

Series Editor's Preface

This volume appears as the fifth in a planned series of reports on the investigations of the Lahav Research Project (LRP) at Tell Halif, located near Kibbutz Lahav in southern Israel. LRP research has focused widely on stratigraphic, environmental, and ethnographic problems related to the history of settlement at and around Tell Halif from prehistoric through modern times. The project was initiated in 1974 and in 1975 received sponsorship from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Since 1983, the LRP has received its primary support from the Cobb Institute of Archaeology at Mississippi State University. During all field seasons, efforts have also been assisted by consortia of other American academic institutions and with support in Israel from the W. F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research and the Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology, both in Jerusalem, and from the Joe Alon Center for Regional and Folklore Studies at Kibbutz Lahav. Throughout, the LRP has been affiliated with the American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR) as one of its approved projects.

LRP investigations at Tell Halif have continued through three phases (I–III) embracing twelve seasons of field excavation between 1976 and 1999. A fourth phase (IV) directed by Oded Borowski under Emory University sponsorship was initiated in 2007. Through all phases, financial support by consortium institutions was supplemented by generous gifts received as private contributions from staff members, subscribers, and worker participants. Patrons and major donors are recognized in the Editor's Preface to *Lahav I* (Dessel 2009: xv–xvii), and the support of all contributors and participants is acknowledged on the project's DigMaster Web site at www.cobb.msstate.edu/Research.html. We are sincerely grateful to this very large group of individuals for their participation in and support of LRP work. At the same time, we also recognize that none of the project's work could have been accomplished without the help of the members of Kibbutz Lahav. With warm encouragement and much material assistance, Lahav's members provided a supportive and congenial base for the team's field research throughout all of the past three decades.

This fifth report in our LRP series focuses on materials recovered during Phase I excavations conducted in 1977, 1979, and 1980 in Field II on the east-central summit of the mound. These Field II excavation efforts were directed by Dan P. Cole of Lake Forest College, aided by the field staff listed passim in Chapter 1: General Introduction. Along with the University of Nebraska, Omaha, Phase I consortium support was provided by Washington State University, Pullman, WA; Lycoming College, Williamsport, PA; St. John's University, Collegeville, MN; and Emory University, Atlanta, GA.

During Phase I, Joe Seger served in the role of overall Project Director, assisted by a Core Staff including, in addition to Dan Cole, Mary Elizabeth Shutler, Washington State University; Karen E. Seger, Omaha, Nebraska; Oded Borowski, Emory University; and Paul F. Jacobs, University of St. Thomas, Houston, Texas. Phase I Recording and Camp Staff included Photographer Patricia M. O'Connor; Assistant Photographers Victoria Satterthwaite and David Kudan; Draftsmen Mark Laustrup and Robert Erskin; Registrars Ann Arenstein, Melanie Montgomery, Eduardo Guerra, Julie Schram, and Robert Wise; Conservator Jeanne Smith; Technical

Illustrator Judith Berkowitz; Medical Consultant Jeanne Jaggard; Camp Managers Catharine Cole, Susan Schwartz, and Nancy Jacobs; Assistant Camp Managers Jerry Sturmer and Betty Kemper; Camp Operations Manager Karl Kemper; and Cooks Muhammad Rabia, Lutfi Tanbor, and Jamal Rabia. During this period, Kibbutz Lahav member Avi Navon participated in field work and provided valuable liaison with the kibbutz.

Other consultants and specialists during Phase I included Israel Department of Antiquities representative Amos Kloner; physical anthropologists Baruch Arensburg of Tel Aviv University and Patricia Smith of Hadassah Hospital, Jerusalem; ethnographic advisers John Landgraf and Omar Othman, both of Jerusalem; survey adviser David Allon of Kibbutz Mishmar Hanegev; and environmental adviser Dan Ratner of Kibbutz Lahav.

The special focus of this volume deals with the results of excavations in Field II. It is the first volume in the series that provides a comprehensive stratigraphic report of investigations in one of the main fields at Halif. Representing late LB IIB through Roman period occupations, it articulates the upper sequence of strata (VIII to III) on the central mound, which embrace the city's cultural history down through the 1st century B.C.E.

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