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Archaeological Museum Newsletter

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The Institute of Archaeology & Siegfried H. Horn Museum Newsletter Volume 28.4

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NEWSLETTER

The Institute of ARCHAEOLOGY Siegfried H. Horn Museum



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INSTITUTE OF ARCHAEOLOGY HORN ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

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Jordan Conference in Washington

The Triennial International Conference of the History and Archaeology of Jordan, under the patronage of HM King Abdullah II, was held in Washington DC from May 23-28, 2007. The conference was the tenth in a series since its inception by HRH Prince al-Hassan Bin Talal in 1980. The venue at the Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University was an ideal setting for the conference whose theme was "Crossing Jordan," which focused on the many peoples and cultures who have crossed Jordan throughout its history. The event also generated a preconference book of American contributions entitled *Crossing Jordan: North American Contributions to the Archaeology of Jordan*, edited by Thomas Levy, P. M. Michèle Daviau, Randall W. Younker, and May Shaer, published by Equinox.

The opening ceremony featured a speech by HRH Princess Sumaya Bint al-Hassan, who reflected on the ongoing commitment of the royal family to archaeological research in Jordan as well as how the results of that research are presented to the general public.

The participants of the conference presented 140 papers which reflected the crossing of Jordan. Papers presented by current and former Madaba Plains personal included: Theorizing Contact Zones and Crossroads: Civilizations, Empires and Deep Time Social Order of the Levantine Countries (Øystein LaBianca); Geopolitical Context of 19th Dynasty Egyptian

(con'd. on p. 2)



The White House.

Activity in Transjordan (Kent Bramlett); Athenodorus of Tarsus and Petra: The Date and Circumstance of His Visit (David Graf); Preserving Jordan's Cultural Heritage Digitally through ETANA (Douglas Clark); Cremation Practices in the Levant: Candlestick Stands in Situ (Adeib Abu-Shmais); Between the Cults of Syria and Arabia: Pagan Traces at Umm el-Jimal (Bert de Vries); Emergence of Madaba as a Regional Center in the Early Iron Age (Timothy Harrison); Nabataeans, Hasmonaeans, Herodians in 'Atrauz, Dhiban, and Madaba (Chang-Ho Ji); Imperial Transitions and Peasant Society in Middle and Late Islamic Jordan (Bethany Walker); The Contribution of Andrews University to Jordanian Archaeology (Randall Younker); The Foundation of Aila: A Nabataean Port on the Red Sea (Thomas Parker); The Aqaba Castle Project: New Excavation Facts (Reem Shqour); Inhabited Vine and Mould-made Lamps in Late Byzantine and Early Islamic Periods (Michèle Daviau); The Iron I Period Across Jordan (Larry Herr); Who Peopled the Madaba Plains in the Iron Age? (Lawrence Geraty); The Druze Experience at Umm al-Jimal: the History and Archaeology of the Early 20th-century Settlement (Robin Brown); and Feasts in Late Second Millennium B.C.E. at Tall al-'Umayri (Gloria London).

Receptions were held at the Jordan Embassy and the Smithsonian Museum hosted by HRH Ambassador Zeid Ra'ad al-Husseini and Dr. Fawwaz al-Khraysheh, the Director of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan. (Paul J. Ray, Jr)



Wolff Lecture

Dr. Sam Wolff, of the Israel Antiquities Authority and editor of the journal *Atiqot*, presented a lecture entitled "Tel Megadim: A Multi-period Site on the Carmel Coast, Israel" on January 17, 2007 at Andrews University.

Tel Megadim (Tel Seḥar), located on the Carmel Coast of Israel, is 35 ha in size, and is cut by both a highway and a railroad. The site was first surveyed by Ron Gophrad who identified pottery from the Early Bronze Age, Early Bronze Age IV, Middle Bronze Age, and Persian periods. Three seasons of excavations took place at Megadim by Magen Broshi from 1967-69, at which time the Persian strata and some Byzantine period material were revealed on top of the mound.

Dr. Wolff began excavating at Megadim in 1994. He opened up a 185 m long by 8 m wide strip along the railroad and also made a cut across the site, revealing the occupational history.

The earliest material, including ceramic and stone vessel fragments, was from the Chalcolithic period. The largest settlement at the site dates to Early Bronze Age 1B (3000-2800 BC). Architectural remains of curvilinear, rectangular, and round-corner buildings were found. The curvilinear building was filled with bow-rimmed pithoi. The contents of the jars have been dated to the 29th century BC on the basis of C¹⁴ dating.

The next phase is the Early Bronze Age IV. This is a period that is not well-represented on tells. However, at Megadim there is evidence of occupation in the form of pottery and bones on top of which a wall was built. A pottery kiln that was cut by a Middle Bronze IIA pit, was also found. Its closest parallel, found at Tel el-Farah, dated to the Early Bronze Age II.

From the Middle Bronze Age, circular structures, walls, a silo, and tombs have been revealed. The tomb remains are very impressive and date to all phases (MB II A, B and C) of the period. There were 3 large multiburial tombs, 11 masonry tombs, and 5 jar burials. In one of the large tombs, which had a corbeled roof, an alabastra, dipper juglets and Cypriot jugs were found. The individual burials date to MB IIA. Levantine painted wares, with parallels to the north, were also found in these tombs.

The Late Bronze Age finds include walls and a flagstone floor along with 160



Sam Wolff.

pieces of Cypriot pottery, indicating trade and exchange in this region. The Iron Age is not represented at Megadim.

The Persian period was uncovered in many rooms during Broshi's excavation. Wolff found more rooms, a kurkar stone altar (with parallels at Tel Dor), tabuns, horse-and rider-figurines, mortaria, and basket-handle amphorae. There is also Corinthian pottery, which is unique in Israel. The ceramic finds, mostly amphorae, include Attic ware, Carthagian, North Aegean, Chian, Samian, Milesian (East Greek bowls), South Aegean, Central Ionian, and Cypriot wares. Most of the amphorae were found in the same general area, though none of the typical Palestinian forms such as the basket-handled amphorae or twisted-handled jars were found.

One of the things that helped Dr. Wolff put these finds into context was the Aḥiqar Papyrus which dates to 5th century BC. The papyrus describes trade coming from Ionia to Elephantine in Egypt. The main export was natron, which was used for making medicines, manufacturing glass, and leaching textiles. A similar situation might have brought wares from these regions to Megadim.

Post-Persian-period structures include a circular installation that cuts some Persian-period walls. It has been suggested on the basis of parallel structures

that it is a lime-kiln, but there is no limestone at Megadim.

The Byzantine-period finds discovered earlier by Broshi include large paved areas, pottery, coins and glass. There does not appear to be anything distinctly from the Roman period at Megadim.

Broshi connected this site with a 4th-century AD account by the Bordeaux Pilgrim, who mentions a horse-trading station 9 Roman miles south of Shiqmona, which is located in modern Haifa. (Carrie Rhodes)



Barkay Lecture

On February 12, 2007 Dr. Gabriel Barkay, professor at Tel Aviv and Hebrew Universities and director of the Temple Mount Sifting Project, presented a lecture entitled "Artifacts from the Temple Mount" for the Horn Museum Lecture Series.

Dr. Barkay presented a detailed overview of the history of the Temple Mount. Jewish tradition says that the Temple Mount was created first and then the world around it. The site is the location of Abraham's attempt to sacrifice his son Isaac, and is called a mountain in the area of Moriah. King Solomon later built the temple on Mt. Moriah. When Mt. Zion is mentioned it is referring to the Temple Mount, though it no longer is a mountain following the building efforts of Herod the Great, who doubled the area of the Temple Mount by cutting off the top of the mount and walling it in, creating a flat artificial platform.

The Canaanites were the first to make the Temple Mount holy in worshiping their god Shalem (or Shulam) on top. This name is mentioned several times in the OT as the name of the city Salem, which would later become Jerusalem. David conquered the city of Jebus and purchased the threshing floor of Araunah, the Jebusite, in order to build an altar. His son Solomon built the temple on this site, which remained for 400 years. The sec-



Gabriel Barkay.

ond temple was built by the returnees from the Babylon captivity, in 515 BC. The third temple was built by Herod. It is usually called the second temple because there was no gap in the sacrificial administration on the site. Titus destroyed the temple in AD 70 while quelling the Jewish revolt, which began in AD 66. The Romans built a temple to Zeus on the location of the former Jewish temple. During this time Jews would gather once a year to wail for the destruction of the temple at the perforated rock, which is now covered by the Dome of the Rock. During the Byzantine period the site was left in ruins, and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher became the site favored by Christians. Most scholars believe that there was no activity on the Temple Mount at this time; however, the Temple Mount Sifting Project has found a lot of evidence of occupation from this period, leading Barkay to suggest that history books need to be rewritten on this matter.

In the year 638 Jerusalem was conquered by Omar and the army of the Prophet Mohammed. There were several Jews in the army who told Omar of the significance of the Temple Mount. Omar built a wooden mosque on the site, but it wasn't until the late 7th century that an Umayyad caliph who was not in control of any of the holy sites of Islam (Mecca

or Medina) made the Temple Mount a holy site. Literature praising Jerusalem was printed, and in 691 Abdu-Malek built the Dome of the Rock and his son built the El-Aqsa Mosque. The name of Jerusalem doesn't appear in the Quran at all, but tradition connects the night journey of the prophet from the "near mosque" to the "far mosque" (el-Aqsa) as being in Jerusalem, where the prophet ascended into heaven. The Dome of the Rock was built as a shrine, replacing the Jewish temple, not as a mosque, though it was later turned into one. Only since the 16th century has the western (Wailing) Wall become the most venerated site by the Jews. Since the Mamluk period no buildings have been added to the Temple Mount.

This has been the status quo on the site until the 20th century. Major changes took place in the 1990s due to a change in policy, which led the Waqf (the Islamic Temple Mount authority) to build a new mosque in Solomon's Stables. There are also over 50 ancient subterranean openings (cisterns, tunnels, storage areas) and many of these were penetrated by the digging of the Waqf. Most of the debris (400 truck loads) was discarded in the Kidron Valley. Barkay says this is an archaeological crime of global proportions. One of Dr. Barkay's students showed him a collection of sherds he had collected from the dump site that extended from the 1st Temple through the Islamic periods. This discovery convinced Barkay that it was worth sifting through the material. A team of approximately 100 volunteers a day has been wet-sifting the dirt and debris since 2004. This is the first time that all the debris from a site is being fully sifted. More than 1,500 ancient coins from the Persian period through modern times (including Hasmonean, Roman, Byzantine, Crusader, and Islamic) have been found along with hundreds of pieces of jewelry, objects of war such as arrowheads, spearheads, and blades, and many other unique finds. (Owen Chesnut)



RANDOM SURVEY

Herod's Quarry Found:

A quarry that provided King Herod with the stones to renovate the Temple has been located in a Jerusalem suburb. In terms of the process it was found that channels were first hewn around each side of a block, then using a hammer the stone cutters inserted a row of cleaving stakes in the bottom part until a fissure was created and the stone detached. A complete cleaving stake, which had been forgotten by the ancient quarrymen, was found at the site. Coins and pottery vessels date the quarry to the first century AD.

Canal Found at Aswan:

An ancient filled-in canal has recently been found at the Aswan granite quarries, in Egypt, which was once used to float large stone monuments to the Nile River. Almost all obelisks, including those at the Luxor and Karnak Temples, were originally hewn in the Aswan area.

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Scepter of Emperor Found:

Italian archaeologist Clementina Panella, who has been excavating in the Roman Forum for 20 years, recently discovered a scepter which belonged to Emperor Maxentius, who ruled from AD 306-312. He drowned in the Tiber River during the battle on the Milvian bridge against Constantine, who attributed his victory to divine intervention and converted to Christianity. Maxentius's supporters are thought to have hidden the scepter after his defeat. It was found wrapped in silk and linen in a wooden box with battle standards and lance heads.

World's Oldest Inscription?

Archaeologists have discovered what they believe to be the world's most ancient inscription in the Iranian city of Jiroft, near Halil Roud. The inscription was discovered in a palace dating to the third millennium BC. It was carved on a baked mud-brick. The script, which consists of geometric shapes, has not yet been deciphered. The Elamite language, which also comes from this same region, may have developed from it.

2,700-year-old Fabric Found:

A funerary urn containing ashes, human bones, dried pomegranates and a 2,700-year-old piece of fabric has been found in Argos, Greece. The corroding oxides of the copper urn have evidently killed the microbes that would have normally destroyed the fabric.

N E W S L E T T E R



The Institute of
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