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SPEAKERS' BIOGRAPHIES AND ABSTRACTS

The World of Ancient Iran and the West

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Lindsay Allen

King's College, London

Lindsay Allen is Senior Lecturer in Greek and Near Eastern History at King's College London. Interested primarily in the Achaemenid Persian empire and pre-Islamic Iran, her work explores the texts and material culture of Achaemenid kingship and the history of scholarship and reception, particularly in relation to Persian history, the ancient Near East, and Alexander of Macedon. Her most recent publication explores the reception of pre-Islamic culture, specifically Persepolitan reliefs, in seventeenth-century Iran. She is currently working on a catalogue of stone fragments from Persepolis that were removed from the site in the eighteenth century.

The Boundaries of Kingship: Objects and Relationships at the Margins

An exhibition uses a blend of objects and narrative to convey a sense of past eras and their inhabitants, in this case the empires of Iran and their western margins. Surviving fragments of a lost, lived experience become part of a patchworked album of the past. Most frequently pictured in the Achaemenid patchwork is the stereotyped figure of the king, carved or stamped into fine substances. The network of domination that the Achaemenid dynasty and their allies maintained used this royal icon as its hub. This paper explores how the shape, substance, and texture of Achaemenid kingship mutated according to its field of operation. This was arguably a necessary logistical innovation that responded to the unprecedented geographical scope of these operations. The king's embedded presence in architecture, communications, and social

stratification became a virtual touchstone for individual and community aspirations. The boundaries of kingship itself over long distance became permeable in its administrative and conceptual manifestations. The rich narrativization of the Achaemenid encounter with the Mediterranean world in the Greek language is partly a response to this stimulus. Our modern fascination with empire is another reframing of this multidimensional reception of Achaemenid kingship across continental distances.

Matthew Canepa

University of California, Irvine

Matthew P. Canepa is Professor and Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Presidential Chair in Art History and Archaeology of Ancient Iran at University of California, Irvine. He is Director of UCI's Ph.D. Program in Visual Studies and the founder and Director of UCI's interdisciplinary Graduate Specialization in Ancient Iran and the Premodern Persianate World. Professor Canepa's most recent book is entitled *The Iranian Expanse: Transforming Royal Identity through Landscape, Architecture, and the Built Environment (550 BCE – 642 CE)* (UC Press, 2020), which won the 2020 James R. Wiseman Book Award from the Archaeological Institute of America. Among current projects, he is editing a volume entitled *Persian Cultures of Power and the Entanglement of the Afro-Eurasian World*, which is in production with Getty Research Institute Publications.

Parthian Silver and the Creation and Contestation of Aristocracies in Post-Hellenistic Iran

This paper offers new insights into the political role of Parthian silver. It considers the role of these vessels in animating political competition among the Arsacids, Seleucids, and Greek dynasties of Bactria and

Northern India. It approaches the problem through the longer Iranian tradition of feasting and redistribution and, more importantly, the contemporary geopolitical and competitive role of these objects. In addition, it will discuss a number of new technical observations and newly translated inscriptions, which shed additional light on their broader historical, political, and artistic contexts.

Sara E. Cole

J. Paul Getty Museum

Sara E. Cole is an Assistant Curator of Antiquities at the J. Paul Getty Museum. She earned her Ph.D. in Ancient History from Yale University and primarily specializes in the hybridizing visual culture of Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt. Since joining the Getty, she has served as co-curator of the 2018 exhibition *Beyond the Nile: Egypt and the Classical World* (Getty Publications, 2018) assisted in curating exhibitions of Mesopotamian and Neo-Assyrian art, and is co-curator of the current exhibition *Persia: Ancient Iran and the Classical World* (Getty Publications, 2022). She is currently preparing a loan exhibition of ancient Nubian jewelry from the collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Persia: Ancient Iran and the Classical World at the Getty Villa Museum and the Question of Parthian Art

The Getty Villa Museum special exhibition *Persia: Ancient Iran and the Classical World* explores the far-reaching exchanges of ancient Iran with Greece and Rome over the course of twelve centuries, through the Achaemenid, Arsacid (Parthian), and Sasanian dynasties. This exhibition is the second in the Getty's ongoing series *The Classical World in Context*. The works on view are vivid expressions of political and cultural identity, showing how these superpowers each constructed their own self-image and profoundly influenced that of their rivals. Included in the exhibition

is a group of silver objects – four rhyta and one bowl – from the Villa Museum’s own collection, dating to the Arsacid (Parthian) empire (ca. 247 BCE – 224 CE). These vessels display a complex intermixing of local Iranian traditions with the Hellenistic Greek styles, motifs, and religious ideas introduced to the region during the period of Seleucid rule. Since their publication in Michael Pfrommer’s *Metalwork from the Hellenized East: Catalogue of the Collections* (Getty Publications, 1993), the group has not been comprehensively reassessed. Preparation for the exhibition and its related catalogue prompted new examinations. The exhibition also provided an unprecedented opportunity to make the vessels available for an intensive study day at the Villa Museum on March 11, 2022. The event, organized by Susanne Gänsicke, Kenneth Lapatin, Matthew Canepa, and Sara E. Cole, brought together a group of museum curators, scholars, conservators, conservation scientists, and a practicing silversmith to explore research questions related to manufacturing techniques, dating, origins, context, and avenues for future research and publication.

Touraj Daryae

University of California, Irvine

Touraj Daryae holds the Maseeh Chair in Persian Studies and is the Director of the Dr. Samuel M. Jordan Center for Persian Studies and Culture at the University of California, Irvine. He is the author of *Sasanian Persia: The Rise and Fall of an Empire* (IB Tauris, 2012), editor of the *Oxford Handbook of Iranian History* (Oxford UP, 2014), and *Iran and its Histories* (Otto Harrassowitz, 2021). He also serves as the editor of *Sasanian Studies*.

Ardashir I, the Early Sasanians, and Reorienting the Near East and the Caucasus

In the third century CE, King Ardashir I and his son Shapūr I attacked the Roman forces beyond the Euphrates, conquering and destroying

cities in Mesopotamia, Syria, and the Persian Gulf in the process. Modern scholars, following Roman testimonies, have interpreted these acts of warfare as a sign of the neo-Persian empire's belligerent disposition. The lecture seeks to contextualize early Sasanian offensives and identify the rationale behind the empire's actions in the confrontations that took place. It is contended that Ardashir I and Shapūr I's grand strategy aimed at reorganizing *Ērānšahr* (The Empire of Iranians), and bringing the Near East into the Sasanian sphere of influence.

Olga M. Davidson

Boston University

Olga M. Davidson (Ph.D., Princeton University, 1983) is on the faculty of the Institute for the Study of Muslim Societies and Civilizations, Boston University, where she has served as Research Fellow since 2009. From 1992 to 1997, she was Chair of the Concentration in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at Brandeis University. Since 1999, she has been Chair of the Board, Ilex Foundation. She is the author of *Poet and Hero in the Persian Book of Kings* (Harvard UP, 3rd ed. 2013) and *Comparative Literature and Classical Persian Poetry* (Harvard UP, 2nd ed. 2013). With Shreve Simpson, she co-edited *Ferdowsi's Shahnama: Millennial Perspectives* (Harvard UP, 2013).

How the Persian *Book of Kings* by Ferdowsi about the Ancient Royal Dynasties of Iran Could Ever Become a World Epic for the So-Called West

The traditional title *Shāhnāme*, meaning literally “Book of Kings” in classical Persian, seems on the surface to be a most appropriate way of referring to this monumental poem completed in the early eleventh century CE by Ferdowsi, whose poetic name, meaning “Man of Paradise,” reflects *ex post facto* the exalted reception of his poetry, through the ages,

in a wide variety of Persianate societies that identified with their Iranian heritage by way of venerating a form of poetry that glorifies the ancient royal dynasties of Iran. But such an exalted reception of the poetry extends to non-Persianate and even non-Iranian societies. As I argue, the poetry of Ferdowsi himself anticipates its own reception not only in the Iranian but also in the non-Iranian world—and even in the world of the “West” as pictured in the *Shāhnāme*. I concentrate on episodes narrated in the *Shāhnāme* about a shah named Goshtāsp, who, before he becomes king, immigrates to the capital city of the “West,” Rūm, that is, Byzantium, where he tests his potential for kingship by undertaking various heroic tasks. Relevant here is my use of the word “heroic” in describing the tasks performed by Goshtāsp in Rūm, since the second part of my argumentation which centers on the historical reception of Ferdowsi in the real “West” that was Europe in later times. For Europeans, the reception of the *Shāhnāme* was inspired by narratives not about kings as kings but about kings as heroes and about heroes as kingmakers.

John O. Hyland

Christopher Newport University

John O. Hyland is Professor of History at Christopher Newport University in Newport News, Virginia. He is the author of *Persian Interventions: the Achaemenid Empire, Athens, and Sparta 450–386 BCE* (Johns Hopkins UP, 2018), as well as numerous articles on Persian and Greek historical topics. He is currently writing a second book, under contract with Oxford University Press, that reexamines Persia’s invasions of Greece in the broader contexts of Achaemenid and ancient Near Eastern imperial practice.

Celebrating Achaemenid Victories: A Glyptic Triumphal Motif and its Greek and Egyptian Victims

Recent scholarship has shed great light on the glyptic iconography of ancient Persian warfare. In contrast with the absence of battle from Achaemenid monumental art, the corpus of combat scenes on Persian seals illustrates the significance of warfare for imperial elites. The specifics of the imagery vary widely, but one scene reappears with striking continuity across multiple seals and impressions, suggesting the possibility of a palace-based artistic commission associated with the commemoration of royal campaigns. It depicts a Persian king or hero in the act of killing a kneeling opponent, while leading a file of enemies behind him on a rope; the prisoners evoke the line-up of the Bisotun relief, but the added violence of the execution scene is more explicit about the completion of victory and chastisement of the foe. The most unusual feature of this group of seals is the changing identity of the defeated enemy, characterized in one version by Greek and in the other by Egyptian dress. This paper will explore the connections between the depictions of Persian triumph over Greeks on the impressions of PTS 28, and those of Persian triumph over Egyptians in the Metropolitan Museum and Zvenigorodsky seals. It considers a possible historical context for the linkage between the triumphal scenes, and examines the dialogue between their imagery and the patterns of Achaemenid imperial warfare in the early fifth century BCE.

Hilmar Klinkott

University of Kiel

Professor Hilmar Klinkott studied Ancient History, (Classical) Archaeology, and Latin at the Ruprecht Carls University Heidelberg, earning a M.A. in 1997. He continued his studies at the University of Tübingen, earning his Ph.D. in 2002. His thesis *Der Satrap: Ein achaimenidischer Amtsträger und seine Handlungsspielräume* (Verlag Antike) was published in 2005. After his habilitation in Ancient History at the University of Tübingen, he became Akademischer Rat in the Seminar für Alte Geschichte und Epigraphik at the Ruprecht

Karls-Universität Heidelberg in 2012 and a member of the Heidelberg excellence cluster “Asia and Europe in a Global Context” in 2013. In the same year, he changed his habilitation to the University of Heidelberg (“Umhabilitierung”). After Deputy Professorships in Hamburg (for Prof. Christoph Schäfer, 2009–2010), Mannheim (for Prof. Christian Mann, 2014/15) and Mainz (Prof. Marietta Horster, 2016), he was appointed Full Professor at the Institut für Klassische Altertumskunde of the Christian Albrechts University. Since then, he continues developing his focus on the History of the ancient Near East and the Achaemenid empire as Professor of Ancient History and History of the Near East at the Institute for Classical Studies/Department of Ancient History at the University of Kiel.

How to Govern an Empire? The Inscriptions of Darius I as a Constitutional Program

The Old Persian inscriptions of Darius I refer to a range of legal, particularly constitutional, questions. The famous tomb inscription from Naqsh-e Rostam (DNb), it is argued, represents a conceptional mission statement for Darius’ vision of governance. The text of DNb is amplified and echoed in other inscriptions of the Great King, the sum of which is akin to a “constitutional” declaration. The paper posits that this “constitutional corpus,” and the resulting legal framework it expounds, bring to light two major notions: first, the “constitution” of the Achaemenid empire is much more than a pure adaptation or transition of former Mesopotamian kingships (for example by Assyrian or Babylonian traditions); and second, the constitutional framework of the royal texts indirectly reflects the debates taking place among the empire’s leading élites, which were likely conducted behind the scenes. Against this background, it is time to reconsider the statement of Fritz Gschnitzer, namely, that a constitutional discussion, as reported by Herodotus for Darius’ claim to power, would be a strictly “Greek” element. Finally, the transmission of an Achaemenid constitutional concept might have provided an impetus for the ways in which the Hellenistic monarchies

organized the administration and government of their multiethnic and multicultural empires (“*Großreiche*”).

John Ma

Columbia University

John Ma is an ancient historian who holds particular interest in the Hellenistic world and the interactions between local community and empire. He completed his doctoral work at the University of Oxford under the supervision of Fergus Millar, and taught at Princeton and Oxford before his current position at Columbia University. He is the author of a book on the cities of Western Asia Minor and their relations with the Seleukid ruler Antiochos III, and of a book on civic culture in the Hellenistic *polis* as embodied in the practice of honorific monuments; he is finishing a book on the Greek city-state from Early Iron Age to Late Antiquity. He is also the co-editor of a volume of essays on the history and historiography of the Athenian empire, and of the recently published, three-volume *Arsāma and his World: The Bodleian Letters in Context* (Oxford UP, 2020), which uses the letters of the satrap of Egypt to his estate manager to approach a series of questions about the Achaemenid empire. He is fascinated by, and convinced of the historical importance of, the Achaemenid empire for the story of ancient history in general, and as a source for broad interpretive issues, detailed test-cases, and theoretical interrogations on empire, culture and society.

Achaemenid Cultural History and the Hellenistic World

Among the transformational impact of the “new Achaemenid history” on the study of the Hellenistic world, cultural history has been neglected: the assumption often seems to be of a radical break. Yet the prehistory of Hellenistic /Alexandrian elite poetry (so visible in the

third century BCE, in its reflexive, playful, ironical, puzzling, aporetic, or destabilizing modes) partly lies in fourth century BCE Asia Minor, with such figures as Antimachos and Philetas. The practice of learning, philology, and scholarly allusion can hence be interpreted within the context of the Achaemenid empire, and specifically a frontier region of the empire, Asia Minor. The latter region offers a picture of complex ethnic identities and cultural practices, where local cultures, “Iranization,” “Achaemenidization,” and “Hellenization” coexisted within the context of Achaemenid power and social relations. I propose that the particular practice of Greek philology within the context of Achaemenid history can be interpreted together with Antimachos’ poetry, or Ephoros’ history, as a cultural stance of deliberate disengagement with the Achaemenid empire; this stance can be contrasted with other forms of “Hellenism” in Achaemenid Asia Minor: the “Ionian renaissance,” the adoption of Greek visual tropes by Achaemenid elites, eclectic forms developed by the Hekatomnid or the Lykian dynasts. In conclusion, I propose to examine the specific nature of Antimachean “hyper-Hellenism” as a local learned culture within the Achaemenid empire, but also to reexamine the role of “pre-Hellenistic” forms (the term need not imply teleology) across the Achaemenid space.

Ali Mousavi

University of California, Los Angeles

Ali Mousavi is a Senior Pourdavoud Research Scholar and Adjunct Assistant Professor of Iranian Archaeology in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures. He studied in Lyon, France, and took his B.A. in Art History, and his M.A. in Archaeology from the University of Lyon, France. He obtained his Ph.D. in Near Eastern archaeology from the University of California, Berkeley. He excavated in France, Turkey, and Iran, and contributed to the inclusion of a number of archaeological sites and monuments on the World Heritage List of the UNESCO. He is the author of a book on the site of Persepolis, *Persepolis: Discovery*

and *Afterlife of a World Wonder* (de Gruyter, 2012), and co-editor of two books: *Ancient Iran from the Air* (Philippe von Zabern, 2012) and *Excavating an Empire* (Mazda Publishers, 2014). He has published on various aspects of Iranian art and archaeology, and holds a particular interest in the archaeology of Iranian empires, from the Achaemenids to the Sasanians, as well as the history of archaeology in Iran and the Near East. He worked as a curator of Ancient Near Eastern Art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art from 2006 to 2013. He teaches Iranian art and archaeology at UCLA and serves as the director of the UCLA Archaeological Gazetteer of Iran project at the Pourdavoud Center.

Takht-e Sōleymān, Sasanians, Romans, and Mongols: Reflections on the Life and Afterlife of a Sacred Place

The most venerated fire temple of the Sasanian empire was located at the present-day site of Takht-e Sōleymān. Built in the course of the fifth and sixth centuries CE, Takht-e Sōleymān, considered the holy place of the empire on account its association with the sacred fire Ādur Gušnasp, was plundered in 642 by an East Roman army, an event that put an end to the use and importance of the place as a fire temple. However, the sack of the sanctuary marked the beginning of the site's afterlife. An interval of six centuries separates the site's Sasanian period from its transformation under the Mongols—when it was known as Sauriq—in the course of which a variety of legends became associated with the mysterious ruins. Prominent historians such as Abu Dulaf, Ibn Khordādbeh, Mas'udi, Tabari, and Yaghut refer to the ruined fire temple and its importance while the site's symbolism influenced Armenian and Christian legends. Chosen as a summer residence by the Ilkhans of Persia in the thirteenth century, it experienced a short period of revival and architectural activities, followed by centuries of abandonment until the archaeologist's spade revealed its less fabulous but still engaging history as the site of the royal fire Ādur Gušnasp. The present survey of Takht-e Sōleymān attempts to show to what extent legends and realities are therein intertwined.

Jake Nabel

Pennsylvania State University

Jake Nabel is an Assistant Professor of Classics & Ancient Mediterranean Studies at Pennsylvania State University. He is a historian of ancient Rome, pre-Islamic Iran, and the points of contact between the two. His research interests include Roman-Parthian relations, the reception of Alexander the Great in Persian literature, early imperial Latin poetry, and late antique Armenia. He is currently writing a book on a group of Arsacid princes who lived at the court of the Roman emperor in the first century CE.

Parthia, Rome, and the Horizons of Ancient Diplomacy

Over the past decade, political scientists have challenged conventional definitions of diplomacy as Eurocentric, historically contingent, and unable to account for the increasing importance of non-state actors such as transnational firms, non-governmental organizations, international institutions, and diasporic ethnic or religious groups. Ancient historians stand to benefit from this literature, but also to contribute to it. As the study of diplomacy decouples from its traditional pairing with the nation-state, the political formations of the ancient world—useful precisely because antiquity was *not* an era of nations—can provide alternate models that are good to think with. This paper therefore surveys diplomatic relations between the ancient empires of Rome and Parthia to contribute to interdisciplinary discussions about the theorization of diplomacy. Roman-Parthian relations merit attention because they show both the utility and the limitations of modern views of diplomacy as a state-bound form of communication. Some aspects of Roman-Parthian high politics can be fruitfully analyzed as diplomacy in this sense: summits, treaties, and the exchange of letters and ambassadors all accord well with conventional definitions. Other modes of interaction, however, do not, and these show the limits of a state-based approach. Into this

category fall sub-state relations with Roman and Parthian dependencies; the employment of non-state agents for diplomatic missions; and the cross-border movement of dynasts outside the remit of the reigning king or emperor. By delimiting the state's involvement in Roman-Parthian relations, I put ancient history in dialogue with a theoretical literature that explores diplomacy's pasts for signs of its future.

David Potter

University of Michigan

David Potter is Francis W. Kelsey Collegiate Professor of Greek and Roman History, Arthur F. Thurnau Professor and Professor of Greek and Latin in the Department of Classical Studies at the University of Michigan. His recent publications include *Disruption: How Things Change* (Oxford UP, 2021); *The Origin of Empire* (Harvard UP, 2019). And *Theodora: Actress, Empress, Saint* (Oxford UP, 2016). As a member of the School of Historical Studies at the Institute for Advanced Study in 2021/22, he has been working on a book on Julius Caesar and the destruction of democracy.

Western Sources for the Sasanians

The Greco-Roman sources for the Sasanians differ widely in tone and content according to the author's date, religious presentation, personal experience, relationship to the imperial court, and purpose. Evolution in the tradition, from stereotype to more nuanced analysis stems from Rome's acceptance of the essential equality between the two empires in terms of military capacity. One result was that western interest in Persia's internal affairs increased. At the same time, there is rarely a sense of mutual obligation, which might make Khusro's decision to attempt the elimination of the Roman empire more comprehensible, while the

evolved Roman understanding of the situation in central Asia, evident in the sixth century, provides context for Heraclius' strategy to end that war. In terms of approach, the Roman sources can be divided into four periods. The first runs from the emergence of the Sasanian regime to the age of Diocletian. The second period centers on the mid-fourth century wars waged by Constantius II and Julian with Sapor II. The third period runs roughly from the reign of Anastasius to the "fifty-year peace" between Justinian and Khusro I in 562. This is a period in which the Sasanian dealings with central Asia begin to influence relations with Rome in a new way and in which the failure of the western empire exerts a significant impact on the direction of imperial policy. Finally, there is the period from the end of Justinian's reign to the end of the great war of the early seventh century.

Robert Rollinger

University of Innsbruck / University of Wrocław

Robert Rollinger is Professor of Ancient History and Ancient Near Eastern Studies at the University of Innsbruck, Austria, where he has held since 2005 the Chair for "Cultural Interactions between the ancient Near East and the Mediterranean" in the Department of Ancient History and Ancient Near Eastern Studies. In addition, he is at the present the NAWA Chair at the University of Wrocław, Poland. His scholarly interests are wide-ranging and encompass the cultural expanse between the Aegean world and the ancient Near East, with a special focus on ancient historiography, the comparative history of empires, and the Achaemenid Empire in particular. His recent publications include: *Short-term Empires in World History* (coedited; Springer, 2020); *A Companion to the Achaemenid Persian Empire, 2 volumes* (Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World) (coedited; Blackwell, 2021); *Empires to be Remembered* (Studies in Universal and Cultural History) (coedited; Springer, 2022); and *Decline, Erosion and Implosion of Empires* (Studies in Universal and

Cultural History) (coedited; Springer, forthcoming). He is a member of numerous academic organizations and research groups, among them: the Austrian Academy of Sciences (ÖAW); the German Archaeological Institute (DAI); and the Academia Europaea.

The Achaemenid Persian Empire and the West: A Structural Approach

This paper intends to offer a new perspective on the Achaemenid Persian empire and its interaction with the Greek world. It questions the alleged special role of the West and argues for a more balanced and less Hellenocentric view, thereby, focusing on imperial structures and taking a more general look at imperial borderlands and their relationship with the center. These border regions, like the Levant and the Aegean world, exhibited some shared features due to their position on the edges of the empire. Seen from the center—through the lens of the imperial ideology—they appeared as peripheral zones, but still under the firm control of the Great King. However, from a structural point of view they were not “peripheral” at all, but represented a category of their own, with a very specific dynamic that made them simultaneously subject to antinomic forces. While they maintained close ties with the imperial center, they still constituted an outside world. They were part of the empire, but at the same time deeply connected with a world beyond the empire’s direct reach. They formed an area of communication between “inside” and “outside,” between “this side” and the “other side.” This intermediate position offered a wide range of possibilities, but also carried sundry risks and dangers. This is especially true for the main historical agents, i.e., the local elites. Contact with the imperial administration and economy opened up a new world, prompted internal development and the transformation of local power structures. The empire can be viewed as an object of admiration and emulation, while at the same time evoking notions of aversion and rejection. This ambiguity decisively characterized the development of the Greek world, which it shared with other borderlands of the empire.

M. Rahim Shayegan

University of California, Los Angeles

M. Rahim Shayegan is the Jahangir and Eleanor Amuzegar Professor of Iranian, and director of the Pourdavoud Center for the Study of the Iranian World at UCLA. He has authored and edited several books, among them: *Arsacids and Sasanians: Political Ideology in Post-Hellenistic and Late Antique Persia* (Cambridge UP, 2011); *Aspects of History and Epic in Ancient Iran: From Gaumāta to Wahnām* (Harvard UP, 2012); and *Cyrus the Great: Life and Lore* (Harvard UP, 2019). He is currently working on a number of volumes on the Achaemenid and Sasanian empires, among them *Des Achéménides aux Sassanides*.

Universality and Alterity in the Achaemenid World

The lecture shall examine against the backdrop of ancient Iranian cosmogony (in the diachrony), the universality claim of the Achaemenids, and explore how discrete spheres of alterity in the West and East, the sum of which constituted the Achaemenid *alter orbis*, were created, named, and tolerated without compromising the imperial space and its aspiration to universality.

Jeffrey Spier

J. Paul Getty Museum

After completing a D.Phil. at Merton College, Oxford, Jeffrey Spier taught classical archaeology at University College London and the University of Arizona before joining the Getty Museum as Senior Curator of Antiquities in 2014. He has published on many aspects of Greek art and iconography, gems and jewelry, numismatics, early Christian and Byzantine art, ancient magic, and the history of collecting.

His books include *Ancient Gems and Finger Rings: Catalogue of the Collections, The J. Paul Getty Museum* (J. Paul Getty Museum, 1992); *Late Antique and Early Christian Gems* (Reichert, 2nd revised 2013); *Picturing the Bible: The Earliest Christian Art* (Yale UP, 2007); and *Late Byzantine Rings, 1204–1453* (Reichert, 2013). With Timothy Potts and Sara E. Cole, he has written and edited the Getty exhibition catalogues, *Beyond the Nile: Egypt and the Classical World* (Getty Publishers, 2018) and *Persia: Ancient Iran and the Classical World* (Getty Publishers, 2022).

Achaemenid Seals: East and West

The use of personal seals, long employed for administrative purposes in Mesopotamia, was continued under the Achaemenids, but the imagery changed substantially, reflecting the artistic program of the royal court. Large numbers of surviving cylinder and stamp seals, along with the many seal impressions on the Persepolis Fortification and Treasury Tablets (509–458 BCE), provide a significant body of material for analysis. In addition, there are numerous stamp seals produced in the western part of the empire, very likely at Sardis and perhaps elsewhere in Asia Minor. This paper will survey the surviving material with particular attention to the possible meaning of images and consider the relationship to contemporary Greek gems.

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