

ARCH 2010C

# ARCHITECTURE, BODY AND PERFORMANCE IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN WORLD

Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World  
Brown University  
Spring 2010



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Meets Mondays 3-5:20 pm [Rhode Island Hall 008](#)

**Instructor:** [Ömür Harmansah](#) (Omur\_Harmansah@brown.edu)

Assistant Professor of Archaeology and Egyptology and Ancient Western Asian Studies

**Ömür's Office Hours:** Tuesdays 1-3 pm at Joukowsky Institute Room 102.

**Librarians (research help):** Norine Duncan and Karen Bouchard, Art Slide Lib., List Art Center, 4th fl.

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**Course Wiki:** <http://proteus.brown.edu/archbodyperform10>

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## Course Description

Bodies make space speak. This graduate seminar investigates the relationship between bodily practices, social performances, and production of space. Contemporary critical theories on the body, its gender and sexuality, its materiality and everyday life will be explored, while new theories of architectural space and landscape will be discussed in the context of archaeological discourse. We will review recent archaeological work in the Ancient Near East to consider the impact of body and performance-related discussions in the field.

Contemporary discourses on body and performance in cultural studies and social theory have flourished drastically in the last two decades and continue to offer new avenues of research in the social sciences and the humanities. In this seminar, our goal is, on the one hand, to explore these new theoretical writings on embodiment, agency, subjectivity, bodily practices, social performances, spectacles, materiality and spatiality of body. On the other hand, we will review recent archaeological work, historical and literary sources from the ancient Near East, and

consider their scholarly interpretations influenced by contemporary discourses. Our task remains to be posing new research questions to the material culture of the ancient Near Eastern world in the light of our theoretical readings and attempt to devise alternative approaches in understanding this corpus of archaeological evidence. Reflexively, we will consider how Near Eastern case studies can be used to critique overarching theories of the body, performance and material culture.

### **Course Requirements**

Students are expected to do the weekly readings and participate in the seminar discussions. Participation, active involvement in the discussions, developing good note-taking habits as well as the contribution to the wiki are the most vital aspects of this course. A *course wiki* is created for the course to be used for discussions, posting of readings, announcements, assignments, and the like. Every student will have access to editing the wiki. Please familiarize yourself with the wiki, and make sure to check the site regularly, at least before each class meeting.

**Response papers:** In the first 6-7 weeks of the semester, following each seminar discussion, you will be asked to write short response papers and post them on the wiki. It is suggested that every member of the class focuses on one aspect of the week's discussion that is critical to him/her, and provide a commentary. Your responses

**Short paper assignment:** This is a 6-8 page paper assignment that will come out of the ideas you will have accumulated in your response papers. It does not involve new research but expected to be a crystallization of your response papers into a chunkier piece of writing addressing issues discussed in class in greater depth. **(Due March 26 Friday, 5 pm hard copy)**

**Class presentations:** we will have weekly presentations of particular bodies of archaeological evidence, sites or particular readings. You will be asked to sign up for them on your own on the wiki. Look for topics marked as "Presentation" in the Weekly Schedule page and put your name on at least one.

**Research project:** Every student will choose a related research topic in collaboration with Ömür and turn it into a final project. Collaborations with others in the seminar are always encouraged. The project should involve the theoretical concepts/issues relating to architecture, body and performance and its application to an archaeological case study, relevant to our seminar discussions. The research project's presentations will include a 15-20 min class presentation of the project **(May 3)**, an 8-12 page draft (to be submitted on the day of the presentation) and a 20-25 page final paper (due .

### **Grading:**

- Class participation 30%
- Response papers 15%
- Short paper assignment 15%
- Class presentations 10%
- Final research project 30%

## Weekly Schedule

**Week 1: Feb 1. Introduction:** overview of the course.

Orbach, Susie; 2009. *Bodies*. New York: Picador: 1-32.

**Week 2: Feb 8. Body and its performances in recent critical theory and archaeology**

Shilling, Chris; 2005. "Introduction" and "Contemporary bodies" in *Body in culture, technology and society*. London: Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE, 1-23 and 47-72.

Turner, Bryan S.; 2000. "An outline of a general sociology of the body," in *The Blackwell companion to social theory*. Bryan S. Turner (ed.). Second edition. Malden MA: Blackwell, 481-502.

Joyce, Rosemary; 2005. "Archaeology of the body," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 34: 139-158.

Boric, Dušan and John Robb; 2008. "Body theory in archaeology" in *Past bodies: body-centered research in archaeology*. Dušan Boric and John Robb (eds.). Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1-7.

Meskell, Lynn M. 1996. "The somatisation of archaeology: institutions, discourses, corporeality," *Norwegian Archaeological Review* 29(1): 1-16.

**Week 3. Feb 15. Body, image and knowledge: rock art and shamanistic performance**

Göbeklitepe and Nevalı Çori: early Neolithic sites in Southeastern Turkey.

### Bodies: animal and human

Tilley, Christopher; 2008. "Body and image" in *Body and image: explorations in landscape phenomenology 2*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 15-52.

Lewis-Williams, J. David; 2001. "South African shamanistic rock art in its social and cognitive contexts," in *Archaeology of shamanism*. Niel S. Price (ed.). London and New York: Routledge, 17-39.

Turnbull, David; 2002. "Performance and narrative, bodies and movement in the construction of places and objects, spaces and knowledges," *Theory, Culture & Society* 19 (5/6): 125-143.

Ingold, Tim; 2000. "Totemism, animism and the depiction of animals," in *Perception of the environment: essays on livelihood, dwelling and skill*. London: Routledge, 111-131.

Miracle, Preston and Dušan Boric; 2008. "Bodily beliefs and agricultural beginnings in Western Asia: animal-human hybridity re-examined" in *Past bodies: body-centered research in archaeology*. Dušan Boric and John Robb (eds.). Oxford: Oxbow Books, 101-113.

### Göbeklitepe and Nevalı Çori: spaces of Neolithic performance (Presentation)

Hauptmann, Harald; 1999. "Urfa Region" in *Neolithic in Turkey*. Mehmet Özdoğan and Nezihe Başgelen (eds.). Istanbul: Arkeoloji ve Sanat Yayınları, 65-86.

Schmidt, Klaus; 2000. "Göbekli Tepe and the rock art of the Near East," *TÜBA-AR* 3: 1-14.

Schmidt, Klaus; 2000. "Göbekli Tepe, Southeastern Turkey. A Preliminary Report on the 1995-1999 Excavations." *Paléorient* 26: 45-54.

**February 22 Long-weekend. No class**

**Week 4. March 1. Performance and performativity: towards an understanding of performed and embodied spaces, subjects, societies.**

Çatalhöyük houses: social memory and everyday performance.

What is performance?

Schechner, Richard; 2002. "What is performance?" *Performance studies: an introduction*. Routledge, 28-50.

Mitchell, Jon P.; 2006. "Performance" in *Handbook of material culture*. Christopher Tilley et. al. (eds.). London: Sage Publications, 384-401.

Carlson, Marvin; 2004. "The performance of culture: anthropological and ethnographic approaches" in *Performance: a critical introduction*. Second Edition. New York: Routledge, 11-30.

Çatalhöyük: architecture and everyday life (Presentation)

Hodder, Ian; 2006. "The spectacle of daily performance at Çatalhöyük," in *Archaeology of performance: theaters of power, community, and politics*. Takeshi Inomata and Lawrence S. Cohen (eds.). Lanham: Altamira Press, 81-102.

Hodder, Ian and C. Cessford; 2004. "Daily practice and social memory at Çatalhöyük," *American Antiquity* 69: 17-40.

Lewis-Williams, David; 2004. "Constructing a cosmos: architecture, power and domestication at Çatalhöyük," *Journal of Social Archaeology* 4: 28-60.

Last, Jonathan; 1998. "A design for life: interpreting the art of Çatalhöyük" *Journal of material culture* 3: 355-378.

**Week 5. March 8. A performative theory for prehistoric figurines**

Beyond the goddess: Figurine studies and the Neolithic

Bailey, Douglas W.; 2008. "The corporeal politics of being in the Neolithic," in *Past bodies: body-centered research in archaeology*. Dušan Boric and John Robb (eds.). Oxford: Oxbow Books, 9-19.

Tringham, Ruth and Margaret Conkey; 1998. "Rethinking Figurines: a critical analysis of Archaeology, Feminism and Popular Culture" in *Ancient Goddesses: The Myths and the Evidence*. C. Morris and C Goodison, ed.. London: British Museum Press.

Joyce, Rosemary; 2008. "Goddesses, matriarchs and manly-hearted women: troubling categorical approaches to gender," in *Ancient bodies, ancient lives: sex, gender and archaeology*. Thames and Hudson, 46-66.

Çatalhöyük figurine project (Presentation)

Figurines project website: <http://www.catalhoyuk.com/figurines.html>

Hodder, Ian; 2006. "Materiality, 'art' and agency" *The Leopard's Tale: Revealing the Mysteries of Catalhoyuk*. Thames & Hudson, 185-216.

Nakamura, Carolyn and Lynn Meskell; 2009. "Articulate bodies: forms and figures at Çatalhöyük," *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 16/3: 205-230.

Meskell, Lynn; Carolyn Nakamura; Rachel King & Shahina Farid; 2008. "Figured Lifeworlds and Depositional Practices at Çatalhöyük" *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 18: 139-161.

**Week 6. March 15. Royal tombs of Ur: Death rituals, bodily violence and burying the dead: transformed bodies**

Body, violence, power

Foucault, Michel; 2007. "...The study of bio-power" in *Security, territory, population: lectures at Collège de France 1977-1978*. Picador, 1-28.

Bahrani, Zainab; 2008. "The king's head," in *Rituals of war: The body and violence in Mesopotamia*. New York: Zone Books, 23-55.

Richardson, Seth; 2007. "Death and dismemberment: in Mesopotamia: Discorporation between the Body and Body Politic," in *Performing Death: Social analysis of funerary traditions in the ancient Near East and Mediterranean*. N. Ianeri (ed.). Chicago: Oriental Institute Publications, 189-208.

Royal tombs of Ur (Presentation)

Cohen, Andrew C; 2005. *Death rituals, ideology, and the development of early Mesopotamian kingship : toward a new understanding of Iraq's royal cemetery of Ur*. Leiden ; Boston: Brill.

Dickson, Bruce; 2006. "Public transcripts expressed in theatres of cruelty: the Royal Graves at Ur in Mesopotamia," *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 16/2: 123-144.

Pollock, S.; 2007. "The Royal Cemetery of Ur: Ritual, tradition and the creation of subjects," in *Representations of political power: case histories from times of change and dissolving order in the Ancient Near East*. M. Heinz and M. H. Feldman (eds.). Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 89-110.

McCaffrey, Katherine; 2008. "Female kings of Ur," in *Gender through time in the ancient Near East*. Lanham, MD : AltaMira Press, 173-216.

Zettler, R. L. and L. Horne(eds.); 1998. *Treasures from the royal tombs of Ur*. Philadelphia: University of Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

**Week 7. March 22. Embodied subjectivities: Constructions of gender and sexuality**

Sexing the body

Fausto-Sterling, Anne; 2000. *Sexing the body : gender politics and the construction of sexuality*. New York, NY : Basic Books, 1-29.

Joyce, Rosemary; 2004. "Embodied subjectivity: gender, femininity, masculinity, sexuality," in *A companion to social archaeology*. Lynn Meskell and Robert W. Preucel (eds.). Malden MA: Blackwell, 82-95.

Knapp, A. Bernard; 1998. "Boys will be Boys: Masculinist Approaches to a Gendered Archaeology" in *Reader in archaeological theory : post-processual and cognitive approaches*. D. S. Whitley (ed.). London: Routledge, 241-256.

Meskell, Lynn M.; 1998. "The irresistible body and the seduction of archaeology" in *Changing bodies, changing meanings: studies on the human body in antiquity*. D. Montserrat (ed.). London: Routledge, 139-161.

Sofaer, Joanna R.; 2006. "Body as an archaeological resource," in *Body as material culture: a theoretical osteoarchaeology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 12-30.

Naram Sin and the aspects of masculinity (Presentation)

Winter, Irene J.; 1996. "Sex, rhetoric and the public monument: the alluring body of Naram-Sin of Agade" in *Sexuality in Ancient Art*, N.B.Kampen (ed.), Cambridge: 11-26.

Bahrani, Zainab; 2008. "Death and the ruler," in *Rituals of war: The body and violence in Mesopotamia*. New York: Zone Books, 101-130.

### **March 27-April 4 Spring break**

### **Week 8. April 5. The polemically trans-gendered and the hyper-sexual body in Mesopotamia**

#### *Nudity, sex and the Old Babylonian terracotta plaques*

Bahrani, Zainab; 2001. "Metaphorics of the body: nudity, the goddess and the gaze," in *Women of Babylon: gender and representation in Mesopotamia*. London: Routledge, 40-69.

Asher-Greve, Julia M.; 1998. "The essential body: Mesopotamian conceptions of the gendered body," in *Gender and the body in the ancient Mediterranean*. Maria Wyke (ed.). Malden, MA: Blackwell, 8-37.

Assante, Julia; 2003. "From whores to hierodules: the historiographic invention of Mesopotamian female sex professionals," in *Ancient art and its historiography*. Alice A. Donohue and Mark D. Fullerton (eds.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 13-47.

Boger, Diane R.; 2008. *Gender through time in the ancient Near East*. Lanham, MD : AltaMira Press.

#### *Lamentation priests*

Bachvarova; Mary R.; 2008. "Sumerian *gala* priests and Eastern Mediterranean returning gods: tragic lamentation in cross-cultural perspective," in *Lament: studies in the Ancient Mediterranean and beyond*. Ann Suter (ed.). Oxford University Press, 18-52.

Cooper, Jerrold S.; 2006. "Genre, gender and the Sumerian lamentation." *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 58: 39-47.

#### *Terracotta plaques* (Presentation)

Moorey, P.R.S.; 2003. *Idols of the people : miniature images of clay in the ancient Near East*. Oxford : Oxford University Press.

### **Week 9. April 12. Ömür is out of town- no class**

### **Week 10. April 19. Performing gender, performing sex: The debate over the Sacred Marriage ritual**

#### *Gender performance*

Butler J. 1993. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex."* New York: Routledge, 1-27.

Joyce, Rosemary; 2008. "Sensous figures, celibates and sex workers: thinking about sex in the past," in *Ancient bodies, ancient lives: sex, gender and archaeology*. Thames and Hudson, 86-114.

Perry, E.M. and Rosemary Joyce; 2001. "Providing a past for *Bodies that matter*. Judith Butler's impact on archaeology of gender," *International Journal of Sexuality and Gender Studies* 6: 63-76.

#### *Early Mesopotamian "sacred marriage" ritual* (Presentation)

- Cooper, Jerrold; 1993. "Sacred marriage and popular cult in early Mesopotamia," in *Official cult and popular religion in the Ancient Near East*. Heidelberg: Universtatsverlag C. Winter, 81-96.
- Steinkeller, Piotr; 1999. "On rulers, priests and sacred marriage: tracing the evolution of Early Sumerian kingship," in *Priests and officials in the Ancient Near East*. K. Watanabe (ed.), Universitätsverlag C. Winter: Heidelberg, 103-137.
- Jones, Philip; 2003. "Embracing Inana: Legitimation and Mediation in the Ancient Mesopotamian Sacred Marriage Hymn Iddin-Dagan A" *The Journal of the American Oriental Society* 123: 291-302.
- Bahrani, Zainab; 2002. "Performativity and the image: narrative, representation and the Uruk vase," in *Leaving no stones unturned: essays on the Ancient Near East and Egypt in honor of Donald P. Hansen*. E. Ehrenberg (ed.). Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2002: pages 15-22.

**Week 11. April 26. Body, movement and landscape: phenomenology of the "lived body" in the place-world**

*Moving bodies in the landscape*

- Tilley, Christopher with Wayne Bennett; 2004. "From body to place to landscape: a phenomenological perspective," in *The materiality of stone: explorations in Landscape Phenomenology: 1*. Oxford: Berg, 1-32.
- Casey, Edward; 2001. "Body, self and landscape: geophilosophical inquiry into the place-world," in *Textures of place: exploring humanist geographies*. P.C. Adams et al. (eds.). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 403-425.
- Ingold, Tim and John Lee Vergunst; 2008. *Ways of walking: ethnography and practice on foot*. Burlington VT: Ashgate.

*Border Steles and Rock reliefs in the Ancient Near East*

- Volk, Lucia; 2008. "When memory repeats itself: The politics of heritage in post civil war Lebanon," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40: 291-314.
- Shafer, Ann; "Assyrian royal monuments on the periphery: ritual and the making of imperial space," in *Ancient Near Eastern art in context: studies in honor of Irene J. Winter*. J. Cheng and M. H. Feldman (eds.). Boston and Leiden: Brill, 133-160.

**Week 12 May 3. Presentations of research projects.**

**Week. 13. May 10. Archaeological fieldwork as bodily performance**

- Pearson, Mike and Michael Shanks; 2001. *Theater/archaeology*. Routledge, pages TBA.

**Final papers due: May 17<sup>th</sup>, by 5 pm. Hard copy in Ömür's mailbox.**