

OCCIDENT & ORIENT

Newsletter of the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology in Amman



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The Institute 2001/2002: Strengthening German-Jordanian Cooperation - News and Activities

Since the publication of our last Newsletter in September 2001 the institute was involved in a variety of scientific activities. Among others it was hosting the European Salon, a round organized alternately by the French (IFAPO), British (CBRL) and German (DEI) archaeological institutes in Amman, a DAAD (German Academic Exchange Programme) committee interviewing and selecting candidates for a scholarship in Germany and last but not least a reception welcoming provost M. Reyer and his wife, who only recently arrived in the region.

A further, very important event during the last months was the inauguration of new trilingual (Arabic, German, English) sign-posts put up at the major archaeological monuments at Umm Qeis and the so called Rujm el-Malfuf building, which is situated in the heart of Jebel Amman just opposite the building of the Department of Antiquities (DoA). The work done by the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology in Amman (DEI) and the German Archaeological Institute (DAI) in Berlin in close cooperation with the Department of Antiquities of Jordan is aiming at a better understanding of the ancient monuments and might become an example for more archaeological sites within Jordan.

Inspired by the fruitful cooperation between German and Jordanian partners our institute is looking forward to further close cooperation with the concerned authorities in order to help to protect the archaeological remains in the Hashemite

Kingdom and present them to a broader public.

Turning to 2002 one of the main projects planned by our institute will be an archaeological excavation at Tell Johfiyeh, an Iron Age site situated some 7.5 km southwest of Irbid, in northern Jordan (Fig. 1). The project is planned as a cooperative effort between our institute and the Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology (IAA) at Yarmouk University, Irbid. A workshop concerning scientific restoration of different materials which had to be cancelled in 2001 due to the events of 11/09/01 should be made up this year in close cooperation with the Goethe-Institute, Amman, a restoration laboratory from Konstanz, the Department of Antiquities of Jordan, Amman, and Yarmouk University, Irbid.

Furthermore, our varied activities all over the country, e.g. in Umm Qeis and its hinterland, will continue. Logistical support will be given among others to visiting scholars and excavation teams working in Tell Zera'a and Umm Qeis. ■



Fig. 1: Tell Johfiyeh from the southeast

Ancient Settlements in the Plain of Akkar/Northern Lebanon. First Results of Archaeological Survey Work in 1997 and 1999

By: Karin Bartl, Freie Universität Berlin in cooperation with Anis Chaaya, Direction Générale des Antiquités du Liban

Introduction

Northern Lebanon represents a region which is divided by its topography into several units: the rather narrow coastal strip, bordered by a hilly region and the high mountains to the east, the highest peak being Qornet es Saouda. Like the adjacent regions to the south and north the coastal and hilly regions offer very favourable settlement conditions which led to development of rather dense occupation since the earliest times.

However, systematic archaeological research focused rather late on northern Lebanon. It was only during the early seventies that archaeological fieldwork at Tripoli (Salamé-Sarkis 1975-76, 1980, 1983), Tell Ardé (ancient *Ardata*) (Salamé-Sarkis 1972, 1973) and Tell 'Arqa (ancient *Irqata*, resp. *Arca Caesarea*) (Thalman 1978a, 1978b, 1990, 1997; Hakimian, Salamé-Sarkis 1988) started. Beside this, archaeological surface investigations of the entire area were carried out during that period but had to be discontinued (Saidah 1969; Sapin 1978-79; Thalman, Maqdisi 1989). The results of this research, which already had shown the rich archaeological potential of the region, led to the systematic survey of one of the most favourable settlement areas of northern Lebanon, the plain of Akkar, which was carried out in 1997 and 1999 as a joint project of Free University Berlin and the Direction Générale des Antiquités du Liban (Bartl, Chaaya in press a, b).

The plain of Akkar represents a very fertile landscape which is nowadays divided into two parts: the northern part in Syria and the southern part in northern Lebanon (Fig. 1). The Lebanese part of the Akkar plain is a nearly triangular area with an extent of ca. 15 km

(N/S) x 20 km (SW-N/E) x 17 km (E/W) which descends gently from west to east and is bordered by a chain of flat hills which form the northern spur of the Lebanese mountains. The permanent water supply of the region is mainly guaranteed by large springs and several rivers which traverse the plain in a southeast-northwestern direction. The most important of the perennial water courses is the Nahr el Kebir, today the border line between Lebanon and Syria. Together with the adjacent Buqiaia plain the Akkar region forms one of the most important routes connecting the Mediterranean coast and inland Syria.

From the 2nd mill. BC onwards, the area is mentioned repeatedly in written sources which show the involvement of the region in international political affairs. At various periods the plain of Akkar became a border region between different spheres of influence or was incorporated into larger political units. It seems that for only a few centuries it was politically autonomous and independent.

Concerning the written evidence, periods of special interest are the second half of the 2nd mill. BC when the area was involved in the Egyptian-Hittite struggle for domination in Syria and later became part of the newly established kingdom of Amurru, the period of Assyrian presence since the end of the 8th cent.

BC (Helck 1962; Klengel 1992), and the later periods since the formation of the Roman province Syria. The last period of supra-regional importance was the Crusader's period, when the plain of Akkar became part of the county of Tripoli (Runciman 1958; Salamé-Sarkis 1980; Leriche 1983).

Preliminary Results

In total, more than 70 places at the plain and the adjacent hilly region to the south and east could be defined as archaeological sites, i.e. settlements, tombs, necropoles and worked rocks (Fig. 2). Besides, many spots with sherd concentrations along the main river courses (Nahr Aarqa, Nahr Estouéne and Nahr el Kebir) were discovered thus pointing to former houses or farmsteads which are now totally destroyed by agricultural activities like deep-ploughing. For example, one of those spots was site no. 129.1 which is marked on the map Liban 1:20.000/Beyrouth 1962-63 as a small tell but today is not recognizable any more.

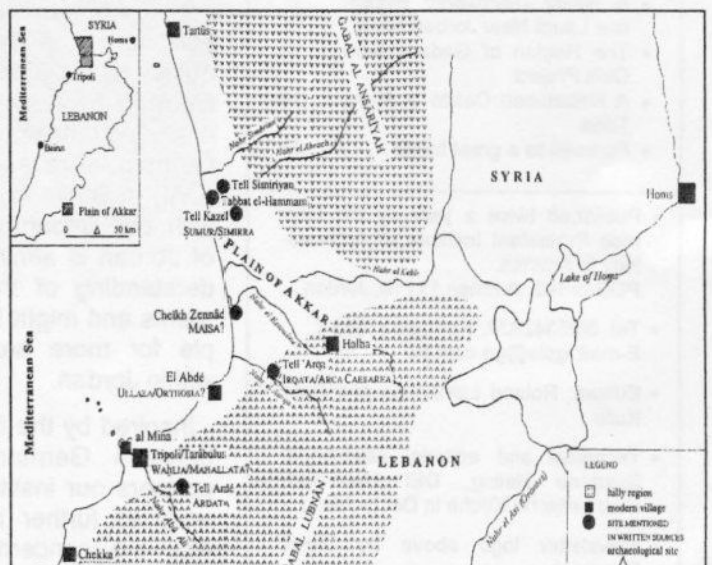


Fig. 1: The plain of Akkar

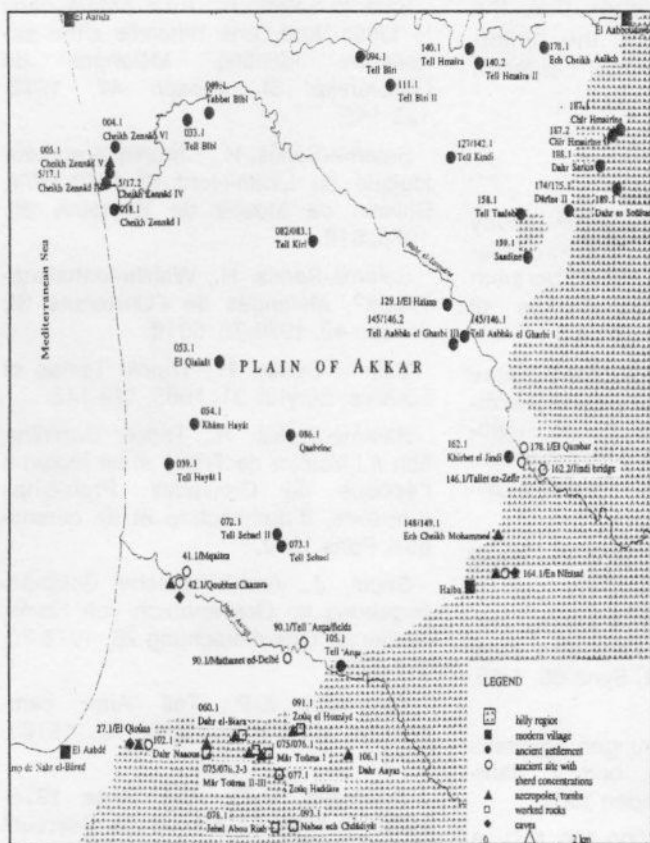


Fig. 2: Ancient settlements in the plain of Akkar (Transcription of the site names according to map collection Liban 1:20.000, Beyrouth 1962-63)

In general, it can be stated that due to intensive cultivation of the entire plain and the existence of many fenced plantations a complete investigation of the region is almost impossible. Although this limits the following assertions to a certain degree, specific trends of occupation are discernible. One of these is the distinct increase of settlement intensity during the post-Iron age periods when all of the larger sites were inhabited. This concerns mainly the Hellenistic to Late Roman/Early Byzantine periods of which the pottery, the main surface material, is rather easy to recognize.

All of the settlements are of medium or small size (2-3 ha). Tell Hmaira, Tell Sebael, Tell Kiri, Tell Biri, Tell Hayat and Cheikh Zennad are the most important sites. It might be that Cheikh Zennad the necropolis of which was excavated already in 1924 (Brossé 1926) is synonymous with the ancient city of Maisa, reported in Assyrian texts of

the 9th cent. BC. Surface finds of red-slipped Iron age pottery indicate that period.

Among the settlements which are occupied since the Early Bronze age, Tell Hmaira/AS 140.1 seems to be the most important one. Like other sites mentioned above it has continuously been occupied from the 3rd mill. BC to the 1st mill. AD. Of special interest are several finds of almost completely preserved Late Bronze age vessels deriving from robbery trenches and kept by villagers nearby

(Fig. 3). Adjacent to Tell Hmaira, a small site (AS 140.2) covered with late neolithic pottery and flint tools (Fig. 4) is situated which represents one of the few find spots of that period in the plain.

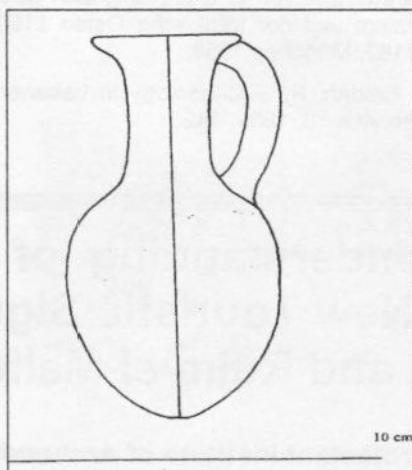


Fig. 3: Late Bronze age pottery from Tell Hmaira/AS 140.1

Besides tell sites and flat settlements, necropolises form another large group of sites. These are situated mostly on the hilly region to the east and south of the plain (Fig. 5), only a few of them like Qoubbet Chamra/AS 42.1 were found in the plain. All of them consist of rock-cut

tombs of different shapes: shaft graves, chamber tombs and cave-like structures. As already mentioned none of these yielded any pottery sherds or other finds. It might be that most of them date to the space of time between the Hellenistic and Byzantine periods since the settlement density of the Akkar plain increased during these centuries. Moreover, it seems that during that period the hilly flanks have been settled for the first time. Sites like Nfesse/AS 164.1 and El Qlouaa/AS 27.1, today totally destroyed by agricultural activities, point to the existence of small villages of the Roman/Byzantine periods in that area. The lack of earlier sites in the hills might be connected with a still dense wood coverage in the 2nd and beginning 1st mill. BC.



Fig. 4: Late Neolithic flint tools from AS 140.2



Fig. 5: Rock-cut tombs in Dahr Naaous/AS 102.1

Summary

To sum up, settlement density in the plain of Akkar differs in the peri-

ods of research. The settlement pattern which can be seen since the end of the 3rd mill. BC (EB IV) in detail is of a rather simple structure. Certainly, the main centre through the ages was Tell 'Arqa, situated at the southern fringe of the plain. Several medium-sized villages were spread in the plain most of which show occupation traces of all periods between the 3rd mill. BC and the Islamic resp. Ottoman periods. An increase of the number of settlements is seen along the river courses and in the hills as well as in the plain itself since the Hellenistic/Roman periods. Sites of the pre-Bronze age are situated at specific places near river courses and at crossing points between the plain and the hills (El Qambar/AS 178.1, Jindi bridge/AS 162.2, Tell 'Arqa-fields/AS 90.1), a fact which could be explained with well known pre-historic subsistence strategies using habitats with different resources.

In general, it can be stated that the Lebanese part of the plain of Akkar was rather densely settled since the end of the Early Bronze age. While the settlement structure of the early periods is rather difficult to define it seems that the post-Iron age periods are characterized by a three- or four-tiered pattern consisting of one center (Tell 'Arqa), several medium-sized villages, few small villages and many single farmsteads. It is only in the Islamic

period (Crusader's time) that the plain of Akkar became the hinterland of the supra-regional center of Tripoli/Trablus.

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Towards a Better Understanding of the Archaeological Remains in Jordan: New Touristic Sign-Posts Inaugurated at Umm Qeis/Gadara and Rujm el-Malfuf (Amman)

By: Roland Lamprichs, German Protestant Institute of Archaeology (DEI), Amman (Jordan)

In cooperation with the Department of Antiquities of Jordan (DoA) the German Archaeological Institute in Berlin (DAI) and the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology in Amman (DEI) put up new trilingual (Arabic, German, English) signposts at the major archaeological monuments excavated in a joint effort during the last four decades in Umm

Qeis. The opening ceremony was held in the presence of H.E. Dr. T. Rifa'i, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities of Jordan, at the Umm Qeis museum (Beit Rusan) on 8/10/2001 (Fig. 1). Brief addresses given by Dr. R. Lamprichs (DEI-Amman), Prof. Dr. A. Hoffmann (DAI), H.E. Dr. F. Khraysheh (DoA), H.E. Dr. M. Schneller (Ambassador of Germany

to Jordan) and H.E. Dr. T. Rifa'i precluded the unveiling of the new signs by the minister. A guided tour and reception at the resthouse concluded the event.

Another sign-post which is donated by the German embassy to the Department of Antiquities and the people of Jordan was put up in the heart of Jebel Amman one day

earlier on 7/10/2001 (Fig. 2). The new sign in Arabic, German and English is aiming at a better understanding of the so called "Rujm el-Malfuf building", situated right opposite of the Department of Antiquities in Amman. The work was planned, organized and carried out by the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology in Amman and the Orient section of the German Archaeological Institute in Berlin in close cooperation with the Department of Antiquities of Jordan. The opening ceremony was held in presence of H.E. Dr. F. Khraysheh (DoA) and representatives of the German embassy and the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology in Amman.

The new postings in Umm Qeis and Amman should become an example for the rest of the Jordanian archaeological sites.

Inspired by the fruitful cooperation the participating German partners are looking forward to further close cooperation with the concerned authorities in order to help to protect the archaeological remains in the Hashemite Kingdom and present them to a broader public. ■



Fig. 1: Umm Qeis - Unveiling of the new signs: Dr. T. Rifa'i talking to Dr. R. Lamprichs



Fig. 2: Rujm el Malfuf: Opening ceremony

The Return of the Gods – The Tell Halaf-Restoration-Project

By: Nadja Cholidis, Vorderasiatisches Museum SMB PK, Berlin (Germany)

In the course of future reconstructions on the Berlin Museumsinsel, the rebuilding of the famous Tell Halaf West Palace front is planned. The figured entrance support was the attraction of the Tell Halaf Museum, which was destroyed during World War II in Berlin. Max von Oppenheim (1860-1946) discovered the site in 1899 when he travelled from Aleppo to determine the best location route for the proposed Bagdad railways. The German diplomat and intimate expert of the Arabian world was so impressed by the sculptures and relief slabs that he resigned in 1909 to start a new profession as an archaeologist.

Tell Halaf is located in the head-

water region of the Khabur River near Ras al-'Ain. After three campaigns (1911-1913, 1927, 1929) the settlement history revealed two major archaeological sequences:

On the one hand the Chalcolithic period, dated from the 6th to 5th millennium BC, with a distinctive ceramic assemblage. After a long settlement hiatus of more than 3000 years an Aramaean ruler named Bahianu founded his new capital Guzana on the top of the older occupation. In the late 9th century BC the residence was sacked by Adad-nirari III. (810-781 BC) and annexed with the surrounding countryside by the Assyrian empire. The excavations uncovered among other build-

ings the palace of Kapara (also West or Temple Palace), an Assyrian temple, parts of the town wall and several graves; above all the sculptural remains of the West Palace received international attention.

The findings, which were brought to Berlin in 1927, were exhibited in a former iron-foundry until the building was destroyed during an air attack in 1943. Walter Andrae, then director of the Vorderasiatisches Museum, spared no pains to recover the debris and stored the fragments, nearly 80 m³ of basalt, in the cellars of the Pergamonmuseum. The political circumstances after 1945, the still unsolved ques-

tions of ownership after von Oppenheim's death a year later and last but not least the shortage of financial funds and personnel prevented any attempt of documentation or further protection by the Vorderasiatisches Museum.

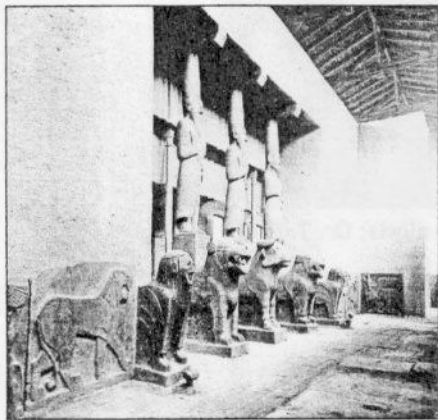


Fig. 1: Plaster casts of the West Palace façade, Tell Halaf Museum (Courtesy Bankhaus Sal. Oppenheim jr. & Cie.)

A preliminary examination of the material after the reunion of the two German states showed that the restoration of some monuments including the palace front was within the realm of possibility. In 1999 the ideas concerning the rebuilding could be combined with the redevelopment concept of the whole Museumsinsel. Since 2001 the Tell Halaf West Palace façade is an integral part of the "Masterplan".



Fig. 2: Double statue of a seated couple; from left to right: Beate Salje, Lutz Martin, Nadja Cholidis and Stefan Geismeyer (Photo: O. Tessmer)

Besides constructional renovation of altogether five museums (Altes and Neues Museum, Alte Nationalgalerie, Bodemuseum and Pergamonmuseum), the "Masterplan" includes a glass structure, which locks up the courtyard of the Pergamonmuseum to the west. At the same time this new building will be the official entrance to the Vorderasiatisches Museum within the Pergamonmuseum. In the blueprint of the architect's office O.M. Ungers, Cologne, the Tell Halaf front is given a perfect place facing Egyptian monuments.

In December 1999 the Director of the Vorderasiatisches Museum in application for subsidy Berlin, Beate

Salje, and her collaborator Lutz Martin filed an by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft to support the Tell Halaf-Restoration-Project with personnel means. The author, who got involved after the granting, has to organize the methodical and scholarly work whereas the direction and execution of the restoration is up to Stefan Geismeyer, restorer of the Vorderasiatisches Museum. Without the generous financial aid of the Sal. Oppenheim Foundation and the warm unreserved support of the Oppenheim family the project would not have been realized within the provided time.

The rebuilding of the palace entrance represents a great challenge for archaeologists, architects and restorers. More than 60 years after the devastation of the Tell Halaf Museum we are getting the unique chance to fulfil von Oppenheim's lifework.

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The Earliest Hellenistic Tomb Find in Jerash or Antioch on the Chrysorhoas. The Jerash City Walls Project: Excavations 2001

By: Ina Kehrberg, Center of British Research in the Levant, Amman (Jordan) and John Manley, Sussex Archaeological Society (Great Britain)

The positive results of a sondage along the city wall in 2000, dating the wall foundation there unequivocally to the early 2nd century AD (Braun, Kehrberg and Manley 2001, 446-448; Kehrberg and Manley 2001; Kehrberg and Manley 2001/2002), gave rise to the 'Jerash City Walls Project' (JCWP). In two seasons, 2001 and 2002, a small team examines the foundations and their stratigraphy at carefully selected points along each sector of the enclosure wall. A third season is planned for post-excavation work and a survey of standing remains of the first wall. The records of the survey will be used for a feasibility study and proposal to the Department of Antiquities of conservation and preservation/protection for the most threatened parts of the wall.



Fig. 1: The Late Hellenistic tomb and the city wall, north sector (trench 100)

The first find at the beginning of the season in September 2001 was not a wall foundation trench. Almost immediately below the thin top layer (originally covered by tumbled blocks of the wall) was a southward sloping rocky outcrop on which the first course of that part of the north-western wall stands. Barely half a metre below a residual dirt layer

which had built up gently sloping against the wall (following more or less the contours of the natural rocky terrain) during the 3rd century AD, the excavation revealed the entrance to a sealed hypogean tomb that reached partly under the city wall and what is today the modern road built on top of the outer wall tumble (Fig. 1). The one chamber had a neatly carved entrance preceded by a shaft or straight sunken dromos. There was no monolithic door but the doorway was closed by tightly packed irregular large blocks wedged and held in place by an earth-clay binder. The burial chamber was just big enough to hold a single burial, it seemed to have been tailored for an adolescent or young adult, perhaps a female, with the head resting at the entrance and facing north, in alignment with the layout of the hypogean tomb. The skeleton is almost intact and is with the Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology (IAA), Yarmouk University, Irbid, for examination and conservation, together with the corroded iron object, a possible tripod. The reports will be published by the examiners together with other reports in the JCWP publications.

The ceramic and other objects (Figs. 2-4) in the tomb and the pottery sherds in the dromos fill leave no doubt as to a date in the Late Hellenistic period: they belong to the later 2nd century or at the latest to the early 1st century BC.

This date has been confirmed by the one Late Hellenistic coin found at the feet of the deceased; preliminary reading has placed the coin in the late 2nd century BC. The coins of the JCWP are being studied by

Julian Bowsher, and his first preliminary readings (pers. comm. cited here) are: The coin of the tomb (wall/trench 100) is Late Hellenistic late 2nd century BC, those of wall/trench 300 are two coins of Aretas IV and two 2nd century coins, in a different context, of the Roman Imperial provincial period; they are totally corroded but appear of 'classic' earlier Imperial date. The last and latest coin comes from the top layer of wall/trench 200 (contaminated) and belongs to the Late Roman late third to early 4th century AD. J. Bowsher will publish a report on the coins of the 2001 season in the JCWP preliminary report, together with the authors, in the next issue of the Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan (46/2002).

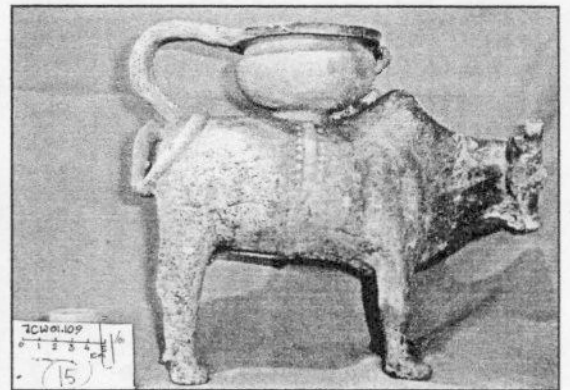


Fig. 2: The sacrificial bull, before cleaning

The pottery models and the rhyton are unique finds, preliminary enquiries have so far failed to unearth similar contemporary finds in Jordan. Following ancient trade, a wider search along land and sea routes from the Arabian peninsula to the African coast may provide better clues if any, especially in contemporary Gulf countries like Bahrain. There is also some evidence which suggests possibly

Ptolemaic Egyptian influence, not only because of superficially shared political climates and relations in northern Jordan at the time of the burial but also with regard to contemporary funerary rituals.

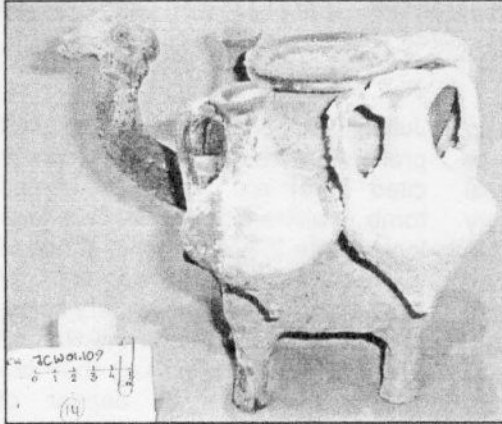


Fig. 3: A camel carrying Rhodian amphorae, before cleaning

The burial is significant because of its unique and undisturbed finds. The models, excepting the Indian 'Brahman-type' bull adorned with a *tenia* for sacrifice and the ritualistic rhyton (both probably not of local manufacture), may allow some speculation about the young owner: perhaps they are not funerary ritual vessels but were originally 'play models' which were once a precious possession early in the life of the deceased. Could it be that these models or perhaps 'toys' represent a real life situation and tell us that the buried person or child was a member of a merchant family whose trade was in oil and wine? The remaining pottery, as well as the gold leaf pectoral, studied for publication by Iman Oweis (Fig. 4), the glass finds, studied and published by Daniel Keller, and the iron strygil make second century BC Gerasa, or rather *Antioch on the Chrysorhoas*, irrevocably part of the Late Hellenistic Mediterranean world.

The actual objective of the JCWP 2001 season was to examine the stratification and nature of the wall foundation in three different locations along the north sector of the city wall, the 'tomb trench' (trench 100) being the westernmost from the North Gate. The second (trench

200) and third sounding (trench 300) were nearer the North Gate, also on the west side of Gerasa.

All three trenches revealed how the builders adapted the foundations of the city wall to the topography of the terrain: trench/wall 100 was founded on the rock-cut upper strata of the tomb covered by ancient dirt (the tomb remained obviously hidden from the builders). Trench/wall 200 showed a foundation trench cut into the 'Jerash soil', or 'terra rossa', to place three courses of foundation blocks founded on natural sloping bedrock; trench/wall 300 was founded on 8 courses of foundation wall with the lowest courses fitted

into a neat trench cut into the clayey red 'Jerash soil'. The large size of the built foundations and its depth at sondage 300 is due to the slope toward the deep wadi bed in that area: the foundations had to allow for the force of the weight of the upper structure built on that slope. The cuts of foundations in 200 and 300 are clearly visible and the colour of the fill easily distinguishable from the prewall baulk.

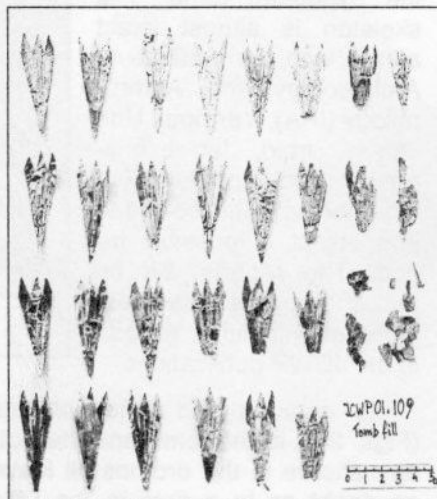


Fig. 4: The gold pectoral, after cleaning (Photo: L. Borel)

The good quantity, well stratified contexts and variety of pottery in all three trenches provide a safe date for construction of the foundations early in the 2nd century AD, corroborated by the coins all of

which were found in key contexts. In fact, the entire terrain shows remarkable homogeneity, well sealed below the exposed surface which was sealed in antiquity by the tumbled remains of the wall. It also shows with regard to the ceramics a pronounced domestic activity from the Late Hellenistic period on, Iron Age sherds adding to the already familiar Jerash picture of occupation (from tombs and the tell of Camp Hill) during that time.

The results confirm the early 2nd century AD dating of the western city wall, north of the South Theatre. A detailed pottery study of the first excavation (South Theatre trench 2000) and this JCWP 2001 season is in preparation and will be published together with the 2002 finds.

Acknowledgements:

The 2001 team of the Jerash City Wall Project (JCWP) was: Iman Oweis, Representative of the Department of Antiquities/Curator of the Jerash Archaeological Museum; Kate Wolrige, Trench Supervisor; Andrew Card, Assistant Trench Supervisor; Marita Manley, volunteer helper; four workers from the Department of Antiquities. Co-Directors of JCWP 2001-2003 are Ina Kehrberg, David Kennedy and John Manley. Gabriel Humbert supervised the preliminary conservation of the tomb finds and mended the complete forms. The JCWP is affiliated and has been funded by the Council for British Research in the Levant (CBRL). The Department of Antiquities generously assisted in providing the workers, field equipment and housing.

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Arrival of a New Cultural Attaché at the German Embassy

By: Andreas Fiedler, German Embassy Amman (Jordan)

Since July 2001 I have been posted as cultural and press attaché at the German Embassy in Amman. These first six months have basically been used to establish contacts and to get in touch with life in Amman and with my various partners. As representative of Germany my focus should be to cooperate with Jordanian partners in order to deepen the bilateral relations and in particular on a university level. But a second pillar, and a very important one, is the European coordination. Only in the framework of joint European efforts cultural events like the annual Film Festival can be organized. The third part of my field of action is the dealing with the German institutes and foundations in Amman and among them the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology (DEI). The role of the Embassy cannot be to control or to advise archaeological experts on their very specific work. But we can be helpful in the case of administrative needs and especially in promoting the output of the archaeological work. A good illustration of this public relation work was the

opening of new sign posts in Umm Qais on the 8th of October 2001. In the realization of this project, the German Archaeological Institute (DAI), the DEI, the Jordanian Department of Antiquities and the German Embassy had joint all their efforts in order to create and to install an exemplary trilingual tour through this marvellous archaeological site. The role of the Embassy in this case was on the one hand to facilitate the importation of the sign posts and on the other hand to represent Germany beside the Jordanian Minister of Tourism, H.E. Dr. Taleb Rifaï, on the occasion of the opening ceremony. This assured a high media presence for the whole project and provided the possibility to the German scholars to explain the new guiding system in a very comprehensive way directly to a greater audience.

Another point of contact between me and the DEI was last year's selection meeting for the scholarships of the German Academic Exchange Programme (DAAD). The

DEI kindly hosted the selection committee on humanities, headed by the cultural attaché. Furthermore, director Dr. Roland Lamprichs directly took part in the selection as member of the committee.

Now, after a first period of getting in touch with Amman, I have to set my cultural targets for the upcoming year 2002 and even for 2003 and 2004. According to the policy of the German Foreign Ministry I will probably stay until that time, i.e. for three years. On an archaeological level, these years will certainly be marked by the preparation of the big Jordan Exhibition in Berlin in 2004. It will be a pleasure to me to be helpful to the DEI during this time and I know that services delivered in relation to the DEI or to any other cultural institution are never a one-way road. The personal experiences made by contributing to the achievement of scientific and cultural targets are so enriching and interesting that it is worth twice doing the job of a cultural attaché in Amman.■

New Discovery in Jordan at Beit-Ras Region (Ancient Capitolias)

By: Wajeeh Karasneh (Irbid Antiquities Office), Khaled al-Rousan (Field Supervisor), Jafer Telfah (Field Supervisor)

Modern Beit-Ras, the ancient Roman city of Capitolias of the Decapolis, is located 6 km north of Irbid governorate, about 100 km from Amman, and arises to an altitude of 600 m above sea level.

The site was documented by several European explorers from the early 19th to 20th century, and mapped in 1886 during a surface survey done by G. Schumacher. Excavations were carried out during the 2000-2001 seasons at Beit-Ras in a limited area covering approximately

6 donoms (6000 m²) of a grove planted with olives trees.

The main two objectives of the excavations were to reveal some own important architectural features of a structure covered with fill (Fig.1), to determine its nature, and to collect data about when it was erected and reused in the later occupation periods.

The recently discovered remains, probably parts of a big theatre, rest on top of a hillside commanding Wadi el-Khallah (Khallah's valley) to

the north. These remains were partly exposed just 150 m east of the already known row of nine east-west vaults adjacent to the mosque in the centre of the village.

The remains of the theatre are lined by remnants of backstage rooms (scaena) of which the doorways were blocked in the Byzantine period. Three of the doorways are well-preserved in the western side, while the upper parts of the other blocked doorways had been removed and reused in the same period (Fig. 2).

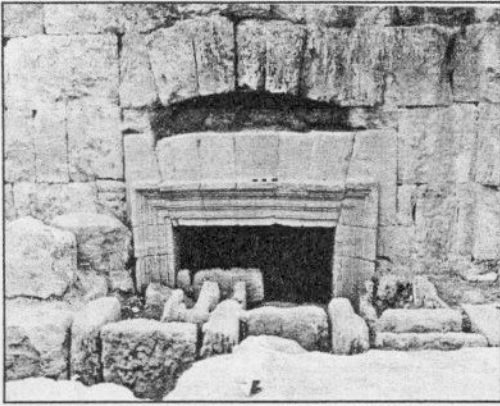


Fig. 5: Blocked room of the back-stage

Acknowledgements:

Our thanks go indeed and foremost to the head of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan, Prof. Dr. Fawwaz al-Khraysheh, who continued ceaselessly the excavations at Beit-Ras over the last two years. For his constant support, encouragement, and interest deep thanks are due again. ■

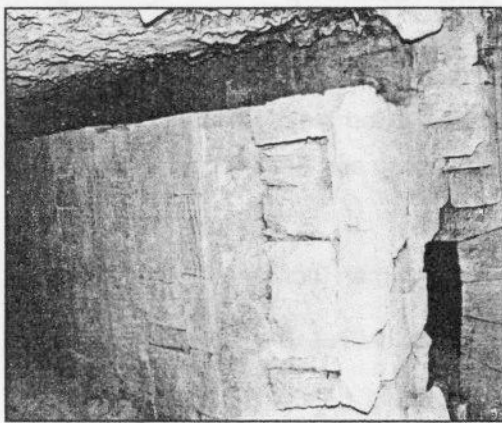


Fig. 6: Supporting wall in front of the backstage doorways

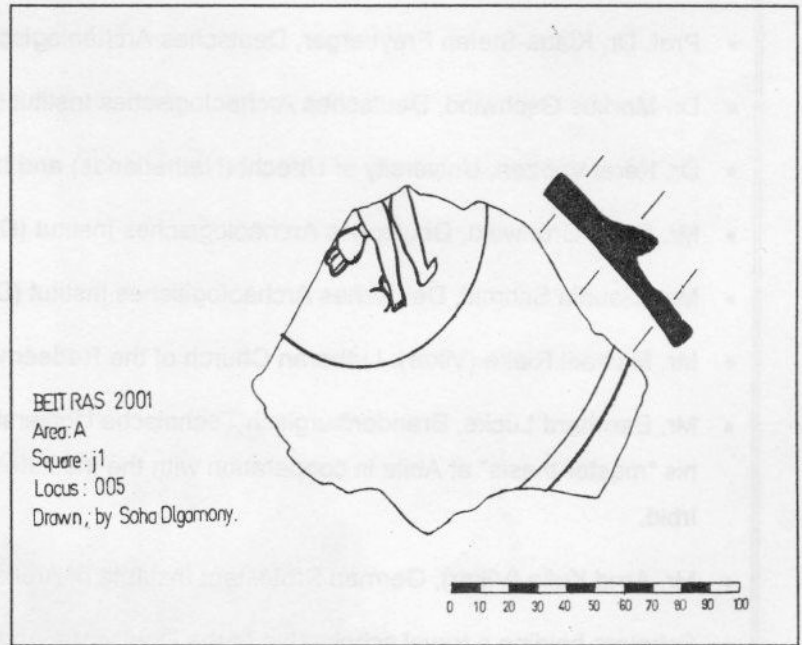
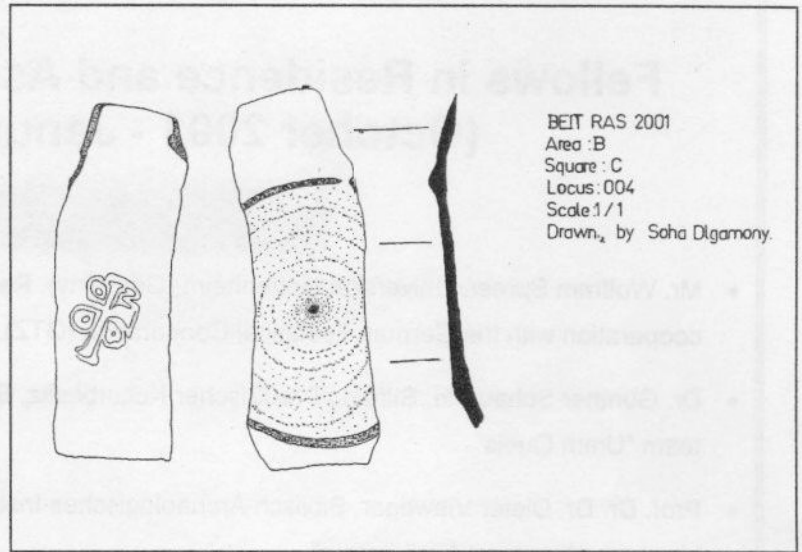


Fig. 7a,b: Stamped Late Roman pottery from Beit-Ras region

Fellows in Residence and Associated Fellows (October 2001 - January 2002)

- Mr. Wolfram Spreer, Universität Hohenheim (Germany). Research for his "master thesis" in cooperation with the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ).
- Dr. Günther Schauerte, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin (Germany) and his excavation team "Umm Queis".
- Prof. Dr. Dr. Dieter Vieweger, Biblisch Archäologisches Institut (BAI), Wuppertal (Germany) and his excavation team "Tell Zera'a".
- Dr. Arnulf Hausleiter, Freie Universität, Berlin (Germany).
- Prof. Dr. Klaus-Stefan Freyberger, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (DAI), Damascus (Syria).
- Dr. Markus Gschwind, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (DAI), Damascus (Syria).
- Dr. Karel Vriezen, University of Utrecht (Netherlands) and his excavation team "Tell Zera'a".
- Mr. Peter Grunwald, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (DAI), Berlin (Germany).
- Ms. Claudia Schmid, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (DAI), Berlin (Germany).
- Mr. Michael Rieke (Vikar), Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Jerusalem.
- Mr. Bernhard Lucke, Brandenburgisch Technische Universität, Cottbus (Germany). Research for his "master thesis" at Abila in cooperation with the Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, Irbid.
- Mr. Arnd Kulla (Vikar), German Protestant Institute of Archaeology in Amman (Jordan).
- Scholars holding a travel scholarship of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (DAI): Dr. Kai Kaniuth; Dr. Andreas Grüner.
- Ms. Anja Dreiser, Trainee at the Department of Antiquities of Jordan, Amman (Jordan).
- Prof. Dr. Donny Youkhanna, Department of Research and Studies, State Board of Antiquities and Heritage, Baghdad (Iraq).

The Engagement of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

By: Paul Pasch, Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Amman (Jordan)

The Amman office of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, founded in 1986, is accredited through a long-standing partnership with the Royal Scientific Society. Starting off as a project of scientific cooperation, today's activities of the Amman office are part of a regional project run by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in the Middle East, called "Promotion of Democracy".

Recent socio-economic and political developments in Jordan

- Within the three years of his re-gency, King Abdullah demonstrated a sense of political stability to his people. Though the young king possesses a completely different approach of ruling compared to his father, Abdullah's main efforts were directed towards domestic political affairs.
 - After the end of this transitional period, the movements towards modernization seem to win the struggle between the old elite and the enforcing younger generation of reformers as already indicated in the change of government in June 2000 from that of Abdul Ra'uf Al-Rawabdeh, a traditional and tribal figure, to that of Ali Abu Al-Ragheb, a liberal businessman. This is also reflected in the composition of the new Senate (Nov. 2001) where the King replaced the stalwarts of his father by his own loyalists.
 - Jordan faces many inner-political and economic obstacles: one of three Jordanians is living in poverty, the rate of unemployment exceeds 20%, the foreign debts go up to 90% of the gross domestic product (GDP), while the annual payments to release the foreign debts are up to 8.6% of the GDP. The income per capita rests in the average at 1645 \$US and the economic growth lies at around 3.3% and thus competes with the enormous growth of the population (3%).
 - As a solution for the economic obstacles Jordan faces, and in order to stimulate an economic growth out of a poor country that possesses only few resources, the king established an Economic Consultancy Council to promote economic sectors like information technologies, tourism, certain branches of the chemical and medical sector, as well as the service sector which was subject to privatization of telecommunication and state owned enterprises. Moreover, there are serious efforts to improve the educational system and to promote foreign direct investments to achieve an export orientated economic growth.
 - The establishment of the Economic Consultancy Council increased the engagement of young members of the private sector who were motivated to accommodate the requirements of globalization and modernization.
 - The energies invested by King Abdullah towards enhanced diplomacy have mainly been channeled towards redefining Jordan's Palestinian legacy and restoring political and economic relationship with Arab countries. Jordan also seeks to gain western financial support through the confirmation of the WTO-membership, EU-association agreement, a free-trade agreement with the USA and the continuous support of the Bretton Woods Institutions.
 - Within the three years of the young monarch's regime, King Abdullah restored Jordan's ties with Gulf states and advocated the lifting of UN sanctions on Iraq in international and regional fora.
- Jordan became the first Arab country to dispatch a Prime Minister to Iraq since crippling sanctions were imposed one decade ago. Furthermore, the young monarch has tried to develop a policy of rapprochement towards Syria as well as establishing a collegial working relation with Bashar Al Assad. Extending these efforts, King Abdullah did not preach normalization with Israel but nevertheless, even despite the impact of the Palestinian Al-Aqsa Intifada on Jordan's internal affairs, he maintains strong links with both his immediate neighbours to the west - the Palestinian Authority and Israel.
- Jordan's regional role was once more manifested with the launching of the Jordanian Egyptian Initiative, which jointly with the recommendations of the Mitchell Report aims at reducing the tension in the Middle East and calls for a continuous dialogue between the Palestinian Authority and Israel towards a final settlement.
 - Furthermore, besides the delicate balancing act Jordan sided with the international alliance in the combat against terrorism. By the end of November 2001 Jordan dispatched troops to Afghanistan to secure the distribution of humanitarian aid to the Afghan people.

Emphasis of Work Agenda

The Amman office of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation aims at providing a modest contribution towards the achievement of the priorities of Jordan's modernization and stabilization as proposed by King Abdullah:

- enhancing the democratization and modernization process of the Jordanian society as well as protecting the national Jordanian identity and the country's inner-security;
- improving the economy to reach international standards of the global economy in order to achieve a stable economic growth for the prosperity of all Jordanians;
- strengthening the regional position of Jordan and working towards a peaceful Middle East;

- promoting women empowerment in political, social and economic spheres as well as preparing the grounds for gender related policies.

Partners in Development

"International Cooperation is far too important to be left to governments alone." (Willy Brandt). The Friedrich Ebert Foundation sees its activities in Jordan as a contribution to:

- supporting the democratization process and strengthening of the civil society;
- improving general political, economic and social conditions;
- reinforcing free trade unions;
- endorsing independent media structures;
- facilitating regional and worldwide cooperation;
- gaining recognition for human rights and gender policies;
- promoting peace and understanding between people.

The Amman office of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation is cooperating with the Royal Scientific Society since 1986 in several scientific projects, mainly in the realm of economic spheres. Through this sustainable partnership, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation gained the respect of the Jordanian authorities as a trustworthy partner in development. Today the Amman office of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation is also cooperating with the following institutions:

Al-Urdun Al-Jadid Research Centre

A research centre that aims to achieve sustainable social, economic and political development in Jordan and the Arab world. The Centre achieves its goals through conducting studies on critical issues at the local and regional levels, initiating dialogue on topics of public concern, holding workshops, seminars and conferences as well as publishing research and studies and conducting training programmes.

Amman Centre for Peace and Development

A dialogue centre that aims at encouraging and providing a forum for face to face contact between the people of the Middle East, conducting research relevant to peace and stability in the region, promote peace education, regional cooperation and development.

Arab Archive Institute

A research and documentation centre, aims at carrying out studies and research on social development and democracy in the Arab countries with respect to international standards of individual's rights. The Institute organizes Jordan's Transparency Information Chapter as well as it is a consultant for international human rights organizations.

Centre for Defending Freedom of Journalists (CDFJ)

It provides legal advice to journalists victims of human rights violations, filing lawsuits on behalf of victim journalists; legally representing defendants or initiating litigation, monitoring and documenting information that concerns legislation and judicial rulings that address journalists and media issues as well as conducting research on related subjects. The CDJF also runs a free of charge Internet Café for Jordan's journalists.

Centre for Strategic Studies/University of Jordan

The Centre was established as an academic unit of the University of Jordan concerned with research in the fields of regional conflicts, international relations and security and has expanded to include research into democratization, political pluralism, the peace process, development, the economy and environment. The CSS is the only research center in Jordan to execute public opinion polls.

Institute of Diplomacy

It provides advanced higher education and training programmes for a

select group of qualified students, professionals and diplomats with emphasis on developing the professional skills required in the conduct of modern diplomacy. In addition, the Institute conducts and participates in research and study programmes.

Business and Professional Women Amman

The association was set to develop a comprehensive framework of structure to provide the necessary education, advocacy, networking, training, professional support and opportunity for the empowerment and active participation of women in the social, business and economic development of the country and to assure their rightful place in all decision making processes.

Jordanian German Business Council

The members of the JGBC commit themselves to work and lobby for better business environment and for close economic ties between Jordan and Germany. The JGBC identifies projects and activities whereby businessmen get a better idea of the economic business environment and investment opportunities in both Jordan and Germany.

Noor Al-Hussein Foundation

The Foundation initiates and supports national and international projects in the fields of integrated community development, education, culture, children's welfare, family health, women and gender equality and enterprise development.

Royal Scientific Society

The institution was established with the aim of conducting scientific and technological research and development work related to the development process in Jordan with special attention to industrial research and services. It also aims at disseminating awareness in the scientific and technological fields and providing specialized technical consultations and services to the public and private sectors.

World Affairs Council (WAC)

The WAC was established to encourage rational and positive debate of important Arab and international issues in the interest of public information and education. For the purposes of achieving its objectives, the Council publishes studies and periodicals, carries out research, holds public lectures and seminars, as well as it encourages and organizes the exchange of visits among individuals and groups involved in the areas of concern of the council in various countries.

Out of the foundation's commitment to enhance and develop the status of national trade unions and aiming to strengthen their role in civil society, the Amman office of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation embarked on cooperation with the General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions (GFJTU) and the MENA office of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) in Amman.

Furthermore the Friedrich Ebert Foundation started an intensive dialogue with the Jordanian Democ-

ocratic Party of the Left, which aims to gain membership to the Socialist International (SI).

The Amman office of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in close cooperation with the local partners is set to achieve its aims through the implementation of training programmes, seminars, workshops, conferences and lectures as well as applied scientific research and publications. ■

Outlines of a Promising Archaeological Project: The ash-Shudayfah Plateau North of Petra (Jordan)

By: Manfred Lindner, Naturhistorische Gesellschaft Nürnberg (Germany)

Introduction

To survey an extremely interesting archaeological site and not being in a position to undertake a final examination and excavation is frustrating. Usually the first discoverer or his/her organization owns a special claim of (scientific) possession, hoping to find an efficient team of specialists to continue or implement the project. If this is not possible, I think it is fair to leave such a claim to scientists who, of course with the permission of the Department of Antiquities, are able and willing to do the job.

The ash-Shudayfah plateau

The ash-Shudayfah plateau (short: Shudayfah YU 366 681, according to the 1:50 000 map of Jordan) was first spotted through binoculars ca. 1.5 km to the north from Umm Babayn, an Early Bronze Age, Nabataean-Roman, Bedouin site (Lindner; Genz 2000, 48). As found out by teams of the Naturhistorische Gesellschaft (NHG) Nürnberg, directed by the author in 1995 and 1997, there are two accesses to the Shudayfah plateau. The one from the Petra-Shobak road at ca. 1350 m is wearisome. The other ac-

cess is a built (probably ancient) donkey path from the northern foot of Baboul Ba'ja. The plateau is a sporn of the Jabal Halil.

An Iron II (Edomite) fortress

Near the western rim of the plateau at 1245 m, an Iron II (Edomite) fortress of 36.50 m x 33 m was identified by E.A. Knauf.

'Amarin Bedouins had built the lower part of a house to the north-east of its centre. The fortress and its surroundings were sherded but no excavation was performed. The pottery was collected, drawn and partly published (Lindner; Genz 2000, 47-85). H. Genz compared the finds with other Iron II sites in southern Jordan, and dated the Shudayfah pottery generally to the Iron Age. According to a theory advanced by E.A. Knauf (Lindner; Knauf 1997) that there existed a kind of cooperation between the Edomite mountain strongholds and the plateau settlements, Shudayfah might have been the plateau settlement corresponding to the mountain stronghold of Ba'ja III. But there is not enough arable land around the Shudayfah fortress to

provide corn for the mountain stronghold. In fact, it is a mountain fortress itself.

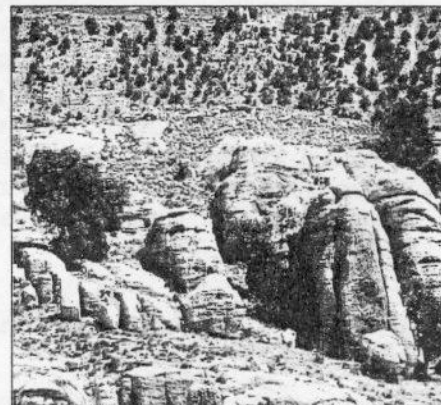


Fig. 1: The Iron II (Edomite) fortress

"Standing and tumbled stones"

Shudayfah impresses on first sight with a lot of complexes of standing and tumbled stones which might have been roughly worked originally but are now featureless or, like one specimen of 1.20 m height, mushroom-shaped due to extreme erosion by heat, frost, wind and intervention by herders and animals. Erosion was facilitated by the softness of the Ordovician white sandstone that, on the other hand,

erodes in a tabular form, and provided thereby easily the "standing stones". It is debatable if the localization and configuration of the stone complexes allow a general interpretation. Some specimens seem to stand in a row, others like an upright monolith of 1.65 m length and 1.20 m width or a horizontal monolith of 2.20 m length look quite different. None seem to be part of a defensive wall. At first regarded spontaneously as graves, surrounded by stone slabs and single cornerstones, it seemed that not all stone complexes could be interpreted that way. In U. Hübner's opinion, no such graves exist in the Iron II period or in the Early Bronze Age (pers. comm.). Meanwhile, after the excavation of houses surrounded by (less eroded) wall slabs and cornerstones on the Umm Saysaban plateau, also Shudayfah could have sported such structures. At Umm Saysaban four excavated 4 m x 5 m structures were explained by their contents as storage houses in the Arad house style (Lindner; Hübner; Genz in print). On Shudayfah houses might have supported people who lived temporarily in tents. Another explanation for the Shudayfah complexes is theoretically possible. As e.g. G. Philip (2001, 200) mentions dolmens at Early Bronze Age dwellings, nothing is certain, before some complexes will be carefully sounded and excavated, nothing of which has been done so far.

The Early Bronze Age pottery and other finds

Of course, the problem hinges on the EB pottery found all around the place, though on the surface not apt to localize any special subsites. Thus places like a rectangular 4 m x 6 m structure by the landmark of an old *Quercus calliprinos*, a kind of courtyard, a few tumuli, cornerstones perhaps of a 7 m x 8 m pen, or a heap of tumbled building stones on the plateau opposite Jebel Fidre with another Early Bronze Age "station", cannot clearly be identified by ceramic finds and should be sounded and/or excavated. Generally, the EB finds collected from the surface were dated

by H. Genz to the Early Bronze Age II, according to parallels from Arad III/II and Barqa el-Hetiye (Lindner; Genz 2000, 57).

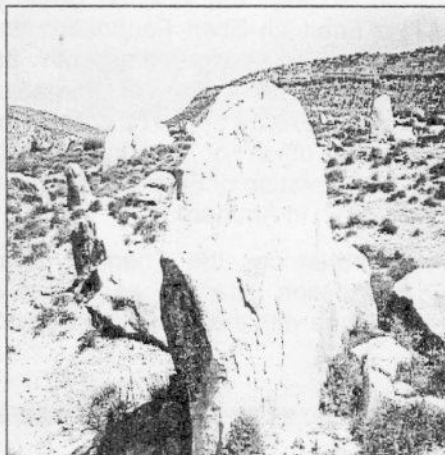


Fig. 2: "Standing and tumbled Stones"

Among other surface finds, there were perforated quartzite mace heads, used as hammers to hammer stone or as a weapon or as a sign of status or only as a stone ring for weighting a digging stick. They can be placed in the Early Bronze Age, according to parallels from Timna (Bourke 2001, 142f.). Tabular scrapers are well represented in the Bronze Age I-III according to H.G.K. Gebel, though being "distinctive tools but indistinctive chronological markers". The scrapers from Shudayfah were drawn and described by H.G.K. Gebel (2000, 63-65. 82-85). A large quern could not be dated.

The much scattered and shattered ceramic material taken from the ground by E.A. Knauf in 1 m x 1 m areas attests four periods of settling or other occupation: an Early Bronze, an Iron II (Edomite), a Nabataean-Roman and a Late Islamic period. Several rims out of Knauf's collection were additionally drawn. Three of them, collected on the way from the Petra-Shobak road, were Middle Bronze Age specimens from undiscovered settling near or rather below the above mentioned road (Fig. 3).

Petroglyphs

High quality petroglyphs of animals were discovered on the Shudayfah plateau. Unfortunately they cannot be dated. There is only the certainty that they are no recent Bedouin work (Lindner 2001, 278) examples of which were also found.

Summary

Short outlines for a promising archaeological project using preliminary results of two surveys of the Naturhistorische Gesellschaft (NHG) Nürnberg are given as an incentive to continue and implement the research on the Shudayfah plateau north of ancient Petra, revealing so far Early Bronze Age II, Iron II (Edomite), Nabataean-Roman and Late Islamic occupations since almost 5000 years.

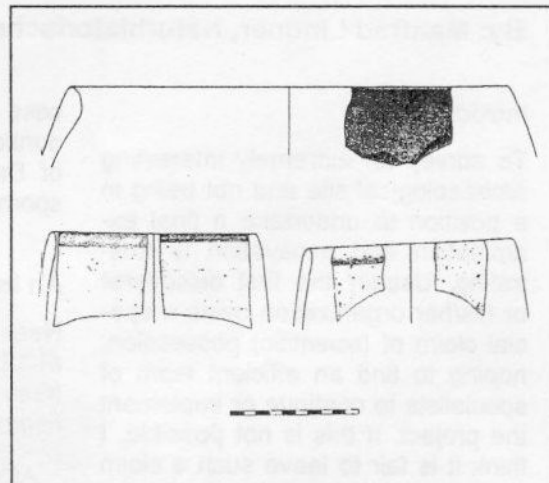


Fig. 3: New pottery finds

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to the Directors-General of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan and their local representatives. Members of my team were Prof. Dr. E.A. Knauf, Prof. Dr. U. Hübner, Baumeister-Ing. E. Gunsam, I. Künne, A. Schmid, E. Schreyer. Dakhlallah Qublan and his son Ismael were reliable guides and, more than that, thankfully accepted mentors. Dr. H. Genz has to be thanked for analyzing the pottery.

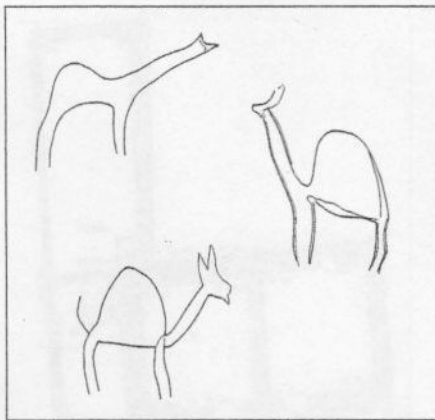


Fig. 4: High quality petroglyphs from Shudayfah

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A Newly Discovered Byzantine Laura Near Jordan River

By: Mohammed Waheeb, Department of Antiquities, Amman (Jordan)

The Jordanian Department of Antiquities team, working on the eastern side of the Jordan River at the site of Jesus' baptism under the direction of the author, has excavated a multi-room complex. The site, discovered over two years ago, was located 50 m east from the river and was surrounded by tamarisk trees from all sides. The structure is bordered by the Lissan marl cliffs with its caves to the east, by the Jordan River to the west and by the famous remains of John the Baptist church 100 m to the south.

The surface survey in 1999 revealed the presence of few Byzantine pottery sherds mixed with sherds of modern pottery. The team decided not to excavate the site at first, because its architecture and other artifacts such as pottery sherds suggested that it were relatively modern remains from the turn of the century, while piles of stones and sand on top of the structure were remains from recent Jordanian army activities.

The site was reexamined during

the 1999-2000 season of excavations. Several test trenches were conducted in different locations on and near the site, then more Byzantine pottery sherds and well cut ashlar were revealed. A systematic comprehensive excavation started at the site aiming to discover the lower remains and to understand the relations between the site and the Jordan River and the other Byzantine building remains discovered at the site of Jesus' baptism. The excavation has revealed two rooms from the 5th-6th century (Byzantine period) and two other rooms which were added later, probably during the Ottoman period:

Room No. 1

is located in the western section of the discovered structure. It is square shaped, measures 5.55 m x 6.10 m and was built of well cut dressed sand stone ashlar. The doorway, 1.00 m wide, was built in the southern wall.

Room No. 2

was built adjacent to room No. 1.

The western wall of this room which measures 0.75 m, probably added in a later period, served as a division wall between the two rooms. The square shaped room measures 5.55 m x 6.10 m. The walls of the room were built of well cut dressed ashlar of sand stone. The doorway is 1.00 m wide.

The two original connected rooms were reused in the Ottoman period. Two rectangular rooms were added to the eastern side of the structure during this period.

Room No. 3

measures 6.00 m x 3.30 m. It was built of local field stones and small pieces of broken sandstone ashlar. A small square structure of 1.85 m x 1.65 m was located in the north western corner of the room, probably used as a small storing place.

Room No. 4

measures 9.00 m x 4.90 m and was built of local field stones and small broken pieces of sand stone ashlar. A small square structure of 1.00 m x

1.20 m, located in the south western corner, was probably used as a fire place: Some charcoal pieces were found during the excavation of this place.

The later Ottoman rooms served perhaps as a part of the Ottoman security system in this region, since it was located near several strategic fords across the Jordan river.

The Byzantine rooms were rebuilt and expanded in the Ottoman era, using stones that were robbed out of the nearby Byzantine era church of John the Baptist. This church, known from pilgrims' accounts from the Byzantine and medieval periods, has been rediscovered and is being excavated by the author. Several black marble blocks from John the Baptist church were found reused in the entrance and walls of the two rooms. In addition to that some other fragments were found reused in the courses of the walls of the Ottoman building. This indicates a continuing destruction of John the Baptist church even during the Ottoman period and later by floods of the Jordan river.

One of the aims of excavating this site is to study possible relations of the original two rooms with the story of the life of St. Mary of Egypt. This link is based almost totally on the suggestion by the French scholar F.M. Abel from the turn of the century: either that she used the rooms herself, or that they were built after her death in the Byzantine era to commemorate the spot where she is thought to have lived and have been buried.

The local people who lived in the area during the period between 1930 and 1967 still call the two original rooms the "Palace of the Lady" (Qaser es-Sett). Due to the recovered architectural remains and other datable material, it is highly recommended to conclude that the site has been the Laura of St. Mary of Egypt, built during the Byzantine period and destroyed by earthquakes and floods of the Jordan river in the late Byzantine period. During the 19th century the site was rebuilt and used by local settlers. ■

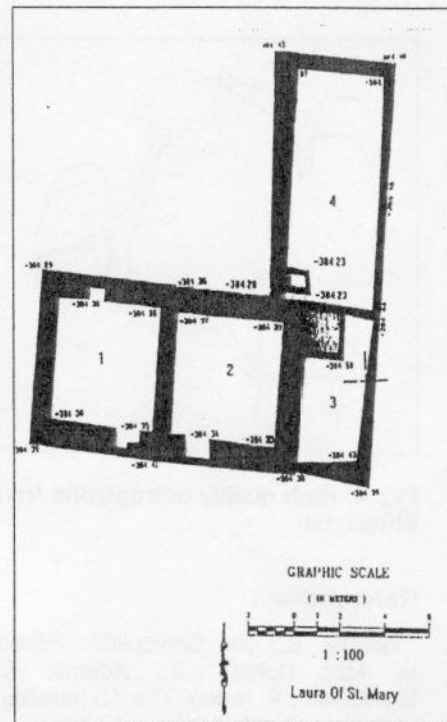


Fig. 1: Laura of St. Mary

The Region of Gadara/Umm Qeis Project.

Second part of the 2001-season: a test trench on Tell Zera'a

By: Karel Vriezen, Theological Faculty, University of Utrecht (Netherlands)

In continuation of the topographical, geoelectrical and archaeological survey of Tell Zera'a by a team of the Biblisch-Archäologisches Institut of the Kirchliche Hochschule Wuppertal, a first excavation was carried out by a team of the Theological Faculty of the University of Utrecht, from 21st October until 1st November 2001.

A test trench, measuring 4.50 m x 7.00 m, was excavated on the western edge of the tell's plateau to investigate the stratigraphy of the site.

Prior to the actual digging, it was supposed that the walls encircling the western part of the plateau and being visible on the surface might

be the remains of an ancient defence line. Therefore, the test trench was laid out as to make a cross section over the walls in order to study them. Then, it soon appeared that these walls were not the remains of a defense system of an ancient settlement, but that they had been built as terrace walls retaining the soil eroding from the tell's plateau. Two of these walls that had been visible on the surface could be dated in the Early Islamic Period as a terminus a quo.

The western one of these walls had been built on a fill deposited over a Byzantine layer. This layer consisted of a hard packed loamy floor, on which two tabuns were

found *in situ*. These tabuns were 0.76 m and 0.54 m in diameter and the wall of one of them still stood up to a height of 0.36 m.

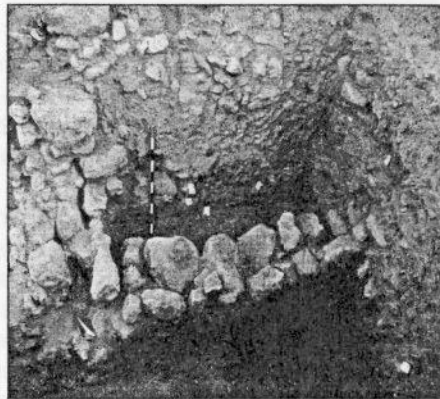


Fig. 1: Tell Zera'a: an Iron Age House wall, looking north-east

The eastern terrace wall was built as the successor of an older terrace wall. This earlier wall had been built on a fill containing only Iron Age pottery. Underneath the fill the remains of an E-W house wall was uncovered in a context of layers with exclusively Iron Age pottery finds. The wall was 0.80 m wide and it had partially been collapsed.

In the end of this trial excavation an Iron Age stratum and a Byzantine stratum could be defined

underneath a series of terrace walls. Of these, especially the stratigraphical definition of the Iron Age is of utmost importance for the regional archaeology of the Umm Qeis-area. A result most promising for the future excavations on Tell Zera'a.■

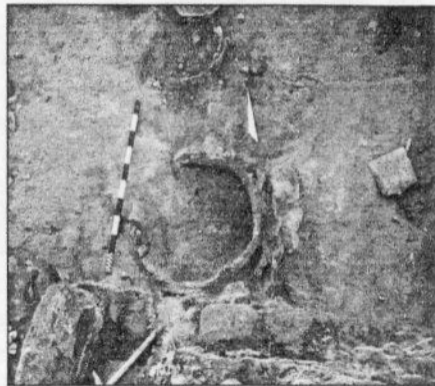


Fig. 2: Tell Zera'a: two Byzantine tabuns, looking north

A Nabataean Caravanserai at Rujm Taba

By: Benjamin J. Dolinka, Department of Archaeology, University of Liverpool (Great Britain)

Rujm Taba is located in the southern Wadi Araba, ca. 41.5 km north-east of Aqaba and 4 km south of the village of Rahma. The remains straddle the modern Dead Sea Highway ca. 1 km north of the Taba mudflats, to the southeast of a large sand-dune field (Fig. 1). Most of the archaeological site at Rujm Taba is located along the base of a rounded alluvial fan along the eastern escarpment of the Wadi Araba. The well-known landmark and important regional water source known as Ain Taba lies along the road ca. 3.5 km to the south. In antiquity, the site served as a way station along the Nabataean route that ran northward along the eastern escarpment of the Wadi Araba from Aila (modern Aqaba) to the southeastern coast of the Dead Sea.

Rujm Taba completely escaped the notice of the ancient Greek and Latin authors, who fail to mention it either directly or indirectly. The site remained essentially terra incognita until it was visited by Fritz Frank (1930s), Thomas Raikes (1970s), and Andrew M. Smith II (1990s). It should be noted, however, that these archaeological surveys all had a broader, more regional emphasis; therefore Rujm Taba received only cursory examination. In August 2001, the "Rujm Taba Archaeological Project" (RTAP) conducted a preliminary reconnais-

sance and survey of the site, which represented the first detailed investigation of Rujm Taba. As a preliminary measure to facilitate future work at the site, the team established a permanent site datum along the western side of the highway (36R UTMN 0705502 / UTME 3307308, elevation 75 m ASL, ± 3 m). The datum formed the origin for an infinitely expanding grid aligned on UTM North and corrected for magnetic declination. The main grid was divided into four quadrants, Fields A-D, and further subdivided into 5 m x 5 m squares, a size chosen to conform to any future excavation, which would be conducted on that module.

Among the three main archaeological components identified by the RTAP team at Rujm Taba was a large building (Structure A001) referred to by previous researchers as either a fortlet or caravanserai. Structure A001 (Fig. 2) is located 55 m west of the modern highway, between a small wadi and the dune field. According to a local informant, the structure is known as Bir Helwan and is located 150 m northwest of the modern well. A001 is a roughly square structure ca. 20 m x 20 m with at least four internal rooms. The building seems to have been constructed of the pink, grey and white granite, which is plentiful in the nearby alluvial fan. The build-

ing is preserved to an average height of at least 1.25 m above the desert floor, but in some places the extant architectural remains rise higher than 2 m. Crude wall lines and the remains of an internal corner were visible in the south-western portion of the structure, but attempts to clean the tops of the walls and establish precise wall lengths and widths were frustrated by the decomposition of the top course of masonry, which had become highly friable from weathering. Where a second course of stone was visible, it seemed to be much better preserved. Excavation will be required to define the architecture.

During the RTAP preliminary reconnaissance and survey, two blocks of thirty-six 5 m x 5 m squares were selected for intensive surface collection. The first encompassed all of Structure A001. The goal of intensive collection was to obtain a body of datable material, which would be sufficiently large to better understand the occupational history of the site. Preliminary assessment of the surface pottery collected from Structure A001 provides a tentative chronological sequence for the structure and reinforces its Nabataean origin. Of the sherds collected, the vast majority (74.5%) were of the distinct Nabataean Fine Painted and Unpainted Wares, ranging in date from

the early 1st through the mid-2nd centuries AD. Also present were fragments of imported Eastern Sigillata A, Nabataean cooking pots of contemporaneous date to the fine wares, and fragments of Nabataean unguentaria. Taken together, the surface evidence suggests continuous occupation of A001 during the first two centuries AD.

The architectural plan of Structure A001 exhibits all of the elements typical of a Nabataean caravanserai, especially when compared with similar structures on either side of the Wadi Araba valley. Two extensive field trips in the Negev and western Araba, conducted by the present writer during autumn 2000, provided a solid basis for comparative studies of the typical Nabataean caravanserai. The Nabataeans seemed to have a preference for caravanserais that were square (or nearly square) with a large, central courtyard surrounded by a series of rooms, measuring ca. 3 m x 3 m, situated along the interior of the outer walls. Nabataean caravanserais generally measured from about 20 to 40 square metres and were almost always located on level ground. They often offered amenities such as "bathtubs" and cooking installations (i.e. *tabūns*), such as the caravanserai at Sha'ar Ramon in the south-central Negev, and were large enough to accommodate groups of travellers with a relatively small caravan of camels. Of particular interest is that the Nabataean caravanserais on the western side of the Wadi Araba and in the Negev were all constructed during the 1st century AD, although they were often occupied after the Roman annexation of Nabataea in AD 106. Structure A001 fits all of the criteria for a Nabataean caravanserai: it has the right size, shape and layout; and surface pottery from the RTAP 2001 Survey and Reconnaissance strongly supports a date in the 1st century AD for its construction.

Structure A001 faces numerous threats from both human activity and its environmental setting. The construction of the modern Dead Sea Highway (ca. 1978) has significantly altered the landscape around

A001. A culvert installed where the highway begins its gentle curve to the northwest now channels a large volume of seasonal runoff directly towards the structure. In fact, the wadi created by this diversion of water has eaten into the soil at the southeastern corner of A001 to a depth of ca. 1.25 m below the desert floor. The most erosive portion of the wadi, where it turns 90° to run south along the western side of the highway (Fig. 2), is now only ca. 10 m from the corner of the structure and will inevitably damage A001 in the near future. Further investigation at Rujm Taba will assess the feasibility of erecting a retaining wall or wadi diversion along the southeastern section of A001, where the structure is most threatened.

A large pit, ca. 1.50 m deep, now filling with windblown sand, suggests that there has been considerable disturbance in the recent past. Ironically, the best-preserved and least-robbed portion of the structure, along the eastern side, is also that which is most threatened by the wadi.

Finally, encroaching sand dunes located to the west and northwest of A001 pose yet another threat to the structure. Since the Geological Map for the 3049 IV Wadi Darba Map Sheet was created in 1986, these dunes appear to have moved between 60 m and 100 m east; if the dunes maintain this eastward movement, they will eventually cover Structure A001.

Two seasons of excavation are planned for the RTAP. The first is scheduled for the summer of 2002, and will focus upon Structure A001 – a high-priority salvage excavation. The main objective for RTAP is to record as much of Rujm Taba as possible, before the resource is lost completely. In order to preserve the site for posterity, RTAP plans to work with the Jordanian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities to investigate the cultural tourism potential of this highly accessible site. Located along the busy Dead Sea Highway connecting Amman to Aqaba, Rujm Taba is well sited to provide visitors with a glimpse of life at an ancient Nabataean road station in southern Jordan.

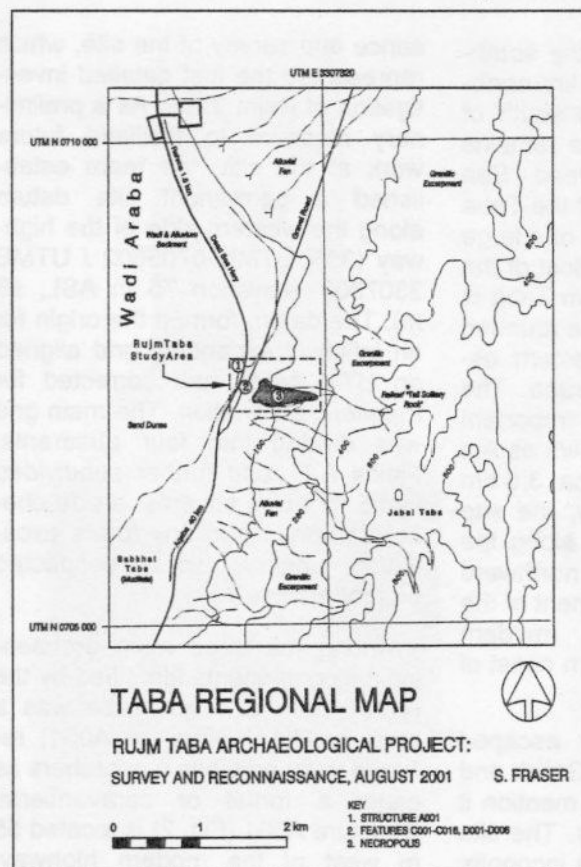


Fig. 1: Map showing the RTAP 2001 survey area and the regional environment surrounding Rujm Taba

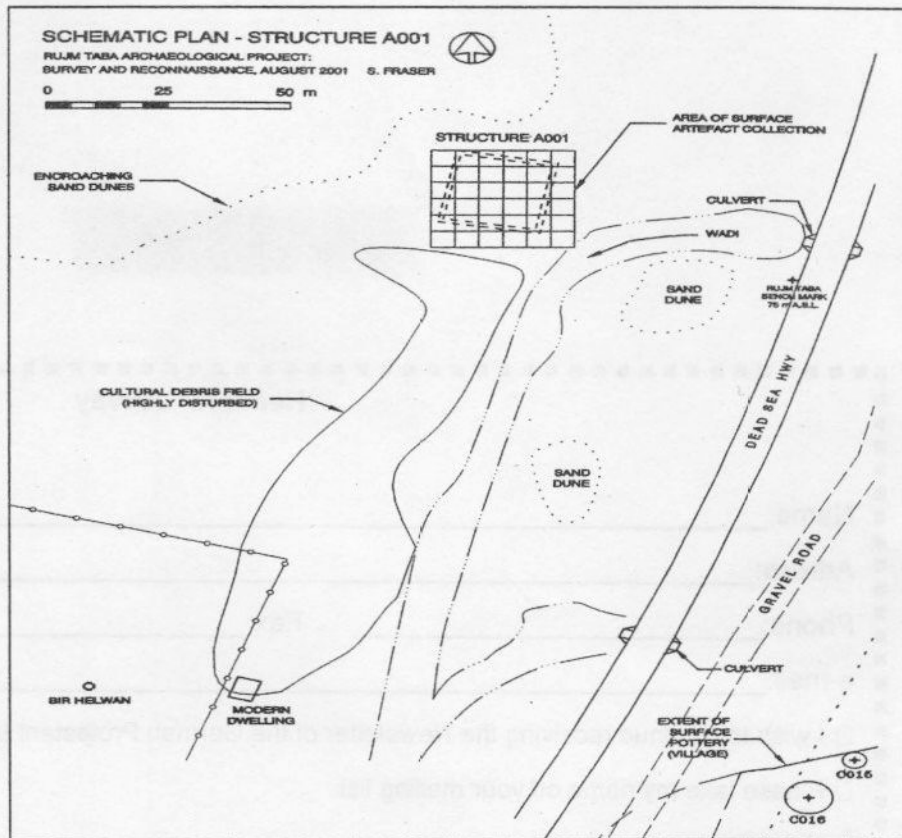
Human activity has also had a substantial impact on A001. Vehicle tracks were clearly visible across the structure, suggesting stone robbing and/or bulldozing of the inte-

Acknowledgements:

The RTAP 2001 team was: Benjamin J. Dolinka (University of Liverpool), Project Director; Khalil Hamdan (Safi Office), Department of Antiquities Representative; R. James Cook (University of Victoria), Assistant Director; and Sean C. Fraser (Heritage Foundation of

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Fig. 2: Plan showing the western side of the Dead Sea Highway and Structure A001, the Nabataean caravanse-
rai.



Farewell to a Great Friend of Jordanian Archaeology. An Obituary for Dr. Jum´a Kareem

By: Zeidan Kafafi, Yarmouk University Irbid (Jordan) and Roland Lamprichs, German Protestant Institute of Archaeology, Amman (Jordan)

Dr. Jum´a Kareem who devoted a considerable part of his life to the history and archaeology of Jordan passed away at the age of 52 on 1st February 2002. His family lost a caring father and husband. The academic community lost an excellent expert, colleague and friend.

Dr. Jum´a Kareem received his B.A. from the University of Jordan in Amman and his M.A. from Yarmouk University in Irbid. He finished his studies with a Ph.D. (Dr. phil.) from the Freie Universität (FU) Berlin, Germany. After he finished his Ph.D. studies he joined the Department of Archaeology at Mu´tah University.

Dr. Kareem was well known as a very hard and sincere researcher.

He joined and conducted several

archaeological field works in Jordan.

Jum´a, we will miss you ! ■



Fig. 1: Jum´a Kareem (2nd row 2nd from right) and the excavation team "Abu Thawwab" (1985)

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We would like to express our gratitude to the following institutions and persons who made donations to our library:

German Archaeological Institute (DAI), Berlin (Germany); German Archaeological Institute, Damascus Branch (Syria); American Center of Oriental Research (ACOR), Amman (Jordan); The Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology (IAA), Yarmouk University, Irbid (Jordan); Friends of Archaeology, Amman (Jordan); University of Jordan, Amman (Jordan); Prof. Dr. R. Dittmann, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität, Münster (Germany); Prof. Dr. B. Salje, Vorderasiatisches Museum (VAM), Berlin (Germany); Dr. L. Martin, Vorderasiatisches Museum (VAM), Berlin (Germany); Dr. Dr. M. Lindner, Naturhistorische Gesellschaft Nürnberg (Germany); Dr. K. Vriezen, University of Utrecht (Netherlands).

We would like to extend our gratitude to the Gertrud-und-Alexander-Böhlig-Stiftung, who subsidized our library in 2001 and 2002.