

Beste lezer,

De afgelopen maanden is er in het NINO-onderzoekscentrum koortsachtig gewerkt aan de voorbereidingen voor de verhuizing. De grootste klus was het ordenen, ontsluiten en ompakken van de diverse NINO-archieven. Het was een race tegen de klok, maar met vereende krachten is het gelukt om alles op tijd af te krijgen (zie verderop in deze nieuwsbrief) Op 4 juni is het Böhl-archief overgebracht naar de Bijzondere Collecties van de UB, met dank aan Sebastiaan Berntsen, Koen Klein en Wouter Hofland. Op 26 juni volgden het archief van de Stichting NINO, het archief van De Buck, en de collectie glasdia's, met dank aan respectievelijk Mathijs Smith, Lauren van Kruijssen en Luna Beerden. De archieven zullen binnenkort te raadplegen zijn op de UB-Studiezaal Bijzondere Collecties – wij zullen u hierover op de hoogte houden op onze website. De overige NINO-gerelateerde archiefmaterialen (onder andere de Ahnengalerie, de diacollectie van Kampman en het archief van Van Driel) zullen in de NINO-archiefkamer in het Herta Mohr-gebouw worden bewaard. Op dit moment werken we aan een bescheiden publicatie waarin een overzicht zal worden gegeven van alle NINO-archieven en -collecties en hun nieuwe locaties.





Activiteiten

Op 30 mei was het feest in de NINO-bibliotheek. We vierden het 85-jarige bestaan van het NINO en namen na 40 jaar afscheid van de Matthias de Vrieshof. Voor deze bijeenkomst, die mede werd georganiseerd door studievereniging Pleyte, hadden zich meer dan 130 mensen aangemeld. Mede door de grote opkomst en de muzikale aankleding van DJ Omar was de avond een groot succes. Hoogtepunten waren de speeches van Marten Stol en Mira Cost en het optreden van Myrthe van Drunen, Koen Klein en Lena Siegmann, die ons trakteerden op een voorproefje van de toneelopvoering van het Gilgamesj-epos bewerkt door Frans de Liagre Böhl (zie ook de oproep verderop in deze nieuwsbrief). Aan onze oproep om foto's en herinneringen op te sturen hebben velen van u gehoor gegeven – waarvoor veel dank! Volgende maand zal er een speciale editie van onze Nieuwsbrief verschijnen, gewijd aan 85 jaar NINO en 40 jaar De Vrieshof in woord en beeld.



Daarnaast waren er onze reguliere activiteiten: op 14 april organiseerde het NINO de slotavond van de Week van de Klassieken in het RMO. Het thema dit jaar was 'Mens en Natuur'. Canan Çakırlar (Universiteit Groningen), Erwin Dijkstra (Universiteit Leiden) en Nicky van de Beek (Johannes Gutenberg Universiteit Mainz) belichtten dit thema aan de hand van respectievelijk bio-archeologie, spijkerschriftteksten en Oudegyptische grafkunst. Op 15 mei vond in het RMO de NINO/EOL-voorjaarslezing plaats. Dit jaar werd die gegeven door de voorzitter van Ex Oriente Lux, Ben Haring, met als titel 'Hiërogliefen, een schrift zonder grenzen'. Beide evenementen mochten op veel belangstelling rekenen.

Hello & Goodbye

De verhuizing is niet de enige verandering deze zomer; er vinden ook enige personele wisselingen plaats binnen het NINO. Deze zomer nemen we afscheid van Nolke Tasma, die jarenlang de stille kracht achter de BiOr-redactie was. Hij zal worden opgevolgd door Kiki Freriks, die eerder als student-assistent aan de Böhl-collectie heeft gewerkt. Ook onze bureau-assistent Sara Gebhardt zal het NINO verlaten; haar plaats zal worden ingenomen door Koen Klein. Koen is net als Kiki geen onbekende; hij heeft hiervoor bij het NINO gewerkt aan het ordenen en ontsluiten van het Böhl-archief en de Ahnengalerie.

Met de overdracht van het NINO-archiefmateriaal naar de UB komt er ook een einde aan de werkzaamheden van Luna Beerden, Wouter Hofland, Lauren van Kruijssen en Mathijs Smith, die de afgelopen periode hard hebben gewerkt om dit mogelijk te maken (zie ook hieronder, blz. 3-4).

Eind augustus zal ook postdoc Georg Cyrus ons verlaten, die in 2022 bij het NINO is begonnen. Zijn positie zal per 1 september worden ingevuld door Albert Planelles. Albert is in 2021 gepromoveerd aan de universiteit van Alcalá en zal de komende twee jaar in Leiden werken aan zijn onderzoeksproject *A comparative analysis of Hurro-Akkadian*. Graag maak ik van deze gelegenheid gebruik om de leden van de benoemingscommissie, Jan Gerrit Dercksen, Mark Eertink, Caroline Waerzeggers en Shana Zaia, hartelijk te danken voor hun tijd en inzet. Verder is vorige maand Andrés García de la Cruz begonnen als eerste NVIC/NINO PhD fellow in Caïro. Albert en Andrés zullen zich in de volgende nieuwsbrief aan u voorstellen.

Tot slot zal ik op 1 september het stokje overdragen aan Miriam Müller, die de komende 5 jaar leiding zal geven aan het NINO. Met haar aantreden zal voor het eerst sinds Adriaan de Buck weer een Egyptoloog aan het roer staan. Graag dank ik iedereen voor de prettige samenwerking de afgelopen jaren en wens ik iedereen een heel fijne zomer.

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De NINO-bibliotheek verhuist naar de Middle Eastern Library op 15-29 juli 2024

De verhuizing van de NINO-bibliotheek is gepland op 15–29 juli 2024.

De collecties van de NINO-bibliotheek worden opgenomen in de Middle Eastern Library van de Universitaire Bibliotheken Leiden, die gehuisvest wordt op de begane grond in het Herta Mohr-gebouw. We verwachten dat de overgang eind juli of begin augustus 2024 voltooid is.

Let op: geplande data zijn bij benadering en kunnen veranderen.

The NINO Library moves into the Middle Eastern Library 15-29 July 2024

The move of the NINO Near Eastern Library is planned for 15–29 July 2024.

The NINO library collections will be fully integrated into UBL's Middle Eastern Library, located on the ground floor of the Herta Mohr Building. We expect the process to be complete at the end of July or beginning of August 2024.

Please note that dates are approximate and may be subject to change.

Het NINO-onderzoekscentrum is verhuisd naar het Herta Mohr-gebouw

Op 27 juni brachten de verhuizers de laatste NINO-meubels naar onze nieuwe burelen. Het nieuwe adres van het NINO-onderzoekscentrum is het Herta Mohr-gebouw (HMO), Witte Singel 27A, 2311 BG Leiden. Onze kantoorruimtes, inclusief een archiefruimte, zijn op de eerste verdieping. Daar zijn we de directe burelen van de egyptologen en assyriologen – zij hebben niet langer een werkkamer in de bibliotheek. We hoeven alleen maar de trap af te lopen om in de Middle Eastern Library te komen.

Ter herinnering: op 1 januari 2018 werd de overeenkomst van kracht waarmee NINO een intensieve organisatorische samenwerking aanging met de Universiteit Leiden en het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden. Voor die datum functioneerde het NINO als zelfstandige stichting met eigen personeel. De stichting NINO bestaat nog steeds en heeft het eigendom van de NINO-collecties (bibliotheekboeken, Böhl-collectie, archivalia, meubels enz.) maar de medewerkers zijn in dienst van de universiteit gekomen: bij het LIAS (instituut binnen FGW) en de Universitaire Bibliotheken (UBL). Directeur en secretaris hebben met veel hulp van parttimers, student-assistenten en vrijwilligers een nieuwe plek voor de kleitabletten en archivalia geregeld – in het

The NINO Research Centre has moved into the Herta Mohr building

On 27 June the movers brought the last of our furniture to the new NINO offices. The visitors' address of the NINO Research Centre is now: Herta Mohr building (HMO), Witte Singel 27A, 2311 BG Leiden, the Netherlands. Our rooms, including an archive room, are located on the first floor of the building. We are direct neighbours to the Egyptologists and Assyriologists, who no longer have offices in the NINO library – it is just a short walk down the stairs to the Middle Eastern Library.

As you will surely remember, on 1 January 2018 an agreement for intensive cooperation between NINO, Leiden University, and the National Museum of Antiquities came into effect. Before this date, NINO functioned as an independent foundation with its own staff. The Foundation NINO is still in existence; it is the owner of the NINO collections (library collections, the Böhl Collection, archival collections, furniture, etc.). Staff, however, has entered into employment of Leiden University: as staff members of LIAS (institute within the Faculty of Humanities) or of Leiden University Libraries. Aided by temporary parttime staff, student assistants, and volunteers, Director and Secretary have secured and prepared for new storage places for our clay



Herta Mohr-gebouw heeft het NINO namelijk veel minder ruimte dan in de Vrieshof. We hebben ook geen magazijnen vol met verkoopvoorraad van onze boeken en tijdschriften meer nodig: verkoop van NINO-publicaties wordt verzorgd door onze uitgever, Peeters in Leuven.

Toch deed het wel pijn om afstand te doen van onze oude ruimtes. Er stond o.a. heel veel archiefmateriaal, dat terugging tot de oprichting van het NINO in 1939. Meer dan tien jaar geleden is Sebastiaan Berntsen begonnen die oude materialen eens goed te bekijken – sinds de vorige verhuizing (in 1982, van Noordeindsplein 4a-6a naar Witte Singel 24-25/Vrieshof 4) was er weinig aandacht aan besteed. Wat bleek? De vergeelde ordners en mappen bevatten schatten aan informatie. De afgelopen jaren hebben we regelmatig bericht (via onze eigen kanalen, maar ook in publicaties van derden; zie o.a. blz. 18 in deze nieuwsbrief) over de verhalen die eruit tevoorschijn kwamen. Mathijs Smith ordende het instituutsarchief volgens de regels van het Nationaal Archief; hij adviseerde Sebastiaan Berntsen, Koen Klein en Wouter Hofland over Ahnengalerie en Böhl-archief, en Lauren van Kruijssen over het De Buck-archief. Resultaat: onze archiefmaterialen zijn nu ontsloten (een wens die we al vele jaren koesterden) en in langdurig bruikleen gegeven aan UBL Bijzondere Collecties, waar ze binnenkort geraadpleegd kunnen worden in de leeszaal. De UB heeft nog veel meer archieven in huis, en er zijn verbanden tussen hun materialen en de onze. Het De Buck-archief was al wereldberoemd onder egyptologen, maar het bleek dat we veel meer in huis hebben dan de serie foto's van Middenrijks lijkisten.

De collectie glasdia's die decennia lang vergeten in de bibliotheek stond werd rond 2013 herontdekt door Deborah Gianessi Eidem; in 2017 hebben we een deel van de dia's gedigitaliseerd; Luna Beerden heeft nu de klus voltooid, metadata toegevoegd en de oude volgorde hersteld.

In onze nieuwe archiefruimte in HMO bewaren we o.a. onderzoeksmaterialen die gebruikt kunnen worden door collega's bij hun onderzoek; hierover een volgende keer meer.

CvZ

tablets and archive materials – necessary because NINO has been allotted much less space in the Herta Mohr building than we had in Matthias de Vrieshof 4. For instance, we no longer have large storage rooms filled with sales stock of NINO publications; this is now taken care of by our publisher, Peeters in Leuven, Belgium.

It did hurt to leave our old premises, where we had ample space for the abundant archival materials going back to NINO's inception in 1939. It was Sebastiaan Berntsen who, over ten years ago, started looking in-depth at these old papers and things. They seemed to have been largely forgotten since the previous move (in 1982, from Noordeindsplein 4a-6a to Witte Singel 24-25/Vrieshof 4). What he found was a wealth of information comprised in brittle, yellowed binders and folders. Over the last few years we have regularly reported on the stories that emerged – through our own channels, but also in external publications; see a.o. page 18 in this newsletter. Mathijs Smith (Dutch National Archives) processed the institute's archives; he advised Sebastiaan Berntsen, Koen Klein and Wouter Hofland on the Ahnengalerie and the Böhl archives, and Lauren van Kruijssen on the De Buck archives. The result is that our archives are properly inventoried, fulfilling our long-standing wish. They have now been given on permanent loan to Leiden University Libraries' Special Collections, where they will soon be accessible through the Reading Room. UBL holds many more archives; there are significant connections between their materials and ours. Our De Buck archives were already well-known to Egyptologists worldwide, but we now found that in addition to the photos of Middle Kingdom coffins, this archive also contains other interesting materials.

Our collection of glass slides had been forgotten in our library, until Deborah Gianessi Eidem rediscovered it around 2013. In 2017 we digitised part of the slides; Luna Beerden has now completed this work, adding metadata and reconstructing the slides' original sequence order.

In our new archive room in HMO we store, among other things, legacy research materials for use by colleagues; more information to follow.

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Funding reports

Epigraphic fieldwork in Deir al-Surian

Karel Innemée

The monastery of Deir al-Surian (Wadi al-Natrun, Egypt) was founded in the early sixth century as a Coptic monastery. At the end of the eighth century a group of Syriac monks, most of them originating from the region of Mosul and Tikrit (in present-day Iraq), joined the community and this meant the beginning of a period of prosperity and bloom for the monastery. Under the abbotship of Moses of Nisibis (first quarter of the tenth century) the library of Coptic and Syriac manuscripts became one of the largest in the eastern Christian world. The church of the monastery was refurbished with a new sanctuary, precious wooden doors inlaid with ivory, while numerous wall paintings were added to the interior. In 1782 however, during a thorough restoration of the building, most of these paintings disappeared under a layer of plaster.



A part of the northern wall of the church with a multitude of inscriptions in various languages.

Since 1995 a team of art historians and restorers under the direction of Dr Karel Innemée works on the uncovering and restoration of these paintings. Very soon it became clear that not only these paintings were an important discovery and enrichment of our knowledge of Christian culture in the Near East, but that also countless inscriptions were coming to light, shedding new light on the history of the monastery and its relations with



Grzegorz Ochata and Jacques van der Vliet examine inscriptions.

Syria. The most important Syriac inscriptions that were discovered over the past 25 years had been published by our team member Prof. Luk Van Rompay (Leiden, later Duke University), but the vast majority of texts awaited documentation and translation. This was not a simple job and where some text were clearly legible from photos, others needed on-the-spot examination. The texts can be divided in a number of categories: First of all there are the captions accompanying the mural paintings, identifying the persons or scenes depicted. A second category consists of 'official' inscriptions: announcements of noteworthy events or commemorative texts concerning the passing of members of the community. Some of these inscriptions are dated, which gives them an additional value, not only for pinpointing events of importance in the history of the monastery but also because they can serve as terminus post quem or ante quem for the layers of plaster and painting on which they were made. The third category, by far the largest when it comes to number, consists of graffiti by visitors. Nowadays we do not welcome such spontaneous additions anymore, but for a period when a visit to a monastery in the Egyptian desert was an arduous undertaking, especially when visitors came from far away, they shed light on the identity of pilgrims and other visitors. Visitors from Mesopotamia, the region of origin of the Syriac monks in the monastery were numerous, apparently, but visitors also came from



*Grzegorz Ochała and Jacques van der Vliet
examine inscriptions.*

various countries, judging from the languages in which graffiti were made. In total seven different languages were found on the walls (counting only the graffiti from before the 20th century): Syriac, Greek, Coptic, Arabic, Ethiopic, Armenian, Latin.

With most of the 18th century plaster that was covering the walls removed, it was high time to document the inscriptions in the church. A preliminary inventory had been made on the basis of photographs, but thanks to the NINO subsidy, it was possible to invite a group of scholars trained in epigraphy to come to Deir al-Surian. From 23 February to 9 March Dr Piotr Jutkiewicz (Warsaw University), Dr Grzegorz Ochała (Warsaw University) and Prof. Jacques van der Vliet (Leiden University) were working for two weeks on the Greek, Coptic, and Syriac inscriptions. The Arabic inscriptions will be dealt with in a later stage by colleagues from Cairo, while the Latin, Armenian and Ethiopic texts are few and can be dealt with from photos.

It was a relatively short but extremely fruitful campaign, of which the results are now being elaborated and will be published in a separate volume in a series concerning the church, its architecture and paintings.

Blue skies of Egypt (Outgoing Mobility Grant)

Johannes Schmitt

What's an Egyptologist's biggest dream? While there are certainly countless answers, including diverse variants of time travel, the most realistic, but still staggering and unreal experience – at least for me – was to finally be there myself: to see and explore all the sites which I've heard and read about, to observe and hear from archaeologists working on site and engaging with its finds and to see what the country is like today, which role its history plays in present-day Egypt.

The 'Cairo semester' organized by the Netherlands-Flemish Institute in Cairo (NVIC) has offered just that, plenty of first-hand experience on both the ancient and modern side of Egypt.

For two months, together with fellow Egyptology students I've been visiting archaeological sites and missions throughout the country, international institutes and lectures, as well as different museums under the guidance and support of our programme coordinator Dr. Marleen De Meyer.

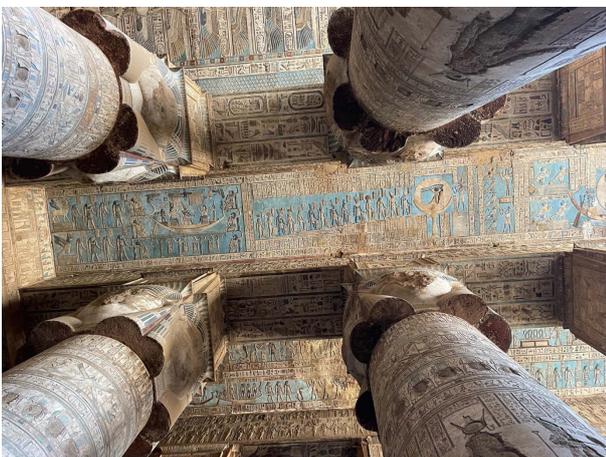
While it was highly instructive to visit the most popular monuments under the guidance of such specialists, it has been a unique experience to go to some calmer, more remote sites. For instance, our visits to the pyramids and their adjoining structures at Dahshur, Meidum and Lahun were quite exhausting, but also greatly exciting because we had the sites nearly for ourselves.



The Bent Pyramid of Snefru at Dahshur.



The same is true for Middle Egypt, the often neglected region between Cairo and Luxor. We visited Beni Hassan with its magnificently painted and masterfully constructed nomarch tombs and on the same day the very different Frazer tombs from the Old Kingdom imitating mastabas in rock. The next day we spent at Amarna – in many ways an extraordinary site – driving from the North tombs, to the Royal tomb, Boundary Stela U, the Small Aten Temple, and the Records Office. Although little remains above the surface, the reconstructions provided by the excavators give an idea of the original grandeur and simply witnessing the sheer vastness of the site was already worth the experience. As the last two sites on our way through Middle Egypt we unexpectedly visited the archaeological mission at Zawyet Sultan, the ancient city of Hebenu which was a provincial capital for over 5000 years and is one of only a few sites with a so-called pyramid of pharao Huni, and lastly Tuna el-Gebel which offers a fascinating compound of Egyptian and Greek culture in the late phases of pharaonic Egypt.



*Another blue sky at Dendera with the
“lunar staircase” in the centre.*

Also after our arrival in Luxor, we were pleasantly surprised by some exceptional trips, such as the visit of the Cambridge university project investigating the use of the Wadis to the West of the Valley of the Kings, i.a. as earlier royal burial ground. Moreover, we went outside of Luxor to see the restored colours in the temples of Esna and Dendera as well as the site of Elkab which was of outstanding importance from prehistoric

times up to the Late Period. There, among the tombs of the New Kingdom officials, we saw the autobiography of Ahmose, son of Ebana, who fought against the Hyksos with pharao Ahmose I; and we climbed up onto the so-called Vulture Rock with its unique graffiti, which seems to have been regarded and used as ritual landscape for centuries.

Thus, this unique programme allowed me both to get in touch with present-day Egypt and its current research landscape, but also to experience some exceptional archaeological sites in an unforgettable way as a group of fellow researchers and friends providing long-lasting inspiration and motivation. I'm truly thankful to the NINO which granted me the financial support necessary to make this possible, and can only recommend this to anyone studying Egypt.



Human Osteoarchaeology in Miletos, Türkiye (Outgoing Mobility Grant)

Azra Say-Ötün

I am currently an MSc Human Osteoarchaeology candidate at Leiden University, and I am interested in what studying human remains can tell us about how people in the ancient past moved, what illnesses and pains they dealt with, and in what activities they were involved in. With the NINO Mobility Grant, I was able to cover the travel costs of two research trips to the Miletos Museum in Balat, Türkiye, to study the human remains stored there from the site of Panormos (18-24 February and 24 March-2 April 2024).



My aim was to study the remains of people buried at Panormos, an ancient Archaic period harbour town (7th-6th centuries BCE). The burials were uncovered as part of a rescue excavation between 2012-2014 but had not yet been analysed by an anthropologist. Their age, sex and pathologies (i.e., signs of disease, trauma, recovery, or nutritional deficiency) were unknown. This was a shame, because there are very few studies conducted and published on skeletal remains in southern Ionia, compared to surrounding areas. A lot has been



written about the architecture of Archaic Ionia, its history and its religion, but not nearly as much about its people! The fact that Panormos was a port of entry to the religious landscape of Ionia was also interesting in terms of the people then buried near it. Who were they? Where did they come from? What was their life like? Osteology is like a lamp we can shine on the lives of those who did not leave texts behind.

Within the span of a few short weeks, I was able to meet the Miletos Museum staff, Miletos excavation team members, Panormos Project co-directors and other generous and welcoming people of the area. I conducted research trips to the Miletos site complex, Didyma and Priene. During my analysis, I was able to reveal what was not known about the fragmented remains.

It is still too early to report on specific results. There are, however, some important basic facts that I can already share. From the individuals I studied, at least two were cremated, two adults were of indeterminate age and sex, one was a probable female, and another was a probable male in his late forties. There are further interesting observations. For example, the people I have studied so far lived to ages where osteoarthritis had already begun. A local female, who survived periods of stress in her childhood (we can tell by

looking at specific lines of arrested growth on the teeth, which develop in childhood), seems to have used her teeth as tools, based on how they wore down and chipped. Having an inventory for the remains will allow them to be more efficiently studied by other professionals and students with other research questions.

My first two trips to western Türkiye have also helped me forge lifelong professional and friendly relationships that I hope to maintain. I conversed with the Miletos staff and Panormos excavation



directors over shared lunch and became familiar with students in a similar position as me from the Miletos excavation. One of my favourite personal memories included being offered a bag of freshly foraged wild fennel from the fields surrounding the museum, which I was able to cook myself following a recipe a kind lady gave me.

There are approximately 60-70 burials recovered from Panormos. Having studied 7 of them so far, I realize there is still a long way to go. But the hardest part was taking the leap and beginning this journey, and I hope to be able to contribute to the eventual publication of this important dataset. With the connections I now have, it is possible for me to finance trips with the Panormos Project and seek accommodation within the Miletos excavation team (University of Hamburg). So, I will continue to study the Panormos remains, even though I will have moved on from a master's by the time the research is finished. But I am a more confident osteologist as a result. The 2024 winter-spring season anthropological report has since been submitted to the Miletos Museum and Turkish Museums Ministry.

For all this, I am once again grateful to NINO and to all those who hosted me, shared their expertise, guided me and trusted me with the material.



DUSANE 2024 (Outreach Allowance)

Lidwien Meulenkamp

On April 11th, the Dutch Symposium of the Ancient Near East (DUSANE) was hosted in the main atrium of the Faculty of Archaeology. The annual symposium highlights the rich history and archaeology of Southwest Asia. This year's theme was centered on interconnectedness, providing new insights in the scale and intensity of interactions within the region. The symposium was organized by Archaeology study association Nabu Na'id and Ancient Near Eastern Studies Pleyte, and funded by NINO and Archon.

In the early morning, Stephanie S. Black kicked off the symposium online from Durham University. She transported the audience to the desert landscapes of Iron Age Oman. Apparent “empty” corridors between coastal and mountain settlement were connected by wadis, which facilitated intensive trade on a local scale. Furthermore, localization does not equal isolation, as camel artefacts and bones may hint at overarching terrestrial land routes to the Assyrian Empire.

The next lecture by Bleda Düring retained the connectivity in Oman, by elaborating on the interconnectedness of small settlements in the Early and Middle Bronze Age. From snacking on marine snails to importing soft stone vessels from regions in modern-day Iran, the excavations by the Wadi al Jizzi Archaeological Project demonstrated the pervasiveness of localized and regional interactions in daily domestic life.

The Arabian Peninsula was left behind as Merlijn Veltman analyzed the multi-layered iconography of funerary earrings in Bactria. The earrings were fabricated from precious materials in various “cultural” styles, and repeatedly restored across multiple generations of use, before being interred with a single individual. These tiny objects emphasized the localized (re)interpretations of objects and styles by past societies, and attribution of localized meanings, instead of homogenous cultural iconographies, materials and styles being applied.



The Warsaw Mummy Project calling in to present on the acquisition history and analysis of Egyptian mummies (photographed by Wojciech Miastkowski).

Following a brief lunch break, Maria Hadjigavriel moved the focus to Cyprus, as she discussed the re-emergent intra- and extra-insular connections during the Chalcolithic Period. Ceramic studies of the style forms and clay sources demonstrate regional similarities and deliberate distinctions, as community identities were defined amongst re-emergent overseas interactions.

Subsequently, the Warsaw Mummy Project delved into relatively modern Egyptian times, with the Polish excavation and extraction strategies of mummies. Wojciech Ejsmond, Marzena Ożarek-Szilke and Stanisław Szilke traced the provenience of the Warsaw Museum's mummy collection

to 19th-century research on medicinal potions, paints and scientific enquiries. Nowadays, the team applies digital tomography to (literally) unravel the past of these individuals, without any destructive practices.

Our final speaker Piotr Zadworny presented the concept of “area-making”, as recorded in Early Dynastic Mesopotamian literature. He focused on the relations between toponyms and the enacting individuals in narratives, through which meaningful spaces of identity and origins were created and conveyed.

Altogether, the DUSANE symposium was a success, as a variety of approaches were presented to highlight the interconnectedness of Southwest Asia, through textual and archaeological practices, and from the past to the present. Many thanks to all the speakers for their wonderful lectures, and to NINO and Archon for funding the event. We hope to see everyone again next year, at DUSANE 2025!





Outgoing Mobility Grant

Eva Cornelisse

From April 9th-19th, thanks to a NINO Outgoing Mobility Grant, I was able to make a short, intensive research trip to London to collect data for my PhD research. My research focusses on the little known Italian Piccinini (fl. 1819-1829, first name unknown) who excavated in western Thebes in the 1820s, a time when the foundations were laid for today's Egyptological collections in European museums. Given current debates on the provenance of objects, the process how ancient Egyptian antiquities were collected is of utmost importance. As one of the agents put on the spot, engaged in collecting antiquities for the Swedish consul-general Giovanni d'Anastasi, Piccinini was both an eyewitness and participant in these developments.

Central to my study are the unpublished manuscripts of three early Egyptologists: Robert Hay, James Burton and John Gardner Wilkinson. All three of them worked intensively in the Theban area at the time when Piccinini was there and show in their work a more academic interest than the average traveller. The vast majority of their work, consisting of notes, journals and letters, drawings, sketches and plans of monuments as well as copies of mural paintings, objects and inscriptions, has not been published or digitised. While the Wilkinson materials are kept mainly in Oxford (Bodleian Libraries), the relevant manuscripts of Robert Hay and James Burton are kept in the British Library. It concerns a considerable amount of material, consisting of

about 35 large volumes, which requires time-consuming research that can only be carried out on the spot.

During my stay in London, I spent most of my time at the Manuscripts Department of the British Library, going intensively through the Hay and Burton materials. I have taken thousands of photos, part of which still needs to be processed. Due to last October's cyber attack, not everything in the British Library was yet fully functioning to digital standards (I had to use a microfilm machine with manual controls and it was impossible to get scans), but in the end everything worked out well.

Working with hand-written manuscripts some 200 years old, usually created under difficult conditions and with limited resources, can be a real challenge. Not all of those men were equally talented in calligraphy, and to make the best use of the paper, they often wrote as small as possible, even crosswise, upside down, in the margin etc.

Sometimes, however, you unexpectedly stumble upon little gems, like very beautiful and highly detailed maps and drawings, even in coloured ink. I feel very privileged to have been able to work with these interesting sources, which has been constantly challenging, surprising and very inspiring – after all it's the closest to these early Egyptologists as you can get. It was absolutely fascinating to discover that certain well-known objects in museums – also in the RMO in Leiden – about whose provenance nothing was known before, turned out to be related with Piccinini. My research trip to London makes a valuable contribution to my further PhD research and would like to thank the NINO very much for making this possible.



Outgoing Mobility Grant

Elena Cantero Ros

On the 31st of March, I travelled to Amman to study the painted plaster assemblage from one of the houses in Gadara of the Decapolis (Umm Qais). This was made possible with funds from the NINO Outgoing Mobility Grant and an invitation from the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology in Amman. The project was a tutorial embedded in the Research Master's program at the University of Groningen, coordinated by Dr. Lidewijde de Jong, who assessed my final report. The assemblage contained more than 1400 pieces of painted plaster dating from the Hellenistic to Early Roman periods, excavated between 1992 and 1995. My work in Jordan lasted for three weeks and consisted of cleaning, inventorying, puzzling, drawing and photographing the pieces. Once back in Groningen, I digitized the drawings and images and wrote a report with the conclusions of this first approach to the assemblage.



At least two different phases of the house decoration were identified, most of them coming from one of the rooms. One resembled the Hellenistic Masonry Style (with very few surviving fragments), and the other featured a panelled later decoration. This last phase contained the most pieces, some of them unparalleled in the literature. An example of this is the arched Lesbian *kymation* featuring a decorative stone pattern, impressed in

red and yellow, of which at least two meters were preserved. This may have been placed very close to a two-lined inscription in Greek, of which only two letters (EY) could be reconstructed. Finally, a generous amount of ceiling plaster with impressed reeds was also recovered, a rare case as they tend to be poorly preserved. The painters of Gadara used six colours: red, yellow, green, pink, black and some white coatings. Future research could provide an accurate date, an identification of the pigments employed and a reconstruction of the room's decoration.

While I was very satisfied with my research work, I was even more delighted to be welcomed in a vibrant and thrilling country such as Jordan. I had the opportunity to witness first-hand the Ramadan and the Eid al-Fitr celebrations, as well as stroll around the streets of central Amman, its impressive citadel and museums. The researchers and staff of the German Institute welcomed me with open arms. I would like to thank the director Brita Jansen, who offered me this opportunity and all the possible assistance during my stay, and Amani Dabouki, who kindly found extra time from her research to help me with the photographs. Regrettably, I was unable to visit the site of Umm Qais myself due to the ongoing conflicts in the borders nearby. Last year it was an increasingly busy tourist attraction, and yet today it is not recommended by European authorities to approach the place. This stresses the importance of striving for a more peaceful and brighter future in the whole area, where archaeology can continue working to the advantage of research and local communities alike.



Outgoing Mobility Grant

John Turco (University of Groningen)

This March I had the opportunity to spend a month in Istanbul as a Netherlands Institute in Turkey (NIT) Research Fellow. During my time there I was able to work on my PhD research while immersed in the rich cultural fabric of the city. The NIT library provided the ideal environment for me to do data collection and the quiet atmosphere was perfect to work on writing my current chapter. My PhD research, entitled *Rituals in Space: Reconstructing Funerary Rituals through Gifts and Bones*, focuses on examining preserved funerary contexts from the Roman period (1st century BCE to 4th century CE) with the aim of reconstructing ritual sequences and practices. The analysis delves into grave good assemblages and their spatial arrangements, bodily treatment, tomb architecture, and evidence of commemorative practices surrounding tombs. The objective is to understand the rituals practiced in the necropoleis of my two case studies: Pisidia (SW Anatolia) and Lebanon. My primary goal of the fellowship was to collect data and gain preliminary insights into my Pisidian case study. I compiled tomb data from two significant sites, Sagalassos and Kibyra, and initiated the organization of a database for future analytical chapters. Additionally, the libraries provided invaluable comparative materials that enriched my understanding of the neighboring regions and their funerary customs. I also had the wonderful opportunity to have engaging conversations with scholars who worked in Pisidia and its neighboring regions as well as with others specializing in funerary material. Their input and suggestions provided new sites and ideas to consider in my research. At the end of my time at



the NIT I presented my work to a group of fellow researchers who all offered interesting insights and some challenging questions. This group consisted of scholars both inside and outside my field, it was a valuable chance to practice adapting presentations to different audiences.

Alongside my library based work, I was able to use my time in Istanbul to visit a wide array of museums and archaeological sites. The archaeological museums of Istanbul were particularly incredible and displayed material related to both of my case studies. In the final few days of my fellowship, I traveled to Izmir where I rented a car and traveled to many archaeological sites and museums. After first visiting the archaeological museum in Izmir, I drove east and visited the sites of Sardis and Bin Tepe. Driving through the dozens of tumuli at the cemetery of Bin Tepe was breathtaking, it was impressive to see the impact of humans on a landscape in such a grand scale. The following day I drove to the site of Ephesus and spent the day marveling at the exceptional buildings on site and rich finds inside the museum in Selçuk.

Visiting these sites offered unique insight into the scale and organization of ancient urban centers while visiting museums afforded some useful examples of grave good assemblages from different times and regions. My time at the NIT was not only immensely useful for my research but it also served as an enriching cultural, and culinary, experience. Thank you to NINO and the staff at the NIT for making this opportunity possible.

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

www.nino-leiden.nl/funding



Nieuws van Visiting Research Fellows

ASOR Punic Project, 3D Modeling of Stelae and Cippi from Carthage (Dar Ben Gacem Fellowship)

Brien Garnand

In anticipation of the 100th/Centennial and 50th/Semicentennial anniversaries of American excavations at the Precinct of Tinnit and Ba'1 in Carthage (the so-called “tophet”), the ASOR Punic Project has done fabric analysis and formal modelling of artifacts from Carthage held in the Netherlands and Denmark, with the support of NINO and the Faculty of Archaeology at the University of Leiden. We have been preparing a commemorative exhibition¹ that calls for 3D models – both full-scale printed replicas of individual stelae and a scale model of the entire American sector. In October during my ASOR Dar Ben Gacem fellowship,² I made a successful preliminary scan of the Regulus-Salammbô sector (draft model)³ in the precise location of the excavations by F.W. Kelsey (University of Michigan, 1925) and by L.E. Stager (ASOR Punic Project, 1975-1979), the former adjacent to and in the strata above the latter. We will rely upon total station readings taken in the early 2000s, the Kelsey-Michigan blueprint plans, and

the Stager-ASOR field-note plans to reconstruct accurate placement of artifacts using the many monuments still *in situ* for reference (including stelae embedded within the Roman vault). Field photos from both excavations will allow for adjustments to the orientation and elevation of stelae.

For our proof-of-concept tests, we used software-based methods (Polycam) to scan sandstone cippi in the open-air museum at the precinct itself. With the support of NINO and the Faculty of Archaeology, and with the collaboration of colleagues from Hogeschool Saxion, we used specific hardware- (Artec Spider and DAVID) to scan urns and limestone stelae from museum storerooms in Leiden (RMO), Den Haag (Museum-Omniversum) and in Copenhagen (Nationalmuseet Danmarks). You can follow our progress by visiting the workspaces on our provisional website⁴ and on Sketchfab⁵. While hardware-based scanning can be prohibitively expensive, our preliminary software-based scans required only a LiDAR equipped iPhone 14 Pro. For the moment, however, the hardware-based system does provide higher quality results.

A full version of our fabric and form analyses will soon appear in *Carthage Studies*, along with certain collateral essays, five of which we preview here.



3D site plan (draft model)



Plaster casts HMANE 1891.1.1-11



Drawing of unpublished inscription HTC 78c5bis

1. Museum exchange/study of casts: Two hundred years ago, the RMO participated an early type of collections exchange by which institutions shared plaster casts so that inscriptions and sculptures might be studied without the burden of travel to collections. Rather than relying upon the drawings of others, Wilhelm Gesenius was one of the first to autopsy the inscriptions themselves and those casts exchanged with the RMO. The resulting 1837 catalog, based upon his study (see our bicentennial webpage)⁶, long remained the starting point for any study of the Phoenician-Punic language. Cast of certain stela were exchanged with multiple museums, e.g. from Copenhagen (NMD Abb 91 *Numidica secunda*) to the RMO (CF*7 CAa9)⁷ and to the British Museum (C211). I even discovered that an early kernel of my home institution's collection included casts from the RMO (HMANE 1891.1.1-1891.1.11).⁸ Our 3D models continue this tradition of collections exchange in order to increase ease-of-access.

2. Study of drawings: Besides studying the actual artifacts (or their casts), early research on inscriptions relied upon wide dissemination of illustrations. The RMO archives have aquarelles made by J.E. Humbert that illustrate portions of stelae no longer preserved (HTC 61a-b *Numidica sexta*⁹ and *septima*¹⁰). In the case of two abbreviated

inscriptions, such drawings provide their only surviving record – one Gesenius published solely from its drawing (HTC 85d2 *Carthagenensis septima*)¹¹ and another has never been published in standard corpora (HTC 78c5bis),¹² likely due to its fragmentary condition and abbreviated text.

3. Iconography: One particular stela we studied in Copenhagen (NMD ABb 149 *Carthagenensis* 13-14)¹³ has iconography that long eluded interpretation, remaining unidentified or misidentified. Now, however, its interpretation as an offering table seems evident and similar to other Punic examples (e.g. Paris Louvre AO 23100 and London BM 125284) and to Egyptian examples (e.g. in the RMO: AM 103, AM 12-c, etc.).

4. Rediscovery: A collateral benefit of our inquiries has been finding two underappreciated stelae by chance. First, Copenhagen NMD 6525¹⁴ had been accessioned in 1909 but only saw publication more than eight decades later, bearing noteworthy scribal errors (Hvidberg-Hansen 1991). The second inscription has Punic iconography with a formulaic Latin dedication (Dresden SKD H4 127/285). Found in 1822 and known from its Leiden cast (RMO KD CBa1),¹⁵ it never made its way into standard corpora due to its lack of clear provenance. The inscription was only quite recently rediscovered in the Kunstsammlungen storerooms (Ehmig 2024). Both stelae deserve greater attention.

5. Provenance: Another collateral value of our inquiries has been finding the original or current locations of certain artifacts. One chance discovery involved a modest, unadorned but



inscribed stela excavated a century ago during the Franco-American excavations, most noteworthy for being taken to Paris by its excavator, the self-styled count Byron Kuhn de Prorok, who must have then given it to the epigrapher and editor of the *CIS*, the abbé Jean-Baptiste Chabot, who in turn bequeathed it to the KU Leuven/Université catholique de Louvain (MuséeL MB402).¹⁶ Equally fortuitous was the discovery of inventory numbers for various stelae presumed lost. When trying to track down the current location of inscriptions illustrated in early catalogs, a search for a Neo-Punic stela (NP 121) uncovered a chapter in a Russian festschrift recounting a donation made by Julius Euting to the State Hermitage in St. Petersburg (Yunusov 2018). Certain stelae from Hadrumetum, previously unaccounted for, now have their precise accession numbers (see our sesquicentennial webpage).¹⁷



*Offering table NMD
ABb 149 CIS I.438*

- 1 <http://phoinikeia.org/PunicProjectData>
- 2 www.asor.org/news/2024/02/dar-ben-gacem-fellowship-garnand
- 3 <https://poly.cam/capture/CCD36893-93AF-47D7-921C-267D52CE48CD>
- 4 <http://phoinikeia.org/PunicProject3D>
- 5 https://sketchfab.com/ASOR_Punic-Project
- 6 <http://phoinikeia.org/PunicProject3D/RMOstelae/bicentennial.htm>
- 7 http://phoinikeia.org/PunicProject3D/RMOstelae/RMO_CF7.htm
- 8 http://phoinikeia.org/PunicProject3D/images/LS_973.jpg
- 9 http://phoinikeia.org/PunicProject3D/RMOstelae/RMO_HTC61a.htm
- 10 http://phoinikeia.org/PunicProject3D/RMOstelae/RMO_HTC61b.htm
- 11 http://phoinikeia.org/PunicProject3D/RMOstelae/RMO_HTC85d2.htm
- 12 http://phoinikeia.org/PunicProject3D/RMOstelae/RMO_HTC78c5.htm
- 13 http://phoinikeia.org/PunicProject3D/RMOstelae/NMD_ABb149.htm
- 14 http://phoinikeia.org/PunicProject3D/RMOstelae/NMD_6525.htm
- 15 http://phoinikeia.org/PunicProject3D/RMOstelae/RMO_KD.htm
- 16 http://phoinikeia.org/PunicProject3D/RMOstelae/ML_MB402.htm
- 17 <http://phoinikeia.org/PunicProject3D/RMOstelae/sesquicentennial.htm>



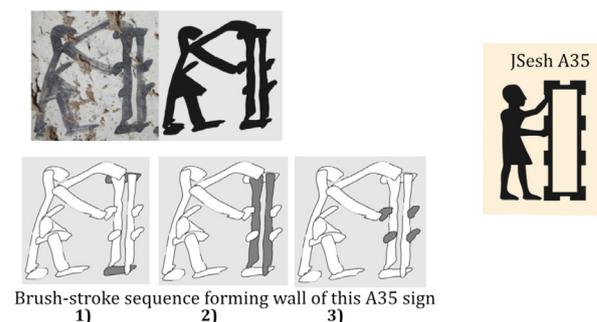
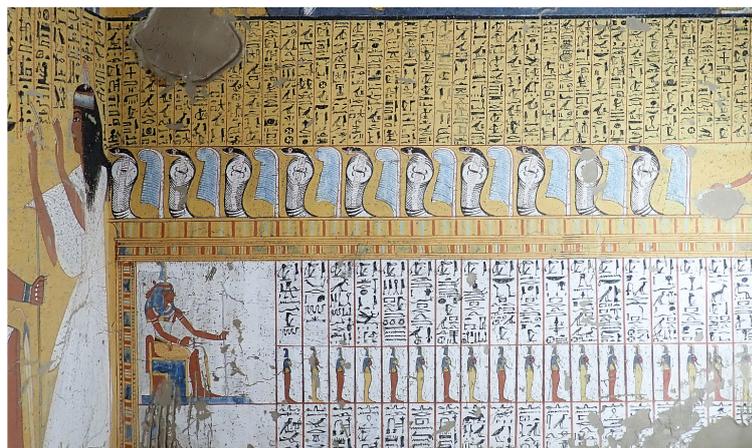
Hieroglyphic hands

Elizabeth Bettles

In 2018 I had the great privilege of being granted a NINO Visiting Research Fellowship to undertake a project concerning hieroglyphs painted in tombs at Deir el-Medina on the West Bank of Luxor. The aim is to characterise and distinguish distinctive features of handwriting styles of different painters (*sš-ḳd.w*) as a means of understanding better the private funerary commerce which existed in the settlement during the Ramesside period. Numerous ostraca from the site reveal aspects of these thriving activities which included members of painter families not only arranging to be paid for painting the tombs of their colleagues, but also a range of funerary objects, many of which are now on display in museums around the world.

As a member of the *Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale* (IFAO)'s Deir el-Medina team, and with the support of the Supreme Council of Antiquities of Egypt, and assisted by the palaeographic expertise of Dr Ben Haring at Leiden University, in 2019 I began documentation in the 20th Dynasty tomb of Chief Workman Anhurkhawy (ii). However, challenges of access arose as the tomb was open to the public, so in 2020 my documentary focus transferred to the currently closed 19th Dynasty tomb of Royal Scribe Amenemipet (TT 265), whose burial chamber walls display copious columns of black-painted hieroglyphs in registers, mostly Book of the Dead spells (Fig. 1a).

While annotating and photographing individual signs, those with morphological features which were atypical when compared to the signs in hieroglyphic sign-lists, Gardiner and JSesh, quickly became apparent. One example is the woman giving birth sign (Gardiner/JSesh B3) which showed unusual tufts of hair sprouting from her head and an unusually pronounced stomach (Fig. 1b). Epigraphic facsimiles, infilled in black, were made of selected signs to denote features of their outline more clearly, as often large straw fragments mixed with the underlying plaster broke through and disrupt sign features.



TT 265:

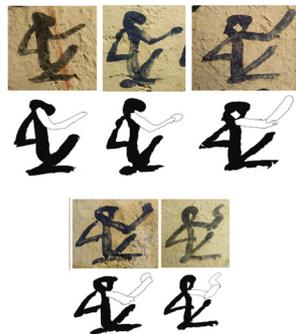
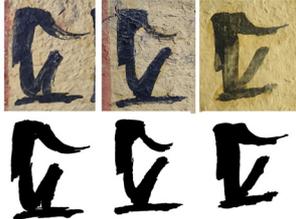
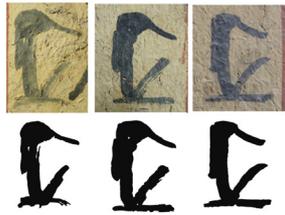
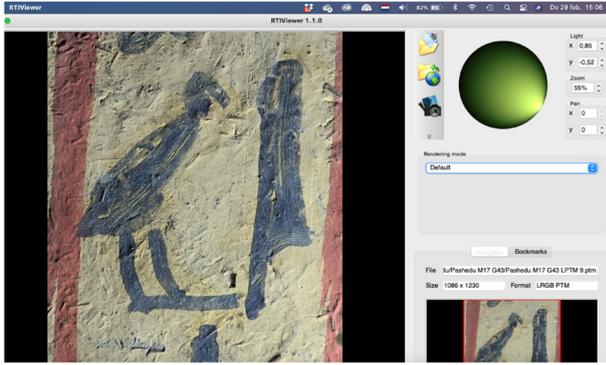
- a) *BD spells on the north wall;*
- b) *atypical rendering of a woman giving birth sign (Gardiner/JSesh B3);*
- c) *stages of brush-stroke sequence for wall construction in the man building a wall sign (Gardiner/JSesh A35).*

In other facsimiles of signs where brush-stroke features are perceptible, stroke shape, size and sequence of application were made, as with the man building a wall sign (Gardiner A35) (Fig. 1c).

In 2024 hieroglyph documentation moved to the 19th Dynasty tomb of the workman Pashedu (TT 3). There the recording process was aided by Kiki Freriks, a Master's candidate at Leiden, who acted as assistant photographer to help brush-stroke features to be discerned more



effectively. Experiments were conducted using the photographic system Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI) (Fig. 2a). Taking further camera equipment with us next season, we hope to improve on this year's results.



TT 3:

- a) A photography test using Reflectance Transformation Imaging;
- b) difference in the beard shape of seated god sign (Gardiner/JSesh A40) in the two BD spells BD 78 and BD 62/63A;
- c) variability in forming processes of the raised arm of the seated man sign (Gardiner/JSesh A1) in BD 78.

Two Book of the Dead spells, for drinking water in the Afterlife (BD 62/63A) and being transformed into a Divine Falcon (BD 78), were the largest text-blocks in TT 3 recorded during the season (Fig. 2b, left). While image processing and analysis remain at an early stage, variability in certain morphological features point to different 'hands' having painted these two texts. For example, the shape of the beard of the seated god (Gardiner A40), consistently shows an up-turned flick in the BD 78 spell, whereas in BD 62/63A it is straighter (Fig. 2b, right). More such examples are currently being gathered to determine whether this initial hypothesis may be valid. In the Divine Falcon text, evidence is also emerging that the ductus (the painter's use of brush-strokes) displays notable variability. The raised arm of the seated man sign (Gardiner A1) is an example of how that sign components could be formed in at least five different ways in this text-block (Fig. 2c). By contrast, in BD spell 62/63A all examples show the arm component was achieved in one flowing stroke with the hand separately. An explanation for this difference is under investigation, with a potential hypothesis that the painter who accomplished BD 78 was in the early stages of his wall-painting career, as compared to a more experienced painter of BD 62/63A.

The intention is to publish the data in this project as an interactive, digital database. Although in the early days the project faced software problems, the Heurist software developed by the University of Sydney for the Humanities has now been adopted and data entry is progressing.



Publicaties & podcasts gerelateerd aan het NINO

Oriental Societies and Societal Self-Assertion. Associations, Funds and Societies for the Archaeological Exploration of the 'Ancient Near East'. Edited by Thomas L. Gertzen and Olaf Matthes (Investigatio Orientis, 10)

In dit volume met bijdragen over privé-initiatieven (verenigingen, fondsen en gezelschappen) die vanaf ca. 1870 Europa en Amerika ontstonden, staan drie bijdragen vanuit het NINO:

- Sebastiaan Berntsen: *The Sichern Committee. A Case Study of Dutch Private Sponsorship of Near Eastern Archaeology* (pp. 87-104)
- Willemijn Waal: *From Wish to Reality. The Foundation and Early Years of the Netherlands Institute for the Near East (NINO)* (pp. 249-268)
- Carolien van Zoest: *The Ancient Near East and Egypt in the Netherlands. Overview of Dutch Societies and Initiatives in the 19th and 20th Century* (pp. 269-303)

De artikelen zijn al in Open Access beschikbaar, het complete volume volgt binnenkort:
www.zaphon.de/epages/83179382.sf/de_DE/?ObjectID=188581389

Blogpost op Leiden Special Collections Blog: “Travelling to ancient Mesopotamia with professor Böhl”

Student-assistenten Koen Klein en Wouter Hoffland schreven deze blogpost, geïnspireerd door hun werk in de NINO-archieven:
www.leidenspecialcollectionsblog.nl/articles/safe-travels-with-a-professor

UBL podcast “The tragic fate of Egyptologist Herta Mohr”

Naar aanleiding van het nieuwe Herta Mohr-gebouw vertelt Nicky van de Beek over haar speurwerk naar deze joodse egyptologe:
www.library.universiteitleiden.nl/news/2024/06/podcast-the-tragic-fate-of-egyptologist-herta-mohr

Verwacht in september: UBL podcast over de Böhl-collectie met Caroline Waerzeggers

Oproep: Pleyte speelt Gilgamesh

Frans de Liagre Böhl maakte de eerste vertaling van het Gilgamesh-epos in het Nederlands (1941). De Wageningsche Studenten Toneelvereniging bracht in 1958 een bewerkte versie op de planken.

Dispuut Pleyte heeft de toneelteksten gemoderniseerd en bereidt een nieuwe opvoering voor!

Meedoen? Email naar dispuutpleyte@gmail.com

of voeg jezelf toe aan de WhatsApp-groep Gilgamesh:
<https://chat.whatsapp.com/BfVLe654cuiAcLR0Lh6vGT>

Agenda-overzicht: activiteiten van NINO en van bevriende organisaties

9-13 september (i.s.m. het RMO): derde editie van de Week van het Oude Schrift met bijdragen van Pieter Houten, Olaf Kaper, Alwin Kloekhorst, Mark de Kreij, Toon Sykora, Willemijn Waal en Koen Wylin

12 september (georganiseerd door UBL): In contact met collecties: de Böhl-kleitablettencollectie

Half september (exacte datum nog niet bekend): banierentoonstelling van Gilgamesj-litho's van kunstenaar Harry van Kruiningen, in de UB

25 september (georganiseerd door UBL, voor genodigden): presentatie Middle Eastern Library-boek

8 oktober: feestelijke inhuldiging Herta Mohr-gebouw

21 november (i.s.m. het RMO): Veenhof-lezing door prof dr. Theo van den Hout (Chicago)

18-20 december: Unseen—Untold: Stories of ancient non-elite communities. NINO Postdoctoral Research Fellow 5th Annual Conference, georganiseerd door Alisée Devillers