



Ur in the Twenty-First Century CE

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Abusch, Tzvi (Brandeis University)

The Form and History of a Babylonian Prayer to Nabû

In this paper I propose to examine Nabû šuilla no. 3.1 This examination continues my earlier study of Marduk šuilla no. 2 in the Kramer Festschrift, JAOS 33. There I demonstrated that Marduk no. 2 did not follow the standard form of the šuilla type and that it displayed a new pattern. The Marduk šuilla does not stand in isolation. Some of its compositional features are found elsewhere; moreover, it is genetically related to Nabû no. 3.

The purpose of the present paper is to examine the Nabû šuilla in light of this genetic relationship in order to work out its structure, history of composition, and relationship to Marduk no. 2. I shall set out the textual segments and structures that the two šuillas share. I shall then point to some imperfections in the Nabû text and note that while the Marduk composition is a consummately executed example of a new form, the Nabû composition is an imperfect, perhaps second-rate, example of the form. We will then try to decide which of the two compositions is earlier and which is constructed using the other as a model.

Allred, Lance (University of California, Los Angeles)

An Archive from the Vicinity of Nippur

Housed in the Jonathan and Jeannette Rosen Ancient Near Eastern Studies Seminar and Tablet Conservation Laboratory at Cornell University are approximately 215 Ur III tablets that bear Nippur month names as well as other features typical to the Nippur corpus. Nevertheless, it seems clear that these tablets did not come from Nippur itself, but represent an altogether new archive from a settlement that lay in the vicinity of Nippur. The bulk of the archive centers around an individual named Aradmu, who was a temple administrator (Sum. šabra) likely associated with a temple to Ninurta. This paper will discuss some of the highlights of this new, important archive.

Almeida, Isabel (Universidade Nova de Lisboa) and **Maria de Fátima Rosa** (Universidade Nova de Lisboa)

The Moon Watching over Sun and Venus: Revisiting the Attributes and Functions of Nanna/Sîn in Mesopotamia

The importance of family for the Mesopotamians as a form of identity, of legitimation and protection is well known. Since genealogical ties were the core of human society, it is of no surprise that the divine world was organized similarly, with parents watching over and legitimating their offspring.

However, the role played by Nanna/Sîn's children in literary compositions seems far more important and active than his own. Justice, divination and luminosity are features immediately associated with Utu/Šamaš; whereas governance, prosperity and prophecy are attributes easily connected with Inanna/Ištar. Surprisingly or not, these were also features of Nanna/Sîn, although in a much less evident way.

Considering the above, one must reflect on the nature of the relationship between father and progeny: did Nanna/Sîn transfer his power to the younger deities, thus legitimating their actions, like a family legacy? Was his silent performance in myths indicative of a logic that regarded him as a patriarch, evoking a role similar to the one played by An/Anu? And what about his functions as a temporal regulator, a leader of the 'black-headed' flock and a theophoric element constantly present in Mesopotamian onomastics? What do these aspects tell us about his personality? When one looks beyond literature, what is the true significance of the 'divine 30'?

With this communication, we intend to reevaluate the impact Nanna/Sîn had in the Mesopotamian religious system, focusing on the presence and continuity of his numinous features in those of Inanna/Ištar and Utu/Šamaš. We aim to explore the bond shared by this triad, emphasizing how family

ties were envisioned as a legitimator of divine power. Through an intertwined analysis of iconographic and textual sources we propose to revisit the divine moon's role throughout time and space in Ancient Mesopotamia, thus contributing to the discussion about the patron god of Ur.

Amrhein, Anastasia (University of Pennsylvania)

Detecting Social Tensions in the Archaeological Record: Official and Vernacular Figurine-Making Traditions at Ur in the 1st Millennium BCE

Foundation figurines and plaques depicting apotropaic demons and sages that were unearthed in Neo-Assyrian palaces and priestly houses have been studied extensively. These objects are representative of practices originated by Neo-Assyrian male scholar-priests preoccupied with the protection of the Crown, and as such, constitute only a small segment of the figurine-making traditions that existed in Mesopotamia. Figurines that are the material remains of popular cult practices not documented in the written record—which are found in domestic and secondary contexts and predominantly depict the female body—have received considerably less critical attention. As Richard Lesure has observed in the context of Mesoamerican archaeology, clay figurines are “points of reference in the negotiation and reproduction of actual social relationships”—which can be revealed only through the consideration of entire assemblages, however. The clay figurine assemblage from Ur presents an opportunity to investigate the power dynamics between different social groups and genders in the context of Assyrian domination and subsequently, the Neo-Babylonian Empire. Through close visual, material and contextual analysis of the figurines in the Penn Museum and via comparison with examples from other sites, this paper will shed light on the official and vernacular figurine-making traditions (and related rituals) that existed at Ur in the 1st millennium BCE and their contentious relationship with one another as well as with Assyrian traditions.

Using textual sources as well as forensic fingerprint analysis, I argue that women were responsible for preserving geographically-defined cultural identities through the manufacture and vernacular use of female figurines. Regional identity—as understood through the lens of sociologist Anthony Giddens' theory of structuration—was thus negotiated, enacted, and perpetuated through oral tradition and practice. While some figurines from Ur fit comfortably within greater Babylonian traditions, others evince local idiosyncrasies of style and iconography that are indicative of beliefs and practices unique to Ur. These cultural currents of image-making persisted despite the rise and fall of empires, resistant to the official figurine-making practices. The official priestly and royal use of figurines, on the other hand, changed with the ruling power and despite anxiety about folk culture, borrowed from it freely—in terms of iconography, manufacturing technique (e.g., the use of molds vs. hand-modeling), and magico-religious ritual. During the period of Assyrian domination, the foundation figurines found in buildings associated with Sin-balassu-iqbi, the Assyrian governor under Assurbanipal, are reminiscent of Neo-Assyrian practices, but at the same time make reference to older Babylonian traditions through iconography and manufacturing techniques. Foundation deposits datable to the post-Assyrian period, suggest a return to Babylonian traditions, but also evince some innovations.

Ashby, Darren (University of Pennsylvania)

Food and Beverage Production in the ED III Bagara of Ningirsu at Tell al-Hiba, Ancient Lagash

This paper presents the material evidence for food and beverage production in an Early Dynastic III building from Tell al-Hiba, ancient Lagash. In 1975, the Al-Hiba Expedition, led by Dr. Donald P. Hansen, uncovered the remains of a multi-room building with a large oven, ceramic vats, and a baked-brick basin, which the excavators identified as a brewery. This building is located in the area of the Bagara, a temple complex dedicated to the god Ningirsu, and is adjacent to another building that should be identified as a temple based on its form and contents.

Textual and visual sources document the involvement of temple households in the production and consumption of food and beverages in a variety of contexts and record the existence of independent

buildings dedicated to these productive activities. Excavations at Ur and elsewhere have uncovered some of these structures. The building from Tell al-Hiba serves as a complement to these other sources and expands our knowledge of food production practices in antiquity.

Averbeck, Richard (Trinity Evangelical Divinity School)

The é-PA, the é-ub-imin, the Eninnu, and the Shape of Ningirsu's Temple in Girsu

The é-PA is a temple or shrine in Girsu dedicated to Ningirsu. In some texts it referred to as the place where Gudea presented bridal gifts to Ningirsu's consort, Bau/Baba (e.g., Gudea Stat D ii 11–iii 2). The question is: how does the é-PA relate to the Eninnu, the well-known name of the temple of Ningirsu, commonly referred to in close context with the é-PA in Gudea texts? Adam Falkenstein considered the é-PA to be a part of the Eninnu (AnOr 30, 131–33). However, the é-PA is also referred to by a more widely used expression: é-ub-imin “the house of seven corners/niches,” and there are texts where the Eninnu and é-PA appear to be variant titles for Ningirsu's temple complex (e.g., Gudea Stat E i 11–17, gù-dé-a énsi-lagaš^{ki} lú é-ninnu-dnin-ġír- su-ka é-PA é-ub-imin mu-dù-a “Gudea, the ruler of Lagash, the man who built the Eninnu of Ningirsu, the é-PA, the house of seven corners”).

In his House Most High, A. R. George reasonably renders é-PA as é-ġidru “House of the Sceptre.” This suggests that perhaps this name designates the Eninnu as the “royal temple.” One element of the design on the lap of Gudea Statue B may even label it as such there. In turn, the designation of the é-PA as the é-ub-imin “the house of seven corners/niches” also corresponds to the shape of the temple according to the design on the lap of Gudea Statue B. Moreover, the description of the construction of the temple in Gudea Cylinder A xx 27–xxi 12 seems to correspond to the same shape of the Eninnu seen from the perspective of the construction process.

Baker, Heather (University of Toronto)

The Historical Topography of Ur in the First Millennium BC

This paper draws on archaeological and textual evidence to examine the historical topography of Ur during the course of the first millennium BC down to the abandonment of the city in the early Hellenistic period. It discusses the location of key features that are mentioned in the cuneiform sources, such as city districts, gates, and watercourses, and attempts to locate them with reference to the excavated archaeological remains. Finally, the paper considers the character of the 1st millennium settlement as a whole, addressing the suggestion of Brinkman (1969, 347) that “the monumental Ur of Neo-Babylonian times was to some extent an artificial creation supported by royal money”.

Barrabee, Janice (University of Pennsylvania)

The Bearded Bull of Ur: Context, Comparanda, and Connotations

The bull with the lapis lazuli beard is perhaps best known from the Great Lyre excavated and then reconstructed by Sir Leonard Woolley from the Royal Cemetery at Ur. The lyre is currently housed at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, where the bull and his beard can easily be viewed. However, numerous other examples exist from Ur and other locations and time periods. This paper seeks to examine the characteristics of the bearded bull and this representation within the mortuary setting of Ur. Once the nature of the bearded bull is defined, his connection to other composite creatures, his role within the mythological and ritual landscape, and his symbolic significance within an enduring ideology will be explored.

Battini, Laura (Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée, Lyon)

Terracottas from Old Babylonian Ur

An important set of terracottas was found at Ur by the conjoint mission of the British Museum and the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology, under the direction of L. Woolley. No real

analysis of these materials has ever been tried. This paper seeks the comprehension of terracottas first in iconographical items, and then especially in the context of the Old Babylonian society. That's essential for understanding the uses, the aims and the people for whom these objects were executed (manufactured or from a mould).

Beaulieu, Paul-Alain (University of Toronto)

The City of Ur and the Neo-Babylonian Empire

Cuneiform sources from the time of the Neo-Babylonian empire (626–539) come mostly from the temple archives of Uruk and Sippar, as well as private archives from Babylon and Borsippa. Other sites have yielded smaller amounts of evidence. In spite of its relative importance, Ur has yielded little epigraphic material dated to this period. One small archive of texts dated mostly at Babylon from Nabopolassar year 2 to year 9, the Sin-uballit archive, has been published in UET 4. In addition we find scattered references to the city in texts from other sites as well as a few royal inscriptions. This talk will bring together all the evidence, discuss some new texts and propose fresh interpretations that will shed light on the role of the city in the rise, climax and downfall of the Neo-Babylonian empire.

Benati, Giacomo (University of Bologna) and **Camille Lecompte** (Centre national de la recherche scientifique, Paris)

The Ties that Bind: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Archaic Texts from Ur

The paper illustrates the aims and goals of a joint project targeting the archaeological and textual reanalysis of the Archaic Texts from Ur, the most important group of cuneiform accounts from the early 3rd millennium BC in Mesopotamia, all from controlled excavations. The first stages of the project featured a thorough recontextualization of the texts (Benati), all excavated in the area of the Royal Cemetery at Ur, and the publication of a group of heretofore unpublished tablets kept in the British Museum of London (Lecompte). The second stage will consist of the preparation of a critical edition of all the texts (Lecompte), with a detailed archaeological commentary (Benati). The joint archaeological and textual reanalysis of these important archives will provide a springboard for reconstructing the development of bureaucratic and socio-economic mechanics of an early state during a much obscure period of Mesopotamian history. Emphasis will be placed on the importance of inter-disciplinary endeavors for understanding ancient Mesopotamia society and economy.

Bjorkman, Judy (Broome Community College, Binghamton)

The Case of the Missing Cult Statue

The search for a good example of remains of the anthropomorphic, divine cult statue described in cuneiform literature has not been fruitful, so far. While some cult statues were taken as booty or even destroyed by enemies, this seems unlikely to account for all of them. Laments and related literature usually do not describe the destruction of the cult statues. This may be because the statues were removed from the city, before it was destroyed, to be hidden and to await better times. It is also suggested that when a temple cult came to an end, cult statues were disassembled with the same care with which they had been made, partly for recycling and partly for burning. Varied evidence from both texts and archaeological remains is used to develop these hypotheses regarding the end-times of cult statues.

Bodi, Daniel (University of Paris 4)

The Ziqqurats of Ur and Babylon and the Place Where the Ark Moors After the Flood

In this paper I will analyze some elements that link the ziqqurat with the Ark. I will begin with the ziqqurat of Ur that is one of the oldest (Ur-Nammu and the Third Dynasty of Ur) and still fairly well preserved, in contrast to the one in Babylon where all that is left is just its imprint on the ground. My argument will start first, with a suggestion made by J.-J. Glassner, that there exists a link between the

symbolic numbers of the seven-storied ziqqurat, its architectural divisions (area base, length, breath and height) as found on the Louvre Esagila Tablet and the detailed specifications of the seven-storied Ark and its inner compartments as described in the Gilgameš Flood Tablet. Second, there is a further link mentioned in the *Gilgameš Epic* XI 158 where at the end of the Deluge, once the Ark was immobilized and held fast for six days by the mountain Ni-muš (*Gilg.* XI 142-146), on the seventh day after releasing a dove, a swallow and a raven, Uta-napištim “offered incense at the ziggurat of the mountain”: *áš-kun sur-qin-nu ina muḥḥi(ugu) ziq-qur-rat šadi(kur)*¹ placing seven flasks in position. Third, while earlier scholars read the name of the mountain where the Ark accosted after the Deluge as Ni-šir, the newer translations of J. Bottéro and A. George, following W. G. Lambert’s reference to a theophorous name *i-din-ni-muš*, now read it as Ni-muš, which would indicate a divinized or a sacred mountain. Fourth, the figure seven establishes a link between the ziggurat, the Ark and the incense flasks. These various elements make it more appropriate to translate the unusual collocation in *Gilg.* XI 158 literally and state that Uta-napištim offered incense on the “ziqqurat of the mountain,” i.e., on the sacred mountain, instead of giving the term ziqqurat a transferred meaning “mountain peak.” Moreover, the myth and legend of the Flood as reflected in the Gilgameš Flood Tablet, do not deal with a precise geographical reference nor with a specific historical event. Rather, on this point the text establishes an important link between the Ark and the ziqqurat and this conjunction carries a religious meaning. The paper will explore further elements showing that the Ark stands for a symbolic representation of the world as a microcosm, while the ziqqurat stands for the central pole of the world uniting the heaven (AN) and the earth (KI) as reflected in a series of Sumerian names for the temple and ziqqurat sacred precincts. Both the ziqqurat where the king of the gods resided between heaven and earth and the Ark that held representatives of all creation, have in common a dimensional scheme that is very likely to be explained in terms of cosmic symbolism.

Boivin, Odette (University of Toronto)

The Palace as Economic Production Unit in the Sealand I Kingdom

The first dynasty of the Sealand, also referred to as the dynasty of Uruku(g) in king lists, occupied parts of southern and middle Babylonia in the later part of the Old Babylonian and at the beginning of the Kassite period. A few hundred unprovenanced texts dated to Pešgaldarameš and Ayadaragalama, two kings who reigned shortly after the fall of Babylon, were published in 2009 by S. Dalley (CUSAS 9). The texts are obviously the product of palatial administration since the palace, É.GAL, is omnipresent in them. They show that this institution procured resources, agricultural and others, transformed them, and used them to provide for various internal and external end users. Grain and vegetables were apparently mainly acquired by the collection of taxes; animal herds were probably partly owned by the palace. Among other economic activities, the palace produced or was strongly involved in the production of flour, malt, beer, reed products and perfumed oil; it also processed animal carcasses. The palace provided for its own household, including dependent or semi-dependent workers, and for foreign envoys visiting the Sealand I court. It also sponsored the cult of several deities and there are indications that the economy of some temples was well integrated into that of the palace, the latter probably performing all or most economic functions of the temples, including providing a livelihood to its priests. This presentation will review the Sealand I evidence and propose a reconstruction of the Sealand I palatial economy as we view it through archival documents.

Borrelli, Noemi (Università di Napoli “L’Orientale”)

Reconstructing a Socio-economic Landscape: The Agricultural Estate of the Lagaš Governor

The successful exploitation of arable land was always of fundamental importance in the economic growth of Southern Mesopotamia. The need for a thorough textual documentation as the one adopted in the Ur III state and, specifically, in the province of Ĝirsu/Lagaš, specialized in grain production, was particularly felt in such state-run agricultural enterprises.

Crucial to the achievement of an efficient management of the agricultural landscape was the agency of the provincial administration, represented ultimately by the governor. However, quantifying the actual degree of economic autonomy of the governor and his family, and separating his institutional duties from his activities as a private individual is inevitably hindered due to the partisan viewpoint of the Ġirsu/Lagaš provincial archive.

Nevertheless, a more accurate analysis of the available data can show how the governor and his family managed the fields individually entrusted to them, if they exercised a proper usufruct of this land and if it was possible for them to gain profit through state agricultural resources.

This paper will attempt, therefore, to offer an insight in the management of the governor's household in relation to his involvement in the agricultural activities of the province, starting from who supervised the governor's agricultural estate, the personnel who depended on him and if there is any evidence that these agents had a relationship with the royal sector.

Bramanti, Armando (Università di Roma / Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena) and **Palmiro Notizia**
(Centro de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales-Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid)

New Light on the Paleography of the Early Dynastic Umma Region

In 1922 Anton Deimel published his *Liste der Archaischen Keilschriftzeichen*, commonly known as LAK. After almost a century, this is still the standard sign list for Early Dynastic Mesopotamia. In recent years, the corpus of ED documents has increased enormously, especially after the publication of hundreds of tablets stemming from the Umma region. Nevertheless, no systematic study of the paleography of these new texts has been conducted so far, and a comprehensive sign list and syllabary are still a *desideratum*.

In this paper we will survey the repertory of signs employed in the ED Umma tablets, trying to distinguish pairs (or clusters) sharing common features. Moreover, we will identify and describe peculiar sign forms according to their morphology. Philological remarks will be offered, together with other relevant diagnostic meta-textual features such as script, size and shape of the tablets, layout of the text, and presence of non-textual markers.

In this way, we intend to approach paleography as a useful tool for improving the edition of these texts, and for setting documents within a relative chronological framework. The general lack of research tools has played a decisive role in committing us to such a study, which will hopefully pave the way for future research on the paleography of the ED tablets from the Umma region.

Brisch, Nicole (University of Copenhagen)

Women as Authors of Sumerian Literary Texts

Discussions of women as authors of literary compositions have mainly focused the famous case of Enheduanna, often hailed as the first named author in human history. Whether Enheduanna's authorship is 'authentic', in a modern Western sense, is not important in the context of this contribution. Instead, this paper will take a closer look at other literary compositions which were either attributed to women or whose mode of writing strongly indicates that the composer was female.

Burge, Katherine (University of Pennsylvania)

The Early Development of the Mitanni Common Style

The formation of the Mitanni state is largely obscure in the absence of historical sources and has been the subject of some debate. While many scholars believe that the Mitanni emerged as a regional power in northern Mesopotamia following the sack of Babylon by the Hittites and a series of ineffectual Assyrian kings, others have argued that the Mitanni were an established entity before the end of the Old Babylonian period. Glyptic evidence would appear to support the second argument.

The Mitanni Common Style, largely defined by seals of sintered quartz, was prolific across the Near East by the 15th century BC, but its earlier development and origin can be traced. A small number of designs of the Common Style have been found in archaeological levels dated as early as the 18th century

BC. This paper explores the earliest archaeological occurrences of this style, looking at a handful of excavated seals and sealings from Old Babylonian contexts, including a cylinder seal found below the pavement of a house in Area AH at Ur.

Campbell, Dennis (San Francisco State University)

A Hurrian Incantation for a Toothache and Mesopotamian Folk Medicine

Six tablets containing Hurrian language texts dating to the Old Babylonian Period were discovered at Mari. Although published in transcription and handcopies in 1939, progress in translating these texts has been difficult due to issues of both preservation and language. The following paper is a new analysis of Mari 5 conducted by Campbell and Fischer at the Free University in Berlin with support from the Excellence Cluster TOPOI (B-4-1). This text displays orthographic features not found in the other Mari Hurrian texts, and this realization has resulted in a completely new interpretation of the incantation. This Hurrian incantation against a toothache was not based off of Mesopotamian traditions for this particular ailment (the lack of a “worm” in the Hurrian is notable). Analysis of the structure of the Hurrian demonstrates a connection to Mesopotamian folk remedies of the type *mannam lušpur* “whom should I send ...” It will be shown that the Hurrian incantation is not a translation of these Akkadian texts, but it likely belongs to the same basic tradition. Possible implications for the similarities between this Hurrian incantation and the *mannam lušpur* text will be explored.

Carter, Robert (University College London - Qatar)

Ur and the Arabian Frontier: cultural interactions during the 'Ubaid Period

The movement of pottery between southern Mesopotamia and the Gulf is well known, and can be characterised as just one aspect of cultural and arguably economic interactions between the people of the two regions. These people appear to have communicated through a long - standing maritime trading network, and evidence increasingly indicates that the northern Gulf and southern Mesopotamia engaged in a degree of cultural hybridization. This is indicated by the distribution of small tokens, trinkets, items of personal adornment and possibly architectural form, in Ubaid Mesopotamia and the Gulf. The distribution of these finds, which might be termed “symbolic objects”, firstly raises questions surrounding the concepts of frontier versus clines of cultural commonality and hybridization; and secondly provides insights into shared symbolic language and material interchange stretching far beyond the Gulf and southern Iraq into northern Mesopotamia and beyond.

Charpin, Dominique (Collège de France)

Epigraphy of Ur: Past, Present, and Future

In this communication, I would like to recall how I discovered 35 years ago that among the first Old Babylonian texts to be published (Strassmaier, *Die altbabylonischen Verträge aus Warka*, Berlin, 1882, with new copies by Jean, *Tell Sifr*, Paris 1931), ca. 30 tablets derived from the first excavations of Ur by Taylor in 1854. This led me to investigate more systematically the Old Babylonian archives from this site, and to devote a book to the clergy of Ur – 30 years ago. A second part will show how the research on OB Ur texts is going on: the ARCHIBAB website has recently made available a lot of the OB texts found at Ur, deriving from official or other diggings, giving the first edition of many tablets only published as copies. Finally, the epigraphical results of the digging season directed by E. Stone at Ur between October and December 2015, which led to the discovery of some thirty new tablets, will be presented.

Charvat, Petr (University of West Bohemia)

Signs from Silence: The Beginning of History of the Sumerian Ur

This is a paper on the earliest phases of history of the ancient Sumerian city of Ur. The author presents its perspective of its development from a central-place settlement in the Late Uruk period down to the end of the Early Dynastic I age, drawing on historical, archaeological and iconographic sources.

Clayden, Tim (Wolfson College, Oxford)

Ur in the Kassite Period

The primary archaeological evidence for Kassite occupation at Ur was excavated in the course of Leonard Woolley's excavations at the site between 1922 and 1934. The formal excavation report of the remains dated to the Kassite Period was published in 1965 five years after Woolley's death in 1960. Woolley's key conclusion was that Kurigalzu I was responsible for a major rebuilding and refurbishment of Ur after neglect in the post Samsu-iluna period.

The only published substantive examination of the Kassite period at Ur in the decades following Woolley's 1965 report was by Brinkman one of whose key conclusions, confirming Woolley's view, was that it was Kurigalzu I (x-1375 BC) who rebuilt Ur. This view has been subsequently confirmed by myself and Bartelmus. The study summarises the background to the building infrastructure at Ur prior to the Kassite period. It reviews the situation in southern Babylonia after the 'Great Revolt' in the reign of Samsu-iluna and examines the roles the First Dynasty of the Sealand and the Kassites in late Old Babylonian society played and how that might have affected life at contemporary Ur. The rise in influence and works of the Kassite kings in the pre- Kurigalzu I period is charted. Finally the paper identifies the archaeological evidence for Kassite activity at Ur.

Overall the paper poses the question — 'what actually happened in the great cities of Babylonia between bouts of royally sponsored building works?' It suggests that life went on, but in a more limited — geographically and economically — manner.

Cohen, Mark (University of Maryland)

Of Gods and Glosses

A survey of names of deities whose reading has been facilitated through the scribal use of glosses. Special attention will be paid to names with "frozen" glosses, that is instances in which the original pronunciation gloss became incorporated into the standardized orthography of the god's name, resulting in the true(?) reading and meaning sometimes being "hidden" from us today. A few of such cases occur for god names occurring throughout cuneiform texts, whereas most are found only in god lists, such as AN:Anum.

Collins, Paul (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford)

History as Ritual in Mesopotamia

Ritual acts in Mesopotamia were tied to a notion of contractual relationships between humans and the gods. Visual depictions of these rituals were a way of transforming historical acts into mythological time. By the middle of the third millennium BC there was an increasing emphasis in imagery on the activities of kings of independent city-states. These can be understood as representations of rituals undertaken as a royal duty to establish justice and order on behalf of the gods. While associated texts served to establish the actions and legal basis for the resolution of events, visual imagery transformed these linear histories into timeless myth. It was thus only through art that the contract between the king and his gods could be fulfilled. During the second millennium BC, legalistic and divinatory requirements to know the past caused scholars to look back farther in time, ultimately to a deep history and original divine 'truth'. This quest for the original source of knowledge encouraged an interest in the physical remains of the past that were sought out, copied and curated. In the first millennium BC an ever greater focus on the god-like

heroic nature of kingship led to parallels being constructed in visual imagery between royal activities and a mythological past. This was not a retreat into history but the establishment of a direct connection between a divinely ordered world of the past and that of the future.

Cooley, Jeffrey (Boston College)

A Scribalized Past: VR 44's Onomastic Reflections on the History of the Land

This paper will discuss VR 44, a multi-lingual name-list unearthed at Kuyunjik, a document that offers a particularly scholarly historiographic reflection. By drawing on conventional historiographic material on the one hand, such as kings list and chronicles, and more scholarly texts and procedures on the other, such as lexical lists and translational hermeneutics, VR 44 presents a kind of linguistic-onomastic history of the land.

This is on display in a number ways. First, though the scribe who produced VR 44 employed general contours of native Babylonian periodization with which he was undoubtedly familiar from the various king lists (such as the ante/post diluvian divide, city dynasties, etc.), he nonetheless rejected a strictly chronological organization. Instead, he capitalized on *grammatological* patterns typical of the classic scribal list format, clustering together names, based on source-language, or which were written with identical/similar signs, or which were similarly Akkadianized. Second, the list contains not only royal names, but also those of non-royals, many of which can be securely identified as the names of eponymous scribal ancestors (e.g., *Asgandu*), important scholars (for example, the famous *Sidu*), as well as literate characters from narratives (such as the incantation priest *Laluralimma* from *Ludlul Bel Nemeqi*). On the obverse of the tablet, in particular, these scholarly forerunners appear in a double column parallel to – but not regnally coordinated with – the long-dead regents. Thus, the scribal past has a similar graphic weight on the tablet the as that of the royals. Third, the scribe included Akkadianized renderings of the Sumerian, Amorite, Kassite (and in one case, Akkadian!) names, a process that employed literal and non-literal methods of exegesis otherwise known from the commentaries and other ostensibly advanced scholarly texts.

In short, VR 44 offers a distinctively self-conscious scribal vision of the history of the land. While it does not offer the kind of second-order analysis first evinced in classical Greek historiography, it shows the application of scribal intellectual processes on traditional written sources. The scribe who crafted it created a deliberate analytical synthesis of documents that, thus, cast a novel perspective of the past.

Cooper, Jerry (Johns Hopkins University)

Enlil and Namzitara

A careful study and reedition of the Old Babylon manuscripts for “Enlil and Namzitara,” first published by Miguel Civil over 40 years ago, provides further insight into the meaning of the story and its puns.

Cooper, Jerry (Johns Hopkins University)

Goings on in the Tablet Room: Editing Sumerian Texts

What went on in the Tablet Room? After a brief personal appreciation of Åke Sjöberg, I will discuss the history of the editing of Sumerian literary texts, an activity that occupied many denizens of the Tablet Room, and was an important part of Åke's contribution to Sumerology.

Crisostomo, C. Jay (University of Michigan)

Close enough? The Mixed Vocabularies and Sumerian Literature

The Mixed Vocabularies (aka “grammatical commentaries”) are apparently impromptu Sumerian-Akkadian bilingual lists of words and phrases. The present paper explores the relationship between intertextuality and scholarship conceptualized in these texts. Both Å Sjöberg (1993) and M. Civil (2009)

have shown that these mixed vocabularies at least partially derive from literary texts. Very few entries within these texts, however, can be demonstrably identified as citations of known texts. I argue that the mixed vocabularies do not cite, but rather allude to lines from literary texts. Following these allusions, the texts construct subsequent entries according to habitualized list-making practices well-known from lexical lists. This use of literary texts in the mixed vocabularies raises questions about the translation, commentary, and nature of citation in cuneiform sources.

Culbertson, Laura (American Public University)

Breakers and Enforcers of the “Oath of the King” (and the King Who Wasn’t There)

The underlying topic of this paper concerns strategies of the royal household of Ur for projecting power and authority into the core provinces of the Ur III state, specifically in the realm of law. It is difficult to identify all the methods by which the kings of Ur executed claims of legal authority in provincial contexts, even though traces of influence from Ur can be detected. For example, Molina (2014) identified king-appointed persons who participated as court officials at Umma and Wilcke (2014) has discussed points of comparison between the law collection and provincial court records. In legal documents of the Ur III period, the king is most visible in regular references to people taking the oath of the king’s name (*mu lugal*), which was a kind of promissory oath. The unspecified king was invoked in recorded *mu lugal* oaths more than any (other) deity. The more specific purpose of this paper is to reopen a question about sociopolitical function of the oath (see Yoda 1995) and to explore the changing extent of who enforced it. Many types of oaths could be used to establish sociopolitical hierarchies between people (including loyalty oaths to the king; see Steinkeller 2008: 187). In many court records of Girsu and Umma, the oath is referenced because it has been broken. This also warrants more investigation given the seriousness of oath breaking in the ancient Near East.

Dalley, Stephanie (University of Oxford)

The First Sealand Dynasty: New Evidence, and the Potential for Trade

Administrative tablets from the First Sealand Dynasty, published in 2009, dated to the reigns of Peshgal and Ayadara, are no longer isolated. A range of literary texts from the same dynasty, and new tablets from Tell Khaiber, allow a broader picture to be drawn of their place in the cultural traditions of Mesopotamia. Gathering together the evidence allows some suggestions to explain why so few tablets are known from that period; where the dynasty had its royal city; and where those two kings should be placed in relationship to early Kassite kings.

Devecchi, Elena (Università degli Studi di Torino)

Managing the Harvest in Kassite Babylonia: The View from the Texts in the Rosen Collection at Cornell University

The “Jonathan and Jeannette Rosen Ancient Near Eastern Studies Seminar” at Cornell University houses ca. 850 Middle Babylonian tablets dating between the 14th and 12th century BCE. The corpus consists mainly of administrative records concerned with the administration of agricultural goods and reflects an administrative system which invites close comparison with that of the Nippur tablets, with which it shares also several personal and geographic names, suggesting that the texts originate from an archive which worked in closed connection with the Nippur administration and was likely situated in its immediate vicinity. At the same time, these new tablets are in many regards typologically and chronologically complementary to the Nippur material and can greatly contribute to supplementing and broadening the picture about Kassite administration given in previous publications.

The paper will present the Middle Babylonian texts from the Rosen Collection at Cornell University, discussing the similarities and the differences with the Nippur material in order to highlight the peculiarities of the two administrative centers.

Eppihimer, Melissa (University of Pittsburg)

Invoking the Akkadians in the Stele of Shamshi-Adad I

The stele attributed to the northern Mesopotamian king Shamshi-Adad I was first published in 1898, the same year that the victory stele of Naram-Sin was found at Susa. The stele of Naram-Sin immediately captured the attention of scholars and has since retained a privileged position in art historical discourse. When art historians ultimately turned to the stele of Shamshi-Adad I, it was inevitably compared to the other, more famous stele of Naram-Sin. A comparison is warranted: both steles include images of a triumphant hero stepping onto the body (or bodies) of his enemy, and the garment of the hero in the Shamshi-Adad I stele closely resembles the garment of Naram-Sin in his stele. As a result of these similarities, the stele of Shamshi-Adad I is thought to depict that king adopting the attributes and ideology of Naram-Sin's kingship. Such a visual appropriation of Akkadian visual models parallels the allusions to Akkadian kingship that appear in Shamshi-Adad I's royal inscriptions.

This paper takes a closer look at the imagery of the stele of Shamshi-Adad I in order to present a more precise characterization of the nature of the stele's Akkadian allusions. It argues that the stele borrows from a broader tradition of Akkadian victory monuments beyond just the stele of Naram-Sin, and that the stele of Naram-Sin and the stele of Shamshi-Adad I display two different kinds of royal triumph. Finally, it considers the value of visual allusions as a strategy for demonstrating historical consciousness in royal monuments.

Feliu, Lluís (University of Barcelona)

Miquel Civil: The Road to Sumer

This presentation will discuss the early years of Miquel Civil's life. It will focus mainly on his family and the historical context in which he grew up, the tumultuous period in Spain in the thirties. Later, after the Spanish Civil War, Miquel Civil found educational and intellectual refuge in the Abbey of Montserrat. It was there he first came across the cuneiform texts housed in its collections that so profoundly determined the orientation of his later interests. His departure from Montserrat and his stay in Paris brought him into contact with French cuneiform studies, and was the start of his brilliant career as a renowned Sumerologist.

Fincke, Jeanette (Universität Heidelberg)

In Search of Ur in iqqur īpuš

The series iqqur īpuš is one of the most peculiar omen series of cuneiform culture. Not only is its title not taken from the first words of its composition as would be usual in Mesopotamian literature. It is also presented in three different formats. The oldest one is the so-called série mensuelle that organizes the omens according to the months, resulting in 12 individual tablets, one for each month of the year. This version is attested from the Middle Babylonian until the Late Babylonian period in Mesopotamia proper, but also in the periphery. Of course, such a long tradition at various far-flung places brings about variations in the sequence of omens.

In this paper I plan to reconstruct the version of the série mensuelle from Ur and compare it with the others.

Frahm, Eckart (Yale University) and **Enrique Jiménez** (Yale University)

Cuneiform Commentaries: New Discoveries

The Cuneiform Commentaries Project (<http://ccp.yale.edu>), online for slightly over a year, has produced electronic editions of some 150 text commentaries so far, among them several dozen previously unpublished. In the first part of our paper, we will present some of the project's most important new findings and discuss how they enhance our knowledge of ancient Mesopotamian exegesis.

The second part of the paper will focus on how the new commentaries contribute to a better understanding of intertextuality in Mesopotamian literature and scholarship. As is well known, there are many instances in which commentaries quote lines from literary and other texts to explain the text commented upon. These quotations often support claims made in the base text. For instance, an omen entry in which a pig carrying a palm frond is said to forecast storms is explained in a commentary by citing a line from the anti-witchcraft series *Maqlû* in which the palm is called “the capturer of all winds”—the association between palm and wind in *Maqlû* thus justifies their causal relationship in the omen. The paper will explore this and other examples to investigate the intertextual dimensions of Mesopotamian commentaries, which complement their metatextual functions.

Franke, Sabina (Universität Hamburg and Helmut-Schmidt-Universität Hamburg)

The Temple of Haldi in Mušasir and the Haldi Temples in Urartu

The temple of the Urartean god Haldi in Musasir was plundered by Sargon II of Assyria in 714 on his famous eighth campaign. This event is mentioned in his written account and also shown on a relief in Sargon’s palace in Dur-Šarrukin. However, many discrepancies between the Haldi temple shown on the relief and the excavated Haldi temples have been noted and discussed at length. In my talk, I will propose a new interpretation of the relief thus reconciling the two depictions.

Frazer, Mary (Yale University)

“Gilgamesh, King of Ur”: The Gilgamesh Letter in Context

The Gilgamesh Letter, best known from three Neo-Assyrian manuscripts excavated at Huzirina in the early 1950s, has repeatedly defied confident interpretation with respect to its function and the circumstances of its composition. Since F.R. Kraus’s detailed examination of these issues in 1980, two discoveries of particular relevance have been made: the identification of a Babylonian manuscript of the letter by M.J. Geller (George 2003: 118); and the discovery of the only known parallel for the letter’s striking identification of Gilgamesh as “king of Ur,” in a manuscript of the Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic probably produced in the area controlled by the First Sealand Dynasty (George 2007). The first part of this paper explores the possibility that the Letter also originated under the First Sealand Dynasty. In so doing, it takes into account (i) the growing evidence for literary composition in southern Mesopotamia during the time of this dynasty, (ii) lexical and orthographic aspects of the Letter that support a composition date at some point in the Middle Babylonian period, and (iii) the appropriateness of the Letter’s ideology in a Sealand setting.

The second part of the paper considers the evidence for the reception of the Gilgamesh Letter in first-millennium Babylonia and Assyria. Topics addressed in this section include: the possible reasons for the text’s popularity at Huzirina, the provenance of the unpublished Babylonian manuscript, and the extent of the Letter’s broader circulation.

Freedman, Immanuel (Harleystown, Pennsylvania)

Babylonian Astronomers Predicted Lunar and Planetary Positions Using Iterated Maps, Forerunners of Deterministic Chaos

Babylonian mathematical astronomy appears to be based on iterated maps— a technology utilized by modern methods of deterministic chaos.

If an ideal Babylonian planetary theory places Greek letter visibility phenomena at fixed solar elongations (to which observed longitudes may be interpolated in time), they define Poincaré sections, for which subdivisions of the synodic arc further define suspension flows.

Tables of predicted displacement indicate that Babylonian astronomers expected to predict close recurrence in calendar date or position among the stars rather than exact return, similar to a modern concept of recurrence. At least one model prescribes the cyclic order in which Venus visits sidereally

fixed zones and thereby defines a periodic cycle of symbols in accordance with modern methods of symbolic dynamics.

Babylonian astronomers were careful to define stable one-dimensional periodic maps partitioned according to resonances and addressed by terminating sexagesimal fractions that suggests at least empirical knowledge of modelocking and Arnol'd tongues.

The well-known System A periodicity constraint relates to linear Diophantine equations and resonance. With phasespace coarsegrained according to a "basic step", the attested map iterations suggest Babylonian insight into the concept of topological Markov partition.

Aabøe pointed out an empirical expansion of attested periods in terms of an Engel expansion of rational numbers. This suggests that periodicities may have been refined by folding observations with a set of trial periods, a modern method robust to noise and missing data.

The piecewise linear maps appear to be linear approximations to invertible circle maps. If a circle map of daily displacement is subsequently integrated to find lunar or planetary positions according to a trapezoidal method, the resulting map is closely related to a modern Standard Map capable of describing perturbations.

Fuensanta, Jesús Gil (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid) and **Alfredo Mederos Martín** (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid)

The Surtepe Late Chalcolithic/Uruk Levels (Birecik, SE Turkey) and their Parallels with Other Artifacts from the Middle-Euphrates

The site of Surtepe Höyük lies in southeastern Turkey and yielded huge archaeological deposits from the Chalcolithic to early Bronze Age ages (IV to III millennia BC). Buildings and artifacts found there suggested parallels with other sites previously discovered in the vicinity of Birecik and in the Middle Euphrates region. Some interpretations concerning the expansion of the Uruk culture in the Turkish Middle Euphrates are here envisaged.

Gabbay, Uri (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

The Balaĝ Prayers to the God Enki: Text, Transmission, and Theology

The *kalûtu* catalog from Nineveh, listing the sequence of compositions comprising the series of Sumerian Emesal prayers, begins with Balaĝ prayers to the god Enki. The fact that the Enki Balaĝs initiate the series – preceding even the Balaĝs to Enlil and Marduk, both considered heads of the Mesopotamian pantheon – indicates their significance.

The lecture will deal with the Balaĝs to Enki, focusing on three points. First, it will address the textual reconstruction of these prayers in the first millennium BCE. Besides the three Balaĝs beginning the *kalûtu* catalogue from Nineveh, a fourth Balaĝ, "Oh, my Abzu!" (a abzu- ĝu₁₀), is known from various tablets, including from Nineveh, even though it does not seem to be listed in the catalog. An unpublished tablet of this Balaĝ adds much to our knowledge of this composition.

Secondly, the lecture will deal with the textual transmission of the Balaĝs to Enki from the second millennium to the first millennium BCE, and will address the issue of the additions of Marduk and Babylon to the originally Enki and Eridu epithets in these compositions.

Thirdly, the lecture will address the theology of the Enki Balaĝs. While the Enlil Balaĝs portray Enlil as abandoning his city and thus bringing destruction upon it, in the Enki Balaĝs (as in the Eridu Lament) the sequence is inverted: Enki leaves his city as a result of its destruction, sitting outside of it and lamenting it with his spouse. This has implications on the theology of Marduk, since in the corpus of Balaĝs Marduk is identified with both Enki and Enlil, and is thus understood both as bringing destruction on his city by abandoning it, and as abandoning his city because it has been destroyed.

Gabriel, Gösta (Georg-August-Universität Göttingen)

Mytho-historiography from Ur III to the OB period: Manuscript-based Textual and Ideological History of the Sumerian King List

Attested for the first time through a manuscript from Šulgi's reign (2094–2047 BCE) (Steinkeller 2003), the Sumerian King List (SKL) represents one of the oldest known pieces of Mesopotamian historiography. Its story begins in a mythical past and proceeds to the time of the list's composers, thereby merging mythical and historical narratives.

The paper aims to reconstruct the SKL's trajectory by taking into account its textual and discursive environment. In doing so, the text will be considered a piece of intellectual rather than of political history (e.g. Michalowski 1983: 238, Marchesi 2010: 234f.).

The paper uses a comprehensive perspective on the text and its extant copies. This comprises the temporal framework and the artefacts' situatedness – esp. based on their materiality, i.e. excavation context and tablet format. Second, the paper will investigate the syntactic and semantic macrostructure (heavenly descent, (deluge), motion of kingship, end) and how this varies between the copies. Special attention is given to the transfer formula that reports on kingship moving from one city to another. Finally, it will also take possible mutual influences from/to the flood account and the city laments into consideration.

As a result, the paper will not only tell how and why the SKL developed over a period of roughly 400 years, but it will also explore a manuscript-based methodology to identify textual strata in Mesopotamian texts, i.e. to conduct literary criticism empirically. In this way the paper merges a detailed analysis of the philological and material dimension of the SKL with a broader methodological scope.

Garfinkle, Steven (Western Washington University)

The Kingdom as Sheepfold: Frontier Strategy Under the Third Dynasty of Ur, A View from the Center

In this paper, I examine what we can deduce from the vast corpus of texts from the last century of the Third Millennium BC about the strategic goals of the Ur III kings in the liminal space between the irrigated core of Mesopotamia and the highland areas to the east and northeast. Frontiers are important to our historical reconstructions of ancient Mesopotamia. They are the places where we imagine both threats and opportunities lay for the growing states of southern Mesopotamia in the Third and early Second Millennia BC. Frontiers were also significant to their understanding of the world around them. In literature, the highland frontiers were the locus for the activity of mythical creatures, both divine and monstrous. The archetypal text about identity in ancient Mesopotamia, the Epic of Gilgamesh, contrasted the civilization of the urban space and its immediate hinterland with the dangerous places outside of that zone. And yet, the epic also tasks its heroes with protecting the hunters and shepherds, whose mobile pastoralism would seem to lie outside of our easy definitions of Mesopotamian space.

Thinking about the Ur III frontier raises a central question about the goals of the military activity of the state. Was it an imperial expansion aimed at direct control of outlying peoples and polities, or was it the creation of new space, both ideologically and on the ground, in which an expanded royal elite could operate and through which they could protect their divinely sanctioned positions and their property? As I will show, the frontier became a critical space in which room was created for the royal military elite to exercise their new roles and to extract the resources that enriched the kingdom and allowed for patronage to be richly bestowed and rewarded. These activities did not require conquest and administration of established polities, but they did require regular successful campaigns: raids beyond the frontier that filled the pastures of the sheepfold with animals, that staffed the weaving establishments, and that brought both wealth and renown to the kings of Ur.

Gehlken, Erlend (Universität Frankfurt), **Tim Collins** (University of Birmingham), **Sandra Woolley** (University of Birmingham), **Laurence Hanes** (University of Birmingham), **Andrew Lewis** (University of Birmingham), **Luis Hernandez Munoz** (University of Birmingham), and **Eugene Ch'ng** (University of Nottingham)

From Uruk to Ur: Automated Matching of Virtual Tablet Fragments

Unlike jigsaw puzzles of thousands of pieces, which computers can now solve, fragmented tablets constitute much more complex freeform three-dimensional “puzzles” whose pieces can belong to an unknown number of complete or incomplete tablets. Computer-aided reconstruction of archaeological fragments has been an active area of research in recent years, although most published work has been specific to the joining of potsherds. Challenges in automated reassembly, aside from the difficulties of acquiring three dimensional scans, include the extremely difficult search problems, the large numbers of false-positive matches and the incorporation of surface imagery with object geometry.

We have produced and refined a means of automatically joining fragments. The process of automated computer joining comprises three main stages: preprocessing, pairwise matching and match ranking. Pairwise matching is an enormously computationally intensive problem that significantly benefits from the parallel computing capacity of modern graphical processing units.

The first successful pair of automated fragment joins was achieved in 2014 for a pair of fragments from Uruk. Further automated joins have since been made using fragments from Ur, currently held by the British Museum. The 3D virtual Ur fragments were acquired with high-resolution photographic texture using a novel, portable, low-cost “scannerless” rotary photogrammetric scanning system. The workflow for the method was designed such that minimal user intervention or training is required for both the 3D acquisition and the automated joining. Future ambitions include the achievement of long-distance photogrammetric matches, for example, of London and Pennsylvania virtual tablet fragments.

Goddeeris, Anne (Universiteit Gent)

A Feast for God and Man: The Redistribution of Sacrificed Animals in Old Babylonian Nippur

Because of Nippur’s prominence, any god of some importance in the Babylonian pantheon wants a pied-à-terre there in the form of a temple or a statue, as to participate in the festivals and receive his/her share in the offerings. Only recently, it is being acknowledged that the Babylonian temples do not function as self-sufficient households, but that the cult is intertwined with all the layers of the social tissue. Temples do not dominate Babylonian society – although they physically dominate the cities with their ziggurats, but they play a central role in its regulation. The private and institutional archives from Nippur illustrate how cultic activities are intertwined with the public works on e.g. canals and city walls, and with the private enterprises of the priestly families.

The Hilprecht Sammlung contains a section of an administrative archive documenting all the aspects of the management of animals in the Nippur temples – from the administration of oxen and donkeys used for ploughing and transport, over the fattening of bovines, sheep, goats and pigs, to assignments of animals to different temples for offerings and the redistribution of the offered meat.

One of these administrative texts was wrongly catalogued because of its atypical lay-out and content. It not only offers a list of townsmen and visitors from other towns who receive mutton on the occasion of a festival, the other parts of the sheep are redistributed to some of the individuals as well, an aspect about which we usually remain uninformed. Studied in its archival, prosopographical and historical context, this text thus offers new evidence about the relations between the temple economy, the city authorities, the residents of Nippur and the guests invited for the festival.

Goodman, Reed (University of Pennsylvania)

Reprising the Lagash-Umma Border Conflict in Light of New Research: The Political Ecology of Water Management in Early Dynastic Mesopotamia

Recent work in geo-archaeology and remote sensing demonstrates that the ancient city of Lagash occupied a unique niche in the varied ecology of southern Mesopotamia. During the Early Dynastic period, in particular, numerous distributaries resulted in an especially water-logged environment, both on- and off-site. The seasonality—and therefore the unpredictability—of nearby marshes, lagoons and estuaries, presented the city with a subsistence and transport base rich in risk and reward. To this end, a newly hypothesized layout of Early Dynastic Lagash, rendered through architectural reconstructions from satellite imagery and time-series maps, recommends a nuanced clarification of the Lagash-Umma border conflict. Specifically, this paper will emphasize Lagash's exceptional vulnerability to inundation, and thus the ever-constant threat of too much water. This line of reasoning departs significantly from traditional implications of water scarcity in regional hostilities. In addition to archaeological evidence, I will make use of third millennium texts from the state of Lagash that address water management. These disparate lines of evidence point out the overriding and constant need for flood control initiatives in Lagash's territory, and hence its susceptibility to the machinations of upstream polities. Finally, the paper will conclude with a consideration of water control just to the north of Lagash and its contribution to the formation of a regional alliance between Umma, Uruk, and Ur.

Gorris, Elynn (Université catholique de Louvain)

Traces of Neo-Elamite Presence in the Persian Gulf: A Preliminary Approach

Although Elam was one of the long-standing kingdoms along the Persian Gulf in antiquity, the evidence on the Elamite involvement in Persian Gulf trade is surprisingly limited. Since most of the Elamite regions (Susiana, Shushtar, Ram Hormuz, Behbahan) were connected through several navigable rivers with the Persian Gulf, Elamites must have profited from this prosperous geographical location.

Especially during the Neo-Elamite period (c. 1000-520 BC), the head of the Persian Gulf was the subject of continuous military confrontations between the Elamites and the Neo-Assyrian Empire, indicating its commercial importance. Nevertheless, direct evidence for a Neo-Elamite maritime trading activities is absent. This paper will therefore explore through cuneiform records (Elamite, Akkadian) the Neo-Elamite presence in the Persian Gulf and its possible involvement in this commercial network.

De Graef, Katrien (Universiteit Gent)

Bad Moon Rising: Changing Fortunes of Early 2nd Millennium BC Ur

The early 2nd millennium BC did not work out very favourably for the city of Ur. It started and ended with a violent destruction of the city: at the dawn of the millennium by the Šimaškians who gave the final blow to the 3rd dynasty of Ur and two and a half centuries later by Samsu-iluna, king of Babylon, who threw the city in to a so-called 'dark age'. In between, the city was subject to the power struggle between the competing dynasties of Isin and Larsa, under the control of which it went to and fro, to end up being incorporated in the Babylonian empire of Hammurabi, which soon started to disintegrate under his successor Samsu-iluna.

Notwithstanding these turbulent times, textual evidence from the early 2nd millennium BC shows that the city of Ur lived through periods of economical, religious and cultural prosperity and remained important and prestigious as a commercial and sacred urban centre and port.

Usually, the periodic collapse and rise of cities, dynasties and empires is considered in political terms or attributed to external factors such as invasions or climate problems, but only rarely touches upon the internal dysfunctions inherent to the system causing the system to implode.

This paper explores the use and value of the *régulation* approach in the study, analysis and understanding of the early 2nd millennium BC history of Ur. The *régulation* theory, influenced by

structural Marxism and the Annales school, among others, studies the transformation of social relations as it creates new forms that are both economic and non-economic, that are organized in structures and themselves reproduce a determinant structure, the mode of production (Aglietta 1976). Basic principle of the *régulation* approach is that all social relations making up society are in se contradictory and that hence crisis is the normal, natural state and non-crisis is a rather chance event. As such, we can look at the turbulent early 2nd millennium BC from another point of view: instead of trying to understand and explain why things went wrong, we should ask ourselves how it came to be that economy, religion and culture flourished and a relative stability was attained in early 2nd millennium BC Ur.

This paper presents some case studies on how the *régulation* approach can be applied to the specific situation of the city of Ur by focusing on particular shapes as well as unique combinations of institutional forms (e.g. subsistence survival, state-estate, tribute-exchange) that temporarily cause stability during which the system reproduces itself and crises are managed despite the system's conflictual and antagonistic character.

Grunert, Nicole (Universität Münster)

Space Syntax Analysis as a Spatial Analysis Tool for Breathing Life into a Dead City

When Woolley excavated parts of the City of Ur, exposing a huge area of domestic houses dating to the Larsa period, he tried to breathe life into this dead city by naming the streets with street names from Oxford and staging pictures with workmen. Apart from making it easier for the excavators to orientate themselves, it also gave the city a more vivid picture. It helps to imagine the city more as a living organism.

By using Space Syntax Analysis, developed in modern Urban and Building planning to analyse new and already existing structures, it should be possible to go even further than just breathing life into the dead city by staging pictures or naming streets and houses. It is also possible to analyse the social relationships in a city quarter. In this paper I examine parts of the AH quarter in Ur, using an Isovist analysis, which investigates the visibility in urban spaces on both a household and an urban scale. By analysing the connectivity and integration of areas in the built space environment, it is possible to generate a pattern of movement as well as locate Hotspots for social contact and interaction. Mapping the possible movement for the inhabitants of those houses makes it possible to determine which residents had social relations to which other complexes. By determining the private vs. public areas and the houses in relation to those, a reconstruction of the social will be possible, even without knowing the spatial distribution of small finds.

Hätinen, Aino (Ruprecht-Karls-Universität)

Sîn-balāssu-iqbi and the Exaltation of the Moon God in Ur

Sîn-balāssu-iqbi, the governor in Ur during the reign of Assurbanipal, was responsible for the most extensive building programme in the moon god's temple complex Ekišnugal since the late 2nd millennium BCE. In connection to this renovation of the moon god's temple and the ziqqurrat, several inscriptions were produced that give a glimpse to the local religious notions concerning the moon god during this time period. The prominent feature in these inscriptions of Sîn-balāssu-iqbi is the notion of the moon god Nanna/Sîn being a local Enlil-figure in Ur. This is evident not only on the basis of the epithets that describe Nanna/Sîn as the king of the gods and the king of heaven and earth, but this is implied also by the possible renaming of the ziqqurrat and the apparent equation of the goddess Ningal with Enlil's wife Ninlil. This paper aims to review the inscriptions of Sîn-balāssu-iqbi and the ways, in which they praise the moon god as the divine king in this local context. A reassessment of these sources is much needed, since the religious notions present in them have previously received only cursory remarks. An Assyrian influence for this exaltation has been suggested, but comparison to other Babylonian cities and deities, such as the sun god Šamaš in Sippar, shows that there is no need to seek such explanations: the role of the

moon god as the local divine king has to be seen as an example for the exaltation of the city's tutelary deity in the local context.

al-Hamdani, Abdulmir (Iraqi State Board of Antiquities and Heritage)

The Shadow State: The Settlement System in Ur-Eridu Region During the First Sealand Dynasty (1721-1340 BCE)

The Sealand was a largely marshy area in southern lower Mesopotamia. It was called KUR-A-AB--BA in Sumerian, *māt tâmti(m)* in Akkadian. The Sumerian term A-AB-BA is commonly translated as a sea. But Robert Adams suggests that aabba refers to a large body of open water like the current Hawr al Ḥammar. Indeed, the ethnographic data support the notion that the term A-AB-BA could mean a marshland or water body not necessarily a sea or a gulf.

The region of the Sealand was the seat of power for at least three dynasties from the middle of the second millennium BCE, but the region had no independent political status before the late Old Babylonian period. The geographic name of the dynasty associated with the Sealand was given in the kinglists, which were written much later, during the first millennium BCE. The first time that the title "king of the Sealand" LUGAL.A.AB.BA, appeared independently was in the reign of Samsuiluna (ca. 1750–1712 BCE). This is now known as the first Sealand dynasty.

The paper will consider: settlement and canal systems before the first Sealand dynasty; settlement patterns during the first Sealand dynasty; the canal system; site distribution during the first Sealand dynasty in the region of Ur–Eridu; marsh sites east of Eridu; and special purpose sites. It will propose Tell Dehaila, west of Ur, as a potential location of the capital city of the Sealand.

Hammer, Emily (University of Chicago) and **Jason Ur** (Harvard University)

The City and Landscape of Ur: An Aerial and Satellite Reassessment

Despite its status as one of the best-excavated cities in Mesopotamia, the city of Ur was passed over entirely by the archaeological revolution in landscape archaeology. Woolley's investigations were long in the past by the time intensive surface collections were undertaken at Uruk, Mashkan-shapir, and Kish. Wright's survey of the Eridu basin provided some regional context for the site, but he did not undertake systematic work at Ur. With the return of archaeological research to the site, it is the appropriate time to take stock of what is known about the demographic and structural history of urbanism at the site, based on a spatial reassessment of the excavations, and a close analysis of remote sensing datasets, including declassified intelligence imagery from the CORONA satellite program (1960–1972) and the U2 aerial program (1959). This review shows the particular challenges to landscape archaeology presented by a complex site like Ur. It also suggests that the settlement complex was much larger than previously supposed by 20th century surveyors.

Hauptmann, Andreas (Deutsches Bergbau-Museum), **Sabine Klein** (Goethe-Universität Frankfurt), and **Richard Zettler** (University of Pennsylvania Museum)

On the Making and Provenancing of Pigments from the Early Dynastic Royal Tombs of Ur, Mesopotamia

A total of 51 cosmetic pigments from the Royal Cemetery of the Sumerian city of Ur, Mesopotamia, now in the collections of the Penn Museum, Philadelphia, were investigated for their mineralogical, inorganic and organic chemical and lead isotope composition. The aim of this study was to investigate the making of the pigments and to search for the origin of the material used.

Main components of the green pigments were green secondary copper minerals such as (par-)atacamite mixed with white hydroxyapatite from bones used as extender. Copper acetates and formic acids were detected. These organic compounds, and matching lead isotope data of pigments with copper metal found at ED Ur as well indicate the making of bluish-greenish verdigris at Ur itself. Corrosion by soil deposition led to the change of colour and transformation to green minerals present today in the pigments.

Black pigments mostly consist of black manganese minerals. Subordinated black chromophores are bitumen and soot.

White pigments were made of oxidised white lead minerals, while in red pigments hematite was detected.

The majority of the pigments were detectably mixed with vegetable oil or an animal fat in order used as binders to produce pastes, which allowed the pigments to be smoothly smeared into the (shell) containers. Chemical and lead isotope analyses point to a provenance of the coloring minerals from ore deposits in Oman, on the Iranian Plateau and in southeast Anatolia.

Hauptmann, Andreas (Deutsches Bergbau-Museum), **Sabine Klein** (Goethe-Universität Frankfurt), and **Richard Zettler** (University of Pennsylvania Museum)

Sorts of Gold, Sorts of Silver from the Royal Tombs of Ur, Mesopotamia

Within a joint venture between the Penn Museum, the Deutsches Bergbau-Museum Bochum, the Goethe University, Frankfurt a.M. and the British Museum, London, a series of non-destructive chemical analyses on selected gold and silver objects were performed using a handheld X-ray fluorescence spectrometer. As several sorts of gold and silver are mentioned in cuneiform tablets the question addressed was the material composition of these objects. Do the artifacts, which are conventionally termed as “gold” indeed consist of pure gold or are these gold alloys? If the artifacts were made of alloys rather than of pure gold, was the alloy produced deliberately by adding other components, e.g., silver and/or copper to the gold, or have such alloys natural origin?

A selection of vessels, tools, weapons, and jewelries (30 objects) predominantly selected from the tomb of Pu-abi (PG 800) and the “Great Death pit” (PG 1237), from which most of the objects were excavated. Gold, silver, and subordinated copper are the predominant alloying components of the gold objects. Most of the gold objects were manufactured from a natural gold-silver alloy. Pure gold, made by metallurgical separation is not known at Ur, but alloying techniques were applied. Beside the variety of gold-silver-alloys some objects contain extraordinary high copper contents (23 – 40 wt.%). Artifacts cast of massive metal such as the dagger blade of tomb 1054 (# 30-12-550), two chisels (# B16724, # B16725) from King Pu-abi’s grave (PG 800) are made of this artificial alloy. Surface enrichment of gold was manufactured by depletion gilding. Adze # B 16691 consists of aurian silver high in copper. Silver objects use to contain some copper. Deliberate alloying techniques are probably accompanied by the first tin bronzes.

Hausleiter, Arnulf (Deutsches Archäologisches Institut)

Foreign and Local Gods in Northwest Arabia

At the oasis of Tayma, Northwest-Arabia, a commercial hub on the so-called incense road, based on late 1st millennium BC written documents from the site, the local pantheon has been defined as Aramaean. It is composed by the main god ŠLM – its name meaning at the same time “image” whose name appears with three epithets, probably with topographic references – and represented probably by a bucranium. The two other deities (Ashima and Shingalla) are associated with clearly allochthonous symbols. Earlier, at the time of King Nabonidus’ (556–539 BC), an explicit follower of the moon-god Šîn, ten-year occupation of Hijazi oases, at Tayma the official representation depicts only Babylonian divine symbols, and nothing is known of the local religious framework. However, a recently discovered stele of this king at the oasis of al-Hayit probably mentions, for the first time, local gods. The aim of the paper is to discussing this very preliminary evidence in respect to the connectedness of the oasis with Syro-Mesopotamia and other regions from the early 2nd millennium BC onwards.

Hearne, James (Western Washington University) and **Yudong Liu** (Western Washington University)

Dating Tablets of the Ur III Period

This paper reports on our efforts to assign dates to tablets the Ur III period (2112–2004 BC) whose dates were either obliterated or never recorded. We date the tablets by appeal to the social networks implied by the occurrence of identical names on more than one tablet. To implement this methodology we have devised a computer program in the machine learning tradition to identify proper names in Sumerian texts and to use those names to build a social network, thus construing each tablet as a kind of Facebook account. The dates of undated tablets are estimated by how well the names in unknown tablets fit in with the social network of known date.

The paper reports primarily on the application of this methodology to the Garshana corpus, a fully curated corpus in which proper names have already been identified, obviating the need for a computer program to initiate this step. We will report results that show that tables of unknown date exhibit a strong tropism for a particular social network. Two sorts of results will be discussed: the success of placing a tablet in a three-year time window and that of placing a tablet reliably at a particular year.

Hershkovitz, Jonathan (Tel Aviv University)

The Absolute Chronology of the First Sealand Dynasty and its Influence on the Persian Gulf

On the basis of the Agum-kakrime inscription, it is generally accepted to attribute the reconstruction of Babylon after the fall of its first dynasty to Agum II, father of Burna-Buriaš I, who lived around 1500 BC. The inscription, allegedly introduces the genealogy of Agum-kakrime with four generations preceding him. However, a careful re-examination of the inscription reveals that between Agum-kakrime and his ancestors, passed an unknown intermediate time, probably longer than four generations. This intermediate period is therefore a “Dark Age” as far as absolute chronology is concerned.

The only preserved royal name sequence during this Dark-Age is that of the First Sealand Dynasty. Recently published Sealand sources, combined with a new synchronism with the First Dynasty of Babylon, enable us to determine that the intermediate period between the fall of Babylon and the Agum-kakrime’s reconstruction, actually lasted longer than the Low-Chronology suggests.

The absolute chronology of Mesopotamia in the Dark-Age may directly influence the duration of the parallel strata of the Gulf entities of Failaka 3B and Qala'at al-Bahrain IIIa. Ceramic sequences as well as textual discoveries from the Gulf that include a year-name of Ea-gāmil, last king of the First Sealand Dynasty could shed light on the question of the connections between Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf during the Dark-Age of the 16th century BC.

Hess, Christian (Freie Universität Berlin)

Springtime for Adad: SEM 117 and the Middle Babylonian Hymnic Tradition

At the end of his *Sumerian Epics and Myths*, Edward Chiera included a tablet containing an Akkadian hymn, which seems in large sections to describe a seasonal myth. The hymn is otherwise unique, but numerous passages reflect stylistic forms and literary themes known from other texts from the second millennium, including cosmic battle and the praise of royal abundance. However, though the text is regularly cited in the dictionaries, it has, with few exceptions, since been largely neglected. This neglect is all the more surprising since it provides one of the few relatively well-preserved hymns from the Middle Babylonian period. The paper will present a brief edition of the text, including comments on grammar and dating, and discuss its role in defining the still poorly understood Middle Babylonian literary tradition.

Ito, Sanae (University of Helsinki)

The Sibling Rivalry in Ur Around the Time of the Revolt of Šamaš-šumu-ukīn

There was a sibling rivalry between Sīn-šarru-ušur and Sīn-tabni-ušur for the governorship of Ur around the time of the revolt of Šamaš-šumu-ukīn. Both were members of a ruling family in Ur; their

father Nikkal-iddin and brother Sīn-balāssu-iqbi had also served as governors of Ur before their tenures. Sīn-šarru-ušur was probably replaced by Sīn-tabni-ušur shortly before or after the revolt began because it is likely that the former appeared suspicious in the eyes of Assurbanipal and the latter was in favour of the Assyrian king.

The contest between the brothers was researched by Durand (1981, *RA* 75) and Frame (1992, *Babylonia 689-627 B.C.*; 2004, *NABU*). In addition, prosopographical studies on Sīn-šarru-ušur and Sīn-tabni-ušur in *The Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire* 3/I (2002) provide more documents, especially letters, concerning their activities. These texts indicate that, besides Sīn-šarru-ušur and Sīn-tabni-ušur, not only the citizens of Ur but also the neighbourhoods of Ur, including the inhabitants of the city Kissik and the Gurasimmu, could be involved in the dispute. This paper attempts to place the relevant texts in sequence and examines the events related to the sibling rivalry in more detail.

Jansen, Moritz (University of Pennsylvania Museum), **Andreas Hauptman** (Deutsches Bergbau-Museum), **Sabine Klein** (Goethe-Universität Frankfurt), and **Richard Zettler** (University of Pennsylvania Museum)

Trace Elements and Isotopes: The Origin of Gold from Ur from a Geochemical Point of View

Gold artifacts recovered from the third millennium Early Dynastic Royal Tombs of Ur in Mesopotamia represent a truly unique archaeological assemblage, due both to the size of the assemblage (hundreds of gold objects) as well as evidence for highly-skilled processing techniques. The fact that there are no natural gold sources in Southern Mesopotamia prompts a question concerning the origin of the raw material used to create these artifacts. Gold was likely imported from other regions such as Anatolia, Iran, Afghanistan, Egypt or even India. The rich corpus of cuneiform tablets from Ur could help to identify trade relations in antiquity through the naming of specific trading posts. However, the tablets date slightly later than the ED period and little is known about the provenance of the site's earliest gold artifacts.

Therefore this project seeks to define the geochemical fingerprint of these objects in order to identify the origin of Ur's gold through its chemical and isotopic composition. Ideally, this method could trace the gold back to the location of its natural deposit(s). In special focus are the numerous inclusions of natural alloys of the Platinum Group Elements that were previously analyzed and indicate that the gold derived from alluvial (riverine) sources. For our analytical work, we used two different methods: first, the chemical composition with main, minor, and trace elements was determined by electron probe micro-analysis and laser-ablation plasma mass spectrometry. Second, the isotopic composition of selected elements (Pb, Os, Cu) was measured by multi-collector plasma mass spectrometry.

Small variations in the trace element composition of the gold artifacts indicate the use of a single alluvial gold source, or closely related sources possessing the same origin. The numerous deposits of Egypt can be excluded due to our analysis, while the geochemical fingerprint pinpoints the source of the gold to rich deposits located in Western Iran or Northern Afghanistan. These findings must be confirmed by the geochemical characterization of those gold occurrences in future, as part of a larger contribution toward our understanding of the extensive trade networks of Early Bronze Age Mesopotamia.

Jeffers, Joshua (University of Pennsylvania)

Re-evaluating the Recensions of Ashurbanipal's Prism F Inscription: Elucidating the Compositional History of the Prism F Class

The Prism F class of Ashurbanipal's royal inscriptions is the first version of his *res gestae* that contains a relatively complete accounting of the king's military endeavors. Significant to this prism class, scholars have noted that its individual exemplars contain considerable variations from the text's main version. In a short article published in 1977, M. Cogan identified seven discrete recensions of the Prism F inscription based on the exemplars known to him at that time. With the current efforts of the Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period (RINAP) project to bring together the over 200 certain exemplars of the Prism F inscription as part of the upcoming RINAP 5/1 volume, Cogan's classification scheme can

be reassessed. Contrary to his analysis that identifies seven recensions, the evidence provided by the exemplars suggests that there is in fact only one major recension of this inscription besides the main version of the text, with just a few exemplars preserving two other variations in a single episode. Furthermore, with respect to Prism F's compositional history, an examination of this major recension suggests that it may have been the first version of the Prism F inscription that was then re-edited and it became the main version of the text.

Jiménez, Enrique (Yale University)

The Story of the Poor, Forlorn Wren

In Mesopotamian literature, Wren is a small bird with big ambitions. A well-known fable, transmitted from the Old Babylonian to the Neo-Assyrian periods, tells how this bird – the smallest of all birds recorded in Iraq – judges himself the equal of an unimpressed elephant. Already in the 1920s this fable was compared to a Greek fable featuring a wren and another much larger animal.

During the talk a hitherto unpublished fable, narrating another adventure of Wren, will be presented. In it, the small wren is presented as an ironic counterpart of the large eagle: while the latter nests “on the top of a mountain,” the wren lays his eggs “on the mountain-plant.” Notwithstanding their different nesting abodes, Wren's life is presented as threatened by eagles and hawks: for this reason, Wren addresses Šamaš – the god of justice – and asks him to protect his life. Šamaš then intervenes, punishes Eagle and exalts Wren, making them equal. The text ends with an epimythium, exhorting birds “from the mountain and the plain” to praise Šamaš.

This fable, of some 40 verses, is preserved in four manuscripts, only one of which was previously published in copy alone. All four manuscripts probably date to the second or first centuries BCE: one of them, dated to 69 BCE, is one of the latest datable cuneiform literary tablets. Moreover, the composition of the text can be dated, on grammatical grounds, to the Late Babylonian period. In addition, a famous fable transmitted from Antiquity until the modern period, which presents a wren defeating an eagle in a contest to choose the king of birds, can be shown to have many elements in common with the Akkadian fable and to be, perhaps, a late scion of it.

Kaercher, Kyra (University of Pennsylvania) and **Tessa de Alarcon** (University of Pennsylvania Museum)

Science and Technology: Using UrOnline to Aid in Scientific Analysis

The creation of UrOnline, a joint project between the Penn Museum and the British Museum, has led to re-analysis of many objects from Ur. UrOnline brings together modern, archival, and field records into one digital platform. As part of this project objects are being looked at by conservators and researchers at both museums in order to gather modern information. Here at the Penn Museum this includes taking modern measurements, photographs, and conducting a condition assessment of all of the artifacts. Some objects have been selected for further analysis. A petrographic study of clay objects, a PXRf study of obsidian, X-rays of various materials, and photomicrographs of pseudomorphs have all been performed in the past 3 years. This paper explains these studies and their preliminary results, and shows how UrOnline can be used to display these results. The scientific analysis of these materials can be used to refine what we know about Woolley's excavations and the ancient city of Ur.

Karacic, Steve (Florida State University), **Peter Magee** (Bryn Mawr), and **Phillip Drechsler** (Universität Tübingen)

New Evidence on Ubaid-Period Trade with the Arabian Gulf

In this paper we present the results and implications of geochemical analysis of pottery from the Neolithic site of Dosariyah in Saudi Arabia. This site is critically important for our understanding of Ubaid period trade in the Arabian Gulf since it has provided large amounts of Ubaid ceramics and a

Coarse Red Ware that has for a long time been considered to be locally produced. The excavations at Dosariyah have provided samples of both of these wares in carefully excavated stratigraphic contexts. Analysis of material from this site thus permits a detailed study of the nature and impact of interaction between the Neolithic nomadic pastoralists of Arabia and the early sedentary farming cultures of southern Mesopotamia. In this first round of analysis, we aim to contribute to this issue by addressing two inter-related questions:

1. Does geochemical analysis support the long-held belief that Coarse Red Ware and Ubaid have different origins?

2. Does geochemical analysis indicate any diachronic or synchronic differences in the sources of Ubaid pottery found at Dosariyah?

Our results indicate meaningful answers can be provided to both these questions.

Karahashi, Fumi (Chuo University)

Royal Nurses and Midwives in Pre-Sargonic Lagaš Texts

In 2011 Miguel Civil published, from the Schøhen Collection, a clay cylinder dated to the Ur III period, which was inscribed with the laws of Ur-Namma and contained new paragraphs not known until then, including some concerning women. Of special interest for me is the one that stipulates the wages of the hired wet-nurse with a midwife function. In light of this new information, I reviewed the nurses and midwives who appear in Pre-sargonic Lagaš texts, with the aim of examining their socio-economic status. Although our texts provide rather limited information on nurses and midwives, they point to the relatively high socio-economic status of these women, as is suggested by larger rations, holding of subsistence land, and membership in the group of lu₂-igi-nigin₂.

Kawami, Trudy (School of Visual Arts, New York City)

The Sumerian Goddess Ninḫursaġa and the Puzzle of her Temple at Tell al-Obaid

The Sumerian goddess Ninḫursaġa is usually identified as a mother goddess associated with fertility and procreation. The evidence for this identity is based in part on excavated finds from a mid-third millennium temple dedicated to her at Tell al-Ubaid, perhaps ancient Nutur, in southern Mesopotamia. Annapadda, king of Ur, son of Mes-anne-padda, king of Ur, claimed to have built it for her. Among the art works found there is an inlaid shell, stone and copper panel with the only scene of cattle milking known from the 3rd millennium BCE. Since Sumerian rulers like Eanatum, Enanatum, Lu-Utu and Lugalzagezi claimed to have been nursed with Ninḫursaġa's "special milk," she has been portrayed as a nurturing goddess associated with cattle and dairying.

A careful reexamination of the excavated remains nearly 20 years ago by J.-D. Forest, (*Le Premiers temples de Mesopotamie [4e et 3e mill.] BAR International Series 765, 1999*), clearly demonstrated that the much-reproduced reconstruction of the temple façade from 1927 is incorrect and that there is no indication where the famous milking scene was originally installed. Furthermore, none of the extant third millennium BCE inscriptions mentioning Ninḫursaġa refers to cattle, milk or dairy products. Instead they describe her as enthroned like a mighty serpent or dragon, invoke her powerful "battle net", and note that "when she talks heaven trembles, when she opens her mouth a storm thunders." This paper will look at the apparent disconnect between the archaeological remains and the contemporaneous references with an eye to better understanding this deity and her temple at Tell al-Obaid.

Kertai, David (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Idols of Assyria: The Reception of the Neo-Assyrian Palace Colossi in the West

The earliest excavations of Assyria were embedded into a colonial discourse in which the contemporary people living in the former territories of Assyria were characterized as unable to properly appreciate and comprehend the "discoveries" being made. Simultaneously, the art objects extant from

Assyria struggled to be accepted into an art historical canon rooted in ancient Greece. This paper discusses the ways in which Assyrian objects were used within these contexts by different groups and individuals. It will focus on the so-called *lamassu*, the large, winged, human-headed bull and lion colossi excavated from the Neo Assyrian palaces, whose reception exemplifies the appreciation and use of Assyrian antiquities. Though the colossi were generally agreed to represent the idols of Assyria, reactions to them by different groups of people were framed quite differently. They were described, for example, as having been misunderstood and feared by the local Arabs, appropriately interpreted by their excavators, mistrusted by the cultural elite, and highly popular among the general European public.

Klein, Jacob (Bar-Ilan University)

Šulgi K: A Unique Poem Referring to Nin-Isina, Demons and (Perhaps) Sick People

Šulgi K is a 96-line-long fragment from a unique Šulgi hymn, which originally may have contained 160 lines or more. The main duplicate of this composition, containing 81 lines (Fitzwilliam Museum ANE 87-1904), is now being studied from a copy made by W.G. Lambert and put at my disposal about 35 years ago. The hymn contains a unique cultic or religious narrative, with king Šulgi at its center. Unfortunately, one or two signs in the beginning of each line of the hymn are missing, and therefore it is extremely difficult to determine the purport of the narrative. The narrative is divided into unequal stanzas, marked with the following refrain (recurring at least five times with slight variations): x-ki-gu-la-àm é-gal-e / [šul]-gi sipad zi ki-en-gi-ra-ke4 á-bi-šè ba-an-dah. Judging from the refrain and from description of demons and their actions in one stanza, we may assume that the hymn describes a visit or descent of Šulgi to the netherworld. However, the reference to the goddess Nin-Isina and to the healing(?) of sick people in two other succeeding stanzas may indicate that ki-gu-la in the refrain does not refer to the netherworld, but to a terrestrial domain. Some key passages of the hymn will be cited and suggestions as to its purport will be welcomed.

Klein, Sabine (Goethe-Universität Frankfurt) and **Andreas Hauptmann** (Deutsches Bergbau-Museum)

Ur, Mesopotamia: The Lead Metal from Pit X

The very last effort of Sir Leonard Woolley in Ur, Mesopotamia, was the excavation of additional graves from the transition period between Late Uruk and Early Dynastic Period, the Jamdet Nasr period (c. 3100–2900 BCE). Pit X brought out a total of 84 metal objects: 4 silver objects, 42 copper objects, and 38 lead objects. In the Penn Museum a small variety of lead object types is preserved such as a flat bowl, a table or tray, or a number of lead metal sheets covering small ceramic cups. The small ceramic cups turned out to be the caps of large ceramic bottles, and the lead sheets, which were wrapped tightly around the turned-over cups functioned as seals. This installation is unique and appears only for a very short period of time.

Three complete bottle-cap combinations exist in the collections: Two in Penn Museum and a third one in Birmingham Museum. The present study focuses on geochemical analysis of the lead objects. It was allowed by the two museums to take samples. These were then used for elemental analysis by ICP-MS in Bochum (German Mining Museum) and lead isotope analysis in Frankfurt a. M. (geochemistry laboratories of Goethe University).

The elemental analysis included the detection of 14 elements. The presence of silver in notable but variable concentrations point to the gaining of the lead metal from polymetallic mineral sources rather than from pure galena. It is therefore unlikely that de-silvered lead from the silver extraction process has been used as it is commonly argued whenever lead metal appears in larger amounts. The lead isotope analysis point to an origin of the lead from ore deposits in Iran or southeast Turkey, but the complete analytical evidences strengthen Turkey as potential source region for the lead metal from Pit X.

Klein, Sabine (Goethe-Universität Frankfurt), **Susan La Niece** (British Museum), and **Andreas Hauptmann** (Deutsches Bergbau-Museum)

Objects from the Ur Collection of the British Museum: Sampling and Analytical Investigations

Our master project on the artifacts from the Royal Tombs of Ur has developed in collaboration with Penn Museum. A generous amount of material in Penn Museum was already accessible to us, but we aimed to supplement the material from Philadelphia, with objects from the British Museum from the different metal groups: gold, silver, copper and bronze,

We received permission from the British Museum to take samples of 7 gold, 10 silver, and 16 copper objects from the Royal Tombs of Ur. Either drilling with drill bits <1 mm or clipping off smallest pieces from the objects was done by Susan La Niece, Scientific Research Department. The requirement is for c. 10 mg of fresh material.

Elemental analysis and lead isotope analysis so far focused on the copper-based objects and were performed on dissolved samples with Mass Spectrometer devices in Bochum and Frankfurt. The copper objects are either pure copper metal, or arsenic- or tin-containing copper metal. When the elements such as arsenic, tin, or silver are treated ungrouped rather than applying compositional thresholds, the question arises whether the typically postulated limit of 1 - 2 % of an element to distinguish between natural impurity or deliberate addition is still tenable.

Lead isotope analyses show similarity of copper-based objects excavated from various graves in Ur with previous analyses (Begemann et al. 2010). Also the green copper rich pigments from the Royal tombs appear identical in isotopic composition. Surprisingly even the silver objects appear to be identical in source to the copper metal. Oman and Turkey are potential candidates for source regions of copper and silver, and increasingly the results point towards Oman.

Kleinerman, Alexandra (Cornell University) and **Alhena Gadotti** (Towson University)

Beyond Nippur and Ur: Early Education in Southern Mesopotamia During the Old Babylonian Period

The Jonathan and Jeannette Rosen Ancient Near Eastern Studies tablet collection at Cornell University houses approximately 800 Sumerian school texts. As expected, these consist of sign, lexical and professions lists, Sumerian and Akkadian personal names, divine names, proverbs, and excerpts from literary compositions. At the same time, however, these texts exhibit internal variation in the order of elements attested in the standard Nippur and Ur lists. Many also contain sections of lists that are seemingly unparalleled.

The purpose of our investigation is to provide a general overview of this material. In particular, we aim to nuance the current understanding of the early stages of education in southern Mesopotamia during the Old Babylonian period.

Knapp, Andrew (Eerdmans)

Royal Succession in the Ancient Near East

The protocols for succession to the throne in the various civilizations of the ancient Near East have attracted relatively little scholarly attention. Since the work of scholars such as Jacobsen and Lambert in the middle of the 20th century, most scholars have accepted that the dynastic principle held in Mesopotamia, and presumably the surrounding societies. Otherwise, with the exception of Hittitologists, few scholars of the ancient Near East have explored the general tenets governing royal succession. In the absence of such work, it is often taken for granted that the throne was intended to pass to the incumbent king's eldest son according to standard rules of primogeniture.

In this paper, I will survey some of the available evidence from the ancient Near East regarding royal succession, beginning with Hatti, and then discussing clues from Ugarit, Assyria, Persia, and elsewhere. I will submit two proposals on the basis of the combined evidence. First, while scholars sometimes treat the concept of primogeniture as universal to monarchic societies, in reality it is a culturally conditioned phenomenon that should not be assumed as a default principle of royal succession. Second, while one

must avoid lumping the disparate civilizations of the ancient Near East into a single unit, the majority of the evidence points to one underlying succession protocol: that in a “standard” scenario the incumbent king was expected to select a successor from a pool of viable candidates.

Knott, Elizabeth (New York University)

Mari’s Investiture Scene and the Ideology of Conquest in the Time of Samsi-Addu

Mari’s Investiture Scene is among the most famous works of art known from the ancient Near East. Found in Court 106 of the royal palace, near the door leading to the throne room, the central frame of the painting features two registers: in the upper is a representation of a king receiving insignias of kingship from the goddess Ishtar, below are two goddesses who hold vases with flowing water. The dating of the painting has been debated, with scholars first proposing a date in the reign of Zimri-Lim, and then more recently in the reign of Yahdun-Lim. This paper reviews the methods used to date Mari’s Investiture Scene and concludes that the imagery remains the best source for dating. I discuss archaeological, textual, and visual data that point towards the creation of the painting as a celebration of Samsi-Addu’s conquest of Mari. This re-dating has implications for the Investiture Scene’s representation of space and its ideological significance. Read as a carefully constructed conquest image of Samsi-Addu, the Investiture Scene’s relationship to religion, geography, and memory are made manifest.

Konstantopoulos, Gina (Institute for the Study of the Ancient World)

Gods in the Margins: Religion and the Fictionalized Frontier in Sumerian Literary Texts

A number of different geographies can be found across the corpus of Sumerian literary texts. Some of these, such as the city of Aratta that populates the Enmerkar and Lugalbanda narratives, may be considered entirely fictional. Others, such as the Cedar Forest, which occurs most prominently in the Gilgamesh cycle, and the island of Dilmun, exist as real locations that have been abstracted – fictionalized and to a degree sensationalized – by their place on or beyond the frontier. Although this distance may be commonly used to demonstrate the power and far-reaching dominion of kings, it also permits, if not encourages, the more frequent appearance of supernatural figures such as monsters and demons, which easily inhabit these spaces. The abstracted nature of these spaces allows for them to function as the setting for grander narratives, creating a semi-mythical space for the heroes of these texts to function in their larger-than-life capacities. However, the more fantastical depictions of these locations must also exist within the framework of the real interactions that are also depicted within the cuneiform record. The two spheres blur: the Cedar Forest may have existed as a set piece for the combat between Gilgamesh, Enkidu, and the monstrous Huwawa, but that conflict was precipitated by Gilgamesh’s desire to attain a very real natural resource from the region – its eponymous cedars, which were used in the construction of temples. This paper will argue that the necessity and frequency of trade and military interactions with these distant lands did not work at cross-purposes to their more mythological depictions, but instead facilitated them, serving to both inform and encourage their representation and significance within the literary and religious sphere.

Koubková, Evelyne (Charles University, Prague)

Washing the Mouth of a Kettledrum

The ritual for covering a kettledrum, attested from the Neo-Assyrian and Late Babylonian period, has been compared several times to the Mouth washing ritual for the induction of cult statues with which it shares a number of features. There are other reasons to suppose that the kettledrum was a kind of divine representation, although this deity most probably had no anthropomorphic appearance. Nevertheless, can we maintain a unidirectional explanation of mouth-washing as a means of creating deities from hand-made artifacts? And how can one wash the mouth of a drum?

It appears that the mouth-washing was a purificatory act which could be applied to a variety of objects, animals, and people. Some of these do not even possess a mouth, while others do not undergo

any kind of *deification* or *animation* in the ritual either. A recent article by Yitzhaq Feder suggests that there can be multiple concepts labeled as purity current in the same cultural area. I will inquire into the complex associations of purification in ancient Mesopotamia to show the mouth-washing was an act of achieving a particular kind of purity which was most closely associated with brightness, and therefore with divine qualities. Nevertheless, the whole ritual context in which this act was embedded must be taken into consideration, as the acquisition of divine status was only one of its varied effects.

Lecompte, Camille (Centre national de la recherche scientifique, Paris), **Giacomo Benati** (University of Bologna), and **Emmert Clevenstine** (University of Geneva)

Non-administrative Documents from Archaic Ur and from the Early Dynastic I–II Period

Although the bulk of the written documentation from the Early Dynastic I–II period consists of administrative and economic records, a small number of cuneiform texts are different in nature and are identified as lexical or “school” tablets, some as exercises. The present paper is an attempt at sketching their importance for understanding the cultural transition between the Late Uruk and Fāra periods. The lexical evidence from ED I–II Ur is limited and consists mainly of copies of lists from the Late Uruk Period, but also includes the earliest list of divine names, which was seemingly invented at that time. Combined with this direct evidence, the analysis of the lexical lists from Fāra that are devoid of any Late Uruk forerunner suggests that the ED IIIa tradition might have some roots in the previous period. The paper will also address a small group of tablets that are similar in shape to the texts labelled as “Practice” for the Late Uruk period, as well as their possible function. Literary texts, albeit scarce (one of the possible ED I–II literary texts, called “Figure aux Plumes”, originating from Girsu), show new features in the usage of writing. The discussion of this textual material relies on the new reconstruction of the archaeological context offered recently by G. Benati.

Lenzi, Alan (University of the Pacific)

Assyriology at the Liberal Arts College: A Report from the Field

There is an ideal in American Assyriology that active scholars will work at a research university, where they will teach Akkadian and/or Sumerian and lead philological seminars on selected texts from their sub-specialty. Although such an Assyriologist may teach an undergraduate course or two each year, their most important pedagogical efforts will be directed at graduate students. The reality of the academic job market makes this career path available to relatively few scholars. Those who remain in academia often find employment teaching undergraduates in a department of history, religious studies, art history, or comparative literature. The present paper shares my experiences of doing precisely this for the last ten years in a religious studies department at a relatively small liberal arts college. In the first part of my paper, I discuss various ways I have incorporated Assyriological materials into a majority of my undergraduate classes. In the second, I identify the professional challenges and the benefits of Assyriologists working in an academic unit not focused on Near Eastern Studies. And in the last, I offer some perspectives on how PhD students in Assyriology can shape their education (and dissertation research) so as to become an attractive candidate for jobs outside of a NELC department. In each part I consider the ramifications of the topic under discussion in terms of both the individual scholar and the field as a whole.

Magee, Peter (Bryn Mawr)

The Donkey of the Sea: New Evidence for the Domestication of the Dromedary Camel and its Appearance in Southern Mesopotamia

This paper presents an overview of the state of evidence concerning the appearance of domesticated dromedary camel in the ancient Near East, with specific attention to the issue of when domesticated dromedaries appear in the archaeological and textual record from southern Mesopotamia. It positions this

evidence in reference to the long history of trade and exchange between southern Mesopotamia and the Arabian Gulf.

Malko, Helen (Columbia University)

Investigation into the Impacts of Foreign Ruling Minorities in Traditional State Societies: The Case of the Kassite State in Babylonia

This research examines the phenomenon of foreign ruling minorities in ancient state societies. It investigates how the Kassites, as a foreign minority, were able to control and maintain political power over the Babylonian majority for centuries. Utilizing two ethnohistorical models of foreign ruling minorities, namely the Arabs in Spain and the Mamluks in Egypt, this paper evaluates the mechanisms employed by the Kassites to maintain political power and the nature of their interaction with Babylonian society as reflected in the material culture and historical records. It shows that Kassites' military skills combined with ruralization of Babylonia might have paved the way for their initial political control over Babylonia. Eventually control over resources and a centralized administration system, headed by the foreign monarchy, sustained the Kassite state. Culturally, the Kassite monarchs successfully manipulated Babylonian religious and kingship traditions to project an image of themselves as true Babylonian rulers, thereby legitimizing their authority. At the same time, however, the kings did not emulate traditional religious and royal architecture; instead, principles of combining the new with the old became particularly evident in Babylonian monumental architecture. Finally, the Kassites seem to have focused on the manipulation of the local elites, without interfering with the socioeconomic organization of the broader society on the domestic level. This approach of cultural preservation and innovation might have been the key factor that enabled the Kassites to maintain political authority over Babylonia for a long period of time.

McGeough, Kevin (University of Lethbridge) and **Elizabeth Galway** (University of Lethbridge)

Excavating Ur in Children's Literature

The sensation that surrounded Woolley's excavations at Ur in the 1920s fundamentally transformed the popular reception of ancient Mesopotamia. The discoveries were in and of themselves remarkable but Woolley's particular skills at public outreach and his approach to storytelling as a means of excavation reporting meant that much of the results of his work were readily adapted into other popular culture forms. In this paper, Kevin McGeough and Elizabeth Galway examine how the excavations at Ur marked a turning point in the representations of Mesopotamia aimed at child audiences. Prior to the Ur excavations, Biblical and Classical connections to the site were paramount in children's literature that discussed Ur. After Woolley's excavations, outreach to children came to be oriented around iconic objects, narratives of human sacrifice, and class-based discussions of everyday life. Whiggish historical narratives about the triumph of liberalism in relation to despotism were easily supported by Woolley's presentation of the cemetery at Ur. The auratic treasures of Ur, while evocative, were essentially empty signifiers allowing authors to create meaning that was deemed appropriate for child readers, even if that meaning had more to do with 20th-century British and American concerns than Mesopotamian culture. By the time of Woolley's excavations, Sumer had come to be understood as the "first civilization" in world history. The seeming chronological primacy of Sumer in treatments of "western civilization" meant that these arguments made by authors of children literature were particularly powerful in naturalizing early 20th-century concerns and values.

McMahon, Augusta (University of Cambridge), **Tina Greenfield** (University of Manitoba / University of Cambridge), and **Hazel Reade** (University College London)

The Oxen Project: Herd Animal Management in Early Dynastic III Ur

This paper introduces a new project, exploring the relationships among humans, domesticated animals and the environment in southern Mesopotamia during the Early Dynastic Period. Phase I of this

project has focused on Ur, as a key site for understanding late Early Dynastic environmental micro-regions. This paper will present the results from zooarchaeological and isotopic analyses conducted on oxen from selected graves in the Royal Cemetery and on comparative faunal remains from private graves. These results provide insights into the diet, management and mobility of animal herds in and around Ur. In particular, the isotopic evidence suggests the existence of several distinct grazing environments and drinking water sources in the hinterland of Ur. The diversity of pastures and water sources exploited implies the existence of a variety of animal management strategies.

Meskhi, Anna (Gori Teaching University)

Whom Ninlil Named at his Birth Šulgi (the Kartvelian Origin of Šulgi)

The lecture focuses on the linguistic analysis of the person name Šulgi, “although there is really very little evidence to fix the reading” (J. L. Hayes). The name belongs to the second king of the Ur III Dynasty who is rightly recognized as “one of the most distinguished and influential monarchs of the ancient world” (S. N. Kramer). The name Šulgi consists of two components: Šul + gi meaning ‘youth + noble’. The second constituent (gi) was occasionally referred to as *gir* forming the full form as *Šulgir*.

The word *šul* is thought to be an autochthonic Sumerian unit, but Kartvelian evidence throws a different light on all its linguistic aspects: phonetic, semantic, and etymological. Both components of the name, Šul and gi, originate from two Kartvelian vocabulary items *cul* ‘son’ and *gir* ‘worthy of honor’, ‘righteous’. Both archetypes belong to the general vocabulary layer of the language. The Kartvelian etymons confirm the bimorphemic structure of the name, support the presence of the auslaut *r* in *gir* and correct their (*šul*, *gir*) phonetic compositions and semantics. Interestingly, the archetype of the first component (*šul*) is linked with the lexeme *son* (= *cul*) discussed in my paper at RAI-60 in Warsaw.

An earlier reading of the name is Dungi. It is built on the same structural pattern as Šulgi – Dun + gi. Examining the first component of the name (*dun*) from the Kartvelian perspective retrieves its archetypal lexeme of entirely different semantics. As a result, the lexemes discussed in this lecture increase the number of Sumerian words with Kartvelian origin presented at various RAI meetings in the past. They demonstrate vividly that the inclusion of Kartvelian languages and culture in Assyriological studies is not just a desirable change, but a necessity.

Michalowski, Piotr (University of Michigan)

At the Origins of Mesopotamian Narrative: The First Few Hundred Years

In his seminal 2013 article on the Uruk period composition “Ad-gi₄,” Miguel Civil opened up a new avenue for the investigation of early Mesopotamian attempts to move from the permanent registration of accounts towards new attempts at recording narrative. Taking a cue from this seminal work, this paper will explore other similar texts to open discussion about certain early Mesopotamian semiotic systems.

Mikolajczak, Tytus (University of Chicago)

Seal Inscriptions of the Accounting Seals in the Persepolis Fortification Archive

A high proportion of the “accounting seals” used on Persepolis Fortification tablets are inscribed. These accounting seals are impressed on late-stage Elamite documents of the kinds called “journals” and “accounts” but rarely on other kinds of Fortification documents. Of ca. 62 accounting seals about 22% have inscriptions (as opposed to ca. 8% of all seals used on Elamite Fortification texts), and the inscriptions are predominantly in Elamite cuneiform script (79%, as opposed to 44% inscribed seals on all Elamite documents). None of the inscribed accounting seals name contemporary users, which highlights the circumstances that seal inscriptions naming contemporary users are rare in the Archive as a whole. This paper also touches on features of the epigraphy of the inscribed accounting seals, which might inform us about procedures of seal cutting and level of literacy among artisans making them.

Miller, Jared (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München) and **Andrew George** (School of Oriental and African Studies, London)

A New Old Babylonian Incantation Against a Snake

The paper presents a new Old Babylonian incantation against a snake from the Cornell University collection. It will discuss the text within the corpus of incantation literature as well as selected lexemes, above all the use of the term *šar šarum*.

Möllenbeck, Christin (Universität Münster)

Aspekte der Sklaverei im altbabylonischen Ur

In der mesopotamischen Gesellschaft wies die Sklaverei keine markante strukturelle Tiefendimension auf. Entsprechend nehmen die Sklaven eine marginale Rolle in der keilschriftlichen Überlieferung ein: Sie werden in der Regel als Objekt notiert und offenbaren lediglich eine Momentaufnahme ihres Schicksals. Wir erfahren die Namen der Sklaven und statistische Daten wie Anzahl, Geschlecht, Herkunft, Preis usw. Diese Fakten liefern zwar das Fundament der Untersuchung zur Sklaverei, aber es kann und muss noch einen Schritt weiter gegangen werden.

Das altbabylonische Textmaterial aus Ur bietet eine Vielfalt von Textgattungen, die hinsichtlich der gesellschaftlichen, ökonomischen oder juristischen Bedeutung für den Privatsektor, als auch für die kultischreligiösen und politisch-administrativen Institutionen ausgewertet werden sollen.

Molina, Manuel (CSIC, Madrid)

The Routes to Ur: Communications Between the Capital City and the Core Provinces of the Ur III State

The sustainability of the Ur III state was partly based on an efficient system of communications both within the core provinces and with the periphery. Consequently, hundreds of administrative texts recorded shipments of livestock and commodities sent through the network of navigable watercourses, workers transferred to other locations under royal or provincial authority, and messengers, diplomats and envoys travelling through the Babylonian geography on all sorts of missions. This paper will focus on how these relationships were maintained between the capital city of Ur and the main provinces of the state. Evidence on transportation routes to and from Ur, the frequency of shipments, the nature of cargoes, and how all this influenced the economy of Ur will be analyzed. Finally, some general conclusions will be drawn on the role played by Ur in the administration of the state.

Monroe, W. Willis (Brown University)

Calendar Texts and the Micro-Zodiac: Intertextuality in Seleucid Astrology

The various texts that make up the corpus of Late Babylonian astrology use paradigmatic structures related to cyclical relations in the heavens. This talk will address the relationship between the Calendar Texts and the Micro-zodiac material from the Late Babylonian period. The Calendar Texts use a mathematical scheme to rotate through pairs of zodiacal signs. This Calendar Text scheme is related to the Micro-zodiac scheme. In addition to the organizational features, much of the content is shared between genres of text. The shared content includes various types of medical ingredients, types of wood, plants, and stones, as well as material related to the cultic calendar, and hemerological advice. However, the relationship between the content and the two schemes illustrates a complex interaction between both types of text and their preserved astrological knowledge. In particular, content is either mirrored or repeated in the Calendar Texts at times contrary to the Micro-zodiac tradition. It is interesting to note that the Seleucid scribe Anu-bēlšunu was involved in the production of a Calendar Text and a Micro-zodiac tablet. Both types of texts serve a similar purpose but utilize the various currents of astrological thinking at the time in different ways.

Musgrave, David (Amridge University)

A Sumerian Administrative Tablet

This paper deals with a transliteration, transcription, and translation of portions of a Sumerian administrative tablet. The tablet is a bought text, seemingly an account of flour and barley, Old Akkadian/Sargonic Period, in the possession of a private collector in Huntsville, AL. The presentation will include PowerPoint slides looking at some of the unique orthography within the tablet, as well as some seemingly unique vocabulary and word order.

The text includes some rarely mentioned officials (anšedab/anšeku), and proper names (A₂-na, Ur-ku-ku and possibly Inana-Ur-mu). There are a number of interesting and challenging passages for which a number of scholars have assisted me by offering their suggestions on readings and possible meanings. One line in this text reads 2 ban₂ udu niga, seemingly “two ban- units” followed by “fatted calf.” One line with an elusive meaning was 1? ban₂ anše šuš kuš uh (with variations by assisting scholars, including 1? ban₂ anše šuš sa ah). There is also in the tablet the seemingly unique phrase gurdub ba-dim₂. While there are many examples of the word gurdub in ePSD, no examples were found with this word followed by ba-dim₂.

More than one line of the text has a noun with -me (meš) enclitic attached, yet with no number (šitim-me; nagar-me; ad-kup₄-me), while, in one case, one of these nouns appears on another line with a number yet no -me enclitic (3 nagar). Other features of the tablet include several nouns with kam-suffix (šitim-kam; še-kam).

One line reads e₂-gar₈ ma₂ ba-dim₂, evidently “made a wall, a boat.” With regard to the word e₂-gar₈, there are 17 texts appear in ePSD with e₂-gar₈, yet in none of the texts is it followed by ma₂ or ba-dim₂. While there is, on the one hand, the seemingly ordinary ud-4-še₃, there is also the construction 12-ud-še₃ (viz., the order of ud and še₃ are reversed).

The transliteration and translation of this tablet is still a work in progress, and is being presented for comment and further discussion.

al-Mutawalli Mahmood, Nawala (College of Arts, University of Baghdad) and **Walther Sallaberger** (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München)

Larsa Period Bullae from the Shara Temple of Umma (Djokha)

The excavations of the Iraqi State Board of Antiquities and Heritage conducted at Umma (Djokha) between 1999 and 2002 discovered various cuneiform text groups from the Ur III and the early Old Babylonian period. The latest text group, found in 2001–2002, stems from a room of the Shara Temple (Room 21), and dates to the Larsa king Sumuel. We present our work in progress on the texts dealing with the management of grain.

Myerston, Jacobo (University of California, San Diego)

Assyro-Babylonian Nominal Semantics in Greece: A History of Reception, Appropriation, and Rejection

In this talk I claim that during the Greek archaic and classical periods a debate about the nature of meaning was set in motion in Greece by the introduction of Babylonian and Assyrian nominal semantics. This scribal discipline consists of particular forms of conceptualizing the relationship between reference and referent, as well as the interpretation of names based on such a conceptualization. The debate that the appropriation of this discipline caused in Greece was limited to a small circle of intellectuals who were interested in theological and cosmological problems—especially philosophers and experts on religion. Thus, the reception in Greece of Assyro-Babylonian nominal semantics was conditioned by structures of expectations and cultural fore-meanings, as well as the need for self-differentiation among competing individuals of an intellectual elite. Such self-differentiation and identity building was primarily achieved by the capacity of offering ‘new’ ideas to a local audience and exploiting them as symbolic capital. The introduction of Assyro-Babylonian nominal semantics by those competing individuals gave rise to multifarious reactions: it was embraced by some and, at the same time, rejected by others who found such

approaches incompatible with their own personal and cultural belief system. To explore this complex issue, I draw on Akkadian and Greek sources, while also examine how Near Eastern imperial formations impacted this reception process in Greece.

Nadali, Davide (Sapienza Università di Roma)

Feeling Pictures and Words: On the Interplay of Communication in Ancient Mesopotamia

Pictures and words (or language if we want) are the primordial ways of communication used by human beings: indeed, one might even conjecture which communications medium arose first. The present paper aims at analysing the deep relationship between pictures and words in ancient Mesopotamia, showing how communication is in fact the result of cooperation between the two: in particular, it will be pointed out how pictures sometimes prevailed over, or even preceded, words (also today we are used or we prefer to express our thoughts and emotions through pictures). It seems we confer pictures a stronger and more effective power in communication: the materiality of pictures as opposed to the immateriality of words discloses the possibility of asking questions of not only what pictures are, but how they are. Indeed material culture deeply affects both the mind and the body and this entanglement closely links the sensual experience (perception, shaping and use of things) to the emotional experience (reception of and reaction to things). In this respect, pictures are special objects of the material world and they can do things to people or even make people to do things that words can't do.

According to these principles and statements, the analysis of pictures in ancient Mesopotamia can finally disclose the role of art in Mesopotamian societies: art does not only reflect the way ancient people viewed, shaped and represented the world but it makes us reflect on how ancient people felt the world. The interplay of pictures and words might be the interpretation of Mesopotamian aesthetics: it does not deal with the research of the concept of beauty; rather it exactly aims for the analysis of the sense of perception, that is how people perceive and feel art.

Nett, Seraina (University of Copenhagen)

The Administration of Regular Offerings in the Ur III Period: People, Networks, Institutions

When discussing the economy of Southern Mesopotamia under the rule of the Third Dynasty of Ur, the level to which state control permeated the underlying local and regional administrative structures remains a pertinent question. One area where the interaction between state and local administration in the Ur III period can be fruitfully investigated is the administration of the cultic practices in their dichotomy between state cult and regional cult. The administration of regular offerings to the gods of the state and regional panthea in particular presents an interesting case study to investigate the differences in administration on the local, provincial, and state level.

By analyzing the documentary texts dealing with the *sá-du*₁₁ offerings in the Ur III- period, this paper will address the differences in religious and economic administration in the different groups of texts at hand. In particular, the paper will focus on the individuals, networks, and institutions involved and the insight into administrative practices and social connections that can be garnered from such an analysis that will shed light on the interplay between state and local administration in the Ur III-state as a whole.

Neumann, Georg (Universität Tübingen)

A Journey to Lorestān: Some New Thoughts to the Historical Topography and Development of Lorestān in the Later 3rd Millennium BCE

A journey to Lorestān has always been dangerous. The many semi-nomadic tribes and small political entities were often at war with each other and even more often with foreign people.

From the Mesopotamian point of view Lorestān has been a breeding ground for hostility with inhabitants being more like demons than humans. In the 2nd mill. BCE for example the designation Lullubian was equated with Barbarian. In the Cuthian Legend of Narām-Sîn the Akkadian king was fighting against an army of bird-like demons lead by seven kings all descendants of Anubanini. The fact

that this ancestor was the Lullubian king, well known from the rock inscriptions at Sarpol-e Zohāb, makes it obvious that there was not much affection to the peoples from the mountains.

The main aim of the paper is to gather all the scattered information from the written sources about the peoples from and regional designation of Lorestān. Another attempt is to present geographical information (GIS) and archaeological sources to locate the different designations of peoples and regions in the 3rd mill. BCE. The shifting balance of power in Lorestān over the course of the Early Bronze Age will also be taken into account. Therefore it is to ask what happened at the time of the Sumerian city-states and what changed when the first empires emerge in Mesopotamia.

Neumann, Kiersten (Oriental Institute Museum, Chicago)

Beyond Impressions: Perceiving and Experiencing Cylinder Seals

Cylinder seals have long been appreciated in the field of Ancient Near Eastern studies for their fundamental contribution to discussions of visual imagery (iconography, composition, style, symbolism, ideology); inscribed tablets and seal legends; identity; sealing practices; and systems of administration. These types of inquiries emphasize the product of the cylinder seal, that is to say the seal impression, whether it be a question of the types of objects that were sealed, technology of communication, or seal impressions as markers of personhood, status, and profession, or the material witness of transactions. Equally significant, however, is the object with which these impressions were made, the miniature three-dimensional stone cylinder whose meaning and life-history reached beyond the text and image carved on its surface.

This paper takes up this latter orientation of inquiry by focusing on cylinder seals themselves, as intricately crafted, affective, culturally valued portable works of art. In particular this paper explores the inherent value and interactive potential of Neo-Assyrian cylinder seals in order to understand their experiential potential in varied contexts of practice. Such contexts range from their creation at the hands of skilled craftsmen to their use as objects impressed in clay, as valued materials for deposition, and as amuletic and visually affective objects of adornment, worn by both people and divinity. In these moments of interaction, cylinder seals offered their creators, wearers, and handlers a multifaceted sensory experience that was immediately meaningful as well as uniquely memorable.

Notizia, Palmiro (Centro de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales-Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid)

Rural Estates of the Girsu/Lagaš Province: The Case of the House of Ur-DUN

Aside from institutional households (temple and palace), a good number of “private” — or better personal — estates are known from the Neo-Sumerian period, which were part of the greater network of households that comprised the patrimonial state of Ur. These households, named after their heads (members of the royal entourage, of the military or of the local elite, merchants, cultic officials etc.), controlled extensive fields, gardens and orchards, as well as herds of sheep and cattle, but were only rarely mentioned in the administrative documents from the provincial archives. One of the best-documented personal households is the one belonging to Ur-DUN, a prominent member of the Girsu/Lagaš elite. His estate played an important role in animal fattening on behalf of the state, but was also involved in wool production, onion cultivation, reed-cutting, fishing, and timber production. The aim of the present paper is to describe the economic activities of the household of Ur-DUN according to the available sources and to highlight how it interacted with the provincial institutional economy, the crown/military sector, and the merchant organization.

Ouyang, Xiaoli (Fudan University) and **Andrea Berlin** (Boston University)

The Connection Between Persian Nippur and Tyrian Kedesh: The Story Behind a Seal Impression

Tel Kedesh is a large mound located in Israel's Upper Galilee, about 36 kilometers east of Tyre. Eight seasons of excavations, led by Sharon Herbert and Andrea Berlin from 1997–2011, uncovered an enormous administrative building, 2,300m², built c. 500 BCE when the region was under Achaemenid Persian rule. The building remained in use until the mid-second century BCE. The Achaemenid-era building included a colonnaded entry court along with reception and storage rooms. The majority of the finds are locally made storage jars for grain and oil. The facility seems to have been the property of the Tyrian royal house, who used it primarily to collect and distribute agricultural goods.

Among the small finds from this era is a clay sealing that had originally bound a papyrus document. The impression, made by a conical stone seal, shows two rampant gazelles propped against a stylized sunflower, their heads turned outward, and a lunate crescent above. Both seal and image style are Neo-Babylonian. Two almost identical seals impressed thirteen tablets in the Murasu archive from Nippur, business records from a well-connected family dating between 427 and 404 BCE. The closest match belonged to a person named Erib-Enlil, who functioned as a witness in three of six texts that attest to the commercial transactions of the Tyrians who lived in Nippur. These texts reveal that the Tyrians were private individuals well integrated into the local society in Mesopotamian Nippur.

The close similarity between the Kedesh sealing and the seal of Erib-Enlil attested in the Murashu archive suggests a relationship between the Tyrian royal house and the Murashu family. Since the sealing found at Kedesh bound a papyrus document, its owner must have come to Tyre and transacted his business there; the document would have then been sent on to the depot at Kedesh. One explanation would be that Murashu representatives assisted in the delivery of tax revenues to the Achaemenids, or, as they were based in Nippur, served as agents on behalf of the Tyrian royal house to exchange their in-kind tax revenues for cash assets.

Paladre, Clélia (Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne)

La glyptique d'Iran du Sud-Ouest au début du II^e millénaire avant notre ère : héritage et dépassement des schémas hérités d'Ur III

La Dynastie d'Ur III va largement s'imposer en Iran du Sud-Ouest. Véritable « empire administratif », c'est principalement au travers des sceaux découverts qu'est illustrée l'intégration de cette région aux systèmes politique et économique mésopotamien. Toutefois, au tournant du II^e millénaire, Ur tombe sous les coups d'une coalition mêlant élamites et amorrites. Malgré sa courte existence, elle laisse une forte empreinte sur l'Histoire du Proche-Orient ancien. Au sein de l'Iran du Sud-Ouest, c'est formellement que l'on retrouve cette influence et principalement au travers de la glyptique des Simashki, pourtant à l'origine de leur chute.

En effet, c'est sous un vernis mésopotamien que va se développer une grande partie de leur production glyptique. Les artisans imprègnent leurs concepts et leurs génies sur des normes héritées d'Ur III et passées dans l'inconscient collectif. Qu'il s'agisse de reprise exacte ou d'adaptation, ce ne sont au final que quelques éléments qui viennent marquer l'originalité locale et l'appropriation des thèmes mésopotamiens par une culture autre.

Il s'agira ici d'étudier l'évolution des schémas iconographiques depuis les sceaux mésopotamiens d'Ur III jusqu'aux modèles « simashkiens », de se concentrer sur le concept de transitions culturelle et politique au travers de l'image, de déceler quels schémas ont été repris ou au contraire rejetés et pour quelles raisons. Et cela en partant du postulat que l'évolution des codes iconographiques se fait l'écho de réalités sociétales, culturelles et politiques.

Nous nous concentrerons principalement sur deux aspects : en premier lieu, le politique. En effet, il est intéressant de noter que les modèles d'Ur III semblent plus facilement dépassés lorsqu'il s'agit de ce domaine. Doit-on y voir une volonté d'affirmation face à un pouvoir qui s'est (trop) longtemps imposé? Ces observations trouvent un écho au sein de la théorie anthropologique de « l'état secondaire ». Mais s'il

s'agit bien d'un « réveil identitaire », comment expliquer cette base mésopotamienne en contradiction même avec le fait de vouloir s'imposer politiquement ?

En second lieu, nous nous concentrerons sur le domaine « religieux ». L'iconographie semble nous illustrer des concepts cosmogoniques, bien plus qu'une réelle mythologie, où la nature tient une place centrale. Mais quelles réalités exactement sont ici sous-entendues ?

Notre propos dépassera largement le cadre d'une « simple » étude artistique puisqu'à travers ces sceaux, c'est l'antagonisme culturel et politique entre Mésopotamie et Elam que nous étudierons. Nous allons ici tenter de comprendre les sociétés passées à travers l'iconographie des sceaux qu'elles ont créés, car de fait, « l'étude des sceaux ne saurait se restreindre à la simple esthétique ».

Pappi, Cinzia (Leopold-Franzens University Innsbruck)

Evidence from the Dark Age: Circulation and Production of Artefacts Between Assyria and West-Iran

Glazing techniques and glass-production, attested since the Late Bronze Age in different regions of the Ancient Near East, became common in Assyria and the Western Iranian repertoire from the 9th century BCE onwards. The architectural decorations of the palatial structures at Idu, identified with the modern Satu Qala in Northern Iraq, provide important evidence for the use of glazing for the chromatic decoration of wall tiles in the period before the rise of the Neo-Assyrian empire. These suggest the presence of a cultural network through which cultural artefacts and technologies circulated within the area between Assyria and the region beyond the Zagros chain. The paper will analyse the stylistic record of Idu within this context and discuss the city's role in the diffusion of these materials in northern Mesopotamia at the turn of the 1st millennium BC. It is suggested that the same networks can serve as a model for the diffusion of other administrative and religious infrastructures.

Paulus, Susanne (University of Chicago)

Redistribution Revisited: Administration of Kassite Nippur

In his dissertation Paulette (2015, 194) stated that “the abstract vision of a highly centralized Mesopotamian ‘storage economy’ is derived primarily from the cuneiform record”. Using this argument as a starting point, this paper will revisit the flow and storage of barley in Kassite Nippur. The data used is mainly based on the so-called “Speicherarchiv” (10th year of Kurigalzu II. – 16th year of Kadašman-Turgu; Sassmannshausen 2001, 187–194).

Following the barley from the surrounding villages to the consumers in Nippur, the importance of central storage and redistribution will be revisited. The paper will reevaluate typical expenses from ‘monthly’ rations to supplies for brewers and millers and extraordinary expenses for purchases and loans. The goal is to evaluate the economic role of barley in the Middle Babylonian Society.

Peighambari, Hamidreza (Persian Gulf University)

Between Geography and Religion of Middle Elam: How the Middle Elamite Territory Shaped the Superiority of the Trinity of Deities

During the Middle Elamite Period, among numerous gods and goddesses worshiped in the realm, three were most prominent. In this paper, we will examine how the formation of this trinity reflects the three major geographical regions of the Elamite realm. In the federal structure of the Elam, Susa, in the lower part of the realm, was the political capital. This region was geographically the extension of the lower Mesopotamian plain, and its inhabitants had long reciprocal relationships with Mesopotamians. Hence, the great Susian god was known as Sumerian Inšušinak. Yet, the upper mountainous region, Anshan, the heart of pure Elamite culture, remained largely unaffected from the influence of Mesopotamian culture. Since the Elamization of the Elamite pantheon by Middle Elamite rulers, especially Untaš-Napiriša, some gods and goddesses were raised to a status equal to Inšušinak. Napiriša is the most prominent example in this respect. The same is true about his wife Kiririša, “mother of gods” and goddesses in the coastal region of the Persian Gulf. Archaeological findings in Kiririša's temple in Liyan, modern Bushehr can be

considered as considerable evidence to this claim. Thus, the three geographically distinct regions of the Elamite realm (plain, mountain, coast) correspond to the emergence and dominance of two gods and a goddess, forming a divine triangle.

Piccin, Michela (Università Ca' Foscari Venezia)

*The Superlative Case in *ludlul bēl nēmeqi* and *Babylonian Theodicy**

As is well known, there is no superlative case in Akkadian – nevertheless, the ancient Akkadians used a wide range of expressions to highlight the concept of superiority. In this paper, I will propose a systematic study of expressions to convey the superiority in religious texts. In particular, I will focus on examples from two literary masterpieces, *ludlul bēl nēmeqi* and the *Babylonian Theodicy*.

I will consider noun phrases such as “the Supreme”, “the Lord”, etc. and verbs such as “to rule over”, “to dominate”, etc. Moreover, I will study the expressions that use a negative qualifier in the term of comparison, such as “nothing is as powerful as X” and also, the rhetorical questions constructed with an interrogative or indefinite pronoun, such as “who could do X?”

The data obtained from these two poems will be compared with each other. I will propose a taxonomy of the occurrences, and outline the nuances of the different expressions. The comparison of the data and their classifications will not only offer an important source for a particular linguistic feature, but it will also have wider repercussions on the theological and philosophical aspects of these poems, and on Mesopotamian religion in general.

Pittman, Holly (University of Pennsylvania)

Art Without Writing: Binary or Continuum in the Early Bronze Age?

This paper considers the character of visual arts in non-literate cultures of the Near East in the third millennium BC. It compares such systems of visual expression to contemporary visual systems of literate cultures in Mesopotamia in an effort to examine the fundamental relationship between textual and visual production for the Early Bronze Age. Case studies are drawn from the Iranian plateau, Central Asia, and the Persian Gulf to probe the relationship between the awareness of writing, its purposes and its structure, in Mesopotamia and the distinct and various structures of their visual systems.

Pittman, Holly (University of Pennsylvania)

Interaction Between Ur and the Iranian Plateau via the Persian Gulf in the Early Dynastic Period: A Review of the Evidence

Excavations at the site of Konar Sandal South in the Halil River Valley in southeastern Iran produced a large and varied body of glyptic art preserved as impressions on clay sealing devices. The imagery of many of these impressions find their closest comparisons with material in the Seal Impression Strata at Ur. This paper presents this evidence to argue for a direct mercantile relationship between Ur and Konar Sandal South beginning in the ED I and ending at the end of the ED period. Konar Sandal South is seen as an inland transshipment point for raw and finished material arriving from points further north and east on the plateau. Maritime transport along the coast of the Persian Gulf is proposed that directly linked Ur to the resource rich Iranian highland. This supply route would have complemented the more distant route associated with the Harappan civilization.

Podany, Amanda (California State Polytechnic University)

A Goddess and Her Community: Insights into a Late Old Babylonian Neighborhood in Terqa

The volume of documents from the 5th through the 9th seasons at Terqa, Syria, published by Olivier Rouault (Terqa Final Reports No. 2: Les textes des saisons 5 à 9, Malibu 2011), includes a number of documents from the Late Old Babylonian (Early Hana) period. Almost all of them feature personal names that are already known from other Hana-style tablets of the same era.

Of particular interest is a list of seventeen names associated with the goddess Ninkarrak (TFR2 5-6), found near a shrine to Ninkarrak, and dating to the reign of King Kaštiliašu. “The king” (LUGAL) heads the list; this was presumably Kaštiliašu, though his name is not given. None of the ensuing personal names has a patronym listed and only two are identified by a profession, but it is possible to trace the likely interrelationships of almost all these men. Interactions and kinship ties are attested among individuals with these names in other previously published documents from Terqa. Homonymy is a challenge—some of the names on the list are known to have been borne by more than one man within the same community. The paper will discuss ways to identify which of the homonymous individuals is intended and will explore the community that they represent. Four additional documents prove particularly useful for this study: TFR1 6 (Rouault, Terqa Final Reports 1), a land sale contract from the archive of Puzurum, dating to the reign of Yadih-Abu; LH 3 (Podany, Land of Hana), a house sale contract dating to the reign of Kaštiliašu; TFR2 6-2, a field sale contract from the reign of Kaštiliašu; and TFR2 5-2, a land sale contract from the reign of Šunuhru-Ammu. Other documents also provide supporting evidence.

Pongratz-Leisten, Beate (Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, New York)

Cultural Concepts and the Deictic Power of the Image: Seeing and Knowing in the Experience, Reception, and Production of Art in Mesopotamia

The placement of royal imagery in semipublic places like courtyards of temples, in places restricted to a limited audience such as palaces, or in rock reliefs far too high to be seen in detail is revealing with regard to ancient Near Eastern practice of reception. Only a small number of elite people and the gods were the addressees of the royal message. Cultural experience and competence, consequently, dominated the production *and* reception of the royal pictorial repertoire in equal manner, and producer and beholder shared the same culturally relative mental equipment that recognized the adequacy of the content of the image in its framework and context. The paper will explore how the ancient inhabitants of Mesopotamia negotiated the genesis and validity of the cosmic order as a *Denkform* and translated it into practical norms which then because of common experience and common cultural memory could find their symbolic expression in the representation of king as hunter, as warrior, and as cultural hero in the various media of image, text, and ritual. The focus will be on the process by which an associational cluster of figurative references was constructed, and particularly on the process and practices of reception that resulted in the particular icon of the victorious warrior. Cognitive and visual experiences frame the making and the reception of images, as does the actual material framework in which the image is emplaced, encountered, or observed. As a diachronic approach to the Mesopotamian imagery demonstrates, the framework of the image anticipated specific expectations and determined a particular iconology.

Popova, Olga (Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne)

The Status of Land Property in Neo-Babylonian Ur (the Case of the Gallābu Family)

The Gallābu archive from Neo-Babylonian Ur is the longest private archive of the period. This archive shows in particular the forming of the patrimony of the Gallābu family during 260 years. This patrimony consisted of orchards with palm-trees bought before the reign of Xerxes. The status of the land property of the Gallābu family changes with the shift of power. At the beginning of the archive there are some private property titles concerning these orchards along with their Retroacts and the cadastral characterization of the lands. However, we find at the same time some indications that refer to the same orchards as the property of a religious institution, namely the temple of Šin in Ur. Interestingly, in the late Achaemenid period the lands appear as the property of the Crown and we observe the royal administration in charge of managing these same fiefs of Gallābu called *bīt qašti*. It is possible that in the beginning we are dealing with two different property rights: the lands at the same time were a private property of the family and subject to the eminent property right of the urban temple. With the arrival of

the Achaemenid power this land became the property of the Crown that the family managed in exchange for their service.

Pournelle, Jennifer (University of South Carolina)

Ur in its Ecological Context: The Evolution of the Lower Euphrates from the 3rd Millennium BCE

From the time of Woolley's (erroneous) attribution of fluvial sediments to "The (Biblical) Flood," Ur's presumed relationship to its river(s) and sites up- and downstream has been hypothesized from scant archaeological evidence. We present results of new geoarchaeological investigations that shed light on timing and rates of marine regression and marsh formation, with implications for Ur's role in local and regional maritime interconnections with its neighbors. New data includes geomorphological, phytolith, microfossil (ostracod, foraminifera), macrofossil (malacofauna), and high-resolution radiocarbon dating.

Rakic, Yelena (The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

The Ushumgal Stele: Examining Representation in the Past and its Presentation in the Present

The Stele of Ushumgal has long been recognized as an important early record of the transfer of land in third millennium BC Mesopotamia. However, its status as a work of visual culture has not been subject to the same level of critical investigation. Featuring both text and image on its four sides (and text on its top and bottom), this object has much to contribute to the discussion of how images worked in early Mesopotamia. This paper will closely examine the stele's imagery considering the representations as an integral part of the whole object. It will also review how past study and presentation of this object has followed certain conventions which themselves have shaped and informed how image and text, especially when appearing together, are interpreted. While the Stele of Ushumgal is well known, there is still much to be learned through an investigation that looks at this object holistically as a work of art in itself.

Renette, Steve (University of Pennsylvania)

Once Upon a Time in the East: The Early History of the Zagros Region

References to the eastern mountain lands appear in the earliest historical records from ancient Mesopotamia with the sign NIM. By the last centuries of the third millennium BCE, cuneiform records frequently mention inhabitants of those mountain lands and make references to various eastern ethnic groups and polities, such as the Guti, the Lullubi, Awan, or Shimashki. The existence of powerful eastern polities is usually explained as a result of secondary state formation in response to interactions with advanced Mesopotamian city-states or empires, archaeological evidence is beginning to reveal a long indigenous development within the Zagros region.

Recent fieldwork at the site of Kani Shaie in Sulaimaniyah Province, Iraqi Kurdistan, sheds light on the early centuries of the Bronze Age in the Zagros. During the fourth millennium BCE, Kani Shaie was a small local center that functioned as a node within the Uruk interregional exchange network. Following a sudden destruction, the site remained inhabited until the middle of the third millennium BCE and continued to fulfill a central position facilitating highland-lowland interaction between dispersed communities throughout the Zagros region. Until recently, the first centuries of the Early Bronze Age were a Dark Age in the archaeological record of the Zagros. The results from Kani Shaie, together with a reevaluation of archaeological evidence from sites such as Chogha Maran and Godin Tepe, reveal a deep history of sustained interaction networks that underpin the emergence of ethnic groups and polities known from later historical sources.

Richardson, Seth (University of Chicago)

Place and Portability: Divine Emblems in Old Babylonian Law

This talk will contrast the fixity and portability of divine emblems as they were used in Old Babylonian legal environments. Across the third millennium, divine emblems appeared in a wide variety

of civic, military, and institutional capacities to express community identities. Only after 2000 BC did their use in legal proceedings emerge—with many earlier functions going into abeyance. In almost a hundred Old Babylonian texts, divine emblems were used to resolve disputes and arrive at legal decisions (esp. by “establishing the true legal situation”). After this period, the use of emblems in legal procedures was relatively rare and confined to oath-taking procedures, with ordeals largely taking on the evidentiary and decision-making roles emblems had previously performed. With this legal use for emblems concentrated in one period, it might appear easy to characterize the why and how of it; but the shifting physical contexts in which they were used, the heterogeneity of forms, and the occasional nature of case law—and even substantial vagaries of representation and ownership—confound any essential answer. By looking at this issue more abstractly in terms of movement and space, this paper hopes to explain the use of emblems in this one era as a consequence of state, temple, civic, and household legal regimes emerging towards congruence across the spatial terrain of city, state, and countryside. These legal environments required that the rule-making of institutions, fixed in recognized spaces, now had to be extended into extra-institutional ones. This was best accomplished by the portability of objects endowed with not only divine, but also community and state authorities.

Robson, Eleanor (University College London)

The Hinterland of Ur in the Sealand Period: Evidence from Current Excavations at Tell Khaiber

Over the course of several seasons of excavation at Tell Khaiber, just 20 km northwest of Ur, the Ur Regional Archaeology Project has produced unprecedented, archaeologically contextualised evidence for life under Sealand Dynasty rule. In this talk I will focus on the 150 or so cuneiform tablets that have been excavated to date, and the light they shed on the networked palatial economy in the mid-second millennium BC, as well as professional and non-professional cuneiform literacy at this period.

The Ur Regional Archaeology Project is a collaboration between the University of Manchester, the British Institute for the Study of Iraq, and Iraq’s State Board for Antiquities and Heritage. It is led by Professor Stuart Campbell, Dr Robert Killick and Dr Jane Moon at the University of Manchester.

Rojas, Felipe (Brown University)

Cuneiform Under Cross and Crescent

What did the material remains of the Bronze and Iron Ages mean to the inhabitants of Late Antique and Medieval Anatolia and the Levant? Who, if anyone, was interested in them? How were those remains interpreted and manipulated? Most importantly, why did things that had been made millennia earlier still have cultural relevance under radically different religious and political regimes? This paper uses a combination of archaeological and literary evidence to explore cases of redeployment of Hittite, Luwian, Assyrian, and Urartian remains in Christian and Muslim contexts: from stelae reused as tombstones by Armenian Christians to monumental statues and inscriptions embedded in the fabric of Levantine churches and mosques. By examining the specific historical and regional contexts in which re-interpretation and reuse happened, this contribution highlights the key role that these objects played in the production of historical narratives about local and universal pasts. This contribution also elucidates the variety of agents, motives, strategies of engagement, and alternative memory horizons implicated in the reinterpretation and manipulation of Bronze and Iron Age material remains.

Rosa, Maria de Fátima (Universidade Nova de Lisboa) and **Almeida, Isabel** (Universidade Nova de Lisboa)

Utopic and Dystopic Images in Mesopotamian Literature: The Conflict Between Order and Chaos in Ur III

Tension between Order and Chaos is central to Mesopotamian literature. “To overturn the appointed times, to obliterate the divine plans, the storms gather to strike like a flood”, thus starts the Lament for Sumer and Urim. Tempest, disease, drought and plague were symptomatic of the dislike the celestial

society expressed towards their human counterpart. The chaotic consequences of the divine disfavor set the tone for human action. The dystopian idea shaped from the fall of Ur III allows us to understand how this was a key political moment which endured in the cultural production of years to come.

On the other hand, this same period allowed the construction of utopian images, where the maintenance of order was seen as imperative. The answer Enki gives to Inanna, in Enki and the World Order, is expressive of this logic: “now, the heart has overflowed, the Land is restored”. With this statement, the god of wisdom refrains the belligerent impetus of Inanna, thus legitimating a time of peace and harmony, under the rulership of Enlil and Ur III.

Hence, compositions that refer to the Ur III period present themselves as a fertile case-study to explore the constructions of both utopic and dystopic images in literary narratives. With this communication, we intend to examine the possibility of applying the theoretical framework that utopianism studies have been developing in recent decades regarding Mesopotamia, hoping to shed some new light on the topic about the tension between chaos and order in this civilization.

Rothman, Mitchell (Widener University)

State and Private Sectors in Old Babylonian Ur

Much effort has been made to understand the origin and dynamics of earliest states, which in the Near East begin at approximately 3500 BC. Less well-studied are the resulting established states that followed. How do they vary and especially, how do they redefine the relationships between what scholars propose are separate state (public) and private sectors? In this paper, the author will focus on the broader Old Babylonian (OB) Period, but specifically on the remains from the “private” neighborhoods AH, EM, and AH at Ur. He will highlight an examination of artifactual finds in relation to textual remains.

Salzmann, Eveline (Goethe-Universität Frankfurt), **Sabine Klein** (Goethe-Universität Frankfurt), and **Andreas Hauptmann** (Deutsches Bergbau-Museum)

Provenance Studies of Copper, Bronze and Silver Artefacts from the Royal Tombs of Ur, Mid-3rd Millennium BC

The excavations of the Royal Tombs of Ur (1922–1934), dated to the Early Dynastic period (mid to late 3rd millennium BC) bestowed large amounts of metal finds. Besides prominent gold objects, plenty of arsenical copper high in nickel, tin bronze and silver objects were found. The great number of metal objects surprised, because Ur is located in the flood area of the Euphrates and Tigris and is void of metal resources. This geological fact indicates an import of metals.

The University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, provided more than 100 artefacts of silver, copper and bronze for analytical investigations. The samples are currently investigated at the laboratories of Frankfurt and Bochum regarding the analysis of major and trace elements with geochemical methods as well as lead and copper isotopes.

The main goals of this project are: 1.) Identification of natural and artificial alloys and 2.) Provenance of metals and ores used for making the artefacts. The Royal Tombs of Ur were buried in Amies “Age of Exchange” when metal production boomed in widely spread regions, which all have to be taken into consideration as possible sources. The analysis of the material shall help to narrow down the most probable metal suppliers of the Ur metal. Possible candidates for metal supply are copper from Oman, tin and/or tin bronzes from Afghanistan and silver from Anatolia or from the Iranian Plateau. Further (isotope) analyses have to be performed before these candidates can be confirmed. Our results contribute to a better understanding of structures, logistic, economy, and policy of trade and exchange in the Early Bronze Age Middle East.

Sanders, Seth (University of California, San Diego)

Heavenly Writing and Earthly Scribes: The Aramaic Republic of Letters in Hellenistic Babylonia and Judea

What can we say about the dialectic between the media- and institutional-”base” and the intellectual and metaphysical “superstructure” of ancient Near Eastern scribal cultures as they came together after the death of native kingship in Mesopotamia? By the late 6th century the diversity of local scribal and educational traditions in the southern Levant had been totally reshaped by an imperial Aramaic that every scribe who wanted steady work had to learn. Meanwhile in Babylonia, Aramaic-writing scribes had risen to control of a number of Babylonian educational centers by the 5th century. More advanced scribes in both places learned some of the same things. In addition to many literary and legal formulae, this shared Aramaic scribal culture sometimes included mathematics, astronomy, and the interpretation of natural phenomena in linguistic and pragmatic terms--a semiotic ontology. While scholars from Zimmern and Lieberman to Cavigneaux, Tigay, and Frahm have discussed the structural parallels between Babylonian and Judean interpretation, this Hellenistic Aramaic republic of letters provides a material basis for them.

Schmitt, Aaron (Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz)

Sites of Memory in 2nd and 1st Millennium Ur

The content of this paper forms part of a larger ongoing project on cultural memory in the Ancient Near East (<https://www.vorderasiatische-archaeologie.uni-mainz.de/altorientalische-erinnerungskulturen/>). The project focuses on the role played by different media in collective references to the past. The main questions are how and why social groups in Mesopotamia referred to the past and how the respective related cultural actions changed over time. The study is based on different case studies, one of which is the city of Ur from where a large number of relevant contexts and objects were excavated. In the paper I will present a selection of especially significant context from the Old Babylonian, Kassite and Neo-Assyrian/Neo-Babylonian periods with an emphasis on both architecture and (inscribed) objects. A further emphasis will be put on the observation of continuation and break of certain traditions and how these can be explained using the available data and based on current theoretical discussions.

Schneider, Bernhard (Universität Innsbruck)

The Archaeology of the Kassite Ekur

Within this paper the archaeological evidence of the Ekur of Nippur during the Kassite period will be presented. The documentation of the early expeditions until 1900, housed in the archives of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (University Museum) in Philadelphia as well as the Hilprecht-Collection in Jena, stayed mostly unpublished. Through the combination of the results of the post-World War II excavations by the “Joint Expedition” conducted by the Oriental Institute and the University Museum new insights for the chosen period are gained. Also the limitations of the archaeological evidence will be demonstrated. Unpublished documentation concerning the ziggurat will comprise an important part of the presentation. As result a revised history of construction of the Ekur will be established for the Kassite period.

Scott, Sarah (Wagner College)

Agency Inscribed: Sealings and Community in Early Dynastic Ur

Image making and writing in early third millennium southern Mesopotamia took place in multiple social spaces. The act of creating a sealing with seal imagery, and the act of creating a tablet with written signs were certainly performed in similar spaces by individuals working within a related notational system. Though the iconography of each system was distinct, the agentive ability of these objects was the same: they organized commodities and communities. However, seal iconography, unlike cuneiform text,

through its appearance on other media (sculpture, ceramics, portable objects), was likely subject to viewing in more diverse social contexts and physical spaces.

This paper, through the analysis of a small group of inscribed (not seal-impressed) sealings from the Seal Impression Strata at Ur, will identify the agentive qualities of sealings through their two distinct iconographic types: cuneiform signs and figural images. Within this group of inscribed sealings are found images akin to signs such as U4 and UB, while there are also images of birds and combative pairs of figures. The signs and images are comparable to signs found on the Ur archaic texts and seal-impressed imagery from the larger, more well-known corpus of seal impressions. In this unique corpus of inscribed sealings it is possible to consider image and text in a closed system to determine how they created meaning in a social setting. It is concluded that temple administrators had the capability to employ iconography understood by either large sectors of the broader community or tightly-knit scribal circles at Ur.

Scurlock, JoAnn (Elmhurst College)

Eclipse of a King: A New Interpretation of the Bull Headed Lyre

Among the most spectacular of finds in the tombs at Ur are musical instruments whose original purpose and relevance to context remains something of a mystery. Particularly intriguing is the sideboard of a bull-headed lyre that shows itself being played by an equid as a part of one of four scenes representing anthropomorphized animals engaged in apparent feasting activity. In this paper we shall use a hypothesis-based approach to attempt to place the harp in its proper context which, I would argue, is an archaeologically attested performance of a substitute king ritual in response to an eclipse that occurred in Winter.

Seymour, Michael (The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

The Illusion of Place in Neo-Assyrian Campaign Reliefs

What can objects do that words can't? One answer is that they can create visual illusions, including illusions of physical space. Painting and photography routinely offer viewers the sensation, carefully mediated, of viewing a place or event first-hand. Was the same kind of illusion employed in ancient Near Eastern art, and if so to what purpose? This paper suggests that the Neo-Assyrian campaign reliefs were indeed designed to create the illusion of physical place and a situated viewpoint, and that in their ancient context these qualities were both unusual and meaningful. In the reliefs of the Sargonid kings in particular a coherent sequence of moves was made toward enhancing the illusion of a situated viewpoint and moment in a foreign land, with its own logic but also within a long-standing framework of ancient Near Eastern visual conventions. These changes and characteristics, seen together almost nowhere else in ancient Near Eastern art, reveal much about the sculptors' intention, and bear on our understanding of the original conception and emphasis of the reliefs in their ancient setting.

Shafer, Ann (Rutgers University)

Topographical Peripheries in the Assyrian Center: Abstract Ornament and the Sacred in Architecture

This paper investigates the intersection between Assyrian religion and monumental architecture, focusing specifically on the patterns of abstract ornament that adorn palace and temple walls. Although in our day we remain conditioned to viewing architectural ornament as merely frivolous in intention and effect, pre-modern cultures the world over have given it a weighty role in their complex iconographical schemes. One of the most complete records of ancient Near Eastern architectural ornament comes from the Assyrians. Produced in both fresco and ceramic glazed mediums, these monumental ornamented surfaces appear to have occurred in large quantities, signaling widespread cultural currency and significance. Highly abstracted, this mostly vegetal iconography is carefully and rhythmically structured to create windows onto hierarchical orders and spatial topographies in peripheries well beyond the

confines of the building's surfaces. Comparative in methodology and provocative in tone, this paper will first problematize briefly the concept of "religion" with regard to the Assyrian built environment and landscape, and will highlight through royal inscriptions and artworks ways in which the sacred and architecture may be said to be intertwined. Second, it will take a critical look at our own, present relationship with architectural ornament by excavating the development of our modernist biases against it. Finally, as an antidote, a careful visual and spatial analysis of the ornament itself – especially as it appears to activate alternative ontologies of nature, landscape, and the visual arts – will suggest ways in which this imagery may have constituted a sacred frame for a larger cosmic perception. Cross-temporal near eastern comparisons will be cited in order to illustrate the multi-faceted nature of the Assyrian visual engagement with the geographic sacred.

Sharlach, Tonia (Oklahoma State University)

Local and Imported Elements in the Religious Observances at Ur Late in the Reign of Shulgi

It is challenging to research Ur itself late in the reign of Shulgi as the archives from that city largely date either earlier or much later. Fortunately archives from other Ur III sites (principally Puzrish Dagan) record numerous religious observances that took place in these years at Ur. Many of these documents come from the religious foundation of Shulgisimti, one of Shulgi's many wives. As many other scholars have noted, many of the events recorded seem to be a little unusual for Ur. Semitic festival names (such as *nabrium* and *elūnum*) appear commonly, as well as offerings to four goddesses (Beletshuhnir, Belet-terraban, Annunitum and Ulmashitum), whose origins may well lie far away from Ur. This paper, then, considers whether religious practices from outside Ur were imported, whether any of them lasted past the death of Shulgi, and the implications for understanding the complex interplay between center and periphery at the heart of the Ur III state.

Shuke, Anastas (University of Tirana)

The River and the City: On their Origins and Semantics in Sumerian

Great rivers are a 'temen' part of the history, offering important advantages to a developing civilization. They provide water to irrigate the fields, and a basic food, the fish. They offer probably the most ancient method of transport. Thus, the River gives life to the City.

The sign id₂ 'river, canal,' is written A.LAGABxHAL, literally 'water distribution enclosure,' near the idea 'irrigate, canal.' LAK-194 gives lum 'brook', near idea 'river,' but it has many other meanings. Might a single word, lum 'river,' cover such semantic range? The answer is here.

Looking for graphic-semantic continuity from pictographic to OS and later periods, it comes up the possibility of seeming discontinuity in the bond of original pictograph or developed sign and its value/meaning. That might have been increased by signs rebus/phonetic use. The wide spread homonymy would be the main actor in occurrences of such discontinuity. Also, differences in the frequency of homonyms may have dictated changes, thus switching the less frequent homonym to another, semantically related sign, or modifying it.

Following such view, it is analyzed Urim₅ graphic etymology, especially the origins of ŠEŠ, its relation to PAP, NU, how šeš might have meant 'brother,' relation to Nanna/Sin and moon, AB meanings, homonymy, and related words. Also, the meanings of Urim₅, urun 'exalted,' and uri₃ 'guard, protect,' together with its classical meaning Ur 'the City' are analyzed as related to 'wall' and 'bridge', essential elements of a city. This paper reaches the conclusion that Urim₅ ŠEŠ.AB graphic etymology is a 'Flag/Sign of Temple/Father/God,' and it means the nearby phrases: the Exalted 'Sign/Place of Temple/Father/God,' also analyzed as possible origins of the terms city, cité, Stadt, etc. The paper tries reaching to a comprehensive picture of the words related to, and components writing the toponym of UR in the 21st century BCE.

Sibbing Plantholt, Irene (University of Pennsylvania)

“She is Able, so I am Capable”: The Healing Goddess Gula and the Embodiment of Scholarly Knowledge, Practice and Tradition in the Kassite Period

From the very beginning of Mesopotamian history we can trace a variety of deities who possess healing powers. Mesopotamian medical experts identify themselves with these healing deities, and let the latter serve in the textual and iconographic record as idealized representations of themselves and their professions. In the Kassite period one of these healing deities obtains a prominent role and is elevated to one of the more important gods in the pantheon: the goddess Gula, who is well-known for her appearance on Kassite kudurrus. In this talk we explore Gula’s appearance on a Kassite seal in order to paint a clearer picture of this deity and her healing character, as well as to dissect her relationship with Mesopotamian scholars, in particular those who specialize in healing. We will find that Kassite seals - in congruence with textual sources - not only provide a fascinating insight into the role of Gula as model and divine patron of scholars, but also into the establishment of the scribal curriculum, creation of scholarly identity and the institutionalization of professions and titles.

van Soldt, Wilfred (Universiteit Leiden)

Grammatical Irregularities in Middle Babylonian Texts and their Chronology

This paper deals with the development of the Middle Babylonian dialect of Akkadian (ca. 1550–1155). In order to detect as many developments as possible Babylonia and the MB period are each divided in three parts. The archival material has been divided in 1) administrative texts, 2) monumental inscriptions, and 3) lexical, religious and literary texts. For the evaluation of the material almost only dated administrative texts have been used, but dated texts from the other groups have been added when the number of sources was too small (for example, for the 16th and 15th centuries). In this way it was possible to group texts according to king and to obtain a clear overview of the features that show how the language evolved from Old Babylonian to Neo-Babylonian. With this method it is possible to date changes more accurate and to link them up with other groups of texts, both earlier and later, and texts from other parts of Mesopotamia.

In my paper I will give a few examples of the grammatical features that appear in the texts.

Sonik, Karen (Auburn University)

The Copy as (Art) Object and the Copyist’s Art

This contribution examines the status and functioning of the copy as (art) object, as well as the role played by copying (and imitation) as a means of both making and knowing in Mesopotamia. The valorization of the original, and the consequent diminution of the copy (and of the significance and utility of imitation) during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Europe is examined, as is the significant role played by the copy in the visual and other arts of earlier periods.

Steele, John (Brown University)

Citation and Use of MUL.APIN in the Neo-Assyrian and Late Babylonian Periods

The compendium MUL.APIN, composed sometime before about 750 BC, is the most important text of early Babylonian astral science. Its contents, which include several star lists, intercalation rules, mathematical schemes for the change in the length of daylight, the duration of visibility of the moon, and the shadow cast by a gnomon, and a small group of celestial omens, made it a foundational text for what may be thought of as ‘traditional’ astronomy. As such, MUL.APIN continued to be copied and used throughout the Neo-Assyrian and Late Babylonian periods, despite the development of much more complicated and accurate forms of astronomy. In this paper I will review evidence for the citation and use of MUL.APIN during these periods and present a newly identified composition that re-works and expands upon MUL.APIN. This new composition, probably written during the Late Babylonian period and

partially preserved in several copies, attests to the continued interest among Babylonian scholars in developing what I have termed ‘schematic’ astronomy alongside newer forms of mathematical astronomy, and the central place of MUL.APIN within the schematic astronomical tradition.

Stein, Diana (University of London)

Reflections on the Banquet Scene: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Thematic Investigations

The “banquet scene” is a popular Mesopotamian subject that has recently attracted much attention in connection with cross-cultural discussions on the politics of feasting. The theme spans the entire 3rd millennium BC, but because there are no textual analogies before the ED IIIB period, much of the research has focused on its end phase, with particular emphasis on a select group of cylinder seals from the Royal Cemetery of Ur. Often presented as archetypical examples of the banquet theme, these seals are in fact exceptional. Following an interdisciplinary review of the evidence and its background according to recent archaeological research, I question the conventional interpretation of this theme, argue that its essence lies elsewhere, and conclude that its particular association with cylinder seals reflects the primary function of ancient Near Eastern glyptic.

Sternitzke, Katja (Vorderasiatisches Museum, Berlin)

Babylon in the Old Babylonian and Kassite Periods: An Archaeological Study of the 2nd Millennium Settlement

German archaeological excavations under the direction of architect and historian Robert Koldewey at Babylon (1899–1917) produced rich archaeological material and plenty of data. Parts of excavated material were published later, presenting the results in an exemplary and extensive but not exhaustive manner and with a clear focus on the famous 1st millennium structures of the Neo Babylonian kings. With the kind permission of the Vorderasiatisches Museum Berlin and Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft a PhD project has taken place to re-examine the stratigraphy, chronology and urban lay-out of Babylon in the 2nd millennium B.C., taking into account published data as well as hitherto unpublished archival documents and objects. This paper presents the results of that dissertation project and provides new archaeological insight in the development of this metropolis under Old Babylonian and Kassite reign and in the controversially disputed transition between these periods.

Stone, Elizabeth (Stony Brook University)

New Excavations at Ur

A new program of excavations in the vicinity of Area AH at Ur was initiated by Stony Brook University in October 2015 with the aim of investigating similarities and/or differences between residential life in Isin-Larsa and Ur III times. A magnetometry survey and four excavations were carried out. Excavations beneath Woolley’s 1 Baker’s Square and Niche Lane excavations penetrated down to Ur III and even Akkadian levels. New areas with Isin-Larsa occupation were opened up to the south of Area AH, beneath the Neo-Babylonian houses, and to the west, beside the ancient watercourse that divided the two mounds of Ur.

Suter, Claudia (University of Bern)

When Visual Images are Described in Texts: Who Represents Whom on the Daduša Stela?

A passage in the text inscribed on the stele of Daduša of Ešnunna professes to describe the adjoining imagery carved on the stele. Some scholars consider this a rare example of a perfect match between text and image. However, their interpretation of the imagery does not conform to visual tradition. The identity of the figures represented is a matter of dispute. How are we to understand this and other similar cases in which text and image on the same monument do not seem to correlate? This contribution will explore

explanations for the difficulties encountered by present-day scholars in interpreting the ancient Mesopotamian visual mind.

Talbot, Lynette (University of Cambridge)

Textual History Between Innovation and Fidelity: A Case Study from the Therapeutic Corpus

The signs KI.MIN and other “ditto” signs are very common in therapeutic and diagnostic texts, and also appear in other scholarly material such as omen collections. There has been some debate regarding their possible Akkadian readings (Köcher’s *Babylonisch-Assyrische Medizin in Texten; CAD*; Borger’s *Zeichenlexikon*), but little attention has been given to the rationale of their distribution and what this might tell us about scribal practice and textual history.

In this paper I examine the variable deployment of “ditto” signs in the therapeutic series *šumma amēlu suālam maruṣ*, a subseries of the UGU therapeutic series. I argue that the use of KI.MIN hints at complex interactions between scribal fidelity and innovation during stages of compilation and reproduction in the history of the *Suālu* series. Factors that I will explore include the inconsistent use of KI.MIN to repeat symptom descriptions in multiple entries, similarities between the content and orthography of entries using KI.MIN, and how the use of KI.MIN relates to the separation of entries by rulings across the tablets.

This approach has important implications for our understanding of scribal practice, the production and transmission of medical scholarship, and the standardisation of written knowledge.

Tavernier, Jan (Université catholique de Louvain)

Ur and Other Cities in Sumerian and Akkadian Personal Names: An Update

This paper will have a look at the way the Mesopotamian people (Sumerians as well as Akkadians) treated toponyms as elements of their anthroponyms, in other words when and how were city names used as elements of personal names.

Taylor, Jonathan (British Museum)

Sîn City: New Light from Old Excavations at Ur

The city of Ur first commanded serious Assyriological attention in 1850s. A series of explorations by British consul Taylor revealed the city’s ancient name, and showed the promise held the by site. Ur was soon enthusiastically connected with Ur of the Chaldees, known from the Bible as home to the patriarch Abraham. Yet it was not until 1920s that extensive excavations were undertaken. Leonard Woolley headed a joint British Museum – Penn Museum expedition that would capture the imagination of scholars and public alike.

Almost a century later, a renewed British Museum – Penn Museum collaboration has brought Woolley’s excavations into the 21st century. The expedition’s finds, together with a rich archive of contemporary records and photographs, have been digitally reunited in an open access web resource. Researchers have unparalleled access to the finds and associated records from a major site spanning the duration of Mesopotamian history. New avenues of research have opened, and a wealth of new material is available. This paper offers examples of how these resources can help us better understand the nature of the inscriptions as objects, how their materiality can address difficult questions, and highlights some new sources.

Thomason, Allison (Southern Illinois University Edwardsville)

Sensing ‘Nature’ in Neo-Assyrian Art

Studies of the sensory environments that surround individuals in the past have gained momentum in recent years, spurred by disciplinary approaches from other fields, including psychology and anthropology. The study of the ancient Near East is no exception and a number of recent scholarly works

and conferences explore the senses and compare sensory experiences of people from various regions of the ancient world. Archaeologists have also tried to understand the relationship between ancient people and their natural environment, with emphasis on subsistence and landscape. Many of these studies utilize floral and faunal data excavated from sites and satellite imagery to understand how humans manipulated the “natural world”, or the reverse. In addition, Assyriologists and other scholars have analyzed numerous tablets and other texts (such as the Old Testament) to understand the epistemological, cosmological and symbolic representation of ancient Near Eastern natural environments in literary culture. In this paper, I explore another form of representation of the natural world, the pictorial evidence from Neo-Assyrian narrative art, as well as material culture excavated from elite buildings, to understand how the Assyrians experienced the sensorial affects of extra-somatic things on the human body. I will interrogate the validity of an Assyrian idea of “nature” or “pastoral,” where the sensory effects of the world outside were noticed and appreciated for their beneficial impact on the individual.

Thornton, Chris (National Geographic Society)

Art and Artifact in the Ancient Near East

As the region where agriculture first took hold on a broad scale, and where the earliest known cities arose, the ancient Near East occupies a crucial crossroads in human history. The visual arts and material remains of the ancient Near East occupy a concomitantly significant, if still often little known, place in the history of art. This project revisits some of the foundations of the (significantly overlapping) fields of study of Near Eastern art and artifact, addresses important contemporary approaches to these, and looks to some of the ways in which these might be productively developed in the future.

Veldhuis, Niek (University of California, Berkeley)

Computational Text Analysis: Comparing Lexical and Literary Vocabularies

The existence of large databases of digitized cuneiform texts invites the use of Computational Text Analysis tools for discovering broader patterns among these texts. This talk will present one such analysis.

Wainer, Zackary (Brown University) and **Matthew Rutz** (Brown University)

Quotation, Interpretation, and Intertext in the Neo-Assyrian Scholarly Reports

Assyrian and Babylonian scholars who served the 7th-century kings Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal authored well over 500 reports that were found in the remains of the royal archives of Nineveh. These tablets exemplify the intersection of knowledge practices and power structures in the Neo-Assyrian empire. Contained within each report were empirical observations that scholars usually recorded by quoting a relevant passage from the corpus of cuneiform divinatory literature. The authors of these reports most commonly cited portions of the extensive celestial-divination series *Enūma Anu Enlil* and its sister commentary series *Šumma Šin ina tāmartišu*, but also included entries from hemerologies (including the Babylonian almanac), teratologies (*Šumma izbu*), behavioral omens (*Šumma ālu*), and other literature. The purpose of this paper is to exploit this rich text corpus to reassess the practices of observation, quotation, and interpretation in Late Assyrian scholarship. While the authors of these reports could simply use quotation as an index of observation, they often implicitly or explicitly interpreted passages from divinatory compositions, sometimes by way of quotations from other texts, in order to associate them with what was observed. Using both a big-data approach and targeted case studies, we will explore the ways in which the reports themselves functioned as intertexts that were linked by the empirical acumen, scholarly knowledge, and interpretive judgment of the reports’ authors.

Weber, Jill (University of Pennsylvania)

More than Just Good Eats: Animals as Administrative Artifacts

Numerous late, Late-Chalcolithic (LC5) settlements across a variety of geographical locales in modern Turkey and Syria contain rubbish deposits with homogeneous fill including large amounts of mass-produced pottery, administrative paraphernalia, and faunal remains of sheep and goat.

The inclusion of beveled-rim bowls and cylinder -seals and -sealings — hallmarks of “southern Uruk” material culture — are consistent with theories about Late-Uruk expansion from southern Iraq and suggest those “foreigners” physical presence at the settlement in an administrative or exchange functional-capacity.

Despite the specialized, administrative nature of many of the artifacts and association of the rubbish deposits with public architecture, the highly homogeneous sheep and goat deposits within the rubbish are often viewed as artifacts of cultural or ethnic distinctiveness of the individuals that created the rubbish — rather than functional debris from specialized activities.

But, why should the animal bones result from processes different than the remainder of the cultural debris? I argue that these rubbish deposits contain homogeneous artifacts because they were created during the performance of similar, specialized tasks. Close examination of the Late-Uruk pits from Tell Brak, northern Syria, suggests that these probably were created in the springtime, when out-sourced herds were brought back to their owners for shearing and accounting — a process documented in texts from the 4th millennium onward.

Wells, Bruce (Saint Joseph’s University)

Divorce, Demotion, and Economic Status in Neo-Babylonian Marriage Contracts

Of the more than 60 published marriage contracts from the Neo-Babylonian and Persian periods, there are 20 referring to possible future action on the part of the husband that will result in negative consequences for the wife. Scholars have generally characterized such action as divorce, and, in most cases, this seems to be the correct conclusion. In 6 of these 20 texts, however, the verb *muššuru* (“to send away”) is not employed. This paper will argue that these 6 contracts do not anticipate full-fledged divorce on the part of the husband but rather the demotion of the woman from first-ranking wife to second-ranking wife. The paper will show that, in these particular cases, there was a built-in incentive for the husband not to divorce his wife: namely, the large dowry that he would have to return. Thus, the anticipated action on his part in the contract is demoting the wife. The penalty listed for him in the texts—most often 1 mina of silver—takes effect when he attempts to marry another wife and demote the first. The paper will also argue that it was usually only well-to-do families that could arrange this type of marriage contract. C. Wunsch has shown that poorer families typically had to accept a clause in their daughter’s marriage contract stipulating death by the “iron dagger” should she be unfaithful to her husband. This paper will expand that line of reasoning to show that another advantage for well-off families was the ability to negotiate a penalty for demotion. The two exceptions to this basic pattern can be explained by virtue of the status of those entering the marriage.

Winter, Irene (Harvard University)

Shulgi’s Stela of Ur-Namma

The fragments preserved from the great Stela of Ur-Namma, found at Ur and presently housed in the University of Pennsylvania Museum and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, constitute (or at least once constituted) the principal public monument known from the Ur III Dynasty. The bibliography on the monument is large. However the full iconographic program of the stela remains elusive, due in part to crucial missing pieces and surface details. I will focus on one such fragment: the enigmatic piece showing a seated male deity at the far right of the second register on the obverse, with the dangling feet of a second figure apparently perched upon his lap. The rest of the figure is, unfortunately, missing.

Scholarly opinion to date has vacillated between identifying these feet as belonging to a child or to a divine consort. The latter opinion was most recently put forward by J.V. Canby. I would like instead to come back to an earlier suggestion that the feet are those of a child; indeed the feet of Ur-Namma's son and heir, Shulgi. I would further argue that such an interpretation offers an opportunity to pursue the visual program of the stela as a whole within the broader context of the Ur III state.

Winters, Ryan (Harvard University)

The Royal Cowherds of Ur: A Study in ŠUKU

A key aspect of Ur III centralization was the royal government's ability to exercise de-facto ownership of land located throughout the various provinces. Already before the former Esagdana-Nippur was renamed Puzriš-Dagan and established as the state's official animal management capital in Šulgi 39, a group of tablets from Umma demonstrate that a group of cowherds stationed in or around that provincial center were being paid with land allotments (ŠUKU) that had been transferred from the local ensi's holdings, under the authority of a well-known royal official otherwise known mostly from the Puzrish-Dagan texts. Many of these Umma herdsmen reoccur in animal delivery texts from Puzrish-Dagan itself, alongside a consistent group of other cowherds marked as stemming from such diverse centers as Girsu, Isin, Adab, Urusagrig, and Maškan-Šapir. It is thus quite likely that these herdsmen too were paid with land allotments garnished from the holdings of their respective provincial capitals. The use of a superior right to the disposal of local land for royal purposes, a cornerstone of capital-provincial relations in the Ur III period, shall be considered alongside a reconstruction of the royal herding system.

Wisnom, Selena (University of Oxford)

Implications of Intertextuality: Erra and Išum and the Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur

One of the defining characteristics of Mesopotamian scholarship is interconnectedness. From the wide semiotic range of each cuneiform sign to the concept of the mirroring of heaven and earth and the interpretation of omens through puns – all such connections were seen to reflect fundamental truths about the universe. As such, intertextuality is deeply embedded in the Mesopotamian worldview, and interpreting a text depends on grasping its surrounding networks of meaning. This paper will outline some methodologies of intertextual analysis, taking Erra and Išum and the Lamentation over the destruction of Sumer and Ur as a case study to show what can be achieved with this approach.

Erra and Išum shows a number of close and specific resemblances with this lamentation that are not found in other city laments or other more contemporary texts. Although the Sumerian city laments are not usually thought to have survived the Old Babylonian period, these striking connections suggest otherwise. Other evidence for the survival of the city lament genre into the first millennium will be presented which strengthens the likelihood of direct allusion in Erra and Išum to the Lamentation over the destruction of Sumer and Ur. The meaning of these connections will be explored, showing how recognition of intertextual contexts can significantly enhance our understanding of the poem. Finally the implications for other genres of cuneiform scholarship will be discussed, opening up new possibilities for understanding these often-enigmatic texts.

Wolfe, Jared (Museum of the Bible, Washington D.C.)

Between Cause and Effect: The Instruments of Action

The paper examines the emergence and evolution of instrumental clauses (marked by Sumerian –ta, Akkadian *ina*) in the corpus of royal inscriptions from 3rd and 2nd millennium rulers in Mesopotamia. These documents present the acts of kings to the gods and the people, and as such represent an early form of historical narrative that is concerned with connecting causes and effects. Standing between these causes and effects are instrumental clauses. These clauses indicate the means by which actions are claimed to have been effected. Thus, investigation of these clauses contributes directly to discussions of

early Mesopotamian historiographical purposes and techniques of identifying cause, action, and effect.

Going further, the present study explores instrumental clauses within their larger linguistic and literary contexts. Instrumental clauses are one of several features that evolve along with larger trends in the Sumero-Akkadian lexicon and historiographical practices from their first appearance in ED III Lagash through the First Dynasty of Babylon. The findings of the study also contribute to our understanding of kingship and the royal cult in the first half of Mesopotamian history. In sum, investigation of instrumental clauses provides a lens through which to analyze a segment of Mesopotamian self-presentation and, thereby, self-understanding.

Woods, Christopher (University of Chicago)

In the Mind's Eye: Possible Mental Abacus Calculations in Mesopotamia

The scant yet intriguing evidence that can be gleaned from lexical and literary texts, as well as from numerical notation itself, indicates that the abacus was known in Mesopotamia at an early date. The evidence provided by particular mathematical errors, however, suggests the use not of a physical device, but, more strikingly, of an abacus construed in the mind's eye — a “mental abacus.” Abacus use, with extensive training, is a typical example of an overlearned cognitive skill — one that has been learned beyond proficiency, so that the operation of the device becomes automatic, interiorized, and subconscious. Indeed, contemporary abacus experts — from China, Japan, and Korea, to India — typically opt to abandon the physical device altogether, and are able to construct a mental image of an abacus and perform calculations by manipulating the visualized beads in precisely the same manner and following the same procedures, as if they were using an actual, physical device. In this paper, I will discuss these errors — which occur in Old Babylonian and Seleucid mathematical texts and are characteristic of large, literally, wide, numbers, exceeding five sexagesimal positions (Proust 2000) — and the degree to which they are consistent with errors and techniques that typify contemporaneous mental abacus practice.

Wright, Rita (New York University)

Puabi's "Cloak": What Lies Beneath

This paper was inspired by an exhibition of Near Eastern holdings from the Royal Cemetery at Ur that were mounted at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in 2009. Among the finds was some of the apparel worn by Puabi in her final days. In a manner appropriate to a woman of her status, the placement of the queen's magnificent ornaments, toggle pins, and other possessions were meticulously reconstructed in order to reveal her high status and her connections to a world beyond Mesopotamia. Using both textual and archaeological evidence, this contribution discusses the kind of textile that lay beneath her showy ornamental arrangements by focusing on the details of the fabric to which they were attached, namely the “cloak,” which is often referred to but rarely explored.

Wu, Xin (Albright Institute)

The Arts of Resistance: Central Asian Trade and Conflict in the Achaemenid Period

The competition for control over trade routes was arguably a key stimulus for conflict not only between the Medes and the Assyrian kings but also between the local polities in Central Asia and the Great King of Persia. Drawing on the evidence of the Achaemenid reliefs and inscriptions at Behistun, images of warfare from the glyptic corpus, and archaeological evidence from Margiana and the Kopet Dagh foothill in Central Asia, and adopting theoretical approaches to the materiality of resistance drawn by scholars such as Scott and Gonzalez Ruibal, this contribution suggests that the polities in the Kopet Dagh foothills at least participated and, perhaps even played a key role, in the political conflicts between the Central Asian satraps and their Persian overlords at the beginning of the Achaemenid period. This contribution further highlights the necessity of working across disciplines (art historical, archaeological, and textual) to construct a detailed and multifaceted view of historical interactions.

Younger, K. Lawson (Trinity International University)

Arameans in the Zagros: The Cuneiform and Aramaic Evidence

In 1998, with the publication of the Bukān Inscription (an Aramaic inscription from the ancient land of Mannea located in the Zagros mountains), scholarly attention focused immediately on how the Aramaic language found its way into this region. This paper will address this issue anew in light of the cuneiform evidence that has not yet been fully integrated into the analysis.

Zadok, Ran (Tel Aviv University)

On the Economic Relations of Eanna with the Sealand, and Related Issues

It is well known that the Ebabbar temple of Larsa, a city that belonged to the Sealand (Bit-Yakin) in the Sargonid period and later as well, was a satellite of the Eanna temple of Uruk. Ur was very close to the Sealand territory. Therefore it is listed together with the cities of Bit-Yakin and other Chaldean territories that supported Merodach-baladan II. In the account of the crimes and sacrileges of Nabu-shuma-ishkun, it is claimed that this king made offerings as he wished to the gods of the Sealand, of Chaldea and of the (eastern) Arameans, whereas in the preceding lines of that account only Chaldea and the Arameans are enumerated. It was singled out because its deities were not exclusively Chaldean: the Sealand included several old temple cities where the traditional cults of Sumero-Akkadian and possibly Kassite deities were practised. The second occurrence appears in a NB letter, where an unnamed Sealand governor speaks of "the life of the Akkadians". The context suggests that he meant people originating from the other areas of Babylonia.

Uruk had intensive economic relations with the Sealand. Two Eanna archive documents that are housed in the Utah Museum of Natural History relate to the Sealand. The first one, issued in Dur-Ilil of the Sealand, is a promissory note for an assessed rent in dates from Bit-Shadaynu. It sheds more light on the market value of dates in 521 BCE: 35 shekels of silver for 70 kors of dates.

The second one is an administrative compendium from the beginning of the Achaemenid period. No less than 55 individuals are listed, in at least 16 settlements. Two of these settlements were located in the Sealand, or near it, viz. Kar-Nabu and Nahallu.

Zaia, Shana (Yale University)

Divine Foundations: Religion and Assyrian Capital Cities

As the Assyrian Empire expanded during the Neo-Assyrian period (954-609 BCE), its kings established or refurbished massive capital cities in the heartland. Notable examples include Ashurnasirpal II's movement from the traditional Assur to Calah, Sargon II's creation of Dur-Sharrukin, and Sennacherib's restoration of Nineveh. Current scholarship has examined these changing seats of power through a political lens, discussing the strategic and propagandistic implications of each new royal site. As imperial power was inextricably linked with religious ideology, however, these political changes were accompanied by theological justifications. Cities were the dwellings of gods as much as they were of mortals, and deities were involved in the process of city (re)building at every level, from patronage of the city as a whole to assisting with construction itself. This paper will discuss the creation, rebuilding, and movement of Assyrian seats of power from a religious perspective, with special attention to the resulting changes (or stasis) in the official cult and representation of gods. Using the corpus of Assyrian royal inscriptions and letters, this paper will use the aforementioned examples as case studies to determine in which ways religion informed the creation of capitals and vice versa. The language and ceremonies associated with building narratives in the official texts will shed further light on how cities were symbols and spaces of divine and royal authority, as well as on the religious implications of moving to a new capital city.

Zettler, Richard (University of Pennsylvania)

Woolley's Excavations at Ur: New Perspectives from Artifact Inventories, Field Records and Ancillary Archival Documentation

Sir Leonard Woolley's excavations at the site of Tell al-Muqqayar, ancient Ur (Biblical Ur of the Chaldees), located near the modern city of Nasiriyah, was the first excavation in the modern nation-state of Iraq, and one of the largest-scale efforts in the more than one hundred and fifty years of archaeological work in the "cradle of civilization." Woolley worked at the site from 1922–1934, excavating on a scale we could never replicate today, and his discoveries, particularly the Royal Cemetery, attracted substantial public attention. Newspapers around the world printed countless articles on his excavations and the *The Illustrated London News*, England's "window on the world," reported the results of Woolley's discoveries at Ur in some thirty features, at least two with color illustrations.

Woolley put out annual preliminary reports on his excavations in *The Antiquaries Journal* and he and his collaborators published the results of their work in popular accounts and ten oversized final reports, the Royal Cemetery in a monumental two volume, lavishly illustrated report. Woolley's reports seemingly provide a definitive account of his excavations. Yet, his field records and ancillary archival documentation, as well as the collections of artifacts deriving from the excavations, held for the most part in the Iraq Museum (Baghdad), British Museum and University of Pennsylvania Museum (Penn Museum), hold the real potential not just to correct details, but to revise Woolley's interpretations of the results of his excavations in ways both large and small.

Funding provided by generous grants, with lead support from the Leon Levy Foundation, over the last few years has made it possible for teams working at the British Museum and Penn Museum to inventory their collections from Woolley's excavations and to digitize and reassemble his field notes and catalog of finds, as well as a wealth of archival documentation relating to the excavations. This paper describes the nature of the documentation in the British Museum and Penn Museum regrettably not in the Iraq Museum, Baghdad its potential for revising Woolley's interpretations and concludes with a few case studies on how a second look at Woolley's field records has altered our understanding of Woolley's Royal Cemetery.

Zimansky, Paul (Stony Brook University)

Was the Karzida of Ur's Akiti Festival at Tell Sakhariya?

Tell Sakhariya, 7 km east northeast of Ur's ziggurat, was excavated over a six-week season ending in January 2012. Absence of domestic architecture frustrated the expedition's goal of exploring a village near to and contemporary with the settlements Woolley had excavated at Ur, but the finds, particularly a significant number of fragmentary royal inscriptions, suggested that the site might actually have been cultic and of royal interest. The paper will examine the evidence for arguing that this site was ancient GA.EŠ, the location of the Karzida, to which the image of Nanna/Suen was transported semi-annually for the Akiti festival.

Abstracts of Conference Posters

Çataloluk, Osman (Balıkesir University) and **Immanuel Freedman** (Harleysville, Pennsylvania)

The Meaning of the Word armannu (armānu, arwānu, armanû, raman=nû)

The word “armannu” is a geographical name, a substantive which was first observed in Mari tablets of SB. It is a foreign word; wr. syll. and as GIŠ.ḪAŠḪUR.KUR.RA; cf. armāniš. giš.Ḫašḫur.kur.ra=ša.par.[gill]u, ár.man.nu (var.ma[n.nu]). Hh.III. 35f.; giš.Ḫašḫur.ar(var.ar).man.nu=MIN. ibid. 37; ir.a[rman.nu] A tablet 955, IR//arman nu//IR //xxx[...] BM 41354 (com., courtesy W. G. Lambert).

The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago (CAD) gives its meaning as a tree together with an aromatic substance obtained from it. This poster explores the possibility that this a Turkic loan word perhaps contributed by a proto-Turkic group of Subareans.

Elsässer, Marc (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München)

Computer-aided Analysis of Sumerian Orthography

Due to what is usually termed the “polyvalence” of cuneiform writing, a certain sequence of signs can often be interpreted in radically different ways. This is especially apparent in Sumerian writing where the intermixture of syllabographic and logographic elements and our limited understanding of the language itself further aggravate the difficulties. A detailed knowledge of Sumerian orthography is therefore indispensable when working with texts written in this language. Yet no systematic study of Sumerian orthography has been performed, as, until recently, the amount of data necessary to produce reliable results simply would not have been manageable. Scholars are therefore, in many cases, still forced to rely on their own experience to determine the possible meanings of a certain combination of signs in a given time, place and context, or to resort to assumptions.

However, with the creation of large scale corpus projects such as CDLI and BDTNS, that have made the greater part of the Sumerian language material available in digital form, and the development of novel analysis methods in the fields of data science and natural language processing that facilitate the evaluation of vast amounts of language data, a comprehensive study of Sumerian orthography has since become possible. This will not only be of great practical value when working with Sumerian texts, but will also help to answer more general questions concerning the history of cuneiform, the development of phonographic writing, and the existence of different cuneiform traditions.

Freedman, Immanuel (Harleysville, Pennsylvania) and **Osman Çataloluk** (Balıkesir University)

The Meaning of the Astral Term mul SAG-ME-GAR

The planet Jupiter is occasionally referred to as mul SAG-ME-GAR, an astral term whose reading and meaning are uncertain. This poster explores the possibilities that mul SAG-ME-GAR, witness SAA 13, 072; SAA 16, 021 and CTN 04, 028 may be a logogram, a (pseudo) Sumerian word or a Turkic loan word.

Helle, Sophus (University of Copenhagen)

The Two-act Structure of Akkadian Epics

In the course of my MA-thesis on the topic of love and grief in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, I have uncovered a number of thematic parallels between the two emotions. For this poster, I want to place this mirroring of love and grief in the larger context of narrative mirroring in Akkadian epics. My claim is that in the majority of Akkadian epics, the narrative is structured by a division into two acts, where the second act mirrors and expands the first. This structure has been noted for most individual epics, but not as a general narratological trope.

This mirroring can take on different forms. In *Atra-hasis*, it is a contrast: between the creation of humanity in the first act and the destruction of humanity in the second. In *Enuma Elish*, it is a repetition: the story of Ea's fight with Apsû is mirrored and magnified in the story of Marduk's fight with Tiamat. Likewise, the extension that takes place in the second act can be realized differently. In *Enuma Elish*, the first act is told in about 50 lines, the second in about 500. But in *Gilgamesh* the two acts are roughly the same length, and the extension is rather one of cosmological space. First the heroes travel west and reach a mysterious forest, then Gilgamesh travels east and reaches a mysterious forest – but then travels beyond it, to the end of the world.

Despite such variation there is a consistent pattern in the narrative structure, which may help clarify stories that are currently unclear. In *Erra and Ishum*, for example, the causal relation between the restoration of Marduk's statue and Erra's subsequent rampage is at present poorly understood. Perhaps it can then be explained as a form of mirroring between a controlled destruction and renewal, and its uncontrollable, universal counterpart.

Henriksen, Agnes (University College London)

Domesticating the Sumerians in Mandate Iraq 1922-1934: Investigating Research Communication in Interwar Britain

The extraordinary finds from Woolley's excavations at Ur captured the public imagination around the world. What strategies were used to present the Ur excavations to different stakeholder groups and stakeholders, and what effect did these sometimes competing stakeholder interests have on research activities and interpretations?

My research is centered on three different types of communication: inter-institutional, museum-public, and third party. The institutional and public communication was primarily created by Woolley and the expedition team. The range of documents and publications reflect deliberate strategies directed towards the interests of the expeditions stakeholders. Here I present the different types of communication and how they can provide information on the choices made by the individuals and institutions involved in communicating the results of the excavations. I also look at the way this information was then reused and transformed by others for different audience groups.

My primary sources for the PhD thesis include: C. Leonard Woolley's business archive (BMCA WY 1), the British Museum business archive related to the Joint Expedition (BMCA CE 32), the Penn Museum business archive related to the Joint Expedition, British newspapers such as: The 'Times', 'Illustrated London News', 'Daily Mail' etc., as well as Woolley's popular and academic publications.

Neumann, Georg (Universität Tübingen)

Digitizing the Inventory of the National Museum of Deir ez Zor

In a world of conflict, war, looting, and total destruction inventories of immovable, movable, and intangible cultural heritage are indispensable. Over centuries these inventories were written by hand on perishable materials; they were often destroyed even if they had been deposited apart of the objects they listed. Therefore the Direction Générale des Antiquités et des Musées (DGAM) and Freie Universität Berlin have in 2015 agreed to conduct a pilot project "Digitizing the inventory of the National Museum of Deir ez-Zor". This joint venture is sponsored by the Foreign Ministry of Germany. It cooperates with the "UNESCO-Emergency Safeguarding of the Syrian Heritage Project", the "Syrian Heritage Archive Project" (SHA) of the German Archaeological Institute (DAI), and with ICOM-Comité International pour la Documentation (CIDOC).

Shuke, Anastas (University of Tirana)

Finding Graphic Etymology Continuity from Pictographic to OS Period

Being a fascinating subject of understanding Sumerians thoughts on an entire civilization depicted on clay, the invention of their language script signs and their readings was not based on the respective object shape and name only. It was basically a visual abstraction of its characteristics, function, or of a man action, so it might also be the depiction of a verb, adverb, adjective, etc. Sometimes the actual term was written with a combination of signs, as a short characterizing sentence, and later on, using the rebus principle and phonetic writing of the language.

The graphically assumed meanings of pictographic signs are considered as notoriously misleading if compared to the later development in cuneiform, but there are plenty of arguments that bespeak the contrary. The occurrences with semantic continuity are fully clear and present everywhere, including basic lexemes. The study of Sumerian by beginning from End has nearly exhausted its resources, what if we try to begin from the Beginning? Begin from pictographic signs?

Following such view, I have analyzed the graphic etymology of some basic verbs like to be, to have, grasp, guard/preserve, get on, eat, drink, bear, beat, ignite, boil, wash, the elements – fire, wind, water, earth, some semantic primes, the Sumerian words for god, kinship terms, adverbs like on/above, many/plenty, etc.

Discovering such graphic etymology would be a secure clue to better understand the cuneiform morphological rules or reading conventions, thus, find precisely the word boundaries, also deciding the most coherent reading values, meanings, so the real, spoken language behind its script.

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On the Water Semantic Field in Sumerian

Water is the most important element in our lives. It is part of our food, our body, it is needed and it is present almost everywhere in our life and activity. A strange coincidence to its chemical formula H₂O, seems to be the A ‘water’ cuneiform sign formed of a single and a double stroke, as if representing the oxygen atom and the two atoms of hydrogen respectively.

The sign for water A, since its pictographic origins, is said to represent “falling water.” It is formed of two elements, the *as* sign and a second one, which I think represents a kind of falling water, the rain. The concept of *rain* is more primary than that of *water* because the occurrence of rain is much more frequent in the sense of space and time, than the water of springs, rivers, etc. So, one might express the idea *water* through that of *rain*. This might be the reason why the A sign is not rotated for 90° as the other signs, thus keeping the vertical direction of rain.

By analyzing literally the expressions “the water is life, water is existence,” we could get the possible equation: A = *exists*, A = *is*. This discussion leads us to the definition “water is rain,” which is what the sign itself may convey to us.

The water semantic field includes all forms, objects and phenomena of water in nature such as rain, sea, river, brook, spring, vapour, cloud, well, flood, silt; its fruits - the fishes, water activities, irrigation, canal, transport - boat, ship, bridge, related verbs – drink, irrigate, to water, to wash, clean, cook, boil, etc. All of them will be discussed in this work, by their graphic etymology from pictographic period to OS and later.