

Janet Richards

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Research interests

Ancient northeast African culture, archaeology, and history; texts and archaeology; political landscapes; the archaeology of individuals; the politics of biography; complex societies (ideologies of power, strategies of materialization, social transformations, political crisis); cities; mortuary behavior; local saint cults; archaeology and popular culture; the past as cultural heritage in the past and present.

Education

Ph.D. 1992, University of Pennsylvania, Anthropology and Oriental Studies.
B.A. 1981, Northwestern University, Anthropology and French.
1979-80 Université de Paris-IV and l'École du Louvre, special student in
Egyptian art and archaeology (Sweetbriar College Junior Year Abroad).

Professional affiliation

Current

Professor of Egyptology, Department of Near Eastern Studies, University of Michigan, 2012-present.
Curator Kelsey Museum of Archaeology 2012-2015, 2017-present. University of Michigan.
Director, University of Michigan Abydos Middle Cemetery Project, Abydos, Egypt (1995-present). Full scale archaeological investigation of late Old Kingdom provincial mortuary landscape.
Senior Fellow, Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, New York University, 2010-present.
Research Associate, University of Pennsylvania Museum, 1992-present.
Research Affiliate, Museum of Anthropology, University of Michigan (1996-present).

Previous

Associate Professor of Egyptology, Department of Near Eastern Studies, (2004-2012),
Associate Curator for Dynastic Egypt, Kelsey Museum of Archaeology (2004-2012), University of Michigan
Assistant Professor of Egyptology, Department of Near Eastern Studies (1998-2004),
Assistant Curator for Dynastic Egypt, Kelsey Museum of Archaeology (1997-2004)
Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of History of Art (1994-1995); Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Near Eastern Studies (1995-1996, 1997-1998); Visiting Assistant Curator, Kelsey Museum (1994-1998), University of Michigan.
Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Mount Holyoke College (1993-1994).

Publications

Books

Writing Ancient Lives: Weni the Elder, local saints, and ancient Egyptian responses to political crisis.

In preparation; under contract with Cambridge University Press.

The Archaeology and Art of Ancient Egypt: Essays in Honor of David B. O'Connor. Co-editor with Z. Hawass. 2 volumes. Supreme Council of Antiquities Press, 2007 (Second edition, revised and expanded, 2009)

Society and Death in Ancient Egypt: Mortuary Landscapes of the Middle Kingdom. Cambridge University Press, 2005 (Paperback edition, 2009).

Order, Legitimacy and Wealth in Ancient States. Co-editor with M. Van Buren. Cambridge University Press, New Directions in Archaeology series, 2000.

Preserving Eternity: Modern Goals, Ancient Intentions. Egyptian Funerary Artifacts at the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology. Co-editor with T. G. Wilfong. Kelsey Museum of Archaeology. 1995.

Online publications

Discovery! Excavating the Ancient World. Web version with text and images of curated exhibition at Kelsey Museum of Archaeology. Published online October 2015.

<https://lsa.umich.edu/content/dam/kelsey-assets/Discovery-portfolio.pdf>

Report of the Archaeology Advisory Committee: Strengthening Archaeological Networks. Co-author with Li Liu, Clemente Marconi, David O'Connor, Robert Preucel, Carla Sinopoli, and Adam Smith, [Institute of Fine Arts/NYU; Mellon Foundation]. Section 2.3 in *Report to the Mellon Foundation PATHWAYS TO THE FUTURE: Art History, Archaeology, and Conservation Trends in Graduate Education and Research*. 2015.

<https://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/fineart/research/mellon/IFA-MellonInitiative-report.pdf>

Selected articles and chapters in books

Local saints and national politics in the late Middle Kingdom. In G. Andreu, F. Morfoisse, et D. Devauchelle (Eds.), *Actes du colloque Sésostris III et la fin du Moyen Empire. Cahiers de la Recherche de l'Institut de Papyrologie et d'Égyptologie de l'Université de Lille 3*. Forthcoming 2017.

Contextualizing Idi. Co-author with Heather Tunmore. *The British Museum Newsletter Ancient Egypt and Sudan*. 2016.

A New Kingdom Figurine from the Abydos Middle Cemetery. In R. Jasnow and K. Cooney (Eds.), *Joyful in Thebes: Egyptological Studies in Honor of Betsy M. Bryan*. Lockwood Press, 2015.

The myths of Osiris and Kamberap in cross-cultural comparison. Co-author with S. Kirsch. In E. Frood, A. McDonald, and R. Parkinson (Eds.), *Decorum and Experience: Essays in Ancient Culture for John Baines*. Griffith Institute, Oxford. 2014.

Spatial and verbal rhetorics of power: constructing late Old Kingdom history. *Journal of Egyptian History* 3 (2): 339-366. 2010.

Conservation and documentation in the Middle Cemetery: activities funded by the Antiquities Endowment Grant. *Bulletin of the American Research Center in Egypt* 197: 9-16. 2010.

Honoring the ancestors: the Middle Kingdom in the Middle Cemetery. In Z. Hawass and J. Houser Wegner (Eds.), *Millions of Jubilees: Essays in Honor of David P. Silverman*, 603-632. Supreme Council of Antiquities Press, Cairo. 2010.

Kingship and legitimation. In W. Wendrich (Ed.), *Egyptian Archaeology*, 55-84. Blackwell Global Studies in Archaeology. Blackwell, Cambridge. 2010.

The archaeology of excavations and the role of context. In Z. Hawass and J. Richards (Eds.), *The Archaeology and Art of Ancient Egypt: Essays in honor of David B. O'Connor*, 313-319. Supreme Council of Antiquities Press, Cairo. 2007.

The loss and rediscovery of the Vizier Iuu at Abydos: magnetic survey in the Middle Cemetery Co-author with T. Herbich. In E. Czerny (Ed.), *Festschrift Manfred Bietak*, 141-149. Denkschriften der Gesamtkademie, Vienna. 2005.

- The Abydos cemeteries in the late Old Kingdom. In Z. Hawass (Ed.), *Egyptology at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century: Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Egyptologists, Cairo*, 400-407. American University in Cairo Press, Cairo. 2003.
- Text and context in late Old Kingdom Egypt: the archaeology and historiography of Weni the Elder. *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 39: 75-102. 2002.
- Time and memory in ancient Egyptian cemeteries: the dynamic history of ancient sites. *Expedition: Magazine of the University of Pennsylvania Museum* 44 (3): 16-24. 2002.
- Introduction: ideology, wealth, and the comparative study of “civilizations.” Co-author with M. Van Buren. In J. Richards and M. Van Buren (Eds.), *Order, Legitimacy, and Wealth in Ancient States*, 3-12. Cambridge University Press, New Directions in Archaeology series. 2000.
- Modified order, responsive legitimacy, redistributed wealth: Egypt, 2260-2040 BC. In J. Richards and M. Van Buren (Eds.), *Order, Legitimacy, and Wealth in Ancient States*, 36-45. Cambridge University Press, New Directions in Archaeology series. 2000.
- Conceptual landscapes in the Egyptian Nile Valley. In W. Ashmore and B. Knapp (Eds.), *Archaeologies of Landscape: Contemporary Perspectives*, 83-100. London, Blackwell. 1999.

Articles and chapters in progress

- Myth, politics, and biography in the ancient Egyptian Nile Valley. In preparation for J. Stauder, A. Stauder, and E. Frood (Eds.), *Ancient Egyptian Biographies: Forms, Contexts, Functions. Wilbour Studies in Egyptology and Ancient Western Asia*, Lockwood Press. n.d.
- At the Gate of the Ancestors: saint cults and the politics of the past at Abydos. In preparation for I. Regulski (Ed.), *Abydos: the Sacred Land at the Western Horizon. British Museum Publications on Egypt and Sudan*, Peeters. n.d.
- Past, present, and future: honoring the ancestors in the Middle Kingdom. In preparation for Rune Nyord (Ed), *Concepts in Middle Kingdom Funerary Culture*. Proceedings of the 2016 Lady Wallis Budge Anniversary Symposium. n.d.
- Body and burial in late Old Kingdom Egypt: funerary material from the tomb chamber of Weni the Elder at Abydos. With Peter Lacovara, Salima Ikram, and Christian Knoblauch. In preparation for submission to *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*.

Archaeological fieldwork

- Director, University of Michigan Middle Cemetery Project, Abydos, Egypt, large-scale investigation of late Old Kingdom provincial mortuary and political landscape. 1995-present.
 Topographic survey, architectural/ceramic analysis: 1995, 1996
 Full-scale excavation: 1999, 2001, 2007, 2009, 2011 and 2012 (late antique graduate student subproject), 2013
 Magnetic survey and study seasons: 2002, 2004, 2011, 2012, 2014.
 MSA Inspectors’ Seminars March 2005, February 2009, November 2014.
<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/kelsey/fieldwork/currentfieldwork>
<http://iabydos.wordpress.com/excavations/>
- Field Director, North Cemetery Project, Pennsylvania-Yale Expedition to Abydos, Egypt.
 Surface survey and collection and selective excavation of Middle Kingdom cemetery zone, January-June 1988.
- Excavation Supervisor, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston Expedition to Deir el Ballas, Egypt, 1986.
 Excavation Supervisor, Pennsylvania-Yale Expedition Early Dynastic Project, Abydos, Egypt, 1986.
 Excavation Supervisor, University of Toronto Expedition to East Karnak, Luxor, Egypt, 1985.
 Excavation Supervisor, British Mission to Tel el-Amarna, Egypt, 1985.
 Epigrapher, Pennsylvania-Yale Expedition to Abydos, Egypt, 1985.

Exhibitions

Senior Consultant, NEH grant “Evaluating Digital Platforms for an Immersive Ancient Egyptian Experience,” Carnegie Museum of Natural History, 1 January – 31 December 2017.

Past

- “Discovery: excavating the ancient world.” Meader Special Exhibition Gallery, Kelsey Museum of Archaeology; Curator. August-November 2013. Online version at <https://www.lsa.umich.edu/UMICH/kelsey/Home/Exhibitions/Past%20exhibitions/Discovery%20portfolio.pdf>
- “Life and death in the Pyramid Age: the Emory Old Kingdom mummy.” Michael C. Carlos Museum, Emory University. Consultant. September-December 2011. Consultant and participant in podcast: “The Emory Old Kingdom mummy,” <http://carlos.emory.edu/education/podcast>
- Sohag Regional Museum of Archaeology, Sohag Province, Egypt. Consultant for regional museum planning. Ongoing.
- Participant in Kelsey Museum Upjohn Exhibition Wing planning process 2004-2009. Curator, reinstallation of permanent Dynastic Egyptian gallery. Opened November 1, 2009.
- “Mary Upjohn Meader: pioneering adventures over Africa.” Meader Special Exhibition Gallery, Kelsey Museum of Archaeology. Co-curated with L. Talalay. November 2009-June 2010. On-line version: <http://lw.lsa.umich.edu/kelsey/meader/>
- “American contributions to Egyptian archaeology.” Exhibition at the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, Egypt. Produced panel and label copy for featured object: statuette of Weni excavated during the 1999 University of Michigan Abydos Middle Cemetery Project field season. 2007.
- “Individual and society in ancient Egypt.” Kelsey Museum, with loans from the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the University of Pennsylvania Museum. Curator. March-August 2003.
- “Egypt and the ancient Near East.” Permanent installation of the Kelsey Museum's ancient Egyptian and Near Eastern Collections. Curator. February 1998-2004.
- “Death in ancient Egypt.” Kelsey Museum. Co-curator with T. Wilfong. 1996-98.
- “Latin funerary inscriptions.” Part of the permanent installation of the Greco-Roman Gallery of the Kelsey Museum. Co-curator with T. Wilfong. 1996-2004.
- “Preserving eternity: modern goals, ancient intentions.” Kelsey Museum. Co-curator with T. Wilfong. 1995-96.

Selected grants and awards

- Collaborating expert, multi-year Swiss National Science Foundation project, “Le discours monumental dans l’Égypte du III^{ème} millénaire : image, écrit, texte.” Principal Investigator Julie Stauder-Porchet, University of Geneva. April 2016-March 2020.
- Berlin Prize, Ellen Maria Gorrissen Fellow of History, American Academy in Berlin, 2014.
- American Research Center in Egypt Antiquities Endowment Fund grants: “Conservation and Presentation Planning for the Weni Mastaba,” awarded 2016, \$50,000; co-PI with Suzanne Davis. “Conservation and Technical Study of Deteriorated Wood from the Abydos Middle Cemetery, Egypt,” awarded 2012, \$42,742; sponsoring PI with Suzanne Davis and Claudia Chemello (senior project conservators). “Abydos Middle Cemetery Project: Survey, Conservation, Documentation, and Teaching of Study Collections,” \$21,952; awarded 2008; co-PI with Suzanne Davis.
- Marjorie M. Fisher Fund of the Michigan Community Foundation, \$140,000 to date; grants to the Abydos Middle Cemetery Project, 2001-present.
- Senior Fellow, Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, New York University, 2010-present.

Member, Scientific Club, University of Michigan, 2009-present.
National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship, 2005-06.
American Philosophical Society Fellowship, 2006-07.
American Council of Learned Societies Fellowship, awarded February 2005 for AY 2005-06;
declined.
Bioanthropology Foundation, \$25,000, Co-PI with M. Adams, NYU and B. Baker, ASU, for
construction of bioarchaeology storage magazine at Abydos, Egypt. 2009-2010.
National Geographic Society, \$20,000 for Abydos Middle Cemetery Project. 2001.

Selected lectures and conference presentations

Upcoming

Invited paper, "Abydos in the late Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period." For the conference
"Beyond Memphis: The Transition of the Late Old Kingdom to the First Intermediate Period as
reflected in Provincial Cemeteries" (co-sponsors Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg,
KU Leuven, and Netherlands-Flemish Institute in Cairo). Würzburg, Germany, 31 August-
3 September 2017.
Invited paper, "Landscape and communication: projects personal and political at Abydos, Egypt." At
the workshop "Earlier Egyptian Inscriptions: Materiality, Locality, Landscape." Faculté des
Lettres, Département des Sciences de l'Antiquité, Université de Genève. Geneva, 7-9
September 2017.

Past

"Local saints and the power of the past." Department of Anthropology, Sociology, Psychology,
and Egyptology, American University in Cairo. November 2016.
"Local saints and the power of the past in early Egypt." Department of Art and Art History, University
of Texas, Austin. February 2016.
"Past, present, future: honoring the ancestors in the Middle Kingdom." Invited speaker, Lady Wallis
Budge Anniversary Symposium: Concepts in Middle Kingdom Funerary Culture. Cambridge
University, January 2016.
"At the gate of the ancestors: saint cults and the politics of the past at Abydos." The
Raymond and Beverly Sackler Foundation Distinguished Lecture in Egyptology, British
Museum, July 2015.
"A New Kingdom Figurine from the Abydos Middle Cemetery." Presented at the Annual
Meeting of the American Research Center in Egypt, April 2015, Houston.
"Local saints and national politics in the late Middle Kingdom." Invited presentation
at the colloquium "Sésostriis III et la fin du Moyen Empire." Université de Lille,
Palais des Beaux Arts Lille, Louvre Lens; in connection with the exhibition "Sésostriis III:
Pharaon de légende." December 2015.
"Local saints, national politics, and the power of the past in early Egypt." Institute
for the Study of the Ancient World, New York University, co-sponsored by the American
Research Center in Egypt. February 2015.
"Life writing within landscapes of power and myth." Invited presentation at the international workshop
"Ancient Egyptian Biographies: Form, Contexts, Functions." Basel, May 2014.
"Myth, politics, and biography in the ancient Egyptian Nile Valley." Ellen Maria Gorrissen Lecture,
American Academy in Berlin, April 2014.
"Die narrativen Strukturen des politischen Gedächtnisses im alten Ägypten." Lecture and debate with
Gerald Moers, University of Vienna. In the series "Head to Head: a meeting of inspired minds"
of the Literaturhaus Stuttgart, Germany, March 2014.
"Learning in Museums." Joint lecture with Suzanne Davis, Kelsey Museum Curator of Conservation.
Cultural Program of The Grand Egyptian Museum, Cairo. April 2012.

“Writing ancient lives: people, politics, and piety in the Egyptian Nile Valley.” Trinity College, February 2012.

“Abydos: l’archéologie d’un paysage politique.” Musée du Louvre, Paris, February 2010.

“After Amarna: Tutankhamen, Horemheb, and ancient Egyptian responses to political crisis.” DeYoung Museum, San Francisco, November 2009.

“The biography of people and places: constructing late Old Kingdom history.” Invited paper at workshop “In search of Egypt’s past: problems and perspectives of the historiography of ancient Egypt.” University of British Columbia. April 2008.

“Politics and provinces.” Brinkley Lecture on Ancient Greece and Egypt, College of William and Mary, October 2007.

Co-Organizer, Third German American Frontiers of Humanities Symposium, “The Making of Memory: Space · Performance · Appropriation;” Co-chair, Egypt session: “Colonial Origins, Post-colonial Realities: the study of Egypt past and present.” Sponsored by the American Philosophical Society, U.S.A., and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, Germany. Philadelphia, 12-15 October 2006.

Lecture Tour, Australian Centre for Egyptology, 5-21 September 2006:

Macquarie University, Sydney; Monash University, Melbourne; Western Australia Museum, Perth; Presbyterian Ladies College, Perth: “Society in Middle Kingdom art;” “A landscape of people, politics, and piety: Abydos in the Old and Middle Kingdoms;” “The lost tomb of Weni the Elder;” “Women archaeologists in the Middle East;” “Fieldwork in the Middle East: method, theory, and politics”

“Individuals, time and memory.” Invited lecture, Annual Sackler Conference of the British Museum, July 11-12, 2002.

Professional affiliations

American Research Center in Egypt
Society for American Archaeology
University of Pennsylvania Museum
Scientific Club, University of Michigan

References

Willeke Wendrich
Joan Silsbee Chair of African Cultural Archaeology
Professor of Egyptian Archaeology
Dept. of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures / Cotsen Institute of Archaeology
Director, Center for Digital Humanities
University of California Los Angeles
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Richard B. Parkinson
Professor of Egyptology
Fellow of The Queen’s College
The University of Oxford
richard.parkinson@orinst.ox.ac.uk

Carla M. Sinopoli
Professor, Department of Anthropology
Curator of Asian Archaeology and Ethnology, Museum of Anthropology

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University of Michigan
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