

In the final phase of the period, the later Middle Bronze IIb, we have somewhat more historical information, again from Egyptian sources. The reign of the Fifteenth Dynasty (the Delta Kingdom) over most of Canaan is reflected in the large number of objects (mainly scarabs) bearing the names of kings of that dynasty found in excavations in southern Canaan. In addition to scarabs of Fifteenth Dynasty kings, the seals of high officials have been discovered. Foremost among them is the treasurer Hori, whose tenure covered the early years of the dynasty and whose name ("the Hurrian") indicates Syro-Canaanite extraction. The end of the period is well documented, thanks to the discovery of Egyptian texts relating the overthrow of the Fifteenth Dynasty in Egypt and its entrenchment in Canaan. This permits the reconstruction of the events and hence the interpretation of the intensification of settlement in the south during the seventeenth century.

CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE.

The culture created in the Land of Israel during the third millennium formed the basis for the establishment of Bronze Age culture. This foundation, however, was insufficient, and the inhabitants of the late third millennium, under pressure of ecological and other changes, had to change their life-style and revert to village or seminomadic modes. At the start of the second millennium the urban culture of Canaan was refashioned, or rather restored, mainly owing to the survival of pockets of urban culture on the Lebanese coast and in northern Syria. The dominance of the culture of greater Syria cannot be denied, but it merged with Egyptian cultural influences, which steadily increased as the period drew to a close. The fusion of the two directions of cultural influence represents the classic

Canaanite culture as we know it in the Late Bronze Age. The latter period is but a direct continuation of the Middle Bronze Age II, with Egyptian influence gaining dominance.

Another important achievement of Middle Bronze II culture was the reincarnation of the Canaanite city-state. This sociopolitical formation would continue to exist, basically unchanged, along the entire eastern Mediterranean littoral for the whole of the Bronze Age, and in some cases well into the Iron Age. The increasing intervention of Canaanites in the politics of a neighboring land (Egypt) and the contribution of this population to the creation of the Fifteenth Dynasty represent, for the first time, the exertion of political influence by inhabitants of Canaan over regions outside its geographical borders. The population, an amalgam of northern immigrants with indigenous elements, had the potential by the second part of the period to spawn migrant groups that could settle in a neighboring country, and even, for a short time, replace its governing elite.

The strength and resilience of Canaanite culture grew out of its ability to fuse Syrian elements, which in themselves contained many Mesopotamian elements, with Egyptian culture. The two systems of writing present in Middle Bronze Age Canaan—Akkadian writing from northern Syria and Egyptian script—are evidence for this process. Only toward the end of the period do Canaanite scribes succeed in fashioning a local script, the proto-Canaanite alphabet, the forerunner of the Canaanite and Hebrew alphabets. The broad foundations of Canaanite culture in the Middle Bronze Age made possible the continued growth and the manifold foreign relations of Canaan in the Late Bronze Age.

The Late Bronze Age

RIVKA GONEN

The general sequence of events is thoroughly documented for the Late Bronze Age in Canaan, which corresponds to the New Kingdom in Egypt (the Eighteenth, Nineteenth, and early Twentieth Dynasties). No other biblical era, the First Temple period excepted, is so brightly illuminated by historical sources or provides so firm a historical basis for archaeological investigation.

The entire Late Bronze Age stands in the sign of Egyptian suzerainty in Canaan, beginning with the renewal of Egyptian control, following the expulsion of the Hyksos dynasty and the reunification of Egypt under the Theban kings, and ending with the gradual attenuation of Egyptian rule, leading to the retreat of Egypt from the region. For four hundred-odd years, Canaan was part of the Egyptian empire and under its direct administration. But notwithstanding its political and military subordination, Canaan maintained its independence in the realms of material and spiritual culture, reaching the zenith of Canaanite creativity in the fields of religion, literature, and art.

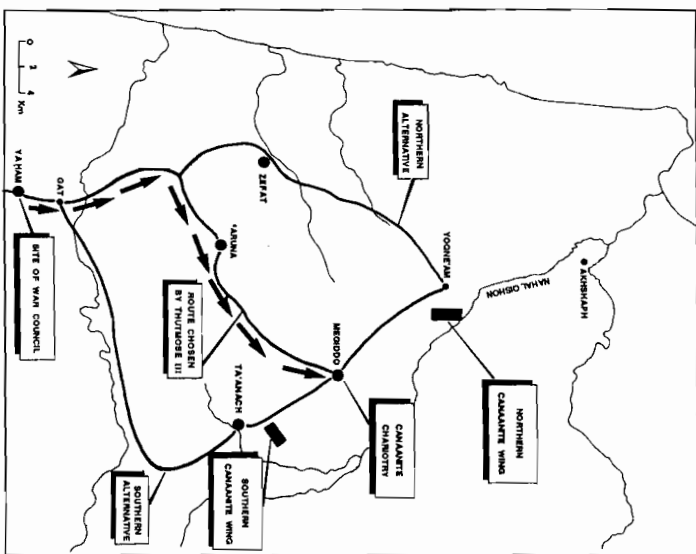
From the historical aspect, the events that terminated the Middle Bronze Age and inaugurated the Late Bronze Age were the over-

throw of the Hyksos dynasty and reunification of Egypt under Ahmose, the founder of the Eighteenth Dynasty, and the conquest of Canaan. The overthrow of Hyksos rule began when Ahmose (1570-1546 B.C.E.) conquered the Hyksos capital at Avaris in the eastern Nile Delta in about 1560 B.C.E., ending Hyksos rule in Egypt. Later, in an unknown year, Ahmose marched across the Sinai peninsula and lay siege to the city of Sharuhen for three years before finally conquering it. Sharuhen, long identified with Tell el-Far'ah South, is presently identified with Tell el-Ajjul. Documents contemporaneous with the rule of Ahmose describe a military campaign to Djahli (a broad Egyptian term for Syria and Canaan), the taking of prisoners there, and the taking of booty from Fenhu (an Egyptian term for the Lebanese coast). These citations indicate military campaigns in Canaan or perhaps even conquest of parts of the country, laying the foundations of the Egyptian empire in Asia and marking the start of the Late Bronze Age.

Ahmose's successors Amenhotep I (1546-1524 B.C.E.) and Thutmose I (1524-1515 B.C.E.) extended the scope of Egyptian interests beyond

the borders of Canaan by pursuing a war with the kingdom of Mitanni, called Naharin by the Egyptians, which had only recently established itself in northern Syria. Thutmose I even crossed the Euphrates and erected a victory stela on the opposite shore. But the power of Mitanni did not diminish. On the contrary, the kingdom expanded in the following years. The kingdom of Mitanni was founded by the Hurrians, the hill people of the upper Euphrates. By the end of the third millennium they had established small kingdoms in the region of the Habur River, a tributary of the Euphrates. From the seventeenth cen-

Map 7.1. Camel passes and Megiddo battlefield



tury on, the Hurrian kingdoms gained strength, invading Syria and Canaan. By the last quarter of the sixteenth century a united Hurrian kingdom, Mitanni, had been established in northern Mesopotamia. To the fourteenth century, it was the principal Near Eastern power opposing Egypt. Mitanni continued to expand east, west, and south, reaching its greatest extent under Saustatar, in the early fifteenth century. Considerable portions of Canaan previously occupied by Egypt, perhaps even all of Canaan, passed into the hands of Mitanni.

This was the state of affairs when Thutmose III (1504–1450 B.C.E.),

the great Eighteenth Dynasty conqueror, embarked on a series of campaigns that restored and fortified Egyptian domination in Canaan and Syria. The first campaign took place in his twenty-third year (1482 B.C.E.) and was aimed at the pacification of the rebellious cities of Canaan, who were supported by Mitanni. Thutmose III conducted fifteen more campaigns, first against Syria, then against the kingdom of Mitanni itself. In his eighth campaign (1472), Thutmose defeated Mitanni, but the continued struggle of the Mitannian dependencies impeded firm Egyptian control over Syria. In Canaan, however, the Egyptian victory was complete.

The most decisive of Thutmose III's campaigns in Canaan was the first, which culminated in the battle of Megiddo and is described in detail in the annals inscribed by order of the king on the walls of the temple of Amun at Karnak. These annals constitute a rare description of ancient military strategy; they are arranged in chronological order and are assumed to be based on the campaign diary written by the royal scribes who participated in the campaigns. The description of the march on Megiddo is the most detailed of the Egyptian campaign reports. An abbreviated record of the campaign was inscribed on a tablet found at Arnamt in upper Egypt and at Jebel Barkal in Nubia. The coalition of rebellious cities in Canaan and Syria, headed by the Mitannian-supported city of Qadesh, included 119 towns, most of them in the Jezreel valley, the Acho valley, the northern Jordan valley, the Bashan, the Damascus plateau, and the Lebanese mountains. These appear to have been the most active regions of opposition. The names of all these towns, as well as other sites on the route of the advancing Egyptian army, are inscribed on the walls of the temple at Karnak.

The Egyptian army won a great victory at the battle of Megiddo, but the Egyptian troops fell to looting and did not pursue their advantage. The leaders of the coalition escaped to Megiddo and shut themselves within its walls, forcing the Egyptians to lay a seven-month siege before surrendering; it is odd that no fortifications of that period have been uncovered at the site. The rebellious kings were taken captive, along with much booty. Military equipment figures highly in the booty lists—924 chariots and 2041 horses, 200 coats of mail and 502 bows—and illustrates the power of the coalition opposing Egypt.

After his decisive victory, Thutmose III established an administrative system in Canaan that endured until the end of the Late Bronze Age. Direct authority over the cities remained in the hands of local rulers, but a few key towns were appropriated for the needs of the Egyptian administration. Chief among them was Gaza, which attained the status of capital of the Egyptian government in Canaan. Other administrative centers included Jaffa and Beth Shean. Yenoam in Transjordan, Kumidi in the Lebanese Beqa', and Ullaza and Sumur on the Phoenician coast. The administration was headed by an Egyptian governor, appointed by the king, officials, aided by small garrisons, assisted in maintaining the peace and collecting taxes.

The death of Thutmose III brought about renewed unrest in the areas of Egyptian domination in Syria and Canaan, requiring his son Amenhotep II (1450–1427 B.C.E.) to conduct three military campaigns. The first (1450 B.C.E.) was directed against the land of Takhshi (the Qadesh region in Syria), which had returned to Mitannian domination. The second campaign (1444 B.C.E.) was also directed against the Syrian kingdoms of Qadesh, Qatna, and Ni, who were allied with Mitanni. The two campaigns appear to have been only moderately successful, as their descriptions include booty lists but no report of battles or victories. The third campaign (1444 B.C.E.) was limited to the Sharon plain and the Jezreel valley and consisted mainly of small-scale battles, which may represent the pacification of local mudinins.

Despite Amenhotep II's unimpressive record in the battlefield, Egypt attained a balance of power with Mitanni, owed, perhaps, to the attrition of both sides by the extended conflict. Egypt and Mitanni established their respective spheres of influence. The border between the two ran from the Qadesh area to the Lebanese Beqa', with Canaan remaining under Egyptian control. This border marked the limit of Egyptian expansion until the end of the Late Bronze Age and even received biblical sanction as the northern border of the Promised Land (Num. 34; Ezek. 47). The agreement with Mitanni enabled Egypt to secure its grip over Canaan, and the successors of Amenhotep II—Thutmose IV and Amenhotep III—conducted only limited forays into Canaan.

Our knowledge of events in Canaan during the reign of Amenhotep IV, better known as Akhenaten (1364–1347 B.C.E.), is greatly enhanced by the discovery of the royal archives at El-Amarna, the site of Akhenaten's capital. This heretic king, who promoted the god Aten to the supreme position in the Egyptian pantheon, founded his capital, called Akhetaten, on virgin ground. In the seventh year of his reign (1358 B.C.E.) the royal court moved to the new capital, bringing along a part of the royal archives that contained letters from the reign of Amenhotep III. During the sojourn of the king in Akhetaten more letters were added to the archives.

Akhetaten was abandoned in 1344 B.C.E., in the third year of the reign of Akhenaten's successor, Tutankhamen (1347–1338 B.C.E.). The El-Amarna archives thus span 27 years, known as the El-Amarna period. The term in its broader sense includes the whole of the fourteenth century, from the days of Amenhotep III to the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty.

The El-Amarna period is well documented by contemporary Egyptian, Hittite, Ugaritic, and Mesopotamian sources. The major events in the Near Eastern expansion may be summed up as the decline of power of Mitanni and the concomitant rise of the Hittite kingdom as the major power in the northern Indo-European nation who penetrated into eastern Anatolia in the first part of the second millennium or perhaps as early as the late third millennium. By the second half of the seventeenth century B.C.E. the Hittites had established a large kingdom, the Old Hittite Kingdom. Following a brief climax, Hittite power and territorial dominion waned. In the mid-fifteenth century a second period of military and territorial expansion began, climaxed by the creation of the Hittite Empire. Shupiliummas I, the greatest of the Hittite kings (1375–1335 B.C.E.) conducted a series of campaigns against Mitanni, ending with the conquest of the capital Wassukkani. He continued south to Syria, gaining the allegiance of the vassal kingdoms of Mitanni. From then on, until the end of the Late Bronze Age, the Hittite Empire was Egypt's rival for domination in Syria, a struggle punctuated by campaigns by Nineteenth Dynasty kings who wished to maintain Egyptian interests in that region.

During this era of dramatic change in the north, Canaan remained loyal to Egypt. This and

other aspects of Canaan's internal situation in mid-fourteenth century Canaan may be gathered from the El-Amarna documents, many of which are letters sent from Canaanite princes to the Egyptian court. They brightly illuminate the Canaanite condition at this time, its settlement, its population, the relations between the Canaanite cities and between these cities and Egypt. About 350 letters were discovered in the El-Amarna archives. They were written for the most part in Akkadian, the international language of the period. The letters include missives sent by the kings of Hatti, Mitanni, Babylon, and Cyprus (Alashiya), as well as copies of the replies of the Egyptian king, but the great majority were written by local Canaanite princes. In some cases, an extended correspondence of a single ruler is preserved; we know of 6 letters sent by Abdu-heba of Jerusalem, 5 by Milkilu-Yaphu. In all, 27 Canaanite cities and 25 Canaanite princes are mentioned. Towns of the Syro-Lebanese coast, the Lebanese Beqa', the Bashan-Damascus plateau, and the Bashan appear as well. From these documents it emerges that only 13 of the towns were city-states of any significance. The rest were minor towns, either directly ruled by the larger cities or otherwise subordinate to them. Though all the city-states were subject to the supreme authority of the Egyptian king, represented by the governor residing at Gaza, they enjoyed internal autonomy. Relations among the city-states were strained and marked by repeated attempts to annex territories of neighboring states. In their letters, the Canaanite princes express their loyalty to Egypt in effusive terms and implore the Pharaoh to send Egyptian military units to assist in the defense against their neighbors. The size of

the units requested is surprisingly small; the prince of Jerusalem, for example, requested fifty troops. The letters offer a vivid portrait of Prince Labayu of Shechem, an ambitious ruler who threatened the territorial integrity of neighboring states in the hills, the Sharon, the Shephelah, and the Jezreel valley. Following the impassioned pleas for assistance sent to the Egyptian king, Labayu was ordered to present himself at court and was assassinated by his enemies on the way there.

The El-Amarna tablets also mention a group termed 'Apiru, or Habiru, which existed on the periphery of Canaanite society. The 'Apiru lack a clear ethnic identity. They were a motley crowd of social outcasts who coalesced, perhaps in several small, unrelated groups. According to the sources, the 'Apiru had no permanent settlements, social privileges, or property. They played an important role in the rivalry between the city-states, transferring their allegiance from one side to another, according to their own interests.

The small chink opened on the social and political life of Canaan was soon shut. From the end of the El-Amarna age onward, our knowledge is again only general.

The rise of the Nineteenth Dynasty saw renewed Egyptian attempts to stabilize its base in face of the growing power of the Hittite empire, which had conquered northern and central Syria. Nineteenth Dynasty kings embarked on military campaigns to stabilize the northern boundary of the Egyptian empire. References to Canaan are derived mainly from accounts of military operations, from which it may be inferred that social ferment was on the rise, particularly among nomadic elements. The three great kings of this dynasty, Seti I, Ramesses II, and Merneptah, led military campaigns, some aimed at

putting down rebellions within Canaan, others directed against the Hittite forces in Syria. Seti I (1291-1279 B.C.E.), dates in accord with the chronological tables of Wenre and Van Sieten, erected two stelae at Beth Shean; one reports the pacification of the nomadic groups, among them the 'Apiru of Mount Yarmuta (biblical Yarmut, in the lower Galilee), who had attacked neighboring settlements. Information regarding the two other campaigns of Seti I is fragmentary, but they appear to have been directed against the cities of Syria and the Hittite forces and probably did not pass through the heart of Canaan but along the coast.

We do not know what the concrete results of Seti I's campaigns were. His heir, Ramesses II (1279-1212 B.C.E.), whose 66-year reign was one of the longest in history, renewed the war against the Hittites. The campaign of 1275 was intended to be the decisive thrust in the struggle between the Egyptians and Hittites, climaxing in the battle of Qadesh on the Orontes. It is most thoroughly documented in inscriptions and reliefs carved on the walls of temples throughout Egypt. According to the Egyptian sources, the Hittite army consisted of 2500 chariots and 37,000 foot soldiers, while the Egyptian army, for which no precise numbers are given, consisted of four divisions named after the four principal Egyptian gods, Amun, Ptah, Ra, and Sutekh (Seti). The detailed descriptions extend to the Egyptian army, and particularly the personal prowess of the king, but between the lines the true picture emerges: the Hittite mounted a surprise attack on two of the Egyptian divisions near Qadesh and only the timely arrival of the third division and an elite seaborne unit prevented the utter defeat of the Egyptians. Ramesses II conducted further campaigns to Syria and Canaan, but details are not known.

The struggle between Egypt and Hatti ended in 1259 B.C.E. with the so-called Silver Treaty, which established the spheres of influence of each power and fixed their boundary along the line of Lebo Hamat in the Lebanese Beqa'. Normalization of relations between Egypt and Hatti followed and was maintained until the collapse of the Hittite empire. It was during the reign of Merneptah (1212-1202 B.C.E.) that Egypt entered a decline, which led to its withdrawal from Canaan seventy years later. Merneptah had to fend off not only the Libyans, the traditional enemy of Egypt on its western frontier, but also two new elements, the Sea Peoples and Israel.

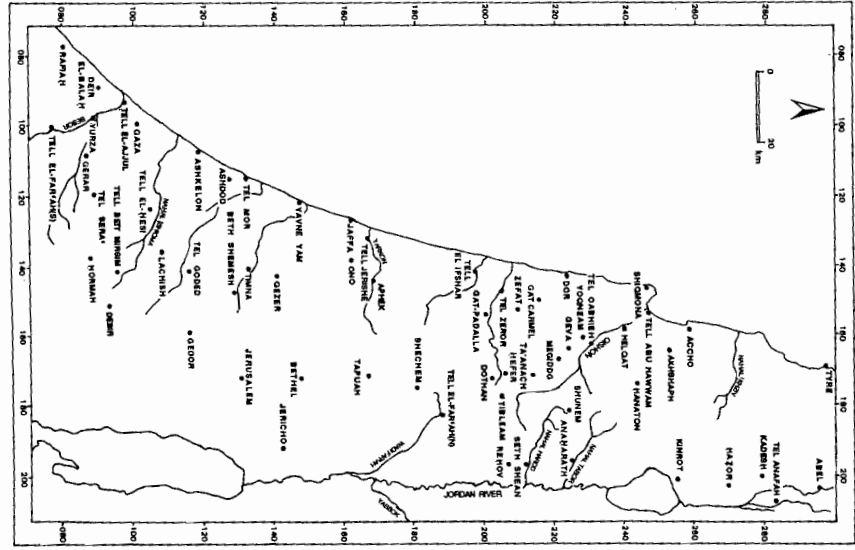
The invasions of the Sea Peoples, which brought about the downfall of the Hittite empire and the kingdoms of the Syrian and Canaanite coast, as well as the rise of the Israelite tribes in Canaan, spelled the end of the old order that had reigned in the eastern Mediterranean littoral throughout the second millennium B.C.E. The ascendancy of the great powers came to an end, and in the resulting vacuum small national states came into being. Historically and archaeologically the early days of the Twentieth Dynasty in Egypt mark the end of the Late Bronze Age and the beginning of the Iron Age.

However, the decline was not immediate. The great campaigner against the Sea Peoples was Ramesses III (1182-1151 B.C.E.), of the Twentieth Dynasty. He fought two great battles, in his fifth and eighth years: the first was a sea battle fought in the Nile Delta, and the second a land battle fought at an unknown place. The Egyptian version of these battles contains the usual boasts about the utter defeat of the enemy, but this seems not to have been quite the case. The battle fields carved on the walls of the temple of Medinet Habu, near Thebes, show that the Sea Peoples

were a migrating people, traveling with their women, children, and household effects. The Egyptians had to contend with a military force and with an uprooted population. The Harris Papyrus, dating from the days of Ramesses III's successor, describes the settling of the Sea Peoples in border fortresses, thus marking the beginning of the Sea Peoples' settlement in Canaan.

The infiltration of the Sea Peoples—and particularly the Philistines, the best known of these groups—was to deeply influence the turn of events in the Iron Age I. Though the Egyptians continued to control Canaan, or at least parts of it, for another fifty years or so, they were no longer able to prevent the settlement of the Israelites in the hill regions or of the Philistines along

MAP 7.2. Late Bronze Age sites in Canaan



the coastal plain, and by the mid-twelfth century, Egyptian presence in Canaan ceased, giving way to new forces and the new order of the Iron Age.

Just as the beginning and end of the Late Bronze Age are fixed by historical events, so too do the various schemes for the subdivision of the period rely on historical events. One common subdivision is into three parts:

- Late Bronze I (1550–1400 B.C.E.), the first part of the Eighteenth Dynasty;
- Late Bronze IIa (1400–1300 B.C.E.), the El-Amarna period, the latter part of the Eighteenth Dynasty;
- Late Bronze IIb (1300–1200 B.C.E.), the Nineteenth Dynasty.

This scheme suggests that the two-hundred-year span from 1400 to 1200 B.C.E. is fundamentally a single period with two subphases, but such is not the case. Although there is considerable cultural continuity between the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries, many changes are evident as well, a result of the increasing involvement of Egypt in Canaan in the face of the Hittite threat from the north and internal sources of unrest, such as the nomadic tribes. The thirteenth century is the most Egyptian in Canaanite history: Egypt tightened her hold on Canaan by establishing a series of administrative centers and fortresses, Egyptian exports to Canaan increased, and Egyptianizing tendencies spread in the local culture. It has therefore been proposed to view the century as an independent phase.

Another scheme for subdivision is that proposed by R. Amiran in her *Ancient Pottery of the Holy Land*. Her subdivision is based on the precise date established for the conquest of Avaris (1570 B.C.E.) and the reigns of Amenhotep II and IV,

and the dates are the same cited in the subdivision of the Mycenaean pottery groups.

- Late Bronze I, 1570–1410 B.C.E.;
- Late Bronze II, 1410–1340 B.C.E.; and
- Late Bronze III, 1340–1200 B.C.E.

There appears to be a consensus regarding the round figure of 1200 for the end of the Late Bronze Age. However, new discoveries at Lachish, Megiddo, Beth Shean, and Tel Sera, including precisely dated inscriptions, and recent reappraisals of terminal Late Bronze Age strata at several sites (such as Megiddo and Beth Shean) indicate that the period should in fact end fifty years later, at approximately 1150 B.C.E. This chapter, therefore, presents a subdivision that takes account of all those reservations, while retaining the simplicity of the first scheme proposed:

- Late Bronze I (1550–1400 B.C.E.), the Eighteenth Dynasty;
- Late Bronze II (1400–1300 B.C.E.), the El-Amarna period; and
- Late Bronze III (1300–1150 B.C.E.), the Nineteenth and early Twentieth Dynasties.

The Settlement of Canaan in the Late Bronze Age

The Late Bronze Age is often thought of as a period of urban efflorescence, though recent research has shown this reputation to be quite exaggerated. The urban image has been based largely on the mention of many sites in Egyptian texts of the period. In the great topographical list of Thutmose III about 75 place names in Canaan and another 40 in the Lebanese Beqaa', the Damascus plateau, and the Bashan are noted. The annals of Amenhotep

III's campaign mention 12 to 14 names, the El-Amarna letters 28 names, and the topographical lists of Seti I 6 or 7 names of settlements in El-Amarna letters, reveal that while some of these sites were capitals of city-states, most were of secondary importance. All were subject to the authority of the Egyptian crown,

but their internal affairs were managed by local rulers, who often styled themselves kings. This manner of administration, with its origins in the Middle Bronze Age, was reaffirmed by Thutmose III after the battle of Megiddo and was maintained throughout the Late Bronze Age.

In the light of excavations and surveys, it becomes apparent that the urban system of Canaan underwent a drastic change in the transition from the Middle to the Late Bronze Age. Many sites were destroyed, and most were not soon rehhabited. Those that were rehhabited did not attain their original size and influence. The causes of the destruction of the Middle Bronze sites have not been adequately clarified, but it is usually ascribed to the Egyptian conquest of Canaan with the ascent of the Eighteenth Dynasty. Though Egyptian sources mention the siege of only one city, Shechem, it would appear that Egypt pursued her military advance northward. The passage of the Egyptian army through the countryside would have been accompanied by siege operations and conquests. Presumably the fighters from the defeated cities added to the destruction in their search for new dwelling places. They would have been responsible for raids on provincial towns and small outlying settlements, with the Egyptians confining themselves to the towns along the main routes. In any case, hardly a single site escaped massive destruction, including some of the

largest and most important sites in the country: Tell el-Far'ah South, Tell el-Ajjul, Tell Beit Mirsim, Jericho, Shechem, Megiddo, Achcho, Hazor, and Dan. Such large-scale destruction no doubt impoverished the population of Canaan, so that when reconstruction began it could only be partial. Of the 54 excavated sites existing at the end of the Middle Bronze Age, only 22 were rehhabited during the Late Bronze I. This casts some doubt on the list of 75 Canaanite cities compiled by Thutmose III, and it could be that some of the places were reference points or ruins, rather than existing towns.

During the Late Bronze II the number of sites doubled. Old sites were rehhabited and new settlements were established at previously uninhabited spots. Concurrently, however, several large sites that had been occupied from the Middle Bronze Age were now abandoned. The new settlements were largely clustered along the coast. Sites such as Tell Abu Hawam, Tel Megiddo, and Tel Girit were no doubt small ports servicing the greatly increased import trade. The balance of total settled area thus remained stable throughout the Late Bronze Age. A rough calculation of the total area of the Late Bronze I sites provides a sum of about 184 hectares, and the total settled area of the Late Bronze II amounts to about 204 hectares, a difference of only 10 percent. So far, only five sites with a Late Bronze Age occupation of more than 5 hectares have been identified (Tell Keisan, Tell Jericho, Ashdod, Lachish, and Hazor), but at Dor and Ashkelon, currently under excavation, the strata of the period have yet to be exposed. New discoveries of Late Bronze Age settlements may also be made. All the remaining sites excavated are less than 5 hectares and often measure only a few dunams, reflecting not only the small average size of sites but also the correspondingly small size of the population, in which no significant growth may be discerned as the period progresses. A similar situation may be observed in the Late Bronze III. Though new sites were added to the Canaanite settlement system, they were small and their contribution to the total inhabited area was insignificant. The new sites were for the most part Egyptian fortresses or residences, built along the main routes or in regions deemed vital for the maintenance of Egyptian authority. Such structures were sometimes built at new sites such as Der el-Balah, but for the most part they are found at long-inhabited sites such as Tell el-Far'ah South, which had lain in ruins since the great destruction at the end of the Middle Bronze Age, or Tell el-Ajjul, which was destroyed early in the Late Bronze I. These fortresses and residences were of characteristic Egyptian type, built in the Egyptian construction technique, to serve Egyptian interests. They should not, therefore, be viewed as a significant addition to the Canaanite urban system. Intensive archaeological surveys in various parts of the country round out the observed pattern of a significant decline in the number of sites. Where some 270 Middle Bronze sites were counted, only about 100 Late Bronze Age sites were found, a decrease of more than 60 percent.

Both the surveys and the excavations indicate considerable differences in the distribution of sites in various parts of the country. The coastal plain from the Sinai to the Carmel, the Judaean Shephelah, and the valleys of Jerzel, Beth Shean, and the upper Jordan were all rather densely inhabited during the Late Bronze Age, though the sites were generally small. In contrast, the hill areas remained devoid of settlement. In the central hills, only Tapuah, Dohhan, Hefer, Debir, Jerusalem, Bethel, Shechem, and Tell el-Far'ah

North were occupied, while in the Galilee hills there appear to have been only a minute number of settlements, and only the sites of Tel Qudsi and Tel Kesh may be attributed to the period with any certainty. The large site of Gebeon was abandoned at the end of the Middle Bronze Age and not rehhabited in the Late Bronze Age, though the cemetery remained partly in use. Beth Zur was also abandoned, and possibly Hebron as well. Jerusalem, which had been a walled town in the Middle Bronze Age, contracted in the Late Bronze Age into a fortress of no great size on the acropolis of the City of David. The hill areas were apparently inhabited by non-sedentary populations such as the 'Apiru and Shasu, who left their imprint in the form of burial sites. The transfer of the focus of settlement to the plains and valleys and the near abandonment of the hill country had a decisive significance for Israelite settlement.

Fortification of the Late Bronze Age Towns

The transition from the Middle to the Late Bronze Age is also reflected in the radical changes in fortification, one of the most prominent features of urban settlement. The impressive fortifications of the Middle Bronze Age were based largely on glacis systems and huge earthen embankments. In the course of the Middle Bronze Age, and even more so with the destruction of the cities, occupation levels within the fortified enclosures rose nearly to the height of the ramparts. By the time the Late Bronze Age cities were established these fortifications, though still extant, did not provide much protection. This was the case at Achcho, for instance, where the enormous ramparts had gone out of use halfway through the Middle Bronze Age. Toward the end of that period

the foundations of a citadel were sunk into the summit of the ramparts, and the Late Bronze Age inhabitants established themselves on the ruins of the citadel. The ramparts continued to support the steep slopes surrounding the mound but did not protrude above the occupation level of the Late Bronze site, so that its defensive value was quite limited. An exception to this rule was the city of Hazor. There is no doubt that the Middle Bronze Age rampart at Hazor towered high above the lower city occupation levels through the whole of the Late Bronze Age; it may thus be considered a true Late Bronze Age defensive system.

If most of the Middle Bronze Age defensive works did not continue to protect cities in the succeeding period, how then were the Late Bronze Age cities defended? The answer is rather surprising: most excavated sites have yielded no remains of Late Bronze Age fortification. In some cases, such as at Tirna (Tel Barash), or at least at the excavated northeast corner of the site, public structures were built in a continuous line, and their exterior walls provided a degree of protection for the site. At Lachish, however, houses and installations were built on the earlier rampart slopes and even within the defensive ditch at its foot; no new fortification having been constructed.

The absence of defensive systems at the sites and their small average size (and hence population) combine to cast doubt on the magnitude of the urban phenomenon in the Late Bronze Age; it would appear that the towns were for the most part quite weak and impoverished. This state of affairs appears to be related to Canaan's location on the route of the Egyptian armies northward; at times it even served as the theater of each military campaign that passed

through the countryside, the local population was expected to supply auxiliary forces, labor, and provisions and to clear roadways. The supreme Egyptian interest was to keep the routes open and the Canaanite population submissive. The pressures on the Canaanite population may have been unendurable (witness the occasional uprisings against Egyptian rule), and many inhabitants likely left the towns to avoid the constant Egyptian demand for supplies and manpower. They could have moved to the more thinly settled zones, in scattered settlements that left few archaeological remains, or they could have joined up with the Apiru or the other unstable elements in Canaan. Many others may have emigrated to Egypt itself, whether by free choice or as captives and slaves (Egyptian texts mention a Canaanite presence in Egypt). As for the fortifications, it may be assumed that the Egyptians prohibited the circumvallation of towns, which could be interpreted as preparation for revolt. Egypt, a great power through most of the Late Bronze Age, was geographically close to Canaan, maintained an Egyptian governor and Egyptian garrisons, could keep a close watch on the cities, and could bring any attempts to construct fortifications to a halt. Small, unfortified sites were more submissive to Egyptian demands than large fortified ones.

The settlement picture in Canaan thus reflects fairly its subservience to Egypt.

Urban Structure

Though the urban system of Late Bronze Age Canaan was not a powerful one, there were nonetheless towns with private dwellings and public institutions. From the meager information gleaned in excavations, a conventional town plan seems to emerge, based on a pe-

ripheral range of structures and a core where the public buildings were concentrated. There were also public areas where commerce was pursued. It seems reasonable to assume that these areas—vacant lots rather than built-up marketplaces—were near the city gates. A public structure present in every city was the temple, located either in the core of the town or near the gate. The larger towns had more than one temple.

WALLS AND GATES

Fortified cities were few and far between in the Late Bronze Age. A small number of sites were, however, walled, and a handful of city gates have been discovered as well. Ramparts have been identified at Hazor and Tel Kinrot, both in the upper Jordan valley; at Beth Shean; at Tel Reger and Tell Abu Hawan in the Acho valley; at Shechem, Tel el-Farsh North, and perhaps Bethel in the central hills; and at Debir (Khirbet Rabud) in the Hebron hills. Hazor was defended by its tremendous Middle Bronze Age ramparts; there is no evidence that they were repaired or enlarged in the Late Bronze Age. At Shechem, the Middle Bronze Age wall was restored, as may have been the case at Bethel as well. Tel Kinrot was first settled at the start of the Late Bronze Age, and Debir in the Late Bronze II; both sites seem to have been fortified from the start. We thus observe no uniform pattern of fortification; those settlements able to construct a defensive wall did so with the materials or earlier structures at hand.

The gates of the period are also largely restorations of Middle Bronze gates, that is, direct-axis entry ways flanked by towers and guardrooms. The gate excavated in the lower city of Hazor was first

built in the Middle Bronze II, hand in hand with the construction of the great eastern ramparts (stratum 4).

It was furnished with a pair of square, solid towers and three pairs of small buttresses on either side of the passage. In the following Middle Bronze phase (stratum 3) the gate was altered to a large gate with two rectangular towers and three pairs of buttresses, the characteristic plan of the gates of this period. This gate was razed in the great destruction of the Middle Bronze Age city and was rebuilt in the Late Bronze I (stratum 2) along precisely the same lines, this time with massive ashlar masonry. This structure survived until the end of the period, undergoing slight repairs and changes, such as the raising of the level of the gate passage and the addition of a threshold of large basalt slabs. The two Middle Bronze Age gates of Shechem were also restored in the Late Bronze Age on an identical plan.

At Megiddo, the large north gate first appears in the plan of the Late Bronze I tower of stratum IX; however, the excavators suggested that it was first built in stratum X, at the end of the Middle Bronze Age. The gate retained its form throughout the Late Bronze Age, when it was lined with well-carved stone slabs. An interesting feature is the remnant of a wooden beam between the fourth and fifth masonry courses. This is the earliest instance of the integration of wooden beams in stone walls, and the method was to be employed in the Solomonic gate at Megiddo as well as in the temple of Solomon in Jerusalem, according to the biblical description. The Megiddo gate has no towers and is not joined to a defensive wall, appearing more ceremonial than truly defensive. It seems thus that Late Bronze Age Megiddo was unfortified. This raises serious problems with regard to the interpretation of the Egyptian

account of the siege of the city by Thutmose III.

Another gate of possible ceremonial character was found at Jaffa. The stone jambs were inscribed with part of the name of Rameses II and five of his titles. No wall was found.

Free-standing gates, though not a common phenomenon, are not inconceivable, for gates served more than a defensive function. The gate was the ceremonial entrance, the town showpiece, and the focus of trade, public gatherings, litigation, news reports, and even cult. Even if the construction of town walls, with their explicitly defensive capacity, was prohibited by the Egyptians, the erection of ceremonial gateways, particularly at key sites, may well have been allowed.

The Late Bronze Age thus produced no innovation in the art of fortification; where fortifications existed, they carried on traditions established during the Middle Bronze Age.

The Late Bronze Age city being a rather feeble entity, it should not come as a surprise that few public structures have been discovered. In fact, the most common public structure in the city was the temple, which was indispensable, as it fulfilled the religious needs of the community. Only a few buildings of governmental or local administrative function have been excavated so far. Structures serving the common welfare, such as public granaries or water supply systems, are as yet unknown. It would appear that the responsibility for food and water supply devolved on the citizens themselves, further evidence of the relative impotence of the municipal governments.

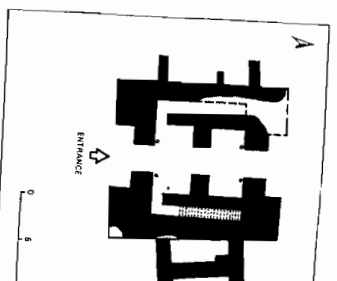


Fig. 71. City gate at Shechem

PALACES

With the political structure of Late Bronze Age Canaan based on the rule of the Egyptian overlords, each urban settlement could be expected to contain a modest palace to serve as the ruler's residence and as the administrative center of the town, with its audience rooms, offices, guardrooms, stables, and storerooms to accommodate considerable provisions both for the ruling family and for the municipal bureaucracy. The palace would also have housed the scribes and the municipal archives and treasury. All these would have required a structure not only larger than the common dwelling but also better defended. It is not surprising to find, therefore, that the buildings identified as palaces are characterized by thick walls that serve both as defense and as support for a second and third story. Two main palace types prevailed during the Late Bronze Age: the courtyard palace, built along the same basic plan of the common dwellings and continuing the Middle Bronze Age building traditions, and the Egyptian-style residency, a type

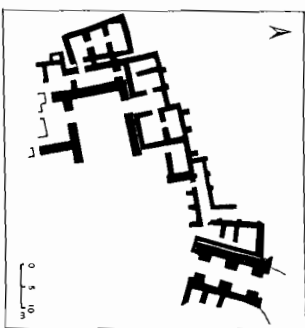


Fig. 7.2. Megiddo palace and city gate

of structure introduced into Canaan mainly during the Late Bronze III, when Egypt intensified its grip on Canaan.

COURTYARD PALACES. The courtyard palace, as its name suggests, consists of a large court with rooms ranged around it. The courtyard may be entirely enclosed by the rooms, which may be ranged in several rows, or only partially enclosed, with rooms concentrated on one or two sides. The courtyard palace was common in the Middle and Late Bronze Ages throughout the Levant and in northern Mesopotamia, the most complete and representative examples being those found in the Syrian cities of Ugarit, Ebla, and Alalakh. In Canaan, Middle Bronze Age courtyard palaces have been unearthed at Hazor, Shechem, Aphaek, Lachish, Tel Sera, and Tell el-Ajjul, but only one Late Bronze Age palace has so far come to light—at Megiddo. More Late Bronze palaces may yet be discovered, but for now, their absence provides further evidence for the impoverishment of city life.

During most of the Middle Bronze Age, the Megiddo palace was near the city center, close to the Fortress Temple. The end of the period, however, saw its removal to the city gate area. Here the expansion of the palace and the changes in its plan may be traced through the Late Bronze Age. The palace first built in stratum X, the late Middle Bronze Age, remained unchanged, apart from the raised floor levels, during stratum IX. The salient features of this palace are the thick northern and eastern walls (about 2.5 meters and 3.5 meters, respectively). The southern and western walls were not preserved, and it is unclear whether the exterior palace walls were all of such extreme breadth. The central lime-paved courtyard of the palace measured

about 100 square meters and was surrounded by rooms on every side. A pair of long and narrow rooms in the southwest corner mark the place of the staircase leading to the second floor (and perhaps to a third as well, in view of the extreme thickness of the walls). The west wing of the palace consisted of a maze of rooms and courtyards. A collection of spindle whorls and loom weights found here suggests that these were weaving workshops; a craft that may have been under the patronage of the local ruler.

In stratum VIII of the Late Bronze II the palace attained its greatest extent. The plan changed, but the massive northern and eastern walls remained in use. The preserved palace area is about 1500 square meters, though there appears to have been another wing to the southwest. The main entrance was from the south, leading through a broad portal to the large central court. The courtyard and the surrounding rooms were paved with fine lime plaster. Three broad doorways led off the central court to rooms on the northeast and northwest and to a shell-paved courtyard on the south. This courtyard was probably a bath chamber, with a square basin sunk into the center of the floor and drained by a subsurface channel. A doorway led west to the most magnificent part of the palace, another large courtyard opening onto a series of rooms. Two pillars (only the base of one has been preserved) stood in the wide entryway, no doubt lending it particular grandeur. It opened onto a broad hall, perhaps an audience hall. A small chamber in the northern part of the palace was probably a treasury. Beneath its floors was found a hoard of gold artifacts, jewelry, cylinder seals, and ivories.

East of the gate, the remains of another palace, smaller than that of Area AA but of a similar plan (a central courtyard enclosed by rooms), were recovered. The walls are thinner than those of the large palace, and the structure may have been an outlying wing of the central structure.

In strata VII B and VII A of the thirteenth and early twelfth centuries, significant changes took place in the organization of the space surrounding the central courtyard of the large palace, but the courtyard itself, as well as the shell-paved court to the southwest, remained unchanged. The halls and roomy inner courts gave way to smaller chambers. West of the central courtyard, in place of the magnificent apartments, a series of three contiguous rooms led to a hall, in the west corner of which lay a small platform approached by steps, a type of small household shrine. In the stratum VIIA palace of the end of the Late Bronze Age, the three rooms were expanded to form a separate, subterranean building approached by stairs. In this cellar was found a cache of valuables, the most important of which are the many rare ivories. Fragments of painted plaster found in the ruins of this palace indicate that its walls were decorated with frescoes.

EGYPTIAN-STYLE RESIDENCES. Palaces of a completely different kind were established in Canaan during the thirteenth and twelfth centuries B.C.E. These structures, commonly known as residences, were not built by the Canaanite inhabitants and do not reflect their strategic concerns of Egypt, for whom Canaan was an important staging post. The Egyptian effort to consolidate its grip on Canaan was concentrated on the southern coastal strip and along the main international routes. It included the construction of outposts at key points

to house Egyptian officials and fulfill military and administrative functions. Such structures were usually built within existing settlements, but in some cases, such as at *Der el-Balah* and *Tel Mor*, they were unrelated to a habitation site and constituted isolated outposts on the highway, with the defensive character of a fortress. It is, however, possible that habitation sites may yet be discovered at these sites as well.

The residences, first identified by Petrie in the excavations of *Tell el-Far'ah South*, were built according to Egyptian architectural and construction principles and therefore stand out as unique in the history of architecture in Canaan. Their plans are uniformly similar to that of private dwellings in Egypt. The buildings are square, with corner entrances. A square courtyard—sometimes identified as a covered hall, if furnished with a base for a pillar that supported the ceiling—lies at the center of the structure. Small chambers surround this square space, and a corner staircase leads to the second floor. The Egyptian mode of construction is reflected in the thick, mud-brick walls with mud-brick foundations or, at times, no foundations at all. Some residences incorporate other Egyptian architectural features, such as T-shaped doorjamb and thresholds. Fine examples of such details appear in two structures from *Bein Shean*, known as buildings 1500 and 1700. An Egyptian inscription, found out of context but attributed to building 1500, states that the Egyptian general *Ramesses-weser-khepeh* occupied the building during the reign of *Ramesses III*.

Egyptian-style residences have been excavated thus far at *Tell el-Far'ah South*, *Tell el-Hesi*, *Tel Sera*, *Tell Jemmeh*, and *Tel Mor*, all on the southern coast of Canaan. Such structures were also found at *Bein Shean*, an Egyptian stronghold dur-

ing the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages.

The palace at *Aphaek* reveals an Egyptian influence in its ground plan, though its construction technique is entirely Canaanite. The small fortified palace transformed the small Canaanite town on the *Yarkon* headwaters into an Egyptian administrative center. Excavations have concentrated on the palace proper, leaving it a moot point whether some contemporaneous remains excavated nearby were part of an isolated palace. The building occupies about 360 square meters. The corner entrance leads to a paved vestibule with a stone bench, perhaps a waiting room. A broad stairway led from the vestibule to the second story, which is not preserved. The ground floor consists of long halls and small chambers; these are not arranged around a central courtyard as is commonly the case in residences. The walls, or more precisely the foundations, are 1.4 meters thick and are built of stone, in contrast to Egyptian practice. The *Aphaek* palace is thus far the only building of its kind in Canaan.

DWELLINGS

Not many Late Bronze Age dwellings have been exposed in archaeological excavations, and the most important site for the study of this subject remains *Megiddo*. In the eastern part of the mound a number of houses forming part of a residential quarter were cleared. Their location, size, and plan, first established in the Middle Bronze Age, remained unchanged during the whole of the Late Bronze Age, reflecting a high measure of continuity, extending over hundreds of years. Certain internal changes in the houses did, of course, occur, such as the raising of floors, the removal or construction of dividing walls, and the blocking

of doorways, all common alterations reflecting the extended use of the buildings.

Four nearly complete houses were exposed in the excavated area, as well as parts of a fifth. The layout of house 3002 in stratum VIII at Megiddo has been almost entirely recovered and provides a good example of a Late Bronze Age dwelling. It measures about 15 x 16 meters. The area designated 3002 was apparently an unroofed courtyard, and the large room to the west may have been one as well. These two inner courts were not approached directly but were surrounded by many small rooms. Because of the poor preservation of the walls and the schematic ground plans provided in the excavation reports, the disposition of the entrances and the manner of circulation within the house are difficult to determine. Some of the rooms had a plastered, beaten earth floor; others were paved with cobblestones. It cannot be said what special functions, if any, set these rooms apart from the rest of the house. In nearby house 3003, in the corner of a room with a plaster floor, was an installation, perhaps a shape of a quarter-circle, perhaps a bathing installation, drained by a channel flowing under the wall and the floor of the adjacent room to a pit.

The construction of the houses was quite simple. Walls are 0.75 meter wide, the lower, preserved portions being built of fieldstones and the superstructure probably of mud brick. No wall has been sufficiently preserved to provide evidence of windows. Houses arranged around central courtyards can receive light and air through the doorway, so that windows are not indispensable. It is doubtful whether the houses had a second story. Roofs were not preserved at Megiddo, but in contemporary stratum C

at Tell Beit Mirsim a large portion of a roof that had collapsed in a conflagration was found. The ceiling was made of wooden beams spanning the room at 0.6-meter intervals. Above and across the beams were laid smaller branches and beams. This wooden structure was covered by a thick layer of clay, which was then plastered. The underside of the ceiling was also covered by a thin layer of plastered clay. This type of construction suggests that the roof was flat. Stone rollers for the upkeep of the plastered roof were found in Area C at Hazor, indicating that this roof-type was widespread throughout Canaan.

It is a question whether the large floor space of the Megiddo dwellings (about 240 square meters) was characteristic of houses of the period. The houses are near the Fortress Temple, and their inhabitants may have held cultic office or been otherwise of the elite. The houses did, however, also serve for the storage of large amounts of provisions as well as for the pursuit of a household crafts. A dwelling of a different type was discovered at Tell Barasi in the Judean Shephelah. It is rectangular (9 x 11 meters), with a thick (1.2 meters) walls. The entrance was from the short south wall. Immediately to the right of the entrance a narrow corridor and a staircase led to the second story, where the living quarters were no doubt situated. The ground floor consisted of one large hall divided by two rows of wooden columns (only the stone bases have remained) and screen walls into three long rooms somewhat reminiscent of the four-roomed house of the Iron Age.

The question of site organization leads back to Megiddo, where a cluster of neighboring houses was uncovered. The houses were arranged on either side of a narrow street, two meters wide, which ran north-south. Another alley

branched off between the houses to the east; the houses on the west side shared a common exterior wall. Because of the poor state of the remains it is not clear whether the houses were entered from the main street or from the side alleys. It may be surmised that the residential quarters of Megiddo were built in a series of rings around the city perimeter. A street would have divided the external row of houses from the internal one.

A residential area was uncovered in Area C at Hazor. Unlike Megiddo, where each house stands apart, the houses at Hazor are clustered in irregular blocks, so it is difficult to determine which units joined to form one dwelling. The walls are not of uniform breadth, are not straight, and do not join at right angles. The house blocks are separated by crooked lanes, giving the area a more plebeian appearance than the Megiddo residential areas.

TEMPLES AND CULT OBJECTS

It is not surprising that many Late Bronze Age temples, since discovered in excavations, had at least one temple that would have a fair chance of discovery, given sufficiently extensive excavations. The temples found show a marked absence of uniformity. They are of many different types and of varied size, location, and content, reflecting an ethnically diverse population, a variety of influences, and no doubt the multitude of divinities in the Canaanite pantheon, as reflected in the Ugaritic mythology and other writings. Despite their great number, our knowledge of the temples, of deities worshipped in the temples, of the character of the cult and the manner in which it was practiced, and of the function and status of the temple in the community is very limited. The absence of texts and the

paucity of cult objects with an obvious function permit a discussion only of the architectural aspects of the temples.

MIGDOL TEMPLES

At three sites in the country—Megiddo, Shechem, and Hazor—temples of a type noteworthy for its monumental dimensions and standard plan have been discovered. They have thick walls, which give

them the aspect of a fortress, heightened by the sturdy towers flanking the entrance to the building. The layout is symmetrical along a longitudinal axis, on which the entrances are located. At the far end of this axis, adjacent to or within the rear wall of the temple, was the focus of the cult, the holy of holies, in the form of a niche or an altar. The migdol temples may be divided into two subtypes: structures in which the interior is occupied by a single hall, and structures in which the interior is divided into two or three broadrooms. The origins of both subtypes lie in northern Syria, where they appear in the major cities of Ebla (Tell Mardikh), Tell Mambqat, and Alalakh. The mig-

dol temple made its first appearance at the three sites in the Middle Bronze Age and remained in use for the entire Late Bronze Age, with some changes and additions. Four temples of this type have been excavated in Canaan: those of Megiddo, Shechem, and Hazor (Area A) are of the first subtype, and the temple of Area H at Hazor is of the second. The Area A temple at Hazor has no flanking towers at the entrance.

THE TEMPLE OF SHECHEM.

This building, near the western gate of the city, was founded on a massive fill accumulated from modifications made in the Middle Bronze Age fortifications. It measures 21.2 x 26.3 meters, and its walls are more than 5 meters thick. Its corners are oriented precisely to the four cardinal points, and the entrance is on the southeast side. Two rows of three pillars supported the roof. The massive entrance towers probably served as stairwells. The column that stood in the middle of the front entrance during the Middle Bronze Age was removed in the Late Bronze Age. On either side of the doorway leading to the main hall were two stones with recesses that

once held, it has been suggested, cultic stela (Imsechoth). No traces of these stela have been recovered, but in the courtyard fronting the temple a fragment of a large stela was recovered and restored by the excavators to its original position. This Shechem temple, which remained unchanged throughout the Late Bronze Age and even into the Iron Age, has been identified with the tower of Shechem (Jud. 9:47).

THE TEMPLE OF MEGIDDO.

The history of the monumental temple of Megiddo is more complex. The excavators of the site suggested that the temple was first constructed in stratum VIII of the Late Bronze II, but renewed investigations have attributed its foundation to stratum X of the Middle Bronze Age. The building remained in use until stratum VIIA, the terminal phase of Canaanite Megiddo, undergoing some changes. The Megiddo temple is identical in plan to that of Shechem but much smaller. In its earliest, well-built phase, it measured only 9.6 x 11.5 meters, with walls 4 meters thick. The rear wall, 5 meters thick, contained a shallow niche. The corners of this structure

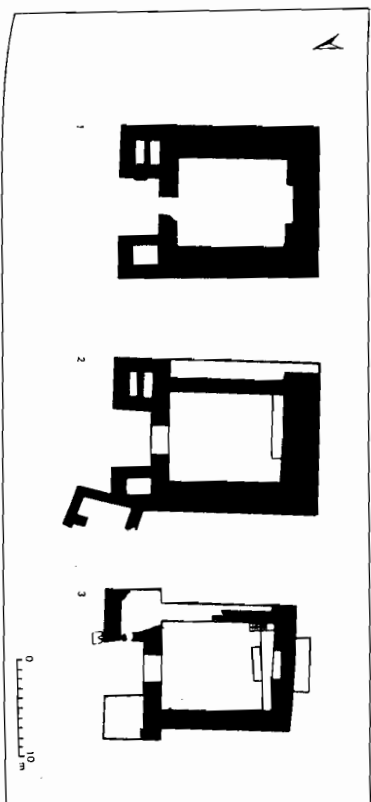


Fig. 7.3. Three stages of the Megiddo temple

are not aligned with the cardinal points, and its entrance is on the north side. The tower to the left of the entrance is built of fine ashlar masonry and contains two narrow chambers interpreted as a staircase; the tower on the right side contains a square chamber. In the next phase of the temple's existence the niche in the rear wall was blocked and the focus of the cult was transferred to a narrow platform. In the final phase the temple walls were considerably narrowed, thus detracting from its fortified character. The contents of the temple were meager.

THE TEMPLE OF HAZOR, AREA A. The third single-chambered miqdot temple is that of Area A in the upper city of Hazor. This structure, founded in stratum XVI and remaining in use until the end of

stratum XV (the Middle Bronze Age to the Late Bronze I), consisted of one long room 9 x 16 meters, with walls 2.35 meters thick. In its lack of flanking towers it differs from the other temples. Yadin suggested that the lack of towers may be ascribed to the proximity of the royal palace, which would have made the separate defense of the temple unnecessary. Like the fortress temple of Shechem, the corners of the temple are oriented with the cardinal points. Opposite the entrance, against the rear wall, was a rectangular brick platform covered with a thick layer of plaster. In the Late Bronze I the entrance was lined with orthostats (finely dressed rectangular stone slabs, often carved in relief, commonly used in the northern Levant to line temple walls). Two orthostats

stood on either side of the entrance, and four more formed the threshold. Many fragments of cult vessels, all of the Late Bronze I, were found on the floor of the temple, along with animal bones. The building was destroyed at the end of the Late Bronze I and, unlike other temples of the same type, was never rebuilt. However, the sanctity of the area was preserved, and during the Late Bronze II and III various installations were built around the ruins; materials were observed, leaving behind heaps of animal bones and votive vessels.

THE MIQDOT TEMPLE WITH BROADROOMS AT HAZOR. The most interesting and opulent of the monumental temples of Canaan is the broadroom temple found in

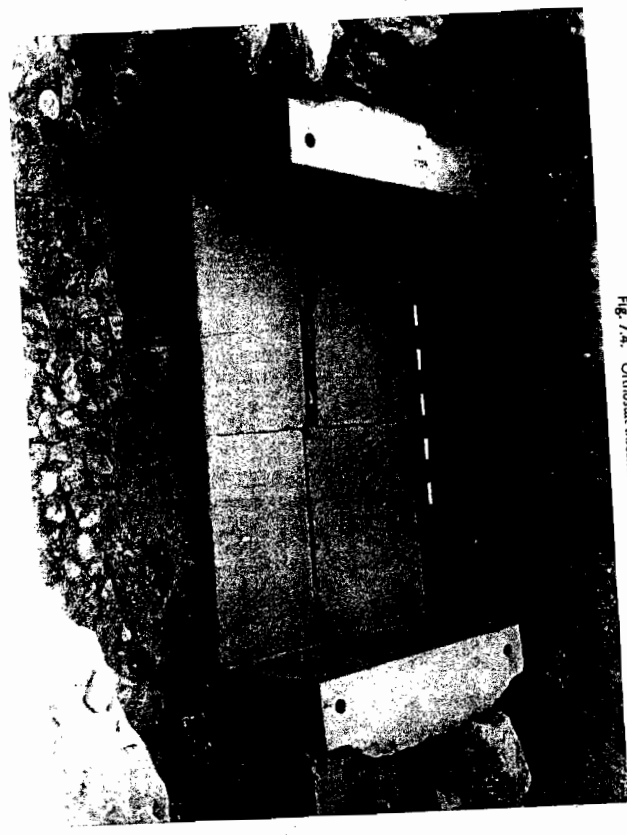


Fig. 7.4. Orthostat threshold of the Area A temple at Hazor

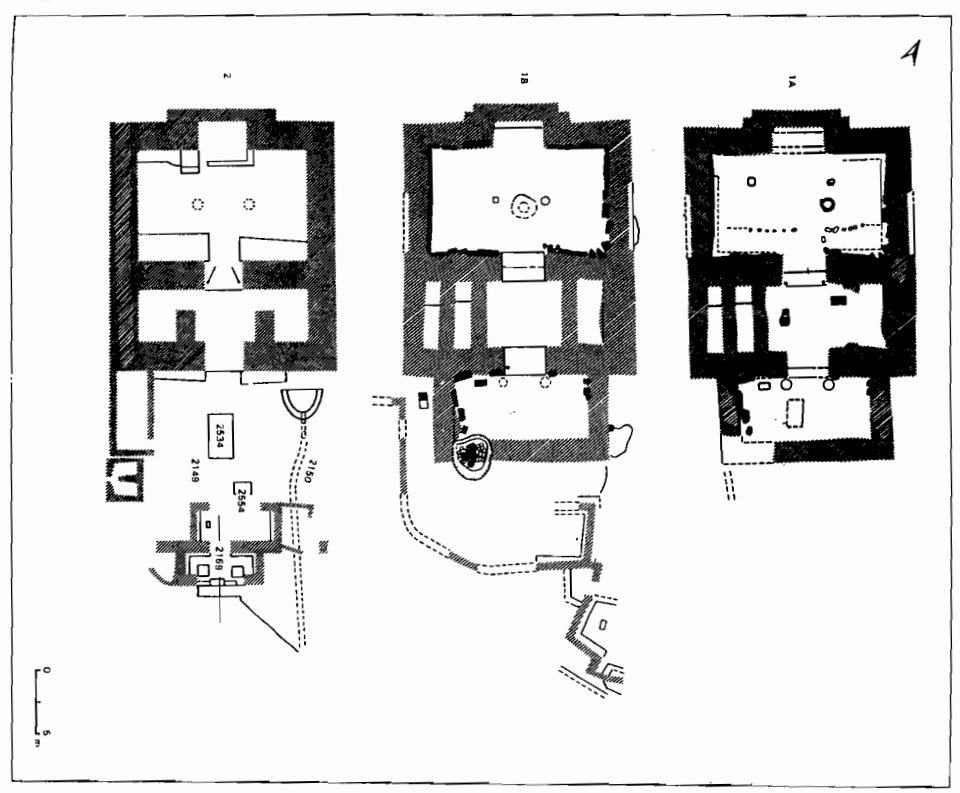


Fig. 7.5. Area H temple at Hazor, strata 2, 1B and 1A

Area H at Hazor. In plan it resembles the temples found at Tell Mar-dikh and Alalakh in northern Syria, and it is thought that its origins lie in that region. The main cult hall is a broadroom, and the two towers flanking the entrance form a broad anteroom. The walls of the temple are thick and its axis of entry direct. The nearly square structure measures 18×20 meters, with walls 2.5 meters thick. As at Shechem, the building is oriented precisely to the four cardinal points, and it is entered from the southeast. The stratum 2 temple of the Late Bronze I is identical to that of stratum 3, of the Middle Bronze Age. In the middle of the main cult room, the holy of holies, are two pillar bases. Benches line the walls on either side of the entrance, and a cult niche is set in the rear wall, with a low wall bor-



Fig. 7.6. Lion orthostat from the Area H temple at Hazor

dering what was no doubt the most sacred part of the temple. In front of the temple was a large court in which, during this phase, various structures were erected—rooms, water installations, and drainage channels. The center of the court was occupied by a square structure; this may have been a platform or altar, and indeed the surrounding area was strewn with animal bones and ash. A gateway led to this court, and beyond it lay an external courtyard. Cultic finds from the inner courtyard include two small female figurines, one in bronze and the other of silver leaf. Also found here was a clay liver model inscribed with Akkadian cuneiform formulas. This object, used for divination, testifies that the people of Hazor were familiar with the cult practices of the Syro-Akkadian expanse.

In the next phase, stratum 1B of the Late Bronze II, an entirely new structure was built on the ruin of the earlier temple. Its plan was fundamentally similar to its predecessor, only now a third broadroom, narrower than the other two, was added to the front of the building. The former vestibule now became a middle hall, divided into long, narrow chambers, which no doubt served as staircases. The temple thus became a tripartite structure 28 meters long, the largest temple of the period. In the center of the holy of holies a small deep pit was carved, the upper part of which was lined with fieldstones. A headless statue of a seated man was found in the pit. On either side of the pit were two basalt pillar bases. This round and the other square. This asymmetry led the excavators to

propose that the bases were taken from the remains of the previous temple, apparently a common practice at Hazor. The inner and outer courtyards flanking the temple remained in use, but the cult installations within them were rebuilt.

After the destruction of this phase, the last in the series of temples was built above it on an identical plan. This structure, attributed to stratum 1A of the Late Bronze III, is known as the Orthostat Temple, after the orthostats lining the main hall in a continuous row and placed at intervals along the walls of the vestibule. The orthostats, which were left plain, were carelessly laid and did not form a continuous surface. This led the excavators to assume that the stone slabs, like the pillar bases, were dismantled from one of the earlier temples and reused

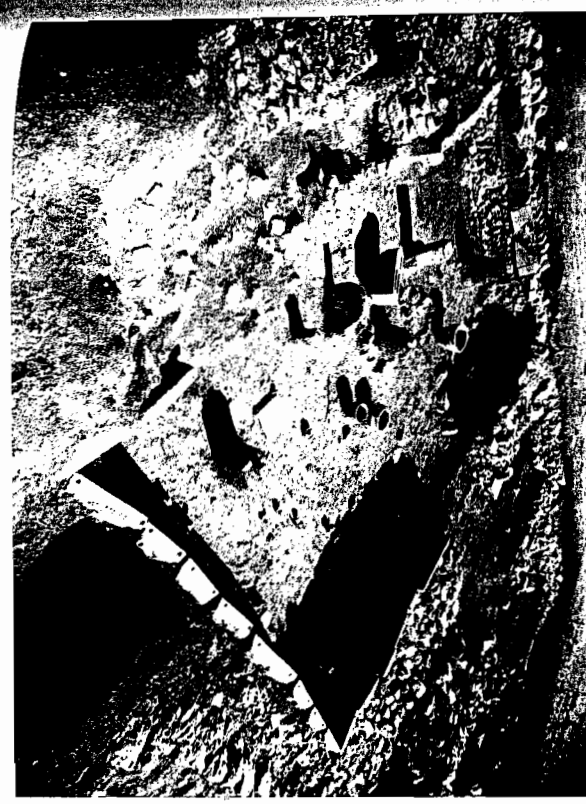


Fig. 7.7. Cella of the Area H temple at Hazor with finds in situ

here. In view of the discovery of the orthostats in the Late Bronze I temple of Area A, in the upper city, a stratum 2 origin was suggested. To this same stratum was assigned an unusually large orthostat found in an unusual context: in a pit cut into the exterior wall left of the entrance. The orthostat was 1.9 meters long and 0.9 meter high, with a lion carved in relief on one side. Judging by the size of the orthostat and the stance of the lion, it had once lined the right jamb of the main entrance, facing its companion guardian, which was never found. Clearly, the relief had been purposely interred in the pit, but it is unclear when and under what circumstances this was done.

The cult objects scattered on the floor of the holy of holies form one of the largest collections of such

items ever found in Israel. Notable in its absence was the central ritual object, the divine image or emblem, which no doubt stood in the cult niche. Yadin suggested, however, that two fragments of a basalt statue found in the inner courtyard of the stratum 1B temple were remains of the cult image of the temple. One fragment was a torso of a male figure whose breast was adorned with a medallion containing a four-rayed emblem. The second fragment was a base in the form of a bull, on which the male figure may have stood. Yadin suggested that this was the image of Hadad, the Canaanite storm god. The four-rayed emblem is sometimes interpreted as a wheel in the storm god's chariot; others interpret it as a solar disk. If the fragments did belong to the cult image that stood in the niche, they

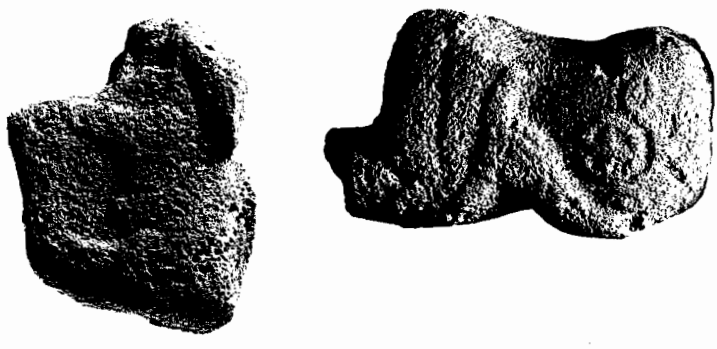


Fig. 7.8. Statue fragments from the Area H temple at Hazor: human torso and bull

represent the only identification of a worshiped deity in Canaanite temples. Support for the identification of the four-rayed emblem as a divine symbol comes from a basalt offering table found on the temple floor by the niche. On one side of this object (0.5 x 0.5 x 1.7 meters) was carved a square frame enclosing the same four-rayed solar disk found on the torso. Two elongated depressions

carved beneath the emblem give the offering table the aspect of a three-columned facade. Similar depressions were carved on the two adjoining sides. Nearby lay a large basalt basin (0.5 meter in diameter), and somewhat to the south another, smaller basin decorated with a running spiral of Mycenaean type. Other finds include basalt offering tables, large ceramic basins, and a

wealth of small objects, including cylinder seals, beads, and pottery. Also found were four small bronze figurines, among them a bull figurine, which Yadin viewed as further proof that the temple deity was the figure depicted standing on a bull. Near the doorway of the holy of holies another statue of a seated figure was found. The figure was depicted, like the one found in

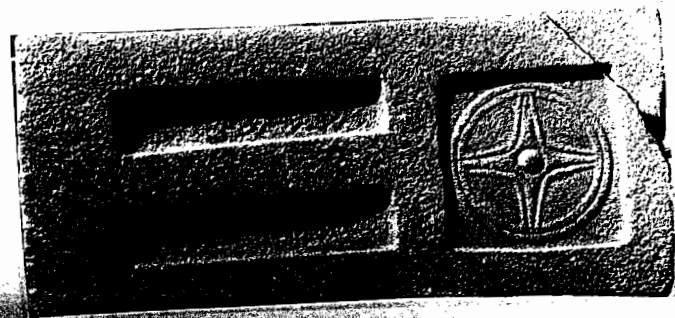


Fig. 7.9. Offering table with emblem of Hadad (height 105 centimeters)

the 1B temple, but the head was discovered nearby.

SQUARE TEMPLES

Another type of temple is the square temple, of which three have been found—at Hazor, on the slopes of Mount Gerizim, and near Amman in Transjordan. This type of temple has a square central courtyard with a single entrance. The narrow corridor between the courtyard walls and the exterior walls is divided by thin walls into rooms of equal length. The temple was entered near one of the corners. When the first building of this type was excavated at Mount Gerizim its sacred character was not perceived. Only after the discovery of the Amman shrine was the Gerizim structure re-investigated and a new temple type proposed. The Amman and Gerizim shrines inspired the interpretation of the stratum 2 building in Area F at Hazor as a sacred structure. This building is so poorly preserved, however, that its reconstruction as a square temple must remain in doubt. In view of the isolation of the Gerizim and Amman temples, at a distance from secondary settlements, it has been

proposed to attribute this type of shrine to a nonsecular population. Be that as it may, the origins of the square plan are unknown, nor is there any evidence regarding the nature of the cult practiced in the temple or the identity of the deity worshipped there. The temple at Hazor was empty of finds, further impeding identification, and the temple at Gerizim contained only fragments of an incense stand. The Amman temple provided a large,

rich assemblage of objects, including objects of gold, ivory, bone, stone, and pottery—many of them imported—as well as a considerable quantity of weapons, but it is not an assemblage of particularly cultic character. On the contrary, because of the profane nature of the finds it has been suggested that they were booty taken during raids on wealthy populations. Some scholars do not accept the identification of the square structures as temples, viewing them rather as mansions architecturally related to the Egyptian-style residences. The similarity to the Egyptian structures is underlined by the identification of column bases (rather than altars) in the central space, suggesting that it was a room rather than an open court.

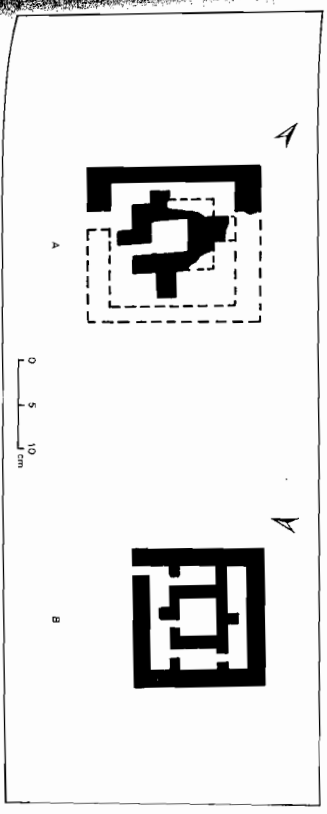


Fig. 7.10. Square temples at Hazor (A) and Amman (B)

As for the temporal range of the square shrines, the structure at Mount Gerizim was dated by the excavators to the Middle Bronze Age II, that of Hazor to the Late Bronze I, and the Amman temple to the Late Bronze II-III. The square temple thus had a range similar to that of the megalith temple, but each of the square temples was short-lived.

EGYPTIAN-STYLE TEMPLES

Temple remains from three Canaanite sites—Beth Shean, Lachish, and Timna in the Arava valley near Eilat—exhibit Egyptian influence either in their layout or in some details of their construction. This should not come as a surprise; on the contrary, it is astonishing to discover how small the influence of Egypt was on Canaanite temples and cult, despite Egypt's supreme power in Canaan for the whole of the Late Bronze Age. Inscriptions reveal the presence of temples in Canaan where Egyptian deities were worshipped. One such inscription, carved on an ivory pash from the Megiddo treasure, mentions a woman minister of Peah in Ashkelon and implies that a ten-

ple (so far undiscovered) is dedicated to this deity at that site.

At Beth Shean, one of the Egyptian garrison towns, a sequence of temples spanning most of the Late Bronze Age and the beginning of the Iron Age was excavated. The first in the sequence, the stratum IX temple generally attributed to the reign of Thutmose III, is of the courtyard type. Its plan is not entirely clear, and it is not Egyptian in character, but many Egyptian objects were found among its remains. Chief among them is a small limestone stela dedicated by one Pa-rem-hub to "Mekal, the god of Beth Shean" in memory of his father Amen-em-Opet. There can be no doubt that Pa-rem-hub and his father were Egyptians, and they are thus portrayed on the stela. However, the god Mekal is recorded neither in the Egyptian nor the Canaanite pantheons; on the stela he is portrayed as a bearded Canaanite deity, with a tall horned headdress and a long ribbon dangling behind.

Another unique object from this temple is a basalt orthostat with two scenes carved in relief. Both depict a lion and a dog (or a lioness) locked in combat. The cultic significance of these scenes, if any, is unclear.

Of the stratum VIII temple little can be said, as all that has remained of it are basal pillar bases. The temple of strata VII and VI was a single structure that underwent some slight alterations between the two phases. It was built in the mid-fourteenth century (others suggest a thirteenth-century date). It closely resembles in both plan and construction several Egyptian cultic installations found at El-Amarna, suggesting that the temple served the local Egyptian governor. It remained in use throughout stratum VI, until the days of Ramesses III.

The mud-brick building is oriented north-south. It has a large main hall, nearly square, with two

bases for the roof supports at its center. Low benches line the walls. Two chambers lie behind the main hall. The one on the right, the cella, is approached by a flight of steps and has a platform abutting its rear wall. The platform no doubt accommodated the image to whom incense was offered on a small altar that stood in the main hall, just in front of the stairway. The left-hand chamber may have been the temple store-room. The main hall of the sanctuary was approached via a walled courtyard entered from the west, a bent-axis approach foreign to the Canaanite cultic tradition. Behind this courtyard was another enclosed court. A papyrus capital, common in Egyptian architecture, was found in the temple, as well as a rich variety of objects including a bronze standard in the image of the Egyptian goddess Hathor, crowned with cow horns and a disk, her features sheathed in gold leaf. Also found were Syro-Hittite cylinder seals and a bronze axehead made in the Anatolian metalworking tradition. The coltan of stratum VI brought about a slight change in the rear part of the temple. The cella and platform were now in the middle of the rear part of the building, flanked by two small chambers. As before, the cella was approached by a flight of steps, in front of which stood an incense altar. The courtyard's flooring, the temple were also rearranged; the inner court was dismantled, and a new court was added to the former outer court, extending west of the temple facade. One now entered the forecourt through a broad colonnaded portal, turned left toward the inner court, and left again to the main hall and the cella. The environs of this temple were strewn with typically Egyptian architectural elements, including painted conics and T-shaped thresholds and doorjambes bearing hieroglyphic inscriptions. Two stelae of Ramesses II are at-

tributed to this stratum, as is a lined inscribed with the name of Ramesses III, which was reused in the stratum V temple of the Iron Age. Smaller finds include many ceramic stands bearing either painted or applied decorations of cultic import.

The temple uncovered at the summit of Tel Lachish, within the citadel or palace precinct, is not a typically Egyptian structure, but it has architectural elements identified as Egyptian. Unlike Beth Shean, Lachish is not mentioned among the cities that served as Egyptian administrative or military centers, but many finds at the site testify to a close connection with Egypt. The temple's phases, all imperfectly preserved, date to the Late Bronze II-III. The structure bears a general resemblance to the strata VII and VI temple at Beth Shean. It has a large central hall, with two column bases set in the center of the mud-brick floor. Many fragments of carbonized wood from the roof beams were found and identified as Lebanese cedar. At the eastern end of the structure, a monumental staircase with a low stone parapet led to a small chamber assumed to be the cella. The large hall, the stairs, and the raised cella recall the Beth Shean temples and are Egyptian in concept. The east wall of the main hall, near the staircase, was decorated with colorful wall paintings, preserved only in fragments of colored plaster found along its base. Along this same wall were ranged three bases of engaged columns. Fragments of slender octagonal columns found thrown on the floor near the staircase may have once stood on the bases. The shape of the columns and the manner in which they were attached to the wall also belong to the Egyptian architectural tradition, as do the light blue hues of the wall paintings.

Somewhat to the north, a large mass of bricks may represent the base of a staircase leading to the second story or to the roof. In the north wall of the main hall there is a monumental doorway, with a threshold built of finely dressed stones; between them lay a wooden plank that supported two wooden posts. The lower parts of the doorjambes were preserved in situ and recesses in them contained carbonized remains of cedar beams. In front of this entrance was a chamber, with graffiti on the floor. If this hall, the temple has an indirect axis of entry, as at Beth Shean.

The most interesting find in the temple was a thin gold plaque originally affixed to a wooden plaque or sewn on cloth or leather, as evidenced by the small perforations around its edges. It was found crumpled and discarded near the staircase leading to the cella. It bears the figure of a nude goddess wearing a headdress in the shape of a flower with two horns at the bottom. The unidentified goddess stands on a horse clad in armor, wearing a feathered decoration on its head. She holds two lotus flowers.

The third Egyptian-style sanctuary is the shrine near the copper mines of Timna in the southern Negev, about 25 kilometers north of Eilat. Its construction is no doubt related to the copper mining activity of Egyptians at Timna during the Nineteenth and Twentieth dynasties. The shrine consists of a small room abutting a rock scarp. The entrance on the southeast side had a small niche carved in the rock wall. The image of Hathor, the patroness of the mines to whom the shrine was devoted, was carved partially on stones and pillars in and around the shrine. Many inscribed objects, some bearing the names of Egyptian kings beginning with Seti I and ending Ramesses V, prove that the shrine was used by Egyptians working the site. Of particular in-

terest is a copper snake, similar to one found at the temple of Tel Mevorath. The ceramic assemblage includes a large group of decorated vessels known as Midianite ware. In its final phase the shrine was probably covered by a cloth canopy, attested to by textile remains on the floor.

OTHER TEMPLES

In addition to the temples enumerated above, there are several Canaanite temples that do not fall into any clear category. These should be seen as of local, popular Canaanite character, and they may possibly have preserved ancient Canaanite cult traditions.

THE FOSSE TEMPLE AT LA-CRICHISH. The moat (fosse) that formed part of the fortifications of Middle Bronze Age Lachish went out of use during the Late Bronze Age, and a temple was constructed inside it, near the northwestern corner of the mound. This building, known as the Fosse Temple, was first constructed in the Late Bronze I and was twice destroyed and rebuilt during the Late Bronze Age, the three phases of construction corresponding to the three phases of the period. Each of the three temples was a simple affair, of rather poor construction. They were oriented north-south, and a cult platform adjoined the south wall of each. The earliest Fosse Temple consisted of a small room (5 × 10 meters), its roof supported by two pillars. A narrow cult platform had three projections. West of the main room was a small chamber near one of the entrances to the temple. A second entrance was in the east wall. The finds in this temple, which included much pottery, a rare Mycenaean vessel, and a scarab of Thutmose III, come from faience dug into its floors, where vessels

that had gone out of use were discarded. The second Fosse Temple was larger than the first and of a different plan. In fact, from the earlier structure only the location of the cult platform, now even narrower and with only a single projection, was retained. The main hall comprised a 10 × 10 meter square, and its ceiling was supported by four pillars, of which only the bases were found. Low benches lined the walls in two or three rows. Two entrances, one from a room at the northwest corner, the other at the southwest corner, led to the main hall. There was another room, also containing benches, on the southeast side of the hall, behind the platform. The latest Fosse Temple, built in the Late Bronze III, is nearly identical to the second, except for the addition of a room at the southwest corner and the enlargement of the cult platform. A large and varied assemblage of objects was found on the temple floors and in the nearby faience: ivory, bone, glass, metal, faience, and stone, as well as much pottery, a good deal of it imported. A large jug bore the proto-Canaanite inscription "An offering to my Lady Eilat." Eilat may well have been the goddess worshiped in the temple. The three Fosse Temples at Lachish are completely different from the large and well-built structure revealed inside the town, in the place area.

THE STELAE TEMPLE IN AREA C AT HAZOR.

Another local shrine was discovered in Area C in the lower city of Hazor, abutting the inner slope of the huge rampart surrounding the city. The shrine has two phases, corresponding to stratum 1A and 1B. In both phases the shrine consisted of one broadroom, 2.5 × 3.3 meters. Its corners face the four cardinal points, and the entrance was from the northeast, as in the Area A temple in the upper

city. Opposite the entrance a semi-circular niche was carved into the rampart and lined with a row of stones; a ceramic vessel was placed in the center of it. Finds on the temple floor included a considerable amount of pottery and a pair of bronze cymbals in a bronze bowl.

The 1A structure, built directly over the 1B shrine, made use of some earlier wall fragments. During this phase, a row of stelae was placed in the niche, earning the shrine the name of the Stela Temple. The ten stelae were made of basalt; they had smoothly dressed faces, concave backs, and rounded tops. The middle stela bore a relief depicting hands outstretched toward an emblem composed of a crescent cradling a disk, interpreted by Yadin as the emblem of the moon god. The hands were understood to represent the consort of the moon god. This small shrine was thus dedicated to the worship of a divine couple, the moon god and his consort. Yadin found support for this interpretation in the statue of a seated male figure at the southern end of the row of stelae, whose chopped-off head was found nearby. An inverted crescent, the emblem of the moon god Sin, was carved in relief on the breast of the figure. At the northern end of the row of stelae, at a somewhat lower elevation, was a small lion orthostat. Its position suggests that, like its larger counterpart in the Area H temple, it was purposely buried. A rather crude basalt slab in front of the stela was probably an offering table. Nearby items may have been brought as offerings, including part of a potter's wheel. A few objects found in neighboring houses have also been interpreted as cult objects. One is a silver-plated stylized snake portrayed above the crude figure of a woman holding snakes. Yadin understood the snakes to be related to the cult of the moon

god. Another object, a small terracotta mask also found in a nearby building, should be seen, according to Yadin, as a plastic expression of "the face of Baal," a title of the god's consort.

An open-air shrine was excavated in Area F of the lower city at Hazor. Following the destruction of the stratum 2 square temple, the area became an open cult place during strata 1A-1B. Within this area was a large altar made of a single stone, 2.4 × 0.8 × 1.2 meters, with two recesses. Many cattle bones were found strewn about the altar. The altar stood at one end of an open area, a drainage channel ran through the middle of the area, and at the far end ceramic vessels and a bull's skull were found on a raised construction. The area was littered with pottery, including vessels of cultic type.

THE TEL MEVORAKH TEMPLE

In the Late Bronze I stratum of Tel Mevorakh, in the northern Sharon, a small temple was built on the rampart that had defended the settlement in the Middle Bronze Age and had by then fallen into disuse. The shrine consisted of an elongated chamber (5 × 10 meters), oriented east-west. A raised platform in the northwest corner was approached by five steps. The eastern part of the structure has not been preserved, and the precise location of the entrance is therefore not known. Benches lined the walls, which were plastered and decorated with colorful frescoes, as in the Lachish temple. A paved court bordered the shrine on three sides occupied the entire summit of the mound. The sanctuary was therefore not related to a settlement site but should be seen as a roadside shrine for travelers passing on the nearby highway. The temple was gutted by fire and restored in the fourteenth century B.C.E. The later structure is

poorly preserved, because of later massive construction at the spot. Both building phases provided a rich collection of artifacts, especially of ceramic vessels. Among the metal objects is a pair of cymbals, resembling those found in the stratum 1B temple in Area C at Hazor, and a copper snake resembling the one found in the shrine at Timna.

Other temples of a local character or that are difficult to categorize have been found at various sites—Tel Kitan in the Jordan valley north of Beth Shean, Tell es-Sa'idiyeh in the eastern Jordan valley, and Tel Sera' in the northern Negev.

Pottery

The local ceramic ware of the Late Bronze Age is entirely wheel-made. The quality of the local products is generally inferior to that of the Middle Bronze Age II. There is less care taken to balance the proportions and less effort invested in the finishing (the slip and burnish). Deformed vessels, a result of careless handling during the drying process prior to firing, are not uncommon. Painted decoration is relatively common in the Late Bronze Age, though it too is often quite carelessly executed. Pottery types are uniform throughout the country, with the exception of isolated cases of limited regional distribution; this uniformity reflects a standardized industry, concentrated in workshops providing large quantities of pottery to an extensive consumer's market. Alongside the local industry, importation of pottery reached an unprecedented scope during the Late Bronze Age.

As in domestic and public architecture, the local ware exhibits a conspicuous degree of typological continuity with the Middle Bronze Age. The ceramic assemblages of the Late Bronze I preserve the strong traditions of the Middle Bronze II Age, though by the Late Bronze II

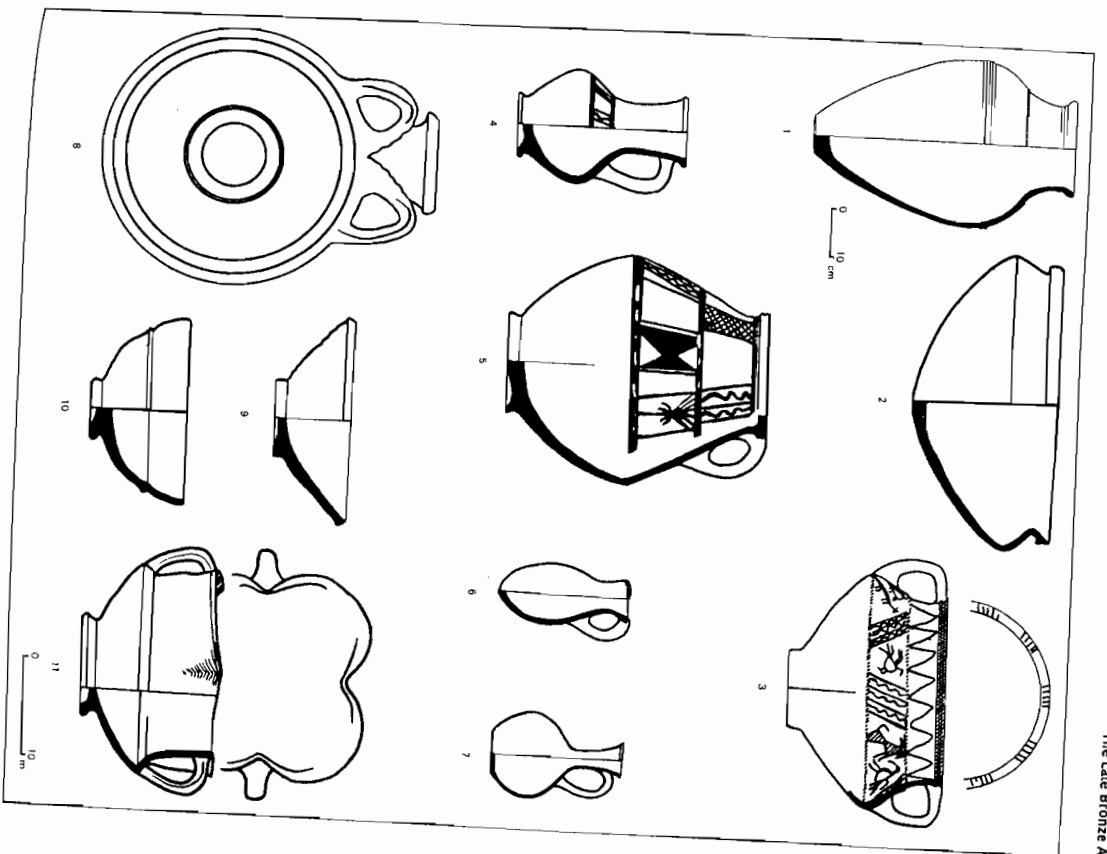


Fig. 7.11. Late Bronze Age pottery

forms were gradually breaking away from these canons. It is difficult to find significant differences between pottery of the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries, and dating is generally based on imported pottery types.

LOCAL POTTERY

PITHOI (fig. 7.11:1). The largest storage vessel of the period was the pithos, a large store jar measuring 1.2 meters or more in height. It has a thick rim, a broad shoulder, a tapering body, and a small base. Pithoi are limited in their distribution to northern Canaan, chiefly to Hazor. A similar type has been found in Syria, relating the vessel to assemblages of the North. It first appears in the Late Bronze II and carries over into the Late Bronze III. It is also one of the vessel types that continues to exist, with some changes, in the Early Iron Age.

JARS. The household jar is the direct descendant of the Middle Bronze Age II jar, and it changes little during the Late Bronze Age. It is ovoid, with a slightly flattened base, and bears two large loop handles. It is often decorated in painted bands or simple painted geometric designs.

A second common jar type has a narrow neck, a broad horizontal shoulder, a tapering body, and a prominent, pointed thick base. This jar, often termed the Canaanite Commercial Jar, has been discovered in tomb assemblages in Greece and Egypt, and it appears to have been used for the exportation of Canaanite produce, perhaps oil and wine, to foreign markets, as part of the extensive international trade network that is the hallmark of the period. Egyptian wall paintings show similar jars with lids, borne by laborers who unload Canaanite trading vessels at Egyptian ports. The commercial jar came into common use in the Late Bronze II and remained in use until the end of the period.

COOKING POTS (fig. 7.11:2). The Late Bronze Age cooking pot is a rounded, handleless vessel, with a triangular rim and a rounded base. This vessel preserves the Middle Bronze II form, which differed only in its rounded rim. In fact, both the rounded and the triangular rim types were extant in the Late Bronze I, before the latter became predominant in the Late Bronze II.

KRATERS (fig. 7.11:3). These are deep broad bowls of varying form. Most have a wide aperture

and handles drawn from the rim to a carinated shoulder. Some stand on a high foot. Kraters are often decorated, especially in the shoulder area. Incised decoration in the Middle Bronze tradition is common in the Late Bronze I. From the Late Bronze II on, painted decoration in simple geometric motifs (wavy lines or net patterns) becomes widespread. Some kraters bear animal representations, mainly goats or ibex and birds.

JUGS (fig. 7.11:4-5). Jugs are divided into globular and biconical shapes. Globular jugs with one shoulder handle closely resemble vessels of the preceding period and gradually disappear as the period progresses. More common are jugs with a large handle extending from rim to shoulder, often decorated in horizontal bands or zigzags.

The biconical jugs, which first appear in the Late Bronze Age, form a distinct group. They are generally larger than globular jugs and have one or two handles. Their prominent feature is the wealth of painted decoration, again largely composed of simple geometric patterns—groups of straight and wavy lines, network or checkerboard patterns painted on the upper part of the vessel. Faunal and floral motifs appear as well. A fine example comes from Megiddo, its shoulder decorated with the ibex and palm motif. This motif, most typical of ceramic vessels of this period, is a popular depiction of the tree of life, a symbol of deep significance in the ancient Near East. The ibex and palm motif appears mainly on biconical jugs but occasionally on jars, chalices, and kraters as well. The Megiddo jug fills out the scene with more ibexes and many different kinds of birds. A crab is depicted in a separate panel beneath the handle.

JUGLETTS (fig. 7.11:6). The typical juglet of this period is the dipper juglet. At the start of the period it is quite large, with a long and somewhat swollen neck in the Middle Bronze tradition. With time, the juglet becomes more slender and has a pinched spout. During the Late Bronze I the cylindrical juglet, a legacy of the Middle Bronze Age, was still in common use, but it soon disappeared. Also common in the same early stage of the period is a well-fashioned juglet, gray in color, with a rounded body, a tall neck, and a high bunish. This gray juglet is one of the diagnostic features of the Late Bronze I (fig. 7.11:7).

FLASKS (fig. 7.11:8). The flask is composed of two wheel-made bowls attached face to face; a wheel-made neck is inserted at the juncture of the two bowls, and finally, two handles are attached in a manner that envelops the neck. Flasks are often decorated, usually in a pattern of concentric circles.

BOWLS (fig. 7.11:9-10). Bowls are the most common pottery vessel. The most frequent types are shallow straight-walled bowls, carinated bowls, and deep rounded bowls. The various bowl categories preserve Middle Bronze Age traditions, and the changes effected during the Late Bronze Age may be observed chiefly in the bases. At the start of the period the ring base, inherited from the earlier period, is most common; it gradually gives way to the disk base and finally to the plain flat base.

In one special bowl type, a rather large carinated bowl, the walls have been pushed in to form a quatrefoil vessel (fig. 7.11:11). Handles were added on two sides, between the foils. This unique type has been found only in Late Bronze I strata at Hazor, and its sources should apparently be sought in the

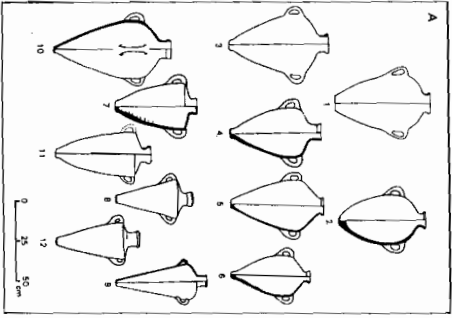


Fig. 7.12. Canaanite jar typology (A) and Egyptian tomb painting (B) depicting jars being unloaded from ship

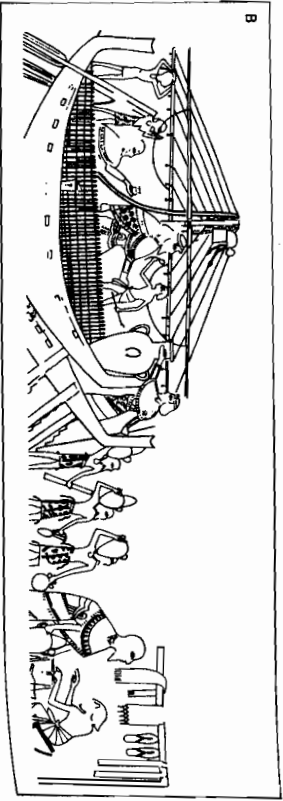


Fig. 7.13. Painted biconical jug pottery from Megiddo (height 34 centimeters)

Cilician culture of southern Anatolia.

GOBLETs AND CHALICES.

Goblets are tall, narrow vessels, while chalices are rounded or flat bowls; both are furnished with a high foot. The two vessels are not very common and are most often found in temples; their function may thus have been cultic rather than domestic. Goblets are often decorated with straight or wavy lines, semicircles, and net patterns. Chalices are usually not decorated.

LAMPS. The oil lamp is a shallow, wheel-made bowl, with one end pinched to form a spout. The pinched spout becomes increasingly prominent as the Late Bronze Age progresses.

BICHROME WARE

This group of vessels, characterized by a painted bichrome decoration, was until recently considered Canaanite in origin, though many specimens have been found in Cyprus. Analysis of the clay composition of several vessels has revealed that though some were indeed made in Canaan, others came from Cyprus. This family of vessels is therefore discussed between the local and imported wares.

Bichrome vessels are most often jugs or kraters. Locally made vessels are usually of a common local form; the imported Cypriot items generally exhibit variant characteristics, such as a wide neck or a rounded body and base. The typical black and red decoration of this ware is painted in one register on the shoulder. The decorative patterns are usually geometric (crosshatched lozenges, hourglasses, hatched triangles, or running spirals), but

faunal motifs appear as well. The quality of the drawing is usually outstanding. Birds are the most commonly drawn animals, though bulls, fish, and cervids appear. Bichrome ware first appears in Canaan at the end of the Middle Bronze Age, but it is most common in the Late Bronze I. It is, in fact, so typical of this period that it has become a diagnostic feature of it, a *fosille directeur*.

IMPORTED POTTERY

The Late Bronze Age is characterized by a wealth of imported pottery, originating in various parts of the eastern Mediterranean basin

—Cyprus, Mycenae, Syria, and Egypt. The presence of imports testifies to the flowering of commerce, to open sea routes, and to a rather high standard of living, which allowed the purchase of imported goods.

CYPRIOt IMPORTS.

Base-ring ware, extremely common in Cyprus, is the Cypriot ware most often encountered in Canaan. The vessels of this family feature a number of technical peculiarities. They are handmade of a fine gray-brown clay and are fired to a high temperature. The handle is not applied to the body but inserted into it. The tall ring base gives the ware its name. The vessel's surface is decorated in vertical and diagonal line groups. In vessels of the earlier base-ring I variety, the lines consist of applied strips of clay; in the later base-ring II vessels they are painted in white.

The most common base-ring forms are jugs and juglets. Other forms include a wishbone-handled bowl, a long, slender bottle, and a lentoid flask. Another form, classified as base-ring ware on account of its method of manufacture, is a bulb-shaped vessel. Of all the forms, the juglet (no doubt used to convey



Fig. 7.14. Bichrome krater from Tel Nagila (height 25 centimeters)

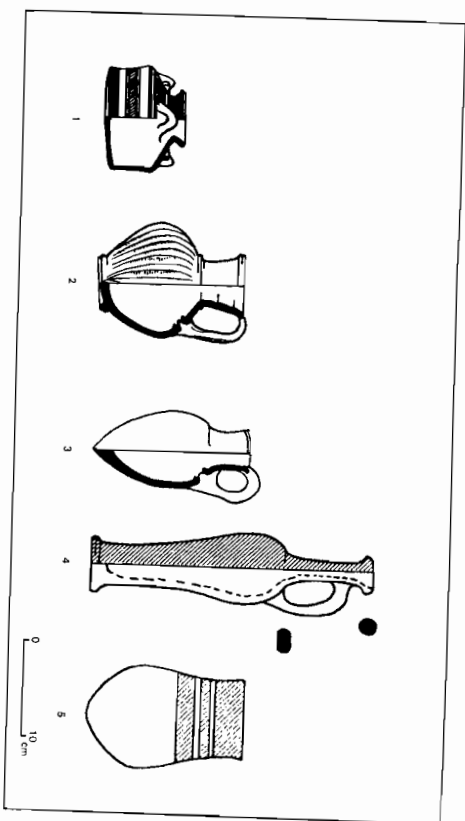


Fig. 7.15. Late Bronze Age imported pottery: Mycenaean pyxis (1), Cypriot Bucchero Jug (2) and white shaver Juglet (3), Syrian bottle (4), Egyptian vase (5)



Fig. 7.16. Base-ring ware. Cypriot imports into Canaan

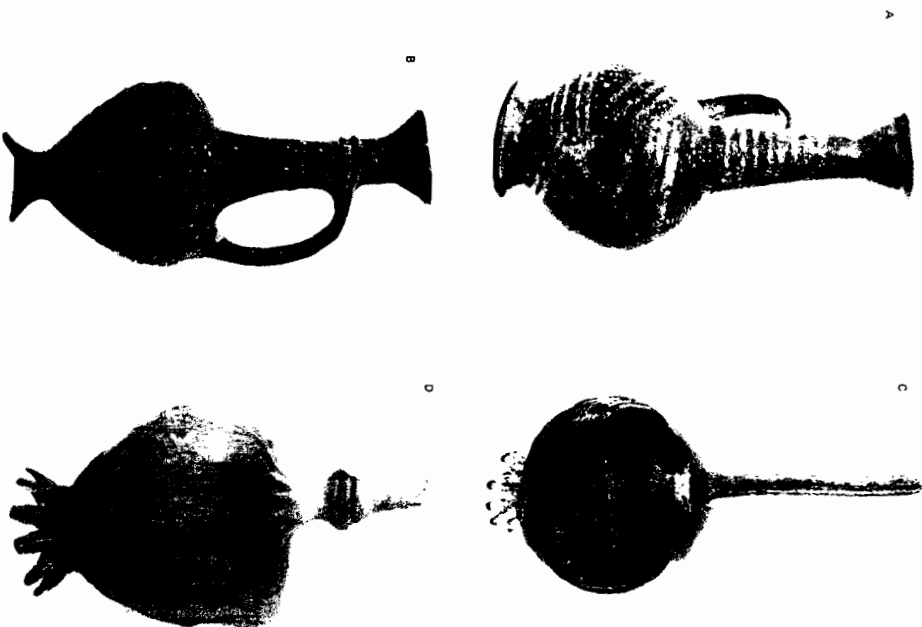


Fig. 7.17. Base-ring jugs (thiblis) (A, B) and poppy capsules (C, D, approx. height 2.5 centimeters)

valuable liquids) is the most widely distributed. R. S. Merrifield suggests that the juglet was used for the exportation of opium. Turned upside down, the juglet resembles the poppy capsule from which opium is extracted.

Base-ring vessels are often used as chronological indicators for sub-phases of the Late Bronze Age: base-ring I vessels are common mainly in the Late Bronze I, and base-ring II vessels in the Late Bronze II. This division is not absolute, for there is an overlap in the use of the two types of vessels in both phases.

For white slip ware the characteristic vessel is a hemispheric bowl with a horizontal wishbone handle (Fig. 7.16-C). The white or grayish-white slip covering the interior and exterior has given rise to the common appellation "milk bowl." The outside of the bowl bears a painted

decoration in shades of brown. The earlier white slip I ware has carefully painted designs, horizontal and vertical bands of ladder or cross-hatched pattern. In the later group, white slip II, the designs are based. Generally speaking, white slip I ware can be dated to the Late Bronze I, and white slip II to the Late Bronze II-III. Another, rarely encountered member of the white slip family is the elegant tankard with its protruding handle.

White shaved juglets (Fig. 7.15:3) have the form of common Canaanite dipper juglets, but their technique is typically Cypriot. They are handmade and have an inserted handle, as in base-ring ware. They are made of whitish clay, and the body is pated with a knife. White shaved juglets appear in considerable numbers in Late Bronze II-III Canaan.

Fig. 7.18. Imported Mycenaean pottery



MYCENAEN POTTERY.

Alongside vessels of Cypriot origin, large quantities of Mycenaean pottery from Greece or Mycenaean-style pottery manufactured in Cyprus were marketed in Canaan during the Late Bronze Age. These vessels are all expertly wheel-made and highly fired. The surface is decorated with simple geometric patterns painted with great precision.

The earliest vessel imported to Canaan is a kylix (drinking cup) of Mycenaean II ware, found in Fosse Temple I of the Late Bronze I at Lachish. Mycenaean imports greatly increased during the Late Bronze II, when vessels of Mycenaean IIIA ware were brought to Canaan. They included, for the most part, stirrup vases, pyxides, and pyriform jars. In the Late Bronze III they were replaced by vessels of the Mycenaean IIIB family. The differentiation between the two groups of Mycenaean

ware is of extreme chronological importance, as it permits us to distinguish between assemblages of the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries.

In a class of their own stand the Mycenaean chalice kraters, large kraters that portray chalice processions. A complete krater of this type was found in a tomb at Tel Dan, and fragments have appeared at various sites.

SYRIAN IMPORTS (fig. 7.15-4).

A comparatively rare vessel among those imported to Canaan is a tall, slender bottle, red slipped and highly burnished. The origin of this vessel, called Syrian bottle, is in northern Syria or southern Anatolia, and it first appears in Canaan during the Late Bronze II.

EGYPTIAN IMPORTS (fig. 7.15.5). The considerable influence of Egypt on the southern coast of Canaan is faintly reflected in the

importation of limited numbers of Egyptian ceramic vessels. A few Egyptian vessels, particularly handleless bag-shaped jars, appear already in assemblages of the Late Bronze II, but the bulk of the Egyptian finds come from Late Bronze III contexts, for the most part in Egyptian fortresses and residences.

A mixture of pottery vessels of varying origin characterizes burial offerings of the period. In tombs one might find Canaanite jars sealed with Cypriot bows and Mycenaean vessels alongside Canaanite and Egyptian ones. Such phenomena testify to the flourishing trade

among the disparate parts of the eastern Mediterranean basin.

Tombs

Two main tomb types predominate in Late Bronze Age Canaan: burial caves and pit graves. Other forms of burial were practiced as well, some carried over from earlier times and others, of apparently foreign origin, introduced only in the Late Bronze Age. The investigation of burial customs and their origins can reveal a great deal about the population of Canaan and the social processes that it underwent.

BURIAL CAVES

The interment of dead in caves was practiced in Canaan since Early Bronze times, and it was the most common form of burial in the Middle Bronze Age. Cave burials were always multiple burials. The tombs, used over a long period, accommodated many bodies. In the Middle Bronze Age, it was the custom to push the bones of the earlier burials toward the sides of the cave and to inter the newly deceased in the center. In this manner, the walls became lined with bone heaps and burial offerings, which were moved along with the bones of their owners. This custom continued unchanged during the Late Bronze Age. The preservation over many generations of a basic burial custom shows that the Canaanite inhabitants of this period were direct descendants of the earlier populations.

The term "cave" refers primarily to natural or man-made caves water cisterns, which were adapted specifically set aside for burial, though it may include chambers carved for other purposes, such as water cisterns, which were adapted for use as tombs. All these cave types saw use during the Late Bronze Age, but the salient characteristic of the period was the reuse

of burial caves hewn in earlier periods; there are but few caves first cut during the Late Bronze Age.

As pushing aside skeletons led to the accumulation of many bodies in one chamber, each cave is in effect a cemetery. It is usually difficult to discover the number of interments in each cave, as the bones in most of the tombs excavated are not well preserved and those that have been preserved have often received too little attention. Offerings placed alongside the deceased gradually accumulated, too, with each added interment, until the objects numbered in some cases, in the hundreds—most of them ceramic vessels.

In contrast to the clear continuity evidenced in the use of caves and in the manner of interment, there were significant changes in the geographic distribution of this mode of burial. During the Middle Bronze Age, cave burials were the most common burial type, and cave tombs were present throughout the country. In the Late Bronze Age, the burial caves of the coastal plain were abandoned, never to be reused. In the hill and Shephelah regions, cave burials were renewed, though often following a considerable time lapse. Only rarely was there continuous use of a cave from the Middle Bronze Age to the Late Bronze Age. Middle Bronze Age cave tombs reused after a lapse have been found at Saled, Hanita, Dammun in the Carmel, Megiddo, Beth Shean, Tell el-Far'ah North, Gibson, Gezer, Jerticho, Lachish, and Tell Rumeidih in Hebron. Caves first used in the Late Bronze Age have been excavated at Kibbet Rabad, Jerusalem, Tell Jeduur, and Saled.

Burial caves such as those at Saled, Hanita, Dammun, Gibson, Jeduur, and Hebron are not adjacent to any settlement site. The hill tombs were virtually devoid of settlements during the Late Bronze

Age; a review of the distribution of burial sites, however, reveals a denser pattern. This may comprise archaeological evidence of a non-elite population of the unstable kind exemplified by the *Apiru* of the El-Amarna letters and other texts, which harassed the settled population. This unsettled population, which may have been disenfranchised and therefore unable to maintain its own burial grounds, buried its dead wherever it could—in caves cut by earlier generations or natural caves in the hills—and preserved the traditional burial practices of the Middle Bronze Age, being unexposed to new influences.

The burial offerings in the caves were usually modest, consisting mainly of domestic pottery: cooking pots, kraters, store jars, jugs, jugs, and a great many bowls. The choice of household objects and the lack of special burial vessels suggest a strong bond between the home and the tomb and perhaps a belief that the tomb was now the home of the deceased. Luxury items such as imported pottery, metal objects, precious jewelry, and weapons are rare, indicating that the standard of living of the Late Bronze Age hill people was quite modest.

Multiple cave burial, so conspicuously preserving the burial customs of earlier generations, implies a conservative attitude, with little attempt to change long-standing behavioral patterns. It appears that in the hill area, well away from the coastal and valley highways, it was easier to maintain a traditional life-style, uninfluenced by the new and strange customs that penetrated the more susceptible regions.

PIT BURIALS

In contrast to the continuity of tradition shown in the tombs of the hill and Shephelah populations, the burial practices of the inhabitants of

the coastal plain, and gradually of the interior valleys, underwent a radical metamorphosis. In the Late Bronze Age, the coastal populations no longer buried their dead in traditional cave tombs, which were abandoned. They were replaced by burials in rectangular pits excavated in the sand or the kurkar rock.

Sometimes the pits were lined with stone slabs, termed *clay graves*. Most often burials were solitary, one body to a grave. Once sealed, the tomb was never reopened, and the repose of the dead was not disturbed. Occasionally two or three bodies were placed in one grave, implying a relation between the deceased. The difference between undisturbed single pit burials and multiple pushed-back cave burials is so fundamental that it must be assumed that the inhabitants of the coastal regions radically changed their outlook on death and burial.

The change may be ascribed to the infiltration of Egyptian ideas regarding the need to preserve the body, ideas that arrived at their fullest expression in the custom of embalming. It should not be surprising to find Egyptian influence at its most potent along the Coastal Plain, and later in the valleys of the interior, where the main international routes, closely guarded by Egypt, passed. The inhabitants of these regions were exposed throughout the entire Late Bronze Age or even earlier to Egyptian ideas (a small number of pit burials appear in the Middle Bronze Age). In contrast, the inhabitants of the hill regions were outside the scope of Egyptian interests and thus were free to maintain local cultural traditions.

Pit burials appear in extensive cemeteries. The largest are those of Tell el-Ajjul, which constantly expanded as the period progressed. Cemeteries have also been identified at Tell Ridan and Deir el-Balah in the Gaza Strip, at Tell el-Far'ah

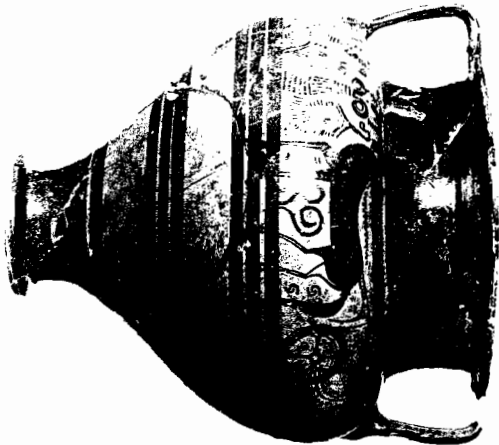


Fig. 7.19. Mycenaean chalice/krater vase (height 39 centimeters)

South, at Horvat Humra and Jal-mahim on the banks of Nahal Sorek, at Tel Zevor in the northern Sharon, Tell Abu Hawam on the banks of Nahal Qishon, the Persian Garden near Acho, and at Kibbutz Gasher Ha-Ziv. Toward the end of the period the custom spread to the interior valleys, and cemeteries of this type have been found at 'Afula and at Tell es-Sidiyeh in the Jordan valley. A number of cemeteries reveal a dominant alignment of burials, with the head pointed west, a typically Egyptian orientation.

Unlike cave burials, where the tomb offerings are replicas of household effects, pit burials provide a distinctive assemblage. The most important component is one jar or two, placed upright in the grave and covered by bowls, sometimes of imported ware, which contain dipper jugs. Another typical offering group consists of a jug and a few bowls. The sealed jars no doubt contained liquids and the bowls food; in fact, bowls have been found to contain the remains of joints of meat. Pit burials also contain more luxury items than cave tombs: imported pottery, beads and jewelry, weapons, and metal pins. It may be inferred that the coastal dwellers understood the needs of the departed differently from the hill people. Furthermore, the coastal people seem to have enjoyed a higher standard of living, doubtless due to their proximity to international land and sea routes.

OTHER FORMS OF BURIAL

Various sites have yielded tombs that differ from the usual types in form, manner of construction, or inclusion of new elements (benches or niches). In some tombs the corpse was interred in a container—a coffin, box, or urn. Most of these elements first appear in Canaan during the Late Bronze Age, though

some may be found at the end of the Middle Bronze Age. They have no precedent in local tradition, and their origins must be sought outside Canaan, tracing diverse influences from throughout the region.

BENCH TOMBS

These are caves in which burial benches were left along one or more of the walls as they were cut. Sometimes, especially in cases where an earlier cave was reused, the benches were constructed of stone. It appears that the intent was to leave the bodies on the benches, and several tombs have been found with complete skeletons still in that position. However, in other cases the bones were gathered into a heap in the center of the cave to make room for later burials. The presence of such benches indicates planning and specific intent in fashioning the tomb chamber, as opposed to the random choice evident in the usual type of burial cave. The intention of interring each body separately, on its own shelf, testifies to a different view of burial, though in some cases the original intent was confounded, and the burials took on the character of the usual cave tombs.

The best-known instances of bench tombs come from the cemeteries of Tell el-Far'ah South, found in two groups. One dates from the thirteenth and twelfth centuries. The other group (which the excavator Perrot called "the tombs of the lords of the Philistines" after discovering anthropoid coffins and Philistine pottery on the floor between the benches) was dated to the twelfth century. When it became apparent that anthropoid coffins need not be linked to the Philistines, a date in the thirteenth century became feasible, and the Philistine vessels could be attributed to a later phase in the use of the tombs. Because of the supposed relation between the bench tombs and the tombs of the

lords of the Philistines, a Mycenaean origin for this tomb type was assumed. A number of archaeologists pointed out the resemblance between the bench tombs and the Mycenaean chamber tombs and suggested that the bench tomb was introduced into Canaan by an early wave of Aegean immigrants, preceding the main wave of Philistines and other Sea Peoples. A reappraisal of the characteristic features of bench tombs and a comparison with the Mycenaean chamber tombs showed that the two types are not alike. At Mycenaean, the tombs have no benches and are approached by a sloping dromos. It was discovered, however, that the bench element and the broad, stepped shaft entrance are characteristic of Cypriot tombs from the Middle Cypriot period onward, reflecting the infiltration of small groups of people from Cyprus. Bench tombs have been excavated at Sarpetta, north of Tyre, at Gezer, Lachish, Tell Yiftun, and Tell el-Ajjul, all sites of the Coastal Plain and the Shephelah.

TOMBS WITH NICHES

These tombs have niches cut into the walls where the dead were laid. The burial concept here resembles the original intent of the bench tombs, as each body was interred separately in a well-defined area. In these tombs too, however, the bones were sometimes removed from the niches and cast onto the floor of the chamber.

Niche tombs have been found at only three sites in Canaan. Tell el-Ajjul, Lachish, and Megiddo. The most interesting group, the so-called "horse and locust" tombs, comes from the Tell el-Ajjul cemetery and dates to the very end of the Middle Bronze Age, approximately 1600 B.C.E. The tombs take on various shapes, round, oval, or rectangular. They are entered from above, through the center of the chamber, which thus serves also as a shaft

Recesses cut into the walls accommodate one or two bodies, which have remained complete and in situ. Some tombs contain a skeleton of a horse with some bones removed, placed in the center of the tomb. The meaning of this custom remains a mystery. A jawbone of a horse was also found in a niche tomb at Lachish, one of four such tombs discovered at that site. Only two niche tombs were found at Megiddo; one of them had only one niche, proving that the tomb was cut to accommodate only one person, an unusual phenomenon in itself.

Like the benches, burial niches are known in Cyprus from the Middle Cypriot period onward. The combination of horse burials with niches, however, is known neither in Cyprus nor in any other neighboring land. Burials of parts of horses are known from contemporaneous sites in Greece, but they occur in tombs of a different type. There is as yet insufficient evidence to relate the disparate scraps of information, other than to suggest that the people buried in the niche tombs, with or without horses, have some relation to the Cypriot-Aegean region.

BUILT TOMBS

Tel Dan and Aphyk, separated by a considerable distance, each provide one instance of a built tomb. Built tombs feature a structural chamber, a rare phenomenon in any period in Canaan. The Aphyk tomb was damaged by later construction, but the Dan tomb has been preserved to a height of 2.4 meters, and its manner of construction may be observed. It consists of a small chamber, 2.2 x 2.4 meters. The walls are corbelled and were probably sealed with a large roof slab, which has not been preserved.

Within the small chamber of the Dan tomb were the remains of 40 individuals, of whom 25 were identified as males (mostly young), 7 as

females, and 5 as children. They were interred with a large assemblage of pottery vessels and other objects. There is a prominent group of Mycenaean imports, among them a complete chalice vase, as well as weapons, gold plaques and earrings, ivory objects, and other bronze, bone, and basalt artifacts. The Dan tomb dates to the fourteenth century B.C.E., and the Aphyk tomb (found in a poor state of preservation) belongs to the thirteenth century.

SMALL CERAMIC COFFINS (LARNAXES)

Two terra-cotta larnaxes have been discovered thus far in Canaan. One, a multihanded chest with a flat lid, was found in a bench tomb at Gezer dated to the fifteenth century. It contained two primary child burials, along with the disarticulated bones of ten more children and an adult. This tomb contained the remains of another 89 individuals, strewn over the benches and the floor of the tomb. The second larnax, in the shape of a small, open tub, was found overturned in one of the pit graves in the Persian Garden near Acho.

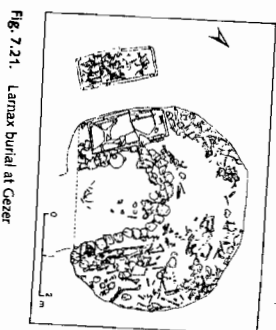


Fig. 7.21. Larnax burial at Gezer.



Fig. 7.20. Built tomb (the Mycenaean tomb) at Tel Dan.



Fig. 722. Gezer jarneck (length 175 centimeters)

with the bones of a young male scattered about. It has been dated to the fourteenth century.

Larnakes were in common use as small coffins for secondary burial on the island of Crete, and they are closely linked to Minoan culture and its offshoots. The presence of larnakes in Canaan may imply some relation with the Minoan world, but it cannot have been a very significant one.

JAR BURIALS. Adult burials in store jars, not to be confused with the infant jar burials under house floors characteristic of the Middle Bronze Age, were common in the Hittite kingdom, especially in the last phase of its existence. The discovery of adult jar burials in Canaan testifies to the arrival of a small population bearing a foreign burial custom. As the jar burials are dated to the early twelfth century (the end of the Late Bronze Age or the beginning of the Iron Age), the bearers of this custom may have been refugees from the disintegrating Hittite Empire.

Jar burials have been encountered at four sites in Canaan, Kfar Yehoshua in the Jezreel valley, Tel Zetor in the Sharon, Tell el-Far'ah North in the Samaria hills, and Azor, near Tel Aviv. The finest ex-

ample comes from Kfar Yehoshua. The deceased, a man of about forty, was laid full length within two jars sheared off at the shoulder and laid face to face. Three flasks were placed inside the jars, and vessels were placed round them, as well as a bronze knife or sickle and the remains of a goat, ox, and pig.

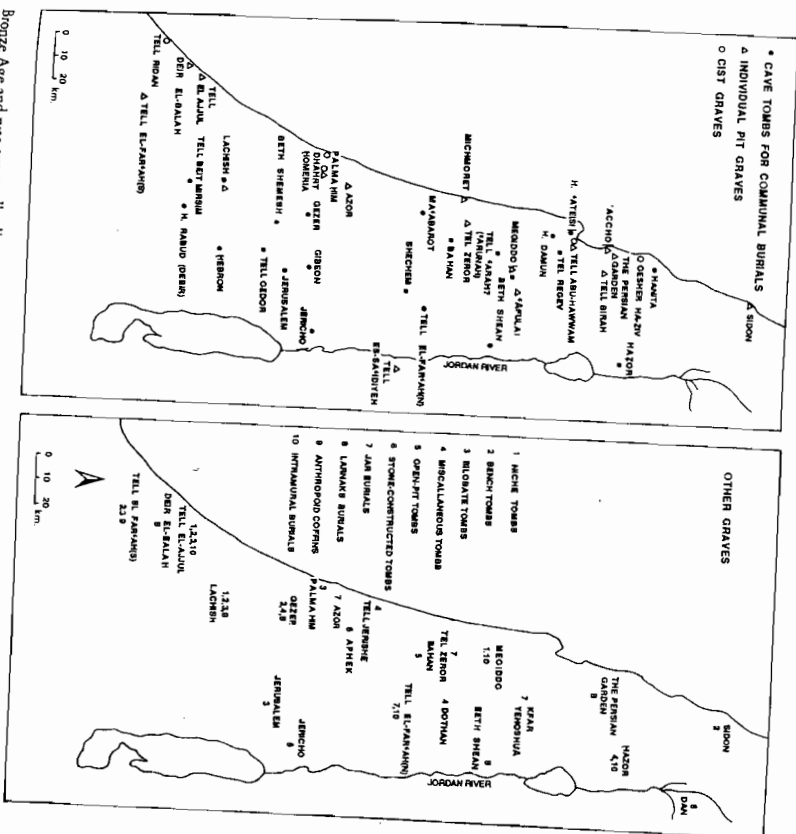
ANTHROPOID COFFINS. The discovery many years ago of large pottery coffins of anthropoid form in the cemeteries of Beth Shean, Lachish, and Tell el-Far'ah South attracted much interest, and it was commonly assumed that they were the burial coffins of the Philistines dating to the twelfth century. Since then, many coffins have been discovered at Deir el-Balah in the Gaza Strip accompanied by vessels and objects of undoubted thirteenth-century date, and it has been established that there is in fact no relation between anthropoid coffins and the Philistines. Rather, the coffins are linked to the strong Egyptian presence in Canaan toward the end of the Late Bronze Age. Many of their representational details relate to the Egyptian world of beliefs concerning the needs of the dead and are found on coffins in Egypt. Most prominent are the lotus flowers on the forehead, the Osiris beard (Os-

iris is the Egyptian god of the dead), and the emblems of Osiris grasped in the hands. However, in those coffins found whole there were two complete adult burials and the bones of one or two other adult or juvenile individuals, a departure from the Egyptian practice of separate interment for each person. Anthropological analysis of the skeletal remains from Deir el-Balah has revealed a resemblance to the population of lower Egypt in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth dynasties and a dissimilarity to Canaanite populations of the same period. It thus appears that the people buried at Deir el-Balah were Egyptians who lived and died in Canaan. The grave pits in the Deir el-Balah cemetery include, alongside the usual assemblage of Canaanite, Cypriot, and Mycenaean vessels, Egyptian pottery and other objects of Egyptian origin or form.

Like the larnakes, anthropoid coffins are not linked to a specific tomb type. At Deir el-Balah the coffins were found in pit graves, in a cemetery that had many similar graves without coffins. At other sites, the coffins were placed in cave tombs already in use, either in hewn burial caves of the usual type (Beth Shean and Lachish) or in bench tombs (Tell el-Far'ah).

The analysis of tomb types has shown that the Canaanite population of the Late Bronze Age was directly descended from that of the Middle Bronze Age. This population gradually became divided into two groups, the conservative hill dwellers, who continued to bury their dead in multiple cave burials, and the more cosmopolitan coastal inhabitants, who were more susceptible to innovation and external influences and buried their dead in single pit graves. Burial within the settlement, a practice deeply rooted in Middle Bronze Age traditions, declined at the beginning of the Late

Map 7.3. Distribution of different forms of burial in the Late Bronze Age



Bronze Age and was eventually discontinued. Alongside the stable population, small groups of immigrants from parts of the Near East—Cyprus, Crete, Egypt, and Anatolia—arrived. Their forms of burial did not leave a lasting impression on the basic modes of burial in Canaan.

Warfare

The study of ancient warfare is based on written sources and a wealth of pictorial documents—tomb paintings and reliefs carved on

the walls of temples and palaces.

The archaeological evidence for warfare, however, is limited mainly to the weapons unearthed in excavations. The decisive innovations in the Late Bronze Age battlefield consisted of two new weapons, the light horse-drawn chariot and the long-range composite bow. Their extensive use gave the Egyptian armies a decisive advantage, fully exploited in Egyptian imperial expansion.

The Late Bronze Age chariot was a light chariot harnessed to two horses and mounted by two per-

sons, a driver and a combatant. The origin of the horse-drawn chariot has yet to be elucidated. The Egyptian word for chariot clearly indicates that it was brought to Egypt from Canaan, though Canaan was merely a way station on the route of its diffusion from the original source. Egyptian depictions show that the Canaanite chariots were lighter than those of the Egyptians, so light that one man could carry a chariot on his shoulder. The Canaanite chariot wheel had four spokes, in contrast to the six-spoked

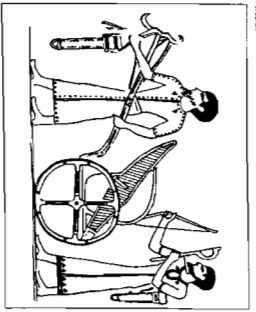


Fig. 7.23. Depiction of Canaanite chariot in an Egyptian wall painting.

Egyptian wheel, and the axle was set somewhat forward of the rear of the chassis.

The second battlefield weapon, the composite bow, was constructed of various kinds of wood and tendons and had an effective range of as much as four hundred meters, the greatest range of any ancient weapon. Though composite bows have not been found in Canaan, where organic materials are not usually preserved, they are mentioned in Egyptian booty lists from Canaan. In addition, a multitude of bronze arrowheads have come to light, some flat and leaf-shaped, others reinforced by a midrib. Whether the two types were used for different bows is not clear, though it appears that the Canaanites employed a simple bow alongside the composite bow.

Javelins and the heavier spears served for medium-range combat. The tips of both weapons, resembling the arrowhead in form, are often difficult to tell apart. Swords and daggers were used in hand-to-hand combat. The most characteristic Late Bronze Age sword is the sickle-shaped sword; unlike the sickle, its cutting edge is on the exterior. A considerable number of sickle-shaped swords have been found in Canaan and in Egypt, and they are typical of the Late Bronze Age in both places, though they were introduced toward the end of the Middle Bronze Age. At close range, short, straight daggers were also employed. Like the sickle-shaped swords, the daggers often exhibit high standards of metal-working. The blade and haft are generally cast in one piece, in a flat mold. The handle was often designed with a recess in which wood or ivory could be inlaid. The Canaanite soldier wore a coat of mail made of scales of armor sewn onto a leather or cloth jacket. Such metal scales have been found in excava-

tions, complementing the depictions in Egyptian wall paintings. A helmet completed the protective gear of the foot soldier.

If the art of battle in the open field saw dramatic advances during the Late Bronze Age, the art of siege warfare remained stagnant. Egypt, the prime factor in the battlegrounds of the period, did not excel in siege warfare. The conquest of the city of Sharrhen, which paved the way for Egyptian dominion in Canaan and marks the transition from the Middle to the Late Bronze Age, dragged on for three years, according to Egyptian sources. A siege of three years implies a tactic of protracted attrition rather than direct attack, and that seems to have been the usual Egyptian approach. Egypt did not develop or make use of the battering ram, a decisive weapon in Iron Age battles. Though the archaeological evidence shows that few towns were encircled by walls, Egyptian artists portrayed conquest scenes of fortified towns, attacked by scaling ladders and other early hand-operated means in use as early as the third millennium B.C.E. In view of the lack of archaeological evidence, these scenes should be understood as artistic conventions rather than true representations.

Economy and Trade

There is no doubt that agriculture comprised the basis of the Canaanite economy. The fame of Canaan's "seven kinds" of produce is no exaggeration; the land was suitable for raising cereals, fruits, and vegetables, as well as for breeding livestock such as small and large cattle, donkeys, and horses. We cannot say whether the land was always sufficiently productive to supply all the subsistence needs of its inhabitants. In years of sufficient rainfall, agricultural produce may well have been sufficient for subsistence and even

for exchangeable surplus, but in dry years, part of the population was forced to look elsewhere for its sustenance, especially to Egypt, whose fields were watered by the Nile floods. Biblical and Egyptian sources describe the descent into Egypt during extended droughts, and their stories seem to reflect a fairly common reality.

The only mineral of marketable value in Canaan was the copper of the Timna region. However, there is no evidence that copper was extracted during most of the Late Bronze Age. No settlements of the weakness likely that any of them would have had the political power or economic initiative to operate the mines. Only at the end of the period is there evidence for mining at Timna, by a state-run Egyptian concession. The Egyptian presence was underlined

by the erection near the mines of a temple dedicated to Hathor.

Despite the dearth of raw materials, or perhaps for that reason, Canaan excelled in its crafts. The potter's craft was advanced, and the textile industry (particularly the use of a purple dye processed from the murex sea snail) may have been well developed in Canaan by the Late Bronze Age. Heaps of split murex shells were discovered in a late Late Bronze Age stratum at Achbo. Canaanite craftsmen seem also to have excelled in metalwork in general and in the manufacture of weapons and chariots in particular. The protective headgear used by Canaanite soldiers (as portrayed on the Megiddo ivories) was of apparently local manufacture, for nothing like it has been encountered elsewhere. Canaanites also seem to have been expert jewelers, and various types of uniquely Canaanite ornaments have been identified. Further proof of the ex-

The Late Bronze Age

prise of the Canaanite craftsman may be found in Egyptian texts, which tell of Canaanite craftsmen engaged in building and decorating tasks in Egypt.

The Late Bronze Age was marked by intensive international trade, compassing the entire eastern Mediterranean basin. Canaan took an active part in this traffic, if only because of its location on the main arteries of overland trade. The archaeological record reveals far more evidence of foreign imports in Canaan than of Canaanite export based on exchange. Canaan must have manufactured a considerable quantity of exportable goods that have not been preserved. As far as can be ascertained, agricultural surplus constituted the bulk of the Canaanite export trade. This may be deduced from the wide distribution of the Canaanite jar, a jar specifically designed for trade and trans-

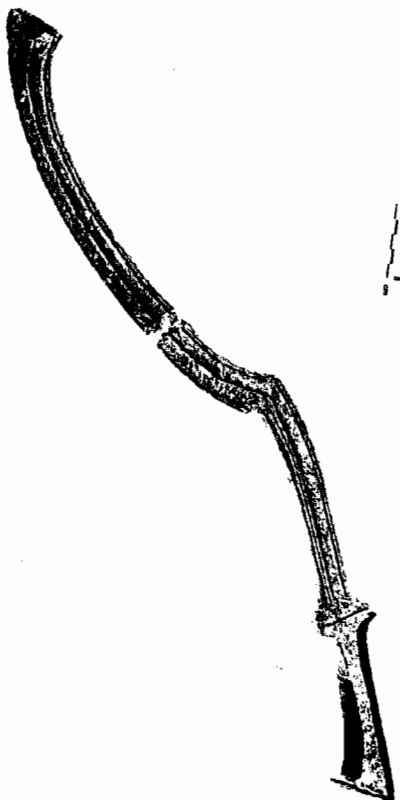


Fig. 7.24. Sickle sword

part of liquids, probably the wines and oils for which Canaan was famous. Valuable testimony to the extent of such trade is provided in an Egyptian tomb painting of a Canaanite merchant ship docked in an Egyptian port and unloading a cargo of jars. The Canaanite jar reached Greece as well, even finding its way to a tomb in Athens.

In the Late Bronze Age, the quantity of imported wares becomes so great that there is hardly a tomb or an excavated room without at least one imported vessel. A com-

bination of vessels from various sources (Mycenaean, Cypriot, Syrian, and Egyptian) is characteristic of ceramic assemblages, particularly in tombs, of the period. Though little is known of the content of these vessels or why they were purchased in such large quantities, their numbers constitute a unique phenomenon in the history of the region. In addition to the pottery, many different raw materials were imported into Canaan. Copper, the basis of all metallurgy of the period, was undoubtedly the most important, and

it is probable that copper-rich Cyprus was the principal source. To prepare bronze, the metal most commonly employed by the smiths of the Late Bronze Age, an alloy of 10-percent tin was needed. The source of tin has yet to be determined, though it clearly was imported. Other imported raw materials for the manufacture of luxury items include gold, silver, and elephant tusks for the preparation of carved ivories.

It is not clear whether this extensive international trade was carried out through direct contacts between the diverse regions or via intermediaries, merchants who traveled the land or sea routes, loading and unloading their goods at each stop. An ancient wreck discovered some years ago at Cape Gelidonya, off the southeastern coast of Turkey, provides evidence of intensive maritime trade. This small ship, which was apparently headed west, contained many copper ingots of apparent Cypriot origin, as well as many copper implements, most of them broken, which were no doubt meant to be recast; it may have been a kind of traveling copper foundry. The form of the ship suggests that it was a Syro-Canaanite vessel, though little can be said of its crew or owners. The cargo of the ship, which was wrecked toward the end of the thirteenth century, reflects the cosmopolitan character of Late Bronze Age trade. Lately, another wreck has been found off the cape of Kas in southern Turkey. Its excavation will no doubt provide much new information concerning the character and extent of international trade in the Late Bronze Age.

A trade network as extensive as that of the Late Bronze Age undoubtedly depended on the maintenance of open land and sea routes, and on reliable modes of transport. The land routes were the same early ways that had been in use since early

times. The main trade route of the ancient Near East was that later known as the Via Maris (the Way of the Sea), which passed along the coastal plain and interior valleys of Canaan. The settlements along the highway enjoyed the advantages of being on the caravan routes, and they have been found to contain a larger proportion of imported vessels and objects than do the settlements of the interior and the hill zones. Secondary routes crisscrossed the country, servicing the sites of the interior. As for conveyances, the donkey appears still to have been the main beast of burden, and donkey caravans bore the main burden of trade. Horses were domesticated mainly for military use, to draw chariots. Though there is no evidence for the use of ox-drawn carts, such as appear in the reliefs of the migrant Sea Peoples, their use cannot be ruled out.

The arts of maritime navigation and shipbuilding had to be greatly developed during this period, for it is difficult to imagine the pursuit of the intensive trade with Cyprus and Greece without the benefit of advances in sea transport. Little is known of the ships of the period, at the number of ships so far discovered is not great. The Cape Gelidonya and Kas ships have provided invaluable data on the structure of Late Bronze Age ships and the character of ancient seafaring. It would appear that a considerable proportion of sea travel was coastal. Movement was generally by day, maintaining eye contact with the shore; at night the ships anchored at small ports. This method of maritime transport, based on frequent anchorages, may explain the rise of small port towns along the Canaanite coast, such as Tel Nami, Tel Megadim, and Shiqmona. Another part of the sea trade was pursued on the open sea; traffic between Canaan and Egypt, for example, could hardly have taken another route.

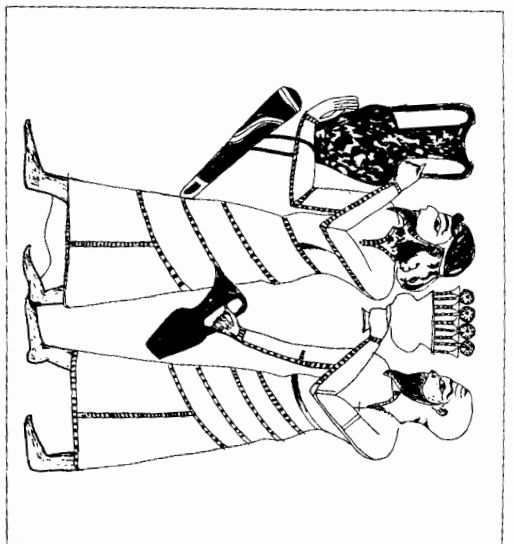


Fig. 7.26. Portrayals of Canaanites in an Egyptian wall painting

Canaanite Culture

The Late Bronze Age marks the zenith of Canaanite culture. During this period of high living standards and flourishing international trade, Canaan was open not only to innovations in art and religion but also to material achievements attained throughout the west Asian and eastern Mediterranean expanse. In two important facets of cultural achievement, art and writing, Canaan made a vital contribution to the advancement of human culture as a whole.

SCRIPTS AND THE INVENTION OF THE ALPHABET

Owing to the cosmopolitan character of Late Bronze Age Canaan, all forms of writing prevalent in the Near East were extant in Canaan. The predominant script was the Akkadian cuneiform, Akkadian being the international language of diplo-

macy at the time. Even the king of Egypt used this language and script in his correspondence with the kings of independent states of equal standing and with the vassal rulers of the Canaanite cities. The El-Amarna letters, as well as the somewhat earlier T'arakah letters, were all written in Akkadian cuneiform script. As literacy, particularly in foreign tongues, was not widespread, every ruler, great or small, must have employed scribes and interpreters who aided him in conducting his foreign affairs. Another interesting document, written in Akkadian cuneiform, is a fragment of a tablet bearing a portion of the famed Mesopotamian Epic of Gilgamesh found at Megiddo, which appears to have been employed in teaching the Akkadian language. This tablet shows that literary works were available in Megiddo and suggests that a scribal school existed at the site.

Another script used in Canaan at

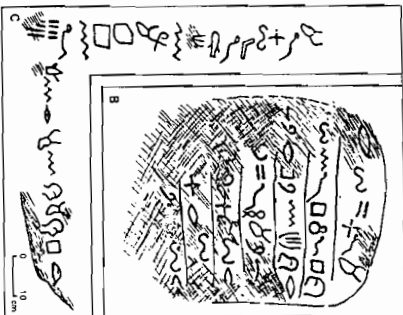
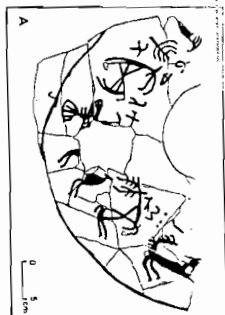


Fig. 727. Proto-Canaanite and proto-Sinaitic inscriptions from Lachish (A) and from Sinal (B). □

this time was the Egyptian hieroglyphic script and its variants. Formal hieroglyphic script was used in official texts, such as the stela erected by kings of the Nineteenth Dynasty at Beth Shean to commemorate their victories in the region or a fragment of a stela from Tel Kinrot. Monumental hieroglyphic inscriptions containing the names of Egyptian monarchs appear on stone doorjambes at Beth Shean and at Jaffa. The name of Ramesses III was inscribed on a metal object in the destruction layer of Lachish. Royal scarabs have been found all over the country. Most common are the scarabs of Thutmose III, Amenhotep II, and Ramesses II, the kings who reigned when Egypt's presence in Canaan was the strongest. A considerable number of Egyptian documents written in hieratic script, the cursive Egyptian script, have been discovered, particularly in the southern sites of Lachish and Tel Sera'. These are notes and administrative lists reflecting the activity of the Egyptian government in Canaan.

A so-far undeciphered script was found incised on elongated clay tablets from the site of Dor, Afula in the Jordan valley. These signs are reminiscent of the Minoan linear script. A clay bulla from Aphik (a lump of clay used to seal rolled up letters) bears a seal impression with Hittite hieroglyphic characters. These instances all bear witness to the extent of the international relations of Canaan in the Late Bronze Age.

The local Canaanite tongue was late to develop its own script. In the Late Bronze Age two different writing systems came into being. Though the two systems use different characters, they share an important feature—both are alphabetical scripts, that is, each character represents only a single phoneme. There was no longer any need for the hundreds of signs used in contemporary writing systems such as cuneiform or Egyptian hieroglyphs, where each sign represents a complete word or syllable or serves as a determinative. In the alphabetical script, there are few signs, corresponding to the small number of phonemes used in speech. The alphabet liberated script from the concrete concepts expressed in the word and made it an abstract tool, allowing expression in stylized characters that bear no relation to the meaning of the words. The invention of the alphabetic script is the most vivid expression of the intellectual bent of the Canaanites and of their positive attitude toward abstract expression.

The earliest alphabetic system of writing known is that termed the proto-Sinaitic script, a group of such inscriptions having been found in the eastern part of the peninsula, in and about the Egyptian temple adjacent to the turquoise mines at Serabit el-Khadim. A series of characters was inscribed in an unskilled hand on Egyptian stela dedicated to Hathor of the mines. Some of the characters, such as those that depict a hand or a fish, may be interpreted as pictographs and are reminiscent of hieroglyphs. But when scholars added up the different characters appearing in the inscriptions, there were only 27; the small number suggested that the script was alphabetic. The deciphering of the proto-Sinaitic inscriptions proved that their language was Canaanite and that they consist of benedictions dedicated to a goddess called Elat or Ba'alat, perhaps the Canaanite name of the Egyptian goddess Hathor. Accompanying inscriptions mention various persons by name, titles and position. They may have been inscribed by Canaanite slaves or workmen employed by the Egyptians in the turquoise mines of Serabit. They are generally dated to the fifteenth century.



Fig. 728. Lachish ewer and its inscription

The proto-Sinaitic script underwent development during the Late Bronze Age at the Canaanite urban centers. This script has become known as Proto-Canaanite, and some of its earliest inscriptions date possibly to the end of the Middle Bronze Age. Judging from the few proto-Canaanite inscriptions so far unearthed, this method of writing was altered conceptually after its invention. The development was for the most part graphic, the characters

gradually losing their resemblance to pictographs and becoming progressively linear. The proto-Canaanite script gave rise, in the Iron Age, to Paleo-Hebrew, Phoenician, and Aramaic scripts, each of which further subbranches that eventually developed into scripts still in use to this day. Thus, the proto-Canaanite was the father of all alphabetic scripts, and its invention was without doubt Canaan's most significant contribution to world culture.

At Ugarit, the large Canaanite city on the northern coast of Syria, an alphabetic script was developed during the Late Bronze Age based on cuneiform signs. As far as we know, Ugaritic writing developed independently of the proto-Sinaitic and proto-Canaanite scripts of southern Canaan. The independent invention of two systems testifies to the urgent need for a new system of writing, perhaps because of the unprecedented development of international trade, in which the Canaanites were prime movers. The Ugaritic alphabet contains 30 characters, of which 27 are consonants and 3 are vowels. It was employed in Ugarit during the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries and has been preserved in a rich archive of literary, religious, economic, and legal texts found at the site. Isolated inscriptions in this script found in southern Canaan (Beth Sheanesh, Ta'anach, and Aphik) show that it was disseminated outside Ugarit. Unlike the southern Canaanite scripts, Ugaritic had no successors, and it went out of use when Ugarit was laid waste at the end of the Late Bronze Age.

ART

The rulers of Canaan did not customarily immortalize their achievements in monumental sculptures and reliefs such as those commissioned by the great kings of the neighboring kingdoms. This is no doubt a corollary of the subordinate status of the Canaanite princes, who at no time during the Late Bronze Age were independent or capable of determining the political and military policies of their kingdoms. There is, therefore, no monumental Canaanite art treating of historical subjects, and we must make do with the ornamental and miniature arts and with the few instances discovered in excavations of monumental religious sculpture.

STONE SCULPTURE AND RELIEFS. Monumental sculptures and reliefs in stone have been discovered so far only at Hazor and Beth Shean. The objects are made of basalt, the durability of which has no doubt contributed to their preservation. They were discovered in the various temples excavated at the site, and their subject matter was religious.

The largest item of sculpture discovered so far in Canaan is the lion orthostat from the Area H temple at Hazor. The lion is portrayed by a combination of two techniques: while the body is shown in high relief, the head and forelegs are shaped in the round and protrude from the front of the orthostat. The unfinished rear of the orthostat, the round dowel holes drilled along its upper edge indicate that the lion was set into the wall of the temple, as the right doorjamb of the main entrance. The Hazor lion excels in its naturalistic design and in the high quality of its workmanship. The lion's head is a powerful three-dimensional portrait, sparing in details, which gives the impression of majestic calm. The body is executed in high relief, with simple, well-defined contours. Details include the mane, which tapers to a stylized horn-shaped tip, and the tail, which curls under the hindleg and around the lion's back. The hindleg is small in proportion to the rest of the body and is the only limb of unnatural proportions. The most interesting aspect of this work of art is the transition from the flat modeling of the lion's body to the three-dimensional execution of the head and forelegs. The point of transition is camouflaged in a sophisticated way by the mane, which covers both the sculptured neck and the relief shoulder of the lion. The problematic transition is further masked by the pattern of incised triangles representing the mane.



Fig. 7.29. Lion orthostat from Area C temple at Hazor (height 44 centimeters)

Another, smaller lion (33 x 44 centimeters), also carved on a basalt orthostat, was found in the Area C temple at Hazor. Like the larger lion, the body is carved in relief on one side of the orthostat, while the head and forelegs project to the fore, but the execution is less refined, and the artist confined himself to outlining the contours of the body and the limbs. The stance is different from that of the large lion; the smaller lion is not crouched in repose but appears to be rased on its haunches, perhaps about to leap, its mouth open in a roar. The mane again terminates in a horn and is accentuated with incisions.

The head of yet another lion, or rather lioness, as it has no mane, was found in Area A in the upper city of Hazor. This could be the remnant of a pair of lionesses guarding the entrance to the upper city palace or temple. The three Hazor lions prove that the lion was of particular significance in the conceptual world of the people of the Late Bronze Age, perhaps as a symbol of potent protective power.

Lions are also portrayed on a basalt stele found at Beth Shean. The stele, 92 centimeters high, is composed of two rectangular registers, each containing a separate scene. The upper register depicts a battle between a dog and a lion, or perhaps a lion and a lioness engaged in courtship. The two animals are raised on their hindlegs and form a triangular composition. They are of equal size, and the lion's mane is modeled, as in the Hazor orthostats, by triangular incisions. On the lion's shoulder is a star, of unknown significance. In the lower scene the lion faces left, in apparent triumph, while the other figure, shown behind the lion, bites his rump.

The motif of the lion, particularly the relief lion guarding the entrance to palaces or temples, is well known in north Syrian and Hittite cultures. An example appears in the city of Alalakh in northern Syria. The Alalakh lions resemble those of Hazor in some important details, the tail passing through

hindlegs and curling over the back or the incised mane terminating in a horn, which indicates that the workshop responsible for the lion reliefs at Hazor and Beth Shean was related to artistic schools of northern Syria and the Hittite kingdom. The Alalakh lions are crude and schematic, and their execution is far less refined than that of the Hazor lions, proving that though the Canaanite artist may not have been imaginative in his choice of theme, his artistic standards were high.

Two small basalt statues of male figures from Hazor might be attributed to the same school of sculptors; they too are reminiscent of

statues from Alalakh. One comes from the Area H temple and the other from the temple in Area C. The Area C statue retains the character of the basalt block of which it was fashioned. The features are extremely schematic, and the statue is blocklike, without open spaces. The features of the second statue are far more natural, and there is a hollow under the seat, giving the statue a less massive aspect. The two figures are seated in a calm, erect pose, the Area H statue on a tall-backed chair and its counterpart on a stool. The two males are smooth shaven; the Area H figure wears a wig or head-dress, while the Area C figure is



Fig. 7.30. Lion and dog orthostat from Beth Shean (height 99 centimeters)

barheaded. Both hold their hands on their knees, though the latter appears to be grasping a vessel or object of some kind. The Area H figure bears no identifying features, and it has been suggested that it represents a king. The Area C figure has the emblem of the inverted crescent on its breast and so may be identified as a deity, perhaps the moon god. The heads of both statues were purposely removed and cast a short distance from the bodies, clearly attesting to the deliberate desecration of the sacred objects, as does the burial of the large lion orthostat. The burial of disused statues in or near temples is also known at Alalakh, further evidence

The Late Bronze Age



Fig. 7.31. Statue of seated deity from Area H temple at Hazor (height 40 centimeters)

of the close ties between Hazor and the North.

Other basalt reliefs from the Hazor temples include the Area C temple stela (particularly the one bearing the relief of the upraised hands, crescent, and disk) and, from Area H, a large bowl with a running spiral design, a pattern characteristic of the Mycenaean world, where it appears on pottery vessels and other objects.

IVORY CARVING. The Late Bronze Age, especially the one hundred years or so between the end of the fourteenth century and the early twelfth century B.C.E., is rich in ivory objects. They are small artifacts, usually flat plaques inlaid in wooden furnishings or boxes to add to their value and beauty. There are also three-dimensional objects made entirely of ivory, such as pyxides, bottles, or stoppers carved in the likeness of small figurines. Ivory comes from elephant tusks, and it was brought to Canaan from Egypt

or from North Syria, where elephants were hunted as late as the early first millennium, as described in various Assyrian documents. Ivory was a precious commodity, and it was collected and hoarded by potentates as a highly valued exchange item. In Canaan, ivory carving is first encountered in the Chalcolithic period, but after that time there is a long lapse in the art of ivory-working, ending only in the Middle Bronze Age II. During that period, and to a greater extent during the Late Bronze Age, ivory carving was reinstated as one of the most important branches of Canaanite art.

Canaanite ivory work exhibits the hallmark of all Canaanite art, eclecticism. While the art of basalt sculpture characterizing northern Canaan was linked to artistic traditions of northern Syria, the art of ivory carving echoed several traditions, first and foremost the Egyptian school. The Canaanite ivory carver was acquainted with the techniques and themes prevalent in

Egypt and was able to imitate them in his own workshop. However, the Egyptian themes are accompanied by motifs copied from objects imported into Canaan from diverse lands such as Mycenae, Cyprus, or Anatolia and hoarded in the treasures of the Canaanite rulers. The mixture of elements is the leading characteristic of Canaanite art.

The most important collection of ivories was unearthed in the treasury of the king of Megiddo, the cellar west of the stratum VIIA palace. Strawn on the floor of the cellar were 380 objects and fragments collected over about 150 years. One of the outstanding objects in this treasure is a square pyxis adorned in high relief with the figures of lions on three sides and sphinxes on the fourth. The lions, like those of Hazor, exhibit northern (Syrian or Hittite) influence, and the object may have been imported from Syria. On the fourth side, two facing sphinxes are portrayed. Their heads are missing and, to judge by the holes remaining in the neck, they were modeled separately.

A fascinating group of objects includes elongated ivory plaques engraved with scenes. Of particular renown is a victory celebration depicted on a knife handle. A procession moves from right to left toward the king, who is seated on a throne decorated with winged sphinxes. Two women face the king; one offers him a beverage and lotus flowers while the other plays a lyre. Behind the women is a battle scene; a warrior stands in a chariot drawn by two horses to which two nude prisoners are tied. They are led by a soldier bearing a round shield and a spear. Behind the king, two servants serve a beverage from a large jar decorated with animal heads. A winged solar disk hovers between



Fig. 7.32. Ivory pyxis from Megiddo (height 12 centimeters)

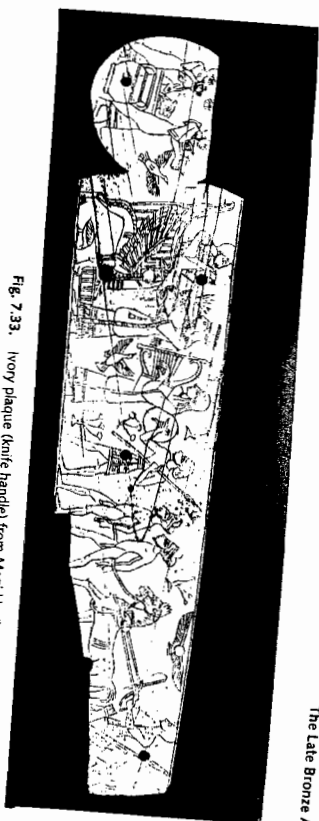


Fig. 7.33. Ivory plaque (knife handle) from Megiddo (length 26 centimeters)

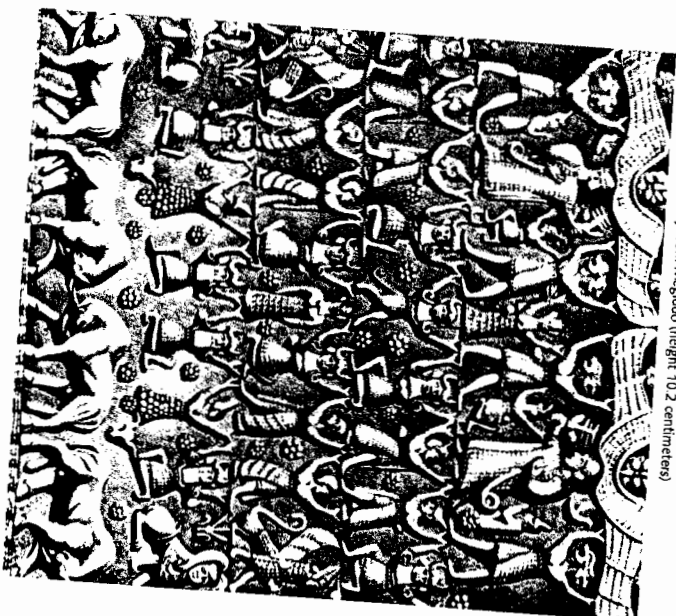


Fig. 7.34. Hittite ivory from Megiddo (height 10.2 centimeters)



Fig. 7.35. Aegean ivory from Megiddo (height 9.2 centimeters)

the chariot and the horse. This motif, along with the general character and composition of the scene, suggests considerable Egyptian influence on this Canaanite creation. Scenes of battle and of victory banners appear on other ivory plaques in the Megiddo hoard. Some plaques are executed in a different technique, that of cutout relief. One such plaque bears the portrait of the Egyptian deity Bes; another portrays a sphinx with large wings, a hybrid of elements of Egyptian (the coliffure and feathered headdress) and Aegean (the wings) origin. The stylized palm motif becomes a central theme in Iron Age Phoenician art, a tradition grounded in the hybrid Canaanite style.

In the Megiddo cache there are also objects of obvious foreign origin. Such is a plaque with a typical Hittite scene consisting of two kings or gods portrayed anthropically; they are dressed in characteristic Hittite garb, a close-fitting cap and a long robe, and they grasp a curved object. These figures are borne on row upon row of Hittite divinities with the aspect of hybrid animals. Above the kings appears the solar disk motif. The plaque is one of a handful of Hittite objects found in Canaan.

There are also some objects from the Mycenaean sphere, among them a plaque depicting a sphinx, and combs of apparent Cypriot origin. A number of items, including a

pen case inscribed with the name and titles of the scribe who owned it (dated to the days of Ramesses III), are original Egyptian objects brought to Megiddo.

Another collection of ivories was found in the last of the Lachish Fosse Temples. It is more or less a contemporary of the Megiddo cache but is more homogeneous, revealing more clearly the Egyptian sources of Canaanite glyptic art. A prominent item is a bottle in the form of a

standing woman. The lower part of the bottle is made of a large intact section of elephant tusk. The upper part, which includes the hands, neck, and head of the female figure, was made separately. A spoon, into which the contents of the bottle (perfumes or cosmetics) could be poured, was inserted into the head. Such objects are held by Canaanites or Syrian tribute bearers portrayed in Egyptian wall paintings. Another object from Lachish is a fragment of a carved pyxis. It portrays animals locked in combat, including a charging bull in the upper register reminiscent of the bulls shown at the bottom of the Hittite plaque from Megiddo.

From the governor's residence at Tell el-Far'ah South come the remains of an ivory-inlaid wooden box. There is a banquet scene and a depiction of a Nilotic environment. Here too, style and theme are closely linked to the Egyptian tradition,

yet a number of local motifs reveal that this is a typical hybrid Canaanite product.

METALWORKING. Canaanite metalwork was largely confined to small objects. A bull cast in bronze, found in the Area H temple at Hazor, has minuscule dimensions (length 5 centimeters), but its naturalistic and powerful character, an almost monumental character. This statuette, reminiscent of Syrian moldwork, testifies to the high standards of the Canaanite craftsman. That standard also finds expression in a number of small idols, particularly in a group from Megiddo.

Apart from these, the products of Canaanite metalworking are not impressive, and they consist mostly of figurines of gods and goddesses cast in flat molds. Stylistically, as in the realms of stone and ivory carving, Canaanite metalworking exhibits a mixture of Egyptian, Syrian, and Aegean elements. Precious metals were rarely used for objects other than jewelry. An engraved gold plaque was found crumpled in the Lachish acropolis temple; once opened, it revealed the portrait of a goddess standing on a horse, embossed in the repoussé technique. The goddess is nude and wears a headdress based on floral motifs. She holds large lotus flowers, and the horse wears a coat of mail.

Conclusion

Late Bronze Age Canaan was influenced by two main factors: Egypt, and the cultures of the eastern Mediterranean basin. Politically, Canaan was part of the Egyptian empire, and the influence of Egypt is perceptible in many realms. On the one hand, Egypt brought about a significant reduction in the population of Canaan. On the other, Canaan was opened to Egyptian

religious and artistic values, and these left their mark in the form of changes in burial customs and in the development of artistic styles. The lands of the eastern Mediterranean basin influenced Canaan through intensive commerce rather than by imperial domination. Canaan was susceptible to developments in its vicinity and received many cultural elements from its neighbors in the realms of religion, architecture, ceramics, and art. Absorbing and alloying the diverse influences, Canaan forged a culture of its own, which reached its zenith in the Late Bronze Age.



Fig. 7.36. Bronze bull figurine from Hazor (height 4.3 centimeters)