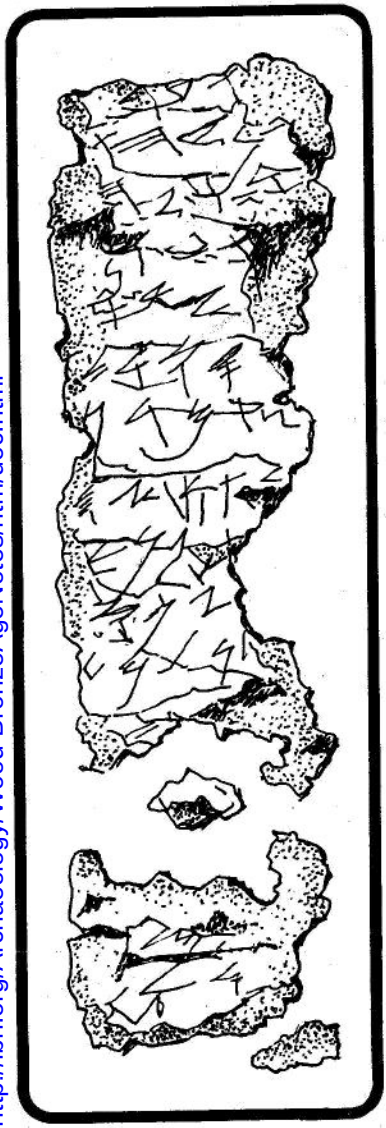
Numbers 6:24-26 Authenticity and the SILVER SCROLLS



by Siegfried Horn

Dr. Gabriel Barkay conducted three seasons of excavations on the slope of the Valley of Ben-Hinnom, just north of St. Andrew's Church in south Jerusalem, between the years 1975 and 1980. During these years he uncovered a large number of ancient tombs from several historical periods. Most of them had been robbed or disturbed long ago. In 1979 he discovered in the course of his work one unspoiled tomb of pre-exilic times (No. 25). This was a truly remarkable find, since tombs of the period of the Hebrew kings have rarely survived without having been entered and robbed of their contents long ago.

This tomb, which from the nature of its contents can be dated to the end of the seventh and the beginning of the sixth centuries BC, (the time of the prophet Jeremiah), was a large family burial place. It contained the skeletal remains of 95 individuals and a repository of about a thousand objects. Among them were 263 complete pottery vessels, 101 pieces of jewelry, of which six were of gold and 95 of silver, also many carved objects of bone and ivory, 41 arrowheads of iron and bronze, and one small colored glass vessel, an amphoriskos.

However, the most sensational finds were two tiny silver scrolls tightly rolled up. One was about one inch long and less than half an inch thick, the other

only half an inch long and a fifth of an inch thick. The excavators assumed that these scrolls had served as amulets and contained inscriptions. For this reason, they were anxious to see them unrolled.

Because of the difficulties involved in unrolling such extremely thin 2,500 year old scrolls of corroded silver sheets, it was thought best to send them to the University of Leeds in Britain, where some of the most experienced restorers of ancient artifacts and metal experts were available for such delicate work. However, the British experts felt that the danger of destroying the scrolls in the process of unrolling was too great to attempt this work. Therefore they declined to attempt the unrolling and returned the scrolls to Israel. The same disappointment was experienced when the scrolls were sent to Germany for unrolling.

The result was that the Israeli technicians in the laboratories of the Israel Museum were forced to attempt to do the job themselves. After many difficulties they developed a special method that enabled them to unroll the two tiny silver sheets with success. After the scrolls had been unrolled and cleaned, they confirmed the expectations of the excavators - they did indeed contain written texts!

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the earliest inscriptions ever found in Jerusalem that contain the name of Israel's God, Yahweh, and the earliest copies of a Bible text in existence.

And what were the contents of the texts? It was the priestly benediction found in the Scriptures, in Numbers 6:24-26: "May Yahweh bless you, and keep you; may Yahweh let his face shine upon you, . . . and give you peace!"*

These were *the earliest inscriptions ever found in Jerusalem that contain the name of Israel's God, Yahweh, and the earliest copies of a Bible text in existence.* These few verses from one of the books of the Pentateuch predate the earliest Biblical copies of the Dead Sea Scrolls by 400 years and bring us back to the period that preceded the Babylonian exile. This find certainly refutes those scholars who claim that the books of Moses had not been reduced to writing until the Babylonian Captivity or later. For here we find a *small portion of the five books of Moses literally quoted, well before the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar* and the deportation of the citizens of the Kingdom of Judah to Babylonia.

The exhibition of these unrolled tiny scrolls in the Israel Museum - one under a large magnifying glass - gives all visitors to that fine institution a possibility to view these important witnesses of the existence of a part of God's Word in the seventh-sixth centuries BC. ■

[*Ed. Although not the complete blessing, this much is parallel in the Hebrew.]

Bibliography: Gabriel Barkay, *Ketef Hinnom: A Treasure Facing Jerusalem's Walls*, "Catalogue No. 274" (Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, 1986).

Siegfried Horn, Jerusalem, March, 1987 [Dr. Horn is retired from teaching at Andrews University. Well-known for his Heshbon excavations, a recent *festschrift* in his honor has articles by reknowned archaeologists and scholars.]

BA Vol 50, 1 1987

The Early Bronze A

The Rise and Collapse of Urbanism

by Suzanne Richard

The Early Bronze Age (around 3400–2000 B.C.;[1] abbreviated as EB) marks the first urban era in the southern Levant, an era graphically portrayed by the fortified cities and towns of the Early Bronze II to III periods in Palestine. A concomitant of the urbanization process was the growth of more complex socioeconomic and political (that is, "state") institutions. The emergence of the "state" in the Near East represents the culmination of processes dating back to the late Upper Paleolithic period (approximately 15,000 B.C.), when the incipient stages of domestication and sedentarization become apparent in the archaeological record. Around 10,000 B.C. throughout the Near East established early village communities were beginning to foreshadow the ongoing evolution toward cultural complexity that would ultimately lead to the first city-states.

The remains dating to the Early Neolithic period (around 8500–6000 B.C.) at Jericho (the earliest walled town in the world), Beidha, and ʿAin Ghazal illustrate that Palestine was as advanced as any area in the Near East. Soon thereafter, however, Palestine began to lag behind its northern neighbors in the progression towards complex societies. Indeed, it was a land of small, regional, village and pastoral societies at a time when major advances toward the development of the city-state system in Mesopotamia were underway (sixth to fourth millennia B.C.). This factor bears on one of the still-debated issues concerning the transition from the "proto-urban" period to the urban Early Bronze Age: Is urbanism an intrusive or indigenous phenomenon in the land of ancient Palestine?

Palestine has always been considered something of a hinterland, backwater, or at best a land bridge between the great empires of the ancient Near East. Although toward the end of the Early Bronze Age Palestine was indeed a hinterland, during periods of urbanism the country became a strategic crossroads of interregional trade and communication. This position benefited Palestine culturally and economically, yet it also rendered it vulnerable to the political and economic vicissitudes of neighboring urban systems.

The Early Bronze Age in Palestine saw a 750-year urban age encompassed by a preformative period at the outset and a period of regression toward the end. How are we to understand these two dramatic episodes of sociocultural change?

In Mesopotamia by the mid-to-late fourth millennium, most of the landmarks of urbanism, such as sophisticated irrigation technology, sociopolitical hierarchies, craft specializations, far-flung trade, writing, monumental structures, and huge cities, had appeared. Although demographic estimates are notoriously difficult, the estimated population of Uruk was 10,000 at around 3100 B.C. and was 50,000 at 2700 B.C. (Adams and Nissen 1972; Adams 1981). In Palestine (excluding Transjordan and the Negeb), however, at around 2700 B.C. the entire population has been estimated at only approximately 150,000 (Broshi and Gophna 1984). Urbanism in Palestine during the Early Bronze Age is not comparable to that of Mesopotamia. Nonetheless, whether Palestine should be called a provincial or secondary "state," a demonstrable "complex" society (so defined in Wenke 1984 and Redman 1978) existed at that time. It is the emergence of the "state" in Palestine and its subsequent collapse that I hope to illumine in this article.

Though its traditions owed a great debt to the more advanced cultural spheres on its borders, Palestine throughout the Early Bronze Age exhibited its own unique cultural configuration. In stark outline it had a seven-hundred-and-fifty-year urban age encompassed by a preformative period (rise) at the outset and by a period of urban regression (collapse) toward the end. How are we to understand the two dramatic episodes of sociocultural change that mark the shift to urbanization and later a shift to deurbanization? Are they to be seen as abrupt changes caused by outside forces or as more gradual indigenous adaptations? Not surprisingly, scholars are divided on this issue for both the forepart and the end of the period.

History of Research

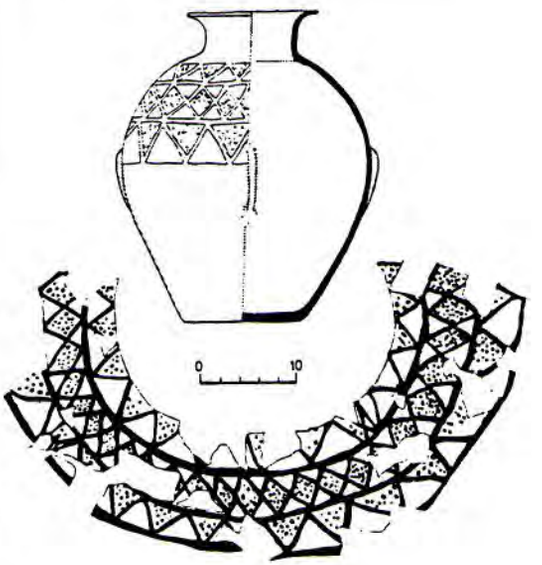
The term *Early Bronze Age* was adopted by William F. Albright and other early archaeologists in the

Age

Archaeological Sources for the History of Palestine

Vessels from EB II known as Abydos Ware are either red polished or painted with a decoration of bands of triangles filled with dots. The jugs shown above are from Arad. Photograph courtesy of the Israel Exploration Society. The drawing below is from Amiran and others 1978.

Approximate Date B.C.	Palestine	Egypt	Mesopotamia
3400–3100	Early Bronze I	Predynastic	Protoliterate
3100–2700	Early Bronze II	First and Second Dynasties	Jemdet Nasr/Early Dynastic I
2700–2350/2300	Early Bronze III	Third through Fifth Dynasties (Old Kingdom)	Early Dynastic II–III
2350/2300–2000	Early Bronze IV	Sixth through Eleventh Dynasties (Old Kingdom–First Intermediate)	Akkadian/Ur III

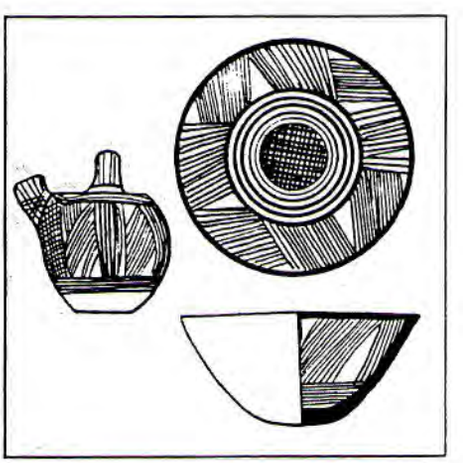


1920s. Thus, third-millennium deposits in Palestine were correlated with the roughly contemporaneous Early Helladic (Greek) and Early Dynastic (Mesopotamian) periods, and the Three Age System of Stone, Bronze, and Iron as used by Old World archaeologists was still maintained. Since copper was the metal primarily used during the Early Bronze Age, we are left with a tacitly accepted misnomer for the period. Bronze metallurgy became common only in the Middle Bronze Age (around 2000 B.C.), although recent research indicates that the technology was introduced during the Early Bronze IV period (Stech, Muhly, and Maddin 1985).

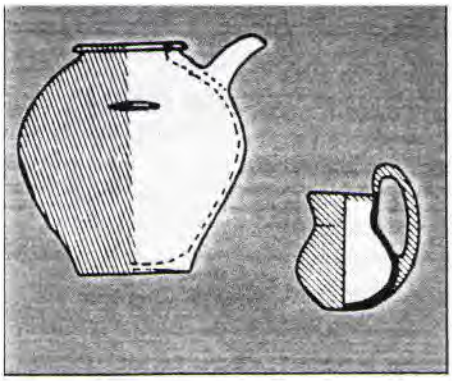
It was Albright's student, G. Ernest Wright (1937), who first undertook the task of systematically analyzing the entire corpus of excavated materials dating to the Early Bronze Age. By utilizing data from Megiddo, Beth-shean, Jericho, Ai, Bâb edh-Dhrâ^{c}, and other sites, he subdivided the age into four stratigraphically defined cultural periods —Early Bronze I to IV. Despite the less-than-rigid application of stratigraphic principles by early archaeologists and the inevitable mixture of pottery, his stratigraphic and ceramic typological study, with minor revisions, has stood the test of time.

Since then the acceleration of archaeological activity, excavation, and, particularly, survey in the region has, uncovered, hundreds of sites dating to the Early Bronze Age. A recent work lists some 888 sites (Thompson 1979), though this includes ephemeral sherd scatters. The actual number investigated is around 100. The dates of 3400 to 2000 B.C., based on correlations with Egyptian materials and recent carbon-14 determinations, reflect the trend to a higher chronology for the beginning of the period (Dever 1982; Weinstein 1984a). There is general agreement that the end of the Early Bronze and the beginning of the Middle Bronze Ages should be coeval with the renascent Twelfth Dynasty of Middle Kingdom Egypt, around 1991 B.C.

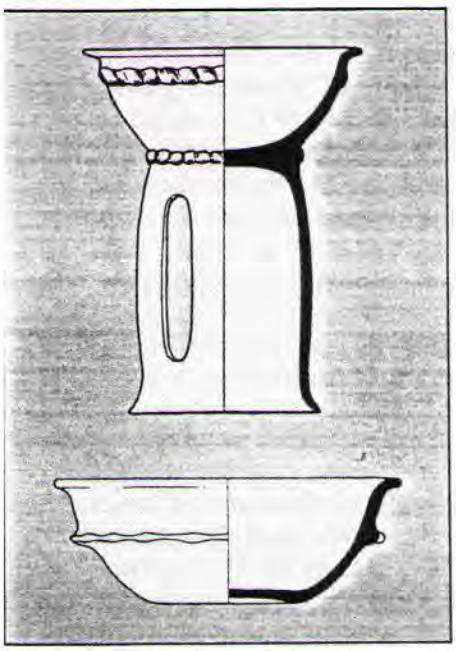
The term *Early Bronze* is commonly used, except by the Israeli school, a few of whom prefer the term *Early Canaanite* (Dothan 1985). This latter usage has provoked much dis-



Examples of red painted pottery, with distinctive basketry designs, from the EB IB/PUB period. Drawings courtesy of Ruth Amiran.



Examples of pottery from the EB IA period ***Above:*** *red burnished pottery of Kenyon's PUA: spouted vessels and high-looped handled cups were popular forms.* ***Below:*** *gray burnished Esdraelon ware of Kenyon's PUC; a series of knobs or molded decoration is characteristic. Drawings courtesy of Ruth Amiran.*



cussion, most of it concerning the inherent problems in utilizing ethnic-related terms to describe a period, especially in the absence of written records. We do not know the ethnic mix in Palestine at that time because no epigraphic remains have yet been found. We do know that the Amorites or westerners (*MARTU/Amurru*, that is, west from the point of view of Mesopotamia) comprised an important ethnic element in Syria and, in light of close cultural and religious correspondences, probably in Palestine as well (Liverani 1973). Although several references to Canaanites exist in Egyptian texts dating to the Old Kingdom (de Vaux 1971;

Since copper was the metal primarily used during the Early Bronze Age, we are left with a tacitly accepted misnomer for the period. Bronze metallurgy became common only in the Middle Bronze Age.

Drower and Bottéro 1971) and in texts from Ebla (Viganò and Pardee 1984), it is probably more accurate to describe the Early Bronze Age population as proto-Canaanite. Linguistically and culturally, Canaanite civilization manifested itself in the Middle and Late Bronze Ages.

Despite the wealth of archaeological materials at hand, the problems that confronted Albright (namely, conflicting views on terminology and sociocultural change) still defy resolution today. Perhaps most confounding to scholar and lay reader alike is the perplexing array of terms used by various scholars for the forepart and end of the age. Both periods are transitional in nature and by definition lend themselves to various interpretations. The perennial debate over foreign invasion versus indigenous cultural continuity highlights the difficulty in explaining change in the archaeological record. These and other issues that dominate the scholarly literature will be examined below. (For other perspectives on the Early Bronze Age the reader is referred to the following surveys: Hennessy 1967; Lapp 1970; Amiran 1970a; Wright 1971; de Vaux 1971; Kempinski 1978; Kenyon 1979; Rast 1980; Ross 1980; and Ben-Tor 1982.)

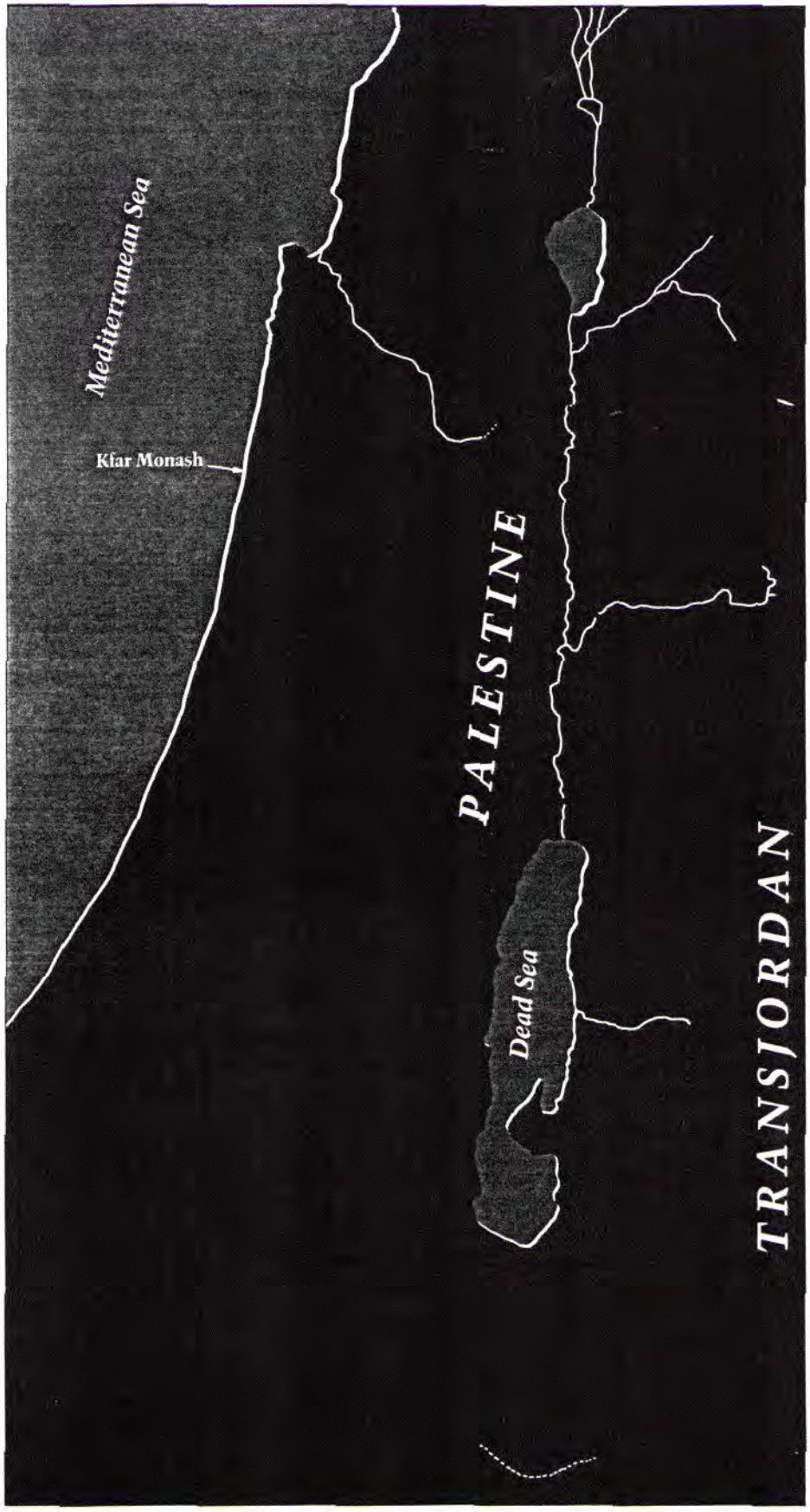
Early Bronze I (3400 to 3100 B.C.)

Issues. Whether scholars utilize the *Early Bronze IA–B–C* of Wright (1958, 1971) and Lapp (1970) or Kenyon's term *Proto Urban A–B–C* (abbreviated as PU; see 1960, 1979), both sides agree that the period was proto-urban in the sense that it preceded the urban city-states that appeared at the transition from Early Bronze I to II. The terminology of *Early Bronze I*, however, implicitly suggests stronger continuity with what followed, while the term *Proto Urban* correlates Palestine cross-culturally with the Protoliterate and Predynastic periods in Mesopotamia and Egypt.

Whatever the terminological preference, the real issue is the growth of urbanism. Was urbanism in the Early Bronze II and III periods a local development, or was the tradition brought in from Syro-Mesopotamia? On this point, there is a growing trend to view urbanism as primarily an indigenous development (Amiran 1970a, 1985, 1986; Miroschedji 1971—his *pré-urbaine* period; Schaub 1982). I will illustrate below through a comparative analysis of material culture and sites that the urban city-states did evolve from indigenous urbanization processes in Early Bronze I.

A related question concerns the relation between the inhabitants of Early Bronze I and the preceding Late Chalcolithic peoples. Again, the current trend shows a shift from a preoccupation with new population groups in favor of indigenous continuity (Callaway 1972; Miroschedji 1971; Schaub 1982; Amiran 1985). It now appears that most Palestinian traditions of the Early Bronze I period (burial practices, burnished and painted pottery, lithics, temple and domestic architecture) are at home in the southern Levant; that is, they are a development from the local Late Chalcolithic.

Finally, at issue is the chronology of three different types of pottery traditions that appear during the transitional period: red burnished (EB IA or PUA), red painted (EB IB or PUB), and gray burnished Esdraelon ware (EB IA or PUC). Although de Vaux believed that PUA/PUC pottery belonged in the Late Chalcolithic period, most scholars follow Wright and Kenyon in situating these wares after this period. At numerous sites the PUA/PUC wares are clearly contemporaneous and are earlier than the painted PUB pottery tradition. Schaub (1982) has shown that there



Feifeh in the southern Ghor (Rast and Schaub 1974). More thorough analysis of settlement patterns would probably uncover such relationships near most of the big sites like Tell el-Farᶜah North, Ai, Tell Gath, Megiddo, Jericho, Beth-yerah, Dothan, Tell Aphek, and Beth-shean.

In addition to the picture of unwalled villages, we have evidence of so-called temple-towns or centers that in terms of community organization immediately precede the city-state stage (see Redman 1978). A "twinned" temple at Megiddo (stratum 19) was separated from a residential area by a walled courtyard. Two large broadrooms contained an altar on the long side opposite the door. Human and animal cultic drawings, incised on stones, were found on a platform. As has been noted (Kempinski 1978), the size and general plan suggest that Megiddo served as a central shrine for the area. Differentiation of public and residential areas attests a growing social stratification. Tell Gath (Tel Erani) likewise has revealed urban development in stratum 8, where a large building (function unknown) with substantial stone walls exhibits the continuous development of a public area through several phases (Kempinski 1978). Although the stratification of the site is difficult, it appears that within the Early Bronze I period a defensive wall surrounded a large settlement that included a distinct public area. The site of Jawa in northeastern Jordan, where a large fortified site with a sophisticated hydraulic technology in evidence has recently been excavated, should also be noted (Helms 1981). Jawa appears to date to the Late Chalcolithic/Early Bronze I period, although we must await final publication of the pottery and associated architecture for confirmation.

As regionalization receded in Early Bronze I, site distribution reflects the choice of more defensible areas close to water sources that promoted agricultural development (Jordan Valley Jezreel Valley, Galilee,

and Shephelah). This shift to the more highly cultivable areas can be correlated with the development of horticulture, especially the grape, date, and olive (Stager 1985). The agricultural practices established at this time (cereal cultivation, horticulture, goat- and sheepherding) represent the beginning of a Mediterranean, mixed economy that remained characteristic of Palestine throughout this and succeeding eras.

The most striking development in Early Bronze I was the dramatic increase in commerce and the beginning of what became an intricate web of relations with Egypt that would last through three millennia. Throughout its history Palestine was a country whose stability waxed and waned in reaction to the political situation of that giant at its southern border. Although trade with Egypt is evidenced in the Late Chalcolithic period, the floruit for these interrelationships was the Early Bronze I and II periods. This topic will be discussed as a unit below, but it is important to note here that strong cultural influences from the north are also apparent at this time (Amiran 1970a; Hennessy 1967). Pottery, artifacts, seals, the broadroom house, religious architecture (and thus traditions) demonstrate that culturally, and probably ethnically, Palestine belonged within the cultural sphere of greater Syro-Mesopotamia.

Thus, the general archaeological picture in Early Bronze I appears to indicate a sociopolitical patterning similar to that of the preceding Late Chalcolithic period, but with important distinctions. Levy's (1986) analysis shows that the inhabitants at that time, although still strikingly regionalized, had already reached a certain level of cultural complexity in terms of production, craft specialization (particularly metallurgy), and intra- and interregional commercial relationships. He has argued effectively that these developments and, especially, a two-tiered site settlement pattern imply a ranked social ordering that we may term a *chiefdom* (see Service 1962). This model describes a movement from egalitarianism (tribal society) to a pre-state ranked society where managerial authority based on kinship rested in the hands of a leader who ruled from a particular center.

The chiefdom model generally fits the archaeological record of Early Bronze I, although a distinction may be made in the degree of intensification and stabilization of a Palestinian society whose economy was founded more on agriculture and trade. The underlying process—urbanization—is apparent in the following areas: development toward a three-tiered (or state) hierarchy of sites; expansion of agriculture and thus food surplus; growth in intra- and interregional trade; less regionalization in site settlement and craft specializations (ceramics, metals); and indications of developing social stratification in the differentiation of public and residential areas. The general picture in Early Bronze I is one of growing sociopolitical complexity, as Palestine's economy was linked with neighboring regions in an interregional trade network.

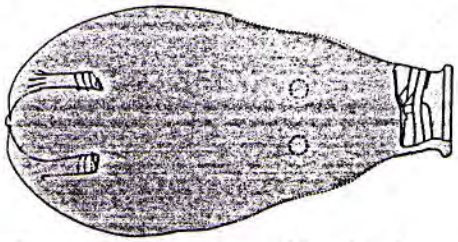
In summary, the data suggest that in Early Bronze I, urbanization processes—anticipated in the Late Chalcolithic period—gained momentum and steadily evolved into the urban city-state institutions at the transition from Early Bronze I to II.

When a society reaches a certain level of growth in trade, technology, population, and complexity, the development of an infrastructure (the state) to support its administration tends to occur (Trigger 1972). A correlative of this development (though not evidenced in Palestine) is usually an institutionalized hierarchy with centralized secular or religious leadership (a prince or priest). Therefore, one need not, as in the past, explain the development of urbanization processes or the construction of urban fortifications by the arrival of new peoples. With trade routes to guard, inevitable competiton among major centers, the ever-present threat of pastoral-nomadic groups on the borders, and political stability to maintain, defensive measures were necessary.

Early Bronze II (circa 3100 to 2700 B.C.)

The city-state. The fully emerged city-state system is in evidence by shortly after 3100 B.C. About half the population was distributed throughout the hill country of Galilee, Samaria, and Judea—the areas of highest agricultural return, particularly olive oil and wine production. Analyses of settlement data (Joffe 1985; Broshi and Gophna 1984) indicate a clear three-tiered ranking system in the distribution of site sizes, implying a more centralized organizational network. Sites generally range from large (20 acres or more) and medium (10 to 20 acres) cities and towns to small (2.5 to 10 acres) and very small (less than 2.5 acres) villages and hamlets. Size alone suggests that an

This fenestrated incense stand, dating to EB III, was found at Ai. From volume 1 of the Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land *(Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1977).*



Zoomorphic alabaster vessel found in the sanctuary at Ai. Reconstructed, it is in the shape of a waterskin. The identity of the animal depicted is uncertain, although it has been suggested that it is a hippopotamus. Note the knotted band moldings on the neck and legs. A complete "hoof" is found on the extant right leg. Photograph from Amiran 1970b. Drawing from Callaway 1978.

The large number of small villages during EB II indicates that there was still a significant social component of sedentary/pastoral peoples in the rural areas whose nonurban traditions ran counter to those of the urbanites.

intermediate administrative organization operated between the large rural agricultural producers and the urban redistribution centers.

It is significant that small villages, especially hamlets (less than 2.5 acres), are proportionately the most numerous. This is an important statistic because it underscores that there was still a significant social component of sedentary/pastoral peoples in the rural areas whose nonurban, more kinship-based traditions ran counter to those of the urbanites. In times of centralized political authority, these groups could be controlled by the urban principalities. At other times these loosely confederated tribal groups were relatively autonomous, as is evident in the Early Bronze IV period.

Although elements of city planning can be discerned at numerous sites—Bâb edh-Dhrâ^{c}, Jericho, Dothan, Beth-yerah, Beth-shean, Megiddo, Taanach, Aphek—I will concentrate on those sites with the greatest horizontal exposure: Ai, Arad, and Tell el-Far^{c}ah North.

Ai. Situated in biblical Ephraim, the 28-acre site of Ai (Callaway 1972, 1980) already epitomizes in phase 3 the classic urban center of Palestine. Occupying the acropolis is a large broadroom building that appears to be a temple. Surrounding the city is a 4-meter-wide wall cut by a series of 1-meter-wide openings (gates), which were defended by nearby huge towers (elliptical and round). Within the fortifications appear typical broadroom houses that include hearths, ovens, and domestic appurtenances such as storage jars, querns, and grinding stones. Following a violent destruction, phase 4 saw the rebuilding of the acropolis structure (clearly a temple in this phase) and especially the strengthening of the fortifications. Whether caused by earthquake activity or attack by enemies, destruction layers, as at Ai, characterize the cities of the Early Bronze II and III periods. In fact, the fortifications at Jericho underwent seventeen rebuilds.

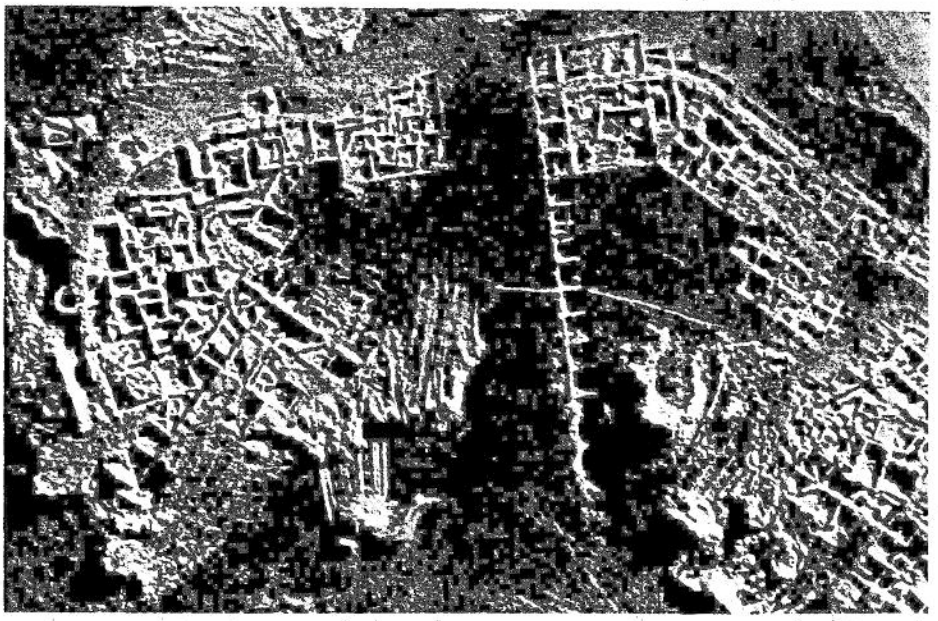
Arad. Our best picture of city planning comes from the northern Negeb site of Tell Arad (strata 2 and 3). Fourteen seasons (Amiran and others 1978; Amiran 1980) have revealed a wide horizontal exposure of the 22-acre site, which is surrounded by a 2.4-meter-wide wall fortified at intervals by semicircular exterior towers. Social stratification is witnessed clearly by a series of monumental buildings (sacred precinct and "palace") at the center of the mound (although not on an acropolis) as well as the differentiation of domestic houses in several areas just within the fortifications. Evincing continuity with earlier cultic practices, the sacred precinct includes a "twinned" temple, along with a *bamah* (sacrificial altar) and *favissa* (a repository for discarded cultic objects) in its courtyard. Other large public buildings near a reservoir point to municipal control of the water administration. Whether a religious or civil authority was in control is unknown, but based on the preeminent position of the sacred precinct at Arad (and other sites), it would seem that, as in Mesopotamia, a religious elite exercised considerable control.

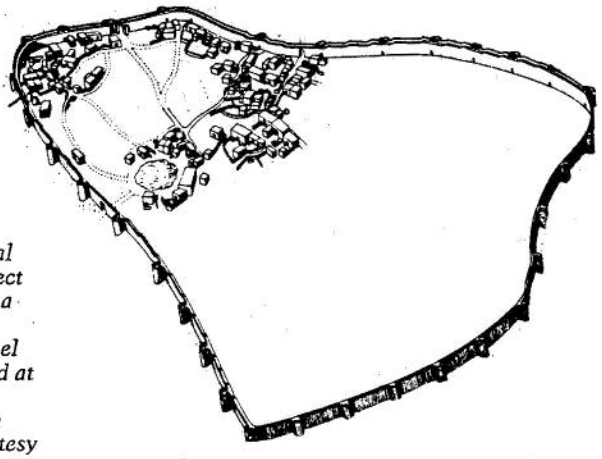
The layout of strata 2 and 3 also shows planning in its system of streets and blocks of houses. Major streets parallel the outer perimeter wall, and transverse streets radiate like the spokes of a wheel from the center city or agora. The courtyard house, still found in the Middle East today, is exemplified by a series of interconnected, bench-lined broadroom

houses arranged around a courtyard where domestic work took place. Larger compounds possibly indicate differences in wealth, although this may simply reflect the extended family that appears to have been the basic domestic unit. Paleobotanical remains indicate a typical Mediterranean, mixed economy. Barley was the dominant plant, but einkorn, emmer, and bread wheat were also cultivated. Legumes, lentils, peas, linseed, olive stones, and vine pips, as well as sheep, goat, and cattle bones were also recovered.

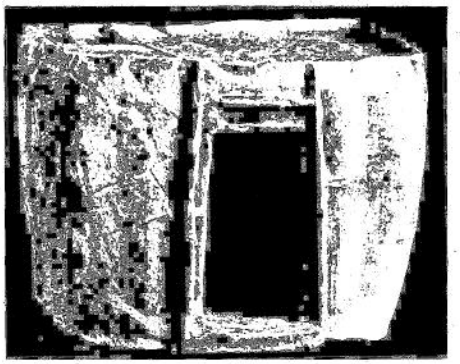
Tell el-Farᶜah North. Six phases at Tell el-Farᶜah provide another glimpse of urban planning in Early Bronze II (de Vaux 1971). In the earliest phase, one of the best-preserved gates in Palestine was discovered. Two chambered, brick towers about 10 meters long (still preserved to approximately 4 meters in height) flank a wide passageway through the city-wall. The town plan is already clear in this phase. Intersecting, paved streets divide blocks of interconnected, rectangular houses, some with benches and rows of bases to support roof pillars. Two pottery workshops and a two-story kiln were found, attesting to the beginning of the mass production of pottery throughout Palestine at this time. Excavation uncovered a temple with an open hall and sanctuary, although it apparently was located in the midst of a residential block. At this site the defenses were also strengthened throughout Early Bronze II, including the addition of a glacis (or earthen embankment).

These archaeological data generally equate with political authority probably centralized at the city-state level. But it is doubtful whether, as in Mesopotamia, any of the independent city-states ever acquired hegemony over other major centers, although the series of destructions at some sites may reflect internecine competition. The data also point to an economy based on intensive agriculture and an international network of trade and a redistribution system (discussed below). Differentiated urban sectors presuppose a complex social stratification elevated beyond kinship ties, and the centrally located temples suggest a cultic uniformity indicative of a priestly elite. Most apparent, though, the striking uniformity of the material culture and city-state design throughout Palestine is a sign of an integrated society. In summary, during Early Bronze II there existed cities, towns, and villages with a fully integrated society among which there were complex interrelationships and interdependencies.





Tell Arad gives us our best picture of city planning in the Early Bronze. The city-wall, towers, and private dwellings excavated in the southern section can be seen in an aerial of the site. Courtesy of Pictorial Archive. An isometric reconstruction of the fortified city from EB II shows the separation of public areas, in the center, from residential areas, along the wall. Radial streets connect the two areas, and the site is encircled by a wall fortified with bastions. Drawing by Lane Ritmeyer is used courtesy of the Israel Museum. The ceramic house model, found at Arad, reveals the typical rectangular or broadroom house of the third millennium B.C.E. with the door on the long side. Courtesy of the Israel Museum and David Harris.



Foreign Relations with Egypt in Early Bronze I and II

The nature of foreign relations with Egypt (that is, whether the archaeological data indicate trade or political domination—Yadin 1955; Yeivin 1960) has been a debated issue for some time. This topic was recently the subject of an article in *BA* (Wright 1985), where an excellent review of the problem and of the con-

Urban collapse. By 2350/2300 B.C., the city-state system had collapsed and all the tells were abandoned; urbanism in Palestine no longer existed. Paradoxically, it was during the Early Bronze III period that the system seemed strongest; in fact all the data seem to suggest that political control was more firmly established at that time. The monumentality of the public/religious sectors shows an intensification of social stratification and presumably greater control by a political elite. The size and continued rebuttressing of defensive works could only have been organized by a highly centralized political authority with control over a significant labor force. The massive food-storage facilities discovered in this period, the size of the major centers, and the evidence that many of these sites were occupied to their capacity imply an increase in urban population. Urban growth in Early Bronze III was characterized by highly nucleated urban centers. As these centers absorbed a growing population, smaller sites were depopulated or abandoned. Indeed, some data suggest a corresponding decline in sedentary village settlements (Fargo 1979). I have already noted above that at the end of Early Bronze II numerous sites were abandoned.

A similar phenomenon has been noted in Mesopotamia, where settlement surveys show that when urban centers became highly nucleated, the population of outlying areas receded (Adams and Nissen 1972; Adams 1981). A concomitant of this appears to be lessening political control by urban centers and expanded autonomy for tribal societies of pastoral nomads. That such a situation existed in Early Bronze III in Palestine is suggested by the archaeological record in the subsequent Early Bronze IV period, when, in the absence of centralized authority, we see a shift towards greater sociopolitical autonomy. Increased autonomy for tribal elements may have resulted in hostilities between the urban principalities and the tribal groups.

We are far from being able to explain definitively the collapse of the urban centers at the end of Early Bronze III, although there are some clues in the archaeological record that allow us to speculate. Although urbanism reached its zenith during this time, the period was apparently not a tranquil one. The massiveness of the fortifications, their continued rebuttressing, and especially Egyptian inscriptional and pictorial evidence of raiding emphasize the high level of militarism in this period (Callaway 1978; de Vaux 1971).

The massive fortifications of EB III suggest constant hostilities, which disrupt trade, inhibit agriculture, and place undue demands on the labor force and army. These stresses may have led to the breakdown of the urban system by the end of the period.

Throughout the Old Kingdom (the Third through Sixth Dynasties), that is, Early Bronze III and the first part of Early Bronze IV, Egyptian raids against "the Asiatics" are attested (Drower and Bottéro 1971). The best evidence comes from the tombs of Dishasha and Saqqara, where fortified towns, some with towers, are shown under siege by Egyptian troops. The people who are besieged are depicted clearly as Asiatics. There are other references to expeditions against fortified towns in a "land of figs and vines," and to a defeat of "the Asiatics, Sand-dwellers," and the Shasu—a term later known to apply to the nomads of our region. Thus the textual references to continual raiding by Egypt may explain the monumental fortifications of the period, and it would also provide one rationale for immigration to the cities as the more sedentary-based rural peoples sought protection. Others presumably would have opted for the more mobile life of pastoral nomadism.

It is known that constant hostilities disrupt trade, depopulate the areas around cities, inhibit agricultural productivity, and place undue demands on the labor force and army.

Such stresses, if they occurred, may have led to social unrest, political upheaval, and the final breakdown of the system by the end of Early Bronze III. It should also be noted that a shift to drier conditions, for which there is some climatological evidence (including textual documentation for drought slightly later in Egypt) may have also played a role in the process of deurbanization (Butzer 1970; Bell 1971; Horowitz 1974). The precise reasons may never be known. I must stress, however, that there is no evidence to posit, as has been done in the past, a nomadic invasion as explanation for the collapse of the urban city-state system (see Kenyon, Bottéro, and Posener 1971).

Early Bronze IV (circa 2350/2300 to 2000 B.C.)

Urban regression. Although current anthropological views on culture change place greater emphasis on isolating internal mechanisms in order to explain processes of change, earlier scholarship tended to view abrupt change in terms of "invasions of new peoples." In the face of such abrupt sociocultural change at the end of Early Bronze III, where urbanism was succeeded by nonurban settlement and nomadism, it is no surprise that invasion theories were appealed to as an explanation for these dramatic events. The most enduring has been the Amorite hypothesis. Although first espoused by Albright in the 1920s, it was Kathleen Kenyon who revitalized this theory in the 1960s as a result of her excavations at Jericho (see the most complete treatment in Kenyon,

sedentary component existed in Transjordan at this time and that the ceramic repertoire exemplified both continuity from local traditions and a foreign element (1974). A new horizon of degenerate red-slipped and burnished pottery at Bâb edh-Dhrâ^{c} likewise showed continuity from the Early Bronze III and could be compared with ceramic types west of the Jordan (Schaub 1973). Dever (1973) termed this pottery the "missing link" between Early Bronze III and the "classic" Middle Bronze I of Palestine and suggested renaming the resultant phases of the period (Early Bronze IVA, IVB, and IVC). Thus the case for the continuity of indigenous traditions during Early Bronze IV began to grow (Oren 1973b), along with a preference for the Early Bronze IVA–C terminology and a call for the abandonment of the Amorite hypothesis and invasion theories in general (Richard 1980; Dever 1980).

Since there is no consensus yet on the proper terminology for the period, the various terms previously adopted and still found in the scholarly literature should be noted. They are: *Early Bronze IV* (Wright 1937); *Middle Bronze I* (Albright 1932); *Intermediate Early Bronze/Middle Bronze* (Kenyon 1951); *Intermediate Bronze Age* (Smith 1962; Lapp 1966); *Early Bronze IIIC/Early Bronze IV/Middle Bronze I* (Albright 1965); and *Early Bronze IV/Middle Bronze I* (Dever 1970). The most often used terms are *Early Bronze IV, Intermediate Early Bronze/Middle Bronze,* and *Middle Bronze I*. The term *Middle Bronze I* is still used by those who believe that continuity in form exists with the following Middle Bronze Age pottery. Recent analyses have shown, however, that this alleged continuity is ephemeral at best (Gerstenblith 1980; Dever 1985a). In Syria also, at least at Ebla (Mazzoni 1985), the Middle Bronze Age assemblage represents a transformation "not to be linked with Early Bronze tradition." Unlike the Early Bronze III to IV transition, a comparison of Early Bronze IV/Middle Bronze Age materials reveals that the differences far outweigh the similarities. Most scholars who use Kenyon's term *Intermediate Early Bronze/Middle Bronze* today concede that significant continuity does exist with the Early Bronze III and that the period is not the "interlude" Kenyon envisioned. (For a recent defense of the term *Intermediate Bronze Age*, see Amiran and Kochavi, 1985.) Thus, the current trend is to describe Wright's original Early Bronze IV (partially reassigned to Early Bronze III; Dever and Richard 1977) and Albright's original Middle Bronze I by the term *Early Bronze IV* (2350/ 2300–2000 B.C.), often divided into phases A, B, and C. Note that the term *Early Bronze IV* has now been adopted for Syria (Matthiae 1981; Dornemann 1979).

A sedentary component existed in Transjordan during EB IV, and the ceramic repertoire exemplifies both continuity from local traditions and a foreign element.

Pastoralism. An important step forward occurred when a new anthropological model of pastoral nomadism, in contrast to Kenyon's conception of nomadism, was suggested by Dever (1973, 1977, 1980) as a means to understand the socioeconomic context of transitory archaeological remains of Early Bronze IV. Pastoral nomadism is an important socioeconomic institution throughout antiquity, although excavation has not concentrated on small seasonal sites. Then, as today, pastoral nomadism was a very important institutionalized alternative in semiarid or steppe zones, where desert and cultivable lands converge. Pastoralists must be seen as necessarily coexistent with agricultural society with which they trade, labor, and sometimes war. There is an "economic interdependence" between the two because each has a need for the other's products (Spooner 1973). Their mobility naturally brings them into contact with neighboring regions, suggesting one possible conduit for cultural exchange. Both modern ethnographic research (for example, the Rwala bedouin of southern Syria—Johnson 1969) and the documentation of relations between sedentists and nomads in the texts of Mesopotamia (Rowton 1980 and earlier references cited there; Buccellati 1966; Luke 1965; Matthews 1978) suggest that pastoral nomadism is a good explanatory model for a certain component of society during Early Bronze IV (particularly in the Negeb and Sinai—Dever 1985b).

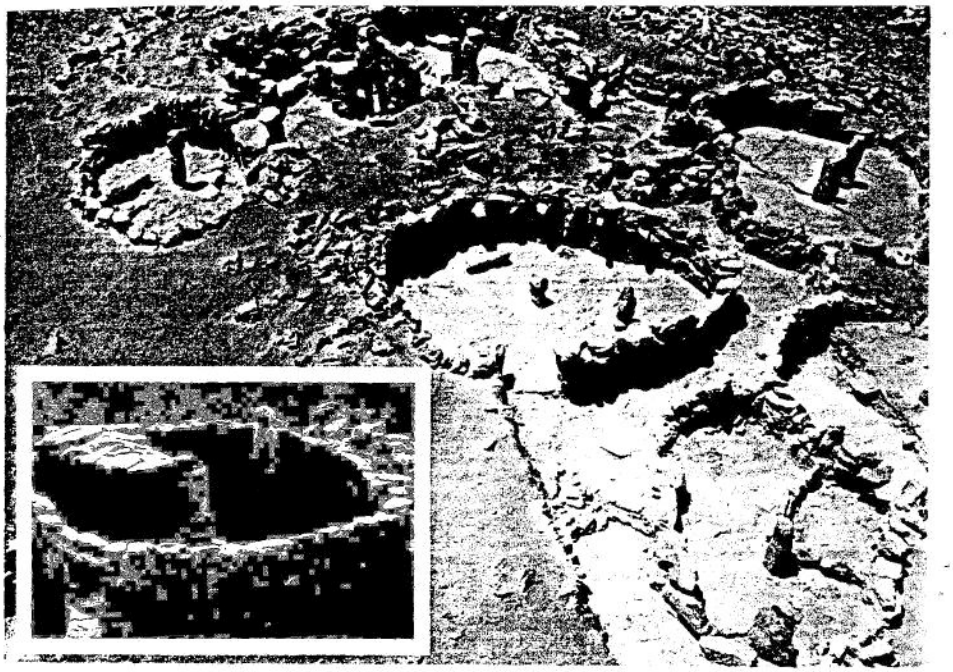
The first complete plan of a seasonal village dating to Early Bronze IV has been discovered at Be^{c}er Resisim, and we can now say much more about the socioeconomic organization of pastoralists. Some eighty curvilinear structures arranged in clusters have been excavated at this site in the western Negeb highlands (Dever 1985b). The size of these huts suggests that they were only used for sleeping quarters. The processing of foodstuffs and tending of animals took place in open areas between the buildings. There is no evidence for social stratification; rather the picture is one of an egalitarian, tribal society. These houses appear to be the seasonal habitations of transhumant pastoralists who subsisted on goat- and sheepherding, some dry farming, and trade. Large cemeteries with similar pottery found some 80 miles away in the hills around Hebron (Jebel Qa^{c}aqir) may suggest their migratory route. Surveys have discovered some 400 nonurban settlements similar to Be^{c}er Resisim throughout the Negeb and Sinai. These data may illuminate several Egyptian texts of the First Intermediate period (for example, The Instruction for King Merikare and The Admonitions of Ipuwer) that relate the attempts of Egypt in the First Intermediate period to stem the tide of Asiatics into Egypt.

coexist with agricultural society, with which they trade, labor, and war. There is an "economic interdependence" because each has a need for the other's products.

Sedentism. The discovery of sedentary sites in Transjordan has over the past fifteen years or so revolutionized our thinking about Early Bronze IV society. Whereas previously it was thought that the area was inhabited solely by nomads, it is now clear that permanent settlements existed and that urban traditions continued into the Early Bronze IV period.

It is now clear that permanent settlements and urban traditions existed in the Transjordan in EB IV. A similar level of sedentism may be discovered in western Palestine. Indeed, surface surveys indicate that small agricultural villages did exist.

With this view from Transjordan, it is probable that a similar level of sedentism will be discovered in western Palestine, and indeed surface surveys indicate that small agricultural villages do exist (Esse 1982; Zori 1962, 1977). At the present time, however, evidence of settlement in western Palestine—aside from the seasonal sites in the Negeb and Sinai—has been excavated at only a few of the major tells (for example, Hazor, Megiddo, Jericho, Beth-shean). The evidence for continuity in permanent settlement and the diffusion of burial and ceramic traditions into Palestine (Dever 1985a) demonstrates that Transjordan played a pivotal role in Early Bronze IV, but for reasons as yet not entirely clear.

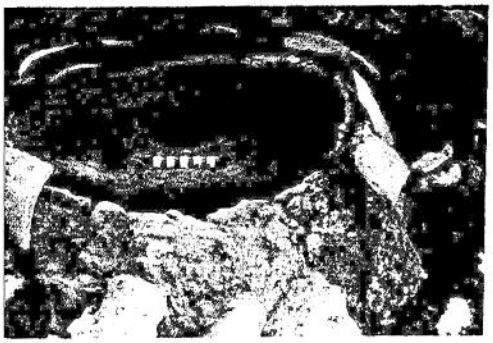


Some eighty curvilinear structures dating to EB IV have been excavated at Be'er Resisim. The inset shows one of these huts as it was reconstructed with beam, chalk-slab, and plaster roof (only one segment completed). Courtesy of Rudolph Cohen and William G. Dever.

Thus our picture of sedentism comes primarily from Transjordan, where excavations at Bâb edh-Dhrâ' (Schaub and Rast 1984), Aroer (Olávarri 1969), Iktanu (Prag 1974), Khirbet Iskander (Parr 1960; Richard 1986), Ader (Cleveland 1960), Tell abu en-'Niaj (Steven Falconer, personal communication), Tell Umm Hammad (Helms 1986), and current excavations at Tell el-'Umeiri (Geraty and others 1986) have revealed various levels of permanent multiphased settlement, from small agricultural villages to small towns with strong urban traditions. Survey has uncovered dozens of other settlement sites in Transjordan of the Early Bronze IV period; these sites will undoubtedly fill out the picture already emerging of a greater level of social complexity than hitherto conjectured for this period.

A detailed look at Khirbet Iskander will suffice to demonstrate the strong connections with the Early Bronze III that we have mentioned above (Richard and Boraas 1984, in press; Richard 1986). Khirbet Iskander is a 7.5-acre site surrounded by a 2.5-meter-wide perimeter wall with reinforced corners that appear to be square towers. At the southeastern corner of the site a two-chambered, bench-lined gate has also come to light. These fortifications are the first and, thus far, the only such defenses known in the Early Bronze IV period. A wide exposure just within the northwestern fortifications has revealed a series of interconnected broadroom houses (one with a bench) grouped around a courtyard. *Tabuns* (cooking ovens), huge saddle querns, mortars, grinders, flint sickle blades, and storage areas all underscore the agricultural base of the community. It appears at this point that there are five major phases to this domestic complex. In one phase some fifty whole or restorable vessels (the largest corpus of intact domestic vessels found at an EB IV sedentary site) were recovered in a storeroom of pottery. Some vessels contained the remains of carbonized grain and one included the complete skeleton of a mouse! Two large cemeteries in the vicinity complete the picture of a well-defended, permanently established agricultural community. On a smaller scale, Khirbet Iskander mirrors the town planning we have described at Early

A chamber of an EB IV shaft tomb at Khirbet Iskander containing the multiple disarticulated burial of at least three people, along with seven ceramic vessels.



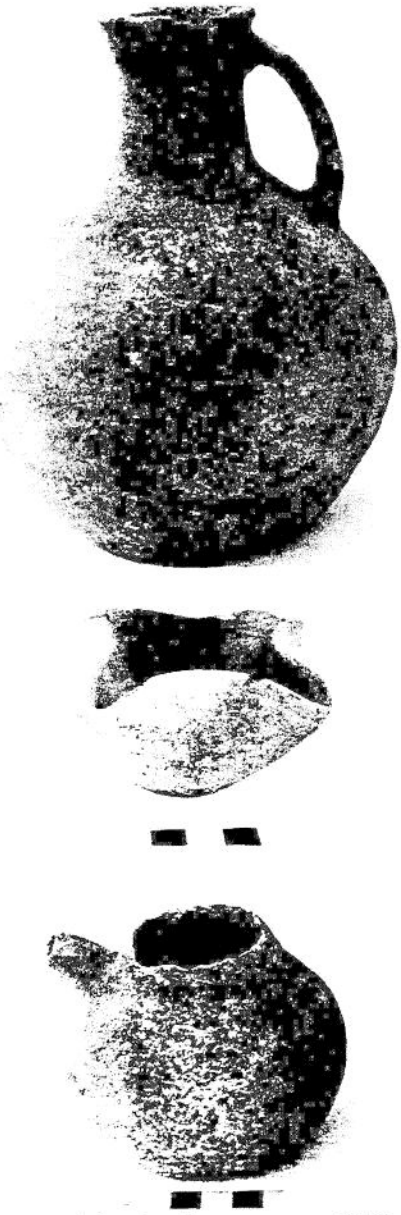
*Two domestic installations excavated at Khirbet Iskander. **Above:** A tabun, or cooking oven. **Below:** A large saddle quern used for grinding grain.*

The last standing menhir, or commemorative marker, at Khirbet Iskander. Although their specific purpose is not known, menhirs are generally considered cultic objects because they have been found associated with cemeteries and sanctuaries.

Bronze Age sites such as Arad, Ai, Tell el-Farᶜah North. Additional excavation is necessary to determine whether there is a separation of domestic and public buildings, and if a sacred area exists at the site. That some regional centers included a sacred area is now confirmed by the recent discovery of a cultic structure at Bâb edh-Dhrâᶜ (Schaub and Rast 1984). In light of this discovery, a reuse of the Megiddo sacred precinct (at least temple 4040) in this period, and likewise an Early Bronze IV date for the menhir-temple at Ader now seem plausible. Har Yeruham is also said to have a small sacred area.

Burial traditions and material culture. Other components of the Early Bronze IV culture reflect similar continuities with Early Bronze III: shaft-tomb, pottery, lithic, and metal traditions. As I have noted, the shaft-tomb tradition (known in Transjordan since Early Bronze I) is found throughout Palestine in Early Bronze IV. The tomb generally consists of a round or square shaft, 1.0 to 2.5 meters in length, connected to one or more round or square chambers of various dimensions with domed roofs. Following interment a blocking stone was set at the entrance and the shaft was filled in. Both primary (usually single) and multiple, disarticulated (secondary) burials are attested. The variety of tomb-types—cairns, built tombs, and dolmens are also known—and burial practices (Kenyon, Bottéro, and Posener 1971) is a good indicator of a loosely integrated society of politically autonomous groups whose customs reflect kinship-based patterns.

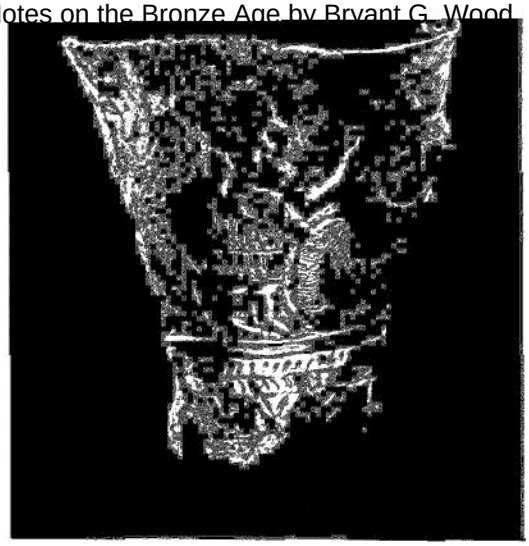
The metal industry displays both local and new Syrian types, and the pottery has a peculiar hybrid quality that is still a point of contention among scholars: Do these new elements represent the presence of new peoples or simply foreign influences? As we have noted in the Early Bronze I to III periods, traditions current in Syria very shortly thereafter were diffused into Palestine and such was



Intact vessels found in the storeroom at Khirbet Iskander.

the case in Early Bronze IV as well. Syrian imported pottery (wheel-made, gray teapots and painted and incised cups), a beautiful silver cup from Ain es-Samiya bearing Mesopotamian mythological scenes, and new metals and innovations in ceramics all underscore continuing trade with Syria, although on a relatively small scale.

The basic red-slipped and burnished Early Bronze III repertoire of platters, bowls, jugs, and jars exists in Early Bronze IV, although in degenerate form and showing decorative motifs, such as a rilled exterior, adopted from a type of decoration in vogue in Syria at this time. The influence, probably derived from trade and cultural contact between the



Silver cup found in an EB IV shaft tomb at Ain es-Samiya. Clearly an import, it is decorated with scenes employing Mesopotamian mythological motifs. Photograph and drawing courtesy of the Israel Museum.

Culture change in Palestine between EB III and IV was once viewed as a bipolar shift from sedentism to nomadism. In reality the shift was from urban to nonurban and pastoral adaptive strategies: from specialization in mode of production to a multi-resource, less specialized economy. This was a natural adaptation following the demise of the urban centers.

two areas, is restricted to decoration, a few new forms, and—in the later well-fired buff pottery—technological advances current in Syria (Dever 1973; Richard 1980; Mazzoni 1985). The new look to the pottery merely reflects concurrent ceramic changes in Syria; however, because in Palestine these ceramic innovations coincided with sociocultural change, their uniqueness has in the past been overly stressed.

The most obvious new element among the metal types is their quantity in comparison with earlier periods. They are mostly found as tomb offerings (Dever 1972), although examples are known from domestic contexts (Be^{c}er Resisim). The quantity of metals and the evidence for local manufacture (ingots at Be^{c}er Resisim and elsewhere in the Negeb, and analyses evidencing true bronze metallurgy) point to a high level of craft specialization in this industry and to trade. The recent discovery of settlement pottery from Early Bronze IV near the Wadi Feinan copper mines (Knauf 1986) in southern Transjordan indicates that the mines may have been worked during this period.

Sociocultural change: a reevaluation. Our perspective on the Early Bronze IV period has changed radically in light of the growing evidence for permanent sedentary sites. These sites and their material culture illustrate sociocultural continuity with Early Bronze III, and thus support a model of culture change, especially for Transjordan, which is less abrupt than hitherto believed. Small towns and villages, agriculture, and pastoralism are indigenous elements in Early Bronze III. Sociocultural change at the Early Bronze III/IV horizon (in this case greater pastoralism and village life as opposed to urban settlement) is better understood as a change in emphasis of production and organization in response to irreversible stresses on the urban system, rather than as an abrupt shift to a new sociocultural phenomenon (see Salzman 1978). The most telling evidence for this new view on sociocultural change lies in the archaeological record of Early Bronze IV, where the actual transitions and continuities from Early Bronze III are manifest. In this view, then, there is no need to posit foreign migrations from Syria (Prag 1985).

Culture change between Early Bronze III and IV has in the past been viewed as a bipolar shift from sedentism to nomadism, whereas in reality the shift was from urban to nonurban and pastoral adaptive strategies—that is, from specialization in mode of production to a multi-resource, less specialized economy as a natural adaptation following the demise of the urban centers. Recent research suggests that specialization-despecialization is a more adequate perspective from which to view Early Bronze IV adaptation in Palestine-Transjordan (Long 1986; see Bates and Lees 1977).

This new perspective on Early Bronze IV is totally in concert with newer anthropological conceptions of society, sociocultural change, and the processes of sedentarization and nomadization (see Adams and Nissen 1972; Nissen 1980; Adams 1978, 1981; Salzman 1978, 1980a, 1980b). To understand change, it is important to view society—a complex set of organizations, institutions, customs—as fluid rather than rigid. Within this society, there is a range of life-styles and institutionalized al-

ternative strategies (for instance, urbanism, village life, and pastoralism) upon which there is greater or lesser stress depending on circumstances (Salzman 1980a). In Early Bronze IV there was an emphasis on nonurban (village and town) and pastoral subsistence strategies in the absence of centralized political control. This fluidity in subsistence strategies (cultural adaptation) along the urban-nonurban continuum provides the mechanism for sociocultural change. Change becomes apparent in the archaeological record when the aggregate of subsistence strategies shifts, as happened in Early Bronze IV.

Sedentarization/nomadization oscillations do, however, occur. They can be documented in the ethnographic present (Salzman 1980b) and in antiquity, as texts and surveys illuminate the movements of nomads into the towns and back to pastoralism, depending on the political and economic climate (Rowton 1980 and earlier works; Buccellati 1966; Luke 1965; Matthews 1978; Adams and Nissen 1972; Adams 1981). Such oscillations must be viewed, however, as part of a larger urban-nonurban process that is cyclical throughout antiquity. Indeed, at the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age, as a result of flourishing Egyptian and Syrian cultures, there was a swing back to urbanism in Palestine.

Conclusion

This survey has attempted to illustrate the fundamental adaptability of the indigenous population in the rise and collapse of urbanism in the Early Bronze Age. The view that Early Bronze civilization represents one cultural continuum from Early Bronze I to IV is not new: G. Ernest Wright drew the same conclusion in 1937 almost solely on the basis of ceramic continuity. What I have attempted to do, in light of the wealth of data available today, is provide a theoretical framework within which to understand some of the processes underlying sociocultural continuity and to illuminate change—growth and decline—as a necessary dynamic in cultural evolution.

Note

[1]Recent evidence suggests that 3200 B.C., the traditional date of the beginning of the Early Bronze Age/end of the Chalcolithic period should be raised to 3400 B.C. See the section in this paper entitled "History of Research."

Acknowledgment

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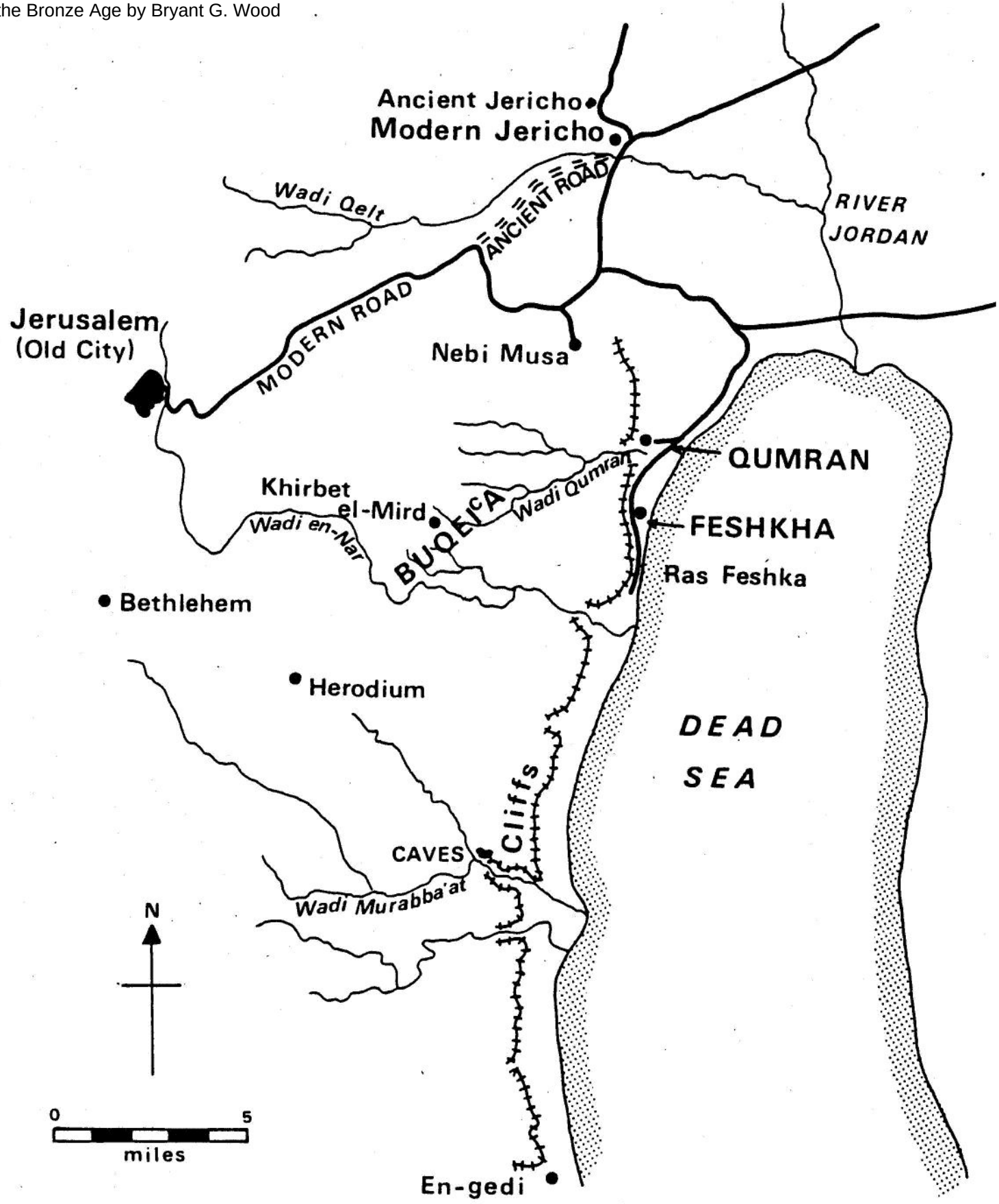
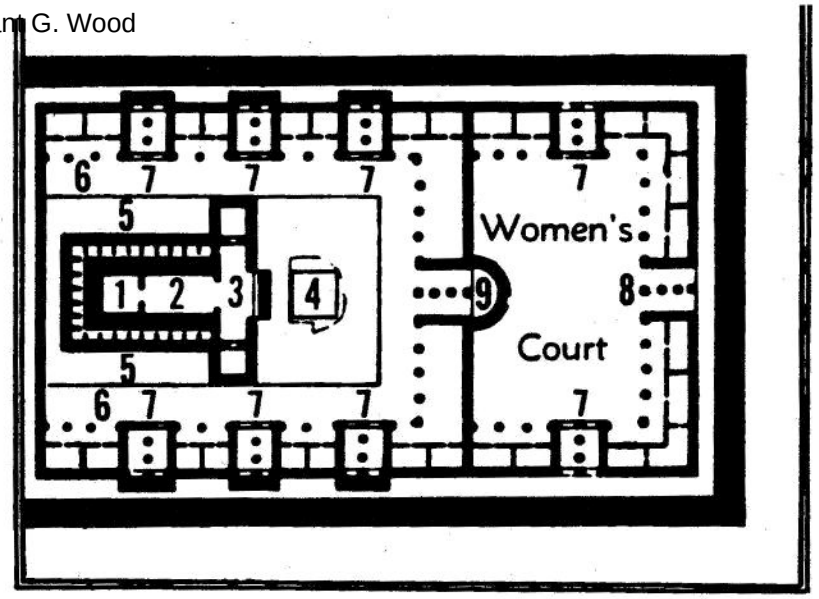
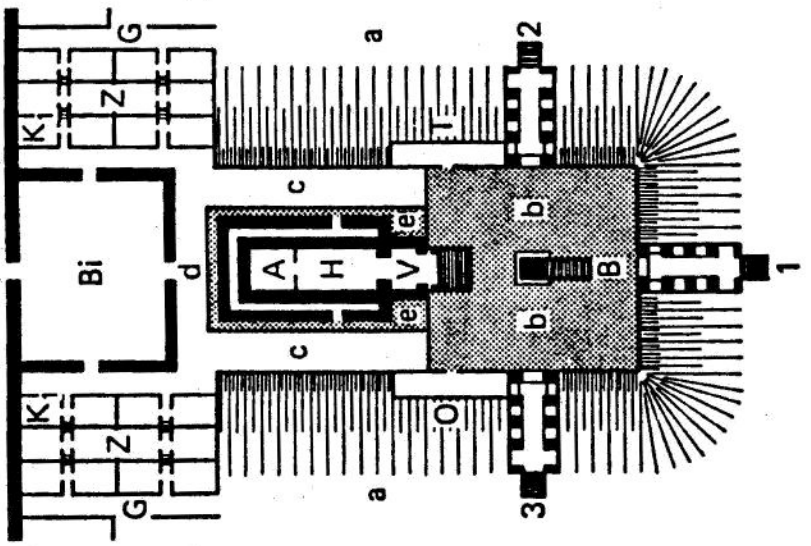
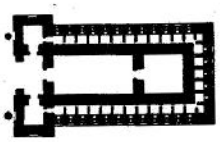




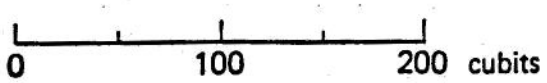
Herod's Temple

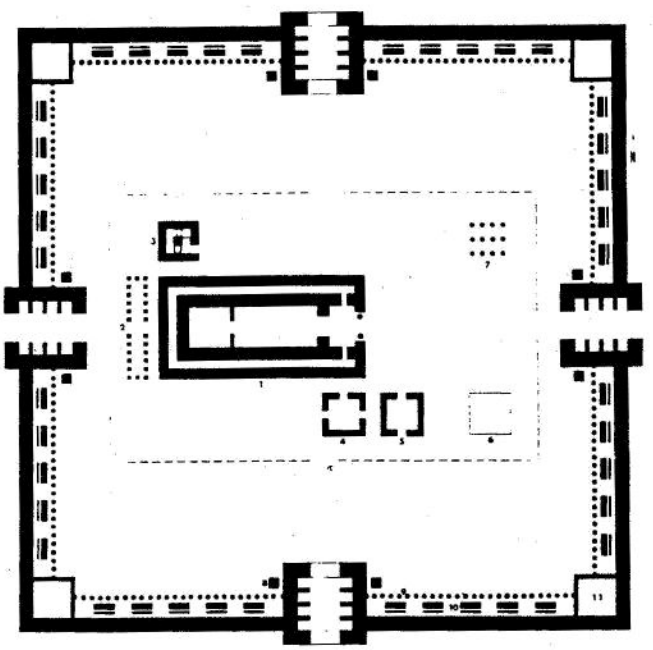


Ezekiel's Temple

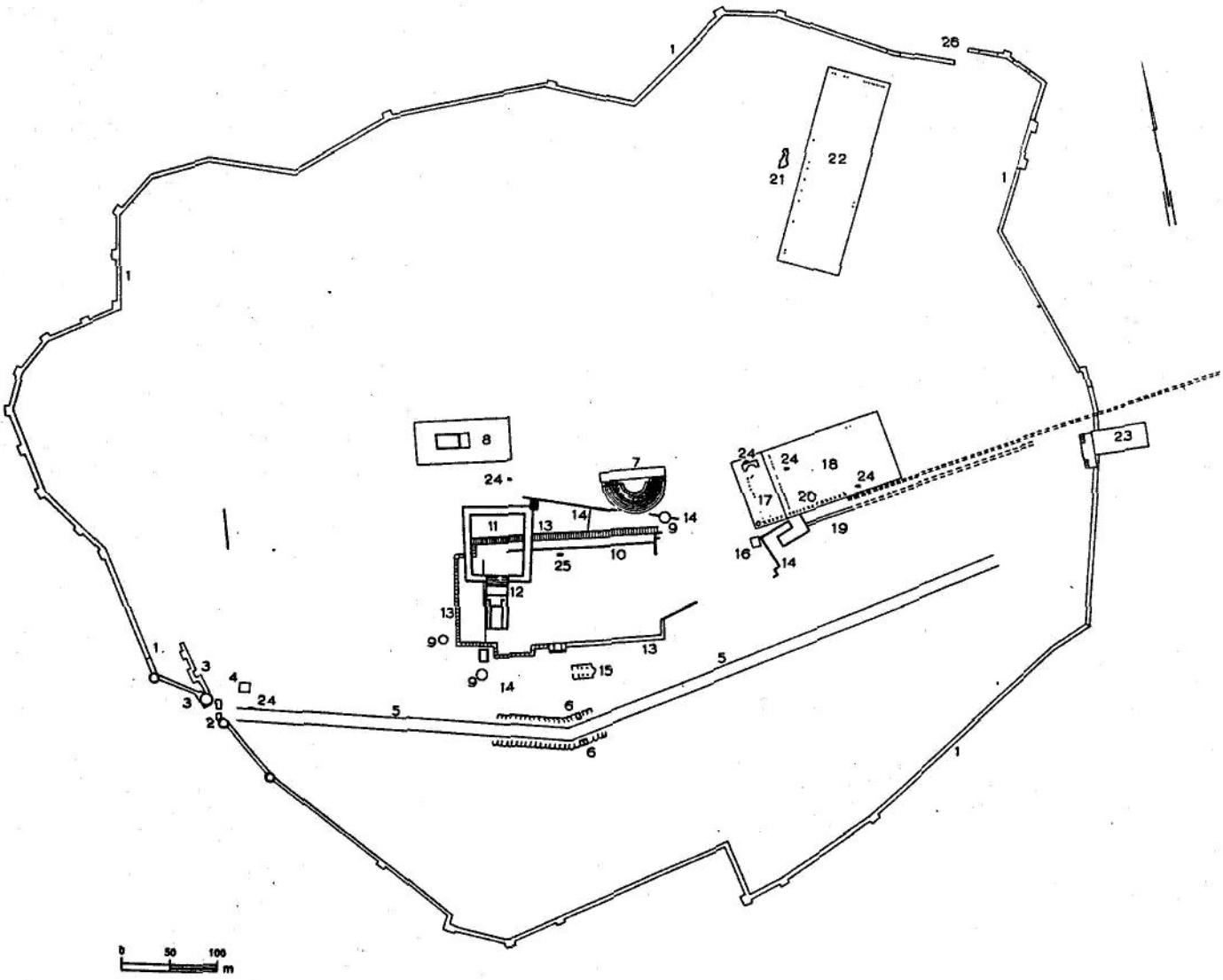


Solomon's Temple





Qumran Temple



1. Roman city wall.
2. West gate. 3. Hellenistic wall and tower. 4. Roman shrine. 5. Colonnaded street. 6. Shops. 7. Theater.
8. Temple of Kore. 9. Hellenistic round towers.
10. Israelite inner wall. 11. Summit temple, forecourt.
12. Summit temple. 13. Israelite casemate wall
14. Lower Israelite wall. 15. Church. 16. Roman shrine.
17. Basilica. 18. Forum. 19. Paved street. 20. Roman conduit. 21. Israelite tombs. 22. Hippodrome.
23. Church and mosque. 24. Israelite building fragment.
25. "Ivory house". 26. Gate(?).

The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations, Simon & Schuster, 1993.

TERMS USED IN OLD TESTAMENT STUDY

Apocrypha – Group of books not part of the Jewish canon of the Hebrew Scriptures, but found in some early Christian versions of the Old Testament. Protestants omit these books from the Bible, while Catholics consider most of them authoritative and include them in their Bible.
Apocryphal – Not genuine, counterfeit, of doubtful authorship or authenticity.
Autograph – Original handwritten manuscript.
Books of Moses – Another term for the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible.

Canon – Books of the Bible accepted as genuine.
Chiasmus – Parallel, or mirror image, structure.
Codex – Leaf book, as distinguished from a roll or scroll, invented and first used by the Romans; a handwritten manuscript in book form.

Etiology – Story made up to explain something (natural feature, ruin, etc.).

Florilegium – Volume or collection of brief extracts or writings.

Gemara – Second part of the Talmud, providing a commentary on the first part, the Mishnah.
Genizah – Storeroom or repository in a synagogue used for discarded, damaged or defective books and papers and sacred objects.

Haggadah – Interpretation of the historical and religious passages of Jewish Scripture that are not legal in character. Unlike the strict logic of halakic interpretation, haggadah could give free play to the imagination.
Halakah (plural **Halakot**) – Teaching one is to follow in Judaism; the rules or laws that are to guide a person's life. Halakic interpretation of the Torah (Biblical law) sought to expound the consequences of individual commandments, the cases in practical life to which they applied, and how they might be accurately preserved.
Hebrew Bible – Jewish sacred writings equivalent to the Protestant Old Testament, although the books are arranged in a different order.

Inclusio – Beginning and ending a literary unit with identical or similar lines.

Kethubim – Hebrew word meaning "writings;" that portion of the Hebrew Bible comprising Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ruth, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and 1 and 2 Chronicles.

Lingua Franca – International diplomatic language of the day.

Masorah – Hebrew word meaning "tradition." It refers to the body of Jewish tradition concerning the Hebrew Bible.
Masoretes – Group of Jewish scribes who preserved the text of the Hebrew Scriptures from before the Christian era to about A.D. 900.
Masoretic Text – Traditional Hebrew text of the Old Testament which was given vowels and copious marginal notation by the Massoretes mostly between A.D. 500 and 900.
Midrash – Any of the rabbinical commentaries and explanatory notes on the Scriptures, written between the beginning of the Exile (ca. 600 B.C.) and ca. A.D. 1200.

ROMAN ADMINISTRATION OF PALESTINE

Early Roman Period, 37 BC-AD 132

Herodian Period, 37 BC-AD 70

Augustus, Roman Emperor 27 BC-AD14 (Lk 2:1)

Herod, King of Judea 40-4 BC (Mt 2:1-19; Lk 1:5)

Archelaus, Ethnarch of Judea and Samaria 4 BC-AD 6 (Mt 2:22) son of Herod

Antipas (Herod the Tetrarch, Herod Antipas), Tetrarch of Galilee and Peraea, 4 BC-AD 39 (Mt 14:1-12; Mk 6:14-29; 8:15; Lk 3:1, 19-20; 8:3; 9:7-9; 13:31; 23:7-15; Acts 4:27; 13:1) son of Herod

Philip (Herod Philip II), Tetrarch of Ituraea and Trachonitis, 4 BC-AD 34 (Lk 3:1)

Annas, High Priest AD 6-15 (Lk 3:2; Jn 18:13, 24; Acts 4:6)

Tiberius Caesar, Roman Emperor AD 14-37 (Mt 22:17, 21; Mk 12:14, 16, 17; Lk 3:1; 20: 22, 24, 25; 23:2; Jn 19:12, 15)

Pontius Pilot, Prefect of Judea AD 26-37 (Mt 27:2-65; Mk 15:1-44; Lk 3:1; 13:1; 23:1-52; Jn 18:28-19:38; Acts 3:13; 4:27; 13:28; 1 Tim 6:13)

Caiaphas, High Priest AD 18-36 (Mt 26:3, 57; Lk 3:2; Jn 11:49-52; 18:13-28; Acts 4:6; 5:17, 21, 27; 9:1)

King Herod (Agrippa I), King of Ituraea, Tranchonitis, Galilee and Paraea AD 37-44 (Acts 12:1-23; 23:35)

Claudius, Roman Emperor AD 41-54 (Acts 11:28; 17:7; 18:2)

Antonius Felix, Procurator of Samaria and Judea AD 52-59 (Acts 23:23-24:27; 25:14)

Drusilla, wife of Antonius Felix (Acts 24:24)

King Agrippa (Agrippa II), King of Ituraea, Tranchonitis, Lysimachus, Varus, Galilee and Peraea AD 49-95 (Acts 25:13-26:32)

Bernice, sister of King Agrippa (Acts 25:13-26:32)

Ananias, High Priest AD 47-58 (Acts 23:1-10; 24:1)

Nero, Roman Emperor AD 54-68 (Acts 25; 26:32; 27:24; 28:19; Phil 4:22)

Portius Festus, Procreator of Samaria and Judea AD 59-62 (Acts 24:27-26:32)

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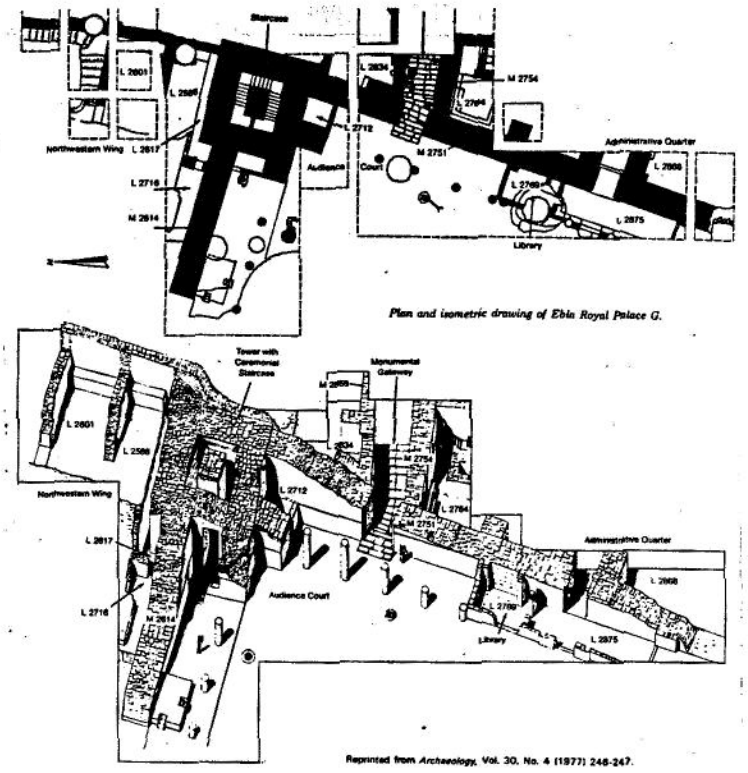
Ebla

The main sectors of Royal Palace G consist of the two rooms of the Northwestern Wing; a spacious courtyard, the Audience Court, with its northern and eastern facades; the tower, enclosing the Ceremonial Staircase at the intersection of these facades; the guard rooms; the Monumental Gateway; and the Administrative Quarter. In addition, small parts of a courtyard to the east of the Northwestern Wing were also probably part of the palace.

The tablets were recovered from the following locations: 42 from Room L 2586 in 1974, 1000 from Store Room L 2712 in 1975, and 14,000 from Library L 2769 in 1975.



Plan and isometric drawing of Ebla Royal Palace G.

Reprinted from *Archaeology*, Vol. 30, No. 4 (1977) 246-247.

Ebla = modern Tell Mardikh, located in Syria, 33 miles southwest of Aleppo.

Scripture references. The Bible does not specifically mention Ebla, but a number of passages indicate that the patriarchs originally came from the area of Haran in southern Turkey, about 150 miles northeast of Ebla. See Genesis 11:31-12:1, 24:1-10, 27:41-28:5.

Excavated from the early 1960s to the present by a team of Italian archaeologists under the direction of Paulo Matthiae.

1968 - statue fragment found with the name Ebla on it.

1974-1977 - ca. 16,000 tablets and fragments of tablets found in Palace G. Represents 8,000-9,000 complete tablets. The tablets date to 2400-2250 B.C. and are written in Sumerian (the language of ancient Sumer) and a new language called "Eblaite" by Giovanni Pettinato, the expedition's original epigrapher. Eblaite is an alphabetic Northwest Semitic language related to Canaanite, from which Hebrew is derived. 70% are economic and administrative, 20% are literary (proverbs, hymns, myths) and 10% are historical (treaties, etc.).

Important for illuminating the period of the early Patriarchs (200 years before Abraham!) and for providing valuable new information on the history and meaning on the Hebrew language.

Further Reading: Ebla: An Empire Rediscovered by Paulo Matthiae, Doubleday, 1981. Ebla: A New Look at History by Giovanni Pettinato, Johns Hopkins, 1991.

Biblical Archaeologist, September 1987, v. 50 no.3. pp. 148-177
"The Middle Bronze Age: The zenith of the urban Canaanite era"; William G. Dever

Archaeological Sources for the History of Palestine

The Middle Bronze Age

The Zenith of the Urban Canaanite Era

by William G. Dever

A brief look at the succession of cultures in ancient Palestine might almost convert us to a cyclical view of history. It seems that civilizations rose briefly, only to fall, then repeated the process over and over. In this series for *Biblical Archaeologist* we have already surveyed the first such cycle (Richard 1987), in which the initial urban phase in the Early Bronze I–III periods (around 3400–2350/2300 B.C.E.) collapsed toward the end of the third millennium B.C.E. This was followed by a "dark age" of several centuries duration in Early Bronze IV (around 2350/2300–2000 B.C.E.), a period marked by a massive disruption and dislocation of population from the urban centers and a reversion to a pastoral nomadic life-style. But the light was soon to dawn again, and the archaeological record reflects it brilliantly.

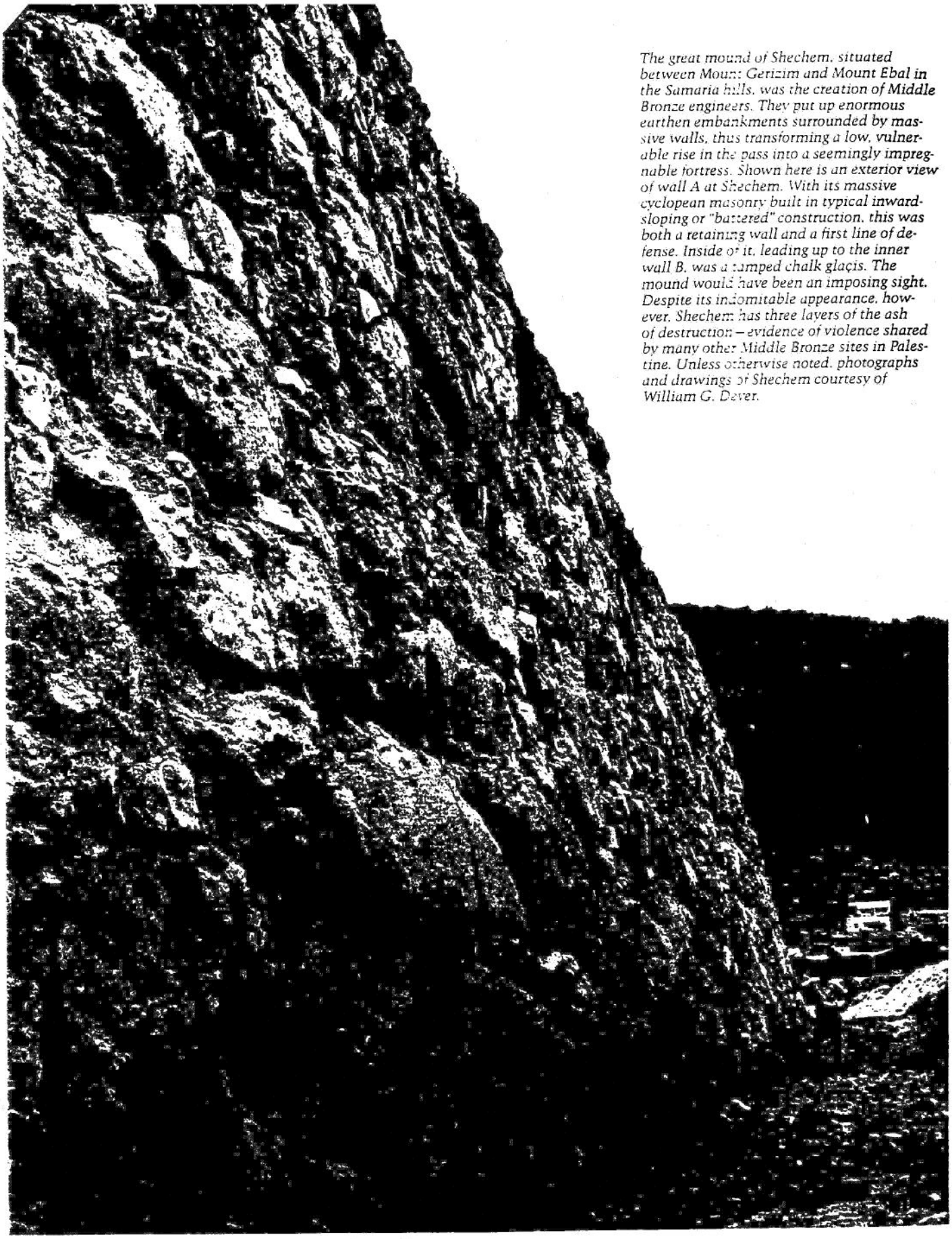
Archaeological periods. Sometime around 2000 B.C.E. the long process of collapse in the southern Levant was halted, and improved conditions soon set the stage for a sudden revival of urban life, ushering in what is termed the *Middle Bronze Age* (often abbreviated as MB).

Sometime around 2000 B.C.E. the long process of collapse in the Southern Levant was halted. A sudden revival of urban life ushered in the Middle Bronze Age.

The *Middle Bronze I–III* terminology that has recently been suggested (Dever 1980; Gerstenblith 1980, 1983: 2–3), and which is used here, retains the conventional three phases of Middle Bronze first distinguished in the 1920s by William F. Albright at Tell Beit Mirsim in his *Middle Bronze IIA–C*. The changed numerical designation, however, is based on the current recognition that Albright's *Middle Bronze I* is not the first phase of the true Middle Bronze Age in the cultural sequence of Palestine; rather, it is the last phase of the Early Bronze Age (now generally termed *Early Bronze IV*—Dever 1980; Richard 1987). Simply abandoning the older term, though, would mean that the Middle Bronze

Comparative Chronology

Palestine					Egypt
Present Terms	Other Terms			Dates B.C.E.	
	Albright	Kenyon	Israeli		
Middle Bronze I	MB IIA	MB I	MB IIA	2000–1800	Middle Kingdom (Twelfth and Thirteenth Dynasties)
Middle Bronze II	MB IIB			1800–1650	
		MB II	MB IIB		
Middle Bronze III	MB IIC			1650–1500	Second Intermediate (Fourteenth–Seventeenth Dynasties)



The great mound of Shechem, situated between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal in the Samaria hills, was the creation of Middle Bronze engineers. They put up enormous earthen embankments surrounded by massive walls, thus transforming a low, vulnerable rise in the pass into a seemingly impregnable fortress. Shown here is an exterior view of wall A at Shechem. With its massive cyclopean masonry built in typical inward-sloping or "battered" construction, this was both a retaining wall and a first line of defense. Inside of it, leading up to the inner wall B, was a tamped chalk glacis. The mound would have been an imposing sight. Despite its indomitable appearance, however, Shechem has three layers of the ash of destruction – evidence of violence shared by many other Middle Bronze sites in Palestine. Unless otherwise noted, photographs and drawings of Shechem courtesy of William G. Dever.

sequence would begin, rather awkwardly, with *Middle Bronze II*. Thus Kenyon (1973) and others have referred to Albright's *Middle Bronze IIA* as *Middle Bronze I*, and we carry this approach to its logical conclusion, adding *Middle Bronze II* and *Middle Bronze III*.

The change in terminology is thus partly a matter of newer perceptions of the transition between the Early Bronze and Middle Bronze periods, as well as a means of keeping the system of nomenclature consistent and as convenient as possible. It must be noted, however, that all terminologies agree on the essential unity and continuity of the several phases of the Middle Bronze Age in Palestine as a historical and cultural entity. Most Israeli archaeologists even go so far as only acknowledging two phases, arguing that there is still an insufficient stratigraphic and ceramic basis for subdividing the second phase into a second and third phase (Kempinski 1983). American authorities, on the other hand, generally retain Albright's threefold division, basing their view on the fine-grained stratigraphic sequence produced by recent excavations, especially those conducted at Shechem and Gezer.

There is also broad agreement on several other aspects of the period. First, the Middle Bronze Age represents not only a period of rapid recovery and reurbanization after the hiatus in Early Bronze IV but is, in fact, the zenith of urban development in the long Bronze Age in Palestine (about 3400–1200 B.C.E.). Second, Palestine was less isolated than it had been in Early Bronze; indeed, it was so much an integral part of Syria that it may be properly regarded as simply the southern portion of "Greater Canaan," whose existence is well documented in the literary texts of the time, comprising approximately modern coastal and south-central Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, the West Bank, Israel, and, probably, the northern Sinai. Third, the geograph-

The New Archaeology

New archaeology is a term coined by several Americanist archaeologists in the late sixties and early seventies for a new—and then highly controversial—approach to New World archaeology. The new archaeology differed from the old largely in arguing for the substitution of an overall theoretical framework that was in a sense less historical and more anthropological and scientific.

The new school contended that the traditional approach, which was basically concerned with studying culture history, had proven deficient. It had been too preoccupied with the relative dating, comparison, and classification of regional archaeological assemblages. The principal tool employed was usually typology, the exhaustive cataloguing of artifact types and their distribution. The major goal was setting up a relative chronology of the development of types, usually with the assumption that charting the diffusion of artifacts could adequately account for cultural contact and change. But the traditional approach, argued the *new archaeologists*, remained merely descriptive; because of its narrow perspective it lacked true explanatory potential. The ultimate goal of archaeology, in the new view, should be a science of cultural evolution.

The new archaeology demanded nothing less than a radical rethinking of the fundamental methods and objectives of archaeology. The debate, which continued into the early 1980s in Americanist circles, was marked initially by a bewildering variety of proposals and counterproposals, as well as by heated polemics. The leading American journals and the programs of the annual meetings of professional organizations like the Society of American Archaeology reflected the trends. The proliferating literature gradually revealed, however, despite some extremist positions, a growing consensus.

Today, there is general agreement that the new archaeology is here to stay, and the significant trends in theory and method may now be enumerated somewhat as follows. As we shall see, several of these trends have had an impact on Old World archaeology as well.

An ecological approach. This entails the study of sites in their total environmental, as well as historical and cultural, settings. The fundamental assumption is that culture is partly (though, of course, not exclusively) an adaptation to basic physical factors, such as geographical situation, climate and rainfall, natural resources, possibilities for exploiting plants and animals, access to natural trade routes, and the like. One may adopt here a version of general systems theory, a theory first developed by economic geographers and currently employed in many of the natural and social sciences today. The fundamental principle of this theory is that any system, biological or social, is the result of the complex interaction of many components, and the system either grows or declines as a result of the changing balance (homeostasis) it is able to maintain. Subsystems of a culture, such as agriculture and other economic strategies or population growth, will all preserve evidence to some extent in the archaeological record and should be investigated as fully as possible. Central place theory may also be employed to study settlement patterns, the relation of sites to each other, urban-rural dynamics, and the function of marketing economics.

Multidisciplinary strategies. The broader objectives of the ecological approach outlined above require the adoption of methods beyond the traditional tools of stratigraphy and typology. Thus the new archaeology pioneered many innovative methods in fieldwork and analysis, often borrowed from other disciplines. Today, alongside traditional skilled excavators and ceramic

xperts, the modern dig staff may include geologists, geomorphologists, limatologists, physical and cultural anthropologists, paleobotanists and aleozoologists, historians of technology, computer programmers, and other pecialists in allied disciplines. Thus a wide variety of data are collected, nalyzed, and integrated into a systemic reconstruction of a past culture.

Quantitative methods of analysis. The collection of so much more, and ore complex, data entails an attempt to quantify. This is necessary not only deal efficiently with a mass of information but also to provide meaningful atistics that other disciplines can utilize. Increasingly, computers are ming into use to process the new data. For example, radiocarbon dating and eutron activation analysis to fingerprint the source of the clays used in ramic production both depend upon computer counting. Even seed and ne samples may be so voluminous that they are unmanageable without mputer analysis.

A scientific (or nomothetic) orientation. The heavy borrowing from the tural sciences and the desire to make archaeology a more systematic dis-pline inevitably suggested to some new archaeologists that archaeology ould itself aim at true scientific status. Thus it was argued that archaeolo-sts should not merely excavate to "see what is there," however responsibly, t should deliberately formulate and test hypotheses against the archaeo-ical record. Moreover, they should do so with the goal of arriving at univer-laws governing the cultural process, laws that would then be capable of ification by prediction—exactly as in the natural sciences. Not all were so plicitly scientific but nearly all soon adopted research designs that were iberately focussed on solving certain very specific problems—sometimes ditional historical problems but more often problems derived from a ader cultural-anthropological perspective.

Behavioral-processual objectives. A natural outgrowth of the above trends s the attempt to move beyond the older descriptive-historical goals of haeology, beyond the exclusive concern with artifacts and dates and iso-d events, toward an understanding of human behavior in all its dimen-ns—indeed toward an explanation of the cultural process itself. Admittedly, s is an unattainable goal but it has broadened the horizons of archaeology ay and made it infinitely more exciting.

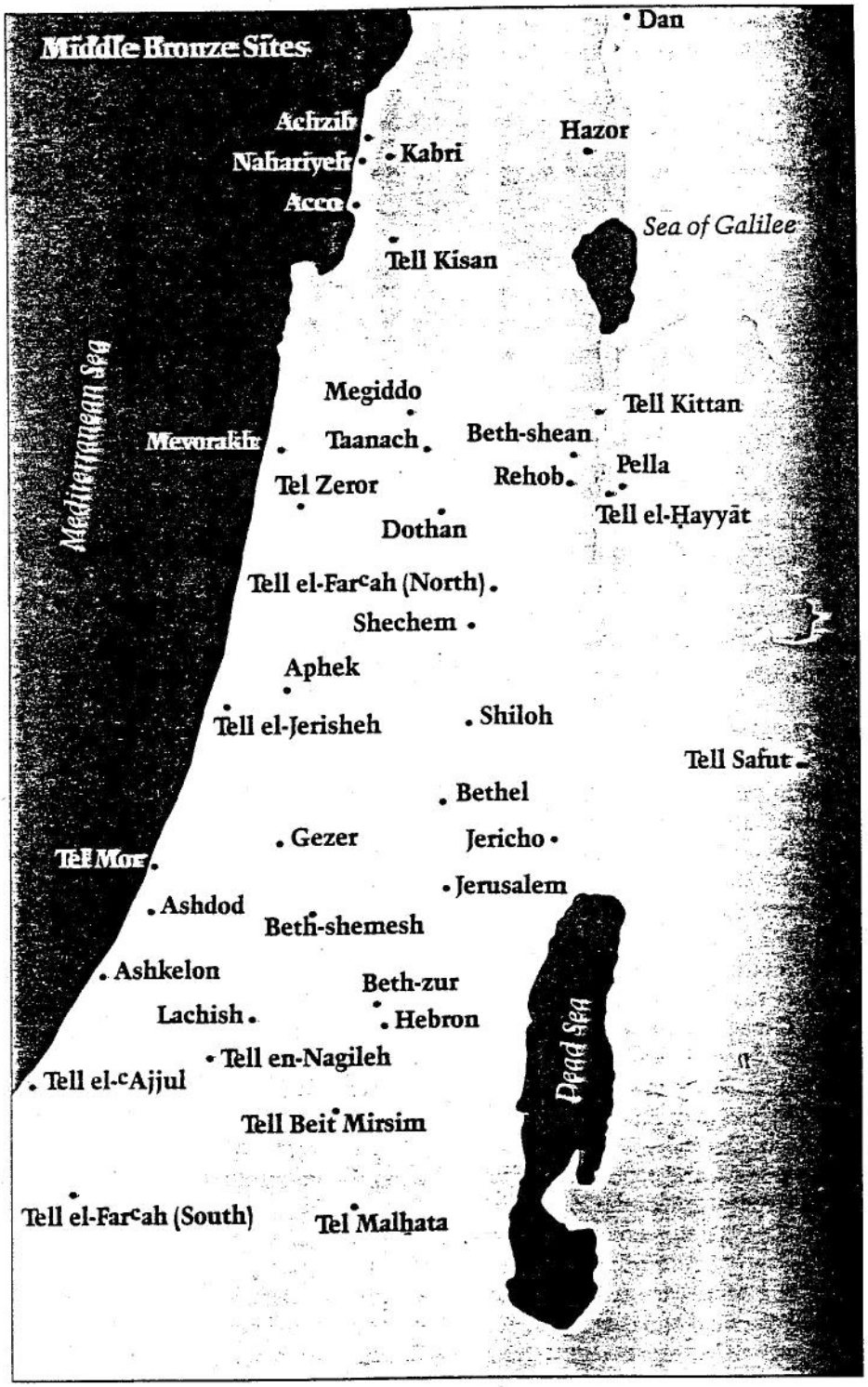
Thus the new archaeology, which first developed in Americanist circles re than twenty years ago, made a somewhat belated impact on Near Eastern Syro-Palestinian archaeology in the seventies and eighties. Not all of its nda has been adopted; and, because it was pioneered by anthropologists on tively recent and simple New World sites, it is not totally applicable to the g historical sequence of complex Middle Eastern mounds. But aspects of new look are evident everywhere in our field: broader research designs, e sophisticated presentations at annual meetings and in publications, e ecological and interdisciplinary projects, more liaison with anthropology the social sciences, and, particularly, a greater concern with professional disciplinary status. It may be said simply that the older style archaeology revious generations—always something of an amateur enterprise, and y a branch of biblical and theological studies—has finally come of age. ough now an independent, secular discipline, Syro-Palestinian archae-y today draws much from and contributes much to these and many other iplines.

For more information, see William G. Dever, "The Impact of the 'New haeology' on Syro-Palestinian Archaeology," *Bulletin of the American hools of Oriental Research, number 242 (1981), pages 15–29*, and "Syro-stinian and Biblical Archaeology," pages 31–74 in *The Hebrew Bible and Modern Interpreters*, edited by D. A. Knight and G. M. Tucker (Philadel-: Fortress, 1980); G. Ernest Wright, "The 'New' Archaeology," *The Biblical haeologist*, volume 38 (1975), numbers 3 and 4, pages 104–15.

ical-historical entity thus demarcated may be designated *Canaanite* in a linguistic as well as cultural sense, since that term is well attested in contemporary texts. Indeed, the term *Canaanite* now occurs even earlier, in Syria in the Ebla archives of the twenty-fourth and twenty-third centuries B.C.E., where a parallel term, *Amorite*, seems to refer to the nonurban, or village-pastoral, element of the dimorphic population (Matthiae 1981). And, of course, both terms are correctly remembered and applied to Palestine by the writers of the Hebrew Bible centuries later (on the Amorites, see further Luke 1965; Buccellati 1966; Dever 1981). Nearly 400 Middle Bronze sites are known in Palestine, but the basic archaeological framework for the period has been elaborated over many years from such large tell-excavations as Tell Beit Mirsim (1926–1932), Megiddo (1926–1939), Jericho (1952–1958), Hazor (1955–1958), Shechem (1957–1973), Gezer (1964–1974), and Aphek (1973–1986). More recently, many smaller sites and regional surveys have added appreciably to the picture and have brought it into better perspective.

Historical reconstruction. As much as archaeology has revolutionized our knowledge of Palestine, or southern Canaan, in the first half of the second millennium B.C.E., we are still not in a position to write a full history of the Middle Bronze Age. Although there are growing numbers of specialist studies, we have only a few attempts at a synthesis of the data. Following Albright's early, fundamental treatments (perhaps best summarized in 1940; see also 1964), the major archaeological summaries are the masterly treatment of the broader historical context by Benyamin Mazar (1968; see also 1970), an authoritative analysis of the sites and stratigraphy by Kathleen Kenyon (1973), and briefer overviews by G. Ernest Wright (1971) and myself (Dever 1976, 1977—both with something of the history of scholar-

By about 1800 B.C.E., 65 percent of the population lived in large fortified cities. The proliferation of these is the most characteristic feature of the period.



he few large urban centers, or city-tates, as previous scholars did, but ather upon the relationship of these enters to each other and to the hin-erland. It appears that the nearly 00 known Middle Bronze Age sites n Palestine can be grouped into three ategories, arranged in a three-tiered ierarchy: large urban sites, about 20 o 175 acres, comprising some 5 per-ent of the total; medium-sized owns, about 7 to 20 acres, account-ng for about 10 percent; and villages nd hamlets of about 1 to 7 acres, naking up about 85 percent (Kotter 986). These data yield several in-eresting results when analyzed. For istance, demographic projections Mabry 1986) indicate that by the Middle Bronze I period, some 65 ercent of the population already ived in a relatively few large fortified ities of 50 acres or more; neverthe-ess, almost half of the settlements ere smaller than 2 acres. Cross-ultural studies, both ancient and odern, indicate that such three-ered, hierarchically arranged settle-ent patterns invariably character-ze a highly urbanized culture. Thus, e larger sites were undoubtedly ue city-states, dominating an conomic hinterland, even though alestine as a whole may not have been a true state in terms of centralized administration.

Walled Cities

A combination of urban growth, complex social organization, increased prosperity, and advanced technology may be observed in town-planning, and especially in defensive systems of the Middle Bronze Age. The proliferation of massive fortifications is the single most characteristic feature of the fully developed phases of the period. This was no doubt a response in part to the growing competition of local city-states,

t may also have been a conse-
ıce of the threat of international
rvention. These complex defense
ks also imply, however, a supe-
engineering and industrial capa-
y. More important, they reflect
ghly centralized system of
ıning and deployment of men
matériel—that is, an efficient
ioeconomic organization that
produce surpluses, as well as a
eaucracy that can control and, if
essary, enforce public policy. (For
lier studies, see Parr 1968; G. R.
Wright 1968; Dever 1973, 1974;
ger 1975.)

In seeking to chart the stages in
iddle Bronze urban development,
holars seem inevitably to have
fined *urban* as meaning *fortified*,
ıd thus they have been especially
ncerned with determining when
ıe earliest city-walls emerged.
igael Yadin questioned the assump-
on, held by nearly all archaeologists
ince Albright, that defense systems
egan in the first phase, Middle
ronze I, and tried in fact to date all
he city-walls to Middle Bronze II
Yadin 1973, 1978). The majority
pinion, however, based on the latest
excavations, holds that many sites
were fortified early, by the nineteenth
century B.C.E. at the latest (see Dever
1976; Gerstenblith 1983). Among
these early walled towns would be
Achzib and Acco in the north, as
well as a group of Sharon Plain sites
(Tel Zeror, Tel Poleg, Tel Burga,
Yabneh-yam), and especially Aphek,
at the headwaters of the Yarkon
River. The latter is now one of our
most important Middle Bronze I
sites, thanks to the excavations of
Moshe Kochavi and others since
1973, which have revealed two phases
of the city-wall and a "palace" that
must be dated fairly early in Middle
Bronze I (Kochavi and Beck 1976;
Kochavi and others 1979, specifically
refuting Yadin).

Thus many of the larger sites in
Palestine had already been fortified
with city-walls and gates before the
end of the Middle Bronze I period

The complexity of MB defense works is evidence for superior engineering, while their massiveness suggests an appreciation of psychological warfare.

(that is, before about 1800 B.C.E.).
But beginning with Middle Bronze
II, and continuing until the end of
Middle Bronze III, the archaeological
record at nearly every site shows a
continual process of defensive con-
structions. One element is added
atop another, in an almost bewilder-
ing array and variety, as though each
city tried to outdo its neighbors. Not
only are all the larger sites fortified, as
might be predicted, but even towns
and villages as small as 2 to 4 acres
are surrounded by city-walls, such as
the tiny coastal fort of Mevorakh, or
the small hill-country site of Shiloh.
Indeed, scarcely a single excavated
Middle Bronze Age site in Palestine
has failed to yield formidable
fortifications.

The basic defensive element is,
of course, a city-wall, usually con-
sisting of a high mudbrick super-
structure on a stone socle or foun-
dation. Often the main wall is of
cyclopean masonry, with rough-
hewn stone blocks 8 to 10 feet long
and weighing a ton or more, laid to a
width of anywhere from 20 to 50 feet.
The Middle Bronze Age city-gate is
of a standard type, apparently derived
from Syria and Anatolia, with three
entryways marked by pairs of oppos-
ing stone piers, and in between two
small chambers or guardrooms on
each side (see Naumann 1971; Gre-
gori 1986).

Almost always this inner line of
defense is augmented with massive,
steep earthen and plaster embank-
ments along the outer face. Farther
downslope there may be an outer
revetment or retaining wall, and
sometimes beyond that a fosse (or
dry moat) with its own counter-
scarp or wall. The earthworks, often
termed *terre pisée* constructions, or
glaçis, are among the most typical
and intriguing elements. Each differs,
since they were designed for local
terrain, and they were constructed
quite ingeniously of whatever local
soils and fill materials were avail-
able. Yet the purpose of each earth-
work, however different, seems the
same: to consolidate and augment
the tell slopes, as well as to create a
system of barriers for any attackers
(see Parr 1968). The term *glaçis*, from
the typical medieval free-fire zone
surrounding the city- or castle-wall,
is probably a misnomer. These fills
and plastered embankments do not
seem designed to protect against
chariots, as Kenyon supposed, al-
though such vehicles were a formi-
dable weapon being introduced at
just this time. Rather, as Yadin
showed (1955), the embankments
were probably a defense against the
Mesopotamian-style battering ram;
the steep slopes and outer walls were
meant to keep the ram away from
the principal city-wall, and also to
make the ram vulnerable to the
defenders atop the wall.

Whatever the exact rationale of
the builders may have been, the de-
fense systems of the Middle Bronze
Age exhibit two striking features.
First, there is an almost endless vari-
ety of constructional elements—all,
however, well integrated. Second,
there is an attempt at mass, almost
as though psychological warfare were
being employed. The cumulative
system not only required an enor-
mous investment of resources but it
must also have been the work of

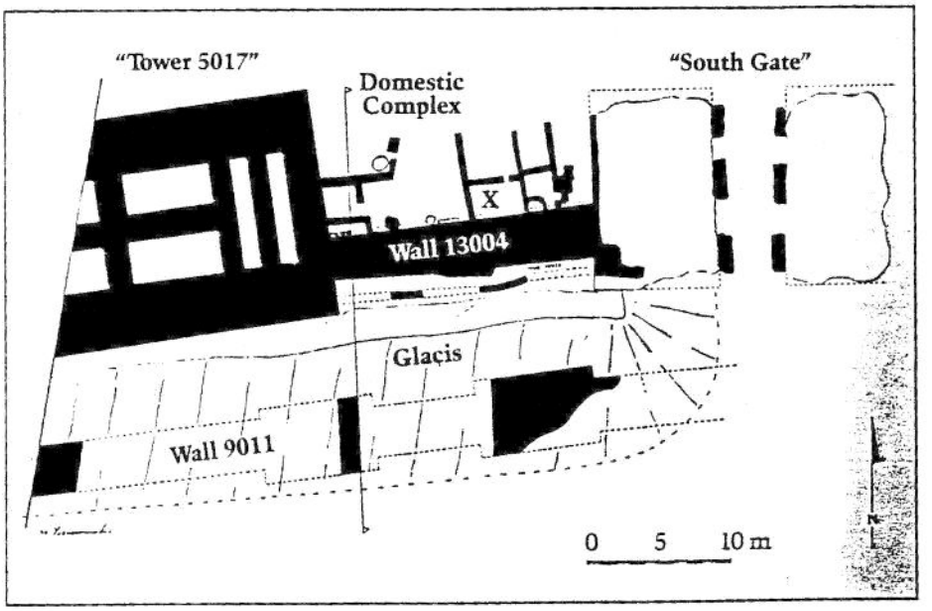
many generations. A typical thick city-wall might run for a mile or more around the site, and it would have had many towers, several gates, and a huge embankment outside that. Its construction would have required perhaps hundreds of thousands of man-hours and the moving of thousands of tons of stone and earth. Such a system was probably under constant construction, alteration, and repair—and for a continuous period of 300 to 500 years at many sites in Middle Bronze Age Palestine.

Two sites may serve to illustrate the walled towns of the Middle Bronze Age. The great mound of Shechem, situated between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal in the Samaria hills, was literally the creation of the Middle Bronze Age engineers. They put up enormous earthen embankments that were surrounded by massive walls, thus transforming a low, vulnerable rise in the pass into a seemingly impregnable fortress. The outer wall A, constructed of cyclopean masonry, is a massive retaining wall for the deep artificial fills behind it, and it still stands more than 30 feet high. Atop that is wall B, a double (or casemate) masonry wall. Between the two principal city-walls is the typical steep, faced slope, or glacis. Two gates are known: the East Gate, a rare, double-entryway gate (otherwise known only at Tel Mor, near Ashdod); and the Northwest Gate, a more typical, three-entryway gate. Adjacent to the latter, on the embankment between the city-walls, is an elaborate multi-roomed structure cleared in 1972 that may best be understood as a barracks or citadel, guarding both the city-gate and the adjacent palace (Dever 1974). The Middle Bronze defenses at Shechem—with at least five phases, all within Middle Bronze II–III and separated by no less than three destructions toward the end—illustrate most dramatically the phenomenon of walled cities of this period. (For more, see G. E. Wright

Above: *Wall A and barracks or citadel (building 7200) on the north side of the Northwest Gate at Shechem. This building had a stone foundation one meter thick, with a mudbrick superstructure, all of which was plastered on the inside. One room on the outside wall had a "peephole" that looked out over the city-gate.* ***Below:*** *Man pointing to the "peephole" cut through wall A at Shechem.*

1965; Dever 1974; Seger 1974, 1975.)

Gezer is even more impressive, now that American excavations in 1964 through 1974 have redated and clarified Macalister's monumental architecture (partially cleared in 1902 through 1909). The "Inner Wall," some 12 to 14 feet thick and still standing as much as 15 feet high, circles the entire site—a length of about 1,600 yards, or nearly a mile. The "South Gate" is a magnificent triple-entryway mudbrick structure at least two stories high. Still preserved are the springers of the arched roof made of mudbrick



Top: The "South Gate" at Gezer was a mudbrick structure that was at least two stories high. The massive stone orthostats or jambs shown here framed the triple sets of wooden doors. Photographs of Gezer courtesy of William G. Dever. ***Bottom:*** *Located to the south and west of Shechem, Gezer was occupied at a much earlier date. Shown here is a plan of the "South Gate" complex at Gezer. A chalk glaçis, or embankment, which would have inhibited any approach to the city, was employed for defense along the outer perimeter. Connector wall 13004 was faced with cyclopean masonry to mask its weakness. Preliminary findings suggested that the destruction of the installations was associated with the campaigns of Tuthmosis III around 1482 B.C.E. New findings, however, suggest an earlier date around the reigns of Amenophis I (1546–1526) or Tuthmosis I (1525–1512). (An x marks the place in a room inside wall 13004 where a small hoard of gold and the skeleton of a woman were found in 1973.) Drawing used courtesy of Joe D. Seger.*

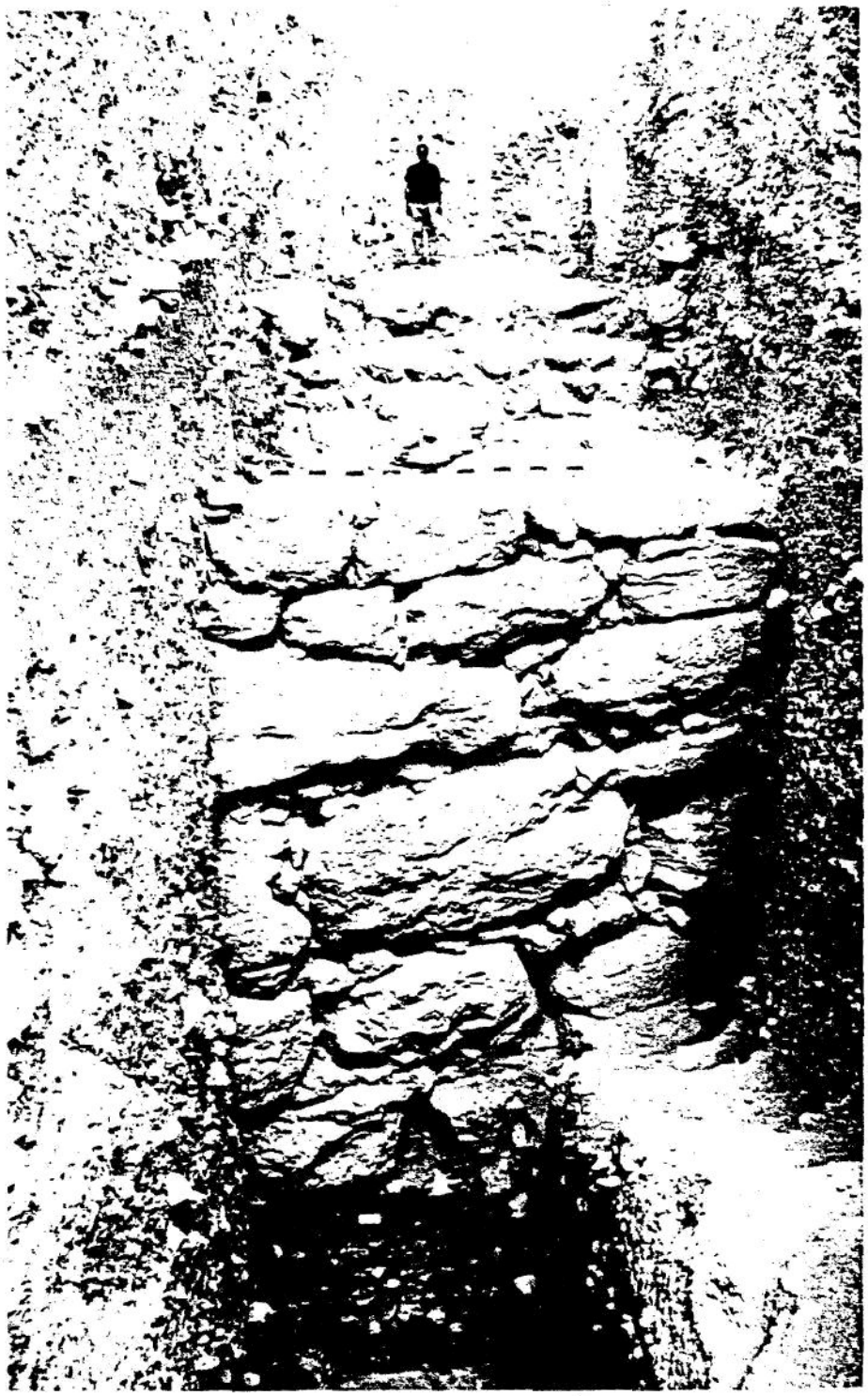
that covered the passageway; these are flanked by three pairs of massive stone piers, or orthostats. The manner in which these piers served to mount swinging wooden doors at the inner and outer gateway has now been illustrated by the splendid city-gate at Ebla (Tell Mardikh) in Syria, where the basalt orthostats and their door-sockets are still preserved (Matthiae 1984: 20). And more recently, an almost intact triple-entryway mudbrick gate of this type, with the arches still standing, has been found at Tel Dan (Biran 1984).

Two quite remarkable features of the Middle Bronze Age defenses of Gezer are "*Glaçis* 8012" and "Tower 5017." The glaçis, sloping up to the "Inner Wall" at an angle of about 45 degrees, is constructed of alternating layers of brown debris from the tell and of virgin chalk. These fills are laid in almost geometric perfection, tightly tamped, then surfaced over with a thick white plaster to make the slope not only impermeable to water and weather but difficult to negotiate as well. "Tower 5017" lies just west of the "South Gate." Only the stone socle or foundation of this elaborate, multistoried storied structure is preserved, but this consists of nine courses of cyclopean masonry, sunk entirely below ground level in a foundation trench some 14 feet deep. This massive tower or citadel is incorporated into a section of city-wall 53 feet thick—one of the largest single-phase stone structures in pre-Roman Palestine. (For more, see Dever and others 1971, 1974; Dever 1973; Seger 1975.)

Town Planning and Domestic Architecture

The defense systems just described imply the existence, of course, not only of relatively sophisticated engineering but also of the highly centralized planning that characterizes urban centers. Another aspect of town planning is spatial and functional layout of the entire area within the city-walls, virtually required by

Though we don't have a complete plan for any MB city, there is evidence that town planning was highly centralized and sophisticated. Greater Canaan was no backwater.



urban life with its dense population and varied activities. Thus we can distinguish in several Middle Bronze Age sites well-planned areas for administrative structures, public functions, temples, commercial and perhaps juridical activities, domestic housing, streets, courtyards, water- and food-storage facilities, stables, and industrial operations. We do not yet have, of course, the complete plan of any Palestinian city of the Middle Bronze Age, but the area of the Northwest Gate at Shechem includes many well-coordinated elements of what may have been a typical administrative and public area. These include the city-wall, gate, and barracks-citadel; a two-story palace with administrative hall; a large open-air plaza; and a monumental public "fortress-temple," possibly combined with a temple-treasury (Dever 1974). Such an arrangement clearly bespeaks sophisticated city planning. Very nearly the same basic plan is seen in stratum VII at Alalakh, near the mouth of the Orontes River in north Syria, and also at Ebla (see Woolley 1953: 64–82; Matthiae 1984: 19–21; Gregori 1986). Many of these elements are also encountered, although on a grander scale, well up into central Anatolia and over into northern Mesopotamia. These common features in urban planning underscore the cultural continuum that we have already noted throughout Greater Canaan in the Middle Bronze Age. Palestine may have been somewhat peripheral but it was no isolated backwater (as Kenyon concluded in the prestigious *Cambridge Ancient History*).

Commercial and domestic areas also attest planning. A typical *suk*,

Left: *This close-up of the "Inner Wall" at Gezer shows "Glaçis 8013," made of alternating layers of tamped brown debris from the tell and virgin chalk, in the section at the left. Note the steep angle of its incline.*
Above: *Section of "Tower 5017" at Gezer. The glaçis is shown clearly in the white (chalk) and earthen debris layers on the left. Only the stone foundation of this elaborate, multistoried structure is preserved, but it was one of the largest single-phase stone structures in pre-Roman Palestine. The size of the fortifications at Gezer and the great care and skill shown in building them are indicative of the level of development and organization evident in Middle Bronze Age communities, as well as of the dangers the people faced.*

or bazaar, not unlike those of modern Middle Eastern towns, is seen at Jericho, where two-story shops-residences line the street coming up the hill from the city-gate (Kenyon 1957: 228–232). At Gezer, several private houses in field VI are well laid out around streets, terraces, and communal courtyards. The latter feature ovens, food storage and preparation areas, and animal shelters. Particularly noteworthy is a system of run-off areas, with plastered and covered subterranean drains that conducted rainwater to several deep cisterns hewn into the bedrock. So successful was this water-storage system that the cisterns were periodically cleaned out and reused for centuries, down into the Iron Age (Dever and others 1971: 126, 127; 1987). All these and other domestic installations point to relatively efficient planning as towns of the Middle Bronze Age grew into large and complex social units.

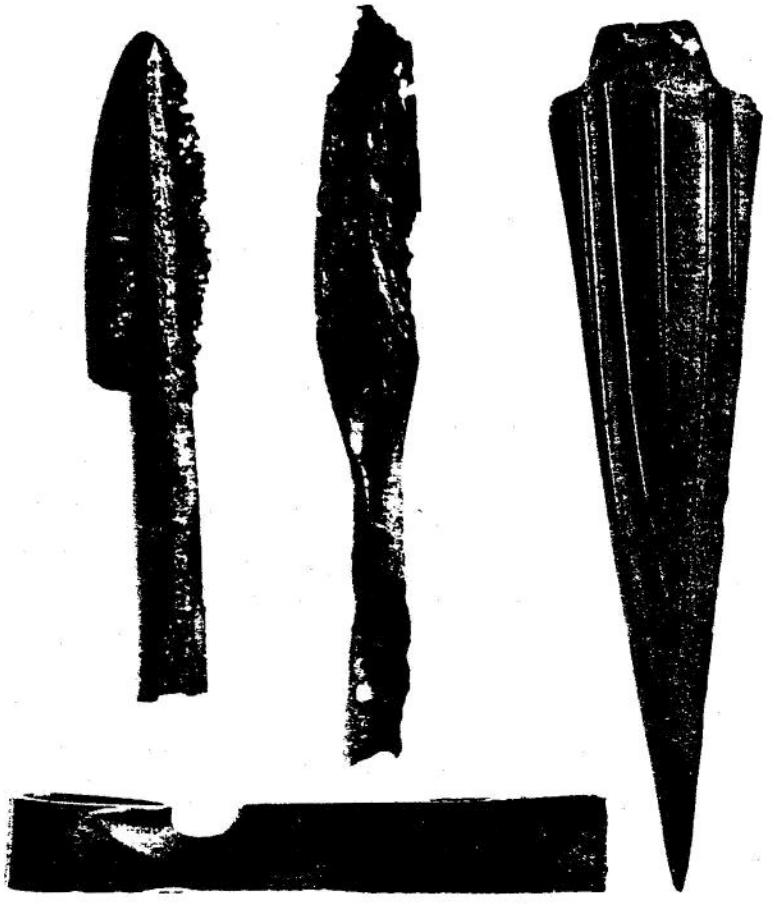
Subsistence, Technology, and Trade

Archaeology's more recent ecological orientation, while seeking to avoid any form of economic determinism, rightly calls attention to the dependence of all cultures on successful adaptation to the physical environment and to available natural resources. Ancient Palestine's basically agrarian economy depended heavily upon the large role of peasants in the social structure, thus upon what economists might call the *domestic mode of production*. This consisted primarily of small-scale agriculture, mixed with some local crafts and cottage industry, supplemented by sporadic trade in luxury items.

This economic regime, well suited to the topography and climate of Palestine, had already been established by the Early Bronze Age, and even earlier. But such a diversified economic strategy depends upon stable conditions, as well as upon a delicate balance maintained by skillful and, to some degree, centralized planning. All this had collapsed, however, in Early Bronze IV as people abandoned cities and towns and reverted to pastoralism in the hinterland and the marginal and semiarid zones. What we see in Middle Bronze I is simply the dramatic reversal of that pattern. Reurbanization, the return to town life, was made possible first by the resumption of larger scale, intensive farming, then by the growth in industry and trade. Increased agricultural production not only fed the growing concentration of population in cities but it also generated surpluses, stimulated exchange of goods, and increasingly created an urban elite. Although the revolution took place in the cities, it was fueled by the hinterland.

Actual archaeological evidence for intensified agriculture is minimal, since our previous generation of biblical archaeologists had little interest in questions of subsistence and did almost no systematic collection of floral and faunal data. Nevertheless, the very location of the Middle Bronze settlements themselves is ample evidence. They are situated in well-watered regions along the coast, in the river valleys, and in the hill country—always within range of extensive arable lands. Defensible position and access to trade routes were, of course, factors in the growth of large tell-sites, but the primary consideration was the agriculturally based subsistence economy, similar to that of the Early Bronze Age. And, as I have already suggested, spatial analysis of the distances between and relationships among the three tiers in the settlement hierarchy strongly suggests that villages, towns, and urban centers were closely linked in a market economy, where agricultural products were redistributed through the larger "central places" (Kotter 1986).

Among plants cultivated again were wheat and barley, probably dominant, along with cereals, legumes, and various fodders. Olives, grapes, figs, and other fruits and vegetables were also grown and processed in various ways for home consumption or export. All common species of animals had long been domesticated, except perhaps the horse, then coming into limited use,

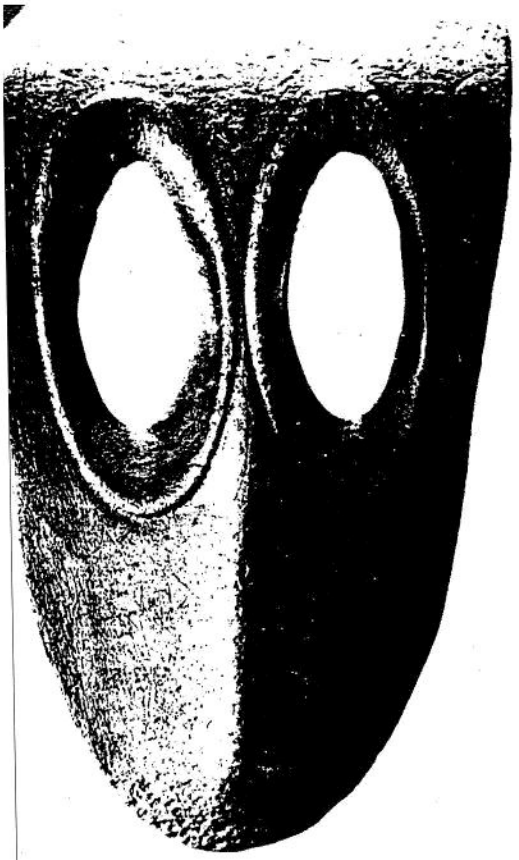


The Middle Bronze Age in Palestine witnessed the introduction of a true tin-bronze metallurgy. The result was a metal that was more malleable than that previously available, thus making it possible to shape tools and weapons into entirely new forms, ones that at the same time held a sharper edge. ***Left:*** *Typical bronze implements from the early part of Middle Bronze. On top are two socketed spear blades and a dagger blade; below is a notched "chisel" axhead. The spear blades were attached to a wooden shaft; later examples are longer and have a tang instead of a socket. The broad, leaf-bladed dagger is approximately 17.5 centimeters long, with cast blood-rills down its length and two rivet holes at the top to attach it to a wooden handle. The axhead has a shaft hole (to the left) and a notch to secure it to a handle with thongs.* ***Right:*** *A beautifully cast duckbill ax with well-defined socket and fenestrations. Like the other bronze pieces shown here, it was found at ʿAin es-Samiyeh, north of Jerusalem; this weapon, which is about 10 centimeters in height, is a refined version of an earlier type often found from the end of the Early Bronze period. Photographs courtesy of William G. Dever.*

and the camel (probably not domesticated until around 1200 B.C.E.). Sheep and goats were predominant, but cattle are also well attested. All were herded both by village farmers and by less settled pastoral nomads in the marginal zones (although the latter have left few archaeological traces and have scarcely been investigated for the Middle Bronze Age, unlike Early Bronze IV). The University of Arizona's recent excavation of Tell el-Ḥayyāt, a small agricultural village in the northern Jordan valley, has employed careful sieving and flotation to retrieve floral and faunal remains. Nearly all the above plants and animals are represented (Falconer and Magness-Gardiner 1984). Of particular interest is the high percentage of pig bones, which indicates that certain species of animals were intensively bred where local conditions were conducive. It appears that agriculture and herding in the Middle Bronze Age were highly specialized and more efficient than ever before. Pastoral hinterlands, village farmlands, and urban markets all constituted a well-integrated and stable economy that fueled the strongest continual period of urban growth up to that time in the history of Palestine.

The most conspicuous changes in the material culture of the Middle Bronze Age in Palestine had already been well established before the end of the first phase, in Middle Bronze I, which I surveyed above. These changes were not only interrelated, since urbanism was obviously an exceedingly complex, multifaceted phenomenon, but they took place relatively rapidly. So far I have described, for the most part, changing patterns of site location and new economic strategies, as cities and urban population grew. But what made these developments possible?

One factor was surely a more efficient technology. For example, the Middle Bronze Age, unlike the Early Bronze, is characterized by the introduction and rapid diffusion of true tin-bronze metallurgy. Somewhere in Syria and Mesopotamia in the final quarter of the third millennium B.C.E., it was discovered that the superior qualities of native arsenical copper could be duplicated by alloying copper with up to 10 percent of tin (by convention, 2 percent or more tin identifies "bronze"). The result was weapons and tools that were more malleable and could thus be cast in entirely new forms, forms that at the same time would take and hold a sharper edge. Just before 2000 B.C.E., as recent studies have shown (Stech, Muhly, and Maddin 1985), the new bronze technology reached Palestine; thus, with the beginning of the Middle Bronze I period, a whole new repertoire of sophisti-



The introduction of true tin-bronze metallurgy and advances in ceramic technology during Middle Bronze brought new forms of weapons, tools, and pottery, all mass-produced.

cated bronze implements appeared in Palestine, all probably locally made but in imitation of Syrian prototypes (see Oren 1971; Dever 1975).

The implications of the bronze revolution must have been enormous. Copper was found locally, but where did the tin come from, and how was it acquired? The only known sources of tin in the ancient Near East were in Anatolia (beyond the Caucasus Range, in modern southern Russia), in the Taurus Mountains (in Turkey), or east of the Iranian plateau (in modern Afghanistan). We may suppose that tin from such sources was brought to Mesopotamia and then shipped to Syria-Palestine by donkey caravan—a distance of more than 500 miles. This is not mere speculation. Evidence for such long-distance trade in the Middle Bronze II period comes from several cuneiform letters found at Mari, the great Amorite city-state on the Upper Euphrates. These eighteen-century-B.C.E. documents actually describe tin trade with two cities in northern Palestine, Dan and Hazor, known from excavations to have flourished precisely in this period (Malamat 1970). This new technology alone—the mass production of bronzes—stimulated international trade and diplomacy. It created a whole new industrial and mercantile class, as well as probably a guild-system of craftsmen. It brought immense wealth to some, opened up new frontiers in agriculture and construction to others, and may even have helped to equip the first standing army in Palestine. Thus, we cannot separate technology from ideology. Both contributed to, and benefited from, the growth of urbanism. And as the Middle Bronze period progressed, so did technology.

In ceramic technology, too, there were similar advances in Middle Bronze I and II–III. Primitive, slow potter's wheels had been used throughout the Early Bronze Age to smooth and finish ceramic vessels. But beginning in Middle Bronze I we get a whole new repertoire of sophisticated pottery. The characteristically elaborate shapes and eggshell-thin wares could only have been fabricated by a new technique: that of spinning by centrifugal force on a fast wheel. The basic forms, as well as the beautiful polished and painted decoration, are clearly influenced by the pottery of central and even northern Syria (Dever 1976; Gerstenblith 1983: 59–87). A generation ago we might have seen in this new pottery a new people, possibly Amorites from the north. Today we would explain change as more likely the result of advances in technology and trade, as well as of the development of new forms of social organization. The new, mass-produced pottery of Middle Bronze I in Palestine was the finest pottery ever produced in the pre-Roman period, and its basic forms continued to evolve steadily throughout Middle Bronze II–III, and even after (see Cole 1984). More than any other medium, this distinctive new pottery may express the new technical mastery, as well as the heightened aesthetic sensibilities, of the urban Middle Bronze Age in Palestine (see Amiran 1970: 90–123).

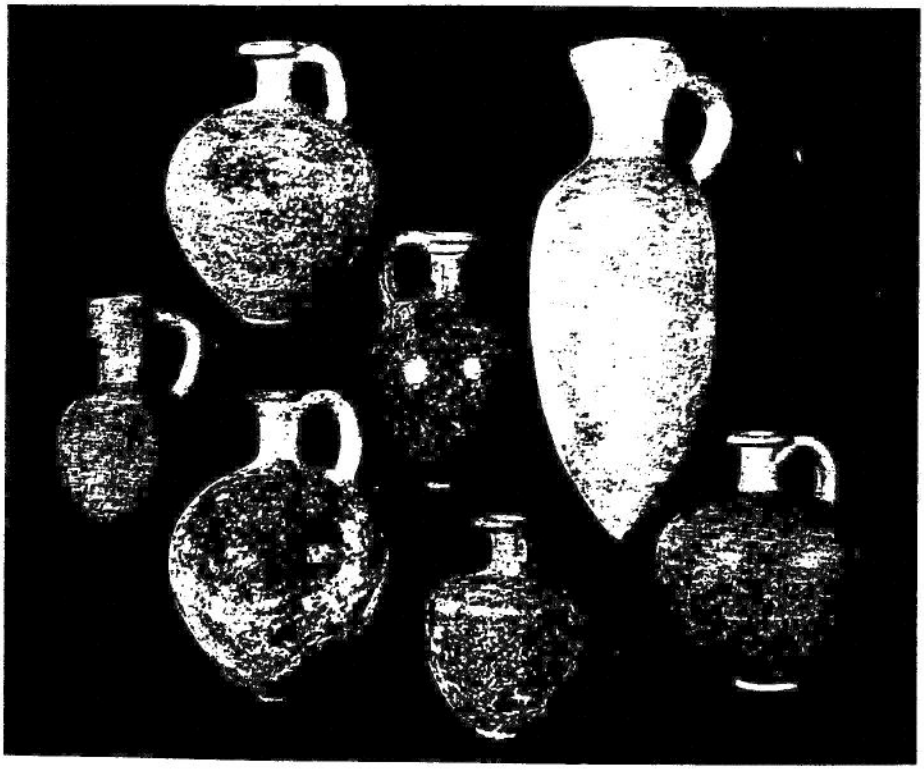
I have already suggested in looking at the bronze implements that technology, industry, and trade are interrelated; raw materials must often be imported, and finished products need markets. International trade was certainly a decisive factor, not only in the reurbanization of Middle Bronze Palestine but also in bringing it out of its political and cultural isolation. Tin was clearly imported via Syria, and Syrian-style pottery is relatively abundant. Egyptian imports of the Twelfth and Thirteenth dynasties are even more conspicuous and include alabasters and faience (Sagona 1980), jewelry of semiprecious stones, and especially scarab signet-rings, which appear for the first time in Palestine during this period and are found at nearly every Middle Bronze site. (On scarabs, see Martin 1971; Tufnell 1984; and on Egyptian

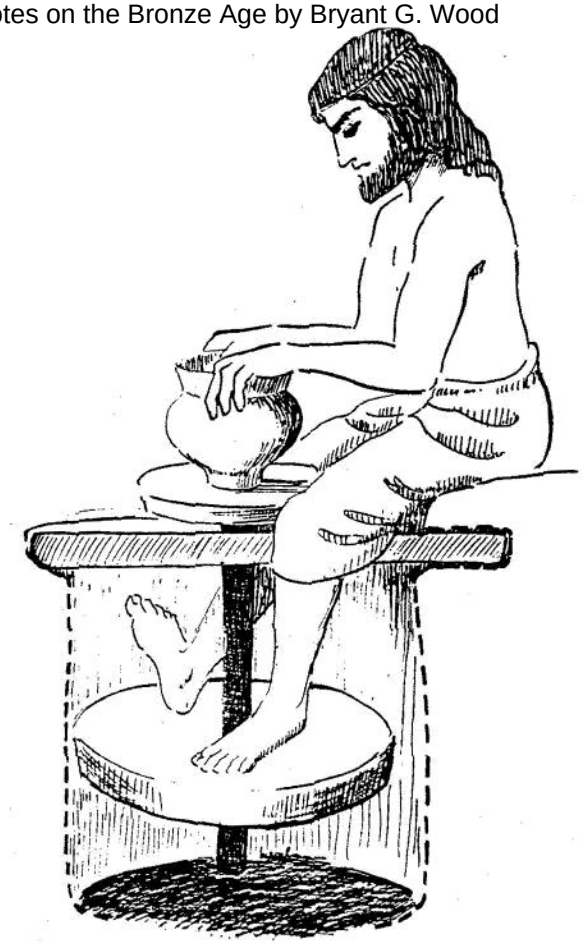
Early Bronze IV vessel found at Khirbet Iskander. Photograph courtesy of Suzanne Richard.

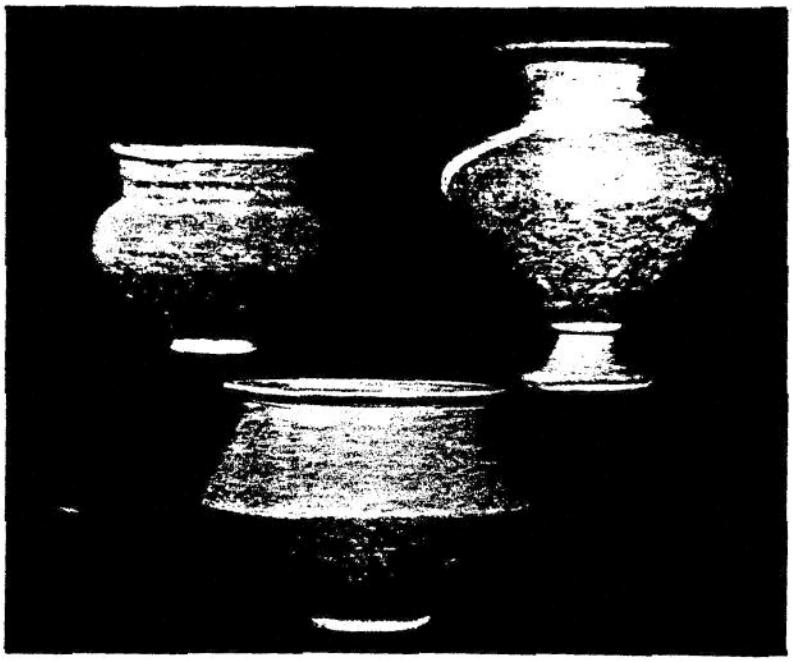
Middle Bronze Palestine also saw significant advances in ceramic technology. Earlier potter's wheels featured a disk-shaped stone platform with a long knob that was fitted into a socket in a stone basin. The potter either turned the platform with one hand and worked the pot with the other or turned the wheel intermittently and used two hands to build the pot. An improved version (and one still in use today) was developed in Middle Bronze. It consists of two stone wheels connected by a long shaft. The lower wheel (called a flywheel or a kick wheel) is controlled by the potter's feet, while the upper wheel spins fast and allows the craftsman to use both hands to work the clay into more elaborate shapes. Shown here are several examples of Middle Bronze pottery. The thinner, more even walls, finished bases, and elegant shapes of these vessels stand in contrast to coarser wares of the Early Bronze Age. Drawings by Lealan Swanson. Photographs courtesy of William G. Dever.

relations generally, see Weinstein 1975). Not only was there extensive overland exchange but Palestine participated in maritime trade for the first time. Cypriot pottery began to be imported even before the end of Middle Bronze I, and by Middle Bronze II–III it included several varieties of Black-on-Red and White Painted wares. The very end of Middle Bronze III was characterized by Monochrome, Base Ring, and Bichrome wares, as well as by "Chocolate" ware that may show Cypriot influence. (For more, see Amiran 1970: 121–123; on the Tell el-Yehudiyeh ware, see Kaplan 1980; and on the Bichrome ware, see Epstein 1966).

But what did Palestine export? We have no textual documentation from Palestine itself and little conclusive archaeological evidence of Palestinian objects found in neighboring lands. Working backward from the evidence of the subsequent Late Bronze Age, however, one can suppose that Palestine's well-known exports to Egypt had already begun earlier. These included agricultural commodities, especially grain, olive oil, and wine; cattle; timber; possibly copper; and probably even laborers, including slaves. Palestinian merchants and traders also transshipped goods overland between Syria and Egypt. A famous wall-painting from a tomb at Beni Hasan of the time of







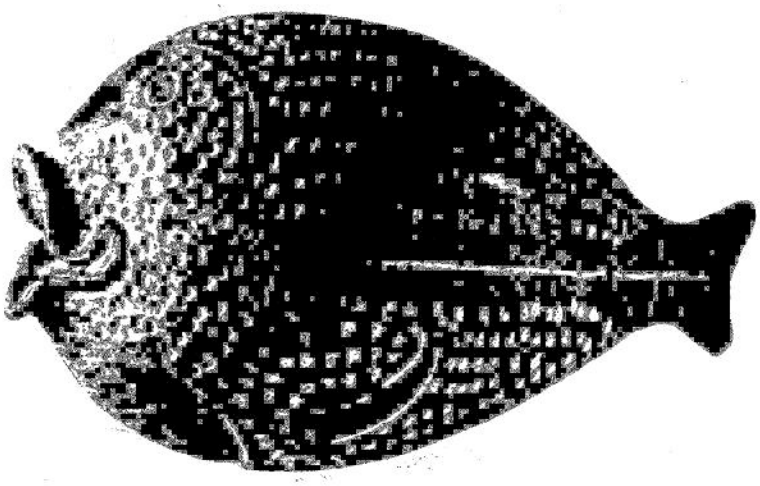
Amenemhet I (around 1960 B.C.E.) depicts a party of thirty-seven donkey caravanners, probably nomadic traders, crossing the Sinai into Egypt. The inscription lists their Amorite-style (West Semitic) names and mentions one product, antimony, a compound used in making *kohl*, the black eye-shadow much favored in Egypt for cosmetics. The Hayes Papyrus (which dates to around 1750 B.C.E.) lists Asiatic slaves working in a household in Upper Egypt, all bearing Amorite names, many among them no doubt from Palestine.

ocial Structure and Political rganization

has been observed that "archaeologists do not dig up social systems." rhaps not, but these, like the other bsystems at which we have been oking, do leave observable traces the archaeological record—insofar material culture may reflect social ganization as well as individual man behavior. Since earlier archaeologists, however, were more interested in political history than in social history, little useful information has been collected.

What evidence we do have reflects increasing social differentiation and stratification, which we should expect in an urbanized society. Middle Bronze Age tombs clearly demonstrate the existence of an elite upper class, as shown in some cases by expensive, often imported, luxury goods. Thus, burials at Gezer, Jericho, and elsewhere have produced gold jewelry, Egyptian alabasters and scarabs, along with ivory-inlaid wooden furniture, beautifully carved wooden utensils, and other expensive items. The Jericho cave and shaft tombs excavated by Kenyon had multiple, successive burials, with a considerable accumulation of wealth (Kenyon 1957: 233–55). They are probably the burial places of rich and powerful ruling famlies—merchants, aristocrats, possibly priests, and petty princes. (One may compare the recently published tombs of "The Lord of the Goats" and "The Princess" at Ebla: Matthiae 1984). Petrie's old "horse-burials" (or at least equids of some kind) at Tell el-ᶜAjjul, with elaborate bronze weapons, are probably tombs of warriors, perhaps belonging to a professional military class. (Similar burials of Asiatics are also found at Tell ed-Dabᶜa in the Egyptian Delta from the Hyksos period). By contrast, the predominant Middle Bronze burial is that of someone from the lower classes and is a rather pathetic affair, with adults laid in a simple cist-grave and children put into a storejar buried beneath a courtyard surface; there are usually few, if any, grave goods.

Architectural traditions point similarly to a society of "haves" and "have-nots." We have already suggested that the massive Middle Bronze fortifications required not only centralized planning and heavy taxation but possibly conscript labor. These defenses simply could not have been built by an egalitarian society or with volunteer efforts.



Above: *Fish-shaped vessel, dating to around the eighteenth century* B.C.E., *found in a tomb at Tel Poleg. Measuring 11 by 19 centimeters, it is an example of Tell el-Yehudiyeh ware, named after the site in the Nile Delta where it was first found. This ware, which is always dark-slipped and burnished, with white-filled punctured decoration, has also been found in the Sudan, Cyprus, and as far north as Ugarit. Such a luxury product, spread over a wide area, suggests a general economic prosperity.* ***Right:*** *Jug with a snake handle. Measuring 32 centimeters high and dating to the mid-second millennium* B.C.E., *it is probably an example of what Sir Flinders Petrie termed "chocolate-on-white-ware," a type of pottery covered with a white slip, highly burnished, and decorated with a brown painted design. Although this example lacks the painted decoration, its fine workmanship is characteristic of the type and also suggests the tradition of excellence among potters of the time. Photographs by David Harris courtesy of the Israel Museum, Jerusalem.*

Domestic architecture shows the same trend. Most private houses are simple mudbrick structures, with only a few earthen-floored rooms; the houses are rather closely crowded together around communal courtyards and narrow lanes. A few very large, multi-room structures, however, resemble "patrician villas," such as those at Hazor, Tell Beit Mirsim, and elsewhere. Finally, we have a growing number of even more elaborate buildings, such as the two-story colonnaded structure near the Northwest Gate at Shechem. These are almost certainly the palaces of local dynasts, such as the "kings" of several Palestinian city-states who are well known from the Amarna Age texts several centuries later. Again, the palace of Yarim-Lim in stratum VII at Alalakh in Syria provides a close contemporary parallel, complete with throne and audience room, as well as palace archive. And now Ebla has produced a Middle Bronze palace, succeeding the well-known Palace G and its fabulous archive of administrative documents (Matthiae 1984). Social stratification in Palestine may not have been quite as pronounced, or the wealthy as wealthy, but class structure and differential access to resources are evident; and the growth of urbanism must surely have promoted, even required, growing social inequities.

The primary question about political organization in the Middle Bronze Age is whether Palestine constituted a state in the true sense. We have seen in earlier installments of this series (Levy 1986; Richard 1987) that the tribal level of organization typical of the Neolithic gave way to a chiefdom level in the Chalcolithic period, then to a more advanced city-state level in the Early Bronze Age. With reurbanization and the expansion of Palestine's horizons in the Middle Bronze Age, we might expect a further evolution toward the highly specialized form of political organization that we characterize as the state, which had typified both Egypt and Mesopotamia since just before 3000 B.C.E.

Given the complete absence of texts and properly historical evidence from Palestine, it is difficult to be precise, but the country-wide unification, or centralized political decision-making, that essentially defines the state appears to be entirely lacking in Middle Bronze Age Palestine. There is no evidence whatsoever, on a nationwide scale, of a single dominant city or capital; of institutionalized kingship; of centralized policy and planning; of a standing army; or, for that matter, of any distinctive ethnic consciousness as nation or people. Palestine is certainly not a *primary* or *pristine state* in the usage of social theorists; it does not even appear to be a *secondary* or *peripheral* state. Nearly all specialists would see the term *state* as properly denoting not only social complexity and integration, which Palestine certainly had evolved even

Part of a wall-painting in a tomb at Beni Hasan in Egypt. The painting, which dates to around 1960 B.C.E., depicts Asiatic traders and thus is evidence for the presence of Asiatic peoples in Egypt before the Second Intermediate Period (at the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age).

by the Early Bronze Age, but also centralization of power, decision-making, and access to resources in the hands of a nonkinship-based elite. Palestine, by contrast, remained at an intermediate level of political development, which is usually referred to as that of the *city-state*.

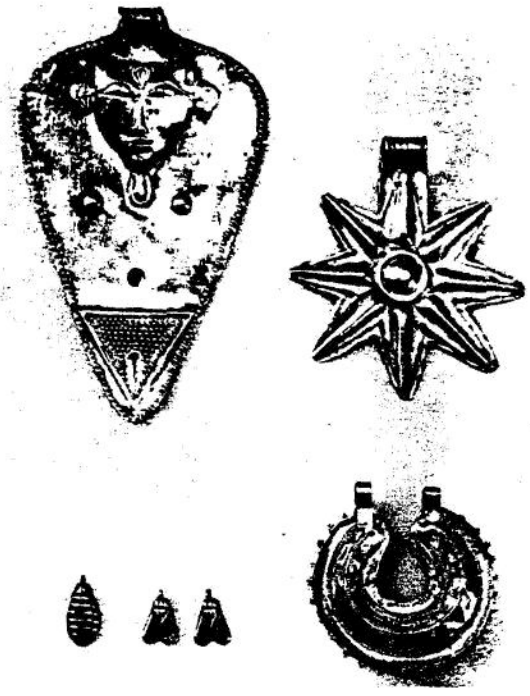
Although the term *city-state* is frequently used, it is rarely defined. Often the implication seems to be that while the regional urban centers each control their own hinterland, they are in turn united in a larger centralized confederation—that is, they constitute a true state. Yet there is little evidence of that in Palestine of the Middle Bronze Age. Rather, it seems to have been bound together only by what we may call a common southern Canaanite culture. Politically it probably remained divided: each city-state enjoying quasi-independence and dominating the surrounding countryside, most likely rivalling other urban centers. I am giving, of course, a theoretical reconstruction, but such a situation of political fragmentation would provide a forerunner for the "Amarna Age" some three to four centuries later in the Late Bronze, when we have ample textual documentation for rival city-states—most of them precisely the urban centers we see in the Middle Bronze Age. The same situation seems to have prevailed in Syria, where we see major city-states like Ebla, Yamkhad, Alalakh, Qaṭna, Ugarit, and the like, but not a unified national state such as Egypt or those in Mesopotamia.

Ideology, Art, and Religion

The ideational and symbolic aspects of a society, particularly a preliterate society, may be difficult to read directly from the "mute" remains of material culture. As Lewis Binford reminds us, archaeologists are poorly equipped to be "paleo-psychologists." Yet we do possess innumerable and varied artifacts from Middle Bronze Palestine that clearly had some artistic or cultic significance—however difficult they may be to interpret.

Let us look first specifically at artistic production (even though, strictly speaking, we cannot in general separate art from religion in the ancient world). There is no representational art from Palestine in this period, and little figural art. We have found nothing of Egyptian- or Mesopotamian-style statuary, or indeed monumental art of any kind. In the minor arts, however, Palestine has a tradition, albeit a provincial one. The principal arts include bone and ivory carving, particularly small geometric strip inlays for wooden furniture and boxes or chests (Liebowitz 1977). These were locally made, the ivory coming either from Syria (where Egyptian records indicate that elephants were hunted in this period) or from wild boars of the immediate region. Most Middle Bronze sites produce these inlays, but the Jericho tombs have yielded both the inlays and the wooden furniture in an extraordinary state of preservation (apparently because Jericho was located in a tectonic area, where gases seeping through rock fissures rendered organic materials inert and prevented decay).

Jewelry from elite tombs has already been mentioned. There is relatively little gold, which was imported and prohibitively expensive; there is some silver, although usually not well preserved. The most common pieces are bead necklaces of semiprecious stones, often made of local red carnelian or the like but frequently of Egyptian frit or faience. Scarabs from Middle Kingdom Egypt became exceedingly common in Palestine during the Middle Bronze Age; they were mounted in signet rings and probably meant to be both articles of adornment (that is, prestige items) and practical devices for stamping seals on documents or other pieces of personal property. These scarabs are usually of ivory



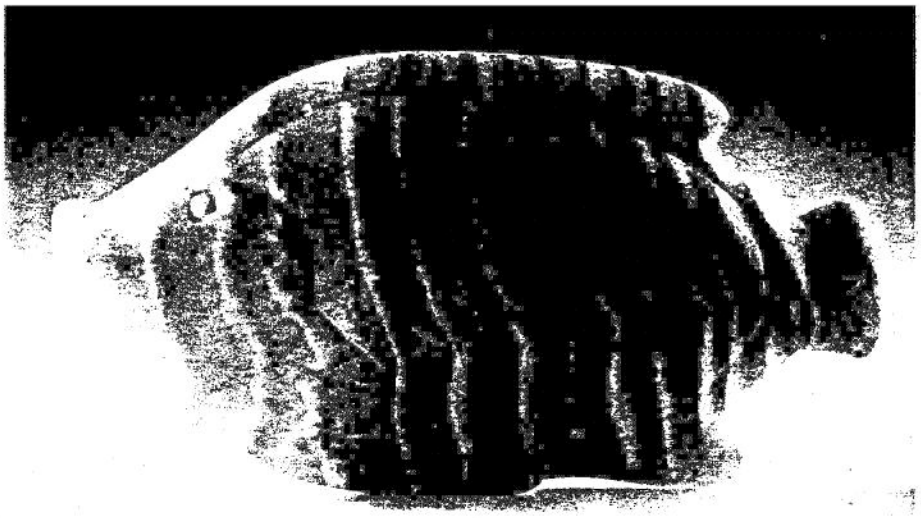
Left: Although there is no representational art from Middle Bronze Palestine, and little figural art, there was a tradition of minor arts. Among these was bone and ivory carving, particularly small geometric inlays for wooden furniture and boxes. Shown here is a carved ivory inlay from wooden furniture from tombs at Jericho. From Jericho I *(London: British School of Archaeology, 1960), by Kathleen Kenyon.* ***Right:*** *Shown here is a selection of jewelry dating to the mid-second millennium (the transition from Middle to Late Bronze) found at Tell el-ᶜAjjul: a pendant depicting the goddess Hathor, a star pendant, an earring, and three fly amulets. The pieces found at this site, most of which came from private hoards, are the finest Canaanite jewelry known and they demonstrate the high level of craftsmanship that had been attained. Photograph by David Harris courtesy of the Israel Department of Antiquities and Museums.*

or bone, carved on the back in the shape of a dung (or scarabaeus) beetle, with either a name-formula or merely a decorative design on the bottom. Many scarabs are imported and sometimes even bear the name of a well-known pharaoh, but others are local imitations and have only archaizing and often bungled decorative motifs. Mesopotamian-style cylinder seals also exist but are rare.

Also of Egyptian manufacture are a variety of alabaster and faience vessels, ranging from small unguentaria and cosmetic containers to larger vessels (Sagona 1980). These were often imitated in local calcite, an inferior material. In both cases, these vessels were probably status symbols, for they are relatively uncommon.

Some artistic and architectural remains attest to religious practices. We have several styles of temples from the Middle Bronze Age. Large single-room fortress (*migdal*) temples, with exceptionally thick walls, are known from Middle Bronze III levels at Shechem and Megiddo, with a close parallel in the temple in area at Ebla. (On the Palestinian examples, see G. E. Wright 1965: 80–102; Dever 1974: 39–48; on Ebla, see Matthiae 1984: 20). These single-room temples were once thought to be a typically urban style, but now a sequence of four successive mud-brick temples of this type, on a somewhat smaller scale, has been found at the tiny village-site of Tell el-Ḥayyāt; these temples date from Middle Bronze I to III (Falconer and Magness-Gardiner 1984, 1987). Syrian-style bipartite or tripartite temples are also found, especially at Shechem (the prototype of the famous temple of Solomon—Dever 1974: 48).

Two cultic installations are unique. The first is the so-called Canaanite high place (Hebrew *bāmāh*) at Nahariyeh, on the coast just north of Acco; this features a long rectangular structure with an adjacent outdoor stone altar where charred organic remains were found.



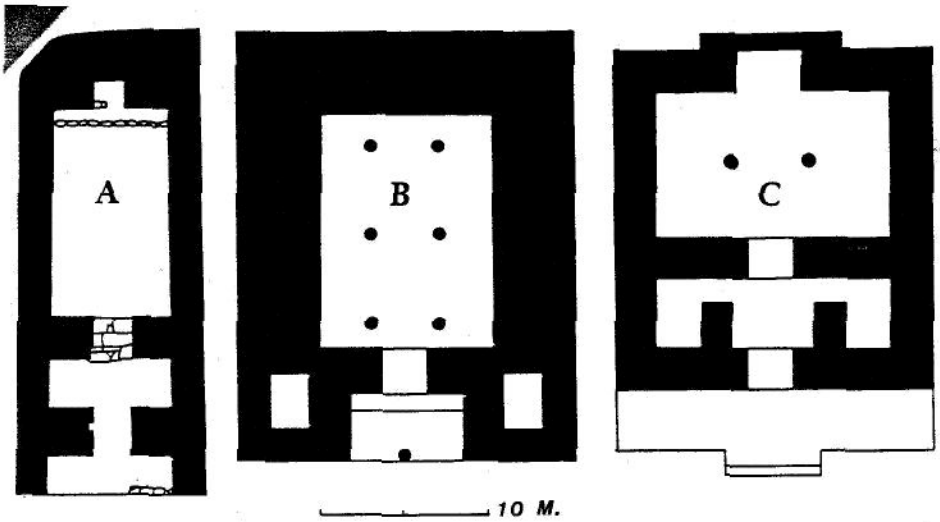
Left: *These three examples of scarabs found at the Middle Bronze site at Hazor are interesting because of their often bungled hieroglyphs, which suggests either that the scarabs were made locally to supply a taste for Egyptian objects or that they are related to the years of the Hyksos (or "foreign rulers") in Egypt. They are, in any event, clear evidence of Egyptian influence in Palestine in the Middle Bronze period. From* Hazor: The Rediscovery of a Great Citadel of the Bible *(New York: Random House, 1975), by Yigael Yadin, courtesy of the estate of Yigael Yadin.* ***Above:*** *This alabaster fish, dating to the mid-second millennium* B.C.E.*, was found at Tell el-ᶜAjjul. Almost six inches long, it could have been used as an unguent container. This luxury good is of Egyptian manufacture and thus suggests that Egypt and Canaan engaged in trade during Middle Bronze. Photograph by David Harris courtesy of the Israel Department of Antiquities and Museums.*

Below left: *Artist's reconstruction of a room with Middle Bronze furniture like those pieces found in a tomb at Jericho. From Kenyon 1957.* ***Below:*** *Display at Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, Canada, that reproduces the scene in the reconstruction. Photograph courtesy of Louisa Curtis Ngote.*

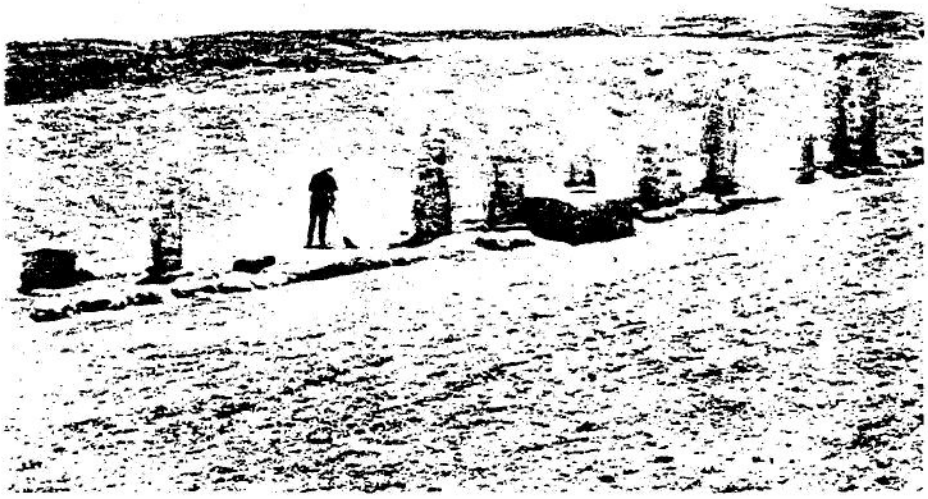
Among the remains were also a number of bronze and terra-cotta female figurines, as well as the molds for making them (Dothan in Biran 1981: 77). Since the Nahariyeh temple is right on the seashore, it may have been a shrine dedicated to Asherah, the consort of the Canaanite high-god, El; Asherah's principle epithet is *'Athiratu-yammi*, "She who treads upon/subdues the sea."

The other installation is the famous "High Place" at Gezer, excavated by Macalister in 1902–1909, then recleared by the American expedition in 1968 and dated to Middle Bronze III. It consists of ten enormous stelae (standing stones) in a north-south alignment, with an associated stone basin surrounded by a plastered pavement. It was not a mortuary installation, as previously thought, but was probably an outdoor covenant-renewal shrine, the ten stelae representing ten towns in league (like the later Delphic leagues). Charred sheep and goat remains testify to animal sacrifice (Dever 1973; Dever and others 1971: 120–24).

Religion in the Middle Bronze Age is also attested by several types of cultic paraphernalia, found not only in temple but also in domestic contexts. Cylindrical terra-cotta stands, usually fenestrated and topped by detachable bowls, were probably used for food and libation



Plans of Middle Bronze fortress (migdal) temples from Ebla (A), Shechem (B), and Hazor (C). This type of Canaanite temple often had a distinctive three-part organization that included a courtyard, entranceway, and an inner sanctuary. It also frequently had a tower in the front that may have given access to a second story. Note that A and C have a niche in the rear wall of the sanctuary for a statue of a deity.



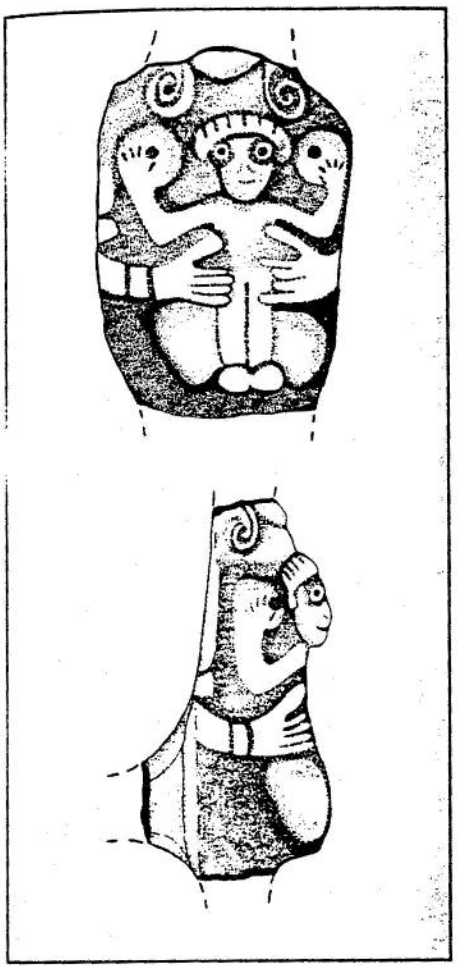
The Middle Bronze "High Place" at Gezer (reexcavated by the Hebrew Union College–Harvard Semitic Museum expedition in 1968) consists of ten standing stones in a north-south arrangement, with an associated stone basin surrounded by a plastered pavement. The whole grouping was erected simultaneously and contains all the biblical elements of covenant-making: the setting up of stones to commemorate the occasion, oath-taking (the ten stones possibly representing ten towns in league), blood sacrifice (possibly represented by the basin), and a covenant meal (there were charred animal remains found in conjunction with the stones). Photograph courtesy of William G. Dever.

Female figurines were popular in Canaan, usually inexpensively produced from clay. Relatively rare are examples in metal. Thus the two sheet-gold pendants shown here, part of a small hoard from a storeroom just inside the "South Gate" at Gezer, were a spectacular find (see the plan of "South Gate" on page 157). Measuring 16.1 and 10 centimeters in height, they are probably representations of Asherah, consort of the Canaanite high-god El. Photograph by David Harris courtesy of the Israel Department of Antiquities and Museums.

offerings, as well as for burning incense. Other clearly cultic artifacts are small terra-cotta figurines; interestingly, we have only female examples (the so-called Astarte figurines). These depict the "mother goddess" nude, en face, often with exaggerated sexual characteristics; they are undoubtedly fertility figurines—that is, talismans to aid women in conception, childbirth, and lactation. They may safely be connected with the veneration of Asherah, the principal Canaanite mother goddess, whose cult continued into the Late Bronze Age and was popular even in ancient Israel.

The most spectacular Middle Bronze figurines of Canaanite deities are two sheet-gold pendants from the destruction of the "South Gate" at Gezer; these depict in Syrian-style bas-relief two females, representations no doubt of Asherah. Similar reliefs are found in the Late Bronze Age, especially at Tell el-ᶜAjjul (Seger 1976).

Finally, votive offerings are known. Most consist of miniatures of common ceramic forms; these are



The religious practices in Palestine during the Middle Bronze Age are suggested by this so-called Astarte figurine, part of an incense stand, found at Shechem. Such figurines may be connected with the veneration of Asherah, the principal Canaanite mother goddess, and were usually meant as talismans to aid in conception, childbirth, and lactation.

usually found in temple precincts, often at the entrance or near the altar, which is characteristically located on the rear wall. Ceramic zoomorphic figurines are also occasionally recovered in connection with these votives. All these vessels probably symbolize the principal activity in worship: the presentation of food and drink offerings to the gods in their house. The Canaanite deities, well known from contemporary and later texts in Syria, were mostly connected with the fertility cult, and thus rites of worship were bound up with the agricultural year and its produce, as well as with human and animal reproduction. The Ugaritic texts of the Late Bronze Age give us a particularly vivid and dramatic picture of this religion, and we may safely project it back into the Middle Bronze Age. Certainly the temples and cult paraphernalia of the periods are in direct continuity.

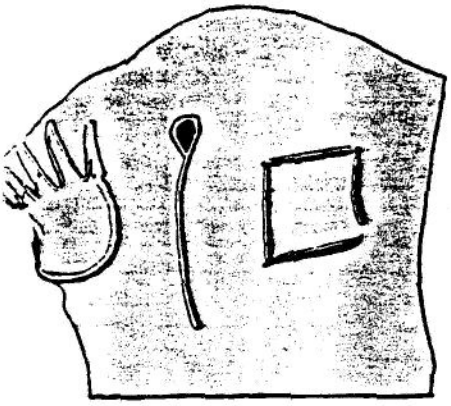
Toward the end of Middle Bronze, around 1650–1600 B.C.E., the first system of writing emerges in Palestine. Writing appears late in Palestine, of course, in comparison with Mesopotamia and Egypt, but when it does appear, it marks a stunning advance. We have only a few fragments of these early Proto-Sinaitic or Canaanite inscriptions, but they introduce a vastly simplified alphabetic system of writing with some twenty-two characters, one that became the basis for all modern Western writing systems. For the first time in the world's history, literacy was within the grasp of the ordinary individual.

Before the turn of the present century, Sir William Flinders Petrie discovered the first of these so-called Proto-Sinaitic inscriptions at Serabit al-Khadem, in the western Sinai. Here Asiatic slaves from Palestine were kept by the Egyptians in the Middle Kingdom to work the turquoise mines. These miserable slaves scrawled graffiti all around on the rock surface, mostly dedicatory inscriptions specifying offerings, usually a lamb, to various West Semitic deities. Especially favored were the male god, El, and his consort Baʿalath/Elath, the "Serpent Lady." One inscription reads, understandably, "O my god, rescue me from the interior of the mine!"

The language of these inscriptions is Canaanite. The system of writing, however, is not the cuneiform script of Ugarit on the Syrian coast, much less the Akkadian cuneiform script of Mesopotamia with its hundreds of signs. Instead, a vastly simplified script is employed, one that uses only about twenty-two signs—one for each sound, rather than for each idea, word, or syllable. The script developed by means of the acrophonic principle, and it became possible thereby for a person to write whatever he or she heard. Thus the sound *b* came to be represented by a much-simplified picture of a house, because the initial sound of the word for house (*beth*) is *b*. Likewise, the sound *m* was represented by a rendition of water, because the initial sound of the word for water (*mem*) is *m*. (See the accompanying chart for the full alphabet and equivalents; see also Albright 1966).

Compared to Egypt or Mesopotamia, writing appeared late in Palestine. When it did there was a stunning advance: the introduction of a vastly simplified alphabet.

These simple signs, with very much the same order and even the same names, eventually evolved into the modern alphabet employed by all Western languages. Borrowed by the later Hebrews from the Canaanites, it was also adopted by the Phoenician seafarers along the coast and thus spread to the Greek mainland by about 1000 B.C.E., thence to the Romans, then to Europe, and finally to the New World. The original *aleph-beth*—that is, alphabet—signs remain transparently clear in modern signs (see the original signs for the modern letters A, Y, and M in the accompanying chart), as well as



The "Gezer Potsherd," a surface find in Proto-Canaanite script. The three characters perhaps read "Caleb."

in their earlier Latin, Greek, Phoenician, and Hebrew versions (Naveh 1982).

What is of note here is that this astonishingly simple and nearly universal writing system was the work of some anonymous genius (or perhaps a committee?) somewhere along the Levantine coast, probably in Palestine, in the Middle Bronze Age (the seventeenth and sixteenth centuries B.C.E.). Early examples of Proto-Sinaitic (or, better, Proto-Canaanite) inscriptions have been found at Megiddo, Shechem, Beth-shemesh, Lachish, and elsewhere in Palestine, as well as in ancient Syria, all dating to the Middle and Late Bronze Ages. One of them was also discovered at Gezer in 1929 by a visitor on a field trip from the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem and published later by the director of the school, William F. Albright. The Gezer inscription is scratched on a sherd of a typical cylindrical cult stand of the Middle Bronze Age, the three characters perhaps reading *Klb*—the name "Caleb."

The few texts we have just described in the local Canaanite script hardly constitute literature, and they do not give us much insight into either the history or ideology of the Middle Bronze Age. We know, however, that some individuals were not only literate but multilingual. We have a few fragments of Akkadian tablets written in cuneiform (the language of North Syria and Mesopotamia). From Hazor come two tablets, one dealing with a real estate transaction, another a lexical text (Landsberger and Tadmor 1964). At Gezer, from destruction debris of Middle Bronze III, we found a fragment of the clay "envelope" of a tablet with a list of names. Most are Semitic, but one of them is clearly Hurrian, the earliest evidence we have thus far of Indo-Aryans from the Lake Van region pushing down into Palestine (Dever and others 1971: 111–13). Only recently a much longer cuneiform inscription has been reported from Middle Bronze levels at Hebron, with a list of sacrifices. These are but tantalizing hints of the earliest known literary tradition of Palestine, but we shall undoubtedly find more in the future.

International Relations

As already suggested, Palestine's real international connections (that is, beyond Syria), apart from sporadic trade with Cyprus and Mesopotamia, were largely with Egypt. Indeed, Egypt provides not only part of the stimulus for reurbanization in Palestine but its chronology is also the basis for a fixed chronology of the Middle Bronze I–III period in Syria-Palestine.

In Egypt, the First Intermediate Period—a "dark age" there, too—ended just after 2000 B.C.E.. At that time, the Middle Kingdom was founded under the vigorous Twelfth Dynasty pharaohs, who reinstated the old dynastic succession. The date of 1991 B.C.E. for the accession of Amenemhet I (the founder of the Twelfth Dynasty) is our earliest astronomically fixed date in ancient Near Eastern history. We owe it to the Egyptians' observation of a solar eclipse and their correlation of that event (which we can date, of course, to the exact year) with the accession dates of early pharaohs of the dynasty mentioned in the King lists.

The Middle Kingdom (the Twelfth and Thirteenth Dynasties) lasted for nearly 500 years. It not only revived the glories of the Old Kingdom and the legendary "Pyramid Age," it also carried Egyptian culture to new heights and enormously expanded Egyptian influence and power abroad.

Among the first efforts of the early pharaohs of the Twelfth Dynasty was the resumption of the old sea trade with Byblos and the Phoenician coast (see Posener 1971; Weinstein 1975; Dever 1976). Within a short time, Egyptian luxury goods were flowing into Syria. The contents of the famous Royal Tombs of the local rulers at Byblos (north of modern Beirut, on the Lebanese coast) reflect just how fond the Syrians were of Egyptian culture. The Byblian princes not only filled their treasury, and later their tombs, with expensive Egyptian imports, they also wrote their Semitic names in Egyptian hieroglyphs, and even adopted the Egyptian title "governor." And that is not all. Elsewhere along the Phoenician coast, in the inland centers and well down into Palestine, nearly all of the major sites of the renascent Middle Bronze Age have produced Egyptian artifacts of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Dynasties. Among the most intriguing items are small carved-stone statuettes, inscribed with the names of a number of high-ranking Egyptian officials of the early Middle Kingdom, even of the royal family. Thus, from Syria we have several sphinxes of Amenemhet III and IV, as well as of their princess-daughters. These may have been sent from the Egyptian court as temple gifts or, more likely, were intended to cement diplomatic and commercial relations with Syria.

From Palestine, we have further evidence of international relations. At Megiddo, there was found a broken statue of one Thut-hotpe, a well-known nomarch (or governor) at Hermopolis, who served under Amenemhet II (approximately 1929–1895 B.C.E.) and Sesostris III (approxi-

mately 1878–1843 B.C.E.). His inscribed and decorated tomb has been excavated at Deir el-Bersha. What was he doing in Palestine—unless he was a commercial attaché, or even a sort of ambassador, of the Twelfth Dynasty? Another contemporary Egyptian official, Sebek-khu, left his stele at Abydos; it describes an Egyptian campaign to *škmm*, almost certainly Shechem near Nablus, which German and American excavations have shown to have been founded precisely in Middle Bronze I. Why would Egyptians be campaigning in northern Palestine and maintaining commercial and diplomatic relations both there and in Syria?

To put it precisely, what were the Twelfth Dynasty interests in Syria-Palestine and how may they have contributed toward the urban renascence there shortly after 2000 B.C.E.? The artifacts show, without any doubt, that the contacts existed; they do not in themselves, however, specify the exact nature of the relationships. Again, just as they are on the beginning of the first urban era in Early Bronze I, archaeologists are divided. Some prefer to see in the artifacts only peaceful trade relations, while others suppose that we confront an actual Egyptian empire in Syria-Palestine (see Posener 1971; Weinstein 1981; Dever 1976).

We do have, however, further evidence in several groups of Twelfth Dynasty execration texts from Egypt. These are curse formulas, specifically mentioning dozens of places in Syria-Palestine and naming their rulers, all of whom bear distinctive West Semitic or Amorite-style names. One group of texts (the Berlin texts, so-called because of their place of publication) is inscribed on small clay statuettes of bound captives; another (the Brussels texts, which are slightly later) is inscribed on red ceramic bowls. These curious items were used in magical rites; they were deliberately smashed, and thus a hex was placed upon the enemy named on the statuette or bowl. However we may understand the motives of the Egyptians regarding these princes, one thing is clear—Egyptian intelligence was superb. They possessed a singularly detailed knowledge of topography, local conditions, and sociopolitical organization in Syria-Palestine during Middle Bronze I. (On the execration texts, see especially van Seters 1966; Posener 1971; Weinstein 1975).

Clay figurine from Saqqara of a captive Asiatic prince with an execration text written across it in Egyptian script. Such figurines were smashed after the curse (execration) was written, and thus a hex was placed upon the enemy named in the text. These texts form an important primary source for our knowledge of Levantine political developments from the Middle Bronze period because they list the names of rulers and city-states in Canaan, southern Syria, and along the Mediterranean coast. Photograph courtesy of the Institut Royal du Patrimoine Artistique, Brussels, Belgium.

The Hyksos in Egypt and Palestine

As we noted in the previous section, the initial phase of the urban revival in Middle Bronze I correlates with the renascent Twelfth Dynasty in Egypt (approximately 1991–1785 B.C.E.). The second phase of development and consolidation in Palestine, occurring during Middle Bronze II, is roughly coeval with the succeeding Thirteenth Dynasty (approximately 1785–1652 B.C.E.). The zenith of the development of the local Canaanite culture in Middle Bronze III (approximately 1650–1500 B.C.E.) then coincides almost precisely with the Second Intermediate Period in Egypt (approximately 1652–1544 B.C.E.). The latter, like the First Intermediate Period, is a time of collapse and disorder; external factors apparently played a part in this case, however. (On the Hyksos periods, see especially von Beckerath 1964; van Seters 1966; Redford 1970; Helck 1971; Hayes 1973; Bietak 1979, 1984; Weinstein 1981; Dever 1985).

Among the threats, real or perceived, to the old line of Theban rulers was the presence of increasing numbers of Asiatics in Egypt. The Asiatics—Amu, or "Sand Dwellers," as they were called—were alternately hated and feared as foreigners by the xenophobic Egyptians. One famous text describes vividly the miserable homeland of the Asiatics—from the Egyptian perspective—obviously somewhere in central and southern Palestine:

> Lo, the wretched Asiatic—it goes ill with the place where he is, afflicted with water, difficult from many trees, the ways thereof painful because of the mountains. He does not dwell in a single place, [but] his legs are made to go astray. He has been fighting [ever] since the time of Horus, [but] he does not conquer, nor yet can he be conquered. He does not announce a day in fighting, like a thief who ... for a gang. (*The Instruction for King Men-Ka-Re*; see Pritchard 1955: 416)

Various groups of these West Semitic peoples from Syria and Palestine suc-

"Tutimaios. In his reign, for what cause I know not, a blast of God smote us; and unexpectedly from the regions of the East invaders of obscure race marched in confidence of victory against our land. By main force they seized it."

ceeded in penetrating the Delta in larger and larger numbers, beginning already in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Dynasties. By the Fifteenth Dynasty, they rose briefly to power. In the Second Intermediate Period, where the rival Sixteenth and Seventeenth Dynasties vied simultaneously for power, revealing Egypt's weakness, a series of Asiatic kings actually ruled northern and central Egypt for a hundred years under the Fifteenth, or Hyksos, Dynasty.

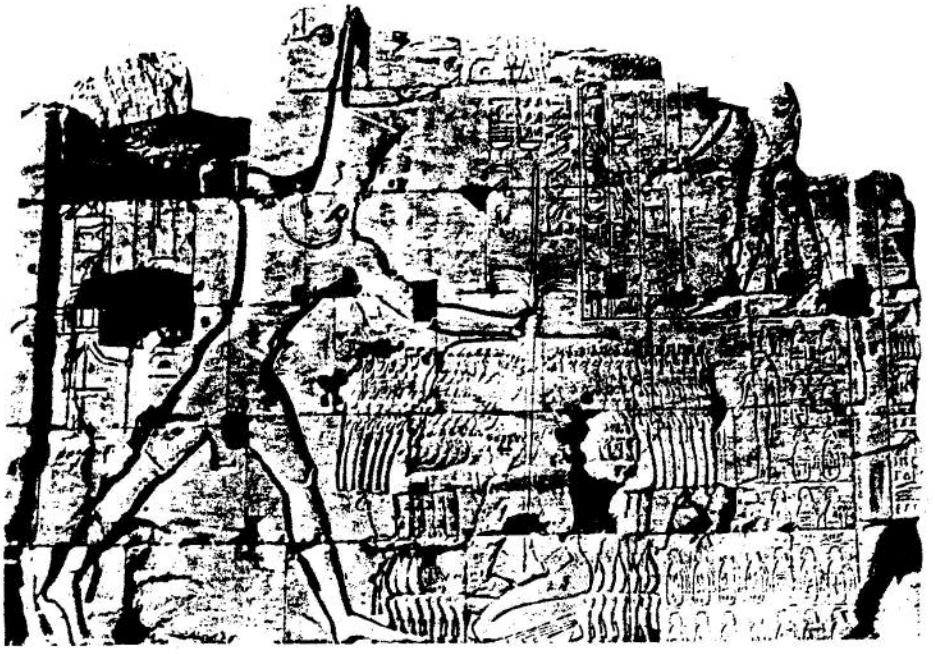
The Egyptian word for Hyksos (*ḥk3w-ḫ3swt*) means simply "foreign ruler," not "Shepherd King" as formerly thought because of the supposed connection between these Asiatics and the biblical patriarchs and their migration to Egypt. But we can show that these "foreign kings" were in fact Semitic—that is, from Syria-Palestine. Fortunately we possess lists of the names of the six kings of the Fifteenth Dynasty; at least three of them are demonstrably West Semitic. Indeed, these kings bear typical Amorite- or Canaanite-style names. One is called *Yaqub-har*, "May the Mountain Deity overreach"—a name that is almost identical in style and meaning to the original form of the name Jacob in the Hebrew Bible. Several scarabs of these Hyksos kings have been found in the Middle Bronze levels of Palestinian sites.

How did these Syro-Palestinian interlopers manage to seize power in Egypt—something that never occurred before or after in that supposedly inviolable country? The chauvinistic Egyptian texts of later periods always portray the hated Hyksos as barbarians who temporarily overran the country. This tradition survived into the Roman period, when the Jewish historian Josephus described the Hyksos through Egyptian eyes thusly:

> Tutimaios. In his reign, for what cause I know not, a blast of God smote us; and unexpectedly from the regions of the East invaders of obscure race marched in confidence of victory against our land. By main force they seized it without striking a blow; and having overpowered the rulers of the land, they then burned our cities ruthlessly, razed to the ground the temples of the gods, and treated all the natives with a cruel hostility, massacring some and leading into slavery the wives and children of others. Finally, they appointed as king one of their number whose name as Salitis; he had his seat in Memphis, levying tribute from Upper and Lower Egypt, and always leaving garrisons behind in the most advantageous places. (*Against Apion*, book 1, chapter 14, line 75 and following; see Thackeray 1961)

It is not surprising that most scholars until recently assumed a Hyksos invasion, which was thought to have been the direct cause of the dissolution of the Second Intermediate Period. But recent Austrian excavations have discovered the location of long-lost Avaris, frequently mentioned in the Egyptian texts as the Hyksos capital, at Tell ed-Dabᶜa in the Nile Delta (Bietak 1979), 1984). What the excavations have brought to light is fascinating: a large settlement that was founded about 1900–1800 B.C.E., with domestic and temple architecture, pottery, metal implements, and burial customs almost identical to those of Palestinian Middle Bronze I. The population and material culture of Avaris were, then, clearly Canaanite. Furthermore, the settlement is pre-Hyksos—founded in the late Twelfth or early Thirteenth Dynasty—and it is the result not of a sudden military invasion but rather of a long, relatively peaceful process of colonization (for this reinterpretation, see Dever 1985, contra Bietak). Thus Asiatics had long been settled in the Delta. Their takeover of Egypt under the Fifteenth, or Hyksos, Dynasty, after some 250 years, was more the result than the cause of the collapse of central authority in the Second Intermediate Period. Already acculturated, and having a large power base in the local Canaanite population of the Delta at Avaris and elsewhere, the Asiatic pretenders to the throne probably simply took advantage of internal weakness and seized power in a lightning coup. The Hyksos remained in control of a good portion of Egypt for a hundred years, until the kings of the late Seventeenth and the early Eighteenth Dynasties succeeded in reuniting Egypt and expelling them, ultimately driving them back into Palestine and Syria. This is where the fortifications described above came into play.

My interpretation of the data, including the new evidence from Tell ed-Dabᶜa, is somewhat contro-



Victory inscription of Tuthmosis III on the walls of a temple at Karnak, from the first years of the revival of the Eighteenth Dynasty pharaohs. Tuthmosis III is depicted holding Asiatic enemies by their hair, a common convention in Egyptian art to show the subjection of foreign enemies to the king. The successful reestablishment of Egyptian hegemony in the Delta meant the expulsion of the hated Hyksos, or "foreign rulers."

versial. If I am correct, however, then we have for the first time a rational explanation for the enigmatic Palestinian defenses, which attained their maximum buildup in Middle Bronze III, 1650–1550 B.C.E.—precisely the time of the Hyksos period in Egypt. The Palestinian city-states constituted the power base for the Asiatic expansion in the Delta. They were the heartland of Canaanite culture, which sustained and supplied the colonies in Egypt. The Palestinian sites were heavily defended not against the rival city-states of the local regions but rather against the possibility of a forced retreat and Egyptian retaliation. This eventuality became more and more a concern late in the period, as Asiatic rulers pushed their power to its limits in Egypt. In time, what was feared happened. The fortifications were needed but they failed.

The end of the Second Intermediate Period and Hyksos rule came around 1540 B.C.E., when Kamose, the last pharaoh of the Theban Seventeenth Dynasty, reasserted himself. A well-known text describes the pharaoh's war council:

> His majesty spoke in his palace to the council of nobles who were in his retinue: "Let me understand what this strength of mine is for! [One] prince is in Avaris, another is in Ethiopia, and [here] I sit associated with an Asiatic and a Negro! Each man has his slice of this Egypt, dividing up the land with me. I cannot pass by him as far as Memphis, the waters of Egypt, [but], behold, he has Hermopolis. No man can settle down, being despoiled by the imposts of the Asiatics. I will grapple with him, that I may cut open his belly! My wish is to save Egypt and to smite the Asiatics!" (*The War Against the Hyksos*; see Pritchard 1955: 232)

Other texts recount that, as they pushed north, the Egyptians besieged Avaris and destroyed it, and the excavations at Tell ed-Dabᶜa reveal that the site was burned around 1540 B.C.E. and lay destroyed for centuries thereafter. Kamose's brother Ahmose, founder of the Eighteenth Dynasty and the New Kingdom, continued these campaigns against the Hyksos, as subsequent pharaohs did well down into the fifteenth century B.C.E.. Several Egyptian texts detail military campaigns against a number of sites in Palestine and into Syria as far as the Upper Euphrates, mentioning specific sites by name. The most explicit text is the victory account of Tuthmosis III, found inscribed on the walls of the great temple of Amun at Karnak (near modern Luxor). It lists dozens of identifiable sites in Palestine and Syria, which the pharaoh claims to have taken on his famous first Asiatic campaign, around 1482 B.C.E. Later texts document almost annual campaigns of the Eighteenth Dynasty pharaohs, down to the time of Tuthmosis IV at the end of the fifteenth century B.C.E. (Weinstein 1981; Dever 1985).

Some historians still dismiss these Egyptians texts, which were popular for centuries, as propaganda (see Shea 1979; Redford 1979), as a bombastic attempt to focus blame for the Second Intermediate interregnum on the Asiatics, and also an idle boast of Egyptian triumph over them. But the fact is that every single Middle Bronze III site excavated thus far in Palestine shows one or more destructions precisely between about 1550 and 1480 B.C.E.—so devastating that most sites were abandoned for a generation or more thereafter, well into Late Bronze I. Shechem suffered three destructions in rapid succession in the Northwest Gate area, leaving heaps of burned mudbrick that are still visible on the mound's surface today. Gezer is a parade example, and also one of the most closely dated destructions. The "South Gate," "Inner Wall," and massive "Tower 5017" were violently burned and so badly damaged that they were never rebuilt. Inside the gate, houses were found filled with up to six feet of destruction debris. Among the smashed pottery and

stone implements on the floors was the crushed body of a young woman in her twenties; she had apparently returned to retrieve the gold deity pendants discussed above but was killed when the burning roof fell on her. It is likely that we can date the destruction during Middle Bronze III at Gezer precisely to the spring of 1482 B.C.E., among the latest in Palestine. It would thus be connected with the first Asiatic campaign of Tuthmosis III, on his way to the famous battle at the Megiddo pass in that year. This campaign is recorded in detail on the wall of the great temple at Karnak, and Gezer is specifically mentioned as one of the sites taken (Dever and others 1971: 102, 103; 1974; Seger 1975, 1976). Not even the smaller Palestinian forts of two to three acres escaped this long series of Egyptian campaigns, as shown by the recent excavation of Tel Mevorakh on the coast.

It is irresistible to connect these violent destructions in Palestine with the campaigns that the Egyptian texts describe following the expulsion of the Hyksos from the Delta. The Middle Bronze III sites in Palestine were at their absolute zenith, climaxing nearly 500 years of steady, peaceful, urban development. They were not only heavily fortified but also more populous and prosperous than they would be until the Roman period. They exhibited the maturity of the long, homogeneous Canaanite culture in Palestine. It is unlikely that these city-states suddenly turned on each other and destroyed themselves in little more than a generation. It is also unlikely that the foe came from the north, for most of the rival urban centers in Syria had already been destroyed (like Ebla) by the Hittite advance around 1600 B.C.E. A far more plausible explanation for the devastation in Palestine, as several scholars have suggested recently, would be the Egyptians' vengeful pursuit of the Hyksos as they retreated to their homeland and made a last, unsuccessful stand at the fortified sites there (see Weinstein 1981; Dever 1985). It was this eventuality that had been anticipated all along and that had no doubt motivated the augmentation, if not the construction, of these enormous Middle Bronze I–III defenses. With that came the end of the second, brilliant urban era in ancient Palestine.

Conclusion

It would be a generation or so after the Middle Bronze destructions before Palestine would recover. Many sites were abandoned for a generation or more, until the Late Bronze IB period (approximately 1450–1400 B.C.E.). Those that were reoccupied were shadows of their former selves, depopulated and impoverished, until full recovery finally came in the Late Bronze II period, under Egyptian hegemony (approximately 1400–1200 B.C.E.). The cycle with which we began our story—the periodic rise, collapse, and renascence of civilization—had come full circle again. And this time Palestine would not regain her former degree of urbanization until the Classical era, many centuries later.

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CHRONOLOGY OF THE UPPER AND LOWER CITIES AT HAZOR

Upper City	Lower City	Period	Description
I		Hellenistic (3rd–2nd centuries B.C.)	Citadel
II		Persian (4th century B.C.)	Citadel, farmhouses, graves
III		Assyrian (7th century B.C.)	Citadel
IV		8th century B.C.	Unfortified settlement
V		8th century B.C.	Destruction by Tiglath Pileser III (732 B.C.)
VI		8th century B.C.	City of Jeroboam II (destruction by earthquake)
VII	Not yet settled	9th century B.C.	Reconstruction of parts of Stratum VIII
VIII		9th century B.C.	Omride dynasty
IX		End 10th–beginning 9th century B.C.	Destruction by Ben-Ḥadad I (conflagration)
X		Mid-10th century B.C.	City of Solomon
XI		11th century B.C.	Limited Israelite settlement
XII		12th century B.C.	Temporary Israelite semi-nomadic settlement
XIII	1A	13th century B.C. Conquest	Destruction in second half of 13th century by Israelite tribes
XIV	1B	14th century B.C.	Amarna period
XV	2	15th century B.C.	Thutmose III–Amenḥotep II
Post-XVI		MB IIC transitional	Burials in ruined city
XVI	3	17th–16th centuries B.C.	Destruction by Aḥmose (conflagration)
XVII	4	18th–17th centuries B.C.	Lower city founded in mid-18th century B.C. (the Mari Texts)
Pre-XVII		Beginning of MB IIB	Unfortified. Mainly burials; some structures
XVIII	Not yet founded	21st–20th centuries B.C. (MB I)	
XX–XIX		26th–24th centuries B.C. (EB III)	Khirbet Kerak culture
XXI		27th century B.C. (EB II)	

Requirements for the Locations of Ai, Beth Aven and Beth El

I. Biblical Requirements for Ai

A. Topographical

1. A mountain to the west, between Ai and Beth El (Gen. 12:8)
2. Located near Beth Aven (Josh. 7:2)
3. Smaller than Gibeon which is 16 acres in size (Josh. 7:3, 10:2)
4. A shebarim nearby (Josh. 7:5)
5. A descent between Ai and Jericho (Josh. 7:5)
6. A valley to the north (Josh. 8:11)
7. A place for an ambush on the west, between Ai and Beth El (Josh. 8:12)
8. Located in the vicinity of Beth El (Josh. 12:9; Ezra 2:28; Neh. 7:32, 11:31)

B. Occupational History

1. EB III (time of Abraham)

a. Known to Abraham (Gen. 12:8, 13:3)
b. Probably a major urban center since all of the other hill country sites mentioned in the Abrahamic narrative are major urban centers
c. Could have been a ruin in Abraham's day since ᶜay is usually interpreted to mean "ruin."

2. MB (time of the Egyptian Sojourn) - no data
3. LB I (time of Joshua)

a. Fortified (Josh. 7:5)
b. Destroyed by fire (Josh. 8:28)
c. Possibly a pile of stones in the gateway (Josh. 8:29)

4. LB II, III (period of the Judges) - probably abandoned (Josh. 8:28)
5. Iron I (period of the Judges, United Monarchy) - no data
6. Iron II (Divided Monarchy) - occupied in the time of Isaiah, second half of the 8th cent. (Is. 10:28)
7. Persian Period (Post Exilic Period) - occupied in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, late 6th and 5th cent. (Ezra 2:28; Neh. 7:32, 11:31)

II. Patristic Evidence for Ai (Eusebius, Onomasticon 4:27)

A. Topographical

a. occupied in the time of Samuel, 11th cent. (1 Sam. 7:16)
b. occupied in the time of David, early 10th cent. (1 Sam. 30:27)

9. Iron II (period of the Divided Monarchy)

a. A cultic center was built there in the time of Jeroboam I, late 10th cent. (1 Kings 12:28-13:32)
b. Occupied in the time of Ahab and Ahaziah, 9th cent. (1 Kings 16:34; 2 Kings 2:3, 23)
c. Occupied in the time of Jeroboam II, mid 8th cent. (Hos. 10:15, 12:4; Amos 3:14, 4:4, 5:5-6, 7:10-13)
d. Occupied after the fall of Samaria, late 8th cent. (2 Kings 17:28)
e. Occupied in the time of Josiah, late 7th cent. (2 Kings 23:4, 15-18)

10. Persian Period (Post Exilic Period) - occupied in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, late 6th and 5th cent. (Ezra 2:28; Neh. 7:32, 11:31)

V. Extra-Biblical Evidence for Beth El

A. Topographical

1. Eusebius, Onomasticon 4:27 (4th cent. A.D.)

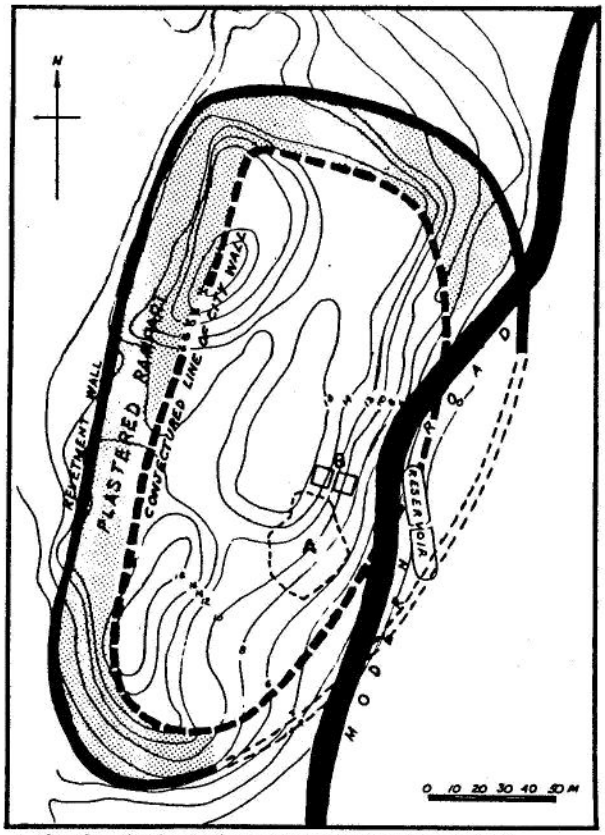
a. 12 Roman miles north of Jerusalem, 4 R.m. from Gibeon, 3 R.m. from the Valley of Ajalon
b. Near Ai
c. On the east side of the road to Neapolis (=Nablus)

2. Pilgrim of Bordeaux, Itinerarium Burdigalense (4th cent. A.D.)

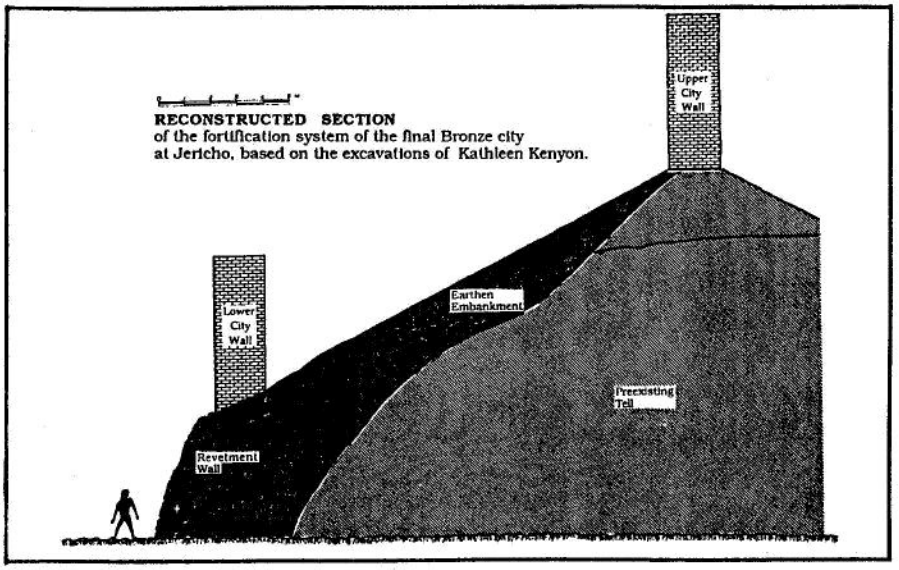
a. 28 Roman miles from Neapolis (=Nablus)
b. East of the Jerusalem road

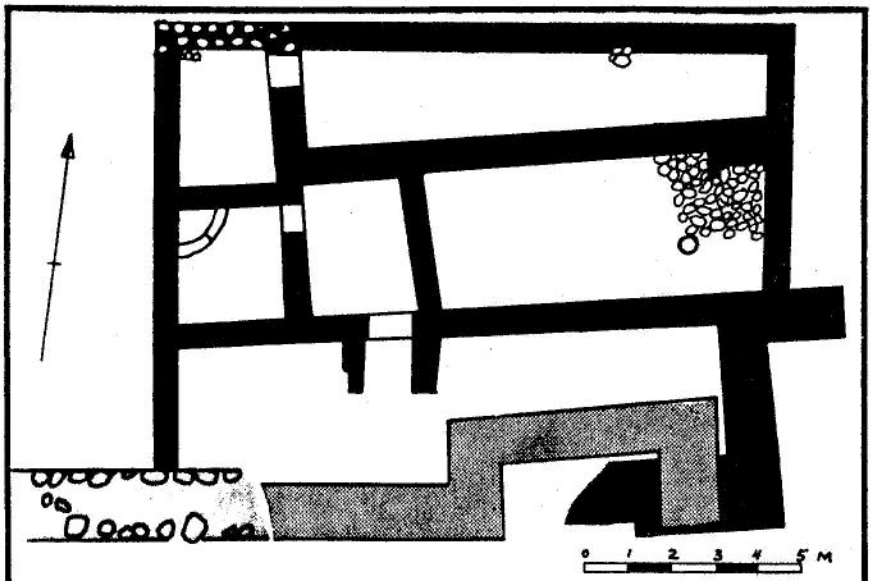
B. Occupational History

1. Fortified in the 2nd cent. B.C. (1 Macc. 9:50; Josephus, Ant. XIII, 1, 3)
2. Captured by the Romans in the 1st cent. B.C. and a garrison established there (Josephus, B.J. IV:ix, 9)
3. A large village in Eusebius' day in the 4th cent. A.D. (Onomasticon 4:27)
4. Occupied in the time of the Pilgrim of Bordeaux in the 4th cent. A.D. (Itinerarium Burdigalense)



Plan of Jericho showing the revetment wall, plastered rampart and conjectured line of the city wall of the final Bronze Age city. A and B: areas excavated by Garstang and Kenyon, respectively, where buildings from the final Bronze Age city were found.





Plan of the "Middle Building" excavated by John Garstang.

Jericho

Excavations

Chas. Warren, 1868; Ernst Sellin and Carl Watzinger, 1907-9; John Garstang, 1930-36; Kathleen Kenyon, 1952-58.

History

Destroyed by the Israelites, ca. 1410 B.C. (Joshua 6).
Occupied by Eglon, king of Moab, ca. 1334-16 B.C. (Judges 3).
Occupied in the time of David, ca. 1000 B.C. (2 Sam. 10:5).
Rebuilt by Hiel the Bethelite, 9th cent. B.C. (1 Kings 16:34).
Spring purified by Elisha, 9th cent. B.C. (2 Kings 2:19-22).
Judahites taken captive by Pekah returned to Jericho, 8th cent. B.C. (2 Chr. 28:8-15).

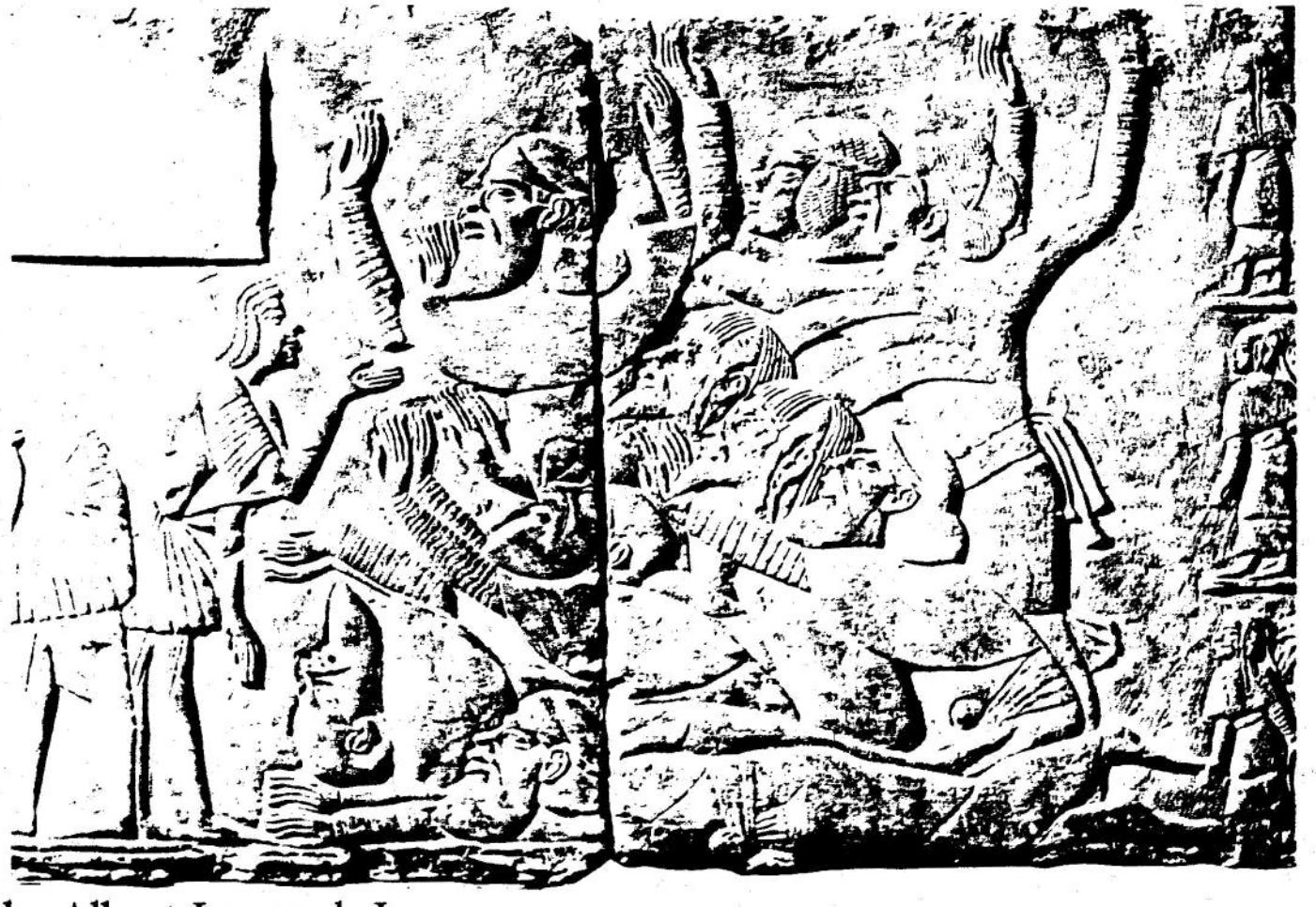
Further reading

Uncovering the Truth at Jericho, by Bryant G. Wood, *Archaeology and Biblical Research*, Autumn 1987; Did the Israelites Conquer Jericho?, by Bryant G. Wood, *Biblical Archaeology Review*, March-April 1990; Dating Jericho's Destruction: Bienkowski is Wrong on All Counts, by Bryant G. Wood, *Biblical Archaeology Review*, Sept-Oct 1990.

Biblical Archaeologist, March 1989, v. 52 no.1, pp. 4-39
"The Late Bronze Age"; Albert Leonard, Jr.

Archaeological Sources for the History of Palestine

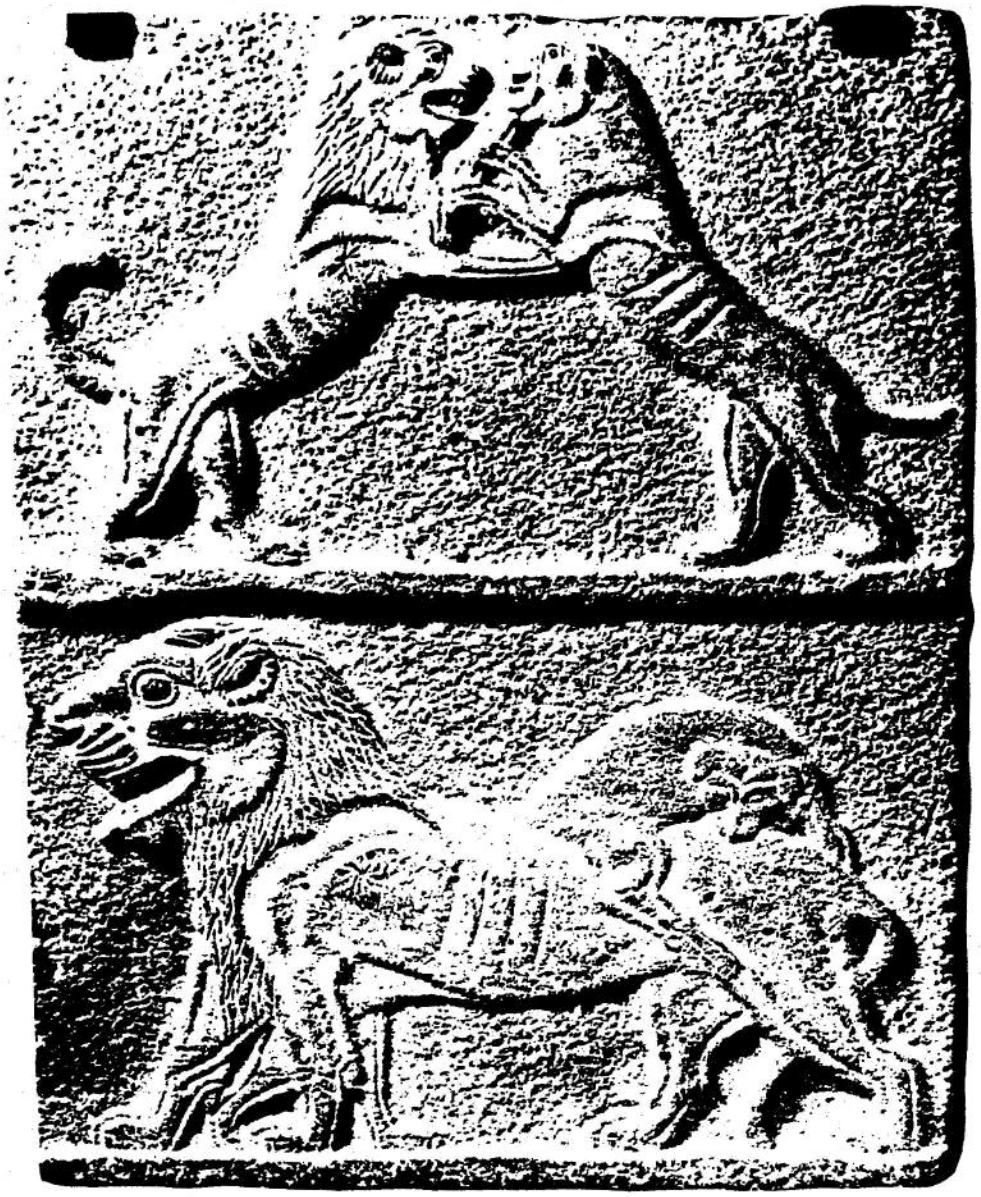
The Late Bronze Age



by Albert Leonard, Jr.

The Late Bronze Age in Canaan began and ended with large-scale population shifts: the Egyptian repulsion of the so-called Hyksos around 1550 B.C.E. and the incursion of the multinational Sea Peoples just after 1200 B.C.E. Egyptian records from this period provide details of both events and help illuminate the more than three centuries of cultural development that took place in Canaan between them. In fact, Syro-Palestine can be seen better against the backdrop of these Egyptian records than at any other time in its prior history.

Thus, in the following pages I will discuss each of the subphases of the Late Bronze Age in Canaan—first in terms of the history revealed by Egyptian sources and then in view of Canaan's ceramic, architectural, and funerary evidence. By this juxtaposition of local archaeological data with contemporaneous Egyptian historical materials, I hope to show



that the texture of Canaan's material culture in the Late Bronze Age varied in response to Egyptian political and economic initiatives, which, ironically, were often directed toward the larger and more formidable states to the north and east of Canaan.

Late Bronze IA

Late Bronze IA covered roughly one hundred years. Its beginning corresponded with the expulsion of the Hyksos from Egypt by Amosis, first pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty,[1] and its end came with the attack of Tuthmosis III, sixth pharaoh of the dynasty, on the Canaanite fortress of Megiddo. This is a very confusing period in the archaeological record, marked by destructions and partial abandonments.

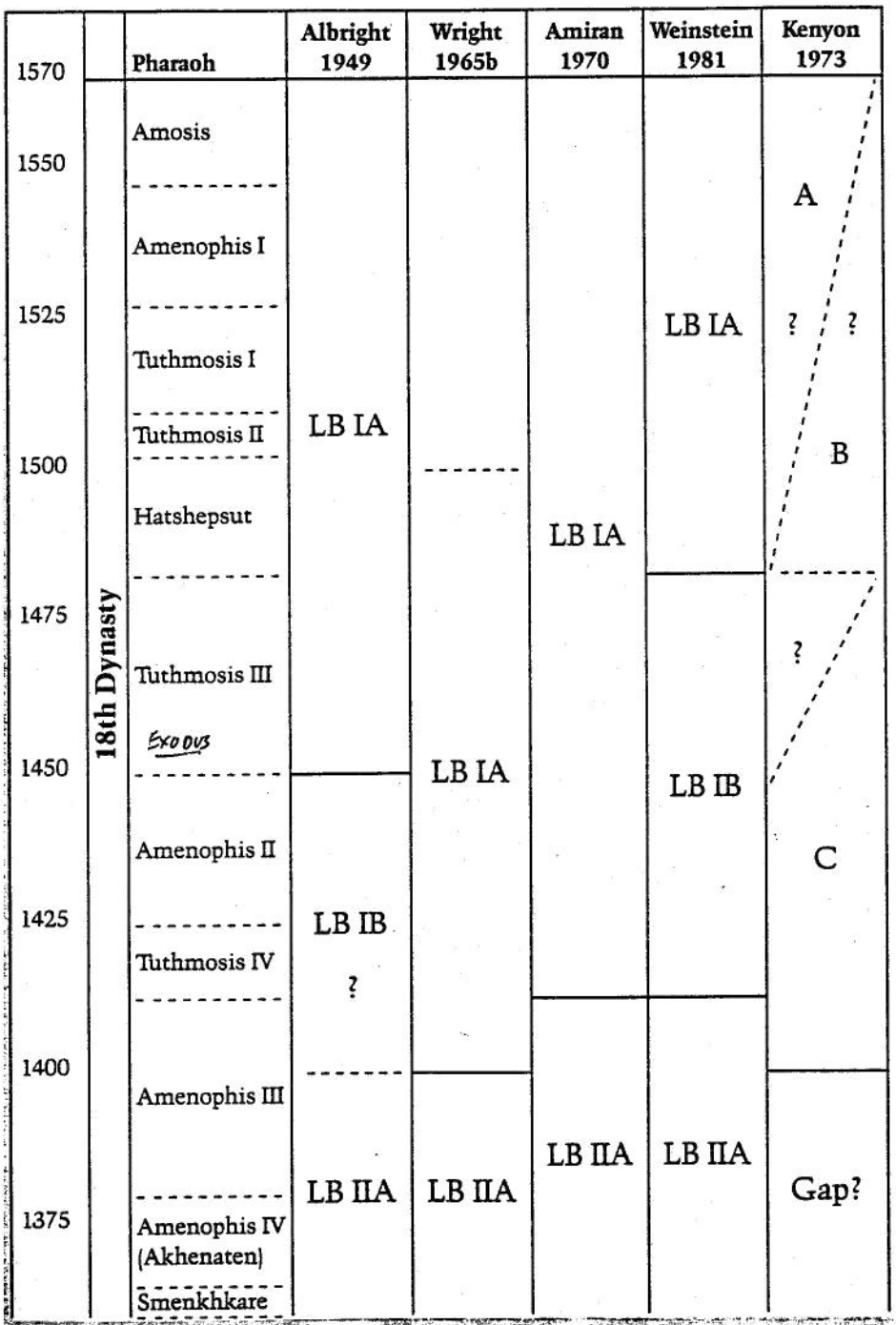
Egyptian Historical Evidence. For the hundred years prior to 1550 B.C.E. much of Egypt was ruled by a group of foreigners. Later known as the Hyksos and designated as the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Dynasties, this group, probably Asiatics, had its capital at Avaris (Tell ed-Dabᶜa) in the eastern Delta (Bietak 1986). It was the Seventeenth Dynasty pharaoh, Kamose, or possibly his predecessor Sekenenre, who first rebelled against the Hyksos (Pritchard 1950: 232). An account of the Egyptian attack on Avaris and its subsequent destruction was found in the tomb

Above: *Although small religious structures with a single cult focus appear to have been the norm during Late Bronze IB, a rambling religious precinct in stratum IX at Beth Shan can now be dated to this period. Called the "Tuthmose III Temple" by its excavators, the precinct, probably dedicated to numerous deities, has yielded many steles, including this one. In the upper register a dog and a male lion of similar size wrestle while standing on their back legs. In the bottom register a dog bites the hindquarters of a striding lion. It is doubtful that such a costly monument was erected as a memorial to the hunting dog, but loftier interpretations have not been offered. From an artistic standpoint, the stele is as good a piece of stone sculpture as anything from Late Bronze Syro-Palestine. Photograph courtesy of the Israel Department of Antiquities and Museums.* ***Left:*** *"Seven times and seven times, I bow down on my back and belly," is one of the claims made in the Amarna letters by Canaanite vassals expressing their subservience and loyalty to Egyptian rulers during Late Bronze IIA (el-Amarna letter 323; Mercer 1939: 771). On this relief from the Memphite tomb of Horemheb, last pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty, a mixed group of foreigners seems to be acting out their devotion before one of the pharaoh's servants. The group consists of five full-bearded Syrians, each wearing a long-sleeved garment with a shoulder cape; an additional Syrian whose wavy hair is tied up like a hat and who wears a kilt with long tassels; two Libyans distinguished by their sharp pointy beards and the feather protruding from their long straight hair; and a beardless figure, possibly that of an African. Photograph courtesy of the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden.*

Dividing the Late Bronze Age

The archaeological record for the Late Bronze Age in Palestine is often uncertain. Scholars have offered varying chronologies of its phases.

Less than forty years ago William F. Albright (1949) made the first intelligent attempts to synthesize our understanding of the late Bronze Age at more than one Palestinian site. At that time there wasn't much material for the critical archaeologist to use. For instance, Late Bronze I was simply subdivided into an early phase (Late Bronze IA), which Albright saw as represented by level II at Tell el-ᶜAjjul and stratum IX at Megiddo, with their characteristic elaborate Bichrome Ware pottery. A second phase (Late Bronze IB) was considered "somewhat of a stepchild" until the excavation of the lowest stratum (Structure I) of the Fosse Temple at Lachish provided Albright with what he considered suitable archaeological deposits. Albright admitted that the subdivision of Late Bronze II was difficult to achieve with accuracy, but he offered an early subphase, Late Bronze IIA, which roughly corresponded to the fourteenth century B.C.E. (the Amarna period and the shift from the Eighteenth to the Nineteenth Dynasties), and a later subphase, Late Bronze IIB, which dated to the thirteenth century B.C.E. (the Ramesside period). His rule of thumb for placing homogeneous deposits within this skeleton was overly reliant, however, on Mycenaean Greek and Cypriot imports whose



The sequence of major Egyptian pharaohs of the New Kingdom and the chronological subdivisions of the Late Bronze Age as proposed by William F. Albright (1949), G. Ernest Wright (1965b), Ruth Amiran (1970), and James M. Weinstein (1981). Dame Kathleen Kenyon's (1973) Late Bronze Age groups also are included. Absolute dates are those followed by the *Cambridge Ancient History*. Conversion to the new dates proposed by K. A. Kitchen (1987) can be achieved by consulting the reigns of specific pharaohs given in the text. When an author has given an

		Pharaoh	Albright 1949	Wright 1965b	Amiran 1970	Weinstein 1981	Kenyon 1973
1360	18th Dynasty	Tutankhamun	LB IIA	LB IIA	LB IIA	LB IIA	Gap?
1350		Ay					D
1325		Horemheb					
	19th Dynasty	Ramesses I					
		Sethos I					E
1300							
			LB IIB	LB IIB	LB IIB	LB IIB	
1275		Ramesses II					
1250							F
		Merneptah					
1225		Amenmesses					
		Sethos II					Gap?
		Siptah					
1200		Tewosret					
	20th Dynasty	Sethnakhte					
		Ramesses III					G
1175							

absolute date that date has been used in the chart; when a date has been expressed in terms of a pharaoh's reign, the date has been extrapolated to the *Cambridge Ancient History* dates; when both a pharaoh's reign and an absolute date are offered, the pharaoh's reign has been used, as this is most likely to reflect the original views of the author. This chart attempts only to be an approximation by the author.

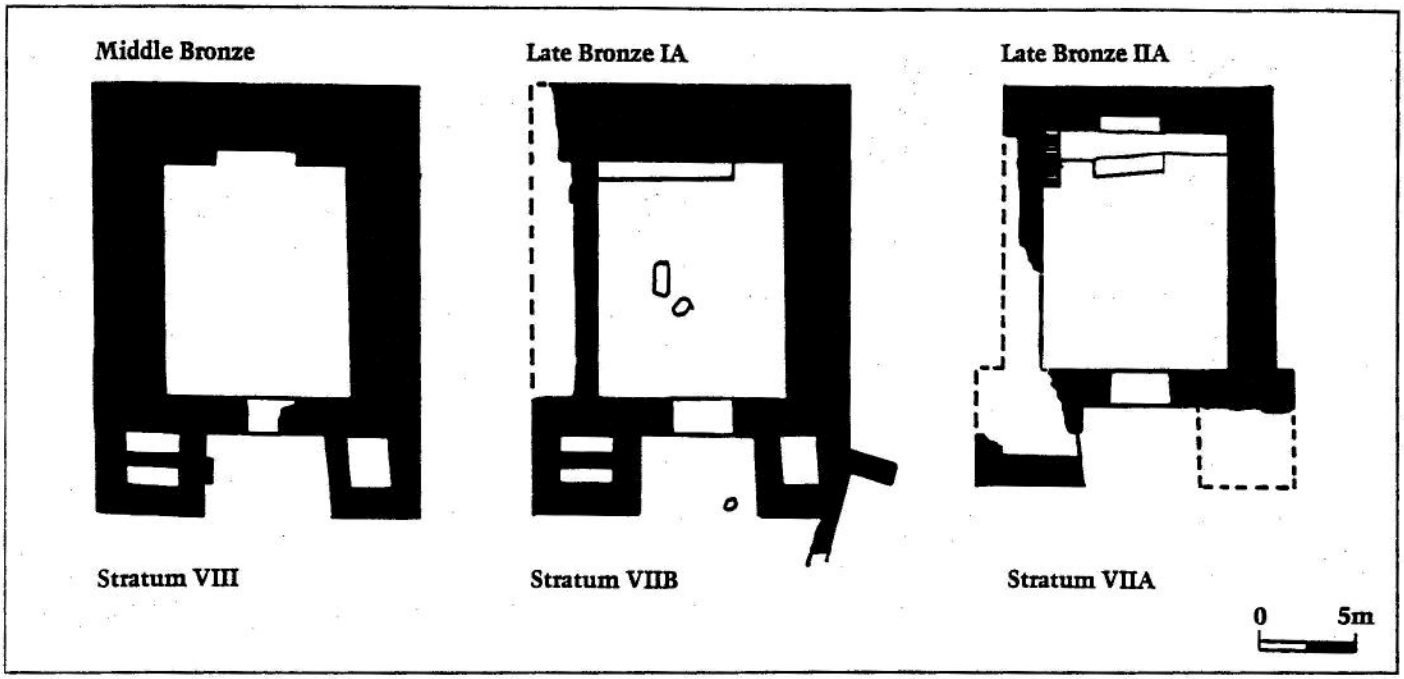
chronological sequences were just then becoming known (Leonard 1987b; Hankey 1987). In his later writings Albright continued to refine his original categories, and most scholars follow at least a modified version of his chronology. Both G Ernest Wright (1965b) and Ruth Amiran (1970), for instance, have divided the period into Late Bronze I, Late Bronze IIA, and Late Bronze IIB.

The other major attempt to create a chronological yardstick for the Late Bronze Age material from Syro-Palestine was made by the British archaeologist Dame Kathleen Kenyon, who devised a system based on a reevaluation of the excavated material from Megiddo, Hazor, Lachish, and other sites (1973: 527–30). Kenyon selected only those individual deposits that she was convinced displayed sufficient archaeological (that is, stratigraphical) integrity for chronological purposes, and she arranged them into seven groups (A through G). In Albright's terms these groups can be summarized as Late Bronze IA (Groups A and B), Late Bronze IB (Group C), Late Bronze IIA (latter part of Group C, a gap, and Group D), and Late Bronze IIB (Groups E, F, and G).

In spite of her keen eye for stratigraphical detail and her implicit caveat against placing too much emphasis on sites that were poorly excavated during the infancy of the discipline, Kenyon's system has not been widely accepted. This is most probably the result of practical matters such as confusion over the relationship between Groups A and B, the fifty-year hiatus between Groups C and D (given the absolute dates with which she was working, this gap covers almost the entire Amarna period), and another substantial gap between Groups F and G at the end of the Late Bronze Age.

In 1981 James M. Weinstein produced an important synthesis of the archaeological and literary material bearing on the chronology of the Late Bronze Age. After reviewing the Egyptian as well as the Syro-Palestinian evidence, Weinstein arrived at the relative chronology that is used in this article.

The so-called Midgal Temple (number 2048) in area BB at Megiddo had its origin in Middle Bronze (left) but continued in use during Late Bronze IA (middle) and IIA (right). The final phase, however, was much less impressive. With walls about half their original thickness, the structure in stratum VIIA hardly deserves the use of the epithet "migdal," meaning fortified. Drawing by Lois A. Kain.



of an Egyptian officer, Ahmose son of Eben, at el-Kab in southern Egypt. It was left to the next pharaoh, Amosis,[2] to complete the rebellion by leading a three-year siege against Sharuhen, the Hyksos stronghold in southern Palestine.[3] Thus, the Hyksos were expelled from the Delta and ultimately driven back into Palestine and then Syria (Dever 1987).

The military career of Ahmose son of Eben continued through the reign of pharaoh Amenophis I[4] and into that of Tuthmosis I,[5] whom he claimed to have accompanied as far north into Syria as the great bend in the Euphrates River. This does not seem to have been an idle boast, for the later pharaoh Tuthmosis III recorded that his grandfather Tuthmosis I had erected a victory stele on the east bank of that great river (Pritchard 1950: 239; see also Spalinger 1978). This would have brought the Egyptians face to face with the kingdom of Mitanni, a North Syrian group made up of a small aristocracy

> Small city-states in Syro-Palestine banded together in Late Bronze IA to defend themselves against what they saw as a bigger threat, Egypt.

of Indo-Europeans ruling a substratum of Hurrians (Merrillees 1986). The chariot-owning nobility who formed the upper crust of Mitanni were called *mariyanna*, a term almost certainly to be equated with the Indo-European word *marya*, which means "young man" or "young warrior" (Drower 1973: 420), with emphasis on his prowess in maneuvering the swift horse-drawn, spoke-wheeled chariot. In Papyrus Anastasi I, which dates to the Nineteenth Dynasty, the royal scribe Hori taunts his rival Amen-em-Opet: "Give me (thy) report in order that I may . . . speak proudly to others of thy designation '*maryan*.' " To which Hori replies: "I know how to hold the reins more skillfully than thou, there is no warrior who is my equal" (Albright 1930–1931: 217; Pritchard 1950: 475–79).

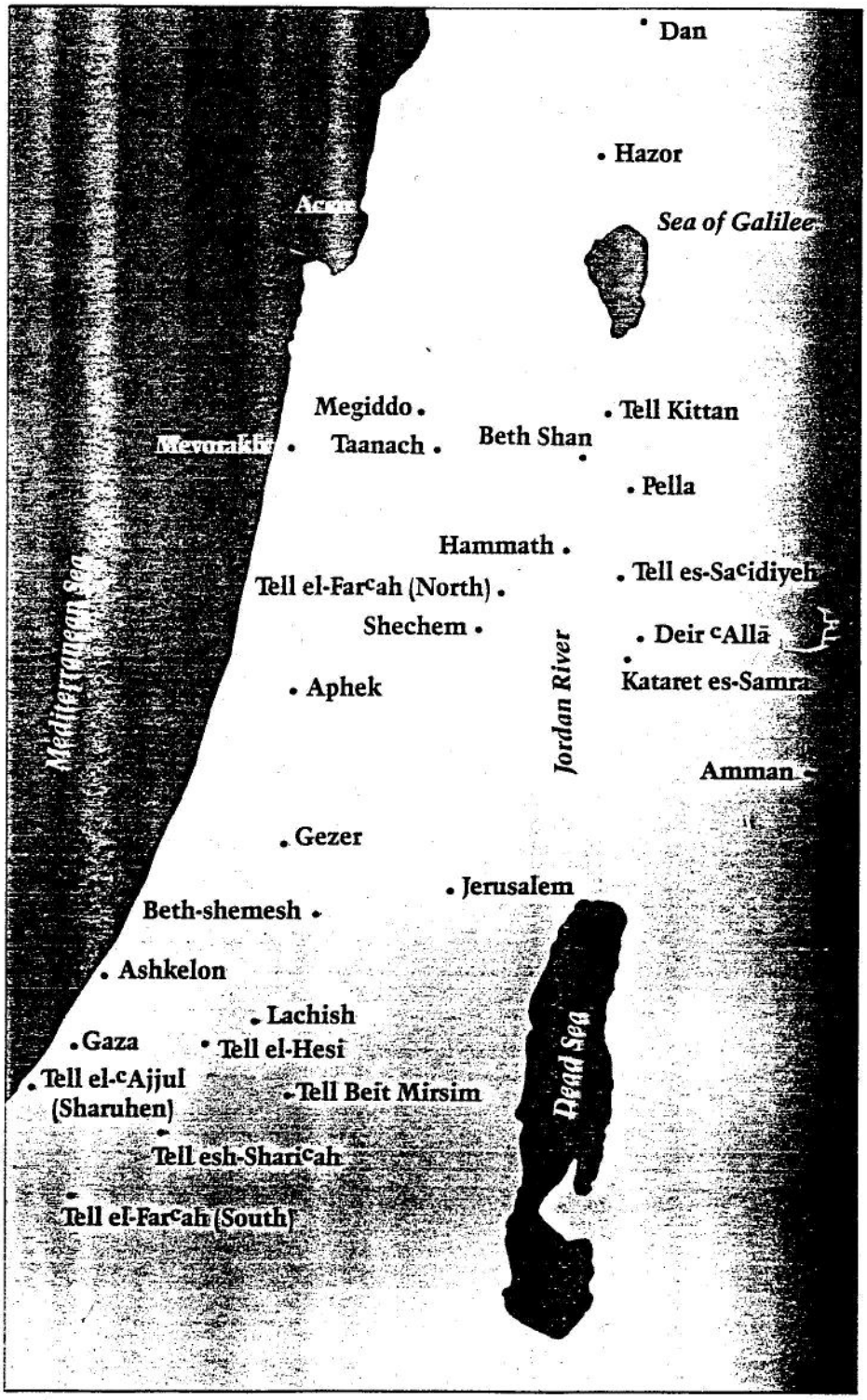
The Mitannian capital, Washukanni, was located somewhere in the region of the headwaters of the Habur River, but its exact location is still unknown and its suggested association with Tell Fakhariyeh has yet to be proven either by excavation or neutron-activation analysis of pertinent cuneiform tablets that were suspected to have been written in Washukanni on local clays (McEwan 1958; Dobel, Asaro, and Michel 1976). At this time Mitanni was the

only military threat to Egypt in the region, but Tuthmosis I was apparently not overly disturbed by the fact; he ended his campaign relaxing and hunting elephants in the Niya Lands of the Orontes Valley.

A gap exists in our knowledge of Syro-Palestine during the reigns of Tuthmosis II[6] and Queen Hatshepsut.[7] Based on the subsequent actions of Tuthmosis III when he became sole ruler of Egypt, we can assume it was a period in which small local city-states were working out their differences and joining into alliances against what they perceived as a greater threat, Egypt. This situation is surprising, since at this time the Egyptians appear to have been rather benevolent. Egypt displayed no desire for permanent economic or political/military control over the area and was apparently content with the occasional raid into the territories to demonstrate its strength (Weinstein 1981; but see also Rainey 1987 and Redford 1987).

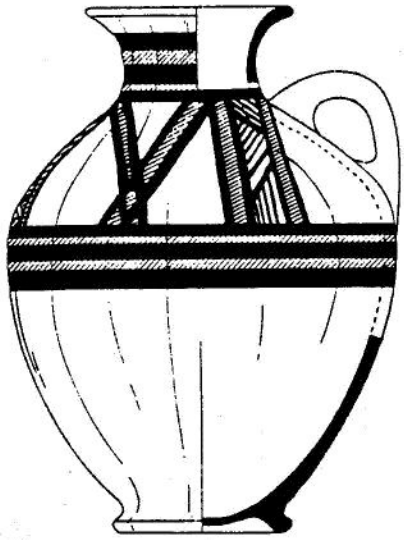
Archaeological Evidence in Canaan. The archaeological record is unclear as to the manner in which the political transition from the Middle Bronze IIC/Middle Bronze III to Late Bronze IA took place in Canaan. For instance, did the city-states of Syro-Palestine simply transfer their allegiance from the Hyksos to the pharaohs of the Eighteenth Dynasty (the beginning of the so-called New Kingdom), as Yohanan Aharoni suggested (1967: 138), or do the destructions and partial abandonments (Dever 1987; Weinstein 1981) indicate a sharper, more hostile break, described by Kathleen Kenyon (1979: 184) as a "considerable dislocation of life in Palestine"?

Ceramic record. From the standpoint of ceramics, the transition from



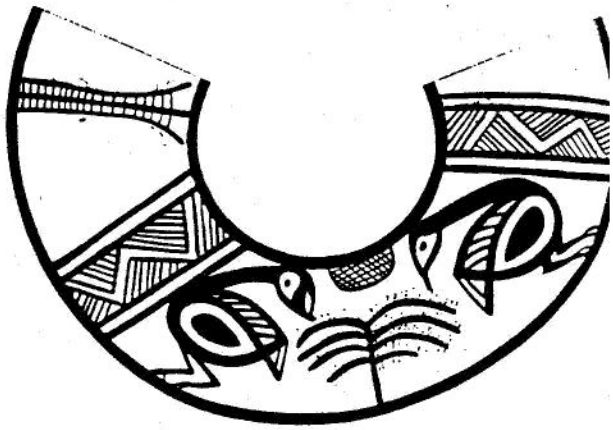
the Middle to the Late Bronze Age—if it can be seen at all—is marked by a surprising degree of continuity in most of the popular local forms and fabrics. Many vessel types of the Late Bronze I exhibit an ancestry that can be traced to the very beginnings of the Middle Bronze. Three "new" fabric types appeared in the ceramic repertoire near the transition, however, and they are distinctive enough to be used by archaeologists as the type-fossils of the Late Bronze IA. These are Bichrome Ware, Black/Grey Lustrous Ware, and Chocolate on White Ware (for a detailed description of these, see the accompanying sidebar).

There also appeared during Late Bronze IA the first examples of two handmade Cypriot fabrics that enjoyed a long history in Canaan (Oren 1969): Base Ring Ware, a black or brownish gray fabric with raised decoration (designated BR I), which appeared almost exclusively in closed forms such as the jug or the small distinctively shaped *bilbil* that must have been traded for the sake of its contents (perhaps opium, an important painkiller in antiquity—Merrillees 1962, 1986: 154); and White Slip Ware (WS I), which dur-



Bichrome Ware

Bichrome Ware



Bichrome Ware

Production of this pottery, often called Elaborate Bichrome Ware, may actually have begun at the very end of Middle Bronze IIC, since fragments of it have been found in deposits dating to that period at Tell el-ᶜAjjul and Megiddo (Wood 1982; Kassis 1973). It is still considered to be a harbinger of Late Bronze IA, however.

Characterized by a limited repertoire of decorative motifs, such as birds, fish, Union Jacks, and the like, executed in red and black paint on a pale buff slip, this pottery is so distinctive in both vessel-form and the artistic quality of its decoration that when it was first "isolated" it was thought to be the product of a single artist called the Tell el-ᶜAjjul Painter (Heurtley 1939). Subsequent study has suggested that this might be too narrow an interpretation of the material, but the restricted range of mainstream forms—jug with shoulder handle, cylindrical juglet, one-handled juglet and krater—in concert with its distinctive decoration suggest that a limited number of workshops were engaged in producing this ware. Attempts to attribute this pottery to a specific ethnic group, such as the Hurrians, as proposed by Claire Epstein (1966), present chronological problems that do not arise if we think of it as the product of a limited number of workshops. Neutron activation analysis has shown that some of these workshops were located in Cyprus (Artzy, Perlman, and Asaro 1973), but at least a portion of the Bichrome Ware vessels found at Megiddo was made from local clays (Artzy, Perlman, and Asaro 1978).

Black/Grey Lustrous Ware

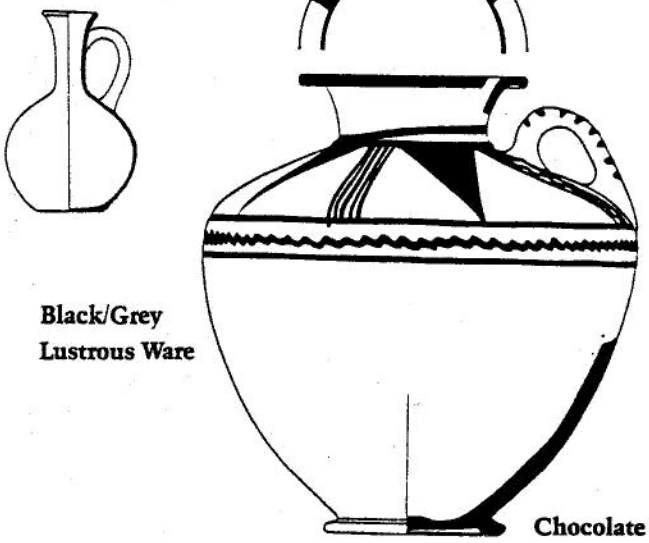
Like the other IA speciality wares, Black/Grey Lustrous Ware appeared on the cusp of the transition from Middle Bronze IIC and Late Bronze IA, having been found in the earlier deposits at Tell el-ᶜAjjul and Tell el-Farᶜah (South) (Oren 1973: 77). Its greatest popularity came in the years just

Bichrome Ware, Black/Grey Lustrous Ware, and Chocolate on White Ware are the type-fossils of Late Bronze IA.

ing this period was restricted to the hemispherical, wishbone-handled "milk bowl" that must have been brought to Canaan as appealing tableware and not as containers for some luxury commodity.

Architectural evidence. As for the plan and appearance of the Canaanite city-states in which this pottery was used, we are unfortunately ignorant; only an occasional hint can be gathered at some of the larger sites where archaeologists have made substantial horizontal exposures. In area AA at the northern end of Megiddo (Tell el-Mutesellim), the city-gate of stratum IX (Loud 1948: 5) and a portion of the adjacent and contemporary "Palace" (Loud 1948: 16 and 33) were uncovered, but so much had been destroyed by later rebuildings that we are not certain of the city's character. It has been claimed that area AA originated in the Middle Bronze; similar survivals of town plans from the Middle Bronze into the Late Bronze I have been suggested at Tell el-Hesi ("Bliss City II") and Tell el-ᶜAjjul (City I, Palace II), presenting us with a feeling of continuity that is difficult to reconcile with the discontinuity apparent at so many other sites (see Weinstein 1981: 1–5).

Our knowledge of religious architecture, however, seems to be on much firmer ground (G. R. H. Wright 1971, 1985; Gray 1964). Temple 2048 at Megiddo (stratum VIIB), with its thick walls, single long-room, and staired towers in front, would have continued in use during this period, as possibly would a related structure, Fortress Temple IB at Shechem (Tell Balaṭah; Wright 1965a: 122 and following). At Hazor (Tell el-Qedah), the only Palestinian site to offer a true paradigm for the religious architecture of Late Bronze, continuity between the Middle Bronze IIC and Late Bronze I is suggested by the "Long Temple" in area A (Yadin 1972: 103) and the "Orthostate Temple" in area H; the latter was constructed during Middle Bronze II but survived through Late Bronze IA and into Late Bronze II. At Tell Kittan a single-room temple with at least two previous phases from Middle Bronze (strata V and IV) was enlarged during Late Bronze I and rooms were added. The presence of "chocolate ware" on the floors of this latest building (stratum III) suggested to the excavator that it had been destroyed during one of the campaigns of Tuthmosis III, when the Egyptians were beginning to tighten their control over the Beth Shan valley (Eisenberg 1977). [Editor's



Black/Grey Lustrous Ware

Chocolate on White Ware

Courtesy of The Oriental Institute, University of Chicago

before the reign of Tuthmosis III. The examples we have are well constructed of a finely levigated (washed) grey clay covered with a grey or black slip that was subsequently polished, often to a luster. This fabric occurred in a single form: a globular-bodied, tall-necked juglet with handle from the shoulder to below the rim. The petal-like appearance of the upper handle attachment is a hallmark of the form.

Chocolate on White Ware

Morphologically, vessels of this ware echo the mainstream shapes of the period but are technically superior to the standard wares in almost every way. Surfaces were covered with a thick, cream-colored slip that was burnished to a light luster before the geometric decoration was added in a shade of paint to the red side of chocolate-brown. Also appearing just before the Late Bronze I period, Chocolate on White Ware may have had its origins at sites close to the Jordan River, since the white *katarrah* marls could have been used in the slip. At Kataret es-Samra, just to the north of the Wadi Zerqa, I (1986: 167) have found, in secondary association with Middle Bronze II, rolled-rim cooking pots that appear to be "kiln-wasters" of this ware.

note: The author prefers the spelling "Beth Shan" as opposed to "Beth-shean"—a preference he shares with the authors of the major publications of the Bronze Age strata at this site (Rowe 1930, 1940; James 1966; Oren 1973).]

Funerary evidence. Most tombs of Late Bronze IA appear to have been shaft tombs from earlier epochs (in some cases as early as Early Bronze IV/Middle Bronze I) that were partially cleared and reused. Their funerary assemblages have been assigned to this period largely on the presence or absence of the Late Bronze IA ceramic type-fossils mentioned above. Rich examples have been found in Tomb 1100 at Megiddo (these are the hallmark of Kathleen Kenyon's Pottery Group A) and in Tomb 42 at Beth Shan. Unfortunately, because of later disturbances suffered by most of these tombs, it has been impossible to recover any significant details about the funerary cult, or cults, of the period.

Late Bronze IB

Late Bronze IB lasted approximately 75 years, its beginning marked by the attack of Tuthmosis III on Megiddo and its end corresponding with the ascension of the pharaoh Amenophis III. Archaeologically, the period has often been considered suspect, its very existence even questioned (Weinstein 1981: 12).

Egyptian Historical Evidence. In Egypt the death of Queen Hatshepsut brought Tuthmosis III[8] to the throne. Tuthmosis III was determined to pursue a vigorous set of policies in Canaan. His tremendous achievement at the Battle of Megiddo (1482 B.C.E.) and the major impact that event had on Egypt's foreign policy toward Canaan could be seen as the keynote of the Late Bronze IB period.

That the Egyptian frontier in Palestine had been coming increasingly under outside pressure during the reign of Hatshepsut is suggested by the speed with which Tuthmosis III, provoked by news of the revolt of a confederation of Syrian princes gathered at Megiddo, moved out of Egypt after her death. This affront to Egyptian power, prestige, and national ego was led by the prince of Kadesh (Tell Nebi Mend) in Syria and was aided and abetted by "individuals of every foreign country, waiting in their chariots—330 princes [*maryanna*] every one of them having their army" (Pritchard 1950: 238; Epstein 1963). Tuthmosis III went forth at the head of an army claimed to number more than 20,000, advancing across the Sinai at the incredible pace of 15 miles per day. North of Gaza, to Yehem south of the Carmel range, the pace of the soldiers and their baggage train slowed to almost half this rate, perhaps because they needed to forage and consolidate as they went or perhaps because of local opposition. Upon reaching Yehem the Egyptian army had three options: to head for the coast and attack Megiddo from the northwest, to come upon Megiddo from the southeast via Taanach (Tell Taʿannek), or to take the direct route through the exceedingly narrow Aruna Pass (Wadi ʿAra). The pharaoh's field officers, who were fearful of attempting the third option, pleaded with him not to take that route but he would not be deterred (Pritchard 1950: 235). Tuthmosis led his forces through the pass and out onto the Esdraelon Plain and surprised the Syrian coalition, which had divided most of its forces to cover the northern and southern approaches.

As described in the Egyptian records, the Battle of Megiddo was a rout, and the Egyptian forces quickly began looting while the army of the Syrian confederation "fled headlong to Megiddo with faces of fear. They abandoned their horses and their chariots of gold and silver, so that someone might draw them up into this town by hoisting on their garments" (Pritchard 1950: 236). The pharaoh immediately surrounded Megiddo with a moat and a wall made of local timber. The city remained enclosed for seven months until "the princes . . . came on their bellies to kiss the ground . . . and to beg breath for their nostrils" (Pritchard 1950: 237) or until "they came out . . . pleading to (his) majesty, saying: Give us breath, our Lord! The countries of Retinue will never repeat rebellion another time!" (Pritchard *1950: 238, Barkal stele*). Even considering the hyperbole of the era the booty that the army of Tuthmosis III brought back from Canaan, which was enumerated and described at length on Egyptian steles and temple walls, was, in both kind and quantity, simply staggering. In addition to mundane fare such as grain, cattle, and sheep (*Ahituv 1978*; Na'aman 1981), they brought back abandoned horses, which were still relatively new to Egyptians, and chariots worked with gold; bronze coats of armor; inlaid furniture; and intricately carved walking sticks. It should be noted that Tuthmosis III never claimed to have destroyed the city, a fact that accords well with the archaeological evidence,[9] but he did inflict a devastating defeat on those who were walled up there, and the battle enabled him to dictate policy

After crushing a Syrian confederation at Megiddo, Tuthmosis III was able to dictate policy to the Canaanite princes.

to the Canaanite lords from a position of strength. He appointed new princes for each town—but not before each took a loyalty oath—and Palestine soon became a giant storehouse for Egypt.

Tuthmosis continued his military campaigns, but with Palestine firmly under his control he concentrated on Syria. During his sixth campaign Kadesh-on-the-Orontes was finally captured; with its defeat a new administrative policy was enacted, the taking of royal hostages: "Now the children of the princes and their brothers were brought as hostages to Egypt . . . (and) . . . whoever of these princes died, his majesty was accustomed to make his son go to stand in his place" (Pritchard 1950: 239). Such a policy not only assured the good behavior of relatives who were left behind, but also provided an heir to the throne who would be sympathetic at least to the correct, or Egyptian, way of doing things when the Egyptianized prince returned to rule his own area.

It appears that during the reign of Tuthmosis III Egypt's attitude toward the people of Syro-Palestine began to change as the Egyptians came to appreciate the potential economic benefits of annual Canaanite contributions to the coffers of the god Amon. For the bureaucratic purposes of collecting tribute, Canaan was divided into three districts, each with its own administrative center strategically situated on or near the major highway in the region, the Via Maris (Aharoni 1967: 42). These centers, each of which was the seat of an Egyptian overseer or commissioner,[10] were at Gaza, probably modern Gaza or Rapha in southern Palestine; Kumidu, Kamid el-Loz in the Beqaʿa Valley; and Sumur, possibly Tell Kazel on the Syrian coast (Goetze 1975a: 2; Weinstein 1981: 12; Aharoni 1967: 152; Muhammad 1959). Claire Epstein's (1963) reconsideration of the verso of Papyrus Hermitage 1116A, an official Egyptian document composed during the reign of Amenophis II that lists rations of beer and grain for *maryannu* messengers from Djahy to Egypt (including specifically the sites of Megiddo, Taanach, and Hazor), indicates that during the reign of Tuthmosis III the collection of tribute from western Asia was a highly structured affair directly controlled by the court. This system was apparently successful and remained relatively intact for more than a century, since it is still reflected in the Amarna letters of the fourteenth century B.C.E.

Brilliant general that he was, Tuthmosis III also had a softer side that often escapes notice; he took interest in, and recorded, the strange plants and animals he encountered on his many military campaigns. A glimpse of the flora and fauna of Canaan during the Late Bronze Age can be seen today, carved in low relief, on the walls of the Festival Hall he had built at the rear of the Temple of Amon at Karnak.

Tuthmosis III died after a reign of more than half a century and was succeeded by his son Amenophis II.[11] A possible coregency with his father while the crown prince campaigned in Asia creates problems with the numbering of his military campaigns, but the general sequence of them is clear (Rainey 1973; Yeivin 1967). That the King ("Great One") of Naharin was continuing to involve Egypt in Canaanite affairs has been shown by the fact that as Amenophis II was passing through the Plain of Sharon while returning from his first Asiatic campaign he intercepted a messenger of the prince of Mitanni "carrying a letter of clay at his throat" (Pritchard 1950: 246). We can only guess what the subject matter of this epistle was, but it must not have had the Egyptians' best interests at heart because the messenger was trotted southward at the side of the king's own chariot.

The young pharaoh boasted of personal valor as none had done before, and with him Egyptian foreign policy took on a more severe mood. Whereas Tuthmosis III may have "crushed all rebellious countries" in Syro-Palestine, Amenophis II "trod Naharin, which his bow had crushed . . . (and) . . . cut off the heads of the attackers" (Pritchard 1950: 245). Consider the plight of the town of Shamash-edom, possibly to be identified with Qurn Hattin near the Sea of Galilee (Aharoni 1960). Amenophis II attacked it with "his face . . . terrible like that of Bastet, like Seth in his moment of raging. . . . He hacked it up in a short moment like a lion fierce of face when he treads the foreign countries" (Pritchard 1950: 245). Even more severe was the treatment of seven Syrian princes who were captured in the vicinity of Damascus during the pharaoh's second Asiatic campaign. After killing them with his mace, the pharaoh hung them upside down on the prow of his boat all the way to Thebes, where six of them were hanged on the city-walls; further upstream, in the land of Nubia, he hanged the seventh on the wall at Napata, all to show "his majesty's victories forever and ever in all lands" (Pritchard 1950: 248; see also Rainey 1973: 72). This more severe policy seems to have had the desired effect. When in

Smaller religious structures, evidently with a single cult focus, apparently were the norm in Late Bronze IB.

his seventh year of rule Amenophis II was conducting a military campaign against a revolt in Syria, the peoples of the Niya lands came to the walls of their towns to applaud him (Drower 1973: 460), and when, at last, he reached Kadesh, long a thorn in the side of his father, its prince "came out in peace to his majesty . . . (and was) made to take the oath of fealty, and all their children as well" (Pritchard 1950: 246). This new policy of cruel treatment of prisoners, obviously intended to deter rebelliousness, was accompanied by a new concept of Canaan as a conquered land that was characterized by an increase in political and economic control coupled with occasional military force (Weinstein 1981: 12).

Amenophis II was succeeded by Tuthmosis IV.[12] The extent of his military activity in Syro-Palestine is debated (Malamat 1961; Weinstein 1981: 13, with references), but at least one campaign can be inferred from the mention of captives from Gezer on a stele from his mortuary temple in Thebes. This may be the campaign represented on the decorated panels of his chariot; these show a divinely directed pharaoh driving forth to "trample down all northern countries, difficult of approach" (Giveon 1969: 56). The politics of his predecessors seem to have been sufficient to control the region, and the annual parades through Canaan, which had characterized the early part of the dynasty, became less and less necessary. The actual occupation of Canaan was still in the future.

Archaeological Evidence in Canaan. As mentioned above, Late Bronze IB has often been considered suspect. Such doubts are based on an apparent gap in occupation at many important Palestinian sites such as Megiddo, Taanach, Tell Beit Mirsim, and Tell el-Farᶜah (South). I believe this so-called gap in occupation can be attributed as much to our lack of knowledge of the pertinent subtleties in changes in the material culture as to the radical depopulation of the countryside.

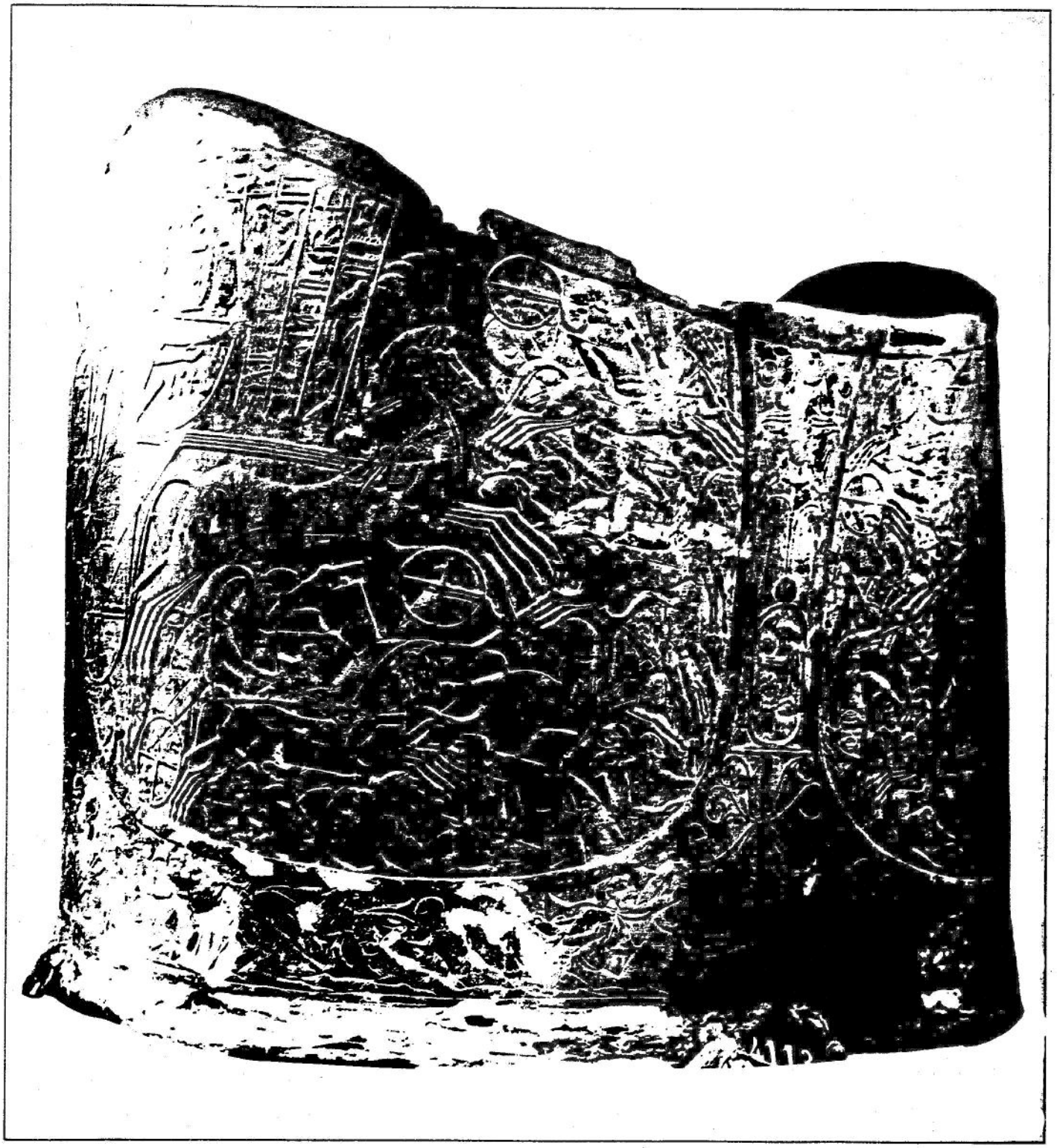
Ceramic record. The three ceramic type-fossils noted in the discussion of Late Bronze IA appear to have had their floruit during that period. Their presence in strange (late?), aberrant forms (for example at the Mevorakh XI temple), or their complete absence, is thought to characterize deposits from the rest of the fifteenth century B.C.E.—that is, Late Bronze IB. Kathleen Kenyon filled this period with her Pottery Group C, which consists exclusively of material from Structure I of the Fosse Temple at Lachish. I don't believe, however, that this phase of the building is securely dated (since the dating is based on a single scarab of Amenophis III), and it should not be used to date Lachish itself, let alone the entire region.

Part of our uncertainty over the development of pottery types during Late Bronze IB is the number of sites at which a gap in occupation following the campaigns of Tuthmosis III has been recognized. One thing is certain, however: In the substratum of nonspecialty wares a slow evolution began in the fifteenth century and continued into the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries. "Milk bowls" from Cyprus painted with the "newer," more schematic, patterns of White Slip II continued to be imported into Palestine, while the first relatively complete import from the Aegean world, a Late Helladic (Mycenaean) II *kylix* from Fosse Temple I at Lachish, signaled what would become a brisk trade in Aegean goods during Late Bronze II.[13]

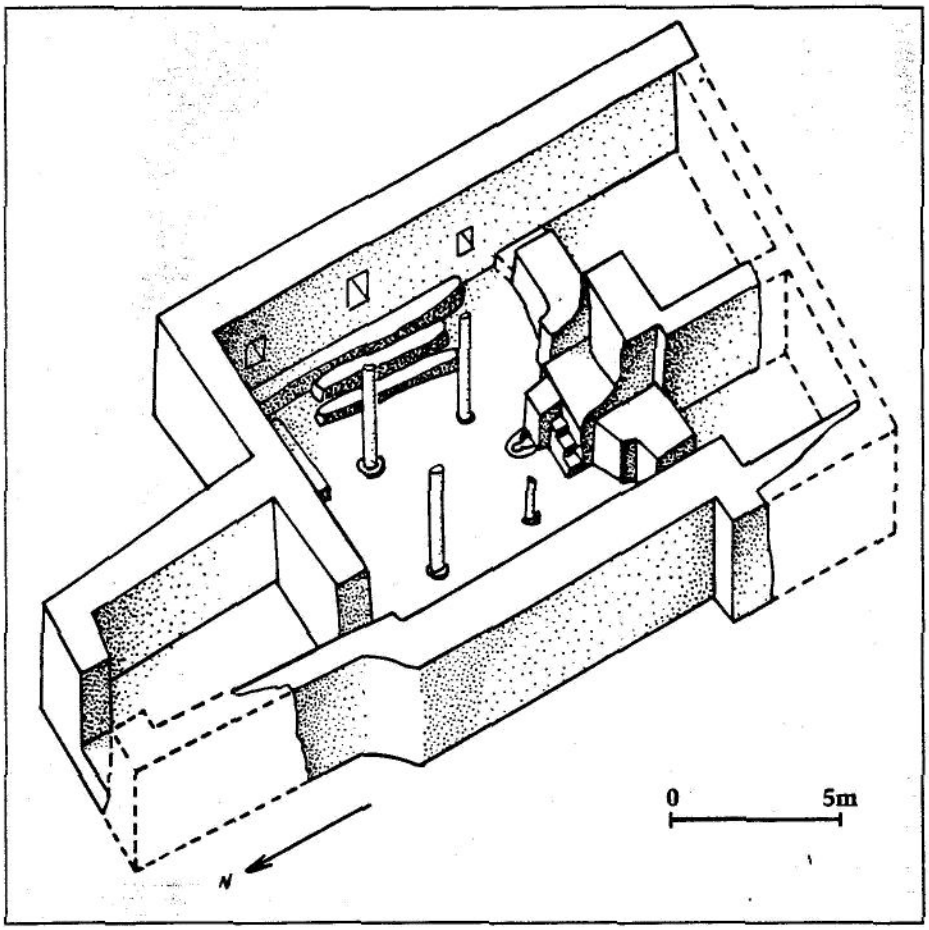
Architectural evidence. In spite of the alleged gaps in occupation at these sites, our understanding of religious architecture in Late Bronze IB is much better than that in Late Bronze IA. The stratigraphy of the rambling religious precinct at level IX at Beth Shan (Rowe 1930, 1940), called the "Thutmose III Temple" by its excavators, has been a source of confusion for more than half a century (Albright 1938: 76–77), but there is now evidence to support a Late Bronze IB date (McGovern 1985: 13). This precinct housed a stele dedicated by the Egyptian architect Amen-em-Opet and his son to "Mekal, Lord of Beth Shan" (Thompson 1970). The bearded god Mekal is pictured sitting on a throne wearing a conical headdress with horns in front and ribbons in back and holding the Egyptian *waz* scepter and *ankh*, illustrating the hybridization of Egypto-Canaanite religious themes (Pritchard 1950: 249; 1969: plate 487).

With the exception of the temple complex at Beth Shan (stratum IX), smaller religious structures, evidently with a single cult focus, appear to have been the norm in the Late Bronze IB and beyond. This is evident at Hazor where a two-room shrine (the "Orthostate Temple") in area H survived from Middle Bronze IIC with only a slight modification of the cult focus and an enlargement or regularization of the forecourt (Yadin 1972: 75–95). In Late Bronze IB this court included an on-axis gateway and a raised platform, perhaps an altar. A bilobate pottery kiln containing around 20 miniature bowls suggests that the priests supplied

During Late Bronze IB, Tuthmosis IV, eighth pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty, probably led at least one military campaign into Syro-Palestine. This campaign may be depicted on the exterior of his wooden chariot. In the panel left the pharaoh is shown charging across the battlefield with his bow drawn and the reigns of the lumbering eight-spoked chariot wrapped securely around his waist. Below each panel is a frieze depicting his vanquished prisoners, all of whom have the characteristic beards of Syro-Palestinians, bound together by a rope. Photograph courtesy of the Egyptian Museum, Cairo.



During the Late Bronze IB a small extramural temple was built at Lachish in the fill of a defensive ditch, or fosse, that had been in use in the Middle Bronze Age. Structure I, the earliest phase of the "Fosse Temple," contained a tripartite platform with a raised altar for cult objects against the southern wall. The temple increased in size in subsequent Structures II and III (shown here), suggesting greater prosperity at the site, but it retained its original orientation and the location of the cult focus against the southern wall. Drawing by Lois A. Kain.



worshippers with some of the necessary cult paraphernalia (Stager and Wolff 1981: 97–98; Yadin 1972: 76). That the forecourt was also used as an important and integral part of the sanctuary can be seen from the finding there of clay liver models bearing Akkadian inscriptions (Yadin 1972: 82–83). Archaeological evidence for the practice of hepatoscopy (divination through the inspection of animal livers), a well-known custom in Mesopotamia, has also been found in the maison du prêtre at Ugarit (Ras Shamra) in northern Canaan (*Courtois 1969*).

At Lachish, in the fill of the Middle Bronze Age defensive ditch (fosse), a small extramural temple was discovered in the 1930s. Structure I, the earliest phase of the "Fosse Temple," was a three-roomed structure with an entrance from the west that was hidden by a short screen wall. The main room, a north-south longroom, had as its cult focus a tripartite platform built against the southern wall.

Tell Mevorakh, near the coast, was the site of a single-room temple. The excavator dated the temple, in stratum XI to the Late Bronze I, probably IB, a date strengthened by the presence of three (late?) Bichrome vessels among a scree of pottery found in situ on the floor of the building (Stern 1977, 1984). Evidently this temple had a long east-west axis, low benches along two of the sides, and, as its focal point, a stepped platform for cult objects.

What is striking about all of these Late Bronze IB temples is the amount of variety in size, plan, and orientation. Unfortunately, we are as yet unable to associate these differences with specific cults or deities.

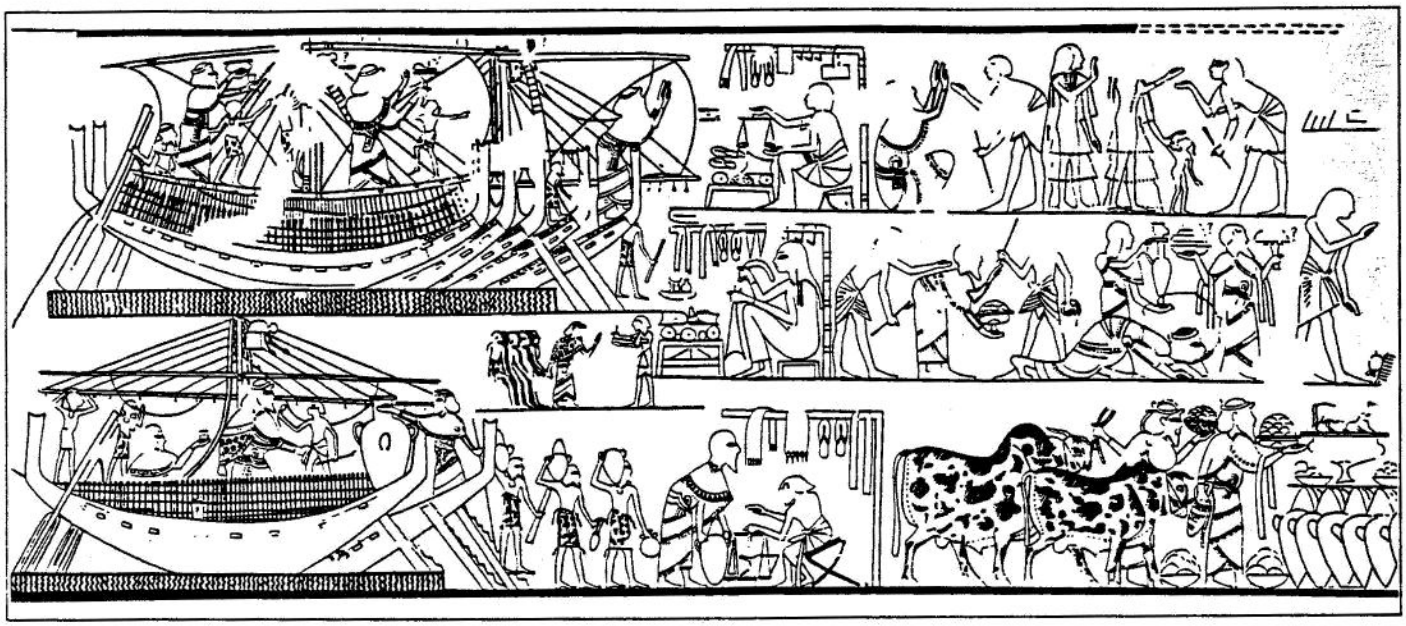
Funerary evidence. Our knowledge of funerary practices in Late Bronze IB is practically nonexistent, primarily because of our inability to date Late Bronze I deposits that do not include ceramic specialty wares from IA. Until we have a better understanding of the development of the local domestic pottery we will be unable to identify burials from this period with assurance or to detect any patterns in the funerary customs of the fifteenth century B.C.E.

Late Bronze IIA

Late Bronze IIA lasted more than one hundred years and corresponded roughly with the reigns of Amenophis III, Amenophis IV (Akhenaten), Smenkhkare, Tutankhamun, Ay, and Horemheb, the final rulers of the Eighteenth Dynasty. It was a period when Egypt lost much of its empire in Syro-Palestine. In Canaan the archaeological record shows a decline in local ceramics, but religious architecture is notable and funerary evidence is rich.

Egyptian Historical Evidence. Tuthmosis IV was succeeded by his son Amenophis III,[14] who used diplomacy as a powerful alternative, or adjunct, to military campaigns in keeping the peace in Syro-Palestine. In his tenth year as pharaoh he strengthened the Egyptian alliance with Mitanni by marrying Gilu-Khepa, daughter of

This drawing of a wall-painting from a tomb in Thebes, probably dating to the time of Amenophis III in Late Bronze IIA, shows several Canaanite ships docked in a congested Egyptian harbor. It thus suggests that the reign of this pharaoh was a period of relative calm in Syro-Palestine, with fruitful economic exchange. In the bottom scene left, sailors are unloading their cargo and bartering with the local merchants. The figure dressed in a long garment is a Canaanite. He offers the contents of a heavy amphora while behind him sailors in short, Aegean-like kilts bring forth other ceramic containers, including, in the first sailor's left hand, a pilgrim flask most likely filled with some costly scented oil. Scenes such as this give us an idea of the international trade that flourished in the eastern Mediterranean during the Late Bronze Age. Drawing courtesy of The Committee of the Egypt Exploration Society.



Shuttarna, the new king of that empire. Gilu-Khepa came south to Egypt with her entourage of more than 300 women. This could not have been considered an ordinary event, for it was proclaimed by the pharaoh and his Egyptian wife, Queen Tiy, on a large commemorative wedding scarab, copies of which have been found in Palestine at Beth-shemesh (ᶜAin Shems) and Gezer (Rowe 1936: 128, 538, and 539). Later in his reign Amenophis III acquired the princess Tadu-Khepa, daughter of the subsequent Mitannian king Tushratta (Goetze 1975a: 5) as well as the daughter of Kadashman-Enlil, the Kassite king of Babylon (el-Amarna letters 1–5; Mercer 1939: 2–17; Campbell 1964: 44–45).

Amenophis III apparently did not feel the need to campaign in Asia. His reign was a period of relative calm in Syro-Palestine; the Egyptian garrisons "functioned largely to halt intercity disputes, to keep troublesome groups such as the ᶜApiru under control, and to facilitate the movement of trade, tribute and communications" (Weinstein 1981: 15). It also appears that during this pharaoh's reign Egypt and Ugarit (Ras Shamra) first came into diplomatic contact (Drower 1975: 475).

The son of Amenophis III and Queen Tiy is one of the most intriguing and controversial figures in history. Ruling after his father's death, the new pharaoh Amenophis IV[15] gradually lost faith in the cult of the great god Amon and promulgated instead the worship of the gleaming multirayed solar disk, the Aten. The pharaoh soon found life at the Theban court too distracting for a man of religious fervor, so he moved his beautiful Queen Nefertiti, their family, and the court northward to a new capital called Akhetaten ("the Horizon of the Aten") at the modern site of Tell el-Amarna, which is located on the east bank of the Nile River about 200 miles south of Cairo (Aldred 1975). Amenophis IV also changed his name to Akhenaten, which means "He who is useful to the Aten" or perhaps "Glorified Spirit of the Aten" (Redford 1987: 141), reflecting the ardor of his new beliefs. Akhenaten and his successors Smenkhkare and Tutankhamun, the Amarna pharaohs, reigned during one of the most interesting periods in the history of the Near East. They turned the barren piece of desert on which Akhetaten was built into a cosmopolitan center.

One of the most important archaeological discoveries pertaining to the history of Syro-Palestine during the Late Bronze Age was the hoard of more than 300 tablets that was clandestinely excavated by the local villagers of Tell el-Amarna in 1887. These texts, called the Amarna tablets, are extant samples of actual diplomatic correspondence between the pharaohs of the Amarna period and the rulers of the great powers of the day—Babylonia, Assyria, Mitanni, Arzawa, Alasia, and Hatti—as well as the local vassal states of Syria and Palestine. The majority of these epistles date to the reigns of Akhe-

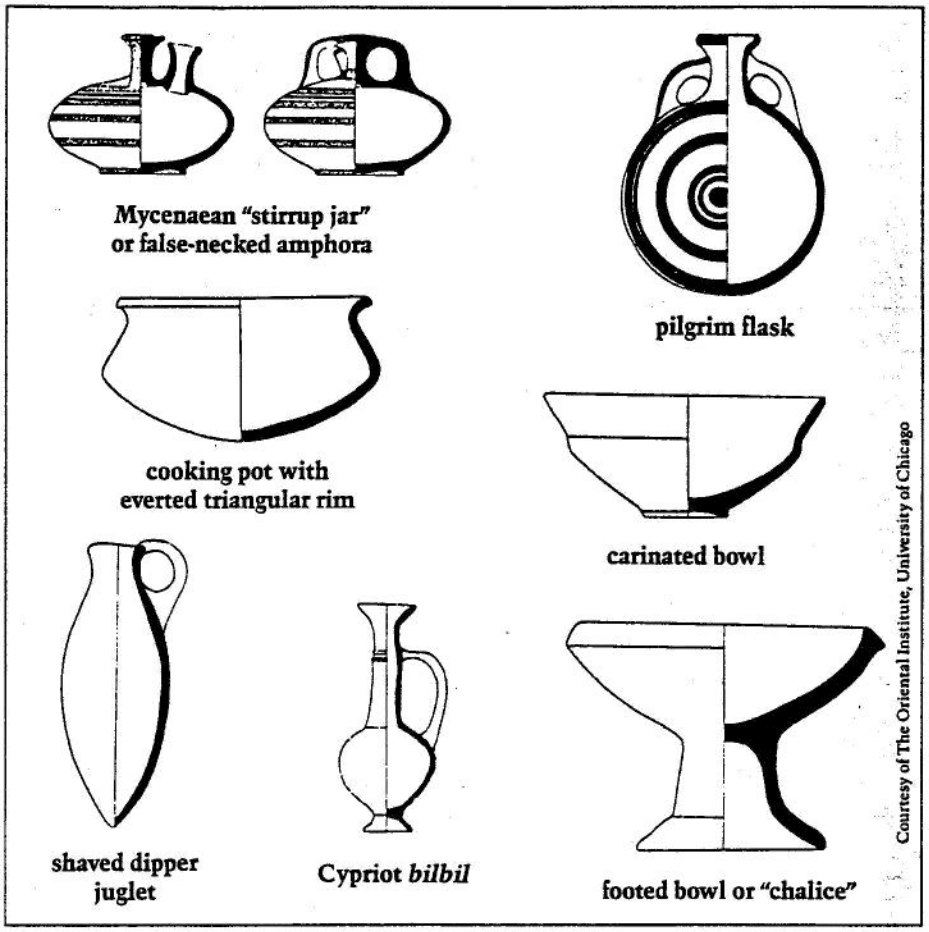
Late Bronze IIA was the time of Amenophis IV, tenth pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty and one of the most intriguing and controversial figures in Near Eastern history. Having lost faith in the traditional gods of Egypt, he promoted the exclusive worship of the gleaming solar disk, the Aten. As part of this, he changed his name to Akhenaten (meaning, perhaps, "he who is useful to Aten") and moved the Egyptian capital north of Thebes to a new capital, Akhetaten (meaning, "the horizon of the Aten"), at the site of modern Tell el-Amarna. On this fragment of a balustrade (now in the Cairo Museum) from a temple ramp at Tell el-Amarna, Akhenaten and his queen Nefertiti are shown presenting offerings to the Aten. The strange deformities apparent here and in many depictions of this pharaoh have led to numerous speculations about his physical and mental well-being, and his religious obsessions have been blamed for the loss of much of the northern part of Egypt's empire during this period. Photograph from Pritchard (1969), courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

naten, Smenkhkare, and Tutankhamun (Campbell 1964), but some are from the earlier correspondence of Amenophis III and were brought from Thebes to Akhetaten when Akhenaten moved his court to the new capital.

These letters describe, in intimate detail, the so-called presents and gifts that were constantly being exchanged between these foreign kings and their "brother" the pharaoh. Horses, chariots, inlaid furniture, lapis lazuli, and ivory objets d'art were the most common items exchanged, but the most valuable and most sought after commodity was gold. That a tremendous quantity of this costly mineral was available to the Egyptians was never lost on their allies to the north. In el-Amarna letter 16, Ashuruballit I of Assyria wrote to Akhenaten that "gold is in thy land like dust" (Mercer 1939: 59).[16]

There was also a serious diplomatic side to these exchanges. When Burraburias II of Babylon was dissatisfied with the amount of gold he had received from Akhenaten, he wrote the pharaoh to remind him of his country's past loyalty to Egypt, recalling that when the Canaanites wrote to his father Kurigalzu in an attempt to involve him in an anti-Egyptian coalition Kurigalzu had told them to "cease making an alliance with me; if you cherish hostility against the King of Egypt, my brother, and wish to ally yourself with another shall I not come, and shall I not plunder you, for he is in alliance with me" (Mercer 1939: 131).

In contrast to the correspondence between Egypt and the kings of the powerful lands, letters to Canaan reveal a vast gap between king and vassal, especially in the formulaic salutations. In el-Amarna letter 323,



for example, Waida of Ashkelon does not refer to himself as the pharaoh's "brother" but as "thy servant and the dust of thy feet" (Mercer 1939: 771).

The subject matter of their letters is also different. The lust for gold, so much on the minds of the pharaoh's "brothers," is replaced by a concern for their personal safety as well as the safety of their villages. Such fears were not unfounded. To the north the power of the Hittites was expanding unchecked by the Egyptian army. In Syria several of the nominally loyal dynasts were beginning to doubt the wisdom of an allegiance to a pharaoh who was so distant, and they sometimes tilted their loyalty toward the Hittites, formed alliances with other princes in the area, or simply struck out on their own policies of expansion, such as that followed by Abdi Ashirta of Amurru and his son Aziru. Concerning the latter, the citizens of Tunip in Syria (Drower 1973: 427 and 453) wrote to the pharaoh in desperation: "But now Tunip, the city, weeps, and her tears are running, and there is not help for us. We have been sending to the king . . . of Egypt for twenty years; but not one word has come to us from our lord" (el-Amarna letter 59; Mercer 1939: 247).

Complicating the situation in the south was the appearance, in increasing numbers and strength, of a group of outlaws and outcasts called *ᶜApiru* (or *ᶜAbiru, Hapiru/Habiru;* in Sumerian, SA.GAZ). This group has sometimes been identified with the Hebrews (*abri*) of the Old Testament (Miller and Hayes 1986: 65–67; Gottwald 1979: 396–409). The *ᶜApiru* were first encountered in Palestine by Amenophis II, who claimed to have captured 3,600 of them (Albright 1975: 115). Freebooters and troublemakers, they readily allied themselves with the less loyal Egyptian vassals and threatened the staunchest supporters of a pharaoh who appears to have been disinterested in the concerns of the area. Word of their actions was common in the Amarna correspondence. Abdi-Hepa of Jerusalem, described by Margaret Drower (1973: 422) as a man who bore "a semitic name but was a devotee of the Hurrian goddess," wrote several letters bemoaning the turmoil the *Habiru* were causing in the hill country of Palestine and pleading with the pharaoh for military support: "The Habiru plunder all lands of the King. If archers are here this year, then the lands of the King, my Lord, will remain; but if archers are not here, then the lands of the King, my Lord, are lost" (el-Amarna letter 287; Mercer 1939: 709).

Amid protestations of loyalty and innocence, or charges and countercharges of disloyalty, the scene presented in this correspondence repeats itself again and again, with apparently little or no help from the pharaoh.

The Amarna letters offer a great deal of insight into the daily events of Canaan in the Late Bronze Age, but they unfortunately also call attention to the fact that we lack other documented material to corroborate their revelations. As Kathleen Kenyon (1973: 556) noted, "the period of destruction associated with the Khabiru [*Habiru*] in the Amarna letters does not seem to be reflected in the history of towns, though there may be some indication of this in a low level of material culture, as shown by buildings, pottery and evidence of art." Rivka Gonen (1984: 69–70) has posited that the majority of Palestinian sites, even those that were well defended in the Middle Bronze Age, were unfortified (that is,

Superior Aegean and Cypriot imports helped bring about the demise of Late Bronze IA specialty wares.

unwalled) during the Late Bronze Age, possibly as a result of an Egyptian policy that restricted its vassals from accumulating military strength behind their city-walls. It is a perplexing situation (Several 1972). How are we to know, for instance, whether the whining and doom-crying of the vassals really reflected a dramatic change in daily events or was merely the normal situation couched in hyperbole aimed at winning the pharaoh's attention? Answers to questions such as this would give us a much better view of what was happening and would help us decide whether Late Bronze IIA was a time of catastrophic loss of Egyptian control in Canaan, as scholars have traditionally held, or simply a difficult period for the Egyptians, as some scholars now believe (Weinstein 1981: 15–16).

There is no evidence to indicate that either Akhenaten or his successor Smenkhkare answered the calls of their Canaanite vassals or led the Egyptian army northward in their defense. In fact, the only Amarna pharaoh who may have conducted such a campaign was young Tutankhamun, who claimed on his Restoration Stele that when he ascended the throne everything was topsy-turvy and that "if troops were sent to Djahi to extend the borders of Egypt, their efforts came to naught" (Steindorf and Seele 1957: 224). He may actually have tried to do something about the shameful state of affairs that existed in western Asia. His field marshal, Horemheb, claimed to have brought back prisoners from Palestine (Steindorf and Seele 1957: 247) and is spoken of in his Memphite tomb as the "guardian of the footsteps of his lord on the battlefield on his day of smiting the Asiatics" (Gardiner 1953; Aldred 1975: 84; Weinstein 1981: 17; Pritchard 1950: 250–51). Other supporting evidence might be found on the side of a small painted wooden trunk from Tutankhamun's tomb where, in a manner that would be used to decorate the massive gateways of the great temples of the pharaohs in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties, he is shown in his chariot leading the Egyptian army into a jumble of already vanquished Syrians.

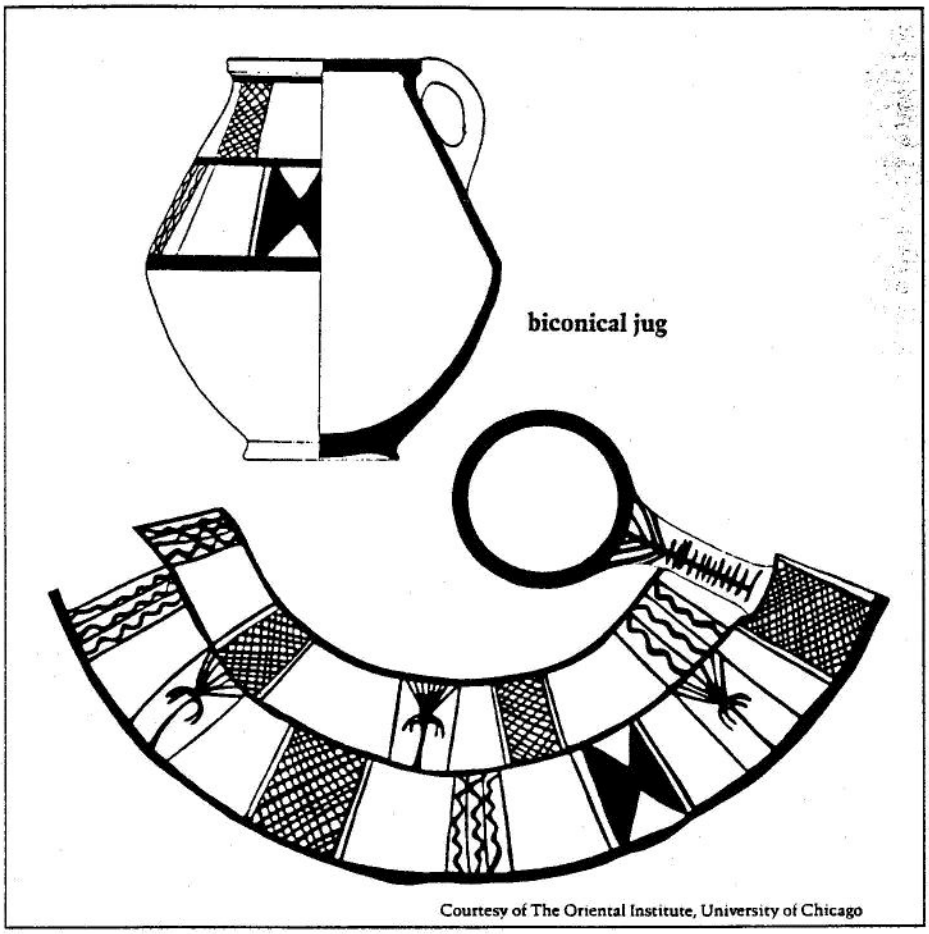
Whether Tutankhamun actually conducted such campaigns (compare Weinstein 1981 with Schulman 1964) or if his claims should be treated as the "stylized recitations of cherished old formulae" (Wilson 1951: 236) can be debated, but whatever the young king tried to do his efforts were unsuccessful. Tutankhamun's early death caused his young wife Ankhesenamon to beg Suppiluliumas, son of Tudhaliyas III, king of Hatti (as the Hittites called their kingdom), to send her one of his sons so that he might marry her and become king over Egypt (Schulman 1979). We can only wonder how the subsequent history of Canaan would have evolved had this union succeeded, but it did not. The Hittite prince, Zannanzash, was intercepted and murdered while passing through Palestine en route to Egypt (Aldred 1975: 69). In the end the throne was assumed by Horemheb, commander-in-chief of the Egyptian army (Redford 1973), whose reign brought the Eighteenth Dynasty to a close, and with it came the end of Late Bronze IIA.

The cause of the collapse of the relationship between Egypt and Canaan is a matter controversy. Was it the result of a policy of benign neglect attributable to Akhenaten's preoccupation with his religious reforms? Does it reflect a policy of laissez-faire in which individual Canaanite chieftains were allowed, and possibly encouraged, to feud and fight with each other? Could it have been an intentional policy of divide-and-rule? To what extent was the situation exacerbated by the southward expansion of the Hittites under Suppiluliumas or by internal pressures supplied by the *ʿApiru*, the Shasu bedouin, or others (Weinstein 1981: 15–16)? Whichever explanation one selects it is indisputable that during the Amarna period Egypt lost much of the northern part of its Asiatic empire to the Hittites under Suppiluliumas during his first Syrian war. The degree of loss further south in Palestine is still a matter of debate.

Archaeological Evidence in Canaan. In Canaan during Late Bronze IIA there was a decline in the quality of local ceramics as imports from Cyprus and the Aegean increased. The architecture, exhibiting both continuity and discontinuity, included good examples of Canaanite religious structures. Some of the most impressive funerary assemblages from all of Late Bronze date to this period.

Ceramic evidence. The pottery by which we try to date the events of Late Bronze IIA can be seen more as a degeneration than as a development. With the demise of Late Bronze IA specialty wares came a decline in fabric, form, and decoration, perhaps stimulated by the ever-increasing presence of Aegean and Cypriot imports that were of superior technical quality and artistic merit.

Plain or slipped bowls with a strong carination and cooking pots with everted triangular rims were virtually ubiquitous during Late Bronze II, whereas footed cups, a



Courtesy of The Oriental Institute, University of Chicago

Middle Bronze holdover, became less common. The shape of a small juglet sometimes reflected the Late Bronze IA Black/Grey Lustrous Ware tradition, but the wider necked, ring-based version had become the norm. Dipper juglets whose graceful Middle Bronze silhouettes were lost in the short, dumpy Late Bronze I forms tended either to remain squat or return to the earlier, attenuated shapes. The pilgrim flask may have had its inspiration in the Aegean world, but the most popular form in Palestine, with a body constructed by joining two hemispherical bowls at the rims, was strictly a local product. Flasks dating to (and diagnostic of) Late Bronze IIA had a petal-like attachment of the handles to the neck.

The painted decoration of the period was usually restricted to groups of horizontal bands, either isolated or combined, with simple vertical elements to produce embryonic *metope* patterns. Larger vessels, plain and footed kraters, and one-handled biconical mugs presented the pot-painter with a broader canvas, and the larger metopes were often filled with more elaborate geometric patterns. Occasionally, abstract elements were combined to form more representational subjects such as the Tree of Life with its central tree and antithetic caprids, a motif that had been popular in the Near East for millennia. A biconical jug found in Tomb D912 at Megiddo goes far beyond the norm of the period, not only in its scale but also in the number and natural depiction of creatures presented on it (Guy and Engberg: 1938: plate 134). Quite rare was the depiction of the human form, such as on two tiny fragments from Beth Shan or the tankard from Ras Shamra showing a bearded male, possibly representing the Canaanite god Baal, enthroned (Culican 1966: 121).

During the fourteenth century B.C.E. the markets of the Canaanite coast were flooded with pottery from Cyprus and the Aegean world. Typical of the Cypriot imports were the Base Ring jug and *bilbil*, which were introduced to the region during Late Bronze IA. By the Late Bronze IIA the raised decoration of Base Ring I had given way to the white-painted, linear patterns of Base Ring II that may be associated, especially on the *bilbil*, with marks that recorded the scoring of the opium poppy (Merrillees 1968: 154). The White Slip Ware "milk bowl" shape, also introduced during Late Bronze IA, demonstrated less carefully executed White Slip II motifs during Late Bronze IIA but continued to be popular.

Representative of the exports from the Mycenaean Greek world (the land of the Keftiu) were the narrow-necked "stirrup jar," which was purposely designed and crafted to transport and dispense costly specialty oils, and both the pyxis and piriform jars, whose wide mouths and strategically placed handles suggest an easy-to-seal container for scented unguents. Contemporary Linear B texts from sites on the Greek mainland indicate that rose or sage were primary ingredients in these popular olive oil-based products (Leonard 1981). What commodities the Canaanites traded for these costly ingredients is unclear, but transport amphorae have been found as far away as the Greek mainland (Grace 1956; Akerstrom 1975; Bass 1987), and wall-paintings from Egyptian tombs picture similar jars on the decks of Canaanite merchant ships whose crews include long-haired sailors from Keftiu.

Architectural evidence. The so-called palace in stratum IX at Megiddo

The cosmopolitan character of the age can be seen in the remarkable wealth displayed at some burial sites.

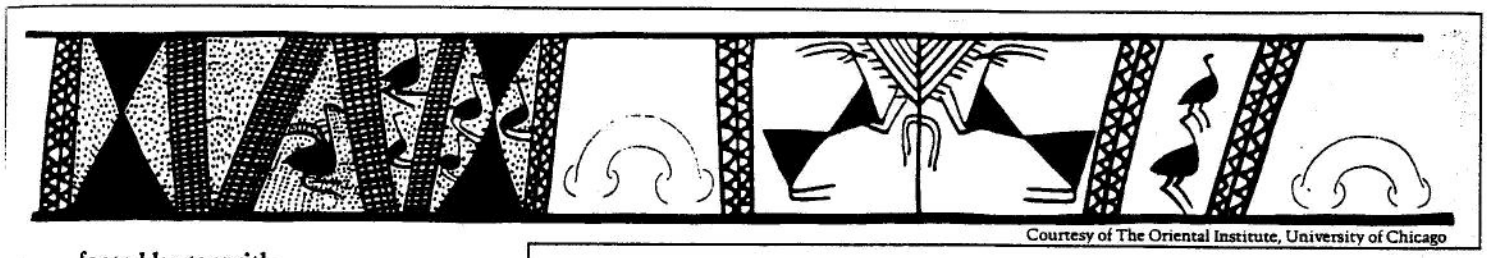
was enlarged during this period, producing a new version in stratum VIII with fewer, but more spacious, rooms: a configuration that continued through the end of the Late Bronze Age (Loud 1948). Although we are uncertain about the function of individual rooms of the ground floor, we know that a great deal of attention was paid to water removal in the form of sumps, drains, basins, and even a room paved with sea shells. This building and the gateway enjoyed a special relationship, which lasted through the end of the Late Bronze Age. The complaints of Biridiya of Megiddo recorded in the Amarna correspondence do not prepare us for such a well-planned and well-built city as shown in the published remains of Megiddo VIII.

Late Bronze IIA provides us with some of our best information on Canaanite religious architecture and, once again, there was both continuity and discontinuity in temple plan. At Megiddo the last phase of Temple 2048 was a much less impressive structure with walls about half their original thickness; the building hardly deserves the continued use of the epithet "migdal," meaning fortified. Also less impressive during this period was the similar temple at Shechem (Fortress Temple 2a) whose main chamber was changed from a longroom to a broadroom (Wright 1965a: 95–101). The Fosse Temple at Lachish was rebuilt and enlarged. Although the plan of Structure II was closer to a broadroom sanctuary with offering benches on three sides, the new "altar" was built against the south wall directly over its predecessor, emphasizing the sanctity associated with the spot. In level VI on the tell at Lachish the Summit Temple had a plan that, in form and function, resembled the Late Bronze IIB temple from stratum VII at Beth Shan (Ussishkin 1978: 10–25; Clamer and Ussishkin 1977). The small finds recovered from the Summit Temple may give us a clue to the deity or deities that were worshipped there, as a gold foil plaque found during excavations depicts a nude goddess standing on a horse. The goddess wears a crown made of horns and vegetation and holds lotus flowers in each hand. Christa Clamer (1980) has identified her as Qudshu (Astarte?). A partner for this goddess may be depicted on a large stone slab incised with the form of a male (Resheph?) who wears a tall conical hat with hanging streamers and who brandishes a long spear over his head in both hands (Ussishkin 1978: figure 4 and plate 7:1, 8). Clamer (1980: 161) compared his crown with that worn by the god on "the MKL stela from Beth Shan." Architectural details of this temple suggest Egyptian influences, and the large quantity of Mycenaean IIIA and IIIB pottery found on its floors accents its cosmopolitan nature, a nature that characterizes all of Canaan in the Late Bronze Age (Ussishkin 1978: 19–20).

The Late Bronze IIA temple from stratum X (1375–1300 B.C.E.) at Tell Mevorakh also was rebuilt over its predecessor from stratum XI. Cult objects found in situ, on or associated with the cult platform, give an indication of the type of worship that was practiced. In addition to pottery vessels, glass pendants, and faience (Mitannian style) cylinder seals, the deposit included a group of important bronzes: knives, a pair of cymbals, a circular pendant with a star design, and a snake measuring about 25 centimeters in length (Stern 1984: 33–35). On the basis of this serpent, also known from cult-associated deposits at the Gezer High Place, Hazor, and the Hathor Temple at Timna, the excavator has suggested that the temple belonged to ᶜAshtoret (Ishtar) and Baal (Stern 1984: 35). Pendants similar to the one from Mevorakh have been found at other Canaanite sites. Those from Ras Shamra/Ugarit also have been interpreted as celestial emblems (*shapash-shebis*; see Isaiah 3:18–19; Schaeffer 1939a: 62).

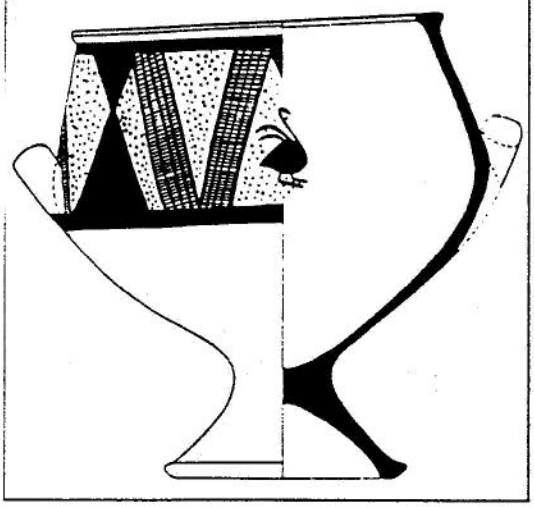
At Hazor, area H continued to retain its sanctity. Although it was rebuilt partially on the remains of the Middle Bronze IIC/Late Bronze I structure, the temple from Late Bronze IIA was enlarged to three, on-axis broadrooms. A pair of basalt blocks, each carved with a lion in relief, greeted visitors as they entered the temple. One of these orthostats was found buried in a pit by the entrance to the shrine. The cult stele found in the later, Late Bronze IIB, phase of this building probably originated in the Late Bronze IIA structure. A similar situation existed in the small temple in area C at Hazor, where original cult paraphernalia was found reused in the slightly repaired phase of the temple dating to Late Bronze IIB.

Funerary evidence. Some of the most impressive funerary assemblages of the Late Bronze Age can be assigned wholly or partially to its IIA period. These large, often reused, sepulchers accommodated multiple burials accompanied by a remarkable display of material wealth that reflects the cosmopolitan character of the age. A good example is Cave 10A at Gezer (Seger 1972). The cave was probably dug as a cistern but



Courtesy of The Oriental Institute, University of Chicago

footed krater with "tree and ibex" (goat) design



was subsequently used for funerary purposes throughout most, if not all, of the fifteenth century and part of the fourteenth century B.C.E. if one is to judge from the more than one hundred complete vessels, local and Cypriot, and other rich grave goods that it contained. Dating to Late Bronze IIA or slightly earlier is a full-length coffin embellished with rows of handles down the sides and along the lid. Similar *larnax*-burials are known from Crete in the Middle to Late Minoan period (Buchholz and Karageorghis 1973: 82–83, number 1064), but this form is so far unique in Palestine. This sarcophagus was apparently intended for the interment of an adult and child but subsequently served as an ossuary for a dozen other children. The last burial in Cave 10A was that of a tall female about 34 years of age (named Sarah by the excavation staff) who was interred in the entrance passage. Close to her hand lay one of the finest and earliest examples of Egyptian glass vessels thus far found in Palestine.

Originally, not secondarily, planned as a burial place, Tomb 8144–8145 was cut into bedrock in area F of the Lower City of Hazor. This fourteenth-century shaft tomb contained an exceptional quantity of grave goods, including more than 500 restorable vessels that demonstrate the full range of Late Bronze IIA local ceramics as well as imports from Cyprus and the Aegean (Mycenaean) world (Yadin and others 1960: 140–53, 159–60).

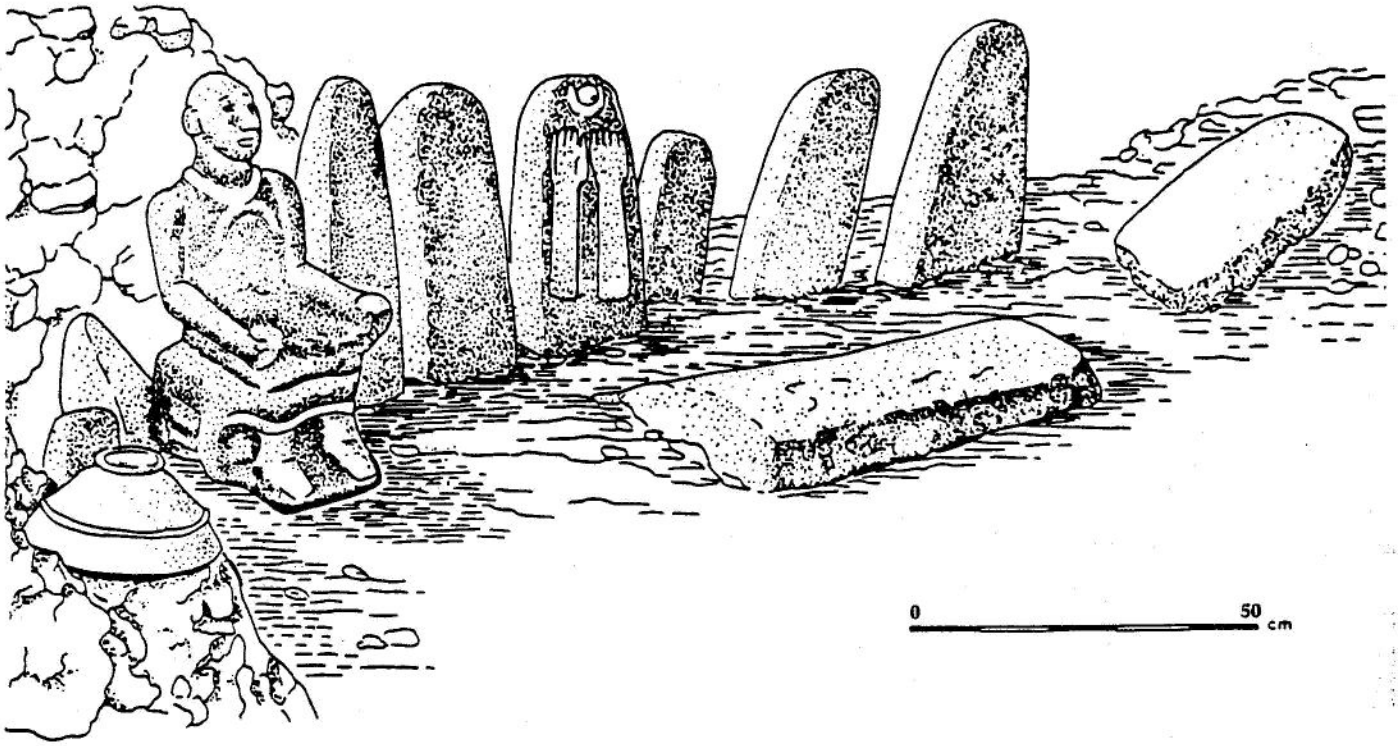
The desire to be buried with an array of imported luxury goods can also be seen at Tel Dan (Tell el-Qadi) where Tomb 387, a structure built of fieldstone, contained a melange of 45 interments of men, women, and children and an array of funerary offerings of gold, silver, bronze, and ivory. The imported pottery included an exceptionally well-preserved Mycenaean "chariot vase." This large, well-made vessel is decorated with a parade of horse-drawn chariots and would have held a position of pride on the table—or in the tomb—of any member of the *maryanna*. Although the Mycenaean chariot krater has been found more frequently in Cyprus, it had a surprisingly wide distribution in Canaan, from Ugarit to Tell el-Farᶜah (South), and from the coast as far inland as Amman and Sahab (Leonard 1987a; Hankey 1974; Ibrahim 1975).

Late Bronze IIB

Late Bronze IIB, a period characterized by conflict, lasted approximately 120 years. During this time both Egyptian and Syro-Palestinian rulers were forced to defend their territories against attacks by foreign intruders, most notably the Sea Peoples. With their passing the Bronze Age slowly came to a close. Egypt, then in the early part of its Twentieth Dynasty, was entering what would be a long period of decline, and Syro-Palestine was about to begin the period that archaeologists refer to as the Iron Age.

Egyptian Historical Evidence. Egyptian kings in the Nineteenth Dynasty considered themselves the legitimate successors of the great pre-Amarna pharaohs of the Eighteenth Dynasty. Horemheb was succeeded by Ramesses I,[17] an elderly vizier who ruled for a little over a year before his place was taken by his son Sethos I.[18] In the manner of Amosis and Tuthmosis III, Sethos I wasted no time in setting out for Canaan. In the first year of his reign, which he termed "the Renaissance," he had already ventured into Palestine trying to reestablish the old Egyptian frontiers. No longer guided by the more ephemeral and placid Aton

Right: *A small single-room temple was built in area C at Hazor during the Late Bronze IIA and was rebuilt during IIB. A section of that temple shows a full complement of cult furnishings. The plan of the later phase shows the objects arranged in a slight arc before an oblong offering table in a niche along the western wall.* ***Below:*** *A basalt statue of a sitting male deity with an inverted, possibly lunar, crescent suspended from his neck was found among the objects. Also found in the niche were ten* masseboth. *or standing stones, the central one of which was carved with two hands reaching upward toward a crescent. These objects suggest that this broadroom shrine was the focus of a lunar cult. Drawing of plan by Lois A. Kain. Drawing of cult objects courtesy of J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tubingen.*

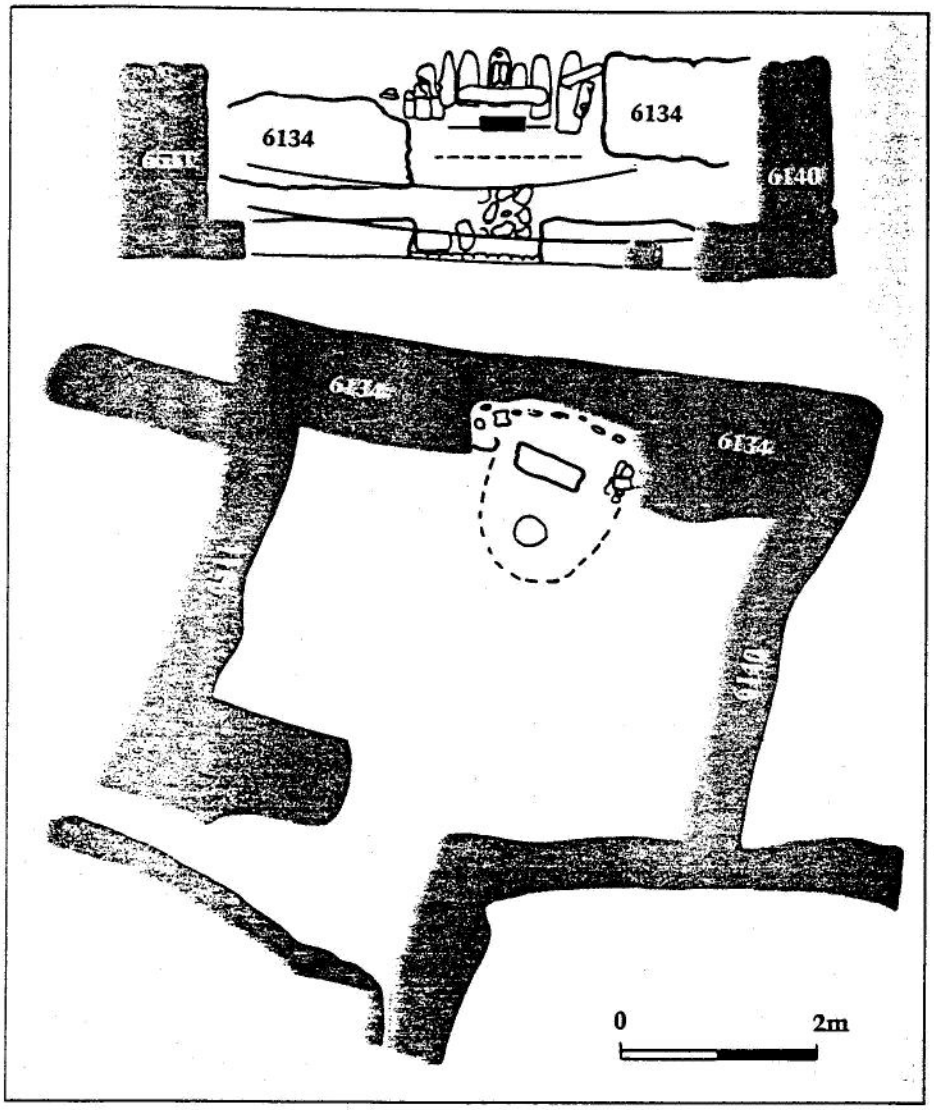


who "filled every land with . . . beauty" (Pritchard 1590: 370), Sethos I proceeded northward guided and protected by the god Amon, whose "heart is satisfied at the sight of blood . . . (who) cuts off the heads of the perverse of heart . . . (who) loves an instant of trampling more than a day of jubilation" (Pritchard 1950: 254). Although the ultimate goal of this ferocious pair was to confront the Hittites in northern Syria, the Egyptian army had to begin fighting as close to home as the southern Sinai where the Shasu bedouin were disrupting the smooth flow of travelers and material along the approximately 120-mile roadway known as the Way of Horus that led from Egypt to Gaza.

Fighting continued as the army moved northward through Palestine to retake Beth Shan from a confederation led by the Prince of Hammath (possibly Tell el-Hammeh) in league with the people of Pella (Pahel, Tabaqat Fahel) in Transjordan. Sethos I and his forces defeated the alliance in a single day and set up a basalt stele at Beth Shan to commemorate his achievements (Pritchard 1950: 253–54). He then continued northward through Kadesh, northwest of Lake Huleh (Aharoni 1967: 166), through the Lebanon Valley, and on to the coast near Tyre where cedar was cut for the glory of the god Amon. Upon his return to Egypt the country turned out in celebration, for it had not seen such a victorious pharaoh in more than half a century. Sethos I's good start in regaining control over Syro-Palestine was only a beginning for, as we have learned from a second stele erected by Sethos I at Beth Shan, even the *Habiru* continued to be a problem for the Egyptians.

Sethos I was succeeded by Ramesses II,[19] a younger son who pushed aside his elder brother the crown prince to become the longest ruling pharaoh (sixty-seven years) in Egyptian history. For the first few years of his reign Ramesses II—King Ozymandias of Percy Shelley's poetry—consolidated his position at home. To the north, the Hittites consolidated their power in northern Syria under King Muwatallis, who had moved the Hittite capital south to Tattashsha (Goetze 1975b: 129) to be nearer to his Syrian interests. (For a different reason for the move, see Bittel 1970: 20–22.) In his fourth year, however, Ramesses II reached the Nahr el-Kalb (Dog River) near Beirut and left his inscription on the neighboring rock cliffs; in the following year he headed north to face the largest coalition of Syrian forces that the Hittites had yet been able to muster.

Tension had been building be-

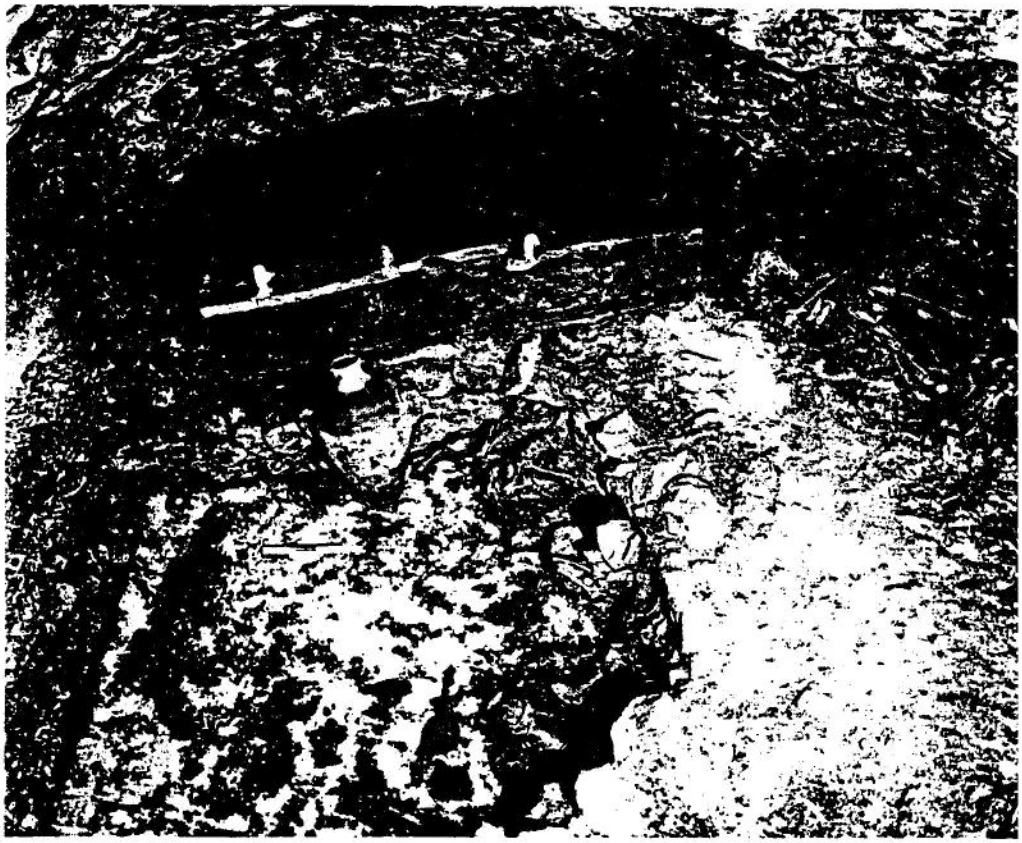


tween the two superpowers for some time, but the real cause of the conflict was the defection of the king of Amurru from the Hittite to the Egyptian side (Bittel 1970: 124). The two sides met at Kadesh-on-the-Orontes where the Egyptian army, led by Ramesses II, was ambushed by an estimated force of 17,000 soldiers who lay in wait for him on the northeastern side of the city. According to the Egyptian version, it was the personal valor of Ramesses II that countered the Hittite treachery. "He cast them into the water like crocodiles, and he slew whomever he desired" (Steindorf and Seele 1957: 251). The events of the day are depicted in surprisingly accurate topographical detail on temple walls throughout Egypt (Karnak, Luxor, Abu Simbel), but the pharaoh's boast of total, single-handed victory seems to be somewhat overstated. Documents from the Hittite capital of Hattusha (near modern Boğazköy) give another version: "At the time when king Muwatallis made war against the king of Egypt, when he defeated the king of Egypt, the Egyptian king went back to the country of Aba. But then king Muwatalli defeated the country of Aba, then he marched back to the country of Hatti" (Bittel 1970: 125). If Ramesses was pressed as far south as Aba, just to the north of Damascus (Steindorf and Seele 1957: 251), it would seem that the Hittite version was the more truthful of the two accounts and that the pharaoh's victory was at best a draw.

In subsequent years Ramesses II continued to find it neccessary to campaign in Asia to keep the Egyptian image strong (Černý 1958; Giveon 1965; Kitchen 1964), not only at distant Syrian sites such as Qatna (Misrife) but also much closer to home at Acco/Acre and even nearby Ashkelon when "it became wicked" (Pritchard 1950: 256). New evidence suggests, however, that the scene of the siege of Ashkelon in the temple of Karnak, which is usually attributed to Ramesses II, may actually have belonged to his son Merneptah (Yurco 1978 and quoted in Stager 1985). The endless warfare must have taken a tremendous amount of energy on both sides, and with Libyan and Sherden pressure building on Egypt's western flank, plus the growing power of Assyria on the Hittite's southern border, the stage was finally set for a true peace between the two belligerents. Sixteen years after the Battle of Kadesh a peace treaty between Ramesses II and Hattusilis III, then king of the Hittites, was inscribed on silver tablets that bore the imprint of the two royal seals. A cuneiform text of the treaty was preserved in the archives at Boğazköy, and hieroglyphic versions of it appear at the Temple of Amon at Karnak and in the mortuary temple of Ramesses II (the "Rameseum") on the opposite bank of the Nile (Pritchard 1950: 199–203; Langdon and Gardiner 1920). Thirteen years after the treaty was signed it was commemorated by the marriage of Ramesses II to the daughter of Hattusilis III who was personally escorted to Egypt during the rainy months of winter by her father the Great King of Hatti (Bittel 1970: 127).

Some of the most impressive funerary assemblages of the Late Bronze Age can be assigned to the IIA period. ***Below:*** *This sarcophagus from Cave 10A at Gezer contains the remains of a single adult and twelve young children. Evidently the adult's coffin served as a protected repository for the remains of the children in subsequent burials in the tomb.* ***Right:*** *The last burial found in the entrance tunnel to Cave 10A at Gezer was that of a tall female, about 34 years of age, named Sarah by the excavation staff. The woman's remains were found just inside the entryway. Close to her head was a magnificent Egyptian "sand core" glass vessel, one of the finest and earliest examples of Egyptian glass found to date in Palestine. Photographs by Theodore A. Rosen, courtesy of Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati.*

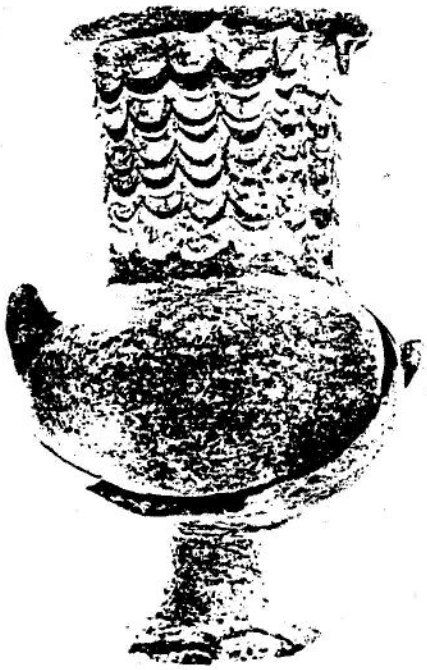
Multiple burials were common during the Late Bronze IIA. At Gezer, for example, the scattered skeletal remains of eighty-nine individuals were found in Cave 10A. Also found in situ was this full-length coffin embellished with rows of handles down the sides and along the lid. Although this sarcophagus is similar to larnax-burials *from Minoan Crete, the form is unique in Palestine. Photograph by Theodore A. Rosen, courtesy of Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati.*



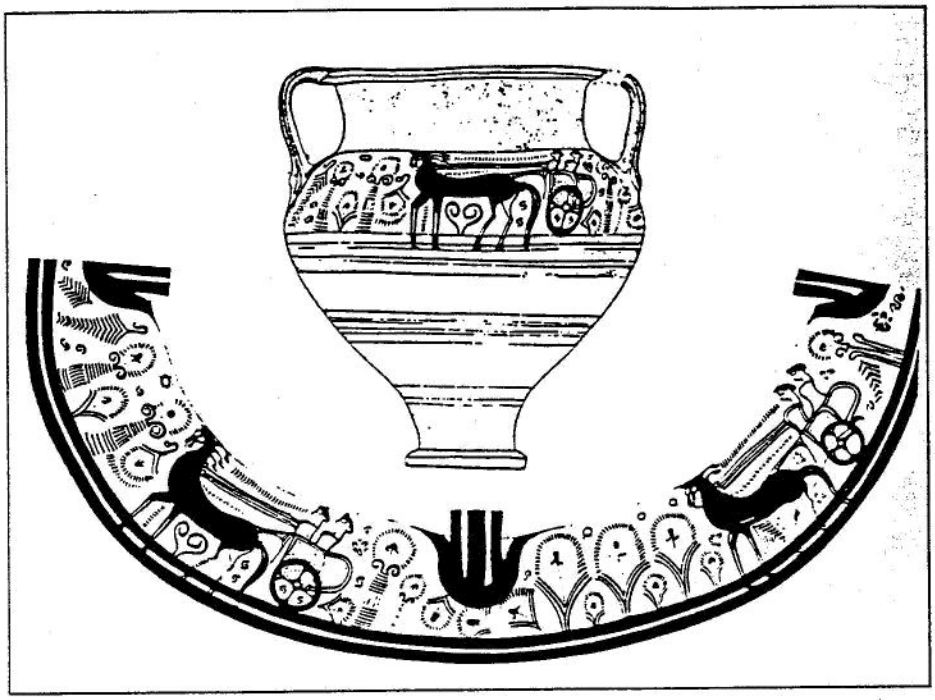
This event must have been important to the pharaoh because he included it among the scenes he had carved on temples as far south as Abu Simbel in Nubia.

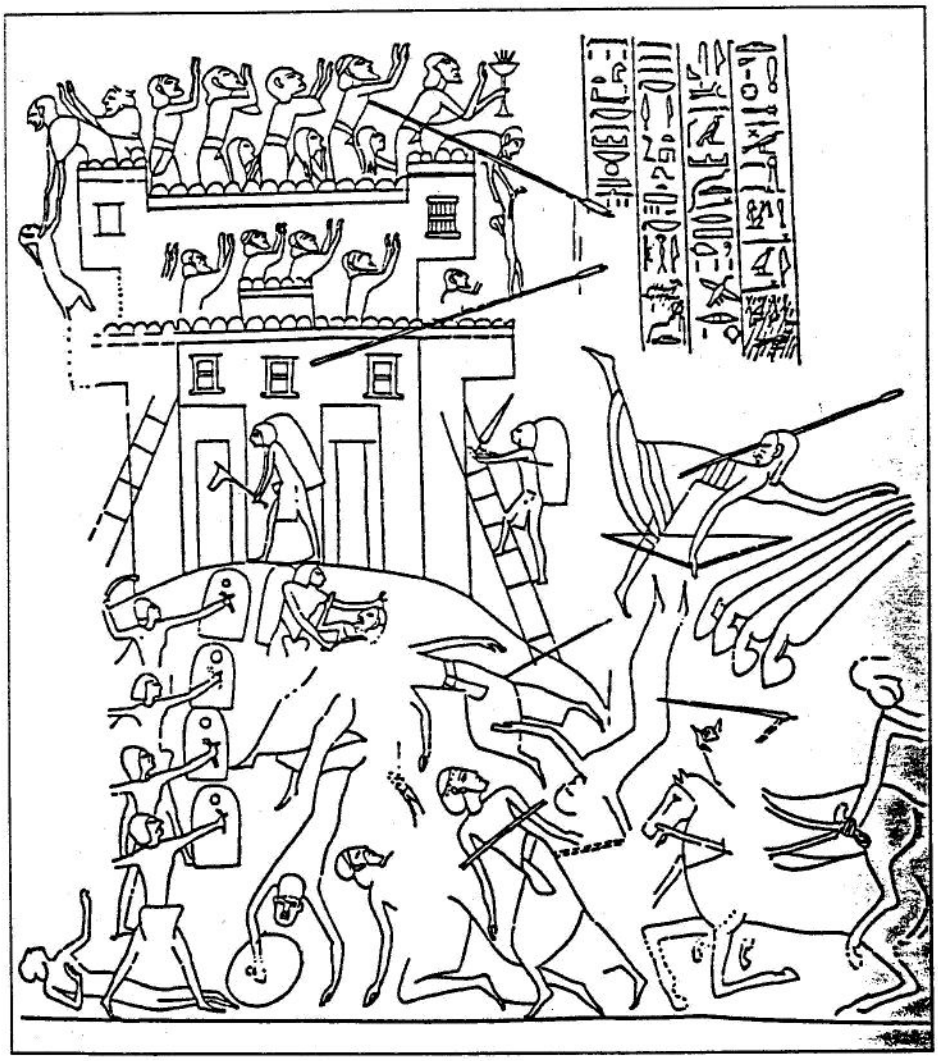
Ramesses was succeeded by his thirteenth son Merneptah,[20] who must have been older than 50 at the time of his coronation. The major threat to Egypt during his reign came from the west where a large army from Libya, abetted by an assortment of future Sea Peoples was pressing hard against his territories in the western Delta. Merneptah was successful in battle against these intruders during his fifth year, and to celebrate he erected in his mortuary temple at Thebes a stele inscribed with a victory hymn that ended with a song of triumph over his Asiatic enemies. Some scholars contend that the Victory Hymn of Merneptah, also known as the Israel Stele, is the earliest record identifying Israel as an unsettled people in Palestine, since of all the countries mentioned on the stele Israel alone is written with the hieroglyphic determinative for a people rather than for a land (Miller and Hayes 1986: 68–69). This stele is important to biblical scholarship in any event because it is the only mention of Israel in Egyptian records. The text is full of examples of scribal carelessness, however, and the reference to a "pacified" Hatti was simply not true, although under Arnuwandash III the Hittites did observe the treaty that existed between the two nations. Donald B. Redford (1986) has completely denied the veracity of Merneptah's boasts of an Asiatic campaign during the early part of his reign, claiming that the Victory Hymn was actually plagiarized from an inscription of Ramesses II at Karnak with the substitution of the word/term "Israel" for "Shasu" bedouin. Such an interpretation would suggest that whatever Israel was at this time, it was not completely understood by the Egyptians.

Within five years of this suspect victory, Merneptah had died and been buried in Thebes where his mummy has survived. With his death a disruption close to anarchy enveloped Egypt (Faulkner 1975: 235–39; Černý 1975). Kings Amenmesses and Siptah left no apparent mark on western Asia, but the car-



Yellow and white festoons decorate the neck of the blue-gray glass (unguent?) container found near Sarah's head in Cave 10A at Gezer. Late Bronze IIA burials were often accompanied by a remarkable display of wealth that reflects the cosmopolitan character of the age. Photograph by Theodore A. Rosen, courtesy of Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati.





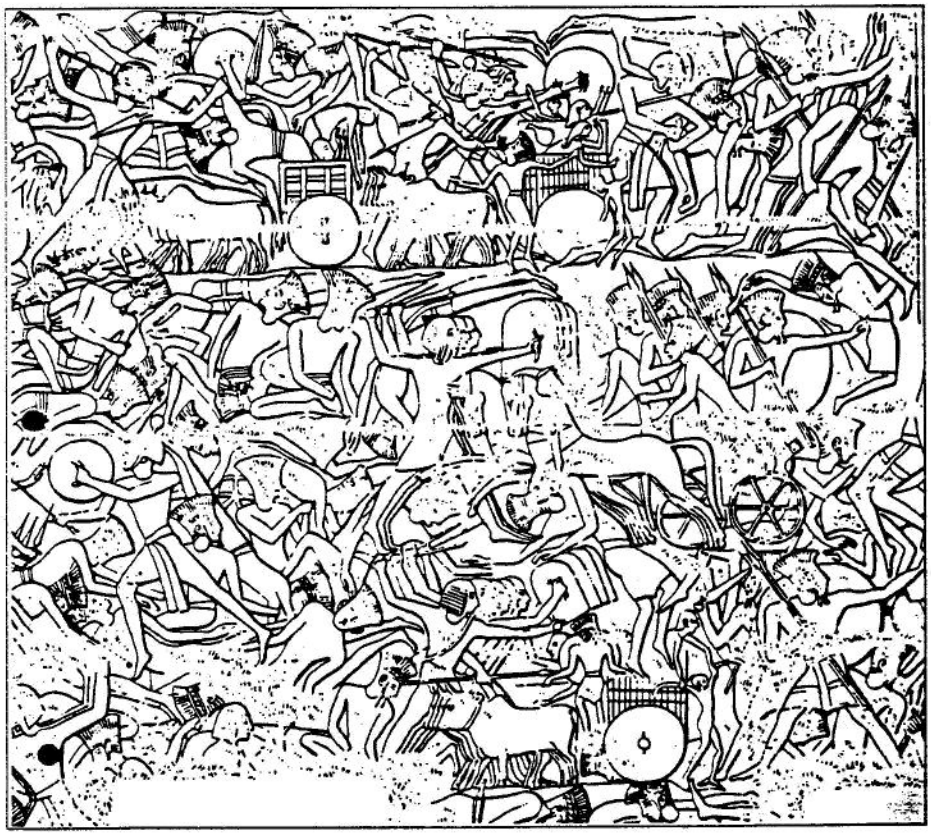
Right: *This Mycenaean "chariot vase" from Tomb 387 at Tel Dan, decorated with a parade of horse-drawn chariots, would have held a place of pride on the table—or in the tomb—of any Canaanite prince or member of the* maryanna *(the chariot-owning nobility). Imported luxury goods are a common feature of burials from the Late Bronze IIA. Drawing from Biran (1970), courtesy of the Hebrew Union College, Jerusalem.* ***Below right:*** *The Late Bronze IIB was a period of seemingly endless warfare as Egyptian rulers of the Nineteenth Dynasty ventured into Syro-Palestine in an attempt to regain control of areas that had been lost during the Amarna period. In this drawing of a relief from the Temple of Ramesses II at Karnak, the coastal city of Ashkelon is being attacked and overtaken by Egyptian forces. This victory scene is usually attributed to Ramesses II, but new data suggest that it should be dated to the reign of his son Merneptah, fourth pharaoh of the Nineteenth Dynasty. Drawing from Stager (1985), courtesy of the Israel Exploration Society.*

touche, or royal seal, of Sethos II[21] has been found impressed on a potsherd at Tell el Farᶜah (South) (Weinstein 1981: 22) and a faience vessel bearing the name of Queen Tewosret[22] was discovered at Deir ᶜAllā in the Transjordan (Franken 1961; Dornemann 1983: 20, 44; Faulkner 1975: 235–39; Yoyotte 1962). During this period of uncertainty it appears that a Syrian prince was actually able to claim title to the throne of Egypt (Pritchard 1950: 260). Putting an end to this state of chaos, which bordered on civil war, was Sethnakhte,[23] a man of uncertain origin who became the first king of the Twentieth Dynasty. Although he ruled for only a year, Sethnakhte seems to have placed the country back on track before leaving the kingship to his son Ramesses III.[24]

For the first few years of his reign Ramesses III was faced with continued threats from the Libyans and their allies in the western Delta, similar to the situation that his

The Sea Peoples posed the greatest threat to the region since the movements of the Hyksos more than three centuries earlier.

predecessor Merneptah had faced. To the north and east of Egypt, however, trouble in the form of the Sea Peoples was almost literally on the horizon. This international coalition was quickly moving into the Egyptian orb, bringing with them death and destruction (Sandars 1978; Brug 1985; Dothan 1982b; Barnett 1975). In his eighth year Ramesses III was forced to deploy the Egyptian army and navy in an attempt to thwart the progress of the Sea Peoples who represented the greatest threat to the stability of the countries of the southeastern Mediterranean since the movements of the Hyksos more than three centuries earlier: "They were coming forward toward Egypt, while the flame was prepared before them. Their confederation was the Philistines, Tjeker, Shekelesh, Denye[n], and Weshesh, lands united. They laid their hands



In the eighth year of his reign, during Late Bronze IIB in Palestine, Ramesses III was forced to deploy his army and navy to thwart the eastward progress of the Sea Peoples, an international confederation that represented the greatest threat to the region since the movements of the Hyksos more than three centuries earlier. In the land battle shown here, left, taken from the mortuary temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu in Thebes, confusion reigns as the pharaoh's forces, assisted by Sherden mercenaries wearing horned helmets (top row center), battle the invaders' infantry somewhere along the Syro-Palestinian coast. The Sea Peoples, some of whom are characterized by tall, featherlike helmets, must have been severely hampered by the presence of their families and their slow, ox-drawn wagons with heavy solid wheels. In the naval scene below, also taken from Medinet Habu, the lion-headed prows on the Egyptian fleet bear down on the ships of the Sea Peoples somewhere along the eastern shore of the Nile Delta. The Sea Peoples' ships have high, duck-headed prows and sterns but no oars, the absence of which might mean that the Egyptian fleet had caught them by surprise. Sherden mercenaries are depicted as fighting on both sides of the fray. Drawings from Dothan (1982b), courtesy of The Oriental Institute of The University of Chicago.

Ramesses III defeated the Sea Peoples on land and sea, but the victory depleted Egypt of much of its revenue and resolve.

upon the lands as far as the circuit of the earth, their hearts confident and trusting: 'Our plans will succeed!' " (Dothan 1982b: 3).

Ramesses III and his forces fought this international confederation on two fronts. Somewhere along the coast of Palestine his army met the infantry and chariotry of their land forces. The Egyptians were victorious over the invaders, who must surely have been severely hampered by the necessity of protecting their families who accompanied them in slow ox-drawn wagons with heavy solid wheels: "Those who came on [land were overthrown and killed]. Amon-Re was after them, destroying them. Those who entered the river-mouths were like birds ensnared in the net. . . . Their leaders were carried off and slain. They were cast down and pinioned" (Dothan 1982b: 3).

Much closer to home, somewhere off the eastern shores of the Delta, a sea battle raged. Oar-driven Egyptian ships with reefed sails, often identified by their lion-headed prows, clashed with the ships of the Sea Peoples, which were characterized by high duck-headed prows and sterns. The absence of any depiction of oars on the ships of these intruders may indicate that they were caught by surprise by the Egyptian fleet (Dothan 1982b: 7), but in any case they were undoubtedly overwhelmed by the pharaoh's navy: "Those who came forward together on the sea, the full flame was in front of them at the river mouths, while a stockade of lances surrounded them on the shore. They were dragged in, enclosed, and prostrated on the beach, killed, and made into heaps from tail to head. Their ships and their goods were as if fallen into the water" (Dothan 1982b: 3). Egypt was victorious, but it must have been a Pyrrhic victory at best. It so exhausted the nation in both revenue and resolve that Egypt entered into a period of steep decline that lasted for centuries.

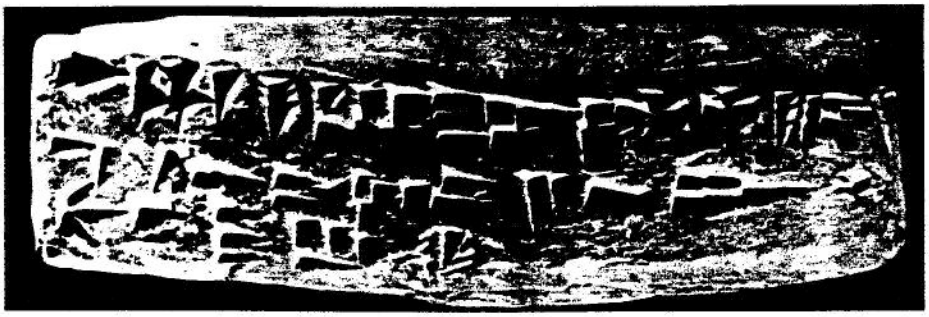
At Ras Shamra (Ugarit) the remarkable discovery of a kiln for baking clay tablets that was filled with about 100 pieces of foreign correspondence that had been translated into Ugaritic, a Semitic language closely related to Phoenician and Biblical Hebrew, indicates that this area also faced impending danger, imminent doom. Before the ancient scribes could return to remove these tablets, disaster struck the city, and the palace was destroyed. Fortunately, the tablets survived to tell their story (well summarized in Drower 1975: 145–47; see also Astour 1965). They tell how in parts of Great Hatti, for example, famine was described as being a "matter of life and death," causing the Hittite king Suppiluliumas II to call on his vassal in Ugarit to send a shipment of 2,000 measures of grain to Cilicia. Pagan, ruler of Alasiya/Cyprus, also wrote to Ugarit requesting food supplies. But how could Ugarit help? Its army had already been sent northward to help the Hittites, and its navy had been stationed off the Lycian (Lykka) coast; stripped of its defenses, it had already been ravaged. As Ammurapi of Ugarit responded to the Cypriot request, "behold, the enemy's ships came here; my cities(?) were burned, and they did evil things in my country" (Astour 1965: 255). Marauders were everywhere. Soon the city of Ugarit was completely destroyed and its ruins "mined" for valuables. Afterwards, a different, much less sophisticated people settled on the site. It is difficult not to associate the disruptions mentioned in the kiln tablets with the eastern movements of the Sea Peoples (compare, however, Schaeffer's changing views: 1939b: 45–46, 1968: 760–68).

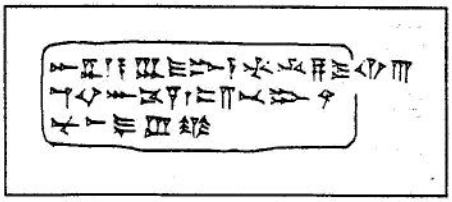
Archaeological Evidence in Canaan. The archaeological record for Late Bronze IIB in Canaan is mixed. Local pottery continued to decline; surprisingly, the quality of Cypriot imports also deteriorated, and eventually these imports disappeared; Mycenaean goods were still popular, but they were also less well made than before, perhaps produced outside the traditional Aegean production centers. In architecture, we are beginning to learn more about the administrative centers in the south, which possibly relate to an Egyptian presence; cult architecture shows continuity with the past; and we know little of Canaanite domestic architecture. Burial customs during the period were strange and varied.

Ceramic record. The quality of Late Bronze IIB pottery continued the decline already noted in the preceding periods. The shapes of carinated bowls, cooking pots, kraters, and mugs remained about the same, but a carelessness of execution and of decoration seems to have been the hallmark of Palestinian pottery in the thirteenth century B.C.E.

The only morphological differences in the local repertoire, other than size and proportion, were in the dipper juglet and flask. Dipper juglets dating to this period often had a pinched lip and vertically shaved body. Shaved juglets became popular in Cyprus as well at this time; their fabric and distinctive manner of pushing the base of the handle through the vessel wall pointed to their having been manufactured on the island. A similar technique was

This clay tablet contains the 30-character cuneiform alphabet of Ugaritic, a Semitic language closely related to Phoenician and Biblical Hebrew. At Ras Shamra (Ugarit) a kiln for baking clay tablets was found containing about 100 pieces of foreign correspondence that had been translated into Ugaritic. These texts tell their own story of destruction at the hands of foreign invaders. Although the kiln tablets do not mention the intruders by name, it is hard not to associate the events recorded on them with the onslaught of the Sea Peoples into Syro-Palestine during Late Bronze IIB. Photograph by Marwan Musselmany, courtesy of Ali Abou-Assaf, director general of Antiquities and Museums, Damascus.





used in the production of shaved juglets made from local Palestinian clays toward the end of Late Bronze II. Pilgrim flasks continued to be popular, but during this period they tended to exhibit a direct (non-petal-like) attachment of the handle to the neck of the vessel.

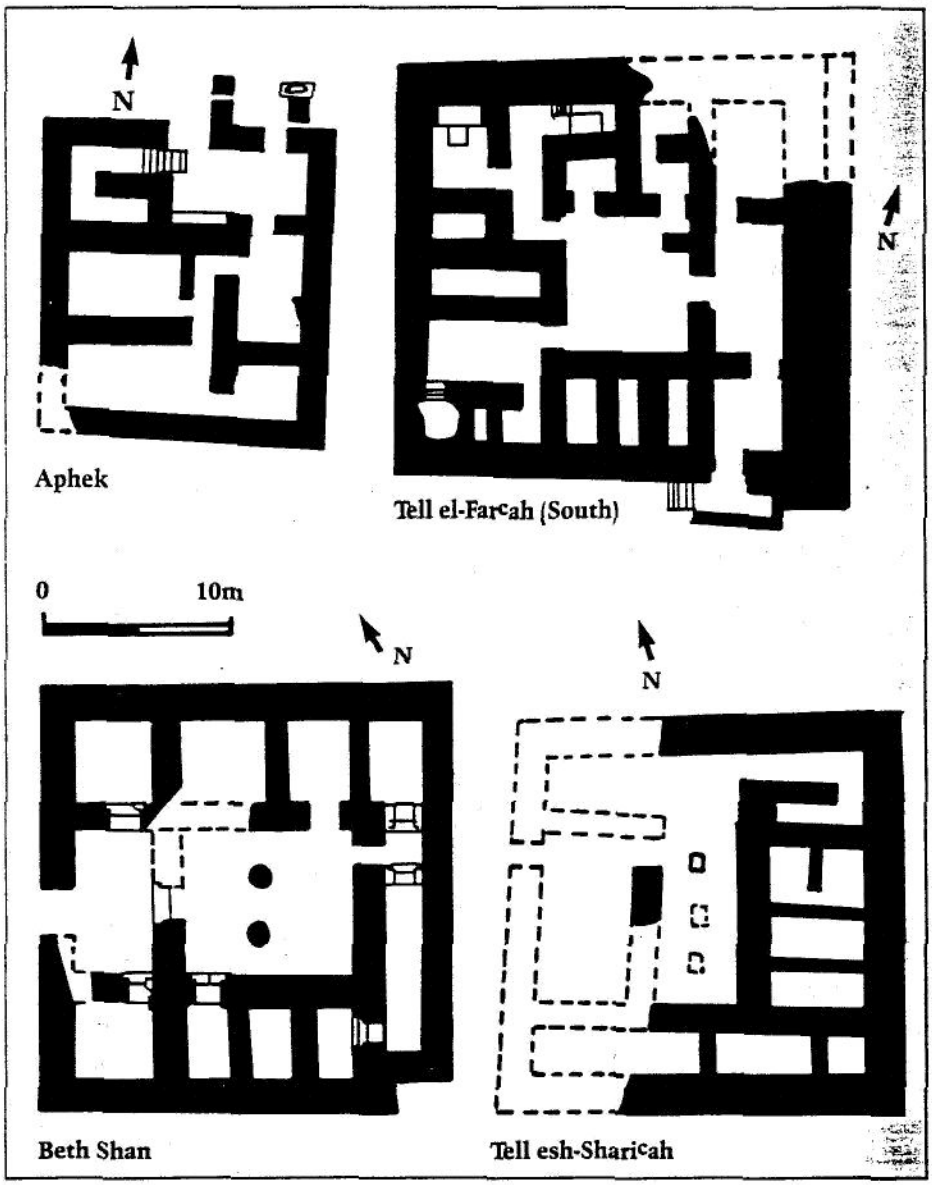
Strangely enough, Cypriot imports, which were so popular in the earlier centuries, declined in quantity and finally ceased to be imported to Canaan (Gittlen 1981). Mycenaean goods took up the slack and continued to be popular, although many were of lesser quality; both they and their contents could have been made outside the traditional Aegean production centers. The copying of many of the Aegean forms, often quite unsuccessfully by the local Canaanite potters, might have been a reflection of increasing difficulty in long-range seaborne commerce. It is possible that before the end of the period Mycenaean pottery was actually made on the coast out of local Syro-Palestinian clays (Stager 1985; Asaro, Perlman, and Dothan 1971).

Architectural evidence. Our knowledge of Canaanite domestic architecture from the Late Bronze IIB period is slight, but Eliezer Oren (1984) has called attention to a distinctive type of well-built, mudbrick structure termed the Governor's Residency at several sites in southern Palestine (for example, Tell esh-Shariᶜah/Tel Serᶜa, Tell el-Hesi, Tell el-Farᶜah (South), and Aphek/Ras el-ᶜAin). To these West Bank sites may now be added Tell es-Saᶜidiyeh in Transjordan (Tubb 1988a). In fact, the traditional view of Transjordan as a cultural backwater during the Late Bronze Age, based in part on Nelson Glueck's early survey work, is slowly being changed as more sites are excavated (Yassine 1988; Dornemann 1983; Kafafi 1977; Leonard 1987a). These governor's residencies were square buildings with rooms grouped around a small central hall in a manner reminiscent of certain New Kingdom structures. It is thought that the Canaanite buildings represent the thirteenth century B.C.E. administrative centers through which the Egyptians controlled their Asiatic empire, and this theory is supported by the concentration of this architectural type (with the exception of Saᶜidiyeh) in the southern part of the country where such control was strongest.

The date of the stratum VII "Amenhotep III" temple at Beth Shan has been the subject of some debate, but a thirteenth-century-B.C.E. date seems to fit the evidence best (McGovern 1985: 13). It and the temple in stratum VI (the excavators' "Seti I" temple), whose floruit extended into the twelfth century B.C.E. (James 1966: 25–26), shared many features including an indirect entrance and a large broadroom sanctuary with two Egyptian lotus columns beyond which was the cult focus. These features set the two temples markedly apart from the reoriented (from north-south to east-west) temples in Beth Shan stratum V, which definitely should be dated to the Iron Age. The degree of Egyptian influence on the plans of the temples in strata VII–VI has also been a topic for discussion (for example, Kenyon, 1979), but the intensity of the Egyptian presence at Beth Shan in the Nineteenth and early Twentieth Dynasties is demonstrated by the presence there of two stone steles erected by Sethos I and a life-sized basalt statue of Ramesses III.

At Lachish the Fosse Temple from Late Bronze II B (Structure III) continued with very little modification. The temple at Hazor also showed considerable continuity of cult. In area H the thirteenth-century-B.C.E. temple essentially continued the plan of its predecessor. The floor of the thirteenth-century temple contained a fire-blackened rectangular piece of basalt described by the excavators as an incense altar. A symbol consisting of a circle with a cross inside it was carved on the face of this block. Nearby, but evidently related to this structure, was a fragmentary statue of a male deity standing on a bull-shaped base; a

The plans of these four buildings—from Aphek, Tell el-Farᶜah (South), Beth Shan, and Tell esh-Shariᶜah—exemplify a distinctive type of well-built, mudbrick structure termed the Governor's Residency. Because of the similarity of their plans and interior room arrangement, both with suggested Egyptian affinities, these buildings are thought to have been the administrative centers through which Egypt exercised political control over Syro-Palestine in the Nineteenth and early Twentieth Dynasties. Drawings by Lois A. Kain.



similar circle and cross was carved on his chest. This deity has been identified as the storm-god Hadad, and it is thought that the area H temple was dedicated to him (Yadin 1972: 95).

The small single-room temple in area C, first noted in Late Bronze IIA, was rebuilt in this period. The cult focus of this broadroom shrine was a niche in its western wall that contained a full complement of cult furnishings arranged in a slight arc before an offering table. In the niche was a large basalt statue of a beardless, seated male holding a cup or bowl in his right hand; he wears no identifying headdress, but an inverted (lunar?) crescent is suspended from his neck. The niche also contained ten basalt *masseboth* (standing stones), one of which has a carving on it of a pair of outstretched human arms/hands apparently reaching toward a disc and crescent. Yigael Yadin compared the motif on this *massebah* (stone) with one on a stele from Zinjirli inscribed with a dedication to Baal of Harran and suggested that the area C shrine was the focus of a lunar cult (Yadin and others 1958: 89; Yadin 1970).

Although they were originally constructed as early as the Middle Bronze Age (Schaeffer 1936: 11), the temples to Dagan and his son Baal at Ras Shamra most probably survived into the Late Bronze IIB period to judge from a Nineteenth Dynasty(?) stele of the Egyptian "royal scribe and chief treasurer" Mami dedicated to "Baal of the North," the great god of Ugarit, that was found just inside his temple (Schaeffer 1939a: 24).

When the Amman airport in Jordan was being expanded in 1955, a stone building, square in plan, was discovered and found to be exceedingly rich in imported Mycenaean vessels (Hennessy 1966; Hankey 1974). The structure has been variously identified as a temple for a fire cult, human sacrifice, or tribal covenants, but a recent investigation (Herr 1981) viewed it as a mortuary institution that practiced, in part, rites of cremation, demonstrating possible ties with the Hittite lands to the north.

Funerary evidence. That strange and varied burial customs were practiced during the Late Bronze IIB period has been demonstrated at many sites. The cemetery at Tell es-Saᶜidiyeh, which has been partially dated by its Aegean imports, produced two tombs (Numbers 102, 117) in which the deceased were wrapped in cloth and subsequently coated with bitumen, possibly in

This aerial view of a building at Tell es-Saʿidiyeh in the Transjordan reveals the characteristic plan of the Governor's Residency, with its square shape and rooms grouped around a small central hall. Photograph courtesy of Jonathan N. Tubb, The British Museum.

imitation of, or as a substitute for, more standard Egyptian rites of mummification. In a third tomb, which was lined with mudbrick, the deceased was interred in a more normal manner, but the wealth of the individual was evidenced by the rich supply of grave offerings; these items consisted of an assortment of bronzes including a wine set (laver, bowl, strainer, and juglet) that was kept close at hand for use in the afterlife. Inasmuch as burial practices are a conservative part of one's personal and religious beliefs, the mixture of such diverse burial types at Tell es-Saʿidiyeh must indicate a similar diversity within the general population. (For these tombs, see Pritchard 1964, 1965, 1980; also see Tubb 1988b for more intriguing burials from the new excavations at the site.)

Another manifestation of the degree of Egyptian influence on the burial practices of at least one segment of Canaanite society can be seen in the use of anthropoid sarcophagi at sites such as Deir el-Balah (Dothan 1979, 1982a). These large clay coffins represented a type of middle-class burial practiced in the Egyptian Delta during the New Kingdom, but their size and friability suggest that those found in Palestine were locally made, a fact supported by neutron activation analysis of clay samples from the Deir el-Balah sarcophagi (Perlman, Asaro, and Dothan 1973). Although plain undecorated coffins have been found, they are rare; on most sarcophagi the face and/or upper torso of the deceased has been modelled on the lid. Painted accents also have been found. The maker of the clay coffin found in Tomb 570 at Lachish attempted to paint a prayer in hieroglyphs along with a representation of the goddess Isis and her sister Nephtys, two of the four female deities closely associated with the rites of mummification in Egypt. Funerary offerings that were buried in these anthropoid coffins, both in Canaan and Egypt, were truly international, including pottery and other artifacts from as far away as Cyprus and the Aegean World.

Trude Dothan has identified two main phases in which these anthropoid sarcophagi were used. In the first phase, which took place during the late fourteenth and into the thirteenth century B.C.E., they appear to have been the choice of high-ranking Egyptian officials, either civilian or military, who served at Egyptian garrisons in Canaan. To this group might be added Egyptianized locals of similar status and foreign mercenaries of some rank. Coffins dating to this first phase have been uncovered at Deir el-Balah, Beth Shan, Tell el-Farʿah (South), and, if it is correct to assign Tomb 570 to stratum VI, at Lachish (see Dothan 1982b: 252–88). The practice of using clay anthropoid coffins outlived the Late Bronze Age, as seen in examples from Dothan's second phase of sarcophagi, which dates to the twelfth and eleventh centuries B.C.E. after the groups of vanquished Sea Peoples had settled—

Previously affluent Canaanites were unable to maintain a high standard of living at the end of the Late Bronze Age.

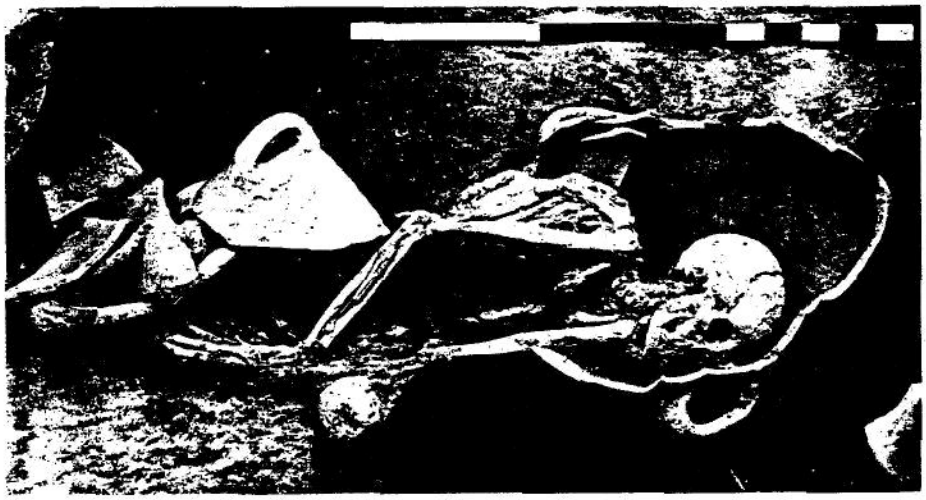
or had been settled—along the coast of Canaan (Dothan, 1982b: 252–88).

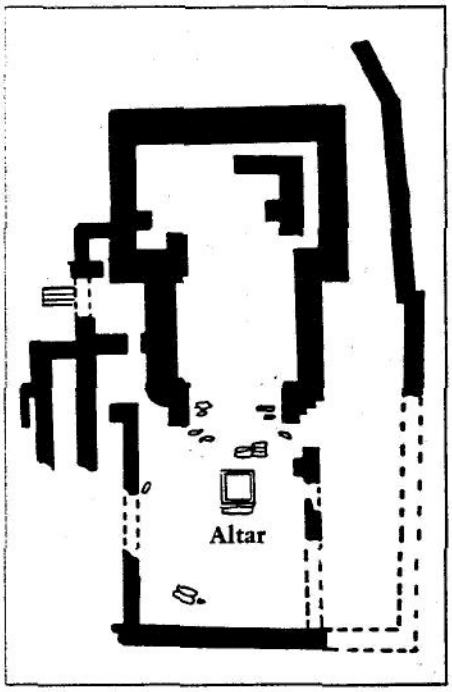
Conclusion

The end of the Late Bronze Age in Canaan came less with a bang than with a whimper. Ramesses III had stopped the Sea Peoples. Egypt and its Asiatic empire were saved—for a while. The pharaoh settled some of the vanquished intruders along the coast of southern Palestine, but other survivors simply staked out any relatively secure piece of land and built new homes. The Bible speaks of Philistines settling along the southern coast, but in fact they were probably a hybrid lot. They could easily have included an admixture of other Sea Peoples such as the Sherden or the Tjeker who were encountered by Wen Amun around 1100 B.C.E. on his ill-fated trip to Byblos to purchase cedar wood (Pritchard 1950: 25–29). The victim of treachery and robbery, Wen Amun found that his position as "Senior of the Forecourt of the House of Ammon" had little influence on Zakar-Baal, an eleventh-century prince of Byblos who forced him to camp on the beach for almost a month while sending him daily messages to "get out of my harbor!" It is difficult to imagine a Canaanite prince responding in such a way to an Egyptian official during the reign of Tuthmosis III, Ramesses II, or practically any other non-Amarna pharaoh during the halcyon days of Egypt's Late Bronze Age empire in Canaan.

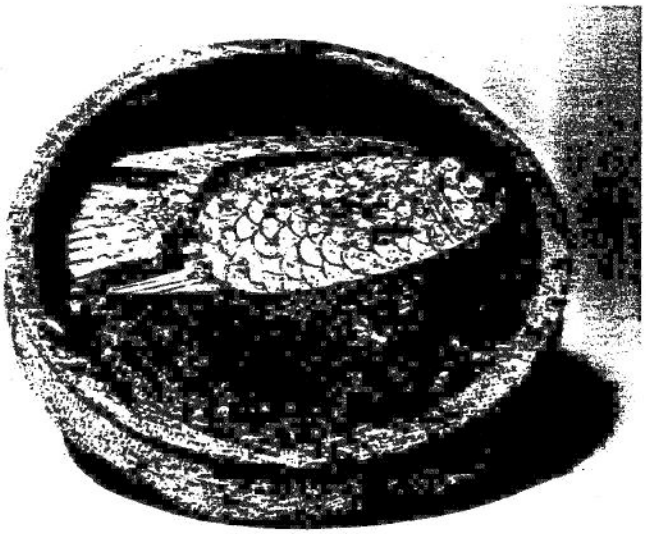
The archaeological record is often uncertain and, at times, confusing and difficult to read, but we get the impression that the lessening of Egyptian control was a slow and gradual one (Weinstein 1981). Many of the major Palestinian cities and towns suffered one or more destructions in the second quarter of the twelfth century B.C.E. (summarized by Fritz 1987) between the reigns of Ramesses III and Ramesses VI or possibly a little later. No single culprit or culprits can be identified with certainty, although the pharaohs, the *Habiru*, and/or the Sea Peoples/Philistines, acting individually or in concert, must share the blame for bringing the Late Bronze Age to a close.

Life became markedly different. Previously affluent Canaanite merchants were unable to maintain the high standard of living they had come to enjoy. No longer could they barter for the exotic products of distant lands or commission craftsmen to produce objets d'art whose eclecticism and hybridization were the very essence of the Late Bronze Age. A much different flavor began to





Right: *Although originally constructed as early as the Middle Bronze Age, the Temple of Baal at Ras Shamra (Ugarit) most probably survived into the Late Bronze IIB period. The temple plan is strictly oriented along a north-south axis and an altar was placed in the courtyard, as it was in the "Seti I" temple in stratum VI at Beth Shan. Drawing by Lois A. Kain.* ***Above:*** *One of the strange burial practices found in Syro-Palestinian tombs dating to the Late Bronze IIB is the "double pithos" burial, in which the deceased was placed inside two large storage jars that had been broken and joined at the shoulders to form a kind of coffin. The burial pictured here, grave 45 at Tell es-Saʿidiyeh, illustrates a variant of this burial type. Here the neck of a jar was broken off to accept the head and upper torso of the deceased while the lower torso was covered with large flat sherds from similar pithoi. Photograph courtesy of Jonathan N. Tubb, The British Museum.*



Left: *This human male skeleton found in grave 251 at Tell es-Saᶜidiyeh shows distorted bone displacement due to the tightness of the wrapping of the body. The bronze javelin head on the chest of the skeleton preserved the imprint of two differently woven cloths, indicating that it had been placed on the cloth-wrapped body of the deceased and then covered with a burial shroud.* ***Upper left:*** *A fish-shaped ivory "cosmetic box" was found inside a bronze bowl that had been placed over the pelvis of a man who was buried face down in grave 232 at Tell es-Saᶜidiyeh. The significance of the fish theme is still a matter of speculation, but it apparently had some meaning because a deposit of fish bones was placed on the back of the deceased's skull at the time of interment, evidently as part of the funeral ceremony.* ***Upper right:*** *Indicative of the high standard of living that was attainable during the Late Bronze Age is this bronze wine set, which was found at Tell es-Saᶜidiyeh in the burial of a wealthy individual. Included in the set are a laver, juglet, and handled strainer. Photographs courtesy of Jonathan N. Tubb, The British Museum.*

pervade the cities and towns. Roadways were empty of the pharaoh's messengers, tinkers from Hatti, and Cretan artisans enjoying the travels of their trade. Things were quieter. The once prosperous seaports ceased to ring with the cacophany of bantering Canaanite longshoremen, Cypriot sailors, and Aegean seamen fresh from their own island ports. It would be almost a millennium, not until the passing of the armies of Alexander the Great, before such an international spirit would return to these ancient shores.

Notes

[1]Absolute dates for the New Kingdom Egyptian rulers (Eighteenth through Twentieth Dynasties) remain a matter of debate. Perhaps the most readily available chronologies are those of the *Cambridge Ancient History*, but they are based on views dating back to the 1950s (see Hayes 1959) and much work has been done on the subject since then. For better or worse, I have used the system of K. A. Kitchen (1987), which assigns an accession date of 1479 B.C.E. for Tuthmosis III and 1279 B.C.E. for Ramesses II. I also have accepted that the Sothic datum of the ninth year of Amenophis I, given in the Ebers Papyrus, was taken at Thebes rather than at either Memphis or Elephantine, thereby producing an initial date of 1550 B.C.E. for Amosis and the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty. For the sake of convenience, both the dates from the *Cambridge Ancient History* (abbreviated as CAH) and Kitchen's dates are presented here. Dates in both of these publications are given as "B.C.," as they are in the present author's original manuscript. The use of "B.C.E." is the editorial policy of *Biblical Archaeologist*.

[2]Kitchen: 1550–1525 B.C.E.; CAH:

1570–1546 B.C.E.

[3]Or was it three successive campaigns against it? See James B. Pritchard (1950: 233) and Hans Goedicke (1974: 40–41). Sharuhen is now identified more plausibly with Tell el-ᶜAjjul (Weinstein 1981: 6; Kempinski 1974) than with nearby Tell el-Farᶜah (South) (Kenyon 1973: 526, 555).

[4]Kitchen: 1525–1504 B.C.E.; CAH: 1546–1526 B.C.E.

[5]Kitchen: 1504–1492 B.C.E.; CAH: 1525–1512 B.C.E.

[6]Kitchen: 1492–1479 B.C.E.; CAH: 1512–1504 B.C.E.

[7]Kitchen: 1479–1457 B.C.E.; CAH: 1503–1482 B.C.E.

[8]Kitchen: 1479–1425 B.C.E.; CAH: 1504–1450 B.C.E., including a coregency with Hatshepsut.

[9]This view is different from that of G. Ernest Wright (1965b: 111), Kathleen Kenyon (1973: 534–35), and others. See James M. Weinstein (1981: 11). For stratum VIII, area BB as the Megiddo fortress of Tuthmosis III, compare Rivka Gonen (1987).

[10]In Akkadian, *rabisu;* in Canaanite, *sokinu.*

[11]Kitchen: 1427–1400 B.C.E.; CAH: 1450–1425 B.C.E.

[12]Kitchen: 1400–1390 B.C.E.; CAH: 1425–1417 B.C.E.

[13]For more information on Cypriot ceramics of the period see P. Åström (1972). For Mycenaean goods see A. Furumark (1972a, 1972b), A. Leonard (1987b), and V. Hankey (1987).

[14]Kitchen: 1390–1352 B.C.E.; CAH: 1417–1379 B.C.E.

[15]Kitchen: 1352–1336 B.C.E.; CAH: 1379–1362 B.C.E.

[16]I have used Samuel A. B. Mercer's translations because they are in English, but they are not always satisfactory. For a caveat on their value, see Anson Rainey (1978: 1, 7, and continuing).

[17]Kitchen: 1295–1294 B.C.E.; CAH: 1320–1318 B.C.E.

[18]Kitchen: 1294–1279 B.C.E.; CAH: 1318–1304 B.C.E.

[19]Kitchen: 1279–1213 B.C.E.; CAH: 1304–1237 B.C.E.

[20]Kitchen: 1213–1203 B.C.E.; CAH: 1236–1223 B.C.E.

[21]Kitchen: 1200–1194 B.C.E.; CAH: 1216–1210 B.C.E.

[22]Kitchen: 1188–1186 B.C.E.; CAH: 1209–1200 B.C.E.

[23]Kitchen: 1186–1184 B.C.E.; CAH: 1200–1198 B.C.E.

[24]Kitchen: 1184–1153 B.C.E.; CAH: 1198–1166 B.C.E.

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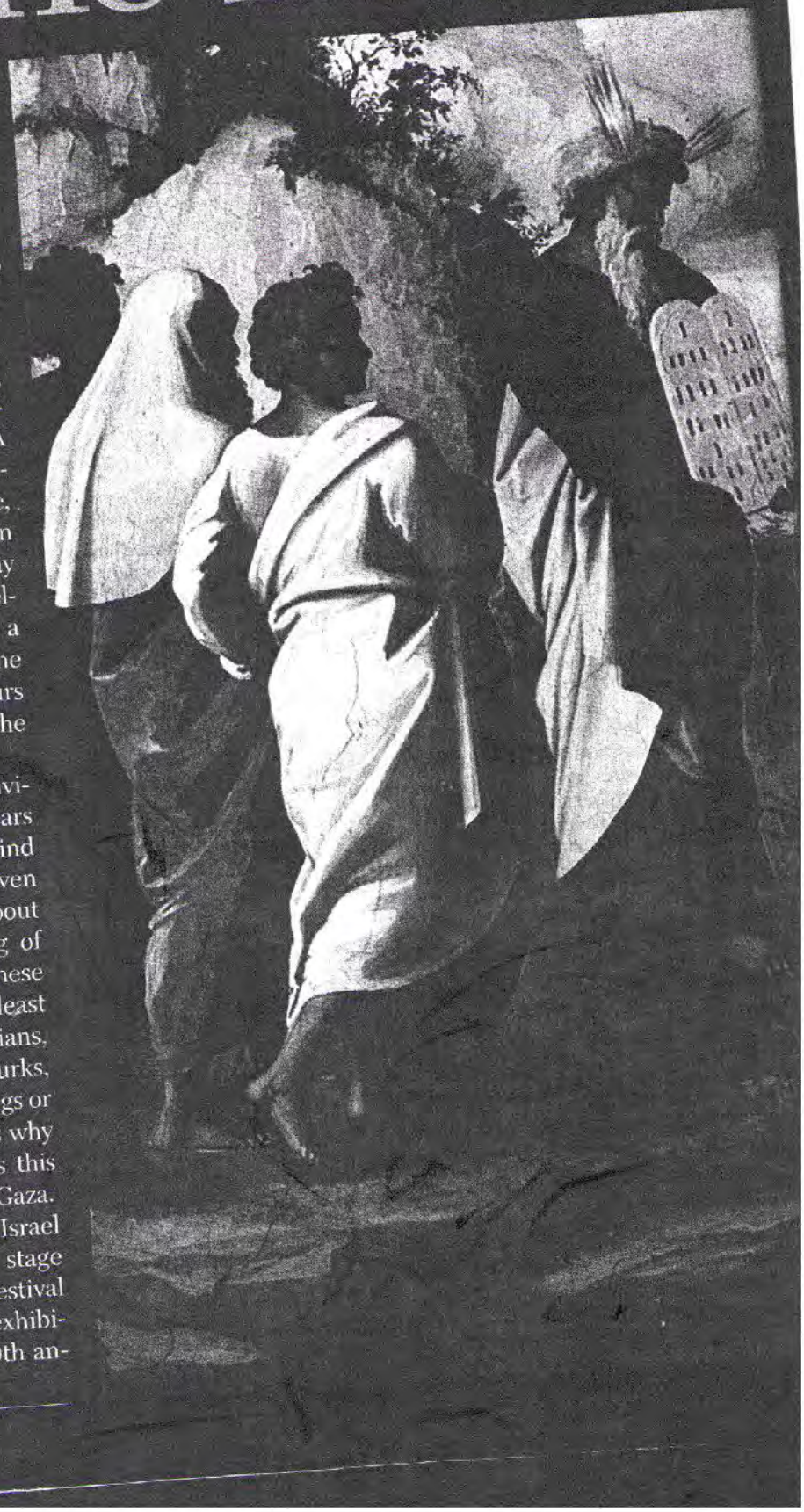
COVER STORIES

Are the Bible's

Archaeology sheds new light on Moses, King David, the Exodus and whether Joshua really fought the Battle of Jericho

By MICHAEL D. LEMONICK



IN ANOTHER PART OF THE WORLD, it would have been a straightforward public-works project. A highway was too narrow to handle the increasing flow of traffic, so the authorities brought in heavy equipment to widen it. Partway through the job, however, a road-leveling tractor uncovered the opening to a cave no one knew was there. Work came to an immediate halt, and within hours a scientific SWAT team descended on the site to study it.

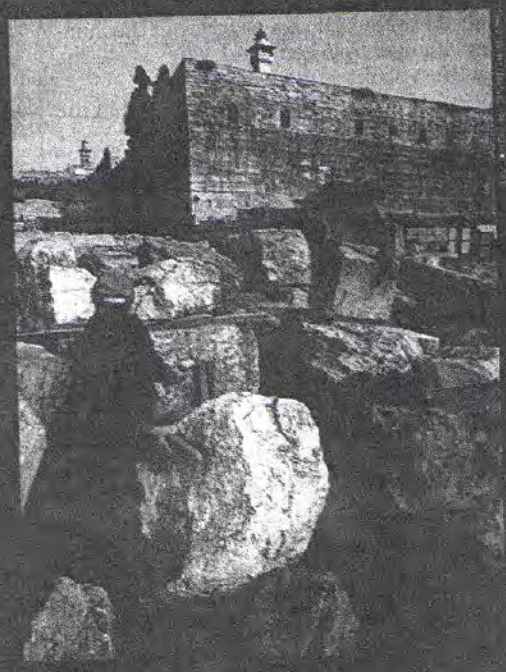
That's the law in Israel, where civilization goes back at least 5,000 years and where a major archaeological find could be lurking under any given square meter of real estate. Just about every empire since the beginning of Western history has occupied these lands, or fought over them, or at least passed through—Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Greeks, Romans, Turks, Crusaders—leaving behind buildings or burial places or artifacts. Which is why there were about 300 active digs this year in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza.

It's also a major reason why Israel has seized the opportunity to stage "Jerusalem 3000," a 17-month festival of art, music and archaeological exhibitions commemorating the 3,000th an-

Stories True?

niversary of the city's original conquest by the ancient Israelites. The festival, which opened in September, admittedly has more to do with luring tourists than with unraveling ancient history. And it has heightened resentment among Palestinian Arabs, who insist that Jerusalem belongs to them and fear that the Israelis' passion for excavating everything in sight threatens Islamic holy sites in the city, around the country and in surrounding areas.

But the celebration serves as a re-



FACT VS. FAITH

IF MOSES WAS A MAN AND NOT A MYTH, PROOF WILL HAVE TO COME FROM DIGS LIKE THIS EXCAVATION OF AN ANCIENT WALL IN JERUSALEM

minder that the region has witnessed a very special sort of history. For nearly 3 billion Jews, Christians and Muslims, this is the Holy Land, the place where the Bible and Koran say Jesus and Abraham and King David and King Solomon all walked the earth. Each spadeful of dirt an archaeologist turns up could yield evidence about how, and even whether, these and other biblical figures actually lived. As Hannukah and Christmas approach, believers around the world are attuned more than ever to the significance of archaeological finds of the past century, and especially the past few years, in establishing the reality of the events underlying their faith.

Some of the Bible's most familiar names, places and events, in fact—the Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; King David, the slayer of Goliath; Moses and the Israelites' flight from bondage in Egypt; Joshua's conquest of the Promised Land and the gloomy prophecies of Jeremiah—are being seen in a new light thanks to a flood of recent discoveries. And archaeologists are always seeking new evidence that might help resolve some still-unanswered questions: Did Moses really exist? Did the Exodus happen? Did Joshua fight the Battle of Jericho? Did Jesus drive out the money changers? When—and why—were the earliest books of the Bible written?

At first, the Israelis who excavated the newly uncovered cave by the highway thought they'd found just that sort of evidence. Inside the rocky opening, located about 30 km northwest of Jerusalem, were 23 burial containers filled with bones. A hasty analysis seemed to show that letters on one stone box spelled out part of the name Hasmonean, a family of Jewish patriots, also known as the Maccabees, whose encounter with a miraculous oil lamp is now celebrated in the lighting of Hannukah candles.

For the first time, it appeared, there was physical proof that this legendary family, known only from the words of the Apocrypha, actually existed. The discovery, announced last month, set off an international wave of excitement (and protests from ultra-Orthodox Jews, who believe that any tampering with human remains violates Jewish law). Then, two weeks ago, came disappointing word from the Israeli Antiquities Authority: the letters on the crypt had been misinterpreted. There is no reason to believe these were the bones of the Maccabees after all.

Such are the frustrations of life in the scientific minefields of biblical archaeology. Digging up the past is always a tricky business, as researchers attempt to reconstruct ancient societies from often fragmentary bits of pottery or statuary or masonry. But trying to identify artifacts from Old Testament times in the Holy Land is

HOUSE OF DAVID

AN ENEMY'S VICTORY BOAST, INSCRIBED IN STONE, IS THE FIRST EVIDENCE OUTSIDE THE BIBLE THAT THERE WAS A KING NAMED DAVID

DAVID RUBINGER FOR TIME

especially problematic. For one thing, virtually no written records survive from the times of King Solomon or earlier. The ancient Israelites, unlike many of their neighbors, evidently wrote mostly on perishable papyrus rather than durable clay.

Moreover, the whole subject is touchy because almost everyone has a stake in Scripture. Jewish and Christian ultraconservatives don't like hearing that parts of the Bible could be fictional. Atheists can't wait to prove that the whole thing is a fairy tale. And even for the moderate majority, the Bible underlies so much of Western culture that it matters a great deal whether its narratives are grounded in truth.

For every discovery like the Maccabees' burial cave that doesn't pan out, there seems to be another that does. Few scholars believe that miracles like Moses' burning bush or Jesus' resurrection will ever be proved scientifically; they are, after all, supernatural events. Conversely, few doubt that the characters in the latter part of the Old Testament and most of the New—Nebuchadnezzar, Jeremiah, Jesus, Peter—really existed, though some will always doubt parts of their stories.

But a series of crucial discoveries suggests that some of the Bible's more ancient tales are also based firmly on real people and events. In 1990, Harvard researchers working in the ancient city of Ashkelon, north of the Gaza Strip, unearthed a small silver-plated bronze calf figurine reminiscent of the huge golden calf mentioned in the *Book of Exodus*. In 1986, archaeologists found the earliest known text of the Bible, dated to about 600 B.C. It suggests that at least part of the Old Testament was written soon after some of the events it describes. Also in 1986, scholars identified an ancient seal that had belonged to Baruch, son of Neriah, a scribe who recorded the prophecies of Jeremiah in 587 B.C. (Because Jews and Muslims don't consider the birth of Christ to be a defining moment in history, many scholars prefer the term B.C.E. to B.C. It stands for either "Before the Christian Era" or "Before the Common Era.") Says Hershel Shanks, founding editor of the influential magazine *Biblical Archaeology Review*: "Seldom does archaeology come face to face with people actually mentioned in the Bible."

In what may be the most important of these discoveries, a team of archaeologists uncovered a 9th century B.C. inscription at an ancient mound called Tel Dan, in the north of Israel, in 1993. Words carved into a chunk of basalt refer to the "House of David" and the "King of Israel." It is the first time the Jewish monarch's name has been found outside the Bible, and appears to prove he was more than mere legend.

On the other hand, say many scholars, much of what is recorded in the Bible is at best distorted, and some characters and events are probably totally fictional. Most scholars suspect that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Judaism's traditional founders, never existed; many doubt the tales of slavery in Egypt and the Exodus; and relatively few modern historians believe in Joshua's conquest of Jericho and the rest of the Promised Land. In the most extreme view, all of the above are complete fabrications, invented centuries after the supposed fact.

These discoveries and theories, and many more, are vigorously contested on all sides by archaeologists, religious scholars and historians. On some things just about everyone agrees. The Bible version of Israelite history after the reign of King Solomon, for example, is generally believed to be based on historical fact because it is corroborated by independent accounts of Kings and battles in Egyptian and Assyrian inscriptions of the time.

PRIOR TO THAT, THOUGH—before about 930 B.C.—the experts disagree on just about everything. At one pole in this scholarly version of *Crossfire* is the group known as the maximalists, who consider the Bible a legitimate guidebook for archaeological research. At the other are the minimalists, or biblical nihilists, who believe the Bible is a religious document and thus can't be read as any sort of objective account. "They say of Bible material, 'If it cannot be proved to be historical it's not historical,'" explains Frank Moore Cross, professor emeritus of Oriental languages at Harvard, who puts himself somewhere in the middle.

First maximalists, then minimalists, have dominated biblical archaeology at one time or another. For early explorers, who began visiting the Holy Land in earnest in the middle of the last century, the Bible was—well, their Bible. The first serious researcher was Edward Robinson, an orientalist at New York City's Union Theological Seminary. In 1837 and 1852 he journeyed to Palestine and identified hundreds of ancient sites by questioning Arabs, who had preserved the traditional names for centuries. Robinson pinpointed Masada. He found a monumental arch supporting the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. "He did more than anybody before or after for biblical topography," says Magen Broshi, curator emeritus of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

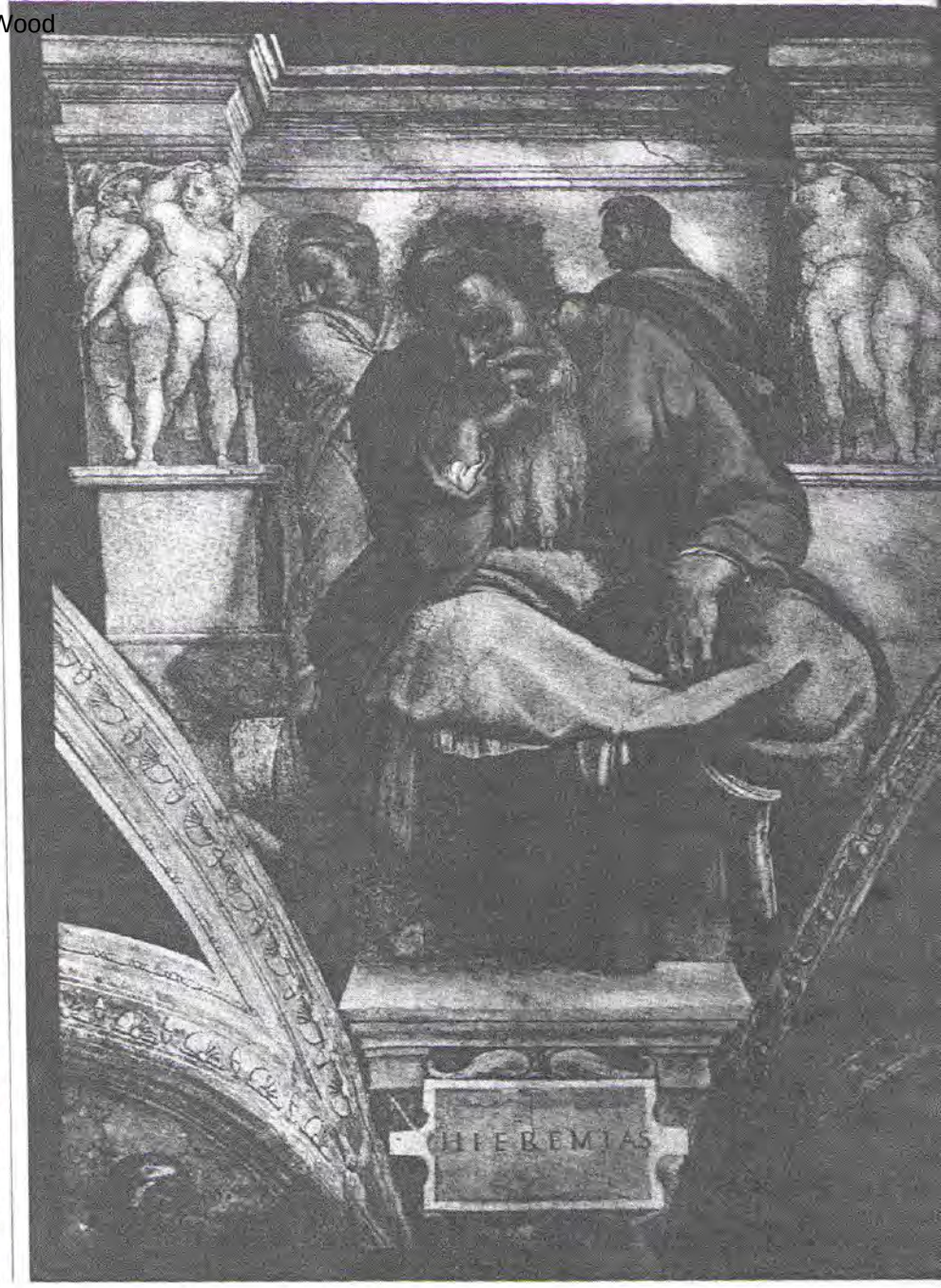
Robinson's excursions set off a wave of exploration that has never let up. Many of the early visitors weren't close to being objective; they were out to vindicate the Bible as history, not to test it. Toward the end of the century, that led to a backlash, especially among liberal German Bible

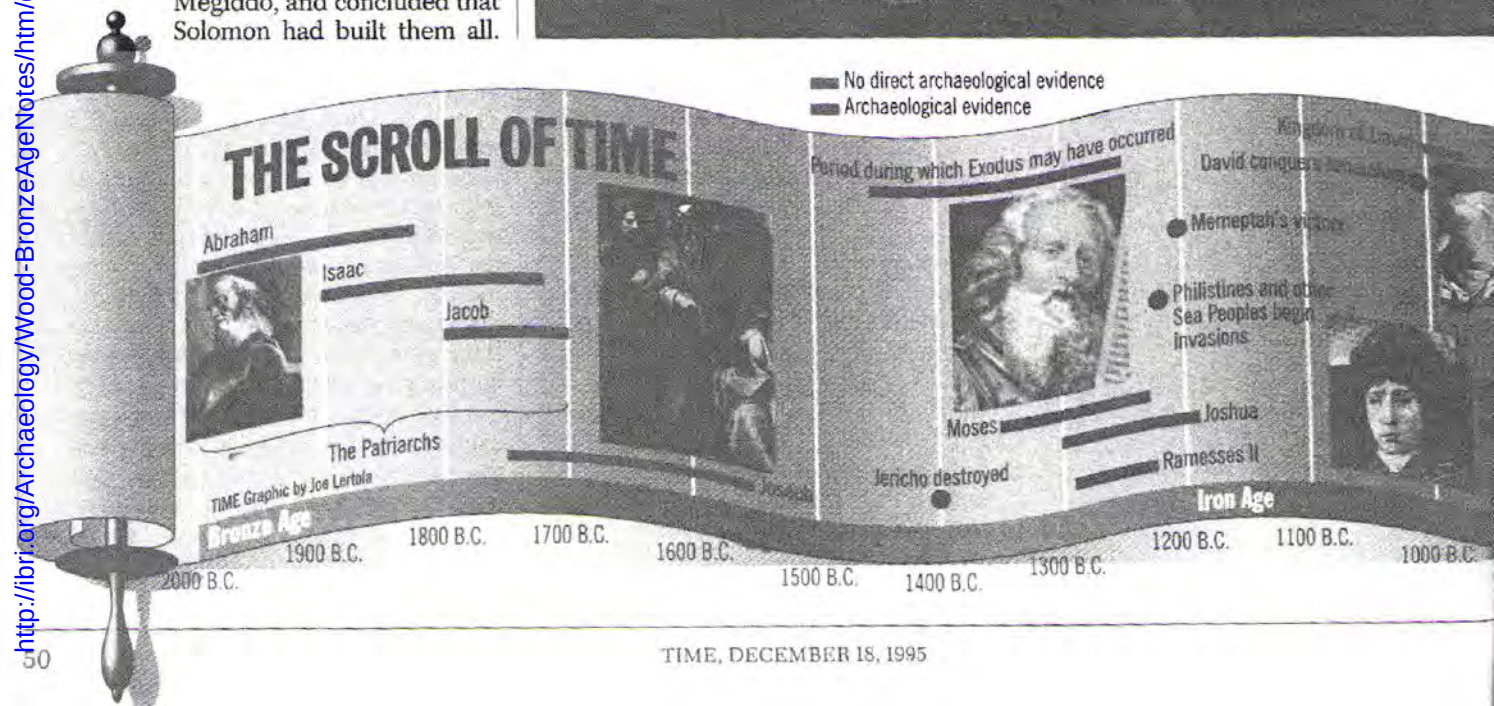
critics. Their equally preconceived position was that the Bible is essentially a myth.

The pendulum swung the other way again in the 1920s, when William Foxwell Albright appeared on the scene. A professor of Semitic languages at Johns Hopkins University and the son of a Methodist missionary, he took a much more scientific approach than most of his predecessors. Rather than assume that the Bible was either entirely accurate or completely fictional, he attempted to confirm Old Testament stories with independent archaeological evidence. And under his considerable influence, biblical archaeology finally became a disciplined and scientific enterprise.

Although he was prepared to see the Bible proved wrong in its particulars, Albright assumed it was accurate until proved otherwise. He assumed the existence of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, for example, and then used circumstantial physical evidence to deduce that they probably lived around 1800 B.C. He accepted the idea of the Exodus from Egypt and military conquest of Canaan (Palestine), and went on to date those events at about 1200 B.C.

Albright's intellectual heirs, including Israeli archaeologists Avraham Biran and the late Yigael Yadin, made similar assumptions. Said Yadin a few years before his death in 1984: "The Old Testament for me is a guide. It is the authentic history of my people." The Bible says, for example, that King Solomon fortified the cities of Hazor, Gezer and Megiddo during his reign. Sure enough, Yadin went out in the late 1950s and found a city gate at the ruins of Hazor, and dated it to Solomon's time, in the 10th century B.C. When he found that early explorers had discovered a similar-looking gate at Gezer, he assigned that to Solomon's era too. And because the Bible mentions Megiddo in the same breath with the other cities, he looked for—and conveniently found—a third gate at Megiddo, and concluded that Solomon had built them all.





ISRAEL EXPLORATION SOCIETY (3)

SIGN OF JEREMIAH

THESE CLAY "BULLAE," BEARING THE SEALS OF JEREMIAH'S SCRIBE, WERE MADE AROUND THE GLOOMY PROPHET'S LIFETIME IN THE 6TH CENTURY B.C., CONFIRMING THAT HE EXISTED

Modern critics point out that this approach can be scientifically perilous. Says John Woodhead, assistant director of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem: "It's a circular argument. Yadin used the data to prove the verse, and the verse to prove the dating of the cities." In fact, says David Ussishkin, director of the Tel Aviv University Institute of Archaeology, the gates at the the three cities don't come from a single period at all. "Hazor is probably Solomonic," he says. "Megiddo is definitely later. Gezer is either/or."

In the case of the Patriarchs, the problems are even worse. There is no direct evidence, other than the Bible, to suggest that Abraham's exploits—his rejection of idolatry, his travels to Canaan, his rescue of his nephew Lot from kidnappers in the Canaanite city of Laish (later renamed Dan)—ever happened. And critics contend that several of the kings and peoples Abraham supposedly encountered existed at widely separated times in history.

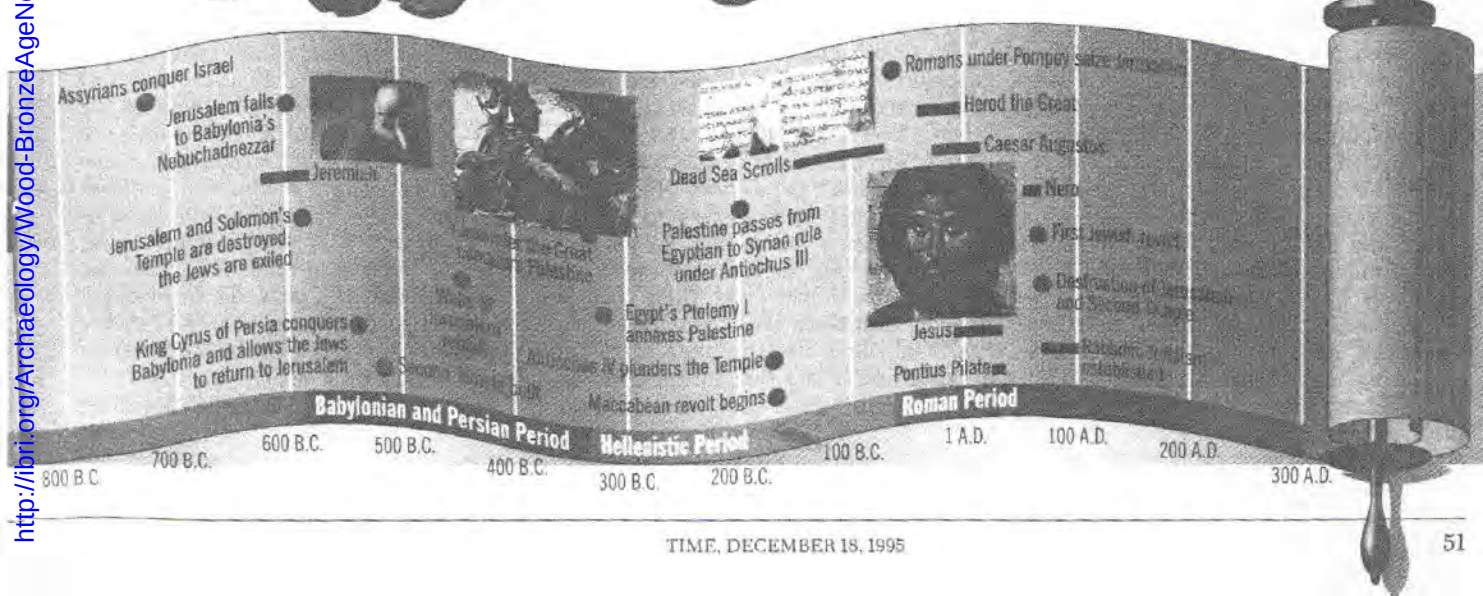
In reaction to these and other inconsistencies arising from overreliance on the Bible, a second wave of superskeptics emerged over the past five years. At last month's annual meeting in Philadelphia of the Society of Biblical Literature and the American Academy of Religion, the pre-eminent conference on Bible scholarship in the world, they were out in force. And while there were differences among what individual scholars believed, radical minimalist John Van Seters of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, summed up many of their commonly held positions. The oldest books of the Old Testament, he declared with Pope-like confidence, weren't written until the Israelites were in exile in Babylon, after 587 B.C. There was no Moses, no crossing of the sea, no revelation on Mount Sinai.

Just as the believers had to yield in the face of evidence that contradicts their assumptions, though, so have the naysayers. It's a truism in archaeology that the absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. Digging up the past is a hit-or-miss proposition. And one hit can demolish a mountain of skepticism. Among the discoveries that strengthen the Bible's claim to historical accuracy:

▶ In 1979 Israeli archaeologist Gabriel Barkay found two tiny silver scrolls inside a Jerusalem tomb. They were dated to around 600 B.C., shortly before the destruction of Solomon's Temple and the Israelites' exile in Babylon. When scientists carefully unrolled the scrolls at the Israel Museum, they found a benediction from the *Book of Numbers* etched into their surface. The discovery made it clear that parts of the Old Testament were being copied long before some skeptics had believed they were even written.

▶ In 1986 archaeologists revealed that several lumps of figured clay called bullae, bought from Arab dealers in 1975, had once been used to mark documents. Nahman Avigad of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem identified the impressions stamped into one piece of clay as coming from the seal of Baruch, son of Neriah, a scribe who recorded the doomsday proclamations of the prophet Jeremiah. Another bore the seal of Yerahme'el, son of King Jehoiakim's son, who the *Book of Jeremiah* says was sent on an unsuccessful mission to arrest both prophet and scribe—again confirming the existence of biblical characters.

▶ In 1990 Frank Yurco, an Egyptologist at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, used hieroglyphic clues from a monolith known as the Merneptah Stele to identify figures in a Luxor wall relief as ancient Israelites. The stele itself, dated to 1207 B.C., cele-



brates a military victory by the Pharaoh Merneptah. "Israel is laid waste," it reads, suggesting that the Israelites were a distinct population more than 3,000 years ago, and not just because the Bible tells us so.

► In 1993 Avraham Biran of Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion and Joseph Naveh of the Hebrew University announced they had found an inscription bearing the phrases "House of David" and "King of Israel." The writing—dated to the 9th century B.C., only a century after David's reign—described a victory by a neighboring King over the Israelites. Some minimalists tried to argue that the inscription might have been misread, but most experts believe Biran and Naveh got it right. The skeptics' claim that King David never existed is now hard to defend.

► Last year the French scholar André Lemaire reported a related "House of David" discovery in *Biblical Archaeology Review*. His subject was the Mesha Stele (also known as the Moabite Stone), the most extensive inscription ever recovered from ancient Palestine. Found in 1868 at the ruins of biblical Dibon and later fractured, the basalt stone wound up in the Louvre, where Lemaire spent seven years studying it. His conclusion: the phrase "House of David" appears there as well. As with the Tel Dan fragment, this inscription comes from an enemy of Israel boasting of a victory—King Mesha of Moab, who figured in the Bible. Lemaire had to reconstruct a missing letter to decode the wording, but if he's right, there are now two 9th century references to David's dynasty.

HAVING SEEN SCIENCE confirm the Bible in some instances and tear it down in others, most scholars have edged toward a middle-of-the-road position. As the Biblical Archaeology Review's Shanks puts it, "You can't look at the text literally. It wasn't written as modern history is written. But on the other hand, it's certainly not made up."

While most archaeologists agree with Shanks' sentiments in principle, that still leaves plenty of room for disagreement over parts of the Old Testament where the evidence is contradictory or still absent, including slavery in Egypt, the existence of Moses, the Exodus and Joshua's military conquest of the Holy Land. The Bible's accounts of these people and events are among the most familiar stories in the Old Testament. But even scholars who believe they really happened admit that there's no proof whatsoever that the Exodus took place. No record of this monumental event appears in Egyptian chronicles of the time, and Israeli archaeologists combing the Sinai during intense searches from 1967 to 1982—years when Israel occupied the peninsula—didn't find a single piece of evidence backing the Israelites' supposed 40-year sojourn in the desert.

The story involves so many miracles—plagues, the parting of the Red Sea, manna from heaven, the giving of the Ten Commandments—that some critics feel the whole story has the flavor of pure myth. A massive exodus that led to the drowning of Pharaoh's army, says Father Anthony Axe, Bible lecturer at Jerusalem's Ecole Biblique, would have reverberated politically and economically through the entire region. And considering that artifacts from as far back as the late Stone Age have turned up in the Sinai, it is perplexing that no evidence of the Israelites' passage has been found. William Dever, a University of Arizona archaeologist, flatly calls Moses a mythical figure. Some scholars even insist the story was a political fabrication, which was invented to unite the disparate tribes living in Canaan through a falsified heroic past.

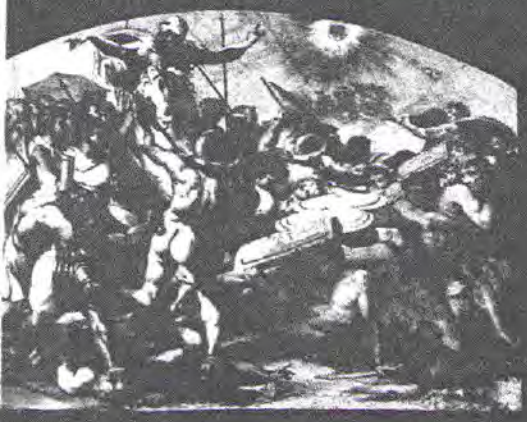
Unlike the Exodus, the story of Joshua and the conquest of Canaan can be tested against a rich archaeological record. The scientific consensus: bad news for the biblical account. According to the *Book of Joshua*, the Israelite leader and his armies swept into Canaan, destroying cities including Jericho, Hazor and Ai, after which the Israelites settled the land.

Archaeology tells a more complicated tale. Historians generally agree that Joshua's conquest would have taken place in the 13th century B.C. But British researcher Kathleen Kenyon, who excavated at Jericho for six years, found no evidence of destruction at that time. Indeed, says Dead Sea Scrolls curator emeritus Broshi, "the city was deserted from the beginning of the 15th century until the 11th century B.C." So was Ai, say Broshi and others. And so, according to archaeological surveys, was most of the land surrounding the cities. Says Broshi: "The central hill regions of Judea and Samaria were practically uninhabited. The Israelites didn't have to kill and burn to settle."

Instead, argues Tel Aviv University archaeologist Israel Finkelstein, the settlement of the Promised Land was a gradual process over a long period, and involved people both from within Canaan and from outside. "Some came from the Hittite country, some from the desert to the east and some from the south," he says. "I would also accept the idea that a core emanated from Egypt, and these people brought with them the idea of monotheism." Only after they had united in a sort of tribal league did they become the Israelites, and while they undoubtedly fought their neighbors for territory, it was only after they were firmly established in Canaan. An alternate theory: the Israelites were simply a breakaway group of Canaanites fed up with the existing society.

Just because most scholars no longer accept Joshua's war of conquest, though, doesn't mean the question is settled by any means. Conservatives have plenty of ideas about how the tide could swing back to a more biblical interpretation. Experts like Abraham Malamat, a biblical historian at the Hebrew University, suggest that no evidence exists of destruction at Ai, for example, because the city was in a different location 3,000 years ago. Bryant Wood, director of the pro-Bible Associates for Biblical Research, insists that his own research supports Joshua's assault on Jericho. Perhaps, he suggests, Kathleen Kenyon was biased, or just got it wrong.

Defenders of the Exodus story have theories too, though their case remains circumstantial. There's no Egyptian record of the Israelites' departure, they suggest, because



DID JOSHUA CONQUER THE CITY OF JERICHO?

The walls of this Canaanite city did come tumbling down, say most historians, but centuries before Moses' protegé could have arrived. When Israelites took over the Promised Land, the conquest was slow and mostly quite peaceful.

DID THE EXODUS HAPPEN?

If they really spent 40 years wandering in the desert after fleeing Egypt, the Israelites should have left at least a few traces. But though scientists have evidence of human occupation in the Sinai dating to the Stone Age, nothing suggests that the Israelites were ever there.

WAS THERE A MOSES?

Biblical epics notwithstanding, many scholars contend that Moses was a legendary hero created by the Hebrews to instill a feeling of national identity and solidarity. Apart from the Bible, there is no evidence that such a man ever lived.

TOP LEFT: SCALA—ART RESOURCE/NY; RIGHT: THE GRANGER COLLECTION

the losers would never have recorded such a major defeat. People may have been looking in the wrong part of the Sinai for remains of the Israelites' wandering, or perhaps the Israelis were in northwest Arabia all along. Anyway, say many scholars, what nation would falsely claim to have been enslaved?

Even the widely accepted notion that the Patriarchs were mythical figures has been challenged. Egyptologist Kenneth Kitchen of the University of Liverpool offered what has been called an "extraordinary demonstration" in *Biblical Archaeology Review* earlier this year that the stories about Abraham are plausible. Drawing on nonbiblical records, Kitchen argued that everything from the quoted price of slaves to the style of warfare to the laws of inheritance in Abraham's day is amazingly consistent with the Bible accounts.

Is he right? Most scholars don't think so, but one crucial discovery—an independent, ancient chronicle of Abraham's wanderings, perhaps—could change their minds in an instant. Similarly, a single discovery could erase all doubts about the Exodus or the sacking of Jericho or just about anything else in the Bible. And new Bible-related discoveries and theories crop up all the time. Early next year, *Biblical Archaeology Review* will be reporting on two of them. The first is another impression of the scribe Baruch's seal, this one with a fingerprint on the edge that was presumably made by Baruch himself. The second is an analysis that claims to fix the precise location where the Ark of the Covenant (the "Lost Ark" of *Raiders* fame) was stored. That's sure to be controversial; the author contends that it must have been placed in a rectangular indentation on the outcropping beneath the Dome of the Rock, the sacred Muslim shrine on the Temple Mount.

All of these finds are useful and interesting. But what scholars truly yearn for—what might even be called the Holy Grail of biblical archaeology—is a royal archive from before the time of King David or King Solomon. No such archive has ever been located inside Israel, although surrounding countries have yielded many from the same era. Sighs Amnon Ben-Tor, a Hebrew University archaeologist: "It's like striking oil. Everywhere but here."

Many scholars believe the archive must exist, though, and Yigael Yadin even thought he knew where it was: in the ancient city of Hazor, in northern Galilee. At his death, Yadin was planning a major dig there to find the clay tablets he was sure lay hidden beneath the surface. His protégé, Ben-Tor, has inherited the project. To date, Ben-Tor has found only a few uninformative tablets. But Hazor is the largest biblical site in the country, and it will take years of digging to explore it fully.

If and when Ben-Tor or his successors locate the archive, the effect on biblical scholarship would be be profound. Instead of relying on half-legible inscriptions and fragments of clay and stone, historians would suddenly have access to huge amounts of information, set down not to advance religious ideas but to record secular events. The historical accuracy of much of the Bible could be settled, one way or the other, almost at a stroke.

Many professional archaeologists maintain that such questions are irrelevant. Says the British School of Archaeology's Woodhead: "I'm not interested in whether there was a David or a Solomon. I'm interested in reconstructing society: what was traded in clay pots, whether the pots or the contents were traded, where the clay was from ... I don't deal with the Bible at all." And even those who do deal with the Bible insist that their emphasis is science, not Scripture. Says Broshi: "Archaeology throws light on the Bible. It has no business trying to prove it."

Yet for ordinary Jews and Christians, it's impossible to maintain scientific detachment about ancient clay pots and fallen stones and inscriptions being dug up in the Holy Land. Hundreds of millions of people grew up listening to Bible stories, and even those who haven't set foot in a church or synagogue for years still carry with them the lessons of these stirring tales of great deeds, great evil, great miracles and great belief. Many may be able to accept the proposition that some of the Bible is fictional. But they are still deeply gratified to learn that much of it appears to be based on fact. Says Harvard's Cross: "To suggest that many things in the Bible are not historical is not too serious. But to lose biblical history altogether is to lose our tradition." ***—Reported by Marlin Levin and Felice Maranz/Jerusalem and Richard N. Ostling/Philadelphia***

The New Testament's Unsolved Mysteries

By JOHN ELSON

ARCHAEOLOGY MAY HAVE CAST DOUBT on the historicity of such Old Testament characters as Moses and Abraham, but what of the central figure of the New? Was Jesus of Nazareth a real person who trod the dusty roads of Palestine in the 1st century? Or were his life, death and resurrection, as recorded in the four Gospels, events that belong entirely to the realm of faith?

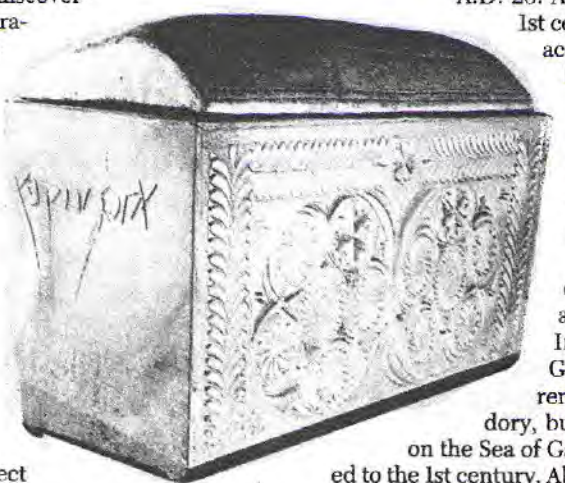
Science has neither proved nor disproved the existence of the itinerant preacher and wonder worker who Christians believe was the Son of God. After all, writes biblical scholar R.T. France, "no 1st century inscription mentions him and no object or building has survived which has a specific link to him." Nonetheless, recent finds in the Holy Land have provided a wealth of insights into the milieu from which belief in Christ emerged.

The most controversial of these discoveries were the 800 or so Hebrew and Aramaic texts unearthed during the 1940s from caves near the Dead Sea. Biblicists have long hoped to locate more of them; last month Israeli archaeologists began excavating four newly discovered caves in the same area.

Scholars originally thought that the Dead Sea Scrolls, with their tantalizing references to the imminent coming of a Messiah, represented the quirky tenets of a fringe sect of Jewish ascetics known as Essenes. But experts now believe that the texts, which include fragments of legal codes, oracles and other literary genres, reflect beliefs widely held in 1st century Judaism.

The Holy Land of Jesus' time, the scrolls show, was rife with apocalyptic fervor. Ordinary Jews yearned for a savior who would lead them in a holy war against the oppressive Romans and a corrupt aristocracy, typified by the hated King Herod. Some scholars believe that Jesus was one of many political rebels in Palestine. His proclamation that the meek would inherit the earth was, in this view, not a dream of eschatological hope but a here-and-now demand for a new political order.

Recent manuscript and inscription finds indicate that such biblical names as Joseph and Judas were commonly used in the 1st century. One of those discoveries is especially intriguing. In 1990, diggers in the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem's Old City uncovered an ossuary (repository for bones) with the inscription JOSEPH SON OF CAIAPHAS. This marked the first archaeological evidence that the high priest Caiaphas, who according to the Gospels presided at the Sanhedrin's trial of Jesus, was a real person. So, indisputably, was Pilate. In 1961, diggers in Caesarea found the fragment of a plaque indicating that a building had been dedicated by PONTIUS PILATUS, PREFECT OF JUDEA.



CENTER: DAVID RUBINGER—ISRAEL ANTIQUE AUTHORITY FOR TIME

Jesus may not have been born in Bethlehem, but this ossuary confirms the existence of the priest who presided at his trial

Nazareth, which many scholars contend was the most probable site of Jesus' birth (rather than Bethlehem), was a small agricultural village in the 1st century. It is only about an hour's walk from Sepphoris, a major commercial center where, according to recent excavations, Romans, Jews and (later) Christians once lived and worked in considerable harmony. Sepphoris is not mentioned in the New Testament, but some scholars speculate that Jesus, a carpenter by trade, might have found work there. If so, he may have been exposed to a wider range of cultures and ideas than his origins in rustic Nazareth would suggest. Did he, for example, learn to speak Greek, the common language of Rome's empire, as well as Aramaic and Hebrew?

Another community that played a major role in Jesus' life is Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee. It was there, according to the Gospels, that he began his public ministry, probably in A.D. 28. Archaeologists have uncovered a 1st century house in Capernaum that according to tradition was the home of St. Peter. The building contains a meeting room that might have been used for worship. Some experts speculate that this was the synagogue where Jesus preached, as recounted in *John* 6: 59.

The Gospels contain no fewer than 45 references to boats and fishing as they relate to Jesus. In 1986, two members of a Galilean kibbutz came across the remains of a 8-m-long wooden dory, buried in the mud near Kinneret on the Sea of Galilee, that has been carbon-dated to the 1st century. Almost certainly, this was the kind of vessel used by Peter, James, John and the other fisherfolk whom Jesus recruited as his first disciples.

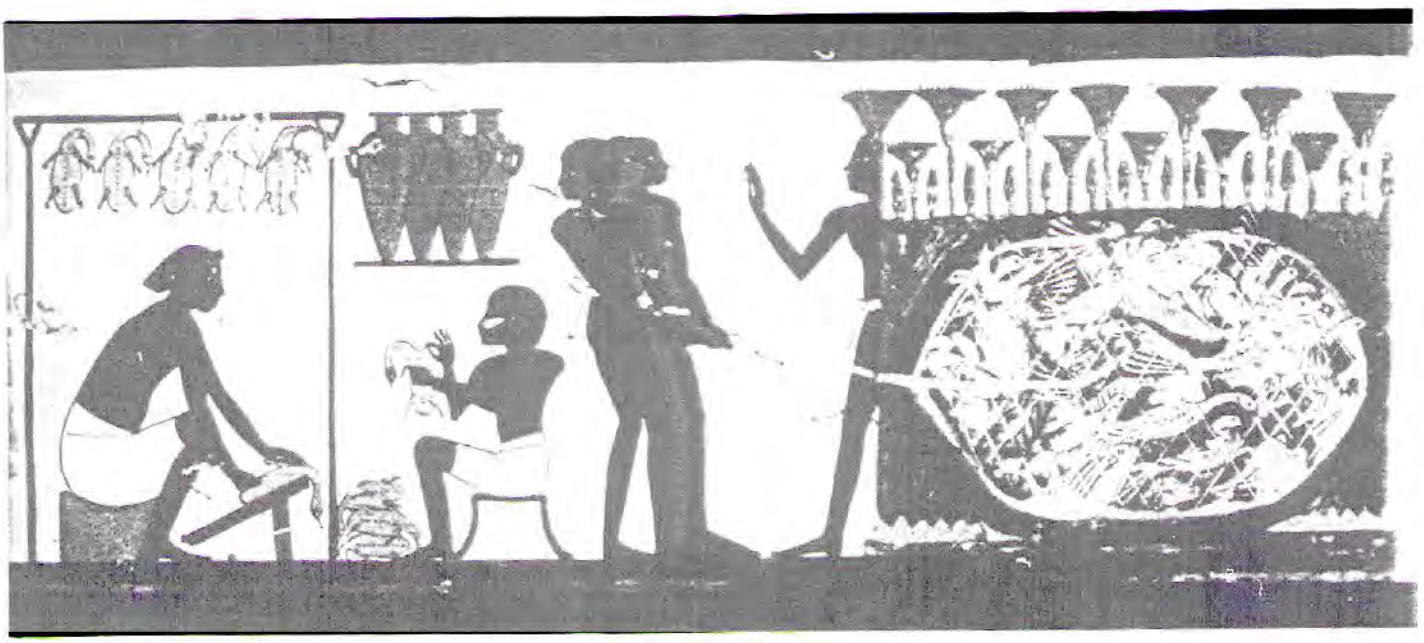
Time and again, archaeological finds have validated scriptural references. Discoveries of an astonishing variety of 1st century coins, for example, help explain the need for money changers, whom an angry Jesus drove away from Jerusalem's Great Temple. Still, there are many questions that archaeology cannot now answer. Did Pilate pass judgment on Jesus at the Antonia fortress near the Temple site, or at Herod's palace across town? (If the latter, then the famed Via Dolorosa—the route that Jesus followed carrying his cross to Golgotha—is incorrect.) Is the tomb of Jesus beneath the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, as tradition holds, or some place unknown outside the Old City's walls?

Science may never say. Many devout believers do not care. For them, the divinely inspired testimony of the Gospels is infinitely more reliable than any evidence unearthed by the hammers of archaeology. ■

Egyptian Amphorae

Of the New Kingdom and Ramesside Periods

By Bryant G. Wood



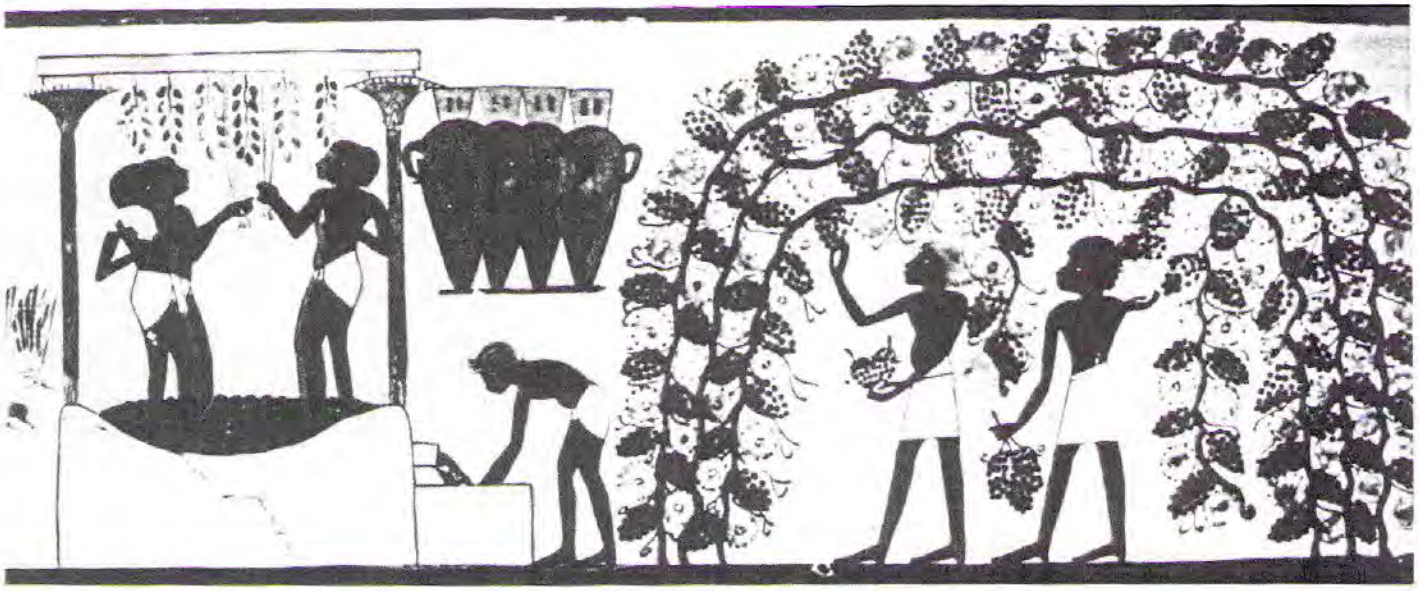
Fowling scene from the tomb of Nakht at Thebes dating to approximately 1430–1420 B.C.E. (the end of the reign of Amenhotep II or the beginning of the reign of Tuthmosis IV). The scene shows birds being netted in a papyrus thicket, then plucked, gutted, and hung to dry in the sun. In the background are the amphorae that will be used to transport the dried birds to the master's larder. Photograph is from Davies (1917).

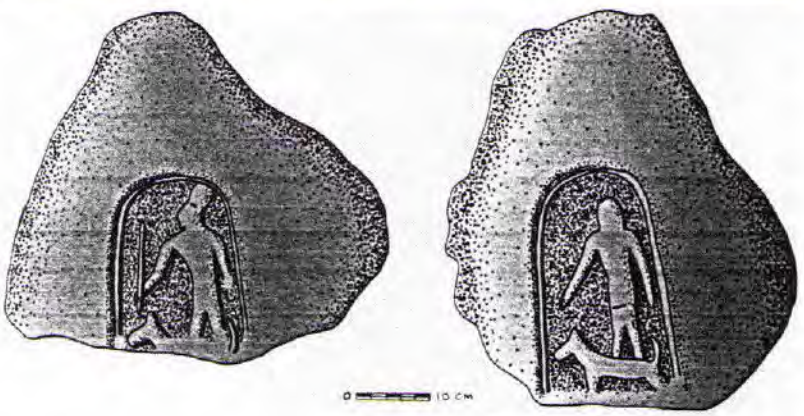
Excavations in the Levant have frequently uncovered vessels from the Late Bronze and Iron Ages (approximately 1500 to 500 B.C.E.) that have been grouped under the general category of *Canaanite jar* (Grace 1956; see also Amiran 1969: 140–42). Within this category, three types, each linked to a specific region of the eastern Mediterranean, have been identified: the *Phoenician store jar* common to northern Palestine has a carinated (keel-shaped) shoulder and short neck; the *store jar* of southern Palestine is characterized by a rounded shoulder; and the *amphora* from Egypt is known by its distinctively slender shape.

When a ceramic typologist studies a particular vessel, three major questions are asked: What is its date? Where was it made? How was it used? Because of the limited nature of the evidence surviving from antiquity, these questions are often difficult, if not impossible, to answer. In the case of the amphora, however, the wealth of epigraphic and pictorial data from Egypt makes it possible to answer these with unusual precision, and we can even trace the evolution of its form over hundreds of years in great detail.

General Description

The most striking feature of the Egyptian amphora is its pointed or slightly rounded base,[1] a seemingly incom-





Above: *Vintage scene from the tomb of Nakht at Thebes showing workers harvesting the grapes, while others are pressing out the juices. The amphorae in the background would be used to ferment and store the liquid. Photograph is from Davies (1917).* ***Right:*** *Stamped clay caps from Tell el-Farʿah (South) in Palestine. The impressions depict a male deity standing on a lion, one holding a scepter or spear in his right hand. The caps were found in association with the remains of forty-five large jars in a large Egyptian-style building that dates to the Nineteenth Dynasty. Drawing is based on numbers 5 and 6 in plate 61 of Starkey and Harding (1932).*

modious feature (see Tufnell 1958: 220). The vessel could hardly have been meant simply for storage because the pointed base necessitated an external means of support. In fact, the amphora was the primary shipping container in antiquity (Grace 1956, 1961; Amiran 1969: 140; Åkerström 1975; Casson 1981). As such, the major design consideration was not stability but strength (Parr 1973). The weakest point in a large jar with a flat base is the junction between the base and the sidewall. A pointed base effectively eliminates this weakness and allows the vessel to be pivoted and tilted, picked up, set down, and otherwise manhandled with much less risk of damage.

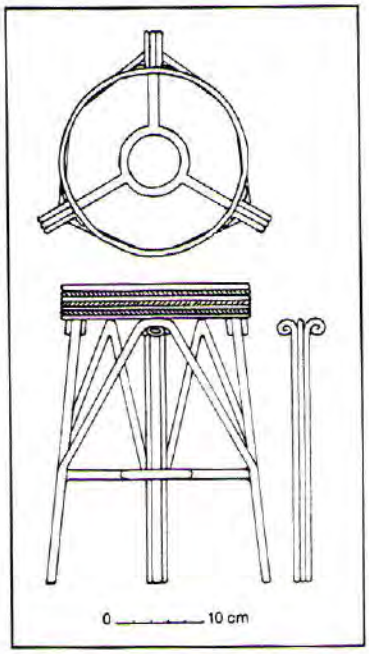
The amphora was used for transporting a variety of commodities. Hieratic inscriptions placed on the amphorae mention such goods as wine, beer, ale, milk, honey, oil, fat unguent, meat, mutton, fowl, fish, curds, grain, beans, fruit, eyepaint, gum, incense, and myrrh (Griffith 1894; Gunn 1923; Fairman 1933, 1951; Hayes 1951; Smith 1976: 181–82; Leahy 1978: figure 1; Hope 1978: 24–25).[2]

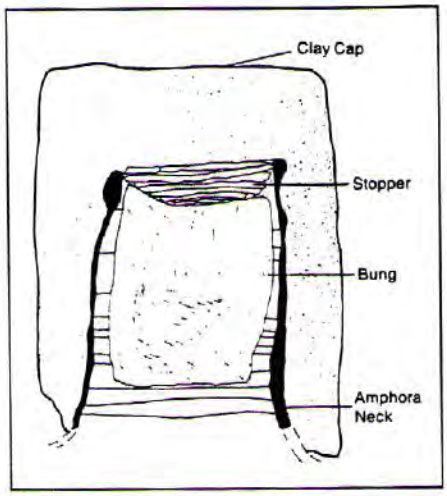
The Egyptian amphora was held upright by a stand, two types of which were commonly used: an annular stand made of fired clay or basketwork, and a tripod made of bronze or possibly wood. This was obviously a vital accessory, even to the point of its being transported along with the vessel. For instance, a painting in the tomb of Parennefer, craftsman of the king, at Amarna (around 1375–1360 B.C.E.), shows Parennefer's servants carrying amphorae laden with gifts for their master from the king; each also carries a tripod stand gracefully cradled in the crook of his arm.

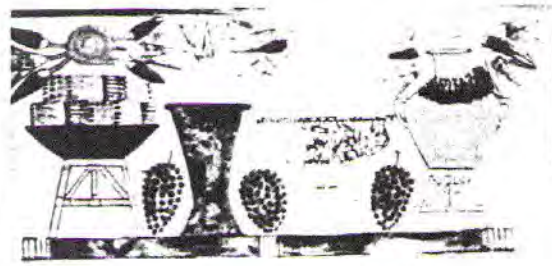
The Egyptian amphora was thus a utilitarian vessel, although an effort was made on occasion to enliven it. The well-known festive scene from the tomb of Nakht, from the end of the reign of Amenhotep II or the beginning of the reign of Tuthmosis IV (around 1430–1420 B.C.E.),[3] depicts an amphora that has lotus flowers covering its mouth and a collar encircling its neck. In some instances collars were painted on the jars, as well as grape or fig vines, no doubt done to suggest the contents (Norman Davies 1923a: plate 1; Montet 1937: 51; Hayes 1951; Brack and Brack 1977: tafel 15; Hope 1978: 16–17, 70).

Amphorae in the Wine Industry

By far the most common use of the Egyptian amphora was for bottling wine. After workers had harvested the







Above left: *Bronze stand from level IV at Beth-shean, dating to the twelfth century* B.C.E. *Drawing is based on figure 102.1 in James (1966).* ***Above center:*** *Cross section through a typical amphora seal. Drawing is based on figure 8a in Hope (1978).* ***Right:*** *Festive scene from the tomb of Nakht at Thebes. Note the amphora, on a tripod stand in the background on the right, is decorated with a collar and covered with lotus flowers. Photograph is from Davies (1917).*

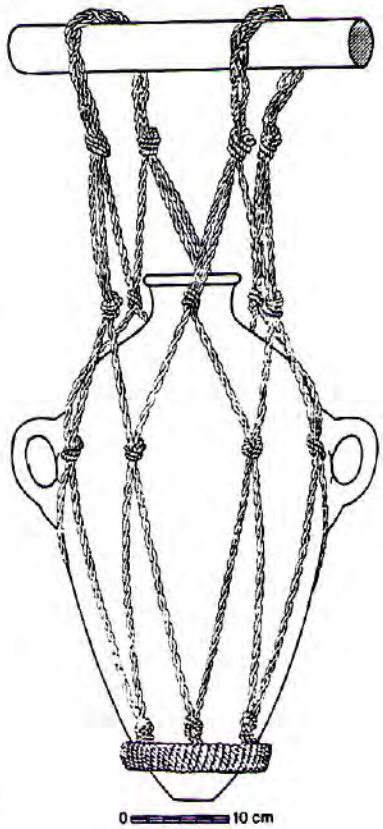
Above: *Limestone stamp from Amarna in Egypt. Stamps of this type were used to impress the clay caps of freshly sealed amphorae. Drawing is based on plate 32.6 of Frankfort and Pendlebury (1933).* ***Right:*** *Amphora with clay cap and seal (Metropolitan Museum of Art 36.3.38). The seal bears the name of Hatshepsut, and a hieratic label on the jar is preceded by the date "Regnal year 7" (of Tuthmosis III), that is, about 1498* B.C.E.*; the label also names the type and quantity of wood oil that the jar contained. The jar, which is 64 centimeters high, was found in the tomb of the parents of Sennemut, Hatshepsut's architect, at Deir el-Bahari, Thebes. See Lansing and Hayes (1937) and Hayes (1957). Photograph is used courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1936.*

grapes and pressed out the juice, they would pour it into amphorae for fermentation. When fermentation was complete, each jar was sealed with a rush bung and a stopper (Hope 1978: 26–32); a clay cap was then fashioned around the outside of the neck and stamped with the vintner's official seal.[4] A number of stamped clay seals have been recovered in excavations (Gunn 1923; Fairman 1933, 1951; Hayes 1951; Černý 1965: 1–4; Smith 1976: 162–75; Brack and Brack 1977: 68; Hope 1978: 3; Leahy 1978: 29–44), as well as the stamps themselves (for instance, Petrie 1897: 7, plate 3.23; Frankfort and Pendlebury 1933: plate 32.6; Smith 1976: 166, 170, plate 49).

Following sealing, a hieratic label was written in ink

This relief from Amarna, around 1375–1360 B.C.E., shows a Syrian soldier drinking directly from an amphora by means of a "drinking tube set." Plate 17 from Spiegelberg and Erman (1908).

Amphorae from the tomb of Tutankhamun, dating to around 1352 B.C.E. Thirty-six such jars were found, twenty-six with hieratic labels with dates ranging from the thirty-first year of Amenhotep III (around 1357 B.C.E.) to the tenth year of Tutankhamun (around 1352 B.C.E.). Jar 434 (on the left) bears the inscription "Year 5. Wine of the House-of-Aton of the Western River. Chief Vintner Any," while jar 486 (on the right) has an inscription that reads "Year 4. Wine of the house-of-Aton, life, prosperity, and health, of the Western River. Chief Vintner Nen" (Černý 1965: 1). Photograph is used courtesy of the Griffith Institute, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.



Rope sling and beer jar from the tomb of Meryet-Amun at Thebes, dating to around 1443 B.C.E. Meryet-Amun was the Queen of Amenhotep II in the early years of his reign. Drawing is based on figure 18 in Winlock (1932).

on the shoulder of the jar indicating the year, type and quality of wine, the estate responsible for production and bottling, the location of the vineyard, and the name of the chief vintner. The jars were then stored in order to age the wine. Some was aged for a considerable length of time. Jars dating to the second year of Amenhotep II (around 1449 B.C.E.) were found in the tomb of Tjanuni, an official of Tuthmosis IV (around 1425–1417 B.C.E.). These jars were therefore twenty-five to thirty years old at the time they were placed in the tomb (Brack and Brack 1977: 68, 70). One of the amphorae in the tomb of Tutankhamun (around 1361–1352 B.C.E.) bears an inscription with a date of the thirty-first year of Amenhotep III (about 1387 B.C.E.), making it thirty-five years old when placed in Tutankhamun's tomb (Černý 1965: 3 and 4).[5]

Once an amphora reached its destination, it became a store jar. When it came time to dispose of the contents, some people found it more convenient to work directly from the amphora (at least in the case of beverages), rather than first transferring the contents to a smaller, more easily managed container. For this, a special "drinking tube set" made of copper or bronze was used. It consisted of a strainer, a right-angled tube, and a cup. The strainer was placed on one end of a reed and inserted into the jar. The right-angled tube was then attached to the other end of the reed. A second reed was attached to the other end of the tube and was used like a straw to draw the liquid from the vessel. A small cup, which was perhaps used to sample the contents before serious drinking began, completed the set (Griffith 1926). After the primary contents had been consumed, the amphora was used for secondary purposes, such as the carrying of water.

Origin of the Handled Amphora

In the Middle Kingdom period (approximately 2130–1680 B.C.E.), large jars of this type did not have handles and they required a rope sling and two men to carry them. At the beginning of the New Kingdom (about 1570 B.C.E.), however, a new type suddenly appeared. This new type was ovoid in shape and had two vertical handles. The addition of handles sometime around the end of the Middle Kingdom represented a major technical innovation for the ancient Egyptians, who normally were slow to adopt new ideas. With handles, an amphora could be carried by one

Above: *Syro-Palestinian store jar from Tell el-Dabᶜa, an Asiatic settlement in the Egyptian Delta. The jar dates to the Middle Bronze IIB period (around 1600 B.C.E.). Drawing is based on figure 6B in Bietak (1986).* ***Right:*** *Amphora dating to the fiftieth year of Ramesses II (around 1255 B.C.E.), from the tomb of Apy at Thebes (see Davies 1927: 39). Photograph is courtesy of the Egyptian Expedition, The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Scale is unknown.*

man, although the rope sling continued to be used in some cases.

The Egyptian amphora of the early New Kingdom is similar in shape to the Palestinian store jar of the Middle Bronze II period (about 1800–1500 B.C.E.). That there is a connection between the two is agreed by all, but there is disagreement as to the exact nature of the connection.

Ruth Amiran believes that the amphorae of the early Eighteenth Dynasty were all imported into Egypt, and only later were they locally produced (Amiran 1969: 141). The evidence indicates, however, that the early Eighteenth Dynasty amphorae were fabricated in Egypt. Many of them were impressed with royal cartouches prior to firing (Bruyère 1937: 92) and their hieratic labels indicate that they were filled with locally produced wine and other native Egyptian products.

A more popular theory is that the handled jar first came from Asia by way of spoil, tribute, and trade during the sole reign of Tuthmosis III (about 1482–1450 B.C.E.), as illustrated by tomb paintings (see, for instance, Davies and Davies 1933: plates 3–7; Norman Davies 1935: plates 10 and 11; 1943: plates 21–23, 44, 48, 49).[6] The Egyptians quickly adopted the new design, according to this view, and began fabricating the jar themselves (Montet 1928: 200; 1937: 50–51; Grace 1956; Parr 1973). Impressed twin cartouches of Hatshepsut and Tuthmosis III (Bruyère 1937: 92) indicate, however, that the handled amphora was made in Egypt already during the joint rule of these two monarchs (around 1504–1482 B.C.E.), prior to the Asiatic campaigns of Tuthmosis III.

The Egyptian amphora was a utilitarian vessel, used to transport and store a variety of commodities.

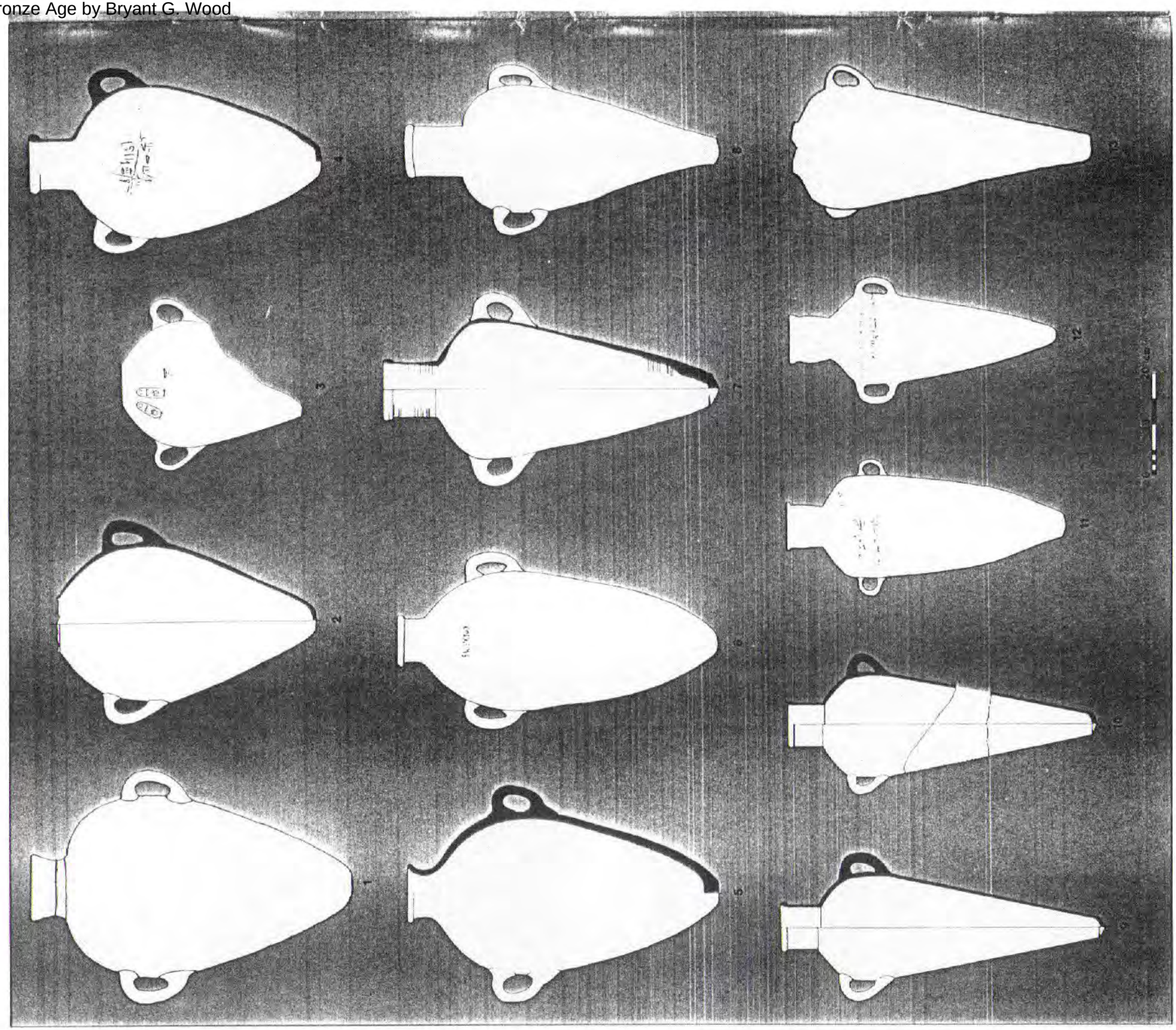
New discoveries in the Delta suggest a means by which these vessels were introduced to the Egyptians. Excavations and surface surveys in the eastern Delta in recent years have revealed Asiatic settlements dating to the late Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period, about 1800–1570 B.C.E. (Bietak 1975, 1986; Holladay 1982: 44–47, 50; Redmount 1984). These Asiatic settlers brought with them, and no doubt continued to produce locally, their native wares, including the handled store jar. Many examples of handled Syro-Palestinian store jars have been recovered from these settlements.

The Delta region is the area where most of the royal vineyards were located according to the hieratic labels (Fairman 1933; Hayes 1951; Smith 1976: 183; Lesko 1977: 23, 28–29; Hope 1978: 24). It is reasonable to suggest, therefore, that the handled store jar was introduced to the Delta vintners by the Asiatics who immigrated to this area at the end of the Middle Kingdom. The vessel then followed a development of its own in Egypt, quite apart from its development in Syria-Palestine.

Typological Development

By assembling a corpus of dated examples, one can establish a series of Egyptian amphorae that shows the typological development of this vessel with a precision not usually possible in the study of ancient Near Eastern ceramics. This typology is characterized by a long neck and an outward-folded rim to accommodate the clay cap, a rounded shoulder, and a tapered lower body that becomes increasingly narrow over time (Holthoer 1977: 97).

In the accompanying sidebar well-dated examples illustrate clearly the evolution of its form. To this I would add a few comments. Number 5, from the tomb of Meryet-Amun, Queen of Amenhotep II, contained a residue that, according to chemical analysis, was from a high-quality beer (Winlock 1932: 32–33). In this case the jar has a short neck, which is possibly because it was made specifically



Dated Amphorae of the New Kingdom and Ramesside Periods

1. Shellal, Nubia, cemetery 7, tomb 5. From the joint reign of Hatshepsut and Tuthmosis III (1503–1482 B.C.E.). Dated by cartouches of Hatshepsut and Tuthmosis III that were impressed separately into the jar while the clay was soft. Reisner (1910: figure 304.1).
2. Deir el-Medineh, tomb 1165. From the joint reign of Hatshepsut and Tuthmosis III. Dated by a handleless jar with cartouches of Hatshepsut and Tuthmosis III that was found in the same tomb. Nagel (1938: figure 63.6).
3. Deir el-Medineh, tombs 1322–1325. From the sole reign of Tuthmosis III (1481–1450 B.C.E.). Dated by two cartouches of Tuthmosis III. Bruyere (1937: 25.3).
4. Thebes, tomb of Tjanuni. From the second year of Amenhotep II (1449 B.C.E.). Dated by a hieratic inscription. Brack and Brack (1977: tafel 63.2/28).
5. Thebes, tomb of Meryet-Amun, Queen of Amenhotep II. From the eighth year of Amenhotep II (1443 B.C.E.). Dated by the death date of Meryet-Amun. Winlock (1932: figure 17e).
6. Thebes, Temple of Amenhotep II. From twenty-sixth year of Amenhotep II (1425 B.C.E.). Dated by a hieratic inscription. Petrie (1897: plate 5.3).
7. Thebes, area C1 at Malkata. From the thirtieth to the thirty-ninth year of Amenhotep III (1388–1379 B.C.E.). Dated by historical information. Hope (1978: figure 1a).
8. Thebes, Tomb of Tutankhamun, Carter object 486. From the fourth year of Tutankhamun (1358 B.C.E.). Dated by a hieratic inscription. Černý (1965: 1).
9. Thebes, Deir el-Medineh, tomb 359. From the sixth year of Ramesses II (1299 B.C.E.). Dated by a hieratic inscription. Nagel (1938: figure 8.2).
10. Thebes, Deir el-Medineh, tomb 359. From the forty-seventh year of Ramesses II (1258 B.C.E.). Dated by a hieratic inscription. Nagel (1938: figure 10.11).
11. Gurob town site. From the fifth year of Merneptah (1232 B.C.E.). Dated by historical circumstances. Petrie (1890: plate 20.32).
12. Thebes, Temple of Siptah. From the fourth year of Tewosret (1206 B.C.E.). Dated by a hieratic inscription. Petrie (1897: figure 17.23).
13. Thebes, Ramesseum. From the thirteenth year of Ramesses III (1186 B.C.E.). Dated by a hieratic inscription. Spiegelberg (1923: figure 27).

Note: Numbers 2, 3, 9, and 10 reproduced with the kind permission of the Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire.

The typological development of the Egyptian amphora can be established with unusual precision.

as a beer container. Beer was made on a day-to-day basis for immediate consumption and was not sealed and stored for long periods of aging (Hayes 1951). A long neck to accommodate a seal and a clay cap therefore was not needed as in the case of wine jars.

Number 8 is one of thirty-six wine jars found in the tomb of Tutankhamun; twenty-six of these jars have identifying hieratic labels dating them to between the thirty-first year of Amenhotep III (about 1387 B.C.E.) and the tenth year of Tutankhamun (about 1352 B.C.E.—Černý 1965). I would note here that an Egyptian amphora of the Tutankhamun era was found in Palestine in a tomb at Acco (Ben-Arieh and Edelstein 1977: figure 10.9; compare Grant 1929: 173, center right; and Grant and Wright 1939: 123). By the time of Ramesses II (around 1304–1237 B.C.E.) the Egyptian amphora had become very narrow (numbers 9 and 10). A very close parallel to number 11 from the fifth year of Merneptah (about 1232 B.C.E.), although somewhat longer (69 as compared with 56 centimeters), was found in tomb 114 at Deir el-Balah, 14 kilometers southwest of Gaza (Dothan 1979: 14, 16).

Conclusion

The pictorial and epigraphic data from Egypt combine to provide a rare insight into the provenience, function, and formal evolution of the Egyptian amphora. Such information is useful not only to students of ancient Egypt but also to those working with the archaeological remains of other areas of the Levant, since this type of vessel was no doubt used in a similar manner throughout the eastern Mediterranean. What is more, Egyptian amphorae are sometimes found in contexts outside Egypt, thus making them important for dating purposes and for studies in cross-cultural connections.

Notes

This article is a revision of a paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Schools of Oriental Research in New York on December 20, 1982.

[1]For the method of fabricating this type of vessel, see Rye 1981: 134–37. For a technical description of the ware, see Holthoer 1977: 98; Hope 1978: 62–75.

[2]These inscriptions, in their fullest form, include the year, commodity, source (estate/region), the occasion for which the commodity was prepared, the title and name of the donor in the case of a donation, and, in the case of wine and meat products, the name of the official who prepared it (Leahy 1978: 5). Egyptian amphorae are thus a ceramic typologist's dream-

come-true, for here we have a vessel that is labeled with its date, provenience, and function.

[3]The dates used in this article are the high dates of Hayes in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, third edition, volume 1, part 1 (1970): 173–93; and volume 2, part 2 (1975): table [A] on page 1038.

[4]For a detailed description of Egyptian wine-making, see Lesko 1977: 15–21.

[5]It is unlikely that the jars in Tutankhamun's tomb were reused, as suggested by Lesko (1977: 23). If the jars were reused, then those responsible for the refilling left the original label intact and did not affix a new label, a situation that seems highly improbable in view of the Egyptian penchant for precise record-keeping and accounting. Out of the 1,400 labels found at the palace-city of Amenhotep III at El Malkata in western Thebes, only a few showed evidence of reuse—a second inscription had been written over the original inscription in several instances (Hayes 1951; Hope 1978: 8).

[6]Jars of this type continued to be imported after the time of Tuthmosis III, as evidenced by later tomb scenes (see Davies and Faulkner 1947; Säve-Söderbergh 1957: plate 23) and hieratic labels reading "wine of *Khore* [Syria-Palestine]" (Fairman 1951; Hayes 1951; Hope 1978: 12, 75).

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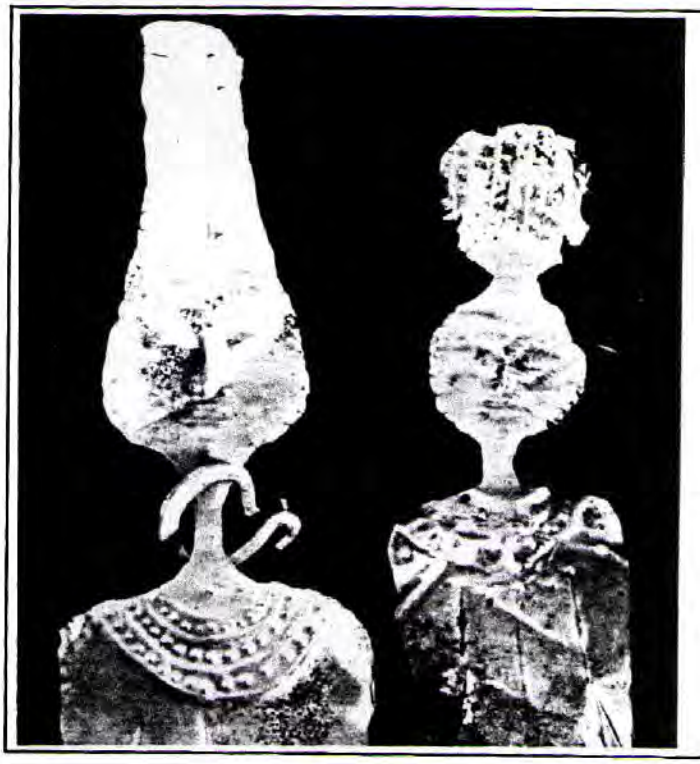

In the Next BA

Palestine in the Middle Bronze Age: The Zenith of the Urban Canaanite Era

by William G. Dever

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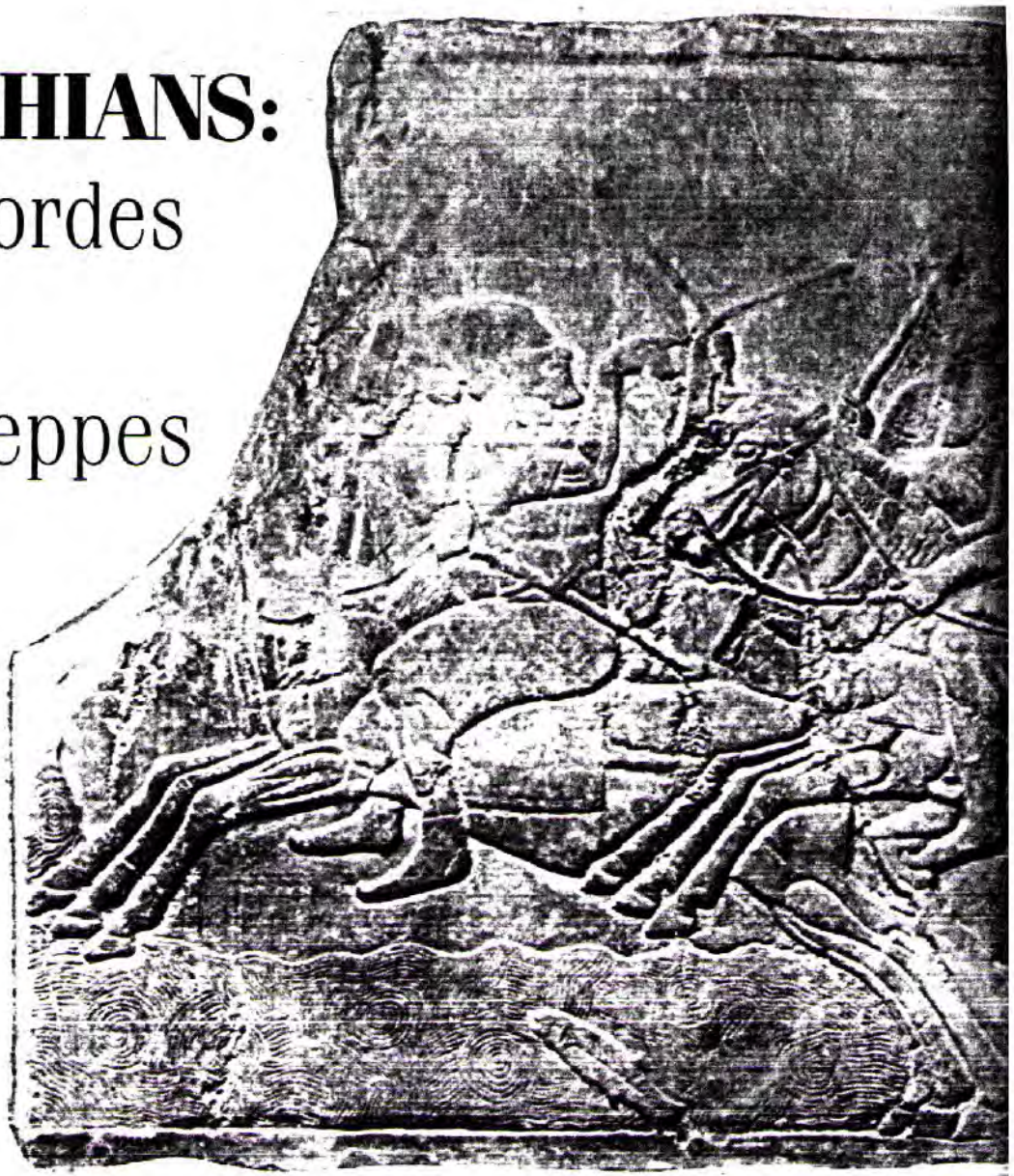
by Edwin Yamauchi

The Scythians may not have been the earliest mounted archers in antiquity but they were among the most skilled.



Mounted archers firing at pursuing Assyrians. This relief is from the palace of Ashurnasirpal II (883–859 B.C.). Phot

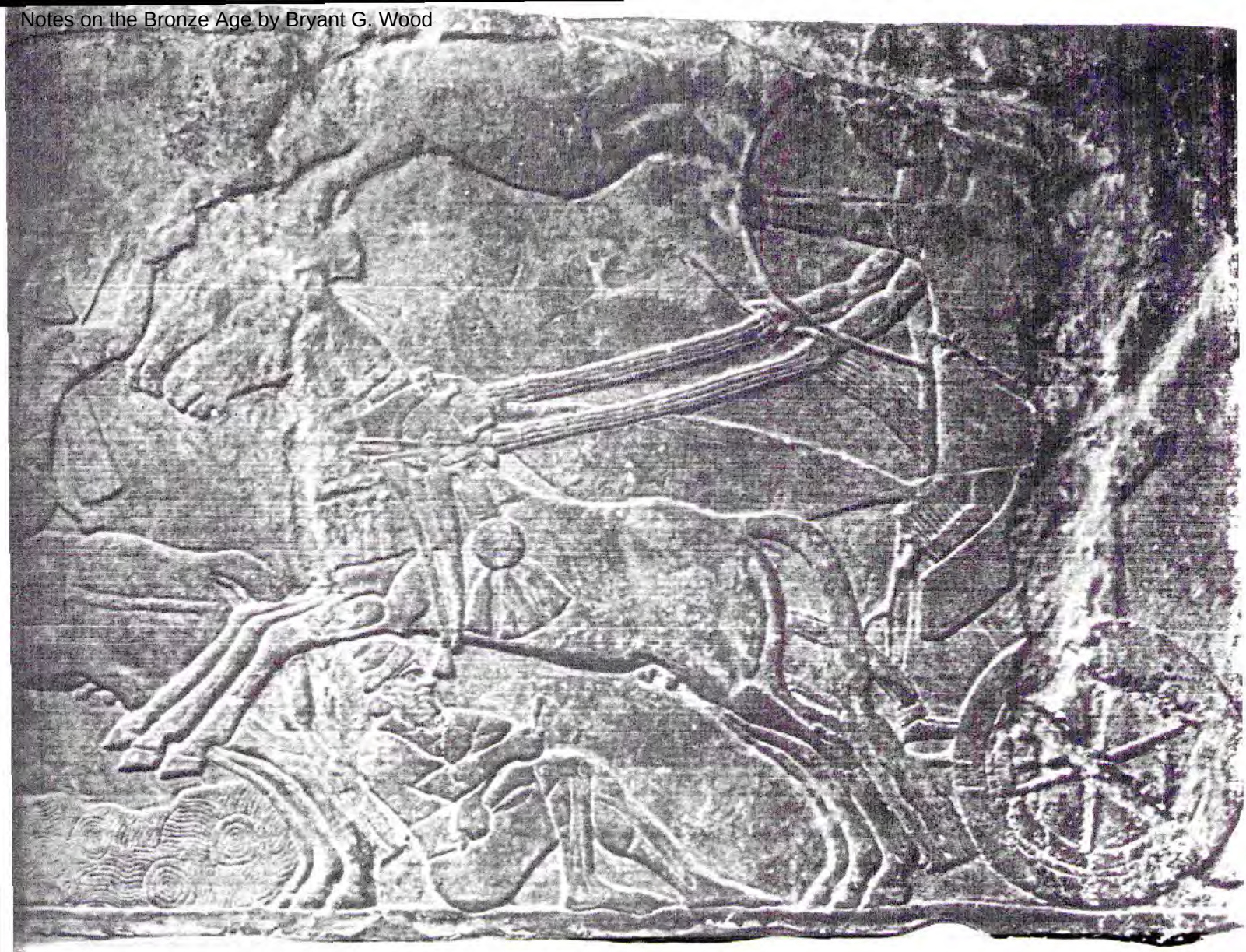
Ancient Israel faced a number of threats at her northern frontier. The several biblical references to such invaders have provided fodder for the speculations of modern, popular interpreters (see sidebar). While identification of the northern enemies as Russians may appeal to our imagination, there is now ample archaeological evidence to identify these invading hordes with the Scythians—contemporaries of the biblical authors.

In the Old Testament the word *Scythian* does not appear. Yet in Genesis 10:3 (and its parallel, 1 Chronicles 1:6) as well as in Jeremiah 51:27, the Hebrew term *Ashkenaz*, which has been identified as the cognate for the Akkadian name for this group, *Ishkuza*, is employed (Parpola 1970: 178). Jeremiah's exhortation even preserves the war-like connotations of the Scythians: "Prepare the nations for battle against her; summon against her these kingdoms: Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz."

The Persians called the various Scythian tribes *saka*. The Greek equivalent, *Skythes*, appears once in the New Testament, Colossians 3:11, and not infrequently in other Greek documents.

The Scythians in the North

The name "Scythian" designates a number of nomadic tribes from the Russian steppes. One group, after being driven out of Media in the seventh century B.C.E., settled in the fertile area of the present-day Ukraine, north of the Black Sea. Related tribes occupied the lands



courtesy of the British Museum.

to the east of the Caspian Sea. Archaeological excavations in these areas have provided a vast number of materials useful in reconstructing the Scythian lifestyle. Moreover, they illumine several references to these tribes in the ancient literature.

Interest in the Scythians was first aroused in the seventeenth century, not by the investigations of literary references, but by the discovery of fabulous treasures in burial sites north and east of the Black Sea. These burials, which date in general to the sixth century B.C.E. (see Artamonov 1969), have yielded over 20,000 gold objects. Today, the discoveries from the tumuli (the Kelermes, Melgunov, Chertomlyk, and other barrows) fill the rooms of Leningrad's Hermitage Museum.

Subsequent excavations in the Soviet states of Armenia and Azerbaijan have documented the Scythian presence in Transcaucasia (northern ancient Urartu; compare the biblical Ararat). In the mid-seventh century, the Urartian settlement of Karmir-Blur (ancient Teishebaini) was founded by Rusa II. A horn carved with a Scythian griffin, discovered in a gate-keeper's lodge, indicates the presence of the northern tribe in the city. Perhaps some Scythians served in Karmir-Blur's garrison.

According to B. Piotrovsky (1969: 178), who has conducted excavations of Karmir-Blur since 1949 (following initial digs between 1939–1941), the Scythians, once allies of Urartu, took advantage of Urartian weakness caused in part by Cimmerian raids, and assaulted

Karmir-Blur at the beginning of the sixth century.

> The citadel was destroyed and set on fire in a night attack directed not against the well defended main gate but against the postern gate in the northwest corner. Before the final assault the citadel came under heavy fire from the enemy archers; and numbers of bronze arrows of the Scythian trilobate type were extracted from the adobe brick of the walls near the postern. It is clear that the attackers of the Urartian fortress included some of their former allies, the Scythians.

Scythian presence has also been confirmed in other areas of the kingdom of Urartu, which incorporated the area around Lake Van (in eastern Turkey), Lake Urmia (in northwestern Iran), and Lake Sevan (in Soviet Armenia). For example, Scythian-type horse-bits and horse burials have been found at Hasanlu south of Lake Urmia, in strata dating from the ninth to the seventh centuries B.C.E. A similar horse burial from this same general period has been uncovered at Baba Jan in the Luristan region of the Zagros Mountains.

Assyrian literary sources place the Scythians in seventh-century Iran, and archaeological evidence suggests an even earlier presence. Although the Assyrian texts do not mention the tribes until late in the eighth century, a relief from the reign of Ashurbanipal II (885–859) portrays mounted archers who may well be Scythians.

The most important Assyrian references to the *Ishkuza* date from the reign of Esarhaddon (681–668). In 676, he boasted about his victory over the Manneans (biblical Minni), Scythian allies who inhabited the area south of Lake Urmia: "I am the one who scattered the inhabitants of Mannai, those rebellious Gutians, and who killed in battle the troops of the Scythian, Ishpakai, an ally who could not save them" (Heidel 1956: 17).

About a decade later, a Scythian chief, Bartatua (the Protothyes of Herodotus I.103) demanded an Assyrian princess in marriage as the price for his allegiance. Esarhaddon questioned the diviners of Shamash concerning this proposal. As Olmstead (1951: 361) observes, "A second inquiry proves a successful marriage, for Bartatua is expected to march against Bit Kapsi and Saparda in the Median land, the enemies of Assyria." The Scythian alliance with the Assyrians lasted at least for another generation; Madyes (Herodotus I.104), the son of Bartatua, fought for the Assyrians against the Cimmerians in Cappadocia ca. 654 B.C.E.

Although Scythian incursion into the Near East cannot be denied, the exact extent of their raids and the years of their domination have remained matters of considerable scholarly debate.

Herodotus indicates that the Scythians were active in Media, southeast of Lake Urmia. It is also evident from the Assyrian texts that these tribes were present in Mannean territory directly south of the lake. The spectacular discovery of the Ziwiye treasure in this area corroborates the literary evidence.

The Ziwiye discoveries were not made during a controlled excavation. Rather, in 1947, a local shepherd happened upon a bronze object identified as either a chest or a coffin. Because of this circumstance, some doubt has been cast on the authenticity of several other objects from the find.

R. D. Barnett (1956) dates the burial of the finds to 600 B.C.E. R. Ghirshman prefers the earlier date of 625. Indeed, since the Ziwiye treasure contains several Assyrian objects, such as an ivory statue of an Assyrian dignitary, Ghirshman has even suggested that part of the treasure may have belonged to the dowry of Esarhaddon's daughter, the wife of the Scythian Bartatua (1976: 103).

The most significant aspect of the Ziwiye treasure is the presence of Scythian "animal style" art. A magnificent gold pectoral, which also includes Urartian and Assyrian stylistic elements, depicts hares and recumbent felines—motifs parallel to the designs on objects found in the Kelermes and Litoj barrows. Such Scythian subjects as lynxes, running hares, and the heads of birds of prey appear on a silver dish with gold inlay designs, also found at Ziwiye. As Ghirshman therefore concludes (1964: 98), "'The Ziwiye treasure' proves that these warrior-horsemen were present in this part of Iran."

The Scythians in the Near East

Although Scythian incursion into the Near East cannot be denied, the exact extent of their raids and the years of their domination have remained matters of considerable scholarly debate. The first focus of the discussion has been the presence of Scythian hordes in Media.

According to Herodotus I.103, during the reign of Cyaxares, the Median kingdom was invaded by a group of Scythians. The historian further relates (IV.1) that "the Scythians . . . ruled the upper country of Asia for twenty-eight years." Vaggione (1973) has argued that "upper country of Asia" probably designates eastern Anatolia, from the Halys River eastward to the borders of Media.

Herodotus provides additional material concerning the question of chronology. He indicates (I.102) that the Scythians averted a Median attack against Nineveh toward the end of the reign of Phraortes. The traditional dating of Phraortes (675–653) would place the Median

Gold pectoral from Ziwiye. Photograph courtesy of Josephine Powell.

incursion about 653, the height of the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal's power. As R. Labat (1961: 4–5) has indicated, this situation is quite improbable. Moreover, this standard chronology places the Scythian interregnum after the tenure of Phraortes and before the accession of Cyaxares, that is, between 653 and 625.

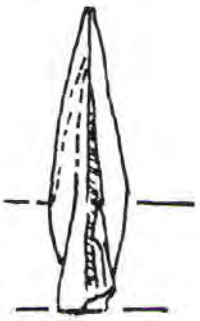
In a brief but important article published in 1979, A. R. Millard proposes a new method of reconciling the data provided by Herodotus with the conflicting evidence from Near Eastern sources. Millard dates the reign of Phraortes to 647–625, and divides the Scythian interregnum into two phases: (1) domination of eastern Anatolia (645–625); and (2) domination of Media during the first eight years of Cyaxares (625–617). This interpretation places Scythian hegemony after the passing of the Assyrian threat and before the attack of Cyaxares against the Assyrians in 615.

After the Scythians attacked the Median kingdom of Cyaxares, some of the tribes made a lightning raid along the Palestinian coast to the borders of Egypt. According to Herodotus (I.105):

> Thence they marched against Egypt: and when they were in the part of Syria called Palestine, Psammetichus king of Egypt met them and persuaded them with gifts and prayers to come no further. So they turned back, and when they came on their way to the city of Ascalon in Syria, most of the Scythians passed by and did no harm, but a few remained behind and plundered the temple of Heavenly Aphrodite.

This account has been the occasion of some controversy. Several scholars have expressed doubts that such a powerful ruler as Psammetichus I (664–610) would resort to bribery in order to dissuade an attack by nomadic barbarians. F. Wilke (1913: 228–29), for example, dismissed the entire account as an etiological tale devised to explain the origin of "the female sickness" (venereal disease?) which Herodotus says afflicted the Scythians as a punishment from Aphrodite. Other specialists may find the Pharoah's use of bribery less than honorable but they do not consider it incredible (see Drioton and Vandier 1952: 576; Gyles 1959: 22). Millard (1979: 122) concludes that "in the light of earlier movements, too, the gravitation of one band to the frontier of Egypt would be no surprise. . . . There are no grounds for dismissing

Scythian Arrowheads



trilobate type

pyramidal type

leaf type

Herodotus' record of a Scythian attempt to enter Egypt."

Excavations at the eastern Delta site of Tell Defenneh (Tahpanhes), built by Psammetichus I, may offer confirmation of the account by Herodotus. The original excavator, W. M. Flinders Petrie, thought that the hundreds of Scythian-type bronze arrows and the iron dagger also in the Scythian style discovered there belonged to Ionian and Carian mercenaries. A more comprehensive interpretation is offered by T. Sulimirski (1954: 305):

> It seems, however, that among these Anatolian mercenaries the Scythians were also included. Recruitment of these troopers fell into the period of the dawnfall (*sic*) of the Scythian might in Western Asia. Characteristic clay figurines representing bearded riders in pointed caps, which almost always accompany the finds attributed to these mercenaries, seem to support this supposition.

The Scythians may not have been the earliest mounted archers in antiquity, but they were among the most skilled, as the relief from Ashurbanipal indicates. Their bows were short (110–100 cm) but powerful and their arrows measured between 50 and 60 cm. The *gorytus*, a case which held both arrows and bow, was often elaborately decorated in gold.

The distinctive, socketed Scythian arrowheads were constructed of bronze, sometimes two-edged but usually trilobate (three-edged) or of the solid, pyramidal type, and often barbed; they were especially adapted for the light bows of mounted archers. These types of arrowheads were not used exclusively by the Scythians; other ancient peoples, such as the Cimmerians, also adopted the styles.

In most cases, however, these arrowheads have been discovered at sites where Scythian presence either is attested or can be postulated. For example, such arrowheads appear only *after* the incursion of the Scythians south of the Caucasus in the late eighth and early seventh centuries. Sulimirski, in his important 1954 article, presents the collected evidence of these arrowheads throughout the Near East. This evidence can be profitably employed in discussions of Scythian presence in Palestine.

Jeremiah's Foe from the North

Jeremiah (4–6 and 8–9) mentions the thrust of a "foe from the north." Today, scholars are divided over the identification of this foe. Does the prophecy reflect the Scythian raid through Palestine? Or, was it an unfulfilled prediction later transferred to another group?

Those who favor the first alternative date the Scythian raid to a time before the prophet's call in 626 (Jeremiah 1:2; see Skinner 1922: 39). Others have concluded that when Jeremiah's original prophecies relating to the Scythians were not fulfilled, he revised them to refer to the Chaldeans. H. H. Rowley notes that "the view that these oracles have been retouched is born of the fact that Jeremiah's ministry is stated to have begun at approximately the time to which Herodotus assigns the Scythian invasion, and of the recognition that as they stand they are appropriate to the Chaldeans, even though some things could equally well apply to the Scythians, and some things perhaps better to them" (1962–63: 218–19).

A mediating position has been taken by John Bright. Although in his important commentary on Jeremiah he affirms the possibility of a Scythian raid into Palestine, Bright acknowledges the disfavor into which the Scythian hypothesis has recently fallen: "But contemporary evidence of such an irruption is lacking, and it must be said that a Scythian domination of western Asia coincident with the latter part of Ashurbanipal's long reign is difficult to credit" (1965: LXXXI).

Bright's chronological question has been resolved by Millard's proposal, which places Scythian dominance of Media *after* the reign of Ashurbanipal. His concern over the alleged lack of evidence can be solved by an appeal to Sulimirski's important study of Scythian arrowheads.

Sulimirski lists a number of trilobate arrowheads discovered at Samaria in seventh-century strata. Contemporaneous specimens have been discovered along the Philistine coast at Tell el-Ajjul and Tell Fara. Sulimirski even reports one three-edged specimen from Jerusalem

Today, new discoveries, especially in Soviet archaeology, enable us to reevaluate the reliability of Herodotus, our principal source on the Scythians and their raid into Palestine.

(1954: 297, 299). In 1975, N. Avigad excavating in the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem, discovered four arrowheads at the base of a massive defense tower dated to the Siege of 586. According to Singer (1976: 7): "The four arrowheads, one iron and three bronze, are thought to be the first remains ever recorded of the two-year Babylonian siege which finally broke the defenses of the starving city."

Although only one of these four arrowheads was of the Scythian-trilobate type, it may hold the key to a new interpretation of Jeremiah's prophecy. This interpretation, which has not been anticipated by scholars, and which may not have been clearly perceived by the prophet himself, concerns the mixed nature of the pronouncements. Some prophecies seem to apply to the Scythians; others concern the Chaldeans. Perhaps Jeremiah's prophecies were fulfilled by an attacking force of both Chaldeans and Scythians.

The Scythian-type arrowheads may have been used for two different purposes. Arrowheads dating to the seventh century probably were employed by marauding Scythians. Yet those of the sixth century and later may be attributed to the Scythian groups who remained in the Near East, to serve as mercenaries with the great powers, especially Egypt and Babylonia. Indeed, subsequent history indicates that the Scythians served as archers for the Persians, and Scythian bowmen were employed as policemen in classical Athens (Plassart 1913). In light of the "Scythian" arrowhead uncovered from the Babylonian attack on Jerusalem, I would therefore suggest that Scythian mercenaries may have served as the vanguard of the Chaldean assault.

Herodotus and Scythian Tombs

The historical reliability of Herodotus, our principal source on the Scythians and their raid into Palestine, was questioned by scholars writing in the early decades of this century, such as Wilke (1913). These criticisms were repeated by later specialists, including Hyatt (1940), and Lauha (1943), who also investigated the connection between Jeremiah's prophecies and the Scythians. Today, new discoveries, especially in Soviet archaeology, enable us to reevaluate the reliability of Herodotus.

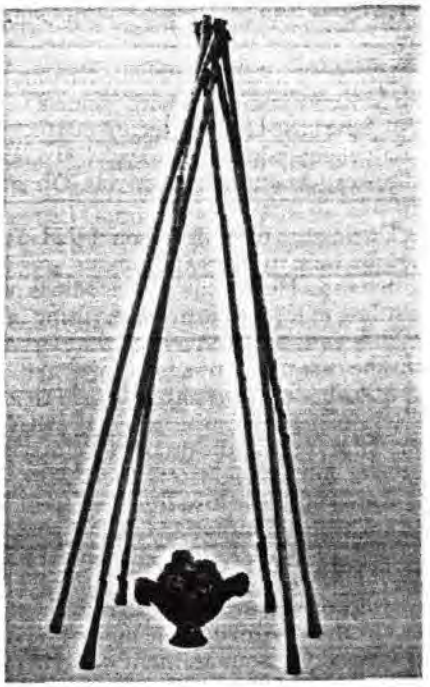
It is true that the Greek historian recounts many bizarre and even savage practices of the Scythians. While some of his statements may seem incredible or exaggerated, a number of them have been corroborated by excavations of tombs located north and east of the Black Sea. The most important find has been the frozen tombs of Pazyryk, located in the Altai Mountains of southern Siberia, just north of the western boundary of the Mongolian People's Republic. Although these tombs may not belong to those who were, strictly speaking, Scythians, they do reveal a closely related culture (compare Potratz 1963: 179; and Artamonov 1965).

The Pazyryk tombs were first discovered by S. Rudenko in 1924 and excavated by him in 1929 and 1947–49. Although partial accounts of these excavations appeared earlier, the comprehensive study of the tombs did not appear in English until 1970 (see Rudenko 1970).

Of the more than forty barrows at Pazyryk, six, ranging in date from the fifth to the third centuries B.C.E., have been excavated. The perishable materials in these tombs were found intact due to an extraordinary circumstance. All six tombs had been opened by robbers, and the openings permitted rain to seep through. This water then froze, largely preserving the bodies of humans and horses, textiles, and other perishable materials for over two millennia!

Discoveries in barrow number 2 confirm Herodotus' observation that the Scythians bathed in the vapor created by heating hemp seeds. Two sets of apparatus, consisting of the copper vessels in which the seeds were heated and the six rods which supported the miniature sauna, were recovered. In such tents "the Scythians howl in joy for the vapour-bath" reported Herodotus (IV.75).

Tomb number 2 yielded an even more interesting confirmation. Herodotus (IV.64) reports that the Scythians carried the heads of their victims to their chiefs. Moreover, he states that they scalped their



Apparatus for inhaling hemp fumes from Pazyryk. Photograph courtesy of the Hermitage Museum in Leningrad, U.S.S.R.

RUSSIAN ATTACKS?

Several popular interpreters of Ezekiel 38:2–5 claim that the passage prophesies an invasion of Israel by the Soviet Union (Lindsey 1970: 63–65; 1980: 67–68). These writers equate the Hebrew word *Rosh* as well as Gog and Magog, with Russia, Meshech with Moscow, and Tubal with Tobolsk. These four identifications are all problematic.

The word *Rosh* is most commonly translated "chief" or "head" (as in the expression for the Jewish New Year, Rosh ha-Shanah, or head of the year). The RSV translates Ezekiel 38:3 as "Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold I am against you, O Gog, *chief prince* of Meshech and Tubal" (emphasis added). Similar renditions appear in the KJV, NAB, and NIV. And even if the term *Rosh* is translated as a proper name (as in the JB, NEB, and NAS), the passage still cannot refer to modern Russia. The name *Rus* was first brought into the region of Kiev by the Vikings in the Middle Ages (Dmytryshyn 1977: 37–41).

The baffling names Gog and Magog have led to a variety of interpretations. The most common explanation is the equation of Gog with the famous Gyges (d. 644), the king of Lydia (western Turkey). Assyrian texts speak of Gyges as *Gugu*, which is a linguistic cognate of Gog (see Cogan and Tadmor 1977). Yet while the names are similar, the geographical details do not coincide. Gog and his hordes are stated to be from "the uttermost parts of the north" (Ezekiel 38:15). The kingdom of Gyges, however, never extended into eastern Anatolia, north of Israel. Thus various attempts (for instance Myres 1932; Astour 1976) to explain the background of Gog and Magog have not won universal consent.

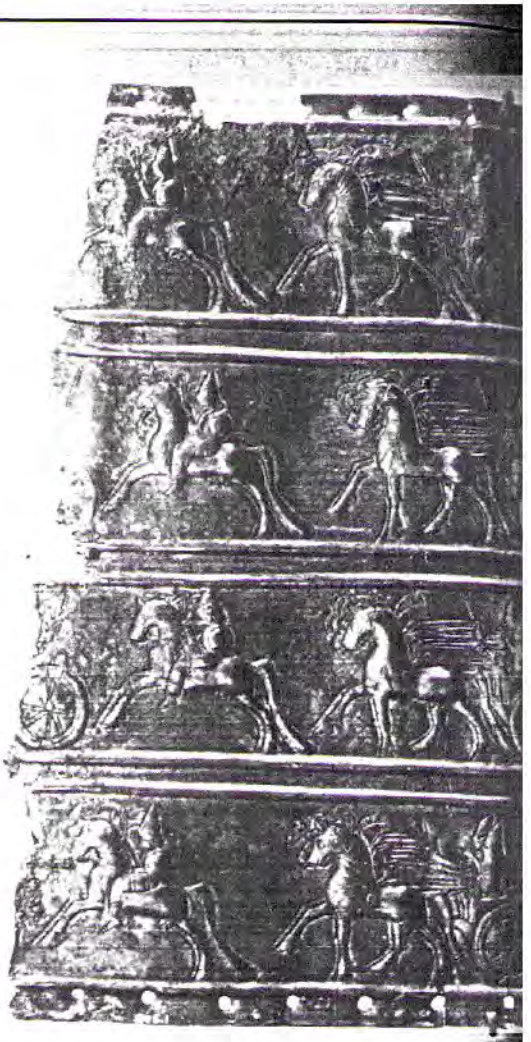
Informed studies acknowledge that the identification of Meshech with Moscow and Tubal with Tobolsk is quite untenable (see Yamauchi 1976). Since the late nineteenth century, Assyrian texts have been available which locate Meshech (*Mushku*) and Tubal (*Tabal*) in central and eastern Anatolia respectively (Olmstead 1923: 143–44, 221–28, 266–67).

During the reign of Sargon II (721–705) the Mushki of central Anatolia were ruled by the famous king Mita, known in classical sources (for instance, Herodotus I.14) as Midas of the Phrygians whose touch according to legend turned everything into gold. We may conclude that the Phrygians who came from the west and the Mushki who came from the east fused into one kingdom (Cavaignac 1953).

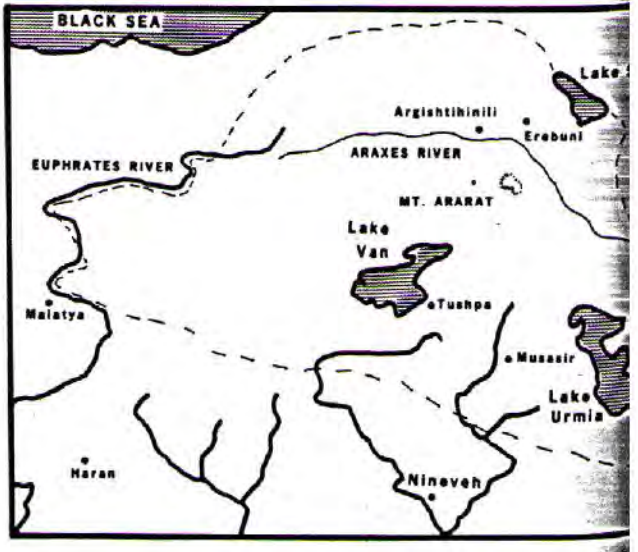
If Rosh is not Russia and Meshech and Tubal are both located in Turkey, we may still ask: Are there other biblical references to invaders from what is today the modern country of Russia? The answer is: Yes, there are. Biblical *Gomer* (Ezekiel 38:6; Genesis 10:2,3) may be associated with the invading tribe from Russia known in nonbiblical sources as the Cimmerians (Akkadian *Gimmiraia*; Greek *Kimmerioi*).

In the *Odyssey* XI.13–19, Homer associated the Cimmerians with a fog-bound land, perhaps the Crimea. Herodotus IV.11–13 relates that they were driven over the Caucasus by the Scythians in a domino-like effect as the Scythians were pushed west by others.

Cuneiform sources mention an invasion by the Cimmerians (Parpola 1970: 132–34). They first attacked the kingdom of Urartu (biblical Ararat) in the late eighth century. According to Assyrian reports King Rusa I (735–714) was so overwhelmed by the Cimmerian invasion that he committed suicide.



Bronze Urartian belt from the eighth century B.C. depicting ch but the horsemen wear Scythian trousers. Photograph courtes



horsemen. The charioteers are Assyrian in dress
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Urartu was weakened by a second Cimmerian raid in 707. The son of Rusa, Argishti, suffered a great defeat as reported by Sennacherib (Pfeiffer 1935: 11). The Cimmerians then passed west into eastern Anatolia where they encountered the Assyrians. Though quite advanced in age, Sargon II led the Assyrian army against the invaders. He perished in 705 while campaigning in Tabal. The Assyrians continued to be alarmed by the Cimmerian presence, as the questions addressed by Esarhaddon (681–668) to the god Shamash indicate. Esarhaddon was able to defeat the Cimmerians around 678 as they were threatening Tabal (Heidel 1956: 15).

The Cimmerians next swept into central and eastern Anatolia, seizing the Greek colony of Sinope on the north shore and devastating Gordion, the capital of Midas around 676. Excavations at Gordion by Rodney Young in the 1950s have uncovered evidence of the attack (see Mellink 1959).

From Assyrian sources we learn that the threat of the Cimmerians forced Gyges to appeal to the Assyrians for aid at some time between 668 and 665. A final raid in 644, in which the capital Sardis fell, resulted in the king's death (Spalinger 1978). A huge tumulus at Bin Tepe near Sardis, some 700 feet in diameter, marks his tomb. Tunnelling into the mound, George Hanfmann uncovered a reduplicated monogram for Gyges' name but failed to locate the sarcophagus itself.

Sweeping past Sardis, the Cimmerians also threatened the Greek cities of the Ionian coast (Smyrna, Magnesia, Ephesus) about fifty miles away. The Ephesian poet Kallinos, famed for his martial poetry, helped to rally his fellow citizens to defend themselves.

The Cimmerians were at that time led by Lygdamis (Strabo I.61), who can be identified with the Tugdamme of cuneiform sources. After his campaigns in western Anatolia, Tugdamme turned east again and threatened Cilicia in southeastern Anatolia. In a text inscribed on a golden incense altar, erected to Marduk at Babylon around 640, Ashurbanipal denounced his foe.

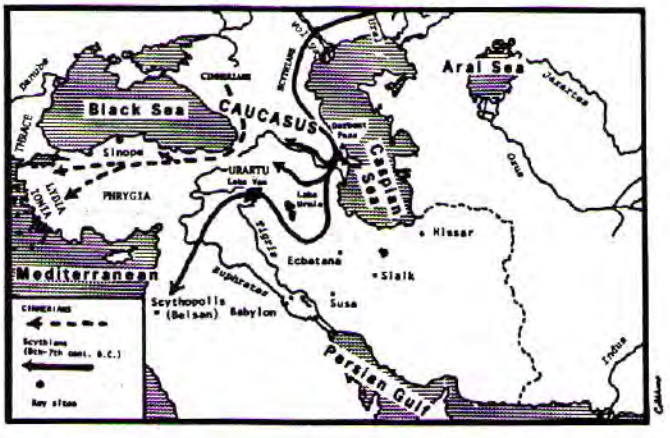
A fragmentary text published by A. R. Millard gives us details of Tugdamme's gruesome death:

> [. . .] the weapons of Ashur, my lord, overwhelmed him and he [went mad], and in his delirium chewed his knuckles [. . .] changed, and imposed on him his severe punishment. [One side of his body suffered a str]oke, piercing pain attacked his heart (Millard 1968: 109–10).

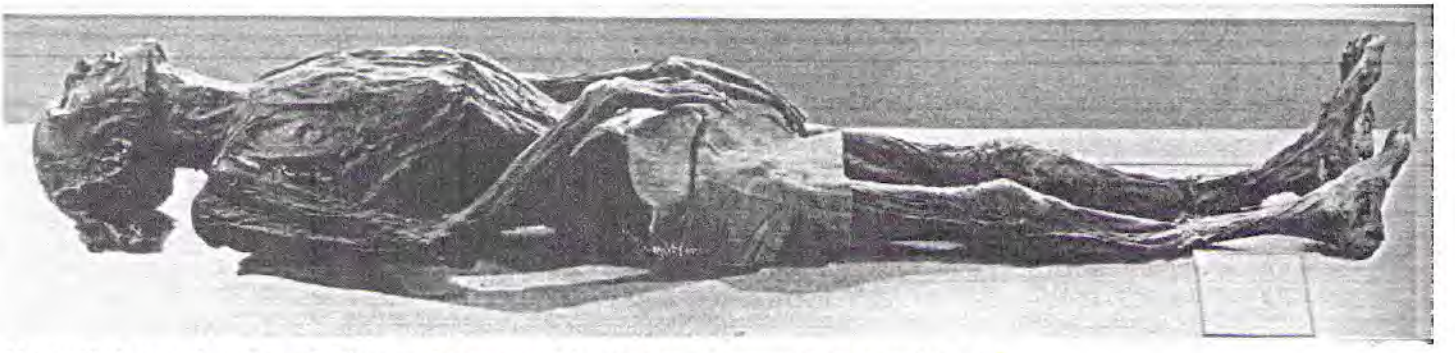
After this decisive defeat the Cimmerians did not survive as an entity. They merged with the native populations in eastern Anatolia which the Armenians were later to call Gomir.

Edwin Yamauchi

Urartu. (Adapted from B. Piotrovsky, The Ancient Civilization of Urartu, *Cowles, 1969.)*



Invasions and settlement of the Iranian Plateau in the late second and early first millennium B.C.



Mummified corpse from Pazyryk. Photograph courtesy of the Hermitage Museum in Leningrad, U.S.S.R.

enemies and used the scalps as "napkins." An illustrated cap found in a Kurdzhip barrow depicts a Scythian holding the head of a victim (Rice 1961: 54); the head of the chief from tomb number 2 at Pazyryk had been scalped.

In the case of the corpses at Pazyryk the entrails, muscles, and brains had been removed. The crania were then filled with soil, pine needles, and larch cones, and the skin sewn up with horsehair (Rudenko 1970: 280 ff.). Herodotus (IV.71) described the embalming of the chief as follows: "His belly [was] cut open and cleansed and filled with cut marsh-plants and frankincense and parsley and anise seed, and sewn up again."

At the death of the king, Herodotus continues (IV.71), the Scythians "bury, after strangling, one of the king's concubines, his cupbearer, his cook, his groom, his squire, and his messenger, besides horses." The sacrifice of a spouse and servants is amply attested by the excavations of Scythian tombs. In the great Chertomlyk burial there were skeletons in each of the four side-chambers: "In the north-west chamber, on remains of a bier painted dark and light blue, lay a woman's skeleton" (Phillips 1965: 75–76).

The sacrifice of horses is also well attested by archaeology. At the Kostromskaya burial, twenty-two horses were arranged on four sides of the tomb (Rice 1961: 102–03). At Chertomlyk "three graves of horses bridled with gold and silver and two of grooms with silver or gold torques and quivers of arrows" were discovered (Phillips 1965: 76). The frozen condition of the Pazyryk tombs preserved "not only skin and hair, but muscles, and entrails with the remains of undigested food" from ten yellow mares (Griaznov 1933: 32).

In the light of these striking discoveries, the reliability of Herodotus as a source for our knowledge of the Scythians can be affirmed. According to Rubinson (1975: 20), "In summary, we can see that Herodotus gives relatively accurate descriptions of the way of life of the nomads who were in fairly close contact with the Greeks, as, for example, in his description of the burial process." (See also Sulimirski 1954: 294; Rice 1961: 42.)

Savage Kinsmen in Christ

In the classical age of Greece (fifth century) the Scythians became well known as archers who fought both with and against the Greeks. In fact, as often noted in the plays of Aristophanes, a corps of Scythians served as a kind of police force in Athens. Though an exceptional Scythian like Anacharsis could become thoroughly Hellenized and gain fame as a sage, their gaudy pants and pointed caps constantly evoked wonder. Moreover their reputation for ferocity, their scalping of captives, and their other barbarous customs made their name synonymous with savagery down into the Christian era (compare 2 Maccabees 4:47; 3 Maccabees 7:5; 4 Maccabees 10:7; Josephus, *Contra Apion* 2.269; Tertullian, *Apology* 9.9).

It is these unsavory associations, then, which provide the point of the reference to the Scythians in Colossians 3:11—a word which means nothing to readers today but which would have aroused a strong emotional response from Paul's audience: "Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all." According to this passage, even those cruel, barbaric Scythians —the epitome of savagery in the ancient world—were capable of redemption through the grace of Christ!

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Scythian archer on an archaic Greek vase (530–520 B.C.) painted by Exekias. Photograph courtesy of the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania.

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