

Systems); and David Graf (Arabia I and II). In addition, Rhonda Root chaired a poster session and Carolyn Rivers a session on Outreach Education.

Presentations by members of *MPP* included: Ghattas Sayej (Lithic Intra-assembly Variability); Larry Herr and Douglas Clark (Tall al-‘Umayri [Madaba Plains Project]: Report on the 2002 Season); Douglas Clark (Iron I Domestic Housing [especially the “four-room” House] in Jordan); Bethany Walker (Reassessing the Islamic Qusur at Tall Hisban); Øystein LaBianca and Lynda Carroll (Settlement and Land Use During the Late Islamic Period at Tall Hisban); Chang-Ho Ji (The Iron Age Temple at Khirbat ‘Ataruz); Michele Daviau (In the Shadow of a Giant: Egyptian Influence in Transjordan); Michael Hasel (The “Foes of Shasu” and the Origin of Israel); Gary Christopherson (Topographic Prominence in the Archaeological Landscape on the Madaba Plain, Jordan); Timothy Harrison (The Tell Tayinat Archaeological project, 1999-2002); and Gloria London (Women Potters and Craft Specialization in a Pre-Market Economy).

Lawrence T. Geraty, the new president of *ASOR*, chaired a number of committee meetings as well as presiding at the *ASOR* Membership Meeting, and the *MPP* Staff Consultation; Larry Herr chaired committee meetings connected

with the Committee on Publications, while Bethany Walker chaired the Consultation of Dig Directors in Jordan and Carolyn Rivers chaired the Committee on Outreach Education.

At the Near East Archaeological Society meetings David Merling, president of *NEAS*, chaired board and business sessions and Paul Ray, the editor of the *Near East Archaeological Society Bulletin*, presented a paper entitled *Kemosh and Moabite Religion*. (Paul J. Ray, Jr.)



Van der Steen

On Monday, November 18, 2002, Eveline J. van der Steen presented a lecture entitled *Traveling with the Bedouin: A Journey into Iron Age Transjordan* for the Horn Archaeological Museum Lectureship. Dr. van der Steen has excavated at Deir ‘Alla and Tell Abu Sarbat, and was field director for the Khirbet Balamah excavations. Currently she is an Urban archaeologist in Delft, Netherlands.

Dr. van der Steen believes that there are many correlations between the tribal kingdoms of the bedouin in Transjordan during the 19th century and the tribal cultures of Transjordan in the Iron Age.

During the 19th century, the whole area of present-day Syria, Jordan, Palestine, Israel and Lebanon was inhabited by Arab bedouin. They were nomads who lived in cultivated areas in spring and summer and retreated to the desert in winter. Among the main tribes in Transjordan were the Anazah in the NW, the Beni-Sakhr in the Central region and the Huweitat in the SW.

In addition, there were several smaller tribes who were subjected to the main tribes. These tribes were mainly pastoralists who paid for protection from the larger tribes.

Initially the Ottoman empire was unsuccessful in controlling this region and focused their attention on protecting the Hajj route. The government paid protection money (*Khawa*), but the pilgrims were regularly attacked by various bedouin tribes.

Bedouin society developed their own economy and their own set of rules. This economy included gateway-market towns like Salt, Nablus and Kerak which functioned semi-independently but paid protection money to the main tribes in the region. Trade routes were established between the main towns. The tribes cultivated the fields around them and their produce was traded with other tribes. This economic system was completely controlled by the large bedouin tribes, who built fortress-cities to protect the trade routes and served as a markets.

Using the the model of tribal kingdoms proposed by Ø. Labianca and R. Younker, van der Steen believes society in Transjordan during the Late Iron Age was largely a tribal society much like the bedouin of the 19th century.

According to van der Steen, Moab and Ammon functioned like a tribal society. Since different professions were possible within a tribal unit, tribe members could diversify into areas other than herding sheep and goats. International and local trade centers were utilized by large and small tribal groups. Heter-archical structures allowed for several power centers. These existed alongside each other



Paul Ray and Keith Schoville at *NEAS* meetings.

and were based on sociopolitical or economic resources, so that religious centers and international and local trade could all function independently.

Tribal affiliations were based on a flexible line of claimed ancestry. Tribes could affiliate with others or change their affiliation depending on circumstances. In addition, territorial affiliations were flexible and allowed for fluid settlement patterns that could change in response to climate, politics or trade. This made the forming and changing of affiliations very easy.

Eventually, this flexibility also facilitated the rise of kings in a supratribal hierarchy without extinguishing the tribal order. The association of specific tribes with their territories was maintained even

in changed political environments.

Dr. van der Steen suggests that the Tribal Kingdom model fits the situation described in the Mesha inscription. The kingdom of Moab was a tribal society that was united into a supertribal hierarchy. Mesha succeeded his father as king and strived to make Moab into a real kingdom by building roads, cisterns and palaces; expressing a responsibility to all of Moab. The towns that Mesha rebuilt, such as Ba'al Maon, Beth Bamot, Bezer and Qarhoh, functioned as semi-independent tribal power centers in the distribution of international and local trade. Each town with its smaller tribal groups owed its allegiance to Mesha and probably claimed some type of common ancestry with the larger Dibonite tribe. (Robert D. Bates)



Eveline J. van der Steen.

