

Weekly Schedule

Material Worlds: Art and Agency in the Near East and Africa

Joukowsky Institute
Classroom

Ömür Harmansah

Changes [Dec 27,
2007]

[Weekly Schedule](#)

[The Niqab: Material...](#)

[Final Paper Projects](#)

[Images of Ain Ghaza...](#)

[Home](#)

[Ethnographies of sp...](#)

[Discussion](#)

[More Changes...](#)

Our helpful librarians | [Nota Bene on E-Books](#)

Week 1. January 29. Introduction: material culture studies and the multidisciplinary approach to things, artifacts, objects.

A case study: [The Automatic Turk](#).

Week 2. February 5. [Materiality: ethnographies of material culture](#). Archaeological and anthropological approaches to studying objects, things, artifacts. An overview.

[Discussion](#) + Response Papers

[Social archaeology and material culture studies](#)

- Meskell, Lynn and Robert W. Pruecel; 2004. "file:848314 Knowledges," in A companion to social archaeology, Lynn Meskell and Rober Preucel. Malden MA: Blackwell, 3-22.
- Hodder, Ian ; 2003. "file:847605 The "social" in Archaeological Theory: An Historical and Contemporary Perspective," in A Companion to Social Archaeology. Lynn Meskell and Rober Preucel. Malden MA: Blackwell, 23-42.
- Tilley, Christopher; 2001. "file:735807 Ethnography and material culture," in Handbook of Ethnography. P. Atkinson et. Al. (eds.). London: Sage Pub., 258-272. The **book** is also in the library.

[Things: materiality, agency, animacy, biography](#)

- Hoskins; Janet. "file:849636 Agency, biography and objects" in Handbook of material culture. C. Tilley et. al. (eds.). London: Sage Pub., 74-84. Go to the **book**.
- Miller, Daniel; 2005. "Materiality: an introduction" in **Materiality**. D. Miller (ed.). Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1-50.
- Olsen, Bjørnar; 2003. "file:683750 Material culture after text: re-membering things". **Norwegian Archaeological Review**, 2003, Vol. 36 Issue 2, 87-104.
- Knappett, Carl; 2005. "Animacy, agency and personhood," in Thinking through material culture: an interdisciplinary perspective. Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 11-34.

[Optional reading:](#)

- Demarrais, Elizabeth; 2004. "file:894111 The materialization of culture," in Rethinking materiality: the engagement of mind with the material world. E. Demarrais et. al. (eds.). Oxford: McDonald Institute Monographs, 11-22. The **book** is also on reserve in the library.
-

Week 3. February 12. Problem of the fetish: towards a theory of powerful things.

[Discussion](#) + Response Papers

[Introduction to colonialism from a postcolonial perspective:](#)

- Bhabha, Homi; 2004. "file:965441 The other question: stereotype, discrimination and the discourse of colonialism" in The location of culture. London and New York: Routledge, 94-120.

[The question of the fetish: colonial West Africa in 16th and 17th c.](#)

- Pietz, William; 1985-88. " The problem of the fetish"
 - **Part I**, Res 9 (1985) 5-17;
 - **Part II** Res 13 (1987) 23-45;

- o Part III Res 16 (1988) 105-23.

- MacGaffey, Wyatt; 1994. "African objects and the idea of fetish," Res 25: 123-131.

Representations of the Portuguese on Benin ivories

- Blier, Suzanne Preston; 1993. "file:742810 Imagining otherness in ivory: African portrayals of the Portuguese ca 1492" Art Bulletin 75: 375-396.
- Blackmun, Barbara W.; 1988. "From trader to priest in two hundred years: the transformation of a foreign figure on Benin ivories," Art Journal 47: 128-138.

Presentation articles:

- Renna, Elisha P.; 1984. "Things that threaten: a symbolic analysis of Bunu Yoruba masquerades," Res 26: 99-112. (Marguerite)
- Pels, Peter; 1998. "The spirit of matter: on fetish, rarity, fact, and fancy," in Border fetishisms: material objects in unstable spaces. Patricia Spyer (ed.). New York, Routledge: 91-121. (Danielle)

February 19. No class. "Looooong weekend"

Week 4. February 26. Prehistoric figurines and barbie dolls. Performing objects: a new reading of Neolithic Çatalhöyük anthropomorphic and zoomorphic artifacts.
Discussion + Response papers



Prehistoric terracotta figurines: deities, individuals or dolls?

- Bailey, Douglas; 2005. Prehistoric Figurines : Representation and Corporeality in the Neolithic. Routledge : Taylor & Francis Ltd. Read Chapters 1, 4, 8, 9.
- Talalay, Lauren E.; 1993. Deities, dolls, and devices : Neolithic figurines from Franchthi Cave, Greece. Bloomington : Indiana University Press, 29-51 and 81-86.

Figurine worlds at Çatalhöyük:

- Hodder, Ian; 2006. "The Leopard's puzzle" and "Materiality, art and agency" in The Leopard's Tale: Revealing the mysteries of Çatalhöyük. New York: Thames and Hudson, 47-64 and 185-206.
- Meskell, Lynn; 2006. "Figurine worlds at Çatalhöyük: materiality, mobility and process," Unpublished paper delivered at Ethnohistory workshop, University of Pennsylvania (April 6, 2006) (Handout with author's permission).

Presentation article:

- Tringham, Ruth and Margaret Conkey; 1998. "Rethinking figurines: a critical view from archaeology of Gimbutas, the 'Goddess' and popular culture," in Ancient Goddesses: the myths and the evidence. Lucy Goodison and Christine Morris. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 22-45.

Optional and further reading:

- 2005 Figurine Field Report at Çatalhöyük, by Lynn Meskell and Carolyn Nakamura.

- Knappett, Carl; 2002. "file:738646 Photographs, skeumorphs and marionettes: some thoughts on mind, agency and object," *Journal of Material Culture* 7/1: 97-117.

Week 5. March 5. Art and agency: Alfred Gell and the anthropological theory of artifacts. Power and performance in Early Mesopotamian material culture. The fear-inducing shield paradigm.

Discussion + Response Papers.

Alfred Gell's anthropological theory of art and agency:

- Gell, Alfred; 1992. "file:1108595 The technology of enchantment and the enchantment of technology," in *Anthropology, art and aesthetics*. Jeremy Coote and Anthony Shelton (eds.). Oxford: Clarendon Press, 40-63.
- Gell, Alfred; 1998. *Art and agency: an anthropological theory*. Oxford and New York: Clarendon Press.
 - All read: Chapter 1. "The problem defined" (1-11), Chapter 2. "The theory of the art nexus" (12-27); Chapter 7. "The distributed person" (96-121).
 - Presentations: "Animism and anthropomorphism" 121-133 and "The animation of idols" 133-154.

Materiality, agency and objecthood in Early Mesopotamia

- Bahrani, Zainab; 2002. "file:259922 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.
- Wengrow, David; 2004. "file:1109691 Violence into order: materiality and sacred power in ancient Iraq," in *Rethinking materiality: the engagement of mind with the material world*. E. Demarrais et. al. (eds.). Oxford: McDonald Institute Monographs, 261-270.
- Winter, Irene J.; 1994. "Radiance as an aesthetic value in the art of Mesopotamia," in *Art: the integral vision*. S.C. Malik and Madhu Khanna (eds.). New Delhi: D.K. Printworld, 123-132.

Optional and further reading:

- Rampley, Matthew; 2005. "file:740547 Art history and cultural difference: Alfred Gell's anthropology of art] *Art History* 28: 524-551.


Week 6. March 12. Social life and cultural biography of things. The question of the dedicated and the deposited object. The Neo-Assyrian apotropaic figures

Discussion + Response Papers

Cultural biography of things: theoretical perspectives

- Kopytoff, Igor; 1986. "file:1225809 The cultural biography of things: commoditization as process," in *The social life of things: commodities in cultural perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 64-91.
- Shanks, Michael 1998. "The life of an artifact" E-publication at traumwerk.stanford.edu.

Biographies and magic in Mesopotamia and Egypt

- Meskell, Lynn; 2004. "Taxonomy, agency, biography" in *Object worlds in ancient Egypt: material biographies past and present*. New York: Berg, 39-58.
- Nakamura, Carolyn; 2005.  "Mastering matters: magical sense and apotropaic figurine worlds of Neo-Assyria" in *Archaeologies of materiality*. Lynn Meskell (ed.). Malden MA: Blackwell, 18-45.

Presentation article:

- Meskell, Lynn; 2004. "Material memories: objects as ancestors" in *Object worlds in ancient Egypt: material biographies past and present*. New York: Berg, 59-85.

Optional and further reading:

- Appadurai, Arjun; 1986. "Introduction: commodities and politics of value," in *The social life of things: commodities in cultural perspective*. Arjun Appadurai (ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 3-62.
- Gosden, Chris and Ywonne Marshall; 1999. "file:642795 Cultural biography of objects," *World Archaeology* 31: 169-178.
- Reiner, Erica; 1995. "Astral Magic in Babylonia" *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, New Ser.*, Vol. 85/4: 1-150. Especially read "Apotropaia" 81-96.
- Reiner, Erica; 1960. "Plague Amulets and House Blessings" *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 19/2: 148-155.
- Wiggermann, F. A. M.; 1993-7. "Mischwesen A". In *Reallexicon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archaologie* (eds E. Ebling and B. Meissner). Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 222-45.

Week 7. March 19. Technology: new transdisciplinary perspectives. Material style and facture. A critique of style. Material meanings and meaningful materials.


Discussion



New approaches to technology: art historical, anthropological, archaeological

- Summers, David; 2003. "Facture" in *Real Spaces*. London: Phaidon Press, 61-86.
- Ingold, Tim; 2000. "file:1304981 Society, nature and the concept of technology" in *The perception of the environment*. London and New York: Routledge, 312-322.
- Dobres, Marcia-Anne; 1999. "file:1307635 Technology's links and *chaines*: the processual unfolding of the technique and technician." in *The social dynamics of technology: practice, politics and world views*. M.-A. Dobres and C.R. Hoffman (eds.). Smithsonian, 124-146.

Meaningful materials, meaningful techniques: skilled craftsmanship in Mesopotamia

- Winter, Irene J.; 1998. "file:1305563 The affective properties of styles: An inquiry into analytical process and the inscription of meaning in art history," in *Picturing Science, Producing Art*. C.A. Jones and P. Galison (eds.), New York & London: Routledge; 55-77.
 - Note: The illustrations of the article is like burnt toast in the pdf. I have posted some of the images on the **Discussion** page. You could always go to the **book** also.
- Winter, Irene J.; 2003. "file:1306119 'Surpassing work': mastery of materials and the value of skilled production in ancient Sumer," in *Culture through objects: ancient Near Eastern studies in honor of P.R.S. Moorey*. Timothy Potts, Michael Roaf, Diana Stein (eds.); Oxford: Griffith Institute, 403-421.
- Sumerian Text:  Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta.

Optional and further reading:

- Shortland, Andrew J. (ed.) 2001. *The social context of technological change : Egypt and the Near East, 1650-1550 BC*. Oxford : Oxbow.
- Dietler, Michael and Ingrid Herbich; 1998. "Habitus, techniques, style: an integrated approach to the social understanding of material culture and boundaries" in *The archaeology of social boundaries*. M. T. Stark (ed.); Washington and London:

March 26. No class. Spring recess.

Week 8. April 2. Divine things: cult practice, cult objects, performing statues.

Discussion

- Frontisi-Ducroux, Françoise; 2001 (1975). "file:1398573 Living statues" in *Antiquities (Postwar French Thought Volume III)*. N. Loraux et. al. eds. New York: The New Press, 164-
- Meskell, Lynn; 2004. "Statue worlds and divine things" in *Object worlds in ancient Egypt: material biographies past and present*. New York: Berg, 87-115.
- Winter, Irene J.; 1992. file:1399218 "Idols of the King: royal images as the recipients of ritual action in ancient Mesopotamia," *Journal of Ritual Studies* 6: 13-42.
- Bahrani, Zainab; 2003. "file:1400650 Salmu: representation in the real," in *The graven image: representation in Babylonia and Assyria*. Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 121-148.

Optional and further reading:

- Meskell, Lynn; 2004. "file:1396657 Divine things," in *Rethinking materiality: the engagement of mind with the material world*. E. Demarrais et. al. (eds.). Oxford: McDonald Institute Monographs, 249-259.
- Reade, Julian; 2005. "Religious ritual in Assyrian sculpture," in *Ritual and politics in ancient Mesopotamia*. B.N. Porter (ed.). New Haven, Connecticut: American Oriental Society, 7-32 and plates pp. 33-62.

Week 9. April 9. Visit to RISD Museum: Figurines from ancient Aegean and the Eastern mediterranean world. Rethinking material worlds: artifacts in museum contexts.

Figurines from the Aegean

- Talalay, Lauren E.; 2005. "file:1401799 The Gendered Sea: iconography, gender, and Mediterranean prehistory," in *The archaeology of Mediterranean Prehistory*. Emma Blake and A. Bernard Knapp (eds.). Malden MA: Blackwell, 130-155.
- Elissa Z. Faro, *What to Do with Figurines? A case from Crete*. on *Archeaolog*.

Rethinking material worlds: artifacts in museum contexts

- Vogel, Susan; 1988. "file:1408562 Introduction to Art/Artifact: African art in anthropology collections" in *The anthropology of art: a reader*. H Murphy and M Perkins (eds.). Malden MA: Blackwell, 209-218.
- Price, Sally; 1989. "file:1407219 A case in point and afterwords to *Primitive Art in Civilized Places*" in *The anthropology of art: a reader*. H Murphy and M Perkins (eds.). Malden MA: Blackwell, 167-185.

Week 10. April 16. Ethnographies of space, place, landscape I: Houses are human: Ethnographies of domestic space and vernacular architecture in Africa and the Near East.

Discussion

- Documentary Video: *The architecture of mud* (by Caterina Borelli & Pamela Jerome): on the techniques and uses of mud bricks as building materials in Hadhramaut region of southeast Yemen.
- Bourdieu, Pierre; (1971). "file:1402089 The Berber house" in *The anthropology of space and place*. Setha M. Low and Denise Lawrence-Zúñiga (eds.). Malden MA: Blackwell, 2003: 131-141.
- Silverstein, Paul A.; 2004. "file:739538 Of rooting and uprooting: Kabyle habitus, domesticity, and structural nostalgia," *Ethnography* 5: 553-578.
- Blier, Suzanne Preston; 1983. "file:741655 Houses are human: architectural self-

images of Africa's Tamberma," The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians 42: 371-382.

- Morris, James and Suzanne Preston Blier; 2004. **Butabu: adobe architecture of West Africa**. Princeton Architectural Press. (Images, skim intro)

Optional and further reading:

- Moore, Henrietta L.; 1996. **Space, text, and gender: an anthropological study of the Marakwet of Kenya**. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Joyce, Rosemary; 2000. "[file:1205242](#) Heirlooms and Houses: Materiality and Social Memory" in Beyond kinship : social and material reproduction in house societies. Rosemary A. Joyce and Susan D. Gillespie (eds.). Philadelphia : University of Pennsylvania Press, 189-212.
- Donley-Reid, Linda; 1990. "A structuring structure: The Swahili house." in Domestic Architecture and the Use of Space: An Interdisciplinary Cross-Cultural Study. S. Kent (ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 114-126.

Week 11. April 23. Ethnographies of space, place, landscape II: Rock reliefs in Anatolia and Assyria- the case of the Source of the Tigris monuments
Discussion

- Tilley, Christopher; 1994. "[file:1566811](#) Space, place, landscape and perception: phenomenological perspectives," A phenomenology of landscapes: places, paths, monuments. Oxford/Providence: Berg, pp. 7-34.
- Casey, Edward; 2001. "[file:1568746](#) 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. Also: **E-book**
- Stokkel, Peter J.; 2005. "[file:1567702](#) A New Perspective on Hittite Rock Reliefs" *Anatolica* 31: 171-188.
- Marcus, Michelle I.; 1995. "[file:432942](#) Geography as visual ideology: landscape, knowledge, and power in Neo-Assyrian art" in Neo-Assyrian geography, Mario Liverani (ed.); Università di Roma "La Sapienza," Roma: Sargon srl, 193-202.

Optional and further reading:

- Blake, Emma; 2004. "Space, spatiality and archaeology," in A companion to social archaeology, 215-229.
- Low, Setha and Denise Lawrence- Zúñiga; 2003. "Locating culture," in The anthropology of space and place: locating culture. Setha M. Low and Denise Lawrence-Zúñiga (eds.). Malden MA: Blackwell, 1-47.
- Shafer, Ann Taylor; 1998. The carving of an empire: Neo-Assyrian monuments on the periphery. Unpublished PhD Dissertation. Harvard University.
- Kreppner, Florian Janoscha; 2002. "[file:412576](#) Public space in nature: the case of Neo-Assyrian rock reliefs", *Altorientalische Forschungen* 29: 367-383.

Week 12. April 30. Student Presentations of Individual Projects. Final Discussion. **Final paper drafts due.**

May 14. Monday, 5 pm: Final papers due.

If you wish to view this page with all files downloadable, visit the private forum and login with administrative password.

You must sign in to post comments.

[Site Home](#) > [The Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology Classroom](#) > [Material Worlds: Art and Agency in the Near East and Africa](#) > **Weekly**
Schedule
Projectforum