



SYMPOSIUM 18-12-2015

The Ancient Near East from Torino to Leiden

*1st International
NINO-CRAST Workshop*



Programme Friday 18 December 2015

10.00-10.30	Opening	
10.30-11.00	Burying the first farmers of the Marmara region in Northwestern Anatolia	Songül Alpaslan Roodenberg
11.00-11.30	The Spread of the Hurrian Language and Culture in Hittite Anatolia during the Early Imperial Age	Stefano De Martino
11.30-12.00	The Geography of the Kingdom of Arraphe	Jeanette Fincke
12.00-14.00	<i>Lunch break</i>	
14.00-14.30	The Terracotta Figurines from Seleucia on the Tigris	Roberta Menegazzi
14.30-15.00	The Italian Archaeological Project at Tulul al Baqarat (al Kut, Iraq)	Carlo Lippolis
15.00-15.30	The NINO Project on the Rania Plain (Northeastern Iraq)	Jesper Eidem
15.30-16.00	<i>Coffee break</i>	
16.00-16.30	Gird Bardastee and the Early Ninevite 5 Period	Matteo Merlino & Deborah Giannessi
16.30-17.00	The NINO Survey in the Rania Plain	Jesper Eidem & Ivan Kisjes
17.00-18.00	<i>Drinks</i>	



Burying the first farmers of the Marmara region in Northwestern Anatolia

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NINO and NIT were intensively involved the last thirty years in archaeological research of the southeastern Marmara region. Neolithic-Early Chalcolithic communities such as Ilıpınar, Menteşe and more recently Barcın have been excavated. Analysis of the human population constitutes an important chapter of this research. Osteological and pathological studies, recently extended with ancient DNA and stable isotope analysis, have already been published in part and begin to produce an idea of the population, but more work remains to be done. One of the characteristics of these farming communities was their care for the deceased.



The Spread of the Hurrian Language and Culture in Hittite Anatolia during the Early Imperial Age

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This paper deals with the problem of how extensively Hurrian was spread in Anatolia during the Early Imperial Age. We will examine the Hurrian texts of this period (examining their literary genre, content, way of transmission in later time, find spot of the tablets, etc.). Moreover the Hurrian personal names documented in all the Hittite texts of this same period will also be taken into consideration.



The Geography of the Kingdom of Arrapḫe

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The kingdom of Arrapḫe controlled the area east of the River Tigris and south of the Lower Zāb for about 100 years, roughly from the mid 15th to the mid 14th century BCE. The population was predominantly Hurrian, but their scribes used the *lingua franca* of those days, Akkadian. The cuneiform texts that were found at various places in this area belong to both private archives and palace administration, shedding light on society, economy, legal practices and various other aspects of this kingdom. In my lecture, I will focus on the information these texts give about the geography of this kingdom.



The Terracotta Figurines from Seleucia on the Tigris

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The excavations conducted during the last century at the site of Seleucia on the Tigris (Iraq) brought to light a great wealth of artefacts, which include over 11,000 terracotta figurines. The study of such a vast repertoire – which has recently led to the publication of the complete catalogue of the Seleucian terracottas – provides us with an extremely rich amount of information. Iconography, style and techniques of manufacturing of the figurines point to a complex, multicultural framework, resulting from the encounter and exchange between Greek, Mesopotamian and Iranian element. In addition, the finding of large deposits related to handicraft activities shed some light on the structure and organization of the local terracotta workshops, and the evolution through time of their production.



The Italian Archaeological Project at Tulul al Baqarat (al Kut, Iraq)

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The Centro Ricerche Archeologiche e Scavi di Torino per il Medio Oriente e l'Asia (CRAST) began research and excavations in Iraq in 1964, at Seleucia on the Tigris. Scientific collaboration with the State Board of Antiquities and Heritage and the Iraqi Museum has never stopped in the following years. Fieldwork was impossible in Iraq for a number of years, but in 2012 despite the still unstable conditions in some areas of the country a site about 25 kilometers south-west of the town of Kut was chosen for a new project.

In November 2013, the Italian archaeological expedition of the CRAST started its first season work at Tulul al Baqarat. This area seems to have big potential for filling in (from the IV millennium BC to the Islamic period) a troubling gap in the settlement map of the Mesopotamian central alluvium. Since the area is mostly unexplored, the first Italian mission has set the goal of a preliminary survey to define the cultural horizons present at the tells that make up Tulul al Baqarat.

Unfortunately, recent political events in Iraq have forced the temporary suspension of activities in 2014. Although still extremely provisional and based on the very limited survey on the field (2013), the data collected until now are of considerable interest.



The NINO Project on the Rania Plain (Northeastern Iraq)

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In 1959 dozens of ancient heritage sites on the Rania Plain in Northeastern Iraq were flooded by the closure of the Dokan Dam. Prior to formation of the artificial Lake Dokan Iraqi archaeologists conducted a survey of the area, and subsequently managed to investigate a few selected sites. They were joined in 1957 by a team from Denmark, which elected to excavate the site of Tell Shemshara, close to the strategic pass at Darband. By a stroke of almost incredible luck the Danes found an archive of cuneiform tablets which had belonged to a governor of Shemshara in the early 2nd Millennium BC. This archive revealed the entire historical and political canvas of the area and period, and is rightly famous. For decades after 1959, however, this corner of Iraq was inaccessible for further research. In recent years the situation has changed, and thus, with great support from the local colleagues in the Kurdish Region of Iraq, and funded principally by NWO, NINO has been able to return to Tell Shemshara and the Rania Plain. Summaries of the results obtained 2012-2015 will be presented in three papers.

This paper will present some main results of the recent archaeological work at Tell Shemshara, focussing on three aspects: the layout and formation of the site, the re-excavation and reconstruction of the early 2nd Millennium BC “Palace of Kuwari”, where the famous cuneiform archives were found, and finally new data for the earlier history of the site “Before Kuwari”.



Gird Bardastee and the Early Ninevite 5 Period

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This paper will present the results of excavation at the early 3rd Millennium BC site of Bardastee, located slightly west of the main Shemshara site. Gird Bardastee was briefly excavated by Iraqi archaeologists in 1959, but virtually no results were published. In spring 2013 NINO conducted major excavation at Bardastee. The paper will present the stratigraphic and ceramic data retrieved, and initiate discussion of the evidence in wider perspectives.



The NINO Survey in the Rania Plain

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Both Tell Shemshara and many other sites at the edges of Lake Dokan suffer yearly erosion from the passing waters of the lake. An important component of our work in the Rania Plain is therefore recording and documenting these sites, many never investigated, before they suffer further damage. This paper will present an overview of this work, explain the challenges and methods involved, and provide some selected results.

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Venue: National Museum of Antiquities, Rapenburg 28, Leiden:
"Caesar" Room (first floor)