

Preface

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This work presents results of rescue excavations by The Packard Humanities Institute (PHI) at Zeugma on the Euphrates in southeastern Turkey. Fieldwork was designed to salvage parts of the ancient city that slowly disappeared from view over several months in 2000 during the gradual filling of the reservoir behind a new hydroelectric dam near Birecik. At the outset of the crisis, PHI launched an ambitious program of excavation and conservation to document the ancient city for posterity. The result was an international collaboration on a scale rarely witnessed for archaeological projects. It is no surprise that this unparalleled endeavor has produced impressive results. These volumes present the final reports of these activities.

In response to international outcry over the destruction of cultural heritage,¹ PHI hired the contract firm Oxford Archaeology (OA) to manage excavation and the Centro di Conservazione Archeologica (CCA) to manage conservation.² The Regional Development Administration of the Southeastern Anatolia Project (Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi, or GAP) provided logistical support in Turkey.³ At the beginning of the PHI campaign in June 2000 the ancient city of Apamea on the east bank of the Euphrates River was flooded in entirety and water levels were already rising on Zeugma. News of the archaeological intervention brought an extraordinary visit by the prime minister, Bülent Ecevit, in the midst of an election campaign. As fieldwork commenced, an impressive collection of aerial photos captured the imminence of the tragic loss of cultural heritage and the harsh conditions that were to challenge the rescue excavations.⁴ Few archaeologists could have prepared for the unique conditions of this race against floodwaters in the extreme temperatures of the Euphrates Valley. Contributors to periodic academic oversight of the rescue excavations for PHI included Richard Hodges, David Kennedy, and Henry Hurst. OA also arranged brief visits by specialists to assist with identification and dating of archaeological finds in 2000, including Janet DeLaine and Philip Kenrick. PHI welcomed the return of archaeologists who had carried out work at Zeugma prior to 2000 so that they could participate in this unique opportunity to rescue parts of the city from destruction. Responders included the Gaziantep Museum, the local archaeological authority, and the University of Nantes, with work directed by Catherine Abadie-Reynal. The Swiss campaign in pursuit of the Roman legionary fortress fell under the PHI umbrella in 2000 but was not threatened by the reservoir. Towards the end of 2000, an independent campaign was directed by the late Prof. Dr. Ümit Serdaroglu under the name Zeugma Initiative Group (ZIG).

The rescue excavations at Zeugma brought to light a formidable corpus of new finds from stunning archaeological contexts. Most of these belong to a residential district perched above the floodplain on the west bank of the Euphrates River (Plates 1 and 2). The houses discovered there were decorated with polychrome mosaic pavements and wall plaster. These correspond in date to the presence of the *legio IIII Scythica* at Zeugma, from Flavian times to the sack of Zeugma and other Roman cities on the Euphrates frontier in A.D. 252/253 by Sasanian armies led by Shapur I. The destruction deposits removed from these houses document the final days of the city with striking clarity. Datable finds from these contexts provide abundant means to date domestic assemblages replete with a broad array of finds not intrinsically datable, especially metalwork. Thus the results of the PHI rescue excavations at Zeugma bring an enormous corpus of new artifacts to bear on conventional interpretations about Zeugma and the Euphrates Valley in antiquity. For example, numismatic finds challenge assumptions about hoarding in antiquity, military finds shed light on soldiers in the city, and inscriptions are fueling new insights about the last days of the Commagenian kings and processes of acculturation on the Euphrates frontier in Hellenistic and Roman times. Programs of petrological, botanical, and animal skeletal analysis add further dimensionality to the interpretation of these artifacts.

Several attempts to bring groups together for collaborative publication followed the rescue excavations of 2000. These included a one-day meeting hosted by OA for PHI at Oxford in 2002 involving representatives from PHI, CCA, OA, the Gaziantep Museum, the University of Nantes, and the Swiss campaign to Zeugma. In 2003 I had several meetings with the Gaziantep Museum in order to encourage collaborative publication of the rescue excavations. I am grateful for the assistance of Kutal Görkay of Ankara University in these negotiations. All attempts to organize joint publication failed. This book therefore includes final publication of the rescue excavations and conservation carried out in Trenches 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 18, and 19 at Zeugma by OA and CCA for the PHI rescue campaign of 2000. Other groups under the umbrella of the PHI rescue campaign in 2000 are publishing their work independently: Catherine Abadie-Reynal (Trenches 6, 14, 16, and 17) and the Gaziantep Museum (Trenches 3 and 8).⁵ Two phases of study followed the rescue campaign of 2000. The first followed immediately upon the excavations, which came to an end when the reservoir reached its intended levels, thereby ending the threat to archaeological contexts higher on the riverbank. This period of reflection and study

ended in April 2001. Concurrent with the organization and study of finds in a GAP facility near Birecik, OA also carried out a topographical survey of the new shoreline on the west bank of the Euphrates, near the submerged zone of the rescue excavations. Following a one-year hiatus beginning in April 2001, OA returned in April 2002 to manage an eight-month study season. Most firsthand examination of conserved artifacts took place at Birecik between May and November 2002. In addition to participating in the organization of the study program at Birecik in 2002, I returned to Gaziantep for additional study of finds with Katherine Dunbabin and Bettina Bergmann in 2003. All project documentation compiled by OA was transferred to the University of Wisconsin–Madison in 2003 for purposes of preparing the final publication for The Packard Humanities Institute. The *Journal of Roman Archaeology* published interim reports on the excavation and conservation program in March 2003, and these provide a cursory introduction to some of the work in this book.⁶

For the PHI project, CCA also managed an ambitious campaign of conservation under the careful direction of Roberto Nardi. Following the end of excavations in mid September, CCA engaged in a Herculean effort to seal wall plaster and mosaics with a reversible waterproof mortar (it had not been possible, nor advisable, to remove all of these from the site during the excavations), backfill the trenches, and fortify Area B with a robust blanket of coarse gravel and sandbags to protect it from wave action across the surface of the new reservoir (see the chapter by Nardi and Schneider). At the Birecik facility and at two new state-of-the-art conservation laboratories constructed by PHI on the grounds of the Gaziantep Museum, CCA cleaned, consolidated, repaired, and conserved over 900 sq. m of mosaic pavements from the time of the rescue excavations until March 2004. All mosaic pavements lifted from trenches under the umbrella of the PHI project were conserved at this time, but the majority of work was devoted to rescuing the many pavements lifted from houses in Area A and orphaned on the steps of the Gaziantep Museum before the beginning of the PHI project.⁷

Two publication meetings brought many contributing authors together for review of the excavation archives, analysis of stratigraphy and artifacts, and discussion about data and interpretation. The first took place at Wolfson College, Oxford, in April 2003.⁸ The second convened as a colloquium at the 105th annual meeting of the Archaeological Institute of America in San Francisco, organized by the editor and The Packard Humanities Institute.⁹ Authors submitted chapters between 2003 and 2007. Several rounds of editing and revision transpired between 2004 and 2009.¹⁰

THE STRUCTURE OF THIS BOOK

Many chapters in this book present catalogues of finds organized by material class. These include synthesis and

discussion of the significance of each corpus of finds for Zeugma. Chapters on the architecture and decoration of the houses describe and interpret the vivid contexts for the archaeological finds (Tobin, Dunbabin, Bergmann, and Benefiel and Coleman). Alongside presentation of artifacts and contexts, a discrete set of chapters presents the results of environmental analyses carried out during the rescue campaign of 2000 (Meiggs, Charles, Gale, and Challinor and de Moulins), while another group explores Zeugma's enduring connection with the Roman army (Elton, Scott, and Hartmann and Speidel). Additional chapters on geophysical survey and site conservation convey challenges to the detection and protection of Zeugma's urban topography in 2000 (Van Den Hoek and Aylward, Nardi and Schneider). The editor's introductory chapter is the analytical preface to the data and interpretation presented in the subsequent chapters. It provides the project's overall framework for research, describes the archaeological deposits, lays out the site chronology, offers historical conclusions, and explains the significance of the PHI rescue excavations for Zeugma, a new benchmark for research on Roman housing and domestic life in the Hellenistic and Roman East.

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OA staff deployed in the trenches in summer 2000 created excavation notebooks, drawings, and photographs. Bruce Adams managed studio photography of artifacts. Luke Adams, Sarah Lucas, and other OA staff drew the artifacts after conservation.

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NOTES

1. For news published during the crisis, see Anonymous 2000, 80–81; Acar 2000a, 6–9; 2000b, 40–3; Başgelen and Ergeç 2000; Boulton 2000; Ergeç, Önal, and Wagner 2000, 104–13; Finkel 2000; Hodges 2000, 4–6; Kinzer 2000a, 2000b; Moore 2000; Morris 2000; Schofield 2001, 25–30. For warnings before the crisis, see Kennedy et al. 1995, 54–6; Kennedy 1994, 26–35; 1995, 127–9; 1998a, 7–8, 13–8; 1998b, 560; 1998c, 20–7; Başgelen 1999, 173–5; Algaze et al. 1991, 175–6; Algaze et al. 1994, 2, 15, 19, 23; Algaze 1992, 3–15. See also the collection of essays in the book *Zeugma yalnız değil!* published by the Tarih Vakfı in 2000.
2. Oxford Archaeology produced three unpublished reports: a 210-page illustrated report on the rescue work of 2000, a 46-page illustrated report on a topographical survey in 2001 along the new shoreline of the Birecik reservoir, and a 12-page report on the seven-month study season at Birecik in 2002. CCA produced a six-volume, unpublished, multimedia report of the conservation work. These reports are in the Zeugma archive retained by The Packard Humanities Institute. For a summary report, see the chapter by Nardi and Schneider in this volume, and Nardi and Schneider 2004, 157–67.
3. GAP-RDA (2001) published a picture book on the rescue excavations.
4. Başgelen 2000. For explanatory captions for some of these photos, see http://www.classics.uwa.edu.au/about/research/zeugma_on_the_euphrates
5. University of Nantes campaign: Abadie-Reynal et al. 2001, 243–305; Barbet 2005; 2004. The Gaziantep Museum campaign was supervised by Kemal Sertok, with Mehmet Önal in charge of Trench 3 and Yusuf Yavaş directing work in Trench 8; cf. the papers pertaining to the rescue campaign of 2000 in Ergeç 2006.
6. Humphrey 2003. Additional excavations were begun by the so-called Zeugma Initiative Group (ZIG), directed by Ümit Serdaroglu, as late as November 2002, in unthreatened areas of the site. The interim reporting in the *JRA* supplement on the work now published here is limited to the chapter by Robert Early et al. (excluding sections on Trenches 3 and 8, which were excavated under the direction of the Gaziantep Museum in

2000) and catalogue number 1 in the chapter by Michael Speidel and Martin Hartmann, which came from a PHI excavation area managed by OA in 2000. All other material presented in the *JRA* supplement will receive final publication as appropriate in venues selected by the responsible parties. The final publication of this work, and that carried out by the ZIG group, is eagerly awaited.

7. Lifted by the joint excavations of the University of Nantes, directed by Catherine Abadie-Reynal, and the Gaziantep Museum, directed by Kemal Sertok and Mehmet Önal.
8. Participants were the editor, Kevin Butcher, Charles Crowther, Richard Hodges, Philip Kenrick, Paul Reynolds, and Jennifer Tobin. Andy Millar provided assistance with management and interpretation of the excavation notebooks. I am grateful to Charles Crowther for the generous invitation to meet at Wolfson College and for logistical support on site.
9. See the abstracts for the 105th annual meeting of the AIA (Boston: Archaeological Institute of America, 2003), Session 2E, pages 50–4. Colloquium presenters were Katherine Dunbabin, Philip Kenrick, Paul Reynolds, Roberto Nardi, Jennifer Tobin, and Sharon Herbert. Richard Hodges and C. Brian Rose were discussants. David W. Packard, John Mck. Camp II, Kathleen Coleman, Rebecca Benefiel, and Bettina Bergmann were also on hand for discussion.
10. The timetable for a project as large and as complex as this one is necessarily protracted. Readers should not fault the authors for the absence of up-to-the-minute bibliography.

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Figure 1. Zeugma. View to south from the Birecik reservoir, showing Belkis Tepe and rescue excavations at the water's edge in the days leading up to maximum inundation in September 2000.



Figure 2. Zeugma. View to north from Belkis Tepe, showing Kara Tepe (left) and rescue excavations along the new shoreline of the Birecik reservoir. September 2000.