

From Mosul to Manila: Early Approaches to Funding Ancient Near Eastern Studies Research in the United States

Ancient Near Eastern Studies, Orientalism, and the American Research University

“To reconstruct a dead or lost Oriental language meant ultimately to reconstruct a dead or neglected Orient; it also meant that reconstructive precision, science, even imagination could prepare the way for what armies, administrations, and bureaucracies would later do on the ground, in the Orient” (Said 1978: 123). Edward Said clearly intended to include ancient Near Eastern alongside Islamic studies as one of his Orientalisms, but his few references to the study of the pre-Islamic Near East, such as the one just quoted, tend to be vague and not very telling (also p. 121). In any case, the more profound problems that Said exposed are not really confined to Orientalism, but apply to Western discourse about the rest of the world in general (Clifford 1980). As historians, we must be conscious about how we essentialize ancient societies in ways similar to those in which an Arabist might have talked about the “Orient,” or an anthropologist about a “primitive” culture (Asad 1973; Clifford 1986; Rabinow 1986). But these considerations are best left for elsewhere.

From Napoleon’s scientific expedition to Egypt to the British East India Company’s Residency at Baghdad, the context of ancient Near Eastern studies was imperialist from the beginning, and the field has been pursued in colonialist and neo-colonialist contexts until the present day. But if the presence of European power in the East made ancient Near Eastern studies possible, those studies themselves were more the stepchild of imperialism than its servant. Unlike Arabic, Persian, and Islamic studies, ancient Near Eastern studies did not provide access to tools of control or domina-

tion.¹ In contrast to the Indian subcontinent, where there is a conscious continuity between contemporary cultures and traditions extending back beyond the first millennium B.C., and where knowledge of Sanskrit was useful to the British in governing (Said 1978: 78-79), there was precious little sense of continuity with the pre-Islamic past in the Ottoman Empire. This was due both to the linguistic and religious gulf between the Islamic Near East and the pre-Islamic past, and to Islam's own indifferent attitude to that past, especially to the pagan past.² It was not the past of the "Orientals," the contemporary inhabitants of the Near East, that our predecessors imagined themselves to be reconstructing. Rather, they were recovering the roots of their own civilization. As the assistant secretary of the Smithsonian Institution said at the dedication of the Harvard Semitic Museum in 1903:

It is coming to be more and more recognized that in everything which makes for the higher life the modern man derives directly from a few groups of peoples that lived about the Mediterranean, and

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1. But legitimate archaeological activity could be used as a cover for espionage, as with T. E. Lawrence at Carchemish, or as Haupt proposed in the Jewish colonization scheme (see below). For the use of Near Eastern scholarship in support of political ends within Europe, see Becker 1985, Carena 1989: 2.2.3.2, Huffmon 1983, Larsen 1987, and Cooper, forthcoming.
 2. See, for example, Peters 1897: 259 and Lewis 1982: 75. There were always exceptions, however, to Islamic indifference to the pagan past, as Lewis documents for early Islam. Persian interest in the pre-Islamic past has a long history, and this interest was revived in nineteenth-century Qajar Persia, no doubt because of the intense European interest in Iranian antiquities. Similarly, in the Ottoman Empire, Western interest in antiquities led to the enlightened antiquities policy established by Hamdi Bey. "The new spirit of progress and enlightenment which emanated from the palace and which found an eloquent herald in the halls of the Imperial Museum is best characterized by the unique fact that several years ago a young officer of the Turkish army submitted an essay on the Sumerian question to the present writer for criticism. Though leniently to be judged as to its real merits, this manuscript speaks volumes for the far-reaching influence which the cuneiform collections at Stambul exercised as an educational factor upon the minds of intelligent Moslems. No wonder that it was the Sultan himself who became the originator of the first Turkish archaeological expedition to Babylonia" (Hilprecht 1903: 573).

The entire question of the uses of pre-Islamic antiquity by the various nations of the Near East in the twentieth century, from Atatürk to the Pahlevis to Saddam Hussein, as well as by non-Muslim minorities, merits monographic attention (see now, for Iraq, Baram 1991).

that a knowledge of their civilization is essential to an understanding of the history of human thought. It had been supposed for a long time that religion was the only important product of the Semitic mind. . . . But as Semitic researches advanced through the digging up of buried cities . . . it was seen that the rudiments of the sciences and the arts as well were to be found in Western Asia; . . . every educated man should be cognizant of the fact that when he used his alphabet, he was going back to the ancient Phoenicians; . . . when he examined the face of his watch . . . he was employing the number system of the ancient Babylonians; . . . when he spoke of the stars . . . or uttered some of the commonest terms known to mathematical and chemical sciences, he was speaking in the language of mediaeval Arabia; . . . when he prayed to his God, he was employing the concept handed down from Palestine (Adler 1933: 159-60).³

If ancient Near Eastern studies in Europe was a beneficiary of, but not a contributor to, imperialism and colonialism, the early study of the ancient Near East in the United States was at one remove further from any geopolitical purpose. Indeed, when the Assyriologist John Peters, planning the first American archaeological expedition to Mesopotamia in the mid-1880s, tried to have the United States Government establish a consulate in Baghdad, he was told that our trade with that part of the world was too small to warrant such attention (Peters 1897: 3). It is precisely because of the absence of obvious political or economic interests that it is important to ask just why and how ancient Near Eastern studies took hold in the United States.

This question must be answered within the broader context of the establishment of research universities in the United States in the last quarter of the nineteenth century (Oleson and Voss 1979). Inspired by the German model that privileged original scientific research over the mere transmission (teaching) of values and culture, new universities were founded, beginning with Johns Hopkins in 1876, and the old collegiate centers of

3. To be sure, Cyrus Adler had another ax to grind when he spoke these words. As Jacob Schiff, the Jewish philanthropist who endowed the Semitic Museum, said: "Indeed, the Jews, the modern representatives of the Semitic people, may well be proud of their origin and ancestry. . . . To combat [anti-Semitism] . . . opportunities should be created for a more thorough study and a better knowledge of Semitic history and civilization, so that the world shall better understand and acknowledge the debt it owes to the Semitic people" (Cohen 1984: 206).

learning, as well as some of the state land-grant institutions, were transformed. The motivation for this explosion of research activity was a "love of learning" with roots in Puritan piety, but which, in a secularizing age, became in part a substitute for ecclesiastical religion (Shils 1979). This exaltation of learning was bound up with a belief in progress, which the new learning would advance, to which was added the patriotic sentiment to emulate European accomplishments, just at a moment when this had become feasible as the young nation entered upon its second century.

Both the desire to advance knowledge and a sense of competition with Europe motivated the pioneers of ancient Near Eastern studies in the United States and their supporters. The great decipherments of Akkadian and Egyptian achieved by mid-century, and the magnificent collections filling the Louvre and the British Museum, were powerful stimuli. But there was an added twist: the ancient Near East was an area of special interest to many because it was the locus of the biblical narratives. Explicit justifications or pleas for support of research on the ancient Near East always maintained a delicate balance between the Old Testament interests of such research and its general scientific value:

Of late years the domain of Shemitic study has been widened; libraries long hidden haven been exhumed on the sites of ancient Babylon and Nineveh; records the very existence of which was unknown at the beginning of this century . . . are now read and printed and studied as a part of the history of mankind. Assyrian becomes a language of university study, not indeed, for many scholars, but for a few, and the bearing of their discoveries is so important upon the language and history of the Hebrews . . . (D.C. Gilman, 1885, quoted by Adler 1933: 163-64).

The study of the cuneiform languages, especially of Assyrian, rapidly became popular at the American universities. The romantic story of the discovery and excavation of Nineveh . . . and the immediate bearing . . . upon the interpretation of the Old Testament and upon the history of art and human civilization in general, appealed at once to the religious sentiment and to the general intelligence of the people (Hilprecht 1903: 290).

Such a project appeals to every one who takes an interest in the dawn of civilization and the history of religion. The monuments in

the valley of the Euphrates and Tigris furnish the key to countless mysteries in the early history of man. They answer a multitude of questions whose solution is indispensable for a study of the development of religion and culture. They add new leaves to the book of man's earliest traditions. They confirm and elucidate the sacred records of the Old Testament (Haupt 1888).⁴

Research support in the new research university environment was largely invisible, "hidden in an 'unvouchered' budget" (Shils 1979: 29-30). Professors were paid to teach, but "despite what might appear from the perspective of today as an arduous round of teaching responsibilities, scientists and scholars who wanted to do research . . . could find time for it. . . . Financial requirements for research were not large and there were few projects for which many assistants were required" (Shils 1979: 29-30). Libraries and laboratories were provided by the universities. But the excavation and collection of Near Eastern antiquities was a different kind of research project, one that required resources greatly in excess of what a university might be expected to put forward in support of its faculty's scholarship.

In the last decades of the nineteenth century, two approaches to fundraising for American expeditions to Mesopotamia were attempted. One, quintessentially American, used the twin lures of science and religion to enlist the aid of wealthy, public-spirited individuals. It led to the successful funding of the Wolfe Expedition and the University of Pennsylvania's Nippur Expeditions. Another, European, approach was taken by Paul Haupt, a German-born and trained professor at The Johns Hopkins University. He tried to launch an expedition to excavate the ancient city of Ur first by soliciting the support of the United States Government in the person of the Smithsonian Institution, and, having failed in Washington, then tried to stimulate a colonialist enterprise in Mesopotamia to which an archaeological expedition might attach itself. A decade later, when the United States had actually become a colonial power in the Orient, Haupt tried to parlay American interests in the Philippines into federal support for Near Eastern studies.

4. Citation from Haupt's Commemoration Day address of 22 February 1888. See below for the context of the address and an additional citation, and compare also the citation from his letter to Langley, cited below.

The Mesopotamian Colonization Scheme

In 1892 a small German-language pamphlet authored by Paul Haupt appeared in Baltimore. It opened abruptly with the following declaration: "Die beste Gegend zur Ansiedlung der russischen Juden ist ohne Zweifel das Land zwischen Euphrat und Tigris, insbesondere das Gebiet des Chaburflusses zwischen Mardin, Nisibis und Mosul" (Haupt 1892: 3). This is the same fertile dry-farming zone to which Harvey Weiss has recently drawn our attention (Weiss 1986). Haupt proposed that a preliminary expedition be dispatched to choose locations for the initial colonies, and that the expedition would be least obtrusive if it were disguised as an archaeological expedition. Thus, the staff would include—along with engineers, agronomists and the like—also archaeologists and Assyriologists, all travelling under Smithsonian auspices.⁵ This proposal capped four years of efforts by Haupt, first to supplant the University of Pennsylvania's Nippur Expedition and then to launch a competing venture.

The original call for an American expedition to Mesopotamia had been sounded by the American Oriental Society in the form of a resolution adopted at its spring 1884 meeting: "England and France have done a noble work of exploration in Assyria and Babylonia. It is time for America to do her part. Let us send out an American expedition" (Peters 1897: 1). The patronage of Miss Catherine Lorillard Wolfe was secured,⁶ and an exploratory expedition was sent out under the leadership of William H. Ward, who returned the next year and wrote an essentially positive report on the possibilities for excavation and assembling a collection of antiquities (Ward 1886). At its October 1885 meeting, the American Oriental Society resolved

that the ruins discovered by Dr. Ward in ancient Babylonia be thoroughly explored as soon as possible; and that we recommend to the

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5. Haupt's pamphlet was the subject of M. Perlmann's elegant 1958 study in the *Publication of the American Jewish Historical Society*. While my study is deeply indebted to Perlmann, he was interested in the pamphlet as an episode in the history of Zionism, whereas I seek to put it in the context of the history of American Assyriology.
 6. "Bishop Potter was present at the breakfast, and his good offices were undoubtedly used in recommending the enterprise. . . . Miss Wolfe asked scarcely any questions about the particular enterprise, but showed interest in the general subject of Oriental exploration" (Peters 1897: 1).

American public this object as one worthy of liberal contributions, in order that a second expedition may be sent out at an early date to make the excavations, and that the Assyrian and Babylonian antiquities may be acquired by American museums (Meade 1974: 52).⁷

No further action was taken by the Society, but John Peters, who had secured the funds for the Wolfe Expedition, and who had just been appointed professor of Hebrew at the University of Pennsylvania, pursued the matter. In the summer of 1887, Peters made the acquaintance of the Philadelphia banker E. W. Clark, who would be instrumental in financing the Nippur Expeditions and research in Assyriology at the University of Pennsylvania (Peters 1897: chap. 1). In the fall, Peters and Clark began organizing the expedition, and at the end of November the university's provost, William Pepper, held an official organizational and fund-raising meeting for it. The University of Pennsylvania's Board of Trustees petitioned the State Department for help in obtaining a permit to excavate, and Peters solicited and obtained the support of President Cleveland. But by early 1888, the university's path to the East was being blocked in Baltimore.

Peters wrote:

Some difficulty arose at this point. This had its origin in Philadelphia with one or two persons who felt that they should have been consulted before the scheme of an expedition was launched. They criticised the scheme proposed . . . This criticism was taken up outside of Philadelphia; and opposition was made to action by the State

7. The emphasis on the acquisition of antiquities, found in all discussions of proposed expeditions to the Near East, reflected more than a desire to reproduce the great European collections, to have and exhibit magnificent objects per se. Rather, in the spirit of the age, it was the scientific value of the objects that was foremost in the minds of at least some scholars. As William Ward wrote: "It is not too late for America to compete with Europe for these collections, which do so much to encourage and develop the scholarship of a country. Where there is material that demands original work, original work will be done" (1886: 33). Acquisition of antiquities often entailed buying them on the market, despite an awareness that the very existence of the market was a destructive force (Peters 1897: 13-15), or working hard to get around the progressive Ottoman antiquities regulations (Peters 1897: chap. 2; cf. n. 2, above). Haupt wrote that cuneiform tablets turned over to the Turks "would be less accessible to scholars than when buried under the ruins of Babylonia" (Haupt to Gilman, 14 April 1888 [SI]). The role of antiquities collections in the development of Near Eastern studies must be looked at in the broader context of the history of collecting and museums in the United States.

Department on our behalf, on the ground that, instead of a local expedition, an effort should be made to send out a national expedition . . . representing all the Assyrian scholarship of the country (Peters 1897: 7).

The opposition in Philadelphia certainly came from the Assyriologist Herman V. Hilprecht, whose own description of the organizational meeting for the expedition quite frankly recorded his disagreements with Peters (Hilprecht 1903: 297-300). He was soon co-opted, at least temporarily, and put on the expedition staff. That the criticism “outside of Philadelphia” referred to Paul Haupt could be inferred from Peters’s account, since at the time, Johns Hopkins was the only other significant center of “Assyrian scholarship” in the United States. In Peters’s next paragraph he spoke of efforts to diffuse the opposition to Penn’s expedition by cooperating with other institutions.

Professor Haupt of Baltimore had worked out a plan of an expedition to excavate Mughair [Ur], and negotiations were entered into with the purpose of amalgamating the two enterprises. This proved impracticable (Peters 1897: 8).

Letters preserved in the archives of the University Museum, Johns Hopkins, and the Smithsonian Institution confirm this reading of Peters’s published account, and they also provide some unpleasant details of Haupt’s machinations.⁸ At the end of March 1887, Haupt had written to Secretary Baird of the Smithsonian Institution that “the National Museum might be enriched, at no great cost,” by assembling a collection of casts of Mesopotamian antiquities in American collections. To do this, he offered the services of “the Assyriological Department of this University” (SI). Evidence that such a project actually got underway is found in a letter dated November 1887 from Cyrus Adler, instructor in Semitics at Johns Hopkins, who was Haupt’s first Ph. D. student, to George Brown Goode, director of the National Museum and assistant secretary of the Smithsonian. The letter

8. I would like to thank Richard Zettler for supplying summaries and copies of materials in the University Museum archives, and Ann C. Gunter and Bill Geiss for help with the Smithsonian materials. The sources of unpublished documents are indicated by the sigla JH (Johns Hopkins), SI (Smithsonian Institution), and UM (University Museum). Letters that exist in both the Smithsonian archives and the University Museum and/or Johns Hopkins are cited from the Smithsonian records.

requested the return of some seals that the museum had borrowed from a private collector through Johns Hopkins (SI). In his memoirs, Adler wrote that he had travelled to Washington in 1888 to locate a collection of photographs of Assyrian antiquities housed in the British Museum, photographs that he remembered having once seen in the National Museum. The visit led to a meeting with Goode, during which Adler claimed he suggested that the museum's scanty collection of Near Eastern artifacts could be augmented by a "very interesting exhibition of casts." When Goode pleaded poverty, Adler volunteered his own services for the project. As a result, Adler wrote, he was offered the post of honorary curator of Oriental antiquities. "But I felt that I was too young and not sufficiently well known to accept it, and I wrote to Dr. Goode to suggest that Professor Haupt be appointed to this position, whose assistant I was quite willing to be" (Adler 1941: 66-68). Since, as we have seen, the project to create a collection of casts was initiated by Haupt in March 1887, Adler must have been confused. The confusion is also evident from Adler's assertion that Baird was then (1888) secretary of the Smithsonian, when in fact Baird had died in August 1887, and had been succeeded by Samuel Pierpont Langley. Adler's biographer, who did not have access to the memoirs, dated the visit to Washington in 1887 (Neuman 1942: 25f.), but we know that it was not until 2 February 1888 that Haupt and Adler received letters of appointment from Secretary Langley as honorary curator and honorary assistant curator respectively (SI). It is highly unlikely that a visit by Adler to Washington during Baird's tenure as secretary (that is, earlier than August 1887) would have resulted in letters of appointment from Langley dated February 1888.

The casts project was clearly begun under Baird, and did not lead to the honorary appointments. But the collection of photographs of Assyrian antiquities mentioned in Adler's account jibes well with a remark Langley made in a letter of 23 February 1888 to Dr. S. Weir Mitchell of Philadelphia, a friend of University of Pennsylvania Provost Pepper, whom Pepper was using as a go-between with Langley (see below). Langley mentioned that cooperation with Haupt had begun nearly a year earlier with the cast project, and he explained that Haupt had recently been appointed honorary curator because

we have had, framed and ready for display for nearly two years, a complete series of the photographs of the the oriental antiquities in the British Museum, and have simply delayed putting them on exhi-

bition, because we found that there was no one in our force who was competent to properly label and arrange them. (SI)

Langley continued: "The appointment [of Haupt as honorary curator] was undoubtedly partly due to the fact that the Baltimore people drew near to us before we drew near to them." This comment must be seen in the context of a "general understanding" dating to "the very inception of Dr. Gilman's presidency," that Johns Hopkins would not form a museum of its own; instead "its specialists would co-operate with ours in the development of the National Museum."

It is improbable that the need to label photographs would have resulted in the creation of two honorary positions at the National Museum, had the "Baltimore people" not, in fact, drawn near. If the letters of appointment were written on 2 February 1888, Adler must have made his trip to Washington to see the photographs either in January of that year, which would correspond to the early 1888 date implied by his memoirs, or in December 1887, which would correspond to the 1887 date given by his biographer. In either case, Adler's trip and the appointments followed close on the heels of the official organization of the Babylonian Exploration Fund in Philadelphia at the end of November 1887, suggesting that Haupt and Adler were suddenly eager to have an official association with the Smithsonian.⁹ Suspicions are further aroused by Haupt's letter to Langley dated 14 February, accepting the appointment as honorary curator. Far from speaking of labeling photographs, he wrote of the opportunity to acquire for the National Museum a collection of Oriental antiquities that would rival those of the British Museum and the Louvre, which "appeal so strongly to all interested in the beginnings of our civilization, and the history and archaeology of the Bible." Haupt offered to submit to Langley a plan for an expedition to Mesopotamia, and in a supplement to his letter marked "confidential" he explained why conditions were especially favorable for an American expedition. He concluded:

Nor do I wish to interfere in any way with the endeavors of other American institutions to obtain a collection of Oriental antiquities

9. Adler's letter of 23 February 1888 to Congressman W. B. Cockran conjoins rather directly the Smithsonian appointment and "our desire to dig on some Babylonian mounds" (Adler 1985: I, 10f.).

for their local museums. From what I know of the attitude of the Turkish Government, I believe, however, that, in case a firman [permit] should be granted to another exploring party from this country, it would be impossible to obtain permission for the excavations under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institution. A general firman for the whole district of Mesopotamia is never granted. (SI)

Here are the two key arguments later made by Haupt against the Philadelphia expedition, an expedition about which Langley at the time of Haupt's letter, knew little or nothing. First, the Philadelphia expedition was a *local* undertaking, whereas the Hopkins-Smithsonian endeavor would be *national* (cf. Peters's published account quoted above). Second, the national expedition would not get permission if any other American expedition were to precede it, nor would the national expedition be able to work under the permit of another expedition. In the correspondence that followed between representatives of the Philadelphia expedition and Langley and Goode, as well as representations made by Philadelphians to Johns Hopkins President Gilman, the Philadelphia people stressed that their expressed intention had always been that once they got their permit they would allow other American parties to work under it. Haupt must therefore have known their position in advance (cf. Peters to Langley, 22 February 1888 [SI]), and argued against it implicitly in his letter to Langley. Haupt, who had long harbored dreams of leading an expedition to Babylonia,¹⁰ was out to block the University of Pennsylvania expedition and replace it with one of his own, for reasons that are not hard to discover. Professor George F. Barker, of the University of Pennsylvania, wrote to Langley that not long after the Philadelphia expedition was organized,

the news came to the ears of the said Dr. Haupt . . . and he at once came over here, highly incensed because he had not been given the direction of the expedition. . . . But these gentlemen do not want Dr. Haupt to be connected with the expedition in any way. He has made himself so objectionable personally, that I learn that not a single per-

10. Soon after Haupt's appointment to the Johns Hopkins faculty in 1883, the senior British Orientalist A. H. Sayce wrote to Haupt: "If we could only explore Mesopotamia, Babylonia and Elam together." (27 May 1883, JH). On 20 July of the same year, Sayce wrote again to Haupt: "I must look to you for making the Expedition a reality when you get into your new home." (JH)

son competent for the work will go upon it, if Dr. Haupt has anything whatever to do with it. Personal spite, therefore, seems to have led him to boast that if he cannot control the expedition, he can use the Smithsonian Institution to kill it. (7 April 1888, SI)

Peters himself never put the matter so bluntly to Gilman, Langley, or Goode. But in a letter to former congressman J. Randolph Tucker, whom Peters was using to lobby the Smithsonian and the State Department, he asserted that he did not ask Haupt to join the expedition

because although a fine scholar, he seems unable to get along peaceably with other scholars, and has a quarrel with almost every other Assyriologist in the world. . . . When he learned that I had organized an Expedition and not asked him to go, he came and wrote to people in Philadelphia, discrediting the Expedition (he had previously written that I was the right person to conduct it), and endeavoring to prevent them from subscribing. (22 February 1888, UM)¹¹

At the same time that Haupt wrote his acceptance letter and confidential note to Langley suggesting a national expedition to Mesopotamia, he also wrote to Goode telling him of his note to Langley and asked Goode to request help for the Smithsonian expedition from the State Department. It was especially important that State should not support another application until the Smithsonian obtained its permit. The letter implies that Goode was familiar with Haupt's plan. A letter sent the same day (14 February) by Langley to Dr. Mitchell in Philadelphia, who had written Langley asking him to support Philadelphia's proposal at the State Department, suggests that Langley, too, was familiar with Haupt's notion of a national expedition.

I must at once tell you that the Philadelphia action has been forestalled by the Johns Hopkins people, who have been here sometime making their arrangements for a similar expedition, and whose Professor of Assyriology, Dr. Haupt, has secured from me the appointment to an honorary curatorship . . . with the understanding that the Institution would further and favor his expedition in every way. . . . It has already been suggested to me this morning that both explorations might be carried on under one Firman." (SI)

11. Cf. Hawkins 1960: 159 on the young Haupt: "Prodigy though he seemed to his students, he proved a difficult colleague."

It was only on the *following* day, 15 February, that Langley wrote to Haupt saying he “should be glad” to have him submit a memorandum on the proposed expedition, and that while the Smithsonian could not provide “pecuniary aid,” “it will give me much pleasure” to help “in any other way,” and “to receive and properly care for, in the National Museum, such collections as may be obtained” (SI).

The paper trail tells only part of the story, and we must assume that certain letters were only formal acknowledgements of relationships and agreements that had already developed. Possibly thanks to the burgeoning friendship between Adler and Goode (Adler 1941: 68f.), Goode and Langley had been enlisted in the cause of Haupt’s “national expedition,” and Haupt’s appointment as honorary curator was made to further this scheme. Although, as Langley states, Haupt may have mentioned the Philadelphia plans when he first raised the subject of a Smithsonian-Hopkins expedition, “and never seemed to have, in any way, a desire to keep that in the background” (Langley to Mitchell, 23 February 1888 [SI]), Haupt certainly did not reveal the scope and extent of the plans for the University of Pennsylvania’s Babylonian Expedition; he represented it, if at all, as a purely local affair. At no time did Haupt secure funds for his expedition, although he appears to have convinced Gilman, Langley, and Goode that such backing would materialize. He also told Langley and Goode that the German government would use its good graces at the Sublime Porte to help secure a permit for the Smithsonian-Hopkins venture.

Peters first heard of Haupt’s plans on 10 February 1888, and appeared the following Monday (13 February) at the Smithsonian. Goode assured him, dissembling somewhat, that Haupt’s expedition was purely a Johns Hopkins affair, and that no application to the State Department would be made by the Smithsonian on Haupt’s behalf; Haupt would work instead through German channels.

On 18 February Peters visited Gilman in Baltimore to assure him that no slight had been intended by the Philadelphia expedition toward Johns Hopkins or Haupt. Gilman was apparently very coy about Johns Hopkins’s plans, and Peters was left with the impression that Johns Hopkins had not really organized anything, nor had it the funds to do so. It seemed that the activity in Baltimore was designed solely to force the Philadelphia expedition to take Haupt on (and “that I am unwilling to do.” Peters to Tucker, 27 February 1888 [UM]). Peters’s message to all was that his expedition had long been planned and that Haupt had known about it for some time; that

he had had no inkling until the previous week that Haupt was planning anything (implying that Haupt was simply trying to block him); that the scope of the Philadelphia expedition was national and not local; that a second American application to the Ottoman Turks would sabotage any American chances of getting a permit; and, finally, that it was only proper that the more organized expedition—his—be given a chance to secure a permit without competition. Once secured, others would be allowed to excavate under it. (Peters to Gilman, 18 February 1888; Peters to Goode, 20 February 1888; Peters to Langley, 22 February 1888 [SI]). Meanwhile, Provost Pepper, through Dr. Mitchell, worked on Langley, making the same points (Pepper to Mitchell, 18 February 1888 [SI]).

On 22 February, the same day that Peters was setting down his case in great detail to Secretary Langley, Haupt, in a Commemoration Day address at Johns Hopkins, called for a national expedition to Mesopotamia under the Smithsonian's auspices.

A national expedition, comprising delegates from . . . various centres of learning, under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institution, and enjoying the aid of the United States Government, could compete with that of any other nation. Everything that is necessary for such an undertaking is here—self-denying enthusiasm facing all dangers, thorough preparation ensuring success, a fertile field for investigation promising rich results, a magnificent museum making accessible to the general public the treasures recovered—everything is here; all we need is a fund. . . . If a fund could be raised, to begin excavations on a sound basis next fall, we could bring to the National Museum a collection of Oriental antiquities, not inferior to the Assyrian treasures of the British Museum and the Paris Louvre! (Haupt 1888: 47).

The rhetoric echoed the proposal he had made the previous week in his letter to Langley. Similar tones were sounded in Haupt's "Memorandum Concerning a National Expedition to be Sent to Mesopotamia under the Auspices of the Smithsonian Institution," printed privately (n.d.) in response to Langley's encouraging letter of 15 February. The memorandum detailed the required staff and budget (forty thousand dollars), and included a call to create an American School of Biblical Archaeology as a consortium, on analogy with the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, to be

headquartered at the American College in Beirut. The bad faith of both Haupt's address and memorandum is manifest, since efforts to organize just such an expedition were well underway in Philadelphia, and the intense rivalry between Haupt and the Philadelphians was at that very moment being played out along the Philadelphia-Baltimore-Washington corridor. "Various attempts . . . to send out local expeditions" were mentioned in the memorandum, and condemned: "But such an undertaking should not be restricted to one community, but ought to have a *decidedly national character*" (emphasis original). As in his original letter on the subject to Langley, Haupt implicitly denied the legitimacy of the efforts of his colleagues at the University of Pennsylvania.¹²

Meanwhile, both Langley and Gilman were under considerable pressure to defuse the unseemly rivalry and bring about some compromise. For Philadelphia, compromise meant that Haupt should postpone his plans for a year, and then field an expedition under Philadelphia's permit (Peters to Langley, 22 February 1888 [SI]). For Langley and Gilman, compromise meant that the Philadelphia expedition would invite Haupt to join them. At Peters's invitation, Adler and Haupt met with Peters, Pepper, and others at Pepper's home in Philadelphia on 3 April. Haupt offered to withdraw all opposition to the Philadelphia expedition, and to "postpone our great National Expedition, provided he was formally invited by the Babylonian Exploration Fund of Philadelphia, to join the staff . . . as a Delegate of the National Museum." He also offered to pay his own way to

12. The question of "national" versus "local" was a genuine point of difference between Haupt and the Philadelphians. Haupt, European in his approach, wanted official sanction—the Smithsonian Institution, the National Museum, the United States military (see below), even German government intervention. But according to the best information available to the Philadelphians, the Turkish government would react more favorably to a private application (Peters to Goode, 20 February 1888 and 22 April 1888; Peters to Langley, 22 February 1888 [SI]). The original application submitted by the University of Pennsylvania to the Turkish minister in Washington states: "We beg leave to call your attention to the fact that this expedition will be under the control of, and sent out by, a private Institution formed solely for purposes of study and research. There is therefore no possible political complications arising out of it. . . ." (Peters 1897: 298). Since this application is dated 23 February 1888, we might see an attempt here to counter the anticipated application by Haupt and the Smithsonian for a national expedition by implying to the Turkish minister that an official national expedition could well give rise to "political complications."

Constantinople, where he would use German influence to get a permit in the name of the Smithsonian, with the understanding that Philadelphia would “have the field entirely until the fall of 1889.” Furthermore, Haupt proposed that should all excavated tablets go, “in the interests of science,” to the National Museum, he would ask Langley to use Smithsonian influence to get army and naval officers seconded to the expedition, and a United States Navy ship to transport the antiquities (Adler to Goode, 4 April 1888; Peters to Langley, 9 April 1888; Haupt to Gilman, 14 April 1888 [SI]). Haupt’s notion of compromise seemed to leave Philadelphia with little but the opportunity to serve as a guinea pig. As Adler wrote to Goode, “the first season is an experiment, and better to let Philadelphia run the risk.”

Haupt and Adler apparently thought they had succeeded (Adler to Goode, 4 April 1888; Gilman to Langley, 10 April 1888 [SI]), but the Philadelphians were not to be moved. On 19 April, after discussions between Peters and Langley, and after the submission of Haupt’s compromise with an endorsement from Gilman, the Babylonian Exploration Fund appointed Pepper and Peters to decide the matter and convey their views to Gilman and Langley (UM). On 22 April, Peters wrote to Goode that “it was found absolutely impossible to constitute a staff containing Prof. Haupt in such a manner as to ensure harmony . . . This will not be stated in the official letter.” On 24 April, Pepper informed Gilman and Langley that he had presented Haupt’s proposal, but “it is felt that the Assyriological Staff already engaged, is as large as can advantageously be taken . . . so that it unfortunately seems impossible to extend an invitation to Professor Haupt.” (SI) The Babylonian Exploration Fund minutes of 24 May record the official decision not to bring Haupt aboard, “as the Assyriological staff is sufficient.” Ironically, at the very same meeting, after rejecting Haupt, the Fund appointed both Robert F. Harper and Herman V. Hilprecht as expedition Assyriologists (UM).

Sometime after the Babylonian Exploration Fund rejected Haupt and cooperation with the Smithsonian, Provost Pepper reached an agreement with Secretary Langley that the latter would make no further efforts on behalf of Haupt’s expedition until the fate of the Philadelphia expedition was finally decided (Goode to Pepper, 17 August 1888 [SI]). Despite some desultory bad-mouthing of the Philadelphia expedition while in Europe in the summer of 1888, and threats, unrealized, to go on to Constantinople and press the case for his own expedition, Haupt could no longer compete

effectively (Pepper to Goode, 1 August 1888 [SI]).¹³ He persisted in trying to get government funding for an expedition, but his plans “collapsed when the trustees [of Johns Hopkins] decided that the university’s financial condition did not allow the absence of one of its professors” (Hawkins 1960: 55). At the end of 1888, the Philadelphia expedition was finally granted its permit, and excavations at Nippur began in February 1889.

It is astonishing that throughout this entire episode, Haupt seems to have remained in the Smithsonian’s good graces. Langley and Goode defended at every turn the innocence of Haupt’s motives despite considerable evidence to the contrary. One explanation, no doubt, is the warm relationship mentioned above that had developed between Goode, Langley’s assistant, and Cyrus Adler, Haupt’s assistant. Adler would eventually leave Johns Hopkins to become the librarian of the Smithsonian in 1892, then be named assistant secretary in 1902. Documents in the Smithsonian archives show that throughout 1888, letters from Philadelphia were often sent to Baltimore for comment, before being answered by Goode or Langley. In replying to Pepper’s complaints about Haupt’s behavior in London (see n. 13), Goode wrote, “I cannot believe that Dr. Haupt is undertaking to represent the views of the Smithsonian Institution in the manner supposed by Dr. Peters” (Goode to Pepper, 17 August 1888). Goode then proceeded to put the best possible interpretation on Haupt’s behavior.¹⁴ The correspondence of Langley and Goode also suggests that the two men would have been genuinely pleased to see a substantial collection of Babylonian antiquities reach the National Museum, and they may have supported

13. News of Haupt’s behavior in London produced near-hysteria in Pepper: “I really have been so much annoyed in regard to the Babylonian Exploring Expedition [sic] that I almost regret having assumed the chairmanship of the Committee. . . . Prof. Haupt is there in London, making the strongest representations against us, in asserting that he has a letter from the German Government to him, as the representative of the Smithsonian and of the National Museum . . . there will be grievous regrets if all our efforts should miscarry through any misrepresentation or causeless antagonism in Constantinople” (Pepper to Goode, 1 August 1888 [SI]). An on-the-scene report comes from Assyriologist Richard F. Harper, writing to his brother, William Rainey Harper, on 18 July 1888: “Today I took Peters up to introduce him to Drs. Bezold and Brünnow. Haupt was in the Assyrian room at the time, but turned away so as not to speak to Peters . . . Haupt has not a single friend here. Bezold and he do not speak at all. There will be fun before he leaves.”(UM)

14. A letter from Adler to Goode, written on the same day, refers to the draft of Goode’s letter to Pepper that Goode sent Adler: “It seems to me to cover the case.” (SI)

Haupt for that reason. Another explanation is that the Philadelphia people were themselves not especially nice, as the Peters-Hilprecht controversy would eventually show.¹⁵

In late 1890, Cyrus Adler took a leave of absence from Johns Hopkins and set sail for the Orient, commissioned by Congress (thanks to his Smithsonian ties) to engage exotic exhibitors and entertainers for the Columbian Exposition in Chicago planned for 1892 (Adler 1941: chaps. 4-8). In January or February 1891, he had an audience with the Ottoman Prime Minister Kiamil Pasha. The two discussed the plight of the Russian Jews, who had been suffering for a decade the pogroms and official anti-Semitism that followed the assassination of Alexander II in 1881 (Vital 1975: chap. 3; Sachar 1958: chap. 12). Kiamil Pasha suggested that some Jews might be settled in Ottoman Mesopotamia and Syria; Palestine, however, was too small to absorb any number of refugees (Adler 1941: 91-92).

The condition of Russian Jewry was a topic of discussion in the United States as well, where 135,000 Russian Jews had immigrated since 1881 (Sachar 1958: 309). The well-to-do and well-established German-American Jewish community, to which Adler belonged, felt considerable ambivalence toward their unfortunate brethren (Perlmann 1958: 157).

They knew that the problem of the Russian Jew did not automatically end with immigration, and they assumed . . . that the burden of the destitute . . . would fall upon them. Second, beset as they were by a rising tide of social anti-Semitism in the United States, they reasoned that substantial numbers of foreign Jews . . . would only exacerbate American prejudice against all Jews (Cohen 1984: 239).

The feelings of American Gentiles toward the new Jewish immigrants were, at best, similarly ambivalent. In his December 1891 address to Congress President Harrison said, "It is estimated that over 1,000,000 will be forced from Russia within a few years . . . neither good for them nor for us" (Perlmann 1958: 158).

In March 1891, about a month after Adler's conversation with Kiamil Pasha, a Gentile Chicagoan named William Blackstone sent a memorial to President Harrison requesting support for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine (Feinstein 1965: chap. 3). Signers of the memorial in-

15. See Meade 1974: 72-76.

cluded the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and a number of distinguished members of the Jewish community.¹⁶ Blackstone was a deeply religious philanthropist whose inspiration came from a visit to Palestine in 1888. But there can be no doubt that the signers of the memorial, both Jew and Gentile, were inspired by fears of massive immigration of Russian Jews as well as by a sincere desire to find some means of alleviating their suffering.¹⁷ The memorial received considerable publicity, and was widely discussed in both the secular and the Jewish press.

Blackstone was prescient. Soon after he presented his memorial, twenty thousand Jews were expelled from Moscow, and expulsions from St. Petersburg and Kharkov followed (Sachar 1958: 245). "The spirit in which the Russian state approached its Jewish subjects was, from this time on, one of manifest and virtually undiluted hostility" (Vital 1975: 180). In Paris, Baron de Hirsch formed the Jewish Colonization Association to find some place to settle large numbers of Jews. Distrusting the Ottomans, his focus was primarily on Argentina. Immigration of Russian Jews to the United States in 1891 alone would nearly equal that of the entire preceding decade, and by the turn of the century President Harrison's feared million would have arrived. It is against this background that Paul Haupt's scheme for the colonization of Russian Jews in Mesopotamia, drafted sometime in 1891, must be set. His assistant had been told by the Ottoman Prime Minister that Mesopotamia would be an acceptable site for Jewish settlement, that Russian persecution of Jews and Jewish immigration had increased dramatically, and that talk of Jewish colonies backed by men of great wealth and even of a Jewish state was in the air. Had Adler written to

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16. The problem of acquiring Palestine was cursorily dismissed: "As to whether Turkey would be willing to part with Palestine, Blackstone stated that its financial situation was such that it would be willing to sell Palestine for a reasonable compensation" (Feinstein 1965: 59). This opinion of what the Ottomans would be willing to do for money, which turned out to be quite mistaken, as the Zionist movement would soon discover, is similar to the likewise mistaken assumption that the Philadelphia expedition would be able to "purchase" from the Turks most of the antiquities that they would excavate (Peters 1897: 19, 22, 25).
 17. The memorial itself, with its proposal for a Jewish state, created a new set of anxieties in large segments of the American Jewish community, which feared that even the suggestion of a Jewish state would cast doubts on their loyalty as Americans. This antagonism to Jewish statehood would persist as a strong anti-Zionist strain, especially among German-American Jews, into the 1950s.

Haupt about his conversation with Kiamil Pasha? Was Johns Hopkins's financial position sufficiently improved that Haupt thought the time ripe to revive his plans for an expedition to the Orient?

In November 1891, Haupt read a paper at a meeting of the Philadelphia Oriental Club held in the home of Judge Mayer Sulzberger, a wealthy Philadelphia Jew with strong interests in Orientalia and Judaica (Adler 1941: 43).¹⁸ Present also was Oscar Straus, United States Minister to the Sublime Porte. Sulzberger was Cyrus Adler's cousin,¹⁹ and it was through Adler that Haupt, a Gentile, had gained entrée to the prosperous German Jewish communities of Baltimore and Philadelphia. After the meeting Haupt showed the manuscript of his pamphlet to Sulzberger and Straus, and Sulzberger was sufficiently impressed to agree to have it printed. The printing must have been accomplished in early 1892.

One cannot help admiring Haupt's ingenuity in linking the plight of Russian Jewry and his German Jewish friends' resulting sympathies and anxieties with his own scholarly ambitions. If the United States lacked the imperialist or economic interests in the Near East that would provide the appropriate context and support for an expedition to Mesopotamia, then that context and support must somehow be created, perhaps through the felicitous conjunction of Jewish misery and Jewish money.

Haupt, who had never been to the Orient, derived most of his information on contemporary conditions in Mesopotamia from a lecture published by Aloys Sprenger in 1886, whose full title deserves to be quoted: *Babylonien, das reichste Land in der Vorzeit und das lohnendste Kolonisationsfeld für die Gegenwart. Ein Vorschlag zur Kolonisation des Orients*. At a time when Germany was scrambling to put together a colonial empire from the leavings of France and England, Sprenger vaunted Mesopotamia's ancient fertility which had declined drastically due to the neglect of its present inhabitants: "die schönsten Länder der Erde durch die Mißwirtschaft der

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18. M. Perlmann describes the meeting as taking place in late 1891 because there is a letter from Haupt to Sulzberger (dated 7 December 1891) that discusses preparing an English edition of his pamphlet (1958: 159f). *Oriental Studies*, page 15, lists two meetings of the Club in late 1891: 19 November and 17 December. The discussion between Haupt and Sulzberger must therefore have taken place at the 19 November meeting, and, indeed, Haupt is listed as having given a paper at that very meeting.
 19. In 1888, during the struggle with the University of Pennsylvania over the Babylonian Expedition, Adler had written to Sulzberger asking that he intervene with Minister Straus to block the Philadelphia project (Adler 1985: I, 1f.).

Muslime zu Einöden geworden sind” (253). The only reason Babylonia had been neglected in the feverish European colonization of the world was that “Kapitalisten und Politiker sich nicht mit Geschichte besaßen und Geschichtsforscher keine Kapitalien besitzen” (187). Germany need only pry Babylonia loose from the crumbling Ottoman Empire—not a difficult task, he thought—and settle it with industrious Swabian peasants who would restore the land’s legendary prosperity.

Haupt was not as crude as Sprenger, and he did not of course advocate an independent colony or Jewish state. His hints to future Jewish farmers included advice on increasing crop fertility by instituting the European practice of manuring, utilizing guano that could be obtained from the Persian Gulf (Haupt 1892: 9-10). Although agriculture would be the economic base of the colonies, Haupt recommended the antiquities trade as an excellent source of additional income. Antiquities were in such supply that thousands of “Duplikaten” could be sold to European and American museums, and there would still be plenty left for a planned local museum. Ever the scholar, Haupt added that “Fragmente von Thontafeltexten, von denen sich die dazu gehörigen größeren Stücke bereits im Britischen Museum finden, müssten schon im Interesse der Wissenschaft an England verkauft werden” (12-13).

Haupt addressed neither the political nor the financial arrangements that would be needed to pull the scheme off. Had he perhaps heard from Adler that the Ottoman Empire would welcome Jewish settlement in Mesopotamia? The first section of the pamphlet discussed the building of a Euphrates railway from Iskenderun to Basra as a necessary part of the project. Was Haupt implying that if the Jews financed the railway the Sultan would accept the Jewish colonists?²⁰

Only in the last three pages of his pamphlet do we find Haupt in his element. Before putting any colonization scheme into effect, precise preliminary investigations by experts would have to be made, and this could be done “most discreetly” (am Unauffälligsten) by combining such studies with a scientific expedition to explore the ruins of ancient Assyria and Babylonia.

20. See Perlmann 1958: 165-66 for later Jewish interest in the Baghdad Railway scheme in connection with the possibility of Jewish settlement in Mesopotamia.

Die Smithsonian Institution zu Washington würde jeder Zeit bereit sein, die wissenschaftliche Leitung des Unternehmens zu übernehmen, und falls man sich bereit erklärte, die archäologische Ergebnisse . . . dem U.S. National Museum zu Washington zur Verfügung zu stellen, würde es nicht unmöglich sein, einige Officiere von der U.S. Army and Navy als Ingenieure, etc., der Expedition beigegeben zu erhalten (Haupt 1892: 19f.).

Here are the very same conditions Haupt had set before the Babylonian Exploration Fund in Philadelphia four years earlier! I very much doubt that Secretary Langley was aware that a Smithsonian expedition was being offered as a cover for laying the groundwork for Jewish colonization in Mesopotamia!

Haupt, in paragraphs that drew heavily on his 1888 "Memorandum," called for a twelve-man expedition staff, including three Assyriologists: "ein Assyriologe für die Alterthümer und Sculpturen . . . ein Assyriologe für die Thontafel-Keilschrifttexte . . . [und] ein Assyriologe als wissenschaftlicher Leiter der Expedition" (21). He thought it best to take along both an Englishman and a Frenchman in order to guarantee consular protection, and it is safe to assume that he intended for himself to be the third. He suggested Theophilus Pinches (English) and Joseph Halévy (French) for the other two. The latter was an odd choice, since Haupt most emphatically disagreed with Halévy's heterodox theories about the Sumerian language (Cooper, forthcoming). Was the choice made because Haupt thought Halévy's obviously Jewish name would make him attractive to potential sponsors of the expedition?

There is no further record of any attempt by Haupt to bring his scheme to fruition, but Moshe Perlmann documents its survival in Jewish circles. Briefly considered by Theodor Herzl as an alternative to Palestine,²¹ Mesopotamia remained high on the list of the territorialists, those Jews who, seeking an immediate and practicable place to settle large numbers of Eastern European Jews, broke with the Zionist movement after the Zionists rejected Uganda (which had been made available by the British Government) or any other territory outside of Palestine and its immediate environs. In 1909 the Mesopotamian scheme was expounded to an enthusiastic

21. Haupt's pamphlet had been sent to Herzl by Adler with a cover letter sometime before the first Zionist Congress in Basel (1897) (Adler 1985: I, 73-75).

meeting of four thousand at Leeds, and in 1910 the Jewish Colonization Association sent out an exploratory expedition to Mesopotamia, certainly without the Assyriological contingent proposed by Haupt. But in 1914 a sub-committee of the Jewish Territorial Organization decided against the possibility of settling Jews in Mesopotamia. The outbreak of World War I rendered the whole scheme a mere historical curiosity.

Paul Haupt and the Philippines

In December 1898, the Treaty of Paris ceded the Philippine Islands to the United States. The following summer, Paul Haupt announced a course in "Malay for Beginners" to be given in the fall semester of 1899. In 1900 he announced a lecture course on the Philippines, and in 1901 his assistant, the talented Semitist Frank Blake, inaugurated instruction in "Philippine Dialects" (Tagalog and Visayan) at Johns Hopkins. This flurry of academic attention to islands at the farthest edge of the Orient was taking place in a department whose interests had hitherto been confined to lands west of Iran, and, with the exception of instruction in conversational Arabic and Hebrew, to antiquity and the Middle Ages.

The United States was finally an imperialist power, with a colonial empire that might provide the same opportunities to Orientalists in America that European imperialism and colonialism had afforded scholars on the other side of the Atlantic. The bridge to the Near East would be the considerable Muslim population of the Philippines. And if the study of Arabic and Islam could be shown to be valuable to the new colonial power, there might be some resultant benefits for ancient Near Eastern studies as well.

At the April 1900 meeting of the American Oriental Society, Haupt read a paper in which he urged the Society to expand its activities in Philippine scholarship, and to "use all our influence to encourage the Smithsonian Institution to extend the work of our excellent Bureau of Ethnology to the Philippine Islands with ample provision for a number of young American Orientalists, who have some training in Malay, Arabic and Sanscrit, to study the languages and the customs of the natives in our new Oriental possessions" (Haupt 1903). He began his paper with an announcement of his own Philippine Encyclopaedia project, but quickly turned to exhort his colleagues to do their patriotic duty.

Now that the United States has become an Oriental power, the American Oriental Society, it seems to me, should take up . . . the study of the languages and customs of the native population in our Asiatic possessions. Officers of the army and navy, statesmen and politicians cannot solve all the problems we are confronted with; Orientalists . . . should be consulted.

Haupt assured his audience that Philippine studies “does not commit us to a colonial, expansional, or imperial policy.” What a strange and disingenuous statement to make in the midst of a brutal colonial war that would end only with Aguinaldo’s capture in the following year!

Haupt then touched on a theme which is a cause for anxiety among all who make a living from Orientalism. “This [Philippine studies] would arouse a widespread interest for Oriental studies. The general public, as a rule, are not interested in our abstract scientific investigations, but in the practical problems.” We must make what we do relevant! An example of the useful wisdom that Orientalists might offer colonial administrators was Haupt’s recommendation on religious policy:

Roman Catholicism is the form of Christianity most successful in proselytizing uncivilized races; you must appeal more to their eyes than to their understanding. . . . Protestant missionaries had better not be admitted for some time. A knowledge of different Christian doctrines would only lead the natives to immeasurable bewilderment.

As he had done in his pamphlet on the settlement of Jews in Mesopotamia, Haupt saved his true aim for the end of the address. This was nothing less than a call for the foundation of an Oriental Institute in the nation’s capital.

During the past forty years the British Government has encouraged Oriental research in India as much as possible, and the United States should follow this noble example, and promote, not only the practical study of Tagalog and other Philippine dialects, but also the study of Malay, Arabic, Hindustani, Siamese, Chinese, and Japanese. We ought to have an Oriental Seminary in Washington, with native teachers under the direction of scientifically trained American Orientalists, for the study of modern Oriental languages, just as they have in Paris, Berlin, Vienna and St. Petersburg. A well-managed Philippine branch in Manila of our Bureau of Ethnology and an

Oriental Seminary in Washington is infinitely cheaper than a large army or navy, and may in some respects accomplish just as much if not a good deal more. . . . Benevolent assimilation without due regard to native prejudices is impossible (Haupt 1903).

Whether we consider Haupt's proposal to be wicked or simply naive and self-serving, we cannot help feeling a tinge of regret that alone among the capitals of great (and even lesser) Western nations, Washington is not (yet) a major center for ancient Near Eastern research.

The Study of the Ancient Near East Then and Now

The proposed Oriental Institute in Washington failed not only because Haupt was too clumsy an advocate. Rather, his proposal must be seen within the context of a series of attempts to centralize the direction and support of the humanities—attempts which collapsed at the turn of the century with the failure of the National University scheme²² and the abandonment of plans to standardize secondary-school curricula (Vesey 1979: 67-68). The centralized European model could not be imposed on a nation with many and diverse centers of learning, strong regional traditions, and a dislike of federal interference in educational and cultural matters. This helps to explain why Washington long remained a cultural and intellectual backwater, and why the Smithsonian never realized its potential for leadership in scholarship and science.

Despite widespread confidence in progress through the 'arts and sciences,' the government of the United States was not inclined to establish a comprehensive program to promote such endeavors because it was believed that the 'arts and sciences,' like economic life, would develop from the initiative of private persons. Instead,

22. Adler, who was involved with the scheme, remembers that "it came to naught, wounded as it were in the house of its friends. Johns Hopkins, being so near to Washington, feared for its distinction . . . In fact, Johns Hopkins made the alternate proposal that, being so near to the national Capital, it should be denominated the National University, and naturally a counter-claim was put in for the University of Virginia. . . . Dr. William Pepper, Provost of the University of Pennsylvania, was the only head of a great university who favored it" (Adler 1941: 194).

governmental scientific institutions became complementary or ancillary to the universities. . . . The Smithsonian Institution could have been used for the furtherance of scientific research but the government never attempted to develop it in this way (Shils 1979: 22).

This puts into perspective not only the failure of Haupt's Oriental Institute scheme, but also the failure of Haupt's various efforts to win support for a national, Smithsonian-sponsored expedition to Mesopotamia.

The approach most effective in America for gaining support for research in the humanities was well understood by Haupt's fellow countryman, Herman Hilprecht. Speaking of the organization of the first Babylonian Expedition, Hilprecht wrote that it became necessary

to arouse greater interest among the religious and educated classes . . . and to make especial efforts to win the confidence and cooperation of public-spirited men of influence and wealth, on whose moral and financial support the practicability of the intended undertaking chiefly depended; for direct assistance from the United States government was entirely out of the question (Hilprecht 1903: 292).

But then the anxiety over relevance, noted above in Haupt's advocacy of Philippine studies, creeps in:

But where could a sufficient number of enlightened men and women be found who had the desire and courage to engage in such a costly and somewhat adventurous enterprise as a Babylonian expedition . . . as long as there were more urgent appeals from churches and schools, universities and museums, hospitals and other charitable institutions, which needed the constant support of their patrons, and while there were plenty of scientific enterprises and experiments of a more general interest and of more practical value? (Hilprecht 1903: 292-93).

Hilprecht's solution, to stimulate the interest of the "educated classes" and win the support of "public-spirited men of influence and wealth," was the correct and ultimately successful approach. Haupt's approach, to make Oriental studies useful to the government, was a dead end.

A century later, the anxiety over relevance is still very much with us. Indeed, as the quotations from Haupt and Hilprecht attest, the question of

relevance has always been an undercurrent in the sea of academic research, despite the cult of knowledge and learning so eloquently described by Shils in the essay cited earlier.²³ Scholars who study the ancient Near East must not only face popular skepticism regarding the value and relevance of the humanities in general, but must also answer the more pointed questions of those who control our budgets. A university cannot call itself by that name without teaching philosophy or English literature; but in an era of dwindling enrollments and heightened bottom-line consciousness, how do we justify the allocation of scarce resources to Assyriology or Egyptology?

Ancient Near Eastern studies, now as in Hilprecht's day, is dependent for large-scale initiatives on "enlightened men and women" of means from "the religious and educated classes." The federal government has relatively recently assumed substantial obligations to culture and scholarship through the National Endowments, which no doubt would have pleased Haupt; but it has done so in a peculiarly American way that makes the government the partner of host institutions and private donors. Washington is no longer a cultural and intellectual backwater, and the Smithsonian's scholarly profile is becoming ever more pronounced, but the legacy of the policies of the decades before World War I remains. Great collections of Near Eastern antiquities are to be seen in Philadelphia, New York, New Haven, Cambridge, and Chicago, but not in the nation's capital.

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23. The 1888 Johns Hopkins Commemoration Day address delivered by Haupt, in which he called for a national expedition to Mesopotamia, was followed by an address by the great chemist, Ira Remsen, who found it necessary there to defend the pursuit of pure as opposed to applied scientific research.

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The siglum SI refers to the Smithsonian Institution Archives; UM refers to the University Museum (Philadelphia) Archives; JH to The Johns Hopkins University Archives.



Fig. 1. (Paul Haupt, 1916. Photo courtesy The Johns Hopkins University)
(Photographic Archives. *Caption to Fig. 2*)



*switch
captions*



Fig. 2. (Cyrus Adler (1863-1940), undated. Photo courtesy Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 95, Photographs.)

Caption to Fig. 1



Fig. 3. Samuel P. Langley (1834-1906), undated. Photo courtesy Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 95, Photographs.

Contributors

Ann C. Gunter, Ancient Near Eastern Art, Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Matthew W. Stolper, Assyriology, The Oriental Institute, Chicago.

Michael Harbsmeier, Anthropology, Center for Research in the Humanities, Copenhagen.

Josef Wiesehöfer, Ancient History, University of Kiel.

Frederick N. Bohrer, History of Art, Hood College, Frederick, Maryland.

Mogens Trolle Larsen, Assyriology, Carsten Niebuhr Institute of Near Eastern Studies, Copenhagen.

Jerrold S. Cooper, Assyriology, Department of Near Eastern Studies, The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore.

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