

Handling faunal remains report Dor – Seasons 2007

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1. Wet sieving (sifting) and further picking

Faunal remains collecting at Dor is done by two methods: hand picking and wet sieving for chosen loci (see Staff Manual 2007).

A total of 707 buckets were wet sieved, from the three areas excavated this season: D2 (supervised by Liz), D5 (Yiftah Shalev and Talia Goldman) and D4 (Sarah Stroup). An effort was made to sample different periods and contexts, to get the full perspective of the site (Table 1). Sediment samples were taken from the sieved loci prior to dipping in the water.

Picking after sieving: All sieved material was hand picked later (referred here as "picking"), and was not analyzed yet. The faunal remains were divided to two categories: macro-fauna and micro-fauna.

Previous to this season (2005, 2006), bones of micro-fauna that could be detected in the "picking" process were packed with the macro-fauna. The rest of the material was packed separately in fabric-bags, for further "fine picking" under magnifying glass. This season, micro-fauna bones which could be detected by the naked eye, were separated to a plastic bag, but were put together in the fabric-bag designated for fine-picking later in the lab.

Unsifted bones were divided into two categories, according to the 'fate' of the pottery in the same contexts. Bones from various 'junk' or disturbed loci (those where the pottery was chucked away) were put in a separate place ("bones from bad loci" box). The "non exotic" bones were thrown away. "Exotic" bones were put with the rest of unsifted bones

The faunal remains (hand-picking, macro-fauna from sifting) are stored in Tel-Aviv University. Fine picking for micro-fauna and fish was not done yet. 16 boxes, waiting for fine-picking are at the Tel-Dor-new-container, and should be transferred to Haifa University.

2. Bone washing

A novelty for handling faunal remains at Dor was bone washing on site. All bones from good loci were washed according to the following procedure:

Bones from each basket are put in separate plastic (fruit) container. They are filled with water to cover the bones, and left to soak for a few minutes. Following that, every bone is brushed gently with tooth brush, except for fragile bones, and put to another clean empty container, with the basket tag, to dry. Small bones can't be seen while the container is filled with dirty water, and so the water left in the container is rinsed through a 1mm mesh (a piece of the same netting used for the wet-sieving bags) to catch all the bones and these are put to dry with the rest from the same basket.

After drying for about two days in half-shade, the bones are re-packed in a plastic bag, with holes (punched by dental-pick), and in a specific box for each area.

Proposition for next season: washing bones at the end of each day, during pottery-washing. They needn't be soaked in water with the pottery at noon, but to be kept in the original plastic bag (preferably with holes) until after noon, and then be washed in the procedure described above. In order not to wash bones from bad loci, it is proposed that during the day, at the excavation itself, or at the end of day, bones from "junk" or disturbed loci will be kept in a different bucket.

3. Excavating and storing special features:

Bone Installation L07D5-114 (a.k.a Boneville): Most bones were photographed in situ by a digital camera. They are kept in a separated box for further analysis in Tel Aviv University.

Dog burials L07D5-112 (a.k.a Dogville): Bones were excavated by Roe Shafir from Haifa University. They are currently at Haifa University, for analysis by Roe Shafir, and will later be transferred to Tel Aviv University for further analysis by Lidar Sapir.

Area	Supervisor	Locus	Period	Context	# Bucket
D2	Liz	07D2-010	Iron I/IIa	fill	30
		07D2-004	Iron I/IIa	occupational layer	30
		07D2-041	Iron I/IIa	fill (occupational degree?)	30
		07D2-051	Iron I/IIa	mudbrick material	23
		07D2-068	Iron I/IIa	sealed occupational layer (next to 004)	30
		07D2-063	Iron I/IIa	fallen stones? Pit?	15
		07D2-055	Iron I/IIa	fallen stones? Pit?	15
		07D2-073	Iron I/IIa	pit	30
total					203
D4	Rebecca	07D4-009	Rm	fill from inside pipe	8
		07D4-024	Rm	pithos	16
		07D4-013	Rm	Collapse?	34
		07D4-045	Rm	sealed fill under floor	20
		07D4-051	Rm	sealed floor makeup	17
		07D4-067	Rm	sealed fill under floor	30
		07D4-091	Rm (ph 2)	floor makeup	30
		07D4-096	Rm (ph 2)	sealed floor makeup and fill below	20
		07D4-106	HI (ph 3)	floor makeup and fill below	30
		07D4-073	Rm (ph 2)	robber trench	20
total					225
D5	Efi	07D5-205	Iron I	destruction layer	21
		07D5-202	Iron I	fill above destruction	24
		07D5-112	Pr/Hi?	dogville	30
		07D5-209	Iron I?	destruction layer	10
		07D5-123	Pr/Hi?	fill	41
		07D5-222	Iron I	robber trench	30
		07D5-221	Iron I	sealed fill below floor (under destruction layer)	30
		07D5-215	Iron I	robber trench	30
		07D5-229	Iron I	sealed under destruction layer	30
total					246
D5	Tali	06D5-230	Iron 2	murix installation	5
		06D5-229	Iron 2	installation	3
		07D5-317	HI	pit	20
		07D5-337	HI	pit	5
total					33
sifting total buckets					707

Table 1. Sifted loci during the 2007 season at Dor.