

The Institute of ARCHAEOLOGY Siegfried H. Horn Museum



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INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY
HORN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
MUSEUM
NEWSLETTER

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Archaeology in Jordan

On November 12, 2012 a round-table panel discussion was held as part of the Horn Museum lectureship series featuring several visiting scholars from Jordan, who were on campus in connection with their participation at the Annual Meeting of the American Schools of Oriental Research, in Chicago, held immediately following their stay at Andrews University. The Jordanian scholars included Jehad Haroun, Reem Al-Shqour, Sabal Al-Zaben, and Maria Elena Ronza. For the panel discussion, they were joined by Drs Randall Younker and Øystein LaBianca, the directors of the Tall Jalul and Tall Hesban archaeological projects, sponsored by Andrews University.

After introducing the panelists and making some preliminary remarks, Dr. LaBianca turned the discussion over to Jehad Haroun, of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan, who talked about archaeological sites and excavation in the country. Haroun said that Jordan is located in the heart of the Holy Land and there are thousands of archaeological sites dating from the Stone Age to the Ottoman period. Today, there are about 85 international archaeological projects working in Jordan.

In 1881 Jordan began to collect data on its archaeological sites. By 2000 about 15,000 sites had been entered into its database. Recently a new National Survey project has been implemented, in part to reevaluate and resurvey sites, especially those about which information has been dormant or missing for more than 50 years, some of which have been partially destroyed or removed by modern activity. The new National Survey uses a web-based database called Mega Jordan that allows people to access information from anywhere.

The new national survey is also necessary due to the increase in archaeological excavation in Jordan. While these excavations have positively impacted the country of Jordan by revealing and clarifying historical issues, the transfer of knowledge, and the training of Jordanian staff, sites

(cont'd on p. 2)



l-r: Panelists Øystein LaBianca, Jehad Haroun, Reem Al-Shqour, Sabal Al-Zaben, Maria Elena Ronza and Randall Younker.

are increasingly threatened by looting and illicit trafficking. This negative impact makes it necessary for each archaeological site to be managed properly. However, due to the current financial crunch the Department of Antiquities does not have sufficient resources to police and maintain the sites itself.

Some archaeological projects, like the Madaba Plains Project (MPP) sponsored by Andrews University, represent proper archaeological work. While some projects simply excavate a site and then abandon it, the Madaba Plains Project has been very good at publishing their work as well as implementing other valuable aspects including site restoration and preservation, community interaction, and artifact restoration and preservation.

Haroun turned the program over to Reem Shqour, director of the dig at the Islamic Village, in conjunction with the Andrews University-sponsored excavations at Tall Jalul. From 2008-2012 excavations have been carried out at the village, located immediately south of Tall Jalul. The village is one of the largest and most important sites in the region, providing important insights into Islamic history.

The goal of these excavations is to complete the occupational history of this part of Jalul, as the tell was inhabited primarily during the Bronze and Iron Ages. Survey of the ruins to the south of the tell had revealed that the history of this site was much longer, including structures that date from the Roman and Byzantine periods, and throughout the entire Islamic period. Excavations have been conducted in three areas. In Area A, the remains of Early- Middle Islamic period a khan, or caravanserai, an important rest stop on the pilgrimage route, have been found. A khan is similar to a modern hotel, except it was not a place to sleep. The travelers slept outside the building in their tents; while the people, who ran the khan, provided food for the travelers and their animals. However, rich people and merchants were allowed to stay in the khan under certain conditions.

In Area B an Early Umayyad period Tower, representative of the earliest build-

ings of Islamic period settlements, was found. It is the only standing structure at the site. Some scholars believe that the tower was built as a mausoleum; however, this is uncertain. One thing is known; the tower was not built for defensive purposes. It is possible that the tower was simply a free-standing structure divided into residential units.

Area C has remains of a Byzantine Church, indicating that this region, like the town of Madaba, was influenced by Christianity during the Byzantine period. The excavations revealed a mosaic floor and what is possibly a tombstone with an inscribed Greek name off to one side. In addition, some marble fragments, which could have come from the altar of the church, have been found.

The next speaker was Sabal Al-Zaben, a resident of Jalul, currently a Ph.D student at Andrews University, whose father Akash al Zaben was instrumental in the location of the Dead Sea Scrolls. It was this story which she preceded to tell.

In 1947 seven scrolls had been discovered in a cave in the Qumran area by Bedouin shepherds, but their significance had not been fully realized. Then, on May 14, 1948, the British Mandate of Palestine ended, and the Arab-Israeli War began. As a result the location of the caves remained unknown to scholars. Some of the Bedouin knew that the Scrolls had been found in the area, but were hoping to profit from the find themselves.

In May 1948 the State of Israel was created, but the Qumran area remained part of the Kingdom of Jordan. When the Arab-Israeli War ended on January 7, 1949, Captain Philippe Lippens of the United Nations Armistice Observer Corps and a British Major-General named Norman Lash initiated a search for the Dead Sea Scrolls. Lash approached a Jordanian military captain, Akash Al-Zaben in hopes that he could locate the site. On January 28, 1949, after seven days of searching, Zaben was successful. He returned to Lash with some pottery sherds from the cave. G. Lankester Harding, the British Director of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan,

observed, but remained cautious as to their authenticity. Nevertheless, Harding made preliminary investigations. The next day the sherds were authenticated and Harding told Al-Zaben that he had indeed discovered the correct site. Archaeological excavations began almost immediately. As a result of his experience with the Scrolls, Akash Al-Zaben became interested in archaeology, and so did Sabal.

Then Elena Ranza, a staff member and Agent for the Hisban excavation project in Jordan, spoke about the history of interaction between the excavators of this site and the people who live there. When the Andrews University Heshbon Expedition first arrived in Hisban in 1968, they found a very tight-knit community. Nevertheless, a close comradery developed between the foreign excavators and their hosts. However, when a fence was constructed around the site in the 1980s, the people began to feel as though the site no longer belonged to the village. By the 1990s when the new phase of excavations began, the union that the community once shared had been fragmented. As a result, a new generation of Hisban excavators once again began to work with the local community in hopes that new memories and connections would be created between the people and the site. In this way, the community would be able to protect and preserve their heritage.

The project is dedicated to the task of developing an archaeological park on the site of Hisban. The park will include three main components including the archaeological excavation, restoration and preservation, and tourist development. With such a diverse park, the community can be involved in helping to educate tourists and other visitors to understand the history and heritage that exists in this part of Jordan. Another way the Hisban group hopes to engage the community is the establishment of a research center. This center would be built just outside the archaeological site and will be constructed in connection with the Hisban cultural association.

Dr. Younker closed the discussion by talking about the benefits of studying trib-

al societies. It helps remove our modern glasses and gives insights in terms of the social structure and everyday life in the biblical world. (Kevin Burton)



ASOR 2012

The venue for the 2012 Annual meeting of the *American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR)* was Chicago's Magnificent Mile and was held between November 14-17. The meetings were attended by the largest number to date, 925 registrants, who attended 90 sessions, with 463 presentations and 18 posters. Manfred Bietak, of the University of Vienna, director of excavations at Tell el-Dab'a, was the speaker for this year's plenary session, presenting a paper entitled "The Discourse Between Historical and Radiocarbon Chronology of the Bronze Age in the Levant."

Other Professional organizations where sessions on archaeology were offered in relatively close proximity were the *Society of Biblical Literature* held November 17-20, also in Chicago, and the *Near East Archaeological Society* (held concurrently: November 14-16), in Milwaukee, WI.

Among the many presentations, business meetings and other events were members and affiliates of the Madaba Plains Project who chaired sessions or presented papers. Those who chaired sessions this year included: Michael Hasel with Yosef Garfinkel (Kirbet Qeiyafa: The Sanctuaries and Early Judean Art and Cult); Bethany Walker (Archaeology of Islamic society I); Douglas Clark (Reports on Current Excavations and Surveys, *ASOR*-Affiliated); Bert de Vries (Archaeology of Islamic Society II); and Constance Gane (Archaeology of Mesopotamia II).

Individual Submissions were made by Helen Dixon (Guidelines from the Museum Field: An Assessment of Ethical Standards for Acquisition, Study, and Display of Unprovenienced Artifacts from ICOM, AAM, and other Museum-



Constance E. Gane chairing session on Mesopotamian archaeology.

Oriented Institutions); Matthew Grey with Jodi Magness, David Amit, Shua Kisilevitz, and Chad Spigel (The 2011-2012 Excavations at Huqoq/Yakuk in Israel's Galilee); Michael Hasel (Weapons in Cultic Context at Kirbet Qeiyafa); Bethany Walker (Adaptations, Transformations, and Continuities: Grand Narratives in Islamic Archaeology Today); Reem Shqour (Excavations at the Islamic Village of Jalul); Stephanie Brown (Iron in the Iron Age: Iron Agricultural Implements from Tell En-Nasbeh); Randall Younker with Paul Ray (The Iron Age Ceramics from Tall Jalul, Jordan); Paul Gregor (The Iron Age Water system at Tall Jalul); Thomas Parker (The Petra North Ridge project: The 2012 Season); Øystein LaBianca (Global History and Archaeology of the Eastern Mediterranean: Towards a Grand Narrative that Can Build Bridges between ANE Specialists and Specializations); Lawrence Geraty (Sensitivity to Dig Hosts in an Islamic Context); Michèle Daviau (Recycling in the Ancient World: Potsherds and Mended Pots); Owen Chesnut ("Seeing Red": Cultic Activities at Tall Safut in the Late Bronze and Iron Ages"); Chang-Ho Ji (Architectural and Stratigraphic Context of the 'Ataruz Inscription Column); Abelardo Rivas (Cultic Objects from Khirbet 'Ataruz:

Kernos, Cup-and-Saucer, and Standing Statue); Stefanie Elkins (The Khirbet 'Ataruz Model Shrine: An Art Historical Analysis); Robert Bates (A Sacred Space in Moab: Envisioning the Cultic Complex at Khirbet 'Ataruz); Robert Bates with Jeffrey Hudon and Øystein LaBianca (The Tall Hisban Cultural Heritage Project, Jordan: Report on Excavation and Restoration Work in 2011-2012); Douglas Clark and Kent Bramlett (the 2012 Season of Excavations of the Madaba Plains Project at Tall al-'Umayri, Jordan); Elena Ronza (Local Participation as a Means to Conservation of Archaeological Sites); Bert de Vries (Keeping a Ruin Ruined: Preservation of House XVII-XVIII, Umm el-Jimal); David Graf (The Caravan Route Between Marib and Medina); Helen Dixon (The Changing Face of Phoenician Burial Practice: The Iron II-Persian Transition in the Levantine Homeland); and Jehad Haroun (Initial Report of the Madoneh Survey).

In addition, Bethany Walker chaired the Consultation of Dig Directors in Jordan, Øystein LaBianca, the Madaba Plains Staff Consultation; Theodore Burgh, the *ASOR* Members Meeting, and Lawrence Geraty, the Madaba Plains Project Reception. (Paul J. Ray, Jr)



RANDOM SURVEY

Jews in Iberia:

A Hebrew inscription with the name Yehiel on it has been found on a 40 x 60 cm marble tomb slab dated by organic material associated with it to ca. A.D. 390. The inscription was found at a villa in the Roman province of Lusitania, near Silves, in Portugal. Although written documentation of Jews living in the Iberian Peninsula has been known from as early as the Ecclesiastical Council of Elvira, in Spain, from ca. 300 AD, dealing with the rules of conduct for Christians and Jews, this inscription is the first archaeological evidence.

Philip's Tomb Rediscovered?

The tomb of the Apostle Philip has traditionally been associated with the Martyrium church at Hierapolis (modern Pamukkale), Turkey. Recently, it was discovered that the grave had been moved to a smaller, previous unknown, church, 46 m (150 ft.) away during Byzantine period.

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New Egyptian Finds:

Among the eclectic cache of objects from different dynasties found in the 18th Dynasty tomb of Djehuty, on the west bank of Luxor/Thebes, in Egypt, archaeologists have recently located a wooden sarcophagus of an unidentified child. Although it does not have any engravings, decoration, or mummy inside, early studies indicate that it dates to the 17th Dynasty, shortly before the reunification of Egypt's New Kingdom. A collection of wooden vessels and wooden ushabti figurines, wrapped in linen, were found beside the sarcophagus.

Amphitheater Found Near Vienna:

Austrian archaeologists have recently located a Roman amphitheater comparable in size to the Colosseum in Rome, at Carnuntum. Originally a base for the Roman legions on the Danube, the site became a thriving metropolis that enjoyed the status of capital of the province of Upper Pannonia in the late 1st century A.D. It was also the location of a conference of Emperors, held on November 11, 308, in an attempt to save the Roman tetrarchy.

Greek Tombs Discovered:

The 6th-century BC tombs of 11 humans buried with the bones of 16 animals, including horses, dogs, cows, deer, sheep, goats, a buffalo and a pig have recently been found in Kozani, in the western Macedonian region of Greece.

NEWSLETTER



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