Archaeologies of Text
Joukowsky Institute Publications

1. KOINE: Mediterranean Studies in Honor of R. Ross Holloway  
   Edited by Derek Counts and Anthony Tuck
2. Re-Presenting the Past: Archaeology through Text and Image  
   Edited by Sheila Bonde and Stephen Houston
3. Locating the Sacred: Theoretical Approaches to the Emplacement of Religion  
   Edited by Claudia Moser and Cecelia Feldman
   Edited by Roderick Campbell
5. Of Rocks and Water: Towards an Archaeology of Place  
   Edited by Ömür Harmanşah
6. Archaeologies of Text: Archaeology, Technology, and Ethics  
   Edited by Matthew T. Rutz and Morag Kersel
## Contents

1. **Introduction: No Discipline is an Island**  
   *Morag M. Kersel and Matthew T. Rutz*  
   1

2. **Case in Point: The Persepolis Fortification Archive**  
   *Matthew W. Stolper*  
   14

3. **Space, Time, and Texts: A Landscape Approach to the Classic Maya Hieroglyphic Record**  
   *Nicholas P. Carter*  
   31

4. **Now You See It, Now You Don’t: The Dynamics of Archaeological and Epigraphic Landscapes from Coptic Egypt**  
   *Scott Bucking*  
   59

5. **Articulating Neo-Assyrian Imperialism at Tell Tayinat**  
   *Timothy P. Harrison*  
   80

6. **The Archaeology of Mesopotamian Extispicy: Modeling Divination in the Old Babylonian Period**  
   *Matthew T. Rutz*  
   97

7. **The Ernest K. Smith Collection of Shang Divination Inscriptions at Columbia University and the Evidence for Scribal Training at Anyang**  
   *Adam Smith*  
   121

8. **Tracing Networks of Cuneiform Scholarship with Oracc, GKAB, and Google Earth**  
   *Eleanor Robson*  
   142

   *Lisa Anderson and Heidi Wendt*  
   164

10. **Forging History: From Antiquity to the Modern Period**  
    *Christopher A. Rollston*  
    176
11. WikiLeaks, Text, and Archaeology: The Case of the Schøyen Incantation Bowls 198
   Neil J. Brodie and Morag M. Kersel

12. Do Restrictions on Publication of Undocumented Texts Promote Legitimacy? 214
   Patty Gerstenblith

   John F. Cherry

Index 245
List of Figures

2.1 Photograph of the site of Persepolis.
2.2 Plan of the site of Persepolis.
2.3 Elamite document from the Persepolis Fortification Archive.
2.4 Aramaic document from the Persepolis Fortification Archive.
2.5 Uninscribed, sealed document from the Persepolis Fortification Archive.
2.6 Unique Old Persian document from the Persepolis Fortification Archive.
2.7 Screenshot from the OCHRE presentation of the Persepolis Fortification Archive Project.

3.1 A map of the Maya area, showing sites mentioned in Chapter 3.
3.2a Passage from Copan Stela 10 alluding to events at the “Copan” sky and cave/outcropping at Uxwitik.
3.2b Passage from Copan Stela 12 naming “Great Earth, the Edge of the Sky, the First Hearth Place cave/outcropping”.
3.2c Passage from Copan Stela 2 naming “Great Earth”.
3.2d Passage from the Main Panel of the Temple of the Cross, Palenque: “The hearth is changed at the Edge of the Sky, at the First Hearth Place”.
3.2e Passage from Quirigua Stela C reading “It happened at the Edge of the Sky, at the First Hearth Place,” in reference to the planting of a mythological stone.
3.2f Ik’ wabynal mythological toponym from a Late Classic polychrome vessel.
3.2g Mythological toponyms ik’ wabynal and ik’ nabhnal from a Late Classic codex-style vessel.
3.3a Passage from Calakmul Stela 114 referring to a “youth, the Chiik Nahb lord”.
3.3b Passage from Naranjo Hieroglyphic Stairway 1 (originally from Caracol) naming Yuknoom “Head” as “the Kaanal lord at Uxte’tuun, he of Chiik Nahb”.
3.3c “Chiik Nahb lord” on Calakmul Monument 6.
3.3d “Chiik Nahb wall” from the southern façade of Calakmul’s North Acropolis.
3.3e Passage from an unprovenanced panel from the region of Cancuen.
3.3f Passage from La Corona Panel 1A reading “Traveled to Chiik Nahb the elder brother person, the youth, K’ihnich Je’ Yookil?”.

3.4a Early, innovative synharmonic spellings of the word for “cave, outcropping” at Copan: CH’EN-ne, from Copan Stela 12.

3.4b CH’EN-ne, from Copan Stela 2. Standard, disharmonic spellings of the same word.

3.4c CH’EN-na, from Copan Stela 10, contemporaneous with Stelae 2 and 12.

3.4d CH’E’N-na, from Tikal Stela 5.

3.4e Standard spelling of the word for “image, person, self” as BAAH-hi, from the central panel of the Temple of the Inscriptions at Palenque.

3.4f tu-BAAJ-ji for t-u baaj, “to his image,” from Copan Stela E.

3.4g u-BAAJ-ji, “his image,” from Copan Stela P.

4.1 Map of Egypt, showing sites mentioned in Chapter 4.

4.2 Northeastern corner of central court, upper terrace, Hatshepsut temple, Deir el-Bahri.

4.3 Butcher’s Court looking southwest towards Room Z, Seti I temple, Abydos.

4.4 Architrave with Coptic religious texts, Butcher’s Court, Seti I temple, Abydos.

4.5 Coptic-period niche in eastern wall of Tomb 29, Beni Hasan.

4.6 Coptic-period graffiti and holes, northeastern corner of Room Z, Seti I temple, Abydos.

4.7 Plastered installation in northeastern corner of Butcher’s Court, Seti I temple, Abydos.

4.8 Daniel in the lion’s den graffito on eastern wall of Tomb 23, Beni Hasan.

5.1 Map of the Amuq Plain showing the location of Tell Tayinat and other principal settlements.

5.2 Topographic map of Tell Tayinat overlaid on a CORONA satellite image of the site.

5.3 Plan of Building XVI, Tell Tayinat.

5.4 Plan of Building XVI, Tell Tayinat, showing the distribution of artifacts and tablets in its inner sanctum.

5.5 Plan of the Assyrian “Sacred Precinct” at Tell Tayinat, showing Buildings II and XVI.

6.1 Old Babylonian liver model allegedly from Sippar.

6.2 Old Babylonian omen compendium allegedly from Sippar.

6.3 Old Babylonian omen report allegedly from Sippar.

7.1 Scapula with divination records and scribal training exercises.
List of Figures

7.2a Divination cracks, records, and exercises on HJ27456: divination cracks (obverse) and notches (reverse).
7.2b Divination cracks, records, and exercises on HJ27456: inscription units.
7.2c Divination cracks, records, and exercises on HJ27456: sequence of dated records and copies.
7.3 Divination records and trainee copies on HJ27456.
8.1 The scholarly knowledge network around seventh-century Kalhu.
8.2 The scholarly knowledge network around seventh-century Huzirina.
8.3 The scholarly knowledge network around fifth-century Uruk.
9.1 The epitaph of Philargyrus L. Sullae.
11.1 Aramaic incantation bowl, British Museum.
11.2 Incantation bowl for sale in Antiquities Shop, Jerusalem.
11.3 Incantation bowl for sale in Antiquities Shop, Jerusalem.

List of Tables

6.1 Provenience and number of omen compendia, early second millennium B.C.
6.2 Provenience and number of omen reports, early second millennium B.C.
6.3 Provenience and number of clay models, early second millennium B.C.
7.1 Known joins involving items from E.K. Smith's collection.
13.1 Sample questions posed to editors about their journals' publication policies.
13.2 Journals included in the survey and their editors.
Notes on Contributors

Lisa Anderson (Ph.D., Brown University, 2009) is Frederick Randolph Grace Assistant Curator of Ancient Art in the Harvard Art Museums and former project manager of the U.S. Epigraphy Project, Brown University.

Neil J. Brodie (Ph.D., University of Liverpool, 1992) is Senior Research Fellow in the Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research at the University of Glasgow. Dr. Brodie is an archaeologist by training and has held positions at the British School at Athens, the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research at the University of Cambridge, where he was Research Director of the Illicit Antiquities Research Centre, and Stanford University’s Archaeology Center. He was co-author (with Jennifer Doole and Peter Watson) of the report Stealing History (2000), commissioned by the Museums Association and ICOM-UK to advise upon the illicit trade in cultural material. He also co-edited (with Morag M. Kersel, Christina Luke, and Kathryn Walker Tubb) Archaeology, Cultural Heritage, and the Antiquities Trade (2006), (with Kathryn Walker Tubb) Illicit Antiquities: The Theft of Culture and the Extinction of Archaeology (2002), and (with Jennifer Doole and Colin Renfrew) Trade in Illicit Antiquities: The Destruction of the World’s Archaeological Heritage (2001). He has worked on archaeological projects in the United Kingdom, Jordan, and Greece, where his work is ongoing.

Scott Bucking (Ph.D., University of Cambridge, 1998) is Associate Professor, Department of History, DePaul University. Professor Bucking’s interests include the archaeology and epigraphy of late antique Egypt and Palestine, literacy and education in the ancient world, Greek and Coptic papyrology, and early Christianity and monasticism. His publications have appeared in the journals Public Archaeology, Palestine Excavation Quarterly, Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik, and Journal of Coptic Studies, and he is author of Practice Makes Perfect: P. Cotsen-Princeton 1 and the Training of Scribes in Byzantine Egypt (2011). He has two ongoing field projects: the Byzantine Cave Dwelling Project at Avdat, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in the Negev Desert of Israel, and the Beni Hasan in Late Antiquity Project in Middle Egypt, near Minya. He also currently serves on the Board of Trustees of the Albright Institute of Archaeological Research in Jerusalem.
Nicholas P. Carter (Ph.D., Brown University, 2014) is Adjunct Lecturer, Department of Anthropology, Brown University. Since 2006 he has worked with the El Zotz Archaeological Project, which has been excavating at the ancient Maya site of El Zotz in central Petén, Guatemala, and directs the Sierra Mazateca Archaeological Project. His research interests include anthropological archaeology; the origins, nature, and disintegration of complex polities; linguistic and semiotic anthropology; writing systems; ancient economies; and ceramic analysis. He has worked on the non-calendrical component of the Zapotec hieroglyphic writing system, as well as the networks of cultural and political influence behind the palaeographic and linguistic trends in Classic Maya inscriptions.

John F. Cherry (Ph.D., Southampton University, 1981) is Joukowsky Family Professor of Archaeology and Professor of Classics, Brown University. His teaching, research interests, and publications are eclectic and reflect a background in Classics, Anthropology, and Archaeology, as well as educational training on both sides of the Atlantic, and archaeological fieldwork experience in Great Britain, the United States, Yugoslav Macedonia, Italy, Armenia, and (especially) Greece and (currently) Montserrat. He is co-author (with A. Bernard Knapp) of *Provenience Studies and Bronze Age Cyprus: Production, Exchange and Polity-economic Change* (1994), as well as co-editor (with Lauren E. Talalay and Despina Margomenou) of *Prehistorians Round the Pond: Reflections on Aegean Prehistory as a Discipline* (2005), (with Susan E. Alcock) *Side-by-side Survey: Comparative Regional Studies in the Mediterranean World* (2004), (with Susan E. Alcock and Jaś Elsner) *Pausanias: Travel and Memory in Roman Greece* (2001), and (with Colin Renfrew) *Peer Polity Interaction and Socio-political Change* (1986). He has been co-editor of the *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* for almost 25 years and is the General Series Editor for *Joukowsky Institute Publications*.

Patty Gerstenblith (Ph.D., Harvard University, 1977; J.D., Northwestern University School of Law, 1983) is Distinguished Research Professor of Law at DePaul University and director of its Center for Art, Museum and Cultural Heritage Law. She is founding President of the Lawyers’ Committee for Cultural Heritage Preservation (2005–2011), a Director of the U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield, and Co-Chair of the American Bar Association’s Art and Cultural Heritage Law Committee. In 2011 she was appointed by President Obama to serve as the Chair of the President’s Cultural Property Advisory Committee in the U.S. Department of State, on which she had previously served as a public representative in the Clinton administration. From 1995 to 2002, she was editor-in-chief of the *International Journal of Cultural Property*. 
Her publications include the casebook *Art, Cultural Heritage and the Law* (2004; 3rd edition, 2012) and numerous articles. Before joining the DePaul faculty, Professor Gerstenblith clerked for the Honorable Richard D. Cudahy of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit.

**Timothy P. Harrison** (Ph.D., University of Chicago, 1995) is Chair of the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, University of Toronto. Professor Harrison is the Director of the Tell Madaba Archaeological Project (Jordan) and the Tayinat Archaeological Project (Turkey) as well as a former President of the American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR). He is the principal author of *Megiddo 3: Final Report on the Stratum VI Excavations* (2004), as well as numerous articles.

**Morag M. Kersel** (Ph.D., University of Cambridge, 2006) is Assistant Professor of Anthropology, DePaul University. Professor Kersel is Co-Director of two ongoing projects: Galilee Prehistory Project (Israel); “Follow the Pots” Project (Jordan). Her research interests include the Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age of the eastern Mediterranean and Levant, cultural heritage protection, the built environment, object biographies, museums, and archaeological tourism. Her work combines archaeological, archival, and oral history research in order to understand the efficacy of cultural heritage law in protecting archaeological landscapes from looting. She is co-author (with Christina Luke) of *U.S. Cultural Diplomacy and Archaeology: Soft Power, Hard Heritage* (2013).

**Eleanor Robson** (D.Phil., Wolfson College, University of Oxford, 1995) is Reader in Ancient Near Eastern History in the Department of History, University College London. She was Co-Director (with Steve Tinney) of the Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded research project *The Geography of Knowledge in Assyria and Babylonia* (2007–2012) and is currently the British Institute for the Study of Iraq’s voluntary Chair of Council. Dr Robson is the author or co-author of several books on Mesopotamian culture and the history of mathematics, most recently *Mathematics in Ancient Iraq: A Social History* (2008), which in 2011 won the History of Science Society’s Pfizer Prize for the Best Scholarly Book. She co-edited (with Jacqueline Stedall) *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Mathematics* (2009) and (with Karen Radner) *The Oxford Handbook of Cuneiform Culture* (2011).

**Christopher A. Rollston** (Ph.D., The Johns Hopkins University, 1999) is Associate Professor of Northwest Semitic Languages and Literatures in the Department of Classical and Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations,
The George Washington University. Professor Rollston is the editor of the journal MAARAV: A Journal for the Study of Northwest Semitic Languages and Literatures and co-editor (with Eric Cline) of the Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research. He was educated as a critical historian and a philologist of ancient Near Eastern languages, with Northwest Semitic epigraphy, ancient scribal education, literacy in the ancient Levant, Hebrew Bible, and Second Temple Jewish Literature as his strongest emphases. He works in more than a dozen ancient and modern languages, especially the biblical languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek), as well as Akkadian, Ugaritic, Phoenician, Ammonite, Moabite, and Sahidic Coptic. He has published widely in the area of Northwest Semitic epigraphy and is author of Writing and Literacy in the World of Ancient Israel: Epigraphic Evidence from the Iron Age (2010), which received the Frank Moore Cross Epigraphy Prize of the American Schools of Oriental Research.

Matthew T. Rutz (Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania, 2008) is Assistant Professor in the Department of Egyptology and Assyriology, Brown University. Professor Rutz works in the field of Assyriology with emphasis on Akkadian (Babylonian/Assyrian) and Sumerian documents from the late second and first millennia B.C., the social and political history of the Late Bronze Age, Babylonian literary and scholastic texts from the site of Nippur (Iraq), divination and medicine in ancient Mesopotamia, the textual transmission of cuneiform literature, and the study of ancient texts as archaeological objects. He is the author of Bodies of Knowledge in Ancient Mesopotamia: The Diviners of Late Bronze Age Emar and Their Tablet Collection (2013).

Adam Smith (Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles, 2008) is Assistant Professor in the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Pennsylvania, where he is also Assistant Curator in the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology’s Asian Section. Professor Smith’s ongoing research focuses on the emergence and evolution of the Chinese writing system during the late second and first millennia B.C., and the early literate activities with which it was associated. He is currently working on a monograph on the topic of divination and its written record in early China.

Matthew W. Stolper (Ph.D., University of Michigan, 1974) is Emeritus Professor of Assyriology and John A. Wilson Professor Emeritus of Oriental Studies in the Oriental Institute and the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations of the University of Chicago. Professor Stolper has worked on Achaemenid Babylonian history and texts as well as on Elamite
history and texts. As Director of the Persepolis Fortification Archive Project, his efforts are focused on Achaemenid administrative records excavated by the Oriental Institute in 1933 at Persepolis, the imperial residence in the Persian homeland, to be published in electronic and conventional forms. He is author of *Tall-i Malyan, I: Elamite Administrative Texts (1972–1974)* (1984), (with Elizabeth Carter) *Elam: Surveys of Political History and Archaeology* (1984), *Entrepreneurs and Empire: The Murašû Archive, the Murašû Firm, and Persian Rule in Babylonia* (1985), *Late Achaemenid, Early Macedonian and Early Seleucid Records of Deposit and Related Texts* (1993), and (with Veysel Donbaz) *Istanbul Murašû Texts* (1997), as well as numerous articles.

**Heidi Wendt** (Ph.D., Brown University, 2013) is Assistant Professor in the Departments of Religion, Philosophy, and Classics, Wright State University. Her interdisciplinary research focuses on religion in the Roman Empire, including early Christianity, and the activities of freelance religious experts and their significance for the emergence of Christians in the first century. Professor Wendt is interested in relationships between Roman and provincial religions, particularly in Roman strategies for negotiating the “foreign” ritual practices and spaces with which they came into contact through imperial expansion. In 2011 she was awarded the Emeline Hill Richardson Pre-Doctoral Rome Prize in Ancient Studies from the American Academy in Rome. She has worked on archaeological projects and conducted research throughout Italy, Greece, and Turkey.
Contributor Addresses

Lisa Anderson  
Division of Asian and Mediterranean Art  
Harvard Art Museums  
32 Quincy St  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
lisa_anderson@harvard.edu

Neil J. Brodie  
Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research  
University of Glasgow  
Ivy Lodge, 63 Gibson St  
Glasgow G12 8LR  
Scotland  
Neil.Brodie@glasgow.ac.uk

Scott Bucking  
Department of History  
DePaul University  
2320 N. Kenmore Ave  
Chicago, IL 60614  
sbucking@depaul.edu

Nicholas P. Carter  
Department of Anthropology  
Brown University, Box 1921  
Providence, RI 02912  
Nicholas_P_Carter@brown.edu

John F. Cherry  
Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World  
Brown University, Box 1837  
60 George St  
Providence, RI 02912  
John_Cherry@brown.edu

Patty Gerstenblith  
DePaul University College of Law  
25 E. Jackson Blvd  
Chicago, IL 60604  
pgersten@depaul.edu

Timothy P. Harrison  
Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations  
University of Toronto  
4 Bancroft Ave  
Toronto, ON  
Canada M5S 1C1  
tim.harrison@utoronto.ca

Morag M. Kersel  
Department of Anthropology  
DePaul University  
2343 North Racine Ave  
Chicago, IL 60614  
mkersel@depaul.edu

Eleanor Robson  
Department of History  
University College London  
Gower St  
London WC1E 6BT  
United Kingdom  
e.robson@ucl.ac.uk

Christopher A. Rollston  
Department of Classical and Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations  
The George Washington University  
801 22nd St NW, Phillips Hall 345  
Washington, DC 20052  
rollston@gwu.edu
Matthew T. Rutz
Department of Egyptology and Assyriology
Brown University, Box 1899
2 Prospect St
Providence, RI 02912
Matthew_Rutz@brown.edu

Adam Smith
University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology
3260 South St, Room 510
Philadelphia, PA 19104
adsmit@sas.upenn.edu

Matthew W. Stolper
Oriental Institute
University of Chicago
1155 E 58th St
Chicago, IL 60637
m-stolper@uchicago.edu

Heidi Wendt
Religion, Philosophy, and Classics
Wright State University
Millett Hall 370
3640 Colonel Glenn Hwy
Dayton, OH 45435
heidi.wendt@wright.edu
Acknowledgments

This volume grew out of a symposium hosted at Brown University on December 3–5, 2010, the purpose of which was to explore different perspectives on the interplay of archaeological and textual material from the ancient world – hence archaeologies of text. For the symposium we invited scholars who routinely engage with the archaeology of texts – archaeologists, classicists, epigraphers, papyrologists, philologists, Assyriologists, Egyptologists, Mayanists, ancient historians – to discuss current theoretical and practical problems that have grown out of their work on early inscriptions and archaeology, and we warmly thank all contributors and participants for their interest, energy, and thoughtful engagement with this perennially relevant, promising, and vexing topic. Our hope was that the variety and specificity of perspectives and methods under discussion would catalyze cross-disciplinary exchange as well as underscore the importance of reevaluating the well-established disciplinary practices and assumptions within our respective fields. We leave it to the reader to decide if we succeeded in our approach, even if only asymptotically.

The symposium was generously supported by several institutional sponsors that we are only too happy to thank: the Department of Egyptology and Assyriology (James P. Allen, then Chair), the Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World (Susan E. Alcock, Director), the Program in Early Cultures, and The Colver Lectureship Fund at Brown University, and the Department of Anthropology at DePaul University. Additional funding for publishing this volume was provided by the Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World and the Humanities Research Fund of Brown University’s Office of the Vice President for Research.

Institutional support is essential, but it is people who give vitality and meaning to symposia such as ours. Over and above the authors of the individual chapters included herein and the many people who came to Brown to participate in the symposium, we gladly acknowledge a number of others by name. Bruce Zuckerman of the University of Southern California gave a stimulating presentation at the symposium, but due to personal reasons he was unable to contribute a chapter to this book. Sue Alcock and Jim Allen were pivotal in making the symposium a success. Claire Benson,
Diana Richardson, and Sarah Sharpe provided enthusiastic and capable administrative and logistical support. Doctoral students from a number of programs at Brown University served as session chairs: Bryan Brinkman, Kathryn Howley, Jessica Nowlin, Timothy Sandiford, Julia Troche, and Zackary Wainer. Subsequently a number of Brown graduate students (some of whom were also chairs) took a graduate seminar that grew out of the symposium: Emanuela Bocancea, Müge Durusu-Tanrıöver, Katherine Harrington, Ian Randall, Timothy Sandiford, and Alexander Smith (Archaeology and the Ancient World); Scott DiGiulio and Christopher Geggie (Classics); Christian Casey, Kathryn Howley, and Julia Troche (Egyptology); M. Willis Monroe and Zackary Wainer (Assyriology). Clive Vella, Ian Randall, and Magdelyne Christakis assisted with editing some of the individual chapters. John Cherry must also be singled out for a final word of thanks. He was a supporter of this enterprise from its inception and later took on a number of roles: as participant in the symposium, as thoughtful contributor to the volume, and as attentive series editor.
Articulating Neo-Assyrian Imperialism at Tell Tayinat

Timothy P. Harrison

The interplay of ancient textual sources and material culture, and their propensity to produce contradictory or contested histories of the past, is well-worn intellectual ground in the study of ancient Near Eastern history. The list of examples is long and the battle lines well-defined, indeed in too many cases entrenched to the point of intransigence, and it is not uncommon to hear the view that examining them in tandem is an unproductive, even misguided, intellectual exercise. In this paper, I will attempt to counter this claim with an example that illustrates how texts and material culture, when examined together in context, can produce unexpected insight, and indeed need to be studied together, if we are to achieve more than a superficial understanding of the complex social and historical experiences of the cultures we study. In so doing, I hope to demonstrate that archaeological and epigraphic research can be complementary and can lead to more richly textured understandings of the past than the fragmented, often skewed, knowledge that typically results when they are conducted as independent scholarly enterprises.

Excavations at Tell Tayinat, located in the North Orontes Valley in southeast Turkey, have uncovered the remains of a Late Assyrian settlement, including an Assyrian governor’s residence and, most recently, a temple and cache, or “collection”, of cuneiform tablets dating to the late eighth–seventh centuries B.C. Historical sources attest that Tayinat (ancient Kunulua) was destroyed by the Neo-Assyrian empire-builder Tiglath-pileser III in 738 B.C. and then transformed into an Assyrian provincial capital equipped with its own governor and administration. The Tayinat excavations thus offer an opportunity to examine archaeological and epigraphic evidence from a cultural and historical context that coincided with the rise and fall of the Assyrian Empire, a pivotal period in the political history of the ancient Near East. They reveal a carefully crafted ritual landscape that both manifested and reinforced the ideology of the Assyrian imperial project.
Studies of the Late Assyrian Period (ca. 911–612 B.C.) have begun to explore the material dimensions of Neo-Assyrian imperialism, particularly the physical and visual expressions of Neo-Assyrian imperial power, and to trace its articulation in the archaeological record (see Parker 2001, 2003). The genius of Assyrian imperial ideology is reflected in its manipulation of the material form, ranging from the standardization of architectural styles to the production of large-scale representational art forms such as wall reliefs and sculpture, and elite craft industries such as ceramic fineware production. Art historical studies in particular have emphasized the programmatic nature of Neo-Assyrian royal art and the remarkably sophisticated use of the written word to construct composite visual narratives that communicated ideological messages carefully tailored to each targeted audience, often representing very different constituencies (see, for example, Lumsden 2004; Porter 2000, 2001; Russell 1998, 1999; Winter 1981, 1997). The result was a visual symbolic landscape that projected the ideology of the imperial program in which the Assyrian king was portrayed as supreme ruler of the civilized world, imbued with divinely sanctioned authority as the earthly representative of the god Ashur.

The Assyrian empire achieved its mature form and organization in the latter decades of the eighth century B.C. (Postgate 1979, 1992). Over the course of the eighth century, Assyria’s political institutions gradually were consolidated into more professionalized bureaucracies controlled directly by the king, marginalizing the traditional influence of the leading political families of Assyria. In 744 B.C., Tiglath-pileser III exploited this shifting power balance and seized control of an Assyria weakened by internal turmoil, precipitated in part by the growing independence of powerful provincial governors. Upon securing the throne, Tiglath-pileser resumed Assyrian territorial expansion to the west. In contrast to the practice of his predecessors, however, which had involved a combination of periodic military campaigns, the extraction of tribute, and the formation of local pro-Assyrian alliances, Tiglath-pileser embarked on a strategy of total conquest. The rulers of subjugated regions were deposed, their populations subjected to mass deportations, and their conquered lands reorganized as provinces administered directly by Assyria (Grayson 1991a; Hawkins 1982: 409).

Each province within the growing empire was administered by a governor (bel pihāti), who was responsible for its civil administration, and in some instances also by a military officer (šaknu), who handled its military affairs. The governor’s primary duties included the maintenance of the province’s road networks and public infrastructure, the levying and collection of taxes,
the distribution of land, and the preservation of law and order. He was also responsible for maintaining local supply bases to support the movement and campaigning of the Assyrian imperial army. Village inspectors (rub ālānī) formed a secondary administrative tier, monitoring the various districts (qammu) that made up the provincial hinterland and reporting on their activities to the governor. To ensure that the provincial administration functioned efficiently, and in keeping with the dictates of the central government, provincial governors were expected to submit regular reports to the king, and their administrations were audited by officials who answered directly to the royal court. The governor’s residence or palace thus formed the operational hub of each province’s administration, functionally replicating the role of the royal palace at the regional level (for further description of the Assyrian provincial system and administration, see Forrer 1920; Harrison 2005; Pečírková 1977, 1987; Radner 2006).

The Late Assyrian Settlement at Tell Tayinat

Tiglath-pileser III launched his assault on the Syro-Hittite states of northwest Syria in 743 B.C. (for a detailed account of the campaign, see Grayson 1991a: 74–76; Hawkins 1982: 410–411; Weippert 1982: 395–396). This was followed, in 738 B.C., by a second western campaign. As a pretext, Tiglath-pileser accused Tutammu, king of Unqi (kur un-qi), of breaking his loyalty oath with Assyria. The consequences of this breach, we are told, were that Tutammu “disregarded his life,” Kinalia (uru Ki-na-li-a), his royal city, was captured, and many of its citizens deported (Tadmor 1994: Ann. 25: 3–12, Summ. Insc. 6: 20–21, 9: 26–27; Tadmor and Yamada 2011: 39–40 [Tiglath-pileser III 12], 115 [Tiglath-pileser III 46], 131 [Tiglath-pileser III 49]; see also Kessler 1975). Tiglath-pileser then reconstituted Kinalia as the capital of a new Assyrian province by the same name and installed a eunuch (ša rēši) as governor (bēl piḥāti). Kinalia remained an Assyrian province until at least the mid-seventh century B.C. (Hawkins 1982: 425, 1983; Millard 1994: 51).

The earliest Assyrian references to the North Orontes Valley region date to the reign of Ashurnasirpal II (883–859 B.C.) and include a description of a campaign conducted ca. 870 B.C. to subdue a series of kingdoms in northwest Syria, including the Kingdom of Patina (kur pa-ti-na-a-a) and its capital Kunulua (ku-nu-lu-a) (see Grayson 1991b: 216–219, A.0.101.1 iii 55–92a; Harrison 2001). The account provides a detailed itinerary of the campaign route that clearly situates Patina in the Amuq Plain and its capital on the southern edge of the plain, just north of the Orontes River, leaving little doubt that Kunulua should be associated with the large Iron Age mound of Tell Tayinat (Figure 5.1). Later Assyrian sources, culminating with
Tiglath-pileser’s conquest and annexation in 738 B.C., confirm the existence of a small kingdom, alternatively referred to as Patina or Unqi, its royal city, Kunulua, and its control of the North Orontes Valley and the surrounding region in the ninth and eighth centuries B.C.
The Syrian-Hittite Expedition Excavations

Large-scale excavations were conducted at Tell Tayinat by the University of Chicago over four field seasons between 1935 and 1938 as part of the Syrian-Hittite Expedition. Since the results of these excavations have been described in detail elsewhere (Batiuk et al. 2005; Haines 1971; Harrison 2001, 2005), I will only summarize them briefly here. The excavations focused primarily on the West Central Area of the upper mound (Figure 5.2), although excavation areas were also opened on the eastern and southern edges of the upper mound and in the lower settlement. In all, the Chicago excavations achieved large horizontal exposures of five distinct architectural phases, or Building Periods, dating to the Iron II and III periods (Amuq Phase O, ca. 950–550 B.C.), with the Third through Fifth Building Periods corresponding to the Late Assyrian settlement (Haines 1971: 64–66).

Renovations to a series of large palatial buildings in the West Central Area, part of the citadel of the Syro-Hittite capital, accounted for most of the activity assigned to the Third Building Period, which the excavators dated to the late eighth–early seventh century (ca. 720–680 B.C.; Haines 1971: 65–66). These renovations included the construction of an elevated rectangular structure (Platform XV) along the east side of the West Central Area complex (Haines 1971: 43–44). The Fourth Building Period witnessed further renovations to the buildings in this area but also significant new construction activity, in particular the construction of a sprawling palatial complex, Building IX, which was erected within a large raised enclosure, identified as Building X by the Chicago team (Haines 1971: 61, plates 88 and 110), in the southeast quadrant of the upper mound (Figure 5.2). Together, this enclosure and the buildings of the adjacent West Central Area formed what must have been a visually imposing citadel. To further enhance its grandeur and reinforce the message of Assyrian military strength, the citadel was approached from the east through a monumental gateway (Gateway VII; Haines 1971: 60, plates 87 and 110), flanked by carved stone orthostats depicting Assyrian assault troops carrying decapitated heads and treading on vanquished foes (see Harrison 2005: 26, figure 1). The Fifth Building Period comprised a series of isolated features confined to the highest parts of the upper mound and marked the terminal Iron Age occupational phase at Tayinat (Haines 1971: 66).

Despite its poor preservation, the design and layout of Building IX identify it as an Assyrian governor’s palace (Haines 1971: 61–63, plates 84–85, 109; Harrison 2005: 26–29). Interestingly, and perhaps not surprisingly, the Chicago excavations running concurrently at the contemporary Assyrian capital of Khorsabad (ancient Dūr-Sharrukin) prompted their excavator,
Gordon Loud (1936), to generalize about the formulaic nature of Assyrian architectural planning during this period. Loud’s preliminary observations were amplified in a subsequent typological study (Turner 1970), which
also emphasized the highly standardized character of Late Assyrian palatial construction. In typical Mesopotamian fashion, the general layout of these palaces consisted of a series of central courtyards which neatly segregated the various functional units of the complex, including their administrative and residential areas. The Late Assyrian palace, however, was further distinguished by the liberal application of the “reception suite,” which was used to delineate the principal audience hall or throne room, additional ceremonial areas, and the residential apartments of the palace. The modular replication of the reception suite is perhaps best exemplified in the royal palace and administrative buildings at Khorsabad. However, the pattern is repeated throughout the royal cities of Assyria and also occurs at numerous other Late Assyrian provincial centers (see further in Harrison 2005: 28–29).

The Syrian-Hittite Expedition also recovered a number of isolated finds, unfortunately almost all from poorly preserved contexts, which further hint at the Neo-Assyrian presence at Tell Tayinat. These included several Late Assyrian cuneiform inscriptions, both inscribed stone monument fragments and clay tablets, a number of cylinder seals, a variety of metal objects, including a composite metal roundel inscribed with the royal name of Tiglath-pileser III, and small quantities of the distinctive Assyrian Glazed and Palace Wares.

The Tayinat Archaeological Project Excavations

Targeted excavations were resumed at Tell Tayinat in 2004, following topographic and surface surveys of the site (see Batiuk et al. 2005), as part of the University of Toronto’s Tayinat Archaeological Project (TAP), and they have since continued on an annual basis (for yearly reports, see Harrison 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011). The Late Assyrian settlement has been encountered in virtually every excavation area investigated to date. For the purposes of this paper, however, I will focus primarily on the results of the investigations in Field 2, located in the center of the upper mound, bordering the southeast corner of the Syrian-Hittite Expedition’s West Central Area (Figure 5.2).

Excavations were initiated in Field 2 in 2005. The primary objective was to determine whether anything remained of Building I, the principal palatial building of the Syro-Hittite citadel (part of the Second Building Period complex), and then to excavate earlier levels associated with a large structure identified by the Syrian-Hittite Expedition as Building XIV, which they had assigned to their First Building Period, and thereby better establish the stratigraphic relationships between these two cultural phases. Excavations proceeded to uncover the foundations of a large monumental structure, very
probably the southeast corner of Building XIV, but unfortunately no floors or occupational surfaces survived. Consequently, in 2008 the excavations were extended laterally to the east in the hopes that disturbance would be minimal in this area and the stratigraphic sequence therefore more intact. Subsequent excavation in 2008 and 2009 quite unexpectedly revealed the well-preserved remains of an Iron Age temple (Figure 5.3), which has been designated Building (or Temple) XVI (for a more thorough description, see Harrison and Osborne 2012).

The building was approached from the south by means of a wide stone staircase. The staircase led to a porch, which supported an ornately carved basalt column base set deeply into its floor. The column base is virtually identical in size, shape and design to column bases found in the entrance of the nearby Building I. However, its lowest carved register was largely hidden from view, obscured by a ceramic tile-paved surface, suggesting that an earlier floor, or phase, to the building still lies unexcavated below. The porch was separated from the central room of the building by two brick piers. A thick deposit of burnt brick, apparently collapse, covered much of the floor between the two piers. This material, in turn, sealed three heavily charred wooden beams, at least one of which appeared to have been set directly into the floor, and therefore probably served as a threshold for a doorway.

The floor of the central room, though badly burned, appeared to have been plastered. The room was largely devoid of pottery or organic remains, but it did produce a substantial quantity of bronze metal, including riveted pieces and several fragments of carved ivory inlay. Though heavily burned and damaged, these remains suggest the central room had been equipped with furniture or fixtures, perhaps for a door. The room also produced fragments of gold and silver foil, and the carved eye inlay from a human figure. A thick layer of collapsed burnt brick sealed the entire room, and in some places had fused with the brickwork of the temple’s outer walls, vivid evidence of the intense conflagration that had consumed the structure.

A second set of piers separated the central room from a small back room, the inner sanctum or cela of the temple. This northern-most room contained an elevated, rectangular platform, or podium, that filled almost the entire room, and clearly represented a renovation to the original design and intended function of the room. The surface of the podium was paved with ceramic tiles, and accessed by steps in its two southern corners. A rectangular, free-standing structure, possibly an altar, stood on the eastern side of the platform. The room had also been burned intensely by fire, preserving a wealth of cultic paraphernalia found strewn across the podium and around its base, including gold, bronze and iron implements, libation vessels, and other ornately decorated ritual objects.
The surface debris also contained a concentration of fragmented cuneiform tablets written in Late Assyrian script. The analysis completed to date by the project epigrapher has identified 11 discrete tablets (Lauinger 2011). All except one (a docket impressed with a stamp seal) are literary or historical.
documents. The majority (seven, or possibly eight, out of the 10) appear to be iqqur īpuš texts, a Mesopotamian hemerological scholarly series that lists the favorable months for undertaking various activities, such as agricultural activities, the construction or demolition of a house, family events such as birth or marriage, medical procedures, and religious ceremonies (Labat 1965). The Tayinat iqqur īpuš tablets are arranged in tabular format, the least common of the various attested organizational schemes, with the x-axis listing a sequence of months, and the y-axis the relevant activities.

Of the two remaining tablets, one is a bilingual Sumerian-Akkadian lexical text (T-1921), and the other (T-1801), by far the largest tablet found in the room at 28 × 43 cm, records an oath imposed by the Assyrian king Esarhaddon on the governor of the province of Kinalia, most likely on the 18th day of the second month of the year 672 B.C., binding the governor in loyalty to Esarhaddon’s chosen successor, Ashurbanipal (for a full transliteration, see Lauinger 2012). The text of the Tayinat “Oath Tablet” closely parallels the 674 lines of the so-called Vassal Treaties of Esarhaddon, eight copies of which were found in the throne room of a building adjacent to the Temple of Nabu in the Assyrian royal city of Nimrud (ancient Kalhu) during British excavations at the site in 1955 (Wiseman 1958).

The Building XVI discovery context fits well with evidence from the Assyrian heartland. At Nimrud, in addition to the vassal treaties, a collection of tablets was discovered in the Ezida (or Temple of Nabu) itself, in a room directly opposite Nabu’s shrine (Postgate and Reade 1980: 309, figure 2). The Nabu Temple at Khorsabad, located adjacent to the Ziggurat Temple complex, contained a room with pigeonholes very likely for storing texts, which probably had been removed when the city was abandoned (Loud and Altman 1938: 46, 60–62, plates 19C, 24D). Tablets were also kept in the vicinity of the Temple of Nabu at Nineveh (Fincke 2004: 55). As the patron god of scribes and writing, the association of these tablet collections with Nabu is not surprising.

More intriguing, however, is the possibility that the vassal, or oath, treaties were deliberately kept in places which their oath-takers were expected to visit on a regular basis (Steymans 2006: 343). As Lauinger (2011: 10–12) has noted, the other tablets found with the Tayinat Oath Tablet help to establish the broader social context for this remarkable collection of cuneiform documents. In particular, two tablets (T-1923 and T-1927) preserve markings that suggest they belonged to a class of amulet-shaped tablets that primarily served a votive function (Reiner 1959). In addition, one of these tablets (T-1923) was pierced horizontally, as was also the Oath Tablet, indicating that both – and possibly the others – were intended to be suspended or mounted. In other words, the tablets recovered from the inner sanctum of Building XVI were intentionally designed for exhibition and display and,
therefore, were not part of an archive, a literary collection, or a library as such. Their provenance, distributed across the western part of the elevated podium, facing an altar-like installation positioned on the podium’s eastern

Figure 5.4. Plan of Building XVI showing the distribution of artifacts and tablets in its inner sanctum (created by S. Batiuk and J. Osborne).
side (Figure 5.4), provides further evidence of their cultic function. Moreover, the position and condition of the Oath Tablet, which exhibits a break pattern that radiates out from an initial contact point along its base, suggests that the tablet was found precisely where it fell when the temple was destroyed. The tablet was uncovered lying face down on the podium, with its back (or reverse) facing up, and had clearly fallen forward during the conflagration that engulfed the building.

Thus far, the excavations of Building XVI have only uncovered its terminal phase; its earlier construction history and dating therefore remain unclear. Nevertheless, the distinctive architectural style and design it shares with the nearby Building II, excavated by the Syrian-Hittite Expedition (see Haines 1971: 53–55, plates 80–81, 100B, 103), including the evidence of similar renovations and associated material culture, indicate that both temples likely formed part of a larger Assyrian religious complex or “sacred precinct” (Figure 5.5), possibly dedicated to the cult of Nabu and his female partner, Tašmetu, and the scene of loyalty oath rituals as part of an annual akitu ceremony (Lauinger 2013: 111–113). Their perpendicular arrangement,
facing a shared central courtyard, replicates a well-established Assyrian double temple tradition best exemplified by the similarly aligned twin temples in the Ziggurat complex on the citadel at Khorsabad. In light of this similarity, it is tempting to speculate that Platform XV, assigned by the Syrian-Hittite Expedition to this period, might have served as an elevated platform for an Assyrian cultic monument, perhaps even a small ziggurat-like structure, situated immediately to the north of Building XVI, further mirroring the layout at Khorsabad.

Landslapes of Imperial Power

The construction of royal citadels, equipped with sprawling palaces lined with elaborately carved orthostats and colossal stone figures, ornately decorated religious monuments and buildings, and vast administrative complexes, was a defining characteristic of the Late Assyrian period. As visual manifestations of Assyrian royal authority, these imposing regal centers represented “landscapes” of power that facilitated both the consolidation of royal authority and the expansion of the Assyrian Empire during this period. The standardization of Assyrian palatial construction in the eighth century, and its modular replication at provincial centers throughout the empire during the reigns of Tiglath-pileser III and his successors, should, therefore, be seen not only as evidence of Assyrian bureaucratic ingenuity and efficiency but also as the physical embodiment of Assyrian imperial ideology.

In this context, the archaeological remains preserved at Tell Tayinat offer a revealing glimpse into the imperial administrative apparatus Tiglath-pileser and his successors installed. As we have seen, this included the construction of standardized palatial and religious architecture, large-scale representational art forms such as wall reliefs and sculpture, and the consumption of elite craft industries such as ceramic fineware production. Moreover, the utilization of these media was not haphazard, but carefully calibrated to maximize their effect on their intended audiences. As Lauinger (2011) has demonstrated in his analysis of the cuneiform tablets found in Building XVI, this extended to the written form as well, with these remarkable documents clearly intended as display objects within the inner sanctum of the temple. In effect, the double temple complex or sacred precinct at Tayinat functioned as a stage for enacting the rituals and theater of divine sanction, with the Oath Tablet and its associated cultic objects serving as both written and visual reminders of the community’s sworn loyalty to the Assyrian king, the divinely appointed ruler of the world.

Building XVI, with its displayed tablets and cultic paraphernalia, also illustrates why context is so important, and why textual and material
cultural evidence need to be examined together, rather than as fragmented, disembodied sources of information about the past. Viewed in isolation, the Oath Tablet preserves the largely formulaic language of a document commemorating a previously known and recorded historical event, and as such, likely would have been identified as an archival document. When understood within its intended social context, however, the tablet and its message are transformed, physically articulating Assyrian imperial authority, cloaked in divine sanction and religious ritual.

Acknowledgments

The Tayinat Archaeological Project has received research grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRCC), the Institute for Aegean Prehistory (INSTAP), the Brennan Foundation, and the University of Toronto, for which we are deeply grateful. I wish also to thank the Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Museums of Turkey, which has graciously awarded the research permits necessary to conduct each of our excavation seasons, the landowners who have generously permitted us to work on their land, and the Reyhanlı Residential School and staff for their warm hospitality throughout our stay. Finally, each season's successful results would not have been possible without the dedicated contribution of all our project staff. This paper is a product of their collective team effort.

References

Batiuk, Stephen, Timothy P. Harrison, and Laurence Pavlish

Fincke, Jeanette C.

Forrer, Emilio O.

Grayson, A. Kirk

Haines, Richard C.

Harrison, Timothy P.

Harrison, Timothy P., and James F. Osborne

Hawkins, J. David

Kessler, Karlheinz

Lauinger, Jacob

Labat, René
1965  *Un calendrier babylonien des travaux des signes et des mois (séries iqqur îpuš).* Librairie Honoré Champion, Paris.


Pečírková, Jana  1977  *The Administrative Organization of the Neo-Assyrian Empire.* Archiv orientální 45: 211–228.


Reiner, Erica
Russell, John M.

Steymans, Han Ulrich

Tadmor, Hayim
1994 *The Inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser III King of Assyria*. Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Jerusalem.

Tadmor, Hayim, and Shigeo Yamada

Turner, Geoffrey

Weippert, Manfred

Winter, Irene J.

Wiseman, Donald J.