

IEJ Vol. 73/2: CONTENTS AND ABSTRACTS

129 In Memoriam – Amnon Ben Tor – IGOR KREIMERMAN

132 AREN M. MAEIR AND CHRISTOPHER ROLLSTON: The So-Called Mount Ebal Curse Tablet: A Critical Response

ABSTRACT: Stripling et al. (2023) published a lead object they believe was inscribed with a Late Bronze Age Hebrew curse, supposedly the earliest known Old Hebrew inscription. If true, this would be a sensational archaeological find. However, serious methodological and factual problems undermine their claims. We contend that their tomographic images fail to demonstrate any discernible letters and have concerns about the authors' dating of the archaeological material from this site. Here, we critically examine their claims, suggesting that most conclusions lack an empirical basis. Ultimately, this artifact is most reasonably understood as an uninscribed lead fishing-net weight.

143 AMIHAI MAZAR: The Lead Object from Mount Ebal as a Fishing-Net Sinkers

ABSTRACT: In this article, I propose to define the lead object from Mt. Ebal, purported to bear an inscription, as a fishing-net weight ("sinker"). The basis for this identification is similar lead objects, defined as such weights, that were common throughout the eastern Mediterranean, in particular during the Late Bronze II and Iron Age I, a time partly corresponding with the main period of occupation at the site of Mt. Ebal.

153 NAAMA YAHALOM-MACK: The Source of the Lead of the Mount Ebal "Tablet"

ABSTRACT: The lead object from Mt. Ebal, defined as a "tablet" with an inscription by Stripling et al. (2023), was found during the secondary sifting of sediments from A. Zertal's 1980s excavations at the site. It was sampled for Lead Isotope Analysis to identify the source of the lead and to potentially shed light on its date. The results showed that the lead can be sourced to the mines of Lavrion in Greece, which were exploited almost continually from the fourth millennium BCE until the Late Roman period. As such, the source of the lead is inconclusive as a factor in determining the secure date of this artifact.

160 SHLOMIT BECHAR, URI BERGER, ANASTASIA SHAPIRO, EDNA J. STERN, NOA GOLDBERG AND YINON SHIVTIEL: The Intermediate Bronze Age Cemetery of Tel Hazor at Giv'at Raḥalim (Tell eṣ-Şafa)

ABSTRACT: Giv'at Raḥalim (Tell eṣ-Şafa) is located c. 2 km east of Tel Hazor and Kibbutz Ayyelet ha-Shahar. The site, containing many caves, was

surveyed several times, and limited excavations suggested that it was first used as a cemetery in the Intermediate Bronze Age. The surveys and our recent excavation in one of the caves confirmed this date and function. This article describes the finds from a burial in Cave 10, which led us to recognize the site as one of the largest cemeteries in Galilee during the Intermediate Bronze Age that served the inhabitants of Hazor and occupants of sites in the vicinity. The caves were reused in later periods for various functions.

184 EYTHAN LEVY: A Note on an Early Alphabetic Jar Inscription from Lachish

ABSTRACT: This paper proposes a new interpretation of an early alphabetic inscription on a jar found at Lachish in 2014. It is suggested that this is a list of offerings, based on observations on the layout of the text and the possible repeated occurrence of the word *ksp* (“silver”) in lines 2 and 3.

189 AMIHAI MAZAR: The Initial Settlement at Tell Qasile in the Context of Philistine Material Culture

ABSTRACT: This article deals with the initial settlement at Tell Qasile in Stratum XII, dated to the second half of the twelfth century BCE. The Hearth Building, south of the sacred enclosure and belonging to this occupation phase, is discussed in detail, along with other aspects of the local material culture. The foundation of Tell Qasile is explained as a result of the territorial expansion of one or more of the Philistine cities in their attempt to establish a port town serving maritime connections along the eastern Mediterranean coast. The settlers arrived from the Philistine urban environment and retained the hybrid Philisto-Canaanite material culture almost identical to that in the core cities.

212 NADAV NA'AMAN: “The High Places Which Are in Front of Jerusalem” (2 Kgs 23:13): A Proposed Identification

ABSTRACT: Recent excavations conducted at two sites — Mordot Arnona, situated about 750 m north of Ramat Raḥel, and Armon ha-Natziv, located south of ancient Jerusalem — shed new light on Josiah’s cult reform. This article postulates that the former was the site of the “high places” located “in front of Jerusalem,” as mentioned in 2 Kgs 23:13–14. The excavations at Mordot Arnona disclosed the radical nature of Josiah’s cult reform. Among the measures taken to eradicate the foreign cults are the razing to the ground of the temple, the breakage and discard of all its cult objects and vessels, and the deliberate removal of its prime architectural elements to the neighboring site at Armon ha-Natziv. The authenticity of this episode, as indicated on the ground, suggests that many other details related to the account of Josiah’s cult reform, including those that many scholars doubt their validity, are genuine historical memories of Josiah’s reform.

- 227 ERIOLA JAKOEL AND GIDEON BOHAK: An Aggressive Magical Figurine from Caesarea

ABSTRACT: A small lead figurine from an Early Roman-period burial complex in Caesarea displays telltale signs of its use as an aggressive magical figurine. It presents a naked woman whose legs are broken above the knees and whose arms are twisted behind her back. Many similar figurines have been found throughout the Greco-Roman world, and their use is amply documented in Greek magical recipe books and Greek and Latin literary texts that describe or condemn magical practices. In the Jewish world, the use of such figurines seems to have been much less common. In addition to publishing the Caesarea figurine and placing it in its historical context, we offer an English translation of and brief comments on the only two Late-Antique Jewish magical recipes with instructions for producing such figurines that are currently known.

- 241 IRA BARASH AND YANA TCHEKHANOVETS: The “Monastery of Virgins” in Jerusalem Revisited

ABSTRACT: This article challenges the identification of a building in the Byzantine complex discovered during B. Mazar’s excavations at the foot of the Temple Mount with the “Monastery of Virgins,” known in Theodosius the Deacon’s description of Jerusalem from the early sixth century CE. This identification is re-examined based on the urban context of the building, an analysis of the architectural structure and archaeological finds, as well as literary, epigraphic, and archaeological evidence regarding early female monasticism in the Holy Land.