

PREFACE

This volume, *Tell Abu al-Kharaz III: The Iron Age*, is the third in a series of three. The first volume published was *Tell Abu al-Kharaz II: The Middle and Late Bronze Ages* (FISCHER 2006a) and the second was *Tell Abu al-Kharaz I: The Early Bronze Age* (FISCHER 2008). Another related published volume which should be mentioned in this context is *The Chronology of the Jordan Valley during the Middle and Late Bronze Ages: Pella, Tell Abu al-Kharaz, and Tell Deir ʿAlla* (FISCHER 2006b).

The general information in the “Introduction” to *Volumes I and II* is equally applicable to this volume. Nevertheless, some information will be repeated in the corresponding chapter of this volume in order to facilitate the understanding of the characteristics of the site and the excavations without consulting one of the previously published volumes. This information covers the topography, surveys, the possible Biblical identity, aims of the project, excavation and recording techniques, nomenclature and legends, various teams, and previously published reports and special studies on which much of this publication is based. However, *Volumes I and II* should be consulted in order to gain access to specialists’ studies on copper and bronze objects, and additional information on the climate, flora and fauna, which in addition to analyses of Bronze Age material by means of AAS also include material from the Iron Age.

It should be highlighted that the present volume is not a complete final report on the Iron Age occupation of Tell Abu al-Kharaz. A number of special studies are in preparation and there are additional topics which will be dealt with in the future. Amongst these are additional osteological and botanical investigations, and petrographic, pottery production and provenance studies. These will appear in the form of supplementary publications. Again, I have felt that the inclusion of these not yet finished studies would delay the publication of the other material and have therefore proceeded with the present volume although their absence may attract some criticism. However, I find it more important to provide access to the material from Tell Abu al-Kharaz by the archaeological community as soon as the major part of the Iron Age studies is completed.

In the Preface of the previous volumes I have emphasized the difficulty of meeting the expectations of all readers as far as the description of the find material is concerned. It is unavoidable that some may argue that the present report is generally too detailed; others, who have a special interest in specific topics, may argue that it is not detailed enough. I have, however, tried to keep the report balanced in order to provide maximum information within the financial constraints, which have had a serious effect on the – already quite substantial – extent of the present publication. One example is the photographic record: although this volume contains more than a hundred photographs, these represent only a small selection of the tens of thousands of photographic documentations (including films) which were taken over the years.

Several surveyors and draughtspersons have provided plans, sections and object drawings over a period of 24 years. It was my intention to keep this documentation as uniform as possible by giving the same instructions to all those responsible for producing them. However, it turned out impossible to fully standardize the plans, sections and object drawings, because every draughtsperson has an individual style. This has resulted in some variation in the design of the drawings produced over this long period.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank again all those people who contributed to the successful execution of the project. I am very much indebted to them. Amongst the people who supported *The Swedish Jordan Expedition* were R.H. Prince Raad Bin Zeid and Princess Majda Raad and their family. My deepest appreciation goes to them for their genuine interest in the excavations and their strong backing and encouragement over the years. Amongst others who strongly supported the project are the various Directors General of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan: Dr. Adnan Hadidi, Dr. Ghazi Bisheh, Dr. Safwan Tell, Dr. Fawwaz Al-Khreyshah and Dr. Ziad Al-Saad. The latter was the first Director General to provide a much needed guard for the protection of the site. For this he deserves particular thanks. The support of the Directors General included the loan of vehicles, personal and financial assistance in the early

years of the expedition, and a smooth bureaucracy which is unparalleled anywhere in the Near East and a token of genuine Jordanian hospitality. I am also very much indebted to H.E. the former Swedish Ambassador in Jordan, Lars Lönnback, who initiated the Swedish excavations in Jordan; the late Professor em. Paul Åström, my good friend and former teacher, who supported the project with advice and whose intervention resulted in additional funding from the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities; Professor em. Basil Hennessy, the former director of the Australian Expedition to Pella, and Dr. Stephen Bourke, the present director of the Australian excavations at Pella, who together made it possible to use the dig house at Pella.

Amongst others who facilitated the project is the staff of the Swedish embassy in Amman including the Swedish ambassadors (in chronological order) H.E. Christian Bausch, Agneta Bohman, Klas Gierow and Charlotta Sparre. Many thanks also go to the personnel of the foreign archaeological institutes in Amman: the American Center of Oriental Research (ACOR), the British Institute at Amman for Archaeology and History (BIAAH) and the Protestant Institute of Archaeology, Research Unit of the German Archaeological Institute, Amman.

The Yarmouk University in Irbid supported our project in many ways, for instance with logistics and personnel. Professor Zeidan Kafafi, whose interest in our work facilitated the renting of the Deir ʿAlla Dig House in 1995 and who gave frequent invitations to give lectures at Yarmouk University, and Professor Ziad Al-Saad, who showed genuine hospitality during our visit to Yarmouk University over the years, should be thanked in particular.

I would like to express my great gratitude to the expedition's architects and draughtspersons, Mr. Elias Markou from Nicosia, Cyprus, between 1989 and 1993, and Mr. Muwafaq Al-Bataineh from Yarmouk University in Irbid, from 1995 to 2012. The latter is still assisting me in the excavations of the *New Swedish Cyprus Expedition at Hala Sultan Tekke*. Muwafaq provided most of the plans, sections, and object drawings of this volume. He also produced the computerized reconstructions of several structures. He should be thanked especially for his accurate work. Others who contributed their drawing skills were Teresa Bürge, Rainer Feldbacher, Lamia Khoury, Nawal Hawarri and Richard Holmgren; the latter assisted in producing plans and sections during the 1994 season of excavation. Rainer Feldbacher scanned a number of plans and sections of this volume for which I am grateful.

My sincere thanks go to Teresa Bürge, recipient of a DOC Fellowship of the Austrian Academy of Sciences at the Institute for Oriental and European Archaeology (OREA), Department for Egypt and the Levant. I wish to thank her for her arduous and time-consuming work on the digitalization of the plans, sections and object drawings, and the production of additional figures including the tricky compilation of Phases IX–XV in Figure 451. She spent much time in correcting the digitalized material for the publication, to check the tables, to establish the pottery statistics, to calculate the vessel volumes and in proof reading including the check of references and cross-references. In addition, she participated in the report on the stratigraphy of Area 9 East, the description of the finds, the interpretation of the remains (see Chapter 2) and the listing of parallels (see Chapter 5). For all her devoted work over the years, which made it possible to publish this volume without further delay, I am much obliged. The manuscript has been checked from a linguistic aspect by Bernard Vowles, whom I thank for his help and suggestions, and his genuine interest in archaeology in general. I would also like to thank Professor Jean-Paul Thalmann, the excavator of Tell Arqa in Lebanon, for providing the program which helped to measure the volumes of various vessel types. I am also grateful to Dr. David Reese for his helpfulness to classify some of the molluscs.

Another person to whom I am very grateful is Mr. Hikmat Ta'ani, who has worked with me for 23 years. Our collaboration started in 1989 when Hikmat became the representative of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan in connection with *The Swedish Jordan Expedition's* excavations at Tell Abu al-Kharaz and, later, Tell ʿAin ʿAbda (in 1995). He joined the expedition as the Department's representative and also participated in every single season after his early retirement. Hikmat, who is beyond any doubt one of Jordan's most experienced field archaeologists, also attended to most of the logistical matters, the employment of the labourers and their salaries and all the necessary contacts with the local people and authorities - the latter supported by Muwafaq. I feel honoured to have Hikmat and Muwafaq as my collaborators and friends. Hikmat and Muwafaq are also still assisting me in the project at Hala Sultan Tekke in connection with the *New Swedish Cyprus Expedition* at Hala Sultan Tekke.

Financial support over the years was thankfully received from many different sources, which are specified below. There are two persons whose efforts in raising the necessary funding should be particularly mentioned: the first is Professor em. Carl-Gustaf Styre-

nus, the former director of the Museum of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Antiquities, who very kindly acted as an intermediary in my contacts with BITS (now part of Sida), the Swedish Government Agency for International Technical and Economic Cooperation. BITS provided the major funds for the expedition during 1989–1996, which is hereby gratefully acknowledged. The second is my tutor and friend, the late Professor em. Paul Åström, whose intervention resulted in the necessary funding from the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities during the entire duration of the project and especially after the BITS-funded period of the project, i.e. during the years 1997 and 1998. In order to study the Iron Age occupation of the site the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities continued to support the expedition generously after Paul's premature death in 2008, i.e. from 2008 to 2012. Professor Manfred Bietak (via SCIEM 2000) provided most welcome financial support for radiocarbon dating at the VERA-laboratory, University of Vienna, for which I am most grateful. I am also thankful to Professor Eva Maria Wild who undertook the radiocarbon analyses without delay.

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Over a period of almost a quarter of a century numerous colleagues have given me the benefit of their opinion on the excavated material. Considerations of space prevent me from naming them all but I wish to express here my sincere thanks to everybody who has contributed with any opinion to this volume. However, I would like to thank some colleagues in specific: Dr. Stephen Bourke who forwarded parallels from the nearby Pella, Dr. Francisco J. Núñez Calvo who forwarded his most valuable opinion on the Phoenician-related material, Dr. Stefano Anastasio who advised on the Assyrian-related material, and Professor em. Amihai Mazar who provided much information concerning Beth-Shean and Rehov.

Last but not least, I wish to thank all the participants in the *Swedish Jordan Expedition*, who came from all over the world and who are listed in the Preface under the each individual season, for their excellent and self-sacrificing work, accomplished under sometimes difficult conditions, which greatly contributed to the successful execution of the project.

Last but not least – this had been said before but it cannot be repeated often enough: I would like to thank my understanding family. Without the kind support of my family this volume would have been published in half the time!

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