

Late Iron II/Persian period. The most significant find this season was an ostrakon found in a fill in the northeast part of the building. It contained five lines of text. A preliminary reading suggests that it is a list of Ammonite family names dating to the late 7th/early-6th century BC. This is slightly earlier than the ceramic evidence found in the building, suggesting earlier occupational phases existed in this area that have not yet been reached.

In Field E, on the east side of the tell, work continued around the mudbrick wall exposed last season (2005). Stone wall fragments of another wall were located to the west of the mudbrick wall. The bases of these walls were not reached, so definite dates could not be determined for either wall. However, the fills associated with them contained pottery from the Late Iron II/Persian period as well as the Late Iron Age II.

Two new fields (G and H) were opened on the south side of the tell, in the hope of locating a city wall. The locations of the fields were selected on the basis of some large hewn stones protruding through the surface of the tell in a line that looked as if they might be part of a wall. Excavation in Field H uncovered three large stones in a line that appeared to be flat flagstones normally used for a road or approach ramp. Unfortunately, they were isolated and their exact function is unknown at this time. Ceramics found in association with these stones date to the Late Iron Age II. Several ballista (sling stones) were found near them.

In Field G, on the southeast corner of the tell, a 3.0 m stretch of a large stone wall was excavated in Square G2. It is possible that this wall is part of a tower for the city's fortification system, although more excavation is needed to verify this supposition. Although at least four courses of the wall were exposed, the base of the wall was not reached, leaving its exact date uncertain. Fills associated with the wall date to Late Iron II/Persian, Late Iron Age II and Iron Age I. A curious structure found along the north face of the "tower" wall was a plastered chan-

nel that seemed to drain water to the outside of the wall. It seems to cut into the earlier wall system, and thus dates to a later phase (Iron II/Persian period?). A wall with some plaster on it was found in Square G4, just north of the water channel, and is probably associated with it. A second wall fragment was found farther north. It also dates to the Late Iron II/Persian period. (Randall W. Younker)



## Ibrahim Lecture

On Nov. 13, 2006, Moawiyah Ibrahim, professor and Dean of Arts at Al-Isra Private University in Amman, Jordan presented a lecture entitled *Recent Archaeological Discoveries in Yemen*. During the 1980s and again in 2005, Dr. Ibrahim was invited to coordinate and serve as chief archaeologist on international projects in Yemen.

The country of Yemen is located in the southwestern corner of the Arabian Peninsula, which is bordered by the Red Sea, Indian Ocean, Arabian/Persian Gulf, and the Arabian Desert on the north. The earliest settlement in the area dates to the 2nd millennium BC and is located just north of the city of Aden. Well-made pottery indicates connections with East Africa (Sudan and Eritrea).

The largest south Arabian kingdom during the 1st millennium BC was Saba<sup>6</sup>, whose capital was Marib. Perhaps its most sophisticated structure was the Marib Dam (8th century BC). The dam was rebuilt only 25 years ago. About 15 km away is the Al-Jufaiha Dam, which was established during the 12th or 11th century BC. These two dams give evidence of Sabaeen skill with water systems. Near the mound of old Marib, there is a temple from the Sabaeen period that was later converted to a mosque. Inscriptions from the 7th and 6th centuries BC can be found on its walls. The 5th century BC Bar<sup>7</sup>an Temple, recently restored after excavations and now open



Moawiyah Ibrahim.

to tourists, is also of interest. The stone for building the temple came from the nearby quarries of Balaq and would have been rolled down to the building area. At Balaq there is an inscription regarding the rules of quarry use that dates to the 4th century BC.

Dr. Ibrahim's most recent focus in Yemen is the Temple of Mahram Bilqis, or Temple of the Moon (Ilmaqah), also known as the Awam Temple. Its oval shape has parallels in Mesopotamia and Palestine, but not in Arabia until now.

The remains consist of a peristyle hall, eight columns in front of the holy of holies, and a number of annexes around the temple. A large number of monumental South Arabic inscriptions dating to the 1st century AD can be found in the peristyle hall. The burial ground and mausoleum are to the south of the Temple. Some of the decorative elements found at the Temple include a bronze statue of Barib-il, a life-size bronze horse, and a portico overlooking a pool.

The Temple had five Iron Age occupational phases (ca. 8th-4th centuries BC). A 5th century BC inscription predates the paved floor. There was also an *in situ* 5th century BC bronze plaque at the base of a staircase that contains the names of two kings, one from 8th century

BC and the other from the 6th century BC. An alabaster head was found in a later enclosure wall that consisted of 20 courses of stones, 10 m high. A number of bronze figures were found, as well as a Middle Sabaean Inscription.

On the one hand late 4th-early 5th century AD pottery found in the walls of the annex suggest that it was not used as a temple after that time. However, many animal bones were found at a sacrificial area nearby, which indicate that it may have been used until the coming of Islam. The results of excavations of the Oval Temple have been published in several volumes by the Publications of the American Foundation for the Study of Man (AFSM).

There are a number of Tower Tombs near Marib that date from the 3rd-2nd millenniums BC that are related to those in Bahrain, but the corresponding settlements from that era have not been found.

Other sites of interest in Yemen include the site of Baraqish (ancient Yathul), the capital of the Kingdom of Ma'in, ca. 400 BC, where a Minaean temple has recently been restored by the Italians. At Timnah, the capital of the kingdom of Qataban, there are several monumental South Arabic inscriptions at the gate of the city. At the palace of Shabwa, the capital of Hadhramawt, the Jabal 'Uqlah Inscriptions, which were dedicatory inscriptions of the kings of Hadhramawt, have been found. Shabwa was not built near a main road but near salt mines, which still exist. Some of the oldest skyscrapers known can be found at the 16th century AD city of Shibam. They are made of mud brick and reach heights of 13 stories. (Carrie Rhodes)

