

Melting Bowl or Salad Pot?

Identity Dynamics of Migrants to State/Imperial Heartlands Through the Ages

A conference organized by David Danzig (ISAW)

Monday, Veterans Day, November 11, 2019

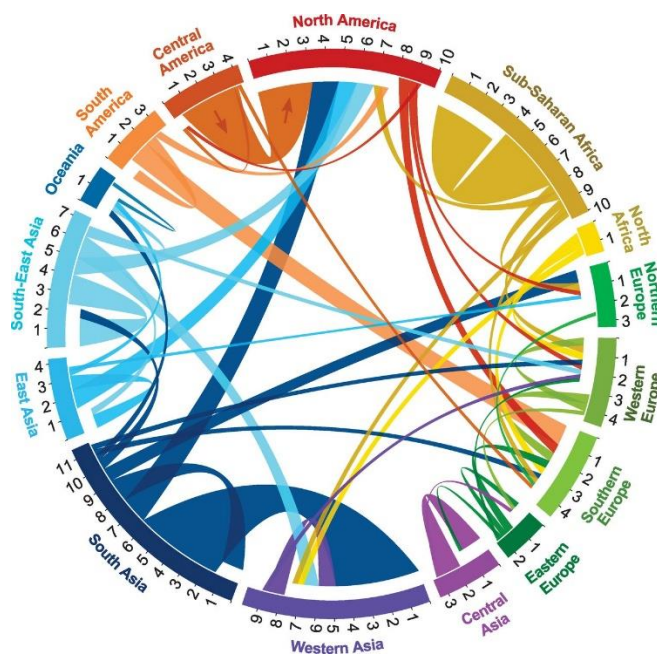
9:00am - 5:30pm

New York University's
Institute for the Study of the Ancient World
15 E 84th St, New York, NY 10028

Free and open to the public; Registration required

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Human migration is and has always been an important component of settled life, impacting all sectors of society. Migration often occurs in the context of the exercise of power by large states and empires. While scholars of migration and ethnicity tend to focus on identity dynamics at the peripheries of such polities, the impact of migration on central heartland regions is potentially more ripe for exploration. Although expansionist actions directly impact borderlands as those communities struggle with new political-cultural encroachments, the resultant flow of migrants to heartlands creates an inter-ethnic hotbed in central territories, in which migrants seek to (re)define themselves in their new contexts. What happens to these people and their identities? This question is problematized in the title of this conference via a play on the terms “melting pot” and “salad bowl.” First used to describe social identity dynamics of migrants to the United States of America, the mixing of these metaphors accentuates the multiplicity of possible developments of identity that arise after immigration to the heartlands of powerful polities. Instead of insisting on a binary approach, this conference brings together expert scholars from multiple fields to explore the dynamics of ethnic identity in state and imperial heartlands in a variety of ancient, pre-modern, modern, and contemporary contexts, in order to investigate the gamut of historical and social developments that result from such migrations.



Migration flows between and within world regions during 2005 to 2010; Abel & Sander, *Science* (2014)

Presenters:

- Naoki Sakai, Cornell University: *National Community and Specific Identification – Modernity in East Asia*
- Richard Alba, CUNY Graduate Center: *The Rise of Mixed Families in the 21st Century US and Its Consequences for Ethnoracial Categories*
- Harris Mylonas, George Washington University: *Salonica's Transition from Empire to Nation-State*
- Helmut Reimitz, Princeton University: *Immigration, Emigration and the Accommodation of Ethnicity in the Post-Roman Latin West*
- Nathanael Shelley, Barnard College, Columbia University: *Migrant Identity and Empires in the Longue Durée: Some Kassite, Abbasid, and Ottoman Cases*
- Sailakshmi Ramgopal, Columbia University: *Acculturation and Absence: Where are Attica's Associations of Italians and Romans?*
- Judith A. Lerner, ISAW: *On Identity and Style in the Funerary Art of Central Asians in Sixth- and Seventh-Century China*
- Soojung Han, Princeton University: *Constructing the Identity of the "Elite" Shatuo Turks during the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms Period China (907-960 AD)*
- David Danzig, ISAW: *Lives and Identities of Egyptian Migrants to Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid Babylonia*

This conference has been generously sponsored by ISAW