

The Walls of Dor*

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THE excavations conducted in recent years at Tel Dor represent an important source for the renewed study of the process of Hellenization which took place in Palestine in the fourth-third centuries B.C.E. Some scholars are of the opinion that at this period Dor was an almost entirely Greek city, that its population consisted of Greek settlers and that for a time it had been a member of the Delian League under the leadership of Athens.¹ Though we do not accept this view and consider that at this period the city was inhabited by a Phoenician population with only a small Greek core,² there are many indications that this large Phoenician centre underwent a rapid process of Hellenization from as early as the beginning of the Persian period. One aspect of this process, prior to the Greek conquest, has recently been discussed by us elsewhere.³ In the present article we will consider the process of Hellenization as it is reflected in the architectural finds, namely, the fortifications of the city.

In Areas A and C (Pl. 1:B) on the eastern side of the mound, four superimposed systems of fortifications dating from the Iron Age onwards were distinguished during the six excavation seasons. The earliest of these walls (Wall 1) was a massive brick wall. The second wall (Wall 2), whose entire eastern line was found in Areas A and C, is an offset-inset wall, about 3 m. thick, with foundations (about 1 m. thick) of limestone and bricks (Fig. 1). The upper part of the wall was probably made of mud brick. This wall is similar in plan to the offset-inset wall uncovered at Megiddo in Strata IVA-III.⁴ Its outer face was built of boulders and the corners were reinforced with large ashlar blocks; a mason's mark

* This article was published in Hebrew in *EI* 19 (1987), pp. 153-159. Excavations have been conducted annually at Tel Dor since 1980; see E. Stern and I. Sharon: Tel Dor, 1986 — Preliminary Report, *IEJ* 37 (1987), pp. 201-211 and references to relevant publications there. The photographs accompanying the article were taken by I. Shtulman and the plans were made by J. Berg. The author was also assisted in the preparation of the article by staff members I. Sharon and Ayelet Gilboa.

Abbreviations of publications frequently quoted here are: *Megiddo* I — R.S. Lamon and G.M. Shipton: *Megiddo*, I (Oriental Institute Publications, 42), Chicago 1939; *Mevorakh* I — E. Stern: *Excavations at Tel Mevorakh (1973-1976)*, I (*Qedem* 9), Jerusalem, 1978.

¹ G. Dahl: *Materials for the History of Dor*, New Haven, 1915, pp. 63-63, and A. Tcherikover: *The Jews and Greeks in the Hellenistic Period*, Tel Aviv, 1963, p. 73; p. 353, n. 15 (Hebrew).

² For a summary of the results of the first five seasons of excavations at Dor on which we base this opinion, see E. Stern: The Excavations at Tel Dor, in E. Lipinski (ed.): *The Land of Israel: Cross-Roads of Civilizations*, Leuven, 1985, pp. 169-192.

³ E. Stern: The Earliest Greek Settlement at Dor, *EI* 18 (1985), pp. 419-427 (Hebrew).

⁴ Cf., for example, the plans in Y. Aharoni: Megiddo, in *Ens. Miqr.*, IV, Jerusalem, 1963, cols. 624-625 (Hebrew).

in typical Israelite-Phoenician style, very common at Megiddo, was found in one of the corners (Pl. 1:C).⁵ Attached to this wall in Area B was a two-chambered gate which was similar in plan and dimensions to the two-chambered gate at Megiddo,⁶ which was also associated with an offset-inset wall.

The date of the offset-inset wall at Dor could be established by the finds in the gate area (Area B): the two-chambered gate was constructed above an earlier four-chambered gate.⁷ The destruction layer of this earlier gate contained pottery which apparently belonged to the end of the eighth century B.C.E. In our opinion, this four-chambered gate and the brick wall attached to it (Wall 1) were destroyed at the time of the Assyrian conquest of Dor during the reign of Tiglath-Pileser III in 734/3 B.C.E.

The two-chambered gate and the associated offset-inset wall (Wall 2) were probably erected not long after the destruction of their predecessors, very likely at the beginning of Assyrian rule, when Dor became the capital of a province bearing its name.⁸ In addition to the general stratigraphic evidence, confirmation of this view is also provided by a unique architectural find: the two-chambered gate was preserved with its flagstone entrance square, an area paved with ashlar stones in the main entrance between the two chambers and a flagstone lane leading from the gate to the interior of the city. In the outer entrance of this gate, on its southern side, were preserved the base of a door jamb and the threshold. In a corner of the latter was a stone socket made of two parts, a lower part consisting, as was usual, of a round basalt stone with a high gloss from use, and a horseshoe-shaped cover-stone of limestone (Pl. 2:A). It has been shown recently that cover-stones of this type in Palestine and other countries were restricted to Assyrian buildings.⁹ It is thus evident that both the two-chambered gate and the attached offset-inset wall were erected at the end of the eighth century B.C.E. or shortly later.

According to the evidence, this advanced fortification system was destroyed in the middle of the fourth century B.C.E., since pottery of this period was found strewn on the floor of the gateway and on the lane leading into the city. These vessels probably belonged to the gate's last period of use. The destruction of Dor's fortifications very likely took place during the Sidonian rebellion against the Persians in 348 B.C.E., which terminated in the razing and destruction of numerous

⁵ Megiddo I, p. 25, Fig. 32:B.

⁶ Stern (above, n. 2), p. 184, Fig. 7; Megiddo, I, Fig. 89.

⁷ Stern (above, n. 2), p. 184, Fig. 7; Megiddo I, p. 75, Fig. 86.

⁸ See the following studies — Y. Aharoni: *The Land of the Bible, Historical Geography*, Philadelphia, 1979, p. 377; Y. Eph'al: Assyrian Dominion in Palestine, in A. Malamat and Y. Eph'al (eds.): *World History of the Jewish People; the Age of the Monarchies: Political History*, Jerusalem, 1979, pp. 276-289.

⁹ This was pointed out to me by R. Reich, whom I wish to thank for his letter confirming this point. On Assyrian buildings in general, see R. Reich: Dur Sharrukin (Khorsabad), *Qadmoniot* 12 (1969), pp. 1-11 (Hebrew); idem, The Persian Building at 'Ayyelet Ha-Shaḥar, *IEJ* 25 (1975), pp. 233-237; R. Reich and B. Brandl: Gezer under Assyrian Rule, *PEQ* 117 (1985), pp. 41-54.

Phoenician cities on the coasts of Phoenicia and northern Israel, including Dor, which at that time was under Sidonian hegemony.¹⁰ The archaeological evidence uncovered in the excavations agrees with the historical facts and indicates that Sidon and the Israelite territories under its control recovered their strength within a short period, apparently with Persian assistance.¹¹

In the recent excavations at Dor, a new system of fortifications was uncovered. It is of great interest, both because of its construction method (for despite its late date it is still a faithful application of Phoenician building methods), and also because it was integrated into the town plan. A long section of this wall (Wall 3) was revealed in Areas A and C (Fig. 2 and Pl. 2:B), and other segments and part of the gate were distinguished in Area B.

The outer line of this wall, more than 1 m. thick, was built almost directly above the line of the earlier offset-inset wall (Wall 2), though it extended in an almost straight line (apart from several projections, see below). Thus some portions were built above a salient, while others descended onto the mud-brick lime-coated glacis, which covered the brick wall (Wall 1) preceding the offset-inset wall and stood a short distance in front of the inset.

Though our initial impression was that this was a casemate wall, and this indeed may be the case,¹² a second, more plausible possibility is that these 'casemates' were in fact merely the eastern ends of long narrow rooms which extended as far as an inner north-south road running parallel to the outer wall, at a distance of about 6-7 m. from it. This road was also in existence in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Its western side has not been excavated.¹³ A row of typical four-room buildings was thus formed in the area between the inner road and the wall.¹⁴

There is no doubt that in the fourth century B.C.E. the fortifications at Dor were still being constructed according to the Phoenician building tradition. Both the outer walls and all the cross-walls follow this characteristic style, in which the spaces between ashlar piers are packed with rubble. Many city-walls in the Phoenician and Palestinian coastal cities are similarly built, beginning (according to our present knowledge) in the tenth-eighth centuries B.C.E. at Megiddo and Tyre,¹⁵

¹⁰ For this rebellion and its consequences, see D. Barag: The Effects of the Tennes Rebellion on Palestine, *BASOR* 183 (1966), pp. 6-12.

¹¹ L.I. Levine: A Propos de la fondation de la Tour de Straton, *RB* 80 (1973), pp. 75-81; E. Stern: *The Material Culture of the Land of the Bible in the Persian Period*, Warminster, 1982, p. 243, n. 29.

¹² In fact casemate walls of this period have been discovered at two neighbouring sites: Tel Megadim (M. Broshi: Tel Megadim, *Qadmoniot* 2 [1968], p. 125 [Hebrew] and *Mevorakh* 1, pp. 71-75).

¹³ Apart from a small section of Wall 4826 uncovered in Square G-45, which was part of the parallel line adjacent to the road (Fig. 2).

¹⁴ See in detail, Y. Shiloh: Elements in the Development of Town Planning in the Israelite City, *IEJ* 28 (1978), pp. 36-51.

¹⁵ For the ashlar masonry at Tyre, see Patricia M. Bikai: *The Pottery of Tyre*, Warminster, 1978, Pl. 89:2, 5-6.

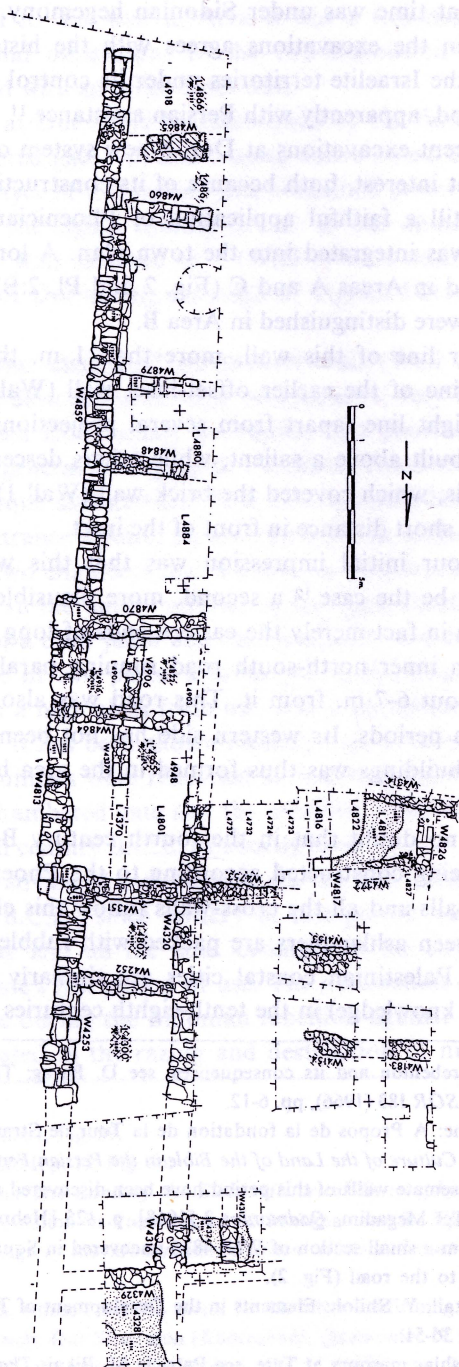


Fig. 2. Dor: the 'casement' wall (Wall 3).

down to the second century B.C.E. at Dor and Jaffa.¹⁶ In the preceding period, the public buildings and fortifications of the Israelite and Judaeen royal cities were built in the same style, but with one difference: they were built of limestone, while all the later fortifications at Dor and the other coastal cities were constructed of local sandstone.¹⁷

Several sections of Wall 3 at Dor were preserved to a height of 2 m. or more and represent some of the finest and most impressive examples of this building style in Palestine. One of the ashlar piers of this wall, which was about 1 m. thick, contained several large stones in its outer face dressed with typical Phoenician-Israelite marginal drafts. This masonry technique is also encountered in many other sites, such as Tyre, Dan, Megiddo, Hazor, Beth Shean, Samaria, Ramat Raḥel and nearby Tel Mevorakh (Pl. 2:C).¹⁸ These stones, however, may have been in secondary use here and may have actually originated in the preceding stratum.

In the third century B.C.E., when this last 'Phoenician' wall of the fourth century together with its adjacent buildings was apparently still standing, the city received a new fortification system. Wall 4 was built in a totally Greek style, previously encountered only rarely at sites in Palestine (in particular Samaria and 'Akko)¹⁹ which had become Greek settlements at the very beginning of the Macedonian conquest).

This new wall was built of large, thick rectangular blocks of sandstone (about 1 m. long), most of them laid in headers facing the outside. It ran in a straight line above the previous structures, which partly projected to the east beyond the line of the new wall, partly ran beneath it, and partly lay inside it on its western side. It was a massive construction, about 2 m. thick, and was built of stone to its full height (Fig. 3, Pl. 3:A). Its foundations cut through all the preceding walls on its eastern side. These earlier walls were almost completely covered with the earth of the lime-coated glacis which protected their foundations.

Square towers, set about 30 m. apart and built in the same style, projected beyond the wall. So far two of these towers have been uncovered, one in Area A and another in Area C, as well as the entire section of wall between them, addi-

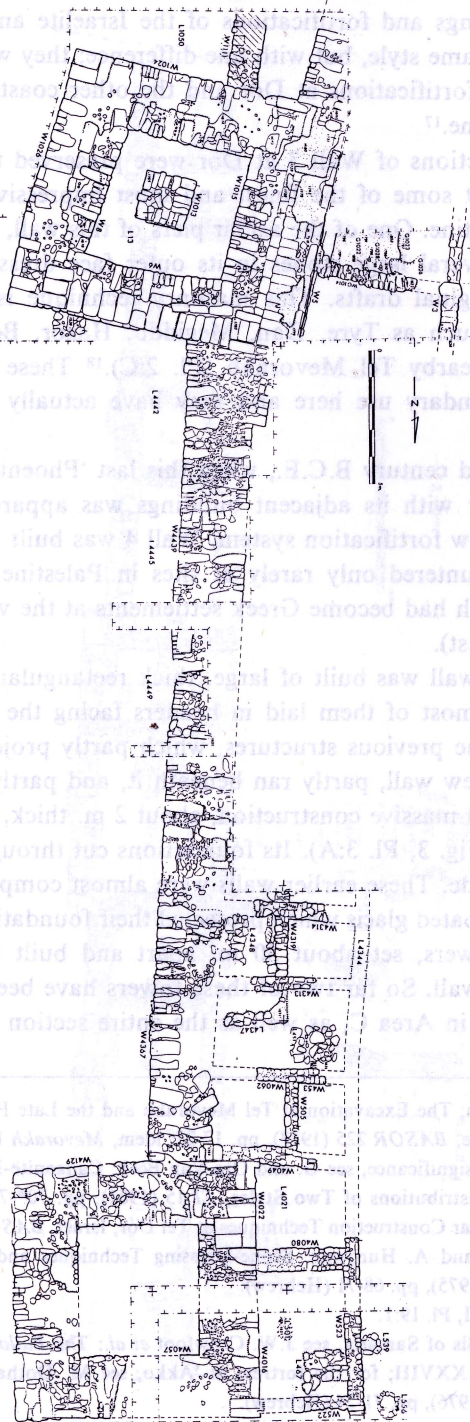
¹⁶ Cf. E. Stern: The Excavation at Tel Mevorakh and the Late Phoenician Elements in the Architecture of Palestine, *BASOR* 225 (1977), pp. 17-27; idem, *Mevorakh* I, pp. 71-75; on this distinctive architecture and its significance, see G. and Ora Van Beek: Canaanite-Phoenician Architecture: The Development and Distributions of Two Styles, *EI* 15 (1981), pp. 70*-77*. (See also I. Sharon: Phoenician and Greek Ashlar Construction Techniques at Tel Dor, Israel, *BASOR* 267 (1987), pp. 21-42.

¹⁷ Y. Shiloh and A. Hurowitz: Stone-Dressing Techniques and Ashlar Quarries of the Iron Age, *Qadmoniot* 8 (1975), pp. 68-71 (Hebrew).

¹⁸ *Mevorakh*, I, Pl. 19:1.

¹⁹ For the walls of Samaria, see J.W. Crowfoot *et al.*: *The Buildings at Samaria*, London, 1942, Pls. XXIV-XXV, XXXVIII; for the fortress at 'Akko, see M. Dothan: The Fortifications of Ptolemais, *Qadmoniot* 9 (1976), pp. 71-74 (Hebrew).

Fig. 3. Dor: the Hellenistic wall (Wall 4), with square towers.



tional sections of the wall, and the remains of another tower associated with the gate in Area B. The interior of the northern tower (Fig. 3) was not well preserved, but its outer contours are quite clear. The foundations of the southern tower (Area A; Pl. 3:B) have survived in their entirety. It is one of the most outstanding remnants of fortifications from the beginning of the Hellenistic period. The stones of this tower are also about 1 m. long and 0.5 m. wide, and all of them were laid in headers facing the exterior. The relative flexibility of sandstone and its ability to receive blows without breaking enabled them to withstand the advanced siege machines of the period. In several spots, this wall has survived to a height of more than 3 m. Also preserved was the central pillar of the southern tower. It apparently supported a wooden spiral staircase which encircled it and led to the roof (Fig. 3, Pl. 3:B). This seems to be the earliest example of a tower of this type uncovered in Palestine (for its date, see below). Towers of this type and their function have recently been discussed by Yadin and Magen.²⁰

In our opinion, it can be concluded that this new wall, with its distinctive style and towers and its impressive innovations, represents an unmistakably Greek fortification. According to the stratigraphic evidence, Wall 4 was not erected at the very start of the Hellenistic period, since it lay over a level dating from the beginning of the period, which contained, *inter alia*, a coin of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-246 B.C.E.). It was therefore probably built in the last years of the reign of this king, or shortly afterwards, for by 219 B.C.E. it was already in existence (see below). According to our present state of knowledge, this wall also continued in use, with alterations and additions, in succeeding periods until the final decline of the city at the end of the second or beginning of the third century C.E. (Pl. 3:C).

From the references in the historical sources it is evident that in the Hellenistic period Dor was a powerful fortified city. Josephus described it as a 'fortified city that was difficult to conquer'.²¹ Polybius related that Antiochus III Megas laid siege to Dor in 219 B.C.E. but did not succeed in capturing it.²² About 80 years later, history repeated itself: the historical sources mention that Tryphon the Seleucid (142-139 B.C.E.), after murdering Jonathan the Hasmonean, fled to Dor to escape from Antiochus VII Sidetes, who besieged him by land and sea with the help of Jonathan's brother, Simeon.²³ Indeed, both the army of Antiochus III and

²⁰ Y. Yadin: *The Temple Scroll*, Jerusalem, 1977, pp. 165-168; Fig. 7; Y. Magen: Bet ha-Mesibbah in the Temple Scroll and in the Mishnah, *EI* 17 (1984), pp. 226-235 (Hebrew). For some reason Magen did not mention the Tel Dor example, even though it was known and had been excavated by the time his article was published. See also: J. Patrich: The Mesibbah of the Temple According to the Tractate Middot, *IEJ* 36 (1986), pp. 215-233.

²¹ *Antiquities*, 13, 223.

²² *Historia* 5, 66.

²³ I Maccabees 9:10-14; 25-27; Josephus, *AJ* 13, 223-224; *BJ* 1, 50.

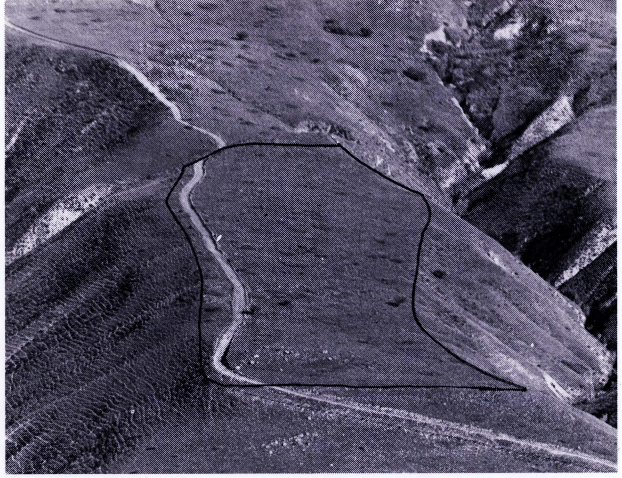
that of Antiochus VII failed to overcome the walls of the city.²⁴ This was easily understood when the remnants of the powerful fortifications were discovered in the recent excavations.

To sum up, although Dor was settled by a Phoenician population at the end of the Persian and the beginning of the Hellenistic periods, two phases can be distinguished in the development of its fortifications: in the fourth century B.C.E. the fortifications of the city were built according to classical Phoenician construction methods of casemates, or the end rooms of houses, with walls of ashlar piers, partly dressed with marginal drafts and their interstices filled with rubble. In the third century B.C.E., after the Greek armies with their developed battle techniques had become a permanent feature of the local scene, the configuration of the city fortifications also underwent a change. At the outset, these changes may have occurred only at sites such as Samaria, where the local population was totally supplanted by Greek settlers, or at 'Akko, which was rebuilt by Ptolemy II and named after him. During the course of the third century, however, these changes also extended to other settlements, perhaps first in the coastal plain which was a permanent field of combat between the Diadochs. These towns included Dor and perhaps also Marisa in the south.²⁵ At all events, the change at Dor from fortifications built in Phoenician style to those in Greek style represents the final stage in the transformation of Dor from a largely 'oriental' city to a Hellenistic one, a process which had started much earlier.

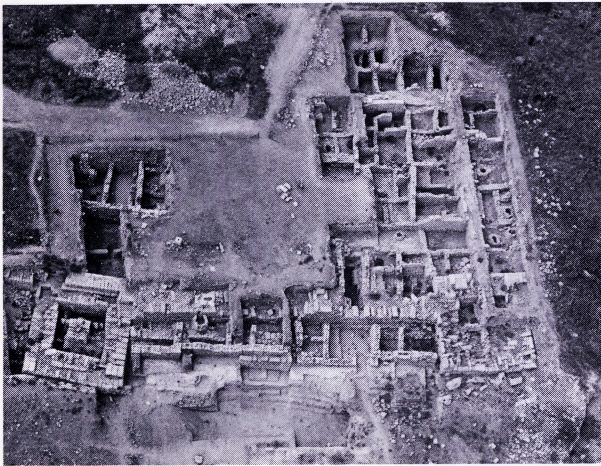
²⁴ The siege of Dor, to which Tryphon had fled, by Antiochus VII Sidetes is attested by two as yet unpublished rare coins of Tryphon from Dor, identified by D. Ariel, and by a lead slingshot on which his name was incised. See D. Schlesinger: A Lead Slingshot from Dor, *Qadmoniot* 13 (1982), p. 116 (Hebrew) and more recently D. Gera: Tryphon's Sling Bullet from Dor, *IEJ* 35 (1985), pp. 153-163. From this period piles of ballistic stones of different sizes were found at Dor; several were marked with their weights. Also found were typical arrowheads of the kind also found at 'Akko (Dothan, above, n. 19). Recent discoveries in the Jerusalem Citadel are also attributed to the siege of Antiochus VII Sidetes against John Hyrcanus in 133/2 B.C.E. They included stacks of ballistic stones, arrowheads and lead slingshots almost identical with those found at Dor; see Renée Sivan and G. Solar: Discoveries in the Jerusalem Citadel — 1980-1984, *Qadmoniot* 17 (1984), pp. 114-115 (Hebrew).

²⁵ M. Avi-Yonah: Mareshah, *EAEHL*, III, pp. 782-790. It should be noted that in Avi-Yonah's opinion, there was also a considerable Phoenician-Sidonian community in Marisa in that period. Cf. G. Horowitz: Town Planning of Hellenistic Marisa, *PEQ* 112 (1980), pp. 93-111.

A: H. Shaḥal Taḥtit. General view, showing the line of the fortifications.



H. SHAḤAL TAḤTIT



B: Dor: Areas A and C, looking west.



C: Dor: a mason's mark at the corner of the offset-inset wall (Wall 2).



A: Dor: the threshold of the two-chambered gate, with its stone socket.

B: Dor: view of the 'casemate' wall (Wall 3), cut by the Hellenistic wall (Wall 4); looking south.



C: Dor: the outer face of the 'casemate' wall (Wall 3), showing the typical Phoenician marginal drafts.

A: Dor: the Hellenistic wall (Wall 4), cutting the 'casemate' wall (Wall 3) on which the woman is standing; looking east.



B: Dor: the Hellenistic wall (Wall 4) and its southern square tower; looking east.



C: Dor, Area B: the stone base of the Hellenistic wall (Wall 4).