Capital of Solomon's Fourth District? Israelite Dor

Ayelet Gilboa[1], Ilan Sharon[2] and Elizabeth Bloch-Smith[3]

1 Kings 4 relates that Dor, the major port-town on Israel's Carmel coast, constituted part of the Solomonic state. This formed the basis for several historical reconstructions. Here, for the first time, we examine all the relevant archaeological data available after three decades of excavations at Tel Dor. We conclude that indeed, archaeology supports a scenario whereby Dor passed from Phoenician to Israelite hands, but that this happened in the second half of the 9th century BC. This shift involved a significant change in the role of Dor and its harbour, exemplified by changes in urban layout, ceramic production, and in commercial and other interaction spheres.

Keywords Dor, Kingdom of Israel, Mediterranean Iron Age, Mediterranean interconnections, book of Kings

Introduction, previous scholarship and rationale

Tel Dor (Kh. el-Burg) is an 8 ha large mound, located on Israel's Carmel coast (Figs 1 and 2). From the 2nd millennium BC on, it served as one of the main port towns along the Carmel and Sharon coasts and from around the end of that millennium was undoubtedly the most important. Its prominent assets consisted of well-protected anchorages to the north and south — a rarity along the southern Levantine Mediterranean seaboard. Easy access inland to the east through the Carmel range proceeded via Nahal Me'arot and the Wadi Milkh pass leading to the Jezreel valley and beyond. Surrounding swamps rendered the site quite isolated and inhospitable until modern times; agriculture, for example, could not be exercised in its immediate vicinity.

Tel Dor is unanimously identified with *Dj-r* of the Egyptian Wenamun report (11th or 10th century BC; Sass 2002), biblical דאר or דור, and with Du'ru of Neo-Assyrian records, d'r of the Eshmunazar inscription and Δῶρα/Δῶρος mentioned in various Hellenistic and later texts.

In the context of the Israelite Monarchy, Dor appears only once, in the list of Solomon's administrative districts (1 Kings 4), discussed further below. Consequently, Dor is usually perceived as one of Israel's prominent maritime outlets at the time of the United Monarchy. It is deemed especially important for Israelite–Phoenician commercial collaboration (Aharoni 1979: 17, 25; Stern 1990a: 17; 1993: 27; 2000: 104–8, 121; Faust 2007: 68).

Occupational remains of the 1st millennium BC were excavated on a large scale by Ephraim Stern between 1980 and 2000, and since 2002 by an expedition led by Sharon and Gilboa (Fig. 3). Stern offered his interpretation of Israelite Dor in a series of papers, mostly during the 1990s, and in his popular book on Dor (1994, with an updated edition in 2000). These were preliminary in nature, as he himself admitted, mainly because knowledge of both the stratigraphic and ceramic sequences of the site was still incomplete. Stern based his interpretations mainly on two of the areas excavated by him — B and C1 — where the town's eastern fortifications were revealed. His chronology of the site was based on initial 'pottery readings' conducted during the excavation seasons and on the correlation of archaeological phenomena with biblical texts. Based on received wisdom (discussed below) he considered Dor to have been Israelite under the United Monarchy. Therefore, any remains datable in

[1]The Zinman Institute of Archaeology, University of Haifa, Israel; [2]Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel; [3]St. Joseph's University, Pennsylvania, USA

Ayelet Gilboa (corresponding author) The Zinman Institute of Archaeology, University of Haifa, Israel; email: agilboa@research.haifa.ac.il

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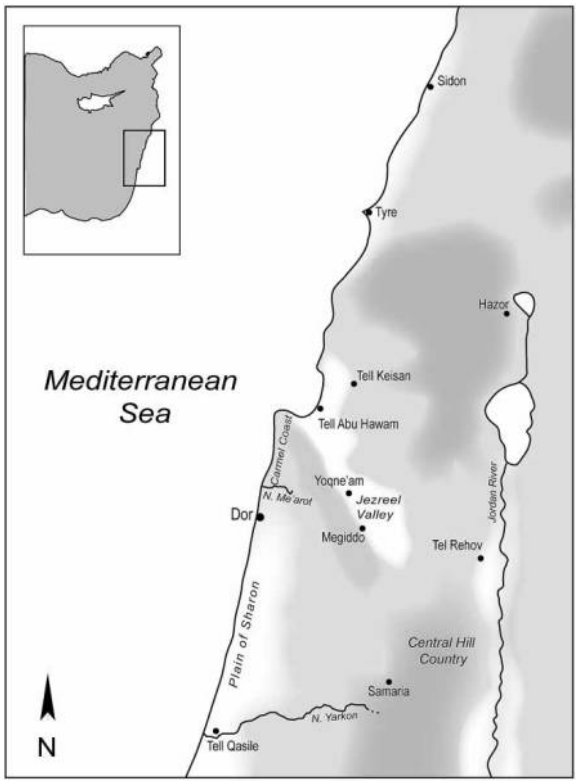


Figure 1 **Location map of Dor, with main sites mentioned in the text.**

his view to the 10th century BC were perforce termed 'Israelite'.

Now, some 15 years later, an updated re-evaluation of the evidence pertaining to Israelite Dor is required for several reasons. First, there are more data to consider because more relevant sections of the tell have been excavated. Second, the stratigraphic, architectural and artefactual sequences in all areas (Stern's as well as ours) are now known with greater precision. This advance enables a more nuanced correlation between developments in the disparate excavation areas, yielding a more comprehensive picture of urban and other trajectories of the site as a whole. Third, we evaluate the implications for Dor of the on-going debate regarding the absolute chronology of the Iron Age in Israel. Stern did not consider this issue, chiefly because when he presented his views the debate was still in its infancy. He based his chronology on the then chronological near-consensus, namely that the archaeological period (or rather, ceramic horizon) termed Iron Age IIA was historically coeval with Israel's United Monarchy *c.* 980–925 BC (see further on this under Foundation Chronology).

This chronological debate also marks the 'loss of innocence' of 'Biblical' archaeology *vis-à-vis* the

Figure 2 **Aerial photograph of Dor and Carmel coast with the Carmel ridge in background; looking north-east.** ***Photograph: Sky View Inc.***

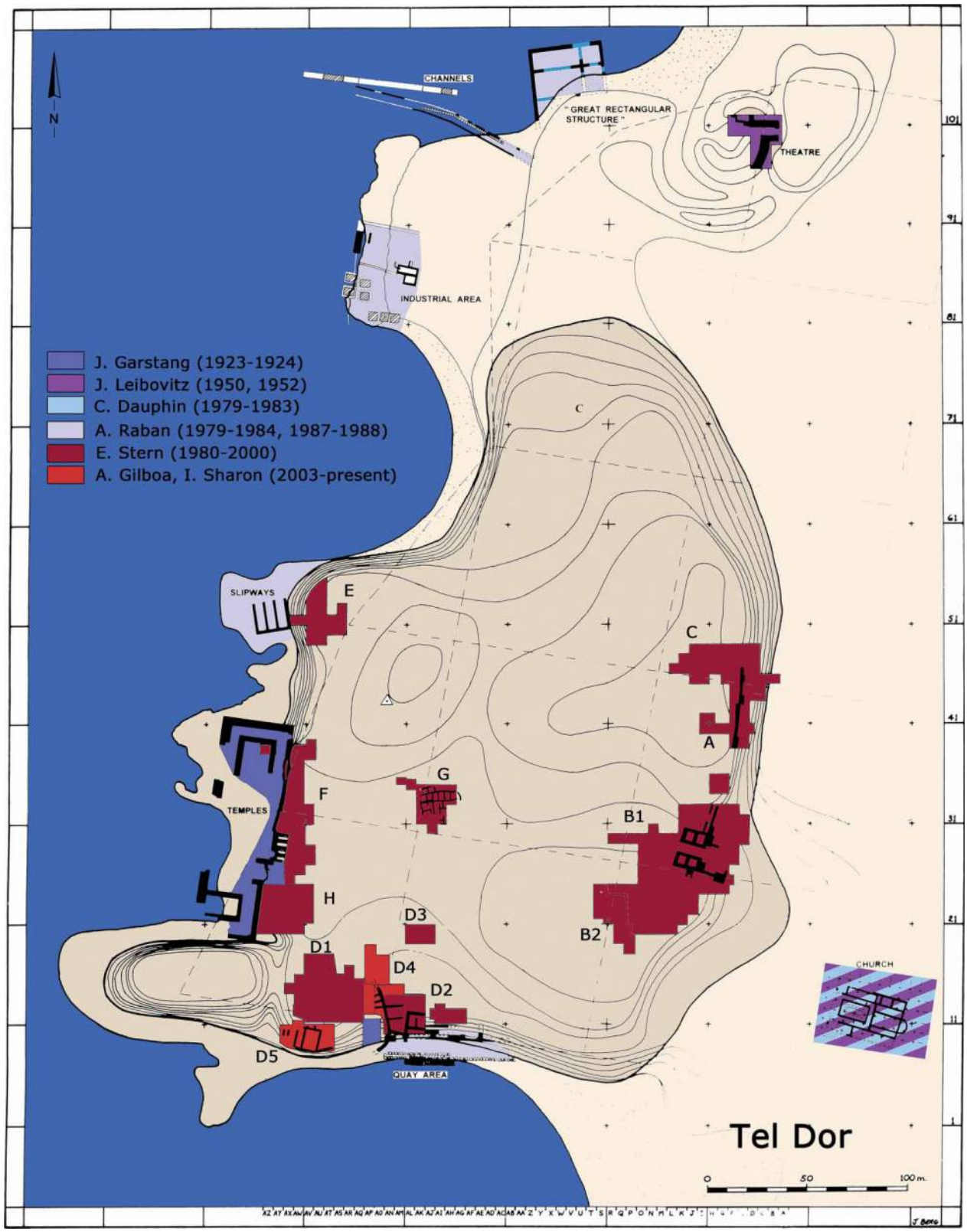


Figure 3 Plan of the tell and excavation areas.

Biblical text. Prior to the 1990s, despite some lip service to Biblical criticism, archaeologists tended to accept the narrative order of the Biblical text at face value. This has irrevocably changed, and so we must begin our reappraisal with a critical review of the textual references to Dor in the Hebrew Bible.

Dor in the Bible

Dor is mentioned six times in the Hebrew Bible, all in the Deuteronomistic History and Chronicles (NJPS Josh 11: 2; 12: 23; 17: 11; Jgs 1: 27; 1 Kgs 4: 11; 1 Chr 7: 29). Three of these qualify the name with the adjective naphat/naphot. Dor is the only locality in the Bible consistently referred to with this designation, and so we start our inquiry with this term.

Assuming a Hebrew origin, this word is derived from either *nwp (BDB) or *nph (DCH), meaning 'to wave'/'to raise high' in the verbal form or 'height' in the nominal form — a topographical misnomer unless the term includes the Carmel cliffs rising to the east of Dor. Beginning with the Vulgate, nāpôt/nāpat has been translated as 'region', probably based on context. Hebrew commentary—from Rashi onwards—also usually renders the term 'district' (as indeed is the meaning of the word in modern Hebrew). Why Dor specifically is repeatedly qualified as 'district' remains moot.

Meir Ben-Dov proposed a derivation from a language associated with the 'Sea Peoples' via an archaic Greek cognate that means 'wooded country' comparable to the Hebrew designation for the region, 'Sharon' (Ben-Dov 1976; cf. Stern 2000: 87). However, the assumption that the '*Skl*/*Tjkr*' residing at Dor per Wenamun were Greek has absolutely no support. Given the term's use solely in connection with Dor, the translation remains conjectural.

According to the book of Joshua, King Jabin of Hazor enlisted the Canaanite king of Naphot-Dor while mustering military forces to fight against the Israelites. Upon defeating Jabin's coalition to complete the conquest of the land (Josh 1–11), the Cis- and Transjordanian tribes received their territorial allotments (Josh 13–24). Joshua chapter 12 summarizes the first 11 chapters by enumerating 31 kings vanquished by the conquering Israelites, including 'the king of Dor of Naphat-Dor' (Josh 12: 9–24, *23a).

The current form of the list of defeated kings is considered a secondary addition to an earlier Deuteronomistic text as it adds kings and cities not previously mentioned (e.g. Josh 12: 16b–18) (Boling 1982: 326–28; Fohrer 1968: 203). Subsequent acknowledgement of unconquered cities within the allotted tribal territories, including Dor, also renders the decisiveness of this alleged pre-monarchic victory suspect (Josh 17: 11–13). Interestingly, as noted by Baly (1957) and others, the association in these passages between the towns of Manasseh (with Dor) and Issachar and Asher may indicate that the author was well aware of the region's Phoenician ancestry, which is well attested archaeologically (see below; for another view, e.g. Aharoni 1979: 235).

The linear biblical history continues with the completion of the conquest and the allocation of tribal territory by Joshua: 'Manasseh possessed Beth-Shean and its dependencies: Ibleam and its dependencies, the inhabitants of Dor and its dependencies, the inhabitants of En-dor and its dependencies, the inhabitants of Taanach and its dependencies, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and its dependencies: these constituted three regions (naphot)' (Josh 14: 1–3; 17: 11; see also 1 Chr 7: 29). However, the next verses temper and qualify Israel's success, 'The Manassites could not dispossess [the inhabitants of] these towns, and the Canaanites stubbornly remained in this region. When the Israelites became stronger, they imposed tribute on the Canaanites; but they did not dispossess them' (Josh 17: 12–13). Judges 1: 27 reiterates Manasseh's failure to expel the inhabitants of these same towns, specifying Dor and its dependencies (but omitting En-dor), raising questions of a common source, literary and chronological disparity. Based on the Joshua texts, an argument cannot be made for a definitive, Israelite, pre-monarchic conquest of Dor and the coastal region, a point also borne out by archaeological testimony (below). The Book of Joshua's composite character, incorporating early materials subject to repeated additions and editing beginning in the Late Monarchic period, complicates the dating of the relevant texts and Israelite hegemony over Dor (Pressler 2008: 408–9).

None of the ensuing stories of battle or conquest from the periods of the Judges, Samuel, or Saul, pit Israel against the towns or regions along the northern coast. Under David's command, the Israelites defeat the Philistines to the south-west (1 Sam 17: 52), the Transjordanian nations of Moab and Ammon to the east (2 Sam 8: 2; 11: 1; 1 Chr 18: 21; 20: 1–3); and Aram to the north-east (2 Sam 10: 17–19; 1 Chr 19: 17–19), but no mention is made of the Sharon/Carmel coast. Still, several scholars place the incorporation of the Carmel/Sharon (and other parts of Israel's future lowlands) in Davidic times (e.g. Aharoni 1979: 296–97; Dietrich 2007: 182–84; Mazar B. 1964; Stern 2000: 106). This assessment is based on the exclusion of the lowlands from the territories ostensibly conquered by Joshua, and their subsequent appearance in the list of Solomonic districts, about which see below. An oblique reference to a Davidic conquest of Southern Phoenicia may be found in Joab's Census (2 Samuel 24: 5–7) reaching as far north as Sidon. McCarter (1984) notes the

difficulties with the Hebrew text regarding the specific sites named, and regards the census-plague-altar description as a 6th-century composite text.

By the time of Solomon, Dor purportedly belonged to Israel as indicated by its inclusion in the list of Solomonic tax districts in I Kgs 4. 'Solomon had 12 prefects governing all Israel, who provided food for the king and his household, each had to provide food for one month in the year' (1 Kings 4: 7). Interpretations vary regarding the foreign influences evident in the 1 Kings 4 taxation system. For Mordechai Cogan, the list shows affinities with the Bronze Age administrative texts of Ugarit and Alalakh (Cogan 2000: 216). Donald Redford (1992: 372) advocates Egyptian influence, and Nadav Na'aman (2001: 431–32) claims the list reflects the circumstances of the late 8th-century Assyrian provincial system. The diversity of proposed geographical and chronological influences suggests a wide-spread ancient Near Eastern taxation system employed in the Bronze and Iron Ages.

Two of the prefects married an Israelite princess, 'Ben-abinadab [in] all of Naphath-Dor—Solomon's daughter Taphath was his wife' (1 Kgs 4: 11) and Naphtali's prefect, who 'took a daughter of Solomon—Basemath—to wife' (1 Kgs 4: 15). Two explanations may be offered for the singling-out of these districts: either that the king assigned a son-in-law to administer the district, or the king married one of his daughters into a local ruling family following the ancient Near Eastern practice of diplomatic marriage to foster political relations. The latter option would imply that Dor retained a degree of independence and formalized its political relations with the Israelite alliance through matrimony (see more on this below). In either case, these marriages would underscore the importance of the two regions.

Expansive descriptions proclaim Solomon's rule 'from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines and the boundary of Egypt' (1 Kgs 5: 1, see also 5: 4). However, the 1 Kings 4: 7–19 districts constitute a significantly smaller kingdom, incorporating Cisjordanian territory north of Judah plus Gilead in Transjordan. As mentioned, the 12 districts correspond to the 12 months of the year rather than the 12 tribes, with some districts deviating from the traditional tribal territories. Both political and economic motives have been attributed to Solomon for replacing the tribal territories with new administrative districts, assuming that the list does reflect historical reality at that time (Mulder 1998: 169–71).

Of the Israelite tribes, only Ephraim, Gilead (mentioned twice), Naphtali, Issachar and Benjamin, and perhaps Asher and Gad (LXX verse 19) appear in the list, other entries situate the districts by cities rather than tribal regions. Judah and several other tribes are not named (e.g. Reuben, Manasseh, Zebulun, Dan). Surprisingly, although the prefects govern 'all Israel,' the territory of the kingdom of Judah—south of the line of Bethel to Bethshemesh—is not included in this division. Various explanations, ancient and modern, have been proposed for Judah's absence. In the LXX, the reference to the prefect 'in the land' at the very end of the list (1 Kgs 4: 19) reads 'in the land of Judah,' filling the apparent lacuna. Some modern commentators agree to this interpretation, pointing out that the word 'Judah' may have been omitted due to haplography, given that the next verse begins with 'Judah' (Cogan 2000: 211). While the haplography argument is persuasive, Judah would constitute a 13th district in a list of 12, so proponents of including Judah must explain its supplementary status. Others interpret the omission as a waiver for Solomon's own tribe of Judah from paying taxes. Alternatively, this may have been a later, northern Israelite administrative list. In this case, 'all Israel' referred to the northern kingdom of Israel including its Transjordanian holdings.

Biblical scholars postulate compositional stages in the 1 Kings 4: 7–19 pericope, based on inconsistencies in style and in extent and specifics of detail, including by a Deuteronomic or Deuteronomistic hand (e.g. Cogan 2000: 216; DeVries 2003: 68; Mulder 1998: 186). For example, Mulder considers verses 8, 14–18 and perhaps 9 and 10 as authentic early verses, but both the inclusive formulation 'all Israel' and the division into 12, mark verse 7 as a later addition (Mulder 1998: 171, 186). He offers no comments on 'our' verse.

Na'aman too reconstructs a composite text. Based on the single Yahwistic name in the list (Jehoshaphat in 1 Kgs 4: 17) and the five officials named as 'son of X,' Na'aman proposes an initial old list of officials preserved in a historiographic source such as 'the Book of the Annals of Solomon' (1 Kgs 11: 41). Late in the 8th century, a district list was devised in accordance with the provincial systems of Assyria and Judah. Subsequently, late in the 7th century, editors incorporated and perhaps revised the list for inclusion in the Book of Kings (Na'aman 2001: 430–32, with extensive references to earlier literature). However, for the ex-Israelite territories west of the Jordan, Na'aman (with many others) postulated three Assyrian provinces—Megiddo, Samaria, and Dor. In fact, as he himself lately noted (Na'aman 2009), the existence of the latter cannot really be corroborated (nor refuted, see also Gilboa 1996). Other scholars who

grosso-modo, accept the list as genuinely reflecting Solomonic administration and holdings are, for example, Alt (1913), Millard (1997), Halpern (2001) Stager (2003) and Dietrich (2007: 182–84, 194).

The Solomonic district list is the final biblical text in which Dor, or the entire Southern Phoenician littoral, is mentioned. Both are conspicuously missing in all of the stories relating to the kingdom of Israel. How much can be made of this omission is moot. In sum, no biblical text specifies Israelite conquest of Dor, or the towns of the region by Joshua, Saul, or David, and the integrity of the allegedly Solomonic tax districts listing Dor is debated.

Archaeological Dor

A discussion of the sequence of habitation in the Iron Age and our interpretation thereof, follows a short overview of Stern's main conclusions and argumentation. The Neo-Assyrian period is outside our scope here, but we briefly describe the occupation levels that precede what we perceive as the Israelite episode, since there can be no understanding of Israelite Dor without juxtaposing it with earlier strata (for which see Gilboa and Sharon 2008, and in detail Sharon and Gilboa 2013).

Previous research

Avner Raban, who excavated the harbour installations and small portions of other buildings on the south side of the tell in the late 1970s–early 1980s was mainly concerned with what he saw as 'the harbour of the Sea Peoples' at Dor (1987; cf. also 1995). He did, however, offer a brief historical interpretation of developments in the ensuing periods. In his opinion, the end of use of the 'quay' and an ashlar-lined well on the coastline of the southern lagoon, and the building of massive boulder walls of 'terrestrial buildings' on top of them (his walls H, L, and M—our 'Monumental Building' see Area D2 below) corresponded with the settlement of '…newcomers [whose] origin was the hilly hinterland of the country and that they were thus the Israelites of the time of David' (Raban 1987: 124; cf. also 1995: 339). As to why David, in particular, is invoked see below.

By far the most explicit discussion of 'Israelite Dor', however, is the one offered by Ephraim Stern (1988; 1990a; 1993; 1994; 2000). Stern (cf. esp. 1993) sees the Israelites as one of the succession of the 'many masters of Dor': Canaanites—'Sea People'—Phoenicians—Israelites—Assyrians etc. Specifically, Stern identified *two* Israelite episodes at Dor. The first started when Dor came under Israelite hegemony during David's reign. Stern states that 'the bible makes it clear that this area was conquered by King David' (Stern 1993: 20). As noted above, this is not so. We can only assume that Stern defers to B. Mazar's dictum that the late Iron Age I destructions of Megiddo VIA, Tell Qasile X and Tell Abu-Hawam IV were contemporary and wrought by David (Mazar B. 1951; 1964: 10, 15)—a rather common assumption at the time (Mazar A. 1985: 127).

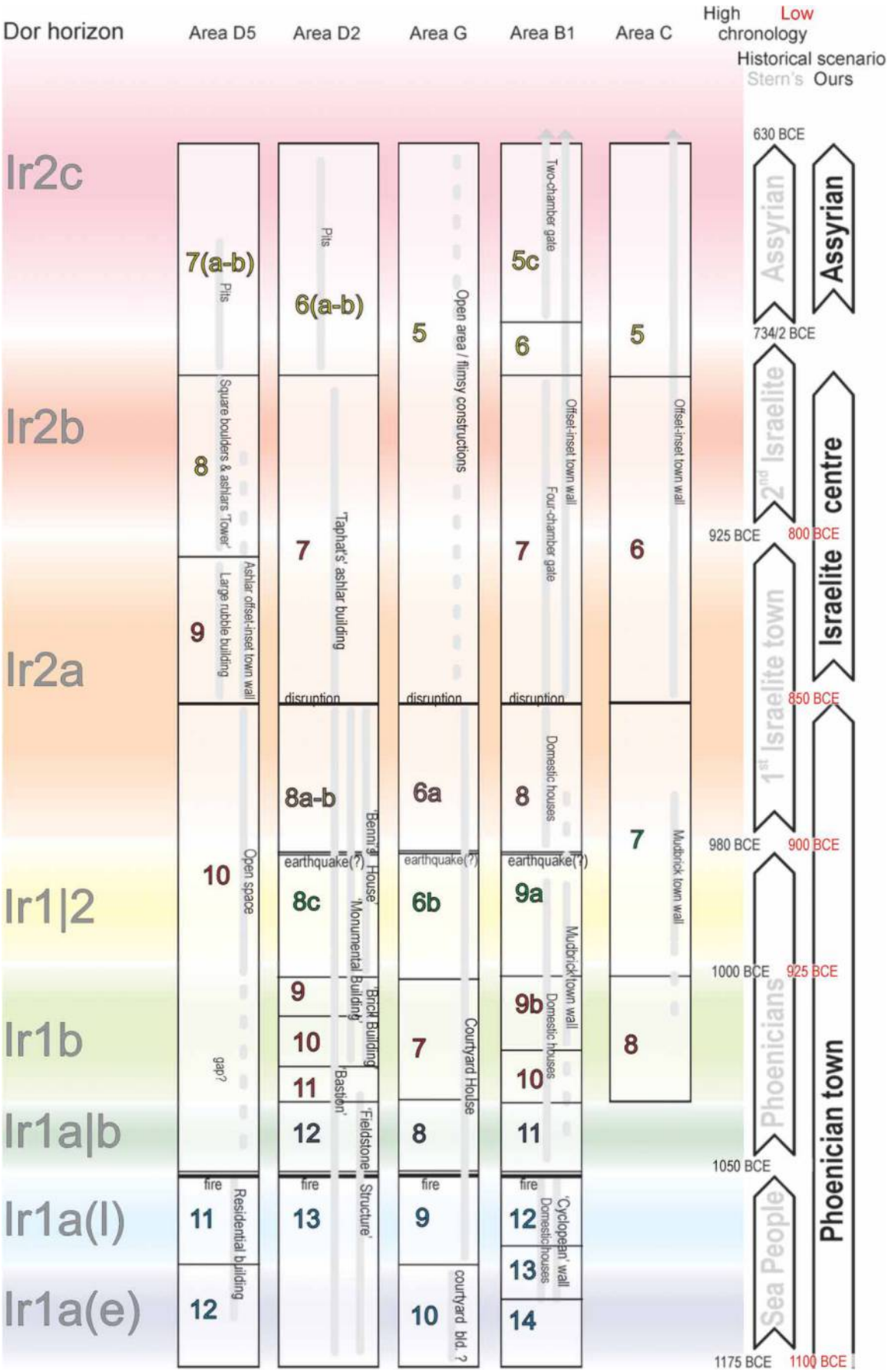
Stern identified evidence for a Davidic conquest and subsequent first Israelite town in four excavation areas. A woman buried under a toppled wall in Area G (see below, Phase G/7a) testified to David's violent conquest (Stern 2008: 1698, though he also raises the possibility of death due to a natural catastrophe). One domestic unit in Area D2 (so called 'Benni's House'; Stern 2000: 359; below, Phase D2/8c) and two stretches of mudbrick city walls (one in Area C1, one in B, see below) were attributed by Stern to the town built by David subsequent to that destruction (Stern 1993: 22, 23; 2000: 109). Further down we argue that Phases G/7 and D2/8c are concurrent, which renders this reconstruction problematic: the woman's death in Area G does not *precede* the construction of the 'Davidic' house in Area D2, but is coeval with the *end* of that occupation episode in Area D2. Note also that whereas Raban and Stern agree on the general historical sequence (i.e. an Israelite takeover at the time of David) they differ on the archaeological correlates for this phenomenon. The 'Monumental Building', which is the hallmark of the 'terrestrial' Israelites for Raban, falls into Stern's 'Phoenician' domination period (Stern 2000: 356–57).

Although an Israelite affiliation for Dor under the United Monarchy was deduced from 1 Kings 4, Stern defined the material culture of this occupation as still being Phoenician: either this earliest Israelite town continued to be inhabited by Phoenicians, or, alternatively, the Israelite inhabitants 'adopted' Phoenician culture (Stern 1993: 21–22).

Other than 'Benni's House' mentioned above, no building was specifically assigned by Stern to the early Israelite episode. This notwithstanding, he asserted that this first Israelite town was 'carefully laid out with streets at right angles' (Stern 1993: 22; 2000: 110, 123), violently destroyed and 'razed to its foundations' during Shishak's campaign in 925 BC (Stern 1993: 22, 23; 2000: 109, 115, 123).

According to Stern, the Israelite town was then rebuilt during a second Israelite phase, under the northern kingdom of Israel. The main architectural remains are a massive four-chamber gate, constructed of huge limestone boulders, and lined, at least in one place, with orthostats of sorts (Stern 1993: 23; below

Table 1 Chrono-stratigraphic chart of Iron Age Dor detailing main architectural features, destructions and other disruptions, and the proposed cultural/political interpretation vis-à-vis that suggested by Stern



Phase B/7). This gate allowed entry through a solid city wall, whose offset–inset continuation was revealed in Area C to the north (below, Phase C1/6–5). Stern dated the complex to the 9th century BC and attributed its construction to Ahab or Omri (Stern 2000: 123). This attribution was based both on historical reasoning—Ahab being the greatest king and builder of Israel in this time span—and also on a comparison between the Dor gate and the four-chamber gate at Megiddo IVA—attributed by Stern, following Yigael Yadin, to Ahab. The Dor and Megiddo gates were considered to have been designed by the same architect (Stern 1990a: 13; 1993: 23; 2000: 115). Ahab's architects oversaw Phoenician masons construct the four-chamber gate, as evidenced by the gate's massive stones, especially when compared with the smaller stones in the Megiddo gate (e.g. Stern 2000: 121).

The attribution of Megiddo Stratum IV's four-chambered gate to Ahab is again quite problematic. More recent scholarship either rejects Yadin's attribution of the earlier six-chambered gate to Stratum IVB–VA (Herzog 1997: figs 5.15, 5.21; Ussishkin 1980) or at least seriously doubts it (Mazar A. 1990: 399, n. 15). If the construction of the six-chambered gate is associated with Stratum IVA, generally dated to the Iron Age IIB, then the subsequent four-chambered gate must be later than Ahab by any chronology. On either the 'Low' or the 'Modified Conventional' chronology (for which see below), the Iron Age IIA ends with the demise of the Omride dynasty, or even later. Thus, the building of the six-chambered gate at Megiddo must post-date Ahab and that of the four-chambered gate is rendered even later. Paradoxically, our suggestion (below) that the construction of the four-chambered gate at Dor might be lowered to the [Late] Iron Age IIA arguably puts Ahab back in the picture (for Dor), but not for the reasons put forward by Stern. The second Israelite occupation ended, according to Stern, in a fiery destruction by Tiglat-pileser III (Stern 1993: 23, 26; 2000: 115), since 'only a very powerful enemy' could have destroyed this city.

A two-phase model

Unlike previous models, we claim that the Iron Age strata at Dor (prior to the Assyrian period) can be broadly divided to two cultural phases (Table 1, last column). The earlier strata (from the very beginning of the Iron Age to sometime *within* Iron Age IIA in conventional terminology) comprise a single cultural continuum (Gilboa 2005; Gilboa and Sharon 2008; Sharon and Gilboa 2013). We shall refer to this continuum henceforward as 'The Early Sequence'. Note that this single continuous sequence, which we have argued should be labelled 'Phoenician' (Gilboa 2005; Gilboa and Sharon 2008; Sharon and Gilboa 2013 and more below), comprises at least three cultural and demographic upheavals according to Stern—Canaanite to 'Sea Peoples', 'Sea Peoples' to Phoenicians, Phoenicians to Israelites.

The second episode (late in Late Iron Age IIA and [early] Iron Age IIB, in conventional terminology) evinces different material–culture phenomena and trajectories. We will call it here 'The Later Sequence'. It is only this second phase, in our opinion, that warrants the name 'Israelite'. We also propose that this occupational phase may have ended somewhat prior to the Assyrian takeover. Thus, in our opinion, the Israelite episode at Dor was much shorter, and generally later, than has hitherto been proposed. For a schematic summary of our interpretation, see Table 1.

The 'Early'/Phoenician sequence

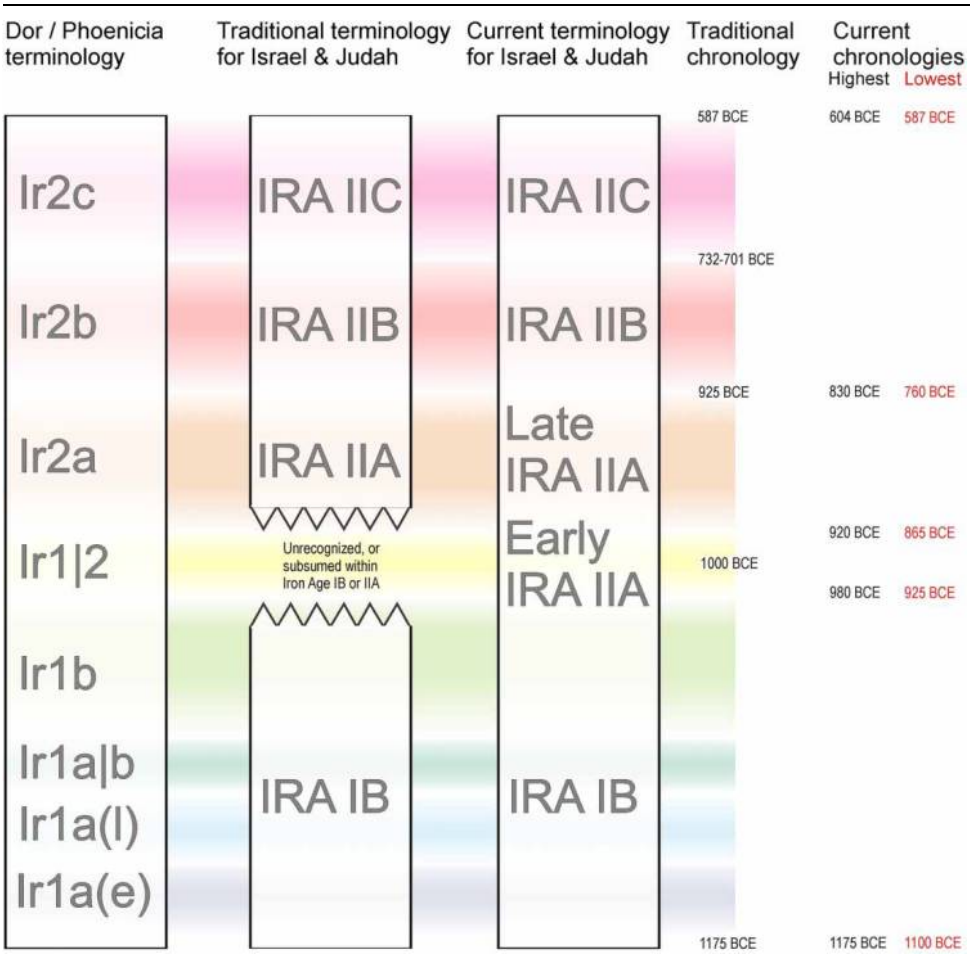
A short summary of the levels we understand as preceding Israelite Dor is necessary in order to put the latter into proper perspective. This earlier sequence encompasses six stratigraphic/chronological horizons called, in the Dor terminology—Ir1 *early*, Ir1a *late*, Ir1a|b, Ir1b, Ir1|2 and Ir2a—the symbol '|' denoting transition (Gilboa and Sharon 2003, Table 1). This sequence was mainly constructed by correlating the ceramic developments in the disparate excavation areas, since for the most part the latter could not be linked stratigraphically (one exception is the site-wide Ir1a *late* destruction level encountered in four areas, mentioned below; see also Table 1).

Our 'early' sequence is coeval with the sequence/periods called in Israel (and more loosely in Judah) Iron I, Early Iron IIA and Late Iron Age IIA (Table 2; see especially Herzog and Singer Avitz 2004; 2006; Mazar A. 2011: 107 and more below). This 'early sequence' has been summarized previously (Gilboa and Sharon 2003; 2008; Sharon and Gilboa 2013; Stern 1999b, and see references therein to more detailed studies, *inter alia* of specific categories of pottery). Therefore, our summary here will be brief, and will focus on the end of that sequence, and on aspects that are important for the comparison with later developments.

Area G

Throughout the early sequence (Phases G/9–6a), this area, in the centre of the mound, was occupied by one long-lived structure—a courtyard building of Canaanite type, built during Ir1a *late* (Phase G/9). Though destroyed by a fierce conflagration, it was

Table 2 **Chronological chart of the Iron Age, comparing the Dor horizons with other terminologies and suggested absolute dates—before the beginning of the chronological debate, and at the present juncture**



quickly rebuilt in Phase G/8 (Ir1a|b) on an almost identical layout (Sharon and Gilboa 2013: 410–11). This Ir1a calamity constitutes the only clear *site-wide* destruction event in the history of Dor. Subsequently, the building continued in use with only minor internal changes.

During the Ir1|2 horizon (Phase G/7a) some trauma occurred. In one room an extensive *in situ* ceramic assemblage remained, and in an adjacent room, the above-mentioned woman lay buried under a collapsed wall surrounded by complete pots. The most probable cause for this mishap is an earthquake (Stewart 1993 and more below). What little damage the building suffered was quickly repaired, and it continued in use into the Ir2a horizon (Phase G/6a). Only then was it finally abandoned. The last phases of the Iron Age in Area G were very much disturbed by later pitting and foundation digging. Only one room of Phase 6a was found reasonably intact, with several vessels left *in situ* but otherwise no evidence of destruction.

Area D2

Throughout the Early Sequence, complexes of huge buildings dominated this area overlooking Dor's southern harbour. The first construction here, on bedrock (Ir1a *early*, Phase D2/14), was a massive oval citadel (nicknamed 'The Bastion,' currently exposed to a length of 20 m and minimally 3 m high; Fig. 4), which commanded structures built at its foot, 3 m lower. Stern (2008: 1695, 1697) called this 'The Canaanite city wall', but there is currently no evidence for its use before the Iron Age. Similar to the situation in Area G, all these buildings burned during Ir1a *late* (Phase D2/13), but were quickly rebuilt along exactly the same lines (in Ir1a|b; Phase D2/12). Soon after, another massive building ('The Monumental Building'; Fig. 4) was constructed in the lower part of the city, east of the Bastion (during Ir1b, Phase D2/10). The outer walls of this building were built of large limestone boulders, but its only preserved (north-west) corner was built with large, finely

Figure 4 **Area D2 showing early Iron Age Bastion (right), the Monumental Building (left) and the Sea Wall (top center); looking south.**
Photograph: Israel Hirshberg

hewn ashlars (about $130 \times 60 \times 60$ cm in size)—the first appearance of this ostensibly Phoenician construction technique in the Iron Age Levant (Sharon 2009).

The Bastion and the Monumental Building continued to dominate activities above the lagoon for a long time. Phases D2/10, 9, 8 (Ir1b till Ir2a) are defined by successive buildings constructed in the space between them. Phases D2/10–9 (Ir1b) consist of a massive brick construction with several parallel long halls without doorways — store rooms or basements. This is overlaid by a smaller structure, constructed from field stones with ashlar corners ('Benni's house', mentioned above, phases D2/8c–8a; Ir1|2–Ir2a). As mentioned, Stern (2008: 1698) attributes this house to his 'first Israelite' occupation and he also calls it a 'four-room' house, but the two partial rooms excavated do not allow it to be assigned to any particular house type. 'Benni's house' revealed an extensive *in situ* ceramic assemblage on its Phase D2/8c floors (Ir1|2). The tilted south wall of the house suggests that this was caused by an earthquake, as in the contemporary horizon in Area G/7. Exactly as in Area G, 'Benni's house' was quickly repaired during Ir2a, with little change (Phase D2/8b), but abandoned soon afterwards, still during Ir2a, with several ceramic vessels left on the floors. In tandem, the centuries-old Bastion, and apparently also the Monumental Building, ceased to function (see further below).

Area B

The earliest Iron Age town here, on the eastern margins of the Tell, was destroyed and burnt down during Ir1a *late* (Phase B/12), similar to Areas G and D2. In contrast to other areas, however, the renovation after the destruction (Phase B/11, Ir1a|b) involved the abandonment of the massive fortification of Phases B/13–12 and expansion of the town to the east, over the line of the defunct city wall. A new city wall — rather more modest and built entirely of bricks — was erected sometime thereafter. Through the subsequent phases (B/10–B/8, Ir1b to Ir2a), the layout of the town remained the same, with a north–south alley running parallel to the fortification, flanked by modest mudbrick and field stone domestic buildings. Stern attributed the mudbrick city wall to the Israelite town of the United Monarchy (1993: 22, 23; 2000: 109), though our evidence indicates it was constructed during Ir1b, and may already have been out of use by Ir2a.

During Ir1|2 (Phase B/9a), assemblages of primary vessels in one or two rooms indicate some disturbance.

This parallels the situation in this period in Areas G (Phase 7) and D2 (Phase 8c) described above. Subsequently, during Ir2a (Phase B/8) the repair of buildings and the alley along their previous lines also mirrors the situation in Areas G and D2. However, the brick town wall might not have been in use in this phase. Also, as in Areas G and D2, this last phase of the 'alley and small structures' configuration ended with evidence of possible 'trauma'—no real destruction to speak of, but primary assemblages remained in some of the rooms. Following this the area was transformed (below).

Area C1

This area, located down the northern part of the eastern slope of the tell, revealed a sequence of the town's fortifications on that side. The earliest Iron Age feature here (Phase C1/7) is a mudbrick wall running along the slope of the tell (Sharon 1995: plan 5.34). Stern (2000: 109) attributed this wall to the United Monarchy and equated it with the mudbrick city wall in Area B. However, no floors or structures were found reaching it. Ceramics sealed by the glacis related to this wall outside the town (Gilboa 1995: fig. 1:10) only provide an Ir1b *terminus post quem*. The data are insufficient to determine the wall's date of construction or the duration of its use. This wall was replaced in Phase C1/6 with a rather more massive city wall (see below).

Area D5

This area is situated along the south-western edge of the mound and like Area D2 overlooks the southern lagoon. Here, as in all other areas, the Ir1a *late* town (Phase D5/11) was violently destroyed by fire. As opposed, however, to the areas described above, the area remained abandoned for the rest of the 'early sequence' (Ir1a|b till Ir2a). Very thick layers of phytoliths (Phase D5/10) point to an outdoor intensive accumulation of organics, perhaps indicating that domestic animals roamed about or were penned here. As in other areas, this situation changed fundamentally sometime *within* the Ir2a horizon (below).

Ceramic characterization

From the Iron Age town's inception in Ir1a *early*, through Ir2a (or at least its beginning, see below), Dor's material culture formed one cultural continuum (Gilboa 2005; Gilboa and Sharon 2003; 2008; Sharon and Gilboa 2013). The main relevant characteristics of the local repertoire are: (1) its similarity to those of Phoenician sites to the north (the 'Akko plain and south Lebanon), manifested among other things by a very extensive local production of Phoenician Bichrome containers (e.g. Fig. 11: 6–9 below), and (2) the gradual evolution of pottery throughout this sequence. As we demonstrated for architecture, continuity rather than rupture is the rule. The close affinities of Dor with the ceramic evolution of early Phoenicia were presented in the publications mentioned above and so will not be repeated here. In the context of the present exposition, however, we do need to stress the differences between the ceramic assemblage of Dor and the pottery repertoire of Israel during Dor's Ir2a phase (= 'Late Iron Age IIA' in Israel).

Fundamental features of the Israelite potting *habitus* are missing, such as the extensive use of red slip and burnishing on pottery (e.g. Faust 2002). Most revealing is the absence of ceramic forms that are prolific at numerous sites in the kingdom of Israel and embody *interaction spheres within Israel*. Notable examples are 'Hippo' jars (and other related jar forms), hole-mouth jars, and the so-called Black Juglets (for Hippo and related jars at nearby Yoqne'am, e.g. Ben-Tor *et al*. 2005: figs I.39: 9, 10; I.47: 6–11; Zarzecki-Peleg *et al*. 2005: 300–2, type SJ IIA; at Megiddo, e.g., Finkelstein 2006: fig. 15.5: 9; Arie 2011: 204–5; for hole-mouth jars in Megiddo, see Finkelstein *et al.* 2000: figs 11.21: 8, 11.34: 3; Finkelstein 2006: figs 15.3; 15.4: 2, 3; 15.5: 1, 9; 15. 6: 3–5, 7, 8, 10, 11; Arie 2011: 206, 220–22; for the extremely prolific Black Juglets at Megiddo, see Finkelstein 2006: figs 15.5: 8; 15.18; Arie 2011: 196–97; at Yoqne'am Black Juglets are less common). Dor, despite its proximity to sites such as Yoqne'am and Megiddo, seems to be outside the orbit of these Israelite contacts.

Foreign contacts

Throughout the early/Phoenician sequence, Dor exhibits very intensive maritime exchanges, perhaps more so than any other (excavated) Eastern Mediterranean site. Egyptian store-jars (e.g. Fig. 11: 14 below) and fish are attested in quantities that are unparalleled elsewhere in the Levant. Dor exported—especially to Cyprus, but also to other surrounding regions—unknown commodities in small flasks (but see Namdar *et al.* 2013) and in various 'Phoenician Bichrome' containers (fabric analyses by Yuval Goren demonstrate that about half of the Phoenician Bichrome vessels on the island originated at Dor: see Gilboa and Goren in press). From Cyprus, Dor imported copious amounts of ceramic tablewares (e.g. Fig. 11: 10–13), a phenomenon not paralleled anywhere other than at Tyre. Trade networks up and

down the coast are attested by the import and export of commercial carinated jars from, and to, various sites in Phoenicia and Philistia and (in Ir1a only) by the import of Philistine Bichrome containers.

Beyond the movement of goods, there were continuous and multifaceted connections with Cyprus—and to a lesser extent with Syria/Cilicia. These are attested by Cypriot stylistic impact on the local production of pithoi (Gilboa 2001), various commercial containers, including the locally produced Phoenician Bichrome ware (Gilboa 1999a), some tablewares (Gilboa 1999b: fig. 5: 7, 8), and ivories (e.g. Stern 2000: fig. 52). North Syrian stylistic traits (Gilboa 2006–2007: 213–26) may represent direct influence, or might have been transmitted *via* Cyprus. We interpreted this evidence as indicating that part of Dor's population in the Early Iron Age consisted of individuals or groups who left Cyprus in the wake of the demographic and economic disintegration of the Island during the Late Cypriot IIIA|B transition, during our Ir1a horizon (e.g. Gilboa 2005; Sharon and Gilboa 2013). Other immigrants may have been present as well.

Summary of the early sequence

We have repeatedly argued in the past (and shortly noted above) that the entire early sequence—from Ir1a through to Ir2a—should be considered one cultural continuum, and that the epithet 'Phoenician' best fits Dor throughout this period. Dor's material culture during this phase echoes that of the Lebanese coast and is markedly different from that of Philistia to its south or inland Israel to the east. In addition, its commercial activities and foreign connections show that Dor partook in, and perhaps even for a time dominated, the kinds of enterprises which were to come to be defined as 'Phoenician'. Whatever the historical reality implied by the use of the ethnonym *Skl* for the inhabitants of Dor in the 'Tale of Wenamun', employing the term 'Sea Peoples' to describe the cultural/social trajectories at Dor at this time is quite misleading. It conflates Dor with Philistia on the one hand, and draws a cultural distinction between it and the Lebanese coast on the other—contrary to the evidence on the ground. Invoking the 'Sea Peoples' to account for the beginning of this sequence, and the Phoenicians for its latter part, compounds the error by positing an abrupt cultural change where none, in our opinion, exists. For these issues, as well as a suggestion for settling the apparent contradiction between the *Skl* of literature and the Phoenicians of material culture, see Gilboa 2005, 2006–2007; Sharon and Gilboa 2013.

During this period, for about 250 years (see below, Foundation Chronology), Dor had a very busy harbour—indeed, a major hub in East Mediterranean maritime networks. Excavation has revealed a town consisting of domestic units, with monumental buildings restricted to the south, above the lagoon. It was completely destroyed once, during Ir1a *late*, in the late 11th century, based on radiometric dates (as yet unpublished). This destruction, however, had very little effect on the layout of the town, on the use of specific buildings, on ceramic production, on the pattern of Dor's commercial contacts, or on its stylistic discourse with Cyprus. Therefore, we see no grounds for Stern's claim that this devastation indicates a Phoenician takeover of a 'Sea People' (*Skl*) town and change in population (Stern 1999b). Baruch Halpern's (2001: 220, n. 22) suggestion—that the destruction represents a conquest of the Sea People town by Saul, Ishbaal, or David, after which it passed peacefully to United Monarchy control—also ignores the archaeological realities at the site.

During Ir1|2, however, misfortune befell several of Dor's domestic structures—in Areas G (Phase 7), D2 (Phase 8c), and B (Phase 9a). Evidence from Areas D2 and G suggests that an earthquake caused a partial demise of domestic structures while sparing the monumental ones. After this event, however, the affected structures and town's layout evidence little change. All rooms continued in use in Ir2a with new floors, and walls repaired where needed.

Subsequent to these repairs, however, all excavated domestic structures (G/6a; B/8; D2/8b) were deserted in an advanced stage of Ir2a (Late Iron Age IIA), about the mid–late 9th century (for the chronology see below). There is no destruction layer to speak of, but to various extents each structure produced pottery in primary contexts on some of its floors. The next occupation phases, as we describe in the following paragraphs, mark a complete change in the town's layout and architecture.

The later sequence/Israelite town

Area G

As mentioned above, the upper layers of the Iron Age in this area are heavily disturbed by Persian-period pits and by the deep foundations of Hellenistic and Roman public structures. After the abandonment of the long-lived courtyard house In Ir2a, no Iron Age architecture is attested in this area, other than bits of a wall and floor dating to the 7th century BC.

Area D2

At a late stage of Ir2a the layout of this area was completely transformed. Both the Monumental Building

and the Bastion, which commanded this area and the lagoon for hundreds of years, ceased to function. The wall that encircled the Bastion was partially dismantled, and for the first time since the inception of the Iron Age town, the areas outside and inside this wall were brought to the same level by extensive shuffling of debris. This brought to an end the age-old configuration of a higher citadel commanding its surroundings. 'Benni's house' was also finally abandoned. The deposition of layers of debris between thick layers of crushed *kurkar* (local sandstone) created a massive podium for a new monumental building. This building—nicknamed 'Taphats' Palace' in preliminary reports (though on no account can it really be allotted to her, see the discussion of chronology below) followed a new orientation. It crossed the line between the former citadel and lower city obliquely, as evident by the remaining portion of this wall and a robbers' trench continuing this line (Fig. 5). Only a small part of this building has been revealed, while most of it is still buried under later deposits. It is also badly preserved—only two foundation courses remain (with a third course visible in a section, Fig. 5). This notwithstanding, its monumentality and prominence cannot be mistaken. The foundation courses, currently exposed over a 10 m extent, are constructed mostly of large, roughly hewn, ashlar headers, about 1 m in length. It is reasonable to assume a superstructure constructed of ashlars as well (*contra* Franklin 2011: 134). The new ashlar structure stood in isolation above the lagoon with an open space, paved partly with a very thick *kurkar* flooring, extending to the south and east.

Since no floors relating to 'Taphat's Palace' have been preserved, the building cannot be dated by its contents. A fairly accurate date for its construction, however, may be offered by the extensive ceramic assemblages under it (in 'Benni's House' of Phase D2/8b) and in its podium fill—both of Ir2a date. An *ante quem* date for the end of use of this building is given by the Ir2b pits that are cut into it (see below).

Area B

Mirroring the situation in Area D2, the abandonment of the Ir2a structures here occasioned an overall change in the configuration of this part of town. A new fortification system was constructed (Phase B/7, Fig. 6): The new city wall in this area was built of field stones and large boulders. While, on the whole, the wall was a solid one, it had two casemates on

Figure 5 **Wall of Ir2a 'Taphat's Palace' crossing diagonally over Bastion wall (center); looking north.** ***Photograph: Craig Pfeister***

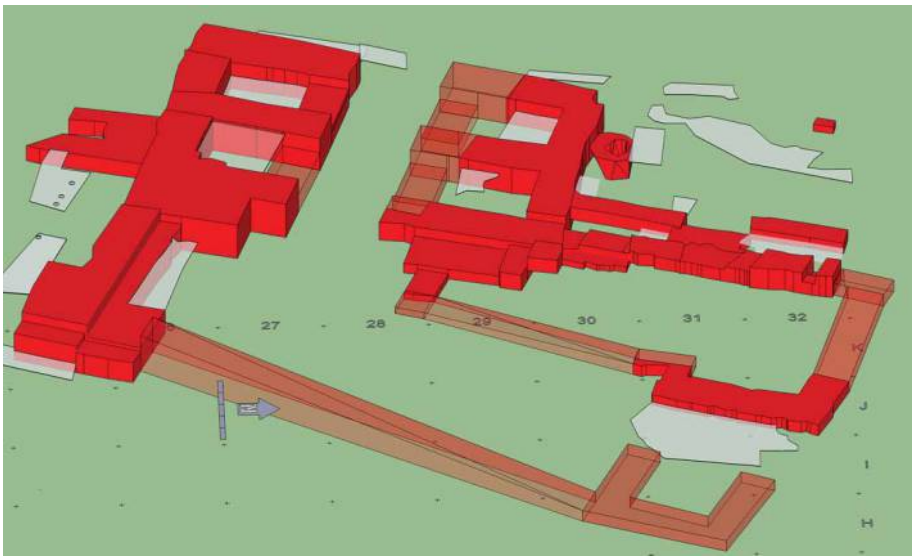


Figure 6 Three-dimensional model of the Late Ir2a city wall and four-chamber gate complex in Area B. Opaque walls were excavated, semi-transparent ones are reconstructed. Light surfaces are the floors that date the complex.

either side of the gate—presumably containing staircases to the top of the gatehouse. One entered the town first through an outer gate, attested by some massive walls of large, roughly hewn ashlars. Passing through an enclosed, paved plaza, one reached the four-chambered inner gate constructed of massive boulders and roughly hewn ashlars (see description in Stern 1993: 23).

Recent analysis demonstrates that at least the northern half of the gate was built into an extensive foundation pit, in a variant of the 'standing foundations' method (see Ussishkin 1980: 10 for a definition). Thus, it appears to have a very wide, irregular foundation trench outside the gatehouse, while inside the gate chambers, which were filled in following construction, there are no foundation trenches at all. The foundation pit for the gatehouse cuts Phase B/8 walls and floors, which are dated to Ir2a. The latest pottery in the constructional fills inside the chambers and underneath the gate-passage pavement is of the same date, as is the pottery in a silo-like installation adjoining the gate on the north. Thus, while Stern's dating of the construction of this gate to the Ir2b is not quite invalidated, a date within Ir2a is more likely. North of the gate, within the town, an open space replaced the former domestic buildings flanking the alley.

Area C1

A new offset-inset city wall (Phases C1/6–5; Sharon 1995: plan 5.33) replaced the earlier mudbrick one. This new wall displayed peculiar construction features. One section constructed of mudbricks on a rubble foundation dovetailed with a segment largely built of ashlars in a header-and-stretcher configuration (the largest ashlars, in the corners, are *c.* 1.5 m long). A corner ashlar bore a cross-shaped mason's mark (Fig. 7). A thick plaster 'glacis' of sorts, probably intended to stabilize the slope, reached the lower part of the exterior face of the wall. The latest material sealed under the glacis dates to Ir2a (Gilboa 1995: fig. 1.13), providing a *terminus post quem* for the construction of the wall. While there is no physical connection between this wall and the Area B wall and gate, their construction and stratigraphic position make it virtually certain that they are part of the same fortification system. Areas inside this city wall were exposed only to a very limited extent in this field. Some living surfaces were located, but no architecture of any kind. It appears that Phase C1/6 was an open space in the city.

Area D5

The same city wall, most likely, was also identified in Area D5. After the long abandonment, during a late stage of Ir2a, this area underwent extensive rebuilding (Phase D5/9). A city wall, 20 m of which have been exposed, ran along the southern slope of the tell. It was constructed mostly of roughly hewn headers, many of them about 1.5 long and as high as 0.5 m, to form an offset-inset wall *c.* 3 m wide (Figs 8 and 9). The wall underwent several stages of re-modelling, which are currently under study.

Inside the wall, the foundations of a large brick-on-rubble structure cut deeply into the early Iron Age levels (Fig. 9 (in pink) and Fig. 10). Since it is currently

Figure 7 Area C1, ashlar offset corner with mason's mark in Ir2a city wall; looking south.

being excavated, its size and plan remain uncertain. Minimally, it extends over 20×15 m and thus occupies and commands a large portion of the south-western part of the tell. The previous characterization of this building as a courtyard building of Canaanite type (Gilboa and Sharon 2008) now requires revision, since the building seems to be of a more complex plan. At an uncertain point in time (for which see below), this building was abandoned (not destroyed), and a truly massive structure, preserved only one course high, was erected over its western part (Phase D5/8; Fig. 9 (in yellow) and Fig. 10). This square structure features *c.* 2 m wide walls, constructed of a combination of large, roughly hewn ashlars (the largest are about 1.5 long) and massive boulders. In the middle of the structure sits a square stone pier, likely a support for a staircase. Since these remains lie at the very edge of the excavation area, it is unclear whether this square structure was an isolated tower, or was attached to a building lying to its north, which is perhaps more probable. Scant remains of massive ashlar walls uncovered east of this structure may indicate that it also continued further in that direction.

Ceramic characterization

The (scant) pottery associated with the few early floors relating to these new constructions did not differ significantly from that of the preceding (early Ir2a) phase. In contrast, the assemblages on the later floors—the 8th-century BC surfaces relating to these buildings—were of an entirely different character, exemplified, for example by the shapes of bowls (Fig. 11: 15–26 compared with the latest bowl types

Figure 8 **Area D5, corner between an ashlar inset and a rubble offset in city wall, looking south.** ***Photograph: Annalisa Ferrari***

of the 'early' sequence in Fig. 11: 1–5). For the totally different repertoire of Late Iron Age bowls in Phoenicia, see, for example, Bikai 1978: pls I:6–15, VIII, IX:1–18, X:8–33, XVIA, from strata IV–I at Tyre. Dor's ceramic affiliation with Phoenicia has ended in nearly every respect, and the pottery orientation shifted to sites in the Israelite realm, such as nearby Yoqne'am and Megiddo, and even faraway Hazor (see also Gilboa 1992: pls XV–XVII). However, we cannot yet determine when exactly this transformation happened, and whether the change transpired rapidly or gradually.

Foreign contacts (or lack thereof)

Concurrent with the architectural transformation described above, there was an almost total cessation of Dor's overseas contacts. The previously omnipresent decorated Phoenician wares (both locally produced and originating elsewhere in Phoenicia) are now virtually non-existent (a few appear again in Assyrian times). Post-Ir2a types of Phoenician decorated containers attested at Phoenician sites such as Tyre, Sarepta and Achziv are absent at Dor (for Tyre see, for example, Bikai 1978: table 8a: de–f, j–k; Nuñez-Calvo 2008: fig. 4: e–g). The extensive import of Cypriot table wares and containers was dramatically reduced, and Cypriot ceramic exports to Dor resumed significantly only under the Assyrians. Similarly, Egyptian jars disappeared from the repertoire.

Discussion: material evidence for Israelite Dor

We submit that the total transformation of the town's landscape, architecture, ceramic repertoire (more gradually) and inter-regional contacts at a late stage of Ir2a signifies the conversion of Dor into an Israelite administrative centre. This is the only instance of such a profound change in the course of her Iron Age history (prior to the Neo-Assyrian takeover).

Urban landscape and architecture

The Israelite centre was imposed over the Phoenician town. In effect, it was constructed *ex nihilo*, completely transforming the town's architectural landscape and

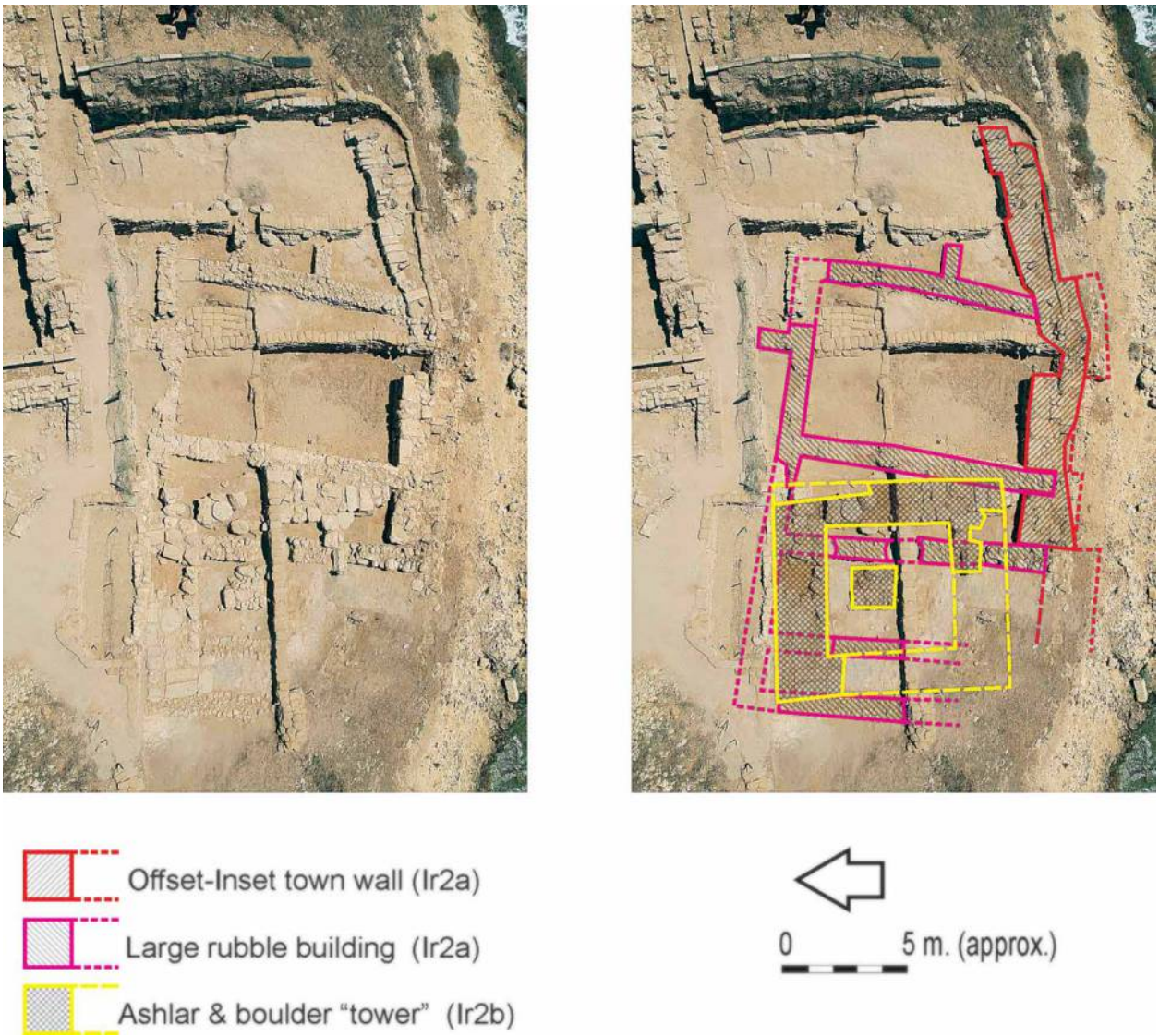


Figure 9 **Aerial photo of area D5 at the end of the 2011 season. Major Iron Age features described in the text are colour-coded.** ***Photograph: Sky View Inc.***

obliterating *all* previous constructions. The new buildings signify an overall change in the site's character—from mainly domestic to apparently exclusively public, monumental architecture.

The new centre was fortified by a new city wall, of which segments are known in Areas D5 (offset and inset, constructed of ashlar and rubble sections), C1 (offset and inset, ashlar and mudbrick sections), and B (boulders and roughly hewn ashlars with at least one casemate on each side of the gate). A gate system led to the town from the east (Area B), consisting of an outer gate and a four-chambered inner gatehouse. Inside the gate was an inner plaza.

Above the lagoon to the south (Area D2), on an elevated podium surrounded by a large courtyard, at least on its south and east, stood 'Taphat's Palace'. Further to the west on the southern slope, adjacent to the ashlar city wall (Area D5), stood another very large (field stone) structure, only partially known at present. This structure was subsequently replaced by a massive square tower, apparently just one wing of a currently concealed structure. Area D5 is the only area that reveals some architectural development during the existence of Israelite Dor. Dor in this period also seems to have been more sparsely built than its earlier predecessors. This is indicated by sections of the town that apparently lay empty (such as in Areas G and C) and by the spacious courtyards surrounding 'Taphat's Palace'.

The buildings of this administrative centre are only partially known; they are all quite large, and were reached in very deep and limited excavation areas. Also, as described above, some of the structures are only attested by foundation courses. Yet, all these

Figure 10 **Panoramic view of Area D5 at the end of the 2013 season; looking south. The big boulders across the bottom are the north wall of the Ir2b ashlar and boulder 'tower' (note ashlars on right). The rubble walls crossing from top to bottom belong to the large rubble building of the Ir2a, underlying the tower. The offset-inset city wall is (barely visible) across the top.**
Photograph: Trevor Layman

buildings—of massive boulders and ashlars—rendered Dor one of the most monumentally built centres of the Northern Israelite Kingdom.

Stern, as mentioned, attributed the massive construction of the four-chamber gate—employing very large boulders with facing orthostats—to Phoenician masons. This attribution, however, was contingent on his belief (1976; 1978: 71–75, *contra* Shiloh 1979: 83–84) that all ashlar construction in Israelite administrative centres was of Phoenician workmanship. Without revisiting the question of the origins and ancestry of this building style (which we do believe to be Phoenician; cf. Sharon 1987: 29–30, 37; 2009 with references to further literature) it was by all accounts quite widespread in the Iron Age II. Therefore, it is not necessary to assume Phoenician (*sensu stricto*) involvement in every instance of its occurrence. So the question here is not the availability of the concept and technology, but the socio-political and perhaps economic circumstances that prompted the expenditure, an issue we address in our summary.

No ashlars with drafted margins are attested at Dor. Also, apart from the one cross, mentioned above, there are no mason's marks (for drafted margins and mason's marks in Megiddo and Samaria, see Franklin 2001; 2007; 2008; but see Ussishkin 2007: 50–51 and Frese and Freedman 2009 for a critique).

Another noteworthy feature of this Israelite centre was its architectural continuity with hardly any alterations or additions for at least a century or more (we discuss the chronology in the next section). Wherever floors are attested, there seems to be a single one (as opposed to very dense floor sequences in the early Iron Age structures). This might be due to the generally poor preservation of the buildings, or to their very monumentality—public structures being less susceptible to frequent changes. But the fact is that in all excavation areas other than in D5 this rather long span of time—extending through to the town's demise—is represented by a single building phase. This is unusual when compared with other administrative centres of the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

Foundation chronology

When was this centre built? Stern ascribed the fortifications on the east (Areas B and C1, his 'second Israelite phase') to Ahab or Omri. This was based on their biblical portrayal as 'builder kings' and his conviction that in 925 BC Shishak destroyed the preceding Israelite town. At that time, the reign of Ahab or Omri was ascribed to the Iron Age IIB.

Rather than hinging our chronology on a phenomenon that is in fact not attested at Dor (historically or archaeologically), we turn to the archaeological

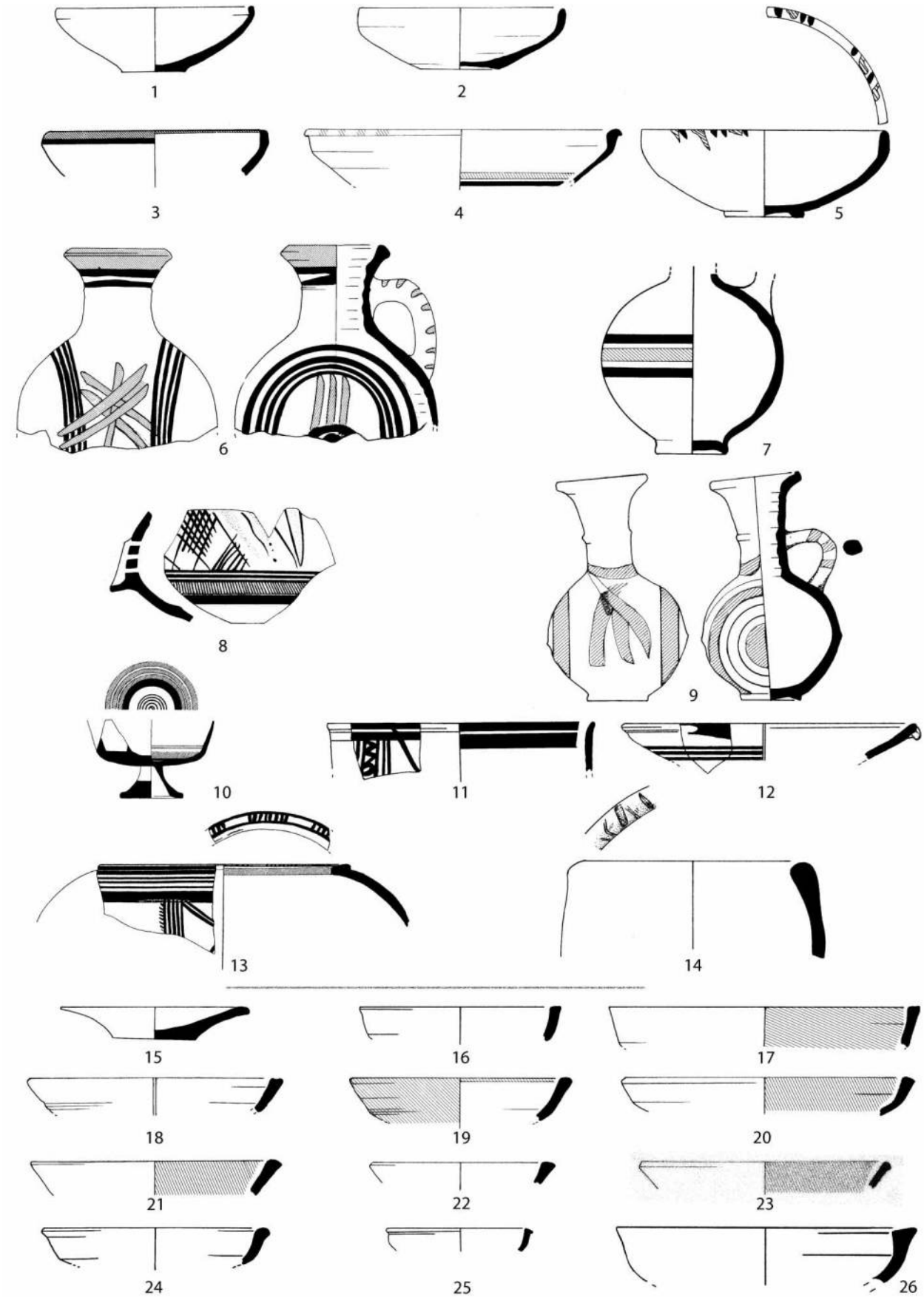


Figure 11 **Comparison between ceramics in Ir2a levels underlying the Israelite town in Area B (Phase 8)—the latest ceramics of the early sequence; with those on the extant latest floors of the Israelite town in this area (Phase 7a), Ir2b. Early sequence: local bowls (1–5), local Phoenician Bichrome containers (6–9), Cypro-Geometric pottery (10–13); Egyptian jar (14). Later sequence: local bowls (15–26).**

remains to date the construction of the new centre. The pottery on the earliest floors of the Israelite centre, as already noted, dates to Ir2a and is indistinguishable from the pottery of the foundations fills of the gate and 'Taphat's Palace' and from that of the underlying Ir2a Phoenician occupation (minus the imports). This indicates that Israelite Dor was built at a late stage of Ir2a. Examples of the Ir2a ceramic assemblages from Areas G and B published in the past (Gilboa and Sharon 2003: figs 12, 13) are similar to the ceramic assemblages occurring immediately beneath the Israelite town (here Fig. 11: 1–14), including a large primary assemblage on Phase 8 floors in Area B that was cut by the construction of the four-chamber gate (of Phase B/7).

In the last 15 years or so, the chronology of the Iron Age in Israel has become an extensively debated issue. It is, however, not our purpose here to provide a comprehensive account of this debate and below we review in brief only the most relevant points.

Regarding *relative* chronology, an important new area of consensus has been attained in recent years. The improved resolution of relative ceramic seriation at Dor (and more generally in Phoenicia) has revealed a hitherto ignored chronological horizon, spanning the transition between the then conventional Iron Age I and Iron Age II. It was dubbed 'Ir1|2′, i.e. a transitional horizon (Sharon and Gilboa 2013: e.g., 28–29 and table on p. 49). Formerly such assemblages were classified either as late in Iron Age I or as Iron IIA.

Subsequently, more or less contemporary stratigraphic/ceramic horizons were identified both in Israel and Judah. This resulted in the division of the former undifferentiated Iron Age IIA into two: 'Early Iron Age IIA' and 'Late Iron IIA' (Herzog and Singer-Avitz 2004, 2006; Mazar A. 2011: 107; here Table 2). At Dor, as already mentioned, the horizon we term Ir2a parallels the newly defined 'Late Iron IIA' (Table 2). The changes we define as the archaeological correlates of the transition from Phoenician to Israelite domination occur *within* this horizon, therefore its date requires some further elaboration.

As far as *absolute* chronology is concerned, methodologically, there is an agreement that radiometric dating is the key to establishing the dates of the relative chronological horizons arrived at by typo-stratigraphic analysis, in order to avoid the previous practice of uncritical extrapolation from biblical testimonies to archaeological chronology. No agreement has been reached yet, but the gap between 'high' and 'low' chronological stances has contracted. Extensive radiocarbon dating during the last decade or so has proved unequivocally that Iron Age II cannot have ended *c.* 925 BCE as previously assumed (e.g. Mazar A. 1990: 296). Today, proponents of a higher chronology (Mazar's 'Modified Conventional Chronology') agree that *Late* Iron Age IIA in Israel—the horizon that concerns us here—only starts during the very late 10th century, at the earliest, and 'occupies' most of the 9th century (e.g. Mazar and Bronk Ramsey 2010; Mazar A. 2011: 107). Advocates of a lower chronology (e.g. Finkelstein 2011: 52; Sharon *et al.* 2005; 2007), start this period later—between 900 and 865 BC.

The *end* of Late Iron Age IIA is now stretched at least a century beyond the traditional date of 925—to the last decades of the 9th century (Mazar and Bronk Ramsey 2010; Mazar A. 2011: 107), or to *c.* 800 BC (Sharon *et al.* 2005; 2007), if not even the first decades of the 8th century (Finkelstein 2011: 52). According to all these chronological schemes, the construction of the new town at Dor in a *late stage* of Ir2a (a late stage within Iron IIA following the terminology of Israel and Judah) was a middle-to-late-9th-century event.

The situation in a nutshell is therefore this: on the one hand, we propose that the *relative* date for the construction of the new administrative centre falls late within 'Late Iron Age IIA', rather than Iron Age IIB, as was hitherto proposed. On the other, according to *all* the aforementioned interpretations of the radiocarbon data from Israel, the absolute date of the end of Iron Age IIA has moved about 100 years lower than was hitherto supposed. Therefore, Stern's attribution of the establishment the 'four-chamber-gate-town' to the Omride Dynasty is definitely plausible, though not for the reasons that he put forward, and a somewhat later date cannot be ruled out.

Commercial contacts

As already mentioned, the construction of the new Israelite centre coincided with the severance of nearly all the site's supra-regional contacts, particularly with Cyprus and Egypt, and to a significant extent also with other Phoenician sites. Eighth-century contexts, however, did produce some jars that may be of Phoenician origin; their quantities and provenience still need to be determined. New networks only emerged under the Assyrians. In fact, throughout Dor's history—from the Middle Bronze Age to Roman times—the Israelite episode constitutes the single instance in which the site did not serve a significant maritime/commercial role. To be sure, ceramics cannot embody all potential cross-regional interactions. If the Dor harbour had served as a

major transhipment point for cereals, horses, etc., but none of this traffic had been accompanied by commodities in clay containers, commercial transactions might not be detected archaeologically. From a *longue durée* perspective, however, the differences between the Israelite episode and all others are nonetheless striking. Dor under the Israelites appears to have relinquished her position as a major player in Eastern Mediterranean maritime trade. Stern (1993: 27; 2000: 121) suggested that Dor's central bay was developed by Ahab into a *choton* (artificial harbour), but his arguments were not made explicit, and we are not aware of any evidence on the ground (or rather in the bay) for any such construction.

The demise of Israelite Dor

A *terminus ad quem* for the demise of 'Tapaht's Palace' in Area D2 is provided by the material in several pits that cut through it (Phase D2/6b), dating to the 8th century BC (and see more below on this chronology). Lacking evidence for violent destruction, the building seems simply to have been abandoned and dismantled (the latter is also evident by the aforementioned robbers' trench). Similarly, the square tower in Area D5 is cut by pits with 8th-century BC material (Phase D5/7) and offers no clues as to why it ceased to function.

Pottery on the latest floors reaching the four-chambered gate of Phase B/7 dates to the second-half of the 8th century BC (e.g. Fig. 11: 15–26). A burnt beam was found on one floor, just west of the gate, and the excavators recorded a layer of ash in one of the gate-chambers (the south-eastern one)—but this is the extent of the evidence for an 'Assyrian destruction' in Area B, or anywhere else at Dor. Soon after the four-chamber gatehouse was decommissioned, a makeshift entryway was devised by the building of a single wall across the north-eastern chamber. This single wall is the only construction attributable to Phase B/6. Thus, even if there was a destruction—whether or not it is attributed to the Assyrians—it was confined to the gatehouse alone. The next substantive activities here (Phase B/5c) date to Neo-Assyrian times, the late 8th century and roughly the first-half of the 7th century BC. Chiefly, a new two-chamber gate replaced the underlying four-chamber gate (e.g. Stern 2000: 132–38, fig. 79) and functioned in conjunction with the old city wall (contrary to statements in Stern 1988: 8; 1990a: 25; 2000: 132).

Based on prevailing historical reconstructions Tiglath-pileser III vanquished Israelite Dor. There are two problems with this reconstruction. Firstly, as mentioned, there is absolutely no evidence for a violent destruction of the Israelite town. Rather, the settlement appears to have been abandoned, and subsequently at least part of the monumental constructions dismantled, a phenomenon best attested by the pits cut into 'Taphat's Palace' in Area D2 and the 'tower' in D5.

Second, preliminary re-evaluation suggests that the pottery on the latest floors of the Israelite buildings, including the gate area (Fig. 11: 15–26 and fully in Gilboa 1992: pls XV–XIX) and in some of the above-mentioned pits may date to approximately the mid 8th century. This raises the possibility that Dor was abandoned somewhat earlier than Tiglath-pileser III's campaign. Subsequent to the abandonment some activity on the tell is attested by the 8th-century pits, by a single wall in Area B1 and by some flimsy floors. The site was revived, again as an administrative centre, only by the Assyrians.

Concluding remarks

In the mid-to-late-9th-century BC, most probably under the Omrides, the town of Dor underwent a thorough programme of urban renovation. After a protracted period of essentially the same layout—comprising some public structures above the southern cove and domestic habitations in most other areas—it was transformed into an administrative centre, with none of the previous buildings left standing. This constitutes the only such profound change throughout Dor's Iron Age history. The new centre was heavily fortified with a solid offset-inset wall and a gate system consisting of an outer gate and a four-chamber inner gatehouse. A series of public structures stood on the south, and extensive open spaces replaced previous domestic quarters.

An economic revolution accompanied this urban one—namely the disruption of nearly all of Dor's traditional inter-regional interaction spheres, especially maritime ones with Cyprus and Egypt. Dor's new administrative centre looked mainly inland, rather than to the sea. A re-orientation of the local ceramic production followed on the heels of these changes. It, too, no longer looked northwards for inspiration, but inland to the Kingdom of Israel. In as much as the few assemblages dating to the beginning of the new centre still show continuity with the previous, Phoenician orientation, we surmise that this change occurred somewhat later than the architectural one, and perhaps more gradually.

The mechanisms of the appropriation of Dor by the Northern Kingdom, however, are unclear. Even though the Phoenician city was not violently destroyed, coercive imposition is still a definite possibility. Omri

conquered Moabite territory attributed to Sihon, and Ahab is remembered for expanding Israel's territory and fortifying towns (1 Kings 22: 39; 2 Kings 3: 4–5; Mesha Inscription lines 4–9.). Ahab battled Israel's neighbours to the north, north-east, east, and south-east, while archaeological evidence suggests that he erected forts along the borders (Finkelstein and Lipschits 2010: 36). Taking over Dor and rebuilding it conforms to this expansionist policy (cf. recently Grabbe 2012).

Alternatively, the dynamics between Israel and her neighbours to the west/north-west may have been different—a political move, involving a territorial treaty with the Phoenicians and possibly intermarriage, as alleged in the biblical stories of Solomon and of Ahab respectively. Such a scenario would presuppose that up to the Israelite takeover Dor formed part of a larger Phoenician polity—currently a moot point.

Whatever the circumstances, the change in Dor's affiliation is first manifested by a burst of ostentatious public construction, as the new overlords physically and symbolically asserted their authority in their newly acquired territory (see Finkelstein 2003: 80–81 for this as a specifically Omride policy; cf. Finkelstein 2000). It is unclear how this affected Dor's population. As mentioned, all (known) domestic structures have been vacated and no domestic units have been identified in the Israelite centre. It can of course be argued that people moved to other (unexcavated) parts of the tell, but this too is moot. Alternatively, they, or most of them, might have left altogether. The change in the affiliation of the locally produced ceramics thereafter, may be due to Israelite populations drifting in after the takeover, or to Omride settlement of an Israelite population at the site, or to the indigenous population gradually accepting the norms of their new polity.

Whatever the case, archaeological evidence certainly does not support the scenario whereby Dor and the Carmel coast were annexed by the Kingdom of Israel in order to promote sea-borne ventures. Dor's diminished maritime importance under the Israelites probably resulted from several factors. Israel, as an inland-based polity, lacked maritime tradition or aspirations (cf. Aharoni 1979: 18; Baly 1957: 116; Faust 2011; Middlemas 2012: esp. nn. 1, 2; Yasur-Landau 2012; Faust even argues for Israelite cosmological/cultural *thallasophobia*). Earlier inter-regional exchanges that also had a social side to them, such as those with Cyprus (e.g. Gilboa 1999a; 2005) were discontinued and the demographic disruption affected the 250-year-old maritime exchanges with Egypt. Surely, the Dor port did not cease to function altogether. It is likely, however, that it mostly served maritime enterprises initiated elsewhere, mainly by the rising maritime power of the day, namely Tyre. The transformation of Dor from an independent player in maritime enterprises, to a passive port-of-call serving mainly Tyrian interests, may have also resulted from formal treaties between the Kingdom of Israel and its new allies, but this cannot be substantiated at present.

Israelite Dor was short lived. It was abandoned in the second-half of the 8th century BC, about a century after it was built, for reasons yet to be determined. The destruction of Dor by Tiglat Pileser III during the 734–732 campaigns remains a possibility, but there is little evidence for it on the ground (or in the texts). The lack of primary destruction assemblages complicates pinpointing the exact terminal date of this town. After a short period of near, or total, abandonment, it was rebuilt as an Assyrian centre. By the Persian period it was again firmly within the Phoenician cultural orbit and Mediterranean interaction spheres.

To return to the alleged Solomonic list of tax districts in 1 Kings 4, a 10th-century BC 'Solomonic' affiliation of Dor with Israel cannot be argued on archaeological grounds. The depiction of Dor as an important Israelite administrative centre fits best with the archaeological *realia* of the mid-9th to mid-8th centuries BC.

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