

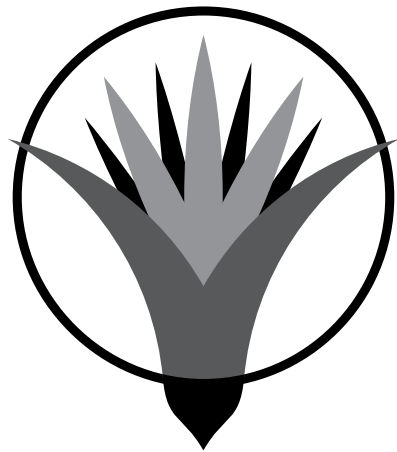
THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE



**ISAC**

**ANNUAL  
REPORT**

2022-  
2023



**ISAC**

**ANNUAL** | 2022-  
**REPORT** | 2023

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On the cover: Vestiges of the Institute's old name on the building's west facade in April 2023, before installation of its new name. Photo by Theo van den Hout.

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# INTRODUCTION

THEO VAN DEN HOUT

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The past academic year was marked by our name change. On April 4, 2023, the Oriental Institute officially became the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures—West Asia & North Africa, or “ISAC” for short. Accompanying this name change was a new logo, one based on a Near Eastern floral element—the lotus—that may be found throughout the Institute on its artifacts and in its architecture.

But though our name changed, our mission and passion remain very much the same. We continue to excavate and care for cultural heritage in the Middle East, study and edit texts, produce tools for the field, publish books, organize exhibits, educate our visitors, take care of our vast and rich collections, and share our research with everybody who has an interest. A testament to this passion is the fact that our faculty and staff produced eight books, forty articles and scholarly reviews, and a documentary.

We continued building our faculty and staff. Since July 2022, we have been joined by Jana Matuszak, assistant professor of Sumerology; Augusta McMahon, professor of Mesopotamian archaeology; and Mehrnoush Soroush, assistant professor of landscape archaeology. On July 1, 2023, Margaret Geoga started as our brand-new assistant professor of Egyptology. Meanwhile, the search for a professor of the archaeology of the Arabian Peninsula and Gulf States, generously endowed by ISAC Advisory Council member Howard Hallengren, is nearing its end. On the staff side we welcomed Marc Maillot, chief curator of the ISAC Museum, and Marianna Capeles, our new business manager, while Brad Lenz and Emily Smith completed our development team under Bill Cosper as assistant director of development/membership and development/events associate, respectively. Brett McClain took over the reins at Chicago House in Luxor, Egypt, as the new director of the Epigraphic Survey.

On May 25, 2023, we celebrated the retirement of Janet Johnson and Donald Whitcomb. Although no longer official members of the ISAC faculty, they remain active. There are still scholarly projects that demand their attention and that they want to bring to successful completion.

We lost four important members of our Advisory Council this past year: John Rowe, former Council chair; Kitty Picken, generous and long-time ISAC supporter; Arthur Herbst, likewise former Council chair and loyal supporter of ISAC together with his wife, Lee; and Neil King, one of our longest-serving members (since 1999). In deep gratitude for their service, we cherish our memories of each of them. We also welcomed a new ISAC Advisory Council member, Sue Geshwender.

This is my last introduction for the ISAC annual report. By the time you read this, I will have handed over the directorship of ISAC to Prof. Tim Harrison, by now well known to all of you. It has been a true pleasure, and above all an honor, to have served first the OI and then ISAC as interim director for two and a half years. I have learned so much from all of you and am deeply grateful for the trust you had in me. I could not have done it without the support of the entire ISAC community.



# IN MEMORIAM

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## JOHN CARSWELL (1931–2023)

John Carswell, ISAC Museum curator from 1978 to 1985 and a specialist in Middle Eastern art and archaeology, passed away in January 2023.

Born in London, he graduated from the Royal College of Art in 1951 and began working extensively overseas with prominent scholars such as Kathleen Kenyon, Seton Lloyd, Sinclair Hood, and Alan Wace. After five years as a professional archaeology designer, he received a professorial appointment at the American University of Beirut, where he remained for twenty years. Promoted to full professor in 1967, he served also as secretary for the University Research Board, as chairman of the Department of Fine Arts on multiple occasions, and on the University Senate. After the Lebanese Civil War began, he resigned from the university in 1976 and spent the remainder of the year as a research fellow at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London.



A very active scholar, he focused specifically on the study of Islamic ceramics and the import of Chinese vessels to the Near East. He authored numerous books, including two reference monographs—one on seventeenth-century Armenian churches in Isfahan, Iran (Clarendon Press), and another on Kütahya tiles and pottery from Jerusalem's Cathedral of St. James (Oxford University Press). Apart from his scholarly activities, he also produced works of art, which he exhibited in various shows in Europe and the United States, including a one-man exhibition of paintings and small objects at the Fischbach Gallery in New York City.

One of his first projects at ISAC was curating a show honoring and focused on the photographs of Ursula Schneider, ISAC photographer from 1942 to 1973. The exhibition, titled *Images of the Thirties* and emphasizing sculpture and architecture in particular, was also shown in the Bergman Family Gallery at Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art and received outstanding reviews from the Chicago art press.

After leaving his position as ISAC Museum curator, he pursued his career as director of the University of Chicago's David and Alfred Smart Museum of Art from 1985 to 1987. He then returned to Britain, where he headed the Islamic department of Sotheby's in London. He retired with his wife, Peggy, who died in 2021, to a home they had restored in Malaga, Spain.

We express our deepest condolences to Prof. Carswell's family, friends, and colleagues. He was a memorable scholar, a talented artist, and a formidable advocate of Middle Eastern studies.

## ARTHUR L. HERBST (1931–2023)

ISAC's immediate past Advisory Council chair, Dr. Arthur L. Herbst, passed away in June 2023 at the age of ninety-one. His service on the Advisory Council began in 2001.

Arthur was born to Jerome and Blanche (Vatz) Herbst in New York City in 1931. When he was two years old, his family moved to Pittsburgh, where he spent his youth. He was a strong student and enjoyed playing sports. During college at Harvard, he rowed lightweight crew and studied physics. While fulfilling his active-duty service requirement in the Navy as a line officer, he reconsidered his life path and shifted



## IN MEMORIAM



from law to medicine. He attended Harvard Medical School, where he also completed a residency and won the Borden Research Award for work in endocrinology.

Arthur started out in practice as an attending physician at Massachusetts General Hospital. Always listening carefully to his patients, he noticed that a few young women with a rare cervical cancer had mothers who had taken the drug diethylstilbestrol during pregnancy to help prevent miscarriage. This observation led him to publish a seminal study that alerted doctors and patients to the potential health risks of prenatal exposure to drugs. For this research, he received the Francis Stone Burns Award from the American Cancer Society.

In 1976, Arthur became chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Chicago. Over the next twenty-four years, he served on multiple medical boards, published more than 180 articles, and gave lectures around the world. He was known to be intelligent, disciplined, hardworking, full of integrity, and unfailingly reliable in all aspects of his life. He could be counted on to provide calm and helpful counsel. He took every call and always did his best to support anyone who needed medical care, whether it was a patient, a family member, or the friend of a friend.

Arthur loved to learn, achieve, and compete. He took Spanish lessons in his seventies and swimming lessons in his eighties. He actively played tennis until he was eighty-eight. In retirement, he and his wife, Lee, split their time between Chicago and Tucson, Arizona. In addition to his service on ISAC's Advisory Council, including two terms as chair, he served as a member and chair of the University of Arizona's Department of Science visiting committee, leveraging his experience as a clinician, scientist, and administrator. Having always felt grateful for the scholarships that enabled him to attend college and medical school, Arthur and Lee established scholarship funds at Harvard, the University of Chicago, and the University of Arizona.

### NEIL J. KING (1929-2023)

Neil J. King died in May 2023 at the age of ninety-three. He had served on the Advisory Council since 1999.

Neil was born in September 1929 in Chicago and raised in Skokie, Illinois. After graduating from Evanston Township High School, he headed to Yale University, where he was a champion Ivy League pole vaulter. Following his graduation from Yale, he served as a Navy officer during the Korean War. Following his naval service, he returned to Skokie to join his father in Armond King Real Estate as a broker, appraiser, and counselor. He served as president of the North Shore Board of Realtors and of the Counselors of Real Estate. Very active in business and civic affairs, in addition to the ISAC Advisory Council, Neil served on many boards, including that of Skokie Valley Hospital (now North Shore Skokie Hospital) for fifty years. He loved the Skokie Public Library and the Skokie Rotary Club, where he and his father both served as president and whose meetings he attended weekly even after moving to Chicago.



Always up for an adventure, in 1975 Neil sailed across the Atlantic Ocean with his teenage son in a thirty-six-foot sailboat. He was an enthusiastic member of the Chicago Adventurers' Club, enthraling his grandchildren with shrunken heads, a giant stuffed bear, and flags suspended from the ceiling commemorating several of his escapades. A natural athlete, he competed well into his seventies as a decathlete, a marathoner, and a runner.

**KATHLEEN PICKEN (1950–2023)**

Kathleen “Kitty” Picken passed away in January 2023 at the age of seventy-three. She first joined the Advisory Council in 2009.

Kitty was born in Chicago in 1950 and adopted by a loving couple, Robert and Doris Picken, who owned the Peerless Confection Company, which produced the original and ever-popular Starlight Mints. They gave their little girl every advantage that the Hyde Park neighborhood had to offer. When Kitty was three, she broke a leg, and Doris took her to the Oriental Institute (ISAC) on the University of Chicago campus because it was wheelchair accessible. By the time she was four, she had already given her first tour of the Museum. After Doris died in 1975, Bob married Rita Tallent, who shared Kitty’s passion for ISAC. When the Institute began its docent training program, Kitty and Rita were among the very first to sign up.

Kitty’s dedication to ISAC never waned. She developed a particular interest in Nubia, ancient Egypt’s southern neighbor. In the 2000s, Kitty and Rita funded the Institute’s permanent gallery dedicated to Nubia, the Robert F. Picken Family Nubian Gallery, which remains the only permanent gallery in the United States dedicated to this ancient African civilization.

Through her interest in Nubia, Kitty established a partnership with University of Michigan archaeologist Geoff Emberling. Kitty encouraged Geoff to begin a new field project in Sudan on the ancient empire of Kush, offering financial, intellectual, and moral support. Her continuing support of his excavations led to more collaborative archaeological practices that included Sudanese colleagues and engaged the local communities.

Her passion for archaeology and education inspired her to support the creation of an archaeology major at Berea College in Berea, Kentucky. She loved to meet with the students there and share her stories and experiences with them. Kitty was embraced by the Berea community and happily traveled abroad with students from many programs, participating in tours of Ireland, Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia. A lifelong world traveler and former professional tour guide, Kitty had many more trips planned, including repeat trips to Great Britain and Iceland.

Kitty’s love for music and the performing arts continued a family tradition. Kitty endowed the Rita Tallent Picken Regional Center for Arts and Humanities at the University of Wisconsin–Parkside, a building affectionately called “The Rita.” She was a supporter of the Des Moines Metro Opera and a member of the President’s Society at Simpson College in her ancestral hometown of Indianola, Iowa, where she moved in her later years.

**JOHN W. ROWE (1945–2022)**

John W. Rowe passed away in September 2022 at the age of seventy-seven. He had served as a member of the Advisory Council since 1999, including several years as chair.

Long one of Chicago’s most prominent business and civic leaders, John was chairman emeritus of Chicago-based Exelon Corporation, an electric utility serving Chicago, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, DC. He led Exelon from its formation in 2000 through the completion of its acquisition of Constellation Energy in 2012. Previously, he held chief executive officer positions at the New England Electric System and Central Maine Power Company, served as general counsel of Consolidated Rail Corporation, and was a partner in the law firm of Isham, Lincoln & Beale.



## IN MEMORIAM

John was a past chairman of Edison Electric Institute. He was the nonexecutive chairman of the board of SunCoke Energy and previously served on the boards of Northern Trust, Allstate, UnumProvident, and Bank Boston. In addition to his service as a member and prior chair of ISAC's Advisory Council, he was a former chairman of the board of trustees of the Illinois Holocaust Museum and chairman of the Commercial Club of Chicago, the Chicago History Museum, the Field Museum, and the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT). He was a member of the boards of the Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Artis-Naples, Kids First Chicago, the Illinois Network of Charter Schools, New Horizons of Southwest Florida, the Northwestern University Settlement House, and the Pritzker Military Library, as well as a past president of the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation. He was a cochair of the American Business Immigration Coalition.

John and his wife, Jeanne, founded two professorships of architecture and a chair in sustainable energy at IIT, as well as the Rowe Chair in the History of American Politics, the Rowe Professorship in Byzantine History, and the Rowe Professorship in Greek History at the University of Wisconsin; the Rowe Center for Research in Virology at the Morgridge Institute; the Curator of Evolutionary Biology at the Field Museum; and ISAC's own Rowe Professorship in Ancient Near Eastern Studies.

Ardent supporters of education at every level, in Chicago the Rowes cofounded the Rowe-Clark Math and Science Academy and the Rowe Elementary and Middle Schools. They also served as patrons of the Pope Saint John Paul II School.

John earned his undergraduate and law degrees at the University of Wisconsin, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and the Order of the Coif. He also received that university's Distinguished Alumni Award. He was awarded honorary doctorates by the University of Wisconsin, DePaul University, IIT, Drexel University, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, Bryant College, Thomas College, and Dominican University.

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PROJECT REPORTS

OVERLEAF: Goblet in the shape of a lotus flower. Faience, modern restoration. Egypt, Mallawi. New Kingdom, Dynasty 18 (fourteenth century BCE). ISACM E549.

# CHICAGO DEMOTIC DICTIONARY

BRIAN P. MUHS AND JANET H. JOHNSON

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Considerable progress was made on the Chicago Demotic Dictionary (CDD) from July 2022 to June 2023, primarily thanks to our research assistants Brendan Hainline, Rolland Long, and Ariel Singer, who have worked patiently and persistently with great attention to very fine details. As a result of their hard work, we can now see some light at the end of the tunnel.

To appreciate this progress, it is useful to review the scope of the project. The completed CDD will comprise three sections: the preliminaries, the letter and number files, and finally the “problem” files. The preliminaries provide the information needed to use the dictionary, such as explanations of the project’s scope and goals and the significance of the layout of the entries; the meaning of the many abbreviations; and full bibliographic information for the Demotic papyri, ostraca, and inscriptions used as primary sources, as well as for the publications about Demotic orthography, lexicography, grammar, and philology that serve as secondary sources. The twenty-four letter files and three number files are the heart of the dictionary; they provide examples of different writings (both spellings and orthographies) of each word organized alphabetically and chronologically, with discussions of various grammatical uses and meanings. The dictionary concludes with three problem files, providing entries for words whose reading, meaning, and placement in the dictionary are uncertain or disputed.

Since 2015, the CDD team has focused its efforts on converting the twenty-seven letter and number files to Unicode and on transferring the files from the word-processing software Word to the publication software InDesign, because the latter better preserves the resolution of the images of Demotic words embedded in the files. This process required extracting images of every example of every Demotic word and writing from the Word files, then individually linking them to their corresponding locations in the InDesign files. By June 2022, twenty-one letter and number files had been completed, four files were undergoing conversion (W, R, D, and numbers), and two files awaited conversion (I and H). This year, by June 2023, three more files were completed (R, H, and numbers), and work was progressing on the remaining three files (I, W, and D). One of the latter files (D) was substantially complete except for some missing images.

Looking ahead, the CDD team hopes to complete the remaining three letter and number files and to turn its attention to the preliminaries and the problem files. The preliminaries are mostly just text but may include a few images that need to be extracted for linkage in InDesign. The prologue has been finished and already converted to Unicode, but the lists of abbreviations and the bibliographies of primary and secondary works cited need to be updated and have not yet been converted. The problem files, however, are a combination of text and images in the same format as the letter files; eventually, they can probably be combined into a single problem file. But first the images need to be extracted and the text converted to Unicode so that both the text and images can be put into InDesign.

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# CHICAGO HITTITE DICTIONARY

THEO VAN DEN HOUT

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Work on the Chicago Hittite Dictionary (CHD) continued at the same pace as the previous year, when we began working on the letter T. Thanks to the work of editors Richard Beal and Petra Goedegebuure, as well as Humanities Teaching Fellow Robert Marineau, the first part of this task—all words starting in *ta*—is already starting to take shape.

Beal finished going through the roughly 195 words starting in *ta*- or *da*- (the Hittite language does not make a distinction between *t* and *d* at the beginning of words). This task meant scouring our files for newly attested words or new examples of existing words. He also checked the so-called “*Konkordanz*,” the German website where all tablets and fragments are listed with photos, findspots, and bibliography, for new joins to already-cited references and for new editions and/or translations for each text cited. If there were none, there may have been a new transliteration. Many entries are short, but some are monstrously long, such as the entry for the verb *da*- “to take,” which, as you can imagine given its everyday meaning, is attested very often. As a result, such an entry can run to dozens of pages. Since some of these dictionary articles were written as many as twenty-five years ago, there was often much new information to add. Along the way, Beal copyedited all the articles into our CHD house style, which should save us a lot of time later on.

Articles for several common words had, for some reason, not yet been written—for instance, one for *taru* “wood/tree.” Another word that had not been written about was the obscure technical term *tarwiyali*, used in augury or bird oracles. For such oracles, one may compare the story of Romulus and Remus at the founding of Rome: after whom of the two was the new city going to be named? To ascertain the decision, the two brothers asked a priest to watch the skies and wait for birds to fly in, because the kinds of birds, their numbers, the flight path, and the sounds they made were considered signs that an expert priest could “read” and interpret as the will of the gods. This very popular Anatolian technique ultimately made its way to Italy, possibly through the Etruscans.

Likewise not yet written was the article for the important verb *tarna*- “to let (go), allow,” which Marineau worked on. There are hundreds of attestations of this verb, and often it occurs with adverbs (similar to combinations in English, such as “let in/out/off/on/up”). Although some of these compounds are straightforward and easy to understand, others can be extremely difficult to interpret. In a similar way, Goedegebuure continued her work on the conjunction *ta* “and” and wrote the entry for *tawananna*, a title of Hittite queens.

Goedegebuure also continued work on the pilot project of revising the entries for the letter L, the very first installment of the CHD published in 1980. The project envisages an electronic update of this publication, now already more than forty years old, and serves as a possible model for the future dissemination of our dictionary.

Two guests remained with us in 2022–23. Dr. Susanne Görke, from the University of Marburg, Germany, first arrived in 2021. Her stay was made possible by the prestigious German Feodor Lynen Fellowship, awarded by the Humboldt Foundation, for her work on a book about the development and establishment of a religious system in Hittite Anatolia. Dr. Görke returned to Germany earlier this calendar year, and we will miss her steady presence in the CHD office. Semra Dalkılıç, a PhD student from Turkey, also spent another year with us as a guest in the CHD office, working on her dissertation on Anatolian seals and sealing practices.



Finally, I want to thank graduate student Naomi Harris for organizing a series of Anatolian Circles (started several years ago and, before Naomi, led by Thalia Lysen, who graduated in 2022), where students, guests, and faculty present new ideas in an informal and conversational way. The latter means that speakers can be interrupted at any moment—and they are!

And as always, we would like to thank our donors, particularly Walter and Susan Guterbock, for their generous support.

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# CULTURAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION PROJECTS IN AFGHANISTAN AND CENTRAL ASIA

GIL J. STEIN

On December 31, 2022, the three Afghan cultural heritage grants carried out by the Chicago Center for Cultural Heritage Preservation (located within ISAC), with funding from the US Department of State and the US Embassy in Kabul, came to an end. In 2022–23, the focus of our heritage preservation efforts shifted north to two Central Asian heritage projects based in Uzbekistan and supported by the US Embassy in Tashkent.

## AFGHANISTAN

In 2022, we carried out the final year of our cultural heritage projects in Afghanistan in partnership with the National Museum of Afghanistan and the Archaeology Institute of Afghanistan (AIA). These efforts were funded by three grants from the US State Department and the US Embassy in Kabul: Core Operations (in particular the Hadda Sculptural Project), the Mobile Museum Outreach Project, and the Afghan Heritage Mapping Partnership (AHMP). Our key partners in the US State Department were cultural heritage program manager Dr. Laura Tedesco and grants management specialist Jaqueline Viselli.

### *Hadda Sculptural Project*

In spring 2001, before demolishing the two monumental standing Buddha statues in the Bamiyan Valley, the Taliban systematically worked their way through the National Museum in Kabul, smashing every statue they could find, including hundreds of sculptures that had been recovered by archaeological excavations at the Early Buddhist monastic center of Hadda near the Khyber Pass in southeastern Afghanistan. At great risk to themselves, the museum's curators secretly swept up and stored thousands of sculptural fragments. From 2016 to 2022, the Hadda Sculptural Project worked to document, conserve, and reassemble hundreds of rare early Buddhist Gandharan-style sculptures from Hadda, while also training the National Museum's conservation staff through in-person sessions and online workshops. Our conservators and museology specialists sorted, conserved, identified, and documented more than 7,600

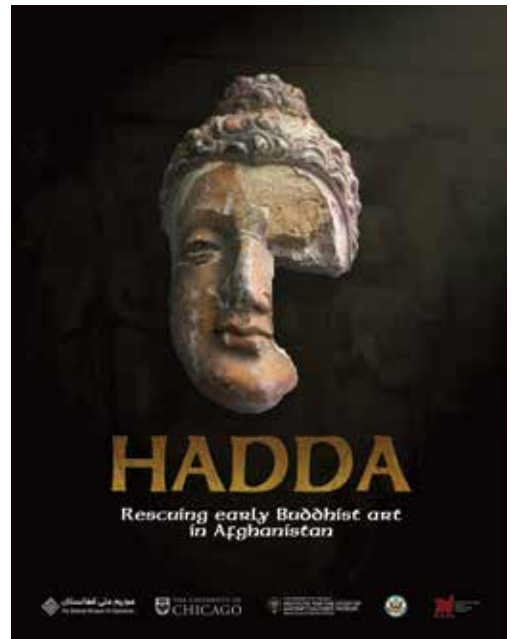


Figure 1. Poster for the documentary film *Hadda: Rescuing Early Buddhist Art in Afghanistan*, produced as part of the Hadda Sculptural Project.

sculptural fragments and have partially reassembled more than 480 of the sculptures that had been smashed by the Taliban. We made 3D digital models of the 40 best-preserved, partially reassembled sculptures and used these models to recreate the sculptures digitally. We also pulled together thousands of images and whatever records survived of the Hadda sculptures into a searchable digital assets management database as a resource for both cultural heritage documentation and scholarly research.

As part of our work, we produced a short documentary film titled *Hadda: Rescuing Early Buddhist Art in Afghanistan*, which is freely accessible at <https://www.youtube.com/@C3HP> (fig. 1).

### **Afghan Heritage Mapping Partnership**

The AHMP with the AIA focused on three key areas:

1. Discovery and spatial inventory of archaeological sites across Afghanistan using remote-sensing satellite imagery
2. Detection and monitoring of looting of heritage sites
3. Training the AIA staff in geospatial techniques for heritage preservation

In 2021, the AHMP entered a collaboration with the University of Chicago's Research Computing Center (RCC) to develop an artificial intelligence (AI) deep-learning model that taught the RCC computer to scan the remote-sensing images and identify the archaeological sites. In 2021–22, the RCC developed the AI deep-learning model, and our project used its data of thousands of site identifications to train the model to identify the main archaeological site types—mounds, caravanserais, forts, and qanats (underground water channels) (fig. 2). AHMP data analysts then visually checked the computer's site predictions to verify their accuracy. By the time the grant ended in December 2022, our collaborative work had identified and verified a total of 29,624 locales with cultural heritage significance.

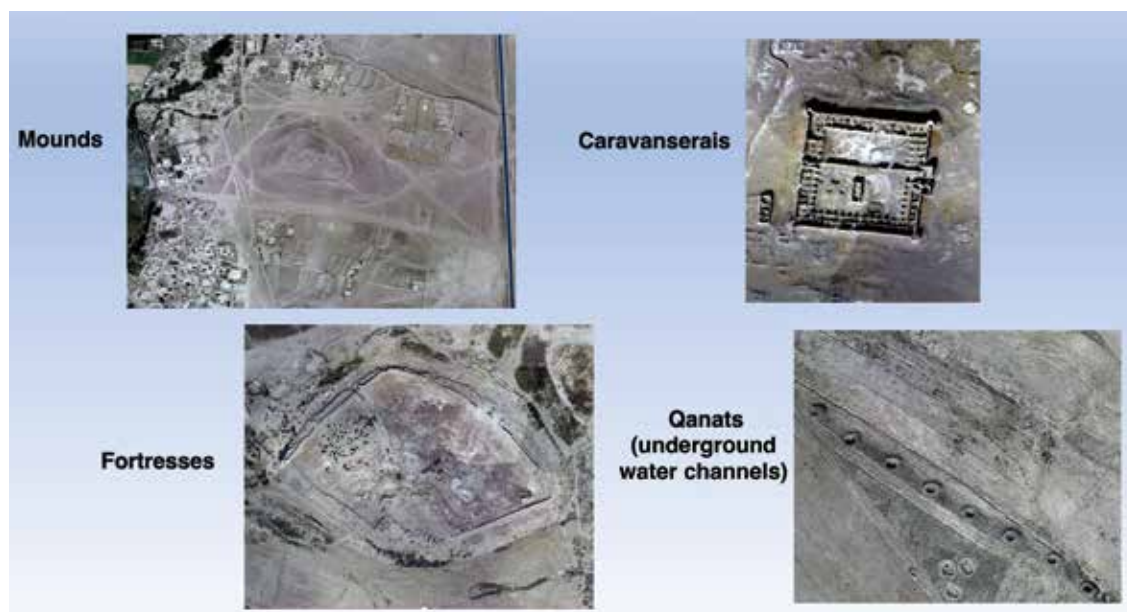


Figure 2. Main archaeological site types in satellite images. Of the 29,624 archaeological sites identified in remote-sensing imagery of Afghanistan, the main types were mounds, caravanserais, fortresses, and qanats (underground water channels).

## Mobile Museum Outreach Project

In 2022, ISAC's Mobile Museum Outreach Project published *A History of Afghanistan in 100 Objects: Treasures from the National Museum of Afghanistan*. The National Museum is the world's most important repository for the artistic masterpieces and objects of daily life that exemplify Afghanistan's 50,000-year history and role in world cultural heritage. The 100 objects presented in the book illustrate the creativity and cross-cultural connections that shaped Afghan culture through the millennia (figs. 3 and 4). The chapters are organized by chronological period to highlight the key transformations in Afghanistan's history, from the stone tools of the Ice Age to twentieth-century ethnographic collections.

Figure 3. Cover of the e-book *A History of Afghanistan in 100 Objects*, designed to highlight the National Museum of Afghanistan's cultural treasures for the general public. Available as a free download from the ISAC website: <https://isac.uchicago.edu/research/projects/preservation-cultural-heritage-afghanistan>.

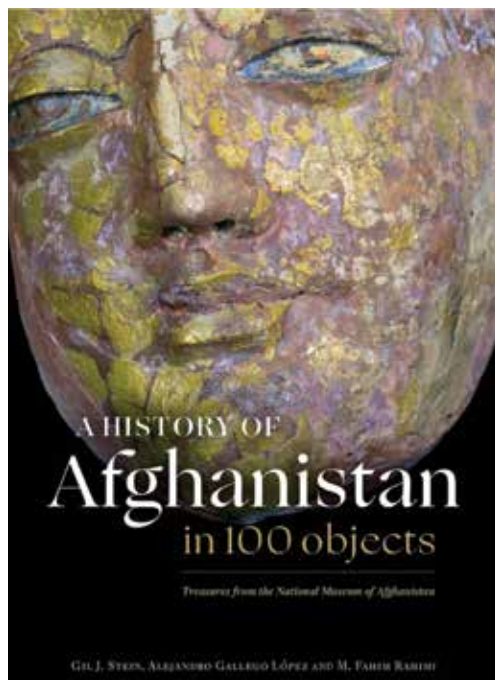


Figure 4. A gold and iron dagger with a four-lobed, turquoise-encrusted scabbard, bearing East Asian-style lion and dragon designs. The dagger, from the first-century CE "Bactrian Treasure" nomadic elite cemetery at Tillya Tepe in northern Afghanistan, is one of the objects featured in the e-book *A History of Afghanistan in 100 Objects*.

## CENTRAL ASIA

Two cultural heritage projects are currently underway in Central Asia: Cultural Heritage and Economic Development (CHED) and our Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation grant, "Conservation and Restoration of the Langar Ota Timurid Mosque, Qashqadaryo Province, Uzbekistan."

### *Cultural Heritage and Economic Development*

CHED is a two-year advanced-training initiative whose work started in 2022. The first workshop in this capacity-building program brought together heritage specialists, museum professionals, and Ministry of Culture staff from the post-Soviet Central Asian republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan to learn strategies for preserving heritage sites while at the same time promoting economic development. The workshops focus on two key strategies for site preservation: inscription as UNESCO World Heritage sites or their development as national archaeological parks. The workshops take place in cooperation with the State Museum for the History of Uzbekistan in Tashkent and the Institute of Fine Arts at the Uzbekistan Academy of Sciences. We have been fortunate to work in partnership with the State Museum's director Ms. Jannat Ismailova and deputy director Dr. Otabek Aripdjanov and with Dr. Shakirjan Pidaev of the Uzbekistan Academy of Sciences.

CHED seeks to share best practices for the development and implementation of "protected heritage spaces" for sites in ways that ensure their sustainability while maximizing their benefits for attracting internal and international tourism, economic development through improved infrastructure, and job creation and the strengthening of civil society in the Central Asian republics. The first CHED workshop took place in the city of Termez (southern Uzbekistan) from October 24 to 30, 2022, and was taught by preservation architect and workshop coordinator Bill Remsen and UNESCO World Heritage site inscription expert



Figure 5. Participants in the first CHED workshop at the Termez Archaeological Museum.

David Michelmore. Remsen and Michelmore have deep experience in successfully conducting integrated projects for the development of economically sustainable protected heritage spaces for both tourism and economic development. The workshop utilized the excavated first- to fifth-century CE Early Buddhist site of Kara Tepe as a case study for the on-site practicum. Eleven participants from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan attended the workshop. Dr. Shakirjan Pidaev and Dr. Otabek Aripdjanov were also present to contribute their expertise (fig. 5).

The workshop focused on two main areas. Michelmore presented a detailed overview of the process of UNESCO World Heritage site inscription and gave an in-depth analysis of two successful proposals for inscription: the Erbil Citadel in Iraqi Kurdistan and sites associated with the life of the Buddha in northern India. Remsen's presentations focused on key issues in site preservation, restoration, and development for tourism.

Mornings were devoted to workshop presentations, overviews, and discussions. Afternoons were spent in the field, on visits to archaeological and historical sites in the Termez region as real-life examples where participants could compare successful site preservation efforts with problematic attempts. In the most important and innovative aspect of the in-field component of the workshop, Remsen developed and conducted two field practicum sessions at the site of Kara Tepe (figs. 6 and 7). Workshop participants were divided into teams tasked with (1) conducting condition assessments of the site to identify and map preservation problems using architectural plans, topographic maps, and remote-sensing images; and (2) developing plans and maps for infrastructure aimed at protecting the site while simultaneously facilitating site access for tourism through pedestrian walkways, parking areas, and a visitors' center. On the mornings after the in-field practica, each team presented its assessments and maps for review and general discussion.



Figure 6. In-field exercise: CHED participant teams conducting conservation condition assessment mapping at the Early Buddhist (first- to third-century CE) monastery site of Kara Tepe, outside the modern city of Termez in southern Uzbekistan.



Figure 7. CHED instructor and workshop coordinator Bill Remsen and workshop participant evaluating the results of a field exercise to plan for tourism infrastructure development at the Early Buddhist monastery site of Kara Tepe near Termez. The site development plans prepared by the three participant teams were posted for discussion, comparative evaluation, comments, and recommended improvements.

At the conclusion of the workshop, participants were asked to fill out evaluation forms. The comments we received made it clear that the CHED workshop's integration of in-class discussions with in-field practical experience was a highly effective approach to training and capacity building.

### ***Organizational Meeting for the Council of Central Asian National Museums***

In parallel with the workshop for preservation planning and economic development, a second part of CHED focused on establishing the Council of Central Asian National Museums, since national museums not only are key institutions for preserving heritage but also function as major attractors for tourism in the five Central Asian republics (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan). To maximize the effectiveness of these institutions, the council's mission would be to develop a framework in which the museums can cooperate in exchanging exhibits and developing best practices for curation, conservation, registration, and storage in keeping with internationally recognized principles.

In December 2022, the leadership teams (directors, deputy directors, and head curators) from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan convened in Tashkent for an organizational meeting to discuss and vote on their intent to establish a Council of Central Asian National Museums. A second important group of participants in the meeting was a team of international guest panelists specializing in international best practices for museums. The guest panelists were Fabio Colombo (object conservation), Michael Fisher (registration databases), Stuart Gibson (best practices and international museum cooperation), Angie Morrow (international exhibits and loans), and Alison Whyte (conservation at the nexus of museum operations).

The meeting began on December 18 with welcoming remarks presented by Dr. Abdukhalimov Bakhrom (vice president, Uzbekistan Academy of Sciences), Sarah Talalay (US Embassy in Tashkent), and Gil Stein (project principal investigator). Each delegation then presented an overview of the assets and challenges facing its own national museum. In the afternoon, the international guest panel presented overviews of key areas of best practices for museums (fig. 8). On December 19, the delegation discussed goals for the planned council, target areas for cooperation, ideas for the council's general governance structure, and the next steps to be taken. A draft joint letter of intent was then written, projected on-screen, and edited by the participants. The final draft was presented for a vote, unanimously accepted, and signed by the four delegations (fig. 9). The project will continue to work with the national museums to help them see the organizational process through to completion in 2023.

Figure 8. National Museum of Tajikistan director Zafarsho Ibrohimzoda discussing the museum's program of 3D artifact scanning.

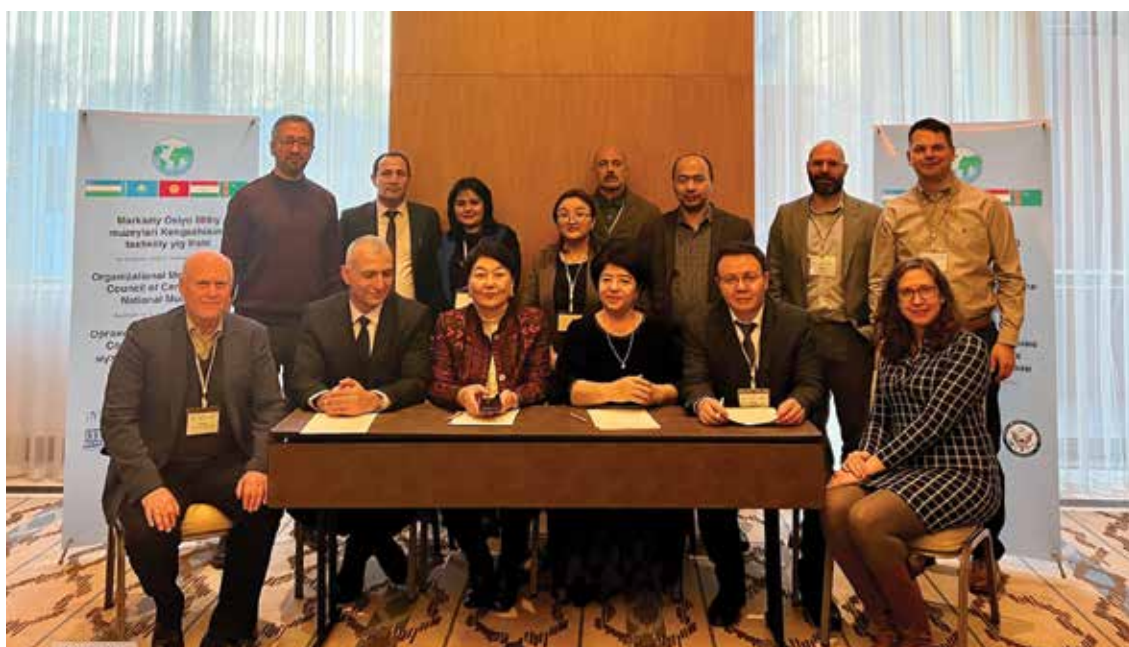


Figure 9. Museum directors and the international panel of museum specialists at the signing ceremony for the joint letter of intent to establish the Council of Central Asian National Museums.

### ***Ambassador's Fund Grant: Conservation and Restoration of Langar Ota***

The goal of this project is to assess, conserve, and restore as necessary the historic Langar Ota mosque/Sufi shrine in Qashqadaryo Province, southern Uzbekistan. The mosque is located on a mountain spur overlooking two deeply incised valleys at the outskirts of the small, isolated mountain village of Langar Ota. The mosque was constructed in the late fifteenth century in the reign of the Timurid ruler Ulug Beg and has played an active role in the religious life of the local and regional community as a Sufi shrine and religious pilgrimage destination for the past six centuries, now attracting about 1,000 pilgrims every month. The condition of the mosque has declined over the years, however, and ongoing problems with water leakage,



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significant cracking in the walls, damage to wooden columns and roof beams, and the slow collapse of the beautiful cut-tile mosaic have reached the point where the shrine's survival is now threatened. In 2022, preservation and conservation specialists Bill Remsen (architectural preservation), Fabio Colombo (tile conservation), and Ian Stewart (architectural wood) conducted a detailed conservation assessment of the mosque. The team evaluated the building's condition, documented the location and forms of site damage, and identified the three most urgent priorities for conservation in 2023–24 (figs. 10–12). The two-year project will conduct conservation interventions to

1. remove the site's damaged old roof and construct a new roof,
2. conserve and stabilize the interior tile work, and
3. stabilize or repair as needed the structural wood elements requiring the most urgent treatment.

These three top-priority conservation interventions represent the most urgent first stage of a series of measures that will be necessary to ensure the long-term preservation of the Langar Ota mosque.



Figure 10. Current condition of the existing metal roof, brick parapet, and walls of the Langar Ota mosque. Preventing further water damage to the structure is the top priority. The leaking metal roof will be removed and replaced with a thicker-gauge, corrugated metal roof with waterproof sealing and improved rain gutters.



Figure 11. Upper register of glazed ceramic tiles with calligraphic inscriptions at the top of the walls immediately beneath the timbered ceiling of the Langar Ota mosque's interior. Note the extensive water damage and partial buckling of the tiles. The tile-work register will be stabilized using Japanese paper and linen with removable adhesives to prevent collapse and breakage during the harsh winter at the site. More extensive conservation of the upper tile register and the glazed cut-tile mosaic will be completed in June and July 2024.



Figure 12. Beamed ceiling of the Langar Ota mosque. Although the structural wood is stable, decorative elements such as the original fifteenth-century multicomponent carved wood capital in the exterior portico of the mosque are at risk of collapse due to water damage from rain and winter snows at the shrine in its isolated location in the mountain village of Langar Ota.

## CONCLUSION

Our cultural heritage projects in Afghanistan and Central Asia span a range of complementary foci but share the common themes of preserving cultural heritage by collaborating with and training local museum specialists and conservators in methods and approaches to preserve their own heritage. In tandem, we are also focusing on projects that emphasize the concept of “preservation through documentation” of objects, monuments, and sites.



# EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY

J. BRETT MCCLAIN

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This year's field season of the Epigraphic Survey in Egypt began on October 15, 2022, and concluded on April 15, 2023. Based at Chicago House, Luxor, the Survey team continued our documentation, conservation, and restoration projects at the sites of Medinet Habu, Luxor Temple, and Khonsu Temple in Karnak, as well as the excavation and documentation of Theban Tomb (TT) 107 in the western necropolis. Our work at each of these sites, carried out with permission from the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA) and the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA), is summarized below.

## MEDINET HABU

At Medinet Habu, the Epigraphic Survey staff pressed forward with epigraphic documentation of various parts of the temple complex. In the Eighteenth Dynasty temple of Amun, our artists and epigraphers worked on the facsimile drawing and collation of scenes to be published in *Medinet Habu* volume XI, including inscriptions of the Twentieth, Twenty-First, Twenty-Fifth, and Twenty-Ninth Dynasties added to the exterior of the temple, as well as on drawings for *Medinet Habu* XII, the New Kingdom and Ptolemaic reliefs in the central bark shrine, and *Medinet Habu* XIII, the reliefs and inscriptions of the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty pylon and the Late Period portico. Our forthcoming publication of the Thutmosid peripteros and facade, *Medinet Habu* X, is now in press (fig. 1).

Concurrently, our photographic team coordinated to provide the large-format film documentation for each of these components of our publication series. In addition, we continued our comprehensive photographic documentation of the tomb chapels of the God's Wives of Amun (Twenty-Fifth and Twenty-Sixth Dynasties), which is now nearly complete (fig. 2); these large-format negatives (fig. 3) will provide the basis for our facsimile drawings of the monuments in future seasons. On the far side of the Medinet Habu temenos, we continued the photographic and epigraphic recording of blocks from the destroyed Western High Gate of Ramesses III (fig. 4); facsimile renderings of the decorated fragment groups, incorporated into larger architectural reconstructions (fig. 5), are now well advanced.

This year the Survey's conservation and restoration teams continued our USAID-funded site management and development program within the Medinet Habu precinct. Restoration of the paved sandstone walkway surrounding the great mortuary temple of Ramesses III (fig. 6), a large-scale endeavor begun in 2015, was completed this season, along with capping of the adjoining mudbrick enclosure walls and structures of the royal administrative complex (fig. 7). Visitors to Medinet Habu will now have unhindered access to the temple's exterior wall reliefs via this authentically reconstructed ancient processional route.

To the north of the Eighteenth Dynasty temple, our stonemasons finished dismantling the Taharqa Gate, also part of our USAID grant program. The blocks of this portal, decorated in raised relief, were carefully cleaned, treated, and consolidated by the conservation team (fig. 8), while a new, damp-coursed concrete foundation was laid and new sandstone blocks were carefully carved to replicate the disintegrated lower courses of the gate structure. The stonemasonry team began rebuilding the gate in January (fig. 9), and by mid-April the reconstruction had reached the halfway point; we expect to complete the restoration of this monument in 2024.

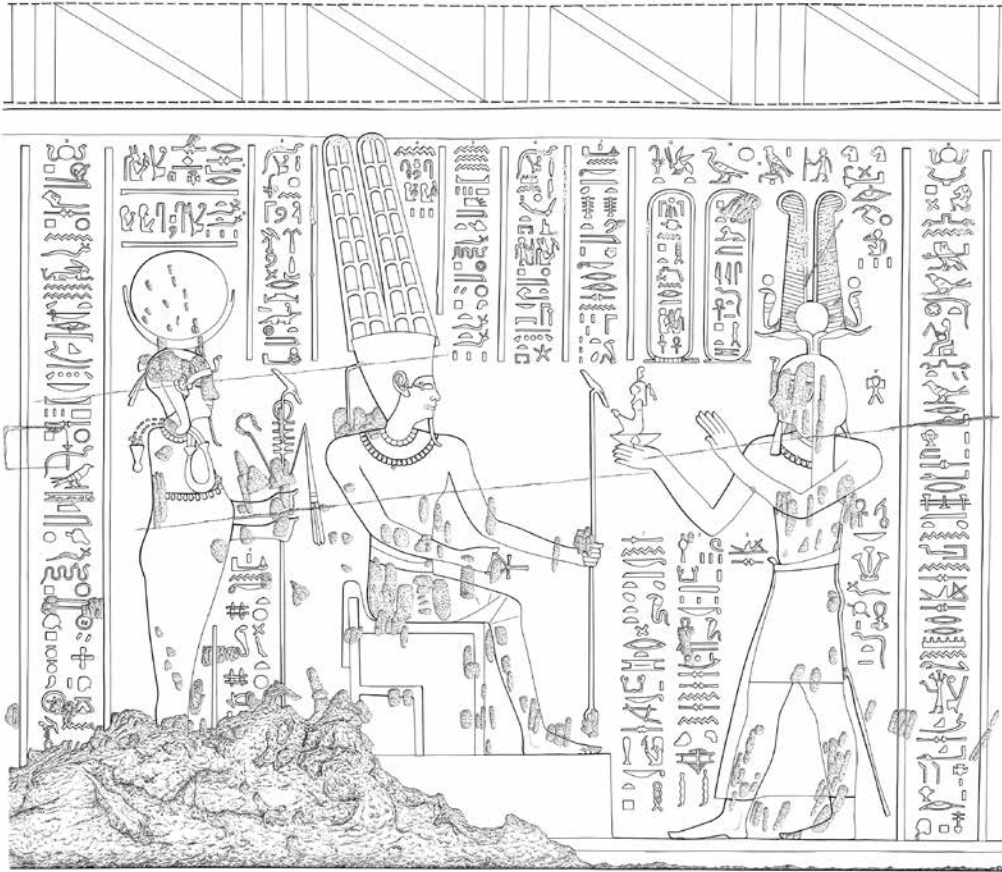


Figure 1. Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II presenting *Ma'at* to Amun and Khonsu, to be published in *Medinet Habu X* (forthcoming). Facsimile drawing by Margaret De Jong.



Figure 2. Amanda Tetreault photographing with large-format camera in the tomb chapels of the God's Wives of Amun. Photo by Yarko Kobylecky.



Figure 3. Inscription in the tomb chapel of Amenirdis. Photo by Yarko Kobylecky and Amanda Tetreault.



Figure 4. Jen Kimpton testing a fragment joint at the Western High Gate. Photo by Sue Lezon.



Figure 5. Keli Alberts preparing a reconstruction drawing of the Western High Gate. Photo by Yarko Kobylecky.



Figure 6. Stonemasonry team installing new sandstone paving block in the north sector of the Ramesses III mortuary temple. Photo by Frank Helmholz.



Figure 7. Conservation team restoring mudbrick walls at the northwest corner of the Ramesses III mortuary temple. Photo by Mohamed Abo el-Makarem.



Figure 8. Conservation team carrying out condition assessments of Tahrqa Gate blocks. Photo by Mohamed Abo el-Makarem.



Figure 9. Stonemasonry team reerecting blocks of the Tahrqa Gate. Photo by Mohamed Abo el-Makarem.



## PROJECT REPORTS | EPIGRAPHIC SURVEY

Outside the Medinet Habu enclosure wall to the southeast, our conservators and stonemasons completed the reconstruction of the west jamb of the Claudius Gate (fig. 10), a USAID-funded project started in 2019. The ruined gate is now stabilized atop a solid concrete foundation, with newly carved sandstone blocks replacing the eroded original foundation stones. In conjunction with each of these restoration projects, we continued our training program for early-career Egyptian conservation professionals, providing instruction and hands-on practical experience in a wide range of conservation methods and techniques (fig. 11). We plan to continue this annual training program, started in 2005, during our upcoming field season and in the years to come.



Figure 10. Stonemasonry team reerecting blocks of the Claudius Gate. Photo by Brett McClain.



Figure 11. Safaa Saad Mohammed cleaning wall reliefs in the Eighteenth Dynasty temple of Amun at Medinet Habu. Photo by Yarko Kobylecky.

## LUXOR TEMPLE

On the east bank of the Nile, we resumed our conservation and epigraphic documentation programs at Luxor Temple. Tagging and registration of the vast and heterogeneous collection of inscribed fragments stored in the temple blockyards continued this year (fig. 12), with nearly 20,000 fragments now registered in our ever-growing fragment database. We also continued conservation monitoring and assessment of a number of core fragment groups, including several groups for which we now have condition records extending over a period of more than twenty years, providing an ideal sample for analysis and evaluation of long-term treatment techniques. From October through December 2022, our team carried out photogrammetric documentation of a set of fragment groups stored at the south end of the blockyard, dating primarily to the reign of Amenhotep III. Since the start of this digital fragment documentation program in 2016, more than 8,000 inscribed pieces have been recorded with high-resolution orthophotographs. As this information is generated in the field, it is also being added to our electronic archives at Chicago House to serve as a research dataset for future analysis of the fragment corpus. During February and March 2023, our team also conducted a review of the open-air museum in the Luxor Temple blockyard. Inaugurated in 2010 with support from the World Monuments Fund, the installation will be refurbished and expanded next season, with new signage and additional fragment groups added to the display platforms.

Our photographers and epigraphic staff also proceeded with documentation of the standing wall remains in Luxor Temple itself. In the central Imperial Chamber, facsimile drawing of the heavily damaged third-century AD Roman frescos, which depict the four Tetrarchs and the Imperial court, is now complete, and this season our team moved on to photogrammetry and facsimile drawing of the underlying coronation scenes from the reign of Amenhotep III (fig. 13). These two chronological phases will be presented in our



Figure 12. Hala Mohammed Ahmed tagging inscribed fragments in the Luxor Temple blockyard. Photo by Brett McClain.



Figure 13. Krisztián Vértés drawing Amenhotep III wall reliefs in the Imperial Chamber of Luxor Temple. Photo by Dominique Navarro.

publication series as *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Luxor Temple III/1* and *III/2*, the first volume of which is now in preparation. In this central sector of the temple and within the monument's innermost chambers, we worked with the Zamani Project/Z&F, a research group affiliated with the University of Cape Town, to conduct a program of 3D laser scanning and architectural surveys that will provide a complete, three-dimensional map of the temple complex, which will be used to provide a spatially accurate framework for our ongoing epigraphic documentation program.

## KHONSU TEMPLE

At Khonsu Temple within the precinct of Karnak, we resumed our documentation of the inscribed blocks and fragments reused in the structure of the Twentieth Dynasty monument. This program, originally carried out by our team in collaboration with the American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE) in 2008–14, had been reinitiated during our 2021–22 field season in conjunction with the ongoing ARCE restoration program on the site. Existing cracks in the walls and ceilings of the temple, which allow access to the decorated surfaces of hundreds of blocks taken from older monuments by Ramesses III's stonemasons, will be filled in as part of this restoration campaign, so it is critical that an epigraphic record of the ancient inscriptions be made beforehand. From January to March 2023, our team was able to record several dozen of these fragments using the foil-impression method that has proven to be the only effective technique for capturing the relief decoration on these hidden stones (fig. 14). We hope to continue this collaborative research effort with ARCE in 2023–24, and our growing record of the corpus of reused blocks from Khonsu Temple will ultimately be included as a volume in our *Temple of Khonsu* publication series.



Figure 14. Dominique Navarro taking foil impressions of reused fragments at Khonsu Temple. Photo by Brett McClain.

## THEBAN TOMB 107

In February 2023, we resumed the clearance of TT 107, the tomb of Nefersekheru, in collaboration with our Australian colleagues from Macquarie University, Sydney, who generously provided their expertise in specialized archaeological techniques. The team expanded the excavation of the tomb's interior, which has never been fully explored, and a range of ceramics and other finds were retrieved from the stratified layers of flood debris that filled the columned hall and inner chambers in later antiquity. Moreover, several new fragments of finely carved limestone relief from the tomb's decoration were recovered (fig. 15), and during March they were conserved, photographed, and drawn by the Epigraphic Survey staff (fig. 16). Much work remains to be done, however, and we plan to continue the excavation and documentation of this Eighteenth Dynasty monument in 2024.



Figure 15. Brett McClain and Mohammed Youssef sorting inscribed fragments at TT 107. Photo by Sue Osgood.

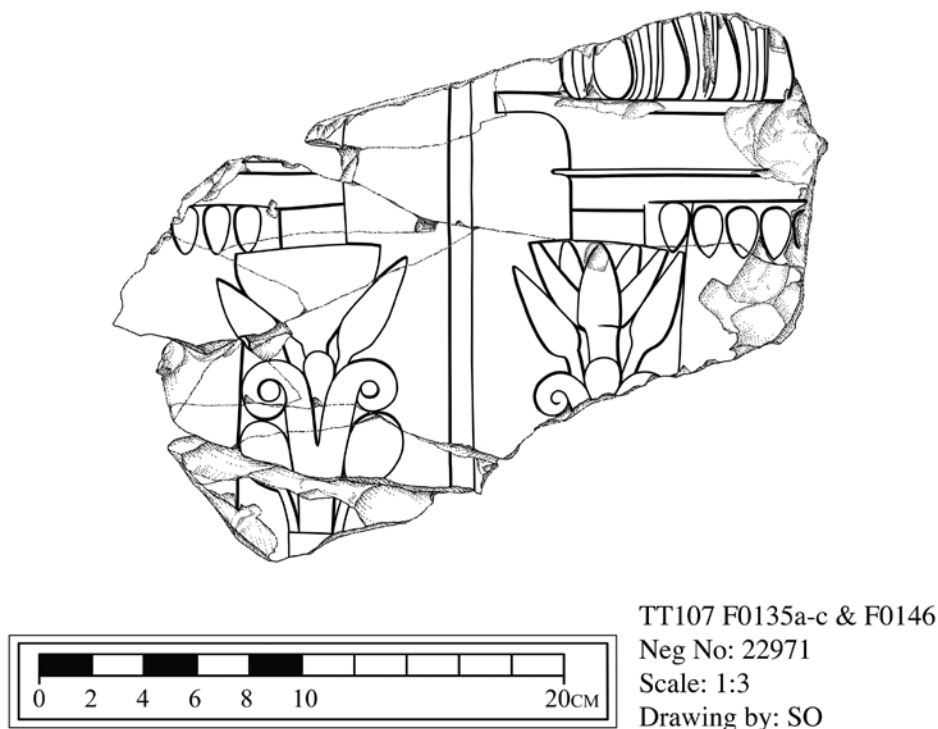


Figure 16. Reassembled group of inscribed fragments from the facade of TT 107. Facsimile drawing by Sue Osgood.

## CHICAGO HOUSE

Our headquarters and residence at Chicago House serve as the base of operations for all our fieldwork during the annual six-month season. The day-to-day management of the facility is overseen by our capable administration and finance team, our experienced house manager and technicians, and our permanent cadre of skilled workmen. Our library and archives offer a wide range of research resources for the local archaeological community, including members of the MoTA/SCA, scholars and students from local universities, and researchers from the many foreign expeditions that work in the region of Luxor each autumn and winter. Our library staff not only organize and maintain the collections but also provide assistance to patrons when needed, and the photographic archives staff oversee and curate our ever-growing collection of large-format film negatives, digital and 3D images, and other documents. In preparation for the Epigraphic Survey's upcoming centennial anniversary, we are assembling a dossier of archival material that will form the basis for a commemorative volume, now in preparation, giving an in-depth history of the expedition; a special exhibition at the ISAC Museum; and other celebratory events planned for autumn 2024.

## STAFF AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Epigraphic Survey professional staff for 2022–23 consisted of J. Brett McClain as field director; epigraphers Jennifer L. Kimpton, Emmanuelle Arnaudière, Aleksandra Hallmann, and Ariel Singer; Egyptologist/house manager Christina Di Cerbo; senior artists Margaret De Jong and Susan Osgood; artists Krisztián Vértés, Keli Alberts, and Dominique Navarro; senior photographer Yarko Kobylecky; photographer/photo archivist Susan Lezon; photo archives assistant Elinor Smith; assistant photographer/photo archivist Amanda Tetreault; digital archivist Alain Arnaudière; archaeologists Boyo Ockinga, Susanne Binder, and Kim McCorquodale (Macquarie University); digital photographers/photogrammetry specialists Owen Murray and Mariusz Caban; laser-scanning specialists Heinz Rütter, Christoph Held, and Bruce McDonald (Zamani Project/Z&F); project manager/data engineer Gina Salama; senior conservators Hiroko Kariya and Mohamed Abo el-Makarem; consultant conservators Stephen Rickerby and Lisa Shekede; master stonemason Frank Helmholz; assistant stonemason Johannes Weninger; head librarian Anait Helmholz; assistant librarian Martina Roshdy Maher; finance manager Essam el-Sayed; administrator Samir Guindy; and assistant administrator Samwell Maher. Our team of forty full-time skilled workmen and twenty-six seasonal workmen was supervised by the indispensable Rais Badawy Mohammed Abd el-Rahman. Emily Teeter has taken on the role of Epigraphic Survey historian to chronicle the first hundred years of our expedition for next year's centennial. We were fortunate to welcome Catie Witt and Rebecca Wang, graduate students in the University of Chicago's Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, as interns during the second half of our field season.

We are most grateful to the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and the Supreme Council of Antiquities, in particular Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Mr. Ahmed Issa; former Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Dr. Khaled el-Enany; SCA Secretary General Dr. Mostafa Waziri; General Director of the Pharaonic Sector Dr. Ayman Ashmawy; General Director of Foreign Missions Dr. Nashwa Gaber; General Director of Antiquities in Luxor Dr. Fathy Yaseen; Gurna Inspectorate General Director Bahaa el-Din; Gurna Inspectorate Assistant Director Ezz ed-Din Kamal en-Nouby; Gurna Inspectorate Director of Foreign Missions Ramadan Ahmed Ali; Luxor Temple Director Ahmed Araby; and all our friends and colleagues in Egypt for another fruitful collaboration this year.

We also extend special thanks to the many friends of ISAC and Chicago House whose generous support has funded our preservation programs in Luxor. We are grateful to USAID mission director Leslie Reed; former USAID mission director Sherry Carlin; and USAID representatives Mohamed Abdel Rahman and Steven Sunderland Jr.; to Dr. Marjorie M. Fisher; David and Carlotta Maher†; O.J. and Angie

Sopranos; Misty and Lewis Gruber; Ward and Diane Zumsteg; Andrea Dudek; Nassef Sawiris; Kitty Picken†; Ellen and Tom Granger; David and Allison Harley; Piers and Jenny Litherland; Tom Van Eynde; Jan Johnson and Donald Whitcomb; Marjorie B. Kiewit; Tom and Linda Heagy; Shafik Gabr, ARTOC Group, Cairo; Holly J. Mulvey; Judge and Mrs. Warren Siegel; Barbara Breasted Whitesides and George Whitesides; Miriam Reitz Baer; Beth Noujaim; James Lichtenstein; Priscilla (Peppy) Bath; Charlie Secchia; Emily Fine; Nan Ray; Anna White; Willard White; Janet and Karim Mostafa; Elisabeth R. French; Waheeb (Ricky) and Christine Kamil; Roger Atkinson; Michael L. Klowden; Caroline Lynch; Charles R. Nelson; Polly Kelly; Louise Grunwald; Lowri Lee Sprung; Andrew Nourse and Patty Hardy; Kate Pitcairn; John W. Prange; Dr. Lorna Straus; Dr. Ben Harer; Dr. Roxie Walker; Tony and Lawrie Dean; Kirk Shmink (Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund); Walter H. A. Vandaele; and Charles L. Michod Jr. We would also like to thank Dr. Louise Bertini, Mary Sadek, and Nick Warner of ARCE for their helpful collaboration and support of our work, along with all our friends and colleagues at ISAC in Chicago.

We wish to express our enduring gratitude to USAID Egypt for the support of our documentation, conservation, restoration, and site management programs at Medinet Habu. For more than two decades, USAID-sponsored grant programs have been vital to the success of our fieldwork in the monumental sites of ancient Thebes.

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# GIZA PLATEAU MAPPING PROJECT

## MARK LEHNER | ANCIENT EGYPT RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

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Ancient Egypt Research Associates (AERA) carried out spring and fall field seasons during 2022–23 with both lab and field work. We returned to two areas on the south side of our flagship site, Heit el-Ghurab (HeG), on which we had last worked in the early 2000s: the Royal Administrative Building (RAB) and the structure we dubbed Enclosure 1 (E1), which lies just west of the RAB compound (fig. 1).

### ROYAL ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING

We returned to the RAB during the spring and fall field seasons, which took place from September 16 to November 30, 2022, and from January 31 to April 9, 2023 (figs. 2–4). We had previously excavated at its north end, the only portion we could access. Most of it, as well as other areas of HeG, were buried under the Abu Hol Sports Club soccer field, where we could not excavate until fall 2021 after the sports club moved. In our earlier work we exposed the bottoms of round mudbrick silos, measuring 2.62 m (5 cubits) in diameter, lining the north and west sides of a court about a meter lower than the floor level outside the court. These silos appeared to serve as the central storage for grain used as flour by several bakeries we excavated to the north in our area EOG (East of the Galleries; see fig. 1), the production yard of the RAB. During our 2022–23 seasons, we excavated targeted areas within the Silo Court and finally answered some questions lingering since the last RAB excavation in 2007.

In February and March 2023, we found the south end of the Silo Court. It measures 39 m × 17.5 m, or 682.5 m<sup>2</sup> (7,346 ft<sup>2</sup>). We found the silos of the southern row, allowing us to estimate thirty silos total in eastern, western, northern, and southern rows. So far we have excavated fifteen individual silos. Four entrances opened into the Silo Court: one on the north, two on the south, and one on the east through the outer wall of the RAB. We hypothesize that grain and other goods could have been delivered up to the RAB from boats in a harbor that filled with water during the inundation. The entire area of the RAB and southeastern part of HeG slopes down to the south, into a depression filled with sand soaked in groundwater (Lagoon 1), the remains of our hypothetical harbor.

A narrow corridor between the silos and the enclosing walls of the Silo Court at each of the four sides, with a floor level higher than the silo bases, allowed workers to fill the silos from the top. They could remove the grain or other stored goods from openings near the bottom of the silos. A low mudbrick wall ran along the court's floor, tangential to the fronts of the silos. We believe apertures for letting out grain and resealing the silos functioned somehow with this low retaining wall or curb. But so far we have not found this articulation intact on any of the silos. When they were demolished or collapsed, the side facing into the court with its aperture would have been weakest, so the bases of the silos have mostly been cut away on that side.

The floor of the Silo Court sloped down gradually from east to west, with the north row of silos following the slope. Quite unexpectedly, we found that the silos in the eastern row were based about 0.5 m higher than those on the north, such that a small ramp leads up to the silo in the northeastern corner, and the low wall along the fronts of the eastern silos rises as a retaining wall for the sand and debris of the higher foundation. Why the builders raised the eastern silos higher, we do not know. We also do not know how high



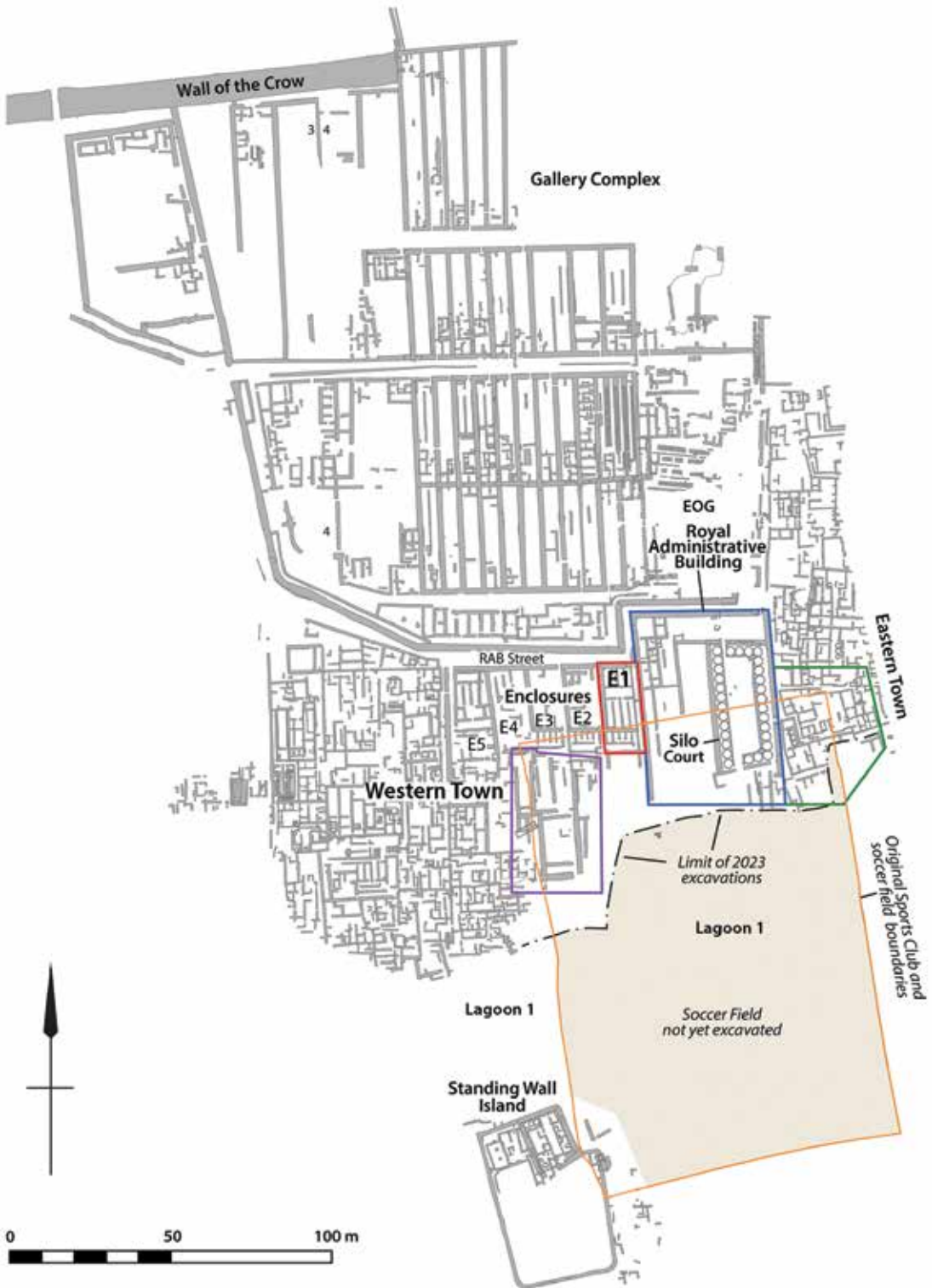


Figure 1. Map of the Heit el-Ghurab site, with areas where AERA worked in fall 2022 and spring 2023 indicated. Map by Rebekah Miracle, AERA GIS.

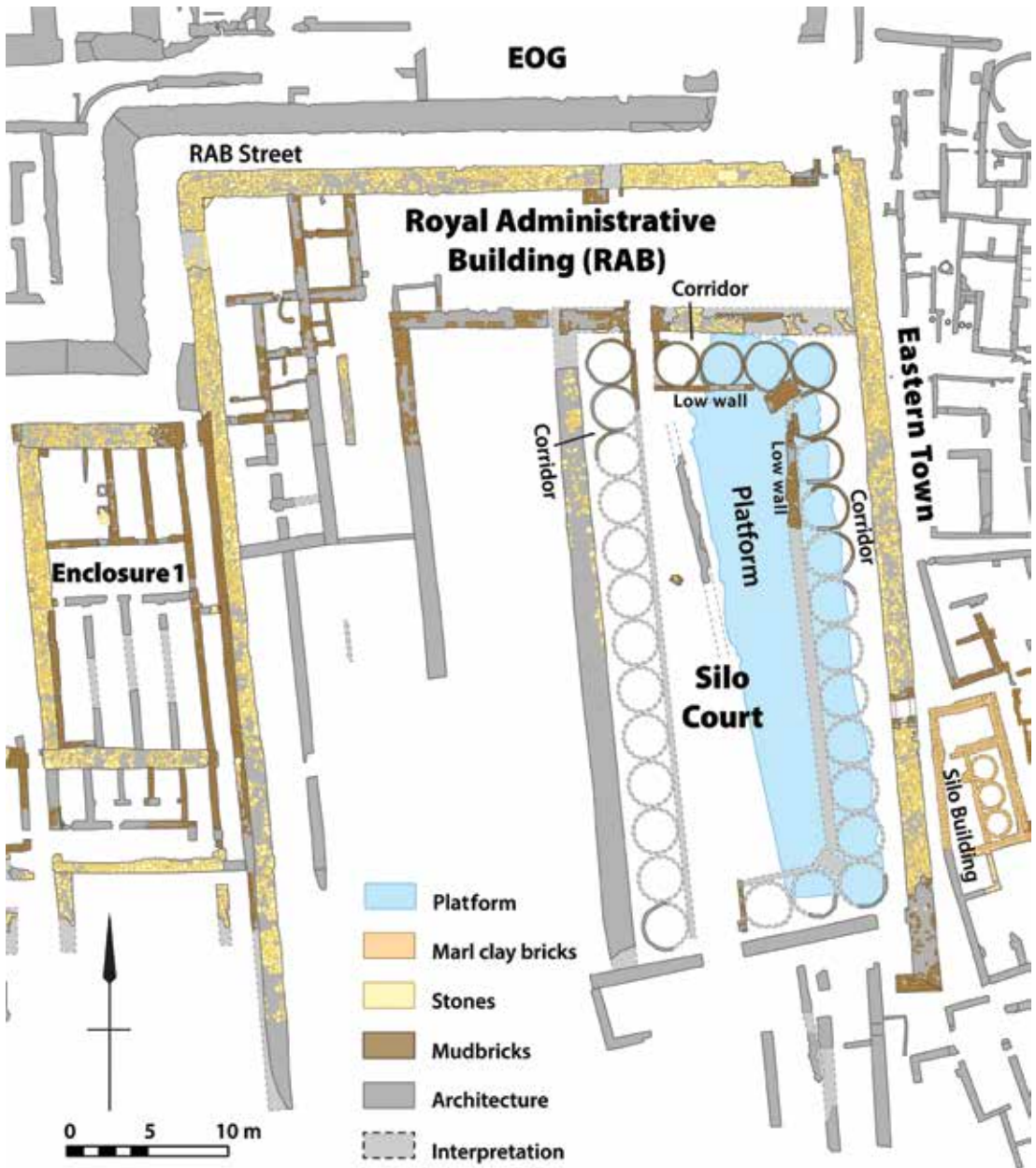


Figure 2. The Royal Administrative Building following excavations in spring 2023. Map by Rebekah Miracle, AERA GIS.

the silos stood or whether they were conical or domed cylinders, like those shown in Old Kingdom tomb scenes. The latter shape is probable.

During our most recent excavations we found evidence of activity after the reign of Menkaure, who left the third Giza pyramid uncompleted. Overall, it appears from all our work over the years that people largely abandoned the HeG settlement after his reign. But in this past field season we found a thick platform of stone over the eastern half of the Silo Court, which appears to have had some use after the silos were decommissioned. The stone debris included pieces of crude limestone furniture (from the adjacent Eastern Town?) and tons of large fragments of granite, diorite, and dolerite. A retaining wall of broken stone and a



Figure 3. The Silo Court during excavations in spring 2023. The Khafre and Khufu pyramids loom in the background. View to the northwest. Photo by Mark Lehner.



Figure 4. Excavators work in the silos of the Silo Court during the fall 2022 excavations. View to the west-southwest. Photo by Mark Lehner.

ramp-like accretion that runs against its eastern length hold the debris in place. The platform material was dumped and held in place above the remains of the eastern silos after they had collapsed. We do not know what the platform was used for—perhaps for dragging away stones from HeG buildings for other construction projects. The western side of the platform forms a ditch with the western wall of the Silo Court, probably after the wall had collapsed. The ditch runs the length of the court and slopes down gradually to the south, toward the hypothetical harbor.

Complicating matters, we also have evidence of activity during the Fifth Dynasty that appears to *pre-date* the platform: six sealings bearing the name of Userkaf, the first king of the dynasty. We found them in past seasons but could not tie them to HeG until 2023. The sealings were made with the same seal, one owned by an official called the “Elder of the House.” They were used to seal peg-and-string closures, most likely on doors for storage structures, such as bins and silos. The fragments that fell when the sealings were broken would not have traveled far, suggesting that the RAB silos were still in use in the Fifth Dynasty. If so, the platform came later, suggesting the site was decommissioned in the early Fifth Dynasty.

To the east of the RAB, we cleared some of the area previously under the soccer field and uncovered more evidence of the Eastern Town, a village-like district unlike other areas of HeG (fig. 5). The newly

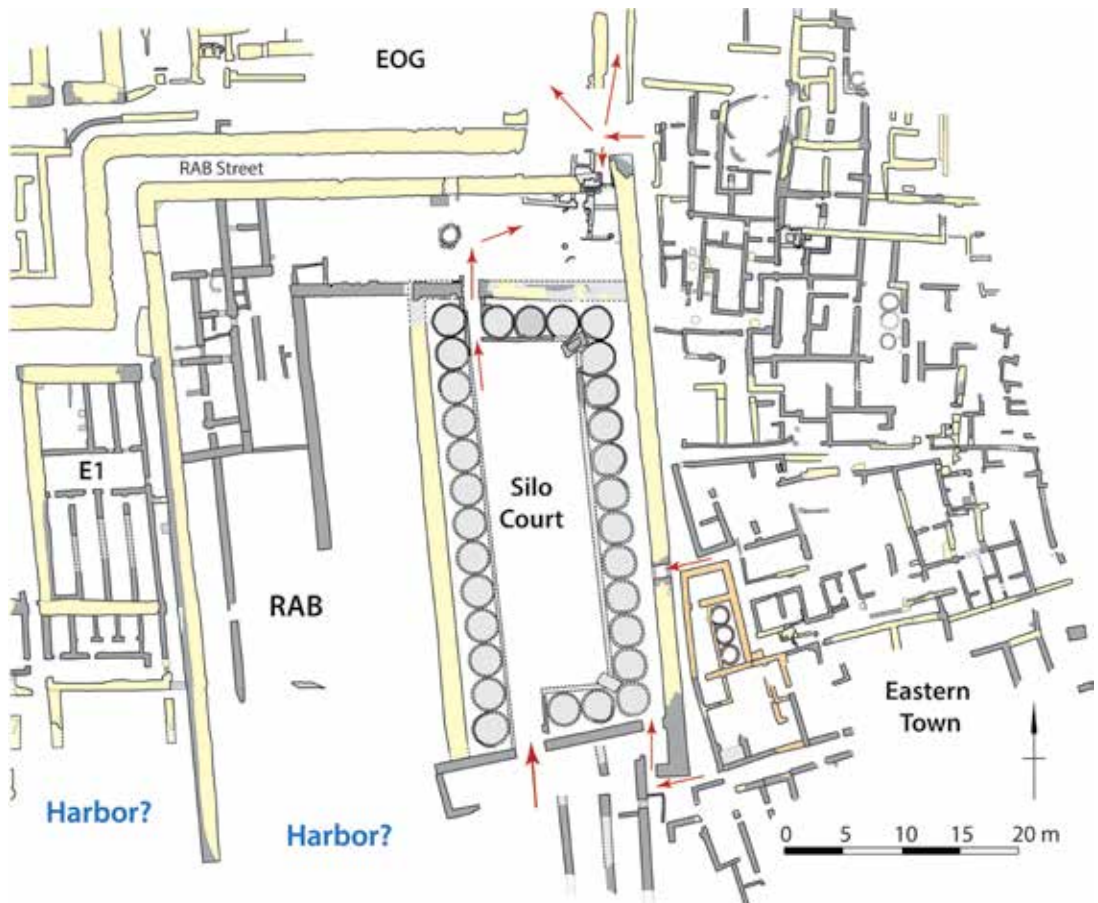


Figure 5. The newly exposed Eastern Town and southern end of the Royal Administrative Building's Silo Court. Yellow walls are composed of broken limestone pieces set in Nile Valley clay. Gray walls are Nile-clay mudbrick. Orange walls are desert marl-clay mudbrick. Red arrows indicate access into the Silo Court. Map by Mark Lehner based on one by Rebekah Miracle, AERA GIS.

revealed architecture included a building with three domestic silos, built entirely of yellow, desert marl-clay bricks, distinct from the dark-gray bricks made from Nile Valley clay. With its points of open access on the south, an entrance on the east, a doorway into the northern RAB on the northeast, and, on the northwest, a corridor ramp leading from the higher, northern floor level down into the Silo Court, the RAB now seems eminently accessible to, and entangled with, the Eastern Town.

## ENCLOSURE 1 AND THE WESTERN TOWN

In 2002 and 2005, we uncovered and partially excavated the northern ends of five large magazines, E1–5 (figs. 6 and 7). In spring 2022 we uncovered the footprint of the southern ends of E1, E2, and E3, which had been buried under the soccer field. Each one featured matching sets of four chambers within it. South of E3 and E4 we found three additional broad galleries extending south about 20 m. More walls extend farther south and disappear under sand soaked in groundwater. Altogether these enclosures, and their adjunct

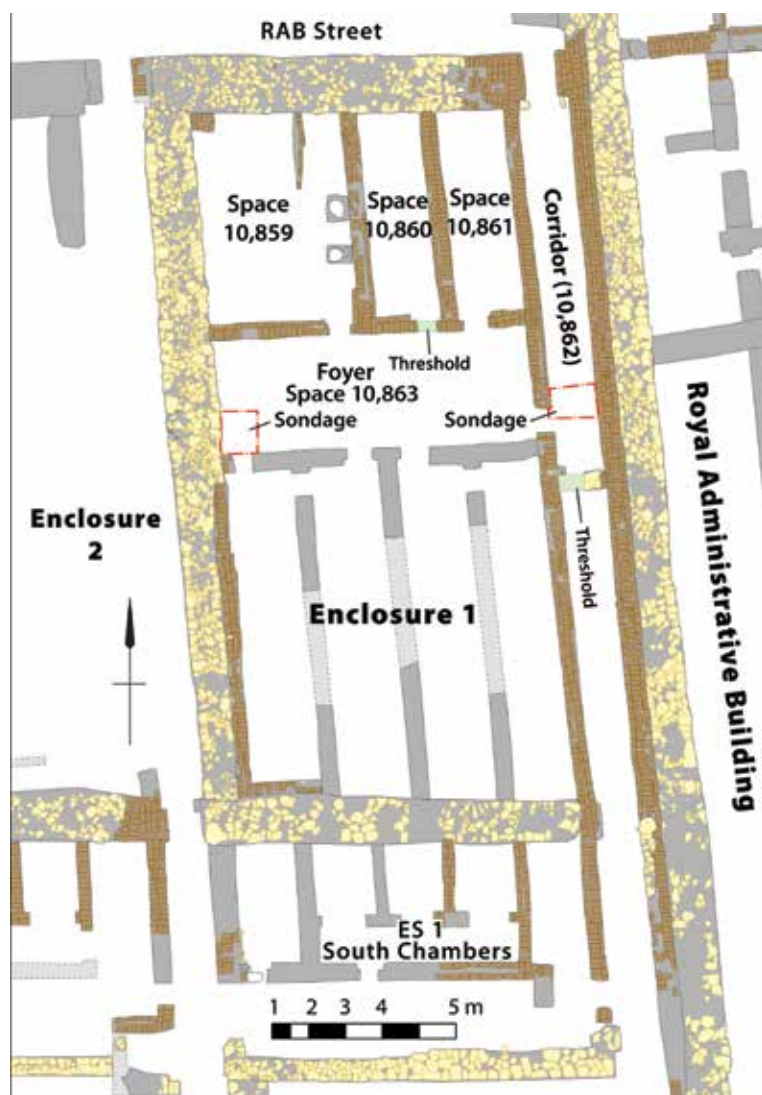


Figure 6. Map of Enclosure 1 and adjacent areas. AERA excavated the north end of E1 and the corridor. Map by Rebekah Miracle, AERA GIS.



Figure 7. Excavators working in Enclosure 1 in spring 2023. View to the north. Photo by Mark Lehner.

sets of chambers and broad galleries, appear to have comprised an impressive, orthogonal port structure for both storing and processing commodities. Located next to the seasonal harbor, they could be easily accessed from boats making deliveries.

In spring 2023 we found further evidence suggesting this area received deliveries from the harbor southwest of E1–3. In the district we call the “Western Town,” after clearing down to the ruin surface once covered by the soccer field, we discovered ramps that slope up gradually from the east, from the sand-filled depression we think was the harbor, to two entrances of a large, stone-built structure.

In the northern end of E1, we excavated three rooms opening off a small, common, central court or foyer (Space 10,863), accessed by a long corridor (Space 10,862) running from RAB Street down the entire eastern side of E1. In the northwestern corner, Space 10,859, we excavated through floors of a workshop. These floors predated a small platform and bread pots for baking bread that one of our field-school teams excavated in 2005. In the earlier, main use of this space, craftsmen created alabaster and other stone objects. We found drill cores, drilled negatives with concave surfaces, a cache of cylindrical cores excavated from drilling vessels, and hundreds of worked pieces with flat surfaces, probably from boxes and small vessels (fig. 8). Craftsmen’s tools were here too—stone drill bits, whetstones, abraders, pounders, axes, grinders, and polishers—as well as raw material: a large block of alabaster. Two clay sealings impressed with craftsman-related titles also turned up in the workshop. Two round, shallow stone emplacements against the eastern wall were probably used for working stone objects, possibly for drilling out vessels. The workshop space was unroofed for ventilation and light.

The room just east of the stone workshop, Space 10,860, may have served administrative functions. It contained no features or installations. The bright-white plaster floor was not robust enough for heavy manual labor or heavy foot traffic. It appears to have been made of alabaster dust, perhaps mixed with limestone or gypsum powder. We have not found anything like this white-plaster floor elsewhere in HeG. In the



Figure 8. Stoneworking discards and tools used to create stone objects found in the stone workshop, Space 10,859, in Enclosure 1. Clockwise from bottom: drill cores left from drilling out round vessels, a drill core, an abrader, and a drill bit. Photos by Mark Lehner.

third space—10,861 on the east—we found no installations; nor did we find any objects that might suggest how it was used.

At some point the two doorways that opened onto the eastern corridor were blocked, as was the corridor along E1's southern wall. But the entrance from RAB Street apparently remained open. We wonder whether such blockings came with the official abandonment of the HeG site. Perhaps the corridor had been put to a new use other than as an access route into E1 and farther south. Like the north-south ditch and stony platform in the RAB Silo Court, people may have used the corridor as a track for carrying away

material from the northern parts of HeG down to the seasonal harbor, or to a lower, dry delivery track, for use at other sites.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We thank all our colleagues in the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA): Ahmed Issa Taha, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities; Dr. Moustafa Waziri, General Director of the Supreme Council of Antiquities; Dr. Nashwa Gaber, Director of the Department of Foreign Missions; Ashraf Mohedein, General Director of the Giza Pyramids Area; and Wael Fathy, Chief Inspector of the Giza Pyramids Area. During fall 2022 Nariman Ali and Rehab Abd el-Baset Metwaly were our MoTA inspectors for site work, and Hani Zaki was inspector for the MoTA magazine and storeroom. During spring 2023 Nareman Sayed el-Badawy and Basma Abdullah were our MoTA inspectors for site work at HeG, and Mohamed Salah was inspector for the MoTA magazine and storeroom.

Our work at the HeG site during fall 2022 was made possible by a generous grant from the National Geographic Society (NGS). I thank Dr. Fred Hiebert, NGS senior archaeologist. A generous grant from Brendan and Maria Kennedy made our 2023 season possible. We thank Charles Simonyi and Microsoft, and Lee and Ramona Bass, for sustained major support during 2022–23. We also thank Dr. Walter Gilbert; Cameron and Linda Myhrvold; Rebecca Sperber, director of the Glen Dash Foundation; Bruce Ludwig; Peter Norton and the Isambard Kingdom Brunel Society; Dr. Marjorie M. Fisher; Howard and Louise Phanstiel; Ed and Kathy Fries; Janice Jerde and Peter Del Rosso; Dr. Kathy DeRue; William Frank; Jeffrey Lamia; Andrew Safir; Dr. Richard Redding; Ankur Jain; Dr. Philip LaPorta; and Matthew McCauley for their major contributions.

The AERA field team included Dr. Mark Lehner, project director; Dr. Mohsen Kamel, executive director of AERA Egypt and archaeologist; Dan Jones, senior archaeologist; archaeologists Ben Bazely, Chris Clark, Dr. Kathy DeRue, Daphne Myhrvold, and Dr. Mathilde Prevost; Manami Yahata, archivist and archaeologist; Rebekah Miracle, GIS director; Sayed Salah Abd el-Hakim, overseer of the workers and photographer; and sixty workers from Abu-Sir.

The senior AERA Lab team included Dr. Richard Redding, chief research officer and zooarchaeologist; Dr. Claire Malleson, lab director and archaeobotanist; Dr. Sarah Hitchens, assistant lab director; Emmy Malak, objects specialist; and Ali Witsell, sealings team head.





# KITES IN CONTEXT

YORKE M. ROWAN, AUSTIN “CHAD” HILL, AND MORAG KERSEL

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The second season of the Kites in Context (KiC) project, which took place from May 19 to June 16, 2023, continued the multiscalar investigation of desert “kites” in the eastern *badia* region of Jordan, one of the core regions of kite distribution. This project is designed to provide novel insights into the chronology and function of these animal traps through an intensive study incorporating remote sensing with boots-on-the-ground excavation and survey. Several scales of investigation are included: satellite and aerial imagery to investigate the distribution of kites and associated structures throughout the region, drone imagery to map and record the landscape in high resolution around a small subset of kites in the *barra* (basaltic desert), and excavation and terrestrial survey to study individual kites and associated structures at an even smaller scale. Our focus on the area around a wadi known as Wadi el-Mahdath (32°19'35.64"N, 37°59'52.41"E) continued in 2023 because the site appears to be a concentration point for human and animal use of the landscape, containing many structures, and sits along one of the primary kite chains in the *barra*. In 2022 our excavation efforts had focused on the kite that sits immediately north of Wadi el-Mahdath, which we labeled “KiC 1-4.” In 2023 we focused our excavation and pedestrian survey efforts on the next kite to the south, KiC 1-5.

## AERIAL SURVEY

This project builds on the aerial survey work previously conducted (Hill, Rowan, and Kersel 2014; Hill and Rowan 2017, 2022) as part of the Eastern Badia Archaeological Project at the sites of Wisad Pools and Wadi al-Qattafi (Hill et al. 2020; Rollefson et al. 2018; Rowan et al. 2015, 2017). Using drones to map ancient landscape features at a much higher resolution than satellite imagery can attain provides a level of detail, in 3D, otherwise unavailable. This level of recording is necessary to map smaller Neolithic and prehistoric features. In 2022 we had visited as many of the kites as possible ( $n = 15$ ) in the two easternmost chains, recording high-resolution mapping data sufficient to produce high-resolution, spatially accurate, and undistorted orthophotographs and accurate digital elevation models (DEMs), as well as oblique images that can serve as a visualization of these features for publication and public presentation. In 2023 we continued the mapping project by visiting additional kite enclosures and mapping other ancient features on the landscape.

The 2023 aerial survey was hampered by factors that limited the amount of work we could accomplish. First, the surprising weather for late May and early June—dust and lightning storms, followed by days of rain and eventual flooding of our campsite (figs. 1 and 2)—caused a delay in the drone mapping program and the loss of five flight days, at significant cost. In addition, the logistics of organizing the military representative to be on-site with us for all drone flights created a significant barrier. Despite the weather and logistical issues, the aerial campaign was a success. We photographed and mapped some fourteen so-called “wheels,” twelve kite enclosures, and a few other anthropogenic structures, such as tailed tombs and “paths,” and recorded images of the flooding (fig. 3). In total we recorded approximately 10,000 images as part of photogrammetry sets that will become orthophotographs and DEMs of the various features visited. An additional 3,800 images were taken with the mini drone for use as illustrations of the landscape and features.

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Figure 1. Kites in Context camp near Wadi el-Madath after rain. Photo by Y. M. Rowan.



Figure 2. Flooded camp with forlorn tent. Photo by Y. M. Rowan.



Figure 3. Aerial view of “wheels” surrounded by flooded desert. Photo by A. C. Hill.

## EXCAVATIONS

### *Cells*

During the 2023 season we excavated two cells of the next kite in the chain, KiC 1-5. In addition, we excavated two prehistoric structures we hoped would be contemporaneous with the kites. The two cells selected for excavation were undisturbed by later rebuilding, reuse, or looting. Cell 4 was of interest not only because it was intact but also because the wall leading into the cell from the enclosure wall was clearly visible (fig. 4). Cell 4 is approximately 6.0–6.5 m in exterior diameter. We excavated the eastern half of the cell to about 1.0 m below the surface of the cell’s interior, removing an enormous amount of stone that did not represent a clear wall. Instead, it appears that after a pit was dug, large stones were deposited around it, and heaps of stone were then piled on top. To make the walls higher, it seems likely that larger basalt boulders ringed the exterior, creating wide walls, on which additional large and medium-sized cobbles could be piled.

Cell 7 was selected not only because the surrounding walls appeared to be in good shape but also because we noticed that some cells had an unusual “threshold” stone—a large, flat stone



Figure 4. Cell 4 excavated, with wall connecting it to the kite enclosure. Photo by Y. M. Rowan.

intentionally set at the entrance to the cell (fig. 5). Bisecting the cell, northeast to southwest, across the center of this threshold stone exposed a built wall on the cell's interior. Bedrock lay only 60 cm below the cell's interior sediments, suggesting that the massive amount of stone filling the cell was collapse from the walls built to prevent gazelles from jumping out once inside the cell. On the exterior, below the threshold stone, a short incline was built with large and medium-sized cobbles, creating a ramp up to the cell pit. No artifacts or datable material were found in either cell, but samples were taken from both for optically stimulated luminescence (OSL) dating.

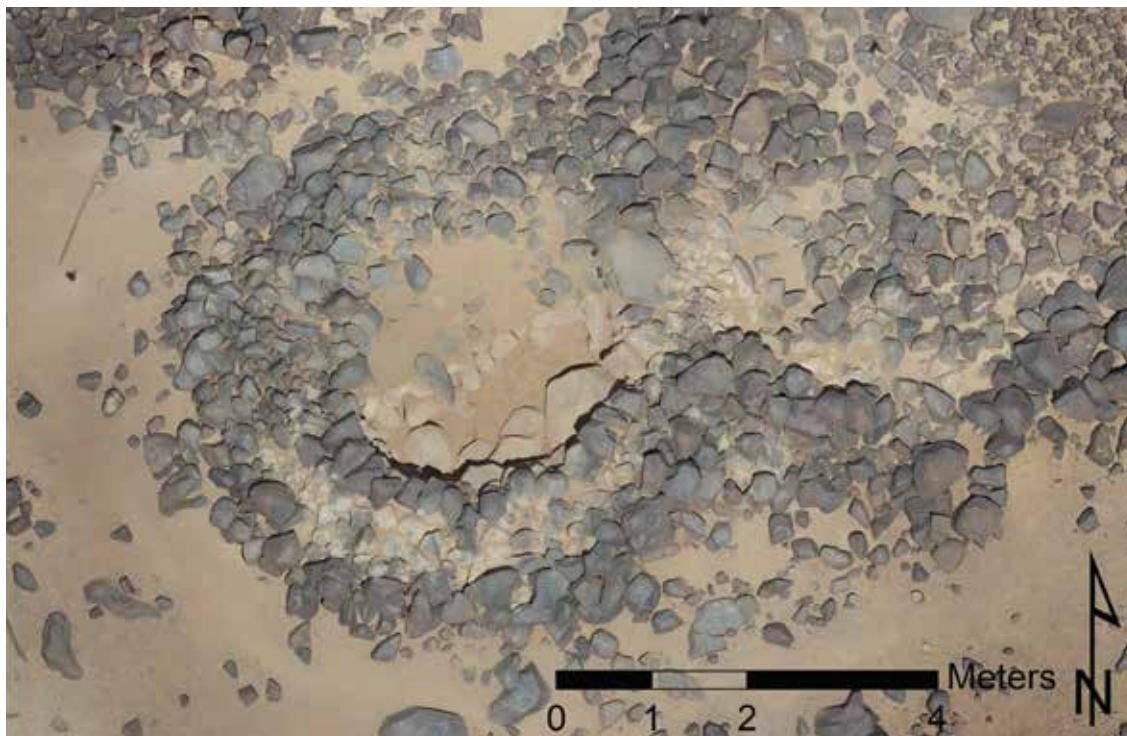


Figure 5. Excavated Cell 7 with “threshold” stone at entrance to cell. Orthophotograph by A. C. Hill.

## Structures

In addition to the two cells, two structures were excavated. Structure 1 spanned 8 m across, including a small, circular exterior feature attached to the south end of the structure (fig. 6). The structure was sectioned down the middle, and its eastern half was excavated. The north end of the structure included a petroglyph depicting a kite on a loose large stone. The main structure was defined by an alignment of large, upright stones demarcating a wall. Excavating around the exterior of the large upright stones, we found stones aligned as a foundation or buttressing to the upright stones. These wall supports extended 0.7–1.0 m in width around the upright structure wall. They stopped at the circular feature attached to the south end of Structure 1. Very few diagnostic flint artifacts were found in the shallow deposits of the structure, and no bone or ceramics were recovered.

Structure 2 was composed of a circular structure; an L-shaped feature attached to the east edge of the circular structure; a “courtyard” or open-air space; and a separate, U-shaped structure attached to the southeast side of the patio (fig. 7). After initially removing tumble, we identified the separation of the circular structure and the L-shaped feature. The circular structure is defined by an alignment of large, upright

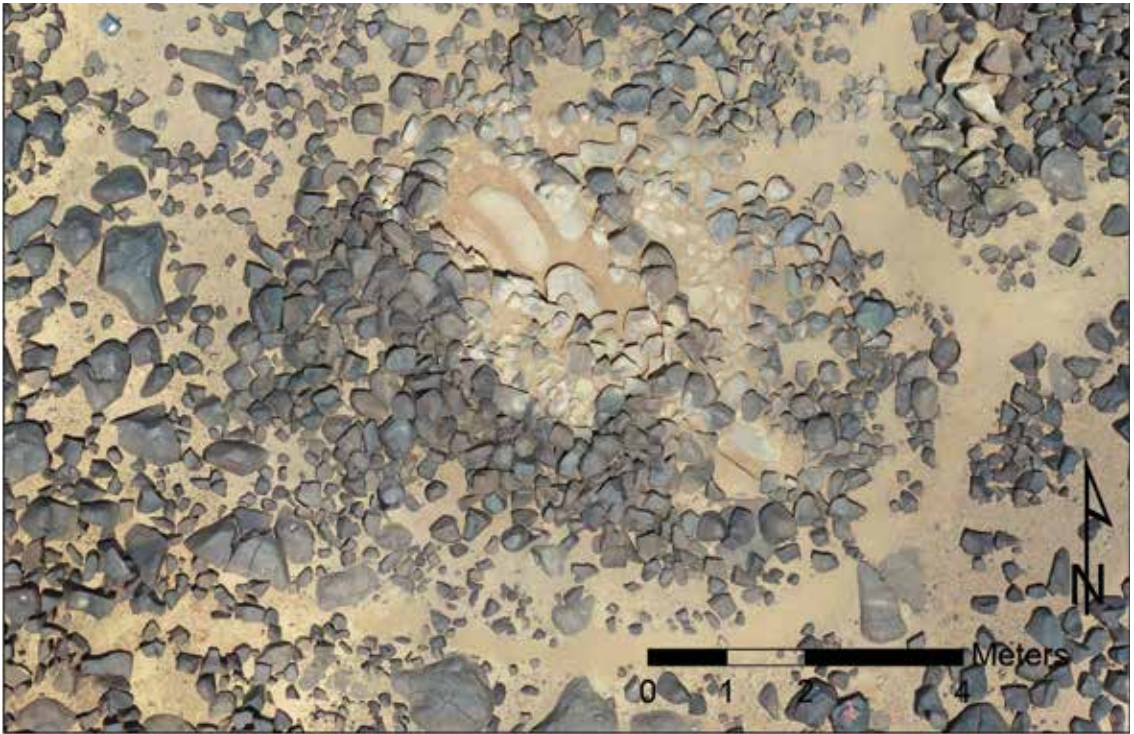


Figure 6. Excavated Structure 1. Orthophotograph by A. C. Hill.

stones and some stacked stones that make up the wall of the upper tier of construction. Near the center of the circular structure's interior was a large stone with a flat top, probably a central work "table," around which a probable floor included flint flakes and small, flat basalt pebbles.

The connection of the L-shaped construction and the circular structure seems to be a slightly later addition. The courtyard or open-air space south-east of the circular structure contained many lithic artifacts, particularly drills, suggesting its use as a workspace.

## PEDESTRIAN SURVEY

In 2022 we had surveyed the hundreds of petroglyphs around the "Roman Pool" of Wadi el-Mahdath, where the density of structures and petroglyphs appeared highest. In 2023 we expanded this survey to understand more about the distribution of archaeological materials around this landscape. Morag Kersel conducted two complementary surveys: a large, transect-based survey of the region



Figure 7. Structure 2 with central work "table." Photo by B. Heidkamp.

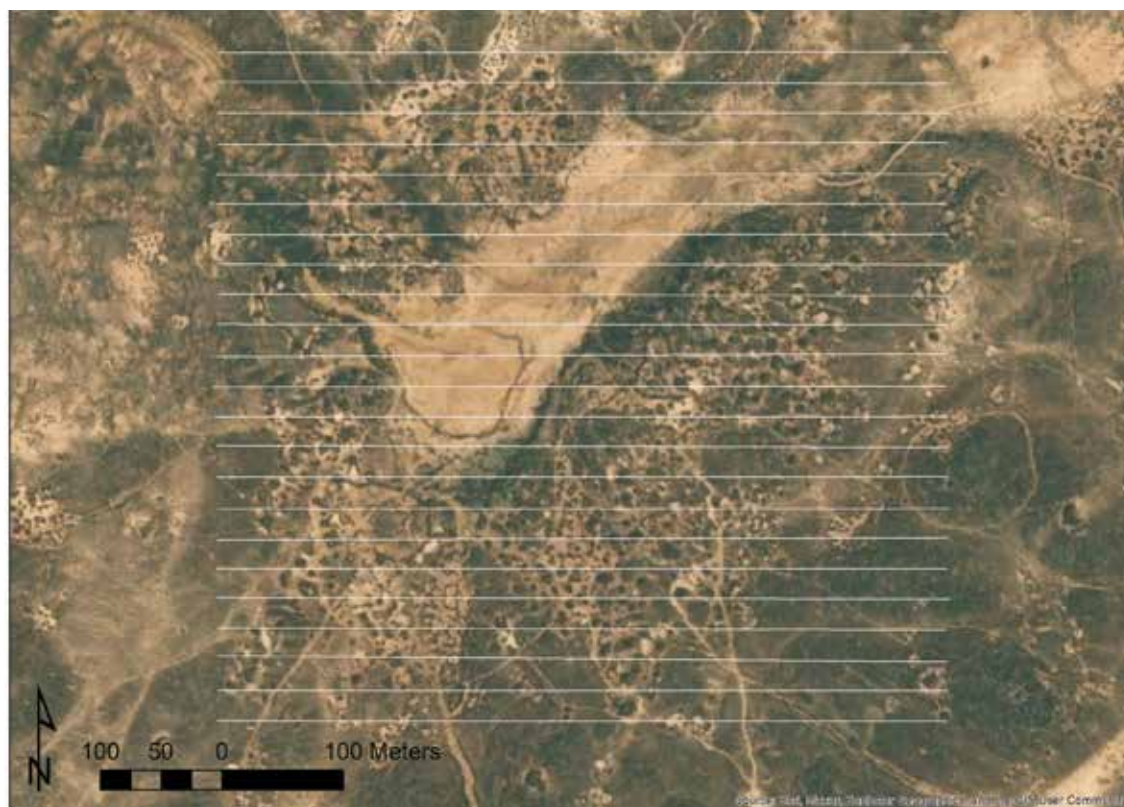


Figure 8. Transects of pedestrian survey around the Roman Pool of Wadi al-Mahdath. Orthophotograph by A. C. Hill.

around KiC 1-5 (fig. 8), and a more intensive pickup of surface materials around individual structures. Kersel walked twenty-three transects of 600 m each, stopping every 50 m to record data (GPS coordinates, environment, artifacts, landscape, looting, and site disturbance). Between 50 m points, any surface artifacts were recorded using counters, and the counts were added to the form at the 50 m mark. Kersel also noted points of interest (POIs) along the transects, including structures, petroglyphs, standing stones, enclosures, kite walls, and cells. The second element of her work was an intensive survey of forty-nine visible surface structures (tombs, kite cells, and oval piles of stones) in the area southwest of the Roman Pool. Recording the GPS coordinates around identified structures, she then conducted a surface pickup in a 2 m radius (a methodology known as a “dog-leash pickup”). For each structure, photographs were taken, its description given, counts of any artifacts made, and any petroglyphs and evidence of looting recorded. The survey was successful at recovering a sample of material culture from a range of structures; the samples should provide insight into the range of functions of the individual structures. Similarly, the transect survey will help visualize the overall distribution of artifacts and POIs across the area.

## CONCLUSION

From the aerial and pedestrian surveys to the excavations of kite cells and buildings, 2022–23 saw a successful archaeological season for the Kites in Context project. Processing the 14,000 images into orthophotographic maps and DEMs will take many more months of work, but initial testing demonstrates that this data will produce maps with superb accuracy and excellent coverage. Crucially, we hope that OSL and radiocarbon dating, from this season and future seasons, will also help answer some of the ongoing questions

about the timing of the construction and abandonment of these kites and other structures. There remain very few good, published dates for the kites, and we hope that our work will help build a comprehensive picture of kite development and operation. Future seasons of research will focus on additional mapping of kites and their associated features, as well as on expanded excavation of the kites and associated structures that have been surveyed and mapped via drone.

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# NUBIAN EXPEDITION PUBLICATION PROJECT

LISA A. HEIDORN AND BRUCE B. WILLIAMS

After a hiatus of three decades, the Nubian Expedition Publication Project produced two volumes in the past year. The first, *Beads from Excavations at Qustul, Adindan, Serra East, Dorginarti, Ballana, and Kalabsha: A-Group, Post-A-Group, C-Group, N-Type, P-Type, Pan Grave, Kerma, Middle Kingdom, and New Kingdom*, by Joanna Then-Obłuska, is a major topical study of material from excavations by the Nubian Expedition between 1962 and 1964 (fig. 1). The second, *The Second Cataract Fortress of Dorginarti*, by Lisa A. Heidorn, is the final publication of a fortress and the small town it contained that was excavated under the direction of James E. Knudstad in 1964 (fig. 2).

Then-Obłuska undertook a major study of the beads excavated in Nubia while she was in residence in Chicago for an extended period from 2014 to 2016. Beads have been neglected artifacts in archaeology since its foundation, but newer publishing technology allows for better publication of beads' most significant features, such as their colors and manufacturing techniques. In recent decades, the study of beads has come into its own with the realization of their importance—not just for adornment but also for symbolism, trade, and archaeological dating. This new volume, in addition to being one of the most beautiful ever produced here, is also a study that takes archaeology in the region in a new direction. Using previous reports,

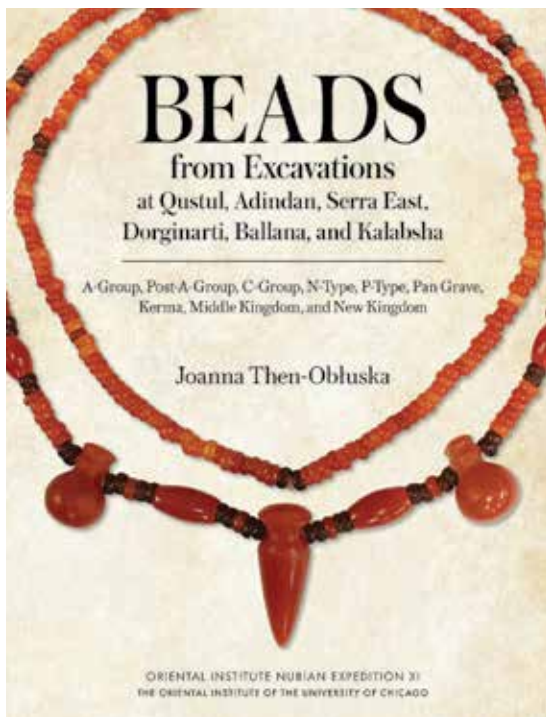


Figure 1. Cover of Then-Obłuska's beads volume.

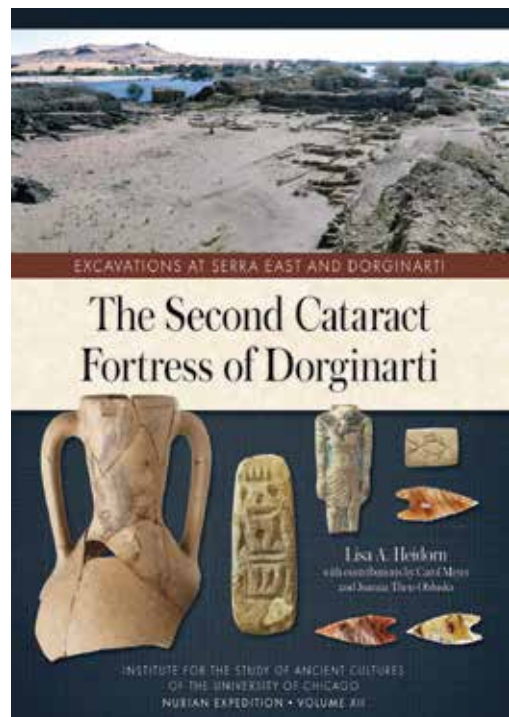


Figure 2. Cover of Heidorn's Dorginarti volume.

Then-Obłuska discovered early evidence from Ballana for a carnelian-bead workshop and objects from two graves in Qustul's Cemetery L that were probably used for shaping beads (see p. 18 of Then-Obłuska's publication). Thus the superb beads from the royal tombs in Cemetery L, across the river from Ballana, were sourced largely from Nubia, with the evidence reversing the assumed flow of such trade items only from the north.

The first Nubian Expedition publication using our institute's new name is the final report of the emergency excavations undertaken at Dorginarti for five months in 1964 by the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute (now the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures—ISAC) as part of the UNESCO Nubian salvage project necessitated by the building of the Aswan High Dam in the 1960s. Following a description of the fortress's landscape and resources, the book describes Dorginarti's architecture in detail, then presents the selection of artifacts brought back from the Sudan and stored in the ISAC Museum. The picture that emerges from the archaeological record shows the continuing importance of Lower Nubia after the withdrawal of Egyptian control in the late second millennium BCE and before the rise of the Kushite empire in the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty.

The best-known sites along the length of the Nile River's Second Cataract are the ruins of Egyptian towns and fortresses occupied during the Old, Middle, and New Kingdoms. The fortresses were part of Egypt's lines of defense and facilitated trade in this region. Trade, military, and cultural contacts existed between Egypt and Nubia throughout history because many desired commodities—raw materials and animal and plant products—stemmed from lands under Kushite control or beyond them to the south, east, and west. Although shipping via the Red Sea and the long haul through the western desert became more common from the mid-first millennium BCE onward, the Nile remained a vital conduit regardless of which state or tribal power controlled the regions along it.

The evidence from the fort indicates that Dorginarti existed in a later era than the better-known Middle and New Kingdom forts. The earliest ceramics found at the site date from the early first millennium BCE, and those from a second occupation stem from the early eighth century. The third major phase of occupation occurred after the campaign of Psamtik II into Nubia during the early sixth century BCE and did not extend past the Persian conquest of Egypt beginning in the last quarter of that century.

## AL-WIDAY

In 2007 and 2008, the Nubian Expedition's work in the Fourth Cataract salvage area included excavating two cemeteries at al-Widay, roughly in the middle of the Fourth Cataract region. Although many institutions worked in the area, time was short and conditions were such that most work was done in surveys with only a limited amount of excavation. At al-Widay I the substantial cemetery was completely excavated, and the earlier, much-degraded tombs at al-Widay II were partly excavated. The former was completely excavated because no other cemetery of its size (more than 100 tombs) had been fully excavated, and the directors were particularly interested in tracing the history of a small population through time from approximately 1800 to 1500 BCE. The Nubian Expedition project is about to submit a full archaeological report of the two sites, including their tombs, objects, pottery, and human and animal remains. Because so little detail has been published on this region to date, the report is extensive and will comprise two volumes. The evidence illuminates the population that participated in the widespread cultural relations between riverine Nubia and the Eastern Desert in the early second millennium BCE and will go far in defining the connections within the region and the chronological stance of the Fourth Cataract remains.

The next phase of the Nubian Expedition's research and publication program, in 2023–24, focuses on the site of Hosh el-Geruf (figs. 3 and 4). This site was the first one investigated in 2007—a task made difficult by its lack of coherent occupational debris. But almost from the beginning it was clear that Hosh



Figure 3. View of Hosh el-Geruf from the east.

Figure 4. Group of grindstones at Hosh el-Geruf.



el-Geruf was a major gold-processing center where ores mined elsewhere in the Fourth Cataract region were reduced and the gold recovered, a bit of which was found in the form of beads at al-Widay I cemetery. Soon after its discovery, Hosh el-Geruf excited interest in the media, with stories on it in the *New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times* and by the BBC, among other outlets ranging from Kazakhstan to an Italian church publication.

In the past year, Bruce Williams gave a lecture on the site and its significance in the University of Munich series of seminars titled *Diverse Nile*. The existence of a regionally organized extraction industry in the Fourth Cataract, long considered remote, is remarkable, and its independent existence contemporary with the early kingdom of Kush farther north is more remarkable still. We expect that a volume giving much more complete information will substantially increase our knowledge of the major gold-mining and gold-processing industry in northeast Africa, especially since it is entirely local.

The accomplishment of publications and the progress toward submitting new ones is much more than a work of authorship. The project had financial support for the phase that produced the volume on Dorginarti from the Michaela Schiff-Giorgini Foundation, the American Research Center in Egypt's Antiquities Endowment Fund, and especially the Shelby White and Leon Levy Program for Archaeological Publications. This initial phase also supported the as-yet-unpublished volumes of the Christian remains

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from Serre Matto (Serra East). For the research and publication of the al-Widay tombs and our current work on the Hosh el-Geruf materials, generous support has come from the Shelby White and Leon Levy Program for Archaeological Publications and the National Endowment for the Humanities Collaborative Research Program.

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# PERSEPOLIS FORTIFICATION ARCHIVE PROJECT

MARK B. GARRISON AND WOUTER F. M. HENKELMAN

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March 2023 marked the ninetieth anniversary of the discovery of the Persepolis Fortification Archive (PFA) in the northeastern casemate wall of the Persepolis terrace. Duly observed among PFA Project members, the jubilee year also marks a transition in project directorship, which will henceforth be in the hands of Mark Garrison and Wouter Henkelman under the aegis of the ISAC director.

“All outcomes seem gloomy,” Matthew Stolper wrote to Henkelman in July 2006, signaling the widespread expectation that the PFA materials, on loan at ISAC since 1936 and the object of legal dispute since 2004, would be either sold or repatriated to Iran in the very near future (“We might have two years for the appeals—maybe more, maybe less”). In the months that followed, Stolper contacted prospective members of what would become the PFA Project team; submitted the first two grant proposals; and convened, with Pierre Briant, an international advisory board at the Collège de France, Paris, on November 6, 2006. By early summer 2007, a more positive, hands-on sentiment was prevalent, as reflected in Stolper’s first annual report, which described the aim of the newly founded project as “to record as much of the archive as possible, at as high quality as possible, as quickly as possible” and “to make the information available widely, quickly, and continuously” (Stolper 2007, 97). Still, at that moment no one anticipated that the PFA Project would last more than a few years. That it is flourishing in 2023 and seeing a third generation entering the fore is to some extent a function of legal providence (as described in the 2017–18 annual report) but largely the fruit of Stolper’s stewardship. As project director, he has tirelessly applied for funding, engaged and trained student workers for data processing and digital photography, drafted reports, presented on the project at numerous occasions, regularly nudged all of us about anticipated results, and—as “a river to his people”—took care of the needs and well-being of the team during the past eighteen years.

In October 2022, ISAC chief conservator Laura d’Alessandro finished the packing of 3,506 Elamite and Aramaic tablets, sealed into nine crates and waiting to be handed to representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Beyond these materials, we anticipate at least six or seven more shipments. Since this process, even under optimum conditions, will take more than a few years to complete, the PFA Project will continue to document and edit as many PFA records as possible before the last items leave the building. This perspective also explains why a change in directorship after so many years is a meaningful step at this point, and it provides us with an opportunity to take stock of the project’s overall progress and the ways in which it is developing.

As of spring 2023, the PFA Project team had cataloged, photographed, edited, and entered into databases some 12,000 discrete items (all being made available for online consultation). In addition, project editors and associated scholars had produced 10 monographs and edited volumes and 110 articles and book chapters; given 164 public lectures and conference presentations; and (co)supervised eight master’s theses and eight doctoral dissertations on PFA-related themes (with six more doctoral dissertations in preparation).

While we take some pride in these numbers, we are also aware that they spell two developments that need addressing. Documenting and publishing the PFA materials was, and is, the core of the project as it has been established at Chicago. The reported period is no different from previous ones in this regard: Young Bok Kim, the project’s technical mainstay, processed 998 surfaces of 114 Elamite cuneiform tablets

and fragments into conventional and polynomial texture mapping images and entered into the Online Cultural and Historical Research Environment (OCHRE) database the readings of 90 Aramaic texts that project editor Annalisa Azzoni had reviewed. Azzoni also advanced, with Mitchka Shahryari, her work on the Aramaic ostraca and their connection with other parts of the PFA. Stolper (re)collated about 80 Elamite texts—mostly livestock accounts (fig. 1)—while Henkelman collated and analyzed about 230 Elamite texts previously read by Stolper; Teagan Wolter continued her work of updating these texts in OCHRE and improving the thesaurus. Henkelman’s student assistants Hamaseh Golestaneh (Berlin) and Rémi Bois (Paris) massaged Word editions of about 800 registers and accounts for inclusion in the project’s analytical Filemaker database. On the glyptic front, Emma Petersen added no fewer than 300 new seal images to the corpus; she hopes to finalize her work on the archive’s uninscribed tablets by autumn 2023, working alongside project veteran Erin Daly, who returned to the project to tackle the seals on 800 memorandum-type Elamite tablets (fig. 2). Christina Chandler visited ISAC twice to finalize her study of the inscribed seals (adding 13 final drawings) and presented her work in a lecture at the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, New York, in November 2022; Delphine Poinot pursued her work on the catalog of 436 stamp seals depicting a single animal (adding 30 final drawings). Garrison oversaw these various subprojects and processed the new data; additionally, he identified seals on some 50 Elamite tablets and produced some 40 final collated drawings. The number of distinct and legible seals in the archive is now approaching 4,500, a figure none of us could have anticipated back in 2006. Lastly, Garrison and project editor Elspeth Dusinberre continued their work on the seals on the Aramaic tablets, more specifically producing granular indices for the upcoming print publication of this part of the archive.

Beyond this “core business,” however, project members continued their efforts to analyze and discuss parts of the corpus within the wider framework of Achaemenid culture and society. Stolper, for one, expanded and revised his previously reported study on livestock management, now expected to be issued as a monograph, and presented preliminary results in lectures at Harvard University (October 2022), in Los Angeles (American Oriental Society meeting, March 2023), and in Paris (as part of Henkelman’s March 2023 class on animals in the PFA). His work means a breakthrough in the understanding of the notorious animal accounts from the archive but has much wider ramifications for understanding Achaemenid



PF-NN 2661



Figure 1. Livestock account PF-NN 2661 (reverse): Unique eighteen-column tabulation breaking down the annual performance of eight small flocks of sheep and goats, then combining the information into totals for which stockyard overseers were accountable.



Figure 2. Emma Petersen and Erin Daly collating seal impressions in the project basement at ISAC.

economic networks. In the same vein, project alumnus Rhyne King used the PFA materials to illustrate the issue of inequality in the Achaemenid empire (King 2023) and applied his views on Achaemenid institutional impact in a lecture, with South Asia specialist Divya Kumar-Dumas, on “Roads, Seals, and Authenticity in the Indus River Valley from the Persepolis Fortification Archive to Kauṭilya’s *Arthaśāstra*” in Los Angeles (American Oriental Society meeting, March 2023). Henkelman, in a paper coauthored with Kai Kaniuth and Kourosh Mohammadkhani (2023), used the PFA to challenge the frequently supposed lack of resilience in centralized state systems. He and Delphine Poinsoot presented their recent project-related work at the 24th Journée Monde Iranien (Paris, March 2023).

Three recent contributions deal with writing at Persepolis in a broad sense. The first, a paper by Jan Tavernier and Annalisa Azzoni (2023), systematically identifies cases of orthographic and phonetic influence of Elamite on Aramaic in Persepolitan contexts, signaling a complicated contact situation in which (Iranian) scribes transported some elements from Achaemenid Elamite (such as the lack of a voiced/voiceless opposition) to their version of Aramaic. Henkelman (2022) made good use of the PFA Project’s extensive databases to chart the use of the divine determinative (AN) with month names, a particularity of Achaemenid Elamite, and related it to variations in (semantic) animacy in earlier Elamite. Miller Prosser (associate director of digital studies in the University of Chicago’s Division of the Humanities) and his colleagues at the DeepScribe Project submitted a first paper on locating and identifying sign values on tagged photographs of Elamite cuneiform tablets available in OCHRE, a promising new tool on which we will report more extensively in the future (see, for now, <https://voices.uchicago.edu/ochre/project/deepscribe/>).

The research here mentioned reflects a decisive turn in the field of Achaemenid studies over the past two decades as the PFA Project increased the impact of the Persepolitan sources. There is now broad academic consensus that new research on Achaemenid iconography, institutional economy, religion, and society necessarily should incorporate the growing evidence from the tablets. For the new project directors, this reality presents an organizational challenge. While we will continue documenting and editing, and



thus maintaining, the original PFA Project at Chicago, we have also begun to create structures that could support and coordinate further exploration of the materials in the wider context of Achaemenid studies. In Berlin, Henkelman codirects (with Kai Kaniuth) a Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft–funded project on the “Unexplored Heartland” (since 2020; renewed in 2023), which focuses on Achaemenid Fārs as an institutional landscape and draws heavily on the PFA. In the past year, Rhyne King served as a postdoctoral researcher in this offshoot project, notably drafting a highly granular description of the area between Pasargadae and Nīrīz as documented in the tablets. Longtime PFA expert Leila Makvandi (Kashan, Iran) is working with Henkelman in the same project to develop portable X-ray fluorescence analyses of tablets and clay samples to provide an additional interpretative layer to such geographical approaches. Within the same framework, Stefan Hauser, Giuseppe Labisi, and Henkelman organized the conference “Institutional Landscape of Empire in Ancient Iran” (Istanbul, July 2022), at which Rhyne King spoke about fortresses and Henkelman about lance bearers as elements in the Achaemenid institutional landscape.

In Paris, Soheil Delshad (who previously organized a successful PFA exhibition at Persepolis; fig. 3) will oversee a second offshoot aimed at editing, translating, and commenting on all records from the Persepolis Treasury Archive, studying it with the insights generated by the PFA Project and involving several project members (Chandler, Garrison, Henkelman, and King; see also Asadi and Delshad, in press).

At this point we have come full circle, as it was also in Paris that the PFA Project was conceived in November 2006. Present at that meeting, with her usual engaging participation, was Amélie Kuhrt; she passed away early in 2023. We close this year’s report by paying tribute to this scholar who was always keenly aware of the historical significance of the Persepolis archives and vigorously supported our work over the past decades.



Figure 3. Persepolis Fortification tablets on display at the Persepolis Museum, Persepolis. The ruins of the Hundred-Column Hall are visible in the reflection. The *Returning Home* exhibition, mentioned in the 2021–22 annual report, was curated by Soheil Delshad and lasted until July 22, 2022.

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# SAHIDIC COPTIC VERSIONS OF THE GOSPEL OF MARK

SOFÍA TORALLAS TOVAR AND ANNE BOUD'HORS

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This annual report focuses on the edition of a Coptic text on which the authors of this report have collaborated for years, with Anne Boud'hors working from L'Institut de recherche et d'histoire des textes (a unit of the Centre national de la recherche scientifique, or CNRS) in Paris, France, and Sofía Torallas Tovar first from the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas in Madrid, Spain, and since 2014 from the University of Chicago. The project is finally coming to an end (see Boud'hors and Torallas Tovar, forthcoming), and now seems the right moment to assess our challenges and achievements.

Work on the Sahidic versions of the Gospel of Mark has seen small advances since the 1970s. Building on previous progress, our collaboration began in 2001. The earliest modern edition of the Gospel of Mark was published by George W. Horner in 1911. He benefited from the discovery in the 1880s of the remains of the library of the White Monastery in Achmim, Upper Egypt, also known as the Monastery of Shenoute. That library was soon thereafter broken up and its holdings scattered to collections throughout the world (Orlandi 2002). Horner's text for the Gospel of Mark was based on fifty-six witnesses, most of them dating to later than the seventh to eighth centuries CE, all of them fragmentary, and none of them presenting a complete text of Mark. Our analysis of all the manuscripts would later prove that the fragments combined by Horner were mostly, but not all, witnesses to what we would later call the "revised version" (saII), which survived only in fragments. Large parts of the Gospel are missing from this version, and parts of Horner's text were taken from fragments of other versions (saIII)—something we discovered only recently.<sup>1</sup>

In 1972, Hans Quecke published P.Palau Ribes 182, an exceptionally beautiful and complete fifth-century CE manuscript that predated all the known fragments (fig. 1). It contained full texts of Luke, John, and Mark, in the Western order. Quecke noticed that P.Palau Ribes 182 features a linguistically archaic text with certain peculiarities when compared to the other known witnesses. A year later, in 1973, Tito Orlandi published an enlightening review of Quecke's edition in which he established the double tradition of the text of Mark (saI and saII), setting the first modern stone on which our project is based. Orlandi indicated that the ancient version witnessed by P.Palau Ribes 182 was later the object of a linguistic and textual revision represented by saII. He also noted that the ancient version was not substituted, for it continued to be copied, as attested by one of Horner's witnesses (H72, dated to the tenth century). In 1984, Boud'hors began researching the White Monastery fragments kept at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Copte 132.1–4 and 133.1–2). She noted variations and affinities that led her to confirm Orlandi's first intuitions with firmer grounds (Boud'hors 1993).

In 1988, Pierpont Morgan Library Ms 569, a ninth-century CE manuscript acquired in 1910 from the monastery of Saint Michael in Hamuli by the New York collector John Pierpont Morgan, was published in an inadequate edition by Aranda Pérez. A few years later, Boud'hors joined the Marc Multilingue project, started by Christian Amphoux, a New Testament criticism scholar (CNRS, Montpellier, France). (For the

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1. We refer to manuscripts using the siglum "sa" for Sahidic, followed by an arabic number, according to the repertories mentioned, and to the three versions, attested by multiple manuscripts, with the same siglum "sa" followed by a roman numeral.



Figure 1. P.Palau Ribes 182.

scope of the project, see the edited volume Amphoux 2005.) The project aimed to bring together philologists and editors of the different language groups into a single working team. Amphoux's initial idea was that the Greek text of Mark remained in flux until the end of the fourth century and that six of the great Greek Uncial manuscripts represent successive editions produced in Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch between 120 and 380 CE. According to this hypothesis, the fluctuating nature of the Greek Gospel of Mark would have influenced the Sahidic version—and all the other Eastern Christian versions—already in the earliest textual phases.

In the 1980s and early 1990s, the publication of the first repertoires of fragments of the Sahidic New Testament were instrumental to the evolution of the project and the organization of the research on fragments (Schmitz and Mink 1986–91). The repertory initiative would later be inherited by the Institut für Neutestamentliche Textforschung (INTF) at the University of Münster, Germany, with whose scholars we have maintained constant and close collaboration (see the work of Siegfried Richter and Katharina Sandmaier at <http://intf.uni-muenster.de/smr/>).

As mentioned above, we began collaborating in 2001, first in the framework of the Marc Multilingue project and then independently. We soon had a draft of the edition of Mark's sixteen chapters in three versions: sa1 (Palau Ribes manuscript), saII (based on Horner's reconstruction), and sa9 (the Pierpont Morgan manuscript). In the past five years we have seen considerable progress on three additional fronts: first, in the identification of a further "family" of manuscripts we called "saIII"; second, via the analysis of manuscript sa123, which provided a glimpse into the philological activity in the Fayum that led to the production of the revised versions; and third, in our understanding of the ending of Mark (chapter 16).

Thanks to our access to libraries and the improvement of digital photography, we could thoroughly analyze the totality of the fragments of Mark. In our recent analysis, we realized that some of the fragments—namely, sa125, sa152, and sa156—aligned with sa9, the Fayum manuscript kept at the Pierpont Morgan Library. The manuscripts shared a clear textual affinity, as well as codicological and paleographical features. Though these manuscripts came from the White Monastery, they clearly show the influence of a Fayumic scribal milieu. Sa9 seems to be the earliest of this group of manuscripts, which attest the version we labeled saIII (Boud’hors and Torallas Tovar 2021).

Another ninth- to tenth-century manuscript with similar paleographical and codicological characteristics, sa123, provided interesting insights into philological activity (Boud’hors and Torallas Tovar 2020). Scattered among the British Library, the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, and the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana in Venice, this manuscript is a book of gospels from the White Monastery. The text of the Gospel of Mark that it contains presents substantial corrections in the form of marginal additions, erasures, and replacements, thus presenting an interesting opportunity to understand the aforementioned process of revision. We observed that the text of sa123, before correction, has affinities with saI, with some contaminations of saII and some readings of its own. We use sa123’s first, uncorrected text as a witness of saI. Furthermore, the corrections had the purpose of bringing the text closer to saII. This finding led us to believe that sa9 could have resulted from a similar process of collation.

Finally, we made progress on the complicated issue of the ending of Mark. Recent collaboration with the project SNSF Mark 16, spearheaded by Claire Clivaz (Geneva, Switzerland), gave additional impetus to our efforts to understand the structure of the final chapter of Mark in Coptic within a large textual tradition. Our three versions show interesting differences. The ancient version, represented mainly by sa1, presents the short ending—that is, the chapter ends with verse 8. SaII features the *conclusio brevior*—that is, verse 8 is followed by an addition, marked in the manuscripts with a distinctive style and a long ending; and sa9, and probably all the saIII family, has, like saII, the addition, but it is not distinctively marked as in saII (Boud’hors and Torallas Tovar 2022).

Summing up, the long-running project to provide an edition of the Sahidic versions of the Gospel of Mark is finally reaching its conclusion. Collaboration with several research projects in the international arena has provided a frame and platform for progress. We are working on the final versions of the critical edition of the chapters incorporating all the known manuscripts (eighty-six to date, compared to Horner’s fifty-six) and anticipate that we will soon see the final product of our toils.

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# SUREZHA EXCAVATIONS

GIL J. STEIN, MICHAEL T. FISHER, AND NADER BABAKR

Excavations by ISAC at Tell Surezha, on the Erbil Plain in the Kurdistan region of northeast Iraq, investigate the prehistoric roots of the earliest towns and later cities in northern Mesopotamia during the Chalcolithic period from roughly 5500 to 3500 BCE. Surezha is ideal for exploring the chronology, economy, and developmental sequence of the Erbil Plain in this period because the site's high mound is largely prehistoric, with only limited later occupation from the Middle Assyrian period and Iron Age.

Tell Surezha is a mounded settlement of about 22 ha, located approximately 20 km south of the city of Erbil, east of the Tigris River and Nineveh (fig. 1). Situated between the Greater and Lesser Zab Rivers, the Erbil Plain receives sufficient rainfall for the rich agricultural production of cereals, supporting a large population in the city of Erbil—ancient Arbela—and its hinterland.

Positioned at the southwest edge of the modern village of Gund-i Surezha, the ancient site of Surezha has three parts: (1) the high mound, (2) the terrace, and (3) the lower town. The conical high mound and terrace measure approximately 188 m from northwest to southeast and 150 m from southwest to northeast, with an area of approximately 2.8 ha (fig. 2). The high mound rises to a height of 16 m above the terrace. The terrace surrounding the base of the high mound is about 2 m high and slopes gradually down over a distance of approximately 70 m to the lower town, which extends out from the terrace in all directions.

Our work on the high mound has recovered evidence for almost two millennia of continuous occupation in the Chalcolithic period (5300–3400 BCE), starting with its foundation on sterile deposits in the Halaf period and continuing through the Ubaid (the period when the first town-sized settlements developed in Mesopotamia) and the Late Chalcolithic (LC) 1, LC 2, LC 3, and LC 4 periods. The LC 3 and

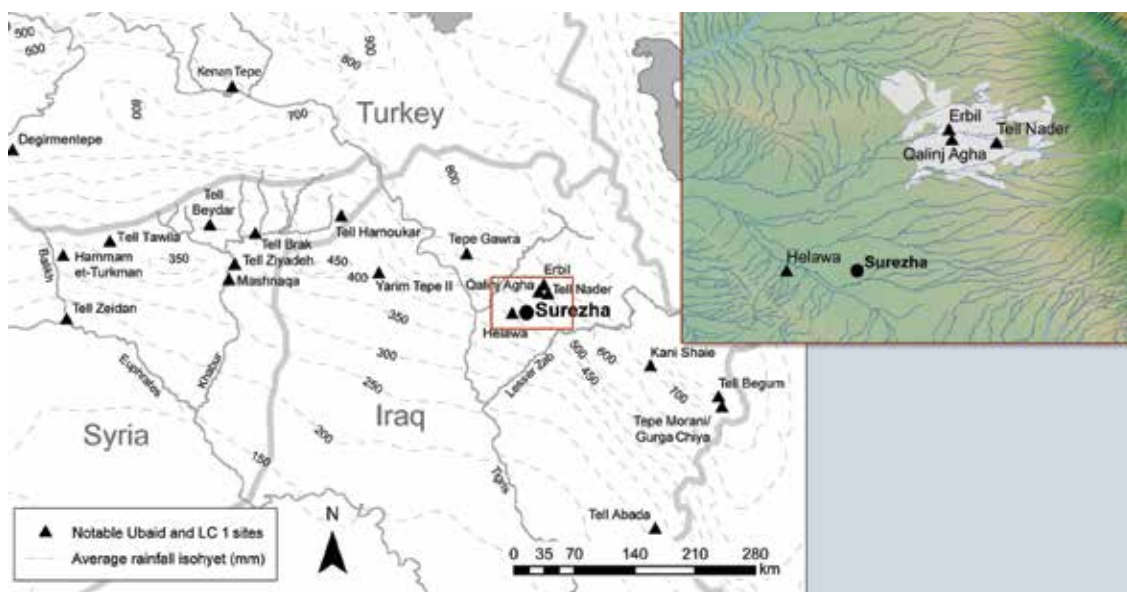


Figure 1. Ubaid/Late Chalcolithic 1 sites in northern Mesopotamia. The insert shows Surezha and other contemporaneous sites on the Erbil Plain in Iraqi Kurdistan. Map by Lucas Proctor.



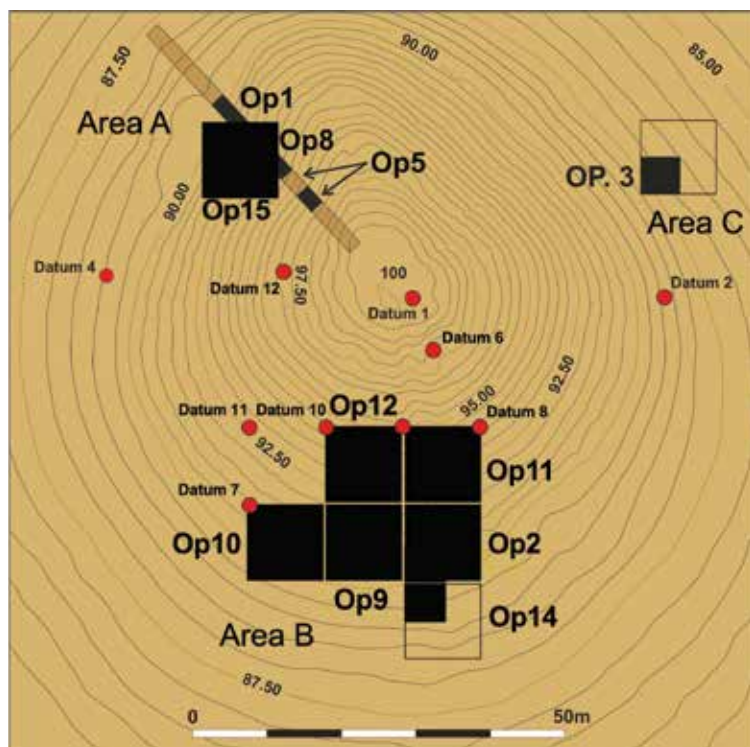


Figure 2. Surezha high mound showing the areas of the 2022 excavations in operations 11, 12, 14, and 15.

LC 4 periods at Surezha are contemporaneous with the Middle Uruk period in southern Mesopotamia. The Chalcolithic period is difficult to investigate because these occupational levels are usually deeply buried beneath 5–30 m of later deposits. However, the abandonment of the Surezha high mound in 3400 BCE, combined with the absence of later occupations there, affords us the rare opportunity to easily reach the building levels of an early town settlement dating back more than 7,000 years.

The 2022 field season took place from September 9 to October 10 and was codirected by Gil Stein and Michael Fisher. Project staff members included Roonak Ahmadiania, John Alden, James Blundell, Adrienne Furniss, Maria Gajewska, Glynnis Maynard, Lucas Proctor, and Sean Reynolds, with Rozhgar Rashid and Nader Babakr serving as our governmental representatives. Site excavations were carried out by twenty-one workers from the Erbil Department of Antiquities and the village of Surezha. We are grateful to the General Director of Antiquities, Mr. Kayfi Ali, and to Mr. Nader Babakr, Director of Antiquities for Erbil Governorate, for permission to excavate at Surezha and for the many ways in which they have facilitated our work. The 2022 excavations focused on Area A in the northwest slope of the high mound (operation 15) and Area B at the southern base of the high mound (operations 11, 12, and 14; see fig. 2).

## AREA A (NORTHWEST SLOPE OF THE HIGH MOUND)

### *Operation 1 Step Trench*

Initial exploration of Area A took place from 2013 to 2016 with the excavation of the 40 m long, 3 m wide operation 1 step trench by Abbas Alizadeh of ISAC. Operation 1 established Surezha's 1,900-year-long stratigraphic sequence in the Chalcolithic period as extending from the Halaf, Ubaid, and LC 1 through LC 4 periods, with later intrusive pits and burials from the second-millennium BCE Middle Assyrian period. One of the key discoveries came with the exposure of an LC 2 occupation dating to the late fifth to early

fourth millennium BCE, contemporaneous with the Early Uruk period in southern Mesopotamia. The LC 2 deposits at Surezha have calibrated radiocarbon dates that fall mainly between 4250 and 3900 BCE.

The LC 2 strata in operation 1 contained a room with an intact mudbrick wall and a set of complete, restorable ceramic vessels lined up against it. These discoveries suggested that expanding out horizontally from the limited LC 2 exposure in the step trench would allow us to recover well-preserved stratigraphy, architecture, and sufficiently large samples of associated ceramics, animal bones, archaeobotanical remains, and radiocarbon dates to greatly improve our understanding of LC 2 chronology and economy at Surezha. Toward this end, in 2022 we began the excavation of operation 15 in Area A.

### Operation 15

Operation 15 is a 10 × 10 m trench in Area A excavated by Lucas Proctor and Roonak Ahmadiania. The trench was laid out to overlap with operation 1 in the area with the LC 2 deposits, thereby ensuring a reliable stratigraphic connection between the two trenches.

Beneath the overlying deposits of the LC 3 period, excavations revealed a complex of LC 2 architecture with at least seven mudbrick rooms whose layout suggests a nondomestic function (fig. 3). These rooms

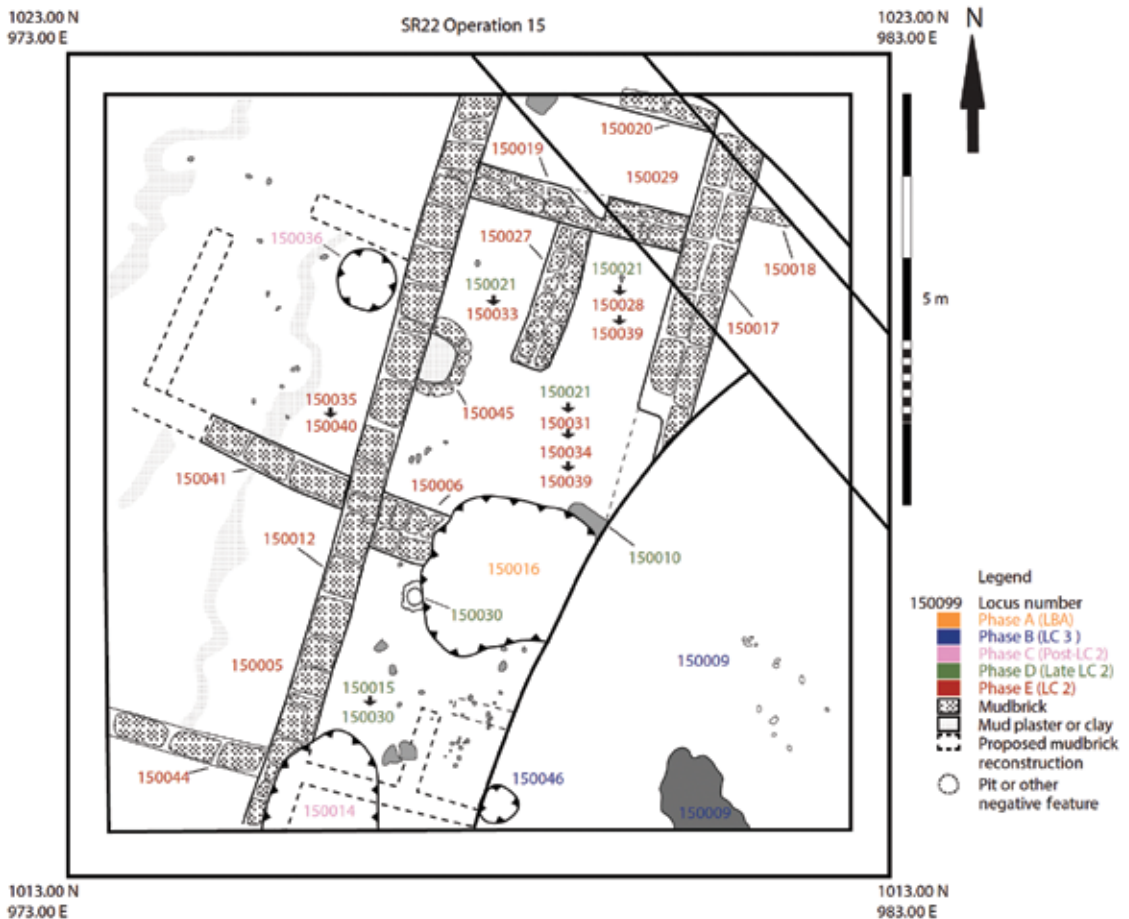


Figure 3. Operation 15 top plan showing the line of the operation 1 step trench (top right) with the LC 2 nondomestic room complex that spans both operation 1 and operation 15. The area at bottom right shows (unexcavated) portions of overlying LC 3 deposits covering a portion of the LC 2 room complex.

were linked stratigraphically to the well-preserved LC 2 room with storage vessels that had been initially excavated in the operation 1 step trench.

## AREA B

In 2022 we began a multiyear effort to expand Area B by opening operations 11 and 12 as two new 10 × 10 m trenches immediately north of operations 2 and 9 (fig. 2).

### *Operation 11*

Operation 11 is a 10 × 10 m trench at the eastern end of Area B and immediately north of operation 2. Excavations there were conducted by Maria Gajewska and Glynnis Maynard. Cleaning of the trench had begun in 2019 with the scraping of about 80 percent of its surface in what appears to have been a mostly open, sloping area in the fifth millennium BCE. In 2022, focused excavations started at the northern end of the trench. Two main architectural features were excavated in this area—room 110008, in the northwest part of operation 11, and kiln 110004, built nearby to the east in an open area along the sloping, fifth-millennium southern surface of the high mound (fig. 4). Both installations apparently date to the LC 2 period.

Kiln 110004 is a two-chambered updraft kiln composed of a lower fuel chamber with a central plastered brick wall that originally supported the floor of an upper (probably domed) chamber where the ceramic vessels would have been placed for firing. Unfortunately, the upper firing chamber no longer survives. The floor separating the two chambers would have been pierced with circular vent holes that allowed the heat from the burning charcoal in the fuel chamber to rise into the upper firing chamber. Kilns with this technologically advanced design first appeared in northern Mesopotamia at the site of Yarim Tepe as early as the 6300 BCE Hassuna period. The kiln's design allowed potters to reach firing temperatures of up to 1,000 degrees Celsius in the oxygen-poor reduction atmosphere inside the closed dome of the firing chamber. Ceramics shrink less and are more stable when fired in the very high temperatures that can be reached in a reducing atmosphere than in the oxidizing atmosphere of an open kiln. The plastered walls of the surviving fuel chamber of kiln 110004 are greenish colored, melted, and vitrified, attesting to the extremely high temperatures attained by the ancient potters at Surezha. The accumulation of sediments and the sequence of superimposed work surfaces built against the outer walls of kiln 110004 suggest that this installation was in use for an extended period of time—perhaps as long as a century—before falling out of use.



Figure 4. Operation 11, with mudbrick room 110008 in the northwest corner of the trench at the rear of the photo and kiln 110004 in the foreground.

## Operation 12

Operation 12 is a 10 × 10 m trench located immediately west of operation 11 in Area B and was excavated by Jim Blundell and Adrienne Furniss. Although the two adjacent excavated areas were contemporaneously occupied during the LC 2 period, they seem to have differed markedly in function. In contrast with the largely open area around the operation 11 kiln, the excavated area in the northern (upslope) portion of operation 12 comprises a series of three parallel mudbrick rooms constructed at the top of the slope, opening to the south, and extending into the north baulk (fig. 5). A hearth is located on an outdoor surface immediately west of the block of rooms. The area may have been residential, but this determination is difficult to make because of the low density of artifacts in the structure.

## Operation 14

In Area B, at the southern edge of the high mound, Late Ubaid architecture is accessible only 30 cm beneath the present-day ground surface and lies immediately under LC 1 houses whose orientation closely matches that of the Ubaid house beneath them. This rare situation gave us the opportunity to make broad horizontal exposures of the Ubaid occupation of Surezha, while at the same time studying the Ubaid-to-LC 1 transition. Previous excavations in operation 2 exposed the remains of two intact Ubaid houses with an alleyway running northeast to southwest between them. In 2016, excavations in the rooms and bins of the Ubaid “West House” in operation 2 yielded classic plain ware and painted Ubaid pottery, along with northern Ubaid prestige goods such as a fragmentary stamp seal and a polished-stone palette similar to those known from Ubaid levels at Tepe Gawra in northeastern Iraq and Tell Zeidan in Syria.

Operation 14 was opened in 2022 by Michael Fisher as a 5 × 5 m exposure of the northwest quadrant of operation 14. It is located immediately south of the operation 2 Ubaid houses along the same northeast-to-southwest alleyway that separated the “West House” and the “East House,” and it seeks to expand the contiguous exposure of this building level (fig. 6).

Excavations in operation 14 identified the stratigraphic transition between the earliest overlying LC 1 architecture and the Ubaid structure that immediately underlay it. This structure appears to be a multi-room, mudbrick house. The north wall of the house runs along the south wall of the “East House” in the adjacent operation 2 Ubaid exposure along the alleyway. The operation 14 house had eight small, cellular rooms, possibly arrayed around a central courtyard. The presence of a central courtyard is uncertain because a modern Iraqi army pit had cut down through the central portion of the house. Ceramics in the room deposits of this structure were good, southern-Ubaid painted and plain ware forms. Plain wares slightly outnumbered painted wares in the sample excavated in 2022. It should be noted that Ubaid ceramics on the Erbil Plain are chaff tempered with the exception of the Ubaid fine ware bowls and plates, which have fine mineral temper or no visible temper. Polished-stone celt SR10995 was recovered from locus 35 in one of the southernmost rooms in the house and may have been a prestige good.



Figure 5. Operation 12, a series of rooms with narrow mudbrick walls, dating apparently to the LC 2 period and contemporaneous with operation 11 to the east.

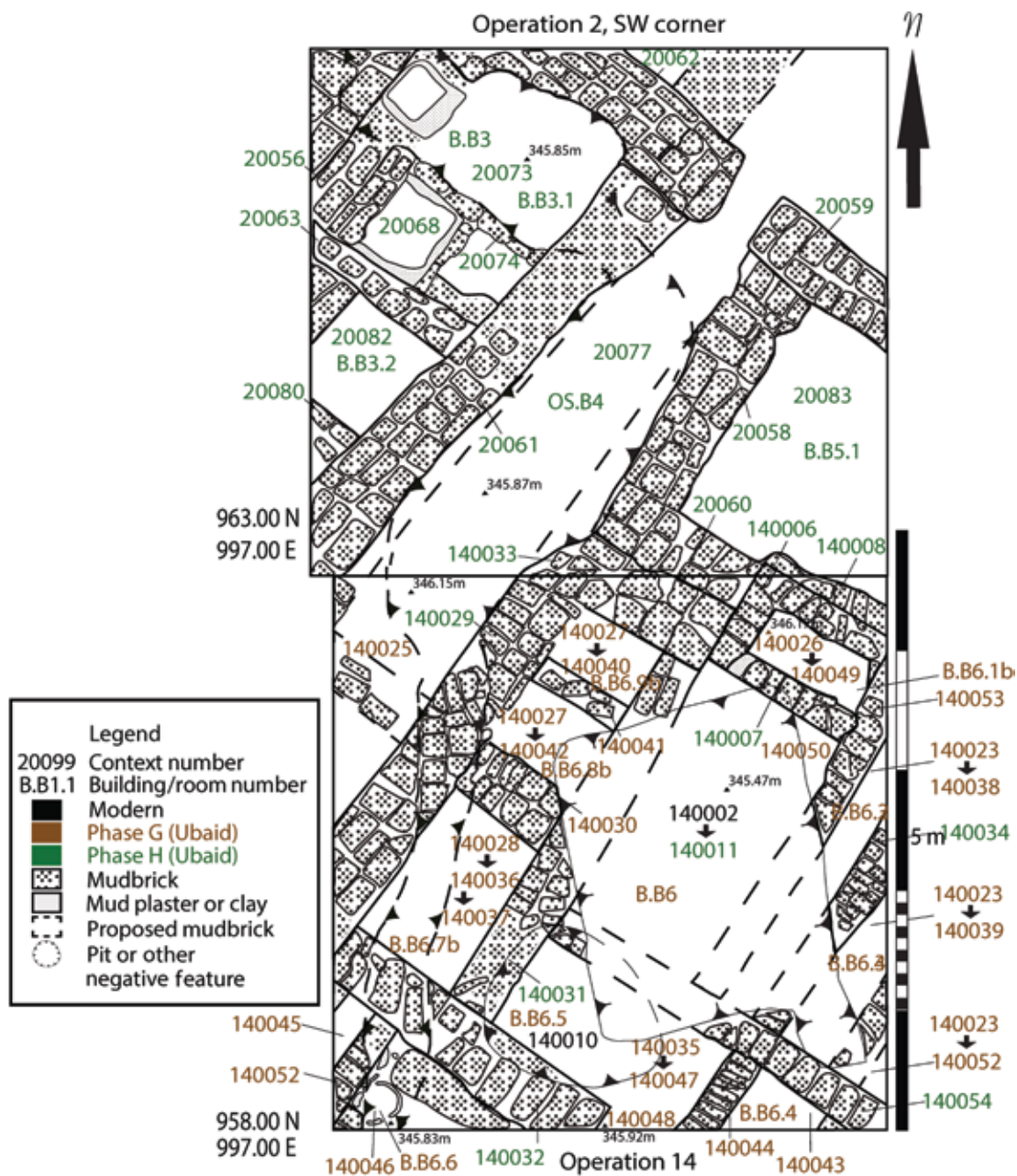


Figure 6. Composite top plan of Late Ubaid domestic architecture in the southwest quadrant of operation 2 (at top) and the northwest quadrant of operation 14 (at bottom).

## ZOOARCHAEOLOGY (MAX PRICE)

Analysis of the Surezha animal bone remains is being conducted by project zooarchaeologist Max Price. Faunal remains from six seasons at Tell Surezha (2013, 2016–19, and 2022) were analyzed to reconstruct animal husbandry practices in the Erbil Plain in the Ubaid and Late Chalcolithic periods. This report focuses on the fauna recovered from operations 11, 12, 14, and 15 in 2022.

## **Relative Abundance**

A total of 976 fragments from the 2022 season were analyzed. A very small number of them were identified as to genus from contexts assigned a phase. These data were added to the existing Tell Surezha database of fauna from all excavation seasons to date (table 1).

## ARCHAEOBOTANY (LUCAS PROCTOR)

To date, more than 400 flotation samples have been collected from Surezha, and over 108 of them have been analyzed. In 2022, 51 samples were collected and processed over the course of the campaign, in addition to the backlog of 15 samples from 2019. Analysis of these samples, as well as continued study of materials from previous campaigns, is ongoing.

### **Analysis of Ubaid and LC 2 Samples from the 2022 Season**

Twelve macrobotanical samples collected during the 2022 field campaign were analyzed in 2022–23 (table 2). Six of these samples, representing three loci, originate from the excavation of operation 14 and date to the Ubaid occupation of the site. Meanwhile, another six samples were examined from contemporaneous floor, hearth, and *tannur* deposits associated with the LC 2 occupation of the site in operation 15. More than 850 items were recovered from these samples, with 786 identifiable specimens representing sixty-one categories/taxa (table 3).

### **Operation 14—Ubaid Results**

The operation 14 samples included a trash deposit (locus 140017), an indoor surface (locus 140036), and what appears to be material deposited by the erosion of a gully into the side of the mound immediately postdating the Ubaid period (locus 140025). This context likely represents redeposited materials of Ubaid contexts and therefore presents only a general picture of overall plant use. In total, 470 identifiable items were recovered from these samples, of which 120 were indeterminate cereal grain fragments that were excluded from further analysis so as not to overrepresent cereals statistically. Unfortunately, the fluvial deposit was also the richest context in the operation 14 samples in terms of identifiable remains. Among its plentiful cereals, pulses, and grasses, it contained higher proportions of wheat (61 percent) compared to barley (30 percent) and abundant lentils (*Lens culinaris*) and small wild grasses. The remaining four samples from trash-bin fill and an indoor surface yielded substantially fewer preserved remains. Barley was identified in both contexts, whereas wheat was not. Relatively few wild and weedy seeds were recovered from these contexts compared to the fluvial deposit.

### **Operation 15—LC 2 Results**

The examined LC 2 samples from the 2022 field season were derived from contemporaneous contexts dated to phase D (later LC 2) of operation 15. They included an open hearth (150023) and oven/*tannur* (150026), as well as nearby surface deposits. Smashed-pottery fragments and grinding stones were recovered from this level, and remnants of a pebble surface suggest it may have been an exterior area at the time of occupation. In total, 257 items were identified in the LC 2 samples, though 140 of them were indeterminate fragments of cereals. Excluding these fragments, intact cereal grains made up 36.8 percent of the charred assemblage. Both the hearth and the *tannur* contained barley and hulled-wheat remains as well as late-stage processing debris, including glume bases and awn fragments. At 8.5 percent, pulses were relatively common in the LC 2 samples; most were found in the hearth. A single flax seed (*Linum usitatissimum*) was found in the *tannur* sample. Wild and weedy seeds (36.5 percent) were encountered in each of the LC 2 samples, though the hearth sample had by far the richest deposit of them. Unlike the operation 14 samples, where small wild-grass seeds were

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Table 1. Surezha animal bone remains (all field seasons), categorized by period.

Identified taxa	Halaf		Ubaid		Ubaid–		LC 1	LC 1–2	LC 1 or 2	LC 2	LC 2–3	LC 3	Middle Assyrian	Islamic
	Ubaid	Halaf-Ubaid	Ubaid	LC 1	LC 1	LC 1								
<i>Ovis/Capra</i> , of which:	20		52	28	487	308	1	40	89	94	64	2		
<i>Ovis</i>			4	3	69	29		2		9	5			
<i>Capra</i>	1		2	2	22	43		17		2				
<i>Ovis/Capra/Gazella</i>	2		7	4	50	6	1	6	7	9	2	1		
<i>Sus</i>	7		36	35	351	42		1	10	80	10	1		
<i>Bos</i>	12		15	9	172	31		2	16	23	7			
<i>Canis</i>	2		2		98	6				1		1		
<i>Vulpes</i>					1	1		7						
<i>Equus</i>					1?									
<i>Dama/Cervus</i>					2				1					
<i>Capreolus</i>					1								1	
Mustelid (cf. <i>Mustela</i> )					1									
<i>Gazella</i>	1		1		31	3		13	2	1	6			
Bivalve (Unionida)		1			12	5		6	2	6	1			
Potomon sp.					2									
Bird			5	2	7			43		1	3			
Fish					1									
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>1,216</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>5</b>		

Table 2. Contextual information for 2022 archaeobotanical samples examined.

Surezha registration number	Operation	Locus	Phase	Deposit class	Deposit type	Flotation volume (L)
11210	14	17	Ubaid F	Secondary	Trash deposit (bin)	2
11212	14	17	Ubaid F	Secondary	Trash deposit (bin)	2
11214	14	17	Ubaid F	Secondary	Trash deposit (bin)	2
11218	14	25	Post-Ubaid B	Tertiary	Fluvial deposit	4
11222	14	25	Post-Ubaid B	Tertiary	Fluvial deposit	4
11216	14	36	Ubaid G	Primary	Floor/indoor Surface	2
10677	15	15	LC 2 D	Primary	Surface	6
11208	15	15	LC 2 D	Primary	Surface	3
10680	15	21	LC 2 D	Primary	Surface	2
10696	15	23	LC 2 D	Primary	Hearth	4
10688	15	25	LC 2 D	Primary	Surface	2
11220	15	26	LC 2 D	Primary	<i>Tannur</i>	3



## PROJECT REPORTS | SUREZHA EXCAVATIONS

Table 3. Taxonomic data from the 2022 samples.

Taxon	11210	11212	11214	11218	11222	11216	10677	11208	10680	10696	10688	11220
<i>Triticum dicoccum</i>				10	3			2	2	7		2
<i>Triticum monococcum</i>				3	1							
<i>Triticum durum/aestivum</i>				3	3							
<i>Triticum</i> sp.				10	21		3	1	1	5	1	3
<i>Triticum</i> sp. (tail grain)				5	4						1	
<i>Triticum</i> sp. (sprouted)									1			
<i>Hordeum</i> sp.			2	12	10	4	1	1	2	3	2	4
<i>Hordeum</i> sp. (twisted)				2			1		2			
Cereal indet. (whole)	1			8		1						
Cereal indet. (fragments)	1	2	4	50	51	12	27	17	22	25	8	41
Hulled wheat spikelet forks				6								
Hulled wheat glume bases				10	14	1	1			10		2
<i>Hordeum</i> sp. rachis				1		1						
Cereal glume (fragments)							1					
Cereal rachis indet.												1
Basal rachis indet.									1			
Basal culm (>2 mm)						1						
Cereal embryo					5				1			
Awn (fragments)				xxx	xxx							xxx
<i>Lathyrus/Vicia</i> type*					2							2
<i>Vicia ervilia</i> *					2							
<i>Lens culinaris</i> *					27							3
<i>Lens</i> sp.*												2
Large legume indet.*				10								
				4	1							2
												1
<i>Linum</i> sp.					1							
<i>Linum usitatissimum</i>												1
Nut shell							1					

POACEAE indet.	1	1	3	20	3	3	1	
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i> type				10				
<i>Hordeum</i> , wild spp.		4	3					4
<i>Lolium rigidum</i> type		8	1					
<i>Lolium/Festuca</i> spp.		32	47		2			
<i>Phalaris</i> sp.		1	1					
<i>Phleum</i> sp.		1	1					
APIACEAE indet.							1	2
<i>Anthemis</i> sp.			1					
<i>Artemisia</i> cf. <i>decumbens</i>							2	
<i>Brassica</i> sp.								1
<i>Gypsophila/Cerastium</i> type			1					
<i>Vaccaria hispanica</i>			1					
<i>Chenopodium</i> sp.			1				2	
<i>Astragalus</i> sp.							3	1
<i>Medicago</i> sp.								1
<i>Trifolium/Melilotus</i> type		1		5				
<i>Trigonella</i> sp.		1		1			3	
<i>Trigonella astroites</i>							1	
LAMIACEAE indet.				1				
<i>Malva</i> ssp.	6	2	1				3	2
<i>Glaucium</i> sp.							1	
<i>Fumaria</i> sp.					1			
<i>Rumex</i> sp.							1	
<i>Adonis</i> sp.				1				
<i>Asperula</i> sp.				2				
<i>Galium</i> sp.							1	
<i>Bellardia</i> sp.							1	
<i>Plantago</i> type				2			1	1
<i>Valerianella</i> sp.		1					1	
<i>Scrophularia</i> sp.						1		
Land snail	1		3	4	1		6	2
Dung fragments							1	2
Indet. dung/bread material			8	13	1	5	10	2

Notes: \* = counted by cotyledon; xxx = massive quantities of small, white awn fragments.

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most commonly recovered, the wild/weedy seeds from the LC 2 are indicative of herbaceous species commonly found in the open steppe (including *Bellevalia*, *Valerianella*, and *Plantago*), in addition to small legumes (*Trigonella*, *Astragalus*, etc.) commonly found in both steppe and field contexts across northern Mesopotamia.

The addition of new Ubaid and LC 2 archaeobotanical samples to the Surezha assemblage contributes to an emerging and nearly continuous sequence of data on prehistoric agropastoralism on the Erbil Plain. Continued analysis of samples from the site promises to shed further light on plant use and agropastoral activities during these important time periods.

## CERAMIC ANALYSES (JOHN ALDEN AND GIL STEIN)

Preliminary analyses done in the field of the Surezha ceramics recovered during the 2022 season were conducted by John Alden and Gil Stein, while archaeometric analyses using instrumental neutron activation analysis (INAA) and thin-section petrography were conducted by Leah Minc (Oregon State University) assisted by Savanna Buehlman-Barbeau (University of Toronto). The 316 excavated pottery lots processed contained 7,356 sherds, of which 2,474 were diagnostic forms—rims, bases, or sherds with surface treatment such as painting, incision, or impressed decoration (table 4). Typological analyses focused mainly on LC 3 diagnostic ceramics and secondarily on LC 2 forms.

Table 4. Summary of ceramic counts and weights from the 2022 field season excavations in operations 11, 12, 14, and 15.

Operation	Total sherds	Total diagnostics	Percentage diagnostics	Percentage painted	Total rims	Total bases	Total painted rim	Total painted body	Total incised	Total other dignostics
11	683	300	43.92	6.59	206	6	10	35	18	25
12	3,017	468	15.51	2.12	335	25	21	43	20	24
14	601	161	26.79	11.15	81	4	24	43	3	6
15	3,055	1,545	50.57	1.44	493	31	13	31	22	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,356</b>	<b>2,474</b>	<b>33.63</b>	<b>2.99</b>	<b>1,115</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>81</b>

## INSTRUMENTAL NEUTRON ACTIVATION ANALYSES OF SUREZHA CHALCOLITHIC CERAMICS (LEAH MINC AND SAVANNA BUEHLMAN-BARBEAU)

As a result of the ongoing trace-element and mineralogical analysis of ceramics from Surezha, our database now totals 299 artifacts analyzed via INAA, including 267 ceramic vessels, 22 ring scrapers, and 10 pieces of unfired clay (table 5).

We can distinguish two composition groups clearly linked to local resources (Surezha-1 and Surezha-2) and identify distinctive compositions that may represent nonlocal sources or foreign imports (the Surezha high-arsenic group). Further, we were able to determine that ceramics that appear foreign (i.e., the Dalma wares) were in fact products of local manufacture matching local chemical signatures (Alden et al. 2021; Buehlman-Barbeau 2020). For this latest set of analyses, we focused on three main research questions.

Table 5. Distribution of the current ceramic INAA sample from Surezha by ware and time period.

Ware/object	Ubaid/			LC			Unknown	Total
	Ubaid	LC 1	LC 1	LC 2	2 or 3	LC 3		
Blister ware	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	3
Burnished black ware	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	3
Fine paste ware	11	0	0	5	1	26	0	43
Dalma ware	0	32	0	0	0	0	0	32
Chaff-tempered buff	1	0	7	3	0	1	0	12
Grit-tempered buff	13	2	1	0	0	0	0	16
Cooking pot ware	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	4
LC gray ware	0	0	0	0	5	38	0	43
Surezha local ware	0	3	11	26	4	55	0	99
Ring scraper	0	0	0	0	0	0	22	22
Other clay object	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	10
Waster	0	0	0	2	0	2	8	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>299</b>

*1. How do our existing chemical groups differ in terms of mineralogical and paste characteristics?*

Our prior chemical analyses identified two abundant, presumably local, ceramic groups, labeled Surezha-1 and Surezha-2, based on sharp bimodalities in the trace metals as well as most of the alkali and rare-earth elements. Multivariate refinement based on principal component scores confirmed two distinct, robust groups, one with higher concentrations of most elements (Surezha-1), and one with generally lower concentrations (Surezha-2). The normalized profile plots of these two groups suggest a classic dilution pattern, in which the increased concentration of some major element (possibly introduced as temper) reduces the concentrations of other minor and trace elements.

In addition, our prior analyses identified a high-arsenic group that is clearly distinct from the Surezha reference groups based on arsenic and vanadium; absent these two elements, the group's normalized profile closely tracks that of Surezha-2, indicating that some distinct type of inclusion accounts for the higher concentrations of these elements. One likely candidate in this area is black (organic-rich) oil shale, which is known to host both arsenic and vanadium.

Petrographic analyses of samples falling within the Surezha-1, Surezha-2, and Surezha high-arsenic groups indicate that the same general suite of minerals is found in all of them. The dominant inclusions are quartz and carbonates (as either crystalline calcite or amorphous grains of micrite), along with feldspar, chert, and mica. In the high-arsenic group, carbonate grains outweigh quartz, and the presence of sedimentary rock fragments is notable. One likely source of arsenic and vanadium in sedimentary rock environments is carbonaceous shale, which could potentially burn out during firing and leave little to see in thin section. Some of the linear voids in these sherds appear to have a reddish mineral residue, possibly representing shale inclusions responsible for higher arsenic and vanadium content (fig. 7).

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Figure 7. Microphotographs (100×) of high-arsenic sherds taken under incident light. Note the platey rock fragments circled in the image on the right.

*2. How well do ceramic wares or types that are both distinctive and relatively rare at Surezha fit within our current composition groups for Surezha—or do they represent imports?*

In this round of analyses, several additional types presumed to be nonlocal were submitted for analysis (table 6). They included the distinctive blister ware ( $N = 3$ ), burnished black ware ( $N = 3$ ), and fine paste ware ( $N = 42$ ).

The Surezha local ware as a group fits poorly within the main composition groups previously defined for the site. Fewer than half of the samples for this ware can be securely linked to a specific composition group; they often fall at the margins of group clusters or show affiliations with more than one group, suggesting that paste recipes were variable and poorly controlled. The fine paste wares show a similar pattern: some samples can be clearly linked to our Surezha-1, Surezha-2, or high-arsenic groups, but a majority cannot—they neither form a chemically distinct group on their own nor fall securely within previously recognized groups. None of the blister ware is of local manufacture, but based on preliminary analyses, two of three pieces of burnished black ware appear to be local.

Table 6. Percentage distribution of ceramic wares, by chemical composition group.

Ware/object	Count	Surezha-1	Surezha-2	Surezha high-arsenic	Surezha high cesium-to-rubidium ratio	Unclear	Outlier
Surezha local ware	98	7.1	9.2	11.2	7.1	57.1	8.2
LC gray ware	43	27.9	32.6	27.9	0.0	11.6	0.0
Cooking pot ware	4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	50.0
Chaff-tempered buff	12	50.0	33.3	8.3	0.0	0.0	8.3
Grit-tempered buff	16	31.3	0.0	6.3	12.5	50.0	0.0
Blister ware	3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	66.7	33.3
Burnished black ware	3	0.0	66.7	0.0	0.0	33.3	0.0
Dalma ware	31	41.9	58.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Fine paste ware	42	31.0	2.4	4.8	2.4	57.1	2.4
Ring scraper	22	40.9	18.2	9.1	22.7	4.6	4.6
Waster	12	33.3	0.0	0.0	41.7	16.7	8.3
Other clay object	4	75.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0

Table 7. Percentage distribution of chemical composition groups, by phase/time period.

Period	Count	Surezha-1	Surezha-2	Surezha high-arsenic	Surezha high cesium-to-rubidium ratio	Unclear	Outlier
Ubaid	25	48.0	4.0	4.0	12.0	32.0	0.0
Ubaid/LC 1	36	36.1	50.0	0.0	2.8	11.1	0.0
LC 1	18	38.9	22.2	0.0	16.7	22.2	0.0
LC 2	41	9.8	12.2	7.3	7.3	46.3	17.1
LC 2/3	10	0.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	80.0	10.0
LC 3	124	16.1	15.3	17.7	0.8	46.0	4.0

### 3. How well do our ceramic composition groups persist through time?

Table 7 shows the percentage of sherds from each time period that can be securely assigned to a composition group. Several trends are of interest here. First, group representation varies chronologically: Surezha-1 and the small Surezha high cesium-to-rubidium groups are more common earlier in the sequence, while the Surezha high-arsenic group is best represented during the LC 2 and LC 3 periods. Second, the number of sherds that cannot be assigned to a local group (the “unclear” and “outlier” categories) increases through time from the Ubaid to the LC 2–3 and then drops again in the LC 3. As a working hypothesis, we suggest this trend indicates an expanding range of clay resources or access to markets through time, as the inhabitants of Surezha communicated more broadly within the Erbil Plain. In the LC 3, that trend was truncated, perhaps through the reorganization of production and the establishment of local pottery workshops, leading to a greater focus on local resources. We do not, however, see an increased standardization of production within local groups across this time.

To date, we have identified two closely related chemical groups at Surezha—Surezha-1 and Surezha-2—whose patterns of chemical and mineralogical variability indicate pastes made using locally available resources. In contrast, we can now tentatively link the chemical and mineralogical signature of the Surezha high-arsenic group to the ridge of oil shales to the south, the result of access to nonlocal resources or markets at the edge of the Erbil Plain. Although our analyses linking chemical, temporal, and formal variability are still at a very preliminary stage, the results to date indicate that significant changes in the spatial scale of resource acquisition and in organization or production may be documented at Surezha.

## CONCLUSIONS

The 2022 field season at Surezha enhanced our understanding of the economic and social organization of the site. New excavation areas such as operations 12, 14 and 15, together with continuing excavations in operation 11, broadened our understanding of the Ubaid occupation of the site, while shedding light on the poorly known LC 2 and LC 3 periods. The data collected contribute to our broader goal of developing an archaeologically based history of the evolution of agropastoral systems on the Erbil Plain and its relation to the development of complex societies in the region.

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INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH



OVERLEAF: Brass lotus and other floral designs  
on the entrance gate to the ISAC Museum  
galleries.

# INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH

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In 2020, **ABBAS ALIZADEH** had submitted a proposal titled “The Archaeology of Apprenticeship” to the Iran National Museum to study its immense collections of pottery from hundreds of sites in Iran. The idea for this project came to him during the eight months he spent organizing the storage areas of the National Museum in 2015–16, where he noticed varying degrees of inferiority in almost every individual collection of pottery, especially in the way painted patterns were executed. He assumed such instances must have been produced by young apprentices learning the trade, and he decided to test this idea (for a full report on this organization project, see the Spring 2016 issue of *News & Notes*).

In May 2022 Alizadeh traveled to Tehran to conduct his research. But a few days after his arrival, the secret police arrested him on charges of espionage for Israel, since he had participated in the excavations at Ashkelon in 1985–90. As a result, he was unable to conduct his research, and only after three months and with immense difficulty was he able to return to the United States. With working in Iran now out of the question, he is exploring other collections in the United States and United Kingdom to determine whether he will be able to test his ideas.

Alizadeh’s manuscript on the excavations at three urban settlements in lowland Susiana, southwestern Iran—Abu Fanduweh, Chogha Do Sar, and Beladiyeh—is in production at ISAC Publications. These excavations were conducted in 2004–5 as part of the Iranian Prehistoric Project. They provide a complete sequence of the major types of fourth-millennium BCE ceramics for the three important stages of socio-economic and political development of the early state and urbanism in the region. At Abu Fanduweh workers uncovered a well-preserved, major monumental building of the Late Susa II (Late Uruk) period. They also discovered a large mudbrick platform, much like the famous Susa platform, but smaller. Like the one at Susa, this platform was also subjected to conflagration. Many 1 × 1 m test trenches around the periphery of these sites helped correct their size estimates reported by Gregory Johnson.

Alizadeh’s preparation of his other ISAC Publications manuscript—on the excavations of five prehistoric settlements in the plain of Persepolis (Tall-e Bakun A and B, Tall-e Jari A and B, and Tall-e Mushki)—is in its final stages of preparation and will soon be submitted to the ISAC publications committee. When published, the results of this 2004 fieldwork will provide the hitherto unavailable absolute radiocarbon dates for these key settlements in the region, as well as the stratified sequence of local pottery and evidence of subsistence economy from about 6800 to 4000 BCE.

In addition, Alizadeh’s manuscript for the ISAC Museum’s Persian Gallery guidebook is completed and now being finalized for publication.

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ISAC’s excavation of the temple of the goddess Inanna at Nippur ended more than sixty years ago (with its eighth season in 1962–63), and though it has often been referred to in scholarly publications, it has remained unpublished. The excavation team members originally most responsible for the publication are all deceased. Responsibility for the publication has been assumed by younger scholars, none of whom participated in the excavation: Richard Zettler for architecture and stratigraphy, Karen Wilson for pottery, Jean Evans for sculpture, and **ROBERT BIGGS** for cuneiform texts. At the suggestion of the late Donald Hansen (the archaeologist during the final seasons of excavation of the Inanna Temple, who planned to

## INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH

publish the sculpture and glyptic as well as the pottery), Biggs volunteered for the task and began his work more than fifty years ago (in July 1972) with drawing the inscriptions on votive stone bowls in the Iraq Museum in Baghdad. He continued his efforts in subsequent years in Baghdad, Chicago, New York City, and New Haven. His basic drawings and transliterations were completed a number of years ago. Over the years, especially with the discovery of many thousands of mid-third-millennium texts at Ebla and other sites in Iraq and Syria, comparable material, especially for the reading and interpretation of personal names, increased considerably. In making final revisions to his manuscript, Biggs has welcomed the collaboration of a leading specialist in Sumerian, Prof. Walther Sallaberger of the University of Munich. With his help, the text is being updated to reflect the current understanding of the Sumerian inscriptions with updated bibliography. Biggs is thus fulfilling the obligation he accepted fifty years ago to shoulder some of the ISAC's institutional responsibility for publication of the Inanna Temple at Nippur.

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**JOHN BRINKMAN** completed the dating and cataloging of thirty-six Middle Babylonian tablets of various types (legal, epistolary, administrative, mathematical, and scholarly, including lexical materials and a royal hymn) for the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto. He also submitted a 1,350-page manuscript listing names of persons in documents from the Kassite dynasty to test the applicability of artificial-intelligence statistical analysis for large-scale prosopography (coordinated with colleagues at the University of Cambridge, United Kingdom: Jonathan Tenney in the Department of Archaeology and a team in the Department of Computer Science); initial promising results include development of a clustering tool to sort out related groups of tablets as well as a date-predictive feature for texts with damaged or missing dates. In February, the website of the Electronic Babylonian Library was launched in Munich; its apparatus for dating the historical periods in Mesopotamia consists of Brinkman's newly revised and recalculated dynastic tables from the twenty-fourth century BC down to the mid-third century AD. These tables contain freshly recalibrated dates based on recent research on the alternating use of lunar and lunar-solar calendars as well as attested intercalary data for the Middle Assyrian and Middle Babylonian periods (ca. 1500–1000 BC). Progress was also made on the preparation for publication of the remaining unedited Khorsabad tablets in cooperation with Grant Frame (University of Pennsylvania), who is serving as coeditor for the projected volume.

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**FRANÇOIS GAUDARD** completed his twenty-ninth year as a member of the ISAC scholarly community. During the past year, he continued to work on his various projects, including the edition of the ISAC Museum's Egyptian funerary shrouds from the Greco-Roman period, several of his other text edition projects, and his series of articles dedicated to the study of little-known aspects of the god Seth. Although the Oriental Institute has been renamed the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures, "Oriental Institute" will be used in the titles of the last two articles in the funerary shroud series for the sake of consistency. The several articles on which Gaudard has been working include:

- "Seth the Gleaming One." To be published in *A Master of Secrets in the Chamber of Darkness: Egyptological Studies in Honor of Robert K. Ritner Presented on the Occasion of His 68th Birthday*, edited by Foy Scalf and Brian Muhs. Studies in Ancient Cultures. Chicago: Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures of the University of Chicago.
- "Funerary Shrouds from Dendera in the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago. Part III: Shroud OIM E4787." To be published in a Festschrift in honor of a colleague.

- “Funerary Shrouds from Dendera in the Oriental Institute Museum of the University of Chicago. Part IV: Shroud OIM E4788 (= OIM E42046).” In preparation.
- “A Demotic Accounting Text from the Ptolemaic Period.” In preparation.

In addition, Gaudard attended two conferences (via Zoom): “Prescription to Prediction: The Ancient Sciences in Cross-Cultural Perspective,” held at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore (October 6–7, 2022), and “Looking Beyond the Text: Scribal Practices in Ancient Egypt,” held at Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz (May 17–19, 2023).

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**McGUIRE GIBSON**, now a professor emeritus, is still engaged in preparing reports of various digs conducted from the 1970s onward. During the past year, he reworked his chapters on the stratigraphy of the Y Trench at Kish and on the Field Museum of Natural History’s seal collection, mainly from Kish, published in spring 2023 in *Where Kingship Descended from Heaven: Studies on Ancient Kish*, edited by Karen L. Wilson and Deborah Bekken. Currently, Gibson is back at work on *Umm al-Hafriyat: An Industrial Town in Akkad* (with Richard L. Zettler, James A. Armstrong, and Robert D. Biggs), a manuscript in an advanced state of completion. When it is finished, he intends to return to the report on Area WG at Nippur, which comprises a sequence of buildings from the Parthian to the Early Islamic periods (ca. 100–900 AD). This operation lies southeast of a building exposed by the University of Pennsylvania (UPenn) team in the 1890s and called the Villa with a Court of Columns. When Gibson began as director of the Nippur excavation in 1973, with him was Carl Haines, Nippur’s director in the 1950s. They both assumed the Villa was evidenced only by slight remains of round columns located at the bottom of a huge hole left by the UPenn team. This hole was designated Area WA and became the site of a major excavation that exposed part of a series of large temples, built one above the other through hundreds of years. It showed evidence of being dedicated to Gula, goddess of medicine, but further excavation may prove that she shares this temple with Ninurta, her consort and a major god in the Nippur pantheon. The stack of temples thus far exposed comprises only the latest five versions (Ur III to Neo-Babylonian, ca. 2,200–549 BC) of an institution that probably originated in the fourth millennium BC.

The assumption that Area WA was the location of the Villa with a Court of Columns proved to be wrong. The error was caused by the fact that neither Gibson nor Haines had actually ever seen the remains of the Villa because a gigantic sea of dunes moved and covered most of Nippur sometime after 1920, when a group from the University of Chicago took photos of it. The dunes were very much in place by 1948, when Haines first arrived at the site. Beginning in the late 1970s, the dune belt began to diminish slowly, and by the 1980s it had become much smaller. As a result, most of Nippur was free of dunes except for some very big ones, including one that stubbornly rested on a high point at the southeast edge of Area WA. By 1987, however, even that dune had disappeared, partly falling down into Area WA but also having been blown away. At this point the Villa became evident high up on the mound where the dune had been. On a higher, unexcavated place southeast of the Villa, where UPenn had established its camp in its first season of work in 1889, the team opened a new area, WG, to examine the last periods of the city’s occupation. This operation exposed building levels dated to the Parthian, Sasanian, and Early Islamic periods. The work here demonstrated, among other things, that the Villa had to be dated to the Parthian period rather than to the earlier Seleucid period, as some scholars had proposed. A few years ago, Abbas Alizadeh flew a drone over all of Nippur, and the Villa and Area WG show up very nicely on those images, while Area WA is less visible, being partially filled by dune and a small forest of tamarisk bushes. The supposed earlier versions of the Gula (and Ninurta?) temple may tempt future directors to tackle the difficulties of working in the area, just

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as the Inanna temple in the 1960s induced Haines to examine the development of that institution through nineteen phases of construction.

Gibson still serves on the boards of The Academic Research Institute in Iraq (TARII) and the American Institute for Yemeni Studies, both of which he founded. He has donated his scholarly books to TARII, and they now reside in the organization's facility in Baghdad.

**PETRA GOEDEGEBUURE**'s research mainly focused on Hieroglyphic Luwian; her two articles accepted for publication are titled "The One and Only Great King Hartapu and the Western Muška" and "'Poldering' in 'Beyond-the-River': Revisiting the End of the Çineköy Inscription." The first article is controversial. Goedegebuure argues that a Luwian inscription previously dated to the twelfth or eleventh century BCE belongs to the eighth century and that this inscription and another one, Türkmenkarahöyük 1, refer to the same event: the gaining of control over the territory of the Muška, or the Phrygians. In the second article Goedegebuure argues that a major feat of King Waraiku of Hiyawa (Cilicia, Turkey)—the creation of new land—did not take place in Cilicia itself but in Gurgum, a polity immediately east of Cilicia. The core argument supporting this view is the reanalysis of the expression ("FLUMEN")*sa-pa+ra/i-* "the river Sabri" (in Cilicia) as a compound noun ("FLUMEN")*sa pa+ra/i-* "Beyond-the-River (the Trans-Euphrates)."

Goedegebuure submitted for publication another Luwian lexical study, "Of Luwian Cities, Hittite Great Kings, and Anatolian Oaks: The Luwian Word for URBS (L.225) 'City' and Related Roots." Here too she provides a new meaning for a lexeme. A word always read as *\*a-la-mi-n°-* "name" turns out to mean "city." Thus far "city" was attested only as URBS-*mi-n°-* with full reading unknown. She now reads the sequence as /allamminna-/ and proposes a base verb /allai-/ "strengthen." Because /allamminna-/ literally means "settlement having fortifications," Goedegebuure argues that the symbol for "city" represents a merlon (see drawing and photo). The verb /allai-/ "strengthen" is also attested in Hittite in a passage that was not well understood but now makes perfect sense. Instead of the translation "To apply plaster (to) the wall, though, [(it shall be)] 2<sup>3</sup> *alla-<sup>3</sup>* (*thick<sup>3</sup>* /



The Luwian symbol for URBS "city."



Tower-shaped funerary stela from Maras. Photo © Hittite Monuments. <https://www.hittitemonuments.com/maras/maras14.htm>.

*hib<sup>3</sup>*)” (KBo 57.10+ ii 16’–18’), Goedegebuure suggests “Now, the fortification wall must be strengthened (*allān*) by applying plaster twice.”

Goedegebuure’s articles “Labarna” and “Hattic” were published in the *Encyclopedia of Ancient History*, and her “Magic in Hittite Society: For Kings, Queens, and Commoners Alike” was published in the Winter 2023 issue of *News & Notes*. At the University of Chicago she served as director of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies’ ancient track and on nine committees. She was honored to be invited to provide an external evaluation of the long-term German research project *Das Corpus der hethitischen Festräume* at the Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur (Mainz). She also peer-reviewed several articles and project proposals.

During the Epigraphic Survey’s 2022–23 field season, **ALEKSANDRA HALLMANN** undertook a visual, iconographic, and technical analysis of two Kushite monuments at Medinet Habu: the chapel of Amenirdis and the gate of Taharqa. From October 25 to November 12, 2022, she worked with conservation consultants Stephen Rickerby and Lisa Shekede to conduct the technical investigation of both monuments (see photos). This project was funded by Hallmann’s grant “Iconographic Program of the Chapels of Osiris in Karnak: Kushite Chapel of Osiris Neb-ankh” (Harmonia 8: UMO 2016/22/M/HS3/00354), awarded by the National Science Centre of Poland and based at the Institute of Mediterranean and Oriental Cultures of the Polish Academy of Sciences (Warsaw).

The primary purpose of this investigation was to gain an understanding of the original materials and decoration techniques in Twenty-Fifth Dynasty monuments, part of a larger project to increase the scope of available technical information about the monuments of this understudied period, and specifically to continue investigations made in previous seasons at the Kushite chapel of Osiris Neb-ankh in Karnak. The two monuments at Medinet Habu were selected as comparanda, since they are similar in date to the Karnak chapel, which was built during the reign of Taharqa and the tenure of Shepenwepet II as God’s Wife of Amun. The geographical juxtaposition of this selection of monuments, on the west and east banks of the Nile, permits comparison of the differences in decoration techniques between two monumental centers that probably employed different crews of stonemasons, craftsmen, and artists. In the future, this research



Stephen Rickerby and Aleksandra Hallmann examining reliefs inside the tomb chapel of Amenirdis. Photo by Lisa Shekede.



Stephen Rickerby, Aleksandra Hallmann, and Lisa Shekede analyzing enhanced digital images of painted reliefs from the Taharqa gate. Photo by Johannes Weninger.

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will be extended to other Kushite monuments or additions to earlier structures within the Medinet Habu and Karnak temple complexes.

A core objective was not only to identify and characterize component materials as far as possible but also to elucidate the sequencing of procedures involved in the creation and decoration of the monuments and compare them with those observed at Karnak. Since both the Amenirdis chapel and the Taharqa gate have undergone significant aging and environmental exposure, determining these original techniques is challenging. Our investigation was based on findings made in previous years that resulted from detailed visual observation and iconographic analysis. To avoid invasive sampling, the agreed approach was to obtain as much information through noninvasive investigative procedures and by employing an incremental research methodology. For the field research, investigative procedures included detailed visual observation and imaging; in situ normal and ultraviolet-light microscopy at magnifications of 60×–200× to identify pigments and pigment combinations and to characterize materials and their application techniques; and multispectral imaging, including visible-induced luminescence (VIL) imaging carried out at various incident light wavelengths to provide complementary information on paint materials that are not readily visible to the naked eye, as well as image enhancement via DStretch software to elucidate features such as preliminary sketches and grid lines.

A significant general finding was that the interior decoration of the Amenirdis chapel was apparently left unfinished. While the incised relief was brought to a high degree of completion, painting seems not to have been started. Although the age and exposure of Egyptian monuments can often eradicate evidence of original painting, usually some trace evidence remains, such as that detectable on the decorated walls of the Amenirdis chapel courtyard. Inside the chapel, however, no paint traces are detectable on any wall surface, and the abundant vestiges of layout lines and sketches suggest they were never concealed by subsequent painting.

Since the Taharqa gate was more exposed to the outdoor environment, it preserves only traces of red, yellow, white, and blue paint, perhaps originally complemented by green and black. Although pigment analysis was not carried out, microscopic and optical investigations indicate that the red and yellow pigments are iron oxides. The white is now mainly present as a background layer. Known whites in the Egyptian palette include calcite, gypsum, and huntite, which were employed singly or in varying combinations. The deterioration of the white on the blocks suggests that gypsum is a predominant component, but other materials cannot be ruled out. VIL analysis confirmed that the blue used is Egyptian blue.

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**REBECCA HASSELBACH-ANDEE** published a volume on the languages and writings of pre-Islamic Arabia coedited with Fred Donner. The volume, *Scripts and Scripture: Writing and Religion in Arabia circa 500–700 CE* (Oriental Institute, 2022) is based on a conference held at the University of Chicago in 2017 and includes contributions by leading scholars of pre-Islamic and early Islamic Arabia.

In addition, Hasselbach-Andee worked on her research project that examines language contact in the mid-third millennium BCE, specifically the contact between Mesopotamia and the Syrian site of Ebla. It is well known that Mesopotamia and Ebla were part of the same vivid trade network. In addition, there is evidence for cultural and scholarly exchanges between the two areas. The people of Ebla, for example, adopted Mesopotamian cuneiform to write their economic records, as well as their international and internal correspondence (“international” meaning recipients beyond the immediate influence of the city of Ebla itself). The language used by Eblaite scribes is clearly related to Akkadian, and it is generally assumed that it reflects the native language of the city. Why people in western Syria would speak an East Semitic language that has not clearly been shown to be native to any areas beyond Mesopotamia proper has not been sufficiently explained, however. Hasselbach-Andee is working on the connections between Mesopotamia and Ebla to try

to determine the origin of the language attested in the written sources of Ebla. This long-term project will result in another book, since it must consider all parts of Eblaite grammar in addition to political, social, and economic factors that motivated the contact between Syria and Mesopotamia at the time.

Besides this project, Hasselbach-Andee started a smaller one that investigates the origin of the feminine marker *-(a)t* in Semitic; the original function of this marker seems to have parallels to those of the feminine marker of Proto-Indo-European. In her study, she attempts to find general principles that govern the development of certain derivational morphemes into gender markers. The results of this study will be presented at a conference in Heidelberg in September 2023.

Lastly, Hasselbach-Andee continued to serve on ISAC's publications committee in addition to her usual commitments of teaching and advising students.

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**JAN JOHNSON** divided her time this academic year, as in most years, among teaching, supervising master's and doctoral students, and pursuing her own research. She taught ancient Egyptian language courses ranging from Old Egyptian (the earliest preserved stage of the language) through Introduction to Middle Egyptian and Middle Egyptian Texts (highlighting the "classical" stage) to Demotic Texts (the late stage of the language, written in a very cursive script, with which she has worked the most). As usual, she enjoyed seeing students "catch on" and enjoy reading the documents and stories of the ancient Egyptians for themselves. She also enjoyed supervising master's theses (including one on the fascinating carved-ivory tusks highlighting mythological scenes and frequently associated with childbirth) and doctoral dissertations. The PhD students with whom she worked the most this year were studying topics such as the Egyptian vocabulary for the various bones in the human head (Ariel Singer) and New Kingdom diplomatics—New Kingdom Egyptian interactions with the major states of West Asia (Rebecca Wang, who defended her dissertation in spring 2023).

Johnson's personal research included the ongoing preparation of entries for her forthcoming *Women in Ancient Egypt: A Sourcebook*, to be published by the Society for Biblical Literature in the series Writings from the Ancient World. In addition, she published several shorter papers, including "Was Shedsukhonsu's Wife Overbearing or Was She the Owner of the Field?" in *Weseretkau "Mighty of Kas": Papers in Memory of Cathleen A. Keller*, edited by Deanna Kiser-Go and Carol A. Redmount (Lockwood, 2023); "Some Egyptian-Greek Language/Script Interactions as Reflected in Magical," coauthored with Ariel Singer, in *One Who Loves Knowledge: Studies in Honor of Richard Jasnow*, edited by Betsy Bryan, Mark Smith, Christina Di Cerbo, Marina Escolano-Poveda, and Jill S. Wallers (Lockwood, 2022); "Her Son," in *In the House of Heqanakht: Text and Context in Ancient Egypt; Studies in Honor of James P. Allen*, edited by M. Victoria Almansa-Villatoro, Silvia Stubnova-Nigrelli, and Mark Lehner (Brill, 2022); and "Women in Demotic (Documentary) Texts," in *Women in Ancient Egypt: Revisiting Power, Agency, and Autonomy*, edited by Mariam F. Ayad (American University in Cairo Press, 2022).

In late May, Johnson and her husband, Don Whitcomb, thoroughly enjoyed the retirement party thrown in their honor by ISAC, with colleagues from the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, and several other units of the University of Chicago. They were delighted to see so many colleagues and students, especially former ones, and to have a chance to talk about "the good old days" and the exciting current days. Despite "retiring," Johnson intends to be in her office regularly for the next year, while she works on completing her *Sourcebook*, and she looks forward to seeing all who drop by.



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This year saw the publication of **MORAG KERSEL**'s *Variant Scholarship: Ancient Texts in Modern Contexts*, which she coedited with J. M. Rasmussen and N. J. Brodie (Sidestone, 2023). Chapters in this open-access volume raise important questions about how and even whether the academy should engage with unprovenanced textual materials (those with little or no information about their archaeological findspot, story of origin, or history of ownership). Case studies in *Variant Scholarship* focus on the ethical, methodological, and theoretical quandaries facing scholars when working with ancient texts in modern contexts.

In November 2022, Kersel participated in an ISAC panel discussion on “Celebrating *Black Panther*: Discussing Museums and Cultures.” This well-attended event included a screening of the film *Black Panther* and a lively Q&A with the audience. In summer 2023, she conducted an intensive pedestrian survey as a part of ISAC’s National Science Foundation–funded project Kites in Context, codirected by ISAC research professor Yorke Rowan, in the Black Desert of eastern Jordan. Pedestrian survey is a surface examination methodology in which archaeologists walk across an area in an organized grid pattern (a “transect”) and record environmental conditions, details about the landscape, surface features of archaeological significance (“POIs,” or points of interest), and counts of artifacts along the transects. Typically, surveys provide evidence of human activity that may be archaeologically significant and potentially aid in decision-making related to future areas of excavation. Over the course of four weeks, Kersel recorded more than fifty structures and collected hundreds of artifacts during the intensive survey (see photo).

Closer to home, she and DePaul University undergraduate Jack Tessman published the results of a research project related to label writing for the Balbo Monument on the Chicago Lakefront Trail (see photo). In “What Future for Forgotten Monuments?” they ask why the city of Chicago has a nearly two-millennia-old column from the Roman port of Ostia, gifted by Benito Mussolini, on the Lakefront Trail near Burnham Harbor. There is no sign or marker apart from the faded original inscription, which is almost unreadable behind a chain-link fence. They argue that an explanatory sign encouraging inquiry and engagement would contextualize this forgotten monument in the city’s landscape.



Petroglyph recorded on a survey transect. Photo by Morag Kersel.



The Balbo Monument. Photo by Morag Kersel.

**JANA MATUSZAK** joined the University of Chicago in January 2023 as assistant professor of Sumerology. During her first two academic quarters here, she mainly focused on teaching elementary and advanced Sumerian, while also developing a new core course on the first Mesopotamian empires. As of spring quarter, she assumed the administration of the Oppenheim Fund, which provides research stipends for master's and doctoral students in Assyriology.

In the short break between quarters, Matuszak presented a paper on new insights into early Sumerian mythology, based on an unpublished Early Dynastic tablet from Nippur, at the 4th International Scientific Conference of Mesopotamian Archaeology held at the University of Al-Qadisiyah in Iraq. The accompanying trips to the archaeological sites of Nippur, Babylon, and Kish, as well as to the Iraq Museum in Baghdad, were much-anticipated highlights for Matuszak. She looks forward to expanding existing collaborations with colleagues at the universities of Al-Qadisiyah and Baghdad, as well as with colleagues working for the Iraqi State Board of Antiquities and Heritage and the Iraq Museum.

Shortly after the conference, she presented a paper on Old Babylonian Sumerian literary creations as a means of understanding the legacy of the third millennium BCE at an international workshop, "Approaches to Cuneiform Literature," which she organized together with Mark Weeden at University College London.

Back in Chicago, she devoted the remainder of the year to submitting a chapter titled "A Woman's Place Is in the House? Perspectives on Women's Mobility from Sumerian Literature" for *Mobility in Antiquity: Rethinking the Ancient World through Movement*, edited by S. Ferruh Adalı, B. Gray, S. Hakenbeck, E. Isayev, E. Jewell, T. Kaçar, L. Mazurek, and J. Mokrišova (Routledge), and she continued her work as co-editor of the journal *Altorientalische Forschungen*, responsible for submissions of articles on Assyriological and Sumerological topics. In April 2023, Matuszak's "Humour in Sumerian Didactic Literature" was published in *The Intellectual Heritage of the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the 64th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale and the 12th Melammu Symposium, University of Innsbruck, July 16–20, 2018*, edited by R. Rollinger, I. Madreiter, M. Lang, and C. Pappi (Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2023).

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**AUGUSTA McMAHON** returned to ISAC and the University of Chicago in September 2022 after twenty-seven years in England at the University of Cambridge. She brings her research focus on ancient urbanism—developed in fieldwork projects at Tell Brak, Syria, and Tell al-Hiba (ancient Lagash), southern Iraq—to the renewed excavations at Nippur, planned for early 2024. McMahon presented the background to the new Nippur project at the 4th International Scientific Conference of Mesopotamian Archaeology (University of Al-Qadisiyah, Iraq) in March 2023 and at the ISAC Sumner Memorial Lecture in May 2023.

McMahon's main publications in 2022–23 presented excavations and magnetometry survey data at Tell al-Hiba, an important city in southern Mesopotamia mainly occupied in the third-millennium BCE Early Dynastic period. The archaeological project renewed at this site in 2019–22 was a collaboration between the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Cambridge. The rapid expansion of al-Hiba, and its equally rapid contraction, meant that much of the Early Dynastic city plan, including streets, neighborhoods, and individual houses, was visible at the surface in specific climatic conditions. Satellite and drone imagery and magnetometry allowed a preliminary investigation of city quarters, streets, and intracity water channels, while excavations revealed details of Early Dynastic houses and pottery kilns. These results have an important impact on reconstructions of the growth and diversity of the world's earliest cities. McMahon's publications on the site include:

- "The Structure and Hydrology of the Early Dynastic City of Lagash (Tell Al-Hiba) from Satellite and Aerial Images," coauthored with E. Hammer and E. Stone (*Iraq* 84 [2022]: 103–27); and

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- “Dense Urbanism and Economic Multi-Centrism at Third Millennium BC Lagash, South Iraq,” coauthored with H. Pittman, Z. al-Rawi, D. Ashby, K. Burge, R. Goodman, E. Hammer, and S. Pizzimenti (*Antiquity* 97 [2023]: 596–615).

In April 2023, McMahon was invited to present on the Late Chalcolithic (fourth millennium BCE) mass graves at Brak in a panel on ancient state violence at the Society for American Archaeology’s annual conference, which took place in Portland, Oregon. These mass graves resulted from violent internal events probably driven by social stresses inherent in early urbanism, especially increases in inequality and power differentials.

McMahon continues to coedit the journal *Iraq* (British Institute for the Study of Iraq). She joined The Academic Institute for Research in Iraq (TARII) as a board member and, from July 1, 2023, as vice president. She has supported the work of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Homeland Security Investigations in assessing possibly looted and illegally imported Mesopotamian objects. And she contributed to the University of Chicago’s “Big Brains” podcast, episode 103, which focused on the past work of ISAC (<https://news.uchicago.edu/origins-civilization-and-future-archaeology-day-tomorrow-began>).

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**CAROL MEYER** suffered a compression fracture in November 2022, and her recovery from spinal damage, surgery, and complications, plus her limited mobility, restricted her research time for too many months. That said, she did complete her chapter “Gold Ore Processing at Hosh el-Geruf” for the ISAC Nubian Expedition volume on Hosh el-Geruf, Fourth Cataract, Sudan. Hosh el-Geruf was not a gold-mining site but a gold-processing site in the Old Kush II and III periods (ca. 2050–1500 BCE) and perhaps the Napatan period as well (ca. 750–300 BCE). Chunks of quartz stained by metallic ores or showing dendritic gold were hauled to Hosh el-Geruf from elsewhere for crushing, fine grinding, and washing to obtain gold dust, to the benefit of whoever was organizing the work. Meyer also completed a number of pottery drawings for the Hosh el-Geruf volume, but mainly she started writing chapter 1, “Introduction and Background,” of *Islamic Glass from Aqaba*, the final report on the more than 15,000 glass fragments recovered in eleven seasons of excavation at Aqaba, ancient Ayla. Umayyad (ca. 650–750) glass of the Syro-Palestinian region is relatively well studied, but that of the Abbasid (ca. 750–969) and Fatimid (ca. 969–1125) periods is anything but, so separating the glass into periods is a major focus of the book. Glass has the potential to be as good a dating tool as pottery, even though it receives far less attention.

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Several of **BRIAN MUHS**’s publications appeared in 2022–23. They included “Egypt and the Mediterranean in the Early Iron Age,” in *The Connected Iron Age: Interregional Networks in the Eastern Mediterranean, 900–600 BCE*, edited by James Osborne and Jonathan Hall (University of Chicago Press, 2022); “Two Early Ptolemaic Demotic Receipts for the Burial Tax and Theban Ostraca Archives,” in *Ripple in Still Water When There Is No Pebble Tossed: Festschrift in Honour of Cary J. Martin*, edited by Adrienn Almásy-Martin, Michel Chauveau, Koen Donker van Heel, and Kim Ryholt (Golden House Press, 2023); “Eight Inscribed Stones, the First Chariot Driver of His Majesty, and Tell el-Muqdam in the Ramesside Period,” in *Weseretskau “Mighty of Kas”: Papers in Memory of Cathleen A. Keller*, edited by Deanna Kiser-Go and Carol A. Redmount (Lockwood, 2023); and a review of *The Epigraphy of Ptolemaic Egypt*, edited by Alan Bowman and Charles Crowther (Oxford University Press, 2020), in the spring–summer 2022 issue of *Religion and Literature*.

Muhs submitted two articles for publication: “New Kingdom Hieratic Manuscripts in the Oriental Institute Museum (Chicago),” with Foy D. Scaif, to appear in *New Kingdom Hieratic Collections* (Presses Universitaires de Liège); and a review of *The Origins of Money in the Iron Age Mediterranean World*, by Elon D. Heymans (Cambridge University Press, 2021), to appear in the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*.

Muhs also presented two academic papers with Tasha Vorderstrasse: “The Katimala Inscription Revisited” in November 2022 at the annual meeting of the American Society of Overseas Research, held in Boston; and “Late Napatan Ruling Queens” in April 2023 at the 74th annual meeting of the American Research Center in Egypt, held in Minneapolis.

In addition to her responsibilities as ISAC Museum curator, **KIERSTEN NEUMANN** continued her research on Assyrian and Achaemenid material culture, museum practice, and collecting histories, which altogether resulted in several original articles, invited talks, and fruitful collaborations.

Neumann submitted several chapters for publication. “Ancient Visual Sources of Religion: Figuring the Divine to Wash Away Evil,” to appear in the *Bloomsbury Handbook of Ancient Near Eastern Religions*, draws on a paper she delivered at the 13th International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East, held in Copenhagen, and takes as a case study the restored water basin of Sennacherib from the temple of Aššur now in the Vorderasiatisches Museum (see photo). “‘Aššur, accept! Aššur, listen!’ Connecting Arabia and Assyria through Aromatics and Olfaction,” to appear in the *Proceedings of the 55th Seminar for Arabian Studies*, results from a keynote talk she delivered at the seminar in connection with a special session on scents of Arabia. “Global, Colonial, Local: Deconstructing Perspectives of Persepolis in the ISAC Museum Archives” will appear in the *Unsilencing the Archives* publication project in the American Society of Overseas Research (ASOR) book series.

Neumann published a review of Ludovico Portuese’s *Life at Court: Ideology and Audience in the Late Assyrian Palace* in the April 2023 issue of the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* and contributed to the Winter 2023 issue of ISAC’s *News & Notes* the short article “Behind the Scenes: The Assyrian Offering Table at the OI Museum” on this ritualized furnishing from Dur-Sharrukin along with more than a dozen other known



Restored water basin from the temple of Aššur. Photo © Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Vorderasiatisches Museum / Olaf M. Teßmer.

## INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH

examples. She continued research for her book project on the Neo-Assyrian temple and all its iterations across Assyria.

In November 2022, Neumann presented “Connecting Collections and Community: Chicago’s OI Museum” at ASOR’s annual meeting, held in Boston; she also continued to serve on ASOR’s program committee, now as cochair, and to chair the ASOR standing session “Cultural Heritage: Preservation, Presentation, and Management” (2021–23). In May 2023, alongside ISAC/Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations alumna Katharyn Hanson, Neumann was invited to speak in the Walters Art Museum’s Boshell Lecture Series, “Modern Deconstructions and Reconstructions of Ancient Nimrud,” in Baltimore. Neumann presented on the work of Iraqi American artist Michael Rakowitz with a focus on the project *The invisible enemy should not exist* and the reappearance of panel G-13 from the Northwest Palace at Kalhu, on display in the ISAC Museum’s Assyrian galleries. In June Neumann delivered a talk titled “Beyond Impressions: Cylinder Seals of the Neo-Assyrian Period as Experiential Object” in the International Association for Archaeological Research in Western & Central Asia’s “Art History and Visual Studies” series, with thanks to organizer Paul Collins for the invitation.

Neumann taught her undergraduate/graduate course, “From Ground to Gallery: Visual Culture of the Ancient Near East,” in the University of Chicago’s Department of Art History in winter 2023. She also advised master’s student Christopher Wilson on his thesis, “A Classical Collection: Interpreting the Past and Questioning the Present”—a proposal for an exhibition exploring discrete aspects of ancient Greek life through Greek ceramics in the classical collection at the University of Chicago’s Smart Museum of Art. Lastly, Neumann continues to collaborate on international museum and art projects and exhibitions.

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**JAMES OSBORNE** was on research leave for the entirety of the 2022–23 academic year thanks to a generous fellowship from the University of Chicago’s Franke Institute for the Humanities. Thus freed from teaching responsibilities, as one of a group of Franke fellows drawn from across the university’s Division of the Humanities he participated in biweekly workshops in which fellows shared and critiqued one another’s work. Since most participating scholars have little background in the other fellows’ fields of research, this workshop provided them with an excellent opportunity to consider their individual work in creative and unexpected ways, and especially from a more macroscopic perspective than is usually afforded by one’s closest colleagues in the same discipline. Osborne is grateful to all the Franke fellows, and particularly to Franke Institute director Prof. Richard Neer, for creating a wonderful intellectual environment.

During his leave, Osborne worked on several publication projects. One that came to fruition is a volume he coedited with Prof. Jonathan Hall in the Department of Classics titled *The Connected Iron Age: Interregional Networks in the Eastern Mediterranean, 900–600 BCE* (University of Chicago Press, 2022). Together with his primary fieldwork collaborator, Michele Massa (Bilkent University, Ankara), Osborne submitted lengthy manuscripts to the *American Journal of Archaeology* and *Ancient Near Eastern Studies*, both of which were accepted for publication and should appear in 2024.

These writing projects stemmed from Osborne and Massa’s fieldwork, which in the summer of 2022 consisted primarily of geophysical exploration at the large, multiperiod mound of Türkmen-Karahöyük in Turkey’s Konya Plain. Partnering with Jesse Casana’s Spatial Archaeometry Lab at Dartmouth, they performed a large-scale magnetometry survey of the site’s outer town. Disappointingly, this work disproved their earlier interpretations of a large lower town. However, it did document significant occupation in a series of satellite mounds that were later used as a burial ground in antiquity. The exact nature of the settlement history of the site will be explored in future planned excavation seasons, hopefully to begin in summer 2024.

**HERVÉ RECULEAU** devoted most of 2022–23 to teaching, mentoring, and academic service. His ongoing collaborations included participating in the workshop “Le corpus de textes d’archives paléobabyloniens et la base de données Archibab: Vers un nouvel outil de recherche lexicographique” (Collège de France, Paris, for the Franco-Russian project Laying the Groundwork for a Corpus-Based Dictionary of Old Babylonian) and coauthoring, for the Computational Research on the Ancient Near East project, a paper read by Lynn Welton (University of Toronto) at the 13th International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East, hosted by the University of Copenhagen.

Reculeau also gave a series of lectures on his ongoing research at the annual meeting of the American Society of Overseas Research, held in Boston, for the workshop “The Transition from the Neo-Assyrian to the Neo-Babylonian Periods”; the conference “The Spirit of Scholarship: The Roman Catholic Background of Ancient Near Eastern and Biblical Studies and Its Legacy” at the Tantur Ecumenical Institute in Jerusalem; the James Lecture workshop titled “Writing the History of Middle Bronze Anatolia: Sources, Perspectives, Periodization, State Formation, and Historiography,” given at Northwestern University; and the 233rd annual meeting of the American Oriental Society in Los Angeles, where he gave a plenary-session talk titled “How Climate Change Impacted the History of First Millennium BCE Mesopotamia—and How It Likely Did Not.”

Reculeau also wrote pieces and gave presentations for a broader audience, with his chapter “Old Babylonian Nippur in Its Environmental and Historical Settings” for the catalog of ISAC’s forthcoming special exhibition *Back to School in Babylonia*, edited by Prof. Susanne Paulus; the framing article for a special, 2023 edition of the French journal *L’Histoire* on Mesopotamia (“La Mésopotamie a-t-elle existé?” *L’Histoire Collection* 99: 3–12); and a talk at the Rencontres Recherche et Création organized by the French Agence Nationale de la Recherche and the Festival d’Avignon (“A l’origine des villes: Repenser la ‘révolution urbaine’ en Mésopotamie”).

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Toponymy, etymology, chronography, ghosts, and liver omens: these were some of the topics on **SETH RICHARDSON**’s mind in 2022–23. He wrote up work on the profound etymological meaninglessness of Sumerian and Akkadian words for “slave.” He puzzled over why the majority of geographical names in Mesopotamian texts were infrequently mentioned and poorly known. He investigated the connections between local, residential mobility and supraregional migration in antiquity.

Richardson had five articles published this year. In “Hard Times for Sippar Women,” he documented ancient cases of hungry and homeless women. These days, when gender studies focus so much on representation and power, there is too little attention paid to the basic and widespread issue of socioeconomic inequality. “Thy Neighbor’s Ghost,” part of a colloquium about a book on funerary cult in the Hebrew Bible and the ancient Near East, inventoried some of the ways the biblical authors appropriated bits and pieces of what they knew about the Mesopotamian cult for the dead to depict it as “necromancy.” A third article, “In Mantic and Hostile Lands,” tracked the ways divination practices in an age of fortresses mimicked the belligerent landscapes into which they peered—where the livers from which the diviners read omens doubled as “maps” of a countryside full of hidden enemies. A similar topic from a political-science point of view was the subject of “Raiders, Neighbors, and Night-time,” which took on the question of ancient standards of what counted as “war” and “peace” and argued that concepts of “security” and “insecurity” were more culturally salient. Fifth and finally, a survey article on “Mesopotamian Slavery” appeared in June 2023, with attention to entry into, experiences of, and exit from slave status in the Babylonian world. He also completed work on a book coauthored with Juan-Carlos Moreno García comparing the organization of power in Egypt and Mesopotamia. Richardson continues work on a book on the Babylonian state in the seventeenth century BCE and has eight more articles in press, with an additional three under review.

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Richardson gave five lectures this year—in person in Prague (twice) and Graz, and remotely in Toulouse and Missoula. He looks forward to giving upcoming papers at the Leiden Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale on the Tell Muḥammad texts; in Würzburg at a workshop on Old Babylonian historiography; in Munich for an invited lecture on Babylonian slavery; and in Chicago at the American Society of Overseas Research annual meeting in November. Another happy and busy year!

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During 2022–23, **YORKE ROWAN** was a National Endowment for the Humanities scholar at the American Center of Research in Amman for his study “In Small Things Remembered: Late Neolithic Material Culture of the Black Desert, Jordan,” an analysis of small items from the excavations of Wisad Pools and Wadi al-Qattafi. During that time, he presented (with A. C. Hill) “Kites in Context: Hunting Traps, Desert Landscapes, and Territorial Control” and (with M.-L. Chambrade and F. Bertocello) “At the Margin: Proposal for Applying Spatial Archaeology to the Study of the ‘Conquest’ of the Near Eastern Arid Steppes in the Late Neolithic” at the 42<sup>e</sup> Rencontres Internationales d’Archéologie et d’Histoire de Nice Côte D’Azur, France. Upon returning from Amman, Rowan welcomed to ISAC Dr. Marie-Laure Chambrade, a Marie Curie postdoctoral fellow studying the margins of the Neolithic period across Syria and Jordan.

Based on the inaugural season of the Kites in Context (KiC) project, Rowan and the KiC team submitted “Kites in the Desert: Placing Ancient Animal Traps in Context” to the journal *Neo-Lithics*. The team also presented results of the first season in “Kites in Context: Prehistoric Black Desert Hunting Traps” at the American Society of Overseas Research annual meeting in Boston. Based on research collaboration with environmental scientists, Rowan published “Local-Scale Environmental Gradients in ‘Snail-Shell’ Stable Isotopes from Holocene Jordanian Archaeological Sites” in the March 2023 issue of *The Holocene*. Finally, Rowan and the KiC team completed the second season of KiC investigations in the Black Desert and submitted a photo essay for peer review to the *Journal of Field Archaeology*.

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**FOY SCALF** continued working with archivist Anne Flannery and archival intern Ling Chan to process, organize, and catalog the papers and slides of Robert Ritner, who passed away in 2021. By the time this report appears, the Festschrift for Robert Ritner, which Scalf coedited with Brian Muhs, will be with ISAC Publications to appear in the series Studies in Ancient Cultures. It includes contributions by twenty-seven of Ritner’s close colleagues. Scalf wrote an “In Memoriam” for Ritner that will appear in *Enchoria* 37. The Autumn 2022 issue of *News & Notes* further highlighted Ritner’s work, where one of his seminal articles was republished along with an article by Scalf focused on Ritner’s long-standing project to study the Horus on the Crocodiles stelae.

Scalf’s article “The Funerary Literature Related to the Book of the Dead” appeared in *The Oxford Handbook of the Egyptian Book of the Dead*. With Brian Muhs, he submitted an article surveying the New Kingdom hieratic collections in the ISAC Museum collection. With Sara Cole and Judith Barr, he submitted an article on the New Kingdom hieratic manuscripts at the J. Paul Getty Museum. Both articles are set to appear in the Aegyptiaca Leodiensia series. With Beth Wang, Scalf is revising their conference paper on the Critical Editions for Digital Analysis and Research (CEDAR) Book of the Dead project for publication in the *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*. Scalf is submitting a revised version of another conference paper on Book of the Dead spells 51–52 to the *Birmingham Egyptology Journal*, in which he examines Egyptian religious literature through the lens of assemblage theory.

On April 21, 2023, Scalf and Wang presented a paper analyzing the transmission of Book of the Dead spell 2 across more than 2,000 years of manuscript witnesses at the 74th annual meeting of the American Research Center in Egypt, held in Minneapolis. Their research and collaboration were the result of phase two of the CEDAR project, funded by the University of Chicago's Neubauer Collegium for the 2022–23 academic year, which provided resources for studying ancient Egyptian religious literature in the OCHRE (Online Cultural and Historical Research Environment) database platform. They presented additional aspects of this project during the CEDAR symposium at the Neubauer on May 22, 2023. The methodology from this project carried over to Scalf's talk titled "Assemblage Theory and Remix Culture," a study of Book of the Dead spells 51–52, for the annual Birmingham Egyptology Symposium on May 25.

For the sixth year in a row, Scalf offered his course on the history of the book for the School of Information Studies at Dominican University (River Forest, Illinois), for which he received the College of Applied Social Sciences Excellence in Teaching Award for Part-Time Faculty in 2022. Scalf teamed up with Tasha Vorderstrasse, Zoë Eisenman, and Fred Beuttler—a collaboration between ISAC and the University of Chicago's Graham School—to teach "Cracking Codes," an adult education course offered to provide historical and cultural context for the decipherment of ancient scripts in the nineteenth century. Inspiration for the course came from the bicentennial anniversary of the decipherment of Egyptian in September 1822 by Jean-François Champollion. Relatedly, Scalf was a quoted contributor for the Live Science article "Why Does the Rosetta Stone Have Three Kinds of Writing?" (July 25, 2022), by Charles Q. Choi. Throughout the year, the Rosetta Stone continued to be a theme as Scalf gave ISAC Community Scholars presentations on Egyptian decipherment and building the pyramids for The Admiral at the Lake and The Clare senior communities, the Glencoe Public Library, Minooka Community High School, and the Wilmette Public Library.

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**MEHRNOUSH SOROUSH** joined the faculty of ISAC in July 2022. She spent her first year getting to know the University of Chicago and ISAC community, resources, and processes, in addition to teaching new courses and directing the Center for Ancient Middle Eastern Landscapes (CAMEL) laboratory (see more details in the CAMEL report). In fall 2023, Soroush offered a new undergraduate course about the Achaemenid Empire, which students received enthusiastically. In fall and winter 2023, she revised and taught an existing two-quarter course on ancient landscapes that introduces students to the theories and methods of landscape archaeology research.

Soroush submitted two articles for review. The first, "A Remote Sensing Perspective on the Sasanian Hydraulic Projects: Re-examining the Irrigation Discourse," was prepared for the proceedings of a symposium organized by the Smithsonian Museum in fall 2022, where she was invited to present. The article argues that some Sasanian hydraulic projects may have served functions other than irrigation, such as textile production. The second article, "Mapping Ancient Subterranean Hydraulic Systems: Low-Cost Seismic Geophysical Methods for the Detection of Buried Qanats," coauthored with Jordan Brown and James Rector (a graduate student and professor, respectively, at the University of California, Berkeley), reports on a field experiment carried out in summer 2022 to test whether vibration sensors in iPhone 12 and 13 devices can detect variations in the way sound waves penetrate compact soil versus hollow tunnels of underground water systems. In spring 2023, Soroush applied for and received a seed grant from the University of Chicago's Institute for the Formation of Knowledge to repeat this experiment with professional geophysical equipment in August 2023.

Soroush's fieldwork is undertaken under the Erbil Plain Archaeological Survey (EPAS) led by Harvard University. As assistant director of EPAS, Soroush studies long-term patterns of human–water interaction in the region. Soroush was granted funding from the University of Chicago's Women's Board to embark



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on a three-year study of the medieval-period ceramics while training a group of Iraqi female professionals. The goal is to facilitate research on the understudied history of the medieval period while creating career development opportunities for women who face cultural barriers that prevent them from participating in field research.

In spring 2023, Soroush joined the affiliated faculty of the University of Chicago's Committee on Environment, Geography, and Urbanization, where she engages with social scientists, architects, and urban planners on bringing the stories of the past into conversation with modern social and environmental concerns.

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In 2022–23, **GIL STEIN** presented four conference papers and invited lectures—two deriving from his excavations at the prehistoric site of Surezha in Iraqi Kurdistan and Tell Zeidan in Syria, and two reporting on cultural heritage preservation efforts in Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Iraq.

As the principal investigator for three US State Department–sponsored cultural heritage grants in Afghanistan, Stein worked remotely with ISAC's international staff in Europe for the final year of these grants, which ended on December 31, 2022. As part of this work, he produced a short documentary film, *Hadda: Rescuing Early Buddhist Art in Afghanistan*, which is freely accessible at <https://www.youtube.com/@C3HP>. In 2022 he was awarded a new, \$250,000 grant from the US State Department's Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation for the project "Conservation and Restoration of the Langar Ota Timurid Mosque, Qashqadaryo Province, Uzbekistan."

In October 2022, Stein organized and implemented the first of two workshops in the multiyear training program grant in Uzbekistan called "CHED" (Cultural Heritage and Economic Development). The first workshop in this capacity-building program brought together heritage specialists, museum professionals, and Ministry of Culture staff from the post-Soviet Central Asian republics to learn strategies for preserving heritage sites while at the same time promoting economic development. The workshops focus on two key strategies for site preservation—inscription as UNESCO World Heritage sites or their development as national archaeological parks.

In tandem with his cultural heritage work, Stein published one book and three articles/book chapters in 2022:

- *A History of Afghanistan in 100 Objects: Treasures from the National Museum of Afghanistan* (with Alejandro Gallego-Lopez and Mohammad Fahim Rahimi) (e-publication in English and Dari editions). London: Scala Arts and Heritage. <https://isac.uchicago.edu/research/projects/preservation-cultural-heritage-afghanistan>.
  - "Cultural Heritage Preservation Projects in Afghanistan and Central Asia." In *Oriental Institute Annual Report 2021–2022*, 17–24. Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.
  - "Performative Destruction: Da'esh (ISIS) Ideology and the War on Heritage in Iraq." In *Cultural Heritage and Mass Atrocities: Human and Security Costs*, edited by James Cuno and Thomas G. Weiss, 168–85. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute.
  - "Archaeobotanical and Dung Spherulite Evidence for Ubaid and Late Chalcolithic Fuel, Farming, and Feasting at Surezha, Iraqi Kurdistan." (with Lucas Proctor and Alexia Smith). *Journal of Archaeological Science Reports* 43: 103449. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352409X22001122>.
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**EMILY TEETER** spent most of the year working on a history of Chicago House for its centennial in fall 2024. In November, she spent a week in Luxor conferring with archivists Emmanuelle and Alain Arn-audiès, and she continues to scour the ISAC Archives thanks to Anne Flannery. Relatives of former Luxor staff have recently contributed memories, memorabilia, and photos, among them the Krewson, Weideman, and Young families (descendants of Harold Nelson) and David Woolman, the son of Laurence and Janet Woolman (architect and designer, respectively), who worked at Luxor, Saqqara, and Megiddo. In a related project, the transcription, translation, and commentary for Uvo Hölscher's excavation diaries (*Tagebücher*) were delivered to Anne Flannery for formatting and release as a digital publication. Teeter worked with Anne Schumacher and Barbara Schubeler Jillson on the project to make this information more widely available.

Emily continues to serve as the editor of the *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*. She did final revisions on a catalog of the Egyptian collection of the Art Institute of Chicago that will appear as an online publication with coauthor Ashley F. Arico. In commemoration of the centennial of the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun, Teeter authored two articles published in the Autumn 2022 and Winter 2023 issues of *News & Notes* about the Institute and Tut.

In April and May 2023, Teeter, with Kevin Cahail of the University of Pennsylvania, consulted with Tim Gardom Associates on the master plan for the redesign of the Egyptian and African galleries at Chicago's Field Museum of Natural History.

Teeter evaluated submissions to several academic journals, and she spoke on Egyptian art at the North Texas chapter of the American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE). In October she participated in an ARCE-sponsored mentoring program, being paired with Mrs. al-Shaimaa Mandor, an inspector for the Sphinx Avenue in Luxor. Teeter was fortunate to be able to meet with her several times in Luxor.

Teeter led the Institute's tour of Egypt in fall 2022 and others for the Smithsonian and ARCE in 2023. She also attended the ARCE annual meeting in Minneapolis. She was reelected to the board of the International Committee for Egyptology of the International Council of Museums, and she continues to serve on the board of the Society of Biblical Literature's Writings of the Ancient World series.

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**SOFÍA TORALLAS TOVAR** made considerable progress on two editorial projects. The first is the Transmission of Magical Knowledge, a collaborative project funded by the Neubauer Collegium of the University of Chicago for which she is the coprincipal investigator. The project saw two volumes, coedited by Torallas Tovar and Christopher A. Faraone, published this year: *Greek and Egyptian Magical Formularies: Text and Translation* (California Classical Studies, 2022)—volume 1 of the new edition, translation, and commentary of the magical handbooks on papyrus—and *The Greco-Egyptian Magical Formularies: Libraries, Books, and Individual Recipes* (University of Michigan Press, 2022)—a collection of essays on book production resulting from deep study of the papyri. Torallas Tovar and Faraone are currently working on volume 2 of *Greek and Egyptian Magical Formularies*, scheduled to appear at the end of the year, and on *New Approaches to the Great Paris Magical Codex* (De Gruyter), also a collection of essays. They believe the attention paid to book format and book production in this project provides not only a new edition of the magical papyri but also a new understanding of the circulation of knowledge in the ancient world. For a full description of the project, see the 2021–22 annual report.

Torallas Tovar's second editorial project is an individual one. A papyrus roll from the Abbey of Montserrat, Spain, contains a Coptic translation of the letter of the patriarch Athanasius to Dracontius, contemporary with the original Greek text. The roll not only features a text previously unknown in Coptic but also provides a window into the materiality of communication in the early Egyptian church. As Torallas Tovar was almost ready to submit the manuscript to the publisher (Mohr Siebeck), her colleague Alin Suciu

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(Göttingen Akademie) surprised her with his discovery of further fragments of the same roll in the Chester Beatty collection in Dublin. She is currently integrating these fragments into the edition and hopes this year to submit the final manuscript, *Athanasius' Epistle to Dracontius: A 4th-Century Coptic Translation in a Papyrus Roll* (P.Monts.Roca inv. 14).

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In addition to his ongoing interim directorship of ISAC, **THEO VAN DEN HOUT** taught three classes, one in each quarter of the academic year. He submitted the manuscript of a popular article for the Dutch journal *Phoenix*—“Alle dagen feest? Religieuze evenementen in het Hettietische Rijk”—and a contribution to a Festschrift for a colleague—“Another Storm God ‘Jumping’ on His Vehicle? Remarks on the Sketch on KUB 20.76.” In 2022, his review article coauthored with Peter Raulwing—“The Worlds of Franz M. Th. de Liagre Böhl (1882–1976)” —of *Bijbel en Babel: Frans de Liagre Böhl, 1882–1976*, by Herman de Liagre Böhl (Prometheus, 2021), appeared in *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 79.

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**TASHA VORDERSTRASSE**, manager of ISAC’s continuing education program, facilitated and taught multiple adult education classes and teacher workshops and provided University of Chicago and Laboratory School tours (see Public Programming—Adult Education in this annual report).

In 2022, Vorderstrasse cochaired the Archaeology of Islamic Society session at the American Society of Overseas Research (ASOR) annual meeting in Boston, a session that had an unprecedented three sections. In addition, she gave several presentations: “Connecting East Africa to the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean,” a virtual and in-person talk for ASOR in October and November; “The Representation of Identity in 19th-Century Tiflis,” a paper for the Virtual Roundtable of the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies conference in October; and a talk with Brian Muhs—“The Katimala Inscription Revisited”—at ASOR’s annual meeting in November. In April 2023 she gave a second talk with Muhs—“Late Napatan Ruling Queens”—at the 74th annual meeting of the American Research Center in Egypt, held in Minneapolis.

Vorderstrasse submitted “Identity Based on Coptic Textile Terminology in Late Antique Egypt” to the proceedings volume for the ISAC postdoctoral seminar “Outward Appearance vs. Inward Significance,” as well as “Centering Nubian Queens in the Ancient World: Histories, Historiographies and (Mis)interpretations” for the volume *Queens in Antiquity and the Present: Speculative Visions and Critical Histories*, to be published by Bloomsbury Academic. Vorderstrasse published “Coin Circulation in Carthage and Its Hinterland” in *Coinage and History in the Seventh Century Near East 7*, edited by Tony Goodwin (Archetype, 2023). And her article “Explaining the Meaning of the Words ‘Orient’ and ‘Oriental’” was posted on the ISAC website when the name of the Institute changed in April 2023; a print version of this article also appeared in the Spring/Summer 2023 issue of *News & Notes*.

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**KAREN L. WILSON** is currently reviewing proofs of *Nippur VI: The Inanna Temple*, which was accepted for publication by ISAC Publications and will appear in the Nippur series, edited by McGuire Gibson. The volume—coauthored by Wilson, Richard L. Zettler, Jean M. Evans, and Robert D. Biggs, with contributions by R. C. Haines and Donald P. Hansen—will be the final publication of ISAC’s excavation of the Inanna Temple at the site of Nippur during the late 1950s and early 1960s. The ISAC publications office is currently editing and laying out the volume(s).

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Wilson also continued to serve as the Kish project coordinator and research associate at Chicago's Field Museum, conducting research on the work of the Field Museum–Oxford University Joint Expedition to Kish in 1923–32. In May the results of a portion of this project were published as *Where Kingship Descended from Heaven: Studies on Ancient Kish* (ISAC, 2023). The volume emerged from a symposium conducted in November 2008 that focused on current research and updated excavations at the site. Chapters cover studies of the human remains, textual evidence, lithics, animal figurines, seals, and stuccos from the sites of Kish and Jamdat Nasr.

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RESEARCH SUPPORT

OVERLEAF: Inlay with lotus and palmette motif. Ivory, paint. Late Bronze Age (twelfth century BCE). Israel, Megiddo. ISACM A22215.

# CENTER FOR ANCIENT MIDDLE EASTERN LANDSCAPES

MEHRNOUSH SOROUGH

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As the new director of the Center for Ancient Middle Eastern Landscapes (CAMEL), I have been busy thinking about, planning for, and implementing programs and initiatives that can redefine the position of the center (founded in the late 1990s by the late Tony Wilkinson) for ISAC students and faculty, as well as the greater University of Chicago and Near Eastern studies communities. The 2022–23 programming centered on four areas: physical space and equipment, research and training, the database, and outreach. The help of research assistant Dominik Lucas, a PhD candidate in anthropology and supervisor of the CAMEL laboratory, was fundamental in the design and implementation of all the projects.

ISAC generously funded the renovation and remodeling of the computer lab. In this process, the space was redesigned to serve better as a publicly accessible research hub with modern workspace, large boards and monitors, visible signage, and shared supplies to encourage student usage (fig. 1). Computer security was also increased to serve a broader community. A reorganization of the equipment room is now underway to accommodate safe storage, assessment, and training.

One aspect of the new vision for CAMEL is to make it a research and training hub for students and scholars interested in studying ancient landscapes and geospatial research. ISAC supports a cohort of undergraduate and graduate students who assist with ongoing projects and receive training to take on new, more advanced responsibilities. These students will provide research support for other students, faculty, and investigators. While CAMEL gives priority to those affiliated with ISAC and the University of Chicago's Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, anyone in and outside the university community can reach out to the center for support in geospatial data collection, remote sensing, digital cartography for



Figure 1. CAMEL research assistant Çağlayan Bal teaching an introductory workshop on open-source QGIS software in the newly remodeled computer lab.



presentations and publications, and/or general project design. CAMEL also began offering free geographic information systems (GIS) and mapping consultation hours in spring 2023.

With the help of Matthew Perley, ISAC's assistant director for finance and administration, CAMEL sought registration as a University of Chicago recharge center beginning in fall 2023 to make it possible to outsource mapping and geospatial data management projects to students vetted and supervised by CAMEL in exchange for a modest hourly fee. We anticipate that this initiative will result in increased publication for faculty, staff, and students, as well as funds for better student training and more resources for the community. If students are involved in the publication of outcomes, CAMEL will subsidize some of our patrons' research costs. For example, research assistant Christian Borgen, who started training in GIS in fall 2022, is now leading a research project funded by an ISAC faculty member.

Many students and faculty expressed interest in training workshops on GIS software, methods, and field techniques and equipment. CAMEL research assistant Yuwei Zhou planned and managed our first experiment with offering free workshops in spring 2023. Çağlayan Bal, a PhD student in Near Eastern art and archaeology, taught an introductory workshop on open-source QGIS software. The Forum for Digital Culture kindly cosponsored two other workshops: Photogrammetry and Total Station. We plan to provide two or three training workshops per year, and we would like to hear from our community about specific needs we can support through our programming.

Finally, we launched a multiquarter project, led by Dominik Lucas and fellow research assistant Murphy (Ruoyang) Tu, for database search improvement. CAMEL possesses an extensive collection of paper maps and negatives of historical satellite imagery, which were applied to landscape research, for the first time, at the CAMEL lab. During the tenure of former CAMEL lab director Scott Branting (2004–14), many of these documents were digitized and prepared for use in GIS software. Under former director Emily Hammer (2014–17), this digitized collection was moved to ISAC's searchable integrated database. Although these changes reduced the amount of time the CAMEL team spends on data requests, the difficulty of spatial searches in the database interface limits public use of this valuable archive. One of our priorities was to make the CAMEL imagery database more easily accessible by providing a publicly available map-search interface. Through a connection made by the director of the Regenstein Library's Center for Digital Scholarship, Cecilia Smith, we partnered with the Big Ten Academic Alliance Geoportal project (<https://geo.btaa.org/>) to enable searches of our collection through this map-based interface, used by several libraries and archives across the country, with a soft launch planned for winter 2023. Foy Scalf, head of ISAC's Research Archives and its Integrated Database Project, was a crucial partner. We would not have dared to embark on this journey without his technological expertise and institutional knowledge.

The value of the CAMEL lab lies in the support it offers to the community. Our team is eager to connect, as evidenced by the two meet-and-greet events we held for faculty, staff, and students. We plan to repeat such events every year. In addition, we created a mailing list and began to reach out to our subscribers regularly with news about our offerings and events. If you would like to be added to our list, please give us your contact information by emailing us at [camel@uchicago.edu](mailto:camel@uchicago.edu).

The help of individuals who generously shared their time, thoughts, and expertise with the CAMEL team was instrumental in successfully implementing the initiatives outlined above. Special thanks go to ISAC faculty and staff members Theo van den Hout, Brendan Bulger, Foy Scalf, Vick Cruz, Anthony Lauricella, Andrew Wright, Logan Conley, Marianna Capeles, Mariana Perlinac, Matt Perley, James Osborne, Hervé Reculeau, and Yorke Rowan. I would also like to thank the 2022–23 cohort of CAMEL research assistants: Dominik Lucas, Harrison Morin, Murphy (Ruoyang) Tu, Çağlayan Bal, Christian Borgen, and Yuwei Zhou, who put incredible amounts of mental and physical labor into a myriad of complicated and tedious tasks related to the remodeling and reprogramming of CAMEL's computer lab, equipment room, and document archives. Our connections make us grow stronger. Please write to me at [mehrnoush@uchicago.edu](mailto:mehrnoush@uchicago.edu) if you are interested in collaborating with us or in funding one of our many projects.

# JOURNAL OF NEAR EASTERN STUDIES

## SETH RICHARDSON

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The academic year 2022–23 saw the publication of *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 81, no. 2 (October 2022) and 82, no. 1 (April 2023), with a total of fourteen articles and twenty-seven book reviews. The featured scholarship covered the breadth of the premodern Near East—from Babylon to Thebes to Hattuša to Ethiopian Aksūm to Nippur to Cairo to Mecca to Jerusalem to Sasanid Iran, with the time span extending from Middle Bronze Babylonia to New Kingdom Egypt to Late Bronze Hatti to Neo-Assyrian Babylonia to Persian Elephantine to early Islamic West Arabia. Our authors tackled topics as diverse as divinized musical instruments, scribal handwriting in Egyptian tombs, poetic borrowings in royal siege accounts, the succession to the Hittite throne, religious diversity in early Islamic Iraq, and the salt trade in ancient Anatolia. One author reconstructed the contents of a medieval library from secondary references to it; another analyzed variant traditions about Mary’s conception of Jesus in Qur’anic tradition; and a third parsed the evidence for the arrival of Jewish mercenaries in Upper Egypt.

Great and original work continues to flow into the journal’s in-box: we received seventy-six original manuscripts between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023. Of them, forty-one were not approved for further review after consideration by the editors. The remaining thirty-five articles were sent to eighty-six peer reviewers for external review. Twenty-four manuscripts went through one round of review; ten went through two rounds; and one lucky manuscript was subjected to three rounds (and was, happily, accepted in the end). By the end of the year, thirteen of these manuscripts had been accepted for publication; ten were still under review or revision; and twelve were not accepted. The journal’s acceptance rate for the year was thus 17 percent of all submitted manuscripts.

The *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* continues to maintain its international standing. Authors of reviewed manuscripts hailed from not only the United States (14) but also the United Kingdom and Israel (4 each); Poland and Italy (2 each); and Germany, Spain, the Netherlands, France, Iran, Egypt, the Czech Republic, Canada, and Turkey (1 each). Our eighty-six reviewers were similarly representative of the international community of scholarship the journal reaches: fifty-three of the reviewers were based outside the United States, including in Australia (1), Austria (1), Belgium (2), Canada (2), Finland (1), France (7), Germany (9), Israel (7), Italy (5), Mauritius (1), the Netherlands (2), Norway (1), the Russian Federation (1), Spain (1), Switzerland (2), Turkey (1), and the United Kingdom (9).

Our reviewers also included colleagues much closer to home: Chicago colleagues who submitted formal reviews of manuscripts included Kay Heikkinen, Brett McClain, Augusta McMahan, Kiersten Neumann, Hervé Reculeau, Seth Richardson, Foy Scalf, Geoffrey Summers, and Theo van den Hout. Chicago colleagues who “pre-reviewed” papers prior to formal review included Rebecca Hasselbach-Andee and Fred Donner (twice each), as well as Helga Anetshofer, Ahmed El Shamsy, Dennis Pardee, Martha Roth, Yorke Rowan, Mehrnoush Soroush, Jeff Stackert, and Erin Walsh. We are profoundly grateful to our reviewers for their help. The anonymity of the process means that they rarely get credit for the thought, care, and time they contribute to making the scholarship we publish as good as it can be.

In other news, the journal instituted a new practice of screening submissions to determine whether or not they include unprovenanced materials among the evidence they present: authors are now asked to answer the question, “Does this manuscript include the first scholarly publication or announcement of any object in a private or public collection acquired after December 30, 1973, that is not documented before

that date or otherwise legally exported from the country of origin?” Asking this question helps the journal follow a policy of ethical publication much in line with that instituted in past years by the American Schools of Overseas Research and the *American Journal of Archaeology*—a policy that purposes not to promote trade in illicitly excavated or traded antiquities through their publication. We thank our colleagues Martha Roth and Morag Kersel for their advice in this matter.

The staff of the journal remained much the same this year: James Osborne as editor and (outgoing) book review editor (ancient); Seth Richardson as managing editor; and Fred Donner as book review editor (modern). Our stalwart student assistant Luiza Osorio Silva laid down her *JNES* pen at the close of the year to assume a teaching appointment in ancient art history and archaeology at the University of California, Irvine; we wish her all the best success. She is succeeded in the position by Jane Gordon, a cuneiform student in the University of Chicago’s Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. We also welcome Mehrnoush Soroush, director of the Center for Ancient Middle Eastern Landscapes, as our new book review editor (ancient).

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# PUBLICATIONS

ANDREW BAUMANN

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This year, the primary goal of Publications was to reduce the large backlog of manuscripts awaiting production. Eight monographs were published between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023:

1. *“Like ‘Ilu Are You Wise’”: Studies in Northwest Semitic Languages and Literatures in Honor of Dennis G. Pardee*. Edited by H. H. Hardy II, Joseph Lam, and Eric D. Reymond. *Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization* 73. Published August 2022.
2. *The Materiality of Greek and Roman Curse Tablets: Technological Advances*. Edited by Sofía Torallas Tovar and Raquel Martín Hernández. *Oriental Institute Miscellaneous Publications*. Published September 2022.
3. *Beads from Excavations at Qustul, Adindan, Serra East, Dorginarti, Ballana, and Kalabsba: A-Group, Post-A-Group, C-Group, N-Type, P-Type, Pan Grave, Kerma, Middle Kingdom, and New Kingdom*. By Joanna Then-Obluska. *Nubian Expedition* 11. Published October 2022.
4. *Excavations at the Palatial Complex: Kerkenes Final Reports 2*. By Geoffrey D. Summers, with contributions by Susanne Berndt, Ahmet Çinici, Yılmaz Selim Erdal, Evangelia Pişkin, Noël Siver, and Françoise Summers. *Oriental Institute Publications* 148. Published December 2022.
5. *Seen Not Heard: Composition, Iconicity, and the Classifier Systems of Logosyllabic Scripts*. Edited by Ilona Zsolnay. *ISAC Seminars* 14. Published May 2023.
6. *The Second Cataract Fortress of Dorginarti*. By Lisa A. Heidorn. *Nubian Expedition* 12. Published May 2023.
7. *Where Kingship Descended from Heaven: Studies on Ancient Kish*. Edited by Karen L. Wilson and Deborah Bekken. *Studies in Ancient Cultures* 1. Published May 2023.
8. *Mural Decoration in the Theban Necropolis*. Edited by Betsy M. Bryan and Peter F. Dorman. *Studies in Ancient Cultures* 2. Published June 2023.

The year could not have been so productive without the help and expertise of several staff and independent contractors, whose contributions I gratefully acknowledge here. Former ISAC Publications managing editor Charissa Johnson handled the entire production of *Excavations at the Palatial Complex*, including the cover design and typesetting. Part-time editorial assistant Becca Cain incorporated the contributors’ proof corrections for *Where Kingship Descended from Heaven*. Freelance editor Connie Gundry Tappy copyedited or proofread all but one of the books published this year. Besides the title typeset by Charissa Johnson, one title had previously been typeset by former Publications staff, and typesetters Kristin Goble and Susanne Wilhelm laid out six titles. Graphic designer James Slate produced seven of the cover designs.

In addition to publishing eight books, Publications produced the annual report and three issues (including one double issue) of the ISAC member magazine *News & Notes* (largely the work of editorial assistant Becca Cain); copyedited and proofread the wall text and labels for two special exhibitions; developed a new design for ISAC Museum publications, such as gallery guides and special exhibition catalogs; and made significant progress on the production of several titles in the backlog that will be published next year. One book, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice* by Robert K. Ritner, was reprinted.

The Institute’s name change in April 2023 necessitated that the names of many of its publication series also change, since they included either the name “Oriental Institute” or the word “Oriental” (table 1).

Table 1. Old and new series names

Old series name	New series name
Assyriological Studies (AS)	<i>No change</i>
The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago (CAD)	<i>No change (dictionary was completed in 2010)</i>
The Demotic Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago (CDD)	The Demotic Dictionary of the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures of the University of Chicago (CDD)
The Hittite Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago (CHD)	The Hittite Dictionary of the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures of the University of Chicago (CHD)
Chicago Hittite Dictionary Supplements (CHDS)	<i>No change</i>
Late Antique and Medieval Islamic Near East (LAMINE)	<i>No change</i>
Oriental Institute Communications (OIC)	ISAC Communications (ISACC)
Oriental Institute Digital Archives (OIDA)	ISAC Digital Archives (ISACDA)
Oriental Institute Museum Publications (OIMP)	ISAC Museum Publications (ISACMP)
Oriental Institute Nubian Expedition (OINE)	Nubian Expedition (NE)
Oriental Institute Publications (OIP)	ISAC Publications (ISACP)
Oriental Institute Seminars (OIS)	ISAC Seminars (ISACS)
Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization (SAOC)	Studies in Ancient Cultures (SAC)
Miscellaneous Publications	<i>No change</i>

Publications and other staff met in January with two librarians from the University of Chicago's Regenstein Library—classics and ancient Near East bibliographer Catherine Mardikes and head of serials management services Renee Martonik—to discuss the need for new ISSNs (international standard serial numbers) and whether volume numbering should be continuous or start anew. The decision was made to continue the numbering for Nubian Expedition publications (because of the planned organization of volumes) and for postdoctoral seminar proceedings (to avoid possible confusion in the sequence of seminars). But other series whose names changed significantly will start their numbering anew with volume 1. It is important to note that although the names of many publication series changed, their formats and scopes did not.

This year, five submitted book manuscripts were accepted for publication. Another submission was rejected, and yet another was returned to the authors following peer review for substantial revision and possible resubmission. Four additional manuscripts were out for peer review at the close of the report year.

As of June 30, 2023, the following fifteen manuscripts comprised the backlog of monographs awaiting publication, including the five manuscripts accepted this year. The first eleven titles were at various stages of production, with many of them fully copyedited and one of them fully typeset. The manuscripts for the last four titles were still being finalized by the authors or volume editors at the close of the report year.

1. *Nippur VI: The Inanna Temple*. By Richard L. Zettler and Karen L. Wilson, with contributions by Jean M. Evans, Robert D. Biggs, Richard C. Haines, Donald P. Hansen, McGuire Gibson, James Knudstad, and John C. Sanders. ISAC Publications.

2. *Center and Periphery: The Archaeology of Politics at Ešnunna from the Ur III Period to the Old Babylonian Period*. By Clemens Reichel. Studies in Ancient Cultures.
3. *Excavations at Serra East, Part 8*. By Bruce Williams et al. Nubian Expedition 13.
4. *Excavations at Serra East, Part 9*. By Bruce Williams et al. Nubian Expedition 14.
5. *Lowland Susiana in the Fourth Millennium*. By Abbas Alizadeh. ISAC Publications.
6. *Iraqi Excavations in the Diyala Region: New Excavations at Tell Asmar (Ancient Eshnunna), 2001–2002, and Excavations at Tell Muqdadiya, 1980*. By Hussein Ali Hamza and Salah Rmaydh, with contributions by Daniel Mahoney, Alexandra Witsel, and Hervé Reculeau. Translated and initially edited by Mark Altaweel. Finally edited, with additional notes, by McGuire Gibson. ISAC Miscellaneous Publications.
7. *Insights into Islamic Archaeology and Material Culture: A Conference in Jerusalem*. Edited by Katia Cytryn-Silverman, Kristoffer Damgaard, and Donald Whitcomb. Studies in Ancient Cultures.
8. *Ancient Iran in the ISAC Museum: From the Prehistoric to the Achaemenid Period*. By Abbas Alizadeh. ISAC Museum Publications.
9. *Pomp, Circumstance, and the Performance of Politics: Acting Politically Correct in the Ancient World*. Edited by Kathryn R. Morgan. ISAC Seminars 15.
10. *An Armenian Futūḥ Narrative: Lewond's Eighth-Century History of the Caliphate*. By Sergio La Porta and Alison M. Vacca. Late Antique and Medieval Islamic Near East 4.
11. *Back to School in Babylonia*. Edited by Susanne Paulus. ISAC Museum Publications 1.
12. *A Master of Secrets in the Chamber of Darkness: Egyptological Studies in Honor of Robert K. Ritner*. Edited by Foy D. Scalf and Brian P. Muhs. Studies in Ancient Cultures.
13. *The Capture of Jerusalem by Strategius of Mar Saba: An Account of the Sasanid Conquest of Jerusalem in 614 AD*. By Sean Anthony and Stephen Shoemaker. Late Antique and Medieval Islamic Near East 5.
14. *Outward Appearance versus Inward Significance: Addressing Identities through Attire in the Ancient World*. Edited by Aleksandra Hallmann. ISAC Seminars 14.
15. *Hattannaš: A Festschrift in Honor of Theo van den Hout on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*. Edited by Petra Goedegebuure and Joost Hazenbos, with the assistance of Emily Smith. Studies in Ancient Cultures.

## ELECTRONIC PUBLICATIONS

The ISAC publications office continues to make PDFs of new publications freely available online as soon as the print editions are released. To access the complete catalog of ISAC titles, which includes annual reports, *News & Notes*, and the *Chicago House Bulletin*, please visit [isac.uchicago.edu/research/catalog-publications](https://isac.uchicago.edu/research/catalog-publications).

## SALES

Since January 1, 2019, ISD has been the exclusive distributor of ISAC publications. Between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023, ISD sold 955 print copies of ISAC publications—694 through its US warehouse and 261 through its agent in the United Kingdom—as well as 47 e-book copies to customers in the United States. Robert K. Ritner's *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice* remained the best-selling title with 98 copies sold, but newly published titles and several previously published special exhibition catalogs also did well; for example, ISD sold 86 copies of *Scripts and Scripture: Writing and Religion in Arabia circa 500–700 CE*, edited by Fred M. Donner and Rebecca Hasselbach-Andee (published 2022); 65 copies of *“Like ‘Ilu Are You Wise”: Studies in Northwest Semitic Languages and Literatures in Honor of Dennis G.*

## RESEARCH SUPPORT | PUBLICATIONS

*Pardee*, edited by H. H. Hardy II, Joseph Lam, and Eric D. Raymond (published 2022); 57 copies of *Between Heaven and Earth: Birds in Ancient Egypt*, edited by Rozenn Bailleul-LeSuer (published 2012); and 48 copies of *Irrigation in Early States: New Directions*, edited by Stephanie Rost (published 2022).

For ordering information, please contact:

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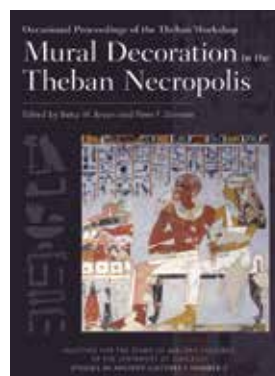
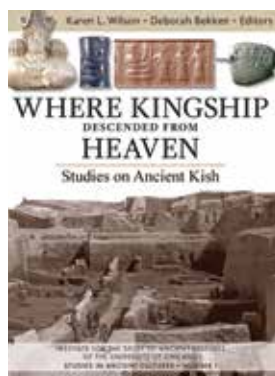
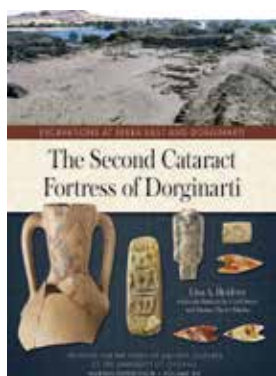
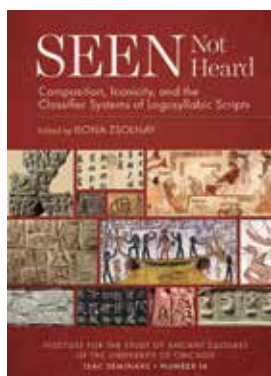
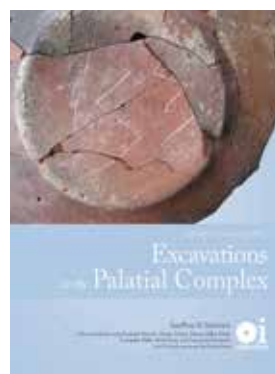
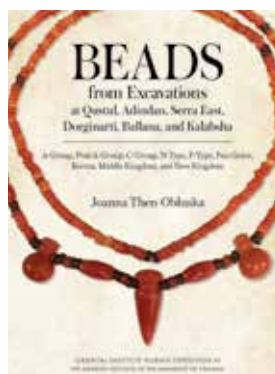
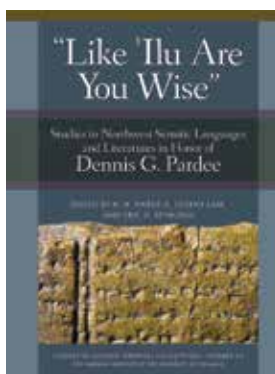
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Booksellers should contact ISD for all information on discounts. ISAC members receive a 20 percent discount on all titles; to receive the member discount, e-mail [isac-membership@uchicago.edu](mailto:isac-membership@uchicago.edu) and ask for the discount code.

Select titles are also made available through the ISAC Museum Shop (formerly the Suq).



# RESEARCH ARCHIVES

## FOY SCALF

Many innovations came to the Research Archives library this year. Along with changes in faculty and staff, the change of our institution's name to Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures (ISAC), announced in April, made one of the most significant impacts. As part of this new identity, ISAC's manager of exhibition design and production, Josh Tulisaiak, updated signage throughout the library, including the exterior welcome, interior orientation, and staff office signs (fig. 1). The graphic display at the back of the reading room, which for the past four years has highlighted the Archaeological Corpus Project, is being redesigned to give an overview of the history of the library. The new display will be revealed during the 2023–24 academic year. Additional outcomes of the name change include some reorganization of the institute's publications within the library—moving the Nubian Expedition series from S/OINE to S/NE and the postdoctoral seminars series from S/OIS to S/ISACS—as well as the development of new reports for departments throughout the building.

Much-needed improvements were made this year to the overall safety and security of the library, our patrons, and our collections. High-resolution security cameras were installed on both levels of the library



Figure 1. New signage for the Research Archives library: exterior welcome sign (left) and interior orientation sign (right). Design and layout by Josh Tulisaiak.



with clear views of the entrance, exit, stairwell, reading room, and hallways. With the cameras, ISAC security personnel can monitor the library at all hours and have access to archived security footage. These security cameras have already proven useful: a lamp stolen from the library's reading room was returned after the thief was identified and reported to the dean of students.

Complete collection monitoring is also now possible after the installation of radio frequency identification (RFID) security systems. RFID tags inserted into our books are monitored by a set of security gates in the hallway outside the library's entrance. Every volume will be tracked as it moves in and out of the library. The RFID tags are passive, requiring no power; they are activated when they come within range of the radio signal of the security gates or RFID workstation. Each tag is programmed with an identification (ID) number tying it to our database records for the book. As a book with a tag passes through the security gates, it triggers an alarm. Library staff are notified through security software developed by Bibliotheca, a leading company in library security infrastructure. We are currently in the process of adding RFID tags to all 75,000 volumes in the collection. It is essential to acknowledge the support from Theo van den Hout and Brendan Bulger in allocating the funds to proceed with these important improvements.

There is an ongoing effort to update our EMu collection management client software commensurate with an upgrade of our EMu servers to a 64-bit environment. This update will require a jump from EMu version 5 to version 9. This year we were able to update from Ubuntu 18 to Red Hat 7 in preparation for a larger upgrade. We are currently waiting for Axiell software engineers to finish accommodating our many customizations by installing EMu version 9 on a new server running Ubuntu 22. This change will finally bring our EMu system into the 64-bit world; however, the change will affect users, as the client software update includes a complete redesign of the graphic user interface. Training and testing will occur in the winter and spring of the 2023–24 academic year.

## PATRONS AND USAGE

In 2022–23, the library ID card reader recorded more than 32,000 transactions representing 2,625 unique patrons who visited the library in person and swiped an ID card to enter. Of course, most visitors were from the University of Chicago campus community. However, increasing pressure on quiet study spaces across campus has resulted in a dramatic rise in the number of visiting students from all university departments; the patron population of the Research Archives library is increasing—and increasing fast. Of the 2,625 patrons who visited this year, members of the student body represented well over 2,300. Many such students are primarily seeking a place to study and concentrate. As predictable, the principal use of our collections remains in the hands of our power users—the more than 200 faculty, staff, students, and visiting researchers from around the globe who come to take advantage of our comprehensive collection of research materials as well as the efficiency of our organizational structure and classification system.

Over the course of the academic year, more than 100 volumes circulated to offices throughout the ISAC building for the research needs of students, faculty, staff, and visiting scholars. These publications ranged in date from 1912 to 2022, reflecting the importance of access to reference data both new and old.

This year we had the pleasure of hosting many visiting researchers, including Imane Achouche, Ashley Arico, Emily Cole, Ashley Demma, Peter Dorman, Jorke Grotenuis, Don Hamerly, Gilad Itach, Elise MacArthur, Andy Moore, Janina Mueller, Megan Sands, James Schwinn, Wayne Sedlak, Dale Simpson, Julius Tabin, Steve Vinson, Milton Wakschlag, and Stephania Walters. Following the suspension of Elmhurst University's Great Libraries of Chicago honors course during the pandemic, students from Elmhurst, along with their professors Carolyn Cielsa and Elaine Page, renewed their annual visit to the Research Archives. Luke Joyner and his students likewise incorporated a visit to our facilities in their Architecture of the Public Library course for the University of Chicago. And the University Communications team used our library's Elizabeth Morse Genius reading room for several video production events and photo shoots. As in years

past, we also offered orientation tours for prospective students and incoming graduate students. In September 2022, we participated in ISAC's hosting of Axiell's 2022 North American User Conference.

## ACQUISITIONS

The Research Archives library had an extremely productive acquisition effort in 2022–23 (table 1). A total of 1,315 volumes were acquired for the library in 366 accession lots—more than one accession lot every day of the year; 270 accession lots arrived through purchases, 72 through gifts, and 24 through exchanges of the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* with other publishers and institutions. For the 270 accession lot purchases, the Research Archives library expended more than \$53,000, plus over \$4,500 in shipping costs. As recognized in last year's report, we would not be able to reflect such growth without the continued support of the library's budget and infrastructure. To that end, we gratefully acknowledge the generous increase to the library's budget established by former ISAC director Christopher Woods and implemented by interim director Theo van den Hout and associate director of administration and finance Brendan Bulger. Our entire community owes them a debt of gratitude for recognizing the Research Archives as the heart of ISAC. We have also been able to supplement our budget through collaboration with Denise Browning, who sells the library's duplicate volumes in the ISAC Museum Shop (formerly the Suq).

Table 1. Research Archives acquisitions, July 2022–June 2023

Month	Number of accession lots	Volumes		
		Monographs, series, pamphlets	Journals	Total
July 2022	37	79	26	105
August 2022	43	91	22	113
September 2022	14	84	62	146
October 2022	35	69	20	89
November 2022	37	80	16	96
December 2022	28	61	30	91
January 2023	46	65	77	142
February 2023	28	42	28	70
March 2023	37	50	101	151
April 2023	15	53	56	109
May 2023	19	66	40	106
June 2023	27	84	13	97
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>824</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>1,315</b>

## ONLINE CATALOG

Research Archives staff added approximately 12,500 new records to the library's catalog in the EMu collection management system this year (table 2; numbers are rounded up to the nearest hundred). This number represents a 50 percent increase over the previous year. Thanks and gratitude for entering this data into

Table 2. Catalog records added

Year	No. of catalog records added	Total no. of catalog records
2022–23	12,500	590,000
2021–22	7,500	577,500
2020–21	5,000	570,000
2019–20	10,000	565,000
2018–19	10,000	555,000
2017–18	10,000	545,000

the institutional digital repository through Axiell’s EMu software are due almost entirely to the staff and volunteers of the Research Archives library (see Acknowledgments below). Records are available online for searching, sorting, and downloading in a variety of formats (<https://isac-idb.uchicago.edu>).

Within the next two years, the Research Archives library will reach 75,000 total volumes (table 3) and more than 600,000 catalog records—nearly double the 40,000 volumes in the library (with 400,000 catalog cards) in 1969 prior to the founding of the Research Archives. Catalog records with links pointing to online content continued to grow, reaching 133,888 records. In addition to requiring labor to enter these links, they need to be maintained because websites often change the structure of their URL addresses, requiring updates to the records in our catalog. When digital object identifiers (DOIs) are available, we include them

Table 3. Research Archives analytics

Type	Total no. of records
Total volumes	72,124
Monographs	17,760
Monograph sections	76,588
Series	2,002
Series volumes	23,119
Series volume sections	106,211
Journals	1,058
Journal volumes	30,170
Journal volume articles	331,031
Theses	1,075
Pamphlets	3058
Reviews	124,658
Festschriften (volumes)	774
Digital invoice records	2,780
Digital cover-art records	16,712
Adobe PDFs	42,157

in our metadata to help ensure the long-term viability of links in the catalog, and we encourage publishers of online content to employ a registered permalink or DOI system for sustainable access to these online materials. Many of our records include multiple links: one directly to publishers' online options and others directing users to aggregator databases such as JSTOR. A continuing desideratum is to incorporate links in the catalog to general online resources, such as online dictionaries, grammars, text editions, websites, blogs, and other relevant media.

The online collections search (<https://isac-idb.uchicago.edu>) that encompasses the catalog of the Research Archives library had over 21,000 users conduct more than 36,000 sessions, with an average session duration of nearly five minutes. Analytics recorded 82,509 total events, of which 68,279 were unique; events include new searches (41,601), viewing details of a record (31,397), revising a search (7,622), searching within results (979), and access via a direct link (907). The most popular events included viewing records for the *lamassu* (ISACM A7369), the record for volume 1 of James P. Allen's edition of the Pyramid Texts, and a cylinder seal depicting Ishtar (ISACM A27903).

## DONATIONS

The Research Archives continues to benefit greatly from generous donations of both funds and books. Over the past three years, we have been working to assess thousands of volumes donated from major academic libraries such as those of Miguel Civil, Stephen Cole, Eugene Cruz-Uribe, McGuire Gibson, Janet Johnson, Shelley Luppert-Barnard, and Don Whitcomb. This year we received the office library of Fred Donner, which will help tremendously in filling long-standing gaps in our Islamic materials. We would like to thank the following for their thoughtful gifts (in alphabetical order): Susan Allison, Alex and Tigran Areshian, Bob Biggs, Denise Browning, Ling Chan, Catherine Chou, the estate of Miguel Civil, Bill Cospes, Stacy Davidson, Fred Donner, Gertrud Farber, Walter Farber, Anne Flannery, Gita Ghei, McGuire Gibson, James Holland, the ISAC Museum image permissions staff, the ISAC Museum Shop, ISAC Publications, the ISAC volunteers' library, Kim Masters, Marilyn Murray, Donna Panzica, Miller Prosser, Martha Roth, Kavin Sampson, Mehrnoush Soroush, Emily Teeter, Theo van den Hout, Bruce Williams, and the estate of Carole Yoshida.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Over the years, the Research Archives library has been extremely blessed with amazing teams of dedicated staff and volunteer members. Without their hard work, collaboration, and help, the library would not be able to fulfill its incredibly high expectations. We have had an exceptional staff this year, and I would like to thank Amy Zillman, Tanya Olson, Courtney Doner, Christian Borgen, and Marta Díaz-Herrera for being such an amazing team. Any patrons who have interacted with them know well how crucial and helpful they are.

I would also like to thank our steadfast volunteers, who, despite the interruption that COVID-19 posed, continued to help us digitize, organize, clean, and enter our data. What we can offer would suffer tremendously without them. Many thanks to Betty Bush, Jane Clinkert-White, Kym Crawford, Claire Mokrauer-Madden, Cliff Peterson, Hilarie Pozesky, Jeremy Walker, and Eric Whitacre for their many efforts over the year.







# MUSEUM

SUSAN ALLISON, ROBERT BAIN, DENISE BROWNING,  
LAURA D'ALESSANDRO, ANNE FLANNERY, MARC MAILLOT,  
HELEN McDONALD, KIERSTEN NEUMANN, JOSH TULISIAK,  
AND ALISON WHYTE

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In a postpandemic era, the main challenge of a museum is to bring its audience back to its galleries in person and for special exhibitions. To that end, as stated in last year's annual report, the ISAC Museum pursued expanding our activities throughout the year. Thanks to the dedicated team of Museum and communications staff, guards, and volunteers, we were able not only to maintain our current opening hours but also to create a new time slot for the public on Friday evenings from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. The idea behind these extended hours was simple: to allow after-work opening hours concurrent with consistent programming. Between July 2022 and June 2023, the Museum galleries hosted 26,529 visitors—an increase of 6.37 percent over the previous twelve-month period. From April 2023 (when the new Friday open hours began) through June 2023, more than 300 visitors enjoyed these evening hours in a calm and welcoming environment. Creating new habits takes time, of course, and fall 2023 will definitely offer a good test to confirm whether the audience is responding well to our offer. As expected, peak attendance on weekends easily exceeded 150 visitors, confirming that our policy and engagement were fruitful. We were able to gather this helpful data thanks to the initiative of Kate Hodge, youth and family program manager. In 2022 she created an attendance-tracking method that allows the Museum team to measure the impact of our programming and gallery outreach. Strengthened by the numbers and new staff members, we continued striving toward the main goal of the Museum team stated in last year's annual report: to reach and surpass pre-COVID-19 attendance numbers.

We pursued docent- and curator-led tours of the Museum galleries and were particularly pleased to start, in partnership with the communications department, refresher tours for the docents led by faculty and Museum staff for each section of the main galleries. In February 2023, Marc Maillot, as the Museum's new associate director and chief curator, and ISAC Museum curator Kiersten Neumann offered in-person tours alongside our virtual options. Regarding the latter, special recognition goes to Tasha Vorderstrasse, continuing education program manager, for her consistently high-quality adult education courses based on our collection. Also in February, Laura D'Alessandro, head of Museum conservation, gave a tour of the permanent galleries and special exhibition with a focus on the evolution of conservation procedures based on the highlights of our collection (see Conservation section below). And Maillot gave a lecture in Breasted Hall to present to the docents and volunteers the vision that the Museum staff wishes to implement in the forthcoming years, with particular emphasis on schools and the greater Chicago area.

In January we welcomed an Uzbek delegation for a tour of the Museum's galleries and visits with Conservation and Museum Archives staff as part of the US Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program On Demand on cultural heritage, organized through WorldChicago (a nonprofit organization whose mission is to facilitate citizen diplomacy initiatives between Chicagoans and US government-sponsored international visitors). We pursued a similar collaboration with WorldChicago in March, when we welcomed a museum delegation from the Balkans led by Julia Sosnivka, program officer at WorldChicago, and Marija Bjelopetrovic, head of public diplomacy at the embassy of Serbia in the United States. Senior curator Evgenija Blanusa and curator Jana Toskovic of the National Museum of Serbia were particularly interested in the connection between ISAC's activities overseas and their impact on the



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Museum's collection in a very demanding time in terms of cultural-heritage management in areas experiencing armed conflicts. This visit was particularly timely for the Museum team, since a presentation on ISAC activities had just been given in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, for the International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage in Conflict Areas (ALIPH) Forum 2023. A nonprofit organization, ALIPH is dedicated to protecting cultural heritage in conflict areas, which is a growing worldwide concern because antiquities trafficking constitutes a considerable source of income. The ISAC Museum has a prominent role to play in such a scope, and the forum allowed us to be identified as a reference institution for years to come.

In the same spirit of reinforcing our partnerships at a national and international level, the Obama Foundation's director of development, Sali Maghoub, visited ISAC on multiple occasions and specifically on March 22, 2023, for a tour of the Nubian galleries and to discuss shared programming with ISAC upon the planned 2026 completion of the Obama Presidential Center in Chicago. The critical question of commuting from downtown Chicago to the south side is a shared goal for both institutions, and the Obama Center will inevitably become a focal point on multiple grounds in the next five years. In March, the Museum team also welcomed Her Excellency Lianys Torres Rivera, Cuba's ambassador to the United States.

In accordance with the Oriental Institute's name change to "Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures—West Asia and North Africa" on April 4, 2023, the Museum changed its name as well—to the "Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures Museum." In recent years, ISAC has worked to develop a more accurate way of describing the nature of its work and collections. To avoid confusion regarding the focus of our permanent galleries and the pejorative connotation of the word "Oriental" in modern parlance, the Museum alongside the Institute wished to reflect a grounded and familiar image for the constituents of Chicago. As this name change sets the path for years to come, it obviously had an important impact on the Museum itself, requiring an ongoing renewal of gallery didactics, a change of the museum store's name to "ISAC Museum Shop," and a demanding update of the database and nomenclature for our entire collection. Indeed, of the more than 350,000 artifacts in ISAC's inventory, fewer than 2 percent are on display in the Museum, and each of them required an updated database entry to maintain its public access to researchers and a general audience. This requirement also applies to ISAC publications: the referencing protocols of the artifacts had to be updated in forthcoming Museum volumes.

The event announcing the name change took place in the Museum's galleries, where we were honored to welcome University of Chicago President Paul Alivisatos and Provost Katherine Baicker. More than 150 guests attended this milestone in the history of our institution. That very day, the ISAC Museum was featured in several news media, including CBS, WTTW, the *Chicago Sun-Times*, and PBS and WBEZ radio, where a complete overview of the name change and its implications was presented through an interview with Maillot. *Chicago* magazine expressed particular interest in the ISAC Museum Shop, as shown by its June 2023 issue, and the Museum also appeared on the *Chicago Tribune's* 10 Museum Must-Sees list for summer 2023.

In May 2023, we had the privilege of welcoming His Excellency Dr. Sameh Aboul-Enein, the Consul of Egypt in Chicago, and his delegation, along with Prof. Zahi Hawass, former Minister of State for Antiquities Affairs of Egypt, for a tour of the Egyptian gallery and ISAC premises. Thanks to this visit, we were able to propose ISAC as the next hosting institution for the celebration of Egypt's independence day (National Day of Egypt); we commemorated the event with a conference and reception on July 29.

Throughout the year, the ISAC Museum reinforced its international dimension through these multiple initiatives, one of its best expressions being the consistent presence of the French consulate particularly in April and May 2023. In April, a reception for the French consulate was given in the galleries to further the expanding partnership between the University of Chicago and the French National Research Center, leading to the official launch of an international research center both in Paris and on the University of Chicago's campus during the week of June 5 under the patronage of President Alivisatos, Executive Vice President Juan de Pablo, and Prof. Antoine Petit, chairman and CEO of the French National Research

Center. The ISAC Museum was present to lay the groundwork for an ambitious participation in the fields of art history and archaeology, with the hope of further developing our already close relationship through the France–Chicago research center in Paris in forthcoming years. French congressman Christopher Weisberg’s visit to ISAC on May 15 demonstrated that interest at the highest diplomatic level.

The stated intention of connecting our members and audience to the latest news in the field of heritage management was aptly illustrated by the first screening of the documentary film *Hadda: Rescuing Early Buddhist Art in Afghanistan* at a member event on June 14, 2023, in Breasted Hall. After the premiere, a panel composed of Rowe Professor of Ancient Near Eastern Studies Gil Stein; Madhuvanti Ghose, inaugural Alsdorf Associate Curator of Indian, Southeast Asian and Himalayan Art in the Art Institute of Chicago’s Arts of Asia department; and Maillot engaged with the public on challenges faced by museums in conflict areas and the universal dimension of the institution in crisis times. Beginning with a case study—the curation and conservation of 7,600 sculptural fragments from Hadda carried out by ISAC and the Chicago Center for Cultural Heritage Preservation—the discussion allowed for confronting experiences in a broad geographical sphere and reflecting on the nature of the museum and its role in modern society.

On a personal note, I (Marc Maillot) wish to express my gratitude to the ISAC family for a warm welcome when I arrived in January as associate director and chief curator of the ISAC Museum. During my first eight months in this role, I particularly appreciated the “little things” everyone did to ensure the best possible conditions for the start of my tenure. I was impressed by the quality of the work and the dedication of the ISAC community to this institution and the city of Chicago. As chief curator, I would like to underscore the marvelous work accomplished by the Museum’s staff to maintain the outreach by and well-being of the collection in difficult times, especially during the pandemic. Being able to present two special exhibitions per year and managing the permanent collection for general audiences and researchers right after the COVID-19 crisis does not result from improvisation. I see myself merely as the spokesman of their engagement.

## SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS

The ISAC Museum’s special exhibitions program hosted two markedly unique and engaging shows this year. We closed the special exhibition *Joseph Lindon Smith: The Persepolis Paintings* on August 28, 2022, and installed *Making Sense of Marbles: Roman Sculpture at the OI*, which ran through March 12, 2023 (<http://isac.uchicago.edu/marbles>) (fig. 1). Cocurated by ISAC Museum curator Kiersten Neumann and Roko Rumora, doctoral candidate in the University of Chicago’s Department of Art History, this exhibition displayed to the public for the first time ISAC’s full collection of Roman sculpture. In the 1950s, ISAC’s sixth director, Carl H. Kraeling, expanded the museum collections with nine marbles, being motivated to develop “a representative collection” of classical sculpture for the city of Chicago. Because this group was assembled through acquisitions from both ISAC’s Libyan excavations at Ptolemais (1956–58) and the international art market, it was ideal for an exhibition tackling such timely topics as collecting practices, provenience and provenance, and archaeology and the art market. With their provenience remarkably well documented, the marbles from Ptolemais showcased the diverse roles sculpture played in the lives of the city’s residents. We also displayed original archival documents related to this group: the license for the first season’s archaeological excavations at Ptolemais, granted by the newly founded United Kingdom of Libya, and a June 1957 license to export five of the objects, granted by the Department of Antiquities of the Provincial Government of Cyrenaica. This abundance of contextual information allowed the Ptolemais marbles to be placed in sharp contrast with the Roman works purchased by Kraeling from the antiquities market. Because those objects lack provenience, their study was limited to provenance (ownership history) research, technical examination, and stylistic analysis. The aim of the exhibition overall was to showcase how we can make sense of marbles with divergent histories and the fundamental importance of archaeological context in telling an object’s story.

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Figure 1. *Making Sense of Marbles: Roman Sculpture at the OI*, which ran through March 12, 2023.

We hosted a series of programs in connection with the exhibition, kicking things off with an exclusive members' preview on September 14, 2022. In October, Neumann and Rumora delivered a hybrid lecture titled "Revisiting Roman Sculpture at the OI: Ptolemais and Beyond." Looking at the conservation work connected with the exhibition, ISAC conservator Alison Whyte delivered a virtual talk in the fall quarter titled "Venus with Cupid: Discoveries from the Conservation Lab," and in the winter quarter Laura D'Alessandro toured a group in the galleries for "To Restore or Not to Restore—Who Makes the Decision? Restoration at the OI from the 1930s to the Present," which culminated with the male statue from Ptolemais (see Conservation section below). In February 2023, Katharine Raff, the Elizabeth McIlvaine Associate Curator of the Arts of the Ancient Mediterranean and Byzantium at the Art Institute of Chicago, contributed a fascinating hybrid talk on related collections in Chicago titled "From Plaster to Marble: The Evolution of Ancient Mediterranean Sculpture at the Art Institute of Chicago." Also in winter, Neumann presented "From Ancient Quarries to New Inquiries: Exhibiting the OI's Roman Sculpture Collection in an Age of Greater Transparency" for the Archaeological Institute of America's Chicago lecture series at the Hopleaf Bar. Promotion of the exhibition included four postcards featuring new photography of the Ptolemais marbles (fig. 2) and coverage in several media outlets, including the *Hyde Park Herald* and *Chicago Sun-Times*.

On April 5, 2023, we opened our special exhibition *Artifacts Also Die*, which featured the work of internationally acclaimed Iraqi-British artist and academic Hanaa Malallah and was curated by Neumann (<http://isac.uchicago.edu/artifacts>) (fig. 3). On display through August 27, *Artifacts Also Die* was the third public display—and the first America-based viewing—of media from the ongoing research project *Ruins, Rubble, and Renewal: Co-existent Ruins—Exploring Iraq's Mesopotamian Past through Contemporary Art*. This interdisciplinary, collaborative project seeks to address how it might be possible for local Iraqi artists in postconflict Iraq to have renewed engagements with ancient Mesopotamian heritage sites (Babylon, Nimrud, Nuffar, and Ur), as well as the Iraq Museum in Baghdad. Participating artists included Mohammed Abd Alwasi, Reyah Abd Al-Redah, Fatimah Jawdet, Betoul Mahdey, and Rozghar Mustafa. Augusta McMahan, ISAC professor of Mesopotamian archaeology and director of ISAC's Nippur Expedition, also contributed to the section on Nuffar. The displayed components included two films, shown via projectors, featuring content related to the ziggurats at Ur and Nuffar and five monitors showing footage captured at Babylon, Nimrud, Nuffar, Ur, and Baghdad; three of these videos included audio components. A series of prints of both photographs and drawings connected with these sites and of artifacts in the Iraq Museum and the British Museum were also on view. Making this exhibition of the *Ruins, Rubble, and Renewal* project unique in comparison with its previous viewings in London and Karbala was the inclusion



Figure 2. Marble statuette of a ram from the Roman Villa at Ptolemais, Libya. ISACM A30920.

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of archaeological material—principally artifacts excavated by ISAC’s Iraq Expedition in the 1930s to 1950s—and associated original archival documents. The section on Nuffar also featured a model of the dig house created by exhibition design and production manager Josh Tulisiak (see Exhibition Design and Production section below). Additionally, *Artifacts Also Die* included an installation in the ISAC Museum’s orientation area that focused on the third-millennium BCE alabaster Warka Vase.

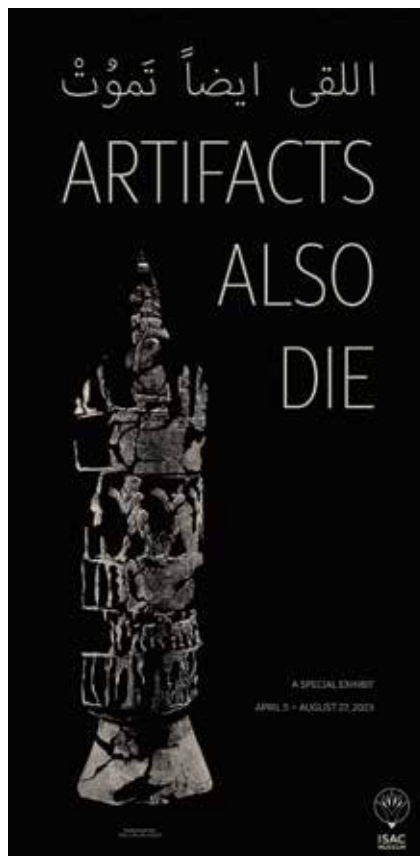


Figure 3. The special exhibition *Artifacts Also Die* opened on April 5, 2023.

The installation was composed of two banners with edited images of the vase, a video of the vase falling to pieces, 3D-printed replica fragments of the vase, and a large-scale print of the archaeological site (fig. 4). Here, Malallah interrogated our relationship with the planet, both emphasizing the vase's depiction of the Mesopotamian ecosystem in its carved hierarchical registers and challenging the present disregard and destruction of the planet's natural system. The installation also recalled the looting of the vase during the 2003 United States–led invasion of Iraq and its subsequent return in fragments and restoration in the Iraq Museum.

Programming held in connection with *Artifacts Also Die* included an exclusive exhibition preview on April 4, which coincided with ISAC's name-change celebration; a private, after-hours viewing took place the following week as part of EXPO Chicago. In addition to numerous exhibition tours, a series of lectures, teacher workshops, and film screenings was held during the course of the exhibition, including a virtual conversation with Malallah and Neumann on Mesopotamian ruins and contemporary art and a screening of *Letters from Baghdad*, a documentary directed by Sabine Krayenbühl and Zeva Oelbaum and narrated by Tilda Swinton that tells the dramatic story of the British spy, explorer, and political powerhouse Gertrude Bell. Promotion of the exhibition included a complimentary booklet—which recorded each component of the exhibition with title, attribution, and a thumbnail image—and coverage in several media outlets, including the *Chicago Tribune*, *Hyde Park Herald*, and *Urban Matter*.

Two additional 2022–23 exhibitions are worthy of note. Extended through winter 2024 is the satellite exhibition *Sealing Practices in Ancient Mesopotamia*, located in the lobby of the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business. Here we present a case study of the administrative practices of the Inanna Temple



Figure 4. The Warka Vase installation displayed in the orientation area as part of the special exhibition *Artifacts Also Die*.

at Nippur as evidenced by administrative records and sealings excavated at the site by ISAC archaeologists in the 1950s. And for the name-change celebration on April 4, we installed in the lobby of the ISAC building a case containing a display curated by Anne Flannery, head of Museum Archives, of archival objects that document ISAC's earliest beginnings (see Archives section below). The exhibition included the Haskell Museum Register of objects 1–2500, circa 1895; a letter from University of Chicago president William Rainey Harper to James Henry Breasted establishing the leadership of the Haskell Oriental Museum on April 27, 1896; a letter from John D. Rockefeller Jr. to James Henry Breasted dated May 2, 1919, establishing funding for the Oriental Institute; and a photograph of the groundbreaking ceremony for the building of the Oriental Institute, located at 1155 East 58th Street, on April 28, 1930.

## EXHIBITION DESIGN AND PRODUCTION

Our primary projects for 2022–23 were the design and production of the Museum's special exhibitions, *Making Sense of Marbles: Roman Sculpture at the OI* and *Artifacts Also Die* (see Special Exhibitions section above), and the design and fabrication of graphics for the Institute's name change and identity.

In fall 2022 we opened *Making Sense of Marbles: Roman Sculpture at the OI*, featuring the Museum's Roman marble collection. The handling and installation of the sculptures was a collaborative effort across ISAC Museum departments, with the assistance of an external specialist who fabricated a new mount for the portrait statue of a young boy (A30907). New plinths were added for the female statue (A30922) and male statue (A30921) (fig. 5), and new pedestals were fabricated to present the portrait statue of a young boy (A30907) and the statuette of Venus with Cupid (A30908) (fig. 6). These new pedestals, built to be modular and reusable, are strong enough to support heavy objects safely and can also be dismantled and reconfigured for future use. Custom welded-steel and wooden guard rails were also fabricated to help protect the artifacts. Another case held smaller objects, for which new mounts were also fabricated. Chosen for the main color of the exhibition walls and promotional material was a classic shade of navy blue, which contrasted with the light-colored marble sculptures while also evoking a majestic presence in the gallery and in the artwork itself. The didactic material and graphics were designed and produced in-house. The text was strategically set away from the majority of the objects to keep visitor and aesthetic focus on the objects themselves but was complemented with images and substantial information. The design and typography of the didactic material also hinted at the carved lettering created during the period in which the sculptures were created. Tunable lighting was used to best capture the marble's natural look, with optimal lighting levels established with Conservation to preserve the remaining pigment (see Conservation section below).

The second exhibition opened in spring 2023. *Artifacts Also Die* featured a large quantity of modern media—multiple monitors, projections, 3D prints, and a handmade model (fig. 7). Much of the physical content for this exhibition was produced and fabricated in-house. A new, four-sided wall was constructed to house various media, including projectors, speakers, and a built-in display case featuring custom lighting that housed a selection of Mesopotamian cylinder and stamp seals (fig. 8). The walls were painted white for a more modern feel, while lighting was set to a warm color temperature to enhance this aesthetic. We collaborated with both the University of Chicago's Materials Research Science and Engineering Center (MRSEC) and Stratasys (an industrial 3D-printing manufacturer) to accomplish the goal of fabricating a to-scale, fragmented version of the Warka Vase, which was then hand-painted to replicate the look of alabaster (fig. 9). Using photographs, a scaled-down model of the Nippur dig house was fabricated by hand using a variety of materials (fig. 10). Because of the vast number of media displays, the didactic materials were simplified to better accommodate the space and to fit in with the contemporary theme.

With the Institute's adopting a new name, logo, and aesthetic this year, we invested much effort in designing and fabricating new graphics and signage to communicate our new identity. Our lotus-inspired



Figure 5. Exhibition view showing the introduction mural and new plinths and guard rails for the two larger marble sculptures.



Figure 6. Exhibition view of two smaller marbles—on newly built modular, reusable pedestals—and exhibition text.







Figure 9. 3D-printed replica fragments of the Warka Vase in the process of being painted.



Figure 10. Model of the Nippur dig house.

Figure 11. New name and identity display on the east facade of the ISAC building.



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Figure 12. Orientation area of the galleries displaying the ISAC Museum's new name and logo.

logo evokes a sense of profound history while accentuating our existing architectural aesthetic and underlining this recurrent motif in our collection. For the lobby, new banners and an updated information panel near the visitor services desk were created. Semipermanent decals of the new ISAC icon were installed on the floor in both the lobby and the galleries. Banners were created for the exterior entrance to the building, as well as for our east-facing facade and the kiosks flanking the pedestrian walkway (fig. 11). The orientation area of the Museum was also updated to include our new name and logo, setting the path for the ongoing update of the permanent gallery didactics (fig. 12).

## CONSERVATION

The year began with a continuation of the work of the University of Chicago's capital project delivery group, which underwrites building improvements on campus and has been working on projects on both the interior and exterior of the ISAC building. Vibration monitoring also continued to ensure that the collections were protected throughout the extensive work period. We appreciate that the university's facilities services continued to maintain open communication with the departments impacted during these periods so that everyone's questions and concerns could be answered in a timely manner. At the conclusion of the courtyard facade work in August 2022, the Nefermaat stela was returned to its permanent location in the Joseph and Mary Grimshaw Egyptian Gallery.

The Museum loaned objects to several museums and libraries for special exhibitions this year: the Louvre Museum (Paris), J. Paul Getty Museum (Los Angeles), Morgan Library & Museum (New York City), and University of Chicago's David and Alfred Smart Museum of Art. The work to prepare a loan involves

most of our Museum staff, and the Conservation staff typically play a major role, starting with assessing the objects for travel and display. Once the loan has been approved, objects requiring treatment are identified and conserved. Formal condition loan reports are then prepared for insurance purposes, and Conservation undertakes the packing of the loaned objects or oversees their packing by a fine arts contractor for transport. Objects made of organic materials are particularly subject to damage when traveling, so the requirements for packing and transport are stringent to ensure the borrowed objects travel safely and the borrower follows all conservation protocols while the objects are in their care. D'Alessandro and Whyte served as couriers for the return of the four loans, and all the objects arrived back at ISAC in good condition. Material on loan from the University of Chicago's Regenstein Library was also returned by Conservation.

During spring and summer 2022, Whyte worked on several of the Roman-period stone sculptures selected for display in the ISAC Museum's fall 2022 exhibition *Making Sense of Marbles: Roman Sculpture at the OI*. One particularly intriguing object was ISACM A30908, Venus with Cupid (fig. 13). Using a combination of analytical tools including the Conservation laboratory's ultraviolet light, digital microscope, and portable X-ray fluorescence (pXRF) spectrometer, Whyte found both gold decoration and two different red pigments on its surface (fig. 14). Justin Jureller, MRSEC technical director, analyzed a small sample from the sculpture using Raman microscopy (see below) and was able to confirm the presence of cinnabar, a red pigment containing mercury and sulfur. (This work made use of the shared facilities at MRSEC supported by the National Science Foundation under award number DMR-2011854.) In November, Whyte presented a lecture on the analysis and conservation treatment of the sculpture as part of the *Making Sense of Marbles* exhibition programming; "Venus with Cupid: Discoveries from the Conservation Lab" is now available on ISAC's YouTube channel.

Raman microscopy is a nondestructive analytical technique that can be used to identify a wide variety of materials in cultural heritage studies, such as ivory, pigments, dyes, and organic compounds. Over the past year, D'Alessandro and Whyte began training on MRSEC's Horiba confocal Raman microscope. Access to this equipment will allow Conservation to expand its analysis of the collections in identifying both the materials from which objects are made and the chemicals used on them historically (prior to the establishment of the Conservation lab). As with many museums, early treatments carried out on our collections were rarely, if ever, documented. Many conservators are left with the task of attempting to determine not only the composition of objects but also any prior chemicals used on them. This step is particularly critical when choosing the optimal treatment for an object to ensure the treatment will be compatible with the chemically altered object.



Figure 13. Venus with Cupid (ISACM A30908).



Figure 14. Digital microscope image of red and gold surface decoration.

Whyte traveled to Uzbekistan in early September 2022 to participate in the fourth workshop of the C5 Cultural Training Partnership in Artifact Conservation (CTPAC) organized by Gil Stein, Rowe Professor of Near Eastern Archaeology and director of the Chicago Center for Cultural Heritage Preservation. Whyte presented a week-long workshop on the conservation of glass objects with participants learning about glass composition, manufacturing techniques, degradation processes, conservation treatments, and preventive care (fig. 15). In mid-September she traveled from Tashkent to Málaga, Spain, to lend conservation support to ISAC archaeologist David Schloen's excavation of the Phoenician site of Cerro del Villar. While there, she helped the archaeologists excavate fragile material while also conserving small objects, maintaining records in the site's database, and ensuring proper storage of finds.

Also in the fall, D'Alessandro and Whyte, along with other ISAC collections staff, attended a workshop organized by the University of Chicago's Office of Risk Management and Huntington T. Block insurance agency on fine-art loss prevention that provided helpful information on better protecting the university's collections. The participants were staff from the university departments responsible for artwork on campus.

In December, Giovanni Verri and Ken Sutherland, conservation scientists from the Art Institute of Chicago, visited the Conservation lab to continue their investigations of the ISAC Museum's Fayum portraits for the APPEAR (Ancient Panel Painting: Examination, Analysis, and Research) project sponsored by the Getty.

The modern art sculptures on loan from Mohamad Hafez—*Hiraeth*, *Collateral Damage*, and *Baggage #5*—were deinstalled in late December 2022 and early January 2023 and packed in their shipping crates with the assistance of Museum lead preparator Robert Bain and exhibition design and production manager Josh Tulisiak. The delicate details on all of Hafez's works required extra care in packing for their return trip. Conservation applied removable structural supports to one of the larger minarets to aid in its safe transit.

In March 2023, the Conservation lab hosted Moritz Jansen, a researcher involved in a collaborative project with Chicago's Field Museum, to investigate the composition of a selection of gold artifacts in ISAC's Mesopotamian collection. Jansen brought his own pXRF spectrometer to conduct the analyses. We modified one of our Bruker stands to provide a stage for his equipment to minimize the handling of our fragile gold objects. Whyte assisted by handling the more fragile objects as Jansen carried out the pXRF analysis. D'Alessandro packed the more than forty gold artifacts in individual boxes to protect them during their transport to the Field Museum. She worked with Jansen to load and unload the most fragile objects

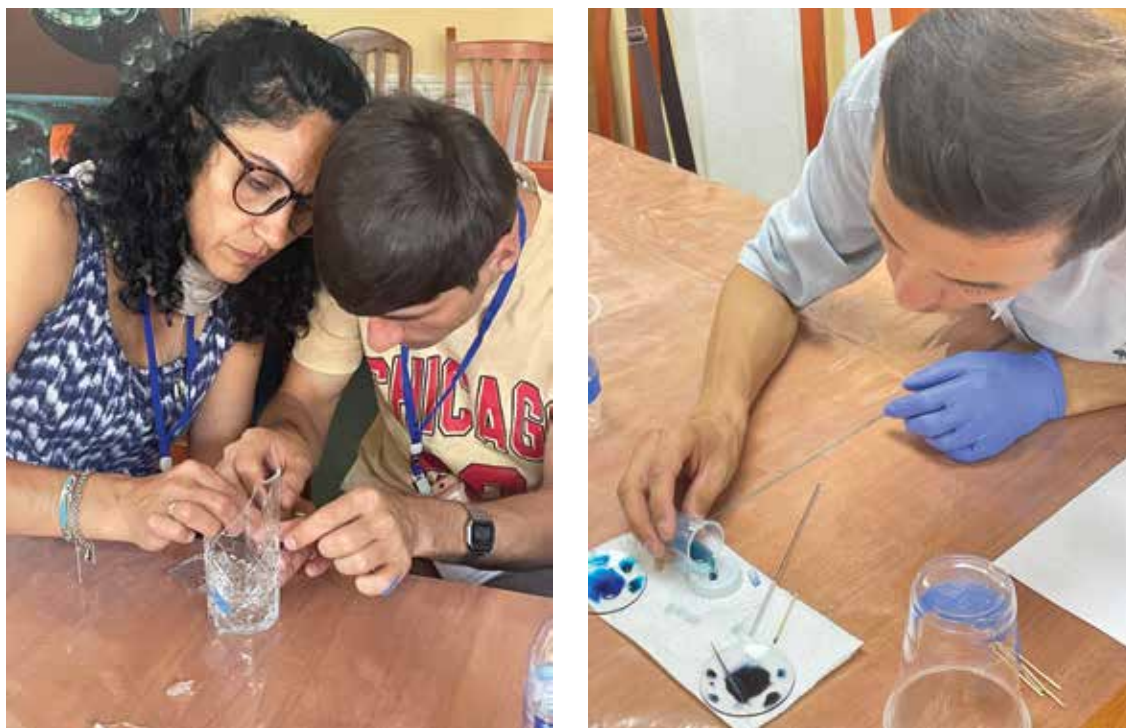


Figure 15. Participants in the CTPAC glass conservation workshop experiment with reconstruction and loss compensation techniques for glass artifacts.

into the chamber of the Field Museum’s analytical equipment (a type of mass spectrometer that analyzes minute samples in solid state). At the conclusion of the analysis, all objects were safely returned to ISAC. Associate registrar Susan Allison’s photography of the gold artifacts before they left ISAC was important in confirming that the objects were visibly unchanged.

In February, D’Alessandro presented a gallery talk titled “To Restore or Not to Restore—Who Makes the Decision? Restoration at the OI from the 1930s to the Present.” The tour included the restoration history of the Assyrian reliefs from Sargon II’s palace, the statue of Tutankhamun, the head of the colossal statue from Tell Tayinat, the Persian bull from Persepolis, and the male statue (ISACM A30921) in the special exhibition *Making Sense of Marbles*. During the year, D’Alessandro conducted a discussion on handling fragile materials in a museum setting to a class taught by Center for Middle Eastern Studies (CMES) lecturer Kathryn Bandy on approaches to the ancient Near East. D’Alessandro also took part in a class taught by Mehrnoush Soroush, assistant professor of landscape archaeology, on ancient empires by providing information on the treatment history of the Persepolis tablets and issues involved in the modern conservation and packing of the clay tablets for their return to Iran. The topic was timely, as the packing of the second shipment of Persepolis Fortification tablets was also completed this year. The crates holding the 3,506 tablets were held in museum storage while awaiting shipment to the National Museum of Iran in Tehran.

A significant portion of the year involved Conservation’s preparations for the 2023–24 special exhibition *Back to School in Babylonia*. Whyte focused on the assessments of the tablets and casts slated for the exhibition and determined that seventeen of the tablets would require stabilization to ready them for display (fig. 16). In spring and summer 2023 she spent much of her time on treating this important collection. For the exhibition catalog, the Conservation team contributed an essay on the historical background of the early field treatment of ISAC’s tablet collection, current conservation treatments, and issues faced today.

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Figure 16. Alison Whyte working on a tablet for the *Back to School in Babylonia* special exhibition.

And last, but certainly not least, this year we welcomed our new Museum director, Marc Maillot, who will take the Museum (and Conservation) in new directions. We look forward to what the next years will bring under his exciting leadership.

## REGISTRATION

This year, recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic continued with an increase in research visits and loans. The Museum's registration staff responded to more than eighty-five requests this year. Staff and student helpers carried out more than 10,000 object movements, and more than 450 objects were registered and photographed. Recently registered material included Iron Age potsherds from Alishar Höyük (Turkey), bronze arrowheads from Persepolis (Iran), and flint tools from Palegawra (Iraq).

### ***Collections Research Grant Recipients and Other Researchers***

Two more of our 2019–20 Collections Research Grant recipients were able to visit and carry out their research. Bart Vanthuyne (postdoctoral researcher, University of Cologne, Germany) came for two weeks in August and September 2022 to study and photograph ceramics from Quibell's excavations at Ballas (Egypt). He had already been able to clarify which pots came from the site through his study of the tomb numbers marked on the pottery from photographs taken by the registrar in 2020 and by comparing the corpus to the Petrie records. Moritz Jansen (German Mining Museum, Bochum, Germany) came for three weeks in March 2023 to study a selection of Mesopotamian gold objects. He also accompanied them on loan to the Field Museum to carry out laser ablation inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry (LA-ICP-MS) analysis under the auspices of Laure Dussubieux, manager of the Field Museum's Elemental Analysis Facility. In late February another loan went to the Field Museum for LA-ICP-MS analysis and Raman spectroscopy. This loan consisted of garnet beads, mostly from Nubia. The researchers on this project—Joanna Then-Obłuska (University of Warsaw, Poland), Albert Gilg (chair of engineering geology, Technical University of Munich, Germany), and Dussubieux—hope the analysis will allow the source(s) of the garnet to be identified.

Other research visits were as follows: Alexander Nagel (residential research associate, Department of Anthropology, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution) visited in July 2022 to study stone blocks and paper squeezes of inscriptions from Persepolis (Iran). Daniel Ruprecht (PhD student, University of Chicago) studied the *Iliad* fragment (E2058) and the Hadrian letter (E8349). Tasha Vorderstrasse (ISAC's continuing education program manager) made several visits to study Carthaginian coins in the Mannheimer collection. Douglas Baird (University of Liverpool, United Kingdom), who gave the Braidwood lecture in February 2023, got an overview of the flint tools from Palegawra excavated by Bruce Howe; Baird also has worked at Palegawra and is preparing a publication of his own excavations at the site. Abbas Alizadeh (ISAC research associate) came to study Lapuii ware from Tall i-Bakun (Iran) in March. His work enabled us to improve the descriptions of some Bakun sherds. Mark Garrison (Trinity University, San Antonio, Texas) and Christina Chandler (PhD student, Trinity University) visited several times during the year to study clay sealings from Persepolis. Savanna Buelman-Barbeau (PhD student, University of Toronto, Canada) came in May to study pottery from Chogha Mish (Iran) and the Diyala sites (Iraq). Marta Zingale (PhD student, University of Manchester, United Kingdom) came for three weeks in May and June to study Early Dynastic and Akkadian-period pottery from the Diyala and Nippur (Iraq).

## Loans

Some outgoing loans returned to us in summer 2022. Two objects from the Museum's Robert F. Picken Family Nubia Gallery—the Pekartror stela fragment (E6408) and the God's Wife Amenirdis I relief fragment (E14681)—returned from the Louvre Museum (Paris). They had been part of the exhibition on the Napatan kings that ended in July 2022 (*Pharaon des Deux Terres: L'épopée africaine des rois de Napata*). Several Persepolis objects returned from the J. Paul Getty Museum (Los Angeles), where they had been part of the *Persia: Ancient Iran and the Classical World* exhibition; the loan objects included the lion-and-bull relief (A73100), a stone lion head (A24089), a gold roundel (A28582), and the Xerxes tablet (A24120), all from displays in the ISAC Museum's Robert and Deborah Aliber Persia Gallery.

New loans also went out this year. In July 2022 a selection of Archaic Susiana and Early Susiana-period potsherds from Chogha Mish (Iran) were sent on loan for analysis to Emmanuelle Casanova (Marie Skłodowska-Curie research fellow, Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris). The analysis being carried out focuses on detection of lipids, indicating the use of milk. Samples from the sherds will be subjected to gas chromatography and mass spectrometry, as well as radiocarbon dating. In October 2022 a selection of Mesopotamian objects was loaned to the Morgan Library & Museum (New York City) for the exhibition *She Who Wrote: Enbeduanna and the Women of Mesopotamia*. (ISAC registrar Helen McDonald served as the courier for this loan on its way out.) The loaned objects included Diyala female sculptures (A11441, A12334, A12412A–B), cylinder seals (A7123, A17131, A27902, A27903), and a plaque (A12417). Most of these objects are usually on display in the Museum's Edgar and Deborah Jannotta Mesopotamian Gallery. The loan returned in February. In February 2023 we loaned two Mesopotamian objects—a piece of silver coil money (A9543) and a stone tablet, known as the “Chicago Stone” (A25412)—to the David and Alfred Smart Museum of Art on campus for the *Metropol Drama* exhibition.

In January 2023 we returned a loan of modern art pieces to the artist Mohamad Hafez (see Conservation section above). His works had been part of the centennial exhibition on display in the Museum's Edgar and Deborah Jannotta Mesopotamian Gallery.

## Class Use

With the assistance of Conservation, a selection of clay sealings from the Nubian site of Serra were made available for a class taught by CMES lecturer Kathryn Bandy: “Approaches to the Ancient Near East.” In February 2023, Foy Scalf—head of ISAC's Research Archives and Integrated Database Project—taught a class for Dominican University that included a selection of inscribed material (both tablets and manuscripts). In



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fall 2022 a selection of sealings and coins was made available for “Ancient Empires,” a class on Achaemenid administration taught by Mehrnoush Soroush, assistant professor of landscape archaeology.

### ***Other Events***

In July, McDonald organized the hosting of a meeting of the Chicago Collections and Registrar Specialists group at ISAC. In September, McDonald and associate registrar Susan Allison attended the Axiell conference in Chicago; Axiell is the company responsible for the collections management software used for the ISAC integrated database. In October, both registrars (along with the rest of the Museum’s collections staff) attended a workshop on fine-art insurance organized by Candace Walters, risk management claims specialist at the University of Chicago.

### ***Photo Permissions and Photography***

More than 150 photo permission requests were processed during the 2022–23 year, including new external and internal photography requests. More than 2,000 images, new and existing, have been added to the database. More than 40 objects were photographed, including both publication photography and study photos. Conservation condition photography was done for an additional 120 objects.

### ***Acknowledgments***

We thank the University of Chicago students who helped in Registration this year. In summer 2022, Hannah Griffin helped unpack and rehouse some of the material received from the Detroit Institute of Arts. During the academic year, we had the help of three students: Hannah Yang served as photography assistant and Madeline Conigliaro-Nguyen as photo archives assistant (helping with photo permissions, adding images to the integrated database, and updating the information for the objects on display in the Edgar and Deborah Jannotta Mesopotamian Gallery), and Evangelia Koronios, who joined us in the winter quarter, registered Iron Age sherds from Alishar Höyük (Turkey). Our volunteer helpers Terry Friedman and Toni Smith also returned in late spring 2023 and have been making a valuable contribution.

## MUSEUM ARCHIVES

The Museum Archives worked diligently this year to bring in new collections, provide access to researchers, and promote the collections online and in person through outreach, classes, and tours. Work continued on the ISAC Digital Archives with the preparation of curated and cataloged archival content; the Cultural Heritage Experiment finished another successful year; and efforts to implement the Institute’s new name across documentation and database entries began and are ongoing.

### ***New Acquisitions and Collection Processing***

The Museum Archives acquired a large amount of material this year through donation and active solicitation. Examples include the research and/or papers of ISAC professors emeriti McGuire Gibson, Edward Wente, and John Wilson and ISAC associate Carol Meyer. These collections will prove incredibly important to future researchers. Because of their size and scope, some of these collections are still undergoing processing.

Continuing to make photographic material more accessible to the public, PhD student and Museum Archives assistant Ling Chan contributed to linking photographic data to bibliographical references and scanning more than 25,000 photographic cards and cataloging them in the database. This process makes more digital photographs available online and provides references to works in which they are published. Master’s student and Museum Archives assistant Apollo El-Khatib continued to process the papers of the

late former ISAC Sumerologist Miguel Civil, while recent PhD graduate Colton Siegmund assisted with salvaging Civil's digital collection during spring 2023.

### ***General Overview of Research Requests***

The Museum Archives fielded research requests both online and in person, assisting researchers such as Domenico Andreucci, Douglas Baird, Elvan Cobb, Peter Der Manuelian, Anne Dunn-Vaturi, Allyson Gonzalez, Colin Halverson, Eva Rose Miller, Alexander Nagel, Rahim Rabenou, Emilie Sarrazin, Kathleen Sheppard, David Wengrow, and Meredyth Winter.

Requests came from institutions as varied as the University of Arizona, Harvard University, Hong Kong Baptist University, Indiana University, University College London, University of Liverpool, Metropolitan Museum, Missouri University of Science and Technology, Philadelphia Museum of Art, University of Potsdam, and University of Turin.

Collections that were accessed include, but were not limited to, the ISAC Directors Correspondence; the Papers of Robert and Linda Braidwood, James Henry Breasted, Henri Frankfort, and Helene Kantor; and the records of the Mendes, Nippur, Persepolis, and Rayy excavations.

### ***Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures Digital Archives***

Started by former ISAC archivist John Larson in 2010 with the inaugural publication *Letters from James Henry Breasted to His Family, August 1919–July 1920*, the formerly named Oriental Institute Digital Archives (OIDA—now ISACDA) is a digital series that strives to promote the Museum's archival collections by exploring ISAC's history through archival documentation. Two digital projects are currently nearing publication. The first is a collection of letters from John Wilson's first year as director of the Institute in 1936. In conversation with Foy Scalf, archivists Claire Makrauer-Madden and Hilarie Pitman Pozesky selected and transcribed letters from the Directors Correspondence, gathering them in a volume highlighting the financial struggles faced by Wilson and the Institute during this critical moment in its history. The second project comprises German transcriptions and English translations of Uvo Hölscher's Medinet Habu excavation notebooks, prepared by ISAC associate and retired curator Emily Teeter with the expert linguistic assistance of Anne Schumacher and Barbara Jillson. These volumes are in the final stages of preparation and will cover the four notebooks, each of which will be published in two parts: one with a scan of the original German and a German transcription, the other with a scan of the original German and an English translation.

### ***Special Projects and Outreach***

The Museum Archives continued its commitment to reaching out to our campus community and engaging with scholars beyond Chicago. This outreach includes undergraduate engagement, graduate instruction, conferences, and exhibition support. This year, the Cultural Heritage Experiment took place in person and enjoyed a record turnout: sixty-two undergraduates participated by borrowing an archival object to live with for the academic year. Students provided in situ photographs throughout the year (fig. 17) and participated in ISAC archival tours and a lecture on the history of archaeological photography by Tasha Vorderstrasse, ISAC's continuing education program manager.

ISAC Museum archivist Anne Flannery supported graduate students who might want to enter the field of archives and special collections by teaching the University of Chicago's graduate course "Managing the Past: Careers in Archives and Special Collections" in fall 2022. This course covered a short history of archives while introducing students to archival and museum practices, concepts, and contemporary challenges. In addition to weekly classes, students participated in informational interviews and created portfolios that highlighted their new skills and resources.

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Figure 17. Examples of objects in the homes of students.

The Museum Archives continued to cooperate with local institutions to encourage research and communicate ISAC's history. Working with North Central College (NCC) in Naperville, Illinois, the Museum Archives provided photographs and documentation for the poster presentation of NCC anthropology student (now graduate) Megan Sands. The presentation examines the work of James Henry Breasted (also an NCC graduate) and will remain on display at the college (fig. 18).



Figure 18. Megan Sands of North Central College presenting her archival research.

In honor of the name-change event on April 4, 2023, the Museum Archives created a small exhibit (see Special Exhibitions section above). The exhibit case contained essential documentation relating to the history of ISAC, including the original Haskell Museum Register, the Rockefeller letter granting funding for the Institute’s establishment, and a photograph of the groundbreaking ceremony for the building that currently houses ISAC (fig. 19). In addition, the Museum Archives supported the special exhibitions program by contributing original documents for the fall 2022 show titled *Making Sense of Marbles: Roman Sculpture at the OI*.

### **Acknowledgments**

Many thanks to everyone who supports the ISAC Museum Archives, including all staff and especially Susan Allison, Rob Bain, Ling Chan, Vick Cruz, Apollo El-Khatib, Helen McDonald, Mariana Perlinac, Josh Tulisak, and Catie Witt. Foy Scalf offered invaluable expertise to the Museum Archives

this year through consultation and continued assistance with the Robert K. Ritner Papers. And thank you to Brendan Bulger, Marc Maillot, Matt Perley, and Theo van den Hout for administrative support of Museum Archives.



Figure 19. Archival mini-exhibit.

## ISAC MUSEUM SHOP

This year the ISAC Museum Shop (formerly the Suq) had opening hours on Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Sales rates were steady, but maintaining and expanding them will require a full week of opening hours. The Museum team is currently working on solutions for returning the shop to a pre-pandemic schedule of opening hours.

As part of the celebration of the Institute’s name change on April 4, 2023, the shop created dedicated retail for the event and reserved a space for an “Oriental Institute” overstock sale during this milestone in the history of our institution. The shop’s name also changed to match the new name of the Institute and maintain consistency in our branding.

The shop’s product line benefited from many people throughout the year. We particularly wish to express our deepest thanks to Christine Amirian—whose parents were dear friends of the ISAC Museum shop for more than forty-five years—and to Nike Whitcomb, who donated special treasures from her husband, James McKechnie.





PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

OVERLEAF: Cup with alternating lotus blossoms and buds. Baked clay, paint. Meroitic period (first to third century CE). Nubia, Ballana. ISACM E22909.

# PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

MATTHEW WELTON, TASHA VORDERSTRASSE,  
KATHERINE HODGE, AND CATHERINE WITT

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The last quarter of the 2022–23 year covered by this annual report saw a restructuring in administration at ISAC. Matthew Welton, previously the manager of member programming, was promoted to associate director of communications, programming, and marketing, a position that oversees the new Programming and Communications department. With the creation of this new position, public programming and outreach have been centralized into one unit at ISAC. Adult Education, the Youth and Family program, the ISAC travel program, and Community Engagement with its volunteer and docent core are now united in a department that is designed to work with ISAC at large, so that all units can be adequately represented as we bring the work, research, and history of our institute to the greater public.

This restructuring coincided with the renaming of the Oriental Institute as the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures—West Asia & North Africa. For the short time this department has been in operation, much of the focus has been on coordinating all aspects of the renaming process and communicating this monumental change. Though the name has successfully been changed and our name-change reception is now in the history books, the work on public education surrounding our decision to transition from OI to ISAC remains ongoing.

While public reaction to our name change was positive overall, we believe it is our duty to continue to integrate topics pertaining to the change and to our history in a growing discourse that extends the walls of ISAC. To accomplish this goal, we will continue to grow and expand the community conversations that were started by our previous community engagement and docent/volunteer manager, Stanford Carpenter. Through in-person and online conversations, we seek to deepen our institutional engagement with both University of Chicago students and the general public—not only on issues surrounding our name change but on a variety of topics that will allow us to discuss our collective present by using lessons learned during more than a century of research studying the cultures of ancient West Asia and North Africa.

The restructuring and creation of the Programming and Communications department is as new as our name. While reports from the managers of Adult Education, the Youth and Family program, and the volunteer and docent program are shared here, other public programming that occurred at ISAC during the 2022–23 year may be found scattered throughout other sections of this annual report.

With the restructuring, we also experienced change in ISAC personnel. We said farewell to Stanford Carpenter, our former community engagement manager, and welcomed Catie Witt as manager of the docent and volunteer program. We entered the new year anticipating that a search for our next community engagement manager would soon be underway.

## ADULT EDUCATION

### *Youth Internship Program*

From June 30 to August 4, 2022, ISAC had an opportunity to take part in the University of Chicago's Youth Internship Program, coordinated through the Office of Civic Engagement. The youth interns were



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all high school students from institutions on Chicago's South Side, and the program gave them the opportunity to participate in activities in different departments of the university. The two students who took part in the program with ISAC were Samia Chatman, of Perspectives/IIT Math & Science Academy, and Morgan Eggleston, of Kenwood Academy.

For six weeks, the students learned how to help document the collections housed in the Education Office, and they met with youth and family program manager Kate Hodge for an hour each week to hear about archaeology and archaeological methodologies. While learning how to document and describe pottery, stones, and other materials, including modern replicas, they also gained skills in organizing their time and developing a research plan, so that at the end of the internship they could give a presentation on their work to a small audience. Samia presented to a group that included ISAC interim director Theo van den Hout; her work as an ISAC intern is featured at <https://collegiatescholars.uchicago.edu/participants/samia-chatman>.

### Classes

ISAC continued to offer online classes this year, including, in the summer quarter, "Cracking Codes: Champollion's Decipherment of Hieroglyphs in Its Historical Context." This eight-week class was taught jointly by ISAC Research Archives head Foy Scalf, continuing education manager Tasha Vorderstrasse, and two instructors from the University of Chicago's Graham School, Fred Beuttler and Zoë Eisenman. The class was very well attended, with 74 registrants. In fall 2022, "Community Archaeology" was jointly taught by Vorderstrasse and Rachel George, a PhD candidate in the Department of Anthropology. The winter quarter focused on art and archaeology from Ethiopia and Eritrea, starting with a free class, "Garima Gospels: Late Antique Manuscripts from Ethiopia," taught by Vorderstrasse. It attracted 281 registrants and was followed by Vorderstrasse's three-week class "The Aksumite Empire: Ethiopia and Eritrea in the 1st Millennium CE." In the spring quarter, Vorderstrasse taught "Building/Imagining Baghdad: From Art Deco to Rifat Chadirji to Frank Lloyd Wright." In summer 2023, the free class on author Drusilla Dunjee Houston's history *Wonderful Ethiopians of the Ancient Cushite Empire* celebrated Juneteenth, and Brendan Hainline started teaching "Reading the Pyramid Texts: Introduction to Old Egyptian," which continued into August.

### Teacher Workshops

Teacher workshops took place in fall 2022 and spring 2023. Three of the fall workshops were conducted by Vorderstrasse alone—"Axumite Empire and Trade," "Napatan Queens," and "Arabic Alchemy and the Philosopher's Stone"—while the fourth was taught by Vorderstrasse in cooperation with Kate Hodge: "Worshipping the Conquerors," in which Vorderstrasse focused on ruler worship of the Ptolemies and Hodge presented a study of Columbus Day. Two teacher workshops took place in spring 2023 and were inspired by the ISAC Museum's *Artifacts Also Die* exhibition: "Depicting Excavations" and "Depicting the World's Columbian Exposition." The addition of Hodge's expertise on indigenous peoples in the Americas has brought a new aspect to the teacher workshop and has begun to draw connections between West Asia/North Africa and other parts of the world where people might not normally see connections.

### University and Other Tours

University tours continued to be popular throughout the year, particularly in the fall. Vorderstrasse gave a total of thirty-nine tours to 247 University of Chicago students, 140 Laboratory School students, and staff. The tours included Vorderstrasse's postcolonial tour as well as specialized tours on Abbasid Baghdad. Vorderstrasse also offered a specialized tour on ancient Kush for the public in June.

## ***Explorers Lecture***

Vorderstrasse organized the lecture “Creating Nubia: How Colonialism, Tourism, and Archaeology Made a Region, a Past, and a People,” given in December 2022 by Will Carruthers of the University of East Anglia.

## ***Social Media***

Adult Education maintained a strong presence across Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, thanks to Kate Hodge’s continued assistance with writing social media posts on most Fridays as well as assuming the task on some Wednesdays. Ryan Winters, a postdoctoral scholar at ISAC, also helped by writing posts about ancient tablets. His work included helping translate a tablet that proved to be the most popular Facebook post ever, on Ur III female workers. The year saw strong engagement with ISAC’s social media posts, particularly during the hundred-year anniversary of the discovery of King Tutankhamun’s tomb, when we featured the work of Johannes Weninger, stonemason at Chicago House in Luxor, Egypt.

## YOUTH AND FAMILY PROGRAM

This year, the goal of the Youth and Family program was to reestablish postpandemic consistency. We worked to increase attendance numbers and to cultivate an audience from around Chicago.

### ***Field Trip Highlights***

From July 2022 to June 2023, 2,038 people came to the ISAC Museum for sixty-eight educational field trips. These programs were led and taught by a team of six education facilitators—Chloe Brettman (lead facilitator), Samantha Suppes, Adrianna Layne, Nat Larsen, Madeleine Roberts-Ganim, and Catherine Witt—in addition to Youth and Family program manager Kate Hodge.

Five educational programs were offered, all of them standards aligned, engaging, and inquiry based. Three were standard field trips, one for each age group: Time Travelers (grades K–4), Artifact Analysis (grades 5–12), and Ancient Innovators (grades 5–12). Newly added were two limited-time field trips based on this year’s special exhibitions: Making Sense of Artifacts and Artifacts Also Die. Of the sixty-eight educational programs hosted by the ISAC Museum, eleven were Time Travelers, twenty-five were Artifact Analysis, thirteen were Ancient Innovators, four were Making Sense of Artifacts, five were a guided tour and film, and ten were guided tours led by facilitators.

For the first time, the Youth and Family program had a pro bono budget to work with in 2023. Thanks to this budget, as well as to partnerships with Communities in Schools, Amplify, Neighborhood School Partnership, Project Exploration, and educators across campus, approximately 250 people in fourteen groups came for a Youth and Family educational program or experience. We look forward to continuing to increase these numbers in the coming year.

In addition to educational field-trip programs, the ISAC Museum also continued offering the option of self-guided tours. We hosted 111 self-guided tour groups with a total of 2,657 individuals.

### ***Program Highlights***

Programming with weekend workshops and weekend events has been an effective and important component of Youth and Family education. In 2022–23, we taught more than 1,250 people during these events. We focused on reestablishing our three annual events—Haunted Halloween (formerly known as Mummies Night), Nowruz, and Ancient Game Day—as well as on creating a consistent weekend programming schedule that allowed for instruction on more specific topics. This year, we discovered that maintaining a consistent weekend workshop schedule while also hosting larger, open-house-type events was the format that

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catered to the largest and most diverse audience. The weekend workshops allowed for new programs to be piloted to a dedicated and local audience, while open-house programs promoted widespread learning to a larger audience from around the city.

Haunted Halloween hosted 560 people and a further 40 at a screening of the movie *Hocus Pocus*, shown later that evening (fig. 1). We offered new craft options that were very popular and a free “spooky” tour. In addition to updating the event’s name, the previously used mummy simulation was refreshed to be a formal lesson that turned out to be very popular. All four classes offered sold out more than a week in advance, and during the event attendance at the lessons exceeded capacity.

Nowruz had around 250 attendees, and we were able to bring back the tea-and-snack-sampling experience. Guests enjoyed sampling as well as gallery scavenger hunts. In 2023–24 we hope to resume the performance component of the event.

About 150 people attended Ancient Game Day, and thanks to the fine weather many people enjoyed games outside.



Figure 1. Haunted Halloween poster, created by Josh Tulusiak.



Figure 2. aDNA workshop participant showing off her candy double helix.



Figure 3. Lead facilitator Chloe Brettman demonstrating headrest use for students.

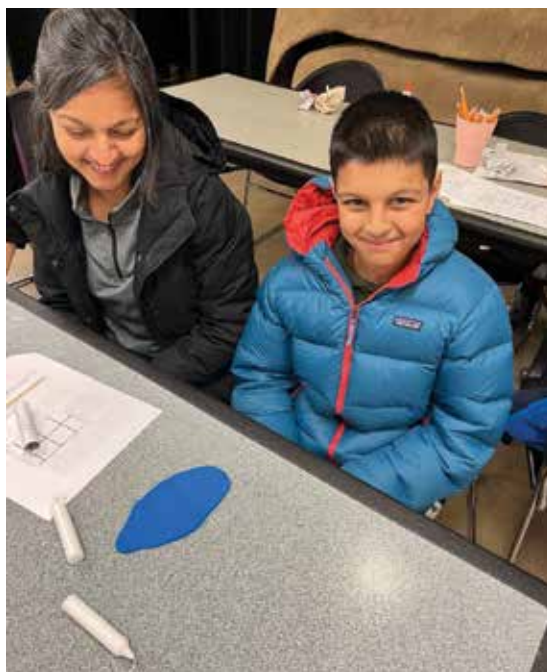


Figure 4. Young workshop participant showing off his cylinder seal design.



Figure 5. Education facilitator Adrianna Layne educating young students about artifact replicas.

In addition to the three annual events, the Youth and Family program organized six other weekend events (figs. 2–5). Two of them were brand-new lessons created in 2023: aDNA and Junior Archaeologist. In partnership with the Pritzker School, aDNA welcomed approximately twenty-five students, who learned how to extract DNA while hearing about the aDNA research of University of Chicago postdoctoral research fellow Hannah Moots. Junior Archaeologist used the Project Archaeology investigation model to allow twenty students to investigate the Jarmo House. The King Tut Day, Nubia: Land of the Bow, and Stamp Seals events were all refreshed and updated and attracted around seventy students.

Ancient Earth Day was another program that was refreshed, updated, and modified this year. In this program, approximately 150 guests did sustainability-themed crafts and learned about examples of recycling and reuse in the ancient world through facilitator-led gallery talks.

### ***Data Collection***

The Youth and Family program has been committed to increasing the collection of data both about its own activities and for the ISAC Museum. We created a standardized data collection model for Visitor Services that was implemented in April 2022. Since its implementation, attendance data—about variables such as age, time of entry, visitor status, and more—has been collected in a standardized and shareable manner. Its continued collection during the Museum’s opening hours has resulted in a great deal of information that has already proven enormously useful. In the future, it can be used to make data-driven decisions for the Museum.

Guests fill out an evaluation form for the Youth and Family programs they attend, from field trips to weekend events. For field trips, evaluations are filled out by each chaperone and each teacher; in 2022–23, these evaluations totaled 112. More than 90 percent of the evaluators rated both the tour and the program itself a 5 out of 5, demonstrating the quality of the programming offered. The Youth and Family program plans to use these evaluations to make data-driven decisions in the future.

## PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

In the coming year, we look forward to writing new lessons, including a formalized Mummification field-trip option and a lesson based on the special ISAC Museum exhibition *Back to School in Babylonia*. We will work to standardize lesson plans aligned with Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards. Finally, we look forward to continuing and strengthening partnerships with the Shedd Aquarium, NPS, CIS, Amplify, and other organizations in Chicago and on campus.

The projects and programming accomplished this year would not have been possible without the expertise and time of the education facilitators, Tasha Vorderstrasse, or the docents who kindly volunteered to help with programs.

## VOLUNTEER AND DOCENT PROGRAM

In 2022–23 we continued to bring docents slowly back into the ISAC Museum galleries after resuming docent-led tours in March 2022 and in-person programming for all volunteers following the hiatus during the COVID-19 pandemic. School groups started to return, but our overall visitor and tour numbers in 2022–23 were low compared to 2019 and early 2020.

Prior to the suspension of docent-guided tours in mid-March 2020, K–12 groups comprised an important part of these tours. In 2018–19, docents gave sixty-eight guided tours for K–12 groups, of which fourteen (21 percent) were guided tours done with the K–12 field-trip programs Artifact Analysis and Ancient Innovators, with a total of fifteen docents participating. In 2019 until March 2020, docents gave thirty-six guided K–12 tours, of which eight (22 percent) were guided tours done with K–12 field-trip programs, with a total of twenty docents participating. These statistics show a considerable stability in the types of guided tours offered by docents between 2018 and 2020.

Whereas field trips continued in a virtual form over the course of the pandemic, the guided tours did not, so the numbers of guided tours of all types were at a low when tours resumed in March 2022. Prior to July 1, 2022, thirteen docent-led tours took place, including for three K–12 school groups. A total of eleven docents participated in the guided tours. After July 1, 2022, docents gave a total of thirty-one tours, of which five were for K–12 groups. A total of fifteen docents gave guided tours. These totals indicate that the number of tours given in person was down prior to the pandemic.

Docents and volunteers also participated in the large ISAC events this year by helping with public programs, giving Ask Me/ad hoc tours, and generally assisting Kate Hodge and Matt Welton with events, such as Haunted Halloween and the *Black Panther* film screening in 2022, and Nowruz, Akitu, ISAC's name-change celebration, and Ancient Earth Day in 2023.

Our volunteer managers, Stanford Carpenter and subsequently Catherine Witt, reengaged with volunteers in person through our Volunteer Days, refresher tours, and Book Club meetings. As community engagement and docent and volunteer manager from July 1, 2022, to May 2, 2023, Carpenter, together with Membership, organized “Champollion and Champagne: 200 Years of Decipherment of Hieroglyphs.” The purpose of this event was to bring community members together for a gallery talk by Brian Muhs, associate professor of Egyptology, and short gallery engagements with Tanya Olson, PhD student in Egyptology, and Rolland Long, PhD student at the University of Pennsylvania and employee of the Chicago Demotic Dictionary.

Following this event was one in November to celebrate the release of the new *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* movie. A screening of the original *Black Panther* film was followed by a roundtable discussion with Morag Kersel and Ytasha Womack. In addition, a November Book Club meeting with James Osborne discussed *The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity*, by David Graeber and David Wengrow. December featured a Volunteer Day with August McMahon, February a Volunteer Day with Marc Maillot, and March a Volunteer Day with Kiersten Neumann. March saw a Volunteer Book Club with Stanford Carpenter discussing Edward Said's *Orientalism*, and April a Volunteer Book Club with Ytasha Womack

discussing her book *Afrofuturism*, as well as a Volunteer Day with Mehrnoush Soroush. Catherine Witt was brought on as docent and volunteer manager in May 2023; she organized the May Volunteer Day with Theo van den Hout, led the June Book Club discussing *Cleopatra: Her History, Her Myth*, by Francine Prose, and organized the July Volunteer Day with J. Brett McClain (figs. 6–7).

The year was also marked by the sad passing of several supporters and important members of our volunteer community, including Doug Baldwin, Gabriele DaSilva, John DeWard, Erl Dordal, Margaret Foorman, Kitty Picken, and George Thomson. We are forever grateful for their devotion and service to ISAC.

While the 2022–23 year was one of transition for ISAC’s docent and volunteer program and education department, we look forward to revitalizing the volunteer program in 2023–24 by offering additional volunteer opportunities, programs, and updated training for docents, and we thank everyone for their continued support and resilience.



Figure 6. May 2023 Volunteer Day tour of the galleries with Theo van den Hout. Photo by Catherine Witt.



Figure 7. July 2023 Volunteer Day with J. Brett McClain. Photo by Catherine Witt.





DEVELOPMENT AND MEMBERSHIP





# DEVELOPMENT AND MEMBERSHIP

BILL COSPER, BRAD LENZ, AND EMILY SMITH

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The Development and Membership team oversees and undertakes all activities related to ISAC's philanthropic support, membership programming, and event planning. These areas of activity work together to attract, sustain, expand, and strengthen a base of partners and supporters committed to advancing ISAC's mission and goals and increasing our financial resources.

After the staffing impacts and transitions that coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic, by the end of the 2022–23 academic and fiscal year (FY) we had a full team working to fulfill our goals and leverage new opportunities for ISAC and its family of supporters. The team comprised Bill Cosper, director of development; Emily Smith, development and events associate (as of October 2022); and Brad Lenz, assistant director of development and membership (as of April 2023).

Two major events were special highlights of FY 2023. One was the unveiling of our new name and logo. After more than two years of research and planning, the Oriental Institute officially became the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures—West Asia & North Africa (ISAC) on April 4, 2023. The name change was undertaken with much thought, research, and time, and our new name more accurately and directly reflects the regions, peoples, and cultures we study and work with. It will shape and guide our long-standing work for years to come. We celebrated this great change with a special reception in the Museum that featured comments from University of Chicago President Paul Alivisatos, Provost Katherine Baicker, and ISAC Interim Director Theo van den Hout and that was attended by more than 150 of our most dedicated friends and supporters.

Making an equally important, if less public, impact on the operational health and well-being of ISAC was the phenomenal gift we received from the estate of longtime dedicated ISAC supporter and Advisory Council member Lois Schwartz. More than \$11 million of her bequest has been invested to provide critically important income to support all aspects of our operations and programs, with a significantly smaller portion funding some important shorter-term institutional priorities and needs. Lois and her late husband, Maury, were generous funders of many programs and institutions studying the areas and cultures that are ISAC's focus, and their great generosity to us is a wonderful testament to their legacy.

We were further honored by the creation of the Jill Carlotta Maher Youth and Family Fund by her family and friends as a permanent addition to the legacy of Carlotta Maher, whose leadership and generous financial contributions as a tireless volunteer, champion for Chicago House, and member of ISAC's Advisory Council are ongoing inspirations for everyone here.

It is thanks to contributions of every size and type that ISAC can sustain and expand our more than 100 years of excellence as a center for research, learning, and cultural preservation. To advance the Institute's philanthropic efforts, ISAC's development team works closely with constituents from across the organization, including senior administrative leaders, faculty, researchers, program staff, Advisory Council members, and other volunteers, along with the University of Chicago's Alumni Relations and Development office.

## DEVELOPMENT AND MEMBERSHIP

## ISAC ADVISORY COUNCIL

Manifested through their leadership, commitment, and generosity, ISAC's Advisory Council members are a crucial aspect of our success and one for which we are immensely grateful. Members of the Council engage with ISAC in many ways, including supporting projects financially, serving as ambassadors for the Institute, volunteering as docents or in collections research, and taking part in our tours, as well as providing guidance and advice based on their careers and experiences.

As of June 30, 2023, Council members included:

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Thomas C. Heagy*	Walter Vandaele
Janet W. Helman*	Anna M. White

*\*Life member*

We were very sorry to lose four important Council members, who passed away in FY 2023. All of them were passionate supporters of ISAC and deeply engaged in every aspect of their involvement with us:

Arthur Herbst (former chair)  
Neil King  
Elizabeth (Kitty) Picken  
John Rowe (former chair)

## PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT

ISAC is deeply grateful for the generous support provided by our members, donors, and partners in service of our mission to enhance scholarly understanding and public awareness of the places, peoples, and heritages we study. Their financial contributions fueled various research initiatives, cultural preservation endeavors, educational programs, and the ongoing activities of the ISAC Museum and its collections.

This critically important funding, along with the unwavering commitment of ISAC's Advisory Council, members, and volunteers, enables us to support and build on the remarkable dedication of our faculty, staff, and students to fortify ISAC's reputation and impact as one of the world's leading centers for research on the ancient world and to sustain our well-earned reputation for academic excellence and rigor.

Throughout the past year, it is this philanthropic support that has allowed us to deepen and expand every aspect of what we do. For example, after the challenges caused by COVID-19 and other factors, we were

thrilled to be getting our fieldwork teams back into full action. ISAC archaeologists, along with their graduate students and research teams, have been working in nations all across our focus regions, at sites straddling several millennia and societies and in places ranging from Egypt to Turkey, from Spain to Uzbekistan, and more. We are especially excited to have three field projects underway in Iraq as of summer 2023, including our impending return to the excavations at Nippur, where we started working more than six decades ago.

## MEMBERSHIP

ISAC was pleased to return to full activity in FY 2023—from our field excavations and public programs to every aspect of the ISAC Museum, which welcomed more than 26,500 visitors during the year.

Many of our Museum visitors joined the more than 1,400 families and individuals who were already ISAC members. We were pleased to be able to continue our membership programming activities this past year and to begin planning for a newly enriched and expanded range of member programming in the coming year.

Our monthly lectures offered in 2022–23 drew nearly 1,000 in-person attendees, as well as more than 35,000 viewers on YouTube, both live and via recordings. A sampling of just a few of these talks illustrates the rich opportunities for learning we provided for our members:

- Douglas Baird (University of Liverpool), “Skulls and Animate Houses”
- Peter Der Manuelian (Harvard University), “Visualizing the Pyramids: Old Digs, New Technologies”
- Richard Jasnow (Johns Hopkins University), “Do You Believe in Thoth? My Life with an Amiable Ancient Egyptian God”
- Augusta McMahon (University of Chicago), “Affluent Suburbs or Disenfranchised Banlieue: The Urban Edge at Nippur, Iraq”
- Felipe Rojas Silva (Brown University), “Cuneiform and Cross: Early Armenian Re-use of Urartian Inscriptions”
- Sofía Torallas-Tovar (University of Chicago), “Egyptians in Athens: Following the Trails of Words”

In addition to our monthly lectures, which are open to the public, we held a special, members-only event in November that celebrated the centennial of the rediscovery of Tutankhamun’s tomb. Cosponsored by the Chicago chapter of the American Research Center in Egypt, this event featured guided tours of the Museum, after which Egyptologist and ISAC associate Emily Teeter presented a lively talk about the impact and modern importance of Tutankhamun.

Members expressed their pleasure at continuing to receive both printed and electronic issues of *News & Notes*, our quarterly magazine, which presents in-depth articles and updates on current topics, research, and other ISAC activities.

We encourage all members to look for forthcoming information about new and expanded programming in the year ahead. It will include more learning opportunities, film screenings, a new member tour program, and much more.

## HONOR ROLL OF DONORS AND MEMBERS

ISAC expresses our deepest gratitude to all the generous supporters who advanced ISAC’s mission and influence by making a new contribution, documented pledge, or stated commitment of \$100 or more during FY 2023 (the period from July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023). We take great pleasure in acknowledging their dedication and publicly recognizing the profound impact of their generosity on all we do.

DEVELOPMENT AND MEMBERSHIP

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Please contact us at [isac-development@uchicago.edu](mailto:isac-development@uchicago.edu) about any corrections that need to be made.*



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OVERLEAF: Relief panel from Sargon II's palace at Dur-Sharrukin, showing the king holding a lotus bunch. Gypsum. Neo-Assyrian period (721-705 BCE). ISACM A7359.

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