ADOPT -a- DIG

THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE
**Oriental Institute Excavations**

**Front Cover, Clockwise from Top Left:**
- Zincirli excavation trench
- Zincirli satellite image
- Tell Edfu excavation
- Tell Zeidan topographic map
- Galilee Prehistory Project excavation
- Virtual reality reconstruction of Kerkenes Dağ
- Worker at Tell Hamoukar
- Kerkenes Dağ computer simulation
The Oriental Institute is a leader in archeological explorations in the Near East. Every year, our researchers in Egypt, Syria, Turkey, and other countries make new discoveries that vastly enrich our understanding of the ancient civilizations of the Fertile Crescent.

The Oriental Institute’s Adopt-a-Dig program creates a new partnership of discovery between you, our supporters, and the field researchers whose projects are rewriting the history of the rise of civilization. With six active digs in Egypt, Israel, Syria, and Turkey, you now have the opportunity to partner with field projects that closely match your own interests. As a dig “adopter,” you can make a five-year commitment to fund the project of your choice at the level of your choice, enabling each of our excavations to have the stable, predictable support base they need to make long-term excavation plans. In turn, dig directors will involve their supporters more closely and directly than ever before, integrating you into the fieldwork and discoveries they make each season.

From the field, where our staff actively unearths Mesopotamian, Phrygian, and ancient Egyptian cities, to our home base at the University of Chicago, where research findings are analyzed and exhibited to the public, the Oriental Institute is committed to expanding the world’s knowledge of ancient civilizations of the Near East. We invite you to become part of this partnership of discovery.
Tell Edfu, one of the best-preserved ancient towns in Egypt, houses the remains of what was once the capital of the second Upper Egyptian province. Continuous occupation over several millennia led to the constant build-up of settlement layers, creating an artificial mound, or tell, of considerable height. Tell Edfu is one of the rare places where nearly three thousand years of Egyptian history are preserved in the stratigraphy of a single site — therefore, it provides an enormous potential for increasing our understanding of ancient urbanism in Egypt, a topic that is still poorly understood since it relies almost entirely on archaeological data. Few ancient Egyptian settlement sites are currently accessible and even fewer have been excavated and published.

The past excavation seasons at Tell Edfu have focused on the eastern part of the tell, which yielded evidence for the early administrative center of the town. The first finds by Dr. Nadine Moeller and her team have already proved to be spectacular, such as the large grain silos that are so far unique in the Egyptian archaeological record. For the first time, it has been possible to discover archaeological settlement remains that complement the already abundant ancient administrative textual sources.

The budget for each field season at Tell Edfu is spent mostly on airfares and salaries for workers and specialists, such as zoologists, archaeo-botanists, and ceramicists. Further research and analysis of new data, such as taking samples for radiocarbon dating, and post-excavation work after each field season, like preparing materials for publication, are parts of the project that are currently underfunded. Adopting Tell Edfu as a dig can increase the output possibilities of the project by funding more researchers and providing for efficient and accurate data processing after each season.
In contrast to regions such as the Negev or Jordan Valley, our knowledge of life in the Galilee during the Chalcolithic period (around 4500-3600 B.C.) is very limited. For example, we have no radiocarbon dates for a Chalcolithic settlement in the Galilee, nor do we have an architectural plan. This is unfortunate because the Chalcolithic period, a key transitional time between the Neolithic and Bronze Ages, witnessed the first metallurgy, the first pottery formed on a wheel, and dramatically new burial practices for the dead.

The new research initiative launched by the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago and led by Dr. Yorke Rowan is designed to examine the dramatic changes in the relationship of villages, ritual sites, and mortuary practices during this poorly understood period. Concentrating first on the site of Marj Rabba, the goal of this project is to understand why this period witnessed dramatic changes such as rapid diversification, intensification in craft production, and agricultural expansion. By comparing material culture in the Galilee with other areas of the southern Levant (lands bordering the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea), Dr. Rowan and his team will obtain samples for botanical, faunal, and geomorphological analyses to further interpretations of Galilean subsistence economy during the Chalcolithic period.

Dr. Rowan and crew had an extremely successful first season, but in the coming seasons support for survey tools, radiocarbon dating, geomorphological analysis, and transportation will help the team further explore Marj Rabba and ultimately expand the project to other Galilean Chalcolithic sites.

Based on the good state of preservation of architectural features and faunal remains, Marj Rabba shows great promise for expanded, intensive investigation made possible by new funding to offer fresh insights into this key transitional era which some have called the “end of prehistory.”
Tell Hamoukar, a large site in northern Syria that has been excavated since 1999 by a joint team from the Oriental Institute and the Syrian Department of Antiquities, has provided insight into the early development of Near Eastern cities. Dr. Clemens Reichel and his team were surprised by the discovery of a walled Late Chalcolithic city that had been destroyed by fire around 3500 B.C., underneath the remains of what was long known to have been a large urban center during the Early Bronze Age (2500–2200 B.C.).

Among the charred remains of Hamoukar, researchers uncovered administrative buildings containing thousands of clay seals and other artifacts of great technical skill and highly developed artistry. These discoveries have challenged the notion that the development of urban civilization and bureaucratic complexity in this area were the result of southern Mesopotamian cultural domination in the later fourth millennium B.C. Recent discoveries, including an export-oriented obsidian tool production center of industrial size dating to 4500–4000 B.C., may push the origins of northern Syria’s first “urban experiments” ever further back into prehistory.

Hamoukar thus promises to provide significant data on early urbanism for many years to come, allowing Dr. Reichel and his team to re-examine and revise the early history of this Near Eastern city. A variety of pottery found at the site raises questions about the people who created it: Is the pottery representative of a cultural movement that involved architecture and other crafts? Does it represent a certain group of people? Is it a marker of social hierarchy? Nearly all funding for Hamoukar will go directly toward excavation methods, equipment, and travel expenses, helping excavators answer these questions and others about early Near Eastern urbanism.
In 1928, near Yozgat, Turkey, the Oriental Institute first excavated at Kerkenes Dağ, an enormous ancient city that we now know was built around 600 B.C. by the Phrygians, a people later ruled by King Midas.

For the past seventeen years, the Kerkenes Dağ project has revolutionized how archaeologists use remote-sensing technologies and advanced simulations to understand ancient cities. Two key questions have guided the work: Who were the people that once built and lived in this enormous city? How did a city like this function — socially, politically, and economically?

Computer software for simulating ancient pedestrian traffic, developed to help answer these questions at Kerkenes Dağ, has even attracted the attention of modern city planners who want to design greener cities that encourage people to walk more and use cars less. A sister project to the archaeological excavations, the Kerkenes EcoCenter also focuses more on the modern world. It provides hands-on opportunities to see how technologies like renewable energy, water minimization irrigation techniques, and organic farming can assist in global efforts toward rural sustainability and development.

The Kerkenes Dağ project is a model of what important insights can be gained from long-term work at a site like this. The knowledge gained has already reshaped our understanding of the Phrygians and of cities in general, both ancient and modern. Through years of effort, the groundwork has been laid to uncover much more knowledge from this ancient city through precision excavations in the years ahead. However, such long-term work requires steady resources: personnel, including conservators, illustrators, and workers hired from the village, are critical to the success of the excavation; ongoing maintenance is needed for expedition tools such as resistivity meters and surveying equipment. Adopting Kerkenes Dağ as a dig can help sustain this project in its long-term mission.

For more information, see http://www.kerkenes.metu.edu.tr/.
The joint Syrian-American excavations at Tell Zeidan are exploring the roots of urbanism in Mesopotamia during the Ubaid period, around 5300 B.C. This enigmatic era saw the first development of widespread irrigation agriculture, centralized temples, powerful political leaders, and the first emergence of social inequality as communities became divided into wealthy elites and poorer commoners. This was the time when people first invented the technology of metallurgy — the Chalcolithic period.

Located at the crossroads of two major trade routes in the rich bottomlands of the Euphrates River valley, Tell Zeidan is one of the largest-known Ubaid temple-towns. Because the site was abandoned in 4000 B.C., the prehistoric strata of the site are immediately accessible beneath the modern-day ground surface instead of being buried beneath meters of deposits from later occupation periods. This means that for the first time, archaeologists can excavate broad areas of an Ubaid regional center to understand how a proto-urban community actually functioned in the sixth and fifth millennia B.C.

Excavations at Tell Zeidan started in 2008, with Dr. Gil J. Stein representing the Oriental Institute. In the team’s two field seasons so far, important evidence for monumental architecture, ancient copper working, long-distance trade in luxury goods, and the beginnings of leadership and administration have been uncovered. Dr. Stein hopes to excavate at Tell Zeidan for twelve field seasons to expose the full range of neighborhoods, activities, and both public and domestic architecture at this 12.5-hectare (31-acre) town. A crucial element in the Oriental Institute’s long-term plans for fieldwork is the construction of a dig house near Tell Zeidan to provide dormitory, laboratory, and storage space for the project as the expedition moves forward in its exploration of the site.
The Neubauer Expedition to Zincirli is conducting a long-term, large-scale exploration of an Iron Age city in southeastern Turkey, near the Syrian border. At the site of Zincirli Höyük, the extensive ruins of the ancient walled city of Sam’al are buried, nestled in a fertile valley surrounded by heavily forested mountains.

Close to both the Mediterranean Sea and the Euphrates River, Sam’al served a crucial purpose as a strategic city for trade and commerce. Three thousand years ago, at the time of the biblical kings of Israel, this 40-hectare (100-acre) city was the capital of a small but powerful kingdom. The city had a monumental palace, massive outer walls, and ornate city gates adorned with sculpted stone reliefs.

Led by Dr. David Schloen, an academic staff of thirty to forty archaeologists and archaeology students dig at Zincirli each summer with the help of hired workers recruited from villages in the vicinity. This is the fifth year of the excavation, and many more seasons are planned in order to reveal large areas of the ancient city and thus gain new insights into the culture, society, and economy of the kingdom of Sam’al — and, by extension, other Iron Age kingdoms of the ancient Levant.

The expedition is using both advanced remote-sensing techniques and actual excavation to explore the neighborhoods and households in the extensive lower town. These explorations have already resulted in major surprise discoveries, such as the magnificent Kuttamuwa stele with its carved stone relief images and its inscription describing the Sam’alian concept of the soul. A pledge to this project is an investment in further uncovering the rich history of Sam’al and its relationship to other Levantine cultures.

For more information, see http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/projects/zin.
MEET THE DIRECTORS

TELL EDFU, EGYPT
Dr. Nadine Moeller

Nadine Moeller has been working on numerous excavations in Egypt since 1998. Her main research interests are settlement archaeology, urbanism, and climate change and its effects on ancient societies. Nadine studied at Heidelberg, Germany, and Cambridge, where she received her Ph.D. in Egyptian Archaeology. She has been directing the excavation at Tell Edfu since 2001, and has been Assistant Professor at the Oriental Institute since 2007.

GALILEE PREHISTORY PROJECT: MARJ RABBA, ISRAEL
Dr. Yorke Rowan

Yorke Rowan is a new Research Associate in the Oriental Institute focused on the late prehistory of the southern Levant (Israel, Jordan, and Palestine). Trained as an anthropological archaeologist, his research focuses on the rise of social complexity, craft specialization, and prehistoric ritual and mortuary practices. In addition to Marj Rabba, he is currently investigating two large prehistoric mortuary sites in the eastern desert of Jordan.

TELL HAMOUKAR, SYRIA
Dr. Clemens Reichel

Clemens Reichel is Assistant Professor of Mesopotamian Archeology at the University of Toronto and Associate Curator for the Ancient Near East at the Royal Ontario Museum. Following his undergraduate studies at the University of Freiburg, Germany, he received his M.A. at the University of London in 1990 and his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago in 2001. His research interests focus on early state societies and bureaucratic complexity in Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age Mesopotamia and Syria.
KERKENES DAĞ, TURKEY
Dr. Scott Branting

Scott Branting is Director of the Center for Ancient Middle Eastern Landscapes (CAMEL) and a Research Assistant Professor in Near Eastern Archaeology at the University of Chicago. With M.A. degrees in Hittitology (University of Chicago) and Geography (SUNY Buffalo), and a Ph.D. in Anthropology (SUNY Buffalo), he crosses a number of disciplinary boundaries with his research. He has worked with numerous expeditions on five continents, but along the way has been a constant member of the Kerkenes Dağ Project for sixteen years and Co-Director for five years.

TELL ZEIDAN, SYRIA
Dr. Gil J. Stein

Gil J. Stein is Director of the Oriental Institute and Professor of Near Eastern Archaeology at the University of Chicago. He received his B.A. from Yale University in 1978 and his Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Pennsylvania in 1988. Gil's research focuses on the development of early urban civilizations in the Near East, economic systems, and the archaeology of ancient colonies, about which he has written over forty journal articles, book chapters, books, and reviews.

ZINCIRLI, TURKEY
Dr. David Schloen

David Schloen is Associate Professor of Syro-Palestinian Archaeology at the University of Chicago. He received his B.A. in Computer Science from the University of Toronto in 1983 and a Ph.D. in Archaeology and Biblical Studies from Harvard University in 1995. His research focuses on the society, economy, and culture of the kingdoms that flourished along the eastern Mediterranean coast and adjacent highlands in the period of archaic urban civilization from 3000 to 500 B.C., among which were the ancient kingdoms of Israel and Judah.
### DONOR LEVELS & BENEFITS

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The Oriental Institute Development staff are more than happy to help you establish a payment plan for your pledges. Please call Rebecca Silverman, Development Associate, at 773.702.5062, or e-mail her at rsilverman@uchicago.edu to set up a schedule.

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