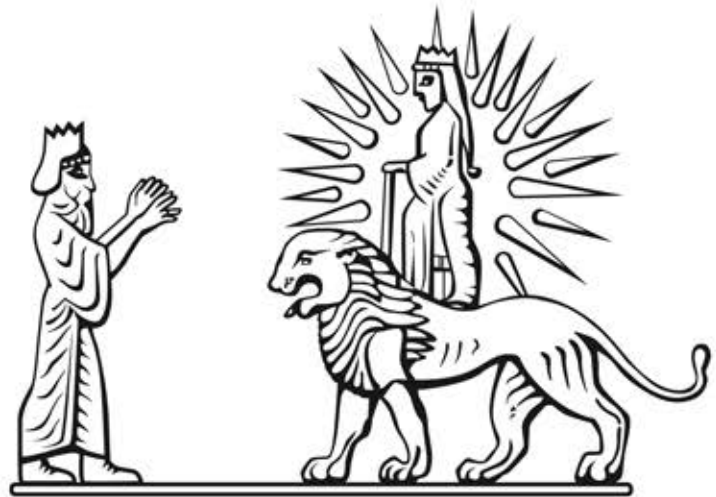


Newsletter

The Heritage of Mesopotamia and the Ancient Near East

Contents

Letter of Introduction	1
Recent publications.....	2 and 7
Reports on Recent Events.....	2
· Workshop 18: Gdańsk	2
· Workshop 19: Innsbruck	3
· Symposium 16: Berlin	3
Upcoming Melammu Events.....	5
· Workshop 20: Innsbruck	5
· Symposium 17: Irvine (CA)	5
· Other workshops	5
Calls for papers	6
· Workshop 21: Gdańsk	6
· Workshop 22: Tartu	7
In Memoriam Kurt A. Raaflaub	8



Letter of Introduction

Dear friends of the Melammu Project,
The year 2023 has seen two Melammu workshops (Gdańsk and Innsbruck) and a Symposium (Berlin). 2024 will be a year with at least four workshops on a variety of topics ranging from perception of space to the concept of love and affective relationships. More information on these events can be found in the present newsletter and updates will appear on the website. This newsletter contains two CFP for upcoming Melammu workshops, which we hope will find your consideration.

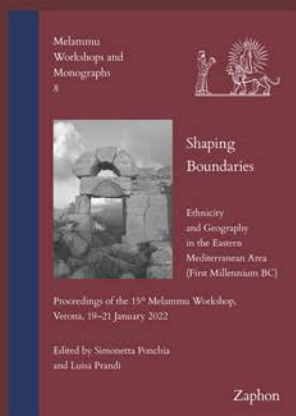
As already announced and discussed in the previous meeting, the 17th Melammu Symposium "Naval connectivity around the Iranian Worlds. From the Persian Gulf towards the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean" will take place in Irvine (CA), June 18-21, 2024. This will be the occasion to elect a new Board.

We wish you a nice holiday season and all the best for 2024!

Sebastian and Ana

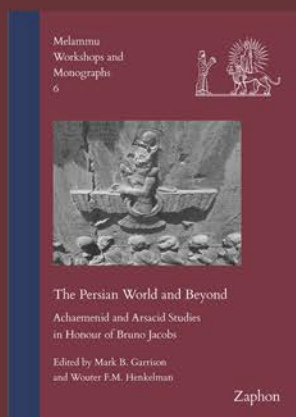


RECENT PUBLICATIONS



Melammu Workshops and Monographs 6 **The Persian World and Beyond Achaemenid and Arsacid Studies in Honour of Bruno Jacobs**

Edited by Mark B. Garrison and Wouter F.M. Henkelman
2023 / ISBN 978-3-96327-226-4 / 560 pp.
130,00 €



Melammu Workshops and Monographs 8 **Shaping Boundaries Ethnicity and Geography in the Eastern Mediterranean Area (First Millennium BC).**

Proceedings of the 15th Melammu Workshop,
Verona, 19-21 January 2022
Edited by Simonetta Ponchia and Luisa Prandi
2023 / ISBN 978-3-96327-202-8 / 282 pp.
79,00 € / open access

Reports on Recent Melammu Events

**Melammu Workshop 18
In Gdańsk, 22-23 May 2023
"Experiencing Borders in Antiquity"
(Krzysztof Ulanowski
and Sebastian Fink)
Organised by IBSC UG
and the Melammu Project**

The 18th Melammu Workshop "Experiencing Borders in Antiquity", organized by Krzysztof Ulanowski (University of Gdańsk) and Sebastian Fink (University of

Innsbruck) took place in Gdańsk (Poland) on 22-23 May 2023. Researchers from Italy, Austria, Bulgaria, England, Estonia and Poland took part in this two-day conference. The subject of the meeting was the perception and crossing of borders in antiquity, ancient texts that deal with experience of crossing borders, the establishment of boundaries, specific rituals or religious ideas related to the crossing of borders, and the sublime hierarchies of borders.



**Melammu Workshop 19
in Innsbruck, 25–26 May 2023
“The Linguistic Position of Sumerian:
Isolate or not?”**

*(Simonetta Ponchia, Martin Lang
and Sebastian Fink)*

The 19th Melammu Workshop was devoted to a discussion of the linguistic position of Sumerian. While this question has often been declared unanswerable, Simo Parpola undertook it to write his Etymological Dictionary of the Sumerian Language (vols. I–III, 2015–2022). The aim of the workshop was to discuss the results of this work, and many Sumerologists, linguists and Finno-Ugrists accepted the challenge and attended the workshop in the beautiful old town of Innsbruck.



**Melammu Symposium 16
In Berlin, 12–14 July 2023.
“Concepts of Governance and the Study
of Ancient Near Eastern Societies”**
(Eva Cancik-Kirschbaum and Jörg Klinger)

The Centre for Advanced Study in the Humanities 2615 “Rethinking Oriental Despotism – Strategies of Governance and Modes of Participation in the Ancient Near East” hosted the 16th Melammu Symposium at Freie Universität Berlin. The symposium explored phenomena of governance in the Ancient Near East. It focused on the influences, contexts and paradigms that determine the constructions and reconstructions of historical phenomena.

This agenda was explored in a series of case studies from three major perspectives: (1) the fragmentary evidence accessible through different types of sources; (2) reception phenomena and the influence of zeitgeist, on the interpretation of the evidence; (3) methodological approaches.

The lectures of the first day focussed the 3rd millennium BCE Mesopotamia: Eva von Dassow proposed that the early archaic



state of Uruk III was characterised by a socio-political structure devoid of any hierarchical order, a situation she described with the term anarchy. With regard to the early 20th century concept of Tempelstadt Ingo Schrakamp showed how this concept can only be properly understood against the socio-political background of the Sumerologist and Jesuit theologian Anton Deimel and his time. Andrew Pottorf assessed social stratification during the

Ur-III period. Assuming that the lowest social stratum respectively might have made up only a relatively small segment of the population he discussed alternatives to the frequently used pyramidal hierarchy model as representation of societal conditions at that time. Concluding the first panel, Joachim Schaper examined the social parameters that framed the development of the concept denominated *justice*

by modern scholars as evidenced by Sumerian texts such as the so-called “reforms” of Uru-inim-ginna.

The lectures of the second day were devoted to policies of the 2nd and 1st millennium BCE:

The first contributor, Regine Pruzsinszky, discussed unpublished texts from Tigonani in northern Mesopotamia, which shed light on the geo-political structures in the region before its incorporation into the Mittani Empire. Among other things, the lecture showed how problematic historical qualifications such as Dark Ages are for periods seemingly lacking in historical records. Yoram Cohen & Eduardo Torrecilla took up that challenge and discussed how to reconstruct the political power structures of the Hittite Empire in Syria. Here it is – among other things – the diversity of sources and the problems caused by inconsistencies in functional denomination for officials that frame present day historical reconstructions. İlgi Gerçek dealt with the Kaska in Anatolia, which, according to her, should no longer be understood primarily as an ethnic group but also as a socio-political entity, opposing Hittite imperial politics. Jörg Klinger discussed the history of reception of an important Hittite Text, the so-called Telipinu-edict. The text, as important as it is for the most diverse aspects of governance, nevertheless does not represent a written constitution of the newly erected Hittite state, a designation that was given to that source by modern historians to highlight the documents’ particular status as a source for Hittite political terminology. Cinzia Pappi’s presentation analysed common features and differences in the interaction between hegemon and periphery in the local communities during the Assyrian empire of the Late Bronze Age. It became clear that a highly organized state as Assyria developed a range of governance practices which were adapted to the varying regional political

conditions. According to Poppy Tushingham, vigilance was a vital tool of governance in the Assyrian Empire of the 1. millennium. Whereas past research had been concentrating on extrinsic motivation, i.e. coercion and surveillance, she argued that, in the case of the neo-Assyrian Empire, intrinsic motivation was generated by vigilance. Dan Socaciu’s paper on the Urartian state’s repertoire of rule highlighted the considerable differences in governance structures as compared to the neighbouring neo-Assyrian Empire.

The lectures of the third day focused on variants of interpretation, histories of reception, and different ways of framing ancient Near Eastern historical horizons and exempla. Suzanne Marchand showed how in the early modern period, Herodotus’ ‘Histories’ served not only as a source for ethnography and mirabilia, but also for military speeches, plays, paintings and tapestries. Quite frequently, Middle Eastern kings and, interestingly, queens formed the centre of attention. Confusing Cambyses with other Persian and Egyptian rulers has contributed to the image of the Oriental despot in modern historiography, as Wouter Henkelmann showed in his contribution. He dealt with the rule of the Persian kings in Egypt. He showed how these monarchs on the one hand took up typical representative and religious-cultic behaviours of the pharaohs, but on the other hand also deliberately violated them. This contradictory behaviour is reflected in a strongly interpretative external historiography, which is now being questioned by new sources. Eva Cancik-Kirschbaum investigated the extent to which the concept of bureaucracy influenced the qualification of ancient Near Eastern societies and the models of the early state. The origins of the term Bürokratie in the context of modern European criticism of the state and statehood and its still partly negative

connotation disqualify the concept for the historical analysis and description of ancient Near Eastern governance structures. Thomas Gertzen illustrated how the interpretation of ancient Egyptian kingship in the early 20th century has been impacted by the collective memory of political events such as e.g. the “Befreiungskriege” (wars of liberation) against Napoleon or the “Reichsgründung” (foundation of the German empire). Markus Witte’s paper discussed the genesis and history of interpretation of the biblical “Book of Judges”. He showed how the book’s authors characterized the political history of early Israel through sophisticated political terminology, and how the text then in turn became the subject of ever new political reinterpretations since antiquity itself. Felix Wiedemann traced concepts such as enlightened monarchy, enlightened absolutism or even enlightened despotism in the early 20th century. He illustrated the amazing degree of divergence in the interpretation of ancient Near Eastern rulers, who served as examples of both the autocratic despot and the enlightened monarch. The concluding contribution by Hans Neumann demonstrated the influence of Marxist historical materialism on research and historical interpretation of ancient near eastern sources in the German Democratic Republic.

The contributions to the Symposium have drawn attention to various forms of both unconscious and intentional influence on historical interpretations. The aim was to show, by way of example, the extent to which terminology, zeitgeist and political ideologies, or even scarce evidence shape explanatory models and historical narratives. These influences can hardly be avoided, but awareness of them must be raised. Intellectual history, history of disciplines, and history of research are important methodological approaches to meet this responsibility.

Upcoming Melammu Events

Melammu Workshop 20
in Innsbruck, 17–19 January 2024

**“From Athens to Samarkand.
Spatial Perception in Antiquity
from the Eastern Mediterranean
to the Taklamakan Desert”**
(*Florian Posselt, Alexander Steiner,
Clemens Steinwender*)

Spatial perception in antiquity is a fruitful and intriguing research area that has already received attention since the late 18th century. The development of separate disciplines dealing with different cultures and sources has, however, led to an often-isolated treatment of such topics in the specific fields of History, Philology and (Historical) Linguistics. This conference

intends to provide the opportunity to overcome such isolated treatment and to strengthen the cooperation between the fields by establishing interdisciplinary discussions. The conference will cover two millennia (1st millennium BCE – 1st millennium CE) and the vast geographical area of Afro-Eurasia. The workshop will focus on Spatial Perception in an Imperial Historical and Linguistic Context. The aim is to investigate the impact of Empires on the conceptualisation of various regions and its reflection in imperial language and sources. Borderlands as dynamic regions of constant exchange and mobility serve as suitable environments for the transmission and transformation of ideas. Connecting and challenging different prospects and

approaches is one of the key goals of the conference. Our leading questions will be: How are various regions conceptualised through the lens of empire on the one hand and through the lens of imperial Borderlands on the other? How are these frameworks realised in language? What are the consequences of territorial disputes for the conceptualisation of later geographical frameworks? How do Borderlands, their boundaries and their conceptualisations change in relation to trade, mobility and complex processes of exchange?

The **full program** is available here:
<http://www.melammu-project.eu/workshops/mw20prog.pdf>

Melammu Symposium 17
in Irvine (CA), June 18-21, 2024
“Naval connectivity around the Iranian Worlds. From the Persian Gulf towards the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean”.
Nastaran Akhavan International Conference on Iranian Studies
(*Touraj Daryaee, Robert Rollinger and Christoph Schäfer*)

The highlands of Iran have always been a region of seminal connectivity between Central Asia, the Middle East, the Steppe zone and India. This geopolitical asset formed and shaped the history of the Iranian Worlds as a hub of an Afro-Eurasian network from the earliest periods onwards and was a driving force for political, social and economic developments. Modern scholarship paid very much attention to this geopolitical setting of the Iranian worlds. However, this perspective has been and still is biased for two reasons. On the one hand, modern research lopsidedly focused on the transregional land routes generally dubbed as “Silk roads” or “The Great Khorasan Road”. On the other hand, the Iranian Worlds did not and still do not receive appropriate attention as an agent of its own in this dynamic scenario of transregional interconnectedness. Instead, even today scholarship is mainly concentrated on the

two alleged main players of Afro-Eurasian connectivity in Antiquity, i.e. the Roman Empire and China. Research history is imbued by this Eurocentric and Sinocentric perspective, dealing with the Iranian worlds solely as an intermediary region between China and Rome, worlds which either impede or tax the trade running through the region but which do not really act as agents of their own.

The Melammu Symposium “Naval connectivity around the Iranian Worlds” intends to change this biased view addressing two main issues. First, it highlights agency of the Iranian Worlds as an actor of its own. The chronological framework will cover two millennia, starting with the definite establishment of empire at the beginning of the first millennium BCE and ending with the Umayyad and Abbasid empire in the first millennium CE. Second, within this longue-durée perspective the conference addresses solely the naval aspect of “Iranian” agency in this lengthy period of Antiquity. Therefore, the Persian Gulf becomes a central zone of scholarly interest as an integral part of a transregional naval network that integrates the Mediterranean, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. Evidence for this network is direct as well as indirect. It originates from Classical and indigenous, as well as from Chinese

written sources. Archaeological and environmental research offer new insights into the various steps of an early process of globalization where the Iranian are supposed to have played a central role. Within this innovative framework the conference attempts to address “Naval connectivity around the Iranian Worlds” from a multidisciplinary and longue-durée perspective which understands seafaring and agency of the Iranian Worlds as crucial aspects of an early history of globalization.

Further information will follow in due time.

Melammu Workshop 24
in Bukarest, 16-18 October 2024.
“Crossing geographical barriers and conceptualizing expansion in Eurasia: exploration, conquest and ideology”
(*Liviu Iancu*)

Details still need to be fixed

Call for papers

Melammu Workshop 21
in Gdansk, 24–25 May 2024.

"The Art of Love"

(Krzysztof Ulanowski, Zozan Tarhan, and Sebastian Fink)

Seduction, love, and the founding of a family are elemental phenomena of all human cultures. While social reality and ideas changed over time, wise men and women of all times seem to have been eager to give advice to the young how they should move in this dangerous field. In myths, epics, songs, law codes, legal documents, proverbs, and even formal handbooks like Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* role models were presented and advice was given. We want to have a detailed look into this and study how the relationship between lovers was conceptualized. How was the whole complex of seduction and love interpreted? How did ancient people perceive the matter of adultery? Which deities were responsible for all questions of love and seduction? Which stories were told to explain love? While most ancient sources

focus on how to seduce women and how to create a strong bond with them, the female seducer also appears in ancient sources, as for example Inanna/Ištar or Aphrodite.

Desire and love challenge human beings to use a huge array of tools to reach their goals. In order to strengthen certain ideological persuasions, people of power even created the concept of sacred marriage. Love can inspire poets to write fantastic pieces of literature, it can motivate people to accomplish something extraordinary. The proverb "All is fair in love and war" reminds us that war and love are not unrelated and that ruses and stratagems are used in both fields alike. Sometimes shortcuts are taken with magic – love potions, the use of magical tools and the bewitching of other lovers is frequently found in literature. While Plato conceptualizes love as something metaphysical, Ovid's approach is more focused on practical advice and like in a battle he advises to use stratagems and deception in order to reach one's aim.

We would like to approach the art of love with a comparative perspective and therefore invite scholars studying the ancient world (the Ancient Near East, China, Egypt, India, Greece, Rome, Thrace, ...) to contribute to the topic. The conference will be organized in the following sessions:

- Role models: Divine and human seducers
- Conceptualizing love and seduction
 - In myths and other literature
 - In philosophy
- Love and seduction in advice literature
- Marriage and adultery in law codes and legal documents
- The art of love and the art of war
- Love and magic

Please submit your abstract (200-300 word) to krzysztof.ulanowski@ug.edu.pl, zozan.tarhan@uni-sofia.bg and sebastian.fink@uibk.ac.at.

The deadline for submission is January 31, 2024, and we will notify you about the acceptance of your paper by February 15.



24/25 May 2024
Gdansk (Poland)

CFP for the 21st Melammu Workshop:

The Art of Love

Organizers:

Krzysztof Ulanowski (University of Gdansk)
Zozan Tarhan (Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski)
Sebastian Fink (Innsbruck University)

*Si quis in hoc artem populo non novit amandi,
hoc legat, et lecto carmine doctus amet.*
Ovid, *Ars Amatoria*

Call for papers

Melammu Workshop 22

in Tartu, 12–15 September 2024

**“Big and Small, High and Low,
Proud and Humble: Constructing
Significance in Ancient Near Eastern and
Mediterranean Cultures”**

*Research Center of Ancient Near Eastern
and Mediterranean Cultures (CAEMC)*

The conference is dedicated to discussing social and cultural prestige in the ancient world. Reputation can be of local significance, global importance or both. Global trends and fashions in the modern world have their precursors in ancient times when communication took more time because the information circulated mainly by word of mouth. Accordingly, social or cultural prestige usually took much more time to develop. Much of the communication between peoples and civilisations – both on the local and global levels – was concerned with the reputations of people, ideas, things, technologies etc. Significance implies a relationship: something is essential for somebody, a group or a culture. Cultural meaning is usually a hierarchical construct, indicating that a person or phenomenon is deemed more important, better and more influential than others. These hierarchies can be created, maintained and manifested in various ways, highlighting the social, economic and political relations and cultural codes of the given societies. The conference calls for papers that study the strategies for acquiring reputation and will discuss the general questions of (inter)cultural prestige in the Ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean world.

An individual's reputation can be related to age and gender or personal qualities like appearance, wisdom, skills or physical strength. On the social level, significance usually involves wealth, pedigree and power, and consequently, the strategies of wealth acquisition, claims of illustrious ancestry and power building. Power building plays a prominent role in the relations between

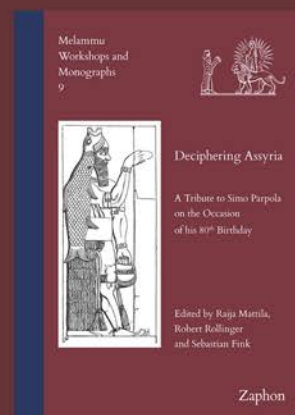
political communities, making some polities, or rulers, more powerful and respectable, thus more significant, compared to others. By far, though not always, does reputation directly relate to power, even if reflecting the social or political hierarchies or contributing to their establishment. Good examples are spiritual authority and artistic fame. In the religious domain, the divinities, rites, festivals, and cult places can have variable reputations for different population groups, which can make the estimation of their significance a matter of dispute. In a similar way, it might be challenging to establish the degrees of significance in art and literature, although certain artefacts and literary works, genres and authors surely outweighed others in public esteem. Literature, either oral or written, has been, however, the principal means to convey and articulate reputation to all kinds of things and people and serves for us as a crucial source for discussing the subject.

We plan the workshop to discuss the ways of establishing, maintaining, manifesting and losing significance in all these and possibly other fields. We expect papers considering the related questions in the cultures evolving from Iran, Mesopotamia and Egypt to the western Mediterranean, from the emergence of civilisations to the fall of the Roman Empire. The questions to be asked could be the following: What made some persons, social groups, communities, religious phenomena, artworks, genres or authors more significant than others in various societies and cultures? How did the strategies of attaining significance relate to the character of the given society or culture? To what extent were the variable ways of attaining significance conditioned by the societal and cultural variabilities, or how did cultural diversity contribute to the different manifestations of significance in the Ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean world?

We expect abstracts (up to 250 words) to be sent to caemc@ut.ee until March 31, 2024.



RECENT PUBLICATIONS



Melammu Workshops and Monographs 9

Deciphering Assyria A Tribute to Simo Parpola on the Occasion of his 80th Birthday

Proceedings of the 15th Melammu Workshop,
Verona, 19–21 January 2022

Edited by Raija Mattila, Robert Rollinger
and Sebastian Fink

2023 / ISBN 978-3-96327-236-3 / XIV + 460 pp.
120,00 €

In Memoriam

Kurt A. Raaflaub (1941-2023)

Am 12. September dieses Jahres ist Kurt A. Raaflaub im Alter von 82 Jahren ebenso unerwartet wie plötzlich verstorben. Obwohl er seit mehreren Jahren an einem Herzleiden laborierte, war er bis zum Schluss munter und lebensfroh, von wachem Geist und sah mit einem offenen Blick in die Zukunft. Mit Kurt Raaflaub verlieren die Altertumswissenschaften einen großen Gelehrten von internationalem Format und das Melammu Project verliert einen treuen und engagierten Mitstreiter der ersten Stunde. Kurt Raaflaub war kein Althistoriker im herkömmlichen Sinn, dessen Interesse ausschließlich der griechisch-römischen Welt gegolten hätte. Sein Blick war wesentlich weiter, sein Interesse an den "alten Welten" um einiges umfassender. Zwei Dinge dürften ihn besonders geprägt haben. Da ist zum einen seine Geburt in Buea, Kamerun als Sohn Schweizer Eltern, die fern der Heimat eine Missionsstation leiteten. Hier verbrachte er die ersten sieben Jahre seines Lebens, was ihm einen ganz eigenen Blick auf die Welt vermittelte. Wer je sein Haus in Providence betrat, wurde sofort der Bedeutung gewahr, die diese außereuropäischen Welten in Kurts Leben hatten. Zum anderen ist dies die besondere Beziehung zu seiner Schweizer Heimat, die er sein ganzes Leben in sich trug. Hier ging er zur Schule, besuchte das Humanistische Gymnasium in Basel, studierte ebendort und promovierte schließlich mit einer Arbeit bei Christian Meier, die sich mit dem Bürgerkrieg zwischen Caesar und Pompeius auseinandersetzte. Nach einem Zwischenstopp als Lehrer für Latein und Griechisch an einem Basler Gymnasium ging er 1972 nach Berlin, wo er bis 1978 als Assistenz-Professor an der Freien Universität tätig war. Hier habilitierte er sich 1979 mit der Arbeit „Die Entdeckung der Freiheit: Zur historischen Semantik und

Gesellschaftsgeschichte eines politischen Grundbegriffs der Griechen“, in der durchaus auch sein Schweizer Geist zu spüren war. Noch vor Abschluss der Habilitation folgte er einem Ruf an die Brown University, der er bis zu seiner Emeritierung 2009 verbunden blieb. Mit Europa und seinen akademischen Welten blieb er stets in engem Kontakt, wie auch die regelmäßigen Besuche in der Heimat nie abrisen. Diese wurden auch nach dem schmerzlichen Tod der Mutter aufrechterhalten. Ein besonderer Bezug zu Bergwelt und eine Freude am Wandern, der er in Begleitung seiner Frau und seiner beiden Brüder und deren Familien nachging, sind ihm nie abhandengekommen. Von Providence aus schuf er ein weitläufiges Netzwerk, das die Altertumswissenschaften transkontinental und transdisziplinär miteinander verknüpfte. Er war ein ebenso brillanter Wissenschaftler wie ein ausgezeichnete Organisator. Dabei weitete sich sein Blick über die Jahre von einem mediterranen Verständnis der Altertumswissenschaften, das das alte Vorderasien ebenso wie das alte Ägypten miteinbezog hin zu einem globalen, wobei er nun sein Augenmerk ebenso auf China und Indien wie auf die alten Amerikas richtete. Auch der Islam durfte in diesem bunten Reigen nicht fehlen. Dem Melammu Project gehörte seit dessen Gründung seine besondere Aufmerksamkeit. Dies beweist seine rege Beteiligung an zahlreichen Symposia und Workshops. Er war über viele Jahre hinweg ein aktives Mitglied im Board des Projekts wie auch der Reihe „Melammu Workshops and Monographs“. Bis zum Schluss stand er dem Projekt mit Rat und Tat als Mitglied des Advisory Boards zur Verfügung. Seine zahlreichen Vorträge bleiben ebenso unvergessen wie seine geistreichen Wortmeldungen und Diskussionsbeiträge. Dabei blieb er im Ton stets freundlich und

amikal, in der Sache quellenbasiert und methodisch klar. Ein besonders Anliegen war ihm die Förderung von Jungwissenschaftlerinnen und Jungwissenschaftlern. Hier befließigte er sich eines beinahe väterlichen Tones, gab jede Form an erdenklicher Hilfestellung und bemühte sich aktiv um deren Einbindung in internationale Gelehrtennetzwerke. Wer Kurt Raaflaub gekannt und erlebt hat, wird ihn nicht vergessen. Mit ihm ist eine außerordentliche Persönlichkeit von uns gegangen, die die Altertumswissenschaften auf besondere Weise bereichert hat. Unser Mitgefühl gilt seiner Frau Deborah Boedeker sowie seinen beiden Stiefkindern. Das Melammu Project wird ihm ein ehrendes Andenken bewahren.

Robert Rollinger

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