

“MESHA, THE *MISHOR*, AND IRON AGE MADABA”

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**Timothy P. Harrison
Oriental Institute
1155 E. 58th Street
Chicago, IL, 60637
harrison@midway.uchicago.edu**

ABSTRACT

Although the textual and inscriptional evidence seem to suggest extensive land use and settlement activity on the Madaba Plain during the 10th through 8th centuries, the archaeological record generally has been interpreted to reflect a period of limited settlement, with flourishing sedentary activity associated with the era of Assyrian and Babylonian hegemony, or the Late Iron II period. The recently launched Tell Madaba excavations present an opportunity to reassess this view from the perspective of a community that, according to the documentary sources, figured prominently in the development of Iron Age society in the central highland region. This paper will examine the archaeological and documentary evidence concerning Madaba, their implications for an understanding of the history of the region, and directions for future research.