

Tel Dor, 1994–1995: Preliminary Stratigraphic Report

E. STERN

The Hebrew University
of Jerusalem

J. BERG

Far Western
Anthropological Research Group Inc.
University of California, Davis

A. GILBOA

The Hebrew University
of Jerusalem

I. SHARON

The Hebrew University
of Jerusalem

J. ZORN

Cornell University
Ithaca, N.Y.

THE fourteenth and fifteenth seasons of excavations at Tel Dor were conducted in 1994 and 1995 in five areas (Fig. 1). The 1994 excavations concentrated on Area D2, on the mound's southern slope, just east of the section cut here by J. Garstang in the 1920s, on Area F, atop its western slope, and on Area G in its centre. In 1995, the areas excavated were Area D2, Area D1 to the west of D2 and of Garstang's section, and Area B2, near the tell's south-eastern corner.¹ Iron Age remains were discovered in Areas D2 and G; Persian remains in Areas D1, D2 and G; Hellenistic remains in Areas D1, D2 and F; and Roman remains in Areas B2, D1, D2 and F. The stratigraphical schemes for each area are, for the time being, independent. Phasing and the numbering of phases are preliminary.

1 The Tel Dor project, directed by E. Stern, is conducted on behalf of the Institute of Archaeology of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and the Israel Exploration Society. Areas F and G were excavated by a team of the University of California at Berkeley, directed by A. Stewart (1994); Area B2 by a group from California State University, Sacramento, directed by H. Goldfried (1995); and Area D1 by a team from Saskatchewan University, Canada, directed by C. Foley (1994, 1995). A large group of German volunteers, headed by E. and V. Haury, participated in both seasons, as well as other volunteers and Hebrew University students. We sincerely thank them all. The staff included R. Rosenthal-Heginbottom, I. Sharon (site stratigrapher), B. Zilberstein (registrar), J. Berg, G. Zionit, S. Schäbitz (architects), A. Estes, L. and C. Foley, A. Gilboa, M. and H. Goldfried, J. Zorn (area supervisors for Areas F, D1, D2, B2 and G respectively). Also participated: B. Avenberg, M. Goldin, O. Hilman-Nagar, J.B. Powell, J. Shtutina, N. Qranot, H. Koenig (assistant area supervisors); I. Hirshberg (photography); V. Rosen (draftmanship); R. Gross (restoration); S. Dahan, R. Janice and R. Samuel (administration). For a full bibliography up to the 1994 season, see Chapter 11 in E. Stern *et al.*: *Excavations at Dor, Final Report, Vol. Ia, Areas A and C: Introduction and Stratigraphy* (Qedem Reports 1), Jerusalem, 1995 (henceforth: *Dor Ia*).

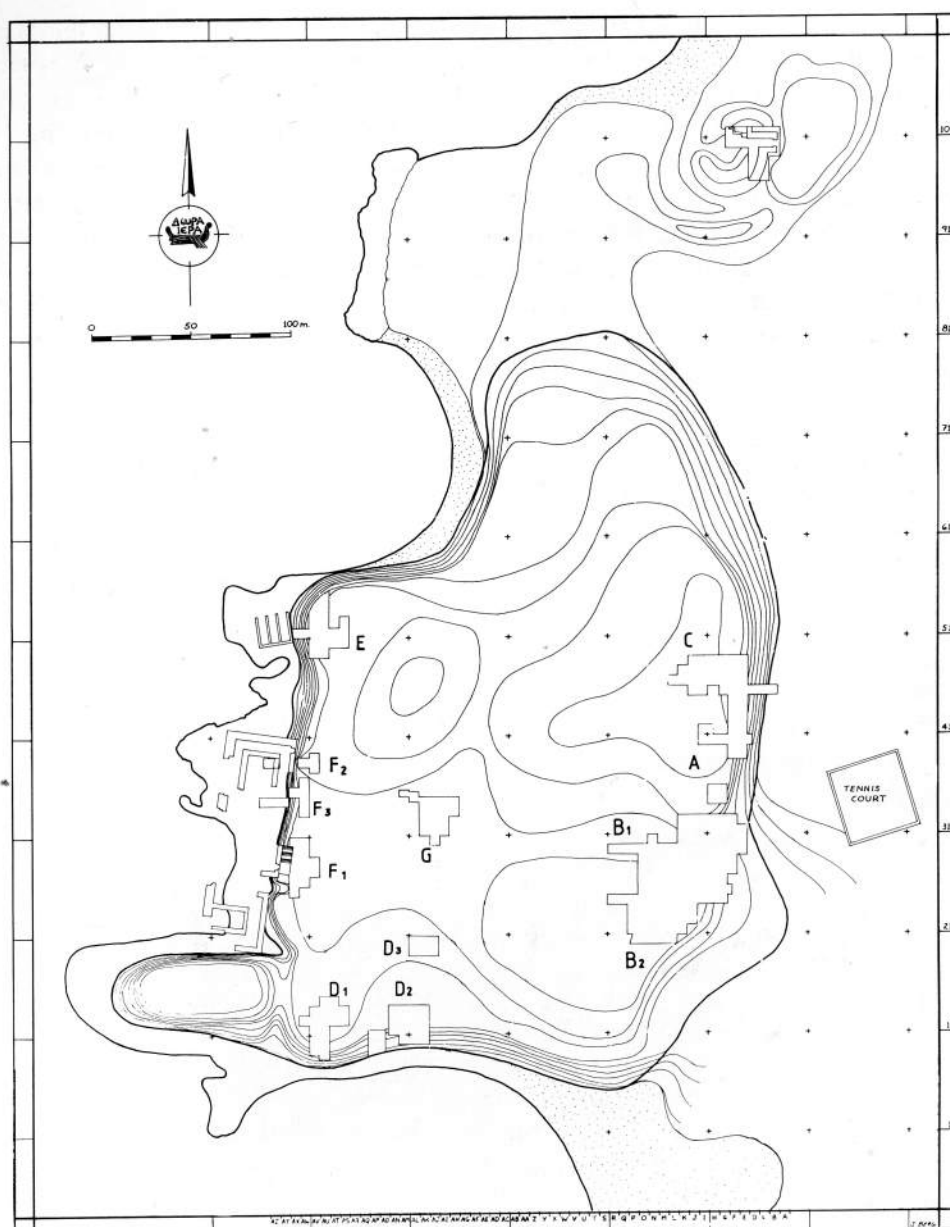


Fig. 1. Tel Dor, 1994-1995: general plan.

In the first decade of excavation, we focused on domestic zones in the eastern section and at the centre of the mound, and on elucidating the eastern fortification lines of the city (Areas A, B1, C and G). In our opinion, we now have a fair understanding of the occupational history of the tell, from the early Iron Age to

the Roman period.² In the past few seasons, we have concentrated on the public institutions at the site, evidence for which is concentrated mainly in the western and southern parts of the mound.³ We have focused on large-scale exposure of at least one public structure in each area, in the hope of elucidating — and ultimately restoring and displaying — at least one example of large-scale public architecture from each of the major periods. These include edifices around the entry *piazza* to the Roman town (Area B2); the temple platform from the Roman period in Area F; a massive building from the Persian and early Hellenistic periods in Area D1 — perhaps part of the acropolis on the south-eastern peninsula; and a monumental structure constructed in the early Iron Age in Area D2, above the southern bay.

AREA B2 (1995)

Phase 1: Late Second Century C.E.(?)–First Half of Third Century C.E. (Fig. 2)

Previous excavations conducted in Area B2 revealed that in the latter part of the

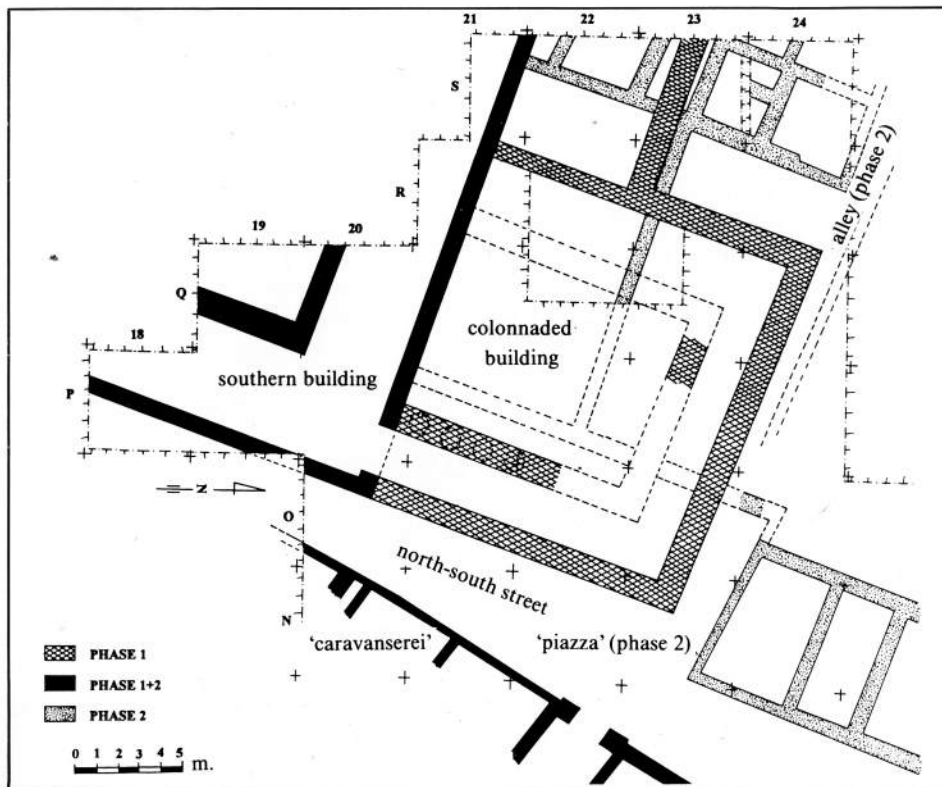


Fig. 2. Area B2: superimposition of Phases 1 and 2.

2 E. Stern, in *Dor Ia* (above, n. 1), pp. 271–283.

3 *Idem*, *Dor — Ruler of the Seas*, Jerusalem, 1994, p. 216.

Roman period a structure had been built to the west of the main city entry, resulting in a modification of the original Phase 2 Roman street plan in this vicinity.⁴ This structure and its relationship to the pre-existing Roman architecture of the area was the main focus of the 1995 undertaking. Two hypotheses were suggested regarding the building's superstructure: that it was a roofed basilical hall, or that it was an open colonnaded courtyard.⁵ Structural factors seem to favour the latter. These differing reconstructions entail different functional significance to the building. Also pertinent to the determination of the type of building is the question of whether it was a completely separate structure, or merely an adjunct to a larger complex. Our aim, therefore, was to determine the building plan, its association with nearby structures, and its stratigraphic relation to other buildings. Towards this goal, we continued excavating within the podium fill of the Phase 1 structure, as well as opening several new units towards the west.

This season's excavation revealed the full extent of the structure (16 × 17.5 m.), with all four walls exposed, although primarily only as foundations (Fig. 2). An inner colonnaded courtyard measures 12.5 × 10 m. Traces of the colonnade were found on three interior sides of the structure, with the eastern and western ends abutting the southern wall. The entryway cannot be determined due to the poor preservation of the superstructure. The eastern façade of the building, facing the north-south street (Fig. 2), is exactly in line with the façade of the Phase 2 building south of it (see below). However, it was established that the two are not the same wall, the Phase 1 façade having been built above the street pavement which abutted the Phase 2 building. The area to the south of the building is heavily disturbed to the level of the Phase 2 foundations, so it is impossible to establish whether the Phase 2 building there continued to be used in Phase 1, or whether something else was built over it. Consequently, it is not possible to ascertain if the exposed building was constructed as a later addition to the Phase 2 structure, or if it had an independent function. The facts that its southern wall reuses the line of the north wall of the earlier building and that its eastern façade is a direct continuation of the Phase 2 façade suggest the latter.

Phase 2: Second Century C.E.

In order to appropriate the space to erect the Phase 1 peristyle, its builders constructed it over part of the main north-south street of the Phase 2 city, narrowing it considerably. They also demolished and closed off an east-west alley, which intersected this street at the north-eastern corner of the building.

Excavations in the fill of the Phase 1 building's podium and to the east of it

4 E. Stern and I. Sharon: Tel Dor 1992: Preliminary Report, *IEJ* 43 (1993), pp. 128–131 (henceforth: Dor 1992).

5 Dor 1992 (above, n. 4), Figs. 3–4.

revealed that in Phase 2, the north–south street was widened at this point to form a small, stone-paved *piazza*, covered in Phase 1 by the colonnaded building. The Phase 2 building to the south of the above-mentioned structure faced this *piazza* at its northern edge, and the north–south street at its eastern façade. An entryway at the north-eastern corner of the building's northern wall, at the southern edge of the *piazza*, was also revealed; in construction and configuration it is identical to the entryway into the large building previously east of the *piazza*.⁶ A series of small rooms was excavated to the west of the *piazza*; the construction and configuration of these rooms suggest possible residential or commercial use, further indicated by the presence of several *taburns* in them. Whereas the city-gate was apparently ringed with large-scale public buildings, it is becoming apparent, as we extend the excavations in Area B2 to the city's interior, that we have reached a residential area.

Earlier Phases

Earlier phases in Area B2 are only minimally exposed. Two different wall systems were exposed; their orientation and distance from each other suggests that they are unrelated. Their relationship to other earlier Phase 3 and Phase 4 structures cannot be determined; nevertheless, their common orientation with the Roman buildings in their immediate vicinity constitutes a further indication that the orientation of the later phases in this area is a continuation of a city plan established in the Hellenistic period, if not earlier.⁷

AREA D1 (1995)

Introduction

The main objective here was to extend the exposure of the large Persian period building in the north-eastern part of this area. This building is remarkable in size, in the width of its walls, its state of preservation, and its unique construction method, in some ways reminiscent of Punic construction in the Western Mediterranean.⁸ In previous seasons, we had excavated half of the building's western hall down to its foundations, and had found a sequence of floors, which indicated that use of this building spanned much of the Persian era and probably continued until the early Hellenistic period.⁹ We had also found that the building extended northwards and eastwards, out of our excavation area.

6 E. Stern, A. Gilboa and I. Sharon: Tel Dor — 1991: Preliminary Report, *IEJ* 42 (1992), pp. 41–42 (henceforth: Dor 1991).

7 Stern (above, n. 3), pp. 272–274.

8 E. Stern and I. Sharon: Tel Dor 1986: Preliminary Report, *IEJ* 37 (1987), p. 208 (henceforth: Dor 1986).

9 *Ibid.*

Phase 0: Late Roman or Later? (Fig. 3)

In the extension of Area D1 to the north we encountered remains later than anything hitherto known in this area: a T-shaped concrete foundation (W16032), which cuts the Roman stratum (see below). No floor was associated with these virtually undatable foundations, which may represent a radical shift in the town's layout in this area in a late Roman phase, such as has already been observed in Areas B2 and F (see below). Alternatively, they may be much later and somehow related to the medieval fortress on the acropolis, whose gateway should be located in this vicinity.

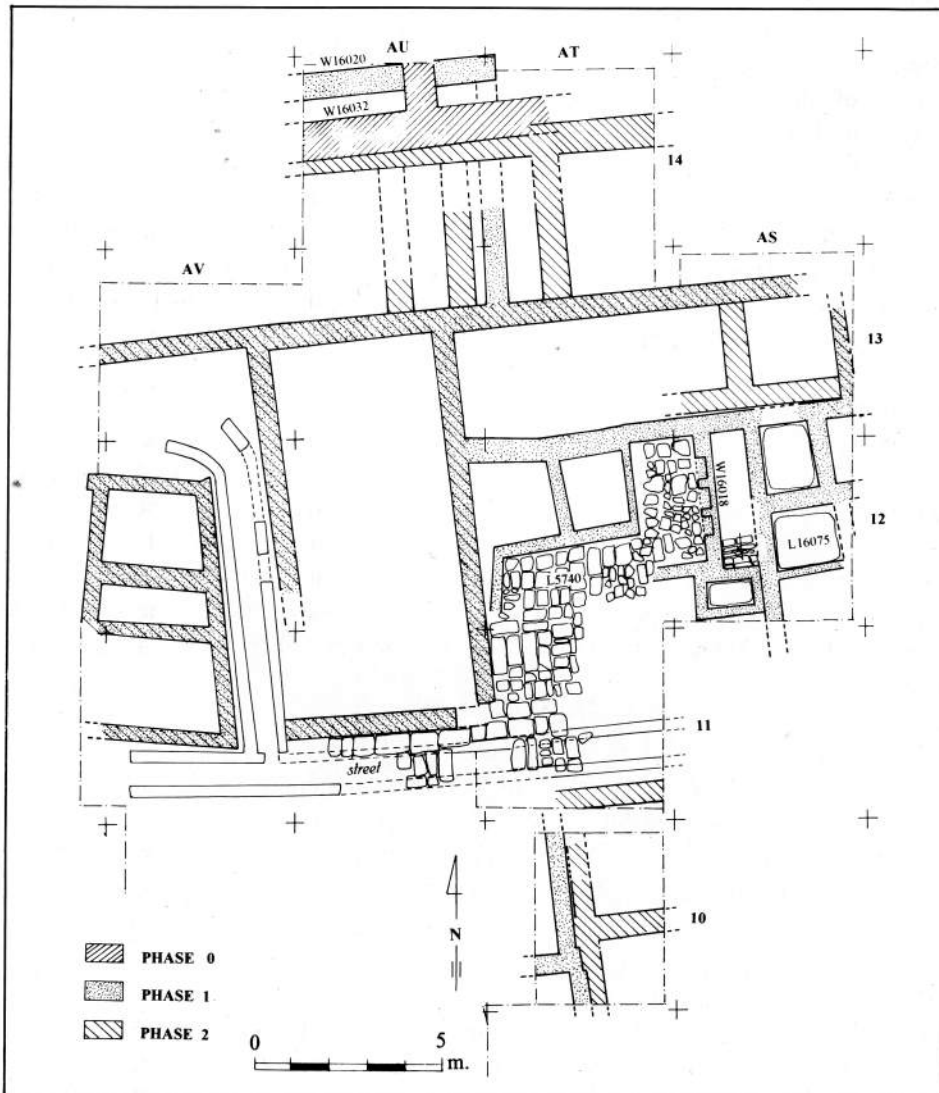


Fig. 3. Area D1: superimposition of Phases 0-2.

Phase 1: The Roman Period (Second Century C.E. ?) (Fig. 3)

Walls of this period were encountered in all the new units opened along the northern and eastern sides of the area. Since these remains are still somewhat fragmentary, it is hard to form a coherent picture of the exact nature of the occupation. In the south-eastern unit we located the continuation of the stone-paved east–west street that runs through Areas D1 and D2.¹⁰ Along the northern edge of the area there is a wall with stuccoed moulding along its base (W16020). In the eastern units a stone-paved passageway was found (L16090, L5740), possibly opening onto the aforementioned east–west street. The eastern wall flanking this passage (W16018) is curiously constructed, with several small niches, whose nature and function is not yet clear.

East of this passage we found an installation consisting of several small, interconnected plaster pools. A juglet and a marble *alabastron* were found in one of these (L16075), as well as several stone tools: two limestone hammerstones; a marble hammerstone, which may, by its shape, have been hafted; a sandstone abrader with an offset conical shape to fit palm of hand; a conical basalt polishing stone; and a tabular whetstone, possibly haematite, probably used for sharpening metal tools, such as chisels. All appear to be related to the manufacture of polished stone vessels, like the one found in association.¹¹

Phase 2: The Hellenistic Period

This phase, wherever it appears, is distinct by virtue of the construction method of many of its walls, which are composed of rubble sections, with large ashlar standing between them at measured intervals. This construction method bears some resemblance to that of the palatial Persian period building below it (see below), but the Hellenistic walls are much thinner and the Hellenistic ashlar *diatons* stand on their short, thin side, while the Persian period ones are set on their long, thin face. The Hellenistic walls seem to follow the lines of the underlying Persian walls in plan.

Phase 3: The Late Persian/ Early Hellenistic Period (Fig. 4)

This is the last period of use of the large Persian period building (built earlier, as is evident from the one room excavated to the bottom). The walls of the building are 1 m. thick, built of rubble filling between massive ashlar *diatons* set at intervals across the width of the walls. This construction technique is reminiscent of the *à*

¹⁰ Stern (above, n. 3), pp. 282–284.

¹¹ For a similar industry elsewhere at Dor, see J. Berg, I. Sharon and B. Zilberstein: The Water Supply, Distribution and Sewage Systems at Roman Dor, in D. Amit *et al.* (eds.): *Ancient Aqueducts in Israel, Supplementum of the Journal of Roman Archaeology* (forthcoming).

telaio (lit. 'in frames') style which appears in the Punic architecture in the West, with the difference that at Dor the placement of the *diatons* is staggered every course, while in true *à telaio* style they stand one on top of the other, forming ashlar piers.¹²

In 1995, exposure of this building was greatly enlarged. In addition to some deepening of the previously excavated northern half of the hall, we finished dismantling the later construction above, began excavating a second hallway, and cleared to the top of the building's walls in two other rooms. So far, it appears that the building has three large parallel halls or rooms (c. 4 × 9 m. each), with an additional passage or hall to the north of all three (Fig. 4). The building definitely continues to the east, and possibly to the north, of the limits of Area D1.

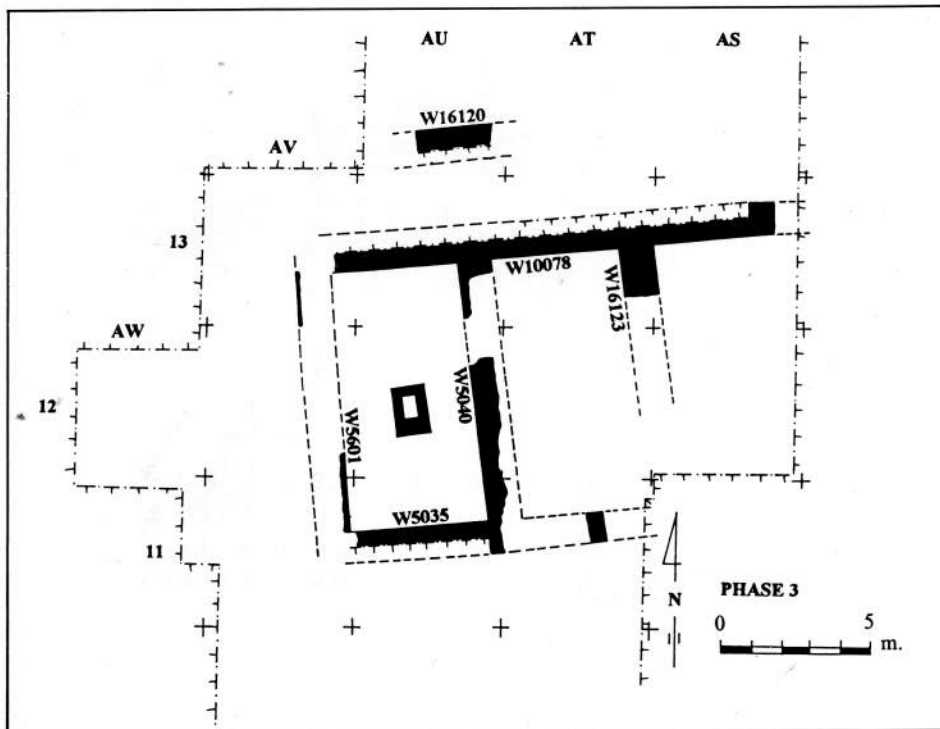


Fig. 4. Area D1: plan of Persian period 'palatial building'.

AREA D2 (1994, 1995)

Introduction

The main purpose here was to continue the exposure of the monumental Iron Age building excavated in previous seasons. Later architecture and deposits were investigated above and around this building.

¹² Cf. S.F. Bondi: City Planning and Architecture, in S. Moscati (ed.): *The Phoenicians*, Milan, 1988, p. 266; Figs. on pp. 249, 260, 270, 271.

A massive, intriguing structure, dated to the Iron Age, is situated along the southern perimeter of the mound, overlooking the southern bay, in which the early Iron Age harbour installations are located.¹³ The southern edge of this building's western wall (Fig. 5; W5340) was visible before excavation, having been exposed by wave-induced erosion of the mound's southern slope. It was first probed by Raban (his Wall M¹⁴) in the course of his investigation of harbour installations at

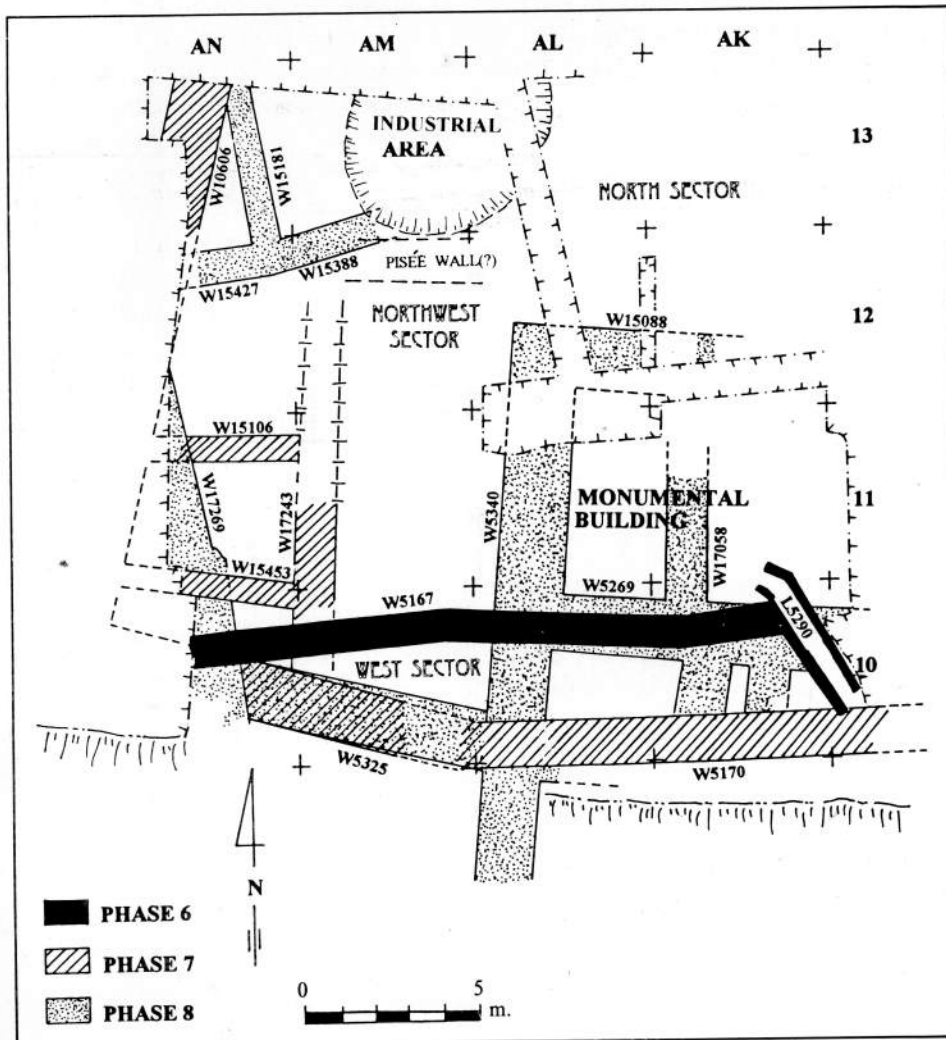


Fig. 5. Area D2, Phase 6-8: plan of Iron Age IB/II buildings.

13 A. Raban: *Dor Yam: Maritime and Coastal Installations at Dor in their Geomorphological and Stratigraphic Context*; Chapter 9 in *Dor Ia* (above, n. 1), pp. 310-341.

14 *Dor Ia* (above, n. 1), Fig. 9.16.

the southern bay. We refer below to the sector of the 'monumental building' itself (and elements directly above it); to a sector west of this building, along the slope and up to the line of the Persian–Roman east–west street; to a sector north-west of the corner of this building; and to a north sector (Fig. 5).

Only the north-western part of the building is known to date: its southern part has been eroded by the sea¹⁵ and its eastern part has not yet been excavated. The extant width of the structure is, therefore, 16 m. and the length of the excavated section is 9 m. Raban¹⁶ notes that his Wall J closely resembles Walls L and M of *the monumental building*. If this is indeed the eastern wall of the same structure, it was originally c. 40 m. long. The western wall of the monumental building (W5340; Raban's Wall M) is almost 5 m. high. The walls (1.75 m. wide) are built of a socle of large limestone boulders and a mudbrick superstructure. The north-western corner is composed of large ashlar. The dimensions of this structure, even in its reduced state of preservation, certainly place it within the group of the largest Iron Age public buildings in this country. The fact that is growing apparent, that the construction of this building predated most of these corollaries (see below), renders it unique.

The excavation of monumental edifices of the Iron Age (and of other periods) poses some special problems for the field archaeologist. Due to heavy construction and deep foundations, these buildings frequently had a long and intricate history, with different constructional and occupational cycles than those of domestic areas around them. The massive platforms formed by the collapse of these buildings were often used as a basis for subsequent construction, removing all evidence of the original superstructure. The material on top of the latest extant floor might, therefore, be unrelated to the original construction (as is the case at Dan¹⁷ and at Lachish¹⁸). The only way to date the construction of such an edifice is the painstaking delineation and deliberation of individual wall relations and layers of constructional fill, with a view both to dating them according to their sherd contents and to correlating constructional episodes in the large public buildings with more easily datable residential strata.

Accordingly, we describe below the general stratigraphic sequence of the area, from the top downwards, emphasizing the layers that might relate to the monumental building, and discuss the significance of these for the chronology and history of that edifice.

Phase 1: The Late Roman Period

The continuation of the cement and conglomerate foundations of the huge building

15 See also Raban (above, n. 13), p. 339.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 313.

17 A. Biran: *Biblical Dan*, Jerusalem, 1994, pp. 215–231.

18 D. Ussishkin: Excavations at Tel Lachish 1973–1977: Preliminary Report, *Tel Aviv* 5 (1978), pp. 41–42.

excavated in previous seasons was uncovered in newly opened squares in the northern part of the area.¹⁹ The overall plan and nature of the structure are still unclear.

Phases 2–3: The Early Roman and Hellenistic Periods

At least three phases of Hellenistic to Early Roman structures were uncovered in the newly opened squares, possibly parts of residential *insulae* like those excavated in Areas A and C.²⁰ Other parts of these structures were excavated here in previous seasons. They are built of *kurkar* with the typical ashlar-pier construction.²¹

Phases 4–5: The Persian Period

Further remains of the long, so-called 'magazine building' south of the east-west street were excavated above the monumental Iron Age building and in the western sector of the area (Fig. 6). The eastern edge of the building (and the possible line of a north-south street) was located just west of the eastern edge of our excavation,

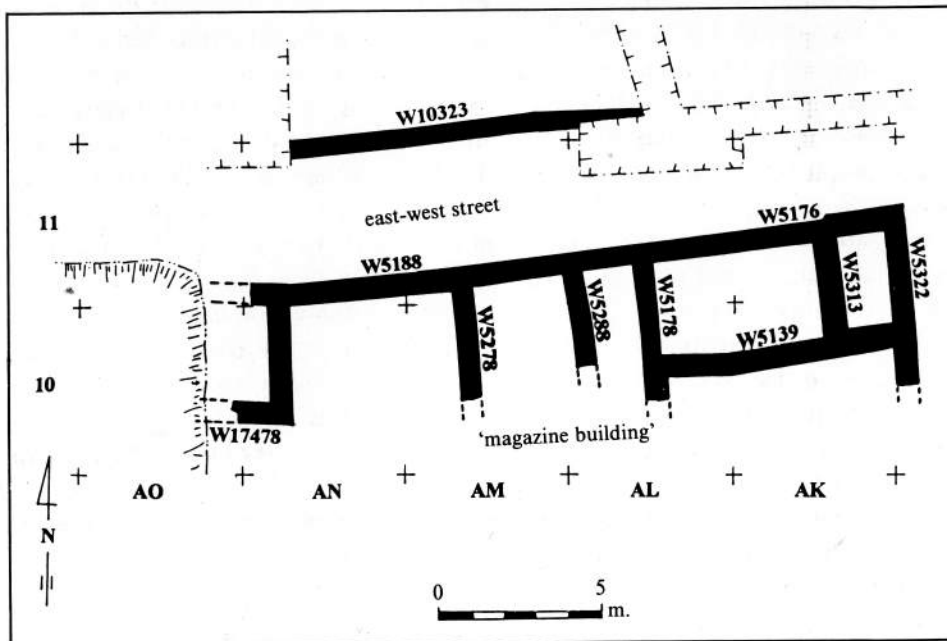


Fig. 6. Area D2, Phase 5: plan of Persian period 'magazine'.

19 E. Stern, A. Gilboa and I. Sharon: Tel Dor, 1987: Preliminary Report, *IEJ* 39 (1989), p. 40.

20 E. Stern: Stratigraphical Summary of Architectural Remains, in *Dor Ia* (above, n. 1); see also I. Sharon: The Stratigraphy of Areas A and C, in *op. cit.*, Photos 5.50–5.54, pp. 91–94.

21 I. Sharon: Phoenician and Greek Ashlar Construction Techniques at Tel Dor, Israel, *BASOR* 267 (1987), Fig. 2:d1.

indicating that the 'magazine' was at least 20 m. long. The western edge was cut by one of Garstang's trenches in the 1920s. The extant part of the building is composed of two parallel walls, the northern one constructed of alternating segments of large boulders and piers of massive squarish ashlar. The short cross walls were built of fieldstones. In some cases two such cross walls were found superimposed, indicating at least two constructional phases within the building. It is not clear whether the building extended southward, beyond the preserved southern wall, to the now eroded southern perimeter of the mound.

Several dog burials and many pits were excavated in the streets east and north of the building, the latter containing large amounts of restorable Persian period pottery and other finds.²² Preliminary analysis of the pottery indicates that the building was in use mainly in the fourth century B.C.E., but the exact chronological range is still unclear.

Phase 6: The 'Industrial Area' — Iron Age IIC

A vast concentration of restorable pottery, mostly of the seventh century B.C.E., and of iron and other slag, was excavated in the north-western sector of the area (Fig. 5). This huge deposit does not appear to relate to any known architecture. The pottery consists mainly of dozens of Phoenician commercial jars²³ and jugs. There are very few other forms, but these include some Assyrian-type vessels. In addition to the large amounts of iron slag, a few crucible fragments were uncovered. A clay *tuyère* and a complete crucible were found in secondary deposition above this concentration, and most probably originated in it. It remains to be determined whether all these remains are in primary deposition (no actual *in situ* vessels were found) or were discarded here. The occurrence of sub-pits within this deposit would favour the former possibility. In any case, these remains unequivocally point to an iron industry at Dor, conducted under Assyrian rule.²⁴ Analysis of the micro-stratigraphy within this deposit may determine whether it was initiated under Assyrian rule or had earlier beginnings, in the second half of the eighth century B.C.E.

Phase 7: Iron Age II

The remains of two buildings in the north-western and western sectors of the area are tentatively assigned to this phase. Of the northern one, obviously a large public building, only the eastern wall (W10606), built of large, well-dressed ashlar, is known

22 E. Stern: A Phoenician-Cypriote Votive Scapula from Tel Dor: A Maritime Scene, *IEJ* 44 (1994), pp. 1–12.

23 A. Gilboa: Assyrian Pottery at Dor and the Status of the Town during the Assyrian Occupation, *EI* 25 (1996), Fig. 4.

24 *Ibid.* S. Shalev: personal communication.

(Fig. 5, p. 37). Of the largely robbed western building, remains of two or three rooms are known, constructed of large fieldstones (W15453, W17243, W15106). The two buildings extend westward into the yet unexcavated part of the area. It should be emphasized that the stratigraphical relationship of these buildings to each other, to the Phase 6 industrial area and to the elements designated below Phase 8 is not yet clear; nor is their dating within the Iron Age (see below).

Phase 7?/8a?: The 'White Floors' — Iron Age IIB

An extensive, thick *kurkar* floor (L15142) was found in large patches west of the monumental building, covering most of the north-western sector of the area. This floor was cut by the Phase 6 industrial deposit. It directly covers the constructional fill of *pisée* platforms designated 'Phase 8' (see below). The floor slopes up towards the two large ashlar in the north-western corner of the monumental building and appears to reach the very top of these stones. Thus, it has not been finally established whether this floor originally abutted the building or covered it. At its northern edge, the floor sealed wall W15388 of Phase 8 (see below), but stopped short of the Phase 7 wall W10606. A few eighth-century pottery vessels were uncovered *in situ* on this *kurkar* floor.

In the western sector, a similar 'white floor' was located above the system of *pisée* platforms. Tracing it was often difficult as it is riddled by Persian pits. It seems to reach W5325, which forms the southern edge of the area. Its relation to the Phase 7 building found in this sector is not clear, as that building was heavily robbed.

Phase 8a: Iron Age IB-II

The monumental building that is our main goal in this area belongs to this phase (Fig. 5). Several superimposed floors were excavated within the building, the lowest still 2.60 m. above the known bottom of its western wall. It remains to be seen whether this gap is bridged by a series of earlier floors, or occupied by a constructional fill. The building is abutted on the west by an east-west wall (W5325), composed of large fieldstones, running along the present edge of the tell, possibly a fortification of sorts. It is not clear, however, whether this wall was built together with the monumental building or forms a later addition. On the west and north-west, the building is abutted by what seems to be a retaining system, composed of three superimposed *terre pisée* platforms, alternating with earthen fills. The uppermost *pisée* platform was covered by the thick white *kurkar* floor described above. The platforms all terminate in the north at a clear line of a curious feature consisting of consolidated mudbrick material, perhaps one of the rare occurrences in this country of *pisée* walls. The boundaries of this system on the other sides are not yet clear. Although the top of each *pisée* platform produced a floor-like surface, none of these had any complete vessels (or any other indication of a living horizon) on them. Quite a sizeable assemblage of sherds was collected from within this series of fills, however.

They all appear to be homogeneous, of an eleventh–tenth-century horizon, and none are necessarily later than the early tenth century B.C.E.

Phase 8b: Iron Age IB/IIA

A fieldstone structure in the north-west sector (Fig. 5, p. 37; W15388, W15427, W15181) belongs to this phase. Parts of two rooms have been excavated; the eastern one was violently destroyed, and its tilted and crooked southern wall may suggest an earthquake.²⁵ The destruction deposit included dozens of restorable vessels, mainly small containers, many bearing bichrome decoration. The preliminary date assigned to this assemblage is the late eleventh or early tenth century B.C.E., like the pottery in the mudbrick platform system and that of Phase 9 in Area B and Phase 7/6 in Area G (see below).

Another wall (W17269), running along the edge of the north-western and western sectors and abutted by the southern enclosure/retaining/fortification wall W5325, is similarly toppled, although, unfortunately, no great amount of pottery or other finds was sealed under this collapse. The *pisée* platforms partly cover this collapse. If W17269 and W5325 are indeed allocated to Phase 8b, and taking into account the fact that W5325 abuts the monumental building, then the monumental building coexisted with the Phase 8b structures and survived whatever calamity caused their collapse.

Conclusion: The Dating and Function of the Monumental Building

The preliminary data pertaining to the dating of the building are summarized in Table 1. It seems that the time of construction has been narrowed to within the Iron

25 We have evidence for several destructions at Dor during the Iron Age I. The difficulty is in correlating the destruction deposits in the various areas, and in determining the cause of each. In Area B1 we found a massive burnt layer in Phase 12 [B1] dating from the late twelfth/early eleventh century B.C.E., and a possible destruction in Phase 9 [B1] dating from the early tenth century B.C.E. In Area G there is a massive conflagration in Phase 9 [G], datable to the late twelfth/early eleventh century B.C.E. (see below in detail), and two episodes, the evidence for which is localised to specific rooms or structures, tentatively assigned to Phases 6b and 7/8. See A. Gilboa: *Iron I Pottery Evolution at Dor — Regional Contexts and the Cypriot Connection*, in S. Gitin, A. Mazar and E. Stern (eds.): *Mediterranean Peoples in Transition: Thirteenth to Early Tenth Centuries BCE* (in press). The Phase 8 catastrophe, vividly illustrated by the body of a woman trapped under a collapsed wall, was hypothesized to be an earthquake (A. Stewart: *A Death at Dor*, *Biblical Archaeology Review* 19/2 [1993], pp. 30–37). It is tempting to assign the collapse of the Phase 8b [D2] houses to the same event. Preliminary assessment of the ceramic evidence, however, suggests a closer affinity of the 8b [D2] assemblage to 6b [G] than to 7 [G].

Table 1. Data pertaining to the dating of the monumental building, Area D2.

Element	Location	Relations to monumental building	Date
W5170 and Floor L5241 (Phase 7)	Over the monumental building	Post-dating	eighth(?) / seventh(?) century (sherds only)
<i>kurkar</i> floor L15142 (Phase 7?/8a?)	North-western sector	Either post-dating or contemporary	Eighth century (<i>in situ</i>)
Fills and floors inside building (Phase 8)	In building	Contemporary	eleventh/tenth century-ninth century (sherds only)
Raban's floor L49 ^a	In building, seaward side	Contemporary	Tenth century (sherds)
Raban's floor L59 ^b	Outside the building, west	Contemporary	Tenth century (sherds)
'Platform' system (Phase 8a)	West and north-western sectors	Contemporary	Late eleventh/early tenth century (sherds)
Building W15388 and W15181 (Phase 8b)	North-western sector	Probably contemporary	Late eleventh/early tenth century (<i>in situ</i>)
Raban's 'Floor 0' ^c	Under building	Pre-dating	Twelfth century

a Raban (above, n. 13), p. 326.

b *Ibid.*, p. 335, Fig. 9.26.

c *Ibid.*, Fig. 9.17.

Age I (or at the latest, the very beginning of Iron Age IIA), i.e. earlier than the date conventionally assigned to other examples of monumental public architecture in the Iron Age, such as the first palace at Lachish, the *bamah* at Dan and the palaces at Megiddo. The only other well-dated examples of Iron I monumental architecture occur at Philistine sites. The question how early within the Iron Age I the building was, in fact, erected, remains to be ascertained in future seasons.

The monumental building continued to be in use for a long period, at least until the ninth, and possibly the eighth century B.C.E. Another question left open is whether it was in use until the Assyrian conquest or went out of use some time before this event.

Although at first it seemed logical to assume that the role of the building is related to the maritime activity in the harbour to its south, this hardly seems to be the case, since all the harbour installations uncovered here by Raban antedate the building. In the architectural phases pre-dating this building, excavated by Raban and dated by him to the late thirteenth-early eleventh centuries B.C.E., a

well, a drainage channel and a pavement were uncovered²⁶ in what Raban defined as a 'topographic' hollow²⁷ — all perhaps indicating this spot as a point of entry from the harbour to the city.²⁸ The retaining system relating to our monumental building covers all these elements, indicating that if indeed a road/street had existed here in the late thirteenth to early eleventh centuries, it was abolished with the construction of the monumental building — a meaningful alternation, perhaps indicating a functional change. Raban, too, views the monumental building as an inland-oriented structure, although he claims that this shift in the destination of this part of the site occurred even earlier than the construction of the monumental building.²⁹

The evidence thus far presented indicates that by the eighth century most of the area, the sectors north-west and west of the monumental building, consisted of a large open court. Another crucial question that remains to be resolved in future seasons concerns the relation of the courtyard to the buildings designated above as Phase 7, and especially Building 10606, which is obviously of a public nature. The issue here is to determine whether these buildings might be regarded as adjunct structures or additions to the monumental building, representing some extension of its original function, or whether they, in fact, replaced it.

AREA F (1994)

Introduction

Previous investigation conducted in Area F and its vicinity indicates that this area is the location of the temple precinct of the late Roman period.³⁰ Two primary complexes or temples are apparent from the remains found at the site to date. Investigations have concentrated on the northern of the two.

Earlier hypotheses conjectured that this northern temple was configured in a fashion common in Roman period temples in the Eastern Mediterranean: a rectangular prostyle temple upon a high, free-standing podium, accessed from an open courtyard by a staircase, the entire complex surrounded by a high temenos wall.³¹ It was assumed that the courtyard must have been at the southern end of the temple, as the remains of the podium wall found at the northern end are too close to the temenos wall to allow space for either a courtyard or a flight of stairs. There

26 Raban (above, n. 13), pp. 327–335.

27 *Idem*, *The Harbor of the Sea Peoples at Dor*, *BA* 50 (1987), p. 123.

28 *Idem* (above, n. 13), Fig. 9.27.

29 *Ibid.*, pp. 337–338.

30 J. Garstang: Tantura (Dora) Bulletin, *British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem* 4 (1924), pp. 35–45, and No. 6, pp. 65–73; J. Berg: *The Temple at Tel Dor, Israel* (unpublished M.A. thesis, California State University), Sacramento, 1986.

31 *Ibid.*; see also Dor 1992 (above, n. 4), p. 134.

are doorways at the northern and southern ends of the eastern temenos wall, allowing access through this wall. Stairways leading down from the city's street level to the doorways have also been uncovered (Fig. 7).

Recent excavations conducted in Area F have focused on the eastern edge of the complex and within the remnants of the podium. Several interesting features have been revealed, resulting in a re-evaluation of the likely configuration of the complex and governing the progress of the excavations in the area. First, the entire complex is separated from the rest of the city by a massive, 2.2 m. thick, concrete barrier wall, which serves as a retaining wall in only a minimal sense. Its function appears to have been merely to segregate the temple area from the remainder of the city. Second, the matrix of the podium itself is not constructed of artificial fill, but instead, of existing stratified occupation horizons of the tell. To construct the podium the builders dug into previous deposits to the level of the courtyard, about 4 m. lower than the existing level of the mound. They then built the podium walls into or against the existing deposits, rather than having artificial fill placed inside the podium after construction. In the case of the eastern podium wall, practically nothing remains, but excavations indicate that it differed significantly in its construction from the remaining podium walls, suggesting that it was probably mostly buried. Third, the eastern temenos wall is not homogeneous along its entire length. At the location of the two doorways this wall is of massive construction, and is built of large blocks, like the other temenos walls. The central portion between the stairways, however, was built of smaller, reused stones.³² As with the eastern podium wall, it appears that the lower portions were buried in the pre-existing deposits. These observations, corroborated by the excavation of a series of units between the projected temenos wall alignment and the podium, lead to the conclusion that the area between the eastern temenos wall and podium was not an open passageway at courtyard level, but rather retained original stratified tell deposits to the floor level of the podium, thus suggesting an entrance into the complex from the east. Finally, both Garstang and the current excavators found that the northern and southern doorways had been intentionally blocked, probably very shortly after completion of the complex.³³ As there is no indication that the complex went out of use at this time, this constitutes further evidence for the existence of an additional entrance, probably at podium floor level. The 1994 effort in Area F was geared towards resolving this question.

Phase 1: The Late Roman Period (Late Second and/or Early Third Century C.E.) (Fig. 7)

Excavation in 1994 consisted of the opening of remaining unexcavated areas on the eastern side of the northern temple complex, between the southern access stairs,

32 Garstang (above, n. 30), Pl. III.

33 *Ibid.*; Dor 1992 (above, n. 4), pp. 134-136.

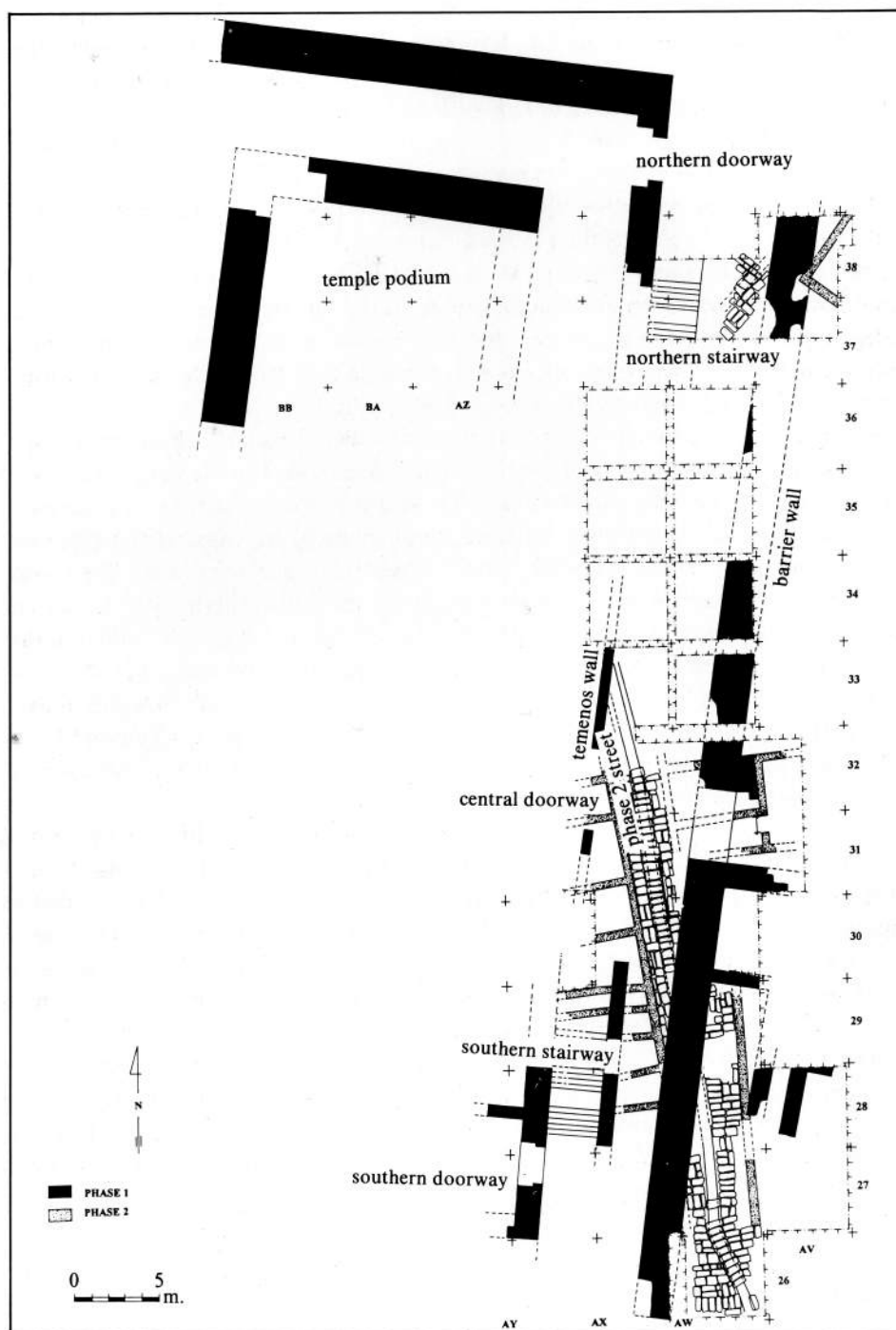


Fig. 7. Area F: superimposition of Phases 1 and 2.

excavated in 1986–1989³⁴ and units AY–AX 33–38 to the north, excavated in 1993.³⁵ The units excavated in 1993, located approximately midway between the two stairways, had failed to reveal an opening in the massive eastern barrier wall and had also failed to locate any continuation of the temenos wall. Lack of preservation of the temenos wall was puzzling, but was considered to be due to disturbances resulting from Garstang's investigations, stone robbing and subsequent erosion.

Work in the new units began with exposure of the thick barrier wall, of which only foundations remain. As the top of this feature lies just below the present surface of the tell, it was not long before it came to light. Two eastward projections, approximately 5 m. apart, were noted almost immediately. These projections are an integral part of the wall and may represent foundations of a monumental entrance into the northern temple complex from the main part of the city. No similar features have been exposed along the remainder of this wall.

Investigation continued to the west in search of remnants of the temenos wall. Large-scale disturbance was again noted, and the excavators began to despair of ever finding the elusive wall. Finally, remnants of the temenos wall were exposed. Only the lower courses of stone remained, but they matched the projected alignment of the temenos wall, as revealed at its northern and southern ends. Even more significantly, a c. 5 m. wide opening exists in this wall, almost directly in line with the opening in the barrier wall to the east, thus providing strong evidence that the main access to the complex was from the east and at street/podium level.

As in the portion of this wall to the north exposed by Garstang in 1924 (see above), this wall is constructed of smaller stone masonry than those sections adjacent to the doorways. In addition, this central section of wall is thinner (about 0.75 m.) than the northern and southern sections (about 1.5 m. thick).

There is a likely explanation for the variations observed in the different sections of this wall. The difference in elevation between the upper, eastern entrance and the door thresholds is approximately 4 m. The wall sections with the doorways had to serve as massive retaining walls to withstand the pressures generated by the fill behind them, and they were built accordingly. On the other hand, the middle section of wall is built on top of existing deposits, and probably served only as a curtain wall, with no significant structural strength required.

The conjecture that the main entrance to the complex was from the centre of its eastern (broad) axis and that it was approached at podium level (i.e. no staircase to the podium is necessary), runs counter to all previous attempts to reconstruct the plan of the temple complex. However, any attempt to present a new reconstruction would be premature at this time.

34 Dor 1986 (above, n. 8), p. 211, Fig. 4.

35 Dor 1992 (above, n. 4), pp. 134–136, Fig. 6; E. Stern and I. Sharon: Tel Dor — 1993: Preliminary Report, *IEJ* 45 (1995), pp. 33–34 (henceforth: Dor 1993).

Phase 2: The Early Roman Period (Second Century C.E.)

Previous investigations have revealed two architecturally distinct strata of the Roman period in Area F, as well as an intermediate Late Hellenistic–Early Roman phase, which is essentially a re-use of the Hellenistic city plan. The same stratigraphic sequence is represented in other areas of the site as well. Excavation in the eastern entrance area was continued down to the Phase 2 street level, which is assigned to the earlier Roman stratum. This system, first exposed in 1986, consists of a stone-paved street and structures on either side of it.³⁶

It has long been our conjecture that the temple post-dates the Phase 2 street system, based on the disorientation of the Phase 2 streets and the temple complex, as well as the fact that the 'barrier wall' overlies the street.³⁷ However, the actual point of conjunction of the street and the temple complex has never been excavated. The location of the remnants of the east temenos wall in 1994 has enabled us to reassess the relation of the temple complex with the street. Unfortunately, the street pavement itself has not survived the massive disturbance evident all along the eastern parts of Area F, but we did locate the ashlar-lined drain channel beneath the street, and that is clearly cut by the temenos wall (Figs. 7, 8).

A difference in orientation had been observed between a Phase 2 street to the north excavated in 1991 and the original section exposed in 1986 (Fig. 7). For some reason, strict orthogonality of plan was not maintained at this point. Excavations conducted in 1993 at the projected intersection, where the change in orientation was expected, revealed the complete destruction of this important juncture, as a result of the construction of the Phase 1 temple complex. The 1994 excavations revealed a continuation of the street, but confirmed the complete destruction at the northern end of this segment.

Phase 3: Late Hellenistic–Early Roman (First Century B.C.E.–First Century C.E.)

Investigation of earlier occupational phases of Area F were very limited, and were restricted to a small part of the area inside the northern portion of the Phase 1 podium. Work in previous seasons had re-exposed a wall containing a niche, originally uncovered by Garstang. Further exposure of this structure in 1993 revealed two additional niches to the south of the original one. Each niche differs in width, height and depth, but all are open to the west. Work in 1994 continued the exposure of this 'niche wall' to the south and down to its original floor surface (Fig. 9). A floor reaching the wall from the west was partially exposed. Restorable pottery, dated to Late Hellenistic/Early Roman times, was found scattered on this floor. It is not yet known whether this is the only floor reaching the 'niche wall,' or whether there might be earlier ones underneath. Unfortunately, most of the structure was

³⁶ Dor 1986 (above, n. 8), pp. 209–211, Fig. 4.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

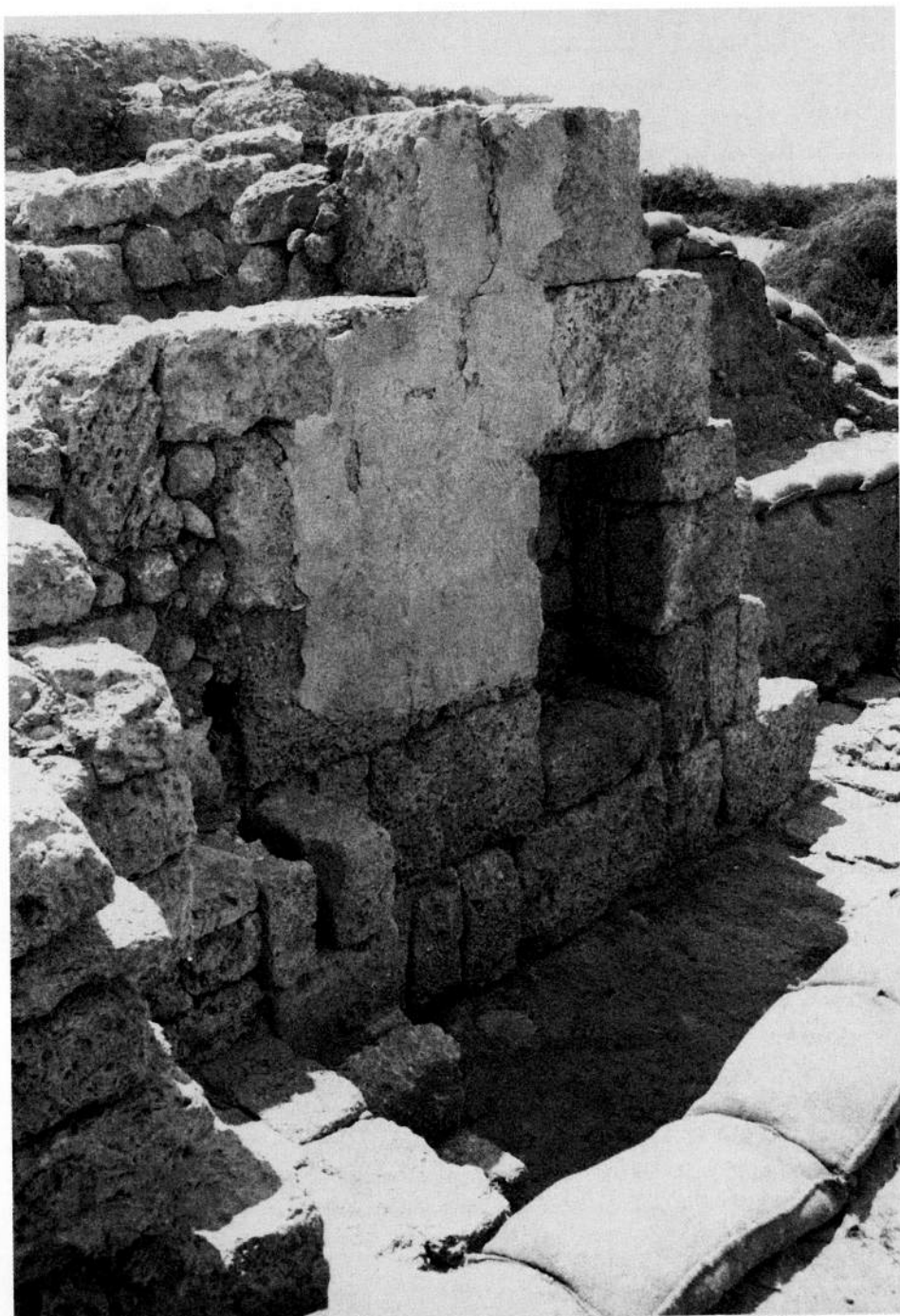


Fig. 8. Area F: Phase 1 temenos wall cutting Phase 2 street.



Fig. 9. Area F: 'niche wall'.

destroyed by later temple construction, making it impossible to determine the size and configuration of the building. To what degree the niches served any ritual or other function is uncertain.

AREA G (1994)

Introduction

Excavation in Area G was begun in 1986 in order to determine the nature of settlement in the centre of the mound.³⁸ After uncovering remains of large public buildings from the Roman down to the Persian periods (local Phases 1–4) and a Persian period pit phase (Phase 5) which disturbed all later Iron II remains, excavations from 1989 and on began to reveal remains from Iron IIA into Iron I (Phases 6 and earlier). Unlike the later phases, the Iron Age remains appeared to have a distinctly private character, i.e. walls of simple fieldstone or mudbrick construction, forming rooms of no particular merit. Perhaps the most outstanding feature of these Iron Age phases is the residents' persistence in reusing the walls of each previous phase. Several

³⁸ For discussion of Iron I material previously excavated in Area G, see, in particular, Dor 1991 (above, n. 6), pp. 34–46; Dor 1992 (above, n. 4), pp. 142–150; and Dor 1993 (above, n. 35), pp. 26–28.

walls have been found standing 2 m. high, with only subtle nuances to differentiate constructional phases. Other walls show a sequence of mudbricks on stone socle, built directly on earlier mudbrick walls. At the end of the 1991 season, the first traces of an area-wide destruction (Phase 9) were found in AI 32. From 1992 onward, excavation has focused on exposing as much of this period as possible.

Four goals were set for 1994, all of which were at least partially attained:

1. To continue the excavation of AG 33 down to the level of the Phase 6b *in situ* assemblage in AH 33 (excavated in 1991), in order to recover the rest of the ceramic material from that floor and to determine the eastern limit of the room from which this material was recovered.³⁹
2. To expand the area of exposure of the room in AJ 34 which yielded a so-called 'cultic assemblage' in 1993, in order to elucidate its nature, to establish its stratigraphic relations to the destruction deposit in AI 31-32 and to probe beneath its floor.⁴⁰
3. To remove later walls and expand the area of the deep destruction (Phase 9) in AI 31 and AI 32 in order to reveal more of the enigmatic 'balustrade' installation uncovered in 1992 and the room to its south.⁴¹
4. To probe beneath the floor level of the Phase 9 destruction floor in AI 31 and AI 32 in order to determine whether Iron I material continues below this floor, or if Phase 9 was constructed directly on top of Late Bronze Age strata.

Phase 6b: Late Eleventh/Early Tenth Century B.C.E.

In 1991 we uncovered a large *in situ* deposit of late eleventh-/early tenth-century pottery on Floor L9657 of AG 33, and tentatively assigned it to Phase 6b of Area G. This is the latest of a series of three possible local destructional episodes in Area G in the Iron Age I. The assemblage bears many similarities to Phase 9 in Area B1,⁴² as well as to material in the Phase 8a 'platforms' and on the Phase 8b floors of Area D2.⁴³

Beneath a thick layer of floor resurfacing and patches (Phase 6a), the level of the Phase 6b floor uncovered in AH 33 was reached. The stumps of the walls enclosing the room on the east and south were also uncovered. However, almost no pottery was recovered from this extension of the floor, except for one krater set into the floor against the east wall. In the south wall, where it would have met the east wall, there was a doorway leading from the room. Beyond the east wall there was a poorly preserved floor, but no other walls were encountered. Phase 6a is a later, less well preserved, rebuilding of Phase 6b.

39 Dor 1991 (above, n. 6), pp. 44-45.

40 Dor 1993 (above, n. 35), p. 28.

41 Dor 1992 (above, n. 4), p. 150.

42 Gilboa (above, n. 25); *idem*, New Finds at Tel Dor and the Beginning of Cypro-Geometric Import to Palestine, *IEJ* 39 (1989).

43 See above, discussion of Area D2, esp. n. 25.

Phase 7?-9?: The 'Cultic Assemblage' Area

In 1993, we found a group of vessels of cultic or votive significance in L9903 of AJ 34. These included a small cult stand with cut-out human figures, a decorated goblet and several votive bowls, as well as a number of regular ones.⁴⁴ At the time it was unclear whether these vessels were situated on a floor or in a shallow depression dug in from an upper phase. In addition, the connection of this deposit to any architecture (cultic or otherwise) was unclear. Consequently, its stratigraphic significance, chronology and cultural role could not be judged. Of special importance was to determine whether this assemblage dates to, or postdates, the Phase 9 destruction.

Further excavation in the room where this assemblage was found determined that a mudbrick surface was laid over an earlier ashy white floor and that the area of the cultic assemblage is some sort of 'cutting' feature, although it remains open whether it is a *favissa* or something else. In a small area west of the cultic assemblage, a floor was reached at a level which probably connects it with the mudbrick floor to the east. The mudbrick surface is at about the same elevation as the Phase 9 destruction in AI 32. This season's efforts may have supplied a set of correlations for this phase across the area. The attribution of the 'cultic assemblage' is still in some debate, however. According to A. Gilboa, the regular vessels in this assemblage are of types usually encountered in Phases 6b and 7, and she tends to update the assemblage as a whole accordingly. The more elaborate specimens in this assemblage are unique. E. Stern argues that their closest corollaries are found in Philistine contexts, and that these objects, at least, are therefore indicative of Sikil occupation of the site, which, in his opinion, ends with the destruction of Phase 9.⁴⁵ Accordingly, they should be down-dated to that phase.

Phase 9: Late Twelfth–Early Eleventh Century B.C.E.: The Destruction Deposit

The destruction deposit of Phase 9 was excavated in AI 32 and the northern half of AI 31 (Fig. 10). In AI 31 the burned material extended only about a third of the way south into the square before becoming normal mudbrick debris. Iron I pottery was found *in situ* on the floor. The ashy white remains of reed mats, large and small beams and a hard red-brown clay layer, several centimetres thick, recorded in section and as excavated provided evidence on how this room was roofed.

The enigmatic installation first excavated in 1992 and nicknamed the 'balustrade'⁴⁶ was completely cleared in AI 32 (Fig. 11). On the east side of this trough-like feature (c. 3.5 m. long; 1.0 m high; 0.8 m. wide) there was a low, half oval-shaped bin. The installation and bin were constructed of mudbricks covered with mud

⁴⁴ Dor 1993 (above, n. 35), p. 28.

⁴⁵ Stern (above, n. 3), pp. 94–98.

⁴⁶ Dor 1992 (above, n. 4), Fig. 15.

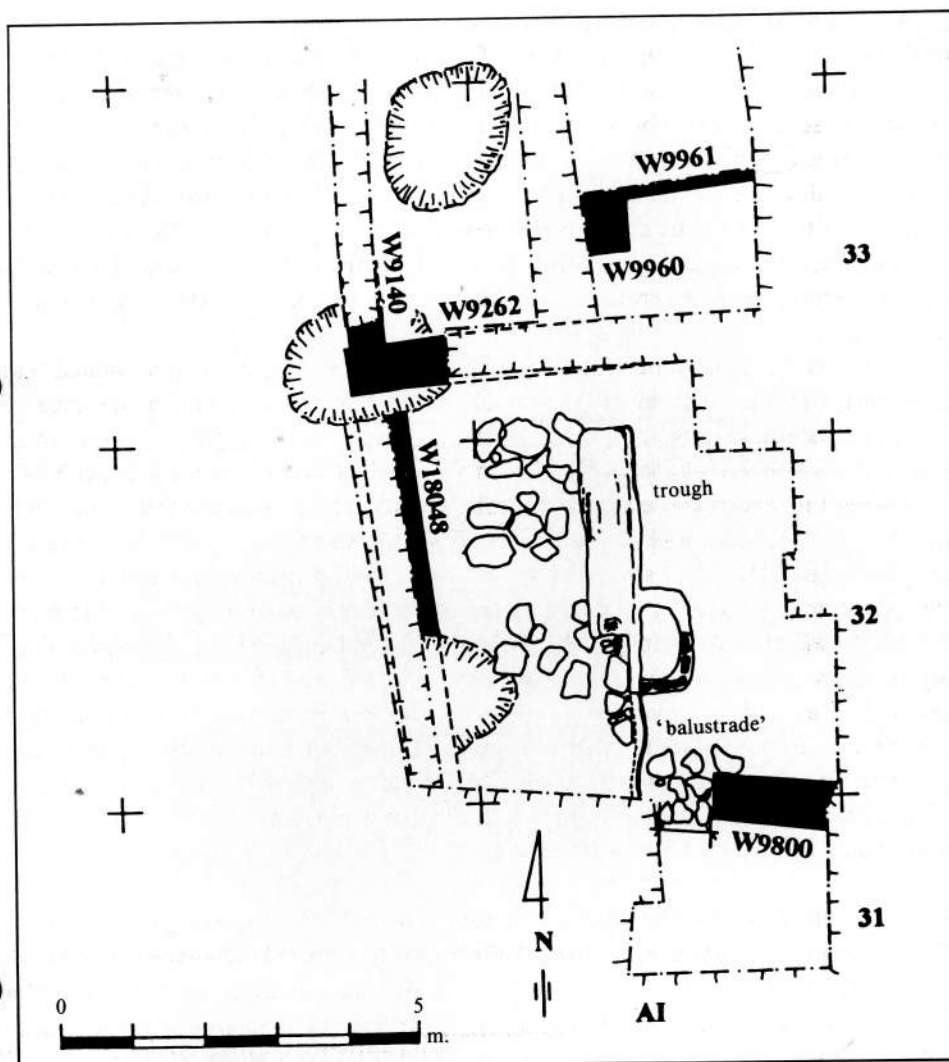


Fig. 10. Area G: Phase 9, Squares AI 31-32.

plaster. The actual trough was only completely preserved in the central part of the installation; to the north the construction of later floors had removed most of it, while to the south, falling debris seems to have destroyed much of the installation (leaving only its eastern wall and the curved edge of the trough; hence its balustrade-like appearance). It may have been a trough for kneading bread dough. Communal dough-kneading troughs (of later date) are illustrated (Fig. 12) in Greek terra-cottas.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Personal communication: A. Stewart.



Fig. 11. Area G, Square AI 32: 'balustrade'.



Fig. 12. Beotian terra-cotta showing women kneading dough at communal trough (courtesy of A. Stewart).

The fiery destruction deposit in AI 32 dwindled toward the northern half of the room. Evidently a fairly combustible material had been located in the southern half. The western wall of the room had begun to collapse inward, but was stopped by large fire-hardened sections of the roof, which fell on top of the installation. No support pillars were found; it is therefore unclear how a roof of a room this size was upheld. The western and northern parts of the installation room had a stone-paved floor; no *in situ* pottery was found on this part of the floor. Above this stone floor section, two later stone floors were also found in Phases 7 and 8, the only stone floors in Iron Age Area G. The eastern half of the room had a dirt floor, on which many *in situ* vessels were found. Three small standing stones were stuck into the floor. It is unclear whether these are stones fallen from a wall or some sort of support structure for a container.

The *in situ* vessels buried within the destruction deposits allow a preliminary dating of the catastrophe to the second half of the twelfth, or the very beginning of the eleventh, century B.C.E. Most of these vessels were containers: at least two 'collared rim' pithoi and three Egyptian jars were found in the room in AI 31, as well as jars of local tradition.⁴⁸ When mended, these jars displayed a curious feature: pieces severely blackened by fire were joined to pieces that had not been affected by fire at all. It can be concluded that the jars in this room were broken, and their pieces scattered, *before* the fire started. This should be a factor taken into consideration in any account for the cause of the Phase 9 destruction.

We found no definite traces of fire in the two rooms of Unit AI 33 to the north. Below the Phase 8 floor discussed above, there was another floor, upon which the skeletons of at least 30 small fish were found. Unfortunately, the bones disintegrated as soon as they were uncovered. This floor is at the same elevation as the one of the destruction deposit, but shows no signs of burning. East of this room and at the same elevation, under the floor where a woman's skeleton was found in 1992, another room, with a large plastered basin and a small settling basin adjacent to it, was found in 1993. These, too, may belong to Phase 9, although clear evidence of fire is absent.

Pre-Phase 9 Probes

Probes below the Phase 9 destruction floor were dug in the southern part of AI 32, the northern part of AI 31, and below the 'cultic assemblage' in AJ 34. No walls, and only three floors, were found. The pottery recovered from these probes consisted only of small sherds, most apparently from the twelfth century B.C.E. Some of the earliest may already belong to the Late Bronze Age, but most characteristic Late Bronze forms are missing.

48 Gilboa (above, n. 25).

Conclusions

The Phase 9 fiery destruction deposit in AI 31–32 is far more localised than was first suggested, and focuses on an installation which may have been used in bread production and a room to its south, possibly used as storage space. Evidence has accumulated that the 'bread' installation room in AI 32 and the 'fish floor' room in AI 33 belong to Phase 9. The two basins in the room adjacent to the 'fish floor' should perhaps be interpreted as a grape-treading basin and settling tank. In a relatively small area it is thus possible to suggest the specialized functions to which the rooms may have been put. This small area displays the variety of economic activities in which the inhabitants of Dor indulged in the early Iron Age: fishing, commerce, and possibly baking and wine production on a commercial scale. How Phase 9 was destroyed is uncertain: natural disaster or outside invasion are possibilities. The issue of the relationships between the fire in Area G and the apparently contemporary burned debris in Area B1 and the limited Iron I exposures in F and E will have to be re-examined.

Phases 6 to 9 (inclusive) currently seem to be rebuildings following a common plan. Several partition walls were added after the Phase 9 destruction, but most of the major walls in the area (and specifically those that we suspect were dividing walls between units) seem to have survived the catastrophe, or to have been rebuilt. This phenomenon differs substantially from that encountered in Area B1, where all the walls of the destruction phase (Phase 12 [B]), including, most significantly, what may have been the town's fortifications, fell into disuse. Probes below the Phase 9 floor have yielded earlier Iron I pottery, but little architecture. Future excavation will determine whether the pre-Phase 9, pre-destruction, Iron I phases express direct architectural continuity with the Phase 9 and later phases in the area. In future seasons we will attempt to uncover the uppermost Late Bronze II horizon in at least part of the area, in order to elucidate the entire Late Bronze–Iron Age transition.