Tel Dan – Biblical Dan

An Archaeological and Biblical Study of the City of Dan

from the Iron Age II to the Hellenistic Period

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"Tell el-Kadi" (Tel Dan)

"Vettä, varjoja ja rehevää laidunta yllin kyllin – mikä ihana levähdyspaikka! Täysin siemauksin olemme kaikki nauttineet kristallinkirkasta vettä lähteestä, joka on 'maailman suurimpia', ja istumme teekannumme ympärillä mahtavan tammen juurella, jonne ei mikään auringon säde pääse kuumuutta tuomaan, sillä aikaa kuin hevosemme käyvät joen rannalla lihavaa ruohoa ahmimassa. Vaivumme niihin muistoihin, jotka kiertyvät levähdyspaikkamme ympäri."

"Kävimme kumpua tarkastamassa ja huomasimme sen olevan mitä otollisimman kaivauksille. Se on soikeanmuotoinen, noin kilometrin pituinen ja 20 m korkuinen; peltona oleva pinta on hiukkasen kovera. … Tulimme ajatelleeksi sitä mahdollisuutta, että reunoja on kohottamassa maahan peittyneet kiinteät muinaisjäännökset, ehkä muinaiskaupungin muurit. Ei voi olla mitään epäilystä siitä, että kumpu kätkee poveensa muistomerkkejä vuosituhansia kestäneen historiansa varrelta."

"Olimme kaikki yksimieliset siitä, että kiitollisempaa kaivauspaikkaa ei voine Palestiinassakaan toivoa. Rohkenin esittää sen ajatuksen, että tämä Pyhän maan pohjoisimmassa kolkassa oleva rauniokumpu varattaisiin suomalaisen retkikunnan tutkittavaksi. Matkatoverini olivat tälle ajatukselle myötätuntoiset, ja niin valtasin kummun Suomelle. Prof. Dalman lupasi tehdä kaikkensa valvoakseen etujamme. … Maailmansota katkaisi yhteyteni hänen ja Palestiinan kanssa. Onko rauhan palattua maailmaan tie Pyhään maahan enää aukeava suomalaiselle retkikunnalle? Siinä kysymys, johon ei tällä hetkellä käy vastaaminen."

"Ennen kuin jätämme ihanan Tell el-Kadin siihen liittyvine muistoineen ja tulevaisuuden-unelmineen käymme vielä katselemassa ihmeellistä lähdettä, joka kumpuaa kukkulan läntisellä juurella. Meidän on tunkeuduttava tiheän viidakon läpi päästäksemme lähteen reunalle. Siinä se on valtavana kuohuavana kattilana. Ääretön vesipaljous, joka sen pohjasta työntyy ilmoille, purkautuu eteläiseen suuntaan leveänä, vuolaana virtana."

Acknowledgements

Arthur Hjelt, Professor of Biblical Studies at the University of Helsinki during 1901–1931, travelled to Palestine in 1911. In his book *From Jerusalem to Damascus* (1917) he described with enthusiasm his visit to "Tell el-Kadi", and wrote about his suggestion that this mound should be reserved for a Finnish exploration team. Professor Gustav Dalman, the Director of the German Archaeological Institute in Jerusalem, promised to do his best to help him to carry out this project. Unfortunately, the First World War interrupted his contacts with both Prof. Dalman and Palestine. Excavations did not start at "Tell el-Kadi" (Tel Dan) until 1966 and, as far as I know, no Finnish group has ever excavated there. Nevertheless, I was glad to discover Arthur Hjelt's book and learn of his dream to excavate at Tel Dan. Today, a hundred years later, I am glad to submit this book to print and, perhaps, to participate in the excavations at Tel Dan in 2018 (?). I am thankful to Hjelt, and so many other Finnish scholars who left us a heritage of enthusiasm and passion for Near Eastern Studies in Finland.

During the long process of working with my dissertation, I received a great amount of support and friendship from numerous people. Firstly, I want to thank Prof. Martti Nissinen, who has patiently supervised me. He has been continuously interested in this work and encouraged me to finish this book. I thank Prof. Timo Veijola, who accepted me as a post-graduate student and guided my studies for several years. Many thanks to Doc. Risto Lauha, who also supervised me. I will always remember my inspiring discussions with him about archaeology, theology, and history. I am grateful for the invaluable remarks to Doc. Raz Kletter, who read the archaeological part of this study. In January 2017, I had a pleasure to discuss the archaeology of Tel Dan with Dr. David Ilan, the Director of the current Tel Dan Excavation Project. He kindly allowed me to read the last chapter of the forthcoming final report *Dan IV*. I deeply thank him and Mrs Levana Zias for the fruitful discussions.

I am glad that Prof. Wolfgang Zwickel and Prof. Kurt L. Noll agreed to be the pre-examiners of my manuscript. Their critical comments were of help in improving this work. Prof. Wolfgang Zwickel will also be my opponent, which is an added pleasure for me. I am deeply indebted to Dr. Christopher TenWolde, who edited the English language of my work on such a tight schedule. He did an excellent job. I am now responsible for the remaining mistakes. Thanks to Prof. Anneli Aejmelaeus for fruitful discussions in Göttingen and Helsinki, and Prof. Tapani Harviainen for his excellent teaching of the Semitic languages and cultures. I thank all those people with whom I studied and worked in the Department of Biblical Studies in 1999–2009. In particular, I thank Dr. Kirsi Valkama and MTh. Tuula Tynjä, with whom I have shared so many hours learning, discussing, and carrying out

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1. Introduction

1. 1. Overview and Aims of the Study

In the Hebrew Bible, the city of Dan is particularly known from the phrase "*from Dan to Beersheba*", denoting the northern and southern limits of the land of (all) Israel. This phrase covers almost half of the occurrences (9/21) of the city of Dan in the biblical texts.[1] Thus, Dan became a landmark for the northern border of Israel – and it still is today in the modern state of Israel. From 1949 until the six-day war in 1967, the borderline between Israel and Syria passed along the northern foot of Tel Dan. Commentaries and histories of ancient Israel have one after another described Dan as the northernmost *Israelite* city. As three of the biblical texts[2] also refer to the cultic activity in Dan, it was interpreted as a cultic center representing the official royal cult of the Northern kingdom (around 900−733 BCE), particularly after the excavations revealed a cultic enclosure at Tel Dan.

Biblical Dan was identified with the mound of Tell el-Qāḍī already in the 19th century. After the archaeological excavations were started at the site in 1966 and the identification was confirmed, Tell el-Qāḍī / Tel Dan became a significant archaeological site in Israel (see chapters 1.2 and 3). Excavations revealed that the site had been inhabited from the Neolithic to the Roman period, and a series of large cities have existed there since the Early Bronze period. The cultic enclosure and the fortification system with its complex gate construction, dated to the Iron Age II (around 900–730 BCE), linked Tel Dan to the biblical stories from the time of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. The find of the Tel Dan stela in 1993, with an Aramaic inscription mentioning *bt dwd* (the house of David) and *mlk ysr'l* (the king of Israel) aroused interest both among archaeologists and biblical scholars (see chapter 3.2).

Despite of its large size and significant location on one of the main roads from Egypt to Mesopotamia, Dan is not mentioned in Assyrian records or other extra-biblical sources, as Megiddo, Samaria, and Damascus are. Thus, the textual evidence comes from the biblical texts and the inscriptions found at the excavations of Tel Dan. In addition to the Tel Dan stela, a few Iron Age inscriptions and an Aramaic–Greek votive inscription from the 3rd century BCE were found at Tel Dan (see chapter 3.3). The village of Dan is also mentioned in the writings of Eusebios from the 4th century CE (see ch.1.2).

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[1] It appears in the books of Judges (once), First and Second Samuel (5 times), and First Kings (once), and in the Chronicles in the opposite order "from Beersheba to Dan" (twice). See chapters 1.3. and 4.1.
[2] Jdg 18:27–31, 1 Kgs 12:25–30, and Amos 8:14.

As part of the discussion about the historical validity of the biblical narratives (see chapter 1.4), several questions have been raised about Dan: was Tel Dan an "*Israelite*" city and when? Does its cult represent the religion of the kingdom of Israel (the Northern kingdom)? When, why, and by whom was the biblical phrase "*from Dan to Beersheba*" created, and how does it reflect the historical reality? What did the authors of the biblical texts know about the city of Dan? These questions can be summarized in one larger question: how do the biblical texts that mention a city of Dan relate to the historical reality of the Iron Age and the archaeological data from Tel Dan? This question is the focus of my dissertation. The methodological issues, such as the possibilities for and limits on reconstructing history, are also discussed.

The issue of the correspondence of the archaeological data with the textual evidence is challenging in the archaeology of Israel-Palestine, because the biblical narratives were so long regarded as reliable stories to form a frame for the history and chronology of the Iron Age remains. Archaeological research was tied to biblical studies, and archaeology was used to answer biblical questions.[3] This is apparent in the interpretations of the excavator of Tel Dan, Avraham Biran (1909–2008), who adopted the biblical stories as such into the reconstructions of the history of Tel Dan (see chapter 1.4). Therefore, a re-evaluation of the historical reconstructions proposed in the earlier research is necessary. It is also important to ask what we would know about the history of Tel Dan if the interpretations based on the Hebrew Bible are filtered away and, on the other hand, what kind of picture can be formed on the basis of the biblical texts. An examination of the archaeological material without the biblical narratives in mind is needed.[4]

Since 1990s, questions such as "can a history of Israel be written?" or "what did biblical writers really know?" have been asked and debated (see chapter 1.4). While the earlier discussion on the historicity of the biblical narratives was concentrated on the patriarchs, the origins of the Israelites, and the conquest stories in the books of Joshua and Judges, the discussion towards the end of the 20th century expanded to cover the later periods as well. The historicity of the "united" kingdom of David and Solomon and the concept of the "divided kingdom" have been debated. The history of the city of Dan – or the reconstructions of its history – will be studied in the context of these discussions.

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[3] Killebrew & Vaughn 2003, 1-3; On biblical archaeology, see Davis 2004, particularly the summary p. 154-156: "Biblical archaeology rested on two fundamental a priori assumptions: that the Bible was historical, and that archaeology provided an external, objective source of realia. ...Archaeology was to establish objective criteria for judging the historical validity of the biblical record."
[4] See Skjeggestad (2001, 1–17).

In chapter 1, the aims, ideas, and material of this study will shortly be presented (chapters 1.1–1.3), but a major part of the chapter concentrates on the methodological issues, particularly on reconstructing history. Chapter 1.4 shows how the position of the Hebrew Bible as a historical source has changed during the last hundred years. This is apparent both in the field of archaeology and in biblical studies. The chronology and absolute dating are also discussed. In chapter 1.5, the methodological principles and terminology used in this study will be presented.

Chapters 2–4 form the core of this study. In chapter 2, the archaeological remains of Tel Dan will be introduced. Chapter 2.1 introduces the excavations and stratigraphy of Tel Dan, and chapters 2.2–2.5 the archaeological remains relevant to this study: The main Iron Age II remains were found in two areas: the cultic enclosure in Area T (chapter 2.2) and the gate structures in Areas A and B (chapter 2.3). The Iron Age remains of these areas are better published and discussed than the remains of the other areas and the later periods, such as the Hellenistic and Roman material (chapter 2.4). Chapters 3 and 4 deal with textual material. The inscriptions from Tel Dan are studied in chapter 3. They include short inscriptions on vessels (chapter 3.1) and the Aramaic stela, the so-called Tel Dan Inscription (chapter 3.2), from the Iron Age, and an Aramaic-Greek stela from the Hellenistic period (chapter 3.3) The historical value of the inscriptions will also be discussed (chapter 3.4).

In chapter 4, the city of Dan in the Hebrew Bible is examined. The biblical passages which mention the city of Dan, and my view of the critical reading of the biblical texts, are presented in chapter 4.1. Each biblical passage is critically studied and interpreted in chapters 4.2 and 4.3 The passages have been classified according to the contents: those having cultic traditions (4.2), and the rest of the passages, including those with reference to the northern location of the city (4.3). The questions asked are: why is the city of Dan mentioned? What is the textual context? What is the connection between the different passages that mention Dan?

In chapter 5, Tel Dan will be examined in the context of the other major archaeological sites identified with the biblical cities of Hazor, Megiddo, and Samaria, the capital of the Northern kingdom, and Tell et-Tell (Bethsaida in the New Testament). The appearance of these cities in the Hebrew Bible will briefly be introduced, and the relation of the city of Dan to the kingdom of Israel will be explored: was the city of Dan part of the kingdom of Israel, and if so when? Is there sufficient archaeological and biblical evidence to answer this question? Did the cult of Dan represent the religion of the kingdom of Israel? Chapter 6 summarizes the results and conclusions of this dissertation.

1.2. Tel Dan and Its Research

Tel Dan (Tell el-Qāḍī) is located in the northernmost point of the Upper Jordan Valley, the Huleh basin, near the modern border of Lebanon (Fig. 1). At present the mound – bordered by the MB II ramparts – covers circa 20 hectares, and its height is about 18 meters from the valley.[5] The location by the sources of the Jordan River at the foot of the Hermon Mountains guaranteed sufficient water supply for the inhabitants at Tel Dan, and the fertile plains[6] all around the mound offered a good basis for economic development and self-sufficiency, in contrast with the meager mountains and plateaus around the valley.[7] Thus, the Huleh basin forms a rather isolated geographical and

Figure 1. Geographical regions of Israel-Palestine and Iron Age II sites.

ecological entity between the highlands, which do not support such prosperous living conditions as the valley itself.[8] The location of Tel Dan was also politically strategic, as it was located on one of the main roads from Egypt to Mesopotamia (Fig. 2).[9] Besides Hazor,

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[5] Biran 1994, 21, 23; Biran 1996a, 1.
[6] Biran 1994, 21; Aharoni 1979, 32: "Especially the northern part of the Huleh Valley has been known as a fertile and well-watered district with its cool and refreshing climate."
[7] The Ḥula basin is limited by the Mountains of Anti-Lebanon and Mount Hermon in the north and north-east, by the Golan heights in the east, by the mountain range of the Upper Galilee in the west.
[8] Greenberg, 1996, 151.
[9] Biran 1994, 21, 23; About the northern roads see Aharoni 1979, 44 (map), 53.

Tel Dan has evidently been the most outstanding city in the Huleh basin over the centuries. It undoubtedly influenced and governed the region in its surroundings.

In the 19th century, the mound was known by its Arabic name of Tell el-Qāḍī. It was identified with the biblical Dan in 1838 by an American scholar, Edward Robinson.[10] A Scottish traveler, John MacGregor, also observed the mound in 1869 and regarded it as a *tell*. In 1955, the site was named Tel Dan by the State of Israel. The identification of Tel Dan with the biblical Dan was supported in the course of Avraham Biran's excavations: a fragment of a limestone stela with an incised Greek and Aramaic
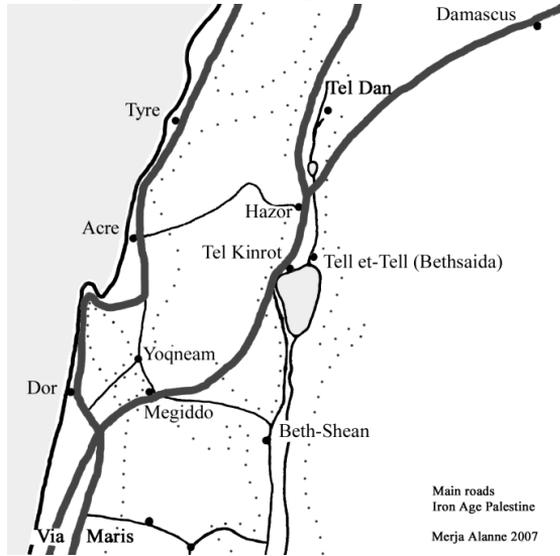
Figure 2. Main roads in Iron Age Palestine. The dotted lines enclose the mountains and highlands.

inscription was discovered in 1976.[11] The Greek text, dated to the late third or early second centuries BCE, is rather well preserved and readable, and can be translated as "to the god who is in Dan" (see chapter 3.3).[12]

The excavation project at Tel Dan was started as a rescue excavation in 1966, because of the threat of war between Israel and Syria. Until 1967, the *tell* was located just in the northern border of Israel against Syria, and the Israeli army had a post on the northern part of the mound. Therefore, only the southern range of the mound (Area A) could be explored. The excavation was directed from its very beginning by Avraham Biran, who then worked as the director of the Israel Department of Antiquities and Museums. After the six-day war (1967), the large scale excavations could be carried out at the *tell* by the Israel Department of Antiquities and Museums. Since 1974, the Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology of Hebrew Union College has been responsible for the excavations.[13] Avraham Biran continued as the director until the end of the project (years 1966 – 1999).[14]

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[10] Robinson 1842, 618. Robinson based his identification on the mention of Eusebius' Onomasticon from the 4th century CE that the village Dan was located four miles from Paneas (Banias). This literary note indicates that Dan still existed as a village during the first centuries CE. See the discussion of the identification of Dan in the 19th century in Robinson 1842, 616–620.
[11] Biran 1976, 204–205; 1994, 221–224; 1996a, 41.
[12] Biran 1994, 221.
[13] Biran 1996a, 1-5.
[14] Ellenson / Biran in Biran et al. 2002, III,1.

Alongside with the excavations, the site has also been conserved and restored by the Israel Antiquities Authority and the Government Tourist Corporation during 1990s.[15] New excavations have been carried out at the site in 2005–2016 by the Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion and directed by David Ilan.[16]

The excavations have yielded plenty of material, and revealed sequence of large cities at Tel Dan (Tell el-Qāḍī) since the Early Bronze Period. These have been reported in tens of preliminary reports and articles by Avraham Biran since 1966 (see bibliography). To date, three volumes of the final reports have been published: *Dan I* (1996), *Dan II* (2002) and *Dan III* (2011).[17] Volume *Dan IV* (Iron Age I, by David Ilan etc.) is forthcoming in 2017. Because it is not yet available, the unpublished doctoral dissertation of David Ilan is used here for the Iron Age I period.[18] However, David Ilan kindly let me read chapter 21 of the forthcoming report (*Dan IV*) and it is also referred to. Furthermore, Rafael Greenberg's report of the Early Bronze Period and its cultural affinities in the volume *Dan I,* and Rachel Ben-Dov's report on the Late Bronze Age "Mycenaean" tombs in the volume *Dan II,* are of great help in studying the Bronze Age strata. These volumes are useful in order to form a general picture of all the periods at the *tell,* against which the Iron Age remains can be reflected.

Because the volumes of the final reports, *Dan I –III,* do not yet include the Iron Age II period, my presentation in chapter 2 is based on the information gathered from the tens of rather short reports written within the last 40 years. The chronicles of the excavations in the beginning of the volumes *Dan I* and *Dan II* are also used to form a picture of what has been found, but the exact information including the locus numbers, find spots, contexts of the finds, and heights are in many parts difficult to discover. This information has to be picked out from the accidental notes and plans of the final volumes, which are unfortunately insufficient. A few articles were published in 2016, which provide some

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[15] Biran 1996a, 5, Ellenson in Biran et al. 2002, III. See also the chronicles of the excavations Biran 1996a, 7-62 and 2002, 3-32.
[16] http://www.teldanexcavations.com/past---present-excavations (visited on January 4th, 2017).
[17] Biran, Avraham et al. (1996) *Dan I*. A Chronicle of the Excavations, the Pottery Neolithic, the Early Bronze Age and the Middle Bronze Age Tombs. Jerusalem: Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology and Hebrew Union College (Annual VI); Ben-Dov, Rachel (2002) *Dan II. A Chronicle of the Excavations and the Late Bronze Age "Mycenaean" Tomb.* Jerusalem: Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology and Hebrew Union College (Annual VII); Ben-Dov, Rachel (2011) *Dan III—Avraham Biran Excavations 1966–1999: The Late Bronze Age.* Jerusalem: Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology Hebrew Union College (Annual IX).
[18] Ilan, David (1999) Northeastern Israel in the Iron Age I: Cultural, Socioeconomic and Political Perspectives. Volume one: Text. Volume two: Illustrations. Dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Tel Aviv University. Unpublished.

current data and re-interpretations of the forthcoming final reports, based on the new excavations in 2005–2016.[19]

Avraham Biran's popular work *Biblical Dan* provides a general overview for the results of the excavations, the stratigraphy, and the most significant discoveries, but its problem is its superficiality, inaccuracy, and a strongly biblical approach; it is not always clear if he bases his interpretations on the archaeological finds or the biblical texts. However, it includes important material on the structures and objects that are not yet published in any other articles. It also helps one to follow Biran's thinking and reasoning. Because of the lack of final reports, the archaeology of Tel Dan is not much examined by archaeologists, except in a few articles and books.[20] Only the Tel Dan stela has been intensively researched (see chapter 3.2). Also, the Iron Age II gate and cult place have often been referred to.

Despite of the risk of some incorrect conclusions due to the lack of the final reports, I find it necessary to examine such an important archaeological site as Tel Dan in the light of the material which is available. There are adequate publications for my purpose, although further reports could surely change some of my conclusions. Although Avraham Biran is criticized for his "biblicism", he managed to carry out a great excavation project that has yielded important archaeological evidence for the research of the history of northern Israel.

1.3. Biblical Dan and Its Research

Dan appears in several contexts and with several meanings in the Hebrew Bible. Aside from the name of the city,[21] Dan also occurs as the name of one of Jacob's sons (e.g. Gen 30:6, 35:25), the name of the tribe of Dan, "the Danites" (e.g. Num 1:38–39, 2:25), and their land (e.g. Ez 48:2), but these are beyond of the interest of this study. The city of Dan appears mostly in the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" (Judges–Kings) or "from Beersheba to Dan" (Chronicles), which expresses the northern and southern limits of the biblical "all Israel" (9 times). The other occurrences in the books of Joshua–Kings refer to the cult at

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[19] E.g. Thareani, Yifat 2016a, "Enemy at the Gates? The Archaeological Visibility of the Arameans at Dan." *In Search for Aram and Israel. Politics, Culture, and Identity.* Omer Sergi, Manfred Oeming, and Izaak J. de Hulster (Eds.). Oriental Religions in Antiquity. Vol. 20. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck; Thareani, Yifat 2016b, "Imperializing the Province: a Residence of a Neo-Assyrian City Governor at Tel Dan." Levant 48/3, 254–283.
[20] E.g. Arie 2008; Finkelstein 2013; Davis 2013; Greer 2013 (see chapter 1.3.).
[21] Gen 14:14; Josh 19:47; Jdg 18:29, 20:1; 1 Sam 3:20; 2 Sam 3:10, 17:11, 24:2, 6, 15; 1 Kgs 5:5, 12:29, 30, 15:20; 2 Kgs 10:29; 1 Chr 21:2; 2 Chr 16:4, 30:5; Jer 4:15; 8:16; Am 8:14.

Dan, the conquest of Dan by the Danites, a census by king David, and an attack on Dan by the Aramaic king Ben Hadad (8 times). Dan is also mentioned in three oracles in the books of Amos and Jeremiah, and it appears in one of the Abraham stories in Genesis (4 times). Most of the references are just short mentions. All of these passages will be studied in detail in chapter 4.

Before the excavations were started at Tel Dan, the city of Dan was mainly discussed in biblical commentaries. It was depicted as the city at the northern limits of Israel since the "period of Judges". In addition, it was associated with the cultic reforms of king Jeroboam I on the basis of 1 Kgs 12:25–30. The first thorough study of the Danites was published in 1985 by Hermann Niemann, *Die Daniten*.[22] It deals with the tribe of Dan and its origin in the biblical texts. The book also includes a short chapter on the excavations of Tel Dan and the comparison between the exegetical and archaeological results.[23] Niemann concludes that during the 13th century BCE the Danites became a tribe that migrated to the north and to the city of Laish/Dan in the beginning of the 12th century. Later on, Niemann changed his opinions in many respects, particularly regarding the dating of the stories and the historicity of the biblical texts.[24] In his article (2006) "Core Israel in the Highlands and its Periphery: Megiddo, the Jezreel Valley and the Galilee in the 11th to 8th Centuries BCE" he suggests that the core of the kingdom of Israel was limited to the central highlands and that it only occasionally expanded to the north.[25]

The biblical passages on the city of Dan were examined in two articles by Kurt L. Noll: "The City of Dan in the Pre-Assyrian Iron Age" (1995) and "The God Who is Among the Danites" (1998).[26] In these articles Noll examines what the biblical narratives actually say about the city of Dan. He concludes that the passages are contradictory, and offers rather little information about the city. He summarizes that even according to the biblical texts Dan was an "Israelite" city only for short periods. In his book *Canaan and Israel in Antiquity* (2013),[27] he confirms his earlier views that the periods of Israelite control over the city of Dan might have been in reality in the late tenth century, and some

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[22] Hermann Michael Niemann (1985), *Die Daniten.Studien zur Geschafte eines altisraelitischen Stammes.* Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht. Göttingen.

[23] See chapter 7, Niemann, Hermann Michael (1985, 259–271), *Die Daniten.Studien zur Geschichte eines altisraelitischen Stammes.* Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

[24] See e.g. Niemann 1999, 25–48 in which he dates the conquest story of the Danites in Jdg 18 to the eitgth century BCE.

[25] In 2006, *Megiddo IV: the 1998–2002 seasons.* Israel Finkelstein, David Ussishkin and Baruch Halpern (eds.). Monograph Series of the Institute of Archaeology; Tel Aviv University, No 24: Tel Aviv, 821–842.

[26] Kurt L. Noll (1995) "The City of Dan in the Pre-Assyrian Iron Age" PEGLMBS 15, 145–156 and (1998) "The God Who is Among the Danites" JSOT 80, 3–23.

[27] Noll 2013, 286–296.

decades in the middle of the ninth century (Omride dynasty), and sometime in the eighth century BCE. He also says that "the prevailing scholarly assumption" that Dan had continuously been Israelite is influenced by the biblical phrase "*from Dan until Beersheba"* that he finds "an ideal rather than a reality."[28]

After the find of three fragments of the so called Tel Dan inscription in 1993 and 1994, tens of articles have been written concerning the inscription and the history behind it. This Aramaic inscription on stela was published and interpreted by Avraham Biran and Joseph Naveh in 1993 and 1994.[29] The dates giving to it vary from the mid-ninth to the early eighth century BCE, and different Aramean kings have been suggested as its author. Different suggestions have also been proposed for who the "king of Israel" (*mlk ysr'l*) which the inscription mentions actually is. The first thorough monograph, *The Tel Dan Inscription. A Reappraisal and a New Interpretation,* was published in 2003 by George Athas.[30] For more, see the discussion and bibliography in chapter 3.

Mark Bartusch (2003) examined the traditions of Dan in his book *Understanding Dan. An Exegetical Study of a Biblical City, Tribe and Ancestor.*[31] He treated all the biblical passages concerning Dan or the Danites, and determined that Judges 18:29–30 is the only biblical passage in which the traditions of the ancestor, the tribe, and the city are woven together. Thus, he supposes that these three elements of the Dan tradition have origins of their own, and the writer of Jdg 18:29–30 has combined therm. The main point of his book is however to prove that the attitude to the Danite traditions was originally neutral, but changed to negative in the course of time; the later biblical editors introduce all the traditions in a negative light. The Danites are presented as being apostate from Yahwistic tradition, which was not the case in the earliest state of the texts. According to him, this development continues in the New Testament and the writings of the church fathers. He dates the biblical texts concerning the city of Dan from the tenth/ninth to the sixth/fifth centuries BCE.

Three books have been published concerning the cult of Dan: Jason S. Bray (2006): *Sacred Dan. Religious Traditions and Cultic Practice in Judges 17–18*[32], Jonathan Greer

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[28] Noll 2013, 286–287.

[29] Biran, Avraham and Naveh, Joseph (1993), "An Aramaic Stele Fragment from Tel Dan", IEJ 43, 81-98; (1995) "The Tel Dan Inscription: A New Fragmen", IEJ 45, 1-18.

[30] Athas, George (2003), *The Tel Dan Inscription. A Reappraisal and a New Interpretation.* JSOT Supplement 360. The University of Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.

[31] Bartusch, Mark (2003), *Understanding Dan. An Exegetical Study of a Biblical City, Tribe and Ancestor.* JSOT, Supplement 379. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.

[32] Bray, Jason S. (2006), Sacred Dan. Religious Traditions and Cultic Practice in Judges 17–18. JSOT Suppl. 449. New York: T&T Clark.

(2013): *Dinner at Dan[33],* and Andrew R. Davis (2013): *Tel Dan in Its Northern Cultic Context.*[34] According to Bray, Judges 17–18 illustrates the religion of the kingdom of Israel "in the late pre-exilic period", prior to the fall of the kingdom of Israel to the Assyrian Empire, but written after that. Although he interprets the story as a legend, he says that it still carries historically valid information about the foundation of the shrine in Dan in which Yahvistic religion was practiced. He claims that its religion was theologically advanced, but defamed by the "pro-Jerusalem Deuteronomists", who believed that Jerusalem was the only legitimate place for the worship of Yahweh, and by whose hands the biblical portrayal is transmitted.

Greer explores the cult of Dan in the light of the biblical texts and the archaeological material of the Iron Age cultic enclosure at Tel Dan (Area T). The intention of his study is to find out if the biblical description of the sacred feats can be identified with the finds from Tel Dan, and his conclusions are positive. His book offers valuable and earlier unpublished archaeological data from Tel Dan, such as the results of the analysis of some deposits of ceramic and animal bones, which illustrate the cult practiced there. The problem with his theory is that he identifies this cult with that of the Northern kingdom without a critical study of the biblical stories. He refers to the debate on the historicity, but treats the biblical descriptions as if they were an authentic description from Iron Age reality.

Davis also examines both the archaeological and biblical evidence. He uses the spatial theory created by Henri Lefebvre in the study of the remains of the Iron Age II cultic enclosure at Tel Dan (Area T) and a few biblical texts. He chose the descriptions of the cult in 1 Kgs 18 and in the book of Amos, which, according to him, best correlate with the biblical cult that corresponds to the finds at Tel Dan. Thus, he presents a new approach by using the same method in studying both the archaeological remains and the biblical texts. His study illustrates the connection between the sacred space and ritual activity in both of them, and he also concludes that the cultic remains of Tel Dan reflects the "ancient Israelite religion and the religious traditions of the northern kingdom".

Two studies concerning the cult of the gates are of value from the point of view of this thesis, because cultic objects including standing stones, cultic structures, and vessels were also found at the gate area of Tel Dan (Areas A and AB). Some similarities can be

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[33] Greer, Jonathan (2013), Dinner at Dan.Biblical and Archaeological Evidence for the Sacred Feasts at Iron Age II Tel Dan and Their Significance. Culture and History of the Ancient Near East, Vol. 66. Leiden, Boston: Brill.
[34] Davis, Andrew R. (2013), Tel Dan in Its Northern Cultic Context.

found between them, and the finds of Tell et-Tell (Bethsaida) which are presented, for example, in the book of Monika Bernett and Othmar Keel (1998): *Mond, Stier und Kult am Stadttor. Die Stiel von Betsaida (et-Tell).*[35] Tina Haettner Blomquist (1999) has studied the potential sites representing the cult of the gates in Iron Age Palestine. She utilizes both archaeological and biblical sources[36], and concludes that gate cult was practiced at the main gate of Tel Dan.

1.4. Reconstructing History – Possibilities and Limits

1.4.1. Avraham Biran's Reconstruction of the History of Iron Age Tel Dan and Its Evaluation

Avraham Biran provides an overview of his interpretation of the history of Tel Dan in his popular book "Biblical Dan" (1994). His interpretations are also presented in his articles, and in the introduction of the excavation report "Dan I" (1996). This chapter is based on those publications.

Biran distinguished three strata (IVA, III, and II) within the Iron Age IIB city (see chapter 2, tables 1 and 2, p.50, 56). He identified these strata with the biblical city of "Israelite" Dan during the Kingdom of Israel (Northern Kingdom), which lasted from the late 10th century BCE to the Assyrian conquest around 732 BCE, after which the city of Stratum I flourished under Assyrian rule.[37] He also states that Tel Dan (= biblical Dan) was already settled by the "Israelites" during the Iron Age I (1150 BCE onwards, Strata VI−V),[38] when the Danites conquered the city as described in Joshua 19:47−48 and Judges 18.[39] Thus, he follows with confidence the biblical narratives in interpreting the archaeological record. Although he supposes that Dan was kept under "Israelite" control from Stratum VI to Stratum II (through Iron Age I−II around 1050−732 BCE), he does not assign any stratum or construction to the period of David or Solomon. This is a problematic period if the biblical narratives of the large kingdom of David and Solomon

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[35] Monika Bernett and Othmar Keel (1998) *Mond, Stier und Kult am Stadttor. Die Stiel von Betsaida (et-Tell).*[35] Freiburg: Universitätsverlag.

[36] Haettner Blomquist, Tina (1999) Gates and Gods. Cults in the City Gates of Iron Age Palestine. An Investigation of the Archaeological and Biblical Sources. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International.

[37] Biran 1994, 22-23, 159–254.

[38] Biran stands for the traditional view about the identification of the Iron I people with the biblical tribes of Israel (chapter 6 in Biran 1994, 125–146). In fact, no archaeological remains give any hints about the ethnic origin of the Iron I inhabitants of Dan.

[39] Biran 1994, 125−126.

are relied upon (2 Sam 24, 1 Kgs 4−5:5), because the 10th century BCE remains (the time of David and Solomon) are not abundant at Tel Dan. At least, the "biblical" descriptions of the flourishing time of Solomon do not fit with the evidence from 10th century BCE Dan. According to Biran's chronology, Stratum IV(B) might represent the remains of the 10th century BCE, but it still represents a continuation of the village culture of Stratum V (see chapter 2.1).

In contrast, Biran undoubtedly assigned the establishment of the cultic site in Stratum IVA (Area T)[40] to Jeroboam I, the first king of the biblical "divided kingdom". Its dating was based on the relative stratigraphy, pottery, and, essentially, on the biblical story in 1 Kgs 12:25−30 in which Jeroboam set up two golden bulls: one in Dan and another in Bethel.[41] Accordingly, Biran identified the cultic enclosure at Tel Dan with the site of the golden bulls of the biblical story. Biran also says that the cultic site at Area T had a long history before the time of Jeroboam I. However, there is no archaeological evidence to verify this hypothesis. Some scattered cultic-like artifacts from the Bronze Age have been found, but this is not enough to conclude that there was a cultic site before Stratum IVA. Only in Area B was a small cultic room of Stratum V found (see chapter 2.1.2). In this case it is obvious that Biran does not rely for his interpretations on the archaeological finds, but the biblical story in Jdg 18:27–31.

Indeed, archaeological material proves that during the Iron Age IIB (from the late10th / early 9th to the late 8th and still during the 7th centuries BCE) Tel Dan was one of the major cities in northern Israel, alongside Hazor, Megiddo, and Samaria. These cities were also strongly fortified during the 9th and 8th century BCE. The gate and fortification systems at Tel Dan were especially massive, reflecting the stratigraphic position and importance of the settlement (see chapter 2.3). Furthermore, the archaeological evidence supports the biblical view that Dan was a religious center (see Jdg 18:27–31, 1 Kgs 12:25–33, Am 8:14). However, Biran's correlation of the biblical stories with the archaeological evidence is too over-simplified, and incorrect. He interprets the archaeological data through a few biblical stories and uses biblical texts for absolute dating without criticism. He does not take into account the temporal and spatial distance of the biblical writers to the Iron Age reality of Tel Dan, and identifies the Iron Age remains with the biblical texts without critical examination. His assumption and reasoning imply that the biblical texts are

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[40] Biran claims that the Iron Age II cult place was established in Stratum IVA. However, he does not say anything about Stratum IVB in this area, but mentions the remains of Stratum V. It is not clear how he defines and separates these two sub phases of Stratum IV. See more of this problem in chapter 2.
[41] See Biran 1994, 165.

authentic sources for the Iron Age reality, and that they can be utilized as primary historical records for the Iron Age II period.[42] Hence, a critical study of the biblical texts and archaeological remains – what has really been found – is needed (see tables 1 and 7).

1.4.2. The Search for History: "Biblical History" or the History of Israel-Palestine

The concept of Israel's history has greatly changed during the last two centuries. Until the 19th century, the Hebrew Bible was in practice the only known source[43] deriving from the ancient Near East, and it was read as a historical source depicting the main phases of Israel's history. This picture has gradually changed as a consequence of the critical study of the Bible and archaeological research in the Middle East. It is reasonable to ask to what degree "*biblical history*"[44] is relevant to the history of Israel-Palestine[45]. Two hundred years of the historical-critical study[46] of the Hebrew Bible has proved the complicated writing and editing process of the Hebrew Bible, revealing its literary-religious character; therefore, it cannot be taken as a primary source for the historical reality of Iron Age Israel-Palestine.

Archaeological research in the Middle East has extended the knowledge of the history of the ancient Near East since the 17th−18th centuries, and the archaeology of Palestine since the 19th century. On the other hand, archaeological evidence has proved the existence of the ancient Near Eastern kingdoms, including Israel and Judah, and the great empires (Babylonia, Assyria, Egypt, the Hittite kingdom)[47] which were known only

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[42] This was the fundamental assumption of the school of 'biblical archaeology' which Biran and his generation of Israeli archaeologists mainly represent. Biran was born in Israel in 1909. He studied and finished his PhD dissertation in 1935 under the supervision of William F. Albright, who can be regarded as the father of 'biblical archaeology'. See interview of Biran: Shanks 1999, 30–47. On the history of biblical archaeology see Davis 2004.

[43] In addition, some other Hellenistic and Roman literature was also known, including ancient histories like those of Josephus and Manetho from the Hellenistic period. See on Hellenistic literature in Koester 1995, 235−271.

[44] By the term "biblical history" I mean the "history" created by the biblical authors and editors over a process of hundreds of years, when the biblical texts were edited and composed into the books, and one epoch was created reflecting the self-understanding of the Jewish community of its own past.

[45] With the term "history of Israel-Palestine" I refer to the modern research of history, archaeology, and biblical studies that covers the geographical region of the modern states of Israel-Palestine, Jordan, and Southern Syria and Lebanon.

[46] The roots of the historical-critical research of the Bible can be seen in the time of the reformation in the early 16th century, but the birth of the scientific historical-critical method can not be dated before the 18th century. Hans Joachim Kraus dates its beginning to the period of Enlightenment. Kraus 1982, 6–43, 80. According to Douglas A. Knight, the beginning of the source criticism can be traced to the early 18th century. 1994, ix.

[47] Discoveries of Hieroglyphic and Akkadian cuneiform inscriptions led to the birth of Egyptology and Assyriology during the 19th century. The ancient Near East came into new light through these written

through the Bible until the 19th century. Thus, some aspects of the biblical stories could be verified.[48] However, at the same, it appeared that the Hebrew Bible was not as unique a historical and religious document as was thought, but rather that it shared many similarities with the other religions in the Near East,[49] and its "history" appeared to include fictive stories. Within the field of biblical research this led to the search for what could be identified as distinctive to the Hebrew Bible alone,[50] and what history it might include. The historicity of *"biblical history"*, and the character of "Israelite" historiography, have been debated by biblical scholars since the end of the 19th century.

Historical-Critical Study of the Hebrew Bible

From the 17th century onwards, and especially in the 19th century, historical questions were posed for the biblical texts, particularly in German research.[51] As a result, the literary critical study of the Bible was developed alongside the textual criticism.[52] The aim was to search for the "original" text layers, and thus to get nearer to the "real" biblical events. The scholars attempted to differentiate between the original, "genuine" text and the later additions, comments, and stories. During the 20th century, the questions of the historical-critical study of the Bible were changed. Historical questions, which dominated in the previous century, were replaced by theological questions. The unity of the Bible was sought for in order to "return to the unitary Bible ... Was there something that could be said about the Old Testament as whole?"[53] The development of the religious, theological, and ideological thinking was researched by the *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule*.[54] Following the change in the research questions, new methods were created in the context of the historical-critical study, such as form criticism and, later on, redactor criticism.[55] As a

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sources and archaeological evidence deriving from the third to first millennia BCE. The biblical studies had to be newly oriented when the historical and religious documents yielded new knowledge: the Tell el-Amarna letters (1887/88) and the inscriptions from Elephantine 1906 in Egypt; in Mesopotamia (the mid 19th century): Chorsabad, Assyrian king Sargon (Paul-Emile Botta), Tell Nimrud (A.H.Layard, 1845), around 20 000 clay tables from the library of Assyrian king Assurbanipal (Nineveh, Major Henry Creswicke Rawlinson). Codex Hammurabi 1901–02 was discovered in Susa. Kraus 1982, 297–298. See also Moore and Kelle 2011, 10−11.

[48] Compare Babel-Bibel dispute Kraus 1982, 309−314: Archaeological excavations revealed the past glory of the Akkadian empires, Assyria and Babylon. No one could any more reject the existence of these ancient empires that had long been known only through the Hebrew Bible.

[49] Barr 1999, 101−105.

[50] Barr 1999, 19–20.

[51] Kraus 1982, 44−79, 174−208.

[52] Kraus 1982, 242−274.

[53] Barr 1999, 18.

[54] Kraus 1982, 327−340.

[55] Kraus 1982, 341−367, 532−553; See also Barton, John (1996) *Reading the Old Testament: Method in Biblical Study*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd.

consequence of the criticism of the traditional historical-critical methods, new approaches were developed[56] towards the end of the 20th century, and the methodologies of other fields of research were also adopted to biblical studies, such as the general literary and social sciences, psychological, ideological, or feministic approaches, and many others.[57]

The influence of historical-critical research on the understanding of Israel's history has been twofold: on the one hand, the term 'historical-critical' implies that the Hebrew Bible includes information from historical events, but the texts must be studied with criticism; on the other hand, historical-critical study has led to the result that the number of the so-called *historically valid* texts of the Bible has significantly decreased, while more and more texts are seen as "late" or "post-exilic" (post-monarchic). In the late 19th century, the presumption was that there were historical events behind the biblical texts, from which the texts derived, and that these "real" events could be found by analyzing the texts. The later expansions into the texts or "late" stories were judged as non-historical, folkloristic, or legendary. The main divider in the attempt to date the textual strata was the *biblical exile*. Thus, the texts have been classified to represent the pre-exilic, exilic, or post-exilic era.[58]

The destruction of Jerusalem and Judah around 586 BCE is still seen as an essential event in the birth and formation of the biblical texts. It divides the biblical texts as (originally) monarchic and post-monarchic, but the editing of the texts continued until the first centuries BCE. The later textual elements are explained by new historical situations in which the earlier story or text had been reinterpreted, expanded, or had commentary additions attached to it. Thus, the earlier texts were edited in new historical situations in order to get them to better correspond to the current needs of the people and their religious community. Today, the interest is not only in the "earliest" biblical texts, but also in the texts of different ages, which are examined from the point of view of what they speak on the thinking, theology, and ideology of the time in which they were written.

Although the intention to trace the original events and to date the text strata has appeared to be complicated, the significance of the historical-critical study approach cannot be denied. It has proved the complicated process of the birth and development of the biblical texts and narratives, in which the historical "facts" and fictions from different times have been intertwined. The Hebrew Bible is a compilation of a variety of texts,

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[56] For example canonical approach, see Childs, Brevard S. (1985), Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context. London:SCM.
[57] See Barton 1996 and Barr 2000.
[58] These terms are still in use in some studies, although most scholars avoid them because they are purely biblical terms (see chapter 1.5).

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representing multiple religious and ideological layers, in which the various text strata include their own theological thinking. Therefore, it is difficult to maintain the belief that the Hebrew Bible should provide a steadfast framework for historical study. Because of its fragmentary character, *biblical history* cannot create the overall frame for the history of Israel-Palestine, but the examination of the biblical texts can reveal some details reflecting past events, and especially the theological and ideological thinking of the biblical writers and editors. Thus, the biblical texts cannot be regarded as primary, but rather secondary sources for the events they describe.[59]

Archaeology of Israel-Palestine

The archaeology of Palestine was born during the 19th century as a consequence of a general interest for the history of ancient Near East, where the roots of European civilization were then seen to exist. It was also greatly motivated by the Bible, through which Palestine was already known as a "holy land". In the end of 19th century BCE, the interest in revealing the hidden remains of the Biblical lands, and in exploring the holy sites and their history, increased.[60] This interest was concentrated on the major biblical sites. The biblical texts and research also offered the problems which archaeology was expected to work out. Important sites were traced and identified with the help of the geographical hints found in the Bible.[61] The birth of archaeological research was preceded by several explorers who surveyed the country and prepared the way for archaeological investigations in 18th and 19th century BCE. They laid the foundation for the study of the geography and topography of Palestine, and recorded ancient monuments, *tells,* and ruins.[62] One of the most famous, the American explorer Edward Robinson, already managed to identify several biblical sites, including Tel Dan.[63]

A significant step was taken when the Palestinian Exploration Fund was founded in 1865 in Great Britain.[64] The aim of this new fund was to practice "the accurate and

[59] See Grabbe 2007, 35: He defines primary sources as sources that are "contemporary or nearly contemporary with the events being described. This means archaeology and inscriptions. The biblical text is almost always a secondary source, written and edited long after the events ostensibly described. … the text may depend on earlier sources, but these sources were edited and adapted."
[60] See Na'aman 2011, 165.
[61] See e.g. Aharoni 1979, 81–92; 105–130.
[62] See Kraus 1982, 295–296; Moorey 1981, 20–21. According to Moorey, Robinson understood the *tells* as having been "bases or platforms for buildings". If he did not see any ruins on the surface of the *tell* he did not recognized it.
[63] This identification was confirmed by excavations more than one hundred years later. See Biran 1994, 25.
[64] Charles Warren (1840–1927) was the first researcher to be sent by the organization to explore the historical topography of Jerusalem. He found an ancient water system (Warren's shaft) in Jerusalem outside the Old City, village of Silwan. The most important contribution to archaeology was made by funding the

systematic investigation of the archaeology, the topography, the geology and physical geography, the manners and customs of the Holy Land, for biblical illustration".[65] A few other institutions and quarterlies for Palestinian archaeology were also established in Europe[66] and the United States.[67] Some very religiously motivated organizations were also established, especially in North America.[68] The religious intention is a typical American reaction for the European biblical criticism. Thus, the archaeology of Palestine was from its beginning more or less involved with biblical interest and seen as part of the biblical studies.[69]

The first archaeological excavation was started at Tell el-Hesi in 1890 by the British archaeologist Flinders Petrie (1853–1942). Petrie first realized the idea of stratigraphy, and developed the method in which different layers of occupations and pottery could be discerned and described. Because of his knowledge of Egyptian material, he was able to create a rough absolute chronology with the help of dateable Egyptian pottery and seals carrying the names of rulers.[70] Until the First World War, several major sites[71] were excavated and the foundation for methodology and documentation were established. However, the published reports of these early excavations differ greatly in quality and in the presentation of their results, such as descriptions of stratigraphy and chronology, typologies of pottery and other objects, parallels with other sites, periodization, and interpretations of historical context and connections.

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cartographical work in Palestine; the first scientific map of Palestine was published in 1879. It covered the region from the Mediterranean to Jordan in the east-west orientation and from Banias (near Tel Dan) to Beersheba in the north-south orientation. Moorey 1981, 21, 23; Kraus 1982, 295: This work was continued by the German architect G. Schumacher in 1896−1902.

[65] Kenyon 1985, 1. The Quarterly of this fund started to appear in 1869 ("Palestine Exploration fund Quarterly Statements" / "Palestine Exploration Quarterly" since 1937.

[66] In Germany (1877): Der Deutsche Verein zur Erforschung Palästinas (Deutscher Palästina-Verein) and the quarterly Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins. Kamlach and Vieweger 2002, 1; In France "Ecole pratique d'Etudes bibliques du Couvent St. Etienne" and "Revue biblique" since 1892. Kraus 1982, 296.

[67] The American School of Oriental Research, an apolitical and not religiously oriented society, (1900), and its journal the Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research (1919). See web pages of ASOR (ASOR home): http://www.asor.org/

[68] For example, the Committee of the Palestine Exploration Society (1870) in New York. Its task was explicitly defined to serve religious needs. See quotation from its instrument of foundation in Ben Tor 1992:8: "Modern skepticism assails the Bible at the point of reality...Hence whatever goes to verify Bible history as real...is a refutation of unbelief...The Committee feels that they have in trust a sacred service for science and for religion."

[69] Deever 1990, 12; Moore and Kelle 2011, 21.

[70] Moorey 1981, 24; Mazar 1990, 11.

[71] The *tells* excavated in the early 20th centuries are Gezer (R.A.S. Macalister 1902–1909), Megiddo (G. Schumacher 1903–1905), Samaria (G.A. Reisner and C.S. Fisher 1908–11), Beth Shemesh (D. Mackenzie 1911–12), Taanach (E. Sellin 1902–04), and Jericho (Sellin and Watzinger 1907–08). Furthermore, in Jerusalem several expeditions carried out excavations. For example, F.J. Bliss and A.C. Dickie excavated the Mount Zion while the city of David was explored by R. Weill, R.A.S. Macalister, J.G. Duncan, J.W. Crowfoot, and G.M. Fitzgerald. See Mazar 1990, 11−12; Kraus 1982, 299. Excavations in Jerusalem: Geva 2000, 1−2.

Amihai Mazar divides the research history of Palestinian archaeology into three periods: research before the First World War, the period between the wars, and research after the Second World War since 1948.[72] The period between the World Wars was characterized by the rise of *Biblical Archaeology*. It primarily started and was concentrated in the United States, but Israeli archaeology and many European scholars, too, have been greatly influenced by this school, especially by its establisher, William Foxwell Albright,[73] who was also the teacher of Avraham Biran, the excavator of Tel Dan.

Biblical archaeology was not only motivated by the Hebrew Bible, but also by a desire to confirm the historicity of biblical narratives. Although Biblical archaeology can be seen as a part of the larger phenomenon of interest in research on the ancient Near East, it was obviously a reaction against "liberal" biblical study, which was seen to undermine the authority and historicity of the Hebrew Bible.[74] Many biblical archaeologists aimed to verify "*biblical history*" as the "true history" of Israel by the means of archaeological evidence. Its task was to set *biblical history* into the context of Near Eastern history, as revealed by archaeological excavations, as Thomas L. Thompson[75] says: "W.F. Albright, to some extent in reaction to Wellhausen, … also wishing to make the case that Israel's early history must be found in the context of a history of the whole ancient Near East, attempted a history of the ancient Near Eastern world from the Paleolithic period to the Christian era. In doing so, he placed Israel and its history within that context (Albright 1940[76])."

Alongside the school of Biblical archaeology, European research, especially German, followed the direction of Albrecht Alt and Martin Noth. They were biblical scholars, trained in historical-critical methods but also interested in the study of Israel's past and the archaeology of (Israel-)Palestine. They were critical of taking the biblical texts at face value. They also used sociological methods ahead of the results of archaeology in order to reconstruct Israel's ancient history. The influence of Albright, Alt, and Noth on the study of Israel's history was so significant that it lasted until the 1970s without any seriously competitive theories arising.[77]

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[72] Mazar 1990, 10. See also Ben-Tor 1992, 5−7, 7−9.
[73] See Dever 1990, 13−16.
[74] Moore and Kelle 2011, 11−17.
[75] Thompson 1987, 28. Similarly Moore and Kelle 2011, 14−16.
[76] See Albright (1940), *From the Stone Age to Christianity.* Garden City: John Hopkins University Press; Albright (1949), *The Archaeology of Palestine.* Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
[77] Moore and Kelle 2011, 16−17. Thompson (1987, 12-15) describes continental biblical research during 1930−1960 as a search for the historical events which lie 'behind the text'. This was done through combining the results of the historical-critical study of the Hebrew Bible, biblical archaeology, and sociological studies. From the point of view of theology, the historical core was found essential in order not to break down the

Since the 1960s, the archaeology of Israel-Palestine has developed in a more independent direction. The so-called "New Archaeology" (known as "processual archaeology") of the 1970s utilized the methods of social and environmental research, as well as comparative ethnographical studies.[78] According to this approach, the task of archaeology was to illustrate the past societies and their way of living by means of archaeological methods, instead of solving biblical problems. When the problems of using the Hebrew Bible as a source were recognized, the terminology was also discussed. The demand to replace the term "biblical archaeology" with "Syro-Palestinian archaeology" was discussed.[79] Aside from the historical questions, the social-scientific approaches modifying the methods of the "New Archaeology" were used.[80] However, "biblical history" continued to provide a framework for archaeological periodization, and biblical texts have also granted names to the ancient peoples of Palestine.[81]

As different methods and approaches were adopted into biblical studies, the same happened in the archaeology of Israel-Palestine, and Israel's past was examined from different points of view.[82] Intensive debate on the potential use of the Hebrew Bible as a source in reconstructing Israel's history was carried on in the 1990s by both archaeologists and biblical scholars. The historicity of the Davidic−Solomonic kingdom was one of the topics of this discussion. It was inspired by the find of the Tel Dan inscription (1993 and 1994), which mentions *"bt dwd"*. An alternative chronology, the "low chronology", for the Iron Age II period by Israeli archaeologist Israel Finkelstein, was also debated. These will be discussed in the next chapter below.

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idea of the salvation history, which emphasizes God's acts in real history. He mentions such scholars as Albrecht Alt (1953, 1959), Martin Noth (1943, 1948, 1950), G.E. Wright (1957,1962), Gerhard von Rad (1972, 1957), Ronald de Vauz (1946-49; 1965; 1971). Similarly, biblical archaeology intentionally tried to trace Israel's history through extra-biblical evidence. The aim was the same: "to discover the events in history which had given rise to and had influenced the biblical tradition" (Thompson 1987, 13). The common feature of both approaches was that they tried to explain and understand biblical stories with the help of historical events.

[78] See on the developments in 1960s and 1970s in Moore and Kelle 2011, 21−25; Valkama 2012, 30−32.

[79] See e.g. Dever 1990, 30; Grabbe 2007, 7; Moore and Kelle 2011, 25.

[80] Moore and Kelle (2011, 29) give examples of such studies, like Lawrence E. Stager's "The Archaeology of the Family in Ancient Israel" (1985), BASOR 260, 1−35.

[81] Aharoni (1979 and 1982, first published in 1960) uses the ethnic titles of "the Canaanite Period" for the Bronze Age and "the Israelite Period" for the Iron Age, while Kenyon (1985, first published in 1960) keeps the terms Bronze and Early Iron Age. Kenyon starts historically based terms from the United Monarchy (beginning of Iron Age II/end of Iron Age I). Mazar 1990 the biblical periodization (the Days of the Judges, the United Monarchy, the Divided Monarchy) besides Iron Age I and II. Skjeggestad (2001, 6,105-106, 109-112) indicates the strong ties between Palestinian archaeology and the biblical interpretation.

[82] See on methodologies in Moore and Kelle 2011, 30−33; Valkama 2012, 31−32; Grabbe 2007, 6−10.

1.4.3. Studies and Discussion of Israel's Past

From Early Research to the Discussion in the 1990s

Despite of the rather rare references in the Hebrew Bible, Dan has self-evidently been regarded as an Israelite boundary city since the "period of the Judges" or the "monarchy of David and Solomon" in the histories of Israel and Judah until 1990s.[83] Consequently, the Northern kingdom was supposed to extend from Dan to Bethel until the destruction of its northern part in 732 BCE in the attack of the Assyrian King Tiglath-Pileser III.[84] Evidently, the biblical phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" and the story of the Jeroboam's golden bulls in Bethel and Dan have influenced these reconstructions of history. According to this narrative, Dan was an Israelite city and ruled by an Israelite king during Iron Age II, the period of the kings of Israel and Judah, and Dan was the royal administrative city representing the official cult of the kingdom on the basis of 1 Kgs 12:28−30 and Amos 8:14 and the archaeological finds at Tel Dan. These interpretations follow the *biblical history,* implying that it corresponds with the history of Israel-Palestine. This belief has gradually changed.

Julius Wellhausen[85] was the first biblical scholar who presented an overall picture of Israel's history based on the literary-critical study of the Hebrew Bible.[86] He became the leading scholar in this field for decades due to his documentary hypothesis of the Pentateuch, and his books on Israel's history, which was his special interest.[87] His *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israel* (1883)[88] was revolutionary in his time because of the

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[83] Since the "period of the Judges": Noth 1986 (1956), 66–67; Aharoni 1979, 213, 220−232; 1982, 153–155, 211; Herrmann 1980, 147–166, 244; Mazar 1990, 328–354, 403–415; Matthews 2002, 39 does not mention the city of Dan, but regards the migration of the tribe of Dan "to the area north of the sea of Galilee" as historical. Ahlström finds the book of the Judges non-historical, but accepts the view that Dan became Israelite during David's rule. Ahlström 1993, 373(–376), 512. Similarly Dietrich 1997, 18–43, 94–104, 160–165 and Miller & Hayes 2006, 180–182, 184. Matthews (2002, 45–46, 54, 62−67) implies that Dan was under Solomonic control.

[84] Samaria, the capital of the kingdom, was occupied only in 722/721 BCE after the attacks of the Assyrian Kings Shalmaneser V and Sargon II. See the fall of Samaria, Becking 1992.

[85] See Wellhausen's scientific significance and production: Knight 1994, v–xvi; Kraus 1982, 274; Thompson 1992, 1–5; Smend, Rudolf (2004), *Julius Wllhausen. Ein Bahnbrecher in drei Disziplinen.* München: Carl Friedrich von Siemens Stiftung; Smend, Rudolf (2007), *From Astruc to Zimmerli. Old Testament Scholarship in three Centuries.* Translated by Margaret Kohl. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 91−102.

[86] Kraus (1982, 257) states that Wellhausen's main interest was aimed at the study of Israel's history and religion. Similarly Knight 1994, xi-xii: "Wellhausen did not concuct source criticism for its own sake, nor merely to the end of understanding the literature. For him, the value of such examinations resided in their historiographical usefulness.[....] Wellhausen's primary concern is to determine how to use the sources for the writing of history, and he develops his argument in the most subtle manner."

[87] Wellhausen did not introduce totally new ideas, but he combined and developed further the ideas and insights of his predecessors. He based his work on the research of Reuß, Hupfeld, and Graf and adopted elements of Hegel's philosophy of history, the research of de Wette, Vatke, Kuenen, and Ewalds. Kraus 1982, 258–260.

[88] This was an expanded edition of Wellhausen's *Geschichte Israels* (1878). See the summary of the central

late dating of the sources JE (the monarchic, "pre-prophetic" period), D (the time of Josiah), and P (post-exilic period).[89] Wellahausen supposed that the prophetic narratives were earlier than the *Torah* (source P)[90], and concluded that the Patriarchal narratives were created only in the time of the monarchy, including no history prior to that time,[91] and introduced the concept of the "idealized prehistory" in his *Israelitische und jüdische Geschichte* (1894).[92] These ideas were, however, rejected and forgotten for several decades. According to Wellhausen, the history of Israel started from the time of Moses when the "Hebrews" settled in Egypt.[93] He also believed that the history of Israel should be separated from the history of Judaism, which was born along with the formation of the Torah, the basis for the beginning of Judaism.[94] Wellhausen regarded the books of Judges, Samuel, and Kings as historical, but observed that they had gone through redactions. Therefore, he stated that the later elements must be separated from the original historical sources.[95]

The heritage of Wellhausen continued through the decades, despite that it was criticized by Albright's school of biblical archaeology, and many of his ideas concerning the "pre-history" of Israel were forgotten.[96] While Wellhausen based his studies on the literary-critical study of the Hebrew Bible only, Albrecht Alt (1883−1956) and Martin Noth (1902−1968) developed interdisciplinary models in the research of Israel's history by utilizing sociological models and the results of archaeological and biblical studies. Their

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content in Kraus 1982, 260–269; Smend 2007, 96.

[89] Wellhausen 1994 (1885), 28–38; Compare Gunkel *Genesis, Handkommentar zum alten Testament*. Göttingen, 1901. See Kraus 1982, 261; Thompson 1992, 1.

[90] Kraus 1982, 246; Smend 2007, 96: "The conclusion is that we have to distinguish between Israel and Judaism. Israel knew no written law. Its 'Torah' was the oral instruction of the priests and prophets. The law in its proper sense … only came to exist for the first time with Deuteronomy … The concept of the covenant between God and the people did not belong to the early period either … is entirely a product of Judaism − or rather is Judaism itself."

[91] See Thompson 1987, 28.

[92] *Israelitische und jüdische Geschichte*. Berlin, 1894. See the summary of the central contents Kraus 1982, 269–274.

[93] Wellhausen 1994 (1885, Encyclopedia Britannica), 433.

[94] Kraus 1982, 268-269; Smend 2004, 19, 22−26; This is presented in Wellhausen's book *Israelitische und jüdische Geschichte* (1894).

[95] J. Wellhausen, Die Composition des Hexateuchs und der historischen Bucher des Alten Testaments. 3. Aufl. 1899, 208 ff; See Kraus 1982, 266.

[96] Alberto Soggin (1993, 22–24, 30–31) states that not many new ideas have been presented in the histories of Israel "during the last 100 years" (until the 1980s). He highlights the works of Abraham Kuenen (1869) and Bernhard Stade (1885), on the basis of which later historians have built their studies; the same questions have been asked throughout the twentieth century: when did the history of Israel and Judah begin? In which period is there evidence to prove the biblical events as historical? Although he lists as exceptions the works of Alt and Noth, Donner 1984–86, Jagersma 1981–85, Miller and Hayes 1987, Lemche 1988, Dielheim group, Thompson, van Seters, and Liverani, he still claims that "all these recent authors relate back to the works of Kuenen 1869 and Stade 1885 and not to those of their immediate predecessors, which makes it difficult to speak of real progress in historiography in this area" (p. 22).

interest was in the history of early Israel, and they developed the theory according to which the emergence of Israel in Canaan was a long and peaceful process, instead of the violent conquest of the land as described in the book of Joshua.[97] Martin Noth also became well-known for his theory of *Deuteronomistic History* (see chapter 4.1).

In the latter half of the 20th century, the discussion on the emergence of early Israel[98] and the "historical" character of the patriarchs or the book of Pentateuch[99] continued into the discussion of the historicity of the Davidic-Solomonic kingdom, and the "archaeology of the United Monarchy".[100] In the 1990s, the possibilities and limits of writing the history of ancient Israel were intensively discussed.[101] Many scholars, known as minimalists,[102] challenged the idea that the Hebrew Bible could be used as a source for the research of Israel's past, as they believed that it is a product of the Persian and Hellenistic period, or even later.[103] This view was rejected by the main-stream of scholars. However, at present, more and more scholars see that the editing of the biblical texts continued until the Hellenistic−Roman periods, and the "sources" from the time of the monarchy are difficult to trace (see chapter 4). This does not mean that the Hebrew Bible should be ignored in the study of the history of monarchic Israel and Judah, but it must be kept in mind that the biblical texts are not authentic or direct evidence from that time. The value of the biblical texts is that they reveal how the biblical writers and editors understood their own "history" and "past", and how they interpreted it.[104]

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[97] Moore and Kelle 2011, 16−17.

[98] See e.g. Alhström (1986), *Who were the Israelites?* Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbraun; Summary in different models in Dever 1990, 49−56; Finkelstein and Na'aman 1994, 9−14.

[99] See Thompson 1974; 1977, 149–21; 1987, 41–59; 1992, 1–10; Miller and Hayes 1986, 58–79, p.72: "In summary, while the extra biblical evidence recovered by archaeological excavations in Palestine are very useful for understanding the general background against which Israel and Judah emerged, these have not turned out to be very helpful for tracing the specific origins of Israel and Judah." Despite their own words, Thompson strongly criticized Miller's and Hayes's (1986) book by saying that it still represented the 'biblical' approach rather than a critical history of Palestine. Thompson 1987, 26–27. Interestingly, Wellhausen already at the end of the 19th century questioned the historicity of the patriarchs and found them to be stories written later on.

[100] Barstad 1997, 37–39; Keithlam 2011, 199.

[101] See discussion e.g. Firtz, Volkmar & Davies, Philip R. (eds.) *The Origins of the Ancient Israelite States.* JSOT Suppl. 228. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press (1996); Grabbe, Lester L (ed.) *Can a 'History of Israel' be Written?* JSOT. Suppl. 245. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press (1997); Bob Becking & Lester L. Grabbe (Eds.). *Between Evidence and Ideology. Essays on the History of Ancient Israel read at the Joint Meeting of the Society for Old Testament Study and the Oud Testamentixch Werkgezelschap Lincoln, July 2009.* Old Testament Studies. Vol. 59. Leiden: Brill (2011).

[102] So-called Copenhagen School Thomas L. Thompson and Niels Peter Lemche, Keith Whitelam, Philip R. Davies. Later on, the Israeli archaeologist Israel Finkelstein was often called a "minimalist".

[103] Moore and Kelle 2011, 33−37; Valkama 2012, 32−33.

[104] Possibly, the sources, even if they were late, "contain reliable information" Dijkstra 2011, 43.

Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives

Towards the end of the 19th century, the historicity of the patriarchs and the patriarchal narratives was first questioned by German biblical scholars.[105] Despite the attempts of the *School of Biblical Archaeology* to find parallels between Genesis 12−50 and the archaeological remains of the second millennium BCE, no extra-biblical evidence that mention the important events or great leaders of the Pentateuch, or traces of the patriarchs, had been found. Explanations were given: the remains were not yet discovered, or they had been destroyed, or the Mesopotamian and Egyptian sources showed minor interest in the small and rather poor lands of Israel and Judah − they were not strong enough to present a threat to the great empires. In the 1970s, Thomas L. Thompson (1974)[106] and John Van Seters (1975)[107] showed that the stories of the patriarchs are ageless, in that they fit to any period, and there are no references to specific absolute dates.[108] Although some scholars disagree,[109] most of them have given up on finding "the Patriarchal Period" in history.[110]

The Question of the Emergence of Early Israel

When the origin of Israel could not be found in the stories of the patriarchs, it was searched for in the realm of the early Iron Age.[111] Since critical views concerning the historicity of the conquest stories of the books of Joshua and Judges had been presented,[112] different models were developed to explain the emergence of early Israel. Although there was also

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[105] For example, Julius Wellhausen realized that the sources behind the pentateuch "were to be understood as literary documents created at the time of their written composition, and hence as compositions reflecting the understanding and knowledge of their authors and their world." Thompson 1992, 2–3.

[106] Thomas L Thompson (1974) *The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives*. BZAW 133. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co. See also Thompson 1987, 22−25.

[107] Van Seters, John (1974), *Abraham in History and Tradition*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

[108] See the archaeological view in Finkelstein and Silberman 2001, 35−36, 319−325.

[109] Amihai Mazar (1990, 224-225). He states that the earliest phase of the oral patriarchal traditions indeed derives from the MB IIB−C. He bases his opinion on the fact that there are distinctive similarities between the description of patriarchal narratives and the MB IIB−C culture. Kenyon (1960/ 1985, 148) dated the patriarchs to the MB II: "This period therefore marks the genesis of the Palestine that we meet in the Old Testament, the Palestine through which the Patriarchs journeyed in their wanderings, and the Palestine in which their descendants subsequently settled. The early Israelites found this Canaanite culture in the land, and much of it they absorbed." On the other hand, Aharoni (1982, 80–112) and Kempinski (1992, 159–210) do not even mention the patriarchs in the chapters in which they give overviews of the MB II period. However, Aharoni (1979, 191−195) finds the patriarchal stories historical. He, for example, identifies the 'Apirus of the El Amarna period with the Hebrews (p. 191); The Egyptologist Kenneth Kitchen (e.g. 2003) also maintains the concept that the period of patriarchs can be identified with the second millennium BCE history of the Near East.

[110] Moore and Kelle 2011, 49−56.

[111] Moore and Kelle 2011, 77−95.

[112] E.g. Gray 1967, 37; Weippert 1967, 14−66; Ahlström 1986, 45−55; 1993, 335; Thompson 1987, 11− 40; Lemche 1988, 29−46.

no archaeological evidence to support the Exodus-stories[113] (except the mention of "Israel" in the Merneptah Stela[114]), the remains of the early Iron Age I sedentary villages (the 13th and 12th centuries BCE) in the central hills of Israel were identified with the settlements of the early Israelites by the majority of scholars until the 1980s. The Israelites were regarded as newcomers from the east to the central hill country – particularly to the mountains of Samaria, Judah, and Galilee.[115] Traces of the biblical exodus were seen in the cultural change which occurred in the transition from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age in the 13th – 12th centuries BCE, for example at Dan, Megiddo, and Hazor. Then, the LB city state culture gradually disappeared towards the end of the second millennium, and was replaced by hundreds of small sedentary settlements. The destruction of the LB cities – which is an archaeological fact – was explained by the invasion of the new population groups. Israelites were supposed to be one of those peoples who destroyed the Canaanite cities.[116] However, the continuation of most of the pottery types from LB II to Iron I has been plausibly demonstrated, which indicates that the continuation was stronger than change.[117]

Since 1980s, an intensive discussion has been conducted on the ethnicity of the early Iron Age settlers, and a large amount of literature has been published on the subject.[118] Although some scholars still maintain the view that the early Israelites caused the destruction of the LB cities in Palestine, or at least settled the country during the 12th century, the more common tendency is to accept that the biblical conquest stories do not reflect the real events of the transition from the Late Bronze to the Iron Age period, and

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[113] According to Finkelstein and Silberman 2001, 327−328, no archaeological remains from this time have been found in the southern Sinai; the traditions of the biblical holy sites in that region derive from the Byzantine period. On the archaeological problems of the conquest of Canaan see pages 79−86, 90.

[114] Merneptah was the Egyptian pharaoh in the 13th century BCE (19th dynasty). See interpretations of the stela in Ahlström 1986, 57–83; Dever 2001, 118–120; Dijkstra 2011, 54−58. There are no other inscriptions referring to Israel or the Israelites before the ninth century BCE. *Ahab of Israel* (A-ha-abbu mat Sir-'i-la-a-a) is mentioned among other kings in the inscription of an Assyrian king Shalmaneser III written after the battle in Qarqar (853 BCE) and "Jehu, Son of Omri" (Ja-ú-a māt Ḫumrî) in his later inscription, on the "Black Obelisk". Israel is called the *land of the house of Omri* (KUR mat Bīt Ḫumrî. Jepsen 1975, 156; Ahlström 1992, 573,577–578, 595; In Israel-Palestine, only a few inscriptions have been found between the 12th and the late 9th centuries BCE.

[115] Aharoni 1982, 153–180; Finkelstein 1988, 352–356; Finkelstein changed his mind later on (e.g. Finkelstein and Silberman 2001, 327−328). Mazar 1990, 334−338.

[116] Aharoni 1979, 191–262: a detailed description of the several invasions by every different Hebrew tribe to the land of Canaan; Aharoni 1982, 157–162. Kenyon 1985, 204–206. Finkelstein 1988, 27–31; Mazar 1990, 328–338; 1992, 281–287. Moreover, the invasion theory was based on the observations that the material culture changed; new elements appeared in the 12th century BCE.

[117] Amiran 1963, 191–192: "Almost every pottery of type can be traced back to its origins in the Bronze Age."

[118] This was discussed by both the biblical scholars and archaeologists. Some examples of bibliography: Thompson 1987, 1992; Lemche 1988; Davies 1992; Dever 2001; Fritz & Davies (Eds.) 1996; Finkelstein & Na'aman (Eds.)1994.

that the stories are fictitious in character.[119] The explanation for the collapse of the LB culture must be sought from the larger context; the gradual deterioration of urbanism happened nearly everywhere in the regions of the eastern Mediterranean at approximately the same time, not only in Palestine.[120]

It is also obvious that the deterioration of the LB culture resulted from a complicated process, which was due to both external and infrastructural reasons. Doumas[121] stresses the internal reasons. According to him, the internal political events in the Mycenaean Greek world led to the deterioration of the kingship and its palatial culture, which caused migrations and an increase in the number of refugees.[122] The invasions of the Philistines and the other groups of Sea Peoples into the eastern coasts of the Mediterranean Sea and Egypt could be associated with these events. A generally presented explanation − caused by an external factor − is a sudden change in climate, which would have taken place around 1300 BCE in the regions of the eastern Mediterranean and the Greek islands. Drought and famine[123] would have forced the urban population to abandon their homelands and migrate. In addition to migration, the local people in Palestine were forced to leave the destroyed cities and look for their livelihood in the sedentary villages of the countryside. As a result, the Iron I sedentary population might well have consisted of both local and migrated peoples from all around the neighboring areas.[124] A shared characteristic of the whole population was the need to build up their lives again on an agricultural basis.

The Question of the United Monarchy and the "Solomonic architecture"

Following the debate on early Israel, the discussion of the historicity of the United Monarchy was started in the 1990s. If the historical basis of the appearance of early Israel in the 12th − 11th century BCE is vague, what is the period that can be defined as the

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[119] See theories and bibliography in Ahlström 1986, 18–24. According to Dever (2001, 98–99, 118−124), this fact does not necessarily exclude the view that one of the peoples who inhabited the central mountains of Palestine during Iron I were "Proto-Israelites". He states that there is enough evidence for this: the appearance of *Israel* in the stele of Merneptah, the Egyptian Pharaoh (around 1210 BCE); the witness of the unconquered cities of Canaan in the Book of Judges; the biblical descriptions in Judges "corresponds...well with the daily life and...socio-economic conditions in the book of Judges...in some degree...1−2 Samuel...even in parts of Joshua".

[120] Na'aman 1994; Bunimovitz 1994; several articles in *Mediterranean Peoples in Transition. Thirteenth to Early Tenth Centuries BCE. In Honor of Professor Trude Dothan.* Gitin, Seymour et al. Eds. (1998), Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society; Dijkstra 2011, 41−82.

[121] Doumas 1998, 130.

[122] Dijkstra (2011, 60−61) states that Egypt also collapsed around 1100 BCE due to internal reasons – its administration and economy collapsed.

[123] Thompson 1992, 215–221; Na'aman 1994, 243–247; Doumas 1998, 129.

[124] Compare Ahlström 1986, 11–43.

starting point for the history of Israel? When did Israel become a nation or political entity which existed on the central highlands of Israel-Palestine? The so-called minimalists[125] emphasized the late composition of the Hebrew Bible (Persian–Hellenistic/Roman), which has little to say about the Iron Age history of Israel-Palestine.[126] The biblical descriptions of the United Monarchy ruled by Saul, David, and Solomon have little historical basis, because they are primarily literary in nature rather than documentary records. Neither is there contemporary archaeological evidence or inscriptions.

Thompson also criticized the way in which scholars search for the period or event in which the "history of Israel begins". He says: "There is nothing akin to a watershed in the biblical tradition, by which we might arbitrarily assess what belongs to history, and suggest that whatever is found before that watershed might presumably be judged as intentionally fictive, and all that follows it as somehow historical. The Hebrew Bible is as a whole a literary product describing a history of the *biblical Israel* instead of that of the *historical Israel*."[127] Therefore, the historical Israel can only be reconstructed through extra-biblical evidence.[128]

In contrast, most scholars are more optimistic: they believe that the Hebrew Bible includes relevant historical information from the monarchic period, but the biblical texts must be critically examined.[129] They emphasize the interaction between historical, biblical, and archaeological research in the study of Iron Age Palestine.[130] For example, the historicity of the existence of the Davidic-Solomonic kingdom is not doubted, but the exaggeration of the biblical descriptions of the greatness and richness of the kingdom is admitted.[131] Baruch Halpern defines the historicity of David and his monarchy on the basis that the Hebrew Bible gives a realistic view of David.[132] Dever illustrates how the biblical

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[125] See Dever 2001, 23–44: He lists in this group at least the following scholars: Philip R. Davies, Thomas L. Thompson, Keith W. Whitelam, Niels Peter Lemche, and Israel Finkelstein. I find it difficult to strictly define this group, because of the variation of opinions within the "minimalists". For example, Finkelstein's approach is archaeological, while most of the other scholars have a background in the biblical studies.

[126] Among others, Thompson 1987, 1992; Lemche 1988; Davies P.R. 1992.

[127] Thompson 1987, 31. Thompson continues that "Israelite ethnic unity came about through the process whereby the indigenous population of Palestine began to understand and identify itself as Israelite. This process is linked both to the fortunes of the political states of Judah and Israel as well as to the unification of Israel's folk tradition." (p. 37). He emphasizes that the biblical Israel should be seen as a late literary reflection of the past.

[128] Thompson 1987, 1992. See also Davies 1992, 49–59, 60, 66–70.

[129] Halpern 2001; Dever 2001; Na'aman 2002; See also Halpern 1981.

[130] So, for example, Halpern 1998; 2001; Dever 2001, particularly, 97–243. On the biblical framework of archaeological periodization see Skjeggestad 2001.

[131] See Särkiö 1994; Halpern 2001, Dever 2001.

[132] Halpern 2001, xvi, 208–226. According to him, the books of Samuel provide a contradictory picture of David which is one of the basic arguments for David's historicity. Dietrich 1997, 133–169 presents similar ideas.

authors must have had knowledge from Iron Age times, because several texts better mirror the material culture of that period than the later times.[133] Bob Becking also finds the evidence of the Hebrew Bible and archaeology sufficient to support the historicity of David.[134] Na'aman has shown that the Hellenistic background does not fit at all to the historical context of David's wars as depicted in the book of 2 Samuel. He admits that hardly any of the wars can be attributed to the time of King David, but they reflect the events of the 9th century BCE. Na'aman says that the biblical writers definitely had earlier sources, which he calls "the chronicle of early Israelite kings".[135]

While the biblical maximalists do not hesitate to accept the *biblical history* as a basis for the history of Israel-Palestine,[136] the minimalists[137] search for extra-biblical evidence for reconstructing history. The existence of some kings of Israel and Judah has been verified by Assyrian or Babylonian inscriptions. Therefore, the "history of Israel" started from this period: Kings Ahab, and Jehu, *Son of Omri* (Ḫumrî) were mentioned by the Assyrian King Shalmaneser III (859–824 BCE), Jehoash/Joash by Adad-nirari III (811–782 BCE), Jehoahaz/ Ahaz, Menahem, and Hosea by Tiglath-pileser III (745–727 BCE), Hezekiah by King Sennacherib (705–681 BCE), Manasseh by Esarhaddon (681 – 669) and Ashurbanipal (668 – 627 BCE), Jehoiachin by Nebuchadnezzar (634 – 562 BCE), the king of Neo-Babylon.[138]

Other than the kings of the 9th and 8th centuries BCE, the kings of the biblical United Monarchy (Saul, David, and Solomon) are not referred to in any extra-biblical sources. It has been argued that this is due to the lack of international connections but, on the other hand, the Solomon of the Hebrew Bible has been described as having had trade and political connections with large areas beyond the borders of his kingdom. Another significant observation is the absence of annalistic notes for the early kings; the annals in the book of Kings start after Solomon.[139] Some scholars have also paid attention to the geographical diversity of Palestine. The land consists of different geographical areas and entities, highlands and valleys, which naturally form several "socio-economic districts".[140]

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[133] See Dever 2001, 124–131.

[134] According to him, David was the founder of the dynasty and a local ruler who reingned parts of Judah and Israel. Becking 2011, 29.

[135] Na'aman 2002, 214–216. Na'aman relies on the extra biblical evidence in the dating of David's wars to the time of the kingdom of Israel (Northern kingdom). See also Van Seters 1983, 357.

[136] For example, Albright 1957; 1949; Kenyon 1960 (1985 /5th edition); Yadin 1972, 1975; Aharoni 1982; Biran 1994. The biblical chronology and framework for the historical interpretation was commonly used and accepted until 1970s.

[137] Thompson 1974; 1987; 1992; Lemche 1988, 1998; Davies P.R., 1992.

[138] See Grabbe 1997, 25–26.

[139] Niemann 1997, 268.

[140] Thus, for example, Niemann 1997, 254–56 and Thompson 1987, 36–37; 1992, 310.

The different living conditions and sources of livelihood in these districts raise the question whether they could have been ruled by one centralized political system. The Middle and Late Bronze Age cities have always been described as city-states which governed the region around them. Would this system have been changed in the Iron Age? The list of Solomon's administrative districts (1 Kgs 4:7−19) actually resembles this diversity. The question is if they were governed by one ruler only, and when. How large was the kingdom?

As for the *"Solomonic architecture"* of Israel, Finkelstein (1996) was the first Israeli archaeologist who questioned the existence of the *biblical* United Monarchy on the basis of archaeology. He observed that the monumental buildings, such as the fortifications and gates of Megiddo, Hazor, and Gezer, which formed the core of the so-called *Solomonic architecture* or the archaeology of the United Monarchy, were dated to the Solomonic era by the excavators purely on the basis of the biblical verses 1 Kgs 7:12 and 9:15–19.[141] By the methods of archaeology, such an exact date cannot be given. A date in the ninth century BCE would fit just as well. The ninth century date could also be argued by the dating of similar buildings in Syria, from where the monumental building style and technique were supposed to be adopted to Israel and Judah; the dates of these buildings are not earlier than the ninth century BCE. If the ninth century date is accepted, "the *Solomonic*" strata would be dated to the 9th century BCE. Because the stratigraphy of Megiddo has been a foundation for the archaeology of the United Monarchy, the changes in the dates of Megiddo would cause the re-dating of the contemporary strata at the other tells. Then, the 10th century − the "period of the United Monarchy" − would appear to be archaeologically quite a poor period, represented by only rare examples of well-planned towns (Megiddo VIA, Tel Kinrot VI–V, Dan V) and public buildings (for example, at Tel Hadar IV which was closely connected toTel Kinrot).

Finkelstein not only questioned the archaeology of the United Monarchy, but also proposed an alternative view of state formation in the land of Israel and an alternative "low chronology" (see below). He says that the archaeological evidence of "a full-blown state" did not appear before the 8th century BCE in Judah,[142] but in the kingdom of Israel it

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[141] Finkelstein 1996, 178. According to Finkelstein 1999, 35 the concept of the United Monarchy had its foundation in two aspects: "from the archaeological point of view, there was a wide consensus about the identification of 10th century BCE strata....from the textual point of view, there was wide acceptance of the biblical description of the United Monarchy as an authentic, historical source. In the last few years more recent archaeological evidence undermines these pivotal assumptions." Finkelstein refers, among other things, to his present excavation project at Tel Megiddo. See also Finkelstein 1998,167–169.

[142] Finkelstein 1999; Otherwise Bunimovitz and Lederman (2001, 121−147) in the light of the discoveries from the 10th century Tel Beth Shemes and e.g. Mazar 2006, 255–272.

appeared already in the first half of the 9th century.[143] The archaeological surveys prove that during the 11th – early 9th centuries BCE (even according to traditional chronology) Judah was an isolated entity which had little in common with the northern hill country where Israel existed.[144] The el-Amarna letters of the Late Bronze Age already reflect the existence of these entities, whose central sites were Shechem in the north and Jerusalem in the south. The existence of the Davidic dynasty was thus apparently limited to the core region of Judah.[145]

Iron Age Chronology – High and Low Chronologies

Absolute dating has long been a problem in the archaeology of Israel-Palestine. This is due to the small amount of the literary sources that reference Bronze and Iron Age Palestine. This is especially a problem for the Iron Age I–IIA period (1200−900 BCE). Therefore, the role of the Hebrew Bible has been emphasized when forming chronologies. Despite the chronological debates in the 1950s and early 1960s,[146] a consensus was reached in the 1960s. The chronology which was then generally accepted is now labeled the "high chronology". It was primarily based on the identification of the first monumental buildings of the Iron Age with Solomon's buildings, such as ascribing the gates of Megiddo, Gezer, and Hazor with the "*Solomonic gates*" by Yigael Yadin.[147] Thus, the "*Solomonic stratum*" of these few major cities became a benchmark for the absolute chronology of the 10th century BCE, although opinions differed on which buildings and architectural structures should be included in the "*Solomonic*" city.[148] The "Solomonic" city was also seen to represent the earliest layer of the Iron Age monumental architecture, with palaces, strong fortifications, city gates, the appearance of red-slipped burnished pottery, and the transition from hand-burnishing to wheel-burnishing.[149]

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[143] Finkelstein 1999, 39–40, 47.

[144] Finkelstein 1996; Finkelstein & Silberman 2001, 130–132.

[145] Finkelstein & Silberman 2001, 129, 155–158.

[146] For example, the debate of Kathleen Kenyon and the excavators of Megiddo over the date of Samaria period I−II and Megiddo VA−IVB, both of which include similar pottery and architecture, pointing the contemporary existence of these strata. Kenyon suggested a lower chronology on the basis of her discoveries in Samaria; she dated Samaria period I−II to the second third of the 9th century BCE (the time of the Omride dynasty on the basis of 1 Kgs 16:23–24), while the excavators of Megiddo dated Megiddo VA–IVB to the mid-10th century BCE because of the identification of this stratum with "Solomonic Megiddo". Later on, Kenyon accepted Yadin's "Solomonic" dates. See debate Kenyon 1957, 198−209; 1964, 143−153; 1985.

[147] Yadin 1958, 80−86; 1960, 62−28; 1972, 147−164.

[148] In particular, the stratigraphy and dating of Megiddo Strata VB, VA−IVB, IVA has been disputed. Finkelstein et al. Megiddo III 2000, 1.

[149] See Aharoni 1982, 192−239; Mazar 1990, 368−402; Barkay 1992a, 325−327.

The debate over the chronology of the Iron Age was raised again by Israel Finkelstein in the mid-1990s. Finkelstein stated that there are no absolute anchors for dating the Iron Age remains in Israel, from the 13th century[150] until the second half of the 8th century.[151] The history between the 13th and the 8th centuries was more or less reconstructed by using the biblical texts in connection with the relative stratigraphy of the major excavated sites such as Megiddo, Hazor, Beth Shean, Lachish, and Tel Beit-Mirsim.[152]

As a result of his observations (see above: the *"Solomonic architecture"*), Finkelstein created an alternative chronology, the so-called low chronology, in order to "overcome the difficulties which exist in the commonly used traditional chronology". He attempted to build this chronology on archaeological or extra-biblical evidence as far as it was possible. Finkelstein presented several arguments in support of his chronology. First, he argued for a later dating of the Philistine immigration. Second, he stated that the archaeology of the United Monarchy (or the archaeology of the 10th century) had been based on the results of the Megiddo excavations, which had been interpreted through the biblical texts. Third, ceramic analyses had proved that there were discrepancies in dating the pottery of various sites: similar assemblages or types had been dated to different centuries. Finkelstein relied on Zimhoni's analyses of the pottery from Jezreel compared to Megiddo and to the other contemporary sites.[153] Fourth, the archaeology of Syria supported the lower dating. The development of Iron Age urbanism started from the north, and monumental architecture was adapted in Israel from northern Syria. However, the earliest monumental buildings in Syria, such as the *Bīt Hilani* palaces, had been dated to the 9th century, while, for example, in Megiddo the palace of this style had been dated to "Solomon", the mid−10th century BCE.[154] Furthermore, Finkelstein said that if the chronology was lowered by ca. 50−100

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[150] The last documents from the transition between the Late Bronze and the Early Iron Age consist of the Egyptian sources of the time of Ramses III and the documents about the battles between the Sea Peoples and Egyptians in the inscriptions of the Medinet Habu relief and in Papyrus Harris I. There is also evidence for the presence of Egyptians in southern Palestine during the times of Ramses IV, V, and VI. Finkelstein 1995, 213; 1996, 179−180.

[151] The earliest absolute anchors are the strata destroyed by the Assyrian kings Tiglath-Pileser III, Salmaneser V, and Sennacherib in the late-8th century. The destruction of Lachish Stratum III by Sennachrib in 701 is one of the best examples. Finkelstein 1996, 180. On Lachish see Ussishkin 1980, 1−18.

[152] This is explicitly expressed by Barkay 1992a, 304: "The absolute chronology of the period (Iron Age II) is based on synchronisms between references in the Bible and other sources to the construction and destruction of cities and excavations of foundation phases and destruction layers at these cities. Outstanding examples....destruction levels ascribed by Shishak in 925 BCE at Mediggo and elsewhere, the foundation of Samaria by King Omri of Israel (1 Kgs 16:24) in 876 BCE, the rebuilding of Hazor by Solomon (1 Kgs 9:15) around the year 950 BCE."

[153] Zimhoni 1992, 57−70; 1997, 83−109.

[154] Finkelstein 1999, 39.

years the gap of the urban habitations in various Israelite towns during the 9th century would be rectified.[155]

The re-dating of the Philistine settlements is based on the distribution of the mono- and bi-chrome pottery regarded as an indication of the presence of the Philistines. The monochrome pottery was dated to the beginning of the 12th century.[156] Finkelstein found it problematic because no Philistine pottery, mono- or bi-chrome, had been found in the Egyptian strongholds which lasted until around 1130 BCE. On the other hand, no Egyptian ware had been found in the Philistine monochrome strata.[157] Finkelstein concluded that the Philistines did not arrive before 1130, and dated the monochrome strata to the late 12th−11th centuries. Consequently, the appearance of the bichrome pottery had to be dated to the 11th / early 10th century.[158] This lowering of the Philistine strata to a later time pushes the whole chronology forwards. This was objected to by Amihai Mazar, who argued for the high chronology. According to his opinion, the Philistines, as new immigrants, could maintain their own traditions and live isolated from the dominant culture. That would explain the limited distribution of the Philistine pottery. Mazar also criticized Finkelstein for lowering the date of several sites only on the basis of the Philistine bichrome ware. He pointed out that it would cause "serious changes in the chronology of the Phoenician and Cypriot pottery groups".[159]

Finkelstein's second argument concerned the archaeology of the United Monarchy, in which Megiddo is the most important site (see above). Finkelstein claimed that the traditional chronology had been built on the results of the excavations of Megiddo. Due to this fact, the whole chronology "stands on a shaky foundation".[160] This opinion was, however, responded to by Mazar: "I see no difficulty in retaining the 'Solomonic' date of the monumental ashlar buildings 6000, 1723, and the six-chamber gate at Megiddo as well as the six-chamber gates at Hazor and Gezer."[161]

The third argument concerned the results of the pottery analyses of the mid-9th century enclosure at Jezreel by Orna Zimhoni. She studied the pottery from the floor and the construction fill and concluded that these pottery assemblages were similar to the

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[155] See Finkelstein 1996, 177−187.
[156] Dothan 1982, 295−296. The first phase of the Philistines immigrated immediately after the destruction of the LB cities (e.g. Ashdod stratum XIIIb). Most of the immigrants arrived during Ramses III.
[157] Finkelstein 1995, 213−217; 1996, 179−180.
[158] Finkelstein 1995, 224.
[159] Mazar 1997, 157−160.
[160] Finkelstein 1996, 184−185, 178: "The archaeology of the United Monarchy was born at Megiddo and remained focused on that site for half a century."
[161] Mazar 1997, 164.

pottery of Megiddo stratum VA−IVB.[162] This study provided a further argument for the low chronology, according to which stratum VIA of Megiddo would be lowered to the "Solomonic" period (10th century) and stratum VA−IVB to the 9th century − contemporary to the enclosure at Jezreel. It is, in addition, notable that the enclosure had been dated to the 9th century on the basis of biblical evidence; according to the biblical texts, the winter palace of the Omride palace was located at Jezreel until its destruction in Jehu's revolt (1 Kgs 21:1,23; 2 Kgs 9:15−17, 30, 36−37).[163] Here, Finkelstein accepted the biblical dating, as Mazar had pointed out.[164] Zimhoni had roughly dated the pottery from the enclosure of Jezreel to the 10th – 9th centuries.[165] Nevertheless, she agreed with the mid-9th century dating suggested by Ussishkin & Woodhead[166] and Na'aman[167] for the palace. She also accepted the view that the destruction of stratum VA−IVB of Megiddo should be lowered to the middle of the 9th century.[168]

The fourth argument concerned the state formation process in Palestine. Finkelstein stated that the biblical description of the "Solomonic Golden Age" was a reflection of 7th century BCE Judah, after the northern kingdom of Israel had been destroyed and occupied by the Assyrian Empire. Only then had Judah its chance to flourish.[169] He showed that the archaeology of the "United Monarchy" was mainly based on the sites of northern Israel, particularly Megiddo and Hazor, while hardly any significant cities had been found in Judah before the 8th century BCE.[170] His point was that during the 10th century BCE no state yet existed; the "Solomonic" strata of the high chronology actually represented the reality of the 9th century BCE. In comparison, Finkelstein also mentioned that there was no archaeological evidence for the formation of an Aramean state in the 10th century BCE, either, but that the Assyrian sources support its presence in the 9th century BCE. In addition, the fact that the monumental buildings in Syria had been dated later than in Israel,

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[162] Zimhoni 1992, 13−28; 1997, 29−56.
[163] See Ussishkin D and Woodhead J., 1992, 3−56.
[164] See Finkelstein 1996, 182−183; Mazar 1999, 40, note 38: "Finkelstein preaches against anchoring archaeological phenomena in biblical data, yet he does exactly the same by utilizing the destruction of Jezreel as a datum point for his chronology."
[165] Zimhoni 1992, 26.
[166] Ussishkin & Woodhead, 1992, see note 31.
[167] Na'aman 1997, 123−127. Unlike Ussishkin & Woodhead, he ascribes the destruction of Jezreel to Hazael, King of Aram in the 9th century during Jehu's time.
[168] Zimhoni 1997, 39. Mazar (1997, 160−163) criticized Zimhoni's results because they were based on a limited amount of pottery, and some of the pottery came from unstratified context.
[169] Finkelstein & Silberman 2001, 229−230, 283−284.
[170] Finkelstein 1999, 39−40. Finkelstein & Silberman (2001, 154) observed that a similar development occurred during the second period of urbanism in the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age II: the north was densely settled first.

particularly in Megiddo, indicated that the traditional dates in the archaeology of Palestine were too early.

 Several archaeologists accepted re-dating and lowering of the dates of certain strata at various sites, but objected to Finkelstein's systematic lowering.[171] Among others, Mazar argues for the high chronology on the basis of his present excavation project at Tel Rehov,[172] while he also accepts the lowering of the Iron Age strata of some other sites.[173] The high choronology is also supported by the excavators of the renewed excavations at Hazor,[174] the study of the pottery at Hazor, Yokneam, and Megiddo by Zarzeki-Peleg,[175] and the excavators of Ḥorvat Rosh Zayit.[176] Furthermore, the pottery from the fortification and monumental buildings at Tel Beth Shemesh support the 10th century dating.[177] Despite this disagreement,[178] the low chronology cannot be ignored. It should be dealt with as an alternative and the discussion about the fundamental principles of dating is important.[179] The low chronology is also considered as an alternative to Tel Dan (see chapter 2.5).

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[171] See the debate between Finkelstein and Mazar in *The Quest for the Historical Israel: Debating Archaeology and the History of Early Israel* (2007), Brian B. Schmidt (ed.).

[172] Coldstream and Mazar 2003, 40−46: The dating of C[14] samples, Greek Geometric pottery from Strata VI−IV, and historical and stratigraphical aspects support the high chronology. Megiddo VA−IVB correlates with Tel Rehov V which can be dated to the 10th century BCE. Tel Rehov VI−IV represents a prosperous city from the 10th−9th century BCE. On the other hand, in the earlier article Mazar introduces the results of C[14] samples of the charred grain from Tel Rehov (Strata C1 and E−1 parallel to Megiddo VA−IVB, Taanach IIA−IIB, Jezreel, Hazor X−IX, XIII, and Ḥorvat Rosh Zayit) which gave a calibrated date of 906−843 BCE (probability 65%) or 916−832 BCE (probability 98%). According to lower date (843/832), the destruction of Tel Rehov stratum 1 corresponds to the destruction of Jezreel and supports the low chronology, while the upper date (916) fits with the traditional chronology and associates the destruction of stratum 1 at Tel Rehov with the Egyptian king of Shishak. Mazar prefers the traditional chronology, because otherwise there would not be sufficient time for the other Iron Age II two strata with their sub-phases. Mazar accepts the lower date for the pottery of Jezreel (the 9th century), but he does not think that all of the assemblages must be dated to the same century following the date of Jezreel. He is convinced that the diagnostic pottery of those strata had a long durance, from the 10th to 9th century BCE. (Mazar 1999, 39−42). See also Mazar 1997, 157−164; 1999, 37−42. Finkelstein's response: Finkelstein 2004, 181−188.

[173] Mazar 1997, 160−161, 163.

[174] Ben-Tor and Ben-Ami 1998, 29−36.

[175] Zarzeki-Peleg 1997, 258−259, 283−284. According to her conclusions, Jokneam stratum XVII and Megiddo stratum VIA belong to the same time, and they must precede Hazor Xb. If the low chronology were accepted, the date of Hazor Xb should be lowered to the end of the 10th or the early 9th century BCE. Like Mazar, she stated that it would make the stratigraphy of the Iron Age II Hazor too dense. In the renewed excavations, even more strata were distinguished than in the excavations of the 1950s. Unlike Finkelstein, she regards Hazor as an important site in the discussion of the United Monarchy.

[176] Gal 2003,147−150; Gal and Alexander 2000.

[177] Bunimovitz and Lederman 2001, 135−147. The authors give a mid-tenth century date to the fortification, and the other monumental building they date to the second half of the same century (p.144). According to the authors, these discoveries indicate that there was a centralized administration in Judah already in the 10th century. The rich 10th century finds might also "reflect the supposed Israelite expansion into the Shephelah during the reigns of David and Solomon". (p. 146).

[178] For example, Mazar 1997, 157−167; 2006, 255–272; Ben-Tor and Ben-Ami 1998, 1−37; Coldstream & Mazar 2003, 157−167; Kletter 2004, 13−54.

[179] See articles for and against in *Jerusalem in Bible and Archaeology. The First Temple Period.* Killebrew & Vaughn Eds. (2003) and *The Bible and Radiocarbon Dating: Archaeology, Text and Science.* Levy & Higham (2005); Boaretto et al. 2005, 39−55; Finkelstein & Piasetzky, 2006, 45−61. See debate of Tel Reḥov:

1.5. Methodology and Terminology

1.5.1. Methodological Principles

Chapters 1.4.2 and 1.4.3 demonstrate the difficulties and problems in reconstructing the Iron Age history of Israel. It is necessary to use all available sources, both archaeological and biblical, but each source must be individually evaluated according to several criteria:

- the quality and significance of the source in relation to the research question
- how the source is used and can be used
- what can be deduced from the source

Because archaeology deals with material remains, and biblical research the textual world, the evidence from these fields must be studied separately, each according to its own merits. The core of this study includes a systematic presentation of the published archaeological material of Tel Dan from the Iron Age II to the Hellenistic periods, including the inscriptions from Tel Dan (chapters 2 and 3) and the analysis of the biblical texts that mention the city of Dan (chapter 4). Although the inscriptions are archaeological finds, they also represent the textual world. Therefore, they are studied in separate chapters. They also differ from the biblical evidence because they are *primary* sources from the Iron Age / Hellenistic period, although not found in the primary archaeological contexts.

Principles in the Study of the Archaeological Material

The study method for the archaeological finds utilizes the following framework:

- description of the finds: What has been found?
- description of the contexts: untouched or contaminated, clear or unclear stratigraphy, the relation of the finds in the same context / phase / stratum
- parallels/ reference material in the other sites (chapter 5)
- relative stratigraphy and chronology
- interpretation of the finds
- dating: the time-span of the stratum and its finds

In the beginning of the study of the archaeological remains, the whole stratigraphy of the *tell* will be presented in order to examine the long term settlement history[180] at Tel Dan. Thus, the stratigraphic location of the Iron Age II – Hellenistic strata can be studied in relation to those of the earlier and later periods. The archaeology of a few other major

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Bruins & van der Plicht & Mazar, A. 2003, 315−318 and Finkelstein & Piasetzky, 2003, 283−295. Mazar 2007, 255–272. See also Herzog & Singer-Avitz 2004, 209−244, and discussion
[180] See Finkelstein 1994, 150–178; Bunimovitz 1994, 179–202.

cities is introduced in chapter 5, in order to compare their archaeological results with Tel Dan. The aim is to describe and deal with the archaeological material through its own methods, and to maintain a distinction between the description and interpretation of the evidence.

The use of absolute dates is minimized in the description of the archaeological results, because of the lack of clearly fixed points. Therefore, I prefer to refer to strata rather than the centuries BCE. However, for the convenience of the reader, and in order to discuss Biran's results and interpretations, the absolute dates cannot totally be avoided. Biran's chronology (high chronology) is referred to in chapter 2. The alternative low chronology will be presented in chapter 2.5. The absolute anchor in the stratigraphy of Tel Dan are the destruction debris of Stratum II. This destruction is assigned to the military campaign of the Assyrian King Tighlat-Pileser III in northern Israel-Palestine around 732 BCE. The dating of the earlier Iron Age strata can be counted from this date down, with the help of the relative stratigraphy and the association of the material culture with the matrix of the archaeological material of other sites. Another question is how exactly Stratum II can be defined and discerned from the earlier and later strata, and how many sub-phases it includes. These questions are unfortunately beyond the reach of this study, due to the lack of the final excavation report. Figure 3 illustrates the methodological approach of this study, aiming to examine all the available material in order to reconstruct the history of the city of Dan.

Principles in the Study of the Biblical Texts

The biblical material concerning the city of Dan is dealt with in chapter 4. The archaeological evidence is referred to at some points, but the synthesis and the interdisciplinary discussion will mainly be conducted at the end of this dissertation (chapter 5). The method of the study follows these principles:

- reading the text in its context: what does the text say?
- the relation of the text passage to the wider context/ the biblical book
- parallel texts? and their relation
- explanations and commentaries of the text
- interpretations and dates given to the text
- ideology and/or theology of the text

The analytic "tools" used on the biblical texts are introduced in chapter 4.1, and the results and conclusions of the biblical passages are summarized in chapter 4.5.

Primary and Secondary Evidence

Archaeological material is discussed first because it provides the "hard" evidence, that is, concrete material evidence from the Iron Age II AB − Hellenistic reality. Therefore, it is taken as the *primary evidence* from these periods, although the absolute dating of the archaeological remains is also complicated. However, they represent the reality of the period to which they belong. In contrast, the biblical texts have been edited many times over the centuries, and are not "finds" from the Iron Age, although they included sources, data, or traditions from that period. Thus, they are regarded as *secondary / tertiary evidence.* If a passage of a biblical text were to be found in an archaeological context of the Iron or Hellenistic Age, it would be *primary evidence,* but there are few such finds.[181] Both archaeological and biblical evidence is in any case fragmentary and accidental, and based on the long process that preserved some data until today and then resulted in it finally being found. Besides, in the case of Dan the biblical material is also quite meager. The city is not described, and thus the information of what kind of city it was is received only by archaeology.
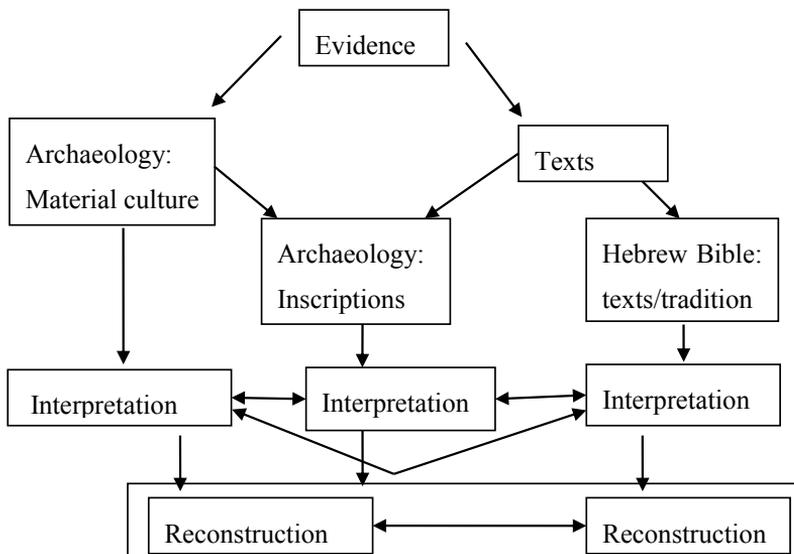
Figure 3. Illustration of the methodological approach of this study.

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[181] Two inscriptions on silver plaques – found in the burial cave in Ketef Hinnom in Jerusalem and resembling the priestly benediction in Num 6:24–26 – can be cited as such examples. See Barkay 1992, 139–194.

1.5.2. Terminology

The periodization of the Iron Age would be a research topic of its own.[182] It will remain beyond the scope of this study, but it is necessary to define which aspects will be used in this study. The early Iron Age will be referred to as Iron Age I, which is roughly dated to 1200–1000 BCE. The Iron Age II period will be divided into three sub periods: IIA, B, and C. I will use the following dates, although they are not meant to be taken too exactly:[183]

>Iron Age IIA: the 10th century BCE
>
>Iron Age IIB: the 9th – late 8th centuries BCE
>
>Iron Age IIC: the late 8th – 6th centuries BCE

Because my intention is to separate archaeological and biblical argumentation, I will also try do it in my terminology. I will avoid using biblical terms in the archaeological context and vice versa. Thus, I prefer to use the term Iron Age IIB to "the time of Ahab", or a podium to a "bamah", contrary to Biran (1994 and the several reports and articles of his). However, I do make some exceptions in order to make it easier to follow Biran's reports. For example, I use Biran's biblical term "*ḥuṣṣot*" for denoting the building complex outside the city wall, and I sometimes also use "*maṣṣeba*" for standing stones (chapter 2.3). I will also try to avoid national labels such as "Israelite Dan" versus "Canaanite Dan", except in references to the research, because we do not know the ethnicity or "nationality" of the Iron and Bronze Age people of Palestine. Although the term "Canaanite" material culture is still generally used by archaeologists, I prefer to replace "Canaanite" with the "Late Bronze".[184] I am not as strict with place names. I will use biblical names (such as Tel Dan instead of the Arabic name Tell el-Qāḍī, Megiddo, Hazor, Lachish) if they have been officially accepted by the state of Israel and the identification is commonly accepted.

City or town? The difference in the use of these words is not easy to define. Usually "a city" refers to a large town, a metropolis, but it is also used in other contexts. In the

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[182] All the suggested periodizations have more or less been based on a mixture of archaeological and biblical evidence. The material culture does not always follow the historically or biblically based definitions of the Iron Age periods. For example, the supposed break in biblical history between the United Monarchy of Solomon and the beginning of the Divided Monarchy is not reflected in the material culture. However, in several periodizations this point of time (year 925 BCE) has been marked as the shift from the period of Iron Age I to Iron Age II, or from Iron IIA to Iron Age IIB.

[183] My periodization follows Mazar 1990, 29−30 except that I do not give as sharp dates as he does (1000−925, 925−720, 720−586 BCE). According to Mazar, the Iron Age ends in 586. However, the material of the Persian period (5th century BCE) can still be ascribed to the culture of the late Iron Age. See Stern 2001, 514−518; Lipschits 2005, 192−206.

[184] "Canaan" in the Late Bronze Age sources is rather a geographic than a national term. It probably refers to the coastal area of Syria and Phoenicia, not to any specific people. Thompson 1999, 81.

archaeology of Israel-Palestine "city" is generally used when the significant regional centers with monumental buildings are referred to. The smaller urban centers are called "town". I will follow this usage. For the sake of consistency, I will also use the word "city" in the biblical context. The "city of Dan" refers both to Dan in the Hebrew Bible and the Iron Age−Hellenistic city at Tel Dan.

"Israel" is a complicated term in the Hebrew Bible. It can refer to the "*whole Israel from Dan to Beersheba*", the biblical kingdom of Israel, the Northern Kingdom, the "people of Israel", "the land of Israel" (*'ereṣ jisra'el*), or to an ethnic or religious label, i.e. "Israelites" (*bᵉnê jisra'el*) in contrast to non-Israelites.[185] I use "*the kingdom of Israel*" when the kingdoms of Israel and Judah of the Iron Age II period is referred to, and Israel-Palestine as a modern term when the geography of the area is referred to. Similarly, I prefer to use "*the people or inhabitants of the Iron Age II*" over "*Israelites*" in the archaeological context. The term "state" is problematic because of its modern connotation. However, it is used in archaeology in order to denote a well-organized and centralized society in which different social classes, particularly the wealthy leading class, can be discerned.[186] I will also use the term thusly, and understand it in this meaning when it is mentioned in the context of Iron Age Israel-Palestine. Furthermore, I try avoid using the term "*ancient Israel*" because of its vagueness.[187]

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[185] See Noth 1986 (1956), 9−15; Davies P.R. 1992, 49−52; Lemche 1998, 86−132; Thompson 1999, 78−79.
[186] E.g. Niemann 1993.
[187] On the problem with the term "*ancient Israel*" see e.g. Davies, P.R. 1992. Davies' focus is that the concept of "ancient Israel" is a scholarly creation which consists of a mixture of the biblical Israel and the history of Iron Age Palestine. As such, it never existed, because biblical history cannot be regarded as history in the sense of the modern scientifical meaning. His intention is to separate the biblical history of Israel from the Israel of the Iron Age II Palestine. The former is mainly the ideological-religious creation of the Persian–Hellenistic Jewish community, but the Israel of Iron Age II Palestine can only be traced through the archaeological evidence. This separation is necessary, because only archaeology can provide evidence which indeed derives from the Iron Age Palestine. Biblical evidence includes tradition drawn from several centuries, but the original documents – if any of them could ever have been defined as such – have disappeared. The Hebrew Bible was combined, redacted, and partly written in the Persian–Hellenistic Period, and therefore it is primarily a document of these later periods. See also Lemche, 1988, 32–34; Thompson 1992, 401–412.

2. Tel Dan: Results of the Excavations

2.1. Stratigraphy of Tel Dan

2.1.1. Excavated Areas

Eight areas were opened and explored at Tel Dan during the years 1966 – 1999 (see fig. 4). Half of the areas (A, AB, K, Y) are situated at the edge of the square-like mound ranging over the Middle Bronze Age IIB rampart,[188] which still surrounds the whole *tell*. Only one area (M) has been opened in the center of the mound. The rest of the areas (B, H, and T) are located at the foot of the inner slope of the MB IIB rampart. Areas A and B were connected by Area AB during the course of the excavations, and now form a physically uniform, large area that is located in the middle of the southern range of the *tell*. Area H is also located near the southern range: around 80 meters east of Area B and some 30 meters westward of Area K, which covers the southeastern corner. Areas T and Y were opened in the northern part of the *tell*; Area T is situated in its northwestern corner near the springs, extending from the inner slope of the MB II rampart towards the center of the *tell,* while Area Y forms a section through the MB rampart near the northeastern corner.

The most important Iron Age IIA–B finds were revealed in Areas A, AB, B, and T, which will be analyzed in detail in chapters 2.2 and 2.3. A large Iron Age gate complex was discovered at the foot of the outer slope of the MB II rampart in Area A.[189] The area was enlarged up the slope towards Area B when the road leading from the gate into the city was extended in that direction.[190] Further excavations revealed several Iron Age II gates in Areas A and AB. In Area T, a large Iron Age II cultic enclosure was revealed; already in the first seasons of the excavations a structure built of well-dressed ashlars was revealed.[191] The building technique of the structure resembles that used in the palaces, temples, citadels, or other public buildings at Megiddo, Samaria, Ramat Rahel, and Hazor during the 10th – 8th centuries BC.[192] This structure turned out to be part of a massive, nearly square-shaped construction. The excavators suggested that the construction represents the

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[188] The huge earthen ramparts, a typical feature of the MB II major cities, served as the defense system of the city. See aerial photograph and description of the ramparts in Biran 1994, 22 (Ill. 2), 59–73.

[189] Biran 1969, 121–122.

[190] Areas A and B were expanded towards each others in order to investigate the connection of the buildings of Area B to the Iron Age gate complex in Area A. Because new architectural elements were revealed between these areas, the new area was discerned to be a separate area and assigned to Area AB. Biran 1996, 24.

[191] Biran 1969a,123; 1969b, 240–241.

[192] Reich 1992, 211–212; Biran 1994, 162–164.

remains of a "bamah", a high place. The podium appeared to belong to a large, enclosed building complex which was in use throughout several centuries in several strata.[193]

Areas K and Y were opened in order to explore the construction of the MB IIB ramparts.[194] A monumental Middle Bronze Age (MB) arch gate build of mud brick was uncovered in Area K.[195] Little Iron Age material has been published from this area. Some Iron Age remains were discovered in Area Y, but mainly from Strata I (a building dated to the late 7th – early 6th centuries), V, and VI. Similarly to Areas B, H, and T, the Iron Age occupation had been limited inside the Middle Bronze Age IIB rampart, covering only its inner slope. Beneath Stratum I, a few Iron Age II walls and floors (L3071, L3016) were revealed west of the rampart core,[196] but Iron Age I was better represented; a concentration of Iron Age I pits were discovered. These pits and floors yielded plenty of pottery, including pithoi, a few Philistine sherds, cooking pots, chalices, and a fragment of a kernos (L3043).[197] Around one of the stone-lined pits (L3127), sealed by floor L3124, six phases from the Iron Age I period were discerned.[198] The finds in the small Area H – located as well on the inner slope of the Middle Bronze IIB rampart – resemble those of Area Y. They consist of the remains of a late 7th-early 6th century building[199] and some material from earlier periods (Iron I and II).[200]

Area M also revealed Iron Age remains. Due to the short distance from Area B, the stratigraphy and finds of these areas show similar features. Biran especially mentions "striking" similarities of the Iron Age I remains (Stratum V).[201] In the uppermost Stratum I, the late 7th – early 6th century BCE buildings cover the whole excavated area. Below Stratum I, a few levels of the remains of Iron Age II were distinguished. The remains

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[193] Biran 1996, 32–49. According to Biran: "it constituted the sacred precinct or sanctuary of Dan throughout a millennium and a half" (from the second half of the 2nd millennium BCE to the Roman period). His arguments centered on the figurines, mostly Egyptian, which he interpreted as god-figurines or other such objects used in cultic context. Biran 1994, 161, 165. However, the religious or cultic nature of the finds cannot be confirmed.

[194] Biran 1996, 53, 58.

[195] Biran 1996, 58–63; 1994, 235–237.

[196] Biran 1996, 54–56.

[197] Several Iron I pits are mentioned and marked in Plan 9, Biran 1996. Pit L905 included a jar with two Philistine sherds (See Biran 1994, 143, Ill. 102). Other pits (L1051, L3033, L3043, L3009) also yielded a considerable amount of Iron I pottery. L3009 also included carbonized grain, animal bones, ash, and similar metallurgical remains to those in Area B. Furthermore, at least one room (L3212) was reported. Biran 1996, 54–57.

[198] Biran 1996, 56, 57; 1980a, 177.

[199] Among other finds there was a Phoenician inscription ללבעל פלט written on the shoulder of the jar. Biran 1994, 262–264, Ill. 218. Similar pottery was found in buildings of Stratum I in Areas B, H, and Y. Biran 1996, 54.

[200] Biran 1996, 29.

[201] Biran 1996, 30.

contain walls, a well-preserved stone pavement (L8012, Stratum II),[202] and pottery dated roughly to the 10th – 8th centuries BCE. Rooms (for example L8060, Stratum V) and pits (L8087, L8115, L8185, L8098, Stratum VI) with Iron Age I pottery were also discovered, as well as LB and MB strata.[203] Because of the large pavement (L8012) of Stratum II, the architecture of earlier strata could be revealed only in small probes. Therefore, Area M did not provide fruitful evidence for the study of the Iron Age IIA–B city. Stratum IV is represented only by pottery,[204] and Strata II and III yielded very fragmentary remains due to the small excavated areas reached in these levels. Thus, the finds in Areas A, AB, B, and T are relevant to Strata IV–II in this study. Remains from Stratum I were found in the other areas, too, as well as finds from the Babylonian-Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman periods, but not much material has been published.
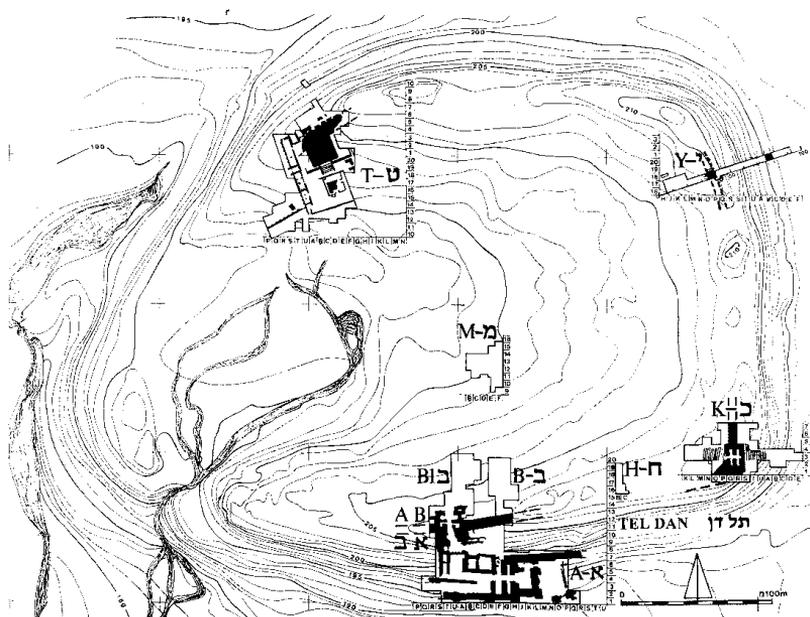
Figure 4. Excavated areas at Tel Dan (Biran et. al, 1996, Plan 1).

2.1.2. Stratification of Tel Dan

Biran discerned sixteen main strata at Tel Dan from the Ceramic Neolithic (Stratum XVI) through Iron Age IIC (Stratum I). Several Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman remains were

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[202] A Hebrew inscription לעמדיו in a stamped handle fragment of a jar was found in the soil layer on this pavement. This name ('Immadyo) was found in three handles. Biran 1996, 32.

[203] Biran 1996, 30–32. A tentative stratigraphy of Area M (Strata I-VII) is presented in page 31.

[204] Biran 1996, 31, 32: "In the southern part of the area, on a Stratum IV floor, pithos, storage jar and cooking pot fragments, lead weights and a scarab were recovered. Beneath this floor the thick burnt layer of Stratum V was met."

also found above Stratum I, but these strata were not numbered.[205] Except for Stratum XVI, the other strata represent the Bronze (9 strata) and Iron (6 strata) Ages. The aim of this chapter is to study the stratigraphical context of the Iron Age II strata. First, the general concept of the stratification of the whole *tell* will be presented, and then the Iron Age stratigraphy will be studied and compared between different areas. Attention will also be paid to the appearance and character of the urban periods at Tel Dan, in order to compare the process of Iron Age urbanism with the development of the urban cultures during the Bronze Age. The results have been gathered in Tables 1 and 2.

The Bronze Age strata

Evidence from the Early Bronze Age city (Strata XV and XIV) was found in all the excavated areas, indicating a large settlement; remains were also found under and outside the MB II rampart. According to Greenberg, gaps in the occupation preceded and followed these two main strata, which include several building phases of the EB city.[206] The material of Strata XV–XIV represents EB II–III urban culture (30th–23rd centuries BCE). This city culture suffered from a rapid deterioration, and only scattered remains were revealed in the stratum above (Stratum XIII). It was dated to the Intermediate EB/MB period.[207]

Stratum XII – IX represents the remains of the Middle Bronze Age city. The excavators observed reuse of the EB II–III fortifications in MB IIA houses, which proves that some remains of the destroyed EB city were still visible at the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age.[208] Strata XII–IX show a continuous habitation at Tel Dan during the whole MB II period.[209]

Between Stratum IX (MB) and Stratum VIII (LB), a layer of thick destruction debris was found in several probes of the excavated areas. This destruction indicates a clear break between these strata, but it did not necessarily imply a long temporal gap; according to Biran, the material of the earliest LB city (early phase of Stratum VIII) belongs to the transitional MB-LB culture, which he dates to the 16th century BCE.[210] The LB city was

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[205] See table of stratigraphy and chronology Biran 1996, 8. For a short description and Biran's view of the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman period at Tel Dan, see Biran 1994, 271–273.
[206] Greenberg 1996, 96, 98.
[207] Biran 1994, 33–45.
[208] Ilan 1996, 163–164.
[209] All the MBII strata have been discerned at Tel Dan in Areas A, B, M, and Y. Several phases or sub-strata can also be identified, particularly within Strata XII and XI. Ilan 1996, 163–164, table 4.1. The earthen rampart for the defense of the developed city was likely constructed in Stratum XI (Transitional MBIIA-B). Biran 1994, 62.
[210] Biran 1994, 104–105: This destruction debris associated with Stratum IX was recognized in Areas B, M, and T. Pottery of Stratum VIII represents a continuity from the MBII tradition, but new types also appeared.

limited within the MB II ramparts, which were utilized for fortification and defense throughout the entire Late Bronze Age. LB I and II material was also found in all the excavated areas. Two main strata (Strata VIII and VII) were assigned.[211] The material culture of the LB period is best represented by tombs, where hundreds of vessels and small objects were discovered. The best preserved tomb was the "Mycenaean" Tomb 387, a burial in Area B.[212] The pottery of the last LB II phase (VIIA1) already shows Iron Age I features. Therefore, the excavators characterized it as "the transitional phase between the Late Bronze and the Iron Ages".[213] Architectural remains are scarce, because this phase was damaged by later building activity.[214]

Iron Ages I Strata (VI–V)

The Iron Age remains at Tel Dan were found on top of a sequence of several Bronze Age cities. Two main strata (Strata VI and V) belonging to the Iron Age I period were distinguished. Stratum VI was revealed above the destruction debris of Stratum VII (LB), and Stratum V was covered by thick debris. Biran states that Strata VI and V were also clearly distinguishable from each other due to the character of the settlement, although no destruction layer was found.[215] He describes Stratum VI as a semi-nomadic[216] material culture characterized by numerous stone-lined or earthen pits, or *shilos*, while Stratum V is characterized by a renewal of urban culture.[217] However, David Ilan does not see the change from Stratum VI to Stratum V as sharp. For example, the pits, typical to Stratum VI, have also been found in Stratum V and IVB. Furthermore, reuse of walls and several

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Among others, bichrome ware typical to 16th–15th centuries BCE was found.

[211] Ben-Dov 2002, 35, 222.

[212] Biran 1994, 111–112; Ben-Dov 2002, 37:"Tomb 387 is the showpiece of the Late Bronze Age II at Tel Dan. Since it is a sealed and defined entity, its abundant finds serve as a reference point from which occupation phases in Area B around the tomb are defined as prior to or later than tomb's construction." See also pages 48 and 222.

[213] Ben-Dov 2002, 48.

[214] Biran 1994, 120: "Unfortunately most of the evidence of the latter part of Late Bronze II Laish has disappeared, being destroyed in the course of building and leveling in the 12th century BCE and subsequently. Thus little can be said of the nature and character of the settlement… The pottery vessels found are typical of the period; characteristics of the previous period and signs of a process of degeneration can be distinguished."

[215] According to Ilan, Stratum VI had suffered from a conflagration, but the evidence was found mainly in pits. He assumed that the builders of Stratum V cleaned off and removed most of this debris, some of it to the underground pits. Ilan 1999, 115–117, 149.

[216] Biran associates the pits, shilos, and cisterns with a semi-nomadic life. However, this cannot be reasoned from the archaeological evidence; pits and shilos are also found in urban contexts. I define the remains of Stratum I as a modest village.

[217] Biran 1994, 126–132, 135. Strata VI-IVB are best represented in Area B. In addition, Areas M and Y provide stratified material, while in Areas A, H, K, and T only small probes reached the Iron Age I strata. See Ilan 1999, 28–67.

floor levels on top of each other made the stratigraphy complicated.[218] This is particularly the situation in Areas B and AB where a rather large area of domestic architecture and a district for metal industry were revealed. Dense sequences of Iron Age I architecture were also found in other areas. In any case, it is clear that Stratum V faced a sudden destruction, which provides a benchmark for stratigraphy between various areas: traces of fire and layers of ashes, more than 50 cm thick, were found wherever this stratum was reached.[219]

Iron Age II Strata (IV–I) and the Persian – Hellenistic Period

Strata IV–I were assigned to the Iron Age II by Biran. He divided Stratum IV into IVB (transition Iron I/II) and IVA in his preliminary reports, but his arguments for this division remain unclear. However, both strata are represented and also well described in Areas B and AB in David Ilan's dissertation on Iron Age I at Tel Dan (1999), in which Strata V– IVA demonstrate continuity. Establishing synchronism between the areas is still challenging. In Areas B1, M, and Y, the remains above Stratum V were also assigned to Stratum IVB, while in Area T the stratum above Stratum V was associated with Stratum IVA. Biran did not assign any remains to Stratum IVB in Area T (see table 1).

Stratum IVB. Stratum IVB consists of well-preserved building remains with pottery in Areas B, B1, AB, M, and Y, and installations for metal industry (Building 7062)[220] in Area AB. In these areas, Stratum IVB shows a rapid recovery of the site after the destruction of Stratum V. Even though Stratum V was badly destroyed, the excavators also observed reuse of the Strata V and VII walls in Stratum IVB, at least in Areas B and AB, the area of the metal industry.[221] The orientation of the buildings also followed those of the Late Bronze Age (Stratum VII) through Stratum V to Stratum IVB. Ilan states that "there is no real change in orientation anywhere until Stratum IVA" in Area B.[222] Stratum IVB faced local destructions and burning, which were evidenced in Areas B, M, T, and Y. Among other things, traces of conflagration and complete vessels in the burnt debris were found in L129 and L161 (Area B). A part of the building (Strata V–IVB) in Area M also seems to

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[218] Ilan 1999, 28, 30, 38, 42. About the pits in Area B see page 45. Ilan says that Stratum VI was "probably short-lived and rather sparsely built-up." Ilan 1999, 38.
[219] Biran 1994, 135–141; Ilan 1999, 26, 51 (Area B): "…a massive conflagration that entrapped a great quantity of *in situ* living floor material...No human remains or signs of military conflict were identified."
[220] See plan of the building complex Fig. 1.29 in Biran 1996, 28.
[221] Biran 1994, 155. About recovery of the metallurgy see page 155; Ilan 1999, 26–28, 51–55.
[222] Ilan 1999, 30.

have suffered from fire, while some walls had just collapsed. Ilan suggests that the reason of this destruction was an earthquake.[223]

Stratum IVA. Stratum IVA is best represented and preserved by the cultic enclosure in Area T. Due to its sudden destruction, the stratum was covered and sealed by the travertine surface of Stratum III above, and the debris of Stratum IVA thus included many artifacts (chapter 2.2.2).[224] The founding of the cultic enclosure was assigned to this stratum. The earliest phase of its structures already represented a new building technique, with ashlar masonry walls in the two-row wall technique. The remains of Stratum IVA are quite scarce in the other areas. This is explained by the disturbance caused by the building activity in Strata III and II (Areas B, M), and the progress of the excavations: the later architecture, which was not removed, hides the earlier remains (particularly Area H).[225] This is also the case in Areas A and AB, where the massive fortifications of Strata III and II hide much of the earlier structures (see chapter 2.3.2).[226] However, beneath the main gate of Stratum III–II, an earlier pavement, walls, and structures were found in some probes (loci 5033, 5052, 5057). These remains with the pottery evidence were enough to identify the earliest gate (?) fortification with Stratum IV(A?).[227] In Area B, some remains of Stratum IVA were also found. Despite the damage caused by the later building, the available material confirmed that the architecture followed that of Stratum IVB, and many houses and walls were rebuilt in Stratum IVA. However, the building technique seems to have changed in the beginning of Stratum IVA. Two-row walls of small stones replaced the earlier single-row walls of big basalts usually set in headers. The new two-row technique was also followed in later strata (IVA–II).[228]

Strata III and II. Strata III and II are evidenced by massive buildings and paved areas (particularly in Areas A, AB, B). The gate complex of Stratum III dominates the remains in Area A. This gate remained in use until the end of Stratum II.[229] In Area T, the cultic enclosure was leveled and covered by a new surface made of crushed limestone. This surface serves as a clear stratigraphical divider between Stratum IVA and III. Stratum III

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[223] Ilan 1999, 26, table 3.1, 56–57, 59–60, 149.

[224] Biran 1994, 165.

[225] A large building dated to the late 7th - early 6th century BCE was revealed in Area H. Earlier strata were only reached in small probes. Biran 1996, 29.

[226] See Biran 1994, 235–254.

[227] Biran 1996, 16–17. See also Biran et al. 1996, Plan 2.

[228] Ilan 1999, 30, 52, 56 (Area B), 61-63 (Area Y). Some walls built in the double-row technique had already been assigned to Stratum IVB, but Ilan is suspicious of their stratigraphical context; he is of the opinion that these walls might as well belong to Stratum IVA (Ilan 1999, 30, footnote 6).

[229] Biran 1994, 246. The gate complex consists of three gates and city wall; the main and outer gate was probably built at the same time, while the upper gate is a later construction built in Stratum II. See description in chapter 4.

also represents different architecture from that of the previous stratum, while Strata III and II show a progressive development without any traces of destruction layers. However, new construction work and rebuilding have been assigned to Stratum III (chapter 2.2.3 and 2.2.4), and in some areas this stratum is divided into two sub-strata, IIIA and IIIB. In the gate area (Area A), new construction was also carried out and the upper gate built (chapters 2.3.3 and 2.3.4). According to Biran, Stratum III is poor in pottery and other finds because of the peaceful nature of the period and the continuity from Stratum III to Stratum II. In contrast, Stratum II (dated by Biran to the 8th century) faced quite a sudden destruction, most probably caused by the Assyrian attack around 732 BCE. The layer of destruction debris was thick and rich with finds. Stratum II also seems to include several phases, but the preliminary reports do not offer a detailed picture.

Stratum I. Stratum I represents the city under Assyrian rule (late 8th – early 7th century BCE), and it was revealed in several excavated areas. The city expanded outside of the Middle Bronze Age ramparts for the first time after the EB city. The cultic enclosure in Area T continued in use, but the gate fortification was not built again. Public buildings, houses, paved streets, and piazzas were uncovered (Areas A, M, H), and several building phases were distinguished. Plenty of pottery and other finds are also associated with this stratum. In Area M, three phases were discerned in this stratum. Stratum I was destroyed by the Babylonians.[230]

Persian–Hellenistic Period. There are hardly any remains from the Babylonian and Persian periods at Tel Dan – or if there are, they are below the ruins of the Hellenistic period. Remains from the Hellenistic period were at least revealed in a probe east of Area T, and in Areas T, A, and AB. Not much of the Hellenistic material is published.[231]

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[230] 1994, 261–271. See preliminary reports e.g. Biran 1969, 123; 1972, 2–3; 1976, 203; 1981; 1982, 139; 1985, 187.
[231] Biran 1994, 271; See preliminary reports e.g. 1969, 121–123, 239; 1970, 118; 1972, 165; 1976b, 203–204; 1977, 244; 1978, 269–270; 1982, 139; 1985, 186.

Stratum	Period (NEAEH)	Character of Settlement	Areas with stratified remains	High Chronology (Biran)	Low Chronol. Iron Age
XVI	Ceramic Neolithic	Settlement	B	50th	
Gap					
XV – XIV	EB II – III	City	A, B, B1, M, K, T, Y (all the areas)	30th – 23th	
Rapid deterioration and destruction Most of the excavated areas					
XIII	Intermediate EB/MB	Scattered remains	?	23th – 20th	
XII – IX	MB II	City: establishment of Gate (Area K) and earthen ramparts XI	A, AB, B, K, M, T, Y (all the areas)	20th –16th	
Destruction Most of the excavated areas					
VIII – VII --------- Latter phase of VII	LB I – II Transition LBII / Iron I	City, continuation of MB city culture Degenerated	A, AB, B, K, M, T, Y Particularly B	16th – 13th around 1200	
VI	Iron I	Village? not dense, pits	A?, AB, B, B1, K, M, T, Y	12th	late 12th – 11th
Conflagration (?)					
V	Iron I	Organized village / Process of urbanism	A?, AB, B, B1, M, T, Y	12th – 11th	10th – 11th
Destruction debris of around 50 cm thick. All the excavated areas.					
IVB	Transition Iron I – II	village?	AB, B, B1, M, Y	late 11th – mid 10th	10th
Traces of local burning. Destroyed by earthquake?					Gap?
IVA	Iron IIA/B?	City?	A?, AB?, B?, M?, T, (B1?) Y?	late 10th – early 9th	9th – 8th
Destruction					
III (IIIB/IIIA)	Iron IIB	City	A, AB, B?, B1(?), M, T, Y	9th – 8th	8th
Earth Quake					
II (several phases?)	Iron IIB	City	All the excavated areas	8th – 732	8th –732
Destruction by Assyrians All the excavated c.732 BCE					
I (3 phases, Area M)	Iron IIC	City (Assyrian)	Nearly all the excavated areas	732 – 6th	732 – 6th
Persian		Scarce remains		5th-4th	5th-4th
Hellenistic (two phases)				late 4th–2nd	late 4th – 2nd

Table 1. The stratigraphy of Tel Dan. The table is based on Biran 1994, 1996a, 2002, and the season reports. Absolute dates according to Biran 1996a, 8.

Discussion on the Change / Continuity of the LB – Iron Strata

Biran described the shift from Stratum VII (LBII) to Stratum VI (Iron I) as "a radical change in the settlement pattern" and "a total change" in the material culture.[232] This view cannot be held anymore. The settlement pattern indeed changed. Apparently, the economic base collapsed towards the end of Stratum VII, which led to the non-urban culture in Stratum VI. However, this did not mean "a total change." First, the rapid deterioration of the material culture was already seen in the last phase of the Late Bronze period (Stratum VIIA1), not just in Stratum VI. Second, some architecture of Stratum VII was reused in Stratum VI.[233] Third, although a few new types of pottery also appeared, the pottery tradition of the Late Bronze period continued in Stratum VI in most of the types.[234] In addition, the last phase of the LB II period (Stratum VIIA1) already represents pottery typical to Iron Age I.[235] Thus, the cultural shift from the Late Bronze Age city to the Iron Age village was not as sharp as Biran suggested. In addition, no significant change in pottery tradition occurred between Strata VI and V, although the village gradually developed back towards an urban society. This change is reflected only by the reappearance of small vessels, which were absent in Stratum VI, such as jugs, juglets, bowls, chalices, flasks, and pyxides.[236] Actually, the material culture of Strata VI-IVB – starting already from Stratum VIIA1 – represents continuity, despite the non-urban period in Stratum VI and the violent destruction of Stratum V.[237]

The process of urbanism continued at Tel Dan from Stratum V onwards, and in Area B and AB strata V–IVA show continuity. However, only from Stratum IVA onwards Tel Dan can at ealierst be defined again as a fortified city.[238] Biran claims that the pottery of

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[232] Biran 1994, 126, 128.
[233] Ilan 1999, 26, table 3.1.
[234] Among other things, pithoi, cooking pots, and most of the bowls continue the Late Bronze Age pottery traditions. As such, Biran 1994, 129 mentions the "Galilean type" pithoi which have also been found at the contemporary stratum at Hazor. Ilan also came to the conclusion that the Iron Age I pottery assemblage mostly represents a continuation of the local LB pottery types. Some types (e.g. Phoenician pithoi) show a connection to the coastal area and Cyprus, while only collared-rim pithoi indicate a link to the central hill country. Ilan 1999, 147–148.
[235] Ben-Dov 2002, 48. Biran 1994, 120–122, 126: "All these finds are from a phase of occupation heralding the beginning of the Iron Age but still bearing vestiges of the Late Bronze Age."
[236] Biran 1994, 141. Biran also mentioned that "the material culture of Stratum V belongs to the same cultural milieu as that of Stratum VI." (page 138). The study of David Ilan well illustrates the similarity in pottery tradition from Stratum VI to Stratum IVB. Ilan 1999, see plates 1–62 (Vol.2).
[237] Ilan emphasizes the homogeneity: "Each of the relevant strata (VI, V, IVB) shows a general homogeneity in architecture and material culture though there are some processual differences. There was much continuity in use of architecture from stratum to stratum in these levels." Ilan 1999, 26; See also Ilan 2017, chapter 21.
[238] See definitions of the city in Herzog 1997, 2–13, particularly p. 13: "The city… is a social entity which came into being through a constellation of circumstances under which non-urban communities were driven to establish central achieved power over the common population and used the city as a power base and as a means to communicate that power. The city became a container of power." Ilan still calls the settlement of

Stratum IVA represents both continuation and new types. Pithoi, both "Galilean" and "Phoenician", were still found, but their relative number was not as high as in the previous strata. Smaller storage jars were more common. He argued for a late 10th – early 9th century date for this stratum.[239]

A different date for Stratum IVA was suggested by Eran Arie. He studied the published pottery and concluded that the pottery of Stratum IVA rather resembles that of the Iron Age II B period, which he would date as late as 830/800 BCE onwards. He suggested a gap of more than a hundred years between Strata IVB and IVA.[240] One of his arguments was the appearance of Samarian Ware in Stratum IVA. This burnished and slipped ware, common in the 9th century, also appeared for the first time in this stratum.[241] The earliest examples of Phoenician Black-on-Red jugs and flasks and the dating of Stratum IVA will be discussed in chapters 2.2 and 2.5.

From Stratum IVA to Stratum I the sequence of the cities show dense stratigraphy with subsequent earthen, slab stone, or plastered floors, reuse of walls and rooms, and leveling operations. The destruction of Stratum IVA was followed by a rebuilding of the city with new architectural features, but Strata III–II were continuous and no traces of destruction were found. Stratum II was covered by the destruction debris on which the city of Stratum I was built.

2.1.3. Synchronism of the Iron Age Strata between the Areas

The synchronism of the strata between the various areas, or even within one area, is difficult. Because no physical connection exists between areas or loci, the only possibility to define the contemporaneous strata is to rely on the similarities and differences of the material, the architectural features, and the earth types of the local strata. Destruction layers are helpful if they cover the whole mound. In Tel Dan, there are few such layers. Thus, the outline of the main Iron Age II strata can be shaped, but it is not possible to determine the definite numbers of the sub-phases and the detailed development within each individual phase, due to the lack of a final excavation report.

Stratum V a village, because no public buildings in this stratum have been found, but he also agrees that Stratum IVA already represents a fortified town or city. Ilan 1999, 146–147.

[239] Biran 1994, 142-143. Biran does not give any examples or refer to any loci or context in which this ware was found.

[240] Arie 2008, 15–33.

[241] Ilan 1999, 56; Biran 1994, 146; Arie 2008, 19 (BL8. Bowl with a thick stepped wall), 27.

The stratigraphic study indicated that only Areas A, AB, B, and T are so far relevant concerning the period of Iron Age IIA-B. The remains of this period in Areas H, K, M, and Y are scarce or not published. Three destruction levels can be regarded as benchmarks in synchronizing the contemporary Iron Age strata. In the lowest level, the destruction of the Late Bronze Age city of Stratum VII can be identified in most of the areas, as well as the destruction debris of Stratum V and Stratum II. The case of Stratum IV is more complicated. This stratum was divided into two phases, IVB and IVA, but this division was not explained by Biran.[242] Because Stratum IVB is best presented in Area B, but Stratum IVA in Area T, the relation of these substrata remain unclear. The character of Stratum IV also varies a great deal from place to place.

In Areas AB and B, the metal industry reached its peak in Stratum V, but it was still an important feature in Stratum IVB (for example Building 7062 with Courtyard 7015).[243] In both strata (V and IVB), rather well-preserved houses terraced on the inner slope of the MB IIB rampart were discovered. Traces of metal industry were found in the context of these domestic buildings. Some cultic remains, including standing stones (*maṣṣebot,* loci 132, 343) and "snake-house" (Room 7082), were found in Stratum V (Area AB).[244] According to Ilan, Stratum IVB was damaged, possibly by an earthquake (at least area B), but the area was rebuilt (Stratum IVA).[245] However, the remains of Stratum IVA were rather modest in Areas AB and B.

In Area T, Biran did not present any finds for Stratum IVB, but assigned the establishment of the cultic enclosure to Stratum IVA. He also mentions the Iron Age I remains of Stratum V and its destruction. However, Ilan refers to the constructions and the destruction of Stratum IVB in Area T,[246] but does not give any detailed description. Nor does Eran Arie's pottery study[247] help, because it only includes the pottery of Strata IVA and II. Thus, it is not possible to say if the pottery of Strata IVA and B are distinguishable from each other, although Ilan mentions that in Area B (including Area AB) some new types appeared in Stratum IVA: early Samarian Ware and burnished red-slipped pottery.[248] He also says that a new building technique (the two-row stone technique) probably

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[242] Similarly, Arie 2008, 32 who sees Stratum IVB as a later part of Stratum V. He suggests that Biran's Stratum V should be called VB and his Stratum IVB would be VA. Stratum IVA should be Stratum IV. Without the final reports of the local stratigraphies this suggestion is, however, too hasty.
[243] See Biran 1996, 27–28.
[244] Ilan 1999, 132–133; Biran 1994, 151–153.
[245] Ilan 1999, 26, table 3.1.
[246] Ilan 1999, 26, 60: "it is clear that Area T was intensely occupied, and destroyed in the same site-wide destructions attributed to Strata V and IVB."
[247] Arie 2008, 6–64.
[248] Ilan 1999, 56.

appeared just in Stratum IVA in both Area B and T.[249] However, the relation between Stratum IVB and IVA remains unclear.

In Area A, the remains of Strata IV(A?) and V are not numerous, due to the limited space of the excavations underneath Stratum III. Therefore, the development from stratum to stratum is difficult to follow. The main fortification (main and outer gate) has been extensively excavated, and it was built in Stratum III (see chapter 2.3.3). The earlier strata (IV and V) have been explored in small probes only; pavement and large structures were discovered under the pavement of Stratum III, but above the destruction of Stratum V. Hence, the earliest fortification could be attached to Stratum IV (A?). It is still questionable if it is contemporary with the Iron Age cultic enclosure of Stratum IVA (Area T), but Biran dated both of them to the "time of Jeroboam I"[250] (Stratum IVA). Although both were found under Stratum III and above the destruction of Stratum V, this does not yet confirm the contemporary dating for the both constructions. The final report must be awaited, in order to shed more light on the development within Stratum IV and the synchronism of the architecture between the different areas.

Strata III – II are well evidenced in almost all areas. At least in Areas A, AB, and T, a break caused by the destruction between Stratum IV(A) and Stratum III can be observed. The new gate fortification (Areas A, AB) and the constructions of the cultic enclosure (Area T) were built in the beginning of Stratum III, and most of them continued in use throughout Stratum II as well. Therefore, the shift from Stratum III to Stratum II is not as obvious. The latter is mainly defined on the basis of some new elements built sometime later at the site. The main fortification system of Stratum III consisted of the city wall and the main and outer gates. This fortification remained in use until the end of Stratum II. Possibly the upper gate (Area AB) also existed already in Stratum III; tower(?) 4028,[251] belonging to this supposed gate, was discovered above the MB IIB core structure but below the upper gate of Stratum II, which is well preserved and entirely revealed.

Not much has been published about the architecture of Strata III and II in Area B. However, large pavements and the remains of at least one public building, which Ilan regards as a tripartite pillared-building,[252] have been reported. Whether these remains belong to Stratum III or Stratum II, or both, is still unclear. In other areas, too, it is not at all easy to define exactly which structures or pavements belong to each stratum due to the

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[249] Ilan 1999, 30, footnote 6.
[250] Biran 1994, 165, 247. This date has only a biblical basis. It can not in any way be argued from the archaeological evidence.
[251] Biran 1996, 25. See also plan 2.
[252] Ilan 1999, 56.

dense sequence of the sub phases and the lack of significant destruction layers. Thus, establishing an exact and detailed synchronism from structure to structure between the areas is highly problematic.

Being aware of the problems and limitations of the synchronism and the stage of excavations in each area, the following results can be determined on the basis of the available material and publications. First, Stratum IV is best evidenced in Areas B (IVB) and T (IVA), while Strata III – II is dominant in Areas A (III – II) and AB (II). Second, the destruction of Stratum IVA is evident in Area T, but not in the gate area (Areas A, AB). New construction work was conducted in both areas during Strata III and II. The massive pavements and public buildings can be attached to these strata. Third, the main fortification system in Area A and the new construction of the cultic enclosure were likely constructed simultaneously in Stratum III, but the synchronism over the different areas leaves room for speculation. More speculative is the synchronism between the earliest Iron Age gate in Area A and the establishment of the Iron Age cultic enclosure in Area T, both of which were defined as Stratum IVA by Biran. Because the excavated area under Stratum III is limited, particularly in Area A, and the local stratigraphies of Areas A and T are not yet published, the remains above the destruction debris of Stratum V and below Stratum III are difficult to synchronize. Table 2 shows the most important architectural remains of each area. The division of Stratum IV into early and later phases (IVB and IVA) is based on Ilan's table in his study of the material culture of Iron Age I at Tel Dan and in northeastern Israel.[253]

Stratum	Area A	Area AB	Area B	T
IVB	limited space of excavations	Building complex, metallurgy	Domestic houses, metallurgy, continuation from Stratum V	Constructions on top of Stratum V, not published
	Earliest gate with pavement Stratum IVA?	Destr. by earthquake?	Destr. by earthquake?	Destr. by earthquake?
IVA		Foundations on top of Stratum IVB walls	Rebuilt of IVB houses, poor preservation	Cultic enclosure
III	Main gate Outer gate, large piazzas	Structures (Earlier Upper gate ?)	Large (public?) building	New construction of cultic enclosure
II	Continuation of the gates, new walls outside outer gate	Construction of Upper Gate		Continuation, new constructions

Table 2. Stratigraphy of Iron Age II in Areas A, AB, B, and T.

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[253] Ilan 1999, 26, table 3.1.

2.1.4. Iron Age Tel Dan in the Long Term Historical Perspective

As shown in table 1 (p. 50), the Iron Age city of Tel Dan represents the third "wave" of urbanism at the site. [254] The EB II–III city (Strata XV–XIV) represents the first period of urban culture in Palestine, which was followed by the Intermediate EB/MB period. The second wave emerged in the first half of the second millennium BCE and reached its peak during the Middle Bronze IIB–C period. This urban culture continued to the end of the Late Bronze Age, when a large-scale deterioration of the cities took place all over the Eastern Mediterranean.[255] The Late Bronze Age city of Tel Dan was not an exception, and it collapsed at the end of Late Bronze Age II. During the Middle and Late Bronze Ages, Hazor was the most dominant city in the Ḥulah Valley,[256] but Tel Dan was evidently a significant urban center as well. The beginning of the Iron Age I period at Hazor, however, remained unsettled (the gap between Strata XIII and XII-XI at Hazor),[257] while Tel Dan recovered much faster from the collapse (Stratum VI) and soon grew into a well-organized village or town (Stratum V).

The process of recovering from the collapse of the Late Bronze Age is demonstrated over the whole of Palestine as the third "wave" of urbanism (Tel Dan from Stratum V onwards). The urban culture emerged in degrees, at different times, and in various ways in different areas of the country. Archaeological evidence has revealed that the process of the third wave of urbanism first started in northern Palestine,[258] and progressed from the valleys to the highlands.[259] At Tel Dan, this process started in Stratum V and reached its peak in Strata III – II and I. The urban processes of the three waves show some similarities. For example, all of them are characterized by a gradual development from a sedentary settlement to an organized village and, at the end, to a city with developed town-planning, public buildings, and domestic areas. At Tel Dan, Strata XV (EB II), XII (MB II A), and V (Iron I) represent the first step towards the development of the city. During Strata XIV (EB III), XII-VII (MB IIB-LB II) and IVA – I (Iron II), Tel Dan belonged to the significant cities of Palestine which ruled their local regions. Both Greenberg (EB city)[260] and Ilan

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[254] Regarding the cyclical history and the similar features of the three waves of urbanism in the central hill country, see Finkelstein 1994, 150–178.
[255] See Gitin et. al (Eds.) 1998, Mediterranean Peoples in Transition. Thirteenth to Early Tenth Centuries BCE.
[256] Ilan 1999, 151.
[257] See Ben-Ami 2001, 148–170.
[258] Finkelstein 1999, 35–36, 39–42.
[259] Herzog and Singer-Avitz, 2004, 235–236.
[260] Greenberg 1996, 151–155. See also Greenberg and Porat 1996, 5–24: based on typological and petrographic analyses, Greenberg and Porat show that the Metallic Ware (EB II–III) found at Tel Dan and in northern Israel was not local, but produced further north, at the Hermon massif or even in Lebanon (p.18).

(MB city and Iron I organized village or town)[261] have observed the interactions of Tel Dan with the north, with the (Phoenician) coast, and the Mediterranean basin, aside from its connections with the highlands (central mountains and Golan Heights).

The first and second waves of urbanism were faced by sudden destructions or a gradual deterioration at the end of the EB III and LB II periods, respectively. At Tel Dan, the destructions of Strata XIII and VII demonstrate that these collapses were followed by the modest settlement periods of the Intermediate EB/MB in Stratum XIII, and the Iron Age I in Stratum VI. In contrast, Iron Age urbanism continued throughout the Assyrian period (Stratum I). The Babylonian and Persian periods at Tel Dan cannot be distinguished, despite the evidence of some scattered Persian period remains. During the Hellenistic period, Tel Dan recovered and probably attained again a position as an important territorial city.[262]

In sum, Strata IV – I (Iron Age II) at Tel Dan represent the third urban period, which has its roots already in the Late Bronze Age; the pottery tradition and town planning in many respects follow those of the Late Bronze Age city culture. The process of the Iron Age urbanism started already in Stratum V, and it continued until the end of Stratum I, the end of the Assyrian period, until the 6th century BCE. The remains of Strata IVA – II are mainly public in nature, while Stratum IVB is, so far, represented solely by private houses. This is best represented in Area B, but the individual walls found in Areas Y, M, and H may also be part of domestic buildings. Since Stratum III at the latest, Tel Dan was a heavily fortified city with a complex gate fortification system (Areas A and AB). It is likely that an earlier Iron Age fortification already existed during Stratum IV(A?), but only a small amount of evidence has been revealed. However, significant remains of Stratum IV(A) have been found at the cultic enclosure in Area T.

2.2. Area T: The Cultic Enclosure

2.2.1. Introduction

The northwestern corner of Tel Dan has been devoted to cultic activity throughout many centuries. Both architecture and artifacts reflect several cultic features. Only public buildings have been found in Strata IVA–I in this area. The strata below Stratum IVA have

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[261] Ilan 1996; 1999.
[262] Biran 1994, 271.

not yet been excavated properly. The cultic enclosure was composed of three elements: a podium, a large courtyard with a "central altar" (Strata IVA–I, Hellenistic and Roman periods), and the side chambers which enclosed the area with some additional walls (figs. 5–10).[263] The podium, called a "bamah" by Biran, was a square-like structure which has been interpreted as an open high place, or as a podium for a temple or palace.[264] Biran (1994) is open to the interpretations of it being a temple or open-air sanctuary.[265] Three building phases of the podium construction ("bamah A, B and C" in Biran's terminology) were distinguished, and each of them introduces new architectural features, as well as the courtyard with the central altar and the rooms. However, the earliest level (Stratum IVA, Biran's "bamah A") evidently differs from the following levels (Strata III and II-I, "bamah B and C"); in Stratum IVA a whole building complex with several rooms existed in the center of the enclosure, while in Strata III and II there was a central altar(?) in the middle of the courtyard. The finds of the cultic enclosure will be introduced below, on a stratum by stratum basis (IVA, III, II).

It is obvious that this area served for public cult and administration. Three criteria for identifying a cult place can be found in Area T: architectural elements (including features such as platforms, benches, and enclosed areas), cultic artefacts, and continuity.[266] In addition, a cult place in the vicinity of impressive natural springs was a characteristic location for a holy site,[267] such as the temples of Banias further north during the Hellenistic-Roman period. The cultic nature of the architecture is represented by the podium or platform[268] and the central altar complex. Furthermore, the whole area was most probably enclosed by walls or rooms ("side chambers") which were – on the basis of the finds – also used for rituals and cultic activity. Altars, traces of animal sacrifices, and pottery typical in cultic connections have been found (presented below). The surface finds in this area also included fragments of such figurines, which have been found in temples or cultic contexts in the Middle and Late Bronze Ages (see below p. 36). The continuity has

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[263] See plans (Figs. 1.34. – 1.38.) in Biran 1996, 33–37 and an overview in Biran 1994, 165–214. A brief presentation also in Mazar 1990, 492–495.

[264] Biran (1974b, 262) supposed that it was an "open-air sanctuary", while many scholars argue that it is a podium on the basis of its similarity with the podium of the palace at Lachish. Mazar (1990, 493) suggests the interpretation of temple, while e.g. Barkay (1992a, 312), H. Weippert (1988, 540), and Zwickel (1994, 254) regard the remains as a podium for a palace. They find parallels in Megiddo and Lachish.

[265] "Whether a temple was also built or whether these are the remains of an open-air sanctuary is difficult to say" Biran 1994, 181.

[266] Gilmour 1995, 9-10.

[267] An important reason for starting the excavations in Area T was the nearby springs. Biran 1994, 23, 25, 162; 1996, 32.

[268] The podium itself has no cultic features, but in this archaeological context it very likely had such a purpose.

already been confirmed, at least from Stratum IVA to the end of II and during late the Hellenistic period. The cultic enclosure at Tel Dan is a unique example of Iron Age cultic places in Israel.[269]

The probes which were dug around the podium-construction in its northern and western faces indicated that the Iron Age II podium of Stratum IVA was built on the inner slope of the MB II earthen rampart.[270] The sherds within the rampart come from the Middle Bronze IIA and Early Bronze Age periods. In addition, sherds and a few architectural remains from the Middle Bronze Age or earlier periods were also found in the probes southeast of the bamah (e.g. square E-19). Biran also associates one layer of ashes with the MB IIA period. This layer was found in the probe beside the western face of the podium, more than three meters below the surface (locus 2825).[271]

Late Bronze Age I (Stratum VIII) and II (Stratum VII) remains were also found in many probes cut in Area T. The pottery of Stratum VII included, among other things, large "Canaanite" pithoi (14th–13th century B.C.), part of a krater decorated with a painted bird, three chalices, a storage jar, and rims of cooking pots, which represent the transition between the LB II – Iron I periods (the probe in the northern part of the area), a milk bowl sherd with other LB sherds from stratum VII, and a carinated bowl together with MB IIC – LB I sherds from stratum VIII (from the probe in the western part of the area).[272] However, most of the LB pottery and material was found in other areas, and especially in the Tomb 387 (Area B).[273] LB II remains had been damaged in several loci by the pits of Iron Age I.[274]

Stratum V was reached in at least three points. Below loci 2235 and 2094 of Stratum IVA (fig. 5), a destruction debris of about 80 cm thick was found. Under this burnt layer, a stone-lined pit which may belong to Stratum VI was discovered. In the western part of the area (locus numbers or squares were not mentioned) and in the soundings in E–F 19–20 the same phenomenon was revealed: destruction debris of Stratum V which included Iron Age

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[269] Mazar A. 1990, 492. The monumental architecture, the large size of the enclosure, and the finds inside reveal the significant role of the place.
[270] Ilan 1996, 165; Biran 1996, 43.
[271] Biran 1996, 44–45, 51–53, Plans 7 and 8.
[272] The exact find places and locus numbers are not mentioned. Biran 1994, 120, 126; 1996, 44.
[273] Material of Area B and the context of the finds are presented in detail by Ben-Dov 2002, 35- 248: More than 500 objects were found in Tomb 387. In addition to 108 pottery vessels (p. 63), four basalt bowls (p. 138), two stone and eight bronze vessels (p.194, 200), the small finds include various metal and bone items. The material is already referred to in several field reports by Biran 1994, 112-113, 115, 117–118.
[274] Biran 1994, 120. See also Ben-Dov 2002, 48.

I material, such as parts of collared-rim jars, cooking pots, bowls, jars. A pit with sherds from early Iron Age I (stratum VI) was also found.[275]

The excavated areas in the lowest strata (below Stratum IVA) were too small to allow the reconstruction of any structures except the core-construction of the earthen rampart north of the podium. An interesting question is whether this place was already in cultic use before Stratum IVA. Such finds have not yet been found in the excavated probes. However, Ilan is of the opinion that the Iron Age podium was constructed on the foundations of a Middle Bronze Age temple. According to him, the basalt boulders underneath the Iron Age II podium form a similar foundation to those of the "Migdal Temples" found at Megiddo, Shechem, and Hazor.[276] It is possible, but not yet proved.

According to Biran, discoveries of a few figurines and fragments of statuettes and statues might also indicate that the area had been public, elite or religious in character during the Middle and Late Bronze Ages. Whether they were in cultic use, however, is debated. The first of them was a surface find, recovered before the excavations had even started. It was an Egyptian style figurine depicting a goddess (?). This bronze figurine belongs to a group called "Female Warriors in Smiting Pose"[277] which can tentatively be dated to the Late Bronze Age. The second one was found in secondary use in the Iron Age II wall (W7911).[278] It was a fragment from an Egyptian "scribe" statuette which was common during the Middle and New Kingdom in Egypt. On the basis of the name "the priest Nefertem" written on the statue, it was also dated to the second half of the second millennium. The third one, "a block statue" of Egyptian style, was also found in a secondary context. It might originate from the time of the 12th dynasty, but it was reused during Iron Age II.[279]

It is also reasonable to mention a unique find from the Iron Age I context in Area T: a clay mask[280] of a human head from stratum V. The same kind of painted mask was found

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[275] Biran 1996, 42–43, 44, 46.

[276] Ilan 1999, 60, footnote 20: "the present author is of the opinion that the foundations of the Iron Age 'high place' rest upon those of a Middle Bronze Age Migdal Temple"; 213, footnote 81: "the basalt boulder foundations underlying the Iron II platform in Area T date to the late MB I or early MB II. The dimensions of these foundations are similar to those of several 'Migdal' ('Syrian') temples, at Megiddo and Shechem and at Hazor."

[277] Other figurines of this type have been found in Lebanon (Byblos, vicinity of Beirut, Fakra), Southern Syria (Haura), and another example from northern Israel (Kfar Kanna). All of these figurines have unfortunately been found out of context, and therefore no date can be given according to the find context and stratigraphy. Negbi tentatively dates the figurines to the second half of the second millennium (LB period) based on the chronology of similar male figurines found in Syro-Palestine and Anatolia. Negbi 1976, 84–86.

[278] See the field report of season 1980 in Biran 1981, 105.

[279] Biran 1994,161; 1996, 44.

[280] Packman, Daliah (2003) has interpreted the find as a cultic-stand part. Eretz Israel (Hebrew).

in a Late Bronze Age building in Area K, which raises the question of whether the mask of Stratum V also originally derives from the Late Bronze Age. In any case, these masks might have been used in cultic practices.[281] A similar mask has been found at Hazor in the stratum of Late Bronze II.[282] In the area of the metal workshops (Areas AB and B), there were also found a few objects which can be interpreted as cultic: a "snake-house" (Room 7082) and standing stones (Loci 132, 343), probably used as *maṣṣebot,* as no other architectural function could be assigned to them.[283]

Biran supposed that cultic activity had already taken place at Area T since the beginning of the Iron Age I, at the latest.[284] Likewise, Mazar states: "It (the cultic enclosure of the Iron Age II) lay above earlier cultic remains from the eleventh and tenth centuries BCE – remains which may be identified as the shrine erected by the Danites after their migration here (Judges 18)."[285] This statement, probably derived from Biran, implies that an archaeological conclusion has been drawn without any supporting archaeological evidence. As mentioned above, no cultic evidence, except the clay mask, has been found from the Iron Age I context of Area T. Thus, the supposition that there is a cult place of Iron Age I at Dan is not based on archaeological evidence, but only on the biblical text in Judges 18, which has been read as a real reflection of Iron Age I history.[286] Of course, on the basis of continuity we can suppose that the cultic tradition at the site is earlier than that proven until now, but the biblical texts cannot be used as evidence for non-existing archaeological data (see analysis on Jdg 18 chapter 4.2.3. below). However, there is no doubt that from Stratum IVA until the Roman period an important cultic center indeed existed at Tel Dan.

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[281] Biran 1994, 105–106, Ill. 71, 142, Ill. 101.

[282] Yadin et al. 1958, Plate CLXIII/ Area D no. 5716.

[283] Ilan 1999, 132–133; Biran 1989a, 93–96; 1989b, 125–133; 1994, 151–153. Biran also considers that a "great amount of chalices" among the finds indicates cultic activity. However, chalices are common vessels during Iron Age I in different contexts. Thus, they have also been used in daily life. For example, in the Iron Age I period at Tel Kinrot, chalices are very common and hardly had any religious function if they did not have any special decoration. However, the "snake house", a ceramic model of a house with a "window" or "door", can evidently be regarded as a cultic object. Parallels have been found in the LB II context at Hazor (Yadin et al. 1961, Plate CCLXXXII/1, no. 122; photograph Plate CCCIX/17) and Tel Kinrot from Areas N (1998/1999) and T (2001), not yet published (the author of this thesis was a staff member of the Kinneret Regional Project and an area supervisor of Area T in 2001).

[284] In the season report of 1969 Biran claims: "It is possible that we have here a high place which originally served ancient Laish and later on also the tribe of Dan and King Jeroboam." He repeats this view in Biran 1994, 159–161, 165. No further evidence to support his concept has been found in the meantime.

[285] Mazar 1990, 492.

[286] See Biran's biblical approach, for example, in Biran 1994, 125–126, 134–135, 159–165. On page 165 he says that Jeroboam I probably knew about the existence of the earlier "Danite sanctuary" and "it is therefore likely that Jeroboam I deliberately set up the golden calf in the original Danite sanctuary." However, he admits that no signs of an Iron I sanctuary have been found in Area T.

2.2.2. Stratum IVA

The remains and destruction debris of Stratum IVA were found under the floor of Stratum III. This floor, forming a layer about 20 cm thick on the top of the remains of Stratum IVA, was made of crushed travertine, which gave it yellowish color, and it was thus called by the excavators "the yellow floor".[287] This layer preserved the remains of Stratum IVA untouched. The enclosure was composed of the podium, a building complex with a courtyard south of the podium, and a few "side chambers" west and east of the podium (fig. 5).

Biran assigned the podium to the same stratum as the central building and the "altar structure" in its center. On the basis of the published plans and reports, it is, however, difficult to understand the contemporary existence of the central building and the podium; it seems that walls W7608, W7595, and the northern continuation of W7711, have been cut or damaged in front of the southern face of the podium. Thus, it seems that the walls and the whole building would have continued further north. If this is the case, the podium would have been built later than the central building complex. In addition, the orientation of the central altar is somewhat strange in relation to the wall or walls on its eastern side. It again raises the problem of stratigraphy in this area. Because a local stratigraphy with sub-strata and the heights of each surface level have not been published, it is not possible to make any further judgment. So far, Biran's stratigraphy must be followed, keeping in mind that the sub-phases have not been separated in his rough stratigraphical outline.

The podium was constructed on the inner slope of the MB II earthen rampart, which was leveled to create a horizontal surface (figs. 4 and 5).[288] It was a rectangular structure, and covered an area of 18 m x 7 m. The foundation with two courses of large travertine boulders has been preserved. The boulders were semi-dressed and, on average, 1,5 m x 0,8 m x 0,6 m in size. They were set in headers, solely, while during Strata III–II (squares C–D/16–17) the headers-and-stretchers technique was used. The red color on the stones of the upper course of the podium indicated their destruction by a fierce fire. The pottery of the destruction layer found on the top of the upper ashlars was dated by Biran to the late 10th – early 9th century.[289]

[287] Biran 1974b, 262; 1976, 203; 1994, 165,184.
[288] Biran 1996, 43–44.
[289] During the seasons 1976–77 the outlines of the podium (bamah A) were explored and some preliminary conclusions could be made. Biran 1972, 165; 1974b, 262; 1976, 203–204; 1977, 244–245; 1980a, 168–182 and a summary Biran 1996, 40–41.

The central building complex just south of the podium forms the core of the remains of this stratum. It consists of an open cobbled courtyard and several rooms to the north, east, and south of it. The northern rooms were defined as storage rooms, while the rooms to the south included some installations, like a pool, a tub, and an olive press. Some of the rooms were paved and likely roofed. The whole complex covers an area of approximately 30 meters south from the southern face of the podium, and is about 17 meters wide.[290] Most of the pottery and important finds of this stratum come from this building complex (Rooms 2093, 2094, 2311, 2317, 2389).

The northern rooms (loci 2093, 2235, 2094) of the building complex had evidently served as storerooms. This was demonstrated by the large amount of vessels found in the thick destruction debris of the collapsed mud brick wall and roof structures. Two large pithoi were found still standing in the small room (L2235), and in the nearby room (L2094) about 40 smashed vessels were revealed. The assemblage included jugs with stripes painted in red and black, an amphora stand, and red-slipped burnished bowls, which are probably early types of Samarian Ware.[291] The pithoi had a decoration of a snake relief encircling the vessel, which likely refers to a cultic use. Furthermore, one of the "snake" pithoi had a seal impression on its rim. The seal depicts a male between two ibexes, which he holds by their horns with each hand. Four other such impressions have been recovered. Biran suggests that they may have functioned as a "potter's trademark" at Dan.[292]

Plenty of vessels and animal bones were also found next to the western face of W7708, on the cobble pavement of the open courtyard (L2311), east of the "central altar" in locus 2311. These included a bar-handled bowl which was filled with bones (sheep, goats, and gazelles), a fragment of a painted incense stand, "Samaria type bowls" and bowls with incised symbols on their bases. In addition, a fragment of a figurine of a male head was found. It is similar to a head fragment from the jar of an olive press installation in L2317, but not as well preserved. According to Biran, all the material from these rooms, as well as those found in the courtyard and the southern rooms, show a close connection to the Phoenician coast and Cyprus.[293]

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[290] Biran 1994, 168.

[291] Biran 1980 a, 175; 1994, 168; 1996, 42, 44.

[292] See photographs of the "snake" pithoi and the seal impression Ills. 125-128 in Biran 1994, 166–167. See also Biran 1977, 244; 1980 a, 175; 1996, 40–41.

[293] Biran 1996a, 42; 1978, 269–270. Biran explains the resemblance of the pottery to that of the Mediterranean coast by "commercial and cultural relations between the Phoenician and Israelite rulers referred in the Old Testament." 1994, 168. However, these relations already existed during the Early Bronze Age, as shown by Greenberg 1996 (see also Greenberg and Porat 1996), and throughout the Middle and Late Bronze periods and even into Iron Age I. See Ilan 1996, 1999, and Ben-Dov 2002.

In the center of the building complex, a rectangular construction of basalt boulders was discovered. It was around 7,5 m x 5 m in size, and its orientation was approximately from northwest to southeast. Only the foundation was preserved; the upper structure and some boulders of the lower course in the center of the structure had been robbed already in antiquity. The excavators interpreted the structure as an altar, although they first suggested that it was a stone-lined pit.[294] The altar was located in the middle of an open courtyard. A cobbled pavement was found all around the altar structure. The pavement extended at least 4,5 meters to the south until wall W7919 (the northern wall of Room 2317), and several meters to the east until the eastern wall (W 7708) of the central building complex. No signs of fire or roof material were found, indicating that the altar had been located in an open courtyard.[295] Unfortunately, Biran does not explain the function of the wall, or the two separate walls just east of the altar. Neither does he explain the relation of the walls to the pavement L2311 and Room 2094: i.e., whether the walls were built on the pavement or the pavement against the walls. The space within the wall or walls (unfortunately not numbered) and the eastern corner of the altar is less than half a meter. Thus, it seems unlikely that the walls and the altar are from the same building phase. This is one of the stratigraphical problems which must be left open.

The southernmost rooms of the central complex also yielded many significant finds.[296] These were found in and around Room 2317. Firstly, three pool installations were discovered: a basin, a broken tub, and a rectangular pool. Because of the nearby springs, Biran believed that these installations could be connected to religious practices and rituals, which led him to cultic interpretations not necessarily accepted by other scholars.

The basin installation was found in Room 2317, located along the western wall of the central building (W7711). The basin was 1,4 meters long and 88 centimeters wide. At each end of the basin there was a basalt slab, sloping from the basin towards a jar found *in situ* sunken into the earth at both ends of the installation. Just to the east, next to the northernmost slab and jar, twelve boulders with a natural hole in each were found. They were of different sizes and weights (the heaviest one even 70 kg).[297] The structure, location, and character of the installation and existence of the perforated big stones nearby

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[294] Biran 1996, 40; 1994, 173. In the preliminary report Biran regards the structure as a pit, because of the missing stones in its center, but he was also open to the interpretation that the structure was a large altar. Biran 1976, 204.

[295] Biran 1994, 168–173.

[296] The rooms were excavated in seasons 1978 and 1979. Biran 1978, 270; 1980a, 175; 1981, 104; 1996, 42–43.

[297] Biran 1980b, 91–95; 1981, 104; 1994, 174–177.

very much support the interpretation as an olive oil press,[298] although Biran interpreted it as a cultic installation used in "water libation ceremonies".[299] Two other installations were located in the adjacent rooms: a broken tub on the pavement 2361 beside the wall 7711, and a stone-built rectangular pool (L2389) in the adjacent room south from Room 2317. The restored tub made of reddish terra cotta was 1,41 meters long, 82 centimeters wide, and 65 centimeters deep. At the other end of the tub was the seat.[300] The function of the tub is unknown. Biran suggests a cultic use, but this is difficult to verify. However, the location of the tub and the pool (L2389) close to the springs of Tel Dan is hardly an accident.

Other finds in the context of the installations probably also influenced Biran's cultic interpretation. First of all, numerous partly burnt bones were found around the basin (olive press installation).[301] Furthermore, four fragments of different figurines were found in this context: three of them inside the two jars of the olive press installation, and one just on the northern side of the mud brick wall W7919, which separates the installation from the courtyard. Three figurines were made of faience (amulets?), and one of clay. The head of an Egyptian faience figurine was found in the southern jar, together with a shallow bowl. The northern jar contained a fragment of another faience figurine and a clay figurine. The faience fragment was part of a human foot, on which a small monkey was sitting. The figurine might depict a king or deity. The clay figurine of a male was similar to that found with a decorated (incense) stand in the cobbled courtyard east of the "central altar" (L2311). The fourth fragment on the northern side of wall W7919 was also of faience, made in the Egyptian style: the middle body of a ruler or deity holding a staff, "a lotus stem", in its left hand.[302] It was found together with the sherds of the third "snake" pithos.

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[298] Stager and Wolff (1981) first argued for an olive press because it would explain the presence of the perforated stones beside the installation. The heavy stones were most likely used as stone weights for the olive press which, according to them, produced oil for the lambs burned in the sanctuary. They noted that Biran had no explanation for the stones. Stager and Wolff, 1981, 95–96. See further discussion in BAR: Laughlin 7(1981); Cathy and Terry Small 8 (1982); Suzanne F. Singer 10/6(1984). Since the discussion in 1980's, the interpretation of the olive press has generally been accepted. Thus, Ilan 1999, 189 and Frankel 1996, 198 who mentions that this olive press is the earliest example found in Galilee. However, another olive press basin, but simpler and smaller than the press at Tel Dan, was found in the excavations at Tel Kinrot in 2003, at Area U, excavated by the author of this dissertation. Alanne and Valkama, 2003.

[299] Biran 1980b, 91–95; 1994, 177. According to Biran (1994), the "tremendous quantity" of gray ash and burnt bone fragments in and around the basin suggested some sort of animal sacrifice. However, he says that no other liquid than water was possible to use there, because of the lack of a drainage system. He rejects the idea of an olive press on the basis that the bottom of the basin, which was not plastered, "would allow valuable olive oil to seep through." He also brings up the absence of olive pits as another argument.

[300] Biran 1996, 42; 1994, 174–177; 1981, 104.

[301] Biran 1994, 177; 1996, 44: Similar vessels to those in the northern storage rooms (L2235 and L2094) were also found, including "cooking pots, storage jars, and a fine Samaria-type bowl."

[302] See pictures and drawings of the figurines in Biran 1994, 178–180, Ills. 1.38. – 1.42 and plates 29–31; 1980b, 95–98. The finds have been described in field reports: Biran 1978, 270; 1981, 104. The parallel find

Two other such pithoi were found in the northern storage room (L2235) of the central building, around 15 meters northward (fig. 5, p. 44).[303] A "snake" relief decoration has more frequently been found in cultic stands or models of houses.[304] At Tel Dan, "snake" pithoi were only found in Area T.

The podium and the central building were likely encircled by a wall to the north, and to the west and east by a range of rooms forming a kind of casemate wall with long-shaped rooms of different sizes. Only one room could be traced in the east, because of the sequence of later strata, but on the west side three long and narrow rooms were found.[305] The rooms were in active use in Strata III and II, but the finds of Stratum IVA are scarce, probably due to the limited excavated space; in the southernmost room an amphora sunken into the floor was found. It was surrounded by a ring of stones (see Square U16).[306] It seems that in Stratum IVA the cultic enclosure occupied an area of about 60m x 45m, and it was destroyed by fire.[307] A burnt destruction layer was found on top of the podium of Stratum IVA, and in the northern and southern rooms of the central building. In the inner courtyard, on the cobbled pavement (L2311), several smashed pottery vessels and other finds were also discovered, but no traces of burning, roof material, or collapsed walls. Thus, it was surely an open area.

2.2.3. Stratum III

A remarkable new feature of the cultic enclosure was a kind of plastered surface, 10–20 centimeters thick. It was made of crushed travertine, and called "the yellow floor" by the excavators because of its yellowish color. This floor covered all the other remains of Stratum IVA except the central altar. This "yellow floor" was found all around the enlarged podium of Strata III and II: at least 26 meters to the south and 7 meters to the west and east, that is, until the enclosure walls. It was also found in the rooms within the western enclosure walls; there the floors were reconstructed and raised by this new surface material (L9087 and the rooms north and south). However, the walls of Stratum IVA

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for the male clay figurine in L2311 see Biran 1994, 172, Ill. 133 and plate 27.

[303] Parallels to the "snake" pithoi have been found in Enkomi in Cyprus. Biran 1994, 177.

[304] Two examples in the Iron I contexts from Beth-Shean are presented in Amiran 1969, 305, Photos 345, 346.

[305] Biran 1994, 168. The western walls of the whole enclosure was already reached in 1974, but only in the level of the upper strata. Biran 1974 b, 262.

[306] The amphora is first mentioned in Biran 1986, 187 and later referred to in Biran 1994, 168 and 1996, 46. No other finds are referred to.

[307] Biran 1994, 168, 181.

(W8427 and its inner parallel and some of the cross walls) were reused, as well some of the enclosure walls in the east, although a few new fragments of walls were also found. Similarly, the central altar structure from the previous stratum (squares C–D, 16–17) was not covered, but reused and enlarged in Strata III and II (figs. 6 and 7).[308]

Outstanding changes were made to the podium structure.[309] The podium was reconstructed, enlarged, and raised. Actually, it was not anymore a podium, but seems to have included rooms. It remained in use during Stratum II, when some new elements were added. All the corners of this podium were found, and almost the entire outer face of the southern and eastern wall. Three of the outer walls of the new, nearly square structure[310] were built in fine ashlar masonry technique, in a manner similar to that found in the monumental buildings in Samaria and Megiddo of the same period.[311] The stones used in the western, southern, and eastern walls of the podium were limestone finely dressed ashlars, with the margins on the edges and bosses in the center left on the stones' outer faces. The ashlars were set in headers and stretchers in the upper courses, but in headers only in the two lowest courses. This technique was characteristic of monumental architecture since Iron Age II in Palestine and Syria.[312] Biran supposed that access to the podium might have been from the east or west, on the basis of a rectangular flat area of stone slabs attached to the western and eastern outer faces of the podium (e.g. L7717). According to him, the flat areas may have been the foundation for steps or a ramp.[313]

Unlike the other walls of the podium, its northern outer wall, which also forms the northern border of the cultic enclosure, was built of "rough basalt boulders" and only in the corners were dressed ashlars used. The reason was most probably its location, as the back wall behind the building complex, not being inside the enclosure. Because of the slope rising towards north, the southern part of the podium must have been raised by further courses of well-dressed ashlars. There, the existing two courses of the Stratum IVA podium provided a firm foundation.[314] An interesting detail in the podium structure is that

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[308] Biran, 1996, 40; 1994, 184; 1980 a, 176; 1974b, 262.

[309] Description of the podium of Stratum III, "Bamah B", in Biran 1994, 189. See also Biran 1970, 118; 1972, 165; 1974a, 40–43; 1974b, 262.

[310] The horizontal dimensions of the podium are: the northern face 18.03 meters, the southern face 18.39 meters, the western face 18.82 meters, and the eastern face 18.63 meters. According to Biran, the podium rose at least three meters high from courtyard to south. Biran 1994, 184, 189; 1970, 118.

[311] Biran 1974 b, 262; 1980 a,176; Biran 1994,184; 1996, 39, 40. See "Samaria building periods 1–2" in Crowfoot, Kenyon , Sukenik 1942, plates XIII,2 and XIV, 1 the lowest course of the wall. Megiddo Stratum in Strata IV. Lamon and Shipton 1939, 9–59, particularly p. 41, fig. 52 and Building 338, p. 46–54.

[312] Reich 1992, 211–212.

[313] Biran 1974b, 262; 1994, 189.

[314] The manner of the construction work on the slope is illustrated in the eastern and western walls of the podium, where the stone foundation of basalt boulders was set as a step rising along the slope. Biran 1994,

wood was also likely used in its construction. Many stones or even row of stones were found tilted, which could be explained by the use of beams in the original construction. In the lower course of the eastern wall, an additional "stepped recess" was discovered, with dowel slots incised on the top of the ashlars at regular distances. The beams would have been put on top of the recess and fixed by the dowels. The stones above the recess were also found tilted, slanted, or collapsed.[315] Some crossing walls were found inside the podium, but unfortunately no pottery or objects which would help in the dating of the construction were discovered.

The central altar was also reconstructed. A row of big boulders in headers was added to form a pavement along the northern and eastern faces of the altar structure of Stratum IVA. The total size of this central altar grew to around 8m x 7m. Two columns were probably located at the distance of one meter from each other in the newly established northern pavement, as evidenced by two plaster circles on the pavement. One column base was found in the nearby wall in secondary use. A new building was also erected in the southern end of the cultic enclosure, above the southern rooms of the central building, where the pool installations had been located in Stratum IVA. No finds from this building have been reported or published.[316]

Evidence on the "yellow floor" primarily represents Stratum II, because Strata III and II show continuity without any destruction level. These strata were distinguished only by some repairs and new constructions. Because of the lack of any destruction layer, hardly any pottery or other finds could be associated with Stratum III.[317] The pottery inside the podium structure of Stratum III and below the "yellow floor" indicates a date of the mid-9th century BCE for establishing Stratum III.[318] Thus, Strata III and II are to be dated from the mid-9th century and to the Assyrian occupation of around 732 BCE. However, Biran does not anywhere suggest what kind of pottery he regards as indicative of the late 10th – early 9th, or the mid-9th or 8th century BCE, and hardly any of this material is published. Therefore, it is rather difficult to give an exact date for the beginning of Stratum III. Based on relative stratigraphy – counted from the destruction of Stratum II around 732 BCE down – the pottery evidence and the appearance of the fine ashlar masonry technique, sometime in the middle of the 9th century is, however, plausible.

184–187 with Ill. 146.
[315] Biran 1994,187.
[316] Biran 1994, 189–191; 1996, 40–41; 1976, 204.
[317] Only some pottery, the head of a female clay figure, and seven-spouted oil lamps found under the steps of Stratum II may belong to this phase. Biran 1974 a, 43.
[318] Biran 1996, 40; 1994, 189; 1972, 165.
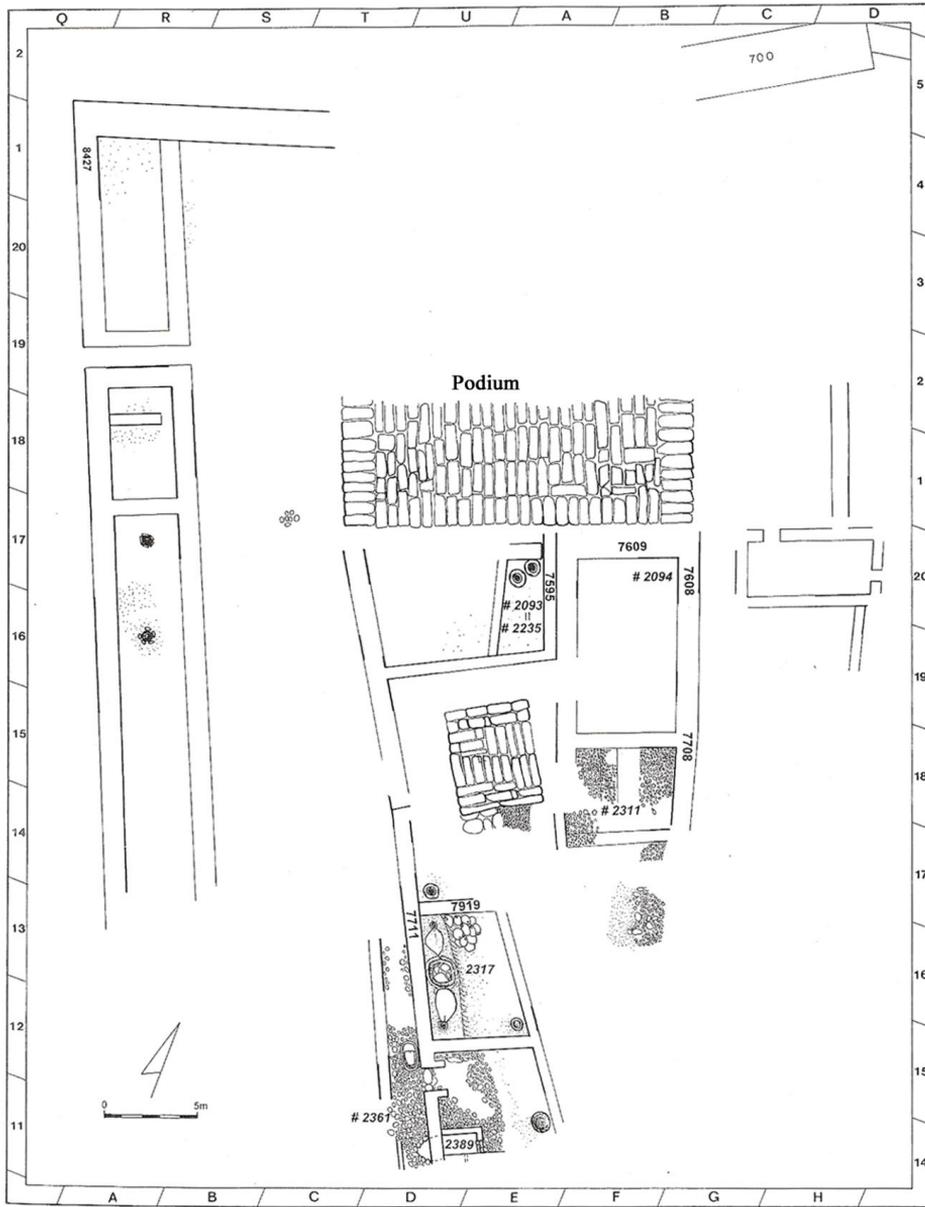
Figure 5. Area T, cultic enclosure Stratum IV (Biran et al. 1996, 33).
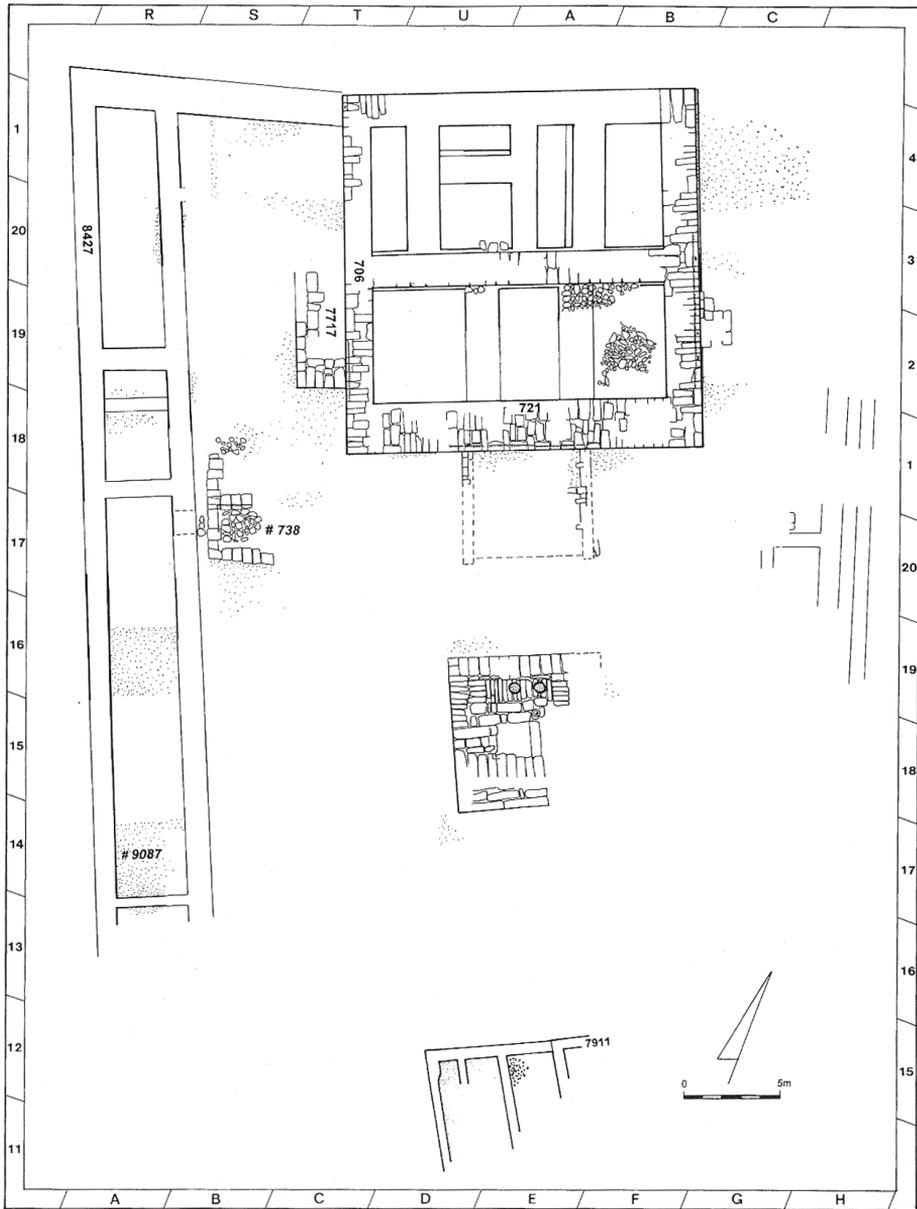
Figure 6. Area T, cultic enclosure Stratum III (Biran et al. 1996, 34).
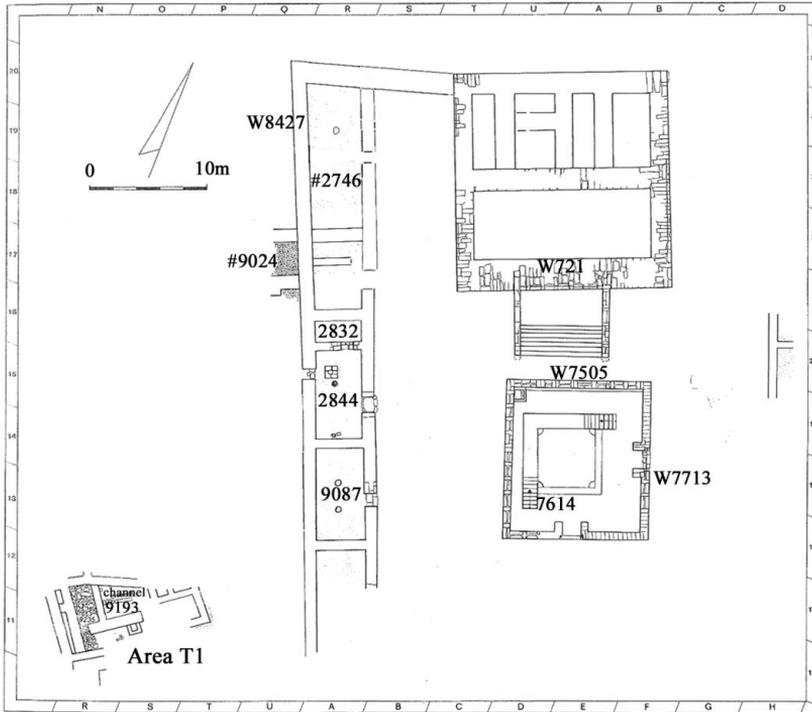
Figure 7. Area T, cultic enclosure Stratum II (Biran et al. 1996, 35).
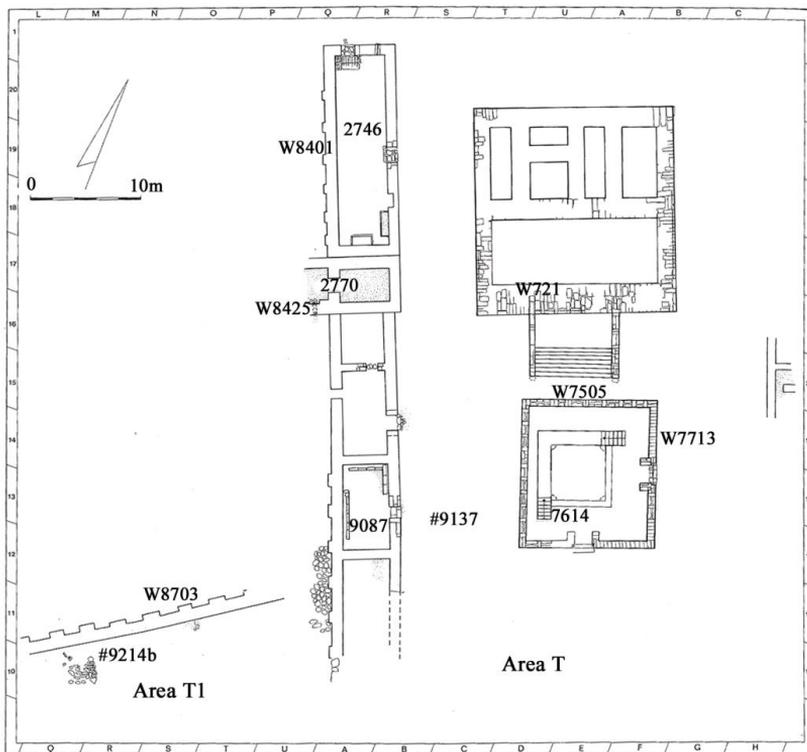
Figure 8. Area T, cultic enclosure Stratum I (Biran et al. 1996, 36).
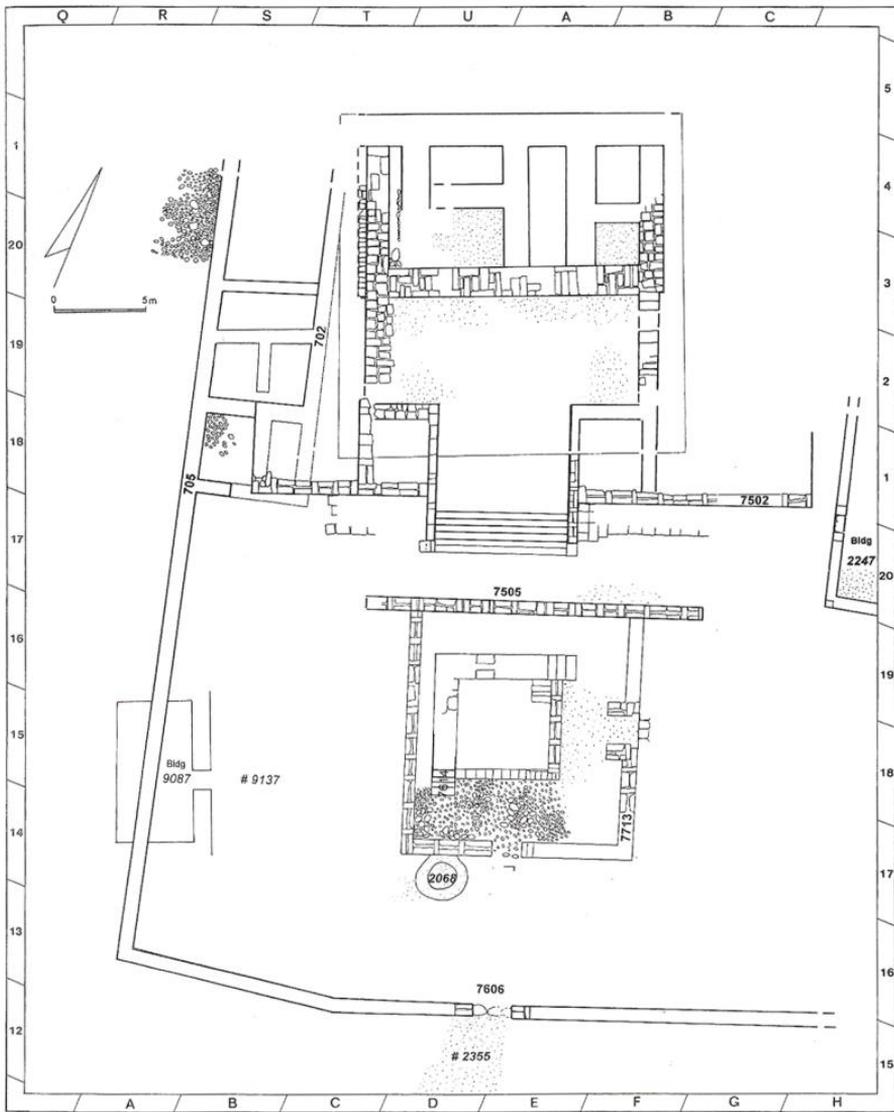
Figure 9. Area T cultic enclosure: Hellenistic Period (Biran et al. 1996, 37).
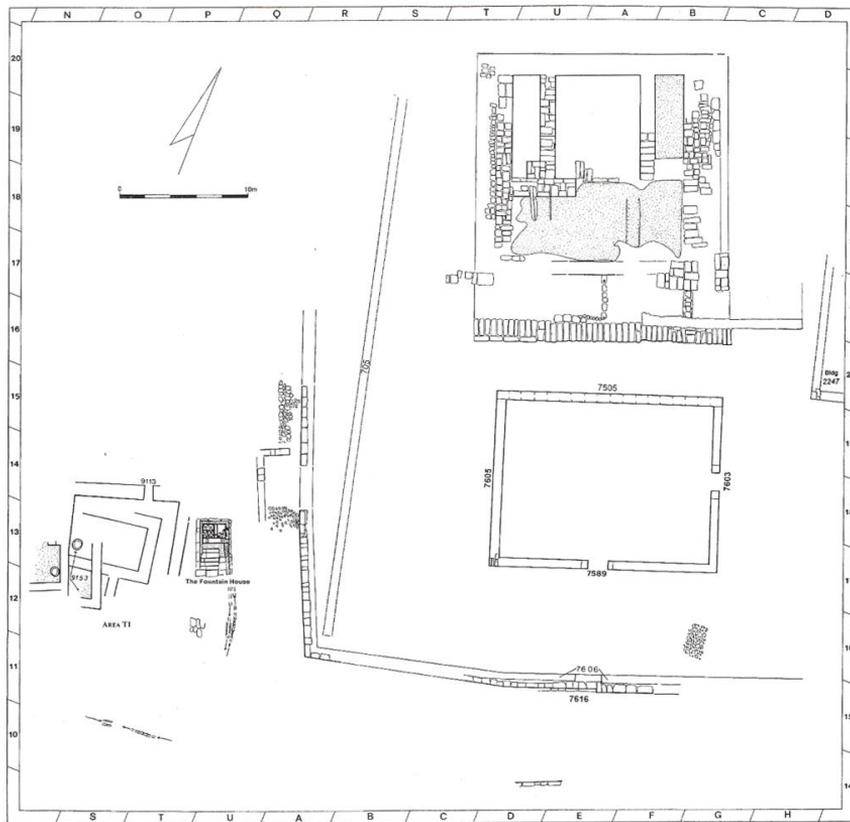
Figure 10. Area T cultic enclosure: Roman Period (Biran et al. 1996, 38).

2.2.4. Stratum II

Stratum II represents a straight continuity from Stratum III. As stated above, no destruction layers were found between Strata III and II, but a few new architectural elements and repairs could be assigned to Stratum II in Area T. The most outstanding new architectural elements were the steps leading up to the podium from the south, and the enclosure wall around the central altar with steps inside this structure. A base for the altar and several cultic artefacts were found in the western side chambers, which had suffered a heavy destruction at the end of Stratum II (fig. 7).

The podium structure continued in use approximately as it was in Stratum III. The only new structure was the monumental steps leading up to the podium. The staircase, eight meters wide, was built against the southern face of the podium on the yellow floor.

The staircase was constructed between the side walls, and was built of well-dressed ashlars. The steps were laid on the top of the fill, horizontally leveled to form a foundation for the stone steps, which were 20–27 cm high. Only Iron Age pottery was found on these steps. An additional three upper steps are from a later period, as indicated by the Hellenistic and Roman pottery found in the foundation construction of the uppermost steps.[319]

While the central altar of Stratum III was located free in the middle of the courtyard, where no buildings existed, in Stratum II the altar was again enlarged, raised (as evidenced by steps), and surrounded by an enclosure wall. Two entrances were found; one in the eastern and another in the southern wall of the central enclosure. The size of the new enclosure was 14 m x 12,5 m. Steps were also found. Five steps, each 1,5 m long and 50 cm high, were revealed in the southwestern corner, along with three steps in the northeastern corner of the enclosure. The steps led to the top of the structure, which was probably an altar. In addition, a stone installation paved by flagstones was found in the northwestern corner. It covered an area about 1,4 square meters in the corner.[320] Because the enclosure of the central altar remained in use in Stratum I, and it was not destroyed in the Assyrian attack, not much material could be associated with Stratum II. However, a few altars or fragments of them were discovered. A small four-horned altar of limestone (38 cm x 40 cm x 35 cm) was found near the stone installation. Traces of fire could still be seen on the altar.[321] Near the southwestern steps of the central altar a base (39 cm^2), perhaps a part of an altar, and a stone horn from a large four-horned altar were found.[322] A horned altar of approximately the same size has been found at Tel Beersheba.[323]

A range of rooms (L 2746, 2844, 9087) within the western casemate wall of the cultic enclosure formed a building complex, or "side chambers", where many finds referring to cultic activity were discovered. Compared to Stratum III, some new walls were also erected. The pottery from the destruction debris inside the rooms indicates an 8th century BCE date for this phase.[324] The most interesting discoveries were made in Room 2844,

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[319] Biran 1996, 40–41; 1994, 201–203; 1980 a, 176; 1977, 244; 1974b, 262; 1970, 118.

[320] Description of the central altar building in Biran 1994, 203. See also season reports 1974b, 262 and 1976, 204; 1977, 245.

[321] Biran 1974, 262; 1994, 203, 204 Ill. 162. Two small, possibly incense altars were found in the "altar room", but they were not horned (below). See horned monolithic incense altars found in Megiddo in Barkay 1992a, 326, fig.9.20; Lamon & Shipton 1939, 24.

[322] The horn was an approximately 50 cm long fragment. Thus the total size of the altar must have been rather large. Biran suggests that the altar might have even been three meters high. Biran 1994, 203; 1982, 139.

[323] A horned altar built of ashlars was found scattered in secondary use in the Iron Age II walls. Aharoni 1974, 2–6; 1975a, 154–156, plate 33, 2.

[324] Biran 1994, 192–201.

which was called an "altar room" by Biran, since three altars had been revealed there. One of the altars, first interpreted as a pillar base, was uncovered in the northern end of Room 2844. It was a square structure, about one square meter and 27 cm high, made of five rectangular shaped lime stones. One more stone was found on top of the structure. The interpretation as an altar is convincing on the basis of the other finds from the room: two other altars further south, iron shovels, a bronze bowl, and a jar full of ashes. Moreover, traces of fire were found on the surface of the stones.[325]

Near the northern altar structure, three iron shovels were found; two together about 70 centimeters north and one separately about a meter south of the altar. Even nearer were an upper part of a jar, full of ashes, and a bronze bowl. The material in the jar probably contained ashes and burnt animal bones, which indicate animal sacrifices. The faunal analysis showed that the bones were mainly from sheep, goats, and cattle, but bones of bears and lions were also found, both in the altar rooms and in the vicinity and inside of the enclosure of the central altar.[326] The altar structure clearly postdates the construction of the "yellow floor".[327] Two other altars were also found standing on the floor nearby the southern wall of the Room 2844. These small monolithic altars were built of travertine.[328] Parallels for these incense altars have been found in Megiddo (the 10/9th – 8th centuries BCE), Lachish (the 10/9th century BCE), and Ekron (the 7th century BCE).[329]

Some noticeable finds were made outside the western enclosure wall. A layer of debris 20 cm thick was found there, on the pavement (L9024), which is evidently part of a room. The debris caused by a conflagration included vessels such as an intact krater, a storage jar, cooking pots, a perforated krater, a zoomorphic figurine, and a jar handle bearing a seal impression with the inscription "לעמדיו".[330] Another stamped handle of the same style has also been found; it was not readable, but might have the same inscription. The excavators dated the room and the finds on the floor to the same period (Stratum II) as the altar room, although it is at a higher level.[331]

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[325] The "altar room" was excavated in seasons 1985–1986. Biran 1986, 181–187; 1987–1988, 46; 1994, 192–195; 1996, 46–47. On the finds see also Greer 2013, 72–80, 94–96.

[326] See on faunal analysis in Greer 2013, 50–54, 58–59 (burnt animal remains from deposits in "altar room"), 61.

[327] The jar was revealed just 20 cm south of the altar, a bowl further southeast. The shovels were more than 50 cm long. Biran 1986, 181, 184, fig. 13; 1994, 192; 1996, 46. The bowl is described in Biran 1994, 196–198, Ill. 154, plate 34.

[328] The smaller altar was only 30 cm high, the bigger one 44 cm. Evidence of fire was visible on the top surface of both altars. Biran 1994, 196; 1996, 47.

[329] Altars in Megiddo: May & Engberg 1935, Plate XII; Lachish: Aharoni 1975b, 26–32, Plates 5,27, 43/7. Four-horned altars in Ekron: Gitin 1992, 43–49.

[330] Biran 1996, 47. See photograph and drawing in Biran 1994, 200, Ill. 158.

[331] No argumentation was presented. See Biran 1994, 199; In an earlier report (1987–1988, 47) Biran dates

No evidence of destruction or burnt material was discovered on the podium, on the "yellow floor" in the courtyard, or on the steps of the high place. Thus, the end of Stratum II in Area T is only demonstrated in the western "side chambers", which were destroyed by a conflagration, probably in the Assyrian attack on Tel Dan. The destruction debris were half a meter thick.[332] Therefore, the pottery and the other material of this stratum mainly come from those rooms, except for the material found in the constructional layers of the podium, the steps, and the enclosure of the "central altar" complex. If these structures were damaged, they had been repaired and the traces of the destruction swept off, because most of the architecture remained in use throughout Stratum I until the Hellenistic or even the Roman periods (compare the plans of the cultic enclosure of different strata, figs. 5–10). Nor was a destruction layer found between Stratum I and the Hellenistic remains in the podium and the central altar structures. Again, there is the possibility that these constructions were not at all damaged, or all the traces of the destruction had been cleaned.[333] In any case, the architecture of the cultic enclosure shows a striking continuity from Stratum II until Hellenistic times, although changes occurred in the enclosure system: new enclosure walls (e.g. W705) were built and the western "side chambers" were destroyed and covered over. A few new rooms and buildings were also constructed west and east of the podium.

2.2.5. Summary

The cultic enclosure in Area T is a unique example of the Iron Age II cult places found so far in Israel.[334] The continuity of its cultic nature is well evidenced from Stratum IVA to the end of Stratum II. The strata below Stratum IVA have not yet been properly excavated. However, the evidence from a few probes show that the area was occupied at least from Stratum V onwards. Due to the limited excavated area, no architecture, except the core of the MB II rampart, could be traced from the earlier strata. No cultic evidence was found in the excavated probes prior to Stratum IVA, except the clay mask in the Iron Age I context.

It is significant that the biggest changes in the cultic enclosure happened between Strata IVA / III and between Stratum II (or I) / Hellenistic period, while Strata III – II (I?)

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the destruction of the room with the seal impression earlier, to late 9th or early 8th century BCE. This date he gives to the end of Stratum III.

[332] Biran 1976, 204; 1994, 204; 1996, 47.

[333] These alternatives were suggested by Biran 1976, 204 and 1996, 41.

[334] Greer (2013, 43) states that compared to the other Iron Age II sanctuaries found in Israel (Arad, Lachish, Megiddo), the cultic site of Tel Dan is larger and an independent complex. A number of the finds and structures (e.g. altars) are also cultic in nature.

show a striking continuity. Stratum IVA was totally destroyed sometime in the 9th century BCE. It is noteworthy that in this stratum red-slipped burnished pottery and the early types of Samarian ware appeared for the first time at Tel Dan. The destruction debris of Stratum IVA was covered by a new floor, which was called the "yellow floor" by the excavators. A new structure, partly on top of the previous podium, was built. The central altar was rebuilt and enlarged. Only the western rooms, the "side chambers", remained in use from Stratum IVA to Stratum III, but their floors were raised and also covered by the "yellow floor". The layout of the complex in Stratum III remained almost the same as in Strata II (and I?).

The shift from Stratum III to Stratum II was demonstrated by some new constructions: the steps to the podium structure against wall W712, the enclosure walls (W7505, W7713) of the central altars, and its steps (L7614). No traces of destruction were observed. However, there is some evidence for earth quake.[335] Thus, hardly any pottery or other finds can be assigned to Stratum III. In contrast, Stratum II suffered a heavy destruction over the whole *tell*. However, in Area T only the western rooms, the "side chambers", were destroyed. This destruction debris revealed several small altars, animal bones, and a few objects related to cultic activity, such as the iron shovels next to one of the altars and a bronze bowl. In addition to this destruction and a new floor fashioned above the debris. According to Biran, no major changes were made in Stratum I, but it is not sure if the cultic place was in use.

2.3. Areas A, AB, B: Gate Complex and Fortifications

2.3.1. Introduction

Approximately in the middle of the southern edge of the mound (Areas A and AB), a great Iron Age gate complex was incorporated into the city wall. The city gate, as excavated so far, was in use during Strata III and II.[336] The whole complex covered an area of more than 75 meters from west to east, and at least 30 meters in the north-south direction, and it consisted of several gates, chambers, and guard rooms, the city wall, a fortification with watch towers, and paved piazzas (see figs. 11 and 12). The four-chamber main gate (inner gate), and the outer gate with entrance to the city, formed the focus of the gate complex,

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[335] Ilan 2017, personal communication on 10th, January.
[336] In the early reports, Biran dates the establishment of the gate "on the basis of a study of the pottery" to "King Jeroboam I, in the last quarter of the tenth century BCE". Biran 1969, 122 (season 1968) and 239 (season 1969). Later on he redated the gate to the 9th - 8th centuries BCE, corresponding to Strata III – II at Tel Dan. See discussion on chronology and dating in chapter 6.

but two other gates were also found: an upper gate in Area AB and traces of an additional outer gate at the southern edge of the large piazza (5106). This piazza with the southern gate was located outside the city wall.

The gate fortification of Tel Dan is one of the largest ever found in Israel. It is well-built of big unworked basalt boulders, and parts of it were preserved even to the height of 1,4 meters. The whole gate area was paved by basalt flagstones, as was the piazza (5106) in front of the outer gate and the road (35) leading from the gate up to the city (Areas AB and B).[337] All the gates went out of use after the destruction of Stratum II (around 732 BCE). This is evidenced by a building of Stratum I on top of the remains of the main gate.[338]

The Iron Age main (inner) and outer gates (Area A) were established at the outer foot of the Middle Bronze IIB ramparts, and the upper gate (Area AB) on top of the earlier fortifications; the MB IIB rampart core was used as a foundation for the later constructions.[339] The strata under the gate complex, predating Stratum III, are not yet well known due to the limited excavated space. In Area A, some fragments of an earlier fortification, probably from Stratum IV, were found (see below). Iron Age I (probably Stratum V) was also reached in two probes: in the piazza between the main and the outer gate (L5037), and under the road in the corner of walls W32 and W33 (L7527), but nothing can be reasoned about the character of this settlement.[340] In Area AB, under the upper gate of Stratum II, remains of earlier gates, probably of Stratum III and of MB II, were also found. The location and orientation of the core of the MB IIB rampart could also be cleared for a distance of more than 40 meters.

Nearby the upper gate, remains from the Late Bronze and Iron Age I periods were also found. These remains mainly included houses with evidence of metal industry, which indicates that the domestic quarter of Area B extended to Area AB.
However, the evidence in the gate complex (Areas A and upper gate in AB) mainly represents Strata III and II, while in Area B further north and in Area AB outside the upper

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[337] See general overview and Biran's interpretations in Biran 1994, 235–254, and summary of the process of excavations in Biran1996, 10–17, 24–26.

[338] Biran 1996, 10, 13. The building, including a flagstone pavement, was found in the first season of the excavations in 1966. Nearby more than 300 hundred Iron Age juglets were discovered. One sherd was inscribed with the Hebrew letters לאמצ. The pottery and this inscription was dated to the 8th century BCE.

[339] Plan 2 in Biran 1996 (see this thesis fig. 10) illustrates the relations of the fortifications of Strata III – II to the earlier fortifications although the problem is the lack of the heights of the walls and pavements. See also Biran 1996, 25; 1979, 103–104.

[340] Biran 1996, 16.

gate the Iron Age I (Strata VI and V) is better revealed. In Area B, and partly Area AB, Strata IV – II are rather eroded or not yet properly published.[341]

2.3.2. Stratum IV

The remains of Stratum IV are scarce, but of a certain importance. Beneath the main gate and piazza, and between the main and outer gates, some probes were excavated under the surfaces of Stratum III – II. As a result, an earlier fortification associated with a pavement was found. The massive remains of this fortification (W99) were found just below the entrance and the northern chambers of the Stratum III – II main gate and the pavement in the piazza (loci 5033, 5052, and 5057). Based on the pottery found against the eastern face of the wall W99, the structure and the pavement were dated by Biran to the 10th – 9th centuries BCE, that is, to Stratum IVA.[342] Biran does not give any description of this pottery, and hardly any has been published. Thus, there is little evidence to date of the remains.

However, it is likely that the earlier fortification belongs to Stratum IV, because beneath these structures Iron Age I pottery was found (L5037). The question is, whether it belongs to Stratum IVA or to Stratum IVB (and to which sub-phase). Biran tentatively assigns it to Stratum IVA, but the publications do not clarify whether the foundation was reached. Therefore, it is difficult to say when this fortification was established. However, the discovery proves that Tel Dan was possibly a fortified city or town already before Stratum III, most likely during the time when the cultic enclosure was established. The Stratum IV remains in Areas A and AB have only been referred to, but not described and defined in detail, in the reports published so far.[343]

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[341] See Iron Age I remains at Area B in David Ilan's study 1999 and Biran 1994, 147–157. Above the scarce remains of Stratum IV, houses including Room 423 (Stratum III, Biran 1996, 18), parts of a large building or buildings, and pavements have been found in Area B (Stratum II, Area B1, Biran 1996, 21. Ilan (1999, 56) suggests Stratum III for these, partly eroded remains). Neither the finds nor the architecture have been published.

[342] Biran 1977, 243; 1978, 269; 1996, 16.

[343] Both Ilan and Biran refer to Stratum IV: Ilan 1999, 56; Biran 1996, 21, 23; 1974b, 263.

2.3.3. Strata III – II: The Lower Gate Complex

The Outer and Main Gate

Based on the stratigraphical evidence, the gate complex was established in Stratum III. Because the gates show a continuous use until the end of Stratum II, these strata are dealt with together here. The continuity from Stratum III to Stratum II was also observed in Area T, and possibly in Area B as well. However, the difference is that the gate complex was totally destroyed in the end of Stratum II and never rebuilt, while the cultic enclosure (Area T) continued in use in Stratum I without any significant change in its layout. The gates were destroyed by fire, which caused the collapse of the upper structures of the walls and buildings. Burnt brick material was found in the destruction debris. The pottery evidence in the burnt debris dates the destruction to the 8th century BCE, which in turn can be associated with the Assyrian attack by Tiglath Pileser III around 732 BCE.[344]

The entrance to the city went from east to west through the outer gate, the inner piazza, and the main gate along the flagstone road (L35), which started from the large piazza east of the outer gate outside the city wall. At a distance of some 20 meters west of the main gate the road (L35), 9-10 meters wide, turned up to the north towards the center of the city. Twenty meters further to the north, up on the MB IIB rampart, there existed an upper gate, built in Stratum II, but beneath it the remains of an earlier gate, likely of Stratum III, were found (described below).[345] The continuation of the road or a piazza was still found in Areas B and B1. The main and outer gates at the lower slope were oriented from east to west according to the contour of the outer edge of the mound.[346] Both gates were built against the northern city wall (W38). Accordingly, the southern city wall (W5), parallel to wall W38, formed the southern wall of the gates and the inner piazza. Hence, the gates were skillfully incorporated into the city's defense system. The main gate was a typical Iron Age four-room gate, while the outer gate was only a simple entrance, with its flat, basalt threshold stones still *in situ*. Biran assumed that several towers were integrated with the gates.[347]

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[344] Biran 1996, 11. Biran first dated this destruction to the Arameans by Ben Hadad in 885 BCE but changed the date. Both dates (the late 10th – early 9th century BCE / 9th century BCE) were based on the pottery. See early dating Biran 1969, 122, 239-240; 1973, 110; 1974a, 49.

[345] See Plan 2, Biran 1996 and Biran 1969, 239; 1970, 119; 1996, 25.

[346] The location on the slope required demanding leveling work. The horizontal surface was created by building massive constructional fills. Biran 1973, 110.

[347] See Biran 1969, 122, 239; 1994, 237–238, 241.

Figure 11. Areas A and AB: Gate complex (Biran et al. 1996, Plan 2.).
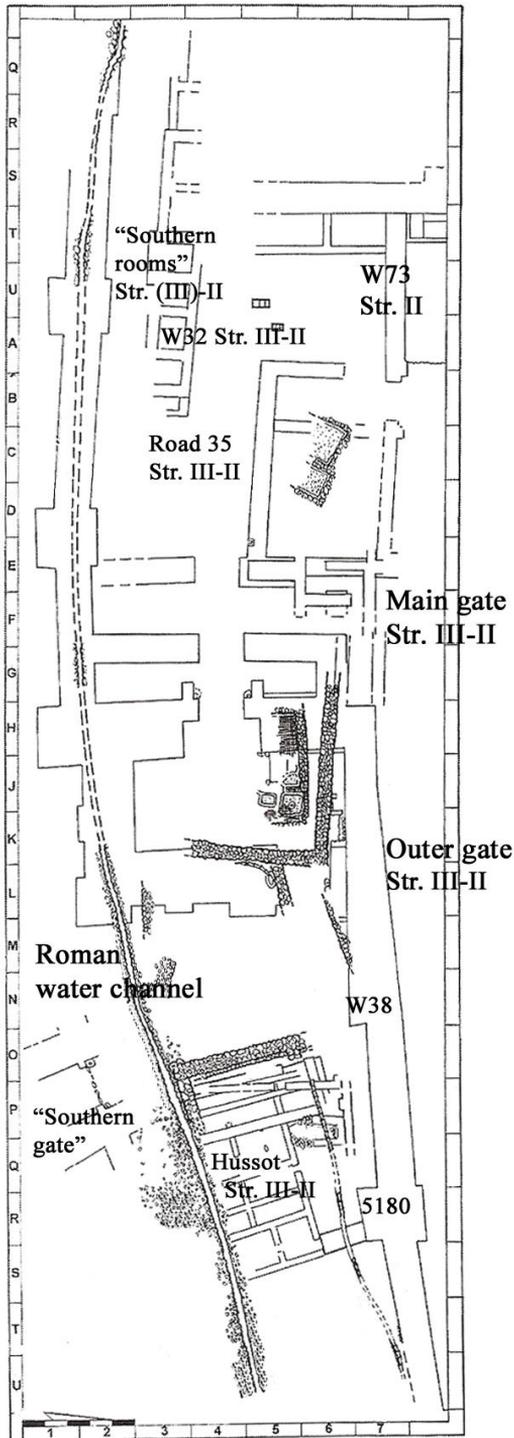
Figure 12. Area A from Stratum III to Roman remains (Biran et al. 2002, 8).

The Inner Piazza

The piazza ("inner piazza", L5122) between the outer and main gate is of particular interest (fig. 11). The discoveries reflect a gate cult:[348] a square structure with three column bases on the ground beside its corners, and an additional stepped structure of two ashlars in front of it, benches, a row of standing stones (*maṣṣebot?*) leaning against the city wall (W38), and over 25 pottery vessels[349] including seven-spouted oil lamps, tripod jugs, bowls, and plates. The square structure, called a "canopied structure" by Biran (locus number not published), and one of the benches facing east were located in the inner piazza, on the right side of the entrance of the main gate along wall W31. A row of five standing stones (*maṣṣebot?*) facing south was also found in the inner piazza, leaning on the city wall W38, west of wall W93. In front of the standing stones was another bench which formed a kind of niche just west of these stones. The 25 vessels, mentioned above, and animal bones, mainly from sheep and goats, were found in this context (L5122).[350] Similar rows of five standing stones and possible "gate shrines" were also found nearby, at the upper gate and outside the city wall (see below, sub-chapter "*Piazzas ... outside the City Wall*").

The canopied structure and the benches were built of well-dressed ashlars.[351] These constructions, the column bases of the canopied structure, and two complete proto-Aeolic capitals[352] – found in the debris on the piazza – represent monumental architecture which was only used in major cities. Biran finds a parallel to the gate and the "canopied structure" at Carchemish, and in the reliefs of the Neo-Assyrian kings.[353] The decoration of

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[348] The cultic character has been discussed by many scholars, such as Ottosson 1980, 99; Mazar 1990, 469; Herzog 1992, 272; Haettner Blomquist 1999, 57–69. The ceremonial function is affirmed by Dever 2001, 199–201 but he refers only to the canopied structure. According to Biran, these finds, together with similar finds from the upper gate, represent the gate cult at Dan (Biran 1996c, 56–58), but the canopied structure can either be a podium for a cult statue or for the seat of the local king or ruler. Biran 1994, 238–241; 1980a, 177–182.

[349] Fifteen of these vessels have been published in Biran 1996c, 56–57, fig. 7; See also Biran 1994, 245, Ill. 205.

[350] See discussion on the finds in Haettner Blomquist 1999, 59–67. She concludes that the function of the canopied structure still remains open. Similarly, the interpretation of the standing stones is problematic, but in this context (L5122) they might have some cultic function.

[351] Biran 1981b, 143–144; 1994, 238–245; 1996, 10–11, 13, 17. See the earlier report Biran 1974a, 43–48, 1969, 239.

[352] Biran 1996a, 17. A fragment of the third capital was found in a secondary use in W6033 in the upper gate context in Area AB, Biran 1985, 186. Similar capitals have been found in Samaria (Crowfoot et al. 1942, 14), Hazor (Yadin et al 1961, plates CCCLXII, CCCLXIII), and Megiddo (Lamon & Shipton 1939, 14–15) in the ninth-eighth century BCE contexts, and in Jerusalem, Ramat Rahel and Medebiyeh in the Transjordan in the 8th and 7th century BCE (Mazar 1990, 474–475 and Y. Shiloh 1979).

[353] Biran 1969, 121–122; 1994, 241. The gate of Carchemish is illustrated in Woolley 1921, Fig. 61). Haettner Blomquist 1999, 59, footnote 166, briefly introduces the relief parallels from Balawat and Nimrud of Shalmaneser III. All of them are from the ninth century BCE. Haettner Blomquist also presents some earlier and later examples which tentatively might have served similar function: LB I temple at Tel Mevorakh (Stern 1984, 4, 30, fig. 24, plate 8:1) and "stepped ashlar podium" in Sarepta (Shrine 1) from the 8th – 7th century BCE context (Pritchard 1975, 16–17, figs. 34–35).

the column bases is of the Neo-Hittite tradition of the Northern Syria.[354] Thus, the finds represent the northern material culture and demonstrate the connections of Tel Dan to Syria. Interesting parallels to the gate and the cultic (?) discoveries of Tel Dan have also been revealed at Bethsaida (Tell et-Tell), some tens of kilometers to the south, which has been regarded as a leading "Aramean" city during the Iron Age II. The discoveries from Bethsaida will be discussed in Chapter 5.2.

Road (35) from the Gate up to the City, and the Southern Rooms

The road (L35), made of flat basalt slabs, leading from the main gate to the upper gate was bordered on the north by wall W22. The road and the wall turns to the north at a distance of about 15 meters from the main gate. Only part of the southern lining wall (W32) of the road, a fragment of some 10 meters, was found (see fig. 11, squares T–U–A–B / 3–4). It also turns to the north (square T4, W33). The road and its lining walls were assigned to Stratum III by Biran. Wall W73, which blocks the road near the upper gate, was according to Biran built in Stratum II in order to prevent a straight access to the city through the upper gate. The road now led around the eastern end of wall W73 to the gate (fig. 11, squares T–A / 7–8). Several rooms representing at least three building phases were found south of the southern lining wall (W32). Biran dated these "southern rooms" (see fig. 11) to the 9th – 8th centuries BCE (Strata III – II).[355]

Piazzas and Buildings outside the City Wall

A rectangular-shaped piazza (L5106) covered more than 400 m^2 east of the outer gate and south of the city wall W38. It was bordered by three walls: W92 to the west, the city wall W38 to the north, and W5073 (and W5018 on its top) to the east. At the southern end of the eastern wall (W5018), a fragment of a monumental basalt stela with an Aramaic inscription was found in secondary use (chapter 3.2). The southern end of the piazza was rather eroded. It is not clear if there was a wall, but it is likely, because an additional gate (southern gate, see figs. 13–14) was discovered there.[356] Its threshold and pivots *in situ* were found in the east end of the assumed southern lining wall of the piazza (L5106). The date and stratum of the gate is, however, difficult to define. With some caution, Biran

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[354] Biran 1980a, 177–182 followed by Mazar 1990, 469.

[355] See the preliminary report, photographs, and plans of the rooms in Biran 2002, 6, 8, fig.1.8., 21–23, fig. 1.34.

[356] Because no locus number was given, the gate will be called the "southern gate". Biran named it the "new gate".

assigned the gate to Stratum III – II, while Herzog[357] assigned it to Stratum I on the basis of its orientation and the fact that there is no stratigraphical connection between piazza 5106 and the main gate. Pottery was of no help; only under the pavement of piazza 5106 was some 9th century pottery found.[358]
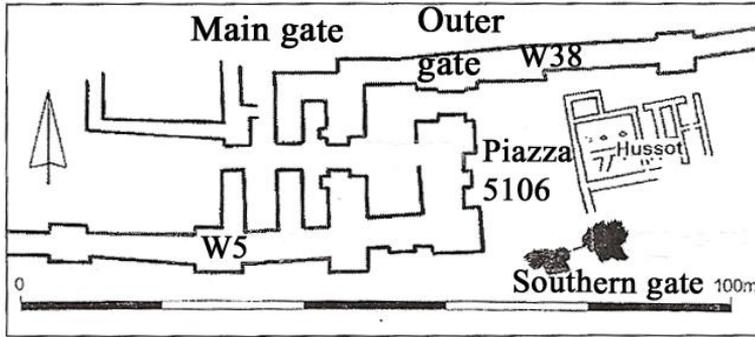
Figure 13. Area A: the location of the "southern gate" (Biran et al. 2002, 6,7).
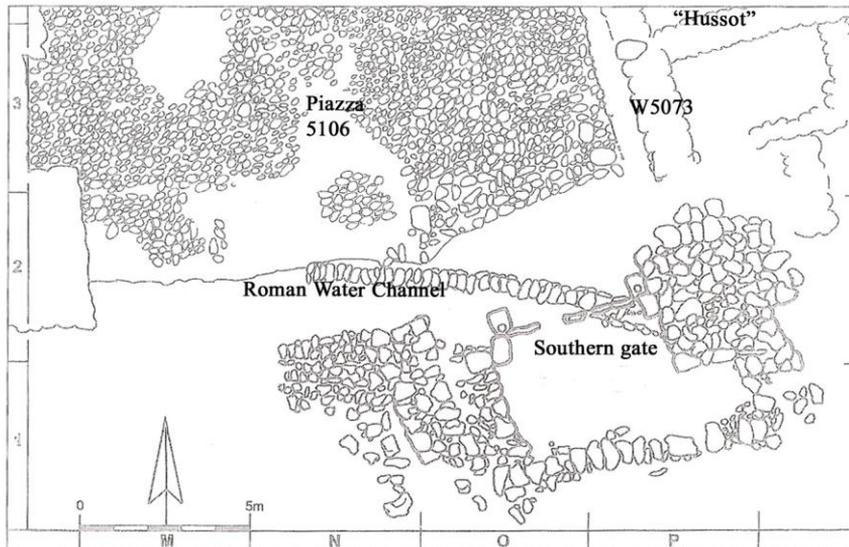
Figure 14. Area A: the "southern gate" (Biran et al. 2002, 7).

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[357] Herzog 1997, 222. The orientation is strange in relation to the nearby walls and the outer gate.
[358] Biran 2002, 5; 1996a, 17; 1996b, 7. Photographs Biran 1994, 275, Ill. 227; 2002, 5, fig. 1.1.

Between the piazza (L5106) in the west (bordering wall W5081 and W5073 below) and the piazza (L5301)[359] in the east, and south of the city wall (W38),[360] there existed a building complex which was located outside the city. Biran reports that three building phases was discerned; the lowest building (Stage C) was dated by Biran to the early 9th century, and the two following phases (Stages B and A) to the 9th – 8th centuries (fig. 15 – 17). No traces of destructions were found, and the area was probably continuously occupied throughout a couple of centuries. The dates are based on the pottery and stratigraphy; Stages A-C were found beneath the destruction debris, which Biran associated with the Assyrian attack at the end of Stratum II. In addition, he mentions that a few walls (e.g. W5081) were found above the western part of the building complex of Stage A, and above Pavement 5201 north of it. These constructions postdate Stage A, but predate the destruction of Stratum II. Some remains representing Stratum I were also found above the destruction layer of Stratum II. Thus, the area was rebuilt in the Assyrian period,[361] and at least five stages were identified: four for Strata (IV) III – II, and one for Stratum I.[362]

Biran calls the building complex (phases A – C) by the biblical term "ḥuṣṣot" according to 1 Kgs 20:34, implying that the area outside the city gate would have served as a kind of marketplace, and a place where travelers and traders could have stayed.[363] I prefer to avoid biblical terms in the archaeological context, because of the insufficient evidence to verify the identification between the text and the archaeological material. However, here I follow Biran, if only for the sake of convenience, because no identification numbers have been given to the buildings; Biran uses the term "ḥuṣṣot" when he refers to the area of the building complex and "Structures/Stages A to C" when he refers to the phase of a building or room.[364]

A group of five standing stones (L5181) facing south was discovered beside the city wall W38 (pavement 5301), approximately 40 meters east of the outer gate, in the destruction layer of Stratum II.[365] The stones are very similar to those in the

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[359] This piazza was found when the city wall was exposed towards east. To date, this piazza has been revealed further south, almost the entire length of the western wall of the "ḥuṣṣot". See plan of pavement 5301 with "ḥuṣṣot" Stage A in Biran 2002, 17, fig. 1.24.

[360] By the end of the excavations the southern face of the city wall (W38) was traced more than 100 meters east of the outer gate. Biran 2002, 16.

[361] See the preliminary report of the results Biran 2002, 9–22; 1999, 43–51.

[362] Biran did not define sub-strata for Stratum III or II. Hence, there is more than one building phase within Stratum III or II (or both of them?).

[363] Biran 1995, 39–41;1998, 42 (sketched plan), 45, 70; 1999, 50–52; 2002, 11.

[364] E.g. Biran 1999, 49–51; 2002, 15–16.

[365] Biran 1995, 39–40; 1998, 44; 2002, 8–9, 17 (plan fig. 1.24.).
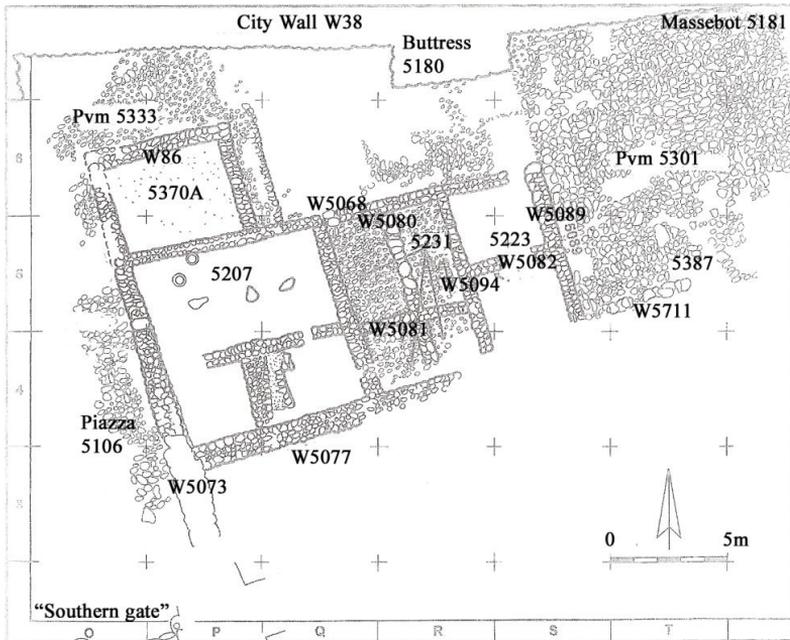
Figure 15. Area A: "ḥuṣṣot", stage A (Biran et al. 2002, 17).
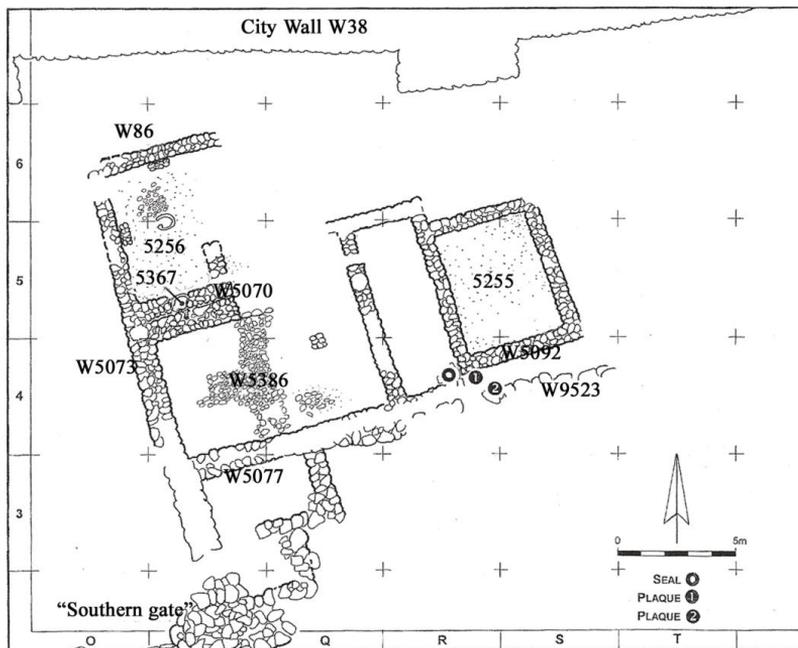
Figure 16. Area A: "ḥuṣṣot", stage B (Biran et al. 2002, 18).
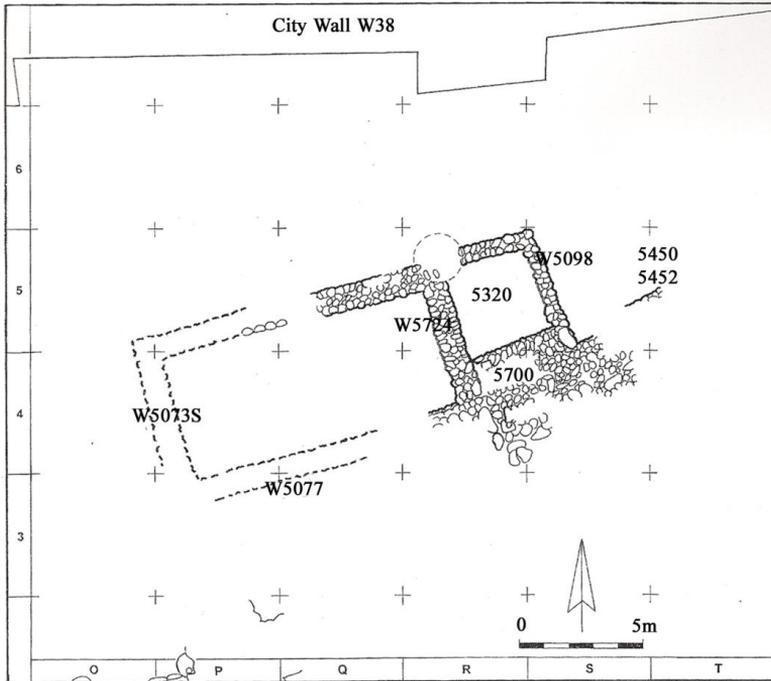
Figure 17. Area A: "ḥuṣṣot", stage C (Biran et al. 2002, 22).

inner piazza (L5122). However, no vessels or other objects or structures were found in the same context. In this respect, this context (L5181) resembles the row of standing stones at the upper gate (chapter 2.3.4); only the standing stones in the inner piazza (L5122) were found together with benches, vessels, and animal bones. All of these three groups of five standing stones were in use at least in Stratum II, but it seems to me that the standing stones under discussion (L5181) could also have been erected in Stratum III, or in a very early phase of Stratum II: Biran reports that the bottoms of the standing stones (L5181) were found under the pavement 5301, so that the surface of this pavement was in the middle of the height of the stones.[366] Hence, the standing stones must have been set before pavement 5301, which was associated with Stage A of the "ḥuṣṣot".[367]

Because of the distance between the gate complex and the architectural elements outside the city wall (the "ḥuṣṣot"), the stratigraphical synchronism is difficult to define. However, the pottery and absence of destruction layers between Stages A to C strongly

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[366] Biran 2002, 9; Biran and Naveh 1995, 3.
[367] The association of pavement 5301 and the "ḥuṣṣot" of Stage A (its eastern wall W5089) is not detailed, but Biran states that they belong to "a single architectural unit." Biran 2002, 14. This is also illustrated in photograph fig.1.21.(p.14) and plan fig.1.24. (p.17).

support the association of the "ḥuṣṣot" with the period of Stratum III – II, which shows continuity in several excavated areas. The buildings of Stage A were abandoned before the destruction of Stratum II, as is indicated by the fact that some walls of Stratum II (e.g. W5081) were found in its debris, built over Stage A, and Pavement 5201 had been built above pavement 5333 (Stage A).[368] New architecture was erected after the Assyrian conquest, on top of the destruction debris of Stratum II (Stratum I, see below). The southern part of piazza 5106 and the southern end of the "ḥuṣṣot" are more eroded.

Significant finds from the "ḥuṣṣot" of Stage B included fragments of two bronze plaques. In both plaques male figures – obviously in high positions – are depicted. In addition, on plaque A there were drawings of a winged sun disc, and beneath it a (n offering?) table with the legs of a bull. The center of the plaque is missing. Plaque B has two male figures and a bull. The plaques are of Neo-Hittite, Northern Syrian, or Assyrian style. Parallels for the depictions can be found on Mesopotamian and Syrian seals, reliefs, and ivories.[369] Plaque A was found in earth locus 5042 at the foot of the southern wall (W5092) of the Stage B building, and plaque B nearby (L5451). According to Biran, both are from the ninth century BCE. Close to plaque A, a scaraboid seal was found (L5332). It also came from the foundations of Structure B.[370]

2.3.4. Stratum (III) – II: The Upper Gate

The upper gate of Stratum II is also a four chamber gate, but smaller than the main gate. It was obviously built over earlier (gate?) remains: a structure (gate?) incorporated into the MB IIB rampart core was found. Above the Middle Bronze remains, but below the Stratum II gate, a rectangular building, which Biran interprets as a tower (Tower 4028), was discovered. Biran suggests that this Tower 4028 belongs to the construction of Stratum III[371] but does not explain why this supposed gate was replaced with a new gate. The new upper gate was in use throughout Stratum II, and was destroyed at the end of Stratum II

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[368] Biran 2002, 11, 16 : A few walls with a north-south orientation (e.g.5081) were built on top of the western part of the "ḥuṣṣot" Stage A. According to Biran, Pavement 5201 corresponds to these walls, while Pavement 5333 coincides with Stage A. Thus, Biran states that "the walls built over the western part of the structure indicate that at least part of Building A went out of use even before the Assyrian conquest." That these latest walls and pavement 5201 antedate the Assyrian attack and its destruction debris is shown in Biran 2002, 12, Fig. 1.18.
[369] In Tallay Ornan's article, such material is introduced. She especially studies the bull motif in the North-Syrian and Mesopotamian context. Ornan 2001, 1–26.
[370] Biran 1999, 52–54, find spots marked in the plan fig. 5 (page 47); 2002, 16, 18, 20, figs. 1.25., 1.27.,1.31.
[371] Biran 1996, 25: "Upper Israelite fortifications were built above the remains of a Middle Bronze Age gate integrated into the rampart system. This earlier construction, and the resulting gap through the ramparts, may have recommended the building of Tower 4028 here in the 9th century BCE."

similarly to the lower gates.[372] The public buildings and piazzas around the gate and in Areas AB and B suffered destruction, as well.[373] A new layout of Stratum I covered most of these areas.

In the context of the upper gate, several interesting finds were also made. A structure of limestone ashlars and row of five standing stones were found nearby the gate. The structure (L7012, square T/8) was annexed to the northern face of cross wall W73 at its western end, some 10 meters south of the upper gate (from W6033) and about 10 meters west of the new entrance to upper gate area, where a threshold and a door pivot were found. The structure was rectangular, around five meters long and two meters wide including the dais on the eastern end. Inside the structure, a hewn limestone ashlar with a rectangular shaped depression[374] was discovered. The ashlar stone was found broken into two parts. According to Biran, this structure resembles the canopied structure in the inner piazza of the lower gate.[375] A row of five roughly worked standing stones facing south was found on the other side of the road, just south of the eastern part of the upper gate.[376] At a distance of two meters, a bench (6040) was discovered (square U – A/9, fig. 10). It may have been connected to the standing stones.

In addition to structure 7012 and the standing stones, a fragment of a third proto-Aeolic capital was found reused in the southern wall (W6033) of the southwestern chamber (4151) of the upper gate.[377] This find context presupposes that it was in its original use in Stratum III. The two complete capitals with similar decoration, mentioned above, were found in the lower gate complex, in the debris of the inner piazza of Stratum II (see above). It is difficult to trace the original location of these capitals. However, Stratum III with its numerous public buildings, piazzas, and the broad way leading towards the inner city provides a suitable context for such columns, which have been found only in the most important regional centers.

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[372] Collapsed mud brick material was found, demonstrating the destruction, although no trace of a conflagration was found. Biran 1985, 186.

[373] In Area B1, Stratum I was eroded, but in Stratum II the public area and street were revealed: "foundation course fragments of broad walls and sparse remnants of a flagstone pavement with its underlying pebble bed were found from Stratum II, apparently the remains of a public area and street which ran north-south." Biran 1996, 21. The pavement, public area or street extended from the upper gate to Area B1 and in Area B a house (L423), probably belonging to Stratum III, was explored. Biran 1996, 18, 23; 1989–1990, 5.

[374] Biran associated this find with "a libation ceremony" as well as another grooved limestone block with a round depression found in the debris of the lower gate. Biran 1998, 41.

[375] See Biran 1985, 186; 1996 25–26, plan 2 (squares B – T/7 – 8); 1998, 41 (photograph with a text); 1996c, 56,58, fig.11.

[376] Biran 1998, 43, 45; 2002, 19 (plan fig. 1.29), 20.

[377] Biran 1985, 186; 1996, 25.

2.3.5. Summary

The gate area has been widely exposed, and the excavations have revealed a large and massive Iron Age gate and fortification system. The gate fortification as revealed to date was established in Stratum III (city walls W5 and W38, main and outer gates with the inner piazza, road 35 with its bordering walls, possibly the earlier upper gate), but it remained in use until the end of Stratum II. The most significant change in the architecture in Stratum II was the construction of the upper gate and the cross wall (W73) in the northern slope of road 35, apparently meant to prevent straight access to the city through the upper gate. The road also extended into the inner city (Area B), where remains of buildings have been found (Stratum III/II). The objects and pottery discovered in the destruction debris naturally represent the latest phase, that is, the end of Stratum II. Due to the continuity from Stratum III to Stratum II, Stratum III material is difficult to discern. Some earlier pottery was found in the probes under the pavements of Stratum III/II where structures, pavements, and floors of earlier strata were discovered. Because the excavated areas predating Stratum III are small, the layout of the earlier strata remains rather fragmentary. However, fragments of massive structures with pavements under the main gate of Stratum III – II provided evidence for the existence of a fortification already during Stratum IV(A?).

The buildings outside the city, east of the outer gate, included piazza (L5106), the "southern gate", the "ḥuṣṣot" with a piazza (L5333 and L5201 above) on its northern end, and piazza 5301 on its eastern side. City wall W38 was traced over 100 meters to the east, and the southern city wall W5 more than 70 meters to the west. The building complex of the "ḥuṣṣot" appeared to have at least three continuous stages without traces of destructions, dated by Biran to the 9th – 8th centuries BCE. Thus, they seem to belong to Strata III and II. Biran stated that at least the western part of the "ḥuṣṣot" went out of use before the destruction of Stratum II, because new walls (e.g. W5018) were constructed on top of the walls of Stage C still in Stratum II. The function of these buildings is not known, but Biran supposed that they have served as a marketplace and places were foreigners and tradesmen could stay.

Among the significant finds were remains which refer to the gate cult, and the discoveries of standing stones at several points. Although the function of the standing stones is difficult to discern, their appearance at several points similarly grouped in a row is, however, striking. Most of these stones were of basalt or limestone, only roughly worked, and stood against walls without any architectural function. Three groups

belonging to Strata (III-) II were found in the upper gate context (loci not published), in the inner piazza of the lower gates (L5122), and outside the city northeast from the "*ḥuṣṣot*" (L5188) against the southern side of the city wall (W38). In each of these three contexts, five standing stones were found in a row facing south. The fourth group of four standing stones, also facing south, was found in Stratum I outside the city (L5188).

At its best, the gate cult is represented in the inner piazza between the outer and main gates (L5122). There, several elements typical of cultic contexts were found: a row of standing stones, a bench structure, a niche, a seven spouted oil lamp amongst other pottery vessels, and some animal bones. These finds are from the destruction debris of Stratum II. A cultic function for the "canopied structure" is also possible (ruler's cult?).

A few standing stones were also discovered in Stratum V. They were found in the building where remains of metal industry were revealed (L129 and L343 in Area B). These stones, quite similar to those of later strata, were also set against the walls without any architectural function. No pottery or other elements of cultic nature were, however, found in their vicinity.[378] The function of these standing stones is also difficult to explain, but their appearance in several strata (V, III?, II, I) is noteworthy. Interestingly, they have only been found in the gate area, and not at all in the cultic enclosure in Area T.

To summarize, some remains of Stratum IV(A?) have been revealed, but the remains of Strata III and II dominates the gate area (Areas A and AB). In contrast, at the top of the mound in Area B, Strata III, II, and especially IVA are quite eroded. Only some pavements can be assigned to these strata. In the light of the published reports, Area B is best represented by the buildings and domestic houses of Stratum V. The lack of any final publications made the study of these results complicated.

2.4. Other Areas: Strata IV–II, Stratum I, and the Persian–Hellenistic Period

Some remains of Stratum IVA were revealed in Area B, but not in good condition due to erosion or damage caused by later constructions. Stratum IV(A?) was also found in Area M, but only by pottery below Stratum III. In the other areas (except T), this stratum could not be discerned because of the limited space of the excavations (Area A), or because the finds of Iron Age II came from unstratified contexts (K, Y). Stratum III was distinguished

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[378] Ilan 1999, 50.

in Area M, and some remains also in Area B. Biran mentions that during Strata II and I, which he dates to the 8th (Stratum II) and late 8th – 7th centuries BCE (Stratum I), the city of Tel Dan flourished. He says that remains of these strata were found in several areas, and that "remains of large public buildings and smaller dwellings of the 8th century BCE" were discovered.[379] He also mentions that pottery included new types, such as decanters and amphorae "with carinated shoulders, elongated bodies and pointed bases", which became more common in Stratum I.[380] Some photographs of the pottery are included in Biran's book *Biblical Dan,*[381] but not much material has been published. Therefore, only a general overview is possible. A few Iron Age inscriptions from Strata II will be introduced in chapter 3.1.

2.4.1. Other Areas of Strata IV– II

Stratum IV(A/B) was recognized in Area M, but only by pottery on floors below Stratum III, without any architectural features. Stratum III walls were also found, and a surface with 9–8th century pottery with animal bones. [382] In Areas H, K, and Y, no strata dated to Iron Age II were defined, but pottery dated to the 9th – 7th centuries BCE is mentioned.[383]

Stratum II is best preserved, according to the publications, in Areas A, AB, T, and M. In the other areas (B, H, K, Y), the finds have not yet been published or the remains are scarce, partly due to the limited excavated area (H, Y). The gate complex with the fortification in Areas A and AB, and the cultic enclosure in Area T, were already presented in chapters 2.2.4, 2.3.3, and 2.3.4. A flagstone pavement (#8012) was found in Area M, which covered all the area in the center of the city extending towards the upper gate (Area B) and the cultic enclosure (Area T). More than 135 m² of this pavement was revealed.[384] According to Biran, it was "a public meeting ground".[385] Pottery vessels, some of them complete, were found on the pavement; they were dated to the 8th – early 7th century BCE by Daliah Pakman.[386] The pavement was incorporated into the earlier wall (Stratum III).[387] The other finds, ascribed by Biran to Stratum II, are the head of faience figurine (AreaY)

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[379] Biran 1994, 255.
[380] Biran 1994, 260.
[381] See Biran 1994, 245, 257, 259.
[382] Biran 1996, 31.
[383] Biran 1996, 56–57, 61.
[384] Biran 1996, 32.
[385] Biran 1994, 255.
[386] Pakman 1992, 230–240; Biran 1996, 31;
[387] Biran 1996, 31.

and a cup-and-saucer vessel, possibly used as an oil lamp (Area K).[388] Pottery from the 8th century, including complete vessels, was also found. In Area B, the later strata were quite eroded or absent (?).

2.4.2. Stratum I

The city of Stratum I was rebuilt above the destruction debris of Stratum II, and it was found in almost all areas. In some areas, like the southern part of Area A, the later Iron Age strata were eroded and damaged by constructions of later periods, particularly those of the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Remains of Stratum I were however uncovered in the destruction debris of the "ḥuṣṣot" in Area A.[389]   In Areas B and B1, the Ottoman burials had damaged or destroyed the later Iron Age I remains.[390] Stratum I seems to be best preserved in Areas M, H, and partly in Area T. In Areas Y and K, levels associated with the early 8th – 6th century pottery BCE were uncovered.[391] The most significant change in the Stratum I city was that all the gates and fortifications (Areas A and AB) went out of use after the destruction of Stratum II (around 732 BCE). On the other hand, only part of the cultic enclosure (Area T) was destroyed, and most of the buildings of Strata III – II remained in use in Stratum I. At least three phases have been discerned in Stratum I (represented in Area M). The pottery of this period is often referred to as "early 8th – 7th" or "7th–early 6th" century BCE in the preliminary reports.

Area A. In Area A, two walls (W3 and W4, see plan fig. 11) were found partly on top of the walls of the main gate (W14 and W31). Between these walls there was a room (L4) in which more than 300 hundred juglets were discovered. One of the sherds was inscribed with the Hebrew letters לאמצ. The pottery and the inscription were dated to the 8th century BCE.[392] According to Biran they belong to Stratum II, but it seems odd to me, because he states that they were found "above the gate chambers".[393] If locus 4 is connected to walls W3 and W4, (see plan fig. 11), which is not reported by Biran, the finds indeed came from on top of the remains of the main gate, and thus represent a later stratum (Stratum I?).

[388] Biran 1994, 255, illustrations p. 256–257.
[389] Biran 2002, 9–11.
[390] Biran 1996, 17, 23 (stratigraphy of Area B1). However, some remains of the 7th century BCE building were revealed. The walls were built of large basalt stones and the floor was of beaten earth. Biran 1989, 93.
[391] Biran 1994,
[392] Biran 1994, 255; 1996, 10, 13.
[393] Biran 1996, 11, fig. 1.5., 13

Some finds representing Stratum I were reported on top of the destruction layer of the "*ḥuṣṣot*" in Area A,[394] but no layout of the Assyrian period has been published. The only structure described in this area was a small shrine, structure L5188 (squares P – Q/5 – 6),[395] where a few standing stones were also discovered. The size of the structure was 2,5 m x 3 m, and it was bordered by three walls to the west, north, and east, while the entrance was from south. Similarly to L5122 in the inner piazza of the lower gates, a few vessels were found, but here they were in front of the standing stones. In addition, in front of the largest standing stone there was a flat stone on which a basalt bowl full of ashes had been set. Close and behind the standing stones, two small juglets and three oil lamps were found. The pottery found in this structure was dated to the late 8th – 7th centuries BCE.[396]

Areas M and H. An area of domestic dwellings with several phases of walls and floors was uncovered in Area M of Stratum I. Plenty of pottery was found in the houses and the courtyards. Biran states that many of the vessel types represent continuity from Stratum II, but new types such as *mortaria* (heavy bowls) and Assyrian type vessels also appear, such as bottles and carinated bowls dated to the 7th – early 6th century BCE. [397] Assyrian-type pottery was also found in an earlier phase of dwellings (late 8th – early 7th century BCE). Ovens / tabuns sunk into the floor were found in both phases.[398] Large buildings were also uncovered in Area H below the surface. These were dated to the 7th – early 6th century BCE. The pottery and other finds from this area have not been published.[399]

Area T. It seems on the basis of the preliminary reports that most of the cultic enclosure of Strata III – II continued in use during Stratum I (see plan fig. 8). No traces of destruction were found in the central altar area. Only the western casemate rooms, the altar room, and the "side-chambers" of Stratum II had been destroyed,[400] but new buildings (rooms) 2746, 2770, and 9087 were constructed above them (see plan, fig. 8). Some plastered floors were found in them. A building with floor #9214 was revealed outside of the enclosure in Area T1. A seventh century BCE scarab was found nearby when one of the walls was removed.[401] Public buildings were revealed only in the early phase of Stratum I and during the later phase, mainly domestic buildings were found.[402]

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[394] See the preliminary report of the results Biran 2002, 9–22; 1999, 43–51.
[395] The locus is marked on the plan of Roman remains Biran 2002, 8, fig. 1.9.
[396] Biran 2002, 8–11, plan fig. 1.9. and photograph fig.1.13.; 1998, 42–43, 45; Biran and Naveh 1995,1–3.
[397] Biran 1994, 261; 1996, 30–31.
[398] Biran 1996, 30.
[399] Biran 1996, 29 (see plan fig. 1.30.).
[400] Biran 1994, 204–206; 1996, 47.
[401] Biran 1989, 96.
[402] Biran 1994, 210–214.

2.4.3. The Persian–Hellenistic Period

The remains of Persian period are rare. According to Biran, some finds indicate that a few architectural buildings were in use in Area T. For example, he mentions walls, stone floors, and ovens near the Roman "fountain house", with animal bones and pottery dating to the Persian and Hellenistic periods (see plan, Roman period, fig. 10, squares S – T, 13 – 14).[403] Two Macedonian coins and some figurines were dated by Biran to this period (5th – 4th century BCE).[404] Levana Zias, who prepares the final report on the Hellenistic period, says that the site recovered in the late Hellenistic period, and only Area T was rebuilt.[405] New architectural structures were not built before that. The stratigraphy is rather mixed, and no pure loci for Hellenistic finds were found. Biran discerned at least two building phases, but the dense stratigraphy suggests even more.[406] The architectural remains of the Hellenistic period are presented in the plan of Area T (fig. 9). Finds of Hellenistic pottery and other objects suggest that some structures of Stratum I, or even Stratum II, were still use during the Hellenistic period, such as the paved road in Area AB.[407]

In Area T, the new elements were a new enclosure wall with a change in orientation, entrance to the enclosure in its southern wall W7606[408] and, in front of it, plastered pavement #2355, 15 – 20 cm thick,[409] enlargement of the podium (W7502)[410], remains near the Roman "fountain house"[411], and building 2247 east of the podium (square G/20) with at least two Hellenistic floors. On these floors, Hellenistic juglet, oil lamps, glass and Ptolemaic coins were discovered.[412] Three coins of Ptolemy II were also found at the base of wall W705 in the southwestern part of the enclosure[413] and altogether 12 coins of Ptolemy II (284 – 247 BCE) were found at Tel Dan.[414] Other coins from the 3rd – 2nd centuries BCE were discovered, too, for example, in Area B, in which no architectural remains were preserved. Several figurines are also reported. Among them a bronze Osiris figurine which was found in a pavement around 20 cm below the surface (squares S – T, 1 – 3).[415] The pottery included both locally made and imported vessels.[416] Important

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[403] Biran 1996, 40.
[404] Biran 1994, 214, 216.
[405] Personal communication on January 10th, 2017.
[406] Biran 1982, 139; 1989–1990, 5; 1994, 215.
[407] Biran 1976, 203; 1985, 186.
[408] Biran 1996b, 8.
[409] Biran 1978, 270; 1996, 42.
[410] Biran 1970, 118; 1996, 40.
[411] Biran 1974b, 263.
[412] Biran 1977, 245; 1996, 42.
[413] Biran 1987–1988, 47.
[414] Biran 1994, 218.
[415] Biran 1996, 45.

Hellenistic finds were a plastered basin and a lime-stone stela with the votive inscription from the 3rd/2nd century BCE.[417] The inscription will be presented in chapter 3.3.

2.5. Aspects of the Material Culture of Tel Dan and Alternative Chronologies

Iron Age I. While Avraham Biran emphasized the significant change in the material culture in the transition from the LBA to Iron Age I, and identified this change with the occupation of Tel Dan by the Israelites,[418] the interpretation of the present excavators is quite different. David Ilan concludes in the forthcoming final report on the Iron Age I period that the background of the people of this period was multicultural.[419] The material culture of the period reflects both a continuity of local traditions and change. The final LBA phases, VIIA2 and VIIA1, show traces of destruction and deteriation, but the site was not abandoned. Many elements indicate that the population of Iron Age I (Strata VI–V) included both local people and new immigrants. The finds of Egyptian type might indicate remnants from the time of the dominance of the Egyptians in the eastern Mediterranean territories during the Late Bronze Age. The Aegean, Cypriot, and coastal items indidate cultural and trade connections with these areas, and possibly immigrants as well.

The pottery vessels of Iron Age I include types common to the Late Bronze Age (e.g. carinated bowls, chalices, karters, cooking pots, globular jugs, flasks), as well as new types (e.g. collared-rim pithoi, great amount of storage jars in Stratum VI).[420] According to Ilan, the continuity from the LBA to Iron Age I is also demonstrated by the technology of manufacturing stone vessels, metallurgy, food consumption, and use of standing stones. Egyptian traditions are introduced by Egyptian type cooking jugs, which are common at Tel Dan, Egyptian forms in many locally manufactured ceramic objects, collared-rim pithoi (which he finds part of the Egyptian administration), two Egyptian stamp seals, and metal and bone objects that have Egyptian parallels. Agean, Cypriot, Lebanese/"Phoenician" coast, and Phililistine features are shown in many types of pottery: Wavy-Band /"Phoenician" pithoi, Philistine sherds, locally made ceramic vessels in

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[416] Biran 1994, 218–219.
[417] Biran 1994, 221.
[418] Biran 1994, 126–142.
[419] Ilan 2017 (forthcoming), chapter 21.
[420] See plates of pottery types Biran 1994, figs. 87, 91–93, 96, 98–99.

Aegaen/Cypriot traditions, some of them with bird motifs, figurines and a kernos resembling Aegean ritual objects, and "Phoenician" bichrome ware (Stratum IVB onwards). Thus, the material of the Iron Age I is heterogeneous. Ilan concludes that this also reflects the heterougeneous origin of the inhabitants of Iron Age Tel Dan: local "Canaanites", Egyptians (who stayed after the collapse of the Egyptian dominion?), and immigrants from the Aegean islands, Cyprus, the coastal area, and Syria.[421]

Iron Age II. The final reports on the Iron Age II period are still being waited upon. Yifat Thareani, a member of the Tel Dan excavation team, published two articles in 2016 which provide some new aspects to the interpretation of the Iron Age II period at Tel Dan and its material culture. One of the articles deals with the issue of the "Aramean" presence and material culture at Tel Dan.[422] Another article concerns the Assyrian residence of Stratum I in Area T1.[423]

The Tel Dan inscription proves that there were Aramaic speaking people at Tel Dan during the second half of the 9th century BCE (see chapter 3.2). However, it is more difficult to define who the "Arameans" actually were, and what "Aramean" material culture actually was. Aram and the Arameans are found in the biblical stories, but they are also mentioned in the Assyrian texts referring to a region on the western banks of the Euphrates. [424] Because southern Syria is a rather unexplored area, including Damascus, the southern "capital" of the Arameans ("Aram-Damascus"),[425] the northern references must be looked for at more distant sites.

In contrast to Eran Arie[426] and Israel Finkelstein[427], who associate many features of Stratum III with the Aramean occupation of the site, or Biran, who associated it with the Israelites (Omride dynasty)[428], Thareani concludes that the Iron Age II material at Tel Dan (Strata III–II) includes elements from different cultures, and from people of originally

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[421] Ilan 2017 (forthcoming), chapter 21; Personal communication with David Ilan on 10th, January, 2017.

[422] Thareani 2016a, "Enemy at the Gates? The Archaeological Visibility of the Arameans at Dan." *In Search for Aram and Israel. Politics, Culture, and Identity.* Omer Sergi, Manfred Oeming, and Izaak J. de Hulster (Eds.) Oriental Religions in Antiquity. Vol. 20. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck.

[423] Thareani 2016b, "Imperializing the Province: a Residence of a Neo-Assyrian City Governor at Tel Dan. Levant 48/3, 254–283.

[424] Akkermans and Schwartz 2003, 366–377; Thareani 2016a, 170.

[425] See Akkermans and Schwartz 2003, 376–377, 400–401; Thareani 2016a, 173.

[426] Arie, Eran (2013), "Reconsidering the Iron Age II Strata at Tel Dan: Archaeological and Historical Implications." Tel Aviv 35:1, 6−64.

[427] Finkestein, Israel (2013), *Forgotten Kingdom; The Archaeology and History of Northern Israel.* Ancient Near East Monographs, Number 5. Atlanta, Georgia: Society of Biblical Literature.

[428] Biran 1994, 189, 246–247.

different ethnic groups: "former Canaanites, Phoenicians and Syrians."[429] She says that what was earlier defined as "Aramaean" culture is "actually a mixture of cultural traditions".[430] For example, the town layout or the canopied structure from Area T do not represent any specific "Aramean" style, because parallels or similar features are found in different parts of Syro-Mesopotamia.[431] Most of the pottery types continue the local tradition of Stratum IVA, and they have parallels in Hazor VIII and Megiddo IVA. Two examples of Cypriot or Syrian ware were recognized: a round handmade cooking pot and a decorated amphoriskos.[432] The Assyrian presence and rule in Stratum I is attested by the residence of the local governer in Area T1.[433]

Low Chronology. How does the low chronology fit to Dan? Both Finkelstein (1996) and Mazar (1997) refer to the two Philistine bichrome sherds, which were discovered inside a storage jar in Stratum V at Tel Dan.[434] These pieces of pottery make possible to synchronize stratum V at Tel Dan with the strata of the sites in which bichrome ware were discovered, like Megiddo VIB – A. Dothan, the excavator of the Philistine Tel Miqneh, Ekron, sees the bichrome sherds as a sign of the trade between the northern area and the Philistine coast.[435] If the low chronology is followed, Stratum V should be lowered to the second half of the eleventh century or to the beginning of the 10th century. This stratum already represents the appearance of an organized village at Tel Dan, and also displays features of incipient urbanization. The beginning of the following stratum IVB would be pushed to the second half of the 10th century and Stratum IVA to the first half of the 9th century. Stratum III would then represent the late 9th – early 8th century BCE and Stratum II the 8th century BCE until its destruction around 732 by the Assyrians.

Because no absolute anchors are available, the exact dates cannot be given to Strata V – III at Tel Dan. The low chronology would better fit to the dates of urbanism (11th century BCE) and the emergence of the monumental buildings in Syria (9th century BCE) as shown by Finkelstein (1999). Thus, the low chronology would provide the 11th – 10th century date BCE to the beginning of the revival of the urban culture at Tel Dan (Strata V and IVB). Similary, the appearance of monumental architecture at Tel Dan in Stratum IVA

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[429] Thareani 2016a, 185.
[430] Thareani 2016a, 185.
[431431] See examples in Thareani 2016a, 176–182.
[432] Thareani 2016a, 183.
[433] See Thareani 2016b, 254–283.
[434] See Biran 1994, 141,143; Dothan 1982 296.
[435] Dothan 1982 296.

and III would fit to the dates of Syria. As the monumental buildings have their prototypes in the Late Bronze culture of northern Syria (for example, the city gate at Carchemish[436]), it is not probable that these elements would have emerged in the Iron Age cities of northern Israel before than they first appeared in the core regions of Syria. The 9th century date for Stratum IVA at Dan would also fit because the ashlar masonry technique, red-slipped pottery, and Samarian ware already appear in this Stratum. Consequently, Strata III and II would be dated to the second half of the 9th century until 732 BCE. Hence, the low chronology is a potential alternative to the high chronology.

2.6. Summary

Tel Dan was a significant city during the Iron Age II at least from Stratum III to Stratum I (mid-9th – 7th centuries BCE / High chronology; 8th – 7th / Low chronology) but probably already in Stratum IVA, when the cultic enclosure was established. Destruction layers were found between Strata IVA / III and II / I while there was a continuity without traces of destructions in Strata III – II. The stratigraphy is dense and, therefore, several sub-strata (IIIB, IIIA) or phases (three phases within Stratum I) were distinguished. The destruction of Stratum II was caused by the Assyrians. The city was revived soon and, thus, Stratum I represents the city under the Assyrian Empire (late 7th – 7th centuries BCE).

Important remains of the Iron Age II are the fortification and gate complex at the southern foot of the *tell* in Areas A and AB (Strata III – II), and the cultic enclosure in the north-western corner of the *tell* near the springs in Area T (Strata IVA – I and Hellenistic period). The gate complex consisted of the outer and main gate attached to the fortification which was in part build on the MBII earthen rampart that also formed a defence to the Iron Age cities. Within these gates, there was an inner piazza in which a cultic space was found, probably representing a gate cult. A paved road from the gates led up to the city through the upper gate, which was constructed on the top the MB rampart during Stratum II. After the destruction of Stratum II, the city wall was not rebuilt but the Assyrian city in Stratum I remained unfortified.

The dense stratigraphy in the cultic enclosure indicate that there was a long cultic tradition of hundreds of years at the site without significant gaps. The layout of the

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[436] Woolley 1921, plate 3.

enclosure kept quite similar from Stratum III to the end of Stratum I. Hence, the Assyrian conquest of the site did not destroy or caused any essential changes in the cultic site. However, according to the present excavators, it is unsure whether the cultic place was in use during the Assyrian period.[437] It was only during the Hellenistic period that new enclosure walls were built. While Areas T, A, and AB were mainly covered by public buildings and piazzas, Area M in the center of the city contained the domestic remains, particularly in Stratum I. The other areas also revealed finds from the Iron Age II strata but the remains are scattered because of the limited space of excavations.

Very little material was found from the late Persian or early Hellenistic periods. The late Hellenistic remains were uncovered in Area T, which indicates that the site was in active use during the 3rd – 2nd centuries BCE. The activity at the site is also confirmed by the find of a votive stela with a Greek-Aramaic inscription (see chapter 3.3). The cultic site continued in use until the end of the Hellenistic period.

The material culture of the Iron Age illustrates the multicultural background of the inhabitants of Tel Dan. It is not possible to discern any specific "Aramean material culture"; rather, it is probable that the inhabitants of Tel Dan represented people of different ethnic origins throughout the Iron Age. Furthermore, Tel Dan was an important regional center in the Huleh Valley.

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[437] Personal communication with David Ilan on 10th, January, 2017.

3. Inscriptions from Tel Dan

3.1. Iron Age Inscriptions on Vessels

Eight Iron Age inscriptions have been found at Tel Dan, including the Aramaic stela inscription (discussed below) and several short inscriptions on vessels. Three, or possibly five, of the eight vessel inscriptions consist of the preposition -לְ and a personal name, four of them likely in Hebrew. Six of them had been inscribed on the handles or shoulders of the jars, one on the body sherd, and one on the base of the bowl. Most likely the personal name expresses the owner of the vessel expressed by the preposition -לְ.

Four of the inscriptions were from seal impressions on the jar-handles. They were found in Stratum II, in four different Areas (AB, B, M, T). Three of the impressions had the inscription לעמדיו (*l'mdyw,* possibly read as *le'immadyaw*, belonging to 'Immadyaw).[438] One of them was found in Area T among the pottery on the floor of the house associated with Stratum II (L9024, squares R-S/18).[439] Another is from Area M. It was found in the earth layer on the pavement of Stratum II.[440] The third seal impression of this type was from Area B. Its letters, from the middle of a word, are unreadable. However, the similarities to the two impressions reading לעמדיו are so striking that the damaged seal most probably belongs to the same group.[441]

Near the upper gate, in Area AB, the fourth stamped jar handle was found in the destruction layer of Stratum II. This seal impression had only a personal name זכריו (*zkryw,* probably read as *Zakaryaw*). Biran dated its Hebrew script to the mid-8th century BCE,[442] but it is notable that dates based on epigraphy and paleography are not always accurate. The same script can just as well be dated to the 7th or 6th century BCE. I find the archaeological context more indicative than the dating of the script by itself. However, the seal may originate from an earlier stratum. A similar seal impression has also been found at Tell et-Tell (Bethsaida). Unfortunately, it has not been published.[443]

Three inscriptions were found in the context of Stratum I, which represents the Assyrian period at Tel Dan. The letters לאמץ (*l'mṣ,* probably read as le'amoṣ, belonging to

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[438] See Avigad & Sass, 1997, 255.

[439] Biran 1987-1988, 47; 1994, 199–201; 1996a, 47. עמדיו (Yahweh with me) is known in the Hebrew Bible in the form עמנו אל (God with us), e.g. Jes 7:14, (8:8).

[440] Photograph in Avigad & Sass, 1997, 255; See also Biran 1995, 9; 1996, 32.

[441] Biran 1994, 201. This seal impression was found in 1974, but it was only published in Biran 1988 after the discovery of the לעמדיו-seal impression in Area T in 1986. See the photograph Biran 1994, 258, Ill. 213. Note the damaged letters, and compare the impression from Areas T and M in Avigad & Sass 1997, 255.

[442] Biran 1996a, 26; 1994, 255, 258 Ill. 213. זכריה (Zakaryaw) appears in 2 Kgs 14:29; 15,8 as the name of King Jeroboam's son.

[443] Avigad & Sass, 1997, 246.

'Amoṣ") were inscribed on a body sherd found with more than 300 juglets in the remains of the house on top of the main gate (Area A).[444] An inscription לבעלפלט (*l^eb 'lplṭ*, belonging to Baʿal Plṭ, reading of plṭ is unknown[445]) was found in the ruins of a large building of Stratum I in Area H. It was inscribed on the shoulder of the jar.[446] Another sherd with only two letters (לט) came from a 7th century BCE context which Biran interprets as a "residential quarter" near the springs in Area T1. These two letters seem to form the two last letters of the word *b 'lplṭ*.[447]

Additionally, the broken base of a bowl with an Aramaic inscription was found in a trench before Biran's excavation project started. Its find place is undefined but, according to Avigad, the base was found together with pottery sherds of the 9th–8th centuries BCE. Five very legible letters were incised on the base after firing. A piece of the base was missing between the third and fourth letter, leaving space for one more letter. The surviving letters form the word לטב [ ]יא which Avigad completes with a letter ח interpreting the text as "belonging to the butchers" (לטב[ח]יא).[448]

Avigad finds a parallel from ʿEin Gev where an Aramaic inscription לשקיא ("belonging to the cupbearer") was found. It was inscribed on the shoulder of the jar. This jar was found in a room amongst a large amount of pottery, including cult objects. The excavators of ʿEin Gev assigned the room with the pottery to Stratum III, which they dated to the ninth century BCE. They also gave quite an exact date for the inscription on the basis of its script: the mid-9th century BCE. According to them, the forms of the letters resemble the scripts of the Mesha stela and the inscription of Bar-Hadad.[449] However, dating of the inscription by its script or language is highly complicated, and no consensus has been arrived at (see discussion on the Tel Dan inscription below). If the bowl inscription from Tel Dan indeed comes from a ninth century context, it would be the oldest

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[444] Biran 1974a, 50; 1994, 255, 260 Ill.215; 1996a, 10. The personal name אמוץ ('Amoṣ) occurs in Jes 1:1 as a name of the prophet Isaiah's father.

[445] Biran suggests reading "pelet" but this vocalization reflects late Hebrew and, therefore, this reading is not likely for 8th – 7th century BCE Hebrew or Phoenician.

[446] Biran 1974a, 50–51; 1994, 262–268, Ill.218; 1996, 29. Biran assumed that the inscription was written in Phoenician script and language. This view was further evidenced by the material of Stratum I. It included several vessel types which are typical in Phoenicia and the coastal area (Biran 1994, 261).

[447] The letter "ט" is clearly the final letter of the word. This is evidenced by the space after "ט" and, the sherd is broken just right to the letter -ל. Thus, it possibly had letters before "לט" but the sherd with the assumed beginning of the word is missing. Biran 1974a, 50–51; 1994, 262, 264. See Ill. 218; 1996a, 29, 50.

[448] Avigad 1968, 42–43.

[449] Avigad 1968, 42–43; Mazar, B. et al. 1964, 27–29. Avigad states that the word טבחיא (in plural) appears only once in the Hebrew Bible (Dan 2:14). They have been understood as bodyguards, whose tasks might also have included slaughtering, cooking and serving food. In the Hebrew form (טבח, טבחים) the word occurs in Gen 37:36; 39:1; 40:3; 41:10,12 and 2 Kgs 25: 8–20, Jer 39:9–52:30.

inscription found at the mound. However, no conclusions can be drawn, because the find is from an unstratified context and the pottery is not indicative enough for exact dating.

In sum, eight short inscriptions from the Iron Age have been found at Tel Dan. Four of them are seal impressions; the other four were inscribed on vessels. Six of them were found in stratified contexts. The inscriptions are shown in table 3. The evaluation of the significance of the finds from the point of view of this study is included in chapter 3.4.

Stratum Area	Inscription on vessel	Item	Find context
I A	לאמץ	Body sherd	Room (7th – 6th cent.) with over 300 juglets (L4). Stratum I.
I H	לבעלפלט	Shoulder, amphora	Ruins of large building. (7th – 6th cent.). Stratum I.
I T1	לט	Body sherd	Residential quarter (7th - 6th cent.). Stratum I.
II T	לעמדיו	Seal impression Handle, jar	On floor, house (8th cent.), within pottery (Room 9024, no. 30655). Stratum II.
II M	לעמדיו	Seal impression, Handle, jar	In earth layer on the pavement (L8321, no. 21175/1). Stratum II.
II AB	זכריו	Seal impression Handle, jar	Destruction debris (8th cent.). (L7129, no. 23677/1). Stratum II.
? B	Not readable, similar to לעמדיו–seals	Seal impression, Handle, jar	?
?	לטב] יא	Bowl, base	Trench, within pottery sherds (9th – 8th century).

Table 3. Iron Age inscriptions on vessels, Strata II and I at Tel Dan.

3.2. Tel Dan Stela

The so-called Tel Dan stela is one of the rare examples of monumental inscriptions found in Israel-Palestine. It was written in a lapidary style.[450] Scholarly opinion has generally regarded it as an authentic[451] Ancient Aramaic[452] inscription. The fragments of the stela were published soon after they were found (1993/ 1994) by Avraham Biran and Josef Naveh. They estimated that the whole stela – made of local basalt stone – was originally

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[450] Athas (2003, 73) mentions parallels such as the stelae of Melqart, Mesha, and Zakkur. These inscriptions are also referred to by Halpern 1994, 64–68.

[451] Only few scholars have doubted the genuineness of the inscription. Fred H. Cryer, later followed by T.L. Thompson and N. P. Lemche, questioned the genuineness of the inscription after he had written four articles on the inscription during1994–1996. His claims of the forgery were presented in a postgraduate seminar in Copenhagen but not published. See Athas 2003, 70–72 who proves Cryer's claims incorrect.

[452] All the authors referred to here use the term "Old Aramaic". It should, however, be replaced by the term "Ancient Aramaic" which better fits to the context of the Iron Age. "Old Aramaic" rather refers to the language of the Persian period. Biran and Naveh 1993; Cryer 1994, 9; Schniedewind 1996, 81; Athas 2003, 245. See also Halpern 1994, 64; Rendsburg 1995, 22, 25; Muraoka 1995, 19–21.

around one meter high and 50 cm wide.[453] The inscription was intensively discussed and disputed in the mid-1990s.[454] The most discussed topic was the interpretation of the word(s) ביתדוד (*bytdwd*, "the house of David"). The question of who wrote the stela and to whom the inscription refers also raised a lively discussion.

3.2.1. The Archaeological Context

Three fragments of the stela were found scattered in Area A, out of their original context. The main fragment (labeled as Fragment A) was found in secondary use in the 8th century BCE wall, which bordered the large piazza (5106) outside the outer gate in Area A. The

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[453] Biran and Naveh 1993, 84; 1994, 276–277. Athas calculated that the original height of the stela could be approximately 110 cm or a bit more, with a maximum width of 45 cm. He supposes that the first surviving lines of the inscription are indeed from the very beginning of the inscription, because the author's father (אבי, "my father") is mentioned already in the second line of the fragment. It was usual to refer to a father at the beginning of such an inscription. Athas 2003, 31.

[454] The inscription was published by Biran, A. and Naveh, J. (1993) "An Aramaic Stele Fragment from Tel Dan." IEJ 43, 81–98; Biran (1994) "Postscript – The Aramaic Stele from Tel Dan." *Biblical Dan*, 275–278, Jerusalem: IES, Hebrew Union College; Biran, A. and Naveh, J. (1995) "The Tel Dan Inscription: A New Fragment." IEJ 45, 1–18. The first thorough research was published by Athas, G. (2003) *The Tel Dan Inscription. A reappraisal and a New Interpretation*. JSOTSuppl.360, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press. The inscription is also dealt with in two other monographs referred in this dissertation: Ghandous, Hadi (2013) *The Elisha–Hazael Paradigm and the Kingdom of Israel*. Durham: Acumen, and Hafþórsson, Sigurður (2006) *A Passing Power. An Examination of the sources for the History of Aram-Damascus in the Second half of the Ningth Century B.C.* Coniectanea Biblica. Old Testament Series 54. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International. The importance of the inscription is demonstrated by a vast amount of the published articles.See discussion: Halpern, B. (1994) "The Stela from Dan: Epigraphic and Historical Considerations." BASOR 296, 63–80; Lemche, N.P. and Thompson, T.L. (1994) "Did Biran Kill David? The Bible in the Light of Archaeology." JSOT 64, 3–22; Davies, Ph. R. (1994) "'House of David' Build on Sand. The Sins of Biblical Maximizers." BAR 20/4, 54–55; Cryer, F.H. (1994) "On the Recently-Discovered 'House of David' Inscription." SJOT 8, 3–19; Uehlinger, Christoph (1994) "Eine antropomorphe Kultstatue des Gottes von Dan." BN 72, 85–100. Cryer F.H. (1995) "A 'Betdaw' Miscellany: Dwd, Dwd'or Dwdh?" SJOT 9, 52–58; Thompson, T.L. (1995) "'House of David': An Eponymic Referent to Yahweh as Godfather." SJOT 9, 59–74. Schniedewind, W.M. (1996) "Tel Dan stela: New Light on Aramaic and Jehu's revolt." BASOR 302, 75–90; Särkiö, P. (1996) "Daavidin huone, Dôd-jumalan temppeli vai paikannimi?" TAik. 101, 46–57. Lemaire, A. (1998) "The Tel DanStela as a Piece of Royal Historiography." JSOT 81, 3-14; Noll, K.L. (1998) "The God Who is Among the Danites." JSOT 80, 3–23; Kottsieper, Ingo (1998) "Die Inschrift vom Tell Dan und die politischen Beziehungen zwischen Aram-Damaskus und Israel in der 1. Hälfte des 1. Jahrtausends vor Christus." *'Und Mose schrieb dieses Lied auf.' Studien zum Alten Testament und zum Alten Orient. Festschrift für Oswald Loretz.* Dietrich & Kottsieper (eds.). Münster: Ugarit-Verlag. Wesselius, J-W (1999) "The first Royal Inscription from ancient Israel. The Tel Dan Inscription reconsidered." SJOT 13, 163–186. Becking, B. (1999) "Did Jehu Write the Tel Dan Inscription?" SJOT 13, 187–201; Schniedewind, W.M. (2001) "A Possible Reconstruction of the Name of Haza'el's Father in the Tel Dan Inscription." IEJ 51/1, 88–91; Wesselius, J-W (2001) "The Road to Jezreel. Primary History and the Tel Dan Inscription." SJOT 15, 83–103; Galil G. (2001) "A re-arrangement of the Fragments of the Tel Dan Inscription and the Relations between Israel and Aram." PEQ 133, 16–21; Mittmann, S. (2002) "Zwei 'Rätsel' der Mēšaʿ-Inschrift mit einem Beitrag zur aramäischen Steleninschrift von Dan (Tel el-Qāḍi)." ZDPV 118, 33–65; Särkiö (2006) Kuningasajalta. Kirjoituksia Salomosta ja rautakauden piirtokirjoituk-sista. SESJ 90, Helsinki: Suomen eksegeettinen Seura, 116–138. Staszak, Martin (2009), "Zu einer Lesart und dem historischen Hintergrund des Fragments B der Stele von Tel Dan." BN 142, 67–77.

fragment had been used as a building stone in the southern end of the piazza's eastern wall (W5018, Square P3), near the southern gate (see plan of the find spots in fig. 18).[455] Two small fragments (labeled as Fragments B1 and B2) were found further north: Fragment B1 was located about 9 meters north of Fragment A in the destruction debris of Stratum II, about 80 cm above the pavement 5106 of the piazza (Square P5); fragment B2 was uncovered close to the city wall W38, used as building material in pavement 5201 (Square Q7).[456]

As Fragment B1 was found within the destruction debris which covered wall W5018 and pavement 5201, the find context of Fragment B1 is later than those of Fragments A (W5018) and B2 (#5201). Fragments A and B2 were reused during the building process of Stratum II, while the reuse of Fragment B1 remains unknown. However, the find contexts of all three fragments can safely be assigned to Stratum II (the 8th century BCE). Hence, Stratum II (the second and third quarter of the 8th century BCE, according to Biran)[457] is without any doubt the period of the secondary (or tertiary) use of the fragments.

My conclusions regarding the stratigraphical contexts of Fragments A and B2 are based on Biran's report (1999) and plan (2002, 12): wall W5018 was partly built on top of the western part of the ḥuṣṣot (Stage A) that was attributed to the early phase of Stratum II.[458] By combining the results of Biran's reports (1999 and 2002), the following stratigraphical sequence of the contemporary building phases relevant to the find spots can be constructed:

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[455] In the earliest reports (Biran and Naveh 1993, Biran 1994, 274–278) the find spot was not exactly described, and the wall number not published. Biran and Naveh (1993) gave contradictory information about the location and the context of the main fragment (Fragment A): on page 81 they said that the fragment was found in the wall, but on page 98 that it was found in the pavement next to the wall. In consequence, Biran and Naveh were criticized, and misleading conclusions about the find context have been made by many scholars, e.g. Halpern 1994, 68; Cryer 1994, 4–5; Lemche and Thompson 1994, 8; Thompson 1995, 60–61; Athas (2003, 7, fig. 2.2.) and Hafþórsson 2006, 50–51 give the wrong wall number (W5073), probably following Biran's early interpretation that the wall in question was the southern continuation of the western wall (W5073) of the ḥuṣṣot (Stage A). The second volume of the final excavation report (Biran et. al. *Tel Dan II*, 2002, 12, Fig. 1.18.) illustrates the change in Biran's stratigraphical interpretation: the plan clearly shows that Fragment A was found in the southern end of W5018. According to the plan, wall W5073 was already out of use. Wall W5018 had a slightly different orientation, and it superimposed wall W5073 in its northern part. Hence, wall W5018 along with the find context of Fragment A represents a later phase of Stratum II than wall W5073, which functioned as the western wall of the ḥuṣṣot during its Stages A and B (Stratum III – early Stratum II).
[456] See the find spots in plan Biran 2002, 12, fig. 1.18. The height of Fragment A is 32 cm and the maximum width 22 cm. Fragment B1 was about 20 cm high and 1,4 cm wide; it included six lines and traces about 12-13 words. The maximum height of Fragment B2 is 10 cm and width 9 cm. Biran and Naveh 1993, 81–84 (Fragment A); 1995, 2–4.
[457] Biran 1994, 11.
[458] Biran 1999, 49–50; 2002, 12, fig. 1.18., 1.24., 1.25., 1.33.

Stratum	Century BCE
Destruction debris of Stratum II (Frag. B1)	c. 732
Late Stratum II	
W5018 (Frag. A) Pavement 5201 (Frag. B2)	mid-8th
Stratum III – early Stratum II:	
Huṣṣot Stage A: W5073 Pavement 5301	c. 800 – mid-8th
Stage B: W5073	mid/late 9th – c. 800
Stage C: W5073S	early/mid 9th – mid/late 9th
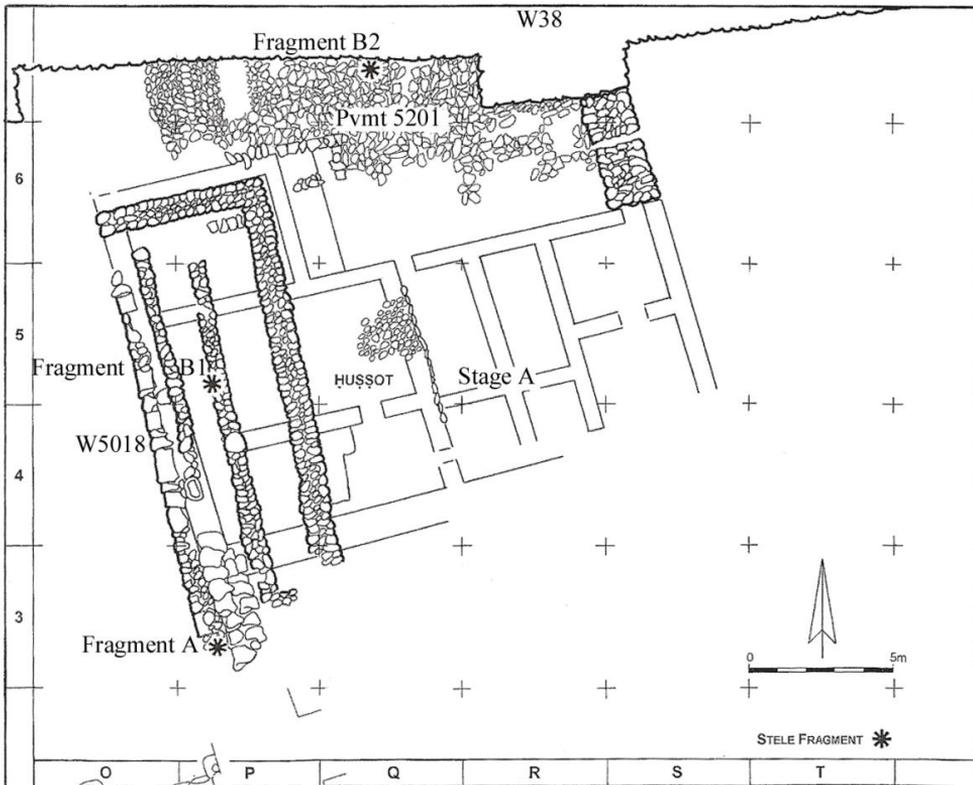
Figure 18. Find spots of the fragments of the Tel Dan stela (Biran et al. 2002, 12).

Absolute dates are based on the assumption that Stratum II was destroyed by Tiglath-Pileser III around 732 BCE. The time of the construction of W5018 and pavement 5201, that is, the secondary (tertiary or more) use of the stela fragments (A, B2), is counted

backwards from this date. It is presupposed that the construction of these structures cannot much predate the mid-8th century BCE. Otherwise the lifespan of the last phase of the *ḥuṣṣot* (Stage A) would be very short. I would, therefore, suggest that the (last) reuse of Fragments A and B2 should not be dated later than the mid-8th century BCE.

Another question is when the stela was inscribed. Where and how long was it on display? Most probably it had stood somewhere in the gate area, which was a logical place for such a stela. This is also supported by the presence of the several groups of standing stones at the gate, and the stela finds in Bethsaida (see chapter 5.2.). According to Athas, the stela had been at display only a short time, and after it was broken the fragments were soon embedded into the constructions as building stones. He believed this due to the good condition of the stela fragments; because of this, he supposed that the stela and its fragments could not have been long exposed to the weather.[459] The problem is that we do not know whether it stood without protection from the weather, or under a roofed area. However, I still find it probable that a stela boasting about a victory of a certain king had not been on display during the reigns of several successive rulers. Because wall W5018 and pavement 5201 were likely constructed during the late phase of Stratum II (middle of the 8th century BCE), the lifespan of the stela can be assigned to late Stratum III or early Stratum II (late 9th – early 8th century BCE) at the earliest. On the other hand, it is possible that the fragments of the stela were reused several times.[460] It would explain why only three fragments were found. In this case, the stela might have been on display some time earlier.

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[459] Athas 2003, 13, 72-73. Similarly Cryer 1994, 5.
[460] From the purely archaeological point of view, Halpern (1994, 68–69) gives the widest possible time span for the display of the stela, from 900 to 770 BCE. For its secondary use, he gives the years 850 – 750 BCE. The early date (900/850 BCE) is, however, based on insufficient archaeological information, and is grounded on Biran's and Naveh's early reports (1993,1995), which also mistakenly led him to place the fragment in the "inner gate structure". Based on the textual evidence, Halpern (p.74), however, suggests that Hazael's son Ben (Bar) Hadad II wrote and set up the stela in the late ninth century BCE. Thus, its breakage and reuse of the fragments would be dated some time later, to the very late 9th or early 8th century BCE, indicating a lifespan of 810-796 BCE. Compare Biran and Naveh (1993, 85 – 86), who gave the last possible date for the secondary use as sometime prior to the destruction in 733/732 BCE, but they do not define the last possible date for the establishment of the stela. On the contrary, they gave quite an early date (the mid-9th century BCE) for it. They argued for this date based on the latest pottery found *under* or *in* the pavement on which wall W5018 with the stela fragment had been built. The pottery *under* the wall is not, however, evidence for the early date.

3.2.2. Transcription and Translation of the Inscription

Fragments B1 and B2 apparently fit together, forming fragment B. Scholarly opinion seems united in the belief that Fragments A and B belong to the same stela inscription.[461] However, a consensus has not been reached on the relation of Fragment B to Fragment A. Although many scholars agree with the reconstruction of Biran and Naveh (1995) to read fragments A and B side by side[462], alternative arrangements of the fragments have been proposed.[463] In my view, Biran's and Naveh's reconstruction is problematic, because the space at the back of the stela, on which the fragments were attached and glued together, is very small.[464] The argumentation of the join of the fragments is also unconvincing, as noticed by Hafþórsson; it was primarily based on the reading of the text, and only secondarily on finding the physical join.[465] They also completed the text to rather a great degree. I prefer the minimalist way, to keep the fragments separate and not to read too much from the inscription. Therefore, I will present the reconstruction of Athas (2003) first, and then the interpretations of Biran and Naveh (1995) and Ghantous (2013). The words / letters and completions which are similar in these three versions are underlined.

Athas (2003): Fragment A

[ׁ.....................[תשר·עַ]ל.................]	A1
[ׁ.....................[ובח]ס[ד]·יַ·אבי·יסק]ׁ	A2
[לכב·א]....................[וישכב·אבי·יהך·אַל]	A3
[ׁ....................ראל·קדם·בארק·אלבי]תאל	A4
[יום]......................[אנה·ויהך·הדד·קדמי·]	A5
[אלפי·ר]..................[ו]·[בַ]ד·מלכי·ואקתל·יַ	A6
[יהואחז·]....................[פרש·אלפי·ואל·כב]	A7
[מל]........................הַ[תה]·וקתל·ישראל·מלך	A8
[א·י].......................[שם·ואש·דוד·ביתד·ר]	A9
[ל·הם·ארק·ית]....................[]	A10
[מ·יהואש].......................?[ולה·אחרן]	A11
[שמת·]....................ראל]·ישׁ·על·לך	A12
[שמרן·ל[עַל·מצר]....................[]	A13

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[461] Differently, Becking 1996, 1999, Cryer 1995 and Thompson 1995 state that fragments A and B do not belong to the same stela.
[462] See Biran and Naveh 1995.
[463] For example, Galil (2001) places Fragment B above Fragment A. Athas (2003) places it below Fragment A. Ghantous (2013) leaves the placement open, but deals with the both fragments separately.
[464] Thus also Ghantous 2013, 37.
[465] See Hafþórsson 2006, 52–53.

A1 [................] you will rule ov[er]..]

A2 [and because of the p]iou[s act]s of my father, may [?]go up............]

A3 and my father will repose. May he go to [............................at every]

A4 ancient [h]earth on ground of El-Bay[tel.........................am]

A5 I, so Hadad would go before me [..............................the day-]

A6 -s of my reign, and I would slay a kin[g] and [.......thousands of cha-]

A7 -riots and thousands of horsemen [...................................]

A8 the king of Israel, and [I] killed [him.........................kin-]

A9 -g of Bayt-Dawid. And [the] name of [...............................]

A10 their land to [..]

A11 another and to [.......................................Jehoash r-]

A12 -eigned over Is[rael.................................I laid]

A13 siege to [Samaria.................................]

Athas (2003): Fragment B

Hebrew		English
[....................·וגזר·]........................]	B1	[.............] and [?] cut [....................................]
[.............?[בה]תלחמה·בא]..................]	B2	[.......in] his [f]ighting against A[?....................]
[.............ה·ויעל·מלכי[·הדד].............]	B3	[.......]?.But my king, [Hadad,]would come [....]
[.................?[המלך·הדד·א]יתי.........]	B4	[.........] Hadad made m[e] king [.....................]
[.......מ[אפק·מן·שבע[·מלכן].......]	B5	[.......b]raver than seven [kings.........................]
[.................ש[ען·אסרי·א]................]	B6	[...........]ty captured m[en...............................]
[.................[רם·בר·].....................]	B7	[...........?]ram son of [....................................]
[.............אמצ[יהו·בר[·יואש...............]	B8	[..........Amaz]iah son of [Joash.......................]

Translation of Biran and Naveh (1995)

Fragment A   **Fragment B**

1 [   ] and cut […   ]

2 [   ]my father went up [against him when   ]he fought at [   ]

3 And my father lay down, he went to his [ancestors]. And entered the king of I[s]

4 rael previously in my father's land.[And   ] Hadad made m[e] king.[   ]

5 And Hadad went in front of me,   [and]   I departed from [the] seven [   ]

6 s of my kingdom, and I slew [seve]nty kin[gs], who harnessed thou[sands of cha-]

7 riots and thousands of horsemen (/horses). [I killed Jeho]ram son of [Ahab   ]

8 king of Israel, and [I] killed [Ahaz]iahu son of [Jehoram kin-]

9 g of the house of David. And I set [their towns into ruins and turned   ]

10   their land into [desolation   ]

11   other [and Jehu ru-]

12   led over Is[rael   and I laid]

13   siege upon [   ]

Translation of Ghantous (2013)

A1

A2   ] my father went up [

A3   ] My father lay down; he went to [his ancestors

A4   the King of Is] rael had gone into my father's land [

A5   ] I/Me. And Hadad went in front of me [

A6   ] my becoming king, and I killed [two] of my kin[gs

A7   two thousand cha]riots and two thousands of horsemen[

A8   I killed] the king of Israel, and [I] killed [

A9   and overth]rew the House of David. I set [

A10   ]?? their land into [

A11   ] other(s) and ??[

A12   k]ing over Is[rael

A13   ] siege upon [

B1   ] and he cut [a treaty

B2   ] he united with him at A[feq/bel

B3   ]? the king marched against ?? [

B4   ] Hadad made king [

B5   ] I departed from the com[pany] of [

B6   power]ful harnessed two thou[sand of]

B7   Jo]ram son of [Ahab

B8   Ahaz]yahu son of [Jehoram

These examples show that the inscription leaves plenty of room for different interpretations. Although most of the letters are clear, no sentences can definitely be confirmed because the text is so fragmentary. However, it is clear that the author was a king (A6, B4), mentions his father (A–A3), and his god Hadad (A5, B4), and boasts of his army (A7) and his victories (A6) over the king of Israel (A8) and the House of David (A9).

3.2.3. By Whom Was the Stela Written and Why?

Because the fragments of the stela were found out of their original context, the date of the stela and its life-span on display can only roughly be estimated with the help of archaeology. However, the earliest possible period for its production can be assigned to Stratum III. Its derivation from Stratum IVA can be ruled out because of the massive

building operations at the gate area during Stratum III.[466] The reuse of Fragment A in wall W5018 and B2 in pavement 5201 defines the latest possible date for the display of the stela to the first half of the 8th century BCE (before mid-8th century). On the epigraphic and paleographic basis, both the 9th and the 8th century BCE (corresponding Strata III and II) would be possible.[467]

The historical situation, as well as the function of the stela, are open to discussion, because the text of the inscription does not provide direct hints as to the date of the stela; no names of the kings were preserved,[468] nor is the reference to the father of the writer (אבי) of any help. Nevertheless, the text refers to military conflicts, most probably between the Arameans and the Israelites, because the author, an Aramean king, claims that he killed the king of Israel מלך ישראל and beat (?) the House of David (?) (Fragment A lines 8–9). The proposed candidates for the author of the stela cover the period from the early 9th to the early 8th century BCE (e.g. Bar Hadad I, Hazael, Bar Hadad II, Jehu[469]).

The first half of the 9th century BCE was suggested by Biran and Naveh in their first publication of the inscription (Fragment A); they associated the inscription with Ben (Bar) Hadad I,[470] but this date and identification were refuted by other scholars.[471] As a response to the critique and the discoveries of Fragments B1 and B2, they postdated the inscription

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[466] Stratum IVA and a 10th century BCE date were suggested only by Rudolph Chapman, but his dating was based on insufficient data and incorrect stratigraphical conclusions regarding Area A. See Chapman 1993–1994, 23–29.

[467] See Halpern 1994, 64–68; Cryer 1994; Athas 2003. Athas states that the script could be placed any time "between the time of Kilamuwa Stela (c. 825 BCE) and that of the Bar Rakib Stela (c. 730 BCE)". He also concluded that the script "shows clear signs of a Syrian style". Athas 2003, 135. According to Cryer, the script includes "a variant of the Phoenician-influenced monumental script that was in use in Syria-Phoenicia from the 10th to 8th centuries." However, he concludes that due to some late features the 9th century BCE date is too early. Cryer 1994, 6, 12–13; Thompson (1995, 60–61) follows Cryer in proposing a date not earlier than the late 8th century BCE, but prefers the 7th century BCE. Otherwise Schniedewind (1996, 78), who gives the +/- 825 date BCE on the paleographic basis.

[468] E.g. Becking 1999, 201 leaves the question of the author unanswered. Biran and Naveh (1995) suggest that the king of Israel mentioned in line A8 can be identified with Joram. Although their reconstruction has been criticized for its over-completion of the gaps, many scholars agree with this identification. The arrangement of the fragments was also criticized by Cryer 1995a, 223–235, Thompson 1995a, 236–240, Galil 2001, 16–21, Athas 2003, 178–189.

[469] Wesselius (1999; 2001) argues that the Israelite king Jehu was the author of the stela. His argumentation is, however, very speculative, as shown by Becking. Becking (1999, 200–201) assigned Fragment A to an Aramaic king of the 8th century BCE, but does not try to identify him. Contrary to the majority of scholars, Becking regards Fragment B as a separate inscription from that of Fragment A.

[470] Biran and Naveh 1993, 86. The writers developed a scenario: Ben Hadad I captured Dan in 885 BCE (1 Kings 15:20). Later on, Dan was regained by Israel (presumably by Omri). In the early days of Ahab, it was occupied by the writer of the stela, but Ahab conquered it back from Ben Hadad II (Adad-idri) as described in 1 Kings 20:34. They found support for their theory in the pottery evidence "found beneath the stela fragment which is dated to the middle of the ninth century BCE." They assumed that Ahab broke the stela. However, the writers leave room for other possibilities as well.

[471] E.g. Halpern 1994, 69; Cryer 1994, 4–5; Lemche and Thompson 1994, 4 footnote 3, 7, 21; Athas 2003, 316. See also Thompson (1995, 59–61).

to the 840s BCE and attributed its writing to the Aramean King Hazael. This opinion has been supported by a number of scholars.[472] Those suggesting the end of the 9th or early 8th century date regard Bar Hadad II, the son of Hazael, as the most plausible alternative.[473] The Aramean king Hazael could be a potential candidate, because he was a usurper who manage to unite the small Aramean kingdoms and extend his power both into northern Syria and into the south, as far as "the House of David" and "Philistine" Gath. His power is also supported by the Assyrian records and biblical stories.[474] During the reign of Bar-Hadad II, the domination of the Arameans again diminished.[475]

Several proposals have been suggested for the function of the stela. According to the excavators, it was the memorial stela of a victorious Aramaic king (Haza'el) who conquered Tel Dan from Israelite domination.[476] Similarly, Cryer (1994) finds the stela a kind of memorial of "some victory or victories" or "commemorative inscription" but he does not attempt to specify its genre.[477] In contrast, Athas created a theory that it was inscribed by Bar Hadad II for the purpose of propaganda in order to attempt to keep control over the areas he was losing. Athas saw the inscription as part of Bar Hadad II's war of propaganda after he had lost control over the southern roads of his territory. According to him, the inscription "highlights the demise of Aram-Damascus as the dominant power of the Levant and the subsequent rise of Israel."[478]

Baruch Halpern has also presented similar ideas; he calls the stela "a propagandistic monument" or "an emergency display inscription" which was intended by Bar Hadad II to maintain the remains of his power and "the loyalty of the local literati" in his desperate political situation.[479] Without any doubt, the stela had a political function. However, it is difficult to say if its creation preceded military conquests or changes in rule. It is possible, but not necessary, as shown by Athas. Furthermore, Simon B. Parker describes the Tel Dan inscription as a "campaign narrative", which has similar features to other stories of this

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[472] Biran and Naveh 1995, 8–9, 17–18. Similarly Margalit 1994, 317–320; Schniedewind 1996, 75, 85 and Na'aman 2000,93, 98–100. Schniedewind and Zuckerman 2001, 88–91 claim that they could construct the name of Haza'el's father "ב]רקאל[" in the stela by the help of the modern computer techniques. This was found by them in line 2 before the word "אבי".

[473] Halpern 1994, 74; Athas 2003, 263–265. Hafþórsson finds both Hazael and Bar Hadad II to be possible candidates, but he notes that both identifications include problems. Hafþórsson 2006, 64.

[474] Ghantous 2013, 45, 64.

[475] Athas 2003, 289–294; Ghantous 2013, 46. Martin Staszak (2009, 67–75) concludes that the beginning of the stela (Fragment A), which mentions "my father", was written by Bar Hadad II, but the end is by Hazael.

[476] Biran and Naveh 1995, 18: "The inscription was presumably a memorial stele describing Hazael's deeds." Similarly Schniedewind 1996, 85 who also regards it as propaganda "boasting of Hazael's victories on the northern border of Israel."

[477] Cryer 1994, 19.

[478] Athas 2003, 316. See also pages 289–294.

[479] Halpern 1994, 74.

category, such as the inscription of Mesha's stela: it refers to the previous conflicts, to the territory of the father and his death, boasts about achievements, and mentions the god who is behind the victories or defeats. In addition to the structure, these narratives share a common ideology. According to Parker, an oral tradition precedes the written document, which is usually inscribed in the courts as "royal stone monuments" alongside with the building projects. Thus, only a king who has a long reign and is powerful enough would be able to establish such stelae.[480]

3.2.4. "bytdwd" in Tel Dan Stela

The interpretation of the words "ך•ביתדוד" (k•bytdwd) in line 9 of Fragment A has been intensely disputed. The publishers[481] of the fragment understood the words as a reference to the biblical "house of David" and reconstructed the previous word as ך[מל] from which only the last letter *kaf* in the beginning of line 9 was preserved. They translated the words "the king of the house of David." The house of David was seen to denote the kingdom of Judah. Several scholars, following Biran and Naveh, concluded that the discovery also verified the historicity of David, his dynasty, and monarchy as described in the Hebrew Bible.[482] However, these identifications with the biblical accounts were too hasty. Reading and interpreting *bytdwd* (ביתדוד) is not as self-evident as Biran and Naveh presented it. Several questions and alternatives to understanding the text were raised.[483] Two observations also concern the orthography. In the Hebrew Bible *byt dwd* appear as two independent words, while in the Tel Dan inscription they were written together without the word-divider which was otherwise used in this inscription.[484] The use of *mater lectionis* was also discussed.[485] Its use in the early texts is not usual. From the point of view of my dissertation, the crucial question is, however, the meaning of *bytdwd*; what does it refer to?

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[480] Parker 1997,58–60.
[481] Biran and Naveh 1993.
[482] Biran and Naveh 1993 followed by Shanks 1994 and Lemaire 1994, 30–37; 1998, 4, 10; Ahituv 1993, 246–247; Kitchen 1997, 32–34. Kitchen also suggests that "highland of d-w-t" (Dawit or Dot) in the wall inscription of the Temple of Amun of Shishak I would refer to "highland/heights of David" (p.39–40). Hafþórsson 2006, 50, 59 identifies *Beth obDawid* with Judah, and maintains the traditional view that it was another political power alongside Israel against Aram-Damascus.
[483] For example, P.R. Davies (1994, 55) introduces different alternatives to understanding *bytdwd*. In the summary he writes: "I hope I have given some idea of the possibilities for a wide variety of meanings of *bytdwd* other than the House of David. It will not do simply to jump to the conclusion, uncertain at best, that the Dan inscription mentions the House of David."
[484] Athas 2003, 218.
[485] P.R. Davies 1994, 54.

Several scholars[486] have suggested that *dwd* should not be read as biblical Dāwid, but rather *Dôd*. Thompson claimed that it should be understood as an epithet for YHWH ("the house of DWD" by meaning "the house of YHWH"), thus resembling "El of Bethel" or "Shemesh of Beth Shemesh".[487] A parallel can be found in the Mesha inscription, in which the term *dwd* + suffix *h* also appears, and apparently refers to a certain god (YHWH?) or person in northern Israel.[488] *bytdwd* has also been read as *Beth Dôd,* referring to the house or temple of the god *Dôd,* which would be comparable to Ash*dod* or Beth*daud*.[489] K.L. Noll has even understood it as the god Hadad, whom he suggests was the patron god of Tel Dan. According to him, Tel Dan was under Aramean rule for most of Iron Age II.[490] The reading *dwd* as *Dôd* is, however, problematic, because the letter *waw* was quite surely read as a consonant in ancient Aramaic and Hebrew. The use of matres lectiones only became common in the later periods.

In addition to the discussion regarding the reading of *dwd*, there is still the problem of how *bytdwd* should be understood. Does it refer to the kingdom of Judah, or to another geographical place, building, or dynasty?[491] If the author intended to refer to the political entity south of the kingdom of Israel, why did he use the dynastic name *beth David* instead of Judah?[492] This is followed by another question: did *Judah* already exist as a known

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[486] P.R. Davies 1994, 54; Knauf et al. 1994, 60-69; Thompson 1995, 61,72.

[487] Thompson 1995, 61, 72.

[488] Ben Zvi 1994, 27–29. Ben Zvi supposed that the *dwd* in the Mesha inscription refers to YHWH as an epithet, or to a person, "most likely an important (northern) Israelite officer" (p. 27). Similarly, *dwd* in the Tel Dan stela can also be understood as referring to YHWH – as did Thompson 1995. However, Zvi also accepts the reading of "the house of David" as a plausible alternative, because this reading is well evidenced and supported by the Hebrew Bible.

[489] P.R. Davies 1994, 54. Knauf et al. (1994, 60–69) also read ביתדוד as *Beth Dôd* and interpreted it as a god of Tel Dan. Uehlinger and Schweiz (1994, 87–88, 96) do not attempt to explain the reading of *dwd* but they claim that the two fragments of a terracotta cult statue found in Area T (L2311, Stratum IVA) might represent it as the local god of Tel Dan. Otherwise Galil (2001, 16), who does not find any evidence for such a god as *dwd*. He says that the parallel appearance of *dwdh* in the Mesha Inscription is explained in that "it is directed to a ritual object and not to a god".

[490] Noll 1998, 19–23.

[491] See different interpretations in Galil 2001, 16.

[492] Biblical texts mostly mention Judah, not *beth David,* as a parallel to the kingdom of Israel. This is not regarded as a problem by Lemaire 1998, 10 and Noll 1998. Noll lists several verses in the books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles where *beth David* is referred to instead of Judah. See Noll 1998, 8 footnote 17. However, in most of these cases the text speaks of the dynasty (*beth*) of David in a rather theological sense. There is only one exception. In 1 Kgs 12:20 Jeroboam is made the king of *all Israel* (*kol-Jisra'el*) but *beth David* was followed by *ševeṭ Jehuda*. Here, *beth David* refers to a people, the tribe of Judah, separate from *all Israel*. It is difficult to see it as a political entity referring to the kingdom of Judah. The next verse (1 Kgs 12:21) has *beth Judah*: *kol-beth Judah* (all the house of Judah) and *ševeṭ Binjamin* was called together to fight against *beth Israel* in order to return the kingship to Rehabeam. Thus, *beth David* cannot easily be identified with the kingdom of Judah in the Hebrew Bible. On the other hand, the Assyrian records use *beth Omri* for kingdom of Israel. Is it possible that the Arameans called Judah *beth David* but Israel was called Israel, not *beth Omri* as the Assyrians did?

political power?[493] And if it existed, by what name did the Arameans of the early 8th century know it? Did they know it as *bytdwd*? These are crucial questions if the previous word is reconstructed [*ml*]*k* as suggested by many scholars.[494] It would give the reading: "the king of *the house of David*". If this is correct, the kings of Israel (line A8) and *bytdwd* (line A9) were seen as the enemies of the Aramaic king who is behind the stela.

However, the reconstruction of the [kin]g in line A9 has been criticized. It has neither biblical nor any other parallels in the other inscriptions of the ancient Near East; for example, there is no mention of "the *king* of *bīt Hûmrī*". The reconstruction of the word [*mele*]*k* in this context is possible, but not in any way evidenced. It can be any word ending with the letter *kaf*.[495] On the basis of the biblical texts and literature of the ancient Near East, we could expect "*mlk yhdh*" (king of Judah) in order to refer to the king of Judah and its kingdom, as occurs in the Arad ostracon 40 from around 600 BCE.[496] It would be the better parallel to "*mlk isr'l*" (king of Israel), which indeed appears in the Aramaic stela. However, it should be noticed that the biblical texts are later, and written by the Judahites, while the Tel Dan inscription was written in the late 9th – early 8th century BCE by an Aramean king.

My conclusion is that *bytdwd* (ביתדוד) should be interpreted as a toponym[497] which likely has its etymology in the dynasty of David.[498] Similarly, *bet ʿOmri* in the Assyrian inscriptions refers to the territory governed by the dynasty of ʿOmri, king of Israel. ביתדוד very strongly resembles the similarly composed toponyms such as בית אל (Bethel), בית לחם (Beth Lehem), בית שאן (Beth She'an), בית שמש (Beth Shemesh), and would refer to a considerably small geographical entity. The existence of Judah as a significant political power during the time when the stela was inscribed (the late 9th – early 8th century BCE) is rather unlikely (see chapter 1.4 and 5.5). In my opinion, Athas is right in his conclusion that *bytdwd* referred to Jerusalem and its surroundings.[499] Archaeological evidence shows that at this time the city existed and had expanded down to the slopes towards the valley of

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[493] Finkelstein 1999 show that still in the early 8th century Judah was a rather modest region. Thus also Herzog & Singer-Avitz 2004, Killebrew 2003 (about Jerusalem as a capital).

[494] Biran and Naveh 1995, 12–13; Kitchen 1997, 32–34, 1998, 4; Noll 1998, 9; Athas 2003, 193, 224–225. Athas, however, interprets ביתדוד as a toponym, not as a dynasty.

[495] Toponym is suggested by Davies P.R. 1994, 54; Knauf et all, 1994, 66; Cryer 1995, 52; Athas 2003, 224.

[496] See http://www.bible.ca/ostraca/bible-ostraca-ostracon-Arad40-letters-edomite-threat-send-troops-Gemariah-Nehemiah-Malchijah-Eshijah-Ramah-Negev-Tel-Ira-Kinah-Horvat-Uza-YHWH-597bc.jpg (visited 1st, February, 2016).

[497] Cryer 1994, 17–18; P.R. Davies 1994, 54; 1995, 52–57; Thompson 1995, 61; Athas 2003, 226.

[498] Athas 2003, 221–226, 271–281.

[499] Athas 2003, 221–226, 271–281.

Kidron, but the city did not reach its flourishing point before the late 8th century BCE. The remains of 10th century BCE Jerusalem are not numerous.[500]

Lemche and Thompson also regard ביתדוד as a toponym, but they first placed it in the north, near Tel Dan.[501] However, there is no evidence for this. The biblical tradition strongly points to the etymology of *byt dwd* in Judah. As a toponym referring to Jerusalem and its surroundings, *byt dwd* likely reflects the tradition of the biblical dynasty of David as a governor of Jerusalem. Thus, it also supports the biblical tradition of David's dynasty.

3.3. Greek – Aramaic/Hebrew Inscription[502]

3.3.1. Archaeological Context

A Greek–Hellenistic limestone stela was found in the cultic enclosure in Area T during the excavation season of 1976. The stela, 25,6 cm x 18,2 cm x 3,2 cm in size, was lying upside-down beneath a Hellenistic floor.[503] It was uncovered inside the inner enclosure of the "central altar" next to the steps (W7614), and 2,5 meters north of the southern wall of the inner enclosure (the wall is not numbered in the plan). On the southern side of the enclosure wall, a plastered basin (L2068) was uncovered on the Hellenistic floor.[504]

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[500] Archaeological evidence proves that during the MB II and late Iron Age (8th century BCE onwards) Jerusalem was a significant city and regional center, but in the late Bronze Age it faced a decline which continued through Iron Age I and II AB. Killebrew 2003, 329–345, particularly 344. Slightly otherwise, Steiner in response to Killebrew's article: on the basis of her restudy of Kathleen Kenyon's excavations in 1961–1967, she states that in the 10th or early 9th century BCE (traditional chronology) a small administrative center was constructed on top of the Ophel Hill. She dates the disputed massive stone structure to this time. However, she agrees that this fortified town was small compared to the large cities of the MB II and Iron Age IIC periods. Steiner 2003, 347–363.

[501] Lemche and Thompson 1994, 10; Thompson 1995, 61–62. However, Thompson (1995, 72) later says that *bytdwd* possibly refers to Jerusalem, but not to Judah.

[502] There are only a few publications of the stela. This chapter is mainly based on Biran's description of the stela and its find context in Biran 1994, 221–224 and Rochelle I. Altman's report (2000, Nov) in http://orion.mscc.huji.ac.il/symposiums/programs/Altman/Altman00.shtml (visited in 2016, February, 8th)

[503] Biran 1994, 221. The measurements are given differently in Biran 1976, 204: 25,50 cm x 15,50 cm.

[504] Biran 1994, 221; 1996, 41.
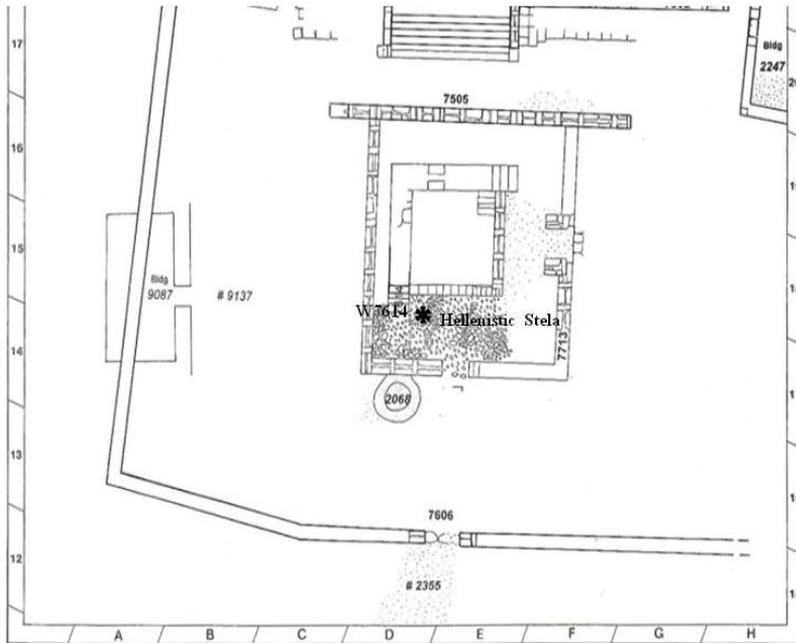
Figure 19. Find spot of the Hellenistic Stela (after Biran1994, 221; 1996, 37, 41).

3.3.2. The Inscription and Its Translation

An inscription of four lines was incised in the stela. Three lines were written in Greek. The Greek text is rather well preserved and readable, while the Aramaic/Hebrew text of the last line is rather damaged. Because there is no space between the Greek and Aramaic/Hebrew texts, and the Aramaic/Hebrew line is not a translation of the Greek text, the inscription is not bilingual.[505] According to Rochelle I. Altman, the stela inscription must have been an official or archival document, as only these kinds of documents were carved in stone; they had to be written on a permanent material that did not allow any later changes or insertions into the text. The inscription was written and incised by a local professional scribe and a stone carver,[506] according to the "standard block format ... using the Greco-Egyptian hierarchy of sizes" of legal documents. Altman states that the stela inscription is evidence of Ptolemaic rule of the site.[507] Ptolemaic coins were also found in the Hellenistic strata at Tel Dan, as reported in chapter 2.4.3.

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[505] Altman 2000, introduction.
[506] Altman (2000, point 8, note 3) assumes that there was a scribe who wrote the text and a stone carver who incised the writing onto the slab, thus, thus two professionals creating the stela inscription in teamwork.
[507] Altman 2000, points 1–3, 8, note 3.

The stela is a votive inscription, in which a person called Zoilos[508] offers a vow to the god of Dan. The last row, written in Aramaic/Hebrew, would probably have told what the vow was, but it has been intentionally damaged by a chisel.[509] The inscription can be translated as follows:

Line 1:   ΘΕΩΙ   to the god
Line 2: ΤΩΙΕΝΔΑΝΟΙΣ   [w]ho is in Dan
Line 3: [Ζ]ΩΙΛΟΣΕΥΧΗ   (vowed) (Z)oilos a vow.[510]
Line 4:   ??*n ndr l'*??   ... a vow to...

The Greek letters represent "a formal, authoritative monumental script" inscribed by a skillful and practiced scribe, while the Aramaic/Hebrew was written in cursive handwriting using Aramaic square letters. According to Altman, the stela with the Greek incised text is evidence of the mass production of votive offerings. A person who bought such an offering could fill in the name of the god in line 1 and his vow in the last line. She assumes that Zoilos wrote the last Aramaic/Hebrew line in ink, and a professional carver then incised it on the stela.[511]

3.3.3. The Function and Date of the Stela: What Was It Used For?

The votive stela inscription of Tel Dan resembles "legally binding covenants" in style and size, of a type used already in Sumer and again in the Greco-Egyptian world. The covenant of votive inscriptions was made between a person and a god. The stelae were probably set on the wall in order to be publicly displayed. The only way to invalidate such a document was to break the stela or damage its inscription. Altman supposed that the last row of this stela was purposefully destroyed in order to cancel the vow and the covenant.[512] The stela was dated to the late third – second centuries BCE on the basis of the style of the Greek script.[513] If this stela with a votive inscription is evidence of the mass production of such

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[508] Biran (1994, 221) notes that Zoilos (Zilas in Aramaic) was a common Greek personal name during the 4th–2nd centuries BCE.

[509] Biran 1994, 221, 223–224; Altman 2000, point 9.

[510] See Biran 1994, 223, Illustration 182. Biran suggests that the word ΔΑΝΟΙΣ can be read as Dan (masculine plural form for the name of the city): "to the god who is in Dan". The problem with this translation is that place names are usually feminine. Therefore, ΔΑΝΟΙΣ could also refer to the Danites, to the people of the site. This is an alternative translation given by Biran. Altman (2000, point 8) suggests Dan, because the name of the site was usually mentioned in Greek votive inscriptions.

[511] Altman 2000, points 6, 8.

[512] Altman 2000, points 1–4, 8–9.

[513] Biran 1994, 221.

documents, it indicates that Tel Dan was a cultic center with skillful and professional craftsmen during the late Hellenistic period.

3.4. Summary and Historical Value of the Inscriptions

The historical value of the short inscriptions on the vessels is quite modest, because of their small number and very short scripts. However, the inscriptions are evidence of literacy, and the appearance of Hebrew names at least during Stratum II at Tel Dan (the 8th century BCE). They also prove that both Hebrew and Aramaic were known, at least during Strata II and I. Except for a bowl inscription, the names seem to be private personal names. Some of them have close parallels with names which appear in the Hebrew Bible. The ending "-jaw" in the Hebrew names may refer to Yahvistic onomasticon. In addition, one or two Phoenician name(s) may reflect connections to the Phoenician coast. It is likely that the inhabitants of Tel Dan were of various cultural backgrounds.

The material culture shows northern features (chapter 2) which indicate Syrian influence. For example, monumental architecture and the ashlar masonry technique were adopted from Syria, not from Judah. Athas is of the opinion that until the early 8th century BCE there was "a distinct Aramaic-speaking culture" at Tel Dan.[514] This is evidenced by the Tel Dan stela and the לטב[ח]יא -inscription; the Aramaic speaking culture would have existed throughout the 9th century BCE. Athas associates the first building phase of Stratum III with Bar Hadad I. In my opinion, he is right in the matter of the cultural influence of Syria over Tel Dan. Instead of "replacing" one culture with another, I would better suggest the existence of a mixed cultural society (see chapters 2.5 and 2.6).

The Tel Dan stela is a remarkable historical and archaeological find. It is one of the rare examples of Iron Age monumental inscriptions found in Israel-Palestine. It does not verify history or historical events as much as was first expected, and it provides little evidence for any specific event known from the Hebrew Bible, but instead resembles the style of a campaign narrative. Because no kings are mentioned by name, there is room for variety of reconstructions. However, the stela inscription can be regarded as a piece of "hard" evidence illustrating the wars and conflicts between the Arameans and Israelites. The Tel Dan Inscription includes political propaganda in the boasting about the achievements of the king, the author of the stela. It is not primarily a victory stela of a

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[514] Athas 2003, 256.

specific event. The Tel Dan inscription is a piece of evidence for the Aramean domination of and Aramaic speaking community at Tel Dan, at least for most of the 9th (early 8th?) century BCE.

During the Hellenistic period (late 3rd–2nd centuries) Tel Dan was host to cultic activity; the cultic area was reconstructed and new architectural elements were built; for example, its enclosure walls were rebuilt. The Hellenistic Greek–Aramaic/Hebrew stela and Ptolemaic coins indicate the Ptolemaic dominance of the site. The stela represents the Greco-Egyptian style. It is also evidence of highly skilled craftsmanship at Tel Dan. The manufacture of the such a stela with inscription presupposes the presence of local professionally trained scribes and carvers. The inscription mentions "to the god who is in Dan", which confirms the identification of Tel Dan with the biblical Dan and also proves the worship of the local god of Dan.

4. Dan in the Hebrew Bible

In chapter 4, the occurrences of the city of Dan in the Hebrew Bible will be studied. Each passage in which Dan appears will be analyzed in order to examine the motives and intentions of the texts: why is Dan referred to? Why was Dan incorporated into the passage? What is the historical setting and the date of the text, and what did the writers know about the city of Dan? Before the closer study of the biblical texts (chapters 4.2 – 4.3), an overview of the appearances of the city in the biblical texts and the aspects of the critical study utilized in this thesis will be introduced (chapter 4.1).

4.1. Dan in the Biblical Texts

4.1.1. Occurrences of the City of Dan

The city of Dan is mentioned 21 times in the Hebrew Bible: Genesis (once), Joshua (once), Judges (twice), First Samuel (once), Second Samuel (5 times), First Kings (4 times), Second Kings (once), First Chronicles (once), Second Chronicles (twice), Jeremiah (twice), and Amos (once). These passages represent only a few stories: two descriptions of the conquest of the city of Dan by the tribe of Dan,[515] and the story of king Jeroboam setting up the golden bulls in Bethel and Dan.[516] The other occurrences are short references. Half of the them (9) are included in the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba"[517] or "from Beersheba to Dan"[518]. In addition, Dan appears in an Abraham story,[519] the census by king David,[520] the list of the cities attacked by the Aramaean king Ben Hadad (2),[521] the evaluation of king Jehu's rule,[522] and prophetic declarations in Jeremiah and Amos (3).[523]

Dan in Genesis. According to the biblical chronology, the first occurrence of the city of Dan is in Gen. 14:14, which depicts Abraham's wars. The verse reports how Abraham with his troops pursued his enemies to the north, as far as Dan and Hobah (v. 15), north of Damascus. This is the only mention of the city of Dan in the Pentateuch.

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[515] Josh 19:47–48; Jdg 18:27–31.
[516] 1 Kgs 12:25–33. Dan appears twice, in verses 29 and 30.
[517] Jdg 20:1; 1 Sam 3:20; 2 Sam 3:10; 17:11; 24:2, 15; 1 Kgs 5:5 (1 Kgs 4:25).
[518] 1Chr 21:2; 2 Chr 30:5.
[519] Gen 14:14.
[520] 2 Sam 24:6.
[521] 1 Kgs 15:20; 2 Chr 16:4.
[522] 2 Kgs 10:29.
[523] Jer 4:15; 8:16; Amos 8:14.

Dan in Joshua and Judges. Most of the occurrences are found in the books of Joshua – Kings, in which the location of Dan at the northern limits of the land of Israel is implied. In Joshua 19:47–48 and Judges 18:27–31, the tribe of Dan conquers a city that was called Leshem (Josh. 19:47) / Laish (Jugd. 18:28), but was then renamed Dan in honor of the ancestor of the tribe. The story of the stolen idol is involved in the occupation story in Judges 18: The Danites stole an idol from the shrine of the house of Micah on their way through Ephraim to Laish (Judg. 18:15–26). After the conquest of the city, the idol was set up in Dan where Jonatan and his descendants served as priests "until the time the land went into captivity" (Jdg 18:30).

Dan in the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" (Judges, Samuel-Kings, Chronicles). The city of Dan appears seven times in the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba", which describes the extent of the land from the north to the south. The phrase is found in the stories of the civil war between the tribes of Israel and Benjamin (Jdg 20:1), Samuel's call (1 Sam 3:20), David's rise (2 Sam. 3:10, 17:11), the census by David (2 Sam 24:2, 15), and the kingship of Solomon (1 Kgs 5:5). It also appears twice in the Chronicles in the form of "from Beersheba to Dan" (1 Chr 21:2, parallel to 2 Sam 24:2, and 2. Chr 30:5). Dan is also mentioned among the cities of the itinerary of the census (2 Sam 24:6), which covered "all the tribes of Israel from Dan to Beersheba" (2 Sam 24:2 / 1 Chr 21:2). In Judges–Kings the phrase only appears in the stories from Judges to king Solomon, but in the Second Chronicles the phrase is also used in the context of Hezekiah, the king of Judah: Hezekiah commands that the Easter Celebration be held "from Beersheba to Dan" (2 Chr 30:1–5). This passage narrates the period after the kingdom of Israel had collapsed and been attached to the Assyrian Empire (721 BCE onwards).

Dan in Kings and Chronicles. Dan occurs five times in the biblical narrative depicting the "divided kingdoms," Israel and Judah: four times in books of Kings and once in the Second Chronicles (1 Kgs 12:29, 30; 1 Kgs 15:20; 2 Kgs 10:29; 2Chr 16:4). The first one is the story of the golden bulls in 1 Kgs 12:25–30, which narrates the power struggle between Rehabeam and Jeroboam after the death of king Solomon. In the story, golden bulls were set up in Dan and Bethel, one in each, by the first king of the kingdom of Israel, Jeroboam (I), in order to prevent the people from continuing their pilgrimages to the temple of Jerusalem. This episode is also referred to in the evaluation of king Jehu's acts. Jehu was condemned because he had kept the bulls in Bethel and Dan (2 Kgs 10:29). In 1 Kgs 15:20 and the Second Chr. 16:4, Dan is mentioned in the list of three cities (Ijon, Dan, and Abel-

beth-maacah) smitten by the Aramean king Ben Hadad during the reign of kings Baasha in Israel and Asa in Judah. This short report implies that Dan was located on the northern border of the "land of Israel" next to the territories ruled by the Aramean kings.

Dan in Jeremiah and Amos. The verses in Jer 4:15; 8:16 mention Dan in two oracles. Other than the passages in Judges–Kings, these oracles depict the time after the collapse of the kingdom of Israel, when Judah and Jerusalem were threatened by the enemy "coming from the north" (cf. Jer 1:14; 4:6; 6:1). Amos 8:14 is also part of an oracle. It mentions the *god of Dan*. Because the verse also refers to the cult in Beersheba, it might be a kind of parallelism to the phrase "*from Dan to Beersheba*."

Dan in the biblical narratives and biblical chronology. In Judges–Kings, the city of Dan appears only in the context that narrates the time from the conquest of the country (Jdg 18:29, 20:1) to the early kings of the kingdom of Israel (1 Kgs 12:29–30, Jeroboam; 1 Kgs 15:17–20, Baasha). After the evaluation of Jehu's deeds (2 Kgs 10:29), Dan disappears. Although Jdg 18:30 says that the priests served the tribe of Dan (in Dan) "*until the time the land went into captivity*", Dan is not mentioned in the narratives depicting the late periods of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Dan does not occur in the narratives of the fall of the kingdom of Israel (2 Kgs 17). Jeroboam and his deeds are condemned in 2 Kgs 17:21–22, but the bulls of Dan and Bethel are absent in these verses, although they were Jeroboam's sin in 1 Kgs 12:30. Nor are the bulls referred to in the narratives of Josiah's reform (2 Kgs 23), although the altars of Bethel were listed among the destroyed objects (2 Kgs 23:15–20).

The phrase "*from Beersheba to Dan*" in the Second Chronicles (30:5) and the oracles in Jeremiah (4:15; 8:16) are the only texts that depict the period after the kingdom of Israel and the city of Dan had been conquered by the Assyrian Empire, and become part of the Assyrian province system. Chapter 2 Chr 30 narrates the time of king Hezekiah (around 700 BCE), and the oracles in Jeremiah the late kingdom of Judah just before the collapse of Jerusalem in the early 6th century BCE.

This brief survey shows that the occurrences of Dan in the Hebrew Bible are scattered, and found in the very different contexts. However, two issues common to all or some of them are observed:

● references to the cult at Dan in three of the texts[524]

● references to the location of Dan at the northern border of the "land of Israel"[525]

The biblical passages have been subdivided under these themes in the detailed analyses in chapters 4.2 and 4.3.

4.1.2. Critical Reading of the Biblical Texts

This chapter introduces the different approaches and tools of biblical research that are utilized in this study. Because the perspective of this thesis is historical, the results of historical-critical research[526], particularly those of literary-redactional studies, are of great importance. The questions are: what is the historical setting of the text or parts of it? How has the text been developed? What was the function and meaning of the text at the time when it was written or edited? How do the different passages mentioning Dan relate to each other? In order to answer the last questions, the approach of ideological criticism is also utilized. Although textual criticism questions are not the focus of this study, for some passages these cannot be avoided. Textual criticism plays an important role because research on the Septuagint, the other old versions, and the biblical texts from Qumran have yielded divergent readings compared to the Masoretic text. In particular, the impact of Septuagint and/or Qumran studies is essential to the study of the passages from the books of Joshua, Samuel, and Chronicles. However, the most important task in chapter 4 is to examine to what degree the texts mentioning the city of Dan include historical information from the period of the kingdom of Israel. Therefore, the concept of deuteronomistic history / redaction and its significance in the history of research is important, and will be more explored in more detail in the end of chapter 4.1.2.

Literary-redactional research. While the aim of early literary critical research from the end of the 19th century into the early 20th century was to trace and isolate the "original

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[524] Golden bulls at Bethel and Dan in 1 Kgs 12:29,30 (and 2 Kgs 10:29); The idol at Dan in Jdg 18:27, 30–31; The god of Dan in Amos 8:14.

[525] Particularly the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" / "from Beersheba to Dan" in Jdg 20:1; 1 Sam 3:20; 2 Sam 3:10; 17:11; 24:2,15; 1 Kgs 5:5 (1 Kgs 4:25); 1Chr 21:2; 2 Chr 30:5; Occupation of Dan in Jdg 18:27–29 (cf. Josh 19:47–48); Abraham story Gen 14:14 (note the mention of Damascus in v. 15); census by King David 2 Sam 24:6 (note the route to the north, from Dan to Sidon and Tyros); the report of the cities smitten by the Aramean king Ben Hadad in 1 Kgs 15:20; 2 Chr 16:4; reference to the north in Jer 4:15; 8:16. The story of the golden bulls also implies the idea of the southern and northern limits of the kingdom of Israel in Bethel and Dan in 1 Kgs 12:29,30 and 2 Kgs 10:29. Amos 8:14 mentions both Dan and Beersheba, possibly reflecting the northern and southern limits of the land of Israel, the phrase *"from Dan to Beersheba"*.

[526] See on the method e.g. Barton, John (1996) Reading the Old Testament: Methods in Biblical Study. London: Darton, Longman & Todd.

sources" of the biblical texts in order to get closer to the real historical events, the emphasis is now on the understanding of the development of the biblical texts. Searching for the "original" or the "earliest source" is no longer the goal, and the early "sources" are not necessarily found to be more "historical" or more valuable than the later textual material. It is also difficult to differentiate between the concept of the "source" and the "redactional" material, because the "sources" may already include earlier edited material due to the process of multiple rewriting and reinterpretations of the texts.

The primary intention of the composers and editors of the biblical texts and traditions was to serve the theological, ideological, and practical needs of the community in which they lived. Thus, the references to the historical and political events are secondary and subjective, written from the point of view of the community. It is also hard to evaluate which texts, stories, or "sources" are originally fictional or legendary and which have a "historical core". However, by studying the texts, and their development and growth, it is possible to deduce something of the reality, ideology, and religious thinking behind the textual world.

Ideological criticism. The ideological approach to biblical study usually ignores the historical questions and concentrates on studying the ideological messages of the biblical stories. Specially, the book of Judges has been a fruitful subject. In this thesis the results of ideological critical research have been utilized particularly in the study of Judges 17–21,[527] without forgetting the historical aspects.[528]

Text criticism. Most of the passages in which the city of Dan appears do not have difficult textual critical problems. The Masoretic text is followed for the most part, but divergent readings are presented. Most of these different readings do not have an influence on the issues studied in this thesis. However, the research on the Septuagint and the Qumran manuscripts indicate that the Masoretic text hardly had any authoritative position during the Hellenistic period. Many Greek versions seem to have the Hebrew *Vorlage* different from that of the Masoretic text.[529] The research of the books of the Chronicles has also proved the variety of the sources (and manuscripts?) used in writing and editing the

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[527] Ideological approaches referred to in this theses: Amit, Yairah 1990 "Hidden Polemic in the Conquest fo Dan: Judges XVII–XVIII," Vetus Testamentum LX/1, 4–20; Yee, Gale A. (1995a) "Introduction: Why Judges?" Judges & Method. New Approaches in Biblical Studies. Ed. Gale E. Yee. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1–16; Yee, Gale A. (1995b) "Ideological Criticism: Judges 17–21 and the dismembered Body." Judges & Method. New Approaches in Biblical Studies. Ed. Gale A. Yee. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 146–170.
[528] On the ideological perspective in biblical studies, see also James Barr (2000) *History and Ideology in the Old Testament: Biblical Studies at the End of a Millennium.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[529] See e.g. the results on the First Samuel A. Greame Auld 2011, 5–17.

books.[530] Therefore, in the study of the passages from the books of Samuel and Chronicles, these matters will be shortly discussed. Moreover, in many of the Greek manuscripts Dan is absent; Josh 19:47–48 and the whole chapter significantly diverges from the Masoretic text. In Amos 8:14 the Masoretic text is at some points unclear, and the Greek text offers alternative readings, which are discussed.

The Deuteronomistic history. The concepts of the Deuteronomistic[531] history, deuteronomistic historiography / history work and redaction have been among the most dominant and debated issues in biblical research since the publication of Überlieferunsgeshcichtliche Studien by Martin Noth in 1940s.[532] Although the term deuteronomistic history is commonly used, a consensus on what it means has never been reached.[533] Scholars have different understandings of and suggestions for dating the deuteronomistic redaction(s), which has led to several modifications of Noth's theory. The existence of the deuteronomists and the deuteronomistic school behind their work has also been questioned. Because the terms are used or discussed in almost every book or article referred to in chapter 4 in this thesis, a brief overview of the topic is necessary. In the end I will summarize how I understand and use these concepts in this study.

The deuteronomistic redaction and the continuity from the book of Deuteronomy to Second Kings were already noticed long before Noth's theory. Julius Wellhausen already in the end of the 19th century discerned pre-deuteronomistic sources from the deuteronomistic redaction and post-deuteronomistic additions.[534] However, Noth was the first scholar who formulated the theory of the single deuteronomistic redactor, who during the time of the "exile" (6th century BCE) composed, wrote, and edited a coherent book

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[530] See e.g. Schweitzer 2011, 37–66. See also Weissenberg etc.(Eds.), 2011, *Changes in Scripture. Rewriting and Interpreting Authoritative Traditions in the Second Temple Period.* BZAW, Band 419. Berlin: DeGruyter.

[531] The term "deuteronomistic" derives from the observation that the theologies of the book of Deuteronomy, particularly the deuteronomic law, had a great influence on the books from Joshua to the Second Kings (Jones 1984, 29). This is deduced from the deuteronomic expressions and phraseology. Moshe Weinfeld listed this terminology in his classic book *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School,* Oxford: University Press 1972, 320–365; Kurt L. Noll gives a definition that a deuteronomistic text "contains words or phrases that can be demonstrated to be dependent upon the book of Deuteronomy and the text also expresses the ideology of Deuteronomy" Noll 2013b, 119.

[532] Noth, Martin (1957) *Überlieferungsgeshcichtliche Studien.* 2nd ed. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag. (Originally published in Halle 1943. English translation 1981: *The Deuteronomistic History.*)

[533] See Römer, Thomas & de Pury, Albert (2000), "Deuteronomistic Historiography: History of Research (DH) and Debated Issues." *Israel Constructs Its History. Deuteronomistic Historiography in Recent Research* (Eds. de Pury, Albert et al.). JSOT, 306. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 24–143.

[534] Wellhausen, Julius (1899), *Die Composition des Hexateuchs und der historischen Bucher des Alten Testaments.* 3. Aufl. For example, he introduces the predeuteronomistic sources and the "deuteronomistic addings" to Judg. 6:6–16:31 (p. 214–215), the continuity from Judges to Samuel–Kings, and the redaction of these books (p. 235–336).

that Noth called the deuteronomistic history, a work covering the biblical books from Deuteronomy to Second Kings.[535] According to Noth, the deuteronomist was not only a compiler but also a history writer, whose intention was to explain the catastrophe caused by the collapse of Judah and the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem. He intended to explain why Israel (late 8th century BCE) and Judah (early 6th century BCE) were punished by the exile (note 1 Kings 12:30a).[536] Thus, the deuteronomist created the theologically based "history of Israel" (deuteronomistic history).

Noth was criticized for the idea of there being only one "exilic" deuteronomistic redactor. The need for several redactional phases was noticed. Although Noth had also observed numerous post-deuteronomistic additions, he did not define any other editorial stage. Contemporary with Noth, Alfred Jepsen had developed a model of plural redaction. He assumed the existence of the "pre-exilic" sources and three deuteronomistic redactions: priestly, prophetic, and levitical.[537] His prophetic redaction corresponded with Noth's deuteronomist. Jepsen's model received little attention. Later on, models of the double redaction with some variations were introduced by many scholars, also called Cross' school.[538] This model assigns one redactional phase to the "pre-exilic period" (7th century BCE), and another to the "time of exile" (6th century BCE).[539] Later supplements were also discerned.[540] In the 1970s, the German school, Rudolf Smend with Walter Dietrich and Timo Veijola, once again created a three-stage deuteronomistic redaction: two exilic and one post-exilic.[541] The earliest redaction was dated to the very beginning of the "exile", around 580 BCE (DtrG, that was associated with Dtr-historian labeled as DtrH), the second one to around 560 BCE (DtrP, prophetic),[542] and the third to post-exilic time, during the Persian period (DtrN, nomistic). In addition, the post-deuteronomic

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[535] Deuteronomistic ideals were observed in the beginning of the book of Judges, and to some degree in Joshua, but particularly in the books of Kings (the evaluations of the deeds of the kings), while in the books of Samuel the traces of deuteronomistic redacton are not numerous.

[536] Noth 1981 (1957), 89-99; See also Soggin 1981, 7; Mayes 1989, 9-13; McKenzie 1991, 2; Römer 2005, 110-111, 114,-116.

[537] Jepsen 1953, *Die Quellen des Königbuches.* His theory is briefly presented in Mulder 1998, 14.

[538] E.g. F.M. Cross 1973, 274–289.

[539] E.g. Gray 1964, 13–15. He divides the material into pre-exilic compilation, exilic and post-exilic redaction, and post-redactional glosses; F.M. Cross (1973, 274–289) labels the levels as Dtr1 and Dtr2; Nelson (1981); Gomes 2006, 22.

[540] On the models see McKenzie 1991, 6–8; Mulder 1998, 11–18; Gomes 2006, 20–22. See also Jones 1984, 31–35; Kratz 2005, 157–158.

[541] See the research history McKenzie 1991, 8–9; Römer & de Pury 2000b, 67–97. On the deuteronomistic redaction in the books of Judges and Samuel see Veijola, Timo 1977: *Das Königtum in der Beurteilung der deuteronomistischen Historiographie: eine redaktion-geschichtliche Untersuchung.*

[542] DtrP was introduced by Walter Dietrich 1972: *Prophetie und Geschichte: Eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zum deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerk.* Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments, 108. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

supplementary material was assumed.[543] This model was criticized on the difficulties of differentiating between DtrG and DtrP, as well the lack of "pre-exilic" redaction.[544] Furthermore, the "deuteronomistic redaction" was not limited to the Babylonian–Persian period, but the process of redaction was seen to continue into the Hellenistic period.[545]

The issue what is meant by *deuteronomistic* is complicated.[546] The debated matters are: 1) the date or dates of the deuteronomistic redaction ("exilic," "pre/ post-exilic," "post-deuteronomistic"), 2) what was "deuteronomistic theology," 3) the definition of the "deuteronomistic" redaction; how it differs from the other editing, and 4) the question whether such a "deuteronomistic school" ever even existed. Furthermore, the term "exilic", crucial in Noth's theory, has turned out to be problematic. First of all, the term has a theological connotation and is based on the biblical narrative. It is dated to the sixth century, starting from the first or second attack on Jerusalem by the Babylonians (597/596 or 586/586 BCE). But it is more difficult to define when it finished (i.e. what is exilic / post-exilic). How much of the population was exiled is also a point of debate. Probably only the upper class was taken, but the kingdom, its infrastructure and capital, Jerusalem, were destroyed, and the level of population was greatly decreased in the post-collapse society.[547]

Although the history of the "exile" is unclear, the destruction of Jerusalem in the early 6th century BCE nevertheless had a great impact on the creation of the Hebrew Bible. It became the watershed according to which the scholars divided the biblical texts into the

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[543] See summaries of Smend's model: Jones 1984, 42–44; Mulder 1998, 15; Römer & de Pury 2000, 73–74, 140. Jones (1984) and Würthwein (1985) adopted the approach of Smend's school.

[544] See McKenzie 1991, 9. McKenzie (1991, 149–151) returned to Noth's model but dated the Deuteronomistic history (DH) to the 7th century BCE, to the time of King Josiah. He separates DH and its post Dtr-additions in his research of the books of Kings.

[545] For example, Knauf 2000b, 388, 392–393: "I stopped believing in the existence of a 'Deuteronomistic historical work' (DtrH) some time ago (p. 388) ... The redactional history of Joshua – 2 Kings did not stop either in 562 BCE, or in 520 or 515 BCE (p. 393)."; Similarly Noll (2013b, 128–129, 138–141) who found "deuteronomisms" in the late Hellenistic texts (2nd century BCE).

[546] See discussion and different views: Knoppers, Gary N. & McConville, Gordon J. (Eds.) 2000, *Reconsidering Israel and Judah: Recent Studies on the Deuteronomistic History*. Sources for Biblical and Theological Study 8. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.; De Pury, Albert et al. (Eds.) 2000, *Israel Constructs Its History. Deuteronomistic Historiography in Recent Research*; Römer, Thomas (Ed.) 2000, *The Future of the Deuteronomistic History*. Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum Lovaniensium 147. Leuven: Leuven University Press; Römer, Thomas 2005: *The so-called Deuteronomistic History: A Sociological, Historical and Literary Introduction*. London: T&T Clark; Edenberg & Pakkala (Eds.) 2013, *Is Samuel among the Deuteronomists?: Current Views on the Place of Samuel in a Deuteronomistic History*. Ancient Israel and Its Literature, No. 16. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.

[547] See Moore & Kelle 2011, 367–368; Valkama 2012, 1–2, footnotes 2,4, 258–271. Valkama (p. 268) states that "the explanations for the collapse were later followed by the stories of exile and return. The history of those who remained in Judah or Babylon was, in many respects, overrun by the interpretations of those who returned, even if they were few compared to those who remained in the land. The exile–and –return pattern was later accepted as the 'official history' by the redactors of the Hebrew Bible."

"sources" from the time of the monarchy (edited or not) and the post-monarchical texts, editions, and additions. During the last decades, biblical scholars have also pointed out the significance of the Persian–Hellenistic era (5th–2nd century BCE) for the formation of the biblical texts.[548] However, the hypothesis of the deuteronomistic redactions is still found valid in many studies.[549] It still offers a methodological tool to analyze the biblical texts. The idea of the large scale editing and reinterpreting of the earlier sources and traditions after the collapse of Judah and the destruction of the Jerusalem temple seems plausible. In particular, it explains the great influence that this collapse had on the Judahite community that transmitted the religious traditions from the monarchies of Israel and Judah and created the books of the Hebrew Bible over the next centuries. Thus, it also explains why the Hebrew Bible is so much a product of the post-monarchical scribes of the Judahite community.

In my view, the "deuteronomistic" redaction was not limited to the 6th century BCE. The process of editing, re-interpreting, and creating the new texts continued through the 5th–1st centuries BCE, when several variants of the biblical texts existed.[550] This is proven by the different readings between the various versions of the Septuagint, Old Greek, and Qumran manuscripts. Whether the later editing during Persian–Hellenistic should be called "deuteronomistic" or "late / post-deuteronomistic" is another question. I found Reinhard Kratz's model[551] of the shaping of the redaction and growth of the biblical text useful. He distinguishes three main phases in the redaction history of Judges – Second Kings: the source material (monarchical origin, some editing), the "deuteronomistic history" (DtrG, 6th century BCE), and the "supplements" (DtrS, from the late 6th century BCE onwards). The "supplements" include the "late and post-deuteronomistic" redaction and material, as

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[548] E.g. Noll 2013a, 55–57; See also Grabbe 2007, 224: "... the text was still developing, being edited, and growing until the first century CE.2; Davies, P. R. 2010, 194–195; The variation of the authoritative scriptures during the Hellenistic period is illustrated in several articles in Edelman & Ben Zvi (Eds.) 2011: *What Was Authoritative for Chronicles?*; Discussion in Moore & Brad 2011, 35–39.

[549] E.g. Mullen, E.Theodore (1993) Narrative History and Ethnic Boundaries: The Deuteronomistic Historian and the Creation of Israelite National Identity. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press; Dietrich, Walter (2002) Von David zu den Deuteronomisten: Studien zu den Geschichtsüberlieferungen des Alten Testaments. Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament. Heft 156. Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer; Pakkala, Juha (2002) "Jeroboam's Sin and Bethel in 1Kgs 12:25–33." BN 112, 86–94 and (2008), "Jeroboam without Bulls." ZAW 120, 501–525; Kratz, Reinhard (2005) The Composition of the Narrative Books of the Old Testament. London: T&T Clark International; Gomes, Jules Francis 2006, The Sanctuary of Bethel and the Configuration of Israelite Identity. BZAW, Band 368. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter; Dietrich, Walter 2013, "The Layer Model of the Deuteronomistic History and the Book of Samuel." *Is Samuel among the Deuteronomists?: Current Views on the Place of Samuel in a Deuteronomistic History*. Edenburg & Pakkala (Eds.). Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.

[550] See e.g. articles in Weissenberg etc.(eds.), 2011, 273–404, particularly Marttila, Marko (2011), "The Deuteronomistic Ideology and Phraseology in the Book of Baruch," 321–346.

[551] Kratz 2005 (see particularly p.153–158).

well as the glosses and the other additions. This classification is sufficient for my purpose, which is to evaluate if the biblical passages mentioning the city of Dan have their roots in the monarchical (9 – 7th centuries BCE) or the post-monarchical (early 6th century BCE until the Hellenistic) period. My goal is to figure out whether the Hebrew Bible includes textual records from the Iron Age city of Tel Dan and, if so, what kind of tradition these records are based on.

The hypothesis of deuteronomistic redactions also offers a useful tool to study the biblical texts from the point of view of cult centralization (usually attached to DtrH) and the deuteronomistic law derived from Deuteronomy (usually attached to the later phase of the deuteronomistic redaction, to DtrN). Three of the texts associate Dan with religious activity (Jdg 18, 1 Kgs 12:25–30, Amos 8:14) in which the worship at the high-places outside Jerusalem is practiced. Was the god of Dan Yahweh or some other god? How did the biblical authors / editors relate to these texts, and why were they written and kept? In addition, the origin of the ideology of "all Israel" and the definition of the land "from Dan to Beersheba" are the object of my interest. Does this idealization of the united land and people derive from the monarchical period, or from the experience of the "exilic" catastrophe? Does it have anything in common with the "deuteronomistic" ideals?

My intention is to keep biblical terminology separate from the study of history. Therefore, I rather refer to the centuries than use biblical terms such as "exilic" or "pre/post-exilic", although it is evident that "exilic" refers to the sixth century BCE. Because these terms and labels are, however, used in the literature, I add the centuries according to which each scholar dates them. The terms Assyrian, Babylon, and Persian periods are also used to refer to the times these empires dominated the past kingdom of Israel (Assyrian periods in late 8th–7th), and Israel and Judah (Babylonian in the 6th, Persian in 5th – late 4th, and Hellenistic periods in the late 4th – 2nd centuries BCE).

4.2. The Cultic Tradition at Dan

4.2.1. Golden bulls: 1 Kings 12, 25–33

Translation 1 Kings 12:25–33

25 Jeroboam built Shechem in Mount Ephraim and settled down there. And he went out from there and built Penuel.
26 But Jeroboam thought in his heart, "Now the kingdom will return to the house of David.

27 If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem, the heart of this[a] people will turn back to their lords, to Rehoboam, the king of Judah, and [b]they will kill me[b] and [c]return to Rehoboam, the king of Judah[c].

28 So the king took counsel[a] and made two bulls[b] of gold. He said to them,[c] "You have long enough gone up to Jerusalem. Behold your gods[d], Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt."

29 And he set one in Bethel and the other he placed in Dan.

30 This matter became a sin.[a] The people went before the one as far as Dan.[b]

31 He made sanctuaries[a] on the high places and appointed priests from among all of the people who were not the Levites.

32 Jeroboam instituted a feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month like the feast that was held in Judah. [a]He went up to the altar – thus he did in Bethel[a] – to offer sacrifices to the bulls which he had made. He placed in Bethel the priests of the high places which[b] he had made.

33 [a]He went up to the altar which he had made[a] [b]in Bethel[b] on the fifteenth day of the eighth month in the feast[c] he alone[d] had invented. He established a feast for the people of Israel, and he went up to the altar to offer incense.

Notes

27.a. Lacking in G.

27.b. Lacking in G[Luc] and in some other G manuscripts.

27.c. Lacking in G. This has been interpreted as a dittography from the previous sentence in MT.[552] Otherwise Pakkala, who explains that the repetition is the result of a later expansion.[553]

28.a. G has a continuation: καὶ ἐπορεύθη.

28.b. The Hebrew word עֵגֶל has usually been translated "calf". On the basis of the biblical references, archaeological and iconographic evidence עֵגֶל in cultic contexts is rather a young bull than a calf.[554] A bull-god has often been interpreted as a symbol of fertility, but it can also depict power and bravery in military actions (cf. verse 28b).[555]

28.c. This could be read אֶל־הָעָם according G πρὸς τὸν λαὸν.

28.d. According to the grammar, אֱלֹהֶיךָ can be translated in singular or plural form (your god or your gods). In this context gods probably refer to two golden bulls. Therefore, the plural form is more probable than the singular.

30.a. Some G manuscripts continue τῷ Ισραηλ or του Ισραηλ.

30.b. G[Luc] continues και προ προσωπου της αλλης εις βαιθηλ. MT could be corrected: לִפְנֵי הָאֶחָד בֵּת־אֵל וְלִפְנֵי הָאֶחָד עַד דָן.

31.a. In MT this a singular (בֵּית) but on the basis of 13:32 this is rather to be understood as a plural form: בָּתֵּי הַבָּמוֹת.

32.a. Almost identical with verse 33a. The only difference is word כֵּן in verse 32 and אֲשֶׁר in verse 33. According to the latter, Jeroboam had also made the altar, not only the bulls.

[552] DeVries 2003, 160; Noth 1968, 267.
[553] He finds the end of the verse original because it would be unnecessary if the previous statement, v. 27.b, had already existed. Pakkala 2008, 504.
[554] Thus Pakkala 2008, 501, note 1.
[555] See Keel & Uehlinger 1998, 118–120, 191–194.

Thus G (v. 32): καὶ ἀνέβη ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον ὃ ἐποίησεν ἐν Βαιθήλ. Similarly v. 33aα but without "in Bethel".

32.b. Hebrew word אֲשֶׁר can refer to the high places or the priests. Hence, another possible translation is: "He placed in Bethel the priests of the high places whom he had appointed".

33.a. This is lacking in the Syriac manuscript (S^w). Probably dittography from verse 32bα.

33.b. Lacking in G.

33.c. This translation is according to G: ἐν τῇ ἑορτῇ which is more likely in this context than MT: בַּחֹדֶשׁ, in the month. The following sentence (v. 33bα) repeat the same by different words.

33.d. MT: מִלְבַּד but Q: מִלְבּוֹ "from the heart", which no Hebrew manuscripts support but G does: ἀπὸ καρδίας αὐτοῦ.

Contents, Context, and Structure of the Passage

The passage 1 Kgs 12:25–33 is part of the story about the struggle of power between Rehoboam, the son and successor of king Solomon, and Jeroboam, the usurper of Israel (1 Kgs 12:1–30). The passage also begins the story of the kingdom of Israel. In chapter 12, the people of Israel made Jeroboam a king "over all Israel" (v. 12:16–20) after they had rejected Rehoboam, who became the king of Judah only (see the prophecy 1 Kgs 11:26–40). Jeroboam was, however, concerned about his kingship if Jerusalem's temple remained the only center of Yahwe's worship. Therefore, he set up two golden bulls in Bethel and Dan as rivals for the temple of Jerusalem, in order to stop the pilgrimages of his people to Jerusalem (v. 12: 26–29). This is introduced as a sin (v. 12:30a, repeated in 2 Kgs 10:29). Another mistake of Jeroboam is presented in 1 Kgs 12:31–13:10, which was renewing the cult of Bethel. According to 1 Kgs 13:33–34, this was the sin of Jeroboam that caused the fall of his family, not the bulls. Chapter 13 continues with two prophetical legends in Bethel (13:11–32), an evaluation of King Jeroboam's deeds (13:33–34), and the story of the condemnation of Jeroboam's family including the prophecy of its fall (14:1–18). The closing account of Jeroboam's deeds, the number of his regnal years, and his death in 1 Kgs 14:19–20 is without any critique or evaluation in the deuterenomistic model.

The passage 1 Kgs 12:25–33 starts with a note which looks like an annalistic record (v. 25).[556] It mentions two residential towns of King Jeroboam which were also built by him: Shechem and Penuel (v. 25). The rest of the text is polemic, and differs from verse 25

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[556] DeVries (2003, 161) finds the verse an "extract from the Book of the Chronicles of the Israelite Kings". Cogan (2001, 361) states that verse 25 is "the only 'factual' item free of polemic in this section." Long (1984, 141) describes the verse as "a chronistic statement". He also says that v. 31– 32 might be rooted in similar sources, but they have been heavily edited. According to Würthwein (1985, 150–151), verse 25 derives from an annalistic report ("annalenhafte Bericht") which originally formed a unit source with verses 12:2, 20a. See also Noth 1968, 269–270, 280.

in its literary style and content. It is a story of power and politics combined with religious innovations. Verses 26–28 form a unity in which the problem, Jeroboam's fear of Rehoboam's sovereignty, is first introduced (v.26–27), and followed by a solution in v. 28: two golden bulls were set up to represent the gods of Israel and to serve as high places, in order to make the temple of Jerusalem redundant for the people of Israel. The story could well finish here, and would work as such with the conclusive judgment in the end (verse 30a).[557] However, by verses 29 and 30b the story was linked to Bethel and Dan, although Jeroboam's residence is in Penuel according to verse 25. Bethel and Dan do not appear in the story before v. 29 and 30. After that, Dan disappears and is once more mentioned in 1 Kgs 15:20 (see chapter 4.3.4). Bethel remains the scene of the stories in the end of chapter 12 (v. 31–33) and chapter 13.

Discussion of the compositional process of the passage

Different suggestions for the composition process of the passage have been introduced. According to Kittel (1900), verses 25 and 28 form the oldest core of the passage while the rest (v. 26–27, 29–33a) present a later layer.[558] Noth (1968) regarded verses 26–29 and 30b as one unit written by the deuteronomist writer,[559] but verse 30a as a later addition because it breaks an otherwise fluent text.[560] Noth was followed with minor variation by Monthgomery (1986),[561] Hentschel (1984),[562] Jones (1984),[563] and Würthwein (1985), who also interprets verse 30b as secondary, a later expansion to verse 29. According to him, the story has several stage of development: verse 25 deriving from an older source with v. 12:2 and 20a, verses 26–29 from the Judahite redactor (DtrG), and two glosses: first 30b and, finally 30a that interrupted the earlier text. Verses 31–33 are an addition to this basic story.[564] Hoffmann (1980) claims that the whole passage (v. 26–32) is fictional and written

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[557] Fritz (1996, 137–138) finds v. 30a as a conclusion of the story to which he also includes v. 29. According to him, verses 30b, 31–33 are the work of later redactors and v. 33 was written as a transition to the next prophetic stories in 13:1–34.

[558] Kittel 1900, 107, 110. For him, "late" in this passage means the 7th century BCE. He finds verse 28 historical (p. 109). He claims that king Jeroboam indeed established the bull cult in Dan and Bethel. The rest of the story he also dates to the 7th century or later.

[559] Noth (1957) supposes that there was one compiler and editor during the exile who composed the deuteronomistic history work. See later discussion and research e.g. Jones 1984, 28–46; Mulder 1998, 13–18; Römer 2005, shortly Kratz 2005,156–157; Gomes 2006, 20–22.

[560] Noth 1968, 284–285.

[561] Monthgomery 1986, 254–256. He also ascribes v. 31 to the basic story, and claims that the whole section 26–29, 30b–31 is based on the "late popular tradition" composed to resist the dominance of the temple of Jerusalem.

[562] Hentschel 1984, 84.

[563] Jones 1984, 248, 257. However, he does not find any additions in verses 26–30, but only verses 31–32.

[564] Würthwein 1985: 150–151, 162, note 3, 165–166.

by a deuteronomistic author.[565] Long (2004) concluded that the passage was composed of two parts: verses 25, 31–32 (and 33, a secondary repetition of v. 32) representing king Jeroboam's building activities, and verses 26–30 representing a fragment of the larger story. He notes that verses 25 and 31–32 are based on earlier source material, but verses 32–33 have been strongly edited by Judahite redactors.[566]

Later research has not yielded any consensus. According to Kratz (2005),[567] the original text deriving from the first deuteronomistic redactor (DtrG) included verses 26a, 27aα, 28a, and 30a, while Gomes (2006) is of the opinion that verses 25–30 and 32 belong to the "same unit."[568] Gomes suggests that the whole passage is from the first deuteronomistic redactor, which he dates to the 7th century BCE. Verses 31, (32b) and 33 he assigns to a later deuteronomistic editor. DeVries (2003) divides the passage into three parts: 1) verse 25: an extract of Jeroboam's building activity 2) verses 26–28 and 30a: a story that was of Judahite origin with the later addition of v. 29, and 3) verses 30b–32b: complaints about Jeroboam's deed.[569] Pakkala (2002) assumes that the passage 1 Kings 12:26–33 mainly derives from the history writer (DtrH, 6th century BCE), but includes additions by several later editors (Dtr N and other additions). However, he emphasizes that the later editing did not destroy or assimilate the main ideas of the history writer. He regards verses 32–33 as secondary.[570] In his later article (2008), Pakkala introduces a different view. He suggests that verses 28aβ–30 represent the youngest unit of the passage v. 26–33, and has been added to the story (v. 12:26–27aαb, 28aα, 31a; 13:33b, 34a) by later editors whose intention was to attach Jeroboam for the bulls and the cult of Bethel.[571] The idea of the article is to prove that the author of the earliest text was unaware of both of these issues. This issue will be returned to below (*The Sin of Jeroboam*).

The opinions of the compositional process of 1 Kings 12:25–33 differ greatly from each other, and include conflicting views. This indicates that the text is not unambiguous, and has literary and redactional critical problems. It has gone through multiple editing

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[565] Hoffmann 1980, 73.

[566] Long 1984, 142.

[567] Kratz 2005, 165, 211 (note 18). Kratz thinks that the original basic text (DtrG) about Jeroboam is found in the following verses, which in their present form include several glosses: 11:26(–28), 40–43, 12:2, 20a, 25, 26–30, 14:19–29.

[568] Gomes 2006, 17–20.

[569] DeVries 2003, 161–163. He says that verse 29 is the only later addition in the passage (v. 25–32).

[570] Pakkala 2002, 86–87. In note 6, he also introduces other scenarios: verse 30 may be an addition because of the change of the subject, or alternatively verse 29 comes from the source and 30 from the history writer. He also finds it possible that verse 32 belongs to the history writer, because it is in line with the preceding text in its content and grammar.

[571] Pakkala 2008, 521–524.

processes, as pointed out by Pakkala.[572] Only verse 25 might derive from the annalistic record of the kings of Israel.[573] From v. 26 onwards the text is different in content and style, and written from the point of view of Judah, having thus a strong Judahite influence:[574] King Jeroboam is presented in a negative light, and the cult outside Jerusalem is condemned. There is also influence from the Levite circles[575] in 12:31. In order to form a clearer concept of the intentions of this text, different theological and ideological motives that are interwoven into this passage will next be studied more closely.

Observations on the theological and ideological features

I observed three issues that are important from the point of view of this study. Firstly, the locations of the stories and events in chapter 12. Several towns are mentioned, but the shifts from place to place do not seem logical, which is likely due to the heterogeneous background of the text. Secondly, the role of the bulls in the Hebrew Bible and in Israelite religion, and what the connection to the cult of Dan was. Thirdly, the sin of Jeroboam. Is it related to the cult at Dan?

Locations of the stories. The scene of the events changes in chapter 12. The beginning of the chapter is located in Shechem (v. 1), where the people of Israel are gathered to choose their ruler (v. 1–15). They abandon Rehoboam, who escapes back to Jerusalem, and make Jeroboam their king (v. 16–24). The rest of the chapter is focused on Jeroboam and his religious innovations (v.25–33 and 13:1–10). It starts with a report of Jeroboam's building activities in two towns of his residence: first Shechem and then Penuel (v. 25). The verse seems a separate and isolated record between the stories of Rehoboam's and Jeroboam's struggle for power (v. 1–24) and the story of Jeroboam's golden bulls (v. 26–28). Shechem and Penuel are not mentioned after v. 25. The mention of Penuel requires

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[572] Pakkala 2008, 503.

[573] DeVries (2003, 161); Cogan 2001, 361; Montgomery, 1986, 254; Würthwein 1985, 150–151. Long (1984, 142). Noth 1968, 269–270, 280. Similarly Kittel 1900, 107 who finds the passage (25–31) relatively young (7. century BCE), but claims that verse 25 (together with verse 28 and 33b) includes "genuine, old material". However, Fritz (1996, 136) remarks that v. 25 rather derives from an oral tradition than from the annalistic record of the kingdom of Israel. Sweeney (2007, 175–176, 178–179) does not pay any special attention to the possible earlier source behind the verse, but assigns the whole story (v. 25–31) to DtrH, as well the narratives of the prophet legends (v. 12:32–13:34); Pakkala (2002, 86–87) emphasizes that the earlier sources were available for the author/s of this passage, but that they had been selected and used to serve the author's own theological intentions, so that the original information of the sources cannot be distinguished.

[574] Pakkala 2010; 2002, 88; Sweeney 2007, 176, 178; DeVries 2003, 163; Cogan 2001, 361–363; Würthwein 1985, 162; Hentschel 1984, 84; Long 1984, 141–142; Jones 1984, 257.

[575] About the Levites and the discussion of their distinction from the priests, see Leuchter & Hutton (Eds.) 2011. Pakkala 2008, 509 and note 34.

attention, because it is a peculiar city for a residence of the king of Israel, due to its location in the Transjordan. Its appearance in the Hebrew Bible is also rare.[576] The story does not state where the golden bulls were made, but verse 29 places them in Bethel and Dan. Why were Bethel and Dan chosen? Would it not have been more logical for the king to have built the main sanctuaries in his own city, particularly for political reasons (cf. v. 26–27), and because the rival place was Jerusalem, the residence of the king of Judah and its capital? Bethel and Dan were never the residences of the kings of Israel.

Dan is located far from the mountains of Ephraim, and its sanctuaries hardly ever competed with Jerusalem's temple. It also has a minor role as a place of worship in the Hebrew Bible, in contrast to Bethel which would have been a better candidate. Bethel is located in the mountains of Ephraim, close to Jerusalem, only 17 km north of it.[577] It is mentioned more than 60 times in the Hebrew Bible, usually with references to its altars, sanctuaries, high places, and prophets,[578] while the references to Dan are scarce. The depictions of the cult of Dan, in addition to this bull-story, are limited to Jdg 18 and Amos 8:14. Bethel is also mentioned as the temple of the king and the temple of the state in Amos 7:13.[579] It is the scene for many prophetical stories (such as chapter 1 Kgs 13) and the place of sacrifice. In 1 Kgs 12–13, Dan is mentioned in verses 12:29 and 30 only, while from verse 12:31 onward Bethel is the focus for following legendary prophetical stories, continuing in chapter 13. Dan is already absent in verse 32, which places both bulls in Bethel. Thus, without verses 29 and 30b the reader would easily place the whole story in Bethel.

In contrast to Tel Dan and the biblical texts, archaeological excavations have not uncovered any cultic remains or items in the Iron Age strata of the Arab village of Beitin,[580] identified with the biblical Bethel,[581] but the excavator of the site, J.L. Kelso, reports that he found a sanctuary and a temple dated to the Middle and Late Bronze Age

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[576] In addition to 1 Kgs 12:25, Penuel appears only five times in the Hebrew Bible: once in the Pentateuch in the aetiological story according to which Jacob described it as the place where he wrestled with an angel/God, in Gen 32:31. The other four occurences are in one of the stories of Gideon in Jdg 8:8–9, 17.
[577] Kelso 1993, 194.
[578] It is known for its sanctuaries, high places, and place of prayer in the Hebrew Bible, for example, in Gen 12:8; 35:1; 1 Sam 7:16, the cult reform of Josiah in 2 Kgs 23:15, 19, and in Jer 48:13 and Amos 3:14.
[579] Würthwein 1985, 164: "Denn wahrend Bet-El als zentraler Kultort des Nordreichs wahrend der Königszeit durch Hos. 10,5; 8,4–6 bezeugt und in Am. 7,13 ausdrücklich als Königsheiligtum und Staatstempel bezeichnet wird, schweigt die Überlieferung der Königszeit völlig über eine entsprechende Rolle von Dan." See also Hentschel 1984, 85.
[580] Kelso 1993, 192. The site was investigated by W.F. Albright in 1927 and excavated by him in 1934 and by J. L. Kelso in 1954, 1957 and 1960. Kelso 1968; 1993, 192.
[581] The identification of Beitin with biblical Bethel is commonly accepted. See Kelso1968,1; Koenen 2003, 3–26; Köhlmoos 2006; 23, 82; Finkelstein & Singer-Avitz 2009, 33; Valkama 2012, 85.

periods.[582] However, the remains are meager and their cultic nature is questionable.[583] Kelso also assumed that in the end of the Assyrian period "the shrine at Bethel was rebuilt"[584] but in his excavation report he does not give any archaeological evidence for the shrine. He based his claims on the biblical texts only, not on the archaeological evidence.[585] According to him, Bethel was almost continuously inhabited from the Bronze age until the early Persian period, except for a destruction and decline caused by an Assyrian attack in Iron Age II. After a gap during the Persian period, habitation continued from the Hellenistic to the Roman periods. Kelso also stated that Bethel flourished during the Middle and Late Bronze Age, during the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, from the end of the Assyrian period until the early Persian period, and again during the Hellenistic times.[586]

A closer examination of Kelso's excavation reports, however, reveals great deficiencies and mistakes in the methods and documentation of the excavations, as well as in the interpretation of the finds.[587] The restudy of the material by Israel Finkelstein and Lily Singer-Avitz produced very different results. According to them, the inhabitation was not as continuous as Kelso claimed. After a period of strong activity during early and middle Iron Age I (late 12th– late 11th centuries), there was a gap at the site from late Iron Age I to early Iron IIA (late 11th – early 9th century BCE). The habitation revived during late Iron Age IIA (the rest of the 9th century BCE), and reached its peak during Iron Age IIB (8th century BCE). Only weak activity at the site could be assigned to the late 7th and early 6th century BCE, and very weak or a gap to the Babylonian and Persian periods (from the 6th to 4th centuries BCE), which according to Kelso were the time of active habitation until the early Persian period.[588] Valkama also pointed out that Kelso (1968) described the Babylonian period as a prosperous time, although the remains are not numerous and the settlement was small on the basis of the archaeological evidence.[589] The site recovered only in the late Hellenistic period (2nd century BCE).[590]

The meager archaeological evidence and the lack of cultic remains at Bethel has led to speculation over whether the identification of the site is correct. Some have claimed that

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[582] Kelso 1993, 192–194.
[583] Koenen 2003, 31–36; Valkama 2012, 86.
[584] Kelso 1993, 194; Kelso 1968, 37.
[585] See the evaluation of Kelso's interpretation Valkama 2012, 86–87, footnote193.
[586] Kelso 1968; 1993, 192–194; See also Köhlmoos 2006, 49–83.
[587] See Valkama 2012, 85–92; Finkelstein & Singer-Avitz 2009, 34–42.
[588] Finkelstein & Singer-Avitz, 2009, 42–43. Although many scholars claim that Bethel was settled during the 6th century BCE, they admit that the remains are scanty. Kelso's statement that the settlement continued into the Babylonian period is based on the fact that no traces of the Babylonian destruction in the beginning of the 6th century were found.
[589] Valkama 2012. See also Lipschits 2003, 346–347; 1999, 172.
[590] Finkelstein & Singer-Avitz, 2009, 43.

the "temple" or "sanctuary" was located outside the town, or that it was an open-air sanctuary which left no traces.[591] Such speculation is unnecessary. The archaeological results – whatever they are – do not change the fact that in the biblical texts Bethel and its cultic history is significant. What the reality was behind the texts is another question. Although archaeology did not provide cultic evidence, the study of the material revealed that the 8th century BCE pottery at Bethel show more Judahite characteristics than those of the material culture of the northern sites.[592] A natural explanation is its vicinity near Jerusalem, the central area of Judah. It also supports the view that Bethel was located on the border of the north and south. Particularly after the fall of the kingdom of Israel, it was more tightly bound with Judah in the south than the north, possibly even earlier.[593] This may have made Bethel and its sanctuaries a rival to Jerusalem's (second) temple. In the archaeological studies of the Babylonian and Persian periods, Bethel is counted in the sites of Benjamin, the northern district of Judah.[594]

The Bulls. Bulls or bull images serving cultic purposes have a few appearances in the Hebrew Bible in addition to 1 Kgs 12:28–30 and 32 and the texts dependent on it (2 Kgs 10:29; 17:16; 2 Chr 11:15; 13:8). These are Ex 32:4–8, 19–24, and 35, with the texts dependent on it (Dtn 9:16, 21; Neh 9:18); 2 Chr 11:15 and 13:8; and Hos 8:5–6, 10:5, and 13:2 (see table 4 p. 139). Hence, the bulls appear in four different contexts: 1) the Exodus story in which Aaron made a bull of gold to be the god of the people of Israel, 2) the golden bulls made by king Jeroboam in First Kings, 3) Jeroboam as the manufacturer of the bulls in Second Chronicles, and 4) bull images associated with the cult of Samaria and Bethel (Bet Aven) in the book of Hosea. In fact, Exodus 32:4bβ and 1 Kgs 12:28bβ are almost identical, and thus literarily dependent.[595] The verses in Second Chronicles mention Jeroboam as a bull-maker. The occurrences in Hosea are short references to the bull of Samaria (8:5,6), the bull of Bet Aven (10:5), and kissing the bulls (13:2), which do not

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[591] See Köhlmoos 2006, 71–73; Koenen 2003, 39.

[592] Finkelstein & Singer-Avitz 2009, 40–41; Köhlmoos 2006, 74–76 emphasizes Bethel as a bordertown between Judah and Israel.

[593] See Koenen 2003, 51, see also 48–52, 216–217.

[594] E.g. Lipschits 199, 155–190; 2003, 346–355. He includes Bethel in the Northern part of the Judean Highlands; Valkama 2012, 85:"Beitîn is the northernmost site in Judah with evidence dated to the mid-sixth century BCE."

[595] Most of the scholars starting from the early research find 1 Kings 12:25–33 older than Ex.32:4–8, e.g. Kittel 1900, 107; Noth, 1968, 284; Gray 1964, 291; Kratz 2005, 134–135, 143 (cf. 185), Pakkala 2002, 86 (see note 2). Otherwise Pakkala 2008, 519–521. Pakkala changed his view in his later article, in which he finds the Exodus context earlier. However, he states that the whole idea of the bulls is rather late in both contexts, because the bulls are restricted to a few passages only, and do not play a central role in deuteronomistic theology.

appear anywhere else in the Hebrew Bible. A common feature to all the occurrences is that the bulls are presented in a negative light and with irony.

Passage	Bull	Site	Person	Sanctuary	Altar
1Kgs 12:29	X	*Dan*, Bethel	Jeroboam		
1 Kgs 12:32	X	Bethel	Jeroboam	X	X
2 Kgs 10:29	X	*Dan*, Bethel	Jehu		
2 Kgs 17:6	X				
2 Chr 11:15	X		Jeroboam	X	
2 Chr 13:8	X		Jeroboam		
Ex 32:4–8, 19–24,35	X	Sinai	Aaron		
Dtn 9:16, 21	X	(Horeb, v.8)	(Aaron, v. 20)		
Neh 9:18	X	(Sinai, v.13)			
Hos 8:5–6	X	Samaria			
Hos 10:5, (8)	X	Bet Aven		(X)	(X)
Hos 13:2	X				
Josiah's reform 2 Kgs 23					
v. 15		Bethel	Jeroboam	X	X
v. 19–20		Cities of Samaria	Kings of Israel	X	X

Table 4. Occurrences of bull images in the Hebrew Bible.

It is noteworthy that Dan is connected with bulls only in 1 Kgs 12:29, 30 (and 2 Kgs 10:29). They are the only verses that combines all three elements: Jeroboam, bulls, and Dan, while in verse 1 Kgs 12:31–33 Dan is already missing. Similarly, in 2 Chr 11:15 and 13:8, Jeroboam is also mentioned as the manufacturer of the bull images, but Dan is absent. According to the Chronicles, Jeroboam made several bull images to serve as gods of his people, but the locations and the number of the bulls are not given. The location of the two bulls is not clear in 1 Kgs 12:26–33 either. Although verse 29 locates one bull in Bethel and another in Dan, in verse 32 both bulls were erected in Bethel. It has been attempted to solve this discrepancy in the locations of the bulls by explaining that an older tradition included only one bull, while there being two bulls at Bethel (v. 32) is the result of later editing representing a later historical situation.[596]

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[596] Montgomery 1986, 255. He supposed that the original tradition included only one bull at Bethel. Another bull was later added in order to get the religion of the kingdom of Israel to look "clearly polytheistic" and thus to avoid confusion with the worship of Yahweh. He claims that one bull can be interpreted as a worship

A more radical solution to the problem of the one / two bulls is suggested by Juha Pakkala. Contrary to the main stream of the research, he suggests that the bulls and their connection to Jeroboam were added to the text at a very late stage. The original text did not even include Bethel. Thus, verses 28aβ – 30 (and v. 31b–33 including multiple redactional layers[597]) form the latest expansion of the passage.[598] The arguments are found in the passage itself, but the other texts of the Hebrew Bible also seem to support this view. Although many scholars have observed problems in the fluency of the passage and shifts of the focus, the existence of the bulls in the earliest form of the story had not been questioned.

Pakkala notes that the solution to Jeroboam's fear in v. 26–27 does not presuppose the bulls. The aim is to stop people going to Jerusalem in order to avoid them going over to Rehoboam, but in verses 28–30 the focus shifts to the bulls; the interest of this author is no longer on Jeroboam's original problem (v. 27a) and, therefore, it must have been written by another author.[599] Verses 28–30 also differ from v. 31–33 in style and content. The latter was written in the form of a "summarizing list" of Jeroboam's sins, while v. 28–30 is an episode which describes the story of the bulls with many words.[600] Moreover, verse 31 starts without a subject and would fluently continue the story from v. 28aα (וַיִּוָּעַץ) to 31a (וַיַּעַשׂ אֶת־בָּתֵי בָמוֹת). At the same, verse 31a continues Jeroboam's aim to prevent people from going to the temple of Jerusalem by building new sanctuaries for the Israelites. Verses 28–30 interrupt this, and include a secondary conclusion in v. 30a labeling the bulls in Bethel and Dan as the sin of Jeroboam, while the original conclusion most probably exists in 13:33–34 without any references to the bulls.[601] In earlier research, verse 30a was interpreted as an addition,[602] an interpolation from v. 13:34,[603] but Pakkala suggests that the whole section (v. 28aβ – 30) is an expansion to the earlier story in v. 26–27 and 31a,

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of Yahweh, but multiple bulls not. Similarly Smith 2007, 382–387, but he also says that this passage is based on historical facts (p.384): "both 1 Kgs 12:28 and 12:32 may yet communicate some historically valid information." He associates the story of the one bull with Jeroboam, and the later edition including plural bulls with the later historical situation after the fall of the kingdom of Israel. He also supposed the continuation of the Bethel cult from the time of Jeroboam until "post-exilic" times, and argues his views based on evidence from Upper Egypt: the Aramaic Papyrus Amherst 63 from the third century BCE (see p.141). He supposed that this community included refugees from, among other places, the area of Bethel, because the papyrus frequently refers to Bethel and its cult.

[597] See arguments in Pakkala 2008, 508–511.

[598] Pakkala 2008, 503, 505.

[599] Pakkala 2008, 505: "Jeroboam's original question does not correspond to the interests of the author behind vv. 28–30, and therefore it is unlikely that this author is behind Jeroboam's original question."

[600] Hoffmann 1980, 72. Pakkala (2008, 505) notes that despite this observation Hoffmann "fails to conclude that there is a literary critical problem between these sections."

[601] Pakkala 2008, 506–507.

[602] E.g. Noth, 1968, 284–285; Würthwein, 1985, 162, note 3; Hentschel 1984, 84.

[603] Montgomery 1986, 255; Pakkala 2008, 506.

written by the history writer. In the earlier research the bulls were included in the earliest layer of the passage, and regarded as the "most integral part of 12:26–33."[604]

Pakkala's theory is plausible, because the bulls are not mentioned as Jeroboam's sin in any other contexts. Neither are they connected to Dan and Bethel except in the texts dependent on 1 Kgs 12:26–33[605] and, actually, the appearances of bulls in cultic contexts are not numerous. They are limited to a few verses only. The prophetic legends and the conclusive condemnation of Jeroboam's rule in 1 Kgs 13, Josiah's reform in 2 Kgs 23, and the list of the reasons for the collapse of the kingdom of Israel in 2 Kgs 17 do not mention the bulls at all, but other reasons are given as the sins which led to the fall of Jeroboam's family and finally of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

An Aramaic papyrus, Amherst 63 from the Upper Egypt, yields an interesting piece of comparison material to the bull-cult of Bethel.[606] It is a liturgical text of an Aramaic speaking community perhaps from around the 3rd century BCE.[607] According to the text (column XVI:1–6),[608] at least some of its members came from Judah and Samaria, possibly from the area of Bethel, because Bethel or the god of Bethel is mentioned several times.[609] The text also contains some Hebrew words like *Adonai* and *Yaho,* and similarities with Psalm 20 (columns XI and XII). If the reading of the Aramaic text is correct, it also offers an interesting parallel with the mention of Hos 13:2 of the kissing bulls: "let them kiss [your] bull[s], let them desire your calves" (Column V, Line 12).

The interpretation of the papyrus raises several questions: for example, whether "Bethel" refers to the place-name, or to the god called Bethel, or both. It is also unclear if it contains traditions from the biblical Bethel-cult before the collapse of the first temple in Jerusalem.[610] There is a gap of several hundred years from the 6th century to the 3rd–2nd century BCE. Hence, I would ask if it rather reflects the cult of Bethel during the Hellenistic period. According to Finkelstein–Singer, habitation at Bethel revived during the 2nd century (see p. 136−138).[611] The late date for the bull-texts in the Hebrew Bible would corroborate with this Hellenistic papyrus. The verses about the bulls in the book of Hosea must also reflect the Persian–Hellenistic period, because they presuppose monotheism, the

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[604] Pakkala 2008, 501.
[605] Only 2 Kgs 10:29 connects the bulls to Dan and Bethel. Verse 2. Kings 17:16 mentions two bulls, only, while verses 2 Chr 11:15; 13:8 also mention Jeroboam as the maker of the bulls.
[606] The Aramaic text has not been published, but see the translation in Steiner 1997, 309–327. Other articles about the text: Steiner 1991, 362–363; 1995, 199–207. See also Smith 2007, 382–394.
[607] Steiner 1997, 310.
[608] Steiner 1997, 321.
[609] Steiner 1991, 363; 1997, 310 followed by Smith 2007, 384–387.
[610] See discussion in Koenen 2003, 76–79; Köhlmoos 2006, 248–250.
[611] Finkelstein & Singer-Avitz, 2009, 43.

first commandment, and the (nomistic) struggle against the other gods and idols.[612] This struggle for only one God, the birth of monotheism, has commonly been dated to the post-monarchic time.

Plenty of bovine figurines, images, and iconographic material have been found from the Bronze and Iron Age periods in the Near East, including the territory of Israel-Palestine. Although many of the objects have been found out of context or in unclear stratigraphic positions in excavations, and despite the difficulties of discerning a bull from other bovine shapes,[613] the evidence still proves the significance of the bull motif in the religious thinking of the second to first millenium BCE.[614] Most of the finds are seals, reliefs, iconographic stelae, or plaques, but figurines of clay or metal have also been found, especially in the contexts of temples of the Middle and Late Bronze Ages.[615] There are no thorough studies of the animal figures of Syria-Palestine, but Koenen lists more than 50 figurines, most of them fragments, that can be identified as a bull: 33 of the items are from Byblos, 4 from Ugarit, 1 near Tyrus, 1 from Tell Ḥalāf, 1 from Karkemisch, and 12 from Israel-Palestine (5 Hazor, 3 Megiddo, 1 Beth-Shean, 1 Reḥōv, 1 Ashkelon, 1 Samarian hills from the so-called "Bull site").[616] Three well preserved bronze figurines of small bulls have been published: one in Ashkelon inside a model shrine of the Middle Bronze IIB,[617] one in Hazor in the temple of the Late Bronze II (Area H),[618] and one in northern Samaria, on the hilltop of Dhahrat et-Tawileh, in an open cult place of Iron Age I known as the "Bull Site".[619] Furthermore, a basalt stela with a bull and moon iconography was uncovered at the Iron Age IIB gate of Bethsaida (chapter 5.2),[620] and two bronze plaques with a bull or ox figure from the Iron Age IIB context near the gate area at Tel Dan (chapter 2.3.3).[621]

Although most of the figurines, especially those of metal, are from the Middle and Late Bronze Ages, the bull likely belonged to the cult of Israel and Judah during the period of the monarchy. Both archaeological evidence and biblical research prove that their

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[612] About the nomistic theology and exile as the "turning point" see Pakkala 1999, 218–222.

[613] László 2010, 185–186.

[614] Mazar 1982, 30–32; Ornan 2001, 3–24 presents symbols of the Bull and Moon deities since the third Millennium BCE.

[615] See e.g. Keel & Üehlinger 1998; Koenen 2003, 95–130; About clay figurines of Iron Age Holland 1975. Bull figurines and images Mazar 1982, 29–32; Bernett & Keel 1998; Ornan 2001; 1–26.

[616] Koenen 2003, 106, footnote 138.

[617] Stager 1991, 24–43; 2008, 577–580. See also Koenen 2003, 105–106.

[618] Negbi 1989, 348–362. Four other figurines have been found in the new excavations at Hazor but these have not been published. Koenen 2003, 106, footnote 138.

[619] Mazar 1982, 27, 32–33; 1993, 266–267. The bull might originate from the Late Bronze Age.

[620] Arav & Freund 1998,42; Bernett & Keel 1998; 2003, 70–76; Ornan 2001, 1–26.

[621] Biran 1999, 52–54.

religion was polytheistic, not differing greatly from the other religions in the region. Monotheistic Judaism gradually developed only in the second half of the first millennium BCE.[622] During the first temple period, the bull was apparently associated with the worship of Yahweh, who was the most important deity particularly in Judah,[623] but other deities such as El and Baal were also worshipped.[624] The assimilation of the different deities or their features was also typical, such as the assimilation of El and his characteristics with Yahweh. This phenomenon is also illustrated in the iconic stela of Bethsaida.[625] It depicts the bull with moon symbolism that possibly represents the storm (bull) and lunar (moon) deities. According to Ornan, "the interchanging of divine attributes between different deities does not contradict Near Eastern religious concepts, as the polytheistic theology conceived the world as being simultaneously governed by several divine entities."[626]

Besides the question of what deity the bull represents, its broader meaning has also been debated. The bull was first seen to symbolize fertility and virility in the context of Syro-Palestinian religions.[627] Other attributes such as strength, power, military leadership, and bravery have also been associated with it.[628] Particularly in the contexts of Ex 32:4 and 1 Kgs 12:28, the bull can be understood as a symbol of emancipation from the slavery of Egypt (Ex) and the rule of Jerusalem (1 Kgs 12:26–28).[629] Taking into consideration the long time span and geographical breadth of the occurrences of the bull symbol, it is most probable that the meaning and function of the bull symbol changed over the course of time in different regions. The same concerns the unsolved debate over the question of whether the bull represented the god himself,[630] his presence,[631] his symbol, or a pedestal for the god.[632]

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[622] E.g. Grabbe 2007, 150–163; Berlejung 2007, 65–73; Collins 2004, 127; Pakkala 1999; 2010b, 18–35. Hess (2009, 296–332) presents archaeological cultic remains from the Iron Age II ("Divided Monarchy") and accepts the polytheistic features of the Israelite religions during the monarchy, although he also keeps to the biblical view of the prophetic proclamation of one God alone at the same time.

[623] See occurrences of YHWH in frequent inscriptions Grabbe 2007, 150–151.

[624] László 2010, 194–196; Gomes 2006, 25–28; Koenen 2003, 99–110; Keel & Üehlinger 1999, 191–198.

[625] Bernett & Keel 1998, 1–2, 95–96.

[626] Ornan 2001, 25. See also Bernett & Keel 1998, 32–41; László 2010, 189–190.

[627] Sweeney 2007, 177; László 2010, 180-201.

[628] Keel & Uehlinger 1998, 118–120, 191–194; Koenen 2003, 110–112, 132; Gomes 2006, 25–26; Sweeney 2007, 177; László 2010, 180–201;

[629] Keel & Uehlinger 1998, 191. Koenen (2003, 110–132) also comes to the conclusion that in the Hebrew Bible the bull primarily represents power.

[630] This is what verse 1 Kgs 12:28 designates: "ויעש שני עגלי זהב ... הנה אלהיך ישראל".

[631] E.g. Gray 1964, 290: "The golden calves were rather the places where the presence of Yahweh was visualized, like the ark in the temple in Jerusalem and the bull pedestals of Baal-Hadad in Syrian sculpture." Gray also claims that the use of the bull reflects "synchronism between the worship of Yahweh and the Canaanite nature-cult." See also Pfeiffer 1999, 43–47.

[632] E.g. Sweeney 2007, 177; Gomes 2006, 25–26; Kittel 1900, 109: "... kann der Stier nur als Symbol der Gottheit gemeint sein."

It is evident that the bull cult does not emerge in the biblical context as a new invention, but that it had its background in the traditions of the Near Eastern religions.[633] But why did it appear, and why was it portrayed in a negative light in the biblical texts? Due to the evidence introduced in this chapter, there is no doubt that the bull cult was, to a certain degree, a reality in Iron Age Israel-Palestine, and at the time of the composition of these biblical texts. The most natural reason for the negative attitude is expressed in the first and second commandments of the Decalogue: the prohibition to have, make, or worship other gods (Dtn 5:7–10). According to Veijola, the prohibition to make idols (Dtn 5:8/ Ex 20:4) is a later addition to the first commandment "you shall have no other gods before me" that he dates not earlier than the 7th–6th century BCE.[634]

The Sin(s) of Jeroboam. "The sin(s)[635] of Jeroboam, son of Nebat" is a peculiar feature in the books of Kings. Its appearance is limited only to these books of the Hebrew Bible. Almost all the kings of Israel are condemned on the basis that they did "what was wrong in the eyes of Yahweh" and "walked in the way of Jeroboam and in his sin(s)"[636] or "did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam, son of Nebat"[637]. Jeroboam's sin is referred to 17 times, with slight variations, and 1 Kgs 12:26–33 forms the basis upon which all the other passages are dependent.[638] However, it is not usually said what the sin or sins of Jeroboam actually were. Only 1 Kgs 12:26–30 (and 2 Kgs 10:29) assigns the golden bulls of Bethel and Dan to the sin of Jeroboam. The other references do not explain what Jeroboam's sin/s.

The present form of the passage 1 Kgs 12:26–33 gives the impression that Jeroboam's sin was apostasy from Yahve, because of the bulls he made. However, the research into the passage indicates that the text was edited several times, and it is likely that the bull in the religion of Monarchic Israel represented the worship of Yahweh, *not* apostasy from him.[639] Most probably, the interpretation of apostasy is from the hand of the later editor(s),[640] and the earlier texts rather criticized the place of the worship and the building of high places

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[633] Keel & Uehlinger 1998, 194; Ornan 2001, 1–26. Older research placed the origin of the bull cult in Egypt, e.g. Kittel 1900, 109–110, but already in the 19th centuary some scohlars (e.g. W. Vatke 1835, A. Dillmann) presented that it has its backgound in local cultures in Syria-Palestine. László 2010, 181–182.

[634] Veijola 1993, 77, 88, 92–93.

[635] "Sin of Jeroboam2 appears both in singular and plural forms in 1 – 2 Kings.

[636] 1 Kgs 15:26, 34; 16:19, 26, 31; 22:53.

[637] 2 Kgs 3:3; 10:29, 31; 13:2, 6, 11; 14:24; 15:9, 18, 24,28; 17:21–22; 23:15. Note the difference between the First and Second Kings: to walk in the way of Jeroboam and in his sin (1Kgs); to turn away from the sin of Jeroboam (2 Kgs) except 2 Kgs 23: 15. See McKenzie 1991, 124.

[638] Pakkala 2002, 86.

[639] Gray 1964, 290; Pakkala 2002, 88; Bartusch 2003, 208; Gomes 2006, 25–26; Sweeney 2007, 177.

[640] Pakkala associates this with DtrN (at earliest the late 6th century BCE). Pakkala 2002, 87–88; 2008, 523–524. In my view, the bulls could be dated even later (the fifth–fourth century BCE).

outside Jerusalem and its temple (v.31).[641] It is also likely that the bulls in the passage represents the latest editing of the text, as suggested by Pakkala,[642] and that *the sin of Jeroboam* usually refers to something other than the bulls. However, the sin of Jerobeam is not explained. I agree with Kratz, who finds in this passage the etiology of the sin of Jeroboam, which is the basic element in the book of Kings.[643]

Summary: Intentions and motives of the passage

The analyses of 1 Kgs 12:25–33 prove that the passage contains divergent intentions, motives, and surprising shifts from one matter to another, and was most probably combined from various sources and traditions.[644] Hence, the passage does not reflect the reality of the kingdom of Israel during the early kings of Israel and Judah, but rather Judahite religious thinking[645] in which different religious and ideological views from different times are interwoven together. While some scholars find the whole passage a fiction,[646] some are more optimistic and discern the use of earlier sources, and also find historically valid information on the religion of the kingdom of Israel.[647] In my opinion, it is not necessary to deny the historicity of Jeroboam as the first king of the kingdom of Israel, but what we know about him and his time is very little, and writing any history of this period faces serious challenges.[648] The theological-ideological views of this passage are from later periods, from the post-monarchical times.

The intention of the text is to explain that the reason of the failure and fall of the kingdom of Israel was its incorrect religious practices and apostasy from Yahweh (representing the theological thinking of post-monarchical Judah). The passage intends to prove that its failure was sealed from the very beginning of the kingdom by the wrongful

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[641] DtrH (the early/mid 6th century BCE). Pakkala 2002, 87–89; 2008, 522–523. Würthwein 1985, 162 also states that Jerusalem was the only legitimate site for the temple or sancuary for DtrG (=DtrH, the early 6th century BCE).

[642] Pakkala 2008, 522–523.

[643] Kratz 2005, 160–163, 165.

[644] Long (1984, 141–142) points out that this passage is "a literary miscellany, a compilation of different traditions carried by various genres."

[645] See Würthwein 1985, 150, 162–163.

[646] E.g. Hoffman (1980, 73) claims that the passage is a deuteronomistic fiction. See also Thompson 1992; Lemche 1998; Davies 1992, 1997.

[647] E.g. Bartusch (2003, 208): "by 'reading between the lines' one may be able to reconstruct the actual, historical character of Jeroboam's tenth-century cult." He thinks that Jeroboam indeed made cultic reforms, but without adding any foreign or radical new ideas. His aim was to "secure control of the nascent kingdom in the north, not alienate his constituency." In his opinion the negative connotation derives from later (deuteronomistic) Judahite redaction (p.209–210).

[648] Pakkala 2010; Grabbe 2007 excludes Jeroboam I and the late 10th century in his history of Israel: *Ancient Israel. What Do We Know and How Do We Konw It?*

deeds of its first king, Jeroboam. The passage presents several reasons that most probably represent different theological or ideological traditions: the abandonment of the temple of Jerusalem (theological and political reason, v. 27), the manufacture of the golden bulls (v. 28), establishing high places and sanctuaries (v. 31–33), accepting other priests than the Levites (v. 31), sacrificing to the bulls (v. 32), establishing his own feast, and acting as a priest by making sacrifices (v. 33).

As discussed above, I suppose that the earliest story included the abandonment of the Jerusalem temple and establishing the other sanctuaries, which were needed to replace the temple. It is hard to believe that a bull image had replaced the temple, but a sanctuary or sanctuaries would have been needed (v. 31 a). Adding the bulls to the story (v. 28aβ –30) is the work of another group of authors, and this group was aware of the Exodus-story and the First Commandment. The idea of setting the bulls at Dan and Bethel, the northernmost and southernmost cities of the kingdom of Israel, may have its roots in the same ideology as the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" that will be examined in chapter 4.3.1.

4.2.2. Jehu's sin in 2 Kgs 10:29

29 However, Jehu did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to sin, from[a] the golden bulls that were in Bethel[b] and Dan[a].

29a. This seems to be an addition in MT.
29b. In MT: בֵּית־אֵל, many manuscripts correct בְּבֵית־אֵל.

This verse is commonly considered to be an addition to the conclusive summary of king Jehu's regnal years (10:28–31, 34–36), but scholars have different opinions about the number of edits within the passage v. 28–31 and the development of the text. For example, Gray presupposed two redactors, one for v. 28–29 and another for v. 30–31. Würthwein and Hentschel discern several text layers with secondary glosses (especially v. 29b). Pakkala assigned v. 29a to the same author-editor as the story in v. 18–28. He pointed out that the section v.18–29 interrupts the story of the elimination of Ahab's family by King Jehu, and explains v. 29a as a transition by which the editor attemped to incorporate his story into the older text, while v. 29b was added later.[649] I find Pakkala's solution most convincing.

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[649] Gray 1964, 508; Würthwein 1984, 342–343; Hentschel 1985, 49–50; Pakkala 2008, 512. Otherwise e.g. Hobbs 1985, 123–124 and Long 1991, 142–145, who do not attempt to trace earlier sources or editing, but deal with the texts in their present form. Hobbs does not date the text at all, but mentions that the references to the sins of Jeroboam are "editorial comments" in order explain the reason for the fall of Israel. Long finds

Despite these differences, scholars agree that verses 34–36 form the original closing statement of Jehu's reign.[650] There is also consensus that the rest of the verse (29b), עגלי הזהב אשר בית־אל ואשר בדן, is evidently a gloss, as also noted in BHS.[651] It is loosely connected to the previous sentence, and has the character of a later explanatory remark for v. 29a.[652] It was likely added to the earlier expansion of the text. Its purpose was to explain what the commentator's opinion was about the sins of Jeroboam: the golden bulls at Bethel and Dan were his sins. This late gloss is undoubtly dependent on 1 Kings 12:28–30 and, thus, they both likely derive from the same author or school of religous ideology. Hence, this verse does not yield any further information on the analysis of 1 Kings 12: 25–33.

4.2.3. Setting up an idol at Dan: Judg. 18:27–31

Translation and Notes

[27] The Danites took[a] what Micah had made and the priest who belonged to him and came against[b] Laish, against[b] the undisturbed and confident people. They smote them by the sword and burned down the city.
[28] There was no deliverer because it was far from Sidon and they had no dealings with anyone[a]. It was in the Valley that belonged to Beth-Rehov. They rebuilt the city and settled down in it.
[29] They named the city Dan after[a] their ancestor who was born to Israel[b], but the name of the city was formerly Laish.
[30] The Danites raised the idol for themselves. Jonathan, son of Gershom, son of Moses[a], and his sons were priests for the tribe of Dan until the time of the captivity of the land.
[31] They set up for themselves the idol of Micah that he had made [and kept it] as long as there was the house of God at Shilo[a].

27a. Two medieval manuscripts adds הַפֶּסֶל (*the idol*) proposing the reading: "took the idol that Micah had made".
27b. According to MT עַל, (*against*) LXX, Peshitta, Vulgata and many medieval manuscripts, read אֶל, (*unto*). The MT reading עַל is preferred because it fits to the context and is systematically used.
28a. MT: אָדָם. Another reading: אֲרָם in LXX Symmachus and many medieval manuscripts. However, most of the important manuscripts of LXX also read אָדָם.

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the passage v. 28–36 "a literary composition of the Dtr writer who offers a series of statements to conclude the regnal period of Jehu" (p. 144). He dates the whole passage to the "time of exile".
[650] E.g. Fritz 1998, 58; Würthwein 1984, 343; Hentschel 1984, 49. Hobbs (1985, 126) also labels v. 34–36 as "the concluding formula to Jehu's reign" although he does not separate any text layers of different ages.
[651] Thus e.g. Gray 1964;508, note a: 2As the syntax suggests, this is a later gloss."; Montgomery 1986, 412; Würthwein 1984, 342; Hentschel 1985, 50; Fritz 1998, 49; Pakkala 2008, 512.
[652] Pakkala (2008, 512) supposed that this was originally a marginal note that was not meant to be included in the text.

29a. MT: בְּשֵׁם but translated according to many manuscripts of LXX כְּשֵׁם κατὰ τὸ ὄνομα that fits better to this context. Thus also Josh. 19:47

29b. Israel = Jacob.

30a. Many manuscripts adds the letter *nun* (with variants of suspended / not suspended *nun*) to the name "Moshe" (*mšh*) between *mem* and *šin* yielding the reading Manasseh (*mⁿšh/ mnšh)* instead of Moshe. Moshe is the more probable on the basis of LXX, the Vulgate and the few medieval manuscripts and because *nun* seems to be later added.

31a. BHS: also suggested בְּשֵׁלְוֶה and בְּלְיָשָׁה.

Contents and Context of Judges 17–18 in the Book of Judges

The story of the conquest of Dan and the establishment of the cultic object in Jdg 18:27–31 is part of the larger narrative or series of episodes that have been linked together constituting chapters 17–18. In chapter 17, the scene is the house of Micah in the hill country of Ephraim with his sanctuary, idols, images (17:5), and the Levite priest (17:9–13). The focus of chapter 18 is on the tribe of Dan searching for a new place to settle down in. The Danites migrate from the south nearby Judah (v. 18:11–12) northwards, until reaching Laish / Dan, which they conquer. On their way they rob Micah's sanctuary and take his priest (18:13–20). They place Micah's idol and images in the rebuilt and renamed city of Dan, where the priest serves them "until the time of the captivity of the land" (18:27–30) / "as long as there was the of God in Shilo" (v.31b). In chapters 19–21 there is another set of stories which includes no reference to that of chapters 17–18: the rape at Gibeah by the Benjaminites, the punishment of Gibeah, the war against the Benjaminites, and saving them from an extinction.

The narratives in chapters 17–18 and 19–21 are independent and do not have much in common with the core stories of the book of Judges in chapters 3–16. Among other things, they lack "judges". They also lack the elements of divine guidance and judgment, except Yahweh's promise to let the Danites succeed in their affairs (18:5–6). The emphasis is on tribal history. Furthermore, there is no mention of Israelites, no individual heroes, and no oppressed people in need of being saved. The pattern that the Israelite are punished (distressed by enemies) after having done evil things (apostasy from Yahweh and his law, especially the first commandment) and then saved by the judge after crying out for Yahweh and enjoying peace in the life-time of that savior-judge,[653] typical of chapters 2–16, is absent in chapters 17–21. Likewise, these chapters lack the demand of obedience to Yahweh and his law. Theologically, these chapters seem to be rather neutral or profane, in

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[653] About the literary pattern which constitutes the book, see e.g. Ahlström 1993, 375; Kratz 2005, 187–188; McConville 2006, 117–118; Grabbe 2007, 99.

contrast to chapters 2–16.[654] On the other hand, the formula *in those days there was no king in Israel* appears only in the last chapters (Jdg 17:6, 18:1, 19:1, 21:25). Moreover, when the contents of the whole book are taken into consideration, the story of the Danite migration is in an odd place. From the thematic point of view, it would belong to chapters 1–2 in which the conquests and territories of each tribe are described.[655]

Due to these differences compared to the rest of the book, I find chapters 17–21 an attachment to the book of Judges, as do most scholars. Usually the book is divided into three units: the transition from the book of Joshua (1–3:6), stories of the judges (3:7–16), and an attachment (17–21).[656] However, some scholars suggest that chapters 1+19–21 (Boling) or 1+17–21 (Gross, Kratz) form the framework, which they argue represents the latest stage of the composition of the Judges, from the 6th or even as late as the 5th – 4th centuries BCE.[657] Whether the first chapter (or two first chapters) were added at the same time as an attachment, cannot be said.

The Book of Judges, the "Period of Judges" and Its Historicity

Before dealing with Judges (17)18, the overall book of Judges will be briefly discussed, because its character, and the historicity and dating of its stories have been greatly disputed. Thus, the existence of the "biblical" period labeled as the "period of judges" or the "pre-monarchic period"[658] has become questionable for many reasons. For example, the violent conquest of the land of Israel - representing the beginning of this period in the Bible – is unlikely (see chapter 1.4); Judges 3–16 is comprised of many independent local stories that are timeless in nature, and were most probably gathered together by later biblical editors in order to create the "history" of "all Israel".[659] The stories do not form a

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[654] However, it is noteworthy that the divine judgements in chapters 2–16 are seemingly from the hands of the later redactors; the original hero stories are quite "profane", "timeless legends" when the redactional layers are omitted around the individual basic stories. See Kratz 2005, 187–188.

[655] Moore 1949, xxix–xxx.

[656] Moore 1949, xii; Gray 1967, 204; Görg 1993, 5; Yee 1995a, 3–5;Block, 1999 (see contents); Matthews 2004, 6–10. Moore's and Görg's division of the book: 1–2:5, 2:6–16, 17–21. Burney (1920, 410) also found chapters 17–18, 19–21 attachment added by "the post-exilic redactor."

[657] Bowling 1969, 30; Gross 2009, 91; Kratz 2005, 196:2. Finally, the appendices describing tribal history in Jdg 1 and Jdg 17–18; 19–21 attach themselves around the narratives about the judges in Jdg 2–16 as though there were no Deuteronomistic scheme of judges or era of the judges." Within chapters 2–16 Kratz distinguishes plenty of redactional layers around the scanty source material (Jdg 3:15, 16–26; 4:4–22; 6:11–24; 7:(1b), 8b–22; 8:4–21; 9:1–54; 11:1–11a; 13:2–24; 14:1–15, 8, 9–19; 16:1–30) that originally were "timeless legends and thus completely unconnected episodes". He states that these episodes were gradually collected into a single epoch, "the epoch of 'judges' of Israel". Thus, this epoch"is not a historical fact but a redactional construction". See p. 188, 193–197, 202–209.

[658] The terms used by e.g. Burney 1920, lv, 253; Bright 1981, 173; Aharoni 1982, 153 (the settlement and the Judges), Mazar A. 1992, 281; 1990, 295 ("the days of Judge").

[659] It is argued by several scholars that the stories seem to have originally been local folkloristic tales. The

coherent picture of one era, or include any hints for absolute dating, but would fit in any period.[660]

Ahlström pointed out that the labels "judges" and "pre-monarchic", which derive from the biblical narratives, are misleading.[661] They are problematic both from the biblical and historical point of view. First, the "judge" (Hebrew *šōfēṭ, šōf e ṭīm*) of the book of Judges is actually something other than a "judge". He was a local ruler or hero, not only a judge. The word *šōfēṭ* is also used as a synonym for a king or prince.[662] Moreover, the *šōfēṭ* of the Judges is often a military leader, or savior, who delivers the oppressed people from the hands of their enemies. Hence, the difference between a judge and a king in the Hebrew Bible is not at all clear,[663] and the "period of the judges" looks like an artificially created "pre-history" of the "biblical" kingdom of David-Solomon.

Although there is no extra-biblical evidence to support the historicity of the events presented in the book of Judges, a number of scholars consider that it indeed contains some historically relevant information, or echoes from the reality of "early Israel" (12th century BCE) carried by the biblical traditions through "collective memory".[664] Some scholars date the stories and their historical setting to the time of the "Davidic–Solomonic kingdom" (10th century BCE),[665] or later periods,[666] while some find the book as a whole a literary-

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later editors expanded them to concern "all Israel". This seems artificial, because the stories themselves do not include any such hints. On the contrary, they portray "judges" that ruled over the rather limited areas in the central hill country, or in Gilead and the Transjordan only. Ahlström (1993, 373) dates this stage of redaction to the period of the United Monarchy, which he finds historical: "in the later narrator's historiographic reconstruction, have been made leaders of 'all Israel'. This pan-Israelite ideology is the result of the Davidic–Solomonic kingdom's short rule over Palestine. In making the 'judges' rulers of 'all Israel' the narrator also 'created' a nation Israel long before it ever existed. This kind of historiography also required a chronology; thus, the 'judges', or 'saviours', as some of them are called, are said to have followed each other." See also Kratz 2005, 187–192. I find Ahlström's view convincing, but would date the redactions to the later periods.

[660] The presentation of the successive "judges" (Jdg 3–16) presupposed the chronology according to which the individual stories of the judges were arranged. In all probability, this chronology was artificially created by the redactors, because the stories themselves do not give any hints about relative or absolute dating. In addition, the round number of 40 years' rule for some of the judges gives the impression of an artificially fashioned chronology. See Ahlström 1993, 373, 375–376; Grabbe 2007, 98–100; Kratz 2005, 187–192.

[661] Ahlström 1993, 371.

[662] One of the tasks of the king (*melek*) was also to act as a judge, (*šfṭ*), see 2. Sam. 15:4; 1 Kgs 7:7).

[663] Ahlström 1993, 371–373; Niehr 1995, 408–428; Yee 1995a, 2.

[664] Thus e.g. Bloch-Smith & Nakhai 1999; Bloch-Smith 2003; Berlejung 2007, 94–95; Bray (2006, 138) dates the final formulation of Judg. 18 to the 7th century, but he supposes that it carries "an ancient memories of the foundation of the shrine." Block (1999, 25–26) represents a very conservative view concerning the historical reliability of the biblical texts. He finds the book of Judges itself "the most helpful source for reconstructing the history of this period." However, he presents different views in p. 44–51.

[665] E.g. Ahlström 1993, 373.

[666] Guillaume (2004, 258) dates the oldest part of the book to the 8th century, and the rest of the book to the 7th–5th centuries BCE, the integration of the book of Joshua and Samuel and the creation of the "period of Judges" to around 200 BCE, and the latest additions to around 150 BCE. See also Becker 1990.

fictional product of the scribal school from the Persian / Hellenistic period.[667] Even those who claim that the book reflects the reality of the 13rd –11st centuries BCE admit that the so-called "*historical facts*" are difficult to discern from the purely fictional, literary, or theological elements of the text, and that it is even more difficult to date them.[668] Therefore, the book of Judges cannot be used as a source for the reconstruction of the history of the end of the second millennium.[669] The final form of the book is seemingly the product of several redactors from different times.[670] As Kratz says, "the redactional passages dominate the structure of the book[671] ... It is the framework scheme which first brings together what are timeless legends and thus completely unconnected episodes into a single epoch in the history of Israel, the epoch of the 'judges' of Israel, which precedes the epoch of the kings of Israel and Judah. Consequently the epoch of the judges is not a historical fact but a redactional construction."[672] Or, in other words by Ahlström: "The 'history' we find in the book of Judges, therefore, is as an ideological reconstruction and as such is a product of the later pure-Yahwistic circles. Thus, the goal of the book is not to present history but to advocate a religious ideal."[673]

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[667] Thompson 1992; Davies 1992; Spronk (2009, 147–149; 2011, 195, 198) represents the opinion that the intention of the book of Judges was not to report authentic events, but to connect the books of Joshua and Samuel and thus to fill the gap in the biblical narrative between them. He claims that the book was created from the prophetic point of view rather than that of history, and tentatively dates the latest composition of the book to the early Hellenistic period (Spronk 2009:149).

[668] For example, Judges and Joshua have different theological-ideological motives that can be seen in the way they describe the conquered territories: Jdg 1 gives a much longer list of non-conquered territories. Thus, the book of Judges portrays a more pessimistic picture of the Israelite conquest of the land than the book of Joshua. Furthermore, the stories are mainly located in the central hill country, Gilead and Philistine territory (chapters 2–17, 19–21), not "all Israel". Only the Danite migration to the north as far as Dan is an exception (chapter 18). Probably the ideology is to show the weakness and moral decline of the time before "there was no king in Israel". See Rake, Mareike (2006), Juda wird aufsteigen! Untersuchungen zum ersten Kapitels des Richterbuches. BZAW 367, Berlin.

[669] This is expressed by Grabbe (2007, 99–100) so that he, on the one hand, admits the possibility of the historical authenticity of the general picture of the book of Judges but, on the other hand, he emphasizes the difficulty of demonstrating any details in history. Thus, he concludes that "the book is generally too problematic to use as a historical source".

[670] Collins 2004, 203–213; Matthews 2004, 6–7; Grabbe 2007, 99–100; See a short research history of the book of Judges in Thompson 1992, 96–105.

[671] Kratz 2005, 187. In some points, the later editorial comments and commentaries are rather easy to isolate from the basic stories; for example, the literary-theological pattern that frames almost every story of the individual "judges" in chapters 3–16: apostasy from Yahweh, punishment, cry for Yahweh and saving act by the "judge" followed by a time of peace. This theological frame is introduced in 2:1–5 and seemingly represents the deuteronomistic redaction. On deuteronomistic ideology see Noth 1981 (1957), 89–99; Soggin 1981, 7; Mayes 1989, 9–13; Römer 2005, 110–111, 114,-116.

[672] Kratz 2005, 188.

[673] Ahlström 1993, 376.

Discussion of the Passage and Chapter (17–)18

The difficulty in interpreting and explaining the narrative of the Danite migration to Dan in Judges 18 is illustrated by the greatly differing opinions of scholars. The date given to this story varies from the 12th–11th centuries (especially in the early research in early twentieth century) to the Hellenistic period (the research since 1990s). Also, different concepts about the composition of the text (sources / redactions), its incorporation into the book of Judges, and the historical background of the story have been suggested. The disputed issues also include whether or not chapters 17–18 belonged to the corpus of "deuterenomistic history". For all of these issues the research has yielded a great number of various explanations, which are now introduced partly chronologically and partly thematically. It is apparent that the focus of the research has moved from the question of *what really happened and when* to the questions: *in which situation was the text written / edited? When, why and by whom? What are the theological-ideological motives behind the text?*

Report of historical events, or fictional literature? In the research of the early 20th century, chapter 18 was usually found to be a narrative of real events from the 12th –11th centuries BCE. It was supposed to carry authentic memories of the events of the early, "pre-monarchic" Israel, even if the narrative had been written sometime later.[674] The narrative was described to be "among the oldest in the book" without traces of deuteronomistic redactions.[675] Or, it was found to be "a genuine old tradition" that was added to the book of Judges by a later deuteronomistic redactor "without deutoronomic comment".[676] This view was also presented by Noth and followed by many until Veijola in the 1970s found several deuteronomistic features in chapters 17–21 and suggested that the *attachment* (chapters 17–21) was an essential part of the deuteronomistic history.[677] Veijola's view was also supported by some scholars.[678] For example, Ahlström said that it was an essential part of the deuteronomistic history that led from the stories of Judges to those of Eli, Samuel, Saul, and finally to the kingdom of David.[679]

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[674] Burney (1920, 416–417) assigns the narratives of chapters 17–18 to J and E sources. He states that chapter 18 "relate to events which took place very early in the period covered by the Book of Judges."; Moore 1949, xxx–xxxi, 398–401; Gray 1967, 237–239; Boling 1975, 32, 258.

[675] Moore 1949, xxiv–xxx.

[676] Gray 1967, 237(–239); Boling 1975, 30–32, 258.

[677] Veijola 1977, 15-27.

[678] Mayes 1989, 13–16; Soggin 1981, 4-5, 270–278; Ahlström 1993, 377; Matthews 2004, 6–7, 167–168.

[679] Ahlström 1993, 377: "chapters 17–21 are thus a meaningful part of the deuteronomistic history and not an addition. This material should be seen as leading to the stories about Eli and Samuel and, finally, Saul, who in his turn is the literary introitus to the Davidic kingdom, the climax of the deuteronomistic composition."

In later research, chapters 17–21 have usually been regarded either as the product of the 7th century BCE[680] or as an "exilic" or "post-deuteronomistic" reflection of the past, having its historical setting in the time when it was written, not before late 6th–5th centuries BCE.[681] There are different opinions of whether these texts, however, carry some memories from the "pre-monarchic" period (12th–11the centuries BCE), or whether they mirror some later times during or just before the time of its writing. Some scholars emphasize that the Danite migration to Dan is an etiological story. Thus Bartusch,[682] who claims that this fictional etiology was created in order to explain the origin of the city of Dan during the time of David and Solomon.

Bartusch states that the intention of the author was to attach both the southern territory of the Danites and northern Dan to the land of Israel. In his hypothesis, the southern site was the original territory of the Danites, while the etiology was needed to explain why there was another Dan in the north that happened to have the same name.[683] This earliest story was written in the 10th century during the time of Jeroboam 1 in the kingdom of Israel, in order to defend Jeroboam's religious innovations at Dan, which Bartusch regards as historical facts. It was originally politically and religiously neutral.[684] Later, the story was edited twice in the late 10th–early 9th centuries BCE. The second revision was made soon after the death of Jeroboam in Judah, when the etiological story took on its negative features, which aimed to criticize the kingdom of Israel and make it seem ridiculous.[685] Matthews and Bray prefer the explanation that the etiology was primarily cultic. It was intended to explain the origin of the cult at Dan.[686] Both of them are of opinion that the etiology is not totally fictional, but also includes some echoes from real events of the more distant past. I agree with the view that the migration story of the Danites is etiological, both

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[680] Yee 1995b, 152, 154–155; Guillame 2004, 258–259; Bray 2006, 138.

[681] Görg 1993, 7; Becker 1990, 253; Römer (2005, 138) finds Judg. 17-18 and 19-21 "as post-Deuteronomistic pieces that were added in order to create an independent book of Judges (without the Samuel Stories)." Gross 2009, 91–92 also finds the late monarchic period possible, but not earlier. Spronk 2009, 147–149 finds it possible that the book of Judges is a scribal work of the early Hellenistic Jewish scribes that intended to collect and edit the prophetic texts and produce "an authorative version of the history of Israel."

[682] Bartusch proposes two possible scenarios of the birth of the story. One scenario is the "traditional," according to which the story is a historically valid description of the Danites' migration to Dan in the 12th – 11th century BCE, known by king Jeroboam. The scenario mainly follows that of early research by Burney 1920 and Moore 1949, who presupposed two sources (J and E) for the narrative of 17–18. Another scenario includes a more critical view that three layers can be distinguished in the story. The latter scenario is presented here. See Bartusch 2003, 181–182.

[683] Bartusch 2003, 190–191.

[684] Bartusch 2003, 202.

[685] Bartusch 2003, 185–186, 191, 198–200. Bartusch desribes the second revision as "a Judean polemic against Israel's sanctuary at Dan" (p. 198).

[686] Matthews 2004, 514; Bray 2006, 42–43. Bray describes the story as a "cultic legend" but also secondarily calls it a "tribal legend".

in explaining the name of the city (well−illustrated by v. 29) and the cult of Dan, but such an early date for the story is unlikely (see my conclusions in the end of this chapter).

Origin of the Danites. One of the disputed topics concerns the origin of the tribe of Dan. In the 1960s, a Greek and Mediterranean origin for the Danites was suggested, and they were identified with one of the groups of the Sea Peoples (see Jdg 5:17).[687] Although this connection is impossible to prove, it is true that the Hebrew Bible depicts the Danites as a somehow foreign group. The biblical texts demonstrate a complex attitude towards them; on the one hand they are presented as distant outsiders, but on the other hand the tribe of Dan is included in the twelve tribes of Israel. The role of being outsiders is described in many ways. The Danites had difficulty finding their own territory (Jdg 1:34, 18:1, Josh 19:47–48), they lost their territory in the south (Jdg 18:2), and their migration to Dan is purposefully presented in a negative light (originally or by the later redactors). They had their own cult (v. 18:30), with priests and an idol that was twice stolen. It was first made with the stolen silver (17:2–4) and, secondly, the Danites stole it from the house of Micah (18:15–20). The Danites are presented as brutal attackers and destroyers of the peaceful and unsuspecting people of Laish.[688]

In chapter 18, the Danites are not called Israelites, and the references that they were part of Israel occur only in the editorial comments in 18:1 and in 18:30. On the other hand, as Judges 18 demonstrates, some biblical author-editors wanted to tie the Danites to "all Israel" and the city of Dan to Israel, as illustrated by the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" (Jdg 20:1). Bartusch points out that Judges 18 is the only narrative which unifies the scattered and individual traditions of the tribe of Dan, its ancestor Dan, the son of Jacob, and the city of Dan.[689] This is best presented in v. 28–29, which is continued by the account of the tribal cult of the Danites at Dan. Hence, the "Danites" might well be a group that was assimilated with the descendants of Jacob and the tribes of Israel at a rather late stage of the composition of the biblical texts, at least concerning the tradition of the "northern Danites".

Unity or disunity of the text. It is reasonable to consider the most striking inconsistencies in the present form of the narrative, some of them already mentioned above. These are, for

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[687] The group called "Dannuna" in the Medinet Habu reliefs was associated with the Danites by Gordon 1963, 20–21 and Yadin 1968, 9–23. See discussion in Dothan 1992, 215–218.
[688] Gross 2009, 788–789, 794–795.
[689] Bartusch 2003, 177.

example, that the definition of the priest as a Levite disappears after v. 18:15, the sudden appearance of the proper name Jonathan and his ancestors in v. 30, and the two endings of the story (v. 30 and 31). Furthermore, while the molded or carved idol covered with silver (*pesel ūmassēḵā*) appears together with the other images (*tᵉrāfîm*) and *ephod* in verses 17:4–5; 18:14, 18, 20 (without *massēḵā*), in the passage 18:27–31 only the idol (*pesel* v. 30) or Micah's idol (v. 31) is mentioned. In v. 24, Micah, however, talks about "my gods" (*ᵉlōhay*), which might refer to the other images and / or ephod. The claim in v. 28 that the city had no affairs with other nations conflicts with the archaeological material of Tel Dan, which illustrates a lively trade relationship in several directions, particularly to the coastal area (see chapter 2).[690] The narrative also conflicts with other biblical texts in some points, for example, 1 Kgs 12:25–33 (see below). Although the inconsistencies do not self-evidently prove the different sources behind the narrative, they indicate editing and changes in the text over the course of time. However, it is difficult if not impossible to reconstruct the development of the narrative, except for the obvious editorial comments that are later added, such as 17:6 and 18:1 (*"in those days there was no king in Israel"*).

Ideological approach. The book of Judges has been an ideal object to test different methods, such as narrative and ideological criticism, contextual theology, or the feministic approach.[691] This is due to its folkloristic and narrative character, and it also offers a variety of charismatic and caricatured characters. Research has shown that the methods of historical criticism can only partly explain the book, which includes timeless stories and legends. The questions of why and when chapters 17–18 were written have been examined by using ideological critics, for example by Gale A. Yee (1995)[692] and Yairah Amit (1990).[693]

Yee states that the most obvious and important motive in chapters 17–21 is to show the moral decline during the period when "there was no king in Israel" and "everyone did what was correct in his own eyes" (17:6; 18:1; 19,1; 21:25). This is depicted as a period of cultic (chapters 17–18) and social chaos (chapters 19–21). According to Yee, the cultic chaos is described with the following features: the disintegration of Israel's cult, making the cult of Dan ridiculous by creating the story of the stolen idol made of stolen silver, the

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[690] Thus also Bartusch 2003, 180, footnote 265.
[691] See e.g. *Judges and Method*. Ed. Gale A. Yee (1995), Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
[692] Yee, Gale A. (1995), "Ideological Criticism: Judges 17–21 and the dismembered Body." *Judges & Method. New Approaches in Biblical Studies.* Ed. Gale A. Yee. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 146–170.
[693] Amit, Yairah (1990), "Hidden Polemic in the Conquest fo Dan: Judges XVII–XVIII." Vetus Testamentum LX/1, 4–20.

robbing of the private shrine in the hill country of Ephraim and buying its priest (18:17–20), the name of the owner of this shrine was Micah / Micahyahu, "who is like Yahweh?", and finally the Danites are depicted as a brutal people who attacked the peaceful and helpless city and inhabitants of Laish.

By the description of this anarchic and chaotic period, the author intended to defend and legitimize the kingship, particularly those of the ideal kings, David, Josiah, and his religious reforms. Thus, the primary point of the story was ideological propaganda on behalf of the Judahite Davidic dynasty, against the corrupted kingdom of Israel. The aim was to combine Israel and Judah under this same, legitimate rule, confirmed by Yahweh, and at the same "to break up the tribal body in service to the monarchy...to stabilize monarchic sovereignty"[694]. Yee finds the fractured body of the concubine of the Levite priest in Judg. 20:29 "an ideological symbol of the tribal disintegration."[695] An important motive was also to defend the cult of Jerusalem against its rivals in Bethel, Dan, and elsewhere in the north. Although Bethel is not mentioned, it is counted amongst the criticized places (see below "the hidden polemic" presented by Amit). Yee regards chapters 17–21 as "a literary production of the pre-exilic Deuteronomist" which has its historical setting during the time of King Josiah, thus being written during the 7th century BCE.[696]

Amit's article is based on the idea that the primary purpose of Jdg 17–18 was a hidden polemic against the cult of Bethel.[697] The hidden polemic was used on the one hand as a rhetorical method, but on the other hand it was chosen because open critiques were too dangerous. She also dates the writing of Jdg 17–18 to the time of Josiah, after the collapse of the kingdom of Israel. Because, according to her, the cult of Bethel continued, but Dan was devastated after the collapse, open critiques were possible against Dan but too dangerous against Bethel.[698] Although Amit is wrong in this matter in the light of the archaeological evidence, which indicates just the opposite view as shown above (Dan was rebuilt during the Assyrian period, but there was probably a gap in the habitation of Bethel at this time), Amit's idea of the hidden critiques and its supporting arguments deserves closer examination.

Amit assumes that the story was written from the Judahite perspective, in order to prove that the cult of Jerusalem was the only correct and accepted one. The rivals had to be

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[694] Yee 1995b, 167.
[695] Yee 1995b, 167.
[696] Yee 1995b, 152–167.
[697] Amit 1990, 4, 19–20.
[698] Amit 1990, 18–19.

defamed. She divides the polemic implied in the narrative into three types: open direct
design, open indirect design, and hidden polemics. The open, direct polemic is expressed
by the verse "in those days there was no king in Israel." Although this seems to be a
neutral statement, Amit says that the reader can easily find the negative meaning on the
basis of its context. The "period of Judges" conflicts the religious and moral ideals, values,
and norms that are familiar in the other biblical texts, and therefore the period without a
king is morally and religiously a bad time. The indirect open critiques are expressed by the
narrator in indirect ways, not through straightforward words, but by the events and the
words or deeds of the characters; for example, the presentation of Micah as a thief, an idol
made of stolen silver, Micah's appointment of his own son as a priest, and the Danites as
robbers and brutal destroyers of the unsuspecting people of Laish.[699]

The hidden polemic only includes indirect hints as to the subjects that are criticized.
Although Bethel is not mentioned, according to Amit, there are plenty of hints in the story
that Bethel, and not Dan, was the real target of the critiques. She claims that in the
narrator's mind the cult of Bethel was the source of the corrupted cult of the kingdom of
Israel, which led to its destruction. The hints are, for example: 1. The use of the name of
the region, the Mountains of Ephraim, instead of a specific place name, which is more
typical in the Hebrew Bible. Thus, the author wants to refer to the whole area, not only a
specific place. Bethel is located in this area. The Mountains of Ephraim are seen as a
synonym for Bethel. 2. Micah built a house of God (bēt 'ᵉlōhīm) that hints at the word
Bethel (bēt̲-'ēl). 3. The association of Bethel and Dan on the basis of 1 Kgs 12:29–30, and
golden bulls set up there. 4. The appointment of the priest both at Dan and Bethel (Jdg
17:5, 10–13; 18:19, 30; 1 Kgs 12:33). 5. The broad exposition of the story, which is not
typical of the Hebrew Bible. The narrative in chapter 18 was expanded by the story of
Micah, the origin of the Danites' idol, in order to point out that the corrupt cult derived
from the Mountain of Ephraim, that is, from Bethel.[700]

Amit's theory presupposes that the biblical author(s) of Jdg 17–18 was familiar with 1
Kgs 12 and other biblical texts, but this is not explicitly argued by her. Although her
analysis is in many respects hypothetical, it includes important observations such as the
connections between Dan, Bethel, and the hill country of Ephraim. An important point in
Amit's theory is that it attempts prove how the author(s) wanted to associate the events at
Dan with those of the hill country of Ephraim. No other places or regions are mentioned;

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[699] Amit 1990, 5–10.
[700] Amit 1990, 10–16.

the central hill country was the core region of the kingdom of Israel, and Dan was located at its northernmost extremity.

The theme of the need to unify the land of Israel and its people was also noticed by McConville (2006), who finds it to be one of the significant intentions of the book of Judges, which however seems to contradict reality. Because of this contrast, he concluded that this unity also included variety, and thus the unity was primarily political, not ethnic.[701] Bartusch (2003) also assumes that the aim of the etiology in Jdg 18 was to link the southern and northern territory of Dan to the land of Israel.[702] An interesting theory is also presented by Niemann (1999), who suggested a model of the "reverse migration." According to him, the Danites' migration has its historical setting in the time of Assyrian attack on the north around 734–733 BCE, when the Danites had escaped from Dan to the south. They settled in Zorah and Eshtaol, and the story was created in order to justify their habitation there as returners.[703] In sum, many of the theories explain that including the Danite migration in the book of the Judges is as an attempt to unify the land and its people, to defend the kingship, and to centralize the cult at the temple of Jerusalem.

Judges 18 and 1 Kgs 12:25–33

Judges 18 and 1 Kgs 12 are the only stories in the Hebrew Bible that describe the establishment of the cult of Dan, but the settings and the details of the stories are rather different. For example, in 1 Kgs 12 the cult was established by Jeroboam, the first king of the kingdom of Israel, while Judges 18 assigns the founding of the cult to the tribe of Dan during pre-monarchic times. 1 Kgs 12 seems to ignore the tradition of the Judges, in spite of the claim in the verse Jdg 18:30 that the cult established by the Danites at Dan continued until the captivity of the land ($g^el\bar{o}\underline{t}\ h\bar{a}'\bar{a}re\d{s}$). The reason for the setting up the cultic object at Dan was explicitly expressed in 1 Kgs 12 - to dissuade people from going to worship at the temple of Jerusalem - while no reason or motive is given in Judges 18, if it was not just to explain the origin of the already existing cult at Dan.[704]

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[701] McConville 2006, 123–125, 131–132. McConville uses a political approach to the books of Genesis to Second Kings. He concludes that the book of Judges in its last stage portrays Israel "operating in unity and diversity" and that it has both a supportive and critical attitude towards the monarchy.

[702] Bartusch 2003, 190–191.

[703] Niemann 1999, 25–48.

[704] Bray (2006, 42–43) states that Judges 18 is primarily a cultic legend and not a conquest story. He finds the story to be a cultic etiology, although it lacks a theophany, an important element of such etiologies. However, Bartusch (2003, 186–187) suggests that the story is rather an etiology of the name of the city of Dan. It explains how the city got its name, Dan. The religious history of the site is secondary for him (p. 191). Bartusch finds the establishment of the cult at Dan by Jeroboam an historical fact, while the story of the Danite's cult was created in order support Jeroboam's religious innovations (p. 194–195).

There are also differences in the cultic objects. Judges 18 recounts the idol (covered with silver, 17:4), ephod, and the other images of the Danites. In contrast, there is only one object, the golden bull, in 1 Kgs 12. Both stories also mention the Levite priests, but in different ways. In 1 Kgs 12 anybody is accepted as a priest, not only the Levites (v. 31), which is reason to criticize Jeroboam's deeds. In contrast, the story of the Judges emphasizes that the priest was a Levite (Judg. 17:9–13; 18:3–4, 15). However, after verse 18:15 the Levite is no longer mentioned, nor he is called the "young Levite." Instead, he is referred to as "the priest" (hak-kohen) without any epithets, except in verse 18:30 which gives him a proper name, Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Moses (Menasseh according to some manuscripts). In addition, Judges 18 originally represents a tribal legend that ties the city of Dan and its cultic activity to the tribe of Dan, while the intention of the final form of the story in 1 Kings 12 is to bind the city and its cult place to the kingdom of Israel: *from Dan to Bethel*. In spite of the differences, in both of the stories, Judges 18 and 1 Kings 12:25–33, there is an ironic or even negative attitude towards the cult at Dan.[705] Both of them attempt to make its cult and the cult of the kingdom of Israel (the Danites) ridiculous, and are written from the point of view of the Judahite circles in order to defend the cult of Jerusalem (see above *Ideological approach*).

The Theology and Ideology Behind the Passage

In my view, the intention of the authors of Judges 18 was to connect the city of Dan with the tribe of Dan, and to explain the origin of the name of the city and its cult. It was also intended to bind the tribal history of the Danites with that of the "history" of "all Israel" by verse 18:29: the city was called Dan after the name of the ancestor of the tribe, the *son of Jacob*. Thus, verse 18:29 is the core of the story. Because Zorah and Eshtaol in the neighborhood of Judah are first mentioned as the territories of the Danites (18:2, see also Josh 19:40–48 chapter 4.3.4.), the authors of the narrative also try to solve the problem between southern and northern Dan. I also agree with those scholars who suggest that the Danites were viewed as outsiders, because of the negative attitude towards them. The narrative also has some features in common with 1 Kgs 12:25–33. Both of them refer to the cult at Dan, although the cult objects are different. Both stories are have negative connotations. They also introduce the beginning of the Danite / Israelite cult at Dan, and

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[705] See e.g. Bartusch 2003, 198–199, 204–212.

imply that Dan was located at the northern limit of the land of Israel. Hence, the cult at Dan was condemned, but the city was portrayed as a part of Israel.

Many scholars find the late 8th – 7th centuries BCE to be the most probable historical setting for the story of Judges 18. In my opinion, there was not yet need to create the ideal of "all Israel", to write and create the history of the past, at such an early period. The need arose after the collapse of Judah around 586 BCE, and its gradual recovery from the 5th century BCE. It then became necessary to strengthen the sense of identity, and to ask who we are and who belongs to us. The motive was not to write down the past events, but to explain the collapse and the present reality. The attempts to unify the various traditions and people under the same political and religious rule governed by Jerusalem is an understandable motive and ideal behind the narrative in Judges 17–18. It is also significant that 1 Kgs 12:25–33 shares the similar basic ideas of the incorrect cult of Dan. I suppose that this was the ideal of the author-editors of the biblical text during the Persian – Hellenistic period.

4.2.4. The God of Dan: Amos 8:14

Translation and Notes

[13] In that day the beautiful young women and the young men shall faint for thirst.
[14] Those who swear by Ashimah[a] of Samaria, and say, "as your god(s), Dan, lives," and, "as the way[b] of Beersheba lives" – they will fall and never rise again.

14a. MT: אַשְׁמַת שֹׁמְרוֹן. *'ašmaṯ* probably refers to the goddess אֲשִׁימָא (cf. 2 Kgs 17:29–30).[706] Alternative translations are "the guilt" or "guiltiness of Samaria" according to the meaning of the word *'ašmā* "guiltiness" or "guilt."[707] On the bases of the context, the interpretation of *'ašmaṯ šōmᵉrōn* as a deity worshipped in Samaria yields the most understandable translation. BHS also suggests reading: בַּאֲשֵׁרַת but I do not see any reason to the emendation of מ to ר in the MT.[708]
14b. Reading of the word *derek* "a way" is difficult. It is often interpreted as a pilgrimage[709] but it does not fit well into the context. Therefore, it more probably refers to

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[706] E.g. Wolff 1969, 372; Jeremias 1995, 114; Andersen & Freedman 1989, 828–830; Barstad 1984, 157; Soggin 1987, 140. Soggin translates the words "the crime of Samaria" but understands it as "an euphemism for some kind of deity, probably with a similar sounding name .... evidently the *'ᵃšīmā* mentioned in 2 Kings 17:30." He mentions an alternative reading in which *'ašmaṯ* derives from the Aramaic 'šm, "the name" of Samaria but does not argue for it. He also refers to the appearance of *'āšīm bêt'ēl* in the Elephantine papyri with the same basic meaning as the Hebrew *'ašmā*.
[707] E.g. Mays 1969, 148; Andersen & Freedman 1989, 826; Bartusch 2003, 230–231, 233. Stuart (1987, 382) also suggests "shame".
[708] Soggin 1987, 140; Bartusch 2003, 231.
[709] Thus Bartusch 2003, 236–237.

a god (see discussion below).[710] This is also supported by the Septuagint. Instead of "the way" (דֶּרֶךְ) Septuagint has ὁ θεός σου (your god). Likely, the Hebrew word behind LXX was read as דֹּדְךָ ,"your beloved one," which was used as an epithet of Yahweh and thus referring to *"your god"*.[711] The Hebrew *drk* has also been translated as "power" according to Ugaritic *drkt* which also refers to the god/ goddess.[712]

The Book of Amos, Contents and Context of the Passage

The book of Amos can roughly be divided into three main sections: oracles against the nations (ch. 1–2); the words of the prophet (ch. 3–6); and visions (ch. 7–9).[713] However, the book is rather complex. Each of the sections contains various material, and the book as a whole includes different literary styles.[714] It consists of pieces of oracles against nations including Israel and Judah, social-ethical proclamations by the prophet/s with a request for justice and the correct worship of Yahweh, visions of the upcoming judgment, destructions, and finally promises of the re-establishment of Israel. This heterogeneity, inconsistencies (e.g. 8:14 versus 9:11–15), and the expansions or commentaries of some passages (e.g. 8:4–8[715] is an explanation for 8:1–3) illustrate the heavy editing of the book.[716] It is stated by most of the scholars that the original message of prophet Amos from the 8th century BCE is difficult to trace due to its assimilation with the work of later authors and editors.[717] Some parts of the book, for example 9:11–15, are evidently from the time after the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BCE (note the references to the *fallen booths of David* v. 9:11 and the *ruined cities* v. 9:14), because the passages seemingly reflect the ideology and theology of the time of the restoration of the collapsed society during the 6th

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[710] See discussion on the different interpretations in Barstad 1984, 191–198; Olyan 1991, 122–135; Jeremias 1995, 120–121;.

[711] E.g. Andersen & Freedman 1989, 826, 828 ("your pantheon"); Olyan 1991, 123 ("your kinsman of Beersheba").

[712] E.g. Soggin 1987, 140–141; Stuart 1987, 382, 387; Jeremias 1995, 114–115.

[713] Jeremias 1996, 41–42; See also Auld 1986, 50; Soggin 1987, vii–viii; Andersen & Freedman 1989.

[714] Soggin 1987, 12, 16.

[715] Levin (1997,) dates the social-ethical proclamation of the book of Amos (2:6–8, 4:1–2, 5:11–12, 8:4–8) to the Hellenistic period (3rd–2nd centuries BCE).

[716] According to Jeremias (1995, XIV; 1996, 41) the literary form of the book of Amos is relatively late. He claims that at least the earliest part of the book of Hosea (like the core of Hos. 4–11) assumed its literary form before that of the book of Amos, although Hosea was a later prophet than Amos.

[717] E.g. Wolff 1969, 372–374; Coote 1981, 1–10; Soggin 1987, 16–23; Jeremias 1995, XIV. Rosenbaum (1990) also admits the problems, but attempts to prove the unity of the book and that most of the book derives from the prophet Amos. The unity of the text is also favored by Stuart 1987, and to a certain degree by Barstad 1984 (see p. 2–10). They claim that the book indeed reflects the religious polemics of the 8th century BCE. Sweeney (2001, 273–286) ascribes the majority of the book to Amos.

– 5th century BCE.[718] Levin (1997) dates the latest redactions to the Hellenistic period (3rd – 2nd centuries BCE).[719]

Chapter 8 is composed of the fourth vision of the prophet (8:1–3), social-ethical declarations (8:4–8), and three oracles of the day of judgment (8:9–14). Passage 8:13–14 is the last of these oracles, and was placed between the fourth (8:1–3) and fifth (9:1–4) vision. The first three visions are found in chapter 7:1–9. The fourth vision in the beginning of chapter 8 prophecies the end of Israel: *The end has come upon my people Israel* (8:2). This vision is followed by the arguments about why Israel will collapse (8:4–8), representing the typical social-ethical message of the book: critiques against the rich aristocracy that oppresses the poor (cf. 2:6–8; 3:1–2, 9–11; 4:1–3; 5:7, 10–17; 6:1–7). This passage also introduces the oracles of the judgment (8:9–14). The fifth vision (9:1–4) again repeats the final fate and catastrophe of Israel. It is likely that the five visions, or at least the first four (7:1–9, 8:1–3; 9:1–4), originally formed a united "book" or collection which the later editors split up by adding the explanatory passages between them.[720]

The oracle in 8:13–14 declares *that day* (בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא) which will change the normal life to sorrow and distress. The oracle is directed towards *young* women and men (v. 13) and *those who swear by ...* and *those who say...* (v. 14). *They* will suffer from thirst and finally fall, facing their death. The choice of the words *habbᵉṯūlōṯ* and *habbaḥūrīm* (*young* women and men) emphasizes the totality of the catastrophe, because the strong, young people will also die, not only the old.[721] The previous two oracles also proclaim the day or days that will change life: *On that day* (וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא) Yahweh will darken the daylight and the celebrations will turn to distress (v. 9–10); *The days will come* (הִנֵּה יָמִים בָּאִים) when people are thirsty and fainting but they do not faint for the hunger of bread or water but the word of Yahweh (v. 11–12). These oracles are loosely connected to each other, and are usually found to be discrete by scholars. However, all of them explain the fourth vision, the *end* of Israel, are probably the later expansions.[722]

Dan appears only once in the book of Amos, in this oracle, and it appears together with Samaria and Beersheba. It is the only occurrence in which Dan is mentioned together with Samaria, the capital of the kingdom of Israel. The appearance of Beersheba is unexpected, because the criticisms of the book of Amos are primarily addressed towards the aristocracy of Samaria and the kingdom of Israel, while Beersheba is located in the

[718] See Wolff 1969, 374–375; Jeremias 1995, XVIII, XXI–XXII. Radine 2010, 198–199.
[719] See Levin 1997, 407–436.
[720] The visions have been regarded as one of the oldest parts in the book of Amos. See Jeremias 1995, XVI.
[721] Mays 1969,149; Stuart 1987, 383.
[722] See Levin 1997, 403–418, 430–436.

southernmost extreme of Judah. Another appearance of Beersheba in the book of Amos is in verse 5:5, in which it is mentioned with Bethel and Gilgal.[723] However, other than Samaria and Dan, Beersheba and Dan appear several times together in the Hebrew Bible in the phrase "*from Dan to Beersheba*". It is rather likely that this phrase was on the mind of the author(s), who used Beersheba as a parallel to Dan. This is discussed below.

Discussion of Amos 8:13–14

The disputed matters in this passage concern the reading and interpretation of the words *'ašmaṯ šōmᵉrôn*, *'elōhêḵā dān* and *derek bᵉ'er-šāḇa'*.[724] What do they refer to, and how should they be interpreted and translated? In addition, there has been discussion of whether this oracle was aimed at the foreign, non-Yahvistic gods and syncretistic cult,[725] or against the corrupted Yahwistic worship and its associated way of life.[726] Hence, a crucial question regarding passage 8:13–14 is: what was the author criticizing? What had *they* (in verses 13 and 14) done wrong? Did *they* swear by false gods, or did they do so incorrectly? From the point of view of this study, an important matter is the appearance of the three cities in verse 14. Why were the cities, with the references to their local cults, mentioned?

The deities and the target of criticism in Amos 8:14. Although the meaning of *'ašmaṯ šōmᵉrôn*, *'ĕlōhêḵâ dān* or *derek bᵉ'er-šāḇa'* is not clear, it is likely that they refer to the local gods or goddesses, because swearing by a deity or a person was a usual practice.[727] This also concerns the "*ḥay*" (live) oaths that the oracle in 8:14 represents (*ḥê 'ĕlōhêḵâ dān / ḥê derek bᵉ'er-šāḇa'*). Swearing by the objects or places was not practiced before the Second Temple period.[728] Usually the deities by whom people swear are accepted by the community. In this oracle, they are criticized, and those who swear by these gods will die. However, it is likely that the oracle is not only directed against the worship of the non-accepted deities, or swearing by them, but also against the corrupted cult and immorality of

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[723] Cf. verse 4:1 in which only Bethel and Gilgal are mentioned. Bethel is also referred to in 3:14 (altars of Bethel); 5:6 (the declaration of Yahweh's punishment to the tribe of Josef and Bethel); 7:10, 13 (the priest of Bethel).

[724] Bartusch 2003, 231, 234–235; Olyan 1991, 121–122.

[725] Thus Barstad 1984, 157, 187, 201; Stuart 1987, 383–385; Andersen & Freedman 1989, 828.

[726] Olyan 1991, 141–149; Bartusch 2003, 231–235; Wolff 1969, 381 ("Abfall von Jahwe").

[727] Barstad 1984, 144–146, 155. See also discussion on the interpretation of *'ašmaṯ* and *derek* in Radine 2010, 67–69.

[728] Oylan 1991, 127. According to Oylan, the Hebrew Bible includes more than one hundred oaths. Only in the New Testament are there cases of swearing by the temple. A bit earliern in the Elephantine inscriptions, there are examples of swearing by a sanctuary or stela. The examples of swearing by pilgrimage are known in Islamic tradition ("swearing by the pilgrimage route to Mecca"). See also Barstad 1984, 146–155.

the people: the people's behavior contradicted religious ideals and morality (cf. 8:4–8).[729] Moreover, the criticisms was probably aimed at defaming the cultic practice outside Jerusalem.[730] Although many scholars claim that most of the proclamation is addressed to the people of the kingdom of Israel,[731] the mention of Beersheba in this verse also points out that it concerns Judah as well.[732]

Samaria, Dan, and Beersheba. Samaria is several times a target of criticism in the book of Amos, which is understandable because as a capital it represented the whole kingdom of Israel.[733] Archaeology has revealed the prosperity of the aristocracy of the city during the 8th century BCE, which fits well with some descriptions in Amos, for example the mentions of ivory furniture[734] (compare Amos 6:4, 1 Kgs 22:39, see chapter 5.4), but they would also fit with some later periods as well,[735] because the city of Samaria remained settled and the head of the province / region of Samaria from the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian periods through the Hellenistic period. It was annexed to the province of Syria in 63 BCE.[736] However, the cult of Samaria is not referred to in the Hebrew Bible, except for the mention of the bull of Samaria in Hos 8:5. The reference to the *'ašmat̲ šōm^erôn* is also unique.[737] In the book of Amos, Samaria is the target of the social injustice, but not so much the target of the apostasy of Yahweh or the cult of the foreign gods. Therefore, some scholars have suggested that the cult of Samaria actually ought to be identified with the cult of Bethel, which was viewed as the sanctuary of the kingdom (Amos 7:13).[738]

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[729] Stuart 1987, 383, 387; Olyan 1991, 136–149; Bartusch 2003, 231–233, 235, 241; Sweeney 2001, 279. See also Wolff 1969, 382–383; Barstad 1984: 182–187; Radine 2010, 96 (discussion on the social-ethical proclamation in the Near Eastern prophecy).

[730] Bartusch 2003, 233, 237, 241.

[731] E.g. Sweeney 2001, 279; Bartusch 2003, 238.

[732] For example, Radine (2010, 78, 130–131) suggests that the earliest stage of the book was also written in Judah in the late 8th–early 7th century BCE, because most of the book presupposes the Assyrian invasion and the conquest of Israel. The message was addressed to the people of Judah, who faced the same threat as the kingdom of Israel had – to become conquered by the Assyrians.

[733] According to Bartusch (2003, 233–235), the critique against Samaria in the book of Amos is actually a polemic against the kingdom of Israel and its leaders.

[734] Crowfoot J.W. & Crowfoot G.M. 1938, 1–2, 54.

[735] Compare Levin (1997, 407–436) who dates the social-ethical criticisms to the Hellenistic period.

[736] Avigad 1993, 1306–1307; Magen 1993, 1316–1317.

[737] Archaeological excavations did not reveal cultic remains from the Iron Age. Only one structure outside the city might have had a cultic function, but this interpretation is quite vague and without evidence. See Sukenik 1942, 21–24 in Crowfoot J.W. & Kenyon, K.M. & Sukenik, E.L. (1942), *Buildings at Samaria*. London. During the Hellenistic-Roman period, Samaria and Shechem were "pagan cities and built in Greek style." Magen 1993, 1317.

[738] See e.g. Soggin 1987, 141. Soggin says that "the bull of Samaria" in Hos 8:5 should be identified with the bull of Bethel (cf. Hos 10:5; 1. Kgs 12:29–30). Similarly Stuart 1987, 386.

However, this is not convincing, because it would be more probable that the main sanctuary of the kingdom would be located in the capital.

It is very likely that the phrase "*from Dan to Beersheba*" is behind the mention of Dan and Beersheba in Amos 8:14, as observed by several scholars. The message of the oracle is thus directed not only to these cities, but the whole land from Dan to Beersheba. Mays uses the term "sacral territory" from Dan to Beersheba.[739] Similarly, Andersen & Freedman state that by directing the oracle against Dan and Beersheba it is directed to the "entire land of Israel" based on the biblical phrase "from Dan to Beersheba."[740] Moreover, Bartusch adds that by referring to Beersheba instead of Bethel the critique also targets the division between the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, and Amos' intention was to reunite these kingdoms, both in cult and monarchy. He is of the opinion that the cult centralization happened before the time of Josiah.[741]

I agree that the oracle was addressed to the people of both kingdoms, and that the intention was to unite this "sacral territory". But the date in the 8th century BCE is too early. It would water down the sharpness of the prophetic message that the *end* is to come. At the core of the prophetic vision in 8:1–2 is the absolute *end*, that cannot be avoided: "the *end* has come upon *my people*." The idea of the unification of Israel and Judah is later. There was no need for such an ideal in the flourishing period of the 8th century BCE in Israel and Judah. Thus, I suppose that the oracle in Am. 8:13–14 is from the later period, and is aimed at reforming religious practices and uniting the entire land "from Dan to Beersheba". The time after the Assyrian attack has been suggested for the period of authorship, because the words in the end of verse 14 "*will never rise again*" is interpreted as referring to the kingdom of Israel that "will never rise again". But I propose that the oracle is colored by the experience of the fall of the both kingdoms, Israel and Judah. This can also be argued by the similarities of the oracles in Amos 8:9–14 with wisdom literature, particularly with the Proverbs.[742] Mays also observed that the word *'ašmā* mainly appears in the late literature of the Hebrew Bible, among others in Chronicles, Ezra, Leviticus, the late Psalm 69:5, and Chr 24:18; 33:23.[743]

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[739] Mays 1969, 150.

[740] Andersen & Freedman 1989, 830–831; Bartusch (2003, 241–242): "Amos intended an allusion to this expression to show just how widespread the practices he condemned were throughout the whole land including ... the territory of the Kingdom of Judah."

[741] Bartusch is of opinion that the Davidic-Solomonic kingdom had extended "from Dan to Beersheba" and that the oracle in Amos 8:14 belonged to the original speeches by Amos. He suggests that because Amos was from Judah (Amos 1:1–2), his aim was to return the kingdom of Israel under the rule of Judah. Bartusch 2003, 233, 240–241.

[742] Andersen & Freedman 1989, 827.

[743] Mays 1969, 149.

Amos 8:14 and the Hellenistic Greek – Aramaic/Hebrew stela from Tel Dan. A Hellenistic limestone stela with a votive inscription was found during the 1976 excavations in the cultic enclosure of Area T in Tel Dan (see chapter 3.3).[744] The stela had an incised Greek and Aramaic / Hebrew inscription, and was dated to the late third or second centuries BCE.[745] The Greek text is rather well preserved and readable. It mentions "the god who is in Dan / among the Danites". The inscription is not much discussed for two reasons: first, the find is not properly published, and second, neither the excavators nor biblical scholars have been greatly interested in the Hellenistic period. However, from the point of view of Amos 8:14, the stela is interesting because the mention of *the god who is in Dan* in lines 1–2 is very reminiscent of the utterance *your god of Dan* in Amos 8:14. Most probably, both of them refer to the local god, but the deity remains unnamed.[746] The stela confirms the identification of Tel Dan with the biblical Dan, but also indicates that the local god of the city was worshipped at the cultic enclosure in Hellenistic Tel Dan. Alongside from Aramaic, the Greek language had also taken root in Dan.

According to Jeremias, the stela proves that the tradition of the cult of the unnamed god at Dan continued after the collapse of Israel and Judah, at least until the Hellenistic period.[747] His statement implies an assumption that *your god of Dan* in Amos represents the Iron Age cult, and that this cult was maintained over centuries. It is possible, but if the oracle in Amos 8:14 is dated to the post-monarchic period, as I suppose, it would not be so far from the date of the Hellenistic stela. As stated in chapter 3.3, the stela might indicate a mass production of such votive stelae. If so, it proves that Tel Dan was a lively religious center during Hellenistic times, and perhaps a destination for pilgrims. In that case, Amos 8:14 might well correspond with the reality of Tel Dan during the Hellenistic period. However, only the one stela has been found.

The Theology and Ideology Behind the Passage

In my view, the oracle in Amos 8:14 is aimed at criticizing the cult and religious practices in the post-monarchic land of Israel, including the territories of the former kingdoms of Israel and Judah. This is illustrated by referring to both Dan and Beersheba, which denote the northern and southern extremes of the territory. Thus, the oracle does not belong to the

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[744] Biran 1976, 204–205; 1994, 221–224; 1996a, 41.
[745] Biran 1994, 221.
[746] See Bartusch 2003, 235.
[747] Jeremias 1995, 121.

speeches and proclamation of the 8th century BCE prophet Amos. It uses the experience of the fall of Israel and Judah in order remind the reader what the consequences are of incorrect religious worship and practices, and its purpose was religious reform. The author(s) of the oracle wanted to defame the local deities and cult-places, in order to emphasize the significance of the temple of Jerusalem.

4.3. Dan as the Northernmost Post of Israel

4.3.1. "From Dan to Beersheba": Jdg 20:1; 1 Sam 3:20; 2 Sam 3:10; 17:11; 24:2, (6–7), 15; 1 Kgs 5:5

The phrase "from Dan toBeersheba" appears seven times in the Hebrew Bible, most of them in the books of Samuel. In addition, the cities are mentioned in 2 Sam 24:6–7. All the phrases are found in narratives that describe the time from the judges to King Solomon: the civil war against the Benjaminites (Judg. 20:1), the call of Samuel (1 Sam 3:20), the rise of David (2 Sam 3:10), the revolt of Absalom (2 Sam 17:11), the census by David (2 Sam 24:2, 15), and a description of the period of peace under the rule of Solomon (1 Kgs 5:5). Except in 2 Sam 24:15, an adjunct is added to the phrase, such as "all Israel", "people of Israel/ Israel and Judah", "all the tribes of Israel". Hence, the phrase was seemingly used to express the limits of the land and to emphasize the unity of the people.

In the commentaries, the phrase is usually explained as indicating the northern and southern limits of the land of Israel,[748] but the historical setting of the phrase is not much commented upon. An exception is the commentary on I & II Samuel by Graeme Auld (2011),[749] who supposes that the census in 2 Sam 24 is the original literary context, and it was from there that the phrase was copied to the other passages (see below). But what was the connection to historical reality? Why and when was the phrase created and used? In the books of Samuel, the city of Dan appears only in this phrase. It does not appear in any of the narratives that are located in Judah, Negev, Gilead in Transjordan, or the central hill country.[750] In the books of Judges and Kings, the phrase is mentioned only once (Jdg 20:1;

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[748] See for example, Moore 1949 [1895], 423; McCarter 1980, 99; Soggin 1981, 290; Stolz 1981, 39, 200: Stolz adds that it expresses the ideal concept of Israel. Conroy 1983, 26; Campbell 2003, 56; Tsumura 2007, 183; Dietrich (2006, 187) states: "Diese beiden politischen Größen waren nur einmal zu einer realen politischen Einheit verbunden: unter David und Salomo in einer Personalunion. Dementsprechend begegnet die Formel 'von Dan bis Beerscheba' nur in Texten über die frühstaatliche Zeit." See also Dietrich 2007, 173.
[749] Auld 2011, 606–607.
[750] The exceptions are the military narratives in 2 Sam 8, 10 and 24: the wars between the Israelites and the

1 Kgs 5:5), but the city of Dan occurs separately five times: in the occupation story of Dan in Jdg 18, the story of the golden bulls in 1 Kgs 12:25–30 (and reference to that story in 2 Kgs 10:29), and the list of the destroyed sites in 1 Kgs 15:20.

From Dan to Beersheba		
Jdg 20:1	"all the sons of Israel"	Civil war
1 Sam 3:20	"all Israel"	Samuel
2 Sam 3:10	"Israel and Judah"	Abner
2 Sam 17:11	"all Israel"	Absalom
2 Sam 24:2	"all the tribes of Israel"	Census by king David,
2 Sam 24:6–7	Gilead, Kadesh, land of Hittites, Sidon, Tyre, cities of Hivites and Canaanites, Negeb of Judah	Census, Joab's route
2 Sam 24:15	"in Israel"	Punishment of census
1 Kgs 5:5	"Judah and Israel"	King Solomon

Table 5. Appearances of the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" in the Hebrew Bible.

The War of the Tribes of Israel against the Benjaminites: Judges 20:1

The story in Judges 19–20 narrates the rape and death of a Levite's concubine in Gibeah. Chapter 20 begins with the meeting of "all Israelites from Dan to Beersheba" (20:1). In this meeting, the Israelites decide how to punish the men of Benjaminite Gibeah, who are guilty of rape and violence (20:1). This is followed by the civil war, in which eleven tribes of Israel and Judah fight against the Benjaminites, who had help from their kinsmen of Gibeah. After their defeat in the war, the tribe of Benjamin is forgiven and helped to survive (chapter 21). Stating that the tribes gathered together "as one man from Dan to Beersheba" is certainly meant to stress the identity and affinity of the people of Israel. Ironically, the assembly, however, leads to a civil war that almost sweeps away one of the

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Arameans (2 Sam 8 and 10, Dan not mentioned), and the census of king David (2 Sam 24), which extends to Dan, Sidon, and Tyre in the north.

tribes, the Benjaminites.[751] The forgiveness of the Benjaminites in chapter 21 again strengthens the unity of the tribes, resulting in a happy end to the story.

Chapters 17–21 are only loosely connected to the rest of the book (see chapter 4.2.3). Therefore, the chapters were found to be a later "attachment" to the older book of Judges (chapters 3–16) by many scholars, as was first suggested by Karl Budde and George F. Moore already in 1890s.[752] The attachment is usually dated to the "post-deuteronomistic" redaction (5th – 4th centuries BCE).[753] Some scholars see its function as a bridge from Judges to the books of Samuel.[754] A different view was introduced by Timo Veijola (1977), who dated chapters 17–21 to the deuteronomistic historian, his DtrG (the 6th century BCE), on the basis of the deuteronomistic terminology and features he discerned in these chapters.[755] A date in the 7th–6th centuries BCE is suggested by some scholars who also argue for the unity of the book.[756]

The set of stories in chapters 17–18 are quite independent from the narrative in 19–21. However, they share a few common features:[757] first of all, the appearance of the city of Dan (18:28–29, 20:1), the anonymous Levite from Ephraim, the editorial note "before there were no kings in Israel" (17:6; 18:1, 19:1, 21:25), robbing (17:2, 18:8, 21:12), violence (18: 27–28, 19:25; 20:21–48), and Shiloh tradition[758] (18:30b, 21:12, 19–21). The question still remains if the story in chapters 19–21 had an origin of its own, or if it was created by the author-editor/s who interpolated it into the book of Judges. The dating is difficult, because the story contains legendary and fictive elements[759] without dateable fix points. Thus, the dates given for the story and its redactions vary.[760] In order to understand

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[751] Moore 1949 [1895], 423 correctly notes that the unity of the assembly is "in striking contrast to the lack of unity among the Israelite tribes which appears in all the old stories of the judges." See also Frolov 2013, 318.
[752] Budde 1890, 91; Moore 1949 [1895], xiii–xxxv.
[753] E.g. Moore (1949 [1895], xiii–xxxviii, 405) suggested that chapters 17–21 were added to the book of Judges by the redactor of the 4th century BCE; according to Becker (1990, 296–299), the story in chapter 19–21 is later ("nach-dtr") than chapter 17–18 ("spät-dtr2); See also Gross 2009, 92–93.
[754] See outlines of the research history in Webb 1987, 13–35; Wong 2006, 1–24.
[755] Veijola 1977, 15 –29, 115 (particularly verses17:6, 18:1, 19:1, 21.25); according to Soggin (1981, 5, 280–283), the work of the DtrG/H was edited by the later redactor DtrN, who, for example, added the assembly in verse 20:1; Boling (1975, 30–38) suggests the "deuteronomic framework" (7th century BCE) for chapters 17–18 and deuteronomistic (6th century BCE) for chapters 19–21.
[756] E.g. Polzin 1980; Webb 1987; Klein 1988.
[757] This is emphasized by Webb 1987, 182.
[758] However, the Shiloh tradition in Judg. 18 is different from that in chapter 21: Shiloh in Jdg 18:31 is located in *Israel* according to Josh 18–22, but in Jdg 21:12 Shiloh is located in "the land of Canaan." See Frolov 2013, 318.
[759] E.g. exaggerations of the numbers and unity of the people, robbing the wives of the Benjaminites or, as Moore 1949 [1895] xxxi describes: "at first sight … the narrative seems to be … one huge theocratic fiction of very late origin."
[760] Moore (1949 [1895], xxxi–xxxv, 405) suggests the 8th century BCE for the first stage of the story (including historical basis), but the attachment of chapters 17–21 he assigns to the redactor of the 4th century BCE. Boling (1975, 277–278§) assigns the historical setting to the pre-monarchical period, but its attachment

the setting and motive of the existing story, its literary connections have been searched for. Parallels and motives have been found in other stories that are also pro-monarchic, such as 1 Sam 8–12.[761]

This imaginary narrative is rather difficult to place in any historical framework. It is also impossible to trace any "echo" from the pre-monarchical period, or the period of the kingdom of Judah. What we have is the existing narrative, which has features of late post-monarchical editing by a priestly scribe (the Levite, morality, the art of narrative).[762] In particular, verse 20:1 clearly shows late features in its terminology, such as *kol bᵊnē isrāʾēl* (all the Israelites),[763] or *qāhal* (to gather) and *ʿedā* (assembly, congregation), which are identified with the phraseology of P:[764] "all the congregation assembled as one man" (cf. Lev 8:4, Num 17:7, Jos 18:1, 22:12).[765] The idea of the unity of the tribes and the people expresses the ideal of becoming one people and nation. Thus, in my opinion, verse 20:1 is an editorial note, but its contents also parallel the ideology of the story in the end: to renew the unity of the tribes, and to recover from the wars and defeats. The verse can hardly date earlier than 5th – 4th century BCE.

The Books of Samuel and the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba"

The Text and Sources. Although the poor condition of the Masoretic text of First and Second Samuel has been noted since the 17th century,[766] the Masoretic text has nevertheless maintained its dominant position. However, during the last decades, textual critical study has become more important, because it has revealed the existence of the number of different readings and manuscripts dating to the last centuries BCE. This variety also indicates that the editing of the text continued through these centuries.[767] In particular, the studies of the Septuagint and the Qumran texts (1QSam, 4QSamᵃ/ 4Q51, 4QSamᵇ/

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to the book of Judges to the deutereonomistic redactor. According to Becker (1990, 257–299), chapters 19–21 have a priestly tone, and were added in the final stage of the redaction. See the research history in Becker 1990, 257–258.

[761] Veijola 1977, 20–22, 27–29; Frolov 2013, 315–316, 322.

[762] See Becker 1990, 297–298.

[763] In addition to this verse, *kol bᵊnē isrāʾēl* appears in the book of Judges only in 2:1–5, which can be interpreted as deuteronomic (7th century BCE, Boling 1975, 283), or more likely as a "later deuteronomistic" or "post-deuteronomistic" passage (Dtr^S) that was created to form the framework for the older book of the Judges (e.g. Kratz 2005, 187–188, 208–210).

[764] Usually dated to the late post-monarchical period (5th – 4th century BCE).

[765] Moore 1949 [1895], 422–423: verse 20:1a.β2 is clearly "written by a later hand"; Soggin 1981, 290: *qāhāl* is a "post-exilic" term. Becker (1990, 298) finds chapters 19–20 "post-deuteronomistic."

[766] The first scientific edition was published in 1871 by Julius Wellhausen, who used the different versions of the Septuagint and the other old translations in his text edition. McCarter 1980, 5–11; See also Gordon 1986, 57–62 and the text history in Hugo 2010, 1–19.

[767] Edenburg & Pakkala 2013, 4–5. The texts were not only copied but also intentionally edited.

4Q52, 4QSam[c]/ 4Q53)[768] have revealed the variations and alternatives for the reading of Samuel, which in part greatly differ from the Masoretic texts, but have many similarities to the Old Greek versions.[769] Moreover, it was observed by A. Graeme Auld that the text of 4QSam[a] has more similarities to the First Chronicles and Josephus than to the Masoretic text of Samuel.[770] These facts lead to the question asked by Philippe Hugo: "Did the books of Samuel exist in two (or three with Qumran) distinct literary forms between the 3rd century B.C. and, at the latest, the 1st century A.D., that is between the translation of the books of Reigns into Greek and the fixations or standardization of the proto-MT?"[771]

In addition to the textual variety, the literary character of the First and Second Samuel is also complicated. Although the existing text has been woven into "a coherent and compelling narrative,"[772] the examination reveals number of originally independent and conflicting stories with many ambiguities. The stories have grown and been joined together.[773] The different sources and the long redaction history have also been accepted by those scholars who focus their studies on the theological or narrative character of the existing text form.[774]

Because the city of Dan appears only in the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" in the books of Samuel, the text critical issues are not of great importance. The phrase is found in the Septuagint as well. Unfortunately, the passages in which the phrase occurs have not been preserved in 4QSam.[775] However, it is important to be aware of the fact that the

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[768] Cross etc., 2005; Auld 2011, 5–6.

[769] Gordon 1986, 57–58; See also Tsumura 2007, 2–10 and, particularly, Auld 2011, 5–7; Hugo (2010, 7) states that already "Otto Thenius (1842, 1864), Julius Wellhausen (1871) and Samuel R. Driver (1890) deemed that, on the whole, the Hebrew source of the LXX of Samuel represented a different textual form from that of the MT, which they often considered even older. Although this hypothesis was kept silent for nearly a century, it reappeared even more forcefully with the discovery of the textual multiplicity at Qumran."

[770] Auld 2011, 6.

[771] Hugo 2010, 7–8.

[772] Thus Borgman 2008, 8.

[773] Various views have been introduced on the sources and growth of the books. See research history Anderson 1989, xxv–xxxvi. Compare the view of Kratz 2005, 170–186 and Auld 2011, 9–14, 622–624. Kratz's literary redaction-critical study divides the textual material into roughly three categories: the sources, the deuteronomistic history (Dtr[G], 6th century BCE), and the supplements (Dtr[S], redactions and additions after Dtr[G]). Auld presupposes a common source for the books of Samuel–Kings and Chronicles. This source includes the first story of David found in 1 Sam 31 and 2 Samuel. This "original" source, the narrative of David and the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, was developed independently and creatively in both Samuel–Kings and Chronicles. Auld also discerns at least three main phases in the development of the book of Samuel: 1. the source common to Chronicles (starting from Saul's death and David's kingship), 2. "The new story of David" presenting the story of David before the kingship (1 Sam 9 onwards), 3. "The latest new beginning" (e.g. 1 Sam 1–8) that is a "fresh introduction to Samuel". Samuel is presented as the prophet who anointed both Saul and David as king. The earlier source was rewritten in every phase, but more extensively in the "final stages."

[774] E.g. Conroy 1983, 11–18; Jobling 1998, 3–37, particularly 16–17; Borgman 2008, 3–16; Auld 2011, 9–17.

[775] See the Qumran text etc. Cross 2005, 47, 107–108, 161–162 (2. Sam. 17:3–22 and 24:1–15 are lacking).

Masoretic text can no longer be held to be the oldest or the most official textual form. Present research also indicates that the editing of the books continued until the last centuries BCE, or even later.

The Contents of the Books and Locations of the Phrase. Most of the occurrences of the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" are in the books of Samuel (5/7). As the central figure of these books is David,[776] the phrase is mostly, directly or indirectly, linked to the David narratives. The narrative of David's rise and succession covers three quarters of the books of Samuel.[777] The beginning of the books, the stories of Samuel (1 Sam 1–3, 7–10, 12), and Saul (1 Sam 9–11, 13–15), with the ark narrative (1 Sam 4–6), leads to the story of David's rise to the throne (1 Sam 16–2 Sam 5) and the succession narrative (2 Sam 6 – 1 Kgs 2).[778] The deuteronomistic or later redactions and additions are in many parts rather distinguishable,[779] with the "deuteronomistic tone dominating."[780] On the other hand, the various sources or earlier independent stories are difficult to trace. The traditions overlap each other due to the multiple rewritings, when the sources were composed and supplemented by new stories in order to create one narrative. The tendency to portray David as an ideal king, and Samuel's main task to anoint him the king of "all Israel" is recognizable.[781] As David is the king of "all Israel," thus, Samuel is also the prophet of "all Israel." The phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" in the books of Samuel is connected to the David stories: from the story of Samuel's call (1 Sam 3:1–20) and the competition between Saul and David, to the stories of David's rise to the throne (2 Sam 3:1–21), to Absalom's revolt (2 Sam 15–18), and the census and its consequences (2 Sam 24).

Samuel – the prophet of "all Israel": 1 Sam. 3:20

The only occurrence of the city of Dan in the first book of Samuel is the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" at the end of the story of Samuel's call (1 Sam 3:1– 4:1a). It is the last story, which deals with Samuel's childhood (1 Sam 1–3).[782] In the story the young Samuel, still a boy, ministered to Yahweh in the temple of Shiloh under the leadership of Eli. Yahweh calls to him and reveals Yahweh's judgment of the family of Eli.[783] The story begins in

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[776] Campbell 2003, 2; Auld 2011, 1–3.
[777] Auld 2011, 2. Auld calls the books "the book of David."
[778] See classification of the stories McCarter 1980, 12–30; Conroy 1983, 12.
[779] Veijola 1975; Campbell 2003, 18; Kratz 2005, 171.
[780] McCarter 1984, 7–8.
[781] Campbell 2003, 2, 9; Auld 2011, 13, 9.
[782] See the structure of these chapters, for example, Klein 1983, 29–35; Dietrich 1992, 76–89; Campbell 2003, 36–37; Porzig 2008, 107.
[783] The divine judgment of Eli's family includes a typical deuteronomistic phraseology. See Veijola 1975,

verse 1b and ends in verse 18, for which verses 1a and 19 form the framework. The
passage in 3:19/20 – 4:1a marks a quick transition from Samuel as a young, unknown boy
(until 3:18) to Samuel as the prophet of "all Israel from Dan to Beersheba." Verses 3:19–
20 is not a part of the story, but rather an independent comment on Samuel's growth. The
passage is thus found to be an editorial addition by many scholars.[784]

The story of Samuel as a local "seer" or "judge" (1 Sam 7:15–17)[785] grows only later
on, as the story of the "prophet of all Israel"[786] whose most important task was to
legitimize David's kingship "over Israel."[787] Verse 1 Sam 3:20 exaggerates Samuel's
significance compared to the stories of Samuel as a local prophet or a "seer" (see 1 Sam
9:1, 3–10, 18–19, 24b–27, 10:2–4, 7, 9–10aα, 14–16a). Because Beersheba, Dan, or the
other sites in the northern Jordan valley and Galilee do not appear in the Samuel stories,
the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" appears suddenly and unexpected in this context. The
idea of Samuel as a prophet of "all Israel" is not supported by the contents of the stories, in
which he often acts as a local prophet. Hence, 1 Sam 3:(19–)20 including the phrase "all
Israel from Dan to Beersheba" is best to be explained as a later interpolation by the editors,
who underlined the unity of the "land and people of Israel" by making Samuel the prophet
of "all Israel."

David's Rise to the Throne and the Succession Narratives: 2 Sam 3:10; 2 Sam 17:11; 2 Sam 24:2, (6–7), 15

Contexts. In the second book of Samuel, the phrase appears in three different episodes in
the narratives of David's rise to the throne and succession. The first of these, 2 Sam 3:10,
concerns the power struggle between the family of Saul and David (2 Sam 2:12–3:1, 6–
21). The phrase occurs in the words of Abner, the commander of Saul's army (2 Sam 2:8),
when he turned away from Saul's side to support David. Abner decided to accomplish the
oath given by Yahweh: Yahweh will transmit the kingship from Saul and "establish the

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38–43; Klein 1983, 31, 33–34; Dietrich 2006, 171–174; Porzig 2008, 119–129.

[784] Dietrich (1992, 81–82) assigns verses 3:19bβ–21a to DtrH(G) (the 6th century BCE), Kratz (2005, 184)
finds the whole story of Samuel's childhood (1 Sam 1:21 onwards) to be a supplement (Dtr^S) to the first
deuteronomistic redaction (Dtr^G); 2006, 186–187; Porzig (2008, 107, 112–113) finds most of the story in 1
Sam 3 deuteronomistic or later, and verses 19–21 the latest addition to the story.

[785] Gordon 1986, 91.

[786] On the growth of the story Dietrich 1992, 76–89, 2006, 171–176; Porzig 2008, 119–121, 126–127. See
also Ahlström 1992, 425; Campbell 2003, 56.

[787] Auld observes resemblances with the statements of David's and Samuel's greatness. According to him, the
"statement of his [Samuel's] growing greatness is even more closely modeled on what was said about David
... after his capture of Jerusalem (2 Sam 5:10)." As Yahweh was with David, he also "was with" Samuel.
Auld 2011, 1–3, 61.

throne of David over Israel and Judah, from Dan to Beersheba." Secondly, the phrase occurs in 2 Sam 17, which narrates the rebellion of Absalom against his father, King David. Absalom is given advice by Hushai that "all Israel from Dan to Beersheba" should be gathered to him. The phrase is followed by the expression "like the sand by the sea for multitude," emphasizing the great number of the people (Gen 22:17, cf. 1 Kgs 4:20) that was gathered to fight against David. In the third episode (2 Sam 24), David commands Joab to go "through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, and take a census of the people" (v. 2). The phrase appears again in verse 15, in which David was punished by Yahweh because of the census: "seventy-thousand of the people died, from Dan to Beersheba." In addition, Dan and Beersheba occur in verses 6 and 7, in the description of the route of the census. It extended from Dan to Sidon and Tyre in the north, and Negev including Beersheba in the south.

Discussion. Historical-critical studies have attempted to trace the growth and development of the books of Samuel. One of the most studied issues is the history of the early kings, particularly David (see chapter 1.4.). Until the 1980s, the earliest sources of the David narrative were self-evidently dated to the court of David and Solomon in Jerusalem (10th century BCE),[788] although the influence of the deuteronomistic redaction was debated.[789] Since the 1990s the existence of such early sources have been questioned by many scholars; the opinions vary from the very minimalistic view of a Persian–Hellenistic date[790] to those who argue that at least some of the sources derive from the period of David and Solomon.[791]

The change from "biblical maximalism" towards a minimalistic view is also reflected in the interpretation of the passages including "from Dan to Beersheba" in Second Samuel. For example, McCarter (1980) dated these passages (or the supposed earliest core of the stories) to the sources that derive from David's time, and depict the actual history of his time.[792] In recent historical-critical studies, less material if any is dated to this period.[793]

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[788] E.g. McCarter 1980, 6–9; Ahlström 1993, 421–542.

[789] According to Veijola (1975), the picture of David in the books of Samuel is very much coloured by the deuteronomistic rewriting. He discerns three levels of deuteronomistic redaction (DtrG, DtrP, DtrN) that offer different portrayals of David. Veijola 1975, 127–142.

[790] E.g. Thompson 1992; Lemche 1998; Davies 1992; Grabbe 2007.

[791] E.g. Bartusch 2003, 216–220; Dietrich 2007, 154–188. However, Dietrich underlines the thorough and critical reading of the texts, and does not suppose that the earliest sources are an exact depiction of the time.

[792] McCarter 1980, 9, 120–122, 382, 386–390, 509–518. Similarly Stolz 1981, 199, 301.

[793] E.g. See Kratz 2005, 184; Dietrich 2007, 154–173. He, however, states that David's kingdom covered both Judah and Israel. For example, in his opinion 2 Sam 24:1–9 describes the borders of David's and Solomon's kingdom.

Research has pointed out that the tradition of the house of Jerusalem and Judah (established with David) and that of the house of Israel (established by Saul)[794] derive from originally separate and independent sources (cf. 2 Sam 2:8–10 and 2:3–4).[795] Reinhard Kratz suggests that these traditions were first united in the court of Jerusalem [796] after the collapse of Israel in the late 7th – early 6th century BCE.[797] According to him, the deuteronomists continued and revised this "first composition of the united kingdom," which was supplemented by later editors from the late 6th century onwards.[798] As a result, David and Solomon were presented as the legitimate successors of Saul. On the other hand, the Chronicles do not describe a civil war at all, but rather a transition from Saul's death straight to the reign of David of "all Israel," without any description of David as a king of Judah in Hebron.[799]

Following Kratz's theory, the Abner-episode in 2 Sam 3:1, 6–11 is most probably the secondary story, interpolated into the deuteronomistic edition.[800] The story that the kingship was transmitted from Saul to David represents the deuteronomistic ideology.[801] In addition, the phrase "over Israel and Judah" presupposes the independent kingdoms of Israel and Judah.[802] The same applies to the story of Absalom's revolt (2 Sam 17) and the census story (2 Sam 24). Both of these narratives deal with Israel and Judah as separate entities. By using the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba," the concept of one unified entity is instead stressed. Absalom's revolt also presupposes the previous Absalom stories in chapters 13–14, and at least the passage 2 Sam 17:5–14 is a later addition to the Absalom narrative.[803]

Chapter 24 begins with the census story, which is followed by several episodes with different themes (Yahweh's anger, the census, David's sin, the plague, and the death of

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[794] It is noteworthy that Saul is never described as the ruler of Judah or followed by the Judeans. He is always addressed as the king of Israel. David is first anointed as the king of Judah in Hebron (2 Sam 2:4). In the previous story of his anointment there is no title (1 Sam 16).

[795] Kratz 2005, 177; Dietrich 2007, 174–176, 178.

[796] Kratz (2005, 175) calls this "pre-deuteronomistic" source "the little collection of Jerusalem court stories."

[797] During this period the tensions between the refugees fleeing from Israel to Judah and the people of Judah might have led to the competition between the two houses of Israel and Judah, as illustrated in the biblical descriptions of the battles between Saul and David. Therefore, this the most probable period and historical setting for the combining of the traditions, in the opinion of Kratz.

[798] Kratz 2005, 177–183.

[799] See Campbell 2005, 29–30.

[800] Kratz 2005, 184 (Kratz assigns the story to Dtr^S (dtr redaction and supplements after DtrG), from the late 6th BCE and onwards); See also Veijola 1975, 59–60; Anderson 1989, 55; Dietrich 2007, 160; Auld 2011, 11, 378. Auld lists several elements that are anticipated in this passage from the other stories, among others, 2 Sam 5:1–3; 7; 10; 24 and 1 Kgs 22:20–22.

[801] Weinfeld 1972, 1, 4 (footnote 1); Veijola (1975, 60) assigns 2 Sam 3:9–10 to DtrG (historian, 6th century BCE).

[802] Kratz 2005, 175–176, table p. 184; Veijola 1975, 60.

[803] See Anderson 1989, 212–213.

people as a punishment for David's sin, the altar and sacrifice). All of these theological elements can hardly be from the same authors.[804] The chapter is described as "enigmatic and at the same time very rich in its wider biblical associations and in its links throughout Samuel" by Graeme Auld.[805] Some scholars regard the census story (24:1–9) as a source that derives from pre-monarchical times, including historical facts about the size of David's kingdom. The other stories in the chapter are found to be later, because they include theological and ideological elements that are typical for the post-monarchical period.[806] Thus, the judgment and punishment for the census would represent the theology of later authors. If this were the case, the motive for the census-story remains unclear. It is also remarkable that the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" occurs twice; both in the census in 24:2 (king's order: *the king said to Joab*) and in the story of the plague in 24:15 (*seventy-thousand of the people died, from Dan to Beersheba*). It is not probable that 24:1–9 would have worked alone. The census and its consequences are a single entity.[807] Just as with the census, the plague also extended "from Dan to Beersheba."[808] This does not exclude the re-editing of the story.

Auld finds the same motives, parallels, and similarities in 2 Sam 24 with later biblical literature, particularly with the books of Job and Chronicles. According to him, the motive in 2 Sam 24 is similar to that in Job 1–2: the "testing of the hero" (cf. also Gen 22, Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac). He also notes that 2 Sam 24 has similar vocabulary to Job 1–2, using the same, rare Hebrew words.[809] In spite of these late features, Auld believes that chapter 24 includes the earliest source in which the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" appears, and from which it has been copied to the other five passages in Samuel (1 Sam 3:20; 2 Sam 3:10; 17:11), Jdg 20:1, and Kgs 5:5. His argument is based on the fact that this is the only synoptic passage of the phrase in Chronicles (2 Sam 24:2 / 1 Chr 21:2). The phrase is the short form, "the territorial formula", approximately the same as that described in the route of the census (2 Sam 24: 5–7).[810] According to him, the Chronicles and the books of Samuel share a common source from which Samuel and the Chronicles developed in their own directions. While the Chronicles underlines a unified Israel by anointing David immediately as the king of all Israel in *Hebron,* without a separation of

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[804] Veijola 1975, 108–118; McCarter 1981, 7–19, 512–518; Campbell 2005, 184–187, 206–210.
[805] Auld 2011, 603.
[806] E.g. McCarter 1981, 9, 512–518; Stolz 1981, 301; Dietrich 2007, 160, 172–173.
[807] Anderson 1989, 282–284.
[808] See Auld 2011, 614–616.
[809] Auld 2011, 620.
[810] Auld 2011, 606.

Israel and Judah (1 Chr 11:1–3), the authors of the first book of Samuel add the stories of Saul as the king of Israel, and make David first the king of Judah only and afterwards the king of Israel as well. The stories of Samuel in 1 Sam 3, Abner in 2 Sam 3, and Absalom's revolt in 2 Sam 17 are also of the class of stories developed by the authors of First Samuel.[811]

I find it likely that the David stories are the primary context of the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" and, as Auld argues, 2 Sam 24 is the most plausible starting point because of its geographical interest in defining the borders. The question of what the historical reality was is another issue: which period is reflected? Are the limits described in the passage completely ideal, or the actual history of a certain period? In my opinion, the divided monarchy is anticipated. I also suppose that the definition of the borders became important only after the destruction of Jerusalem around 586 BCE. During the existence of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah the borders were most probably flexible, depending on international politics and the relative powers of the kingdoms and the local rulers. Reality was not as fixed as the ideal phrase. The post-monarchical date for the stories in chapter 24 is probable, as is also suggested by Kratz.[812]

The Period of Peace During Solomon's Rule: 1. Kings 5:5

In the books of Kings the only appearance of the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" is associated with the kingdom of Solomon. It describes the ideal period of peace under the rule of king Solomon, when all of the inhabitants of Israel and Judah lived in safety "from Dan to Beersheba, all of them under their vines and fig trees" (v. 5:5/ 4:25). The period of peace is also depicted in 1 Chr 22:9, which predicts the birth of Solomon, "*a man of peace*" (אִישׁ מְנוּחָה), and Yahweh will grant "*peace and quiet for Israel during his days*" (וְשָׁלוֹם וָשֶׁקֶט אֶתֵּן עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּיָמָיו).

The "miscellany" section in 1 Kgs 4:20–5:5 is reminiscent in many respects of the royal inscriptions of the ancient Near East, which exaggerate the achievements of the kings and praise the prosperity and well-being of their people.[813] It also reminds one of the eschatological period of peace in the prophetic declaration (Mi 4:4; Zech 3:10).[814] Simon DeVries associates verses 4:20, 5:1 (4:21), and 5:4–5 (4:24–25) with the promises to the patriarchs in the book of Genesis. The promise of the land (v. 5:1, 4) and the promise of a

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[811] Auld 2011, 9–17; 606–607, 614–615, 620–630.
[812] Kratz 2005, 184 (Dtr[S], late or post deuteronomistic supplements).
[813] Long 1984, 75; Cogan 2001, 216.
[814] Würthwein 1985, 47.

numerous people (v. 4:20; cf. 2 Sam 7:11) are fulfilled in this ideal description of Solomon's time. Verse 5:4 (4:24) repeats verse 5:1 (4:21) with some different words, and also enlarges the area under Solomon's rule: While verse 5:1 (4:21) describes Solomon's territory extending *from* the River Euphrates to the border of Egypt, verse 5:4 (4:24) extends the area to the *other side* of the Euphrates, denoting the eastern side of the river. Verse 5:4 (4:24) also adds the aspect of security - "he had peace on all sides" - which is again repeated in verse 5:5 (5:25).[815]

The repetition, the exaggeration of the size of Solomon's kingdom, and the idealized picture of total peace and a happy life in verse 5:4–5 (4:24–25) indicate the late post-monarchical date (Persian-Hellenistic).[816] DeVries points out that the reverse order, Judah before Israel in verses 5:5 (4:25) and 4:20, denotes the "late post-exilic date" of this expansion. In the early sources, Israel is commonly mentioned first. [817]

Intention and Ideology

The purpose of the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" is to express the limits of the territory of Israel – or Israel and Judah. It was used to underline the unity of the land and the people, in order to strengthen the identity of the post-monarchical Judahite community in the minds of a people who had lost their independence. In this situation, the definition of the borders of the land became important.

The most plausible literary context for the first appearance of the phrase is the David narrative, particularly the census story in 2 Sam 24. David is the most central figure in the books of Samuel, and his kingdom of "all Israel" followed by his son Solomon represents the ideal kingdom of Israel. The authors of First Samuel enlarged the David narrative, combining the Saul and David traditions into a successive narrative in which Saul is introduced as the king of Israel and David's predecessor and competitor. The phrase does not occur in Saul narratives, but once in the context of the narratives of the prophet Samuel, who also anointed both Saul and David as king of Israel (and David as king of Judah as well). Samuel is portrayed in 1 Sam 3:20 as the prophet of all Israel "from Dan to Beersheba", similarly as David is presented as the king of all Israel, including both Israel and Judah.

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[815] DeVries 2003, 72.
[816] Thus Würthwein 1985, 47–48; Särkiö (1994, 53) assigns the verses to DtrN, but the later date is more probable, as shown by DeVries. Kratz 2005, 184 assigns them to Dtr[S] (deuteronomistic supplement or later additions).
[817] DeVries 2003, 72–73.

In the context of Solomon, the emphasis is on the period of peace "from Dan to Beersheba" during his kingdom. The phrase in Judg 20:1 is not tied with the kingship, but it also has a literary context that argues for the entity of the people of Israel; the civil war, the battle of the Israelites against the tribe of Benjamin, ends with a new beginning in which the almost destroyed tribe of Benjamin is rescued. It is noteworthy that the use of the phrase is limited to the books of Judges and Samuel–Kings, which originally constituted one book. Thus, it is likely that the phrase was used and added by the editors who composed this book and incorporated Jdg 17–21 between the book of Judges (2–16) and Samuel–Kings.

Why Dan? In my view, the natural reason to denote Dan as the northernmost limit of Israel was geographical. The Ḥermon mountains represent the natural border in the north and, on the other hand, the Jordan river and valley linked the city of Dan to the south. The city was located on the important route from Mesopotamia and Syria to the south. Beersheba was located in the southernmost settled territory from the perspective of the Judahite community, at the edge of the desert of Negev. Thus, the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" covered the territory that was considered to belong to the land of Israel, or to represent its ideal size by the author/editors of the biblical texts. Whether the city of Dan was indeed part of the Israelite kingdom is another question that cannot be deduced from this phrase alone, or answered on the basis of the geographical or biblical evidence alone. This will be discussed in chapter 5.5.

4.3.2. "From Beersheba to Dan": 1 Chr 21:2; 2 Chr 30:5

Introduction

In the books of the Chronicles, the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" also occurs in the opposite direction: "from Beersheba to Dan". This is probably due to the focus on Jerusalem and Judah in the Chronicles; the perspective is from the south to the north.[818] The phrase appears only twice, and only one occurrence is synoptic with the books of Samuel–Kings: the census story in 2 Sam 24 / 1 Chr 21. Another occurrence of the phrase is placed in the context of the celebration of the Passover commanded by King Hezekiah in 2 Chr 30:5. The phrase has its primary setting in the census narrative, and has been copied into the context of Hezekiah. However, different views have been introduced on the sources that the Chroniclers used.

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[818] Williamson 1982, 144.

While earlier studies usually regarded Samuel–Kings as the primary source for the Chronicles, which were mainly followed by selecting and re-interpreting their textual material, and believed that Ezra and Nehemiah came from the same authors,[819] current studies emphasize the significance of the creative role of the Chroniclers in the formation of their own theological and ideological message in the conditions in which they lived.[820] The study of the Qumran texts indicates that the Chronicles have more in common with the Qumran version (4QSamª) of 2 Sam 24 than that of the Masoretic text.[821] It is suggested that the Chronicles was the local history of Jerusalem, following the Greek historiographical tradition (the local histories of Greek city-states). This would have been possible during the (late) Persian–Hellenistic period,[822] the period when the book of Chronicles was most probably written.[823]

Graeme Auld suggests that the chroniclers did not copy the story of the census from Second Samuel, but rather shared the same source with 2 Sam 24.[824] Gary N. Knoppers states that "the chronicler relied heavily upon his *Vorlage* of 2 Sam 24:1–25," but he also deals with the issue of how the story was changed by the chroniclers.[825] According Sara Japhet, we do not know with certainty what constituted the *Vorlage* of the Chroniclers.[826] The story of the Passover celebration also exhibits rather different elements compared to the stories in Samuel–Kings.

From Beersheba to Dan		
1 Chron. 21:2	"the population of Israel"	Census by David
2 Chron. 30:5	"all Israel"	King Hezekiah, Passover celebration

Table 6. Appearances of the phrase "from Beersheba to Dan" in the Hebrew Bible.

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[819] Braun 1986, xxiii. See also Myers 1965, xx–xxxii. The problems with the *Vorlage* were recognized; different versions of the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts existed.
[820] See the articles in *What Was Authoritative for Chronicles?* Ben Zvi, Ehud and Edelman Diana (Eds.) 2011, Winona Lake: Indiana: Eisenbrauns. See also Japhet 2002, 39–49; Knoppers 2004a, 66–89.
[821] Japhet 2002, 346; Knoppers 2004a, 52–65, 743–762; Auld 2011, 6.
[822] See Edelman and Mitchell 2011: "Chronicles and Local Greek Histories." *What was Authoritative for Chronicles?* Ben Zvi and Edelman (eds.), Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns.
[823] Japhet 2002, 52–54 (late 4th century BCE); Knoppers 2004a, 111–117.
[824] Auld 2011, 9–14, 606.
[825] Knoppers 2004b, 761–762.
[826] Japhet 2002, 346.

1 Chr 21:2

The story of the census in the Chronicles corresponds with that of 2 Sam 24, but the Chronicle's story is shorter and has a more negative point of view. In the Chronicles, it is Satan who stands upon Israel and incites David to the census, while in 2 Sam 24 it is Yahweh. The phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" appears in both stories, but the itinerary is only given in 2 Sam 24:5–7. The command was given to Joab to go "from Beersheba to Dan" in order to count the population of Israel, and he "went throughout all Israel, and came back to Jerusalem" (v. 4). This is against Yahweh's will, and Israel is punished by the plague in both stories. In the Chronicles, the phrase is not however repeated in the plague episode, as in 2 Sam 24. The Chronicles only state that seventy-thousand of the people of Israel died (1 Chr 21:14), but that Jerusalem was saved (v. 15).

It seems that the Chroniclers were not interested or properly aware of the geography of the north. Nothing is mentioned referring to the north except the inclusion of Dan in the stock phrase, and the whole story is focused on what happened in Jerusalem. That Judah is not separately mentioned in verse 21:2 indicates that there was only one Israel for the authors. The emphasis in the Chronicles is on the unity of *all Israel*,[827] and Judah is interpreted as one of the tribes.[828] Verse 21:5b is probably a later interpolation added due to the influence of 2 Sam 24:9.[829] The focus of the story is, however, on David. He is depicted as a repentant sinner. According to Gary Knoppers, this is in line with the Chronicler's intention to idealize David: "In the context of a national disaster of his own making, David is able to turn a catastrophe into the occasion for a permanent divine blessing upon Israel."[830]

2 Chr 30:5

The story parallels that of 2 Kgs 23:21–23: the re-establishment of the Passover celebration. In 2 Kgs 23 the king who gives this command is however King Josiah, while in the book of Chronicles it is King Hezekiah. The phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" does not occur in Second Kings. Thus, the authors/editors of the Chronicles probably copied the phrase from the census narrative and adopted it to this context. The appearance of the phrase, particularly the adjunct of *all Israel*, is peculiar here, because the kingdom of Israel

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[827] Braun 1986, xxxv–xxxvii. Braun introduces *all Israel* as one of the essential theological themes in the book of the Chronicles. Japhet 2002, 348.
[828] Williamson 1982, 145; Japhet 2002, 348–349.
[829] Braun 1986, 217; Japhet 2002, 349.
[830] Knoppers 2004b, 769.

did not exist during the reign of Hezekiah, and Judah was then a vassal state of Assyria.[831] The authors of the Hellenistic period were not interested in this fact, and the story also has other imaginary features.[832] The chroniclers' intention was to portray Hezekiah as a reformer similar to Josiah, or a second Solomon (1 Chr 30:26), an ideal successor to the Davidic dynasty who reunites the people and re-establishes the correct worship and cult of Yahweh.[833] The passage probably reflects the time of the authors, the late Persian–Hellenistic period,[834] when an attempt was being made to restore the temple service and the unity of the people.[835] Verse 30:5 also indicates that the phrase was used as a fixed utterance, without reference to actual conditions.

Intention and Ideology

In the Chronicles, the primary context of the phrase "from Beersheba to Dan" is in the story of the census carried out by David (1 Chr 21:2). The story perhaps derives from the same source as its synoptic narrative 2 Sam 24. The reversed direction of the phrase, from south to north, is very likely due to the strong Judahite perspective in the Chronicles. However, the stories express the same intention as those in Samuel–Kings: to strengthen the unity of the land and the people of the religious community in Judah. The phrase was copied and added to the story of the Passover celebration commanded by King Hezekiah (2 Chr 30:5). Thus, the chroniclers of the late Persian–Hellenistic period ignored the fact that during the reign of Hezekiah the kingdom of Israel had collapsed, its territory was under the Assyrian rule, and Judah was a vassal state of Assyria. Or, they intended to argue that the territory of the kingdom of Israel was still, or again, part of one Israel, "all Israel", governed from Jerusalem. The book of Samuel–Kings did not use the phrase in the stories describing the time after Solomon's reign. The Chronicles highlight the concepts of one Israel and "all Israel" to a greater degree than even Samuel–Kings does.

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[831] See Williamson 1982, 366.
[832] Dillard 1987, 240; Japhet 2003, 382.
[833] Dillard 1987, 240–246; Otherwise Japhet 2003, 382–384 who argues that some aspects, e.g. the dating of the Passover, fits with the time of Hezekiah.
[834] Knoppers 2004b, 111–117.
[835] Williamson 1982, 360, 356–366.

4.3.3. List of Destroyed Cities: 1 Kgs 15:20; 2 Chr 16:4

Translation and Notes

1 Kgs 15:20 Ben-hadad listened to king Asa and sent the commanders of his
soldiers against the cities of Israel. He smote[a] Ijon, Dan, Abel-beth-
maacah, and all Chinneroth, all the land of Naphtali.

20a Some manuscripts have the third person, plural "they smote" as 2. Chron. 16:4.

2 Chr 16:4 Ben-hadad listened to king Asa, and sent the commanders of his
soldiers against the cities of Israel. They smote Ijon, Dan, Abel-
majim, and all the store-cities of Naphtali.

Contents and Context

Dan appears in the passage that first narrates the conflict between Asa, the king of Judah, and Baasha, the king of Israel (1 Kgs 15:16–17). Asa manages to fomment another conflict in the north between Baasha and Ben-hadad, the Aramean king of Damascus (1 Kgs 15:18–20), which helps Asa to throw off Baasha's oppression (1 Kgs 15:20–22). Thus, the story begins and ends at the border area of Judah and Israel, but another scene is in the northern Jordan valley and Galilee (1 Kgs 15:20).

The episode begins with the statement that Asa and Baasha were in continuous war as long as they lived (v. 16, repeated also in v. 32[836]). Baasha attacked Judah and started to fortify Ramah, a city close to Jerusalem, in order to control the roads to and from Judah (v. 17). In order to stop Baasha's oppression and his building activity in Ramah, Asa urges Ben-Hadad, the Aramean king of Damascus, to attack "the cities of Israel" in the north, and so he did (v. 18–20). Baasha escaped from Ramah and stayed in Tirzah, while Asa started to fortify Geba of Benjamin and Mizpah using the building material which Baasha had acquired for his building operation in Ramah (v. 21–22).

This story (1 Kgs 15:16–22) interrupts the "deuteronomistic" account of the regnal years of King Asa (15:11–15, 23–24).[837] Baasha's appearance in this passage (v. 16–22) is surprising, because it precedes the presentation of his succession and regnal years (v. 27–28 and again in verse 33). Usually, the years of the reign of the king are related first, and then his deeds. However, Baasha is introduced three times with the epithet "the king of Israel" before his succession is described. First, verse 16 states that Asa and Baasha, *the*

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[836] See also 1 Kgs 14:30 and 15:6, which tell that there was already a continuous war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam and their families.
[837] On the structure of chapters 1 Kings 15:1–16:28 see Long 1984, 165–167.

king of Israel, were at war, and verse 17 that Baasha, *the king of Israel* attacked Judah. Verse 19 again repeats the phrase Baasha, *the king of Israel*. Verses 27–28 reveal something more about him (*Baasha, the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar*) and how he became the king (*Baasha conspired against Nadab, his predecessor, and succeeded him*). Only in verses 33–34 is the "deuteronomistic" account of his reign given, but the episode between Asa, Baasha, and Ben-Hadad (15:16–22) is not mentioned. While Asa is positively evaluated, Baasha is condemned according to the deuteronomistic formula: "*he did what was evil in the eyes of Yahweh walking in the way of Jeroboam*" (15:34). On the other hand, in verses 27–29 Baasha is said to have fulfilled Yahweh's prophesy by killing the family of Jeroboam. In v. 16–22 Baasha is not condemned, but he is presented as a loser. Thus, the different passages create a different and ambivalent picture of King Baasha and his deeds.

The episode in 1 Kgs 15:16–22 is silent regarding the consequences of Ben Hadad's attack on the north. Baasha is said to have escaped from Ramah but "stayed in Tirzah" (1 Kgs 15:20–21). He is not said to have gone to fight with Ben-hadad, and it seems that he had nothing to do with the cities in the north. This episode does not have any continuation, and it is not referred to anywhere else in the Hebrew Bible, except in the parallel story in 2 Chr 16:1–6.

Chapters 1 Kgs 15:1–16:28 form an entity that narrates the reigns of the seven kings: Abijam, Asa, Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, and Omri. It is placed between the larger narratives of kings Jeroboam (chapters 12–14) and Ahab (16:29–22:40). In verse 15:29, the destruction of Jeroboam's family is completed (the tale of Jeroboam's demise), and in 16:21–28 Omri's dynasty is founded, followed by many stories about his son Ahab. Most of this unit is covered by the synchronistically designed "deuteronomistic reign by reign" pattern.[838] Ben Hadad's attack (1 Kgs 15:20) was inserted into this framework, preceded by the description of the Judahite-Israelite conflict.

In the Chronicles, the reign of Asa is presented in 2 Chr 14–16, and the episode of the conflict with Israel, including Ben-hadad's attack *"against the cities of Israel",* in 2 Chr 16:1–6. Asa's reign is extensively described,[839] including plenty of material and interpretation which is not found in First Kings 15.[840] However, the description of the conflict between Asa and Baasha in 2 Chr 16:1–6 is almost identical with that of 1 Kgs 15:17–22: The episode was incorporated into the account of King Asa's reign: Asa asks

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[838] Long 1984, 168–170.
[839] Dillard 1987, 115; Japhet 1993, 740.
[840] See Japhet 1993, 731; Cogan 2001, 403, footnote 1.

Ben-Hadad for help, and Ben-Hadad smites Ijon, Dan, and Abel-beth-maacah (1 Kgs 15:20 / 2 Chr 16:4). First Kings also mentions Chinneroth and the land of Naphtali. In the Chronicles, Chinneroth is absent, and Abel-majim and the "store cities of Naphtali" appear instead of Abel-beth-maacah and the land of Naphtali, but the Chroniclers' version is continued by the prophecy in 2 Chr 16:7–10. Second Chronicles, however, shows King Asa in a negative light; his mistake was to rely on a foreign ruler instead of Yahweh, and he was condemned for this reason. The Chronicles provide a critical and negative picture of King Asa, while First Kings presents him positively as a king who was favored by Yahweh.

Discussion of the Passage

The verse 1 Kgs 15:20 is a report-like text and, therefore, it is regarded by many scholars as a fragment of an annalistic source,[841] likely carrying the historical fact of border wars between the kingdom of Israel and the Arameans. The destroyed cities/regions are listed in order from the north to the south,[842] which also makes the "report" look like an historical document. However, the "report-like" form of the text does not self-evidently verify its historical[843] validity. Actually, this "report" is incorporated into the story dealing with the conflict between Judah and Israel (v. 15:16–18), which makes it part of the larger plot and narrative. The focus of this narrative is not in the north of Israel but on Ramah, in the border district of Judah, close to Jerusalem.[844] The account of Ben-Hadad's attack against Ijon, Dan, and Abel-beth-maachah is a minor plot point, followed by what first happened in the south. Thus, the main focus of the narrative is on Judah.[845] If verse 20 represents an independent piece of an early document, it has, in my view, been detached from its annalistic, documentary context and used to serve the aims of the narrative in 1 Kgs 15.[846]

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[841] Thus Noth 1968, 337–338; Long 1984, 166, 168; Jones 1984, 282; DeVries 1985, 190; Würthwein 1985, 188; Fritz 1996, 153; Cogan 2001, 402–403; Bartusch 2003, 214–215.

[842] Montgomery & Gehman 1986, 277; Cogan 2001, 400.

[843] By the term "historical" I mean here events that have happened in reality. That such a conflict really happened during the reign of Baasha by the initiative of Asa is not easily proved. One biblical verse is not a sufficient piece of evidence for reconstructing military history, although it would fit with the general picture of fighting neighboring kingdoms. It is also debated whether Dan belonged to the kingdom of Israel during the 9th century BCE (see chapter 5).

[844] Ramah is located the mid-way from Bethel to Jerusalem.

[845] See also Japhet's commentary on 2 Chr 16:1–6, Japhet 1993, 732.

[846] Jones (1984, 285) finds verse 15:16 an editorial link to the episode described in 15:16–22. He suggests that the whole passage derives from "an annalistic source", but before it was attached to this context it had already been formulated as "a historical narrative." He refers to Gray (1977, 351), with whom he agrees. I also agree that the form of the passage, or part of it, is a narrative, but to what degree it reflects historical events remains open because of the inadequate evidence. It has a strong Judahite perspective, but it honestly admits the superiority of Israel to Judah.

A list of a similar type is found in 2 Kgs 15:29. This verse describes how Tiglath Pileser, the king of Assyria, attacked and conquered "Ijon, Abel-beth-maacah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and he deported the people to Assyria." This list is longer than the previous example, and reaches as far south as Gilead, but Dan is missing from it. According to Mordechai Cogan, the consequences of these two campaigns were also different: while the area conquered by Tiglath Pileser was annexed to Assyria (2 Kgs 15:29), Ben-Hadad's army in 1 Kgs 15:20 only destroyed the cities but did not conquer them. The cities remained under the reign of the Israelite king.[847] However, what happened to the cities and territories after Ben-Hadad's attack is not explicitly stated,[848] and the biblical texts do not provide an unambiguous answer. Hence, it is necessary to examine the "three Israelite cities" in 1 Kgs 15:20 in more detail: to study the appearance of Ijon and Abel-beth-maacah in the Hebrew Bible.

Because of their similarities, the lists of Ben-Hadad and Tiglath-Pileser may derive from the same source.[849] This is in fact probable, because Ijon appears only three times in the Hebrew Bible, and all of them in these lists (1 Kgs 15:20; 2 Kgs 15:29; 2 Chron. 16:4). Abel-beth-maacah also occurs in both lists in Kings, but not in the Chronicles (Abel-majjim in 2 Chr 16:4). Aside from these, Abel-beth-maacah appears twice in the story of Sheba's rebellion against David (2 Sam. 20: 14,15). It is the city into which Sheba, son of Bichri, escaped David's forces "through all the tribes of Israel" (2 Sam. 20:14). In this story, Abel-beth-maacah seems to represent a city that is located far from Jerusalem, on the other side of the territories of "all the tribes of Israel," a city that is safe enough for the escapees from Jerusalem.

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[847] Cogan 2001, 400. Thus also DeVries 1985, 191 and Biran 1994, 181–183. Biran supposed that the biblical word "smote" (*wajjak*) in 1 Kgs 15:20 illustrates Ben-Hadad's attack, but not an overall conquest of the site. Thus, he associates the partial destruction of "bamah A" (Stratum IV) in the cultic enclosure (Area T) with this biblical verse. This interpetation presupposes that 1 Kgs 15:20 is historical evidence for an attack that happened during the 9th century BCE.

[848] So Noth (1968, 341) and Würthwein (1985, 190). However, Noth also supposed that the northern area was left under the control of the kingdom of Israel on the basis of 2 Kgs 15:29: "Vom judäischen Gesichtskreis des Berichterstatters aus bedeutete das, daß er den Ausbau von Rama einfach liegen ließ und nunmehr 'in Thirza blieb' ... Außerhalb des judäischen Gesichtskreises und daher unerwähnt bleibt der Fortgang der Ereignisse im israelitisch-aramäischen Grenzgebiet. Man kann daher nur mutmaßen, daß Baesa den aramäischen Einfall jedenfalls zum Stehen gebracht und wahrscheinlich das aramäisch besetzt gewesene Gebiet zurückgewonnen hat, sei es durch kriegerisches Handeln oder aber durch selbständigen Rückzug der Aramäer ... Jedenfalls war nach 2 Kö 15:29a etwa anderthalb Jahrhunderte später dieses Gebiet wieder Herrschaftsbereich des Staates Israel." Japhet (1993, 733) suggests that "since the event is viewed from the perspective of Judah, we are left without information about Baasha's measures to repulse the forces of Aram."

[849] Cogan 2001, 400.

Moreover, Maacah, which can be associated with the city of Abel-beth-maacah,[850] appears twice in 2 Sam. 10:6, 8 (and in parallel story in 1 Chr 19:6–7) together with Beth-rehov and Zobah: "the Arameans of Beth-rehob and the Arameans of Zobah ... as well as the king of Maacah." In this story, these "Arameans" and the king of Maacah were "hired" to fight with the Ammonites against David. Hence, Zobah, Beth-rehov, and Maacah are considered to be outside of Israelite territory in this text. On the other hand, Josh 13:13 states that "the Israelites did not drive out the Geshurites or the Maacathites; but Geshur and Maacah live within Israel to this day." The epithet "Maacathite" also appears in some other passages, such as 2 Sam 23:34; 2 Kgs 25:23; Jer 40:8; 1 Chr 4:19; Dtr 3:14; Josh 12:5; Josh 13:11, 13.

Were Ijon, Dan, and Abel-beth-maacah "Israelite" cities/territories, as 1 Kgs 15:20 claims? The biblical texts do not yield a clear picture. That Ijon appears only three times in the Hebrew Bible, in these military lists, does not tell much about its relation to the kingdom of Israel. Because Ijon was located several kilometers north of Dan, it also raises the question concerning the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba." If Ijon was regarded as an "Israelite" city, why was Dan chosen to exemplify the northernmost post of the kingdom of Israel, and not Ijon? Maacah / Abel-beth-maacah is in some biblical verses referred to as a "Maachathite" or "Aramean" (1 Chr 19:6) city or territory close to the "Aramean" Rehov and Zobah (2 Sam. 10:6, 8). Thus, what was the relationship between the "Maachathites," "Arameans," and the "Israelites"? The wise woman from Abel-beth-maachah describes herself in 2 Sam 20:19: אָנֹכִי שְׁלֻמֵי אֱמוּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל *I am one of those who are peaceable and faithful in Israel*." This verse reflects the dominance of Israel over the territory of Abel-beth-maacah (during David's reign), but does not associate the "Maachathites" with "Israelites." Again, it must be kept in mind that this is the Judahite point of view.

The territories and people of Maacah / Abel-beth-maacah, Zobah and Rehov are referred to and discussed only in a few passages in Second Samuel and Joshua (2 Sam. 10:6, 8 / 1 Chr 19:6–7; 2 Sam. 20: 14–19; Josh 12:5; 13:11–13 / Dtr 3:14).[851] They are not mentioned in the books of Kings,[852] not even in the stories of Ahab, who is frequently at war with Ben-Hadad. After 1 Kgs 15:20, Ben-Hadad's next attack is directed straight against Samaria (1 Kgs 20), without any mention of the resistance of these northern "Israelite" cities or territories, which were unavoidably in his way on the route from

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[850] See e.g. Na'aman 2012, 89–90, 95.
[851] Zobah and/or Rehov is/are also mentioned in 1 Sam 14:47 (narratives of Saul); 2 Sam 8:3,5,12; 23:36 (narratives of David; see also 1 Chr 18:3,5,9); Rehov is included in the territory of the tribe of Asher (Josh 19:28; 21:31; Jdg 1:31).
[852] Except the king of Zobah in 1 Kgs 11:23 (narratives of Solomon).

Damascus to Samaria. The narrator of Ahab's and Ben-Hadad's conflicts does not show any interest in the districts of the northern Jordan valley. The locations of the battles were Samaria (1 Kgs 20:1), Aphek (1 Kgs 20:26, 30), and Ramoth-gilead (1 Kgs 22, 3–4, 29). Until now, the excavations at Abel-beth-maacah (started in 2013) have mainly revealed remains from the periods of Iron Age I to early Iron Age II (11–10th centuries BCE).[853]

Another question is why Dan is missing from "Tiglath-Pileser's list" (2 Kgs 15:29) but appears in "Ben-Hadad's list", while Ijon and Abel-beth-maacah are mentioned in both of them. Archaeological evidence suggests that Dan was a prosperous city during mid-8th century BCE (see chapters 2.2.4 and 2.3.3–4). Was Dan unknown to the editors of "Tighlath-Pieleser's list", or was it not worth mentioning? Dan is absent in all the biblical texts narrating the period of the Israelite kingdom after its first king Jeroboam (golden bulls in 1 Kgs 12:29–30) and the list in 1 Kgs 15:20. The city of Dan is not mentioned at all in Second Kings, except 2 Kgs 10:29, which is a literary repetition from 1 Kgs 12:29 (see chapter 4.2 above).

The Chroniclers' version (2 Chr 16:1–6) does not significantly differ from that of the First Kings. Thus, they must have the same source, or, as Sara Japhet suggests,[854] 1 Kgs 15:17–22 was used as the source. The passage in the Chronicles is modified. A prophetic story (16:7–10), which is the special material of the Chroniclers, is added in order to serve the Chroniclers' own motives and purposes. It gives a strong theological emphasis to the text, which is typical for them.[855] While First Kings gives a positive picture of King Asa, the prophecy in Second Chronicles ranks Asa among the kings unfaithful to Yahweh, because he relied on Ben-Hadad, a foreign ruler. The Judahite perspective is even stronger in the Chroniclers' version than in that of First Kings.[856] The Chroniclers' version does not provide any further understanding of the appearance of Ijon, Abel-majjim, and Dan in the list of the cities attacked by Ben-Hadad. According to 1 Kgs 15:20, they are portrayed as "cities of Israel", although they do not occur elsewhere in the Chronicles, except Dan twice in the phrase "*from Beersheba to Dan*" (1 Chron. 21:2; 2 Chron. 30:5).

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[853] See preliminary reports in http://www.abel-beth-maacah.org/ (visited 23.9.2015). The preliminary results from Abel-beth-maacah resemble those of the excavations at the lower city of Tel Kinrot (Tell el-ʿOreme), where three continuous main phases dating to Iron Age I were revealed under terrace walls and structures of the Ottoman period. See e.g. Fritz–Münger 2002, 2–32.

[854] Japhet 1993, 731; Williamson (1982, 273) says that the *Vorlage* of the Chroniclers' might also have differed from the Masoretic Text.

[855] Japhet 1993, 731: "Most – although certainly not all – of these changes have as common denominator the Chronicler's need to provide full theological and historical coherence for the events described in his sources." See also Myers 1965, 93–94; Williamson 1982, 273–274; Dillard 1987, 115–116, 125–126.

[856] Japhet 1993, 732.

Intention and summary

In my view, the passages 1 Kgs 15:17–22 and 2 Chr 16:1–6 focus on the relationship between Judah and Israel. The passages have been placed within the chronicle of King Asa of Judah, which underlines the Judahite perspective. Moreover, the episode is not mentioned or referred to in the chronicles of the kings of Israel. Thus, the intention of these passages is not to tell the history of the northern Israelite regions, or to report the fate of the cities in the northern Jordan valley. The story attempts to explain how Judah managed to liberate itself from the oppression of Israel. Therefore, the list of the cities attacked by Ben-Hadad (1 Kgs 15:20) is secondary to this episode, although the list of the cities originated from the annals.

The combination of the three cities Ijon, Abel-beth-maacah, and Dan, is unique in the Hebrew Bible. It appears only in this episode in 1 Kgs 15:20 and its parallel story in 2 Chr 16:4 (with the modification of Abel-beth-maacah to Abel- majjim). In particular, the appearance of Ijon is rare, as it appears only three times, in three military lists, in the Hebrew Bible. In addition to this episode, it occurs in the military list of Tighlath-Pileser in 2 Kgs 15:29. Although Ijon was located north of Dan, Dan was chosen to mark the northernmost point of the kingdom of Israel. Hence, Dan became a more significant city than Ijon and Abel-beth-maacah in the Hebrew Bible, although they were located close to each other. While Abel-beth-maacah / Maacah – in addition to 1 Kgs 15:20 / 2 Chron 16:4 and 2 Kgs 15:29 – appears in the books of Joshua, Samuel, Chronicles, and once in Deuteronomy (Josh 12:5; 13:11–13 / Dtr 3:14; 2 Sam. 10:6, 8 / 1 Chr 19:6–7; 2 Sam. 20: 14–19;), Dan also appears in two books of the prophets (Jeremiah, Amos), Judges, and Genesis (see table 7).

The question of whether these cities were "Israelite" cannot be answered on the basis of the biblical texts. First of all, it is not clear what is meant by the term "Israelite" in Kgs 15:20. Does it mean the domination of the kingdom of Israel over that area, or the "Israelite" population in the cities? The texts are not numerous, and not much can be deduced from them. I agree with Burke Long who argues that the intention of the textual unit 1 Kgs 15:1–16:28 – which is "an editorial composite"[857] of different genres – is to point out the "malfunction of monarchy in the north."[858] The episode in 1 Kgs 15:17–22 and, particularly, the verse describing Ben-hadad's attack in 1 Kgs 15:20, underline the

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[857] Long 1984, 168. See also Noth 1968, 326–327.
[858] Long 1984, 170.

failure of Israel. This is the purpose of the verse, and the story that was written and edited in Judah.

4.3.4. Occupation of Dan by the Danites: Josh 19:47–48

Translation and Notes

[47] When the Danites lost their territory, they went up to fight against Leshem and captured it. They smote it by the sword, took possession of it and settled down in it. They renamed Leshem Dan after their ancestor Dan.
[48] This is the inheritance of the tribe of the Danites according to their families, these towns with their villages.

Translation of the Greek Septuagint[859]

[47] This *is* the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Dan, according to their families, these *are* their cities and their villages: and the children of Dan did not drive out the Amorite who afflicted them in the mountain; and the Amorite would not suffer them to come down into the valley, but they forcibly took from them the border of their portion.

[48] And the sons of Dan (Judah)[860] went and fought against Lachis, and took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword; and they dwelt in it, and called the name of it Lasendan[861]: and the Amorite continued to dwell in Edom and in Salamin: and the hand of Ephraim prevailed against them, and they became tribute to them.

The Text, Context and Comparison with Judges 18

The text of the book of Joshua is complex; the Masoretic text differs greatly from the many different versions of Septuagint throughout the book. For example, the Old Greek version from the second century BCE differs in part in every verse from the Masoretic text.[862] This indicates that the text was not only copied, but also interpreted and edited.[863] The Greek translations probably had different "Vorlage" from that of the Masoretic text.[864] Most likely, this is also the case with the passage under discussion (Josh 19:47–48).[865] The "original" or the earliest textual form is hard to trace, if it is even relevant at all.[866] The

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[859] The Translation of the Greek Old Testament Scriptures, Including the Apocrypha. Compiled from the Translation by sir Lancelot C.L. Brenton 1851. http://ecmarsh.com/lxx/Joshua/index.htm visited 10.6. 2013.
[860] Ιουδα (Judah) according to Rahlfs, Alfred - Hanhart, Robert (2006), Septuaginta. Editio altera/Revised Edition. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft.
[861] Λασενδακ (Lasendak) according to Rahlfs, Alfred - Hanhart, Robert (2006), Septuaginta. Editio altera/Revised Edition. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft.
[862] Butler 1983, xvii–xx. See also Fritz 1994, 1-3.
[863] Butler 1983, 200 (note for verses 19:47–48).
[864] Fritz 1994, 1.
[865] See Tov 1999, 395 followed by Bartusch 2003, 97.
[866] Knauf (2008, 35) states: "Die Frage nach 'älteren' Formen des Textes ist nur punktuell möglich und nur im Rahmen redaktionsgeschichtlicher, historischer oder religionshistorischer Fragestellungen sinnvoll."

contents of the book are, however, clear: the first part of the book (chapters 1–12) describes the conquest of the land, and the second part (chapters 13–19) the division of the land for each tribe. Verses 19:47–48 belong to the passage in which the territory of the tribe of Dan is presented (19:40–48).

The conquest of the city of Dan is also described in Judges 18. The description in Joshua is much shorter, and the author seems to ignore the location of Dan.[867] According to the Masoretic text of Joshua, the Danites lost the territory that was first allotted to them by lot. This territory, which they were forced to leave, was located next to Judah (Josh.19:40–47). The homeless tribe then fought against Leshem to capture it and settle down there. In the Greek version, presented above, the site is *Lachis* (cf. Jdg 18:29 *Laish*).[868] In Judges, the Danites also depart from the south (18:2), but their migration through the mountains of Ephraim towards the north is also narrated. In Joshua, this is not described. Zorah and Eshtaol are mentioned as the "first homes" of the tribe of Dan, in both Josh 19:42 and Jdg 18:2. The other towns or settlements listed in Joshua 19:40–46 are absent in the story of the Judges. Both narratives present the Danites as a homeless people searching for a place to settle down. The renaming of the conquered city "after the ancestor Dan" is related both in Joshua 19:47 and Judges 18:29 in the Masoretic text, but in the Greek versions the reference to the ancestor is lacking, and the city is renamed differently: Lasendan/ Lasendak/ Lachis.

Discussion of the Passage

The passage concerning the territory and the tribe of Dan is confused (19:40–48). In addition to the differences between the Masoretic and Greek texts, the contents of the passage are problematic. First, the list of the towns allotted to the tribe of Dan in Josh 19:41–46, 48 (47 in Septuagint) is rather similar to that described as the territory of Judah in Josh 15:1–12, 33–36.[869] The settlements of both lists were located in the Shefelah, west of the mountains of Judah,[870] and thus it seems that the territory of Dan was within that of

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[867] Gray 1967, 171.

[868] Note that in many versions of the Septuagint the sons of *Judah* appears instead of the sons of Dan (Josh. 19:48): καὶ ἐπορεύθησαν **οἱ υἱοὶ Ιουδα** καὶ ἐπολέμησαν **τὴν Λαχις** καὶ κατελάβοντο αὐτὴν καὶ ἐπάταξαν αὐτὴν ἐν στόματι μαχαίρος καὶ κατῴκησαν αὐτὴν καὶ ἐκάλεσαν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτῆς **Λασενδακ**. Rahlfs, Alfred - Hanhart, Robert (2006), Septuaginta. Editio altera/Revised Edition. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft. Probably the Vorlage of this Greek text derives from the pro-Judahite circles. See Bartusch 2003, 97. However, Bartusch's date for this "pro-Judah scribe" to the "early years of the Divided Monarchy" is not plausible.

[869] Gray 1967, 170.

[870] See identification of the sites in Fritz 1994, 198.

Judah. Second, other than the territories of the other tribes, the borders of the Danites' territory are not defined (another exception is the tribe of Simeon).[871] Third, the place of verse 19:47 (19:48 Septuagint) is striking. This is a part of the conquest stories that are already narrated in Joshua 2–12, while chapters 13–19 deal with the division of the land to the tribes.[872] Therefore, verse 47 (48 in Septuagint) seems to be in the wrong place – or it is a later interpolation into chapter 19.[873] Furthermore, it is striking that after losing their "southern territory" (verses 41–46) only one city (Leshem / Laish / Lachis?), unknown to the writer of this passage, is now ascribed to the tribe of Dan. Scholars agree that Josh 19:47 (48) is based on and added under the influence of Jdg 1:34–35 and 18:27–29.[874]

According to John Gray, the similarities between the lists of Josh 19:41–46 and Josh 15:1–12, 33–36 must be understood so that the author of Joshua 19:41–46 utilized the list of Josh 15, the description of the territory of Judah.[875] The towns and settlements in the passages are located at the same territory and, for example, Zorah and Eshtaol are mentioned in the both lists. Accordingly, the territory of "the tribe of Dan" in Joshua 19:41–46 is depicted as part of the territory of Judah in Joshua 15:33–36. Because Judges 13–16 (Samson's story), along with Judges 18:2, also attaches the area around Zorah and Eshtaol to the Danites (see Jdg 13:2, 25),[876] Judges was most probably used as the source for Joshua 19:40–48. It is likely that this southern territory was also primarily associated with the tribe of Dan in the biblical tradition. The Levitical cities of the tribe of Dan are also placed in this area (see Josh. 21:23), [877] and the reference to the migration of the tribe of Dan to the north is lacking in Septuagint (Josh 19:48, Rahlf's – Hanhart's edition). The question still remains: who were the Danites? Were the Danites an independent group, part of the population of Judah, or someone else?

Axel Knauf[878] suggests that the traditions of the "northern" and the "southern" tribe of Dan have different origins that are primarily based on the place names: Tel Dan in the north and Mahaneh-Dan in the south. He states that the "northern tribe" of Dan "was never anything but the significant city in the northern edge of Israel." Hence, he assumes that the

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[871] See Fritz 1994, 198; Knauf 2008, 168.
[872] Fritz 1994, 199.
[873] Bartusch (2003, 93) also finds the place and the narrative form of this verse striking: It "is unparalleled in the immediate context (Josh. 18–19)." See Bartusch 2003, 92–94, 218.
[874] Gray 1967, 170–171; Butler 1983, 206; Knauf 2008, 168; de Vos 2009, 71. See also Tov 1999, 395.
[875] Gray 1967, 170. Fritz (1994, 199) states that the list reflects the reality of the period during the kingdom of Judah.
[876] Samson's father, belonging to the tribe of Dan, is from Zorah, and Samson stayed "in *Mahaneh-Dan*, between Zorah and Eshtaol."
[877] See Bartusch 2003, 92–93, 218; Rahlfs, Alfred - Hanhart, Robert (2006), Septuaginta: Jos 19:47–48.
[878] Knauf 2008, 168.

city created the fiction of the tribe in the north and the "Danites" were nothing else but the inhabitants of the city of Dan. The reconstruction of the "southern tribe of Dan" he dates to the 6th – 5th centuries BCE Judah, and associates it with the Samson stories in Jdg 13–16: the concept of the *Danite* Samson comes from the place name Mahaneh-Dan. He also associates the southern tradition of the Danites with the Sea People *Danuna* and their non-Israelite tradition of the Danites in Shefelah. (see chapter 4.2 The Occupation of Dan, Jdg 18:27–31).

The different biblical stories and their various versions reflect the varied views of the Danites in the Hebrew Bible. In my view, Knauf's statement that the place name "created" the tribe is rather convincing: those who lived in Dan were the Danites, or the tribe of Dan. Because there was *Mahaneh-Dan* in the Shefelah, close to the core of Judah, and also a *Dan* in the northern Jordan valley, there was confusion about where the Danites came from. The story in Judges 18 attempts to join these southern and northern traditions, which culminates in the account of Jdg 18:29, the only verse in the Hebrew Bible that combines the tradition of the ancestor, the tribe, and the city of Dan. Josh 19:41–48 is, however, based on the southern tradition written from the Judean perspective. In the Greek versions, the connection between the ancestor and the name of the city is lacking, as is the connection to the northern city of Dan (Tel Dan / Tell el-Qaḍi).

The latter part of the book of Joshua is usually dated to the late phase of the formation of the Hebrew Bible. There are similarities with the other late biblical texts (late Persian–Hellenistic): for example, with Numbers 26–36 (division of the land) and the First Chronicles 23–27 (the use of the lots, cf. Neh 11:36).[879] God or Yahweh is not active; he is hardly mentioned, but he is present in the land that achieved holiness. The language and theological elements is reminiscent of a Priestly Document.[880]

The City of Dan in Joshua, and the Intention of the Text

The focus in the book of Joshua is on the conquest and division of the land of Israel. The different versions of the names of the city (Laish / Lachish / Dan) and the tribe (Dan in MT / Judah in Septuagint) indicate the editing of the text. It also indicates that the biblical writers or editors were unsure of the location of Dan and of the territory of the Danites, and whether it belonged to Israel. According to the Masoretic text of Josh 19:40–48, the

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[879] de Vos 2009, 65–66.
[880] de Vos 2009, 61–62, 65–66, 68, 71. Butler (1983, 141) finds the historical context of the land division in the "exile" (6th century BCE), when the geographical traditions of the lost land became significant. The later phase is, however, more likely, as argued by de Vos.

Danites were accepted as one of the tribes of Israel within the people of Israel, but they are not dealt with in a similar way to the other tribes, and in many versions of the Septuagint the city of Dan is missing in the book of Joshua. Moreover, in the light of some other texts, Dan is also dealt with as an outsider or marginal group.[881] Joshua 19 has a strong Judahite emphasis. The connection to the northern city of Dan, *Tell el-Qāḍi / Tel Dan*, is absent. The Danites of Joshua 19 are located in or next to the territory of Judah, and the mention of the city of Dan in Josh. 19:47 is a later interpolation added under the influence of Jdg 1:34-–35 and 18:29.

The theological meaning of the passage is best understood in the light of the theme of the whole book: the land giving. This is meaningful for a people who had lost their independence, people who were searching for their identity. According to Trent C. Butler, the tribe of Dan is an example of a people who were distressed, suffered defeat and damage, and lost their territory, but after fighting gained another one: "new hope, new land, new victory."[882] Butler also states that this "victory" gained by God is bound to the obedience to Yahweh.[883] In fact, the references to the "deuteronomistic" law and covenant are almost absent in chapters 13–21, except for 21:43–45, in which the inheritance of the land is based on the promises given by Yahweh. Thus, passage 19:40–48 is hardly from the "deuteronomistic historian" (6th century BCE), but is later, and verse 19:47 (48 in Septuagint) is the latest interpolation to the passage.

4.3.5. The Abraham-story: Gen. 14:14

Translation and Notes

[14] When Abram heard that his nephew[a] had been taken captive, he armed his trained men, born in his house, three hundred eighteen, and pursued them as far as Dan.

14a. In MT: his brother, but it refers to Lot, Abram's nephew (v. 12).

Contents and Context of Chapter 14

The verse Gen. 14:14 belongs to the description of Abraham's war in chapter 14. The chapter begins with the reports of the wars between the allies of the local kings (v. 1–11). The conflicts lead to the defeat and looting of Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham's nephew,

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[881] See e.g. Bartusch 2003, 261.
[882] Butler 1983, 207.
[883] Butler 1983, 206–208.

Lot, who dwells in Sodom, is also captured (v.12). For this reason, Abraham becomes involved in the war and manages to liberate Lot and to return the booty (v.13–16). The rest of the chapter has two more episodes: the negotiation of the booty between Abraham and the king of Sodom (v. 17, 21–24), which is interrupted by the episode of Melchizedek, who emerges to bless Abraham (18–20).

Chapter 14 is quite loosely connected to the text and narratives before and after it. Chapter 14 forms an entity with clear boundaries.[884] Chapter 14:1 begins with the typical technical term *in the days of* ... (וַיְהִי בִּימֵי) in order to link the passage to the previous text, and, similarly, chapter 15:1 starts with the words *after these things...* (אַחַר הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה) as the transition to the following narrative. However, the contents of *these things* are not referred to anywhere else. The beginning of the chapter (v.1–11) does not include any connection to patriarchal stories. Only verse 12 links Abraham's nephew, Lot, to the events that lead Abraham to the rescue operation. Chapter 14 is also exceptional because it is a war story, while Genesis 12–50 is mostly a compilation of family narratives.[885] It is also difficult to find any historical background, because none of the kings or their cities listed in Gen. 14:1–11 are known from any other sources.[886] With good reason, chapter 14 is called an enigmatic text by Gard Granerød.[887]

Discussion on Chapter 14

The function and setting of chapter 14 have aroused discussion because of their distinctive character in the midst of the stories of Abraham.[888] The discussion has mainly focused on three issues: 1) the relation of chapter 14 to the rest of the book of Genesis; 2) the internal unity or disunity of the chapter; and 3) the background and date of the chapter or a portion

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[884] Wenham 1987, 304. See also von Rad 1972, 134–135.

[885] Granerød 2010, 25–30. Granerød also notes the absence of divine power, except for the Melchizedek episode in 14:18–20, and to the stylistic divergence: vocabulary, itineraries, and chronological references. Genesis includes around 460 words, and 288 of them occur only in this chpater. The abundance of proper names is high compared to the other patricarhal narratives. The itineraries in chapter 14 have no correspondence in Genesis, but rather in the books like Kings or Chronicles (e.g. 1 Kgs 15:20; 2 Kgs 15:29; 2 Chr 13:19; 26:6; 28:18). Furthermore, the chapter begins with the chronological statement: "…in the days of Amraphel, king of Shinar…" trying to fix the story to the history of the larger world, which is not typical in Genesis, but again resembles those style of the so-called historical books of the Hebrew Bible.

[886] Westermann 1986, 193–194; Collins 2004, 84–90. Grabbe 2007, 52–55. Genesis does not include any references to events known from extra-biblical sources. Therefore, its narratives seem to be timeless, and are suited to different periods of history BCE. Some scholars have proposed an Akkadian background for chapter 14, and suggested that King Chedorlaomer might have been Hammurabi, king of Babylon (19th century BCE), but considering the lack of evidence this identification, and also the old cuneiform text that is its basis, have generally been rejected. See Emerton 1971a, 24–47.

[887] Granerød 2010, 3–5. Von Rad (1972, 134) states: "Keine der Vätergeschichten enthält so viel Phantastisches, historisch Unmögliches und Wunderhaftes."

[888] Van Seters 1975, 296; See Emerton 1971a, 24–47; 1971b, 403–439; Granerød 2010, 3–7, footnotes 3–6.

of it. It is widely accepted that Gen 14 is a late addition to the composition of the book of Genesis,[889] but the question of the internal integrity of the chapter divides opinions. Scholars also differ in their opinions of whether the chapter, or parts of it, include old traditions, and about the dates of the chapter or its passages. This discussion will shortly be reviewed below, by introducing a few different concepts from earlier and current research.[890]

Claus Westermann following Gerhard von Rad[891] in using the traditio-historical method in the 1970s to divide the chapter into three parts, which all had an origin of their own: 1. The report of the campaign (v. 1–11/12); 2. The liberation narrative (v. 12–17, 21–24); and 3. The Melchizedek episode (v. 18–20).[892] He found part two, Abraham's liberation narrative, the oldest part of the chapter, which was expanded by adding the Melchizedek episode during "the time of David." Westermann observed that the liberation narrative is reminiscent of the savior stories in Judges. Abraham is a similar "savior hero" type, like those in the book of Judges. Therefore, he thought that the passage in Gen 14: 11/12–17 originated from the "same cycle". He regarded "the time of the Judges" as the period of the creation of these narratives. Concerning the first passage (v. 1–11), he claimed that this non-Israelite and non-historical war story was created in the post-exilic era, and has its background in the context of broader world history.[893] He dates the compilation of the whole chapter to the "late post-exilic period", and according to him it is "the work of a scribe's desk…to be compared with other late Jewish writings" by which he refers to the Jewish midrash-like literature.[894]

Westermann, and others sharing similar opinions of the lack of integrity of chapter 14, have been particularly criticized for their unsatisfactory explanations of the question of how the individual passages would have worked alone. Wenham correctly states that it is impossible to find v. 11/12–16 to be an original, independent story.[895] The captivity and

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[889] Westermann 1986, 190–192; Kratz 2005, 260–261; Granerød 2010, 4, 30.

[890] Claus Westermann in 1960s – 1970s; Gordon J. Wenham in 1980s; Gard Granerød in 2000s.

[891] Von Rad 1972, 134–140. Von Rad was among the first scholars who suggested an inconsistency in the narrative of chapter 14.

[892] Westermann 1986, 190. Similarly Emerton 1971b, 437–439 but he recounted more glosses and divided passage v. 1–11 into several pieces. Contrary to Westermann, he found the references to Lot to be the latest additions.

[893] According to Westermann, the intention of the biblical author was to link the patriarchal narratives to broader world history, by creating a campaign story in the style of great eastern kings, and using the Assyrian and Babylonian royal inscriptions of the military campaigns as models for the passage in 1–11. Westermann 1986, 190–191, 193. Zimmerli (1976, 35, 42) also argues for the broader historical context of this narrative, although he supports the integrity of chapter 14 and the earlier date.

[894] Westermann 1986, 192–193.

[895] Wenham 1987, 304–307. According to him, the chapter has two main parts: three battle reports (v. 1–16) and the confrontation between Abraham, the king of Sodom, and Melchizedek (v.17–24), which constitute a

robbery of Lot, and Abraham's liberation act, have no sensible motive without the war story of v. 1–11. Wenham says: "The story would lose much of its punch were the introductory verses omitted… Rather the chapter is a substantial unity." Contrary to Westermann, he is of opinion that chapter 14 belongs to a "larger Abraham-Lot cycle" and presupposes old, pre-Jahvistic material that has later been edited and glosses added.[896] However, Wenham also sees a connection to the book of Judges. He finds a parallel to Judg. 7, in which Gideon conquered the Midianites, and also refers to Judg. 18:29 as an explanation of the mention of Dan: Dan is part of the promised land.[897]

Granerød also supports the unity of verses 1–17 and 21–24, but regards the Melchizedek episode (v. 18–20) as a later interpolation to it.[898] He, however, finds the whole narrative rather late, similarly to Van Seters, who also argues that the military report is "so completely fanciful that we can only suppose it to be a completely artificial literary creation, using the campaign report in chronicle form as a model".[899] Granerød also shares this view, claiming that chapter 14 is "from a scribe's desk," the scribal work from the Persian – early Hellenistic period.[900] The scribe used several biblical and non-biblical narratives as his sources, as sort of "building blocks."[901] He thinks that the scribe borrowed the style, narrative frameworks, geographical data, itineraries, and place names from the already available biblical literature[902] and other sources, and merged these ideas into the narrative in Gen. 14. Granerød supposes that the extra biblical sources derived from the rich multicultural contacts and connections of the Second Temple Period between various nations and the Jewish diaspora communities, among others an Elamite community in Samaria.[903]

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coherent narrative. The integrity with or without the Melchizedek episode (v. 18–20) was also supported by e.g. Zimmerli 1976, 35; Van Seters 1975, 302; Granerød 2010, 30, 38–40.

[896] Wenham 1987, 307. Kratz 2005, 273 includes chapters 12–13, 18–19, 21:1a, and 6–8 to the Abraham–Lot narratives, while he finds chapter 14 to be a late expansion with "midrash like additions." (p. 260).

[897] Wenham 1987, 314.

[898] Similarly Emerton 1971b, 407–412; Zimmerli 1976, 35; Van Seters 1975, 307–308. Verses 18–20 is an isolated episode that intterrupts the dialogue of Abraham and the king of Sodom. The sudden appearance and disappearance of Melchizedek, and the fact that the narrative in Gen 14 does not presuppose the episode v. 18–20, support the impression that it is a later addition. Moreover, the blessing of Melchizedek "Blessed… God Most High, creator of heaven and earth" reflects the theology and phraseology of the other rather late texts (Hellenistic?) of the Hebrew Bible (thus Van Seters 1975, 308). In the light of the present study, Westerman's tenth century date BCE is impossible. See further arguments Granerød 2010, 31–36; 155–171; 239–241.

[899] Van Seters 1975, 300–301.

[900] Similarly Kratz 2005, 260, 274.

[901] Granerød 2010, 99–152.

[902] E.g. 1 Sam 30, Gen. 10; Dtn 1–3; Num 10–21; 2 Sam 8. Granerød 2010, 127.

[903] Granerød 2010, 128. This view is reminiscent of Westermann's concept of the background for the war story in verses 1–11 (Westermann 1986, 193), but Granerød dates the chapter to a later period (Pesrian–early Hellenistic) than Westermann (Assyrian–Babylonian).

A particularly interesting aspect of Granerød's conclusions is his observation that the itineraries in Genesis 14 correspond with the extent of the "Promised Land", and also resembles that of David's kingdom as depicted in 2 Sam 8.[904] Furthermore, he plausibly claims that the events and ideas of the sixth–fourth century BCE fit well with those reflected in Genesis 14, such as the figure of Abraham depicting the experience of the "people of Israel" in late biblical and Hellenistic literature (e.g. Aramaic Genesis Apocryphon from Qumran, the books of Sirak and Jubilee), the idealized delimitation of the land of Israel (ha-ʾareṣ) that is rather a literary dream than reality (Abraham's pursuit from Hebron to Dan until north of Damascus), and the tendency to mix fact and fiction in quasi-historical narratives, which is typical of the Persian–Hellenistic period.[905]

While earlier research sought to identify the historical background of the period to which Gen 14 would fit, current research focuses on the ideology behind the narrative. Consequently, instead of searching history, Granerød attempted to find the answer of why Genesis 14 was created and incorporated into the book of Genesis, and what the intention of the author or authors was. I think that Westermann, Wenham, and others were right in observing the resemblances between the book of Judges and Gen. 14, but they dated the narratives too early. In the light of more recent research, Granerød's conclusions of the rather late, Persian–Hellenistic (post-exilic) date is more convincing.

Why does Dan appear here?

Gen 14:14 is the only occurrence of the city of Dan in the Pentateuch. The commentaries and other studies have not paid much attention to this matter. The occurrence of Dan in Gen 14:14 is traditionally explained as an anachronism, because the city was called Dan only after its conquest by the Danites in Jdg 18:29.[906] According to Westermann, there is no anachronism because the story was created at "the time of Judges" when Laish was already known as Dan.[907] However, these solutions are not satisfactory. In my opinion, the mention of Dan in Gen 14:14 is difficult to explain without its connection to the other passages that include a reference to the city of Dan. I propose that there must have been a kind of similar background and ideology behind these texts, particularly those emphasizing

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[904] Granerød 2010, 126–127. Granerød presumes that it was the text that was borrowed by the author of Gen. 14. In 2 Sam 8, David ruled over the Philistines, the Moabites, the Arameans of Zobah and Damascus, the Ammonites, and the Amalekites, which – according to him – covers the territories of those of the kings listed in Gen. 14:5–7, 13–15, excluding the territory of the Philistines to the west.
[905] Granerød 2010, 129–152.
[906] Von Rad 1972, 137; Zimmerli 1976, 41.
[907] Westermann 1986, 201.

the location of Dan at the northern extreme of the "land of Israel." Granerød's idea that the accepted extent of the promised land is one of the motives for Abraham's itineraries is convincing.[908] It explains the appearance of Dan in Gen 14. The late date for the chapter is also plausible, because otherwise Dan would most probably occur more frequently. That the authors/editors borrowed itineraries from other sources also explains the rather irrelevant and fictional events and sites in Gen 14, especially Abraham's pursuit of his enemies, the great kings, with only a handful of his men, from Hebron to Dan and then north of Damascus. The description does not seem realistic, because the distance is several hundred kilometers.[909]

The events of the fight took place even further south, at the Dead Sea in "the Valley of Siddim" (v. 14:3). That makes the story seem like a scribal work without little connection to real events, but rather having some other purpose. Furthermore, the observation of the earlier researchers of the parallels between the stories of Judges and Gen 14 is important; for example, Wenham (1987) finds a parallel to Jdg 7 (Gideon conquered Midianites) and Westermann (1986) finds Abraham to be a hero in the same mold as the heroes in Judges. In my opinion, the link to Judges also explains the appearance of Dan in Gen 14. The intention to make Abraham a hero who is victorious over enemies from the south (Dead Sea) to the north (Dan and Damascus) recalls the ideology of the united land of Israel, "all Israel." I assume that the story is from the same scribal cycle as are many other texts emphasizing the extremes of the "promised land", here from Hebron and the Dead Sea to Dan and Damascus. It also corresponds with the stories of the conquest of the land in the book of Joshua.

4.3.6. Oracles of Judgment: Jer 4:15; 8:16

Translation and Notes of Jer 4:15 and Jer 8:16

4:15 For a voice is announcing from Dan
         and proclaiming disaster from the hill country of Ephraim.
8:16 From Dan we can hear[a] the snorting of his horses,
         from the sound of the neighing of his strong steeds the whole earth quakes.
They are coming, devouring the earth and all that is in it: the   city and those dwelling there.

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[908] This idea is also referred by Kratz 2005.
[909] Zimmerli (1976, 41) notes the distance: it is around 250 km by air from Hebron to Dan and then Damascus.

8:16 a. Masoretic text *nišmaʿ* can be understood either as qal, impf., plural, first person, "we hear" (thus LXX) or nif., perf., sing., 3. person, masculine, "is heard" (Vulgate). The translation "we can hear" fits better to the context because it continues the plural first person "we" of the previous verses 8:14–15 (see discussion below).[910]

Contents and Context of Jer 4:15 and Jer 8:16

Dan is mentioned twice in the book of Jeremiah, in two oracles: Jer. 4:15–17 and 8:13–17. The primary concern here is to examine why Dan is included in these oracles. It is peculiar, because the book of Jeremiah mainly concerns the matter of Judah and its people. In the commentaries, the appearance of Dan is mostly explained by its geographical position at the northernmost border of Israel, although the kingdom of Israel had already ceased to exist a long time before.[911] In my opinion, the answer should not primarily be searched for among historical events or politics, but rather by asking: what are the intentions and targets of the texts.

Both of the oracles proclaim the coming disaster, which was understood as God's judgment: Judah had rebelled against Yahweh (Jer. 4:16–17; 8:14), and therefore the enemy is on its way from the north towards Jerusalem and the cities of Judah. Thus, the Judahite perspective is obvious (4:3–4, 11, 14,16; 8:5),[912] and the "we" in verses 8:14–16, 20 are those living in Jerusalem and Judah. The enemy is anonymous and coming from the distant north, which is neither named nor located in any specific area. However, it has usually been identified with the Babylonian army and its invasion of Judah.[913] The "enemy from the north" described in Jer 6:22–23 is an expression peculiar to the book of Jeremiah.[914]

Chapters 4 and 8 are rather fragmentary, as are the chapters around them (2–10). They do not form an entity, but constitute different pieces of God's speeches, oracles, prophetic proclamations, and descriptions of the foes in the coming war, disaster as the judgment of God, and the lamentations of the people.[915] Prose and poetry vary in the text.[916] The

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[910] See Craigie etc. 1991, 136–138.

[911] For example, Craigie 1991, 77; Wanke 1995, 62; Lundbom 1999, 346; Fischer 2005, 220, 339. See also Schmidt 2008, 131–132, 199. He does not explain the mention of Dan, but also interprets its appearance from the point of view of its geographical location: the enemy from the distant place is coming from Dan and Ephraim towards Judah.

[912] Craigie etc. 1991,76; Bartusch 2003, 221; Fischer 2005, 219.

[913] Lundbom 1999, 347.

[914] See "enemy from the north"-tradition Craigie etc. 1991, 138–139.

[915] The fragmentary and unintegrated character of these chapters is reflected in the diversity of the classifications of the texts in commentaries. Compare the contents of Wanke 1995, Lundbom 1999, Fischer 2005, and Schmidt 2008. See also Herrmann 1990, 38–52. He says about chapters 1–25 (p. 39): "Dieser Teil des Jeremiabuches ist allerdings äußerst komplex und macht der eingehenden Analyse die meisten Schwierigkeiten."

earliest phase of Jeremiah 1–20 is usually dated to the time of the prophet Jeremiah, in the late 7th–early 6th century BCE, when the Babylonian threat against Judah was apparent.[917] However, many passages in the composition presuppose that the destruction had already happened, which indicates the post-monarchic period. Siegfried Herrman points out several deuteronomistic and post-deutronomistic verses, but the textual history is surely more complicated, and includes even more phases and continuous re-interpretations.[918]

Discussion of Jeremiah 4:15

The oracle in Jer 4:15–16 announces that the war with the approaching enemy, and defeat at their hands, are unavoidable. On the other hand, the previous verse (v. 14) still offers a hope of salvation if people turn away from their wickedness (כַּבְּסִי מֵרָעָה לִבֵּךְ יְרוּשָׁלַם). However, according to the following verses (v. 17–18), the army of the "distant land" (v. 16) had already come, and Judah was besieged. Although the perfect tense of the verbs can be interpreted as the divine future (will come, will be besieged), the oracle proclaims the unavoidable fact: the judgment is already present. The explanation for this tragedy is the wickedness (רָעָה) of Judah (v. 18).

Verse 4:15 vividly describes how the bad message is coming. The voice can already be heard. It is arriving from Dan and the Hill Country of Ephraim. The verse consists of these two parallel phrases, which depict the speed and intensity of the message. The enemy is already as near as the hills of Ephraim, at the borders of Judah.[919] The first phrase includes a wordplay: "*maggīd middān*"[920] ("is announcing from Dan") to which the rest of the verse forms a parallelism: "*mašmiaʿ ʾawen mēhār ʾefrāyim*" ("is proclaiming disaster from the hills of Ephraim"). The word *qol* (the voice) often appears in the book of Jeremiah, and on most occasions it is associated with the divine voice, the voice of Yahweh which must be listened to and whose orders must be obeyed (see, for example, Jer. 3:13, 21, 25; 7:28; 9:13).[921] Jer. 4:15 is also the divine voice, declaring Yahweh's approaching judgment.

Scholars agree that the Dan in Jer. 4:15 and 8:16 refers to the city identified with *Tel Dan (Tell el- Qāḍi)*.[922] However, the meaning of the name of the city, both in Hebrew *dîn*

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[916] See the table Herrmann 1990,41–45.
[917] See on different datings in Herrman 1990, 1–7; Craigie 1991, 139, 140; Lundbom 1999, 348.
[918] Herrman 1990, 41–45.
[919] Craigie etc. 1995, 77; Lundbom 1999, 347–348; Schmidt 2008, 131.
[920] Lundbom 1999, 346.
[921] Fischer notes that this keyword (Leitwort) is found seven times in Jer 4:15–31, Fischer 2005, 210.
[922] For example, Lundbom 1999, 346; Fischer 2005, 220. Schmidt 2008, 132.

and Arabic *qāḍa* "to judge", has not received as much attention. Georg Fischer refers to Hieronymus's mention of its meaning[923] but does not comment on it, although it would make sense in this context: is Dan mentioned because the voice (*qol*) brings the message of judgment? The wordplay *"maggid middan"* fits with this idea; the voice is coming from Dan, from the city which carries the name "to judge". Ironically, the city and the tribe of Dan have a negative connotation in biblical literature, especially in the post-biblical Jewish and Christian tradition.[924]

Another point that is little discussed is the appearance of the city of Dan and Ephraim together. They also appear together in the narrative of the occupation of Dan by the Danites in Jdg 18:2, 7, 13, 27–29: the Danites migrate through the hill country of Ephraim to the city of Laish/Dan. No other places are mentioned between Ephraim and Dan, as if there was nothing there. Dan is the city, but Ephraim is a territory. No detailed descriptions of its cities or villages are given, while Jerusalem, Judah, and the cities of Judah are often mentioned in the book of Jeremiah. That Ephraim is mentioned is logical because of its location close to Judah, but the city of Dan is very distant. The appearance of Ephraim and Dan cannot only be explained by the route of the enemy (the enemy is coming from the north via Dan and Ephraim), but rather by the motives of the authors: why and under what conditions they wrote the texts (see below, *The Ideology Behind the Passage*).

Discussion of Jeremiah 8:16

Chapter 8 has similar themes as chapter 4: the enemy is near, the lamentation of the people, and a call for the repentance. The oracle in 8:13–17 is a poetic dialogue between Yahweh, the prophet, and the people of Judah,[925] which declares the destruction of the people and their land and cities, leaving no possibility to escape this fate (v. 14). Again, the voices from the distant city of Dan are heard (v. 16). In this passage, they are the voices of the snorting horses of the enemy. All the land "quakes" from their sounds. The steeds are coming to destroy; they will eat the crops of the earth and destroy the city and its inhabitants.

In verses 13 and 17 Yahweh is speaking, while in verse 14 the subject is "we". Verse 15 has nominal sentences only, without subjects, but the content of the verse indicates that the speaker is the people – a people who hoped for peace and healing, but there was no

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[923] See Fischer 2005, 220, footnote 6.
[924] E.g. Jewish Rabbinic literature and the writings of the church fathers. Bartusch 2003, 1–8.
[925] For the structure of the oracle see Lundbom 1999, 520–522; Fischer 2005, 331.

good for them, only terror. The verb *nišmaʿ* in verse 16 allows two possibilities for the subject: nif. perfect, singular, third person, masculine, "is heard"; or qal, imperfect, plural, first person, "we hear". Because the subject in verse 14 is the plural first person, and verse 15 is also understood as the speech of the people, it is logical to interpret *nišmaʿ* as the active form "we hear".[926]

While some scholars find the *"Sitz im Leben"* of the oracle in the time of the Babylonian threat around 600 BCE,[927] some suggest its setting in the community of worship in the post-monarchic[928] period, as a response to the experience of the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple.[929] The latter date would offer a motive for and use of the oracle: to explain the destruction of Jerusalem (the sin of Judah) and to serve as a confession of sin[930] and lamentation in the liturgy of the community. Thus, the oracles were addressed to the generations after the destruction, not to those before it; through lament and repentance there would be a new beginning with the help of Yahweh. The city of Dan in the oracle recalls God's judgment, and the enemy from the north is now understood as having fulfilled the task given it by Yahweh.

The Intentions and Ideology Behind the Passages

Why is Dan mentioned in the book of Jeremiah? The answer that it was due to its geographical location at the border of the past kingdom of Israel during the Babylonian threat around 600 BCE is insufficient. The oracles were hardly authentic reports of what will happen in the near future. In this case, the mention of Dan would also be surprising, because since the end of the 8th century BCE the city of Dan and the kingdom of Israel were under the rule of the Assyrian empire, probably belonging to the province of Megiddo.[931] The contents and the setting of the oracles also refer to the post-monarchic period. Because the poetic declarations of the divine word and the lamentation of the people alternate in the oracles, the motive is probably something other than predicting coming events. Therefore, a liturgical context is plausible. This does not mean that there is no link to historical reality, but the question is: what kind of link is it, and from which time. In my view, the passages are best to be understood as the product of a people who are recovering from a catastrophe, the destruction of Jerusalem around 586 BCE. They would

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[926] Thus Craigie etc. 1991, 138.
[927] Craigie etc. 1991, 140; Lundbom 1999, 527; Bartusch 2003, 223–225,
[928] According to Schmidt "the exilic or post-exilic period". Schmidt 2008, 200.
[929] Schmidt 2008, 200; See also Wanke 1995, 100.
[930] About the confession of the sin, see Fischer 2005, 338–339; Schmidt 2008, 200.
[931] Stern 2001, 46.

rather deal with a past event, the trauma of the people, than whatever is ahead. Thus, they represent scribal work by the religious community of the descendants of the people of Judah, who had suffered from the war and the collapse. The city of Dan and its name "to judge" were surely known by the writers, but the appearance of Dan in the biblical texts does not necessarily presuppose that it was considered to be an "Israelite city".

4.4. Summary

The occurrences of the city of Dan in the Hebrew Bible are scarce (see table 7 below), and most of them appear in Joshua–Kings and Chronicles (17/21), in which the city of Dan is associated with the tribe of Dan (Joshua and Judges), the prophet Samuel, and some of the kings of Israel and Judah (Samuel–Kings and Chronicles). In addition, the city of Dan appears in two prophetical texts, Jeremiah and Amos (3/21), and once in Genesis (1/21). In all of them the location of the city at the northernmost point of the land of Israel is implied, which culminated in the phrase *from Dan to Beersheba* / *from Beersheba to Dan* (9/21). The same idea is likewise reflected in Amos (8:14), in which the cult of Dan and Beersheba is referred to, and in First Kings (12:28–30), in which the golden bulls are located in Dan and Bethel, the northern- and southern-most points of the territory of the kingdom of Israel. In First Kings and Second Chronicles, Ben-hadad of Damascus from the north attacks the "Israelite cities" of Ijon, Dan, and Abel-beth-maacah. In Jeremiah (4 and 8) the enemy is also coming from the north, and the voices of this enemy are heard from Dan. In Genesis, Abraham pursues his enemies from Hebron to Dan and onwards north of Damascus, and in Judges the tribe of Dan migrates from Judah to Laish / Dan and occupies it. Three of the passages also refers to the cult of Dan: an idol/image (Jgs 18), the golden bull (1 Kgs 12), and the god of Dan (Amos 8).

The analysis of this chapter indicates that Dan appears in various contexts in different stories, oracles, military lists, and in the stock phrase. All of the passages are difficult to date, because there are no references to absolute dates, the texts have been edited many times, and the stories are ideological and fictive rather than descriptions of the past events. The texts were also written and edited from the Judahite point of view, and their intention was to defame the cult and the king of the kingdom of Israel. Therefore, many of the passages, particularly the cultic references, are ironic and have negative connotations. The phrase *from Dan to Beersheba* was not only meant to define the northern and southern limits of the land of Israel, but also to represent the ideal of uniting the people and the land

of Israel into one religious and political entity. This ideology became necessary after the collapse of Judah and Jerusalem in 586 BCE, when the people of Judah had lost their independence and had a need to create a new identity. The theological intention of the post-monarchic Judahite community was to defame religious practices outside Jerusalem, and to proclaim that Jerusalem was the only correct place for the temple of Yahweh.

Appearance of Dan	Other cities / lands	Cult	Literary Context
1 Kgs 12:29	Bethel	Bulls	King Jeroboam
1 Kgs 12:30	(Bethel)	Bull(s)	King Jeroboam
2 Kgs 10:29	Bethel	Bulls	King Jehu
Jdg 18:29–30	(ch.18, Judah –Ephraim – Laish)	Idol	Occupation of Dan by the Danites
Amos 8:14	Samaria, Beersheba	God of Dan	Prophetic declaration
Josh 19:47–48	Leshem		Occupation of Dan by the Danites
1 Kgs 15:20	Ijon, Abel-beth-maacah, Chinneroth, land of Naphtali.		List of destroyed cities
2 Chr 16:4	Ijon, Abel-majim, store cities of Naphtali		List of destroyed cities
Gen 14:14			Abraham-story
Jer 4:15	Ephraim, (Jerusalem, Judah)	Oracle	Declaration against Jerusalem and Judah
Jer 8:16	(Jerusalem, Judah)	Oracle	Declaration against Jerusalem and Judah
From Dan to Beersheba			
Jdg 20:1	"all the sons of Israel"		Civil war
1 Sam 3:20	"all Israel"	Prophet	Samuel
2 Sam 3:10	"Israel and Judah"		Abner
2 Sam 17:11	"all Israel"		Absalom
2 Sam 24:2	"all the tribes of Israel"		Census by king David,
2 Sam 24:6–7	Gilead, Kadesh, land of Hittites, Sidon, Tyre, cities of Hivites and Canaanites, Negeb of Judah		Census, Joab's route
2 Sam 24:15	"in Israel"		Punishment of census
1 Kgs 5:5	"Judah and Israel"		King Solomon
From Beersheba to Dan			
1 Chr 21:2	"the population of Israel"		Census by David
2 Chr 30:5	"all Israel"		King Hezekiah, Passover celebration

Table 7. Appearances of the city of Dan in the Hebrew Bible.

5. The City of Dan Compared to the Other Sites, and Related to the Kingdom of Israel

5.1. Introduction

The northern edge of the Ḥulah valley, where the city of Dan was located, forms a geographical and economical unit surrounded by mountains to the north, east, and west, and the Jordan Valley to the south. The nearest major city, Hazor (Tell el-Qedaḥ), was located about 26 kilometers from Tel Dan, at the southern fringe of the same Valley. While "the archaeology of the Northern Kingdom" (Kingdom of Israel) was long based on the results of the excavations of Hazor in the Lower Galilee and Megiddo in the Jezreel Valley, the archaeology of these mounds, the interpretations of the remains, and the discussions about them are briefly presented in this chapter. The stratigraphy and interpretations of their history are also compared to that of Tel Dan.

In addition to Hazor and Megiddo, the remains of Tell et-Tell (Bethsaida) are briefly presented, because some of the finds from this city – regarded as an Aramean city by the excavators − have similarities with the remains of Tel Dan. It was also a significant city in the Northern Jordan Valley, close to the Sea of Galilee. The city of Samaria is also essential, because it was the capital of the kingdom of Israel during the 9th − 8th centuries BCE. At all of these sites, fortified cities existed during the Iron Age II. Archaeological excavations have revealed public buildings, city walls, and gates (in Samaria only the walls of the palace fortification).

The aim of this chapter is to offer comparison material for the study of the city of Dan: the stratigraphy of the sites, different interpretations of the stratigraphy, the finds and dating, the appearance in the biblical texts. The relation of the city of Dan to the kingdom of Israel is also briefly discussed, and the synthesis of the results is summarized.

5.2. Tel Hazor

5.2.1. Archaeological Evidence and Interpretations

The Site and the History of Excavations

Tel Hazor (Tell el-Qedaḥ) is the nearest major site to Tel Dan. It is located in the Huleh Valley, about 26 kilometers south of Tel Dan and 15 kilometers north of the Sea of Galilee.

Tel el-Qedaḥ was identified with the biblical Hazor by J.L. Porter already in 1875,[932] and first explored in 1928 by J. Garstang.[933] The major excavations at the site have been conducted by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem under the leadership of Yigael Yadin (in 1955-58, 1968-69) and Amnon Ben-Tor (ongoing campaign since 1990).[934] Yadin excavated several areas on the acropolis and the Lower City, while Ben-Tor's excavation has been concentrated on the acropolis, mainly in Area A, where Yadin had discovered the so-called "Solomonic" six-chambered gate and casemate wall. The results of the Hazor excavations have been presented in a five-volume final report (Yadin's excavations),[935] and in numerous articles and preliminary reports.[936]

Essential Strata and Remains from the Point of View of This Study

The emergence of the small administrative city is represented in Strata X and IX, which were dated to the "Solomonic period", the mid −10th century BCE. This city covered half of the acropolis, and a six-chambered city gate with casemated city wall was discovered.[937] Furthermore, a pillar-house near the city gate was found, and the renewed excavations have also revealed domestic houses.[938] These strata correlate with Tel Dan IVB(A?), but few common features can be shown in the architecture. At Tel Hazor, the first sherds of red slipped burnished pottery appeared in these strata,[939] while at Tel Dan it was only in

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[932] Yadin *et al.* 1958, 3.

[933] The results of Garstang's trial soundings were, however, never published, and his field notes were destroyed by a fire during the Second World War. Yadin 1975,22; 1993, 594.

[934] Ben-Tor 1997, 1; Ben-Tor & Ben-Ami, 1998, 2. Sixteen seasons were carried out during the years 1990−2005. See "Selz Foundation Hazor Excavations in Memory of Yigael Yadin" in web site http://unixware.mscc.huji.ac.il/~hatsor/hazor.html.

[935] Yadin, Yigael et al. (1958), Hazor I. The James A. de Rothschild Expedition at Hazor. An Account of the first Season of Excavations (1955). Jerusalem: The Magnes Press of the Hebrew University; Yadin, Yigael et al. (1960), Hazor II, The James A. de Rothschild Expedition at Hazor. An Account of the Second Excavation Campaign 1956. Jerusalem: The Magnes Press of the Hebrew University; Yadin, Yigael et al. (1969), Hazor III-IV, Plates. The James A. de Rothschild Expedition at Hazor. An Account of theThird and Fourth Seasons of Excavation 1957-1958. Jerusalem: The Magnes Press of the Hebrew University; Yadin, Yigael et al. Ed. Ben-Tor, Amnon (1989), Hazor III-IV, Text. The James A. de Rothschild Expedition at Hazor. An Account of the Third and Fourth Seasons of Excavation 1957-1958. Jerusalem: The Israel Exploration Society, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Ben-Tor, Amnon et al. Ed. Ben-Tor, Amnon and Bonfil, Ruhama (1997), Hazor V, The James A. de Rothschild Expedition at Hazor. An Account of the Fifth Season of Excavation, 1968. Jerusalem: The Israel Exploration Society and The Hebrew Universtiy of Jerusalem; Ben-Tor, Amnon, Ben-Ami, Doron and Sandhaus, Deborah (2012), *Hazor VI.* The 1990-2009 Excavations – The Iron Age. Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society.

[936] The preliminary results of Ben-Tor's excavations were presented in seasonal reports published in IEJ, Notes and News during 1992−2005. See Ben-Tor & Ben-Ami, 1998, 2, footnote 6 and basic bibliography in http://hazor.huji.ac.il/ (visited 2016, April 7th).

[937] Yadin 1972, 118, 133−194; Ben-Tor & Ben-Ami 1998, 2−3, 11, 29.

[938] Ben-Tor 1996, 262−263.

[939] Yadin *et al.* 1958, Pl. XLV, 15 (wheel burnished), 16. A few fragments of fine Samaria Ware were also discovered. Two of the fragments of "Samarian" bowls were of brown slip and burnished. Yadin *et al.* 1958, 10, fragments of Samaria Ware Pl. XLV, 12-14.

Stratum IVA that this pottery type was found. The pottery of Strata X and IX resembles that of Megiddo VA-IVB, Tell el-Far'ah III, and Samaria Pottery Period I – II.[940]

In addition, the following strata at Tel Hazor (VIII – V, the 9th – 8th centuries BCE) do not show any significant similarities with Tel Dan III-II. However, both were enclosed by a city wall, fortified, and had several public buildings, although no city gates for these strata were found at Hazor. In Stratum VIII, Tel Hazor was expanded to cover the whole acropolis, and a completely new layout appeared with a great citadel in the northern part of the acropolis.[941] Stratum VII followed the town planning of Stratum VIII, and after a slight decline in this stratum, the city reached its peak during Strata VI-V.[942] Furthermore, Hazor was also characterized by a dense stratigraphy[943] until it suffered destruction by Tiglath-Pileser III around 732 BCE,[944] like Tel Dan Stratum II.

Stratigraphy

Ten main strata were assigned to the Iron Age by Yigael Yadin: two strata to Iron Age I (Strata XII and XI, later defined as one Stratum XII – XI)[945], seven main strata to Iron Age II (Strata X – IV), and one stratum to the Assyrian period (Stratum III).[946] On the basis of the renewed excavations, Amnon Ben-Tor has confirmed Yadin's definition and chronology of Strata X and IX (Xb, Xa, IXb, IXa)[947] but, unlike Yadin, Ben-Tor has also found private dwellings beside the public buildings, which can be associated with Stratum X or IX. These discoveries significantly change the overall picture of the earliest Iron Age city, which was based on Yadin's excavation, and was thought to represent only a fortification with little remains of civil inhabitation.[948] Ben-Tor's excavations have also

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[940] Interestingly, Kathleen Kenyon, the excavator of Samaria, dated the Pottery Period I – II to the ninth century BCE. See footnote 286.

[941] Yadin 1972, 165. Yadin states that in this Stratum the city was even more characterized as a city with strong fortifications than the previous "Solomonic" city. Herzog notes that the fortifications of Hazor VIII show "conceptual flexibility in city planning; various methods suited to local requirements were employed to protect the city." Herzog 1997, 224.

[942] See Yadin 1972, 165–178; Herzog 1997, 224–226.

[943] Zarzeki-Peleg 1997, 283–284. New phases have been brought to light by Ben-Tor's discovery of Iron Age dwellings, most of them forming a sequence dated from the 9th, or even 10th century to the 7th century BCE. See seasonal reports Ben-Tor 1998, 275–277; 2003, 220–221; 2004, 232, 235. See also the conclusions of the pottery analysis between Hazor, Yokneam, and Megiddo in Zarzeki-Peleg 1997, 283–284.

[944] Yadin 1972, 112–114.

[945] See discussion on the problem of Yadin's separation of Strata XII – XI in Ben-Ami 2001, 149–150, 165–170; See critique on Yadin's dating already in Kochavi 1984, 63.

[946] Yadin 1972, 118, 133–194.

[947] Ben-Tor & Ben-Ami 1998, 2–3, 11, 29: "the renewed excavations have clearly confirmed the conclusions arrived at in the 1950's with regard to Hazor Strata X–IX, insofar as the stratigraphy, as well as the chronology, are concerned." See also Ben-Tor 1993, 253; 1995a, 65–66; 1996, 262.

[948] Ben-Tor 1996, 262–263.

revealed new strata and sub-phases attributed to Yadin's Strata VIII – IV,[949] demonstrating an extremely dense sequence for the Iron Age II occupations. Therefore, Hazor yields important evidence for the development and history of the site during the 10th/9th – 8th centuries BCE. Area A has proved to be the most significant area in creating the stratigraphy of Hazor, because all the Iron Age strata except the Assyrian period of Yadin's Stratum III have been discovered there.[950] Thus, the stratigraphical and chronological conclusions are to a great degree grounded on Area A. The renewed excavations have confirmed that Hazor was continuously built and settled from Stratum X until Yadin's Stratum IV, which was destroyed by the Assyrian conquest.[951] Before Stratum X there was, however, a gap in habitation. This is well argued by Ben-Ami, who states that the duration of the modest Stratum XII-XI must have been quite short, and limited to the eleventh century BCE.[952] It is obvious that it could not extend until the mid-tenth century BCE, which is the earliest suggested date for establishment of Stratum X.

Architecture and Pottery Dated to the 10th − 9th Century BCE: Strata X and IX

Only a few areas of the mound have been excavated down to Stratum X. However, the line of the casemated city wall was able to be followed and, therefore, the fortified area can be defined. It covers about 2,5 hectares, which is only 38% of the size of the previous LB city (6,5 ha).[953] This fortified city was established in Stratum Xb, and continued in use until Stratum IXa with only minor changes in its architecture.[954] The architectural structures consist of the six-chambered gate (Area A) with a casemated wall (Areas A and B, L, M), a large public building (200–202) beneath the pillared building of Stratum VIII (Area A4),[955] and private buildings (particularly in Area A) discovered in the renewed excavations.[956]

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[949] Zarzeki-Peleg 1997, 283–284. New phases have been brought to light by Ben-Tor's discovery of Iron Age dwellings, most of them forming a sequence dated from the 9th, or even 10th century to the 7th century BCE. See seasonal reports Ben-Tor 1998, 275–277; 2000, 248; 2001, 235; 2002, 254–255; 2003, 220–221; 2004, 232, 235. See also the conclusions of the pottery analysis between Hazor, Yokneam, and Megiddo in Zarzeki-Peleg 1997, 283–284.

[950] Bonfil 1989, 15; Yadin 1972, 112–113.

[951] Yadin 1972, 191.

[952] Ben-Ami 2001, 149–150, 165–170; Critique on Yadin's dating of Stratum XII and XI see also Kochavi1984.

[953] Herzog 1997, 214.

[954] "Stratum IX shows the almost unchanged reuse of the city of Stratum X… A new concept of city planning was introduced in Stratum VIII; a concept that was retained throughout Iron Age IIB." Herzog 1997, 224.

[955] The gate and casemate wall were already fully excavated by Yadin in Area A. See Yadin et al 1958, 9–11; 1959, 1–5; 1972, 135–146; 1989, 30–33, 37–39, 82–87; Area L: Garfinkel 1997, 223–229. The building was partly revealed by the expedition of Yadin but completely explored by Ben-Tor. Ben-Tor & Ben-Ami 1998, 3–12.

[956] Ben-Tor 1996, 262–263; 1998, 275–277; 2004, 232.

Furthermore, a street between the casemated wall and building 200–202 was revealed.[957] Wherever the casemated wall was excavated, it was found above Stratum XII − XI but below Stratum VIII.[958] However, parts of the wall remained in use during Strata VIII – VII and even later, but most of the casemates were filled in. Only a few casemates in Area A remained in use, probably as storage rooms.[959]

On the basis of Yadin's reports, the stratigraphical connection between building 200 − 202, the street, the casemated wall, and the gate in Strata X and IX (Area A) seems clear: the casemated wall had evidently been planned and constructed at the same time as the gate and the earliest street level, which is shown by their sharing the same construction level.[960] Yadin also observed that the line of the casemated wall fits both to the topography of the edge of the mound and the orientation of the gate.[961]

Furthermore, the floors in building 200 – 202 and in the adjacent street correlate; floors of all sub-phases (Xb, Xa, IXb, IXa) were found Stratum Xb, representing the earliest phase. Although no floors were found within the casemates and the gate chambers,[962] it is probable that the earliest phase can be assigned to Stratum Xb, because of the close physical connection of the earliest phase of the casemated wall to the street Stratum Xb. The foundations of the gate, which were preserved to a height of 20 – 30 cm, had been built of field stones.[963] It is improbable that ashlars or dressed stones were used in the upper courses, because they were specifically used in foundations.

The pottery of Stratum X did not significantly differ from the pottery of Stratum IX. Yadin stated that the similarity in the pottery, with only slight variants, could be explained by the short span of time, some 60 years, which these strata cover.[964] In the *Hazor I* volume, the pottery of Strata X and IX is presented in the same category. Due to the limited space of the excavated area and the small amount of the material, the pottery of Stratum X could not have stratigraphically differed from that of Stratum IX. The pottery of these strata was, however, dated to the tenth century BCE on the basis of its resemblance to the pottery of Megiddo VA – IVB, Tell el-Farʻah III, and Samaria Pottery Period I – II.[965]

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[957] Herzog 1997, 214; Ben-Tor & Ben-Ami 1998, 5–7; Ben-Tor 1995a, 65–66.
[958] Yadin 1972, 140.
[959] Herzog 1997, 224.
[960] The pictures in Yadin *et al. 1969,* Pl. XIX well illustrates the stratigraphical connection between the arhcitectural structures in Strata Xb and Xa. See the general view in Pls. II and III.
[961] Yadin 1972, 136, 143; Yadin *et al.* 1959, 1; Yadin *et al.* 1989, 30–39.
[962] See Yadin 1972, 133; Yadin *et al.* 1989, 30–39.
[963] Yadin *et al.* 1989, 31.
[964] Yadin 1972, 143.
[965] Interestingly, Kathleen Kenyon, the excavator of Samaria, dated the Pottery Period I – II to the ninth century BCE (discussed in the chapter on Samaria, which is not included in this paper).

In this assemblage a few fragments of fine Samaria Ware were discovered. Two of the fragments of "Samarian" bowls were of brown slip and burnished.[966] Furthermore, there were also two burnished bowls with red slip.[967] During the later seasons, pottery from the different sub-phases could be discerned in the street and building 200 – 202, according to the stratigraphy of the floors, but not in the casemates or within the gate.[968]

Ben-Tor & Ben-Ami came to rather similar conclusions concerning the stratigraphy and pottery as Yadin *et al.* had in their earlier excavations. The pottery analyzed by Ben-Tor & Ben-Ami represents the four well-stratified and defined floors (Strata Xb, Xa, IXb, IXa) in the building 200 − 202 in Area A. The building is safely sealed by the pavement of the pillared building in Stratum VIII above. The analysis yielded the following results.[969] *1. Bowls.* Among the seven different types of bowls, no new types were found compared to Yadin's excavations. Hand burnishing does not really appear, and the amount of slipped and burnished ware is rather small. Some of the types clearly derive from the Iron I tradition, and appear more in Stratum X than Stratum IX, while some other types are more common in Stratum IX. Thus, the difference between Strata X and IX can only been observed in the change of the relative numbers of various types; some types are more common in Stratum X than IX, and vice versa. *2. Kraters.* This quite a small group seemingly shows transitional features. Some of the types have predecessors in the LB and Iron I periods, while others appear first in Stratum Xb and are most common in Stratum VIII. *3. Cooking pots.* A clear continuation from the types of Iron I was observed. In addition, only slight changes can be noted between the cooking pots of Iron I and Iron II in Hazor. Some similar types were found even in Stratum VIII. The cooking pots of Strata X − IX are similar to those found everywhere in the country at Iron Age II sites. *4. Storage Jars.* The pithoi typical to Iron Age I were absent, while storage jars are common (20% of the total number among the analyzed vessels). This group also shows features from the jars of the previous period. However, certain types, such as cylindrical storage jars, appear first

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[966] Yadin *et al.* 1958, 10, fragments of Samaria Ware Pl. XLV, 12 −14.

[967] Yadin *et al.* 1958, Pl. XLV, 15 (wheel burnished), 16.

[968] In the season of 1956, it was mainly the casemates that were discovered. Because the casemates were in continuous use until Stratum VIII, rather little material from the earlier strata was found. The pottery presented in the plates comes mainly from the street where the surfaces of both Stratum X and Stratum IX were discoverd. Yadin *et al.* 1959, 4 − 5, Pls. LI and LII. The plates of seasons 1957−1958 from Area A illustrate pottery from all the phases separately (Strata Xb,Xa, IXb, and IXa). All the pottery presented there comes from from building 200 – 202 and the street where both strata with subphases could be discerned. Yadin *et al. 1969,* Pls. CLXXI-CLXXIX. In Area B, the subphases could not be discerned, but only the pottery from the main strata, Stratum X and Stratum IX. Yadin *et al. 1969,* Pls. CCVII – CCXIII. Accordingly, Ben-Tor & Ben-Ami 1998, 13-29 presents the pottery from the building in all its four phases.

[969] Ben-Tor & Ben-Ami 1998, 13–29; See comparison between the pottery of Hazor X – IX and Yokneam in Zarzegi-Peleg 1997, 270–283.

in Strata X − IX but are common in later strata. *5. Phoenician wares.* The two groups of Phoenician ware (Achziv and Cypro-Phoenician ware) which appear in Strata X and IX have no predecessors from Iron Age I anywhere in the country, and are even rare in the 10th – early 9th centuries.[970] Instead, the bichrome ware of this family is already known from the Iron Age I assemblages, especially bichrome jugs and pilgrim flasks. These types continue to Iron Age IIA (10th century) and even later.[971]

This analysis indicates that the pottery of Strata X and IX continues the Iron I or even LB traditions in many types, while it also includes types which have their first appearance in these strata and then continue in later periods. At Hazor, the red-slipped burnished ware first emerged in Stratum X, but was not yet common. A comparison of the pottery of Hazor X – IX to that of Yokneam shows that parallel types have been found in Yokneam Strata XVIII – XI, covering a time span from the early Iron Age (12th century) until Iron Age III (the end of the 8th century).[972] Likewise at Hazor, many of the pottery types of Strata X and IX continue to later strata, although changes and variants appear. However, on the grounds of the statistical analysis of the occurrences of each vessel with its sub-types at Hazor X and IX compared to their occurrences at Yokneam and Megiddo, Zarzegi-Peleg concluded that Hazor Xb coincides with Megiddo VB, Hazor Xa with Yokneam XV, Hazor IXb with Megiddo VA-IVB and Yokneam XIV, and Hazor IXa overlaps with Yokneam XIII (See table 3). She also keeps the 10th - early 9th century date for Stratum X to Stratum IX. [973] Different conclusions were made by Orna Zimhoni, who sees a coincidence between the pottery of the fills from Jezreel enclosure with Megiddo VB, VA-IVB, Samaria Periods I-III, Taanach Periods IIB and III, and Hazor X-VIII. She notes the problem of chronology and dating used at each site; certain pottery types have been dated to the 10th century BCE at some sites, and at other sites to the 9th century.[974] Although part of the problem is solved by assigning a long time span to certain pottery types, the absolute dating still remains problematic. Unlike Zarzegi-Peleg, Zimhoni leans towards the lower chronology and dates Megiddo VA-IVB to the 9th century, following the date of the pottery from the Jezreel enclosure.[975] Accordingly, Hazor X−IX would also be dated to the same century.

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[970] Ben-Tor& Ben-Ami 1998, 25–27, 29; See also Amiran 1969, 272–273, Pl. 92, note that most of the examples come from later Iron Age strata.
[971] Ben-Tor & Ben-Ami 1998, 28; Amiran 1969, 271 (well presented e.g. in Megiddo VIA).
[972] Zarzegi-Peleg 1997, 272–273.
[973] Zarzegi-Peleg, 1997, 283–284.
[974] The same problem is observed by Ben-Tor&Ben-Ami 1998, 30.
[975] See Zimhoni 1997, 25-26, 38-39.

Some conclusions can be drawn from the results and discussion above. There are no pottery types which are indicative only of Hazor X − IX; thus, there are no special types limited to the 10th century, neither at Hazor or at any other sites, and the absolute dates cannot be based on pottery assemblages but on "non-ceramic considerations".[976] The dating of the pottery relies on the relative stratigraphy and chronology. Changes in a relative number of the occurrences of each pottery type in different strata may have some significance. The absolute date for Hazor X-IX given by Yadin *et al.* and followed Ben-Tor and others is explicitly and primarily based on biblical texts (specially 1 Kgs 9:15); the architectural elements (the fortification including the six-chambered gate and the casemated wall) were identified with the biblical reference to the building activity of King Solomon. This date was assigned after the relative stratigraphy was seen to "fit" with the "Solomonic" date of Stratum X. Nevertheless, there is no indicative archaeological evidence to support such an exact date as the mid-10th century BCE for the beginning of Stratum X.

Strata VIII-VII

The most striking difference between the city of Stratum VIII and the previous city is its size. While the fortified city of Strata X − IX covered less than half of the mound, the newly built city extended to the edges of the mound, once again covering the same area as the upper city during the LB period (6,5 ha).[977] However, the lower city was not rebuilt after the destruction of the LB II city. Another difference is represented by the new layout and character of the Stratum VIII city.[978] Several building complexes have been discovered belonging to Stratum VIII: the fortification evidenced by the city wall in several excavated areas (Areas B, L, M, G), a citadel with a chain of houses (Area B), a pillared building (Building 71), a few casemates[979] from the city wall of Strata X − IX reused as storage rooms (Area A), and a water system (Area L). The partial destruction of Stratum VIII was followed by a rebuilding of the city of Stratum VII with similar town planning. Hence, there are no major differences between these two cities.[980]

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[976] Ben-Tor & Ben-Ami 1998, 30.
[977] Herzog 1997, 224.
[978] Yadin 1972, 165. Yadin states that in this Stratum the city was even more characterized as the city with strong fortifications than the previous "Solomonic" city. Herzog notes that the fortifications of Hazor VIII show "conceptual flexibility in city planning; various methods suited to local requirements were employed to protect the city." Herzog 1997, 224.
[979] Yadin *et al.* 1959, 6: The casemates which continued to be in use in Strata VIII were probably not as badly damaged in destruction of Stratum IX as the rest of the wall.
[980] See Yadin 1972, 165-178; Herzog 1997, 224-226;

The expansion of the city in Stratum VIII is best proved by the discoveries of the city wall in Areas M and G; in Area M the northern[981] corner of the Strata X − IX city wall was revealed. Attached to this wall, the later (Strata VIII − V) continuation of the city wall to the east along the northern edge of the mound was also discovered. The eastern part of the mound was then occupied. As a consequence of this expansion, the eastern city wall of Strata X – IX, which had been destroyed at the end of Stratum IX, was abandoned except for some of the casemates (see Area A).[982] In Area G, where Stratum VIII appeared to be the oldest Iron Age stratum, a double defense system was found in the northern corner of the mound. The first defense was offered by the solid city wall, which was 2.5- 3 meters wide. In this area of the mound the city wall formed its northern corner. The wall had a stone foundation built of fieldstones. Only at the outer edge of the northern corner were some ashlars used. Inside the city wall, the remains of a house, labeled as 10060, were found. Only part of the walls and floors could be found, because the later house (10054) built in the same place in Stratum VII was not removed.[983] An additional defense outside the city wall, called by excavators "the Forward Bastion", was found at the lower, eastern terrace, protruding out of the city towards the northeast. The northernmost part was excavated. The bastion consisted of the enclosure casemated wall with two towers: one abutted to the northern corner of the city wall, and the other some twenty meters to the northeast. There, the casemate wall made a corner and turned towards the southeast. Within the bastion, Stratum VIII was reached only at a few points. Therefore, hardly anything can be said about its function. Some remains belonging to Stratum VIII were also found outside the fortification.[984]

During Stratum VII no significant changes were made to the city wall and the Forward Bastion; the same walls and even floors were in use. In contrast, House 10060 had been destroyed at the end of Stratum VIII and a new house, labeled as 10054, was built in the same place. Due to the continuation of these strata, most of the pottery was found in mixed loci of Strata VIII and VII. Only within House 10060 and in two loci (10053d-e, 10061) outside the bastion could pottery of Stratum VIII be discerned. According to the excavators, the pottery of these secure loci could be dated to the 9th century, but many of the types were also common in the 8th century BCE.[985]

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[981] The excavators refer to this part of the mound as the "northeastern" edge which I find uncorrect.
[982] Yadin 1972, 165-166; Yadin *et al.* 1959, 6-7.
[983] Yadin *et al.* 1989, 172-173.
[984] Yadin 1972, 165-166; Yadin *et al.* 1989, 165-166, 174-180.
[985] E.g. a carinated bowl Yadin *et al.* 1969, Pl. CCXLVII,1; plates idem. Pl. CCXLVII, 5-6; most of the kraters idem. Pl. CCXLVII, 21-26 and Pl. CCXLIII, 2-4; juglets idem. Pl. CCXLVIII, 13-14). Yadin *et al.*

Pillared Building 71, which was found beneath the private houses of Stratum VI and above the ruins of building 200−202 (Strata X and IX) in Area A, was in use from Stratum VIII to Stratum VII. Some of the walls and pillars of Stratum VII were still reused in the houses of Stratum VI.[986] This tripartite building was interpreted as a storehouse, on the basis of the storage jars and kraters found in its debris. As further evidence, a large amount of storage vessels was also found in the nearby casemates, proving that the area was used for storage. Attached to the northern wall of the Building 71 and parallel to its elongated rooms, an additional two paved halls were discovered.[987] No vessels were found *in situ* on the floor of these halls, probably due to the fact that the same floors were also used in Strata VII and VI.[988] Two separate floors were, however, assigned to the Pillared Building 71. The lower one represents Stratum VIII, while the later floor, at ca. 0,50 meters higher, was constructed in Stratum VII. A considerable amount of pottery was found on both of the floors, in stratigraphically secure contexts. Interestingly, the excavators observed that the pottery of Stratum VII differed significantly from that of Stratum VIII, while the pottery from Stratum VII to Stratum V showed a clear continuation.[989] Therefore, the pottery of Stratum VIII was dated to the first half of the 9th century, and that of Stratum VII to the latter part of same century.[990] In addition to the finds from the Pillared Building, a considerable number of vessels was found in the preserved casemates, which were used as storage rooms during Strata VIII and VII. Floors assigned to both strata could be discerned.[991] In addition to these buildings, two private houses (170 and 14b), certainly constructed in Stratum VII, were discovered south of the Pillared Building 71. A few vessels were discovered in these three-room houses. [992]

The western part of the mound in Area B was completely rebuilt in Stratum VIII. All the earlier buildings, including the western casemated wall, were intentionally destroyed, and new buildings were constructed. The results in Area B are parallel to those in Areas A

1989, 180, 182.

[986] Yadin *et al.* 1958, 22.

[987] Herzog 1997, 224; Yadin *et al.* 1958, 11-14, see plan in Pl. CLXXII; Yadin 1972, 168. For the interpretation of the pillared buildings see Kochavi 1998.

[988] Yadin *et al.* 1959, 6.

[989] The pottery of Strata VII-V, resembling that of Megiddo III, represents all types of Samaria Ware, while some vessels already appeared in Strata X-IX. Yadin *et al.* 1958, 20.

[990] Yadin *et al.* 1958, 14, 19-20. The excavators mention that the pottery of Stratum VIII resembles that of Samaria Period III. This causes a tension between the dates of Hazor and Samaria, because Kenyon dated Period III in Samaria to the latter part of the 9th century. See Kenyon 1957, 94-95, 198-209. This problem will be discussed in another chapter.

[991] Yadin *et al.* 1959, 8.

[992] Yadin *et al.* 1959, 14.

and G; the city plan in Stratum VIII was carefully considered.[993] The architecture of Area B consisted of the large Citadel 3090, the buildings around the citadel (Northern Building 3100c and 3235; Southern Buildings 3208 and 3197; Eastern Building 3168b), the open spaces between the Citadel and the Northern Buildings, and the large open area to the east of the Eastern Building. In addition, the casemated city wall of Strata X and IX was reused, except those parts which were left beneath the new buildings (3100c, 3235, 3090, 3208, and 3197).[994] The purpose of the monumental[995] citadel, 25 meters x 21 meters in size, was certainly to defend the city on its western edge. It was mainly built of field stones, but the corners and door jambs were strengthened by the use of well-dressed ashlars in their construction. The foundations were deep, thus causing the destruction of the earlier architecture at the site. Because only one floor was found, and it was associated with all the strata from Stratum VIII until Stratum V, the material found in the destruction debris derives mainly from the latest Stratum. Pottery typical to Stratum VIII was found only in one locus, room 3109.[996] The other buildings in the context of the citadel were built using similar techniques, but the walls are thinner and the buildings smaller. They were also in continuous use until Stratum V and, therefore, no stratigraphical sequence of the material or separate floors could be discerned.[997] Some minor changes were made in Stratum VII in the Eastern Building, to which two small rooms and new walls were added.[998]

Remains from the 9th century were also found in Area L, which is dominated by an enormous water system.[999] Although its construction was associated with Stratum VIII, I will not deal with it here because it yielded hardly any material significant for my study. Likewise, most of the structures in this area were also in continuous use throughout Strata VIII to V, e.g. the Four-Room House next to the entrance of the water tunnel, and some of the casemates in the city wall. A few floors, or fragments of them, with pottery could be assigned either to Stratum VIII or Stratum VII. The pottery types of Stratum VIII resemble those found in the other areas in earlier excavations (particularly the pottery found in season 1956 in Area A). Neither were there are any exceptions among the pottery of Stratum VII, but this assemblage is quite characteristic of the period in question. The

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[993] Yadin *et al.* 1989, 88.

[994] See Plan XX, Yadin *et al.* 1989, 90-91 and the text, 97; Yadin 1972, 170; Herzog 1997, 225.

[995] The deliberate planning, large size, and well-built walls are evidence of the monumental nature of the building. In addition, Proto-Aeolic capitals, which were found in secondary use, probably originated from the top of pilasters lining the facade of the entrance to the citadel. See description Yadin *et al.* 1989, 89-92.

[996] Yadin *et al.* 1989, 88-92; Yadin 1972, 169-172.

[997] Yadin *et al.* 1989, 92-100.

[998] Compare the plans XX and XI Yadin *et al.* 1989, 90-91 and 98, respectively. For the description see pp. 97, 99.

[999] See descriptions in Yadin 1972, 172-178; 1975, 233-247; Garfinkel 1997, 239-246.

typological tradition of Stratum VIII was continued to Stratum VII, and until the end of Stratum V in Hazor.[1000]

Criteria for Dating, and Historical Interpretations

The excavations have shown that Stratum X is easily discernable from the previous Stratum XII−XI. The Iron Age I period at Hazor (Stratum XII−XI) represents a modest village, while Stratum X shows the rise of a new urbanism. It reflects a social structure and way of life totally different from Stratum XII−XI. The discovery of the six-chambered gate in Stratum X marked a significant cornerstone for Yadin's chronology; he was convinced of the Solomonic date for the construction of the gates at Hazor, Gezer, and Megiddo. He based the date on stratigraphy, pottery, relative chronology, and biblical evidence (1 Kgs 9:15).[1001] Ultimately, the biblical interpretation appears to have been the most important evidence for his absolute dating, because no archaeological finds discovered from the Iron Age strata can yield such exact dates. Yadin explicitly expressed his criteria. He anchored the absolute chronology on specific individual finds and interpretations of Strata II, V, VI, X, and XII.[1002] Two silver coins[1003] dated to the Persian period (400−332 BCE) were found in Stratum II; one in Area A, in a grave where Attic Ware was also discovered, and another in Area B, in the citadel of the Persian period. Stratum V was covered by thick layers of ash, which proved the destruction of this city by Tiglath-Pileser III in 732 BCE. Stratum VI had also faced a sudden destruction. Yadin connected this destruction with the biblical references to an earthquake during the reign of King Uzziah, around 760 BCE (Zechariah 14:5; Amos 1:4). Stratum X was confidently interpreted as the "Solomonic city" founded in the mid-10th century BCE. Likewise, he identified Stratum XII as the "first semi-nomadic Israelite settlement, which was founded upon the debris of the last Bronze Age city".[1004]

"Solomonic building activity" cannot anymore be used as a primary criterion to date the buildings to the 10th century BCE. However, Ben-Tor confirmed the 10th century date for the gate of Hazor as a result of his resumed excavations, although the dates of the other similar gates have been questioned or rejected. For example, the date of the similar gate of Gezer has been disputed,[1005] and the tenth century date for the six-chambered gate of

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[1000] See the plates representing the pottery of these strata in Area L Garfinkel 1997, 232-239, 248-255.
[1001] Yadin 1972, 135. See also 1960, 62; 1970, 67; 1993, 601.
[1002] Yadin 1972, 112-114. See also Yadin 1975, 147-148.
[1003] See details Yadin *et al* 1958, 62; 1960, 32.
[1004] Yadin 1972, 113.
[1005] About the discussion see Ussishkin 1990, 74-77. See also Ussishkin 1980; Finkelstein 1990, 109-114;

Megiddo has long been rejected by most scholars due to stratigraphical reasons.[1006] Although Ben-Tor argues his dating from the dense stratigraphy and for other archaeological criteria, the absolute dating also relied on biblical history. According to the low chronology, Hazor would have been abandoned in the mid-tenth century.

At Hazor, developed urban culture is well represented through Strata X−V, its peak having been during Strata VI−V. According to the high chronology, the first urban sites indeed appeared in the mid-tenth century. This position usually implies the biblical view that King David was the founder of the United Monarchy, and that King Solomon was the builder of the Iron Age fortifications, although it has not been explicitly stated. However, the problem with this interpretation is the lack of archaeologically defined mid-tenth century finds. The occurrence of red-slipped pottery, unburnished, hand-burnished, or wheel-burnished, has been used as such a criterion since the findings of Albright and his contemporaries. But the time span of the events during the first part of the first millennium has proved to be so long that this is not sufficient for exact dating.[1007] Thus, the concept of "10th century architecture" or "pottery" is based on the relative stratigraphy and chronology. Usually, this interpretation also relies on the biblical framework. [1008] This means that the absolute date of the "mid-10th" century is more of a "biblical date" than an archaeologically defined date.

Defining the 9th century on an archaeological basis has also proved to be problematic. Omride architecture has traditionally been used as the fix-point for this absolute dating. The problem is that similar architecture has been associated with the 10th, 9th, and 8th centuries. There is also little evidence to define what kind of architecture is typical to the "Omrides" – or is there any such? The example at Hazor shows that the early and later phase of the 9th century can be distinguished only with the help of relative stratigraphy. No exact dates can be given. As discussed above, the pottery can rarely be used as a diagnostic for exact absolute dates. However, looking from the larger perspective, some conclusions can be made.

The Iron Age urbanism in Hazor began in Stratum X (mid / late 10th century BCE). The size of the city was doubled, and a new layout appeared in Stratum VIII (the latter half of the 9th century BCE). Some partial destructions in various parts of the mound occurred in the following strata (late 9th − early 8th century), but a continuation has also been

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Wightman 1990, 15-17; Otherwise Dever 1984, 1986; Holladay 1990a, 1990b.
[1006] Following Ussishkin 1980.
[1007] Ussishkin 1990, 76; Finkelstein 1990, 115-117.
[1008] Wightman 1990; Thompson 1992; Davies 1992; Whitelam 1996; Finkelstein 1996, 1998, 1999; Skjeggestad 2001.

shown, especially in the western part of the mound (Citadel 3090 and the buildings around it). It seems clear that no major changes in material culture or in politics occurred during Strata X−VII (mid / late 10th − 9th centuries BCE), but the city developed and its importance increased in Strata VI−V (8th century BCE) despite the slight decline in Stratum VII. In contrast to the biblical descriptions, which emphasize the material richness of the "Solomonic Kingdom", the 10th century at Hazor was more modest than in the following two centuries.

Stratum	Date BCE/Period	Description
XIII	13th century / LB	Destruction of the last ("Canaanite") city in 2nd half of 13th century by Israelites
XII	12th century / Iron I	Temporary Israelite semi-nomadic settlement
XI	11th century / Iron I	Limited Israelite settlement
Xb, a	Mid-10th century / Iron II	City of Solomon
IXb,a	Late 10th −early 9th century / Iron II	Destruction by Ben-H□adad I (conflagration)
VIII	9th century / Iron II	Omride dynasty
VII	9th century / Iron II/III ?	Reconstruction of Parts of Stratum VIII
VI	8th century / Iron III	City of Jeroboam II (destruction by earthquake)
V	8th century / Iron III	Destruction by Tiglath Pileser III (732 BCE)
IV	8th century / Iron III	Unfortified settlement
III	7th centtury / Assyrian	Citadel

Table 8. The Iron Age stratigraphy and chronology by Yadin *et al.* (1989), xiii.

Stratum	Dating / Period	Description
XIII	Until mid-13th century / LB	Destruction at the latest in mid-13th century by unknown people
XII-XI	11th century / Iron I	New (unknown) population living in "camps"
Xb, Xa	Mid-10th century / Iron II	City of Solomon: Iron Age fortifications (gate, casemate wall, large building)
IXb, IXa	Late 10th − early 9th century / Iron II	Minor changes from Stratum X; Stratum destroyed by Ben-Hadad I
VIII	Second quarter of 9th century	Pillared building in Area A4
VII		Omride dynasty; Stratum destroyed by Hazael

Table 9. The Iron Age stratigraphy by Ben-Ami 2001 (Strata XIII, XII-XI); Ben-Tor 1997, BenTor & Ben-Ami 1998 based on the results in Area A4 and Zarzegi-Peleg 1997 (Strata X, IX).

Period	Megiddo	Yokneam	Hazor
Iron I	VIB --- VIA	XVII --- XVII	 XII-XI
Iron II	? VB --- VA-IVB ?	XVI --- XV --- XIV XIII	? Xb Xa IXb IXa --- VIII

Table 10. The results of the ceramic comparison between Megiddo, Yokneam, and Hazor. (Zarzegi-Peleg 1997, 284).

5.2.2. Hazor in the Hebrew Bible

The occurrences of the city of Hazor in the Hebrew Bible are not many.[1009] It occurs eight times in the books of Joshua, Judges, and First and Second Kings (Josh 11:10−13; 19:36; Jgd 4:2; 1 Kgs 9:15; 2 Kgs 15:29). In addition, a king of Hazor is mentioned three times (Josh 11:1; 12:19 and Jgd 4:17), and the army of Hazor once (1 Sam 12:9 that is dependent on Jgs 4). Most of the occurrences are linked to the story of the conquest of Hazor and the division of the land in Joshua 11 and 19 (7x), and that of Deborah and Siserah in Jgd 4 (3x). It appears only twice in the narratives of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah: first connected to King Solomon (1 Kgs 9:15), and another time in the list of the cities occupied by the Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser (2 Kgs 15:29).

Biblical Hazor is thus best known from the conquest narrative in Josh 11:10−13. There, Hazor is depicted as the most powerful city-state in the region, which the Israelites nevertheless managed to destroy. Biblical Hazor is also known as a "Solomonic" city because of the biblical verse 1 Kgs 9:15: Hazor was one of the three cities (Gezer, Hazor, Megiddo) which was fortified by King Solomon. These biblical stories have maintained the concept that Hazor became "Israelite" in the early Iron Age, was one of the administrative cities of the United Monarchy, and remained an important city in the Northern Kingdom, although no references to Hazor appear in any stories of this period. It

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[1009] Another city of Hazor in the Judean Negev also appears in Joshua (Jos 15:23, 25). Hazor also appears in the book of Nehemiah as a city of the tribe of Benjamin (Neh 11:33), and in Jeremiah as a place attacked by the Babylonians (Jer 49:28−33). The plain of Hazor is also mentioned in 1 Maccabees 11:67.

is mentioned only at the end of this era: in the list of the cities occupied by the Assyrians (2 Kgs 15:29).

Compared to the city of Dan in the Hebrew Bible, the occurrences of Hazor are even fewer. Common elements are the absence of both cities in the stories of the period of the kingdoms, but both of them appear in the conquest stories in Joshua / Judges.

5.3. Megiddo (Tell el-Mutesellim)

5.3.1. Archaeological Evidence and Interpretations

The Site and the History of Excavations

Megiddo is an important archaeological site in Israel because of its rich remains, central location at the edge of the Jezreel Valley along the Via Maris, and its long history of habitation and exploration. The site, Tell el-Mutesellim, was identified with biblical Megiddo already by Edward Robinson in the 19th century.[1010] The identification has not been questioned. The size of the mound is about 15 acres.[1011] Megiddo was first excavated by the *Deutscher Palästina-Verein* under the direction of Gottlieb Schumacher in 1903−1905. The large scale excavations in 1925−1939 were carried out by the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. This campaign was directed by C.S. Fischer, P.L.O. Guy, and Gordon Loud. After the Second World War, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem revived the excavations of Megiddo with a few short seasons in the 1960s and 1970s.[1012] The University of Tel Aviv started "a long-term" project again in 1992, in partnership with Pennsylvania State University, under the direction of Israel Finkelstein, David Ussishkin, and Baruch Halpern. The first excavation report, *Megiddo III*, which introduces the results of the 1992−1996 seasons, came out in 2000.[1013] The second report of the expedition,

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[1010] The identification was also suggested as early as the 14th century by Estori ha-Parḥi. Yadin 1993, 1003.
[1011] Yadin 1993, 1003.
[1012] Davies G. 1986, 12: Yigael Yadin in 1960, 1966-67, 1971-72, I. Dunayevsky in 1965, and A. Eitan 1974. See the presentation of the research history until the 1970s in Kempinski 1989, 1-10; Davies G. 1986, 12-24.
[1013] Finkelstein, Israel & Ussishkin, David & Halpern, Baruch, eds. (2000), Megiddo III: The 1992−1996 Seasons. Monograph, no 18. Tel Aviv: Emery and Claire Yass Publications in Archaeology, Institute of Archaeology.

Megiddo IV: The 1998−2002 Seasons, was published in 2006,[1014] and *Megiddo V: The 2004−2008 Seasons* in 2013.[1015]

The results of the Megiddo excavations have been intensively discussed since the beginning of the first excavations. Every excavator has tried to clarify the complicated stratigraphy, which is due to the frequent rebuilding on the *tell*. Even though archaeologists have accepted the basic division of the strata, they disagree about the placement of individual structures within this stratigraphy. In the introduction of the *Megiddo III* volume, the directors of the present Megiddo expedition say: "Because most of the earlier investigations were undertaken when archaeological methods were still in their infancy, the stratigraphy, and thus the history, of the site have remained elusive. Almost every layer and major architectural feature has become a focus of fierce scholarly dispute. These problems have haunted the discipline for over half a century. They necessitated a revisiting of Megiddo."[1016]

Megiddo has played a particularly significant role in the debate about the archaeology of the United Monarchy;[1017] the so called "Solomonic" strata were first identified in the early 20th century at Megiddo and Gezer.[1018] Although Schumacher did not give any absolute dates in his report of 1908, he probably supposed that the "palace" and "temple" of his stratum 5[1019] derive from the "Solomonic" period. He observed the similarity between the masonry technique of these "buildings in Megiddo" and the "square towers" of the gate of Gezer, which were assigned to the period of Solomon by Macalister.[1020] Carl Watzinger, who completed the report of Schumacher's excavation, made the first attempt to date the strata of Megiddo in his publication of 1929.[1021] The ashlar buildings of

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[1014] Finkelstein, Israel & Ussishkin, David & Halpern, Baruch, eds. (2006), Megiddo IV: The 1998−2002 Seasons. Monograph, no 24. Tel Aviv: Emery and Claire Yass Publications in Archaeology, Institute of Archaeology.

[1015] Finkelstein, Israel & Ussishkin, David & Cline, Eric H. eds. (2013), Megiddo V: The 2004−2008 Seasons. Vol. 1−3. Monograph, no 31. Winona Lake, Indiana : Eisenbrauns.

[1016] Megiddo III 2000, 1.

[1017] See Finkelstein 1996, 177−180; Finkelstein and Silberman 2001,135−142; Skjeggestad 2001, 203−227.

[1018] Macalister 1912 (Vol.I), 250pp.

[1019] Schumacher found a large building which he called a "palace" around 15 meters west of the north-south section (squares T18−21, S18−19). The walls of the building were partly built of ashlar masonry. He assigned the "palace" to his stratum 5 ("die fünfte Schicht"). See Schumacher 1908, Band I, Text, 91−99, Abb.135−145, and Tafeln XXIX. He also associated another building partly built of ashlar masonry with the same stratum (his "fünfte Schichte"). This building, which he found in the eastern part of the tell ("Tempelburg" squares Q−R 28−29), he interpreted as a temple (later called building 338).Schumacher 1908, 110−121.

[1020] This assumption is documented in Macalister's final report: *The excavations of Gezer. Vol.I* (1912), 255-256. Macalister writes about their discussion during Schumacher's visit to Gezer. Most probably the "special masonry" described by Macalister refers to the ashlar technique, and the "Megiddo buildings" in question represent Schumacher's stratum 5.

[1021] Watzinger 1929. Watzinger divides the presentation of the finds of Megiddo (1903−1905) into two main

Schumacher's stratum 4[1022] became one of the key defining elements for the absolute chronology; they were believed to represent the building program of King Solomon in the first half of the tenth century BCE. This stratum was believed to be destroyed by the Egyptian Pharaoh Shishak around 925 BCE.[1023]

The Chicago expedition expanded the excavations to encompass the whole mound, and the results are presented in several publications. At that time the Megiddo excavations marked a considerable advance in methodology and recording systems, and the publications are much clearer than those of the earlier excavations. The excavators clearly express their interpretations of the stratification and chronology, although many of their conclusions and arguments have later been proved to be incorrect. The excavators also defined and described the "Solomonic stratum". This Stratum, which was assigned to the early phase of Chicago's Stratum IV, included large complexes of public buildings such as the much-debated "stables" and palaces. Stratum IV was dated to 1000 − 800 BCE and divided to two sub phases: Stratum IVB (earlier and shorter phase) and the main phase Stratum IV (later and relatively long), which could only be distinguished stratigraphically, while the material culture remained similar from the beginning until the end of this stratum.[1024] Stratum V was dated to the end of the 11th century, Stratum IVB to the 10th, and the main Stratum IV to the 9th and 8th centuries BCE (IVB belonging to the end of David's rule/beginning of Solomon's).[1025]

The stratigraphy of the Chicago expedition has provided a foundation for the research of Megiddo, although the chronological sequence and dating of the individual buildings, walls, or gates has continuously been debated. The results were first criticized and re-evaluated by William F. Albright and G.E.Wright.[1026] Then, Yigael Yadin, on the basis of his new finds, suggested a renewed Iron Age stratigraphy in which the "Solomonic" architecture was confirmed.[1027] Volkmar Fritz, David Ussishkin, and Aharon Kempinski also presented slightly different stratigraphical divisions and dates.[1028] Finkelstein suggested lowering the Iron Age chronology, and proposed the re-dating of Stratum

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chapters: "Funde aus der Bronzezeit" p. 1−25 and "Funde aus der Eisenzeit" p. 26−91. He also seems to stratify the finds, but it is nearly impossible to trace the exact find context.

[1022] Stratum 4 lies beneath Stratum 5. See Schumacher's stratigraphy below.

[1023] Watzinger 1929, 67; See also Davies G. 1986, 15−16 and Kempinski 1989, 7. Note that Kempinski incorrectly states that Schumacher first identified the "Solomonic" ashlar technique. Schumacher indeed identified and described the ashlar walls, but did not associate them with the "Solomonic" period in his publication of 1908.

[1024] Lamon and Shipton 1939, 8.

[1025] Lamon and Shipton 1939, 7−8, 59−60. See also Davies 1986, 76−85.

[1026] Wright 1950; Albright 1943, 2−3, 29−30.

[1027] Yadin 1958, 1960, 1970.

[1028] Fritz 1990, 72; Ussishkin 1980; Kempinski 1989, 10, 90−103.

VA−IVB (the "Solomonic stratum") to the 9th century. Hence, Stratum VB would represent the 10th century.[1029] The Megiddo expedition since 1992 has introduced different views.

In the following sections, the various stratigraphical interpretations are dealt with in a more detailed way. I will start from the earliest excavators, and proceed in a chronological order.

Interpretations of the Stratigraphy and Chronology of Iron Age Megiddo

Schumacher 1908 and Watzinger 1929. Schumacher started his excavations in the eastern part of the mound, which was the highest point of the *tell*. He called the area the "Tempelburg", because he thought he had discovered a temple with cultic finds.[1030] He also excavated a big north-south section through the tell. He named the areas in this section, from north to south: "Nordrand", "Nordburg", "mittlere Burg", "Palast" (west of section) with "Raum mit Maṣṣeboth" (within the section), and "Südliches Burgtor".[1031] Schumacher's publication of 1908 does not offer any dating or periodization of the results of his excavations in 1903−1905. He only describes the eight strata, which he distinguished and labelled from Stratum 1 at the bottom to Stratum 8 on the top. He did not explain his stratigraphical conclusions. Neither did he show the different stratigraphical layers in the plans. However, it is possible to reason from his descriptions that, according to him, the first Iron Age monumental buildings were discovered in his stratum 5: the "Palaste" in the southern part of the tell, some 15 meters west of the big north-south section, and the "Tempel" with "Maṣṣeboth" (later known as Building 338) in the "Tempelburg", located in the easternmost part of the mound.[1032]

Carl Watzinger (1929), who continued Schumacher's work, not only reported the finds but also attempted to date the strata on the basis of Schumacher's report. Watzinger divided the finds into two main periods: "the finds from the Bronze Age" and "the finds from the Iron Age". In addition, he differentiates between MB and LB finds.[1033] He also

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[1029] Finkelstein 1996, 177−187; 1999, 36−39.
[1030] Schumacer 1908, I Band, A. Text, 7:"1. April 1903 begannen die Ausgrabungen bei 0 31 am Ostrande des Tell, da er dort am höchsten war und eine Kultstätte vermuten liess; sie wurden in diesem Frühjahr bis N 29 und 31 im Norden und S 25 im Westen und bis W 30 im Südosten fortgeführt." Später he called this area "Tempelburg". See the plan in Tafel II in Schumacer 1908, I Band, B. Tafeln.
[1031] See Tafel II in Schumacer 1908, I Band, B. Tafeln.
[1032] Schumacher 1908, Band 1: Stratum 5 (5. Schichte) p. 91−124. According to the reference of Macalister, Schumacher probably considered this stratum to represent Solomonic period. Macalister Gezer I, 1912, 255−256. See also my footnote 7, and Davies G. 1986, 14.
[1033] Summary of Watzinger's conclusions of Bronze Age finds. Watzinger 1929, 24−25.

describes a few destruction layers assigned to Thuthmoses III, Shishak, and Tiglath-Pileser III, but his stratigraphical description is not systematic and exact; the contexts of the architectural remains and finds are difficult to trace. This is not only due to the undeveloped methodology, but also the fact that Schumacher's field notes and find lists have disappeared.[1034] However, Watzinger managed to reconstruct an outline of the stratigraphical sequence on the basis of the documentation of Schumacher's excavations. He also presented many parallel finds from various sites in Palestine, Egypt, and Syria.

Watzinger starts his reports of the Iron Age finds by describing the destruction debris ("Brandshcift") which covered the building remains assigned by him to Solomon (Schumacher's "4. Schicht"). The destruction debris was already observed by Schumacher, who found traces of fire, charcoal, collapsed mud brick, and ashes in many parts of the north-south section within this stratum.[1035] According to Watzinger, this heavily destroyed "Solomonic" stratum consisted of "Südtor", structures above the "Nord- and Mittelburg", and a tomb in the "Mittelburg".[1036] Although the remains are extremely fragmentary, Watzinger was convinced about the "Solomonic" date on the basis of the new building technique,[1037] represented in a few walls of this stratum. In addition, he argues that several small finds from this stratum fit with the Solomonic date. He came to this conclusion by comparing the "Solomonic" material (architecture, pottery, small finds) from Megiddo with the results of several other excavations in Palestine. For example, he mentions that constructions with similar masonry were found in Gezer, Taanach, and Tel el-Fūl.[1038] However, this dating basically derives from the identification of the biblical descriptions of Solomon's building acts with the "new building technique" (ashlar masonry) and monumental remains found at the major sites above the Late Bronze and Iron I remains. Watzinger held to this interpretation, although he could not find any fortifications in the "Solomonic" stratum 4.[1039] Watzinger attributed the destruction of the "Solomonic" city to the attack of Shishak.[1040]

Watzinger dated Schumacher's stratum 5 to the 9th and 8th centuries, but he subdivided this stratum into early and later phases: the "palace" was associated with the

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[1034] Watzinger 1929, v.
[1035] Schumacher 1908, 1.Band, A. Text, 85−90; See also B Tafeln, XX; Watzinger 1929, 41.
[1036] Description and interpretation of this stratum Watzinger 1929, 42−59.
[1037] This "highly developed building technique" was later called ashlar masonry.
[1038] Watzinger 1929, 56−57. About Gezer see Macalister's description and dating of the towers and city wall built of (ashlar) masonry in Macalister Gezer I, 244−256, particularly 253, 255−256.
[1039] See Watzinger 1929, 57−58. Watzinger states that the biblical verses 1 Kgs 4:12 and 9:15 support his dating of stratum 4 to the "Solomonic" period. Thus, he follows W.F. Albright and A.Alt, who also find Solomon to be the builder of the city of this stratum. E.g. Albright ASOR Annual 1922/3,18.
[1040] Watzinger 1929, 59, 91.

early stage of the stratum, while the "temple in the Tempelburg" which Watzinger interpreted as a complex of houses,[1041] represented a later phase of this stratum. Watzinger recognized the similarity between the construction technique of the "Solomonic Südtor" (stratum 4, 10th century), the palace with its enclosure walls (stratum 5, early phase, 9th century), and the walls of the houses in the "Tempelburg" (stratum 5, later phase, 8th century), but he separated the buildings into different strata and phases mainly on stratigraphical grounds: the enclosure wall of the palace runs over the wall of the "Südtor", while the houses in the "Tempelburg" were built around five meters above the floor of the palace.[1042]

Watzinger also notes that traces of the destruction level of stratum 4 were found under the palace. Thus, the remains of the palace were found between two layers of destruction; the lower destruction layer he associated with the destruction of the "Solomonic city" by Shishak, and the upper debris with the destruction of the city by the Assyrians.[1043] He dates the construction of the palace to the period of Omride dynasty, based on both stratigraphical and ceramic evidence. According to him, only some types of pottery were found in the palace, such as fragments of pilgrim flasks[1044] and one rim piece of a bright red bowl,[1045] are reminiscent of the types in the "Solomonic" stratum, while most of the pottery shows new types or development. In architecture, he observes the close relation between the "Omride" palaces in Samaria and the palace of stratum 5 in Megiddo. In particular, he mentions the similarly dressed building stones (ashlars) in both buildings. The finds of several seals, especially the Shemaʻ and Asaph seals, are evidence that the palace continued in use until the second half of the 8th century.[1046] Watzinger concludes that both the house complex ("Tempelburg") and the "palace" were destroyed by the attack of Assyrians in 733 BCE. Some traces of the Assyrian city of Megiddo were also observed in Schumacher's excavations.

[1041] Watzinger was not convinced of the cultic nature of the remains of Schumacher's "Templeburg". He said that „die Deutung des Hauptgebäudes als Tempel ist unmöglich". Watzinger 1929, 72; the remains were from a large residence or a complex of individual houses. Watzinger 1929, 72−73, 89. This interpretation was agreed with by most of the later excavators of Megiddo. See e.g. Guy 1931, 32−33. Lamon&Shipton 1939, 59. Kempinski 1989, 92, 97. However, Fisher 1929, 68−71 accepted Schumacher's cultic interpretation and calls the upper phase of the building the "Astarte Palace". Ussishkin returned to the question of the function of this building, and suggests the interpretation of a temple. See Ussishkin 1989.

[1042] See Watzinger 1929, 59, 67−68, 72−74, 88−89.

[1043] Watzinger 1929, 59, 67−68.

[1044] Schumacher 1908, *Tell el-Mutesellim. I. A. Text,* Abb.102.

[1045] Schumacher 1908, *Tell el-Mutesellim. I. B. Tafeln,* XXXII, g.

[1046] Watzinger 1929, 59, 67.

Chicago Expedition 1925-1939. During the first years of the renewed excavations, the eastern slope and the south-eastern part of the summit were exposed.[1047] The Bronze Age tombs (2500−1300 BCE) on the eastern slope were explored. Only a couple of the tombs were dated to the Iron Age (around 1000 BCE).[1048] One of the LBA tombs had probably been used as a deposit of the "Astarte temple" (Schumacher's "temple") from 800−600 BCE.[1049] Fisher excavated three strata on the summit which contained remains of houses and walls of fortifications. He gives the year 350 BCE as the latest possible date for stratum I, and dates stratum III to 800−600BCE on the basis of the finds in the "Astarte temple". Hence, strata I and II existed sometime between 600 and 350 BCE.[1050] P.L.O. Guy, who continued Fisher's excavations in 1927, came to similar conclusions. He states that the uppermost two strata (or three according to Guy: I, II, Sub-II) near surface are damaged, and therefore difficult to interpret and date. The termination of the latest stratum I to the middle of 4th century BCE was given on the basis of Greek pottery. In contrast to Strata I−II, Stratum III was extensively exposed, and Guy dated it without a doubt to the "latter part of the Hebrew kingdom".[1051]

Under Stratum III, Fisher revealed earlier buildings but not the entire layer. He found only a few walls to represent the 9th century (Omride dynasty, 870 BCE onwards) beneath the "Astarte temple", discovered by Schumacher and interpreted as a "temple" by him but as a complex of houses by Watzinger. Fisher followed Watzinger in discerning two strata for this building: the lower structures of the building he assigned to the earlier, Omride period, while the upper part was constructed on the ruins of the Omride walls and built of high quality ashlar masonry. Fisher states that only the upper structure of Schumacher's "temple" functioned as a "sacred compound of Astarte" in the "post-Omride" period (800−600 BCE).[1052] In addition to the 9th century walls, Fisher dated the palace on the southern edge of the tell to the beginning of the "Solomonic" period, from 970 BCE

[1047] For a plan of the excavated areas: Fisher 1929,10, fig. 6. For the results of these areas see Fisher 1929, 40−74.

[1048] Fisher 1929, 55,57; In the 1927 excavations, 41 new tombs from the EB to the Early Iron Age periods were revealed. Guy 1931, 11. See the final report of the tombs revealed in Megiddo: Guy, P.L.O. and Engberg, R.M. (1938) *Megiddo Tombs, OIP XXXIII*. Chicago, Illinois: The University of Chicago Press.

[1049] Fisher 1929, 49.

[1050] See plan Guy 1931, 10, fig.14; Fisher 1929, 71. On the dating and interpretation of the strata see Fisher 1929, 59−67 (strata I−II), 68, 71 (stratum III). He says that all the pottery found in the rooms of the "Astarte temple" belongs to the "Hebrew period" and the capitals (proto-iolic) of Cypriote origin, also discovered in the same stratum, are dated to 800−600 BCE.

[1051] Guy 1931, 20. See p. 19 for the dating of uppermost strata. In addition to Fisher's stratum II, Guy distinguished Stratum Sub-II.

[1052] Fisher 1929,16, 68−71. He mentions that several limestone and incense altars were discovered, as well as jars and jugs in the storerooms, in the debris and ashes of the destruction.

onwards; the expedition observed the similarity between this Megiddo palace and the palace revealed in Samaria, and was convinced of the "Israelite date" of the architecture represented by these buildings.[1053]

However, in Samaria the palace was dated to the 9th century, to the period of the Omride dynasty, while the similar Megiddo palace was regarded as representing the "Solomonic era" of the 10th century. Fisher was aware of this discrepancy, but he concluded that there were two stages of the fine ashlar buildings in Megiddo: the southern palace representing the "Solomonic" period and the eastern remains belonging to Ahab's time.[1054] As for the history of earlier periods, Fisher mentions that during the "time of Thutmose III Megiddo was a strongly fortified post, the chief town of a wealthy kingdom."[1055] However, he does not really report the archaeological remains of this period, except for the LBA tombs. Rather, he refers to literary sources.

Stratum IV was mostly excavated during the first half of the Chicago excavations, and published by Lamon and Shipton. Stratum IVB was mainly composed of the buildings in the southern palace compound (1693) in Area B; a large architectural complex including an enclosure wall (1610) with a four-chamber gate 1567, and palaces 1723 and palace 1482. Fine ashlar masonry was used in all of these buildings and walls, similar to that of earlier examples revealed in Samaria and Gezer. In addition, several monumental proto-Ionic capitals were revealed.[1056] The main Stratum IV was, however, observed in all excavated areas. The main characteristic of this stratum became the pillared buildings interpreted by the excavators as "Solomon's stables": three in Area C and one in Area A, a few meters west of the enclosure wall of compound 1963.[1057] In addition, the outer, four-chamber gate (149.30) was revealed but published together with the six-chamber gate (2156).[1058] The excavators thought that these gates, with their watch towers and the city wall 325,[1059] formed a strong fortification in the "Solomonic" period (main Stratum IV), but this interpretation has been proved incorrect.[1060] Building 338 (Schumacher's "temple",

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[1053] Fisher 1929, 16, 73−74. On page 16 Fisher writes: "On the southern edge of the summit there are remains of a large structure of unmistakably Israelite character… similarity in plan and structure to the palace found at Samaria." He supposed that this palace was destroyed by the attack of Shishak in 932BCE. A fragment of Shishak's stele was found in 1925 in the dump of Schumacher's excavation. Fisher 1929, ix, xi−xii (foreword by Breasted), 60−61.

[1054] Fisher 1929, 73.

[1055] Fisher 1929, 13.

[1056] Lamon and Shipton 1939, 11−27.

[1057] Description in Lamon and Shipton 1939, 32−47.

[1058] Description of the gates in Loud 1948, 46−57. See also plan, fig. 389.

[1059] The city wall could be found or traced along the entire edge of the mound. Lamon and Shipton 1939, 28−29

[1060] Gate 2156 (the six-chambered gate) was associated with Stratum IVA (9th century) in the later research

Fisher's "Astarte temple", Watzinger's "complex of houses") was explored and re-interpreted as a private residence.[1061]

Stratum V was described as a modest town, "a peaceful agricultural settlement" where no public buildings, gates, or fortifications were revealed. However, objects of a cultic character were found everywhere in this stratum. Loud labelled the later phase of Stratum V as VA, which was mainly revealed in Area AA: buildings forming a defence at the edge of the tell above the poor remains of Stratum VB. It also included a number of plastered floors or stone pavements with plenty of pottery. Lamon and Shipton tentatively dated Stratum V to the second half of the 11th century on the basis of the dark red, irregularly hand-burnished pottery which they believed to have been replaced by wheel burnished wares around 1000 BCE.[1062]

Guy dates the establishment of Stratum IV to Solomon, in the 10th century. According to him and the later excavators, this stratum continued into the 9th century.[1063] Guy makes a connection between the "Solomonic" masonry of Gezer and that of Megiddo Stratum IV: "its lower part was of stone with dressing and bonding similar in places to examples found at Gezer and exactly like what has been discovered elsewhere in our Stratum IV".[1064] As mentioned above, Lamon and Shipton distinguished a Stratum IVB from the main Stratum IV. However, they say that this stratum was not entirely completed before the establishment of the main Stratum IV. They suppose that David, to whom they attached the establishment of Stratum IVB, "perhaps because of troubles in the south during the latter part of his reign, abandoned the project" and Solomon completed it. Solomon was also found to be the builder of the main Stratum, because the excavators associated the pillared buildings with the stables of Solomon's chariots (1 Kgs 9:15-19).[1065] The Chicago expedition argues for their interpretation on the basis of the internal stratigraphical sequence and pottery fabrics − amongst other factors, the appearance of light red wheel-burnished vessels which had then been dated to not earlier than the 10th century BCE. Their absolute date for Stratum IV is to a great degree grounded on the

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(e.g. Ussishkin 1980). Yadin (1960, 1970) still argued for its earlier date and place in Stratum VA−IVB. Mazar 1990, 384 still follows Yadin's date.

[1061] Lamon and Shipton 1939, 59.

[1062] Lamon and Shipton 1939, 3−7; Loud 1948, 45−46.

[1063] Guy 1931, 45−46; Lamon&Shipton 1939, xi,xvii: note that Guy's Stratum III "Astarte temple" (800−600 BCE) was dated by Lamon and Shipton to the 9th century and, thus, included in Stratum IV. Guy's Stratum Sub-II corresponds to Lamon's and Shipton's Stratum III; Loud 1948,5.

[1064] Guy 1931, 24 and Macalister 1912, Vol. I, fig. 129, 248, see also fig.127, 245.

[1065] Lamon and Shipton 1939, 59.

analogy between the biblical description of Solomon's building acts and the architecture of this stratum.

Albright 1943 and Wright 1950. Albright's critique of the results of the Megiddo expedition mainly concerned Stratum V and IVB; he observed that the division between Stratum V and IVB is not as clear as presented in *Megiddo I* (1939); at least some buildings attached to Stratum V in fact belong to Stratum IVB. G.E. Wright came to a similar conclusion after the appearance of *Megiddo II* (1948), in which Stratum V was already divided into Strata VB and VA. He suggested the combining of strata VA and IVB into one stratum, VA−IVB.[1066] Albright dated Stratum V to 1050−975 BCE (David), Stratum IVB to 950−915 (Solomon), and Stratum IVA to 915−815BCE (kings of the Northern Kingdom).[1067] Wright suggested that Stratum VB was destroyed by David "in the early part of the 10th century", and Stratum VA−IVB he assigns to David and Solomon.[1068]

Yigael Yadin's Excavations in 1960, 1966-67, and 1971-72. In Yadin's excavations, the aim was to clarify the Iron Age stratigraphy and to search for "Solomonic" Megiddo, where he expected to find a casemated city wall.[1069] This was presupposed by him based on his discoveries at Hazor, and his re-interpretation of Gezer's fortification, where similar gates were found in connection with the casemated city wall. Indeed, he believed that he had found what he was looking for: on the northeast edge of the tell he discovered a casemated wall beneath the solid offset-inset city wall (325), and claimed that this casemated wall (outer wall labelled as 52) was associated with the "Solomonic" six-chamber gate (2156), although no physical connection could be found. The Chicago expedition had excavated and removed the remains just around gate area.[1070] The existence of this casemated wall has been rejected by other scholars.[1071]

While searching for the casemates under the solid wall, he discovered a new building, fortress 6000 (later interpreted as a palace), connected to and forming part of the casemate wall belonging to the same building phase (Stratum VA−IVB). Palace 1723 was also

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[1066] Wright 1950, 42−43; Albright 1943, 2−3, 29−30. See also Ussishkin 1980, 4.
[1067] Albright 1943, 29−30.
[1068] Wright 1950, 44−45.
[1069] See Yadin 1960, 62; 1970, 66−67.
[1070] Ussishkin 1980, 3.
[1071] The "casemates" have been interpreted by other scholars as a row of rooms, including the outer wall of palace 6000. See Aharoni 1972, 303−305; Ussishkin 1980.

further excavated, and Yadin was convinced about its "Solomonic" date.[1072] Furthermore, he excavated and re-dated the water systems which were revealed by the Chicago Expedition. Yadin dated the passageway to the spring (gallery 629) to the second half of the tenth century (late Stratum VA−IVB), while the Chicago Expedition had associated it with Stratum VII, in the first half of the 12th century BCE, on the basis of the 12th century pottery.[1073] Another water system discovered by Yadin was dated to the 9th century (Stratum IVA).[1074] According to Yadin, all of these discoveries taken together formed a strong fortification deriving from the 10th century, "Solomonic" Megiddo of Stratum VA−IVB.[1075] Thus, he accepted Albright's and Wright's combination of Strata VA and IVB. This stratigraphical definition implied that some buildings which were earlier attributed to King David were now assigned to the time of King Solomon by Yadin. Accordingly, he lowered the date of the "Solomonic" Stratum IV (main Stratum IV), including the "stables",[1076] to the 9th century, the time of the Omride dynasty.[1077] Yadin also dated Stratum III to the Assyrian period, built after the destruction of Stratum IVA around 733 BCE.[1078]

Despite Yadin's efforts to promote archaeological research on its own terms by introducing stratigraphically based arguments, his interpretation still reflects a very biblical approach. The conclusions of his Megiddo excavations were greatly influenced by the verse 1 Kgs 9:15, which he explicitly states.[1079] Skjeggestad says that Yadin only changed the emphasis from King Solomon's "stables" of the Chicago Expedition to Solomonic royal architecture, which includes a significant gate structure, a city wall, and town-planning. She refers to Yadin's statement in an article: "the Bible helped so much in identifying and dating actual remains found by the spade".[1080]

[1072] Yadin 1967, 120.
[1073] Megiddo Water 1935; Yadin 1970, 90−93, fig. 16: First, Yadin noticed that Gallery 629 was built after the destruction of Stratum VIA but before the solid city wall 325. Later examination showed that the gallery cut the structures of both Stratum VIA and Stratum VB.
[1074] Yadin 1970, 93.
[1075] See Yadin's reports: Yadin 1958, 85−86; 1960, 62, 64−68; 1966, 278−279; 1967, 120; 1970, 68−75, 79−89, 91−93, 95; Yadin, Shiloh, and Eitan 1972, 162−164.
[1076] Yadin accepts the interpretation of the pillared building as stable. Yadin 1976a, 249−252; 1976b, 18−22. This interpretation was soon rejected by several archaeologists, e.g. Aharoni 1982, 200; discussion in Mazar 1990, 477−478. For an overview of the interpretations of the Iron Age pillared buildings, see Kochavi 1998, 474−477; 1999, 44−50.
[1077] Davies G. 1986, 87−90; See also Aharoni 1982, 195−200 and Skjeggestad 2001, 208.
[1078] Yadin 1970, 96.
[1079] Yadin says that this verse was one of his main arguments for the dating of the "Solomonic" buildings. 1960, 62,68; See Finkelstein's criticism about biblically grounded dating in Finkelstein 1996, 178−179.
[1080] Skjeggestad 2001, 207−210; Yadin 1960, 62.

(Aharoni 1972), Ussishkin 1980. Although Yadin solved some of the problems which the Chicago Expedition left, his solutions also raised new problems, and he was also criticized. First, Aharoni did not find evidence for the existence of the casemated wall, which was not found by the Chicago Expedition either. Neither did he agree with Yadin's combination of Strata VA and IVB and its association with the period of Solomon, although he agreed that the six-chamber gate without a doubt represented "Solomonic" architecture (Stratum IVB), together with the similar gates of Hazor Stratum XB and Gezer (Yadin's reinterpretation of Macalister's "Maccabean Castle" as the "Solomonic" six chamber gate).[1081] Later on, Ussishkin rejected Yadin's date for the six-chamber gate, which, according to him, was primarily grounded on a "typological similarity" with the gates of Gezer and Hazor. Ussishkin emphasizes that such typological comparison can only be used as a secondary proof, while the local stratigraphy, context, and sequence of architectural layers should be considered as the primary evidence.[1082] After a thorough stratigraphical study of the gate area, Ussishkin proved that the "Solomonic" gate cannot belong to Stratum VA – IVB, but must have been constructed in Stratum IVA (during the 9th century BCE).[1083] However, Ussishkin's critique is to a great degree limited to the stratigraphical location of this gate,

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[1081] Aharoni 1972, 303−307.

[1082] Ussishkin 1980, 1−3, especially p.3. See Yadin's reply to Ussishkin's methodological critique Yadin 1980, 19, 21; Yadin is of the same opinion about the methodology, and shows that Ussishkin also uses indirect evidence by comparing the construction of the Megiddo gates to the construction method at Lachish.

[1083] Ussishkin 1980, 7−17. In his earlier article 1966, 181, Ussishkin still follows Yadin's interpretation that the six-chamber gates of Megiddo, Hazor, and Gezer "were in fact built by Solomon's architects" (quoted by Ussishkin from Yadin 1958, 85-86). There are different stratigraphical interpretations of the foundation of the six-chamber gate: Ussishkin (1980, 7−17) states that the six chamber gate was constructed on the "built-up" foundations (no foundation trench, the foundation walls were built on the level ground). After building up these walls – including the foundation walls proper as well as the "rubble blocking walls of the doorjambs" and the inner and outer entrance of the gate house – the space between and outside the foundation walls of the gate was filled in with constructional fill. On top of this fill and the blocking walls, a pavement of lime plaster, the earliest surface level of this gate, was laid, and the proper walls (perhaps of mudbrick) were built upon the foundation walls. The Chicago excavators who discovered this gate gave a similar interpretation. They assigned the gate to Stratum IV (main= IVA) but dated the beginning of this Stratum – and thus, the six-chambered gate as well – to the Solomonic period. See Lamon, *Megiddo II* (1948), 46−57, especially pages 47−48. Otherwise Yadin (1972, 84−88, particurlarly p.88; 1980, 19−20), who discerns two phases for this gate. What Ussishkin and the Chicago team considered to be a mere foundation, Yadin interpreted as the proper walls of the gate, representing the first phase of the gate belonging to Stratum VA−IVB. According to Yadin, no foundations were constructed, but the six-chambered gate represents a kind of "free-standing" type; the earliest surface (floor-level) lies at the same level as the base of the first course of the gate walls. Yadin agrees that the gate was in use in Stratum IVA as well. Yadin explains that when Stratum VA−IVB was destroyed the six-chambered gate was rebuilt, and the floor raised by filling in the earlier gate and building the blocking walls. Hence, what the Chicago report and Ussishkin considered as an original construction fill, Yadin interpreted as the floor filling of the second phase of the gate. Both Ussishkin and Yadin also refer to biblical evidence (particularly 1 Kgs 9:15, but also 1 Kgs 7:9-12), but they uses it differently; Yadin argues with this verse for the fortifications, including the similar gates of Gezer, Hazor, and Megiddo, while Ussishkin emphasizes the general character of Stratum VA−IVB with its monumental palaces and architecture; the biblical description does not necessiraly imply fortifications. He says that "assuming that the biblical text is correct and reliable, then the Stratum VA−IVB city can easily by identified as the city built by Solomon." Ussishkin 1980,7.

and he seems to accept many of Yadin's revised interpretations related to the results of the Chicago Expedition. For example, he accepts that Stratum VA − IVB represents the "Solomonic" city with its two palaces (1723, 6000), building 1428, and a probable casemated wall connected to the palace 6000. He also accepts Yadin's chronology of Strata VB − III. [1084]

Fritz 1990 and Kempinski1989. Compared to Yadin's stratigraphical division, Fritz divides strata VA and IVB into separate periods: Stratum VB 1000 − 950, Stratum VA 950 − 900, Stratum IVB 900 − 850.[1085] Kempinski also keeps these strata distinguishable, but give different dates: Stratum VB 1050−980, Stratum VA (including IVB) 980−920, Stratum IV 900/880 − 815.[1086]

Davies, Graham I. 1986.[1087] The approach of G. Davies relies heavily on biblical evidence. His periodization follows biblical history: he labels the Middle and Late Bronze and Early Iron Age strata as "Canaanite" Megiddo, although he admits that the term "Canaanites" is known to history only from the Late Bronze Age. According to him, the Israelite period in Megiddo starts with the occupation of the site by King David. He does not give an exact date for when he believes this occupation happened. He associates the modest stratum VB with the Davidic Megiddo, while stratum VA−IVB represents the monumental Solomonic Megiddo. G. Davies assigns the reconstruction of the monumental Megiddo after its destruction by Pharaoh Shishak I to the Omride dynasty, around the mid-ninth century BCE. The remains of this period are illustrated in the main stratum of stratum IV (IVA), which lasted until the occupation by the Assyrians in 734/2.[1088]

Interestingly, G. Davies does note the material similarity of "Canaanite" (strata? −VIA) and "Israelite" (strata VB and VA − IVB) Megiddo, however he makes a sharp division between these two eras: the destruction of the stratum VIA city started a new political period in Megiddo, ruled by the Israelite kings. The material similarity, which is due to the continuation of the tradition of the LB material culture into strata VB and VA − IVB, he explains by saying that the "Canaanites" may have continued to inhabit "Israelite"

[1084] Ussishkin 1980, 5−6,17; See also Ussishkin 1966: 179−181,186; Yadin 1980, 19.
[1085] Fritz 1990, 71−78, table p.72. See table and debate in Skjeggestad 2001, 211; Davies G. 1986, 89−92.
[1086] Kempinski 1989, 10.
[1087] Davies G. 1986, 76−97 serves as a source for the table.
[1088] See Davies G. 1986, 76−97: Davidic period (76−78), Solomonic period (summary 95−96), the period from the Omride dynasty to the Assyrian occupation (96−97).

Megiddo. However, the city was annexed to the kingdom of David.[1089] He does not say explicitly that a new population of Israelites would have settled down in Megiddo; he probably found it to be self-evident. At least, he seems to believe that the rule of Megiddo was tightly in the hands of the Israelite kings since David.

Finkelstein 1990s. Finkelstein suggests the lowering of the Iron Age chronology. He bases his suggestion on three points: first, re-dating the Philistine settlements by lowering them ca. 50 years; second, the vague dates of Megiddo's "Solomonic stratum"; and third, the synchronism between the 9th century pottery of the Jezreel enclosure and the pottery assemblages of Megiddo Stratum VA−IVB. As a result, he would lower the 10th century strata to the 9th century. Consequently, Stratum VA-IVB (the "Solomonic stratum") in Megiddo would be lowered to the 9th century. Hence, Stratum VB would represent 10th century Megiddo.[1090]

High chronology			Low chronology (Finkelstein)		
Century	Stratum	Description	Century	Stratum	Description
− 1135	VIIA	destroyed violently no Philistine sherds	− 1135	VIIA	Destroyed violently, no Philistine sherds
end 12th	VIB	genuine Bichrome	end 12th	gap	
11th	VIA	genuine Bichrome, degenerated (Tel Qasile X)	11th − early 10th	VIB	
	destruction	debris*	950−late 10th	VIA	
late 11th	VB	Poor		destruction	debris* (Shoshenq ?)
10th	VA-IVB	Solomonic monumental buildings			
	destruction	by Shoshenq			
			aroun 900	VB	Poor
9th − mid 8th	IVA		9th	VA– IVB	Monumental buildings
				destruction	
			late 9th − mid 8th	IVA	
D e s t r o y e d b y A s s y r i a n s					

Table 11. Strata of Megiddo according to the high and low chronology.

[1089] Davies G. 1986, 77−78, 95−96. G. Davies mentions that in stratum VA−IVB "a large quantity of ritual vessels had been found. These also seem for the most part to reproduce styles well known from the late Canaanite period" (p. 95). According to him, these finds indicate that the "old inhabitants had continued to live in the city". By "old inhabitants" he refers to the local "Canaanite" people who derive from the LB population.
[1090] Finkelstein does not go into details in dealing with Megiddo's stratigraphy. Finkelstein 1995; 1996, 177−187; 1999, 36−39.

Summary of the early research. It is obvious that no consensus has been reached. Most of the debate has focused on stratigraphy. Dating is primarily based on the relative chronology of the monumental buildings, while the use of pottery as indicative evidence has played a minor role, particularly in the early reports. However, the pottery of Megiddo is often referred to in other works, and with its help the strata of other sites have been dated.[1091] It seems to me that in Megiddo the architecture dated the pottery, and not vice-versa; the pottery found in the debris of the "Solomonic" buildings was dated accordingly to the 10th century.

In the early excavation reports, the appearance of ashlar masonry in public buildings seems to have been a landmark for the beginning of the "Israelite rule" under David/Solomon. This interpretation is strongly based on analogies between the biblical descriptions of the Solomonic kingdom and the architecture revealed in the excavations. However, these biblical analogies have been used for different purposes. While the Chicago Expedition argued for the "Solomonic" date of the "stables" by referring to 1 Kgs 9:19, Yadin rejected this date for stratigraphical reasons. The "stables" were located above the Fortress 6000, the "casemated wall", and the six-chamber gate which Yadin, in turn, dated to the "Solomonic" period on the basis of 1 Kings 9:15 and the resemblance of the city gates of Hazor, Gezer, and Megiddo. Although dating based on such analogies is not used anymore, the "biblical" chronology is still behind the archaeological interpretations in many cases.

In Megiddo, a common stratigraphy between the excavated areas, or even within the same area, is difficult to define. Also, absolute dating is problematic, because no indicative finds exist. Therefore, I find almost impossible to clearly discern the town plan of Strata VA or VA-IVB and IVA. The relative sequence of the buildings in the same place can be followed, but a stratigraphical connection between different places with no physical connections does not exist, and can hardly be unambiguously defined. This was also the conclusion of the Megiddo Expedition since 1992, which uses the local stratigraphy of each area.

The Megiddo Expedition since 1992. One of the aims of the renewed excavations at Megiddo is to solve the problems of the earlier research. Eight areas have been excavated, and most of them are the same as the old ones.[1092] The results cannot be compared directly

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[1091] The pottery from Megiddo was also one of the main sources for the pottery study by Ruth Amiran (1969), *Ancient Pottery of the Holy Land.* Ramat Gan: Massada Press.
[1092] Finkelstein etc. 2013, 3.

with the earlier results, because the stratigraphy is counted locally in each area.[1093] Neither are absolute dates given in the general tables. The results of the material, environmental, and physical studies have more of an emphasis in today's archaeological research.

5.3.2. Megiddo in the Hebrew Bible

Megiddo appears eleven times in the Hebrew Bible. Six of them refers to the city of Megiddo (1 Kgs 4:12, 9:15; 2 Kgs 9:27; 2 Kgs 23:29, 30; 1 Chr 7:29), while the other passages mention a king of Megiddo (Jos 12:21), inhabitants of Megiddo (Josh 17:11, Jgd 1:27), the waters of Megiddo (Jgd 5:19), and the Valley of Megiddo (2 Chr 35:22). In contrast to Dan and Hazor, the city of Megiddo occurs only in First and Second Kings and the First Chronicles. Two of the passages are connected to King Solomon: Megiddo and Taanach are mentioned as cities of the administrative districts of King Solomon in 1 Kgs 4:12, and Megiddo is mentioned as a city that was built by Solomon in 1 Kgs 9:15. In Second Kings, Megiddo appears as a place of death of two kings of Judah: Ahaziah (2 Kgs 9:27) and Josiah (2 Kgs 23:29, 30). 2 Chr 35:22 repeats the story of the battle in the Valley of Megiddo in which Josiah was wounded. In First Chronicles, Megiddo appears among the cities given to the descendants of Manasseh (1 Chr 7:29). It is peculiar that Megiddo is only mentioned in connection with the kings of Judah. For Ahaziah, Megiddo was the place where he escaped Jehu the usurper, while Jezreel is mentioned as the residence of the kings of Israel (e.g. 1 Kgs 21:1; 2 Kgs 9:30).

The king of Megiddo appears in the list of the kings that were defeated by Joshua (Josh 12:21), but Megiddo is not mentioned as a battlefield. The people of Megiddo are also claimed to belong to the territory of Manasseh, according to Josh 17:11. However, the verse in Jgd 1:27 claims that the tribe could not manage to occupy the city, but its inhabitants remained in the surrounding territory. In Jgd 5:19, the vicinity of Megiddo is said to have been the site of the battlefield of the "Canaanite kings". In this verse, Taanach and the waters of Megiddo appear together. In many of these occurrences, Megiddo and its surroundings are depicted as places of battles and death.

[1093] Finkelstein etc. 2013, 18.

5.4. Tell et-Tell – the Bethsaida of the New Testament

The Site and the History of Excavations

Bethsaida is located on the northern coast of the Sea of Galilee, 250 meters east of the Jordan River.[1094] The site was identified with the Bethsaida of the New Testament,[1095] and the excavators suggest that the Iron Age city was the capital of the land of Geshur.[1096] The site is 20 acres in size; the mound is 400 meters long and around 200 meters wide.[1097] The excavations at the site were started in 1987, and have been continued until 2015. Several (preliminary) reports and articles have been published.[1098]

The Results in Relation to Tel Dan

The Excavations of the Iron Age city at Tell et-Tell, Bethsaida (Strata VI and V, 10th−8th century BCE, high chronology), have yielded the closest parallel to the material culture of Tel Dan. Similar architecture and building technique was used in these two cities, in the flagstone pavements of the gate area and in wall construction, particularly in the city wall and the walls of the four-chambered gate. The walls were built of slightly worked, big basalt boulders like at Tel Dan.[1099] The cultic finds at the gate also show a significant similarity: a square structure on the right in front of the main gate, and cultic type pottery and stelae (*maṣṣeboth*) next to the structure. In Bethsaida, two carefully dressed stelae[1100] were found standing *in situ* on both sides of the entrance (see the gate of Bethsaida, fig. 20).[1101] Moreover, monumental buildings resembling a *bīt hilāni* palace and a possible temple were found.[1102] An iconic stela (*maṣṣeba*) depicting a moon god refers to the Syrian

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[1094] Arav 1995, 3.
[1095] Arav 1995, xiv.
[1096] Arav 2009, 6.
[1097] Arav 1995, 3; 2009, 6.
[1098] Arav, Rami and Freund, Richard A., eds (1995), *Bethsaida. A City by the North shore of the Sea of Galilee.* Vol. 1. Bethsaida Excavations Project. Kirksville, Missouri: Thomas Jefferson University Press; Arav, Rami and Freund, Richard A., eds (1999), *Bethsaida. A City by the North shore of the Sea of Galilee.* Vol. 2. Bethsaida Excavations Project. Kirksville, Missouri: Thomas Jefferson University Press; Arav, Rami and Freund, Richard A., eds (2004), *Bethsaida. A City by the North shore of the Sea of Galilee.* Vol. 1. Bethsaida Excavations Project. Kirksville, Missouri: Thomas Jefferson University Press; Arav, Rami and Freund, Richard A., eds (2009), *Bethsaida. A City by the North shore of the Sea of Galilee.* Vol. 4. Bethsaida Excavations Project. Kirksville, Missouri: Thomas Jefferson University Press; See field reports 2003−2015: http://www.unomaha.edu/international-studies-and-programs/bethsaida/about-us/reports.php (visited 14.4. 2016).
[1099] Arav 2001, 239−245; Arav 2009, 9−12.
[1100] See Arav 2003, Ills. 85, 92, p. 52, 56−57.
[1101] See photograph Arav 2009, 23, fig. 1.16, on stelae p. 46−50, fig. 1.34−1.36.
[1102] Arav 2003, 62−64; Arav and Bernett 2000, 47−49, 52−55.

(Aramean) culture of the city. Parallels can be found in Mesopotamia and Syria.[1103] The excavators find that Bethsaida was the capital of the Aramean, Geshurite kingdom.[1104]

Because of the similarities between the remains of Tel Dan and Bethsaida, a common background for their material culture can be supposed. Strata VI−V at Bethsaida are likely contemporary with Strata IV−III, or at least Stratum III, at Tel Dan. Does this reflect Syrian material culture? The mention of the "king of Israel" in the Tel Dan stela indicates that at least during Stratum III/II Israel was known by the Arameans as a threat to their realm, probably already during the Omride dynasty.[1105] This is also depicted in the biblical traditions. Israel probably managed to expand its political power to Tel Dan in the late 9th or the 8th centuries BCE, when Assyria gradually took control of the territories of the Arameans in the north. However, the inscription does not necessarily presuppose any military action, as shown by Athas (2003); the Tel Dan Stela might have been set up for the purpose of propaganda. However, it shows that Israel, which had its core in region of the Samarian hill country, was able to expand towards the north during the first half of the 8th century BCE. It is also probable that the city of Tel Dan was or became multicultural, because it was located in the area where the north−south and the west−east roads crossed. Actually, the whole of northern Israel, particularly the northern valleys, have most probably been multicultural regions, as Faust has shown.[1106]
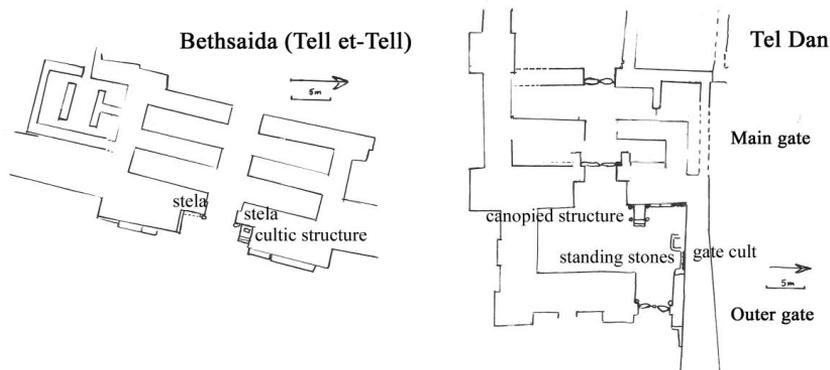
Figure 20. Gates of Tel Dan and Bethsaida.
Redrwan by Merja Alanne after Arav 2001, 240.

[1103] Bernett and Keel 2003, 70−71; Ornan 2001, 1, 19−26.
[1104] Arav and Bernett 2000, 81; Arav 2009, 47−48, 113−115.
[1105] The power of the Omride dynasty during King Ahab is evidenced in the Monolith Inscription of Shalmaneser III, which mentions him as a participant in a coalition against the Assyrian campaign to the south. See Ahlström 1993, 576−578.
[1106] Faust 2000, 21. Faust's study is mainly based on the exploration of the different house types found in the northern valleys.

5.5. Samaria

5.5.3. Archaeological Evidence and Interpretations

The Site and the History of Excavations

Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom, is located on the western edge of Mount Ephraim on a steep hill, 430 m above the sea level. The site was an ideal choice for the capital, because of its central and strategic position athwart the roads leading to the north, to the Mediterranean coast to the west, and to the Jordan valley to the east.[1107] Harvard University carried out the first excavations at the site in 1908−1910, directed by G. Schumacher, G.A. Reisner, and C.S. Fisher. The excavations were resumed in 1931−1935 by a second campaign of a Joint Expedition of five institutions under the leadership of J.W. Crowfoot and E.L. Sukenik. Kathleen Kenyon and G.M. Crowfoot also participated in the excavations, and were the main authors of the publications aside from the directors. [1108]

The emphasis of this chapter will be on the excavation reports of the second expedition,[1109] and the re-interpretation of those results by Ron E.Tappy several decades later.[1110] These reports and subsequent research illustrate the difficulties in establishing the stratigraphy of the site, associating artefacts with contemporary buildings, and the dating of the finds; Samaria has repeatedly been rebuilt from the Iron Age until the time of the Byzantine village of Sebaste. Accordingly, building stones of several structures have been robbed to the bedrock, particularly from those built of fine, dressed ashlars. Several walls of the earliest strata, from the 9th to the 7th centuries, can only been traced with the help of foundation trenches cut into the bedrock.[1111] The later constructions also penetrated to the remains of previous strata, damaging them and confusing the stratigraphy.[1112] Despite these challenges, as described in the excavation reports, Kenyon did not find it difficult to

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[1107] Avigad 1978, 1032; Mazar 1990, 406.
[1108] *Harvard excavations at Samaria I* 1924, 7; Avigad 1978, 1035−1036. F. Zayadin from the Jordan Department of Antiquities directed small scale excavations at Samaria in 1965−1967, but he concentrated on the Hellenistic and Roman city, as did J.B. Hennessy in 1968. Avigad 1978, 1050.
[1109] *Samaria − Sebaste I: Buildings* (1942) by J.W. Crowfoot, Kathleen M. Kenyon, E.L. Sukenik ; *Samaria − Sebaste III: Objects* (1957) by J.W. Crowfoot, G.M. Crowfoot, Kathleen M. Kenyon.
[1110] Tappy, Ron E. 1992*: The Archaeology of Israelite Samaria*.
[1111] Kenyon 1942, 94−112, particularly pages 94−96, 101,106; Kenyon 1957, 90.
Luckily, in several points the lowest courses of the earliest walls have been preserved. Thus, the fine manufacture of the 9th century ashlar technique in Israel is evidenced. According to the excavators, the walls of these earliest strata (9th century BCE) introduce a more delicate ashlar masonry than the later 8th century walls, which are made of ashlars as well but roughly dressed. *Samaria−Sebaste I* 1942, 5−6.
[1112] See e.g. Kenyon 1942, 116: inside the enclosure of the Israelite Period, the Hellenistic and Roman building operations have destroyed all the earlier remains. "North of 410 N over nearly the whole area, all evidence has been destroyed...not only the walls were removed, but the floor levels sliced off ..., so that not even the robber trenches of the walls were left."

create a relative chronology. Nevertheless, she admits that absolute dating is a more problematic issue. She states:[1113]

> These excavations revealed a series of buildings of the Israelite period, of which the relative chronology could be definitely established by stratification, but of which the absolute dating is much less certain.

Kenyon's Stratigraphy

Kenyon distinguished nine strata, which she calls "periods". She attributes "Periods I−VI" to the time of the Israelite kings, from the beginning of the Omride dynasty around 880 BCE until the Assyrian attack on Samaria in 721 BCE. "Periods VII−VIII" represent the time from the 7th century to the 4th century. Although Greek influence in the pottery is already increasingly present during "Period IX", Kenyon does not ascribe this period to the Hellenistic period. Only the following phases are termed the Early Hellenistic, Hellenistic, and Late Hellenistic periods. The Hellenistic strata were followed by the Herodian period, and the second, third, and fourth Roman periods. [1114] In addition to these 16 periods altogether, the Joint Expedition found scattered remains belonging to the Byzantine village of Sebaste, which was evidenced by a coin belonging to "the House of Constantine".[1115]

Kenyon differentiates between the building and pottery phases. Thus, the excavators introduce separately the "Building Periods" (vol. I) and the "Pottery Periods" (vol. III). "Pottery Periods I−IX", however, are associated with the corresponding "Building Periods I−IX".[1116] In addition, the Hellenistic and Roman pottery deposits were associated with the corresponding building phases. "Periods I and II", which fall under the interest of this paper, were dated by the Joint Expedition to the 9th century (875−841 BCE). As is typical of the old excavation reports, the methods of dating are not explicitly argued. Neither is there any general presentation or table of chronology in the reports. The stratigraphy is introduced in the presentations of each building period, but the arguments on the basis of which the excavators built it, and the "periods" of the individual structures, remain unclear in a number of cases.

[1113] Kenyon 1942, 93.

[1114] Kenyon 1942, 93−138; 1957, 217: Pottery of Period IX shows similarities with that found in fills of Period VIII. On the other hand, an increased amount of Hellenistic pottery, including few pieces of Attic ware, was found in deposits of this period. Thus, Period IX seems to represent, according to Kenyon, the transition from the Persian to the Early Hellenistic Period.

[1115] Kenyon 1942, 139. Furthermore, the EBA period at the site is evidenced by cuttings in the bedrock containing EBA pottery, found in several places under the Iron Age remains. After the EBA period, the next occupation at the site appeared to be in the Iron Age. Kenyon states that the Iron Age occupation did not start before the 9th century. Kenyon 1942, 91−94.

[1116] *Samaria−Sebaste I* 1942, 8, 93−110.

Tappy's Critique of Kenyon's Conclusions

In his research, Ron E. Tappy focused on the "Pottery Periods I−II". First of all, he points out that a stratigraphic description of the pottery in the report is missing. Consequently, it is impossible to trace the original find spots of individual vessels and fragments. Tappy correctly states that Kenyon only describes the horizontal place of discovered objects by indicating the "strip"[1117] where the pottery was found, while she neglects to discuss the vertical position of the finds; in other words, the stratigraphical definition of each of the published objects or deposits is left in question.[1118] Although Kenyon separates the stratified pottery from that found in unsure contexts, not even the closed contexts of the stratified pottery finds have been reported. It is nearly impossible to re-evaluate the stratigraphical position of pottery assemblages on the basis of the excavation reports. Therefore, Tappy goes back to Kenyon's field notes and attempts to trace the original, three dimensional find spots of the individual pottery objects, as well as the pottery assemblages of various deposits. [1119]

To begin with, Tappy refers to the earlier articles from the 1950s in which Kenyon's dating was already re-evaluated.[1120] After a thorough analysis of the pottery from "Pottery Period I and II", Tappy concludes that these earliest Iron Age pottery assemblages represent a time span ranging from the 11th century until the beginning of the 9th century BCE. Tappy bases his conclusions on a detailed study of stratigraphy and pottery typology. He searched for the exact find spots of the pottery from Kenyon's field books, described the objects, and referred to parallels. He became convinced through his study that the published pottery assigned by Kenyon to "Pottery Period I" is from secure, stratified contexts.[1121] Thus, the results can be considered reliable.

According to Tappy's chronology, "Pottery Periods I−II" predate the establishment of the capital by the Omride dynasty. Consequently, Tappy accepts Kenyon's date for the "Building Periods I−II" to the kings of the Omride dynasty, but not her association of the pottery of "Pottery Periods I−II" with these earliest building periods. Kenyon's method of dating the buildings by means of the pottery found beneath the floor, and not according to the pottery discovered on the floor, has been strongly criticized, not only by Tappy but also

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[1117] The Joint Expedition divided the excavation area into "fields" and "strips", which they named with two letters: a capital indicating the field and small letters the strips in the field e.g. Qd, Qk. See SSIII 1957, xiv−xv. *Samaria−Sebaste I* 1942, 3.
[1118] Tappy 1992, 2, 7, 8−9.
[1119] See introduction, Tappy 1992, 1−14.
[1120] Tappy starts by introducing the articles of Albright, Aharoni − Amiran, de Voux, and Wright, who criticize Kenyon's late dating of the "Pottery Periods I−II". See Tappy 1992, 2−11.
[1121] Tappy 1992, 213−216, 254.

by several other scholars since the 1950s.[1122] Tappy proves that the pottery of "Pottery Period I−II" was definitely found below or inside the floors of "Building Period I". Thus, "Pottery Periods I−II" represent an earlier occupation at Samaria than "Building Periods I−II" (9th century). Tappy attributes the pottery of Kenyon's "Pottery Period III" to "Building Period I−II".

The Influence of Biblical texts on Kenyon's Archaeological Interpretation

Kenyon was criticized for her uncritical use of biblical texts for dating archaeological data. She maintained her interpretation that there was no Iron Age occupation at Samaria prior the establishment of the capital by King Omri around 880 BCE. She adopted this view from the verse 1 Kgs 16:24, which influenced her interpretation of the archaeological evidence.[1123] Hence, Tappy says that "Kenyon based her entire chronology for these early periods at Samaria more on history than archaeology".[1124]

Kenyon's reasoning is undoubtedly ambiguous: she dates the Samaria pottery to the 9th century, although nearly all the parallels which she introduces have been dated to the 10th −11th centuries. She rather suggested lowering the date of the pottery than accepting the pre-Omride occupation of the hill of Samaria.[1125] Because most of the buildings and walls of Building Period I, and even several Hellenistic or Roman remains, have been built straight on the bedrock,[1126] it is probable that the supposed architectural structures from prior to "Building Period I" have been totally destroyed and swept out. According to Kenyon, the evidence at Samaria provides a pottery chronology with secure fixed points of absolute dating, which can be used in dating other sites.[1127] Unfortunately, her absolute dates were based only on her preconceived opinions of the historicity of biblical events, not on an archaeological foundation.

[1122] Tappy 1992, 68−69, 97, 214. See Kenyon's method in Kenyon 1957, 90; For early discussion, briefly, Avigad 1978, 1041.
[1123] Kenyon 1985, 260: "Excavation confirms the biblical account that Omri founded his town on a virgin site." Aharoni criticizes Kenyon's interpretation: "Only the archaeological findings can give an answer, and one must not start out with a preconceived notion that at Samaria everything begins in the reign of Omri... Today, there is no doubt that pottery from the tenth century is found at Samaria, and perhaps even from the eleventh." Aharoni 1982, 203.
[1124] Tappy 1992, 214−215. The quotation 215.
[1125] Kenyon 1957, 198−209; see also Tappy 1992, 98−101.
[1126] See Kenyon 1942, 94-97, 121,129.
[1127] Kenyon 1957, 198-199.

The Pottery as Evidence for Dating

One of the most significant changes in pottery techniques between the pottery of "Period I−II" and the pottery of the later periods was the shift from the hand-burnishing technique to wheel-burnishing. Kenyon observed that during the "Pottery Periods I−II" no completely wheel-burnished vessels or fragments were found; burnishing was accomplished either by hand or by a combination of hand and wheel burnishing.[1128] Only "Pottery Period IV" represents the complete adoption of wheel-burnished technique, although already during "Pottery Period III" wheel-burnish had almost superseded hand-burnishing. Kenyon regards "Pottery Periods I−III" as a transition from hand burnishing to wheel burnishing. In most cases, the colour of the slip was red-brown until "Pottery Period III", when the colour started to change to a more reddish tone; after "Pottery Period IV" the dominant colour was bright red.[1129]

According to Kenyon, the pottery of "Period I" and "Period II" is similar, showing no differences in types or technology, while "Period III" represents a transitional period in many respects. "Pottery Period IV" shows significant development, both in the quality of manufacture and material, compared to the previous pottery.[1130] This change happened in Samaria, according to Kenyon, around 800 BCE. Tappy also dates "Pottery Period III" to the 9th century.[1131]

5.5.4. Samaria in the Hebrew Bible

While Dan appears in the Hebrew Bible 21 times, Hazor 12 times, and Megiddo 11 times, Samaria occurs 110 times. The difference in the number of occurrences between Samaria and the other cities is surprisingly large. On the other hand, part of these refer to Samaria

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[1128] Kenyon found a close parallel to the "Pottery Periods I−II" in Megiddo stratum V, in which a large amount of hand-burnished vessels were found, but wheel-burnishing had also begun. She has, however, difficulties in explaining the different dates; Megiddo V was dated to the so-called *Solomonic period* of the 10th century, its end marked by the attack of Shishak around 925 BCE. Thus, Kenyon is forced to suggest that the end of Megiddo V was slightly later than the establishment of Samaria, that is, after the beginning of "Period I" at Samaria. She dates the whole period of Megiddo V to 1000−850 BCE. She also refers to Tell Abu Hawam III (dated to 1100−925 BCE by the excavators) and Tell Beit Mirsim B.2 and B.3 when she argues for the lower dates of Megiddo V. Accordingly, she suggests lowering the following stratum IV to 850−750 BCE. Stratum III is dated to 750-650 BCE. Kenyon 1957, 199−200, 204.
[1129] Kenyon 1957, 94−95.
[1130] Kenyon 1957, 199.
[1131] According to Ruth Amiran, the main shifts in Iron Age pottery happened in the span between 1000 and 800 BCE. Amiran 1969, 191. Furthermore, she states that 'the irregular hand burnish' is a typical feature in Iron Age II A−B bowls (10th and 9th century), but wheel burnishing also appears. On Iron Age II bowls (8th and 7th century), the most common decoration was a red burnished slip. Amiran 1969, 195, 200.

as a region rather than a city, mentioning "the cities of Samaria."[1132] However, Samaria can be considered a significant biblical city. In my opinion, the explanation is that it was a capital of the kingdom of Israel since the first half of the 9th century BCE, and it was located on the mountain of Ephraim, rather close to Jerusalem.

According to 1 Kgs 16:24, Samaria was founded by King Omri, who bought the "mountain of Samaria" from Šemer and built a city on it. Samaria is a central place in the many stories of King Ahab, the son of Omri. It continued to be a residence of the rest of the kings of Israel, and its fall to the Assyrians is told of both in the Hebrew Bible (2 Kgs 17:3−6) and in the inscriptions of the Assyrian kings Shalmanesser V and Sargon II.[1133] Most of the occurrences of the city of Samaria in the bible are found in First and Second Kings (almost 60). It also appears in the prophets (Jes, Jer, Hez, Hos, Amos, Ob, Mic), and in the Chronicles and Nehemiah. Hence, it was widely known by the writers and editors of the biblical texts. Samaria was not only the capital of the kingdom of Israel, but also the capital city of an Assyrian province.

5.6. Dan and the kingdom of Israel − Summary and synthesis

The archaeological remains of Dan, Hazor, and Megiddo prove that they were significant cities in northern Israel during the Iron Age II period, as shown in chapters 2 and 5. Through the influence of the biblical evidence, particularly the phrase *"from Dan to Beersheba"* (chapter 4.3.1), these cities came to represent the material culture of the kingdom of Israel. However, the scholarly discussion of the 1990s questioned the historical validity of the biblical record. As a consequence, the extent of the kingdom of Israel – and the role of Dan as a border marker - is also debated.

Archaeological evidence shows both similarities and differences between these northern cities. The common features include, among the other things, the revival of urbanism during the Iron Age II, the appearance of monumental architecture in the beginning of Iron Age II (e.g. fortifications, public buildings, palaces/temples, ashlar masonry building technique, column capitals), and the appearance of burnished red-slipped ware. These elements are present in Dan IVA, Hazor X–IX, and Megiddo VA–IVB. However, the gate and fortification of Dan III–II differs from those of Hazor and Megiddo. The gate complex, with its outer and inner gates, lacks a six-chamber gate and solid city

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[1132] E.g. 1 Kgs 13:32.
[1133] See Becking 1992 (*The Fall of Samaria*); Dever 2007, 78−92; Tappy 2007, 258−279.

wall, and the fortification of Dan was built of unworked basalt stones. Because the monumental building projects required political power and an organized society, the emergence of such public buildings can be seen as evidence of centralized power and an established kingdom. However, it is difficult to say without written evidence who were behind the building of the cities. Without written evidence, it is also difficult to explain why the Middle and Late Bronze Age cities are seen as city-states, while the Iron Age cities are seen as members of a kingdom, with centralized power held by the capital.

The Tel Dan inscription is a strong piece of evidence for the existence of conflicts between the "Aramean" kings and the kings of Israel in the late ninth (and eighth?) centuries. It indicates that the conflicts had continued for some time, and that Dan was occasionally under the political control of the "Arameans" and Israelites during the second half of the ninth – early eighth centuries BCE. However, the Tel Dan inscription cannot be used to prove the existence of the Davidic-Solomonic kingdom, although *byt dwd* is mentioned. The inscription only proves that during the time that the stela was written (the second half of the 9th century BCE) such a political power existed in the southern Levant.

In my view, the biblical stories also support the existence of the Israelite – Aramaean conflicts. Although the literary form of the stories and the other records, and their motives, are post-monarchic, they include older traditions representing the reality of the wars of the Iron Age II period. The phrase "*from Dan to Beersheba*", however, better reflects the post-monarchic ideology of the unity of the people of "all Israel", than the reality of the time of the kingdom of Israel. It is unlikely that the city of Dan was continuously governed from distant Samaria, rather, it may have been an independent(?) city that governed the surrounding region. Its material culture has more similarities with that of Bethsaida than that of Samaria, due to regional contacts.

I believe that the hill country of Ephraim, with its capital Samaria in the center of the region, was the core territory of the kingdom of Israel, as is also pointed out by the biblical texts and traditions Samaria appears many times more in the texts than Dan, Hazor, and Megiddo put together. The kingdom of Israel probably extended its power to the north from time to time. The biblical texts include some hints about Iron Age Dan, but the motives of the stories are post-monarchic. These passages and stories are also scarce, sporadic, and disconnected from each other.

6. Conclusions

The aim of this study was to examine the history - and the various reconstructions of that history - of the city of Dan from the point of view of the archaeological and biblical evidence, and to re-evaluate the different reconstructions suggested in earlier research. An essential question was: how do the biblical texts relate to the archaeological data? Just as the methods of archaeology and biblical studies have developed over the last hundred and fifty years, our understanding of Israel's past has also changed. The most significant change has been the questioning of the use of the Hebrew Bible as a source for historical reconstructions; its use as a primary, factual source has been criticized, because it has led to misleading historical reconstructions. The critical reading of the biblical texts has in turn been emphasized. Although the critical approach to the biblical texts is commonly accepted, the views of scholars differ widely as to what degree the biblical texts include historical evidence from the time of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BCE. Their opinions also differ as to what degree the editing of the biblical texts has changed the texts, their focus, and their theology or ideology.

In this work, all the available evidence – archaeological and biblical – was utilized in the study of the history of Israel, but the value of the different sources varies. Preference was given to the archaeological evidence, because it represents the primary sources for the time in which context the material was found. The biblical texts can only be used as secondary evidence, because of their long history of editing; they describe the events of the distant past. Therefore, the archaeological remains, including the inscriptions from the Iron Age to the Hellenistic period, were the first evidence introduced and examined in this study. The biblical passages, which mention the city of Dan, were analyzed separately and individually, utilizing the perspective of historical-critical studies. Finally, the correspondence of the biblical texts to the archaeological remains was discussed.

Tel Dan is a significant archaeological site in northern Israel. Archeological excavations have revealed that a series of cities and settlements have existed at the site from the Early Bronze Age through the Roman period. The most important Iron Age II remains are the gate and fortification in Area A–AB (Stratum IVA? III–II) and the cultic enclosure in Area T (IVA–II, I, Hellenistic Period). The gate and fortification were totally destroyed in the attack of Tiglath-Pileser III around 732 BCE. The city was rebuilt and expanded, but it remained unfortified. An Assyrian residence was built next to the cultic enclosure (Area T1) but, according to the present excavators, it is not sure whether the

cultic enclosure was in use in Stratum 1, as suggested by Biran. On the other, they say that during the Hellenistic period, it was the only area that was in use and a enclosure wall was built. Cultic activity is demonstrated by various items at the site, including the Greek-Aramaic stela, which mentions the "God who is in Dan / within the Danites". The Tel Dan stela from Stratum III–II is a unique example of a monumental inscription from Israel. It proves that there was an Aramaic speaking population at Tel Dan. It also indicates the existence of wars between the "Aramean" rulers and the kings of Israel.

This study demonstrates that the biblical passages concerning the city of Dan are scarce, and do not form any logical account of the history of the city. Most of the texts probably belong to a rather late compositional stage of the Hebrew Bible. Thus, they tell us little about the Iron Age city of Tel Dan. They rather reflect the theological and ideological thinking of the post-monarchic Judahite community. However, they also include hints about the Iron Age city of Dan, for example, its cultic tradtions and conflicts between the "Arameans" and Israelites.

On the basis of the archaeology, there is no evidence that links Tel Dan self-evidently to the biblical kingdom of Israel. It seems most likely that the kingdom of Israel did not continuously extend its reach as far north as Tel Dan, but only occasionally expanded its political power over it, probably during the Omride dynasty (King Ahab) and again in the latter half of the 9th and 8th century BCE. Most of the biblical stories are situated in the central hill country of Judah and Ephraim. The northern sites are not frequently mentioned. In my opinion, the phrase *"from Dan to Beersheba"* represents an ideal of the Judahite community of the post-monarchical period, expressing the limits of the land of Israel.

However, Dan was a significant city and regional center during the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. The city was rebuilt during the Assyrian period, and it also existed during the centuries when the biblical texts were combined into one epic and the Hebrew Bible was created. The biblical writers and editors of post-monarchical Judah probably had access to literary sources from the period of the monarchy, but they used and interpreted the texts so that they better corresponded to their own life-time than the Iron Age reality, and better supported the theological and ideological needs of their community.

Abbreviations

AB   The Anchor Bible.

AJBA   Australian Journal of Biblical Archaeology

BA   Biblical Archaeologist

BAR   Biblical Archaeology Review

BASOR   Bulletin of American Schools of Oriental Research

BN   Biblische Notizen

BZAW   Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft

FAT   Forschungen zum Alten Testament.

IEJ   Israel Exploration Journal

JNES   Journal for the Neareastern Studies

JSOT   Journal for the Study of the Old Testament

NEA   Near Eastern Archaeology

OTD   Old Testament Library.

TA   Tel Aviv

VT   Vetus Testamentum

ZAW   Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft

ZDPV   Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins

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Abstract

The city of Dan, which is mentioned 21 time in the Hebrew Bible, was identified with Tell Tell el-Qaḍi (Tel Dan) already in the 19th century. Tel Dan is located in northern Israel, in the Upper Jordan Valley at the foot of Mount Hermon. It has been one of the most important archaeological site in Israel since 1966, when excavations began at the site under the direction of Avraham Biran. The aim of this study is to examine the history of the city of Dan from the point of view of both the archaeological and the biblical evidence, and to re-evaluate the earlier reconstructions of its history. An essential question is: how do the biblical texts that mention a city of Dan relate to the historical reality of the Iron Age, and to the archaeological data from Tel Dan? The methods and results of both archaeological and biblical studies are utilized, with the aim of promoting discussion between the two fields. However, it is first necessary to study the archaeological and textual evidence separately in order to evaluate them.

Avraham Biran represents the so-called school of biblical archaeology, which emphasized the significance of the Hebrew Bible as a source for the history of Israel during "biblical" times. As a consequence, the archaeological remains and the settlement history of the biblical sites were interpreted with the help of the biblical texts, without a critical reading. This has led to misleading historical reconstructions, as is also the case for Dan. The final excavation reports on the Iron Age period at Dan have not yet been published. However, the preliminary reports and a few new articles by the current excavators of Dan, show that the material culture of Tel Dan has both northern (Syro-Mesopotamian) and southern (Megiddo, Hazor, and Samaria) features.

This study demonstrates that the biblical passages concerning the city of Dan are scarce, and that they belong to a rather late compositional stage of the Hebrew Bible. Thus, they tell us very little about the reality of the Iron Age IIB city of Dan, and instead reflect the theological and ideological thinking of the post-monarchic Judahite community. Most of the biblical stories are situated in the central hill country of Samaria and Judah, and the northern sites such as Dan are not frequently mentioned.

The archaeological evidence and the biblical texts do not self-evidently link the city of Dan to the kingdom of Israel. It is probable that the Israelite monarchy did not continuously extend its reach as far north as Tel Dan during the Iron Age II period, but rather only occasionally during the 9th–8th centuries BCE. The biblical phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" most probably represents an ideal of the Judahite community of the post-monarchic period, used to define the limits of the land of Israel.

Tiivistelmä

Danin kaupunki, joka on samastettu jo 1800-luvulla Tell el- Qaḍin (Tel Danin) rauniokumpuun, on mainittu 21 kertaa Vanhassa testamentissa. Tel Dan sijaitsee pohjois-Israelissa Jordanin laakson pohjoisosassa Hermonin vuorten juurella. Se on ollut yksi merkittävistä arkeologisista kohteista Israelissa sen jälkeen, kun arkeologiset kaivaukset aloitettiin siellä vuonna 1966 Avraham Biranin johdolla. Väitöskirjani tarkoitus on tutkia Danin kaupungin historiaa sekä arkeologian että raamatuntutkimuksen näkökulmista ja arvioida nykyisen tutkimuksen perusteella aikaisempia käsityksiä sen historiasta. Oleellista on tarkastella, miten Raamatun tekstit ja arkeologinen materiaali suhtautuvat toisiinsa ja mitä niiden perusteella voidaan tietää Raamatun Danista ja toisaalta rautakauden/hellenistisen ajan kaupungista Tel Danilla. Työssä hyödynnetään sekä arkeologian että raamatuntutkimuksen menetelmiä ja tuloksia. Ensin arkeologinen ja tekstiaineisto käsitellään erikseen kummankin tieteen alan omia metodeja käyttäen.

Avraham Biran edusti niin sanottua Raamatun arkeologian koulukuntaa, joka korosti Raamatun merkitystä Israelin historian tutkimuksen tärkeänä lähteenä. Siinä ongelmana oli se, että arkeologisia jäänteitä tulkittiin liian suoraviivaisesti Raamatun tekstien mukaisesti ilman tekstien kriittistä tutkimista. Se on johtanut virheellisiin historiallisiin tulkintoihin. Näin myös Danin kaupungin kohdalla. Tel Danin rautakauden ajan kaivausraportteja ei ole vielä julkaistu. Kuitenkin lukuisat esiraportit ja artikkelit osoittavat, että Tel Danin materiaalisessa kulttuurissa on sekä pohjoisia (Syyria-Mesopotamia) että eteläisiä vaikutteita (Megiddo, Hasor, Samaria).

Tämä tutkimus osoittaa, että Raamatun kohdat, joissa Danin kaupunki mainitaan, ovat melko vähäisiä ja ne kuuluvat Vanhan testamentin myöhäisiin tekstikerrostumiin. Siksi ne eivät paljon kerro rautakauden IIB Danin kaupungin todellisuudesta. Pikemminkin ne heijastelevat kuningasajan jälkeisen Juudan yhteisön ideologista ja teologista ajattelua. Useimmat Vanhan testamentin kertomukset sijoittuvat Samarian ja Juudan vuoriston alueille. Pohjoisia kaupunkeja ja asutuksia ei kovin useasti mainita.

Arkeologinen materiaali ja Raamatun tekstit eivät itsestään selvästi liitä Danin kaupunkia Israelin rautakautiseen kuningaskuntaan. Luultavasti Israelin kuningaskunta ei ulottunut jatkuvasti Daniin asti, vaan ajoittain 800-luvulla ja 700-luvulla eKr. Vanhassa testamentissa esiintyvä fraasi "Danista Beersebaan" todennäköisesti kuvaa kuningasajan jälkeisen Juudan yhteisön ihannetta määritellä Israelin rajat ja kansa.