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Dr. J. Dik & Drs. N.C.F. Groot

CAAS: The centre & its current research in the Near East

The Universities of Delft and Leiden have joined forces in a new research centre: CAAS, the Centre of Art and Archaeological Sciences. CAAS is a centre for the scientific study of material cultural heritage in its archaeological and art historical context with a focus on an effective interface among the disciplines involved. The multi-disciplinary approach for art and archaeological studies aims to bridge the gap that often exists between the traditional, humanity based, archaeological and art historical studies and the, science based, study of human culture. Already, this new centre has several research projects, which aim to overcome this 'gap', including two projects which are centred in Jordan.

One of these two CAAS-projects concerns ceramics from Tell Deir 'Alla in Jordan. The first part of this research is the study of the faience vessel collection from the Late Bronze Age sanctuary. Faience is a so-called 'high-tech' ceramic, consisting of a body of sintered quartz/sand grains, which is covered by an alkaline glaze.¹ The focus of this study is on the traditions, which underlie the production and the distribution of these ceramic objects.² Besides a stylistic comparison and a macroscopic study of production techniques, the research also encompasses the analysis of the glazes.

The results of this combined approach testify, first of all, of the innovative nature of the vitreous industries of Late Bronze Age in the Near East. This is illustrated by the discovery of previous unknown glaze colorants.³ Moreover, it can be assumed that faience objects were locally produced in Transjordan.

In addition to the high level vitreous industry of this era, the collection testifies of the large-scale exchange of objects in the Near East during the Late Bronze Age. It seems that the exchange of faience vessels in the Near East was confined within amore or less 'cultic' framework.

All these results also give a further insight into the society of Transjordan during this period, which still remains relatively obscure. Rather than simply being a peripheral culture, it was a dynamic culture with its own traits, including a regional vitreous industry.

Drs. J. Bos

Site Management in de Fayum

In de regio Fayum wordt momenteel door de Amerikaans-Nederlandse expeditie (van UCLA en RUG) diachroon onderzoek gedaan naar de ontwikkeling van landbouw in Egypte. In de afgelopen jaren ontdekte deze expeditie nieuwe graanopslagplaatsen uit het Neolithicum aan de noordzijde van het Qarun meer. Sinds deze vondst in 2004 wordt er hard gewerkt aan een mogelijke bescherming van de vindplaats, aangezien de site wordt bedreigd door recente landbouwontwikkelingen. Ook andere sites in de regio worden door natuurlijke of menselijke factoren bedreigd, zoals bijvoorbeeld de Grieks-Romeinse site Karanis. Voor deze en andere vindplaatsen moet in de nabije toekomst een management plan uitkomst bieden. Jolanda Bos schrijft deze plannen vanuit haar expertise met erfgoedbeheer in Nederland en het Nabije Oosten en vertelt in deze lezing over het werk in Karanis en de Fayum.

Drs. E. Kaptijn

**Late Chalcolithic/EB I 'missing link' pottery in the Jordan Valley?
A newly discovered site at Qatar Damieh.**

The transition from the Late Chalcolithic period to the Early Bronze Age is enigmatic. The Late Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age I periods have very different characteristics with regard to architectural styles, ground and chipped stone industries and especially pottery styles (Braun 2000: 115). This change in material culture has led some scholars to argue for the total disappearance of Late Chalcolithic society and the arrival of new settlers in the Early Bronze Ia period (e.g. Gophna 1998: 272). Others, however, have argued for an entirely local development (Braun 1989) (Hanbury-Tenison 1986).

The recently excavated settlement at Ashqelon Afridar however shed a new light on this transition. At this site the pottery of the earliest phase of the EB I period shows clear Chalcolithic traits amongst the in general Early Bronze Age characteristics of the pottery (anonymous 2004). This transitional pottery and thus the evidence for an indigenous development seems to be restricted to a limited number of sites in the southern coastal plain of Israel (Braun 2000: 115). However, during the last survey season around tell Deir 'Alla in the East Jordan Valley a new site was discovered in the Qatar north of Damieh. The pottery shows types characteristic of the Chalcolithic period together with Early Bronze I shapes. Remarkable, however, are the sherds that are unknown to either periods and find their only parallels

in the so-called 'missing link' stratum at Afridar. In this paper the connections of this newly discovered site with the coastal plain will be investigated and the implications for the Chalcolithic - Early Bronze Age transition in the Middle Jordan Valley will be examined in relation to previous excavations and recent survey finds in the area.

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Drs. L.P. du Pied

Title: Continuity and Change in the Northern Levant in the Iron Age: a view from a pottery perspective

The end of the Late Bronze Age (ca. 1200/1180 BC) is marked by destructions and upheavals in the whole Eastern Mediterranean area. The following Iron I period is often described as a 'Dark Age', although it is nowadays generally accepted that important innovations occurred in this period as well. It is clear that at the end of this period a new political and economic situation emerged in Syria and adjacent areas, but some degree of continuity can be noted in most sites in the northern region. From the 11th century on there is increasing pressure from the Assyrians on this region, who eventually took over most of the Levant by the end of the 8th century BC. By discussing some aspects of continuity and change in the Iron Age pottery repertoires of Ras el-Bassit, Ras Ibn Hani and Tell Kazel, questions about (changing) regional, intra-regional and extra-regional contacts will be addressed in the context of the political and economic changes that took place during the Iron Age.

Prof.dr.ir. J. van der Plicht

Radiocarbon: recent developments - about Dodo's, Chauvet and the Levant

Radiocarbon (¹⁴C) is a well established method for dating organic materials such as charcoal, plants, wood, bones and others for the last 50.000 years. Obviously the ¹⁴C dating method is of great importance for chronological studies, as it offers a yardstick for measuring past time by scientific means. As such the method has spawned revolutions in archaeological thinking during the 1960's.

More recent breakthroughs concern precise calibration of the Radiocarbon timescale, now possible back to 26.000 years ago, and the introduction of AMS enabling the measurement of small (milligram size) samples.

The lecture will describe the state of the art of the ¹⁴C method, and will be illustrated by selected recent examples such as dating the spectacular cave paintings from Chauvet cave in France, and the Dodo paradise from Mauritius. Finally I will discuss the ¹⁴C dates from Tel Rehov, Israel, which play a crucial role in the so-called "high or low chronology" debate for the Iron Age in the Levant with far reaching consequences - such as the very existence of the kings David and Solomon, and revisions of traditional chronologies for the second millennium BC for the Mediterranean.

Prof. dr. W.H. van Soldt & Drs. Kozad M. Ahmed

Iraaks Koerdistan: nieuwe Leidse onderzoeksprojecten

In april 2006 is een groep van Leidse onderzoekers op uitnodiging van de Iraakse ambassadeur in Nederland voor de eerste keer in Erbil geweest (Erbil is de hoofdstad van Iraaks Koerdistan en een van de oudste steden ter wereld). Ons doel was contacten te leggen met een aantal instellingen, zoals de Salahaddin universiteit in Erbil. Tijdens ons bezoek hebben we een universitair memorandum opgesteld waarin de intenties van de samenwerking zijn vastgelegd: uitwisseling van studenten en docenten, training van museummedewerkers en een survey plus opgraving in Koerdistan. Tijdens de voordracht zal ik ingaan op de projecten die inmiddels op de rails zijn gezet.

The extensive territories known since the early years of the use of writing in Mesopotamia as 'Subartu' were a combination of rugged mountainous lands and some hilly lands in the foothills. From the middle of the third millennium BC, early (city-)states were founded there but they have hardly left written material about themselves. The relative illiteracy of these early states makes it difficult to write their history. However, the discovery of some

inscriptions in the last few decades in the region have changed this fact and added valuable information to our knowledge about them, particularly Simurrum. This was an old land that had its own ruling elite with a local population, most probably Subarian, that have later been Hurrianized. Simurrum became the fundamental Hurrian barricade in front of the kings of Ur III Dynasty on the way to the heartland of the Hurrian lands, hence was subject to at least 11 successive campaigns. After the fall of Ur, Simurrum appeared as a major power in the region that could subjugate numerous other territories to grow to a widespread kingdom.

Dr. G. Vogelsang-Eastwood
TEXTILE RESEARCH

The Textile Research Centre (TRC) was founded in 1991 with the aim of supporting research into textiles and dress. It is based at the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden and works closely with the Departments of Anthropology, Archaeology and Art History, Leiden University.

Dress is everything a person does to their bodies in order to express their identity. Dress is a silent language that speaks volumes about a person's sex, gender, age, cultural background, occupation, status (social and marital), religion, politics, economic position and so forth. Dress includes body modifications (hairdos to tattoos), as well as body supplements (everything from clothing, jewellery, make-up, walking sticks to daggers).

The TRC has a collection of over 3000 garments and accessories for men, women and children from throughout the world. It specializes in Middle Eastern and Dutch regional dress.

Current projects include: ancient Egyptian textile technology based on the Beni Hasan tomb paintings; archaeological reconstructing the garments worn by Afghan Scythians in the first century BC; a history of face veils in the Middle East; Coptic monastic and liturgical dress in Egypt and Saudi Arabian dress for men and women.

Dr. J. Vroom

Ceramics and the archaeology of consumption in the eastern Mediterranean during Byzantine and Ottoman times

This paper aims to touch upon some wider themes in Medieval and Post-Medieval archaeology in the eastern Mediterranean, such as chronology, trade, the quantity and variety of material culture on sites, as well as the archaeology of consumption. The research on the archaeological aspects of daily life in Post-Roman times is part of a larger and long-term study by me of the material culture (especially table utensils of pottery, glass, metal and of other materials) in the eastern Mediterranean during the Byzantine, Islamic, Ottoman and Modern periods (ranging from around the 7th to the mid 20th centuries), using archaeological data, textual sources and pictorial information. In particular, I hope to show some ceramic finds from two projects in the eastern Mediterranean in which I am involved as a pottery specialist: the first project concerns an excavation near the Euphrates River in eastern Turkey, the second is a surface survey on an island in the Aegean.