

Center for Archaeological Investigations
27th Visiting Scholar Conference
Abstracts

Session 1: Sensing Landscapes

Dibéwagendamowin / Kārohirohi: Reflections on Sacred Images on the Rocks

William A. Allen (Heritage One), Gerard O'Regan (Ngai Tabu Tribe), Perry Fletcher (Taupo District), and Elder Roger Noganosh (Magnetawan First Nation)

Shimmering, reflected sunlight on or about pictographs (rock art) has been noticed at a number of rock faces at river and lake edges in northern Ontario in Canada and in New Zealand. This paper provides an account of the landscape features at some of the locations where the moving reflected light appears to have an association with the painted images. It then considers how such reflections may have been interpreted within the traditional worldviews of the indigenous peoples responsible for the painting of the images, the Anishinaabeg in Canada and the Maori in New Zealand. The discussion will explore factors to be considered in determining whether or not there is an actual correlation between the reflected light and the rock paintings and, if so, what kinds of questions may be addressed meaningfully through ongoing research into the pattern of the placement of the images on the rocks in these two distant countries.

Colored Monuments and Sensory Theater among the Mississippians

Corin C. O. Pursell (Southern Illinois University Carbondale)

In communities of the Mississippian cultures, the primary materials and most visually apparent elements were carefully organized mounds of earth, often laid out as cosmograms or sociograms. Recent excavations at Shiloh Mounds have inspired archaeologists studying the Mississippians to become more aware that colorful sediments were deliberately included in many of these earthworks. While color is of growing recent interest in archaeology, the significance of these colorful materials to the Mississippians has not been addressed. This paper is an attempt to interpret such colorful monumental spaces, using Shiloh Mounds as a case study. Color use acts to modify the theatrical and visual experience of the monumental space, while colored substances also serve as extended metaphors that condense meaning into material. The visual experience of colored mounds is thus tied up in the social reality of Shiloh's people, with implications for an understanding of their political and religious theater. More explicitly, an emphasis on the colorful past of Shiloh allows a more nuanced application of ethnographic analogy that does not generalize away idiosyncratic local history and practice at Shiloh. Shiloh was constructed using red and white sediments, deposited in discrete areas of the site. Many southeastern Native Americans characteristically split both their ideological and their social realities into the dichotomous categories of Red and White. These are key

symbols of a suite of related concepts including clan, directional, and animal symbolism, tied to various personal or social attributes. This paper shows that such broad ethnographic generalizations do violence to the local-context, historically contingent metaphors of Shiloh, in which monumental Red and White, in quotidian and ritual experience, accomplished surprising social goals. Engagement with the sensuous past of Shiloh changes our understanding of the site, inverting assumptions about the power dynamics of the construction of two of the main mounds.

The Sound of Sulfur and Smell of Lightning: Sensing the Volcano

Karen Holmberg (Brown University, Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World)

The phenomenological experience of past individuals is an aspect that archaeology has difficulty clearly addressing through material culture. While the recent turn toward studies of materiality and material culture provide incredibly useful theoretical insights, the lack of a distinctive material trace for past ‘experience’ can be problematic. Recent phenomenological writings in archaeology by authors such as Chris Tilley frame natural environments not just as landscapes but as smellscapes, soundscapes, tastescapes, and touchscapes that provide continual opportunities for synaesthesia (the overlapping and blending of bodily senses). In this paper, I discuss the unique and particular sensory components of volcanic landscapes. As I have discussed in prior work, volcanic contexts are very active landscapes in non-eruptive periods; the act of eruption simply provides an exaggerated example of the more subtle synaesthetic elements present in non-eruption. I draw from recent archaeological and ethnographic discussions from fieldwork conducted in areas such as the southwestern United States and Indonesia, archaeological data and ethnohistoric stories from Latin America, my own fieldwork in Panamá, and work by contemporary artists to query the degree to which past experiences of the volcanic landscape—replete with smells, sounds, tremors, and temperatures—can or cannot be approached from the vantage of the present.

Session 2: Archaeoacoustics

Soundscapes and Household Ritual in Ancient Oaxaca, Mexico, A.D. 1000–1200

Stacie M. King (Indiana University)

In ancient Mexico, ritual and performance were major components of state festivals, involving not only participants with social, political, and economic roles but also providing a space and place for embodied engagement. This is beautifully captured in Clendinnen’s (1991) description of Aztec ritual as a total sensory experience, filled with smells, sounds, colors, tastes, and movements. Such rituals heightened and challenged each individual’s sense of self, provided a sense of history and belonging, and perhaps kept people physically craving more. In Postclassic Oaxaca, ritual and performance in state politics were equally embodied. Noble feasts provided the opportunity to

renew political alliances and enact genealogical histories. Material propaganda at such events included boldly decorated serving dishes and painted picture books (codices). Codices were not simply two-dimensional deerskin paper books but would have been displayed three-dimensionally during feasts and political events. Actors performed the stories, engaging the senses through dance; colorful, rattling costumes; ritual speech, song, food, drink, and incense burning. We know far less, however, about the sensory aspect of rituals in everyday household contexts. The site of Río Viejo in coastal Oaxaca, Mexico, provides an excellent case study for examining non-elite sensory rituals in household settings. My household excavations uncovered large numbers of objects related to sound making, including bells, rattles, flutes, and whistles (King 2003). In addition, nearly all of the colorful ceramic serving vessels had rattle supports. Acoustic analysis of the whistles and flutes shows that some sounds traveled beyond the immediate household, engaging members of multiple households with one another. Sound-making items were found across the site in various contexts, including middens, interior and exterior occupation surfaces, and burials. The prevalence of sound-making objects at Río Viejo demonstrates that sensory experiences were prominent, celebrated elements of everyday life and household ritual, which escaped the purview of elite, state-run events.

Musical Space and Quiet Space at Two Medieval Monastic Sites in Canterbury: St. Augustine's Abbey and St. Gregory's Priory in the Mid-thirteenth Century

Joe Williams (University of Kent)

Sound is an important aspect of life but is one that is often ignored in archaeological interpretations. Study of artifacts such as musical instruments has tended to focus on their “intrinsic values” or on technical details, without a great deal of attention being paid to their positions in the lives of their users. In the context of medieval monasteries sound is particularly significant, considering the emphasis placed on silence in monastic rules. Musical space and quiet space are not considered here in binary opposition, but rather as similar qualitative types in that both require a relative lack of external sound to function as desired by their users. The idea of co-presence is significant in this regard, as it is often through sound that we are aware of the proximity of another. The background noises, or *belles noiseuses*, of everyday mid-thirteenth century life at a Benedictine monastery and an Augustinian house of regular canons are studied by focusing on the movement of people through their spaces and on artifacts found during excavations. An interpretive approach, utilizing access analysis and consideration of co-presence zones in conjunction with study of artifacts in their archaeological contexts, suggests that the background noises of these two sites were somewhat dissimilar in terms of amount, character, and spatial distribution. The reasons for such variation can be said, on the basis of data generated by access analysis, to relate to the layouts of the main claustral buildings, but the artifactual evidence suggests that differences between the rules followed by the two monastic orders also played a part. However, it must also be remembered that human agency had a significant impact on life at these two sites, and consequently we cannot use a study of them to form judgments about these monastic orders as wholes.

“Grown So Witty as to Speak”: Aurality in the Gravestones of New England, 1750–1800

Kimberly K. Porter (University of North Dakota)

“Remember me as you pass by,” so begins a popular New England epitaph from the late eighteenth century found in nearly every cemetery of the era in the region. This epitaph is an eye-catching reminder of man’s mortality. Indeed, many stones of the period carry alternate messages from the dead exhorting their readers (and potentially their listeners) to live a Christian life, for death and its terrors await the unredeemed. Other stones remind children and surviving spouses that eternal reunion will ultimately occur. Beyond exploring the presence of messages from the dead, which were clearly meant for the reading public, this essay argues that while all stones were meant to be *seen*, these particular stones were also meant to be *heard*. This is to argue that while privilege has been given to the visual aspects of the stones of New England—with their death’s heads, cherubs, and willowed urns—attention should also be directed to the oral exhortations. Puritan New England possessed a high level of literacy; some have argued that at least 50% of church members could read and write. However, for the unschooled and the youthful, perhaps as well for the elderly and visually limited, the engraved messages on the stones in question could offer no direction. Hence, I argue that such gravestones were meant to be read aloud to those unable to grasp their meanings visually. The work is based on the examination of early New England texts regarding mortality, modern interpretations of carved tombstone images, personal explorations, and collections of epitaphs gathered by earlier scholars. It is also informed by my understanding of oral history and folklore.

Tuning In to the Maltese Temple Culture

Linda C. Eneix (The OTS Foundation)

Although not in themselves a recent discovery in the world of archaeology, the megalithic monuments of the Maltese Islands and the artifacts found within them do even more to illuminate the ancient Mediterranean world when examined from a multidisciplinary perspective. In particular, the subterranean Hal-Saflieni Hypogeum, with architectural features that are still intact after five thousand years, has had its visual attributes fully described in the language of traditional European archaeology. Yet the remarkable sound effects in this Neolithic site are mentioned only in passing. The aim of this presentation is to discuss innovative work in the field of archaeoacoustics and neuroscience as it relates to the importance of sound in the design of the Maltese “temples,” particularly the suggestion that the development of monumental architecture may actually have been prompted by a desire to manipulate sound effects in a ritual context. New avenues opened by these approaches may change our understanding of the past and underscore the profound value of broader collaborative investigation.

Session 3: Sensing Society

Multisensory Archaeology: Sensory Potential of Everyday Practices in Late Bronze Age Macedonia, Greece

Vasilis Tsamis (Wessex Archaeology)

An archaeology of the senses is full of obstacles. One pathway toward understanding how people in the past experienced their world is found in reflexivity and in the assessment of our own perception of the senses. A second involves searching for sensory potentials and multisensory interpretations in everyday experiences. My study for an archaeology of the senses focuses on everyday life. In particular, through the application of distribution maps and space syntax theory, I analyze the experiential potential of building, storing foodstuff, and consuming food and drink. This paper illustrates the unique insights gained from a multisensory interpretation of the past. In addition, it articulates the need to incorporate memory studies with the study of the senses in order to reconstruct past sensory experiences. The results produced a working example for an archaeology of the senses. Past sensory experiences were identified in the way the Bronze Age people in Macedonia, Greece, experienced space and material culture, shaped memories, and forged identities. My analyses show how societies in the same region, using the same material culture and engaged in similar subsistence patterns, experienced everyday life differently. This research was influenced by the phenomenological movement, work on memory and duration by Bergson, and deconstruction by Deleuze. I have also been inspired by early studies of food consumption and memory (e.g., the work of Hamilakis) and their efforts to reconstruct a multisensory past. The above have shown the potential of studying everyday experiences if we are concerned with an archaeology of the senses.

The Sensorium of Chavín de Huantar

Mary Weismantel (Northwestern University)

This paper argues that the incorporation of sensory data into analysis allows archaeologists to build models that fully consider the spatial and material evidence from their own sites and better utilize comparative archaeological, historic, and ethnographic evidence from elsewhere. The famous site of Chavín de Huantar (located in the northern highlands of Peru, and dating to approximately 900–200 B.C.E.) exhibits unusual capacities for sensory engagement. Since colonial times, visitors to its underground chambers have encountered visual and spatial extremes of light and dark, openness and enclosure. Recent archaeological research adds an auditory component: the site's massive stone chambers could amplify, channel, and distort the sound of conch-shell trumpets, rainwater, or whispers. My own research on the site's monumental carved stone brings tactile engagement to Chavín's sensory repertoire. These sensory features further confirm the widespread scholarly conviction that this site had religious functions; shamanism and oracles are two concepts often cited

in interpretations of the site plan and associated art. However, the imprecise use of such concepts by Americanist archaeologists has been appropriately criticized. This paper argues that sensory analysis enables a more rigorous comparative approach: detailed spatial and material analysis of specific aspects of the site plan—such as its hidden underground chambers, off-kilter symmetry, and series of small, enfolding public spaces—and of the experience of perceiving the complex iconography carved on the site's stone surfaces, allows testing of narrow hypotheses about site use by comparing these specific material practices to archaeological, historic, and ethnographic evidence about oracles and shamanic practices elsewhere. A method that centers on sensory data can thus use analogies, not in order to confirm a uniform human history, but rather to construct historically specific understandings of complex societies in the Americas—and ultimately, a more informed understanding of global history.

Imagined Narratives, Sensuous Lives

Ruth M. Van Dyke (Binghamton University – SUNY)

Over the past two decades, archaeologists have used experimental and phenomenological approaches to bring emotion, meaning, memory, and tactile experience into archaeological interpretation. Sensuous archaeologies help humanize the past for ourselves and for the public. Sensuous archaeologies also have an important role to play in critical analyses. The past is comprised of individuals who lived within the world as they understood it, so in order to understand long-term change, we must also think about the past from individual perspectives. In my attempt to understand the lived experiences of ancient Chacoans in the southwestern United States, I have conducted phenomenological exercises, observing and recording the sights and sensations of traversing the landscape. However, phenomenological experiments alone are not enough. Much phenomenological work, including mine, has difficulty addressing the diversity of experiences encountered by those of different ages, genders, body sizes, social standings, classes, or ethnicities. Recently, I have been attempting to ameliorate some of these difficulties through the use of imagined narratives. Imagined narratives are essentially creative nonfiction—the use of archaeological information to construct imagined lives in the past. Bailey, Shanks, Thomas, and others argue correctly that the art/science dichotomy is a post-Enlightenment construct. We use both intuitive and analytical sensibilities when we seek to understand the past. Imagined narratives are analytical tools that provide us with alternative ways of thinking about, not just representing, the past. As I try to imagine a series of events in ancient Chaco from the point of view of a particular individual, not only does the past become closer, more personal and more humanized, but the effort also brings into relief the many things I do not know and the questions I have not even thought to ask. Imagined narratives as thought experiments have the power to take archaeologists out of the two-dimensional world of data and interpretation and into the three-dimensional world of sensuous engagement.

Maya Palaces as Experiences: Ancient Maya Royal Architecture and Its Influence on Sensory Perception

Ryan Mongelluzzo (University of California, Riverside)

This work examines ancient Maya (300–900 C.E.) palaces, with a focus on new evidence I have recovered from the royal court at Holmul, Guatemala. Ancient Maya palaces were designed and modified as expressions of privacy and territoriality and to nonverbally communicate and maintain the power and position of the rulers who were anchored inside them. I take a phenomenological approach to infer how palace morphology affected sensory perception and movement using a series of spatial analyses and intersite comparisons. The morphology of royal architecture along with permanent features such as niches, benches, and cord holders can be analyzed in terms of sensory cues intended to control vision and vocalization. Auditory effects were also present to signal changes in space usage. Through these analyses, it is possible to understand how architecture influenced or controlled behavior and embodied power, and thereby served the ruler's political needs. This work is phenomenological in that it centers on influences of individual experience. Through a specific set of spatial tests, including auditory effect and sightline analyses, done in part with 3-D computer models, the experiences fostered by Maya places are revealed. Palaces materialized power, experienced more directly than heretofore recognized. By considering spatial strategies of privacy, territoriality, and boundary production, it is possible to perceive how ancient Maya rulers used their palaces as symbols and as a way to affect people into accepting and supporting royal authority. Uncovering ancient palatial spatial systems is an integral part of understanding ancient Maya rulership, their tenets of architectural design, and how we as humans experience our built landscapes

Session 5: Craft and Manufacturing Processes

Scents and Sensibilities: The Phenomenology of Late Neolithic Iberian Slate Plaque Production

Jonathan T. Thomas (University of Iowa)

The engraved slate plaques of Late Neolithic (3500–2500 B.C.) Iberia are one of the most enigmatic expressions of prehistoric European art, capturing the imagination of the public and archaeologists alike during the past century. Thousands of these hand-sized perforated plaques have been found in Neolithic collective burials, and they are thought to have served mnemonic, prestigious, or ritual purposes, commemorating specific individuals interred in megalithic tombs. While most research on the plaques has emphasized their visual qualities, suggesting that their imagery was designed in part to “trap” the imagination of the viewer (*sensu* Gell 1996), this paper instead explores how the materiality of slate and the experience of plaque making may have served as sensory “traps” in multivocal ways: haptic, olfactory, auditory, and even gustatory. Initially, large numbers of plaques were experimentally replicated to answer questions about the degree of skill involved in their

fabrication, potential specialization, and the technology involved in their *chaîne opératoire*. These experiments, however, had the additional benefit of yielding valuable phenomenological information about the sensory experience of plaque making: grinding slate into the desired form results in a pungent, burning smell; fills the nose and mouth with an acrid-tasting, moisture-absorbent chalky dust; and causes a slight burning sensation in the eyes. Engraving slate with various tools results in high-pitched, ear-splitting noises not unlike nails running down a chalkboard. While abrasive, unworked slate is jagged and often lacerates the hands of the producer, the polished final product is tactilely pleasurable: warm, smooth, and soft; the darkly lustrous slate is an inviting material to hold in one's hand. This information contributes to our understanding of the polysemic role of stoneworking in the Late Neolithic world and the manner in which plaques functioned as sensory mnemonic devices, stimulating the memory of plaque makers and those in their immediate vicinity.

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The Production Process as Sensory Experience? A Multidisciplinary Consideration of Iron and Copper Manufacture in Colonial New England

Krysta Ryzewski (Brown University, Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World)

Craft and technology, art and science, materials and social agency—these are sets of seemingly dualistic relations that are often distinguished from the outset in archaeological discussions of production. Operating from these distinctions can be risky, however, because they carry potentially inhibiting consequences for how archaeologists recognize and understand complex issues and networks of relations involved in the manufacturing of archaeological materials. Where in these relations might archaeologists fit in experiential knowledge or multisensory acts of production? These are topics that demand different orientations that recognize the interrelationships between humans, materials, and modes of engagement in the production of material culture. Using detailed examples from colonial-period metal production sites in New England, this paper argues that archaeological assemblages are uniquely suited to address the social and material complexities of craft technologies. Archaeologically, written documentation of metal (and other) production processes is uncommon and what does exist is somewhat inaccurate, since such step-by-step explications were, in fact, impractical for describing craft operations that were largely guided by tactile knowledge, sensory cues, and learned experience. This paper asks how archaeologists might access these ways of doing, which are essential for informing our understandings about the important interrelationships between social and technological processes in the past; relationships in which sensuous experiences were critically important. This question is especially salient when considering how, as Pfaffenberger (1992:508) aptly states, “the portion of technical knowledge that people can verbalize represents only the tip of the iceberg.” Considering how tactile, multisensory knowledge can be ingrained in processes of manufacture, regardless of how wrought or mechanized

production may be, this paper suggests that we might consider craft-technologies as practice-oriented processes of manufacture that demand intricate technical knowledge, skilled labor, and understandings of materials' properties. Using a suite of interdisciplinary methods, including archaeometry, archaeological excavations, anthropological theory, ethnoarchaeology, and materials science, this paper seeks to demonstrate how copper alloy and iron metals can be read as archives of the sensory production process itself; documents from which otherwise inaccessible information about tradition and innovation in craft technologies can be gathered.

References

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The Senses of Touch: Haptics and Affects in Craftsmanship

Harald B. Høgseth (Sør-Trøndelag University College, Technical Building Protection and Restoration)

It is a common misunderstanding among non-craftspeople that craft is manual labor. This idea is based on lack of knowledge. On the contrary, we are dealing with a very high level of abstraction. Before he/she starts a project, the craftsperson has to decide on how the product is going to look, how to make it, and how it works. This is a process based on insight and experience in a range of features, such as the properties and possibilities of tools and materials. All of this is a long and winding process based on a series of actions. Not all of these are manual. A whole series of considerations and decisions each take their toll on mental energy. The craftsperson's senses of touch, haptics, and affects are built on "know how" and "know what." Body, movement, and perception are essential for the craftsperson's praxis or performance. As an archaeologist and carpenter, I have had the pleasure to work the last 15 years with craftspeople who possess traditional knowledge, analyzing their practice in connection with archaeological remains after past craftspeople. My presentation will present an analysis of how craftspeople use their senses in the interaction with their surroundings regarding the connection between materials, tools, technique/procedures, and abstractions/ knowledge.

Craft and Sensory Play in Late Bronze Age Thebes

Anastasia Dakouri-Hild (University of Virginia)

This paper deals with an assemblage of banded agate artifacts, many of which are unfinished or failed, produced by a Mycenaean palatial workshop ca. 1400 B.C.E. The finds originate from the so-called House of Kadmos at the center of the citadel of Thebes, a site excavated nearly a century ago. Specifically, I take up two issues that have emerged during the study of this assemblage. The first is the agency of Theban craftspeople and the degree to which they were free to experiment in their work. The second is the relationship between idea and medium in craftsmanship and artistic

practice. The very term *medium* implies a mentalistic approach, according to which manipulation of matter takes a backseat to ideas and thought processes. However, the House of Kadmos assemblage demonstrates that the material is neither just a constraint—a problem to be dealt with—nor a blank medium upon which preconceived ideas are “downloaded.” The mutual feedback between mind and matter attested through the artifacts in question is not just of a visual but also of a tactile nature; it’s about the look as well as the feel of smooth, gently curving, shiny, intricately patterned matter. I argue that while certain ideas must predate action in craftsmanship, others are embodied and “playfully” articulated, in the process of creatively grappling with matter.

Session 6: Archaeolfaction

The Scent of Prestige: Perfume in Bronze Age Pylos, Greece

Joanne M. A. Murphy (University of North Carolina, Greensboro)

By presenting biological evidence on the olfactory system and combining it with archaeological evidence from Pylos, I examine the smells of Pylos with a view to highlighting the significance of perfumed oil in the Bronze Age. I stress the Pylian appreciation and manipulation of perfume not just as an economic and political material but also as a mnemonic, evocative device. My argument rests on scientific and cultural studies. Biologists have shown that smell, like taste and touch, physically impacts the body and that the olfactory system is directly connected to the brain. Anthropologists claim that the biological uniqueness of the sense of smell means that it evokes memories, emotions, and connections more easily and readily than do other senses. The prominent position of the perfume industry at the Mycenaean palace of Pylos has long been known. Both the archaeological remains and textual evidence indicate that perfume was a prestigious commodity at Pylos that was manufactured under palatial control at the palace. The finished product was a restricted commodity that was distributed by the wanax, the highest ranked individual at the palace. The fragrance of the perfumed oil would have been prominent at the palace creating both a physical and a sensory connection between the palace, its power, its prestige, and its wealth and the smell. While the smell of the manufacture of perfume would have been available to all who lived in and around the palace or even visited the palace, the finished refined perfume was only available to a limited few. Therefore the smell of perfume simultaneously united the people of Pylos and emphasized their separation into sociopolitical groups. This paper, thusly, connects some well- and long-known data about perfume production at Pylos and combines it with more recent works on sensory anthropology.

A Whiff of Mortality: The Smells and Sounds of Death in Roman and Byzantine Beth She'an-Scythopolis

Emerson Avery (University of Pennsylvania)

Roman tombs were occupied by the dead but experienced by the living. Archaeological and documentary sources make clear that mortuary ritual involved not only the public performance of funerary duties but also the repeated presence of family and associates at, and sometimes within, the tomb. This was especially true at the time of the *Parentalia*, when sacrifices and even banquets were shared with the benevolent dead, and on the occasion of the interment of the newly deceased, who went to join their forebears in the *aeterna domus*. In part because such frequency of contact between the living and the dead is no longer common, it has attracted a great deal of scholarly attention. Much of this, however, has been focused on questions that are only peripherally concerned with the tomb as a physical space: either the performative, and so public, aspects of Roman funerary praxis or its consequences for Roman eschatology. Less often addressed is the (sometimes literally) visceral experience of *participating* in Roman funerals. In this paper, I draw on findings from my research on the Roman and Byzantine chamber tombs of Beth She'an-Scythopolis's Northern Cemetery, unpublished until now, to explore the sensory experience of Roman mortuary ritual. An examination of selected tombs and their contents reveals a series of spaces filled with darkness but redolent with the smell of offered food, the perfume of scented oil, and the fetor of decay. Music, I suggest, may also have played a part in some aspects of funerary ritual. The selective engagement of visitors' various senses, I conclude, served to create the tomb as a liminal space between the living and the dead: existing outside of quotidian experience, but eminently sensible to those whose duties brought them there.

Imagined Aromas and Artificial Flowers in Minoan Society

Jo Day (Southern Illinois University, Carbondale)

The Minoan society of Bronze Age Crete (c. 3000–1450 B.C.) is renowned for its elaborate ceramics, brightly colored frescoes, carved stone vessels, and intricate jewelry, all evidencing highly skilled craft production. The natural world is a popular theme across this wide range of material culture, and animals and plants are especially common motifs. Particularly intriguing is the development of three-dimensional representations of plants: relief flowers and petals adorn elaborate ceramic vessels; stone “blossom bowls” are metamorphosed into flowers due to the incised petals on their exteriors; Kamares Ware cups are painted with petals extending up their sides from the base. All of these features turn the vessels into artificial flowers, thus giving the impression of consuming from an actual blossom.

The ongoing difficulties encountered by scholars in attempting to identify the species of flower in these examples (as is possible with much other Minoan floral iconography) is interpreted here as indicating that the visual aspect of the artifact was not the only (or most) important element

to be considered. This paper examines these artificial flowers using a multisensory and contextual analysis and argues that they are intimately linked to the Minoan sensorium and, in particular, important for evoking the sense of smell. The mnemonic powers of aromas are well known, as is the association of olfactory stimulus with periods of liminality. An investigation of Minoan aromatic environments through such material remains suggests a more significant role for smell (and other “close” senses) in Cretan Bronze Age society than has heretofore been acknowledged.

Session 7: The Full Body Experience

A Sense of Touch—the Full-body Experience—in the Past and Present of Çatalhöyük, Turkey

Ruth Tringham (University of California, Berkeley)

The potential of a “sensuous archaeology” is gaining momentum, pursued through exploring ideas of embodiment and landscape perspectives; by embracing phenomenology; and more explicitly by conducting sensory studies. In this paper I want to come to the more general issues of a sensuous archaeology through the sense of touch—the haptic sense. The tactile-kinesthetic sense is the most fundamental, immediate, intimate, and erotic of all the senses and is important in structuring space and thus interpreting a person’s relationship to other people and to the physical and built environment. Touch is far more than just fingers. I have been inspired by geographers such as Porteous and Rodaway, as well as Tim Ingold, who themselves owe much to the writing of Merleau-Ponty, to think of the tactile-kinesthetic sense as including not only the more obvious haptic sensations, such as surface, form, pressure, pain, temperature, and texture, but also those full-body sensations of balance and the sense of movement in any part of the body. To think about the temporality, events, and rhythms of the body's haptic responses is an essential element of understanding social practice. I suggest here that the process by which practices that started as new and unfamiliar experiences became familiar and “enactive knowledge” is one anchor to investigating sensory responses in the past. Another anchor is the idea that movement, like learning, is an essential element of social practice and the construction of place and, like learning, it can be problematized, although generally it has not been. Thousands of sensory experiences, events, ballets, and taskscapes contributed to the growing of the East Mound at Çatalhöyük during the 1000 years of its life 9000 years ago. I will suggest in this paper that the key to constructing or imagining what these may have been is to ground them in the empirical remains of these ephemeral events and performances.

Consuming the Past: Sustenance, Taste, and the Shared Embodiment of Food Preparation

Marie Hopwood (DePauw University)

The power of food is incredible: how a scent links us to memory, how taste can embody identity, and how certain practiced movements become second nature. Archaeological food studies have long been relegated either to analyses of power manipulation through feasting or to issues of domestication. We separate out coarse-ware pottery from floral and faunal remains, treating them as separate materials in ways that surely were not meant in the past. Some recent studies, such as those by Atalay and Hastorf (2006), are notable in moving beyond these frameworks and exploring food in its own right. We can bring these disparate parts of archaeological analysis together to explore the power of the creation of food in the past. Food preparation practices are not created new each day in modern times, nor were they in ancient times. Instead, this most quotidian of practices was taught and learned until the movements became habitual and the practices embodied. The preparation of food is a total sensory experience, feeling the texture of the raw food itself, stirring it in a pot, smelling it cooking across an open space, tasting it for seasoning and doneness, even hearing its sounds as you go about another task. In this paper I propose to explore the embodied senses of food preparation in the Halaf period of ancient Mesopotamia, particularly in relation to the site of Fıstıklı Höyük, Turkey. This exploration will build off a discussion of embodied practices in to evidence of habitual movement in food preparation as etched in the surfaces of ceramic food preparation vessels along with evidence of the plant and animal food sources available to and utilized by the cooks. The goal is to explore the powerful humanity of the past as people cooked for each other, sustaining themselves both in body and in community.

The Senses and the Divine in Late Antique Material Culture

Heather Crawley (University of Bristol)

Late Antiquity, or the third through sixth centuries A.D. in the Mediterranean, is a period characterized by a relationship with the divine that was mediated by material culture. This relationship, I argue, was exercised through sensory perception: a persistent theme in literature that has been noted in academic studies. Such studies, however, focus almost exclusively on the expression of the powers of the senses in texts. In contrast, the “material turn” of this period’s engagement with the divine (as coined by Patricia Cox-Miller) is underexplored in terms of its material culture. This paper seeks to address this imbalance. Through the study of ritual objects (with particular focus on the silverware of the Christian Eucharist), I will demonstrate how sensing the divine was enabled by the particular sensory qualities, attributes, materials, and manufacture of objects used in the rituals of church liturgy (such as sheen, texture, and acoustics). By this new understanding, texts, such as sermons, did not just elaborate on a sensory relationship that was already grounded in material culture but also contributed to its construction as audible objects of sense in themselves. I further argue that Late Antiquity is a rich, yet underused, resource for sensory archaeology. In particular, against earlier uni-sense approaches (such as Susan Ashbrook-Harvey’s treatment of olfaction in this period), this paper will demonstrate that the Late Antique relationship with the divine involved an integration of the senses. While the particular senses of sight and hearing were sometimes privileged, the body was understood as a sensory organ through which divinity

could be accessed as a combination of sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch—experiences layered through the ritual use of objects such as incense burners, icons, and the silver patens and chalices of the Eucharist (on which this paper will focus), in buildings designed for heightened auditory and light effects.

The Sensory Experience of Blood Sacrifice in the Roman Imperial Cult

Candace Weddle (University of Southern California)

In the field of classical scholarship we have been too often reliant on sterile approaches to analyzing the sensory aspects of ancient sacrificial rites. Mute mosaics of choirs and silent reliefs of flute players have served as evidence for the sounds of worship. Though scent was an integral part of ancient ritual and signified perhaps more strongly than visual elements the connection of the people with the divine, we have been content to allow ancient descriptions of burning incense to suggest the aroma of worship (this despite the fact that, neurologically speaking, man's sense of smell is almost completely cut off from the brain's language center, rendering descriptions of scents weak at best). Certainly archaeological and literary sources provide vital evidence for ancient rites; however, I suggest a fresh approach to considering the sensory elements of sacrifice. Details of the sacrifices offered within the Roman imperial cult are known—ancient sources record as many as 144 bulls offered in a single day in the worship of the deified emperor. It is difficult for scholars to conceive of the sensory impact of such a spectacle. In this paper, I suggest that a more thorough understanding of the experience may be achieved through an autoethnographic investigation of modern religious sacrifice, an approach that to my knowledge has not yet been utilized. I analyze my experience of the slaughter of large numbers of bovines during the Islamic Kurban Bayram sacrifices in Istanbul to make suggestions concerning the sensory elements of Roman imperial cult sacrifices and, by extension, of ancient blood sacrifice in general. This is not a comparative religion project but rather an attempt to understand the sensory impact of ancient sacrifice in a way that exceeds the limitations of traditional archaeological research.

Session 8: Presenting the Past in the Present

Replication, Digital Objects, and Haptics: Can Touching Replicas and “Virtual Touch” Provide a Means of Touching the Untouchable?

Linda Hurcombe (University of Exeter)

Objects form a tangible connection with the past, yet most museum objects will never be touched

by the public. Some organic objects are so fragile that even researchers and curators will not touch them. Reconstructing the fragments can offer both a research tool and also a strong presentation aid, but the replicas may also wear quickly if made accessible to the public. This paper will deconstruct the sense of touch and present the results of collaborative projects. The first involves the replication of materials and techniques unfamiliar to a modern audience; the second investigates the prospects for “virtual touch” by means of digital mixed media involving user interaction with a visual screen display and a haptic device to create the sensation of touch. The theoretical and practical issues have been diverse but have included understanding the sense of touch as multiple haptic sensations, ensuring that the original object is the primary focus of engagement, thinking about new ways to promote public understanding of archaeological materials and objects, and considering sensory cues versus sensory precision. The work has focused on prehistoric textiles since these are among the most fragile archaeological remains where public access and presentation are the most challenging.

Beyond the Display Case: Creating a Multisensory Museum Experience

Catherine P. Foster and Pamela Blotner (Badè Museum of Biblical Archaeology, Pacific School of Religion)

Since the early nineteenth century, the evolution of modern Western ethnographic and anthropological museums has largely supported a single sensory visitor experience, one based on sight. The purely visual presentation of material culture has dominated to the detriment of other “lesser” senses of touch, smell, taste, and hearing that at one time figured prominently within the larger museum sensescape (Classen and Howes). Thus, inside this stale environment a static picture of past and present cultures has been born and propagated—their art and objects locked away behind cases that serve as both a physical and a psychological barrier. How then can museums break free of this underlying ocular framework to embrace a truly sensory narrative of the lives, institutions, and cultures their visual and material collections represent? This paper explores the dissemination of sensuous pasts and presents in museum space through the use of art and objects at the Badè Museum in Berkeley. Drawing from an exhibition concept now in preparation, we provide examples of how a sensory exploration of ancient Israelite society can be exhibited through innovative use of archaeological materials. This study extends to modern artistic interpretations of prehistoric artifacts as a meditation on measurement: specifically, how does one quantify the five senses in scientific, spiritual, anthropological, and artistic circles? Our goal is to encourage museums to look beyond the display case when it comes to user experiences and to become appropriate spaces for the proliferation of sensory anthropological and archaeological research. Only then will a truly holistic narrative of the human experience in both the past and the present be understood, acknowledged, and shared.

Funding

Pacific School of Religion

