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EDITORIAL

Adumatu Journal continues, praise be to Allah Almighty, to hold its scientific meetings for archaeologists, that focus on emerging archaeological themes after the success of the first and second conferences held in Sakaka in Al-Jouf Province, Saudi Arabia, in 2005 and 2010 respectively. The third conference took place in the Jordan Museum in Amman, from 13 - 14 October 2018, titled “Water through Ages in the Arab World in the Light of Archeological Excavations.” The conference was held under the umbrella of Abdulrahman Al-Sudairy Cultural Center and the patronage of HRH Princess Sumaya bint al-Hassan, President of the Royal Scientific Society, Jordan. The meeting was attended by many renowned archeologists and researchers from the Arab World and beyond.

The number of applications received exceeded four hundred from around the world, which reflects Adumatu’s status in the academic community.

The opening ceremony of the conference was under the patronage of HRH Princess Sumaya bint al-Hassan, who delegated HE Professor Zaidan Kafafi, President of Yarmouk University to attend on her behalf. Professor Kafafi stressed the importance of the conference and pointed out that the most eminent global civilizations settled and emerged on the banks of rivers in Mesopotamia, The Nile River, The Indus River, and The Ganges. We would never have reached the scientific and intellectual progress or the modern information revolution of today if our ancestors had not laid the first building blocks ever since they settled near lasting sources of water more than ten thousand years ago. This helped them to innovate and increase production which can only be achieved by intellectual and informational development. They worked on developing their knowledge and inventions and searched for sources of raw materials to manufacture tools. Therefore, significant and influential social transformations took place, resulting in accumulative cognitive development over the past centuries.

Mr. Sultan bin Faisal Al-Sudairy, representing the Board of Directors of Abdulrahman Al-Sudairy Cultural Centre, participated in the conference. He delivered a speech on behalf of the center, where he pointed out that the conference was held in Amman to emphasize the message of Adumatu Journal that sought to strengthen the cultural communication between Saudi Arabia and other countries, just as the oasis of Dumat al-Jandal (Adumatu) in northern Saudi Arabia has always been; a linking point between adjacent cultures in the past. He stressed that when the Center decided to adopt the publication of Adumatu Journal specialized in research and archaeological studies in the Arab World,

the Journal was meant to be a link between researchers from different countries of the world, and a solid scientific tool for scientific communication and research.

We extend our gratitude to HRH Princess Sumaya bint al-Hassan, President of the Royal Scientific Society and Deputy Chairman of the Jordan Museum for her patronage of the conference, and to our colleagues in the Departments of Archeology at the Jordanian universities, who attended this event and enriched its scientific discussions.

We would also like to thank Dr. Ziad Bin Abdulrahman Al-Sudairy, the Managing Director, for his continuous support of Adumatu and its Editorial Board, as well as Mr. Sultan bin Faisal Al-Sudairy for his continuous follow-up of the Conference and attending its sessions. We also thank the team that participated in the preparation of all the work of the conference, especially Mr. Mohammad Suwanah for his instrumental efforts.

The participants presented 34 papers on early human migrations and their relation to water areas, geographical spread of archaeological sites and their relation to water sources, water in rock art and ancient inscriptions, irrigation and water conservation techniques, and ancient climate studies.

The conference concluded with important recommendations, including: Advocating the development of scientific research methodologies; unifying archaeological terms among Arab researchers; urging Arab researchers and archaeological missions in Arab countries to publish in Arabic to enrich information in the field of archeology and Arab cultural heritage; stressing the importance of exchanging expertise in the field of archeological mission in the Arab World; and drawing attention to specialized studies in rock art as an important source of archeology. The participants also stressed the role of Islamic civilization in the Arab regions and its role in the transfer of Arab civilization to the rest of the world.

Finally, HRH Prince Sultan bin Salman bin Abdul Aziz passed on the Presidency of the General Authority for Tourism and National Heritage, after having brought about a great cultural and developmental movement in the fields of tourism and archeology, and after a journey of great achievements. His Highness's efforts have contributed to raising the level of interest in archaeological sites and tourism, and registering a number of archaeological sites in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the UNESCO World Heritage Site's list, in a national plan with a vision, relentless work and unwavering patience that brought about immense advantages.

Prince Sultan assumed the position as the President of the Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage in the year 2009. He has served as Secretary General of the Tourism Authority since its establishment in the year 2000, which contributed to the development of the tourism strategy in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The "Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage" has witnessed remarkable developments since its beginning with the name "The Supreme Commission for Tourism" in the year 2000. After

that, “The Agency of Antiquities” was merged in the year 2004, and the Authority became responsible for the Antiquities Sector in the Kingdom besides the tourism sector. Back then, it was called the “General Authority for Tourism and Antiquities.” The name was later amended to become the “Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage.”

The purpose of the Authority was to care for all aspects of the tourism and archaeological sectors in the Kingdom; also to organize, develop and promote them to become tributaries of the national cultural and economic development, taking into account their role in human civilization and their influence in the international community. The Authority also aims to contribute to the formulation of scientific concepts and visions to promote national tourism and national cultural heritage as an industry with integrated dimensions at all social, religious and economic levels.

Prince Sultan bin Salman sought the protection of rare archaeological and heritage sites, including rich treasures of information and history, representing the civilizations that have inhabited the land of Saudi Arabia through the ages. Regions of the Kingdom are rich with these rare archaeological and heritage sites. Ever since he presided this sector, Prince Sultan has worked to build a vast base of highly trained Saudis, who are now leading projects, programs, tourist sites, heritage and archaeological sites in different regions of the Kingdom under the umbrella of the Authority. He has built partnerships in all that has been achieved. He has been an initiator of teamwork, and always advocated the importance of the role of local communities in working with the official sectors of the Authority. He has always urged locals in each region to become effective contributors to committees operating in heritage and archeological sites. As a result, they engaged in training with experts and consultants hired by the Authority, and started managing the heritage sites themselves and participated in their restoration.

One of the achievements of HRH Prince Sultan is that forty four joint Saudi international archaeological missions have been launched in various regions of the Kingdom. This has led to a great expansion in archaeological surveys and excavations, especially since the Kingdom is rich in thousands of archaeological sites that constitute priceless cultural treasures. Additionally, the exhibition, “Roads of Arabia Masterpieces of Antiquities in Saudi Arabia across the Ages,” has become one of the most important Saudi international exhibitions that presented the cultural heritage of the Kingdom and the Arabian Peninsula to more than five million visitors in the world’s most famous and oldest museums in Europe, America, and Asia. His Highness’s book, “The Possible Imagination”, published in 2017, summarizes the achievements made by persistence, perseverance and hard work in the fields of tourism, archeology and national heritage. Yet, these achievements were once a fantasy.

Editor -in-Chief