

Dear readers,

This collection of essays is the second of two issues of the *Jerusalem Journal of Archaeology's* third volume (JJAR 3/2), devoted to the study of natural and artificial caves. While most were specifically intended for hiding in times of distress, others were set up as storage installations, ritual baths, and agricultural facilities and subsequently converted into hiding complexes. The ongoing discovery of new caves across Israel through surveys and intensive land development drives a growing field of research, presenting speleologists and archaeologists with challenging opportunities and ample material for future scientific publications. It is my hope that further volumes of JJAR will be dedicated to this fascinating subject in the near future.

This issue presents six articles on both natural and artificial caves and the archaeological finds recovered in them:

Yinon Shvitziel, Oren Zingboym, Zviki Badihi, and Uri Berger, A Hiding Complex from the Period of the Bar Kokhba Revolt at the Ancient Settlement of Huqoq.

Two hiding complexes were discovered in the Galilean Jewish village of Huqoq, where one of the most magnificent ancient synagogues in the country has been discovered and excavated. One hiding complex was partially excavated in the past, and the other is the object of the current article. The authors present their findings and evidence that this hiding complex was prepared for use or was used during the Bar Kokhba Revolt.

Adi Erlich, Danny Binshtok, and Ran Kaftory, New Hiding Complexes at Beth She'arim and Their Dating.

Several hiding complexes were discovered during the renewed archaeological excavations at Beth She'arim in Lower Galilee. The authors present various finds and features providing evidence that these hiding complexes were established in preparation for or used during the Bar Kokhba Revolt.

Alexander Melamed, A New Perspective on Research of the Underground Complexes in Light of the Excavations at Nesher-Ramla Quarry.

The article describes a particularly large complex of underground installations in the Nesher-Ramla Quarry area, which the author interprets as hiding places. He attributes some of them to periods prior to the Jewish rebellions.

Michael Osband, Oren Zingboym, Eran Meir, and Amos Frumkin, A Survey of the Site and Caves at Tell el-Hawy by the Confluence of the Rukkad and Yarmuk Rivers.

This paper presents a preliminary study of a site located above the confluence of the Rukkad and Yarmuk rivers, near Israel's current borders with Syria and Jordan. It mainly dates from the Iron Age, late Hellenistic, and Roman periods. The authors explored various features and twenty caves, including a large burial cave with numerous cells. The authors describe the caves and the finds from the survey, considering them along with the site's location and function in the region.

Dvir Raviv, Rafael Y. Lewis, Aharon Tavger, Haim Shkolnik, Binyamin Har-Even, Evgeny Aharonovich, Micka Ullman, Boaz Langford, and Amos Frumkin, An Archaeological Survey at el-Janab Cave, Central Samaria.

The article describes the exploration and documentation of a large karstic cave south of Nablus, central Samaria. The finds in the cave attest to its use in different periods and for different reasons, including refuge at times of distress. The article presents the archaeological assemblages from the cave and discusses their relevance for the region's history.

Asher Ovadiah, Cults of Deities in Caves in Israel in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods

This article discusses three caves in different locations in the country that were used as sites of pagan worship during the Hellenistic and Roman periods. According to the author, these and other caves had a sacred status in the pagan world as places of worship.

**I hope you will enjoy reading this volume,
Prof. Yinon Shvitiel, Zefat Academic College, I.C.R.C.,
volume editor**