

## The Institute of ARCHAEOLOGY Siegfried H. Horn Museum



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INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY  
HORN ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
MUSEUM  
NEWSLETTER

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## Museum Tablets On-line

Most of the nearly 3000 cuneiform tablets in the Horn Archaeological Museum, one of the largest collections in the US, are available in hard-copy book form as part of the Institute of Archaeology Publications Assyriological Series, in 8 volumes (1984-2003), by Marcel Sigrist. However, until recently, outside of the publications, there was no method, short of visiting the Museum's collection itself, for interested scholars to study this material.

To make this material, and thousands of other cuneiform tablets in institutions worldwide more accessible, the *Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative (CDLI)*, under the direction of Robert Englund of UCLA and Peter Damerow of the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin, is changing the paradigm. The *CDLI* represents the efforts of an international group of Assyriologists, museum curators and historians of science to make the content of cuneiform tablets, which date from ca. 3350 BC-AD 75, available on the internet. Out of the estimated 500,000 tablets in public and private collections around the world, about 225,000 have been catalogued in electronic format by the *CDLI*.

In 2002 Cale Johnson scanned around 900 tablets from the Horn Museum on a standard 600 dpi scanner under darkroom conditions and offset them by 10 degrees, creating a shadow in order to better see the cuneiform signs imprinted on the tablets. In August of 2009 another 634 tablets from the Museum's collection were scanned by Michael Heinle and Lance Allred using the same process with updated computers. By the time this article appears in print Heinle will have come for a more extended visit to scan many more of the tablets from our collection.

The tablets scanned to date can be found on the *CDLI* website at <http://cdli.ucla.edu/collections/horn/horn.html>. (Paul J. Ray, Jr.)



Lance Allred and Michael Heinle Digitizing Horn Museum Cuneiform Tablets.

## Hasel Lecture

On February 16, 2009 Dr. Michael Hasel, professor of Ancient Near Eastern Studies at Southern Adventist University and curator of the Lynn H. Wood archaeological museum, presented a lecture on *The Identification of Canaanite Territories, Cities, and Peoples in the New Kingdom of Egypt* for the Horn Lecture Series.

There are many inscriptions covering pyramids, tombs, and obelisks in Egypt. In this lecture Dr. Hasel focused on military inscriptions, which center around the concepts of order and chaos with the Egyptians bringing order to foreign peoples. The Egyptians depicted all kinds of places and people, including Nubians, Libyans, Asiatics, and Hittites. All these people were depicted differently and seemingly accurately. A common theme is the smiting of foreign people by the pharaoh. One of the most important steles for connections to the biblical land is the Merneptah stele. Found in 1896, this stele mentions the conquest of foreign lands including Israel and dates to 1208/7 BC. The name “Israel” is followed by a determinative for people, placing Israel as a people in the land of Canaan along with important sites such as Gaza and Ashkelon. However, Israel is different than the other names mentioned because the determinatives of the latter indicate villages/towns or a territory. Originally John Wilson, who translated the stele in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, suggested that the determinative “people” for Israel could be due to a scribal error or carelessness. This citation was quoted often by other scholars seeking to place doubt on the exact usage of Israel. Hasel decided to do a thorough study of all determinatives to see if scribes were ever careless or inexact in their usage. There are 220 different names used over 1200 times in the New Kingdom texts for places within the scope of the biblical world, leaving out places like Kush (Nubia) in Africa.

Hasel focused on the name Qadesh in Egyptian sources as a case study to see



Michael Hasel.

how consistent the scribes were. The Battle of Qadesh is recorded in more places than any other event in Egyptian history. Rameses II had it inscribed in several places throughout Upper and Lower Egypt and there are three papyri versions as well. These different versions are recorded in different literary styles and so it is excellent for testing the consistency of scribal usage of the determinatives. Qadesh was important as a border area between Egypt and Hatti (the land of the Hittites) located in northern Syria along the Orontes River. The Battle of Qadesh took place in 1174 BC, during year 5 of the reign of Rameses II. It was a fierce battle and both Hittite and Egyptian forces claimed victory. However, Rameses outdoes the Hittites by claiming that he alone defeated the enemy.

In New Kingdom literary texts, Hittite names are the most frequently mentioned, and in the poems that record the above-mentioned event, the majority are found with determinatives for the city or Egyptian enemies. There are 380 names, 367 preserved determinatives and only 3 inconsistencies, with the latter found only in the papyri, not on the reliefs. In the bulletin, or more formal account of the campaign, there is only one inconsistency. On the reliefs themselves, there are 85 names with 79 determinatives, and no inconsistencies. Hasel points out that it is known that scribes sometimes accompanied pharaohs on their military campaigns and at the very least based their inscriptions on the daybooks

of the campaigns. So it is safe to say that these scribes had a sound knowledge of foreign geography. (Owen Chesnut)



## Yunker Lecture

On March 30, 2009 Dr. Randall Yunker, director of the Institute of Archaeology and Professor of Old Testament and Archaeology at Andrews University, gave a lecture entitled *Forgotten Treasures of Biblical Archaeology* for the Horn Lecture Series.

In biblical archaeology there has been a debate in recent years between maximalists (those who believe in the historicity of the Bible) and minimalists (those who believe that the Bible was written late and that most of the stories have no historical foundation). In this lecture Dr. Yunker focused on archaeological discoveries that have been “forgotten.”

According to Kenneth Kitchen, 17 out of the 20 foreign rulers mentioned in the Bible are known from extrabiblical sources, and 9 out of the 14 kings of Judah and Israel that are said to have had interactions with the rulers of Mesopotamia are mentioned in the annals of those kings. In addition, the names of 10 rulers of Israel and Judah have been found on artifacts found on archaeological excavations in Israel and Jordan. One of the most well-known accounts from the Bible is the siege of Lachish, by Sennacherib, of which there are wall reliefs from his palace depicting the siege as well as the Taylor Prism, yielding additional information. These textual finds are supported by other archaeological discoveries from the site of Lachish.

Although there is no archaeological evidence that establishes the biblical Flood account, there are many documents from ancient Mesopotamia that correspond with the biblical account. They have the same sequence: creation of world, something goes wrong, and how the deity deals with the problem. The Atrahasis Epic has the same tripartite structure. Other

creation and flood epics include Enuma Elish and the Gilgamesh Epic.

Important finds from Egypt include the Rosetta Stone, used to translate Egyptian hieroglyphics, and the Amarna Letters, clay tablets that reflect correspondence between rulers of city-states in Canaan and the pharaoh in Egypt.

There are many other discoveries that lend support to biblical accounts. The Moabite Stone (or Mesha Stele) and the Dan Stele both mention the house of David, in reference to the kingdom of Judah. The Moabite Stone is a direct parallel, from the perspective of the Moabite king Mesha, of the biblical account of 2 Kings 3. There are accounts mentioning other Israelite kings such as Ahab at the battle of Qarqar. Jehu is seen giving trib-

ute to Shalmaneser III on the Black Obelisk. The Siloam Tunnel Inscription makes mention of one of the works that Hezekiah began in preparation for the Assyrian army led by Sennacherib. Evidence for cult religion, spoken against in the Bible, is evidenced in the Ashkelon bull calf and other stelae representing Baal as well as female pillar figurines and other cult objects depicting Asherah.

Other examples given by Dr. Younker in his lecture include people, places, or objects mentioned in the Bible, while others merely give insight into the cultural backgrounds during Old and New Testament times. Suffice it to say there is much evidence that supports the general historicity of the Bible. (Owen Chesnut).



Randall Younker.

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# RANDOM SURVEY

## *Nero's Dining Room?*

Archaeologists believe they found the remains of Nero's revolving dining room on Palatine Hill, in Rome. The circular room is 16 m in diameter. Built as part of his palace, which also featured an artificial lake and a statue of Nero, the first-century AD historian Suetonius noted that it revolved "night and day, in imitation of the motion of the celestial bodies." The exact method of how the room revolved is yet to be determined, but it was supported by a pillar, 4 m in diameter, and traces of a wooden platform have been found.

## *Minoan-Style Wall Painting Remains Found in Israel:*

Excavations at Tel Kabri have yielded the remains of a Minoan-style wall painting, characterized by its blue background. It is the first of its kind to be found in Israel. The fresco adds to other Aegean discoveries that have been found at the Middle Bronze Age palace on the site.

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## *Tomb at Qatna Found:*

Excavations in the NW wing of the royal palace in the ancient city of Qatna, Syria, have located a cellar-tomb containing hundreds of artifacts and human bones dating from 1600-1400 BC. Numerous ceramic and stone (granite and alabaster) vessels, the latter Egyptian imports, were located. In one vessel, gold jewelry consisting of rings and gold foil was found. Other artifacts include a bronze spearhead, a gold pin, a lapis-lazuli cylinder seal, a scarab, a stone monkey sculpture holding a vessel used to hold facial paint, and an ivory human statuette.

## *DNA and King Tut:*

Recent DNA tests on 11 Egyptian mummies suggest that Tutankhamun was frail, had a left clubbed foot and a useless right one due to a family history of inbreeding, and died of malaria. The tests conclusively confirm that Queen Tiye was his grandmother and Akhenaten his father. His mother (Mummy KV35YL), though still unidentified, was definitely his father's sister. Two still-born bodies in Tut's tomb have been identified as his children.

## *Sheba Inscription Mentions Judah!*

A late 7th century BC South Arabian inscription has confirmed biblical references to commercial relations with Judah. Though later than Solomon, the inscription mentions the "towns of Judah" as a location with which the kingdom of Sheba conducted business.

## NEWSLETTER



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