

*Of Dirt and People.  
The (Digital) Hermeneutics of Archaeology*

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**I. Urkesh**

**A Life Trajectory**

When, on October 27, 1984, we first approached Tell Mozan for the start of our excavations, we were faced with nothing more than a hill [Fig. I], altogether mute as to any potential glorious history hidden under its slopes. To be sure, we had gathered clues to that effect. We even suspected that it might be a forgotten ancient city, known from historical and mythological texts. But could we ever find out?



I. Outline of High Mound, Tell Mozan (Courtesy IIMAS -- The International Institute for Mesopotamian Area Studies).

Well, find out we did, almost with a vengeance, you might say. First came the monuments: a high temple; a sprawling royal palace; a deep necromantic shaft. And then, the written evidence that gave us, one after the other, a series of names of kings and queens and their officials and, most important of all, the name of the ancient city itself, Urkesh. It took us ten years of excavation: it was all we had hoped for, and more. It turned out that Urkesh was one of the first cities in history, dating back to the early fourth millennium BC; that it was one of the largest in the region for these early periods; and that it was a flourishing center of a little-known culture, that of the Hurrians.

All of this is enough to convey the sense of what one normally associates with archaeology: the thrill of freeing history from the grip of the soil, out of what appears like an inert mound of dirt, discovering a life once lived, enshrined in monuments and objects that speak a universal human language, across millennia of silence that suddenly vanish and bring us into immediate contact with «them».

It is a poetic moment when this breaking down of barriers happens; one that is well worth all the effort that goes into making it possible. We wish to share with you this moment of immediacy, when we feel we re-appropriate a millennially broken tradition, one with no living carriers who can tell us of its values. It is all extremely relevant, and it all seems so simple. We want to first lay out this evidence. And «evident» is the proper term, because there is an immediate recognition of «evident» value in monuments and objects, where sheer beauty seems indeed to speak for itself.

But then, in the second part, we will want you to share as well in the process that makes this possible. Because that has been one of the great lessons we have learned, the one that has unlocked the doors to immediacy, and the one on which we are involved now with our broad team of young collaborators. It is the hermeneutic process; a process that is inextricably bound up, today, with the whole issue of digitality. In fact, we feel that archaeology holds a key to help us go beyond some of the ephemeral blind alleys which cyberspace seems to be all too often reduced to today.

## The Monuments

Michelangelo's poetic imaging that «*Non ha l'ottimo artista alcun concetto / c' un marmo solo in sé non circoscrive / col suo superchio, e solo a quello arriva / la man che ubbidisce all' intelletto*»<sup>1</sup> can serve as an apt metaphor for the excavation process. Very literally in this case, certainly more so than a sculptor with his statue, we remove the matrix, the «*superchio*», in which an ancient structure has been buried under its own collapse. The monuments are truncated, and emerge with a fascination of their own, precisely as ruins, something we have been trained to see through the eyes of artists like Piranesi. But these ruins were not standing; they emerged slowly from the ground.

The first that we found is also the most monumental. A high temple, at the very top of the tell, some 27 meters above the plain level, and yet, dating back to the middle of the third millennium. Of the temple itself, we had only the lowest parts of the walls and the floors, but then, in front of it, there appeared the monumental stone staircase that led to the top [Fig. II]. The staircase proper is flanked by steps that are twice the size of the normal steps: they were clearly not for walking, and so we can safely infer that they were for sitting down, facing, perhaps, a ceremony that was happening in the broad open space at the base.



II. Temple staircase (Courtesy IIMAS -- The International Institute for Mesopotamian Area Studies).

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<sup>1</sup> Roughly translated: *Not even the best artist can conceive an idea that is not already contained within the matrix of the marble; he only gets to it through his hand, which follows the intellect.*

The staircase shows us that the temple was standing at the top of an ancient rise, comparable to the ziggurats known from southern Mesopotamia, except that in this case it is a frontal arrangement of space: it is, in other words, to be seen from the south with the backdrop of mountains, which in some ways it imitates.

In the third millennium, this rise stood by itself; it was only in the late second millennium that construction grew up around it so that then the temple was surrounded by structures situated at the same level. Still in the third millennium, a royal palace was built near the base of this rise [Fig. III]. It was thus dominated by the temple, but it certainly rivaled it in monumentality. We have only been able to excavate a portion of it; the rest lies deep under later accumulations. But even so it has emerged as a very distinctive and impressive architectural whole. We have the service sectors, which include the kitchen and a large storage area: in the latter, we found some one thousand pieces of clay that were used to seal containers and doors and bear the imprint of seals that marked the ownership of the contents. A couple of hundred were inscribed in cuneiform, so besides the beautiful and very distinctive iconography, we also have a precise reference to people who resided in the palace, the king and queen, and several officials.



III. Overall view of the Tukki Palace (Courtesy IIMAS -- The International Institute for Mesopotamian Area Studies).

The most unexpected structure was a wide and deep stone-lined shaft [Fig. IV] that was sunk deep into the ground, right next to the royal palace. We have conclusively interpreted it as the site of necromantic rituals, i. e., rituals through which the spirits of the netherworld were invoked and expected to appear and give responses, primarily for the king and the royal household. It was a uniquely Hurrian ritual, and we know the Hurrian name of the structure: *abi*. It is the same word that occurs in Hebrew as *ôb*: we find it in the book of Samuel referring to the “witch of Endor,” whom Saul consults in order to question the spirit of Samuel. The Urkesh structure is truly monumental in size and shape, fit for a royal setting, as we know it from the palace. It is also very distinctively Hurrian in the sense that the very idea of having such contacts with the netherworld was anathema for the southern Mesopotamians, i. e., the Sumerians and the Akkadians.



IV. The necromantic shaft (*abi*; Courtesy Kenneth Garrett). ; Courtesy IIMAS -- The International Institute for Mesopotamian Area Studies

### *The Objects*

The most surprising find, and the most welcome, was that of short cuneiform texts that gave us the ancient name of the city [Fig. V], confirming our initial working hypothesis that this was the site of ancient Urkesh. The presence of such texts is one of the most conclusive pieces of evidence for the general question of how to identify an ancient site. In our case, the texts were in the form of short legends on seals belonging to the king, the queen, and officials of the court. They were found together primarily in the storeroom of the service quarter of the Palace. These impressions were discarded after the containers they sealed were opened.



V. Seal impression of king Tupkish, with the name of the ancient city (cuneiform in red; Courtesy IIMAS -- The International Institute for Mesopotamian Area Studies)

Besides the legends, the seals of which we found the impressions give evidence of a very dynamic style and iconography, characterized by a striking realism. We have scenes of the royal family [Fig. VI] and of some of their attendants, including for instance the «cook» [Fig. VII] i. e., the person who was in charge of the kitchen as a whole (and the kitchen was right next to the storeroom...).



VI. Seal impression with the royal family and inscription of the queen (Courtesy IIMAS -- The International Institute for Mesopotamian Area Studies).



VII. Seal impression of the "cook" (Courtesy IIMAS -- The International Institute for Mesopotamian Area Studies).

Just as realistic is the plastic art. A bronze lion found before our excavations but originating from Urkesh (as indicated in the inscription that accompanies it), probably dating to the period just before the Palace, projects an extraordinary sense of movement, with the body of the animal twisted as if in a gesture of reaction to an approaching danger [Fig. VIII]. And many clay figurines seem like small sculptures, endowed with a special sense of personality [Fig. IX].



VIII. Bronze statue of the Lion of Tish-atal from Urkesh (in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Courtesy Kenneth Garrett).



IX. Clay figurine, with bitumen markings (Courtesy IIMAS -- The International Institute for Mesopotamian Area Studies).



Particularly significant is a bas-relief that is not only realistic in style, but also very closely linked to the narrative of an episode of one of the major epic poems from Mesopotamia, *Gilgamesh* [Fig. X]. Only one quarter of the original plaque is preserved, but it is safe to assume that the other three portions of the plaque illustrated three other episodes of the same poem. The specificity of the details is impressive. The figure on the left is Enkidu, who is described in the text as follows: «His whole body was hairy, with a long hair as if of a woman, the curls rolling down like those of the god of wheat», and the text also says that he has a quiver with arrows, just as in our figure. Of Gilgamesh, the figure on the right, the text says that he is still very young, which is reflected in the image of the beardless youth represented on our bas-relief.



X. Stone plaque, with Enkidu (left) and Gilgamesh (Courtesy IIMAS -- The International Institute for Mesopotamian Area Studies).

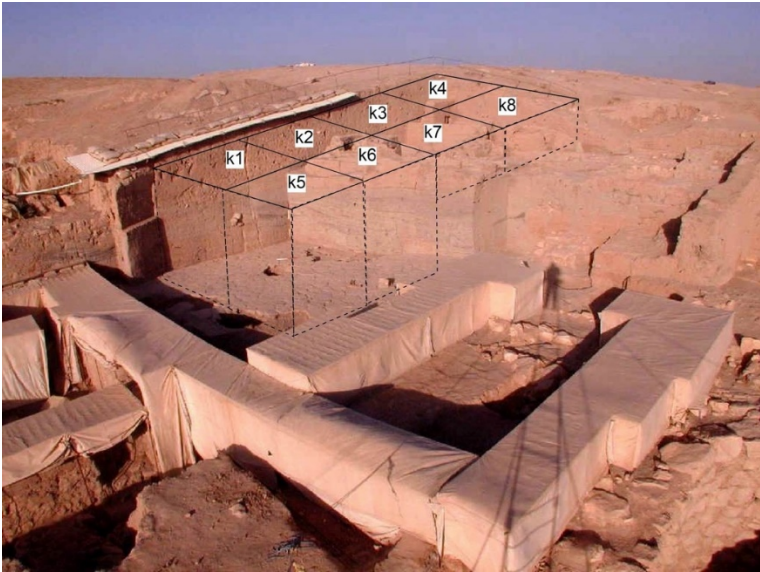
### **The Process**

Urkesh, before becoming once again Urkesh, was simply Tell Mozan. A plain hill, against the background of the Taurus mountains. A hill. We wielded picks and dental tools to disentangle Urkesh from Tell Mozan, seeking... That is the question we want to stress here: seeking what? The easy answer is: monuments and objects, as we have just seen. But in effect the critical task of the archaeologist, the one task that no one else but an archaeologist is trained to do, is to find and document the emplacement of these «things» in the ground. How are they associated in the dirt? How can we record this moment that is forever lost once the matrix is dissolved? And, beyond that, how do those objects and their physical relationship in the ground allow us to speak of the peoples of the past?

We are building up to that, but first we want to give you a sense of scale and dimension. We will do that by looking at the one type of find that is by far the most common at Urkesh as in all other historical sites in the Near East: ceramics [Fig. XI].



XI. Complete clay vessels being readied for shipment to Museum (Courtesy IIMAS -- The International Institute for Mesopotamian Area Studies).



XII. A typical excavation unit (A16; Courtesy IIMAS -- The International Institute for Mesopotamian Area Studies).

A typical excavation unit may look like this [Fig. XII]: an area of 20 by 10 m<sup>2</sup>, excavated to a varying depth of between 2 and 4 ms, for a total of 350 cubic m<sup>2</sup>. The unit is given a label, here A16. It yielded 61,082 ceramic fragments, or sherds (besides 1,138 objects including whole vessels). For every single one of these items, we can assign a precise emplacement in one of 347 distinct stratigraphic features. Similarly, we can assign every single sherd to one of 22 distinct ware types, and 14 distinct shape types. We can also distribute them chronologically across a span of 1,000 years, all neatly seen in a succession of 24 strata partly etched in the sections of our excavations [Fig. XIII].



XIII. Strata in A16 from about 2300 BC at the bottom to 1300 BC at the top (Courtesy IIMAS -- The International Institute for Mesopotamian Area Studies).

As an example, here is the biography of one of these sherds [Fig. XIV]. It is a segmented narrative that provides all the information in sequential order, as one would find in a prose narrative, but with each attribute given separately, so as to combine the power of a database with that of a logical sequence.

Recording the data with the minutia of which these numbers give you a glimpse was our first task. It could not have been done outside of a digital framework, to which we will return. But the ultimate question is: *cui bono*?

**A16.34**  
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Printed on 2022-10-19

Overview  
1. OVERVIEW  
2. IDENTIFICATION  
3. STRATIGRAPHY  
4. TYPOLOGY  
5. REFERENCE  
6. INTERPRETIVE

**1. OVERVIEW**

Roster	Date	Author	Record
Category	11		shy artifact
Best definition	2002-10-16	mKB	unassigned
Best image	2002-08-16		

**2. IDENTIFICATION**

Designation

Roster	Date	Author	Record
Definition	2001-07-15	IR	jar
Definition	2003-07-23	vV	bowl
Definition	2003-10-19	mKB	unassigned

Description (summary)

Roster	Date	Author	Record
	2003-07-23	vV	Portion of a chaff-tempered ceramic bowl or flared vase with only 3-6 centimeters of the body with red painted stripes preserved. The vessel contains a typical Khafar decoration with the stripes extending down to the base of the vessel. This vessel was found in 49, with the head 131 resting on this vessel. Please refer to drawing W18 and W144019.

Notes on identification

Roster	Date	Author	Record
	2007-10-19	mKB	The initial identification by vV as "bowl or flared base" and by IR as "jar" indicates an uncertainty, which is due to the fact that the preserved portion of the vessel is cylindrical, in a way that is not otherwise found with bowls. It seems better to consider this an unassigned type.
	2022-10-16	mKB	Portion of a chaff-tempered ceramic vessel with a cylindrical lower portion and a base of a small conical portion above, possibly a bowl or pot. Only 3-6 centimeters of the body with red painted stripes preserved.

**3. STRATIGRAPHY**

Volumetric Localizations

Roster	Date	Author	Record
Locus	2001-07-15	IR	3105

Contact Association

Roster	Date	Author	Record
Type of contact	2001-07-15	IR	314 (bowl) sits on 174 (jar)

Spatial Aggregation

Roster	Date	Author	Record
Nature of association	2001-07-15	IR	associated q. lat. 292

Time Sequencing

Roster	Date	Author	Record
Element to which element belongs	2015-05-26	tt	3241AAR
Phase to which element belongs	2015-05-26	tt	3241AAR

**4. TYPOLOGY**

Measurements

Roster	Date	Author	Record
Height	2001-07-23	vV	6.3
Length	2016-09-07	BE	12.3
Width 1 or diameter of rim	2015-05-19	JJC	10
Width 3 or diameter of base	2001-07-23	vV	10.3
Reference to drawing (W files)	2001-07-23	vV	W18

Morphology









Roster	Date	Author	Record
Ware or Material, species	2016-09-07	BE	clay
Color	2015-05-19	JJC	Chaff-tempered
Notes on typology	2001-07-15	IR	base of cv that 131 head rests on
Zon.DECORATION.Technique	2015-05-16	JJC	painted
Zon.DECORATION.Type	2015-05-16	JJC	parallel straight lines
Zon.SHAPE: Rim/base handle	2015-05-19	mKB	base: flat
Zon.SHAPE: Notes on shape	2015-05-19	mKB	The walls of the vessels flare out less if decision to consider this type as many vessels that are also relatively straight bowls.
Zon.SHAPE: Notes on shape	2022-10-16	mKB	In some ways, the shape may be similar (29) also found in 45.

Function

Roster	Date	Author	Record
Activity definition	2022-10-16	mKB	used as pillow under the head of the deceased

**6. REFERENCE**

Analogical Record

Roster	Date	Author	Record
Photo of context (v view)	2001-07-16	IR	
Photo of context (v view)	2001-07-16	IR	
Photo of context (v view)	2001-07-16	IR	
Photo of individual elements (studios)	2001-07-27	IR	
Photo of individual elements (studios)	2010-08-18	tt	
Photo of individual elements (studios)	2010-08-18	tt	
Drawing of individual element (studio)	2010-08-18	tt	
Drawing of individual element (studio)	2007-07-26	cv	

Disposition

Roster	Date	Author	Record
Storage	2016-09-29	JN	ZSB 006-007

**7. INTERPRETIVE**

Historical

Roster	Date	Author	Record
Religion	2022-10-16	mKB	The sherd seems to have been worked so as to be level at the upper edges - see this image from one side, and this one from the other. I assume that this may have been a function of the use to be made in the burial: the sherd was to serve as a pillow for the head of the deceased, so that it may not be in contact with the dirt. The template of the context shows this well. This suggests a special level of care for the deceased. It is interesting that there should be no complete ceramic vessel in the burial, even though there were two silver rings (133, 134) and one bronze bucket (29). The unusual shape of the sherd 134 may perhaps be reminiscent of the shape of the bucket.

XIV. "Biography" of a sherd (Courtesy IIMAS -- The International Institute for Mesopotamian Area Studies).

## **II. Beyond Urkesh**

### **The Epistemological Turn**

During our twenty-three years of excavation, we had been focusing from the beginning, and very sharply, on the question of meaning. How do we extract knowledge from our finds? And conversely, how legitimately can we make our conceptual categories match theirs?

We were already then going beyond Urkesh, i.e., beyond the sphere of what we were finding in the ground. But all the more so during the eleven years when, because of the war in Syria, reflection has wholly taken the place of excavation. Our fieldwork was in fact always shaped by a profound interest in the theoretical scaffolding that gives coherence to the whole enterprise, but this was all the more so during this intervening long winter for our field work – the Balzan challenge could not have come at a better moment. These eleven years of reflection and meditation, following twice as many years in the field, have nurtured not only our commitment to concluding the process of publication, but also to refining and articulating the theoretical underpinning of the work. The epistemological question has thus come to dominate our perspective: what do we know? how do we reach the core meaning? through which filters? to what degree of certainty?

These are the issues we are confronting within our Balzan research project, and here we want to lay them out as a manifesto illustrating the guiding principles that will govern our approach, a task shared with a large group of young «Mozanians». We will look at these issues from three points of view. (1) Digitality is of the essence, in ways that will emerge as surprising precisely from an epistemological point of view. (2) Hermeneutics, too, will emerge under a new light, that of archaeological reason, aimed at letting life be disclosed out of the hiddenness of a broken tradition. (3) Thus, the binomial of the Balzan Prize category, «art and archaeology», resonates loudly in our work, because it tells us of an immediacy that leads to empathy across the gulf of time.

### **Digitality**

The process of excavation is emblematic as an epistemological model: to say that archaeology is natively digital may seem startling, but has much merit. The essence is that in the ground we find a world of incoherence, consisting of a multitude of fragments that originally come from a setting where they had meaning, but have since become

completely detached from it due to the ravages of time. We have the fragments, by the millions – and behind them we must seek the whole into which they once cohered. In their present state they are entirely disconnected, save for the physical association they have in the ground. It is that association that the process of excavation must observe and record. Thus, we have a grammar of associative patterns, where elements touch each other, where one leans on, or cuts, another; and so on.

Forcibly, the excavation breaks this associative link, and then we must apply the same grammatical approach to the elements in themselves, seen as specimens fitting the parameters of a given morphology that has to be articulated in the most minute detail [Fig. XV].



XV. The critical moment when an element is extracted from the ground, breaking its association with its matrix (Courtesy IIMAS -- The International Institute for Mesopotamian Area Studies).

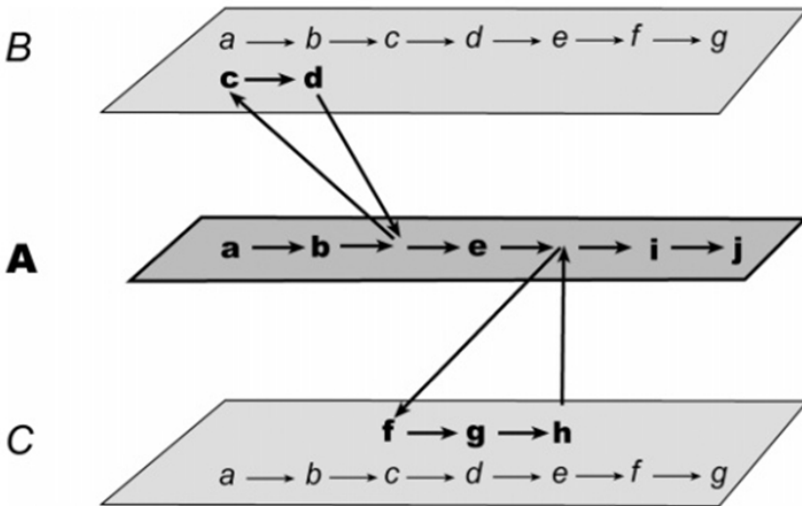
From such morphological patterns we may in turn construct a syntax that makes explicit the formal connections among the elements seen now as elements of an organic structure – which, in our case, is a culture in which these elements acted. The levels of analysis can thus widen to include more and more levels of interaction, such as the

operational function of these elements, their economic value, all the way up to their ideological import.

What is natively digital, in archaeology, is precisely this total dominance of the fragments as the starting point. In philology we start with a text, in biology with a living organism, in sociology with an organized group of individuals. Even in geology, the discipline perhaps closest to archaeology, we start with a stratigraphy that is coherent in such a way that the experiment done through a sounding in one spot can be repeated in another. In archaeology we can never repeat the experiment. Every invasive moment, when we dislodge an association in the ground, is unique, never repeatable. The fragments are more of the same, i. e., disconnected broken pieces, as it were – more than in any other discipline. In this lies their native digitality – thus the proper (electronic) digitality in which we embed them, from their birth as discovered fragments, suits them perfectly. They can be handled as fragments but within a grammar that endows them with a tensionality whereby they can retrieve their connectivity with the whole to which they once belonged.

This happens, in our system, through a digital discourse that introduces a new and highly effective exploitation of the website model as a transformative epistemic system. In contrast with it, there is the non-linear approach in current use today. It is the converse model, and one that is highly negative in its effects: it dulls the ability for critical thought.

Digital discourse is intrinsically multi-linear [Fig. XVI]: we consider one line of evidence and one line of thought (which proceeds linearly on its own path), but we compare it at the same time, in our mind, with one or more relevant lines of evidence and of thought. For example, what you just read about the multi-linear approach may elicit some thoughts in your mind that either confirm, or conflict with, our interpretation: these parallel planes allow you to critique our line of thought. It is in this regard that the digital discourse approach is transformative: of its own it generates multi-linear paths that are concurrently active and interacting. We believe that this model of a new epistemic system will set the digital humanities, and in fact the social sciences as well, on a new footing.



XVI. A digital discourse comprising multiple sequences conceived concurrently (Courtesy IIMAS -- The International Institute for Mesopotamian Area Studies).

***Hermeneutics***

Ultimately, and in part through its native digitality, archaeology is a conduit of knowledge not so much because it bares new elements from the grip of the earth, but because it helps these elements to self-disclose with regard to their meaning. A cuneiform tablet [Fig. XVII] is seen and recognized immediately as such, as soon as its shape begins to emerge out of the dirt in which it had been encased for millennia. But is it known? It really remains an unknown until it is «read». The process of reading entails a host of mental processes that presuppose a cipher which must be, precisely, deciphered. The codes used exist even when such codification was applied only intuitively by the ancients. For example, the categories of verb or noun are codes we attribute through linguistic analysis; they were not ancient categories. Yet the fact that verbs and nouns exist in a given cuneiform tablet is beyond all doubt. And that is how the «unknownness» of the tablet as first seen is translated into the «knownness» of the tablet when read and understood, in its verbs, and nouns, and all the rest.





XVII. Administrative tablet, giving evidence that Hurrian was used for ordinary administrative tasks (Courtesy IIMAS -- The International Institute for Mesopotamian Area Studies).

Reading cuneiform is a model of everything else in the interpretive process which we must set in place when faced with a broken tradition. «Broken» means that there are no living carriers, and there have not been any for a long, long time. No one to tell us about meaning. In and of themselves, the finds give only a mute witness. There is no living memory, no sense of identity in which we can recognize them first and then, through them, ourselves. In principle, the hermeneutic process presupposes such continuity, which, in our case, is instead totally missing. We have no handles onto which we can anchor our effort to relate.

Comparative evidence is critical in this case. For example, the interpretation of the *abi* as a necromantic shaft (Fig. IV) depends on the retrieval of clusters of bones of puppy dogs and piglets, which are seldom found elsewhere, especially together, but which are known from later Hurrian texts to be typical of rituals connected with the netherworld. Moreover, the even later text from the book of Samuel in the Bible gives evidence of the survival of these rituals after the demise of Hurrian culture.

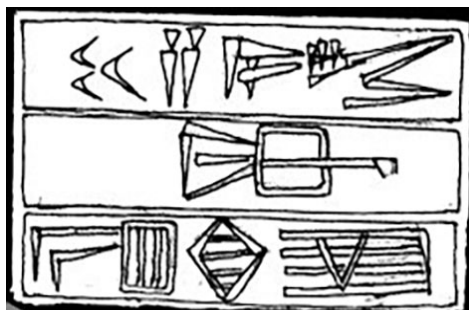
That is where archaeological reason comes in. It teaches us to discover patterns in what was once a universe of meaning, which must be now recovered. Everything human is a subject for archaeological reason, whether related to a hominin of two million years ago, or to a Hurrian from Urkesh, or even to us, when, in our private lives, memory fails us

and we become paradoxically a broken tradition to ourselves. The only limit to archaeological reason will emerge, should the impossible happen, with aliens coming to the shores of our planet: yes, we could recognize patterns in their culture; but what sense would they yield, if they did not resonate in our own experience?

### *Empathy*

In its broadest sense, art can be seen as the triumph of immediacy. In the case of a broken tradition, we need a process that mediates, through hermeneutics – our response to the original as found. We may say that hermeneutics produces immediacy through mediation; it trains us to see the whole through the fragments.

The scholarly dimension of our effort derives from the fact that it is articulated as an argument. The process through which we propose to recapture experience is argument-based and not imaginative. Let us take as an example a cuneiform text, say the simple legend of one of our seals [Fig. XVIII]. Through the mediation of philology, we can reconstruct the phonemic system hidden behind the signs, and even attribute a phonetic value to them. We can read aloud the three lines of the queen's seal as *Uqnītum ashti Tupkish*, and the sound we articulate brings back to life the sound which a Hurrian reader would have pronounced over four millennia ago (with some acceptable approximations which can be seen as a matter of accent). There is an extremely complex argument behind the reading, and the same argument indicates that one might read the same signs variably in Sumerian or Akkadian (as a contemporary of Uqnītum might also have done). That is the mediation – but our hearing the sound pronounced today is as immediate as it would have been for one of the ancients.



XVIII. The legend of a seal which in Hurrian would sound (today as four thousand years ago) *Uqnītum ashti Tupkish* (Courtesy IIMAS -- The International Institute for Mesopotamian Area Studies).

At a higher level, the Gilgamesh plaque we have already seen [Fig. X] is on one level immediate in its appeal to any human viewer, of any age. But the full impact of the representation comes only from the mediated effort that attributes meaning to the iconographic details, as we have already seen. «Attributing» does not mean overlaying something that is not there. It rather means identifying attributes that are intrinsic to the original, and that self-disclose once they have been recognized through the process of distributional analysis. Here, again, it is mediation that leads us to immediacy.

Herein lies the universal value of humanism seen as the capacity to appropriate human experience. *Qua* social scientists, we first describe the data as found with a full degree of mediating distancing, of *epoché*. This description entails dissecting the unknown (i. e., the element) and turning it in to a known (i. e., the interpreted); it entails fragmenting in order to reconstitute the original whole. To this rediscovered whole we can turn anew *qua* humanists and tune in more closely to the ancient experience. It is empathy at its best, because it is an argued empathy.

Archaeological reason emerges then as the diapason, the tuning fork that ascertains that our pitch is the same as theirs, that when we say *Urkesh* aloud, the sound is indeed the same as the one that would have vibrated when the word was spoken by them, the ancient Hurrians who lived there. We have not only disentangled the ruins of Urkesh out of the dirt of Tell Mozan; we have not only learned to utter the sound *U-r-k-e-sh* hidden behind the signs; we have come to say this word right there, at the location of ancient Urkesh, pointing at what is left of their built environment, knowing that the sound and the built environment are once again reconstituted as a living whole.

### **Selected publications**

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G.B. (editor), *Approaches to the Study of the Ancient Near East: Gelb Volume*. Roma: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1973, pp. 338, Plates II.

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“The Royal Palace of Urkesh. Report on the 12<sup>th</sup> Season at Tell Mozan/Urkesh: Excavations in Area AA, June-October 1999,” *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft zu Berlin* 132, pp. 133-183.

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