

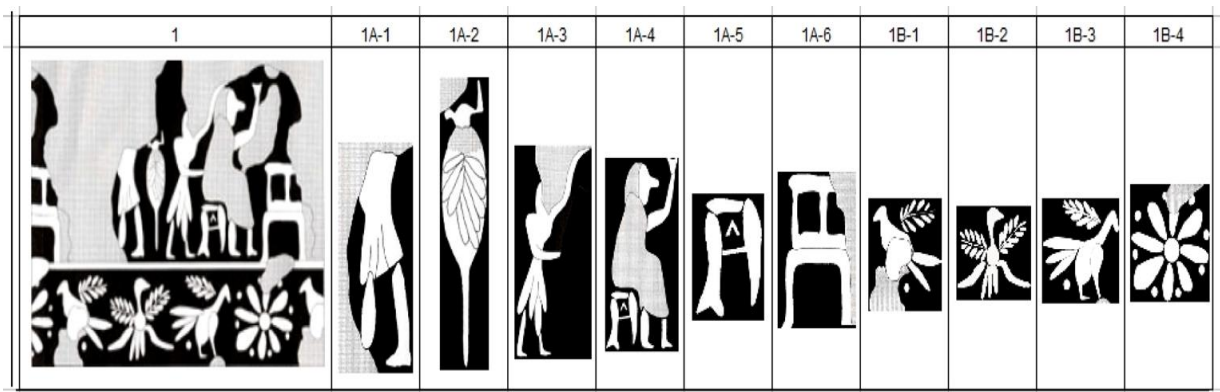
## Report on Berlin meetings – March 2023

### Giorgio Buccellati and Marilyn Kelly-Buccellati

Giorgio Buccellati (gB) and Marilyn Kelly-Buccellati (mKB) spent the month of March in Berlin, working with Federico Buccellati (fAB) on the [Cybernetica Mesopotamica](#) Project. Among other items, they discussed the implementation of an important new aspect of the project: a separate domain on [glyptic analysis](#), which would revisit two projects started in the early phases of the project, relating to Old Babylonian and Old Assyrian glyptics.

They also met for several days with [Yasmine Mahmoud](#) (yM), to discuss new plans relating on the one hand to conservation and cultural heritage and on the other on further work on the digital books within [Cyb-Mes.net](#).

They also met with Maria Gabriella Micale to discuss aspects of her new project with ASOR Open Context.



**Affe**

Diese Figur stellt scheinbar einen Affen dar; die Interpretation ist insofern unklar als es nur wenige Beispiele gibt, aber da es sich hier um ein Tier mit anthropomorphen Gliedern und einem Gesicht mit einer Schnauze handelt, ist eine Bezeichnung als Affe wahrscheinlich korrekt.

Quantität     3    



The new [CM domain](#) – Iconographic analysis of cylinder seals:  
Old Babylonian and Old Assyrian lexicons



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# 1 Cybernetica Mesopotamica

## 1.1 Revision of Parts II and III

[Cyb-Mes.net](#) will in some ways serve as an introduction to the theoretical principles developed in [d-Discourse.net](#), and working on both led to some important additions to sections two and three of [Cyb-Mes.net](#). gB plans now to finish this website by mid May.

## 1.2 The Seals domain

Another major development was the decision to include in the project [a domain](#) on which important work was done in earlier years, namely the seals project. The image that we use as the header for this report gives two items of the lexica for Old Babylonian and Old Assyrian glyptics. The first was developed under the direction of mKB in the 80es, and the second was produced in 2006 by fAB as part of a comprehensive analysis of the Old Assyrian corpus.

We intend now to prepare both lexica for publication. This will also serve as a point of reference for the digital book on [Urkish glyptics](#) which mKB will work on as soon as the [Ceramics book](#) is finished.

# 2 A possible new project in Lebanon

There may be a possibility of doing field work in Lebanon: this seems attractive especially if it involves the cultural heritage aspect. While this is still very much in a preliminary stage, we discussed a possible involvement of [IIMAS](#) and [AVASA](#) in the project.

# 3 Yasmine Mahmoud's administrative role

## 3.1 New role as Associate Director

gB and mKB met with yM for a period of about [one week](#), and reviewed in detail her role as [IIMAS](#) Associate Director for the [Urkish Extended Project](#). She will help in coordinating not only the work in Syria, but also all our other various projects including the organization of group events and meetings concerning the current [Cybernetica Mesopotamica](#) project. The ones of more immediate interest are listed here. These were all the object of intense discussions in Berlin.

## 3.2 Conservation at Urkish and the Kaplan Fund

Following in her own footsteps, she will continue to actively supervise all activities at the site, as well as the updating of the relevant sections of the website, in particular concerning the work being done under the terms of the grant from the Kaplan Fund.

### 3.3 Yara Moualla and Khouzama Bahloul

She will organize two new projects in connection with two young Syrian colleagues.

Dr. [Yara Moualla](#) will work on the women's [atelier project](#), which she had started in 2012, and which was then carried out by [Hiba Qassar](#). There are several new ideas that Yasmine will implement with Yara during the course of next year.

Dr. Khouzama Bahloul will undertake work on the publication of the [A10](#) digital book. Khouzama has no previous experience with the [UGR](#), but as Syrian Director of the Ugarit excavations she is a senior archaeologist who brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to our project, and of course Yasmine will help her with regard to the [UGR](#). Along with the [A6](#) publication now entrusted to [Amer Ahmad](#), this will be an important new step in gaining new recruits for the publication of digital books relating to units excavated in earlier years.

### 3.4 Fund raising

We agreed on attempting to explore new funding possibilities, especially in the Gulf area. Some of the channels that might lead to our goals are:

- Prince Klaus foundation, recommended by Dr. Maamoun Abdul Karim
- United Arab Emirates where we will try through Marwan Midani to set up meetings with possible donors
- Saudi Arabia where we will try to find funding sources through Jamal Omar.

## 4 Yasmine's Urkesh trip

Yasmine Mahmoud will be taking a trip to Urkesh in April. She will possibly be accompanied by Yara Moualla and Khouzama Bahloul. The purpose of the trip can be summarized in the following points:

### 4.1 Checking on the site and planning necessary interventions

Yasmine will check on the state of the site especially the [palace walls](#). She will also assess the state of the mud plaster of the protective shelters of the palace and decide if it needs complete replacement as per [Muhammad Omo](#)'s recommendation. She will also discuss with the local collaborator any further interventions that need to be implemented.

### 4.2 Mountasir and wall monitoring

[Mountasir Qassim](#) will join our team and will primarily work on coordinating the work on the site and monitoring the [palace walls](#). Mountasir will accompany Yasmine in checking the walls individually and make the comparison between the photos of the previous year and the current state in order to learn how to prepare the [yearly wall monitoring report](#).

### 4.3 Storage

The storage space will be checked and all the [ZSB](#) boxes will be cross checked with the latest inventory list created by Amer Ahmad.

### 4.4 Ceramic library

The ceramic library will be checked and the assessment will be reported back to mKB. In addition to the library, mKB's office will be checked as well, and an inventory of the items in the cabinets will be provided.

### 4.5 J4 ceramics

We will ask [Hammade](#) about the [J4](#) ceramics in order to know if there are any unprocessed [q-items](#). The same will apply to other excavation units currently under work.

### 4.6 Teeth sample

Two years ago, a teeth sample has been collected at the request of Dr. [Arwa Kharobi](#) for DNA analysis. Yasmine will prepare the proper authorization from the [DGAM](#) to bring the samples from Mozan to Damascus and then send it to A. Kharobi.

### 4.7 Surface finds

The [surface finds](#) project has been worked on by Amer Ahmad. Mountasir Qassim will take over and work on any new finds collected from the site. We will organize this work together and find a proper storage for the surface finds.

### 4.8 Women's atelier

We plan on reviving the women's [atelier](#). We already talked about this with Amira, who said that the women are ready to work, especially during the wintertime. We plan on meeting the women and Yara Moualla will act as the director of the project where she will be responsible for the creative aspect in addition to finding the proper distribution channels for the produced items.

### 4.9 Maintain connections with friends

We plan on visiting Bishop Antranig Ayvazian, the head of the Armenian church in the region, who is a close friend of the expedition. We also plan on visiting Dr. Droubi, who was the expedition's doctor and a close friend.

## 5 Yasmine's research

### 5.1 J4 digital book

With the assistance of [Lorenzo Crescioli](#), she will continue to work on the publication of the [J4](#) digital book. The documentary section accessed from the [right-hand side](#) is almost completed, and she plans to complete the whole book by September.

There are some problems that can be summarized in the following points.

- Some photos and thumbnails do not open despite the link being there.
- The phases and strata are all determined based on the [MZA](#) chronological chart of 2008 which might cause confusion. Therefore, all phases and strata will be re-assigned according to the MZA phase and strata chart of 2011.
- There is a gap in the sequential numbering of the items. These items do not exist in the J files or the scanned logs of [J4](#). This issue will be discussed with [Sara Comelli](#) to clarify the situation.
- It is necessary to check the ceramic assemblages of [J6](#) to determine if there are any that belong to [J4](#).

As for the [left-hand side](#), the work should be completed by September.

### 5.2 Figurine book and digital book

As part of her own research commitment, Yasmine will also continue to work on the publication of her [doctoral dissertation](#), relating to the human figurines from Urkesh. Besides a standard paper publication, within the Antichistica series of Ca' Foscari, she will also produce the digital book within the [UGR](#).

## 6 Meetings (virtual and in person)

It was decided to hold three meetings in order to discuss the progress of the work and the issues related.

### 6.1 Meeting in April

On the occasion of yM's visit to Mozan, we will hold a brief online meeting from the site or, if necessary, from Qamishli.

### 6.2 Meeting in May

This meeting will be virtual and it will be in the form of a four hour workshop to discuss (a) the progress of work on the various digital books, aiming for a September deadline; (b) ask the participants for a progress report in the form of a [timetable](#); and (c) discuss in depth

the contributions that were requested of the participants for the [Digital Discourse](#) volume.

### 6.3 Meeting in June

gB and mKB will be coming to Damascus at the end of May to participate in the colloquium organized by the DGAM in the beginning of June. We plan on holding a virtual meeting in the DGAM with the participation of the DGAM's General Director and Director of Excavation, and the Balzan Foundation members with a few of our team members, where we will each present a brief report on the progress of our work on the [Cybernetica Mesopotamica](#) project.

In addition to the presentations that gB and mKB will give at the colloquium, we will organize a lecture at the University of Damascus, the Department of Archaeology where the professors will present their work on the digital publication.

### 6.4 Seminar in September

As in 2022, this seminar will be held in Beola in person and it will entail a longer work period and discussions regarding the finished digital books, the [Digital Discourse](#) volume and the systemic questions regarding the roster, lexicon and specific labels. In addition, we will have extensive discussions regarding future plans.

## 7 *Digital Discourse: A View from the Field*

We had an extensive discussion about the [projected volume](#) and what is expected of the authors in terms of their contribution. In order to clarify the concept, a virtual workshop will be held in May (see paragraph 6.2) with the participation of all the invited authors in order to discuss their monographs and address any issues one might be having with this task.