



Damqātum^{N° 4}

Centro de Estudios de Historia del
Antiguo Oriente (CEHAO)
Departamento de Historia
Facultad de Filosofía y Letras
Pontificia Universidad Católica Argentina

THE CEHAO NEWSLETTER / EL BOLETÍN DE NOTICIAS DEL CEHAO

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Damqātum

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Karnak, Mendes and Thirty Years in Egyptology: an Interview with Alicia Daneri Rodrigo

by Virginia Laporta

It is a pleasure to interview Prof. Alicia Daneri Rodrigo, one of the most important scholars in the Argentinean Egyptology. After a successful career of more than thirty years in Egyptology, participating in archaeological research in very important sites as Karnak and Mendes (with the University of Toronto and later the Pennsylvania State University), Daneri retired from her posts at the University of Buenos Aires, University of La Plata and CONICET (National Research Council). However, she is still actively involved in the research and the training of graduate students.

How were your first steps in research?

The incorporation into the Ancient Near East field of studies, especially Egyptology, was early because when I entered the University of La Plata I



Alicia Daneri Rodrigo (first from the left) with Egyptian staff in Mendes.

had a particular interest in Archaeology and Egyptology. I chose History, and at that time Prof. Abraham Rosenvasser was Dean of the Faculty of Humanities. He taught two courses: Ancient Near Eastern History and Classics. That was an auspicious context for my immediate insertion. Besides, Rosenvasser had founded in La Plata an Institute of Ancient History and had bought the library from the

(To page 2)

(From page 1)

British Egyptologist Stephen Glanville, which had Flinders Petrie's publications and of the British School of Archaeology. Together with the material of Egyptology and Biblical Studies, there was also material of Classical History. Unfortunately, when Rosenvasser finished his term and retired from the courses of Ancient history, the material from this library was dispersed. Some books went to the Institute of Classical Studies and the part corresponding to the Ancient Near East was left in the Main Library. So, when Rosenvasser retired from La Plata -he taught simultaneously in La Plata and Buenos Aires-, there was a dispersal of his students from the Faculty of Humanities. There was, in parallel, a group in Buenos Aires, which later on integrated the courses in the University of Buenos Aires. In my case, I moved to Buenos Aires and later on I went with my husband to Canada, while I had still three courses to finish my undergraduate studies. We left because my husband had a scholarship for a PhD program in other field, and I went to the Institute of Ancient Near Eastern Studies in Toronto, in the year 1967. I was accepted there as a special student knowing that I still had pending the conclusion of my undergraduate studies. I was there one year as a special student and I graduated when I went back temporarily to Argentina. During my second year I won the *Ontario Graduate Fellowship* to do a *Master of Arts*, and later on, a scholarship to start the PhD in Toronto. In that moment the Institute had a staff of excellent scholars, such as Donald Redford, Winnifred Needler and Ronald Williams, a well-known Demotist, in Egyptology; and in Biblical and Mesopotamian Studies, Kirk Grayson who also taught Assyriology. The most interesting specialization were the languages offered by the institute. That is why I did all the Egyptian levels with Redford and Williams, and also took courses of Biblical Hebrew and Egyptian Archaeology.

In 1973, we decided to come back to Argentina; my husband had concluded his PhD, had worked in the University of Toronto and had a

proposal to work in our country. I joined the Institute of Ancient History that was directed by Rosenvasser and started teaching at the University of Buenos Aires, but most of my work was basically concentrated in research. I started the PhD with Rosenvasser until his death; afterwards I finished and defended the dissertation in the University of Buenos Aires.

So, did you keep in touch with Redford and the people of Toronto?

In fact, I did so because there it was created, during the 1970s, the Society for Studies of Egyptian Antiquities (SSEA). The initial meetings of the Society, which is in fact the Canadian Association of Egyptology, took place in Toronto while I was living there, and I am in fact one of its first members, and today I am one of the Society's life members. I even participated in a cataloguing project of the *CoffinTexts* when I had already finished the Master, which established a very good work relationship. Years later, I began participating in the Akhenaten Temple Project in Karnak, directed by Redford on behalf of the University of Toronto, and later on in Tell er Rub'a-Mendes, a site located in the Egyptian Delta. Concerning the University of Buenos Aires, I continued working at the Institute of Ancient Near Eastern History and teaching in the undergraduate course of Ancient History as Adjunct Professor. Afterwards, I was accepted as Associate Professor in the University of Buenos Aires and Full Professor in the University of La Plata. I maintained these positions until 2006.

By observing your language studies it is inevitable to ask why did you study Arabic?

In order to work in Egypt as well as in other places of the Near East it is advisable to have some knowledge of Arabic. The problem is that Classical Arabic is not of much help in the daily life because the modern language is quite different from the classical one, and even inside one country there are regional

(To page 4)

SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE - CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS DE HISTORIA DEL ANTIGUO ORIENTE (CEHAO-UCA)

NEW ONLINE ANCIENT NEAR EAST MONOGRAPH SERIES ESTABLISHED

The Society of Biblical Literature, in partnership with the Centro de Estudios de Historia del Antiguo Oriente, Universidad Católica Argentina (CEHAO/UCA), announces the establishment of a new online, open-access monograph series. The focus of the series will be on the ancient Near East, including ancient Israel and its literature, from the early Neolithic to the early Hellenistic eras. Proposals and manuscripts may be submitted in either Spanish or English. Manuscripts are subject to blind peer review by two members of the series' editorial board before acceptance. Published volumes will be held to the high scholarly standards of SBL and CEHAO/UCA.

A prestigious international group of scholars has agreed to serve on the editorial board:

Co-General Editors:

Ehud Ben Zvi, University of Alberta

Roxana Flammini, Catholic University of Argentina

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Martti Nissinen, University of Helsinki

Juan Manuel Tebes, Catholic University of Argentina, University of Buenos Aires

The partnership between SBL and CEHAO/UCA was initiated under the auspices of SBL's International Cooperation Initiative (ICI) and represents the type of international scholarly exchange that is the goal of ICI. Scholars from anywhere in the world are invited to submit proposals, and the online nature of the series will provide global access to the published scholarship.

Questions about the series or proposals for volumes should be directed to Ehud Ben Zvi (ehud.ben.zvi@ualberta.ca), Roxana Flammini (roxflamm@yahoo.com.ar), or Billie Jean Collins (billie.collins@sbl-site.org).



SOCIETY OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE



CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS DE
HISTORIA DEL ANTIGUO ORIENTE
(CEHAO-UCA)

ACADEMIC ACTIVITY IN BUENOS AIRES

Centro de Estudios de Historia del Antiguo Oriente - Facultad de Filosofía y Letras
Pontificia Universidad Católica Argentina



MARCEL SIGRIST IN BUENOS AIRES: August to September 2008

Seminars:

- **"Introduction to the Akkadian Language" (in English)** Conference:

August 5th - 28th, Tuesday and Thursday from 5.30 pm to 8 pm

- **"History of Jerusalem" (in English)**

September 24th, 6 pm

Free and open to the general public.

- **"A History of Ancient Mesopotamia" (in English)**

September 2nd - 25th, Tuesday and Thursday from 5.30 pm to 8 pm

Oriented to the general public but with limited vacancies.

The CEHAO is pleased to announce the visit of Professor Marcel Sigrist (*École Biblique et Archéologique Française de Jerusalem*, Israel), one of the most important scholars in the field of ancient Mesopotamian history and language, who will be in Buenos Aires during the next months of August and September. In this opportunity he will give two courses "Introduction to the Akkadian Language" and "A History of Ancient Mesopotamia" which are open to the general public although vacancies are limited. There will also be a conference in which Sigrist will teach about the "History of Jerusalem"; free of charge and open to the general public. All of these activities will be given in English and will be open to the community.

Please contact us for further information at:

E-mail: cehao_uca@yahoo.com.ar

Telephone: (54-11) 4349 - 0200 (int 1189)

Website: www.uca.edu.ar/cehao

(From page 2)

differences, as in Egypt between south and north. The course I took in the Islamic Centre of Buenos Aires was very useful, because there they taught oral and elementary comprehension of Arabic. I consider convenient studying modern Arabic and even more today when it is not so difficult to become a volunteer in an excavation in the Near East.

And what about the other languages, ancient and modern?

The study of modern languages such as English, French and German, is very important for those who start doing research. Regarding ancient languages, for instance in Toronto the policy was to have a main field of research. In my case it was Egyptology, and I studied Egyptian, but also it was important to have a good knowledge of a second language, so I chose Hebrew.

Why did you study Hebrew if your interests were linked specifically with Egyptology?

I think it depends on the orientation that a person chooses and of thinking about a particular order of priorities. And it is very important because when you arrive to a certain point in your research, you cannot get valid results if they are not based on a personal work with the sources. Also, by knowing their original language, you can discuss if the interpretation of another author is appropriate or not.

What is the importance of the languages as well as theories related to the field of work?

Certainly that is a good point, because nowadays the theoretical views of different disciplines are applied to History. The

(To page 5)

(From page 4)

interdisciplinary work is doubtless very important, but there are people who wrongly think that they can apply theories taken from other disciplines without knowing what is elementary, that is to say the historical context itself, without having the appropriate knowledge for the research with texts. So that, taking into account that a valuable work is the one that has a baggage, a theoretical approach, it cannot be properly done unless the author knows perfectly well the subject he studies as well as the language of the texts in order to properly judge it from the original material. And this can also be applied to college teaching because there are cases in which people present their views in such a general way that they do not give the student the elements to understand the subject. This has to do with the teacher and the quality of his teaching.

Do you consider that your previous studies in Canada and research in Buenos Aires allowed you to enter to CONICET?

Definitely yes, I entered CONICET in the year 1981, even though I already was in Argentina since 1973/74 and had incorporated myself into the circle of Rosenvasser again. I think that it is very important the experience of studying in a well-known specialized centre,

because it provides specific knowledge in the field one is interested in, as well as the human experience interacting with people who studied in other environment. Regarding my research work in Argentina, by the time I entered CONICET, Rosenvasser was publishing the results of the excavation of the Ramesside temple at Aksha -part of the UNESCO project to rescue the temples that were in danger by the construction of the Aswan Dam in the 1960s-. He was director of the expedition together with Jean Vercoutter from France. At first, I published in the *Revista del Instituto de Historia Antigua Oriental (RIHAO)* of the University of Buenos Aires some unpublished material from the Museum of Natural Sciences of La Plata, and after the death of Rosenvasser I started working with part of Aksha's material that had been left unpublished. In 1990 those who belonged to CONICET went to a new research department named Programa de Estudios de Egiptología (PREDE- in English, Egyptological Studies Program). There, the *Revista de Estudios de Egiptología (REE)* began to be published and the studies on Aksha were particularly included there. I also started to participate in projects located in Egypt. In this way, I was involved in publishing the research results based on the fieldwork carried by the

(To page 6)

Trip to Egypt - Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (14th edition)

July 27th - August 10th 2008

This trip is organized in the manner of a "cultural vacation" focused on students from the course of Ancient Prehistory and History of the Faculty of Humanities of the Open University of Catalunya (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya). Nevertheless, the trip is open to other students in general as well as the whole UOC community and people in general who are interested in a less "touristic" trip and a more "cultural" one. All the explanations will be given in Catalan.

Price of the trip: 1.425 €

(Plus for individual room: 200 €)

For more information visit our web site: www.uoc.edu

(From page 5)

University of Toronto and the Pennsylvania State University, in Karnak as well as in Mendes. In fact, I always tried to work in a line that would mix both the research on the fieldwork I was doing in Egypt and its applicability to college teaching. That is why I linked the fieldwork in Mendes with a research project in CONICET about "pottery and exchange." This issue was relevant because this site -Mendes- had a port that linked different areas through the Nile, such as the Mediterranean and the regions to the south. In this sense, the exchange of pottery was an appropriate issue to be analyzed. So, from then on, projects were guided in that way. The last project I have been working on was a research on the celebration of one of the Egyptian royal rituals, related to the foundation of temples. Specifically, I have been working on the foundation ritual in the temple of Mendes. What visitors can see on the surface today of the central temple of Mendes are remains of buildings of several periods, particularly from the sixth century BCE. The archaeological work of the "Mendes Project" contributed with a huge amount of information about the temple's history and the importance of the city as a religious centre in the early periods. Mendes is a very complex site and special for a director like Redford, who possesses a wide and deep vision of the Egyptian history.

So, were your studies at the University of Toronto which allowed you to participate in the archaeological excavations in Mendes (Tell er Rub'a) and in the Akhenaten Temple Project (East Karnak)?

Certainly, the relationship created during my studies in Toronto was very important. The first work related with Archaeology was in the Temple of Akhenaten in Karnak, where I participated in two campaigns, in 1989 and 1991. It is one of the places where Akhenaten built temples before the foundation of Amarna and his religious reform. That is why it is a very special site, because it is a testimony of a previous period to the reform. It was totally dismantled after Akhenaten's reign and the

most part of the construction blocks were reused in diverse buildings in Karnak. Redford's work has been related to the excavation of the temple foundations, the recovery of blocks that were left there when it was destroyed, and the reconstruction of the scenes that decorated the temple. All this work was made from the material that was found there.

That would imply that a systematic destruction did take place in that site?

Yes, there was a systematic destruction after the death of Akhenaten that coincided with the return to the religious orthodoxy, and the material of the temples was re-used in buildings of different periods. In this way, part of the blocks were found kilometers away from the original location in Karnak.

Which were the most important findings in Mendes (Tell er Rub'a)?

Tell er Rub'a, the ancient city of Mendes, is a large site (90 ha.), with an occupation from the Predynastic Period (late fourth millennium) to the Hellenistic Period. Different areas of the city have been excavated: the port zone, which connected with one of the Nile branches, the royal cemetery, the cemeteries of the sacred animals and the main temple. The most significant excavation results are the wealth of the material remains, particularly those belonging to the Old Kingdom times and to the end of this period; the evidence of extensive exchange relationships with the Eastern Mediterranean since the sixth century BCE to the Hellenistic period; and the archaeological indications of the destruction suffered by the city during the second Persian invasion. Undoubtedly, the results of the archaeological research - which are in process of publication by the project's director - will throw light on the history of the city and the Delta region. Actually, while I was working on the pottery of the site -my specific role in the project- not only Roman and Hellenistic wares from the upper strata of the tell were found, but almost

(To page 7)

(From page 6)

all the previous historical periods of the ancient Egypt.

Is it possible for students to participate in an excavation of such importance as Mendes?

Yes. The "Mendes Project" has a Field School for students that wish to participate in the excavation. Obviously, the fees for overseas students are rather expensive. In the case of American students, for example those from Penn State, they have the possibility of receiving a loan that must be paid in due time, but in return, the Mendes Project gives them academic credits. The fees finance the excavation and are used for funding the work team, the specialists and the local workers.

Which are the chances for those Argentineans that choose Egyptology as a field of research but that are coming from a private university? In what ways can this fact be a "disadvantage", especially at the time of obtaining fundings or grants from state institutions?

I disagree with this idea, because being a graduate from a state university is not a guarantee of success. Furthermore, it depends on the received academic knowledge and personal conditions. Communication nowadays is very extensive and people have so many opportunities of getting scholarships that the idea of private university graduates being limited is really absurd. In fact, certain private universities offer career programs which give you everything you need. What is evaluated when someone is considered for an academic position is what that person has done while studying and how he did it. We have to admit that times have changed, younger people not only can achieve a doctorate earlier in life but produce good research work, which is what really matters. It is true that in certain fields - such as Egyptology - it is not so easy, but difficulties are equal to everybody. We have to compete and, above all, bear in mind the requirements.

Translation: Eugenia Minolli.



The Amarna Trust is organizing a special cultural tour to Egypt led by Dr. Rawia Ismail and (as guest lecturer) Professor Barry Kemp between November 1-10, 2008. This tour is in support of the Amarna Trust, and for promoting archaeological excavation, conservation and research on the Amarna Period. The tour will visit some of Egypt's rarely visited sites around the cities of **El Minya** (Tebtunis, Heracleopolis Magna, Frazer tombs, Beni Hassan tombs, Tell El-Amarna, Tuna el-Gebel), **Zagazig** (Bubastis, Mendes, Bahbeit el-Hagar, Buto) and **Rosetta**.

Info: <http://www.gatewaytoegypt.com/>



INSTITUTIONAL PARTICIPATION OF CEHAO MEMBER

During last April Roxana Flammini (CEHAO's Director) presented a paper about "Asymmetrical Core-Periphery Relationships during the Egyptian Middle Kingdom (ca. 2050-1640 BC)" in the conference "What Would a Bronze Age World System Look Like? World Systems Approaches to Europe and Western Asia 4th to 1st Millennium BC." The aim of this conference was to review the applicability of a world-systems perspective to the complex material remains of what might very loosely be called early Europe, extending from Anatolia and the eastern Mediterranean in the south-east to the Atlantic and North Sea in the north-west, and covering a span from the 4th to the 1st millennium BC. It was hoped to examine the ways in which (if at all) such a perspective can best be adapted to prehistoric and early historic contexts, and to discuss the pitfalls which may lie in the way of such adaptations. In particular, it confronted the problem of maintaining some sort of balance between ideas of eastern influence and regional autonomy by identifying in detail which aspects of European societies can best be viewed from this standpoint, and by attempting to reconstruct the mechanisms by which external stimuli may have had a significant impact upon processes of social reproduction.

Website: <http://www.ancientworldsystems.group.shef.ac.uk/>

CONICET

Instituto Multidisciplinario de Historia y Ciencias Humanas

The III Interdisciplinary Seminar on Mobility and Migrations (*III Jornadas Interdisciplinarias sobre Movilidad y Migraciones*), organized by the *Instituto Multidisciplinario de Historia y Ciencias Humanas* - CONICET, will take place from 22th to 24th October 2008, in the Institute facilities (Saavedra 15, 5th floor, C1083ACA, Buenos Aires). Inscription is free.

For more information, contact:

Instituto Multidisciplinario de Historia y Ciencias Humanas - Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas.

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NEWS

Graffiti and Cultural Heritage

The responsibility for Egypt's cultural heritage should be of concern to the whole world and its governing bodies and institutes. During centuries a long colonial archaeology has been practiced in Egypt: the study of Egypt by foreign Egyptologists and archaeologists catering to their own constituency.

Many of the destructive forces listed below affect Egypt's sites and monuments as well: 1) Acid rain and weathering, 2) Pollution, 3) Modern agricultural practices and land reclamation, 4) Looting, 5) Demolition, building and development projects, 6) Urban sprawl caused by an ever-growing population, 7) Earthquakes, floods and other natural disasters, 8) The construction of dams, 9) Deterioration caused by a change of environment due to excavation, 10) Salinization, 11) High water table levels, 12) Lack of money and resources, 13) *Sebakhin* (diggers for ancient mud-brick and mud-brick wash, to use as fertilizer or in manufacturing new mud-bricks), 14) Raw material extraction, 15) Military training and war, 16) Natural erosion processes, 17) Tourism and 18) Graffiti.

Graffiti is not a new phenomenon; it has been around as long as Egyptian civilization. Ancient graffiti can be found near Hatshepsut's temple at Deir el-Bahari, in the Great Pyramid of Khufu, Djoser's funerary enclosure at Saqqara and on several monuments throughout Egypt. Ancient graffiti can be of historical



Graffiti on the Enclosure Wall of Djoser's Step Pyramid, Saqqara

and philological significance. For example, the Romans carved graffiti on walls and monuments, with examples surviving in [Egypt](#). The eruption of [Vesuvius](#) preserved graffiti in [Pompeii](#), including [Latin](#) courses, magic spells, declarations of love, alphabets, political slogans and famous literary quotes, providing insight into ancient Roman street life. Also, graffiti can help trace the wanderings of early travelers and early Egyptologist, especially those of the Nineteenth Century.

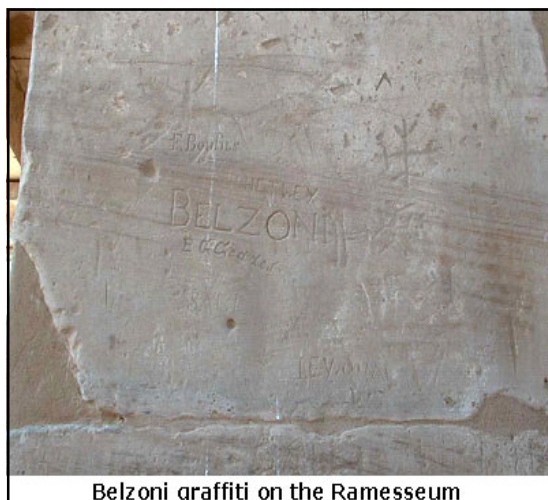
Belzoni was one of the most prolific graffiti makers, because his mark can be found up and down Egypt. In the Ramesseum at Thebes (Luxor) he inscribed his name twice - in the main temple and on a statue of Ramesses II. Why he wrote his name, defacing the monument he was supposedly studying?

Maybe in Belzoni's day it may have been socially acceptable to deface

(To page 10)

NEWS

(From page 9)



Belzoni graffiti on the Ramesseum

monuments, to hack pieces out and take them back to Europe. Perhaps, he wanted to emulate the deeds of [Renaissance](#) artists, such as [Pinturicchio](#), [Raphael](#), [Michelangelo](#), [Ghirlandaio](#) or [Filippino Lippi](#), who descended into the ruins of Nero's [Domus Aurea](#) and carved or painted their names.

The writing of modern graffiti on ancient monuments must be discouraged. Graffiti does not give the monument any prestige, and the monuments have enough of their own dignity. For example, the graffiti on Unas' Causeway does not enhance it or tell us anything new about modern society.

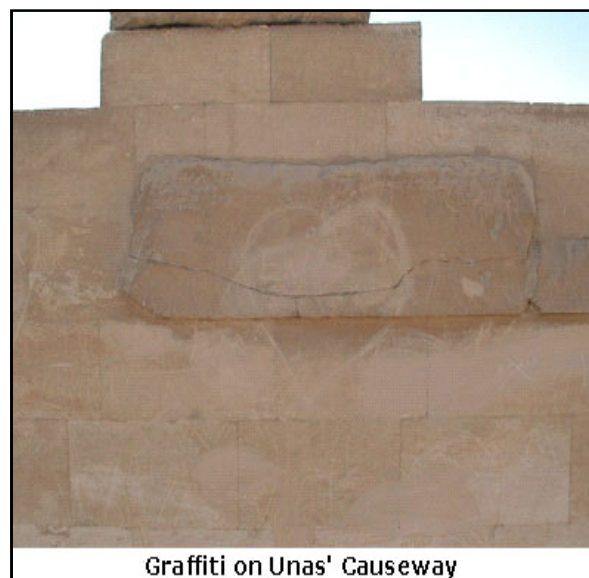
Ancient and rare rock art in remote locations in the Western and Eastern deserts were also desecrated. On a recent survey of the Red Sea were noted many defacements on rock art that had been free of any graffiti only two years ago, when David Rohl made his recent survey

of the area.

Many contemporary analysts and even art critics have begun to see artistic value in some graffiti and to recognize it as a form of [public art](#). However, it is only socially acceptable in certain places, and these places are not on the monuments of our ancestors. The defiling of monuments should be seen as a crime against our past and cultural heritage ■

Dr. Graciela Gestoso Singer

Cf. <http://e-c-h-o.org> and Caminos, R.A. 1976. "The Recording of Inscriptions and Scenes in Tombs and Temples". In: *Ancient Egyptian Epigraphy and Paleography*. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art Press, pp. 3-25.



Graffiti on Unas' Causeway



20-25 Juli 2008

54e Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale

Würzburg

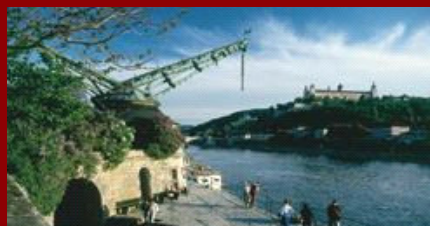
54e Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale Würzburg, July 20-25, 2008

The theme of the 54e RAI is:

"ORGANIZATION, REPRESENTATION AND SYMBOLS OF POWER IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST"

Although some aspects of this theme have already been the subjects of earlier scholarly events, it is still productive to pose the question, especially with regard to a categorization and comparative analysis of political power structures, their ritual and aesthetic manifestations as well as their insignia and symbols. It appears very promising in light of texts and city structures to examine, for example, the participation of consulting bodies in political decisions of Middle and Late Bronze Age Syria. Therefore, this theme presents the opportunity for contributions from the different sub disciplines of philological, historical and archaeological research within Ancient Near Eastern studies.

www.altorientalistik.uni-wuerzburg.de/rai54/



WAC-6

IRELAND 2008
29th June - 4th July

SIXTH WORLD ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONGRESS

The Organising Committee of the Sixth World Archaeological Congress invites colleagues from across the globe to come to Dublin, Ireland, from 29th June to 4th July 2008. The spacious campus of University College Dublin will be the main venue for WAC-6.

wac6@ucd.ie www.ucd.ie/wac-6





The Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities
Société pour l'Étude de l'Égypte Ancienne
 (SSEA / SEEA)

The Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities
2008 SCHOLARS' COLLOQUIUM
CALL FOR PAPERS

The SSEA invites all doctoral level graduate students and senior scholars to submit proposals for papers to be given at this year's Scholars' Colloquium. The deadline for submission is **OCTOBER 1st, 2008**. The Scholars' Colloquium will be held on **Friday, October 31st, 2008 and on Sunday, November 2nd, 2008** in the Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queens' Park, Toronto, Canada.

Proposals for Scholars' Colloquium papers will be accepted from graduate students and senior scholars in the fields of Egyptology, Anthropology, Classics, Fine Arts, Archaeology, Nubian Studies and related fields on ANY topic connected with pharaonic, Roman or Coptic Egypt, but must represent an original contribution to the field. Papers may not exceed 20 minutes in length.

Interested scholars should send a title and brief abstract of their proposed paper to the Scholars' Colloquium Coordinators at ssae@byu.edu. Please note that only proposals submitted in electronic format [i.e. via email] will be considered. For more information please see: <http://www.thessea.org/news.php#38>

NEW MEETING OF THE IAE COMPUTER GROUP (INFORMATIQUE ET EGYPTOLOGIE, I&E)
 8, 9, 10 and 11 July 2008.

The meeting will take place in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria, on 8-11 July 2008, with the sessions on 9-10 July.



Contact

People who are interested should contact Regina Hölzl. For any queries about the programme, papers etc, please contact Nigel Strudwick.

<http://www.newton.cam.ac.uk/egypt/ie2008/index.html>

INTERCULTURAL CONTACTS IN THE ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN

Cairo, 26 - 29 October 2008
 Netherlands-Flemish Institute in Cairo



Universiteit Leiden

A conference organised with the support of the European Union Delegation and the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Cairo, on the occasion of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008.

Introduction

Dialogue between cultures around the Mediterranean is not a new phenomenon invented at the moment the European Union was established, or the Barcelona process was started. On the contrary, as it is becoming increasingly clear from the results of archaeological research, people from different regions around the Mediterranean have been in contact with each other since prehistory. Indeed, the topic of discussion has recently become whether the Mediterranean can be seen as an entity deserving research on its own right. In the light of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, the NVIC organizes a conference in Cairo dealing with intercultural contacts in the region. This is the first international conference addressing this topic in a southern Mediterranean country.

THE WORLD'S FIRST CITIES
(SUMMER 2008)
*Summary*

About 4000 BCE, people across ancient Mesopotamia -today's Iraq- started moving from smaller towns, villages, and nomad camps, to begin to build cities. Until very recently, scholars thought that the first Mesopotamian cities developed exclusively in southern Mesopotamia, but there is now archaeological evidence for early cities much farther north on the Mesopotamian landscape. The course will begin in prehistoric towns and villages, move to examination of two early cities, Uruk in the south and Tell Brak in the north, and end with a discussion of the Uruk's expansion, in which people from southern Mesopotamia moved across the Near East.

\$165 for Oriental Institute members

\$205 for non-members

This course will meet at the Oriental Institute, 1155 E. 58th Street.

"BABYLON. MYTH AND TRUTH"

From 26 June to 5 October 2008

Two worlds, one exhibition. In coordination with the Musée du Louvre in Paris and the British Museum in London, the National Museums in Berlin venture to explore the backgrounds behind the myth of Babel and the true facts surrounding the ancient city of Babylon. Discover what lies at the bottom of the legend that - the legend which accounts for today's fascination with Babylon.

**Opening Hours**

Sun-Wed: 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Thu-Sat: 9 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Online-Booking: www.smb.museum/babylon

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