Meetings with the Past: Treasures for the Future

An exhibition on European – Jordanian Cooperation in the field of Archaeology in Jordan
Modern Survey Methods in the "Gadara Region Project"

MODERN SURVEY strategies are relevant for a detailed planning of larger archaeological projects. The Gadara Region Project started with a large survey in the Wadi Al Arab in northern Jordan in 2001, the main focus being Tell Zara’a the most important settlement site in the Wadi. Different methods were used during the remote sensing and photogrammetry. The distribution of the collected pottery showed that the Islamic settlement was concentrated at the centre of the Tell, the Roman/Byzantine period to the north and the remains of the earlier periods at the edges of the surveyed area, as elsewhere; they are covered by remains of a later date. The geophysical work revealed walls, which on excavation, proved to date to the Early and Late Bronze Age. Remote Sensing and photogrammetry were used and are very precise time saving methods of recording archaeological features in excavated areas. In Remote sensing a camera is attached to a helium balloon and photographs taken from a height of up to 135m, giving an impressive overview of the excavated area and its surroundings.

Photogrammetry was used to reduce the time consuming drawing of archaeological features in the field by the precise photographic recording of detailed areas. The progress of the excavation could therefore be recorded very quickly and sites sketches produced with great accuracy.

Dr Jutta Haser & Prof. Dr Dieter Vieweger,
German Protestant Institute, Jordan
Biblical Archaeological Institute Wuppertal, Germany

Neolithic Regional Study Projects In The Greater Petra Area – Basta and Ba’ja

A study of the Neolithic region in the Greater Petra Area, focusing on Basta and Ba’ja. The project aimed at reconstructing the environmental, land use and settlement patterns of that region. The sites of Basta and Ba’ja were explored, prospect ions focusing on botanical, mineral resource and geomorphologic questions, and a mapping of the present-day environmental features. Sites dated to about 7500 or 8000 bc were the camping places of migratory groups of hunters who harvested wild cereals and legumes. Permanent stone-built villages date to 7500-6000 bc, when sheep or goats, cereals and legumes were domesticated. The unsustainable intensity of grazing led to soil degradation, abandonment of the villages, and adoption of mobile herding.

Basta is a late Pre-Pottery Neolithic B (7500-6000 bc) site. Buildings are in planned units of several rooms. Objects found were of flint, ground stoneware, and sun-dried clay, with carvings in marble and limestone, and beads of various materials. Lists are given of wild and domesticated animal and vegetable foodstuffs and of tree species. Human bones showed various identified pathological defects.

Ba’ja dates to the same period and there are various hypotheses about its unusual shel-