Hierarchy and Equality
Representations of Sex/Gender in the Ancient World

Conference
September 11 – September 13 2016
Philippos Hotel, 3 Mitseon Street, Acropolis, Athens
Programme

Abstracts and Bios

List of Participants

Information to all presenters:

The chair of the different sessions will give a short introduction to each paper (name of presenter and title of paper), and chair the following round of Q & A.

Each paper has a time slot of 30 (60 for key notes) minutes:

- After 15 (45) minutes, chair will give notice that you have 5 minutes left.
- After 20 (50) minutes, chair will ask you to finish your presentation.
- After 25 (55) minutes, chair will stop your presentation.
Programme

Sunday, September 11, 2016

15:00 Conference Start

15:30 Key Note I:
Brooke Holmes, Princeton University:
The One-Sex Zombie and the History of Difference

16:30 Coffee / Tea / Light meal

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17:00 Uroš Matić, University of Muenster:
Archaeology of genital mutilation: Phalli-cutting, military violence and gender in ancient Egypt

Jorunn Økland, Norwegian Institute at Athens and University of Oslo:
Gender relations, etic and emic approaches to notions of equality and sameness between genders in Hellenistic Greek terminology and its reception

17:30 Nenad Marković, Charles University in Prague:
A link between their fathers and husbands: strategic marriages within the Memphite elite society during the late Saite and at the very beginning of the Persian era (570-486 BCE)

Bartłomiej Bednarek, Jagiellonian University, Kraków:
The dynamics of desire: is the pecking-order model to be rejected?

18:00 Reinert Skumsnes, University of Oslo:
The Gender Paradox in Egyptology

Caroline Sofie Balschmidt, University of Copenhagen:
Addicted to Gender
### Monday, September 12, 2016

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<td>Rune Nyord, University of Cambridge: (En)gendering the world in ancient Egypt</td>
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<td>Heather Lee McCarthy, New York University: Ramesses II’s Royal Women: Mortuary Evidence of a Queenly Hierarchy</td>
<td>Gitte Buch-Hansen, Copenhagen University: Rereading Romans 7 in the Light of Philo’s Conception of Original Sin</td>
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<td>11:30</td>
<td>Michal Čermák, Charles University in Prague: &quot;Then they spat in the face of Horus&quot;: A critical look on the &quot;homosexual episode&quot; of the Contendings of Horus and Seth</td>
<td>Marianne Bjelland Kartzow, University of Oslo: Virgin Mary, a Slave of God: Metaphor, Gender and Reproductive Bodies in Early Christian Texts</td>
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<td>Isabel Almeida, Universidade NOVA de Lisboa, Universidade dos Açores: Out of the binary! Questioning gender issues in the Mesopotamian Divine World</td>
<td>Paraskevi Arapoglou, The Aristotle University, Thessaloniki: Sexual and Asexual Representations in the Apocryphal Acts of John. Social Status or Hierarchy in the making?</td>
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13:30 Break

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15:00 Serdar Yalçın, Columbia University:  
Neither Man nor Woman: Art and Identity of Ancient Mesopotamian Eunuchs  
Maria Papadopoulou, University of Copenhagen:  
Why did Hipparchia not weave?  
An approach to discourse on gender (in)equality in Greek antiquity

15:30 Kathleen McCaffrey, Independent researcher:  
How to Make a Goddess 'Male': The Competing Gender Logics of Antiquity  
Birgitta Leppänen Sjöberg, Uppsala University:  
Sex, gender and space. Norms’ taboos’ and the construction of identity within the private space of the oikos in the ancient Greek society

16:00 Key Note III  
Stephanie Lynn Budin  
Who’s Your Mama?: The Third Wave Gets Knocked Up

17:00 Coffee / Tea / Light meal

17:30 Agnès Garcia-Ventura, Università degli Studi di Roma:  
A Language for Women, Effeminate and Eunuchs?  
Analysing the Constructions of Alterity and Hierarchy in Sumerian Studies  
Meritxell Ferrer, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona:  
More than a Dwelling: Women, Rituals and Homes in Western Sicily (8th-5th centuries BC)

18:00 Yazdan Safaee, Independent researcher:  
Achaemenid Women: Putting Greek Image to the Test
Tuesday, September 13, 2016

09:00 Key Note IV:
Benjamin Alberti, Framingham State University:
New Materialisms, New Bodies, and Conceptual Innovation in the Archaeology of Sex/Gender in the Ancient World

10:00 Coffee / Tea

10:30 Jenny Högström Berntson, University of Gothenburg:
Engendering rituals. Votive figurines of dancing and music making women from ancient Greek sanctuaries

11:00 Anithi Dipla, The Hellenic Open University/The Open University of Cyprus:
Brides, beasts and prostitutes: shaping women’s sexuality and promoting female gender roles in Classical Athens

11:30 Lene Os Johannessen, University of Oslo:
The woman and the beast: a mistress of wild animals or a metaphor for gender roles?

12:00 Coffee / Tea / Light meal

12:30 Mireia López-Bertran & Agnès Garcia-Ventura, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Università degli Studi di Roma:
Phoenician-Punic Material Culture: Questioning the Validity of the Binary Male/Female as Category of Analysis

13:00 End of conference
Brooke Holmes
Princeton University

The One-Sex Zombie and the History of Difference

Abstract

Thomas Laqueur’s *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* was first published over a quarter of a century ago. Despite trenchant critique by scholars of premodern medicine—including, most recently, Helen King’s *The One-Sex Body on Trial: The Classical and Early Modern Evidence*—Laqueur’s account continues to exercise an outsized impact on how the history of the sexed body is told, particularly for the ancient Greco-Roman evidence.

In this talk, I consider the tenacity of the one-sex model in light of the persistence of the nature/culture opposition as a means of structuring our own debates about sex and gender. As that opposition has come under pressure in recent years through the mutually enforcing work of trans and queer studies and the many variants of new materialism, which have returned feminist focus to the physicality of bodies, we may finally be in a position to read the ancient evidence in its complexity. The sexed body in antiquity is neither entirely fluid nor entirely fixed. Its circumscribed but unpredictable variability offers a new angle on current debates.

I am also interested in offering a counter-model to Laqueur’s reading of the premodern world under the sign of inversion. Rather than inscribing difference into the history of difference by simply reversing our own terms, I argue that we need more supple models, informed by the methods of comparatism, to navigate lines of continuity and discontinuity with ancient biological and medical models.

Bio

Brooke Holmes is Professor of Classics and Director of the Interdisciplinary Doctoral Program in the Humanities (IHUM) at Princeton University, where she is also affiliated with the Program in Gender and Sexuality Studies, the Program in the History of Science, the Department of Comparative Literature, and the Center for Human Values. She is the author of *The Symptom and the Subject: The Emergence of the Physical Body in Ancient Greece* (2010) and *Gender: Antiquity and Its Legacy* (2012). She has co-edited volumes on Aelius Aristides, the reception of Epicureanism, and ancient science, and published numerous articles on the history of the body, ancient medicine and philosophy, ancient literature, and contemporary theory. She is currently the PI of the ongoing project “Postclassicisms” (www.postclassicisms.org) and is curating an exhibition entitled “Liquid Antiquity” with the support of the DESTE Foundation and the Benaki Museum, due to open in Athens next spring.
Uroš Matić
Institute for Egyptology and Coptic studies, University of Muenster (Germany)

Archaeology of genital mutilation: Phalli-cutting, military violence and gender in ancient Egypt

Abstract

Gender research, although becoming increasingly present in Egyptology, is only rarely found in studies of war and violence in ancient Egypt. Adopting gender theory in researching military violence in New Kingdom Egypt can provide us with additional insight in understanding the possible meanings behind the practice of genital mutilation in war. The practice of removal of the phalli of the enemies in war is attested in ancient Egypt for the first time in Early Dynastic Period (Narmer palette). However, larger number of attestations, with more details and information on this war practice, are of Ramesside date (Medinet Habu temple and Athribis stela). The principal problem is that doubts have been raised on the identification of the cut off body parts as some authors argue that it were not phalli, but phalli-cases which were cut off. This paper will offer both philological and, so far not provided iconographic evidence that indeed phalli were cut off during the New Kingdom and only from the “Libyan” enemies. This is followed by discussion on the phalli cutting custom in relation to military violence and gender. Assuming the theory of gender performativity (sensu Judith Butler) the paper will explore how sexes/genders are materialized through military violence using phalli cutting as a case study. It will be argued that both gender as a performative practice and sexes/genders as body parts (cut off members) can be materialized through violence and representation.

Bio

Uroš Matić is a Ph.D candidate at the Institute for Egyptology and Coptic studies of the University of Muenster (Germany) working on violent treatments of enemies and prisoners of war in New Kingdom Egypt. He is working on the excavations in Tell el-Dabca (ÖAI) and Aswan (Swiss Inst.). His professional interests are Second Intermediate Period and New Kingdom Egypt, Aegean-Egyptian interrelations, war, violence, gender and postcolonial theory. Since 2009 he is the member of Archaeology and Gender in Europe-work group of the European Association of Archaeologists. He is the co-editor of Archaeologies of gender and violence (forthcoming).
Nenad Marković  
Czech Institute of Egyptology, Charles University in Prague  

A link between their fathers and husbands: strategic marriages within the Memphite elite society during the late Saite and at the very beginning of the Persian era (570-486 BCE)

Abstract

At present, the identity and social status of female members of the priestly elite of Memphis during the Twenty Sixth (Saite) and the Twenty Seventh (Persian) Dynasties respectively has never been a subject of systematic and comprehensive study. The corpus of Serapeum votive stelae, although only partly published for this epoch, permits us to trace dozens of women usually without known social background (as it is standard for several other types of preserved monuments, for example statues or sarcophagi, with notable exceptions), but on-going research discovered numerous women whose side of family is well-attested on the monuments of their husbands and sons, sometimes even several generations in the past: nearly half of the eighty-eight so far collected examples. Since these women usually did not bear specific title of any type (except ‘mistress of the house’), this paper aims to compare the social status of interconnected families according to the professional careers of their male members (as expressed by their titles) and to propose key role of women in establishing wider social networks and power groups mostly concentrated around the Ptah precinct at Memphis.

Bio

Nenad Marković is a PhD candidate of the Czech Institute of Egyptology, Charles University at Prague (Czech Republic), currently working on a dissertation titled Between Dynastic Changes, Political Power, Prestige, Social Status, and Court Hierarchies: a Prosopographical Study of the Lower Egyptian Elite Families in the late Saite and at the beginning of Persian Era (570-486 BCE) under supervision of Dr Ladislav Bareš. His main research interests include the prosopography of the Memphite area during the Late and Ptolemaic Periods (664-30 BCE), the history of the Saite, Persian and Ptolemaic Egypt (664-30 BCE), the institution of the High Priests of Ptah at Memphis in general, and the veneration of the Apis divine bulls at Memphis (c. 3100 BCE – 362 CE).
Reinert Skumsnes
University of Oslo

The gender paradox in Egyptology

Abstract
There is no consensus on what gender was like in ancient Egypt. Scholars describe it differently and often contradict one-another. In this paper, some of the aspects behind what I have called the gender paradox in Egyptology will be discussed. Lynn Meskell’s (1999, 218) claim that «in Egypt it might be expedient to talk in terms of sex, rather then gender, since this is perhaps closer to what the Egyptians experienced» will be used as a starting point. It will be argued that this claim, together with her critique of the so-called Foucauldian oeuvre in archaeology, is inaccurate.

A three-dimensional conception of gender will be proposed as key to understand the dynamics of gender in ancient Egypt, and as a potential solution to the so-called gender paradox in Egyptology. The crux of my argument is that layers of gendered discourse, that depended on numerous and often intersecting factors, including kind of source material, affected the position, and more importantly, the representation of the individual in the records. In the end, there was neither equality nor an unambiguous gender hierarchy in ancient Egypt, but rather a multitude of different family and gender constellations.

Bio
Reinert Skumsnes holds a MA-degree in ancient history/Egyptology from the University of Bergen, and has intermittently been a non-degree student at the American University in Cairo. He is currently a PhD-candidate at the Centre for Gender Research at the University of Oslo, and his thesis is titled Patterns of change – Family and Gender Hierarchies in New Kingdom Egypt: titles of non-royal women.

Reinert has archaeological experience from the Old Kingdom site of Giza, working with an American mission led by Dr. Mark Lehner and Dr. Ana Tavares. Since 2012, he has been affiliated with a British mission led by Prof. Barry Kemp and Dr. Anna Stevens, excavating the New Kingdom site of Tell el-Amarna.
Gender relations. etic and emic approaches to notions of equality and sameness between genders in Hellenistic Greek terminology and its reception.

Abstract

Gender equality is a modern, post-Enlightenment value, and a postulate of this paper is that nothing equivalent is found in the ancient world. Although modern democracies refer to ancient Greece as their model, by modern measures ancient Athens was never a democracy since it did not grant citizenship to women and other groups who today enjoy full rights. Notions of ‘isotes’ were more about identity than about the equality of different entities, for example. Oneness did not presuppose equality either. Still, even if gender hierarchy was the default model of relations between the sexes, it does not mean that there was no notion of women’s authority, no notion of mutuality, balance, sameness or relative equality, and no way to express it. The paper will analyse relevant terminology, its applications in the area of gender, and also how this terminology is received in modern discussion. It will also ask where such an approach leaves Thomas Laqueur’s hierarchical one-sex model.

Bio

Jorunn Økland, director, Norwegian Institute at Athens and Professor of Gender Studies in the Humanities, University of Oslo. Until 2008 Senior Lecturer in Biblical Studies, Faculty of Arts, University of Sheffield, with special responsibility for teaching theory. Her publications are at the intersections between gender and other theory, biblical studies, archaeology and reception history. Most recent volume (co-edited): Biblical Spatiality and the Sacred (Bloomsbury 2016). Founding editor of Journal of the Bible and its Reception (de Gruyter 2014-). Among previous books are Marxist Feminist Criticism of the Bible (2008), Women in Their Place: Paul and the Corinthian Discourse of Gender and Sanctuary Space (Continuum 2004), and Metamorphoses: Resurrection, Body and Transformative Practices in Early Christianities (co-edited, de Gruyter 2009).
Bartłomiej (Bart) Bednarek  
Jagiellonian University, Kraków

The dynamics of desire: is the pecking-order model to be rejected?

Abstract

Last quarter of the twentieth century was revolutionary for our perception of Greek sexuality. Same sex erotic practices, previously ignored or gainsaid by most scholars finally received the scholarly attention they deserved. Yet, in this very brief period the brand new paradigm coined by Dover, Foucault and Halperin degenerated into an almost dogmatic system of rigid rules of description. Therefore it does not come as a surprise that already by the late nineties scholars such as Hubbard and Davidson opposed to some of its most fundamental theses. Among other concepts, the very cornerstone of the Foucauldian theory, namely, so called phallocentric principle was described as a product of some modern preconceptions. Hubbard and Davidson seem to have gone as far as to suggest that for Greeks it did not matter whether a man assumed an active or passive role in an intercourse.

In my contribution I would like to focus on some literary data, especially from the old comedy in order to show that the phallocentric principle should not be completely rejected. Although it would be certainly a mistake to take it as the only force at work within the dynamics of desire in ancient Greece, at least in some contexts it seems to have shaped the relations of power and hierarchy, thus contributing to construction of gender identities.

Bio

Bartłomiej Bednarek studied classical philology and Italian studies at the Jagiellonian University, Kraków. In 2015 he defended his PhD theses “The myth of Dionysus in Greek poetry from Homer to Euripides”, subsequently published under the same title (in Polish language). Currently he works as a researcher in a project “Animal sacrifice in ancient Greece in the light of philological testimonies”. His scholarly interests are centred around such fields as religion and culture of archaic and classical Greece, Greek sexuality, and Greek comedy.
Addicted to Gender

Abstract

Is reading Laqueur a new way of understanding the sexual ethics of the ancient world? Sexual morality is constituted by the natural function of sexuality: reproduction in the context of long-term commitment of raising children. The explanation for this particular sexual ethic lies in its origin with Plato, and it emphasized the idea that giving in to our “lower selves,” our animal natures, is addictive, a threat to reason, and, collectively, to civilization itself. When reading Thomas Laqueur and his theory of the “One Sex Model”, this form of sexual ethic poses an interesting problem. In this context, one could argue that heterosexual sex is actually narcissist sex; sex with a person who’s reproductive anatomy is identical to your own, and therefore the sexuality you become addicted to is in fact your own sexuality. This would without doubt have been considered a wrong form of sexuality in an ancient context. I would like to propose that the addiction, which the ancient societies speak of, is a gender-based addiction – an addiction to a social construction. Furthermore, I will argue that this proposition can inform our views on the ancient understandings of the sex/gender dichotomy, and go to show that sexual ethics at the time already were operating with a division between sex and gender.

Bio

Caroline Balschmidt holds a Bachelor in Theology, a Master of Excellence in Religious Roots of Europe, and is currently studying for a Master of Divinity at the faculty of Theology with the University of Copenhagen. Caroline’s research interests lie in the area of feminist theology, social constructivism, and the role of women in ancient Greco-Roman texts, in biblical literature, and in the writings of the Church Fathers. She recently presented a paper on Womanist theology at the yearly international conference hosted by the Coordination of Gender Research at University of Copenhagen.
Abstract

Drawing its examples from ancient Egypt, this lecture discusses some of the central intersections between ancient and modern conceptions of gender, including the interplay between gender and other hierarchies, and approaches to indigenous theories of gender. Two case studies are presented illustrating on the one hand the upscaling of gender from the level of human relations to function as an ontological category, and on the other conflicts between ancient conceptions and modern expectations in practices connected to fertility and reproduction.

Bio

Rune Nyord trained as an Egyptologist at the University of Copenhagen and is currently a Fellow of Christ’s College, Cambridge (2010–). His work focuses on cognitive and anthropological approaches to ancient Egyptian thought and practice, dealing with such questions as conceptions of the body in ancient Egyptian religion and healing practice, uses and conceptions of images, and religious ontologies. He is the author of Breathing Flesh: Conceptions of the Body in the Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts (Copenhagen 2009) and is currently working on a book project funded by the Carlsberg Foundation aiming at a rethinking of the conceptual framework for understanding ancient Egyptian mortuary religion.
Equality among ancient Egyptian pharaohs: Deconstructing modern expressions of female rulership and the political presence of Twelfth Dynasty royal women

Abstract

By using Twelfth Dynasty royal women as a case study, this paper will explore the effects on interpreting ancient Egypt caused by modern understandings of gender, sex and equality. From modern scholarship, governing ancient Egypt seems to have been a male dominated enterprise; however, among the legion of royal women who ruled Egypt on behalf of men, there were at least seven royal women who exclusively reigned as pharaohs. The legacies of these seven female pharaohs and multiple regents have often been discarded or reduced to a footnote. The Twelfth Dynasty (1994 – 1781 BC) is home to ancient Egypt’s first unequivocally attested female pharaoh, Sobekneferu. Her reign and time period are troubled by a lack of research and because of this the importance of all royal women from the Twelfth Dynasty has been neglected. Yet Sobekneferu and her female predecessors were the first women to be regularly portrayed with emblems and poses previously associated only with pharaohs, such as wearing uraei, in the sphinx pose, having their names encircled within a cartouche and wearing the pharaonic regalia. Based upon our contemporary understanding of gender roles, in Ancient Egypt the sex of the ruler was of less importance and royal women were agents of their own reconstructions of royal power. This research seeks to clarify the political presence of royal women by examining their continuous governmental influence, which made it possible for a female to rule ancient Egypt without a male counterpart.

Bio

I am currently a Ph.D. candidate in Egyptology at Swansea University, Wales researching the political presence of Twelfth Dynasty (1994 – 1781 BC) royal women through iconographic and archaeological analyses. My research also explores Egypt’s first well-documented female pharaoh, Sobekneferu as well as the administratively powerful princess Neferuptah. My dissertation is titled A Study of Royal Female Power and Political Influence in Ancient Egypt: Contextualising Queenship in the Twelfth Dynasty. Originally from South Carolina, USA, I earned my M.A. degree in Art History from the Institute of Egyptian Art and Archaeology located at the University of Memphis, Tennessee.
Abstracts and bios – Monday September 12 – Room 1

Heather L. McCarthy
New York University

Ramesses II’s Royal Women: Mortuary Evidence of a Queenly Hierarchy

Abstract

Of the eighteen known Ramesside period (1292-1075 BCE) royal women’s tombs located in the Valley of the Queens, Egypt, eight tombs on the valley’s north flank were cut and decorated for three generations of royal women related to the 19th Dynasty pharaoh, Ramesses II (r. 1279-1213 BCE), by blood, marriage, or both. These are the tombs of his mother, Tuy (QV 80); of his most prominent wife, Nefertari (QV 66); and of his daughter-wives, Bint-Anath (QV 71), Merytamun (QV 68), Nebettawy (QV 60), Henuttawy (QV 73), and Henutmire (QV 75). The final tomb, QV 74, though cut and decorated for an unnamed, unknown daughter of Ramesses II, remained empty until it was usurped for the burial of Duatentipet, a 20th Dynasty queen.

The tombs of Ramesses II’s royal women exhibit significant differences in terms of size, architectural complexity, decoration, and the royal iconography employed in wall scenes. These tombs provide evidence of a hierarchy among their royal, female owners—differences in status not necessarily reflected by their royal filiation titles, as all held the great royal wife (Hmt nswt wrt) title. In my paper, I will identify and discuss four likely indicators of hierarchical ranking: 1) the relative grandeur and complexity of tomb plans and decorative programs, 2) the “personalization” of some tombs for specific royal women, while other tombs were “prefabricated,” 3) the employment of royal donation formulae on some tomb doorways, and 4) the types of regalia royal women are shown wearing in their tombs.

Bio

Dr. Heather L. McCarthy is an Egyptologist who received her PhD from the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University in 2011. Her dissertation, completed under the supervision of Prof. David B. O’Connor, is, Queenship, Cosmography, and Regeneration: The Decorative Programs and Architecture of Ramesside Royal Women’s Tombs, an examination, analysis, and interpretive discussion of the fifteen best-preserved, Ramesside period (1292-1075 BCE) royal women’s tombs in the Valley of the Queens, Luxor. She is currently the deputy director of the New York University Epigraphical Expedition to the Ramesses II Temple at Abydos.
"Then they spat in the face of Horus": A critical look on the "homosexual episode" of the Contendings of Horus and Seth

Abstract

This paper presents a new approach to the so-called “homosexual episode” of the Contendings of Horus and Seth, a Late Egyptian tale from the Twentieth dynasty. There the two eponymous gods take part in a sexual encounter, Seth seemingly taking advantage of the younger Horus in order to gain leverage in his bid for the throne of Egypt. The focus of the paper is the final part of this episode where Seth brags about his “manly deed” and the gods spit in Horus' face in response.

The central argument is that the traditional Egyptological interpretation – that the spitting is a sign of contempt for the sexually subjugated male – is unsupported by Egyptian evidence and reflects modern attitudes towards homosexuality rather than ancient ones. The purpose of this paper is twofold: first, it will provide a new understanding of the mytheme by calling upon the testimony of magical and funerary texts to show that the act of spitting in the eye has connotations of healing and care, particularly in the context of sexual violence. The second avenue that will be taken is a critique of Egyptology itself with regard to issues of sex and gender. The paper will attempt to outline the specific biases that seem to shape academic thought with regard to premodern sexuality and provide alternative avenues of approach to this still contested topic.

Bio

Mgr. Michal Čermák (b. 1989) is a PhD student of Religious studies at the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies of the Faculty of Arts of the Charles University in Prague. He specializes in Ancient Egyptian religion, anthropology of religion, interpretation of myth and ritual with particular interest in the cultural construction of the Other. He has lectured on Egyptian religion and conducted seminars on both Egyptian religion and critical interpretation of contemporary popular culture. His dissertation project deals with Seth in the Ramesside Period. He took part in several student conferences as both an active and passive participant.
Out of the binary! Questioning gender issues in the Egyptian Divine World

Abstract

Even if they were not recognized as such, there were various performative and discursive centres of production of gender ideas throughout History. The pantheons can be envisaged as an interesting example.

In this paper I intend to address gender issues in the Nilotic divine world. Given that duality is a fundamental feature of the Egyptian civilization, how can we refer to non-binary expressions revealed by the Egyptian goddesses and gods, particularly the birthing-giving creator-god? Can we envisage the Egyptian pantheon as a source of discourses and representations that light out a certain gender order? To what extent does the Egyptian divine world mirror aspects of gender blurring?

In fact the ideas of strict masculinity and femininity are somehow challenged by the myths that narrate gods’ lifes. Seth’s virility, consequence of his link with the violent storms, is perhaps threatened when he sees himself without testicles. Osiris, a male god in name and persona may be represented as female, expressing ideas of fertility and rejuvenation. Simultaneously, some goddesses, like Anat, an “imported” goddess, who is said to act as men, due to their warrior and therefore supposedly “manly” performances.

Focusing on these particular deities and others, namely Atum, Hapy or Neith, we will try to propose a preliminary approach to envisage this issue in the Egyptian divine world.

Bio

Guilherme Borges Pires graduated in History at FCSH/NOVA. He has a MA in Egyptology by the same institution, where he presented the dissertation Perceiving the sacred: the sacralization of aquatic and terrestrial spaces in Ancient Egypt. Currently, he is a PhD candidate and he is working about the Egyptian Demiurge. He is a Research Assistant at CHAM (FCSH/NOVA; UAc) and he is the Lisbon’s representative of the Association for Students of Egyptology (ASE). He also takes part of the Editorial Board of the journal Práticas da História - Journal on Theory of History, Historiography and Uses of the Past.
Abstract

To illustrate the gender issues in the Mesopotamian divine sphere, I intend to present a paper about the gender roles of different goddesses, as they were displayed in the mythic literature.

The traditional idea that men had to work outside, executing belligerent and power responsibilities, whereas women were staying-at-home mothers, taking care of children in a submissive position, seems to be proved by the legal documentation one can find in Mesopotamia, like the very famous “Code of Hammurabi”. The tendency to identify the stiff binary distribution of tasks, traditional of patriarchal societies, becomes, thus, obvious for this civilization.

However, if one looks closely to the behavior of some divine feminine figures, we are impelled to question this assertion. We must keep in mind that divine society mirrored the human one to some extent, so the events and relations identified in the first had to be (somehow) reflected in the latter. Then, through the analysis of the roles displayed by Nammu, the primeval Sumerian goddess, that alone created the cosmos and the other deities; by Tiamat, the Semite primordial mother, which goes to battle to revenge her husband’s death; by Utu, the silent and perfect spouse that provokes a change in the (oddly) aggressive Enki; and, of course, by Inanna/Ištar, the patron goddess of kingship, war and love, it is possible to find a more deep understanding on what concerns the ‘out of the binary roles’, which were attributed to the feminine, in the world encompassed by the Tigris and Euphrates.

Bio

Isabel Almeida, PhD in History- Ancient Middle East History by FCSH/Nova, is an invited professor at the same institution, where she teaches classes related to ancient oriental civilizations. In her thesis, *The construction of Inanna/Ištar in Mesopotamia: 4th – 2nd millennia BC*, she dealt with gender representations in Antiquity, particularity in what concerns divine feminine. Her current interests focus on cultural and religion History of the Ancient Middle East. She is also a researcher and deputy director of CHAM- Portuguese Centre for Global History (FCSH-UNL and UAc).
Neither Man nor Woman: Art and Identity of Ancient Mesopotamian Eunuchs

Abstract

This paper will reconsider eunuchs as a separate gender category in ancient Mesopotamian society, and address the issue of how they created and expressed a group identity through personally commissioned artworks. Eunuchs held important positions in Mesopotamian courts from at least the middle of the second millennium B.C., and acted as a power group in the society, which could at times impose its own interests on administrations. On the other hand, because they bore certain consequences of castration, such as sterility, smooth body and face, feminine voice, and the lack of masculine musculature, they did not conform to Mesopotamian masculine ideals. In this context, I will argue that the inability to procreate and the lack of body hair and beard signified serious deficiencies according to the Mesopotamian conception of masculinity, marking eunuchs as a separate gender category. Yet, the high quality personal seals, steles and other artworks commissioned by these people show that eunuchs were members of the elite, and the source of this status was the affiliation with the king. The visual designs and formulation of the inscriptions carved on the artworks made constant references both to this crucial relation between the castrati and their royal master, and to the bond among eunuchs themselves. Hence, artworks served as an important media through which Mesopotamian eunuchs created and expressed a privileged group identity.

Bio

Serdar Yalçın is a Core Lecturer at Columbia University in New York. He received his Ph.D. in Art History and Archaeology from Columbia University in 2014. His research interests include art and archaeology of the ancient Near East, identity and material culture, and interconnections in the ancient eastern Mediterranean.
Abstract

The long-lived visual traditions of two nude female figures from the ancient Near East offer extensive data sets for tracking gender norms over time: amulets that depict Lamashtu (the Mesopotamian counterpart to Lamia and Gello) and an abundantly attested figurine of disputed identity who cups her breasts with assurance. In the Hellenistic corpora of southern Babylonia, some artifacts of each type undergo a curious transformation seen nowhere else, a partial sex change created by adding a penis to the female templates. In each case, nothing indicates a change of identity since all other characteristics remain the same.

Cross-referencing the Mesopotamian artifacts with textual and material evidence from classical sources, this paper argues that the hermaphroditic figures are cultural hybrids that reflect a sticking point in the transmittal of a native Babylonian gender concept to a Greek audience, the idea that it was possible to be masculine without being biologically male.

Bio

Kathleen McCaffrey is an independent researcher who holds graduate degrees from Claremont Graduate University and the University of California, Berkeley. Utilizing gender theory and both texts and material evidence, she has proposed in successive publications that the Mesopotamian taxonomy does not follow a two-sex model. Her previous work includes studies of anomalous gender referencing in Akkadian texts and overlooked incongruities in the Royal Cemetery of Ur. Two recent publications identify a ritual that transitioned individuals to different genders and re-evaluate the Mesopotamian harimtu as a gender variant status that has been falsely analogized with Western-style prostitution.
Who’s Your Mamma?: The Third Wave Gets Knocked Up

Abstract

The Third Wave Feminist claim that biological sex is a false binary predicated upon socially constructed gender breaks down in the face of maternity. All mammals, including humans, are anatomically divided between those with the anatomy to gestate their young internally (females) and those who do not (males). This biological constant leads to a further constant in human social gender construction: Females are regarded as child-nurturers across cultures. This presentation considers the ancient evidence for the social constructs of maternity, what is constant and what is not, and how the fact of female maternity relates to female status both in antiquity and in the Age of Feminism.

Bio

Stephanie Lynn Budin is an ancient historian (Ph.D. University of Pennsylvania) who focuses on ancient Greece and the Near East. Her published works include Women in Antiquity: Real Women Across the Ancient World (Routledge 2016), Artemis (Routledge, 2015), Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age (Cambridge University Press, 2011), The Myth of Sacred Prostitution in Antiquity (Cambridge University Press, 2008), and The Origin of Aphrodite (CDL Press, 2003), as well as numerous articles on ancient religion and iconography. She lives in New Jersey with her husband and bunnies.
A Language for Women, Effeminate and Eunuchs? 
Analysing the Constructions of Alterity and Hierarchy in Sumerian Studies

Abstract

Sumerian, one of the languages used in ancient Mesopotamia, has come down to us in the form of hundreds of thousands of cuneiform tablets dated from the end of the fourth millennium BCE, almost up until the beginning of the Common Era. However, only during the first centuries of this chronological period was Sumerian spoken, and most of the written evidence records it as a dead language. This is the case of “Emesal”, a variant of Sumerian attested from the beginning of the second millennium BCE, when Sumerian was already a dead language.

Regarding “Emesal” (frequently interpreted as “the language of women”) from the end of the 19th century CE various proposals have been put forward to define its uses and contexts. All of them share one common feature: a basis which, in some way, links language and gender, as most of them highlighted that Emesal had nothing to do with hegemonic masculinity, but with an alterity embodied by women, eunuchs or “effeminates” (as has been labeled in secondary literature) identified as its potential “users”. In addition, “Emesal” has been usually presented as a hierarchically inferior variant of the so-called “standard” Sumerian. As it seems to me that there are certain assumptions regarding sex and gender underlying these interpretations (though they are hardly ever stated explicitly), in this communication I aim to detect some them paying attention to the way alterity (regarding sex / gender) and hierarchy (regarding the status of the linguistic variants) are constructed in secondary literature.

Bio

Agnès Garcia-Ventura was awarded her PhD by the Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona, Spain) in 2012. As Postdoc, she was awarded a fellowship at the Collaborative Research Centre 933, “Material Texts Cultures”, of the Rupert Charles University in Heidelberg (November 2012-May 2013). She also worked for one academic year as Assistant Professor at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (2013-2014). Since October 2014 she is “Beatriu de Pinós” Postdoc fellow at the “Sapienza”, Università degli studi di Roma. Her main areas of interest are gender studies (especially their application to Assyriology) and the historiography of Ancient Near Eastern studies.
Abstract

Greek sources on Achaemenid history and culture are well-known and have been the references of many academic studies. Recent studies, however, have shown that these sources must be approached critically. The Greek perception of Achaemenid women is one such issue that prompts careful researchers in doing some crucial critical reassessment. Additionally, advances in Gender Studies in recent years have led many researchers focusing on Achaemenid women and their role. Despite those particulars, no consensus about reliability of Greek sources have been reached. The quest for the reliability of Greek sources and their view on the Achaemenid women have been usually the most crucial thing to discuss. Philosophical and literary sources provide useful information on Greek perspectives concerning women. In order to better understand the historical reality behind the image of Achaemenid women in Greek sources we first study Greek perceptions of women and then compare the image with other sources to find out if there is a deep connection between Greek perspectives on women and Greek accounts of Achaemenid history or not. It is important to reconstruct the image of women through direct reference to the Greek perspective. This reconstruction can be used as a database that shows us aspects of fictional accounts in which we are informed about women. Through this database, one can recognize the interference of Greek view in narratives of Achaemenid women and compare those with non-Greek sources, such as archaeological evidence and archival sources from heartland of Achaemenid Empire.

Keywords: Greek sources, Achaemenid era, Achaemenid women, Greek image.

Bio

I am born in Iran in May 1989. As an MA, I have an MA in the history of ancient Iran from the University of Tehran. His main research interests are Achaemenid culture and history. Yazdan’s MA thesis discusses how the Greek perception of women influenced the Greek accounts of Achaemenid history. He has previously published a paper on “Mithrakana at Persepolis” (in Persian). I also have reviewed the book "CTESIAS History of Persia Tales of the Orient" in DABIR which is the e-journal of Jordan Center for Persian Studies at University of California, Irvine.
Line Cecilie Engh
The Norwegian Institute in Rome

‘What the one-sex theory cannot explain. Elite males who appropriated female traits and stances.’

Abstract

Late ancient and medieval texts teemed with female personifications. Sciences, cities, virtues and vices, and, above all, the church and the human soul were imagined as women. A legacy from both ancient rhetoric and ancient Judaism, female personifications in Latin Christendom were more than ‘just’ metaphors or allegories. Rather, they shaped individual and collective identities, providing elite males like bishops and abbots with gendered concepts that they used to think the values of their culture, like ritual purity, orthodoxy, spiritual authority, and celibacy. My talk explores the use of female imagery – related especially to the biblical image of the bride of Christ and the Song of Songs – and how that imagery fashioned male identities from the patristic writers to the Cistercians: Why did elite religious males map female traits and stances onto themselves and their communities? Using insights from poststructuralism – that gender is contingent on spiritual states of being rather than just the body or body parts – my talk nevertheless problematizes Thomas Laqueur’s one-sex model as well as recent suggestions of ascetic men constituting a ‘third gender’. While Laqueur’s theory may account for the virago (the saintly woman who becomes male) – with its inherent teleology and gender hierarchy – it cannot envision a movement from male to female except as deteriorative. But these men were not merely appropriating a notion of female imperfection or ‘lack’, but even positive attributions (both existing in fact and desirable qualities) like female fecundity and the ability to lactate and nourish.

Bio

Line Cecilie Engh works on medieval intellectual history, with focus on hermeneutics, rhetoric, mysticism, and gender perspectives. She was awarded her PhD from the University of Oslo in 2011, and currently holds a research fellowship at the Norwegian Institute in Rome. Her theoretical interests include metaphor theory, cognitive theory, and gender theory. She has published on Bernard of Clairvaux’s Sermons on the Song of Songs, papal uses of female imagery, and medieval marriage.
Rereading Romans 7 in the Light of Philo’s Conception of Original Sin

Abstract

In *Adam, Eve, and the Serpent*, Pagels claimed that “Augustine found in Romans 7 what others had not seen there – a sexualized interpretation of sin and a revulsion from ‘the flesh’ based on his own idiosyncratic belief that we contract the disease of sin through the process of conception” (1988:143). I, however, shall argue that in Philo’s *De opificio* we find a well-developed concept of original sin. In his interpretation of the generation of the first woman and her fatal encounter with the snake (152.161), Philo takes issue with so-called cradle-argument by the aid of which the various philosophical schools of his time addressed questions about the character of the primary driver of human action and the human τέλος. He adopts the position of the Academy, combining the Epicurean first mover with the Stoic τέλος. But Philo also provides the Epicurean cradle-argument with his own, Jewish and biblical, twist. He links the generation of the instinctive urge for pleasure in the fetus with the pleasure needed for conception to take place. In his exegesis, Philo is on a par with contemporary medical science, e.g. Galen and Soranus, who also argued for the necessity of pleasure for impregnation. Thus, in his allegorical anthropology, Philo jumble together biblical exegesis, medical science, and Greco-Roman philosophy. The result is a causative link between the act of generation, the pleasure driver, and the vicious state of humanity. It is against this backdrop that the profoundly gendered Christian anthropology – and Romans 7 – must be understood.

Bio

Gitte Buch-Hansen, PhD, is Professor MSO, New Testament Exegesis, Faculty of Theology, Copenhagen University. She has published *A Stoic Understanding of Pneuma in John’s Gospel* (2010). She chairs the *Center for the Study of the Reception of the Bible* at her faculty and co-chairs the EABS-session *Europe Contested: Contemporary Bible Readings Performed by ‘Ordinary’ Readers in a European Context*. She is member of the UiO-based research-group *Reassembling Democracy: Ritual as Cultural Resource* with the project: *Consumed Identities. The Eucharist and the Negotiation of National Identity in the Danish Majority Church*. She has published articles within biblical, gender, film, and cultural studies.
Marianne Bjelland Kartzow,  
University of Oslo

**Virgin Mary, a Slave of God: Metaphor, Gender and Reproductive Bodies in Early Christian Texts**

**Abstract**
Parallel to other female slaves, virgin Mary is offering her reproductive capital to her master, according to the opening scenes of the Gospel of Luke (Luke 1:38, see also verse 48). She calls herself a slave of God, but translations and interpretations agree this is merely a metaphorical title; she is the Lords “servant.” By help of the growing field of metaphorical theory, I ask: What does it mean that something is metaphorical? A metaphor takes it’s meaning from the interaction of body and culture, and may vary according to gender, social class, ethnicity, sex, culture, language etc. Metaphors are not stable and independent of context, literary or historical. I suggest an intersectional approach to the slavery metaphor. In the New Testament the apostle Paul is also calling himself a slave of God, but he is never offering his reproductive body in the service of his master.

**Bio**
Marianne Bjelland Kartzow is professor of New Testament studies at the University of Oslo, Norway. She is interested in early Christian discourses on gender and social status, in particular interpreted with intersectional perspectives. She has published two monographs (*Gossip and Gender: Othering of Speech in the Pastoral Epistles*, DeGruyter 2009; *Destabilizing the Margins: An Intersectional Approach to Early Christian Memory*, Pickwick 2012), and edited four anthologies/theme issues of journals, mostly on early Christian texts, theoretical challenges and issues of interpretation. She is currently working on metaphor theories and intersectionality as tools for biblical interpretation, as well as an edited volume together with Valérie Nicolet, Paris, entitled *The Complexity of Conversion: An Intersectional Approach to (Religious) Change in the Ancient World and Beyond.*
Constructing Masculine Hierarchies in Early Christianity: Lk 12:35-38

Abstract

Over the past decades there have been written several studies on the NT and early Christianity and in Greco-Roman antiquity on sexualities, bodies, gender and so on, each of these studies overlap with the interest in masculinity. Greek, Roman, and Jewish societies of antiquity were "masculine" cultures in that they reflected an anthropology centred on ideals of manliness and an ideological preference for manliness that defined what it meant “to be man” and excluded others from the status as "real men". It was a system that gave privileged men the right to dominate and oppress others. These ideals were by and large adopted by early Christian communities. However, we find some strands in the NT that seemingly rub against the dominant ideologies. These clustered around the ideal of spiritual equality and servile imagery employed on the life in Spirit or apostolic service.

In this paper I focus on the ideal of serving put forth by Jesus in The Gospel of Luke. I use the short parable in Lk 12:35-38 and the ideal of service as a case to explore the construction masculine hierarchies in early Christianity. The parable in Lk 12:35-38 imagines a reversal of master and slave as a reward for the slaves’ vigilance. The parable hints at a new formation of masculine ideals that run contrary to the ideal of ruling others. This image of reversal resonated with the reversal sayings and slave motifs in Luke and in the NT as well. On the one hand, and in terms of the broader discourse of masculinity, the ideal of serving other was emasculating. Serving connoted to slavishness and unmanliness in the ancient world. There ample examples stereotypes about serving slaves, for instance that masters preferred young slaves for table service or groomed older slaves into looking young and attractive. On the other hand, Luke in general seems to conform to the dominant values of his time. As such, there is a tension or ambiguity between the ideal of service and the ideal of masculinity.

My argument is that Luke’s imagining of a new community clustered around the Kingdom of God that mirrored yet resisted the dominant values. This is evidenced in the vacillation between hierarchy and equality. To support my argument, I will compare Lk 12:35-38 with other early Christian and ancient attitudes towards slavery – in particular Philo’s description of the Therapeutai and together with Josephus the Essenes.

Bio

Anders Martinsen is a ph.d. in New Testament studies from The Theological Faculty at the University of Oslo. He is currently associate professor at Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences. Martinsen defended his thesis “Men and Unmen in the Parables in Luke: Slavery, Masculinity, Reception” in 2015. His research interests include gender, masculinity and slavery in early Christianity, reception history and critical theory. He has published several articles, reviews, etc. and co-authored two books.
Paraskevi Arapoglou,  
The Aristotle University, Thessaloniki

**Sexual and Asexual Representations in the Apocryphal Acts of John. Social Status or Hierarchy in the making?**

**Abstract**

The Apocryphal Acts of John is a mid-second century text in which various gnostic influences are evident. The text’s narrative concerns the life and acts of Apostle John. Very different influences can be traced in this fragmentary text (e.g. Gnostic). Interestingly, at the beginning of the ‘80s, several scholars claimed that the Apocryphal Acts, in general, were texts that had an oral background in female communities, whereas later on, others challenged such an idea. Indeed, the Apocryphal Acts of John contain main stories about women who play important roles in the narrative and act as protagonists in various scenes of the story. Therefore, it is assumed in this paper that this text can provide quite interesting insight into conceptions of the era regarding women’s role in early Christianity. The proposed paper aims to investigate how certain characters of the narrative are described in terms of sex/gender distinction. Additionally, by applying modern theories of gender it will attempt to trace any textual indications that could lead to a deeper understanding of whether and how sexuality is fashioned through the experience of the flesh. Being a man or a woman in ancient times was a matter of holding a certain place in society and assuming a specific cultural role within that context. Therefore, the characters of Cleopatra and Lycomedes, Drusiana and Andronicus, as well as Callimachus and the young man who had fallen in love with his neighbor’s wife will be examined in an effort to discern possible hierarchical structures and ideologies. Are those characters’ depictions affected by any notions of sexual differences? Are there any specific traits of sameness or difference that affect our understanding? Finally, taking into consideration early gnostic ascetic ideals the paper will explore whether there are any possible gnostic influences on the text regarding the diverse depictions of sex/gender.

**Bio**

I was born in Thessaloniki, Greece in 1975. I studied Translation at the Hellenic American Union of Thessaloniki and at the Chartered Institute of Linguists in London where I received Level 7 Diploma in Translation. In 2015 I completed my undergraduate studies in Theology and I am currently a postgraduate student of the New Testament at the School of Pastoral and Social Theology at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. I have been working as a translator and ICAP coordinator for the Hellenic Bible Society. I am a member of the EABS and for the past year I hold the position of the Association’s Graduate Student Representative.
**Abstract**

In the *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* Diogenes Laërtios recounts the story of Hipparchia, the cynic philosopher, versus Theodoros the Atheist. While at a symposium, a space normally not open to respectable women, Hipparchia engaged in an argument with Theodoros. Realizing that he was about to be beaten at his own game, Theodoros tried to expose her body to the eyes of all present by pulling up her *himation*. She did not lose her temper and calmly replied that she, unlike other women, had made the choice to cultivate her mind, instead of spending her time weaving.

While Theodoros was trying not to lose face among his peers, Hipparchia was competing for her place in the public sphere. If we trust Diogenes’ account, Hipparchia won this competition in rhetoric and logic (*agōn logōn*), by rejecting domesticity and women’s traditional chores. We propose to analyze the story of Hipparchia transmitted by Diogenes as an early formulation of an ideology of gender inequality. What this paper will aim to show is that the story of Hipparchia seems to suggest that the only way to be competitive in a male world is to be a man or to live as one. Taking contemporary feminist theory into account, this paper will investigate the case of Diogenes’ Hipparchia as an instance within a broader discourse which traces gender difference as biological and therefore ‘natural’, and thus not easy to overlook, much less overcome.

**Bio**

Maria Papadopoulou is a classical philologist. She wrote her PhD on the Semantics of Colour in Hellenistic Poetry at the University of Athens. She has published on Hellenistic Poetry and Greek Dialectology. She has taught part of a BA course on Women in Antiquity at the University of Copenhagen and has presented papers on gender in antiquity in Canada and Finland. Currently, she is Marie Curie Fellow at the University of Copenhagen. Her two-year project investigates the Politics of Dress and Identity in Lagid Egypt.
Birgitta Leppänen Sjöberg  
Department of archaeology and ancient history,  
Uppsala University

**Sex, gender and space. Norms’ taboos’ and the construction of identity within the private space of the *oikos* in the ancient Greek society.**

**Abstract**

The discourse on sexuality and identity of women has a long history within research on the ancient Greek society. Especially the sexuality of women partaking in symposia as seen on Greek vases has been subject to discussions oscillating between interpretations either assigning the women an identity as prostitutes or rejecting such an interpretation. The principal focus with this paper is to revitalize the issue of sexuality and construction of identity and status within the private space of the *oikos* and more specifically the male connoted *andron*. It is hypothesized that sexuality as an identity when intersecting with other categories as gender, ethnicity and status construct hierarchical identities and structures within the private space. Of significance is to understand how normative attitudes on sexual behaviour, such as constructed and identified by the community of the Athenian citizens, defined the identity and controlled the life of the individual. In order understand and construct normative behaviour in a long term perspective changes in attitudes are necessary to reconstruct and a close reading of literary and iconographical sources is therefore adapted. To recognize the construction of sexuality as a behavioural marker various ‘taboos’ connoted to sexuality will be explored. To understand the impact of norms in the ancient Greek society in a long term perspective a social custom model, constructed by G.A. Akerlof, will be tested.

**Bio**

B. L Sjöberg is researcher and teacher. She has recently completed a project, financed by the Swedish Research Council on intersectionality and the private space of the Greek household, the *oikos*, in a diachronic perspective. The project has focused hierarchical relations constructed on identity categories of the various household members. Synergies of the recent project are new research focused on ageing but also identities and urbanization. Further, the Late Bronze Age to the Classical period is currently focused from the perspective of iconography of mourning and the construction of social identity. B.L: Sjöberg has published articles on intersectionality and the Greek household.
Meritxell Ferrer
Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona

More than a Dwelling: Women, Rituals and Homes in Western Sicily (8th-5th centuries BC)

Abstract

Despite the importance that gender studies and feminist perspectives have achieved in archaeology in the last decades, their impact has been quite limited in Sicilian archaeology. In fact, most of the narratives related to Sicily in the First Millennium BC have traditionally focused on what might be considered masculine topics and, with modern eyes, directly associated with power –such as trade, production, monumental architecture, politics and the public sphere. This androcentric bias in Sicilian studies –both in colonial, Greek and Phoenician, and local contexts– not only involved a noteworthy lack of attention to women and feminine agency, but also to those research areas where women, and especially their capacity of action, could be visualized more effectively, for example in domestic contexts and other arenas of domesticity.

In response of these traditional discourses the main aim of this communication is to recover the agency of certain Sicilian women through the analysis of some ritual practices carried out in the household, both in Greek (Himera), Phoenician (Mozia) and local (Monte Maranfusa and Monte Polizzo) contexts. The study of these practices in a cross-cultural perspective highlights the agency of certain Sicilian women, as well as points out their centrality and importance in the maintenance of their own homes and, by extension, of their communities: Greek, Phoenician and Local.

Bio

Meritxell Ferrer is a Beatriu de Pinós/Marie Curie (2015-2017) postdoctoral research fellow at Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Humanities Department. Previously, she has been Beatriu de Pinós/Marie Curie postdoctoral research fellow at Stanford University, Classics Department and Archaeology Center (2013-2015). She earned her Ph.D. from IUHJVV-UPF (Barcelona, Spain) in 2012 with a dissertation entitled “Sicilian Acropolei: Communities, Rituals and Powers (10th – 5th BC). Her research specializes in the archaeology of the Mediterranean during the Iron Age, mainly Phoenician and Greek colonization in the western Mediterranean, with a particular interest in Sicily and the Iberian Peninsula. Her interests encompass themes such as post-colonial perspectives, cultural contact, ritual, gender and power relations. Meritxell has done fieldwork in Spain, Sicily, Portugal and Sardinia.
Abstract

In this paper I outline important shifts in thinking about sex/gender, bodies, and materiality in the archaeology of the ancient world. I make two, parallel arguments. First, that it is possible to trace a path from an initial concern with gender as the cultural construction of sex, through a performative understanding of the sex/gender relationship (inspired by Judith Butler), to a nascent new materialist interrogation of the very real impact of the body’s materiality on its status. The central change in the way we think about sex and gender has been from a model of active culture to a model of active materiality (the latter represented by the work of Karen Barad). Through examples drawn from my work on Minoan artworks and the concept of “body” I illustrate the nature of those shifts.

My second argument is that a concern with the status of our central concepts – sex, gender, body, and materiality – has dogged debate since at least the 1990s. The question has been, do our contemporary concepts work with the ancient contexts? Recent responses to that question include a willingness to be led by source texts and materials in conceptual innovation. The two arguments converge in rethinking the status of archaeological material as representation.

Bio

Benjamin Alberti is Professor of Anthropology at Framingham State University and graduate lecturer at the Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina. Enduring themes in his research are bodies, the status of representation, sex/gender, and archaeologies of ontology, which he has explored through artworks and ceramics from Bronze Age Crete and formative period northwest Argentina. Published work includes the edited volumes Archaeology After Interpretation (2013, Left Coast Press, with Andy Jones and Joshua Pollard), a special section of Cambridge Archaeological Journal (2009, with Tamara Bray), and Archaeology in Latin America (1999, Routledge, with Gustavo Politis), and a number of articles and book chapters.
Engendering rituals. Votive figurines of dancing and music making women from ancient Greek sanctuaries

Abstract

Votive gifts constitute a large part of the archaeological material found at ancient sanctuaries in the Mediterranean world. Amongst these gifts figurines or figurine groups of dancing and music making women and men can be identified. These types of gifts are usually interpreted as evidence for ritual dance and music playing at the site. If we shift focus from the ritual sphere to the broader context of the society the same objects can be analyzed to shed light on ideas regarding gendered roles and norms in the society where they were made, used and displayed. Recent feminist theories have argued that artefacts in ancient societies were used with the means to influence and negotiate norms and roles connected to gender. Intertwined with theories highlighting material aspects of religion these theories can be used to interpret votive gifts with this broader focus in mind. I intend to discuss how votive figurines of dancing and music making women can be regarded as reflections of cultural norms and values connected to ideas on female roles in society. By taking a stand in this theoretical approach the variation of types of votive gifts portraying dancing and music making will be used to emphasize different possibilities in meaning and value embedded in these material remains of ancient devotion.

Key words: votive, dance, music, ritual, intersectionality, materiality, gender

Bio

Jenny Högström Berntson is a PhD student in History of Religions at the Department of Literature, History of Ideas and Religion at the University of Gothenburg. The object of her thesis is to study various types of votive gifts from three sanctuaries in Paestum. The focus lies on votive gifts as agents conveying symbolic meaning, especially regarding gender. Jenny Högström Berntson is also research administrator for the Centre for Critical Heritage Studies, a research collaboration between University of Gothenburg and University College London.
Abstracts and bios – Tuesday September 13 – Room 1

Anthi Dipla
The Hellenic Open University/The Open University of Cyprus

Brides, beasts and prostitutes: shaping women’s sexuality and promoting female gender roles in Classical Athens

Abstract

In the vase-painting of Classical Athens, a popular art medium of the time, scenes of ephebes, on the model of Theseus, the emblematic hero of Athenian democracy, pursuing women as if they were wild animals and abducting them, gain emphatic popularity. These scenes are apparently coined on the model of earlier, Archaic depictions of Peleus struggling with Thetis, while she metamorphoses into various beasts, in her struggle to escape marriage. All these images may have served as an alternative representation of the wedding theme and may have expressed prevalent social notions about the nature of women and about how erotic/marital union should be. Women are supposed to be “bestial” and can only be assimilated into civil life through “rape” and marriage. As an act of violence (followed by rape), abduction expresses the renewed control from father to husband, through the transfer of dominance (κυριεία rights), and female submission to it.

Moreover, there appears to be a trend in the second half of the fifth century to mix the iconographies of the respectable (brides) with the disreputable (hetaerae). Hetaerae may appear in activities of the industrious housewife, such as spinning, brides in scenes of gift exchange, normally reserved for accosted hetaerae, or in sensual bathing, such as in “voyeuristic” views of brothels. Aphrodite or Eros are meaningfully shown often participating in the bridal preparation, suggesting the strong appeal of bridal adornment. The bride's beauty can be manipulated to inspire passion in the groom and ensure childbirth.

Partaking in wild nature, brides need to be pursued, “raped”, and tamed. Their power of seduction needs to be tightly controlled and only be placed at the service of marriage and of the oikos’ and city’s best interest.

Bio

Anthi Dipla is a Classical archaeologist/art historian. She studied at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and the University of Oxford (MA, PhD). She specializes in Greek vase painting, iconography and mythology, with further interests in women studies and social history. Her research projects have been focused principally on the narration of stories on vases, so as to forward social notions about gender roles through this popular art medium. As an adjunct professor she has taught at various universities in Greece and abroad (UK, USA, Turkey), and currently at the Hellenic Open University and the Open University of Cyprus. She has participated in excavations, scientific projects and conferences in Greece, Cyprus and abroad and she has published articles in Greek and international, peer-reviewed periodicals and edited volumes. Her book, Eros in Pursuit: Abduction and Seduction Scenes on Athenian Vases, is under publication in the British Archaeological Reports series.
Lene Os Johannessen  
Department of Archaeology, University of Oslo  

The woman and the beast: a mistress of wild animals or a metaphor for gender roles?  

Abstract  
Animal and animal-human motifs were very popular motifs in ancient Greek material culture. The female body was more frequently and more strongly associated with accompanying animals than the male body was. One of the most significant animal-human images is the image of a woman together with wild animals, an image commonly referred to as potnia theron – mistress of wild animals. An interpretation of the woman-wild animal motif as a goddess (Artemis) controlling wild animals and nature stands in a long and unquestioned tradition. In this paper I will seek a different explanation by investigating the relationship between animals, women and ideas of gender.

Animals are at one and same time food, commodities, pets, the embodiment of ‘nature’ and are frequently used as symbols and metaphors. How animals were regarded and how the relationship between humans and animals was viewed in ancient Greece is strongly associated with how human beings saw themselves. By examining the animal and human-animal motifs it is possible to explore how the ancient Greeks used animals to communicate cultural ideas and values. The empirical starting point will mainly be animal and animal-human motifs from sanctuaries of Artemis, but I will also draw upon material from other contexts.

Bio  
Lene Os Johannessen is PhD in Classical Archaeology from the University of Oslo. She defended her thesis Constituting Artemis. The social and cultural significance of votive offerings in the cults of Artemis at Brauron, Ephesos and Sparta in 2015. Johannessen has participated in several archaeological investigations in Norway, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Greece. Since 2014 she has been working as a lecturer and a researcher at the Department of Archaeology at the University of Oslo. Her research interests cover gender, religion and votive offerings in ancient Greece, archaeological theory and feminist theory.
Phoenician-Punic Material Culture: Questioning the Validity of the Binary Male/Female as Category of Analysis

Abstract

When studying Phoenician-Punic terracotta figurines or clay masks their initial classification is traditionally by sex. These materials, then, are interpreted as representing females or as representing males thanks to some features. In this direction, breasts, genitals, as well as facial elements like makeup (mostly red circles on cheeks, foreheads and chins), and exaggerated chins as beards, have been traditionally interpreted as features for females (makeup, presence of breasts) or for males (beards, chins, absence of breasts). Despite some of these proposals might work in some cases or for some purposes, they also raise a number of questions. First, when applying these criteria, certain images remain indeterminate, as the initial binary classification itself acts to limit a possible wider range of sex and gender identities. Second, even if we concentrate in images clearly classifiable as males or females, this option does not usually take into account the diversity of males and of females, i.e. the diversity of masculinities and femininities potentially constructed.

Taking these objections into account, in this communication we propose to analyse a sample of Phoenician-Punic terracotta figurines and clay masks from the seventh to the second centuries BCE, from selected areas of the western Mediterranean, namely Iberia, Ibiza, Carthage, Sicily and Carthage. Through the analysis of some examples, we aim to question to which extent the binary male/female may act as a helpful first step of the research or as a polemic first step that might hide other possible interpretations of these materials beyond the dual male/female framework.

Bios

Mireia López-Bertran is Beatriu de Pinós/Marie Curie fellow at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona (Spain). She received her PhD degree in History from the Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona, Spain) in 2007. Her dissertation focused on Phoenician and Punic rituals in rural landscapes. Between 2010 and 2012 she was postdoctoral fellow with the Spanish Ministry of Education and Culture—FECYT and Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Glasgow, where she carried out a project about Phoenician and Punic clay human figurines. She specialises in the Phoenician and Punic sites of the ancient Mediterranean, with research interests in embodiment, rituals and gender.

Agnès Garcia-Ventura was awarded her PhD by the Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona, Spain) in 2012. As Postdoc, she was awarded a fellowship at the Collaborative Research Centre 933, “Material Texts Cultures”, of the Rupert Charles University in Heidelberg (November 2012-May 2013). She also worked for one academic year as Assistant Professor at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (2013-2014). Since October 2014 she is “Beatriu de Pinós” Postdoc fellow at the “Sapienza”, Università degli studi di Roma. Her main areas of interest are gender studies and the historiography of Ancient Near Eastern studies.
Luca Scalco  
University of Padova, Italy

Parents and gender identity in Roman funerary monuments

Abstract

In the last decades many scholars from different disciplines have fairly debated about reality, everyday life and hierarchy of the Roman family, trying to widen the topic by reconsidering the traditional picture of gens and patria postestas in the light of a more “modernistic” view of nuclear family relationships. In recent years a similar approach has been proposed also for Roman art, focussing mainly on iconography, especially that of childhood, of funerary and public monuments. The paper I am proposing aims to contribute to this discussion moving the attention from children to parents: portraits of families on Roman funerary monuments attest quite a varied situation, in which every family tries to find its own way of representation in spite of social and iconographical constraints. The integration of “visual” data with other types of evidence - from disciplines such as epigraphy, Roman law and demography - allows us to understand gender differences in the representations of parents on tombstones, and appreciate the reformulation of gender priority from both the social and private point of view, suggesting new insights into the coexistence of patria potestas and affection. The topic will be analyzed by presenting a selection of monuments with funerary portraits of single parents, starting from Rome (i.e. altar of Passienii, relief of Septumii) and moving to central and northern Italy (i.e. stelae from Saturnia, Tergeste, Brixillum and Aquileia), in a wide time span that goes from mid 1st century BC to 3rd century AD.

Bio

I obtained my BA degree in 2011 with a dissertation regarding Roman lead coffins from Aquileia, whose results have been published in 2011, 2013 and 2016. In 2013 I discussed my MA dissertation focused on the analysis of funerary rituals from a Roman necropolis in Verona (Italy), and the results are forthcoming in Archeologia Veneta 2016. Since 2014 I have been attending a PhD in Padua, with a project focused on the representation of families on Roman funerary monuments; in the last years I have been actively involved in conferences and some of these papers are forthcoming. Since 2014 I have also been in charge as excavation tutor for the site of the ‘Domus delle Bestie Ferite’ in Aquileia.
Music-making that defies hierarchical structures? A woman cithara-player from Ancona

Abstract

This paper will discuss the motif of a sepulchral monument from the Roman Late Republic, found in the vicinities of Ancona, Italy. It shows a young woman playing the cithara – a rather large and complex instrument belonging to the lyre-family. With few exceptions women did not play the cithara, according to ancient literary sources. This was reserved for men at public concerts and musical competitions.

In ancient Rome attitudes towards women’s music-making were complex. Women were described as immoral if they performed in public or in a virtuous way, and thus associated with the world of entertainment and prostitutes. On funerary monuments, the intentions were to display aspects of the deceased to be proud of. In the case of women, that often implied traditional, feminine virtues such as needlework and a modest character. Also, a lyra could be displayed but most often the smaller chelys-lyra, used in more intimate, familiar contexts. Putting up a funerary monument was expensive. Prostitutes and artists who in the texts are those who sometimes are connected to cithara-playing are never seen commemorated in this way. So, why portray a respectful woman as a cithara-player, if it contradicted Roman moral norms as displayed in the ancient literature?

I argue that the Ancona citharistria gives a different perspective on how the Romans looked upon music-making in connection to women and virtue than the literary sources suggest. I propose that the monument could indeed show a respectable woman who was both appreciated and respected for her music skills.

Bio

Erika Lindgren Liljenstolpe is a Ph.D. in Ancient history at Uppsala University, Sweden. Her research focuses on music and gender in Antiquity, and her dissertation (2015) treated attitudes towards women’s music-making in ancient Rome. She is currently working on a project that explores women and music in image, as well as in a music-archaeological project that will reconstruct Scandinavian Iron age horns. As a Riksspelman on violin she also works as a musician. Erika has previously worked at The Museum of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Antiquities in Stockholm and has participated in excavations in Pompeii and Prima Porta.
Abstract

This paper examines Roman sex and sexuality through the lens of cultural appropriation in Suetonius’ description of Tiberius’ sexual Disneyland on Capri (*Vita Tiberii* 43-44). Capri functions as a space of liminal sexuality that breaks down divisions among male-female-transexual, human-animal-divine, adult-child, active-passive. Tiberius’ Capri obliterates any current model of sexuality or sexual identity. Tiberius appropriated and then inverted sex cultures from around the Mediterranean (akin to the adoption of foreign art or literary forms, or the incorporation of statuary, painting, artisans, slaves, intellectual systems). In the process he expresses a deep understanding of Roman sexuality as he actively constructs a new kind of sex culture that dismantles normative modes of pederasty, pornography, bestiality, sexuality and identity. Whereas Catullus, Tibullus, and Ovid employ a sort of normative poetics of sexual appropriation, Tiberius offers a radical model, in which the closer an individual is to the emperor, the more Roman systems of sexuality become atomized and reassembled. Tiberius constructs a sexual space beyond gender, sex, identity and humanization. In the formation of liminal sexualities on Capri Tiberius becomes the center of this sexual revolution and he alone retains a static sexual identity, a sexual identity that also signifies the status of the emperor in the Roman Empire. Rather than framing Tiberius’ sexual revolution at Capri as something perverse and monstrous (as Suetonius does), I prefer to evaluate how it reveals a deep awareness of the matrices of sex, sexuality, identity and power in Rome and the broader Mediterranean.

Bio

Bill Gladhill is an Associate Professor of Classics at McGill University. He has published broadly on Vergil, Ovid, Suetonius, and Plato. His book *Rethinking Roman Alliance* (Cambridge 2016) examines notions of alliance and social breakdown in Roman literature and society. Currently he is working on Roman spirituality, the ancient body, and Roman funerary lament. In addition, he is preparing an edited volume on *Aeneid* 6 and a commentary on *Thebaid* 10.
The Fate and Role of Captive Women and Concubines in Late Antiquity: 
Three Representations from the Late Roman Empire.

Abstract

At the very lowest rung of society, captives, slaves and concubines are among the most poorly attested and least studied of all social groups in late antiquity. However, in Bissula, Euphemia and Augustine’s anonymous concubines, we can analyze representations of interpersonal relationships between comparatively powerful male individuals (a senator, a soldier and an urban intellectual) and their partners of various degrees of willingness: Bissula was a captive from Germania given to the senator Ausonius as a reward for military services, Euphemia a Syrian girl married off to a soldier but later treated as a captive slave when it turned out her husband already had a wife, and in Augustine’s case, low-status urban Roman women who provided him with companionship for well over a decade. Based on these cases, it is possible to outline a model of power, compliance, agency and reciprocity (or lack thereof) that characterized such asymmetrical relationships in the fourth and fifth centuries AD. Even if abuse, violence or neglect seems to have been the norm, at least some women of humble origins (e.g. Bissula) were able to form their destiny to a certain extent and achieve some status and security. Their varying fates and background factors (war, captivity, development of slavery, rise of Christianity, and other social changes) may be used to analyze wider trends in the development of the institutions pertaining to female captives, sexual slavery, and concubinage as attested in law, epistolography and numerus but less detailed narrative sources during this period.

Bio

Leif Inge Ree Petersen, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Historical Studies, NTNU, has written the monograph Siege Warfare and Military Organization in the Successor States (400-800 AD): Byzantium, the West and Islam (Brill, 2013), several articles on the history of technology, warfare, ideology and social history in late antique, Byzantine, Islamic and Western societies, and is currently preparing a monograph on Captive Women: The Fate and Role of Women Captives of War in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages, as well as editing Common Men and Women at War, on the social history of warfare 400-1500 and Strategies, including studies on the strategic economy of raiding and taking captives.
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