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- 1 R. Greenberg – E. Eisenberg – S. Paz – Y. Paz, Bet Yerah: The Early Bronze Age Mound I: Excavation Reports, 1933–1986, *IAA Report* 30 (Jerusalem 2006); R. Greenberg, Bet Yerah: The Early Bronze Age Mound II: Urban Structure and Material Culture, 1933–1986 Excavations, *IAA Report* 54 (Jerusalem 2014).
- 2 The area was reexcavated by Eisenberg and Yogeve and a few discussions of the building have been published: Y. Hirschfeld, The Palestinian Dwelling in the Roman-Byzantine Period, *SBF Collectio Minor* 34 (Jerusalem 1995) 67; Y. Tepper, A Basilica at Bet Yerah? Bet Yerah Revisited. *Tel Aviv* 26, 271–282; O. Tal, The Archaeology of Hellenistic Palestine: Between Tradition and Renewal (Jerusalem 2006) 95–97.

blow delivered by Alexander Jannaeus' military campaigns between 104 and 92 BCE. Different chronological evidence from various areas most likely indicate that part of the site was already destroyed or abandoned in the days of Jonathan's occupation of Galilee or Tryphon (mid-140s BCE). Chapter 6 places Hellenistic Philoteria in its architectural and historical contexts. This chapter, based on Tal's previous research (see note 2), analyses the city plan and the type of residential houses at Philoteria in comparison to other Hellenistic sites in the region like Dora, Samaria, Mount Gerizim and Maresha / Marisa. As more data regarding the Hellenistic period and its architectural and cultural remains have recently been obtained, a more comprehensive investigation of Tal's analysis will certainly be welcome in the future. To date, Tal documents the chronological and historical context of Philoteria based on the dated stamped amphora handles and consolidates the site's foundation and destruction dates.

After Ptolemais (Akko) was established by Ptolemy II Philadelphus the foundations of Nysa-Scythopolis, Philoteria and Philadelphia must have followed soon after. Engaged in both the First (276–272 BCE) and Second (259–255 BCE) Syrian wars the importance of Coele Syria loomed high in Ptolemy II's strategy. Once the Ptolemaic naval base and administrative centre in Coele Syria was founded, the secure connection of the coast with the Hellenistic centres of Transjordan, strengthened by Philadelphia, became crucial. Philoteria guarded the passages over the Jordan River, while Nysa-Scythopolis was located at the region's most important road junction that connected the coast with the Hellenistic poleis of Transjordan and Damascus. There is no clear evidence that at the time of their foundation the right of a polis was granted to any of the three Hellenistic centres, and it is reasonable to assume that they were originally established as military strongholds at well-chosen strategic locations and later developed into semi-autonomous poleis.

Part II comprises seven chapters. Chapter 7 is a historical introduction to Khirbat al-Karak/Tel Bet Yerah and al-Šinnabra (Tawfiq Da'adli). Arab historians located al-Šinnabra at the southern end of the Sea of Galilee, c. 6 km south of Tabariyya, the capital of Jund al-Urdunn. At al-Šinnabra a number of Umayyad caliphs resided, including Mu'āwiya. Donald Whitcomb identified al-Šinnabra at the Early Bronze Age site of Bet Yerah³. Chapter 8 describes the stratigraphy and architecture of the fortified palace (qasr) and the external bathhouse of al-Šinnabra excavated by Guy and Bar-Adon (1950–1951) and the sixth century church revealed by Delougaz and Haines (1952–1953). Further methodical excavations of the Tel Aviv University expedition (2009) established a seventh-century terminus post quem for the fortified palace and an eight-century terminus post quem for the bathhouse (Greenberg and Paz 2010). Due to the earlier excavation methods and the poor amount of recorded pottery the report is based on field diaries, a small number of photographs and plans. Further data was obtained by the Tel Aviv University expeditions in 2007 and 2013. The complex consists of a surrounding fortification, a central building in the form of a basilica and an attached bathhouse. Although Umayyad palaces did not follow a single ground plan and had varied configurations (cf. to Kh. al-Mafjar) they tended to have a central basilical hall (cf. to Mashatta, al-Minya and 'Anjar), while the bathhouse seems to follow the arrangements of Umayyad baths. Chapter 9 discusses the coins (Gabriela Bijovsky) along with the meagre pottery finds (fig. 8.60). The relatively small assemblage of coins retrieved from clear loci does indeed support the dating of the Umayyad complexes. Chapter 10 deals with the inverted siphon pipeline to al-Šinnabra and the petrographic analysis of its terracotta pipes (Yardenna Alexandre and Anastasia Shapiro). Chapter 11 is a geochemical study of the basalt blocks from the Bet Yerah and Sussita siphon (Tajana Gluhak). Chapter 12 reports the bridge to al-Šinnabra (Yardenna Alexandre). In the concluding Chapter 13 the long-term history at Tel Bet Yerah is summarized (Raphael Greenberg, Oren Tal and Tawfiq Da'adli). The authors address the location of Roman

3 D. Whitcomb, Khirbet al-Kerak Identified with Sinnabra. *Al-'Usur Al-Wusta. The Bulletin of Middle East Medievalists* 14, 2002, 1–6; id. *From Pastoral Peasantry to Tribal Urbanites: Arab Tribes and the Foundation of the Islamic State in Syria*, in: J. Szuchman (ed.), *Nomads, Tribes and the State in the Ancient Near East: Cross Disciplinary Perspectives*, OIS 5 (Chicago 2009) 241–260.

Sennabre and Bet Yerah, suggesting that it should be sought to the west of the mound which lacks Roman-period installations of any kind, and the river, on the high road to Tiberias, where Roman and Byzantine tombs were recorded.

The publication of the remains of Hellenistic Philoteria and Early Islamic al-Ṣinnabra was not an easy task. Apart from preliminary summaries the earlier excavations were not properly published; hence the meagre data obtained from archives furnish the main substance that resulted in a final report. In addition, the findings from recent minor excavations were included to broaden the analysis of those two important strata at the site. Taking into consideration the difficulties faced by the scholars, the final report presented in the current volume is an important contribution to the site's history and occupation in particular and to the regional research in general, for which we should be thankful.