

# ANCIENT MIRRORS: ALWAYS REFLECTIVE AND GENERALLY SECRETIVE OBJECTS OF THE PAST CULTURES

Güner Coşkunsu 1, \*, @ , Barbara Fash 2, \*, @ , David S. Stuart 3, \*, @ , Emiliano Gallaga Murrieta 4, \*, @ , Jesús Gil Fuensanta 5, \*, @

1 : Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (Seminario de Estudios Orientales “Adolfo de Rivadeneyra” c/ Facultad CC.EE.)

2 : Harvard University, Department of Anthropology

3 : The University of Texas at Austin, Department of Anthropology and LLILAS

4 : Escuela de Antropología del Norte de México-INAH Chihuahua.

5 : Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, La SEI-ICFS, Instituto de Ciencias Forenses, c/ Facultad CC.EE

\* : Auteur correspondant

Mirrors or mirror-like objects/”mirrors” made of stones, minerals, glass and metal were found in various archaeological contexts, generally in burial, offering and cache contexts. These remarkable and somehow enigmatic objects are best known from Neolithic and Chalcolithic sites of Çatal Höyük, Domuz Tepe, Güvercin Kayası and Tepecik in Turkey; several Olmec, Maya, Aztec and Inca sites in Americas, as well as from ancient Egyptian and Indian excavations.

According to the realms of archaeological and historical recoveries, the mirror appears throughout the human history from prehistoric times to today and most likely still waters were the first mirror-like functioning natural element until actual mirrors made of solid material like obsidian, and later liquid “mirrors”/reflectors made of mercury were manufactured. Based on iconography informed by textual, historical and ethnographical accounts, solid and liquid mirrors were associated with the soul, supernatural spirits, afterlife, magic, scrying, sorcery, divination, astronomy, the sun, sun gods, fire, light, darkness, authority, hidden truth, cosmetics, beauty, scientific applications, luxury, prestige, self-recognition and self-delusion. However, because mirrors archaeologically have not been studied well, specifically those of Prehistory and Protohistory, both as a material object and non-material abstract remains of past cultures, they are still need to be explored. Therefore, this session aims to investigate prehistoric and protohistoric mirrors from all around the World both as a material object and other aspects beyond materiality; past peoples’ perception of mirrors and reflections on shiny objects; personal and societal need for gazing into mirrors from interdisciplinary and comparative perspectives. In addition to technological, typological, functional and experimental aspects, astronomical, symbolic, religious, magical, ritualistic, artistic, neuroscientific, and paleopsychological aspects also will be discussed.