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## EXCAVATIONS AT TELL ES-SWEYHAT IN SYRIA 1989 AND 1991

by Thomas A. Holland, Publications Coordinator and Research Associate, The Oriental Institute

Tell es-Sweyhat is located on the east bank of the Euphrates river in northern Syria, about 90 miles east of Aleppo and 75 miles northwest of Raqqa, the modern administrative center for this area of the Syrian Jazira. The site (figure 1) is situated approximately one mile east of Lake Assad, which was formed by the completion of the Tabqa (eth-Thawra) dam during the 1970s. Sweyhat was founded in the center of the broad river terrace, which is encircled by an escarpment over 500 meters high encroaching on the Euphrates to the north (site of the new Tishreen Dam project) and which gently curves eastward around the Sweyhat plain for some 15 miles.

Although the 1989 season (sponsored by The University Museum, The University of Pennsylvania) was brief, lasting only one month, four soundings were made. Operations 1 and 2 were excavated on the main mound just east of the Area IV complex of rooms, which were built up against the inner face of the town wall (grid square F6, figure 1). Operations 3 and 4 were excavated in two areas of the outer town, southeast and west of the main mound in grid squares K11 and F3 (figure 1).

Operations 1 and 2, (see aerial photograph and sketch plan, figures 2 and 3), revealed a 3 meter wide pebble-paved street constructed in a north-south direction and situated parallel to the east face of the large Area IV buildings. The street in these two operations also parallels, at a 14 meter distance, the large 2.50 meter wide mudbrick town wall, against which the Area IV

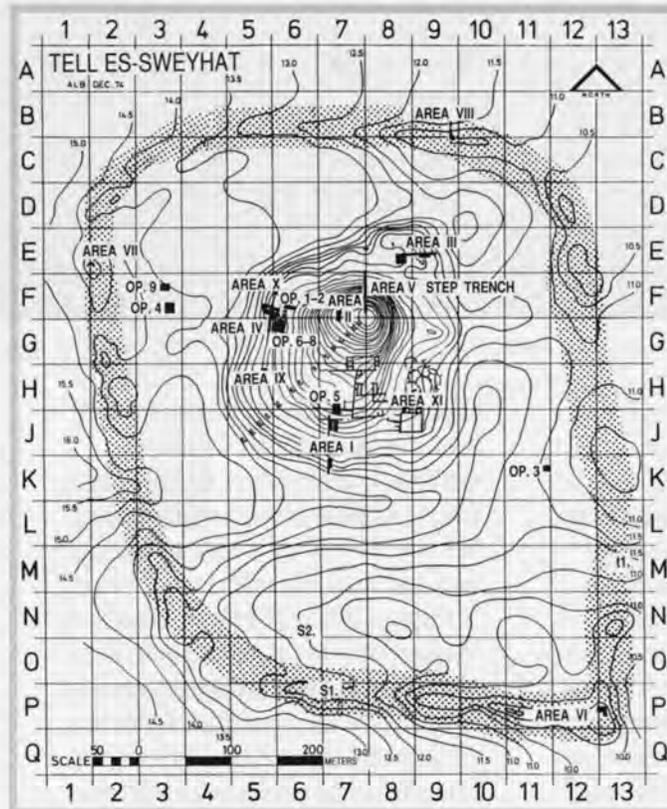


Figure 1. Contour Plan of Sweyhat Showing Excavations of 1973-75, 1989, and 1991

rooms were constructed to the west of the street. It is likely that the street curves gently in a north-east direction further to the north in the same direction as that portion of the town wall shown in Area XA, against which room 15 is constructed. That the street was parallel to the town wall in this area of the excavation may indicate that it paralleled the rest of the town wall and thus served as an inner ring-road, but proof of this will have to await further excavation. The third millennium B.C. deposits collected from the street included sherds, flint tools, and animal bones.

Operations 3 and 4 (figure 1) in the lower town were situated in two of the areas where the density of surface material collected at the beginning of the 1989 season was very high. Upon excavation, very little architecture was evident apart from some fragmentary mudbrick walls with stone foundations, but this was due mostly to the smallness of the operations. The expansion of the Operation 4 square in 1991 (see below) showed extensive architectural remains contemporary with the occupation on the main mound. Also, the remains of another pebble-paved street in Operation 3 confirms

*continued on page 2*



**Figure 2. Aerial Photograph of Sweyhat Area IV Operations**

town planning in the outer town as well as in the main walled inner town.

One of the more interesting finds from the pebble-paved street in Operation 1 was a wall fragment of a terracotta house model (figure 4). The architectural motifs depicted on our fragment, particularly the engaged spiral columns, are a feature incorporated on facades of major buildings in greater north Syria/Mesopotamia during the 3rd-2nd millennium B.C., particularly those at Tell Leilan (compare the columns along the north facade of the Leilan Building Level II temple and the complete house model in *Ebla to Damascus: Art and Archaeology of Ancient Syria*, edited by H. Weiss, 1985, figures 45 and 101). The fragment of a dove perched on the protruding ends of two joining roof beams extending outside the house wall is identical in decoration to a completely preserved model supposedly from Salamiyya, near Hama in Syria. The presence of two sets of roof beams both at the top and the bottom of the two engaged spiral columns suggests that our fragment is the second storey of a model house similar in design to the Hama model. The Sweyhat model has

an additional decorative feature, which consists of an incised complete tree motif on the right side of the columns and the remains of another one on the left side. The Hama model, unstratified, and other examples from the Early Dynastic Ishtar Temple at Ashur in Mesopotamia and also from 14th-13th centuries B.C. contexts in Syria, have made the dating of this type of model difficult. Present evidence from Sweyhat indicates that our house model belongs to the Akkadian period or slightly later during the end of the 3rd millennium B.C. Other evidence, both textual and glyptic, suggests that these types of house models were used as votive offerings in temples.

During 1990, due to the ever rising costs of fieldwork in the Near East, Richard Zettler and I requested joint sponsorship for the 1991 excavations. The directors of The Oriental Institute and The University Museum kindly agreed to our request for joint sponsorship and provided generous financial support and back-up resources, for which we are very grateful, and which made possible the two-month 1991 season. We also are extremely appreciative for the financial support we

received from private donors associated with both institutions.

The 1991 season, conducted during October and November, was staffed by ten full-time and four part-time members from the USA and Britain. Richard Zettler and I again served as co-directors and represented the expedition's co-sponsor institutions. The site supervisors were Jennifer Arzt, an Oriental Institute graduate, Timothy Adams, Adam Ford, Emma Murray, and Sally Randell, all graduates of the Institute of Archaeology, London University. John Ellsworth, a part-time artist at The Oriental Institute, worked as the draughtsman for all object and pottery drawings. Matthew Waters and Michael Danti, both graduate students at the University Museum, were responsible for the processing of archaeobotanical samples and the surveying of the trenches. Tony Wilkinson, Oriental Institute Research Associate, joined the team as a part-time member and continued his survey of the Sweyhat plain for one month (October). Donna Strahan, Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, and Mark Fenn, Conservation Analytical Laboratory, Smithsonian Institution,

were also part-time members and worked as conservators during the final month of the season (November). John Robertson, Department of History, Central Michigan University, joined us for two weeks in November and assisted with both excavations on the tell and with the study of the finds. We are very grateful for all the assistance we received from the staff.

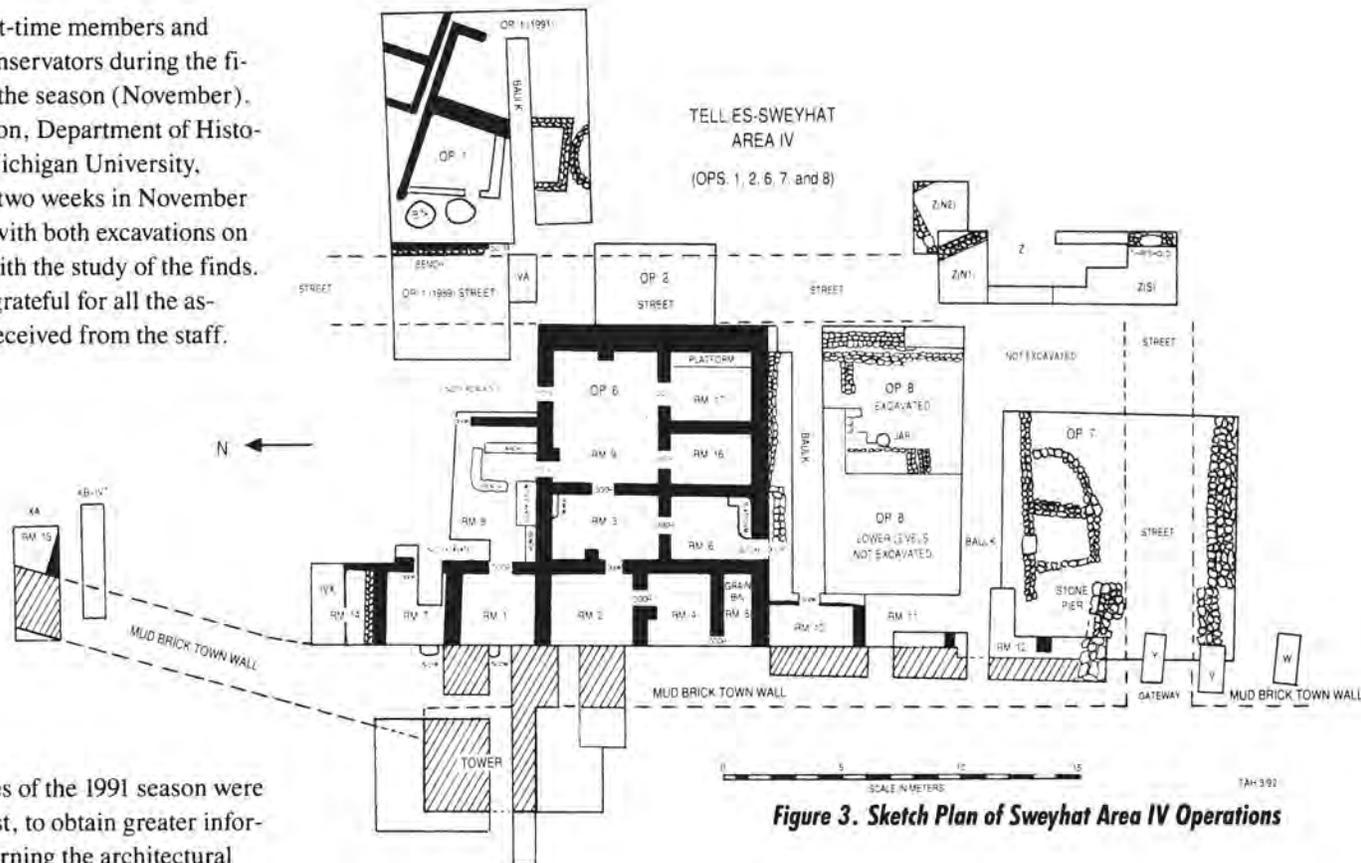


Figure 3. Sketch Plan of Sweyhat Area IV Operations

The objectives of the 1991 season were threefold: first, to obtain greater information concerning the architectural planning and dating of the different phases of occupation at the site, particularly in Area IV of the main mound (figures 2 and 3); second, to assess the relationship between the outer and inner towns; and third, to relate changes in the pattern of archaeological settlement to the physical landscape, man-induced landscape features, land use systems, and the regional environment. The first of these objectives was initiated by extending the 1989 Operation 1 up the slope of the mound by 10 meters to the east of the street, by beginning three more Operations, 6, 7, and 8, along the east and south sides of the rooms found in the previous Area IV excavations, and by opening a new trench designated Operation 5, on the south slope of the main mound north of Area I. The second objective was met by greatly enlarging Operation 4, begun in 1989, in the western sector of the outer town; during the second half of the season it became necessary to open another area, Operation 9, north of Operation 4, to supplement information from that area. The work of the third goal was primarily undertaken by Tony Wilkinson, who carried out ex-

tensive fieldwork by covering an area approximately 5 km in an arc around Sweyhat on foot.

Operation 1 (figure 3), situated upslope to the east of the Area IV rooms excavated in the 1970s, provided us with at least four later building phases on top of the original third millennium town. In a room belonging to the first of these phases that abutted the street were found two large circular oven-like structures (figures 2 and 3) which were possibly used for some kind of grain storage, although no remains of such were found within them. A closely associated phase in another room to the east contained a complete figurine of a human male with an elaborately decorated headdress and beard. This is a remarkable find in northern Syria (figure 5) as most figurines previously found are in female form, which are usually associated with offerings or other expressions denoting the idea of fertility.

Operation 6 is located between Operation 2 and the unexcavated portion of

room 9 and the rooms (numbers 16 and 17) known to exist to the south of room 9 (figure 3). Room 9 was found to abut onto the west side of the street in Operation 2 and, although not fully defined in 1991, the east wall of room 17 probably also adjoins the street. The eight complete rooms now excavated, except for room 1, between the town wall and the street (rooms 2 to 6, 9, 16, and 17) form the central unit of a large well-designed house, rectangular in shape, which measures 10 meters in width and 13.50 meters in length. That these rooms originally formed only a central unit for other connecting rooms both to the south and north is evident from the presence of a number of doors leading to other rooms or courtyards beyond the central unit. Room 9 has two doors in its northern wall; the westernmost one leads into room 8, not fully excavated, which may be a courtyard on the evidence of a free-standing arch and workbenches found in the 1970s; the easternmost door leads most likely into another room abutting the street in Operation 1, but this area remains unexcavated. Although blocked in antiq-

*continued on page 4*

continued from page 3

uity, a doorway existed in the southwestern corner of room 6 that originally led either to another courtyard or room to the south; the baulk separating Operations 6 and 8 did not allow us to excavate the door in 1991 and the excavations opposite the door in Operation 8 did not reach the earlier third millennium levels. Another door may exist in the south wall of room 17, but the lower levels in the southern end of this room also were not excavated. It should be noted that both of the northern doorways in room 9 were blocked up and plastered over, the same as the doorway in room 6. This implies that the adjoining house units, both to the south and north, were possibly converted to uses other than living or working quarters, became the property of other owners, or were simply blocked off because they had become too expensive to maintain. The second suggestion seems the most likely as everyday use pottery containers and stone grinders and mortars were found in situ in rooms 1 and 8, particularly on the excavated portion of the workbench in room 8. The rooms to the south of Operation 6, except room 10, within the area of Operation 8 were not excavated to third millennium levels and therefore their relationship to the adjoining central house unit to the north is at present unclear.

Operation 7, further to the south in Area IV, revealed additional information about the main town wall in addition to providing the first evidence concerning one of the city gates. The town wall was not clearly defined in the upper levels of the sounding in room 12 made during the 1970s, but the 1991 excavations in Operation 7 overlapped this room and showed that the mudbricks of the town wall were not laid further south than the stone paving at the southern end of the room (figure 3). The aerial photograph (figure 2) shows a substantial rectangular-shaped stone pier to the

east of the stone paving and massive stone foundations of a large wall 3 meters to the south and opposite the pier. The suspected gateway and the section of the town wall through which it was placed are not excavated, but present evidence indicates that the street is positioned in a straight line from the inner town leading west to a sharp saddle-shaped depression in the fortification ramparts of the outer town in the northwestern corner of grid square G2 (figure 1) and that it is at least 3 meters wide — the same width as the inner ring-road, with which the paved street into the town probably joins. Wilkinson's preliminary land use studies suggest that at least one hollow way (see T.J. Wilkinson's article, p. 17) leads from this area of the outer rampart to the southwest to join up with another Bronze Age settlement at Tell Juaf, located in the Euphrates valley flood plain; thereby providing another piece of evidence for a gateway in the outer defensive wall.

Operation 5 (grid squares H7 and J7, figure 1) is located slightly to the northeast of the Area I excavations which were undertaken on the southern slope of the mound during the 1970s. Only one half of the trench was excavated down to Early Bronze Age levels. Excavations were halted two weeks before the conclusion of the season because the upper portions of two adjoining mudbrick house walls, that had eroded and fallen, were discovered

to have remains of painted wall plaster. Our two conservators worked for ten days to conserve and lift the thin fragments to a depth of only 15.20 centimeters before the season ended. The conservators' report of the plaster includes the following description:

*"The fragments are painted with maroon red and black, and the unpainted background provides a white color, in what appear to be repeating patterns (possibly representing some sort of border) and figures (though none was complete enough to be identified). The colored areas retain quite a bit of richly colored pigment, though it is very friable. It appears to have been applied with a binder, rather than in a true fresco technique, though none of the binder seems to have survived"*.

A close parallel for this type of wall painting comes from Tell Munbaqa, another Bronze Age site about 15 kilometers to the south of Sweyhat. The small, incomplete, wall painting found at Munbaqa depicts two stylized human figures with upraised arms, large and thickly painted circles for eyes, and clothing which is kilt-like; the figures are surrounded by a rectangular-shaped border with elaborate geometric designs. The depth of the painted walls in Operation 5 at Sweyhat is not yet known nor is it certain that the wall painting continues



Figure 4. Model Votive House Fragment from Sweyhat Op. 1 Street

around all the walls of one or more rooms. Plaster was visible and intact on the inner faces of the walls at the level excavation had to cease. The northern end of the trench was carefully sealed with layers of plastic sheeting, stones, and earth at the end of the season to prevent further decay from winter rains. Before excavation did cease, a portion of a Bronze Age figurine also was found in Operation 5. It was a human female figurine; the upper torso and head were preserved and it was decorated with an elaborate headdress and two applied necklaces. The upper torso was unusually broad at the shoulders and wafer-like in thickness; the remains of the arms and hands were folded onto the breast area (figure 6).

Operations 4 and 9 in the western part of the outer town (grid square F3, figure 1) revealed stone foundations of a least one multi-roomed house as well as industrial workshops, which are datable to the same Early Bronze Age occupation as that in the earlier phase of the inner town. Extensive modern plowing and erosion have, unfortunately, destroyed nearly all traces of the mudbrick superstructures which rested upon the substantial stone-built foundations. However, a number of complete or nearly complete pottery vessels and figurines were found in situ so that a comparison can eventually be made between the life styles of the inner and outer towns. Operation 9 offered some evidence of industrial activity in that a number of stone covered drainage channels were associated with fairly large plastered basins; a great number of stone mortars and other stone tools were also found there.

This area was possibly used for a food processing industry since the remains of pickled capers, for example, were found among the plant remains in an Area IV room excavated in the 1970s. Also, the lower intact portion of a pottery jar was found in Operation 9

which originally contained some kind of metal tool or vessel, but despite the conservators' best efforts to consolidate the remains, the object had completely disintegrated and was unidentifiable; it may have been a cup or dipper-like object used to remove material stored in the jar. A great deal of metal working was practiced in the inner town since crucibles, bronze tongs, and metal slag were found in the Area IV rooms during previous excavations. During the 1991 season, one half of a two-sided, domed-shaped, finely worked, steatite mould for casting metal jewelry (figure 7) was found in Operation 6; it may have been made by cutting in half a stone macehead. Other evidence for major metal working included a bronze cosmetic spatula and various bronze pins for attaching items of clothing. Operation 5 also contained a limestone mould for making bronze spears or dagger blades.

The field work conducted by Tony Wilkinson included geomorphologic studies, air photographic examination, off-site survey, collection of field scatters of sherds, investigation of a tomb on the cliffs of the west bank of the Euphrates river, and various on-site work.

A study of the finds, architecture, and survey of the Sweyhat plain associated with the 1989 and 1991 seasons is at present underway and we hope to have a full preliminary report available in an Oriental Institute series volume in 1993. In the meantime, in order to examine more thoroughly the many complicated issues involved in the study of a large Early Bronze Age town and its hinterland, The Oriental Institute and The University Museum are planning to conduct individual field seasons at Sweyhat every other year so that each institution can concentrate more fully on separate research projects. The next season will be undertaken in the autumn of 1992 by The Oriental Institute to study the pottery, stone objects, and other finds excavated during the previous two seasons, to excavate the wall painting in Operation 5, and to continue the general field survey in the Sweyhat plain and beyond. The University Museum will continue with other research goals in 1993 when excavations will be concentrated in the large outer town of the site and in an extension of Operation 1 upslope to determine the sequence of occupation overlying the initial third millennium

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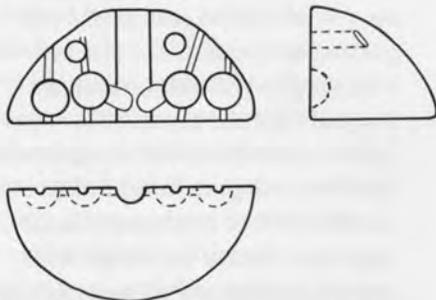
Figure 5. Male Human Figurine from Sweyhat Op. 1

continued from page 5

B.C. town. Oriental Institute work will again resume in 1994, primarily in the inner walled town, to investigate town planning, architecture, and related issues.



**Figure 6. Female Human Figurine from Sweyhat Op. 5**



**Figure 7. One Half of Steatite Mould for Casting Metal Jewelry from Sweyhat Op. 6**

*Thomas Andrews Holland began his formal training in archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology, University of London (1964-67), during which time he gained field experience in Jordan at the sites of Jerusalem and Petra. From 1968 to 1975, he worked as an assistant for Dame Kathleen Kenyon and attended Magdalen College, University of Oxford, where he received his doctoral degree (1975). After Kenyon's untimely death, he completed the final publications of the Jericho excavations. He obtained further archaeological field experience in the 1970s working on Neolithic sites at Umm Dabaghiyah in Iraq and Tell Abu Hureyra in Syria. He directed excavations at his own site, Tell es-Sweyhat, for three seasons (1973-75) and worked as assistant director thereafter at Tell Brak in Syria (1976, 1978, and 1980). After completing his work on the Jericho publications, he moved from Cambridge, England to Chicago in 1984 and began his job as Publications Coordinator at The Oriental Institute. His excavations at Tell es-Sweyhat were renewed in 1989 and another season was conducted during 1991.*



**B**RIGHT BANNERS!

emblazoned with images from campus arts and alumni organizations appeared through Hyde Park neighborhoods in conjunction with the Centennial celebration of The University of Chicago. The rendering of the winged bull from the palace of Sargon II was done by Oriental Institute artist John Ellsworth. One of the banners hangs at University and 58th Street, marking the entrance of The Oriental Institute.

# The Oriental Institute RESEARCH ARCHIVES

## ACQUISITIONS LIST WITH A LIST OF ESSAYS, ARTICLES AND REVIEWS

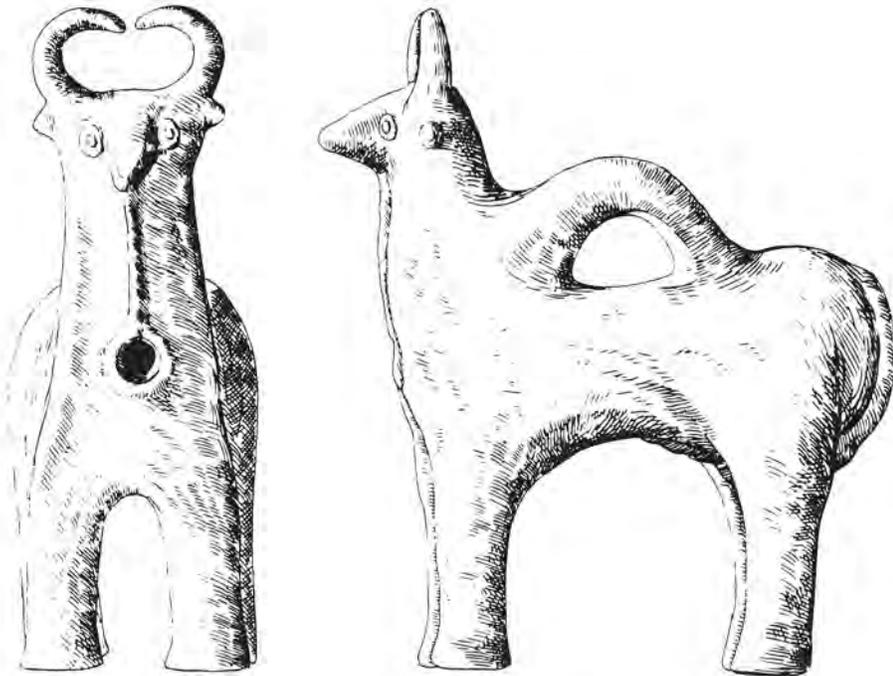
The Acquisitions List of the Research Archives of The Oriental Institute is a new publication which will be an invaluable tool for scholars, teachers and librarians. Appearing four times per year, the Acquisitions List is a detailed index to published sources for the study of the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Anatolia and Iran. It is designed to aid those faced with the prospect of keeping abreast of reports published in an ever-expanding list of journals, serials and monographs, and will provide a new ease of access to current literature on the ancient Near East. Based on the material acquired by the Research Archives of The Oriental Institute, the Acquisitions List will provide rapid and detailed access to this collection, the most extensive of its kind in North America.

The Oriental Institute Research Archives Acquisitions List has two parts. The first section includes detailed entries for each item acquired in the Research Archives during the three month period in question. For each entry we provide as complete a bibliographic reference as possible, so that users may be able to find a particular title under the various systems of classification, cataloguing, shelving, or ordering which are in use in other libraries and bookstores. All of our cataloguing is done in-house, which allows us to assess and describe each title on its own merits and according to the bibliographical conventions current in the various fields of ancient Near Eastern Studies.

The second part of the Acquisitions List is an alphabetized analytical entry for each essay, article, review and other bibliographically discrete item published within the material listed in the first part of the Acquisitions List. This section includes every item of relevance to the ancient Near East. Each of the first two issues of the Acquisitions List (which appeared in January and March 1991) included more than two thousand analytical entries. The analytical list ends with a series of indexes: a list of key-words appearing in the titles of the analytical entries which gives the user an unprecedented tool for access to current bibliographical data, an index of books reviewed, and a complete listing of primary and secondary authors.

Each issue of the Acquisitions List is perfect bound and is more than two hundred pages in length. The subscription price for members of The Oriental Institute is \$40 per year.

*For further information please contact: Charles E. Jones, Research Archivist—Bibliographer, The Oriental Institute, 1155 East 58th Street, Chicago, Illinois 60637-1569.*



*Iron Age II-III pottery from Luristan.*

*Incidental illustrations are taken from Schmidt, Erich F.; van Loon, Maurits N.; Curvers, Hans H. The Holmes Expeditions to Luristan. With a contribution by J.A. Brinkman. Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1989. (Oriental Institute Publications, Volume 108). ISBN: 0-918986-53-2. \$85.00*

## News & Notes

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All inquiries, comments, and suggestions are welcome.

# SUNDAY FILMS

All films are shown at 2:00 p.m. in Breasted Hall and are free of charge. Each lasts approximately 30 minutes; a tour of the galleries will be offered immediately following the program.

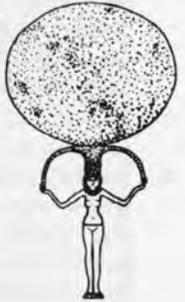
<b>JULY</b>	5	<b>Iran: Landmarks in the Desert</b>
	12	<b>Nubia 64: Saving the Temples of Ancient Egypt</b>
	19	<b>Egypt: Gift of the Nile</b>
	26	<b>Iraq: Stairway to the Gods</b>
<b>AUGUST</b>	2	<b>Megiddo: City of Destruction</b>
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<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	6	<b>Egypt's Pyramids</b>
	13	<b>Rivers of Time</b>
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	27	<b>Nubia 64: Saving the Temples of Ancient Egypt</b>

# F O R T H C O M I N G P U B L I C A T I O N S

## **Excavations Between Abu Simbel and the Sudan Frontier, Part 6: New Kingdom Remains from Cemeteries R, V, K, S, and W at Qustul and Adindan.** *Bruce B. Williams*

Some of the objects found in this publication will be coffins with Egyptian names, a wide variety of stone vessels including some of special quality, cosmetic equipment, and scarabs. The objects found in tomb V 48 are the most interesting and include the coffin of the Lady Senisenbu, stone vessels, a nested set of metal bowls, and a mirror with a handle in the form of a nude goddess.

- Oriental Institute Nubian Expedition 6



## **A Late Period Hieratic Wisdom Text [P. Brooklyn 47.218.135]**

*Richard Jasnow*

This volume will contain an edition of P. Brooklyn 47.218.135, a papyrus dated to the fifth or fourth century B.C. in the collection of the Brooklyn Museum. Despite the relatively poor state of preservation, the papyrus contains a wisdom text of considerable interest, as it is one of the few literary works written in the hieratic script known from the Late period. Classicists and biblical scholars will certainly wish to consider possible connections with Hellenistic and biblical wisdom traditions.

- Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization 52

## **Life in a Multi-Cultural Society: Egypt from Cambyses to Constantine and Beyond.** *Janet H. Johnson, ed.*

Egypt from its incorporation into the Persian empire in 525 B.C. was home to a multi-cultural society with several strong cultural traditions. Scholars from a variety of disciplines were invited to a symposium held September, 1990 at the Oriental Institute in conjunction with the 4th International Congress of Demotists. Most of the papers presented at the symposium will be included in this volume.

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# A <sup>A</sup> "Lost" Tribe of R A B

by Fred M. Donner, Associate Professor, The Oriental Institute and Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations

Arabia at the time of the prophet Muhammad (ca. 570–632 C.E.) was inhabited by people who, with few exceptions, thought of themselves as belonging to one or another "tribe." Some of these tribal groups were powerful, some relatively weak; some consisted mainly of pastoral nomads, some mainly of villagers or townsmen, and some were mixed. Tribes interacted constantly with one another — trading, intermarrying, making alliances, competing for scarce resources, be they crucial grazing grounds for their flocks or control of lucrative oases or caravan routes. In such a "tribal society", however, the individual was identified first and foremost by his tribal affiliation, whatever he did or wherever he went, and it was to his tribe and the subordinate lineages within it that the individual looked for protection and social support.

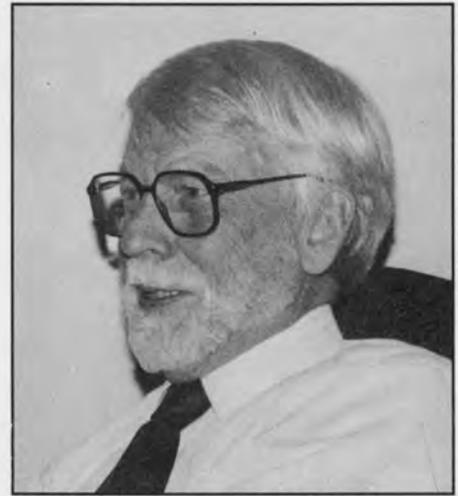
The sources for early Islamic history are very informative on the history of many Arabian tribes, because they provided the early Islamic state's soldiers and administrators. When we examine this "tribal" history, however, some interesting problems arise. We note, for example, that some of the tribes identifiable in the seventh century, such as the Sulaym or Muzayna, are still in existence today — that is, their corporate tribal identity has been maintained continuously for over fourteen centuries, sometimes even through prolonged periods of hardship and strife. Many other tribes, on the other hand, have not survived; we read of them in the historical sources for a certain period, but eventually references to them get sparse and then vanish entirely. Moreover, this happens even to some tribes that were, at one time, numerous, powerful, and in control of significant economic resources. The dynamics underlying the survival or abandonment of corporate tribal identities is a tantalizing puzzle in the field of social theory.

In a recent paper read at a conference of early Islamic historians in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in May 1992, I examined the case of the Hanifa tribe of eastern Arabia. Hanifa are especially interesting because they were, at the time of the rise of Islam, one of the most powerful and economically well-endowed tribes of the Arabian peninsula. They dominated the agriculturally rich region of al-Yamama, had significant commercial interests, and were allied with the Sasanian Great Kings of Iran as vassals, a position that brought them much prestige and almost certainly royal subventions as well. They were powerful enough to raise stiff resistance to the spread of Islam in the so-called *ridda* (apostasy) wars in the early seventh century C.E., and, though subjugated by the Muslims, they were still quite numerous and powerful in eastern Arabia later in the century. Yet, within five centuries they simply disappear from our sources. I argue that their disappearance is linked to a severe decline in their status, which caused individuals in the tribe to attach themselves as clients to other, more prestigious, tribal groups and then slowly give up their identity as members of Hanifa in favor of an identification with the higher-status tribe of their patrons. Several factors contributed to their fall in status. They had resisted the spread of Islam, so committed Muslims tended to look askance at Hanifas on religious grounds. The defeat of Hanifa by the Muslims during the *ridda* wars was accompanied by great loss of fighting men, and the remaining women may have been absorbed through intermarriage into other tribes—and in a patrilineal society such as Arabia's, their offspring would have been considered members of the other tribes. The defeat of Hanifa also meant the seizure of many of their properties by members of other tribes, which could have resulted in the economic impoverishment of those many

members of Hanifa who remained in their traditional territories. It thus seems likely that Hanifas gradually relinquished their corporate tribal identity by aligning themselves through clientage with other groups, so that after several centuries of this process the tribe of Hanifa had ceased to exist as an effective social unit.

*Fred Donner, who specializes in early Islamic social history and historiography, was recently elected president of Middle East Medievalists, and is also the editor of the MEM newsletter, Al-'Usur al-Wusta.*

I A



**Gösta Werner Ahlström**  
**August 27, 1918–January 17, 1992**

Gösta Ahlström was born in Sandviken, Sweden, and received his Th.D. from Uppsala University in 1959. He came to the University of Chicago as a visiting professor of Old Testament Studies in 1962, and in 1976 was jointly appointed Professor of Old Testament and Ancient Palestinian Studies in the Divinity School and in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations.

Actively involved with the American Schools of Oriental Research, Ahlström served on a number of ASOR committees and participated in excavations in Israel, Cyprus, and Tunisia. He was the Annual Professor at the Albright Institute in Jerusalem in 1969–1970.

Professor Ahlström is survived by his wife, Ria, a Museum volunteer, and his daughter Pernilla and son Hans. His book, *The History of Ancient Palestine From the Paleolithic Period to Alexander's Conquest*, is being published posthumously by the University of Sheffield Press, England.

## **E**EDITOR'S CORRECTION:

The excerpt of the poem quoted on the front page of the Spring 1992 *News & Notes*, "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer", was not written by Percy Bysshe Shelley, but by John Keats. We apologize for the error.

**HARRY OFFNER** will be giving a lecture entitled "Translating Ancient Documents for the Modern Reader" in Melbourne, Australia, on Monday, July 13, 1992, at the International Congress of Religion and Biblical Studies.



**Children make replicas of ancient Nubian objects in the museum gallery.**



**More than 500 people visited The Oriental Institute Museum to view the new Nubian exhibit.**

# Discover Nubia! Day

On Sunday, February 8th, over 500 people came to The Oriental Institute Museum to learn about Nubia. This event, presented by the Museum, was scheduled to celebrate the opening of the exhibit *Vanished Kingdoms of the Nile: The Rediscovery of Ancient Nubia*. Throughout the day, the galleries and auditorium were crowded as families and individuals viewed films, participated in craft activities, listened to informal talks and had the opportunity to examine modern and ancient Nubian artifacts.

The crafts which the education department specially designed for the event were a huge success; replicas of Ballana crowns were carefully assembled and placed on heads; Nubian necklaces and replicas of Nubian hand mirrors were proudly carried out the door. In all, over 250 craft projects were completed during the course of the day.

Mr. Awad Abdelgadir, a Nubian who specializes in children's education programs, took children and adults alike on a safari and tour of his Nubian village, and later he related the stories which his parents and grandparents told to him as a child.

Discover Nubia! Day attracted youth groups from as far away as Milwaukee and gave many Chicago children and their families their first introduction to the resources of The Oriental Institute.



**Awad Abdelgadir, a Sudanese Nubian from the village of Az-Zawrat, gave programs on daily life in modern Nubia.**

## Fund for Research on the Dead Sea Scrolls and other Hebrew and Aramaic Manuscripts

The Oriental Institute is pleased to announce the establishment of a **Fund for Research on the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Hebrew and Aramaic Manuscripts**. During the past several years, there has been a great surge of interest in the Scrolls as scholars here and abroad pressed for the release of the unpublished texts. Now that the texts have been released, there is a need for funding to enable Oriental Institute scholars to reach their research and publications goals, and contribute with increasing effectiveness to the growing debate on Qumran origins and other significant topics of investigation.

For further information about the Fund for Research on the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Hebrew and Aramaic Manuscripts, please contact The Oriental Institute Development Office at 312/702-9513.

*Parchment fragment of scroll from non-biblical text.*



*Pot with Frog and Floral Decoration, Ballana, Meroitic Period, about 200 A.D.*

## SPECIAL EXHIBITS

at The Oriental Institute Museum  
in conjunction with the  
**Centennial Celebration**  
of The University of Chicago  
continuing through December 1992

- **Sifting the Sands of Time:**  
The Oriental Institute and the Ancient Near East
- **Vanished Kingdoms of the Nile:**  
The Rediscovery of Ancient Nubia

A reminder: Museum hours are  
Tuesday-Saturday 10:00-4:00, Wednesday 10:00-8:30,  
Sunday 12:00-4:00. Closed Monday.



*Mountain village outside of Sana. (photo courtesy of Raymond Tindel)*

## INTO THE HADRAMAWT: The Oriental Institute Tour to Yemen, 18 January–4 February 1992

*by Raymond D. Tindel, Registrar,  
The Oriental Institute*

Virtually everything about Yemen is dramatic. The earth itself has been crumpled by tectonic forces to produce a rugged landscape of mountain crags and plunging valleys. In ancient times Yemen was the land of frankincense, myrrh, and the Queen of Sheba. Today, it is a land just emerging from the Middle Ages, where towns still have city walls and gates, and tribesmen go armed, usually with a *jambiyah*, a large curved knife worn at the front of the belt and an AK-47 assault rifle.

Gretel Braidwood and I have just returned from leading an Oriental Institute tour to Yemen. We had prepared for this trip to Yemen with some care, as there had been many changes since my last visit to the region in 1984. On the positive side, North and

South Yemen had recently united, so it would be possible this time to visit Aden and the Hadramawt, formerly part of the inaccessible People's Democratic Republic. On the other hand, during the Gulf crisis Yemen had sided openly with Iraq. This had produced strained relations with the U.S. and created various economic problems for Yemen. Our party of eighteen would be one of the first American groups to enter the country since the crisis and we were not sure what conditions would be; we prepared for all sorts of difficulties which never occurred.

Any concerns we might have had over the kind of welcome we might receive evaporated almost immediately. We were met at Sana airport by our local guide, Mohammed Murshid of Universal Travel and Tourism. At some point early in our conversation he said, "Don't worry, we take care of everything," and they did.

Sana was still reassuringly exotic. While the suburbs have sprawled in every direction, the heart of the ancient



*Jibla. (photo courtesy of Raymond Tindel)*

city has remained intact. The *suq* is still a crowded maze of narrow alleys and tiny shops stuffed with everything from spices to aluminum pans. Centuries-old houses, some with alabaster windows, still line winding, stone-paved streets. Each house is, in effect, a fortified tower, entered through a massive and usually ornate door. Ground floors are generally windowless. Upper floors usually have more windows, while a large *mafraj*, or sitting room, on the top floor as many as six stories up, will have broad windows giving a grand prospect over the city. This concern with defensibility is not trivial; Sana was sacked by tribesmen in 1948 and again came under siege in 1967 during Yemen's civil war.

We had wonderful meals, ranging from traditional Yemeni fare at a *funduk* — hotel — in Kawkaban to a banquet attended also by the U. S. Ambassador Arthur Hughes, Professor McGuire Gibson of The Oriental Institute, and

Dr. Yusuf Abdullah of the Department of Antiquities.

Yemen is a photographer's paradise (or despair, if you have not brought enough film). Outside Sana small farming villages seem to grow almost organically from mountain crags, with dozens of narrow terraces stepping down the slopes below them. Each terrace is carefully arranged to catch its share of the area's limited rainfall. Many of the mountain towns still retain their essentially medieval character. Walls and fortified gateways defend the old quarters of Thula, Kawkaban, and Amran, and many of the streets inside these towns are too narrow and contorted for motor vehicles; we often had to abandon our Land Cruisers and make our way on foot. At Hajjarah, it is a stairway rather than a road which leads up to the city's main gate. It takes considerable self-discipline not to stop at every turn in the road to catch a view even more dramatic than the last.

Yemen's principal Red Sea port, fishing dhows still bring in their catch. Alas, they are no longer unloaded offshore by porters who slog through the surf with great bundles of fish; the catch is now unloaded at docks into wheelbarrows, less picturesque but much easier for the men who do the work.

In the old mountain capital of Ta'iz the palace of Imam Ahmed has been preserved as a museum, kept as the Imam left it at his death in 1962. There are cabinets full of the bottles of medicine which he took to try to relieve the pain from the wounds he suffered in various assassination attempts. The Imam was known to like mechanical contrivances, so there are also cabinets full of the clocks and watches he received as presents from visiting diplomatic delegations.

For me the great adventure of the trip was to be able to cross over into what had once been South Yemen, *terra incognita*, and to visit Aden and the Hadramawt. In ancient times the Kingdom of Hadramawt was a rival to Saba and Himyar, the frankincense country *par excellence*. South Arabians dominated the spice trade in antiquity, and frankincense sometimes brought its weight in gold in the markets in Rome. Yemenis today still use various kinds of incense, and frankincense is readily available in the *suq* in Ta'iz.

Many Hadramis have traditionally gone abroad to make their fortunes, returning after a number of years to a comfortable retirement. Early Western travellers into the area were often amazed to find white-washed mud brick mansions complete with irrigated gardens and even swimming pools.

Mud brick is clearly the architectural medium of the Hadramawt, and each town and village seems to have its own

*continued on page 22*



**Oriental Institute members and volunteers, from left, Mary Grimshaw, Joan Rosenberg, Alice Rubash, Norman Rubash, and Teresa Hintzke. (photo courtesy of Joan Rosenberg)**

Our passage through the Tihama, South Arabia's coastal desert, was like a visit to Africa. Here the tower houses of the highlands are replaced by clusters of round, single-story dwellings with conical thatched roofs, surrounded by thornbush enclosures. At Hodeida,

# NEW VIEWS ON OLD LANDSCAPES

by T.J. Wilkinson, Research Associate, The Oriental Institute



**Iron Age (first millennium B.C.) fields along the edge of the mountains of northern Oman. Note how the stones have been cleared from the field area and a stone-lined channel constructed through the field center. The water source was probably a well at the far end of the channel.**

When introduced, for example at a party, I will often get the response: “so you’re an archaeologist, what do you dig?” alternatively, if I am introduced as a geomorphologist, there follows a cloying silence, only broken by something such as “a geo-what-ographist?” The best reaction I ever had was at a small party in Baghdad, when the inquisitor (a civil engineer), on hearing of my trade, immediately hauled me away to view maps detailing ancient sites and irrigation systems near the Jebel Hamrin. As I will therefore try to explain, I am an odd, hybrid beast, neither archaeologist nor a real earth scientist; although I do excavate archaeological sites and have drawn countless potsherds, I am happiest when I am examining the complete landscape.

As a new employee at The Oriental Institute, my role is to shift some of our focus away from the sites themselves, or the finds they contain, in order to look at the entire settled landscape of cities, towns, villages, farmsteads, and even campsites, as well as the web of roads that linked them, and

the fields or water systems that sustained them.

By studying the ancient landscape in its entirety we can gain some idea of the ancient geography, economy and environment of a particular society. Of course, this is not the first time that such work has been undertaken at The Oriental Institute, because pioneering work on this subject has been undertaken by, amongst others, Thorkild Jacobsen, Robert Braidwood and Robert McCormick Adams. During recent years, however, advances in techniques, both high and low tech, have enabled us to go much further in describing the landscape than was possible a few decades ago. Here I will outline the types of results that we can obtain, and why I think they are important for anybody who is interested in the ancient world.

My chosen unit of study is the region, or any area of land that is big enough to allow us to study the rise and fall of towns and their hinterland(s). If no site survey has been done, or if it was too

general to be of value, I will embark on a site survey. Such work enables us, once the diagnostic pottery has been sorted, classified and counted, to locate where the main towns, villages and other settlements were (the settlement hierarchy). Such work needs to be undertaken critically, because landscapes are not stable and all too often one finds that sites may have been erased (or partly so) by an errant river, or virtually obliterated from view by sediments washed, for example, from the adjacent hills. Although it is not good to have gaps in the settlement geography, if we must have gaps, it is crucial to know where they are. This problem is illustrated by an example from the Euphrates valley in Syria where the Euphrates, by perpetually sweeping along a preferred course, has eroded away numerous ancient settlement sites, some perhaps relating to the Bronze Age kingdom of Emar, to leave only the remains that stand proudly on the hillslopes above the river. Such remains are frequently only a small portion of the former populated area, and often merely comprise a biased

glimpse of what had formerly been present, usually simply a citadel or cemetery. Particularly frustrating is the alluvial landscape of southern Iraq where sites, ancient river channels, canals and fields can be buried beneath the alluvium. In such cases, the entire landscape is not buried, but sufficient may have been lost for us to tread warily when interpreting, for example, the past pattern of settlement and population.

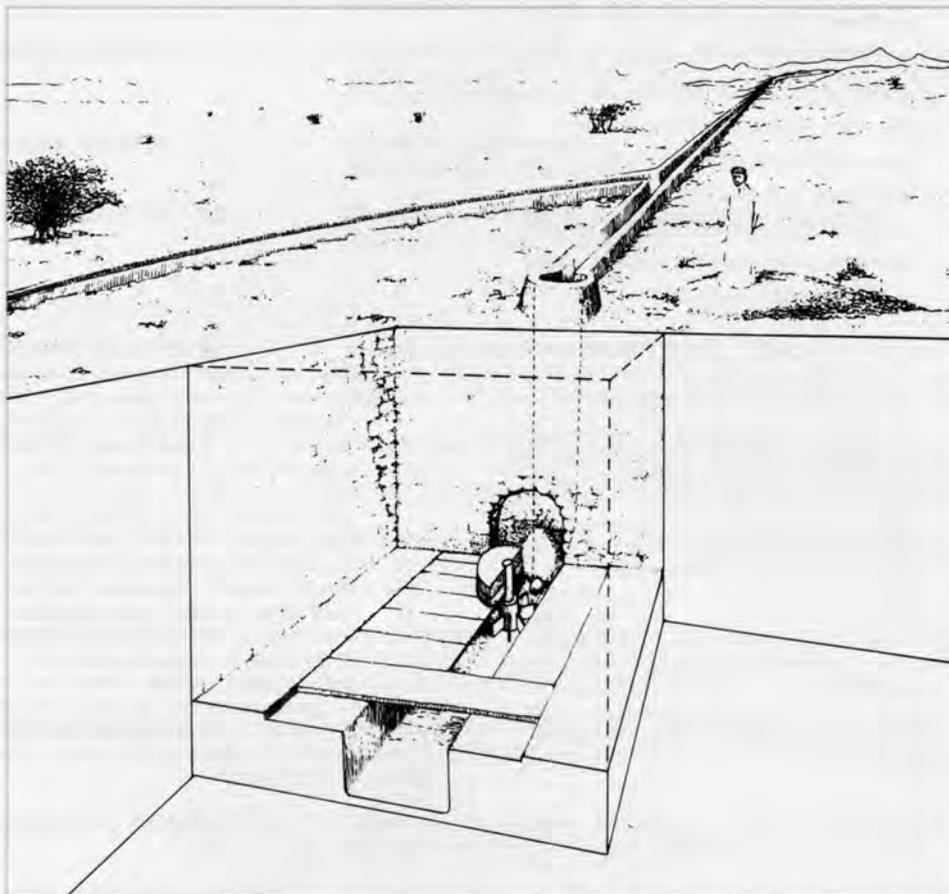
To the uninitiated, many of the archaeologically most important parts of the Middle East consist of dull, featureless plains. Detailed study of such areas can, however, demonstrate the existence of crucial features that can significantly

amplify the record of archaeological sites alone. For example in many parts of Upper Mesopotamia (northern Iraq and Syria, and parts of southeastern Turkey), long straight valleys can radiate out from sites or cross the landscape from site to site. Such "hollow ways" seem to be the lines of ancient routes that were worn and compressed by the movement of human populations and their beasts. These pathways then become further enlarged by the flow of storm runoff to produce features very similar to the sunken lanes of Britain and Europe. Although such features have been interpreted as canals, unlike canals, when plotted on regional maps, these features tend to be limited to within the zone of rainfed farming.

Further south they are much less common, and their place is taken by true canals which show the classic attributes of real canals with a channel cut and adjacent banks of upcast spoil. Therefore if such hollow ways are indeed ancient roads, they provide important evidence, not only of how people travelled to their fields or pastures, but also where the ancient trade routes might have been. Such information in turn is valuable for those who study ancient itineraries on cuneiform tablets.

All sorts of water supply features can leave their mark upon the landscape. The evidence for canals I have described, but sometimes, as in southern Mesopotamia, such features will have been planed away by the wind so that all one can see is the fill within the canal, often visible clearly against the background of soil through which it had been cut. Such canals were the life blood of Sumerian and later societies, not only supplying the water but also providing a convenient mode of transport between settlements or from settlements to their fields. Less grand, but equally important, are the remains of wells and water holes. These can show up as low mounds of upcast spoil, or slightly buried masses of soil discoloured by the long-continued effect of waterlogging. In northern Iraq such features have now been traced as far back as six thousand years B.C.

*continued on page 18*



**Artist's reconstruction of an early Islamic (ninth-tenth century A.D.) underground water mill on a cement water supply channel near Sohar, Oman (drawing by L. Couvert). From *Journal of Oman Studies*, volume 9, 1987.**

*continued from page 17*

We have all seen fields that remain as walled enclosures or stone terraces, but in the archaeological landscape fields can remain as more subtle traces. For example in areas of stony terrain, field areas have often been cleaned of stones (figure 1) and those stones piled up within the fields as cairns or placed around the outside to keep animals out. In many places it is even possible to suggest where humans have been manuring with settlement-derived organic wastes, because in such areas the ancient field soils are strewn with small potsherds, and other artifacts which were formerly contained within the manure and other wastes that were scraped from the adjacent settlements. Enthusiasts should note that good examples of such pottery scatters were found for several kilometres around the site of Tell Sweyhat, discussed by Tom Holland on p. 3 of *News & Notes*.

In order to pursue landscape archaeology, although it is possible to simply walk around and plot features with a surveying compass or theodolite, it is usually better to view the landscape from above using air photographs, satellite images, or even very detailed topographic maps. Ideally such aids enable us to discern and plot ancient routes (hollow ways), canals, archaeological sites (in all their variety), wells, mining sites, quarries, certain types of ancient fields, and many other features. Although they do not tell us much about the density of artifacts upon the surface, they can still provide us with the basic framework for mapping such features.

Not only does landscape archaeology provide a valuable link between sites, routes systems, agricultural economies and texts, it can also shed light on environmental change. Too often one hears that when sites have been found in, for example, a semi-arid area: "it must have been wetter then." In some cases that may be true, but to prove it, it is necessary to harness the skills of the landscape archaeologist and geomorphologist together with other specialists such as palaeobotanists, animal bone specialists and geochemists. Specifically, the landscape archaeologist can play a crucial role in identifying to what extent the landscape has been disturbed by ancient excavations or over-used by intensive cultivation practises. Furthermore certain features, such as the hollow ways noted above, can lead to the rapid growth of gully systems which can then develop into fully-fledged badlands. In turn such features can either increase the chance of floods downslope or can generate sufficient sediment to result in considerable inconvenience to the inhabitants of areas downslope. In an era when we are all becoming more aware of the effects of humans on the landscape, the study of ancient archaeological landscapes can therefore also teach us a considerable amount about environmental change.

*T.J. Wilkinson was born in Essex, England, and has a degree in geography from London University and McMaster University (Hamilton, Ontario). He has worked on archaeological projects since 1972 for various governments and universities in Turkey, Greece, Syria, Iran, Oman, and Saudi Arabia, as well as in Canada and Britain. He was a member of the team at Tell es-Sweyhat in 1974 and 1991, and was also on the University of Chicago team to Kurban Höyük on the Euphrates in Turkey (1980-1984). Before his present appointment as Research Associate at The Oriental Institute, he was resident in Baghdad as Assistant Director of the British Archaeological Expedition to Iraq.*

# SPECIAL INTEREST TOURS SUMMER 1992

## FOR ADULTS

Each Friday at 11:30 in July and August, a special tour will be offered to highlight a selected gallery or topic. Tours last approximately 45 minutes. There is no fee and no reservations are needed. Meet in the Museum lobby. For further information, please call the Education Office at 312/702-9507.

## FOR CHILDREN

Children's Special Interest tours, recommended for children ages 6-12, are given Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. in July and August. Each tour lasts approximately 30 minutes and will be followed by an optional pencil and paper gallery activity. Total program time is approximately one hour. **Please note that these tours are intended for individual children or family groups; they cannot accommodate larger groups from organized community centers. Larger groups must make arrangements on an individualized basis.** There is no fee and no reservations are needed. Meet in the Museum Lobby. For further information, contact the Museum Education Office at 312/702-9507.



*Pair of horse-bit cheekpieces said to be from Luristan.*

- FRIDAY, JULY 10** **Persepolis and the Persian Empire** This tour will feature artifacts from the Persian capital city of Persepolis as an introduction to the Achaemenid empire and the lands it ruled in the ancient Near East.
- FRIDAY, JULY 17** **World of the Pharaohs** Pyramids, mummies, the Book of the Dead, and a colossal statue of King Tut are among the many artifacts to be viewed as this tour discusses the ancient Egyptian people throughout 3000 years of history along the Nile.
- FRIDAY, JULY 24** **Cities of Ancient Iraq** Ancient Iraq was home to the early Sumerian city-states, to Babylon of Hammurabi and Nebuchadnezzar, and to the fortress-cities of the mighty Assyrian kings. This tour will look at artifacts from the many civilizations of ancient Iraq.
- FRIDAY, JULY 31** **From the Hand of the Archaeologist** Oriental Institute archaeologists have excavated at more than 70 sites since the Institute was founded in 1919. This tour will look at some of the artifacts discovered and discuss some of the sites at which they were found.
- FRIDAY, AUGUST 7** **Ancient Nubia and Egypt** The special exhibit "*Vanished Kingdom of the Nile: The Rediscovery of Ancient Nubia*" will be the starting point for a look at ancient Nubia and the interactions of Nubia and Egypt.
- FRIDAY, AUGUST 14** **Treasures of the Oriental Institute Museum** This tour will highlight The Oriental Institute's important collections with choices of artifacts from the great civilizations of the ancient Near East. Objects from Egypt, Sumer, Babylon, Assyria, and Persia will be featured.
- FRIDAY, AUGUST 21** **World of the Pharaohs**  
*Repeat of July 17 program*
- FRIDAY, AUGUST 28** **Treasures of the Oriental Institute Museum**  
*Repeat of August 14 program*
- THURSDAY, JULY 2** **A Child's Life in Ancient Egypt** Children in ancient Egypt generally shared the lives and activities of their parents, much as children do today. We will see the objects these children used long ago and view representations of some ancient Egyptian children and their parents.
- THURSDAY, JULY 9** **Treasures and Wonders of the Past** Beautiful painted pots and objects made of gold are among the exciting finds that Oriental Institute archaeologists have made. We will view some treasures of the museum collection and hear how they were discovered.
- THURSDAY, JULY 16** **Hieroglyphic Writing** The ancient Egyptians used hundreds of tiny pictures as symbols in their writing system. We will identify some of these hieroglyphs in the gallery and talk about this fascinating way of writing.
- THURSDAY, JULY 23** **Pyramids and Mummies** We will see scale models of a mastaba and a pyramid to learn about the tombs of Egyptian pharaohs and discuss the mummies and funerary equipment to learn how Egyptians prepared the body for its "house of eternity."
- THURSDAY, JULY 30** **The Bull With Five Legs** We will talk about why the 40 ton bull from Iraq has five legs and a human head and how it was moved half way around the world to its present home in The Oriental Institute.
- THURSDAY, AUGUST 13** **What an Archaeologist Does** We will see various kinds of artifacts discovered by archaeologists and talk about how they help learn about the past.
- THURSDAY, AUGUST 20** **Egyptian Magic** We will look at magical amulets and figurines of gods in ancient Egypt as we hear some of the stories in which they play a part.
- THURSDAY, AUGUST 27** **Nubia: Vanished Kingdoms of the Nile** When Lake Nasser formed behind the Aswan High Dam, much of ancient Nubia became submerged under the waters. We will look at artifacts excavated from these now lost lands whose kings once ruled Egypt.

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## LITERATURE AND PROPAGANDA: MIDDLE KINGDOM EGYPT JUNE 17–AUGUST 5, 1992

Dynasty XII of Egyptian history represents a period when literature was employed to support political developments. Amenemhat I had a prophecy written to announce his assumption of kingship. When he was assassinated, another set of texts were composed to assure his son and successor's smooth takeover of power. Later, Senwosret III disestablished the powerful provincial monarchs. They produced a complaint text, authored by a famous scribe, to write a series of veiled diatribes against pharaoh and his dynasty. Others, elevated by the king, penned loyalist writings lauding the pharaoh for their status in society. In addition to these texts, the class will read the story of Sinuhe, a XII Dynasty tale originating perhaps as a biography and certainly used also for political purposes. A film treatment of this story will be examined in a class viewing of **The Egyptian**, a film based on Mika Waltari's novel of the same title.

### REQUIRED TEXTS:

Lichtheim, Miriam. *Ancient Egyptian Literature*. Berkeley, University of California, 1975 (paperback ed.) Volume I: The Old and Middle Kingdoms.

Waltari, Mika. *The Egyptian*. (translated Naomi Walford) New York, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1949, (out of print, get from public library, if possible, or try a used book store).

Parkinson, R.B. *Voices from Ancient Egypt*. An Anthology of Middle Kingdom Writings (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991).

Class will meet at The Oriental Institute on Wednesdays, June 17–August 5 from 7–9 p.m.

### TUITION:

Membership to The Oriental Institute is required. Tuition for the course is \$75 for members. Non-members \$105 (includes a one-year membership to The Oriental Institute). For further information, please call the Education Office at 312/702-9507.

## THE AMARNA PERIOD IN EGYPT JUNE 20–AUGUST 15, 1992

This class will feature an advanced discussion of the period of Egyptian history known as the Amarna Age (ca. 1400–1325 B.C.), so-named after the site of Akhenaten's capital at El-Amarna in Middle Egypt. The reigns covered will include Amenhotep III, Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten), Nefertiti, Smenkhkare, Tutankhamun, Ay, and finally Horemheb. The focus will include the international scene, including Mitanni, the Hittite Empire, and the Syrian vassals of Egypt — all illuminated in the El-Amarna tablets found in 1887 at Akhenaten's capital. Recent research, which has shed new light on the Amarna period, will be included in the class. (This class is intended for those who already have a background in Egyptian history).

### REQUIRED TEXTS:

Redford, Donald B. *Akhenaten: The Heretic King*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1984.

Murnane, William J. *The Road to Kadesh*. Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilizations, no. 42. Chicago, The Oriental Institute, 1985.

Class will meet at The Oriental Institute on Saturdays June 20–August 15 from 10 a.m.–noon. There will be no class on July 4th.

### TUITION:

Membership to The Oriental Institute is required. Tuition for the course is \$75 for members. Non-members \$105 (includes a one-year membership to The Oriental Institute). For further information, please call the Education Office at 312/702-9507.

### INSTRUCTOR:

The instructor for Literature and Propaganda and The Amarna Age is Frank Yurco, a Ph.D. candidate at The Oriental Institute. Frank has taught numerous courses on topics of ancient Egyptian history, culture and language at both The Oriental Institute and the Field Museum.

# R | S | E | S

## INTRODUCTION TO ANCIENT EGYPTIAN HIEROGLYPHS JUNE 20–AUGUST 15, 1992

Utilizing a very supportive and structured approach, this class will teach the students to read the language of ancient Egypt. Specifically, this refers to that phase known as “middle Egyptian”, which the ancients themselves considered the classical form of their language, and in which most of their great literary and religious texts were written.

By reading texts in class and performing various assigned exercises, the students, under the tutelage of their Egyptologist-teacher, will learn the subtleties of the Egyptian grammatical system. The students will also learn to write ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs. In the eight week course, students will translate and make hand-copies of authentic ancient Egyptian historical, literary and religious inscriptions which will be provided by the instructor.

### REQUIRED TEXTS:

- Gardiner, A.H. *Egyptian Grammar* (3rd edition, revised)

A packet of auxiliary readings, bibliography, hieroglyphic inscriptions, charts and diagrams will also be distributed in class.

### INSTRUCTOR:

Peter Piccione, Ph.D., is an Egyptologist who has both excavated and worked as an epigrapher in Egypt and is an experienced teacher of hieroglyphs.

Class will meet at The Oriental Institute on Saturdays — June 20–August 15 from 10 a.m. –noon.

### TUITION:

Membership to The Oriental Institute is required. Tuition for the course is \$75 for members. Non-members \$105 (includes a one-year membership to The Oriental Institute). For further information, please call the Education Office at 312/702-9507.

Please enroll me in the following course:

\_\_\_\_\_ Literature and Propaganda \_\_\_\_\_ The Amarna Age

\_\_\_\_\_ Introduction to Hieroglyphs

\_\_\_\_\_ I am a member and enclose \$75 for tuition

\_\_\_\_\_ I am not a member, and enclose a SEPARATE \$30 check for an annual membership

\_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to The Oriental Institute, and send to The Oriental Institute Education Office, 1155 East 58th Street, Chicago, Illinois 60637.

*continued from page 15*

traditions. The sultan's palace in Seiyun, now a museum, is probably the grandest example of one style which consists of a basically squarish structure with tapering round towers at all four corners. And then there are the towers of Shibam, the so-called "Chicago of the Desert." Its tightly-packed six- and seven-story tower houses with their clean exterior lines produce a skyline which reminded early twentieth century travellers of the skyscrapers of downtown Chicago.

There is currently a building boom underway in the Hadramawt. Hadramis seem to have saved their money until the Communists went away, and there are open lots everywhere covered with mud brick drying in the sun. Ornament is in. Facades range from spiked crenelations along the roof lines which resemble candles on a birthday cake to the columns and triangular pediments of a Greek temple. The structures are then often whitewashed with detailing in blue, pink, yellow, and pale green.

As we returned to Sana we visited Zafar, once the Himyarite capital of South Arabia and now site of perhaps the world's most remote museum. It was heartwarming to be remembered by the villagers with whom I had worked ten years and more ago.

Our last foray from Sana took us out to the beginnings of civilization in South Arabia, to visit the ruins of Baraqish and Marib on the edge of the Empty Quarter, the great desert occupying the center of the Arabian Peninsula. Baraqish is the best preserved pre-Islamic ruin in South Arabia. At Marib the stone from ancient temples has been reused in the old Islamic town, which is itself now nearly deserted and tumbling down. Nearby, a new Marib has sprung up, fed by oil revenues and irrigation. New fields and orchards are

being carved out of what were once the fields of pre-Islamic Sabaeen Marib.

And so, as the sun set slowly in the west, we bade fond farewell . . .



*Columns of the Awam Temple at Marib. (photo courtesy of Raymond Tindel)*

**PARTICIPANTS IN THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE MEMBERS' TRAVEL PROGRAM TRIP TO YEMEN WERE:**

James Buchanan, Vancouver, British Columbia  
 Leila Foster, Evanston, Illinois  
 Mary Grimshaw, Wilmette, Illinois  
 Teresa Hintzke, Winnetka, Illinois  
 Julie Ann McGrath, Tinley Park, Illinois  
 George and Sally Pagels, Chicago, Illinois  
 Ann Cooper Penning, Nerja, Spain  
 Emily Rosenberg, Oakland, California  
 Joan Rosenberg, Highland Park, Illinois  
 Norman and Alice Rubash, Evanston, Illinois  
 Helen Smith, Waterloo, Ontario  
 Ann Swartwout, Birmingham, Michigan  
 Mary Anne Swoboda, Birmingham, Michigan  
 Robert and Mary Upton, St. Joseph, Michigan  
 June Wendnagel, Wilmette, Illinois

## ***The Oriental Institute: Its Collection and Its Work***

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### ▶ A VIDEO CASSETTE ◀

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The Oriental Institute Museum Education Office is pleased to announce the release of *The Oriental Institute: Its Collection and Its Work*. This twenty minute videotape highlights artifacts in the museum to provide an overview of ancient Near Eastern history and introduce the work of the Oriental Institute. Computer-animated maps, photographs of excavation sites and mention of the several dictionary projects of the Institute are also included.

Developed as an educational resource for use by school groups, the videotape will be of interest to anyone who wishes to learn about the The Oriental Institute,

to be introduced to the history of the ancient Near East, or to view images of the art and culture of ancient Near Eastern peoples.

*The Oriental Institute: Its Collection and Its Work* is closed captioned for the hearing impaired.

The videocassettes are available for purchase at The Suq for \$14.95. The mail-order price for members is \$18.28 (including discount, shipping, tax) and \$19.90 for non-members (including shipping and tax). For further information, please contact The Suq at 312/702-9509.

**P**lease send me *The Oriental Institute: Its Collection and Its Work*

\_\_\_\_\_ I am a member and enclose \$18.28

\_\_\_\_\_ I am not a member, and enclose \$19.90.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am not a member but enclose a SEPARATE \$30 check for an annual membership and \$18.28 for the video tape.

Please add .25 shipping charge for each additional tape ordered. If ordering more than one tape, members should deduct 10% discount from total videotape cost and add 8% sales tax.

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Permit No. 1504



## **NUBIAN FROG PIN**

The *Suq* is pleased to offer a new pin in the form of a frog. The frog appears on a Nubian jar of the first-second centuries A.D. currently on display in the exhibit *Vanished Kingdoms of the Nile: The Rediscovery of Ancient Nubia*. The pin is made of hard blue-green enamel with gold metal highlights, measuring 7/8" tall, and has a tie tack post so that it can be used either as a tie tack or lapel pin. The frog was a symbol of regeneration in Egypt and Nubia. **Members \$ 4.37** (Includes discount and tax).

**Non-members \$4.86** (Includes tax). **Postage \$3.75**. Please send your check, made payable to The Oriental Institute, to The Suq, The Oriental Institute, 1155 East 58th Street, Chicago, Illinois 60637. Phone orders (312) 702-9509.

**See illustration on page 13.**