UNESCO SPONSORS PREHISTORY SEMINAR IN U.S.S.R.

April 17, 1982

Greetings from Robert J. Braidwood

I write this on my way back from Moscow and the central Asian S.S.R. of Tadjikistan. I am in our accustomed room overlooking the Bosphorus in Istanbul, in the house of our Turkish colleague, Halet Ėmambey. The reason for the trip was an invitation to an international symposium, sponsored by UNESCO, in the Tadjik city of Dushanbe. The subject of the symposium concerned the beginnings of the food-producing way of life in central Asia some seven or eight thousand years ago. My role, discovered on arrival, was to present an up-to-date summary of how early village-farming life began, some nine or ten thousand years ago, in neighboring southwestern Asia.

I left Chicago on April 5th for a through flight to Moscow, arriving via Zurich at about 4:30 P.M. the next day. It took about an hour and a half to clear through immigration and customs control in the new Moscow international airport. When the control was completed, the Harvard colleague (who had joined the flight in Boston) and I were met by three of the Russian colleagues who were with us in Chicago for a visit last November.

I'm ashamed to say that in the excitement of being finally cleared and of hurrying to meet the colleagues beyond the barrier I left my passport and exit visa (a separate slip with photograph and details) with the little Russian lady who examined the baggage. This could have been fatal: foreigners don't go documentless in the U.S.S.R! However, the little customs lady chased after me with the passport and visa, a first nice welcoming touch of hospitality.

There is, of course, much bureaucratic red tape and confusion in the U.S.S.R., but I also discovered how we have it at our own end as well. The Russian colleagues were obviously pleased to greet us but somewhat surprised to see me. I'd been sent a cablegram asking just when I would arrive. I never received it, and they, assuming that I wasn't coming, had not reserved a ticket for the next day's flight to Dushanbe. Why had I not received their cablegram? They had my home address from old correspondence, National Academy of Sciences membership lists, heaven knows from where. Several years ago, however, some American bureaucrat in Indiana (where I live) had revised our address from R.R. S. Box 316 to 0454 E. 700 N, and last year, the LaPorte post office started refusing to deliver domestic mail to our old form of address. Since telegrams and cables now come by domestic mail (if Western Union doesn't find you by phone the first try), I'm sure that that cable from Moscow is in some dead-letter office. The Russian colleagues were quite properly merry when I explained the situation.

There was, unfortunately, no spare ticket on the April 7th flight from Moscow to Dushanbe (a party head there died and many officials were going down for the funeral). I was to be given hospitality until the next day in the hotel of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, and was assigned two very pleasant graduates students as guides to Moscow for the day. It was a spectacular success, and included the Kremlin, St. Basil's cathedral, Red square, and the center of town. The sight seeing was especially good because the day was bright and sparkling. This was lucky: during our two days in Moscow after returning from Dushanbe, the weather was grey and rainy.

The flight to Dushanbe took a bit over four hours flight time: Dushanbe is almost 2000 miles southeast of Moscow (farther than from New York to Denver) and three hour's earlier time change. The city lies in a pleasant green valley, and there is a fine snow-capped ridge of mountains just north of it. There are other ridges in the far distance to the south. It was already spring: the leaves on the trees were mouse-ear sized and forsythia and daffodils were out. In Moscow there had still been some snow. The hotel was a new eight-story affair, of standard Hilton-like design. It appears that both the hotel and the town are on the package tour circuit which includes Bukhara and Samarkand, to the near northwest.

The next morning, we were taken in minibuses to a couple of sites near a village called Hissar, about thirty miles west of Dushanbe. The village is clustered about a medieval fortress on a high hill, with a ruined mosque and madrassa (school) near the base of the hill. The colleagues said that the other site was "neolithic" (I was unclear just what this meant to them) but that it hadn't yet been excavated. This site was also on a high hill, and there was an excellent view of the valley and its main stream, which I believe was an upper tributary of the Amu Darya (Oxus).

I'll not bother you too much with details of the four day symposium. There were scholars from Afghanistan, China, England, Germany, Hungary, India, Italy, Pakistan, Turkey, and the United States, as well as many Russians and people from Tadjikistan and from several of the other southern republics. I learned much, especially that the beginnings of an early food-producing way of life was also well evidenced in central Asia. The sessions of the symposium were held in a very comfortable hall; there was simultaneous translation of the presentations and the exchange of ideas flowed easily. Late on the afternoon of the third day, they cleared the platform and a group of eight Tadjik musicians, a singer, and a very pretty girl dancer performed most handsomely.

On the final afternoon, we had free time. My friend, the Italian colleague, and his wife and I were taken around the bazaar section of the city by a bright young Tadjik lady who spoke good English. Physically, the Tadiks are Mongols, and their language is essentially Persian. It impressed me that they have obvious pride in their identity. At least a third of the

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ONE EVENING IN MAY—HIGH SPIRITS PREVAILED

The Oriental Institute Museum can often feel austere, certainly awesome. It was not so on the night of its 50th birthday. Granted, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra played, and we entered the lobby. For one thing, we are accustomed to a throng of people at the door, flowers, and spilling over into the Egyptian hall—engaged in a cacophony of talk. This night there was a small table, staffed by two, one to give you your table number, the other to sell you tickets for wine, cocktails, or soft drinks. Someone approaching the ticket desk asked "where is everyone?" The answer was "follow the arrow!"

We "followed the arrows" and realized that the arrangements committee had done some brilliant planning to accomo-date the overfrowning crowd. We also began to understand why so many good friends had to have their reservations returned because the party was an early sell-out. What a brainstorm to place the tables in the stately Babylonian hall, at the garden entrance, and down in the garden! The garden was breath-takingly beautiful in the setting sun on a balmy May evening, with the trees in full bloom and the plants in full deep green. The garden was the center of the party, and the coffee, drinks, toffee from one hall into another, with a stop here and there to take a peek at some artifact capturing passing attention, and eventually wandered down into the garden. Appetizers were passed around at the various stations where drinks could be replenished. A stroll on a spring evening along the River Seine in Paris may induce enchantment with the mystery of life-that-is-to-be. In the stroll through what seemed like open encampments of the ancient Near East, there was an aura which induced a pro-found feeling that civilization is continuous and one, with interruptions now and again. We could stand before a figure over 5000 years old and in 1982, identify it with spiritual communions. Who knows, but at least comfortably inspiring.

The Egyptian and Assyrian halls were off limits until the call to coffee before 10:30 p.m. Many of these groups are from upper elementary classes studying world history. A smaller number of groups include younger students, or from colleges and universities. Just to touch upon the highlights of the collection in house time means a superficial, though fascinating, look at a wide range of objects. The docents encourage the students to come back after this introduction, and many do—especially during the summer.

SUMMER WEEK DAY TOURS PLANNED FOR ALL AGES

The Oriental Institute docents have been interpreting the Museum's collection for visitors since 1966. Mrs. John Livingood, now Vice Chairman of the Visiting Committee, is the first woman to guide guests at the Museum. Many docents who trained as guides at the Museum have spent their years of experience with the more recently trained adults. The guide program also receives help from the Museum's education coordinator, Joan Berghausen, appointed to that post three years ago. The program has been expanded specially for students of all ages. This summer, during the months of July and August, each Thursday morning at 10:30, will be "Children's Time." Programs will be geared for children, from 7 to 12, who may have visited the Museum during the school year in a group accompanied by a teacher, and who want to "come back again" to explore more fully the educational potential of the Museum through special interest tours designed particularly for them.

A pilot series began last summer was so well received that it is being repeated and expanded. Each tour lasts approximately 30 minutes, and focuses on a special topic. Children may attend as many as six hours a day because they choose. One little girl attended all of them last summer! No special registration is needed—simply meet in the lobby promptly at 10:30.

It was July 15, the house of the god Alexander and His Conquests in the East.

S presents are welcome to accompany their children on these summer tours. So many did last year, that this year, special interest tours especially for adults have been added. Adult tours last about 35 minutes. All meet in the lobby at the stated date and time. Specific information for both children's and adults' special interest tours is available from the Museum education coordinator at 753-2573.

CHILDREN'S TIME: Special Interest Gallery Tours

July 1 Pyramids and Mummies
July 8 Assyrian Palace of King Sargon II
July 15 The House of the Gold Mask
July 22 Highlights of the Museum - with reproductions to touch
July 29 Alexander and His Conquests in the East
August 5 Pottery of the Ancients - What Was This Used For?
August 19 Highlights of the Museum - with reproductions to touch
August 26 King Tut and His Times

(Continued on next page)
Summer Week Day Tours Planned for All Ages (Continued)

ADULT SPECIAL INTEREST TOURS

Fri., July 2
1:00 p.m. Egyptian Religion
Thurs., July 8
1:00 p.m. The Bible and the Ancient Near East
Wed., July 14
11:30 a.m. Assyrian Palace of King Sargon II
Wed., July 14
1:00 p.m. Art of Mesopotamia
Tues., July 20
11:30 a.m. Art of Egypt
Tues., July 20
1:00 p.m. Egyptian Religion
Sat., July 31
1:00 p.m. Bible and the Ancient Near East
Fri., August 6
11:30 a.m. Art of Mesopotamia
Fri., August 6
1:00 p.m. Assyrian Palace of King Sargon II
Thurs., Aug. 12
1:00 p.m. Art of Egypt
Wed., Aug. 18
11:30 a.m. Egyptian Religion
Wed., Aug. 18
1:00 p.m. Bible and the Ancient Near East
Sun., Aug. 22
2:30 p.m. King Tut and His Times
Tues., Aug. 24
11:30 a.m. Art of Mesopotamia
Tues., Aug. 24
1:00 p.m. Assyrian Palace of King Sargon II

ORIENTAL INSTITUTE MUSEUM GUIDE
OFF THE PRESS

Over two years in preparation, the new Guide to the Oriental Institute Museum is now available. Published with a grant from the Women's Board of the University of Chicago, the Guide is a brief, thorough introduction to the permanent collections of the Oriental Institute Museum and to the history and culture of the ancient Near East of which these collections form a significant part.

The text combines a case-by-case guide to the galleries and descriptions of important objects in the collections, and includes introductory essays on the history and archaeology of the ancient Near East. Objects are placed in their proper historical and cultural contexts. The Guide is generously illustrated with new photographs (including three color plates) of pieces from the permanent collection on display in the museum. The text is supplemented by a two-page chronological chart setting side by side the major episodes of ancient Near Eastern history which spans 10,000 years and three continents. Finally, a fold-out shaded relief map locates the countries and sites discussed in the text.

The Guide is on sale in the Suiq Museum Store, or by mail through the Museum Office (Attention: Guide Book Sales).

Order information: for each Guide, enclose $3.75 (minus 10% members' discount) plus $1.25 for handling and postage. For Illinois orders, please add 7% sales tax.

FREE SUNDAY AFTERNOON FILM SERIES
SHOWN IN BREASTED HALL AT 2 PM

July 4 The Human Adventure
11 Iran: Landmarks in the Desert
18 The Egyptologists
25 Turkey: Crossroads of the Ancient World
August 1 The Human Adventure
8 Rivers of Time
15 Megiddo: City of Destruction
22 Egypt: Gift of the Nile
29 Iraq: Stairway to the Gods
Sept. 5 The Human Adventure
12 Iran: Landmarks in the Desert
19 The Egyptologists
26 Turkey: Crossroads of the Ancient World

Have a safe and happy summer and we will see you in September.
SUMMER LECTURES
There will be two Museum lectures this summer. The speaker and topic on Thursday, July 29 at 7 PM will be announced later. On Thursday, August 5 at 7 PM, Joe Greene will talk about rural archaeology in Carthage during the Punic and Roman periods. Announcements for both will be sent later, but circle the dates now. Weather permitting, the receptions afterwards will be in the garden.

ONCE AGAIN, HIEROGLYPHS BY MAIL
This summer we are again offering our popular course in Egyptian Hieroglyphs by mail. This beginning course will be taught by Frank Yurco and will cover eight lessons. He will send you lesson notes and exercises, and when you have returned your exercises to him, he will correct them and answer any questions you might have. The course will begin in July and will take you about ten to twelve weeks depending on the speed with which you work. Mr. Yurco recommends borrowing or purchasing a copy of Gardner’s Egyptian Grammar, 3rd Edition. The Suq has this text for sale, $37.50 less 10% for members, plus $2.50 postage and packing, plus 7% sales tax for shipping in Illinois. Cost of the course is $70 to members.

Please enroll me in Egyptian Hieroglyphs by Mail.
☐ My check for $70 is enclosed.
☐ I am a member.
☐ I am not a member, but enclose a separate check for $20 to cover a one-year membership.
☐ I would like to order Gardner’s Egyptian Grammar from the Suq. I enclosed a separate check ($37.50 minus 10% discount for members, plus $2.50 postage plus 7% sales tax in Illinois).

Please make all checks payable to THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE. Please register by July 9, 1982. MAIL TO Membership Secretary, The Oriental Institute, 1155 E. 58th St., Chicago, IL 60637.

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