

Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology - 2013-2014

(www.ngsba.org)

Dr. David Ilan, director

The NGSBA currently employs two full-time archaeologists (Dr. David Ilan and Dr. Yifat Thareani), one part-time researcher and administrator (Levana Zias) and one part-time illustrator (Noga Zeevi). Other functions are now farmed out on a contractual basis, when needed. Below is a brief summary of our activities for the past academic year.

- **Tel Dan publication.** This is, once again, the main focus of our work, occupying the majority of our time and energy. The *Dan IV* and *Dan V* volumes have been rescheduled for publication by the end of the current year. *Dan IV* (the Early Iron Age - David Ilan) will be the largest volume we have ever published. *Dan V* (The Middle Bronze Age fortifications and Mudbrick Gate) will be the last volume written (in part) by Avraham Biran. *Dan VII* (the Iron Age II domestic contexts) is currently in preparation by Yifat Thareani, with an anticipated publication date of 2015. Work on *Dan VII* is financed by a \$25,000, 3-year grant, awarded by the White-Levy Publication Program of Harvard University (this is the last year). Levana Zias continues preparing the Hellenistic and Roman levels for publication (Possibly as *Dan VIII*). She has made some startling new discoveries about the Hellenistic period temple, which it now seems bears a remarkable similarity to the Samaritan Temple on Mt. Gerizim.
- **Conservation work at Tel Dan.** Last year we received a grant of \$35,000 to expedite a small conservation project of an early Iron Age sanctuary and the recycling metallurgy installations at Tel Dan. This grant was made by the Friends of Heritage Conservation group in Los Angeles (www.fohp.org). Our partner in the project is the Israel National Parks Authority. Unfortunately, this project has not yet entered the execution phase, due various timing and approval issues concerning our restoration architect. We hope to make this happen this year. Further restoration work was carried out on the Middle Bronze Age gate and the Iron Age fortifications. New handicapped access paths and seating were inaugurated at the National Park of Tel Dan.
- **Tel Dan excavation.** No excavations were carried out this year in order to devote time to publication. We plan to be in the field again next year (2015). In the meantime we are talking to potential academic partners to share the financing and publication responsibilities.
- **Community excavation in Korazim** (cosponsored with the Israel National Parks Authority). This small excavation of a courtyard house at the Talmudic period site of Korazim, just north of the Sea of Galilee was directed by Achia Hacoen and executed by the Korazim Regional High School with the aim of introducing high school kids to field archaeology. This work is financed by the school, the regional council and the National Parks Authority. The highlight was a small hoard of gold and silver coins from the Talmudic (Byzantine) period.
- **Community excavation in Lod** (cosponsored with *Karev Educational Initiatives*). Now in its 8th year, this project, directed by Yuval Gadot, Efrat Boser and Taufik Deadle, entails the excavation of a Mamluk and Ottoman-period caravanserai in the urban heart of Lod. The goals of this project are to encourage a sense of identification and pride with the town's rich history, despite the poverty of its modern aspect. Jewish and Arab schoolchildren all participate—12 schools and approximately 1200 children excavate every year. We now must push the scholarly publication of this project.
- **Contract archaeology.** We continue to work with the archaeological contract firm Y.G. Archaeology to expedite small-scale excavations that keep us active in the excavation business and that bring in funds in the form of overhead/academic oversight fees. A new site was excavated this year at the Golani Junction. The NGSBA receives 10% of the budget for such

excavations, which brings in an average of \$7000 per year. With some additional investment, there are ways to increase this sum substantially. We are investigating various synergies.

- **Sponsorship of Archaeological Seminars – Dig for a Day.** Starting in January 2015 the NGSBA will be the academic sponsor of Archaeological Seminars. They will provide digging and guiding services to HUC students and staff, free of charge, and pay us 10% of their annual budget (this will bring in approximately \$11,000 per year). The Tel Maresha project will publish with us, at their expense.
- **Our journal: *NGSBA Archaeology*** (edited by David Ilan). This past year we published our second issue of *NGSBA Archaeology* – a journal for the publication of our research, community and contract excavations (<http://ngsba.org/en/publications/ngsba-archaeology-journal>). **This journal has boosted our academic standing significantly.** Volume 3 is scheduled for publication in December.
- **Scholarly publication.** In the past year David Ilan published a coauthored monograph (Gadot, Y., Ilan, D., Tepper, Y. and Yannai, E. *The Bronze Age Cemetery at 'Ara*, (Salvage Excavation Reports No. 8), Tel Aviv University: Institute of Archaeology. 2013); and two book chapters: D. Ilan, Chapter 6: The Early Bronze Age Tombs of Megiddo - a Reappraisal, Pp. 117-123 in: *The University of Chicago Excavations on the Eastern Slope of Megiddo* (E. Braun), University of Chicago, Oriental Institute Publications, 2013); and Y. Rowan and D. Ilan, The Subterranean Landscape of the Southern Levant During the Chalcolithic Period, Pp. 87-108 in: *Sacred Darkness: A Global Perspective on the Ritual Use of Caves* (ed. H. Moyes). Boulder, Colorado: University of Colorado Press. 2013. He also published two encyclopedia entries: D. Ilan. Tel Dan, in: *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and Archaeology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2013; and D. Ilan, Tel Dan, in: *Oxford Biblical Studies Online - Photographic essays* (<http://www.oxfordbiblicalstudies.com>), 2013.
Yifat Thareani published two articles: Thareani, Y. 2014. Forces of Decline and Regeneration: A Socio-economic Account of the Iron Age II Negev Desert. In: Ben Zvi, E., Knoppers, G. and Miller, M. (eds.). *The Economy of Ancient Judah in its Historical Context*, and: Thareani, Y. 2014. The Judean Desert Frontier in the Seventh Century BCE: A View from 'Aroer. In: Tebes, J. M. (ed.). *Unearthing the Wilderness, Workshop on the History and Archaeology of the Negev and Edom in the Iron Age*.
- **Conference participation.** David Ilan delivered three papers at international meetings: at the annual conference of the American Schools of Oriental Research in Baltimore, the Invisible Dead Conference in Durham, England, and the International Conference of Archaeology in the Ancient Near East in Basel.
Yifat Thareani gave a paper in the Heidelberg Colloquium: *Aram and Israel: Cultural Interaction, Political Borders and Construction of Identity during the early Iron Age (12th-8th Century BCE)*, September 2013
- **Public lectures abroad.** In September 2013 David Ilan was scholar in residence at the Wissen und Wort symposium in Schwabische Alb, Germany, *The Massive Threat: Israel and the Superpowers During the 9th Through 7th Centuries BC*. His lectures: 1. *Eine Wallfahrt zum eisenzeitlichen Tel Dan*; 2. *Tell Dan z. Zt. der assyrischen Herrschaft*; and 3. *Archaeological Evidence of Deportation and Importation of Populations*. In November, Ilan delivered lectures at the Skirball Center, Los Angeles (*Death in Ancient Canaan*) and at UCLA (*How Ancient Israel Began: a view from Tel Dan*) and at the Pittsburgh Biblical Archaeology Society (*The Mystery of the Missing Dagger Blade*); Temple Sinai, Pittsburgh (*The Bible and Archaeology, Where the Meet, Where they Don't and Why*); and at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (*How Ancient Israel Began: a View from Tel Dan*).
- **News in Antiquity lecture series.** As usual, this series presented a program of nine public lectures, on the last Tuesday of every month, showcasing mainly young scholars doing cutting-edge research. Attendance averaged approximately 55 people per lecture.

- **Teaching.** David Ilan continues to teach the Introduction to Biblical History course in the Year in Israel Program. He also coordinates and teaches for the School of Graduate Studies summer program in Israel. Yifat Thareani also worked with the School of Graduate Studies summer program in Israel and teaches as an adjunct professor at Haifa University.
- **Skirball Archaeological Museum.** This year, again, approximately 40 groups visited the museum this year (this includes only those groups registered by us). To reiterate last year's report, we believe there is potential for a much higher visitation rate if we advertize and make some format changes.
- **Fundraising.** No new funds were raised this year except for money brought in by contract archaeology and the fees due next year from Archaeological Seminars. From previous experience, once another final excavation report is published research grants and foundation gifts will be more available.