

RESEARCH ARCHIVES

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Introduction¹

When you think of the Oriental Institute, our world-class museum collections and archaeological excavation projects probably come immediately to mind. What may be less apparent is the significant role of the Research Archives. The Research Archives (fig. 1), formerly known as the Oriental Institute Library, is at the very heart of the Oriental Institute and is fundamental to its mission.² With over 50,000 volumes, we are a unique scholarly resource that is essential for every research project within the building. In fact, it is the one place within the Oriental Institute where all our researchers come together on a regular basis.³ We are the metaphorical crossroads of the intellectual study of the ancient Near East, where ideas are shared and debated, championed or destroyed. In our reading room and in our stacks, on a daily basis, discoveries are being made, hypotheses are being born, and even archaeology — the archaeology of ideas — is being conducted.

In addition to our internal service, we are continuously supplying an international web of scholars with a flow of information unimaginable only ten years ago. Oriental Institute research associates working with projects across the globe, archaeologists in the field, and graduate students right here at home rely on the one-of-a-kind scholarly resource that our collections provide. Many research associates working in the United States, the Middle East, and abroad, without access to the Research Archives, call upon us to deliver copies of publications necessary for their work, but unavailable to them. When an Oriental Institute archaeologist uncovers some enigmatic object in the field, we are often their first point of contact, and we can scan and send publications to them right in the field. At the very mention of a new publication overlapping with their dissertation topic, scrambling graduate students routinely inquire about the latest scholarship. New discoveries do not only happen in the field; they are happening every day inside the minds of our patrons. Many of our greatest publications, the Oriental Institute Publication volumes we know and love, were born, raised, and disciplined in our reading room.

In that regard, the Oriental Institute has been and continues to be at the forefront of studying the ancient Middle East on its own terms, not as some exotic other that is somehow inherently different from us, but as the foundation of the urban society we take for granted all around us.⁴

¹ Portions of the introduction were presented at the Oriental Institute for the Research Endowment Campaign Completion Event, March 27, 2010.

² The original designation for the in-house collection of scholarly reference materials was the Oriental Institute Library, referred to as such by James H. Breasted, *The Oriental Institute* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1933), p. 122, and Shirley A. Lyon in *Oriental Institute Annual Report 1969/70*, p. 29. The *Oriental Institute Annual Report 1972/73*, pp. 48–49 listed under “Needs of the Oriental Institute” \$950,000 for the “[e]ndowment for an Oriental Institute Library.” The designation “Research Archives” was announced in *Oriental Institute Annual Report 1973/74*, pp. 56–58, in order to distinguish the Institute’s collection from that of the University of Chicago library system.

³ I like to think of the Oriental Institute as a country club for ancient Near East studies, in the same vein as the Princeton Mathematics department had been described as “a country club for math” in Sylvia Nasar, *A Beautiful Mind* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998), p. 50.

⁴ For Western views of the Middle East as Other, see, e.g., the fundamental work of Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978). Oriental Institute founder James H. Breasted continuously emphasized the role of the ancient Near East in shaping civilization. As Edith W. Ware stated in her introduction to the revised edition of Breasted’s *The Conquest of Civilization* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1938), p. iii, his work “struck a new logical balance in which the Orient occupied its appropriate place.” Such feelings were enshrined in the tympanum above the Oriental Institute doors, showing what Breasted described as “the transition of civilization from the ancient Orient to



Figure 1. Research Archives Reading Room circa 1963

Their pots and pans have more than abstract museal qualities as art objects; they are the reflections of past lives lived, past challenges faced, and past discoveries forged. These challenges cannot be accomplished in a vacuum. All our projects rely on the foundation laid by past generations of scholars and the records they have left us in the form of scholarship, that is, published research in print form. From identifying sites on a satellite image to describing museum items in a database, from a new study of religious ritual papyri to determining the definition of an unrecognized word, every project within the Oriental Institute depends upon the Research Archives for its vast treasure of ideas, knowledge, and data.

This interactive collaboration of scholars, both within and without the Research Archives, exemplifies the important steps taken during 2009–2010 to fulfill our mission:

... to make its resources available and useful to the faculty, staff, and projects of the Oriental Institute and to sustain and preserve for future generations a universe of knowledge and creativity relating to the languages and cultures of the ancient Near East and to the ancient and modern scholarly traditions associated with the ancient Near East.⁵

As described below, we continue striving to maintain our position as a premier scholarly resource for studying the ancient Near East in acquisitions, bibliographic data, online tools, and open-access publications for Oriental Institute faculty, staff, students, Members, and the scholarly community. I believe that the essential value of the Research Archives is reflected in the breadth, depth, and quality of recent work produced by Oriental Institute scholars.

the West” in *The Oriental Institute* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1933), p. 103. The tympanum was featured in Emily Teeter and Leslie Schramer, “Some Decorative Motifs of the Oriental Institute Building,” *Oriental Institute News & Notes* 199 (Fall 2008), p. 17.

⁵ As stated by Charles E. Jones, *Oriental Institute Annual Report 2003–2004*, p. 161.

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Acquisitions

Acquisitions for 2009–2010 remained near 1,200 volumes, maintaining the 15 percent increase witnessed in 2008–2009 (table 1). During my tenure thus far as head of Research Archives, acquisitions have been top priority, for Oriental Institute researchers need access to such materials in order to continue fulfilling the mission of the Oriental Institute: gather, interpret, and disseminate knowledge about the cultures of the ancient Near East. The rate of publication in the fields of ancient Near East studies continues to increase, demonstrating the growth and vitality of our fields. Supporting the research of scholars within the Oriental Institute is the basic mission of the Research Archives. To that end, our efficient use of funds and low infrastructure expenditures are essential to maintain our elite level of scholarly resources.

Table 1. Research Archives acquisitions, May 2009–April 2010

<i>Month</i>	<i>Monographs, Series, Pamphlets</i>	<i>Journals</i>	<i>Total</i>
July 2009	122	66	188
August 2009	154	38	192
September 2009	92	25	117
October 2009	111	36	147
November 2009	33	32	65
December 2009	20	34	54
January 2010	43	40	83
February 2010	37	43	80
March 2010	27	44	71
April 2010	27	18	45
May 2010	38	55	93
June 2010	47	15	62
Totals	751	446	1,197

Online Catalog

From July 1, 2009, to June 30, 2010, the Research Archives online catalog has grown by 35,000 records, from 330,000 to 365,000 analytic records (table 2). During the last four years, we have made a serious attempt to revolutionize the online catalog. Complete coverage of the collection within the Research Archives is our primary goal. The retrospective cataloging of the monographs has been completed, and we have turned our attention to the journals. The pamphlet files will be completed last. However, our secondary goal is to create a serious bibliographic research tool. At present, the Research Archives online catalog is one of the largest publicly accessible online databases for ancient Near East studies, and it is one of the few resources scholars can consult in order to search complete analytic records for individually authored journal articles, chapters, papers, and books.

Table 2. Catalog records

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of Catalog Records Added</i>	<i>Total Number of Catalog Records</i>
2009–2010	35,000	365,000
2008–2009	63,000	330,000
2007–2008	62,000	257,000
2006–2007	28,000	195,000
—	—	—
2003–2004	10,000	130,000

For the online catalog, academic year 2010–2011 is shaping up to be one of the most exciting for the Research Archives since the launch of the electronic catalog and its publication online. Our major goal this year is migration to a new database software which will improve the usability and functionality of the database as well as expanding the realm of possibilities for what we can do. Over the next eight months, we will begin the arduous task of database design, data cleanup, and data migration. Once complete, users will experience a revolution in functionality, enabling complex searching and sorting along with a variety of new, internally linked data sets, increasing the already immense value of our database.

In addition, we have furthered our project of adding links to individual catalog entries. In the past year, we have added links for *Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, Comptes rendus des séances de l'année* (J/CRAIBL), *Antiquity* (J/ANT), *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* (J/CBQ), and *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* (J/PEQ). We also continue to add links to all online material for newly acquired volumes. As more volumes become available online, our backlist of links to be added grows steadily. Currently, there are over 90,000 links to online material in the catalog (table 3).

Table 3. Links to online records in the catalog

<i>Call Number</i>	<i>Journal</i>	<i>Journal</i>	<i>Access</i>
JAOS	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>	14,385	JSTOR
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>	11,222	Ebsco
ANT	<i>Antiquity</i>	11,034	Antiquity
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>	10,988	JSTOR/AJA
ZQE	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>	7,336	JSTOR
Syria	<i>Syria</i>	5,351	JSTOR
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>	4,854	JSTOR/JNES
JEA	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i>	3,950	JSTOR
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American School of Oriental Research</i>	3,646	JSTOR
ZDMG	<i>Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>	2,835	Open
CRAIBL	<i>Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres. Comptes rendus</i>	2,254	Open
BIAR	<i>Near Eastern Archaeology (formerly Biblical Archaeologist)</i>	2,006	JSTOR
PEQ	<i>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</i>	1,651	Ebsco
ZA	<i>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie</i>	1,476	Open
JESHO	<i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i>	1,444	JSTOR
BIFAO	<i>Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale</i>	1,133	Open

Table 3. Links to online records in the catalog (cont.)

<i>Call Number</i>	<i>Journal</i>	<i>Journal</i>	<i>Access</i>
JARCE	<i>Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt</i>	1,132	JSTOR
RBL	<i>Review of Biblical Literature</i>	925	Open
JCS	<i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i>	970	JSTOR
IRQ	<i>Iraq</i>	876	JSTOR
ANS	<i>Anatolian Studies</i>	683	JSTOR
FUB	<i>Forschungen und Berichte</i>	673	JSTOR
IRN	<i>Iran</i>	601	JSTOR
JANES	<i>Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society</i>	322	Open
Orj	<i>Orient: Report of the Society for Near Eastern Studies in Japan</i>	299	Open
Bib	<i>Biblica</i>	286	Open
ARO	<i>Ars Orientalis</i>	206	JSTOR
BSEG	<i>Bulletin: Society d'Égyptologie Geneve</i>	135	Open
BMSEAS	<i>British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and Sudan</i>	52	Open
LingAeg	<i>Lingua Aegyptia</i>	46	Open
StOr	<i>Studia Orontica</i>	32	Open
ARTA	<i>Achaemenid Research on Texts and Archaeology</i>	29	Open
CDLJ	<i>Cuneiform Digital Library Journal</i>	25	Open
CDLB	<i>Cuneiform Digital Library Bulletin</i>	18	Open
ENiM	<i>Égypte Nilotique et Méditerranéenne</i>	6	Open
CDLN	<i>Cuneiform Digital Library Notes</i>	8	Open
Total		92,889	

Resources on the Web

In addition to the online catalog, the Research Archives maintains a series of open-access online resources.

Introduction and Guide

http://oi.uchicago.edu/pdf/research_archives_introduction&guide.pdf

An updated introduction and guide to the Research Archives contains a brief history, a guide to the Research Archives collection, and instructions for using the online catalog.

Dissertations

<http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/library/dissertation/>

With the permission of the authors, the Research Archives provides access to Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) copies of dissertations completed in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations of the University of Chicago. The following were added during the 2009–2010 academic year:

A. Asa Eger. *The Spaces between the Teeth: Environment, Settlement, and Interaction on the Islamic-Byzantine Frontier*. PhD dissertation. Chicago, 2008.

<http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/library/dissertation/eger.html>

Dissertation Proposals

<http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/library/dissertation/proposals/>

With the permission of the authors, the Research Archives provides access to Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) copies of dissertation proposals completed in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations of the University of Chicago. Access to dissertation proposals provides PhD candidates the opportunity to promote their work while simultaneously sharing current research with colleagues and interested scholars. Although dormant for several years, we have now revived this project with the hope of fostering increased participation.

Acquisitions Lists

<http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/library/acquisitions.html>

The acquisitions lists of the Research Archives are distributed in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) on a monthly basis. This process has been active and continuative since September 2007.

Annual Reports

<http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/library/annualreports.html>

Annual Reports for the Research Archives are available from 1991 to 2009.

Monographs

<http://oilib.uchicago.edu>

Copies of out-of-copyright monographs have been scanned and are made available in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) through links in the online catalog of the Research Archives. As of June 2010, the Research Archives provides access to over 150 volumes. A selection of recent additions follows:

Edwyn Bevan. *Jerusalem under the High-priests: Five Lectures on the Period between Nehemiah and the New Testament*. London: Edward Arnold, 1930.

Margaret A. Murray. *Egyptian Temples*. London: Sampson Low, Marston, 1931.

N. Reich. *Demotische und griechische Texte auf Mumientäfelchen in der Sammlung der Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer*. Leipzig: Verlag von Eduard Avenarius, 1908.

Claude F. A. Schaeffer. *The Cuneiform Texts of Ras Shamra-Ugarit*. London: Oxford University Press, 1939.

Siegfried Schott. *Mythe und Mythenbildung im alten Ägypten*. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs Verlag, 1945.

Adopt-a-Journal

<http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/library/adopt-a-journal.html>

The Research Archives has launched an “Adopt-a-Journal” campaign in order to increase support for the Research Archives. Donors are recognized through personalized book plates made in their honor and placed in volumes of their choosing.

Visitors

The Research Archives is a popular place for visiting scholars, and we have had the pleasure to accommodate the research trips of many individuals, including (in alphabetical order): Richard Averbek, Nicole Brisch, Arthur L. George, Jonathan Price, Daniel Justel, Isaac Kalimi, Adam Miglio, Brian Muhs, Rune Nyord, Ryan Perry, Joshua Roberson, Seth Sanders, Julie Stauder-Porchet, Andréas Stauder, Maren Schentuleit, Jonathan Tenney, and Irene Winter.

Acknowledgments

The Research Archives continues to receive generous support from a variety of sources, including faculty, staff, volunteers, and employees. Our exchange program could not function without the help of Leslie Schramer and Tom Urban in the Oriental Institute Publications Department; Chris Woods, Kathy Mineck, and Drew Baumann of the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*; and Seth Sanders of the *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions*. I would like to further acknowledge here the generous donations and help from the following (in alphabetical order): Abbas Alizadeh, Fred Donner, Andrea Dudek, Geoff Emberling, Mary Louise Jackowicz, James Tillanpugh, Emily Teeter, Donald Whitcomb, and Bruce Williams.

I have been fortunate to have exceptional library staff, the very blood and sweat behind our achievements, and they deserve a hearty thank you. Laura Holzweg, NELC graduate student studying Islamic archaeology, completed the cataloging of the monographs and is currently assisting with new acquisitions. Lori Calabria, NELC graduate student studying Egyptology, has focused on cataloging new acquisitions. NELC graduate student in Near Eastern archaeology Monique Vincent and University of Chicago undergraduate Jill Waller focused on retrospective cataloging of the journal collection. I would like to thank them for their hard work, which is crucial to our mission.

Our steadfast team of volunteers continues to help the Research Archives in tremendous ways. When on break from volunteering in the Suq and collecting stamps, Ray Broms is the driving force behind our scanning project, scanning several volumes every week. Stephanie Duran participated in our retrospective cataloging of the journals, taking on the monumental task of cataloging early volumes of *Archaeology* magazine. Through the leadership of Andrea Dudek, and her recruitment of volunteer Mary Louise Jackowicz, we have begun a comprehensive inventory of our journal collection. Tireless Oriental Institute volunteer James Tillanpugh aided in our scanning and cataloging processes. All their help contributes a great deal to what the Research Archives offers.
