

The Institute of ARCHAEOLOGY Siegfried H. Horn Museum



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INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY
HORN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
MUSEUM
NEWSLETTER

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ASOR 2010 Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR) was held in Atlanta from November 17-20, 2010. Fifty-nine sessions were offered with nearly 700 people attending the over 300 presentations that were made. Sessions on Archaeology were also offered within walking distance at the Near East Archaeological Society (November 17-19) and the Society of Biblical Literature (November 20-23), the latter, with a major feature consisting of papers in honor of Israeli archaeologist David Ussishkin. The ASOR plenary address this year was presented by Edgar Peltenburg which was entitled "Fashioning Identity: Workshops and Cemeteries at Prehistoric Souskiou, Cyprus." A special feature this year was a Saturday evening presentation on Current Issues in Biblical Archaeology featuring presentations on the Archaeology of Jerusalem by Andrew Vaughn, Garth Gilmour, Gershon Galil, Avraham Faust and Amihai Mazar.

As is typical, a number of Madaba Plains Project members and affiliates participated in various aspects of the program. Those who chaired sessions this year included: Bethany Walker (Archaeology of Islamic Society I); Constance Gane (Archaeology of Mesopotamia); Ellen Bedall with Eric Cline (Teaching Archaeology to Undergraduates: Success Stories and Cautionary Tales); Michael Hasel (Khirbet Qeiyafa: A Fortified City in Judah from the Time of King David); Bert de Vries (Archaeology of Islamic Society II); and Timothy Harrison (Tayinat Archaeological Project: Recent Investigations in the "Land of Palistin"). In addition, Douglas Clark, Larry Herr and Kent Bramlett chaired a Madaba Plains Project: 'Umayri Workshop; Douglas Clark chaired the Madaba Plains Project Consultation; Lawrence Geraty presided over the Madaba Plains Project Reception; and Bethany Walker headed up the Consultation of Dig Directors in Jordan.

(cont'd. on p. 2)



Monique Vincent presenting paper at ASOR.

Individual submissions were made by Thomas Parker (Coarse Ware Pottery of the First through Third Centuries at Roman Aila, [Aqaba, Jordan]: A Preliminary Analysis); Matthew Vincent (iPods and Archaeology: In Field Data Entry at Tall al-ʿUmayri and Tall Jalul); Owen Chesnut (The Middle Bronze Age at Tall Safut: To Glacis or Not to Glacis); Douglas Clark and Kent Bramlett (The 2010 Season of Excavations of the Madaba Plains Project at Tall al-ʿUmayri, Jordan); Monique Vincent (The Early Iron I Egyptianizing Objects at Tall al-ʿUmayri: Context and Parallels); Robert Bates (Archaeology and the Undergraduate: Turning a “Cautionary Tale” into a “Success Story”); Stefanie Elkins (Educating Future Archaeologists: How to Reach “Generation Y” in the Classroom); Michael Hasel (Khirbet Qeiyafa: Area D: Excavations South of the Western Gate); Bethany Walker and Øystein LaBianca (Deconstructing the *qasr* on Tall Hisban: Highlights from the 2010 Season); P. M. Michèle Daviau (The Coroplastic Traditions of Transjordan); Mariusz Gorniak (Bronze Age Sepulchral Archaeology); Bert de Vries (Community and Archaeology at Umm el-Jimal, Jordan: A Strategy for Revitalization of a Dead Site); and Øystein LaBianca (Tall Hisban Cultural Heritage Project: Some Reflections on Local Capacity Building and Stakeholdership).

At the annual meeting of the Near East Archaeological Society Paul Ray presented a paper on “The 2009 and 2010 Excavations at Tall Jalul.” (Paul J. Ray, Jr.)



Treasures of Jordan

People interested in ancient history have occasionally read about the archaeological delights of Jordan, including the wonders of Gadera, Jerash, Amman, Madaba, Kerak, and especially Petra. There are also numerous Bronze and Iron Age sites of interest to biblical scholars

such as Amman, Hesban, Sela, Buseira, and Umm el-Biyara. For those with an interest in the later historical periods there are numerous *khans* and desert castles.

As a scholar who has worked in Jordan for some 25 years, I have become aware of another Jordanian treasure that many of us who enjoy studying the riches of the Holy Land tend to overlook; that is the community of scholars that make up Jordan’s archaeological family. Readers of popular archeology magazines are well aware of Albright, Wright, Cross, Dever, Yadin, Aharoni, Biran, Finkelstein and the Mazars (among many others). But what about those archaeologists who are native to Jordan and have taken the lead in excavating and studying the archaeological riches of their homeland? Many reasons might be suggested as to why our Jordanian colleagues are less known: they may involve certain political realities, or differing cultural and religious perspectives. However, our purpose is not to dwell on these things; but rather simply to celebrate the accomplishments of this fine group of individuals.

The most obvious characteristic of Jordan’s archaeological community is their congenial collegiality. The hospitality for which Jordanians are world famous is certainly exhibited by the scholars of Jordan towards their foreign counterparts. I cannot think of a single Jordanian colleague with whom I have interacted who has not invited me to his home for a meal and to visit. Such encounters create lifelong bonds of friendship and cooperation seldom enjoyed in other scholarly communities. The polite modesty, typical of Jordanian society, may be one reason their contributions are not as well known—they are less likely than other archaeologists to “toot their own horn.” However, such modesty should not belie the pride and excellence in which these scholars pursue the academic enterprise.

A couple of outstanding archaeologists who have played a major role in the development and growth of the discipline in Jordan are Drs. Moawiyah Ibrahim and Zeidan Kafafi. They have not only made significant contributions to field archae-



Moawiyah Ibrahim.

ology, but have also published numerous scholarly works, as well as participating in many international conferences that have greatly expanded our knowledge of Jordan’s ancient heritage. Both are considered humble and collaborative by their non-Jordanian colleagues, and a delight to work with.

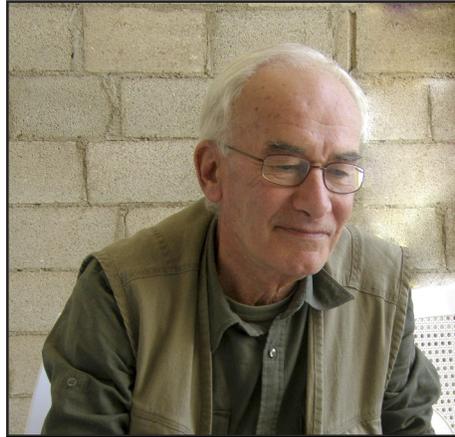
Dr. Ibrahim is the epitome of a scholar and a gentleman. It is almost impossible not to receive an invitation to visit at his home if he knows you are in the country. Along with tapping into his vast knowledge of the archaeology of Jordan and surrounding countries, I have enjoyed perusing his library which reflects a lifelong collection of a senior scholar. In addition to his many excavations he has played a key role in advancing the discipline of archaeology in Jordan, especially with his involvement at Yarmuk University. He had also acquired considerable experience outside of Jordan as a professor and field archaeologist. His international travels have included visits to Andrews University where he has enriched our students’ awareness of what is going on in the archaeology of Jordan.

Dr. Kafafi, who also teaches at Yarmuk University, received his PhD from Freie University, in Berlin. He has pursued research interests in both the prehistoric and later periods, developing an expertise in Neolithic period and Bronze Age material culture. Dr. Kafafi’s name is always at the top of any list of Jordan’s outstanding archaeologists.

Another outstanding professor from Yarmuk University, whom I've had the pleasure of encountering in the field, is Dr. Omar Al Ghul of the Department of epigraphy. Dr. Al Ghul is a dedicated professor who is determined to give his students the best possible training in archaeology and epigraphy. I have enjoyed his visits to Jalul where he has brought students to see field archaeology in action. Dr. Al Ghul typically asks me to explain what is going on in English, which most students understand; then he translates the explanation into Arabic to make sure no nuances are lost. He encourages his students to ask questions and interact with what they have heard. It is clear that the future generation of Jordanian archaeologists will be well equipped to enter careers in archaeology under his careful tutelage. Dr. Al Ghul has also been very involved in presenting papers and publishing in his area of specialty, epigraphy, recently editing a volume, *Proceedings of Yarmouk: Second Annual Colloquium on Epigraphy and Ancient Writings* (2005). This work nicely reflects the growing international impact of Jordan's scholars on this important field.

The University of Jordan also has an outstanding archaeology faculty. In addition, they have a fine museum of archaeology with excellent exhibits from the Bronze Age to the Islamic period. One of the faculty with whom I have been privileged to interact is Dr. Nabil Khairy, who has served as the chair of the archaeology department. He received his degree at the Institute of Archaeology at the University of London. Dr. Khairy is a specialist in Petra and the Nabataeans and has recently been in the US, at La Sierra University, on a Fulbright Fellowship. Dr. Khair Yassine, another professor from the University of Jordan, has done important work on the Iron Age sites of Tall Mazar and Tall Nimrim, and has published books and many articles on his work that help illuminate the history of the Ammonites.

The Department of Antiquities of Jordan (DAJ) is the center point for all archaeological work in Jordan. Presently



Ghazi Bisheh.

under the professional hand of Dr. Zaid Al Saad, the department enjoys the expertise of numerous archaeologists and scholars. One of the outstanding senior archaeologists is Dr. Mohammad Najjar, who has worked at the DAJ for years as a senior field archaeologist and has been described by his non-Jordanian colleagues as the backbone of the department. He has made particularly valuable contributions through his research at Iron Age sites, such as Khirbet Khilda, which are critical for understanding the Ammonites. I also had the privilege of working with him on a volume on the Ammonites.

Another major figure in Jordanian archaeology, in both the DAJ and academia, is Dr. Ghazi Bisheh. Dr. Bisheh has served as a former Director General of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan. During that time he maintained a rigorous program of field work and publication in spite of heavy administrative responsibilities. Even though he has since retired, Dr. Bisheh continues to be active in the archaeological community, giving lectures, publishing and visiting sites. He has an extraordinary knowledge of Islamic history and archaeology. I have personally appreciated and benefited from his visits to Jalul.

Yet another well-known figure from the DAJ is Dr. Fawzi Zayadine, who served for many years at the Deputy Director. Fluent in French and English as well as Arabic, Dr. Zayadine has accumulated an enviable publication record with both scholarly and popular works on

archaeology in all three languages. He is intimately familiar with the archaeological work throughout Jordan and has personally led out in a number of important field projects, including work at Iraq el-Amir. It is hard to find anyone more familiar with the site of Petra. He not only knows everyone who works there, but also seems to know the secrets behind every obscure crag and cranny throughout the entire park. In addition, he has written some popular works on archaeology and the Bible for visitors to Jordan.

I have also been impressed with the rise of Jordanian women in Jordanian archaeology. Dr. Maysoun Al Nahar, of the University of Jordan, is excavating the Neolithic site at Tell Abu As-Sawwan, near Jerash, as a field school for the University of Jordan students. Dr. Lamia El Khouri, of Yarmuk University, is excavating the Classical/Byzantine period site of Barsinia, near Irbid. She also has a field school for the Yarmuk University students. The Department of Antiquities employs a number of women with excellent experience in field archaeology. A few with whom I have personally worked include Dr. May Shaer (conservation architect) and Ms. Rula Qussous (object registrar for the DAJ). Many more could be mentioned. All of these women have extensive field experience and are heavily involved in scholarship and publication in one way or another.

Regrettably, space does not permit mention of many other important Jordanian archaeologists. However, all of the above scholars are typical of the larger community of Jordanian archaeologists who, as a group, have diligently worked both within Jordan and the broader international community to illuminate the archaeological heritage of Jordan. Beginning archaeological students, biblical scholars, indeed anyone who wants to fully understand the great riches of the "Other side of the Jordan" can only benefit by becoming better acquainted with the tremendous contributions of Jordan's own scholars. (Randall W. Younker)



RANDOM SURVEY

Philistine Temple Found:

Archaeologists working at Tell es-Safi (Gath), in Israel, have uncovered a temple structure dated to the 10th century BC. Along with some exterior walls, the building has two large pillar bases at its center. Various cultic related objects were also found in its vicinity. In addition, a 20 m section of wall was found on the summit, that had shifted laterally about 2 m, and then toppled, suggesting earthquake activity. It can be dated to the mid-8th century BC at about the same time as the earthquake mentioned in the Bible, in Amos 1:1.

New Discoveries at Petra:

Two tombs have recently been discovered in Wadi Mataha, at Petra, Jordan. Tomb 676, with an elaborate facade, contained 15 loculi (burial chambers). The other tomb had 12 loculi with a total of 61 burials. Both tombs contained grave goods including almost 500 wooden artifacts.

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Shipwreck Found off Cyprus:

The wreck of a merchant vessel has recently been discovered off the southern coast of Cyprus. The ship, dating to around 400 BC, was laden mainly with wine amphorae from Chios and other islands in the Aegean Sea. A large quantity of olive stones was found on the ancient shipwreck, providing insight into the diet of sailors at this time. Besides being a staple of the Mediterranean diet, olive oil was the base for some of the oldest perfumes made on Cyprus. The agricultural product was also used to fire copper furnaces on the island.

Assyrian Cuneiform Tablets Found in Turkey:

A cache of cuneiform tablets was recently found at Tell Tayinat, one of which records an early 7th century BC treaty between Esarhaddon, king of the Assyrian Empire, and a secondary ruler who acknowledged Assyrian power. The 650 line treaty was designed to secure accession to the Assyrian throne and avoid a political crisis. In it the ruler vowed to recognize the authority of Ashurbanipal, the son and successor of Esarhaddon.

Stonehenge in Syria?

A series of stone circles, alignments and what appear to be corbelled-roof structures along with stone tools dating to the Neolithic Period have recently been found near the site of Deir Mar Musa al-Habashi in the Syrian desert.

N E W S L E T T E R



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