What Happened to the Cult Figurines?

Israelite Religion Purified After the Exile

EPHRAIM STERN

Accidental discoveries of two pits containing cult figurines have led me to discern an extraordinary development in Israelite religious observance. This development occurred when the Jews returned from the Babylonian Exile in the sixth to fifth centuries B.C.

The first discovery took place in the opening season of our excavations at Tel Dor, on the Mediterranean coast of Israel, where we were fortunate enough to uncover a *favissa* (FAH-viss-uh). A *favissa* (plural, *favissae* [FAH-viss-ee]) is a pit into which votive figurines or statuettes have been thrown. Sometimes

Holding her breasts *and grinning broadly, this 6-inch-tall figurine represents the fertility goddess Astarte in a typical pose. Worshipped under a variety of names throughout the ancient Near East, Astarte was the consort of the storm-god Baal. The late Iron Age, Phoenician mold at right, found at Tel Dor, produced this modern cast.*

Tel Dor *thrusts a rocky finger into the Mediterranean about 12 miles south of Haifa in Israel (see map, p. 29). Founded by the Canaanites in the 20th or 19th century B.C. and occupied by various peoples through the Roman period, Dor became an important port city that conducted extensive trade with Cyprus and the countries in the Aegean. In excavations conducted since 1980, visible in the area just above the center of the photo, a number of intentionally buried figurines have emerged. These led dig director Ephraim Stern to make a general study of such objects, which in turn led him to an original observation about the development of Israelite religious practices in the period following the return of the Jews from exile in Babylonia.*

these figurines are made of metal or stone, but mostly they are made of clay. They are almost always broken, intentionally destroyed.

Originally the figurines from our *favissae* had stood on a shelf or bench of a nearby sanctuary. After a time, having served their purpose—whatever that was—the figurines were removed, deliberately broken, probably in some kind of religious ceremony, and then disposed of. Because they were sacred objects, they could not simply be thrown away. Instead, they were literally buried in a special pit, thus making room in the sanctuary for a new host of votive offerings. (To this day, Jews refrain from throwing away or destroying worn-out sacred texts; instead, they bury them or store them in a repository called a *geniza*.)

We found the first *favissa* at Tel Dor in 1980. Though we have dug for nine years, and have become the largest dig in Israel, the discovery of the *favissa* in our first season will always be remembered as a special thrill. Somehow, the *favissa* had been miraculously preserved in an area near the city gate, in a very narrow space between two city walls, one from the Persian period (fifth-fourth centuries B.C.) and the other from the Hellenistic period (third-first centuries B.C.). The *favissa* itself dates to the fifth to fourth centuries B.C. We know this by comparing certain stylistic elements of the figurines with others that have established dates.

In 1982, we discovered a second *favissa*. This one (on the eastern slope of the mound—in our Area C) was dug into the clay bricks of the city wall from the Iron Age (ninth-eighth centuries B.C.). Obviously, this *favissa* was created long after the Iron Age defense wall had gone out of use. We date this *favissa* to 420-400 B.C., based on the dates of the Attic pottery that we found in it.

Each of these *favissae* attests to a nearby contemporaneous sanctuary, which we have been unable to find. These sanctuaries were probably completely destroyed in later periods.

The discovery of these two *favissae* has led me to study ancient figurines generally. Clay figurines are not found in nearly as great abundance as pottery vessels in archaeological excavations in Israel, but they are by no means uncommon either. They date from almost every archaeological period. Some of these clay figurines

even date from as far back as the Neolithic period (eighth millennium B.C.), when pottery vessels were created for the first time in the Near East. In every succeeding period, clay figurines continued to be produced. By now they have been found not by the hundreds, but by the thousands.

Numerous studies have been devoted to the various techniques by which these clay figurines were made and to the creation of different typologies by which they can be subdivided. It is more difficult to determine their cultic significance. Thus, we can distinguish figurines that come from Israel, Judah, Edom, Philistia and Phoenicia (see map, p. 29), but we cannot so easily discuss their divine identity nor the functions they served in the various cults.

Before describing the clay figurines we found in the *favissae* at Tel Dor, let us look at the Phoenicians who lived at Tel Dor in the period of our *favissae*.

The Phoenicians were actually the heirs and descendants of the Canaanites. Indeed, they called themselves Canaanites. "Phoenician" is the term applied to them by the the Greeks, beginning in about the eighth century B.C., after this fascinating people had already become a major worldwide (as the world was then known) maritime power. But originally these Canaanites were pushed by the Philistines (and related Sea Peoples) and by the Israelites into a small coastal area on the Mediterranean Sea, north of the Sea Peoples and west of the Israelite territory. This occurred as early as the 11th century B.C. and was completed by the time of King David and King Solomon in the tenth century B.C. The Canaanites—or Phoenicians, as we may now call them—were confined to a few major coastal cities, from south to north: Dor, 'Acco, Tyre, Sidon, Byblos and Arwad. Unable to expand to the east or the south, they turned to the Mediterranean Sea on the west. They became merchants, sailors and traders, ultimately establishing important colonies as far west as Spain, exporting their culture as well as their goods, and importing the goods and cultures of other peoples. Not until the Roman destruction of Phoenician Carthage in 150 B.C. did the Romans eclipse the Phoenicians

The process of Hellenization on the coast of Palestine began in the fifth century B.C., the period of our *favissae* at Dor. The figurines in the *favissae* of Dor,

Graves for figurines *thrilled excavators when they were discovered at Tel Dor. Known as* favissae *(singular,* favissa*), such pits provided a special burial place for discarded votive figurines, whose sacredness demanded this unusual treatment. After a figurine had served its purpose, it was removed from the sanctuary and deliberately broken—probably in some ceremony—and then laid to rest in a* favissa.

Uncovered in 1980 between two city walls near the city gate, the first favissa *found at Tel Dor (upper photo) contained the figurines seen on the right side of the pit. These date to the fifth to fourth centuries B.C. The 1982 discovery of the second* favissa *(lower photo), dug into the clay bricks of the Iron Age city wall on the mound's eastern side, also revealed Attic pottery dated to 420-400 B.C.*

COURTESY DR. I. ROLL, DIRECTOR, APPOLONIA EXCAVATION

Three broken statuettes *of the male deity Baal (above), excavated at Tel Dor, display the same fezlike hat, the typical Phoenician headdress of the Iron Age and Persian period (tenth-fourth centuries B.C.). Other characteristic Phoenician features of these 2-inch-high heads include large moustaches and a long beard still intact on the right-hand figurine. The latter also retains a fragment of his arm, bent at the elbow, perhaps in the act of stroking his beard, a common gesture in Baal figurines. (The numbers visible above the brow of the left-hand head are modern identification numbers.)*

Baal figurines also sometimes wear the long, pointed Egyptian-style headdress known as an "Osiris" hat, which bedecks a head (left) unearthed at Appolonia, an ancient city 22 miles south of Caesarea on the coast of Israel. Flaring, red-painted ornaments decorate each side of the hat.

consistent with hundreds of other figurines found at other coastal sites in Phoenicia and elsewhere, reflect both Eastern and Western influence. In fact, they can be generally divided into Eastern and Western types, the former exhibiting ancient Canaanite and Egyptian influence, and the latter the more recent Greek or Hellenistic influence.

The Eastern type is more common in Palestine, Cis-Jordan and Transjordan. The Western type is more common in Rhodes, Cyprus and mainland Greece. In coastal Phoenicia, the two types are mixed.

The Eastern type shows a variety of stylistic influences—Canaanite, Egyptian and even Mesopotamian-Persian, all of which were merged in the finest artistic tradition of the Phoenicians. The Western type,

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Riderless now, *this fragmentary horse figurine probably once bore a man wearing the national headdress of the Persians. Such statuettes, known as "Persian riders," most likely depict Baal in his warrior-god incarnation. Traces of paint blotch the surface of this example found at Tel Dor.*

on the other hand, is more uniform stylistically, without an admixture of influences. Thus we can readily distinguish Greek, Rhodian and Cypriot subdivisions of the Western type.

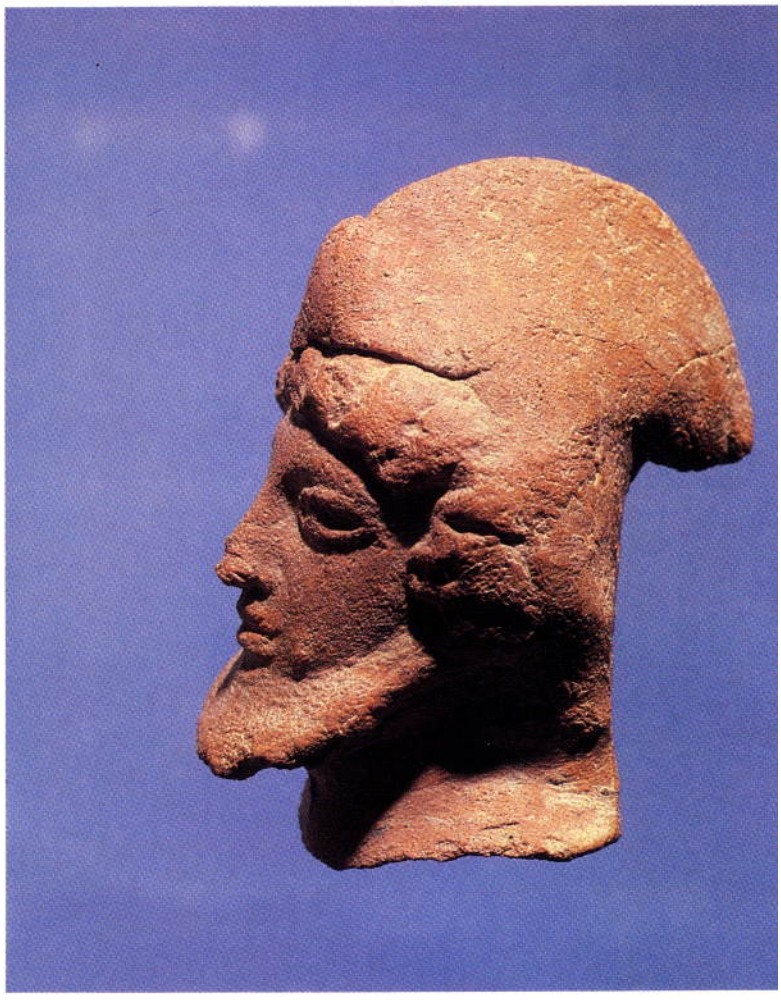
The Eastern and Western types can also be distinguished by production techniques. In the older, Eastern tradition, the body is solid and handmade; only the head is molded. Sometimes we even find molded, solid plaques. In Phoenicia proper, we also find hollow round bodies made on a wheel ("bell-shaped" bodies) to which molded heads were attached. Beginning in the sixth century B.C., a new technique was imported from the West, probably from Greece: a hollow body molded in front, with the back sealed with smooth strips of clay.

The figurines from both East and West include both male and female deities.

Wrapped in a cloak and seated on a chair, a bearded man with a large moustache represents a common male deity. In this position, he strokes his beard. In another variation, he stands with his hands crossed on his breast. In both the seated and standing versions, he wears a round, flat headdress, the typical Phoenician headdress of the Iron Age and Persian period (tenth-fourth centuries B.C.).

A common variation of the seated form has the figure wearing a long pointed hat of Egyptian style (known as the "Osiris" hat). Despite the different headdresses in the two types of figurines, they apparently represent the same god, as indicated by the identical beard and moustache and by the same seated attitude. Both types probably represent the most common deity in the pantheon of Phoenicia and Palestine, the god Baal. The difference in dress possibly attests to "Baals" of different localities, as was common in the Canaanite-Phoenician cult.

Another, less common, male figurine depicts a man wearing a pointed cloth hat that covers his cheeks and chin. As we know from Achaemenid (uh-KEE-meh-nid) reliefs, this was apparently the national headdress of the Persians. Whenever the body of these figurines is preserved, it is seated on a horse—hence the common scholarly term "Persian rider" for these figurines. The "Persian rider" figurines probably represent Baal in his aspect as a warrior god.



Curly locks *and a jutting beard frame the face of this Greek-style figurine head. Not quite 2 inches high, the head, typically produced in multiple copies from a mold, wears a hand-modeled Greek warrior's helmet. Other examples of this sort wear a pointed Phrygian cap or remain bareheaded. Although this kind of figurine probably originally represented the Greek god Zeus, it became the Phoenician god Baal when the style was imported to Dor, where Western-type figurines predominate over the Eastern-type.*

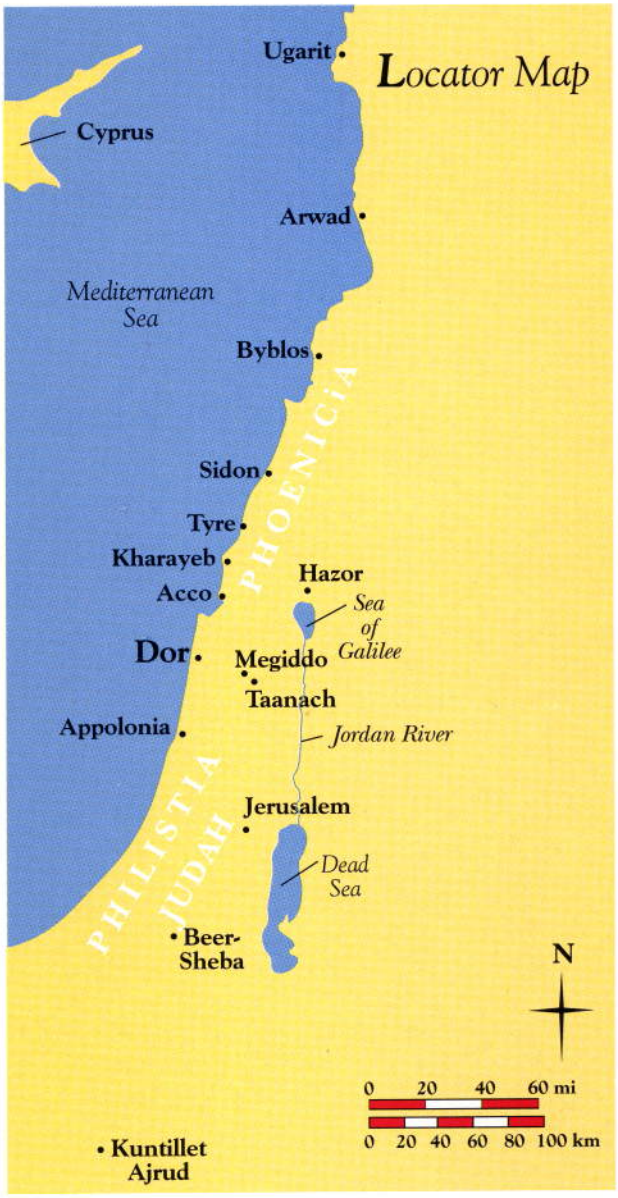
The most common figurines at Dor, however, are of the Western type. It should not be surprising that the inhabitants of Dor, whether Phoenician or Greek traders, preferred the new Greek-styled figurines to the older Eastern types. The heads of these bearded figurines were made from a mold created by a talented engraver and produced in multiple copies (see photo, p. 27). But then a handmade headdress was added. The headdress varies. It may be a Greek warrior's helmet or a pointed Phrygian cap, or the figure may be bareheaded. This type of figurine may originally have represented Zeus in his various guises, but here he is turned into Baal.

Several other forms of male deities have been found at Dor, such as the Greek Heracles (here to be identified as the Tyrian Baal Melqart), as well as young boys, but these examples are enough to give you a general idea.

Most of the female figurines represent traditional

Ready to fight off evil, ***Bes stands in a traditional pose, arms akimbo, wearing a truculent expression and his usual feathered headdress. An Egyptian god adopted into the Canaanite-Phoenician pantheon, Bes served as the ordinary person's chief talisman against evil. He had already assumed a prominent role by the ninth century B.C. During the time of the Dor favissae, Bes was represented in numerous forms, including this 1.5-inch bone pendant.***

A maternal Astarte *appears in these three, 6-inch-high statuettes from Tel Dor (opposite). This later development in the traditional representation of the fertility goddess—in contrast to the earlier style seen in the photo on page 23—shows her wearing a drape and an Egyptian wig. In this form, she is depicted pregnant, as in the left- and right-hand examples, or nursing a child, as in the center example. Figurines made in this later style incorporated new Greek production techniques, resulting in hollow bodies cast by a mold in front, with their backs sealed by smooth strips of clay.*



fertility goddesses, either in the older form of a naked woman supporting her breasts with her hands (see photo, p. 23), or the later type wearing a drape. When she wears a drape, her head is covered with an Egyptian wig; she is either pregnant and rests a hand on her swollen abdomen, or she is nursing or carrying a child already born. Most of these later-style figurines are already made with the new Greek technique—that is, with hollow, molded bodies in front, and with the back sealed with smooth strips of clay. Thus here again we can distinguish between Eastern and Western types on the basis of technique as well as style.

Sometimes, however, elements of Eastern and Western style are fused. For example, many female figurines display an Egyptian wig and face, but have round curls in the Greek fashion on their forehead.

Many female figurines can be easily identified in their original Greek guise as Aphrodite, Artemis or Athena, but it is beyond doubt that in Palestinian sanctuaries they all represented Astarte, the local female consort of the god Baal.

The pagan religions of Palestine, both in the older Canaanite period and in the later first millennium B.C., were undoubtedly complex. For the earlier period this complexity is clear from the 14th-century B.C. literature found on cuneiform tablets at Ugarit. For the later periods our sources are sparse. We do, however, know the names of the chief gods of the various peoples inhabiting the country, such as Qos, the chief god of Edom; Chemosh, the chief god of Moab; Milkom, the chief god of Ammon; and Baal, the chief god of Phoenicia. Each of these gods had a consort, but in no case do we know the entire pantheon.

Overall, the archaeological finds reflect three major types of figurines that appear simultaneously in all assemblages, just as we have seen at Dor: an adult male, represented as a king sitting on a throne or standing, or as a warrior on a horse; a fertility goddess holding her breasts or a child and sometimes pregnant; and young boys.

This is consistent with Sabatino Moscati's observation that the Phoenician cult was composed of "a triad of deities":

> "a protective god of the city; a goddess, often his wife or companion who symbolizes the fertile earth; and a young god somehow connected with the goddess (usually her son) whose resurrection expresses the annual cycle of vegetation. Within these limits, the names and functions of the gods vary, and the fluidity of this pantheon, where the common name often prevails over the proper name, and the function over the personality, is characteristic. Another characteristic of the Phoenician triad is its flexibility from town to town."*

Thus, Baal had many local names. Some were connected with sacred mountains such as Baal Saphon (and perhaps Baal Carmel); others were connected with geographic regions as in Baal Lebanon; but mainly they were connected with different cities where Baal had different names, such as Baal Ashmun in Sidon, Melqart in Tyre, Baal Gebal in Byblos and Baal Haman in Carthage.

* *The World of the Phoenicians* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1973), p. 62.

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The same is true of goddesses. Astarte (Ashtoret) underwent similar changes from town to town: In Byblos she was called Baalat Gebal and was depicted as the Egyptian goddess Isis; in Carthage she was known as Tanit Pane Baal; and in Sarepta she was called Tanit-Ashtoret.

Occasionally, a find will point to a particular cult practice. For example, from Greek sources we know that the Phoenician cult practiced sacred prostitution. In the first Dor *favissa*, we found an almost intact figurine of a naked woman with swollen belly and drooping breasts, seated with legs apart and smiling. This figurine is unique in Palestine, although two similar, but not identical, figurines have been found in Kharayeb, farther north on the Phoenician coast (see photos, p. 54). In the Kharayeb examples, the woman sits with her legs apart, one hand on her knee and the other pointing to her genitals.

What we have been describing might be called the official cult, associated with sanctuaries where priests doubtless officiated. But side by side with this official cult was a popular religion or "popular cult" that served the people's daily need to ward off evil spirits and misfortune. The scholarly term for this is "apotropaic religion," from a Greek word meaning "to avert evil." Archaeological remains from this popular religion include such items as demonic figurines and masks, as well as associated jars and beads.

In the period of the *favissae* at Dor, the principal divinity who was invoked to ward off evil was an Egyptian god named Bes (see photo, p. 28). Bes had become a member of the Canaanite-Phoenician folklore much earlier, and now assumed the principal burden of protecting the ordinary person. Bes is a small grotesque god, always depicted naked, often with prominent genitals, arms akimbo, and with a peculiar feathered headdress. He must have already played an important role in the ninth century, as we know from his appearance on a painted vessel at Kuntillet Ajrud, an Israelite-Phoenician desert sanctuary in Sinai. Later, during the period of the Dor *favissae*, he is found almost everywhere—as clay figurines, on vases, on pendants and on stamp seals.

At Tel Dor and at nearby Tel Mevorakh, which I excavated several years ago,* we found Bes in a variety of guises—on vases, as clay figurines, as faience figurines, engraved on a particularly beautiful pendant and at the center of a complete faience necklace (the only one of its kind ever discovered in Israel). At the end of the Persian period (fourth century B.C.) and the beginning of the Hellenistic period (third century B.C.), Bes was gradually replaced by demonic representations of Greek satyrs.

A popular emblem to ward off evil spirits was the "eye of Horus," another Egyptian import into Palestine. Three pairs of Horus eyes were found on the Tel Dor necklace mentioned above, which includes the figure of Bes as its centerpiece.

Another class of apotropaic artifacts consists of clay masks, although only a fragment of one of these was found at Dor. These masks, like Bes and the eye of Horus, have a long history in Palestine, going back all the way to the Late Bronze Age (15th-13th centuries B.C.). But there is no doubt that they flourished especially in the Persian period. These masks depict both male and female apotropaic divinities, the majority with grotesque faces undoubtedly intended to frighten away evil spirits.

In the center of the forehead of some of these masks is an emblem, or totem, that varies from one to the other. Many years ago, I discussed these totems with the late Professor Yigael Yadin, who, in his brilliant, imaginative and intuitive way, immediately suggested a relationship between the totems on the foreheads of these pagan masks and the Biblical injunction to place the words of God's law as a frontlet between your eyes (Exodus 13:11-16; Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 11:13-21). Observant Jews to this day wear a small box containing the words of the law on their forehead (as well as a similar box on their arm in obedience to another part of these Biblical passages) during their morning prayers. Yadin thought that perhaps these phylacteries (*tefillin* [tih-fee-LEEN] in Hebrew), as these small boxes of scripts are called, were originally intended as a symbolic gesture in opposition to the pagan cult of the time.

As I have already noted, beginning in the Persian period and to an increasing extent in the Hellenistic period, we see the absorption of Greek deities and ideas into Phoenician culture. In the Persian period, most of the cultic finds still reflect a local or Egyptian character; in the course of time, they tend to change to a Greek character. Bes is gradually replaced by satyrs; the Astarte mask takes on Greek features. But the Phoenicians absorbed the Greek features, rather than simply adopting the Greek character. Thus, a clay figurine with the features of Heracles, Zeus or Aphrodite may be a local god—Baal Melqart or Ashmun or Astarte—with a Greek name. In the words of my teacher, the late Professor Michael Avi-Yonah, "Usually the eastern god retained his identity and only borrowed the shape of the Greek."

Now let us place these cultic artifacts in a larger setting. I have already suggested that their origin goes back long before the post-Exilic period we have been describing. As I said, clay figurines have been found by the hundreds—even by the thousands—all over Palestine in earlier periods. At Iron Age sites (12th-6th centuries B.C.), and at Late Bronze Age sites (16th-13th centuries B.C.), as well as at those from still earlier periods—including sites in the heartland of ancient Israel: at Arad, Beer-Sheva, Lachish, Megiddo, Taanach, Hazor and Dan—figurines, mostly of clay, have been found. These sites have produced quantities of clay figurines from the Israelite and earlier Canaanite periods. Even in Jerusalem, at a site overlooking the Temple Mount, a hoard of clay figurines dating from the eighth to seventh centuries B.C. was found. Thus, the use of these pagan figurines by Israelites is attested both archaeologically and in the Bible. (See, for example, Isaiah 42:17, 44:9-17; Jeremiah 44:15-25; 2 Kings 17:15-17, 23:1-15.)

Especially revealing are the drawings and inscriptions found at ninth-century Kuntillet Ajrud.** I have already mentioned the drawing of Bes on a vase from Kuntillet Ajrud. This same vessel invokes the name of the Israelite God Yahweh. Many other artifacts at Kuntillet Ajrud incorporate pagan elements into the Hebrew cult.

In time the Assyrians destroyed the northern kingdom of Israel (in 721 B.C.). Then the Babylonians conquered the southern kingdom of Judah and destroyed Jerusalem (in 586 B.C.). Thus began the Babylonian Exile. Fifty years later, the Persians ruled the eastern world and permitted the Jews to return to their homeland. It is this period on which we have concentrated in this article.

In the Persian period (the post-Exilic period), we find a very strange phenomenon: In the areas of the country occupied by Jews, *not a single cultic figurine* has been found! This is despite the many excavations, as well as surveys, that have been conducted in Judea and, to a somewhat lesser extent, in Samaria.

This sharply contrasts with earlier periods, when it is impossible to distinguish between Israelite areas and pagan areas on the basis of the presence or absence of cultic figurines. In earlier periods we also find sanctuaries and altars in Israelite areas, despite the famous religious reforms of King Hezekiah (727-698 B.C.; see 2 Kings 18:3-6), and then by King Josiah (639-609 B.C.; see 2 Kings

* See Ephraim Stern, "Excavations at Tel Mevorakh Are Prelude to Tel Dor Dig," **BAR**, May/June 1979.

** See Ze'ev Meshel, "Did Yahweh Have a Consort?" **BAR**, March/April 1979; André Lemaire, "Who or What Was Yahweh's Asherah?" **BAR**, November/December 1984.

Sacred prostitution, ***a cultic practice intended to insure the continuing fertility of nature, is reflected in these figurines from Tel Dor (above, left) and Kharayeb (above, right), on the Phoenician coast 40 miles north of Dor. The unique figurine from Dor shows a smiling woman seated with spread legs. In the similar, but even more explicit, Kharayeb figurine, the woman points to her genitals.***

23:1-15), both of whom attempted—apparently unsuccessfully—to centralize Israelite worship in Jerusalem and to ban outlying cult places. Archaeologists have failed, however, to locate either sanctuaries* or cultic figurines in areas occupied by the returning exiles.

In areas outside the region settled by the returning exiles, we continue to find a great number of assemblages of cultic figurines—in Idumea, Philistia, Phoenicia (as we have seen in this article) and Galilee—that is, in those parts of the country still dominated by pagans. In these regions dozens of *favissae* full of clay figurines and stone statuettes have been found, most of them along the Mediterranean coast. One of the largest assemblages comes from Dor.

How can we explain the complete absence of sanctuaries (except, of course, for the Jerusalem Temple) and, even more significantly, the complete absence of these common cultic figurines in areas of Jewish settlement in the post-Exilic period? Apparently, pagan cults ceased to exist among the Judeans, who purified their worship.

This situation may also help us point to the origins of the synagogue, although we have no archaeological evidence from such an early period. (The earliest synagogue structures—at Masada, Herodium and Gamla**—date from about the turn of the era. The famous Theodotus inscription comes from a Jerusalem synagogue in the first century B.C., but it mentions that Theodotus is a grandson of an *archisynagogus*, so there must have been a synagogue in Jerusalem in the late second or early first century B.C.;† this is our earliest archaeological evidence for the existence of a synagogue.) In the post-Exilic period, the small, pagan cult sanctuaries, which produced figurines like those we have been looking at, were no longer available in areas settled by Jews. It seems logical to conclude that they were replaced by small, public prayer centers—that is, synagogues. It seems that this development occurred among the Babylonian exiles and was transferred to the land of Israel by the returning exiles. (In Egypt, the situation was different. We know from the Bible that there was an Egyptian diaspora even before the Babylonian destruction of 586 B.C. In Egypt, unlike Babylonia, the Jews continued their pagan customs, and, as we know from papyri found on the island of Elephantine in the Nile, they even built their own temple and adopted Egyptian and Canaanite pagan names.)

One concluding observation: Now that we have established the fact that the Jewish exiles who returned from Babylon to the land of their ancestors no longer tolerated cultic figurines, we can use this principle to distinguish between pagan and Jewish settlements. Take, for example, the city of Lachish in the Persian period, where many such figurines have been uncovered.

In "Restoring the Great Gate at Lachish" (**BAR**, March/April 1988), David Ussishkin claims that Persian-period Lachish (sixth-fourth centuries B.C.) "represents the work of the returning Babylonian exiles who now governed the Persian province of Judea (Yehud)" (p. 43). In the same issue, Itzhaq Beit-Arieh urges (p. 41) that Lachish was an Edomite city in this period.

In my opinion the latter view is correct. In the case of Lachish, we have not only the presence of many cult figurines, but also the fact that until now not a single "Yehud" stamp impression has been found at Lachish even after many years of excavations. ("Yehud" was the name of Judea in the Persian period, and stamp impressions with this designation are commonly found at Judean sites of the period.)

The study of ancient cult figurines is a fascinating one. I hope I have shown how much can be learned from such a study.

Photos, unless otherwise credited, are courtesy of the author.

GLOSSARY

Achaemenid (uh-KEE-meh-nid): the dynasty of kings that ruled Persia from about 550 to 331 B.C.

favissa (FAH-viss-uh): similar to a *geniza* (see below), this is a special pit in which discarded votive figurines were deliberately buried, probably in a religious ceremony.

geniza: a storage room for worn, discarded religious books and artifacts. It is forbidden to destroy these objects or to throw them away, because they may contain the name of God.

tefillin (tih-fee-LEEN [Heb.]; tih-FILL-en [common Yiddish pronunciation]): small boxes containing scripts from the Jewish law, which observant Jews wear on the forehead and arm during recitation of certain prayers.

* The Samaritan temple at Gerizim was, of course, a schismatic exception. The Samaritans were expelled from the Jerusalem Temple in the fourth century B.C. They then built their own temple on the top of Mount Gerizim. The Samaritan settlement at this site is now being excavated by I. Magen. The residental quarter is very well preserved, but not the temple itself.

** See "Gamla: The Masada of the North," **BAR**, January/February 1979.

† See Hershel Shanks, *Judaism in Stone: The Archaeology of Ancient Synagogues* (Washington: Biblical Archaeology Society; New York: Harper & Row, 1979), pp. 17-20.