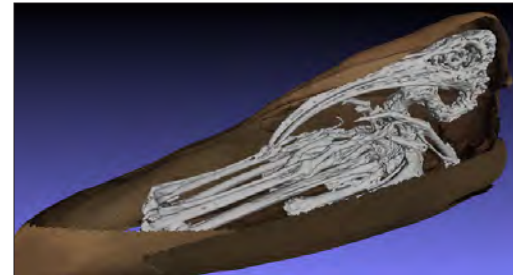
When Joukowsky Institute doctoral candidate Jen Thum and Julia Troche (Ph.D. 2015, Department of Egyptology and Assyriology) decided to include the Institute’s (alleged?) ibis mummy in their upcoming exhibition for the Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology, they knew they needed to first determine what really lay inside its tuxedo-like linen bandages.



The ibis was a sacred bird in ancient Egypt because of its associations with the god Thoth. During the Late through Roman Periods (c. 700 BCE - 200 CE), temple-raised ibises were killed, mummified, and dedicated as cult offerings to Thoth. This practice was so popular that the ibis nearly became extinct in Egypt, and priests – who were desperate to continue the offerings and the revenue they brought in – began to make “fake” ibis mummies. These ancient forgeries sometimes contained only one or two ibis bones, another animal altogether, or no animal remains at all.

In collaboration with the Alpert Medical School’s Department

of Diagnostic Imaging (chaired by Dr. John Cronan) and Rhode Island Hospital, Troche and Thum arranged a doctor’s visit for the ibis. In March 2015, the ibis was seen by Dr. Derek Merck and Rhode Island Hospital’s Lead CT Technologist Scott Collins. Merck and Collins used two non-invasive, non-destructive techniques, CT-scans and X-rays, to virtually “see” inside the mummy. From these data, it was clear that there was, indeed, an actual ibis skeleton inside the mummy wrappings. The information from the CT scans was so rich that Collins was able to create a three-dimensional model of the ibis’s skeleton, which will be 3D printed for the Haffenreffer exhibit.



From September 2015 the ibis will be on display in the Haffenreffer Museum in Manning Hall, a few doors down from Rhode Island Hall, as part of the exhibit “Uncovering Ancient Egypt: Ancient Crafts, Modern Technologies.”

Verdict: REAL!

NEW DOCTORS OF ARCHAEOLOGY

The Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World is delighted to announce the successful defense of two doctoral dissertations this Spring:

Sarah Craft

Pilgrimage Pragmatics: Travel Infrastructure, Movement, and Connectivity in Late Roman and Early Byzantine Cilicia

Dr. Craft’s dissertation explores the dynamic world of Christian pilgrims in the eastern Mediterranean (ca. 400-600 CE) through a landscape



approach, using archaeological evidence as well as a combination of literary and epigraphic texts. The geographical distribution of pilgrimage destinations is considered as part of a larger network of churches that was physically and conceptually linked by the infrastructure that facilitated travel. Together, these constitute the anchors and connections of the early Christian devotional landscape, one that was subject to various strategies of appropriation and claims to authority by the inhabitant communities.

Early Christian pilgrimage and its destinations are considered along a continuum of overlapping scales – from the local to the interregional, with attention given to the traveler’s origin as well as the destination’s attraction – and within their wider context. The integration of spatial data drawn from saints’ lives, epigraphic evidence, architectural catalogues, and archaeological remains demonstrates that early Christian pilgrimage was inextricably part of the more broadly conceived political, social, and productive landscapes of the late antique world.

Dr. Craft successfully defended her dissertation on Wednesday, March 4th.

Alexander Smith

Indigeneity and Colonial Response: The Metamorphoses of Balearic Culture in the Late Iron Age

Dr. Smith’s dissertation is focused on the prehistoric indigenous culture of the northern two Balearic Islands (Mallorca and Menorca) during the second half of the first millennium BCE. During this Late Talayotic period, not only do monumental, ritual, and funerary landscapes shift significantly, but two major powers emerge in the Western Mediterranean as dominant economic and political forces: Carthage and Rome. This period of critical transition for Mallorca and Menorca begins with increased trade contacts with the Carthaginian settlement of Ibiza, other settlements along the Iberian coast, and southern France. By the Second Punic War, Rome became the dominant political force in the Western Mediterranean and conquered the island chain in 123 BCE. What happened next is generally considered to be a period of acculturation and Romanization for Mallorca and Menorca, but the archaeological evidence from indigenous sites actually says something quite different. This dissertation critically examines these cultural transitions using postcolonial theory to understand how changes were reflected in the material culture and daily practices of the indigenous inhabitants of Mallorca and Menorca. Using settlement pattern data, domestic remains, funerary and ritual monuments, as well as underwater archaeological evidence, this study takes a close look at Late Talayotic culture to understand how indigenous practices persisted, changed, or ceased during these transitional periods, interrogating notions of Mediterranean indigeneity and questioning the nature of Western Mediterranean locality in the late first millennium BCE.



Dr. Smith successfully defended his dissertation on Thursday, March 19th.

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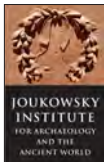
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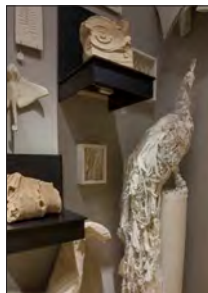
THE GHOSTS OF RHODE ISLAND HALL

Archaeology is all about time and about attempting to understand what happened in the past. But it is not often that an institute of archaeology is haunted by its own past in such strange and wonderful ways as the Joukowsky Institute has been this past year.

It was about a year ago when a new office appeared on Rhode Island Hall's first floor. A sign by the door reads: *J.W.P. Jenks, Naturalist, Room 110*. The door's open, peek in. It's dark, packed full of Victorian furniture and... nature? There's a duck undergoing taxidermy



on a small table in the front. Is that a plate of glass eyes? A cabinet on the wall is full of bottles and jars: arsenic? An axe?



Across the hall, another room: *Museum Storeroom, Room 111*. This one is as brightly lit as the other is dark, but it seems full of... ghosts? The walls are grey, and grey shelves are filled with... white things. Animals, plants, birds. A spectacular peacock, all white. Animal horns, white. White bugs.

At the center of the building, an exhibit case adds yet more things and pieces of thing. To the left: Japanese musical instruments, Grand Tour medallions, African knives. In the middle: taxidermied birds in glass boxes, Chinese shoes.... To the right: broken Egyptian amulets, broken bird eggs,

a mangled telegraph key, a jar of dirt. And old, fragile, museum artifact labels. Musing on the case from left to right takes you from artifacts in good shape to broken things to fragments to... just words describing artifacts. A close look at the old labels helps reveal the story: in faded print, *Museum of Brown University*. And posted above, two signs: *Life and Death*.



Rhode Island Hall, the site of these mysterious places, was once the home of Brown's museum of natural history, founded by John Whipple Potter Jenks in 1871 and curated by him until his sudden death – on the very steps of the building – in 1894. In 1945, almost all that remained, 92 truckloads, was hauled to the university dump on the banks of Seekonk River. *Sic transit gloria mundi*.

But a few bits survived. The Jenks Society for Lost Museums, a group of Brown and RISD students, advised by artist Mark Dion, brought them home, back to Rhode Island Hall. They put these re-discovered artifacts on display, and commissioned local artists to recreate the ghosts of objects that had disappeared.



The exhibition closed in May 2015. Except for one room that remains: the ghost of Professor Jenks will have a home in Rhode Island Hall for another year.