STRATA

Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society

Volume 32

2014

The Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society
2nd floor, Supreme House
300 Regents Park Road
London N3 2JX

The full texts of articles within Strata are available online through
Academic Search Premier (EBSCO). This periodical is indexed in the
ATLA Religion Database®, published by the American Theological Library Association,
300 S. Wacker Dr., Suite 2100, Chicago IL 60606,
Email: atla@atla.com; website: www.atla.com

Cover: Beth Alpha synagogue mosaic, NASA image

ISSN Series 2042-7867 (Print)

Typeset by 3DWM, Switzerland
Printed and bound in Great Britain by
4word Page & Print Production Ltd.

Strata: Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society

Please send correspondence and books for review to:

The Executive Secretary
The Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society
2nd floor, Supreme House
300 Regents Park Road
London N3 2JX
UK

Please format material according to the 'Notes for Contributors' found at the back of this volume and submit articles to the editor electronically at: editor@aias.org.uk. Book reviews should be sent to the book reviews editor at strata.reviews@aias.org.uk

Strata is published annually. To subscribe, please consult the Society's website at www.aias.org.uk or use the form at the back of this volume.

The Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society

HONORARY OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Honorary President
Rt Hon. The Viscount Allenby of Megiddo†

Chairman
Prof. Martin Goodman, DLitt, FBA

Vice-Chairman
Prof. H. G. M. Williamson, DD, FBA
Mr Mike Sommer

Vice-Chairman (Israel)
Prof. Amihai Mazar

Hon. Secretary
Dr Nick Slope

Hon. Treasurer
Dr Paul Newham

Committee
Mrs Barbara Barnett
Prof. George Brooke
Dr Simcha Shalom Brooks
Dr Rupert Chapman III
Dr Irving Finkel
Prof. Shimon Gibson
Mrs Roberta Harris
Dr Sandra Jacobs
Dr Sean Kingsley
Dr David Milson
Dr Stephen Rosenberg
Dr Joan Taylor

Executive Secretary
Sheila Ford

Editorial

This year saw the passing of our president and long-supporter of the AIAS, the Right Honorable Viscount Allenby of Megiddo. Blessed be his memory.

Continuing the Society's interest in the dawn of civilization, in this issue the first paper concerns our understanding of the shift from hunting and gathering to living in villages and cities. Our knowledge of this period is still rather vague. Ram Gophna and Yitzhak Paz discuss settlement dynamics in the area surrounding modern Tel Aviv, the Central Coastal Plain. Here, major changes to settlement patterns occurred at the end of the fourth and beginning of the third millenium BCE, approximately five thousand years ago. The authors were able to identify three settlement clusters, each with their own specific characteristics.

The next study by Rachel Hallote discusses a recent find from Khirbet Summeily, a fascinating, single period Iron Age site on the northern edge of the Negev desert. Female plaque figurines are known from numerous sites in the ancient world, but we know little concerning their use. Dr. Hallote suggests that these figurines may have been used as a talisman following birth, a particularly interesting idea never mentioned before.

The following two major studies collect both recent archaeological data, some of which was discovered by the authors, and provide new interpretations for our understanding of Hellenistic and Roman period Horvat 'Eleq on the Carmel highland near modern Haifa and the Nabatean site of Oboda in the Negev. The former, first excavated by the late Yitzhak Hirschfeld, began much earlier than once thought, and went through several periods of existence. Today, the site is best known as the final resting place of the Baron and Baroness Edmund de Rothschild. The chronology of the latter site of Oboda too, is much more complex than was originally thought by its excavator, Avraham Negev. The identification of the Nabataean treasury there has helped to identify another treasury at Petra. Both these studies are major re-evaluations of previous work and bring new insight into the field.

The last study concerns an extremely rare lead seal found near Jaffa, belonging to the Austrian Lloyd shipping company. Yoav Arbel discusses this find and its

testimony to European interest in the Holy Land at the beginning of the 19th century, while Palestine was controlled by the Ottoman Empire.

My sincerest thanks to all those who have helped produce this volume, and especially Sandra Jacobs for the book reviews. The Society is grateful to Joey Silver for his support towards the costs of printing the journal. Finally, I would like to encourage anyone who would like to know more to visit our website: www.aias.org and also our new Facebook page: http://www.facebook.com/IsraelArchaeologyLondon.

David Milson
Editor

Contents

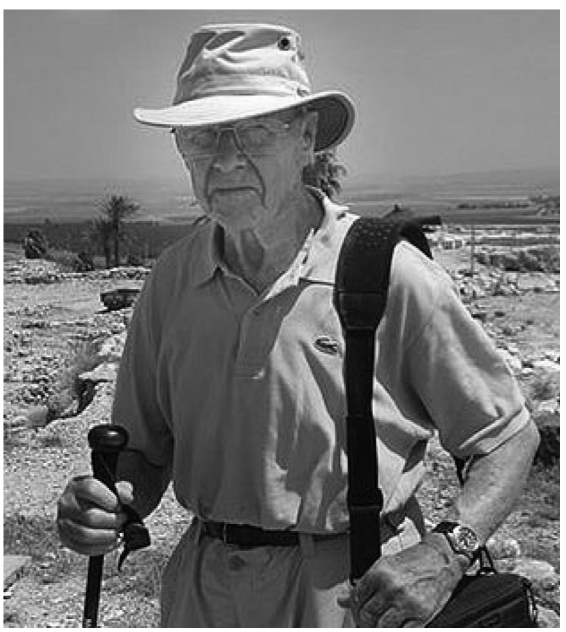
Reviews

IN MEMORIAM

Lord Allenby of Megiddo

20 April 1931 - 3 October 2014

The Society has learned with sadness of the death on 3 October of its President, Lord Allenby of Megiddo, and expresses its sincere sympathy to his widow Sara. Lord Allenby regularly attended the Annual General Meeting of the Society, when he always encouraged us to recruit more members, and some years ago he generously hosted a reception for the Society at the House of Lords to help with this. For obvious reasons, both as a great nephew of the first Viscount Allenby and as a man with a distinguished military career of his own, he took a particular interest in the current excavations at Megiddo, a site which he and his wife visited several times. The Society remains grateful for his steadfast support.



From Village to Town to Village Again: Settlement Dynamics in the Central Coastal Plain and Adjacent Shephelah from the Late Early Bronze Age I to Early Bronze Age III

Ram Gophna[1] and Yitzhak Paz[2]
[1]*Tel Aviv University*
[2]*Israel Antiquities Authority*

The central coastal plain and adjacent Shephelah during the late Early Bronze Age I through Early Bronze III periods has been extensively explored and furnishes us with a 'laboratory' rich with settlement data. This information enables an examination of Canaanite EBA settlement history both microscopically and macroscopically, from the single sherd in a specific site, to the region as a whole. Three settlement areas will be discussed to illustrate changes in this region: the Lod valley, in the south; the Aphek valley to the north, and the coastal Tel Aviv area in the west. The consolidation of sites in these three settlement areas occurred between the late 4th millennium and the 3rd millennium BCE, and while having much in common, each had their own peculiarities. This settlement history between the EBIB-EBIII reflects a fascinating process that shaped the central coastal plain of Israel.

Early Bronze Age Ib/Late EBI

Introduction

The period succeeding Early EBI (EBIA) is known as Late EBI (Braun 1996, 2000) or alternately as EBIB (Stager 1992; Yekutieli 2000; 2001). Typically, several of the sites inhabited during the Early EBI were abandoned during Late EBI[1] while new settlements were founded elsewhere.[2]

There is a major bifurcation in ceramic assemblages between the northern and southern cultural facies of the EBI in the southern Levant (Amiran 1971), a divergence possibly rooted in the Late Chalcolithic period (Braun 1996:4). Yekutieli has suggested that the post-EBIA of the southern region may be divided into two sub-phases (2000). The earlier of these phases is characterized by pottery decorated in a highly idiosyncratic style of incised decoration on jars and by plastic decoration that appears mainly on jugs. The different distribution of these pottery types was noted between the southern coastal plain in the

vicinity of Ashkelon to the Beth Shemesh region in the Judean Shephelah, with the major sites being Tel Erani (stratum C), H. Ptorah and Hartuv (Yekutieli 2000; Kempinki and Gilead 1990; Milevski and Baumgarten 2008; Mazar and de-Miroschedji 1996).

One view suggests the Erani-C pottery is the earliest of the EBI occupations, as indicated by its associations with Proto-Dynastic Egyptian sites (Braun and van den Brink 1998). However, the sporadic presence of sherds of this style in ceramic assemblages of the study region cannot clearly testify to late EBI sub-phasing. Sporadic indications of the earliest recognizable post-early EBI settlement system within our study area are marked by the presence of few ceramic vessel forms of Erani-C pottery in a burial cave at Azor (Ben-Tor 1975: Fig. 6.3, 9.13; Perrot and Ladiray 1980: Fig. 74:19, 22, 30), at Tel Dalit, Stratum 5 (Gophna 1974: Pl. 30, no. 9), at Giv'at Tittora Cave 5 (Lass 2000; in appendix) and at Horbat Hamim, a cave context near Modi'in (van den Brink, in press).[3] Evidence for the Erani-C horizon seems to be lacking in the northern reaches of the study area (e.g., Lod and Greater Tel Aviv), where no pottery of this type was found. This lack of evidence does not necessarily imply that in this region there was no settlement coeval with the Erani-C episode; rather that there are insufficient chronologically sensitive indices to determine sequential ceramic phases.

Another view focuses on regionality (Gophna and Paz 2010: 29–34), where the chronological phasing for Erani-C is only relevant for the settlements between Ashkelon and the Beth Shemesh–Jerusalem region. It is more difficult to determine whether this distinction is applicable for the central coastal plain of Israel, mainly because of the paucity of clearly stratified sequences within Late EBI. Similar chronological *fossiles directeurs* of either the southern or northern regions cannot be used to determine the relative dating of its sites because the area was open to influences from both regions, while having its own local stylistic variations.

The Sites (Fig. 1)

Settlements

Twenty-seven Late EBI settlements, three artifact scatters as well as nine burial sites are known in this area. These can be divided into three clusters. The northern cluster is located along the extension of the Yarkon river near Tel Aphek and includes the settlements of Tel Aphek (Stratum B VIIIa-c), Tel Qana, Giv'at Qesem and Sheikh Baraz ed-Din (Fig. 2). The largest settlement in this cluster was Tel Aphek, where a fortified urban center occupied no less than 12 hectares. This site dominated the Yarkon fords (see e.g. Kochavi et. al. 2000: 67; Paz 2002: 242).

The southern cluster is located along the eastern tributaries of the Ayalon stream,

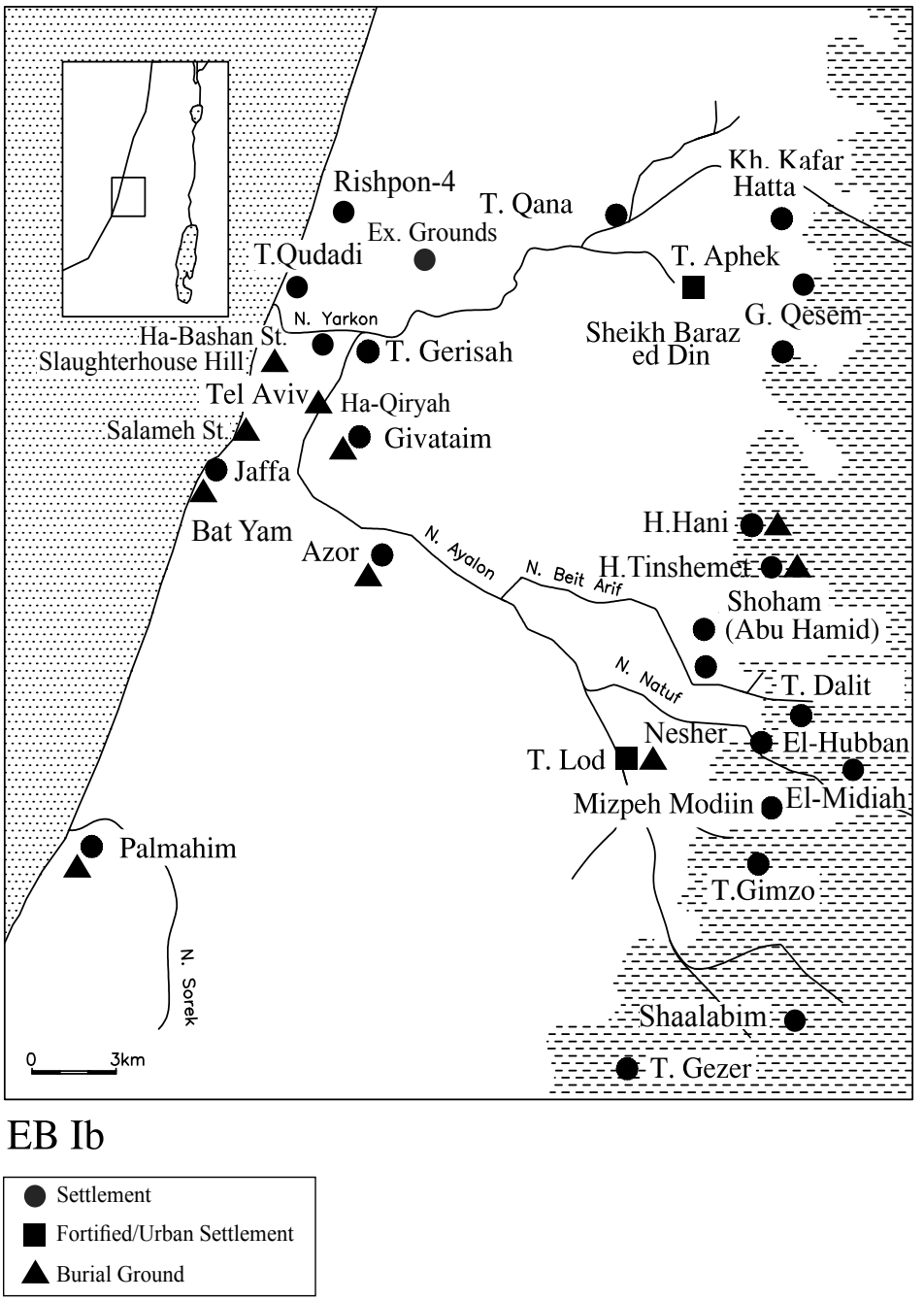


Fig. 1. The three settlement clusters of the central coastal plain during the EBIB.

an area designated as the 'Lod valley.' The sites that belong to this cluster include Horvat Hani, Horvat Tinshemet, Shoham NE, Tel Dalit, Nevallat, el-Hubban, Tel Lod, Mizpeh Modi'in, Gimzo, Sha'alabim and Gezer (cf. Shavit 2000:205–207, Figs. 6.18). Tel Lod was the major settlement here. Though neither its exact size is known, nor if it was fortified, the rich material culture and extensive occupation are evidence for its leading role in the eastern Ayalon Basin. The Dynasty 0 Egyptian baking moulds, majestic *serekhs* and other Egyptian artifacts attest to the presence of a foreign enclave of Egyptians, judging from the material culture remains (see e.g. Yannai and Marder 2000; van den Brink 2002; Paz et. al. 2005). This colony probably had an active role in the exchange of Egyptian pottery sporadically found in other sites of that region, such as at Shoham North. A possible connection of this colony to the western cluster (see below), evident by the large number of Egyptian pottery vessels found in the Tel Aviv region burial sites, such as Giva'at Kozlovsky (Giva'tayim) and Ha-Qiryah (Tel Aviv) cannot be ruled out (see e.g. Sussman and Ben-Arieh 1966; Braun and van den Brink 2002).

The third, western cluster is located along the northern extension of the Ayalon stream, and between its meeting point with the western end of the Yarkon River to the Mediterranean in an area of c. 15 × 7 km. This region seems to have been rather extensively occupied during the EBIB, with eight settlement sites and six burial sites discovered so far.

These settlement sites are north and south of the Yarkon river. Rishpon-4, the Exhibition Grounds and Tel Qudadi are North of the Yarkon. The latter two had few EBIB sherds, the excavation at Rishpon-4 yielded large amounts of pottery in the northern late EBI traditions, as well a rich assemblage of late EBIB 'Proto-Metallic Ware' (see Gophna 1978; Paz 2010; Paz, Shoval and Zlatkin 2009).

South of the Yarkon river, settlement sites included Ha-Bashan street, Tel Gerisah, Ha-Masger street, Jaffa and Azor. The major settlement of this group must have been Azor, whose cemeteries yielded vast amounts of finds, including Egyptian artifacts that attest to the presence of an Egyptian community within the Canaanite site, much like Lod (see Ben-Tor 1975).

Most settlements in all three clusters were open air sites, but a few dwellings and storage facilities existed in caves sites such as Tinshemet, Giv'at Qesem and Shoham South. These sites in the Upper Shephelah, noted for its limestone bedrock outcrops as is typical of open air settlements, remains are not preserved.

Burials

Burial caves were detected and explored in the southern and western clusters. The burials in the southern cluster include Horvat Hani, Phases III-IV, Tinshemet cave,

Nevallat, and the recently discovered Nesher-Ramlah caves (Avrutis and van den Brink 2010; Avrutis 2012).

All four sites seem to be isolated caves that were not part of large cemeteries. Their relation to a specific settlement is problematic. Considering their geographic location, one may assume that Horvat Tinshemet and Horvat Hani were connected to the settlement of Shoham, and that of Nesher-Ramlah was connected with Lod.

On the one hand, the burials of the western cluster represent a more complicated situation. Isolated burial caves were found in the southern part of this region, at Bat Yam and in Salameh Street (Kaplan 1993). On the other hand, burial sites that appear to be part of larger cemeteries were found at Nordau Street perhaps connected with the Slaughterhouse Hill, at Kaplan Junction/ha-Kiriya (Braun and van den Brink 2002; in press), Giv'atayim (Sussman and Ben-Arie 1966) and Azor (Ben-Tor 1975; cf. van den Brink et al. 2007). The latter should be connected with the settlement at Tel Azor. The burial caves at Kaplan Junction/ha-Kiriya probably were associated with a settlement probably near the adjacent Ayalon Basin or its immediate environs, although little is known as urban sprawl has removed any possibility of recovering useful information.[4]

Discussion

The settlement pattern in the central coastal plain of Israel during the EBIB was characterized by a consolidation of three settlement clusters connected to the Yarkon-Ayalon river system. It is important to note that in the northern and southern clusters, one settlement site was predominant: Aphek in the north and Lod in the south. The exact nature of Azor is still vague, as the site is still unexcavated. The other Tel Aviv region sites seem to have been small rural settlements.

A settlement pattern of notable intensity is discernible in the region, resulting from at least two hundred years[5] of development with a concomitant growth in population. At some point this process was apparently ended by a crisis or perhaps a series of crises (cf. Portugali and Gophna 1993). This caused either the total abandonment or shrinking of built-up areas at certain sites and the construction of fortification and defensive walls in others. Notably, the sole fortified site is Tel Aphek. Other sites grew and became fortified in the EBII period. Examples of dynamics can be demonstrated by Abu Hamid/ Tel Bareqet, Tel Dalit and Tel Aphek:

1) The flourishing, late EBI settlement at Abu Hamid (Nadelman 1995; Paz, Segal and Nadelman: in press), dated by ceramic parallels to Tel Lod (Paz et. al. 2005) was abandoned at the end of the period. Its population probably moved to the newly founded, EBII fortified site at nearby Tel Bareqet.

2) At Tel Aphek in late EBI, three subsequent phases of a fortified town flourished during the EBIB (Kochavi et. al 2000:62–66). This settlement came to

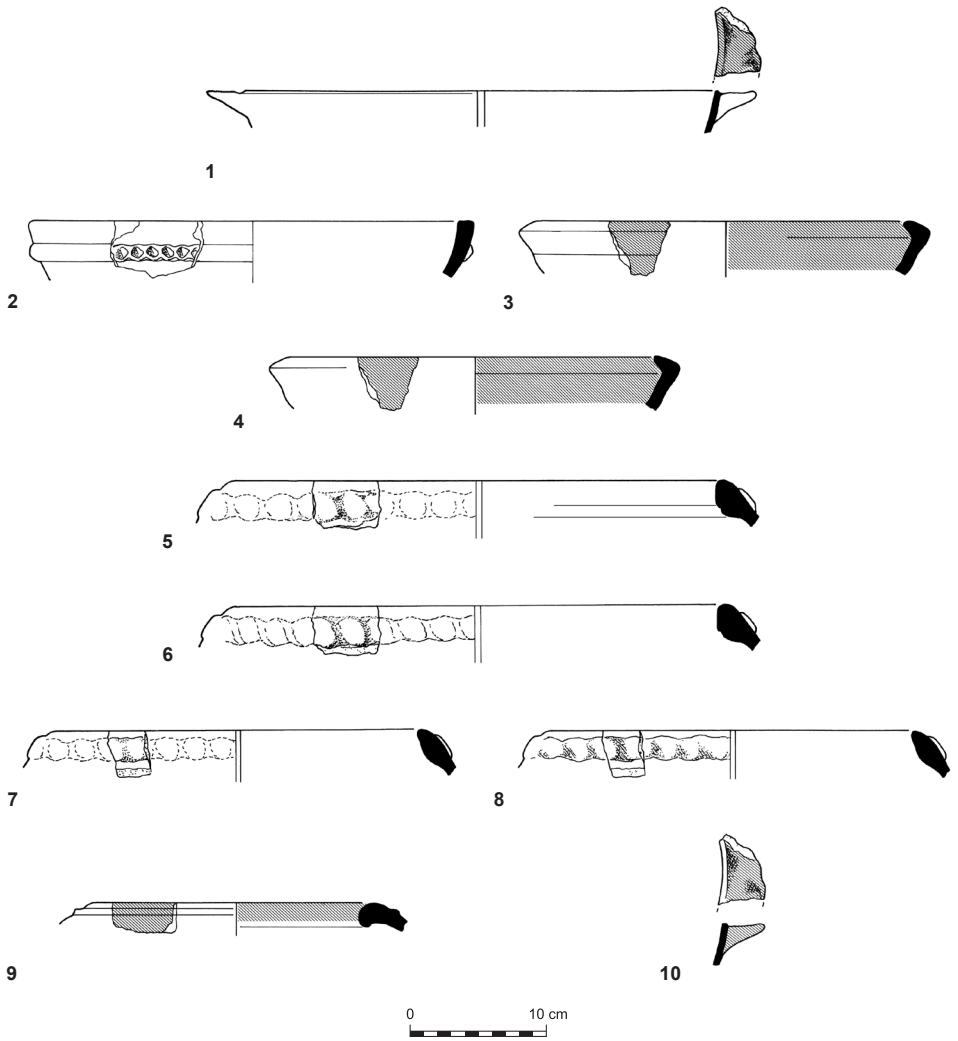


Fig. 2. EBI pottery from Sheikh Baraz ed-Din: bowls (1–4), hole-mouths (5–9), ledge handle (10).

an end by natural causes and another was established in the early EBII, possibly by the descendants of the same population. Notably, the EBII settlement was significantly smaller (Gophna pers. obs.). There is no information regarding the construction of fortifications during the Late EBI at other settlements in the region of the study besides at Tel Aphek.

Another important point should be addressed that may have implications on our ability to synchronize accurately the last horizon of the EBIB. The settlement histories of Horvat Illin Tahtit near Bet Shemesh, Tel Bareqet and Khirbet Abu Hamid (Shoham North) reflect a continuous settlement history in the EBIB (Paz, Segal and Nadelman: in press). At Horvat Illin Tahtit in stratum II, architectural features include both rounded and rectilinear structures (with rounded corners). Both these features occur in late EBIB horizons at Tel esh-Shuneh North, Tel Bet Yerah, Qiryat Ata and Palmahim (see e.g. Paz and Paz 2006; Braun 1996).

The pottery of Shoham North is characteristic to the late EBIB, with the most abundant red slipped ridged hole-mouth as a *fossil directeur,* having close parallels from many sites in northern and southern regions of Israel. A fragment of an Egyptian cylindrical vessel found in stratum II and other Egyptianized wine jar fragments testify to the late EBIB horizon of the site. Stratum I at Shoham North, although poorly preserved, reflects a totally different architecture, with segments of rectangular structures. The date of this stratum falls between the latest EBIB and the earliest EBII. Yet, no EBII pottery could be securely assigned to stratum I.

The earliest occupation at Tel Bareqet preceded the fortified town and was only detected in bedrock pockets. The settlement may be contemporaneous to stratum I at Shoham North. Pottery from these 'pockets' should be dated to the earliest EBII. The fortified town that followed this was securely dated to the EBII on the basis of ceramic hallmarks like 'North Canaanite Metallic Ware' and plastic rope-decorated hole-mouth jars. The architecture of a well-planned town with gates, towers, streets and residential quarters fits well within the model of the familiar urbanization process (see e.g. Getzov, Paz and Gophna 2001: 24–29; Greenberg 2002).

A three-stage settlement process can be reconstructed spread over less than 100 years between Shoham North stratum II (the Egyptian pottery and Proto-Metallic Ware give an estimated Dynasty 0 date of c. 3150 BCE), through stratum I, and the erection of the fortified Tel Bareqet, no later than 3050 BCE (a C14 date for the fortified town was retrieved from olive seeds to 3100 BCE).[6]

The period becomes more complicated with Horvat Illin Tahtit. This site, located c. 25 km south-east of Shoham North, was first defined as a late EBIB village (Braun 2005). It cannot be dated prior to Dynasty 0 in Egypt for two reasons: first, it lacks Erani-C pottery, abundant in other sites at the Bet Shemesh region, such as Hartuv, (Mazar and de-Miroschedji 1996), and second, Egyptian pottery fixes its late EBIB horizon to no earlier than 3200 BCE (Braun 2005). A close examination of the latest stratum III architectural phase at Horvat Illin Tahtit reveals a well planned settlement, of which more than 1100 m^2 were excavated. The site had rectangular structures, four alleyways, and not one round building. The overall plan is similar to the urban town of EBII Tel Bareqet (Braun 2005). Some pottery

types, particularly two complete jars with two pairs of handles and various jugs seem to be quite similar at both sites judging by photos published by Braun (2005) and Paz (2007). The hallmarks of late EBIB pottery, abundant at Tel Aphek in the northern cluster, Tel Lod and Shoham North (southern cluster) and Rishpon-4 (western cluster) such as red washed ridged hole-mouths are completely lacking at Horvat Illin. Plastic rope-decorated hole-mouth jars with partial decoration over the rim, securely assigned to the late EBIB (Gophna 1996: Fig. 41: 11) are common at Horvat Illin Tahtit.

A complicated chronological jigsaw can be illustrated, even though we cannot date Tel Bareqet to the EBIB and Horvat Illin Tahtit to the EBII. The following sequence between settlement episodes might be suggested, from the earliest to the latest: Shoham North stratum II (late EBIB), Horvat Illin Tahtit (late EBIB), Lod post-Egyptian phase (latest EBIB, see Paz et. al. 2005: 139), Shoham North stratum I and Tel Bareqet pre-town phase (earliest EBII). The chronological span for each episode cannot be more than 50–100 years, between 3100–3050/3000 BCE (compare between Braun 2005, Paz et. al. 2005, Paz and Paz 2007).

Moving northwest along the Ayalon stream towards the Yarkon river, the EBIB pottery tradition becomes clearer. At Aphek and Rishpon-4, the pottery resembles northern regions assemblages devoid of Erani-C types. Moreover, the few Erani-C vessels reported from mortuary contexts at Azor have little context since they were not found in clear stratigraphy. The Erani-C horizon at Hartuv and in Ramat Bet Shemesh seems to blur the chronological picture, mainly due to it being detected in horizontal rather than in vertical stratigraphy. This situation might reflect a spatial settlement shift in the EBIB.

While the settlement at Hartuv with Erani-C pottery had been deserted, its inhabitants may have settled at Horvat Illin Tahtit,[7] the situation in the Yarkon-Ayalon region is significantly different. Here, some sites represent a vertical stratigraphic sequence that reflect homogenous late EBIB pottery, while lacking any Erani-C pottery. These were short-lived sites representing the very end of the EBIB. Both spatial and stratigraphic evidence strengthen the idea that Erani-C pottery can be distinguished as a clear chronological sub-phase of the EBIB. This occurred in the smaller region spread between the Bet-Shemesh/Jerusalem area to the east, to Ashkelon in the west. This pattern did not reach the Soreq Basin or northwest to the Yarkon-Ayalon Basin (Gophna, Paz and Taxel 2010: 29–34).

An Egyptian Episode

Evidence from the end of the late Proto-Dynastic period in Egypt (Naqada IIIB-C/ late EBI), probably during the reign of the last king of Dynasty 0 and the first king of Dynasty 1, includes hundreds of vessels indicating Egyptian contacts with

the southern Levant. Cylinder seal impressions, Egyptian imported and locally imitated pottery, mainly from settlement contexts have been found in the southern region (van den Brink 2002). The assemblage from Tel Lod is impressive, where nine *serekhs* were uncovered. These highly stylized Egyptian symbols for rulers/kings bearing their names, have all been incised prior to firing on imported Egyptian vessels. Five are of Horus Narmer and one of Horus Ka (van den Brink and Braun 2002; Braun and van den Brink 2007).

Egyptian imports have also been found in burial contexts at Nesher-Ramla (Avrutis 2012), at Azor in both settlement and mortuary contexts (van den Brink et al. 2007), and at Giv'atayim in a mortuary context. Drop-shaped vessels of varying sizes indicating Egyptian influence points to the existence of a nearby settlement. Ha-Qiriah burial cave is another site. Other Late EBI burial sites often lack Egyptian imported or related material. An Egyptian bottle (probably a heirloom) was recovered in excavations at Tel Aphek in a settlement phase, dated by the excavators to EBII. A fragment of an Egyptian cylindrical vessel was found during the excavations at Shoham North (Paz, Segal and Nadelman: in press).

At the end of the EBI, finds indicate an Egyptian settlement existed at Tel Azor and Tel Lod (van den Brink 2002; Paz et al. 2005). Tel Azor was probably a northern extension of Egyptian settlement among local populations during the EBIB (see map in de-Miroschedji and Sadek 2000). At Tel Lod kitchen ware was found–bread moulds produced with organic temper. These were common in Egypt, yet rare in Canaan. Petrographic analysis conducted on some bread moulds indicated that these moulds were manufactured at En Besor, a well known Egyptian outpost. Along with Tel Sakan, this site was one of the main bases for the Egyptians moving north (Paz et. al. 2005: 148–149; Gophna 1995). Similarly, a bread mould was found in the EBIB settlements at Al-Maghar, located c. 10 km southwest of Lod. This mould also originated in the En Besor vicinity (Gophna et. al. 2010: 20). Some Egyptian authority, located along the Besor region, was probably in charge of dispatching and equipping Egyptians who went northwards to settle. Recently discovered indications of a contemporary anchorage at Jaffa may imply the existence of commercial maritime relations between the central coastal plain and Egypt (Gophna 2002).

Summary

Some fortified settlements first appear in this area during Late EBI and EBII. These represent a peak in the population of the region during the Early Bronze Age, both in density of settlements and population size (cf. Joffe 1993; Esse 1991; Paz 2002; Getzov, Paz and Gophna 2001: 22–24).

Crises are postulated to explain the abandonment of some settlements and the growth of others. Crises might explain the increased number of Late EBI and EBII fortifications, that apparently began with a defensive wall at Tel Aphek. Yet, the settlement shrank at Tel Aphek with its abundance of Late EBI finds spread over the tell yet relative scarcity of EBII artifacts spread over a restricted area (see below in the discussion of EBII material).

The data available from excavations during the last three decades enable us to compare chronological and cultural processes that took place in different regions. The settlement system of the late 4th millennium BCE (EBIB) south of the Ayalon Basin between Jerusalem-Bet Shemesh and Ashkelon was apparently characterized by local variations atypical of the other regions. The major differences between the two regions were:

1. In the Yarkon-Ayalon region, a homogenous cultural process characterized the time-span between c. 3300–3050 BCE.

2. The introduction of new elements such as 'Proto-Metallic Ware' (see e.g. Paz, Shoval and Zlatkin 2009) as well as Egyptian imported pottery assimilated in the local culture without a cultural break.

3. The Egyptian presence at Azor and at Tel Lod did not cause a break in the local material culture. The continuous nature of local late EBIB pottery types was well attested both in long stratigraphic sequences at Tel Lod and at Tel Aphek and in short-lived sites such as Rishpon-4.

The region between Bet-Shemesh westwards divides into two different chronological and cultural horizons, reflected in horizontal rather than vertical stratigraphy. The earlier Erani-C horizon was detected at Jerusalem (Shukrun: pers. comm.), Ramat Bet Shemesh (Eisenberg: forthcoming), Eshtaol west (IAA excavation in 2013), H. Ptora (Milevski and Baumgarten 2008), and Ashkelon Barnea. The later horizon was found at Horvat Illin Tahtit along with Egyptian pottery, (see e.g. Braun 2005) and Eshtaol East (Golani: pers. communication.).

One of the most curious notions that can be made here is that the closer the site is to the Yarkon river, the easier it is to differentiate between EBIB and EBII. When moving southeast along the Ayalon stream, this differentiation becomes more problematic. Foreign imports such as North Canaanite Metallic Ware that entered the region by the beginning of the 3rd millennium BCE, made this distinction easier. While most local pottery types show a typological continuation between EBIB-EBII, the introduction of North Canaanite Metallic Ware clearly outlined the very beginning of EBII in the study area.

This was not the case in the Bet Shemesh region, where no North Canaanite Metallic Ware was detected at sites like Horvat Illin Tahtit. The curious

resemblance in pottery types and in architecture between this late EBIB site to EBII Tel Bareqet may hint at another variety of development that characterized the southern region. We might suggest that by the very beginning of the 3rd millennium BCE, sites at the Yarkon-Ayalon Basin were fortified and passed the threshold of urbanization. These date to EBII, while other sites, at precisely the same time in the Bet Shemesh region, had no North Canaanite Metallic Ware or other EBII traits and therefore continued their EBIB culture. This is highly problematic, especially when the similarities between Horvat Illin Tahtit and Tel Bareqet highlight the former as a large, nucleated, pre-planned, fortified town. The trajectory towards urbanization should not be looked for in foreign factors but rather reconstructed from intra-regional socio-political processes (e.g. Paz 2002; Getzov, Paz and Gophna 2001: 22–24).

The Early Bronze Age II

Introduction (Fig. 3)

The settlement crisis that took place during the very end of the 4th millennium resulted in the abandonment of many unfortified sites and a concentration of the population in fortified towns (see Joffe 1993; Portugali and Gophna 1993; Getzov, Paz and Gophna 2001: 24–26). A similar pattern did not occur in the central coastal plain. This complicated arena presents a tripartite scenario, where each cluster consolidated during the EBIB, yet reflects a different settlement process.

The Sites

The three settlement clusters that consolidated during the EBIB changed during the EBII. The sole settlement that continued to exist in the northern cluster was Tel Aphek. All of its smaller satellites were abandoned. Tel Aphek shows a continuity in its settlement history and maintained its status as an urban center (see Greenberg 2002). The EBIB wall went out of use, and was not replaced.

The southern cluster was the scene of similar processes. During the EBII, there were five towns in the eastern part of the Ayalon Basin: Tel Dalit, Tel Bareqet, Tel Gimzo (Fig. 4), Tel Gezer and Tel Lod. The settlement at Tel Lod indicates stability during the EBII, but its exact size remains unknown. No town wall was detected during the excavations. The nearby open site of Mizpe Modi'in continued to be settled during the EBII, situated c. 3 km northeast of Tel Gimzo, further inland.

Most conspicuous are the shifts from village to town at the sites of Tel Dalit and at Tel Bareqet. The EBIB buildings at Tel Dalit, about four hectares in size, were leveled and a walled town was erected (Gophna 1996: 62). North of Tel Dalit, the EBIB village of Shoham North was abandoned by the end of the 4th millennium and in the very beginning of the EBII, a new four-hectare fortified

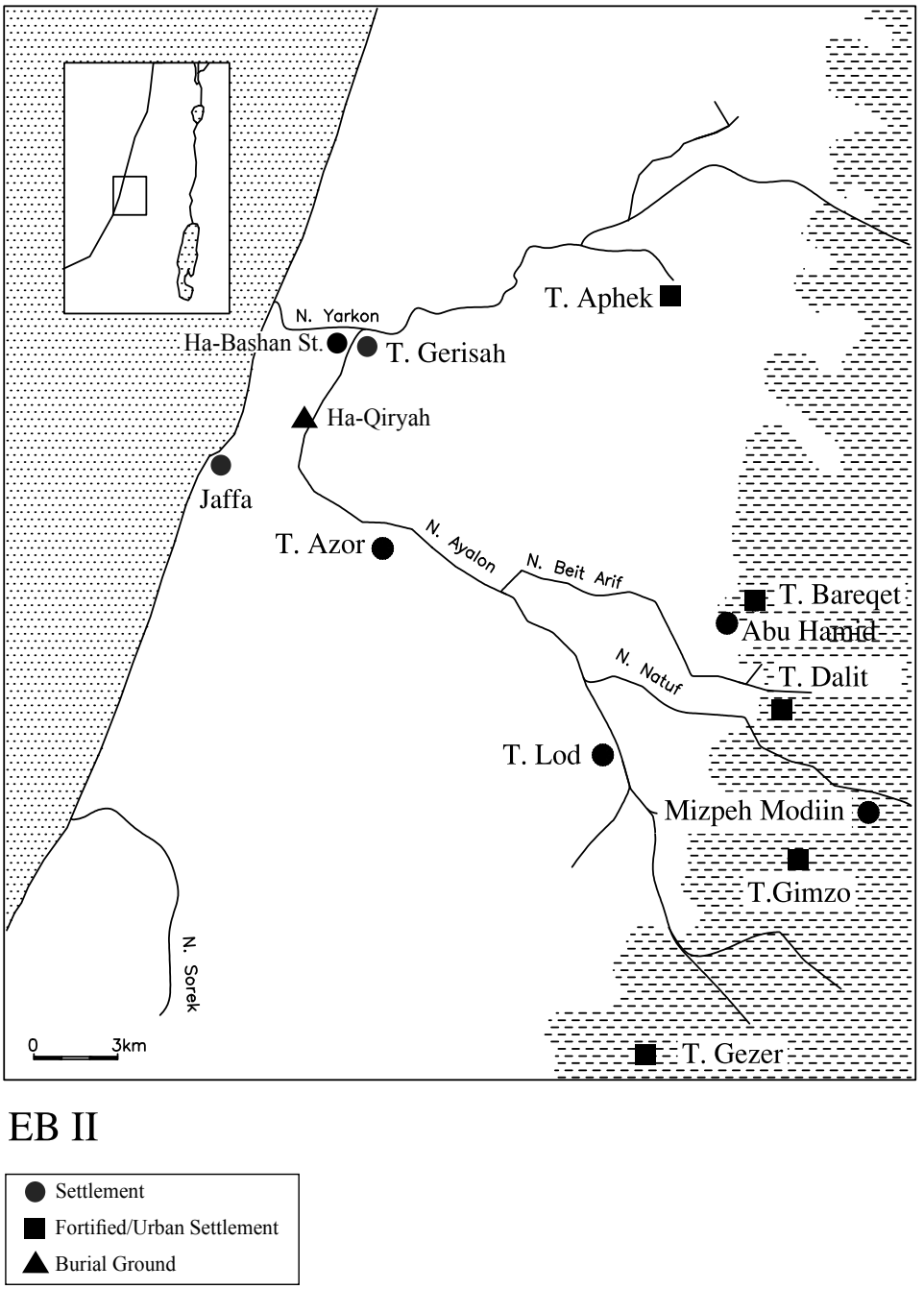


Fig. 3. The central coastal plain with three settlement clusters during the EBII.

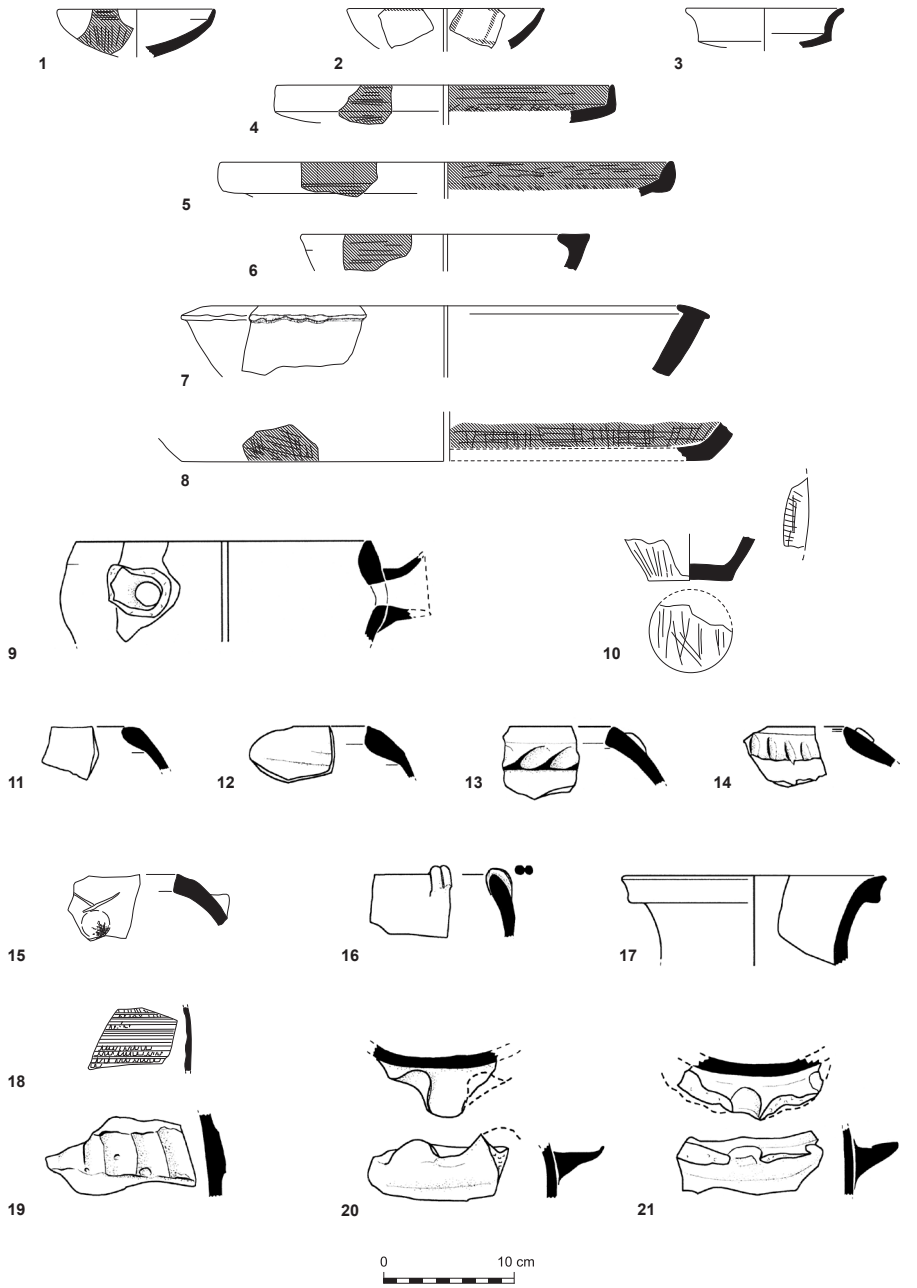


Fig. 4. EBII pottery from Tel Gimzo: bowls (1–3), platters (4–5), vats (6–7), jar base (8), spouted hole-mouth (9), juglet (10), hole-mouths (11–16), pithos (17), decorated sherds (18–19), ledge handles (20–21).

town was established at Tel Bareqet, a prominent hill located 1 km to the east. This walled town developed through two stages during the EBII (e.g. Paz and Paz 2007). An urban settlement may have also existed during the EBII at Tel Gimzo[8] and also c. 10 km southwest, at Tel Gezer (Dever 1993).

The southern cluster this area is similar to the picture characterized in the northern cluster: most of the open air villages were abandoned, and the population concentrated in few nucleated urban towns (see Gophna 1996: 158–162; Getzov, Paz and Gophna 2001: 24–25).

A different settlement picture emerges from the western cluster. Here, the number of settlements was reduced by half: only Ha-Bashan street, Tel Gerisah, Jaffa and Azor had continuous existence into the EBII. Unlike the situation in the northern and southern clusters, not one new urban settlement was established. Moreover, these four settlements maintained their rural nature. A cluster of open air settlements without links to an urban center is uncommon in the land of Israel may hint at a connection between walled towns and a new socio-political order. This pattern did not exist in the Tel Aviv-Jaffa municipal area and its immediate vicinity. This situation was presumably affected from the distinct natural setting of the coastal sites that reside adjacent to the sea shore. Therefore we might assume these were involved with seafaring activity that may have been the backbone of their existence (Gophna and Paz 2011).

Burials

Only the two burial grounds at Ha-Qiriah and Azor were continuously used during the EBII, both in the western settlement cluster. The EBII burial remains represent a possible link with the four rural villages of the western cluster. Yet, not one EBII burial ground was detected in the northern and in the southern clusters. This means that the whole EBII urban system of the central coastal plain has no data for cemeteries, a situation well known from other southern Levant regions (e.g. Ilan 2002).

The accumulated data related to the settlement history of the Lod Valley during the EBII requires an understanding of its territorial and political divisions. The settlement pattern of the Lod valley during the EBII, in which contemporaneous polities existed within urban settlement indicates that this region was divided between similar entities. Each one probably controlled a small territory.

The Early Bronze Age III

Introduction (Fig. 5)

By the beginning of the EBIII, a severe crisis affected most of the land of Israel and resulted with the abandonment of whole regions, including Upper Galilee

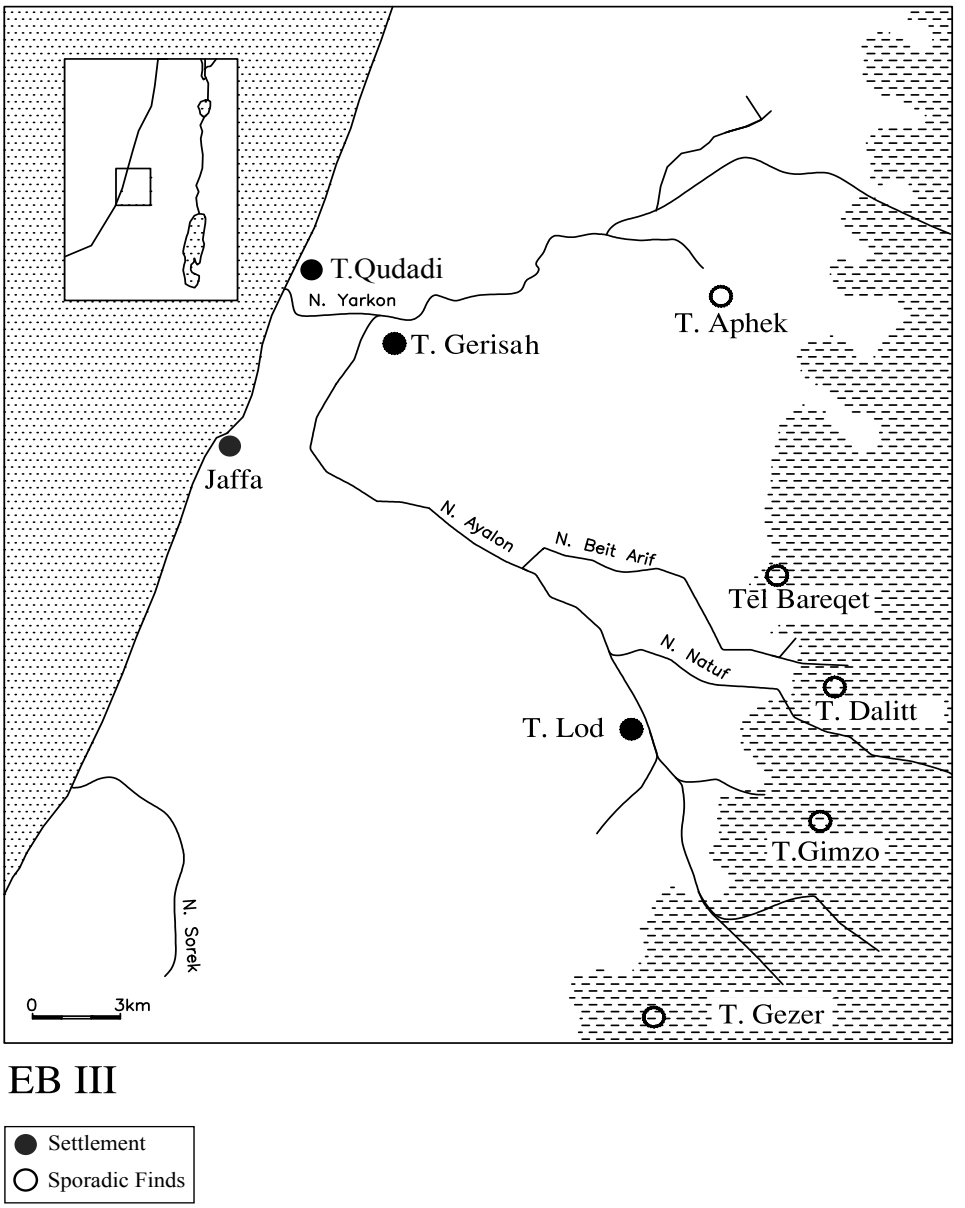


Fig. 5. The three settlement clusters of the central coastal plain during the EBIII

and the Samaria region. Many urban settlements were deserted or destroyed. The next urban system of the EBIII was primarily concentrated in three large units: the northern valleys, the Jordan Valley and the southern coastal plain with its extension into the Judean Shephelah (see Getzov, Paz and Gophna 2001: 30ff).

The settlement crisis severely affected urban towns, yet did not severely change the few rural settlements that were established in the western cluster.

The Sites

All five walled settlements of the northern and southern clusters were completely abandoned. At Tel Aphek, Tel Bareqet, Tel Dalit, and Tel Gezer, small quantities of EBIII pottery sherds (amongst some Khirbet Kerak Ware sherds) may hint at a short duration settlement episode sometime in the course of this long (c. 500 year long) period. This situation stands in sharp contrast to the flourishing urban landscape of southwestern Canaan during the EBIII (Getzov, Paz and Gophna 2001: 33–38). Two sites stand out, Tel Lod, and Tel Gimzo. At Tel Lod, the excavation results indicate the existence of a settlement during the EBIII. The survey data at Tel Gimzo may reflect a similar phenomenon.

The western cluster settlement system probably did not collapse, and a degree of continuity can be reported. At Tel Gerisah, in light of the large amounts of pottery and complete vessels found in excavations and surveys, the EBIB unfortified village continuously existed through the EBII and flourished in the EBIII (Herzog 1993; Gophna and Paz 2011). The settlement certainly benefited from its strategic location on the fords of the Yarkon river. No doubt it was connected with the site of Tel Qudadi, occupying a dominant position on the outlet of the river. Perhaps it acted as an anchorage and an outpost for marine traffic sailing eastwards on the Yarkon river (see Gophna and Paz 2011). Jaffa was another site that commanded a natural anchorage. This site was connected with maritime activity already during the EBIII (Gophna and Liphschitz 1996: 148–149).

The nearest walled towns during the whole of the Early Bronze Age III were ʻAi (Callaway 1980) to the east, Horvat Shovav (Gophna and Paz 2008) and Tel Yarmouth (de-Miroscedji 1993) to the south, both at least 35 km away. The central coastal plain was a kind of backwater until the end of the Early Bronze Age, unlike the southern coastal plain (Gophna and Blockman 2004, Getzov et al. 2001).

The Central Coastal Plain Settlement System during the EBA – A Comparison with Southwestern Israel

The above discussions highlight the complexity of the central coastal plain settlement process during the EBIB to the EBIII. The identification of three settlement clusters and their characteristics was only possible after careful examination of the results of decades of fieldwork by others, comparing the settlement process of this area with the adjacent southwestern Israel comprising the Judean Shephelah and the southwestern coastal plain. This discussion will

focus on settlement processes reflected in the material culture, with no detailed discussions on architecture.

The area that stretches from the Judean Shephelah westwards towards the western coastal plain of Israel represents an enigmatic settlement sequence that should be studied in detail in the future. The EBIB period here may be divided into two main chronological and cultural horizons (see in Yekutieli 2000). The early Erani-C pottery was found at sites such as Hartuv (Mazar and de-Miroschedji 1996), Eshtaol (Storchan: pers. comm.), Horvat Ptorah (Milevski and Baumgarten 2008), Tel Erani (Kempinski and Gilead 1991; Yekutieli 2001) and Ashkelon-Barnea.

The later horizon with an Egyptian presence was detected at sites such as Horvat Illin Tahtit (Braun 2005), Eshtaol (Golani: pers. comm.), Amaziah (Milevski: pers. comm.), Tel Erani, Tel Poran, Tel Maahaz and the Egyptian posts at Ein Besor and Tel Sakan (see e.g. de-Miroschedji and Sadeq 2000). In southwestern Israel, both early and late EBIB horizons were mainly present, yet in horizontal rather than vertical stratigraphy.

The crisis that characterized the transition between EBIB-EBII affected southwestern Israel as well. Numerous open settlements were deserted, and several urban fortified towns were established, e.g. Tel Yarmouth, Tel Zafit and Tel Agra. The EBIII was a period of vast urbanization processes characterizing the south-western regions of Israel. Settlements such as Tel Lachish, Tel Nagila, Tel Halif and Tel Hesi were established, while others, like Tel Poran, Tel Ashqelon, and Tel Saken were re-settled as fortified urban centers. Tel Yarmouth maintained its urban character, and reached its apogee during the EBIII (de-Miroschedji 1999). Other sites, such as H. Shovav, Tel Zafit and Tel Erani continuously existed as urban towns (e.g. Gophna and Paz 2008).

Concurrently, rural open settlements existed, some with and some without direct contact to the urban centers. Sites such as Givat Ziqit, Tel Turmus and Bir Gamla represent a dynamic 400-year long settlement system in EBIII, in which fortified urban towns declined and became unfortified (e.g. Tel Halif), while villages became fortified towns (e.g. Tel Hesi), other sites retained their power as urban centers (Yarmouth, Lachish), while other remained as small villages or way stations (e.g. Tel Turmus and Bir Gamla).

Conclusion

These distribution maps from the central coastal plain reflect the dynamics of social, territorial and political processes during more than one thousand years of the Early Bronze Age. Each region had its own settlement pattern during the EBA compared with the central coastal plain (Getzov, Paz and Gophna 2001). The peculiarity of the central coastal plain is shown here with the help of data

documenting traits of material culture. By reconstructing three settlement clusters, each with a different settlement pattern, where villages succeeded towns and *vice versa,* the western cluster stands out in that no settlement grew enough to become a town during the EBA.

Table 1. Periodization of known Early Bronze Age IB-III sites in the Central Coastal Plain

Sites	**EBIB (post Erani-C)**	**EBII**	**EBIII**
Tel Aphek	fortified settlement	fortified (?)	+
Tel Qanah	+		
Giv'at Qesem	storage caves		
Sheikh Baraz ed-Din	+	+	
Tel Aviv	+ (?)		
Bodenheimer Str./ha-Bashan Street	+		
Exhibition Grounds	+	+	
Hamasager Street		unfortified	
Yannai Street = (Slaughter House hill) Street = General Hill	burial caves	burial caves	
Ha-Qiryah/Kaplan Junction	+		
Rishpon 4	burial caves		
Salameh Street	burial cave		
Jaffa	+		
Tel Gerisa	+	unfortified	+
Giv'atayim	burial caves		
Azor	settlement and burial caves	+	
Tel Bareqet		fortified	
Tel Dalit	open village	fortified	
Horbat Hani (west)	(phases III-IV) burial cave		
Tinshemet	dwelling/burial cave		
Shoham (N) /Khirbet Abu Hamid	settlement		

Shoham (NE)	dwelling cave	
Shoham (S)	settlement	
Nevallat	burial cave	
el-Hubban	+	
Tel Lod	+	+
Palmahim	+	
Gimzo	+	fortified (?)
Tel Gezer Tel Gezer, Str. XXVI; Field I, ph. 14	+ mainly burial caves	 +
Tel Hamid, the lower terrace, area B	+	
Sha'alabim	+	
Mizpeh Modi'in	(sherds)	+
Nesher	burial caves	
er-Ras/el-Mediah	+	

Acknowledgements

The authors thank Mrs. Yulia Gotlieb for preparation of the figures.

Endnotes

1 Early EBI sites abandoned and not resettled during Late EBI include Mazor, Quleh, Ben Shemen, Modi'in (Deep Deposits), Horbat Hadat, Mevo Horon and Giv'at Tittora. Most of these abandoned Early EBI sites were settled during the preceding Chalcolithic period, e.g. Mazor, Quleh [west], Ben Shemen, Modi'in (Deep Deposits), Horbat Hadat and Giv'at Tittora. Sites with a similar settlement history north this area include Metzer in the central Sharon plain (Dothan 1959) and Nahal Alexander (Gophna 1974: Fig. 6).

2 Early EBI sites resettled during the Late EBI include Ha-Masger Street, the Exhibition Grounds, Azor, Tel Dalit Stratum V, Horbat Hani phases III-IV, Shoham North/Abu Hamid, Shoham South, Palmahim Quarry (burial caves) and Tel Gezer (mainly burial caves; cf. Seger 1988).

3 The Erani-C incised loop handles at Giv'at Tittora Cave 5 and at Horvat Hamim come from Early EBI contexts. The origins of this aspect of Erani-C pottery might have its roots in this period.

4 The cemetery in the Qiryah Quarter of Tel Aviv on the west bank of the Ayalon river shows the existence of a settlement on a terrace leading to the Ayalon Basin, today at the Montefiori Quarter, or perhaps 0.7 km further north, at Ha-Masger Street. This mirrors a situation to the east of the Ayalon river, with burial caves at Giv'atayim probably associated with a nearby settlement on a terrace slightly west in the direction of the Ayalon Basin.

5 For a detailed discussion of the chronology of this period see: Braun 1996: 65–169.
6 Two of three olive seeds analyzed in Switzerland by Professor Bonani gave a date of c. 3100 BC.
7 Recent excavations at Eshtaol yielded three phases of architecture and pottery exclusively dated to the Erani-C horizon (observation from the 2013 Israel Antiquities Authority excavation). This situation might reflect a large settlement that was succeeded by a smaller one since late EBIB pottery was scanty in all excavation areas. The authors wish to thank the directors of Eshtaol Excavation for allowing them to see and study the pottery of the site.
8 All available data concerning Tel Gimzo are the result of surveys during which pottery was collected from various parts of the mound, see Fig. 4.

References

Amiran, R., (1971). *The Ancient Pottery of Eretz Yisrael.* Jerusalem.

Avrutis, V.W., (2010). 'Three Early Bronze Age I Burials at el-Hirbe (Nesher-Ramle).' In S. Kol-Yakov ed., *Excavations at Nesher-Ramleh Quarry, 2006–2007* (Haifa).

Avrutis, V.W., (2012). 'Late Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age I Remains at el-Hirbe (Nesher-Ramle).' In S. Kol-Yakov ed., *Excavations at Nesher-Ramle Quarry, 2008–2009* (Haifa).

Avrutis, V.W and van den Brink, E.C.M., (2010). 'Finds from a Late Early Bronze Age I Burial Ground at Nesher-Ramle (el-Hirbe), Israel, Reflecting Egyptian-South Levantine Interrelations,' *Cahiers Caribéens d'Egyptologie* 13–14: 45–59.

Ben-Tor, A., (1975). 'Two Burial Caves of the Proto-Urban Period at Azor, 1971,' *Qedem* 1: 1–53.

Braun, E., (1996). *Cultural Diversity and Change in the Early Bronze Age I of Israel and Jordan.* Unpublished PhD dissertation (Tel Aviv University, Hebrew with English abstract).

Braun, E., (2005). 'Horvat Illin Tahtit.' Pp. 1789–1790 in E. Stern, ed., *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land* 5 (Jerusalem).

Braun, E. and van den Brink, E.C.M., (1998). 'Some Comments on the Late EBI Sequence of Canaan and Relative Dating of Tomb Uj at Umm el-Ga'ab and Graves 313 and 787 from Minshat Abu Omar with Imported Ware: Views from Egypt and Canaan. *Egypt and the Levant* 7: 71–93.

Braun, E. and van den Brink, E.C.M., (2002). Tel Aviv, Ha-Qirya. *Hadashot Arkheologiyot-Excavations and Surveys in Israel* 117. http://www.hadashot-esi.org.il/report_detail_eng.asp?id=275&mag_id=110.

Callaway, J.A., (1980). *The Early Bronze Age Citadel and Lower City at Ai.* (London).

Dever, W.G., (1993). 'Gezer.' Pp. 496–506 in E. Stern (ed.) *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land* 2 (Jerusalem).

Dothan, M., (1959). Excavations at Meser 1957: Preliminary Report on the Second Season, *Israel Exploration Journal* 9:13–29.

Esse, D.L., (1991). *Subsistence, Trade and Social Change in the Early Bronze Age*, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization. No. 50 (Chicago).

Getzov, N., (2006). *The Tel Bet Yerah Excavations 1994–1995*. IAA Reports 28 (Jerusalem).

Getzov, N., Paz Y. and Gophna R., (2001). *Shifting Urban Landscapes during the Early Bronze Age in the Land of Israel* (Tel Aviv).

Gophna, R., (1974). *The Settlement of the Coastal Plain of Eretz Israel during the Early Bronze Age*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation. (Tel Aviv University, Hebrew with English abstract).

Gophna, R., (1978). 'Archaeological Survey of the Central Coastal Plain, 1977 Preliminary Report,' *Tel Aviv* 5/3–4: 136–147.

Gophna, R., (1996). *Excavations at Tel Dalit. An Early Bronze Age Walled Town in Central Israel* (Tel Aviv).

Gophna, R., (2002). 'Elusive Anchorage Points along the Israel Littoral and the Egyptian-Canaanite Maritime Route during the Early Bronze Age I.' Pp. 418–421 in E.C.M. van den Brink and T. E. Levy (eds.), *Egyptian-Canaanite Interaction: From the 4th. Through Early 3rd Millennium B.C.E*. (London).

Gophna, R. and Liphschitz, N., (1996). 'The Ashkelon Trough Settlements in the Early Bronze Age I: New Evidence of Maritime Trade,' *Tel Aviv* 23: 143–153.

Gophna, R. and Blockman, N., (2004). 'Neolithic, Chalcolithic, Early Bronze and Intermediate Bronze Age Pottery.' Pp 873–899 in D. Ussishkin, (ed.), *The Renewed Archaeological Excavations at Lachish 1973–1994*, *Vol. II* (Tel Aviv).

Gophna, R. and Paz, Y., (2008). 'Horvat Shovav – A Fortified Urban Settlement from The Early Bronze Age in the Judean Shephelah.' Pp 55–63 in S. Bar, (ed.), *In the Hill Country and in the Shephelah, and in the Arabah, Studies and Researches Presented to Adam Zertal in the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Manasseh Hill-Country Survey. (*Jerusalem, Hebrew).

Gophna, R., Paz, Y. and Taxel, I., (2010). 'Al-Maghar–An Early Bronze Age Walled Town in the Lower Soreq Valley and the EBIB–II Sequence in the Central Coastal Plain of Israel,' *Strata* 28: 9–38.

Gophna, R. and Paz, Y., (2011). 'Tell Qudadi and Tel Gerisah: Two Early Bronze Age Sites on the Yarkon River,' *Tel Aviv* 38/1: 42–51.

Greenberg, R., (1987). *The Settlement of the Huleh Valley in EBII-III*. Unpublished MA Thesis. (Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Hebrew with English abstract).

Greenberg, R., (1996*). The Huleh Valley from the Beginning of the Early Bronze Age to the end of the Middle Bronze Age IIA: A Study in Regional Archaeology.* Unpublished PhD Dissertation. (Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Hebrew with English abstract).

Greenberg R., (2002). *Early Urbanizations in the Levant. A Regional Narrative* (London and New York).

Greenberg, R., Eisenberg, E., Paz, S. And Paz, Y., (2006). *Bet Yerah – The Early Bronze Age Mound, Vol. I, Excavation Reports (1933–1986)*. IAA Reports 30, (Jerusalem).

Herzog, Z., (1993). Gerisah, Tel. Pp. 480–484 in E. Stern, (ed.), *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land* 2 (Jerusalem).

Ilan, D., (2002). 'Mortuary Practices in Early Bronze Age Canaan,' *Near Eastern Archaeology* 65: 92–104.

Joffe, A.H., (1993). *Settlement and Society in the Early Bronze I and II, Southern Levant* (Sheffield).

Kaplan, J. and Ritter-Kaplan, H., (1993). 'Tel Aviv.' Pp. 1451–1457 in E. Stern, (ed.), *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land* 4.

Kempinski, A. and Gilead, I., (1991). 'New Excavations at Tel Erani: A Preliminary Report of the 1985–1988 Seasons,' *Tel Aviv* 18/2: 121–163.

Kochavi, M., Beck, P. and Yadin, E., (2000). eds. *Aphek-Antipatris I – Excavations of Areas A and B - The 1972–1976 Seasons* (Jerusalem).

Lass, E.H.E., (2000). 'Ḥorbat Tittora, the Eastern Slope,' *Excavations and Surveys in Israel* 20: 72*–73*.

Mazar, A. and de Miroschedji, P., (1996). 'Hartuv: an Aspect of the Early Bronze I Culture of Southern Israel,' *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 302: 1–40.

Milevski, I. and Baumgarten, Y., (2008). 'Between Lachish and Tel Erani: Horvat Ptora, a New Late Prehistoric Site in the Southern Levant.' Pp. 609–626 in**:** J. Córdoba et al. (eds.), *Proceedings of the 5th International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East* (Madrid).

de-Miroschedji, P., (1999). 'Yarmouth: The Dawn of City-States in Southern Canaan,' *Near Eastern Archaeology* 62: 2–21.

de-Miroschedji, P. and Sadek, M., (2000). 'Tell es-Sakan 2000.' *Orient Express* 4: 98–101.

Nadelman, Y., (1995). 'Shoham,' *ESI* 14: 80–81.

Paz, Y., (2002). 'Fortified Settlements of the EBIB and the Emergence of the First Urban System,' *Tel Aviv* 29/2: 238–261.

Paz, Y., (2010). '"Last but not Lost" – New Vistas on Ceramics of the Proto-Urban Horizon (Latest EBIB) – Evidence from a small site at the central coast of the Land of Israel.' Pp. 899–912 in P. Matthiae et al. (eds.), *Proceedings of ICAANE 6,* Vol 1 (Weisbaden).

Paz, S. and Paz, Y., (2006). 'Minor Excavations, 1933–1977: Areas MK, RV, BH.' Pp. 469–486 in R. Greenberg et. al. (eds.), *Tel Bet Yerah, Vol. 1: Excavation Reports* (Jerusalem).

Paz, Y and Paz, S., (2007). 'Tel Bareket- Excavations in a Fortified City of the Early Bronze Age II in the Central Coastal Plain,' *Qadmoniot* 40: 82–88 (Hebrew).

Paz, Y., Rosenberg, D. and Nativ, A., (2005). 'Excavations at Lod: Neolithic and Chalcolithic Remains and an Egyptian Presence in the Early Bronze Age,' *Salvage Excavation Reports* 2: 114–158.

Paz, Y., Shoval, S. and Zlatkin, O., (2009). 'Canaanite EBIB 'Proto Metallic Ware': the Earliest Production of Ceramic 'Metallic Ware' in the Land of Israel,' *Leiden Journal of Pottery Studies* 25: 163–188.

Paz, Y., Segal, O., and Nadelman, Y. (in press). 'An EBIB village at Shoham North,' '*Atiqot.*

Perrot, J. and Ladiray, D., (1980). *Tombes à ossuaries de la région côtière palestinienne au IVe millènaire avant l'ère chrétienne* (Paris).

Portugali, J. and Gophna, R., (1993). 'Crisis, Progress and Urbanization: the Transition from Early Bronze I to Early Bronze II in Palestine,' *Tel Aviv* 20: 164–186.

Prausnitz, M., (1957). 'Khirbet Quneitra, 1952,' *'Alon* 5–6: 35–36 (Hebrew).

Rast, W.E. and Schaub, R.T., (2004). *Bâb edh-Dhrâ': Excavations at the Town Site (1975–1981), Part 1 (Text) and Part 2 (Plates and Appendixes); Reports of the Expedition to the Dead Sea Plain, Jordan* Vol. 2 (Winona Lake, Indiana).

Shavit, A., (2000). 'Settlement Patterns in the Ayalon Valley in the Bronze and Iron Ages,' *Tel Aviv* 27/2: 189–230.

Sussman, V. and Ben-Arieh, S., (1966). 'Ancient Burials at Giva'atayim,' *'Atiqot* 3: 7–39. (Hebrew).

Stager, L. E., (1992). 'The Periodization of Palestine from Neolithic Through Early Bronze Age Times.' Pp. 22–41 in R. W. Ehrich, (ed.), *Chronologies in Old World Archaeology* 1 (Chicago).

van den Brink, E.C.M., (2002). 'An Egyptian Presence of the Late Early Bronze Age I at Tel Lod, Central Coastal Plain, Israel.' Pp. 286–305 in E.C.M. van den Brink and T. E. Levy (eds.), *Egyptian-Canaanite Interaction: From the 4th. Through Early 3rd Millennium B.C.E*. (London).

Yannai, E. and Marder, O., (2000). 'Lod,' *Hadashot Arkheologiyot-Excavations and Surveys in Israel* 112: 63*–65*.

Yekutieli, Y., (2000). 'Early Bronze Age I Pottery in Southwestern Canaan.' Pp. 129–152 in G. Philip and D. Baird (eds.), *Ceramics and Change in the Early Bronze Age of the Southern Levant* (Sheffield).

Yekutieli, Y., (2001). 'The Early Bronze Age IA Pottery of Southwestern Canaan.' Pp. 659–688 in S. R. Wolff (ed.), *Studies in the Archaeology of Israel and Neighboring Lands in Memory of Douglas L. Esse* (Chicago-Atlanta).

Winn, S.M.M. and Yakar, J., (1984). 'The 1982 Excavations at Tel Kinrot: The Early Bronze Age Settlement,' *Tel Aviv* 11: 20–47.

A New Suggestion Regarding Plaque Figurines and a New Figurine from Khirbet Summeily

Rachel Hallote
Purchase College SUNY

While female plaque figurines are generally considered to have connections with fertility, scholarship is still somewhat divided on whether this group of artefacts represents humans or goddesses, and if goddesses, which goddess in particular. Through the analysis of a plaque figurine found at the Iron II site of Khirbet Summeily, it is suggested that not only are plaque figurines indeed depictions of human women, but that they served as talismans of a specific stage of fertility, the days immediately following birth.

Introduction and Context

During the second season of excavations at Khirbet Summeily, an Iron Age site in the northern Negev desert, a fragmentary plaque figurine was found near the surface of a newly opened excavation area. The figurine is typical of the plaque type, but a brief analysis of its specifics will lead to a new interpretation of the use of plaque figurines in general. It is suggested that plaques are talismans that specifically represent human women post-partum, as they recover from childbirth.

Khirbet Summeily is a small Iron Age village site, located 4 km west of Tell el-Hesi, in the northern Negev desert, along a branch of the Wadi el-Hesi (Nahal Shiqma), map reference (OIG) 12040 10815 (Fig. 1).[1] While the site has been known to archaeologists since Petrie surveyed the region in 1890, it had not been previously excavated. Extending over 24 dunams at its largest point, Summeily is a subsection of the larger site of Horvat Soreka, which includes Ottoman and Mandate Period remains.

Excavations at Summeily began in 2011, and two seasons of excavation have taken place so far, co-directed by James Hardin (Cobb Institute, Mississippi State University) and Jeffrey A. Blakely (University of Wisconsin-Madison).[2] Based on preliminary ceramic analysis, the site appears to have almost exclusively Iron Age remains, largely Judahite in character, and mainly dating from the 10th–8th centuries BCE, with a smattering of Philistine ceramic material. The excavators believe that that the site is located on or near the border between Judah and Philistia (see Hardin, Rollston and Blakely 2012:31).

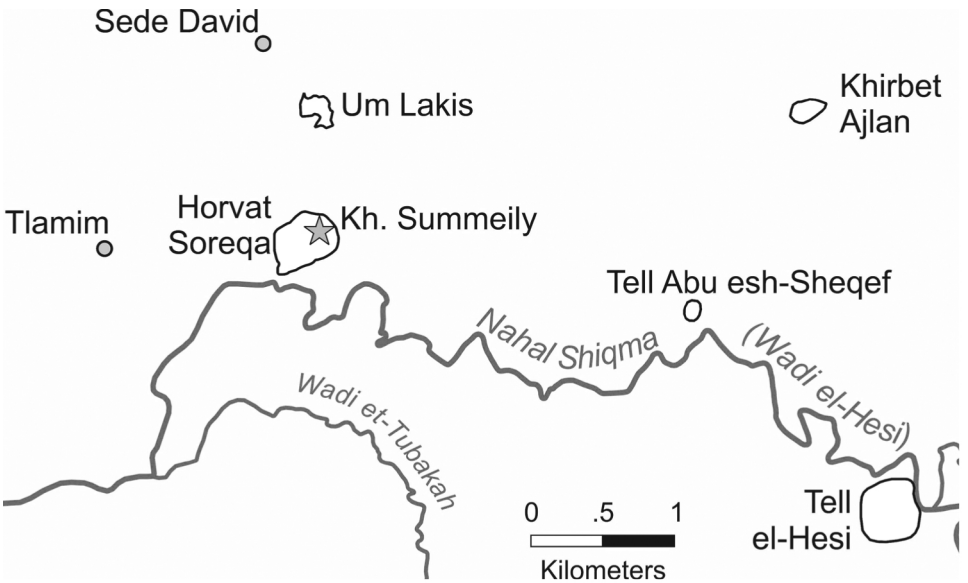


Fig. 1. Location of Khirbet Summeily

Find Spot and Description

During the 2012 excavation season, a fragmentary plaque figurine was found near the surface of a newly opened excavation area in the northern part of the site (Fig. 2).[3] While the figurine was found in a topsoil locus, Summeily has no overburden of late material, and the first stratum below topsoil dates to the 10th–9th centuries BCE. Based on finds in this area of the site, notably the large numbers of loom weights excavated just below topsoil levels, we suggest that this was a weaving area within a domestic sphere (see Blakely and Hardin in prep).

The female figurine fragment measures 4.4 cm in height at the left side and 5.1 cm on the right side, is 3.8 cm wide, and varies between 0.5 and 1.0 cm in thickness (Fig. 3). It is made of a porous clay, and is light brown in color, 7.5 YR 7/4 on the Munsell scale. It bears no evidence of paint or slip. The surface is badly worn and is mottled by marks from chaff. Typical of plaque figurines, it appears to have been made in an open mould.

Only the lower half of the figurine is preserved, from a point just above the pubic region, to the ankles. The feet are missing. The visible features of the body (legs, pubic triangle) are in shallow relief. The reverse of the plaque is flat in its center, but curves pronouncedly upwards towards the sides. There is no decorative treatment on the reverse. On the outermost part of the obverse are traces of what

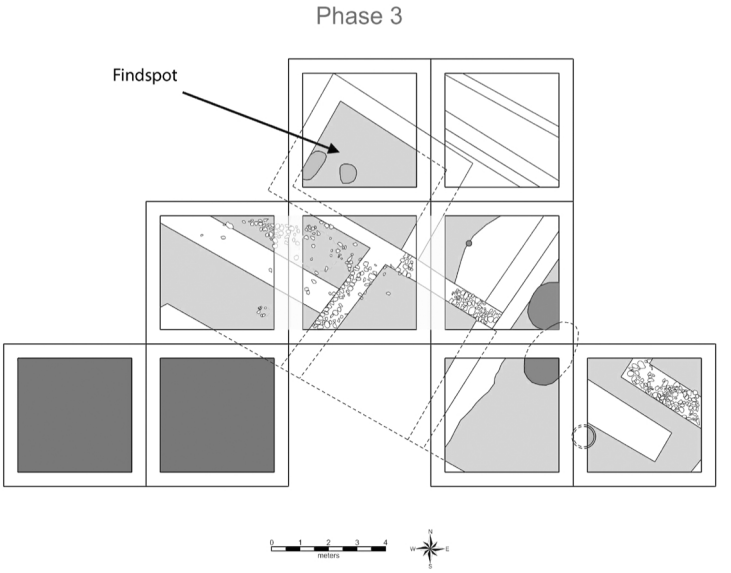


Fig. 2. Plan of Khirbet Summeily with findspot of figurine marked

Fig. 3. Photograph of figurine

might be a frame-like line, slightly more pronounced on the right side than on the left. As is typical of plaque figurines, the legs are somewhat elongated, and depicted slightly apart. While the leftmost foot is broken off, the curvature on the right one suggests that the foot itself is partially intact, and extends frontwards (not sideways), as is common with "lying-on-bed" plaque figurines (see below). No toes are represented, and the relief is very shallow in this portion of the figure. Due to the absence of arms next to the body, it is clear that the arms were depicted in a raised position, and would have appeared entirely on the missing top part. Owing to its fragmentary nature, no speculation can be made about specific positions of arms, style of face, hair, or jewelry.

Although several scholars have studied female figurines, including plaques, over the years (notably Kletter 1996, Hadley 2000), Tadmor's typology from 30 years ago still holds as the main reference point for these figures, and some of her basic conclusions regarding their physical position, as well as identification, will be referred to here (Tadmor 1982; also Tadmor 1996). For instance, the lack of decorative treatment of the back of the Summeily figurine, combined with the curvature of the back, makes it likely that this figurine was intended to be placed in a lying down position, not a standing one, which is in line with Tadmor's category of "figurines lying on beds." Similarly, the traces of the frame-like line are consistent with what Tadmor has suggested might be part of a ledge or edge of the bed (Tadmor 1982:156–157). The fact that the arms were most likely raised is also in line with many well known examples of plaque figurines with arms in various uplifted positions, sometimes with hands cupping breasts, (such as several from Tel Zeror, and other examples) and other times holding an object. As will be discussed below, these figurines certainly represent humans, in contrast to a separate group of plaque figurines that commonly wear Hathor wigs and that possibly represent goddesses.

Dating

In her study of female iconography, Hadley cites a wide variety of examples and agrees with Tadmor that the height of the period of plaque figurines was the late Bronze Age, but that they continued to be manufactured into the early Iron Age. Tadmor and Hadley both note that the Iron Age plaque figures are often made in a debased style when compared to their late Bronze predecessors. At one point it was thought that later ones were limited to sites in northern and coastal regions, and did not appear at southern sites (Hadley 2000:188; Tadmor 1982:171–172), however, in recent years additional figurines have been found at sites such as Beth Shemesh, Kibbutz Revadim, and Aphek, and even Philistine Ashkelon among other southern locations (cf. Hadley 2000:193; Press 2012:75). The Summeily

figurine can be added to these. This Canaanite plaque figurine tradition began in the late Bronze Age, and continued in inland southern Judah in the early Iron Age.

The Summeily figurine, although a surface find, can be dated by the context of the site as well as stylistically. The preliminary analysis of the ceramics from Khirbet Summeily points to the Iron Age II as the main period of occupation, with at least four identifiable strata dating from the 10th–9th centuries through the 8th century BCE. However, a fair amount of Iron I and a small quantity of LB materials are mixed with the Iron II ceramics (see Blakely and Hardin, in preparation).

The existence of some Iron I ceramics at Summeily can be combined with what is known about the timeframe for the manufacture of plaque figurines. The Summeily figurine, with its shallow relief, undistinguished carving, and poor quality clay fits into the stylistically debased category of plaque figurines of the early Iron Age. Because some Iron I material is known at Summeily, it is likely that the Summeily plaque figurine also dates to the early Iron Age. Because it comes from a topsoil context, nothing more precise may be postulated.

Discussion

To date, no one has published a complete catalogue of the plaque figures of the southern Levant, although there are catalogues and discussions of human and animal figurines that include plaques (see Moorey 2003, Holland 1975), often with the uncritical assumption that the plaque figurines denote a subcategory of divine figures (see for instance Sugimoto 2008, and various previous studies noted by Cornelius 2004:1–4).[4] Yet several scholars have long since demonstrated that the type of figurine found at Summeily is part of a grouping of plaque figurines that most likely represents human women rather than goddesses.

One of Tadmor's main conclusions regarding plaque figurines was that those of the "lying-on-bed" type represent human beings, not deities, as they completely lack any divine symbolism (Tadmor 1982:149, 170). In fact, Tadmor was able to differentiate between this non-divine "lying-on-bed" group and several other groups of plaque figurines. She particularly distinguished between the "lying-on-bed" group and a different group that stand upright with their feet turned out, wear Hathor wigs, and often hold long-stemmed flowers—suggesting this latter group may be divine.[5] Tadmor is followed by Hadley, and both speculated on which goddess may be associated with the standing, Hathor-wigged plaque figurines, concluding that Qudshu, Astarte and Anath, or a combination thereof, are all possibilities (Tadmor 1982:161, 164; Hadley 2000:9, 188–196).[6]

The only significant challenge to the suggestion that the "lying-on-bed" plaque figurines are depictions of human women is found in Keel and Uehlinger (1998).

In their discussion of images of the divine, Keel and Uehlinger reiterate some of the older arguments for divinity of these plaques put forward by the first generation of scholars such as Albright (1939) and Pritchard (1943), and also dispute the bed iconography and the idea of lying rather than standing, in spite of the clear iconography of the feet and "bed frame" (Keel and Uehlinger 1998:99–100).) But when trying to identify which goddess the plaques represent, Keel and Uehlinger struggle with the interpretation, saying that neither "fertility goddess" nor "mother goddess" is an adequate characterization, and attempting to suggest that the nudity is merely representative of youthfulness or "erotic attractiveness" (Keel and Uehlinger 1998:106). Similarly Dever, in a rather cursory overview of plaque figurines, assumes they are divine (Dever 2005:176–179), while Moorey, who classifies them into a divine "Astarte" category, admits that they have no direct attribute of the divine (Moorey 2003:40).[7] None of these assertions of divinity are sufficient, and Tadmor's original points about the lack of divine symbolism, the rounded backs which demonstrate they were placed in a lying down position, the extended feet of a flat-lying figure, and the frames that might represent beds, still hold.

Plaque Figurines as Possible Post-Partum Talismans

If these plaque figurines do indeed represent human women, the important remaining question is what were they used for—i.e., what was the function of these small, crudely-formed depictions of nude human women lying on beds?

Certainly, the nudity of figurines allows for the general interpretation that they were fertility related (see for instance Dever 2005, Kletter 1996). Their common findspots in domestic contexts should also be seen as related to women's household worship rather than public worship (see, generally, Ebeling 2010 on the association of women's items with the domestic sphere, and Meyers 1999 and 2007 on the role of women in society via analyses of domestic spaces).

One previous suggestion about the use of these figures was funerary. Tadmor noted that plaque figurines are sometimes found in burial contexts (Tadmor 1982:149, 171). However while a number of these have certainly been found in burials, many have been found in stratigraphic contexts as well, notably in domestic structures (Keel and Uehilinger 1998:100). These two contexts (burial and domestic) both leave open the possibility that these figurines were owned and kept by women as talismans. If these were women's items, their findspots in domestic areas inhabited regularly by women seems reasonable (cf. the Summeily figurine abandoned in the general context of a domestic weaving area). Furthermore, the fact that some were found in funerary contexts allows for the possibility that they were buried with their female owners, although much more careful analyses of funerary contexts would need to be undertaken to determine whether they were buried with women exclusively.[8]

Another quite reasonable suggestion regarding these objects is that they are fertility figurines, talismans relating to childbirth. This was suggested early in the scholarship by Albright (1939) and also Pritchard (1943). Albright specifically commented about the figurines' relation to childbirth based on the fact that the hands were occasionally positioned at the genitalia. He interpreted this gesture as representing a woman about to give birth (cf. an example from Taanach, Keel and Uehilinger 1992:99, after Albright 1939:109, 119). Pritchard, who assumed these figurines represented goddesses, also made the association with childbearing (Pritchard 1943:87, noted in Hadley 2000:188, and Tadmor 1982:171). The suggestions of more recent scholars also mimic this, notably that of Beck, who concluded that these figurines represent a deity of fertility who was meant to protect women in childbirth (Beck 1986:31–32).

However, it should be noted that even the figurines with hands near the pubic region do not appear pregnant. In fact, rather than general childbirth associations, this author suggests a more specific possibility for recumbent human female plaque figurines, regardless of the position of their hands. It is possible that these figurines were talismans associated with the post-partum period, specifically the recovery period in the days immediately following childbirth, when the mother is sometimes in equal physical danger to the infant. The nudity of the figures could represent the recent act of giving birth (or human fertility in general) while in the case of the figurines which hold their breasts, the gesture could reflect the concern with nursing, an especially dominant concern in the days immediately following birth, when only colostrum sustains the infant. The position of lying flat on a bed may represent a period of repose and recovery following the physical exertion of giving birth.

The hypothesis regarding recovery in a post-partum period is strengthened by the fact that in biblical Judah there was a clear societal acknowledgement of a specific post-partum period. A brief examination of biblical passages regarding purity laws demonstrates this. According to Leviticus 12:1–7, after giving birth to a boy, a mother was considered impure for a total of 40 days, divided into the 7 days between birth and circumcision, followed by another 33 days. After giving birth to a girl, a mother was impure for a total of 80 days, divided into an initial 14 days, followed by an additional 66 days. These periods immediately after birth exempted her from contact with her husband, which in practical and medical terms would allow her body to heal following birth.[9] While the intent of the text is to protect the community from impurity from the post-partum distarches, it is notable that only the mother is impure, while the child, who was born in the midst of the secretions, is not (see Milgrom 1991:744–766). All this reflects a tacit cultural recognition of the precarious physical state of the mother immediately following childbirth. This post-partum recovery period was one of risk to mothers as well as

infants. Its length could be loosely measured in time based on the amount, type and continuation of the flowing of lochia, as is evidenced by the separation into two phases in the Leviticus text (Milgrom 1991:749). From this, it is possible to postulate that small, portable clay figurines, often small enough to hold in the palm of one's hand, or place in the pocket of a garment, represented a successfully recuperating new mother, and would be kept and held by a woman in the weeks immediately following childbirth. If such figurines had hands at the breasts as well, they could also represent the concomitant biological issue of this recovery period: the need to nourish the infant to keep it alive.

Successful physical recovery as well as nursing were primary physical concerns of women which were not addressed by official cults of deities. These figurines were likely talismans that were held by women as a method of expressing the hope for successful recovery, or possibly to help along private prayers or petitions. If the woman did not survive childbirth or died shortly thereafter, these figures could certainly have been buried with her, now representing the cause of her death.

Conclusion

As a small, somewhat isolated village site, Khirbet Summeily was probably protected by the nearby Judahite fortress of Tell el-Hesi. In spite of its location, it may not have self-identified as Judahite, or seen itself in relation to the larger whole based in Jerusalem (see Blakely and Hardin, in prep.). Just as the site itself has no clear cultural affiliations besides a preponderance of Judahite ceramics, there is no evidence of either any standard Canaanite cultic traditions nor any Philistine or Judahite ones. However, early Iron II levels at the site include what appears to be a cult room, with a grinding stone altar and a low-fired ceramic zoomorphic head of an animal placed nearby (idem).[10] This very interesting cultic installation merely emphasizes the various local traditions that seem to have thrived in a small unaffiliated village.

The fact that a plaque figurine, an item that was a common feature of Canaanite folk religion, was found at such a site adds weight to the hypothesis that this type of figurine is indeed associated with small-scale domestic cult, not with worship of any major goddess, and is therefore human, not divine. Based on its stylistic details, this figurine most likely dates to the early Iron Age and was probably kept as an heirloom, possibly handed down for several generations, and was brought to Summeily with its owner when the village was first founded. While contextually it comes from topsoil, more generally, it might have been from a domestic area (potentially a courtyard area) where the female-dominated domestic task of weaving took place.[11] This particular figurine, as well as the figurine type in general, could have been used as a talisman by individual women in the weeks

following the birth of a child, as these women would not have strong associations or connections with a dominant temple cultic tradition.

Notes

1 All graphics in this study are courtesy of William Isenberger, for the Hesi Regional Project.
2 The project is supported by the Cobb Institute of Archaeology of Mississippi State University, with additional support from the Institute for Jewish Studies Program of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and the Jewish Studies Program of Purchase College SUNY. Core team members came from all three institutions.
3 Specifically, the figurine was found in the western topsoil material of excavation area 53. Object registration G–42/20/1 I.55.002 MC 013 MCR 1061 OR 130 (26/6/12)
4 Cornelius notes his own intent to produce a cataloguing study of the plaque type (Cornelius 2004:15 note 47).
5 Tadmor also describes a third group of plaque figurines known from Deir el-Balah, which also depict human women lying on beds, but which are Egyptian in style.
6 These goddesses have also all been linked in an inscription which includes all of these names. Both Tadmor and Hadley cite the Winchester figurine, now in a private collection, but published by I. Edwards in 1955.
7 See also Ziffer, Bunimovitz and Lederman 2009, and Paz 2007.
8 While morphological analyses of skeletal remains from southern Levantine tombs are often not practical, associations with other items, such as jewellery, and as opposed to weaponry, could shed light on gender (see generally Hallote 1995).
9 There were numerous discussions in the Rabbinic Period about whether all or only the first part of these days meant abstinence, but generally it was understood to last for entirety of the period (see Milgrom 1991:748–750). The longer length of impurity following the birth of a girl is commonly understood as being a reflection of the status of the sexes in society. The linkage of impurity to post-partum secretions is paralleled in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Hatti, as well as other lands.
10 The excavators suggest the head is of a lion or lioness, but another possibility is that it represents an ovicaprid.
11 See for instance Ebeling 2010:56–59 on weaving as a female domestic task.

Bibliography

Albright, W. F., (1939). 'Astarte Plaques and Figurines from Tell Beit Mirsim.' Pp. 107–120 in *Mélanges syriens offerts à M. René Dussaud. Bibliothèque archéologique et historique* (Paris).

Beck, P., (1986). 'A New Type of Female Figurine.' Pp. 29–34 in M. Kelly-Buccellati et al. (eds.), *Insight Through Images: Studies in Honor of Edith Porada. Bibliotheca Mesopotamica* 21 (Malibu).

Blakely, J. A. and Hardin, J. W. (in preparation). *Preliminary Report on Khirbet Summeily Excavations.*

Cornelius, I., (2004). *The Many Faces of the Goddess: The Iconography of the Syro-Palestinian Goddesses Anat, Astarte, Qedeshet, and Ashera c. 1500–1000 BCE*. Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 204 (Freiburg).

Dever, W. G., (2005). *Did God Have a Wife? Archaeology and Folk Religion in Ancient Israel* (Grand Rapids).

Ebeling, J., (2010). *Women's Lives in Biblical Times* (New York).

Hadley, J., (2000). *The Cult of Asherah in Ancient Israel and Judah: Evidence for a Hebrew Goddess* (Cambridge).

Hallote, R., (1995). 'Mortuary Archaeology and the Middle Bronze Age Southern Levant,' *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 8/1:93–125.

Hardin, J. W., Rollston, C. A., and Blakely, J. A., (2012). 'Biblical Geography in Southwestern Judah,' *Near Eastern Archaeology* 75/1:20–35.

Holland, T., (1975). *A Typological and Archaeological Study of Human and Animal Representations in the Plastic Art in Palestine During the Iron Age* (Unpublished PhD dissertation, Oxford University).

Keel, O. and Uehlinger, G., (1998). *Gods, Goddesses and Images of God in Ancient Israel* (Minneapolis).

Keil, C. F. and Delitzsch, F., (1866). *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament* (Edinburgh).

Kletter, R., (1996). *The Judean Pillar Figurines and the Archaeology of Asherah.* BAR International Series 636 (Oxford).

Meyers, C., (1999). 'Women and the Domestic Economy of Early Israel.' Pp. 33–41 in A. Bach (ed.), *Women in the Hebrew Bible: A Reader* (New York).

Meyers, C., (2007). 'From Field Crops to Food: Attributing Gender and Meaning to Bread Production in Iron Age Israel.' Pp. 67–84 in D. R. Edwards and C. T. McCollough (eds.), *The Archaeology of Difference: Gender, Ethnicity, Class and the "Other" in Antiquity: Studies in Honor of Eric M. Meyers* (Boston).

Milgrom, J., (1991). *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, Anchor Bible, vol. 3* (New York).

Moorey, P. R. S., (2003). *Idols of the People: Miniature Images of Clay in the Ancient Near East*: *The Schweich Lectures of the British Academy, 2001* (Oxford).

Paz, S., (2007). *Drums, Women, and Goddesses: Drumming and Gender in Iron Age II Israel* (Fribourg).

Press, M. D., (2012). *Ashkelon 4: The Iron Age Figurines of Ashkelon and Philistia* (Winona Lake).

Pritchard, J. B., (1943). *Palestinian Figurines in Relation to Certain Goddesses Known Through Literatur*e, American Oriental Series vol. 24 (New Haven).

Sugimoto, D. T., (2008). *Female Figurines with a Disc from the Southern Levant and the Formation of Monotheism* (Tokyo).

Tadmor, M., (1982). 'Female Cult Figures in Late Canaan and Early Israel: Archaeological Evidence.' Pp. 139–173 in T. Ishida (ed.), *Studies in the Period of David and Solomon and Other Essays* (Winona Lake).

Tadmor, M., (1996). 'Plaque Figurines of Recumbent Women: Use and Meaning,' *Eretz Israel* 25:290–296 (Hebrew).

Whitekettle, R., (1995). 'Leviticus 12 and the Israelite Woman: Ritual Process, Liminality and the Womb,' *Zeitschrift fur die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 107:393–408.

Ziffer, I., Bunimovitz, S., and Lederman, Z., (2009). 'Divine or Human? An Intriguing Plaque Figurine from Tel Beth-Shemesh,' *Ägypten und Levante* 19:333–341.

Between Phoenicia and Judaea: Preliminary Results of the 2007–2010 Excavation Seasons at Horvat ‘Eleq, Ramat HaNadiv, Israel

Orit Peleg-Barkat[1] and Yotam Tepper[2,3]

[1]*Hebrew University of Jerusalem*
[2]*Tel Aviv University*
[3]*Israel Antiquities Authority*

In Memory of Prof. Yizhar Hirschfeld

Renewed excavations at Horvat ‘Eleq support a fresh understanding of this multi-strata settlement. The site was first inhabited in the Iron Age. A fortification system was constructed in the 4th century BCE and was already out of use by the Hellenistic period. The finds indicate that the Hellenistic period saw the zenith of the settlement, in terms of magnitude of construction and extent. New data contradicts Hirschfeld’s identification of the site as a single strata, fortified Herodian palace. Reassessment of the date of the fortification at the site and its phases of occupation sheds light on the border between Phoenicia and Judaea during the Persian and Hellenistic periods.

Introduction

Horvat ‘Eleq (Khirbet Umm el-’Aleq), situated on the eastern slopes of Ramat HaNadiv (Fig. 1), was excavated since 1984 by an archaeological expedition headed by the late Prof. Yizhar Hirschfeld, on behalf of the Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The excavations were initiated and funded by the Ramat HaNadiv Foundation. In 2000 Hirschfeld published the first volume of the report, presenting and analysing the results of the 1984–1998 excavations (Hirschfeld 2000). In the same year, Hirschfeld resumed excavations and they continued, alongside preservation and reconstruction work, until 2005.[1] A final excavation season, scheduled for summer 2007, was meant to complete the exposure of the wall that encircles the site and allow the Ramat HaNadiv Foundation to make preparations for opening the site to the public.

Hirschfeld’s untimely death in November 2006 jeopardized this plan. However, with a decision by the Foundation to complete the excavations and their timely publication, the authors were appointed by the committee of executors of Hirschfeld’s scientific

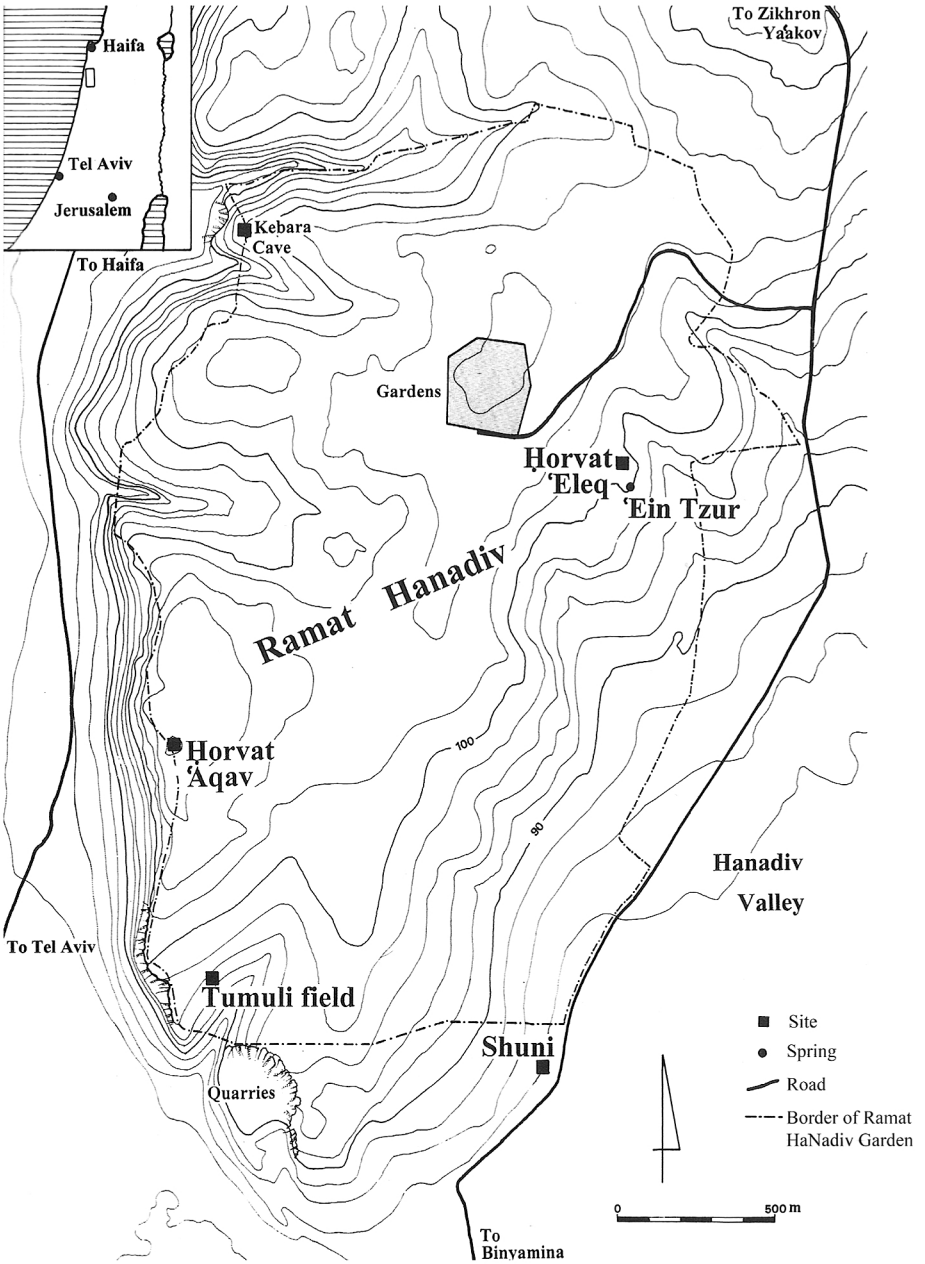


Fig.1. General plan of Ramat HaNadiv and the location of Horvat ‘Eleq (Hirschfeld 2000: Fig. 1).

legacy at the Hebrew University to complete and publish the excavations at the site. Consequently, during 2007–2010 three seasons of excavations at Horvat ‘Eleq were conducted.[2] To publish the complete results of the excavation seasons that have not been published by Hirschfeld himself, the finds from earlier seasons were given to specialists for analysis.

The preliminary results of the renewed excavations depict a more nuanced perception of the site, including the dating of its phases of occupation, and the functions of various buildings. One of the most striking conclusions is that the fortification of the site, ascribed by Hirschfeld to the time of Herod, should be dated *c*. 300 years earlier, namely to the end of the Persian period or the beginning of the Hellenistic period. Hirschfeld’s identification of the site in the Early Roman period as an impressive estate is also questioned by the authors, as no typical palatial Herodian architectonic features were uncovered (Tepper 2013).

Hirschfeld’s Excavations at Horvat ‘Eleq (1984–2005)

In Hirschfeld’s last articles on Horvat ‘Eleq, there is a strong emphasis on the Early Roman phase of occupation at the site (Hirschfeld 2003; Hirschfeld and Peleg 2005; Hirschfeld and Feinberg-Vamosh 2005),[3] though in the excavation report (Hirschfeld 2000), he describes five archaeological layers:

Phase I
This phase is represented by a single wall in Area C with both Iron Age I and II pottery found in mixed loci.

Phase II
Hirschfeld identified a dozen walls at the north-western section of the site (Area C) and the remains of a pool near the spring at the foot of the site. He suggested this area was an Early Hellenistic period rural settlement. Several walls and architectural units were uncovered outside of the peripheral wall, to its west, north, and south.

The finds relating to this phase include local and imported pottery dated from the Ptolemaic and Seleucid rule in the 3rd and 2nd centuries BCE. A lack of Hasmonaean coins in the numismatic assemblage lead Hirschfeld to suggest that the site was destroyed during Alexander Jannaeus’ campaigns (103–76 BCE) and was left in ruins until the ascension to power of King Herod (37–4 BCE).

Phase III
Hirschfeld identified architectural complexes encircled by the peripheral wall with its towers as the remnants of a large Early Roman mansion. Hirschfeld sometimes referred to this area as the Herodian palatial estate or fortified palace, and suggested

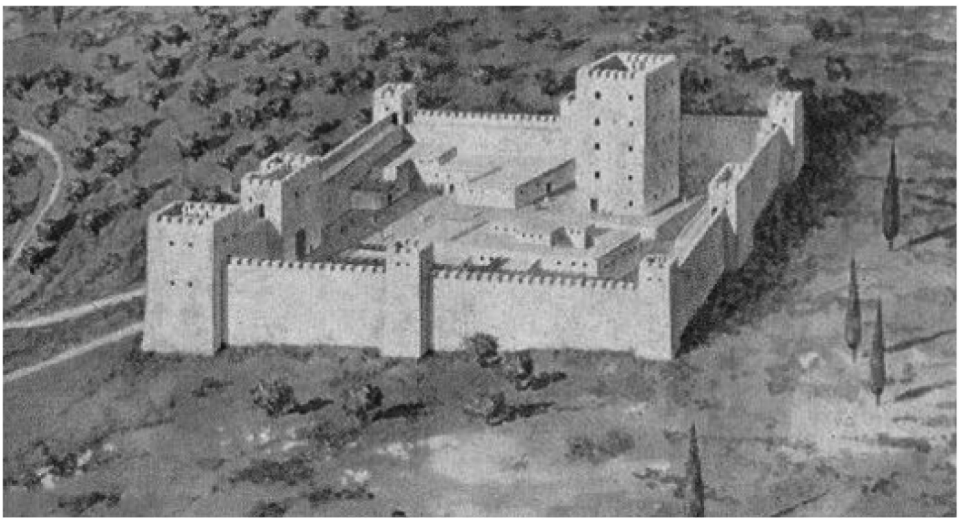


Fig. 2. Reconstruction proposal of Horvat ‘Eleq, view to the west (Drawing: Balage Balog).

that the Early Roman period was the site’s zenith (Fig. 2; Hirschfeld and Feinberg-Vamosh 2005).

The foundations of a central square tower with an internal spiral staircase were excavated in the north western part of the site. When Hirschfeld started excavations here in the 1980s he first suggested that the tower was built in the Hellenistic period. However, he later re-dated the tower to the Early Roman period.

The remains uncovered to the south of the site, in the vicinity of ‘Ein Tzur spring, included an agricultural area, an olive press, a *columbarium* (dovecote), a pool, a Roman style bathhouse and a water conduit. These were also associated with the Herodian complex. The Early Roman period finds include coins, local and imported pottery, glassware, and architectural decoration elements.

Hirschfeld suggested that the estate was built in the days of King Herod and that during the 1st century CE, apparently in the days of Agrippa I (41–44 CE), several alterations were conducted, changing its plan. Hirschfeld proposed that it was abandoned during the First Revolt (66–70 CE). The finds testify to the wealth of the owner. Hirschfeld suggested that this site, not far from the newly founded Caesarea overlooking the HaNadiv Valley, served as the mansion or as royal manor of one of Herod’s sons or courtiers.

Phase IV

Late Roman period and the Byzantine period pottery were discovered by Hirschfeld mainly in the water conduit, aqueduct and pool that continued in use. Additionally, two Late Roman chest tombs were excavated in the western fringes of the site.

From the Byzantine period the most significant find is a large hoard, containing *c.* 2,100 coins dating from the 4th until the 7th centuries CE found inside the spring tunnel. This hoard corresponds well with testimony from the Bordeaux pilgim, dating from 333 CE, who stated that women who bathe in a spring on Mount Syna, three miles away from the city of Caesarea Maritima, become pregnant (*Itinerarium Burdigalense*, 4). Hirschfeld identified the fertility spring mentioned in the Itinerary as the spring of ‘Ein Tzur.

Phase V

During the Late Ottoman period and under the British Mandate, occupation resumed. The village known as Umm el-’Aleq occupied an area of c. 0.5 acres at the highest point of the hill. A farmstead called ‘Beit Khouri’ was added in the 19th century to its north, when the Khouri family from Haifa bought land there. This village and farmstead, above ancient remains, were excavated and documented by Hirschfeld. Zionist pioneers settled at the site after the First World War, when the lands were purchased from the Khouri family by the Jewish Colonization Association (ICA) and Baron Edmond de Rothschild. The Zionist settlement was short-lived and the site was abandoned in 1923. In 1954, the Baron and Baroness Edmund de Rothschild were buried on the grounds and the the Ramat HaNadiv Foundation was created for the benefit of future generations.

The ‘Fortified Complex’

On a visit to Horvat ‘Eleq today one is bound to get the impression that the fortification wall is one of the most prominent features of the site. This is mainly due to extensive restoration works that took place during Hirschfeld’s excavations. Rather, merely one or two courses of foundations were preserved in many areas.

The wall has an almost square outline with each side c. 70 m long, enclosing an area of c. 5,000 m^2. Square towers were built into its four corners. The towers measure 5 × 5 m, with the southeastern tower having been enlarged at a second phase to c. 8 × 9 m. Projecting rectangular towers (5 × 2.5 m) were built at the centre of the northern, eastern and western sides. Hirschfeld fully exposed the walls along the eastern, southern and northern sides. The western flank was partially excavated, yet its southwestern corner tower was left unexposed. This wall was built of roughly hewn dolomite stones and is c. 2 m wide. Hirschfeld estimated that the wall was originally c. 8 m high.

An opening, 3 m wide, exposed by Hirschfeld in the eastern section of the southern fortification wall was identified as an early Roman period gate and was named the ‘Water Gate,’ since it faces the nearby spring. Since this opening is rather small, Hirschfeld believed it was a secondary gate and continued his search for a more monumental entrance befitting a Herodian palatial estate.

Hirschfeld suggested that the square layout of the fortification wall with its corner towers should be referred to as a *'tetrapyrgion'* type of fortified palace, a term used by Flavius Josephus to describe the palace of the Seleucid King Demetrius I Soter (162–150 BCE) near Antioch (*AntJ*. 13.36) and Herod's palace on Masada (*BJ*. 7.289). Since Demetrius' palace did not survive and Herod's palace in Masada, built over three separated terraces, presents a unique variant, Hirschfeld proposed that Horvat 'Eleq represents the only complete example for a palace of the *tetrapyrgion* type.

The Renewed Excavations at Horvat 'Eleq (2007–10)[4]

One of the main goals of the renewed excavations, initiated and funded by the Ramat HaNadiv Foundation, the charitable organisation and nature park created by the Baron Edmund de Rothschild was to make the archaeological site accessible to the public. Finding the original entrance to the site was one of the first goals of the project, in order to take into consideration tourism needs, allowing for the possibility that visitors could enter the site through the original gates of the archaeological site. This could possibly also answer essential research questions involving the nature of the site and the dating of its fortifications.

The excavations focused on three areas (Fig. 3). Area E is situated near the north-western corner of the site, where a deviation in the line of the wall of the fortified complex occurred, possibly indicating a blocked gate.[5] Area F, situated in the south-eastern foot of the site is where Hirschfeld identified the 'Water Gate' that opened towards the spring. The goal of the recent excavation was to examine whether these were gates in the fortification wall and to determine their dating and relationship to the various wings of the walled complex. Area D is where the southern end of the western fortification wall and the south-western corner tower remained unexcavated. The results of the excavations in these areas have brought a new understanding of the character of the site and its different occupation layers. The results helped us to more accurately date the peripheral wall and its towers.

Area E

In 2005, during Hirschfeld's last excavation season, he detected a deviation in the line of the northern flank of the fortification wall, a few meters to the east of the northwestern tower. Topographically, the north-western corner of the fortified complex was at its highest point. This location certainly provided convenient access into the site from the northwest. Hirschfeld suggested that the deviation marked an entrance that had been blocked at some later stage.[6]

We began excavations on either side of the wall of the fortified complex to verify whether a gate existed at this point (Fig. 4). The area of the excavation outside the fortified complex had for the most part been disturbed by excavation debris from

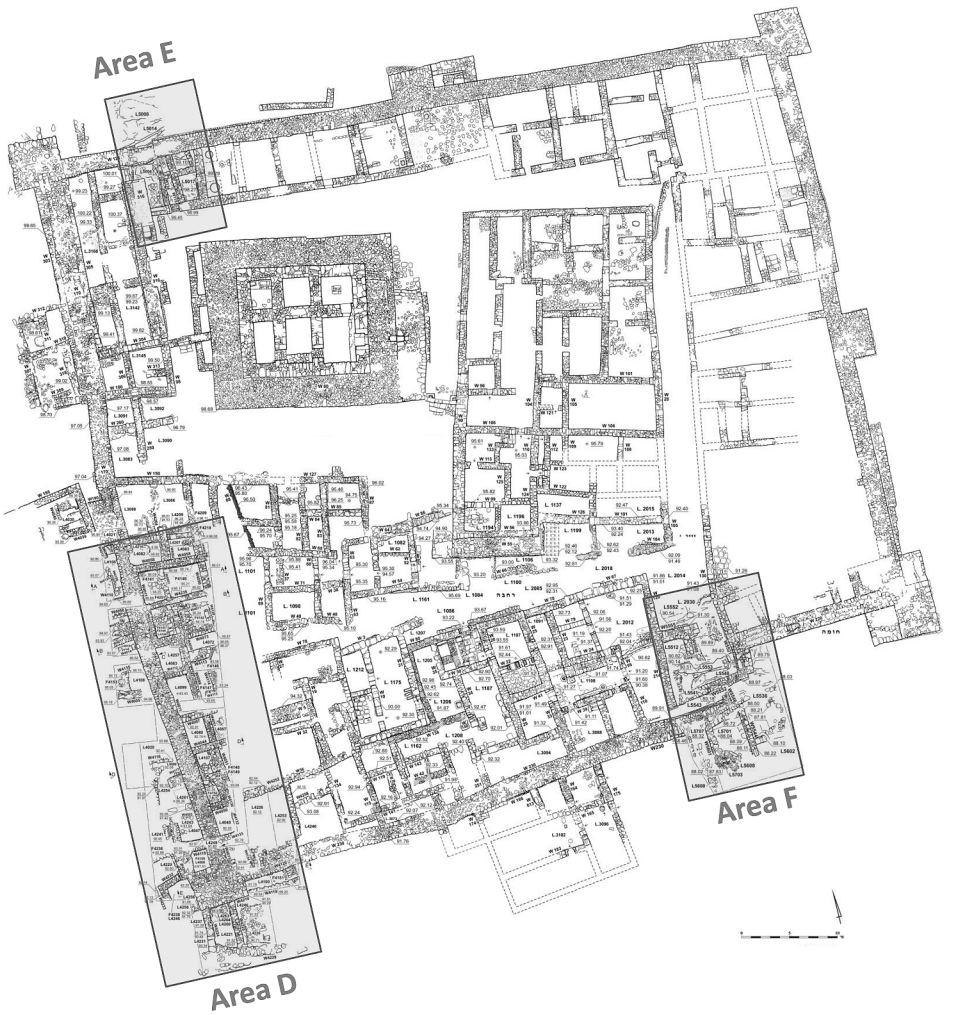


Fig. 3. Horvat ʻEleq, general site plan with marked location of excavation areas (Drawing: Dov Porotski).

previous seasons. No floors were identified that could provide a secure dating, even though it was dug down to bedrock.[7] Here, bedrock slopes gently down from north to south, toward the foundations of the wall of the fortified complex. In several places, the rock was levelled and probably served as a habitation layer during the Persian period, as two *in situ* complete Persian period cooking pots found a few centimetres above bedrock indicate (Fig. 5).

Close to the wall a deep, narrow channel cut in the bedrock was full of brownish-red *terra rosa* soil. This soil filling the channel is not local, and

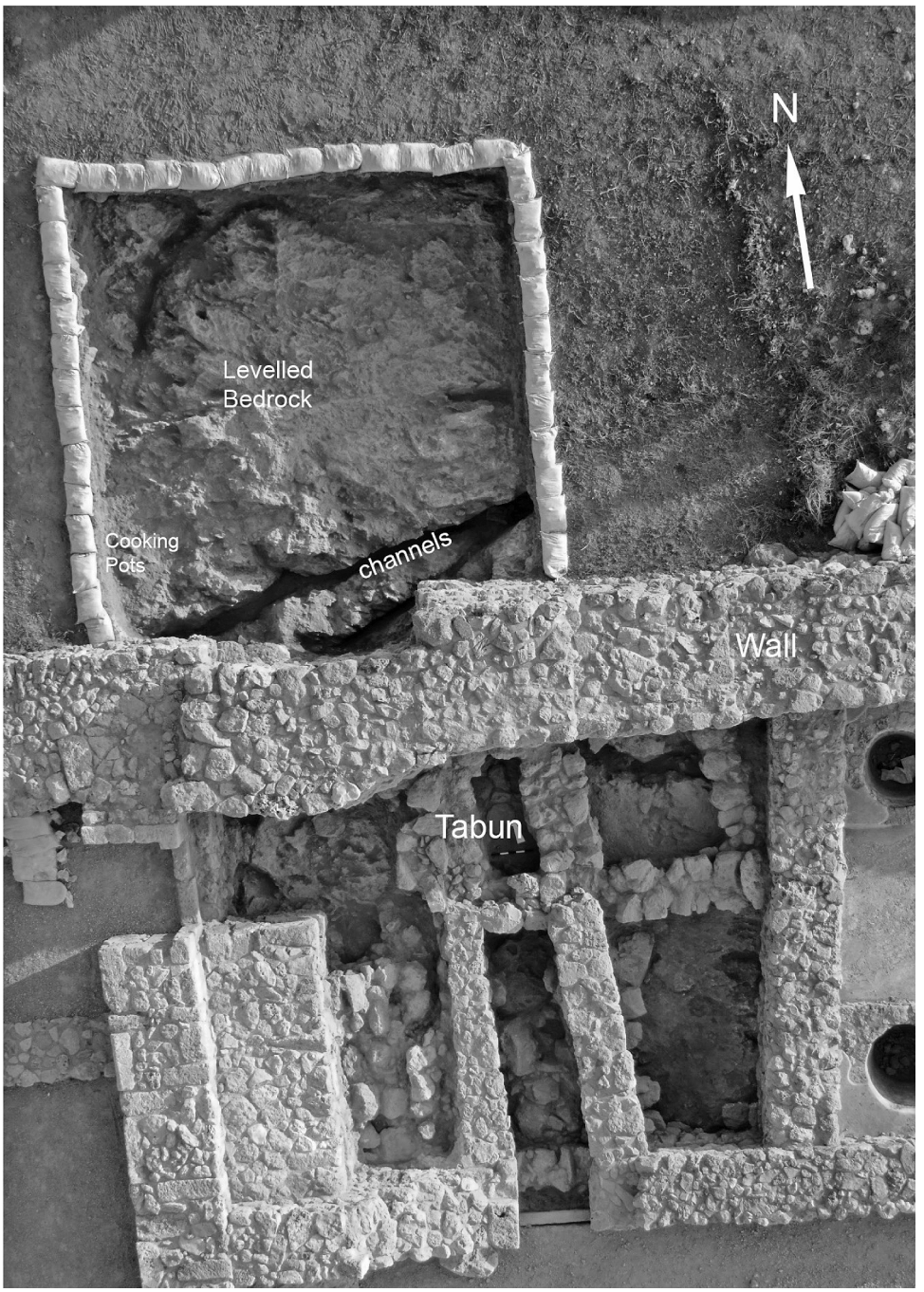


Fig. 4. Aerial photograph of Area E (Photo: Skyview)

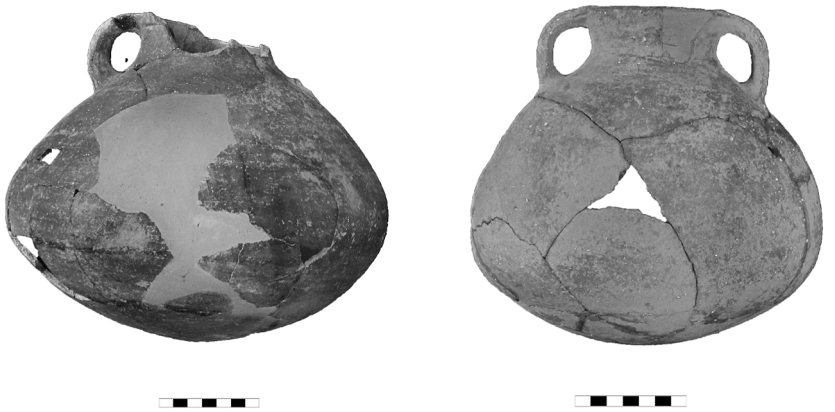


Fig. 5. Persian period cooking pots (Photo: Vladimir Naikhin).

indicates that the inhabitants of the site presumably brought it to seal the channel's floor to conduct water. The pottery finds from the channel were meagre and non-indicative, and could not date the channel, yet they support the idea that it was for human use. The fortification wall—both in the area of the deviation and along the regular line of the wall—is at a higher elevation in relation to the rock; its lowest course is about half a meter above the levelled rock and the channels cut into it. Thus, it must post-date the use of the channel. If the rock served as a habitation level during the Persian period, the construction of the fortification wall must post-date it.

The area on the inner side of the wall of the fortified complex was divided into three rooms by two north–south walls. These two walls were uncovered in Hirschfeld's excavations and underwent conservation. The eastern room revealed at least two construction phases; in the centre another wall was uncovered. South of this wall, two poorly preserved floors were identified. When the upper floor was dismantled it was found to contain ceramic material dating no later than the end of the Hellenistic period, while meagre diagnostic material from the foundation of the lower floor dated no later than the Persian period. In the central room, a *tabun* abutting the wall was dated no later than the Roman period in the 2nd century CE, namely to the last phase of occupation at the site.

The excavation of Area E revealed no evidence of an entry. The original wall of the fortified complex was preserved to a height of one to two courses.[8] If there were any thresholds or doorjambs bases these were not preserved. No remains of steps or a ramp were found abutting the area of the deviation either inside or outside the wall, nor any installations of any kind that could attest to an entrance.

While intensive conservation of this area ruled out examination of the original courses of the wall, based on other considerations it appears almost certain that there was no entrance here. Nonetheless, finds revealed important stratigraphic evidence of several construction phases. The earliest phase, probably dating to the early Persian period, predates the construction of the fortification wall. The latest phase, ascribed to the Roman period, postdate it. The two dated floor levels can be ascribed to the intervening Persian-Hellenistic period. Yet, their association with the wall of the fortified complex remains unclear.

Area F

Area F was also excavated on both sides of the fortified compound (Fig. 6). The excavation area on the inside of the wall (6.5 × 10 m) is between two building complexes. To the west is an Early Roman building that Hirschfeld named the 'Villa.' To the east is the partially excavated 'Eastern Wing.' Late Ottoman graves hindered further excavation there. Hirschfeld defined this area as a street leading south to the 'water gate,' although no pavement was preserved.

The excavation continued c. 10 m beyond the fortification wall to the south. Here, too, as in Area E, part of the area had undergone post-excavation reconstruction. The main features in this area were two walls previously identified as a ramp leading to the 'Water Gate.'[9]

Ottoman Gate and Burials

During the excavation it became clear that the two diagonal walls are Late Ottoman in date (late 19th or early 20th centuries), and have no connection with the early Roman (or earlier) gate, if such had existed in this area (see below). This conclusion is based on the fact that in dismantling the walls and excavating the fill under their foundations, the pottery and metal objects retrieved clearly date to the Ottoman period. These two walls flanked an Ottoman-period passageway for residents of the village of Umm el-'Aleq, built over the ruins of the ancient site. This passageway led from the village to the 'Ein Tzur spring and to the agricultural lands in the HaNadiv Valley.

In 2009, we found that one wall was built above an Ottoman period tomb (grave A in Fig. 6). Interestingly, the shape of the tomb and the nature of the burials are unusual and differ markedly from those of the Ottoman cemetery in the eastern part of the site. In this cemetary, rectangular pit-graves were dug east–west, with the head oriented southwards. However, this tomb below the ramp, was built of ashlars in secondary use, placed side by side in a circle c. 1.80 m in diameter. The tomb was dug into earlier Hellenistic period occupation phases. Within this grave were three skeletons—two adults and a child—in flexed positions. Alongside one of the adults (probably a female),

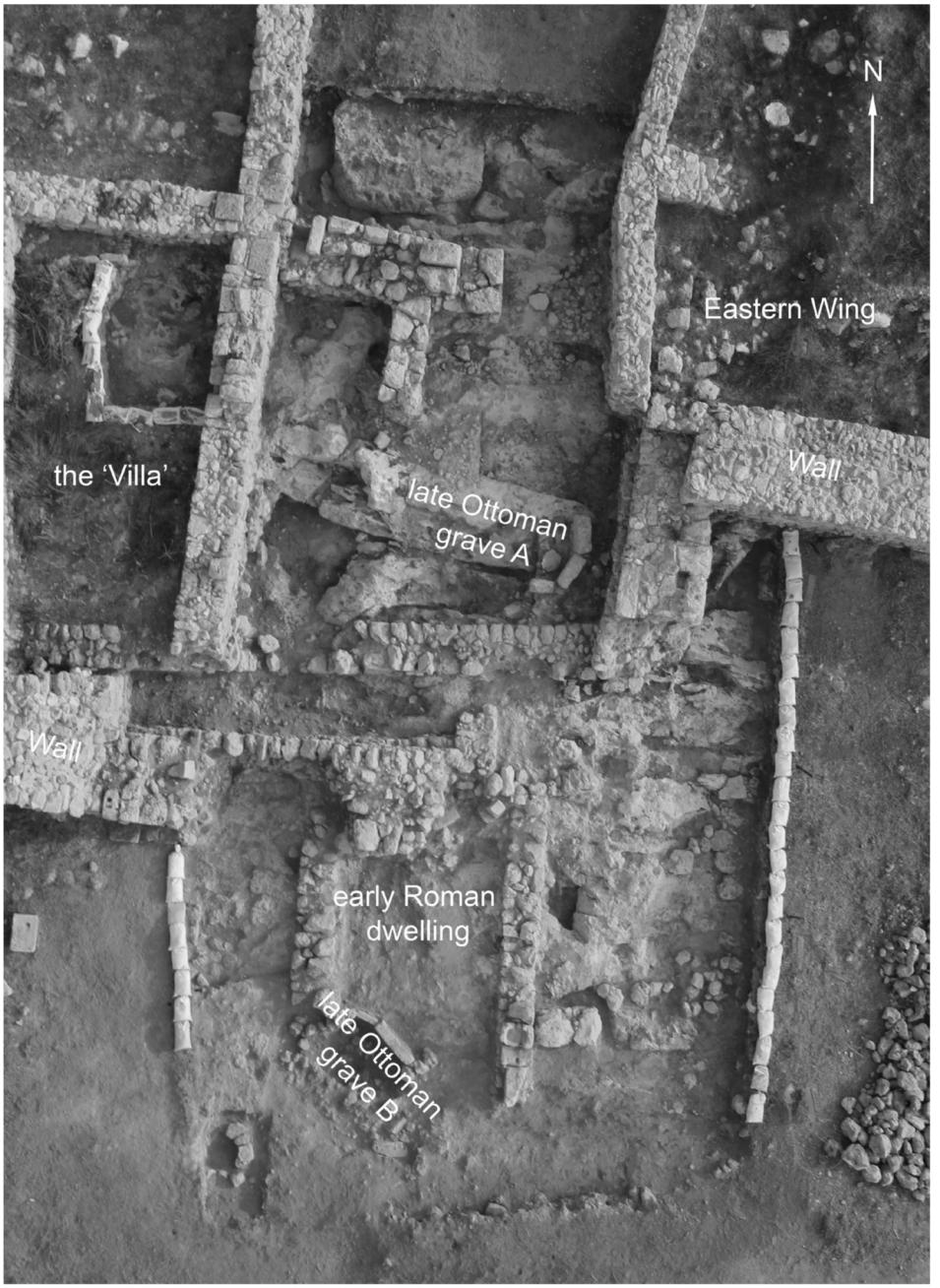


Fig. 6. Aerial photograph of Area F, after removal of the Ottoman walls of the ‘Water Gate’ (Photo: Skyview).

Fig. 7. Dog bones found inside the pile of stones that sealed the northern Ottoman burial in area F (Photo: Guy Bar-Oz).

two bronze rings were found, a bronze pin, a glass bracelet and the bones of a bird and a chicken. The tomb was covered with a heap of stones from which an almost complete pottery jug was retrieved, along with an iron knife, the bones of two dogs (Fig. 7) and a goat or sheep.

In 2010, several meters to the south a second Ottoman period tomb was revealed (grave B in Fig. 6, and see Fig. 8). The form of the tomb was similar to the tomb discussed above. This one was almost circular, and built directly above a Roman-era floor. The tomb was sealed with building stones, some in secondary use, and covered with a heap of small fieldstones. The skeletal remains were brittle and crumbled easily, making it difficult to expose. Two partially articulated skeletons of an adult and child were found within the tomb. The southernmost adult skull was laid on its side, facing east-northeast. The northern skeleton had less well preserved vertebrae, pelvis, arm, and foot bones, and the skull, although partially crushed, appears to have been laid facing the same direction. The skeleton was compacted, flexed and the arms were crossed in front of the body. In addition to the two *in situ* skeletons, bones were discovered in the tomb that may be attributed to a non-articulated skeleton (lower jaw, piece of skull) that may have been interred above the other two, and damaged due to its proximity to the surface.

This second burial contained no grave goods that could assist in dating the tomb. Yet, its stratigraphic context and similarity to the burial discussed above indicate that this burial should also be ascribed to the Ottoman period. Their

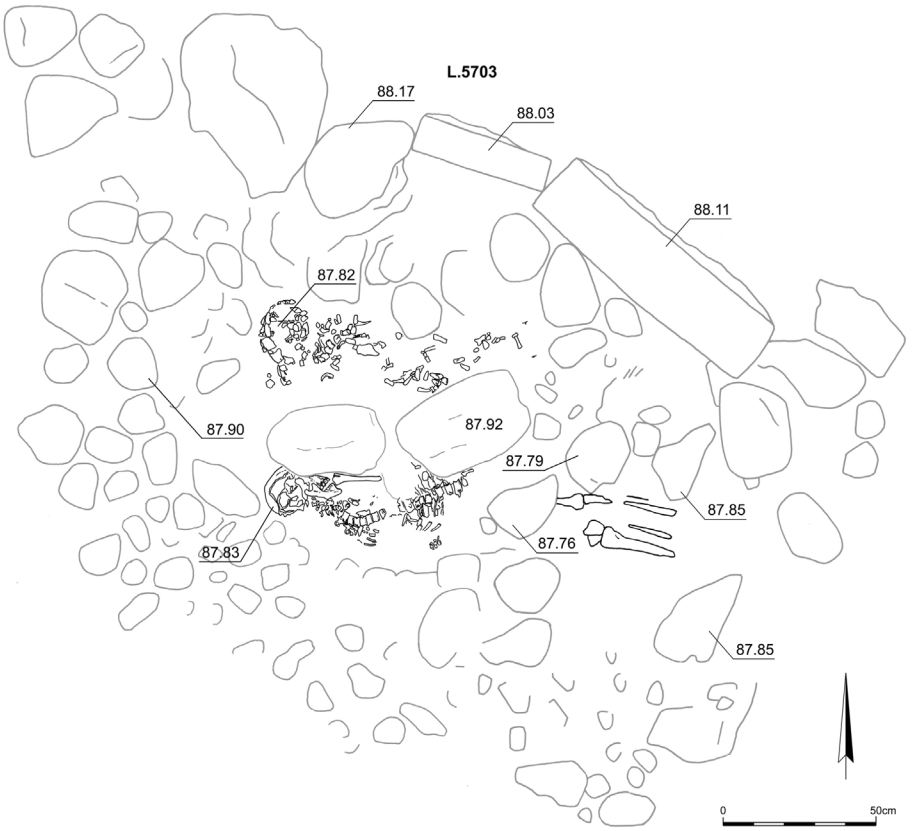


Fig. 8. Detailed plan of the southern Ottoman burial in area F (Drawing: Dov Porotski).

unusual circular shape and burial with several individuals including animal bones, markedly differs from Ottoman-period Muslim burials. Typically, these were simple elongated oval or rectangular pit-graves sealed by flat stone slabs (Eakins 1993: 22−26), oriented east–west, containing a single skeleton and skull facing south towards Mecca (Gorzalczany 2000; 2009a). These two unusual burials might indicate the existence of other ethnic groups in this village, or possibly, of several phases in the history of the Ottoman village’s cemeteries. Since the tomb was covered by an Ottoman period wall, this also indicates that there were at least several phases of occupation.

Early Roman Dwellings Outside the Fortification Wall

No Early Roman occupation levels were uncovered inside of the fortification wall in this area. Such layers were probably excavated in earlier seasons.[10]

Fig. 9. The Early Roman complex south of the southern wall, looking north (Photo: Tomer Appelbaum).

An Early Roman complex was uncovered outside the southern wall of the fortified complex (W230, Fig. 9). In this area, two north–south walls were revealed, abutting the southern wall of the fortified complex on the south. One wall was partially sealed below the Ottoman period ramp. The northern section of the complex was covered by a heap of collapsed stones and Early Roman period potsherds. A lintel and jamb-stones were also found in the debris. The threshold of this door was preserved in the southern portion of W5544. After removing the debris, plaster floors were revealed on both sides of this wall. A probe beneath one of these floors revealed Early Roman potsherds.

Another probe beneath W5705, oriented east–west along the line of the southern wall of the site (W230) and constituting the northern wall of the Early Roman complex, described here, clarified its construction date and function. Under its foundation course we uncovered a layer of yellowish marl foundation (L5707), which apparently constituted the continuation of the similar floor that we had unearthed on the northern side of the wall (L5543) and dated to the Hellenistic period. In the fill from the foundation course and the floor beneath it only a few Iron Age and Hellenistic period sherds were found. Apparently, the wall cannot date earlier than the Hellenistic period.

Exposing Early Roman complexes on both sides of the fortification wall attests that it did not serve as a fortification wall in the Roman period. Already in 2004, Hirschfeld found remains of an Early Roman dwelling complex entrenched into the fortification wall's foundations, south of the 'Villa.'

Hellenistic Remains North of the Southern Wall

An east–west wall, preserved more than 10 m in length, was uncovered parallel to the southern wall, just one meter north. This wall is earlier than the early Roman 'Villa' and probably dates to the Hellenistic period. The western section of its foundation was cut from bedrock. Further cuts in the bedrock created a levelled floor south of the wall. North of this wall another floor was excavated, characterized by a foundation of small and medium-sized stones levelled with the bedrock. In the northern section of this area, a similar floor foundation dated to the Hellenistic period was exposed. Several poorly preserved Hellenistic period walls were found nearby.

Finds from the Persian Period and Iron Age

Although no architectural remains could be securely associated with the Persian period or Iron Age, the ceramic finds from this period were prominent in most of the excavation area, particularly directly below the foundations of the Hellenistic floors above the bedrock. In various places the rock appears to have been levelled and hewn into steps. Whether this infrastructure work occurred in the Iron Age or Persian period cannot be determined. Perhaps this work was preparation for Hellenistic period construction, when fills were brought containing Iron Age and Persian material from other areas of the site.

The Gate in the Southern Wall

The dominant characteristic of the fortification wall, and particularly the southern section, is that it was not built as a single unit, but rather in phases with additions and later supports. This wall makes a kind of a 90 degree 'bend' where its eastern section is c. 7.5 m north of its western section. An earlier foundation might have dictated the line of this wall; or, it might have been planned. Since this is the only 'bend' or buttress in the fortification wall, it seems a suitable position for a gate. Unfortunately, the southern end of the north–south wall was destroyed by mechanical equipment.

The assumption that this point was suitable for a gate was based on a number of factors. First, this is the most convenient place nearest the spring. Second, a wide street crossing the site from north to south leads here. Third, the south-eastern corner tower near the excavation area is the largest of all,[11] attesting to a need to provide increased defence to this part of the fortifications. Fourth, anyone who would try to enter the complex would be in a poorly-defended space.

Here, a threshold of a large doorway was built at this point in the fortification wall, although only the northern section was preserved. The threshold was composed of two stones, and certainly not incorporated in secondary use. Since this wall was constructed over an earlier Hellenistic wall, the threshold could not be earlier than the construction of this wall. Unfortunately, due to the limitations of excavating in an area that has undergone conservation and reconstruction, we lack sufficient data to determine a more precise date.

Area D

In the south-western part of the site, this area exposed the southern part of the western wall, the south-western tower, as well as the western end of the southern wall (Fig. 10). We hoped that the full exposure of the wall would answer the question of accessibility to the site and the location of the gate. Although no gate was uncovered, the excavation provided valuable data securely dating the construction of the fortification wall, as well as when it went out of use.

Ottoman Period Remains

The top-most layer of the excavation, in some cases above layers of collapse and earth fills and in other cases directly over the Roman finds, contained Ottoman period architectural remains. At least three phases were detected, all belonging to the Late Ottoman period. These were remains of temporary structures on the fringes of the Ottoman period Umm el-'Aleq village, with typically rounded walls and courtyards with *tabuns* (Fig. 11). The finds include many iron farming tools, such as hoes, chisels, sickles, tools for fruit harvesting, as well as fragments of home ware. Other finds include smoking pipes, tobacco boxes, horse and mule shoes, rifle bullets, knives, jewellery (Fig. 12) and coins. Most of the pottery vessels were locally made, although some were imports. These finds, along with large amounts of animal bones gathered from the vicinity of the *tabuns* provide valuable data concerning the livelihoods and diet of the villagers.

Noteworthy is a coin, revealed close to surface level, identified as a Zichron Ya'akov Colony private token (Fig. 13). In 1885, three years after the foundation of the colony, as the result of a shortage of small change in the local trade, Yehuda Wormser, the representative of Baron Edmond Rothschild, initiated the use of copper tokens for local use. These were meant to replace the former Ottoman parchment notes and to free their dependence on money-changers. The tokens were prepared in Paris, and guaranteed by the Rothschild family with 30,000 gold francs. Zikhron Ya'akov tokens are extremely rare, since their introduction was opposed by the Ottoman authorities, who shelved them less than a year after they were produced (Kindler 1966: 23–25; Meshorer 2006: 149–148).

Fig. 10. Aerial photograph of Area D (Photo: Skyview).

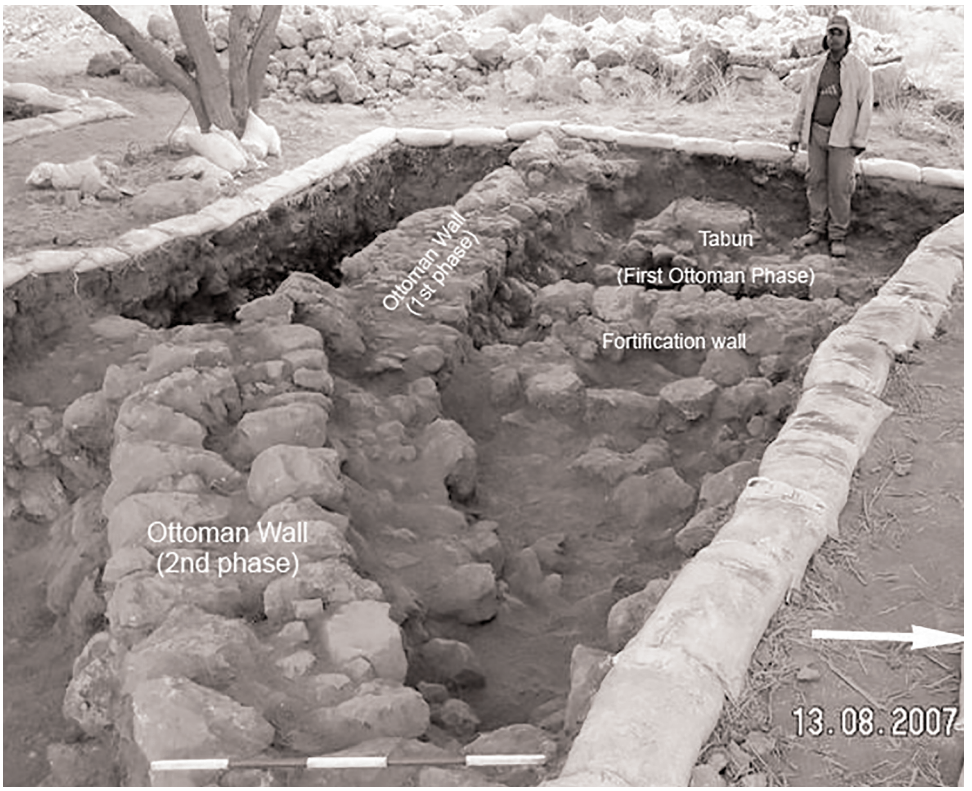


Fig. 11. Remains of round walls of the Ottoman period (Photo: Yotam Tepper).

The Roman Period – Occupational Continuity Beyond 70 CE

Two early Roman architectural complexes comprising rectangular rooms with dirt floors and courtyards paved with stone slabs were partially excavated inside the wall, near the northern section of area D (Fig. 14). A complete set of Olynthian mill stones (Fig. 15), as well as one stone basin *in situ*, several fragments of similar basins and a domestic olive press (*bodedah*) were found on the floor of a courtyard adjacent to the western wall. Grinding stones were also incorporated in secondary use in the paving of the courtyard. These finds attest to the various professions by the inhabitants of the dwelling in the courtyard. A test pit below the courtyard's floor revealed another floor, dated by the finds to the Hellenistic period.

Although most of the finds collected from the architectural complexes were typically Early Roman, several artefacts found inside the architectural complexes and in their close vicinity date to the second half of the 1st century and the 2nd century CE, including a Roman arrowhead, a complete oil lamp of the 'Darom' Type (Fig. 16), and coins with Tenth Roman Legion counter marks. These coins probably

Fig. 12. Ottoman period bronze rings set with stone cabochons (Photo: Vladimir Naikhin).

Fig. 13. Zikhron Ya’akov Colony private token found in area D (Photo: Vladimir Naikhin).

attest to Roman soldiers living at the site. These finds substantiate evidence from previous seasons attesting to the continuity of the occupation at the site after 70 CE, such as that from 2004, when Hirschfeld excavated two cist tombs west of the western wall and dated by an almost complete 2nd century CE glass vessel.

A marble slab fragment with a Latin inscription on each side was uncovered (Fig. 17). On one side the word ‘aqued[uct]’ may be reconstructed, while on the other appears an Imperial epitaph. The use of Latin rather than Greek, and the size of the letters (11 cm in height), suggests that this is an Imperial, rather than a private inscription. Leah Di Segni studied the inscription and suggested a date in the 2nd or 3rd centuries CE. Although it is possible that the slab was brought to the site from nearby Caesarea Maritima for secondary use, it seems reasonable to link the inscription with the late 2nd century aqueduct connecting the nearby spring of ‘Ein Tzur with Caesarea, constructed by the Roman soldiers of the 6th and 10th legions.

Fig. 14. Paved courtyard of an Early Roman complex with several stone utensils (Photo: Yotam Tepper).

Hellenistic Remains Attesting to the Date of the Fortification System at the Site

The renewed excavations exposed c. 40 m of the western wall of the site, the south-western tower and c. 6 m of the southern wall, completing the exposure of the entire fortification system.[12] This 1.8 m wide wall was built of two faces of large and medium-size field stones with a rubble fill and its construction is neither fine nor uniform.[13] The wall was preserved to a maximum height of 2 m.

The excavation on either side of the fortification did not reveal any destruction layers whatsoever. A handful of round stones, probably slingshots, one Hellenistic and two Roman period arrowheads were uncovered. Several more were retrieved from other areas of the excavation. The fortification wall probably did not withstand the test of a siege or battle, certainly not in the latest phase of occupation at the site. Furthermore, the careless construction method and its relatively narrow width raise doubts as to its ability to withstand any kind of military seige.

Fills rich in Hellenistic period finds were excavated along the western wall, and especially on its western outer side. The finds include local and imported pottery bowls, jars, juglets, cooking pots as well as oil lamps, large numbers of coins and fibulae. The pottery and coins are mostly of the 3rd century BCE, though several

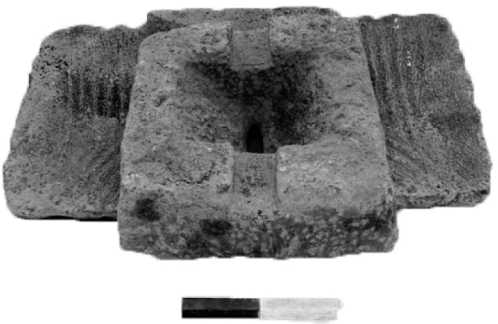


Fig. 15. Olynthian Mill set found in Area D (Photo: Tomer Appelbaum).

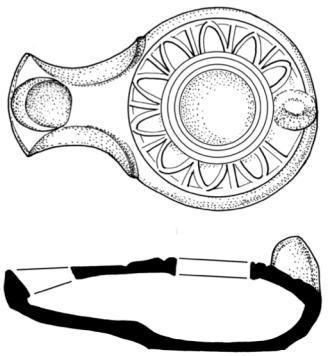


Fig. 16. A complete oil lamp of the ‘Darom’ type found in area D (Drawing: Julia Rudman).

Fig. 17. Marble fragment with Latin inscriptions on both sides (Photo: Vladimir Naikhin).

types of both pottery and coins were dated to the 2nd century BCE.[14] These finds attest to a substantial occupation phase in the Hellenistic period and they shed light on the date of the fortification system. Hellenistic period walls and floors abut the outer face of the western wall and south-western tower (see below). Clearly, the wall and tower predate the Hellenistic period construction. The wall and tower must have gone out of use by the time these Hellenistic complexes were constructed.

South of the tower, a room with its floor and two north–south walls abutting the southern face of the tower was partially excavated (Fig. 18). Here, a *tabun* installed into the floor near the tower was exposed. By the time the room with its

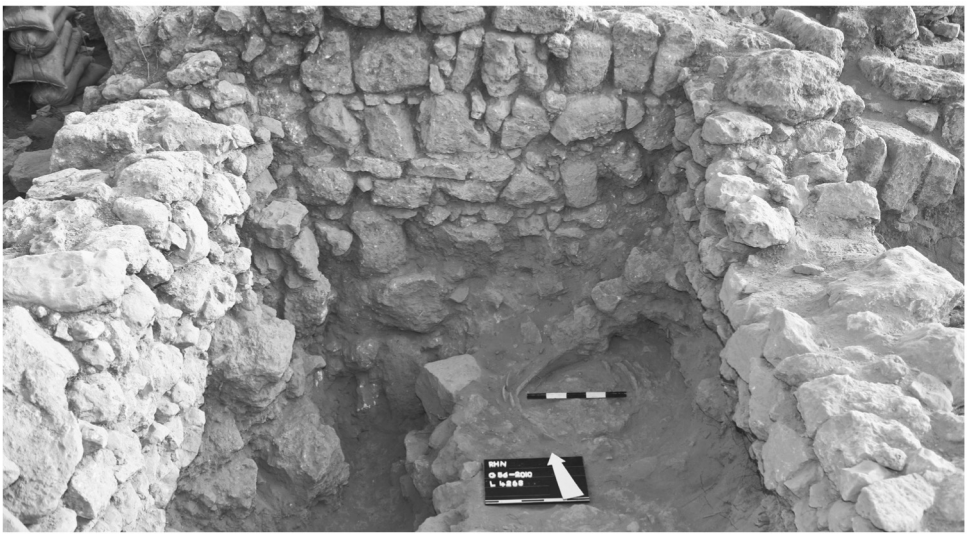


Fig. 18. Hellenistic period room with walls and floor (with a *tabun*) abutting the southern face of the southwestern tower (Photo: Tomer Appelbaum).

tabun were constructed, the tower was no longer in use as the external fortification wall of the site. A probe below the floor brought to light finds from the Iron Age to the Hellenistic period. No Early Roman period finds were uncovered either above or below the floor. Another nearby room, whose floor abuts the western wall of the tower, was exposed too. The finds on this floor included fragments of a complete Late Hellenistic jug and bowl. Below the foundations of the floor we uncovered Persian and Hellenistic pottery, a small alabaster bowl, one coin dated to reign of Alexander the Great (336–323 BCE) and another, a silver tetradrachme of Ptolmy I Soter (304–283 BCE, Fig. 19). A coin of Ptolemy II (285–243 BCE) was retrieved from inside a later wall built above the corner tower's western wall. Another, third room against the western face included a floor abutting the outer face of the wall. Hellenistic period pottery shards were found on its dirt floor, including an almost complete *pyxis* and *unguentarium*. A coin of Ptolemy II was also found. North of this room, also abutting the outer face of the fortification wall, the ceramic finds gathered from between the stones of an installation were from the Hellenistic period or earlier.

North of the corner tower, we dug a deep probe under the western flank of the foundation wall (W4011; Fig. 20). Remains of a floor were unearthed about half a metre beneath the foundations (F4266). The floor consisted of a layer of thin yellowish marl. A layer of black ash c. 10 cm thick containing Iron Age I–II and Persian period shards was found. The results of this probe show that the western fortification wall was built later than the Persian period.

Fig. 19. Silver tetradrachme of Ptolemy I retrieved from below the floor abutting to western face of the southwestern tower (Photo: Vladimir Naikhin).

The Hellenistic period floors and walls outside the walled compound abutting the western wall indicate that the entire fortification system predates their construction. The walled compound must have been built prior to the Early Roman period. Moreover, the fortification wall apparently was out of use by the Hellenistic period. The probe west of the western wall provides a *terminus post quem* for the construction of the wall during the later Persian period or to the beginning of the Hellenistic period. A thorough analysis of the finds from this probe together with the other finds of the site will help us with a more exact dating of the construction of this wall.

An important unique find is a carved limestone sundial with a profiled base. This sundial was discovered together with collapsed building stones above the floor of a room of the Early Roman complex not far from the western wall of the site (Fig. 21). Both of the sundial’s protruding ends were broken, presumably intentionally, in order to facilitate its incorporation as building material in a later, Early Roman wall. The sundial should be dated to the Hellenistic period. Six incised hour lines can be discerned in its concave portion, and the upper section contains a depression for the *gnomon* (shadow-caster).

Finds from the Persian Period and the Iron Age

A sealed locus from the Persian period was uncovered in 2007 south of and adjacent to the southern wall of the site. The probe below the foundations of the western wall revealed a floor and a small part of an east-west wall as described above. Large quantities of Persian period pottery, including mortaria, jars with basket handles, a pinched lamp, a juglet, and East Greek and other types of pottery, were retrieved. Numerous shards from Iron Age I and II were also found, along with the fragment of a Chalcolithic flint adze. These finds indicate that Horvat ‘Eleq is a multi-stratum site where settlement persisted over a long time-span.

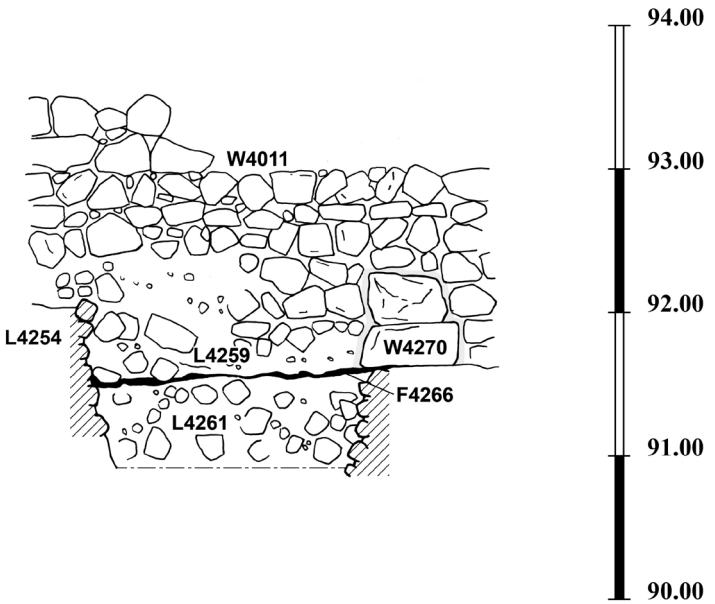


Fig. 20. Section below the western wall of the site (W4011), looking east (Drawing: Dov Porotski).

Conclusion

The location of the site on the southern slopes of Mount Carmel in a strategic point adjacent to a water source, overlooking Roman Imperial roads[15] and fertile agricultural land (HaNadiv Valley) made it suitable for human settlement over long periods. The site served the rural periphery of coastal cities, mainly Dor in the Hellenistic period and Caesarea Maritima during the Roman and Byzantine periods (Tepper 2013).

The results of the 2007–2010 seasons of excavations at Horvat ‘Eleq allow us to refine the dating of the settlement. The renewed excavations clarified the site as multi-strata, spanning through the Iron Age I and II, Persian, Hellenistic, and Early Roman (the second half of the 1st century to the 2nd century CE) periods; with continued human activity near the spring into the Byzantine period. After a long hiatus, settlement returned at the end of the Ottoman period.

The evidence for continued occupation into the 2nd century CE and lack of evidence for destruction as consequence of a siege or battle contradicts previous conclusions that the site was an Early Roman period single-stratum site deserted during the First Revolt.

The western wall and the south-western tower in Area D were built toward the end of the Persian period or at the beginning of the Hellenistic period. They fell out

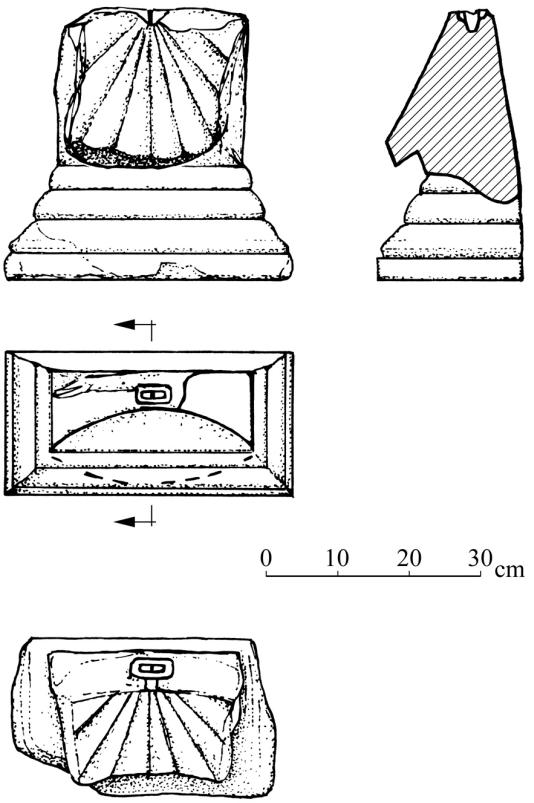


Fig. 21. Hellenistic sundial from area D (Drawing: Dov Porotski).

of use later in the Hellenistic period, when dwellings were constructed abutting the outer faces of the fortification wall and its towers.

Third, the finds indicate that the zenith of the settlement was during the Persian and Hellenistic periods. The current reconstruction of the site and particularly the impressive line of the wall and square corner towers are an imposing creation dating to the late Persian or Hellenistic period and not the early Roman period, as previously thought. Furthermore, Hirschfeld’s identification of the site as a palace complex cannot be supported by the finds. So far, no architectural remains such as frescos, reception halls, peristyle courtyards typical of a Herodian-era palace have been found. In our opinion, during the Early Roman period the site was a village or farm, built on the ruins of the earlier Hellenistic site.

Fourth, from the results of the renewed excavations and the new dating of the fortifications, the southern boundary of Phoenicia should be re-examined considering the geographical location of Horvat ‘Eleq in relation to other contemporary fortified sites (Fig. 22).

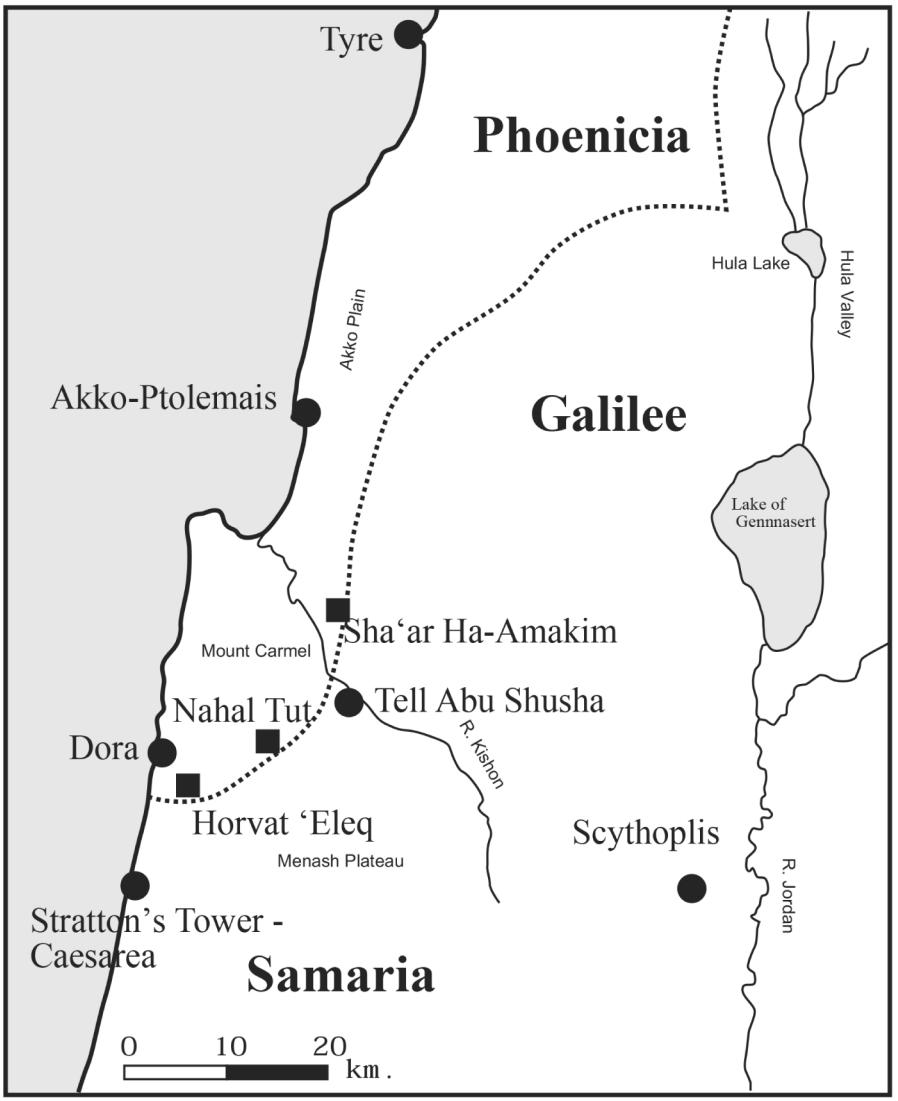


Fig. 22. Map showing a tentative borderline between Phoenicia and Judaea (Drawing: Nimrod Getzov).

Under the reign of Darius I (522–486 BCE), or at the latest during his successor, Darius II (485–465 BCE), twenty administrative satraps were established. The fifth satrapy, called ‘Beyond the River,’ included Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine and Cyprus (Graf 1994: 173−175; Tal 2005:71−74). The late 6th or early 5th century inscription on the sarcophagus of Eshmunazar II, the king of Sidon, states that the Persian king bestowed Eshmunazar with large territories that extend from Mount Carmel in the north to the Yarkon River in the south, and from Jaffa in the north to Ashdod in the south (Avishur 2000:123−126; Na’aman 2009:314).

From the late 4th century BCE text ‘Periplus of Pseudo-Scylax,’ we know that the entire coastal plain of Palestine was certainly under the sovereignty of Tyre and Sidon (Stern 1973:8−12). In 333 BCE, following Alexander the Great’s Battle of Issus, Syria and Palestine, most of the Phoenician cities along the coast (excluding Tyre and Ashdod) fell to his army. Palestine and parts of Phoenicia were then included in the province of Syria. In the Hellenistic period, the administrative division of the province probably remained similar to the earlier Persian period (Briant 1996:893−896).

In the 2nd century BCE, with the Hasmonaean expansion to the Galilee the situation changed dramatically. John Hyrcanus I and Alexander Jannaeus gained control over the northern Sharon and the southern Carmel coast. The territories to the north, including Mount Carmel and most of the Carmel coast were left in the control of the Phoenician cities (Tal 2006:10−11). Falvius Josephus, while describing the Galilee and its boundaries (*BJ* III. 35) mentions Mount Carmel as being under the control of Sidon. He also mentions Geva Parashim (‘City of Horsemen’), as a site located on the western boundary of the Galilee. Mazar (1986) identified the site as Tell Abu Shusha near Kibbutz Mishmar Ha-Emek, based on Josephus’ description. The location of Geva on the western boundary of the Galilee and that of Horvat ‘Eleq on the northern boundary of Samaria place them both in the southern periphery of Ptolemais, an area that was under strong influence of the Phoenician coastal cities. Solid Hellenistic period remains confirm this geo-political state of affairs in the southern Carmel region, but its roots are earlier in the Persian period.

Our knowledge of Persian period fortifications in Palestine is unfortunately meagre and fragmented (Stern 1973:51−56). In contrast, a substantial number of forts and other fortified sites of the Hellenistic period are known. Yet, their distribution is inconsistent and in most areas (excluding Arad Valley and the vicinity of Beer-Sheba) it is difficult to reconstruct clear defensive lines along border areas. Probably, the main strategy was to strengthen strategically weak points rather than creating a continuous line of fortifications. This situation changed

under the Hasmonaeans, or perhaps earlier under the Seleucids, when continuous defence lines were established, based on three types of fortified sites, including forts, fortified cities and fortified palaces (Shatzman 1991:94−97, 311−312).

Several km north of Horvat ‘Eleq at Nahal Tut, a similarly dated fortified site was excavated by Y. Alexandre of the IAA (2006). This site comprises a square complex surrounded by a casemate wall with four corner towers. The excavator has suggested that the site was established as an agricultural storage facility by Alexander the Great’s garrison during his siege of Tyre in 333/2 BCE and destroyed a year later in the Samaritan Revolt (332 BCE) that broke when Alexander was in Egypt. Nahal Tut’s geographic location and the finds retrieved during the excavations all point to a strong link with the Phoenician coast line, and especially with Dor. The similarities between this site and that of Horvat ‘Eleq suggest that Horvat ‘Eleq too was fortified at the same period and in similar circumstances, although here, no destruction layer was detected. Their location on the southern border of the Phoenician territory, as well as in an area that is rich in agricultural land turned them suitable to the Macedonian needs.[16]

Several studies have attempted to draw an ethno-archaeological line dividing the Galilee and Phoenicia during the Late Hellenistic or Hasmonaean period, based on historical sources, as well as on ceramic and numismatic finds (Leibner 2012:437−469; Syon 2004:224−235). These studies, whose focus is on the Galilee and not examining other sites on southern Mount Carmel, draw the western border of the Galilee along the Acko\Ptolemais Valley (Dar 2014; Gadot and Tepper 2008). Since the territory of the Phoenician influence extended to the Carmel coast, we would like to suggest that the ethno-archaeological border drawn by scholars such as Leibner and Syon from the Hula Valley in the north-east and along the northern border of the Galilee should continue westward along the Menashe Plateau and southern Mount Carmel to the coast (Leibner 2012; Syon 2004). This line would then meet the border of the territory under the influence of the city of Dor.[17]

We hope that continued research and analysis of the finds from this site on the south-eastern edge of Ramat HaNadiv from all the excavation seasons will allow us to present additional conclusions about its size in various periods, its importance and its function.

Notes

1 Between 2000 and 2005 Hirschfeld published several articles, where he discussed the finds from the excavations and his interpretation of the function and character of the site in ancient times (Hirschfeld 2003; Hirschfeld and Peleg 2005; Hirschfeld and Feinberg-Vamosh 2005).

2 We would like to thank all of those who assisted us during the excavation. The area supervisors were Yonathan Mizrachi and Ayelet Tatcher. Hila Frank was in charge of registration of finds. Metal detection was conducted by Bnaya Lopane, Yuval Lopane and Moshe Lopane. Our physical anthropologist was Noga Bachrach. Barak Monnickendam-Givon read pottery and Ariel Berman identified the coins. Other scholars who assisted include: Noa Rabban-Gerstel, Ayelet Sharir and Laila Abado (animal bones), Ruth Tal-Jackson (glass vessels), Leah Di Segni (inscriptions), Noa Klein and Leore Grosman (flints). The drawing of plans and stone objects was conducted by Dov Porotzky and Slava Pirsky. Tomer Appelbaum was the field photographer and photographs of the finds were taken by Vladimir Naikhin. Mimi Lavi was in charge of finds conservation. Julia Rudman drew the finds. Ibrahim Suwaed headed the excavation team. Logistics were coordinated by Mahfouz el-Khatib. The following individuals visited the site and contributed their knowledge and experience: Ehud Netzer, Rebecca Martin, Gideon Avni, Zvika Greenhut, Yossi Levi, Karem Sa'id, Marwan Masarwa, Guy Stiebel, Yigal Tepper and Yuval Shahar. We are grateful to all. Special thanks go to Hugo Jan Trago, the director for his support and assistance to the project since its inception, and to the devoted staff at the Ramat HaNadiv Foundation.

3 For a detailed summary of Hirschfeld's conception of the site, see: Tepper and Peleg 2009.

4 Two of the renewed dig areas had been excavated previously by Hirschfeld in the 1998, 2002 and 2005 seasons. These had undergone extensive conservation and reconstruction. This fact created some difficulty in terms of excavation and identification of the original remains and their differentiation from reconstruction. Another difficulty stemmed from the heavy mechanical equipment used in the area adjacent to the north-western corner of the wall of the fortified complex, and more so in the area of the 'Water Gate' which almost reached bedrock and severely damaged some remains.

5 Hirschfeld proposed this theory at the end of the 2005 season. The 'postern gate,' was marked on the plans prepared at the end of that season.

6 A study of the site plan and of the outlines of the fortification wall reveals two more deviations in the line of the wall – one in the eastern wall and one in the western wall – both near the towers in the centre of each wall. There is another deviation, albeit less clear-cut, in the western part of the southern wall. It seems therefore, that this was a construction method and not necessarily evidence of an entrance. In addition, the northern part of the western wall is particularly wide – as much as 3 m thick. The wall was apparently thickened at that point to protect a weak point. Indeed, at that point, the site was given to control from the northwest, while to the south and the east, the site has a controlling view of its surroundings. Since the inhabitants of the site perceived the northwestern corner as a strategically weak point, creating a gateway here would have weakened the fortification of this point even further.

7 A single white layer, abutting the northern wall of the fortified complex was related to modern conservation work protecting the wall foundations.

8 The present height of the wall of the fortified complex is the result of conservation and reconstruction. In the area of the deviation, one course of the original wall was preserved,

as can be seen in photographs of the excavation and in a cross-section in the excavation report published in 2000 (Hirschfeld 2000: Figs. 90, 117).

9 According to Hirschfeld, these were retaining walls for a ramp that approached the gate from the south and the eastern wall also enclosed a small triangular tower east of the gate.

10 During the renewed excavations we re-exposed and documented what Hirschfeld identified as drainage 'channels' from the 'Villa' complex west of the street. These 'channels' were built on top of Hellenistic period walls and fills. Due to their shape and high elevation, we suspected that these were rather remains of Ottoman Muslim burials, similar to the ones Hirschfeld exposed in the eastern wing of the complex.

11 Other corner towers are solid, 5 m^2 in size, and all are smaller than the southeastern tower, which was enlarged to almost double this size.

12 The excavations along the western wall indicate a date in the late Persian or early Hellenistic period and not in the Herodian period as Hirschfeld suggested. This misconception probably originated since several Herodian period dwellings used the western line of the wall as a boundary wall.

13 In several places the wall is thinner and its construction seems haphazard. Near the south-western tower the stones were placed diagonally to the wall's axis, rather than in neat courses above earthen fill. The walls of the tower, in contrast, and especially its corners, were built of partially chiselled larger stones.

14 Hirschfeld uncovered some Hellenistic finds and walls in previous seasons (Hirschfeld 2000: 240–243).

15 Horvat 'Eleq overlooks two Imperial Roman roads. The first is the road from Caesarea to Legio that extends from the coastal plan eastward towards Jezreel Valley, through *Nahal Taninim*, and the second is the Caesarea–Acco\Ptolemais road along the coastal plain that bypasses Mount Carmel from the north (Roll 2011: 239−256; Tepper 2011: 257−275).

16 Another fortified site nearby that shares similar features with Horvat 'Eleq is the Hellenistic site at Sha'ar Ha-Amakim. The site, dated by the excavators to the Hasmonaean period, has in its centre a massive tower similar in form to the one exposed at Horvat 'Eleq (Segal, Młynarczyk and Burdajewicz 2014).

17. For a recent estimation and analysis of the population of Dor in these periods, see: Nitschke, Martin and Shalev 2011.

References

Alexandre, Y., (2006). 'Nahal Tut (Site VIII): A Fortified Storage Depot from the Late Fourth Century B.C.E.,' *'Atiqot* 52: 131−189.

Avishur, Y., (2000). *Phoenician Inscriptions and the Bible:Select Inscriptions and Studies in Stylistic and Literary Devices Common to the Phoenician Inscriptions and the Bible* (Ann Arbor).

Briant, P., (1996). *Histoire de l'Empire perse de Cyrus à Alexandre* (Paris).

Dar, S., (2014). *Rural Settlements on Mount Carmel in Antiquity* (Oxford).

Eakins, J.K., (1993). *Tell el-Hesi* V*: The Muslim Cemetery in Field V and VI/IX (Stratum II)* (Winona Lake).

Eck, W., (2014). ‘The Armed Forces and the Infrastructure of cities during the Roman Imperial Period - The Example of Judaea/Syria Palaestine.’ Pp. 207-214 in C. Ohlig, and T. Tsuk, (eds.), *Cura Aquarum in Israel II. Water in Antiquity* (Siegburg).

Gadot, Y., and Tepper, Y., (2008). ‘Map of Regavim (49), Archaeological Survey of Israel’ (Hebrew). http://www.antiquities.org.il/survey/#map

Gorzalczany, A., (2009). ‘A New Type of Cemetery from the Late Mamluk and Early Ottoman Period from Central Israel,’ *Levant* 41/2: 223–237.

Gorzalczany, A., (2009a). ‘A site from the Early Islamic Period and a Cemetery from the Late Islamic Period in Arab Kefar Saba,’ *ʻAtiqot* 61: 83–96.

Graf, D.F., (1994). ‘The Persian Royal Road System,’ Pp. 167–189 in H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, A. Kuhrt and M. Cool Root (eds.), *Continuity and Change: Proceedings of the Last Achaemenid History Workshop, April 6-8, 1990 – Ann Arbor, Michigan* [Achaemenid History, VIII] (Leiden).

Hirschfeld, Y., (2000). *Ramat HaNadiv Excavations. Final Report of the 1984–1998 Seasons* (Jerusalem).

Hirschfeld, Y., (2003). ‘A Lion’s Head from the Herodian Palace at Ramat HaNadiv,’ *Israel Museum Studies in Archaeology* 2: 11−16.

Hirschfeld, Y., and Feinberg-Vamosh, M., (2005). ‘A Country Gentleman’s Estate: Unearthing the Splendors of Ramat HaNadiv,’ *Biblical Archaeology Review* 31/2: 18−31.

Hirschfeld, Y., and Peleg, O., (2005). ‘An Early Roman Gemstone Depicting Apollo Found at Rāmat Ha-Nādīv,’ *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* 121/1: 59−66.

Leibner, U., (2012). ‘The Origins of Jewish Settlement in the Galilee in the Second Temple Period: Historical Sources and Archaeological Data,’ *Zion* 77: 437–469 (Hebrew).

Mazar, B., ed., (1986). *Geva: Archaeological Discoveries at Tell Abu-Shusha, Mishmar Ha-ʹEmeq* (Jerusalem).

Nitschke, J. L., Martin, S. R., and Shalev, Y., (2011). ‘Between Carmel and the Sea. Tel Dor: The Late Periods,’ NEA 74/3: 132–154.

Na’aman, N., (2009). ‘Did the City of Dor Serve as the Capital of an Assyrian Province?’ *Eretz-Israel* 29: 310–317.

Roll, I., (2011). ‘The Roman Roads to Caesarea.’ Pp. 239−256 in E. Ayalon and A. Izdarechet (eds.), *Caesarea Treasures* vol. I (Caesarea, Hebrew).

Segal, A., Młynarczyk, J., and Burdajewicz, M., (2014). *Excavations of the Hellenistic Site in Kibbutz Shaʻar-Haʻ Amakim (Gaba)1984 – 1998: Final Report, Revised Edition* (Haifa).

Shatzman, I., (1991). *The Armies of the Hasmonaeans and the Herod: From Hellenistic to Roman Frameworks* (Tübingen).

Stern, E. (1973). *Material Culture of the Land of the Bible in the Persian Period 558-332 B.C.* (Jerusalem, Hebrew).

Syon, D., (2004). ‘Tyre and Gamla: A Study in the Monetary Influence of Southern Phoenicia on Galille and the Golan in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods,’ (Unpublished PhD, Dissertation, Hebrew University of Jerusalem).

Tal, O., (2005). ‘Some Remarks on the Coastal Plain of Palestine under Achaemenid Rule – an Archaeological Synopsis,’ *Persika* 6: 71–96.

Tal, O., (2006). *The Archaeology of Hellenistic Palestine: Between Tradition and Renewal* (Jerusalem, Hebrew).

Tepper, Y., (2011), '19 Mills from…"Roman Road from Legio to Caesarea through Ramat Menashe,' Pp. 257−275 in E. Ayalon and A. Izdarechet (eds.), *Caesarea Treasures* vol. I (Caesarea, Hebrew).

Tepper, Y., (2013). 'Historic Human Activity – Evaluation of the Archaeological Findings,' Pp. 79–86 in A. Pervolotsky (ed.), *Conserving and Managing Mediterranean Ecosystems: The Ramat HaNadiv Case Study and Beyond. Ramat HaNadiv* (Tel Aviv, Hebrew).

Tepper, Y. and Peleg-Barkat, O., (eds.) (2009). *Horvat 'Eleq (Khirbet Umm el-'Alek) at Ramat HaNadiv – Preliminary Report of the 2000–2005 Seasons (in Memory of Yizhar Hirschfeld)* (Zikhron Ya'akov, Hebrew).

Oboda and the Nabateans

Tali Erickson-Gini
Israel Antiquities Authority

The late Professor Avraham Negev dedicated his life to the discovery of Nabateans in the Negev. This paper focuses on Ovdat, or Oboda, where Negev spent years studying the site. While the framework for his dating remains sound, recent excavations have refined some of Negev's conclusions. The function of this site was a seasonal camping ground in the Hellenistic period as early as the 3rd century BCE. A hiatus in occupation occurred following the conquest of Gaza by the Hasmonean king, Alexander Jannaeus in 99 BCE. The construction of the acropolis and Nabataean settlement continued towards the end of the millenium. The site remained inhabited until sometime after 618 CE.

Nabataean Oboda is located in the central Negev Highlands, strategically set near important ancient roads traversing the area (Fig. 1).[1] The most famous of these is the Petra – Gaza road, also known as the 'Incense Road'. Oboda is physically impressive, situated on a high plateau overlooking the Zin basin. The impressive acropolis, constructed in the last decades of the 1st century BCE, contained at least two Nabataean temples, the most notable of which was dedicated to the cult of a deified Nabataean king Obodas (or Avdat). The site boasts of an army camp from the time of Diocletian, Roman watchtowers, a late Roman caravansary, residential quarters ranging in date from the 1st century CE through early 7th century CE, five Byzantine period winepresses, several churches (Figs. 2–3) and a well-preserved bathhouse supplied with water from a 70-metre-deep well. Furthermore, the entire western face of the site below the acropolis has hundreds of man-made caves carved into the soft limestone. Unlike Elusa, the capital of the Negev region, Oboda and its surrounding territory has a large corpus of Nabataean, Greek, Thamudic and Arabic inscriptions. Oboda provides some of the best insights into the history and archaeology of the Nabataeans in the Negev.

Local Beduin in the 19th century referred to the site as Abdeh or Oboda. Early explorers frequently visited, among them, the Englishmen E.H. Palmer (1870) and later C.L. Woolley (1913–1914), the Austro-Hungarian A. Musil (1902), and the Frenchmen Jauseen, Savignac and Vincent (1904–1905). Palmer was the first to identify Abdeh as the site of ancient Oboda (1871:410–413) described in late antiquity by Stephanus of Byzantium as the town named for the deified

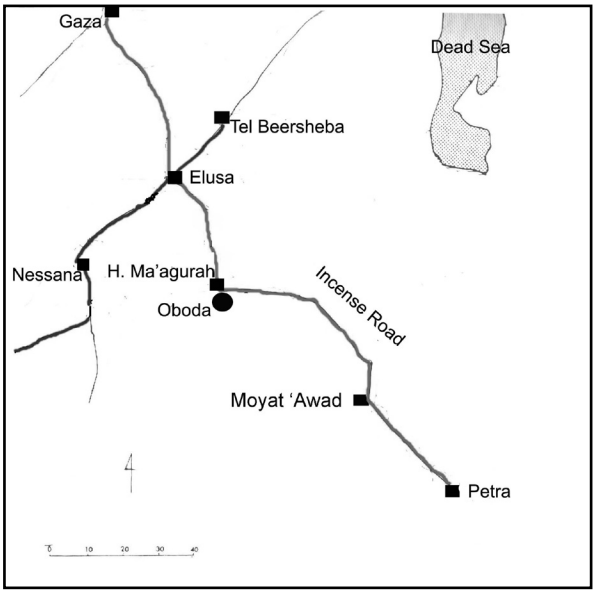


Fig. 1. Map of Oboda and other nearby sites.

Nabataean king and the site of his burial (*Steph. Byz*. 482, 15–16). These and later explorers documented outstanding features of the site, including a number of no longer visible painted inscriptions (Jaussen, Savignac and Vincent 1905: 78). Alois Musil provided invaluable photographs of the site and its extensive rock-cut caves (1907: 106–151). Just before WWII, a number of small excavations were carried out at the site under the direction of the American D.H. Colt (1937). Although these were sparcely documented, Colt described frescos and stucco decoration in a small Nabataean temple in the southeast corner of the temenos (Colt 1962: 45–47). Twenty years later, in 1958, Michael Avi-Yonah of the Hebrew University initiated large-scale excavations as part of a project to open the site to the public under the auspices of the Israel National Parks Authority. The excavations continued in the early 1960s under the direction of his student, Avraham Negev. Negev concentrated mainly on the area of the acropolis with the remains of the temples, two later Byzantine churches and a Byzantine citadel (Negev 1991; 1997: 27–38). Negev also excavated a large loculi tomb believed to have been the tomb of Obodas (the 'en-Nusra' burial cave) as well as a Byzantine bathhouse located at the foot of the site. In cooperation with Rudolph Cohen of the Israel Department of Antiquities, between 1975 and 1977, Negev resumed excavations at the site when he concentrated on an army camp northeast of the acropolis, a late Roman farmhouse and a pottery kiln and workshop (Negev 1977b: 27–29). Cohen excavated a late Roman caravansaray (Cohen 1980:44–46).[2] Negev published his final excavation report of the architecture in 1997, and two volumes on the ceramic evidence, including the Nabataean potter's

Fig. 2. Aerial photo of the Oboda acropolis facing northeast (©Eitan Tal).

workshop (Negev 1974; 1986).[3] In 1989, Negev carried out excavations in the small temple first described by Colt, which he identified as a second 'Temple of Obodas,' noting the possibility that other gods, such as Dushara and 'Uzza were probably worshipped there (Negev 1991).

The site continued to attract further attention and some of this new information is now available. Peter Fabian with the IAA carried out the largest of these excavations in the late Byzantine residential quarter and along the late Byzantine town wall (1993–1994) and in 1999 with the author, we uncovered the army camp partially investigated by Negev and Cohen.[4]

The army camp is impressive, measuring 100 × 100 m with projecting corner and intermediate towers. Over half of the camp was excavated, revealing the *principia* and main gate on its eastern side as well as army barracks with rooms around the perimeter. New evidence points to a Diocletianic date (late 3rd century) for its construction and occupation (Erickson-Gini 2002).[5] In 1999–2000, I uncovered a residential quarter dated primarily to the late Roman and early Byzantine periods located outside the town wall (Erickson-Gini 2010a: 91–95).

Negev's research at Oboda has provided the basis for the study of Nabataean archaeology in the Negev Highlands. Negev's greatest contribution in the field is his publication of inscriptions discovered in and near Oboda. These include several found in the acropolis, including an important Nabataean inscription from the second year of the reign of Aretas IV (7 BCE), showing that the acropolis and the Oboda Temple were standing during the reign of Augustus.

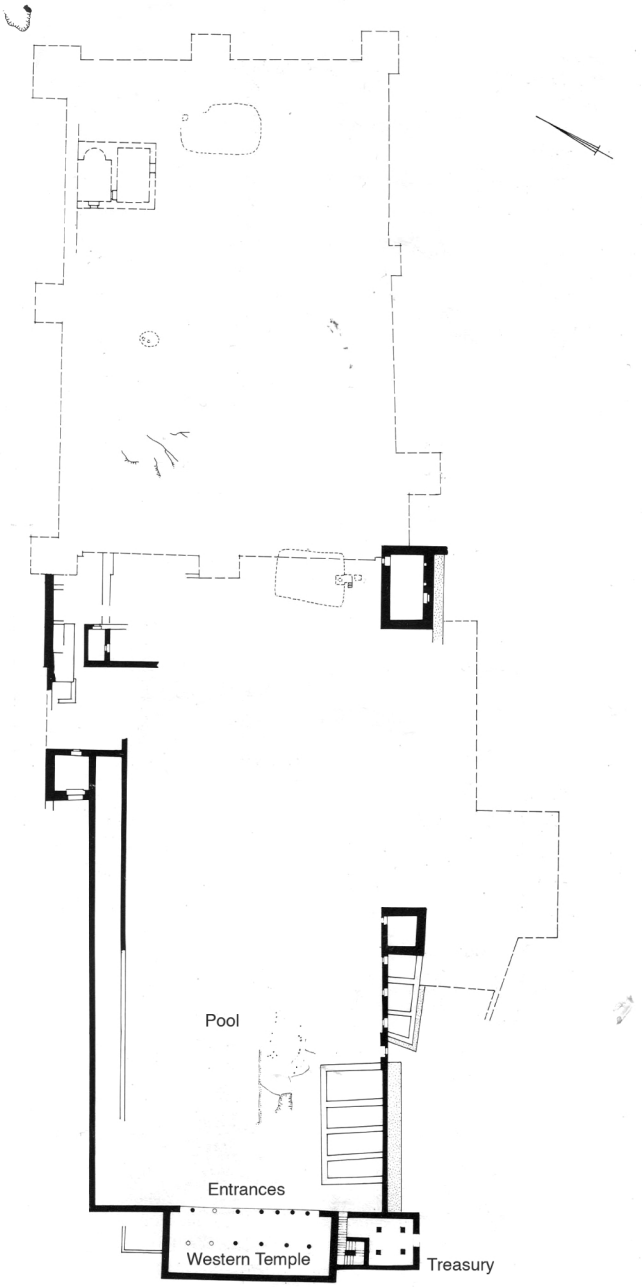


Fig. 3. Plan of the Acropolis, showing the Western Temple of Obodas (from Negev 1997: Fig. 17).

Fig. 4. Nabataean graffito, ink on plaster, from the Early Byzantine Residential Quarter (from Negev 2003: Fig. 30).

Greek inscriptions found in the remains of the 'Zeus Oboda Temple' show that it functioned and was refurbished as late as the mid-3rd century CE (Negev 1981: 11–24). These and other Greek inscriptions of the 3rd century CE in the Roman Tomb and in a Diocletianic watchtower, provide strong evidence for a continued Nabataean presence at the site, several generations after the Roman annexation of Nabataea in 106 CE.

Nabataean Script

Negev assumed that Nabataean script went out of use within a short period of time following the Roman annexation in 106 CE. Yet, in 2000, a black-ink-on-white plaster Nabataean graffito (Fig. 4) was discovered in sealed deposits in a room of the early Byzantine residential quarter outside the late Byzantine city wall (Negev 2003: 26; Erickson-Gini 2010a: 185). The houses there had rooms cut into bedrock with steps leading up to central courtyards. Only Room 23 had plastered walls. The plaster, bedrock construction and the fact that it was sealed by an early 5th century CE earthquake precludes the possibility that the graffito dates earlier than the 4th century CE. Significantly, the plasterer himself signed the graffito. The inscription begins with a salutation mentioning the Nabataean god, Dushara ('Good memory and peace from Dushara') and it refers to 'our lord Senogovia' (Negev 2003:20*).

Fig. 5. The reconstructed monumental entrance into the 3rd century CE Western Temple (facing west).

The continued use of Nabataean script in the early Byzantine period sheds light on the bilingual Nabataean and Arabic inscription discovered nearby at ‘En Avdat (Negev 2003: 21). Negev claimed that the ‘En Avdat inscription dated no later than the early 2nd century CE. However, in light of the discovery of the above Nabataean graffito, the date of the inscription can now be revised to the Byzantine period.

The Temples

Two temples were discovered on the acropolis platform, called the Obodas Temple (or Western Temple) and Small Temple. The former is at the extreme western edge of the *temenos* (Fig. 5). A dedicatory inscription discovered in its ruins indicates that both this temple and the raised platform existed in 8/7 BCE, the second regnal year of Aretas IV (9 BCE – 40 CE; Negev 1997:3). Numerous inscriptions in Nabataean and Greek were discovered at the site and particularly near the Western Temple, some of which refer to Zeus Obodas (Negev 1997: 53–54), yet no inscriptions were found in the vicinity of the Small Temple.[6]

To extend the level of the platform, the western end of the platform was supported by vaults. These were similar in form to Herod the Great’s extension of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Negev discovered eight Greek inscriptions on the lintel of the main entrance facing the portico, which demonstrate that the temple was renovated in the mid-3rd century CE. The latest dated inscription from this group is 267/8 CE (Negev 1981: 12). Changes include

Fig. 6. Altar discovered in the ruins of the Western Temple of Obodas.

the construction of a new temple roof and the reduction of the main entrance from its original maximum width of 1.40 m. (Negev 1997: 54).

A shallow 2 m square pool was carved into the bedrock 12 m east of the temenos portico. A shallow channel carved into the bedrock fed this pool. The upper section of an incense altar with carved horns bearing a Nabataean inscription was uncovered east of the entrance (Negev 1981: 23, Photo 11). A second altar for ritual sacrifices (Fig. 6), was discovered in front of the northern doorpost (Negev 1997: 55).

Negev described two types of Nabataean temples in Jordan and Syria: a 'northern' type with a central, ambulatory platform and a 'southern' type with a tripartite division (Negev 1977a: Figs. 14, 16). A third, 'broadhouse' type of temple can be added to these two. This type is known from southern Moab, at the site of Muhhay (Brünnow and Domaszewski 1904: 69–75). The Western Temple at Oboda is also of this type (Negev 1977a: 610).[7] Both temples are aligned on a north-south axis and they are both accessed through multiple entrances from the east while the western wall of the structure (Negev's 'portico') has no entrance, apparently because it was built on a slope. Access to both required staircase towers on either end. The staircase towers in the Muhhay temple were built along its eastern side, near the northern and southern corners. This arrangement is only slightly different at Oboda, where the staircase towers are located at southern and northern ends. The Muhhay temple contains a partition wall dividing the interior into southern and northern sections with the northern section being the smaller of the two. The same division apparently existed in the Oboda temple, and can be seen in the remains of a partition wall located north of the monumental entrance. During the excavation of the portico, Negev discovered a column drum bearing a *tabula ansata* and a Greek inscription stating that Raisos (son) of Abdalgos built the roof as a thanksgiving (Fig. 7; Negev 1981: 14–15). Photographs taken during the excavation show the

Fig. 7. Column drum from the Western Temple of Obodas with the inscription of Raisos, son of Abdalgos, who built the roof.

existence of walls between the columns along the eastern 'entrance' side of temple. Thus, there is little doubt that the 'portico' was not a portico but rather an enclosed, roofed space: the actual Temple of Oboda. The date of the Western Temple of Obodas suggests that this is an early form of Nabataean temple.

No temple with an ambulatory cultic platform (*motab*) has been found as yet in the Negev. Tholbecq demonstrated that this temple type appears to be profoundly influenced by Egyptian cultic tradition (1998: 248–252; 2007: 115–124). Their distribution near the *Via Nova Triana* suggests that a strong Egyptian influence may have been reinforced by *Legio III Cyrenaica* soldiers who were transferred from Egypt to police and defend the newly formed *Provincia Arabia* in the early 2nd century CE. At Qasrawit in northern Sinai, Egyptian influence was certainly notable at the temple with its ambulatory platform (Oren 1980: Figs. 8–13).

The Column Brackets Decorating the Western Temple

Recent vandalism and renovations at Oboda have brought to light several issues concerning Negev's interpretation of the architecture and the reconstructions carried out under his direction. One involves three decorated column brackets reconstructed along the south colonnade of the North Church (Figs. 8a-b; Negev 1997: 118–121). According to Negev, the brackets were not discovered inside the main hall itself but were found in the cistern in the atrium of the church. Although numerous churches in the Negev Highlands have been excavated, no similar brackets have been discovered. Furthermore, the extensive re-use of worked stones from the Western Temple of Obodas in the construction of the North Church was readily evident. According to Negev, the walls of the church and the entire floor were constructed from stones that originated in the Nabataean temple located next

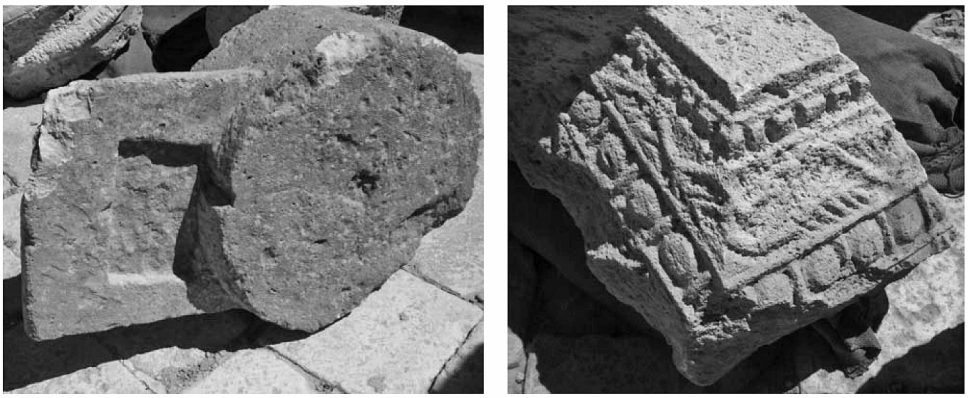


Fig. 8a-b. Column brackets with a square depression on the upper side discovered in the cistern of the North Church.

to it (*ibid*., 113). The stones originating from the temple were of a higher quality of workmanship than those of the later Byzantine church. Many floor stones of the church display early Roman (Herodian period) dressing with smooth margins, a typical late 1st century BCE feature belonging to the period when the temple was first constructed and not from later periods. According to Negev, the cornice sections of the church walls were probably obtained from the 3rd c CE renovated outer temple wall. Indeed, Negev discovered a Greek dedication inscription to the Egyptian god, Apis, carved into a re-used stone in the southeastern corner of the basilica (Negev 1981: 23).[8]

Negev assumed that the decorated column brackets were used to support the wooden beams that held up the roof over the aisles of the Byzantine basilica. Yet, a close examination of the attached column drums by engineer Lily Sukhanov of the Israel Nature and Parks Authority and architect Ram Shoeff of the Israel Antiquities Authority revealed that these drums are the same size and bear the same Nabataean-style dressing marks as those inside the temple. Moreover, the column drums integrated into the southern side of the church apse revealed that they also bore traces of Nabataean dressing marks. The builders of the church attempted to smooth these marks over in order to blend in with stones of the Byzantine workmanship.[9] According to Sukhanov, from an engineering point of view, the brackets could not have supported the roof of the aisles in the manner that Negev suggested (Sukhanov, personal communication).

These decorated column brackets certainly originated in the Western Temple. There is a square depression indicating that they originally held a statue or bust. Similar brackets are known from late Roman contexts in temples and along colonnades in Palmyra, Apamea and other sites in Syria and Cilicia (Ball 2001: 384–385). One of the most impressive examples of statue brackets is at the Temple

of Bel at Palmyra. There the brackets are mid-way up the columns in the forecourt of the temple (Dirven 2008: 235).[10] These brackets from Oboda were most probably placed along the front of temple, on the columns of the eastern entrance wall. Their decoration point to a date for the renovation of the temple in the 3rd century CE. Other decorated elements include the frieze of metopes, monoglyphs and a line of dentils along the bottom.[11]

The Temple Treasury

An intriguing feature of the Western Temple is its treasury room (Negev 1978: 625). This room, at the southern end of the temple, was supported by four tall piers that apparently collapsed in the early 5th century earthquake (Fig. 9). Here, Negev found several Nabataean inscriptions from the reign of Aretas IV, the earliest from his second year in 7 BCE. In addition, a hoard of Nabataean vessels and bronze objects dated to the early Roman period in the 1st century CE were uncovered (*ibid*., 1986: Pl. XXI). This assemblage included a complete Nabataean painted ware cup, part of a painted ware bowl and other painted ware sherds from the late 2nd to mid 3rd century CE (Negev 1988a, 39–62). Three complete bag-shaped juglets may date to the late Roman period (*ibid*., 71–72, 113–114).[12] The ceramic vessels and sherds in the assemblage represent the latest phase of its use in the late Roman period while only two or three sherds can be dated to earlier periods.[13]

In the 1997 final report, Rosenthal-Heginbottom analysed the hoard of bronze human and animal figurines and lamps (1997: 193–202). One lamp was inscribed with a Nabataean inscription, 'Good memory and peace to…', the same formula found in the early 5th century CE Nabataean inscription found at the site. The hoard also included bronze fixtures, a winged 'sphinx,' pendants and beads, and carved bone pins. In 2000, a bronze figurine was discovered in a late Roman context in Oboda's domestic quarter (Erickson-Gini and Israel 2003: Fig. 12; Erickson-Gini 2010a: 127, Fig. 3:1). This figurine is similar in many respects to a statuette of a young male, possibly representing Adonis, which was discovered in the hoard (Rosenthal-Heginbottom 1997: Pl. 1:7).

Rosenthal-Heginbottom compared the objects in the hoard with those from the Temple of the Winged Lions in Petra excavated by Hammond (*ibid*., 194, 201). Due to the significant number of metal objects, Hammond identified this paved room (Room 2), separated from the temple by a corridor, as a metal workshop. However, he admitted that the room lacked technological paraphernalia such as furnaces, crucibles or molds. He claimed that this was used for the repair or final finishing of metal products (Hammond 1987: 137).[14] Hammond dated the destruction of the Temple of the Winged Lions and the 'Metal Workshop' to the 363 CE earthquake (Hammond 1987: 136–139; 2000: 155).

Fig. 9. Area of the Western Temple treasury, facing north.

An examination of Hammond's field notes from the Winged Lion temple revealed details suggesting that the assemblages associated with the Painter's Workshop and possibly the 'Metal Workshop' were apparently abandoned *in situ*, sometime in the mid-3rd century CE. The room located on the western side of the temple that Hammond assumed to be a metal workshop has clearly been confused with later use of nearby rooms found at a higher level that are firmly dated to the 363 CE destruction. This workshop bears all the signs of a temple treasury similar to the one at Oboda. Both assemblages contained bronze cultic objects. For example, the bust of Serapis from the Temple of the Winged Lions, is similar to the Medusa head and figurines of Aphrodite and Adonis all from Oboda. Both sites share remarkably similar winged figures (sphinxes) supported by a single foot in the form of a lion's paw (Hammond 1987: Fig. 11). The Oboda sphinx and another bronze lion's paw were probably fixtures (Rosenthal-Heginbottom 1997: 201) while there were a large number of bronze fixtures present in the Petra assemblage (Hammond 1987: 139). Furthermore, both assemblages contained bronze figures with peaked caps, bronze lamps and jewelry, including pins and finger rings.

Both these treasuries were apparently repositories for gifts and offerings to the deities worshipped there. This would account for the presence of valuable, high quality bronze objects and fixtures as well as smaller offerings of jewelry and other personal items.[15] Recently, a metal workshop dated to the end of the 1st century CE has been uncovered near Petra (Grawehr 2007). The presence of a local tradition of metal working at Petra raises even more questions to possible connections with Egyptian metal workers, long inferred by the discovery of bronze objects in the temple there and at Oboda.

The Small Temple (Temple of Obodas)

In 1989, Negev excavated several trenches east of the South Church (Fig. 10; Negev 1997: 27–38). A large part of his final report was devoted to the investigations here. Only half of a structure was extant (Rooms 1 and 2, *ibid*., Fig. 15). Negev excavated its southern side, beneath and outside the Byzantine period sloped revetment wall (Rooms 3 and 4). The revetment wall was probably installed following the early 5th century CE earthquake along with the revetment walls lining the southern side of the temenos west of the South Church (Fig. 11). Thus, the temple may have been standing and possibly functioning as late as the early 5th century.

Negev identified the Obodas Temple based on the plan of the structure. He assumed that the extant rooms (Rooms 1 and 2) were two *adyta* since there were niches along the southern walls of both rooms. The arrangement is such that one would have entered into the largest room, or *adyta*, through a doorway in the southern wall. Two niches are present on either side of the doorway, which was subsequently blocked with the construction of the revetment wall. A third niche is located along the southern wall of Room 2.

The niches,[16] the painted plaster panels and molded stucco architectural elements found in Rooms 1 and 2 are the strongest arguments for the function of this building. The presence of a cistern with early Roman Nabataean architecture on the north side of the structure provides additional support. Although Negev provided black and white photographs of the painted plaster panels, he does not mention the Colt Expedition's description as 'draughted and rusticated masonry' from their work at the site in 1937 (Colt 1962: 45–47). Negev collected these elements and placed them in the storerooms of the Avdat National Park. These include large and small fragments, mainly of finely molded cornices and dentils (Fig. 12). Cone-shaped moldings on the back were used to fix them into the wall (Fig. 13). Some of the fragments bear traces of red and blue paint. The cornices and dentils probably decorated the doorway and possibly the niches in Rooms 1 and 2.

Painted and molded plaster decoration was a popular feature in several Nabataean temples, particularly in their late Roman phases. Molded cornices,

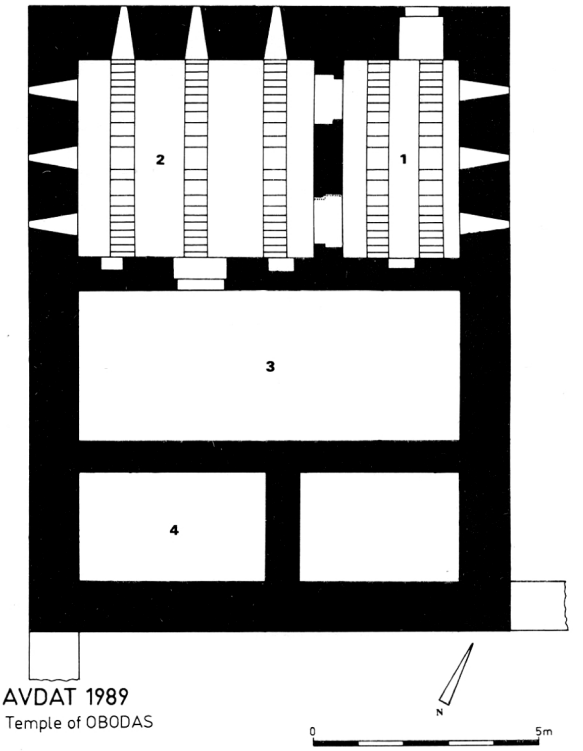


Fig. 10. Plan of the Small Temple in the southeast corner of the temenos (from Negev 1997: Fig. 15).

Fig. 11. Massive revetment wall of the 5th century CE constructed along the southern side of the temenos.

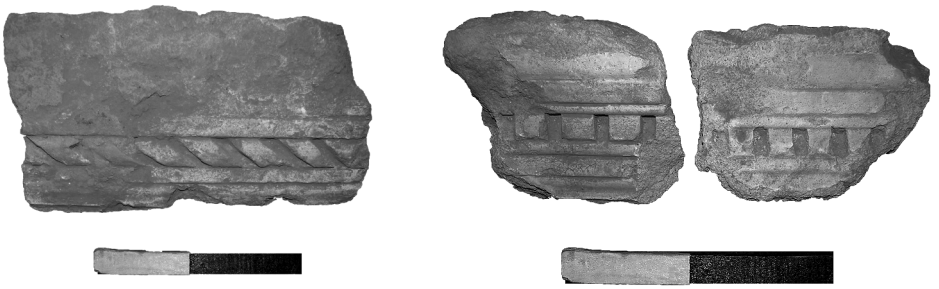


Fig. 12. Molded stucco decoration from the Small Temple.

painted plaster panels and elaborate sculpted stucco decoration were discovered in the excavation of the Great Temple at Petra (Joukowsky 2002a: 328; 2002b: 241–242; Egan 2002: Figs. 3–4). Evidence of decoration of this type has been discovered elsewhere at Petra in Qasr al-Bint (Zayadine 1987: Pl. 13) and in the Temple of the Winged Lions in Petra (Hammond 1996: 14, 78). Similar decoration has been discovered in the Nabataean temple of Lat at Wadi Ramm (Colt 1962: 45–47; Tholbecq 1998: 244–245), the temple at Khirbet edh-Dharih (Villenueve and al-Muheisen 1988) and it was apparently present in the latest phase of the temple at Khirbet Tannur (Glueck 1965: 120).

Regarding the date of the Small Temple and its stucco and painted plaster decoration, Negev found 'Middle Nabataean' pottery in a trench in the *adyton* and in its foundations (Negev 1997: 37). He also mentions 'Middle Nabataean' and late Roman pottery, and coins in the dump left by the Colt Expedition's excavation of the southern half of the *adyton*. This suggests that the temple remained in use in the late Roman period. The Nabataeans were skilled in molded stucco and painted plaster (Zayadine 1987: 142). eastern traditions and increasingly Roman architectural trends profoundly influenced their work. A major issue remains as to how late this form of decoration continued after the Roman annexation of the province in 106 CE. Evidence from a number of sites suggests that it is often found in the latest, probably post-annexation phases of Nabataean temples, for instance, in the Great Temple (Egan 2002: 351), Wadi Ramm (Tholbecq 1998: 245), Khirbet edh-Darih (Villeneuve and al-Muheisen 1988) and probably Khirbet Tannur (Glueck 1965: 120). Significantly, the Wadi Ramm temple appears to have functioned in the late Roman period, decades after the annexation (Tholbecq 1998: 245, n. 17). Painted plaster and molded stucco were not confined to cultic structures and have also been found in private dwellings such as the 'Painted House' in Petra's Siq al-Barid and ez-Zantur mansions (EZ IV in Kolb 2002: 262–264). It is also present in late Roman contexts in Building XII at Mampsis (Negev 1986: 127–128; Goodman 1988).

Fig. 13. Cone-shaped fixture on the back of a piece of molded stucco decoration from the Small Temple.

Evidence of an Epidemic

In 2000, the excavation of the late Roman Residential Quarter revealed a fully stocked kitchen pantry abandoned in the first half of the 3rd century CE (Fig. 14; Erickson-Gini 2010a: 93). Numerous ceramic vessels, together with camel bones bearing ink inscriptions in Greek and Nabataean, the remains of two imported glass vessels, and a sealed jug probably containing wine were discovered. The ceramic repertoire included cooking pots and a casserole, late Nabataean painted fine ware plates, plain ware bowls and cups, imported wine jars, a large globular fine ware jug with a wide, combed handle, and a heavy 'football-shaped' flask. The inscribed camel bones were probably used for listing inventory in the pantry. One perforated worked bone for hanging is nearly identical to another from a 3rd-4th century context from a nearby farmhouse (Negev 1977b; Erickson-Gini 2012: Fig. 5).[17]

When the immediate area was re-occupied in the late 3rd century, the pantry appears to have been deliberately covered with a thick layer of soil, while the two main rooms of the structure were completely filled. The intentional fills in these rooms resulted in the preservation of the walls to nearly their full height. In the late 3rd century CE a new story was built above the filled rooms.

The abandonment of a complete collection of household wares and foodstuffs has parallels in the contemporary abandonment of whole sites further east along the Incense Road, such as the hill-top fort at Moyat 'Awad in the western Aravah.[18] Here, large quantities of complete ceramic vessels were found stacked in nearly every room of the structure, together with baskets, wood beams and a variety of organic matter and glass vessels. The latest coins discovered in the structure date to the year 222 CE. Similarly, a collection of whole ceramic vessels identical to those found in the Oboda pantry at Moyat 'Awad was discovered in a contemporary abandoned fort. At the Nabataean caravansary of Sha'ar Ramon, abandoned rooms, including a nearly complete large cooking oven, were discovered containing whole ceramic

Fig. 14. The Oboda pantry upon discovery in the 2000 excavation.

vessels from the same period. Although part of the structure was reoccupied in the early Byzantine period, the oven and bathing facilities inside the caravansary of the late Roman period were not touched or utilized in the succeeding occupation.

These sites are unusual in that there are no signs of looting or scavenging among the assemblages. The intentional covering of the structure at Oboda might suggest that these sites were abandoned due to an epidemic along the Incense Road sometime in the first half of the 3rd century CE. A similar abandonment of complete ceramic assemblages is evident in the 'Painters Workshop' and the 'Marble Workshop' in the Temple of the Winged Lions at Petra. Although the 'Painters Workshop' was dated by the excavator from the late 1st to early 2nd century CE and the 'Marble Workshop' to the 1st century CE (Hammond 1987: 134, 136), they contain vessels with distinct parallels to those found in other sites and should be properly dated to 3rd c.[19] Elsewhere at Petra, a tomb excavated on the North Ridge (Bikai and Perry, 2001) was found containing a ceramic assemblage that parallels those found in the Negev sites abandoned in the 3rd century. According to the excavators, the tomb was apparently utilized before it was completed possibly as a result of plague or infectious disease (Bikai and Perry 2001: 65; Perry 2002: 268). The evidence

from Petra is paralleled with numismatic evidence that points to a cessation in the issue of city coins there and in other cities in southern Jordan during or immediately following the reign of the Roman emperor, Elagablus who ruled from 218–222 CE (Kindler 1983: 78, Fiema 1991: 114). This precedes the cessation of coinage in other Eastern cities by several decades.

Taken altogether, the evidence from Petra suggests that the city was struck by an epidemic sometime in the first half of the 3rd century. The abrupt cessation of the Nabataean fine ware production may be attributed to this event as well as the abandonment of whole assemblages in the Temple of the Winged Lions.

The Byzantine Bathhouse

Due to its location at the foot of the plateau, the bathhouse suffered less structural damage from the early 7th century CE earthquake that destroyed most of the site. This bathhouse is one of the best preserved found anywhere in Israel (Fig. 15). A well, 70m deep, provided water. The British rebuilt the upper section of the well, probably during the drought in the late 1930s. Although Negev provided an architectural description of the bathhouse in his 1997 report (Negev 1997: 171–176), he makes no reference to the numismatic evidence found there and only briefly refers to some Byzantine pottery.

New excavations around the well and the *praefurnia* were begun by Tahal in 1992 and continued by the author in 1993 on behalf of the IAA and the Israel Parks Authority. These excavations revealed two clearly defined architectural phases. The earliest coins date to the first half of the 4th century CE. In the first phase, water was transported from plastered pools near the well through underground ceramic pipes. The southeast corner of the bathhouse contained a furnace and a *caldarium* (Negev's Room 7, originally considered a *laconicum*; 1997: 173–174). Substantial architectural changes took place in the bathhouse in the Byzantine period, certainly after the early 5th century CE earthquake. The ceramic pipe between the well area and the bathhouse went out of use and the main pool next to the well was rebuilt at a higher level with adjoining watering troughs for animals. A low wall between the pool and the southern face of the bathhouse helped to transport water, presumably in an exposed ceramic pipe. A number of projecting stones located along the south and west faces of the bathhouses that puzzled Negev probably supported this new ceramic pipe (*ibid*., 171).[20]

Inside the bathhouse, a second *caldarium* with a domed roof was constructed in the southwest corner of the structure (Fig. 16; Negev's Room 8; *ibid*., 174–176). The supporting squinches found in the corners of the Phase 2 *caldarium* are identical to those found in agricultural towers of the 5th and 6th century CE throughout the Negev Highlands. A second furnace was constructed on the west face of the bathhouse.

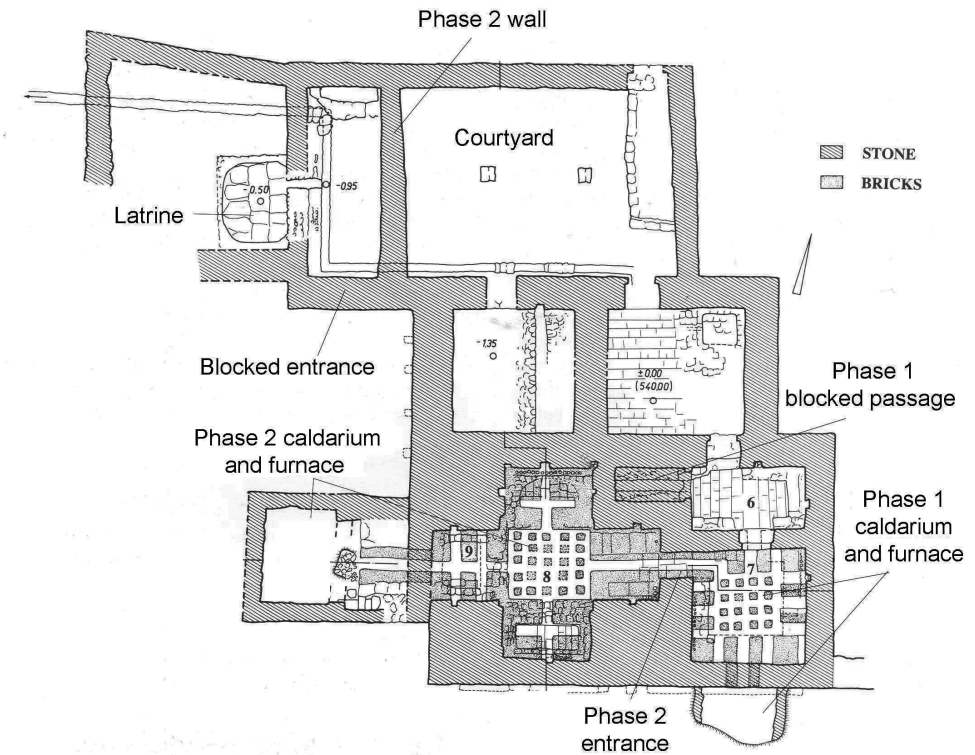


Fig. 15. Plan and phases of the Oboda bathhouse (from Negev 1997: Fig. 26).

The two construction phases are clearly visible from inside the first *caldarium* (Room 7) and the *apodyterium* (Room 6). Throughout the earliest phase of the structure relieving arches identical to those found in the Diocletianic tower were present in all the original doorways. A perfectly preserved relieving arch of this type, partially covered with the original white plaster, leads into a barrel-vaulted passageway off of Room 6. The passageway was built over part of the original hypocaust and its walls are still covered with the original white plaster. The passageway was blocked by the new construction of the second *caldarium* and its existence puzzled Negev, who described it as a *pissoir*. By comparison, the entrance to the second *caldarium* is not arched but is a crudely constructed opening leading into the domed room.

Other architectural changes include the reduced size of the forecourt (Negev's Room 1 and 2) and a blocked doorway leading from the west face of the bathhouse into the original forecourt. In the second phase, a north-south wall was built across

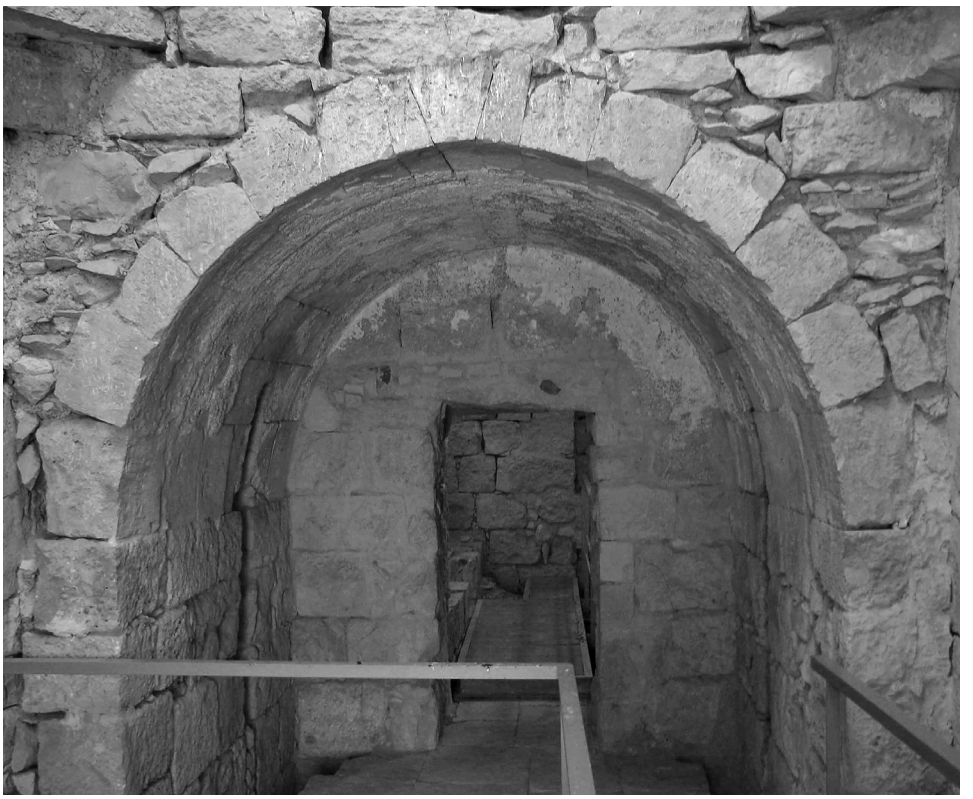


Fig. 16. The interior of the Phase 2 caldarium.

the western side of the forecourt. The new wall blocked off access to a shallow pool (Negev's Room 3) that probably served originally as a military latrine. Until the late 1990s, earthquake damage was still visible in the north wall of Room 5, which served as a *tepidarium*.

Coins from the first half of the 4th century CE indicate the original construction date of the complex, and relieving arches identical to those of the Diocletianic tower both point to its construction by Roman military personnel stationed in the army camp (Erickson-Gini 2002). Since Negev's excavations in the Oboda bathhouse, a number of Roman military bathhouses (*balnea*) have been discovered in Diocletianic contexts in the Aravah and southern Jordan. These include bathhouses excavated at 'En Hazeva (Cohen and Israel 1996), Yotvata (Magness and Davies 2008), Gharandal (Darby and Darby 2010), Bir Madkur (Smith 2009) and the legionary camp at Lejjun (de Vries and Lain 2006: 213–226).

Earthquakes

The destruction of the town by a massive earthquake sometime in the early 7th century CE was one piece of a puzzle not mentioned by Negev. The earthquake certainly occurred after the latest inscription found at the site in the *Martyrion* of St. Theodore (South Church) in 617 CE (Negev 1981: 37). Direct evidence of the destruction and abandonment of the site was uncovered by Fabian, with massive destruction evident throughout the site, and particularly along the western face of the site with its extensive caves and buildings (Korjenkov et al., 1996). Mezad Yeruham, several kms further south, was apparently destroyed at the same time (Y. Baumgarten, personal communication), while the earthquake left a trail of damage at numerous sites. This is indicated by the early seventh-century construction of revetment walls around churches and private houses at Sobota (Shivta), Sa'adon, Rehovot in-the-Negev, and Nessana. Compared to other Nabataean sites in the Negev Highlands that indicate a continued occupation through the late Byzantine period well into the early Islamic period in the 9th c., Oboda was devoid of settlement in the early Islamic period. In place of a central town, such as Sobota (Shivta), Rehovot in-the-Negev, or Nessana, a significant number of early Islamic farming villages—many with open-air mosques—were found in close proximity to Oboda.

Recent research has also revealed a history of earthquakes and their impact on the occupation and development of the town. A massive earthquake took place in the early 5th century CE, substantial evidence of which was uncovered in the late Roman and early Byzantine residential quarter (Erickson-Gini 2010a: 91–93). All of the structures east of the town wall were abandoned and used as a source of building stone for the late Byzantine town. Following this earthquake, massive revetment walls were constructed along the southern wall of the acropolis in order to shore up the heavily damaged walls.

In contrast, the late Byzantine citadel adjoining the *temenos* area of the acropolis has no revetment walls, certainly due to its construction following the earthquake. The two churches inside the *temenos* area were built using numerous early Roman ashlars and architectural elements originally from the Obodas Temple damaged in the earthquake.

Earlier and less destructive earthquakes are also indicated. Some damage apparently occurred from the 363 CE earthquake. There is indirect evidence of a more substantial destruction in the early 2nd century CE in which residential structures from the earliest phase of the Nabataean settlement east of the late Roman residential quarter were demolished and used as a source of building stone for later structures. Destruction from this earthquake is well attested particularly

nearby at Horvat Hazaza, and along the Petra to Gaza road at Mezad Mahmal, Sha'ar Ramon, Mezad Neqarot and Moyat 'Awad, and at 'En Rahel in the Arava as well as at Mampsis (Korjenkov and Erickson-Gini 2003).

Hasmoneans and Nabataeans

Negev maintained that the archaeological record indicates a gap in Nabataean occupation in the Negev following the conquest of Gaza by the Hasmonean king, Alexander Jannaeus in 99 BCE (Negev 1977a: 535). According to Flavius Josephus, the Hasmoneans conquered the southern coast of Palestine after their siege of Gaza (Jos. *Ant*. XIII. 13.3). Josephus also referred to a political agreement between Alexander's son, Hyrcanus II, and the Nabataeans around 65 BCE which included the return of twelve regions in exchange for military support (Jos. *Ant*. XIV. 1.4). The last places in Josephus' list include Alusa and Orybda, which F. M. Abel suggested should be identified with the Nabataean towns Elusa and Oboda (Abel 1938: 148). Israeli scholars rejected this identification for decades, owing to the study by Schalit, who suggested that all of the place names in Josephus' list should be found in southern Transjordan (Schalit 1951). Yet, the later discovery of Hasmonean forts at Horvat Ma'agurah and Nessana clearly show that Abel's suggestion was correct, and that the Hasmoneans conquest in southern Palestine was not limited to the coastal ports but reached deep into the Negev Highlands, blocking the Nabataeans from using both major roads to access the coast.

Alexander Jannaeus' policy of blocking Nabataean trade routes through the Negev and Moab had far-reaching implications for the development of a Nabataean presence further north in Syria and south towards the Red Sea. In the decades following the withdrawal of Hasmonean forces from the Negev around 65 BCE, the Nabataeans established towns in the Negev at Elusa, Oboda and Nessana.

Conclusion

Negev pioneered the study of Nabataean material culture in the Negev with his large-scale excavations in Oboda and Mampsis and smaller excavations in the sites of Elusa and Shivta. Recent excavations carried out by researchers provide a framework for a re-evaluation of his interpretations.

New data on the development of Oboda from the early Roman period to the abandonment of the site shows that a catastrophic earthquake in the early 7th century CE damaged numerous buildings at the site. Furthermore, an epidemic at Oboda and other sites along the Incense Road probably affected Nabataean material culture as far away as Petra.

Negev was one of the few Nabataean scholars who dealt with questions of trade on the Petra to Gaza Road, the 'Incense Road'. Negev suggested that international trade flowing through the site ceased before the end of the 1st century CE (Negev 1977a: 639). This assumption was widely accepted despite Cohen's preliminary findings from caravan sites along the road indicating that trade continued uninterrupted into the early 3rd century CE.[21]

Negev claimed that in wake of the collapse of international trade, the Nabataeans adopted intensive methods of agriculture as early as the second half of the 1st century CE, during the reign of Rabbel II. The vast dispersion of agricultural terraces throughout the Negev Highlands has been cited as 'evidence' of Nabataean agriculture. Yet, no winepresses have been found at Oboda or the general region that pre-date the Byzantine period. In 1997, the earliest winepress found at Oboda was uncovered in a farmhouse and was apparently destroyed by an early 5th century earthquake (Negev 1997: 7; Erickson-Gini 2010a: 81). In recent years, the agricultural terraces and related installations found throughout the Negev Highlands have been dated primarily to the Byzantine and early Islamic periods (Haiman 1995; Nevo 1991; Urman 2004: 112*; Erickson-Gini 2010a: 81–82; 191–199).

Negev's assumption that Nabataean trade along the Incense Road ceased prior to the Roman annexation and was replaced by agriculture during the reign of their last king, Rabbel II, has been shown to be premature. International trade along the Incense Road and Nabataean material culture continued long past the annexation and the international trade broke down in the 3rd century CE. In the Negev Highlands, the local population adopted wide-scale agriculture around the 4th century and cultural ties with Petra remained strong until the end of the early Byzantine period in the 5th century CE.

Furthermore, Negev's assumption that the Nabataeans ceased to use their own script in the early 2nd century needs to be re-evaluated with the discovery of a Nabataean graffito in the early Byzantine Residential Quarter. New discoveries have also been made regarding the plan and decoration of the main temple at the site. Evidence for Diocletian's army camp at Oboda exists northeast of the acropolis, while the towers, domestic structures in the early Byzantine Residential Quarter and the bathhouse below the plateau point to continued occupation. Further excavations in Oboda are necessary to determine the full extent of the settlement in the Hellenistic and early Roman periods.

Notes

1 This paper was originally presented in December 2009 in the *Topoi* conference organized by S.G. Schmid in Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Germany: Central Places in Arabia during the Hellenistic and Roman Periods, Common Trends and Different Developments. The writer wishes to thank Professor Schmid for his permission to publish this paper outside the forthcoming conference proceedings.

2 Several years later, Cohen carried out important excavations in several Nabataean sites along the Petra to Gaza road including Moa (Moyat 'Awad), Horvat Qasra, Har Massa, Mezad Neqarot, Sha'ar Ramon, Mezad Mahmal and Horvat Ma'agurah (Cohen 1982; Erickson-Gini and Hirschfeld, in press).

3 Subsequent analysis of the Nabataean wares discovered in the workshop showed that they were produced in Petra and not on site (Gunneweg et al., 1988), while identification of the structure as a Nabataean workshop and kiln has since been challenged ('Amr 1987:17; Schmid 2007: 323; Goren and Fabian 2008).

4 Negev's published excavation reports are ambiguous since they lack critical details such as lists of loci, baskets, elevations, and statigraphic sections. Moreover, the numismatic evidence is largely absent.

5 Fabian disputed the Diocletianic date of the Roman army camp, and instead suggested a date in the 2nd century CE (2005). The numismatic evidence does not support an early date for the camp and the ceramic evidence is confusing due to the secondary deposition of much of the material (see Erickson-Gini 2002).

6 Negev designated the smaller 'tripartite' temple (here, the 'Small Temple') as the Obodas Temple (1997: 2–3, 27–38).

7 Glueck reports that the Muhhay (Mahaiy) temple was dismantled sometime after Brunnow drew its plan (1965: 59).

8 In the later publication of this inscription, Negev changed the location from the southeastern corner of the North Church as stated in the earlier report to the northeastern corner (Negev 1981: 23; 1997: 119).

9 My thanks are due to Dr. Olga Finkelstein, a conservator of the Israel Antiquities Authority, for her discovery of this feature.

10 According to Dirven, many of the statues at Palmyra are no longer extant because they were made from bronze rather than from stone (2008: 235).

11 Special thanks goes to Lily Sukhanov, Ram Shoeff and Dr. Olga Finkelstein for sharing their observations and analyses as well as Professor Judith McKenzie (University of Oxford), Dr. Lihi Habas (Hebrew University of Jerusalem) and Professor Moshe Fischer (Tel-Aviv University) for their detailed comments and contributions to understanding the date, function and decoration of the brackets. I would also like to thank Karni Golan who is currently studying Byzantine architectural elements from the Central Negev on behalf of Ben Gurion University for her comments regarding this unique feature.

12 A fourth, nearly complete juglet, lacking a base, is also included in the assemblage (Negev 1986: 113–114, no. 994).

13 In 1997, Negev claimed that 'Western Sigillata' wares and a complete Roman round lamp were included in the assemblage (1997: 51), yet these do not appear in the 1986 pottery report.
14 In his paper on the ez-Zantur metal workshop, Grawehr notes the lack of actual metal working facilities in Hammond's 'metal workshop' and the fact that: 'the context clearly belongs to the late Roman occupation of the site.' (Grawehr 2007: 398).
15 The bronze 'dolphins' discovered in the Wadi Ramm temple (Savignac and Horsfield 1935: 261) were probably offerings as well.
16 Tholbecq notes that the cultic niches present in many Nabataean temples, such as the Temple of the Winged Lions and the Qasr al-Bint, may also have an Egyptian origin (1998: 249).
17 The writer wishes to thank Professor Guy Bar-Oz of the University of Haifa for the discovery of the writing on these bones during his examination.
18 This site was previously referred to as Moa. Yet, the lack of any Byzantine period finds has brought about a revision in its identification.
19 An examination of excavation records of the Temple of the Winged Lions reveals the presence of 3rd century coins in the 'painters workshop'. The 'marble workshop' contained Nabataean painted fine ware plates identical to those found in the Negev sites of the early 3rd century. My thanks to Lin Hammond and Dr. Christopher Tuttle, the Deputy Director at ACOR in Amman, for making these records available.
20 Due to the lack of full documentation, many details concerning the phasing of the bathhouse may never be known. Projecting stones along the south face of the Phase 1 *caldarium* are a possible indication of a second, exposed ceramic pipe that transported water to other parts of the original structure. Part of the Phase 1 walls might have been renovated during Phase 2 and equipped with projecting stones. Furthermore, it is unclear whether the original Phase 1 *caldarium* functioned during Phase 2.
21 The final report of Cohen's excavations at several sites along the Petra to Gaza Road is being prepared for publication.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Diod. – Diodorus of Sicily (1st century B.C.E.), *Bibliotheca historica*, (1960–1967) (ed.) C.H. Oldfather, (London).

Diod. - *Diodorus of Sicily*, (1954) 12 volumes. transl. R. M. Geer. (Cambridge, Mass.).

Jos. *Ant*. – Josephus Flavius –*Complete Works: The Antiquities of the Jews*, (1976) transl. W. Whiston, (New York).

Steph. Byz - Stephanus of Byzantium - *Ethnika*. (1958) A. Meineke. (ed.) (Graz).

Secondary Sources

Abel, F.M., (1938). *Géographie de la Palestine*, Vol. II (Paris).

'Amr K., (1987). *The Pottery from Petra: A Neutron Activation Analysis Study*, BAR Int. Series 324 (Oxford).

Ball, W., (2001). *Rome in the East. The Transformation of an Empire* (London and New York).

Bellinger, A.R., (1962). 'Coins.' Pp. 70–75 in H.D. Colt (ed.), *The Nessana Excavations,* Vol. I (London).

Bikai, P.M. and M. A. Perry., (2001). 'Petra North Ridge Tombs 1 and 2; Preliminary Report,' *BASOR* 324: 59–78.

Brünnow, R.E. and Domaszewski, A. v., (1904). *Die Provincia Arabia I* (Strassburg).

Cohen, R., (1980). 'The Excavations in 'Avdat, 1977,' *Qadmoniot* 49–50: 44–46 (Hebrew).

Cohen, R., (1982). 'New Light on the Date of the Petra-Gaza Road,' *Biblical Archaeologist* 45: 240–247.

Cohen, R., (1985). *Archaeological Survey of Israel, Map of Sede Boqer West 167* (Jerusalem).

Cohen, R., (1988–1989b). 'Horvat Ma'agura,' *ESI* 7–8: 114.

Cohen, R. and Y. Israel., (1996). ''En Hatzeva 1990–1994,' *Excavations and Surveys in Israel* 15: 110–116.

Colt, H.D. (ed.), (1962). *Excavations at Nessana I* (London).

Darby, R. and Darby, E., (2010). *A Newly Identified Roman Military Bath at 'Ayn Gharandal (Jordan)*. http://balneorient.hypotheses.org/1983.

De Vries, B. and Lain, A., (2006). 'Chapter 7. The Legionary Bath (Area C.10).' Pp. 213–226 in S.T. Parker, (ed.), *The Roman Frontier in Central Jordan*, *Vol. I. Final Report on the Limes Arabicus Project 1980–1989* (Washington, D.C.).

Dirven, L., (2008). 'Aspects of Hatrene Religion. A Note on the Statues of Kings and Nobles from Hatra.' Pp. 209–246 in T. Kaiser, (ed.), *The Variety of Local Religious Life in the Near East in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods* (Leiden).

Egan, E.C., (2002). 'Stucco Decoration from the South Corridor of the Petra Great Temple: Discussion and Interpretation,' *ADAJ* 46: 347–361.

Erickson-Gini, T., (2002). 'Nabataean or Roman? Reconsidering the Date of the Camp at Avdat in Light of Recent Excavations.' Pp. 113–130 in P.W.M. Freeman, J. Bennett, Z.T. Fiema and B. Hoffmann (eds.), *Limes XVIII: Proceedings of the XVIIIth International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies held in Amman, Jordan (September 2000)* (Oxford).

Erickson-Gini, T., (2010a). *Nabataean Settlement and Self-Organized Economy in the Central Negev. Crisis and Renewal* (Oxford).

Erickson-Gini, T., (2010b). 'Horvat Ma'agurah and Hasmonean Rule in the Negev,' *Teva Ha'dvarim* 173: 110–113 (Hebrew).

Erickson-Gini, T., (2012). 'Nabataean Agriculture: Myth and Reality,' *Journal of Arid Environments* 86: 50–54.

Erickson-Gini, T. and Hirschfeld, Y., (eds.), (forthcoming). *Rudolph Cohen's Excavations in the Nabataean-Roman Sites along the Incense Road in the Negev Desert, 1978–1988*.

Erickson-Gini, T. and Israel, Y., (2003). 'Recent Advances in the Research of the Nabatean and Roman Negev.' Pp. 9*-11* (English), 11–14 (Hebrew) in R. Rosenthal-Heginbottom, (ed.), *The Nabateans in the Negev* (Haifa).

Fabian, P., (2005) Avdat during the Establishment of the Provincia Arabia: The Roman Military Camp and its Position in the Eastern Defense System of the Empire. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation. Ben Gurion University in the Negev (Beersheva, Hebrew).

Fiema, Z.T., (1991). Economics, Administration and Demography of Late Roman and Byzantine Southern Transjordan. (PhD Dissertation. The University of Utah).

Glueck, N., (1965). *Deities and Dolphins* (New York).

Goodman, J., (1988). 'The Frescoes in Building XII.' Pp. 147–162 in A. Negev, (ed.), *The Architecture of Mampsis, Final Report, I*. Qedem 26 (Jerusalem).

Goren, Y. and P. Fabian (2008). 'The Oboda Potter's Workshop Reconsidered.' Pp. 340–351 in J.H. Humphrey, (ed.), *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, Vol. 21 (Ann Arbor).

Grace, V., (1962). 'Stamped Handles of Commerical Amphoras.' Pp. 106–130 in H.D. Colt (ed.), *The Nessana Excavations, Vol. I* (London).

Grawehr, M., (2007). 'Production of Bronze Works in the Nabataean Kingdom,' *SHAJ* 9: 397–403.

Gunneweg, J., Perlmann, I. and Asaro, F., (1988). 'The Origin, Classification and Chronology of Nabataean Painted Fine Ware,' *Jahrbuch des roemisch-germanischen Zentralmuseums*, 77: 314–345 (Mainz).

Haiman, M., (1995). 'Agriculture and Nomad-State Relations in the Negev Desert in the Byzantine and Early Islamic Periods,' *BASOR* 279: 5–29.

Hammond, P.C., (1987). 'Three Workshops at Petra (Jordan),' *PEQ* 119: 129–141.

Hammond, P.C., (1996). *The Temple of the Winged Lions Petra, Jordan 1974–1990*. (Fountain Hills, Arizona).

Hammond, P.C., (2000). 'Nabatean Metallurgy: Foundry and Fraud.' Pp. 145–156 in L.E. Stager, J.A. Greene and M.D. Coogan, (eds.), *The Archaeology of Jordan and Beyond. Essays in Honor of James A. Sauer* (Winona Lake, Indiana).

Jaussen, A., Savignac, R. and Vincent, H., (1904). ''Abdeh (4–9 fevrier, 1904),' *Revue Biblique* Nouv. Ser. I: 403–424.

Jaussen, A., Savignac, R., and Vincent, H., (1905). ''Abdeh,' *Revue Biblique* Nouv. Ser. I: 234–244.

Joukowsky, M.S., (2002a). 'The Brown University 2001 Petra Great Temple Excavations Offer More Surprises,' *ADAJ* 46: 315–330.

Joukowsky, M.S., (2002b). 'The Petra Great Temple: A Nabataean Architectural Miracle,' *NEA* 65: 235–248.

Kindler, A., (1983). *The Coinage of Bostra* (Warminster).

Kolb, B., (2002). 'Excavating a Nabataean Mansion,' *NEA* 65: 260–264.

Korjenkov, A.M. and Erickson-Gini, T., (2003). 'The Seismic Origin of the Destruction of the Nabataean Forts of Ein Erga and Ein Rahel, Arava Valley, Israel,' *Archäologischer Anzeiger* 2: 39–50.

Korjenkov, A.M., Fabian, P. and Becker, P., (1996). 'Evidence fro 4th and 7th Century AD Earthquakes, Avdat Ruins (Israel): Seismic and Historical Implications.' P. 52 in *Annual Meeting of the Israel Geological Society, Eilat, March 18–21, 1996*.

Magness, J. and Davies G., (2008). 'Yotvata – 2007,' *Excavations and Surveys in Israel* 120. http://www.hadashot-esi.org.il/report_detail_eng.asp?id=807&mag_id=114.

Musil, A., (1907). *Arabia Petraea, Vol. 2: Edom* (Vienna).

Negev, A., (1974). *The Nabatean Potter's Workshop at Oboda* (Bonn).

Negev, A., (1977a). The Nabateans and the Provincia Arabia. Pp. 520–676 in M. Temporini and W. Haase, (eds.), *Aufstieg und Niedergang er Romischen Welt II.6* (Berlin).

Negev, A., (1977b). 'The Excavations in Avdat, 1975–1976,' *Qadmoniot* 37:27–29 (Hebrew).
Negev, A., (1981). *The Greek Inscriptions from the Negev*. Studium Biblicum Franciscanum. Collection Minor N. 25 (Jerusalem).
Negev, A., (1986). *The Late Hellenistic and Early Roman Pottery of Nabatean Oboda*. Qedem 22 (Jerusalem).
Negev, A.(1988). *The Architecture of Mampsis, Final Report, I*. Qedem 26 (Jerusalem).
Negev, A., (1988). *The Architecture of Mampsis, Final Report, Vol. I. The Middle and Late Roman and Byzantine Periods*. Qedem 27 (Jerusalem).
Negev, A., (1991). 'The Temple of Obodas: Excavations at Oboda in July 1989,' *Israel Exploration Journal* 41: 62–80.
Negev, A., (1997). *The Architecture of Oboda, Final Report*. Qedem 36 (Jerusalem).
Negev, A., (2003). 'Obodas the God in a Nabatean-Arabic Inscription from the Vicinity of Oboda and a Review of other Nabatean Inscriptions.' Pp. 17*–20* (English), 21–26 (Hebrew) in R. Rosenthal-Heginbottom, (ed.), *The Nabateans in the Negev* (Haifa).
Netzer, E., (1999). *The Palaces of the Hasmoneans and Herod the Great* (Jerusalem).
Nevo, Y., (1991). *Pagans and Herders: A Re-examination of the Negev Runoff Cultivation Systems in the Byzantine and Early Islamic Periods* (Beer Sheva).
Oren, E.D., (1980). 'North Sinai Survey, 1972–1978.' Pp. 101–158 in Z. Meshel and I. Finkelstein, (eds.), *Sinai in Antiquity. Researches in the History and Archaeology of the Peninsula* (Tel Aviv; Hebrew).
Palmer, E.H., (1871). 'The Desert of the Tih and the Country of Moab.' *PEFQSt*: 3–80.
Perry, M., (2002). 'Life and Death in Nabataea: The North Ridge Tombs and Nabataean Burial Practices.' *NEA* 65/4: 265–270.
Rosenthal-Heginbottom R., (1997). 'Chapter VII. D. Small Finds from the Excavations (1958–61).' Pp. 193–214 in A. Negev, (ed.), *The Architecture of Oboda, Final Report*. Qedem 36 (Jerusalem).
Savignac, M.R. and Horsfield, G., (1935). 'Le Temple de Ramm.' *Revue Biblique* 44: 245–278.
Schalit, A., (1951). 'Alexander Yannai's Conqests in Moab,' *Eretz Israel* 1: 104–121 (Hebrew).
Schmid, S., (2007). 'Nabataean Fine-ware Pottery.' Pp. 309–326 in K.D. Politis, (ed.), *The World of the Nabataeans, Vol. 2 of the International Conference The World of the Herods and the Nabataeans held at the British Museum, 17–19 April 2001* (Stuttgart).
Shatzman, I., (1991). *The Armies of the Hasmonaeans and Herod* (Tubingen).
Smith, A.M., (2009). *Bir Madhkur Project. The Site of Bir Madhkur*. http://home.gwu.edu/~amsii/wadiarabaproject/bmp/bmp_about.html
Tholbecq, L., (1998). 'The Nabataeo-Roman Site of Wadi Ramm (Iram): A New Appraisal.' *ADAJ* 42: 241–258.
Tholbecq, L., (2007). 'Nabataean Monumental Architecture.' Pp. 103–144 in K.D. Politis, (ed.), *The World of the Nabataeans, Vol. 2 of the International Conference The World of the Herods and the Nabataeans held at the British Museum, 17–19 April 2001* (Stuttgart).
Urman, D., (2004). *Nessana. Excavations and Studies I. Beer-Sheva: Studies by the Department of Bible and Ancient Near East Vol. XVII* (Beer-Sheba).

Villeneuve, F. and Z. al-Muheisen (1988). 'Fouilles à Khirbet edh-Dharih (Jordanie), 1984–1987: un village, son sanctuaire et sa nécropole aux époques nabatéenne et romaine (Ier-IVe siècle apr. J.-C.),' *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres* 458–479.

Woolley, C.L. and Lawrence, T.E., (1914–1915). 'The Wilderness of Zin,' *Palestine Exploration Fund Annual* 3.

Zayadine, F., (1987). 'Decorative Stucco at Petra and other Hellenistic Sites,' *SHAJ* 3: 131–142.

An Austrian Lloyd Seal from Jaffa

Yoav Arbel
Israel Antiquities Authority

A rare lead seal of the shipping company Austrian Lloyd was found during salvage excavations at the center of Jaffa. The seal is dated to the turn of the 20th century, a time of fundamental changes in Jaffa affecting a wide range of fields, from city planning, architecture and infrastructure to economy, politics and demography. The seal is a modest yet meaningful testimony to the role of commercial firms in the growing European involvement in Ottoman provinces during that time. It also reflects the contribution of archaeology to the study of relatively recent periods often ignored in traditional research.

Introduction

Systematic archaeological excavations focusing on the mound of Jaffa began in 1948 and still continue (Bowman et al. 1955, Kaplan 1967, 1972, 1975, Kaplan and Ritter-Kaplan 1993, Herzog 2008, Burke et al. 2014). Contrary to a formerly prevalent view that limited the ancient Jaffa settlement to the mound, salvage excavations since the mid-1990's in several areas to the south and east of the modern urban sprawl attest to a lower city that thrived alongside the ancient core (Fantalkin 2005, Peilstöcker et al. 2006, Arbel 2008, 2009a,b, 2010, Arbel and Peilstöcker 2009, Re'em 2010, Peilstöcker and Burke 2011). The last phase of urban development that even today has an impact on the character of the modern city took place in the second half of the 19th century during the closing decades of Ottoman rule.

Until recently, this period was considered too recent for archaeological relevance and was therefore largely neglected by archaeologists working in Jaffa. A different approach was adopted in salvage excavations at the Lower City, where late Ottoman remains were treated similarly to those of earlier strata.[1] Significant new data concerning the city's recent history, some of it invisible in literary sources, subsequently has come to light. Much of that information relates to Jaffa's role in international trade networks of the 19th century, featuring large shipping companies from several European nations

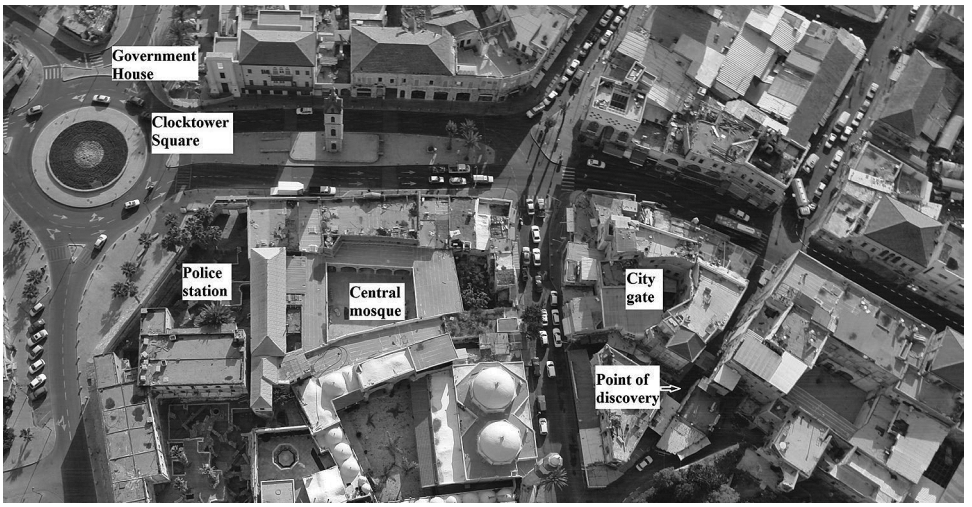
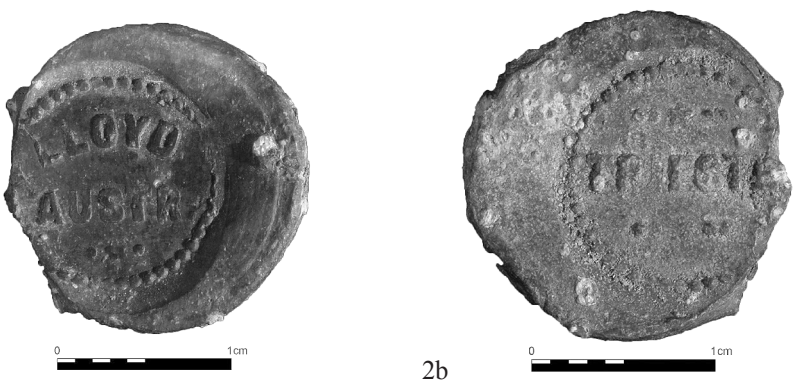


Fig. 1. Central Jaffa and point of discovery of the seal.



2a 2b

Fig. 2a-b. The seal – obverse and reverse.

(Kark 1990: 220). During salvage excavations in central Jaffa in 2008, an extremely rare lead seal of the leading shipping company of the time, Austrian Lloyd (*Österreichischer Lloyd, Lloyd Austriaco*) was discovered.[2]

The Seal and its Historical Background

The seal was found under the Ottoman stone paving on Moneychangers Street (*Rehov HaHalfanim*) in the northeastern outskirts of historical Jaffa. The site is near the Ottoman city gate and the civic center that developed there in the

late 19th century (Fig. 1). The seal was preserved fairly intact, with only a slight fracture on one edge (Figs. 2a and 2b). The circular stamps occupy 1.4 cm of the artefact's 1.8 cm diameter. The obverse face includes the word *Lloyd* above the word *Austr[iaco]*.[3] A six-pointed star flanked by two dots appears below. The reverse face contains the word *Trieste.* Single six-pointed stars, each flanked by two dots, appear over the word and under it. All words are in capital Latin letters and framed by a ring of small dots.

The seal is dated between the last decade of the 19th century and World War I. The use of the name *Trieste* points to a pre-WWI date, as after the war it was replaced with *Triestino*. Although the title *Lloyd Austriaco* was also in use in the earliest phases of the company's existence, historical and archaeological evidence favors a much later *terminus post quem* date for the seal.

The Jaffa municipality was established in 1871, with the paving of central streets as one of its main objectives. Stone pavements were exposed under the modern asphalt of several streets near Clock Tower Square and the civic center surrounding it. Rich assemblages of local and imported pottery, stamped pseudo-porcelain plates, glass sherds, metal objects and coins, all dating to the closing decades of the 19th century were sealed under the flagstones of these streets, including Moneychangers Street. Based on this stratigraphic context, the seal should post-date 1891, when the *Lloyd Austriaco* title was re-adopted.[4]

Fast development in Jaffa during that period was directly related to broader political and economic processes. The steady decline of the Ottoman empire and the increasing involvement of European powers (Lewis 1988, Heacock 1995) led the Ottoman government to implement reforms (*tanzimat*), which resulted in broader exposure to European cultural trends and material commodities. As a harbor town, Jaffa was particularly susceptible to such changes.

Jaffa began the 19th century recovering from the destruction and bloodshed from Napoleon's brief conquest and the aftermath of his withdrawal (Gichon 1998). British assistance notwithstanding, reconstruction followed traditional Ottoman lines (Kark 1990: 53, Kana'an 2001a,b). Yet by the end of the century Jaffa evolved into a bustling cosmopolitan town. Modern motorcars replaced animal power in drawing water from wells for the local orchards (Kark 1990: 245–246, Kark 1998: 534–535). New hotels and inns were established in Jaffa—as in Jerusalem—to provide for the sharp rise in the numbers of tourists and pilgrims (Kark 1990: 285–286, Gibson and Chapman 1995).[5] Technological improvements and larger investments bolstered and diversified the local economy, simultaneously profiting from major developments such as the opening of the Suez Canal and the increasing employment of steamships. As a consequence, by the close of the 19th century Jaffa was a typical eastern Mediterranean port of call for major European shipping companies, among whom was Austrian Lloyd.

Fig. 3. Lloyd Austriaco offices at Jaffa harbor (postcard from the early 20th century).

Austrian Lloyd in the Holy Land

In 1835 the insurance organization *Lloyd Austriaco* established a steamship company based in Trieste. Shortly afterwards, a contract was signed between the new company and the Austrian government for the transportation of mail and passengers to ports in the eastern Mediterranean (Abulafia 2011: 556). Austrian Lloyd soon grew to be a leading shipping company in the region, with regular steamship services to Greece, the Balkans, Turkey, Syria, Egypt and the Holy Land (Fig. 4).

Austrian Lloyd vessels first anchored at the shores of the Holy Land in the early 1850's (Ben-Arieh 2007: 191). In usual circumstances, poorly situated Jaffa would never be chosen as one of its ports of call; a chain of shallow reefs opposite the city turned its harbor into a historically notorious scene of disasters (Fig. 5).[6] Unable to navigate through the hazardous rocks, large ships were compelled to anchor a mile away, trusting transportation of passengers and goods to local boatmen. Yet Jaffa remained by far the closest harbor to Jerusalem, thus no major shipping company could afford to avoid it. Regular visits by Austrian Lloyd steamships were part of a pattern that was soon to make that harbor, despite it disadvantages, one of the busiest in the eastern Mediterranean (Kark 2011: 135).

The process was never limited to the commercial arena. Like all other European powers, Austria played an active role in political struggles for influence in the

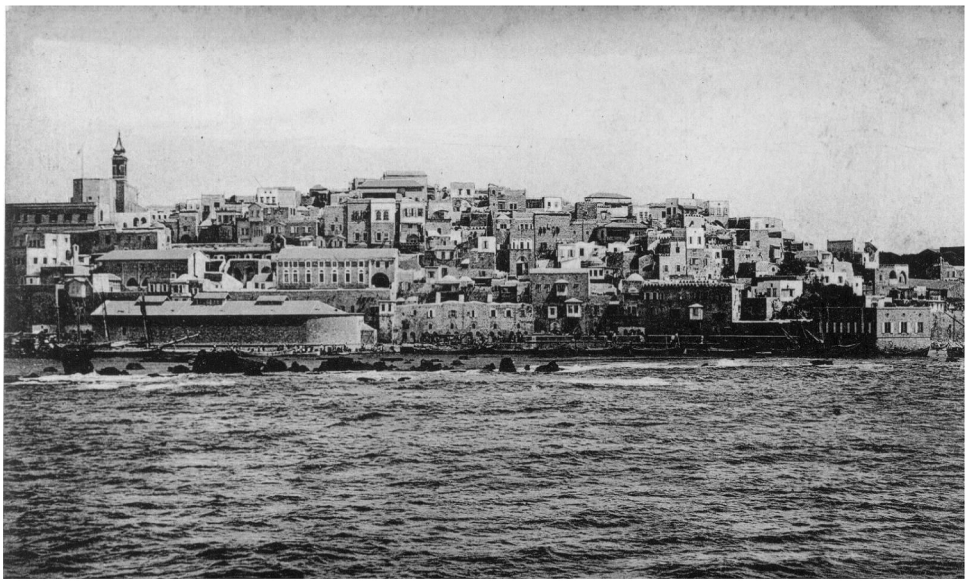


Fig. 4. Jaffa harbor and its reefs at the turn of the 20th century.

domains of the declining Ottoman empire. Albeit a private company, Austrian Lloyd was considered by the Habsburgs in Vienna as an invaluable asset to the state, serving vital Austrian interests to the southern Ottoman coasts. This perspective is vividly reflected in the correspondence between the Austrian consulate in Jerusalem and the Austrian ambassador in Constantinople.[7] In a letter from the end of 1880 or early 1881, Consul Bernhard Graf Caboga-Cerva bitterly criticizes Austrian commerce in the Holy Land compared with that of other European countries, stating that 'if Lloyd had not existed…[Austria] probably would not be selling here more than Portugal or Denmark, and that when commerce is the source of the position of power of the nations.'[8]

It should therefore come as no surprise that the lines separating Austrian Lloyd from Austrian diplomatic representation in the Holy Land were sometimes blurred. The presence of the company in Jaffa was a central reason for the upgrading of the official Austrian consular agency to a vice-consulate. Employment with Austrian Lloyd granted temporary Austrian diplomatic sanction (Eliav 1985: 32, 115).

The role of Austrian Lloyd in mail transportation was prominent too, as the Austrian post service was considered more effective and reliable than several European counterparts operating between Jaffa and Jerusalem (Eliav 1985: 244, Kark 1990: 217–219, Kark 1998: 536). Mail arrived once a week on Lloyd ships to Jaffa and traveled by guarded coaches to Jerusalem. The Ottomans, whose own

mail services were notorious for their slowness and inefficiency, attempted to upgrade them by transporting mail through the new rail line inaugurated in 1892. Clients in Jerusalem, however, especially of the Jewish community for which mail links with Europe were an economic lifeline, remained faithful to the Austrian service.[9] The Austrians were no strangers to local Jewish affairs (Blumberg 2007: 169–170) and with the steep growth of the Jewish population in Jerusalem during the 19th century, maintaining a constructive position among the Jewish community was in their political and commercial interests.[10] Among their efforts were vigorous diplomatic measures to protect Jewish passengers on Lloyd ships from harassment by the local authorities.[11] Austrian Lloyd's Jewish link, incidentally, reaches back to the company's genesis. Jews were among its founders and the Rothschilds of Vienna and London were some of the company's most significant initial financiers (Abulafia 2011: 560, 556).

The intimate connections between Austrian Lloyd and the Vienna government also had its downsides. The Austrian annexation of Bosnia Herzegovina during the Young Turks revolution in 1908 sparked anti-Austrian outbursts in various locations in the Ottoman Empire (Frierson 2004: 118–119). A boycott of Lloyd ships in Jaffa lasted over four months, at considerable financial damage to the company. In a letter dated 13 October 1908 addressed to the Ottoman governor of Jaffa, Austrian vice-consul M. Wenko protests against Jaffa's boatmen violently preventing the transportation of Ministry of Health officials to the Lloyd ship *Enterpré*. The rogue boatmen also blocked the transfer of mail to the shore (Eliav 1985: 350).

Yet, there were no long-term repercussions, and the importation of Austrian goods soon recovered and even increased, 'mostly and as usual in Lloyd ships from Trieste or Fiume,' as stated in a document from November 1911.[12]

The Austrian Lloyd shipping company dissolved in 1918 in the aftermath of the First World War, after over eighty years of activity as a chief sea carrier in the Eastern Mediterranean.[13] The discovery of one of its lead seals under a late nineteenth century street in Jaffa provides a tangible testimony to important aspects of international commercial activities there, when Ottoman grasp over the Holy Land was gradually waning and foreign powers competed over the domains that were soon to be relinquished.

Notes

1 The first detailed description of late Ottoman remains in an excavation in Jaffa appears in Kletter's report of his 1999 excavations at Roslan Street, near the central police station (Kletter 2004).

2 The excavations (IAA permit No. A-5378, A-5577) were conducted in 2008–2009 by the Israel Antiquities Authority and directed by the author (Arbel 2010). The seal was found in Area D, supervised by Orit Segal. Ottoman remains included building foundations, paved streets, an extensive drain system and stone-built cesspits. Building remains from the Crusader period were also found, as were Hellenistic pottery, coins and other artefacts. Four other lead seals were discovered, all in Late Ottoman contexts, but none were decipherable. The photographs of the seal, courtesy of the Israel Antiquities Authority, were taken by Clara Amit. I wish to thank Amir Gorzalczany for his useful comments on an early draft of this paper. I am also indebted to Dr. Dalia Levy Eliahu and to Tzvi Shaham for permission to use historical photographs from their collections.

3 The completion of the inscription and additional historical details were kindly provided by Captain Eberhard Koch, Chairman and Managing Partner, Österreichischer Lloyd (Cyprus).

4 http://www.imperatrix.co.uk/line.htm (accessed April 23, 2014).

5 British artist and traveler W.H. Bartlett praised the new hotels he witnessed in Jerusalem in 1853, which apparently invested considerable efforts in meeting refined European tastes in accommodations, food and beverages at affordable prices (cited in Gibson and Chapman 1995: 93). In this aspect, as in many others, Jaffa mirrored Jerusalem. Useful information about Jaffa could also be found in the leading printed guides of the time, such as Baedeker (Kark 2001) and Thomas Cook (Mendelson 1985: 391–396).

6 Many travelers describe the reefs in colorful prose. Mary Eliza Rogers (1865: 19), who traveled extensively in the land during the 1850s, left the following impression of her first landing in Jaffa: 'We were at anchor just outside a semicircular belt of rocks, some of which rose dark and high out of the water, while others had sunk beneath its surface, and were only indicated by the dashing of the surf over them. This rocky belt stands like a barrier in front of the town and forms a natural harbor of about fifty feet in width, but […] offers no protection in bad weather.' The reefs are a dominant feature in almost all maps of Jaffa from the late 18th century and throughout the 19th century (Shaham 2011, Figs. 13.2–5, 7–8, 12–13, 15, 17–20). Similar depictions emerge from late medieval illustrations (Ze'evi 1985: 11, 51–52, 54–55, 72, 136–137).

7 The Austrian documents were published by Eliav (1985).

8 File Jer, II\61 (Cited in Eliav 1985: 179).

9 A letter dated 17 July 1849 illustrates the salience of the Austrian mail for Jewish daily life in Jerusalem. In this letter, local Jews ask the Austrian consul, Josef Graf von Pizzamano, to send a regular envoy to meet the monthly Lloyd ship in Beirut, in order to speed up mail transport and delivery and ensure its safety (File N. 145, Jer, II\31, cited in Eliav 1985: 64).

10 A Jewish population of 2,000 at the start of the century grew to 35,000 out of 55,000 inhabitants at its conclusion (Ben-Arieh 1975).

11 In a letter dated 8 September 1893 to the ambassador in Constantinople, Consul Anton Ritter von Strautz writes of Turkish mistreatment of Jewish passengers 'almost every time that the Austrian Lloyd ship arrives in Jaffa.' Von Strautz adds that habitual harassment and extortion prevents many Jews from landing and that Lloyd captains were complaining of constant disruptions of sailing schedule (File No. 1178, BK\B105; cited in Eliav 1985: 252).

12 File 19, VC Jaffa, cited in Eliav 1985: 378.

13 The company was re-incepted in 1951. Official website: http://www.oelsm.com/

Bibliography

Abulafia, D., (2011). *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean* (Oxford).

Arbel, Y., (2008). 'Yafo, Flea Market Complex,' *Hadashot Arkhaeologiyot – Excavations and Surveys in Israel* 120 (electronic publication) http://www.hadashot-esi.org.il/report_detail_eng.asp?id=900&mag_id=114 (accessed December 16 2013).

Arbel, Y., (2009a). 'Yafo, the Qishle, Preliminary Report,' *Hadashot Arkhaeologiyot - Excavations and Surveys in Israel* 121 (electronic publication) http://www.hadashot-esi.org.il/report_detail_eng.asp?id=1051&mag_id=115 (accessed December 21 2013).

Arbel, Y., (2009b). 'Excavations at the Police Compound (*Kishle*) of Jaffa,' *Qadmoniot* 137: 31–42 (Hebrew).

Arbel, Y., (2010). 'Yafo, HaZorfim Street, Preliminary Report,' *Hadashot Arkhaeologiyot – Excavations and Surveys in Israel* 122 (electronic publication) http://www.hadashot-esi.org.il/report_detail_eng.asp?id=1474&mag_id=117 (accessed December 19 2010).

Arbel, Y. and Peilstöcker, M., (2009). 'The Lower City of Jaffa,' *Qadmoniot* 137: 31–42 (Hebrew).

Ben-Arieh, Y., (1975). 'The Growth of Jerusalem in the Nineteenth Century,' *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 65: 352–269.

Ben-Arieh, Y., (2007). *The Rediscovery of the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century* (Jerusalem).

Blumberg, A., (2007). *Zion before Zionism 1838–1880* (Jerusalem).

Bowman, J., Isserlin, B. S. J. and Rowe, K. R. (1955). 'The University of Leeds, Department of Semitics Archaeological Expedition to Jaffa 1952,' *Proceedings of the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society* 7/4: 231–250.

Burke, A.A., Peilstöcker, M. and Pierce, G., (2014). 'Hellenistic Architecture in Jaffa: The 2009 Excavations of the Jaffa Cultural Heritage Project in the Visitors Center,' *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 146/1: 1–16.

Eliav, M., (1985). *Under Imperial Austrian Protection; Selected Documents from the Archives of the Austrian Consulate in Jerusalem 1849–1917* (Jerusalem, Hebrew).

Fantalkin, A., (2005). 'A Group of Iron Age Wineries from Ancient Jaffa (Joppa),' *Salvage Excavation Reports* 2: 3–26.

Frierson, E. B., (2004). 'Gender, Consumption and Patriotism.' Pp. 99–128 in A. Salvatore and D.F. Eickelman (eds.), *Public Islam and the Common Good* (Leiden).

Gibson, S. and Chapman R.I., (1995). 'The Mediterranean Hotel in the Nineteenth Century,' *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 127: 95–105.

Gichon, M., (1998). 'Jaffa, 1799,' *Napoleonic Scholarship* 1(2) (electronic publication) http://www.napoleon-series.org/ins/scholarship 98/c_jaffa.html#planning (accessed April 20 2014).

Heacock, R. (1995). 'Jerusalem and the Holy Places in European Dimplomacy.' Pp. 160–180 in A. O'Mahony, G. Gunner and K. Hintlian (eds.), *The Christian Heritage in the Holy Land* (London).

Herzog, Z., (2008). 'Jaffa' Pp. 1791–1792 in E. Stern (ed.), *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land* (Jerusalem).

Kana'an, R., (2001a). 'Waqf, Architecture, and Political Self-Fashioning: The Construction of the Great Mosque of Jaffa by Muhammmad Aga Abu Nabbut,' *Muqarnas* 18: 120–40.

Kana'an, R., (2001b). 'Two Ottoman *Sabils* in Jaffa (c. 1810–1815): An Architectural and Epigraphic Analysis,' *Levant* 33: 189–204.

Kaplan, J., (1967). 'Jaffa,' *Revue Biblique* 74: 87–88.

Kaplan, J., (1972). 'The Archaeology and History of Tel Aviv-Jaffa,' *Biblical Archaeologist* 35: 65–95.

Kaplan, J., (1975). 'Jaffa,' *Revue Biblique* 82/2: 257–260.

Kaplan, J. and Ritter-Kaplan, H., (1993). 'Jaffa.' Pp. 655–659 in E. Stern (ed.), *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land* (Jerusalem).

Kark, R., (1990). *Jaffa – City in Evolution (1799–1917*) (Jerusalem).

Kark, R., (1998). 'The Introduction of Modern Technology into the Holy Land (1800–1914 CE).' Pp.524–541 in T. E. Levy (ed.), *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land* (London).

Kark, R., (2001). 'From Pilgrimage to budding Tourism: the Role of Thomas Cook in The Rediscovery of the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century.' Pp.155–174 in S. Searight and M. Wagstaff (eds.), *Travelers to the Near East* (London).

Kark, R., (2011). 'Ottoman Jaffa: From Ruin to Central City in Palestine.' Pp. 129–136 in M. Peilstöcker and A. A. Burke (eds.), *The History and Archaeology of Jaffa 1* (Los Angeles).

Kletter, R., (2004). 'Jaffa, Roslan Street,' *'Atiqot* 47: 193–207.

Lewis, B., (1988). *The Muslim Discovery of Europe* (New York).

Mendelson, E. (1985). 'Baedeker's Universe,' *The Yale Review* 74: 386–403.

Peilstöcker, M. and A. A. Burke., (2011). 'Preliminary Report for the 2007 Ganor Compound Excavations.' Pp. 177–186 in M. Peilstöcker and A. A. Burke (eds.), *The History and Archaeology of Jaffa 1* (Los Angeles).

Peilstöcker, M., Re'em, A., Haddad, E., and Gendelman, P., (2006). 'Yafo, Flea Market Complex,' *Hadashot Arkhaeologiyot–Excavations and Surveys in Israel* 118 (electronic publication) http://www.hadashot- esi.org.il/report_detail_eng.asp?id=431&mag_id=111 (accessed December 29, 2011).

Re'em, A., (2010). 'Yafo, the French Hospital, 2007–2008: Preliminary Report,' *Hadashot Arkhaeologiyot - Excavations and Surveys in Israel* 122 (electronic publication) http://www.hadashot-esi.org.il/report_detail_eng.asp?id=1566&mag_id=117 (accessed October 16 2013)

Rogers, M.E., (1865). *Domestic Life in Palestine* (Cincinnati).
Shaham, T., (2011). 'Jaffa in Historical Maps.' Pp. 137–174 in M. Peilstöcker and A. A. Burke (eds.), *The History and Archaeology of Jaffa 1* (Los Angeles).
Ze'evi, R., (1985). *Jaffa – Tides of Times* (Tel Aviv).

Book Reviews

Charles Méla et Frédéric Möri en collaboration avec Sydney H. Aufrère, Gilles Dorival, Alain Le Boulluec, *Alexandrie la divine*. (2 vols). Genève: Éditions de la Baconnière, 2014. Pp. 1132, incl. illustrations and maps. €196/CHF 219. ISBN:978–2-9404–3122–9.

The size of the two-volume study reflects its scholarly magnitude: it measures 25 × 31 cms and weighs approximately 8 kilos (!). This beautifully edited and most welcome study appeared alongside a fascinating exhibition (5 April to 31 August 2014) at the Fondation Martin Bodmer in Cologny near Geneva. This immense publication offers a collection of 118 papers, 400 nearly monochromatic photos, including ancient maps and all necessary indexes. While the first chapter introduces the complex cultural climate surrounding the foundation of Alexandria, the final chapter collects papers discussing the legacy of Alexandria in the period of European Renaissance. Although both volumes embrace many centuries, crucial attention is given to the Hellenistic megalopolis. That enormous historical scope is covered by contributions written by approximately one hundred established scholars representing the whole range of academic fields related to the central theme of the two volumes. These short but insightful contributions are intended to introduce general readers to a particular subject; they combine references to the ancient sources with selected modern publications. The study gives a coherent, attractive and inspiring testimony to the impressive richness of life in the ancient city. That outstanding affluence includes various elements of cultures (e.g. literature and poetry), religions (Egyptian beliefs and later syncretism of cults, Judaism, Christianies, Hermetica, Islam), different schools of Hellenistic philosophies found in the city, its interest in various types of science, a variety of architecture and of course the complex history of the city.

I particularly value the contributions dedicated to the Jewish and Christian legacy reflected in literature and archaeology. On the subject of Alexandrian Judaism, the volume offers articles written by Marie-Françoise Baslez on Yahweh and Dionysus and their conflict in Wisdom Literatures and the Books of the Maccabees (pp. 716–726), together with Lucia Saudelli on the relationship between the Law of Moses and Greek philosophy as a particular Alexandrian motif (pp. 726–733) and Maren R. Niehoff on the Alexandrian Jews and the pagan school of textual criticism (pp. 733–742). Baslez rightly highlighted the main dialectic of Jewish culture/religion in Alexandria as the ongoing development between two spheres: integration and resistance (p. 722). Saudelli's reconstruction of Philo of Alexandria's assimilation of

Greek philosophical wisdom, although summarised in such a limited space, gives justice to his main (and brilliant) theological intuition (p. 731). Niehoff shows a number of exegetical (e.g. Hebrew terminology, idioms) dilemmas faced by Jewish translators and commentators (e.g. Philo of Alexandria) while working on the Septuagint (p. 739) and concludes with confirmation of multiple approaches (i.e. not exclusively allegorical) to the Scriptural text by Jewish authors (p. 740).

Equally, in the second volume, Chapter 1 examines the origin of Alexandrian Christianity (pp. 750–820), with Chapter 2 discussing Christian theological diversity (Gnosticism), thus offering a number of papers which combine brief but comprehensive study with sound and insightful elaboration. Among the presented themes are: the origin of Christianity in Alexandria (Alain Le Boulluec, pp. 750–757); the Christian 'school'/*didaskaleion* (Alain Le Boulluec, pp. 757–765); Jewish and Christian Sibylline poetry (Jean- Michel Roessli, pp. 768–774); the beginning of Egyptian monasticism (Ewa Wipszycka, pp. 774–782); the conflict between Arius, Arians and Athanasius (Annick Martin, pp. 782–789); the Bible of the Copts (Nathalie Bosson, Anne Boud'hors, pp. 789–796); Alexandrian theology in the 5th and 7th centuries CE (Christian Boudignon, pp. 802–809) and the assessment of pagan culture in relation to the domination of Christianity (Myrto Malouta, Garth Fowden, 809–820). Chapter 2 offers five papers, which discuss the main trajectories of the development of some alternative theologies (Jean-Daniel Dubois, pp. 820–829 and later Paul-Hubert Poirier, pp. 834–837); the relationship between Gnosticism and Judaism (Madeleine Scopello, pp. 830–833), philosophy (Paul-Hubert Poirier, 839–841) and magic (Madeleine Scopello, pp. 842–845). The limited nature of the current review does not allow detailed evaluation of all these and other papers in relation to the appearance and development of Christianity in Alexandria; these observations will, nonetheless, allow the reader to grasp the main factors which stimulated that process.

Finally I wish to point out the main values of this encyclopaedic oeuvre. The vital combination of papers and iconography gives the reader a highly impressive and well documented insight into the spirit of ancient Alexandria. The study gives testimony not only to the brightness of the megalopolis, such as its well known intellectual legacy and passion for knowledge, wisdom and even its desire for immortality. It also testifies to the moments of darkness: ethnic tensions, persecutions of minorities and the suffering of the Alexandrian people. The moments of glory as well as the moments of pain are documented by the contributors in their short but inspiring papers, and are also illustrated by outstanding photographs.

Piotr Ashwin-Siejkowski
King's College, London

Michael D. Press, *Ashkelon 4: The Iron Age Figurines of Ashkelon and Philistia: Final Reports of the Leon Levy Expedition to Ashkelon 4*. Harvard Semitic Museum and Eisenbrauns, 2012. Pp. xiv + 264. $49.50. ISBN:978–1-57506–942–5.

The monograph, published as Volume 4 of the reports of The Leon Levy Expedition to Ashkelon, is a revision of the author's PhD dissertation, entitled *Philistine Figurines and Figurines in Philistia in the Iron Age*, and presented at Harvard University in 2007. The change in title is appropriate, considering the focus on the figurines of Ashkelon, in the wider context of Philistia. The academic style reflects closely its genre as a PhD project, and has the merits of clearly delineating the goals of the project, and each chapter. Press first addresses two theoretical concepts: figurines and Philistines (Chapter 2). In defining the notion of figurine, Press outlines key works in the field, and also shows an awareness of more recent theoretical debate on issues of social identities and relations which, however, he does not follow through in his work, where he opts for a more traditional iconographic approach. Press problematizes the definition of Philistine, in the context of debates about ethnic and cultural identities.

The author, then, outlines the history of research of the figurines of Palestine in general, and Philistia in particular (Chapter 3). Press draws attention to the emphasis on female figurines, the increased focus on the figurines of Judah, and the tendency, despite occasional caution, to remain within traditional views. Moving to the Philistine figurines, Press is particularly critical of the work of Dothan (1967, 181–184; 1982, 234–249), and his approach which is not comprehensive, often marking exceptional figurines as those which define the norm. True to PhD form, Press outlines his method, proposing a set of four characteristics to his work: bounded, comprehensive, systematic and archaeological (Chapter 4). Press dwells at length on the first ('bounded'), needing to specify the boundaries for Philistia, a concept he problematized in chapter 2. He ultimately adopts a pragmatic approach, proposing a working definition to circumscribe an area, remaining aware that boundaries change over time. Within these boundaries, Press opts to be 'comprehensive,' including objects from 25 sites. Press describes his 'systematic' way of dealing with the material, adapting Panofsky's traditional art-historical study: moving from a first level of typological definition, to iconographic analysis and a consideration of textual evidence, to move towards figurine function and identity. Finally, in his archaeological approach, Press proposes to consider the figurines in both their find site-context and in their general distribution. Central to the work is the catalogue of figurines from Ashkelon. All the Iron Age types from the site are measured and described, and presented with colour photographs and drawings, providing a view of the figurine fragment from all angles. Non Iron Age types are included, but without illustration.

The catalogue is admirable for its clarity, and provides explanation of the meanings of registration numbers and find-spot information, helping to lock in the material contextually with the work of the expedition. An index of entries is also included in the work. It is unfortunate that the pdf version of this volume, available on the expedition website (http://digashkelon.com/current-projects/), is not linked to the finds database, unlike Volume 3 of the reports. For the material from the later Iron Age, the catalogue overlaps significantly with Cohen's chapter in Volume 3 (Cohen 2011), and the two works acknowledge each other, without significant debate.

Press moves to the core of his work, with a chapter on typology and iconography. He defines a typology, which he already applied to the figurines of Ashkelon, and extends it to the rest of the figurines from Philistia. Understandably, Press does not provide a detailed catalogue of this material, as plenty of material awaits publication. References to published figurines divided by type are spread throughout the chapter, and the work would have profitted from a summary list in the appendix. Press redefines some important categories, particularly the Philistine Psi, in place of the often mislabelled "mourning" figurines. He discusses the iconography and possible identity of all the figurines types, and is commendable in the effort not to focus narrowly on anthropomorphic material.

In his contextual study, Press situates the figurine types in their inter-regional, regional and site context. On a site level especially, Press highlights the difficulty with interpretation, considering the lack of criteria to judge the function of buildings, which often leads their function to be reinterpreted (p. 217). On the site level for Ashkelon, Press provides ten plans (in the Appendix), showing the exact find-spots of the figurine by grid and phase. Considering the rather small area of excavation, the difficulty with discerning any wider scale patterns is more than expected. In his conclusion, Press outlines briefly the various types of figurines found. He also addresses key questions regarding ethnic identity, and criticises the superficiality of a series of arguments which equate too quickly differences and similarity of material culture to distinctiveness or loss of identity on an ethnic or cultural group level.

The monograph is highly commendable for its scientific rigour and for providing a solid basis for further study. We should look forward to further work by Press on this field, moving further into an understanding of the figurines and the construction of meaning for the people who made them.

Cohen, S.L., (2011). 'Terracotta Figurines.' Pp. 441–471 in L.E. Stager et al., *Ashkelon 3. The Seventh Century* (Winona Lake, IN).

Dothan, T. (1967). *The Philistines and their Material Culture* (Jerusalem, Hebrew).
Dothan, T. (1982). *The Philistines and their Material Culture* (Jerusalem).

Josef Mario Briffa
University College, London

Irving Finkel, *The Ark Before Noah: Decoding the Story of the Flood*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2014. Pp. 421, incl. b/w and col. illustrations. £25.00. ISBN:978–1-44–475707–1.

At the core of this exuberant book is a cuneiform tablet written nearly 4,000 years ago. It was acquired at the end of World War II by an RAF officer stationed in Iraq whose son, the late Douglas Simmonds, brought it to the British Museum to find out about its contents. Irving Finkel, Assistant Keeper and Assyriologist at that museum, realized that its text described how the ark was built, an account that differed from other, long-known cuneiform versions of the Flood story. More than that, it supplied details otherwise known only from the Book of Genesis.

Around the decoding of 'The Ark Tablet' the author weaves various strands: how and when the previously known cuneiform accounts were found and deciphered; how to read the script; his own career of study and research; and a smattering of history. His style is discursive, dramatic, and often amusing, even when esoteric texts such as manuals of omens are described. Some brief explanations and references are rightly relegated to end notes. Episodes unrelated to the core subject, such as his discovery and elucidation of the Royal Game of Ur, and a digression on the invention of the alphabet, provide a kaleidoscopic backcloth against which, eventually in Chapter 4, Babylonian, Assyrian, Greek and Quranic accounts of the Flood story are set out. With the fifth chapter we come at last to 'The Ark Tablet,' with an English translation and photographs of the tablet. The builder of the Ark is named as Atrahasis. Whereas earlier-known versions of the Flood story seem to describe the ship as a multi-storey cube, the new text gives details of a different shape: a coracle. Enticingly Finkel picks out words from damaged passages in the *Epic of Atrahasis* and in an Assyrian fragment found in 1872 which indicate that those versions also described a coracle, and should not, therefore, be forced to conform to the cuboid shape of the ark in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*.

Details of materials and measurements for building the ark in the Simmonds tablet are compared with the much less specific accounts in the other sources: the Epic of Gilgamesh and the Epic of Atrahasis. Finkel looks at questions of which animals went into the ark, and has found the Babylonian word for 'two by two' in 'The Ark Tablet.' Although there is a close-up photo of the relevant signs, unfortunately the photo is too poor to confirm this. His discussion of how

to keep the animals harmoniously and feed them all correctly is highly amusing, and he uses the issue to introduce the reader to lists of animals in cuneiform lexical (dictionary) texts, as well as to Athanasius Kircher's drawings of the ark and how the accommodation was arranged for the animals. He digresses in order to introduce the Documentary Hypothesis in relationship to the Genesis accounts, and shows how more than one version of the story can be disentangled in the Hebrew text.

Moving on to what happened when the Ark was complete and loaded, and when the Ark grounded after the water receded, Finkel makes comparisons between biblical and cuneiform accounts. He argues that composers of the story for the Bible did their work in Babylonia after the Exile, perhaps giving a rather simplistic view given the textual variations in Hebrew; but he shows through Babylonian texts of that time that some key Babylonian and Judean beliefs had much in common. The argument allows the story of Nebuchadnezzar and the Exile to be retold, along with the recent discovery on tablets in the British Museum of names of magnates named by Jeremiah. Finkel lists the types of Hebrew scroll texts likely to have been taken from Jerusalem in 597 BCE, and digresses into the story of the Tower of Babel, suggesting that the building was unfinished. His statement that "the religion of the Old Testament Hebrews from its inception differed crucially from that of all its predecessors and contemporaries" will not meet with the agreement of many scholars including liberal Jews, and is not, in any case, indicated by the various accounts of the Flood Story. His understanding that the Hebrew Bible was composed by many 'human hands' reworking pre-existing texts for the benefit of stateless Judeans in exile is, however, commonly held by a majority of Old Testament scholars. He explains how the Flood story from early second millennium cuneiform was incorporated, with expert insights into the process of scribal education and the importance of emergent scripture. This seems to contradict his earlier statement, p. 28, that scribes transmitted texts without intentional changes. Even though very many copies of the Flood story were found at the Assyrian capital Nineveh, dating to the seventh century BC, a possible Assyrian contribution to the formation of scripture is, surprisingly, never suggested.

Chapter 12 presents the different strands of text telling where the ark landed after the flood water receded. This leads to a brilliant link that Finkel has made with the *Babylonian World Map* and an intriguing interpretation of two sections of its partially restored text, based on similarities with lines 13–14 in 'The Ark Tablet,' allowing a better understanding of the Map as a whole, and accounting for the naming of Mt. Ararat. The different name for the mountain in the *Gilgamesh Epic* is explained, and Finkel gives an ingenious speculation that an Assyrian incantation may refer to an expedition made by Sennacherib to look for the Ark on Cudi Dagh, ancient Mt. Nipur, where he carved panels of inscription, an expedition apparently

referred to in the Talmud (p. 291). But no reference is given to the incantation text, which is presented only in translation.

Finkel points out that 'The Ark Tablet' does not include vital elements of the Flood story, but concentrates on the character of Atrahasis and precise details of the ark, claiming that a theatrical play explains unusual features, and that the measurements given are practical and realistic for a Euphrates audience to whom the coracle was more familiar than a cube-shaped boat. (His talk at the Oxford Literary Festival seemed to give a different interpretation: that of apprentice scribes showing off their expertise in mathematics within a mythical context, which this reviewer found more convincing).

Appendix 1 expounds the several cryptic techniques encapsulated in the Babylonian word for 'spirit/ghost' used in the *Epic of Atrahasis* when man is created, compared with similar techniques used in omens. This is unrelated to the story of the ark. Appendix 2 explains some odd features in the Flood story in the *Epic of Gilgamesh* by comparison with 'The Ark Tablet.' Appendix 3 written with Mark Wilson explores the mathematics and the measures used in 'The Ark Tablet,' with supporting diagrams and discussion of the materials, but does not tackle the feasibility of scaling up a working design. Appendix 4 gives a transliteration of the new text line by line, each with a translation and vocabulary.

It is unusual for a scholar to write about a discovery in this way, and lack of rigour occasionally shows. In Appendix 4 the disadvantage of the choice Finkel has made is apparent: his presentation is no substitute for a thorough text edition, and has not been prepared with enough care. Some of the readings are certainly wrong. One example is line 10, for which the translation makes no sense, and where *kannu* cannot be accusative at that period; the following word is dual nominative, a well-known measure 2 × 60m, giving a meaning, 'A *kannu*-rope (nominative) of 120 metres…' for the first part of the line. If the word for 'back' has indeed been written wrongly twice instead of 'rib' in lines 13 and 29, analysis and explanation are required. The scribe appears to have written the logogram for 'finger' incorrectly on no less than five occasions, but there is no comment to evaluate the mistake; the signs as written should be translated 'sixty': 'sixty (measures) of bitumen for the outsides/interior/cabins, and 300 (measures) of lard.' Photos as reproduced here are not good enough for the reader to see the end of the line, but enough to see that the brackets showing damaged signs are sometimes slightly but crucially misplaced. There is no hand copy of the text. Assyriologists will hope for an edition presenting the text in much more careful detail.

The sixth century date Finkel gives for the *World Map* is at variance with the 'late eighth or seventh century' of recent research, with the possibility that the map on the obverse and the text on the reverse have different dates of composition. It is not 'sure,' as he maintains (p. 82), that Gilgamesh was a 'real man' rather than an

archetype of kingship. Speculations over the Hebrew word *tevah* for the ark and possible cognates in Babylonian (p. 147–48) are unconvincing; editing is shoddy– the rodent is repeated in the list of creatures on pp. 199–201; tomatoes (p. 251) are anachronistic, and the caption for the sacred dragon with its long, vertical tail and long legs 'probably modeled on a giant and carnivorous monitor lizard' is unlikely to meet the approval of David Attenborough, to whom the book is dedicated. The illustrations, both black-and-white and coloured, are interestingly varied, but unnumbered. On pp. 278–79 two sentences are repeated by accident. The publisher might have taken more care. Because the author is a scholar who, after a rigorous training, has spent most of his life working in the British Museum (as this book describes), there is a danger that many readers will not realize how many details in the book are untrustworthy. But much of the book is brilliant, giving splendid insights into the variety and interest of cuneiform texts of many kinds, to engage its readers in the wonderful texts found on clay tablets; full of unusual but relevant illustrations, and a thoroughly entertaining read.

Stephanie Dalley
Oriental Institute, University of Oxford

Margreet L. Steiner and Ann E. Killebrew (eds.), The *Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of the Levant, c. 8000–332 BCE. Handbooks in Archaeology.* Oxford University Press, 2014. Pp. xxiii + 885, incl. 212 figures and 18 tables. £110.00. ISBN 978–0-19–921297–2.

This volume aims to cover the archaeology of the Levant between the Neolithic period and the coming of Alexander, or about 8000 to 332 BCE. By 'Levant' is meant Syria-Palestine, or the eastern Mediterranean between the Euphrates and the border of Egypt, plus Cyprus. This book fills a gap since such a comprehensive one-volume overview has not existed before. It does this with 55 chapters and 54 contributors. The contributors are nicely divided between the older and more mature scholars and younger ones who are nevertheless starting to make a name for themselves. Also, although all contributions are in English, there is a good mix of international scholars, not only from the USA and Israel but plenty from Europe (including the UK), Canada, and Australia. It was good to see one contributor from Jordan. The editors rejected editing a volume on 'biblical archaeology,' which they were initially invited to do. This is commendable (but see some further remarks below), and a very welcome volume is available here.

This reference work is not for the beginner but 'advanced students' (both undergraduate and graduate), as well as professionals. Thus, the contributions generally presuppose a certain knowledge of archaeology and archaeological

terminology. There is no list of definitions: ceramic types and technical terms generally are not explained, or are only briefly clarified in context. The table of contents gives chapter titles but not subdivisions of chapters, while the single index is limited primarily to broad topics and proper names, and only some of the occurrences of particular archaeological and geographical sites are usually listed. Each chapter ends with a list of 'Suggested Reading' and a more extensive list of 'References.' Many will find these up-to-date bibliographies some of the most valuable parts of the volume.

There are many figures, illustrations, and maps, and these are generally helpful. Unfortunately, the maps tend to be small (usually only a portion of a page), many relevant sites or places in the discussion are omitted, and occasionally the sites are even placed wrongly. For example, Beersheba and Beth Shean are wrongly placed on Fig. 1.3. This does not seem to happen often, but it is a shame that this accompanies a chapter on historical geography. But perhaps more of a problem is the map Fig. 1.1 which has Tyre slightly wrong, though it is problematic mainly because many of the important major features (e.g., the Homs Gap) mentioned in the article are not indicated.

The scope of the volume is fully justified. The coverage is dictated by the field of archaeology, not external interests such as those of history or religion. For those interested in the earlier periods, this will be a useful reference, while those interested in the period of the historical Israel or 'biblical' history will find plenty to keep them going, at least to the fall of Jerusalem in 587/586 BCE. Some of us regret that the Neo-Babylonian and Persian periods are so briefly treated, and the Greek and Roman periods not at all. Yet these could not all have been included in one volume, and still do an adequate job of covering the field. One cannot complain about what has been included in this volume; indeed, we should be grateful to the editors for giving us such a useful survey of the field.

After an Introduction by the editors, the volume begins with a first section on 'Background and Definitions,' with chapters on historical geography, peoples and languages (in the Bronze and Iron Ages), history of research, and chronology. Part II is on 'The Levant as the Crossroads between Empires,' with chapters on the Levant and Egypt, Anatolia (Hittites), Mesopotamia, and Achaemenid Persia. These two sections form a good introduction and framework for the body of the work, 'The Archaeological Record,' which is divided into seven sections on the Neolithic period, the Chalcolithic period, the Early and Intermediate Bronze Ages, the Middle Bronze Age, the late Bronze Age, the Iron Age I, and the Iron Age II.

All sections under 'The Archaeological Record' have an introductory or overview chapter, which is an important means of orienting the reader to the topic of the section. Then, there are chapters on the northern Levant, the southern Levant (Cisjordan), the southern Levant (Transjordan), and Cyprus. But this scheme is

varied according to the demands of the material. In the chapters on the Bronze Ages, for example, the northern Levant is divided into two chapters, one on Syria and one on Lebanon. The Iron Age II section, with much fuller material available, contains individual chapters on the Aramaean states, Phoenicia, Philistia, Israel, Judah, Ammon, Moab, Edom, and Cyprus (as well as an introductory chapter and the chapters on the Neo-Babylonian and Persian periods).

The book is very well designed as a proper archaeological reference. Yet I could not help feeling that there was an educational service that could have been attended to here and quite appropriately. The fact is that—however much the editors and contributors may regret it and I think most of them would—'biblical archaeology' dominated many earlier works, especially on the popular level, that are still very much in circulation. In wisely rejecting to edit a volume on 'biblical archaeology,' perhaps they have gone a little too far in ignoring the subject. I agree that a reference work on archaeology does not have to be constrained by past ill-advised fads, but even some archaeologists are still willing to refer to their work as 'biblical archaeology.' Yet apart from a brief paragraph in the 'History of Research' and the occasional sentence here and there (e.g., on pp. 82 and 396–97), 'biblical archaeology' and the past interpretations that it occasioned are not discussed. Professionals will generally be aware of the debates, but not all of those who read this Oxford Handbook.

Thus, in the section on the Middle Bronze Age, I miss any reference to past interpretations about the 'Patriarchal Period.' Indeed, the chapter on Cisjordan does not include the region south of Hebron. Any reader who could use guidance about how the archaeology does not fit with the biblical text would not find it here, which is a shame. Similarly, it would have been legitimate to include discussion about how the archaeology, as well as recent historical discussion, did not favour the biblical account in Joshua. Some no doubt feel that the best way to deal with past misinterpretations is to ignore them, but I am not convinced that now is the time to exclude any discussion of such things. They are still too recent, and there are still too many who have heard nothing else, not to mention popular archaeological publications that continue to cater for the biblically conservative market. I agree with those who would like to expunge 'biblical archaeology' (both the expression and the concept) from Syro-Palestinian archaeology, but that does not preclude us from pointing out—gently and non-polemically—why certain concepts based on a particular understanding of the biblical text have now been generally abandoned.

Yet having said that, I found the chapters on Israel (A. E. Killebrew) and Judah (J. W. Hardin) in the Iron II, as well as the introductory chapter to the Iron II (M. L. Steiner), exemplary chapters that are well written and well presented. In such a reference work as this, the data often have to be presented in rather condensed

form, which does not make exposition for the non-specialist easy. I think most contributors have succeeded well in their presentations, though an index of terminology (including, for example, some of the main terms for pottery) would have been a useful addition.

In sum, this volume is to be highly recommended. It will be hard to find another volume that covers the ground so expertly and lucidly. The editors have done a wonderful job of choosing good contributors and editing the results. This is a reference work to be found on the shelf of anyone interested in the archaeology of ancient Syria-Palestine.

Lester L. Grabbe
University of Hull

Eliot Braun with David Ilan, Ofer Marder, Yael Braun, and Sariel Shalev, *Early Megiddo on the East Slope (the 'Megiddo Stages"): A Report on the Early Occupation of the East Slope of Megiddo (Results of the Oriental Institute's Excavations, 1925–1933).* OIP 139. Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2013. Pp. xxxii + 174. 34 figures, 98 plates, 22 tables. $75.00. ISBN 978–1-885923–98–1.

The pioneering work of the Oriental Institute (OI) at Megiddo several decades ago has served as a major cornerstone for scholars studying the region of the southern Levant, despite its rather cursory publication in varied iterations. This fact is particularly true for the late prehistoric period represented in this volume, since the OI's publication provided rare documentation of a generally under-represented archaeological period. As a result, scholars of the Early Bronze Age I (EB I) have had to rely heavily on the OI's incomplete reports, which have only been supplemented by more recent archaeological excavations elsewhere in the region.

This detailed report substantially completes prior publications of the work carried out by the OI on the southeastern slope at the base of Megiddo from 1925–1933 (Fisher 1929; Guy 1931; Engberg and Shipton 1934; Guy and Engberg 1938). The archaeological remains encountered on the 'East Slope' comprised a relatively large exposure down to bedrock belonging to periods of the Early Bronze Age and earlier. This report focuses on Square U16 of the East Slope, in which most of the early remains were encountered.

The volume introduces the OI excavation and describes the site of Megiddo, the history of research on it, and the variety of archival sources used in the study, namely those of the OI and Israel Antiquities Authority. Braun pays due respect to the original OI excavator's pioneering methodology and

documentation, which were vastly superior to contemporary (and even some subsequent) methods. The major lacunae encountered in this study result less from the nature of the original documentation and more from the fact that some of the presumed documents have been lost.

Chapter 2 is devoted to describing and illustrating the stratigraphy and non-mortuary architecture of the East Slope. The generally incomplete written documentation of the OI is at least supplemented by the digitized photographic archive of the excavation, which Braun utilizes successfully. Altogether, Braun's painstaking and meticulous investment in organizing and studying the unpublished information in the archives has resulted in perhaps the best presentation one could hope for according to modern excavation and publication standards. By annotating original plans and photographs of the excavators, as well as presenting new ones, Braun helps clarify several stratigraphic issues and facilitates interpretation of the major phases under examination.

The concept of the 'Stages' (I–VII) on the East Slope was conceived by Engberg and Shipton (1934) to explain their interpretation of sequences based primarily on the evidence of certain ceramic types found in sequentially excavated deposits. Unlike the more discrete strata on the main mound of the site, the Stages were much more hypothetical constructs encountered in different localities based more on ceramics than discrete features or fills. In Braun's warranted reassessment, Stages IV and V do not reflect discrete chrono-cultural deposits, because of both the apparent internal phasing and stratigraphic relationships of architectural elements (or lack thereof), as well as the paucity of coherent assemblages of related objects of material culture.

Braun's contribution to the phasing of activity on the East Slope expounds the sequence of building events that controvert the simple two-stage sequence of buildings in the early deposits. Quite rightly, he suggests that these two Stages are predicated on the reality of two slightly sloping bedrock terraces, one upslope from the other, rather than actual superimposed strata. After describing the later post-Stage IV deposits on the East Slope, Braun enters a detailed critical treatment of the earliest constructions belonging to Stages IV and V (and earlier). The evidence for the earliest activity on the East Slope comprises several features cut into the bedrock that do not seem to be compatible with other features, particularly later architectural features. EB I buildings are dated on the basis of pottery recovered in association with the architecture (mainly floors). The small rectangular B/V/1 (and later B/V/2) had externally rounded corners, as well as other features normative of building practices of this period. Most of the finds associated with B/V/1 indicate a simple domestic function of the building; however, Braun delineates possible

points of evidence that may indicate certain mortuary-related activities associated with the structure. Building B/IV/1 appears to have utilized previously flattened bedrock on Stage IV and may have had two phases, the latest phase of which comprises a somewhat 'apisidal' plan, or rather a hybrid resulting from a curvilinear tradition appended onto a previously rectilinear layout. This correct interpretation counters the notion that the apisidal plan (born from the 1934 publication) is a typical feature of EB I architecture, not only at Megiddo but elsewhere in the region.

Chapters 3 through 5 provide a detailed discussion of the artefacts and their significance, in which Braun's command of ceramic typologies is well-attested in great detail. Despite serious limitations, Ofer Marder's study of the flint collection provides useful criteria for dating pre-Stage V activity on the East Slope. In Chapter 6, David Ilan elaborates on research regarding Tomb 910. Although the criteria for dating this tomb to the EB I are fairly tenuous (almost all the pottery derives from fill, not floors), Ilan presents a compelling interpretation that Tomb 910 was that of a very high-status person contemporary with the monumental J-4 temple of Megiddo.

Altogether, this work represents a valuable contribution to our understanding of the EB I at Megiddo and in the wider region, and comes at a crucial time when our notions of the period are changing—in great part due to Braun's contributions in recent decades. The work of the Jezreel Valley Regional Project alluded to in various places in the text has, in fact, recently excavated an EB I settlement at Tel Megiddo East in very close proximity to the main tell, with phases of development paralleling those of the monumental constructions of J-4 (Adams et al. 2014). Thus, this volume constitutes a major authoritative revision of the EB I and an essential resource for ongoing research on the period.

Adams, M.J., David, J., Homsher, R.S., and Cohen, M.E., (2014). 'The Rise of a Complex Society: New Evidence from Tel Megiddo East in the Late Fourth Millennium,' *Near Eastern Archaeology* 77/1:32–43.

Fischer, C.S., (1929). *The Excavation of Armageddon* (Chicago).

Guy, P.L.O., (1931). *New Light from Armageddon: Second Provisional Report (1927–29) on the Excavations at Megiddo in Palestine* (Chicago).

Engberg, R.M., and Shipton, G.M., (1934). *Notes on the Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Pottery of Megiddo* (Chicago).

Guy, P.L.O., and Engberg, R.M., (1938). *Megiddo Tombs* (Chicago).

Robert S. Homsher
Harvard University

Esther Eshel, and Yigal Levin (eds.), *'See, I will bring a scroll recounting what befell me' (Ps 40:8): Epigraphy and Daily Life from the Bible to the Talmud Dedicated to the Memory of Professor Hanan Eshel*. Journal of Ancient Judaism Supplements 12. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht. Pp. 245, incl. 60 figures. €99.99. ISBN 978–3-525–55062–5.

This tribute to the much missed Hanan Eshel, founding director of the David and Jemima Jeselsohn Epigraphic Center for Jewish History, presents of a rich array of early Judaean inscriptional finds. The papers, initially delivered at an international conference held in Eshel's memory, are accompanied by Marlene and Lawrence Schiffman's warm appreciation of his scholarly achievements.

Renowned for his synthesis of archaeological, textual and historical data, Eshel's doctoral work examined the origin of the Samaritans. His subsequent research concentrated upon the period of Hasmonean rule, the historical context of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bar Kochba revolt. His extensive knowledge of the geography, economy and agriculture of the Judaean desert, informed his identification of Qumran with the biblical Secacah, which he believed to be the communal centre of the Essenes. In addition Eshel authored guidebooks on Qumran and Masada, reflecting his experience both as an archaeologist and a tour guide. His numerous articles focussed on the areas of numismatics, weights, pottery and burials, which complemented his close readings of the sectarian scrolls. Each paper in this volume is of a consistently high calibre, and in keeping with Eshel's investigative approach, contextualizes the inscriptional sources in their archaeological, historical (where available), and comparative paleographic and philological settings.

Commencing with 'Notes on the Kuntillet 'Ajrud Inscriptions,' Shmuel Aḥituv surveys the writing found at this Iron Age II site, noted for its striking mention of 'YHWH of Samaria/Teman and His *'asherah,'* which is preserved also in the inscriptions at Makkedah (Khirbet-el-Kôm). Overall he concludes that now the earliest Hebrew poetry should be pushed back to the end, or the middle of, the 9th century BCE. Together with Amihai Mazar, Aḥituv then examines the palaeography and onomastics in 'The Inscriptions from Tel Rehov and their Contribution to the Study of Script and Writing during Iron Age IIA.' Although the majority of these are incised upon pottery or stone vessels, the authors conclude that writing was more common in the 10th and 9th centuries than has to date been acknowledged. Conversely, Aren Maeir and Esther Eshel suggest that writing in Philistia may have been more limited, based on the data in their publication of 'Four Short Alphabetic Inscriptions from late Iron Age IIa Tell es-Safi/Gath and their Implications for the Development of Literacy in Iron Age Philistia and Environs.'

Next Aaron Demsky examines 'Researching Literacy in Ancient Israel - New Approaches and Recent Developments,' where he informatively evaluates the

development of the alphabet, in the ostraca from Izbet Sartah (c1100 BCE), Khirbet Qeiyafa (late 11th - early 10th BCE) and the Tel Zayit abecedary. He identifies the known gaps in our present knowledge, while outlining new research trajectories for the future. Moving closer in time, Lester Grabbe explains how early Jewish scribes were integrated in their ancient Near Eastern and Hellenistic environments, in 'Scribes, Writing, and Epigraphy in the Second Temple Period.' This is followed by 'Aramaic and Latin Graffiti in an Underground Complex at Khirbet 'Arâk Hâla–North of Bet Guvrin,' submitted collectively by Boaz Zissu, Boaz Langford, Avner Ecker and Esther Eshel. Here an exceptional Latin note (inscribed on an olive press) records a transaction relating to oil, and thus hints at the possibility that the Roman army may have been stationed in the Judaean shephelah (i.e. in Israel's south-central lowlands).

A rewarding analysis of ancient Jewish coinage is provided by Uriel Rappaport, in 'The Inscriptions on the Yehud and the Hasmonean Coins: Historical Perspectives.' This treatment, especially his assessment of the differences between the Persian period *Yehud* and the later Hasmonean coins, has substantial implications for biblical scholars as well as historians. New light on ethnic, *halakhic* (legal), artistic and epigraphic issues is then shed by David Amit† in 'Jewish Bread Stamps and Wine and Oil Seals from the late Second Temple, Mishnaic, and Talmudic Periods.' Each of the three staple crops (i.e. grain, grapes and olives, producing bread, wine and oil), are considered in their religious, as well as nutritional, contexts. Finally, Eitan Klein and Haim Mamalya, present 'Two Dated Christian Burial Inscriptions from The Negev Desert,' published here for the first time. These complement the existing corpus from the ancient cities of Nessana and Sobota adding new data to the regional onomasticon. A separate selection of photographic images and accompanying line drawings for each inscription is provided, although the size and resolution of each of the maps (particularly that on p. 185) was disappointing. An index of ancient sources and scholarly references complements the publication.

Both individually and collectively, these papers enrich our understanding of daily life from Iron Age Israel and Judah. Aside from some of the new inscriptions presented here for the first time, several contributions provide excellent teaching materials for undergraduate, and postgraduate, courses on post-biblical Jewish history and early rabbinic Judaism. As a highly respected lecturer at Bar-Ilan University, Eshel would have deeply appreciated the fruits that these contributions will bear in the related disciplines of archaeology, history and geography and which will, no doubt, continue to grace his enduring legacy.

Sandra Jacobs
King's College, London

Nicholas Postgate, *Bronze Age Bureaucracy: Writing and the Practice of Government in Assyria*. Cambridge University Press, 2013. Pp. xi + 484 incl. 40 figures. £65.00. ISBN:978–1-10–704375–6.

The role of Assyria as an international power in the late Bronze Age, alongside the Egyptian, Babylonian, Mittianian and Hittite empires, has been long-recognized for its political and military impact. This fresh study explores its daily administration, by investigating the role of writing in ten archives from the Middle Assyrian period (1500–1056 BCE), which present 'the Assyrian government in action through the eyes and hands of its scribes,' (p. 336). This period has yielded the greatest variety of written sources, all of which are clearly differentiated in the introduction, where a valuable account of the ruling infra-structure is conveniently provided. Organized around the activities of the royal house, select elite households (commissioned by the king to act on his behalf), could also engage independently in private enterprise. In this context the palace functioned both as the residence of the monarch, as well as the seat of government, where its scribes 'the literate administrators of the Assyrian state' (p. 7), monitored the movement of state-owned commodities, as indicated in by the term, *ša ēkalli*, meaning literally 'belonging to, or of the palace.'

With these preliminaries in place, the chapter on 'Writing in Assyria: The Scribes and their Output' clarifies the necessity for recording time and metrological observations with precision. Here Postage itemizes the known weights, capacity and area measures and identifies the differences between the various writing boards and clay tablets, which preserved legal receipts, accounts, debt-notes and other formal directives. The discussion of seals, sealing documents, archives and their storage then segues into his major treatment of archives at the capital city of Aššur, where he examines the following five collections: The Offerings House Archives, which traces the movement of commodities to the temple; The Stewards Archive, which affords a glimpse into the management of raw materials, produce and finished goods in the royal palaces; The Archive of Mutta the Animal-Fattener, who was responsible for managing the sheep and goats conventionally brought as 'audience gifts' to secure the attention of the ruler; the Archive of Babu-aḫa-iddina, a well-placed official whose urban household was involved in extensive commercial activities, including leather work, carpentry, stone-work, textile and perfume production. Of interest to readers of this journal is that this includes records of trading journeys to Canaan (Texts 62 and 64:5–6, p. 258). The final corpus from Aššur is a family archive comprising of 84 documents, representing three generations, over a period of at least 44 years. The strength of the evidence from these sources justifies the distinction between public and private transactions, where the identification of state property is readily apparent in the cuneiform

documentation relating to commercial household activities. In addition to these city-centre accounts, five provincial archives are then examined: from Tell-al-Rimah (ancient Karana or Qatara), Tell Billa (ancient Šibaniba), Tell Chuera (ancient Ḫarbu) and Tell Sheikh Hamad (ancient Durkatlimmu).

These finds inform the next chapter where 'The Government of Assyria and Its Impact,' includes discussions of 'Holes in the Canvas,' and other methodological factors affecting the modern interpretations of the bureaucratic processes in these sources. For example, where the relationship between private and public functions blurs in the face of inherited appointments, as officials hand their posts directly to their sons. Postgate concludes that 'the Assyrian state seems to have functioned like a business venture,' (p. 337) where government activity outside of Aššur was largely controlled by palace staff in each of the provincial capitals, which acted as local branches of the enterprise. A useful synopsis of the (poorly attested) role of the army, in relation to military service and supplies, complements this assessment. Written documentation at Nuzi, Alalaḫ (Tell Atchana/Açana), Ugarit (Ras Shamra), and Greece are next compared to the local systems found at Aššur. The final chapter synthesizes the vast amount of data, indicating that the Middle Assyrian infrastructure, with its 'strong ethos of written accountability' (p. 427) remained reasonably consistent in its use of bureaucratic documentation, in marked contrast to the less-reliant use of administrative records in the Neo-Assyrian period of the first millennium. The astute observations on the role of writing 'as a bridging mechanism' (pp. 424–426) remain additionally relevant to the transmission of early Hebrew Biblical texts—despite their being written centuries later.

This is a fluent and rigorous treatment, the kind that is destined to become a classic resource, although probably less accessible as an introductory work. Its contribution, far beyond the discipline of Assyriology, will be felt by historians of economics, politics, law and sociology. In providing a systematic analysis of the mechanics of empire, Postgate has demonstrated how bureaucratic authority was imposed in what was clearly one of the most sophisticated economies of pre-classical antiquity. The data from each archive offers fascinating insights from the use of early accounting, to the range of available occupations—where the appearance of leather workers, exorcists, felt-makers, confectioners and eunuchs belie the richness and diversity of elite Assyrian society. Other gleanings inform many various social contexts, including deportations and rations, ethnic and national (Assyrian) identity, family relationships, the complexities of debt-slavery, and the relationship between palace and temple, to name but a few of the most compelling issues presented. The volume includes appendices of reigning kings and eponyms, together with a bibliography and extensive indices for scholarly reference. The maps, tables and illustrations, although black and white, are of a consistently high quality and resolution. It is a superb monograph:

a real must-have for all university libraries, colleges of higher education and anyone interested in the material nature and purpose of writing in Near Eastern Bronze Age cultures.

Sandra Jacobs
Kings College, London

Andreas J.M. Kropp, *Images and Monuments of Near Eastern Dynasts:100 BC-AD 100*. Oxford Studies in Ancient Culture and Representation. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. Pp. xx + 497; 137 black & white figures, 4 maps. £105.00. ISBN:978–0-19–967072–7.

This volume, which is a revised version of the author's PhD thesis (University of Oxford, 2007), provides a commented survey of the art and architecture of the Near East, including Asia Minor east of the Taurus Mountains and as far south as northern Arabia (Nabataea), over a period of two centuries, between the demise of the Hellenistic monarchies and the assumption of Roman control over the eastern Mediterranean. Kropp's study excludes regions that were under partial or total Parthian domination, such as Armenia, Palmyra and Osrhoene (Edessa). It is encyclopaedic in scope and fairly well illustrated: the monuments examined are palaces, tombs and sanctuaries, each of which is assigned a chapter, but rather little consideration is given to the corpus of inscriptions from the region. Much has been published on all the topics covered and the author demonstrates an impressive mastery of the scholarship of the field in English, French and German–although not of the substantial literature in Hebrew–making this work a useful sourcebook, particularly for students, but with some reservations, as explained below.

Kropp's book retains the structure of a PhD thesis, with an opening chapter given over to defining the scope and methodology adopted in the study. The final chapter is a summing up, with conclusions that consider how the images and monuments surveyed yield insights regarding 'royal ideology.' Five chapters have been accounted for so far. The remaining chapter looks at royal portraits in the sculptural and numismatic repertoire. Reading this book is like being transported on a 'grand tour' of the Near East, as it was two millennia ago, being guided around the principal monuments of the kingdoms and principalities of the region by a leading expert, and dropping in on their rulers and learning something about their personalities and religious cults that they promoted (although much about the various religious practices remains shrouded in mystery). What we find is a kaleidoscope of heterogeneous monarchies, religions and cultures, to partly quote Kropp, about which he finds it somewhat difficult to pull out many common threads.

Considering that all these states, with the exception of the Nabataean realm, crystallised out of the Seleucid Empire, it is somewhat surprising that they manifest such diversified characteristics in their art, architecture and cultic and burial practices. According to this book, the Seleucid legacy seems to be only sporadically visible in such artefacts as the coinage of Hasmonaean Judaea, somewhat ironically perhaps, and the pride of place given to the royal Seleucid ancestry (and also the Achaemenid roots) of the Commagene kings in the sculptural programmes of the highly distinctive tomb sanctuaries (*hierothesia*) of Antiochus I of Commagene.

It is important to point out what this book is not. For sure, it is not specifically about the phenomenon of client kingdoms of the Roman Empire. In particular, it omits consideration of the important client states of Mauretania in the west, Thrace, Cappadocia and Pontus in the north, which, together with Judaea, formed the mainstay of the client network of the Roman Empire through the Julio-Claudian period (Jacobson 2001; Braund 1984). These states were all Hellenized to a similar degree and their monarchies were bound together by marriage from the reign of Augustus. They patronised Greek culture and were commemorated in Athens and other Greek cities for their benefactions. They functioned as agents of a coherent Imperial policy, all participating in building cities named after Caesar Augustus, as either Caesarea or Sebaste. In the rather disparate assortment of kingdoms and principalities selected, Judaea appears as the 'odd man out,' distorting the picture of mainstream Roman imperial policy that applied across the Mediterranean. Kropp's partial choice of dynasts makes some of his generalising statements off the mark. So, for example he states that 'Roman appointees [as client rulers] were usually accepted by local populations, albeit grudgingly' (p. 11), although he recognises that this was not true of Judaea. However, there was also considerable resistance to rulers foisted on other populations by Rome, including those of Cappadocia (Dio 57.17, 3–4) and Mauretania (Tacitus, *Annals* 2.52; 4.26).

Kropp offers a number of insightful observations. For example, he highlights the fact that the art and architecture of the region blend pre-classical Near Eastern influences that go back to the Iron Age with Greek and Roman elements. For the most part, the client states did not imbibe Roman influences neat, but blended them with local traditions (pp. 7–8). The author provides crisp accounts of facets of royal ideology and cultural issues relating to the kingdoms and principalities under consideration; to give but one example, his brief treatment of the policy of euergetism (benefaction) that was widely practised, where he points out that it was an activity developed by Hellenistic rulers to promote political cohesion (pp. 253–56). Kropp reminds us of the aniconic preferences of the Nabataeans, albeit not a prohibition, which helps to account for the primitiveness of the human representations in their art and including their coin images. He is quite right that too much has been made of the choice of an eagle on a coin of Herod the Great.

As Kropp saliently notes, an eagle features prominently on the Tyrian shekels and half shekels approved for transactions in the Temple of Jerusalem, to which should be added that eagles frequently recur on the earliest Judaean coins ascribed to the Achaemenid and Ptolemaic periods. One of the most original and intriguing claims made by Kropp is that Herod's ambitious building programme had a direct impact on places and communities in the Near East beyond those listed by Josephus, including Heliopolis (Baalbek) and Petra (pp. 161, 278–79, 367), and he marshals strong evidence in support of his case.

It is felt that Kropp misses an essential point regarding the practice of aniconism by Herod the Great. While the taboo on figural representation was strictly enforced in public rooms in his palaces, as we now know, this was not the case in the private quarters of his palaces: hence we encounter a *labrum* (basin) adorned with Silenus heads and frescos representing populated scenes displayed on the walls of the Royal Room of the theatre, both in Herod's palace complex at Herodium (Netzer et al. 2013:144–45; Rozenberg 2013:174–89). The evidence provided by these adornments attests to Herod's opportunism on religious and cultural issues and reminds us of the statement in Josephus that Herod was 'less intent upon observing the customs of his own nation than upon honouring them [his Roman patrons]' (Josephus, *Antiquities* 15.330).

Some other of the author's judgements are equally at odds with the material evidence. Thus, for example, Dioscuri imagery is not at all 'virtually absent' on Seleucid coins (p. 235), as Kropp would have us believe. The cosmic twins feature on issues of no less than eight Seleucid kings and their distinctive starred caps on coins of a further three Seleucid monarchs (see Houghton and Lorber 2002, I.2:212; Houghton, Lorber and Hoover 2008, II.2:461). While I can agree with Kropp that it is true that Herod's adoption of Roman architecture and building technology does not by itself imply the institution by Rome of a policy of *cultural surveillance* of Judaea (pp. 346–48), the range of duties undertaken by Herod and his fellow client kings as part of a close-knit network under imperial direction, spelt out by Suetonius (*Augustus* 48, 60), were doubtless intended to achieve both political and cultural integration. This is exactly what occurred in practice, so it must have constituted official Imperial policy. Herod was assigned the epithet *Philorhomaios* (*OGIS* 414 = IG^2 II 3440; cf. Josephus, *Antiquities* 15.387; Braund 1984:105–107), which would imply that he was recognised as a promoter of Romanization just as, according to Kropp, the epithet *Philhellen* applied to Antiochus I of Commagene signified that he regarded himself as a Hellenizer (p. 363). It is telling in this regard that client kings were encouraged, if not instructed, to send their children to Rome to be brought up and educated there, a point not mentioned by Kropp. In the event, within two or three generations, Judaea and the other kingdoms lost much of their distinctive cultural and religious character and were effectively assimilated into

the Empire. The Jewish city of Jerusalem was replaced as capital of a territory that was no longer even called Judaea by the cosmopolitan port of Caesarea, and similar changes occurred elsewhere.

In several places, Kropp lends undue credence to the erstwhile opinions of particular individual scholars even when ideas are subsequently revised. In my view, he gives far too much weight to one particular recent interpretation of the layout of Herod's Temple, which I find fundamentally flawed in being awkwardly out of geometrical congruence with its surviving outer enclosure, a highly unlikely arrangement for a temple complex which was substantially rebuilt in the Augustan period. To boot, he also misspells the name of the author responsible (p. 269). It would have been far more appropriate and useful for Kropp to have provided a brief review of the principal reconstructions that have been put forward to date. While he judiciously notes that the venue for the main cultic action in the precinct of Jupiter at Heliopolis (Baalbek) were the altars at the centre of its *temenos*, why might something similar not have been true also of the Temple of Jerusalem, as rebuilt by Herod, and therefore have been reflected in its layout, as well (p. 275)? Then, again, Kropp seems rather quick to latch on to a view promoted by A. K. Marshak (2006) that Herod's dated coins commemorate his re-founding of Sebaste in 27 BCE (pp. 245–46), for which there is absolutely no independent evidence, whereas D. T. Ariel, a leading authority on Herod's coins, after first entertaining that idea, subsequently revised his opinion on this point (Ariel and Fontanille 2012:90–92).

For the most part, Kropp takes care over accuracy of detail in his descriptions, but there are occasional lapses. For example he states that the sarcophagus found at Herodium by Netzer, which he believed contained Herod's body, 'had its long side decorated with large rosettes with large rosettes very similar to those on the sarcophagus of Helena of Adiabene' (p. 108). In fact, the sarcophagus from the Tomb of the Kings, inscribed in two lines with the name of the queen in Aramaic (referred to as *Ṣdn mlkt/Ṣdh mlkth*) is rather plain, its decoration having been left incomplete (see Yardeni, Price and Misgav 2010).

The book as published suffers from poor editing. There is repetition in the text, e.g. the mention of a 9 m deep cut in the courtyard of the temple of Jupiter at Baalbek in one sentence after another (p. 275). There are quite a few annoying typographical errors, such as 'meres' for 'metres' (p. 334). Fortunately, 'the head of a bearded male god in from (sic!) of a thunderbolt' (p. 287) is redeemed by a photograph (fig. 96). There are some awkward turns of phrase, like 'only in Arabic times' (p. 277). Problems, too, are noted with the referencing. Those of the same author and year are differentiated in the text by letters a, etc., attached to the year, but this differentiation is not observed in the bibliography, which results in some confusion. Also, Duyrat 2002 is mentioned in the text (p. 240), but is nowhere to be found in the bibliography. On the other hand L. C. Kahn 1996

('King Herod's Temple of Roma and Augustus at Caesarea Maritima') is included in the bibliography but not on p. 325 of the text, where one would expect to see it.

The maps and coin tables at the back of the book are also not up to scratch. For a start, maps 1 and 2 are barely legible and many site names mentioned in the book are not shown. The coin tabulation might have been more useful, but it is blighted by numerous faults. In the first place, coin sizes are not included and, while photographs of all the coins are provided, they are not reproduced to scale. It follows that different denominations of a coin type are skated over (e.g. Agrippa II, Meshorer 2001: nos. 129–131). The coin catalogue references (under the confusing heading 'Type') are to Meshorer 2001 (*Treasury of Jewish Coins*), although this is not indicated on the first few pages, nor included in the bibliography. Kropp uses unusual abbreviations, including 'Hasm' and the German 'o.ä' (oder Ähnliches, meaning 'or similar'). For the most part, the abbreviated entries in the 'Comments' column are quite ridiculous. This table is little more than an improvised jotting for work in progress, rather than an addendum to a respectable volume.

The myriad of blemishes, which is all the more inexcusable in a publication bearing a premium retail price tag, detracts from what is otherwise an important addition to the literature on the Near East in the Hellenistic and Roman periods by a promising young scholar.

Ariel, D.T., and Fontanille, J.-P., (2012). *The Coins of Herod: A Modern Analysis and Die Classification* (Leiden and Boston).

Braund, D.C., (1984). *Rome and the Friendly King: The Character of Client Kingship* (London, Canberra and New York).

Houghton, A., and Lorber, C., (2002). *Seleucid Coins: A Comprehensive Catalogue, Part I* (in 2 vols.): *Seleucus I through Antiochus III* (New York, Lancaster, PA and London).

Houghton, A., Lorber, C., and Hoover, O., (2008). *Seleucid Coins: A Comprehensive Catalogue, Part II* (in 2 vols.). *Seleucus IV through Antiochus XIII* (New York, Lancaster, PA and London).

Jacobson, D.M., (2001). 'Three Roman Client Kings: Herod of Judaea, Archelaus of Cappadocia and Juba of Mauretania,' *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 133: 22–38.

Kahn, L.C., (1996) 'King Herod's Temple of Roma and Augustus at Caesarea Maritima,' in A. Raban and K. G. Holum (eds.), *Caesarea Maritima. A Retrospective after Two Millennia* (Leiden), 130–45.

Marshak, A.K., (2006). 'The Dated Coins of Herod the Great: Towards a New Chronology,' *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 37:212–40.

Meshorer, Y., (2001). *A Treasury of Jewish Coins from the Persian Period to Bar Kokhba* (Nyack, NY).

Netzer, E., Porat, R., Kalman, Y., and Chachy, R., (2003). 'Herodium.' Pp. 126–165 in S. Rozenberg and D. Mevorah, *Herod the Great: The King's Final Journey* (Jerusalem).

Rozenberg, S., (2003). 'Interior Decoration in Herod's Palaces.' Pp. 166–223 in S. Rozenberg and D. Mevorah, *Herod the Great: The King's Final Journey* (Jerusalem).

Yardeni, A., Price, J., and Misgav, H., (2010). '123. Sarcophagus of Queen Ṣadan from the 'Tomb of the Kings' with Aramaic inscription, 1st c. CE.' Pp. 165–167 in H. M. Cotton et al. (eds.), *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae*, *Volume 1.1*: *Jerusalem* (Berlin).

David M. Jacobson
University College, London

William G. Dever, *Excavations at the Early Bronze IV Sites of Jebel Qa'aqir and Be'er Resisim*. Harvard Semitic Museum Studies in the Archaeology and History of the Levant 6. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2014. Pp. viii + 366. $79.50. ISBN 978–1-57506–947–0.

The appearance of this volume is of paramount importance for the study of the non-urban phases of the 3rd and early 2nd Millennium Southern Levant, and to other periods and topics as well. The volume is the final report on excavations that were conducted at two sites of major importance for the study of the Early Bronze Age IV (known by some as the Intermediate Bronze Age or the Middle Bronze Age I), on which much has been written in the last few decades. Although too much time has passed since the actual excavations and the publications (more than 45 years for Jebel Qa'aqir and close to 35 years for Be'er Resisim!)—and this has a clear effect on some of the reports included—Professor Dever is to be effusively thanked for not letting these materials 'wither away and die,' but rather bring them out in a comprehensive and attractive manner.

The publication is divided into two sections, one dealing with the excavations at Jebel Qa'aqir and the other at Be'er Resisim. The first site, Jebel Qa'aqir, located in the southwestern Hebron Hills, while primarily being a burial site, includes other interesting remains, including habitation caves, several cairns, a pottery production site, etc. The second site, located in the Central Western Negev, near the present border between Israel and Egypt, is a very well-preserved arid zone habitation site.

Each site is discussed in detail, with overviews of environment, architecture and stratigraphy, the various finds, and chapters which attempt to place these sites within the broader contexts of this period and its culture. While the two sites are in different zones and quite far from one another, Dever stresses the connection between these two types of sites, as they reflect what he believes is the major theme of this period—a collection of mainly nomadic pastoral communities who moved between the arid and Mediterranean zones throughout the year.

In addition to the analysis of the sites and their finds by Dever himself, one notes the 16 included appendices, in which types of finds are discussed by various experts, even if some of these are unfinished preliminary accounts prepared

decades ago. I found particularly interesting the assessment of the human remains by P. Smith (pp. 237–241), the faunal remains by L. Horwitz (pp. 243–247), and pottery production techniques by G. London (pp. 253–277).

While reading over the book, several studies which might have added to the discussions came to mind:

1. In the examination of the caves which served for occupation at Jebel Qa'aqir, I believe that some interesting insights might have been derived from contemporary caves used for living in the southern Hebron Hills until this day (Habakuk, 2012).
2. In Dever's discussion of the chronology of the period (p. 227), he notes several 14C dates from sites in the Negev, some of which go back to the mid-3rd Millennium BCE—which he believes is too early for the EB IV. This though is not necessarily the case, as recent results of the high radiometric dating of the EB indicates that the EB III ended during the mid-3rd Millennium BCE (Regev, 2012).

While the overall implications of this chronology are still being processed, one must take into account that in all recent discussions, the EB IV was most probably longer than previously assumed, even up to five centuries in length.

Overall, given the long time between the excavations and the final publication, the author is to be commended for managing to provide a very comprehensive overview of these sites, even if it probably would have been more complete if concluded closer to the time of the excavations. This volume is an important addition to any library dealing with the ancient Southern Levant.

Regev, J. et al., (2012). 'Chronology of the Early Bronze Age in the Southern Levant: New Analysis for a High Chronology,' *Radiocarbon* 54: 525–66.
Habakuk, Y., (1985). *Life in the Hebron Mountain Caves* (Tel Aviv, Hebrew).

Aren Maeir
Bar-Ilan University

Edward Adams, *The Earliest Christian Meeting Places: Almost Exclusively Houses?* The Library of New Testament Studies, 450. London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2013. Pp. xiv + 263 incl. illustrations. £60.00. ISBN:978–0–56–728257–6.

One of the dominant assumptions in scholarship concerning the origin of early Christian meeting places has been that the first Christians met exclusively in the homes of individual members, buildings that became known as *domus ecclesiae*, and that before Constantine there was no such thing as a church building with

its own distinctive architecture. The adoption of the basilica after Christianity became the official religion of the Empire coincided with some of the most important developments within the nascent Church, but this was several centuries after Christianity had evolved. Edward Adams challenges this strong consensus view that the early Christians met 'almost exclusively in houses,' which is the force of his subtitle. Such was the assumption of Michael White's groundbreaking study in 1990, *The Social Origins of Christian Architecture: Building God's House in the Roman World* (Trinity Press International), and many other works. Richard Krautheimer, however, was one who had noted that bathhouses were taken over as basilical church buildings after Constantine and that funerary structures were also adapted in church architecture as a form of memorial architecture (White 1990, 19, 154). These are but several of the options for the place and setting of early Christian worship offered by Adams.

In questioning the scholarly consensus Adams examines the literary evidence together with the archaeological and comparative evidence alongside and convincingly demonstrates that the evidence for the old theory is simply weak or in many cases lacking. He does this effectively in Part I: Evidence for Houses and Meeting Places (pp. 17–136). In Part II (137–197), subtitled 'Evidence and Possibilities for Non-House Meeting Places,' he goes on to illustrate the possibility of places for Christian worship in a number of settings not previously taken seriously, some of them based more on literary sources than material evidence, though in the end he takes all into account. Some of these imagined spaces for Christian worship are quite novel, such as Roman barns and warehouses, shops and workshops, inns, bathhouses, gardens, open urban spaces, and burial sites. Several appendices are added: Appendix 1, 'The Setting of the Corinthian Communal Meal,' and Appendix 2, Figures, which include photos and plans that illustrate the various section of the book.

Adams' thesis or broadened view of the earliest Christian meetings places in his view supports Justin's reply to Rusticus that Christians met 'wherever was chosen and was possible for each group' and such a view also supports White's classification of the *domus ecclesiae* as 'any building specifically adapted or renovated' for ecclesial use (p. 201). A clear implication of this hypothesis is the assumed connection between the house and the communal meal that was so central to the worship of early Christians. Consideration of the greater variety for Christian worship will thus greatly affect our understanding of worshipful dining.

It is not surprising therefore that the author in the end suggests that the term 'house church' be abandoned altogether in New Testament and Early Christian Studies. Rather, Adams concludes that a much wider discussion on ecclesial space should now take place. This volume has wide implications for a variety of fields within Early Christian Studies and offers a new way of evaluating the data on

Christian assembly, worship, and the material culture associated with it. I for one applaud the effort and commend the book highly.

Eric Meyers
Duke University

Y. Samuel Chen, *The Primeval Flood Catastrophe: Origins and Early Development in Mesopotamian Traditions*. Oxford Oriental Monographs. Oxford: OUP, 2013. Pp. 352 incl. 16 b/w plates. £90.00. ISBN 978–0-19–967620–0.

'After the Flood had swept over (the land), when kingship had descended from heaven …,' the best-preserved copy of the *Sumerian King List (SKL*) relates, 'kingship was in Kish,' then passed to other cities. Beside this 'chronographic' source are the famous Sumerian and Babylonian Flood stories. Did they tell of a catastrophic deluge in Sumer, or is their language figurative, making them mythologized versions of a political calamity? In this published form of his Oxford doctoral thesis, Chen argues strongly for the latter explanation.

His introduction states he will focus on textual sources from c. 2000 to 1600 BCE —mentioning others—to demonstrate how 'the 'Flood motif and its mythological and historiographical representatives … only began to emerge and flourish' later in that period (pp. 2, 3). Noticing hints from other scholars, he explains why Flood traditions should be seen as insertions in the *SKL*, the *Instructions of Shuruppak*, and the *Gilgamesh Epic*. He recognizes the imponderable elements of oral tradition, transmission, authorship and school exercises, beside the incompleteness of texts and limits in understanding Sumerian language and attitudes to literature.

Chapter 1 (pp. 21–66) studies words for 'flood,' revealing their almost wholly figurative uses in Sumerian prior to 2000 BCE, and often later, so that it would be hard to suppose it was used of the Deluge in earlier times. Chen devotes Ch. 2 (pp. 67–127) to literary compositions before 2000 BCE which tell of primeval times, beginning in 'days, nights, years' of long ago, as the basis for his view that the collapse of the Third Dynasty of Ur, about 2000 BCE, 'gave rise to the motif of the primeval flood catastrophe' being added to those settings and to the concept of a 'royal hero who restored the devastated world' (pp. 125–26). Therefore the 'Antediluvian Traditions' are examined in Ch. 4 (pp. 129–96) to show how they thus developed. The oldest copy of *SKL* (dated palaeographically to the Third Dynasty of Ur) and several others do not have the pre-Flood section and the six manuscripts that preserve it disagree on the sequence and names of some rulers, as listed in a chart on p. 192 (it should be noted many copies disagree about post-Flood rulers, too), so it seems to be a late addition. Texts of the *Instructions of Shuruppak* written about 2500 BCE do not name the speaker's son, only in Old Babylonian

copies is he Ziusudra, a name of the Flood hero. The *Instructions of Ur-Ninurta*, king of Isin, c. 1923–1896 BCE, seem to be the first to have the Flood as a marker of distant time after which order was restored, a theme found in hymns of the same period praising kings for pacifying the land. That may reveal how a metaphor was turned into an event. This idea is elaborated in Ch. 4, 'The Flood Epic' (pp. 197–252), comparing elements in the Epic with those in laments for cities and the land, both dealing with catastrophic events. The laments were composed in the Ur III period and afterwards to account for the downfall of major cities and of Sumer and Akkad. They use imagery of storm and flood for the destructions gods inflicted. Listing the terms for catastrophes and comparing them with terms in the Flood stories indicates that the latter were inspired by the laments. Notable is the theme of noise as a cause and as a consequence of destruction in laments and in the *Atrahasis Epic*; both the latter and the *Lament for Sumer and Ur* have 'the land bellowing like a bull' in its prosperity.

Chen marshals impressive evidence from a wide range of sources. He is aware that new discoveries may affect his case, but some weaknesses deserve notice. Interpretation is sometimes too literal, thus, 'The notion that the Flood hero had a wife must be a late development. It is lacking in … the Old Babylonian …*Atrahasis Epic'* (p. 178, fn. 90) is misleading, for the Epic states 'he sent his family aboard' (III ii 42, parallel to Gilgamesh XI 85), surely including his wife, who is not mentioned in the Gilgamesh version until the Flood is over. *The Sumerian Flood Story (SFS*), he asserts, 'in polemic fashion hailed the Flood hero Ziusudra as the only ruler in the antediluvian era' (p. 194, cf. 120, 151–53), unlike SKL. However, there was no reason for *SFS* to name kings of the pre-Flood cities. To deduce this difference implies opposition between *SFS* and *SKL* on the nature of kingship seems unjustified. Again, the laments tell of religious observances ceasing and shrines destroyed while Atrahasis is told people should not worship their gods and goddesses. Yet the comparison is weak; the Atrahasis Epic knows nothing of rites ended or temples destroyed - the instruction was for a particular time and purpose.

Storm and flood were frequent, major threats in Babylonia, the laments often describing 'storm' as the destructive agent. While the word could be applied metaphorically to 'battle, drought and fire,' storm winds can batter gates and break locks, storm-whipped water can leave heaps of corpses so such results cannot be easily dismissed as figurative (pp. 208–14). One case Chen cites is the name of the 22nd year of Ibbi-Suen, last king of the Third Dynasty of Ur, telling how he restored Ur after it was smitten by a divinely sent flood which 'blurred the boundaries of heaven and earth' (p. 47). Although he allows 'an actual meteorological catastrophe' might be recorded (p. 98), he treats it rather as a figure (p. 214). The last phrase echoes, he thinks, the 'image of stormy weather used to portray the separation of heaven and earth during cosmogony' (p. 48). The more

banal explanation of a hurricane that created flooding and obliterated the horizon deserves to be considered.

The question remains: Did figures and metaphors create the Flood Story, or was an existing tradition dressed in literary clothes? The absence of the Deluge from early Sumerian might indicate an external, Amorite, origin and local adaptation, as suggested for the battle between the gods and the ocean, or the *lex talionis* which both appear in the Old Babylonian period.

Alan R. Millard
University of Liverpool

Isaac Kalimi, and Seth Richardson (eds.), *Sennacherib at the Gates of Jerusalem: Story, History and Historiography.* Oriental Institute Culture and History of the Ancient Near East 71. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014. Pp. xii+ 548, incl. illustrations. €181/$234. ISBN 978–90–04–26561–5.

'The Assyrian siege of Jerusalem in 701 B.C.E. was a "world event," both historically and historiographically' declare the editors in their introduction. What happened at Jerusalem? How can we know and what has been the lasting impact of the event? The editors have collected thirteen essays to demonstrate the significance of the seige, divided into three groups: Part One, 'I will defend this city to save it,' deals with the event in textual sources; Part Two, 'The Weapon of Aššur,' investigates Sennacherib and his resources; Part Three, 'After Life,' describes the life of the event and of Sennacherib in post-biblical literature. This review will concentrate on Parts One and Two.

Sennacherib's inscriptions, archives and palace reliefs, Egyptian texts, archaeological discoveries and Hebrew narratives together provide the most extensive resources for any event in ancient Judah. The Assyrian 'annals' concur with the biblical passages in telling of Hezekiah's submission and tribute, while silent on the disaster 2 Kings 19:35 says befell Sennacherib's army. In 'Cross-examining the Assyrian Witnesses to Sennacherib's Third Campaign: Assessing the Limits of Historical Reconstruction' (Ch. 3), Mordechai Cogan concludes Hezekiah's submission was complete, so it was not 'in Assyria's interests to pursue further military action against Jerusalem' (p. 71, similarly E. Frahm, p. 207). He argues against views of Sennacherib's 'annals' as presenting an unusual case, thus concealing the disaster 2 Kings 19 reports. Mario Fales agrees in 'The Road to Judah:701 B.C.E. in the Context of Sennacherib's Political-Military Strategy' (Ch. 7), where he discusses Sennacherib's role on the northern frontier as crown prince and his reaction to his father's death in battle. Elements of his first and second campaigns are seen

to foreshadow those of the third, leading to the same conclusion as Cogan. How far these activities followed the patterns of his predecessors, how far they were determined by circumstances or by the personality of the king are questions. Eckhard Frahm explores 'Family Matters: Psycho-historical Reflections on Sennacherib and his Times' (Ch. 6), providing an in-depth portrayal drawing on all available contemporary documents. With a new reading of a damaged stele, he finds Sennacherib's mother was Ra'īmâ. Buried in a tomb at Nimrud were Yabâ, wife of Tiglath-Pileser III and Atalyâ, Sargon's queen. The names of all three with Sennacherib's wife Naqi'a point to West Semitic influence in the royal family, suggesting Sennacherib's native language was Aramaic. Frahm inclines towards Stephanie Dalley's identification of Yabâ and Atalyâ as Hebrew princesses, but note the ending *-yâ* is not the Israelite divine name as it is not written thus in cuneiform (see A. Millard 2013, 841). Little can be said of Sennacherib's childhood, but as crown prince he was heavily engaged in securing Assyria's northern frontier for his father. Sargon's death in battle brought 'almost complete denial' from Sennacherib, a factor scrutinised here together with 'the enhanced role' of women at his court. Dalley's supposition of a link between Judah and Sargon through Atalyâ is doubted, although Frahm sees indirect links between Assyrian officials and Judah in Rab-shakeh's speaking Hebrew (2 Kgs 18:26, 28). Frahm's extensive, major, if somewhat imaginative study, deserves careful reading. 'Sennacherib's Invasions of the Levant through the Eyes of Assyrian Intelligence Service' (Ch. 8) is Peter Dubovský's detailed assessment of necessary preparations, based largely upon letters, many from the time Sennacherib was crown prince, also bringing analogies from modern history, especially the Cold War period. Not directly related to Judah, the texts indicate the variety of sources informing the king. That suggests the Rab-shakeh could have used an interpreter to address the people of Jerusalem rather than speaking Hebrew himself; the narrator of 2 Kings 18 had no need to specify that.

Assyriologists are used to analyzing royal propaganda, usually the only account of royal deeds. Here the results of their analyses can be set beside studies of the other sources. David Ussishkin's excavations at Lachish show signs of a siege and heavy destruction, with destructions at other sites, followed by lighter occupation, while Jerusalem has uninterrupted occupation, with signs of new fortifications, perhaps against a siege, although the Siloam Tunnel was not prepared for that purpose. (Ch. 4, 'Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah: The Archaeological Perspective with an Emphasis on Lachish and Jerusalem). Correlating the Lachish reliefs with the topography enables him to locate the site of Sennacherib's throne outside Lachish. Note that his presence at Lachish is not mentioned in his 'annals.'

While both Sennacherib and the Bible (2 Kgs 18:17; 19:8) relate the confrontation with Kushite Tirhakah, 'it is certainly noteworthy' that two Egyptian stelae often cited as indicating Tirhakah's campaign did not bother to claim 'the Kushites' most memorable intervention in Levantine affairs,' according to Jeremy Pope in his rehearsal of Kushite policy, based on geography and longer term history (Ch. 5, ' 'Beyond the Broken Reed: Kushite Intervention and the Limits of *l'histoire événementielle*'). The 25th Dynasty, he asserts, was interested in maintaining links with the Levant primarily for imports of copper and cedar wood, while concerned to secure the north-eastern frontier; Tirhakah's foray into Philistia was exceptional. The sealings imprinted with Shabaka's name from Nineveh, described on p. 116, were republished by Terence C. Mitchell and Ann Searight (2008), *Catalogue of the Western Asiatic Seals in the British Museum: Stamp Seals* III, *Impressions of Stamp Seals on Cuneiform Tablets, Clay Bullae, and Jar Handles* (Leiden and Boston), nos 12, 13.

Only Kalimi's 'Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah: The Chronicler's View Compared with His "Biblical' Sources",' (Ch.1), discusses the lengthy biblical texts. To elucidate the Chronicler's purpose, he shows how Chronicles created an account of good king Hezekiah and his faith in God contrasted with wicked Sennacherib and apparently treated the Assyrians as actually besieging Jerusalem unlike 2 Kings. Chronicles portrays Hezekiah as triumphant and prosperous, ignoring the submission to Assyria 2 Kings 18:13–16 recounts. (Those verses need not be divorced from 18:17–19:37 but taken as a summary the whole narrative, see W. J. Martin, ' "Dischronologized" Narrative in the Old Testament,' *Vetus Testamentum, Supplement 17, Congress Volume, Rome 1968* [Leiden: Brill, 1969], pp. 179–86.) The 'miraculous' destruction of the Assyrian army finds a place only in this essay, but Kalimi is only concerned to distinguish between 2 Kings (1:15) 'the angel of the lord' and 'the Lord sent an angel' (2 Chron. 32:21), stressing divine initiative. However, agents act on their master's orders, so this distinction may not be significant, as in Judges 6:11, 14, where 'the angel and 'the Lord' are interchangeable, a feature common to other biblical and ancient near eastern texts.

Ignoring the divine intervention means discounting the record of the supernatural disaster to Sennacherib's army, as if the writer of 2 Kings was a modern historian for whom such things do not occur. Yet that was how ancient rulers reported the unexpected. The Hebrew text has to be read in that context. It relates a catastrophe befalling the enemy which had no other obvious explanation - it was 'an act of God.' The ancient writer's assumption of a supernatural event does not prevent the modern historian from accepting Assyria's army suffered a reverse, any more than Sennacherib's report, 'By the command of the god Ashur … the king of Elam died prematurely' would prevent acceptance that the

king died; the narrative has to be treated equally with the other sources - see A. Millard (1994), 'Story, History and Theology,' in A. R. Millard, J. K. Hoffmeier, D. W. Baker, eds, *Faith, Tradition, and History: Old Testament Historiography in Its Near Eastern Context* (Winona Lake, Indiana), 37–64. Sennacherib's boast of the reduction of Judah's boundaries, the despatch of elite troops, heavy tribute and court personnel to Nineveh, beside the survival of Hezekiah, the rebel who had imprisoned the pro-Assyrian ruler of Ekron, needs explanation. Other rebels either took flight or were captured, their capitals either submitted or were taken and plundered, in no other case did one send tribute 'after' Sennacherib to Nineveh; the episode is peculiar. No-one should expect Sennacherib's 'annals' to reveal such a reverse, nor the Egyptian stelae to tell of the defeat at Eltekeh. Rather than 'Assyria's interests' preventing the capture of the rebel, reading all the texts together allows the conclusion that there was a less positive reason - as the Bible relates.

Sennacherib's name lived long in many regions. Gerbern Oegema surveys 'Sennacherib's Campaign and its Reception in the Time of the Second Temple' (Ch.10), demonstrating a shift from historiographic interest to apocalyptic, with the king beginning to become an evil despot, as Rivka Ulmer portrays in 'Sennacherib in Midrashic and Related literature' (Ch. 11) and even 'The Devil in Person, the Devil in Disguise' according to Joseph Verheyden, 'Looking for Sennacherib in Early Christian Literature' (Ch. 12). In her essay 'Memories of Sennacherib in Aramaic Tradition' (Ch. 9), Tawny Holm finds two traits: firstly 'the benevolent patron of Ahiqar' in the 5th century BCE *Story of Ahiqar*; secondly the unjust oppressor based on the biblical texts in Christian Aramaic literature. She discusses proposals for the origin of the Ahiqar story, positing a home among Egyptian court tales. (The Assyrian dialect forms of proper names, such as Nabu-sum-iskun, rather than Babylonian, Nabu-shum-ishkun, may count against that, as Oegema notes, p. 327.)

Seth Richardson closes the volume, considering the whole range of texts, in 'The First "World Event:" Sennacherib at Jerusalem' (Ch.13), asking why it had so long-lasting a legacy across so many societies and languages. He perceives a focus shifting from kings to elite officials, from local to empire-wide, multi-ethnic affairs and audiences the dramatic qualities and reversal of kingly ambitions. His essay deserves close attention.

The volume contributes significantly to understanding the original events and their after-life, with the regrettable omission of adequate assessment of 2 Kings 19:35. Readers of *Strata* should note the new definitive publication by A. K. Grayson and J. Novotny, *The Royal Inscriptions of Sennacherib, King of Assyria (704–681 BC)*, Parts 1 and 2 (Winona Lake, IN. 2012, 2014), was not available to most of the authors.

Millard, A., (2013). 'Transcriptions into Cuneiform.' Pp. 838–47 in Khan, Geoffrey (ed.). *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Liinguistics*, Vol. 3, (Leiden):838–47.

Alan R. Millard
University of Liverpool

Vasile Babota, *The Institution of the Hasmonean High Priesthood*. Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism 165. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013. Pp. xvii + 347. €123.00. ISBN:978–90–04–25177–9.

There is a sense of *déja vu* in reviewing a book on a topic about which one has oneself written, especially when one's own work is referenced periodically in the book under review. Such was the case as I worked my way through Babota's monograph: the various *cruces interpretum* sprang to life anew, and I was back assessing the validity of the historical sources, weighing and interpreting the evidence to be found in them, scouring the terrain for evidence missed or undervalued by other scholars, all this time in Babota's company. Not that our two works are entirely comparable, since his focuses exclusively and in great detail on an era which was only one part of mine; nevertheless, his often adds contours to the picture painted more summarily in mine.

What kind of contours, then, are we talking about? Babota sets himself the task of understanding exactly how the Hasmonean high priesthood came into being; at least, I think that is what he does, because the title of his book and the description of his intentions in the introduction are ambiguous. 'The general aim of this study is the institution of the Hasmonean high priesthood,' he says on p. 4. Should 'institution' be construed as a verb or as a noun? Is the book about the process of instituting the Hasmonean high priesthood, or about the Hasmonean high priesthood as an institution? The ambiguity appears to be relieved by a statement on the next page: '[T]he central question that this study raises is what kind of institution was the Hasmonean high priesthood' (p. 5). However, the same ambiguity runs throughout the study, and while using the term 'institution' might have seemed like a clever way of encompassing both the process and the product–for both, indeed, are discussed–it does not make for clarity of argument. A similar point could be made about 'Hasmonean high priesthood.' Babota uses the term 'Hasmonean' to refer to the entire dynasty beginning with Judas, Jonathan and Simon, but his investigation ends with the death of Simon, so that he only considers the first generation of nationalist rebels, who are elsewhere referred to as Maccabeans. This limitation of scope, while perfectly legitimate and justified in itself, means that the study covers the period of the incipient but not the mature Hasmonean high priesthood, and

it raises the question of what it means for Babota to make claims about 'the nature of the Hasmonean high priesthood.'

On balance, however, it appears that Babota is examining the emergence and the nature of the high priestly office that was held by the Maccabean brothers Jonathan and Simon in second-century BCE Judah. As part of this examination, Babota is particularly concerned to elucidate the relationship between the newly emerging high priesthood and the Seleucid overlords. His major conclusion in this respect is that these Hasmoneans operated as Hellenistic high priestly rulers after the manner of such rulers elsewhere in the Seleucid empire, who were appointed by the overlord and who had both cultic and military/political authority in the regions where they were appointed. In this way, he suggests, it is possible to account for the various elements in the depictions of Jonathan and Simon in the books of Maccabees and in Josephus. In addition to presenting detailed analyses of these major literary sources, Babota supports his arguments by drawing on epigraphic and archaeological sources, using them to strengthen his proposals about the chronology, the nature and the veracity of events as recorded in the literary sources.

How well, then, does Babota achieve his purported aims? There are two issues here, namely, structure and content. To begin with structural issues, the monograph is the result of Babota's doctoral thesis, and it bears the hallmarks of that genre: division into a very large number of small sections, a desire to include as much as possible of the information unearthed, periodic reviews of scholarship on the issues being discussed, and the attempt to offer new interpretations. The resultant investigation that it presents is minute and incredibly detailed, and this, together with the features just mentioned, means that it is not always an easy read; it is still basically a thesis rather than a monograph. Of course, any decent monograph will offer reviews of scholarship and new or reformulated interpretations of data, but the division into small sections, often of less than a page in length, is inimical to presenting a clear argument and makes the work read like a report, not a book. It gives a sense of disjointedness, which is aggravated further by excessively short paragraphs breaking up the flow of thought in an unhelpful way. A related issue is that the use of English is often ambiguous (as noted earlier) and unidiomatic, not to say grammatically incorrect, so that it is frequently an effort for the reader to understand precisely what is meant. I must confess to being surprised that Brill would allow such a low standard of English to prevail in its scholarly monograph series. That aside, though, in terms of content, what of Babota's proposal to understand Jonathan and Simon as 'Hellenistic/Seleucid high priests' rather than 'Jewish/biblical high priests'? If I understand him correctly and can dare to paraphrase his conclusions, he is arguing for the (early) Hasmonean high priesthood as a Hellenistic version of sacral kingship; that is, he argues for these Hasmoneans as civil and military rulers,

who in line with a pattern found elsewhere in the Hellenistic world bear the title of high priest *(archiereus)* and have ex officio responsibility for their dominion's cultic worship, however that responsibility is expressed in any given case. Babota mentions this model of oversight in chapter 2, where he cites the cases of Ptolemy, whom inscriptions designate as *strategos* and *archiereus* of Koile Syria and Phoenicia, and Olympiodorus, who some scholars think on the basis of recently discovered inscriptional evidence, fulfilled a similar role. In Chapter 6 Babota also gives three more examples of such Hellenistic high priests (that is, individuals called *archiereus* who also appear to have had considerable civic and military power). Nevertheless, given that the book's dust-jacket blurb presents Babota's idea that the Hasmoneans were 'Hellenistic high priests' as a major conclusion of his study, I was surprised at how little direct attention (about half-a-dozen pages in total) was given to these figures, especially in light of the detailed analysis of so much other material concerning the precise sequence and location of events, much of which appeared tangential at best to the 'Hellenistic high priest' issue. Even the content that was about the Hellenistic high priests felt more like assertion than demonstration, and Babota's case would be considerably strengthened by more detailed discussion of these figures and a closer description of how they operated that would enable a more informed comparison with the Hasmoneans. That said, though, to the extent that he understands Jonathan and Simon as something different from the 'traditional' biblical picture of the high priest and as figures who are just as concerned with military and governmental matters as with cultic issues, I think he is correct, although he differs from others–myself included–in his conception of the model on which they based their self-understanding (Hellenistic high priest rather than biblical sacral king).

Overall, then, as a minutely detailed discussion about a wide range of matters relating to the history of high priesthood in second-century Judah, this works reasonably well, but as a project of which the central aim is to present a new understanding of the early Hasmonean high priesthood in terms of Hellenistic *archiereis* it is less successful. Indeed, despite the dust-jacket blurb and Babota's own statement of intent in the introduction, the 'Hellenistic high priest' issue comes across as only one of a multitude of questions that Babota sets himself to answer as he sifts through the history of the period. If it really were the central plank of his investigation I would expect to see far more wood and far fewer trees.

Rooke, D.W., (2000) *Zadok's Heirs: The Role and Development of the High Priesthood in Ancient Israel* (Oxford and New York).

Deborah W. Rooke
Regent's Park College, Oxford

Dan Bahat, *The Jerusalem Western Wall Tunnel*. Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2014. Pp. 432 incl. illustrations. $104. ISBN 978–965–221–091–3.

This is an important book, and a massive one. It gives a complete description of the Western Wall Tunnel that runs alongside the base of the Western Wall of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, and it leaves no stone unturned, no stone unphotographed and no stone undrawn. Its author Dan Bahat was district archaeologist of Jerusalem under the Israel Department of Antiquities until 1990, then a lecturer at Bar-Ilan University and at present is associate professor at Toronto University, Canada. He made a detailed study of the Western Wall Tunnel prior to its opening in part to the public in 1996.

The opening of the tunnel was arranged under the auspices of Israel's Ministry of Religious Affairs, and their workers prepared many areas for visitors by clearing away later fill, removing plaster from stone walls and building additional sections of walls and pillars for better stability and safety. This made the work of the archaeologists more complex and Bahat describes many instances when it was not possible to see the original structures due to modern modifications. Nevertheless he was able to locate the early discoveries that had been made and recorded by Charles Warren and Charles Wilson and he describes and acknowledges the valuable work they and other early explorers had done under difficult conditions.

Bahat is amazed at the myriad of arches and structural walls that is seen in the Tunnel and finally was able to discover that a large portion of this material is indeed part of a two-storey Crusader building that somehow got built into the substructures supporting later Mamluk and Ayyubid institutions, especially the Al-Tankiziyya Madrasa, above ground. This is well illustrated by drawings on pp. 154–155 and a reconstruction on p. 204 by Mark Kunin. Similarly a Roman public latrine, with multiple seating and integral drainage (reconstructed on p. 174), was found under the mosaic floor of one of the rooms in the Crusader building. These finds indicate the complex series of layers that Bahat found adjoining the Tunnel, and the different functions that they served in their time.

Later Bahat describes the Master Course that lines part of the east wall of the Tunnel. He attributes the name to Nahman Avigad who coined it in 1968 when he saw the massive ashlars at this level. The largest stone is 13.6 m long and 3.3m high. Judging by destroyed stones alongside it was deemed to be 4.6 m thick, which would have given it a weight of 570 tons. Bahat, perhaps wisely, offers no thoughts on how such a monster could have been moved and placed in position. This may be because in the Appendix to the volume (p. 395) ground penetration radar (GPR) measurements were made of the stone and the thickness was found to be only 1.8 to 2.5 m, so the weight works out at about 250 tons, still

a monster, and its handling is still unexplained. The reason for the Master Course is also unclear. It was thought that it may have been necessary to act as counterweight to pressure from some possible internal vaulted space structure (p. 244) but that has again been found wrong by the GPR survey, which indicated no void but a mass of fill behind the Course. Why the Course is there and how the massive stones were set in place remains a mystery.

Bahat says that his comprehensive work is not a typical dig report (p. 3) but its very completeness in nature, and the division of the site into loci, belies his claim. There is discussion of the assignment of the loci and a full description of nearly every one of them, with photographs and drawings, which together bring the necessary clarity to the records. The drawings of the walls on pp. 6 to 16 are remarkable for their detail, showing both grain and surface dressing of each stone in its position, penned by Sharon Ma'ayan, who also drew the useful explanatory section, from Wilson's Arch to the secret passage to the East, on p. 18.

After the main body of the work, there is an interesting chapter asking, "When did the Western Wall (which Bahat calls the Prayer Plaza) become a place of Jewish Prayer?" and then a full catalogue of pottery and small finds which covers all of 31 pages. It is complemented by a chapter on the work done by the late Alexander Onn and Shlomit Wechsler-Bdolah in the area of Wilson's Arch and the Great Bridge that led from the eastern cardo to the Western Wall. This is followed by an Appendix with the full report of the GPR survey of the Master Course (a reprint of a 2006 article by Jol, Bauman and Bahat), and finally an Index of loci and walls.

All this information is most valuable and helps to make understandable this complete survey of one of the most important and precious remains of Jerusalem, the most significant of all biblical cities. The book itself is a monument of original survey and a mine of valuable information.

Stephen Gabriel Rosenberg
W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research, Jerusalem.

Ze'ev Meshel, with A. Aḥituv, Liora Freud et al., *Kuntillet `Ajrud (Ḥorvat Teman): An Iron Age II Religious Site on the Judah-Sinai Border*. Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2012. Pp. xxxv + 364 incl. plans and illustrations. $96. ISBN 978–9-65–221088–3.

The small hill of Kuntillet 'Ajrud (Ḥorvat Teman) is mysterious and provocative. Located in the far south of the eastern Sinai, it contains remains from only one period, probably the beginning of Iron Age IIb (c. 800–750 BCE, though see Singer-Avitz 2006, 2009; Finkelstein and Piasetsky 2008). It was most likely abandoned

after its collapse in an earthquake (*cf.* Amos 1:1; Zech 5:14). Its location beyond the site of Kadesh-Barnea meant that it was a stopping place for traders and others on their way from Arabia and Judah to Egypt, but, according to the site's excavator Ze'ev Meshel, its core identity was as a cultic centre.

The buildings of the site were almost entirely excavated by Meshel in 1975–6, over three seasons, and this final report volume begins with some nice pictures of the volunteers and descriptions of the hardships of the dig itself, which is actually quite relevant to imagining the hardships experienced by those who lived at the site some 2800 years ago. This is a place with a harsh environment, prone to dusty wind and extreme heat, with a limited water supply. Meshel co-writes and edits a significant part of this final report, adding comments at the end of some chapters by individual experts. This seems a good way of proceeding, and allows evidence to be presented in a way that does not presuppose that all issues have been solved.

The site of 'Ajrud lay on a main route from Judah to Eilat via Kadesh Barnea, linking with the Gaza road, and it was reasonable to suppose at the start of excavation that it was a fortress guarding the road, but it is argued that this is probably not the case. In the discussion by Meshel with Avner Goren it is suggested that while Building A (29 × 15 m) is somewhat fortress-like with four towers the finds there indicate it was largely used for storage, and there is an interesting bench room with plastered walls, including images. In Building B, divided into a northern and southern wing of two small structures, there were hardly any finds, but it was covered with white plaster (including the door jambs) with an entrance via a raised platform that could be understood as a *bama* or high place. In the plaster of the site as a whole, and also on pithoi and other items, there were a considerable number of inscriptions—mainly in Hebrew script—most famously 'YHWH of Teman/ Shomron and his Asherah.'

However, what seems to come across here is evidence that asks us not to think in 'either-or' categories. Building A is surely a fortified building with multiple uses, not a 'fortress' in purely military terms but nevertheless a defensible way-station populated by people who did ordinary household things, like weaving and cooking. Building B, with its high uncovered platform (W51), is striking because of the decorated plaster interior in the northern wing, and was most likely built up in its upper courses by mud-brick, the remains of which were found collapsed (p. 53). The classification of Building B as one building is not quite explained, but since this was the entrance-way to the site the assumption would most naturally be that these were two structures on either side of the entrance, which makes the suggestion of the raised platform as a *bama* highly unlikely, since it is simply in a very unlikely location for cultic activity. The *bama* is well placed strategically, however, as a base for a higher wooden or mud-brick look-out structure that has

not survived. The plaster art of the Building B northern wing actually shows men next to such a look-out tower, and it is reasonable to assume that the depiction is relevant to the place. Likewise, it is hard to understand why the function of two basins in L167 remain 'unclear' (p. 59) when pack animals needed water troughs, and this is a perfectly reasonable area for sheltering them.

The inscriptions containing Hebrew names with the spelling 'Yo' rather than 'Yahu' (see p. 128–9) and the mention of Shomron (Samaria) strongly link the site with the northern Kingdom. Meshel plausibly attributes it to the initiative of Joash (Jehoash) son of Joahaz (Jehoahaz) of Israel (c.806–791 BCE), who defeated Amaziah son of Joash of Judah (c. 796–776 BCE), according to 2 Kings 14:7–16 and 2 Chron. 25:5–24. This certainly would explain the links with the northern Kingdom at the site, but somewhat less convincing is the suggestion (curiously on the basis of 1 Chron. 26:32) that Joash settled priests and Levites in this remote location (p. 69) (see below).

As for the dating, radiocarbon results provided by Israel Carmi and Dror Segal cluster around 830–750 BCE (p. 61) though it has to be said that there are some significant anomalies in these dates in terms of some later (Persian) period results, and the issue of the sporadic opportunistic use of the site by later people is not greatly explored.

The volume then continues with specific studies on artefacts. Most interesting are the benedictory or dedicatory inscriptions, and writing exercises, with numerous names being written in paleo-Hebrew script, including mention of products being 'to/of the governor of the city' (e.g. 2.4, 2.5, 2.8). Imagining this site as a 'city,' even in the most minimal way, seems challenging given the surviving stone structures and one wonders whether 'the city' was largely built of mud-brick, meaning that further explorations for vestiges outside the region of the stone ruins might prove illuminating.

The chapter on the inscriptions, written by Shmuel Ahituv, Esther Eshel and Ze'ev Meshel, is very well done, but there seems to be an underlying resistance to interpretations that would indicate Asherah worship. The authors appear to reject the suggestion that Asherah was a companion of YHWH or that she was widely worshipped in Iron Age Israel, pointing out that she disappears from the pantheons of neighbouring cultures by the first millennium and '[o]ne finds it difficult to accept that the goddess Asherah had vanished from all other lands except Israel' (p. 131). This is an extreme statement in view of the plethora of quite local deities of the ancient Near East that apparently should be dismissed by means of applying the same criterion of authenticity. They sharply distinguish a sacred cultic object (the asherah) from the goddess herself (Asherah), which is exactly what I argued against in my own study on this (Taylor 1995), since a divine power/entity could essentially inhabit an object, which in this case

(as I have suggested) is actually a type of stylised tree, often an almond tree. The discussion in this chapter overall seems slightly thin and rigid, and lacks detailed interaction with scholarly literature. From the Kh el-Qom inscription to the Lachish ewer the fact is that the evidence of Asherah/Elat as a companion to YHWH in both biblical and archaeological sources seems rather too strong to dismiss, especially given that regionally such a goddess could be called by different names and be modified/syncretised in different cultural/cultic environments. We have in the Elephantine papyri a dedication of temple funds for Yahu, Anath-Bethel and Ashim-Bethel (Papyrus 22.123–125/15:1–14). Ashima is found as a name in both 2 Kings 17:30 (made by the 'men of Hamath'), and in Amos 8:14 the name appears as a pun ('guilt'): Ashimah of Shomron. That this really indicates a goddess has been traced through Pheonician sources in the brilliant analysis of Hans Barstad (1984, 155–80). Whether she was called Asherah, asherim or Ash[er]ima, or assimilated to Anath (Mondrian 2013), we clearly have some female deity/ies and/or feminine sacred items linked with YHWH, making the appearance of the name 'Asherah' not that surprising at 'Ajrud. The more interesting thing is that it is YHWH who is paramount, as the writers of this chapter rightly note, with reference to Ps. 89:7 and other biblical passages. In 'Ajrud, YWHH is associated with Baal and El in the inscription 4.2 on the wall plaster of the bench room, but likewise paramount.

The two pithoi (A and B) with significant ink inscriptions mentioning 'YHWH of Teman/Shomron and his Asherah' have other images described in the next chapter by Pirhiya Beck. In the case of Pithos A there is on one side the depiction of a sacred tree (in my view an Asherah tree with an almond at the top, see Taylor 1995) in between ibexes, with other images of a lion, lioness, boar, horse and another animals (that are often associated with Anath) and, on the other side a cow and suckling calf, two pictures of the Egyptian god Bes and a female lyre player. On Pithos B there are pictures of a group of worshippers, an ibex, the cow in a suckling calf picture, an archer. Such representational images, which have strong parallels in the ancient Near East, along with Egyptian Bes, would require us to think fairly expansively about the possible meanings of the Hebrew inscriptions here. The inscriptions were written after the figures were drawn, but none of the images were rubbed out. Beck states that '[w]hen we consider the geographical position of `Ajrud as, among other things, a crossroad desert station, it seems only natural that the caravaneers and other wayfarers who stopped there would have been inclined to ask the inhabitants of the site to dedicate inscriptions (and perhaps even drawings) in order to secure the protection of their gods during their perilous journey' (p. 183). One wonders though whether the travellers, bedding down in the bench room, might also have drawn these themselves: Bes is, after all, a protective deity that might not be quite appropriately drawn by an

Israelite. This would make the bench room show not only distinctive Israelite belief but rather a melange, and an indication of considerable religious toleration if not blending. The inscription on the wall plaster of the bench room of Building A (Inscription 4.2) mentioning both YHWH, El and Baal testifies to YHWH worship with that of other gods.

Less well known here is a painting in yellow and black on a sherd showing an enthroned (female) figure and a similar seated figure drawn large. Beck provides an excellent reconstruction of this Egyptian-style seated female figure smelling a lotus flower painted at the entrance to the bench-room of Building A (wall painting no. 9) in red, black and yellow. Another image of a female face in profile was found at the entrance to the western storeroom of Building A. As Beck notes, the various motifs are iconographically derived from the Phoenician-Syrian world (p. 197). While Beck does not speculate on the identity of the figure, the throne suggests a queen or female deity, and the gesture is one of enjoyment

The pottery is presented by Etan Ayalon, who notes that it is almost a complete assemblage and homogeneous, coming from one period. As such it will undoubtedly prove very useful for comparative dating. It did not include Negebite (nomad) ware, but rather most of the pottery was made of motza clay from the area of the Judaean hills, but also from other places, as demonstrated by the INAA analysis by Jan Gunneweg, Isadore Perlman and Ze'ev Meshel. 50% of the pottery comprises storage vessels, along with a range of small vessels in Building A, and there were 30 cooking pots (p. 205). The petrographic analysis of a shallow globular cooking pot determined the clay as coming from the southern Shephelah or northern Negev (p. 216, 244). Plugs of various kinds included those made of mud, stone and pottery, as well as simple lids. One of the clay and chaff stoppers had an impression of a linen cloth, placed over the mouth of the jar before a wet clay stopper was pushed into the opening (p. 315); this is examined in the discussion by Orit Shamir, who also presents the cordage, used for tying and packing. There were no identifiably cultic items; either this was really not a site of cultic practice or the inhabitants took every last piece of equipment, though Meshel states that 'it is difficult to explain such extreme behaviour' (p. 69). Indeed, surely, the lack of cultic items does argue against the identification of this site as cultic.

`Ajrud has provided 120 items of textiles, the largest amount of textiles from a single Iron Age site, and these, along with basketry, are analysed very finely by Avigail Sheffer and Amalia Tidhar. They note that the bulk of the finds were in the southern storeroom and eastern kitchen, largely in bundles, and generally quite small. In three cases the linen has been woven together with wool, and one of these has dyed wool. Lev. 19:18 and Deut. 22:11 prohibit this mixing of linen and wool in clothing, but it is often noted that priestly girdles were composed of mixed yarns (Exod. 28:5–6, 39.29). Meshel links both the shatnez and the linen

garments themselves with priests and Levites living at the site (p. 308), but this seems far-fetched. By the time of the Mishnah the shatnez exception among Jews was distinctly linked to Temple service (m.Kil. 9:1), but to assume that the shatnez of the textiles in ʻAjrud indicates the site was run by priests (on duty) seems rash, especially as the shatnez textiles do not come from girdles. I am not convinced that they should even be defined as coming from clothing, since these textiles may have been from sheets, hangings, table coverings, towels or any other kind of cloth, and there is no biblical prescriptions forbidding shatnez in textiles that are not worn. If from clothing, they may have come from non-Israelite travellers. That these textiles were often found in bundles of scraps would suggest that they were used as rags. Moreover, the notion that linen is to be associated particularly with priests is completely wrong. Sheffer and Tidhar in fact state that ʻ[a] simple linen garment was also the primary clothing of the Israelite male (Jer. 13:1). In fact, one may add that Josephus (War 4:469–70) indicates that in his day linen was worn in hot weather. Meshel himself notes that carbonised linen was found in Kadesh Barnea (Shamir 2007:255). The simplest explanation then is that people may have worn linen (if these are actually clothing items) because it was hot. While the discussion by Sheffer and Tidhar is very good, it seems that Meshel is forcing an interpretation upon it that seems quite awry.

Interesting is the fact that loom weights were found at the site, and there are wooden remains from the warp-weighted loom, fibres and threads. Basketry included a complete sieve and another that is fragmentary. The warp beam in place is shown in a diagram within the discussion of wooden objects by Yigal Sitry. This is also interesting for its identification of wood as being simple and of low quality, coming from local trees such as Tamarix and Phoenix dactylifera (date palm).

A discussion of faunal remains provides evidence of sheep-goat consumption and possibly cattle (L252), but a sand fox skeleton was also found (L51), as well as a dog. Interestingly there were at least two immature hares, ostrich eggshells and feathers, snakes, as well as Mediterranean fish and Nile perch and shells. The paucity of remains, yet their somewhat exotic nature at times, is quite consistent with what we might expect of a way-station. Finally there is a presentation of more recent human remains found at this site and botanical material is discussed by Nili Liphschitz and stone artefacts by Nadin Reshef.

Overall, scholars now have a full presentation of the remains from ʻAjrud in a beautifully-presented volume that will undoubtedly be used profitably by researchers for years to come. The theory of Israelite establishment seems strong given the pottery alone, yet the artefacts, iconography and inscriptions indicate to this reviewer less of a cultic centre and more of a way-station in which people looked to a variety of gods for protection on their journeys. Religion, after all,

inhabited daily life as much as cultic buildings. The enthroned female figure smelling a lotus, positioned just at the entrance to Building A, might surely be the most provocative of all images from this fascinating site.

Barstad, Ḥ, (1984). *The Religious Polemics of Amos: Studies in the Preaching of Am 2, 7B-8; 4, 1–13; 5, 1–27; 6, 4–7; 8, 14* (Leiden).
Finkelstein, I. and Piasetsky, E., (2008). 'The Date of Kuntillet `Ajrud: The 14C Perspective,' *Tel Aviv* 35:175–86.
Mondriaan, M.E., (2013). 'Anat-Yahu and the Jews at Elephantine,' *Journal for Semitics* 22/2:537–552.
Shamir, O., (2007). 'Textiles, Loom Weights and Spindle Whorls.' Pp. 255–67 in R. Cohen and Ḥ Bernick-Greenberg, (eds.), *Excavations at Kadesh Barnea, Part* 1 (Jerusalem).
Singer Avitz, L., (2006). 'The Date of Kuntillet `Ajrud,' *Tel Aviv* 33:197–228.
Singer-Avitz, L., (2009). 'The Date of Kuntillet `Ajrud: A Rejoinder,' *Tel Aviv* 36:110–19.
Taylor, J.E., (1995). 'The Asherah, the Menorah and the Sacred Tree,' *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 66:29–54.

Joan E. Taylor
King's College, London

David Stacey and Greg Doudna, with Gideon Avni, *Qumran Revisited: A Reassessment of the Archaeology of the Site and Its Texts*. BAR International Series 2520. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2013. Pp. 150 incl. illustrations. £29.00. ISBN 978–1-40–731138–8.

The present volume combines three essays: a review of the archaeology of Qumran by David Stacey (pp. 3–74), a discussion about the Qumran texts by Gregory Doudna (pp. 75–124) and an analysis of the Qumran cemetery by Gideon Avni (pp. 125–36).

In David Stacey's discussion of the site of Qumran, it is largely identified as a Herodian estate, operated seasonally for economic reasons, with a close connection with the royal estate of Jericho associated with palaces at Tulul Abu al-Alaiq. Stacey presents his argument in studies on various areas of the site, focusing on the minutiae of published evidence and his own personal observation. In terms of chronology, Stacey joins the voices of most others who see the post-Iron Age resettlement of Qumran as a modest construction in the reign of Alexander Jannaeus. He fuses some of de Vaux's Ia and Ib phases into a pre-earthquake (of 31 BCE) Hasmonean form, with a development after the earthquake of 31 BCE into what became the Period II shape that de Vaux identified, while little is said of Period III apart from a summary chart on p. 74. Stacey only uses the stratigraphic terms of de Vaux, and does not much

engage with the work of Humbert or the detailed discussions of Cargill (2009).

There are some suggestions that are unlikely. Stacey speculates that the upper level of the tower might have functioned as a dove-cote. Stacey notes that there are two slit windows facing north, and a lot of mud bricks in the fill of the lower rooms, and so there might have been an upper level columbarium made of mud bricks and the slits could have been for doves to enter. But slit windows in towers used as defensive lookouts are very common (so Hyrcania, nearby) and a pile of mud bricks is no evidence at Qumran, when most of the superstructures, partitions and upper storeys were made of mud bricks. There is no shaping for nesting birds or dovecote openings in any of the Qumran mud brick pieces, while the columbarium at Masada shows that these slots were inward facing and clearly moulded, with square windows for the doves to fly in, and dove slots from the floor up. Multi-use structures there may be, but a defensive look-out post that doubled as a columbarium–designed to furnish dung for fertilisation of fields–seems an amusing scenario for the people manning this space.

More significantly, it has formerly been assumed that the aqueduct system of Qumran was established prior to the earthquake of 31 BCE. Thus, for example, right at the outset J. T. Milik noted of the Qumran aqueduct that: 'The closest parallel to the Qumran aqueduct is the one that supplies the fortress of Hyrcanion, built by Hyrcanus I and the contemporary with the Qumran water installations. I had an occasion recently to study its early sections in the Wadi Ennar (near the monastery of Mar Saba). It was built on the deep gorge's northern slope so that it would be able to trap all the rainfall. The way in which the channel is cut into and through the rock, and built up on stone fills at places where the rock drops away, so as to maintain the water's level, the dimensions of the aqueduct itself, the composition of the plaster–all these details are identical in the Hyrcania and Qumran aqueducts' (Milik 1959:152). De Vaux likewise saw the aqueduct developments as taking place in Period Ib, which he dated prior to the earthquake of 31 BCE, and the study by Ilan and Amit (2002) placed it in this period also.

Stacey differs, and he sees the aqueduct largely as a result of Herodian engineering. Yet, on the basis of the work of Netzer and Gabrecht (2002:373–7), he states that it was the Hasmoneans in Jericho that 'had to go to considerable lengths to bring water by aqueduct from Ain Qelt, some 8 km to the west in the Wadi Qelt' in order to develop 'irrigated agriculture on the relatively flat ground to the north of where wadi debouches into the canyon,' with the area south of the wadi 'irrigated via a pool, Birket Musa ... which must have been fed by diverting some of the water than ran in the wadi' (p. 3). The Hasmoneans also brought water from Ain Na'aran, to the north of Ain es-

Sultan, 'by an aqueduct that ran for some 5 km.' With all this ascribed to the Hasmoneans, why Stacey defines the Qumran aqueduct system as Herodian is buried in a dense discussion on pp. 11–23 in which he asks: 'when was the "main" aqueduct built?'; the title is key, as it indicates how Stacey pushes attention away from the aqueduct not defined as 'main.'

Since this argument does not read in a very coherent way, it is probably better in this review to divide the discussion between the aqueduct proper and the channels within the site, which in Stacey's discussion are dealt with in a different order. The discussion begins with little introduction on p. 11 and then is interrupted by a dating discussion on pp. 34–37, returning to the water system again on p. 38.

In terms of the aqueduct in the nearby cliffs Stacey notes on the basis of Ilan and Amit (2002) that there were two phases: the earliest phase was built as a 1.1 m. channel through the lower part of the cliffs to the system of pools L.110, L.117 and L.118, but the 'capture of this limited quantity of water was abandoned' and a better aqueduct was constructed. In fact, Stacey reduces the earlier aqueduct system to a single channel at the bottom of the cliffs without allowing for a system in which water is fed to it. While Ilan and Amit had this first aqueduct running from a (now missing) dam in the Wadi Qumran (Ilan and Amit Fig. 1; 3, 6–16), Stacey ascribes this dam also to Herod (p. 21) and imagines a sophisticated concrete construction (p. 17). Stacey then (a) cuts the imaginary dam out of the first system and (b) largely ignores even what he allows to remain of the first aqueduct system.

The argument for the Herodian date of the expanded 'main' channel system in the buildings is not really found in such assertions about the aqueduct in the cliffs but in the detailed analysis of the stratigraphy in the region of the area around pools of L.110, 117 and 118, largely already published in Stacey's article in *DSD* 14 (2007), in which he is critical of de Vaux's analysis. He stresses how there was heightening of the walls of L110, 117 and 118 associated with this developed aqueduct (p. 38). The most important evidence Stacey points to is that a developed outlet channel in L.117 is associated with steps added when the walls of this cistern were heightened. These ran over a rubbish dump, Trench A, which has pottery dated to the early Herodian period (pp. 11–12, 21). Thus it would be quite plausible to conclude that a development of the 'main' aqueduct took place in the Herodian period, but Stacey continually pushes for a more absolute model, whereby there do not appear to be any Hasmonean elements.

The type of detailed analysis Stacey makes to support his theory will bamboozle most readers and needs to be unravelled by close inspection that cannot be done properly in a review, but an example will need to suffice: On pp. 13–14 Stacey notes correctly that de Vaux's notion that the north-west corner of the western building was damaged by the earthquake (of 31 BCE) and strengthened by a buttress, but then states that since the aqueduct was fed by a basin L.132 to the

north of the buttress that had its south and west walls built on to the buttress (and not an earlier wall), the aqueduct itself must post-date the buttress and thus be later than 31 BCE. However, in the drawings of Humbert and Chambon 1994: Period Ib, Pl. IV and also XIX, while an earlier western wall is not evidenced prior to 31 BCE, it is clearly shown beginning in L.142, beside *miqveh* L.138, and one should then continue the line of this wall to meet the corner. In other words, the buttress at the edge of L.132 involved the restoration of a pre-existing wall, now missing, not the construction of a new one. The previous wall was built right on the edge of the plateau, and would have fallen down the slope in the destruction of 31 BCE. Instead, Stacey writes that 'de Vaux illogically believed that L132 was functioning as a decantation basin before the earthquake' (p. 14). Stacey should have noted that de Vaux astutely observed that the buttress was built directly on both ash and sediment (Humbert and Chambon 1994:333; de Vaux 1973:24), associated with earthquake damage and flooding of the area. The flooding here lay on top of this same ash in L.130. In other words, there was an earthquake and fire, and then the flooding in this zone that spilt into L.130 means that the channel system could not cope with the water that arrived *from the pre-existing aqueduct*.

Stacey in fact does not even accept flooding here, and interprets de Vaux's observation of the flood silt in L.130 as nothing but 'Lisan marl,' the 'virgin soil,' thus rejecting de Vaux's own understanding of what he was actually seeing, even silt defined as 75 cm thick (de Vaux 1973:23), which seems remarkably brusque, given that de Vaux was so sure of it that he posited a period of abandonment at the site. Such flooding could only have taken place if a water system here functioned so that water spilt out from L.132 into L.130 on some occasion after the earthquake and fire. Thus, Stacey forgets about the Hasmonean aqueduct he himself notes in the cliffs which accounts for the first aqueduct developments (identified as Ib by de Vaux in this area of L.132), and indeed it is not shown in his Plan 1 on p. 26, where this aqueduct is outlined in blue as being Herodian. This sedimentation basin L.132 was essential in the first system, ahead of the water's arrival in L.110, 117 and 118.

This tendency towards absolute claims mars the better discussion Stacey provides that there was a later major water system development in the Herodian period, an argument which correlates with the analysis of Hirschfeld (2004:111–28) and others, though this analysis is still flecked with assertions. While accepting that the pool L.48/9 was not in fact cracked in the earthquake of 31 BCE, Stacey still has L.48/9 damaged at some point with L.71 built subsequently as an alternative pool, but there is no evidence of the channel to L.48/9 ever being blocked off; the channel here was developed to aid flow to L.71 and elsewhere but that does not mean that L.48/9 went out of use, even with some slumping (the evidence for which seems inconclusive). It was not filled in and built in an area

of the site in which other spaces of the main building were reused intensively in all phases. Overall, the tendency to ascribe sub-phases of development to the whole site on the basis of the aqueduct system phases seems unpersuasive. In relation to parts of the site it is possible to define more sub-phases than de Vaux or others have suggested (Taylor and Wagemakers 2011), but these may be the result of regular redesign and upkeep in different parts of the settlement at different times according to need, especially in regard to buttressing walls that had become unstable. It may be a sector-based approach is more helpful than a settlement-wide one.

Stacey's discussion of industrial activity at Qumran (pp. 52–65) is interesting, if speculative, and first published in this journal (Stacey 2008), though it veers off at one point into a proposal about the manufacture of reed coracles for which there is no evidence at all. It is indeed worthwhile to remember the seasonality not only of industries around the Dead Sea, and of agriculture in general in antiquity, but ultimately Stacey is determined to sever the scrolls from the site as a result of these proposals. The fact is that the scrolls were found at Qumran (in caves actually built into the plateau of the building occupation zone in 7Q-9Q), but the suggested evidence for tanning rests on pure hypothesis. Stacey prefers the hypothetical scenario to the actual archaeological evidence, stating '[a]s the industrial processes of Qumran were malodorous, it is unlikely that any scrolls were composed or copied in the polluted atmosphere where slaughter of animals and the use of dung and urine in processing their by-products would have rendered all present ritually impure' (p. 63), apparently forgetting his own argument about the seasonality of such industries at Qumran, which would allow tanning only in winter and spring. He sees the scrolls as *genizot* from Jerusalem and Jericho, without any specifically sectarian links. Stacey then suggests a scenario in which the site of Qumran must be detached from the scrolls and the Essenes, staffed by Herod's slaves, again on the basis of no evidence at all, though he acknowledges there might have been 'Essene quartermasters' (p. 67): a strange proposal given that Essenes rejected slavery (Philo, *Prob.* 79; Josephus, *Ant.* 18:21).

What one is left with in the end is a decent observation on seasonality, some possible industries and a fair discussion of how some key developments in the water system can be dated to the Herodian period. That the later water system required the engineering expertise of Herodian builders is also perfectly plausible, but it does not require a modification of the Qumran-Essene hypothesis (see Taylor 2012).

In the second essay ("The Sect of the Qumran Texts and its Leading Role in the Temple in Jerusalem During Much of the First Century BCE: Toward a New Framework for Understanding"), Gregory Doudna offers an ambitious

revision of the entire history of the texts and their authors. His starting-point is that nothing in the S (=Community Rule) texts implies opposition to the Jerusalem temple or priesthood: no calendrical dispute, no criticism of their combination of royal and high priestly offices. The sect of the Qumran texts in fact *was* the community of the Hasmonean high priests. D. offers in support a selection of other scholars' observations and develops his earlier work on the Nahum *pesher*, in whose depiction of the doomed king and the violent death of the Wicked Priest he now discerns Antigonus Mattathias, the last Hasmonean priest-king, executed in 37 BCE. The 'Teacher of Righteousness' is Hyrcanus II, whom he usurped but who was in power when most of the texts were composed—not a remote figure to the authors but living and/or recently deceased in the first century BCE, having been exiled in 40 BCE and finally executed under Herod in 30 BCE.

The D (= 'Damascus') texts represent a rewriting of S, and relate to after the career of the Teacher, while descriptions of the 'Essenes' relate to a yet later stage in the history of the groups. Doudna's thesis thus supports Stacey in suggesting that Qumran developed as an outpost in the Herodian era. Doudna's historicist focus on identifiable historical characters and events represents a return to an agenda familiar from decades ago, and one abandoned for sound reasons. But several of the arguments here are deserving of serious consideration in the still unresolved quest for the origins of the Qumran libraries and the histories of their authors. Doudna's piece is thus interesting and well-written, providing a fresh perspective that will undoubtedly stimulate further debate.

Gideon Avni's discussion of the cemetery is also a very good review, clearly presented. The point he makes is there is actually nothing very distinctive about the Qumran shaft graves in regard to their morphology: '[s]imple shaft graves of the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine periods similar to those in Qumran have been discovered in many sites, and they are widespread, along with other types, in the cemeteries of the big cities along the coastal plain' (p. 128); they are also found in nomad populations of the deserts, including modern Bedouin. The orientation of the graves provides no chronological indicator. The gender ratio is not that unusual, which 'contradicts the interpretation of Qumran as a monastic site where only men dwelled' (p. 129), while the minimal number of child skeletons may be a result of seasonality. The question of the dating of the skeletons does still remain crucial, however, and Avni does not quite follow through on what he observes about the dating of some skeletons earlier or later than the settlement occupation periods (p. 127–8), meaning that one cannot really state categorically that the cemetery is inconsistent with a period of occupation of Essene settlement, given that Josephus knows of both unmarried and married Essenes (i.e. we need to understand that

there were male and female people within the category of 'Essenes,' *War* 2:160–161). In addition, if the site in the Second Temple period was initially founded by the Hasmoneans without Essene involvement, then there would have been a period in which a normative settlement was in existence, and invariably there were women in such outposts; this holds true for the post 68 CE scenario also. But Avni is surely right that we need to see the cemetery as much more than one linked with the site alone; frankly, Qumran is much too small to account for such a vast cemetery.

In Avni's view it was 'an attractive site for the desert population which frequented the area at various times' (p. 130). The trouble is that there is no evidence for a desert population roaming the area in Second Temple times, and the region was tightly administered: the comparable cemetery of Kh. Qazoun on the eastern shore of the Dead Sea served settled populations of towns and villages close by. Therefore, the template of a cemetery that functioned not only for its nearest settlement but for a wider region is established, and Avni makes it clear these can also be multi-ethnic, multi-religious, though again one wonders about periods of use. The later use of the Qumran cemetery past the time of the occupation of the settlement still needs further clarification, as does the issue of where the occupants of the Iron Age were buried.

One small error was spotted: in terms of the radiocarbon dating of the two women's skeletons in secondary burial in the small building at the eastern end of the middle finger of the main cemetery ('Burial 1000'): he cites 'Broshi and Eshel 2004' for the radiocarbon results when the citation should be Eshel, Broshi, Freund and Schultz 2002:151 n. 58. He states that they are from 'the third or second century BCE.' The results here are actually not reported very coherently, and quite easy to misinterpret, but the 2 sigma range of 95.4% probability (the best result to use) was 210–30 BCE, meaning that a date in the early 1st century BCE is appropriate, since in such ranges all possible dates are equally probable for the true one. This assumes, of course, that there really was enough carbon in the tooth for a secure radiocarbon date. Notwithstanding this, and the points of nuancing, this is an excellent and well-informed discussion.

The little site of Khirbet Qumran remains one of the most important and contentious in the region, because of its association with the Dead Sea Scrolls, and argument about its interpretation has been fierce. Any errors in analyses by scholars trying to understand the jigsaw puzzle of the remains can be the cause of condemnation, especially in terms of presentations that are speculative. Stacey does speculate, but this leads to some worthwhile ruminations about industries that need to be kept in mind for the future. In addition, I congratulate Stacey for trying his best to work with the material in order to argue for a different

chronology of the water system and identify other facets of the site, and clearly much hard work has gone into this book. It is a shame, then, that Stacey pushes things too far at times with groundless assertions, and can even dismiss alternative suggestions too glibly, even by apparent knowledge of Herod's 'character': 'Herod foresaw that, by the construction of a prestigious dam, the site [of Qumran] could become a cog in the extensive building programme which was so important to him' (p. 67). Such a fictionized Herod cannot be used for history. That the very modest site of Qumran could be viewed in any way as a cause of honour to Herod, to be classified with the palaces of Jericho, Masada, Machaerus or elsewhere, does not convince. Doudna and Avni, by contrast, show a refined, scholarly and discursive mode of writing with judicious assessments, and this book is to be read for their interesting studies as much as for Stacey's proposals.

Cargill, R.R. (2009). *Qumran through (Real) Time: A Virtual Reconstruction of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Piscataway, NJ).

Eshel, H., Broshi, M., Freund, R. and Schultz, B., (2002). 'New Data on the Cemetery East of Khirbet Qumran,' *Dead Sea Discoveries* 9:135–65.

Humbert, J.-B. and Chambon, A., (1994). *Fouilles de Khirbet Qumrân et de Ain Feshka I: Album de photographies. Répertoire du fonds photographiques. Synthèse des notes de chantier du Père Roland de Vaux* (Fribourg).

Ilan, Z. and Amit, D., (2002), 'The Aqueduct of Qumran.' Pp. 380–86 in D. Amit, J. Patrich and Y. Hirschfeld (eds.), *The Aqueducts of Israel* (Portsmouth, RI).

Milik, J.T., (1959). *Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judea* (London).

Netzer, E. and Gabrecht, G., (2002). 'Water Channels and a Royal Estate of the Late Hellenistic Period in Jericho's Western Plains.' Pp. 367–79 in D. Amit, J. Patrich and Y. Hirschfeld (eds.), *The Aqueducts of Israel* (Portsmouth, RI).

Stacey, D., (2008). 'Seasonal Industries at Qumran,' *BAIAS* 26:7–29.

Taylor, J.E., (2012). *The Essenes, the Scrolls and the Dead Sea* (Oxford).

Wagemakers, B. and Taylor, J.E., (2011). 'New Photographs of the Qumran Excavations from 1954 and Interpretations of L.77 and L.86,' *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 143:134–56.

Joan E. Taylor
King's College, London
Philip R. Davies
University of Sheffield

Peter Alpass, *The Religious Life of Nabataea.* Religions in the Graeco-Roman World, 175. Leiden: Brill, 2013. Pp. xvi + 256, incl. 56 illustrations. €134.00/$174.00. ISBN:978–9-00–419051–1.

In this book, which is based on the author's PhD thesis (Durham University, 2011), Peter Alpass attempts to provide a new study of the religion of the

Nabataeans by emphasising the variety of religious practices and beliefs across the territory they controlled from the 4th century BCE until the Roman annexation of Provincia Arabia in 106 CE. As stated in the introduction to the volume (Ch. 1), his work aims to explore whether 'we can discern any coherent religious system at play that is distinctive to the Nabataean kingdom' (p. 8). Faced with the vast and disparate body of evidence (epigraphic, historical, iconographical and archaeological) pertaining to the religious life of Nabataea, Alpass employs a geographical approach with a focus on the local experience of the worshippers (p. 8). Thus, the following five chapters each deals with a different urban centre or region of the Nabataean kingdom (Ch. 2: Petra; Ch. 3: Hegra; Ch. 4: the Negev; Ch. 5: the Hauran; Ch. 6: central Nabataea, i.e. Khirbet Tannur, Khirbet Dharih and Dhat Ras) with a survey of the key material in its context.

This methodology, he claims, is what distinguishes his work from the fundamental monograph of John Healey, *The Religion of the Nabataeans: a Conspectus* (Brill, 2001), which categorises the material according to the different deities and, according to Alpass, downplays variety at the expense of seeking a coherent religious system (p. 5). However, while Alpass' work presents an intelligible and readable synthesis of the local religious traditions at play within the Nabataean kingdom, and an exploration of the problems of defining a specifically 'Nabataean' religion, one is left with the impression that what we have here is a rehashing of the material that has already been superbly examined by Healey just a decade ago. Furthermore, in an effort to differ from previous scholarly approaches and to emphasise variety at the regional level, Alpass' work may even be said to run the risk of downplaying the importance of what may be the so-called 'Nabataean' elements of the evident religious practices.

In his conclusion (Ch. 7), he rightly asserts that three key aspects emerge as consistent throughout the Nabataean kingdom: the aniconic tradition of representing the gods, ritual feasting and the prominence of the god Dushara. Since the former two practices are also common to the Near East and Mediterranean area in general, he concludes that it is the combination of the three aspects that expresses a distinctly Nabataean identity (p. 238). At this point, it would have been fruitful to explore how the individual elements were interpreted by the Nabataeans, which ultimately resulted in a recognisably 'Nabataean' form and appearance–seen, for example, in the particular arrangement and design of the rock-cut triclinia at Petra and the 'idol blocks' (i.e. betyls). Nevertheless, Alpass insists on the lack of 'uniformity of religious practice throughout Nabataea' and the existence of many different religious traditions in the kingdom (pp. 239–240), a conclusion that is to be expected when

one focuses on the local level of religious experience.

With Alpass' PhD thesis previously accessible online (Durham e-Theses), readers will notice that in fact very little has been modified for publication, and the majority of the chapters are reproduced almost word for word. Thus, the book regrettably has the character of a thesis (for e.g. the catalogue of inscriptions at the end of Ch. 2: pp. 88–109 and the detailed footnotes). In addition, despite the hiatus between the defence of the thesis and its publication, the bibliography has not been updated–with the latest references dating no later than 2010. This is unfortunate, because since then several new and important volumes have been published that include articles on Nabataean religion (for e.g. Nehmé & Wadeson 2012; Blome *et al*. 2012; Kiraz and al-Salameen 2012) as well as reports on recent archaeological fieldwork (for e.g. Robert Wenning's work on the Petra Niches Project and Laurent Tholbecq's surveys on Jabal Numeir and Jabal Khubthah). The recent appearance of Judith McKenzie's volumes on the important sanctuary at Khirbet Tannur (2013), while obviously too late to be incorporated into Alpass' work, are also a rich source of new material pertaining to Nabataean religious practices and could have been utilised to provide a better scope to his work.

There are abundant images provided in this monograph, but many have been produced at a low quality and in fact appear in Healey's 2001 volume at a higher resolution. Unfortunately, Alpass has also relied on old plans of Dalman, several of which are inaccurate and have since been updated. In this volume, Alpass displays a good grasp of the material and manages to present it clearly and coherently, as well as exploring current issues and debates concerning the topic. For this reason, his work may prove useful as an introductory text book for students. Unfortunately, it provides scholarship with little in the way of new insights and does not radically change our view of religion in the Nabataean world.

Blome, P., Schmid, S., and Nimry, F. eds. (2012). *Sheikh Ibrahim and Petra 1812–2012, Exhibition Volume* (Basel).

Kiraz, G., and al-Salameen, Z., eds. (2012). *From Ugarit to Nabataea: Studies in Honor of John F. Healey* (Piscataway, NJ).

McKenzie, J. et al. (2013). *The Nabataean Temple at Khirbet et-Tannur, Jordan,* Vols. 1 & 2 (Boston).

Nehmé L., and Wadeson L., eds. (2012). *The Nabataeans in Focus: Current Archaeological Research at Petra* (Oxford).

Lucy Wadeson
Université Libre de Bruxelles

Manfred Weippert, *Götterwort in Menschenmund: Studien zur Prophetie in Assyrien, Israel und Juda*. Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments, 252. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014. Pp. 304. €84.99. ISBN 978–3-525–53613–1.

For many decades the second millennium BCE prophetic texts from Mari have been the subject of intense study and comparison with the Hebrew Bible. Before 1997, however, when Simo Parpola published an edition with English translation, the prophetic texts from the reigns of the 7th century Neo-Assyrian kings Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal were almost ignored in biblical scholarship. Although they were contemporary with several of the biblical prophets, only a few sporadic attempts were made to study them; following initial efforts in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they appear to have been almost completely forgotten until the 1970s. Nowadays, by contrast, they are included as standard in all studies of the biblical prophets.

Manfred Weippert, a senior scholar from Heidelberg, was one of the first to draw renewed attention to these texts' importance. Although he began work on them as early as 1971, when few even recognized them as prophetic, and when they were just referred to as 'oracles' without further discussion, his first main publication to deal with them directly dates from 1981. That extended paper and seven others dating down to 2002 are usefully collected here; some are well known but others were published in obscure, and in two cases even 'private' publications, so that few scholars will be aware of the complete corpus. An appendix and postscript are added as new material.

In addition to introducing this material to readers, so that there is an inevitable degree of overlap between some of the papers, Weippert was particularly interested in the form and genre of these texts, and he also had a good eye in consequence for some of the features which they often shared in common. Among these he noted in particular the saying to the Assyrian kings 'do not fear' and the way in which the divinity was introduced as 'I am X.' These two features led him (correctly) to identify the closest parallels in the biblical prophets with Isaiah 40–55, usually thought to have been written in Babylon during the exilic period, not very long after the Neo-Assyrian prophecies which have survived. There too we find frequent use of the 'fear not' formula, which Weippert therefore argues is not likely to have been part of a priestly oracle, as had often been previously thought, and also the characteristic divine self-presentation as 'I am the Lord.'

Apart from the value of having this pioneering research so conveniently collected (and indeed, one or two of the papers deserve to be regarded as classics), Weippert has also taken the sensible decision not to attempt to update them (though they are now attractively printed to a standard format). While some reviewers have the habit

of regretting that older work has not been revised, I share with Weippert the view that these essays played their important part in the history of biblical research at the time they were written and in the state of knowledge which then prevailed. Research has moved on since then, not least because of his work (and also because of the wider familiarity of the material following Parpola's edition), so that an update would have been misleading. Rather, he sensibly reserves his current contribution to the two new elements—an appendix which gives a German translation of the texts which Parpola edited and then a postscript of nearly 20 pages with interesting comments on several topics. First, he outlines the course of his own engagement with the material and the circumstances in which he studied it; second, he discusses the definition of 'prophecy,' a subject which crops up in several of his earlier papers and on which there has been considerable discussion since; third, he surveys some recent discussions on the second millennium material, and finally he reflects at greater length on more recent work on the Neo-Assyrian material.

On this latter topic, he correctly observes that most recent attention has shifted to a proposal that the slightly earlier 8th century prophets (Amos, Hosea, and the first part of Isaiah), usually considered to be primarily prophets of judgment, should be seen rather, like their Neo-Assyrian counterparts, as offering words of support and encouragement to the kings of Israel and Judah, with the judgment oracles added only later in the light of bitter historical experience. Weippert notes that not everyone agrees with these new proposals and he leaves the subject undecided. To those he lists in his concluding footnote, the present reviewer might add his own recent essay on this subject in relation to Isaiah in R. P. Gordon and H. M. Bartsad (eds.), *"Thus Speaks Ishtar of Arbela": Prophecy in Israel, Assyria, and Egypt in the Neo-Assyrian Period* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 273–300. In my opinion, Weippert was much nearer the mark when he found the genuine parallels in Isaiah 40–55 and that the speculations which radically revise previous opinions of earlier prophets fail to take a number of other important considerations into account. It is much to be hoped, therefore, that this welcome publication will help to restore a proper balance to this important source of comparative data for the study of the Hebrew prophets.

H. G. M. Williamson
Southwold, Suffolk

Adam Zertal (ed.), *El-Ahwat, A Fortified Site from the Early Iron Age Near Nahal 'Iron, Israel: Excavations 1993–2000.* Culture and History of the Ancient Near East 24. Leiden: Brill, 2012. Pp. xix + 485 incl. illustrations and maps. €125. 00/$185.00. ISBN:978–9-00417–645–4.

Adam Zertal, editor of this volume and director of the excavations at El-Ahwat, studied archaeology at Tel Aviv University's Institute of Archaeology. That institute stressed the value of archaeological surveying, and Zertal belongs to the generation of students (along with Yehuda Dagan, Israel Finkelstein, Rafi Frankel, Zvi Gal, Zvi Lederman, and Avi Ofer) of Moshe Kochavi and others that continued that tradition for some forty years. Zertal's area was Manasseh, or northern Samaria. One can confidently state that nobody knows the archaeology of this area better than he does. His life-long investment of time and effort has resulted in several impressive publications, the most recent being Zertal 2004 and 2008. Most of Zertal's excavations stem from this survey, and this was the case of El-Ahwat, the most extensive of his excavations. The volume reviewed here is the final report of that excavation.

The text is divided into four main sections (following a brief introduction): stratigraphy, architecture and chronology according to areas (pp. 21–177); the finds (181–309); economy and environment (313–407); and conclusions (411–435). A bibliography (436–468) and locus list (469–485) follow. One might wonder why it was decided to put stone objects (313–328) and Ottoman pipes (402– 407) under 'economy and environment' and not under 'finds.' Yes, stone objects shed light on economy and environment, but on the other hand, so do the coins (301–309), which are under 'finds.' The introductory material, stratigraphy and conclusions were written by Zertal and staff members of the excavation; the remaining chapters were written by both staff members and invited specialists.

The stratigraphy/architecture/chronology section provides a fairly straightforward discussion of what is, more or less, a single-period (Iron Age I) site partially covered by later material. What is commendable is that the interpretations of the architecture are presently separately from the basic descriptions. One can take issue with some interpretations presented, however. Is there enough evidence to claim that Complex 100 was the Egyptian governor's house (78–80, 434)? Is the city wall indicative of nuraghic (Sardinian) influence brought to the Levant by Shardana (one of the Sea-Peoples) mercenaries? Does it even date to the Iron Age (see below)? Is there evidence for two phases within the Iron I to complement the earlier and later pottery assemblages argued for in the pottery chapter?

The pottery chapter is a competently written typological study. It paints a picture, however, of not such a short-lived site as argued by Zertal and Brandl

(262–263) but rather one that has an early (beginning in the late 13th century) and a late (11th century or so, into Iron IB) phase (200). Two problems arise when one wishes to deal with the pottery in detail. One is the lack of quantitative details (how many of each type), the other the lack of stratigraphic details. Which types occur together? Do some occur in earlier contexts and others in later ones? Would it not be important, for example, to know how many CP1–2 examples, which are transitional LB/Iron I in date, were identified in comparison with CP3–5, which are Iron I? Or if they were found together? Two small points: (1) the possible identification of a krater rim sherd as being Sardinian, as previously suggested by Zertal (Fig. 12.7:2) is not argued in the text; on the contrary, it is thought to be local (426); (2) what the authors call loom weights (i.e., pierced ceramic disks; p. 200 and Fig. 12.14:5–7) might be spindle whorls, but they are certainly not loom weights.

I have few specific comments regarding the non-ceramic finds. Baruch Brandl's detailed study of the scarabs, seals, etc. (233–263) is crucial for the discussion of the chronology of the site (see below). That 89 beads were found (Jack Green, 264–287) in non-funerary contexts supports Green's theory that they were manufactured on-site (280). The ivory caprid head (288–294) is an exceptionally lovely piece. It should be pointed out that the parallel provided from Stratum 7b at Tel Ashdod dates to the 8th century and not "early Iron Age" (p. 292). For completeness-sake I mention here an unpublished parallel identical to the one from Tel Ashdod that was excavated at Tel Dover (southern Golan, on the bank of the Yarmuk River). Oren Cohen's contribution on a bronze linchpin adds another exceptional find; a more recent discussion of the parallel from Ashkelon can be found in Stager 2006.

The analysis of the faunal evidence is only partially represented (fish and shells) in this volume. The main report is missing. Assuming that the faunal specialist did not meet the publication deadline, Zertal could have decided to publish the abstract from a lecture presented at a conference held at Haifa in December 1997 (Kolska-Horwitz 1997) which summarized the results of the faunal analysis—better that than nothing. This abstract briefly describes a rather typical assemblage, one dominated by sheep and goat, followed by cattle. Especially telling in that abstract is the concluding sentence: 'These results indicate that the patterns of animal exploitation, characteristic of many Sardinian Nuragic sites, were not practiced at El-Ahwat.' The fish remains are presented by Omri Lernau (362–369). Lernau laments that there are 'only' 50 bones that could be identified taxonomically (362), but that number comprises, to my knowledge, the largest collection from an inland Iron I site in the country. That 36 of these bones were of Nile perch adds to our perception of the volume of trade between Egypt and the Levant in Iron I.

All of the discussions in this volume are competently written and provide the reader with the basic knowledge necessary to understand the excavation results. Readers may agree or disagree with some of Zertal's theories. One might have hoped for him to have tackled Finkelstein's (2002) stratigraphic and chronological criticisms head-on; instead he chose to avoid mentioning them (The reference to Finkelstein 2002 is mentioned only once in the book, in Brandl's chapter on the glyptic finds.) Several questions remain open for future debate. One is the chronological debate. Should one eschew the 14C dates, as Zertal does, in favor of the ceramic and glyptic finds? Or should one rely on the 14C dates and date the ceramics a bit later, into the Megiddo VIA horizon (Finkelstein and Piasetzky 2007)? In this reviewer's opinion, it should not be an either–or situation. Rather, two occupational phases need to be recognized; one, to include the early pottery and glyptic finds (late LB/early Iron I), the other the later Iron IB or 11th/early 10th centuries (i.e., Megiddo St. VIA horizon), which would accommodate the 14 C dates and the flanged-rim cooking pots presented in the pottery chapter. Should one accept the interpretation of nuraghic influence in the ethnic makeup of the site's population? If one removes the pottery and the animal bones from the discussion (see above), then one is left only with the features associated with the city wall. If one accepts Finkelstein's theory that the so-called city wall was a terrace wall system built in the Roman period, then Zertal's theory is bereft of evidence.

Readers can accept or reject Zertal's theories. In the end, however, they should welcome the appearance of this final report, which provides all with a basis upon which to make such judgments. Unfortunately, the high price for this volume will prohibit most scholars from purchasing their own personal copy.

Finkelstein, I., (2002). 'El-Ahwat: A Fortified Sea People City?' *Israel Exploration Journal* 52:187–199.

Finkelstein, I. and Piasetzky, E., (2007). 'Radiocarbon Dating and Philistine Chronology with an Addendum on el-Ahwat.' *Ägypten und Levante* 17:73–82.

Kolska-Horwitz, L., (1997). 'The Fauna from El-Ahwat and the Economy of the Site.' Unpublished abstract of lecture presented at West and East: Connections between the Western and Eastern Mediterranean in the End of the Late Bronze and the Beginning of the Iron Age—New Evidence (Colloquium, 10–12 December 1997, University of Haifa).

Stager, L.E., (2006). 'Chariot Fittings from Philistine Ashkelon.' Pp. 169–176 in S. Gitin, J.E. Wright and J.P. Dessel (eds.), *Confronting the Past: Archaeological and Historical Essays on Ancient Israel in Honor of William G. Dever* (Winona Lake, IN).

Zertal, A., (2004). *The Manasseh Hill Country Survey I: The Shechem Syncline* (Boston).

Zertal, A., (2008). *The Manasseh Hill Country Survey II: The Eastern Valleys and the Fringes of the Desert* (Leiden and Boston).

Samuel Wolff
Israel Antiquities Authority

Books Received

James H. Charlesworth, (ed.), *The Tomb of Jesus and His Family? Exploring Ancient Jewish Tombs Near Jerusalem's Walls*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2013. Pp. 605. $48.00. ISBN:978–0-80286–745–2.

Claire Clivaz, Andrew Gregory and David Hamidovic (eds.), *Digital Humanities in Biblical, Early Jewish and Early Christian Studies*. Scholarly Communication Series 2. Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 2014. €110,00/$142.00. Pp. 260. ISBN:978–9-00426–432–8.

Shimon Gibson, Yoni Shapira, Rupert L. Chapman III (eds.), *Tourists, Travellers and Hotels in 19th-Century Jerusalem*. Palestine Exploration Fund Annuals, 11. Maney Publications, 2013. Pp. 304. £48.00. ISBN:978–1-907975–28–8.

Rachel Hachlili, *Ancient Synagogues-Archaeology and Art: New Discoveries and Current Research*. Handbook of Oriental Studies. Section 1 The Near and Middle East, 105. Leiden: Brill, 2013. €218.00/$22.00. ISBN:978–9-00425–773–3.

Ya'akov Meshorer with Gabriela Bijovsky and Wolfgang Fischer-Bossert, *Coins of the Holy Land: The Abraham and Marian Sofaer Collection at the American Numismatic Society and the Israel Museum.* Ancient Coins in North American Collections 8. USA: American Numismatic Society, 2013. 2 vols, Pp. 344 + 244. $190.00. ISBN:978–0-89722–283–9.

John R. Spencer, Robert A. Mullins and Aaron J. Brody (eds.), *Material Culture Matters: Essays on The Archaeology of the Southern Levant in Honor of Seymour Gitin.* Winona Lake, Indiana: Published on behalf of the W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeology by Eisenbrauns, 2014. Pp.xxii + 321, incl, b/w illustrations. $59.50. ISBN:978–1-57506–298–3.

Astrid Swenson and Peter Mandler (eds.), *From Plunder to Preservation: Britain and the Heritage of Empire, c.1800–1940*. Proceedings of the British Academy, 187. Oxford: Published for the British Academy by Oxford University Press, 2013. Pp. 304 incl. illustrations, facsimiles and maps. £70.00. ISBN:978–0-19726–541–3.

Bart Wagemakers (ed.), *Archaeology in the 'Land of Tells and Ruins': A History of Excavations in the Holy Land Inspired by the Photographs and Accounts of Leo Boer*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2014. Pp xiv + 264, incl. b/w and col. illustrations. £49.95. ISBN:978–1-78297–245–7.

Lecture Summaries

CHRISTIAN AND JEWISH TOMBSTONES FROM ANCIENT ZOARA/ZOORA

ILARIA BULTRIGHINI
University College London

The biblical town of Zoar, referred to as Zoora in a 6th-century CE map, is located near modern Ghor es-Safi, by the southeastern shore of the Dead Sea in Jordan. Regular and illegal archeological excavations which took place in the 1980s and 1990s on the site brought to light an impressive number of Greek and Aramaic stone epitaphs dating to the 4th–6th centuries CE. Gravestones inscribed in Greek belong to Christian burials, while the fewer stones inscribed in Aramaic can be attributed to Jewish burials. This is a major discovery, not only because these texts are of exceptional quality and unusual character, but also for their sheer number: the corpus of newly-discovered epitaphs from Zoara/Zoora comprises 386 Greek and ca. 50 Aramaic inscriptions, more than can be found in most of the cities or towns in the Roman Near East.

THE PROMONTORY PALACE AT CAESAREA MARITIMA, ISRAEL

BARBARA BURRELL
University of Cincinnatti, USA

The Promontory Palace is one of very few Hellenistic palaces integrated into the structure of a major city whose remains are substantially preserved. It was built as a vital part of Herod the Great's newly founded city of Caesarea, on one of the largest artificial harbours ever constructed in the ancient world. This lecture shed light on the building's functions, its place in the urban structure of the city, and its relations to cities and palaces founded by Herod elsewhere in Judaea. In addition, the Palace's subsequent history as the Praetorium of the province's governors shows how subsequent Roman rulers adapted rulers' palaces as instruments of their own dominion.

LOOKING FOR WOMEN AT QUMRAN

ESTHER G CHAZON
Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Were there women in the sectarian community at Qumran? This question was virtually inconceivable during the first forty years of research following the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947. In those years the Scrolls and the Qumran site were interpreted as an ascetic, celibate, "monastic" community by the small coterie of scholars who had access to the finds, among them members of monastic orders. The public pressure for open access to the Scrolls that reached a crescendo in 1990 resulted in the expansion of the international team of editors and their publication of all 940 scrolls within about a decade. This in turn led to a revolution in scholars' understanding of the Qumran community, its library, its place in the socio-historical context of the Second Temple period, and its relevance for Judaism (and early Christianity) after the Temple's destruction. One of most dramatic changes has come vis à vis the question of women at Qumran. Today many scholars see the presence of women in the sectarian writings and at the Qumran site, and now ask not merely "Were there women at Qumran?" but "How prevalent were women at Qumran? Were they full members of the community? What roles did they assume?" The lecture addressed these questions by presenting the relevant archaeological and textual evidence including the skeletal remains from the cemetery, the penal code from the Cave 4 copy of the Damascus Document, the Rule of the Congregation, and the so-called "Marriage Ritual."

THE ARK BEFORE NOAH: THE TABLET AND THE BOOK

IRVING FINKEL
British Museum

This talk discussed the Babylonian cuneiform tablet which was brought, unread, to the British Museum by Douglas Simmonds, and turned out to be a new piece of the famous Babylonian Flood Story, with astonishing new information about what the Babylonian Ark looked like, what was needed to build it, and even how the animals were to go on board. This illustrated talk will explain some of the remarkable contents of the tablet and what its decipherment finally led to: a documentary film (nearly completed) and a book (finished and published), showing how life as a British Museum curator can become at any moment a matter of volcanic excitement.

THE QUEST FOR KING DAVID: NEW LIGHT FROM KHIRBET QEIYAFA

YOSSI GARFINKEL
Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Khirbet Qeiyafa is a massive fortified city located on the summit

of a hill overlooking the Elah Valley. This is a key strategic location in the biblical Kingdom of Judah, on the main road connecting Philistia and the Coastal Plain to Jerusalem and Hebron in the hill country. Professor Garfinkel's excavations have unearthed, for the first time in the archaeological research of Israel, a fortified city in Judah from the late 11th to early 10th centuries BCE. This dating is based on radiometric dating from Oxford University. The urban planning, food habits, administration and cult are all different from the finds in Philistine or Canaanite sites, and from sites in the northern Kingdom of Israel. The site exhibits typical elements known only in the Kingdom of Judah, and demonstrates that these characteristics had already been developed in the time of King David.

ARCHAEOLOGY IN JERUSALEM IN THE 1920s: COLONIALISM, HISTORY AND THE IMAGE OF GOD IN ANCIENT ISRAEL

GARTH GILMOUR
Oxford University

The Palestine Exploration Fund's excavations in Jerusalem from 1923 to 1925 were initiated with much expectation. The senior figure of the PEF's recent past, Professor RAS Macalister, was appointed to head up the project, and he was joined by Rev. J. Garrow Duncan, a Scottish priest with some archaeological experience in Egypt. However, the results of the dig were disappointing, Macalister left after just a few months, there was conflict with the local workers, and the Silwani villagers objected to the excavation. What went wrong, and why? In addition to attempting to explain the difficulties surrounding the project, some of the many significant items from the Bronze Age through to the Ottoman period will be presented and discussed. Arguably the most important of the finds from the dig is a small sherd from the 7th century BC with the carved image of two deity figures, possibly the God of Israel and his consort Asherah. The sherd's significance for our understanding of early Israelite religion will be considered.

SEAL IMPRESSIONS AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUDAH DURING THE TIME OF THE FIRST TEMPLE

YUVAL GOREN
Tel Aviv University

Judahite papyri are not preserved in the archaeological record and the information contained in them has been lost. The bullae which once sealed these documents form the only existing evidence of a rich writing tradition that existed during the Iron Age. This lecture presented the results of a technological study of Judahite bullae from controlled

excavations in Jerusalem and elsewhere. Determination of the provenance of the bullae sheds light on the administrative system and the political and economic structure of the kingdom of Judah during its final days. It also has some implications for the authenticity of several landmark bullae which have surfaced in the antiquities market during the last four decades.

CALENDARS AND DATING FORMULAS IN JEWISH DOCUMENTS FROM THE CAVES OF REFUGE IN THE JUDEAN DESERT

DR HELEN JACOBUS
University College London

What kind of calendars were used by Jewish communities in the first and early second century in Judea and the surrounding areas? The lecture focussed on the dates and dating formulas used in legal documents found in the Cave of Letters in Nahal Hever, Wadi Murabbaʿât and other sites, many of which were hidden inside caves during the Second Jewish Revolt and in earlier periods. They include some with the names of Roman emperors, and others with revolutionary dating formulas, and the name of Bar Kokhba. Many deeds concern the personal and business lives of women. The lecture traced the surprising calendrical pattern which is to be found in most of these documents.

COPPER, CRISES AND THE BIRTH OF KINGS: WHAT HAPPENED IN THE EARLY IRON AGE?

BRUCE ROUTLEDGE
University of Liverpool

High precision radiocarbon dating has revolutionized our understanding of the early Iron Age in the Southern Levant. So far, debate has focused mainly on whether radiocarbon dates undermine the correlations traditionally drawn between archaeological finds and biblical narratives relating to the United Monarchy of Saul, David and Solomon. However, this focus has failed to realize the potential of radiocarbon dating for writing new narratives of archaeological events which are independent of the Bible. In this lecture Dr. Routledge discussed how new dates from archaeological sites in Jordan, Israel and Palestine suggest wide-spread social and economic changes across the Southern Levant early in the tenth century B.C.E. These changes suggest an interesting new narrative of how and why kingdoms emerged in this region at the end of the early Iron Age.

MODELLING IRON AGE AND OLDER SOCIETIES: WORKING WITH 19th CENTURY TRIBAL POLITICS

EVELINE VAN DER STEEN
Liverpool University

For as long as we know Near Eastern society has been fundamentally tribal. Its social structure, political institutions, and economy have always been embedded in tribal frameworks. These days tribes are often marginalized, on the edge of society, or politically incorporated in local and national governments. It is hard to imagine what a fully tribal society looked like before the age of globalization. In the 19th century the situation was very different. Then, travellers in the region had to negotiate with powerful tribes, such as the Anaze or the Beni Sakhr, who controlled political and economical networks. Protection schemes involving smaller tribes, villages and towns, competed with each other for territorial control. Many explorers felt they had stepped straight into the world of the Bible. Many of the explorers and travellers described their experiences in books, articles and letters. While essentially western in their outlook, they were often captivated by the simplicity of desert life, finding eternal truths and values in tribal laws and customs. A direct comparison between these 19th century tribal networks and the Bronze or Iron Ages in the Levant must be treated with caution. Nevertheless, documents from those periods show that there are marked similarities, in social and economic organisation, in territorial and power structures. In the 19th century, like in the past, tribes could gain power and develop into states under a strong leader. The tribal state of Hayil on the Arabian peninsula developed out of a tribal confederation, under a strong leader. The narrative cycle of David in the Old Testament, has strong similarities with recent tribal epics, and portrays David as a heroic tribal leader. These comparisons throw light on life in a tribal society, such as it may have been in the time of the Canaanites and Israelites.

Reports from Jerusalem

REPORT 55
NOVEMBER 2013

Neolithic Beads and Figurines from Western Galilee

A large agricultural settlement extending over 20 hectares (50 acres) has been uncovered at Ein Zippori in the western Galilee. It is related to the Wadi Rabah culture that prevailed in Israel in the sixth to fifth millennia BCE, and collections of decorative beads in a large basin and ostrich images and figurines were found and demonstrated to the Press. The site excavators claim that these and other items are evidence of an early agricultural economy with extensive trade links.

Neanderthals and Homo Sapiens Interbred in Carmel

At the Nahal Me'arot caves in the Carmel range, recently granted UNESCO Heritage status, archaeologists have found tools of both Neanderthals and Homo Sapiens in close proximity. Daniel Kaufmann, working at the site, claims that the interbreeding of the two species, which genetic research has suggested existed in non-aggressive mating between the two sub-species, took place at this site where there is evidence of peaceful living side by side as early as 80,000 years ago.

Human Remains in Deep Well in The Jezreel Valley

In an emergency excavation preceding the enlargement of a junction at Enot Nisanit on Road 66 in the western Jezreel Valley, archaeologists from the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) have uncovered a well approximately 8m deep x 1.3m in diameter. The large diameter was reduced by two capstones set over the mouth. At the bottom of the well were found skeletal remains of a young woman and an older man of thirty or forty years of age. The excavation director, Yotam Tepper, thinks the water became undrinkable after the bodies had fallen into the well, and many romantic suggestions have been made as to why the two skeletons were found here together. The well shaft also contained remains of animal bones, charcoal and other organic materials which have enabled the finds, including the human bones, to be dated to the early Neolithic period, about 8,500 years ago. A

deep well of this early period is unique in Israel, according to Dr. Omri Barzilai of the IAA Prehistoric Branch, and indicates the population's impressive knowledge of the hydrology of the area and their ability to work together to undertake such a considerable community project.

REPORT 56
DECEMBER 2013

Cuneiform Tablets to be Returned to Iraq

Nearly ten thousand cuneiform tablets will be returned to Iraq by Cornell University. The tablets date from the 4th millennium BCE and later, and are suspected to have been looted from Iraq, which has demanded their return. They were donated to the university by a collector who bought them on the market seven years ago, and they have been preserved, photographed and published over the last few years by scholars at the university, which has now agreed to return them to Iraq museum in Baghdad. The university acknowledges that there may be concerns about the safety of the tablets, but has stated that "the Iraq Museum seems to be secure at this point". The tablets include the private records of a Sumerian princess of Garsana, who administered her husband's estate after his death, who gave equal rights and wages to women, and allowed them to direct male workers on building projects. Other tablets record details of temple rituals, the treatment of refugees and the yields of agricultural products.

Climatic Changes at the end of the Late Bronze Age

A study conducted by Dafna Langgut and published in the Journal of the Tel Aviv Institute of Archaeology shows that there was a great climatic change in the period of 1250-1100 BCE, that may have accounted for the upheavals in the civilizations of the Eastern Mediterranean, in Egypt, Greece, Crete, Syria and in Israel, where the first monarchy was established. The study was based on core samples taken from deep under the Kinneret, Sea of Galilee, in 18m. long cores containing fossil grains of pollen, which Langgut claims is the most enduring organic material in nature. The pollen was blown into the water and the particles show details of the vegetation that grew around the lake and the climatic conditions of the period. The study was conducted together with Prof. Israel Finkelstein of Tel Aviv University, Prof. Thomas Litt of Bonn University and Prof. Mordechai Stein of Hebrew University. Prof. Finkelstein notes that this pollen study had a frequency of every forty years, as compared to other pollen studies of only every several hundred

years, which may have missed the changes now revealed. The results correlate with text records of drought and famine in locations from Anatolia to Egypt.

Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) Arrests Looter

Uzi Rotstein of the IAA Theft Prevention Unit reported the arrest of one of a group of six illegal metal-detector operators who were looting Byzantine coins at a site in the Nahal Sorek basin in the Judean hills. Excavating an ancient site without a permit from the IAA is considered to be a criminal act that can result in a prison term of up to five years. Members of the Theft Prevention Unit are not police officers but carry small arms and have the right to make arrests.

Ancient Wine Cellar Unearthed at Tel Kabri

At Tel Kabri, 3 km. east of Naharia, archaeologists have unearthed a large wine cellar dated to 1700 BCE. It was part of a luxurious palace and estate that may have belonged to a rich northern Canaanite ruler. The find amounted to forty plain 1 m. high storage jars and is one of the largest wine cellars ever found. By residue analysis, the excavators, Eric Cline of George Washington University, Andrew Koh of Brandeis University and Assaf Yasur-Landau of Haifa University, showed that the wine, both red and white, was flavoured with honey, juniper, mint, cinnamon and myrtle. The cellar was about 5 x 8 m. and adjacent to a large banqueting hall, both of which may have been destroyed by earthquake. At the end of the dig, two doors were found leading out of the cellar, which will have to await examination until the next season in 2015.

Chalcolithic Village found near Beit Shemesh

Since 2004, archaeologists of the IAA have been exposing domestic remains on a site south of Beit Shemesh, alongside road 38, which is due to be widened. The finds include a building of the pre-pottery Neolithic period dated to about 8000 BCE, the oldest such structure to have been found in this country, according to Dr. Amir Golani, in charge of the dig. Other buildings of a later date were also uncovered, together with axes, flints and stone tools, which will be cleaned and preserved by the IAA at their nearby offices. Next to the oldest building was found a standing monolith (1.2m. high and weighing a quarter of a ton), that had been tooled on all six sides, which suggests it may have served a cultic function alongside the building.

Hasmonean Period Building in Jerusalem

A building of 64 sq. m. nearly 4m. high has been uncovered in the Givati parking area by the City of David, and dated to the Hasmonean period. According to Dr.

Doron Ben-Ami, one of the directors of the dig, this is the first evidence of a building of this period to be found in Jerusalem. Dating has been made easier by the discovery on the floor of over forty silver and bronze coins of the second century BCE, which are now being cleaned and will take another year, Ben-Ami said. Only part of the structure has been uncovered so far, but it is not domestic in nature and likely to have been a public building. It is hoped to find further evidence of the period as the dig proceeds.

REPORT 57
JANUARY 2014

Red Sea — Dead Sea Project

There has been considerable discussion recently in the press about the possibility of constructing a water link from the Gulf of Eilat to the southern end of the Dead Sea. The purpose of this scheme would be to stem the loss of water in the Dead Sea, which is dropping about one meter in height every year, The scheme would include considerable advantages in water supply to the Israelis, the Palestinians and the Jordanians, who all support the idea in theory, but it is ergonomically controversial and hugely costly. There are strong arguments on both sides. Whatever details, it would involve the construction of a canal or large pipeline between the two waterways and this would cause considerable damage to the area of the Negev involved, which in turn would require a very large number of rescue digs by archaeologists.

Removal of Jewish Relics from Temple Mount

There was a heated discussion in the Knesset at the end of December, initiated by Moshe Feiglin, who asserted that the Waqf, the Islamic supervisory body of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, was removing ancient timber beams, which he claimed dated back to the time of Solomon, from the site. He blamed the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) for lack of supervision, but in fact, the IAA has no responsibility for this area, designated as a Holy Site, over which only the Waqf and the Police have jurisdiction.

"Kedem Compound" Visitors' Centre Criticised

The Givati Parking Lot opposite the entrance to the City of David site is due to be developed as a visitors' centre in East Jerusalem. The approved plans have

been criticized by archaeologists because the development will completely cover the site, which was in the course of excavation and has revealed rich finds that are attributed to a possible palace of Queen Helena of Adiabene, who converted to Judaism and settled in Jerusalem in 1st century CE. Judging by the published illustration, the project is a massive one with a central pedestrian walkway flanked by four-storey construction each side to house meeting and exhibition rooms, lecture halls and offices. There will be underground parking levels which will destroy parts of the site, and the critics claim that the whole complex should have been planned on an open ground floor with pillars, that would have allowed access to the original structures below.

Excavations at Tel Hebron

Work started in early January on excavations at Tel Rumeida, ancient Hebron, where walls exist that date back to the period of Abraham and earlier, according to a recent press release by the IAA. The dig will continue works started in the 1960's which have revealed remains from the Early Bronze Age and all later periods up to the Islamic era. The excavations will be conducted by Emanuel Eisenberg of the IAA, who worked on the site 15 years ago and is now hoping to make finds, he says, that go back to the time of King David and earlier.

Ancient Pottery from a Galilee Basement

In mid-January the IAA made the surprising find of a large store of ancient pottery in the basement of a woman living in Poriya Illit in the lower Galilee. The lady, Osnat Lester, telephoned the IAA to announce that she had a basement full of pottery dredged up from the Mediterranean by a fisherman relative of her family, now deceased. The IAA sent two of its members and found a large number of boxes of intact vessels and large broken fragments, that they were able to date to the periods from the Biblical to the Roman ages. The vessels were used to carry wine, oils and various foodstuffs, and had been loaded on cargo ships which later sank at sea. The pottery was encrusted with seashells and ocean debris and sediment. This valuable find will be examined in detail and then prepared for public exhibition, according to Amir Ganon of the IAA, which will please the donor who had expressed the wish that it will not just be stored away but put on view so that her grandchildren would be able to view it. The IAA thanked Mrs. Lester for presenting this precious cargo of pottery to them and thereby donating it to the people of Israel as a whole.

REPORT 58
FEBRUARY 2014

Church Uncovered near Kiryat Gat

At the village of Aluma, just north-west of Kiryat Gat and beside the ancient road from Ashkelon to Jerusalem, the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) has discovered the remains of a Byzantine Church with excellent mosaics. The building is 22m long and 12 m. wide and is of the basilica type with a wide nave and narrow aisles. All three sections have floors covered in colourful mosaics laid out as forty medallions framed by vine tendrils, each medallion depicting an animal or botanical symbol and with the names of local church leaders Demetrios and Herakles. There is a large external entry courtyard floored in white mosaic with a panel giving the names of Mary and Jesus, and the local donor. The church is the only one of this period found in the area and the IAA suggest that it was the focus of Christianity in this vicinity. Also found nearby was a potter's workshop with remains of jugs and bowls, lamps and glass objects, indicating a rich local culture, according to Dr. Daniel Varga, director of the excavation. The mosaics will be removed for public display at a museum and the site covered back to preserve it.

Dead Sea Scrolls on Facebook

Since early December 2013, the IAA have put the Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital library on Facebook and made the thousands of fragments available free of charge to the public, in an improved format thanks to use of a unique camera developed for the purpose. The website is www.deadseascrolls.org.il. The upgraded website includes 10,000 new images, translations into Russian and German, and a faster search engine.

Ancient Well in Tel Aviv

In a salvage dig in the Ramat Hahayal area, a large Byzantine-era well, about 1,500 years old, has been uncovered. The mouth of the well is several meters wide and is an example of one that employed a donkey to draw water by means of clay vessels on a continual belt and discharge it into a nearby cistern or reservoir.

Metal Greek Statue from Gaza

A life-size bronze statue of a Greek god has been rescued from shallow waters by a Palestinian fisherman off the coast of Gaza. It weighs 500 kg and was hauled aboard his boat by four men, he says, and taken ashore on a cart because of its great weight. According to one expert it shows no sign of encrustation or barnacles and it is suspected to have been found on land, though not declared as such. The local

government of Hamas heard of it and ordered it to be taken into police custody, since when it has been kept from view, to the intense frustration of local scholars and archaeologists. One expert from the Ecole Biblique in Jerusalem is reported to have declared it to be priceless, very rare and virtually unique, but it should be noted that there are two life-size bronze statues in the Athens National Museum, which are called Poseidon and Paris. The Gaza statue has been dated to the fifth to first century BCE and dubbed Apollo, for reasons unknown.

Unesco Listing of Ancient Caves and Terraces

Israel has put forward to UNESCO for consideration at their next meeting in Doha in June, for the World Heritage List, the caves of Bet Guvrin and Maresha, southwest of Jerusalem. The caves belong to ancient cities that were inhabited from the time of the Edomites to the Crusaders.

At the same meeting, the Palestinian Authority have put forward the ancient terraces of Battir, a west-bank village near Jerusalem, whose terraces go back hundreds of years, it is claimed.

Persian Period Village Near Jerusalem

During work on a natural gas line from the coast to Jerusalem, remains of a large village were uncovered near Mitzpe Harel, west of Jerusalem. The settlement consisted of several houses around narrow pathways and was probably surrounded by orchards and vineyards, as prevalent in the area today. It looks as if the houses were the standard four-room house around a courtyard, and the village was perched on an elevated spur with good views of the surrounding country. According to the dig director Irina Zilberbord, the village was at its peak in the Hasmonean period of the second century BCE and was abandoned at the end of that period - perhaps when Herod drew away many peasant inhabitants for work on his reconstruction of the Jerusalem Temple, according to Dr. Yuval Baruch, the Jerusalem regional archaeologist. It is reported, happily, that the gas line will now be relocated so that the site can remain accessible for further investigation.

REPORT 59
MARCH 2014

The World of the Philistines Museum

A new museum has opened in Ashdod on the Israeli coast, devoted to the Philistines, who lived in that area some three thousand years ago. It is called

the Corinne Mamane Museum, after a young archaeologist who was tragically killed in a road accident nearby. It is a serious collection of Philistine remains and artifacts from 12th to 7th centuries BCE, but it is geared to create interest for local schoolchildren who flock to it regularly. In one section dealing with the life of Samson and his fights with the Philistines, there is a whole wall devoted to a large photographic tableau of Gustav Dore's engraving of Samson seizing the two pillars of the temple of Dagon (Judges 16:30). As one stands in front of it and claps ones hands, the picture disintegrates, the pillars collapse and all the Philistines fall down dead. There is also a table with images of many pottery fragments spread around, as one touches each piece, it appears to fly off onto a central screen and join together with the other pieces to make up a large amphora, suitably restored. These are fascinating exhibits for children and adults alike. The professional adviser to the Museum was Prof. Aren Maeir.

Ancient Miqveh in Spain

The synagogue of Gerona, in Catalonia, Spain, was founded in 1435 and abandoned at the expulsion of the Spanish Jews in 1492. Gerona had an active Jewish population of over twenty families. Recently a contemporary *miqveh* has been uncovered on the site, which is a rare find as so few ritual baths remain of that early date in Europe. The synagogue site now houses a museum of local Jewish history, and Alon Bar, the Israeli Ambassador to Spain, attended the unveiling of the *miqveh* together with Spanish dignitaries, who said that the Spanish authorities see the find as an important link with their Jewish past, which they now hope to promote.

Sy Gitin Retires as Director of the Albright Institute of Archaeology

In July of this year Prof. Seymour Gitin, 78, will retire as Director of the W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research, after thirty-four years in office. He will be replaced by Dr. Matthew Adams, an Egyptologist who trained at Penn State University and has taught at several American universities and is director of the Jezreel Valley Regional Project in Israel.

Prof. Gitin expanded the activities of the Institute to include an international fellowship programme with 65 fellows from all over the world, including the Far East, as well as local Israelis and Palestinians. He instituted an annual programme of 80 events, such as weekly lectures and field trips, and conducted a major excavation at Tel Miqne-Ekron, organised in conjunction with the Hebrew University, with Trude Dothan and Gitin as joint directors.

Other field projects associated with the Albright include sites at Ashkelon, Tel Kedesh, Gezer, Sepphoris. Tel Regev and Tel Zeitah. During Prof. Gitin's term

of office, the Institute has undergone major renovations to its premises in East Jerusalem and the library holdings have increased threefold. The Albright is now the premier English-speaking archaeological facility in Israel.

Sy himself has authored nearly two hundred publications and will continue working on the Tel Miqne-Ekron material in his retirement, when he will remain as Dorot Director and Professor of Archaeology Emeritus. He has received prizes and awards from many universities and from the Israel Museum for his outstanding contribution to the archaeology of the Levant in general, and to the history of the Philistines in particular. We wish him a long and active retirement in good health.

Exhibition of Earliest Masks at Israel Museum

The exhibition of twelve of the world's oldest masks has featured in the Museum since early March, and will remain open until September 2014. Further information will be available in due course.

Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) Library

As part of its ambitious new building project called the Schottenstein National Campus for Archaeology in Israel, now under construction on Museum Hill by the Israel Museum and the Bible Lands Museum in Jerusalem, the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) will erect the largest library of the archaeology of Israel in the Middle East, and perhaps in the world. It will be called the Mandel National Library for Archaeology in Israel, and is being built thanks to donations from the Mandel Foundation of Cleveland, USA. It will house 150,000 volumes and include 500 rare books and thousands of periodicals. The facility, designed by architect Moshe Safdie, will be open to the public as well as scholars and it is hoped it will be completed by April 2016.

REPORT 60
APRIL 2014

Exhibition of Early Masks at the Israel Museum

A new temporary exhibition at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem shows a collection of twelve masks from Jericho and other sites around the Dead Sea. The masks are all of stone and dated to the Pre-pottery Neolithic B period of about nine thousand years ago. They were dispersed among several museums and private collections and have been collected together here for the first time. The Israel Museum had two of them, one from Nahal Hemar

in the Judean Desert and one from nearby Horvat Duma, according to Debby Hershman, the curator. They are all beautifully mounted on separate stands and individually spotlit in a dark room, which gives one an uncanny feeling of being watched by surreal ancestors, and found wanting. Their purpose is unclear but the Museum speculates that they were used for unknown rituals in a world where the symbols of death breathed life into those that viewed them. The exhibition remains open until 13th September 2014.

Crac Des Chevaliers Threatened

It has been reported that Syrian government forces have been shelling the walls of this well-preserved Crusader castle, in the Homs gap of Syria, where rebels have been entrenched. The castle is an UNESCO World Heritage site and one of the most important standing medieval castles in the world. Heavy shelling had already damaged some of the interior structures, according to earlier reports.

Prehistoric Diet in Ramle

Archaeologists of Haifa University, led by Dr. Yossi Zaidner, have uncovered early human remains at the Hector site in Ramle, south of Ben Gurion airport, in a very deep pit-like area that dates back to the Mousterian period of the Paleolithic era of 170,000 years ago. The remains include a considerable number of large bones that relate to equids, fallow deer and rhinoceros, which were presumably the diet of the humans that camped out in this deep and open area. This is one of the earliest remains of human settlement in the Middle East and is most unusual, according to Dr. Zaidner, for being located in an open- air camp rather than a cave.

Second Temple Ossuaries Looted

Two Palestinians from Bethlehem were recently arrested trying to sell eleven ossuaries to two Israeli collectors. They were all detained by police at a security checkpoint and reported to the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA), whose Eitan Klein recognized the artefacts as Second Temple burial coffins by their fine double rosette carvings on the limestone. The ossuaries had come from an unknown cave in the Jerusalem area, and one of them was quite small and probably that of a deceased child. Two of the ossuaries had names inscribed, but only the first names, being Yoezer and Ralfin, written in Hebrew and Greek.

The ossuaries will be held by the IAA pending the trial of the criminals, and the bones transferred to the Ministry of Religious Affairs for conventional Jewish burial.

Tomb of Prominent Canaanite?

During a rescue dig before the laying of a gas pipeline at Tel Shadud near Sarid, 6 kms. south-west of Nazareth, a cylindrical clay coffin with an anthropomorphic carved lid of an Egyptian type, was found. Inside was an adult skeleton, tentatively identified by Dr. Ron Be'eri, one of the directors of the dig, as a Canaanite who may have served the Egyptian government. With the body was found a gold signet ring with the name of Seti I, father of Ramesses the Great, engraved on it. This dates the remains to 13th century BCE. Nearby were the graves of two men and two women, who may have been family members of the coffin deceased, as well as pieces of pottery, a bronze dagger and bowl and other bronze fragments. These were considered to be offerings to the gods and also utensils for the use of the deceased in the afterlife. Dr. Be'eri thought that the skeleton may have been that of an Egyptian official or a wealthy Canaanite of the local elite, imitating Egyptian customs. The IAA will take DNA samples from inside the coffin to try and determine the original nationality of the deceased.

Prize Awarded to Prof. Gabriel Barkai

The Moskowitz Prize for Zionism has recently been awarded to three recipients: Michael Freund of the Jerusalem Post; to Rabbi Yosef Zvi Rimon of the ex-Gush Katif settlers; and to archaeologist Prof. Gabriel Barkai, who share the prize of $100,000. The award to Prof. Barkai is for his lifelong work on the ancient history of Jerusalem and in particular for his salvage of the remains removed from the Temple Mount by the Islamic authorities, and for setting up the major sifting complex to analyse those remains.

We congratulate Prof. Barkai on this well deserved award.

Jerusalem Spring Citadel Dig Completed

After fifteen years of work at the Gihon Spring, Professors Ronny Reich and Eli Shukron have now completed their uncovering of the great fortress that protected the spring in the Canaanite period of 1,800 years ago, and continued in use during the reigns of David and Solomon and thereafter. The structure was of truly massive stonework the like of which was not seen again until the time of Herod the Great. The work was discovered when a new visitors' centre was planned, which had to be delayed until the archaeologists had completed their investigations. It can now go ahead and the public will be allowed access to see the exposed megaliths of the impressive foundations of the fortress. The question now remains—if the Gihon Spring was so heavily fortified, why did Hezekiah (or another) have to build the extensive rock-cut tunnel to protect the spring from the Assyrians?

REPORT 61
JULY 2014

Wall Paintings Depicting Crusader Period

The nuns of the Saint-Louis Hospital, near the old City of Jerusalem, have recently uncovered a series of nineteenth century paintings depicting the Crusader period in their basement storage areas. Because the paintings are "like murals from the times of the Crusaders" according to Amit Re'em, district archaeologist of the Israeli Antiquities Authority (IAA), they are of interest to the IAA, who have been helping the nuns to clean and preserve the paintings before they are displayed to the public. The hospital, named after King Louis IX of France, leader of the Seventh Crusade of 1248 CE, was completed in 1896 and the basement was decorated by murals showing the works of the Crusaders in Jerusalem. The paintings are of historical interest but as they are not antiques themselves, the IAA has no budget to assist in preserving them and the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition, who staff the hospice and care for terminal patients of all religions, are actively seeking funds to help them to preserve these interesting and historic murals.

Lead Seal of 12th Century Found Near Monastery

The seal was found in the Bayit Vegan area of Jerusalem in a rescue excavation of a Byzantine period farmyard, under the direction of Benjamin Storchan and Dr. Benjamin Dolinka of the IAA. The site had been abandoned after the Byzantine period and resettled during the Crusader and Mamluk periods, and appears to have been a farmyard belonging to the monastery of Mar Saba on the Nahal Kidron outside Jerusalem. The seal is an extremely rare example and depicts the bust of a bearded saint, who holds a cross in one hand and the Gospel in the other, and around it is the inscription, Saint Sabas, in Greek. Other artifacts found depict the daily life of the farm, while the seal, or bulla as it is called, would have been affixed to a letter to ensure that it was not opened by an unauthorised person. After authentication and recording, the seal was presented to Theopholis III, Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem, on whose property it had been found. He noted its importance for the history of Christianity in the Holy Land.

Educational Centre in Grand Hall of Temple Mount Tunnels

In early June a new educational centre was opened under the Muslim Quarter of Jerusalem, connected to the tunnels running alongside the Kotel, the outer Western Wall of the Temple. The area is delimited by tall arches standing

on stone pillars and is surrounded by an Herodian staircase, a section of a Roman roadway and a Mamluk bath-house, showing the variety of periods that constitute this part of underground Jerusalem. The excavated area will become an educational centre for Jewish history and the elaborate excavation and preparatory work have been funded by Zvi Hirsch Bogolyubov, a Ukrainian billionaire living in Dnepropetrovsk and London, who wanted to demonstrate his love for Israel.

National Park World Heritage Site

The complex of caves in the Beit Guvrin-Maresha national park, south-west of Jerusalem, has been accepted as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO at its recent meeting in Qatar, where it was described as "a city under a city" formed by man-made caves, hollowed out of thick layers of soft homogenous chalk, in a series of historical periods of some two thousand years from the Iron Age to that of the Crusaders. The caves, which started as quarries, were later converted to craft centres, places of worship, bath-houses, tombs and hiding places. The site will be the 8th Israeli World Heritage Site. At the same meeting in Qatar, UNESCO included the early agricultural terraces of the village of Battir in the West Bank in the list of World Heritage Sites and also that of World Heritage Sites in Danger, in the name of the Palestinian Authority.

REPORT 62
AUGUST 2014

Jewish Revolt Coins Discovered

During work on the expansion of the Jerusalem to Tel Aviv highway, a rescue dig by the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) uncovered a previously unknown village of the Roman period. In the corner of one room a cache of 114 bronze coins was discovered. The coins are all dated to year four (69/70 CE) of the Jewish Revolt. They are all the same denomination of one-quarter or one-eighth shekel value, and must have been hidden just before the Roman destruction of Jerusalem, according to Pablo Betzer and Eyal Marco, directors of the dig. The coins are marked "Geulat Zion" on the obverse and show a lulav and citrons with date 4 on the reverse. The village, now called Hirbet Mazruk, was destroyed by the Romans, partly rebuilt and destroyed again at the Bar Kochba revolt seventy years later. It is planned to preserve the village remains as part of the landscape works beside the new highway.

Rare Roman Coin Found at Bethsaida

A bronze coin of the reign of Agrippa II, great-grandson of Herod the Great, was found at Bethsaida, the site on the north shore of Lake Kinneret, which is being dug under the direction of Rami Arav, who dates the coin to 85 CE. It was minted at Caesarea Maritima and has the head of Roman Emperor Domitian on one side and a palm tree on the reverse.

Ancient Game Board Found at Tel Gezer

An inscribed game board, about 25cm long × 6cm wide, with three counters and two dice was recently uncovered at Tel Gezer, a Solomonic site 25 km. south-east of Tel Aviv. In spite of continued rocket fire from Gaza, the mainly United States student volunteers have refused to leave and have continued work on the site, and jump into their excavation pits when the sirens wail, according to joint directors Steve Ortiz of SW Baptist Theological Seminary of Fort Worth, Texas and Sam Wolff of the IAA.

Threat of Erosion to Western Wall

A recent study at the Hebrew University has shown that the interstices between the stones of the outer wall of the Jerusalem Temple, the site known as the Western Wall, a major tourist and religious attraction, are causing unusually high erosion of the limestone blocks that make up the wall.

The cause was due to "rapid dissolution along micron-scale grain boundaries followed by mechanical detachment of tiny particles from the surface" according to the researchers. They add that it may be possible to develop materials that bind the tiny crystals into the rock and thus counteract the rate of erosion. In contrast, the air of Jerusalem is rather dusty with particles of sand blowing in from the Judean desert, and my scientific advisor says that this leaves a grainy deposit on the buildings that generally helps to preserve the ancient stonework.

Death of the IAA Director-General, Joshua Dorfmann

On 31st July of this year Joshua (Shuka) Dorfmann passed away. He was aged 64 and had been Director-general of the IAA since 2000. He had been appointed from the Army, where he was the principal artillery officer of the Israel Defence Forces with the rank of brigadier. He had an MA degree from Haifa University in Political Science and in his time at the IAA he had organised a large expansion of rescue digs throughout the country. His position will be filled by his deputy Dr. Uzi Dahari, until a new Director General can be appointed.

REPORT 63
SEPTEMBER 2014

Oldest Metal Object ever Found in the Region

It is claimed that a small copper object found in an excavation at Tel Tsaf, south of Beit Shean in Israel, is the oldest metal object ever found in the Middle East. The object is described as an awl, a small pointed pin-shaped tool that was used for punching holes, and was dated to the late 6th or early 5th millennium BCE. It was found in a rich commercial centre that dates to around 5000 BCE and excavation commenced there in 1970. The claim is published in the journal PLOS ONE by Dr. Danny Rosenberg of Haifa University and Dr. Florian Klimscha of the German Archaeological Institute of Berlin. The site had been identified as a wealthy trading centre due to its large mudbrick buildings and the number of storage silos holding vast quantities of wheat and barley. Other findings included pieces made from obsidian, shells from the Nile and figurines of people and animals. The copper awl, 4 cms. long, was found by Prof. Yossi Garfinkel in a sealed grave covered by large stones inside a silo, indicating the importance of the buried body and that of the awl to the deceased. This copper artifact and its date moves back the known use of metal in the region by several hundred years.

Huge Ancient Reservoir at Beit Shearim

In an excavation conducted by the Israel Nature and Parks Authority (INPA) in conjunction with the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) at the burial sites of Beit Shearim, 15 km. south-east of Haifa, a huge underground reservoir was found. It had two staircases for water carriers going up and down and had a capacity of 1,300 cubic metres of water, and the INPA dated it to the Roman period of the early centuries CE.

Internet Archaeological Museum

The IAA announced that it was launching an Internet Archaeological Museum "accessible at the touch of a button". It will be organised in collaboration with the Israel and Rockefeller Museums and the Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library and will feature some 2,500 artifacts of the most important collections of the Levant. The site will be accessed at www.antiquities.org.il and will be updated regularly by the IAA.

Byzantine Compound at Beit Shemesh

A large and well preserved compound was recently uncovered by the IAA at Beit Shemesh, 15 km. south-west of Jerusalem. The excavators, Irene Zibelbrod and Tehilla Libman, said the site was surrounded by a substantial wall and enclosed an industrial area and a residential one. They found a large olive press and a very large winepress with two treading floors and a collecting vat, and they believe that the site had been a monastery of the Byzantine period, although no church or evidence of other religious activity had been found. The impressive size of the presses and other industrial remains suggested that the compound had acted as a regional centre with numerous rooms, some with mosaic floors. The excavation was conducted prior to the expansion of Beit Shemesh, and the archaeological remains will be preserved as a landmark in the new residential area.

REPORT 64
NOVEMBER 2014

Earthquake and Recent Finds at Susita

Excavation continues at Susita, the site on the hills overlooking the east bank of Kinneret, the Sea of Galilee. The finds were discovered under the roof of a building that collapsed in the earthquake of 363 CE. Susita was also called Hippos as it sits like a horse on a hilltop 350m. above the lake. According to the excavator, Dr. Michael Eisenberg of Haifa University, the collapsed building, the largest on the site, was a basilica that served as a marketplace, and a number of skeletons were discovered under its collapsed roof. One of them was of a young woman who was wearing a golden dove-shaped pendant. Also found was the marble leg of a statue that may have been 2m. high, that of a god or an athlete. The earthquake of 363 was a powerful one and completely destroyed the city, which took twenty years to be rebuilt and, according to Eisenberg, there was a later earthquake of 749 CE, which destroyed the city completely – the city was never rebuilt. The city had a bastion of the Roman period that overlooked the lake and there the archaeologists found a catapult-like machine that would have been 8m. long and could have launched massive stone ammunition, some of which was still extant at the site.

Ancient Mikveh – Recent Graffiti, South of Beit Shemesh

In a rescue dig at the Ha'Ela junction, before the widening of Route 38, the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) has uncovered an ancient *miqveh*, believed to be

dated to about 100 CE, and a massive water cistern of about two hundred years later. Great interest centred on the fact that the ceiling of the cistern had been scratched with the names of two Australian soldiers at the time of the British Mandate. According to Yoav Tsur of the IAA, the find "allows us to reconstruct a double story – a Jewish settlement of the second century CE, probably against the background of the Bar-Kochba Revolt and another story, no less fascinating, about a group of Australian soldiers who visited the site 1,700 years later and left their mark". They left their names, Corporals Scarlett and Walsh and their numbers in the RAE (Royal Australian Engineers) with the date 30/5/1940.

According to the IAA, research shows that Scarlett died in 1970 and Walsh in 2005, but the IAA will contact their families to tell them about the find. The Israel National Roads Company has agreed to slightly change the junction layout so that the finds can be incorporated in the adjacent landscaping.

Latin Inscription Found in Jerusalem

Although found in July, this inscription from the time of the reign of the Emperor Hadrian was only recently displayed to the public at the Rockefeller Museum. It is on a large stone, weighing one ton and was found in secondary use as part of the cover of a deep cistern, with part of the stone cut out in a semi-circle to accommodate a small manhole cover to the cistern.

The inscription reads (in translation):

> To the Imperator Caesar Traianus Hadrianus Augustus, son of the deified Traianus Pathicus, grandson of the deified Nerva, high priest, invested with tribunician power for the fourteenth time, consul for the third time, father of the country (dedicated by) the tenth legion Fretensis Antoniniana

It is dated to the year 129/130 CE, when Hadrian was touring his eastern colonies and dedicated the rebuilt Jerusalem as Colonia Aelia Capitolina. The inscription is in fine classic Roman lettering and according to Dr. Rina Avner who led the IAA team that located it, "there is no doubt that this is one of the most important official Latin inscriptions that have been discovered in this country."

The other half of the inscription, which was found many years ago by the French diplomat Charles Clermont-Ganneau, is on display in the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum at the Lion's gate of the old City.

The new inscription find was the subject of a day-long seminar at the Rockefeller Museum, where it will shortly be put on permanent display.

REPORT 65
DECEMBER 2014

Scroll Looters Caught Red-Handed

In the first week of December, inspectors of the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) Robbery Prevention Unit arrested thieves carrying out illegal excavations in a cave using a metal detector and other tools. The culprits had been observed by the Arad Rescue Unit working at the so-called Cave of Skulls on the northern cliff of Nahal Tze'elim, about 15 km. west of the Dead Sea and 5 km. north of Arad. The cave is extremely difficult to reach, and the trespassers, young men from near Hebron, rappelled down from the top of the cliff to reach the cave. They were spotted by the Arad Rescue Unit who alerted the IAA inspectors, who came and waited for the culprits at the top of the cliff and arrested them. They were taken to the Arad police station where they were questioned and detained. According to Amir Ganor, director of the Robbery Prevention Unit, scroll robbers have been operating in the area for many years in the hope of finding scrolls, scraps of ancient texts and artifacts left in the caves from the times of the Great Revolt and the Bar-Kochba Revolt, which can be sold for large sums in the antiquity markets in Israel and abroad. He added that it was the first time in decades that the thieves had been caught in the act of looting. The crime is punishable by up to five years in prison.

Woolley and Lawrence Museum at Carchemish

The Turkish government is planning to open a museum to the work of Leonard Woolley and T.E.Lawrence at Jerabulus, where the excavators lived from 1910–1914, overlooking the site of Carchemish. The museum, due to open next May, is being organized by Nicolo Marchetti of Bologna University, who says they are working very close to an area of fighting between Turkey and Syrian rebels, and they will erect a very high anti-sniper wall around the museum for the safety of visitors. Archaeological work at Carchemish, on the Euphrates, resumed in 2011 and is ongoing.

Aerial Photography Simplified

It is often desired to photograph an archaeological site from the air, which helps to see the overall layout and also identify nearby areas that may require excavation. The difficulty has been the cost of hiring aircraft or balloons for the job and the time involved in getting the results. Now in Israel that task has been greatly simplified by two companies that can provide clear and accurate photographs taken from a camera mounted on an aerial drone. The work is done by a pilot on the ground

and an expert photographer, who work together and can arrange for pictures taken from all angles. The images are directed straight to the excavator's computer and the cost is considerably less and much faster than comparable aerial photography of the past.

Large Ancient Farmhouse in Central Israel

A farmhouse of the 8th century BCE has been unearthed at Rosh Ha'ayin, a few kms. east of Petah Tikva. It extends over a large area measuring 30m by 40m and was in fact a small settlement in itself, providing for processing the agricultural produce as well as residential quarters. There was also a number of wine presses found nearby, which suggest that wine production was the most important agricultural activity of the area. According to Amit Shadman, the dig director of the IAA, the farmhouse was built during the Assyrian Conquest, continued into the Persian period of the 6th century BCE and later into the Hellenistic period as well. This was confirmed by the finding on one floor of a rare silver coin bearing the head of Zeus on one side and that of Heracles on the other, together with the name of Alexander (the Great). The site will be preserved and conserved within the town by the IAA for the benefit of local residents and visitors.

Stephen Gabriel Rosenberg
W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research, Jerusalem

Grant Reports

Rebekah Welton
Kings College London

This summer, thanks to the grant from the AIAS, I participated for four weeks in an excavation in Jerusalem just outside the Old City by the Zion Gate. I was a returnee to this dig having participated in the previous 2013 season. I was invited back as an assistant area supervisor and was thrilled to be able to take up this opportunity. The excavation was led by Dr Shimon Gibson. The site is located on the slope outside the Old City walls but was within the ancient walls during the Roman period. In the Byzantine period the site would have been at the southern end of the Cardo Maximus as can be seen on the Madaba map. In the Early Islamic period Mount Zion was used for domestic houses, but the Crusaders and Ayyubids built fortifications across the mount including a gate tower the remains of which are in the area of this excavation site.

The field section that I worked in included an Ummayad period cistern which may have been renovated in the Mamluke or Ottoman periods. Around the cistern was a dirt fill made up of an ash layer and, at the bottom of the fill, a mosaic floor which may be Byzantine. In the last few days of the dig the tops of plaster walls emerged. These will be excavated in the next season. Many finds were in the dirt fill including Roman to Islamic period pottery sherds, as well as some items of jewellery, weights, animal bones, glass fragments and coins.

Other field areas were also extremely interesting; a large ash layer that revealed seeds from many different fruit and grains may have been camp remains from the 1099 siege of Jerusalem by the Crusaders. Another area uncovered remains from the Ottoman and British Mandate periods. Nearby, a mosaic floor and a partially preserved Byzantine period archway were uncovered. There was also a plaster covered water installation with nearly intact Roman vessels on its floor. We also found an Iron Age II LMLK jar handle but unfortunately the city name was missing.

My role as an assistant entailed helping the area supervisor with administrative tasks such as organising bucket numbers, loci numbers, field notes and field sketches. I also instructed our team members and delegated tasks including using a

Fig. 1. Holding a Roman coin.

pick, carrying buckets, trowelling and pottery washing. As a staff member I was included in the decision making processes of identifying stratigraphic layers, loci changes and techniques for excavating the delicate ash layer. These excavation responsibilities gave me an invaluable insight into the organisational and logistical side of excavations which I had not previously experienced as a volunteer.

Being based in Jerusalem meant I was able to visit many other archaeological sites and parks such as the Wohl Archaeological Museum in the Herodian Quarter, the City of David Visitors Centre, the "John the Baptist" Cave near Suba, The Israel Museum, the Rockefeller Archaeological Museum as well as Masada and Qumran. We were given seminars by several archaeologists about their discoveries, particularly interesting were the sessions given by Yana Tchekhanovets about the Givati Excavation, Schlomit Weksler-Bdolah about the excavation of the Aelia Capitolina Foundations and Rafi Lewis's research concerning the medieval landscapes of the Holy Land.

These experiences enhanced my time in Israel and they illuminate what I previously had only studied from photos and diagrams in books. I had the opportunity to hear first-hand from archaeologists about how their excavations affect our understandings of ancient Jerusalem. I look forward to returning again next year in order to continue studying archaeology in the field, meeting other enthusiastic diggers and uncovering more of this fascinating dig site.

Samuel Atkins
University College London

The AIAS grant supported me in continuing research at Tel Erani with Prof. Yuval Yekutieli of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer Sheva. The main objectives of my visit were to gain a better understanding of the stratigraphy from our 2013

season of excavations and to prepare a short report to submit to the IAA before applying for a permit for the forthcoming 2014 season of excavations in October.

In order to meet the first of these objectives we conducted a thorough analysis of the high-quality section photography from the 2013 season at Erani, during several intensive sessions with three other area supervisors from the excavations. We projected these images onto a whiteboard and observed the significant features that we could see using marker pens. Following this, we identified a number of different phases and levels of which we believed that these features were a part. We collated these conclusions into a number of graphic illustrations using photo-editing software and produced a short report summarising a possible narrative trajectory for the development of these phases. We were able to identify six separate phases to our 2013 excavations at Erani, which allowed us to make some very interesting comparisons with conclusions from Yeivin's 1960's excavations. We consider that these intensive sessions proved to be a great success and I would encourage those who may be interested in our conclusions to read the forthcoming preliminary reports.

The rest of my time at BGU was spent in collating and editing the relevant paperwork necessary for submission to the IAA. This involved presenting around 500 photographs in a format that would be easy to browse, and arranging the daily diaries, drawings, loci cards and basket lists in a single PDF that could be submitted with ease. Some of this might be considered mundane, but is an absolutely essential part of the process for our study of Tel Erani to continue smoothly. This objective was also met, and we have recently received a permit from the IAA to proceed with our excavation season in October 2014.

I would like to express my sincerest thanks to the AIAS for their contribution to our research on Tel Erani, but also to my own personal academic development. The process of examining the stratigraphy from our excavations proved particularly beneficial to my own understanding of the fundamental application of archaeological theory. In addition, I now have a much better understanding of the practicalities of arranging an excavation season in Israel.

Elisabeth Sawerthal
King's College London

I received the AIAS grant so that I could work at the Tel Aviv University excavations at Ashdod-Yam under the direction of Dr. Alexander Fantalkin. Having already been part of the first season of excavation in 2013, which resulted in the discovery of a fortified wall from the 8th century BCE, it was clear to me

that being further involved in this project would be an interesting experience. I was thrilled at the prospect of returning for the following season as Assistant Area Supervisor. With the intention of making the most out of my trip, I decided to also carry out research for my MA dissertation on the uses of heritage and the role of the past in present-day Jerusalem. My particular aims were to visit relevant sites and speak to archaeologists who have worked in the city in order to gain insight into the matter on the ground.

However, my summer plans dedicated to the exploration of the past were interrupted by the region's present political reality. The launch of Operation Protective Edge and the unceasing flow of rockets that came out of Gaza unsurprisingly brought all archaeological activity in the south of the country to a halt. Consequently, the season of excavation at Ashdod-Yam was also cancelled. Not wanting to call off the whole trip, I deferred my departure, shortening my visit to Israel from a whole month to three weeks in order to at least follow the latter half of the original plan by conducting my dissertation research.

Based in Tel Aviv, I made use of the university's library resources and contacted scholars involved in archaeological activities in Jerusalem. Subsequently, I was able to meet archaeologists from various institutions including Tel Aviv University, Bar-Ilan University, the University of the Holy Land, the Israel Antiquities Authorities as well as from the activist group Emek Shaveh. These conversations gave me a better insight into Jerusalem's archaeological scene. In addition, I visited many of Jerusalem's heritage tourist sites in order to make up my own mind regarding the role they play in the city.

One exciting experience was the day I spent with Dr. Gabriel Barkay who was kind enough to show me the Emek Tzurim National Park and the Temple Mount Sifting Project. Since 2004, a team of archaeologists, permanent volunteers and visiting tourists have been sifting through tonnes of soil. The debris is believed to derive from a subterranean structure of the Temple Mount or Haram al-Sharif from where it was removed in the late 1990s as part of illegal structural alteration works conducted by the Muslim religious authorities. The project has been surrounded by much controversy due to its location (East Jerusalem), funding by the Ir David Foundation (an NGO) and some doubts regarding its actual scientific value (all finds are out of context). Hearing about these matters from the project director was fascinating and very helpful for the planning and writing of my dissertation.

Another interesting experience was my visit to the City of David, the archaeological park that runs down the south-eastern hill of the Old City of Jerusalem through the Arab village of Silwan. I had already been to the site during a previous stay in Israel but this time I experienced it differently, namely, through the eyes of archaeologist activist group Emek Shaveh by taking one of their alternative tours through the park. Special attention was drawn to topics such as

the supposed oversimplification and misrepresentation of archaeological remains by the park's operating organisation, the Ir David Foundation, the impact of the archaeological park on the local Arab population and the role of archaeology in the Arab-Israeli conflict as a whole. The idea of approaching archaeology in its setting within a wider socio-political context of the present was particularly helpful in understanding the significant role the concept of heritage plays in Jerusalem.

Due to the political situation, nothing really went according to the original plan, yet my trip to Israel this summer allowed me to gain an insight into the politics of Jerusalem's archaeological heritage, a much deeper one than I could have ever obtained within the walls of any of London's libraries. Furthermore, it showed me that, in present-day Jerusalem, the past really matters.

Notes for Contributors

Strata requires all articles to be presented in line with the typographical conventions of the publication, which follows the basic form of the Harvard reference system. Within the text, references are made in brackets in the form of the author and date of publication, followed by page numbers, e.g. (Aharoni 1979: 44–52). The full reference is to be given in the bibliography at the end of the article, as follows:

Book:
Aharoni, Y., (1979). *The Land of the Bible, A Historical Geography* (London).

Article:
Naveh, J., (1989). 'The Aramaic and Hebrew Inscriptions from Ancient Synagogues,' *Eretz-Israel* 20: 302–310 (Hebrew).

Chapter:
Gibson, S., (2001). 'Agricultural Terraces and Settlement Expansion in the Highlands of Early Iron Age Palestine: Is There a Correlation Between the Two?' Pp. 113–146 in A. Mazar (ed.), *Studies in the Archaeology of the Iron Age in Israel and Jordan* (Sheffield).

An abstract of no more than 100 words should be included at the beginning.

The article can be divided between headings and sub-headings, with no capitalisation. The headings are in bold, with a space before the text, while the sub-headings are in italics, with no space before the text.

Please note additionally:

- An article should be submitted in British English spelling, not American, e.g. artefacts, not artifacts.
- There are end-notes rather than foot-notes.
- Do not format your work with indentations, hanging paragraphs and so on, but type it up without justified margins, one and a half spaced, in Times New Roman font.
- Transliterate Hebrew, Greek or Arabic and other languages into English letters unless it is essential to have the original characters (e.g. in an inscription).
- Greek, Latin, Aramaic, Hebrew or Arabic terms in English are to be italicised: *in situ, tesserae, miqveh*.
- If foreign lettering is used please employ the Times New Roman Unicode font.
- BCE and CE, not BC and AD.
- Roman period, Byzantine period with a lower-case 'p'.
- Figure numbers to be preceded by full stop and space: Fig. 5.
- Single quotes to be used: 'Gaza School'.
- Extensive quotes should be set as a separate paragraph without quote marks at 1 pt lower font size than main body text.
- Biblical quotes: use fuller form of abbreviation, e.g. Isa. 11: 2–3; Mark 5: 5.
- Dates: e.g. 1990–96; 15 June 2007 (no commas).
- Use numerals for centuries, e.g. 'the 12th century'
- Measurements: largest digit first with space after number: 90 × 20 cm.
- Measures are metric: m, cm, mm without full-stops.
- Numbers at the beginning of a sentence should be written out in full, e.g. Twenty men went off to war.
- Do not hyphenate 'southwest', 'northeast' etc.
- Please follow Loeb editions in citations of Josephus.

Kindly note that the preferred length for book reviews is 500–800 words, except for an edited collection, in which case 1,000–1,200 words in total is acceptable. It is the responsibility of authors to obtain copyright permission for all illustrations and no responsibility is taken by *Strata* for any copyright infringements.

Articles should be sent as a Word document directly to: David Milson editor@aias.org.uk and reviews sent to: Sandra Jacobs strata.reviews@aias.org.uk.

The Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society

MEMBERSHIP FORM
(block capitals please)

Name _____ Title _____

Address _____

_____

_____

Telephone (day) _____

(evening) _____

E-mail _____

Tick as appropriate:

AIAS Membership:

Full Membership (UK) £25 per year ☐

Full Membership (Overseas) £27.50 per year ☐

Life Membership £300 (minimum) ☐

Student Membership (UK) £10 ☐

Student Card No _____ Date issued _____

Course _____

Institution _____

Subscriptions to *Strata* only:

Individuals and institutions (UK) £20 ☐

Individuals (Overseas) £27.50 ☐

(includes optional membership at no extra cost)

Libraries and institutions (Overseas) £30 ☐

Donation towards Trust Fund for Student Grants ☐

Total _____

Cheque enclosed (Sterling) payable to:

'The Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society'

or *Charge my credit card*

Charge: Visa/Mastercard/Maestro/American Express

Card No.:_____

Name on Card: _____

Start date: _____ Expiry date: _____

Issue No.: _____ Security Code: _____

Signature: _____

The Executive Secretary, The Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society
2nd floor, Supreme House, 300 Regents Park Road, London N3 2JX, England.

Reg. Charity No. 220367