

## 227 Stepping It Up (Like a Ziggurat): Education, ASOR, and the Twenty-First Century

*Susan E. Alcock*



The special burden ASOR bears, namely, the fact that its core geographical focus is notoriously in the news, gives its members an especial opportunity and incentive to be vocal on the topic of heritage loss. In this essay, the author discusses the importance of education outreach in this time of heightened awareness of and sympathy for the plight of cultural remains in the Near East, exploring ways that archaeologists can engage and educate

the public at a scale that will not only help in the preservation of material culture in this troubled part of the world, but will also lead to a greater understanding for the region and its people, past and present.

## 233 Archaeomagnetism, Radiocarbon Dating, and the Problem of Circular Reasoning in Chronological Debates: A Reply to Stillinger et al. 2016

*Katharina Streit and Felix Höflmayer*

In the June 2016 issue of *Near Eastern Archaeology*, Michele D. Stillinger, James W. Hardin, Joshua M. Feinberg, and Jeffrey A. Blakely published a paper entitled “Archaeomagnetism as a Complementary Dating Technique to Address the Iron Age Chronology Debate in the Levant” (Stillinger et al. 2016) in which the authors argue that archaeomagnetism “can provide a complementary dating tool to build a stronger, more robust chronology for the Iron Age” (90). The authors suggest here that their paper is overly optimistic regarding the potential of archaeomagnetism as a means for refining the Iron Age chronology of the Levant. Further, their approach is in fact based on circular reasoning, seriously constraining the potential use of this dating methodology. Despite the fact that other absolute dating techniques would be highly desirable for providing absolute (calendrical) dates for the Iron Age, the authors argue that radiocarbon dating and Bayesian analysis of radiocarbon determinations will remain the most useful and reliable dating methodology in the foreseeable future.

## 236 The Near East before Borders: Recent Excavations at Ein el-Jarba (Israel) and the Cultural Interactions of the Sixth Millennium cal. B.C.E.

*Katharina Streit*

During the 2015 excavation season at Ein el-Jarba, Israel, two Halaf sherds were uncovered in a domestic context dating to the Early Chalcolithic period. Ein el-Jarba was inhabited during the sixth millennium B.C.E. and has been regarded as part of the Wadi Rabah culture, which is known for its interactions with the northern Levant, as evidenced by intense obsidian trade. The Halaf culture was the dominant cultural group of upper Mesopotamia and eastern Anatolia at this time, and also influenced the northern Levantine littoral. The Halaf sherds from Ein el-Jarba currently represent the southernmost spread of Halaf ceramics. Here the author discusses the Halaf sherds, their archaeological context, and the implications of long-distance ties between the Halaf and Wadi Rabah cultures, shedding new light on the interregional connections of the Levant in the Early Chalcolithic period.

## 246 Archaeology Returns to Ur: A New Dialogue with Old Houses

*Elizabeth C. Stone and Paul Zimansky*

More than eighty years after Woolley’s departure, the authors have initiated excavations in Mesopotamia’s most celebrated residential district, Ur’s Area AH. Did private housing change significantly as Ur went from the capital of a bureaucratic empire under its Third Dynasty to a city state in the Isin-Larsa period? The authors opened four areas, two within Woolley’s excavations and two just outside of them. In the former, there was a great deal more Isin-Larsa material to be excavated than Woolley’s reports suggested. Architecture north of AH was very well-preserved and offered spaces in which Ur III materials can be accessed easily in coming seasons. The fourth excavation area, to the southwest of Area AH, revealed architecture of a different character, perhaps of the Old Babylonian period, lying at a lower elevation than the nearby “House of Abraham,” suggesting that the Isin-Larsa architecture of AH was built on a hill.



## 260 “You Have Entered Joppa”: 3D Modeling of Jaffa’s New Kingdom Egyptian Gate

*Jeremy I. Williams and Aaron A. Burke*

From 2011 to 2014, the Jaffa Cultural Heritage Project excavated several phases of an Egyptian New Kingdom gate complex located in Jaffa, Israel. Excavations in 2013 revealed extensive remains of the Level IVB/Phase RG-4a gate, which was destroyed in a major conflagration ca. 1135 B.C.E. In 2015, work began on a digital reconstruction of the gate’s architecture and its environs. This reconstruction sheds new light on the gate complex and the interrelationships between its many architectural elements. The process has led to some suggestions as to how the extant remains might be reconstructed, but also illustrates how much has been lost and that such reconstructions are inherently dependent on excavated remains from other, sometimes quite distant, sites.



## 272 A Clay Bread Stamp from Khirbet et-Tireh

*Salah H. Al-Houdalieh*

The clay bread stamp presented here was found at in a monastic complex dating to the Late Byzantine–Early Islamic period at Khirbet et-Tireh, approximately 16 km northwest of Jerusalem. The stamp, which consists of a cross and other simple geometrics, is of fired clay and is notable both for its workmanship and for surviving almost completely intact. Based on the monastic context of the find, plus the stamp’s relatively small size, it was probably used to decorate small individual loaves, perhaps as sacramental bread.



## 276 A Rare Discovery at Tel Achziv: A Phoenician Clay Mask Mold from the Ninth Century B.C.E.

*Michael Jasmin, Yifat Thareani,  
and Philippe Abrahami*

Renewed excavations on the tell of Achziv in the north of Israel by a French-Israeli team have led to the discovery (in July 2016) of a very rare find: a clay anthropomorphic mask mold. This object comes from a layer dated to the tenth or ninth century b.c.e. Clay masks are characteristic of Phoenician culture, but the actual mask molds that produced them have been lacking until now. This article discusses the context and possible uses of this remarkable find.

## 280 The Practice of Repairing Vessels in Ancient Egypt: Methods of Repair and Anthropological Implications

*Julia Hsieh*

Before mass production, the practice of repairing ceramic and stone vessels, as well as other household items, was widely practiced, from antiquity into the last century. This article provides a brief overview of the methods of repair and highlights some of the anthropological implications of the practice, namely, what information might we extract regarding the individual, the settlement, or even the societal group as a whole, when we unearth an assemblage that includes repaired vessels?