The joys and blunders of working at Çatalhöyük, Turkey: a 25 year report

Abstract: The aim of this lecture is to summarize the results of 25 years of work at the 9000 year old ‘town’ of Çatalhöyük in central Turkey. The project was characterized by using the latest scientific techniques and engaging in community based methods. The results were at times impressive but there were also mistakes that were made, and difficult moments. This talk discusses some of the main archaeological results and also reflects on the challenges posed by community-based archaeology.

Dr. Artemis Papatheodorou: Ottoman policies on archaeology and a Republican post-scriptum

Abstract: In the 19th century, the Ottoman state gradually developed a concrete interest in antiquities found in its lands. This interest was translated into specific activities to manage archaeological heritage in the empire and was codified in a sequence of regulations between 1869 and 1906. This paper looks at these regulations and discusses the goals that they served, and the way that they were implemented. It also looks at the 1912 regulation on the protection of monuments and at how it affected archaeological heritage management in the empire. Given that the last Ottoman regulation on antiquities survived the transition into the Turkish Republic, this paper also aims to shed light on continuity and discontinuity between the two periods. Analysis largely relies on a critical reading of Ottoman archaeology-related legislation, and administrative documents that survive at the Ottoman Archive at the Office of the President in Istanbul.

Dr. Işılay Gürsu: Understanding the ‘Public’ in Public Archaeology: Insights from Turkey

Abstract: Since 2013, the British Institute at Ankara (BIAA) has been actively involved in a series of projects in Turkey dedicated to understanding the public perception of archaeology, a topic often neglected by archaeologists and others working in and around the field. Archaeological assets in Turkey, and elsewhere, are increasingly under threat and their future is largely dependent on mobilising the public’s opinion regarding their safeguard. Despite its clear importance, deconstructing this insight is a challenging task as it requires the use of different methodologies to investigate public opinion, as well as to define which aspects of the public and whose opinion is being asked and analysed.

This talk will concentrate on two projects undertaken under the auspices of the BIAA, “Living Amid the Ruins: archaeological sites as hubs of sustainable development in Southwest Turkey” (LAR), and “Safeguarding Archaeological Assets of Turkey” (SARAT). Examining Turkish archaeological assets at two different scales, these projects have explored different methodologies to engage with the public; to assess their perception of archaeology, identify the possible tangible and intangible benefits the public could gain from archaeology, and suggest ways which could help make archaeology more relevant to modern society.

Dr. John MacGinnis: Operating in the Northern Marches: The Neo-Assyrian Province of Tušhan

Abstract: This paper will examine the operation and administration of the Neo-Assyrian province of Tušhan through its long period of Assyrian occupation. The province was situated along the southern bank of the upper Tigris in what is now southeastern Turkey, its autonomous capital corresponding to the site of Ziyaret Tepe, some 60 km east of modern Diyarbakır. The sources available for the study of ancient Tušhan are rich and varied. The abundant archaeological evidence from the excavations undertaken at Ziyaret Tepe are complemented by a range of textual sources including royal inscriptions, letters from the royal correspondence, and texts from the site itself. Putting these all together allows for a balanced evaluation of the many systems - agricultural, administrative, religious, military and others - used to implement imperial control, allowing in the process the possibility of studying their development over time, their impact on the environment and the degree of interaction with the indigenous population groups.

Dr Maxime Brami (Mainz): Early farming expansion beyond the Anatolian plateau
Abstract: The adoption of agriculture and settled village life is one of the most important transitions in prehistory, long viewed as one of the most essential ‘revolutions’ in human history. This contribution will focus on early agricultural dispersals beyond the Central Anatolian Plateau, 8,500 years ago – summarizing what we know and what we don’t know about this expansion, based on the results of recent biomolecular (ancient DNA, stable isotope) research and more traditional archaeological approaches in the western half of the Anatolian Peninsula, consisting here of the Eastern Marmara region, the Lakes District and the Aegean Basin. An intriguing phenomenon is the diffusion of houses and house-related practices, which alongside other cultural markers show distant links with Çatalhöyük and the Central Anatolian Plateau, highlighting the complexity and multi-dimensionality of the process of neolithic expansion.

Professor Douglas Baird (Liverpool/Pınarbaşı): Skulls and animate houses – Boncuklu, the Neolithic of central Anatolia and the antecedents of Çatalhöyük

Abstract: There has been much debate about the transformations in social arrangements attendant upon the development of sedentary agricultural communities. This presentation explores the nature of the early Neolithic households at Boncuklu in the context of the development of the Neolithic of central Anatolia.

Dr Lee Clare (German Archaeological Institute/Göbekli Tepe): Göbekli Tepe: Archaeological Research at the “Zero Point in Time"

Abstract: The 1st July 2018 saw the inscription of the archaeological site of Göbekli Tepe on the UNESCO World Heritage List during the 42nd Session of the World Heritage Committee in Manama, Bahrain. The application process and the 18 months since inscription have resulted in many new insights and brought forth a series of expected (and sometimes unexpected) challenges relating to heritage management, conservation and site presentation issues. At the same time, new insights from archaeological research have culminated in a new understanding not only of site function but also its stratigraphy, chronology and the biographies of its special buildings. This paper will review this most recent chapter in the history of the archaeological site, also highlight the changing role of the archaeologist within these different processes.

Professor Scott Redford (SOAS): What can Archaeology Tell us About Medieval Anatolia?

Abstract: Historical sources tell us of the momentous cultural and economic changes that occurred during the medieval (roughly 11-14th cs) period in the territories of today’s Turkey. The slow decline of the Byzantine Empire, the establishment of Turco-Islamic principalities in former Byzantine lands, the Crusades, and the rise and fall of an independent Armenian Kingdom are among these. Based on, but not limited to, the speaker’s participation in excavations and surveys in southern, south-eastern, and central Turkey, this talk will address archaeology’s contribution to understanding some of the shifting social and economic developments of the time.

Pre-booking essential:
Adult: £80, Student: £40, RAI Fellow / ATS / BIAA Member: £40 + limited free tickets for SOAS staff & students.

Booking essential: https://anatolian-archaeology-symposium.eventbrite.co.uk

Contact: contact@angloturkishsociety.org.uk

Join us for a celebration of this rich and varied heritage going back to the dawn of civilisation covering a wide time span from pre-history. Tea / coffee provided on the day.

Ian Hodder led the Çatalhöyük Research Project, shedding light on the development of one of the world’s earliest societies, the social and economic organization of the settlement, and the transformation from hunting and gathering to agriculture and civilization. In recent research, he has built theories about how human entanglement with material things draws humans down certain evolutionary and historical pathways while at the same time constraining choices that can be made.

More info:
Professor Baird graduated with an MA and PhD in Archaeology. He completed his PhD on the Neolithic of the desert zones of the Levant in 1992. Between 1982 and 1987 he carried out excavations, field survey and research on chipped stone and ceramics in the Middle East, in Jordan, Iraq and Cyprus. He has directed three major archaeological field projects, 1) the Tell esh Shuna project, in Jordan dealing with the Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age of the southern Levant; 2) the Konya Plain Survey in Turkey dealing with the long-term settlement history of central Anatolia, 10,000 BC - 1750 AD; 3) the Pınarbaşı and Boncuklu projects in Turkey dealing with the appearance of the first sedentary and agricultural societies.

Lee Clare is research lecturer at the Orient Department of German Archaeological Institute (DAI) and coordinator of research and fieldwork at Göbekli Tepe. He completed his master's degree at the University of Cologne in 2005, majoring in prehistoric archaeology. Following the completion of his PhD in 2013, dedicated to climate-culture interactions in the Eastern Mediterranean during the Early Holocene, he joined the DAI as post-doctoral fellow in the frame of the Our Place: Our Place in the World project, financed by the John Templeton Foundation and coordinated by Klaus Schmidt (DAI) and Trevor Watkins (University of Edinburgh). In the frame of his current position, Lee has become a frequent-flyer, speaking regularly at international conferences. In addition to the Göbekli Tepe site, his other areas of academic expertise include Neolithisation and Neolithic dispersal processes, Early-Middle Holocene absolute chronologies, culture-climate interaction, prehistoric conflict, and cognitive evolution.

Dr. Artemis Papatheodorou graduated with a DPhil in Oriental Studies from the University of Oxford in 2017. Her doctoral thesis discussed the archaeological policies of the Ottoman state, archaeology in the autonomous Ottoman principality of Samos in the Aegean, and the archaeological activities of the most important Ottoman Greek learned society, the Hellenic Literary Society at Constantinople, in the 19th and early 20th centuries. In the Autumn of 2018, she was Visiting Assistant Professor in History at the American University of Sharjah, in the United Arab Emirates. Her research interests focus on the Ottoman reception of the past, and the reception of the Ottoman past nowadays.

Dr. John MacGinnis is a Senior Curator at the British Museum and Lead Archaeologist in the Iraq Emergency Heritage Management Training Scheme; he is also a Research Associate of the University of Cambridge McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research. His background is in Assyriology and Near Eastern Archaeology, a field in which he has more than thirty years' experience. He has participated extensively in excavations across the middle east. He first worked in Iraq in 1987 and from 2009 on has participated in archaeological investigations in both the north and the south of the country. He was previously Field Director of the operations in the lower town at the Neo-Assyrian provincial capital of Ziyaret Tepe (ancient Tushan) and is currently Director of the excavations in the Darband-i Rania pass in Iraqi Kurdistan. Throughout this time he has also been involved in epigraphic research and publication. Dr. MacGinnis would bring to the Council the benefit of these many years of experience in archaeological fieldwork and epigraphic research and his deep commitment to the people and heritage of Iraq.

Dr. Işılay Gürsu, The British Institute at Ankara (BIAA)
Işılay Gürsu got her PHD degree in Cultural Heritage Management from IMT Institute for Advanced Studies, Lucca in Italy in 2013. She joined the BIAA in January 2013.
For the first two years of this appointment, she worked on the betterment of the presentation and interpretation of the ancient site of Aspendos and the ancient region of Pisidia. She is the Co-I of the research titled: "Living Amid the Ruins: Archaeological Sites as Hubs of Sustainable Development in Southwest Turkey" awarded by the British Academy’s Sustainable Development Programme in December 2016. She is currently part of the Safeguarding Archaeological Assets of Turkey (SARAT) project.
Having graduated from Boğaziçi University’s Tourism Administration department, Işılay completed her MA studies at the Koç University's “Anatolian Civilizations and Cultural Heritage Management” programme. Before moving to Italy for her PHD, she worked at the Istanbul Archaeological Museums Development Project for one year.
Her academic interests include understanding the relationship that contemporary society has with archaeology; at a practical level she is interested in creating activities that could potentially strengthen this relationship.
Maxime Brami is a prehistoric archaeologist working on the origins and spread of agriculture – an economic complex invented around 12,000 years ago in the Near East, which also included sedentism and (later) pottery. The agricultural (or neolithic) revolution is an important milestone: for over 99% of human history, humans have been extracting food from nature, hunting or fishing and gathering wild plants; then, rather abruptly, some communities in Southwest Asia started cultivating plants and herding animals – thus producing food and freeing themselves from (over-)reliance on nature. This process seems to have coincided with the emergence of the first villages in Southwest Asia and of monumental structures, which some have called ‘temples’ (e.g. Göbeklitepe in Southeast Turkey). Maxime’s focus in finding out is how this economic complex dominated by agriculture, once formalized into a coherent pattern of existence, became portable and spread across large stretches of Europe, Asia and Africa, eventually giving rise to the urban, industrial and post-industrial societies in which we live today.

Professor Scott Redford lectures in art, archaeology, and architecture of Anatolia, the eastern Mediterranean, and SW Asia from the 11-14th centuries with a special interest in landscape, urbanism, and ceramics.