

The final chapter offers a detailed account of the evidence from the far western Mediterranean and Atlantic coastal regions. Joan Ramon Torres outlines the problems plaguing the field: a need for a more expansive chronological view of the shape repertoires; a dependence on Aegean chronological markers; a lack of integration and in-depth ceramic studies of all of the available evidence from sites; and poor definition of ware types, pottery shapes, and their surface treatments. Current schemes devised for Los Toscanos, Huelvá, and Cerro del Villar are viewed critically (pp. 213–16). All fall short of a comprehensive typology applicable to the early Phoenician pottery in the west (p. 216). Nor are pottery workshops well known. Five Mediterranean horizons covering the eighth to sixth centuries B.C. (M1–M5) and another pertaining to the Atlantic region (A1—the repertoire of the latter region being even less clearly understood) are defined and illustrated in representative figures.

The essays in this volume illustrate how widely scholars must cast their nets in order to understand the scope and nature of the Phoenician expansion into the central and western Mediterranean. Encapsulated in the chapters are clear statements about the range of the earliest evidence for a Levantine presence in specific regions. Red Slipped wares continue to represent a strong Phoenician presence. Wine consumption as well as the vessels used in this practice emerge as a cultural trend influencing trade in the western settlements. Overall this book will be an important addition to any academic library.

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***Excavations at Tall Jawa, Jordan, Volume 4: The Early Islamic House*, by P. M. Michèle Daviau. Culture and History of the Ancient Near East, Volume 11.4. Leiden: Brill, 2010. xxxii + 540 pp., 158 figures, 49 tables, 1 DVD. Cloth. \$230.00.**

Central Transjordan in the Early Islamic period has received steady attention from archaeologists, who have filled in much-needed information on its cities, palaces, waystations (*quṣūr*), and Christian churches. Surveys and excavations at 'Amman, Jarash, Hisban, Madaba, Qaṣr al-Ḥallabāt,

and Umm al-Rasas have yielded new evidence on Umayyad settlement, early Islamic urbanism, and Islamic-Christian cultural exchange. Nonetheless, how rural communities fared during and after the Islamic conquests in this region and in relation to these more prominent sites is not well reflected in the archaeological evidence. What is assumed is that the countryside remained predominantly Christian. Yet the intricate interplay of Christian-Islamic transition, not always a linear or predetermined process, has remained elusive, complicated by such factors as the presence of the Arab Christian Ghassānid tribes who gradually converted. Departing from the oft-discussed religious and ethnic transitions of the landscape, the material culture of transition presents us with another set of questions entirely. The publication of *Excavations at Tall Jawa, Jordan, Volume 4: The Early Islamic House* is, therefore, an important contribution that adds not only to the growing body of evidence for central Transjordan, but also to our understanding of non-urban Islamic archaeology and the seventh- to eighth-century transition.

A small team under the direction of Michèle Daviau excavated the Early Islamic house (Building 600) as part of an investigation of the larger Iron Age site of Tall Jawa. The mound had been reused in later periods with semi-preserved collapsed buildings. The excavators dedicated five seasons (from 1991 to 1995) to the excavation of Building 600, assumed to be a Byzantine house with an earlier Iron Age II occupation and located in the center of the mound. The publication, although delayed, is presented systematically and is largely evidence driven, with chapters by Daviau detailing the methodology, architecture and stratigraphy, architectural features, and ceramic typology. Ceramic lamps and small finds were co-studied by Daviau, Martin Beckman, and N. J. Johnson. Separate and individual contributions were made for reports on the mosaic floors (Debra Foran), painted plaster, inscribed lamps, and other vessels (Johnson), human burials (Margaret A. Judd), glass vessels and lamps (Heather A. Siemens), and a coin hoard (Alan Walmsley). Finally, a section on how the excavation was carried out is presented as a multimedia information system (David Hemsworth) with an attached database of the project on DVD.

The team conducted the excavations following the architecture and areas that corresponded to the ten rooms in the two-story building. Chapter 3 presents the architecture and post-Iron Age II stratigraphy (although the latter was not always clear, given the nature of the site) for the rooms of the building. Each room is presented individually and clearly, with finds listed for the loci for each room. The house was small, measuring about 232 m², and was occupied during the Early Islamic period in the second half of the seventh century or first half of the eighth century and was abandoned likely by the ninth century. Occupation in the Byzantine period in the sixth/early seventh centuries is uncertain, although there was some "strong evidence" of it in material culture remains in and around the structure (although there is no statistical representation of these data, which may have been instructive). The argument by the ex-

cavators that the site was abandoned prior to the late eighth century is more convincing, especially given the absence of several important Abbasid-period ceramics. Scattered pieces including glass bangles from surface contexts point to temporary occupants between the Abbasid and modern periods.¹ As such, it is mainly a single-period rural Umayyad-period house on the outskirts of 'Amman and presents a rare case of giving important contextualized information from this unevenly understood period which has until now been dominated largely by the monumental *quṣūr* or desert castles and the conspicuous formerly Byzantine cities. The individual and well-studied artifactual and architectural analyses of the Umayyad material culture will be supremely valuable for the archaeological record of the central Transjordan region, particularly as many previously assumed late seventh-/early eighth-century ceramic indicators have been redated to the Abbasid period, thus at times creating a gap in Transitional/Umayyad material culture.

While the publication is evidence driven and comprehensive in its treatment of artifact categories and in its systematic and clear presentation of parallels, the author's conclusions containing interpretations and hypotheses—an area only the excavators are qualified to discuss—are too modest. There are three interrelated areas of inquiry that both raised and merited a fuller discussion: the role of Tall Jawa in the region; the nature and function of domestic architecture, associated material culture, and demography in this period; and the thorny issue of the religious and ethnic identity of the house's occupants.

How the site fits into a regional model is important to our understanding of rural settlement during the Transitional and Early Islamic periods. Daviau's final chapter begins by mentioning that other survey evidence demonstrates heaviest settlement in central Jordan during Late Roman/Byzantine times, a trend seen around the Syro-Palestinian Near East. Yet, during the Umayyad occupation and further in the Abbasid period, the number of sites, based on survey evidence, declined. This indicates an uneven settlement pattern where certain regions continued or were abandoned throughout the Early Islamic period, amending an assertion of absolute continuity from the Byzantine period. It also introduces a more complex trend in the overall landscape—namely, that while the more prominent cities and *quṣūr* and even church complexes continue in the Umayyad period, rural settlements are less visible in the landscape, either because they were too few and far between or because they were situated within the vicinity of more prominent buildings. Did the residents of Tall Jawa survive during the Transitional/Umayyad periods because of their proximity to urban 'Amman or other *quṣūr*? How can our knowledge of the site's abandonment by the Abbasid period and its temporary post-occupational history

inform on larger shifts in settlement decline and shift from central Jordan toward Iraq?

One avenue of research only briefly mentioned in the interpretation was a study on demography and the function and arrangement of the space of a house as it related to other examples from studies of domestic architecture. Unfortunately, this was noted only in passing (pp. 86–87). Estimations of how many people lived in the house based on rooms and room sizes would have been a valuable exercise, especially in hypothesizing site catchment area. The intriguing presence of a possible family burial within the house, well described and narrated by Judd to include three adult males, one adult female, two children, and one infant, may provide a rare clue to a more specific demographic investigation, assuming these were not later occupants. Useful to studies of domestic architecture, a neglected field, are comparative tables of average thicknesses and sizes of walls, doors, and rooms. Given that the house has the potential to represent a discrete building occupied over a century or century and a half, not reoccupied, and abandoned (and likely affected by earthquake), a study of vessels (including minimum vessel numbers, percentages and distributions of cooking wares, grain storage, liquid storage, and fine wares) linked with the rooms would have extended the analysis of ceramic functionality furnished by Daviau. Chapter 3 provides the basis for such a study, with tables of find summaries for each room, which would have undoubtedly been hampered by the state of preservation. The upper floor seems to have been largely for domestic use and food preparation, as demonstrated by Rooms 602, 603, and 605, all of which have evidence for ovens or hearths, and by Room 609, whose contents included a mortar, pounder, knife blade, and two millstones. Room 606 had no utilitarian ceramic vessels but mainly lamps. According to Daviau, the lower-story Room 606 may have been a male space, while the upper-story rooms may have been female space. Interestingly, the excavators posit that the entrance would have been on the upper story, from Room 608. This may challenge assumed notions of public versus private space in Near Eastern and Islamic households while upholding notions of prescribed gendered roles. In a Muslim household, guests would presumably have been led directly downstairs, presenting an interesting and inverted arrangement. Yet, pre-Islamic and non-Muslim houses also may have separated public and private space.² Further, the excavators posit that the Islamic house borrows from a Roman-Byzantine architectural type and likely had a late Byzantine occupation, possibly of sedentary Christian Arabs. One thing that is noticeably absent is good evidence of keeping animals within the house, or of food production, agricultural implements, or craft workshops. These activities may have been relegated to other structures on the mound.

¹ In the catalog, the three glass bangle fragments are "probably associated with the late Byzantine-early Umayyad occupation of the tell." However, these objects are also well known from later Islamic/Medieval excavations and continued to be worn by early Modern Bedouin.

² For example, a second- to third-century Roman home excavated at Apheq revealed a courtyard and guest rooms with private living quarters in the back of the house and a hidden entrance not facing the street (Hirschfeld 1995: 91).

Further discussion of the nature and function of Building 600 at Tall Jawa would challenge ideas about domestic architecture, particularly archaeologically recognizable "Islamic" features such as those mentioned by Insoll in *The Archaeology of Islam* which may, in fact, be extensions of traditional notions of basic privacy and pragmatic arrangement of space seen in other cultures.

A recurring theme from the excavations and one common to the archaeology of the Byzantine–Islamic transition is that of religious identity. There is an inherent danger in assuming the religion of the residents, given that there are no clear methodologies for investigating or deliberating on a "Christian" or "Islamic" house, contrary to what studies like Insoll's may show (Insoll 1999: 60–92). Excavations at Jawa revealed crosses incised on a window stone, a lintel with three crosses in relief, a bronze cross object, plaster with fragments of Greek lettering that do not seem to be plastered over, and fragments of an ostrich egg, strongly associated with both Christian and Islamic religious symbolism, from a "hall" in the center of the lower story. Just east, within a room designated for special functions (being the only room with a decorated mosaic carpet and having painted plaster walls), there were lamps with Arabic inscriptions. This room was designated as a "reception area," but Foran, in her cohesive chapter on the mosaics of the house, suggests that the eastern orientation of the room indicates that it may possibly have had a religious function by a Christian community. Upstairs, in Room 605 excavators found an ostracoon with an Arabic text (and one bearing the *bas-malah*), Arabic graffiti on plaster in Rooms 606 and 607, and inscribed ostrich egg shells. Insoll suggests that these were Islamic artifacts, yet the examples at Jawa show both Christian and Muslim motifs (Insoll 1999: 42). The difficulty with the Muslim and Christian remains at Jawa is that it is not known if, for example, the crosses and Greek items were reused or recycled or part of an earlier phase, whose presence itself is unaffirmed. Or, perhaps Arabic-speaking Christians were living there and perhaps influenced by Islamic culture. While Foran indicates that the lack of figural representation may indicate an Islamic date, it is important to note that in the seventh and early eighth centuries, figures do appear in Islamic art. Conversely, Christian residents may have adopted Islamic religious aesthetics and refrained from figural depiction. The excavators posit that the occupants may have been Ghassānids who were Christian Arabs that gradually converted to Islam. The strong parallels in all object categories to the site of Qaṣr Ḥallabāt and other Ghassānid settlements may support this claim further. If this is true, then we have evidence, however ambiguous and rudimentary, for not only an archaeology of transition but an archaeology of conversion.

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Proceedings of the 6th International Congress of the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East, 5 May–10 May 2009, >>Sapienza<<, Università di Roma, edited by Paolo Matthiae, Frances Pinnock, Lorenzo Nigro, and Nicolò Marchetti. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010. 3 vols. Vol. 1: XXVII + 1026 pp.; Vol. 2: XXV + 768 pp.; Vol. 3: XXV + 538 pp. Cloth. €294.00. [Distributed in North America by Eisenbrauns]

This three-volume set represents the published proceedings of the Sixth International Congress of the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East (6ICAANE) held at Sapienza University of Rome on May 5 through May 10, 2008 (not 2009, as misstated in the conference proceedings' title). The only unifying theme of this set is a loose archaeological focus on a broad geographic definition of the Near East. This variability of geographic, temporal, and methodological techniques means that this set offers something of value for all archaeologists working in the region. Volume 1 contains the proceedings of three thematic sessions; Volume 2 presents the reports of recent archaeological fieldwork in the Near East; and Volume 3 consists of the publications of the Islamic archaeology and general poster sessions, plus a section dealing with the ceremonial precinct of Canaanite Hazor.

Volume 1 is divided into three sections, each devoted to a particular theme. The first thematic section is entitled "Near Eastern Archaeology in the Past, Present and Future. Archaeological Heritage and the Archaeologist's Identity." This section may seem a little disjointed from a glance at the table of contents; however, the papers published in this section clearly emphasize the dialectical relationship between our knowledge of the past and our lived experiences in the present. Papers by Fernando Escribano Martín, Maria Gabriella Micale, and Brigitte Pedde outline the role that Near Eastern archaeology has played in architectural design. These papers highlight Edward Said's (1979) assertion that the West identifies itself in relation to the "Other," in this case through an incorporation of Mesopotamian design elements in architecture. While the discussion of cultural heritage and the role archaeologists play as stewards of the past in the 21st century may not be as progressive as approaches outlined elsewhere (Pollock and Bernbeck 2005; McGuire 2008; Meskell 2005; Starzmann 2008), the willingness to engage in the discussion should be held in a positive light. Davide Nadali's paper on archaeology as a "science of

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