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Spring 2015

## The Institute of Archaeology & Siegfried H. Horn Museum Newsletter Volume 36.2

Paul Gregor

Constance Gane

Helena Gregor

Justin Singleton

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## The Institute of ARCHAEOLOGY Siegfried H. Horn Museum



### The 2015 Excavations at Tall Jalul

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HORN ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
MUSEUM  
NEWSLETTER

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Andrews University continued excavations at Tall Jalul in Field W (the reservoir) from May 10-June 4, 2015. The excavations were directed by Paul Z. Gregor and Constance Gane, of the Institute of Archaeology, and Helena R. Gregor, of Andrews University, was the Field Archaeologist. Mr. Isa Seryani served as representative for the Department of Antiquities of Jordan.

During the 2010 season, Field W was opened in order to explore the nature and function of a water channel, discovered in Field G during the 2007 and 2009 seasons, and its relationship to the reservoir. A total of eleven squares were opened in Field W during the 2010, 2011, and 2012 seasons. In 2014 work continued in Squares W9 and W10, and this season (2015) work continued in W7 and W8 along with three new squares (W12, W13, and W14) that were opened for more lateral exposure.

After the initial discovery of the reservoir wall and connecting floor in Square W5, during the 2011 season, five additional squares were opened in 2012 to provide new information regarding the size and nature of the reservoir. Since four squares (W7, W8, W9, and W10) were not completed by the end of the 2012 season, work continued in Squares W9 and W10 during the 2014 season. This season (2015) work was completed in Squares W7 and W9 where the floor of the reservoir was revealed together with other features.

While Squares W13 and W14 revealed only post-7th century BC fill, without any architecture, Square W12 (the most southern square excavated this season) revealed a section of plaster on the side of the southern perimeter wall of the reservoir during the last few days of digging.

(cont'd on p. 2)



Jalul 2015 Team.

The floor of the reservoir was reached both in Squares W7 and W8. Wall 16, found in Square W7 during the 2012 season, was initially thought to have served as a partition to the reservoir. It has now been completely excavated and it sits on the plastered floor of the reservoir. It is constructed with tightly-packed dirt and stones.

In Square W8 another wall was discovered, also sitting on the floor of the reservoir. It may have served as revetment, supporting Wall 16 on the northern side. Both walls may have been constructed to create a pathway from one side of the reservoir to another. Neither wall was plastered, so it is unlikely that they served as a partition wall of the reservoir while it was still in use. It is possible that these walls were constructed after the reservoir went out of use during the 6th century BC. Further work is needed to round out the overall configuration of the water reservoir and its various features. (Paul Gregor, Constance Gane and Helena Gregor)



## Silva Lecture

A question to which both archaeologists and those in biblical studies would like an answer, is how Judaism adapted and survived during the Diaspora. To at least partially answer this question, Rodrigo Silva, of São Paulo University, presented an illustrated lecture entitled “In a Strange Land: How Judaism Adapted and Survived in Dura Europos, Syria,” on November 17, 2014, as part of the Horn Museum Lecture Series.

Due to its remarkable preservation, Dura Europos has sometimes been referred to as the Pompeii of the Syrian Desert. Silva sees Dura Europos as a good case study for Diaspora dynamics because those who lived at this site were part of a multi-faceted culture, including people of Syrian, Greek, Persian, Jewish, and Christian subcultures, along with Roman soldiers and conscript barbarians. Data from this site can be used to help identify



Dura Europos.

how this Jewish community survived in a pagan world. In terms of excavated structures, Dura Europos contains one of the oldest and best-preserved synagogues that has been found in the Diaspora.

Silva lists two theorists as the foundation for his work with Dura Europos: Chris Gosden and Homi Bhabha. In his book *Archaeology and Colonialism: Cultural Contact from 5000 BC to the Present*, Gosden discusses what happens to traditional peoples within a diverse colony, namely a destabilizing of older values leading to the changing of concepts. Similarly, Bhabha, emphasizes the ongoing effects of hybridization in his book *The Location of Culture*. With these contributions, Silva is able to piece together both the adaptation and survival of specifically-Jewish concepts within the Jewish community at Dura Europos.

As expressed in Bhabha's work, it is understood that survival within a colony works in stages. First, there is a sense of both isolation and imitation. Isolation occurs within the older generation, at which time there is an attempt to hold on to the traditions of the past. At the same time, imitation occurs among the younger generation, who attempt to live outside of the isolation of pure tradition, and begin to imitate in very small ways the language and actions of the other culture. For them, a natural merger occurs, even if only in the use of local material culture. The sec-

ond stage is that of a mixture, or the finding of middle ground, where truth and authenticity move aside for ambiguity. The third step is that of hybridity; this is what actually challenges colonialism and permits the survival of the original culture. In hybridity, nonnegotiables are maintained while negotiables are relaxed, thus developing a completely different form of the culture. This same process can be understood when referencing Hellenized Jews. These Jews were not pure Hellenists, but rather Jews who have adapted certain doctrines and practices while attempting to maintain the core of their own system. The fourth and final step is emergence, that is the emergence of a new culture where everything has been changed.

At the Dura Europos there were numerous religious structures including a number of pagan temples, and even a Christian house church, as well as the Jewish synagogue. Like other peoples, who lived amidst the religious pluralism in Dura Europos, the Jewish community of the city had two options: either amalgamation (adaptation through religious syncretism) or hybridization (change, but holding onto nonnegotiable tenets). It is clear that the pagans of the city had adapted through amalgamation, as is evident from an excavated statue of Zeus in Roman attire with an inscription attributing it to Ba'al. However, in order for the



Jewish community to survive and maintain their beliefs, amalgamation was not an option. And, indeed, as evidenced by the remains of the synagogue, the Jewish community at Dura Europos chose hybridization over amalgamation.

During the siege of the city by the Sassanian Persians in AD 256, the defending soldiers began to strengthen the walls by filling in buildings along the fortifications with soil and debris. In the process, and because of the close proximity of the synagogue to the wall, the frescos on the inside walls of the synagogue were covered and remained safe through the destruction. It was only during the excavation of the city that these frescos were uncovered, revealing twenty-four images of biblical events. These images, ranging

from Moses and the burning bush to the valley of dry bones, show a stunning difference from the biblical text; each of the images had been updated in style and dress. For example, Moses appears in Roman attire and the Egyptian army at the Red Sea is depicted in Persian military array with Greek shields. Other images, such as Aaron, also appear in Persian dress. Nevertheless, the core of Jewish theology had stayed the same, as evidenced by one fresco featuring the Torah in front of the Temple and the destruction of idols.

Thus, this Jewish community in the Diaspora survived by allowing change. (Justin Singleton)



Rodrigo Silva.

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# RANDOM SURVEY

## *Thracian Tomb Found?*

The remains of a 2500-year-old Thracian chariot and two horses, buried in an upright position, have been discovered in a burial mound, containing seven burial structures and two pits, in the village of Svestari, in NE Bulgaria. Evidence of metal disks on their heads suggests that the horses wore harnesses. The mound is located near the grave of a warrior, presumably the owner of the chariot. In Homer's *Iliad*, the Thracians were allies with Troy against their southern Greek neighbors.

## *Jumbo Corinthian Capital Found:*

Perhaps the largest Corinthian capital ever found has recently been unearthed in Hadrian's Temple at the site of Cyzicus, Turkey. It weighs 20 tons, is 1.9 m in diameter, and 2.5 m high, rivaling Baalbek's Temple of Jupiter, in Lebanon. The head of a large-scale bull figure was also found at this ancient commercial site on the Sea of Marmara.

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## *Ancient City Found in Iraq:*

The ancient city of Idu, which thrived from ca.1250-850 BC, has recently been found in the Kurdistan region of northern Iraq. The tell site rises 10 m (32 ft) above the surrounding plain on the N bank of the Lower Zab River. While its earliest remains go back to the Neolithic period, it was under the control of the Assyrian Empire throughout most of its floruit, becoming independent for a short period during the reign of Ba'ilanu, who built a large palace for himself. Cuneiform inscriptions and works of art have been found, which help interpret the remains.

## *Statue of Ramses II Found:*

A 1.95 m (6.39 ft) high x 1.60 m (5.24 ft) wide red granite statue of Pharaoh Ramses II (1279-1213 BC) has been found recently at Great Temple of Bastet, at Tell Basta, in the Nile Delta of Egypt. Ramses, with his cartouche engraved on his back, stands between the Egyptian deities Hathor and Ptah. Another statue of an as yet unidentified New Kingdom official, with a hieroglyphic text offering it to the goddesses Bastet and Sekhmet and the god Horakhti, has also been found.

## *Town Gate at Gath:*

A massive gate and 30 m (98 ft) of the fortification wall of the city of Gath have recently been unearthed, along with the remains of the destruction of the city by Hazael in ca. 830 BC. The remains of a Temple and iron smelting have also been found near the gate.

# NEWSLETTER



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