



Fig. 33. View into the Wadi Shu'aib (towards south) with site of Khirbet Shu'aib/WS-006 visible to the right of the Mosque and Shrine of Nabi Shu'aib (photo by A. Ahrens)

The Wadi Shu'aib Archaeological Survey Project (WSAS) was initiated in 2016 by the Damascus Branch of the Orient Department of the German Archaeological Institute. Conducted under Alexander Ahrens, the project focuses on a thorough survey and reevaluation of all archaeological and historical sites in the Wadi Shu'aib, ranging from the Neolithic to Ottoman Periods, starting from immediately south of the city of as-Salt in the highlands down to the city of South Shuna (Shuna al-Janubiyya) located in the southern Jordan Valley.

During the two survey campaigns conducted in fall 2016 and 2017, a total of 27 archaeological sites were recorded within the wadi system. Some of these sites were already known to the scholarly community, but were never recorded and documented thoroughly, while the majority of sites prospected were hitherto unknown (Fig. 33).

Additionally, and as part of the Wadi Shu'aib Archaeological Survey Project, small targeted excavations were conducted in 2017 at the site of Tall Bleibil (Tall Bulaybil) located close to the alluvial fan of the Wadi Shu'aib in the eastern part of the Jordan Valley. In order to retrieve material for further analysis, especially radiocarbon dating, botanical samples were taken from a collapsed northern section of the tell at five different positions and elevations. The results of the radiocarbon analysis

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of three of these samples from the earliest levels accessible, all based on short-lived botanical remains (barley, *Hordeum vulgare*), show that the site was inhabited during the Iron Age period (Iron Age IIA/B), with older levels dated to the Early and Late Bronze Ages so far only attested in the pottery assemblage collected at the site during the survey. Additionally, a large mudbrick wall was found protruding from the collapsed section. This is presumably the settlement's city wall or a wall belonging to a larger building complex within the settlement, which seems to have been destroyed in a conflagration, dating to the Iron Age IIA period according to radiocarbon analysis.

The survey of the Wadi Shu'aib as well as the archaeological work at Tell Bleibil will continue in 2018.

Project website: <http://www.dainst.org/project/2824386>

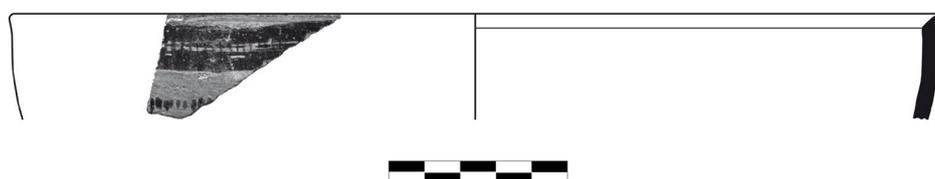


Fig. 34. Fragment of Cyprote White Slip II Ware ("milk bowl") from Tell Bleibil/WS-007 located close to the alluvial fan of the Wadi Shu'aib in the southern Jordan Valley (courtesy of the DAI, Orient Department; photo by A. Ahrens; drawing by B. Biewig and A. Gubisch)