

NEWSLETTER

The Institute of ARCHAEOLOGY Siegfried H. Horn Museum



Table of Contents

	Page
<i>ASOR 2007</i>	1
<i>Babylonian Symposium</i>	2
<i>Jesus Tomb</i>	3
<i>Random Survey</i>	4

INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY
HORN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
MUSEUM
NEWSLETTER

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ASOR 2007

The annual meeting of the *American Schools of Oriental Research* was held in San Diego from November 14-17, 2007. This year there were 52 sessions with 240 papers read. The plenary session featured Jodi Magness, who summarized the current state of Qumran archaeology. The annual meeting of the *Near East Archaeological Society* was held concurrently from Nov. 14-16, and the annual meeting of the *Society of Biblical Literature* immediately following from Nov. 17-20.

The Madaba Plains Project featured two sessions focusing on their 40 years in Jordan, starting with the Heshbon Expedition, presided over by Lawrence Geraty and Douglas Clark respectively. Papers included an Introduction (Lawrence Geraty); The Early Bronze, Middle Bronze, and Iron II at Tall al-ʿUmayri (Larry Herr); The Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages at Tall al-ʿUmayri (Douglas Clark); Fifteen Years at Tall Jalul (Randall Younker) with a focus on the Jalul Ostrakon, 2007 (Roy Gane); Tall Hisban: Palimpsest of Great and Little Traditions of Transjordan and the Ancient Near East (Øystein LaBianca); Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the Madaba Plains Project (William Dever); Discovering Iron Age Towns in Central Jordan: The Legacy of the Madaba Plains Project (Michèle Daviau); Beyond the MPP: A Regional Approach to the Archaeology of the Madaba Plain Region (Timothy Harrison) and From the Madaba Plains Project to Northern Jordan (Bethany Walker). In addition, Lawrence Geraty presided over the Madaba Plains Project Reception and Øystein LaBianca chaired the Madaba Plains Project Staff Consultation.

Madaba Plains Project staff who presided over other sessions included Øystein LaBianca (Order and Conflict: Roundtables on the Agency Role of Empires in the Levant); Bert de Vries (Material Culture in Ottoman Syro-Palestine); Gary Christopherson (Geographic Information

(con'd. on p. 2)



William Dever lauding the accomplishments of the MPP at the 40-year celebration.

Systems [GIS], Remote Sensing and Archaeology); and Gloria London (Ethnoarchaeology of Ancient Pottery). Individual papers read by project members included Chang-Ho Ji (The Iron I-II Settlement and Cultic Structures at Khirbat 'Ataruz, Jordan: Excavating the High Place, Sanctuary, and Settlement Village); Øystein LaBianca (The Agency Role of Empires in the Levant: An Introduction to ASOR's Cross Border Initiative). Øystein LaBianca, Bert de Vries, and Bethany Walker also served as facilitators for this session; Theodore Burgh and students (Virtual Studies of the Past); Darrell Rohl (Reassessing the Stratigraphy of Early Roman Esbus (Tall Hisban); Bert de Vries (Nostalgia for Empire); Bethany Walker (Jordan's Economy and Culture Under Early Ottoman Rule); Gloria London (Feasts in the Late Second Millennium B.C.E. at Tall al-'Umayri) and Google Archaeology: Data and Applications for Everyone. (Paul J. Ray, Jr.)



Babylon

In the fall of 2006 Prof. Constance Gane taught a Seminar on Babylon. On April 2, 2007 she and her students gave a symposium entitled *The World of Daniel in Babylon* based on her dissertation and the research the students had prepared.

Omar Jarvis opened the program with a summary of his paper the "Euphrates: The Life of Babylon." During the Neo-Babylonian period the city of Babylon had a very extensive water system in place which included moat walls, quay walls, docks, canals, a drainage system, and a sewer system. The canals extended far beyond the city, across the flood plains, and supplied water for a large agricultural area. They also connected the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in order to transport goods. The water system had a dual function; to supply fresh water and to drain waste from the city. It was also the city's main weakness and led to its destruction by the Persians.



Prof. Constance Gane.

Enrique Baez spoke on the "Babylonian Background of Genesis 11:1-9." The story of the Tower of Babel has its basis at least during the First Dynasty of Babylon (1700-1670 BC). By that time, the first *ziggurat* at Babylon, which was built by Shar-kali-sharri during the 23rd century BC, was in existence. The Akkadian Creation Epic has some similarities with the Genesis narrative including a highrise shrine made of bricks being raised up. There is also a Sumerian tablet from ca. 2000 BC which speaks of a golden age in the history of mankind, where there was a universal language and faith. The Genesis narrative is a brilliantly written *palistrophe*, paralleling the *ziggurat* ascending to the heavens and God descending to punish the people.

Justo Morales' paper was on "The *Akitu* Festival in the Neo-Babylonian Period." This 12-day festival was a celebration of creation and the creator god, Marduk. The first 4 days of the ceremony were celebrated at *Esagila*, the temple of Marduk and ended with the recitation of *Enuma Elish*, the creation account. The events of the next several days were preparatory to the last 3 days of the feast when the sacred marriage ritual was performed. The main biblical parallel to aspects of this feast is the Day of Atonement.

Jeremy Jacko's presentation "Marduk and the Gods of Babylon" was read by

Christie Goulart. The original three main deities of Sumer and Akkad were Anu, whose name means sky and was associated with the bull of heaven, Enlil, whose name means lord wind and is the storm god, and Ea (Enki), the god of rivers and father of Marduk, the patron god of Babylon. Marduk received the greatest adoration from the Babylonians beginning with his ascension to prominence during the reign of Hammurabi (1792-1750 BC). Depicted as dragon-like beast, he became supreme around 1254 BC, and is later mentioned in the Bible as Bel.

Sean Porras presented a paper on "The Religious Role of the Ishtar Gate." Found during the excavations of Robert Koldewey between 1899-1917, the Ishtar Gate was one of eight city gates during the Neo-Babylonian period. It was sacred to the goddess Ishtar and comprised two separate gate houses. It was richly adorned with colored bricks and depicted three Babylonian gods in animal form (Ishtar: lion; Adad: bull and Snake-dragon: composite beast). Daniel would have passed through this gate while he was in Babylon and may have drawn some of the imagery reflected in his book from its depictions.

Prof. Gane spoke on the "Fantastic Creatures in Neo-Babylonian Iconography." There are 3 kinds of birds: the griffin-demon, bird-griffin, and lion-headed eagle; and 3 kinds of bulls: the



Sean Porras explains Ishtar Gate model.



Chris Chadwick with open-house tour.

bull-man, winged-bull, and human-headed bull. Four different kinds of fish are known: a merman, mermaid, fish-cloaked being, and goat fish. There are also several varieties of lion: a lion-dragon griffin, winged lion-creature, lion-demon, lion-man/humanoid, lion-headed emblem, winged lion, and sphinx. In addition, there are other mythical creatures such as centaurs, canine-headed demons, ibex, scorpion-man, and a snake-like dragon.

Jonathan Peinado spoke on "The Neo-Babylonian Dowry and its Impact on Widowhood." The dowry agreement and the widow's settlement determined to a large extent the future economic status of a widow. The purpose of the dowry was to establish a new household, be a financial support for the widow, and to act as an inheritance for her children. Outside of the dowry and settlement the widow had to rely on the temple for food and shelter for her children if they were married.

Chris Chadwick spoke on "Babylonian Mathematics." Mathematical cuneiform texts date back to the 4th millennium BC. Mathematical principles were developed by the Babylonians to aid with agriculture, astronomy, and building techniques. Place value notation, or the place that a digit occupies in a certain numeral, is one of the first mathematical inventions of the Babylonians. Babylonian numeration is based on the sexagesimal system (units of 60) as

opposed to most other systems which are based on units of 10. There were three types of mathematical tablets: 1) table texts; 2) problem texts; and 3) coefficient texts.

The final presentation was by Marcella Morales entitled "Understanding Babylon Through Visual Art: A Photo Essay of Iraq and its People." This featured pictures covering general history, culture, the Iraqi War, and archaeology.

The presentations were followed by an open house at the Horn Archaeological Museum. (Owen Chesnut)



Jesus Tomb

Drs. Randy Younker and Paul Ray of the Institute of Archaeology lectured on "The Tomb of Jesus" on March 13, 2007. This lecture was a response to the documentary done by Simcha Jacobovici and James Cameron. Dr. Younker began by discussing the background on the tomb (found in 1980) and the recent attention it has received. The 1st Century AD tomb contained 10 ossuaries (bone boxes), 6 of which had inscriptions, one with the name "Jesus son of Joseph."

Younker went on to discuss the inscriptions, why they are potentially important, and the problems with the documentary's case. The 6 inscriptions carry biblical names (Mariamne, Judah son of Jesus, Matthew, Jesus son of Joseph, Jose or Joseph, and Mary). The ossuaries were examined and catalogued at the Rockefeller Museum and then stored. They were later published in a catalogue. The documentary claims that these ossuaries contained Jesus and his family.

The film made several somewhat inflammatory statements including: 1) Jesus is the Jesus of the NT, based on the combination of the names Jesus and Joseph, which is very rare; 2) the Latinized form (Mary) of the Hebrew name Maria is also rare; 3) that Mariamne Mare is a name only applied to Mary Magdalene and the DNA samples from the Mary and Jesus ossuaries showed that

they were not related, and hence were husband and wife; and 4) that the 10th ossuary was lost or stolen and only recently found on the antiquities market, bearing the inscription "James son of Joseph, brother of Jesus."

Younker says that nearly 3000 names of the 1st Century AD have been studied. Among them, Jesus appears 99 times in inscriptions (22 times on ossuaries). According to statistical analysis there would be 20 people named Jesus with a father named Joseph and a brother named James. Mary is the most popular female name. The name Mariamne Mare is an incorrect reading of the inscription, which should read "Mary and Martha." These names refers to one woman who is known by two names in two different languages. Ossuary #10 had neither inscription or decorations on it, so due to its lack of importance was put in the garden of the Rockefeller Museum. Hence, it was never lost and could not be the James ossuary.

Dr. Ray noted that the remains of 17 people were found in the 10 ossuaries. He also showed that the size of the 10th ossuary is different than that of the James Ossuary and while the former was plain, the latter has rosettes. He went on to discuss tomb typologies from the Iron Age through the Roman period. For ca. 100 years (30 BC to AD 70) ossuaries were used, especially around Jerusalem. Jews at this time were concerned about the resurrection of the dead and wanted to have their individual bones separated from their relatives. There are two traditional places that have laid claim to being the burial place of Christ (not His final resting place). The so-called Garden Tomb is part of a series of tombs that date to Iron Age II. It was later modified in the Byzantine period, so it is both too early and too late. The other is a 1st century AD loculi tomb within the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. This tomb fits the biblical account very well. In the Gospels Jesus was laid on a bench, wrapped in a cloth with spices, and never moved before he rose from the dead. (Owen Chesnut)



RANDOM SURVEY

"Missing Pyramid" Found:

At Saqqara, Egypt, archaeologists have recently found what appears to be the pyramid of Pharaoh Menkauhor, who reigned 8 years toward the end of the 5th Dynasty (2494-2345 BC). Only the base of the "Headless Pyramid," originally found in 1842 by Karl Richard Lepsius, remains. The desert soon buried his discovery. The pyramid's base was found in a 15 foot-deep pit along with a burial chamber and a gray granite sarcophagus lid after a 25 foot-high mound of sand was removed over the past year and a half.

Pagan Tombs under St. Peter's Basilica:

The 2nd century AD Valeri Mausoleum is a series of 22 tombs and grottoes of a family of former slaves that was buried by Constantine in the 4th century AD in order to build the basilica over the nearby tomb of Peter. These tombs have been restored and are now open to the public.

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Herodian (?) Structure Found:

Archaeologists have recently found the remains of a monumental building from the Hellenistic and Roman periods at Tall adh-Dhahab (West) on the Jabbok River, in Jordan. Based on architectural parallels with Alexandreion, in Israel, it is speculated that the building was erected by Herod the Great, and that the site was perhaps Amathous mentioned in the works of the Jewish historian Josephus. Remains from the Late Bronze and Iron Ages I and II were also found at the site, which is often connected with the biblical site of Mahanaim during those times.

Ancient Salad Dressing?

Researchers have investigated the remains of a 2,400-year-old shipwreck off the coast of Chios, in the Aegean Sea. The wreck held more than 350 amphoras, two of which were recovered by a robot. DNA scrapings from the insides of one of the amphoras revealed a mixture of olives and oregano. Chios is well known as a major exporter of wine in antiquity. These findings suggest that the island had a larger repertoire of export products.

Second Temple Period House Discovered:

A large 2nd Temple period house has recently been found adjacent to the Temple Mount. Remains of massive 5 meter-high walls, 2-story halls, a basement and ritual baths have been found. It has been suggested that it is the house of the royal family of Adiabene.

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