



Beste lezer,

Vlak voor het zomerreces bereikt u nog een laatste nieuwsbrief voor dit academisch jaar! Het is ongeveer een jaar geleden dat we verhuisd zijn naar het Herta Mohr-gebouw. Wij genieten van de vele mogelijkheden die de nieuwe huisvesting biedt zoals aansprekende kamers voor onderzoek en onderwijs (zie nieuwsbrief van oktober), openbare ruimte voor kleinere tentoonstellingen (zie nieuwsbrief van december) en gemeenschappelijk gedeeltes met andere instituten voor lezingen en borrels. Verder geeft het bericht uit de bibliotheek een goed beeld van de nieuwe opzet in de Middle Eastern Library en de plek die het NINO inneemt.

Bijna elke maand kon het NINO een evenement onder het nieuwe dak organiseren, van lezingen tot boekpresentaties, prijsuitreikingen, tentoonstelling openingen en natuurlijk ook leuke feestjes zoals de Sinterklaas- en Pleyteborrels. Maar het was de goede samenwerking met andere instituten, partners en vooral het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden waardoor we een uitgebreid programma konden organiseren. Zo was het ons ook mogelijk een nieuwe lezingenreeks te introduceren door een bij het RMO ingesteld fonds op naam. De lezing ter ere van Herta Mohr vindt vanaf nu jaarlijks plaats in april en presenteert de nieuwste ontwikkelingen in de Egyptologie door jonge, vooral vrouwelijke wetenschappers.

Op 11 april, vlak voor de herdenkingsdag van Herta Mohrs overlijden in Bergen-Belsen, konden

wij prof. Kathrin Gabler van de Universiteit Mainz ontvangen. Pas een jaar geleden begonnen als nieuwe hoogleraar in Mainz, vertelde Kathrin over haar onderzoek in het graf van Ipoei in Deir el-Medina. Als expert in de prosopografie van het arbeidersdorp is zij een oude bekende in Leiden; zij heeft destijds een deel van haar proefschrift in de NINO-bibliotheek en onder begeleiding van de Leidse collega's geschreven. In haar goed bezochte lezing sloeg Kathrin een brug van het vroege onderzoek van vrouwen in de Egyptologie, onder andere Herta Mohr die in 1943 in Leiden de grafkapel van Hetepherachty in het RMO publiceerde, naar Nina de Garis Davies die het graf van Ipoei met haar kleurrijke en gedetailleerde tekeningen opnieuw tot leven wakte.

Jonge vrouwen in de wetenschap is ook het onderwerp van een recentelijk verschenen artikel in de NRC. Het gaat om een groep Nederlandse studenten rond Albert Einstein in Zürich waaronder Rebekka Biegel die haar liefde voor de astronomie met een proefschrift over de kennis van de sterren in het oude Egypte verbond. Haar contributie aan de vroege Nederlandse Egyptologie wordt door Rob Demarée in een gastbijdrage in deze nieuwsbrief opgespoord. Zij deelt het lot van een veel te vroeg eind van haar leven met Herta Mohr: beiden werden door het naziregime naar Westerbork gevoerd. Misschien kenden ze elkaar. Des te belangrijker is het dat hun bijdrage aan de Egyptologie en de studie van het Oude Nabije Oosten nu eindelijk bekend gemaakt wordt en de plek inneemt die het verdient. *MM*



V.l.n.r.: Wim Weijland, Miriam Müller, Johan Oosting, Kathrin Gabler (foto: Annabel van Amerongen)



De eerste Herta Mohr-lezing, op 11 april 2025 (foto: Alisée Devillers)



Nieuws uit het NINO- onderzoekscentrum

Funding Report: Fieldwork Subsidy for the TT 45 Project, Luxor, Egypt

Carina van den Hoven

A generous fieldwork grant provided by NINO, combined with a grant from the Leiden University Centre for Digital Humanities, has enabled the development of a proof of concept on the digital documentation and material analysis of the painted decoration of Theban Tomb 45.

Since 2018 a fieldwork project is carried out in Theban Tomb 45 (TT 45), directed by Dr. Carina van den Hoven. TT 45 dates to ca. 1400 BCE and is situated in the Theban necropolis, a UNESCO World Heritage Site on the West Bank of Luxor. One of the most interesting aspects of TT 45 is its reuse: the tomb was constructed and partially decorated with painted scenes and texts in the 18th Dynasty (reign of Amenhotep II, ca. 1425–1400 BCE) for a man named Djehuty and his family. In the Ramesside period, the tomb was reused by a man called Djehutyemheb and his family. The practice of tomb reuse may call to mind images of tomb robbery, usurpation, and destruction, but TT 45 was reused with consideration for the memory of the first tomb owners: most of the existing decoration was left in its original state, whereas new decoration was added to wall sections that had been left undecorated. In addition, some of the original paintings were partially retouched and repainted, thus updating them to Ramesside style and (personal) taste. For example, garments, wigs and furniture depicted in the tomb were altered, and texts were added to the existing decoration. The reuse of TT 45 and the ways in which the second occupant dealt with the existing decoration forms the starting point for a research project which investigates tomb reuse in ancient Egypt, carried out by Carina van den Hoven at NINO.

The main aims of the fieldwork project in and around TT 45 are to carry out conservation and restoration, (digital) documentation and publication, analysis of the painted decoration,

archaeological study, and preventive conservation and risk management activities. This work is funded by the Gerda Henkel Stiftung. The NINO Fieldwork Subsidy, combined with the grant from the Leiden University Centre for Digital Humanities, has enabled the development of a proof of concept on the digital documentation and material analysis of the painted decoration of this tomb, with a special focus on the repaintings that were carried out by the second tomb owner.

The purpose of the proof of concept was threefold:

- to develop a digital method to document and publish this monument in such a way that interactive investigation of the tomb will be possible even without physical access to it;
- to test the suitability of photo processing and digital imaging software, as well as non-invasive technologies such as ultraviolet light inspection and infrared photography in the material analysis of the ancient wall paintings;
- to open up new research opportunities on how the ancient Egyptians engaged with and perceived their own cultural heritage.

Results

Considering the ever-increasing deterioration of archaeological sites, it is very important to accurately record the monuments for future generations using modern technology. One of the aims of the TT 45 Project is to contribute significantly to the development of new standards for the (digital) documentation, publication and accessibility of ancient material culture. Through a combination of photogrammetry, 3D modelling, and digital epigraphy, we created a scale 1:1 digital record of the tomb, which documents not only its architecture and decoration, but which also functions as a digital tool allowing interactive investigation of the tomb, even without physical access to it. The 3D model was used to produce geometrically accurate images (orthophotographs) i.e. images in which surface variations, camera lens distortions and perspective distortions have been corrected. Based on these images, exact and highly detailed digital epigraphic tracings of the painted tomb decoration are being produced

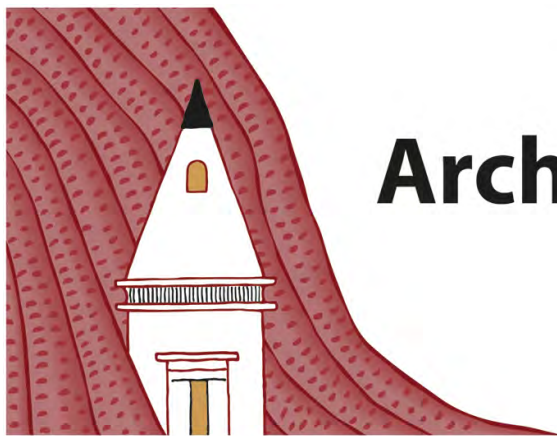


without the need for touching the walls, using graphic design software and a digital drawing tablet. A digital reconstruction of damaged and destroyed parts of the decoration will be added, based on archive photographs and drawings of TT45 and comparative material from other tombs.

Part of the painted wall decoration of TT 45 has faded over time and is now barely visible with the naked eye. Furthermore, the original wall

The pilot project enabled the team to acquire new digital skills which are now used for training purposes in the field in Egypt.

The investigation of the (re)painted decoration of TT45 forms the starting point of Van den Hoven's larger research project on tomb reuse which focuses on the questions of how secondary tomb owners dealt with the past in reused tombs, and how they inserted their own memory into



Stichting Archeologisch Erfgoed Luxor

Visit the website of the TT 45 fieldwork project: www.stichtingael.nl

decoration was partially repainted by the second tomb owner. The application of digital imaging techniques to enhance the legibility of faded writing is gaining in usage in Egyptology and has mainly been tested on papyri and graffiti. We tested the suitability of various software applications and non-invasive technologies for improving the legibility of faded paint on tomb walls and for detecting ancient repaintings that cannot be seen with the naked eye. Software applications such as ImageJ (DStretch plugin) proved limited in providing the desired results, whereas ultraviolet light inspection and infrared photography were found to be suitable for the material analysis of the ancient (re)paintings. Infrared photography in particular proved helpful in identifying ancient repaintings that cannot be seen with the naked eye. The infrared photographs are currently being studied in detail and will be part of the (digital) publication of TT45.

the existing decoration of these tombs. Her interdisciplinary approach challenges traditional outside-in interpretations by combining theory and methodology from the fields of Memory Studies and Landscape Archaeology, which enables her to explore tomb reuse in terms of the interaction between mortuary practice, cultural memory, and the physical features of the mortuary landscape. In doing so, she aims to allow for a deep-level understanding of this understudied phenomenon and to contribute to wider cross-cultural discussions on the reuse of mortuary spaces and on the functioning of mortuary landscapes and the tombs therein as dynamic spaces through which memories were constructed, preserved and transferred across generations.



Incoming Mobility Grant report

Sonia Mzali

For two weeks in February 2025, I was able to complete a research trip to Leiden thanks to a NINO Incoming Mobility Grant. The aim of my visit to NINO was threefold: to work on unpublished tablets in the De Liagre Böhl collection, to meet and discuss aspects of my research with Dr. Rients de Boer and to work within the institute's library which includes resources that are not available in France.

Thanks to the digitization of the De Liagre Böhl tablet collection and their availability online on the CDLI, I have been able to identify twelve unpublished tablets from the Ur III period that pertain to the subject of my PhD thesis, specifically administrative texts from Puzriš-Dagan and Ĝirsu that refer to individuals bearing the cultic title **en** of the deities Inana, Nanna and Našše. I was able to collate these twelve tablets* while in Leiden.



* LB 2174, LB 2178, LB 2180, LB 2247, LB 2280, LB 2396, LB 3011, LB 3070, LB 3142, LB 3189, LB 3191 and LB 3211.

During my stay, I met on three occasions with Dr. Rients de Boer who was kind enough to show me around the institute and the library as well as grant me access to the cuneiform collection. We were able to discuss the Isin-Larsa period, and his insights were of great interest to me. I was also able to attend one of the lectures in the “Ancient Worlds Lunch Talks” series which I very much enjoyed (along with the pizza!).

I am grateful to the staff at the Special Collections Reading Room for their help and availability. I would like to thank Dr. Miriam Müller, Prof. Dr. Caroline Waerzeggers and Koen Klein for their warm welcome as well as Dr. Rients de Boer for his invaluable help.

Conference Subsidy report

*Valentina Vari, Caroline van Toor,
Onno van Nijf, and Saskia Peels*

On Thursday 6 and Friday 7 March 2025, the international conference **Language and Cultural Interactions in the Roman World – The Impact of Inscriptions** took place at the University of Groningen.

The conference was set up to explore cultural interaction in the ancient world through the lens of inscriptions. The Mediterranean world and neighbouring areas constituted the geographic scope, with the period between the 3rd century BCE and the 3rd century CE as its chronological span. Inscriptions constitute immediate evidence of the interaction between people in the new scenery of the Roman expansion in the Mediterranean. With this conference, we wanted to advocate that, in order to understand these inscriptions, it is important to consider not only the texts themselves (e.g. linguistic aspects and onomastics) but also their material aspects and their physical context (e.g. location, visibility). Thus, inscriptions are not simply seen as the result of cultural interaction, but as a medium through which the common ground between the different social groups involved could be actively negotiated – thus adding a crucial layer to the interpretation of these objects.



A total of thirteen scholars took the stage during those two days. Four of the speakers addressed the topic of cultural interaction in the Ancient Near East, which we will highlight in this newsletter.

Invited speaker Prof. Bruno Rochette (Université de Liège) addressed evidence for bilingualism and diglossia in sub-literary texts, including papyri. Prof. Tibor Grüll (University of Pécs) discussed inscribed curses from Phrygia to argue for religious cultural interaction in that region. Dr Andrea Gatzke (State University of New York) presented us with bilingual arches from Roman Anatolia and discussed how differences in the two languages used on them, informs us about the way in which urban space was defined in terms of the local versus the Roman global. Finally, Dr Abigail Graham (British School at Rome) offered an interpretation of three bilingual statue bases from the Harbour Gymnasium of Ephesus, showing how these bilingual bases and the statue that once crowned them together contributed to an interpretation for literate and non-literate viewers.



The conference was a fantastic opportunity to bring together scholars from Europe and even the United States to discuss cultural interaction on the basis of inscriptions, in both their linguistic and material context. The conference subsidy awarded by the NINO was essential in making this happen. With this, we thank the NINO and the NINO affiliated scholars present for their contributions to the conference. You might spot the latter on the photo, which shows the speakers, chairs, organisers, and attendees on the final Friday.

The full programme and the abstracts to all papers can still be found on the conference website:

<https://languageandculturalinteractionsintheromanworld.wordpress.com>.

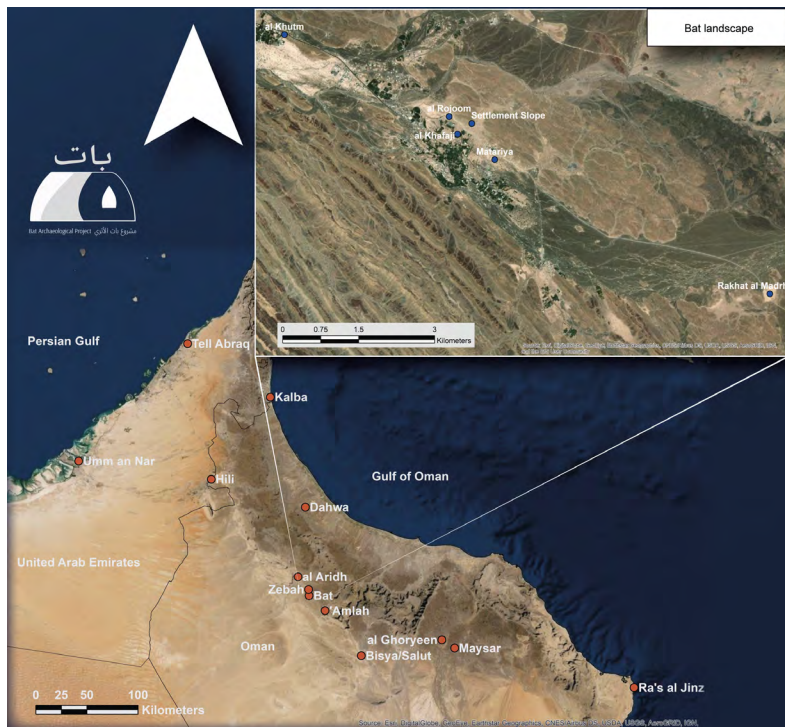
Fieldwork Subsidy report Bat Archaeological Project: Bronze Age resilience beyond the oasis

Jennifer Swerida (Leiden University)

With support from the NINO Fieldwork Subsidy, the Bat Archaeological Project (BAP) is working to develop a more nuanced picture of how Early Bronze Age communities in Southeast Arabia responded to long-term environmental change. During winter 2024-25, a group of students from the Faculty of Archaeology joined me in excavations at the site of Rakhat al-Madrh (RaM) in northwest Oman. Our preliminary findings suggest that resilience to regional drought conditions around 2200 BCE – associated with the so-called 4.2k arid event – may have involved more diverse strategies than previously recognised.

The 4.2k event, a theorised period of prolonged drought that coincides with the collapse of several complex societies in West Asia, including the Akkadian Empire, has been a driver in discussions of climate-driven societal decline for decades. Archaeological data from eastern Arabia, however, suggest a more regionally contingent narrative. In Oman's interior, where the Umm an-Nar period (ca. 2700-2000 BCE) society flourished during the third millennium, there is no clear evidence for a dramatic collapse. Instead, settlement patterns during the Late Umm an-Nar (ca. 2200-2000 BCE) suggest a gradual reduction of activity at large oasis settlements and abandonment of many smaller sites.

This pattern is further complicated by BAP's findings at RaM, a small settlement located 7.5 km southeast of the much larger site in the Bat oasis. Atypically situated within a small natural basin adjacent to the seasonal waterway of the Wadi al-Hijr, RaM appears to have been home to a small community of agropastoralists during the height of the Umm an-Nar period. Even more unusual is that, unlike many other minor Umm an-Nar sites



Map of southeast Arabia indicating the location of Bat and other significant Bronze Age sites; inset showing the concentration of sites in the Bat oasis (centre) and the distant Rakhat al-Madrh (lower right).



Map of the Rakhat al-Madrh basin indicating the locations of buildings RaM 1, 2, 3, and 4.

in the region that were abandoned around 2200 BCE, social activities at RaM continued into the Late Umm an-Nar period and beyond. The site's exceptional topography likely played a role in enabling this continuation: periodic flooding from the nearby wadi allowed for the temporary formation of a wetland-like environment, creating a localised pocket of moisture-retentive soil in an otherwise increasingly arid landscape.

The BAP team has now excavated portions of all four stone structures at RaM. Three – RaM 1, 2, and 4 – follow typical Umm an-Nar domestic plans and appear to have been abandoned around the beginning of the arid phase. However, RaM 3, a larger and architecturally distinct building and the subject of this winter's field research, shows multiple phases of construction and sustained activity well into the Late Umm an-Nar period, with evidence for continued use into the Wadi Suq period (ca. 2000-1600 BCE).

This building, constructed with unusually massive stone masonry, yielded a range of occupational features across several distinct stratigraphic use

phases. While the results of radiocarbon analyses from this season are still forthcoming, samples from an earlier test trench excavated in the RaM 3 courtyard provide a scientific date range of 2210-2127 cal. BCE, within the Late Umm an-Nar period, for the most substantial phase of activity. Continuing cultural deposits both above and below this peak phase represent an unexpectedly long building use life, spanning much of the third and into the second millennium BCE. Hearths, storage areas, and activity areas related to bead production and metallurgy suggest that RaM 3 functioned as a community gathering and craft production space. Finds include carnelian beads in various stages of production, crucible fragments, and abundant pottery stylistically datable to the Umm an-Nar and Wadi Suq periods. The scale and complexity of RaM 3, along with the nature of the activities conducted there, point to its importance as a communal or multifunctional space – something more than just a house.

While paleoenvironmental proxies such as gastropod shells and archaeobotanical remains indicate relatively moist conditions in the basin



before 2200 BCE, these proxies disappear in later levels, suggesting drier climate conditions in the Late Umm an-Nar. Nevertheless, RaM 3 remained active. This divergence between environmental degradation and continued occupation raises questions about how social structures buffered communities against ecological stress.

One potential reading of the longevity of social activities in RaM 3, despite the arid conditions and abandonment of other buildings at the site, is the importance of community-centred resilience in times of environmental stress. Rather than interpreting the Late Umm an-Nar as simply a period of decline, we can consider how shared spaces and cultural practices allowed communities to adapt to changing social and environmental circumstances, including water scarcity.



*Leiden University MA student
Aiyana Plasman holding an
Umm an-Nar jar sherd.*

As broader discussions continue about the relationship between climate and societal change in ancient contexts, BAP's research adds evidence for the diversity of local responses. By moving beyond the oasis to consider marginal and seasonally viable landscapes, my team's work aims to open new avenues for understanding resilience in prehistoric Arabia.

In coming seasons, the project will continue with further excavation and environmental sampling, with the aim of refining the chronology of RaM 3 and expanding the paleoenvironmental dataset for the Late Umm an-Nar and Wadi Suq periods.



Bat Archaeological Project team photo, winter 2025.

Conference Subsidy Report

DUSANE 2025 committee

On April 17th, the Dutch Symposium of the Ancient Near East (**DUSANE**) was hosted at the Faculty of Archaeology in Leiden. For the first time, the day was also live-streamed for those who were not able to attend the event in person. This year's edition of the annual symposium was co-organized by the study associations from Archaeology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies, Nabu Na'id and Dispuut Pleyte, and sponsored by NINO and Archon. Organized by and for students, DUSANE aims to highlight the interdisciplinary nature of the history and archaeology of Southwest Asia. For this year, the phrase *to go down in flames* formed the common thread in the discussions.



*Jennifer Swerida speaking
at DUSANE 2025.*

Following the opening of the symposium, new member of the Archaeology faculty Dr. Jennifer Swerida kicked off the first discussion of the end of the Umm an-Nar period in southeast Arabia. Recent excavations by Leiden University at the site Rakhat al-Madrh in Oman have revealed that, despite general settlement abandonment, one building continues to be intermittently used.

Discussing the persistence of community spaces during a period of turmoil, Swerida highlighted the endurance of social interaction when society seemingly went down in flames.

Moving away from Oman and to southwest Iran, Drs. Theo Krispijn gave an introductory lecture on Elamite language and culture, introducing DUSANE to the rich history of this extinct language. In his lecture Krispijn discussed not only the origin of Elamite language and cuneiform, but also their development into the first millennium BC. Moreover, the interconnectedness of the region and culture was highlighted by the trilingual Bisotun inscription in Elamite, Old Persian, and Babylonian.



Following a short lunch break, Prof. Lidewijde de Jong brought the discussion to Palmyra, presenting new research on mortuary customs in communal tombs. Revisiting old excavation reports, new evidence for ritual practices is highlighted, contradicting previous assumptions of evidence being scarce. Pointing out the presence of installations for water libations and burning incense, de Jong highlighted the significance of water and fire in the Palmyrene cult of the dead.

Gustav Ryberg Smidt, PhD student at Ghent University, returned DUSANE to more modern times, presenting his approach to digital and computational analyses of cuneiform tablets. As part of the Cune-III-Form project at Ghent University, Ryberg Smidt uses Automatic Image Recognition to analyse Old Babylonian texts. He also highlights that, whilst some might fear the eradication of Assyriology through Artificial Intelligence and Large Language Models, Assyriologists are and will continue to be indispensable for studying cuneiform culture.



*Nolke Tasma speaking
at DUSANE 2025.*

The symposium returned to Palmyra, with PhD student Nolke Tasma discussing the end of the city's Aramaic epigraphic habit, being the direct consequence of emperor Aurelian's conquest of Palmyra. Discussing the last phase of Palmyrene

Aramaic epigraphy, Tasma explored not only its ending, but also what came after and how this reflects the development of Palmyrene society after the crisis of 273 AD.

After a short coffee break, Dr. Dennis Braekmans took over, discussing the analyses of a group of inscribed clay figurines from Saqqara, discovered at a Middle Kingdom cenotaph in the Teti Pyramid cemetery. This study of both the figurines

and their context, Braekmans highlighted, offers a unique insight into their materiality, production, and use. For this end they have been subjected to interdisciplinary analyses, combining Egyptological and archaeological approaches.

This year's final speaker, Lidewij van de Peut, introduced DUSANE to the Hittite objects in the Böhl Collection, the largest collection of clay tablets in the Netherlands. As a Visiting Research Fellow at NINO, van de Peut examines not only the Hittite texts themselves, but also their origins and collection history. At DUSANE she highlighted several of these objects, offering insight into the formation of the Böhl Collection.

After a full day, it is safe to say that this year's edition of DUSANE did not go down in flames but was rather a great success. The great variety of speakers and topics enabled engaging presentations and discussions. Moreover, with speakers from both Archaeology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies the importance of interdisciplinary research was highlighted many times. The organizing committee thanks all the speakers and their amazing lectures and wishes to extend its gratitude to NINO for sponsoring this year's edition and to Archon for promoting DUSANE. We hope to see everyone again next year, at DUSANE 2026!

Outgoing Mobility Grant report

Hilde Zwart

This academic year I have been working on the publication of a Demotic land sale contract from the 6th century BCE, which is currently in the British Museum. Papyrus BM EA 10117 was published by Nathaniel Reich in 1914, but since our understanding of Demotic and access to resources has increased considerably in the last century, this original edition is in need of revision. And so, this papyrus has been the object of my research for the course Demotic Papyrology III under the supervision of Dr Koen Donker van Heel. With the help of a NINO Outgoing Mobility Grant, I was able to go to London in order to study the papyrus up close in the British Museum Study Room.



The contract concerns the sale of 33 arouras (ca. 9.1 ha, or 13 soccer fields) of private highland, an exceptionally big plot of land. The seller of the land, Djedhor (*Dd-ḥr*) son of Peftuikhons (*P3y-f-t3w-ḥ. wy-Hnsw*), is not known from other texts, but his title, god's father of Amun, indicates that he was a man of high standing. This is reinforced by the large property that is being sold, as well as the important titles of the neighbours, and, not least of all, the incredibly high number of witnesses that are listed on the verso. Whereas a contract would regularly contain a maximum of 16 witnesses, this list contains 19.

This witness list, written on the verso of the papyrus, is an important part of my edition, since its reading has not been reconsidered after Reich's 1914 publication. The writing on this side is not always clear and includes names that are not known from other sources. This is why I am working on a facsimile of the verso, alongside some problematic words on the recto, to accompany my proposed readings. Especially for this purpose, it was crucial to be able to see the papyrus in real life.



After having stared at a (somewhat grainy) black-and-white photograph for months, it was amazing to be able to see the real papyrus before me at last. My visit to the British Museum gave me the opportunity to check my readings and to study the material aspects of the papyrus. I was also able to make my own photographs for reference and I received a good scan of the papyrus. This would not have been possible without the help from the staff at the British Museum, and I am very thankful for their support. I am also very grateful

for the help of Dr Cary Martin, who joined me for some time in the study room as we discussed problematic readings and he shared his invaluable insights.

I would like to express my gratitude to the NINO for granting me an Outgoing Mobility Grant and thus providing me with this experience, which was not only invaluable for my research, but has also been a highlight in my academic career.

Outreach Allowance report

Christina Williamson (University of Groningen)

Time might arguably be conceived as an urban invention. At least the measurement of time, such as the division into years, months, weeks and hours, is geared towards a synchronicity aimed at coordinating collective actions and maintaining a healthy urban rhythm. But time is also a religious matter, with calendars marking festival cycles, and the deep sense of time represented by gods and heroes, and the stories told about them. Urban and religious temporalities took on many forms, but who were they for? Who shared in these temporal experiences? How did they contribute to the vibrance of the city?

These are some of the questions that were at the center of the workshop **Religious Temporalities and the Ancient City** held at the University of Groningen, 15-16 May. Keynote speaker was Jörg Rüpke, from the Max-Weber-Kolleg at Erfurt, who opened up several themes on the intersection of divine and human timescapes that were further addressed in the workshop.





Sixteen papers were presented, divided into six themes. Festival time was addressed from an urban iconographic perspective (Zahra Newby, Warwick), through a linguistic study of festival revivals (Steven Brandwood, Columbia), and with a focus on the archaeology of the remains deposited from animal sacrifice (Astrid Lindenlauf, Bryn Mawr College).

The corporeal experience of time was explored through critical fabulation (Demi Storm, Nijmegen) and the intersection of urban deathscapes with timescapes (Ecem Usuni, Antalya, and Asuman Lätzer-Lasar, Marburg).

Representations of temporality and temples was assessed from a close reading of the iconography at the Temple of the Palmyrene Gods at Dura Europos (Nicholas Aherne, Groningen), and of the eponymous role of priests in marking time in the Greek world (Angelika Kellner, Mannheim).

Urban temporalities in Asia Minor included the temporal depth of Seleukid ruler cults through genealogies (Thomas Faassen, Groningen), the deep past of Sardis anchored in its temples (Rogier van der Heijden, Freiburg), and the deep time of divine names and epithets in urban foundations (Giuseppina Marano, Pisa).

Divine urban foundations in the Greek world was further traced through Pausanias (Greta Hawes, Macquarie), and the perception of ancient cities in Roman Egypt (Lucas Weisser-Gericke, Basel).

The last session focused on Christian perceptions, illuminating the role of the night (Despina Iossif, Athens) and Roman Egypt, particularly the Kalends of January as seen by John Chrysostom (Elsa Lucassen, Amsterdam, also Hakan Ozlen, Wisconsin). The venue of the Mennonite church in Groningen provided a relaxed and informal atmosphere in which speakers and members of the audience could engage in fruitful discussions.

The overall quality was high and there are plans to publish the workshop. A highlight was the presentation by two students (Nynke ter Heide and Gerthia Luning) from the Groningen MA course 'Urban Timescapes in the Ancient World' who presented their story maps that the audience could browse through ([link](#)).



*MA students Nynke and Gerthia presenting
their story maps during the workshop*

The workshop was the product of a collaboration between Sofie Remijnsen (University of Amsterdam) and Christina Williamson and Pim Schievink (University of Groningen), this workshop was organized with help from the Netherlands Institute for the Near East (NINO) as well as funding from two OIKOS research groups ('Cultural Interactions in the Ancient World' and 'Cities and Settlements'), the Groningen Research Institute for the Study of Culture (ICOG) and CRASIS, the interfaculty research institute for the study of the ancient world.

For more information, see

<https://religioustemporalities.wordpress.com>

NINO funding: upcoming deadlines

1 June–1 October: submission of BA and MA theses on the Ancient Near East or Egypt (for Thesis Prizes)

15 August: Incoming Mobility Grant, Outgoing Mobility Grant, Conference Subsidy, Fieldwork Subsidy

continuous: Visiting Research Fellowship, Outreach Allowance

See www.nino-leiden.nl/funding



Even voorstellen



Visiting Research Fellow: Elisabetta Cianfanelli

Elisabetta Cianfanelli earned her PhD in Historical Studies in 2019 from the Università degli Studi di Firenze with a

dissertation in Assyriology focused on the study of several Ebla officials frequently documented in the 3rd millennium cuneiform Palace G Archives excavated at Tell Mardikh, Syria.

Since 2019, she has been a Postdoctoral Fellow at the same university and recently joined the editorial team of *Asia Anteriore Antica: Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Cultures Studies* as a member of the editorial secretariat.

As a Postdoctoral Fellow, she holds the position of Teaching Assistant Professor, where she supports courses in Assyriology and Ancient Near Eastern History for both BA and MA students. Additionally, she leads seminars for Ph.D. students focusing on the 2nd millennium Mari archives and the 3rd millennium Ebla archives. She has enriched her expertise in Akkadian and Sumerian through attending specialized courses at the Pontificio Istituto Biblico, where her studies centered on Old Babylonian letters and ritual texts, Old Assyrian letters, and Sumerian royal inscriptions and Ur III legal texts. This has equipped her to lead workshops for MA and Ph.D. students on Sumerian Grammar, in addition to workshops on Cuneiform Epigraphy, where she guides students in creating digital hand-copies of cuneiform tablets.

She has been an active member of the Research Unit of the Università degli Studi di Firenze, participating in the national PRIN 2017 project “Big Data and Early Archives (Big-DEA). Measuring Settlement Dynamics and Environmental Exploitation in the Ebla Region during the 3rd Millennium BC: Archaeological Record, Cuneiform Texts, and Remote Sensing”; as a member of the Research Unit of the Università degli Studi di Firenze, she is currently

participating in the national PRIN 2022 project “The Environmental, Economic and Social Geography of Ebla in the 3rd millennium BC: A Connected World”.

Her primary research field remains Ebla, on which she has published various papers, mainly focused on reconstructing the social structure of Ebla, but also including investigations into Ebla legal texts, as well as topographical and chronological studies. Prosopography is her primary research methodology, and she has been contributing to the online project *The Prosopography of Ebla* (ProsE) of the Università degli Studi di Firenze since 2019.

As a Visiting Research Fellow at NINO, Elisabetta Cianfanelli aims to publish a monograph on Ebla management of its territory, thereby expanding on the themes explored in her doctoral thesis with a broader geographical and comparative scope. Her project will mainly focus on the ugula-officials, who were responsible for overseeing nearly all productive activities across various centers in the Ebla kingdom. The research will examine both the economic and productive roles of these centers and promoting a comparison with the administrative records from earlier or almost contemporary tablet collections found at other sites in Syria.

Visiting Research Fellow: Pansee Abou ElAtta

Pansee Abou ElAtta is an Egyptian-Canadian scholar, visual artist, curator. Her work examines



receptions of Ancient Egypt from the eighteenth century through the present, using Critical Museology and decolonial methodologies to envision liberatory possibilities for archives and collections.

She is an artist-research fellow in the NWA-funded Pressing Matter project, as part of which, her large-scale interactive art installation will be exhibited as part of a group exhibition at the Wereldmuseum Amsterdam titled *Unfinished Pasts*, highlighted on [DutchNews.nl](https://www.dutchnews.nl).



Art installation by Pansee Abou ELAtta, part of group exhibition 'Unfinished Past' in Wereldmuseum Amsterdam (photos: Les Adu).

A former research fellow as part of *Inherit* at the Humboldt University of Berlin, her research investigated the way the concept of *Ḥurma* (Arabic: autonomy, dignity, privacy, honour) may be implemented to more ethically re-consider the collection, exhibition, and study of Ancient Egyptian mummified human remains.

Currently, she is (remotely) completing a postdoctoral fellowship at Carleton University, Canada as part of *Mobile Subjects, Contrapuntal Modernisms*, producing interactive artistic data visualizations representing the circulation of artists from the decolonizing world in the mid-century era.

As a NINO visiting fellow, her project titled *What can Ancient Egyptian mummies tell us about Dutch collection histories?* examines the ontological positioning and re-positioning of Ancient Egyptian human remains through different museum collections to better understand how Dutch museology has framed the boundaries of the 'human'. This project asks: how can these collections help us understand the different ways that the human body has been defined and codified in the Netherlands?

Tracing these transformations reveals the ways that Egypt – a place seen as both foreign yet familiar – and Egyptian bodies are cast by Dutch collecting institutions as a constitutive force demarcating the boundaries of diverse taxonomic categories, and in so doing, communicating conceptualizations of the 'human' to broad audiences.

Nieuws uit de MEL/NINO-bibliotheek

Binnenkort is het al weer een jaar geleden dat de NINO-bibliotheek verhuisde naar het nieuwe Herta Mohr-gebouw en onderdeel werd van de MEL (Middle Eastern Library). Inmiddels is iedereen (hopelijk) helemaal gewend aan de nieuwe locatie.

De studieplekken in de MEL en de African Library blijken zeer geliefd onder studenten uit alle studierichtingen. Vooral tijdens tentamenperiodes zijn vaak alle plaatsen bezet. Voor de gebruikers van de MEL-NINO collectie zijn speciaal 22 studieplekken gereserveerd. Deze plekken zijn niet opgenomen in het reguliere reserveringssysteem. Mochten er toch mensen op deze plekken zitten die geen gebruik maken van de collectie, dan kunnen zij verzocht worden plaats te maken voor mensen die wél van de collectie gebruik maken.

De verdeling van de collectie over de studiezaal en het S-UB is niet ideaal, maar gelukkig weten de gebruikers de benodigde vakliteratuur goed te vinden. Boeken uit de studiezaal mogen niet meegenomen worden naar het S-UB, maar andersom mag wel. Na gebruik moeten alle boeken op de terugzetkar achter de balie geplaatst worden waarna de baliemedewerkers ervoor zorgen dat ze weer op hun goede plaats op de plank teruggezet worden. Er worden nog steeds boeken in de kast gevonden die niet op de juiste plek staan. Voorkom dat boeken zoek raken, en zet ze na gebruik in de terugzetkar.



Middle Eastern Library

Reguliere openingstijden

Leeszaal: maandag t/m vrijdag 9:00-23:00u (na 17:00 toegang via UBL-loopbrug), zaterdag en zondag 9:30-22:30 (via UBL-loopbrug).

Bibliotheekbalie: maandag t/m vrijdag 9:00-17:00u.

Zomerrooster 7 juli-31 augustus

Maandag t/m vrijdag 9:00-17:00u, zaterdag 13:00-16:30u (via UBL-loopbrug), zondag gesloten.

Zie voor actuele informatie de [UBL-website](#).

Via de catalogus kunt u zien welke boeken nieuw binnengekomen zijn. Klik in de bovenste balk op “Acquisitions”, daarna “Latest” en selecteer “Ancient Near East”.

Helaas is er wat ruis in het systeem waardoor niet alleen titels met betrekking op het Oude Nabije Oosten zichtbaar zijn, maar ook van sommige andere vakgebieden.



Zichtkast tijdschriften



Boekenkar onder de balie

Van de belangrijkste tijdschriften staat het meest recente nummer in de zichtkast in de studiezaal. Voorgaande nummers bevinden zich onder de klep; één keer per jaar worden de tijdschriften daarvandaan naar hun plek in het S-UB gebracht. Pas dan krijgen ze een sticker met het T-nummer.

Tenslotte vindt u op deze pagina het overzicht van de openingstijden – let vooral op de aangepaste tijden van het zomerrooster. Vanuit de bibliotheek voor iedereen een fijne zomer toegewenst!

Zomerrooster Faculteit Geesteswetenschappen

Van 7 juli t/m 30 augustus 2025 geldt er een zomerrooster voor de Humanities Campus: buiten kantooruren zijn de gebouwen niet toegankelijk.

Let op: de MEL heeft eigen openingstijden!



Even bijlezen

De eerste vrouw in de Nederlandse Egyptologie

Rob Demarée

een artikel in de NRC van 18 januari verwijst naar een wetenschappelijk artikel in het tijdschrift *Endeavour* 48 (2024) van J. Dane en C. Verhoef. In dat artikel beschrijven de auteurs hun zoektocht om de identiteit vast te stellen van een dame op een foto van 30 juni 1913:

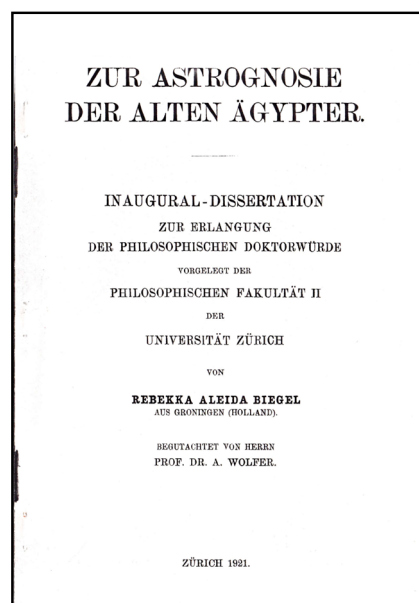


De foto toont een groep wetenschappers, onder wie Paul Ehrenfest en Albert Einstein in het laboratorium van Pierre Weiss in Zürich. Twee van de drie dames op de foto (aan weerszijden van Ehrenfest) waren al vrij zeker geïdentificeerd als Catharina Amelia Frankamp en Eva Dina Bruins, Leidse studenten wis- en natuurkunde en astronomie. Het drietal, ter plaatse bekend als “die Holländerinnen”, werd door Einstein gevraagd om voor zijn werk over de zwaartekracht theorie astrofysische berekeningen te maken omdat hij dat zelf niet goed kon. Hij noemde hen zijn drie “Rechenpferde”, vooral omdat zij zeer precies waren.

Met gebruikmaking ook van open source intelligence slaagden de auteurs erin vast te stellen dat de derde dame (rechts vooraan) Rebekka (Betty) Aleida Biegel moest zijn. Zij begon in 1905 samen met Eva Bruins in Leiden aan haar studie wis- en natuurkunde en astronomie, werd als snel lid van de vrouwelijke studentenvereniging VVSL

en was in 1911 praeses van die vereniging. Beide dames hadden ook bijzondere belangstelling voor astrologie.

Betty Biegel vervolgde in 1914 haar studie astronomie aan de universiteit van Zürich. In 1921 promoveerde zij aldaar op een dissertatie getiteld “Zur Astrognosie der alten Ägypter”, waarin zij op basis van toenmaals bekende oud-Egyptische afbeeldingen van de sterrenhemel de posities 3000-4000 jaar geleden van 160 vaste sterren aan de noordelijke hemel berekende: een bijzondere prestatie, want pas jaren nadien volgden de publicaties van veel meer gegevens in de standaardwerken van Otto Neugebauer en Richard Parker. De studie en het proefschrift van Rebekka Biegel zijn in de Nederlandse Egyptologie tot nu toe onbekend gebleven, hoewel een exemplaar van haar proefschrift al vele jaren aanwezig was in de bibliotheek van het NINO (006 013 349). Haar bijdrage verdient een plaats in de geschiedenis van de Nederlandse Egyptologie, ook al bleef dit haar enige egyptologische publicatie.



In Zürich maakte Rebekka (Betty) kennis met de psycholoog Carl Jung, voor wie zij eveneens astrofysische berekeningen maakte, en toen zij geen vaste betrekking in de sterrenkunde bleek te kunnen krijgen ging zij in Utrecht psychologie studeren. Samen met haar zuster Johanna (Annie), die in Zürich was afgestudeerd in de biologie, ging



zij in Amsterdam wonen. Na afronding van haar studie kreeg zij in 1929 een baan bij de PTT waar zij als bedrijfspsycholoog een psychotechnisch laboratorium oprichtte, gevestigd in het hoofdkantoor aan de Kortenaerkade 12 te Den Haag. Als directeur van deze instelling werd zij tevens lid van de Raad van Bestuur van de PTT. Vanaf 1935 was zij ook privaattoecent toegepaste psychologie aan de Technische Hogeschool Delft. De Duitse bezetting vanaf 1940 leidde tot haar gedwongen ontslag bij de PTT in 1941.

Op 26 mei 1943 werden Rebekka en haar zus Johanna vanuit Amsterdam weggevoerd naar Westerbork. Enkele dagen later pleegden zij zelfmoord nadat zij begrepen hadden dat alle inwoners van hun barak naar Auschwitz of Sobibor zouden worden getransporteerd.

Bronnen

- Bruno van Wayenburg, *De Nederlandse Betty Biegel ging naar Zürich om de worstelende Einstein te helpen met zijn bewijs*. NRC, Wetenschapsbijlage 18 januari 2025.
- J. Dane, C. Verhoef, Who's that lady? — Applying open source intelligence in a history context, *Endeavour* 48(4), 2024: 100967. Open Access: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.endeavour.2024.100967>

Call for submissions: *Conference Decolonizing Archaeological Epistemologies*

Organized by Pansee Abou elAtta in Leiden, October 27-30, 2025

The opening of the Grand Egyptian Museum has been hailed as a major museological achievement, a cutting-edge and high-tech advancement with the potential to shift global discourses on the repatriation of Pharaonic antiquities. And yet, little emphasis has been placed on how such discourses entrench existing museological norms, situating categories of “antiquity”, “artifact”, “treasure”, and “discovery” through extractive, colonial frameworks. *Decolonizing Archaeological Epistemologies* is a conference critically examining archaeological histories and practices, proposing

Agenda-overzicht

Activiteiten van NINO en van bevriende organisaties

15-9-2025 t/m 20-9-2025:

Week van het Oude Schrift

Sprekers: Petra Sijpesteijn, Martin Baasten, Ruwan van der Iest, Joanne Stolk, Jacob de Ridder, Maarten Kossmann; georganiseerd door NINO & RMO. Locatie: Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Tempelzaal.

www.rmo.nl/uw-bezoek/activiteiten/week-van-het-oude-schrift-2025

Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, t/m 31 augustus 2025: tentoonstelling “Dromen van Egypte”. Door Egypte geïnspireerde objecten uit de collectie van Jean-Marcel Humbert.

www.rmo.nl/tentoonstellingen/tijdelijke-tentoonstellingen/dromen-van-egypte

Allard Pierson, t/m 1 maart 2026: tentoonstelling “Van Glas, gemaakt in de oudheid”. Ruim 200 glazen voorwerpen uit de eigen archeologiecollectie.

www.allardpierson.nl/agenda/tentoonstelling-van-glas

instead more expansive, democratic, and liberatory approaches to the past and material culture, challenging extant museological, academic, economic, and legal systems governing the ways that material culture is collected, studied, and traded. With implications spanning beyond Egyptology to archaeology, museology, and historical disciplines more broadly, this conference proposes a counter-colonial approach that rethinks the status of the historical object in the public eye.

Scholars engaging with relevant themes at a post-graduate or professional level are invited to apply. Interested participants are requested to submit a 250 word abstract and contact information by July 15, 2025 through an [online form](#).