

**A PLEA FOR RESEARCH IN ASIA MINOR AND
SYRIA AUTHORIZED BY MEN WHOSE HIGH
ACHIEVEMENTS AND REPRESENTATIVE
CHARACTER MAKE THE PROJECT A CALL OF
HUMANITY AT LARGE FOR LIGHT IN REGARD
TO THE LIFE OF MAN IN THE CRADLE OF
WESTERN CIVILIZATION**

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A plea for research in Asia Minor and Syria authorized by men whose high achievements and representative character make the project a call of humanity at large for light in regard to the life of man in the cradle of Western civilization by J. R. Sitlington Sterrett

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A Call of Humanity at Large

FOR
L I G H T

IN REGARD TO

The Life of Man
In The Cradle of Western Civilization

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA
BY
J. R. SITLINGTON STERRETT

CORNELL UNIVERSITY
ITHACA, NEW YORK

ASIA MINOR.

Archaeologists agree that Asia Minor is the country from which, in the near future, startling, and even dazzling additions to our knowledge of the past will be made. So far as the Hittites are concerned these additions will be **history itself**, for they will actually create the history of humanity just before the beginnings of written history, a past so dim and so distant that even the constitutionally inquisitive Greek knew almost nothing of or about it, though strangely enough, he was its immediate inheritor and passed it on to us.

But the nearer past also, the historic past, the Phrygian, Hellenic, Hellenistic past, the Græco-Roman and the Early Christian past in Asia Minor, claims, aye, demands, earnest, immediate, and long-continued investigation, not to speak of the Seljukian, the Crusading, and even the Turkish past.

For the last thirty years a small band of scholars has been eager to collect ancient inscriptions, to study ancient monuments, to locate ancient cities and to create the ancient map. But the ancient documents that could be found easily, as the result of leisurely journeys through Asia Minor, have in great measure been garnered already, largely through the efforts of Sir William M. Ramsay and other travellers trained by him in **surface** research, one of whom is the present writer and petitioner. But what still remains to be done is of infinitely greater importance than that which has already been accomplished. Witness the discovery of the documentary proof that Boghaz-kieui was really the capital of the Hittite empire, a thing long suspected it is true, but never proved till now, for none could get the proof till now. And yet there was that precious document, extant, actually **extant**, but lying beneath the ground, where it had lain for maybe three millennia, waiting for the man to come and discover it, and with its help write a new and a splendid page of history.

Results to Be Expected from Surface Research.

The additions to the sum of human knowledge that may be expected from a systematic search for everything that is above ground in Asia Minor will be manifold in nature. Such a systematic search will throw light on ancient geography, on ancient history and legislation, whether local, regal, imperial, or municipal, on the history of Christianity in the earlier centuries of our era, on customs and manners, on pagan religious rites, ceremonies, and usages, on the location and importance of ancient cities, on ancient roads and road systems, trade-routes and international commerce, in short, on every conceivable subject affected by the discovery and proper assimilation of Greek and Latin inscriptions, combined with a patient study of the topography, geography, and local history. The material collected in this way is much more difficult to assimilate, much more difficult to fit into its proper place, its own special niche or corner in history or geography than is the material gained by excavations. It therefore demands an expert with broader knowledge, more balanced judgment, and keener instincts than does the material gained by excavations. Therefore surface research is best managed in connexion with excavations.

Chartography a Surface Exploration.

The extant maps of Asia Minor in general are based on dead-reckoning by the time consumed in the march of a horse. The convention upon which geographers have had to work is that in one hour an average horse will pass over three miles and one-half. But this convention is wholly unsatisfactory; Ramsay has found that the driving time will vary between six and twelve minutes per kilometer, for the horse will travel rapidly or slowly, as the road is good or poor, or as it traverses level or hilly ground. There is no trustworthy map of Asia minor, for all alike are crude and inaccurate. There is not a single city on the plateau of Asia Minor, apart from the few railway surveys, whose situation is certain **within several miles**. Owing to this fact route surveys, however good, however much they may ap-

proach perfection, whether made by Kiepert, Ramsay, von Diest, Admiral Spratt, or Major Bennett, are mere makeshifts. Therefore in adapting special route surveys to the general map this uncertainty is exasperating to travelling scholars, because they cannot make their own routes fit into the general scheme.

Ancient Roads a Surface Exploration.

The study of ancient roads in general is most important, difficult, and fascinating. In earliest times the road-system throughout Asia Minor led to and centered in the capital of the Hittite empire, a capital whose site was that of the modern Boghaz-kieui, though the name of the city itself is as yet unknown.

Later on the road-system led to and centered in Ephesus, at one extreme, and Susa, at the other. Under early Roman rule the roads continued to point to Ephesus, because Ephesus pointed to Rome. With the change in the seat of empire the road-system pointed to and centered in Constantinople; and similarly Iconium was its center in Seljukian times.

In addition to these grand centers of the various road-systems there were, in the Roman period, provincial centers of provincial road-systems; and distances were measured from these provincial centers. All sorts of geographical problems depend upon the accurate fixing and locating of the actual track, or line, of these roads, whether international or provincial. But it is more imperative that the lines of the roads in the Roman period be fixed with entire accuracy.

Method of Conducting Surface Research.

The aim of the leader of the expedition would be to fix upon a given Province, whether Cappadocia, Lycia, Phrygia, Cilicia, Pamphylia, or what not, and to visit, perhaps repeatedly, every village in that Province, district by district; to collect every Greek, Latin, or Hittite inscription that is above ground; to study, plan, and photograph every monument of antiquity and every Early Christian Church; to get every scrap of information that may be gathered from the lips of the natives. Ex-

perience has taught travelling archæologists that the most effective method of conducting surface research is to encamp for some time at a given town or village and make excursions therefrom as a center, and to repeat this in consecutive years. This plan makes the presence of the exploring party known to everybody in the vicinity; it puts the travellers on terms of friendship and intimacy with the natives; it allays their ever alert suspicion and overcomes their reluctance to tell of antiquities; and it brings in information that could not be had by merely journeying through the country. For many ears, and many eyes, and many tongues hear, see, and impart more than a lone traveller can hope for. In short it is the principle of intensive farming applied to surface research.

Such an expedition would accomplish something really substantial along the lines mentioned, something that would be a permanent gain for the science of the past, for archæology, history, geography, topography, religion, legislation, manners, customs, etc., from prehistoric, that is, from pre-hellenic, times down to the present day.

Sore Need for Haste in Doing Surface Research.

There is a crying need for great haste in putting into the field an expedition for surface research. The reason for haste is the fact that ancient monuments of every kind, whether structural, sculptural, or epigraphical are being destroyed every day with pitiful remorselessness. The Turks, and even the Christians, are using the ancient stones of every kind for building materials, especially in the construction of mosques, fountains, barracks, mussafir odas, schools, etc. But besides that the actual annihilation of buildings, of sculptured and inscribed stones, is brought about in two ways, firstly, by being burned to make lime, and, secondly, by being destroyed ruthlessly because of superstition or religion. There is a universally prevalent belief that the hewn, sculptured, or inscribed stones that date from pagan or Christian antiquity contain gold which was secreted in their interior by the inhabitants of the country at the time of the Seljuk or Turkish conquest. Therefore the searcher for

gold attacks the stones with drill and maul and blows them up with gunpowder, a fate which befell the splendid lion of Chæronæa. On the other hand the religious fanatic destroys ancient stones, whether they be sculptured or inscribed, because sculpture is an offense in his nostrils, and inscriptions carved on stone by the detested infidels, whether Pagan or Christian, are hated all the more by the Moslems, because, in their ignorance, they are unable to read the inscriptions which tell where treasure was hidden by the Giaours at the time of the Turkish conquest. Therefore, to prevent the interloping archæologists from reaping a golden harvest that is denied to the faithful, but ignorant, Moslem, he takes hammer and chisel and hacks away the inscription, or at least he defaces it to the best of his ability; especially if the stone bears a cross—that hated symbol.

When Leake travelled, the city walls of Iconium were still full of inscribed stones and works of sculpture. After the destruction of Iconium by Ibrahim Pasha a new city was built adjoining the old city. The ancient stones which formed the city walls were utilized in building the new city. When I travelled, the core of the old city walls, which consisted originally of mud, was still full of the traces of the impressions which the mud had made of inscriptions and works of sculpture. All the stones had perished beyond recovery.

Again, in his *Historical Geography* (p. 333), a book published not a great many years ago, Ramsay mentions, near Iconium, "the remains of a fine and large Christian Church," but in 1900 Crowfoot found scarcely "one stone standing upon another."

Therefore, if we would save all these *disjecta membra* of a glorious antiquity we must be up and doing. This fact is well recognized in Europe, thanks chiefly to Sir William M. Ramsay, who has spent thirty years of his life in *surface* research in Asia Minor.

In 1907 the present writer, who had himself spent years in surface research, organized a Cornell Expedition to Asia Minor, in order thereby to aid in snatching some bits of knowledge from the burning. The results of the work of the Cornell Expedition will be published during 1911.

Initial Outlay for Surface Research.

The initial equipment for surface research would include scientific instruments, photographic outfits and supplies for each member of the expedition, tents, camp equipments, and cooking outfits for each member of the expedition,—in order to enable each man to work independently and separately and along separate routes,—riding horses, pack-mules, two-wheeled gigs, trocheameters, etc. But this initial outlay, once made, would not be an annual expense, except that from time to time renewals will have to be made, as this or that article, implement, or animal becomes useless, from whatever cause.

Excavations.

It may be expected confidently that large additions to the sum of human knowledge will result from surface explorations in Asia Minor, but the most priceless treasures for archaeology, for history, for art, for architecture, **lie buried beneath the soil.** Here only excavations will avail, and for that reason systematic excavations pursued to an absolute finish, should go hand in hand with the systematic exploration of the surface.

Sites Belonging to the Hittite Period.

It cannot be doubted that excavations will greatly advance the science of the past, and will throw a bright light upon the history of the world for nearly three millenniums. It would begin at a time prior to the dawn of Greek history, and the story that will be told by the great mounds of Tyana, Iconium, Cæsarea-Mazaca, and Melitene, all of them Hittite cities, will "stupefy and astound" the world, to use the words of Sir William M. Ramsay. These mounds vary in size somewhat; that of Tyana covers approximately forty acres, and this mound, forty acres in extent, is the ancient Hittite city of Tyana. Conditions similar to those already mentioned prevail at other Hittite sites. The spade alone can reveal the contents of these mounds, and in those mounds there lies buried a story about which the world of scholars is burning to hear. Hittite sculptures lie so near the