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Mongolian Archaeology: New Discoveries, New Concerns

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Mongolian Archaeology: New Discoveries, New Concerns

Conference Participants

Jeffrey ALTSCHUL, Statistical Research, Inc.
John Vincent BELLEZZA, University of Virginia
Richard CIOLEK-TORELLO, Statistical Research, Inc.
Julia Kate CLARK, Northern Mongolia Archaeology Project
D. ERDENEBAAATAR, Ulaanbaatar City College
Nelson Graburn
William FITZHUGH, Smithsonian Institution
William HONEYCHURCH, Yale University
Esther JACOBSON-TEPFER, University of Oregon
Richard Dennis KORTUM, East Tennessee State University
Daniel ROGERS, Smithsonian Institution
Joan SCHNEIDER, San Manuel Band of Mission Indians
William TAYLOR, Max Planck Institute
Uranchimeg Tsultem
Joshua WRIGHT, University of Aberdeen

Agenda
Mongolian Archaeology: New Discoveries, New Concerns

Conference Abstracts

Jeffrey ALTSCHUL and Richard CIOLEK-TORELLO, Statistical Research, Inc.

Balancing Mongolia’s Past with Economic Development

Rapid growth in tourism, mining and other aspects of economic development have created a crisis in the protection and management of cultural heritage resources in Mongolia. To meet this challenge, the Mongolian International Heritage Team (MIHT), comprised of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, Institute of History and Archaeology, Statistical Research, Inc., and the University of Arizona, School of Anthropology, developed a comprehensive cultural heritage management plan for Ömnögovi aimag in the Gobi Desert. This plan incorporates five components: Public Policy, Compliance, Public Programs, Capacity Building, and Empowering Local Communities. Public Policy focuses on the laws and regulations that govern how cultural heritage will be defined, identified, evaluated, and managed, while Compliance involves the identification and evaluation of archaeological, paleontological, and historical resources endangered by development. By contrast, Public Programs focus on intangible heritage, teaching children about their cultural heritage, and heritage tourism. Capacity Building involves training of professionals to manage their cultural heritage. The final component aims to empower local communities to manage and monitor actions that affect their heritage resources. In our presentation, we discuss the successes and problems experienced in the implementation of this plan.

John Vincent BELLEZZA, University of Virginia

“Mongolia and the Western Tibetan Plateau in the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age: Considering an expanded sphere of cultural interconnectivity in Late Prehistoric Inner Asia”

This paper compares pre-Buddhist monuments, rock art and artifacts in Upper Tibet (constitutes most of the western half of the Tibetan Plateau) with those from other areas of Inner Asia, particularly Mongolian cultural regions. It reviews archaeological discoveries made in the last 25 years, which show that northern regions had a formative impact on the cultural and technological development of Upper Tibet in the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age. While technological innovation (bronze metallurgy, equestrian arts, etc.), increased social complexity (aristocracies, proto-states, etc.) and the rise of new economic systems (nomadic pastoralism, etc.) in the Mongolian world reverberated most strongly in other Eurasian steppe and desert regions, manifold correspondences in the archaeological record indicate that they also penetrated the Kunlun divide to reach Upper Tibet. These influences are also seen in the rock art record of the western extremity of the Tibetan Plateau (Ladakh, Baltistan and Spiti).

Using cross-cultural methodological approaches based on morphological, functional, stylistic and chronological parallels,
this work furnishes an analysis of material and abstract links between Upper Tibet and (greater) Mongolia. Affinities in conception, form and utility are used to develop an assessment of the causes and conditions that may have facilitated cultural and technological interactions between these vast territories in antiquity. The effects of technological, political and economic transmissions from the north on the ideological and symbolic fabric of pre-Buddhist Upper Tibet are considered in this study as well.

The main bodies of Upper Tibetan archaeological evidence presented in this paper include mascot, chariot, horse rider, and ‘animal style’ rock art; funerary sites with stelae and appended constructions; and portable copper alloy articles such as ‘animal style’ bronzes, mirrors, equestrian fittings, personal ornaments, knives, and bell-shaped objects.

Julia Kate CLARK, Northern Mongolia Archaeology Project
“Efforts of the American Center for Mongolian Studies Cultural Heritage Program to Preserve the Real and Digital Cultural Resources of Mongolia”

The American Center for Mongolian Studies, through their newly developed Cultural Heritage Program, has been working hard to creatively and effectively approach the problem of digital data management, and its role in cultural heritage preservation in Mongolia. This paper will discuss the efforts of the Center in approaching the digital data problem, as well as future plans. It is hoped that it will encourage discussion among archaeologists about the importance of a sustainable and accessible digital data management plan. The potential loss of a large amounts of digital data through technological change, shifting careers, and other means is one of the most pressing issues that cultural heritage preservation, including archaeology, faces today.

D. ERDENEBAATAR, Ulaanbaatar City College

Abstract forthcoming.

William FITZHUGH, Smithsonian Institution
“Culture, History, Tradition, and the Biluut Rock Art Complex at Khoton Noor, Mongolian Altai”

Connections between rock art and archaeology was the central theme of a three-year investigation of the Khoton Noor region of western Mongolia organized by East Tennessee State University with the Smithsonian and National Museum of Mongolia. The Biluut rock art complex documenting nearly 10,000 years of elaborating petroglyphic history provided a rare opportunity to investigate rock art and archaeology as a single integrated enterprise. This presentation describes a 7000-year culture history demonstrated by dwellings, ritual sites, and burial practices, and identified points of intersection with the Biluut petroglyphic record. Links between archaeology and rock are difficult to perceive until the Bronze Age, and thereafter become increasingly important for understanding Iron Age and Turkic cultures and their monument traditions, including burials, standing stones and ovoos. A notable feature of Khoton history is the long-term continuity seen in local ritual traditions that persisted in an Altai mountain enclave beyond the centralized power of entities like the Xiongnu and
Mongol states. In order to conduct future research that has local benefits, partnerships are needed at all levels to preserve and protect endangered archaeological sites, monuments, and rock art crucial for maintaining cultural traditions, identity, and economic development.

William HONEYCHURCH, Yale University
“Monuments of the East: Pastoralism, Exchange and Down-the-line Networks”

Recently the monumental landscapes of Mongolia’s Bronze Age have become better understood in terms of dating, distributions, mortuary function, and symbolism. The dominant focus has been central, northern and western Mongolia where charismatic sites like the famous "deer stones" have monopolized attention. Recent surveys in eastern Mongolia have now revealed a different approach to monumental practices and offer an opportunity to compare practices, landscape organization, and chronology. This approach sheds new light on the problem of why early pastoral nomads began building stone monument across multiple parts of the Mongolian Plateau by the mid second millennium BC.

Esther JACOBSON-TEPFER, University of Oregon
“The Preservation of Rock Art Complexes Through World Heritage Status”

I would like to discuss the preservation of rock art sites from the perspective of one who has worked in the Altai Mountains of Russia and Mongolia. My approach is shaped most particularly by my participation in the successful UNESCO World Heritage nomination, Petroglyphic Complexes of the Mongolian Altai (2011).

Preservation of rock art involves four stages coinciding with four significant points of development. These include:

- The site or complex [identification, documentation, analysis of physical setting, and preliminary analysis of visual materials];
- The laboratory [transcription of documentary materials, development of appropriate data bases, development of mapping, secondary analyses of visual materials; and dissemination];
- Governmental or public agencies [archiving of all relevant materials, the decision to preserve, the development of preservation strategies, and the development of management plans]; and
- Agencies charged with dissemination and education.

Each stage presents significant challenges: how do we record rock art and its environs in a manner appropriate to the concept of preservation? How do our databases shape (or distort) the ability of future scholars to use this material? How can the actions of public or governmental agencies further regional understanding of cultural heritage? And how do we protect a site/complex from the natural deterioration of time and the elements and from more pernicious anthropogenic damage? Success in the search for preservation of cultural heritage requires a willingness to negotiate, to collaborate, and to work across a variety of special interests and perspectives.

Richard Dennis KORTUM, East Tennessee State University
Altai rock art is increasingly seen as essential to our grasp of the character and movements of prehistoric cultures throughout Inner Asia. In the past 25 years dozens of rock art sites have been found within Mongolia’s far-western Bayan Ulgii province alone. The Biluut Petroglyph Complex, an enduring ceremonial center at Khoton Lake near the convergence of Russia, China, and Kazakhstan, contains an array of several hundred archaeological sites associated with an unusually dense concentration of more than ten thousand petroglyphs. Imagery is attributed to the Stone Age through the Bronze and Iron Ages, and from the Turkic period to ethnographic times. Highlighting significant figures while summarizing ongoing investigations from 2004 through 2016, this paper focuses on the dating of these images.

Direct scientific dating of non-organic rock peckings and engravings is notoriously difficult. Despite more than two decades of intensive effort, results are not widely accepted. At present, Altai rock art researchers rely on a set of contextual and stylistic criteria, some of which are subjective or intersubjective in application. These yield chronologies designated by broad cultural periods, e.g., “Archaic” (pre-Bronze Age), “Bronze Age”, “late Bronze Age”, “Iron Age”, and “Turkic Period”, etc., which, in each case, span several hundred to several thousand years. In an attempt to obtain greater precision, in 2015 we experimented with a new correlative dating technique of varnish microlamination (VML) analysis, based on millennial-scale climate variations recorded in varnish microstratigraphy (we will repeat our tests this coming July). Both methods are discussed and preliminary results of our recent experiments are presented.

Daniel ROGERS, Smithsonian Institution
“Architecture, Empires, and Archaeology: New Perspectives on Interpreting Mongolia’s Past”

More than 2,000 years ago the first empire on the eastern steppe came into existence, followed over time by at least 13 others. Each of these empires innovated new political approaches, technologies, and perspectives, many of which originated outside the steppe region. Even so, all maintained a core reliance on herd animals and traditions shared by the steppe cultures. Archaeological research in Mongolia and surrounding areas is currently in the process of reinterpreting the significance of these early polities. As the research goes forward two of the most important challenges involve how to assemble and then use large data sets, and the preservation of the sites themselves. Once thought to be just the reflection of political and economic changes to the south, emerging evidence points to a far more complicated political landscape linked to issues of mobility, dispersed control hierarchies, and the economics of multi-resource pastoralism. Together, these patterns offer an alternative vision of the origin and operation of early complex polities—not just on the steppe.

Archaeologically, the pastoralist way of using the built environment provides a window into the dynamics of political processes. Evidence from a large sample of sites suggests that these polities operated as networks that relied more on mobility than the direct interactions seen in urban centers in sedentary
societies. The urban centers of the steppe were the byproduct of polity formation, rather than the source.

Joan SCHNEIDER. San Manuel Band of Mission Indians “BUILDING A CULTURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM IN MONGOLIA: Experiences from Ikh Nart Nature Reserve, Dornogovi Aimag”

Ikh Nart Nature Reserve, a Mongolian Protected Area, was created in 1996 with the intent of protecting increasingly threatened species, especially the argali and ibex. Active mentoring of Mongolian wildlife conservation biologists by the Denver Zoological Foundation started in 2000 and expanded over the years to the mentoring of Mongolian professionals and students in the conservation of raptors, small mammals, reptiles, and finally insects and flora. In 2010 while an archaeologist at Anza-Borrego Desert State Park in southern California, I was approached by Denver Zoo staff to come to Mongolia to check out "strange piles of rocks" and other constructions within Ikh Nart. Since that time, the Ikh Nart Archaeological Team, composed of both American and Mongolian archaeologists, supplemented by Earthwatch volunteers, and bolstered by an official "Sister Park" relationship between Anza-Borrego and Ikh Nart, has made substantial progress toward sustainability for the rich cultural landscape of Ikh Nart.

Some of the elements of the Ikh Nart project include data-gathering using a random-sample pedestrian survey of this 666 km² landscape of rocky outcrops and rolling grasslands, creating a GIS mapping method, training Ikh Nart staff and students, working with local schools and the soum museum, building capacity in cultural heritage conservation for Mongolian archaeologists and rangers, creating interpretive and conservation messages in both Mongolian and English for tourists and other visitors, and partnering with local entities to develop a program in cultural tourism. Research agendas have not been ignored; investigation of the period of transition to early pastoralism is underway in cooperation with the University of Texas, Austin and the University of Pittsburgh.

The conservation programs at Ikh Nart (both cultural heritage and wildlife) have led to the designation of the Reserve as a model for other Protected Areas in Mongolia.

William TAYLOR, Max Planck Institute “3D Scanning for Research and Cultural Heritage Preservation in Mongolia”

3D technology presents new solutions to the issues of artifact and archaeological site conservation in contemporary Mongolia. A large portion of Mongolia’s tangible heritage consists of fragile faunal remains, which often receive low priority in cases of limited resources for archaeological conservation and storage efforts. 3D scanning offers a powerful tool for preserving morphological data from skeletal material, with the added advantage of easy sharing, long-term storage, and incorporation into digital repositories. While scanning can be unwieldy or impractical for in-field documentation,
particularly in the case of larger archaeological features such as stone monuments or rock art, 3D photogrammetry is fast, and can produce results comparable to more expensive or time-intensive approaches, while using a minimum of equipment. Photogrammetry has the added advantage of avoiding subjectivity and preventing unnecessary damage from commonly practiced field techniques (like chalking). This paper highlights recent efforts at 3D documentation of stone monuments, rock art, and horse burials in northern Bayankhongor province, central Mongolia. Results indicate that 3D technology is not only an effective tool for cultural heritage preservation, but also that this approach often yields new research insights into the archaeological record. As Mongolia copes with issues of protecting and sharing archaeological data for future generations, 3D scanning and photogrammetry must play an expanded role in effective cultural heritage management.

Joshua WRIGHT, University of Aberdeen
“Integrated Narratives: Cultural Resources Preservation and Regional Archaeology in Mongolia”

Over the last two decades the amount of intensive regional archaeology in Mongolia has grown to be analytically powerful in several regions and continues to increase. This has supported a network of additional specialist research, excavation and many developments in Mongolian archaeology. This paper will make a case for this intensive investment in local archaeology as the key element for long term success of archaeology in Mongolia. This will be contrasted with the growing trend for well funded major research projects that consume existing collections and do not invest in capacity building or contextual understanding of the archaeological record in Eurasia.

Mongolian Archaeology: New Discoveries, New Concerns

Participant Biographies

Jeffrey ATLSCHUL, Statistical Research, Inc.

Jeffrey H. Altschul holds B.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Anthropology and has worked in cultural heritage management (CHM) since 1975. In 1983 he and his wife founded Statistical Research, Inc. (SRI) in the USA and in 2008, he co-founded Nexus Heritage in the United Kingdom. Together, the two consultancies provide CHM services around the world. In 2001, he founded the SRI Foundation which is a not-for-profit
USA-based organization that advances historic preservation through education, research and training. Altschul has served as principal investigator on hundreds of CHM projects in North America, Latin America, Europe, Africa, and Asia. In 2010, he formed the Mongolian International Heritage Team (MIHT) which in 2010, designed the Oyu Tolgoi Cultural Heritage Program (CHP). In 2012, the MIHT performed a sample survey and predictive model for the Northern Railways project between Murun and Erdenet.

Altschul has served as president of the Register of Professional Archaeologists and the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) and served on scores of boards of directors of professional societies. Altschul has written hundreds of technical reports, published papers, books, and monographs in cultural heritage. Of particular note are the Oyu Tolgoi Cultural Heritage Program: Protecting the Past, Preserving the Present: Report on Phase 1 Activities of the Oyu Tolgoi Cultural Heritage Program Design for Ömnögovi Aimag. (edited with B. Gunchinsuren and John W. Olsen) and The Oyu Tolgoi Cultural Heritage Program (edited with B. Gunchinsuren and John W. Olsen).

John Vincent BELLEZZA, University of Virginia

John Vincent Bellezza specializes in the archaeology and cultural history of pre-Buddhist Upper Tibet. He is a Senior Research Fellow with the Tibet Center, University of Virginia. Over the last 25 years, Bellezza has comprehensively charted the visible monuments and rock art of Upper Tibet and has published widely on archaic ritual traditions in Bon and Old Tibetan literature. Bellezza is the first non-Tibetan to have explored both the geographic and ritual sources of each of the four major rivers that emerge from the Mount Tise region. He has also visited nearly every main island and major headland in the great lakes region of Tibet. In addition to numerous scholarly and popular articles, Bellezza has written nine books: Divine Dyads: Ancient Civilization in Tibet (1997: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives), Antiquities of Northern Tibet (2001: Adroit Publishers), Antiquities of Upper Tibet (2002: Adroit Publishers), Calling Down the Gods (2005: Brill), Zhang Zhung: Foundations of Civilization in Tibet (2008: Austrian Academy of Sciences), Death and Beyond in Ancient Tibet (2013: Austrian Academy of Sciences), Antiquities of Zhang Zhung, vols. 1, 2 (2014: Central University of Tibetan Studies), and Dawn of Tibet (2014: Rowman and Littlefield). For more information about his work, see www.tibetarchaeology.com.

Richard CIOLEK-TORELLO, Statistical Research, Inc.

Dr. Richard Ciolek-Torello is a Registered Professional Archaeologist and Vice President at Statistical Research, Inc. He is also an expert member of the International Committee on Archaeological Heritage Management (ICAHM). Since 1969, Dr. Ciolek-Torello has directed many large, complex, and, often, controversial archaeological and historical projects in the American West, has conducted ethnoarchaeological research in India, and is currently involved in SRI's international Cultural Heritage Management program. In the latter capacity, he has been involved in the Oyu Tolgoi Cultural Heritage Program and the Northern Railways Project conducted by the
Mongolian International Heritage Team (MIHT). For the past two seasons, has also participated in the Ihk Nart Archaeological Project and is currently developing a research project with members of the MIHT to study Bai Balik and other Mongolian Iron Age cities.

The results of Dr. Ciolek-Torello’s extensive research are published in over 130 technical reports and articles in peer-reviewed journals, such as the Journal of Field Archaeology, Journal of Wetland Archaeology, and Kiva; and books published by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, BAR International, Cambridge University Press, Prehistory Press, the University of Colorado Press, and the University of New Mexico Press. Dr. Ciolek-Torello also has made over 80 presentations about his research at state, national, and international archaeological and anthropological conferences.

Julia Kate CLARK, Northern Mongolia Archaeology Project

Dr. Julia Clark is the Cultural Heritage Coordinator of the American Center for Mongolian Studies in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia and the Director of the Northern Mongolia Archaeology Project in the Darkhad Depression of Huvsgul Aimag. She has been conducting archaeological fieldwork in Mongolia since 2007 in central, western and northern Mongolia. Dr. Clark’s research focuses on multi-resource economies, pastoral adaptation, and human-ecology in late prehistoric and early historic northeast Asia.

D. ERDENEBAATAR, Ulaanbaatar City College

William FITZHUGH, Smithsonian Institution

William W. Fitzhugh is an anthropologist who has researched northern cultures and environments throughout the circumpolar region for more than forty years. His archaeological research has investigated the history of Arctic and Subarctic cultures and the effects of climate change and European contacts on the native cultures of Labrador, Quebec, and Baffin Island. His recent research explores 16/17th century Basque contacts with Inuit in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Tracing circumpolar cultural connections led Fitzhugh to the Russian Arctic and to Mongolia, where he studies Bronze Age and other cultures. He founded and directs the Arctic Studies Center in the Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History. In addition to books, exhibition catalogs, monographs, and journal papers he has produced international exhibitions, and popular films.

William HONEYCHURCH, Yale University

Esther JACOBSON-TEPFER, University of Oregon

Esther Jacobson-Tepfer is the Maude I. Kerns Professor Emeritus in the Department of the History of Art and Architecture, University of Oregon, where she taught the history of Asian art for 47 years.

Jacobson-Tepfer’s published work, including seven books and many articles, reflects her years of fieldwork on rock art, archaeology and landscape in the Altai Mountains of

Jacobson-Tepfer has an Honorary Doctorate from the Mongolian Institute of Archaeology (2003). She has worked closely with Mongolian authorities on two successful World Heritage Nominations, *Petroglyphic Complexes of the Mongolian Altai* (2011) and *The Sacred Landscape of Burkhan Khaldun* (2015). For her contributions to the preservation of Mongolia’s cultural heritage, the Mongolian Academy of Sciences honored her with their highest recognition, the Kublai Khan Gold Medal (June, 2016).

**Richard Dennis KORTUM**, East Tennessee State University

Dr. Richard Kortum is Professor Emeritus in the Department of Philosophy and Humanities at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City, Tennessee, where he taught for the past 16 years. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Duke University, a double-major in philosophy and fine art, Phi Beta Kappa. After completing the Tripos 1B in philosophy at Queens’ College, Cambridge University in England, he spent a year as William M. Keck Fellow at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. Richard earned his doctorate in philosophy of language at Lincoln College, Oxford, under the supervision of Wykeham Chair of Logic, Sir Michael Dummett.

In 2004-2005 Richard was a 12-month Fulbright Scholar to the former Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan. Two years ago he received the ETSU Distinguished Faculty Award for Outstanding Research. He is the author of *Varieties of Tone: Frege, Dummett, and the Shades of Meaning* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). Since the summer of 2004 he has been engaged in cross-disciplinary rock art research. He has been awarded numerous grants to explore prehistoric petroglyphs in the Altai Mountains of far-western Mongolia, including a Three-Year Collaborative Research Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and has published and delivered numerous conference papers on his discoveries. Richard is currently under contract for two books on the rock art of Bayan Ulgii aimag: with Mongolia’s Nepko Publishers for *The Petroglyphs of Biluut Tolgoi: A Prehistoric Sacred Center in the Mongolian Altai* (expected in 2017); and with Cambridge University Press for *Rock Art and Archaeology of Inner Asia: The Biluut Petroglyph Complex* with William Fitzhugh (expected 2018).

**Daniel ROGERS**, Smithsonian Institution

**Joan SCHNEIDER**, San Manuel Band of Mission Indians

Schneider received her MS and PhD degrees in Anthropology from the University of California, Riverside, after a career change from the health sciences (she has Bachelor of Science and Master of Public Health degrees from Columbia University
in New York City). She was Assistant Research Anthropologist at UC Riverside; she served as Interim Executive Director during the development of the Western Center for Archaeology and Paleontology (now Western Science Center). From 2001 until 2011, she was Associate State Archaeologist for the Colorado Desert District, California State Parks, of which Anza-Borrego Desert State Park is a major component. In retirement, Schneider continues to volunteer at Anza-Borrego as a volunteer trainer and member of the Colorado Desert Archaeology Society; she has recently become a Trustee of the Anza Borrego Foundation. Schneider is currently Consulting Archaeologist for the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians and works closely with Native American governments and individuals, government agencies, and private corporations on many projects. Schneider has worked for over 30 years in desert regions of the world, including the Colorado, Mojave, Sonoran, Negev, and more recently, the Gobi. As a Principal Investigator, she has conducted projects in Joshua Tree and Death Valley National Parks, as well being an Archaeological Field School Director at Joshua Tree National Park. A Fulbright Specialist award, a United States Ambassador’s Cultural Heritage grant, and grants from the Trust for Mutual Understanding and the Earthwatch Institute support her research and cultural heritage conservation efforts in Mongolia--ongoing since 2010.

Schneider's archaeological research focuses on the reasons why prehistoric peoples (particularly women) chose certain stones for tools and vessels, how the materials chosen related to the tasks performed with those tools, and how economic and political patterns are expressed through quarry studies using geochemistry and petrography. She has contributed articles to regional, national, and international professional publications. She is a proponent of citizen science and public education.

William TAYLOR, Max Planck Institute

William Taylor is a postdoctoral research fellow at the Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History in Jena, Germany. He has been conducting archaeological research in Mongolia since 2011, and received his Ph.D. in archaeology from the University of New Mexico in 2016. His dissertation used archaeozoological techniques to investigate the origins of horseback riding and nomadic life in Mongolia.

Joshua WRIGHT, University of Aberdeen

Wright is a landscape archaeologist with a research focus on East Asia. He is a lecturer in the Department of Archaeology and the University of Aberdeen. His research addresses monumentality and movement, settlement patterns, mobile pastoralist economies, political landscapes, and the spatial structure of communities. Currently he carries out research in Mongolia and China using primarily archaeological survey. Previously, Wright was one of the directors of the first intensive archaeological surveys in Eastern Eurasia, the Egiin Gol Survey (1997-2002) and the Baga Gazaryn Chuluu Project (2004-2008) in Mongolia and key member of the Chengdu Plain Archaeological Survey (2007-2010). He received his Ph.D. in Anthropology from Harvard University (2006, Anthropology) where he studied the adoption of nomadic
pastoralism and the dynamics of subsistence and landscape in Northern Mongolia. In addition to China and Mongolia, he has carried out fieldwork in Greece, Turkey, China, Egypt, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Greece, Mexico, India, Pakistan Jordan and Belize.