Tel Dor, 1992: Preliminary Report

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THE twelfth season of excavations at Tel Dor[1] was conducted during July–August 1992, directed by E. Stern on behalf of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Israel Exploration Society.[2] Other participating groups were from the University of California, Berkeley, directed by A. Stewart; the California State University, Sacramento, directed by H.P. Goldfried; and the University of Saskatchewan, directed by C. Foley.

Five areas were excavated (Fig. 1). In Area B1 on the eastern edge of the mound we uncovered mainly Byzantine and Iron Age II remains. In the adjacent area, B2, we concentrated on wide exposure of Roman public buildings. Area G, in the centre of the tell, yielded mainly Iron Age I remains. Area D1, above the southern bay, was re-opened this season to excavate the Persian and Iron Age II strata. A new area, F2, was opened at the centre of the western slope; the significant remains there are Roman.

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1 For reports on earlier excavation seasons at Tel Dor, see Notes and News, *IEJ* 30 (1980), pp. 209–213; E. Stern: Excavations at Tel Dor, 1981: Preliminary Report, *IEJ* 32 (1982), pp. 107–117 (henceforth: Dor, 1981); Notes and News, *IEJ* 33 (1983), pp. 259–261; 35 (1985), pp. 60–64; 36 (1986), pp. 101–104; E. Stern and I. Sharon: Tel Dor, 1986, Preliminary Report, *IEJ* 37 (1987), pp. 202–211 (henceforth: Dor, 1986); E. Stern, Ayelet Gilboa and I. Sharon: Tel Dor, 1987, Preliminary Report, *IEJ* 39 (1989), pp. 32–42 (henceforth: Dor, 1987); E. Stern, J. Berg and I. Sharon: Tel Dor, 1988–1989: Preliminary Report, *IEJ* 41 (1991), pp. 46–61 (henceforth: Dor, 1988–1989); and E. Stern, Ayelet Gilboa and I. Sharon: Tel Dor, 1991: Preliminary Report, *IEJ* 42 (1992), pp. 34–46 (henceforth: Dor, 1991).

For recent general surveys, see E. Stern: The Many Masters of Dor, Part I, *Biblical Archaeology Review* 19/1 (1993), pp. 22–31, 76–78; Part II, *Biblical Archaeology Review* 19/2 (1993), pp. 18–29; *idem*, The Walls of Dor, *IEJ* 38 (1988), pp. 7–14; and *idem*, Hazor, Dor and Megiddo in the Time of Ahab and under Assyrian Rule, *IEJ* 40 (1990), pp. 12–30.

2 He was assisted by Renate Rosenthal-Heginbottom, I. Sharon and Ayelet Gilboa, and a field staff of some 25 members, including Bracha Zilberstein (registrar); J. Zorn and Patricia Cason (field supervisors); Gilah Benadiva and S. Stark (architectural drafting); Vered Rosen (artifact restoration and drawing); Y. Hirshberg and Z. Radovan (photography); and S. Dahan (administration). The excavation at Dor serves as an annual study excavation for students of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the other participating institutions; some 120 students and volunteers participated in the 1992 season. The expedition was lodged at the Pardess Hanna Agricultural School, and had the use of the facilities and the support of the Centre of Nautical and Regional Archaeology of Kibbutz Naḥsholim.

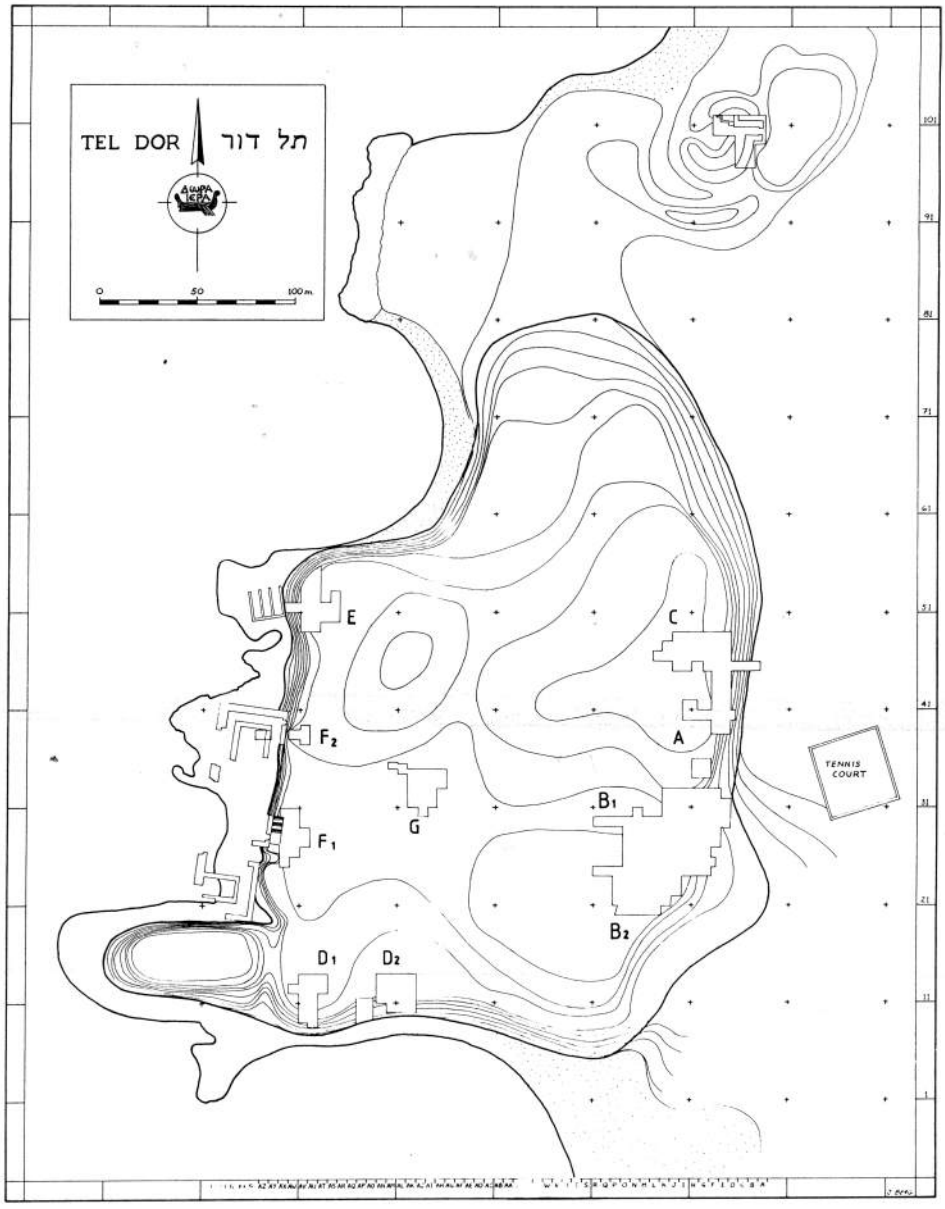

Fig. 1. Tel Dor, 1992: general plan.

This report is divided into major topics, according to research goals we set out to tackle and new ones which developed during the season. The topics are arranged chronologically.

Byzantine Structures in Area B1

Our main objective here this season was to clarify the plan of the ramp leading to the Iron Age IIB four-chambered gate and of the outer gate structure surrounding this ramp. We extended Area B1 northward and eastward towards the lower slopes of the tell, and in doing so, encountered some remains of the lower city which had surrounded the mound at least since the Roman period.

These were mostly the eroded foundations of a large Roman building, sections of which have appeared every season since 1988.[3] An unexpected find in Unit E 31 consisted of the remains of a later structure — constructed of square-sectioned ashlars bonded with concrete — which cut these foundations. The many fallen pieces of plaster and roof-tiles uncovered may provide information regarding the superstructure of this later building, in which we found, for the first time, typical Byzantine pottery, including chocolate-coloured 'Gaza Ware' jars and 'Late Roman Red' tableware.

The existence of a Byzantine phase at Dor is no surprise. In addition to literary evidence of Dor having been the seat of a bishop in the fifth to seventh centuries C.E.,[4] there are the remains of the church at Kibbutz Naḥsholim to the south-east of the tell,[5] as well as accumulating evidence of nautical activity, demonstrating that the harbour was not completely abandoned despite the fact that most of the overseas trade must have shifted to the much larger port of nearby Caesarea.[6] We still maintain, moreover, that the main urban centre on the mound itself was not occupied any later than the mid-third century C.E. and that the Byzantine settlement moved off the tell and to the south-east. Its remains are found whenever foundations are dug at Kibbutz Naḥsholim or when the fishponds east of the site are drained. The structure found below Area B1, east of the tell, should thus be regarded as one of these remains.

The Roman Public Building in Area B2

Area B2 lies on the eastern side of the mound, south-west of the eastern gate (Fig. 1). For a number of years the goal here has been to expose as much as possible of the Roman strata. Remains of various public structures, belonging to two distinct architectural phases within the Roman period, have been uncovered. This season we concentrated on two projects. One was to complete the excavation of

3 Dor, 1991, p. 36.

4 G. Dahl: The Materials for the History of Dor, *Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences* 20 (1915), pp. 102–108.

5 Claudine Dauphin: On the Pilgrim's Way to the Holy City, *Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society* (1982–1983), pp. 25–31.

6 K. Raveh and S.A. Kingsley: The Status of Dor in Late Antiquity — A Maritime Perspective, *BA* 54 (1991), pp. 198–206.

a large courtyard-building,[7] which was found to have a central courtyard surrounded by colonnades, with one of the columns *in situ*. The open-air, cobbled central part of the courtyard was separated from the seashell-paved, roofed walkway by a stone (or marble) partition. Slots for inserting the thin slabs of this partition were found in the column bases.

The second project was to continue investigation of a structure whose corner was found in 1987 opposite this building and south of the large public building at the south-western corner of the gate *piazza*.[8] At the time, the foundations of this building appeared to be laid over the paving stones of the early Roman street, thus proving that the structure was built in the second of the two Roman strata, in contrast to all other major structures of Area B2, which had been built in the first stratum and which continued in use, with some alterations, in the second.

The structure proved to be a low rubble-filled podium surrounded by ashlar walls. The width of the building is 18 m.; its length is still unknown, as its southern edge has not yet been uncovered (Fig. 2). There is a pavement of very thin multi-coloured marble slabs, reminiscent of the *opus sectile* technique, above the podium. Some of these slabs were found *in situ*, and the position of others may be inferred from marks on the concrete sub-floor surface.

These marks also point unmistakably to the former existence of an internal colonnade around three sides (east, west and north) of the building. Although the columns were not found, it is probable that a pile of column drums, found north of this building and previously attributed to the public building to its north, actually belong to this structure. This supposition is supported by the presence in this pile of heart-sectioned column drums — which can only be found in the corner columns of internal peripheral colonnades, such as in this structure.

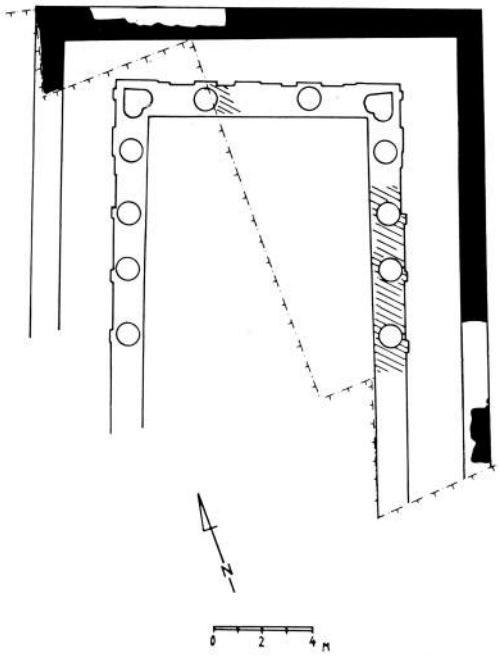

Fig. 2. Tel Dor, 1992, Area B2; a Roman podium surrounded by an internal colonnade on three sides.

7 Dor, 1988–1989, p. 54.
8 Dor, 1987, p. 37.

What was the plan of this building? At the moment, we are entertaining two possibilities. One is that the building was completely roofed over, basilica-style (Fig. 3), with the colonnade supporting the central nave walls, clerestory windows and the roof over the central space. The plan of such a building would resemble the plan of the 'Galilean'-type synagogues. The building is distinctly smaller than main town-hall basilicas elsewhere (e.g. the basilica at Samaria, 32 × 60 m.,[9] or the so-called 'boulaterion' at Ashkelon, 35 × 110 m.[10]), but basilical halls of various sizes may serve different functions in public and administrative buildings in a Roman town.

The other possibility is the reconstruction of the entire excavated portion as a peristyle (Fig. 4), probably a front to one of the city's main public buildings (which would, in this case, be located south of the area excavated so far), although free-standing peristyle structures are also known.

The aisles between the side walls and the colonnade are extremely narrow (4 m.), in contrast with the wide unsupported span (10 m.) above the central space. In addition, there are apparently no deep sleeper foundations beneath the colonnade, indicating that the columns did not support a great weight of superstructure. These

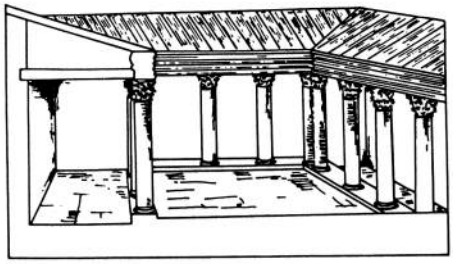

Fig. 3. Tel Dor, 1992, Area B2: reconstruction of the Roman building as a roofed basilical structure, resembling the 'Galilean'-type synagogues in plan.

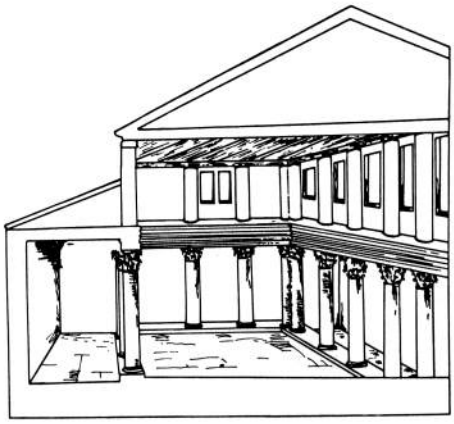

Fig. 4. Tel Dor, 1992, Area B2; reconstruction of the Roman building as an open-air structure surrounded by a colonnade, probably a front to one of the city's main public buildings.

9 G.A. Reisner *et al.*: *Harvard Excavations at Samaria*, Cambridge, MA, 1924, Plan 12.

10 J. Garstang: The Excavations at Ashkelon, *PEQ* 54 (1922), p. 115; see L. Stager: *Ashkelon Discovered*, Washington, 1991, pp. 43–45 for its identification as a basilica.

indications might lend support to the second hypothesis,[11] but only further excavation will tell.

As above-mentioned, this building dates from the very last urban phase at Dor, probably in the first quarter of the third century C.E. Its floors were cleared just a few centimetres below the surface, and therefore, the finds above them cannot be used for dating purposes. In the street east of the building, however (between it and the above-mentioned courtyard-building), we have exposed several superimposed pavement surfaces over the years, segregating the pottery from sealed deposits. The highest of these surfaces appears to relate to this structure.

The Roman Temple Complex, Area F2

The two temples on the seaward side of the tell were first excavated in 1923–1924 by Garstang, who dated them to the early Hellenistic period.[12] A re-evaluation of his data, as well as a preliminary survey of the visible architectural remains, indicated that the structure actually might be considerably later,[13] an impression strengthened by several seasons of excavation in Area F, by the south-eastern edge of the large temple.

Garstang's plans show a large rectangular podium, oriented north–south, surrounded by a narrow courtyard and separated from the mound itself by a high temenos wall (Fig. 5). His excavation exposed two gates leading into the courtyard, on the southern and northern ends of the east temenos wall. Outside the southern gateway he exposed a monumental stairway which led down from the tell to the gateway into the temenos.

Encroachment by the sea since the site's abandonment obliterated approximately two-thirds of the temple structure; most of the remaining one-third had been excavated by Garstang. Our initial strategy in the temple (our Area F) in 1986[14] was to expose Garstang's southern stairway, which has since disappeared. We also planned to excavate east of it in the hope of finding well stratified deposits and of clearing the interface between these deposits and Garstang's stairway, thereby establishing the temple's date. In general, our results support the late dating of the temple.[15] However, the area of the staircase itself was much disturbed by Garstang's trenches and back-dirt piles, as well as by post-1920s stone robbing. Moreover,

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11 Some basilical halls in the Roman period did, however, have similar nave/side passage ratios, cf. the synagogue at Meiron, E. Meyers *et al.: Excavations at Meiron*, Cambridge, MA, 1981, Fig. 2.8.

12 J. Garstang: Tanturah (Dora), *Bulletin of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem* 6 (1924), p. 67.

13 J.E. Berg: *The Temple at Tel Dor, Israel* (M.A. diss., California State University), Sacramento, 1985.

14 Dor, 1986, p. 203.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 221; Dor, 1988–1989, p. 50.

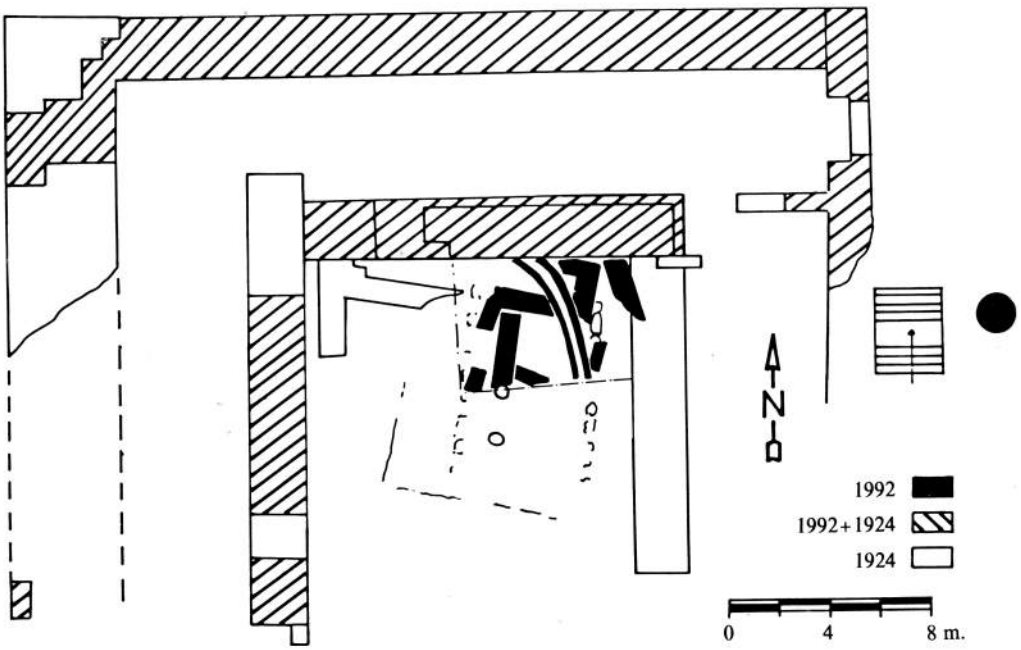

Fig. 5. Tel Dor, 1992, Area F2: correlation of Garstang's 1924 excavation plan with the 1992 excavation in this area.

we were limited to studying the stratigraphy outside the temple courtyard. Due to changes in the coastline, there is a sheer drop to the sea nowadays immediately inside the southern temenos gate.

This year we decided to verify our results with a slightly different approach. Since Garstang had not excavated outside the northern gateway in the eastern temenos wall, there was hope that a similar stairway might be found intact there. Moreover, the northern part of the temple podium had been undisturbed by the sea, and Garstang, according to his report, left the original floor of the temple exposed in this portion of the podium. Garstang's plans show many additional walls here; these, as well as the podium and temenos walls, were attributed by him to various periods from the Iron Age to the Byzantine period. At any rate, the northern part of the temple provides an opportunity for a more complete and undisturbed stratigraphical sequence than the parts of Area F previously excavated. We therefore laid out a line of excavation squares, oriented east–west, across the podium of the temple, the courtyard, the temenos wall (just south of the northern gate) and the conjectured line of the stairway. We called this new area F2.

The northern part of the temple, at the end of the 1924 season, featured a rectangular podium with a thick plaster floor and three small column bases on it, surrounded by three massive ashlar podium walls on the north, east and west sides. On the northern wall, Garstang, using a crane, reconstructed one of the temple's columns

from architectural fragments found in his excavation. Since 1924, this area has been completely overgrown with dense thorny shrubbery. The first task here was to cut these bushes and remove Garstang's back-dirt and stone piles, which had since spilled into the excavated area. We tackled part of this work this season with the aid of 50 youths of the 'Sar-El' army volunteer organization and a bulldozer. After three-quarters of a century's erosion and stone robbing, the rectangular podium had deteriorated into two small roundish hillocks. The columns and other architectural fragments left by Garstang (e.g. the unique flat arch over the northern gateway) had toppled into the bottom of the courtyard or been removed altogether. The northern podium wall, made of ashlar headers slightly smaller than the other walls of the podium, was completely robbed out. Other walls drawn in on Garstang's plans are completely missing, while several walls now visible above ground do not appear on his plans at all. All these factors make it difficult to correlate Garstang's plans with our own (Fig. 5).

We did, however, locate a tiny corner of Garstang's thick plaster floor of the temple podium. The significance of this is that any elements sealed beneath must antedate the construction of the temple. Contrary to our expectations, the podium core underneath this floor is not made of extensive constructional fills. Immediately under the floor, the upper part of several walls appeared, with floor surfaces reaching some of them. Additional clearing of both the top and the sides of the eroded hillock making up what is left of the podium revealed quite a few additional walls, with complex inter-stratigraphy (Fig. 5); none of these walls are aligned with the temple, and the existing podium foundations clearly cut them. The deposits reaching them date, inasmuch as could be ascertained, from the entire span of the Iron Age to the late Hellenistic/early Roman periods. We found no evidence that any of these pre-temple structures were anything but residential.

Apparently the builders of the temple at Dor did not follow the usual practice (e.g. at the Augusteum at Caesarea or Herod's Temple at Jerusalem), starting at the courtyard level and building up to create a dirt-filled (or hollow and vaulted) podium. Rather, they used the existing level of the tell as the podium's floor, cutting down and excavating around it to create the low courtyard and the stairways leading down into it. This was probably in order to maintain the effect of having the temple structure level with the street or *piazza* running along the western edge of the city, yet towering above the temenos courtyard and the harbour. The result of this technique is that the core of the podium is made up of relatively undisturbed pre-temple tell deposits, and the latest are sufficient to date the construction of the temple.

The latest pre-temple element we located seems to be a covered drain channel, which we followed for some 5 m. up to the point where it is cut by the foundations of the northern podium wall. The potsherds retrieved from within the drain, as well as the construction and character of the drain itself, are Roman. This drain cuts a system of walls, to which some fragmentary floor surfaces are attached, which

in turn are partly sealed by the podium floor referred to above. The collection of pottery from these floors (including some complete pots) is late Hellenistic. This therefore strengthens our previous conclusion that Garstang's temple is Roman, rather than Hellenistic.

The extensive cleaning and weeding operations we undertook in the temple area revealed several new features regarding the temple's construction. First, whereas the outside faces of the podium walls are constructed of huge, square-sectioned ashlars with no bonding material between them, there is considerable use of mortar on the inside, buried faces. In some sections the core of the wall is made of a conglomerate of concrete and small stones, rather than ashlars. What looks like a typical Hellenistic dry construction was perhaps a deliberate ploy. This may have misled Garstang into misdating the temple.

The existence of several mason's marks on the temple's stones has already been noted.[16] The cleaning and drawing of the temple walls revealed several new ones, bringing the total to six α letters. Indeed, taking into consideration that only one or two faces of each ashlar block are visible, it is possible that all blocks are thus marked. The letters obviously do not denote the order of construction, nor can they be the marks of individual worksmen. Perhaps the α mark is the quarry's batch designation for blocks destined for the temple; or else it may be an indication of size.

Finally, after cleaning out extensive areas of the temple, we surveyed all of the architectural fragments now visible above the surface and had them drawn. This survey located some pieces not previously noted, which may necessitate some changes in the temple's plan. Essentially, Berg's reconstruction of the building as a south-facing prostyle temple on a high podium is still the most plausible one.[17] The temple may, however, have had a deeper porch, which would necessitate additional columns and better account for the number of extant architectural elements.

The eastern half of Area F2, beyond the temenos wall, was undisturbed by Garstang. As hoped, we found here part of the stairway leading down to the northern gateway into the temenos (Fig. 6). The staircase is 3.5 m. wide and runs down from south to north along the temenos wall. Its highest preserved elevation is 16.00 at the southern end of our unit, and we followed it down to elevation 14.50 at the northern end. The stairway continues north of the excavated edge of Area F2, and its presumed base is at the level of the temenos courtyard — approximately 13.50.

The ramp which contains the stairway was probably dug from the existing surface level during the Roman period, and its eastern limit must have been a massive retaining wall. At some point in antiquity, possibly even when the temple was still in use, this supporting wall was robbed out and the entire ramp filled in with Late Roman potsherds. This fill reached a depth of approximately 2 m.

16 Berg (above, n. 13), Pl. 2.
17 *Ibid.*, pp. 30–34, Pls. 1, 4.

Fig. 6. Tel Dor, 1992, Area F2: stairway leading down to the northern gate into the temple complex.

at the deepest edge of the area; a backhoe was necessary to remove it. We used the technique of sample-trenching: a trench was dug manually at one end of the unit in order to ascertain the stratigraphy and obtain a sufficient sample of potsherds from each layer, and a backhoe was then used to excavate the rest of the unit to the same depth.

From one of the tractor back-dirt piles (we do not know whether from the ramp-fill or the cleanup of Garstang's dumps) a thin copper plaque, cut in the shape of a dancing maiden (Fig. 7), was found. The details of her hair, facial features and the folds of her khyton were carefully incised in low relief. The plaque was probably part of an applied copper decoration to a wooden box or a piece of furniture, and most likely is Hellenistic in date.

Fig. 7. Tel Dor, 1992, Area F2: a Hellenistic copper plaque, shaped like a dancing maiden and decorated in low relief.

Moving further east, still within Area F2, we reached an area completely undisturbed by the activities connected to the construction of the temple. Here, just a few centimetres below surface level, we hit a Roman flagstone pavement — belonging to a street or an open *piazza* — which stops just short of the presumed line of the stairway's retaining wall, and was perhaps cut by that wall. On the east, the pavement is cut by a wide shapeless poured-concrete foundation of a type we know well from Late Roman remains in Areas F1 and G. These walls are presumably part of the re-orientation of the western part of the town concurrent with the construction of the temple. Underneath these Roman remains, Hellenistic walls and floors began to appear.

The Persian Public Building and the Iron Age Industry, Area D1

Area D1, on the western edge of the south bay, was opened in 1984 and excavated until 1987.[18] The two significant finds here were a purple dye installation and a large building north of it, both from the Persian period. In the building we excavated a wide (8.5 × 4.5 m.) hallway with a stout ashlar pillar in its centre. The only work carried out here since 1987 has been some limited probes in the dye installation.[19]

We regard this season's work in Area D1 as a feasibility study for a much wider strategy: to re-open Areas D1 and D2 in force and to open a new field between Areas D2 and G (see Fig. 1), developing these areas towards each other so as to eventually cut a great L-shaped swathe across the south portion and into the centre of the tell. We thus hope to overcome what we consider to be the main problem of urban tell archaeology today: limited exposure.

Work in Area D1 was confined to two sections. The first, a wide expanse located west of the dye installation and containing no architecture below the Hellenistic level, was selected to explore the possibility of uncovering Iron Age strata in this part of the site. This area was devoid of buildings of the Persian period, yet riddled with pits; delineating and clearing these took a good part of the season. These Persian pits completely disturbed the late Iron Age strata, of which only small fragments of floors remained. Below these we found what was probably a courtyard, enclosed by two wide fieldstone walls along the western and northern portion of the excavation unit. The floor of this courtyard, which had been repeatedly repaved, was extremely uneven. It has a wavy east–west section and a marked tilt from north to south, as well as several deeper depressions or pits dug into it. Our general impression is that this space is not a residential element, but was perhaps used for some sort of industry, dated by its pottery to the Iron Age IIA.

Fig. 8. Tel Dor, 1992, Area D1: a limestone statuette bust of the Persian period.

18 Dor, 1986, p. 208; Dor, 1987, pp. 38–89.
19 Dor, 1991, pp. 45–46.

Our second test probe was inside the hallway of the large Persian building. Last winter's rains, as well as some vandal potholing, had undermined the pillar in the centre of this hallway; it therefore had to be dismantled. Directly under it there was a very large pit, from which great amounts of Persian pottery and small finds were recovered, the most spectacular being the head of a limestone statuette (Fig. 8). It appears that the outer walls of the hall had much deeper foundations than the ashlar pillar. Several superimposed *kurkar* pavements were found attached to these walls, but unfortunately, most of them extended only slightly into the hall as its centre was occupied by the pit. Nevertheless, these pavements show that this building had a long and complex history. The excavation of additional parts of it, lying to the east and north of the currently exposed room, might fill some of the gaps in our knowledge of contemporary public architecture, while also providing a good chronological sequence spanning most, if not all, of the Persian period.

The Iron II Outer Gate Structure, Area B1 (Fig. 9)

The main architectural complex of the Iron Age II in Area B is the offset–inset town wall, to which two gatehouses are attached: a four-room gate (Fig. 9:2) built when

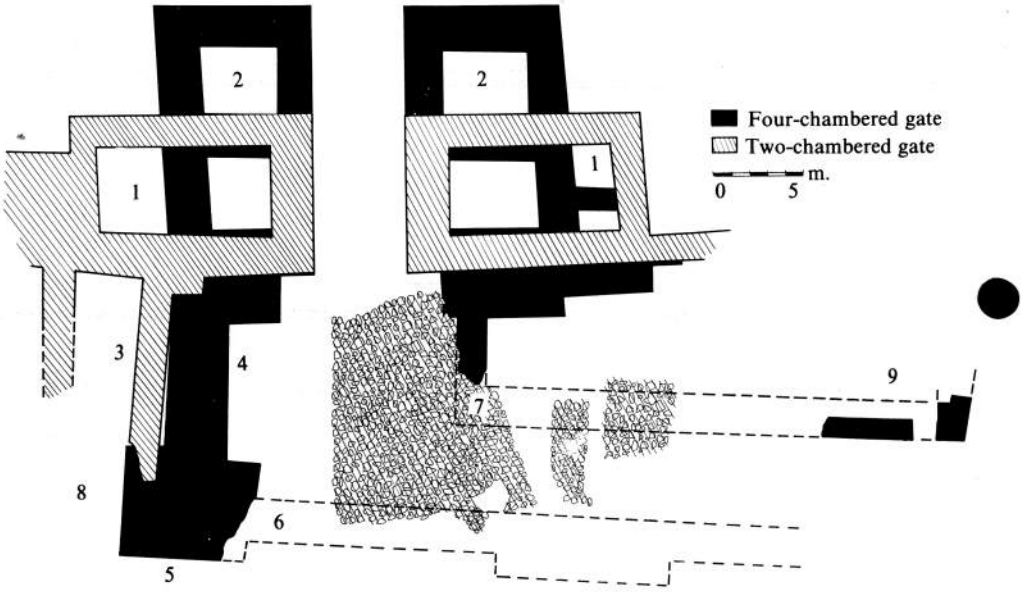

Fig. 9. Tel Dor, 1992, Area B: the gate complex. 1) Two-chambered gatehouse; 2) Four-chambered gatehouse; 3) W7249 — 'extension walls' from the two-chambered gate to the (presumed) outer gate; 4) 'Extension wall' from the four-chambered gate to the outer gate; 5) Corner-tower at outer gate (relating to the four-chambered gatehouse; 6) Presumed line of eastern wall flanking the outer gate courtyard; 7) Cobbled roadway leading to the two-chambered gate; 8) Glacis surfaces relating to lower (four-chambered) gate system; and 9) Western wall at the outer gatehouse.

the wall was destroyed in the late eighth century B.C.E. and superceded (after a brief transitional phase) by a two-room gate (Fig. 9:1) which remained in use, together with the offset–inset wall, well into the Persian period.[20] Each of the two inner gatehouses had an attendant outer gate complex, consisting of a ramp leading up to the gate from the north, encircled by an additional fortification wall. In the last two seasons, we concentrated on clearing these outer gate structures in Area B1. Last year we followed the pavement of the ramp leading up to the later of the two gates until it disappeared under the north-eastern corner of the excavated area. We therefore extended the excavation area to the north and the east in 1992, as well as conducting several limited probes south of the outer gatehouse (technically within the area of Field B2). Our efforts revealed several new features, as described below.

In previous seasons, we had exposed several enormous stones while excavating later strata east of the gate. We had always assumed these stones to be part of the Iron Age outer gate structure, but their position never made architectural sense when placed on the Iron Age plans.[21] Last year, while clearing out the catapult ball pit,[22] we encountered similar stones directly under one of the later outer gate walls. These gave us a clue to the correct interpretation of these features, which we tested this season.

At first glance, it seemed that the large ashlar headers underneath W7249 (Fig. 9:3), which extends outwards from the two-chambered gate, are part of its foundation. However, W7249 has no deep foundations elsewhere; moreover, the superior quality of stonework and scale of construction of the so-called 'foundation' do not lend credence to this supposition. This year we demonstrated that the ashlar header wall is indeed an older construction, on which the later 'extension wall' was built: at least some of the 'white floors' which clearly reach this ashlar wall (see also below) actually extend below the late 'extension wall' and are visible in section on its other side. Cleaning the point at which the ashlar wall supposedly 'disappeared' showed that it jogs back at this point, in true offset–inset fashion, and then continues with the line of huge boulders already exposed in previous seasons (Fig. 9:5).

What we have, in fact, is a massive square corner-tower belonging to the earlier of the two gate complexes. The tower is constructed of large boulders on the inside (similar in size and construction to those of the inner four-room gatehouse) and large ashlars, in headers-out construction, on the outside. At least two courses are preserved at the southern face of the tower. The existence of such a corner-tower in the earlier gate complex further strengthens the analogy between the gates of

20 Stern (above, n. 1, Walls of Dor), pp. 6–9.
21 Dor, 1988–1989, p. 54.
22 Dor, 1991, pp. 42–44. Note in particular Fig. 8, Walls 7351 and 7249.

Dor and those of Megiddo (Fig. 10),[23] as well as those of Lachish.[24] In all of these cases, it seems, the courtyard of the late outer gate was surrounded by casemates, and the earlier had a solid offset–inset wall with a prominent corner-tower.

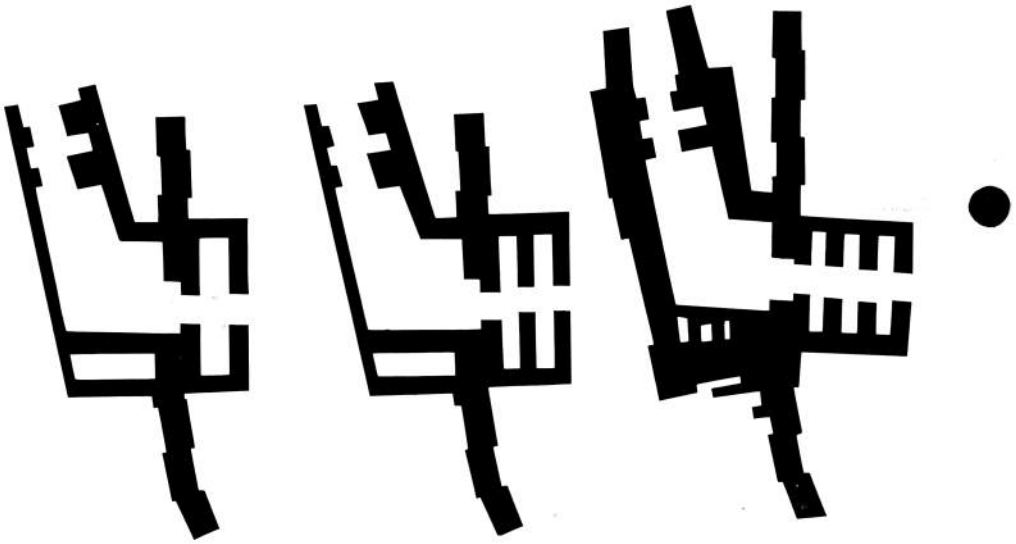

Fig. 10. Succession of Iron Age gates at Megiddo. Right: six-chambered gate (with outer gate complex); centre: four-chambered gate; and left: two-chambered gate.

In order to test the corner-tower theory further, we dug two additional probes, to the east and west of the Roman aquaduct pillar on top of the previously discovered boulders. In the eastern probe, below the base of the Roman aquaduct, we hit, as expected, large boulders of the tower's core. The deposits above and between these boulders definitely date them to the Iron Age. The results of the western probe were inconclusive. The base of the Roman aquaduct here was a very thick and tough conglomerate of stones and concrete, apparently poured directly over the Iron Age boulder wall (Fig. 9:4). It proved impossible to differentiate between the stones belonging to the original wall and those which are part of the Roman addition. We have also been unable so far to locate the position of the north–south wall, which presumably emerges from the northern side of the corner-tower and which should mark the eastern edge of the ramp leading up to the gate (Fig. 9:6).

23 R.S. Lamon and G.M. Shipton: *Megiddo* I, Chicago, 1939, Fig. 89; G. Loud: *Megiddo* II, Chicago, 1948, Fig. 105.

24 D. Ussishkin: Excavations at Tel Lachish 1973–1977, *Tel Aviv* 5 (1978), Figs. 15–16.

Several additional probes were dug in the area south of the 'extension wall' and outside the outer gate structure. The purpose of these was to find out more about the series of 'white floors' (presumably glacis-surfaces outside the city wall; Fig. 9:8) found here last season, and to investigate the nature of a battered stone retaining wall found under these floors last year.[25] We located a total of six superimposed white lime surfaces, all apparently earlier than the two-chambered gate and its outer gatehouse 'extension walls' (see above). The two lower ones, at least, reach the lower outer-gatehouse corner-tower. Unfortunately, we did not obtain from between these floors a good type-series of pottery to indicate the period of use of the four-chambered gate. The pottery from all of these surfaces (except perhaps the lowest one) is scarce, and seems to be uniformly late Iron Age. Apparently, the raising of the glacis here was one depositional effort, the various surfaces being merely different constructional stages within it, or else the glacis was resurfaced several times within a relatively short time-span towards the end of the period in which the four-chambered gate was in use.

Under the 'white floors' we found a homogeneous sandy-constructional fill (see also below), as in every probe into the foundation of the four-chambered gate.[26] The fill contains pottery dating mainly from Iron Age I, with a few pieces which may be Iron IIA, but none clearly later. The battered stone wall was found in this fill. No floor reaches it, and a foundation trench on its south-western side indicates that it is a foundation or a retaining wall. No further information about the date or function of this wall, which predates all other fortification systems, was obtained this season, and it remains an enigma.

In the northern units of Area B1, we attempted to clear late remains (Byzantine, Roman and Persian) in order to reach the surface of the roadway leading up toward the gates (Fig. 9:7). The southern part of this roadway, where it reaches the two-chambered gate, was uncovered in the first season of our excavation at Dor, although we did not fully realize what it was at the time.[27] Since then we have steadily enlarged the exposure of this surface, and have found its southern part is cobbled, while the northern end is constructed of packed dirt.[28] This year we located additional parts of this surface in Units G 30 and E 31. The pottery recovered from the roadway is Persian, dating from the very end of the period of use of the two-chambered gate and the offset–inset fortification system.

In Unit F 32, where this cobbled surface was very fragmented, we removed it in the hope of finding underneath an older road surface leading to the four-chambered gate. Immediately below the Persian surface, however, we encountered sand that

25 Dor, 1991, p. 44.
26 *Ibid.*; Dor, 1988–1989, p. 55.
27 E. Stern: Tel Dor, 1980, Notes and News, *IEJ* 30 (1980), p. 212.
28 Dor, 1981, p. 116; Dor, 1988–1989, p. 54.

resembled the constructional fill beneath the gates. In all probability, the builders of the two-chambered gate removed all evidence of the previous roadway.

This year we investigated the direction and construction of the northern continuation in Unit F 32 of a row of massive stones which we found last season under the aforementioned surface in Unit F 31 (Fig. 9:9). (In stratigraphic position, as well as in constructional details, these stones correspond to the lower gate system: the four-chambered inner gatehouse and the corner-tower discussed above.) We found that the wall extends only a little way into the new unit before turning westward and disappearing into the baulk. This supports our assumption that the wall is part of the outer gatehouse itself. The wall at this point is preserved only one course high and this is almost certainly foundation, as no floor surface was seen to reach this wall. The fill around the foundation, as well as below the wall, is the same clean sand described elsewhere as being 'pre-gate'. We dug one test probe into this fill to check its depth and composition. At level 11.90 (about 30 cm. below the foundation of the outer gate) we found a concentration of Late Bronze pottery, most at least partly mendable. This assemblage is almost entirely imported: Base Ring I and II, White Painted and Mycenaean ware are all represented.

The Iron Age I, Area G

The Iron Age I has been the focus of our interest at Dor for the past few seasons. In contrast to the usual picture of urban decline at the beginning of the Iron Age,[29] the site has already offered unique insights into a vigorous urbanizational activity, providing an abundance of imported materials in a period usually characterized by the cessation of overseas trade.[30] Our efforts to gain wide exposure of this period have focused on Area G, in the centre of the tell. The extraordinary finds made here in 1992 merit a more detailed discussion of the stratigraphy of this area. Iron I and early Iron II remains in Area G fall into three distinct strata, each of which may be further divided into two. The most complete sequence we have had so far is in Unit AI 32, and a sketch of this sequence may serve as a type-section for the stratigraphy elsewhere in the area (Figs. 11, 12).

Last year we proposed a stratigraphic sequence for Area G, with the proviso that the terminology is tentative and local.[31] We have not yet made any attempt to correlate the phase numbers here with site-wide stratification (which we note with Roman numeral stratum numbers), although we have a probable correlation of the Area G phases with the local phasing of Area B1, the other area in which Iron I remains were extensively excavated at Dor (see Table 1).

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29 E. Stern: Sikils, Phoenicians and Israelites at Tel Dor, *EI* 23 (1992), pp. 253–259 (Hebrew with English abstract).

30 Ayelet Gilboa: New Finds at Tel Dor and the Beginning of Cypro-Geometric Import to Palestine, *IEJ* 39 (1989), pp. 214–216.

31 Dor, 1991, p. 45.

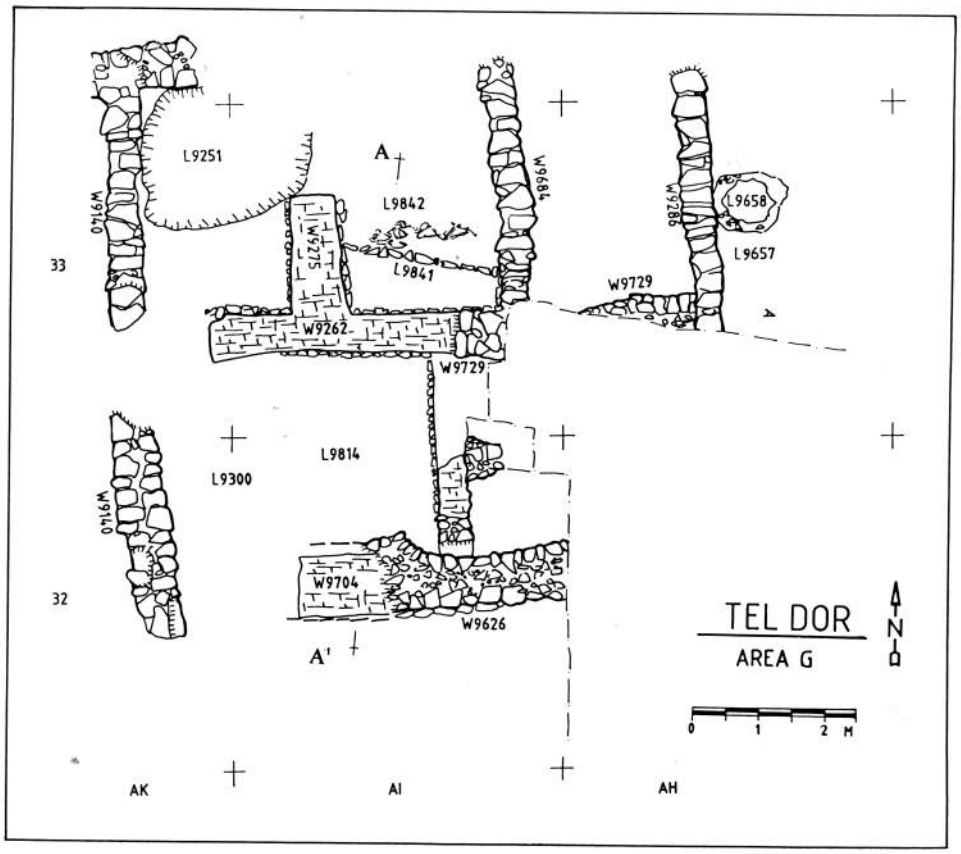

Fig. 11. Tel Dor, 1992, Area G: plan of Iron Age I remains.

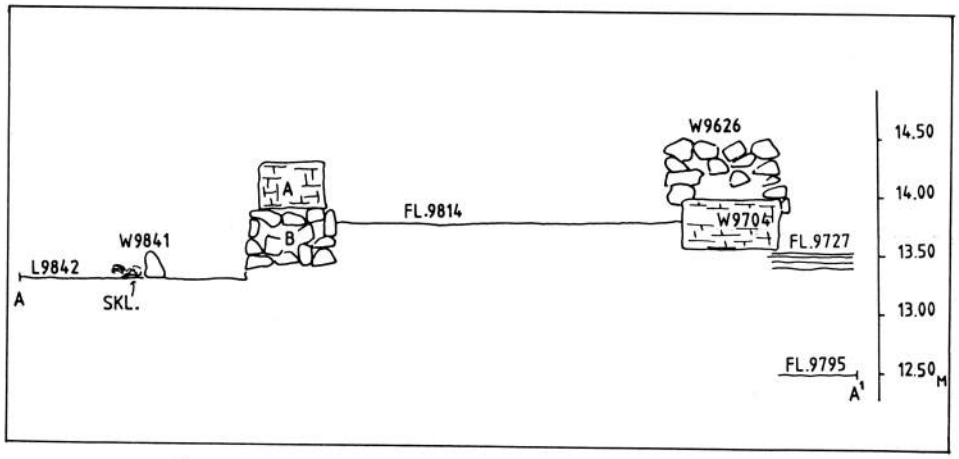

Fig. 12. Tel Dor, 1992, Area G: Section A–A' (see Fig. 11).

Table 1. Tentative correlations and dates for Iron I phases in Areas G and B1.

Area G	Area B1	Date
Phase 6a	Phase 8	Tenth century B.C.E.
Phase 6b	Phase 9	End of eleventh/early tenth century B.C.E.
Phase 7 Phase 8	Phase 10 Phase 11	Eleventh century B.C.E.
Phase 9	Phase 12 Phase 13	End of twelfth/early eleventh century B.C.E.

Phase 6. This phase is represented in Fig. 11 by a mudbrick wall (W9626) on a stone socle. This is one of a series of similar walls (some mudbrick, others constructed entirely of fieldstones) which have appeared in every unit of Area G and constitute a residential district (Fig. 13). It is not yet clear whether all the walls exposed so far are a single residence or parts of several adjacent houses. In some of the excavation units we found more than one floor level adjoining these walls; this phase is divided accordingly into 6a and 6b. Chronologically, Phase 6 appears to range from the end of the eleventh/early tenth centuries B.C.E. to the late tenth and possibly well into the ninth centuries B.C.E.

Phase 7 (Figs. 11, 12). The mudbrick wall, W9704, lying under W9626, belongs to this phase. For the most part, the Phase 6 residential district seems to be a direct continuation of Phase 7 structures. In some cases, the Phase 7 walls were re-used in Phase 6 with no change. In such rooms, the stratigraphical differentiation between the two phases is very difficult to ascertain. A case in point is the assemblage found last season on Floor 9657 (Units AH 33–34).[32] At the time we believed it to belong to Phase 6b, but additional evidence (see below) might lead us to consider the possibility that it is Phase 7. This is indicative of a much wider problem evident at Dor: the extraordinary continuity of the material culture between Late Iron Age I and Early Iron Age II. Re-urbanization (the most significant social change characterizing the Iron Age IIA in the interior of Israel) cannot be a criterion, because Dor was an urban site throughout the Iron Age I. Many stylistic attributes, such as the appearance of red-slipped and -burnished pottery, are missing from the local repertoire at Dor (as in other northern coastal sites) even later in the Iron Age II. A most plausible dating for the few assemblages definitely attributable to Phase 7

32 Dor, 1991, p. 45.

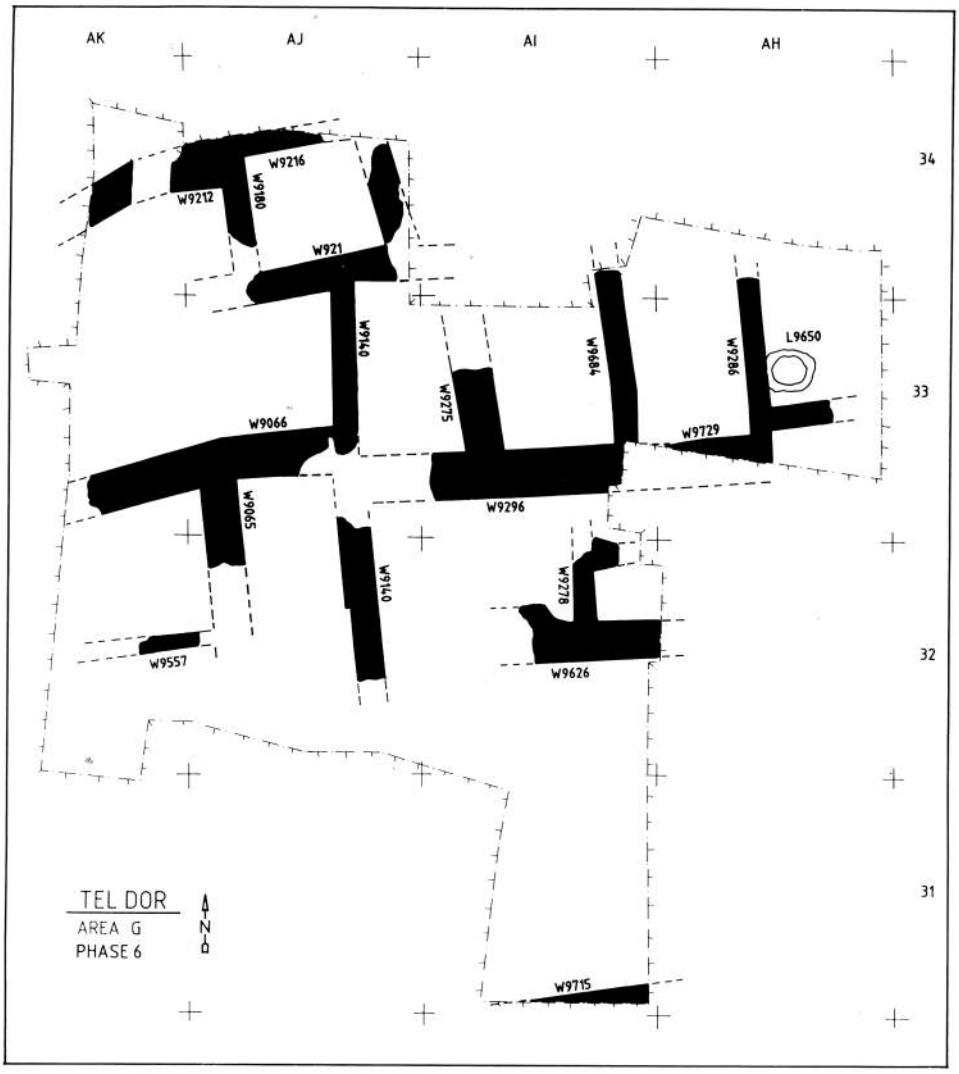

Fig. 13. Tel Dor, 1992, Area G: plan of Phase 6.

(e.g. some complete pots found this season on Floor 9727, which reaches the Phase 7 wall, W9704; see Fig. 12) would be somewhere in the second half of the eleventh century B.C.E.

'Phase 8'. This is characterized in Fig. 12 by a series of floors which seems to underlie W9704. The entire phase is in question since no walls have yet been found in relation to these floors (with the possible exception of W9841; see below). It is arguable that these surfaces do not constitute an independent phase, architecturally speaking, but merely represent some sort of levelling operation above the Phase 9

destruction (see below, p. 149), in order to achieve a reasonably flat surface upon which to begin construction of the Phase 7 walls. A separate number was allocated for this phase in the provisional phasing scheme in the event that independent walls belonging to it are eventually found and it is determined to be a separate entity. One option to consider is the combination of Phases 7 and 8 into 'Phase 7 + 8' for the purpose of this discussion. A similar situation was found above the same destruction level in Area B1;[33] thus, whatever the explanation, the phenomenon seems to occur site-wide.

Phase 9 is the destruction layer first glimpsed last season.[34] It is fully discussed in a separate section (see below, p. 149).

Skeletal Remains in Unit AI 33

In the course of excavating Unit AI 33 (Fig. 13), we found the entire space between W9262, W9684 and W9275 to be filled with fallen stones. No floors of either Phase 6b or 7 were found in this unit. The southern edge of the stone fall defined a fairly neat line — W9841. We assumed that this wall had collapsed; accordingly, when tidying up towards the end of the season, we began to remove the stones with the purpose of locating the north face of the wall. While doing so, we found human foot bones protruding from the rubble. Excavating further, we exposed a complete skeleton of a woman, approximately 40 years of age,[35] lying on Floor L9842, next to W9841, and completely covered with rubble.

The woman was lying on her side, facing the wall (Fig. 14). Almost all the bones were intact and in articulation, except for the left foot, which was found at an impossible angle (possibly dislocated when the woman fell), and the skull, which was partially caved-in. Both hands were raised to protect the face (or in a gesture of supplication?).

W9841, the collapse of which presumably caused the woman's death, is an extremely thin wall, constructed of a single width of medium-sized fieldstones. As a free-standing wall it could have been very stable. It might have been a retaining wall, or an installation wall of some kind. The top of W9841 is just below the level of the top of W9262b, and its bottom is a few centimetres below that of W9262b. It appears to extend under W9275 and to abut W9684.

Since this find was made on the last two days of the season, we did not have time to fully excavate the rooms around the one in which the skeleton was found, nor to ascertain the stratigraphical relationships between all the architectural elements

33 E. Stern: New Evidence from Dor for the First Appearance of the Phoenicians along the Northern Coast of Israel, *BASOR* 279 (1990), p. 26.

34 Dor, 1991, p. 45.

35 Personal communication: Prof. Patricia Smith.

Fig. 14. Tel Dor, 1992, Area G: skeletal remains.

in the unit. On the basis of our current knowledge, the skeleton could be attributed to phase 6b, 7, or 8. The most likely candidate, based on the similar levels of W9841 and W9262b, is phase 7. However, phase 6b is not out of the question, assuming that W9262 and W9841 continued in use into phase 6, since no phase 6 floor was found in this room. The conjecture that the skeleton might belong to phase 8 is based on the possibility that in phase 7, W9262b was a stone foundation for the brick wall W9262a, and that W9841 belongs to a lower phase. Determining the correct dating is one of our goals in the coming season. It should be stressed that in absolute dates, the stratigraphic ambiguity is of no great consequence since all three phases span, in all probability, less than a century. Nonetheless, deciding whether to date this find to the very end of the Iron Age I or slightly earlier is important for assessing its historical significance.

What, then, is the significance of the skeleton lying in the rubble? An earthquake or some other natural calamity would account for the sudden collapse of the wall over the body, as well as for the fact that it had not been dug out of the rubble. On the other hand, so far there has been no positive evidence for earthquake damage in other areas of the tell, although there are no contrary indications either; what caused the end of the corresponding phases 9 and 10 in Area B1, for instance, is a moot question.

Other possibilities are war or fire. It should be stressed that, unlike the preceding phase 9 (see below, p. 149), we found no evidence of conflagration in phases 6b–8. The

postulation of violent conquest once again assumes a general or site-wide destruction, and is therefore subject to the same limitations as the earthquake theory.

Finally, we should consider the possibility that this is a burial, rather than an accidental death. To our knowledge, there is not a single instance of intramural burial under a cairn of stones in this country. Intramural burials in built (vaulted or slab-roofed) chambers under houses are known — although uncommon — in the Canaanite periods, but never in the Iron Age. The stones over the skeleton might in this case be the collapse of the walls or roof of the chamber. This might account for the appearance of W9841, but if this is the case, where are the other walls of the chamber? Moreover, such crypts almost always contain multiple burials and an abundance of grave goods.

Let us now consider the wider significance of this occurrence. One attractive theory is to relate the skeleton found in L9842 and the pots on Floor 9559 and on Floor 9657 in Area G to the end of phase 9 in Area B1.[36] This hypothesis has the merit of reducing all the evidence of mishaps in the Iron Age I at Dor to two site-wide destructions: a great fire at the end of the twelfth/beginning of the eleventh centuries B.C.E., which brought about the end of phase 9 in Area G and of phase 12 in Area B1 (see below); and an earthquake(?) at the end of the eleventh/ beginning of the tenth centuries B.C.E., causing the end of phase 9 in Area B1 and phase 7 in Area G. Admittedly, such an explanation strains (but does not actually break) the stratigraphic constraints. It requires the attribution of the skeleton to phase 7 (rather than 6b or 8) and the 'moving' of the assemblage on Floor 9657 (almost 1 m. higher than the skeleton) from phase 6b into 7. Typologically, the question posed by this equation is whether phase 9, the final Iron I phase in Area B1, is best correlated with phase 7 or with phase 6b in Area G.

If one accepts this theory, this destruction might find corollaries elsewhere. We have already opined[37] that our phase 9 in Area B1 corresponds with the Stratum VIb destruction at Megiddo, which, in turn, is equated with a series of other destructions, such as Tell Qasile Stratum X. This series of destructions serves as a benchmark for the end of the Iron Age I inasmuch as the strata following them already display Iron II stylistic attributes. The usual explanation of this widespread catastrophe is to ascribe it to David's conquests. This is based on the reasonable assumption that the transition from Iron I to Iron IIA coincides historically with the establishment of the United Kingdom. No absolute dates, however, are available to support these assumptions. Dor and Megiddo are mentioned in the list of 'unconquered lands' in Joshua and Judges, while they appear as part of the Israelite kingdom in Solomon's list of provinces. There is no mention, however, as to exactly when and in what manner the transition from Canaanite to Israelite rule occurred. Other

36 A. Stewart: A Death at Dor, *Biblical Archaeology Review* 19/2 (1993), p. 36.
37 Gilboa (above, n. 30), p. 205.

towns in which comparable destruction layers are found (Qasile, Yoqneam) are not mentioned in any relevant source.

The Great Fire, Phase 9 of Area G

At the end of last season, while sweeping the floors of phase 8 in Unit AI 32, we noticed that immediately below the floor level the colour of the dirt turned to the rich orange colour of baked brick. This recalled a similar phenomenon encountered in Area B1, where the corresponding phase 12 had suffered intense fire, which baked most of the mudbricks straight through.[38] A small test probe confirmed that a destruction layer of some depth indeed occurs in phase 9 of Area G.[39] This season we set out to excavate the complete unit down to floor level.

The destruction level proved to be nearly 1 m. thick. The fill of the unit consisted mainly of burnt fallen bricks with pockets of black ash. The limestones in the fall had calcified in the intense heat and turned into spots of lime with the consistency and colour of cream cheese. The fall was almost devoid of pottery. At level 12.60 we reached the floor, which was characterised by a layer of crushed pottery

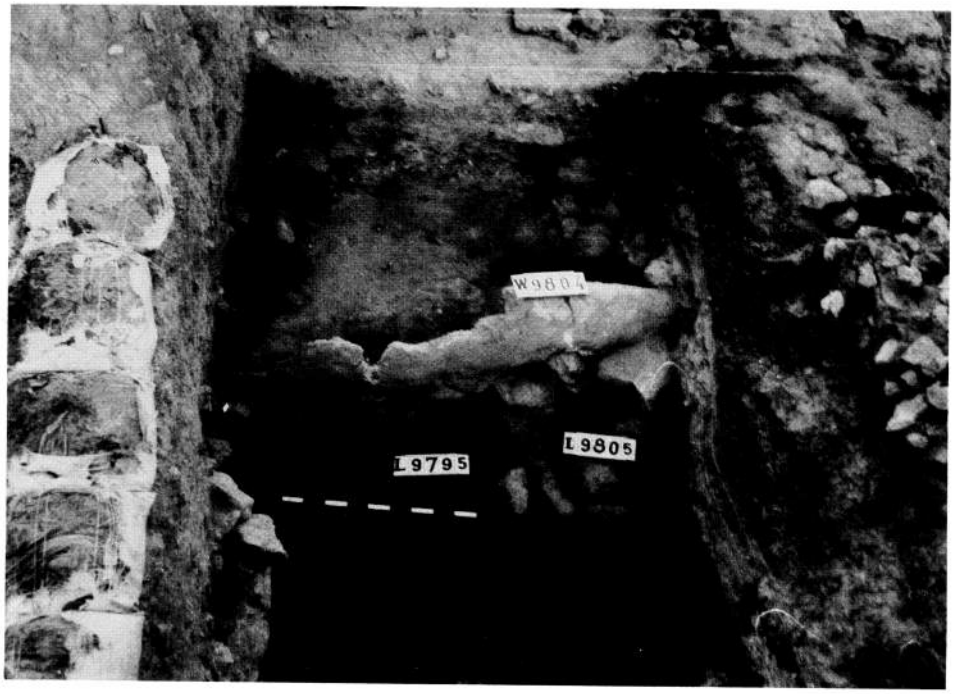

Fig. 15. Tel Dor, 1992, Area G: the destruction level.

38 Dor, 1988–1989, pp. 58–59.
39 Dor, 1991, p. 45.

and a dramatic change of colour of the deposits, back to dull grey and brown, a few centimetres below it.

Several pots from this floor were mended; the most characteristic are reminiscent of Late Bronze prototypes (e.g. both a late variant of the 'Canaanite' commercial storage-jar and a late form of the 'household' storage-jar, decorated with red bands on the shoulder, are prevalent).

One architectural feature of this stratum is noteworthy: a very thin (less than 10 cm.) waist-high partition which runs north–south across the centre of the excavation unit. It is coated by a layer of lime and mud plaster with round moulding, balustrade style, at the top (Fig. 15). The fire had solidified this plaster into a concretion almost as hard as modern cement plaster, which explains why this remarkable installation stayed intact. Next to this partition there is a small basin-like installation, half of which is still hidden under the baulk. As of yet, we do not have any explanation as to the nature of these installations. One cannot help but wonder if such installations were not very common in ancient dwellings, although they are rarely discovered. Silos or bins made of unburnt clay or dung are commonly seen in dwellings in traditional societies today, and are mentioned in some historical sources.[40] They would not survive at all, except when preserved in extraordinary conditions, such as the great heat generated by the fire which destroyed this city. It is our intent to greatly extend the exposure of this stratum over the next few years, and to preserve in Area G a part of the city as it looked when destroyed in the early Iron Age.

40 Y. Hirschfeld: *Dwelling Houses in Roman and Byzantine Palestine*, Jerusalem, 1987, pp. 74–76 (Hebrew).