

# News & Notes

ORIENTAL INSTITUTE  
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

The Oriental Institute

*Issued confidentially to members and friends*

No. 13: January, 1975

*Not for publication*

Dear Friends,

At the start of the new year, we once again ask your help in expanding our membership.

Last year, we surveyed the continuing problem of illicit traffic in antiquities and the plundering of ancient sites. Now, because of the inflation that plagues us all, we are beset with an equally serious difficulty: the soaring cost of publication. Our research projects, such as the Assyrian Dictionary, the Epigraphic Survey, and our archeological field expeditions will mean very little unless the specialized results of these researches can be published for use by scholars. With the astronomically rising costs of paper and printing, we are no longer able to make these researches available in print as quickly as is desirable.

As often in the past, we rely greatly on members' contributions to help us to cope with growing financial pressures. One of our most effective sources for new members is the names suggested by you, our present members.

We would very much appreciate your sending us the names of persons who might be interested in joining the Oriental Institute. We would like to invite them to become members.

With many thanks for your interest and cooperation,

Sincerely yours,

John A. Brinkman, Director

## VISITING SCHOLARS

Dr. Maurits N. van Loon has returned to the Oriental Institute for a month-and-a-half visit in December and January. He was a Research Associate and then Assistant Professor of Western Asiatic Archeology here between 1965 and 1970. In 1965 and 1967 he dug at two sites in Syria, and from 1968 to 1970 he was Field Director of the Institute's excavations at Korucutepe, Turkey. This was part of an international salvage effort to study the area about to be flooded by a major Euphrates dam project. Dr. van Loon is taking a working vacation from his position as Professor in the University of Amsterdam to prepare the final report on Korucutepe (preliminary reports have appeared in recent numbers of the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*), and also to edit for publication the notes on the late Dr. Erich Schmidt's excavations at Sorkh Dum-e Luri, Iran, of 1935-38.

Korucutepe, in Eastern Anatolia, was inhabited between about 4500 and 800 B. C. The heaviest deposits, though, come from the Early Bronze Age of the third millennium, and the site thus provides a good insight into the village culture, centered in the Transcaucasian region, which succeeded the Uruk culture. It is interesting that around the end of the third millennium the character of the site changed. It

was no longer inhabited as a village, but the mound was crowned by a single ceremonial building with a central triple hearth. During the second millennium it belonged to the Kingdom of Isuwa, a vassal-state of the Hittites, and seal impressions of these local rulers have been found at Korucutepe. Thanks to this and the other salvage projects in the area, we will soon have a coherent archeological history of Eastern Anatolia.

Dr. Kaspar K. Riemschneider is this year's James Henry Breasted Research Associate at the Assyrian Dictionary. His principal task is the preparation of dictionary articles, but he is also studying Babylonian omens and Akkadian texts from Boğazköy. Dr. Riemschneider has taught at the University of Munich, and is the author of the standard study grammar of the Akkadian language.

Dr. Shigeru Yamamoto, Associate Professor at the Prefecture University of Kyoto, has been studying land tenure as it can be reconstructed using Sumerian texts from Lagash (ca. 2400 B. C.). Assyriology is a relatively new field in Japan, and the universities there have not been able to assemble libraries to compare with ours. Dr. Yamamoto is here working with Professors Civil and Gelb.

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## SOME RECENT BOOKS

*Alimenta Hethaeorum: Food Production in Hittite Asia Minor*, by Harry A. Hoffner, Jr., is not so dry, nor is its subject so restricted, as the title might suggest. What it is is an account of virtually every aspect of food growing, preparing, and even use, among the Hittites.

The kernel of the book is a list of all the known names of types of bread in all the Hittite texts. Dr. Hoffner prepared it as part of a glossary of synonyms he needed for his dissertation on the Hittite Law Code. (Because we do not have private archives of the Hittites to compare with Mesopotamian ones, just about all we know of Hittite civilization must be deduced from official documents such as the Code.) The "bread" section of this glossary—i.e., the list of words preceded by the semantic determinative for "flour product"—turned out to be quite large. The etymologies of some of the names were clear: little crescent moon bread, little human figure bread, and others. But were these explanations for the other bread names? Dr. Hoffner collected every reference to bread in every text. Then he discovered a picture in Adolf Erman's *Life in Ancient Egypt* of a royal bakery, from the tomb of Ramses III, showing many different shapes of bread. He also recalled that the Hebrew of 2 Samuel 13:8, where Tamar bakes cakes for her supposedly ailing half-brother Amnon, speaks of "hearts" of "heart-shaped" cakes. All these disparate references to similar practices fired Dr. Hoffner's interest, and one of the purposes of *Alimenta Hethaeorum* is to bring together all these facts.

But one cannot simply stop with bread. Interest in that subject leads naturally in other directions which Harry Hoffner has explored. By exhaustive examination of all the available documents and comparison with the testimony of contemporaneous civilizations, Hoffner has established a plausible reconstruction of the agricultural year. By studying archeological evidence of grain remains and philological evidence of the texts, and using intuition, he has a pretty good idea of the history of agriculture over the millennia and a remarkable understanding of the methods of cultivation used by the Hittites.

Chapters on the baking of bread and on all the other kinds of food eaten in Hittite times round out the study. The latter section is a fascinating potpourri of rituals, cultural parallels, and culinary knowhow (supplied by Mrs. Hoffner) which provides a much more intimate look at the Hittites than has hitherto been possible for that culture, or indeed for almost any non-modern one.

Besides the obvious one of content, the other attractions of this book include its style (Dr. Hoffner is a good writer!), its numerous illustrations, and, especially, the fact that every passage or word in a foreign language, ancient or modern, is accompanied by an English translation. Thus *Alimenta Hethaeorum* is not only a fascinating account of its subject matter, but also an admirable sample of what a philologist does for a living. Since Hittite texts deal with kinds and gods rather than ordinary people, this is in effect a gourmet guide to the past. Though it contains no recipes (the Hittites weren't explicit enough), this is the sort of book that any

collector of cookbooks (and aren't we all?) would like to have on the shelf.

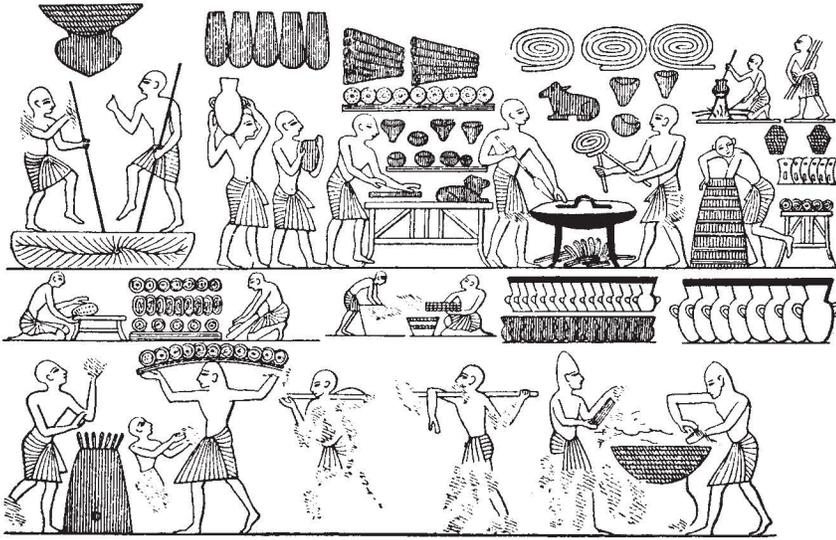
Time-Life Books has just brought out two new volumes in their series *The Emergence of Man*. Dr. Hoffner served as consultant for one, and Dr. Robert D. Biggs for the other. At Time-Life, a book is usually written by a journalist "in consultation with" an expert in the field, who is responsible for the content, but not the final form, of his volume. Nevertheless, Dr. Hoffner saw to it that *The Empire Builders* is a useful introduction to the Hittites. Chapters on the discovery of Hittite civilization, the decipherment of their language, their foreign relations (i.e., diplomacy and warfare), everyday life, and the fate of the Hittite Empire are accompanied by photographs of the quality expected of Time-Life Books and by perhaps not so successful line drawings. *The Empire Builders*, along with co-consultant O. R. Gurney's older, rather more technical *The Hittites*, is a good book for those curious about this often neglected civilization. A similarly commendable volume is Dr. Biggs' *The Birth of Writing*. This book begins with a discussion of ways of recording messages devised in prehistory. That is followed by a lucid account of the methods used in the last century to decipher various forgotten languages. Sections on the development of writing, the training of scribes, and the significance of writing in civilization are particularly noteworthy. The illustrations thus far are taken from both Mesopotamia and Egypt. A chapter on the alphabet leads into an essay on recent triumphs and remaining challenges of decipherment, such as Linear B and Etruscan, respectively. The book closes with a mention of the oldest literature (Sumerian) and a glance at the art of calligraphy (Far Eastern, Islamic, Medieval). An eminently sensible bibliography—only beware of *The Story of Language* by Mario Pei, who appears ignorant of the progress of linguistics over the last century—rounds out the work. *The Birth of Writing* is probably the best volume to appear so far in a somewhat erratic series.

John L. Foster has created a handsome volume of *Love Songs of the New Kingdom*. He studied Egyptian at the Oriental Institute and now teaches English at Roosevelt University, Chicago. For almost all the known examples of this genre, Mr. Foster has created English versions. They are sometimes translations, sometimes paraphrases, and sometimes free constructions suggested by the Egyptian, but they are always English poetry. For some of the poems Foster has included hieroglyphic transliterations of the hieratic originals. The book is attractively rubricated, and is illustrated with black-and-white plates of some of the exquisite Nina M. Davies copies of Egyptian paintings.

In 1965, Mrs. Nancy Tieken Wheelock, an Institute member, traveled in Iraq and Turkey. Her journal of that trip has been published under the title *Watching Them Dig*.

Each of these books is now or will soon be available at The Suq, the last in limited quantity.

—Peter T. Daniels



*Egyptian Royal Bakery from the Tomb of Ramses III. After A. Erman, Life in Ancient Egypt.*

★ There will be a training course for Museum Docents and Suq Volunteers on ten Mondays from April 14th through June 16th. The course will be held in Breasted Hall from 10:30 to 2:30 with a break for lunch. Trainees must be members of the Institute and a fee of \$20.00 for materials will be charged. Parking will be available. Please call Mrs. Jill Maher at 753-2573 or 753-2471 for an interview.

★ The Oriental Institute tour of archeological sites in Turkey is now set to depart in May, taking advantage of the pleasant Turkish spring weather. After a brief stopover in London, the tour will commence in Ankara, with the archeological museum there providing a marvelous introduction to the various early cultures of Anatolia. Visits to sites will commence with a series of sorties from Ankara, first to the Hittite capital at Boğazköy and then to the impressive Phrygian remains at Gordion. From Ankara, the tour will move south across the Anatolian plateau to Göreme and Kültepe and then down to Turkey's southern coast for a brief rest by the sea. The next phase will take the group back across the mountains, through rugged and beautiful scenery of Lydia to the Aegean coast. The best preserved sites of the classical world are found here and will be visited along with more ancient monuments of Hittite and Lydian origin. The tour will conclude with a visit to the site of Priam's (and Schliemann's) Troy. In Istanbul the tour will have a chance to review all that it has seen in a visit to the Istanbul archeological museum, now reopened to the public. In addition, the overwhelming accomplishments of later periods will make this city a fitting climax to our three-week excursion in Turkey, a land of most magnificent cultural contrasts.

**There will be a meeting of those interested in the tour in Room 210 at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, January 14.**

★ This correspondence recently took place with a Spanish-speaking gentleman:

October 31st, 1974  
American Research Institute in Turkey  
c/o The Oriental Institute  
Dear Sir:

We address to you in order to request quotation // about WHITE TURKEY OF DOBLE BREAST. We would be very pleased if you send us any material booklets or any other information apart from pro-forma invoices. Our main interest will be to import the turkey male and female.

Awaiting your soon answer, we remain sincerely yours,

[Signature]

November 11, 1974

Dear Sir:

Thank you very much for your letter of October 31, 1974. The American Research Institute in Turkey is concerned with scholarly research in Turkey (Turquia), the country and has nothing to do with the bird called turkey (pavo).

I am sorry that I have to disappoint you.

Sincerely yours,

Hans G. Güterbock  
President

Meanwhile, Mrs. Frances Güterbock is performing the "world's oldest song" (see the account of H.G. Güterbock's research in *News & Notes* for April, 1974) at the University Faculty Wives' Show in January. She plays a genie who emerges from a magic lamp when it is rubbed. . . .

# THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE

*cordially invites you to attend an illustrated lecture*

## “ASHURNASIRPAL COMES TO CHICAGO”

by

**John A. Brinkman and McGuire Gibson**

The Oriental Institute

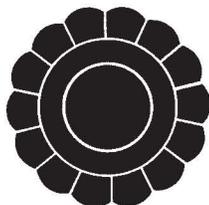
**Tuesday, January 14, 1975**

**8:30 P.M.**

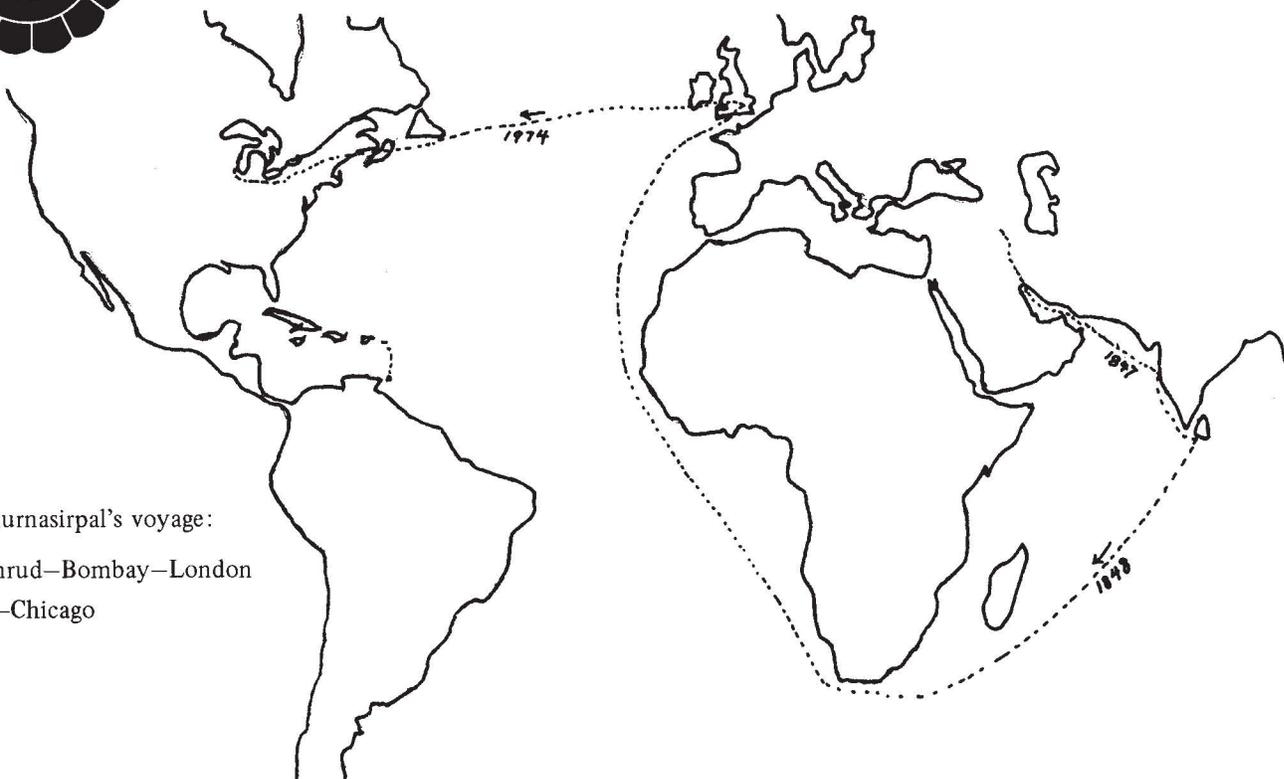
The James Henry Breasted Lecture Hall  
1155 East 58th Street

Admission is free. Museum halls and The Suq will be open one hour before the lecture.

*(The Quadrangle Club, 1155 East 57th Street, will be open to Oriental Institute Members who wish to make dinner reservations. Please call Mrs. Schlender, 493-8601. Please remember that the privilege of the use of the dining room at the Quadrangle Club is a courtesy extended to members of the Oriental Institute only on nights when there is an Oriental Institute lecture.)*



The Oriental Institute  
The University of Chicago  
1155 East 58th Street · Chicago, Illinois · 60637



Ashurnasirpal's voyage:  
Nimrud—Bombay—London  
—Chicago