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BOOK REVIEW

Review of Neely, M, Clark, G, & Michèle Daviau, P M (eds.). 2017. *Walking through Jordan. Essays in Honour of Burton MacDonald*

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Neeley, M, Clark, G, & Michèle Daviau, P M (eds.) 2017. *Walking through Jordan. Essays in Honour of Burton MacDonald*. Sheffield; Bristol, Equinox Publishing. 405 pages (Hardbound). £90. ISBN 978-1-78179-283-4

This collection of nineteen essays aims to honour the legacy of Jordan's most distinguished survey archaeologist, Professor Burton MacDonald (b. 1939). Trained in Canada as a Biblical scholar, MacDonald's five major regional surveys of West-Central Jordan between 1979 and 2012 meant a significant departure from earlier surveys of the region. Early archaeological surveys in the Levant date back to the early years of the nineteenth century (e.g. Burckhardt 1822) which, given the limitations of the time, concentrated on locating high visibility sites but were unable to date them. The first relatively systematic surveys took place in the 1920s and 1930s, when William Albright (1924) and Nelson Glueck (1934) respectively developed ceramic chronologies for dating Levantine sites and documented, through the first extensive surveys, numerous sites believed to be associated with events in the Bible. With the advent of the New Archaeology in the 1960s and 1970s and the success of regional survey projects in Mesopotamia (e.g. Adams 1965; Hole et al. 1969), archaeologists began to incorporate a regional perspective in their research agendas, identifying sites likely to be important for subsequent excavation as well as providing inventories of sites that allowed archaeologists to begin to address questions of regional scope, such as shifting settlement patterns (Marks and Freidel 1977) or seasonal land use related to transhumance (Henry 1995). It is in this context that MacDonald initiated his first survey in the Wadi Hasa (MacDonald 1988), which would be followed by further surveys in the Southern Ghor and Northeast 'Arabah

(MacDonald 1992), the Tafila to Busayra region (MacDonald et al. 2004), Ayl to Ras an-Naqb (MacDonald et al. 2012) and Shammakh to Ayl (MacDonald et al. 2016). As opposed to previous surveys, MacDonald's were not tied to ongoing or planned excavations but, in spite of his interest in the Iron Age and Early Christian period, intended to produce thorough records of human occupation in the areas under investigation from the Lower Palaeolithic to the end of the Ottoman Empire (1918), and he encouraged others to use the data and to expand upon them by means of further surveys and excavations linked to their own particular specialisms. Thus, MacDonald's surveys, which altogether recorded over 2400 sites, laid the foundations of survey research in Jordan. Unfortunately, these data remain largely unexamined due, to a large extent, to a failure to adopt problem-oriented conceptual frameworks and to take advantage of new methodologies (Neely et al. 2017: 8-9). This book brings together a wide range of scholars who aim precisely to build on MacDonald's initial survey work.

The volume is structured thematically into three sections. The first section (chapters 2 to 7), brings together six essays dealing with archaeology of the time of the Bible. Three of these (Edwards, Chadwick and Daviau) explore the Iron Age site of Khirbat al-Mudayna ath-Thamad in northern Moab, and its surrounding area from the point of view of material culture, mortuary archaeology and craft production. A more regional approach is taken, respectively, by Kafafi and Ferguson, who review the archaeological and textual evidence of the lesser known northern regions of Jordan and reassess Nelson Glueck's concept of the 'Madaba Line'. Finally, Fiema presents the results of the excavations at Jabal Harun and its economic role in the wider Petra region.

The second section of the book (chapters 8 to 15) deals with archaeological survey: recent archaeological surveys in the Khirbat Iskandar region, the Bab edh-Dhra', the Kerak Plateau, the Northern Negev, the Southern Ghors and Northeast Arabah, the Central Arabah, and the Tall Ma'an, and Barqa/Faynan regions (Richard, Klassen, Smith II, Foran, Adams et al.), a reassessment of the surveys by MacDonald in the Wadi Hasa (Banning) and Glueck's pioneer studies of Eastern Palestine (van der Steen) and analysis of ceramic data derived from MacDonald's surveys in the Highlands of Southern Jordan (Herr).

The final section of the volume revolves around Neolithic and Palaeolithic Archaeology (chapters 16 to 19). Peterson examines Pre-Pottery Neolithic mortuary practices, subsistence, architecture, lithic technology and site geomorphology at the site of Khirbat Hamman, first identified by MacDonald's Wadi Hasa Survey. An overview of the Late Natufian archaeological material and geomorphological context of the TBAS 212 site, in the Wadi Qusayr, discovered in the course of MacDonald's Tafila-Busayra Archaeological survey, is provided by Neely and Brett Hill, whereas Olszewski et al. present the archaeological materials and function of the Middle Epipalaeolithic site of Tor at-Tareeq, also recorded as part of MacDonald's Wadi Hasa survey. Finally, Clark assesses the impact of MacDonald's surveys on the development of Palaeolithic archaeology in Jordan.

Walking through Jordan brings together a large and varied number of topics related to prehistoric Jordanian archaeology, the common denominator of all of them being that they build on the pioneer survey work carried out by Burton MacDonald over almost forty years. It is precisely the breadth of the scope of these essays that makes it difficult to organise them thematically. The editors have attempted to overcome this problem by distributing the chapters into two chronological sections (Archaeology of the Bible and Neolithic and Palaeolithic archaeology) and a thematic section (new archaeological surveys building on MacDonald's). This solution does bring some order to the chapters, albeit there is little in common between them. The essays by Kafafi, Banning and Clark aim to synthesise questions related to Early Iron Age Archaeology in Jordan, the current state of survey research in Jordan and the impact of MacDonald's surveys on our knowledge of the Stone Age in the region, but they fail to take into account the contributions of the other scholars in their respective sections. In this regard, a final editorial chapter which attempts to make a general assessment of how the information in the papers in this volume progresses beyond MacDonald's surveys and impact on our knowledge of Jordanian archaeology, how they contribute to overcome the traditional shortcomings of survey research that were highlighted in the introductory chapter, and what the possible avenues for future research are, would have been beneficial. A second criticism is the decision to place the chapters dealing with archaeological survey between the 'Archaeology of the Bible' and the 'Neolithic and Palaeolithic Archaeology' sections, thus interrupting the chronological progression of the essays. Further, the choice of

the heading 'Archaeology of the Bible' for the first section seems inaccurate, as none of the papers included, except for Kafafi's synthesis of the archaeology of North Jordan, takes heed of the Biblical account and its potential connections with archaeology. A more neutral term such as 'Iron Age Archaeology' or even 'Archaeology during the Biblical period' would have avoided this problem.

Overall, this is an indispensable contribution to the study of survey archaeology in Jordan. It points out the centrality of survey for the progress of archaeological research and shows how Burton MacDonald's work set the basis for much of what we know about Jordanian archaeology and for current research in this region, as can be seen in this collection of essays based on his work.

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