

(Conference cont.)

time). The Madaba Plains Project-‘Umayri paper, “Excavation, Restoration and Presentation of Tall al-‘Umayri (Madaba Plains Project 1998-2000),” covered highlights from excavations over the past two seasons: the EB dolmen in Field K, the MB tower(?), the LB building, the early Iron I remains in Fields A and B, the late Iron I cultic remains from Field H, the limited late Iron II artifacts and architecture, and the Hellenistic farmstead in Field L. Dr. Fawwaz al-Kraysheh, Director-General of the Department of Antiquities and Dr. Ghazi Bisheh, former Director-General of the Department, both gave papers. Others from the Department made presentations as well.

Other participants from Jordan included Dr. Raouf Abujaber, owner of part of Tall al-Umayri and Rami Khouri. As a historian, Dr. Abujaber gave a paper on agricultural life in Jordan during the 19th century. There were a number of former MPP members in the crowd including Tim Harrison, Chang-ho Ji, Harold Mare, Ghattas Sayej, and Bert DeVries. In all, there were 117 conference participants and 91 presenters representing the countries of Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Jordan, Korea, Netherlands, Palestine, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the USA. At the end of the conference, Dr. Kraysheh officially welcomed participants to Amman in 2004 for the next one. Washington, D.C. is the tentative location for the 2007 conference.

As the host of the conference, the University of Sydney and did a marvelous job arranging venues both on and off campus. Participants stayed dormitory style at Wesley College. The sessions were held in the Education Building, five-minutes walk away, and in the Old Main Quadrangle, a grand place with the Great Hall for the opening ceremonies. Participants were bused off for several events, including a museum reception, a cruise around Sydney Harbour, and a visit to the Sydney Zoo. (Douglass R. Clark)



Hoffmeier at Andrews

James Hoffmeier, Prof. of OT and Near Eastern History and Archaeology from Trinity International University, spoke for the Horn Archaeological Lectureship on Oct. 15, 2001. Hoffmeier is the director of the North Sinai Archaeological Project and the Tell el-Borg excavations. His lecture was entitled: The Excavations at Tell el-Borg, Sinai: New Light on the Route of the Exodus.

According to the biblical exodus (Ex 13:20-14:2), the Israelites traveled from Pi-Rameses (Tel al-Dab’a) to Succoth (Tell el-Maskhuta) on the east end of the Wadi Tumilat until they reached Etham. Then, they turned and camped by the sea before Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea opposite Baal Zephon.

Three names on the route of the exodus are unidentified (Migdol, Pi Hahiroth and Baal-Zephon). Hoffmeier believes that Tell el-Borg may be one of them.

In the Late Bronze Age (LB), Egypt was protected by a series of forts along the Mediterranean coast. The first three forts were called Tjaru, the Mansion of the Lion and Migdol, respectively. Gardiner associated Tjaru with Tell el-Abu Sefeh, the Mansion of the Lion with Tel Ahmar and Migdol with Tell el-Heir but recent excavations date these sites from the Ptolemaic period or later.

Dr. Hoffmeier has confirmed that Migdol was one first three forts that protected Egypt’s northern border near the east end of the Delta during the New Kingdom. Egyptian documents also mention Migdol as the last Egyptian fort that can be reached by water.

In order to locate Migdol, Hoffmeier and coastal Geologist Daniel Stanley used declassified satellite photos of the Delta. They were able to determine the coastal outline of the LB Delta region. They also discovered that a branch of the Nile passed between the Tell el-Borg fort and the supporting town.

Hebua 1 and Hebua 2 were also located within the LB Delta. Dr. Hoffmeier



Dr. James Hoffmeier

believes that either Hebua 1 and Hebua 2 are Tjaru, Tell el-Borg is the Mansion of the Lion and Migdol is uncertain or that Hebua 1 is Tjaru, Hebua 2 is the Mansion of the Lion and el-Borg is Migdol.

Excavations at Tell el-Borg have revealed many artifacts from the Armarna and Ramside periods. A deep moat with an enigmatic stepped structure was lined with fired bricks. Most bricks from the Armarna period were unfired. This led many Egyptian archaeologists to conclude that brick firing technology was not available at that time. Hoffmeier believes that these fired bricks were necessary to prevent moisture from destroying the moat. Unfired bricks used for domestic architecture would not be able to withstand the Mediterranean climate without crumbling. In addition, several stamped jar handles with the cartouches of Smenkhare and Tutankhamun and inscriptions from Tuthmosis III were found.

A stone block was found of a deity with the name “strong bull” behind it. Though many Egyptian king names included the words “strong bull,” K. A. Kitchen has linked the iconography with similar examples at Tell el-Maskhuta and the period of Rameses II. Another inscription on a name plate bears the name of “Hi,” the weapons bearer and a military officer in the Great Division of Amun. This confirms a possible Ramside military presence at Tell el-Borg and suggests that this fort was one of several that protected the narrow land route from Canaan to Egypt. (Robert D. Bates)