

# ACOR Newsletter

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## Jabal Hamrat Fidan

During July and August, 2000, the University of California, San Diego, the University of Bristol and the Department of Antiquities of Jordan completed Phase I (1997 to 2000) of field research in the Jabal Hamrat Fidan (JHF) region of southern Jordan. Located at the 'gateway' to the copper ore rich Faynan district, the JHF project focuses on the role of early ore procurement and metallurgy on the evolution of societies from the Neolithic to the Iron Age. The 2000 season, recently completed, had three primary goals; a) completion of excavations in the Khirbet Hamra Ifdan (KHI) Early Bronze (EB) III metal manufactory; b) botanical, geophysical and geomorphological surveys in the JHF; c) processing of data from both the 1999 and 2000 season including the complete archiving of the material; and d) preparation of the sites excavated in the JHF for local visitation and eco-tourism.

The 2000 excavations, directed by T.E. Levy and R.B. Adams, at KHI aimed at trying to identify domestic structures linked to the inhabitants of the EB III site. Previous excavations demonstrated the widespread nature of EB metal working activities at the site with nearly 50 rooms and courtyards linked to this specialization. By opening and additional 11 squares of 5 x 5 m each adjacent to the 1999 excavation, domestic units were located. In addition, information regarding the recycling of metal during the EB III came to light. All artifact and architectural data was collected using GPS technology adapted to standard EDM survey equipment.



A botanical survey focused on identifying the main landscape and vegetation units in the JHF; a total of 9 major units were defined and mapped. In addition, new plant types never recorded in this part of Jordan were identified. Substantial work was also carried out on the identification of paleo-springs that would have been used in the JHF from the Neolithic through the iron Age.

The geophysical survey focused on the mapping of the closest mining complex to KHI situated at Umm Tha'hor, using an Electro magnetic induction (EMI) tool, a series of mine shafts and galleries were identified.

A geomorphological survey was made along the Wadi Fidan for a distance of 7 km. The aim of the survey was to identify changing landscapes in the Wadi Fidan portion of the JHF from the Paleolithic through the Iron Age. A series of ancient terraces were identified, and the data is now being modeled using GIS. This data will be instrumental for analyzing human/and relationships in the JHF 'deep-time' study of ancient metallurgy and social change.

During the excavation substantial resources and time were devoted to processing: a) the lithic data from the 1999 PPNB excavations; b) the human remains from the 1997 excavations at the iron Age cemetery of WFD40; c) the archaeozoological remains from both the PPNB site of WFD 1 and the EB II-IV site of KHI; f) the archaeometallurgical



remains from both the 1999 and 2000 seasons at KHI; g) digital photography of the 2000 artifacts; h) digital survey and mapping data as well as the excavation GIS data input and analyses.

In accordance to the JHF project's commitment to preserving and presenting the sites excavated since 1997 to the public, M. Najjar directed the construction of trails and presentation walls at four major sites excavated by our team. These sites include the PPNB village of WFD 1, the EB I metal workers village at WFD 4, the EB II to IV copper metal manufactory at KHI, and the Iron cemetery at WFD 40. To facilitate visitation at these sites, large signs in Arabic and English were placed at each site. The signs provide a brief explanation of the significance of each site.

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