

RESEARCH

Donald Whitcomb

Donald Whitcomb devoted summer 1997 to research on early Islamic history and culture, formulating a theory on early Islamic urbanism. In the fall, the first presentation of these hypotheses was at the MESA meetings in San Francisco. This paper on "Patterns of Urban Organisation: Beginnings of the Islamic City" was expanded for the AIA meetings here in Chicago. This was a special session on settlements in honor of Robert Braidwood; the "dipchart" on early Islamic urbanism was prepared for this occasion (see *Aqaba*, fig. 2, above).

One spin-off of this study was a new appreciation of early Islamic Jerusalem; these ideas were presented at the University of Wisconsin at Madison in the spring. Shortly thereafter, Don presented a paper to the Byzantine workshop on campus on al-Muqaddasi's description of Constantinople in the tenth century. Later in the spring, he attended a colloquium on the Fatimids in Paris and then went to Copenhagen, where he gave a keynote lecture on the early Islamic period for the Seventh Conference on the History and Archaeology of Jordan.

This year Don also began an intensive study of the settlement patterns in late Antiquity and early Islamic times in the Negev. In addition, as the number of students interested in Byzantine and Islamic archaeology grew, Don offered an increasing number of courses, including Late Levant, a new course on Islamic archaeology of North Africa, and Islamic ceramics.
