



News & Notes

No. 112 January–February 1988

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ÇAYÖNÜ—1987

Robert and Linda Braidwood

We have now finished another excellent season's excavation at Çayönü, our ca. 10,000 year old early village farming site in southeastern Turkey. Much was accomplished but much unfortunately could not be finished. We had three goals for the season. First, we wanted to learn more about how the main prehistoric settlement of Çayönü finally ended. Next, we wanted to expose more area within the very earliest levels of the site. Finally, we wanted to complete our carefully detailed clearances of the special building remains of what we call the skull house.

What was really achieved? We did get a good start, in a new area, on the remains of the latest prehistoric levels. Unfortunately, we didn't manage to clear very much of the earliest levels—too much ancient destruction had taken place in the area where we were working. As to the skull house, surprisingly, even after four season's work on it, we've not yet completed the final clearance of the building's remains.

Why? Because complicated burials kept turning up. We managed to expose and clear a few, but it is painstakingly slow work. Several other concentrations of human bones had to be postponed for our next season.

One of the real highlights of the season, for us, had to do with the Çayönü human bones. We Braidwoods were charged with getting the packages of this season's excavated human
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Çayönü skulls in the anthropology laboratory at Hacitepe University, Ankara. From the left: Dr. Metin Özbek, Bob Braidwood, Halet Çambel, Prof. Bozkurt Güvenç.

AQABA

Donald Whitcomb

On Monday, January 25, 1988 a new exhibit, Aqaba – "Port of Palestine on the China Sea," will open in the Museum from 5-8 p.m., and will be followed at 8 p.m. by a lecture on Aqaba presented by the excavator, Donald Whitcomb.

The Jordanian port city of Aqaba has had a long and important history in the Near East. Donald Whitcomb, Director of the Oriental Institute's excavations at Aqaba, has written the following background notes for this exhibition.

و وايلة مدينة على طرف شعبة بحر الصين
عامرة جلييلة ذات نخيل و اسماك
فرضة فلسطين و خزانة الحجاز

And Wayla is a city on a branch of the China Sea
Great in prosperity with its palms and fish

It is the port of Palestine, the storehouse of the Hijaz.

Muqaddasi, ca. 985 A.D.

One can imagine the Arab geographer Shams ed-Din Muqaddasi visiting Aqaba, known as Ayla in the 10th century, from his native city of Jerusalem. He immediately saw a problem—his quote continues, "[The city] is usually called Ayla, but [the true] Ayla is in ruins nearby, about which it is written, 'Ask them concerning the town by the sea.'" The comfortable and prosperous town "with its palms and fish" was not the same place as the ancient Ayla mentioned in the Qur'an (or Elath of the Bible). His solution was to make up a new name for the town, Wayla or the "little Ayla." He was, in fact, the first archaeologist to examine the history of the area included in modern Aqaba.

Until spring of 1987 Muqaddasi's statement could not be understood, since the archaeology of Aqaba had been neglected for a millennium. It is now clear that this scholar stood in the medieval town and looked northwest to a vast ruin field, the Nabataean, Roman, and Byzantine town. Further to the northwest are even earlier ruins called Tell el-Kheleifeh, belonging to the first millennium B.C. These might be associated with Solomon's port, Ezion Geber, but its Biblical contemporary, Elath, has still not been located. The long history of the port of Aqaba, connecting Palestine and Egypt with the lands along the shores of the Indian Ocean as far away as China, is now in the first stages of archaeological research.

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The site of the medieval port of Ayla has been abandoned since the time of the Crusades and its monumental buildings have been covered by wind-blown sand. Recent excavations are now returning it to view as a central part of the modern city of Aqaba. The old city wall, preserved over 4.5 meters high, its towers and one of its gates, preserved above the top of its arch, are now visible from the Corniche road.

History of Ayla (Aqaba)

Most of the history of Ayla is only vaguely known. There is little direct evidence for the Nabataean port, though the commercial prowess and proximity of the important Nabataean city of Petra make such a port an obvious possibility. The Ptolemies took Elath from the Nabataeans and renamed it Berenice, beginning a pattern of Egyptian attempts to dominate this region. The Romans constructed the *via nova* from Aqaba to Bosra in southern Syria (111-116 A.D.) and stationed the 10th legion Fretensis at Aqaba (which they called Ailana). Bishops of the town are known from 325 until the early 7th century. The Prophet Muhammad made a treaty with the town, represented by Yuhanna ibn Ru'ba, in 630. This early submission greatly facilitated the first Muslim attacks on Palestine under 'Amr ibn al-'As in 634.

One must turn to the Arab geographers of the 9th and 10th centuries for descriptions of the development of Ayla. The commercial prosperity of the town is reflected in the account of Ya'qubi, "The city of Ayla is a great city on the shore of the salt sea and in it gather the pilgrims of Syria, Egypt, and the Maghreb [North Africa]. There are numerous merchants and common people. . . ." In addition to the passages from Muqaddasi mentioned above, this observant geographer noted that ". . . in Wayla, there is disagreement among the people of Syria, the Hijaz [western Arabia], and Egypt, like in Abbadan, but I join it to Syria because its customs and measures are Syrian. It is the port of Palestine, from which come its im-

ported goods." This description testifies to the prosperity of Ayla and its extensive trade connections with Egypt, Palestine, and the Hijaz. The latter was its primary customer and, while Egypt may have been primary supplier, the cultural identification of Ayla was with Palestine and greater Syria. An important impetus for these interconnections was the annual pilgrimage to Mecca; both the North African/Egyptian and the Palestinian/Syrian roads passed through the city, which was stocked with food supplies from Gaza.



Carol Meyer practices her epigraphic skills on Arabic graffiti scratched on a frescoed wall.

For the end to this prosperity, one may allude to a variety of causal factors. An Egyptian Fatimid garrison was stationed at Ayla in 961, fighting revolts until the town was sacked in 1024 by local tribesmen. Ayla suffered an earthquake in 1072. Finally the Crusaders captured Ayla in 1116, after which it was retaken by Saladin in 1170. A decade later, there was a brief occupation by the Crusader Renaud de Chatillon. Throughout the latter exchanges the town does not seem to have been fortified; it is therefore tempting to see the end of the walled site, which is presently under excavation, during the early 12th century. Correspondingly, Abu'l Fida says there was nothing left but a stronghold near the shore in the 13th century, when the name changed from Ayla to Aqaba. This would seem to be the castle of the Ayyubid/Mamluk period (13th century and later), about a kilometer to the south of the site of Ayla, which became the focus for settlement until modern times.

Donald Whitcomb excavated at Aqaba in 1986 and 1987, and will return for another season in 1988. The Aqaba exhibition will continue in the Museum through the spring, and will then move to Jordan. Along with maps, photographs, and site plans, the exhibit will feature a large number of artifacts which span the centuries of history of the early city.



Measuring a depth against the inside face of the city wall. The arch of the door to the tower is visible at the bottom.



General view of Ayla with the city wall on the right and the central Pavilion building in front of a modern white building.

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bones (contained in three large footlockers and two big duffle bags) up to Ankara on the train with us. Good friend Halet was to meet us at the Ankara station. She did, and we checked the lot overnight at the station. Next morning we reclaimed them and Halet managed to rent a very small pick-up with driver. She and Linda squeezed up front with him and Bob sat grandly on the footlockers out back.

Hacitepe University, where Dr. Metin Özbek has his anthropology laboratory, sits in the hills, 20 miles from Ankara. We had met Metin briefly, two years earlier when Halet had convinced him to undertake the study of the Çayönü human skeletal materials. Metin did his Ph.D. in physical anthropology in France and we had not yet heard him attempt English. For our visit now he had set up a day's seminar session with several graduate students, his assistant Izzet, and his department head, Prof. Bozkurt Güvenç, an impressive social anthropologist. Metin's English was very comprehensible and he had a lot to tell us—it was a memorable occasion.

Clearly Metin and Izzet had worked very hard and effectively at getting the badly broken bones from our earlier seasons at Çayönü cleaned and—to the extent possible—restored. Even more important was the information that Metin was able to give us about his results.

The bones from the skull house itself show a mixture of both ages and sexes. Metin is no longer sure that many of the heads were actually cut off from their bodies—only one or two examples showed clear evidence of cutting. Also it was now clear that most of the actually burned skulls came from the later levels within the skull house. In the deeper, earlier levels there were also more long bones as well as the skulls. So far, Metin has (by reassembling many very badly smashed remains

of skulls) accounted for at least seventy-six individuals from the skull house.

There is, in addition, evidence for at least one hundred seventy-two individuals in the skeletal remains we've recovered from all the other areas we've exposed on Çayönü. Not all, by any means, were from neatly laid-out burials. Anyway, here is a good question—what did you have to do, or who did you have to be, to get your skull placed in the skull house?

So far, too, Metin has produced some interesting information about the physical conditions of the people at Çayönü. In the burials outside the skull house 48% of the bones were of children under fifteen years of age and half of these children were under age six. Child mortality was high. For people over fifteen the average age at death was twenty-nine; only four people were over fifty, all of them women.

Metin also believes he may have, among other possibilities, evidence of tuberculosis and perhaps even malaria. Many people had bad teeth, including excessive wear of the enamel due to grains of basalt from the stone mills used to grind wheat into flour. Surprisingly, too, there also appear to have been definite nutritional deficiencies.

Metin could even show, through facets present on the lower leg bones (the tibiae), that the Çayönü people's customary position for rest and work must have been squatting with the soles of both feet flat on the ground. This is a position that people still use from the Near East on towards Japan. Try it if you like—we don't find it comfortable—no facets on our tibiae!

We left the day's seminar session in Metin's lab with the feeling that the Çayönü bones were in very good hands. Even more, indeed, we had the feeling of being closer to the actual inhabitants of ancient Çayönü than we'd ever been before. The story of what life must have been like, when agriculture and settled villages were beginning, continues to unfold.

THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE MUSEUM

CORDIALLY INVITES YOU TO A RECEPTION
CELEBRATING THE OPENING OF

Aqaba – “Port of Palestine on the China Sea.”

Monday, January 25, 1988
5:00-8:00 p.m.



Following the opening
Donald Whitcomb, Field Director at Aqaba, will
present a lecture in Breasted Hall about the site of AQABA

FREE SUNDAY MOVIES AT THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE

All films will be shown at 2 p.m. in Breasted Hall

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| JANUARY | 3 Iraq: Stairway to the Gods |
| | 10 Egypt: Gift of the Nile |
| | 17 Megiddo: City of Destruction |
| | 24 Preserving Egypt's Past |
| | 31 Egypt's Pyramids |
| FEBRUARY | 7 Jordan film – title to be announced |
| | 14 The Big Dig |
| | 21 Turkey: Crossroads of the Ancient World |
| | 28 Champollion: Egyptian Hieroglyphs
Deciphered |
| MARCH | 6 Rivers of Time |
| | 13 Myth of the Pharaohs/Ancient
Mesopotamia |
| | 20 Royal Archives of Ebla |
| | 27 Iran: Landmarks in the Desert |

COURSE FOR NEW DOCENTS

The Oriental Institute course for new docents will begin at the end of March. The course which meets on Mondays consists of lectures by Institute faculty members on the history, art and archaeology of Egypt, Mesopotamia, Persia, Anatolia and Syria-Palestine. Lectures are followed by gallery workshops led by experienced docents.

Docents introduce visitors to the Museum's collection of ancient Middle Eastern artifacts. The guides lead a variety of groups including grammar school through college students, art center members and senior citizens.

There is no fee for the course, but after taking the course docents must be willing to lead tours in the Museum for half a day a week for at least a year. For more information, or to arrange for an interview, call Janet Helman, volunteer coordinator at 702-9507.

WINTER MEMBERS' COURSE

Queens of Ancient Egypt

See November-December *News & Notes* for course description.

Classes will meet on Saturdays, 10 a.m.-noon, for eight weeks. January 16 through March 5 at the Oriental Institute. FURTHER INFORMATION 702-9507. Tuition is \$60 plus \$30 annual membership in Oriental Institute.

CHILDREN'S WORKSHOPS WINTER 1988

MUMMIES AND PYRAMIDS

Saturday, January 16 (10 a.m.-12 noon)

Learn about the ancient Egyptian art of mummification, how the body was dried and wrapped for its eternal home in the tomb. The tour will look at mummies, mummy cases, and coffins, and see a model of a real pyramid, the tomb of an Egyptian king.

CRAFT: Students will make sock doll replicas of mummies, wrap them and place them in Egyptian-style coffins with eyes on the side.

ANCIENT MAGIC

Saturday, January 23 (10 a.m.-12 noon)

People of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia used magical amulets to keep away evil spirits and attract good influences. On tour, we will learn why the sacred eye of Horus was thought to have healing powers, why the scarab beetle protected the soul of ancient Egyptians during the final judgment, and why the demon Pazuzu was a protector of women and babies.

CRAFT: Students will make replicas of ancient Egyptian amulets to wear and a Pazuzu hand puppet with wings that move.

GODS AND GODDESSES

Saturday, January 30 (10 a.m.-12 noon)

Many ancient Egyptian gods and goddesses were shown as part animal and part human in form. We will look at some of these gods and goddesses and talk about some of the myths and stories about them. Included will be Anubis, the jackal-headed god, Thoth, the ibis-headed, Horus, the hawk-headed, and Sekhmet, the lioness-headed.

CRAFT: Students will make 3-dimensional masks of the jackal god, Anubis, and the lioness goddess, Sekhmet.

KINGS AND THINGS

Saturday, February 6 (10 a.m.-12 noon)

On tour we will see ancient objects of daily life and talk about how the Egyptians lived thousands of years ago. We will learn about the life of a king as well as the lives of ordinary people.

CRAFT: Students will make replicas of two items of jewelry used by ancient Egyptian kings—a vulture pectoral (necklace covering the chest) or a leopard's head pendant like the one found in King Tut's tomb.

These Children's Workshops are recommended for children ages 6-12. Each workshop includes a tour and a craft activity, which results in an object for the participant to take home. Workshop participants must register in advance. The fee for each workshop is \$6. Call the Education Office, 702-9507 to register or for more information.

LECTURE SCHEDULE

Lectures will be presented at 8 p.m. in Breasted Hall at the Oriental Institute.

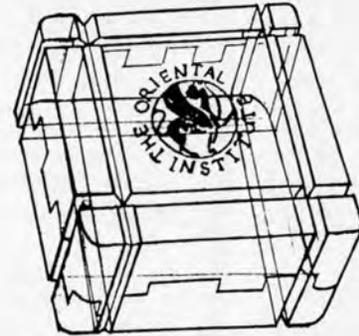
Institute members may make dinner reservations at the Quadrangle Club, 1155 East 57th Street, 702-2550 before membership lectures. They will bill the Oriental Institute and we, in turn, will bill you. Please print your name and address at the bottom of your dinner check, as well as signing it, so that we know where to send your bill.

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| January 6, 1988 | Alan Peatfield, The British School of Archaeology, Athens, <i>Minoan Religion: New Developments and Near Eastern Connections</i> . A joint lecture with the Chicago Society of A.I.A. |
| January 25, 1988 | Donald Whitcomb, The Oriental Institute, <i>Aqaba - "Port of Palestine on the China Sea."</i> THIS IS A MONDAY LECTURE and is presented in conjunction with the opening in the museum, from 5-8 p.m. this evening, of a new exhibition, <i>Aqaba - "Port of Palestine on the China Sea,"</i> artifacts and drawings from the excavations at Aqaba. |
| February 3, 1988 | Thomas Holland, The Oriental Institute, <i>Sweyhat: an Ur III Outpost on the Euphrates River in Syria</i> . |
| February 17, 1988 | Gene Gragg and Dennis Pardee, The Oriental Institute, <i>Shem, Ham (and Japheth): Where Do the Languages of the Ancient Near East Come From?</i> |
| March 2, 1988 | Thomas Jacobson, Indiana University, <i>Man and the Sea in Prehistoric Greece and the Aegean Islands</i> . A joint lecture with the Chicago Society of the A.I.A. |
| April 6, 1988 | William Dever, The University of Arizona, <i>Archaeology and "Popular Cult" in Ancient Israel</i> . |
| April 20, 1988 | Gus Van Beek, The Smithsonian Institution, <i>An Overview of the Excavations of Tell Jemmeh, Israel</i> . |
| May 4, 1988 | Douglas Esse, The Oriental Institute, <i>Ashkelon in the Persian Period: A Levantine Emporium</i> . |
| May 16, 1988 | Annual Oriental Institute Dinner in the Museum. |

السوق SUQ



New O.I. Card Reproduced from our own Assyrian relief of a Median groom walking two horses. The relief was excavated at the Palace of Sargon II at Khorsabad which dates from 721–705 B.C. The card is blind embossed which gives it a very detailed, sculpted effect and is blank inside. Available either in a gray limestone color similar to the original or in a rich beige, sandstone color. The card is **\$1.50** each or **\$1.35** for members.



O.I. Box Made in Italy of 24% lead crystal and etched with the logo of the Oriental Institute on the top. It makes a handsome box for all of your collectables. Available in two sizes.

2 $\frac{3}{4}$ " \times 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ "	\$10.95	Members \$ 9.85
3 $\frac{5}{8}$ " \times 3 $\frac{5}{8}$ "	\$17.95	Members \$16.15

Marbled Silk Scarves Made of pure silk then hand marbled making each one unique. This ancient technique was originally used on paper for bookbindings. We have a few in our collection that were on display during the bookbinding exhibit.

9" \times 54"	\$31.00	Members \$27.90
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The Oriental Institute

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