

## *Kufr Yuba and Irbid Area*

It was the tireless Gottlieb Schumacher who, while traveling through the Irbid region, discovered the extensive fields of dolmens west of what was still, at that time, a small town. In *Northern Ajlun*, published in 1890, he mentioned not only the dolmens near Samma (see page 65 below) but in particular the dolmens found “extending to the north and to the south from the neighbourhood of Kefr Yuba up as far as Jumha” (Schumacher 1890: 169). He recognized the platforms or terraces, built either as a single row or multiple rows, on which many of these dolmens were built, and noted the often eccentric position of the dolmens on their platform. He also pointed out the rows of stones (‘trails’), running in between the dolmens, which he suggested were remains of (cult) avenues. The few dolmens that he excavated yielded ash, mixed with a few remains of charcoal, as well as several copper (possibly bronze?) bracelets. There was always a floor slab below, resting on the bare rock. Although he investigated about 100, he suggested that the total number in the area could have been up to 1000.

Little remains nowadays of these once impressive fields. Most have been plowed away, although here and there, a lone specimen, which has survived the destructive mind, can still be encountered, as well as some standing stones, circles etc. A few groups still remain, however, in the immediate vicinity of the village of Kufr Yuba. The area was particularly rich in ‘double-dolmens’, and I still remember the beautiful one next to the road (the old petroleum road) from al-Husn to the Jordan Valley and northwest of Tell Joffiyeh. It was completely destroyed in 2005.

Tara Steimer and Lamia El-Khouri, who surveyed the area in 2005, still came across many remnants of dolmen fields, in particular close to Tell al-Ashe‘ir, Wadi al-Ghafar and Khirbet Awwar, as well as standing stones and trails of stones. South of Tell Kufr Yuba, a big concentration occurs with 25 and 57 dolmens recorded in two adjacent fields. At a site called Abar al-Sharqi, again south of Kufr



*Dolmen, Joffiyeh area*

Yuba, they found 7 specimens, and 44 north of Kufr Yuba (al-Gharwayieh). Another 15 were identified near Khalt Eaged, 30 km west of Irbid. This site also includes circular structures and standing stones.



*Dolmen, Kufr Yuba area*

*How to get there*

Close to Tell Joffiyeh

N 32°30'13.8"

E 035°48'26.7"

Tell al-Ashe'ir

N 32°33'36.0"

E 035°47'30.8"

Kufr Yuba

N 32°32'08.0"

E 035°48'33.9"

Kufr Yuba 2 (Abu Tchillab)

N 32°33'01.0"

E 035°47'50.7"

Kufr Yuba 3 (Al-Qatatym)

N 32°31'39.2"

E 035°47'50.7"

Try to find your way from Irbid towards Shuna Shamaliyah (Jordan Valley). When arriving at Kufr Yuba, the road splits. Going straight, Tell al-Ashe'ir is on your right, and a few dolmens are just west of it. If you turn left into the village, you will find quite a few more on the opposite slope south of there, dangerously bordering the village of Kufr Yuba (a neighborhood called Abu Tchillab). Another two nice groups are a bit further south, on the edge of the town facing the village of Bayt Yafa. The neighborhood is called al-Qatatym.

Alternatively, coming from Amman towards Irbid, turn left at the town of al-Husn, south of Irbid. Continue on the old petroleum road towards the west. A few dolmens are spread over different fields in between Tell Joffiyeh and Ham, south of Kufr Yuba.

*References:*

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*Dolmens in the Kufr Yuba area*