What is Text?

Goal of the meeting

The goal of the meeting is to problematize the concept of 'text' and take into account the ancient manuscript and scribal culture, our modern perceptions and uses of texts, and recent developments in various fields of study where materiality of texts is taken seriously, preconceived ideas about 'canon' are questioned, and the surrounding textual and archaeological evidence is brought into rich dialogue with the textual sources.

The central question thus is, "What is text?"

Materiality: What kind of material features and scribal marks are there in manuscripts (e.g., in cuneiform tablets, the Dead Sea Scrolls, Greek manuscripts) that help us to better understand the kind of changes taking place and how? How is the use of scrolls different from the use of codices and books? Which new advances are being made in archaeology that textual scholars should be aware of? How is archaeology studying its 'texts' (artefacts)? How are both types of archaeological artefacts testifying to lived religion?

Textuality: How to define a text unit? To what degree are texts fixed or fluid? What is the relationship between different versions of a text? How do methodological assumptions in historical-critical studies work? What is 'text' from a philosophical perspective? What is intertextuality? How are texts transmitted by performance and ritual? How are texts lived by recitation and memory?

Compositionality: How are compositions/works represented in mind? How do fictive or real persons carry traditions connected to compositions? When is a composition transformed into something else?

PROGRAM

Wed 26 Aug	Thu 27 Aug	Fri 28 Aug

9.00–12.00 Workshop time for teams. Recommended that teams either come on Tuesday or consider taking an early ferry to Tallinn. Arrival with the 10:30–12:30 ferry at the latest.	9.00–11.30 **Keynote lecture: Francis Borchardt** **"**What Do You Do When a Text is Failing?: The *Letter of Aristeas* and the Need for a New Pentateuch" Response: Katja Kujanpää Chair: Jutta Jokiranta
	
	small group discussions
	response
	discussion
		9.00–12.30 2 Parallel sessions (3 presentations each, session 3,5 h, break between):
		  C. Methodology of combining ANE texts, Greek texts, and extra biblical materials together with biblical texts. – organizers: Martti & HannaT
		
		  D. Examining the combination of textual criticism with other traditional exegetical methods – organizers: Anneli & Tuukka & Jessi

12–15 Lunch (not organized)	11.30–14 Lunch	12.30–14.30 Lunch

15.00–16.00 Opening reception (Hosted by Anneli Aejmelaeus)
 	
16.00–18.30 **Keynote lecture: Sara Milstein** Response: Mika Pajunen Chair: Hanne von Weissenberg
 	
small group discussions
response
discussion
	14.00–17.30 2 parallel sessions (3 presentations each, session 3,5 h, break between):
	
	  A. The history of Israel from archaeology and text, how to methodologically combine text and archaeology. – organizers: Juha & Izaak
	
	  B. Ritual as text, ritual as embodied text, ritual as transmitting a text and paratextual material. – organizers: Jutta & Jeremy & Mika
		14.30–16.00 Concluding session: results of the sessions, gathering lexicon, and strategic plans Martti Nissinen
		
		16.30 Home

19 Dinner (Hosted by Martti Nissinen)	19 Dinner (Hosted by Hanne von Weissenberg)	

Sara Milstein, "*Belles-Lettres* or Homework? Evaluating the 'Literary' Legacy of Mesopotamian Scribal Education"

abstract: The focus of this talk is the extent to which Mesopotamian school-texts can or should be treated as "literary texts," or "versions" of a known literary tradition. The Mesopotamian corpus yields a considerable number of school-texts dating to the Old Babylonian and Middle Babylonian periods (early and mid-second millennium B.C.E.). Many of these texts were preserved only accidentally, in that they were used as filler for the foundations of houses or buildings. These texts often contain only portions of their respective works and often contain errors, in part due to the fact that many of them were composed in a language that differed from that of the students' mother tongue. This applies both to Babylonian students copying Sumerian texts in the Old Babylonian period and to non-Babylonians copying Akkadian texts in the Old and Middle Babylonian periods. In some cases, however, the only available attestations of a given work or of a version of that work are in the form of these school-texts. Together we will examine three unique cases—an Old Babylonian tablet from Susa inscribed with an extract from Etana; a Middle Babylonian tablet from Amarna with a complete copy of Adapa; and a Middle Babylonian tablet from Ugarit with an extract from the Gilgamesh Epic—and explore the degree to which these texts can be treated as "texts" and/or used in efforts to reconstruct the development of these works over time.

Francis Borchardt, "What Do You Do When a Text is Failing?: The Letter of Aristeas and the Need for a New Pentateuch"

abstract: This study aims to highlight certain features of the Letter of Aristeas that reveal how that story and the myth it contains conceive of the royal translation project and what it reveals about the nature of "text" for the ancient author. This paper will apply the concept of 'auxiliary texts' developed by Markus Dubischar ("Survival of the Most Condensed? Auxiliary Texts, Communications Theory, and Condensation of Knowledge," in Condensing Texts-condensed texts (eds. Marietta Horster and Christiane Reitz; Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2010), 39-68) based on the conversation theory of Paul Grice in order to show that the Letter of Aristeas understands the Hebrew pentateuch as a failing text. It will be shown that because the Letter of Aristeas both deeply respects the traditions and teachings contained within the pentateuch, and recognizes the failure of the text outside of a particular context, it sees the translation project as necessary for the pentateuch's survival. The study will compare the statements related in prologues from Graeco-Roman and Hellenistic 'auxiliary texts' to similar statements in the Letter of Aristeas to underline the ways in which the Greek translation of the Hebrew text is simultaneously conceived of as a correction of the problems inherent in the Hebrew text tradition, and is not attempting to entirely replace that tradition. Thus, the paper will attempt to extend the concept of auxiliary texts to translations. Further, this paper will reflect on the insights of folklore studies and speech-act theory to try to determine the location of meaning for the author of Aristeas. It will use the Letter of Aristeas to question whether the written word is primary, or is simply part of a broader phenomenon in which "text" has a far broader meaning than its conception in current biblical scholarship.

Sessions are not traditional conference papers sessions but may include problem-based workshops, pedagogical methods to facilitate communication, small-group discussions, and prior reading for orientation (decided by session organizers). Each participant will attend either A or B session, and either C or D session. You may choose the session in Tallinn, but please note some materials and prior readings sent beforehand.

A. Archaeology and Text – Methodological Complexities in Biblical Studies (organizers: Juha Pakkala, Izaak J. de Hulster)

The aim of the session is to shed light on the methodological complexities of combining material culture and written sources, in particular in relation to Biblical Studies. The papers will contribute to a better understanding of the dialogue between archaeology and history and expound the problems inherent in the endeavour to combine textual, iconographic, and (other) archaeological data. In small groups the participants reflect on each paper and 'map' (on paper, possibly with different colours) their thoughts about how the (individual) speakers integrate the different kinds of source material and how the members of the group would do so.

The panel (Kirsi Valkama, Raimo Hakola, Sanna Saari) forms one small group with the chair (Martti Nissinen, as an advising member) and the three speakers (Rick Bonnie, Juha Pakkala, Izaak de Hulster) will each participate as an advising member in a group. Other participants of the session will be active as group members.

14:00-14:05	Introduction (incl. explanation of group task)	5 min
14:05-14:50	Paper 1* – Juha Pakkala: "The history of Israel from archaeology and text, how to methodologically combine text and archaeology – Geshur as test case." 45 min	
14:50-15:35	Paper 2* – Izaak J. de Hulster: "Iconographic finds – the cutting edge of material culture and written sources?"	45 min
15:35-15:50	*Break*	*15 min*
15:50-16:35	Paper 3* – Rick Bonnie: "Methodological Reflections on Archaeology's Contribution to the Rabbinic Miqva'ot"	45 min
16:35-16:55	Group work 20 min	
16:55-17:30	Final discussion, incl. presentation of group work	35 min

* Papers include discussion, the slot is planned as follows:

20 minutes: paper
5 minutes: reflection in small groups**
20 minutes: panel-initiated discussion about content and methodology

Juha Pakkala: "The methodological complexities of combining biblical information, other texts, and archaeology. The so called Kingdom of Geshur as an example."

Abstract: The Hebrew Bible contains important information about ancient past. In combination with other texts and archaeological evidence, it can be used as a significant source to reconstruct Israel's past. However, it is crucial that biblical information, other texts, and material evidence from archaeology are combined in a methodologically appropriate way. The history of biblical studies shows countless examples how other evidence has been interpreted through "biblical lenses", which distorts the reconstruction of ancient history.

In this paper Geshur is used as an example of the methodological hazards when biblical references dominate the interpretation of other evidence. Although the biblical references contain only very little actual information, they have been essential in the creation of scholars' conceptions of an ancient kingdom called Geshur inhabited by the Geshurites. Extra-biblical evidence has mainly functioned as a means to validate conceptions rising out of biblical references. Despite the methodological problems, Geshur is mentioned in most histories of Israel (for example, playing a role in the reconstruction of the political situation during the early monarchic period), and its area is marked in most Bible atlases. As specific examples, I will discuss how an El Amarna letter (EA256) and an inscription of Shalmaneser III have been used to support a biblical conception of Geshur. The use of other archaeological material evidence will also be discussed.

Izaak J. de Hulster: "Iconographic finds – the cutting edge of material culture and written sources?"

Abstract: Iconographic exegesis is the interpretation of texts with the help of pictorial material. Narrowed down to a historical approach to the Hebrew Bible, iconographic exegesis illuminates Old Testament texts against the background of ancient Near Eastern material images, from miniature art to monumental art. The Hebrew Bible is commonly identified with its textual features, whereas ancient Levantine images are known through archaeology. This paper will discuss several ways in which iconography provides a connection between material culture and texts. First of all, texts do not exist without a medium; for texts from antiquity this implies materiality – the same holds even more so for images. Secondly narrowing the focus to iconography, many cultures produce and employ both texts and images – this constitutes 'cultural' and cognitive links. Again, the role of materiality will be discussed. Beyond that, text and image can also reflect on each other and thus also stimulate new production. Finally, these two media can share contents because of which they can be mutually illuminating, often in combination with the archaeological record at large.

Rick Bonnie: "Methodological Reflections on Archaeology's Contribution to the Rabbinic *Miqva'ot*"

Abstract: The mishnaic tractate *miqva'ot* (c. 200-225 CE) provides the earliest mentioning of water installations designated specifically for Jewish ritual immersion in Palestine. It also offers some underlying (though vague) rules as to what constitutes such ritual immersion baths. Especially these underlying textual rules have played a crucial role in the first functional identification of the hundreds of stepped pools exposed in excavations throughout Palestine as

miqva'ot. More importantly, the wide distribution of stepped pools in Palestine, consequently, has led to the general idea among scholars that by the first century CE most Jews observed the practice of ritual bathing.

But what does observing such a practice actually mean for people? Textual sources teach us relatively little about people's daily use and experience of these features. What was the socio-religious role and significance of these stepped pools within a Jewish household? And what about the darkness, dampness and filthiness of the space in which it was housed? This paper aims to discuss these issues and will reflect on archaeology's contribution to our knowledge of the Rabbinic *miqva'ot*.

B. Ritual as Text (organizers: Jutta Jokiranta, Mika Pajunen)

14:00-15:00   Paper 1 – Reinhard Müller, "What is 'The Judgment Written' (Ps 149:9)? A Case Study on the Relationship between Ritual and Textual Tradition"   10–15 min. Discussion 45 min.
15:00-15:10   *Break 10 min.*
15:10-16:15   Paper 2 – Jason Silverman, "Medium is more than Text"   15–20 min. Discussion 40-45 min.
16:15-16:25   Break 10 min.
16:25-17:30   Paper 3 – Jutta Jokiranta, "Ritual as Text, Ritual in Transmission of Texts: What does Cognitive Science of Religion Has to Offer?"   20 min. Discussion 40 min. Conclusion of session.

Reinhard Müller, "What is 'The Judgment Written' (Ps 149:9)? A Case Study on the Relationship between Ritual and Textual Tradition"

- ***see*** *handout sent beforehand*
- ***prepare*** *by reading Ps 149 and looking up words and phrases of this Psalm with a concordance; Qumran people are particularly welcome to check the Qumran concordances*
- *initial statement (10–15 min.), debate in small groups with questions (45–55 min.)*

Jason Silverman, "Medium is more than Text"

Abstract: The media through which communication is conducted fundamentally impact society and the ways social actors interact with the content of said media. Changes in dominant media create paradigm shifts, and these must be understood to fully grasp the structure of a society and its discourse. This session will take a look at media theory, specifically orality and literacy, to discuss its impact on the analysis of written texts in the residually oral context of the past. A written precis of media theory will be distributed in advance.

- *prepare* by familiarizing yourself to Oral/Media Theory by reading Jason's Chapter 3 of Persepolis and Jerusalem, *pages 98–115 (=18 pages, theoretical background), file* **attached**. *Think of questions, comments, applications.*
- *intro (15–20 min.), discussion (40–50 min.)*

Jutta Jokiranta, "Ritual as Text, Ritual in Transmission of Texts: What does Cognitive Science of Religion Has to Offer?"

Abstract: Cognitive Science of Religion (CSR) is a recent novel branch of study that explores the human mind and its "architecture" to better understand and explain human religious behavior. I will present a few theoretical frameworks from CSR that may help us think of rituals that are reflected, prescribed, described, and evidenced in our ancient sources. Ritual behavior can be approached as "text" with its own grammar which participants intuitively grasp (Lawson&McCauley). Rituals have been seen to differ with regard to their ways of transmitting traditions (Whitehouse). Rituals carry and often teach their participants traditions, symbols and narratives, but another aspect of rituals – their efficacy – equally plays a role in the overall religious transmission (Sørensen). Discussion will be directed to think of examples and implications of these theories, and to test them in light of our evidence.

- *prepare* by reading the short introduction to CSR by Ilkka Pyysiäinen, "Cognitive Science of Religion: State-of-the-Art," *Journal for the Cognitive Science of Religion 1.1 (2012) 5–28,* **attached**. *Finnish-reading participants may choose to read the chapter by Petri Luomanen, "Kognitiotiede raamatuntutkimuksessa," in* Johdatus sosiaalitieteelliseen raamatuntutkimukseen *(ed. Petri Luomanen, Jutta Jokiranta, Outi Lehtipuu; SESJ 105, 2013).*
- *intro (20 min.), discussion (40–50 min.)*

C. Extra-biblical & Biblical Texts (organizers: Martti Nissinen, Hanna Tervanotko)

Hanna Tervanotko, "Is Prophet a Mantis (and Mantis a Prophet)? Methodological and Comparative Perspectives to Prophetic Figures in Ancient Jewish and Greek Texts"

Abstract: Prophets are characters that deliver godly messages. Whereas for long the prophets of the "Jewish" literature have been analyzed in isolation from their broader cultural contexts, recently several scholars have placed them in their ancient cultural contexts, e.g., that of ancient Eastern Mediterranean or ancient Near Eastern prophecy and divination. This fresh change of scholarly paradigm challenges us to look at the prophetic activities with new eyes: how do the Jewish prophetic figures differ from those of their neighboring cultures? Or do they?

In this paper my aim is to contribute to the current discussion by asking to what extent the prophets of the ancient Jewish texts, and those of ancient Greek texts are comparable with each other and what are the methodological challenges we meet when comparing them. More concretely by focusing on previously maintained juxtaposition between intuitive and technical divination I will ask to what extent figures "prophet" and "mantis" correspond each

other. After comparing Jewish prophets and Greek prophets and mantis and their divinatory methods (technical vs. intuitive) with each other I will open our discussion for some broader methodological questions and models which allow us to compare materials that derive from different cultural contexts.

Sami Yli-Karjanmaa, "Hannah–A Hard Day's Knightess: Hesiod in Philo's Exegesis of 1 Kgdms 1:15"

Abstract: Philo's allegorization of 1 Kgdms 1:15 in *De ebrietate* 149-150 raises questions on several fronts: about the relationship between the Masoretic text and the LXX, Philo's apparently deviating from both, different ways of understanding all three, the significance of Philonic parallels, and the use of Hesiod's *Works and Days* by several Greek authors and Philo himself. I look forward to introducing to you this piece of allegory and to learning from your insights. If you wish, you can **familiarize** yourself with the text at http://tinyurl.com/knightess (loebclassics.com).

Martti Nissinen, "Song of Songs and the Akkadian Love Lyrics: A Case of Cultural Transmission?"

Each speaker has c. 30 minutes and will include methodological questions to be discussed. Abstracts will be sent before the meeting.

D. Textual-Criticism & Other Methods (organizers: Anneli Aejmelalues, Jessi Orpana)

Chair: Jessi Orpana
Tuukka Kauhanen: "Textual Studies in Practice"   (60 min)
Katja Kujanpää: "Paul, God's Power - and Leviathan"   (25 min)
Break (10 min)
Christian Seppänen: "Mice and Boils in 1 Sam 5–6"   (25 min)
Anneli Aejmelaeus: "Was Samuel a Nazirite?"   (60 min)