

Stored and Displaced Data: Cuneiform Tablets and Their Archaeological Contexts in the Ancient Near East Sanna Aro-Valjus

AAS 130 29.10.2014-25.02.2015 Wed 10-12 P444



The course will be given in English, if there are non-Finnish speakers among the participants. This course is addressed to students of Assyriology, but all students, especially of Egyptology, Semitic Languages, Archaeology, Classical Archaeology, Classical Philology, History and Art History, Information Studies and Information Technologies etc. are welcome.

This course offers an introduction to the different archival collections and other storing systems of cuneiform tablets in the Ancient Near East, between the emergence of the proto-writing in the 4th Millennium BC until the last phase of cuneiform writing tradition in Hellenistic Babylonia. It gives information about the contents of official state and “temple” libraries, private archives, foundation deposits with cuneiform texts and their physical settings. How was data compiled and how were the collections maintained? Correspondence and displaced stray finds gives us insights to the mobility of information.

Program

- 29.10.: Introduction: Chronological frameworks & “collections” of cuneiform tablets
- 5.11.: Research History and present streams of scholarship
- 12.11.: Compiling and storing data before the invention of writing
- 19.11.; Early Bronze Age 1: Proto-Writing & finding contexts in Uruk and elsewhere
- 26.11.: Early Bronze Age 2: Early Dynastic “archives” and foundation deposits
- 3.12.: The diffusion of the cuneiform writing from Mesopotamia to other parts of the Ancient Near East
- 10.12.: The missing archives of the Akkad Dynasty
- CHRISTMAS BREAK
- 14.1.: Old Assyrian Trading Colonies in Anatolia
- 21.1. : Copying texts in Old Babylonian scribal schools
- 28.1. : Hittite text collections & international correspondence of the Late Bronze Age
- 4.2. : Neo-Assyrian Period 1
- 11.2.: Neo-Assyrian Period 2
- 18.2. : Neo-Babylonian & Persian period
- 25.2. : The end of the cuneiform tradition: Hellenistic Mesopotamia

Opetusta muinaisista arkistoista 2.-3. periodi 2014-2015

This course is examined by reading one scientific article by choice and submitting an essay of it. Instructions and a list of bibliography of articles are given during the course. Additionally, attendance at classes is expected.

N.B.: If you have not previously attained any basic knowledge about Ancient Near Eastern history, i.e. general guidelines of chronology, cultures and political entities, it is recommendable to do some reading either before or at the beginning of the course:

Recommended short introductions:

J. Aruz (ed.) *Art of the First Cities* (2003) = photo compendium

B.R.Foster/K. Polinger Foster, *Civilizations of Ancient Iraq* (2009).

A. Kuhrt, *Ancient Near East 1-2* (1995).

G. Leick, *Mesopotamia. The Invention of the City* (2001).

S. Pollock, *Ancient Mesopotamia: the Eden that Never Was* (1999).

D.T. Potts, *Mesopotamian Civilization. The Material Foundations* (1997).

M. Roaf, *Cultural Atlas of Mesopotamia and the Ancient Near East* (1990) = slightly outdated but still useful

M. Van De Mieroop, *A History of the Ancient Near East ca. 3000-323 BC* (2004/2007).

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