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Spring 2022

# The Institute of Archaeology & Siegfried H. Horn Museum Newsletter Volume 43.2

Paul J. Ray Jr.

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## The Institute of ARCHAEOLOGY Siegfried H. Horn Museum



### ASOR 2021

The in-person component of the Annual Meeting of the *American Society of Overseas Research (ASOR)* was held in Chicago from November 17-20, 2021, with a virtual component held from December 18-21. We will report on the in-person component, at which there were 69 sessions, with about 310 paper and 16 poster presentations attended by over 525 people. The plenary address was presented by Morag Kersel of DePaul University entitled “Living with Legacies: ASOR Archaeo-activism and a Future for 21st Century Archaeology.”

This year papers presented by Madaba Plains Project (MPP) members and affiliates included: Bethany Walker (The Revival of Late Medieval Syria: A Case of Migration and Return); Darrell Rohl (Mapping Umm al-Jimal, from the Princeton Expedition to the Present); Kent Bramlett and Craig W. Tyson (The Anthropoid Coffins of Jordan: A Reappraisal of the Their Date and Meaning); Robert D. Bates (Social Complexity in Iron Age Transjordan: A Controlled Comparison of Resource Management in the Madaba Region); Owen Chesnut (Asking for a Place: Identifying the Location of Biblical Eshtoal); Michael Orellana (Drawing Ceramic Plates for Jalul with Rhinoceros-Grasshopper); Helen M. Dixon (“May You Bless Her”: Religious Insights from Levantine Phoenician Women’s Votive Inscriptions); Betty Adams (The Potential and Perils of Non-Destructive Organic Residue Analysis in the Field. Development of Solvent-Based Protocol Yields Data in Field Lab Experiments Consistent with Institutional Lab Testing on Cosmetic and Other Artifacts); and Kent Bramlett, Monique Vincent and Friedbert Ninow (The Stratified Pottery of Khirbat al-Balu’a in Regional Context).

Those MPP members who chaired sessions or participated in Workshops or Business Meetings on the program include: Owen Chesnut (Chair, Archaeology of the Southern Levant); Darrell Rohl

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NEWSLETTER

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Øystein Labianca, with his wife Asta, receiving W. F. Albright Service Award.

(Workshop Panelist: Levantine Entanglements: Cultural Productions, Long-term Changes and Globalizations in the Eastern Mediterranean); Douglas R. Clark (General Progress Report: Updates and Projections SCHEP/MRAMP) AND (Strategic Removal, Demolition and Excavation) both as part of the Preserving the Cultural Heritage of the Madaba Region of Jordan Workshop, Øystein S. LaBianca (A More Inclusive Past for Levantine Lands: A Project Proposal and Case Study from the Greater Madaba Region of Jordan) as part of the Preserving the Cultural Heritage of the Madaba Region of Jordan Workshop; Timothy Harrison (Panelist: the Preserving the Cultural Heritage of the Madaba Region of Jordan Workshop); Douglas R. Clark with Suzanne Richard, Marta Polcaro and Marta D'Andrea (Madaba Regional Archaeological Museum Project (MRAMP) Workshop; Kent Bramlett with Friedbert Ninow and Monique Vincent (Balu'a Regional Archaeological Project (BRAP) Workshop; and Bethany Walker (Consultation of Dig Directors in Jordan). In addition, Colton J. Hodges presented a poster presentation entitled "Esbu and the Decapolis."

Finally, in the annual awards ceremony, Øystein S. LaBianca was presented a W.F. Albright Service Award as a distinguished member of the Board of Trustees of the American Center Of Research in Jordan (ACOR) since 1997, serving simultaneously as ACOR's representative to ASOR, and sitting of the Board of Trustees of ASOR since 2001. (Paul J. Ray, Jr)



## Bisheh Dies

In a recent issue of the Newsletter (42.4), the obituaries of three American Archaeologists who spent most of their careers excavating in Jordan were reported. Not long after the death of the third of these individuals, one of Jordan's own native archaeologists (Ghazi Bisheh) died



Aerial View of Tall Hisban (courtesy of Richard Cleave).

on January 24, 2022, adding yet another loss to the archaeological community in Jordan.

Ghazi Bisheh was an ardent researcher who devoted himself to archaeological research for almost half a century. He was born in Amman in 1945, to a family of Circassian refugees who had settled in Amman in the 19th century. Ghazi spent most of his youth at his grandparent's house overlooking the city's ancient Roman nymphaeum, whose nymphs motivated him to study archaeology.

Ghazi graduated from the University of Jordan in 1967 with a bachelor's degree in archaeology. During his studies, he became fascinated with early Islamic architecture and in 1970 he left Jordan to earn a master's degree in Islamic art and architecture from the University of Michigan, where he also received his PhD, with a dissertation entitled "The Mosque of the Prophet at Madīnah throughout the First-Century A.H. with Special Emphasis on the Umayyad Mosque."

Upon his return to Jordan in 1973, Ghazi joined the Department of Antiquities, first as director of registration and documentation and then as director of excavations. In 1989, he was promoted to Director-General, a position he held

twice, first from 1989 to 1992 and then again from 1995 until his retirement in 1999. Ghazi was also an associate professor of archaeology at Yarmouk University in northern Jordan.

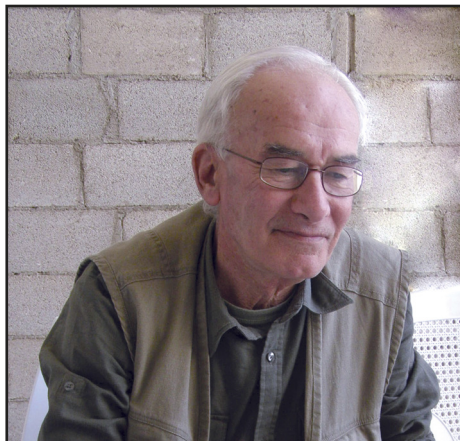
Throughout his long career, Ghazi excavated at many sites in Jordan, including Tall Hisban, Madaba, Qasr Hallabat, Qusayr Amra, and Qastal. His publications were numerous and covered topics ranging from ancient inscriptions to mosaic art and Islamic architecture. He also regularly helped organize international conferences and workshops, and was a major figure in the archaeological community of Jordan, helping found the Petra National Trust and serving on the board of trustees of the Jordan Museum.

Ghazi was a man of the world who believed that archaeology belongs not to individual nations but to all humanity. As noted in *Biblical Archaeology Review* 22.5 (1996): 16, 71-72, he devoted considerable energy and thought to combating looting, antiquities trafficking, and illicit forgeries. He also believed in the importance of cultural heritage education and, as such, helped develop innovative and creative ways to engage Jordan's youth in archaeology.

Øystein LaBianca fondly remembers Ghazi by noting: "My decision to resume

fieldwork at Tall Hisban in 1996 two decades after the conclusion of the original Heshbon Expedition to Tall Hisban, was in no small part thanks to the support and encouragement I received from Ghazi Bisheh, then the General Director of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan. Not only did he signal his support of this decision in words, he backed it up by supplying funding to pay half a dozen local workers to assist with cleaning the site. To the extent that we were able to pioneer community archaeology at Hisban, it is surely thanks to the vision and support of Ghazi Bisheh. He will be greatly missed.

Works by Dr. Bisheh include: From Castellum to Palatium: Umayyad Mosaic Pavements from Qasr al-Hallabat in Jordan, 1992, The Cultural Resources



Ghazi Bisheh.

Management Project in Jordan  
Archaeological Rescue Survey of the Ras an-Naqab-Aqaba Highway Alignment,

1992, An iconographic Detail from Khirbet al-Mafjar: The Fruit-and-Knife Motif, 2000, Les peintures de Qusayr ‘Amra: un bain omeyyade dans la Bādiya jordanienne, 2007, and *The Umayyads: The Rise of Islamic Art*, with Fawzi Zayadine, Mohammad al-Asad, Ina Kehrberg, and Lara Tohme 2014.

Dr. Bisheh will be sadly missed, not only by his family, friends, and colleagues, but by the entire archaeological community who work in Jordan. He will be remembered as an inspiration and a true model for all scholars. (Published Obituary, slightly modified by Paul J. Ray, Jr.)



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# RANDOM SURVEY

## *Linear Elamite Deciphered:*

From ca. 2300-1880 BC Linear Elamite was the main script of the Elamite language in Iran. Recently, a team of scholars utilizing several silver beakers with highly standardized Elamite royal inscriptions nearly identical to another group of objects that likewise contained Elamite inscriptions written in Akkadian cuneiform allowed the researchers to identify numerous divine, geographical and personal names. From there, they succeeded in unlocking the script, deciphering 72 of an estimated slightly over a 100 signs.

## *Burial Found:*

Archaeologists have recently discovered an Early Bronze Age burial containing a male skeleton, adorned with bangles and necklaces in the agricultural and mining settlement of Resuloğlu, Turkey. Grave goods also include clay and metal gifts; with the style of weaponry suggesting the community was of Caucasian and Mesopotamian origin.

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## *Sarcophagi Discovered:*

Recent excavations at the sacred animal cemetery at Saqqara, Egypt have yielded 250 sarcophagi and 150 statuettes from the Late Period Twenty-Seventh to Thirty-first Dynasties (ca. 525-332 BC). Some of the sarcophagi contained preserved mummies. The statuettes are representations of Egyptian deities including Anubis, Amun, Bastet, Hathor, Isis, Min, and Osiris. A headless statuette of Imhotep, the architect who built the Stepped Pyramid of Djoser at the site at the beginning of the Third Dynasty (2686-2613 BC) was also found.

## *Statue of Hercules Found:*

Archaeologists working at the site of Philippi, Greece, have unearthed a Roman period (2nd century AD) statue of the Greek god Hercules. On the head of the statue is a wreath of vine leaves, and a lion hangs from his left shoulder, representing the Nemean lion that he slayed and wore according to the myth surrounding his character. In addition, an 8th or 9th century AD Byzantine-period highly ornate structure, probably a fountain, was found.

## *Mosaic Found:*

A well-preserved 5th-7th century Byzantine-period mosaic, with iconography of 17 beasts and birds, displayed in vibrant colors and complex geometry, has recently been found by a Palestinian farmer in the Gaza Strip.

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