

THE EDUCATIONAL WORK OF THE MUSEUM

The Oriental Institute Museum draws visitors from Greater Chicago, from other cities and all states of the Union, and from many foreign countries. It is open daily from 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. (except Mondays, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day) and evenings before the regular Institute lectures that are held once each month. Attendance figures during the last three years have ranged as follows:

1956-57.....	43,608
1957-58.....	43,369
1958-59.....	47,813

The growth in the number of visitors is modest and healthy. During 1958-59 it has been stimulated by special exhibits, by regular biweekly announcements made over Radio Station WFMT at our expense, and by the expanding work of the Docent.

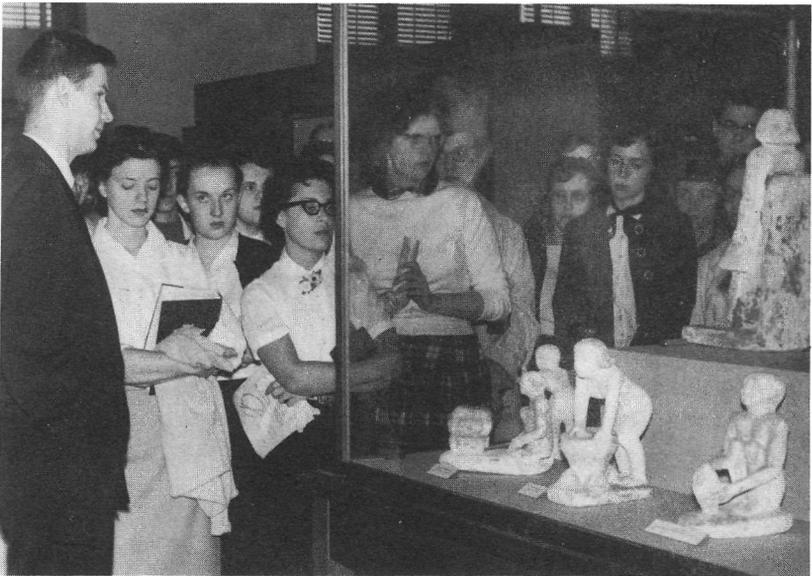


FIG. 2.—*High-school students on guided tour of the Museum*

The planned educational work of the Museum proceeds at three levels. One is represented by school groups from other institutions, a second by the adult groups from Chicago and neighboring midwestern

cities, and the third by the professional and graduate students enrolled at the University of Chicago and working in the Institute, who use the Museum as their laboratory. The third group has been taken care of down through the years and will continue to be handled by the Oriental Institute's professors of archeology. The other two groups we have been able to serve only during the last three years. This has been made possible by the appointment of a Museum Docent, thanks to funds supplied by contributions and dues of Institute Members (Fig. 2). The results have been gratifying, and their outward aspects can be set forth most readily in tabular form.

NUMBER OF GROUPS GUIDED BY THE DOCENT

Year	Elementary School	High School	College and Seminary	Other	Total
1956-57.....	48	35	13	70	166
1957-58.....	77	28	16	34	155
1958-59.....	82	32	19	83	216

NUMBER OF PERSONS IN GROUPS GUIDED BY THE DOCENT

Year	Elementary School	High School	College and Seminary	Other	Total
1956-57.....	1,634	1,389	328	1,800	5,151
1957-58.....	2,578	1,217	508	1,055	5,358
1958-59.....	2,936	1,144	390	1,808	6,278

Other interesting bits of statistical information come to light in the Docent's report of the work for 1958-59. Of the school groups for whose visits arrangements were made through her, 90 represent public schools, 10 private schools, and 14 parochial schools. Of these, 46 came from the city of Chicago and 68 from outside the city limits. An important feature of the Docent's work was that of visiting schools that planned to send groups to the Museum or that could not transport their pupils to the Museum. Such visits were made to 22 schools, 16 of them lying outside the city limits. An aspect of the Museum's educational work that has been growing in importance is that of its appeal to

adult and other informally organized study groups or clubs and that of its appeal to church groups. This accounts for the relatively large number of groups (83) and visitors (1,808) listed in the tables under the general heading "Other."

Certain deficiencies in the provisions we are currently in a position to make for the educational work of the Museum under existing budgetary limitations have come to light or have been re-emphasized during the current year. At the elementary- and high-school level, and particularly for the visits of the Docent to the schools that are planning to send their classes to the Museum, the availability of a film library of cinema "shorts" would be a great asset. We have tried to collect a nucleus of such films as are commercially available, but this falls far short of the actual needs. Above all, the films are commonly somewhat irrelevant to the specific needs of the school programs, lack the contact with the "discovery" element in archeological exploration, and sometimes even offend our own scientific knowledge of what is or is not so. We ought ourselves to be producing educational materials for use at the elementary- and high-school level, both in the textbook and in the film-library fields—a large and expensive undertaking that would need to be separately staffed and financed.

In the field of education for professional purposes we have another deficiency to cope with. Our University of Chicago graduate students studying archeology have at their disposal the collections of all kinds of artifacts housed in the rows and rows of storage cabinets that fill the vast caverns of our basement. These are the materials that the regular visitor to the Museum never sees—the submerged two-thirds of the "iceberg." In some categories the quantity of material available in these cabinets is twenty-five to fifty times what can possibly be exhibited. At one occasion at the beginning of the "atomic scare," when we were asked to put a dollar value on our Museum's holdings, we estimated the objects in the Museum halls at between three and four million dollars and those in the basement at at least another million. Much of this last has an additional value for study purposes, especially where it is fragmentary and requires the development of a trained imagination to establish its complete form, significance, and attribution.

We need in this connection to set up in one of the basement halls an

archeological laboratory, with tables and desks and rows of drawers and files for keeping at hand study collections, especially of pottery fragments, from various periods and parts of the cultural life of the ancient Near East. We have made the sketches for the installation of this workshop and are waiting only to see when we can afford it.

SPECIAL EXHIBITS AND IMPORTANT RECENT ACCESSIONS

What has been said above about the nature of the Oriental Institute implies as a natural corollary that many of its basic exhibits must be standing exhibits, to give a fundamental picture of the nature and the development of different ancient cultures. But we are aware of the danger inherent in a "frozen" display and realize that the worst comment anyone can make about any museum is the self-satisfied assertion that he has seen it. To avoid giving the lethal "static" impression, our particular type of museum must seek to renew itself continuously, which can be done in a great many ways, given a healthy imagination on the part of the staff and an interested, helpful circle of friends.

It is surprising how much can be done in this connection with color applied to the background of the exhibition cases and with changes and improvements in lighting. It is interesting to observe how even the departure from a balanced, "at-rest" distribution in groups of small objects and their rearrangement along modern lines can give new emphasis to their individual importance (Fig. 3). We are continually rearranging the elements of the ongoing part of our "show" by applying what can be learned about modern museum techniques on this score, but much remains to be done and learned to achieve the full fruition of the current experiments.

An important feature of any museum such as ours is that it shall have special temporary exhibits. When by good fortune the field expeditions of the Institute have both the permission of the local governments and the opportunity to bring home with them large collections of important recent discoveries, these provide a natural occasion for special exhibitions. The work in the field during 1957-58 did not produce this type of result, but three separate "shows" were arranged nonetheless.

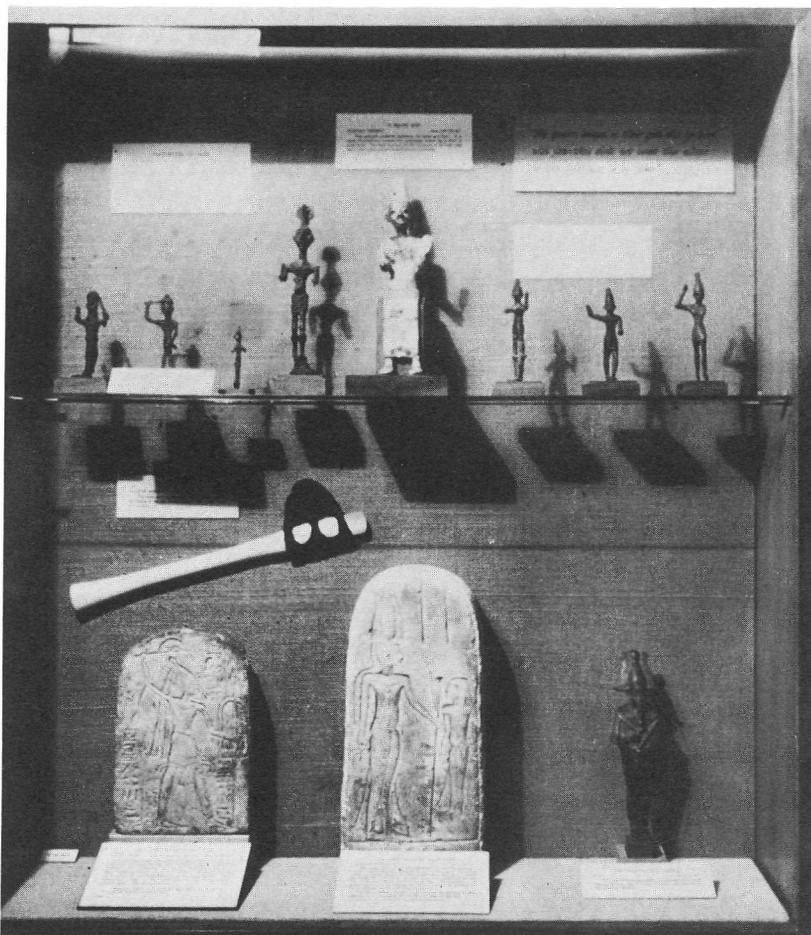


FIG. 3.—*Individual wall case of Canaanite exhibit, showing arrangement of objects*

The first was a special display of objects representing the religion and cult of the Canaanite period of Palestinian history—a display that balanced at one end of the Palestinian Hall what the Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit suggested at the other. For if in the Dead Sea material one could see the sectarian diffraction of later Jewish religious life, one could at the other glimpse what it was by way of Baal worship, to which Israelite religious beliefs and institutions reacted in the formative, patriarchal period.

A second display, also in the Palestinian Hall, had a more practical purpose. Here, along the blank west wall, we arranged long series of colored prints of Egyptian tomb decorations. This was an "over-run" of individual plates from the famous Davies-Gardiner *Ancient Egyptian Paintings* that we discovered in England and that we have been offering for sale to visitors with astonishing success.

The most important display of the year was a loan exhibit from Turkey representing objects found at Gordion and in a royal tomb there by the University Museum of Philadelphia (Fig. 6). The exhibit is one we shared with the University Museum, the National Gallery at Washington, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, and the Metropolitan Museum in New York. It remained for one month and attracted no little attention. The job of mounting such "shows" falls upon the shoulders of the Curator and the preparators of the Museum. The cost of having the Gordion "show" and its Turkish attendant was borne by income from Members' dues and gifts.

More important for the continuing life of the Museum than such temporary and loan exhibits are new accessions to its permanent holdings. From the Libyan field expedition of 1957-58 we received only one such object, namely, a remarkable portrait head (Fig. 7). It is that of an elderly lady, her face strong and deeply wrinkled, done in the severe "veristic" manner of Republican Roman art, and is a welcome addition to the growing collection of antique marbles from the Hellenistic and Roman Orient.

Outstanding among the gifts of Members and among the purchases made possible by funds supplied by Members during 1958-59 are the following:

1. An Amarna-style Egyptian head in sunken relief (cover design). Deeply sensitive and exquisitely modeled, this is an extra-fine example of a type and style rare and hard to come by. The head originally was part of some larger work from which it was long since broken off or cut out.
Purchased with funds supplied anonymously by an Institute Member.
- 2-3. Two bronze statuettes representing, respectively, a winged deity and a man with a dog, the former of the Isin-Larsa period (ca. 1900 B.C.), the latter of the Assyrian Empire (Figs. 4 and 5). The deity has certain unusual features and was the subject of a long discussion at a meeting of the University's Near East Club of students and professors. The thesis advanced and debated was that the winged figure rep-



FIG. 4.—Bronze statuette of intercessory deity (recent accession).



FIG. 5.—Bronze statuette of man with dog (recent accession).

resents the deity that intercedes for mortals before the throne of the high god. The man with the dog we were particularly happy to be able to obtain because a similar bronze was recently found in our Nippur excavations as a dedicatory offering in a temple but had been kept by the Iraq Antiquities Department in the division of finds.

Purchased with funds supplied at Christmastime by Institute Members Miss Harriet Borland, Mrs. George G. Cameron, Mr. Edward J. Chalifoux, Mr. Christian E. Jarchow, Mr. Leon Pomerance, Mrs. Edwin A. Seipp, Mrs. W. Byron Smith, Mrs. Gustavus F. Swift, and in memory of Mrs. Alvin E. Bastien.

4. Illuminated liturgical manuscript of the Four Gospels in Arabic with four full-page Evangelist portraits. Probably seventeenth century, this duodecimo manuscript is a unique example of the continuing importance of the Byzantine art tradition in the Islamic Orient. While the Arabic text is done in a beautiful Koranic hand, the miniatures, in the finest late Byzantine style, were clearly done by Christian artists and therefore have the names of the Evangelists inscribed in Greek against their gold background.

Purchased with funds supplied by Mrs. Claire von der Marwitz.

The first three objects mentioned are currently on exhibit in the halls of the Museum, while the fourth is still kept in the Museum Vault. Also on exhibit in the Persian Hall, on loan from Mr. and Mrs. Leon Pomerance of Long Island, is an excellent example of Iranian gold appliqué from the famous Zawiyah Treasure (Fig. 8). Other smaller bronzes and seal cylinders, purchased with funds supplied by Members' dues and gifts, have been incorporated in the larger holdings of the

Museum, in which they filled minor gaps. Still other objects have appeared for the first time on the Museum floor, having been put into exhibitable form by the preparators and Member volunteers in our laboratories, after languishing for many years in the storage cabinets of the basement (Fig. 9).

While the Museum's exhibits continue to renew themselves in many different ways and at many individual points, there is still much room for improvement—both in the exhibits themselves and in the facilities for their presentation. Our ceiling lights are utterly antiquated by contemporary standards. We have far too much window light, which is reflected in the glass of the cases obscuring the exhibits. Drop ceilings with indirect over-all lighting and apertures for “spots” would make a big difference. By carrying the walls of the building up into the window spaces to one-third of the height of the windows, we not only could cut out the worst of the reflection but would gain wall space for greatly enlarged pictures, “blow-ups” of the lands and sites from which our exhibits come. At the suggestion of a member of the University's Board of Trustees, we have recently been considering installing the



FIG. 6.—Corner of the Gordion loan exhibit

Lectour system of microwave internal broadcasting, so that visitors by renting a pocket receiver at small cost can hear prepared "gallery lectures" on the exhibits. On this point we are waiting to see how satisfactorily this equipment will work at the Art Institute, where it is currently being installed. But one thing we really should get at an early date, namely, a new Balopticon to provide continuous daylight projection of slides and films showing the archeological work of the Institute. Our present model is antediluvian, and the black-and-white slides which it can handle are so antiquated that we are ashamed to turn it on. But this kind of free educational entertainment is always welcomed by the very young and by those oldsters who enjoy sitting and resting their legs for a change and is good propaganda.

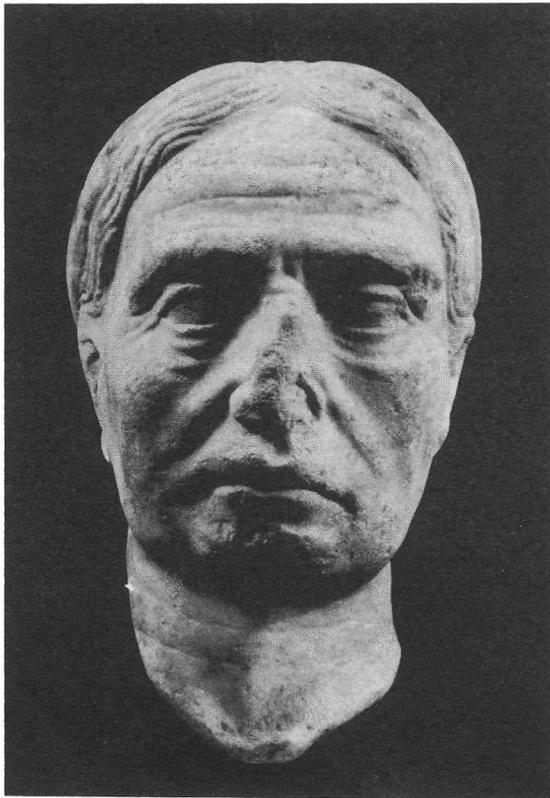


FIG. 7.—*Republican Roman portrait head in marble from Libya (recent accession)*

LECTURES AND THE URBANIZATION SYMPOSIUM

An important part of the work carried on in connection with the Museum is that of the illustrated lectures given one each month from October to May for Members and Friends of the Institute. Members receive advance notice of all such lectures, and the first lecture in the fall is usually open only to them and personally invited friends, so that they may enjoy also the reception that usually follows. Announcement is also made to Members of other lectures of interest to them, arranged by the local chapter of the AIA.

During the academic year 1958-59 the following lectures were given in the Oriental Institute series:

- October *New Treasures from Tomb and Temple in Ancient Egypt*, PROFESSOR GEORGE R. HUGHES, Field Director of the Epigraphic Survey, Oriental Institute, University of Chicago.
- November *Recent Excavations in the Capital of the Hittite Empire*, HANS G. GÜTERBOCK, Professor of Hittitology, Oriental Institute, University of Chicago.
- December *The Temple of Inanna at Nippur*, RICHARD HAINES (Oriental Institute), DONALD HANSEN (Harvard University), and ALBRECHT GOETZE (Yale University).
- January *New Insights into the Dead Sea Scrolls*, MONSIGNOR PATRICK WILLIAM SKEHAN, Professor of Semitic Languages, Catholic University of America.
- March *The Monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai*, PROFESSOR GEORGE H. FORTY, JR., Field Director of the joint expedition of the University of Michigan, Princeton University, and the University of Alexandria, Egypt; Chairman of Department of Fine Arts, University of Michigan.
- April *Phrygian Art in Oriental and Greek Perspective*, PROFESSOR MACHTELD MELLINK, Bryn Mawr College.
- May *Progress of the Hazor Dig*, DR. YIGAL YADIN, Director of the Hazor Excavations, Hebrew University, Jerusalem. Sponsored jointly by University College and the Oriental Institute.

Technical deficiencies in the equipment of our Breasted Lecture Hall crop up occasionally and are being coped with as circumstances permit. With funds supplied by Members, the facilities of our projection room have been improved and are now adequate to meet all demands. An interested Member is making available a "lavalier" type microphone so that speakers whose voices need magnification can be heard even when they move from the lectern. The public address system has been over-

hauled but is ancient and may ultimately need replacement. Ventilation is adequate for the winter season but leaves something to be desired during the warmer months. Air conditioning, which is the natural solution, is expensive.

During the three days December 4-7, 1958, the Museum was the scene of an unusual event, a symposium attended by seventy invited guests, half from the various faculties and departments of the University of Chicago and half from other institutions of learning in this country and from overseas. In the course of six regular sessions, each lasting an entire morning or afternoon, specialists in many fields of learning discussed to their hearts' content and with much insight the importance of the city for the development of high civilization throughout the various periods in the history of the ancient Near Eastern world from Sumerian through Greek and Roman times. The discussions were recorded on tape and are being prepared for publication. The occasion was notable and enhanced by the setting (Fig. 10).

BEHIND THE SCENES

As anyone who has ever had anything to do with it knows, a great deal has to go on behind the scenes in a museum to obtain on the floor the results that look so simple and obvious to the casual visitor. The work that has to go on behind the scenes in an archeological and historically oriented museum like that of the Oriental Institute is even more complicated than usual—owing to the origin and nature of its holdings, on the one hand, and to the institutional context to which it belongs, on the other. The Oriental Institute Museum has two foci of its behind-the-scenes operation—its laboratories and storage areas in the basement and its offices on the second floor of the building. Both are understaffed, but both are working heroically to keep up with the pressure of immediate necessities.

In the laboratories and workshops the preparator and his assistant (we used to have three men here) prepare materials for exhibition, make the exhibition cases and install their lighting, and mount and dismount exhibits. In the preparation of materials for exhibit they are assisted currently by two volunteer workers from among our Members (our pet

name for them is “mummy-dusters”) who work with them one day each week. What makes the workload in the basement so very heavy in our case is that most of what we receive and process is measured not by its exhibition value but by its potential historical value. For our field archeologists every old bronze disk, no matter how corroded, every oddment of old pottery vessels, of clay tablets, or of modeled stone objects, is precious, and it is the function of the laboratory to clean, patch, assemble, and repair these pieces so that a maximum of historical information may be obtained from them for our scholarly work and publication—irrespective of whether they could ever be exhibited. In 50 per cent of the cases, what the laboratories accomplish does wonders for our research and yields nothing to the actual repertoire of exhibit-able objects.



FIG. 8.—Gold plaque from the Zawiyah Treasure (on loan)

A position intermediate between the technical laboratories and the Museum offices is occupied by the photographic workshop. Here the demands of our exhibits, of those who wish to reproduce our objects for educational purposes—particularly in textbooks—of our own field workers as they prepare their reports upon our excavations, and of our scholars as they write new interpretative and critical publications and lectures run together in a never ending stream. The demands not only are extensive but are of the most varied types, and all require the highest standards of workmanship. With the help of Membership funds we have in past years provided at least a basic nucleus of highly modern and efficient equipment for the conduct of this work.

The offices of the Museum would be happy indeed if they had only to determine and implement policy regarding the operation of the Museum itself, its exhibits, its educational program, its loans to other institutions, and its technical and its photographic laboratories. Instead, like the laboratories, they find themselves deeply involved in our archeological field work and in our publication and our teaching enterprises.

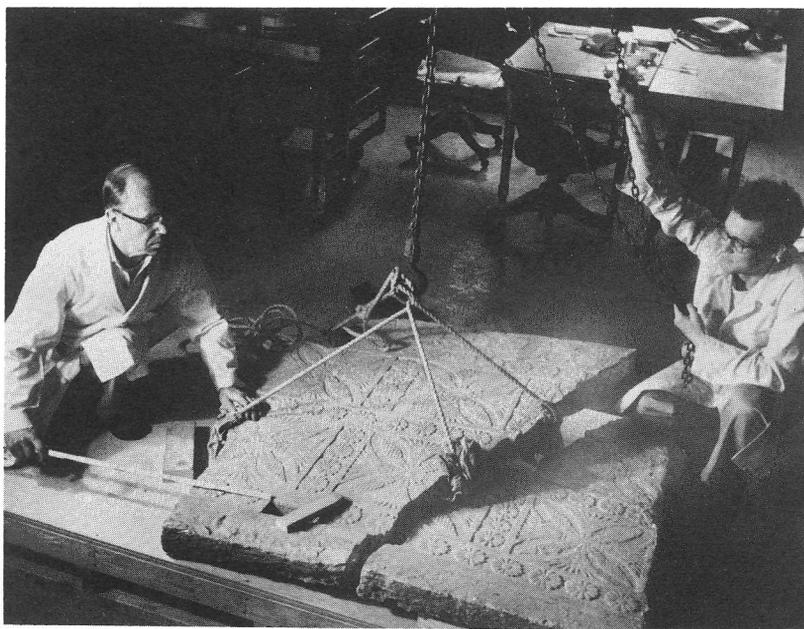


FIG. 9.—Assembling Assyrian threshold in Museum laboratory

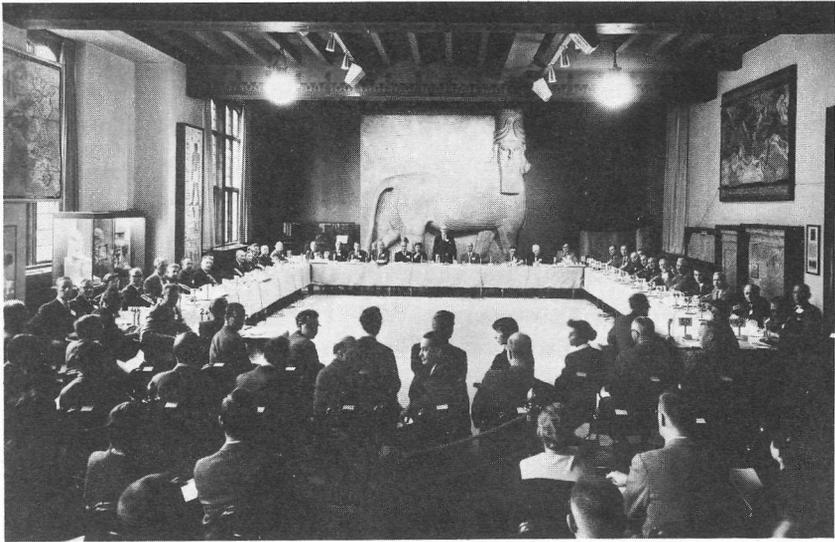


FIG. 10.—*Urbanization symposium in session in the Museum*

It is through the administrative offices that all of the thousands of archeological artifacts brought in from field expeditions get accessioned and numbered and ultimately assigned to storage cases in the basement, where they can be located by a carefully organized system of registration. It is to the photographic records section of the Museum's administrative offices that all the hundreds of invaluable field expedition negatives are turned over—for accessioning, for reproduction, for study purposes, and ultimately for the preparation of publishable prints. It is here, too, that are kept the rich print collections representing views of places, sites, objects, and diggings brought together from the undertakings and holdings of other institutions at home and abroad that are working in the same field with us. It is here, finally, that are held the slide collections we use in our classwork.

Currently, the Museum offices are involved also in a growing business enterprise—whose income is fed back into our scholarly work—that of selling to a public with a growing appetite for such things reproductions of ancient art objects and of colored prints, of “paperbacks,” of postcards, and of booklets describing certain of our exhibits. As the result of a simple story that appeared in the Chicago daily papers last

winter, the Museum offices have even been concerned lately with requests from other museums to supply them with some of our unexhibited mummies, since these are now hard to come by. More importantly, the Museum offices have during the past year gone over our extensive holdings in small precious and semiprecious objects, in manuscripts on parchment and on papyrus, and have organized them for accessibility and exhibition in our steel and concrete vault on the second floor of the Institute building. Currently, they are at work creating in another room a system of archives—where the original drawings, survey records, object registers, and “journals” of past expeditions are to be housed for future reference as needed. For this installation we shall need new lighting and filing equipment, as we need it also in the “slide” room.

So the work of the Oriental Institute Museum is indeed many-sided, with ramifications in all directions. We may be dealing with the oldest and most remote types of museum materials more consistently and more comprehensively than any other museum in the entire country. But we are anything but “dead” and “static.” The grimy dirt from the Chicago smog we find difficult to keep from settling on our windows, our desks, our laboratory equipment, our exhibits, and our storage bins. But the dust of the ages does not get a chance to settle—it is continually being stirred up by our efforts to perform our manifold duties.

In its work the Oriental Institute Museum has been greatly helped and encouraged by the interest, the gifts, and the contributions of the Members and Friends of the Institute. We hope we may continue to deserve that interest in the future. Museums must continue to grow and change if they are to serve the contemporary world and are to exhibit to the future the meaning and character of the past. This is true both in an intellectual and in a physical sense, and if tomorrow we could add a new wing to our building, running back to Woodlawn Avenue, complete with more exhibition space, with a laboratory for the newest technological equipment, with a better lecture hall, and with special facilities for handling groups of school children, we not only would be able to put its facilities to immediate use but would have the initiative and the imagination to make them count effectively in the sum total of our efforts for science, for the University, and for the community.