

“THE 1998 AND 1999 SEASONS OF THE TELL MADABA ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT”

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ABSTRACT

The Tell Madaba Archaeological Project (TMAP) represents part of an ongoing multidisciplinary regional research effort that is investigating the range of adaptive strategies and social institutions developed by early urban communities in the semi-arid Highlands of central Jordan. The 1998 and 1999 field seasons were devoted to excavations in Field B on the western slope of the tell acropolis. The specific goals of this phase of the project are to (1) map and record the substantial architectural remains preserved on this part of the site, (2) systematically assemble quantifiable collections of botanical, faunal, ceramic, and lithic materials for each of the principal phases of occupation represented, (3) conduct the preliminary processing and laboratory analysis of the material evidence recovered, and (4) integrate the architectural and artifact records in a GIS-formatted relational database that will permit detailed regional analysis. By the end of the 1998 season, excavations had succeeded in uncovering a five-phase stratified sequence that spanned four broad cultural horizons tentatively dated to the Late Ottoman (Late 19th Century and later), Early Roman/Nabatean (1st Century B.C.E. to 1st Century C.E.), Late Hellenistic (2nd-1st Centuries B.C.E.), and Iron IIB/C (9/8th-7/6th Centuries B.C.E.) periods, as well as evidence that this cultural sequence extends back to at least the Early Bronze Age. The 1999 season will continue the excavations begun in 1998. This paper will present the results of these two seasons, and will explore their implications for the broader research objectives of the project.