

Chronologies in Old World Archaeology: Archaeological Seminar at Columbia University

Introduction

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"In the autumn of 1966 one of the University Seminars of Columbia University was created for the archaeology of the Eastern Mediterranean, Eastern Europe, and the Near East. The principal aim of the Seminar was to coordinate the chronologies of the regions involved." This sentence is copied from the first page of "Chronologies" printed in the *AJA* 72 (1968), page 301. The last installment was printed in *AJA* 92 (1988), pages 581ff. The initial incentive to publish abstracts of these meetings was provided by M. E. L. Mallowan, who wanted to be kept informed of the reports given in this Seminar. He is gone, but we continue to publish the contents of our reports.

Chronology is still a major problem, but we have become aware of its myriad facets. The reports that we seek to obtain are therefore often not directly concerned with chronology, but they may teach us some aspect of an ancient site, or of some group of objects or texts that we have not hitherto noticed or tried to understand. One of our main objectives is to keep this very varied group of scholars aware of the exploratory research that is going on in the ancient Near Eastern and Eastern European field, of the discoveries that are being made, and, perhaps most important, of the new ideas that are being developed.

At the invitation of the editors of this journal, articles and summaries of the reports given in the Seminar in the course of an academic year will be printed in *JANES*. As before, these articles and summaries will be reviewed by the authors nine months after the reports had been presented in order to increase the validity of the statements made about the material.

The papers in the present group contain an article by Marc Van De Mieroop composed from the lecture he gave at the Seminar on April 13, 1989, entitled "Old Babylonian Ur: Portrait of an Ancient Mesopotamian City." There are summaries of the reports by David W. Anthony, on March 14, 1990, on "Horses and Prehistoric Chronology of Eastern Europe and Western/Central Asia," and of C. C. Lamberg Karlovsky and Fred Hiebert, on November 9, 1990, on "The Relation of the

Finds from Shahdad to Those of Sites in Central Asia.” The summaries were written by the Seminar’s rapporteur for 1989–1991, Megan L. Cifarelli, and were submitted to the authors for correction before publication. A second major article, by Nancy W. Leinwand, “Regional Characteristics in the Styles and Iconography of the Seal Impressions of Level II at Kültepe,” which was presented in December 1989, is also included.