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Edom in Judah: An Archaeological Investigation of Identity, Interaction, and Social
Entanglement in the Negev During the Late Iron Age (8th–6th Centuries BCE)

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures

by

Andrew Joel Danielson

2020

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Edom in Judah: An Archaeological Investigation of Identity, Interaction, and Social
Entanglement in the Negev During the Late Iron Age (8th–6th Centuries BCE)

by

Andrew Joel Danielson

Doctor of Philosophy in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures

University of California, Los Angeles, 2020

Professor Aaron Alexander Burke, Chair

Archaeological excavations in the northeastern Negev region of southern Judah identified significant amounts of “foreign” archaeological material culture in contexts dating to the late Iron Age (late eighth to early sixth century BCE). This iconic material culture consisted of highly identifiable ceramics, evidence of non-Yahwistic cult featuring the deity *Qws*, and non-Judahite inscriptions. Identified as associated with the kingdom of Edom to the east, this material culture assemblage was quickly interpreted to be the result of an Edomite “invasion,” understood as occurring during the late Judean monarchy (late seventh to early sixth centuries BCE) in tandem with Babylonian aggression and the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BCE, as was promoted by certain readings of the biblical text.

This study challenges the monocausal interpretation of an invasion, recognizing both the longevity of this material culture’s presence in the northeastern Negev, its frequent production

within the northeastern Negev, and the contexts in which it was excavated that reveal a material culture footprint inconsistent with an invasion. I argue that the Edomite material culture came to be present in the region through a long and sustained pattern of culture contact, migration, and social entanglement, in large part the result of activity associated with the lucrative South Arabian trade that traversed the region en route to the Mediterranean. Framing the region through a borderlands approach, three case studies explore each of the iconic “Edomite” datasets, 1) foodways, 2) ritual behavior, and 3) inscriptions. I present each dataset in relation to patterns of human behavior and interaction, and especially the ways that they may be used as proxies for different types of social identities. Ultimately, this study delivers a new narrative of social entanglement for a misrepresented region. While the end of this period may have been marked by violence, the previous century and a half indicates a lengthy pattern of cross-cultural interaction, political ambition, economic enterprise, and social entanglement.

The dissertation of Andrew Joel Danielson is approved.

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2020

For Kaitlyn

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Complex Landscape” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of American Schools of
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- 2018 “Beyond Judah and Edom’s Borders: Social Interaction and Entanglement seen through Culinary Preferences in the Iron Age Southern Levant.” Paper presented at the UCLA Archaeology Graduate Conference, Los Angeles CA, February 3, 2018.
- 2017 “Edom in Judah: A Case Study on “Edomite” Presence, Interaction, and Identity in the Negev in the Late Iron Age.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Schools of Oriental Research, Boston, MA, November 16, 2017.
- 2015 “The Kaplan Excavations Publication Initiative, 2015.” Poster presented with N. Ben-Marzouk, J. Damm, A. Karoll, K. Kowalski, J. Williams, A. Burke and M. Peilstöcker at the Annual Meeting of the American Schools of Oriental Research, Atlanta, GA, November 21, 2015.
- 2014 “The Kaplan Excavations Publication Initiative, 2014.” Poster presented with J. Damm, A. B. Karoll, M. Haase, A.-K. Jeske, K. Kowalski, N. Ben-Marzouk, A. Burke and M. Peilstöcker at the Annual Meeting of the American Schools of Oriental Research, San Diego, CA, November 22, 2014.

**PART ONE: BACKGROUND OF RESEARCH, THEORETICAL CONCERNS, AND
REGIONAL CONTEXT**

CHAPTER 1. THE QUESTION OF EDMITE PRESENCE IN JUDAH AND THE DIRECTION OF STUDY

The sociopolitical landscape of the southern Levant during the late Iron Age (late eighth through early sixth centuries BCE) consisted of a series of small polities competing and cooperating beneath the umbrella of Neo-Assyrian imperial authority. In the northeastern Negev, a region that served as the southern frontier of one of these polities—Judah—an increasing number of archaeological excavations began identifying a corpus of material culture that was distinct from assemblages well-known in the northeastern Negev and areas of Judah to the north. This divergent assemblage consisted of highly recognizable ceramics, notably a ridged-rim holemouth cooking pot and a highly decorated tableware set, distinct cultic statuary and figurines, and several inscriptional features including the use of the theophoric element *qws* in onomastics and distinct paleographic elements of the script. These divergent features of the material culture assemblage appeared to present traditions that were not in vogue with the Judahite practices of the time. Instead, they represented “foreign” material culture found within the borders of southern Judah that could demonstrably be associated with the neighboring polity of Edom (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Map of the southern Levant in the late Iron Age. (Map by author)



Located in semi-arid and arid southern Transjordan to the east, the polity of Edom was situated within an ecologically and agriculturally marginal zone where little and inconsistent rainfall contributed to a heavily arid and desiccated Mediterranean landscape. Similarly, the region of the northeastern Negev was semi-arid with rainfall restricted to winter months. Between the two regions, the arid and inhospitable Wadi Arabah exemplified the challenges of sustainability and movement through the region. Yet, despite the ecological and topographic challenges of the landscape, interpretations of these ancient polities have explicitly or implicitly understood them to function like modern nation-states. This assumption implies that political entities exhibited a uniformly distributed sovereignty within a discretely bounded geographic zone, and that their inhabitants overwhelmingly bore a uniform cultural and ethnic heritage.¹ These flawed assumptions have led to the Edomite material culture being viewed as reflecting a homogeneous “other,” whose presence within the borders of southern Judah was interpreted as intrusive. Further, the prominence of the use of biblical text as an interpretive tool for archaeological contexts, led certain passages to be viewed as demonstrable proof of Edomite hostilities in the region at the time of the Babylonian conquest of 586 BCE.² Consequently, the presence of foreign Edomite material culture in Judah, dated to the period of the late Judean monarchy in the seventh century BCE, was predominantly understood as the result of an Edomite invasion that collaborated with imperial Babylonian aggression in the region.

Yet the archaeological material culture footprint cannot be interpreted as the result of an invasion. Beyond the failure of these interpretations to engage with more complex mechanisms of interaction, particularly taking into account the effect of arid and semi-arid environments on

¹ See Agnew (1994), and further discussion in Chapter 2.

² See for example historical overviews of Judah in the late Iron Age that present titles such as: “The Southern Kingdom of Judah: Surrounded by Enemies” (Maier 2017), where ideas of hostility are promoted at the outset.

movement and sustainability, they overlook key features of the archaeological record. First, the “Edomite” material culture is not found above destruction strata that postdate “Judahite” contexts, nor is the material culture restricted to the tail end of the Judean monarchy in the late seventh and early sixth century BCE. Moreover, these material culture signifiers are not found as a complete material culture assemblage at settlement sites but rather are unevenly and inconsistently distributed across the landscape of the northeastern Negev, often integrated into the same activity contexts as their Judahite counterparts. Most significantly, however, they are also found in contexts that date as early as the late eighth century BCE, indicating that the social practices that led to this material culture footprint were not the result of a decisive moment in time, but rather part of a more protracted series of interconnections.

A. DIRECTION AND ORGANIZATION OF STUDY

Recognizing these inconsistencies, this work seeks to challenge and complicate the perspective of the region, its inhabitants, and their interactions. The temporal context for this research is the period spanning the late eighth through early sixth century BCE, regionally focused in the northeastern Negev where this pattern of deposition is to be found, but also including analysis of southern Transjordan to inform the above context. This work further explores the role that the South Arabian trade traversing this region held for creating a context of economic mobility. The primary dataset engaged is the contextualized archaeological material culture record. Through its analysis, this work challenges understandings of the nature of sociopolitical authority within the region, and the nature of social interactions through the employment of heuristic models such as theories of social entanglement (Dietler 2010, 55–74). The analysis divides the Edomite material culture assemblage into categories that can be associated with certain behavioral patterns,

examining the role each subdivision would hold among different social groups. Lastly, it confronts the assumption of a uniform ethnic identity, rather breaking down how these different material culture aspects would differentially affect variant individuals and communities. In sum, this work will seek to respond to the following question: How may this material culture footprint be understood in terms of the identities of its users, and what were the behaviors of the actors that led to these patterns of deposition?

The subsequent study consists of two major parts and is organized in the following manner. Chapter 1 continues by outlining the history of scholarship in Edom and in southern Judah. It describes both the trajectory of archaeological investigation and publication, and the evolution of how Judahite and Edomite interaction has been interpreted.

Chapter 2 outlines the theoretical position adopted in this work. It first discusses the nature of sociopolitical structures and how they ought to be understood in relation to the landscape. Second, it outlines the multiple explicit and implicit ways that social interactions in the southern Levant have been described, and advocates for the use of social entanglement as a heuristic. Lastly it describes the complexities of collective and individual identities and particularly the challenges that arise when the concept of ethnicity is uncritically applied to ancient social groups.

Chapter 3 provides a contextual understanding of the marginal and arid regions of southern Transjordan, northwest Arabia, and the northeastern Negev, highlighting aspects of environment, topography, sociopolitical organization, subsistence and economic activities. This overview of the regional context allows for the subsequent datasets and case studies to be appropriately situated not only within space and time, but within the environmental, social,

political, and economic processes of the region that held a defining role in structuring interactions and in defining identities.

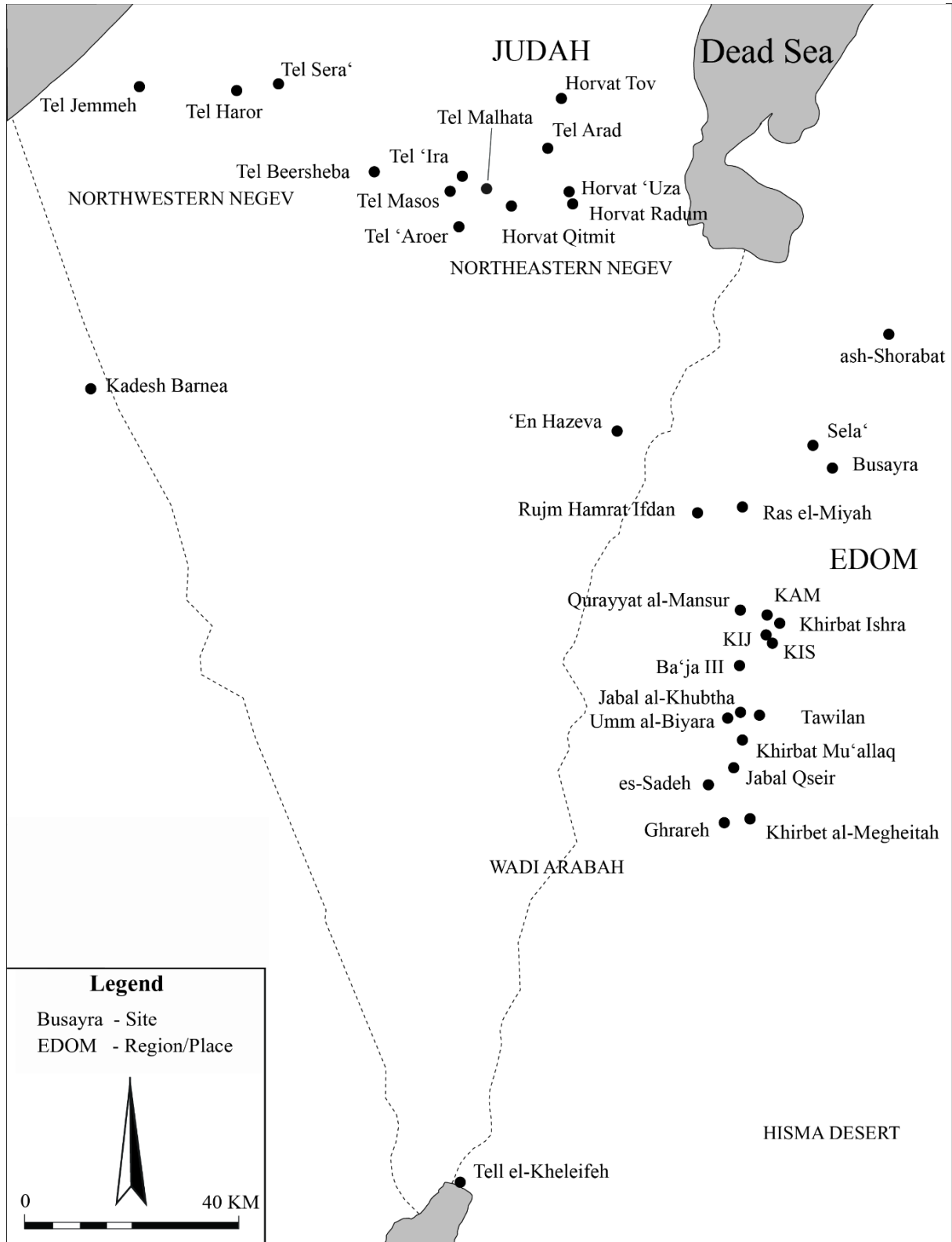
In the second part of this dissertation, Chapter 4 presents the first case study and comprises the single largest dataset: ceramics. This chapter examines ceramics related to culinary practices, namely food preparation (cooking pots) and food consumption (bowls, cups, kraters). The northeastern Negev presents a rich and variable dataset of these ceramics, and as they have most dominantly provided the basis for (mis)interpretation of interaction throughout the region, they provide the initial and greatest opportunity to nuance perspectives of social interactions. This chapter demonstrates the myriad forms of interaction that can be explored in contexts of food preparation that highlight patterns of the maintenance of foodways by individuals even within “foreign” contexts, and conspicuous manners in which identity was promoted through feasting.

Chapter 5 examines ritual practices in the region. It engages with ritual behavior on a household/family level, on community/regional level, and lastly at the supra-regional level. As “Edomite” sanctuaries and shrines excavated within and adjacent the Negev have provided perhaps the most iconic lens through which previous studies have articulated Edomite activity in the region, the integration of an analysis of these practices is necessary, especially for how they can relate to aspects of belonging and difference and the degree to which they affect larger social identities. This analysis articulates the diversity of cultic expressions as seen in the general similarity in ritual practices at a domestic level and the increasing degrees of differences promoted at the supra-regional level. It explores the ways that affiliation to cultic communities can be visually expressed.

Chapter 6 consists of several components organized around the themes of language and text. First, it explores surviving textual traditions from the region (i.e., the Hebrew Bible), which provide insight into Judahite perspectives of the Edomite other. Of special interest are genealogies and the structuring of kinship, historiographical mention of conflict and cooperation, and the patriarchal narratives that may be examined as metaphors of kinship. Second, it examines inscriptions with regard to socio-linguistic theories related to language, script, and scribal practices, and their relation to defining belonging and difference. Lastly, the internal data within the inscriptions, particularly onomastic data and naming practices, are examined with regard to how these may be employed to serve as markers of community affiliation.

This study culminates in Chapter 7, which weaves the insights of each of the individual strands of inquiry together into a larger narrative. The complex patterns of interaction and identity negotiation are described and demonstrate multi-faceted patterns of social and economic alliance, intermarriage, hostility, and cooperation within this dynamic frontier region.

Figure 2. Map of sites and regions discussed in the text. (Map by author)



B. HISTORY OF SCHOLARSHIP

A study of the Edomite material culture present in the northeastern Negev requires an examination of the origin and trajectory that scholarship on this question has taken. This necessitates a review of the history of archaeological investigation in both the northeastern Negev of Judah where this material culture is found, and the region of Edom in southern Transjordan where the material culture appears to have originated (see Figure 2). The history of research in these regions can be broadly divided into three major periods, each dominated both by iconic personalities and by the interpretive frameworks employed.

I. NELSON GLUECK: EARLY EXPLORATION AND THE DOMINANCE OF THE BIBLICAL NARRATIVE

Early western knowledge of Transjordan—and Edom—was derived primarily from the biblical text and was supplemented by the reports of travelers such as Walter Burckhardt (1822), David Millard (1855), Edward Palmer (1872), and Alois Musil (1908). The writings of these early travelers consisted of descriptions of places visited, current populations, and at times their relation to the Hebrew Bible. The first major synthetic attempt at a history of Edom was Frants Buhl's 1893 *Geschichte der Edomiter*. Buhl's work relied heavily on references and allusions to Edom within the biblical text, integrated with aspects of the reports of European travelers.

The first major archaeological research of Transjordan was conducted by Nelson Glueck. Glueck's early surveys of Transjordan (Glueck 1940a; 1934; 1935; 1939a) marked the first intensive and relatively systematic archaeological survey of the region, and were a watershed in bringing Transjordan to the attention of the scholarly community. Similarly, Glueck's excavations at Tell el-Kheleifeh on the Red Sea in the southern Arabah identified some of the earliest material culture elements that would later be influential in discussions on the origin and

nature of the peoples of Iron Age Edom (Glueck 1938; 1939b; 1940b; Pratico 1993). Glueck's work in Transjordan was supplemented by his survey work in Cisjordan, namely in the Negev where his work *Rivers in the Desert: A History of the Negev* (1959) marked one of the first attempts at a comprehensive presentation of the region.

Despite the significant contribution made by Glueck's work, like most analyses of its time it was primarily concerned with elucidating the biblical text (Whiting 2007, 20–26). Thus, this region was primarily viewed in relation to its potential to contribute to the history of ancient Israel, a history that was understood through rigid interpretations of the biblical text.³ As such, following his survey work of the region, Glueck concluded that the rise of Edom was to be dated to the thirteenth century BCE in light of the necessitated interaction between Edom and the Israelites following their Exodus from Egypt, as was also advocated by Albright (Numbers 20; Glueck 1947). Such an interpretation understood Edom as a socially and politically complex “kingdom” in the thirteenth century BCE and continuing in existence until the sixth century BCE (Crowell 2004, 3–5). Glueck's attempts at interpretation were hindered by the lack of substantial knowledge of the ceramic assemblage of southern Transjordan and particularly its relation to ceramic assemblages from Cisjordan.

The work of Glueck is also characterized by the desire to associate and equate archaeological sites and material culture to places, events, and peoples of the biblical text. As such, his interpretations of the excavations at Tell el-Kheleifeh were dominated by the desire to associate archaeological phases to kings and events from biblical history (Glueck 1970, 106–37; Pratico 1993, 18–21). Similarly, Glueck's perspectives on Edom at this time were heavily

³ Such approaches were grounded in the assertion of the linearity and historical reality of the biblical narrative, with the primary role of archaeology to be its elucidation. These positions are made explicit in the work of Albright (1949, 219–37; see also Glueck 1970, 5–39). For a brief overview, see discussion in Porter (2013, 42–49).

influenced by then-current conceptions of social and political structures as inherently related to the notion of the “nation-state,” understood by influential figures of the time such as Albrecht Alt to have been the driving force of history (Alt 1930; see discussion in Whiting 2007, 18–19). The assumptions adopted by this perspective resulted in many unsubstantiated conclusions concerning the nature of the region, namely in terms of the identities assumed by its inhabitants, aspects of social cohesion, its sociopolitical structures, and the definable borders that a nation-state would presumably possess.

Likewise, contemporary excavations in Cisjordan followed a similar trajectory, although ceramic assemblages in this region were better understood. The knowledge of ceramics was primarily the result of the pioneering work of Albright as seen through his excavations at Tell Beit Mirsim (Albright 1932; 1943). Excavations in Cisjordan, however, were initially focused on major tells outside of the Negev (Beth Shemesh, Megiddo, Lachish, Samaria, etc.), and thus the majority of the Negev remained archaeologically *terra incognita* until the subsequent phase of archaeological exploration (see Whiting 2007, 18–36). In summary, the research of this period can then be characterized by not only the use of the biblical text as an interpretive tool, but the primacy that was placed on certain interpretations of the text, namely as providing a clear historical outline of the region (Moore and Kelle 2011, 10–17).

2. 1960s THROUGH 1990s: INTENSIVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS

Beginning in the 1960s and continuing into the 1970s, both southern Transjordan and the Negev region of Israel began to feature more prominently in archaeological investigations. This period also featured some of the early challenges to the primacy of the use of the biblical text in interpretation, as well as a refinement to earlier archaeological excavation methodology, although these were still lacking in acute stratigraphic control and in standardized

methodological implementation. A discussion of specific aspects of the new excavations and the resultant state of data is best achieved through independent examinations of southern Transjordan and the Negev.

a. Transjordan: Crystal Bennett and the Unearthing of Edom

The first systematic excavations in the region of Edom were undertaken by Crystal Bennett at the site of Umm al-Biyara in Petra (1960–1965). Her excavations began with two central goals, first seeking to ascertain the identification of the site, and second, to discover stratified Edomite pottery in order to verify or challenge Glueck’s original chronology (Bienkowski 2011c, 6–7). These excavations began with simple and seemingly attainable goals, reflective of their time, which were only somewhat indirectly met. Regarding Bennett’s first objective, while the ancient name of the site remains unknown, it is no longer associated with the biblical site of Sela’ as was previously suggested.⁴ Bennett’s second objective of obtaining a stratified sequence of Edomite pottery was also not met as Umm al-Biyara was discovered to have been a one period site (Bienkowski 2011c, 8). However, these excavations were pivotal as the discovery of a bulla mentioning *Qwsgr* (קוּסְגַר), an individual known from Assyrian sources (Borger 1956, 48–49), allowed for a chronological synchronism between the region of Edom and Assyria to be obtained. The Assyrian sources recorded tribute and support from Edom supplied by *Qwsgr* (*qa-us-gab-ri*), dated to the reigns of Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal in the first half of seventh century BCE, who was presumed to be the same figure identified in the bulla (Pritchard 1969, 291, 294). This synchronism challenged Glueck’s original early dating of Edomite material culture by placing an emphasis rather on the late Iron Age, namely the seventh century BCE

⁴ Glueck and others before him had suggested that Umm al-Biyara may have been biblical Sela’ (2 Kings 14:7; Isaiah 42:11; Jeremiah 49:13–17; Obadiah 3–4; Bienkowski 2011c, 5–6). Consensus opinion of the identification of biblical Sela’ has since shifted to the mountaintop fortress refuge near the village of as-Sila’ (السلع) several kilometers to the northwest of Busayra (Bienkowski 2011c, 5–8).

(Bienkowski 2011c, 8; van der Veen 2011, 79–81). The entirety of the results of these excavations, however, were not published until 2011 (Bienkowski 2011c), thus leaving the majority of the supplementary archaeological material culture and contexts inaccessible for detailed study.

Following her work at Umm al-Biyara, Bennett continued her excavations in the region of Edom, next moving to the site of Tawilan (1968–1970; 1982) in nearby Wadi Musa, and in view of Umm al-Biyara (Bennett and Bienkowski 1995, 16). The excavation objectives were similar to those that drove her work at Umm al-Biyara, namely focused on the identification of the site and its ability to contribute to a chronological understanding of Edom, goals which unfortunately were not met. Furthermore, a lack of consistent excavation methodology across the site, the infrequent presence of Bennett during excavation, and the untimely publication of the results have led to numerous challenges in the contribution of these excavations results to an overall understanding of the region (Bennett and Bienkowski 1995, 16).

In light of the inability to provide a ceramic sequence, Bennett quickly shifted her focus to Busayra where she directed excavations from 1971–1974 and in 1980 (Bienkowski 2002a, 42). The excavations of the site, measuring at least 8.1 ha and by far the largest in Edom, afforded Bennett a greater chance at obtaining a ceramic sequence for Edom, primarily to address the assertions of Glueck regarding Edomite sociopolitical complexity in the thirteenth century BCE (Glueck 1947). Bennett's excavations revealed a substantial fortified administrative center featuring two large buildings located on the acropolis of the site. While a date for the initial occupation at Busayra was initially left somewhat ambiguous (see discussion in Whiting

(2007, 42)),⁵ Bienkowski's final publication of the site has provided a late eighth century BCE date for the earliest occupation (Bienkowski 2002a, 477–78).

Bennett's excavations, despite their groundbreaking archaeological characterization of the region, were fraught with challenges for subsequent study. First, beyond preliminary publications, the excavations were not published soon enough, nor in sufficient detail for comprehensive analyses of the region to be grounded in archaeological contexts and material culture. Despite the excavations of all three sites occurring between 1960 and 1980, they were only published decades later by Bennett's student Piotr Bienkowski with Tawilan published in 1995 (Bennett and Bienkowski 1995), Busayra in 2002 (Bienkowski 2002a), and Umm al-Biyara not until 2011 (Bienkowski 2011c). The excavations were further hindered due to an inconsistent methodology and a lack of standardized recording of individual areas within each site, adding a substantial challenge to their use in subsequent detailed studies.

Although the excavations were a product of their time and cannot be faulted for the quality of their research questions, they represent a rigid approach to excavation that was primarily concerned with a dialogue between biblical historians and the archaeology of the region, an approach that constrained the ability to inform other aspects of inquiry. Bennett can be commended, however, in her desire to examine the archaeological record independent of uncritical use of the biblical narrative in interpretation. Most important from Bennett's work was her critique of Glueck's dates for the beginning of the Edomite kingdom. Namely, Bennett's work indicated that the kingdom of Edom as it was known biblically, ought to be dated to the Assyrian Period (late eighth through sixth centuries BCE). In particular, she saw the reign of

⁵ Although Bennett was somewhat ambiguous as to the earliest date of occupation at Busayra, her understanding appears to have ranged between the tenth and eighth century BCE, gradually lowering over time (Bennett 1975, 3; 1983, 11).

Tiglath Pileser III and his incorporation of the southern Levantine polities as vassal states to Assur to have been the defining moment in the formation of political complexity and the origin of a kingdom in Edom (Bennett 1982).⁶ This result of her work lowered Glueck's dates for the origins of Edom by nearly five centuries.

Following Bennett, several additional but limited excavations and soundings were conducted by Stephen Hart at Khirbet Ishra, Khirbet al-Megheitah (Hart 1987), and Ghrareh (Hart 1988; 1989, 9–20). Continued research regarding Edom at this time was primarily concerned with the construction of a relative ceramic sequence (Hart 1989; Oakeshott 1979; 1983; E. Mazar 1985), a goal that continued to be challenged by the lack of a vertical Iron Age stratigraphic sequence for many of these sites (Hart 1995b, 53). As such, many of the typologies that were created were driven by form rather than chronology or relied heavily on parallels to Cisjordan.

John Bartlett's 1989 *Edom and the Edomites* represents the state of scholarship regarding Edom at this time. Bartlett's work represents the first major synthetic attempt at a history of Edom since Buhl and Glueck, and sought to incorporate both textual sources and the preliminary data available from Bennett and Hart's surveys and excavations. Also using extrabiblical textual data, Bartlett sought to trace a national history for Edom from its pre-monarchic origins in the late second millennium BCE until the Persian period. As such, its presentation follows the pattern of scholarship at the time in writing a "national" history, and while using the limited data available from archaeological excavations in southern Transjordan, remained heavily reliant on the biblical text. Similarly, it was published too soon to make use of the excavated data from the

⁶ Caution is needed to not overstate the role of Assyria in local development and trade. It is necessary to focus also on the significant role of local agency (Stager, Master, and Schloen 2008, 10, 740).

northeastern Negev. Nonetheless, Bartlett's work represents an important milestone in the study of the Edomites.

b. The Negev: Izthaq Beit-Arieh and Exploration and Excavation in Southern Judah

Concurrent to Bennett's excavations in southern Transjordan, the northeastern Negev began to experience its own shift to a period of intensified archaeological investigation. The new excavations at Tel Arad in 1962 by Yohanan Aharoni and Ruth Amiran marked the beginning of this period of inquiry, as Aharoni also soon began excavating at Tel Beersheba, Tel Masos, and Tel Malhata as part of a greater regional Negev project (Beit-Arieh 1999c, xix). Following Aharoni's untimely death in 1976, excavations in the region were continued by his students, most notably Itzhaq Beit-Arieh. Most noteworthy of these excavations for the purposes of this work were those conducted at Tel Arad (Herzog 2002; Singer-Avitz 2002; Aharoni 1981), Tel Beersheba (Aharoni 1973a; Singer-Avitz 1999; Herzog and Singer-Avitz 2016), Tel Malhata (Beit-Arieh and Freud 2015b), Tel Masos (Fritz and Kempinski 1983), Tel 'Ira (Beit-Arieh 1999c), Horvat Qitmit (Beit-Arieh 1995a), Horvat 'Uza (Beit-Arieh 2007c), Horvat Radum (Beit-Arieh 2007c), Tel 'Aroer (Thareani 2011b), Kadesh Barnea (Cohen and Bernick-Greenberg 2007), and 'En Hazeva (Cohen and Yisrael 1995b). Although this period saw a substantial amount of archaeological investigation in the Negev, similar to the situation in Transjordan many of these excavations suffered from delayed publication.⁷

Of central importance, however, for the question of Edomite interaction in the Negev was the discovery and publication of the Arad Ostraca (Aharoni 1981). Within the military fort at Tel Arad, a number of administrative ostraca were discovered, several of which contained apparent

⁷ The excavations from both 'En Hazeva and Tel Arad are still awaiting final publication.

allusions to hostilities between Judah and Edom (especially Arad nos. 24 and 40; Aharoni 1981, 46–49, 74). These ostraca were discovered and translated at the time when the iconic “Edomite” ceramics began to appear in excavations in the northeastern Negev, the forms and decorative motifs of which were already recognizable as a result of Bennet’s work in southern Transjordan (e.g., Oakeshott 1979; 1983; E. Mazar 1985). The presence of these south Transjordanian ceramics together with Aharoni’s translation of apparent hostilities between Edom and Judah in the Arad Ostraca, were taken together to indicate an Edomite invasion that had wrested control of the northeastern Negev from Judah in the decades prior to the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BCE (Aharoni 1981, 149–50; Beit-Arieh 1995c). The early excavations at Tel Malhata (1967, 1971; Kochavi 1993b),⁸ which yielded particularly significant quantities of the easily identifiable Edomite pottery, and Horvat Qitmit (1984–1986; Beit-Arieh 1995a), which also produced iconic Edomite cultic material culture, reinforced concepts of a foreign, Edomite intrusion (see Beit-Arieh and Cresson 1985; Beit-Arieh 1995a, 311–14). Together with select Judahite rhetoric from the biblical text that cursed Edom for its supposed participation in the destruction of Jerusalem (e.g., Obadiah, Isaiah 34, Psalm 137:7), the presence of this material culture and these ostraca were seen as firm evidence for an Edomite invasion of southern Judah (Beit-Arieh 1996; Cohen and Yisrael 1996).⁹

In these determinations, Horvat Qitmit served a pivotal role as it was the first major site in the northeastern Negev containing Edomite material culture to be fully published (Beit-Arieh 1995a), and as a result served as a basis for subsequent analysis. However, the dating of Horvat

⁸ Tel Malhata was excavated in two main phases, first by Moshe Kohavi in 1967 and 1971, and then later by a team led by Itzhaq Beit Arieh (1990, 1992–1995, 1998 and 2000). The excavations were not published in their entirety until 2015 (Beit-Arieh and Freud 2015b).

⁹ This view of Edomite participation in the destruction of Jerusalem was further influenced by numerous references to impending vengeance that was to be taken on Edom (see Isaiah 34:5–8; Isaiah 63:1–4; Jeremiah 49:7–22; Lamentations 4:21; Ezekiel 25:13–14; Amos 1:11–12).

Qitmit (Beit-Arieh 1995a, 313) followed the earlier textual interpretations of the Arad Ostraca by Aharoni (1981, 146–50), who associated Edomite presence with the physical act of invasion either in direct collaboration with Babylonian aggression, or opportunistically taking advantage of deteriorating Judahite control. Thus, Horvat Qitmit was dated to the final decades of the Judean monarchy in the late seventh or early sixth century BCE in large part on the basis of external inscriptional data. This claim, in essence then, created an aura under which any Edomite material culture in the Negev could best be explained by the physical presence of foreign Edomites only following their intrusion/invasion into the region, an interpretation that was based upon particular readings of the biblical text and purportedly supported by the Arad Ostraca.

c. Creating the Edomite

Other material culture aspects of the archaeological record were quickly identified with “Edomite culture” and were associated with the presence of ethnically Edomite individuals. These include, beyond the aforementioned ceramics and ritual material culture, the theophoric element *Qws* found within onomastics, and an official Edomite script. Ostraca and texts that presented the theophoric element of the deity *Qws* (קוּס) were taken to further indicate the presence of Edomites after the discovery of the *Qwsgr* (קוּסגבר) inscription from Umm al-Biyara (van der Veen 2011), and Assyrian references to presumably the same individual listed as a king of Edom (Borger 1956, 48–49). This association was substantiated through additional inscriptions associating *Qws* with Busayra (A. R. Millard 2002), as well as the discovery of the deity name *Qws* in Negevite sites already associated with Edomite activity such as Horvat Qitmit and Horvat ‘Uza (Beit-Arieh and Cresson 1985). The name of this deity was also known from Josephus’ account, which mentioned Koze as the primary deity of the Idumeans (*Antiquities* XV:

253),¹⁰ and together, these attestations were taken to indicate that *Qws* functioned as the “national” deity of Edom (Knauf 1999; Bartlett 1989, 200–204; Dearman 1995).¹¹ This identification followed the biblical writers’ tendency to define foreign states by their primary deity, as seen in the associations of Milkom with Ammon, Kemosh with Moab, and Yahweh’s relationship with Israel and Judah (e.g., 1 Kings 11: 4–7; 2 Kings 23: 13, etc.). Such a clear association between *Qws* and Edom was tested, however temporarily, in that the biblical text never once mentioned *Qws* as a deity, much less in association with Edom. The only biblical mention of *Qws* was as a theophoric element (*barqōs*; ברקוס) within a list of Babylonian exiles recorded in texts dating to the Persian period (Nehemiah 7: 55; Ezra 2: 53). Other than this indirect reference, the biblical text was unusually silent regarding Edom and its deities.¹²

The second major datum used to identify Edomites, resulting from the analyses of theophorics of “national” deities, was the attempted determination of a distinct script, described as a “national” script that could be associated with Edomite scribal practices (see discussion in Whiting 2007, 40). This process began first with Glueck’s labelling of the ostraca from Tell el-Kheleifeh as Edomite (Glueck 1970, 132–34), and continued through the attempted identification of certain characteristics that could be isolated as distinctly Edomite (Naveh 1966). Subsequent analyses of the inscriptions sought to isolate particular paleographic, morphological, and lexical features that could identify a script and language of Edom (Herr 1980; Vanderhooft 1995). Discoveries of other inscriptions from the Negev that contained the theophoric element *qws* as

¹⁰ The Idumeans, active primarily in the Judean Negev during the Persian and Hellenistic periods, are named after the region known as Idumea, which correlates primarily to the northern Negev (Hübner 1992). The etymological correlation between Idumea and Edom, as well as Koze and Qos, has led to an equation between these peoples and this god, viewing the Idumeans as the cultural descendants of the Edomites.

¹¹ See, however, Bartlett’s discussion of other prominent deities within Edom (1989, 211).

¹² For a greater discussion of the deity *Qws*, see discussion in Chapter 5.B and 6.C. For further attestations of the deity in personal names across time and space, see Bartlett (1989, 204–7).

well as certain script features that appeared similar those already labelled as Edomite (Beit-Arieh and Cresson 1985), further supported these hypotheses and were used as proxies for Edomite presence.

While these analyses did succeed in highlighting paleographical and morphological nuances, patterns in onomastics, and a similar repertoire of ceramics, the primary challenge with these determinations lay within the assumptions regarding the use of the biblical text and the nature of what the terms “Edom” and “Edomite” implied. Arguments levied by Israel Finkelstein challenged many of these inferences and interpretations. First, with regard to Horvat Qitmit, rather than associating the Edomite nature of this site with a programmatic plan on behalf of the political elite within Edom, Finkelstein highlighted the dynamic nature of the region in terms of trade routes and diverse cultural groups traversing the region, while also noting other methodological and interpretive challenges to the concept of an Edomite invasion (Finkelstein 1992b). Additional critiques identified the challenge in drawing borders and boundaries for ceramic vessels, arguing to view them as a geographic-cultural phenomenon rather than an ethnic one. Similarly, the general scarcity of inscriptional data that could support an Edomite epigraphy was noted (Finkelstein 1995, 139–44). Further, Finkelstein challenged the notion of a hostile Edom and the invasion hypothesis, noting its archaeological reliance on a single ambiguous datum (i.e., Arad Ostrakon no. 24; Finkelstein 1995, 139–44). These critiques would mark the beginning of a slow shift in perspectives toward this region and toward Edomite interaction.

In brief, the uncritical use of the biblical text as an interpretive tool, in essence created a logical fallacy as one extremely complex dataset (i.e., the biblical text) was uncritically applied as an interpretive tool to another extremely complex dataset (i.e., the archaeological record). The second major and crippling challenge came in the assumption of what constituted “Edom” and

“Edomites.” The notion of strict borders applied throughout this region, bounding and delineating areas of control, and containing within them ethnically homogeneous “Edomites” (e.g., Edelman 1995a; Beit-Arieh 1995c), is heavily based on modern beliefs of nationalism and “national identities” and cannot be directly applied to the past in this manner (Routledge 2003). The assumptions in these perspectives made for rather simplistic narratives of Edomite “intrusion” into the Negev whenever these material culture indices were discovered.

3. THE NEW MILLENNIUM: NEW DATA AND NEW DIRECTIONS

In the new millennium these regions saw significant advancement in their potential for further analysis due in large part to the eventual publication of earlier excavation data. Moreover, new surveys and excavations supplied an increasing amount of new data that was undertaken with more systematic excavation and more theoretically sound research questions. The result of these excavations and publication began to outline a data-rich context ripe for nuanced studies.

a. New Excavations and Surveys

Archaeological knowledge of southern Transjordan received a boost from the work of Burton MacDonald, who over several decades surveyed substantial portions of southern Transjordan. Additional surveys in the region enlarged this growing dataset and are discussed in summary form in *The Southern Transjordan Edomite Plateau and the Dead Sea Rift Valley* (MacDonald 2015, 24–41).¹³ MacDonald’s work was especially useful in demonstrating the settlement

¹³ These surveys, soundings, and limited excavations include: the Wadi al-Hasa Archaeological Survey (WHS; B. MacDonald 1988), the Tafila-Busayra Archaeological Survey (TBAS; B. MacDonald et al. 2004), the Shammakh to Ayl Archaeological Survey (SAAS; B. MacDonald, Clark, and Herr 2016); the Lowlands to Highlands of Edom Project (L2HE; N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b), the South Jordan Iron Age II Survey and Excavation Project (SJIAP; Whiting et al. 2008; 2009), the Naturhistorische Gessellschaft Nürnberg (NHG; Lindner, Farajat, and Zeitler 1996; Lindner and Farajat 1987; Bienert, Lamprichs, and Vieweger 2000; Lindner et al. 1990; 1996), the Ayl to Ras an-Naqab Archaeological Survey (ARNAS; B. MacDonald 2012), the Southern Ghors and Northeast ‘Arabah Archaeological Survey (SGNAS; B. MacDonald et al. 1992), the Southeast ‘Arabah Archaeological Survey (S. Parker and Smith II 2014), and the Edom Lowlands Regional Archaeological Project (ELRAP; Levy, Ben-Yosef, and Najjar 2014).

patterns of the region, which allowed for a view of Edom beyond that solely presented by Bennett's excavations and the preliminary work of Hart (B. MacDonald 1988; B. MacDonald et al. 1992; 2004; B. MacDonald 2012; B. MacDonald, Clark, and Herr 2016). These surveys not only presented additional settlement sites from the period of the Iron II (primarily in the form of small villages and farmsteads), but also at last allowed for a diachronic perspective of the region that demonstrated the settlement patterns, or the lack thereof, in the centuries and millennia preceding the late Iron Age. Despite the potential this survey data holds, it has yet to be used synthetically in any meaningful way beyond summary overviews (e.g., B. MacDonald 2015).

Further significant in the elucidation of this region has been the work directed by Thomas Levy and Mohammad Najjar as a part of the Edom Lowlands Regional Archaeological Project (ELRAP; 1997–2009) in the Faynan region of the northeastern Arabah (Levy, Najjar, Ben-Yosef, et al. 2014).¹⁴ One of the major contributions of this project was its focus on the earlier centuries of the Iron Age, and its concentration on the mining and industrial activity of the Faynan region, approximately 15 km southwest of Busayra. Accordingly, similar to MacDonald's surveys, this project succeeded in explicating the diachronic trajectory of the region, an accomplishment that had eluded Bennett. In particular, excavations at Khirbat en-Nahas (Levy, Najjar, Higham, et al. 2014), Khirbat al-Jariya (Ben-Yosef et al. 2010; Knabb et al. 2014; Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 798–816), Ras al-Miyah (Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 816–814), and limited soundings at Rujm Hamrat Ifdan (N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014a) sought to better understand the mining activity at these sites and how it related to regional activity during the Iron Age I and the Iron Age II. Furthermore, the excavation at the cemetery at Wadi Fidan 40 allowed for mortuary data to supplement the domestic and industrial material

¹⁴ See also the earlier work of Hauptman in the Faynan region (2007).

culture (Beherec, Najjar, and Levy 2014; Beherec 2011). The mortuary data permitted further discussion on the nature of the actors in the Faynan region and especially their relation to the mining activities there (Beherec et al. 2016; Levy 2009; 2008). Levy and his team also sought to determine how activity in the Arabah could be correlated with the traditional highland view of late Iron Age Edomite settlement through limited excavations at Khirbat al-Malayqtah, Khirbat al-Kur, Khirbat al-Iraq Shmaliya and reinvestigations at Tawilan (N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b; N. Smith 2009). This project also achieved the creation of a regional ceramic typology (N. Smith and Levy 2014; N. Smith 2009).¹⁵ Levy's successes bear significant implications for the archaeology of the Iron Age in this region as it provides radiocarbon-dated evidence of activity that spans from the early through the late Iron Age and provides a basis for discussions of the diachronic trajectory of sociopolitical and economic activity in the region.

b. Publication of Earlier Data

The decade and a half following the turn of the millennium saw significant progress toward publishing much of the outstanding excavated material culture from both southern Transjordan and the Negev. As previously mentioned, Piotr Bienkowski published the results of Bennett's excavations at Tawilan (Bennett and Bienkowski 1995), Busayra (Bienkowski 2002a), and Umm al-Biyara (Bienkowski 2011c). Levy's work in the Faynan with its swift publication, presents the other significant collated excavations results from Edom (Levy, Najjar, Ben-Yosef, et al. 2014).

¹⁵ A similar project to that of the Faynan is being conducted at Timna, further to the south in the Arabah. This work is seeking to re-evaluate and supplement Beno Rothenberg's work (Rothenberg 1990; 1988), especially in terms of the dates of mining activity in the region (Ben-Yosef et al. 2012), the identity of the agents involved (Avner 2014) and their socioeconomic status (Sapir-Hen and Ben-Yosef 2014). Preliminary results of this work have already challenged aspects of long held interpretations and hold significant implications for the centuries preceding the late Iron Age Edomite kingdom (e.g., Ben-Yosef 2019; 2018).

Combined with the aforementioned survey data, preliminary soundings, and limited excavations, this presents the current state of published data from Edom.¹⁶

The archaeological portrait of the northeastern Negev also began to take shape with the publication of many of the excavations that occurred in the preceding decades. This included Tel Masos (Fritz and Kempinski 1983), Horvat Qitmit (Beit-Arieh 1995a), Tel ‘Ira (Beit-Arieh 1999c), Horvat ‘Uza (Beit-Arieh 2007c), Horvat Radum (Beit-Arieh 2007c), Tel ‘Aroer (Thareani 2011b), Tel Malhata (Beit-Arieh and Freud 2015b), and Tel Beersheba (Herzog and Singer-Avitz 2016; Singer-Avitz 1999; Aharoni 1973a). Sites still awaiting full publication include ‘En Hazeva (Cohen and Yisrael 1995b), and Tel Arad, although the latter possesses extensive preliminary reports (Herzog 2002; Singer-Avitz 2002; Aharoni 1981). Sites beyond the immediate environs of the northeastern Negev that bear pertinence to this work include Kadash Barnea (Cohen and Bernick-Greenberg 2007), Kuntillet ‘Ajrud (Meshel 2012), Tel Sera‘ (Oren 1993c), Tel Haror (Oren 1993a), Tel Jemmeh (Ben-Shlomo and Van Beek 2014), Ruqeish (Oren 1993b; Culican 1973), and Ashkelon (Stager, Master, and Schloen 2008). Thus, a substantial number of major sites within the Beersheba Valley and surrounding environs have been recently published, presenting the opportunity for robust and nuanced analyses of the region.

¹⁶ Additional data from limited soundings and excavations are available from: Ghrareh (Hart 1987, 35–39; 1988; 1989, 9–20), Khirbat al-Iraq Shmaliya (N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b), Khirbet al-Kur (formerly Khirbat al-Iraq-Junubiya; N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b), Khirbet al-Malayqtah (N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b); Ras al-Miyah (Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 816–40), Khirbat en-Nahas (Levy, Najjar, Higham, et al. 2014), Rujm Hamrat Ifdan (N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014a), Wadi Fidan 40 (Beherec, Najjar, and Levy 2014; Levy 2008; Beherec 2011), Tell el-Kheleifeh (Pratico 1993; Glueck 1938; 1939b; 1940b; 1967), Khirbat al-Mu‘allaq (Lindner, Farajat, and Zeitler 1996), Ba‘ja III (Lindner and Farajat 1987; Bienert, Lamprichs, and Vieweger 2000), es-Sadeh (Lindner, Farajat, and Zeitler 1988; Lindner et al. 1990; Lindner 1992), Jabal Qseir (Lindner et al. 1996), Khirbat al-Megheitah (Hart 1987, 38–42; 1989, 56–57), Khirbat Ishra (Hart 1987, 42–45; 1989, 55–56), Jabal al-Khubtha (Lindner et al. 1997), Jabal as-Suffaha (Lindner et al. 1998; Lindner 2001), Sela‘ (Da Riva 2019; 2016; Da Riva et al. 2017; Hart 1986; Raz, Raz, and Uchitel 2001; Lindner 1992; Dalley and Goguel 1997), Qurayyat al-Mansur (Hübner 2004), Khirbat ad-Dabba (Whiting et al. 2008; 2009), and Khirbat an-Nawafila (‘Amr et al. 2000). For a comprehensive list of sites discussed in this work, see Appendix A.

Similarly, significant advances have been made regarding an understanding of the ceramic sequences of both southern Transjordan and the northeastern Negev. Beyond the original ceramic typologies that informed much of the archaeology of the southern Levant in the second half of the twentieth century CE (Amiran 1970),¹⁷ additional ceramic analysis by Oakeshott (1979; 1983), Eilat Mazar (1985), and Hart (1989; 1995b), built a foundation that was supplemented by Hendrix, Drey, and Storfjell (1997), and Homès-Fredericq and Franken (1986). More recently, through the Edomite Lowlands Regional Archaeology Project, Neil Smith and Thomas Levy provided a detailed ceramic sequence from their sites (N. Smith and Levy 2014; N. Smith 2009). Lastly, the new southern Levantine ceramic typologies for Israel (Gitin 2015d), have provided a nuanced chronological and regional perspective of ceramic trends in Transjordan (Herr 2015; Bienkowski 2015), and the northeastern Negev (Beit-Arieh and Freud 2015a).

c. Calls for Re-evaluation

In light of the newly available data, the northeastern Negev and particularly the phenomenon of the Edomite material culture found there, has seen renewed investigation. The piecemeal publication of these sites has resulted in a gradual shift toward greater complexity of discussion regarding the question of Edomite presence. A significant moment in this transition was the preliminary publication of a portion of data from Tel Beersheba by Lily Singer-Avitz that emphasized the role the northeastern Negev held in facilitating the lucrative South Arabian trade that brought aromatics from Arabia to the southern Levant (Singer-Avitz 1999). Building in part on earlier and less extensive analyses (Holladay 1995; Finkelstein 1992b), Singer-Avitz's work complicated the portrait of this region and its trade by integrating archaeological data from a

¹⁷ Reflecting the state of archaeological excavations at the time, Amiran's work almost exclusively relied on the pottery from Cisjordanian sites and was thus of limited utility for Transjordan.

discrete dataset that exemplified how this trade affected Beersheba, and by extension, the region. Evidence for the Arabian trade exists primarily in the form of proxy data including implements used to burn the incense (i.e., cuboid altars and perforated incense burners (Holladay 1995, 386; Daviau 2001a)), evidence of Arabians (i.e. Arabian inscriptions; van Der Veen and Bron 2014)), and the faunal remains of camels used for desert caravan transport (Wapnish 1981; Boivin and Fuller 2009, 160).¹⁸

In particular, the emphasis on the potential for movement through this region, albeit within a dominantly economic framework, presented alternative modes by which cultural diversity in the region could be explained. Further, the dating of the Beersheba contexts as within the eighth century BCE demonstrated the longevity of these behaviors. Singer-Avitz's perspective, building on the earlier work of Finkelstein and others (Finkelstein 1992b), placed an emphasis on the role of Assyria in creating a context in which this trade could flourish, as well as the Assyrian's vested interest in its economic potential. These interpretations saw the origins of this economic program to have been Tiglath Pileser III's incorporation of the southern Levant into the Assyrian empire as vassal states (Singer-Avitz 1999, 8–10).¹⁹ Assyrian interest in the facilitation of the trade was argued to have been one of the primary reasons for their presence within the western Negev, as it served as an overland terminus for the trade after crossing the northeastern Negev via the Beersheba-Arad Valley (Na'aman 1995; Thareani-Sussely 2007b; Thareani 2014a). Assyrian presence was especially evident at the site of Tell Jemmeh, which

¹⁸ Likewise, comparative Nabatean and Roman data (Ben-Yehoshua, Borowitz, and Hanuš 2012, 15–22; Erickson-Gini 2010, 35–50) and allusions to the trade within the biblical text (e.g. 1 Kings 10; 2 Chronicles 9), are of value in identifying this trade.

¹⁹ It was also argued that the fall of Damascus in 732 BCE, which released the Aramean stranglehold on trade coming north, created widespread Assyrian access and increased desire for this trade (Byrne 2003).

served as the major western node of this network prior to the trade reaching the ports of the Mediterranean (Ben-Shlomo and Van Beek 2014; Wapnish 1981).

Thus, Singer-Avitz's work argued that rather than an invasion being the primary reason for Edomite presence in the Negev, there were significant economic motives that would draw westward movement (Singer-Avitz 1999, 8–10). In this fashion she followed Finkelstein in his critique of the use of Arad Ostraca 24 as reliable evidence for an Edomite invasion (Finkelstein 1995, 139–44). Other critiques of the interpretation of Arad Ostraca 24 suggested entirely new readings arguing that the context reflected was rather a disagreement over grazing rights (Guillaume 2013). Similarly, it was argued that the political circumstances of the months following the Yom Kippur War (1973 CE) in which the original Hebrew version of the Arad Ostraca was published, had retro-projected a modern zeitgeist into the Iron Age (Guillaume 2013, 105). Furthermore, Singer-Avitz's demonstration that the origins of Edomite material culture could be found already within the late eighth century BCE (Singer-Avitz 1999, 6–10), substantiated her perspective of Edomite involvement in the Arabian trade throughout the entirety of the Assyrian period, and consequently intimating further challenge to monocausal “invasion” interpretations as the cause for the material culture footprint. In this fashion, Singer-Avitz laid the foundation for a context of Edomite economic interest in the northeastern Negev that began already in the late eighth century BCE.

Further research in the northeastern Negev highlighted its social and cultural diversity, seeking to engage with different communities acting within the region to define the roles they held in social, political, and economic interactions (Tebes 2007; 2006b; Thareani 2008; 2014b). The work of Juan Tebes in particular, sought to highlight some of the less archaeologically visible groups, namely mobile pastoral communities by associating them with the handmade

“Negevite” ware (Tebes 2006a; Haiman and Goren 1992).²⁰ Tebes’ work follows earlier identifications of significant actors in the region, including Arabians, as has been demonstrated by Israel Eph‘al on the basis of historical sources (Eph‘al 1982). Similarly, Tebes, among others, has sought to demonstrate that the Arabian trade in the region can be extended into earlier centuries of the Iron Age, namely by means of the presence of Qurayyah Painted Ware in the Negev, and its association with the Arabian Hejaz (Tebes 2014a).²¹

Beyond the archaeological material culture, the biblical text’s prophetic curses against Edom, upon which the invasion hypothesis so heavily relied (e.g., Obadiah, Isaiah 34, Amos 1; Jeremiah 49: 7–22, etc.), has received more nuanced analysis (Assis 2016; 2006; Tebes 2011a; 2006b; Dykehouse 2008; Beach 1994). These critiques have sought to engage with the text beyond historical summaries, noting the peculiar juxtaposition of the curses of Edom with the fraternal language that is uniquely expressed in relation to Edom (Deuteronomy 23:7–8; Genesis 25–28; 32–33). These relationships as preserved in the biblical text were explored from literary, theological, and apocalyptic perspectives. Yet, while these studies provide valuable insight into the question of broad Judahite and Edomite identities from the biblical perspective, they largely did not explore these concepts in relation to the physical context in which they likely arose (i.e., the interaction zone between Judah and Edom). Similarly, while several studies made use of archaeological material culture (Tebes 2006c; Dykehouse 2008), their studies predate the publication of many of the excavation reports and thus did not have access to the complete

²⁰ These vessels have been associated with mobile pastoral communities (Haiman and Goren 1992; Tebes 2006a), but also likely indicate simple household vessels created by unskilled potters that often appear in rural contexts (Dagan 2013; M. Martin and Finkelstein 2013, 11–12).

²¹ This pottery, known for its iconic decorative motifs was first identified as “Midianite Ware” as it appears to have had its locale of origin within the Hejaz of Arabia, a region traditionally identified with the “Midian” of the biblical text (Dayton 1972). In light of the difficulties of assigning a cultural identity to a ceramic corpus, the ware is more accurately termed Qurayyah Painted Ware, after the site in the Hejaz where it is so prominently attested (Tebes 2014b).

contextualized corpus. Further, these approaches did not engage with the archaeological material in relation to theories concerning deposition, social interaction, identity etc., and instead maintained a research foundation based on the literary tradition, in essence perpetuating the biblically-based studies dominant since the work of Nelson Glueck.

While research in the Negev has begun to more meaningfully outline the character and economic potential that the northeastern Negev held in order to provide a context for “foreign” presence and interaction, research within Transjordan has been engaged in a contentious debate of its own. This debate centered on the exact nature of social and political structures, and how best to characterize social hierarchies. Likewise, the manner of the creation of sociopolitical complexity, or state formation remains contested. Fundamentally, these debates shaped the dialogue concerning how the polities of Ammon, Moab, and Edom were to be most effectively envisioned.

The Transjordan has been viewed as a slightly different context than the regions to the west due to its more marginal environment and the resultant lower potential for agricultural output, particularly in the arid and ecologically marginal southern region of Edom (Cordova 2007). Likewise, Transjordan remains less well known due to its lack of a preserved textual tradition comparable to the Hebrew Bible. In reaction to the dominantly culture-historical paradigms that were largely based on the biblical text and incomplete archaeological data (Bartlett 1989; Glueck 1970), efforts were made to apply anthropological models to complicate the traditional descriptions of Edom as a “nation-state.” These challenges were brought forth initially by members of the Madaba Plains Project, working in the regions of Edom’s northern neighbors, Ammon and Moab. These critiques sought to describe sociopolitical complexity in Transjordan as characterized by “tribal kingdoms” (LaBianca and Younker 1995; LaBianca

1999). This model argued that the region should be viewed as heterarchically structured by different land or range-based kin groups linked to subsistence practices.²² As such, kin-relations were argued to have been the driving factor in social unity that were reified through real or fictive association to an eponymous ancestor within a flexible system that could be negotiated, revised or re-created depending upon regional stimuli and the need for additional alliances or new enmities (Tobolowsky 2017). This model saw the rise of political complexity as the result of loose tribal coalitions that formed a “supra-tribal elite” under the leadership of presumably the foremost persons of a prominent tribe, which would place a veneer of hierarchal authority over a landscape that was fundamentally heterarchically organized in terms of the distribution of authority.²³ In summary then, these critiques saw authority and political complexity as negotiated and temporary, needing specific circumstances to arise in order to allow for multi-tribal coalitions, or in other words, for kingdoms or states to arise (LaBianca and Younker 1995; LaBianca 1999; Bienkowski 2009; 2014; Bienkowski and van der Steen 2001; van der Steen 2004).

Critiques to the “tribal kingdom” model for Transjordan arose primarily from the work of Bruce Routledge in west-central Jordan—the region of Moab—where he argued for social segmentation to be the structuring principle of an ideologically centralized polity where authority was gained by force and consent (Routledge 2004, 27–40, 114–32).²⁴ Routledge’s post-

²² For further discussion on heterarchical approaches to complex societies, see Crumley (1995), and Ehrenreich, Crumley, and Levy (1995).

²³ Other heterarchical models for Transjordan have also been applied to much earlier contexts (Savage, Falconer, and Harrison 2007).

²⁴ Routledge critiques the tribal model as it appears to be often based upon a negative position, i.e., upon what the state is not; thus, the tribal model is not centralized, not hierarchical, not bureaucratic... etc. (2004, 115). See rebuttal in Bienkowski (2009).

structuralist critique sought to account for the complex and messy manners in which kinship could be negotiated, and how these ideal kinship forms were often clouded and complicated by imbalance. His argument sought to focus on a dual negotiated identity as land-based and kin-based, derived from his reading of the Mesha Inscription (Routledge 2000b). In this manner, he incorporated a social segmentation model that placed an emphasis upon social differentiation through contrast (us vs. them), wherein a community inhabiting a region could self-identify as a kin-group (real or fictive). He then argued for processes of force and consent within and between these land-tied communities to allow for an elite to gain hegemony (Routledge 2004; 2000b; Porter 2004; 2013, 56–57).²⁵

The majority of these debates focused to the north of Edom, on Edom’s northern neighbors of Moab and Ammon. Without delving too deeply into their merits and critiques (see Chapter 2.A), several fundamental principles proposed by both scholarly camps had significant bearing on scholarly perspectives of Edom. Most overt, was the rejection of concepts of a “nation state” as was prevalent in the early scholarship of the southern Levant. Rather, these critiques saw social and political organization as essentially heterarchical and structured around both land-tied and range-tied groups that self-identified as (real or fictive) kinship units that served as fundamentally shared strategic and practical acts (Porter 2013, 56–57).²⁶ Within these models, either through alliances, or force and consent, these units were seen to become loosely integrated beneath a supra-tribal elite (LaBianca and Younker 1995; LaBianca 1999; Routledge 2004). These concepts saw limited application to the region of Edom by Bienkowski and van der

²⁵ Porter (2004) uses Routledge’s model for Edom, though see Bienkowski (2009, 12–15) for an opposing view and critique. Elsewhere, Porter also uses a model of segmentation, applying it to early Iron Age Moab (2013).

²⁶ Interesting parallels may be drawn to Judahite textual traditions concerning Edom’s social organization, as seen in Genesis 36 where clear “tribal” affiliations to specific locales are outlined.

Steen (2001), who applied a “tribal” model, and by Porter (2004), who applied a model of social segmentation similar to the ideas of Routledge (2004).

Contemporary to these studies, in an unpublished dissertation, Bradley Crowell created one of the first analyses of Edom that prioritized archaeological contexts and material culture (Crowell 2004). Intentionally placing primacy on local south Transjordanian archaeological and inscriptional material, Crowell sought not to prioritize external textual traditions (i.e., the Hebrew Bible). Moreover, Crowell situated his analysis within the context of broader transregional phenomena including imperial Assyrian expansion and the rising South Arabian trade networks. As such, Crowell’s work represents an important advance in understating sociopolitical and economic development in Edom from an archaeological standpoint.

Shortly thereafter, the Edom Lowlands Regional Archaeology Project (ELRAP) sought additional avenues to explore the rise of sociopolitical complexity in Edom using archaeological contexts from the region (Levy, Najjar, Ben-Yosef, et al. 2014). This project presented several key contributions. First, by outlining settlements and activity in the region from the late thirteenth through the eighth century BCE (N. Smith and Levy 2014, 452–53), it demonstrated that Edom did not arise *ex nihilo* in the Iron IIC as the work of Bennett seemed to imply. Second, this work displayed regional aspects of settlement and social boundaries through ceramic studies (N. Smith and Levy 2014; N. Smith 2009), especially noting a shift in settlement from the lowlands (Arabah Valley) in the thirteenth through ninth centuries BCE (Iron I and IIA–B), to the highlands (Shara Mountains and plateau) in the eighth through sixth centuries BCE (Iron IIC; N. Smith, Goren, and Levy 2014; N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b). Further efforts to produce terminology for the sociopolitical structures of the region and fundamentally the nature of the Edomite polity settled on the term “kingdom” after noting the inability to concisely define Edom

as either a “chiefdom” or a “state” according to anthropological ideals (N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 287–91; N. Smith 2009, 39–53). Though a substantial step forward in understanding this region, the focus of ELRAP was primarily on the centuries prior to the context for this work, and thus provides an initial first step for examining social, political, and economic organization immediately preceding the late Iron Age Edomite polity.²⁷

The revised manner of viewing Edom as heterarchical and decentralized implicitly challenged the notions of strict borders around the polities, a necessary assumption for Beit-Arieh’s model of an invasion (Beit-Arieh 1995c). These earlier perspectives had conveniently utilized the Wadi Arabah as a topographical border between these regions, a concept neatly matching the twentieth and twenty-first century CE political divisions of the region. There is, however, little basis for such a division, both on archaeological or theoretical considerations (Bienkowski 2006; see also Chapter 2A). Rather the Arabah appears to have functioned more as a route and a region that linked different social groups and regions (Bienkowski and van der Steen 2001, 39; Bartlett 1989, 37–44; Edelman 1995a). Along a similar vein, research in the Negev has sought to move beyond viewing the Negev as a “border” for Judah, and toward understanding it more as a frontier in which complex interaction and mobility were to be expected (Thareani 2014a; 2010).

4. CONCLUSIONS AND NEW DIRECTIONS

After critiques that undermine concepts of Edom as a nation-state are taken into account, and the apparent complexity and diversity of social groups in the region is acknowledged, it becomes challenging to discuss Edom as consisting of a singular “ethnic” culture. In this fashion, the three

²⁷ Similarly, the polities of Israel and Jordan have undergone further critique and study seeking better clarify the rise of political complexity (Finkelstein 1988; Kletter 2004; Joffe 2002; Master 2001; M. B. Moore and Kelle 2011, 219–28), and the structure and ethnic nature of society (Faust 2006a; 2012; Stager 1985).

major Edomite culture markers, the ceramics, the script, and the worship of the god *Qws*, have been recognized as problematic categorizations (Whiting 2007, 39–41). Despite this challenge and Whiting’s critique, few studies have moved away, or sought to nuance these descriptors even despite their own acknowledgement of the issues in using ceramics as an ethnic marker for Edom and Edomites (e.g., Bienkowski and van der Steen 2001, 39). Limited efforts saw the promotion of the term “Busayra Painted Ware” to reference a particular decorated tableware seeming to emanate from Busayra (Bienkowski 1992b; Singer-Avitz 2004), but for the most part the term “Edomite” to describe ceramics, and the implications it implicitly assumes, has been maintained (Beit-Arieh and Freud 2015a; Freud 2014).

As previously discussed, several studies since the turn of the millennium have investigated the northeastern Negev with the desire to better understand Edomite and Judahite interaction, seeking to integrate select archaeological material culture with the biblical text (Dykehouse 2008; Tebes 2006c).²⁸ While these studies predate the availability of a significant portion of the archaeological record, their primary focus was on the textual dataset. Others, such as Charlotte Whiting have sought explicitly to critique previous archaeological methodologies as well as the dominant interpretations associating ethnicity to a specific material culture (2007). Despite lacking access to much of the unpublished archaeological data, Whiting did highlight particular trends in the ceramic assemblage, namely the preponderance of food preparation and food consumption vessels, although her final analysis appears to have misunderstood the significance of the types of ceramics and their broader social implications (Whiting 2007, 109–34; see discussion in N. Smith 2009, 223–28). As such, a consideration of the archaeological

²⁸ See also the work of Crowell who briefly engages with the question of Edomite interaction in the Negev during his survey on social and political development in Edom (2004, 219–24).

record toward more nuanced analyses of social interaction and social identities remains necessary.

Other recent work of note includes that of Yifat Thareani, who sought not only to examine the whole of the northeastern Negev with regard to socioeconomic activity during the late Iron Age (Thareani-Sussely 2007b; Thareani 2014b), but also to engage with specific questions related to Edomite presence and activity, primarily from the perspective of the site she published—Tel ‘Aroer (Thareani 2008; 2014a; 2010). Her work developed the social significance that certain aspects of the Edomite material culture could hold. Namely her study on the iconic Edomite decorated wares from Tel ‘Aroer noted the social significance imbued in the decorations on the part of the individual actor responsible for them, as well as the significance these forms would hold in social contexts of consumption (Thareani 2010). While highly nuanced, Thareani’s work only engaged with a small portion of the material culture assemblage, and only from Tel ‘Aroer. A more expansive analysis remains outstanding.

Several additional advances have highlighted the need for renewed study of these contexts. Lily Singer-Avitz’s work on the ceramics from Tel Beersheba convincingly argues that many of the ceramic forms frequently labelled as Edomite were present already in the late eighth century BCE, and not in insignificant numbers (Singer-Avitz 2014). Although this is not an entirely new claim (Singer-Avitz 1999, 6–10), she has now demonstrated that beyond Tel Beersheba, these examples are attested in late eighth century BCE contexts at Tel Malhata, Tel ‘Ira, Tel ‘Aroer, and Tel Arad, in other words, at nearly every major eighth century BCE site in the northeastern Negev. With the publication of these sites, it is now possible to engage with the individual contexts in which they were excavated and their distribution patterns throughout the region. Similarly, petrographic studies of the Edomite ceramics have determined that they were

predominantly produced in the northeastern Negev (Freud 2014; Freud and Goren 2015; Iserlis and Thareani 2011), a discovery that holds significant implications for the nature of social interaction within the region and laying ripe the opportunity for subsequent analysis.²⁹

In summary, the piecemeal nature of the publication of the material culture data and its full archaeological contexts, and reliance on interpretations based on the biblical texts, limited the opportunity for substantial in-depth study both upon the individual site level, but also for the region as a whole. At present, with the availability of this data together with new consideration toward theories of sovereignty, identity and ethnicity, and social interaction, robust and nuanced perspectives of this material culture phenomenon and the social interactions underlying it can be achieved.

²⁹ For reference, see also earlier studies that relied on INAA analysis (e.g., Gunneweg and Mommsen 1990; 1995; Gunneweg et al. 1991).

CHAPTER 2. THE THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The major theoretical positions that orient the present approach are outlined using a multi-scalar approach. First, broad conceptions of the region as whole are discussed, namely the nature of sociopolitical structures and the ways they relate to the landscape they inhabit. Second, the ways in which humans and communities interact with one another and the resultant effects of sustained culture contact are examined. Lastly, this chapter explores the complexities of individual and social identities and how they may be analyzed through material culture remains.

A. REGIONAL CONSIDERATIONS: SOCIOPOLITICAL ORGANIZATION AND THE LANDSCAPE

The two themes that will be explored in this section are sociopolitical organizational frameworks, and the relation of political authority to the landscape and the ways that sovereignty affects modes of access and interaction regionally. Historically, the examination of diverse sociopolitical entities has focused on systems of classification through which they could be effectively described. However, in using such classificatory systems, it becomes easy to overrepresent what the data is able to demonstrate, resulting in misleading portrayals. Similarly, too often these classifications become an interpretation in their own right, using predetermined labels to describe a region that are more or less divorced from the particularities present within the data. As a result, it is necessary to briefly deconstruct such terms and the inherent baggage they carry, and to explore interpretive models that can more effectively engage with the archaeological material culture of these contexts.

1. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL STRUCTURES

Characterizing and providing labels for the ancient polities such as Edom and Judah has proven a difficult task. Early engagement with the southern Levant preferred to describe its polities as

“kingdoms” (Albright 1940; Kenyon 1960; Glueck 1970), stemming predominantly from culture-historical paradigms (Childe 1950; R. M. Adams 1966), and evoking a medieval feudal image for the Iron Age. More recently, preferences lie in the use of the term “state,” although this label warrants a brief excursus as to the degree of its applicability, and particularly the assumptions it brings with it.

a. States and Chiefdoms

In moving beyond culture-historical approaches, theoretical developments within anthropology attempted to describe social evolutionary frameworks that could be applied cross-culturally to describe an evolution from tribe, to chiefdom, to state (Flannery 1972; Service 1962; Earle 1977; Carneiro 1981).³⁰ This development was pivotal for scholarship of the southern Levant, and at present continues to define many approaches to the field. In its application, this model tends to essentialize a one-dimensional “checklist” approach to ancient society and emphasizes an assumed linear evolutionary trajectory that is presumed to be one-directional (see critique in Routledge 2004, 9). This unidirectionality betrays a western bias wherein “state” forms of society exhibit more of the “advanced” (cultural and intellectual) traits of social groupings. Further, when applied in the context of the southern Levant, this approach has tended to emphasize forms of kin-based authority in pre-state societies and a shift toward territorial forms of power within state-level societies (e.g., Levy 1995; see discussion in Master 2001, 124–26).³¹

Despite the challenges to the neo-evolutionary paradigm, the usefulness of cross-cultural comparisons has in large part perpetuated its use in the southern Levant even though in many

³⁰ For more recent and nuanced use of these concepts see: Feinman and Marcus 1998; Stein and Rothman 1994; and Yoffee 2005.

³¹ Although, see Yoffee’s conclusion wherein he seeks to address the issue of directionality (1995, 545–47).

instances such categories do more to obscure polities than to describe them. For example, such issues become readily apparent when attempts are made to categorize Edom as either a complex “state,” or a less complex “chiefdom” (e.g., Tebes 2016). As noted by Neil Smith, once all available data is brought to bear, it appears that neither category is sufficient. For, concerning complexity, Edom does not possess enough of the requisite characteristics to be considered a state (e.g., four-tier settlement hierarchy, two levels of decision making, etc.), yet it does possess enough state-like features (e.g., religious institutions, palaces and government ideology) that it cannot be described as a chiefdom (N. Smith 2009, 16–33, 53–55, 325–26; N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 287–90). Smith’s analysis highlights the shortcomings that static categories have in accounting for contextually contingent factors (N. Smith 2009, 39–46). As a result of Edom’s “betweenness” of chiefdom and state, Smith has advocated for a return to the more malleable term “kingdom” to describe Edom, although he details exactly what is meant in his usage. He describes the kingdom as a:

...territorial unit having a monarchical form of government headed by a ruling king. The term kingdom implies that it is led by a king—who is functionally different from a paramount chief. It also correlates well with a level of political organization involving the jurisdiction over a definite region. In addition, kingdoms also can connote a palace, government, military, monumental construction, and stratification, but the extent of political hegemony and size is left vague...Finally, specifically for the region of the Middle East, it is a literal translation of an extensively used term in textual documents by both local populations and empires to describe these polities. It is also immediately understood by scholars working in other areas... (N. Smith 2009, 45–46).³²

In this advocacy, Smith revisits an older label, and while being more explicit in its usage, conceptually leaves it general enough to apply broadly throughout the region. Similarly, in using the term kingdom, Smith roots it within the linguistic tradition of the southern Levant. What

³² See also discussion in: N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy (2014b, 287–90).

these labels do not account for, however, are many of the more intricate designs by which these polities are woven together, and the various processes that reify them.

Such considerations are in part addressed by proposals that emphasize external stimuli as the driving force for the creation of a derivative “secondary state” (Knauf 1992c; Joffe 2002). Borrowing from tenets of world systems theory (Wallerstein 1974), the application of these models to Edom has been based on scant archaeological data with a focus instead on pressure from the Neo-Assyrian empire as an external stimulus combined with elements of environmental determinism as a result of Edom’s ecological marginality (Knauf 1992c). Secondary state models have similarly sought to account for collective forms of identity, wherein following the achievement of political authority by a ruling elite, the co-option and/or promotion of unifying symbols or behaviors would result in the creation of an “ethnicizing” state (Joffe 2002). While Joffe’s argument is created primarily with the polity of Israel in mind, relying on Phoenicia to serve as an external stimulus (2002), the significant reflections of Assyrian features in late Iron Age Edom ensures the persistence of such an approach.

b. Tribal Kingdoms

Seeking a more context-specific model apart from universalist paradigms that could better account for the unique environment, geography, and historical data from Transjordan, a new model was created by Øystein LaBianca and Randall Younker of the Madaba Plains Project. Working in northern Transjordan among the polities of Moab and Ammon, they advanced a model of “Tribalism” and “Tribal Kingdoms” to account for many of the unique features that the marginal region of Transjordan possessed (LaBianca and Younker 1995; LaBianca 1999).³³ This

³³ LaBianca and Younker’s usage of the term “tribal” (LaBianca and Younker 1995; LaBianca 1999) is as a descriptor of discrete social elements organized along kinship lines rather than the previously discussed neo-evolutionary stage of cultural development (Flannery 1972; Service 1962).

model was strongly influenced by the environmental and climatic challenges of Transjordan, and the fundamentally ephemeral and fleeting examples of “state-level” polities in the history of the region.

Following the work of Immanuel Marx (1977) they argued that the defining social feature of the region was the “tribe” that functioned as a flexible unit of subsistence,³⁴ characterized by in-group loyalties formed on the basis of fluid notions of unilineal descent—segmentary lineages.³⁵ In this fashion, along a continuum of agriculture (land-based) and pastoral (range-based) activities, social units maintained a flexible system of subsistence to minimize risk. These tribal units possessed cohesion through forms of generative genealogies in which forms of real and fictive kinship could be manipulated within to create larger tribal coalitions or divisions as desired. Within this model, the rise of kings and “state-like” polities did not diminish the tribal structure of society, but was rather layered upon this system that had coalesced in order to create a “supra-tribal” element (LaBianca 1999; LaBianca and Younker 1995). Fundamentally, this system is argued to have been heterarchical, with power distributed evenly across the landscape, allowing for the system to easily revert to its tribal roots were the supra-tribal elite to be unsuccessful (LaBianca 1999; LaBianca and Younker 1995). This model saw the potential for the emergence of the supra-tribal elite to be largely reliant on environmental factors. In this way,

³⁴ Marx (1977), however, also highlights the territorial nature of tribes, seeing them as territorial units that use ideologies of kinship, but where kinship does not necessarily serve as the basic structuring principle (Rosen 2017, 36–38).

³⁵ A number of issues are raised in the use of the concept “tribe” as the major organizational principle of sociopolitical development, most significantly its assumption to be an ahistorical constant in Transjordan and its broad analytical scope as focused on social collectives such as “Moabites” or “Edomites” (Porter 2013, 55–56). Despite these issues, one of its more effective elements lies in the concept of segmentary lineages, which lie at the foundation of the tribe’s kinship structure. Segmentary lineages describe a manner of differentiating social groups where successive generations are agnatically organized through an eponymous founding member. Among segmentary lineages, alliances could be formed as necessary by identifying real (or fictive) commonalities in lineages, essentially manipulating the lineage structure to account for contextually contingent needs and circumstances (Porter 2013, 54–57; Prewitt 1981; Evans-Pritchard 1940).

the agricultural potential of different regions in Transjordan differentially affected the frequencies of supra-tribal coalescence and the strength of these associations. As such, the northern regions of Transjordan that received substantially more rainfall—such as Ammon—were understood to have been the most densely settled and engaged in agriculture (land-tied tribalism), compared to Edom, far to the south, which was described as primarily pastoral (range-tied tribalism) due to its climatic patterns. Similar to the models of secondary state formation, an external stimulus such as a militaristic threat was seen as the impetus by which tribal coalescence and the formation of the supra-tribal elite would be achieved (LaBianca and Younker 1995, 406–11).

In attempting to create a model specific to Edom, Piotr Bienkowski and Eveline van der Steen similarly advanced a kin-based model of a tribal kingdom, basing their analysis on Ottoman period parallels (Bienkowski and van der Steen 2001; van der Steen 2004; Bienkowski 2014; 2009; 2007). This variant of the tribal model emphasizes many of the same features as those espoused by LaBianca and Younker, but in its application to Edom highlights decentralized settlement patterns as well as the high degree of variability in the ceramics of the region, seen to indicate regional spheres of production and limited degrees of exchange between what they argue to be different tribal groups (Bienkowski and van der Steen 2001, 26–28). Bienkowski and van der Steen emphasize the role of these tribes in facilitating long-distance trade, successfully recognizing a major impetus for mobility and movement, and the economic potential of the region beyond mere subsistence practices, though based predominantly on Ottoman period parallels (Bienkowski and van der Steen 2001, 31–35). In summary, both of these models place an emphasis on kin-structures as the defining mode of social and political organization across the region, organized predominantly by subsistence factors, and described as “tribes.”

c. Patrimonialism

Other models of social and political organization applied to the southern Levant were inspired by the writings of Max Weber (1978), and exemplified in the work of Lawrence Stager (1985) and several of his students (Schloen 2001; Master 2001). The patrimonial system focused on the concept of the “house of the father” (*bêt 'āb*) as the empirical socially organizing principle, with the natural forces of the domestic household driven toward filial obedience to the patriarch, or master, consequently shaping the concept of authority within society. A series of nested patrimonial hierarchies thus constituted supra-household authority with the king serving as the ultimate master or metaphorical “father” of the collective. The household’s emphasis on piety toward the master and this tradition would create a powerful and flexible bond that would be abstracted to larger social scales, as well as perpetuated over successive generations (Master 2001, 128).

The socially hierarchical terminology present in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Joshua 7), namely that of the “household” (*bêt 'āb*), the “clan” (*mišpāḥâ*), and the “tribe” (*šēbet* or *maṭṭeh*) was argued to be supportive of such a nested patrimonial structure, organized through segmented lineages (Stager 1985, 20–23). In addition to the apparent rootedness of the concept within the Hebrew Bible, the strength of Stager’s approach lay in the association of the *bêt 'āb* to the archaeologically prevalent “four-room house” domestic structure (Stager 1985). In this way, a theoretical concept could be easily identified and engaged with by both archaeologists and textual scholars. While Stager originally argued for the patrimonial model to be applied to Israel and Judah (Stager 1985; Master 2001), Schloen argued that the household, or *bêt 'āb*, could in fact serve as the “root metaphor” of the ancient understanding of political relationships and that

this organizational principle could be extended over much of the ancient Near East (Schloen 2001, 71–72). This model remains highly influential within the southern Levant.

d. Hegemony and the Segmentary State

In a critique, Bruce Routledge has argued that in the desire to create models that can be applied cross-culturally, there is the inherent risk, particularly within poorly elucidated contexts, of in essence “creating” the “state” as its own abstracted entity that lives outside of time and space (Routledge 2004, 1–26). Routledge also challenges the use of the abstract terms of “tribe” and “household” as having “essential forms that place them outside of history...[with] meanings so fixed as never to be contested” (Routledge 2004, 131–32). He further argues that by focusing upon these states as “things,” or as a “what,” we gloss over the significance rather, of *how* the state *is*; namely, of how exactly the requisite social and regional features came to be collected and utilized by an elite entity. In essence then, he argues for a focus to be placed on the *process* of the state, or rather, on continual processes of state formation. Likewise, Routledge challenges how these “timeless forms can generate state hegemony in their own image monolithically, noncontingently, and outside of the articulation of specific cultural resources in specific hegemonic projects” (2004, 132). In other words, this post-structuralist critique places an emphasis on contextual contingency, reinserting local factors as a focus and moving beyond static labels and toward an examination of the behaviors and actions that create and maintain sociopolitical complexity.

Routledge tests his hegemonic model on Edom’s northern neighbor, Moab, stressing the modes by which elites would consolidate power within larger “state” metaphors of identity and cohesion through an emphasis on the dual concepts of *force* and *consent*, following in part a neo-Gramscian approach (Routledge 2004, 27–40; see also: Routledge 2000b; 2014; Gramsci 1971;

Porter 2004, 378). Routledge then succeeds in articulating what the other models tend to gloss over, namely, the ways that political complexity can be achieved. Furthermore, by challenging the romanticized and idealized notions of “kinship” and “tribes” as structural constants, Routledge accounts for the flexible and messy manners in which segmentary lineage systems played out, and especially the manners in which these elements could be consolidated through force/coercion and consent under ideological and inclusive metaphors in order to create the segmentary state (Routledge 2014; Porter 2013, 56).

Following Routledge’s model for Moab, Benjamin Porter applies similar concepts to Edom, seeking to demonstrate the hegemonic manners in which Edom’s elite navigated their position and maintained control despite the limitations of local ecology and pressure from external empires (Porter 2004). Porter specifically posits that Edom’s elites consolidated their power in five ways: 1) encouraging sedentary subsistence practices, 2) the promotion of a unified cult centered on the deity *Qws*, 3) the construction of a political and administrative center at Busayra, 4) the redistribution of prestige objects to subjects, and 5) territorial expansion into the Negev (Porter 2004, 379). In this fashion, Porter draws attention to the local actors and the local strategies that were involved in the creation of elite authority within Edom.

While there remains some reticence toward Routledge and Porter’s model (e.g., Bienkowski 2009), its focus on the sociopolitical complexity as a process rather than an ahistorical constant accentuates the importance of examining human behaviors, a task for which archaeology is well-suited. Similarly, the emphasis on human behavior, and the central role that behavior holds in determining social identities, highlights its hermeneutic value for this study. As such, this work adopts the models promoted by Routledge and Porter, integrating the near-consensus perspectives of the region that describe a heterarchical distribution of power

throughout a landscape that consists of segmentary lineages organized by malleable and negotiated metaphors of kinship.

2. TERRITORIALITY

Likewise, sociopolitical groups interact within and with the landscape they inhabit in different ways, the nuances of which have seen varied discussion in scholarly literature. In particular, many approaches have assumed a rigid and evenly-distributed territorialism as the basis of state power in the Iron Age kingdoms of the southern Levant. Yet these assumptions are laden with issues relating to environment, topography, social differences, restricted bases of power, and especially the non-territorial manner in which much sovereignty is projected.

The relationship between social groups and geographic regions has long been a feature of anthropological and sociological inquiry. Early concepts of these relations saw an inherent inseparability between social or political elements and their control over a geographic area. For example, Henry Lewis Morgan asserted that control of territory was of greater defining importance in producing social solidarity than even language or political organization (Morgan 1963, 7; Van Valkenburgh and Osborne 2013, 4). The application of more socially centered theories viewed territorial regions as better understood in terms of a “culture area” as seen in the work of Franz Boas and his students (Van Valkenburgh and Osborne 2013, 4–7). Similarly, Frederik Barth’s emphases on boundaries as the locales in which group identity was generated, emphasized the social rather than physical dimensions of territoriality (Barth 1969b, 15). This resulted in the understanding that patterned human behavior was a primary factor in delineating geographic areas in order to assert control or influence the behavior of others, with territoriality being in essence a “geographic expression of social power” (Sack 1986, 19). In this way it

became possible for concepts of the social, and of culture, to be less united to a discrete territorial region.

Similarly, challenges arose in relation to the way political entities were viewed in relation to the landscape. For example, Weber's classic definition of the state understood it to be the ability of a particular community to hold a successful monopoly over the legitimate use of force within a delineated geographic area (Weber 1946, 78). However, such concepts lead into what John Agnew has called the "territorial trap." This trap, Agnew argues, consists of three assumptions, first, that firmly fixed and delineated boundaries mark sovereign space, second, that there is a strong binary distinction between the "domestic" and the "foreign," and third, that the state can serve as a "container" of society (Agnew 1994). It is difficult then, for the territorial state to be equated with the boundaries of a society, upheld as a normative, comprehensive community in the form of a nation (Albert and Brock 2001, 42). In this sense, Westphalian perceptions of sovereignty, and of homogeneous national and ethnic identities are inherently problematic, particularly for the ancient world. To compensate for these challenges, increased attention needs to be given to nonterritorial forms of sovereignty and sociality (Van Valkenburgh and Osborne 2013, 8–9).

Similarly, the landscape is not a static backdrop, but rather holds a relational role in political discourse between objects, bodies, and places—a necessary acknowledgement in order to account for regional and contextual variability (A. T. Smith 2003, 25). Likewise, it is necessary to recognize the variability of territories. Each territorial context presents unique geographic, topographic and environmental features, with its human inhabitants engaging with the region in vastly different ways. Furthermore, control of territory is frequently expressed in non-territorial forms of power that can affect social life in vastly different ways (Van

Valkenburgh and Osborne 2013, 10–14).³⁶ In this fashion, it is essential to move beyond the perspective of strict borders bounding polities as these essentially present “container models” for enclosing economic, social, and political processes (Agnew 1994; Osborne 2013).³⁷ Such views perceive the ancient landscape as consisting of concise and delineated “bubbles” of actors explicitly possessing and maintaining a static form of undifferentiated control throughout these territories. Rather, several new ways to engage with these issues in the southern Levant are through the models of borderland and frontier regions.

a. Borderlands and Frontiers

The strengths of borderland and frontier models lie in their emphasis on malleability, and in the very focus upon them as dynamic regions. When states are viewed as strictly delineated, “border” regions are often viewed as of peripheral importance to the central, core regions of polities, functioning as passive recipients to innovation and activity (Lightfoot and Martinez 1995, 471–72). As such, they have been assumed to serve as barriers of culture, only able to be influenced by their core region, rather than as socially charged areas of cross-cutting social networks, intercultural interactions, and the creolization of cultural constructs (Lightfoot and Martinez 1995, 487–88).³⁸

³⁶ Scholars working among mobile and non-sedentary populations have generally succeeded in more nuanced analyses of the relation between human populations and territory (e.g., Frachetti 2008; Khazanov 1994).

³⁷ See the work of Osborne (2013) and his case study of the Amuq Valley where he argues for a model of “malleable territoriality” to account for the non-contiguous aspects of sovereignty within the region during the Iron Age.

³⁸ The theoretical concept of frontiers and its cultural significance was most notably brought forth by Frederik Jackson Turner in his seminal paper on the American Frontier (F. J. Turner 1893). Turner’s thesis was unique in placing an emphasis directly on the American West, or the American frontier, with the experiences encountered therein serving as the primary impetus for the development of the “classic” American national character. For further discussion, see F. J. Turner (1893) and discussion in B. J. Parker and Rodseth (2005, 5–6).

To move away from the essentially binary nature of core-periphery relationships and static conceptions of polities, Bradley Parker presented his continuum of boundary dynamics. At one end of the continuum are borders, understood as static and restrictive, while at the other end are the porous and fluid frontier regions. In this way, the continuum represents degrees of permeability that are explored beneath the greater umbrella concept of “borderlands” (B. J. Parker 2006, 82; 2002, 373).³⁹ Within the borderland matrix he subsequently proposes, Parker demonstrates that the recursive interplays between political, geographic, economic, cultural, and demographic boundaries would demonstrate the complexities inherent in producing the dynamism of these zones (B. J. Parker 2006, 90, Fig. 3). In this formulation, focus is placed directly onto these liminal zones, exploring them within their own right and outlining the potential they hold for complex forms of sovereignty and sociality to play out.

In essence then, following the argument outlined by Lightfoot and Martinez (1995), analyses of frontiers need to emphasize the dynamic nature of these liminal regions, and the different types of boundaries that promote or inhibit movement across them (B. J. Parker 2006, 81–82). Although it may be challenging to discuss a frontier without its relation to a central core, it is imperative not to view the frontier as a passive recipient of core ideals, innovations or activity. Rather, in addition to influences from within the region it adjoins/encloses, frontiers present their own socially charged context of activity and cross-cultural interaction. Furthermore, this paradigm also proposes a shift from viewing the interests of the polity or social elements *upon* the border or frontier, to their interests and interactions *across* these boundary zones (Minghi 1991; B. J. Parker 2006, 81–82). With regard to the context of the Negev, these

³⁹ Alternative understandings of frontier regions, such as from the perspective of political geography, use the term “frontier” to relate to either a formal division between different political entities (political frontier), or between settled and uninhabited parts of a country (Prescott 1987, 36–50).

perspectives have seen limited application. Yifat Thareani has briefly proposed describing the northeastern Negev as the frontier of Judah, contrasting it with the Shephelah, which she views as functioning as a less permeable border (Thareani 2014a). Framing the Negev as a frontier as Thareani does, presents it as a permeable region in which cross-cultural interactions and movement are to be expected (2010, 49–50).

b. Networks

The northeastern Negev, and more broadly, the entirety of the southern Levantine region explored within this work is a difficult landscape, with its environmentally marginal regions ranging from semi-arid to fully arid. As such, this region presents numerous challenges to settlement expressly due to the lack of widespread available water and arable land. Further, movement through the region is constrained by not only availability of water, but by its mountainous and arid terrain. With these factors in mind, several concepts relating to network systems are of great value. In a series of articles, Monica Smith sought to challenge perceptions of how ancient humans interacted with the landscape. Rather than as a homogeneous whole, Smith argues that humans would have perceived the landscapes they inhabited as a series of “resource-rich nodes linked by corridors of access” where the maintenance of firm boundaries was not nearly as important as was control of the resource-rich nodes (Monica Smith 2007, 28, 33; 2005). This model argues for human behavior as gravitating toward these specific strategic locales or nodes within the network and concentrating activities there. In the southern Levant, these nodes would relate to major settlements built around available water and arable land, and the corridors of access to the major roads and paths linking these settlements and crossing the region. For an arid and semi-arid region, these concepts fundamentally alter the way this landscape is viewed. The concept of borders simply does not apply when one speaks of

uninhabited desert regions in antiquity. Rather, specific nodes at particular crossroads, or topographic boundaries are thrust to the forefront of zones in which complex forms of sovereignty and sociality are to be featured.

B. CROSS-CULTURAL INTERACTIONS: THEORIES AND IMPLICATIONS

Building on the concepts of borderlands and networks, the following discussion outlines the major frameworks that have explicitly or implicitly shaped previous narratives of diverse forms of social interaction. While the interactions in the northeastern Negev are not classified as a colonial encounter in the strict sense of the term, the tenets of post-colonial theory are of significant value for this work. Ultimately, this work adopts the metaphor and heuristic of social entanglement to describe interactions in the northeastern Negev.

1. ACCULTURATION AND WORLD-SYSTEMS THEORY

Early twentieth century research on culture contact and colonial situations were dominated by what may be termed “acculturation theory” (Dietler 2010, 47–50). These interpretations held that at a point of culture contact, less “advanced” or complex societies would begin to adopt the cultural traits (material culture, technologies, etc.) of the more “advanced” or dominant culture. This pattern of adoption was seen to ultimately lend itself toward “progress” on the part of the less “advanced” or complex group in something of an accelerated neo-evolutionary trajectory (Dietler 2010, 47). The issues with this model are manifold, the least of all being the static perception of culture that it implied, and the process of acculturation to consist more or less of merely a transfer of “cultural traits” (Dietler 2010, 47). This model also presents cultures as inherently inert, as stable and unchanging, implying that colonial encounters would eventually result in assimilation (acculturation) or destruction (de-culturation; Dietler 2010, 47–50).

Furthermore, the assumptions of a “superiority” among the colonizers (e.g., technologies, policies, religion, culture, etc.) that this model employed, together with the implicit assumption of a desire toward, or inevitable adoption of these “cultural traits” on the part of indigenous populations, resulted in a lack of consideration of indigenous agency that as noted by post-colonial critiques, would and could react in a variety of manners to the colonial encounters (e.g., selective adoption, mimicry, resistance, etc.; Lyons and Papadopoulos 2002).

The rise of “world-systems” or “core-periphery” theories in the 1960s and 1970s resulted in numerous applications of these concepts to archaeological contexts, particularly in the studies of interregional and colonial encounters. Despite its original objective to engage with global capitalist economic systems in recent centuries, world-systems theory gained significant traction in archaeological discourse (Wallerstein 1974; Stein 1999, 10–43).⁴⁰ The economic focus of the world-systems approach, however, often resulted in Eurocentric and unidirectional interpretive frameworks, and similar to acculturation models, emphasized the activity of “core” actors while reducing the periphery to passive bystanders (Stein 2002). The world-systems approach is founded on the idea of asymmetrical power relations between core and peripheral zones, highlighting a dichotomy that all too easily allowed for the perpetuation of singular perspectives by highlighting the roles of the core and muting or overlooking the agency of the periphery (Stein 1999, 12–13). Despite application to archaeological contexts (Algaze 1993; Marcus 1990), the assumptions of the dominance of the core, of unequal systems of exchange, and the core’s structuration of peripheral economies are problematic assumptions rendering Wallerstein’s model unsuited to colonial archaeological investigations (Stein 1999, 16–26). Furthermore, the

⁴⁰ The world-systems approach as advocated Immanuel Wallerstein (1974) was intended to relate primarily to European capitalism following the late fifteenth century CE. Others, such as Andre Frank, understood it rather as a more fundamental pattern of human behavior that could be studied across the millennia (Frank 1993).

macro-scale at which this model operated seldom accounted for the unique individual contexts of interaction, acceptance, indifference, rejection, and subversive forms of mimicry that were at the basis of many local interactions within colonial contexts.

2. HYBRIDITY AND THE LOCATION OF CULTURE

Homi Bhabha's seminal work, *The Location of Culture*, challenged many of these dichotomous assumptions particularly with his emphasis on "hybridity" as at the fore of indigenous responses to colonialism (1994).⁴¹ Bhabha's use of "hybridity," however, views it not as an organic fusion of types, but rather a result of the deep ambivalence that is inherently a part of colonial encounters. The result is a conscious reimagining and refashioning of elements of society in which the sum becomes greater than its parts and carries with it new meaning significant within its own context (Bhabha 1994, 110; Liebmann 2008, 5–6). Furthermore, Bhabha's concept of "third space," challenged the dichotomous foundation of world-systems ideals by highlighting the interaction zones that were the primary loci of hybridity as an outcome of colonial encounters (Bhabha 1994).⁴² In this fashion, the zone of culture contact was no longer a passive recipient of "core" programs or ideals, or a reflection of the "periphery," but was rather an entirely new space, a dynamic and productive zone, full of diverse actors and ideals, and as a result of encounters became an entirely new "hybridized" region.

⁴¹ Likewise, see Edward Said's *Orientalism*, which follows a similar post-colonial critique in highlighting how culturally and intellectually entrenched patterns of imperialism, have, and continue to shape the scholarship and interactions with the "Orient" (1978).

⁴² For work in a similar vein, although describing a different context and variant modes of interaction, see Richard White's *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* (1991). Within White's conception of interaction between Native American (Algonquin) and French traders who were both far from their respective regions of power, the efforts to create a zone of mutual understanding and interaction for the purposes of trade resulted in the formation of a "Middle Ground." This Middle Ground served as both a place and process where a balance of power and mutual need resulted in the creation of a working relationship, characterized by creative misunderstandings.

In subsequent efforts to refine theories related to human encounters in contact zones, Phillip Stockhammer has questioned the terminology used and the implications they hold. In particular, the term “hybridity” possesses questionable origins in colonial ideologies concerning race, and its usage originally as a biological metaphor may not render it applicable to discourses concerning cultural processes (Stockhammer 2012b; Dietler 2010, 52–53). Likewise, Stockhammer notes that the use of the term “hybrid” can only exist in meaning as long as it stands in opposition to the term “pure,” and thus, if colonial contexts are seen as zones of “hybridity” then by extension, the cultures engaged within these regions are to be understood as “pure” cultures, a difficult concept imbued with xenophobic and racist associations (Stockhammer 2012b, 2). Building from this critique, Silliman questions how long a supposed “hybrid” can maintain its status as such before it becomes its own “authentic state” from which further hybridizations can occur (Silliman 2016, 38). Furthermore, if the term hybridity is not contextualized and nuanced within each archaeological context, but rather is seen to serve as an explanatory model of colonial situations, then in essence, each colonial encounter will result in a *hybrid* situation and the term will lose all analytical meaning (Dietler 2010, 52–53). Both Dietler and Stockhammer advocate instead for the usage of the term “entanglement” to account for the complex forms of adoption, adaptation, resistance, and dependence that form within contact zones as a result of cross-cultural social encounters (Stockhammer 2012a; 2013; Dietler 2010, 52; Silliman 2016, 38–39).

3. ENTANGLEMENTS AND ENTANGLED THINGS

A relatively new concept in archaeological analysis, entanglement seeks to provide a heuristic that moves beyond dualistic thinking and accounts for the totality of the interwoven and interdependent webs of intended and unintended consequences that are formed in intercultural

social encounters (Silliman 2016, 36–39; Dietler 2010, 74; 1997; 1998; Stahl 2002). Dietler, in his application of the concept to Iron Age Mediterranean France, seeks to move beyond traditional emphases of asymmetrical power relations in colonial encounters, and rather to focus on relationships of *entangled* webs of economic, political, social and cultural linkages as a result of consuming foreign material culture (Dietler 2010, 55, 74). Dietler, through his analysis of violence, trade, culinary practices, and architecture in this context, highlights aspects of demand, indifference, and rejection as the indigenous responses to these encounters (Dietler 2010, 66–74). The conceptual utility of entanglement is especially demonstrated in its ability to describe a vast array of forms of relationships, degrees of interconnectivities, intensities of interrelations, and from its ability to be used in a pluralistic sense, defining multiple scales of relations rather than ubiquitous wholes. Furthermore, the emphasis on multidirectional and recursive aspects of relationships allows for the agency of multiple actors to be explored, thus not stifling voices in uni-directional approaches, and avoiding binary relationships within encounters.

Entanglement is an idea fundamentally founded in relationships between humans, and between humans and things (i.e., material culture). However, central to the notions of relationships between humans and things is the assertion of the agency of material things and their ability to inform and shape interactions, identity, and human behavior (Der and Fernandini 2016; Lyons and Papadopoulos 2002, 8). The agency of material objects as transformative in human-human and human-object relationships was also exemplified in the ideas of Actor Network Theory (ANT), which stands in close relation to the idea of entanglement (Latour 2005; Law 1992). ANT seeks to explore the relationships between material and humans, rather than dwelling on fixed dualisms such as “structure and agency,” “activity and passivity,” “materiality and sociality,” etc. (Latour 2005; Hodder 2012, 91). Latour makes particular note of the

heterogeneity of human and non-human actors and the potential of these “*actants*” to influence other actors to behave in unpredictable ways, thus envisioning agency as distributed throughout the networks of interactions and interrelations (Latour 2005, 129; Der and Fernandini 2016, 14). In fact, for Latour, it is inherently necessary to place emphasis on non-human actors, as humans continue to delegate tasks and behaviors, consequently giving agency to non-human things (i.e., a cooking pot) to aid in everyday matters (Der and Fernandini 2016, 14). Consequently, the actions of humans engaging in social activities such as food consumption or feasting are inextricably entangled within the material forms that are a fundamental part of these relations.

Despite its strengths in applying agency to material culture and focusing on relationships, ANT has several weaknesses as noted by Ian Hodder and his students. First, ANT helps only to identify associations rather than examining the intricacies of dependencies that form as a result of these relationships. Secondly, ANT fails to consider temporality and the effect it would hold on those same relationships. Lastly, ANT does not account for the role that power dynamics would hold in affecting the relations and dependences that form (Der and Fernandini 2016, 15; Hodder 2012). In particular, for Hodder, ANT’s emphasis on relationality and its resultant challenge in elucidating and demonstrating dependence and dependencies within these relations, was the primary motivator for a more nuanced approach (Hodder 2012, 92).

In presenting his own perspectives and advocacy for the use of entanglement in archaeology, Hodder emphasizes it as a flexible framework that focusses on the multi-dimensional relations, affordances, and dependencies that knit together interactions between humans and things, and that beyond answering the *why* of interactions, focusses on the *how* (Hodder 2012; Der and Fernandini 2016, 18–20; Hodder and Mol 2016). Within this usage, Hodder stresses concepts of dependence (often productive and enabling) and dependencies (often

constraining and limiting) as the dominant outcome of the dialectic relationship between humans and things (Hodder 2012, 17–18, 88). Moreover, Hodder emphasizes a multiplicity of relationships, dependences, and dependencies that can be explored within entanglements, namely relationships between Humans and Humans (HH), Humans and Things (HT), Things and Humans (TH) and Things and Things (TT). Also lacking in Latour’s Actor Network Theory that Hodder accounts for, is temporality, noting that there is a scheduling and sequencing of order in relationships (Hodder 2012, 206–7, 212–13), and that temporality is “fluid, situational, and contingent” ultimately holding sway over entanglements as a process, rather than an event (Der and Fernandini 2016, 19). Hodder’s discussion of entanglement centers further on the concept of entrapment, wherein, through dependences and dependencies, humans and things become inescapably and irreversibly entrapped and constrained as “it is not the material conditions of social life that determine the direction of change, but the tautness (entrapment) of heterogenous entanglements” (Hodder 2012, 206). In this fashion, Hodder successfully expands in a nuanced and holistic sense the various aspects of entanglement between the multi-variate relationships of humans and material things.

Due, however, to the relative infancy of the use of entanglement within archaeology, little consensus exists with regard to the most productive manner in which to use entanglement, whether as a model, metaphor, or method and theory (Silliman 2016). Some efforts to employ entanglement as a model have been undertaken, such as that advocated by Stockhammer, who promotes two “states” of entanglement. The first, “relational entanglement,” accounts for when an object is “appropriated and thus integrated into local practices, systems of meaning and worldviews,” wherein the object itself remains the same but the perceptions of those surrounding the object have shifted, a model wherein archaeological context is of utmost importance

(Stockhammer 2013, 16–17). Stockhammer asserts the second stage of entanglement to be “material entanglement” when something new (material culture) is created that is greater than the sum of its parts, similar to the notion of “hybridity” as promoted by Bhabha (Stockhammer 2013, 16–17). Stockhammer’s ideas provide a successful way of engaging with material culture but fail to account for the complex and diverse forms of entanglements, and dependent relationships that emerge within such contexts. The most nuanced model for a general theory of entanglement lies in the work of Ian Hodder’s *Entangled* (2012), however, due to its broad scope, far reach, and the challenge in distinguishing entanglements that are relevant for intensive study rather than the entirety of all relationships that are available, Silliman concludes that entanglement is best used as a metaphor, and as a heuristic (Silliman 2016, 36–44).

The concept of entanglement and its use as a heuristic for describing the related ideas of relationships, dependences, dependencies, and entrapment between humans and material culture, are one of the central tenets informing my approach to human behavior and interaction in the northeastern Negev. It is particularly appropriate as it allows for an interpretation of human interaction within a landscape that is not framed through lenses of homogeneities and cultural transformations. Rather, it allows for the landscape to be viewed as differentiated, with particular nodes in the landscape receiving more human attention than others. Likewise, this heuristic permits an analysis of human interactions on both a community and individual level, recognizing the agency of individual actors and differentiated forms of human interaction both within, and between different sites. Entanglement thus encapsulates the complexities of identity maintenance and differentiation both at broad and local levels.

C. SOCIAL COLLECTIVES AND THE INDIVIDUAL: ETHNICITIES AND IDENTITIES

The following section outlines the theories behind the concept of ethnicity and the role of collective social identities as they relate to discussions of social and cultural interactions. The uncritical use of the term “ethnicity” has resulted in the frequent conflation between ethnicity and a national identity, which is particularly observable in the broad and casual manner that previous studies have discussed “Edomite” material culture as markers of “ethnic” or “national” Edomites (e.g., Beit-Arieh 1995a; 1995c; Bartlett 1989; E. Mazar 1985; Herr 1997). The subsequent discussion presents a brief overview of the different and evolving ways that ethnicity has been used in scholarship, the nuanced ways that it can be associated with material culture, the significance of the multiple identities held by different actors and communities, and the role of intersectionality in the study of ancient identities.

1. INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS ON IDENTITY AND ETHNICITY

The study of ethnicity and identities in the southern Levant presents a vast and varied literature (Kamp and Yoffee 1980; Bunimovitz 1990; Esse 1992; Dever 1995; Redmount 1995; Finkelstein 1996; 1997; S. T. Smith 2003c; 2003b; Killebrew 2005; Kletter 2006; Faust 2006a; Hesse and Wapnish 1997).⁴³ The varying degrees of success that some of these works have achieved has hinged in part on issues related to terminology and the historical contingency of many of these terms. Varied understandings of the meaning of ethnicity—a modern term—combined with the influence of present-day ideals regarding the meaningful categorizations of humans and social groups are particularly challenging to scholars (Insoll 2007a; Diaz-Andreu and Lucy 2005). Indeed, our present-day preoccupation with assigning identities to others and ourselves appears to be in part a product of migratory behaviors within our globalized world (Heisler 2001, 227).

⁴³ See a critique of many of these approaches in Whiting (2007, 85–90).

As a result of this situation, we may be placing far too significant an emphasis on the importance of certain types of identity in the ancient world (Meskell 2002). Furthermore, the categorization of ethnicity and other identities is often performed on the basis of cultural assumptions that are meaningful in the present but that may not have held the same relevance in antiquity (Meskell 2003, 187–88).

Perhaps the most pertinent example is that of “nationality” and the often-implicit equation of “ethnic” to “national” identities, built from the notion of the Iron Age polities of the southern Levant functioning in essence as ethnic-national kingdoms or states. This can especially be seen in the case of Edom (Herr 1997; Bartlett 1989; Tebes 2006c).⁴⁴ While some scholars, namely Steven Grosby, have explicitly argued for ancient Israel to be a case in point for the antiquity of the nation (Grosby 1993; 1999; 2002; see critique in Routledge 2003, 222–25), the prevailing consensus is that the present-day concept of a nation and a national identity is the product of the centuries following the Peace of Westphalia, the French Revolution, and the events subsequent global colonialism, and could not have existed prior (Albert and Brock 2001; Rowe 2014; Pfaff 1993, 13–40; Lucy 2005, 101). Furthermore, the complexity of the ancient situation is further blurred by an often inadequate understanding of even our modern context (Routledge 2003). Thus, while the terminology employed in the Hebrew Bible with reference to polities such as “Edom,” and peoples such as “Edomites” may appear on first glance to relate to modern notions of nations and national identities such as “Canada” and “Canadians,” direct correlations between these understandings cannot be made. These terms do not present emic notions of the ancient self and community affiliation, particularly in the sense of an equation to being “national subjects,” for while such terms are often used by rulers to describes peoples,

⁴⁴ See, however, the variant manner in which Joffe articulates his notion of the “ethnicizing state” (2002).

these terms were not used by people to describe themselves (Emberling 1997, 304–5). These concepts require deeper exploration.⁴⁵

2. ETHNICITY: FROM BIOLOGICAL TO CULTURAL

While detailed overviews of the study of ethnicity are presented elsewhere and need not be fully articulated here (S. Jones 1997; Emberling 1997, 297–300; Trigger 2006, 211–313; Siapkas 2014), a few notes on major shifts within scholarship is warranted; primarily the shift in the view of ethnicity from a biological to a cultural phenomenon. Early studies of ethnicity and collective social identities emphasized a biological or racial component as can especially be seen in the notorious example of the work of Gustaf Kossina in his efforts to discover “Germans” in history (Trigger 2006, 235–41). Kossina’s work was heavily based in racist ideals that understood race to be a determining factor in human behavior despite it too being a modern concept in the manner that we use it (Trigger 2006, 237; S. T. Smith 2007). Although Kossina’s work is often used as an extreme example of the direction that such assumptions of humanity can be taken and used politically, such approaches were not uncommon in the intellectual sphere of the time. As noted by Barth, these approaches understood there to be an equation between race, language, and culture (1969b, 13). Similarly, social and cultural diversity were viewed as constrained by biological, hereditary factors that were the primary feature by which to determine different human “types” (S. Jones 1997, 40–45). These perspectives saw ethnic groups as possessing a stable set of cultural traits that could be traced through the material culture of the archaeological

⁴⁵ While ethnic groups exist in relation to states, ethnic groups are not states. A state identity has little evidence in the ancient world. Although it was used by rulers to describes peoples, it was not the manner by which people described themselves (Emberling 1997, 304–5). The relationship between states and ethnic groups is complex and as noted by Routledge, some of the potency of ethnicity can lie in its ability to mobilize collective sentiment and actions through its association to a polity (2000a, 64; after Ferguson and Mansbach 1996). The processes of ethnogenesis can also be seen to take place within state-like structures, as a component of it (Emberling 1997, 307–9; Joffe 2002; Faust 2006a), perhaps through competition, ethnocentrism, and differential power as McGuire articulates (1982).

record, as seen in the work of Vere Gordon Childe (1929; 1939) and the culture-historical approach to archaeology (Lucy 2005, 87–91). This racial theory, together with similar concepts of “tribe” and “culture” emphasized physical and linguistic differences and were assumed to have been an objective way to categorize different humans. Subsequent critiques to this approach saw ethnicity rather as subjective and historically contingent, far from a static and essentialized definition of humans, a critique that slowly gave way to “cultural studies” that focused upon social rather than biological differences (S. Jones 1997, 40–55).⁴⁶

The social approach to ethnicity is best known in the work of Frederik Barth (1969b; 1969a). Barth began by countering prevailing understandings of ethnicity as biologically self-perpetuating (a race), or as sharing fundamental cultural values that were seen in a unified set of cultural forms (a culture), or comprising a sphere of communication and interaction (a linguistic group).⁴⁷ Instead, he argued that ethnic groups were a population that “has a membership that identifies itself, and is identified by others, as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order” (Barth 1969b, 10–11; Emberling 1997, 298–99).⁴⁸ Barth thus placed an emphasis on emic perspectives of ethnicity in highlighting that it was a category of self-ascription by the actors themselves, often in relation to differences presented by other communities (Barth 1969b, 10–14). A further insight from Barth argued that these ethnic groups would be more visible at their boundaries, which ought to be the focus of inquiry, rather than the

⁴⁶ Equations between biology and ethnicity are still maintained in the present day, primarily through the attempted use of genetic data to map “ethnic groups,” despite the incorrect assumption between ethnicity and biology and the lack of “time-depth” that this data is able to show (Lucy 2005, 92–93).

⁴⁷ Although language is not to be used as an objective diagnostic of ethnic groups, some ethnic groups often do possess a shared language or dialect (Emberling 1997, 303–4).

⁴⁸ Barth’s approach that emphasized ethnicity as a social response involving shared interest in opposition to external threats, became known as “instrumentalist” and stood in contrast to the earlier approaches of ethnicity as derived from biology and culture, which became known as “primordialist” (S. Jones 1997, 56–79).

cultural matter enclosed within (Barth 1969b, 15–16). In this way, Barth effectively eliminated the need for links between race, culture, and ethnicity by instead focusing on the concept of self-ascription and demonstrating ethnicity to be a social process that was subjective, not formed by objective traits, and that was flexible enough to allow for changes in group membership (Emberling 1997, 299).

Subsequent advances to Barth's concept of an ethnic group can be highlighted in terminology. For example, as discussed by Emberling, the concept of a boundary for an ethnic group emphasizes a sharp delineation that is seldom seen between different "ethnic groups."⁴⁹ Rather, the use of the term "difference" may be a more accurate designation, particularly as it also embodies perceptions of "difference" that define these groups (Emberling 1997, 299). Furthermore, viewing ethnic groups as inherent extensions of kinship groups, as sharing a perception of common ancestry, and as unique and contextually contingent (Emberling 1997, 304–7), identifies one emic approach to ethnicities, namely through the investigation of familial language as preserved in text.⁵⁰ In this way, ethnicities can be further described as more of an "ideational being" that is imagined but not imaginary, and forms as a part of a process or continual dialectic between actors (Lucy 2005, 97–98). However, caution must be taken in examining these groups, as such subjective approaches risk reifying the ethnic group from an etic perspective when it ought rather to be emically defined in the manner of relational opposition, as a relationship wherein one group begins to identify others as different on the basis of myths of

⁴⁹ Consider together with the previous discussion on the fluidity of frontiers.

⁵⁰ Thus, the uniqueness of ethnicity as a form of identity in certain contexts may be within its usage of kinship metaphors, particularly metaphors of blood relations in the absence of actual systems of determining descent (Routledge 2000a, 64).

origin—a particularly noteworthy concept in relation to the southern Levantine textual traditions (Lucy 2005, 95–97; Eriksen 1993, 12).

Worth developing further is the concept of self-ascription, as it stands at the heart of these concepts of ethnicity. Namely, these constructs are a subjective social phenomenon, and it is an individual's *self-identification* that is the key element of affiliation. In addition, these identities are situational and overlapping, continuously constructed and negotiated by individuals in different contexts (Emberling 1997, 302; S. T. Smith 2007, 232; Whiting 2007, 93). Self-ascription in itself is an inherently social phenomenon, best understood within the context of relations that serve's one interest. At its core, self-ascription is situational in that these relationships to other actors and defining myths can be negotiated and manipulated at various points in life resulting in shifts in ethnic identification and affiliation (Jenkins 2008, 48; Van den Berghe 1981, 27; Barth 1994; N. Smith 2009, 113). However, as noted by Smith, the desires at the root of self-interest can in themselves be viewed as a form of internalized cultural sentiment (N. Smith 2009, 114), and thus actors cannot be seen to act entirely for themselves, having become in Hodder's terms, entrapped within their social context (Hodder 2012). The process of this internalization from cultural elements echoes aspects of primordialism, at least in the context of cultural forms, as the process of socialization can constrain one's ability to act purely in self-interest due to deep sentiments of belonging within a social environment (Barth 1994, 16; Lucy 2005, 98; N. Smith 2009, 113–15). This is not to deny an individual's ability for selective self-identification in the instrumentalist sense, but rather signifying the deeply rooted sense of a social identity that is imprinted on an individual during childhood.

In this fashion, ethnic identities are not solely social constructions that can be manipulated or discarded at whim due to their heavily embedded and entangled nature within

one's social context and personal psyche (N. Smith 2009, 117–18). With regard to the creation and maintenance of this type of identity, additional focus can also be placed on cultural institutions and the role they play in influencing social behavior and action through the reification of identities. For example, the usage of myths of origin by religious institutions can serve to accentuate senses both of belonging and of difference (Barth 1994, 16; N. Smith 2009, 116–17). Socialization thus internalizes ethnic identity within childhood, generating the self-ascription from a young age that creates a rooted sense of belonging that is not easily or rationally ignored or replaced (Jenkins 2008, 48–49; Eriksen 1993, 60; 2000).

3. ETHNICITY, MATERIAL CULTURE, AND HUMAN BEHAVIOR

Identifying ethnic groups within the archaeological record has proven an elusive task, primarily through the challenge in assigning material culture to be “indicators” of ethnic groups (S. T. Smith 2007). The most prominent southern Levantine example of these challenges can be found in the case of assigning collar-rim store jars, four-room houses, and a lack of pig bones to be material culture markers of “ethnic Israelites” (Shiloh 1970; Faust and Bunimovitz 2003; Faust 2006a; Dever 1995). Although initially a compelling suggestion, such facile associations fell short primarily due to the lack of a spatial overlap of this material culture with the region supposedly inhabited by “ethnic Israelites,” a lack of concise understanding of what constituted an “ethnic Israelite” as well as the lack of other status, economic, and political considerations that could and would affect the distribution and use of certain types of material culture (Finkelstein 1996; Hesse and Wapnish 1997; Kletter 2006). At its core, this approach failed largely in its implicit assumption of “ethnicity” to be the essential defining feature in choice and usage of material culture.

Likewise, with regard to our contexts of the northeastern Negev and Edom, such equations persist, particularly in the interpretations that label the iconic painted wares and holemouth ridged-rim cooking pots as “Edomite Painted Ware” and “Edomite” cooking pots respectively (E. Mazar 1985; Bartlett 1989; Beit-Arieh 1995c; see discussion in Whiting 2007, 90). Using the term “Edomite” pottery would not be problematic were it in reference to a geographic distribution of the wares within the *region* of Edom, but such meanings are seldom held as it is instead implicitly associated with ethnicity and a national identity. A recognition of these issues has led to calls for revised terminology although alternative terms have yet to become rooted in the literature.⁵¹

These examples highlight firsthand the challenges of discussing ethnicity in the ancient world, namely the challenge in identifying “ethnic” groups on the basis of archaeological material culture, and the similar challenge resulting from the application of political or “ethnic” labels to such artifacts. As a result, numerous “post-Barthian” studies have emphasized the need to move beyond such equations of material culture to ethnic groups (Kamp and Yoffee 1980, 88). Ian Hodder’s ethnographic work in Kenya, Zambia, and Sudan revealed significant insights into the relation between ethnic groups and material culture by highlighting that other identities such as gender, age, or status often played more substantial roles in the use and distribution of types of material culture (Hodder 1982; Shennan 1989). From this work, we may highlight the importance of other identities operating beside and together with ethnicity, including gender, age, status, religion, occupation, etc., and that while material culture can mark social identities,

⁵¹ Piotr Bienkowski suggested adopting the term “Busayra Painted Ware” for the painted variants, after the site where it was first and most dominantly discovered (Bienkowski 1992a, 7). This term has seen limited use (Singer-Avitz 2004). More recent work has sought to apply the label “Southern Transjordan-Negev Pottery” (STNP) a label that better reflects the distribution pattern of these ceramics (Tebes 2011b; 2015), but in its overly broad designation lacks the ability to succinctly differentiate this ware from the multiple other, and more abundant “types” found in this region during this period. Both of these suggested terms have failed to be utilized in the most recent ceramic references (e.g., Beit-Arieh and Freud 2015a; Bienkowski 2015).

ethnicity will not always be the identity that they most readily reflect or promote (Emberling 1997, 312–13).

Consequently, focus needs to be placed on the behavior of individuals and the ways that material culture relates to certain aspects of behavior, and by extension, the identities reflected by this behavior. This follows the concepts of *habitus* and practice theory as advocated by Pierre Bourdieu (1977), to focus on the shared dispositions and practices that create ethnicity (S. Jones 1997, 128; Kamp and Yoffee 1980). Although *habitus* cannot be seen as a substitute for ethnicity, it provides a manner of bridging the gap between the primordial and instrumental approaches to ethnicity (Whiting 2007, 92; S. Jones 1997, 128–29).⁵² Archaeologically, a focus on material culture that reflects particular behaviors and social action can then be used to determine different identities that would be promoted, maintained or negotiated by the activities associated with that material culture (Emberling 1997, 310–11). Regarding the material culture, it is significant to look not merely at stylistic differences such as painted decoration to determine ethnicity,⁵³ but rather to examine material culture from more of a *chaîne opératoire* approach that engages with the life cycle and use of the material culture in terms of the behavior, social action, interaction, and relationships associated with it. This will allow for a more nuanced perspective toward the patterning of the material culture (Lucy 2005, 105).⁵⁴ Thus, production, use, and most importantly context, are of absolute necessity if material culture is to comment on aspects of identity. Furthermore, certain behaviors and their related material culture correlates (dress, mortuary practices, culinary practices, architecture and the structuring of space) constitute

⁵² See also Giddens's Theory of Structuration (1984).

⁵³ Contra Sackett (1977; 1991) following Jones (1997, 111–22).

⁵⁴ In this way, “ethnic groups” may even be viewed as a form of social network, particularly when seeking detect aspects of these relations within the archaeological record (Blake 2014, 84).

either more visible or more socially sensitive markers of identity and can thus provide a more nuanced perspective of associated behaviors and relationships (Lucy 2005, 105).

In summary then, archaeological inquiry into ethnicity must focus both on people who chose to act and appear in similar fashions, and on differences and whether they remain the same or change over time. This engagement needs to be on a local and individual level rather than a sole acknowledgment of general patterns (Lucy 2005, 109). Following the original ideals of Barth, ethnicity will be most visible within boundary regions, where differences are more clearly expressed, and it is within these boundaries and zones of contact between different cultural and ethnic groups that identities are created, reinforced, and ultimately best explored (Barth 1969a). Worth considering also is how and why these identities are maintained despite the flow of material culture, ideas, and complex forms of interaction across these boundaries (B. J. Parker and Rodseth 2005, 7). However, differences in behavior and material culture may be for reasons beyond that of ethnicity and it is necessary not to allow presentist assumptions to color our interpretations of antiquity (Lucy 2005, 109). Ethnicity and other communal identities must also be thought of in terms of ranges of identities, some of which would be strongly felt, others weakly felt, but recognized as context specific and situational. Furthermore, ethnicity is but one of many identities individuals possess (e.g., age, gender, status, religion, occupation, etc.), identities that are not experienced in isolation but in relation to one another (Lucy 2005, 100–101).

D. THEORETICAL POSITION AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

To distill the above theoretical considerations into the targeted approach of this dissertation, there are several points to emphasize. First, is that the landscape is differentiated both

ecologically, socially, and politically, and cannot be characterized by delineated borders. Rather, the landscape consists of a network of nodes both in, and between different political centers. These nodes, and the corridors of access between them, are the stages where political, economic, and social (inter)action are most concentrated. Likewise, the social groups operating in and between these regions are not homogeneous wholes, but rather consist of segmented groups both on a horizontal spatial level, and vertically through sociopolitical hierarchies. To varying degrees, individuals and social groups may share certain behaviors and signal similarity, or they may distinguish themselves as different through other divergent behaviors. Interactions, then, within a region such as Edom or between Edom and Judah in the northeastern Negev, cannot be viewed as ubiquitous social or political action. Instead, they reflect the complexities of power dynamics, economic interests, and social action at broad and local levels. The result of many of these interactions can be encapsulated within the concept of “entanglement” that promotes the ideas of relationships, dependences, dependencies, and entrapment.

As the datasets engaged in this study are varied, specific additional theoretical considerations and methodologies unique to each context will be explored directly in relation to the dataset to which they apply. However, in seeking to address and explore the questions posed above, this work will in general adopt a tripartite multi-scalar approach as its primary organizing principle with regard to each archaeological material culture dataset.⁵⁵ This multi-scalar approach will provide a more holistic and nuanced understanding of this region by examining

⁵⁵ The traditions of the biblical text will also be accounted for, although on a secondary level following a thorough engagement with the archaeological material culture (see Chapter 6.A). In this fashion this work will seek to avoid the pitfalls of earlier studies that used of the biblical text as the principle hermeneutic with which to approach the archaeological record. The biblical text in itself is a valuable dataset for this region as it presents the Judahite perspective of self and of the Edomite “other.” These perspectives, nonetheless, need to be properly contextualized as reflecting the perspectives and polemics of Jerusalem’s elite and thus will be considered secondarily to the archaeological record.

social action and interaction on multiple scales of analysis. These scales include first, a highly localized level (micro-scale), looking at individual buildings, domestic structures and activity areas.⁵⁶ Second, at a broader level (meso-scale), it will examine patterns within sites, taking into consideration site function (e.g., military fort, watchtower, agricultural village, caravanserai, administrative center, etc.). Lastly, this study will examine the region as a whole (macro-scale), seeking to highlight patterns of behavior and interaction at a regional level. However, the macro-scale approach will not be given primacy of place over those of the individual micro-scale contexts, as it is within these individual locations that the choices made by actors reflect the nuances of the nature of cross-cultural interaction and resultant identity negotiation (Lucy 2005, 109). Rather than describing the region through broad brush strokes as has been the prevailing trend, this work will seek to highlight a series of individual micro-scale contexts that will highlight the actions of individual actors with the objective of using these vignettes to inform the larger narrative.

This multi-scalar approach will consist predominantly of qualitative analyses. As the published archaeological data from these sites does not present holistic quantitative data in terms material culture (especially ceramics), quantitative presentations run the risk of misrepresenting the region.⁵⁷ As such, and also in an intentional desire not to reduce human action and agency to numerals, this work will focus on qualitative engagements with the archaeological record, seeking to elucidate the *behavior* and choices made by individual actors through their usage of

⁵⁶ This multi-scalar approach and some of the terminology employed was in part inspired from the work of Osborne (2011, 50–56).

⁵⁷ The lack of robust quantitative data is predominantly a result of excavation and recording methodologies and the challenges inherent in acquiring, recording and storing such amounts of material culture data. In the contexts below where quantities of data are utilized, this is in relation only to the relative quantities of data that were both collected, *and* published, and is emphasized as such.

certain types of material culture within particular contexts. On the meso-scale and macro-scales of analysis, this can for example be demonstrated through distributional analyses that present a qualitative portrait of the patterns that emerge beyond the level of individual contexts, thus displaying trends in the behavior and choices of the individual and community actors. For sites that present multiple strata dating to this period, diachronic considerations will factor into analyses. While the micro-scale contextual analysis will provide synchronic “snapshots” of life throughout the region, these cannot be held as representative of the century-and-a-half that will be examined in this work, and specific notation will be made to situate these “photographs” within the broader timeline. In this way, various trends, trajectories, and shifts may be elucidated, and highlight continuities or changes in behavior over time.

This study will also be multi-modal, focusing on socially sensitive and culturally conservative aspects of the archaeological record that can successfully serve as proxy’s for human behavior, choice, and action (Lucy 2005, 105). Based on the available data, the primary datasets will consist of ceramics (culinary practices), ritual places and ritual material culture, and inscriptions and textual material (language and dialect, scribal practices, onomastics, textual traditions).⁵⁸ Each of these datasets presents a unique corpus necessitating specific theoretical and methodological considerations that will be explored in relation to each in the chapters below. Overall, however, this study will adhere to the general methodological structure outlined above, namely a qualitative multi-scalar approach to archaeological contexts that seeks to highlight micro-scale case studies and both synchronic and diachronic contributions to the greater regional narrative.

⁵⁸ Dress and burial customs are highly desired avenues of study for this work, particularly as they are socially sensitive and culturally conservative, although untenable for study in this context. Too few material culture correlates remain within this context for dress to provide a viable avenue, and the (surprising) lack of more substantial numbers of burials from this region and period preclude a robust analysis of burial customs.

CHAPTER 3. EDOM, JUDAH, AND ARABIA IN THE IRON AGE: REFRESHED

PERSPECTIVES

Having outlined the theoretical position of this study, Chapter 3 highlights major features of the environment, patterns of settlement, and sociopolitical organization in the region of study. It is divided into three parts. The first examines Edom in southern Transjordan, the second, the major oases of northwest Arabia that were involved in the incense trade, and the third, the northeastern Negev of southern Judah.⁵⁹ It aims to provide an overview of the setting, both physical and social, for the subsequent case studies.

A. ENVISIONING EDOM

Reconstructions of the polity of Edom that arose in southern Transjordan during the Iron Age have dominantly relied on the biblical text and external Assyrian sources due to a sparse and incomplete knowledge of the archaeology of the region (e.g., Bartlett 1989). Although Edom has become better known archaeologically in recent decades, no recent historical or social syntheses exist for the region beyond brief analyses (Porter 2004), specific subset studies (Levy, Najjar, Ben-Yosef, et al. 2014) and unpublished dissertations (S. Brown 2018b; Crowell 2004; Harvey 1999). Although a new and detailed archaeological engagement with the sociopolitical history of Edom remains a ripe and necessary study, it is beyond the scope of this work. In the following discussion, however, the major environmental, social, economic and political factors that affected the sociopolitical trajectory of this region will be highlighted, with a particular focus on their relation to the other major region of focus—the northeastern Negev.

⁵⁹ For a list of sites discussed in the text, see Appendix A.

1. TERMS, TOPOGRAPHY, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

In antiquity, two terms were commonly used in reference to the region of southern Transjordan where the late Iron Age polity of Edom arose. The first, and the namesake of the polity, was Edom (אֶדוֹם), which translated as “red” appears to be a descriptive term for the Nubian Sandstone massifs running north-south along the eastern side of the Wadi Arabah, characterized by their reddish color (Bartlett 1992, 287). The earliest attestations of this term are found in New Kingdom Egyptian texts where it functions as a regional descriptor in association with the activities of mobile pastoral communities—the *shasu* (Papyrus Anastasi VI; Pritchard 1969, 259). Edom as a regional descriptor functions in tandem with another term deriving from New Kingdom Egyptian texts: Seir, which is similarly used in relation to the activities of *shasu* communities, and is associated with a mountainous region (e.g., Papyrus Harris I; Giveon 1971, Doc. 25; Pritchard 1969, 262). Likewise, within the biblical tradition, Seir (שַׁעִיר) appears to have designated a mountainous subset of the greater region of Edom (e.g., Genesis 14:6, 32:3, 36:8),⁶⁰ although it was not infrequently conflated or used synonymously with the term Edom, particularly in etiological narratives (e.g., Genesis 32:3; 36:8; Knauf 1992a; Edelman 1995a, 7–11).⁶¹ Thus, in its earliest usage, the term Edom related to a geographic region that later lent its name to the polity and people of the Iron Age.

Attempts to delineate the region of Edom, and of the political entity it held, have relied predominantly on the biblical text and to a lesser degree the distribution of settlements that bear material culture similar to the best-known Edomite sites of Busayra, Tawilan, and Umm al-

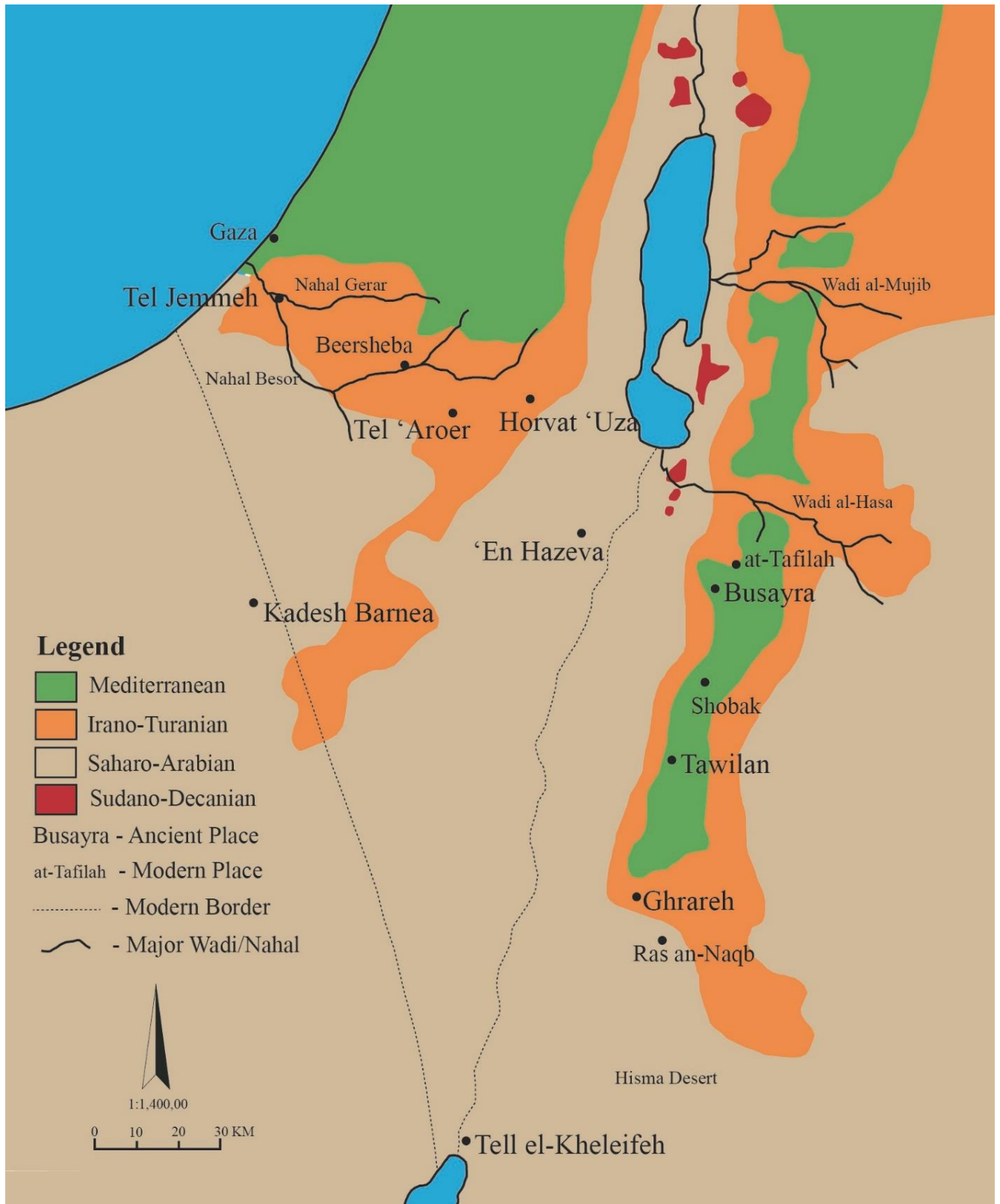
⁶⁰ It is likely that the ancient term Seir is preserved in the present-day term “Shara” that refers to the mountains extending roughly extend from Shobak in the north to Ras en-Naqb in southern Jordan (see Figure 3; Harvey 1999, 61–62).

⁶¹ Other interpretations have suggested that the geographic range of Seir and Edom included areas within the Negev, and specifically portions of the Judean Negev (Edelman 1995a, 7–11).

Biyara. In addition, significant topographical features that restrict access and movement have served as influential factors as are highlighted in the descriptions of the biblical writers. On the basis of these data, the “borders” of Edom have been posited to include the Wadi el-Hasa (biblical Brook Zered) as delineating the north, the Wadi Arabah the west, and the Syrian Desert the east. The southern border is variously described as located at the edge of the Red Sea in association with the site of Tell el-Kheleifeh, or, following the natural topography of the region, near the present-day town of Ras en-Naqab where the southern Transjordanian plateau abruptly descends and transitions into the Hisma Desert (Edelman 1995a; Beit-Arieh 1995c; Bartlett 1989). While these delineations are useful, they can also falsely inform assumptions about the region as a bounded sovereign entity as previously discussed, especially when different forms of Edomite material culture are found outside of this zone. Rather than focusing on topographical borders, it is more appropriate to examine social similarity and projections of elite sovereignty as extending throughout the region using the conceptual model of a network. Within this framework, different sites would serve as nodes that are affiliated with one another in varying degrees, with those possessing a centralized influence as more integral. This framework ultimately projects perceptions of social similarity as seen through shared behaviors and identities, and/or extensions of elite authority through power-forming activities, with distance and topography serving as constraining factors.⁶²

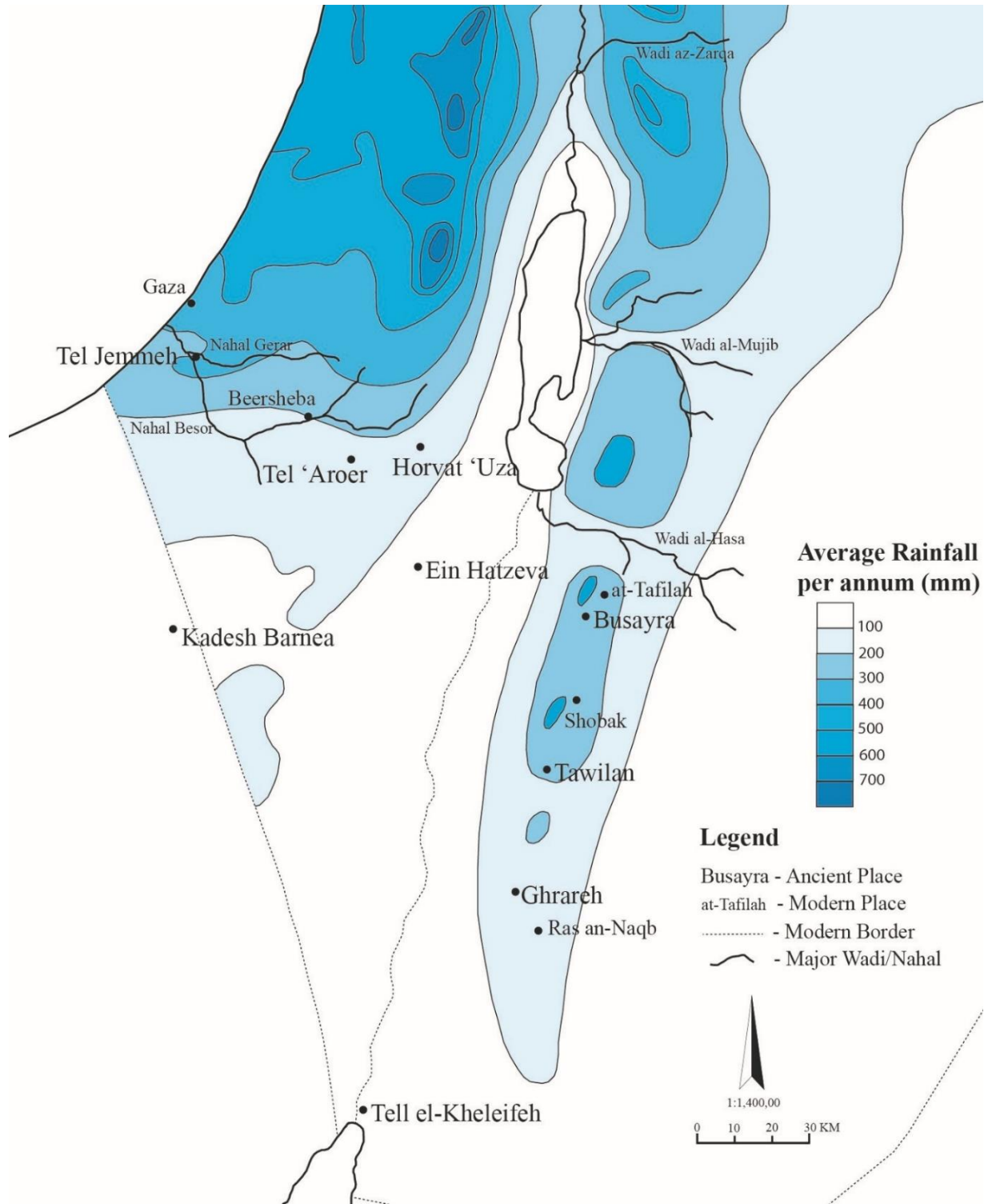
⁶² See discussion of networks and interaction in Chapter 2.A.2 (Monica Smith 2005; 2007; Osborne 2013).

Figure 3. Vegetation zones of the southern Levant. (Map by author, after Zohary 1962, map 4)



Nonetheless, this loosely delineated region of Edom is contained on its western side by the sandstone formations of the eastern Arabah, comprised of sections of igneous (crystalline) rocks. To the east of these mountain ranges, in the region of the “Edomite highlands” or “Edomite plateau,” are limestone and dolomite outcrops covered in varying amounts of sedimentation, areas that prove fertile for agriculture. Yet further east, the fertile land gives way to a geological chalk-marl-slate complex with outcrops of volcanic rock and eventually the Syrian Desert (S. of Israel 1985, Map 11). These regions present several different vegetation zones that relate to their respective rainfall patterns (see Figure 3 and 4). These vegetation zones include first a desiccated Mediterranean zone, which comprises the central area of the Edomite highlands including the major settlement area of Busayra and a corridor to the south. This region presents a Mediterranean maquis forest featuring species of oak (*Quercus calliprinos*, *Quercus boissieri* and *Quercus ithaburensis*), olive (*Olea europaea*), pine (*Pinus halepensis*), and terebinth (*Pistacia palaestina*). Dwarf shrubs and other herbaceous flora are also common, with ideal rainfall patterns reaching between 300 and 400 mm per annum (Langgut et al. 2015, 219; Zohary 1962). The Mediterranean zone consists of a discontinuous patchwork of land, much of it desiccated by the removal of vegetation and extensive soil erosion (Cordova 2007; 2009; Henry et al. 2017).

Figure 4. Average rainfall patterns of Edom and the Negev. (Map by author, data after Ababsa 2013, Figure I.12; and Survey of Israel 1985, Map 12)



Surrounding this region, the Irano-Turanian zone presents a semi-arid region featuring various species of grasses (*Poaceae*), shrubs (*Chenopodiaceae* and *Artemisia herba-alba*) and very few trees. Temperatures fluctuate broadly with rainfall patterns between 100 and 300 mm per annum (Langgut et al. 2015, 219; Zohary 1962). This zone includes the majority of the area of the Shara Mountains and the immediate surroundings of the Mediterranean zone. Further to the east, south, and within the Arabah Valley, the Saharo-Arabian vegetation zone dominates, presenting small shrubs (*Chenopodiaceae* and *Zygophyllum dumosum*), few grasses, and tamarisk trees (*Tamarix*). In general, there is little species variation. The climate is that of a desert with rainfall typically below 100 mm per annum and never exceeding 200 mm (Langgut et al. 2015, 219–20; Zohary 1962). Surrounding several of the oases of the Arabah Valley and around the shores of the Dead Sea, the vegetation is that of the Sudano-Decanian zone, with tropical flora linked to freshwater springs or wadi beds that include acacia (*Acacia*), jujube (*Ziziphus spinachristi*), and salvadora (*Salvadora persica*) species (Langgut et al. 2015, 219–20; Zohary 1962).

This unique landscape presents a number of challenges to its inhabitants. First, regarding subsistence strategies, if the rain-fed dry farming common to the southern Levant is to be conducted, then a minimum of 200 mm of rainfall per annum is necessary (Rosen 2017, 73). Using modern data as correlates for ancient environment and weather patterns, it can be demonstrated that only a restricted portion of Edom falls within, or above this range, with the most fertile areas positioned east of the Jabal and Shara Mountain ranges, namely surrounding present day Tafilah and Busayra south of the Wadi al-Hasa, and extending south to the area of Shobak and Wadi Musa (see Figure 4).⁶³ This area appears, on average, to receive consistently

⁶³ While it is difficult to reconstruct weather patterns of the ancient world, broad correlations of climate regimes and environment between the ancient world and the present do allow for the modern situation to be cautiously used as a

more than 200 mm, and at times within the range of 300–400 mm, of rainfall per annum, with the more marginal surrounding regions receiving less (Jordan National Geographic Center 1984, Map 111; Ababsa 2013, Fig. I.12).⁶⁴ However, for semi-arid and arid regions, averages are in essence artificial and can mean very little as extreme variation within even a decade is not uncommon (Rosen 2017, 73).

For the communities that straddle the traditional threshold of 200 mm of rainfall per year, divergences in rainfall patterns could be rather acutely felt as intra- and interannual variation is indeed characteristic of Mediterranean zones. For example, in the most fertile area of Edom between 1966/1967, Tafilah and Shobak received around 400 mm of rainfall with the majority of the remainder of the highlands receiving well above the 200 mm rainfall threshold, a rather productive agricultural year (Jordan National Geographic Center 1984).⁶⁵ However, only six years earlier, during the dry 1959/1960 year, the same fertile Tafilah-Shobak corridor received barely more than 100 mm of rainfall, with the surrounding region suffering even more acutely (Jordan National Geographic Center 1984). Moreover, the majority of precipitation falls between November and April, with the remaining summer months hot and dry. These climate divergences

proxy for major periods of the Iron Age. For example, speleothem data (Bar-Matthews and Ayalon 2004; 2011) as well as radiocarbon dated palynological and organic remains from sedimentation core samples extracted from the Sea of Galilee and Dead Sea (Langgut et al. 2014; 2015; Kagan et al. 2015; Langgut, Finkelstein, and Litt 2013), demonstrate that climate patterns of the Iron Age were not overly dissimilar from the present (Issar and Zohar 2007, 27, 182–200). However, it is significant to note that the tendency to view radiocarbon dated environmental sequences on the basis of their archaeological period, envisions it as a static integral block of data and does not easily allow for interpretations of graduated change. This factor can often lead to an overemphasis on “abrupt” change between archaeological periods (Rosen 2017, 78–79).

⁶⁴ This data presents the average of the years 1942–1976 (Jordan National Geographic Center 1984, Map 111).

⁶⁵ Note, however, that years of high rainfall may have presented their own challenges dependent on the manner in which the rain fell. If substantial amounts fell within a short period of time, there would be an increase in risk of erosion of valuable sediments. This risk could in part be alleviated through terracing, although the torrential nature of the flash floods in the wadi systems adds an additional challenge, perhaps also affecting the positioning of settlements such as es-Sadeh to the tops of mountains rather than on the valley floor (Lindner, Farajat, and Zeitler 1988, 80–84).

indicate that local populations would divide their time toward greater intensity in agriculture during certain months—particularly planting and harvest—and in other months regulate pastures for herd grazing.

The fluctuations in rainfall would prove challenging for communities that relied on a certain minimum for a productive harvest, necessitating a mixed and varied subsistence program in order to ensure long-term sustainability. Modern agricultural data demonstrates that wheat and barley dry farming is well-adapted to the Mediterranean zone, which possesses the fertile red and yellow Mediterranean soils (Jordan National Geographic Center 1984, Maps 116, 117, 120, 133, 134, 135). Cultivation of olives and grape are also not uncommon within this zone, particularly in the areas surrounding Tafilah and Shobak (Jordan National Geographic Center 1984, Maps 123, 127). Limited indicators from the archaeological record of the Iron Age support these crops as the dominant agricultural staples that together with pastoralism represented the subsistence economy.

2. CERAMICS, DATING, AND THE CHRONOLOGICAL SEQUENCE OF THE EDMITE KINGDOM

One of the greater challenges in understanding the archaeology and settlement history of Edom have been issues in chronology. In Crystal Bennett's excavations at Tawilan, Umm al-Biyara, and Busayra, one of her primary objectives was to excavate a multi-strata/period site so that a chronological ceramic sequence could be attained, one that was local to southern Jordan and did not rely on external ceramic sequences. Unfortunately, such a site has yet to be excavated in the highlands of Edom, if indeed such a site exists.⁶⁶ The majority of sites appear to be single-period and to date to the late Iron Age (late eighth to sixth centuries BCE). The exceptions are Busayra,

⁶⁶ The site of Rujm Hamrat Ifdan in the lowlands of Edom does present such a multi-period site inhabited in both the early and latter portions of the Iron Age, although it is only preliminarily understood, and the settlement does not appear to be continuous through the Iron Age (N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014a).

which likely presents some degree of continuity into the fifth and perhaps fourth centuries BCE (Bienkowski 2002a, 475–82),⁶⁷ and to a lesser degree, Tawilan, which presents some material culture that can be dated to the Persian period (Bennett and Bienkowski 1995, 67–68).⁶⁸ The primary challenge remains, however, in a lack of stratified continuity from the earlier portions of the Iron Age⁶⁹ into the late Iron Age,⁷⁰ and likewise from the late Iron Age into the Nabatean period. The entire dating of the ceramic assemblage from Edom was originally fixed on a bulla from the single-period site of Umm al-Biyara that preserved the inscription: “*Qwsgr* king of Edom,” a figure who could be linked to Assyrian tribute lists and thus provide an absolute date for Umm al-Biyara (van der Veen 2011). On the basis of ceramic correlates from other sites to Umm al-Biyara, a late Iron Age date was extended across the region.⁷¹

⁶⁷ Due to challenges in the excavation methodology employed and the paucity of remains from these later centuries (Bienkowski 2002a, 349–51), activity at the site during these later periods was likely quite ephemeral.

⁶⁸ It is significant to note that many of the Iron II ceramic forms of Transjordan continued in use into the Persian period so that there is not a distinct “Persian period” assemblage per se (Bienkowski 2008). Furthermore, many of the challenges in the inability to determine earlier Iron Age sites may lie in the fact that the ceramics of the late Iron Age were in use in preceding periods but were not recognized as such. In this way, our understanding of “late Iron Age” sites may be skewed, and actually represent settlement activity earlier in the Iron II and also later, into the early Persian period. Regardless, the general patterns of a significant increase in settlement during the late Iron Age is undeniable.

⁶⁹ Israel Finkelstein attempted to define the Iron I forms of Edom on the basis of similar forms from Iron I Palestine (using Izbet Sartah and Shiloh for parallels), due to his assumption that they had been mixed into later contexts and not identified due to poor stratigraphic control (Finkelstein 1992a; 1995, 127–37). His suggestion is challenged by the fact that he relied on parallel sites regionally distant and external to Edom and did not account for that fact that many of these forms could continue in use for centuries. Further, his identification of only certain specific functional forms rather than isolating an entire assemblage limits its validity (see discussion in Bienkowski (1992, 108) and Zeitler (1992, 171)).

⁷⁰ The recent re-investigations at Tawilan took radiocarbon dates to aid in the dating of its habitation sequence. The results suggest some activity at Tawilan in the early eighth or perhaps even within the ninth century BCE; although due to challenges in the calibration curve during this period of the Iron Age and the isolated nature of this early date in Edom, the authors express hesitance and caution in the use of such an early ninth century BCE date (N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 285–87). Regardless of its veracity, the nature of Tawilan as a single period site (with smaller sub-phases attested) and the homogeneity of the ceramic assemblage challenges the articulation of activity prior to the late eighth century.

⁷¹ Further challenges were encountered in the study of the pottery from Edom, particularly in light of regional variances in ceramics (Bienkowski and van der Steen 2001, 26). Of note is the debate that surrounded the painted vs. non-painted wares and whether the decorated forms were indicative of an earlier or later period. As the decorated wares were dominant at Busayra and present in not insignificant numbers at Tawilan, and were almost entirely

A major breakthrough in understanding Edomite settlement came as a result of the work on the Edomite Lowlands Regional Archaeology Project that excavated material culture on the base of the Edomite plateau in the Wadi Arabah at sites including Khirbet en-Nahas (Levy, Najjar, Higham, et al. 2014), Khirbat al-Jariya (Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 798–816), and Wadi Fidan 40 (Beherec, Najjar, and Levy 2014; Beherec 2011). These sites presented a wealth of archaeological data dated to the late twelfth through early ninth centuries BCE (Levy, Najjar, Ben-Yosef, et al. 2014). The chronology of these sites was substantiated by radiocarbon dating although unfortunately most dates relied on wood and not short-lived organic samples. The results of this work provided new attempts at ceramic sequences for Edom and the formulation of the “lowlands to highlands” hypothesis, arguing that in the earlier portion of the Iron Age the dominant identifiable activity was to be found in the lowlands, while the descendants of these persons later in the Iron Age were predominantly situated within the highlands (N. Smith and Levy 2014; N. Smith, Goren, and Levy 2014).

Similar to southern Transjordan, the recent publication of many of the sites within the northeastern Negev has resulted in a much more refined ability to examine ceramic parallels between Edom and the Negev and to further chronologically define the sites of Edom. Most notable of the Negevite sites that inform the early period of the kingdom of Edom include Beersheba (strata III–II) and Arad (strata X–VIII) from which “Edomite” style pottery with clear

lacking from other sites such as Umm al-Biyara, Stephen Hart argued that the painted wares dated to a period after the plain wares (Hart 1995a; 1989). His hypothesis was built on the *Qwsgr* seal at Umm al-Biyara that provided a fixed date within the seventh century BCE (van der Veen 2011), and the cuneiform tablet dated to the reign of “Darius” from Tawilan (Dalley 1995), which gave a firm Persian period date, thus sequentially later than Umm al-Biyara. As no painted wares were found on Umm al-Biyara, but were extensively found at Tawilan, Hart suggested that the painted forms were chronologically later. Without delving too deeply into the discussion, Hart’s hypothesis did not stand as other interpretations relating to site location, the function of ceramics, and the social significance of the use of painted forms provided more accurate explanations that instead demonstrate a contemporaneity to the painted and non-painted forms (e.g., Bienkowski 1995c; Zeitler 1992). Furthermore, the questionable context of the Tawilan cuneiform inscription and the nature of its discovery within a “fill-accumulation deposit,” do not allow for it to be successfully used a chronological peg (Bennett and Bienkowski 1995, 102).

parallels to Busayra are found as early as the eighth century BCE (Singer-Avitz 2014).⁷² Beyond the implications these ceramics hold for discussions of interaction within the northeastern Negev, they indicate that the identical ceramics from sites such as Busayra can be dated at least within the late eighth century BCE, thus not necessitating such a significance placed on a seventh century BCE settlement period as is promoted by the *Qwsgr* seal from Umm al-Biyara (Bienkowski 1992a). Rather, the rise of sociopolitical complexity and settlement of the major Edomite sites, especially Busayra, are intimated from external ceramic inferences to occur well within the eighth century BCE.

3. PROLOGUE: EDOM BEFORE THE EDMITE POLITY

The sequence of settlement activity on the south Transjordanian plateau prior to the eighth century BCE historical emergence of the Edomite kingdom, is poorly understood due to the paucity of archaeological settlement data. From the Late Bronze Age, no site excavated in the highlands has provided evidence of occupation. The results from archaeological surveys are likewise sparse enough that the Late Bronze Age is seldom featured as a definable unit within highland surveys (B. MacDonald, Clark, and Herr 2016, 482; B. MacDonald 2012, 421; B. MacDonald et al. 2004, 56).⁷³ The data is similar for the lowland regions of the Wadi al-Hasa to the north, and the lowland southern Ghors and northeast Arabah (B. MacDonald et al. 1992, 71). There is Late Bronze Age data from the western and most fertile part of the Wadi al-Hasa, but again it is limited (B. MacDonald 1988, 170). This is not necessarily to imply that the region was

⁷² Likewise, Edomite pottery has also been identified at other northeastern Negev sites that present habitation during the eighth century BCE, namely Tel ‘Aroer (strata IV–III), Tel ‘Ira (Stratum VII), and Kadash Barnea (Stratum III).

⁷³ An exception to the lacuna of Late Bronze Age sites may be the site SAAS 271 where Chalcolithic and Middle/Late Bronze sherds were collected, the site being described as a seasonal pastoralist camp (B. MacDonald, Clark, and Herr 2016, 482, 377–78). This identification, however, rests upon a single potential Late Bronze sherd.

entirely devoid of human presence and activity during the Late Bronze Age, but rather that patterns of sedentary habitation are lacking.⁷⁴

The limited Egyptian references to the region appear to support the survey data. These sources primarily describe the region in relation to the pastoral activities of different mobile *shasu* communities (Ward 1992).⁷⁵ Egyptian texts such as Papyrus Anastasi VI, dating to the reign Merneptah record: “[We] have finished letting the [*shasu*] tribes of Edom/Seir pass the Fortress [of] Mer-ne-Ptah...” (Pritchard 1969, 259). In this text the *shasu* are seen entering Egypt, presumably for their flocks to graze during a period of environmental necessity. Other texts describe limited campaigns into the region, including the actions of Ramesses II who claims to have “plundered the *shasu*-land, captured the mountain of Seir” (Giveon 1971, Doc. 25). Likewise, Papyrus Harris I preserves the boast of Ramesses III who claims to have “destroyed the people of Seir among the [*shasu*] tribes... razed their tents, their people, their property, and their cattle as well, without number...” (Pritchard 1969, 262).⁷⁶ These texts, together with the lack of settlement data from archaeological survey suggest a sparsely inhabited and decentralized landscape characterized by the pastoral activity of mobile communities (B. MacDonald 2015, 22).⁷⁷

⁷⁴ While substantial sedentary activity is lacking for the region, this situation may be exacerbated by an incomplete understanding of the ceramic repertoire for the region.

⁷⁵ The term *shasu* as an Egyptian social classification has been understood to mean “wanderer” in Egyptian, or “plunderer” based upon the Semitic derivation of שש. As these references derive from an Egyptian context, the translation “wanderer” is preferred which affords well with the mobile communities of the arid and semi-arid regions of the southern Levant (Redford 1992, 271–72; Giveon 1971, 261–63; Ward 1972, 56–59).

⁷⁶ It has also been suggested that the toponymic lists of Ramesses II at Karnak at Ramesses III at Medinet Habu preserve “Edomite” tribal names in the preservation of the consonants *q* and *ś*, argued to be an Egyptian rendering of Semitic קש (qws), serving as a theophoric element of the primary deity of the Iron II within Late Bronze tribal names (Oded 1971).

⁷⁷ The Exodus traditions that describe interactions between the Israelites and the King of Edom and an Edomite army (e.g., Numbers 20: 14–21), ought not be viewed as an event reflecting some situation in the Late Bronze or early Iron Age, but rather a product reflecting the context more closely associated with the period in which the text

It is within the early Iron Age that archaeological settlement data for the region becomes somewhat more visible. In the highlands, on the Edomite plateau, limited numbers of sites begin to appear in the Iron I, although these are restricted to the northern areas of the Wadi al-Hasa and Tafilah-Busayra region (B. MacDonald 1988, 171–89; B. MacDonald et al. 2004, 56), and are much less attested on the southern half of the plateau (B. MacDonald 2012, 421; B. MacDonald, Clark, and Herr 2016, 482–83).⁷⁸ These sites appear to consist primarily of small agricultural hamlets, farmsteads, and sites associated with pastoralism. In other words, these sites evidence sparse sedentary settlement focused on agropastoral subsistence. More intensive activity, however, was identified in the work of the Edomite Lowlands Regional Archaeological Project (ELRAP) in the Faynan mining district.⁷⁹ In particular, the copper mining and production activities associated with the sites of Khirbat al-Jariya and Khirbat en-Nahas were established on the basis of radiocarbon data to the period spanning the twelfth through early ninth century BCE, with activity at Khirbat en-Nahas most prominent in the tenth century BCE (Levy, Najjar, Higham, et al. 2014; Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 778–79). The presence of a nearby cemetery, Wadi Fidan 40 (Beherec, Najjar, and Levy 2014; Beherec 2011), provides evidence of the communities affiliated with the copper production activities (Beherec et al. 2016). The

was written, thus reflecting the realia of the late Iron Age (Schniedewind 2004). Such a degree of sociopolitical centralization and organization finds no archaeological context except during the Iron Age. Whether this is the late Iron Age as has long been suggested, or earlier in the Iron Age as has recently been argued (Ben-Yosef 2019), remains to be determined. Rather, older portions of the Hebrew Bible, such as the poetry of Exodus 15 (Schniedewind 2013, 70–72; Hendel 2015), which loosely alludes to a decentralized heterarchical organization of the region (v. 15) paint a picture more congruent with the archaeological data.

⁷⁸ See, however, Hart's critique of Macdonald's earlier methodology (Hart 1992, 94–96). In the absence of a stratified Iron I to Iron II sequence it is possible that there is additional Iron I activity and habitation in the highlands, but that it has rather been classified as Iron II due to the continuity of many of the ceramic forms. Further study is needed to re-evaluate the ceramics of these surveys in light of the radiocarbon dated ceramic sequence and typology created by Smith and Levy from the excavations in the Faynan region (N. Smith and Levy 2014).

⁷⁹ Likewise, the recent and renewed work at Timna presents an additional context of related activity within the region, but is unfortunately beyond the scope of this work (Ben-Yosef et al. 2012; Ben-Yosef 2018; 2019).

evidence from Wadi Fidan 40 suggests in part that the copper production activities were largely performed by the local inhabitants of the region, who, as Levy and Ben-Yosef argue, are to be seen as the cultural precursors to the Edomites of the later Iron Age (Levy 2009; Levy, Najjar, Higham, et al. 2014, 232; Ben-Yosef et al. 2019).⁸⁰ According to this new data, the activities of the Faynan mining district appear to serve as the antecedent to the later emergence of the Edomite kingdom. Despite this paradigm altering new data, the transition from the early to late Iron Age in terms of settlement shifts and the developments in sociopolitical complexities awaits future analysis.

4. THE BEGINNINGS OF THE EDMITE POLITY AND ITS RELATIONS WITH ASSYRIA

Archaeological surveys identified a substantial increase in the number of settlements in the Edomite highlands dating to the second half of the Iron II period (B. MacDonald 2015, 24–41; B. MacDonald, Clark, and Herr 2016, 482–87; B. MacDonald 2012, 421–25; B. MacDonald et al. 2004, 56–58; 1992, 73–81; B. MacDonald 1988, 171–89). This increase includes the first appearance of the larger farming settlements at the sites of Tawilan and Khirbat ad-Dabba, as well as the rise of the only truly large city, Busayra. The majority of other settlements noted in surveys primarily constitute villages, farmsteads, pastoral enclosures, mountaintop dwellings, and some small fortified towers or fortlets. The causal factors of the rise of sedentary settlements within the Iron II is not well understood but appear to be contemporaneous to the increasing sociopolitical complexity that resulted in the Edomite kingdom. It is at this point that the references to Edom from Assyrian sources become instructive (see Table 1).

⁸⁰ For a similar argument advocating for local agency in copper production at Timna, see Avner (2014).

Table 1. References to Edom within Assyrian Inscriptions (after Crowell 2004, 99).⁸¹

| Assyrian King | Date BCE | Reference to Edom | Comments | Reference |
|-------------------------|----------|---------------------------|--|---|
| Adad-Nirari III | 796 | “Edom” | Payment: <i>maddattu</i> ; <i>biltu</i> | (Grayson 1996, 3:212–13, no. 8) |
| Tiglath-Pileser III | 734 | “Qauš-malaka of Edom” | Payment: <i>maddatu</i> | (Tadmor 1994, 170–71, Summary 7; Pritchard 1969, 282) |
| Sargon II ⁸² | 712 | “Edom” | Payment: <i>tāmartu</i> | (Fuchs 1998, 44–46, 73–74) |
| Sennacherib | 701 | “Ayyarammu of Edom” | Payment: <i>tāmartu</i> ; <i>šadlu</i> ; troops? | (Frahm 1997, 10–11; Pritchard 1969, 287) |
| Esarhaddon | 680 | “Qauš-gabar King of Edom” | Payment: building material | (Borger 1956, 48–49; Pritchard 1969, 291) |
| Assurbanipal | 667 | “Qauš-gabar King of Edom” | Payment: <i>tāmartu</i> ; troops | (Borger 1996, 18–20, 212; Pritchard 1969, 294) |
| Assurbanipal | 641 | “Edom” | Payment: troops | (Borger 1996, 61–62, 245) |

Edom is first mentioned as paying tribute to Assyria during the reign of Adad-Nirari III (811–783 BCE) with the tribute occurring during the early eighth century BCE.⁸³ The reference to Edom contains no mention of a king or leader, merely a reference to the region/polity in line with the references to the other tribute bearing polities. Edom next appears in Assyrian sources during the reign of Tiglath-Pileser III, again paying tribute, this time by a certain Qaušmalaka (*Qwsmkk*). Although not specifically identified as a king, Qaušmalaka is the first individual who can be recognized as acting on behalf of Edom. This eighth century BCE moment coincides with the appearance of Edomite material culture in stratified Negevite sites, and a chronologically

⁸¹ This chart provides only the most significant references from Assyrian texts. For a more substantial list and discussion of these and additional references, see Crowell (2004, 76–99).

⁸² Edom is also mentioned in the Sargon Geography, although only in a loose geographical sense (Horowitz 1998, 68–75).

⁸³ It is notable that in the annals of Shalmaneser III there is no mention of Edom, despite reference to Israel and Ammon. Presumably at this point in the ninth century BCE Edom lacked the sociopolitical organization and coherence to be a participant in these conflicts.

contemporaneous tradition in the Hebrew Bible concerning an Edomite king conquering the site of Elath, presumably a reference to Tell el-Kheleifeh (see discussion in Pratico (1993, 17–22)). The cumulative evidence of tribute payments, increased sedentary settlements, the distribution of an iconic material culture, and reference to a militaristic campaign provide more than sufficient evidence for a coherent sociopolitical Edomite entity at least as early as the second half of eighth century BCE.

The biblical data regarding early Edom is more difficult to untangle. Despite the numerous references to Edom and Edomites in the monarchic traditions of the Hebrew Bible, they are not without their challenges (see Table 2). Several of these earliest references to Edom, at least in terms of their narrative setting, present Edom in the manner of a traditional-enemy trope (1 Samuel 14:47–48; 1 Kings 11:14–22), with contradictory information regarding sociopolitical complexity (1 Kings 22:47; 2 Kings 3:4–27; 2 Kings 8:20–22), or with claims that do not appear to match the archaeological survey and excavation data of the Edomite plateau (2 Samuel 8:12–14).⁸⁴ More intriguing are the references to Edomite kingship, wherein a narrative setting of the mid-ninth century BCE, the biblical text states: “...there was no king in Edom; a deputy was king” (1 Kings 22:47). Later the text states that: “Edom revolted against the rule of Judah and set up a king of their own” (2 Kings 8:20–22). These references appear to presume that Edom had been subjugated by Judah following the activities recorded regarding David and Joab (2 Sam. 8:12–14), and have been argued by some to reference the beginning of self-rule in Edom (Bartlett 1989, 117–18). Archaeologically, however, there is little data that could substantiate these claims for the mid-ninth century BCE.

⁸⁴ For a substantial discussion of these challenges, see discussion in Crowell (2004, 141–202).

Table 2. Selected monarchic period references to Edom and Edomites from the Hebrew Bible.⁸⁵

| King | Date (BCE) | Reference to Edom | Comments | Reference |
|---------------------|---------------------------|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| Saul | 11 th cent. | “he fought against all his enemies...against Edom” | Generic reference to traditional enemies | 1 Sam. 14:47–48 |
| David | 10 th cent. | “waged war against... valley of Salt. He put garrisons in Edom” | Closely resembles campaign of Amaziah (see below) | 2 Sam. 8:12–14; 1 Chron. 18:11–13 |
| Solomon | 10 th cent. | “...an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite” | Patterned theme of an adversary from a traditional enemy? ⁸⁶ | 1 Kings 11:14–22 |
| Jehoshaphat (Judah) | mid-9 th cent. | “There was no king in Edom; a deputy was king” | Appears at odds with 2 Kings 3 | 1 Kings 22:47 |
| Jehoshaphat (Judah) | mid-9 th cent. | “...and the king of Edom set out” | From the joint campaign of Israel, Judah, and Edom against Mesha of Moab | 2 Kings 3:4–27 |
| Jehoram (Judah) | ca. 849–842 | “Edom revolted against the rule of Judah and set up a king of their own” | Allusion to 2 Sam. 8:12–14? | 2 Kings 8:20–22; 2 Chron. 21:8–10 |
| Amaziah (Judah) | ca. 796–767 | “killed 10,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt. He took Sela’ by storm” | Narrative setting corresponds to the earliest Assyrian reference to Edom | 2 Kings 14:7; 2 Chron. 25:11–14 |
| Ahaz (Judah) | ca. 732–716 | “the king of Edom recovered Elath for Edom and drove the Judeans from Elath” ⁸⁷ | Qauš-malaka of Edom mentioned in Assyrian sources | 2 Kings 16:6; 2 Chron. 28:16–18 |

Rather, it is in the second half of the eighth century BCE that we see the turning points for a more visible, complex sociopolitical organization in Edom, at least that can be traced

⁸⁵ This chart uses only select references to Edom that are constructive regarding a Judahite perspective of Edom during the monarchic period. The use of much of this data is challenging due to the nature and date of composition, as well as the transmission of the text. For more substantive discussion, see Crowell (2004, 141–202).

⁸⁶ See also the argument that this is a scribal error for “Hadad the Aramean” (Lemaire 1988; see also n. 87).

⁸⁷ Note that the Masoretic text preserves “ארמ” (Aram) although this is presumably an error for “אדמ” (Edom) as noted in the *qere*, and as geographic logic would dictate. On this discrepancy between Edom and Aram, see also Lemaire (1988).

through sedentary activity and linked to textual sources. This period coincides with the arrival of Assyrian influence in the southern Levant and the fall of Damascus (Byrne 2003). It is at the site of Busayra, unique in its at least 8 ha size, that additional evidence for the beginning of the polity of Edom can be identified, beginnings that appear linked to Assyrian influences. On the acropolis in Area A stands a large temple complex built atop a podium (Bienkowski 2002a, 71–72, 94–95). Nearby in Area C, also on a podium was an architectural complex interpreted as a palace and complete with a toilet (Bienkowski 2002a, 199). Collectively, the podia (Assyrian *tamlû*), the temple, and the palace all represent or bear features that are distinctively Assyrian (Reich 1992, 219–20; Bennett 1982; Crowell 2004, 235–44), attested in Assyria (e.g., Nimrud, Khorsabad, Nineveh, and Kar Shalmaneser; see G. Turner [1970] and Loud [1936]), and at sites in the Levant that bear strong Assyrian traditions (Stern 2001, 26–29; Reich 1992). Additional Assyrian influences can be seen in a number of ceramic forms from Edom that imitate Assyrian Palace Ware (Anastasio 2010, 24–26; Crowell 2004, 245–48).

The influence of Assyria among the elite actors at Edom's preeminent city of Busayra is significant. The act of paying tribute, first to Adad-Nirari III in the early eighth century BCE, may have been one of the mechanisms by which political hierarchy in Edom was established or at least formalized on an international level. This tribute was likely first paid by the most prominent member(s) of a dominant tribe or community who then used their position and status to exert their influence at Busayra and begin or continue to establish their position atop the sociopolitical hierarchy. Decades later, when Qaušmalaka paid tribute to Tiglath-Pileser III in 734 BCE, this political hierarchy appears to have been firmly established at Busayra. At this time Edom became formally entrenched as an Assyrian vassal (Tadmor 1994, 9; Bartlett 1989, 128; Ahlström 1993, 642), or to use a perhaps more appropriate term, a client state (Postgate

1992b).⁸⁸ This period also coincides with the construction of large, elite, Assyrian-style structures atop the acropolis at Busayra, whose construction and evocation of Assyrian grandeur would have served as potent symbols of the divine and imperially sanctioned authority of the elite ruling there.

The precise mechanisms by which state formation (or kingdom formation) in Edom was achieved remain somewhat speculative. In one of the few works that seeks to address this issue, Benjamin Porter has outlined several processes by which this may have come about, accounting for the contextually contingent factors specific to this region (Porter 2004). Porter argues that elites in Edom garnered and maintained their loose hold over society through the promotion of a unifying identity and by fostering goodwill and asymmetrical relations through gift giving. A unified identity was achieved in part through the promotion of an inclusive *Qws* cult. The position of these elites was then further solidified by campaigns and an expansion of the polity, as well as the construction of Busayra to serve as a regional political and administrative center (Porter 2004, 379–89). The position of these elites, however, was far from stable due to the challenges of maintaining the goodwill of, and power over, the inhabitants of Edom, while navigating both a subservient and productive client status to first Assyria, and then Babylon. In particular, the need to provide tribute to Assyria necessitated both an economic surplus within the region and the means and authority by which to effectively gather it. In order to achieve this, Porter argues that a transition from pastoral nomadism toward greater forms of sedentary subsistence practices were encouraged by elite actors. Increased sedentarism would have created

⁸⁸ Bienkowski suggests that this construction likely dates to the seventh century BCE (Bienkowski 2002a, 475–78), although there are no firm reasons why it cannot be half a century prior. His dating appears influenced by the gravitational pull of the date of the *Qwsgr* seal from Umm al-Biyara. In light of the above confluence of textual sources and the excavated finds from stratified eighth century BCE sites in the northeastern Negev, a late eighth century BCE date (or perhaps slightly earlier) is more harmonious. Crowell similarly suggests that the podia may have been constructed around the time of Sargon II as this palatial architectural method is first found in his reign (Crowell 2004, 236; see also Bienkowski 1995a).

additional reliance on the rising elite, and allowed for further unity throughout the segmentary society through the promotion of social and economic bonds while also coinciding with increased regional stability (Porter 2004, 379–80).⁸⁹

5. THE CHARACTER OF EDOM DURING THE IRON II

Despite efforts undertaken by the elites at Busayra, Edom does not appear to have been as wholly integrated and unified as its neighbors to the north and west. Beyond Busayra, the social landscape of Edom appears decentralized, with few sites larger than a hectare. These settlements consist primarily of small villages, hamlets, and farmsteads (see Figure 5).⁹⁰ The largest settlements include Khirbat ad-Dabba at approximately 4 ha (Whiting et al. 2008; 2009), Tawilan and associated Khirbat an-Nawafra at approximately 1 ha (Bennett and Bienkowski 1995; N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b; 'Amr et al. 2000), and Ghrareh similarly at 1 ha (Hart 1987; 1988; 1989). The character of these sites appear to be based primarily on agropastoral subsistence, with inconsistent patterns of fortification and little evidence for public structures.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Porter is met with harsh criticism (e.g., Bienkowski 2009), from entrenched positions that promote their own “tribal” model (e.g., Bienkowski 2014, 785–87; Bienkowski and van der Steen 2001; LaBianca and Younker 1995). These other tribal models though, do not account for the historically contingent complexities and processes surrounding internal factors responsible for the creation of sociopolitical cohesion and coherence, and rather rely on external stimuli, ecology, and the general sense of a timeless, constant “tribal” form (see critique in Routledge 2004, 115–23; Porter 2013, 55–57).

⁹⁰ This discussion follows the classification system of Crowell (2004, 21–67). Both Harvey (1999, 207–92) and Crowell (2004, 21–67) present a classificatory system of Edomite sites, although both now are dated and remain unpublished. Only the better-known sites are discussed in this work. See Harvey (1999, 207–92), MacDonald (2015, 24–41), and the aforementioned regional surveys (Chapter 1.B.3.a) for a more comprehensive list of sites encountered in survey.

⁹¹ Khirbat ad-Dabba and Ghrareh, for example, appear to present limited fortifications while Tawilan does not. Public buildings have not been identified in the excavations at Khirbat ad-Dabba or Tawilan.

Figure 5. Map of sites and trade routes in Edom. (Map by author)



The site of Ghrareh presents a slightly different situation as it possesses fortification walls around the hill on which it is located, complete with a gate and a tower adjacent a large central building that may have served as a large residence (Hart 1988; 1987, 36–38; 1989, 10–19). Although Ghrareh was still presumably engaged in agriculture, its fortifications, defensible position, and its strategic location indicate that it likely held a specific function in coordination with Busayra (Hart 1987, 38; 1988, 98). Notably, its geographic position at the very southern end of the settled area of Edom adjacent to the confluence of the King’s Highway and the Wadi Delaghah that provided easy access to the Arabah, suggests that its strategic location was likely its *raison d’être*.⁹² The ability to control this particular node at the confluence of these routes, and at the edge of the southern Edomite plateau would have been of significant strategic interest to those ruling at Busayra, and it is not difficult to envision the large central structure at Ghrareh as serving as the base of an important individual loyal to Busayra.

Smaller residential sites are widely attested across the region. These sites range from small farmsteads to house clusters and hamlets beneath 1 ha in size.⁹³ They are unfortified and emphasize agricultural and pastoral activities, making use of terrace farming, and with the rooms in the domestic structures placing an emphasis on storage. Their locations as predominantly within the agriculturally productive regions of the Edomite plateau and in fertile areas of the Wadi al-Hasa, suggest that they were operating at a level above mere subsistence, likely

⁹² The significance of this route and the access it affords is better intimated in the Roman period, where the site of ‘Ayn Gharandal (Arieldela) was positioned in the Wadi Arabah at the nexus where this route from the highlands entered the Arabah (R. Darby and Darby 2012).

⁹³ These small residential sites include: Khirbat al-Megheitah (Hart 1987; 1989, 56–57); Khirbat al-Malayqtah (N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b); Khirbat al-Iraq Shmaliya (N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b); Khirbat al-Kur (formerly Khirbat al-Iraq Junubiya; N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b); Kutle II (Lindner et al. 1998, 228–29); Kutle III (Lindner et al. 1998, 233–34); Deraj I (Lindner et al. 1998, 232–33); ash-Shorabat (Bienkowski 1995a; Bienkowski et al. 1997; Bienkowski and Adams 1999); Khirbat Dharih (al-Muheisen and Villeneuve 2005); Khirbat Dahaha (Tholbecq 2001; Glueck 1935, 78) Wadi ‘Anabah (Tholbecq 2001, 402) and Khirbat al-Qarara/al-Muzayr‘a (Tholbecq 2001, 402), among numerous others encountered in survey.

producing an agricultural surplus that could have been taxed. This is exemplified in sites that have been more methodically excavated such as Khirbat al-Iraq Shmaliya connected with the nearby site of Khirbat al-Kur, where small storage rooms were found with complete store jars, some possessing stamp seals, and with evidence for small-scale metal working (N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 268–74). The presence of cosmetic palettes and higher quality decorated ceramics further indicates that many of these sites operated above a level of subsistence in their ability to acquire externally produced products (N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 268–74). In their totality, these sites represent small sedentary families and communities.

Beyond the residential sites, and perhaps the most enigmatic of Edom, are the mountaintop sites.⁹⁴ Ranging from the Jabal Mountains in the north near the Wadi al-Hasa, to the southern end of the Shara Mountains near Ghrareh in the south, these sites are found scattered throughout the igneous and sandstone mountain ranges that separate the Edomite plateau from the Wadi Arabah. Of these, only the site of Umm al-Biyara has been extensively excavated (Bienkowski 2011c).⁹⁵ While presenting similar features to the residential sites in their focus on domestic life and agropastoral subsistence, these mountaintop sites defy singular functional interpretations and likely fulfilled a variety of necessities based on socially and regionally

⁹⁴ The mountaintop sites are eloquently described within Judahite traditions concerning Edom: “...you who live in the clefts of the rock, who hold the height of the hill. Although you make your nest as high as the eagle’s, from there I will bring you down, says the Lord” (Jeremiah 49:16), and: “you that live in the clefts of the rock, whose dwelling is in the heights. You say in your heart, “who will bring me down to the ground?” Though you soar aloft like the eagle, though your nest is set among the stars, from there I will bring you down says the Lord” (Obadiah 1:3–4).

⁹⁵ These sites, listed from north to south include: Qosa el-Hamra (Ben-David 2015, 230–31; Glueck 1939a, 42); Sela’ (Da Riva 2019; 2016; Da Riva et al. 2017; Dalley and Goguel 1997; Raz, Raz, and Uchitel 2001; Hart 1986; Lindner 1992); Shag Rish (Sheikh er-Rish, Ben-David 2015, 229; Glueck 1939, 38–41); Qurayyat al-Mansur (Hübner 2004); Ba’ja III (Bienert, Lamprichs, and Vieweger 2000; Lindner and Farajat 1987; Lindner 1992; Zeitler 1992); Jabal al-Khubtha (Lindner et al. 1997); Umm al-Biyara (Bienkowski 2011c; Schmid and Bienkowski 2011); Jabal Qseir (Lindner et al. 1996); es-Sadeh (Umm el-‘Ala; Lindner, Farajat, and Zeitler 1988; Lindner et al. 1990; Lindner 1992); and recently discovered el-Manktaa (<http://www.apaame.org/2015/01/flight-20141019-new-edomite-stronghold.html>). Undoubtedly, additional mountaintop sites will be added to this list, and with fortune will be more intensively studied in the future.

contingent factors. In many cases located atop nearly inaccessible mountains, the theme of defensibility is prevalent among all of them. Due to their inaccessibility, many bear no defensive features atop them, as the cliffs of the mountains served this function. The only site that appears to present regular fortifications is the site of Qosa el-Hamra in the north, which possessed a 1.5 m thick wall complete with towers, surrounding the approximately half hectare summit (Ben-David 2015, 230–31; Glueck 1939a, 42). The topography of the mountains in this northern region, however, differ from those to the south so that it appears as though Qosa el-Hamra is built atop a spur, similar to Ghrareh in the south. Further, its location in the Wadi Feifa near the access point to the Wadi at-Tafilah indicates an ability to monitor access to and from the Arabah into one of the most agriculturally fertile areas of Edom. The coordination and labor required to construct Qosa el-Hamra's defenses, and its location at a potential access to the plateau suggest that similar to Ghrareh, this site may have fulfilled a strategic role desired by those at Busayra.

Other mountaintop sites are located in strategic positions within or at the head of major wadi systems that provide passage from the Edomite plateau through the mountains to the Arabah, including Shag Rish in the Wadi Dana (Sheikh er-Rish, Ben-David 2015, 229; Glueck 1939, 38–41), Qurayyat al-Mansur in the Wadi al-Faid (Hübner 2004), Umm al-Biyara in the Petra region (Bienkowski 2011), es-Sadeh in the Wadi es-Sadeh (Lindner, Farajat, and Zeitler 1988; Lindner et al. 1990), and el-Mankhtaa in the Wadi Suweid.⁹⁶ While not immediately determining their sole function, the question of access from the lowlands to highlands and their access to springs and water sources located in these wadi systems, indicates the strategic position held by many of these mountaintop sites. Not all, however, were located along these access routes, so that their interpretation solely as a defensive measure is not permitted. Sites such as

⁹⁶ El-Mankhtaa is not yet published and only known from limited exploration: <http://www.apaame.org/2015/01/flight-20141019-new-edomite-stronghold.html>.

Jabal al-Khubtha (Lindner et al. 1997), Jabal Qseir (Lindner et al. 1996), Ba'ja III (Bienert, Lamprichs, and Vieweger 2000; Lindner and Farajat 1987), es-Sadeh (Lindner, Farajat, and Zeitler 1988; Lindner et al. 1990), and Umm al-Biyara (Bienkowski 2011c), are all located around fertile lands and could have provided a central place of refuge for the inhabitants of the surrounding region whose farmsteads were not fortified. The factor of visibility that these mountaintop sites likewise offered is significant, as due to the topographical nature of this mountainous region, visibility from the valley floors is severely limited. From the heights of Umm al-Biyara for example, the nearby contemporaneous sites of Jabal al-Khubtha, Tawilan, and Khirbat an-Nawafra are clearly visible, and one can see substantial portions of the area surrounding Petra, including Jabal Harun⁹⁷ and into the Wadi Arabah.⁹⁸ Likewise, from the heights of Umm al-Biyara, the acoustic capabilities are such that one can hear conversations from the valley floor of the surrounding area, and sounds and movements from up to several kilometers away (Schmid and Bienkowski 2011, 106–7). Heightened acoustic abilities was likely a feature of many of the other mountaintop sites as well.

Activity atop the mountaintop sites, when data are available, appears to be decidedly domestic with a focus on storage.⁹⁹ As noted by Lindner and Knauf, storage jars dominate the ceramic assemblages of these sites, particularly on Jabal al-Khubtha (Lindner and Knauf 1997, 261). Furthermore, many of the sites (especially es-Sadeh, Jabal Qseir, and el-Mankhtaa), preserve large compartmented “longhouse” structures that may have served as storage areas. The

⁹⁷ It is surprising that there does not appear to have been any substantial activity atop Jabal Harun during the Iron II beyond presumed pastoral activities, as suggested by its surveyors and excavators (Hertell et al. 2013, 334–35; Kouki and Lavento 2013; Fiema, Frösén, and Holappa 2016; Fiema and Frösén 2008). The strategic location of Jabal Harun as the tallest mountain in the region and providing an excellent view of the neighboring Petra and Wadi Arabah regions would also suggest desirability for the late Iron Age.

⁹⁸ Personal observation.

⁹⁹ Information for Qosa el-Hamra, Shag Rish, and el-Mankhtaa is nearly non-existent.

longhouses are notable in their size, ranging from 22 x 10 m on Jabal Qseir, to es-Sadeh where they measure 20 m, 47 m, and 83 m in length, with some serving to also restrict access to and from the summit, perhaps for defensive or pastoral purposes (Lindner et al. 1996, 146; Lindner, Farajat, and Zeitler 1988, 80). The area around Jabal Qseir, es-Sadeh, and el-Mankhtaa appear highly conducive to pastoralism, and while perhaps lacking the same degree of agricultural potential as the plateau, were not without cultivable areas. The regions around Ba'ja III and Umm al-Biyara appear to have been especially fertile. Bienkowski has suggested that at many of the mountaintop sites in addition to pastoralism, only small-scale horticulture rather than agriculture was feasible (Bienkowski 2011a, 123). Likewise, an ostrakon bearing a receipt for oil found atop Umm al-Biyara (al-Ghul 2011), and the substantial evidence for viticulture during the Nabatean period, suggests that olives and grapes could also be exploited in these regions (Bienkowski 2011a, 123).¹⁰⁰ Regardless, the lack of ability for agriculture atop these sites indicates that cereal foods had to be brought to the summits from the surrounding areas, and are presumably the best explanation for the abundance of coarse storage jars found on them (Lindner and Knauf 1997). Overall, these mountaintop sites also present very little of the iconic Busayra Painted Ware (Zeitler 1992; Lindner et al. 1996, 153–61; Lindner, Farajat, and Zeitler 1996, 126–30), although it is not entirely absent from all sites and its perceived absence may be a feature of taphonomic or survey selection processes (Bienert, Lamprichs, and Vieweger 2000).

In addition to the longhouses, domestic dwellings atop the sites range from rock cut rectangular foundations that may have served as the foundations for tent superstructure, as best

¹⁰⁰ While Nabatean period analogs are illustrative, there are limitations in using the later data to infer practice in the Iron Age. In many cases the Iron Age data is simply not present and too heavily drawing on Nabatean period comparisons likely significantly overstates the scope and intensity of earlier periods, particularly concerning horticulture.

attested at Ba‘ja III (Lindner 1992, 144–45), Sela‘ (Da Riva 2019, 162), Jabal Qseir (Lindner et al. 1996, 142), and the stone-built “corridor houses” at Umm al-Biyara (Baxter 2011).¹⁰¹ The inaccessibility of the mountains and the arid nature of the region necessitated careful water management. While many of the sites were located adjacent wadi beds or nearby springs from which water was accessible, significant modifications can be seen atop the mountains, most notably in the form of piriform plastered cisterns with channels cut into the rock leading to them in order to maximize the catchment area on the mountain.¹⁰² For example, at least twenty such cisterns were noted atop Jabal Qseir (Lindner et al. 1996, 145–46), seventeen atop Shag Rish (Ben-David 2015, 229), six atop Ba‘ja III (Lindner and Farajat 1987, 176), and at least eight atop Umm al-Biyara (Bienkowski 2011c, 138–40). Many of the cisterns on the mountaintop sites have been dated to the Nabatean period due to the renown of the Nabatean hydraulic capabilities, but also, as in the case of Umm al-Biyara, to their apparent association with Nabatean structures (Bienkowski 2011c, 140). While the cisterns were undoubtedly exploited during the Nabatean period, there are several factors that indicate a likely Iron Age date for their origin. Using Umm al-Biyara as a case study, it may be surmised that first the inhabitants of the Iron II period would have needed access to water, and the transport of water to the heights of Umm al-Biyara would have been an incredibly laborious task. Second, this type of cistern is attested at nearly every contemporaneous mountaintop site of the Iron II.¹⁰³ Lastly, the location of the cisterns near the

¹⁰¹ Many of these foundations also possessed a pot-hole, or cup-mark in the center that may have served as a base for a tent pole (Lindner et al. 1996, 142; Bienert, Lamprichs, and Vieweger 2000, 125).

¹⁰² The only site for which cisterns are unattested and believed to not have been present is Qosa el-Hamra, which appears to have had abundant access to water sources at the wadi floor, and was one of the more accessible of the mountaintop sites (Ben-David 2015, 230–31).

¹⁰³ The ubiquity in number and in form of these cisterns together with the technical skill required to create them, has led Lindner to suggest that they may have been the work of itinerant cistern makers (Lindner 1992, 146). Lindner’s suggestion bears thought, as perhaps water systems specialists such as these moved and found work through kinship networks or perhaps through political ties as a part of a concerted effort towards sedentarization (Porter 2004, 379).

Nabatean structures at Umm al-Biyara was most likely due to catchment and drainage considerations. As the cisterns are located at one of the lowest places atop the gradually sloping mountaintop, the rock cut channels could funnel water from across the entire mountaintop, thus maximizing the catchment area.¹⁰⁴ It is more likely that the Nabateans chose the locale adjacent the cisterns on Umm al-Biyara particularly for the vista of Petra that it offered, and for its access to already existing water management features.

In summary, these mountaintop sites reflect a focus on domestic activity, with mixed forms of agriculture, pastoralism, and possible viticulture and horticulture (including olive cultivation), with food concerns seen in the emphasis on storage, and water concerns highlighted by the systems of water management present at the sites. These sites are highly defensible, likely serving as places of refuge for local communities, either from threats external to Edom, or internal, from within Edom itself. Textual sources preserve a number of allusions to such threats including biblical references of Judahite raids against Edom (2 Samuel 8:12–14; 2 Kings 14:7; 1 Chronicles 18:11–13; 2 Chronicles 25:11–14), evidence of raiding Arab tribes, especially the tribes of Qedar and Nebayoth (Eph‘al 1982, 157–58; Borger 1996, 61–62, 245), and most significantly the activities of Nabonidus in the region as a part of his militaristic campaign toward Tayma as evidenced in the inscription from Sela‘ (Beaulieu 1989, 166–68; Dalley and Goguel 1997; Da Riva 2019).¹⁰⁵

The lack of fine wares suggests a low degree of integration of these mountaintop sites with the traditions of Busayra toward conspicuous feasting (see Chapter 4). These sites perhaps

Similar specialists are known in earlier periods including mobile architects and house builders (J. Sasson 1968; Zaccagnini 1983).

¹⁰⁴ Personal observation.

¹⁰⁵ Similarly, the potential of the Edomite elite to forcibly exert control over various communities may have been locally mitigated through access to such places of refuge.

ought not to be viewed as of an entirely variant character from smaller residential and agricultural sites, although their highly inaccessible locations mark them as unique. The increased degree of visibility and defense that they afforded ought not to be undervalued. Due to their distribution across the region, these sites ought to be viewed in association with local communities, dwelling and moving through the local environs. These sites perhaps provide one of the dominant reasons that we do not see a higher degree of sociopolitical integration throughout the region, as the elites at Busayra were presumably unable or unwilling to directly exert their dominance across the landscape, choosing instead softer forms of alliance making through gift giving, and inclusive identity creation through the cult of *Qws* (see Porter 2004). It appears that instead, the elites at Busayra chose to focus their attentions elsewhere, primarily toward significant nodes in the trade networks of the region, namely at Tell el-Kheleifeh, 'En Hazeva, the northeastern Negev, and Dedan.

Several sites not located atop mountains provide evidence of defensive measures, and based on available data, can be distinguished from the smaller residential sites on the basis of their extant fortifications. These sites include Khirbet al-Mu'allaq (Lindner, Farajat, and Zeitler 1996), Khirbet Ishra (Hart 1987; 1989, 55–56), Deraj III (Lindner et al. 1998, 230–31), and Ghrareh (Hart 1987; 1988; 1989). Deraj III is located among a cluster of small farming sites in the Jabal as-Suffaha range, while the sites of Ghrareh, Khirbet al-Mu'allaq, and Khirbet Ishra are all located along the main north-south King's Highway trade route. Also notable among these three sites is their positioning at regular intervals along the King's Highway as one heads north toward Busayra. Likewise, the aforementioned strategic positioning of Ghrareh along the north-south and east-west road was significant to its existence.¹⁰⁶ If Ghrareh functioned as a station

¹⁰⁶ The distance from Ghrareh to Khirbet al-Mu'allaq is approximately 20 km (ca. 4 hr 30 min walk), and the distance from Khirbet al-Mu'allaq to Khirbet Ishra is approximately 27 km (ca. 6 hr walk). By this logic, halfway

monitoring access to the plateau from the south, then it is likely that the other small fortified sites of Khirbet Mu‘allaq and Khirbet Ishra can be understood as small way stations along this road. Unfortunately, Khirbet Mu‘allaq and Khirbet Ishra are poorly understood archaeologically.

The rulers at Busayra appear to have also attempted to renew copper mining activities in the Faynan region. Although not operating at nearly the same scale as in previous centuries, investment in the mining area at Ras el-Miyah was not insignificant, most prominently seen in the construction of the two fortresses of Ras el-Miyah East, and Ras el-Miyah West that guard the entrance to the mining area of the Wadi al-Ghuwayba (Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 816–40). The ceramic evidence associated with the copper exploitation activities are typical of the late Iron Age at Busayra and are distinct from the earlier material culture connected to the activity at Khirbat en-Nahas and Khirbat al-Jariya (Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 816). The unfinished nature of Ras el-Miyah East, and the limited evidence for smelting in the area led the excavators to suggest that this was perhaps a failed enterprise (Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 832–41). The lack of evidence for on-site smelting (Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 832–41), however, may merely indicate that copper ores were exported from the site and that smelting and subsequent metalwork was done elsewhere. While perhaps not the most efficient method of copper production, it is not without precedent (e.g., Golden 2009; Shugar 2003). Moreover, evidence of small-scale copper production as seen in raw ores and slag are found throughout the region at Khirbat al-Iraq Shmaliya (N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 273–74), Tell el-Kheleifeh (Koucky and Miller 1993, 65–70), and Beersheba (Fabian and Gil’ad 2010). Similarly, the fact that the fortress of Ras el-Miyah West was completed, and the substantial

between Khirbet Ishra and Busayra (approximately 41 km; ca. 9 hr walk) would be an additional, yet unidentified small fortified site. The region where this potential site would be located, between Shobak and Busayra, remains relatively unknown archaeologically.

evidence for mining activity suggests that there was a limited measure of success, although on far less grand scale than earlier centuries. The unfinished nature of Ras el-Miyah East is likely the result of an abrupt cessation of the activities due to an unidentified cause.¹⁰⁷ The proximity of Busayra to this mining region, parallels in material culture, and the fortified direct access afforded to it through the Wadi al-Ghuwayba suggests that Busayra played an integral role in this enterprise.

In a similar fashion, the elites at Busayra were acting even further abroad. Although a precise date for the construction of the fortified site of Tell el-Kheleifeh remains elusive (Pratico 1993), a number of factors strongly indicate formalized Edomite control of this site during the late Iron II.¹⁰⁸ Due to the inability to consistently assign material culture to discrete archaeological phases, the dates of major construction activities at Tell el-Kheleifeh remain somewhat speculative (Pratico 1993, 49–50). Nonetheless, as the majority of ceramics at the site date to the late Iron Age (late eighth through sixth century BCE), they indicate this to be the main period of activity associated with both the early phase (casemate fortress and monumental building) and late phase (inset/offset fortification) periods of the site.¹⁰⁹ The majority of ceramics excavated at Tell el-Kheleifeh bear a very strong resemblance to what has since been excavated at Busayra and what has been called Edomite pottery in the northeastern Negev (Pratico 1993, 33–34, 49–50, 71–73). Moreover, the identification of the sealing “belonging to *Qws'nl*, servant

¹⁰⁷ The events surrounding the campaigns of Nabonidus in this region (Crowell 2007), are one possible context in which this abrupt cessation could be situated.

¹⁰⁸ Glueck never formally published all of the data from Tell el-Kheleifeh, only preliminary reports (Glueck 1938; 1939b; 1940b; 1967; 1970, 106–37). Methodological challenges in these earliest archaeological excavations create the primary challenge for fully understanding the phasing of the site. Subsequent efforts to re-excavate Tell el-Kheleifeh ended prematurely and tragically (Mussell 1999; 2000).

¹⁰⁹ Tell el-Kheleifeh may possess an even earlier phase or at least activity during the early Iron Age as evidenced by fragments of Qurayyah Painted Ware (Luciani 2018; Finkelstein 2014).

of the king” (לקוסענל עבד המלך) and the association of this theophoric element to Edom (see Chapter 6.C), indicates an Edomite official, affiliated with the Edomite king at Busayra operating at Tell el-Kheleifeh.¹¹⁰

The precise question of the historical sequence at Tell el-Kheleifeh is intriguing due to the frequent references it receives in the biblical tradition, provided its identification as Ezion-Geber/Elath is correct (e.g., 1 Kings 9:26; 1 Kings 22:47–49; 2 Kings 16:6; Finkelstein 2014; Crowell 2004, 159–66).¹¹¹ The tradition from the book of Kings implies that an early phase of Tell el-Kheleifeh was controlled by Judah in the first half of the eighth century BCE during the reign of Uzziah (2 Kings 14:21–22; 2 Chronicles 26:1; see also Finkelstein 2014, 106, 134–36).¹¹² The tradition records that control of the site was wrested from Judah by Edom sometime in the late eighth century BCE and associated with the events surrounding the Syro-Ephraimite war and the activities of Tiglath-Pileser III in the region.¹¹³ Needless to say, these historical allusions are difficult to substantiate archaeologically at Tell el-Kheleifeh.

What is further intriguing about Tell el-Kheleifeh, however, is the architecture of the early phase that presents a monumental building within the casemate fort. Rather than representing a four-room house as suggested by Pratico (1993, 23–25), this mudbrick structure much more closely resembles the form and construction of Assyrian residences, administrative buildings, and even forts (Avner 2008, 1708). Examples of these can be seen across the Assyrian

¹¹⁰ This individual, or at least this name, also appears to be referenced as the recipient of a shipment of oil and flour from the epistolary at Tel Arad in the northeastern Negev (Arad Ostrakon No. 12; Aharoni 1981, 26, no. 12).

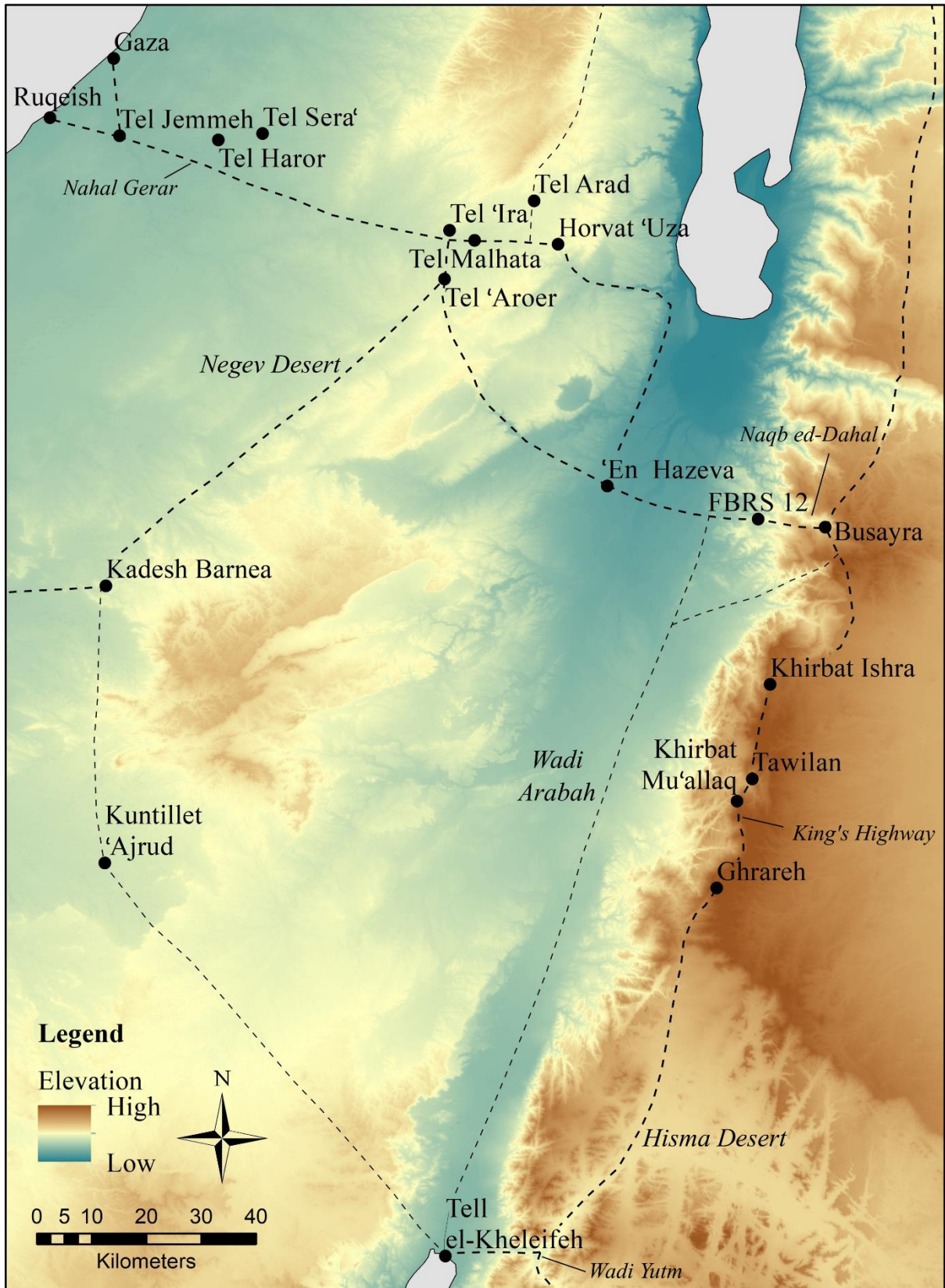
¹¹¹ For a discussion of Tell el-Kheleifeh’s identification with Elath and Ezion Geber, see Pratico (1993, 17–22).

¹¹² This hypothesis then sees early activity at Tell el-Kheleifeh associated with the Darb al-Ghazza trade route operating through the northeastern Sinai in conjunction with activities at Kuntillet ‘Ajrud (Finkelstein 2014; Meshel 2012).

¹¹³ See above n. 87.

Empire at Nimrud (Mallowan 1966, fig. 35), Zinjirli (Frankfort 1970, Fig. 330), Arslan Tash (G. Turner 1968, pl. XVII, Rooms XXXII-XLII), Tell Shekh Hamad (Pucci 2008, Fig. 3, Haus 4), and even as far away as Median Tepe Nush-I Jan (Stronach and Roaf 2007, Fig. 4.1; after Ben-Shlomo 2014, 1057–1064; Fig. 34.2). More pertinent to the context at hand, these structures are attested in the southern Levant, most notably at Tell Jemmeh (Building I and Building EG; Ben-Shlomo 2014, Figure 34.2), which functioned as both a seat of Assyrian control for the region, and as the nexus point for the South Arabian trade heading toward the Mediterranean. This structural parallel insinuates that Tell el-Kheleifeh was established in association with Assyrian objectives, and as suggested by Na’aman, perhaps in coordination with Kadesh Barnea and ‘En Hazeva (Na’aman 2001, 267–68). Assyrian objectives likely centered on the desire to control key aspects of the South Arabian trade, a goal that could be most efficiently achieved through strategic investment at key nexus points in the trade route. Such objectives could be met through direct investment at sites such as Tell el-Jemmeh, which was closer to Assyrian networks of power, and indirect investment at more distant locales such as Tell el-Kheleifeh, which would be operated by local clients such as the Edomite elite.

Figure 6. Trade routes of the southern Levant. (Map by author)



Edom appears to have substantially benefitted from the South Arabian trade (Lipiński 2013). With a loyal subject controlling Tell el-Kheleifeh, the Edomite elite at Busayra functionally possessed a stranglehold on the route taken by the South Arabian trade caravans. As this trade consisted of camel caravans travelling from South Arabia via Dedan (al-‘Ula) in the Hejaz, they would have entered the southern Levant at the head of the gulf of Aqaba, monitored by Tell el-Kheleifeh.¹¹⁴ As the site of Kuntillet ‘Ajrud on the northeastern Sinai Darb el-Ghazza route appears to have gone out of use by the late eighth century BCE (Meshel 2012, 61, 205), and as there do not appear to have been any substantial sites within the Wadi Arabah during the late Iron Age, the Edomite control of Tell el-Kheleifeh suggests that this trade would have been directed east up the Wadi Yutm, and north along the King’s Highway across the Edomite plateau past Ghrareh and toward Busayra (see Figure 6; Jouvenel 2013). From the Edomite highlands there are many access points to the Wadi Arabah, most notably in the Petra region, however, these do not appear to have been heavily frequented by caravans prior to the Nabatean period (Ben-David 2013; 2012; Smith II 2017). Other wadis such as the Wadi Dana and the Wadi es-

¹¹⁴ To date there appears no convincing evidence that this trade was conducted by maritime means during the Iron Age. Maritime trade from South Arabia appears to have only begun in the Nabatean period, continuing through the Roman period and beyond, as evidenced by historical sources, ports such as Aila, Leuke Kome, Berenike, etc., and shipwrecks found in the Red Sea (Demange 2010; S. T. Parker 2009; Kitchen 2007; Cappers 2006; Sidebotham and Wendrich 2007). Boivin and Fuller argue that the overland route was less difficult than maritime trade for most of the first millennium due to a lack of sufficient navigation knowledge (Boivin and Fuller 2009, 160). Such a hypothesis is substantiated in the account of Scylax, who on behalf of Darius the Great studied possible routes of trade with India and who appears to have circumnavigated most of the Arabian Peninsula. Scylax’s route travelled along the coastline from the Indus as far as the Kamaran islands of Yemen (Salles 1988, 79–86), continuing to Arsinoe in Egypt (de Maigret 2002, 23–26), and coincide with the contemporaneous efforts to link the Red Sea to Mediterranean by means of the Nile Canal (Breton 1998, 71–72). These efforts indicate a desire to open this trade to maritime transport during the Persian Period, while indicating that it was not yet fully functioning as such. This, however, does not necessarily exclude all forms of maritime trade in the region during the Iron Age as the Hebrew Bible intimates (1 Kings 22:47–50; 2 Chronicles 20:35–37), although the accounts of the biblical text record these efforts as unsuccessful. The earlier narratives concerning Solomon and the Red Sea (e.g., 1 Kings 9:26–28; 2 Chronicles 8:17), are even more challenging to historically substantiate in their presentation of overt Deuteronomistic themes of the standards of good Yahwistic kings (see Crowell 2004, 161).

Sadeh also provide access from the Edomite plateau to the Wadi Arabah, though they similarly do not appear to have functioned in any major capacity during this period.¹¹⁵

Rather, in this system of access points and nodes in trade networks, the location and substantial size of Busayra should not be underestimated. From its position, Busayra provided the most convenient access from the Edomite plateau to the Wadi Arabah via the Naqb ad-Dahal. The Naqb ed-Dahal presents substantial evidence of use in the Iron Age including retaining walls, curb stones, road markers and switchbacks in steep locations to help facilitate camel traffic (Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014a, 540–47).¹¹⁶ Most significant to this route was the discovery of unexcavated site FBRS 12 (Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014a, 530–35, 545), likely a caravanserai that sat at the floor of the wadi and at the base of the Iron Age road ascending directly to Busayra (see Figure 5 and 6). Similarly, other access routes such as the Wadi Dana provided gradual descents from Busayra to the Arabah (Ben-David 2009). Thus, Busayra was located at a position that served as the nexus of both the north-south King’s Highway and a major east-west route leading to the Wadi Arabah and the northeastern Negev and was in the prime position to benefit from the economic activities associated with the caravan trade.

¹¹⁵ These small wadi systems appear to have provided small-scale access to and from the Arabah that together with the surrounding resources were exploited by local communities. This also appears to have been the case for the mountaintop site of Qurayyat Mansur in the Wadi al-Faid (contra Hübner 2004). As many of the mountaintop sites in these wadi systems maintained excellent visibility and access to the Arabah, and as they were not likely integrated under the authority of Busayra, they possessed the ability to efficiently conduct raids on caravans travelling north through the Wadi Arabah. Factors such as raiding may have been one of the main reasons for investment in the more regulated King’s Highway route.

¹¹⁶ This same route was taken by T. E. Lawrence during his journey from Tafilah to Beersheba—an excellent case study in the most efficient route from the Edomite plateau to the northeastern Negev. Lawrence recounts the journey from Tafilah down the Wadi Dahal (Naqb ad-Dahal) across the Arabah, past Husb (‘En Hazeva) and then into the Beersheba Valley, via the Wadi Murra (Lawrence 1938, 501). This ascent into the Beersheba Valley via the Wadi Murra likely took Lawrence along the major southern access into the Beersheba Valley passing alongside Tel ‘Aroer and echoing one of the major routes into the Beersheba Valley used during the late Iron Age. Lawrence states that the journey was a distance of approximately 80 miles (=128 km), and having ridden through the night, the entire journey appears to have been made in a single twenty four hour day (Lawrence 1938, 499–502).

While there is little direct evidence of incense consumption at Busayra that would demonstrate the presence of the South Arabian trade, there is significant evidence for diverse other items that were traded from across the ancient Near East and through this network.¹¹⁷ For example, Assyrian tribute lists record Arabian envoys bringing camels, precious stones, and spices—likely the most lucrative of the Arabian trade goods (Potts 2011, 89). Likewise, the biblical text records an extensive list of traded goods that were brought to Tyre and that identifies Edom as trading in precious stones, linen, and embroidered work (Ezekiel 27:16). Further, with regard to items trade east toward Edom and Arabia, a raid on a caravan destined for Tayma and Saba’ records the seizure of two hundred camels whose loads contained blue-purple wool, other wool, iron, precious stones, and “every kind of merchandise” (Potts 2011, 88). The transport of purple dyed wool, produced on the Levantine coast from murex shells (e.g., *Bolinus brandaris* and *Hexaplex trunculus*), appears to have been especially lucrative along this route east to Arabia (Koren 2005; Jensen 1963). Lastly, it is necessary to consider that humans were also a commodity traded along this road (Amos 1). In this fashion, both Busayra’s existence and economic foundation would be intricately intertwined within this extensive trade network, with economic interests also oriented toward other nodes of the network, namely toward the region directly to the west—the northeastern Negev. Thus, discussions of Edomite persons active in the northeastern Negev ought to begin with Busayra.

In summary, Edom appears to have consisted of a decentralized landscape comprised of numerous small farming villages and farmsteads engaged in agropastoral activities. The lack of significant secondary, or second-tier sites within Edom accentuates the uniqueness of Busayra

¹¹⁷ Note that incense altars are attested elsewhere in Edom (Bennett and Bienkowski 1995, 85). Furthermore the numerous species of marine invertebrates at Busayra identify both close connections with the southern Red Sea region, and another example of a trade commodity (Reese 2002)

and its elite actors who navigated a tenuous position between their Assyrian overlords and the heterarchical social landscape beneath them (Porter 2004). Economic opportunities were presented in the copper mining region around Ras el-Miyah but especially through the South Arabian trade, in which Busayra functioned as a key node in the trade network. Further, by controlling Tell el-Kheleifeh, this trade could be more easily maneuvered north along the King's Highway and monitored by sites such as Ghrareh, Khirbat Mu'allaq, Khirbat Ishra, and FBRS 12. The natural flow of this trade west from Busayra toward the Mediterranean via the northeastern Negev created a rich context for mobility, movement, and interaction with the inhabitants of that region.

B. ARABIA AND THE ARABIAN TRADE

In recognizing the central role that economic opportunities afforded by the South Arabian aromatics trade played in the history of late Iron Age Edom, a discussion of the region of Arabia is warranted. Northwest Arabia is frequently excluded from discussions of the southern Levant in part due to the lack of archaeological exploration in much of Saudi Arabia, but also as a result of modern borders which have artificially divided the landscape. However, by elucidating the sociopolitical organization of Edom's southern neighbors and exploring the character and composition of this trade, we can better understand the effect of this trade on the southern Levant. Specifically, this discussion will focus on the Hejaz region of northwest Arabia.

1. TOPOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENT

Much of northwestern Arabia is a continuation of the same topography and environment of southern Jordan, namely that of the Hisma region beginning at Ras en-Naqab on the southern edge of the Edomite plateau and extending into Arabia past the oasis at Dedan (present day al-

‘Ula; Parr, Harding, and Dayton 1970, 196).¹¹⁸ This region consists of crystalline sandstone rock formations (familiar in Jordan’s Wadi Rum region) interspersed with volcanic rock outcrops (Engel, Bruckner, and Messenzehl 2011, 39). Along the western side of the region these peaks form a mountain range that extends along the eastern coast of the Red Sea, while the eastern side of this region is straddled by the inhospitable dune fields of the Nafud Desert, measuring 57,000 square kilometers, and imposing a substantial challenge to life within and travel across it (Sanlaville 2010, 60; Parr, Harding, and Dayton 1970, 197).¹¹⁹ The entirety of the northwestern Hejaz receives less than 100 mm of rainfall per year—often well below this mark—creating a reliance on the springs and artesian wells that are scattered throughout the landscape and at oases such as Dedan and Tayma. Here the climate and wells allow for extensive date palm cultivation (Sanlaville 2010, 56–57; Engel, Bruckner, and Messenzehl 2011, 43–45). Between these oases, limited pastoralism is possible, although the oases serve as the major regionally centralizing features with the corridors of access between them significant for the connectivity they provide. An intimate knowledge of the landscape is necessary in order to survive outside of the oases, thus highlighting the important role played by the Arabian tribes and communities who lived outside these oases in facilitating movement across the region (Retsö 2003; Eph‘al 1982).

¹¹⁸ The drawing of the border between Jordan and Saudi Arabia primarily reflects European expediency rather than any meaningful social or topographic distinctions. This was poignantly evidenced in the resultant challenges to local communities during the early period of British colonial rule in Transjordan where access between summer and winter grazing regions, and access to the limited wells and water sources of the arid region (namely the Wadi Sirhan), were suddenly restricted (Bocco and Tell 1994).

¹¹⁹ Similarly to the south, the massive Rub al-Khali, or Empty Quarter as it is also known, measuring 600,000 square km poses similar challenges to life and mobility (Sanlaville 2010, 60). Both dune deserts severely restrict the opportunities for east-west travel across Arabia.

2. SOCIOPOLITICAL STRUCTURES OF THE HEJAZ

As a result of these regional characteristics, the major oases of the Hejaz served as the seats of political and economic power, often located a significant distance from one another and wielding considerable regional influence (Hausleiter 2012, 818).¹²⁰ The major oases appear to have functioned in a form of heterarchical organization with the largest and most dominant being Dedan, Tayma, and Dumah (al-Jawf/Dumat al-Jandal) to the northeast (see Figure 7; al-Said 2011, 125; see also Crumley 1995). These three oases proved the dominant actors in the north, with the next most significant oasis and seat of regional power located at Yathrib, present-day Medina (Hausleiter 2012, 819; M. Macdonald 2015, 15–24). The heterarchical nature of these oases is perhaps also uniquely reflected in the way that each oasis developed their own form of the south Semitic alphabetic script (M. Macdonald 2010, 9). Life, however, was not restricted to the oases, as substantial numbers of other communities, described and identified through tribal or kinship metaphors, operated in the lands between the oases, making use of watering holes and wells in the desert regions (Hausleiter 2012, 818; Eph'al 1982; Retsö 2003).¹²¹

The most important oases for this work include Dedan, Tayma, and Dumah as they dominated the social, political, and economic landscape of the Hejaz and served as the interface between Arabia and Edom in the Levant. Dedan, located at the present day site of al-'Ula (also known as al-Khurraybah), sits in a strategic position at a constricted passage through the sandstone mountains of the region, able to control movement and possessing access to an abundant supply of water through its artesian wells (Parr, Harding, and Dayton 1970, 204–14;

¹²⁰ Conflicts between these oases are attested, with the most notable being wars fought between Tayma and Dedan in the late first millennium BCE, likely in an effort to gain greater control over trade routes (Hausleiter 2011, 105).

¹²¹ Knowledge of these oases, and the archaeology of Arabia in general, remains limited as archaeological excavation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is in its infancy. Already, though, excavations are yielding significant insights (Eichmann 2011).

Engel, Bruckner, and Messenzehl 2011, 43–45). The site, particularly its early Dedanite phase remains known only through preliminary survey (Parr, Harding, and Dayton 1970, 204–14), and limited archaeological investigation (S. al-Said 2011a; 2011b; 2010). In its earliest attested phases it served as the kingdom of Dedan, and later as Lihyan in the later first millennium BCE (S. al-Said 2011a, 126; Abu al-Hasan 2010; Al-Khathami 1999). During the Nabatean period it continued in use as the site of Hegra, with the main settlement moving slightly to the north, to present-day Madain Saleh, and fulfilled a similar economic role in facilitating caravan trade as it had in the preceding centuries (S. al-Said 2010). Information regarding Dedan’s role in the Arabian trade is better attested in its later phases, especially during the Lihyanite period when it appears to have extended influence over the oasis at Tayma (Hausleiter 2011, 116), and where it appears to have held a Minean (South Arabian) commercial station as is attested in numerous public and private inscriptions (M. Macdonald 2010, 14). From its earlier periods, Dedan features as a locale conquered by Nabonidus in the sixth century BCE (Pritchard 1969, 562–63), as well as frequently attested in the biblical text, often in contexts of trade relations (e.g., Isaiah 21:13; Jeremiah 49:8; Ezekiel 27:15, 20; 38:13, etc.).

The recent Saudi-German excavations at Tayma have situated it more clearly within archaeological discourse, though it already had received Near Eastern fame as the locale of the Nabonidus’ sojourn during the sixth century BCE (Beaulieu 1989, 149–84; Pritchard 1969, 562–63). The recent excavations have revealed the longevity of Tayma’s dominance in the Hejaz, with significant fortifications dated as early as the mid-third millennium B.C.E (Hausleiter and Zur 2016).¹²² Trade and contact with the Levantine world and beyond is already attested within the early and late second millennium BCE (al-Hajiri 2011; Somaglino and Tallet 2013;

¹²² There is evidence for cultivation at Tayma as early as 6600 cal BP (Hausleiter and Zur 2016, 384–86).

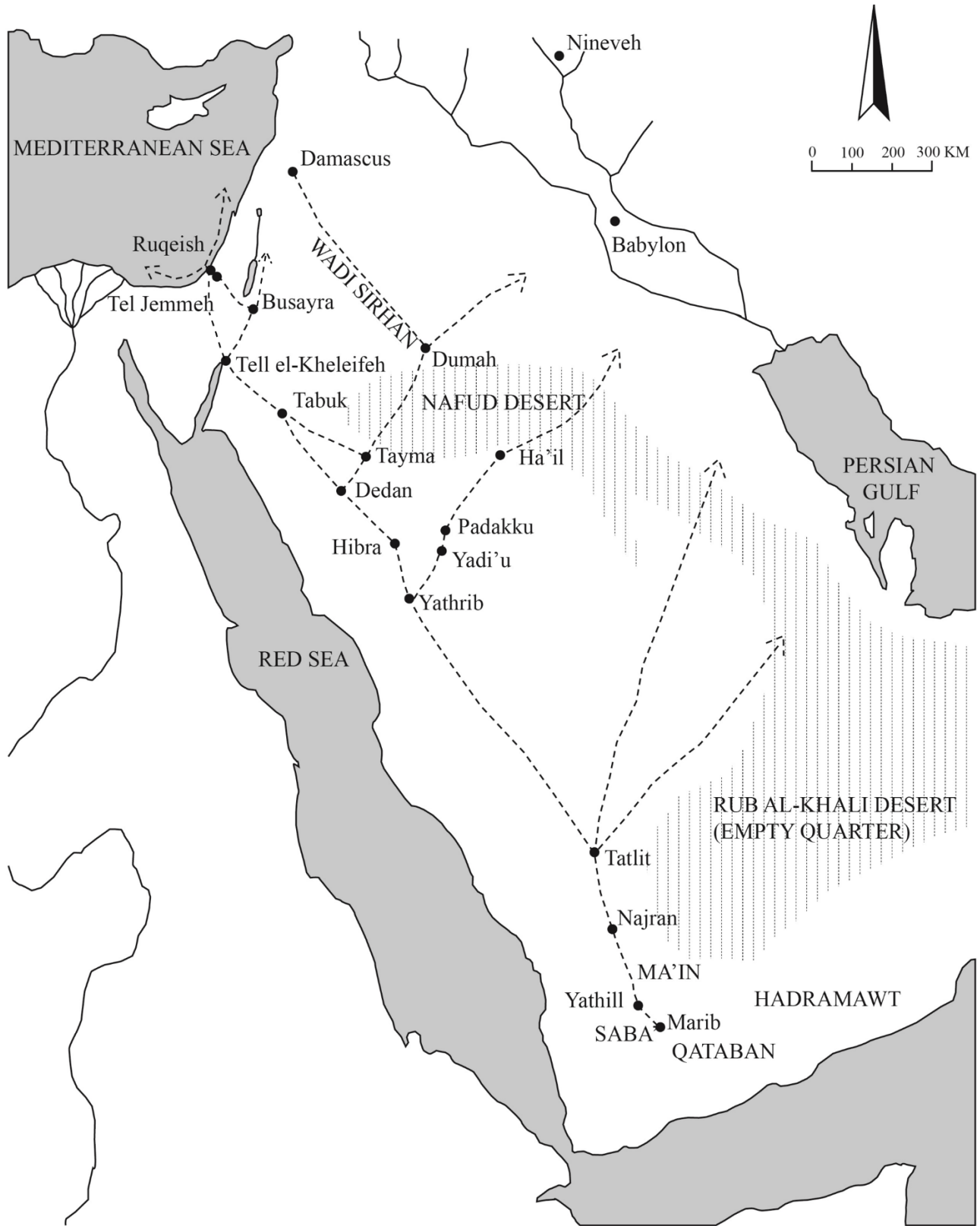
Hausleiter 2014).¹²³ Tayma, likewise, is well-known in relation to Assyrian activities and was also known to the biblical writers (e.g., Job 6:19; Isaiah 21:14; Jeremiah 25:23). During the late Iron Age, Tayma played a central role in serving as a node for trade heading east, and presumably stood in significant competition with Dedan (Hausleiter 2011, 116). Its geographic position and less prominent role than Dedan within the biblical text, suggests that Dedan may have held a greater role in trade relations with the southern Levant with Tayma holding more significance for trade travelling east towards the oasis of Dumah and Mesopotamia.

Located at present day al-Jawf (Islamic Dumat al-Jandal), the oasis of Dumah is best known from Assyrian sources as their major base of influence in Arabia, and their key to access to the South Arabian trade. Formal Assyrian interference in Arabia is first attested in the campaigns of Sennacherib and the subsequent Assyrian-appointment of vassals of the site (Potts 2011, 88). The Arab tribe of Qedar, who was heavily involved in the aromatics trade is often associated with Dumah (Hausleiter 2012, 818; Wenning 2013, 9–10), and is also known from the biblical texts (e.g. Isaiah 21:16–17; 40:11; 60:7; Jeremiah 2:10; 49:28; Ezekiel 27:21).¹²⁴

¹²³ The site of Qurayyah, known for the early discovery of its wares (Qurayyah Painted Ware or Midianite Ware), appears to have been also prominent during the second and in the early first millennium BCE. It does not appear to have been a significant player during the later Iron Age (Parr, Harding, and Dayton 1970, 219–41; Luciani 2016, 2018).

¹²⁴ The tribe of Nebayoth appears to have also been influential in the region, paying tribute to the Assyrians (Potts 2011, 90), and may have been the precursors to the Nabateans. They are also known from the biblical text, often presented together with Qedar (e.g., Isaiah 60:7; Genesis 25:13; 1 Chronicles 1:29).

Figure 7. Map of Arabian oases and trade routes. (Map by author, adapted after Macdonald 1997, Fig. 1)



3. CARAVANS AND THE AROMATICS TRADE

The oases played an invaluable role in facilitating the transport and trade of lucrative aromatics from southern Arabia. This aromatics trade originated in the mountainous regions of the southern Arabian Peninsula, where the unique climate of the region allowed for their cultivation (Engel, Bruckner, and Messenzehl 2011, 43). These aromatics consisted of two major components, frankincense and myrrh, the desire for which was driven by medicinal, therapeutic, mortuary, ritual, and various other social needs and desires (Ben-Yehoshua, Borowitz, and Hanuš 2012). Frankincense was borne from the sap of the trees belonging to the genus *Boswellia*, especially *Boswellia sacra* (van Beek 1958, 141; Zohary 1982, 197), whereas myrrh is identified with the species *Commiphora* (Zohary 1982, 200).¹²⁵ These species were native to South Arabia, present-day Yemen, and their trade during the first millennium BCE was controlled by the kingdoms of South Arabia, namely Saba', Ma'in, Qataban, and Hadramawt due to their ability to control the production and distribution of the aromatics (see Figure 7; de Maigret 2002; Breton 1998; Sholan, Antonini, and Arbach 2009). So lucrative was this trade, with aromatics worth more than their weight in gold, that later Greek and Roman historians such as Strabo and Pliny referred to this region as *Felix Arabia* (fortunate Arabia) as its inhabitants were known as the richest in the world (Smith II 2017; Ben-Yehoshua, Borowitz, and Hanuš 2012, 1–2, 14; Breton 1998, 55–59).¹²⁶

¹²⁵ For a discussion of the harvesting of Frankincense see Morris (1997).

¹²⁶ In addition to the South Arabian varieties, aromatics were also locally procured in the southern Levant from the *Commiphora gileadensis*, known as “balm of Gilead” (Ben-Yehoshua, Borowitz, and Hanuš 2012, 1–2), and attested within biblical literature (e.g., Jeremiah 8:22; 46:11, and presumably anachronistically placed within Genesis 37:25). This variety, however, does not appear to have commanded the same demand as its southern counterparts.

The external desire for these aromatics resulted in the creation of an extensive and long-distance trade network that extended from South Arabia, north to the Levant, Egypt, Mediterranean and Mesopotamian regions. Aromatics, however, were only the most valuable commodity of a broader trade, which also consisted of camels, precious stones, and spices as attested in Assyrian booty and tribute lists (Breton 1998, 61–63; Potts 2011, 89; Namdar et al. 2013). This trade, via the North Arabian oases to the southern Levant does not appear to be a new phenomenon in the middle of the first millennium BCE, but rather a continuation of earlier trade and movement across Arabia, contacts of which were already well established at the end of the second, and in the early first millennium BCE (Hausleiter 2012, 817–18). Evidence for these interconnections include the inscription of Ramesses III from the region of Tayma (Somaglino and Tallet 2013), and the phenomenon of the distribution of Qurayyah Painted Ware across the northern Hejaz and southern Levant (Luciani 2016; 2018). Thus, trade along these routes in the late Iron Age can be seen as a continuation of pre-existing routes and contacts, although now operating on a much more intensive and extensive scale (Jasmin 2006; Singer-Avitz 1999; Finkelstein 1992b).

The ability of the trade to function across the vast desert region and to reach increasingly intensified scales appears linked to the use of the domesticated camel (*Camelus dromedarius*), which was best suited to traverse the arid environment from South Arabia to the Levant (Magee 2015; Bulliet 1990). Beyond the wealth available to persons directly involved in this trade, associated individuals, communities, and political entities would have had numerous opportunities to also benefit. First, the mobile communities located between oases would have provided camels, guides and guards, and presumably charged for the privilege of safe passage, fulfilling a central role in facilitating the trade, as evidenced by the prominent position they hold

for the region in the Assyrian Annals (Retsö 2003, 129–65; M. Macdonald 2010, 9).¹²⁷ Various settlements and trade nodes along the routes would have profited through the provisioning of the caravans and through markets for traded goods, with the elite of these centers profiting via “transit tolls” (Holladay 1995, 383; M. Macdonald 2010, 9). Although epitomized by aromatics, this established network would have facilitated opportunity for numerous other types of trade and interaction.

Direct evidence for the presence of these traders in the southern Levant can be most clearly seen in inscriptions, which are prevalent at sites involved in facilitating this trade. From southern Jordan, Dadanite and Minean inscriptions have been identified within the Hisma Desert (Graf 1983), with similar Dadanite and Minean elements attested in onomastics and script from Tell el-Kheleifeh (Divito 1993, 59, 62). Likewise, an Arabian seal was excavated at Ghrareh (Knauf 1988a), and several potential Arabian influences can be seen in inscriptions at Busayra (van Der Veen and Bron 2014, 210–12, 214; A. R. Millard 2002, 429–31). From ‘En Hazeva in the Arabah, another station on this route, a seal with Arabian names has been identified (van Der Veen and Bron 2014, 212–14). Further west along within the northeastern Negev, Arabian names and words are attested at Horvat ‘Uza (Beit-Arieh 2007c, 178–79; van Der Veen and Bron 2014, 209–10), at Tel Beersheba (Bron 2016; van Der Veen and Bron 2014, 205–6), and at Tel ‘Aroer (Thareani 2011b, 228). Yet further west en route to the Mediterranean, a list of North Arabian names was excavated at Tel Sera‘ (Oren 1993c), and a jar with a South Arabian sign was excavated at Tel Jemmeh (Van Beek 2014, 1036–37).¹²⁸

¹²⁷ For perspectives on the interactions between caravaneers and city populations in South Arabia, see emergent studies from the ancient Sabeian city of Yathill (Fedele 2014).

¹²⁸ Other examples from the southern Levant include inscriptions from the City of David (Shiloh 1987), and an inscribed South Arabian clay stamp from Bethel (Van Beek and Jamme 1958). See also discussion in van Der Veen and Bron (2014).

Likewise, from South Arabia, a newly discovered inscription references Judah in association with the route of this trade. Although lacking a precise provenience, the inscription likely derives from the city of Nashq in the Kingdom of Saba', present-day al-Bayda, Yemen. It dates to ca. 600 BCE and details a man serving Yada'il Bayin the King of Saba', who participated in battles against Ma'in as far as Hadramawt, but who also led a trade expedition northwards and records visiting Dedan, "the towns of Judah" ('HGR YHD) and Gaza, and even includes a record of sailing from Gaza to Kition on Cyprus (André Lemaire 2012; Bron 2009).

Additional proxy data for this trade is evidenced by the abundance of cuboid incense altars throughout the region and across the greater ancient Near East (Zimmerle 2014; Freud and Reshef 2015, 585–95; Ziffer 2016; Thareani 2011b, 206–8; Gera 2007, 215; Daviau 2012, 437–40; Gitin 2009; 2002; 1992; 1989). Likewise, other more indirect data such as camel figurines from sites such as Busayra indicate the presence of such trade (Sedman 2002, 381–92).¹²⁹ The biblical text also preserves numerous references to this trade including Ezekiel 21:21–23, Job 6:14–23, Isaiah 21:13–15, with an extensive preservation of trade networks in Ezekiel 27 (Liverani 1991). Likewise, the traditions surrounding Solomon and the Queen of Sheba as recorded in 1 Kings 10 and 2 Chronicles 9, give indirect evidence of this trade. While heavily influenced by later monarchic ideology, these texts likely retro-project a context of late Iron Age trade earlier into time and onto Solomon (Retsö 2003, 173–76).

4. TRADE ROUTES AND CHALLENGES

On leaving southern Arabia, this trade had several, but limited options. Heading north, beyond the first trade node Najran, at the next stop of Tatlit the caravans could head east across the

¹²⁹ Sedman notes some ambiguity in the identification of these figurines and prefers to identify them as horses (2002, 381–92). The present author, however, follows Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy (2014a, 514) in identifying them as camels.

Arabian Peninsula, skirting the empty sand desert of the Rub al-Khali, or continue to the north to the next major node at Yathrib, present day Medina (see Figure 7; Macdonald 1997, Fig. 1).¹³⁰ From Yathrib, the caravans possessed further options to continue north or head to the east. The more complex and challenging routes to the east made use of the oases at Ha'il, or Dumah via Tayma, to skirt the Nafud Desert and head directly toward southern Mesopotamia. From Dumah, another route via the Wadi Sirhan afforded access toward northern Transjordan and Damascus, and was likely the route exploited by Sennacherib and the Assyrians (Eph'al 1982, 15–17). Heading north from Yathrib, however, the route would travel to Dedan, then Tabuk, and from there enter the southern Levant by way of the Jordanian Hisma at the southern end of the King's Highway. From this perspective of trade routes and access between oases nodes, the oases of Yathrib, Tayma, Dedan, and Dumah stand out in particular for their importance in serving as hubs where trade could be controlled and directed. Regarding the route from Dedan to the southern Levant, it appears to have travelled on the eastern side of the Hisma within the Tabuk Basin, between the coastal mountains to the west and the Nafud Desert to the east.¹³¹ This was the same route taken by the later Pilgrim Road (Darb al-Hajj) from Damascus to Medina and Mecca, and the short-lived Ottoman Hejaz Railway (Parr, Harding, and Dayton 1970, 197–98). Once within the southern Levant, this trade could continue north along the King's Highway through Edom and Moab toward Damascus (Byrne 2003), or branch to the west, toward the Mediterranean coast where it would be distributed to the rest of the Levant, the Mediterranean world, and Egypt. Thus, each of these oases in northwestern Arabia can be seen to act as a node

¹³⁰ For a similar, hypothetical itinerary based upon later classical and Nabatean parallels, see de Maigret (1997).

¹³¹ From Dedan, east-west access to the Red Sea coast is evidenced near al-Wajh (Parr, Harding, and Dayton 1970, 198), although as there is yet no substantial evidence to demonstrate maritime trade during the Iron Age (see n. 114). Routes such as this were presumably for local purposes rather than as functioning portions of the caravan route.

within a greater network of access and interconnections, providing staging points for a trade that would leap-frog its way north from southern Arabia.

To reach the Mediterranean, trade caravans were presented with several different routes. The most direct was to the northwest, by way of the Darb el Ghazza, past Kuntillet ‘Ajrud toward Gaza (see Figure 6). By the late eighth century BCE, however, the abandonment of Kuntillet ‘Ajrud likely indicates that this route has ceased to be used, particularly as the lack of a waystation across this arid and harsh landscape would have made travel an extremely dangerous endeavor (Meshel 2012, 61,205; Singer-Avitz 2006; 2009; Finkelstein 2014, 132, 135–36; Schniedewind 2014, 275, 293). That the abandonment of Kuntillet ‘Ajrud coincided with the arrival of Edomite control over Tell el-Kheleifeh was likely not coincidental but reflects a shift in trade routes.¹³² Travel through the Arabah Valley would have been the most efficient route northward (Jouvenel 2013), though evidence suggests it was not used. First, there are few Iron Age sites that could serve as waystations or even settlements within the Arabah, in direct contrast to the trade-rich Nabatean and Roman periods (Smith II 2017; Erickson-Gini and Israel 2013). Similarly, in the absence of such caravanserai, the lack of visibility and surrounding mountainous terrain made the Arabah Valley ripe for brigandage, a fact evident even within recent memory (Musil 1908, 298–99). Rather, as outlined above, the location of waystations and forts rather appear to indicate that once Edomite agents were in control of Tell el-Kheleifeh, the trade route shifted north, along the King’s Highway, past the sites of Ghrareh, Khirbat Mu‘allaq, Khirbat Ishra, Busayra and FBRS 12.

¹³² The abandonment of Kuntillet ‘Ajrud can be contrasted with Kadesh Barnea, whose settlement continued, likely as a result of its position along additional northeast-southwest trade routes and the nearby spring of ‘Ein al-Qudeirat that allowed for its own settlement system to exist and thrive even without external influence (Haiman 2007).

Safe travel along these routes was not guaranteed. The especially valuable cargo, and the desire for safe passage would have provided numerous opportunities for guides, guards, and safe passage payments, but also for raiding. In comparable contexts such as the Old Assyrian caravan trade from Ashur to Kultepe-Kanesh in Anatolia, raids on caravans are well-attested, necessitating means of protection either from state assurances, individual guards or mercenaries, or both (Larsen 1976, 93; Postgate 1992a, 211). The creation of outposts and way stations along the northern Mesopotamian route helped to protect and facilitate the trade (Dalley 1984, 171, 175). Similar dangers to the safety of trade caravans are also attested in the Amarna Letters (e.g., EA 7, 8, 199, 255, 287; Moran 1992). Such difficulties can similarly be identified directly in relation to the South Arabian trade, including in one example an attack on a caravan leaving the territory near Tayma that left only a single survivor (Oppenheim 1967, no. 118; Eph'al 1982, 147–49, 155; Maraqtan 1996).¹³³ These dangers are also intimated within the biblical text (e.g., Job 6:14–23; 12:6; Isaiah 21:13–15; Obadiah 5), with a reference to a caravanserai, or way station appearing within Jeremiah 9:2.¹³⁴

Within the region of Edom, the potential of danger along the trade routes was also present, specifically seen in the lack of visibility through mountain passes adjacent the Wadi Arabah, and the opportunity presenting persons at mountaintop sites to see arriving caravans well in advance of their arrival, creating potential for ambush. The realities of such fear of raid and robbery can be seen in the reports of Alois Musil during his journey through this area from

¹³³ More contemporary analogies to dangers in the region of Tayma are attested in the account of Alois Musil, where the easiest roads between the desert oases were often beset by robbers. Musil records the routes to Tayma as being called the “Roads of Death,” as they were “infested” with robbers (Musil 1930, 106). Due to such situations and contexts of uncertainty in meeting strangers, interactions often began with attempted violence until the tribal affiliations were made known (Musil 1930, 104).

¹³⁴ See also Schloen’s interpretation of the role that caravan trade and raiding held in the conflict recorded in Judges 5 (1993).

Busayra to the Arabah in the environs of Wadi Dana and the Naqb ed-Dahal. Within his account, upon sighting other riders, Musil's guide, out of fear of the newcomers being robbers, immediately fled rather than engaging (Musil 1908, 298–99; see discussion also in Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014, 504). Similar experiences are echoed in the writings of T. E. Lawrence, where upon his journey through the same region from Busayra to Beersheba, on encountering another camp, it was discovered that those within the camp had fled into the hills at the sight of newcomers choosing to cover the newcomers with their guns rather than wait to determine who they were (Lawrence 1938, 501). Although the example in the case of T. E. Lawrence was influenced by the political and military activities of the time, the nature of the sparsely inhabited and environmentally difficult region, often not affording sufficient visibility, renders it a challenging and potentially dangerous landscape.¹³⁵ During the Iron Age, the lack of ubiquitous political control over the region and the lack of widespread settlement presented a ripe opportunity for brigandage. These dangers could be partially alleviated through the creation of caravanserais, way stations, or garrisoned forts along the route such as FBRS 12, 'En Hazeva, and Horvat 'Uza, which would have allowed for local agents to monitor and protect the route. Protection afforded by these intermittent waystations would have been supplemented by the use of guides and guards, a position likely fulfilled by local persons along the route, including individuals from Edom acting in a formal or informal capacity.

5. IMPERIAL INTEREST IN THE ARABIAN TRADE

The wealth and prestige that these trade goods offered drew significant interest from the imperial powers controlling the Levant and greater Near East. The earliest well-attested Assyrian contact

¹³⁵ Similarly, while caution is necessary in drawing analogies to Jordan's recent past, the Ottoman period is informative in the numerous difficulties of Ottoman administrators to effectively control the region south of the Wadi al-Hasa (Rogan 1999).

with Arabia appears during the reign of Tiglath Pileser III in the second half of the eighth century BCE. Texts from this period indicate that following the defeat of Shamsi queen of the Arabs, Tiglath Pileser III seized 30,000 camels and 5000 bags of spices among other goods (Eph'al 1982, 33–36; Tadmor 1994, 225–30). Similarly, during Tiglath Pileser III's reign, Assyrian records indicate tribute from Saba' and Tema/Tayma, indicating direct contact with the northern oases and South Arabia (Eph'al 1982, 33–36; Retsö 2003, 132–36). Similar events during the reign of Sargon II saw tribute including countless camels, aromatics, precious stones, horses, ivory, and gold, paid in tribute from Shamsi queen of the Arabs, and Itamra king of Saba' among others (Retsö 2003, 148–50).¹³⁶ In subsequent years, additional campaigns by Sennacherib witnessed battles against Telhunu, queen of the Arabs, and Hazael king of the Arabs, with pursuit extending to Adummatu “in the desert,” presumably Dumah. The eventual conquest of Adummatu (Dumah) resulted in the capture of thousands of camels, and a tribute of semi-precious stones, cypress wood, and aromatics (Frahm 1997, 131; Luckenbill 1924, 92–93; Borger 1956, 35; Retsö 2003, 154–55). Further involvement in the trade is seen in subsequent gifts (*namartu*) of semi-precious stones and aromatics from the king of Saba' in 683 BCE (Potts 2011, 88). Beyond the continued indication of the substantial role played by Arab tribes within this trade, these tribute events and particularly the campaign of Sennacherib is significant in its resultant establishment of Assyrian presence at Dumah, and thus their control over a key northern node in the trade network.

Assyrian interest in these oases continues through the reign of Esarhaddon, seen in the continued appointment of vassals at Dumah, including a certain Tabu'a who was appointed queen of the Arabs after being raised in the Assyrian court (Potts 2011, 88). Subsequent revolts

¹³⁶ It is possible that there is another “Saba'” in northern Arabia, or perhaps more likely that there was a Sabean merchant colony in northern Arabia, similar to what is seen later with the Mineans at Dedan (Retsö 2003, 149).

at Dumah resulted in additional campaigns to restore order and Assyrian control, with further tribute listed as 1,000 semi-precious stones, 50 camels, and 1,000 leather containers of aromatics (Retsö 2003, 158–59; Potts 2011, 89). Continued revolts during the reign of Ashurbanipal resulted in the presence of Assyrian garrisons placed in the region, continued tribute as well as new tributaries such as Natnu king of the Nabayyate (Nebayoth?) from the region of Tayma, submitting tribute likely out of fear for maintaining position (Potts 2011, 90; Retsö 2003, 161–66). Thus, throughout the period of Assyrian hegemony, significant interest within northern Arabia and the products to which it provided access, are well established, with Assyrian control demonstrated at the major oasis of Dumah.

In the decades marking Assyria's decline and the rise of the Chaldean dynasty at Babylon, Akkadian sources concerning Arabia and the Arabs become scarce. However, concerning events of the early sixth century BCE and the fall of Tyre, a song in Ezekiel preserves the trading partners of Tyre as including Edom, Judah, Dedan, princes of Qedar, and merchants of Sheba (Saba') and Ra'mah, with trade goods including spices, balm, precious stones, and gold (Ezekiel 27:16–22). These goods echo the trade and tribute material previously discussed, although presented from a southern Levantine perspective (Liverani 1991; Retsö 2003, 176–78). Likewise, Jeremiah 25:18–26 and 49:28–33 evoke the same image of trade and interconnections. It is difficult to fully elucidate the desires of the early Babylonian dynasts toward this trade, although it is presumed that their interests would have aligned with those of the Assyrians, due at the very least to the wealth involved. Convincing arguments have been raised that one of the primary concerns of Nebuchadnezzar II in his southern Levantine campaigns was to fully remove Egyptian presence and influence from the region, necessitating at times the adoption of a “scorched-earth” policy to parts of the region in order to achieve this end

(Stager 1996b; Fantalkin 2011; Vanderhooft 2003; 1999, 81–114). The scorched earth policy and eradication of Egyptian influence in the Levant would similarly remove Babylon’s largest trade competitor.

From the later reign of Nabonidus, a more overt and directed program toward this trade and these routes emerges and is also attested in textual sources. Nabonidus has long been an enigmatic figure for numerous reasons, including his emulation of the Sargonid Assyrians (Vanderhooft 1999, 51–54), his elevation of the deity Sin over the more traditional Babylonian deities (Beaulieu 1989, 43–65), his decade long stay in Arabia (Potts 2011, 91; Pritchard 1969, 562–63), and the remarkably successful propaganda levied against him by influential persons in Babylon and by Cyrus the Great (Pritchard 1969, 306–7, 315–16). These portrayals often highlight Nabonidus as a “mad” king, and appear also to be the inspirational elements behind the much later coded and enigmatic texts of Daniel 4, and the “Prayer of Nabonidus” from Qumran (Milik 1956).

However, independent of these portrayals, other historical elements of his stay in Tayma, and the already established Mesopotamian interest in the South Arabian trade indicate that Nabonidus’ activities in Tayma amount to much more than religious activities or madness. Although couched in religious mandates, the Harran Stele indicates that during his decade at Tayma, Nabonidus led numerous campaigns to other oases including Dadanu (Dedan), Padakku (Fadak), Hibra (Khaybar), Yadi‘u (Yadi‘), and Yatribu (Yathrib; Gadd 1958; Pritchard 1969, 562–63). Not coincidentally, these sites include the majority of important oasis powers in the region (Dedan, Tayma, Yathrib), and a number of secondary oases (Padakku, Hibra, Yadi‘u). Nabonidus’ activity and residence at Tayma is well-substantiated not only in cuneiform sources from Mesopotamia, but in a stele discovered at Tayma, whose iconography parallels that used by

Nabonidus and whose inscription preserves his name (Eichmann, Schaudig, and Hausleiter 2006). Similarly, an additional inscription recently excavated further south in Arabia substantiate these campaign claims of Nabonidus. Found in the present-day town of al-Hait (ancient Padakku/Fadak), a rock carved in the shape of a Mesopotamian stele bears a standing figure together with divine symbols (moon, sun and star) with a partially preserved cuneiform inscription. The imagery of the standing figure is that of Nabonidus, together with the cuneiform preserving his title, and confirming the identification of al-Hait/Fadak with ancient Padakku (Hausleiter and Schaudig 2016; *forthc.*). An additional reference to Nabonidus can be found in Edom, at the site of Sela' near Busayra, which presents Nabonidus in a similar fashion to those previously described (Dalley and Goguel 1997). This inscription was likely carved during Nabonidus campaign into the Hejaz, where a journey through Edom is recorded (Da Riva 2019; Crowell 2007; Beaulieu 1989, 166).

The sites in northern Arabia that were targeted by Nabonidus, do not appear to have been haphazardly chosen, nor was the campaign the result of a “mad” or solely religiously motivated individual.¹³⁷ Rather they indicate a programmatic attempt to control each of the major nodes through which the lucrative South Arabian trade was conducted. By controlling Dedan, Tayma, and Yathrib, Nabonidus effectively held a stranglehold on all productive trade routes heading north from South Arabia. Further, by controlling these specific nodes, Nabonidus could encourage the trade to be redirected via Dumah and Ha'il directly across the Arabian Peninsula to Babylonia, effectively eliminating Egyptian and Levantine access to the trade. This monopoly is presumably the reason that “the king of Egypt, the Medes, the land Arabs and all hostile

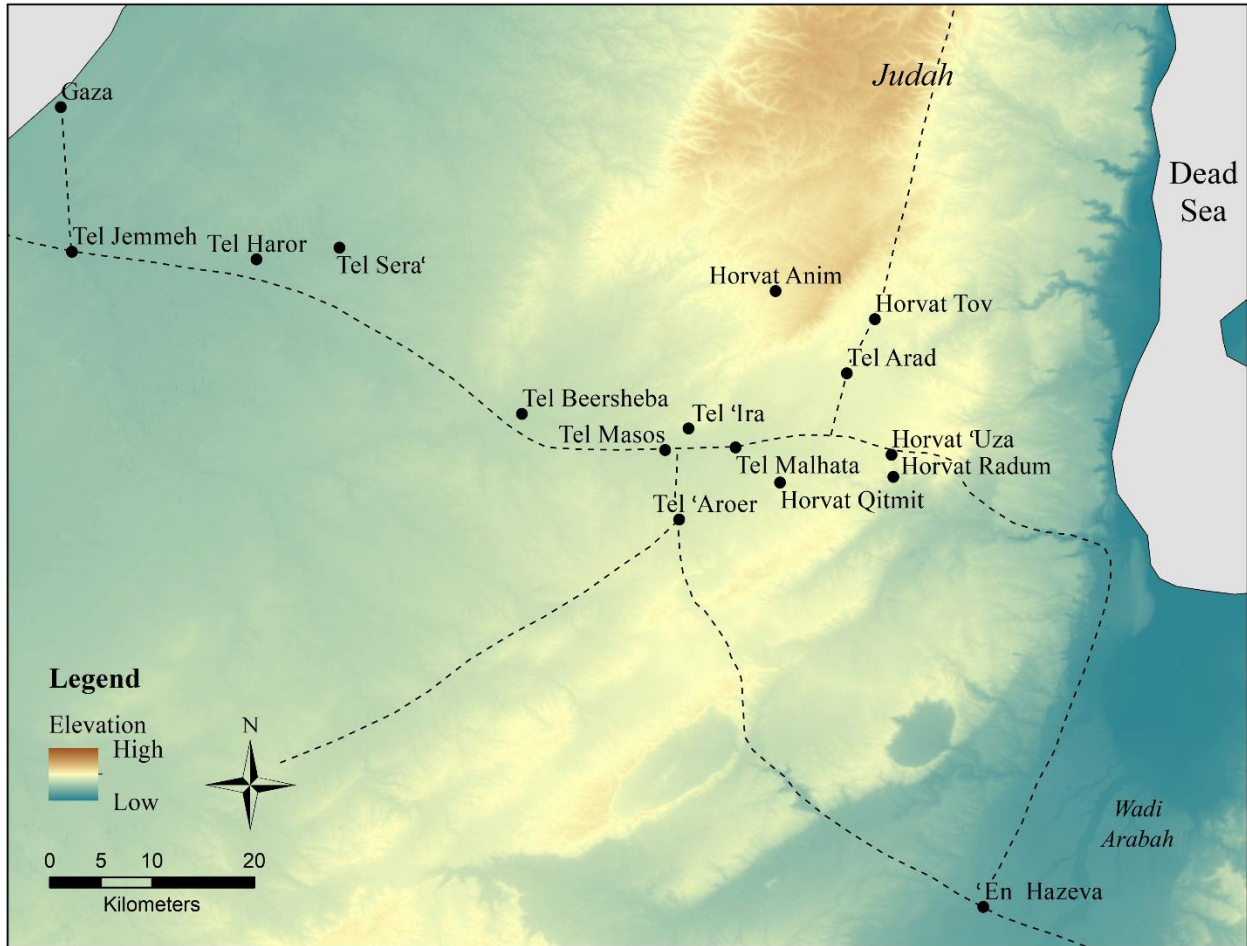
¹³⁷ It is likely that political divergences in Babylon, particularly between Nabonidus and his son Belshazzar, encouraged Nabonidus to remove himself from the city (Beaulieu 1989, 169–202). This, however, does not detract from the significance and import of his Arabian activities.

kings” sent peace envoys to Nabonidus (Pritchard 1969, 562; Potts 2010, 77). The cumulation of these activities paints a rather vivid picture of the most formalized efforts by a foreign entity to this point, to gain control of this trade. Consequently, a major impetus behind Nabonidus’ activity in Arabia can be seen as a culmination of a process begun centuries earlier to gain access to, and control over this trade, likely in efforts to reroute it directly toward Mesopotamian centers (Wenning 2013, 9–10).

It is within the sixth century BCE, and presumably related to the activities of Nabonidus that the fragile extension of elite power from Busayra over Edom appears to have faltered. At this time destructions are recorded in the region, many of which are assigned to Nabonidus on the basis of the Sela’ inscription (Bienkowski 2002a, 475–78; Dalley and Goguel 1997; Da Riva 2019). Following the destruction at Busayra, the site seems to have been rebuilt with presumed limited continuity into the Persian period (Bienkowski 2002a, 477–78; Porter 2004, 384). A limited degree of continuity is also reflected at Tell el-Kheleifeh, most easily detected in Aramaic ostraca of the Persian period (Divito 1993). Similarly, numerous destructions are attested within the northeastern Negev and dated to the early sixth century BCE. The lack of rebuilding, however, indicates that this trade did not, and could not function as it had during the preceding centuries. It is more than likely that a central focus of Nabonidus’ control and influence over Tayma, Dedan, and Yathrib, was presumably aimed at redirecting this trade away from the southern Levant and to the east, toward Babylonia. In essence then, Nabonidus appears to have reorganized this entire system of trade, an act that proved detrimental to the economic activities of Edom, Judah, and the southern Levant, to say nothing of the implications this held for elite individuals heavily involved in the trade such as those at Busayra. Regardless of the nature of Edomite continuity following Nabonidus’ campaign, the sixth century BCE and the

activities of Nabonidus clearly mark the beginning of the end for the polity of Edom (Crowell 2007; Wenning 2013, 9–10).

Figure 8. Map of sites and routes in in the northeastern Negev. (Map by author)



C. ENVISIONING THE JUDEAN NEGEV

Extensive archaeological excavations across the northeastern Negev have allowed for the region to be fairly-well understood and represented archaeologically. Various syntheses have examined cyclical patterns of settlement and activity within the region and surrounding arid environments (Finkelstein 1995; Finkelstein et al. 2018). Similar works have demonstrated the agricultural and economic opportunities afforded by the Beersheba Valley (Höhn 2016; 2015). The following section aims to fully contextualize this region and elucidate the Negev's relation both to the

Arabian trade and to Edomite interaction during the late Iron Age. This brief synopsis will provide the immediate context for the subsequent case studies.

1. TOPOGRAPHY, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

To the west of Edom in the semi-arid portion of southern Judah is the region that will be the central focus of the subsequent case studies, namely the northeastern Negev, alternatively described as the Beersheba-Arad Valley. This area is marked by the settlement of Beersheba at its western extent and Tel Arad and Horvat 'Uza at its eastern extent (see Figure 8). The northeastern Negev is comprised of an alluvial loess plain consisting of aeolian fine-grained silts that at times reach several meters in depth, surrounded by Mesozoic and Eocene limestone outcrops that limit the agricultural potential of the surrounding region (Evenari, Shanan, and Tadmor 1982, 44, 41–49; S. of Israel 1985, Map 11). To the southwest, en route to Kadesh Barnea, the region is dominated by crescentic sand dunes (S. of Israel 1985, Map 11), while to the east, around the area of 'En Hazeva in the Arabah Valley, the region consists of lisan sediments with thin alluvium (S. of Israel 1985, Map 11).

The area of the northeastern Negev is classified as a part of the Irano-Turanian vegetation zone (see Figure 3). This landscape is nearly treeless, with the major vegetation restricted primarily to species of grasses (*Poaceae*) and shrubs (*Chenopodiaceae* and *Artemisia herba-alba*). Rainfall within the region typically fluctuates between 200 and 400 mm per annum, with a broad temperature range both daily and seasonally (Langgut et al. 2015, 219; Zohary 1962). The region to the south of the Beersheba-Arad Valley and around the site of Kadesh Barnea is classified as the Saharo-Arabian vegetation zone. In this desert, annual rainfall is typically below 100 mm and does not exceed 200 mm per annum. Daily and seasonal temperatures fluctuate broadly. Low flora diversity includes grasses and small shrubs (*Chenopodiaceae* and

Zygophyllum dumosum) and tamarisk trees (*Tamarix*; Langgut et al. 2015, 219–20; Zohary 1962). The only perennial water sources within the northeastern Negev are located near Tel Masos, Tel ‘Aroer and Tel Malhata (Beit-Arieh 1999c, 9).

Recorded rainfall averages from the northeastern Negev in recent decades (1931–1960) present the region as fluctuating around the 200 mm isohyet (see Figure 4).¹³⁸ However, as noted above in the context of southern Jordan, year to year rainfall fluctuations can be quite significant. For example, for the 1932/33 year, the Beersheba-Arad Valley received less than 100–200 mm of rainfall compared to the following year where 300–400 mm of rainfall was recorded (S. of Israel 1985, Map 12, 13). Of particular note would be the years 1959/60 and 1962/63, where rainfall was well below the 100 mm mark, in what could be classified as acute drought years (S. of Israel 1985, Map 13). Such scenarios would necessitate either substantial agricultural stores from previous harvests, a mixed and diverse subsistence regime, reliance on external imports, or any combination of the above to successfully survive into more fertile years. On the basis of modern data, the soil and rainfall profile of the Beersheba Valley indicate that it is optimized for the cultivation of barley and wheat, which for example, for the years 1974/1975 comprised 30–40% and 50–60% of the agricultural output of the region, respectively (S. of Israel 1985, Map 35). In the nearby Arabah Valley and around sites such as ‘En Hazeva or Tell el-Kheleifeh, less than 100 mm of rainfall perennially (often below 50 mm), indicates that rainfed agriculture was not an option, and that the habitation and activity within the region were centralized around springs and shallow aquifers where oases, often featuring date palms, provided opportunity for sustenance. These oases are classified as part of the Sudano-Decanian vegetation zone (see discussion above; Langgut et al. 2015, 219–20).

¹³⁸ See above n. 63 for a justification of the use of modern data to stand as a proxy for ancient climate regimes.

2. THE NORTHEASTERN NEGEV DURING THE IRON II

Following the decline of the settlement system structured around Tel Masos during the early Iron Age (Finkelstein 1995, 114–26; 1988; Tebes 2003), the major settlement in this region during the tenth and ninth centuries BCE centered around the sites of Tel Beersheba in the west (strata VII–IV; Herzog and Singer-Avitz 2016, 29), Tel ‘Ira (Stratum VIII; Beit-Arieh 1999c, 170,174) and Tel Malhata (Stratum V; Beit-Arieh and Freud 2015b, 28) in the middle of the valley, and Tel Arad (strata XII–XI; Herzog 2002, 14) to the east (see Figure 8; Höhn 2015, 211). Additional settlement is attested at smaller and lesser-known sites in the vicinity including Tel Esdar and Yattir Site (Kochavi 1993a; Beit-Arieh 1999b, 1), and settlement(s) buried beneath the modern city of Be’er Sheva (Fabian and Gil’ad 2010; Talis 2012; Peretz 2018). It was during this period of the tenth and ninth centuries BCE that a coalescence of elite authority in Jerusalem resulted in the establishment of the polity of Judah, which appears to have extended its influence over these sites within the northeastern Negev (Holladay and Klassen 2014; Holladay 1995; Beit-Arieh and Freud 2015a, 365; Faust 2012; 2006a).¹³⁹

During the latter centuries of the Iron Age, namely the late eighth and the seventh centuries BCE, settlement and activity in the northeastern Negev intensified, particularly on the larger tell sites in the region. Although this settlement phenomenon of the late eighth through early sixth century BCE can be discussed as belonging to the same general subsistence,

¹³⁹ The Iron IIA (tenth and ninth centuries BCE) also sees the “Negev Fortress” phenomenon in the central Negev highlands that have alternatively been understood as a state sponsored initiative (Haiman 1994; Faust 2006b), a pattern of sedentarization of nomadic pastoral groups (Finkelstein 1984; 1995, 103–14), or as associated with the copper mining activities of the Wadi Arabah (M. Martin and Finkelstein 2013; Boaretto, Finkelstein, and Shahack-Gross 2010). Further, these settlements can be described as small subsistence communities operating in marginal zones and employing a wide and variable set of subsistence strategies similar to sites that have been more rigorously investigated in west-central Jordan such as Khirbat al-Mudayna al-‘Aliya (Porter 2013; Porter et al. 2014; Lev-Tov, Porter, and Routledge 2011; Routledge 2000a). In this way, the “Negev Fortresses” may appear to match a similar pattern of small fortified subsistence communities in arid regions such as those from west central Jordan including Khirbat al-Mudayna al-Mu‘arraja, Lahun, Khirbat al-Mudayna ‘ala al-Mujib and others (Routledge 2000a, 56–59).

economic, and demographic trends, they are better understood as belonging to two distinct phases, the first dating to the late eighth century BCE, and the second, from the seventh until the early sixth century BCE (Figure 9; Thareani-Sussely 2007b). This first period of investment and increased settlement in the northeastern Negev includes the settlements at Tel Beersheba (strata III–II; Herzog and Singer-Avitz 2016, 29), Tel ‘Ira (strata VIII-VII; Beit-Arieh 1999c, 170–74), Tel Malhata (strata IVB-IVA; Beit-Arieh and Freud 2015b, 28), Tel Arad (strata X-VIII; Herzog 2002, 14), and Tel ‘Aroer (strata IV-III; Thareani 2011, 2). External to the northeastern Negev, but relevant to this discussion is the contemporaneous activity at the fortified sites of Kuntillet ‘Ajrud along the Darb al-Ghazza trade route in northern Sinai (Meshel 2012, 61, 205),¹⁴⁰ Kadesh Barnea (Stratum III; Cohen and Bernick-Greenberg 2007, 9–13),¹⁴¹ and ‘En Hazeva (Stratum V; Cohen and Yisrael 1995, 223).¹⁴² These three fortified sites all served as significant nodes of the trade network in this region. Historically, this first period of activity in the northeastern Negev in the late eighth century BCE appears to be associated with the events subsequent the Syro-Ephraimite war and the activities of Tiglath Pileser III in the region. Following these events Judah and much of the southern Levant’s status as a client of Assyria afforded a context of relative stability known as the *pax Assyriaca*. With the Arabian trade that had begun to traverse the region, the northeastern Negev presented a far greater *raison d’être* than mere subsistence

¹⁴⁰ Kuntillet ‘Ajrud may have had its origin within the ninth century BCE as suggested by Meshel (2012, 61, 205), although see alternative analysis by Singer-Avitz who argues on the basis of the ceramics that this activity ought to be dated to the late eighth century BCE (Singer-Avitz 2006; 2009).

¹⁴¹ On the identification of the biblical Kadesh Barnea with Tell el-Qudeirat, see Cohen and Bernick-Greenberg (2007, 4). Settlement at Kadesh Barnea is also attested earlier, in the tenth century BCE as part of the “Negev Fortress” phenomenon (Cohen and Bernick-Greenberg 2007, 7–9).

¹⁴² Settlement at ‘En Hazeva appears to predate the eighth century BCE, appearing to begin in the tenth century BCE (Cohen and Yisrael 1995b, 223). These interpretations are heavily based upon the biblical texts, however, and recent attempts to re-examine the unpublished excavated archaeological material from the site has identified a substantial challenge due to the quality of the excavation records (E. Darby 2017).

farming, rather serving as a regional trade corridor connecting the Mediterranean ports to southern Transjordan and northern Arabia (Singer-Avitz 1999; Thareani-Sussely 2007b; Keimer 2011, 121–22).

Figure 9. Comparative stratigraphy of the northeastern Negev. (Figure by author)

Comparative Stratigraphy of the Northeastern Negev and Surrounding Region

| | Iron I | Iron IIA | Iron IIB | Iron IIC | Babylonian Period | Persian Period | |
|------------------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|-------------------|----------------|---------|
| | 1,000 BCE | 900 BCE | 800 BCE | 700 BCE | 600 BCE | 500 BCE | 400 BCE |
| Tel 'Ira | | VIII | VII | VI | | V | IV |
| Tel Beer-sheba | | VII VI V | IV III | II I | | | |
| Tel Malhata | | V | IVB IVA | IIIB IIIA | | | |
| Tel 'Aroer | | | IV III | Ila I Ib | | Ia | |
| Tel Arad | | XII | XI | X-VIII | VII VI | | |
| Horvat 'Uza | | | | ?-III | | | |
| Horvat Radum | | | | ?-I | | | |
| Tel Masos | | | | ?-Area G | | | |
| Horvat Qitmit | | | | ?-I | | | |
| Kadesh Barnea | IV | | III | II | | I | |
| 'En Hazeva | VI | | V | IV | | | |
| Kuntillet 'Ajrud | | | I | | | | |

The transition from the eighth to the seventh century BCE in the northeastern Negev was marked by a series of destructions attributed to Sennacherib's campaign against Hezekiah in 701 BCE. The destructions do not appear to have significantly altered the long-term trajectory of trade and activity in this region. Its continuity is likely due in part to Assyrian desire to maintain

economic viability and a strong presence on the border with Egypt (Thareani 2016), but also the result of the agency of local actors. Even more, the seventh century BCE appears to mark the flourish of settlement. The major difference between the eighth and seventh centuries BCE is marked by the lack of continuity at Tel Beersheba, which following a brief squatter phase (Stratum I; Herzog and Singer-Avitz 2016, 29), remained abandoned during the seventh and early sixth centuries BCE. As Tel Beersheba appears to have served as a Judahite administrative center for the region during the eighth century BCE (Herzog 1992, 258–61; 1997, 244–47), it was likely the central target of Sennacherib’s campaign to whom may be attributed the intense conflagration that ended Stratum II (Herzog and Singer-Avitz 2016, 26). The presumed deportations of the city’s elite was likely a major cause for disruption at the site and the leading factor as to why the site was not subsequently re-established (Thareani-Sussely 2007b, 73). Rather, the administrative role previously held by Tel Beersheba appears to have shifted to Tel ‘Ira (especially Stratum VI) in the seventh century BCE due to its immense size and fortifications, the communication potential of the site (Keimer 2011, 124–25), and its commanding position over—and visibility of—the Beersheba Valley.¹⁴³

Beyond the shift in administrative focus, the seventh century BCE marks a high degree of continuity and further investment. Outside of Tel Beersheba, there is little evidence for site abandonment following destruction but rather a restoration of the sites according to similar settlement plans. In addition to Tel ‘Ira, this seventh century BCE continuity is marked at Tel Malhata (strata IIIB–IIIA; Beit-Arieh and Freud 2015, 28), Tel ‘Aroer (strata IIa–IIb; Thareani 2011, 2), and Tel Arad (strata VII–VI; Herzog 2002, 14). Likewise, beyond the northeastern

¹⁴³ From Tel ‘Ira, on a clear day, at a minimum the sites of Tel Malhata, Tel Masos, Horvat Qitmit and Tel ‘Aroer are visible (personal observation).

Negev, the settlements of Kadesh Barnea (Stratum II; Cohen and Bernick-Greenberg 2007, 13–17), and ‘En Hazeva (Stratum IV; Cohen and Yisrael 1995, 223) appear to have been similarly rebuilt. Additional investment in the region is witnessed in the construction of several new sites, although these were predominantly military in nature. These sites include Horvat ‘Uza (Beit-Arieh 2007c) and its associated watchtower at Horvat Radum (Beit-Arieh 2007c, 303–28), as well as small forts at Tel Masos (Fritz and Kempinski 1983, 123–37), Horvat Tov (Cohen 1995, 115–16) and Horvat ‘Anim (Cohen 1995, 116–18). The final major development in the northeastern Negev in the seventh century BCE was the establishment of the sanctuary at Horvat Qitmit with its strong associations with Edom (Beit-Arieh 1995a).¹⁴⁴

As previously discussed, the landscape and environmental conditions of the Beersheba Valley made the region most suited for mixed agriculture and pastoralism, with an emphasis on dry farming. While additional sites beyond those discussed above have been noted in surveys and would provide additional insight into smaller farmsteads and villages engaged in this agricultural activity, many of these remain unpublished (Beit-Arieh 1999b, 1). On the basis of subsistence practices of the Levant during the Iron Age, it may be assumed that many of those engaged in agriculture and pastoral activities dwelt within the cities and towns of the region

¹⁴⁴ Horvat Qitmit and other seventh century BCE sites such as Horvat ‘Uza and Horvat Radum were originally suggested to have been constructed around the time of the reign of Josiah in the late seventh century BCE due to a presumed need for both Assyrian withdrawal and the encroachment of Edom during the final decades of the Judean monarchy for this construction to occur (Beit-Arieh 1995a, 311–16; 1999b, 2–3; Thareani-Sussely 2007b). However, ceramics from Horvat Qitmit that are more typical of nearby Tel Malhata Stratum IV than Stratum III, suggests that Horvat Qitmit was already established in the early seventh century BCE, if not the late eighth century BCE (Beit-Arieh, Freud, and Tal 2015, 741–42). Likewise, it is difficult to establish a foundation date for the other published fortress sites of Horvat ‘Uza, Horvat Radum, and Horvat Tov (much less unpublished Horvat ‘Anim). The ceramics from Horvat ‘Uza and Horvat Radum fit well within a seventh and early sixth century BCE horizon (Freud 2007a, 77), but it is primarily historical conjecture that has led to the perspective that they were not constructed until the latter portion of the seventh century BCE (Beit-Arieh 2007c, 331–34; 1995a, 311–14).

(Schloen 2001, 135–83).¹⁴⁵ The agropastoral subsistence basis of these towns is evidenced in agricultural tools found within the towns, especially sickles, botanical remains that suggest a dominant reliance upon wheat (*triticum*) and barley (*hordeum*) for subsistence (Liphshitz 2016; 2015; 1999), and faunal remains dominated by sheep (*ovis aries*) and goat (*capra hircus*) that indicate subsistence level strategies of culling and usage (Sade 2016; 2015; A. Sasson 2016; Motro 2011; Dayan 1999; Horwitz 1999).¹⁴⁶

All the major settlements of this region present evidence of fortifications,¹⁴⁷ markedly evident in numerous fortresses in the region (Tel ‘Ira, Tel Arad, Horvat ‘Uza, Horvat Radum, Horvat Tov and Tel Masos).¹⁴⁸ Due to their locations, these forts and watchtowers served as outposts and stations along major access routes to and through the region, as well as locales by which the Judahite administration could maintain an influential presence. The Judahite administrative and militaristic involvement at these sites is evidenced in the ostraca found at these forts that preserve an overwhelming dominance of Yahwistic names, but also preserve insight into the militaristic administration of the region. Of the inscriptions at Tel Arad, the epistolary of its commander Eliashib, preserves fascinating insight into militaristic activity.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁵ See alternative perspectives in (Faust 2000; 2012, 128–77), although Faust tends to promote a dichotomy between urban and rural life that is not to be expected in pre-industrial and precapitalistic societies (Schloen 2001, 140–140; Crone 2015, 15–18, 25–38).

¹⁴⁶ Agricultural implements are well attested at each of these major sites. See, for example: Tel ‘Ira (Goldsmith, Ben-Dov, and Kertesz 1999, 452–56), Tel Malhata (Reshef 2015), Tel ‘Aroer (Thareani 2011b, 240–45), and Tel Beersheba (Paz 2016, 1162–74, 1182–88).

¹⁴⁷ These sites are not exceeding large. The largest is Tel ‘Ira at 2.5 ha (Beit-Arieh 1999c, 9), Tel ‘Aroer at 2 ha (Thareani 2011b, 3), Tel Malhata at 1.8 ha (Beit-Arieh and Freud 2015b, 11) and Tel Beersheba at 1 ha (Herzog and Singer-Avitz 2016, 15).

¹⁴⁸ Horvat ‘Anim, though located to the north of Tel Arad and bearing relevance to this discussion, remains poorly known due to a lack of systematic excavation and publication (Cohen 1995, 115–18). Further, the nature of the settlement at Tel Masos in this period is not well-known due to limited exposure.

¹⁴⁹ For further discussion on the nature of naming practices and the militaristic administration of the region, see discussion in Chapter 6.C.

Arad Ostrakon 24 states: "...from Arad 50 and from Kin[ah]...and you shall send them to Ramat-Negeb by the hand of Malkiyahu the son of Qerab'ur and he shall hand them over to Elisha' the son of Yirimyahu in Ramat-Negeb, lest anything should happen to the city...(Aharoni 1981, 46–49). The ostrakon highlights one of the roles of Arad in the region both in stationing soldiers and directing them toward other locales in times of need. The site of Arad is easily identified as Tel Arad, but further, the likely identification of Qinah with Horvat 'Uza (preserved in the Arabic Wadi el-Qeini; Beit-Arieh 2007c, 4), and Ramat-Negeb with Tel 'Ira (Beit-Arieh 1999c, 15; Thareani 2011b, 5), allows for the outlines of military movements to take shape, with Tel Arad and Horvat 'Uza serving as smaller forts redirecting soldiers to Tel 'Ira (Ramat Negeb) in times of need.

The positioning of the forts within the region was not happenstance, but strategically positioned to best monitor key access points through the northeastern Negev. From the south and east, two major routes led into the Beersheba Valley. The first led from the south from the direction of 'En Hazeva into the northeastern Negev past the site of Tel 'Aroer which guarded the southern entrance to the valley (Figure 8; Dorsey 1991, 124–27), and possessed a caravanserai associated with the South Arabian trade (Thareani-Sussely 2007a; Thareani 2010; 2011a). The second route, also by way of 'En Hazeva, travelled north to the southern end of the Dead Sea, and by way of Mezzad Gozal and Rogem Zohar entered the Beersheba Valley via the Wadi Hemar and Wadi el-Qeini, an access guarded and monitored by Horvat 'Uza and Horvat Radum (see Figure 8; Dorsey 1991, 125–26). The fort at Tel Arad guarded the main route north to Hebron and Jerusalem, while Tel Masos was positioned in the center of the valley at the intersection of the main east-west route from Malhata to Beersheba, and the north-south road from Tel 'Aroer to Tel 'Ira (Dorsey 1991, 125–28). In this fashion, the Beersheba Valley can be

understood to function as trade corridor from east to west, providing an efficient route from the Wadi Arabah to the coastal plain and Judean highlands.¹⁵⁰ Thus, we can gain a perspective of the northeastern Negev as consisting of a series of fortified settlements, engaged in subsistence activities. The militaristic forts guarding key access points into the valley indicate the strategic role this valley held in providing access from east to west, and for providing the main corridor for the South Arabian caravan trade to reach the Mediterranean coast.

3. UNDER IMPERIAL EYES

Numerous studies have demonstrated Assyrian interests in tribute, trade, trade networks and the opportunity for economic prosperity from the region (e.g., Singer-Avitz 1999; Aubet 2001; Edens and Bawden 1989; Tadmor 1975; Byrne 2003; Gitin 1997; Aster and Faust 2018; Fantalkin 2018). The picture that emerges, however, with regard to direct Assyrian action, is in controlling specific nodes in the trade network, namely at constricted output points where the trade could be most efficiently managed with a lesser degree of investment (e.g., Liverani 1988; see also Thareani 2016; Bagg 2013). As such, in the southern Levant, Assyrian investment and activity is most heavily focused in the coastal plain, at the western end of the northeastern Negev trade corridor (Thareani 2016; Na'aman 1979, 83–86; see also Elat 1978). This program of controlling the coastal plain was also dictated by the geography and ecology of the region as this was the area in which more intensified control could have the greatest impact in regulating the region and its trade (Thareani 2016, 96). Regions and trade nodes to the east were left under the control of local proxies (Faust 2018; Tyson 2018).

¹⁵⁰ This role of the Beersheba-Arad Valley as a trade corridor, especially in connection with raw materials (i.e., copper) from the Arabah is also reflected in the Early Bronze Age (Finkelstein 1995, 69–86; Amiran 1978; 1996), and at the close of the Late Bronze Age and in the Early Iron Age (Singer 1994, 282–85; Finkelstein 1988; Tebes 2003).

Direct Assyrian investment is most readily visible at Tell Jemmeh (Ben-Shlomo 2014; see also Ben-Shlomo and Van Beek 2014),¹⁵¹ Tel Sera‘ (Oren 1993c), Tel Haror (Oren 1993a), and Tell Abu Salima (Reich 1993), in the form of forts or administrative centers built with Assyrian layouts and Assyrian construction techniques (Ben-Shlomo 2014d, 68–73; Finkelstein 1995, 147; Bienkowski and van der Steen 2001, 39–40). Assyrian influence is also witnessed in Assyrian ceramics and their relatively abundant locally produced imitations (Anastasio 2010, 24–26; Ben-Shlomo 2014, 74–79; Engstrom 2004). Likewise, on the Mediterranean coast less than 10 km west of Tel Jemmeh, the large 8–10 ha fortified site of Ruqeish provided a site from which Assyria could influence and play a role in the Mediterranean trade and is the most likely candidate for Sargon II’s “sealed *karum* of Egypt” erected in 716 BCE (Oren 1993b; Stern 2001, 113).¹⁵² The Assyrian control of this area likely depended on their ability to control or cooperate with Phoenician maritime capabilities.

From Tel Jemmeh, the Assyrians were well situated to benefit from the South Arabian trade as its location at the confluence of the southern Nahal Besor and the northern Nahal Gerar allowed it to take advantage of the two main routes heading west from the Beersheba Valley. Tel Sera‘ and Tel Haror on the Nahal Gerar, both bearing substantial remains dating to the late Iron Age, including Assyrian style structures (Oren 1993c, 1333; 1993a, 584), suggest that travel was primarily conducted through the Nahal Gerar. The southern route along the Nahal Besor does not appear to have been as intensely traveled as evidenced by the lack of comparable activity, especially seen in the lack of occupation at Tell el-Far‘ah (South) during the eighth and seventh

¹⁵¹ Tell Jemmeh is likely the Iron Age site of Arza (Yurza during the Late Bronze Age) and was conquered by Esarhaddon in 679 BCE. It is likely also the destination of Sargon’s earlier campaign to the Brook of Egypt in 716 BCE (Na’aman 1979, 72–73; Ben-Shlomo 2014d, 60; Pritchard 1969, 292).

¹⁵² A comparable window into Assyrian involvement in Mediterranean trade networks can be seen in the events following the unsuccessful Sidonian rebellion in 667 BCE. After Esarhaddon destroyed Sidon he attempted to reestablish greater control over trade through the construction of Kar Esarhaddon (Stern 2001, 60).

centuries BCE (Gophna 1993). The role of Tel Jemmeh as at the nexus between the semi-arid Negev world and the coastal plain, and its role as an interface between the social and economic interactions of these regions is further demonstrated in the substantial number of camel remains, suggested to have originated as the pack animals used both in trading endeavors and by the Assyrian armies for their invasions of Egypt (Wapnish 1981; Jasmin 2006, 146–49).¹⁵³ Thus, the physical location of Tel Jemmeh demonstrates its strategic centrality in achieving Assyrian interests in the southern Levant where it was well positioned to influence trade from South Arabia via the northeastern Negev, from the north along the *via maris*, from the ports of the Mediterranean, as well as serving as a check on Egyptian interests in the southern Levant.

In the late seventh century BCE (ca. 640 BCE), Assyrian dominance began to wane and slowly withdraw from external client regions due in large part to instability within their heartland, a situation of which Egypt was quick to take advantage (Kuhrt 1995, 540–46, 636–46; Stern 2001, 228–29). Under the vigorous leadership of Necho II (610–595 BCE), many of these coastal plain sites came under Egyptian influence if not direct control for a brief time at the close of the sixth century BCE (Stern 2001, 228–35).¹⁵⁴ This situation was likely the main causal factor for Neo-Babylonian policy toward, and campaigns against, many of the coastal plain cities (Fantalkin 2011; Mumford 2014, 83–84; Stager 1996b). As previously outlined, the Neo-Babylonian period sees a shift away from investment in the southern coastal plain, and a re-

¹⁵³ In addition to Wapnish’s groundbreaking study on camel bones from Tel Jemmeh (Wapnish 1981), camel remains have been found at additional sites in the region, most notably Tel Beersheba (A. Sasson 2016), and Kadesh Barnea (Hakker-Orion 2007), but also in limited numbers from Busayra (Bienkowski 2002b, 472), Tawilan (Köhler-Rollefson 1995, 99), Tel ‘Ira (Dayan 1999, 481; Horwitz 1999, 489), Horvat ‘Uza (Sade 2007a), Tel Malhata (Sade 2015), and Tel ‘Aroer (Motro 2011). The limited numbers of the camel remains suggest that they were presumably not part of the diet, but used rather as pack animals (Hakker-Orion 2007, 289).

¹⁵⁴ A desire for greater control and self-determination in relation to the economic opportunities offered by the coastal plain may have contributed to the ill-fated attempt of Josiah of Judah to attack Necho II at Megiddo in 609 BCE (2 Kings 23:29–30; 2 Chronicles 35:20–25).

directing of trade routes, likely in large part to limit Egyptian access to this trade and serving as a deterrent for Egyptian interference in the southern Levant. Likewise, the series of destructions across the northeastern Negev dated to the early sixth century BCE (Lipschits 2005, 224–29), provides evidence of a major disruption to both the trade network and the communities living in the region, bringing down the social and economic systems that had been in place since the late eighth century BCE (Thareani 2014b).

D. CONCLUSION

Part one of this dissertation has been concerned with the history of scholarship for the northeastern Negev and southern Transjordan, previous theoretical assumptions that have formed the basis of this scholarship, and the specific considerations that form the approach of this analysis. Lastly, part one has provided an overview of the physical, sociopolitical, and economic landscape of the southern Levant. The majority of previous research conducted on Edom and Edomite interactions with Judah has explicitly or implicitly been based on the biblical text, with textual traditions used to inform interpretations of the archaeological record. A few exceptions to this overall trend have been discussed, although they either predate the availability of much of the archaeological record of the northeastern Negev, are less concerned with the nature of Edomite interaction in southern Judah, or are limited in their scope (Porter 2004; N. Smith 2009; N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b; Thareani 2010; 2014b; 2014a; Tebes 2007; Singer-Avitz 1999; 2014; Freud 2014).

In assembling the archaeological record to serve as the primary dataset for analysis, several theoretical considerations were outlined for use. These include the understanding of the landscape as an ecologically, socially, and politically differentiated space. This means that

notions of strict delineated borders and of social or ethnic homogeneity cannot be unconsciously applied to the region. Rather, by viewing the landscape as a network of nodes and access corridors, and focusing analysis on these nodes, the primary stages of social, political and economic activity and interactions can be highlighted. These interactions were not between homogeneous political or cultural entities, but instead reflect the complexities of power dynamics, economic interests, and social action at broad and local levels. Lastly, interactions in the northeastern Negev can be most productively explored through the concept of social entanglement that emphasizes the complexities of the relationships between humans.

During the late Iron Age, the northeastern Negev was under the administrative control of the Judahite kingdom and Edom was ruled through its foremost city of Busayra. Both kingdoms were clients of the Assyrian Empire whose presence was most closely felt in the southern coastal plain. While the landscape was characterized by harsh semi-arid and arid regions, significant economic opportunity was afforded by the South Arabian trade network that crossed the northeastern Negev from Edom on its way to the Mediterranean. While aromatics are the most frequently cited commodity of this network due its high value, precious stones, metals, cloth, wool and dyed wool, livestock and even humans are recorded as trade items. Trade opportunities and myriad associated activity, together with the yearly fluctuations of transhumance for pastoral purposes, provide substantive contexts in which movement and interaction across this landscape was to be expected.

Building on these theoretical considerations and the reality of the late Iron Age landscape, the second part of this dissertation will engage in a series of case studies. These case studies will address the central research question of this dissertation, namely how the diversity of the archaeological material culture record in northeastern Negev can be understood in terms of

the identities of its users, and the nature of the behaviors that led to these patterns of deposition. The case studies engage with 1) foodways, explored primarily through ceramic cooking pots and tablewares, 2) ritual spaces and the complexities of the religious landscape, and lastly, 3) textual and inscriptional data that preserve the memories of entangled relationships, differences in script and dialects, and distinctions in naming traditions that marked persons and belonging or as different.

PART TWO: CASE STUDIES OF INTERACTION AND IDENTITY

CHAPTER 4. FOODWAYS AND CULINARY PRACTICES AT THE NEXUS OF INTERACTION

Food is enormously important, first of all, as sustenance... But food is also a symbolic marker of membership (or non-membership) in practically any sort of social grouping. Whether it be ceremonial, religious or secular, social groups characteristically employ food to draw lines, confirm statuses, and separate those who do, and do not, belong... Food habits are so close to the core of what culture is that they sometimes function almost like language. As with language, on many occasions people define themselves with food; at the same time, food consistently defines and redefines *them* (Mintz 2002, 26).

The following chapter examines identity and interaction in the frontier zone of the northeastern Negev and southern Transjordan through a consideration of ancient foodways. It focuses on the ceramics that relate to food production and consumption as they form the most abundant material culture correlate to foodways in the archaeological record. This study also engages with faunal and botanical remains to the extent that their preservation and publication permit. As ceramics related to foodways serve as a proxy for distinct culinary practices, they reveal insights into highly socially sensitive aspects of cultural identity. The analysis of these ceramics demonstrates a complex, long-term portrait of migration and interaction between diverse individuals and communities, with high degrees of culinary diversity attested not only across different sites but within individual domestic structures. This chapter ultimately explores the myriad forms of interaction found in contexts of food preparation that highlight patterns in the maintenance of foodways by individuals in “foreign” contexts, and conspicuous manners in which identity was promoted through feasting.

A. FOODWAYS AS A MARKER OF IDENTITIES AND OF COMMUNICATION

Initially concerned with subsistence and diet, foodways research has since sought to understand the role of food within its greater social, economic, and ideological contexts (Twiss 2012). A significant component of this conceptual shift has been the recognition of the central role that food holds in structuring everyday human activity, and the multiple, sequential behaviors associated with food production and consumption. Such a consideration of each step required for the provisioning of a meal are artfully captured in the writings of Musaylima during the early Medieval period:

By the women sowing seed
and the women reaping crops
and the women winnowing wheat
and the women milling flower
and the women baking bread
and the women sopping bread broth
and the women gobbling morsels of fat and butter
You are deemed better than the dwellers in tents of hair
Nor do the village dwellers take precedence over you
Musaylima seventh century CE (quoted in van Gelder 2000, 88)

Beyond the contextual considerations of this early Islamic text and its thought-provoking gendered perspective, the social significance of each step of the foodways process that is portrayed extends well beyond a singular consideration of consumption. Rather, in identifying each step of the food production process, an emphasis is placed on the centrality and entangled nature of the behaviors involved in producing the food, and by extension, the role these would have in the structuring of daily life.

As a result of this social structuring of entangled behaviors, it is necessary to consider the entire trajectory of food production and consumption. Such perspectives consider food and culinary practices from the initial stages of procurement and distribution, to preparation and presentation, and eventually to consumption and disposal, in other words, a *chaîne opératoire* of

food (Goody 1982; Metheny 2015, 221; Pitts 2015, 95–96). It is the culmination of all of these processes and the relation of food to each individual context and technology involved in its transformation that results in food serving a powerful semiotic role within its social milieu (Marak 2014, 171). Similarly, as noted by Lévi-Strauss, it is through the transformation from raw to cooked that the natural world enters into the human domain, imbuing it with cultural significance (Lévi-Strauss 1972). Lastly, as foodways are an essential and repetitive element of daily behavior and are seldom conducted in isolation, they are often associated with strong emotion and are at the forefront of concepts of heritage and of belonging (Appadurai 1981; Brulotte and Di Giovine 2014; Leitch 2003).

The significance that foodways hold in serving as a powerful marker of identity lie in the intersection of the materiality of food and its associated implements, together with the performance of culturally resonant behaviors in association with it (Twiss 2007, 2). As the oft-cited claim of Brillat-Savarin indicates: “Tell me what kind of food you eat, and I will tell you what you are,” food often stands as one of the most conspicuous and readily identifiable markers of identity, of belonging and of difference (Brillat-Savarin 2000, 3). Myriad studies of foodways have demonstrated these powerful associations, exploring contexts and methods that are nearly as varied as they are numerous (e.g., Hastorf 2017; Garth 2013; Warner 2015; Janowski and Kerlogue 2007; Kershner 2002; Brulotte and Di Giovine 2014; Cramer, Greene, and Walters 2011; Marak 2014; Counihan and Van Esterik 2013). As a marker of identity, food often creates distinction for larger social groupings (Fischler 1988), where those who consume similar food are often viewed positively, and those who consume unusual or unrecognizable foods are viewed with distrust and often disgust (Scholliers 2001, 8). Similarly, it is not only the food that is

consumed that bears significance, but where, how, and with whom it is consumed that emphasizes sentiments of belonging and of distance from others (Twiss 2007, 1).

The identities expressed and reified in foodways, however, seldom if ever present a one-to-one correlation with a particular social group or ethnic identity, nor are the identities expressly singular. Rather, foodways also lend insight into patterns of inequality, hierarchy and power, of gender and age differences, and other aspects of their human context (Twiss 2012; Porter 2013, 82–103, 112–27; 2011; Mee and Renard 2007; Mennell, Murcott, and van Otterloo 1992, 54–60). Such differences may be indicated by the amount and types of food consumed, the order in which individual actors partake in the meal, the types of vessels and utensils used, the spatial organization of those consuming a meal, and the nature of those preparing the meal (Dietler 1990; Twiss 2007, 3). In many cases, within a singular social grouping, the consumption of, and often restricted access to certain foods is used to maintain social boundaries of hierarchy (Thomas 2007; Grant 2002; Sarasúa 2001; Sapir-Hen and Ben-Yosef 2014). Furthermore, food, through its preparation and consumption can also serve a communicative and a performative role whereby connections, whether of kinship or alliance, are fostered or obligations are created (Fox and Harrell 2008; Cramer, Greene, and Walters 2011; Greene and Cramer 2011, xii; Janowski and Kerlogue 2007; Janowski 2007; C. Meyers 2012). Such performative aspects are best exemplified and most easily detectable within feasting contexts, whereby status inequalities and demonstrations of opulence are on full display (Bray 2003; Jiminéz, Montón-Subías, and Romero 2011; Altmann and Fu 2014; Greer 2013; Fox and Harrell 2008; Pollock 2012a).

One of the most productive ways that foodways has been explored is through its means of expressing or maintaining association with a broad social identity, as is particularly apparent in immigrant, diaspora, and colonial situations. In many of these contexts foodways serve as a

primary means by which immigrant communities seek to maintain aspects of their identity, while also negotiating the complexities of new geographic and sociopolitical surroundings (Ben-Shlomo et al. 2008; Fantalkin 2015; Quercia 2015; Faust 2015; Franklin 2015; Brighton 2015; Mennell, Murcott, and van Otterloo 1992, 75–80). The centrality foodways hold in the conception of identity within a community is especially striking in contexts where such foodways are maintained, despite an environmental context that is not at all conducive to such a practice, as seen for example among the Norse settlers in Greenland (Pierce 2008; McGovern 2000).

Such contexts of interaction and culinary contact, however, often result in a complex series of negotiations between the cuisines, the communities practicing them, and ultimately with the very nature of the identity of that community, a feature that is constantly being imagined, and re-imagined as a result of such encounters. For example, host communities may reject and villainize new cuisines while ultimately adopting elements of it (Sponza 2002; Luu 2002; Panayi 2002). Likewise, immigrant communities will adopt new elements or ingredients of the host culture into their own cuisine, often re-inventing it within its new context (Kershner 2002). In this way, and despite the oft-cited nature of cuisine as one of the more conservative elements of culture, numerous contexts exist in which exotic foods and ingredients are adopted, often taking on a life of their own and coming to hold an entirely new significance among a certain community (Dietler 2010, 186–89).¹⁵⁵ Such considerations are necessary when examining foodways over time as they are never static but very much a dynamic and active part of daily life.

¹⁵⁵ One need only think of the British adoption of tea as a result of their colonial encounters, or the association of the potato with the Irish to consider the evolution new ingredients can hold in terms of exemplifying a broad social identity (see discussion in Dietler 2010, 186).

The trespassing and indigenization of foreign foods is often patterned by *individual* ingredients being added to a cuisine, thereby not threatening that cuisine in its essence, but rather subtly shifting or modifying it (Dietler 2010, 186–87). Likewise, while often serving to demarcate cultural and social boundaries, foodways also somewhat ironically serve as one of the primary means by which the crossings of such boundaries may be attempted (Twiss 2007, 3). As identities constitute much more than an ethnic or social totality, it is often through the performance and interaction of other aspects of one’s identity that the crossing of such boundaries is enacted. Whether through the emulation of elite feasting practices or through cross-cultural intermarriage, contexts of contact and their culinary records are ripe with such entangled encounters (Dietler 2010, 183–256; S. T. Smith 2003a). It is through the interplay of both the conservative nature of culinary identities, but also the manners in which these boundaries are crossed or manipulated that unique perspectives toward patterns of social cohesion, interaction and entanglement can ultimately be explored.

B. ARCHAEOLOGICAL CORRELATES TO CUISINE

To explore foodways archaeologically, it is necessary to identify material culture correlates to the various stages of the foodways process. Robust and spatially nuanced records of the zooarchaeological and archaeobotanical remains are immensely useful in determining not only the types of foods consumed, but also of the agricultural, pastoral, hunting, foraging, or other methods of food procurement that would have structured significant portions of daily life. Likewise, pathological and isotopic analyses of human remains can yield further insights into nutrition, diet, and the rigors of daily activity associated with food production as especially seen among sedentary agriculturalists (Twiss 2012, 375–78; Molleson 2007). Moreover, the vessels

and implements used in preparation and consumption practices can yield valuable insight, especially when considered in their spatial and temporal contexts and in relation to divergent patterns within the same sites and regions. Likewise, conspicuous patterns of consumption can provide a wealth of information regarding the relations between various subsets of the same social groups (e.g., Greer 2013; 2014).

Cooking pots are especially useful in the study of ancient foodways due to their availability within the archaeological record, and also to the convergence of their indicated food preparation practices and the data they provide concerning the persons creating them. Not only is the cuisine prepared within the cooking pot considered socially conservative and associated with the identity and heritage of those consuming it, but the very practice of creating the vessels in themselves may be seen as highly culturally conservative (K. Nelson 2015, 118). For, as remarked by Vitelli: “In my experience, to see a pot, or handle it, or even discuss how it is made, is not sufficient experience to be able to reproduce it. There must be some actual experience of the process if one is to enter the tradition of the medium” (Vitelli 1977, 30; Papadopoulos 1997, 450). Indeed, not only may cuisine be identified as socially meaningful, but the form of the vessels preparing the meal appear to be restricted to the communities of potters producing them. The production of the cooking pots is a process that is shaped by, and perpetuated through a complex series of motor habits that can only be learned through significant investment in a specific context of learning, or apprenticeship (Wendrich 2012a). Numerous ethnoarchaeological studies have demonstrated this principle of vessel form traditions perpetuated within specific communities of potters, and the difficulty of potters trained in different contexts to emulate the nuances of such ceramic forms due to the rigid nature of complex motor habits developed over time (Dietler and Herbich 1998; Gosselain 1998; Stark 1998a; 1998b; Deal 2007).

Such an embodiment of cultural aspects within corporeal action is best encompassed in the concept of *habitus* as outlined by Pierre Bourdieu (1977). In terms of its application within contexts of learning, Bourdieu states:

The essential part of the *modus operandi* which defines practical mastery is transmitted in practice, in its practical state, without attaining the level of discourse. The child imitates not “models” but other people’s actions. Body *hexis* speaks directly to the motor function, in the form of a pattern of postures that is both individual and systematic, because linked to a whole system of techniques involving the body and tools, and charged with a host of social meanings and values. (Bourdieu 1977, 87; after Wendrich 2012b, 4).¹⁵⁶

The social meaning associated with these vessels may then be understood as imbued within the vessel itself, through the bodily action involved in its creation, and the social setting in which it was created. These contexts of learning may be productively considered through the concept of an apprenticeship, but also especially within the life contexts of these craftspersons, through legitimate, informal peripheral learning that has been described as a “community of practice” (Wenger 1998; Lave and Wenger 1991; see also Wendrich 2012a; 2012b). Such contexts of learning together with the social meaning associated with the cuisine held in vessels such as cooking pots, help to envision the mode by which these vessels are perpetuated over time, and how they can be considered as both socially sensitive and culturally conservative (K. Nelson 2015, 118). It is for these above reasons that the presence of cooking pots within certain archaeological contexts are often used as an indicator of the actual *presence* of the peoples, or at the very least, the potters associated with them, rather than as markers of trade or emulation (Fantalkin 2015; Ben-Shlomo et al. 2008; Quercia 2015; Spagnoli 2010; Spataro and Villing 2015; Bürge 2017; Papadopoulos 1997). These perspectives are also due in part to the relatively

¹⁵⁶ Whereby *modus operandi* describes the method of creation, and *hexis* refers to the manifestation of *habitus* as outlined by Bourdieu (1977; see discussion in Wendrich 2012b, 2–7).

drab nature of cooking vessels and other household pottery, which are less likely to be emulated by other communities for prestige purposes due to their lack of social visibility (Fantalkin 2015).

While similar considerations may be given toward the contexts of production of other vessels such as table or serving wares, they must be examined in a slightly different fashion. Due to the association of prestige and the performative aspects of the contexts of feasting, the function of consumption vessels varies considerably from those of cooking pots, whose social visibility was presumably more restricted. For example, and related to the context of discussion of this work, during the late Iron Age in the southern Levant, many of the elite serving and feasting wares associated with the polity of Edom appear to emulate in part the prestige forms found in Assyrian courts, and yet the cooking pots preserve a distinctly local tradition (Anastasio 2010, 24–26; Ben-Shlomo 2014d, 74–79; Hunt 2015, 146–81; Daviau 2002a). Petrographic analyses of these vessels, and other Assyrian forms, indicate that emulations were being produced locally (Engstrom 2004; Daviau and Graham 2009).

Moreover, in the southern Transjordanian Edomite context, many of these forms were decorated with elaborate painted decorations, a feature not seen in their Assyrian prototypes (Bienkowski 2002c; Singer-Avitz 2004; 2014). Thus, despite the likelihood of Assyrian potters, or persons trained in Assyrian potting traditions present in the southern Levant, much of the meaning and prestige associated with the use of these forms and the feasting traditions they embody (Hunt 2015, 182–204; Ermidoro 2015; Groß 2015), was transformed in accordance with local tradition as seen in the elaborate decorative patterns of their new sociopolitical context. This practice, however, is isolated from those of the cooking pots, which do not bear such similarities to Assyrian forms, preserving instead distinctly local traditions. In summary, by examining foodways within their holistic context we can strive to reach a more nuanced

understanding of the social meaning associated with these vessels, the identities they maintain and promote, and the nature of their negotiation within interaction zones.

1. FOOD PREPARATION: COOKING POT TYPOLOGY

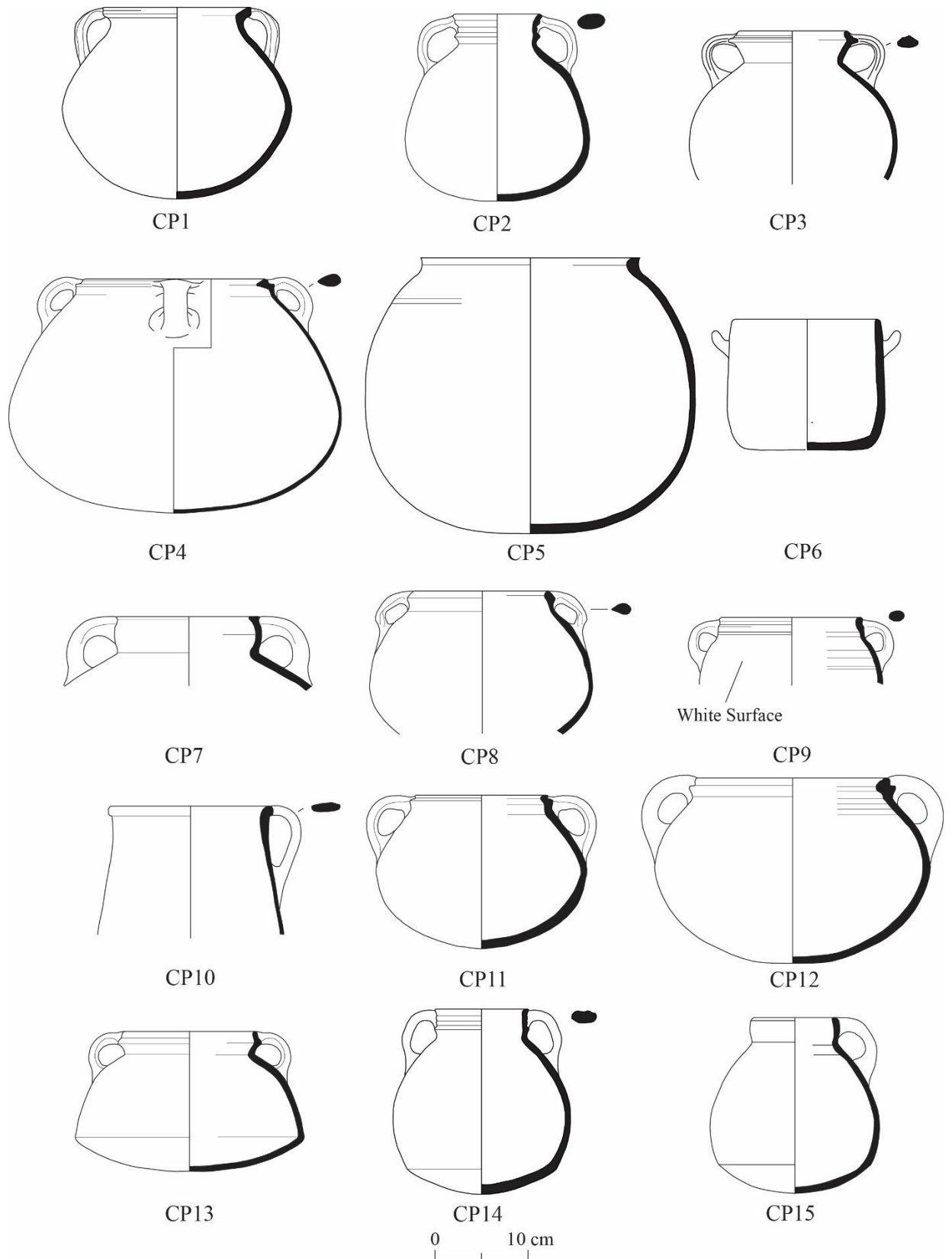
Cooking pots provide an excellent case study due to their transregional ubiquity within the archaeological record. During the late Iron Age, they can be divided into several distinct traditions. A typological schema for these traditions is described below, and visually portrayed in Figure 10. This typology encompasses the most dominant cooking pot forms of the northeastern Negev and southern Transjordan during the late Iron Age (late Iron IIB and Iron IIC), and when possible, has united existing site-specific cooking pot typologies. A methodological concern, however, is raised in such an endeavor. While attempting to delineate the major cooking pot traditions of the region, the schema below may appear to artificially homogenize some of the discreet nuances of the forms, flattening the uniqueness of slightly variant traditions that can be seen between sites and between different potting communities. For example, the cooking pot type CP4 encompasses a host of variances that are particularly noticeable in southern Transjordan.¹⁵⁷ While each of the slight variances in the physical form could account for a new sub-category, the resultant complexities of such a typology would negate its heuristic value. Rather, recognizing that these variances are the result of different potting communities perpetuating the same general form or tradition over time and space, we can discuss these types in terms of the broader pattern of foodways and potting traditions that they in fact represent. As

¹⁵⁷ For example, within the ceramic typology created by Smith and Levy this type is represented by approximately a dozen different sub-categories that account for slight variances in the shape of the neck, ridges, and other features (N. Smith and Levy 2014, 336–37).

such, presented below is the typology of cooking pots found within the northeastern Negev and southern Transjordan during the late Iron Age.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁸ Tabulations of cooking pot types by frequency is recorded in Appendix B.

Figure 10. Southern Levantine late Iron Age cooking pot types. (Figure by author)



Cooking Pot 1 (CP1)

Description: Neckless cooking pot with an everted rim and two handles; often called a “Judahite” cooking pot. This vessel is very common in the region of Judah during the Iron IIC.

Attestations: Arad VII–VI (Singer-Avitz 2002, 140, Type CP6); Tel ‘Aroer II (Thareani 2011b, 132–33, Type CP2, CP3); Horvat Qitmit (Freud and Beit-Arieh 1995, 216); Horvat Tov (Itkin 2018, 70, Type CP1); Horvat ‘Uza III (Freud 2007a, 80); Tel ‘Ira VI (Freud 1999, 217); Kadesh Barnea 2 (Bernick-Greenberg 2007a, 161, Type CP7); Tel Malhata III (Freud 2015, 199, Type CP5); Tel Masos (Zimhoni 1983, 128, Type CP2); Tell el-Kheleifeh (Pratico 1993, Pl. 19:6).

Cooking Pot 2 (CP2)

Description: Ridged-neck cooking pot with two handles; often called a “Judahite” cooking pot. This vessel is very common in the region of Judah during the Iron IIC.

Attestations: Arad VII–VI (Singer-Avitz 2002, 141, Type CP9, CP10); Tel ‘Aroer II (Thareani 2011b, 135, Type CP10, CP11); Horvat Qitmit (Freud and Beit-Arieh 1995, 216); Horvat Radum (Freud 2007c, 318–19); Horvat Tov (Itkin 2018, 71, Type CP2, CP3); Horvat ‘Uza III (Freud 2007a, 81); Tel ‘Ira VI (Freud 1999, 218); Kadesh Barnea 2 (Bernick-Greenberg 2007a, 162, Type CP8); Tel Malhata III (Freud 2015, 199–200, Type CP6); Tel Masos (Zimhoni 1983, 128, Type CP1).

Cooking Pot 3 (CP3)

Description: Stepped-rim cooking pot with an out-flaring neck; often called a “Coastal” cooking pot. This vessel is prevalent in the Beersheba-Arad Valley in the Iron IIC, although it is better-known in the southern coastal plain of Israel.

Attestations: Ashkelon (Stager, Master, and Schloen 2008, 86–87); Arad VII–VI (Singer-Avitz 2002, 140, Type CP5); Tel ‘Aroer II (Biran and Cohen 1981, Fig. 10:6); Horvat Qitmit (Freud and Beit-Arieh 1995, Fig. 4.6:21); Horvat ‘Uza III (Freud 2007a, 81); Tel ‘Ira VI (Freud 1999, 218); Tell Jemmeh (Ben-Shlomo 2014b, Fig. 8.176); Kadesh Barnea 2 (Bernick-Greenberg 2007a, 162, Type CP9); Tel Malhata III (Freud 2015, 196–98, Type CP3); Tel Masos (Zimhoni 1983, 18, Type CP4).

Cooking Pot 4 (CP4)

Description: Neckless or short-neck cooking pot with a ridged rim and two to four handles; often called an “Edomite” cooking pot. This vessel is dominant in southern Transjordan, but also well-attested in the northeastern Negev. Its contexts predominantly date to the Iron IIC, although it also appears in the late Iron IIB. This type corresponds to Oakeshott’s Typology of southern Transjordan Cooking Pot types A and B (Oakeshott 1979, 48; Bienkowski 2002c, 307–9, 312). The major differences between Oakeshott’s type CPA and CPB is the presence of a neck, which, as noted by Hart (Hart 1995b, 55) is an artificial distinction as there is a continuum between this type of cooking pot with and without a neck.

Attestations: Arad VII–VI (Singer-Avitz 2002, 140, Type CP7); Tel ‘Aroer III–II (Thareani 2011b, 133–34, Type CP5); Horvat Qitmit (Freud and Beit-Arieh 1995, 216); Horvat Radum (Freud 2007c, 318–19); Horvat Tov (Itkin 2018, 72–73, Type CP5); Horvat ‘Uza III (Freud 2007a, 81); Tel ‘Ira VI (Freud 1999, 218); Kadesh Barnea 2 (Bernick-Greenberg 2007a, 170, Type ECP1); Tel Malhata IV–III (Freud 2015, 194–95, Type CP1); Tel Masos (Zimhoni 1983, 128, Type CP3); Busayra (Bienkowski 2002c, 307–9, Type CPA and CPB); Ba’ja III (Lindner and

Farajat 1987, Fig. 4; Bienert, Lamprichs, and Vieweger 2000, Fig. 15); FBRS 27 (Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014a, 522, Fig. 6.6:5); Ghrareh (Hart 1989, 17, Type CPA, CPB); Jabal al-Khubtha (Lindner et al. 1997, Fig. 22); Jabal al-Qseir (Lindner et al. 1996, Fig. 23); Tell el-Kheleifeh (Pratico 1993, 38–39, Type CP1); Khirbat al-Iraq Shmaliyeh (N. Smith and Levy 2014, 336–37, Table 4.44, Type CP33, CP46); Khirbet Ishra (Hart 1989, Pl. 60: 10–12); Khirbat al-Kur (KIJ; N. Smith and Levy 2014, 336–37, Table 4.44, Type CP33, CP36, CP38, CP39); Khirbet al-Megheitah (Hart 1989, Pl. 59:11–12, 21); Khirbat al-Malayqtah (N. Smith and Levy 2014, 336–37, Table 4.44, Types CP30, CP33, CP36, CP37, CP38, CP39, CP46); Khirbat Mu‘allaq (Lindner, Farajat, and Zeitler 1996, Fig. 26); Qurayyat al-Mansur (Hübner 2004, abb. 3:3); Ras al-Miyah (Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 839–40, Fig. 12.49a: 2; 12.49b: 2, 5); Rujm Hamrat Ifdan (N. Smith and Levy 2014, 336–37, Table 4.44, Type CP30, CP31, CP32, CP33, CP34, CP35); es-Sadeh (Lindner, Farajat, and Zeitler 1988, Fig. 8; Lindner et al. 1990, Fig. 11); ash-Shorabat (Bienkowski and Adams 1999, Fig. 1–3); Tawilan (Hart 1995b, 55, CPA; N. Smith and Levy 2014, 336–37, Table 4.44, Types CP30, CP33, CP36, CP37, CP38, CP39, CP40, CP46); Umm al-Biyara (Bienkowski 2011b, 66, Type CPA).

Cooking Pot 5 (CP5)

Description: Cooking pot with a simple rim and incipient or no handles; often called an “early Edomite” cooking pot or “Negevite” cooking pot. This vessel type encompasses a variety of localized forms although it is often handmade, and often holemouth, or presenting a simple out-turned rim. This vessel is most common in the Iron IIB

but is also attested in the Iron IIC. According to Oakeshott's Typology of southern Transjordan, this type corresponds to Cooking Pot D. A number of examples of this type that were produced in southern Transjordan were wheelmade (Oakeshott 1979, 49; Bienkowski 2002c, 312).

Attestations: Arad VIII (Singer-Avitz 2002, 143–44, Type CP14); Tel 'Aroer III (Thareani 2011b, 134, Type CP6); Tel Beersheba III (Singer-Avitz 2016, 610–11, Type CP “Negebite”); Kadesh Barnea 4–2 (Bernick-Greenberg 2007b, 192–93, Type NCP1, NCP2, NCP3); Tel Malhata IV (Freud 2015, 196, Type CP2); Busayra (Bienkowski 2002c, 312, Type CPD, Fig. 9.40:14-16); Tell el-Kheleifeh (Pratico 1993, Pl. 12:3); Tawilan (Hart 1995b, Fig. 6.35: 5); Ghrareh (Hart 1989, 17, CPD).

Cooking Pot 6 (CP6)

Description: Handmade cooking pot with a flat base; also known as a “Negevite” cooking pot or krater. This vessel is common in the Iron IIB and IIC. This type is very similar to those of Type CP5 in their production, differentiated on the basis of their flat bases, presumed variant cooking techniques, and in some cases their fabric (Bernick-Greenberg 2007b, 191–93). According to Oakeshott's Typology of southern Transjordan, this type corresponds to Cooking Pot D. A number of examples of this type that were produced in southern Transjordan were wheelmade (Oakeshott 1979, 49; Bienkowski 2002c, 312).¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁹ As many early excavations and subsequent publications did not know how to engage with these handmade forms in a standardized manner, many were simply labeled as “Negevite ware” and no information regarding form type, burn marks, or even visual representations were presented. As such, it is not always possible to determine between vessels that would have functioned as cooking pots and those that would have served as bowls or kraters. Every possible attempt to isolate solely cooking vessels was made, although due to these difficulties, the numbers of this form as presented in this work may be slightly inflated at certain sites, namely see discussion regarding Kadesh Barnea below.

Attestations: Tel Beersheba III (Singer-Avitz 2016, 610–11, Type CP “Negebite”); Kadash Barnea 4–2 (Bernick-Greenberg 2007b, 191–92, Types K1–K7); Tell el-Kheleifeh (Pratico 1993, Pl. 11-13); Tawilan (Hart 1995b, Fig. 6.36); Ghrareh (Hart 1989, 17, Type CPD, Pl. 24); Khirbet Ishra (Hart 1989, Pl. 60: 9).

Cooking Pot 7 (CP7)

Description: “Miscellaneous” cooking pots from southern Transjordan with necks; some with rilled or bow rims. Handle location varies, but often extend from the rim to the body. This type derives from Oakeshott’s typology of the southern Transjordan, Cooking Pot Type CPC, and accounts for a number of lesser attested forms of the region (Oakeshott 1979, 48–49; Bienkowski 2002c, 312).

Attestations: Busayra (Bienkowski 2002c, 312, Type CPC); Umm al-Biyara (Bienkowski 2011b, 66, Type CPC).

Cooking Pot 8 (CP8)

Description: Double-folded rim cooking pots; best attested in southern Transjordan and at Tell el-Kheleifeh, though not in significant numbers. This type derives from Oakeshott’s typology of the southern Transjordan, Cooking Pot Type CPE and accounts for a number of lesser attested forms of the region (Oakeshott 1979, 49; Bienkowski 2002c, 312). The rim appears to mirror the rims of a number of bowls and kraters from southern Transjordan (Oakeshott’s Bowl Type F; Bienkowski 2002c, 276, 278–79), possibly suggesting a morphological origin for the form.

Attestations: Busayra (Bienkowski 2002c, 312, Type CPE); Tell el-Kheleifeh (Pratico 1993, Pl. 19: 5, 7); Tawilan (Hart 1995b, 55, Type CPE).

Cooking Pot 9 (CP9)

Description: Small cooking pot with a white surface. The distinction of this type is on the basis of the unique white nature of its surface (and often fabric). Its form most often corresponds to Type CP4, although several examples of ware in Type CP2 are also noted at Tel Malhata. This cooking pot type is derived from the typology of Tel Malhata, where it is a distinctive type, but poorly attested elsewhere.

Attestations: Tel Malhata IVA–III (Freud 2015, 198, Type CP4); Horvat Qitmit (Freud and Beit-Arieh 1995, Fig. 4.12: 22 [one sherd]); Tel ‘Ira VII (Freud 1999, Fig. 6.80: 11 [one sherd]).

Cooking Pot 10 (CP10)

Description: Wide-mouthed cooking pot with a flaring rim and a single handle; this form has its origins in the Aegean region (Waldbaum and Magness 1997, 31–32) and within the context of discussion is currently only attested at Tel Malhata.¹⁶⁰

Attestations: Tel Malhata IIIA (Freud 2015, 201, Type CP11).

Cooking Pot 11 (CP11)

Description: Short, up-turned, grooved-rim cooking pot with a pair of loop handles extending from the rim to the body. This form is common in Judah in the late Iron IIA and in the Iron IIB.

Attestations: Tel Arad X–VIII (Singer-Avitz 2002, 139, Type CP1, CP2); Tel ‘Aroer IV-IIa (Thareani 2011b, 132–33, Type CP1, CP4); Tel Beersheba III–II (Singer-Avitz 2016, 606–8, Type CP3); Kadesh Barnea 4–2 (Bernick-Greenberg 2007a, 135,

¹⁶⁰ This type of cooking pot together with other East Greek pottery is often argued to be indicative of the presence of Greek mercenaries (Fantalkin 2001, 84; 2011, 95).

145, 150, 161, Type CP1, CP2); Tel Malhata IV–III (Freud 2015, 201, Type CP10); Tell el-Kheleifeh (Pratico 1993, Pl. 18: 7-10; 19:1-4).

Cooking Pot 12 (CP12)

Description: Cooking pot with a thickened ridged rim and a pair of loop handles extending from the rim to the body. This form is common in Judah in the Iron IIB.

Attestations: Tel Arad X–VIII (Singer-Avitz 2002, 139, Type CP3); Tel ‘Aroer IIa (Thareani 2011b, 134–35, Type CP8); Tel Beersheba III–II (Singer-Avitz 2016, 605–6, Type CP2); Kadesh Barnea 4–2 (Bernick-Greenberg 2007a, 135, 145, 150, 161, Type CP1); Tel ‘Ira VII (Freud 1999, 201); Tel Malhata V–III (Freud 2015, 200–201, Type CP8).

Cooking Pot 13 (CP13)

Description: Open cooking pot with a stepped-rim and out-flaring neck. The vessel has a rounded base, a sharp carination in the lower body, and two loop handles extending from the rim to the body. This vessel is common at Tel Beersheba in the Iron IIB and appears to be an antecedent to CP3.

Attestations: Tel Beersheba III–II (Singer-Avitz 2016, 608, Type CP5).

Cooking Pot 14 (CP14)

Description: Globular-body cooking pot with three to four ridges on its high, straight neck and a pair of loop handles extending from the neck to the shoulder. This type is common in Judah in the Iron IIB.

Attestations: Tel Arad X–VIII (Singer-Avitz 2002, 141, Type CP8); Tel Malhata IV–III (Freud 2015, 200, Type CP7); Tel ‘Aroer IV (Thareani 2011b, 135, Type CP9); Tel ‘Ira

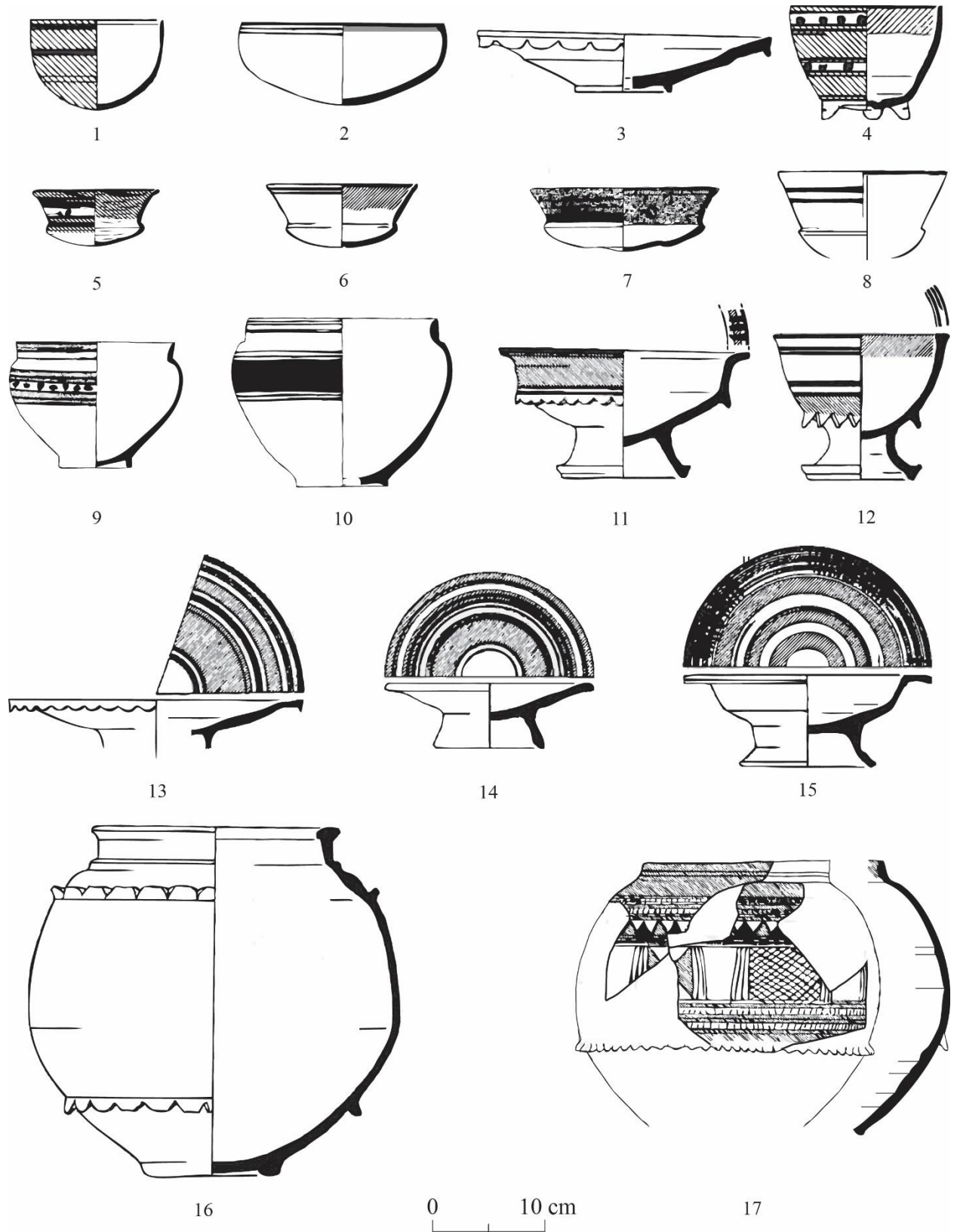
VII (Freud 1999, 201); Tel Beersheba III–II (Singer-Avitz 2016, 608–9, Type CP7); Kadesh Barnea 3 (Bernick-Greenberg 2007a, 150, Type CP6).

Cooking Pot 15 (CP15)

Description: Cooking jug with a swollen body, smooth neck, rounded rim, and a single loop handle. This type is known in Judah in the Iron IIB, and is also common in the Iron IIA (Herzog and Singer-Avitz 2015, 216).

Attestations: Tel Arad X–VIII (Singer-Avitz 2002, 143, Type CP13); Tel Beersheba III–II (Singer-Avitz 2016, 610, Type CP10, CP11); Tel ‘Ira VII (Freud 1999, 201).

Figure 11. Examples of Busayra Painted Ware (BPW). (Figure by author)



2. FEASTING WARES: *BUSAYRA PAINTED WARE AND THE NEGEV TRADITION*

The archaeological record of this region of the southern Levant also provides an abundance of data related to the consumption and feasting aspect of foodways. The tableware tradition called “Busayra Painted Ware” (henceforth BPW), consists of a spectrum of iconic decorated vessels attested in southern Transjordan and the northeastern Negev (see Figure 11).¹⁶¹ This ware has been chosen for analysis first on its past association with the polity of Edom—although this work will seek to nuance this association—its distinctiveness within the archaeological record, and its chronologically and spatially restricted pattern of attestation. Moreover, the purported cultural association between BPW and the so-called Edomite-type cooking pots (above Type CP4), identifies its merit in examining similarities or divergences between two different iconic “Edomite” markers. This ware is eponymously labelled after its earliest and most prominent locus of attestation—Busayra (Bienkowski 2002c). It has also been found in substantial quantities at other sites in southern Transjordan and to varying degrees within the northeastern Negev (Hart 1989; Singer-Avitz 2014; Thareani 2010; Singer-Avitz 2004). On the basis of sheer quantities alone, however, and in light of variant and better attested traditions of serving wares at sites in the northeastern Negev (Beit-Arieh and Freud 2015a, 365–67, 371–74), the association of this ware to Busayra as point of origin is compelling (Bienkowski 2015, 422–23, 431–32; 2002c).

The vessels that form a part of the BPW assemblage consist primarily of bowls and kraters, but also include chalices, incense burners and stands (Thareani 2010, 36). This corpus is

¹⁶¹ This ware was previously called “Edomite Painted Ware,” though due to the problematic association of one aspect of material culture with a sociopolitical entity, Bienkowski proposed calling it “Busayra Painted Ware” after its first and most prominent locus of discovery (Bienkowski 1992b, 7). Alternatively, Juan Manuel Tebes has called it “Southern Transjordan-Negev Pottery,” (STNP; Tebes 2011, also Tebes 2015), a label that better reflects its geographic distribution but is too general to be of much utility. For these reasons the designation “Busayra Painted Ware” is maintained in this work.

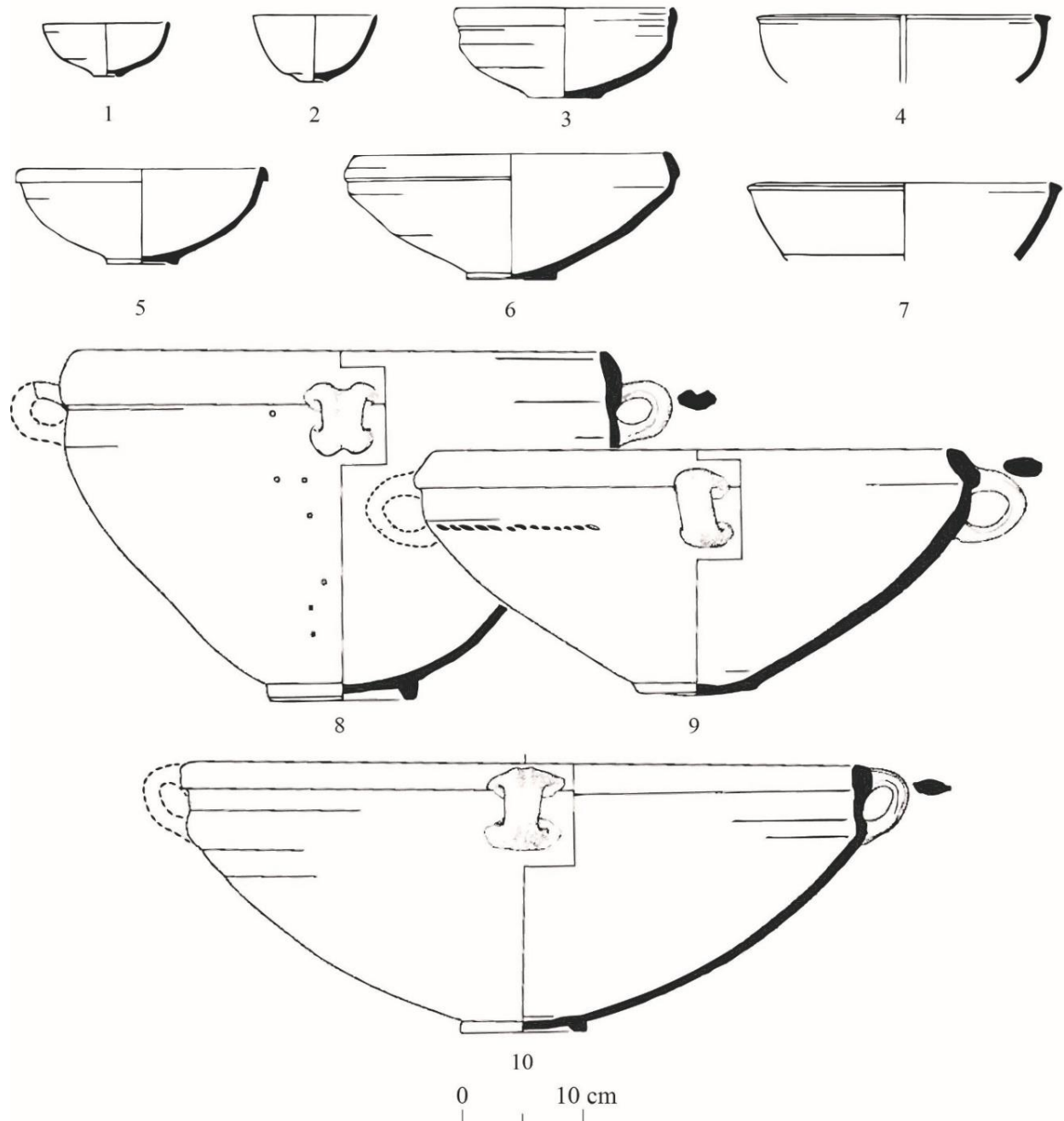
made distinct by its presentation of a regionally distinctive pattern of painted motifs that include ladder, triangle, net, triglyph, and metopes applied in brown, black, red, and white colors, with the frequent presence of plastic denticulations (Thareani 2010, 36). Due to a number of *formal* similarities between certain vessels of the BPW tradition and Assyrian Palace Ware (henceforth APW), APW and its local imitations have often been mis-identified as part of an Edomite tradition (Singer-Avitz 2014; E. Mazar 1985; Oakeshott 1979; see also Na'aman and Thareani-Sussely 2006; Singer-Avitz 2007). The relation between APW and BPW, however, is purely formal as APW is typically never decorated (Anastasio 2010; Hunt 2015), and forms its own tradition separate from Edomite spheres of influence (Engstrom 2004; Ben-Shlomo 2014d, 73–79; 2014a). Likewise, many of the BPW exemplars preserve Transjordanian forms that are not represented in APW, further distinguishing the corpus (S. Brown 2018a, 170–71). Rather, the painted decorations of BPW appear to align it more closely with a longstanding North Arabian tradition where regionalized decorative patterns are attested at competing desert oasis nodes such as Tayma and Dedan (Hausleiter 2014; Bawden and Edens 1988; J. M. Tebes 2013; 2015).¹⁶² Thus, while the producers of BPW appear to draw in part on the pre-existing prestige of the Assyrian forms, the prestige is indigenized through the decorative motifs that signal these vessels as distinctly Edomite and identify them as following a North Arabian decorative tradition.

Furthermore, these types of decorative motifs do not appear to be an influence in the traditions of the neighboring region of southern Judah which presents its own distinct tableware set (see Figure 12). In this fashion, the iconic decorative features of BPW are a distinctive, and

¹⁶² Painted ceramics appear to have a long history in Northwest Arabia, seen especially in earlier Iron Age Qurayyah Painted Ware tradition (Luciani 2016).

readily recognizable symbol of meaning, and through the activities surrounding consumption and feasting, as serving a role of performative social communication.

Figure 12. Common serving wares of the northeastern Negev. (Figure by author)



C. CASE STUDIES AND ANALYSIS

In light of the above discussion, the subsequent analysis will examine culinary practices, preferences, and interactions within the archaeological context of southern Transjordan and the northeastern Negev. It will engage with these sites first on an individual basis, integrating all extant archaeological data relating to foodways (faunal, botanical, inscriptional, etc.), but placing a specific emphasis on cooking pots and BPW, which form the dominant and most consistent material culture element for inter-site comparison. While faunal and botanical remains provide information regarding the major components of diet, cooking pots indicate the tradition in which food was prepared and cooked. Furthermore, beyond the frequencies of certain cooking pot types, their spatial distribution within sites can identify the patterning of certain foodways. Similarly, distributions of the BPW tablewares and contexts in which these vessels are clustered can be indicative of locales of feasting, where social alliances were fostered, or social obligations created. Lastly, considerations of the locales of production of these vessels (e.g., petrography and Instrumental Neutron Activation Analysis [INAA]), can shed further light into the contexts in which actors created these vessels and perpetuated familiar traditions.

While this analysis will engage to a degree with vessel quantities, it is reliant on what published data is available within excavation reports. To this extent it seeks to present all available examples (see Appendix B). However, in very few instances do excavation reports provide a complete quantification of vessels excavated, and those recorded and published assuredly skew toward vessels that are better preserved.¹⁶³ Rather, the quantifications present below are designed to portray the published vessels encountered that are likely representative of the trends at each site.

¹⁶³ As S. Brown notes, ceramics published in excavation reports may indicate more of the taphonomic processes at sites than necessarily the exact quantities or types of vessels used at a time (2018, 87–88).

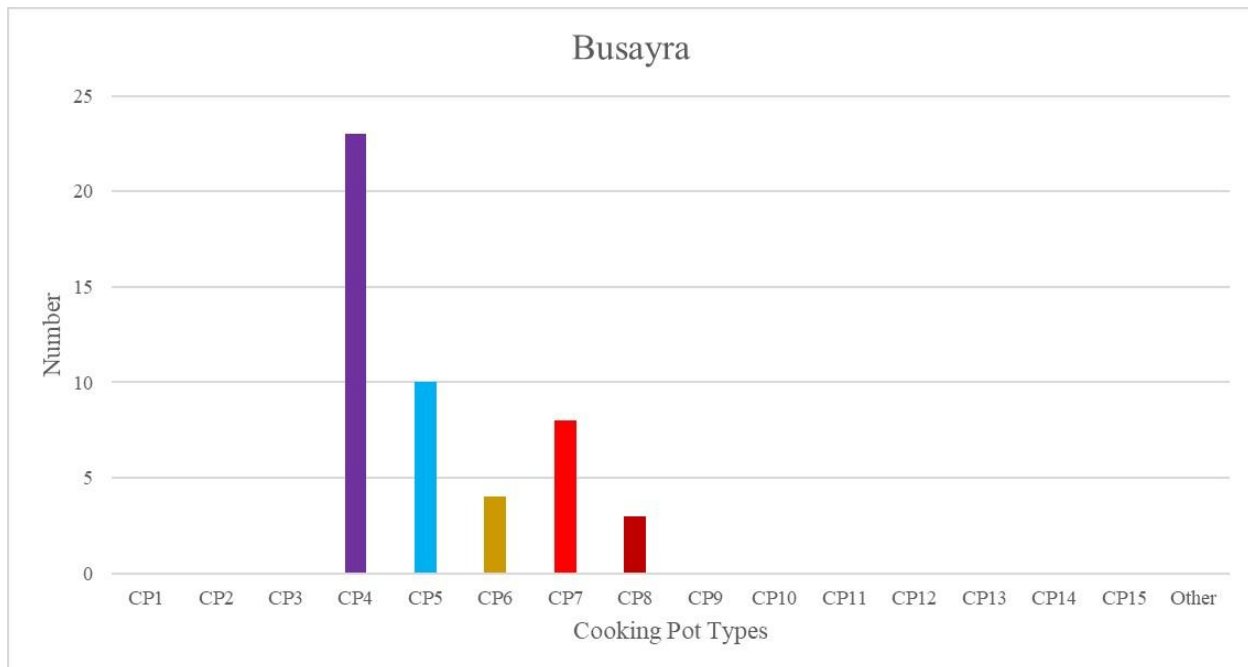
1. SOUTHERN TRANSJORDAN: SITES AND REGIONAL PATTERNS

The following analysis of southern Transjordan begins with the sites that present the most substantial archaeological data, beginning with the foremost city of Edom—Busayra. In the instances where archaeological data is scant, sites are discussed in tandem with one another on the basis of correlations in site type (mountaintop sites), or by the archaeological project that investigated them (ELRAP).

a. Busayra

As the foremost city in the region of Edom, Busayra presents a pivotal dataset for determining elite patterns of culinary behavior. The ceramic vessels used in the production of food from Busayra are dominated by Type CP4, the form most prevalent within southern Transjordan (see Figure 13; Bienkowsk 2002c, Fig. 9.38–9.41). The handmade forms of types CP5 and CP6 are not uncommon, as are types CP7 and CP8. The locales in which these vessels were excavated are all elite areas located on the acropolis of the city (Plate 1). These locales include the temple area (Area A), the palace area (Area B), and especially the structures positioned between the temple and palace, adjacent a narrow gate (Area B). Particularly from trench B1:1, the quantity of cooking pot Type CP4 is substantial.

Figure 13. Cooking pot types attested at Busayra. (Figure by author)



Regarding clusters of BPW, Area B again presents an overwhelming number of vessels of this type (Plate 2). These vessels are remarkable in not only their state of preservation, but in the elaborateness of the decorative motifs and the skill with which they were executed (Bienkowski 2002c, 236–306; S. Brown 2018a). Additional tableware of the same form but lacking the painted decorations were found in this area, although in lesser numbers than their painted counterparts. It is possible that during excavation a collection bias resulted in an over-representation of painted forms or that this pattern is the result of taphonomic processes as noted by S. Brown (2018, 87–88), yet the quantity, quality, and location of the vessels suggest that this may not necessarily be the case. Located between the temple and palace areas, it is possible that Area B served as a locale in which elaborate feasts were hosted or served, or as the area in which this refuse was deposited.¹⁶⁴ The quantities of BPW found in this area, together with the

¹⁶⁴ It was initially suggested during excavation that the prevalence of pottery in Area B was the result of destruction and post-destruction activities, or natural forces depositing this pottery into Area B. However, there were no definitive indications that these ceramics were not local to Area B (Bienkowski 2002a, 126. 137-138).

dominance of cooking pot Type CP4 from Area B appears to then represent the culinary preferences and performative mode of consumption of the elites living on the acropolis of the site. It bears emphasizing, however, that Type CP4, long described as the “Edomite” cooking pot, is not the only type present at Busayra, and that it only represents about half of the excavated forms. Other traditions, namely the handmade varieties (CP5 and CP6), often described as Negevite ware, are also prevalent within the same elite areas. Additional, non-elite contexts at Busayra would prove highly informative, but await further excavation.

Data remains scant regarding the location of production for these both cooking pots and BPW. INAA analysis performed on several samples appears to indicate a “chemical grouping” that statistically appears to be local to the region, with some additional variants more closely related to the Petra Region (Gunneweg and Balla 2002). Several examples labelled as outliers, however, could very likely have originated in the Busayra region, merely from a variant clay source. Lacking further study of the clays of this region and petrographic analysis, a definitive origin for different forms is difficult to determine. In the meantime, it can be hypothesized that the most prevalent forms of food preparation and feasting vessels derived from local potting traditions.

The faunal remains (as number of individual specimen; NISP) from Busayra indicate that sheep (*Ovis aries*) and goats (*Capra hircus*) provided the dominant source of the meat supply at the site (86% of faunal remains).¹⁶⁵ Second to sheep and goat remains were domestic cattle (*Bos taurus*; 10%), although these species were likely first exploited for their use as draught animals (Bienkowski 2002b, 471–72). A single bone of a camel (*Camelus dromedarius*) was identified. Limited additional faunal remains provide evidence of wild species such as gazelle (*Gazella* sp.;

¹⁶⁵ More detailed data such as the minimum number of individuals (MNI) is not available.

0.09%), boar (*Sus scrofa*; 0.19%), and chicken (*Gallus gallus*; 0.24%).¹⁶⁶ The discovery of a number of fish vertebrae (*Pisces* indet.; 0.47%), likely originating from the Red Sea region, suggest that fish may have formed a more significant portion of the diet but that the additional remains were not captured as a result of excavation methodology (Bienkowski 2002b, 471–72). A significant number of marine invertebrates were also found at Busayra although it appears unlikely that these formed a component of the diet (Reese 2002).¹⁶⁷

The portrait of faunal remains from Bennett’s excavations is supplemented by the work of the Busayra Cultural Heritage Project (BCHP, 2013–2015), in their excavations in Area DD (adjacent Area D). From their excavations, 83% of the remains were identified as sheep (*Ovis aries*) and goat (*Capra hircus*) with additional remains indicating that cattle (*Bos Taurus*; 3%), partridge, fish, and gazelle added limited amounts of diversity to the diet (S. Brown 2018b, 118; Lev-Tov 2015). The culling practices of the sheep and goat remains indicate that many of the animals were used for meat consumption. In total, 44% of the ageable remains were found to have been killed prior to reaching one year of age, with the additional specimen kept for breeding and secondary product production (e.g., wool, dairy; S. Brown 2018b, 118; Lev-Tov 2015). Brown’s interpretation of these remains suggests a degree of wealth among those in Area DD and a lack of concern over depleting animal resources as evidenced by both the young kill-

¹⁶⁶ Chickens (*Gallus gallus*) in Southwest Asia and North Africa are best attested during the Persian and Hellenistic periods, and are frequently understood to have been introduced to this region at that time (Coltherd 1966; K. MacDonald and Edwards 1993). While it is possible that the remains presented here are stratigraphically mis-attributed and belong to subsequent strata, there is data that supports a limited presence for *Gallus gallus* during the Iron Age, and in some contexts even earlier (Blench and Macdonald 2000; West and Zhou 1988; Taran 1975).

¹⁶⁷ As the marine invertebrates predominantly derive from Red Sea contexts, it is likely that they came to Busayra along the same routes as other Arabian trade goods. As substantial numbers evidence human modification, their purpose was likely for industrial rather than consumption purposes (Reese 2002).

age and the high kill percentage among female specimen (2018, 119).¹⁶⁸ It is also possible that some of these culling practices were reflective of the religious economy in the adjacent Area A, although further investigation is necessary to substantiate this hypothesis (S. Brown 2018b, 119).

While botanical data is lacking from Crystal Bennett's excavations at Busayra, the recent excavations of the BHP systematically sampled and analyzed botanical remains (S. Brown 2018b, 12, 94–97, 110–24).¹⁶⁹ From Area DD (adjacent Area D) the species of lentil (*Lens* spp.) pea (*Pisum* spp.), grape (*Vitis vinifera*), barley (*Hordeum* spp.), wheat (*Triticum aestivum*) and fig (*Ficus carica*) were identified (Farahani 2015). From these limited remains, of note were the substantial number of fig seeds (S. Brown 2018b, 111–12, figs. 7.2–7.4; Farahani 2015, 5, 7–8). Further, the presence of *Rumex* (Polygonaceae) and sedge (Cyperaceae) species from this context indicates that many of these crops were grown in wet and marshy environments, likely from agricultural fields in the wadis surrounding Busayra that provisioned the site (S. Brown 2018b, 112; Farahani 2015, 11).

b. Tawilan

At the 0.9 ha village of Tawilan, the cooking pot types consist primarily of Type CP4 with the handmade types CP5 and CP6 comprising the remainder of the assemblage (see Figure 14; Bennett and Bienkowski 1995, Fig. 6.33-36). In this fashion Tawilan presents a restricted portrait of the forms attested at Busayra with types CP7 and CP8 unattested. Of the vessels that fall

¹⁶⁸ Male species are generally better represented among animals culled for consumption as female species are kept for their breeding ability and production of milk.

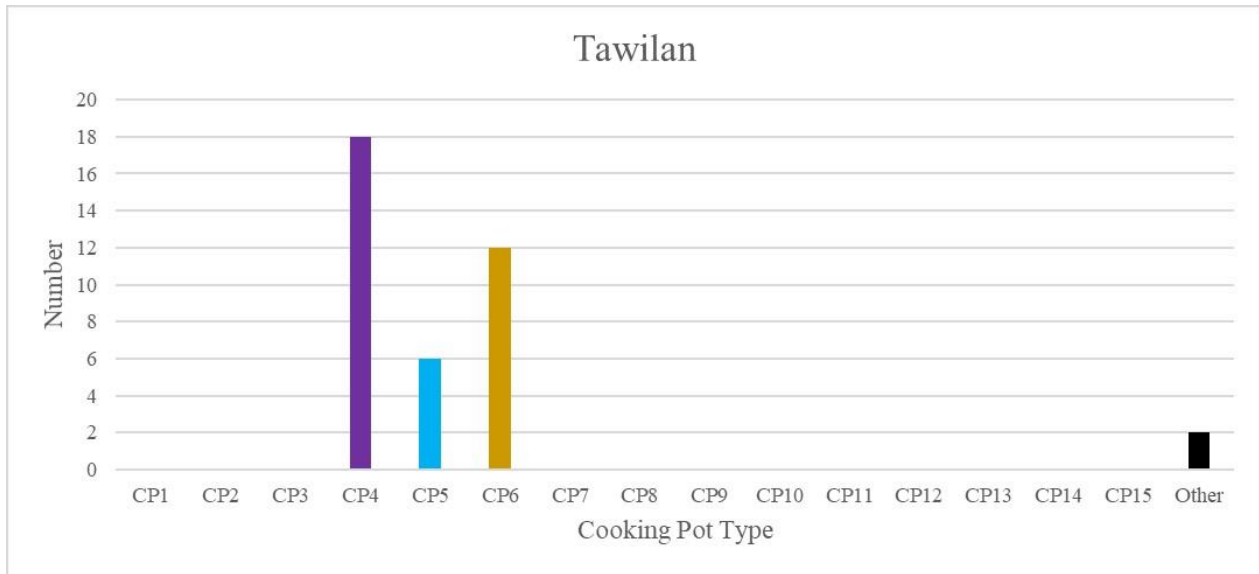
¹⁶⁹ Botanical data is not available from any of Bennett's or Hart's excavations (Busayra, Tawilan, Umm al-Biyara, Ghrareh, Khirbat Ishra, Khirbat al-Megheitah), much less from Glueck's work at Tell el-Kheleifeh, rendering insight into this essential component of culinary activity in this region sorely lacking. The work of Stephanie Brown and Benjamin Porter at Busayra marks the first systematically sampled and analyzed botanical remains from southern Transjordanian plateau (S. Brown 2018b, 110). These remains, however, are from a limited set of excavations in an elite quarter of Busayra and thus should not be taken as a representative sample for the entirety of southern Transjordan.

within type CP4, there is a degree of variance, most noticeable in whether the vessel's rim forms a continuing line with the shoulder (holemouth), or whether there is a small neck present (Oakeshott's Type A vs. Type B respectively (Oakeshott 1979, 48)). It is from this assemblage at Tawilan, however, that Stephen Hart argues this division to be artificial as there is a continuum between these variances, and it would thus be quite challenging to divide the assemblage (Hart 1995b, 55).¹⁷⁰ Further variances within the Type CP4 tradition include miniature forms (Bennett and Bienkowski 1995, Fig. 6.34:9–12) that may have been associated with ritual contexts (Daviau 2001a, 213–14, see also Chapter 5.C). The different cooking pot types at Tawilan were found spread across the excavated areas with a lack of any distinct patterning (Plate 3), save for the predominance of Type CP6 examples to be of an unknown provenance, likely the result of sampling strategies.¹⁷¹

¹⁷⁰ The variances in the holemouth and slight-neck forms are intriguing, in that some of the necked CP4 variances appear to be quite similar in form to the earlier Type CP11, notably prominent in the Iron IIA and especially Iron IIB in Judah. It appears possible that Type CP4 may have developed from the CP11 tradition. Tell el-Kheleifeh could appear informative in this regard as it could present a material culture manifestation of this evolution. On the basis of the challenges to stratigraphic control at Kheleifeh, however, such postulations remain conjecture. It is likewise possible that some of the CP11 forms at Tell el-Kheleifeh were mistaken for more prominently necked forms of Type CP4, although the notations of Pratico regarding clear macro-fabric variances between these forms indicates that they are indeed most likely from distinct potting traditions. Similarly, on the basis of the general chronological divergences between these forms, it is highly likely that they are evidence of chronological differences in culinary practices with Type CP4 of the Iron IIC replacing Type CP11 of the Iron IIB.

¹⁷¹ See discussion below in relation to the Lowlands to Highlands of Edom Project as limited renewed excavations were conducted at Tawilan (N. Smith and Levy 2014, Fig. 4.36-37).

Figure 14. Cooking pot types attested at Tawilan. (Figure by author)



Busayra Painted Ware is evidenced at Tawilan in substantial numbers (Plate 4). In contrast to Busayra, however, there are few locations where such a stark and overwhelming number of these were excavated. Rather, they appear spread across the site, with small clusters present in the northern and southern portions of Area I, the eastern portion of Area II, and the northwest corner of Area III. These clusters likely indicate areas in which this tableware was used in consumption activities, or where they were discarded. This patterning further indicates that these vessels, and the consumption activities associated with them, were not restricted to certain areas of the site, but rather were common in numerous households. Likewise, in relation to the locales of different forms of cooking pots, the BPW appears associated predominantly with types CP4 and CP5, although its lack of association to Type CP6 may be attributed to the lack of provenance for so many of these forms. Many of the BPW examples, while attested in significant numbers and with some presenting highly elaborate decorations, are overall, of a lesser visually refined presentation than those from Busayra (Bennett and Bienkowski 1995, Fig. 6.1-6.18). While most appear to imitate the classic forms of Assyrian Palace Ware, several

examples are highly evocative of the most elaborate Assyrian forms, notable in the thumb impressions of the bodies of several highly carinated bowls (Bennett and Bienkowski 1995, Fig. 6.8: 9-10).¹⁷²

The faunal assemblage at Tawilan bears strong similarities to that at Busayra, namely with sheep (*Ovis aries*) and goat species (*Capra hircus*) totaling 82.9% of the assemblage (NISP),¹⁷³ with cattle (*Bos taurus*) forming a sizable secondary component (13.5%). Limited evidence for equids (*Equus* sp.; 1.1%), pig (*Sus scrofa*; 1%), gazelle (*Gazellus* sp.; 0.9), and camel (*camelus* sp.; 0.2%) complete the assemblage (Köhler-Rollefson 1995).¹⁷⁴ The faunal remains suggests that sheep and goat were the primary meat source, although they were most likely kept principally for their secondary products of wool and dairy. Similarly, while cattle were the second most attested species, their significance at Tawilan was most likely for their use as draught animals rather than as a source of meat. Numerous marine invertebrates were excavated at the site, predominantly *Cypraea* and *Tridacna* species originating from the Red Sea, however, it is unknown if these were utilized as a food source, with their most likely function being ornamentation and gaming pieces for the *Cypraea* and containers or raw material for the *Tridacna* (Reese 1995). There is no botanical data from the site.

c. Umm al-Biyara

At the mountaintop site of Umm al-Biyara, while few in number, the cooking pot assemblage presents Type CP4 as most prevalent, with an additional example of Type CP7 attested (see

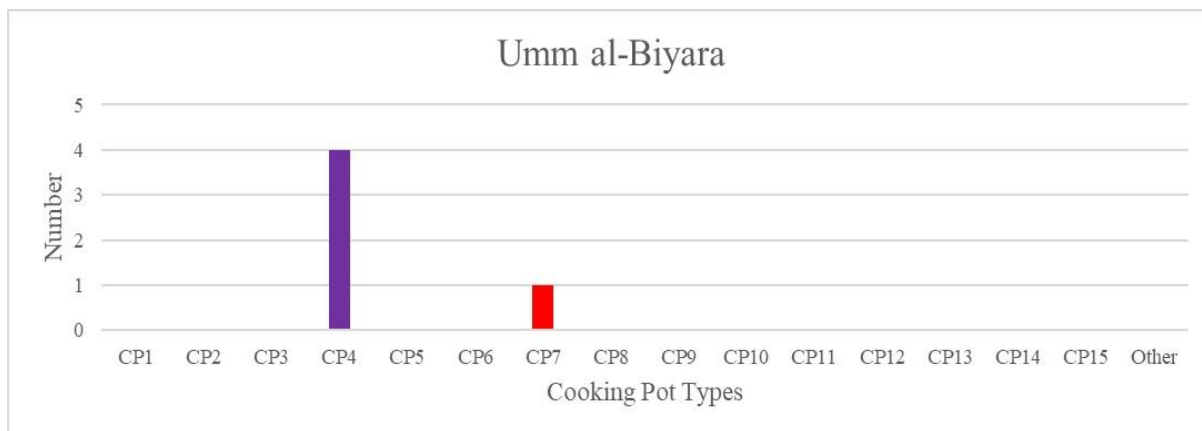
¹⁷² INAA analysis was conducted on several raw clay samples from the wadis surrounding Tawilan, but these results do not appear to have been compared to similar analysis of any vessels from Tawilan, thus limiting the relevance of the study (Khairieh 1995).

¹⁷³ Only data regarding the number of individual specimens (NISP) is available.

¹⁷⁴ See Köhler-Rollefson's discussion of the collection methodology, which was inconsistent in the early years of excavation (1968–1969) but was much improved in the third season in 1982 (Köhler-Rollefson 1995, 97–98).

Figure 15 and Plate 5; Bienkowski 2011b, 64–65).¹⁷⁵ The data concerning these vessels is limited, but CP4 does represent the dominant tradition of food preparation at the site. While a number of the vessel *forms* that often are decorated in the BPW style are attested at Umm al-Biyara, no examples bearing decorative motifs were excavated, suggesting that the decorated tableware was not a significant feature in consumption practices at the site.

Figure 15. Cooking pot types attested at Umm al-Biyara. (Figure by author)



At Umm al-Biyara, sheep (*Ovis aries*) and goat species (*Capra hircus*) totaled 75% of the assemblage, with cattle (*Bos Taurus*) forming a sizable secondary component (16.8%) similar to the patterning at Busayra and Tawilan (Clutton-Brock 2011).¹⁷⁶ Notable from Umm al-Biyara were bird remains (*Aves* sp.) totaling 6.2% of the assemblage, and the discovery of a lion bone (*Panthera leo*) indicating the presence of large predators in the region. The shell remains from Umm al-Biyara are most likely reflective of adornment, tokens, or industry, with species

¹⁷⁵ This example of Type CP7 equates to Oakeshott’s Type CPC (Oakeshott 1979, 48–49; Bienkowski 2002c, 312). Freud, however, suggests this to be of the “coastal variety” Type CP3 (Freud 2015, 198). While possible, the available data is not able to confirm such an identification, and thus it follows Oakeshott’s designation.

¹⁷⁶ Only data regarding the number of individual specimens (NISP) is available.

originating from the Red Sea region and attesting to a north-south geographical focus to the site (Reese 2011).¹⁷⁷ From Umm al-Biyara, an ostrakon bears the inscription:

*šmn. r[...
m'dr [.] m[...
bd. '[..]' '[...]*

Roughly translated as: “oil ... from ‘*dr* ... by the hand of ...”, this ostrakon indicates a delivery of oil that appears to have arrived at Umm al-Biyara from a site named ‘*dr*, presumably in Umm al-Biyara’s vicinity (al-Ghul 2011). As suggested by Bienkowski, it is likely that this receipt preserves evidence of larger scale olive cultivation, for which the area around Umm al-Biyara is well suited (Bienkowski 2011a, 123).

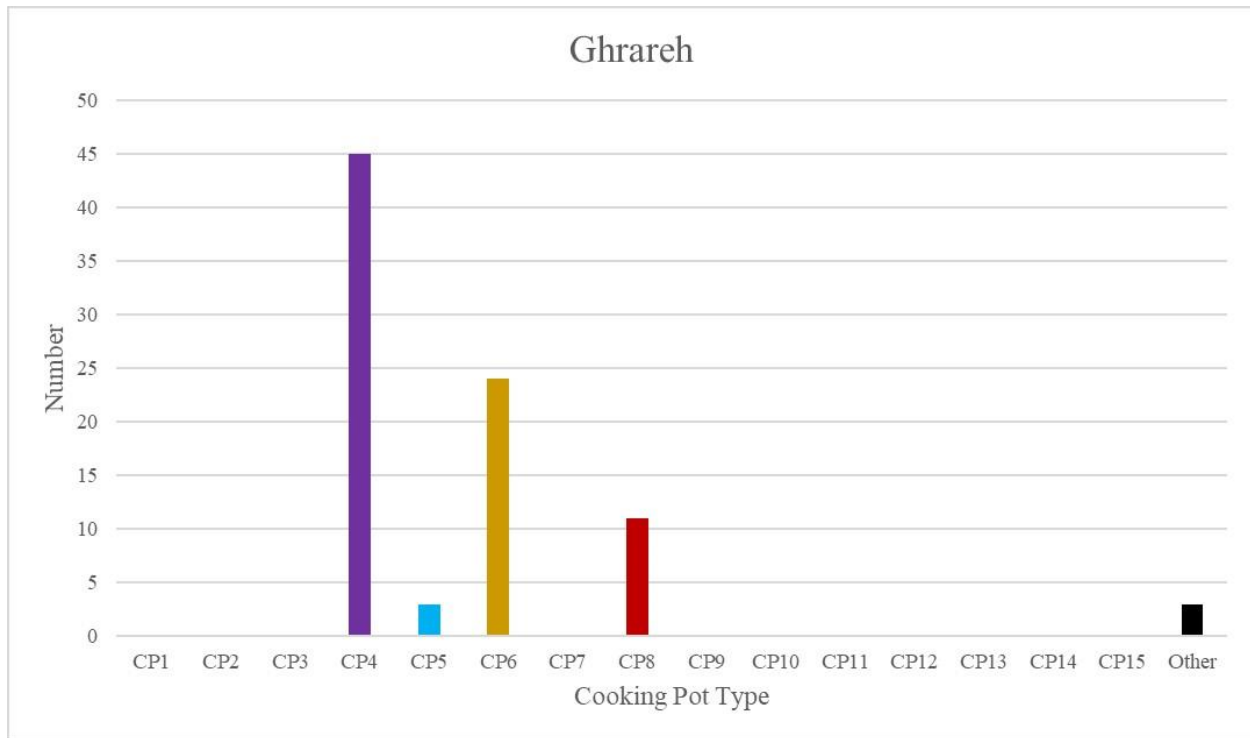
d. Ghrareh

While no botanical or faunal data from Ghrareh is available, Stephen Hart’s excavations produced a substantial amount of ceramic data relevant for this study (Hart 1989, Pls. 21–24, 27–28). Of the cooking pot forms (Figure 16), Type CP4 is most prevalent followed by the handmade form of Type CP6. Types CP8 and CP5 are also attested at the site. The relative frequency of these forms is similar to that encountered at Tawilan and Busayra and compares most closely with Busayra in that Type CP8 is not encountered at Tawilan. These cooking pots were encountered in situ in the large pillared house of Area A where significant numbers of types CP4 and CP6 cooking pots were integrated into the same activity, storage, and refuse areas (Plate 6). Significant numbers of cooking pots were also found scattered around Area B, which appears to have served as an open area used for cooking. A number of the cooking pots from Area B

¹⁷⁷ The marine species are dominated by cowrie (*Cypraea*), which accounts for 89% of the assemblage. Dog-cockles (*Glycymeris*; 3.5%), giant clam (*Tridacna*; 1.7%), cone shell (*Conus*; 1.7%) and turban shell (*Turbo radiatus*; 0.8%) are also attested (Reese 2011).

were also excavated in the fill from Tomb 2, which having been robbed in antiquity was filled with refuse (Hart 1988, 93–94).

Figure 16. Cooking pot types attested at Ghrareh. (Figure by author)



Within Area A, the rooms that contained the most substantial number of cooking pots also contained substantial amounts of BPW (Plate 7), suggesting that these were the locales where these vessels were stored, and food was prepared. The large cluster of BPW in the central courtyard suggests that this may have been a frequent space for feasting. Ghrareh presents, beyond Busayra and Tawilan, the most substantial amount of BPW excavated in southern Transjordan. What is noteworthy about Ghrareh, however, is that the vast majority of its BPW derives from the large pillared structure in Area A, interpreted as a domestic structure housing one nuclear family (S. Brown 2018b, 88). This family would have held a position of great significance, dwelling within the largest structure at the center and apex of the fortified site. Moreover, the substantial number of culinary ceramics and BPW within the structure suggest

that large meals were prepared there and consumed in a symbolically meaningful way in their use of BPW.

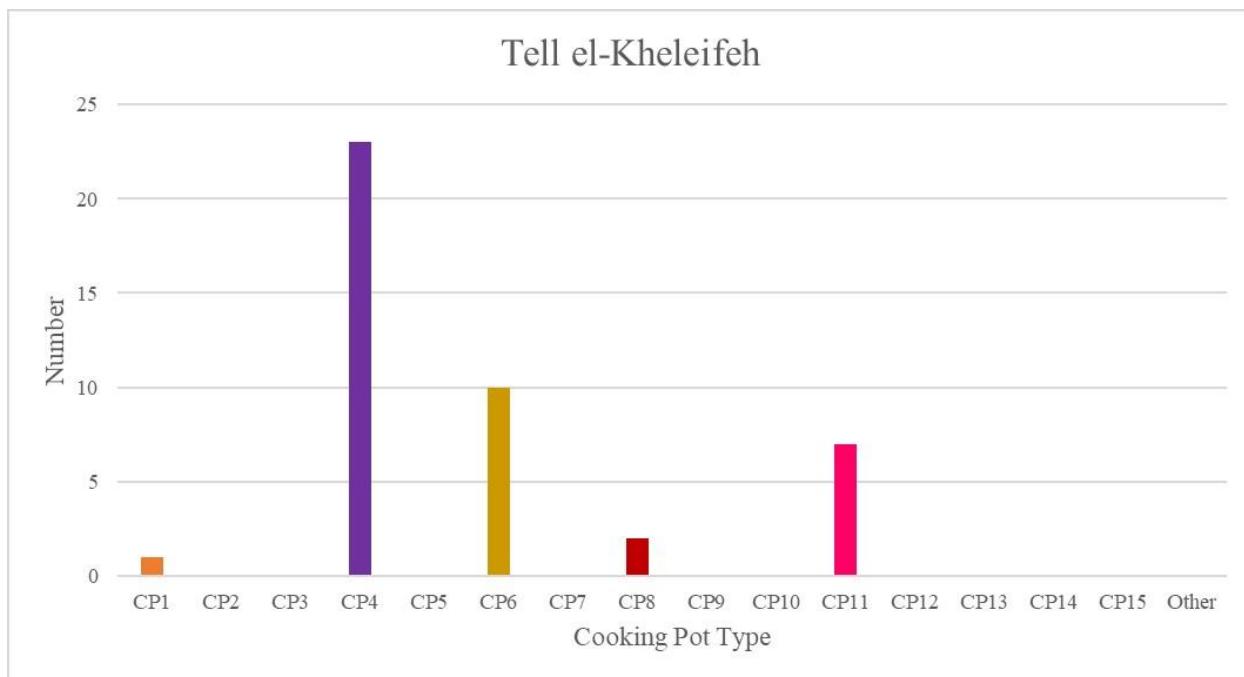
e. Tell el-Kheleifeh

The data regarding culinary practices from Tell el-Kheleifeh derives solely from ceramic remains. Of the cooking pots attested (see Figure 17), Type CP4 is dominant, followed by the Negevite ware Type CP6. Types CP11, CP8 and one example of CP1 are also present (Pratico 1993, 38–40; Pls. 11–12, 16–19).¹⁷⁸ What this portrait most likely represents is at least two horizons of ceramic activity at the site, an earlier phase in the Iron IIB, and then another horizon within the Iron IIC. Type CP11, yet unattested in southern Transjordan, is a form well-known in the northeastern Negev in Iron IIB strata and likely represents an earlier phase of activity at Tell el-Kheleifeh.¹⁷⁹ While Type CP6 has a broad chronological range, Type CP4 is best attested in Iron IIC contexts, together with types CP8 and CP1. It is tempting to view these ceramic horizons as reflecting the portrait outlined in 2 Kings 16:6 wherein control of Elath/Tell el-Kheleifeh transitioned from Judah to Edom (see also Finkelstein 2014, 106, 134–36). Short of renewed excavations providing a concise stratigraphic and ceramic sequence, however, this remains speculative.

¹⁷⁸ See above discussion in relation to the ceramics of Tawilan. There is something of a relation between the form of CP11 and the “necked” variants of CP4. It is possible that a number of the CP11 exemplars here are indeed a part of the CP4 corpus and that they were erroneously categorized as of a different type by Pratico. However, on the basis of his identifications and of stark differences in the macro-fabrics of these vessels (Pratico 1993, 38–40), it is more likely that they are indeed two different forms and are discussed here as such.

¹⁷⁹ See prior discussion in Chapter 3. Precise dates for phases and a general chronological sequence for Tell el-Kheleifeh is difficult to establish as the general spatial provenance for ceramics was recorded, but not their elevation, thus creating a challenge in distinguishing ceramic horizons in coordination with architectural phases (Pratico 1993, 1–13).

Figure 17. Cooking pot types attested at Tell el-Kheleifeh. (Figure by author)



Nonetheless, in examining the spatial distribution of these forms (Plate 8) they are found to cluster around, and within, Glueck's Period I casemate walls, although it is also possible that this was merely the central area of culinary activity within the Period II walls. From what is an incomplete representation of the ceramic assemblage at the site, the dominance of types CP4 and CP6 is noteworthy, with the signature of these vessels as similar to Busayra, Ghrareh and Tawilan. In terms of BPW at the site (Plate 9), the distribution loosely follows that of the cooking pots. The quantities of this ware are substantially less than was encountered at Busayra and Tawilan, with many of the decorative motifs featuring denticulations, and only the simplest painted bands of the BPW tradition. Additional tableware ceramics bear the same form as those of BPW, with strong formal comparisons to examples from Busayra and Tawilan but lack the distinctive decorative motifs of the BPW tradition.

Despite the lack of faunal and botanical data, Tell el-Kheleifeh possesses another unique dataset. Namely, a series of jars were excavated, all bearing the same form, with many

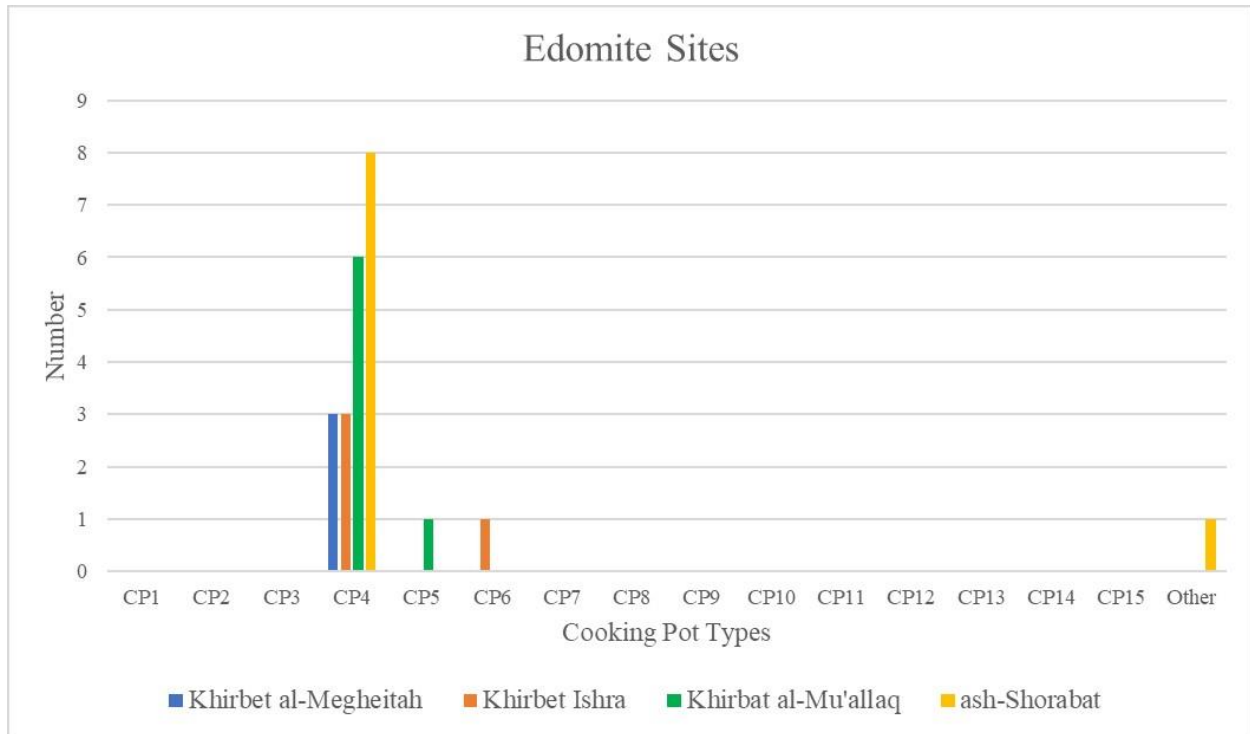
preserving a sealing reading: “*lqws ‘nl ‘bd hmlk*” or “belonging to *Qws ‘nl*, servant of the king” (Pratico 1993, 40; Divito 1993, 53–55). The jars upon which these stamps are most frequently preserved are of a type common at Busayra (Jug B), Tawilan, Umm al-Biyara, and among many of the less-known southern Transjordanian sites, but are relatively unknown in the Negev beyond Horvat Qitmit (see discussion in Bienkowski 2002c, 325–29). The distribution of the jars that possess seals (Plate 10), conforms well to the patterns of Type CP4 cooking pot. One can even postulate a center of operations, or storeroom for these stamped vessels in the area of Room 27. It is likely that this area served as the center for a redistribution of provisions for those stationed at the site on behalf of *Qws ‘nl* who served as an administrator or commander at the site. In light of Tell el-Kheleifeh’s ceramic parallels (cooking pots, BPW, jars), naming traditions (see Chapter 6.C), and the biblical tradition (see discussion in Chapter 3.A), the king to whom *Qws ‘nl* was subservient was undoubtedly located at Busayra. The site appears, at least in the Iron IIC, to have been administered by an official acting on behalf of the king at Busayra, with provisions stored in vessels common at Busayra, preparing food in a manner similar to Busayra, and consuming them in similar, albeit less decorative vessels. The environment around Tell el-Kheleifeh likely precluded consistent reliance on agriculture, so that many of these jars are likely evidence of foodstuffs transported to the site to support its inhabitants.

f. Other Sites and Settlements

Archaeological data for additional sites in southern Transjordan is less abundant and many of these sites will thus be discussed in tandem with one another. No faunal or botanical data for these sites is available. At Khirbat Ishra, Khirbat al-Megheitah, Khirbat al-Mu‘allaq and ash-Shorabat the scant ceramic data from preliminary soundings demonstrates that the cooking pot forms are similar to the sites explored above, namely dominated by Type CP4 with lesser

amounts of types CP5 and CP6 (see Figure 18). While no examples of Type CP7 or CP8 are attested, this is primarily the result of the extremely limited exposures of the sites.

Figure 18. Cooking pot types attested at Khirbat Ishra, Khirbat al-Megheiteh, Khirbat al-Mu‘allaq, and ash-Shorabat. (Figure by author)



Excavations at Khirbet Ishra were restricted to three small trenches from which only four cooking pots fragments are published (Plate 11; Hart 1989, Pl. 60: 9, 10-12). Of these, three are Type CP4 and one is Type CP6, otherwise known as Negevite ware. The regularized nature of the fortifications at the site suggest it served a role in monitoring the region around it, and most likely the King’s Highway to which it sat adjacent. From Khirbat al-Megheiteh, several trenches reveal a limited amount of ceramics, of which Type CP4 was the only cooking pot both excavated and subsequently published (Plate 12; Hart 1989, 56–57; Pl. 59).¹⁸⁰ While the general

¹⁸⁰ The Type CP4 examples excavated at Khirbat Ishra and Khirbat al-Megheiteh are described as belonging to Oakeshott’s Type CPB as they present a small neck and demonstrating the variances that appear within this form across a larger region (Oakeshott 1979, 48).

portrait of the site remains unclear, it was suggested by the excavator to have served as a farming hamlet or small village (Hart 1987, 38–42).

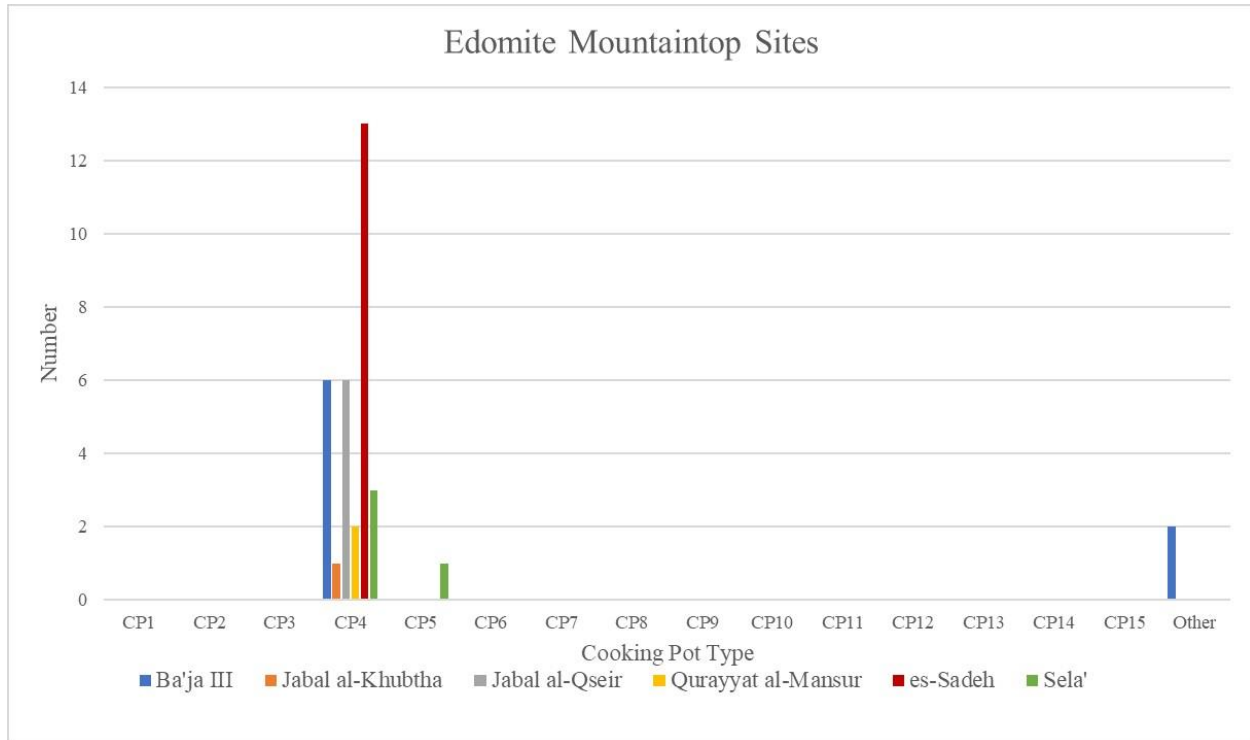
Similar to Khirbat Ishra, Khirbat al-Mu‘allaq was a small fortified site adjacent the King’s Highway. Ceramic forms include a dominance of Type CP4 with an additional example of Type CP5 (Lindner, Farajat, and Zeitler 1996, Fig. 26, 28-29). Painted pottery is present in a “small but considerable amount” (Lindner, Farajat, and Zeitler 1996, 129). Ash-Shorabat, located in the fertile bottom of the Wadi al-Hasa likewise presents a dominance of Type CP4 cooking pots (Bienkowski and Adams 1999, 151–57). The overall ceramic assemblage of ash-Shorabat, while similar to Busayra, is increasingly different from sites further south, demonstrating a regionality to the nuances of the production of these forms (Bienkowski and Adams 1999, 160). At all of these sites, the “painted ware” attested may be assumed to reference BPW, but any data regarding quantities or provenance are lacking.

g. Mountaintop Edomite Sites

Beyond Umm al-Biyara, additional mountaintop sites in southern Transjordan provide a limited window into culinary practices in the region. These sites include: Ba‘ja III (Lindner and Farajat 1987, Fig. 5; Bienert, Lamprichs, and Vieweger 2000, Fig. 15), Jabal al-Khubtha (Lindner et al. 1997, Fig. 22), Jabal al-Qseir (Lindner et al. 1996, Fig. 23), Qurayyat al-Mansur (Hübner 2004, abb. 3-4), es-Sadeh (Lindner, Farajat, and Zeitler 1988, Fig. 8; Lindner et al. 1990, Fig. 11; Zeitler 1992, Fig. 14.4-5), and Sela‘ (Hart 1986, Fig. 2). Despite the limited ceramic data available from them, they present a similar cooking pot signature to that previously discussed, namely an emphasis upon Type CP4 (Figure 19).¹⁸¹

¹⁸¹ These data are, however, incomplete. Due to the iconic nature of this form as identifiably Iron Age and “Edomite,” it is possible that there was a significant sample bias in the sherds collected and published.

Figure 19. Cooking pot types attested at the Edomite mountaintop sites (Ba‘ja III, Jabal al-Khubtha, Jabal al-Qseir, Qurayyat al-Mansur, es-Sadeh, and Sela‘). (Figure by author)



In most instances, these mountaintop sites are located near perennial springs and in most cases overlooking fertile regions. The exception to this situation would be Qurayyat al-Mansur which rather than fertile fields, had access to a well-watered wadi floor rich with date palms and figs (Hübner 2004). Atop some sites, olive presses (Ba‘ja III; Bienert, Lamprichs, and Vieweger 2000, 125–26), and threshing floors (Jabal al-Khubtha; Lindner et al. 1997, 181) provide more concrete evidence of agricultural and horticultural activity.¹⁸² Evidence suggests that these sites were engaged in agropastoral activities and likely served as central locales for disparate farmsteads and herders in the region (Lindner and Knauf 1997; Lindner et al. 1996, 150–52). Small amounts “painted wares,” presumably BPW, are present at several of the sites, namely Ba‘ja III (Bienert, Lamprichs, and Vieweger 2000, 127), es-Sadeh (Lindner, Farajat, and Zeitler

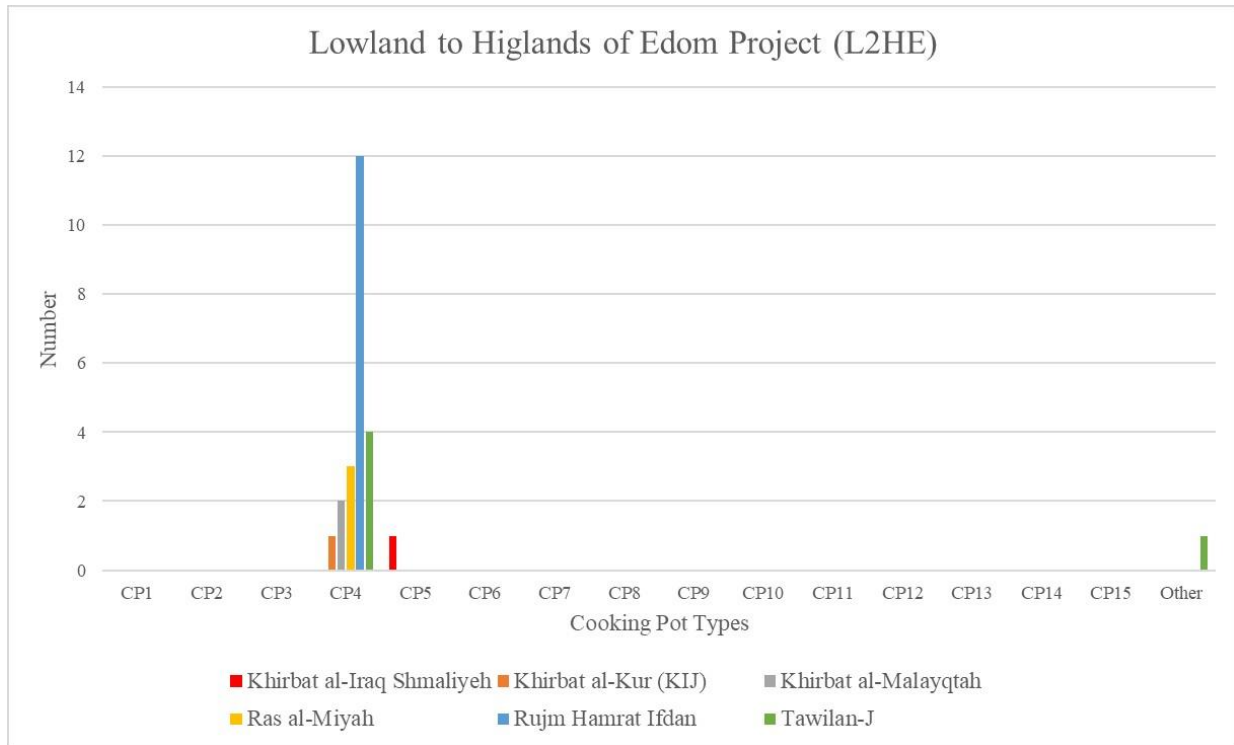
¹⁸² The date for these installations is hard to determine with certainty, particularly the threshing floor at Jabal al-Khubtha. Even if they date to a later period, these subsistence practices would not be dissimilar to the Iron Age.

1988, 79; Lindner et al. 1990, 211), and Sela' (Da Riva et al. 2017, 632). Overall, however, BPW does not appear to be a significant feature of the ceramic assemblages at these sites.

h. Lowland to Highlands of Edom Project (L2HE)

The work of Tom Levy and the University of California, San Diego based team in the Edom Lowlands Regional Archaeology Project (ELRAP), and their investigations of additional sites dating to the Iron II complements the above patterns. The sites of relevance and their published ceramics include: Khirbat al-Iraq Shmaliyeh (N. Smith and Levy 2014, Fig. 4.35), Khirbat al-Kur (KIJ; N. Smith and Levy 2014, Fig. 4.34), Khirbat al-Malayqtah (N. Smith and Levy 2014, Fig. 4.33), Ras el-Miyah (Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, Fig. 12.49), Rujm Hamrat Ifdan (N. Smith and Levy 2014, Fig. 4.27; 4.31), and reinvestigations of Tawilan in Area J (N. Smith and Levy 2014, Fig. 4.36–37). While some quantitative portrayals of ceramic data are provided for these sites (N. Smith and Levy 2014, 423; Table 4.44), the data only relates to some of the best attested forms, and overall does not lend itself to a complete quantitative portrait.

Figure 20. Cooking pot types attested in the Lowland to Highlands of Edom Project (Khirbat al-Iraq Shmaliyeh, Khirbat al-Kur, Khirbat al-Malayqtah, Ras al-Miyah, Rujm Hamrat Ifdan and Tawilan-J). (Figure by author)



From the ceramic plates that are published, and from images of material culture excavated in soundings, a similar cooking pot signature to the rest of the region is identifiable, namely in the prominence of Type CP4 (see Figure 20). These forms, however, represent a host of slight variances in the shape of the neck, ridges, and other features that resulted in Smith and Levy dividing them into approximately a dozen different subtypes (N. Smith and Levy 2014, 336–37). Indeed, and as previously discussed, while Type CP4 is dominant in southern Transjordan, there are a number of variances to the general form that likely derive from different potting communities operating in variant spatial and chronological contexts. Painted pottery of the BPW tradition was encountered at all of these sites in limited quantities and presenting the most basic elements of the BPW tradition, black horizontal bands (Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, Fig. 12.48–49; N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 274; N. Smith and Levy 2014, 385–

403). Presumably, at many of these sites the limited quantities are a result of the limited scope of the excavations.

i. Regional Patterns

Across southern Transjordan, several patterns emerge. First, in terms of prevalent cooking pot types, Type CP4 is by far the most prominent form. This type, however, does represent a degree of diversity in form, primarily seen in the presence or absence of a small neck. This is likely a result of slight differences in cooking pot tradition, production variances on the basis of regionally established potters, and/or changes in the vessel form over time. While the forms of Type CP4 can conclusively be assigned to the seventh and sixth centuries BCE, the lack of distinct and dateable sequenced strata from southern Transjordan precludes the establishment of a firmer chronological horizon in which this form first appears, although on the basis of data from the northeastern Negev (see below), a date at least within the late eighth century BCE can be assumed. Thus, Type CP4 in southern Transjordan appears to represent the dominant mode of food preparation from the eighth through early sixth centuries BCE. Additional cooking pot traditions, however, are also well attested, namely the handmade types CP5 and CP6 which appear in contemporaneous strata to Type CP4. Types CP7 and CP8 are also attested in southern Transjordan, with Type CP7 accounting for a small but varied assemblage, and Type CP8 appearing to mirror the rims of a number of bowls and kraters from southern Transjordan (Bienkowski 2002c, 312).

The association of Busayra Painted Ware with the foremost city of Busayra is evidenced in the immense number of vessels deriving from the acropolis at Busayra. The clear association of BPW with elite contexts indicates its association with elite feasting practices at the site, of alliance making and the creation of obligations (Plate 2). Additional contexts of significant

clusters of BPW are found at Ghrareh in the pillared house of Area A (Plate 7), suggesting another context of highly conspicuous feasting, modelled after patterns established at Busayra. Similar patterns of BPW such as at Tawilan (Plate 4), indicate that this highly visible pattern of feasting would have been readily recognized across southern Transjordan. At many of these sites (Busayra, Ghrareh, and Tawilan), there is a correlation between the provenance of BPW and cooking pot Type CP4 suggesting that foods consumed in BPW tablewares were produced in large part in Type CP4 cooking pots.

While these vessels cannot *a priori* be associated with a particular ethnicity, they demonstrate visible patterns of behavior and tradition that would hold significant meaning for participants and observers. For example, the tradition of cooking pot Type CP4 appears prevalent across the entirety of southern Transjordan and thus represents the primary mode of food preparation among many of the social elements within the region. Regarding BPW, however, this is not present across the region in the same near-ubiquitous fashion, but rather appears more closely associated with elite contexts and accordingly would serve as a marker of the promotion or maintenance of certain elite ideals, of the fostering of social alliances and the creation of relationships and obligations.

The limited botanical data from southern Transjordan deriving solely from the elite areas at Busayra indicate a cereal diet (wheat and barley), supplemented by legumes (lentils and peas), and certain fruit species (grape and fig). The presence of grape, as well as the reference to oil at Umm al-Biyara indicates that the so-called “Levantine triad” consisting of cereal grains, oil and wine were most likely the base elements of the diet within the region (Pace 2014, 187–89; N. Macdonald 2008). The limited faunal data from southern Transjordan supplements the portrait of a subsistence economy also invested in herding sheep and goat primarily for their secondary

products of dairy and wool. Similarly, with cattle remains, their role as draught animals likely precluded their presence as a common component of the local diet, which, in the occasional times it presented meat, likely consisted of sheep and goat. The atypical culling patterns of sheep and goat as evidenced at Busayra are likely indicative of elite or religious excess rather than a prevailing regional pattern (S. Brown 2018b, 118–19; Lev-Tov 2015). The limited evidence of camel is likely indicative of their use as pack animals and not as an exploited meat source. Evidence of limited fish, bird, pig, and wild species such as gazelle indicate some diversity in diet, as well as modes of procurement, where even relatively inaccessible sites such as Umm al-Biyara were able to procure fish from distant regions, likely preserved through drying or salting.¹⁸³

2. NORTHERN NEGEV: SITES AND REGIONAL PATTERNS

The following analysis engages with the sites located in the northeastern Negev. The sites are discussed in order from east to west along the trade route, following the hypothetical itinerary of travel westward from Edom toward the Mediterranean.

a. ‘En Hazeva

‘En Hazeva, located on the western side of the Wadi Arabah, is roughly equidistant from Busayra and the sites in the Beersheba Valley and is positioned at the strategic intersection where the northern and southern routes to the northeastern Negev branched (see Figure 6). To date, only preliminary overviews of the site and certain material culture studies are available (Cohen and Yisrael 1995a; 1995b; 1996; Ben-Arieh 2011). While these studies indicate significant south Transjordanian influence at the site, types and quantities of cooking vessels and tablewares are not available. The eventual publication of this material culture will undoubtedly

¹⁸³ Due to the sampling strategies at these sites and the fragile and small nature of the bird and fish remains, the amounts presented in publication are likely a low estimate as to what may have in actuality been consumed.

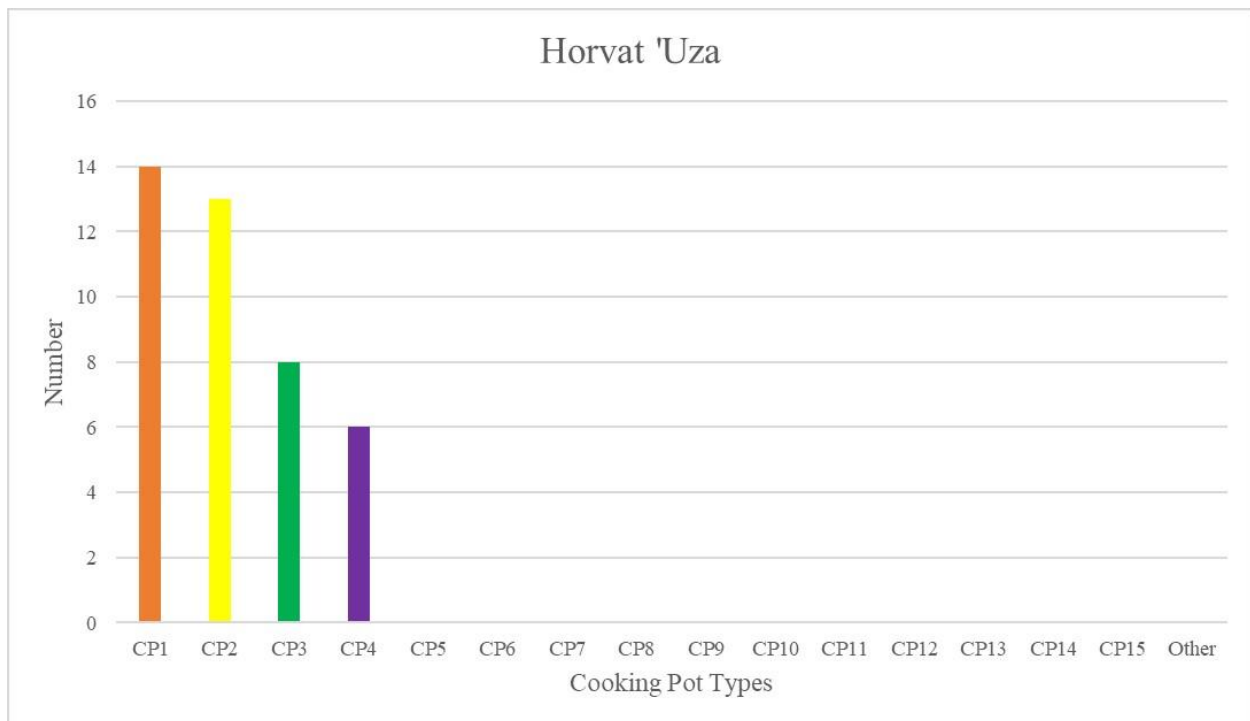
be of crucial significance for subsequent studies. Nonetheless, it is unlikely that 'En Hazeva will differ significantly from the major trends identified in this region regarding the local production of vessels and the longevity of interaction. For example, recent petrographic analysis has demonstrated a local context of production for the Edomite ritual material culture at the site (Cohen-Weinberger 2011; see also Chapter 5.C), a principle that may be hypothesized to extend to other yet unpublished ceramic forms. The most revealing information regarding culinary identities that the material culture of 'En Hazeva can demonstrate, is the traditions that were most prominent and if chronological differences in such patterns can be identified.

b. Horvat 'Uza

At Horvat 'Uza, the sole Iron Age stratum dates to the Iron IIC, being constructed at some point in the seventh century BCE and functioning until the early sixth century BCE. The cooking pot assemblage at Horvat 'Uza is quite restricted, comprising only four late Iron Age forms (Figure 21). While Horvat 'Uza's dataset is comparable to Tel Arad strata VII–VI (see below), Horvat 'Uza differs in the relative frequency of the forms CP3 and CP4. While types CP1 and CP2 are most abundant, types CP3 and CP4 are still present in comparatively substantial quantities. With regard to the spatial distribution of these different forms (Plate 13), it is significant that they are found together not only in the same domestic structures, but also within the same loci in those structures. For example, in L.741 in a structure in the south-central portion of the fort, two cooking pots of Type CP1 are found together with individual examples of types CP2, CP3 and CP4 (Freud 2007a, 96, fig. 3.26). What is remarkable about this pattern is that these cooking pot forms are found within the same context, indicating that the food being prepared within them was done so in the same context as the food being prepared according to different traditions, i.e., in different vessels. This pattern plays out across the site, where certain forms do not appear to

be restricted to certain areas at the site. Even at the western edge of the fort where a cluster of types CP1 and CP2 are attested, Type CP4 is preserved in other areas of the house, indicating a high degree of integration of these various forms of food preparation. As types CP3 and CP4 have long been associated with the coastal plain and the southern Transjordan respectively, this integration suggests that the foodways represented by these different cooking pot traditions were prepared and consumed across the fort, and presumably all possessed a high degree of visibility to those stationed at the fort.

Figure 21. Cooking pot types attested at Horvat ‘Uza. (Figure by author)



In contrast to Beit-Arieh’s conclusion that much of the Edomite material culture found at Horvat ‘Uza and elsewhere in the northeastern Negev was the result of “aggressive expansion” (Beit-Arieh 2007c, 333–34), the data from Horvat ‘Uza, particularly in the form of the cooking pots, does not substantiate such a conclusion. The integration of these diverse ceramic forms into contemporaneous contexts and even the same and living and activity areas indicates rather a

picture of complementary behavior, of social integration and entanglement rather than the result of an aggressive take-over. Similarly, when looking at the manners in which this food was consumed, there are very few attestations of BPW, with only two select examples attested in the fort, and two found in refuse contexts outside of the fort (Plate 14). The practice of consuming food in the BPW tradition is effectively non-existent at Horvat ‘Uza. The majority of tableware at Horvat ‘Uza rather follows the local tradition of vessel forms most common in the northeastern Negev (see Figure 12). Thus, the only real “foreign/Edomite” influence is seen within the cooking pot forms, which of themselves, are of a much less obtrusive nature, with cooking and food preparation being much less visible acts than feasting, and not what would be expected as the sole footprint of an invading entity. Rather the portrait appears to be one of degrees of social integration between persons bearing diverse culinary traditions within a fort controlled by the Judahite administration.

The faunal remains at Horvat ‘Uza preserve a similar quantity and ratio of sheep (*Ovis aries*) and goat (*Capra hircus*) to the previous sites, with a minimum number of individuals comprising 80.83% (n=97) of both the domestic and wild assemblage.¹⁸⁴ Cattle (*Bos taurus*) comprise 5.83% (n=7) of the assemblage, apparently at a lower number than other sites, and perhaps reflecting the nature of the site as serving a more militaristic rather than agricultural function. In terms of the minimum number of individuals, a single specimen (MNI=1; 0.83%) is also attested for the following domestic and wild species: unspecified carnivores (*Carnivora*), chicken (*Gallus gallus*),¹⁸⁵ stork (*Ciconia ciconia*), pig (*Sus scrofa*), ibex (*Capra Ibex Nubiana*),

¹⁸⁴ The quantities presented in the faunal report for Horvat ‘Uza state that 92.66% of the assemblage consisted of sheep and goats. However, this number represents the number of bones found and only compared to the domestic assemblage. Based upon the available data, and when including the wild species attested at the site, the MNI for sheep and goats is rather 80.83% of the assemblage (see Sade 2007a).

¹⁸⁵ See above n. 166.

deer (*Cervus* sp.), zebu (*Bos indicus*), dog (*Canis familiaris*), donkey (*Equus asinus*), hare (*Lepus* sp.), triggerfish (*Balistes coralينensis*), vulture (*Gyps fulvus*), bustard (*Otis*), goose (*Anser anser*), falcon (*Falco*), and unspecified bird (*Aves* sp.; Sade 2007a, 289–92). Grains of wheat (*Triticum* sp.), barley (*Hordeum* sp.), and several olive stones (*Olea europaea*), were also attested in the excavations (Liphschitz 2007, 300).

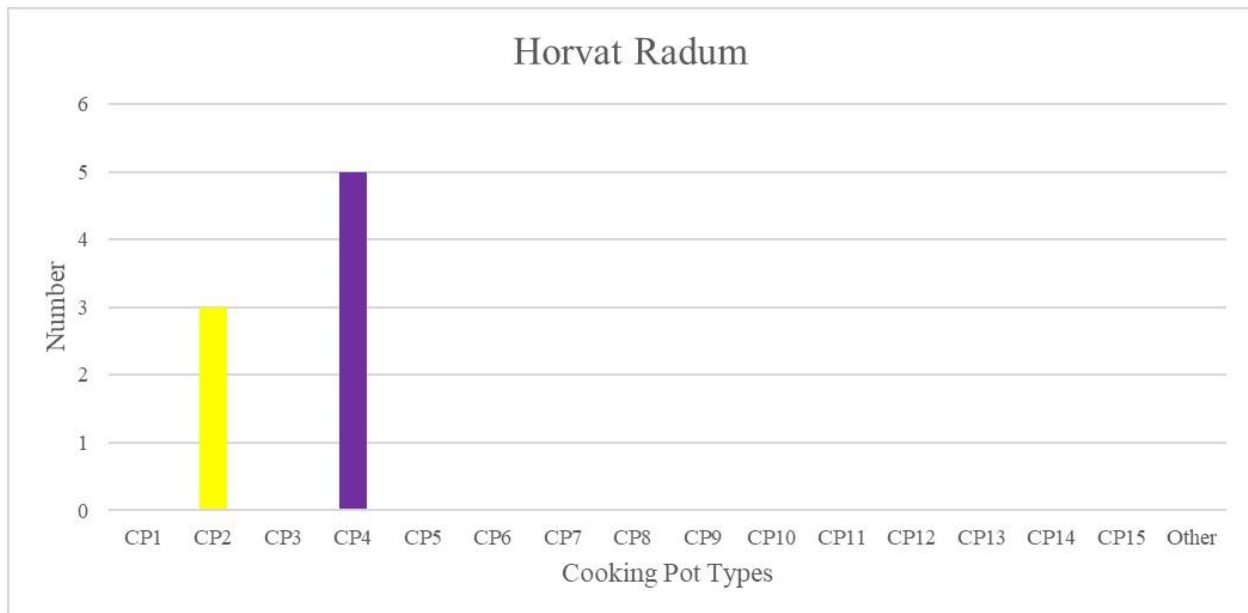
c. Horvat Radum

The small watchtower and fort at Horvat Radum revealed eight cooking pots, four of which were in the Type CP4 tradition, and three in the Type CP2 tradition (see Figure 22). These were found evenly distributed across the area with a small concentration of Type CP4 cooking pots in the northern corner of the fortification wall (Plate 15; L.110). Horvat Radum is the only fortified site serving a militaristic function in the northeastern Negev that presents a majority of Type CP4 cooking pots, although the dataset is quite limited. Horvat Radum's apparent complementary role in providing increased visibility for Horvat 'Uza (located 2 km to the north), suggests that the social component present at Radum was reflective of decisions emanating from Horvat 'Uza (Beit-Arieh 2007c, 314). BPW is not attested at the site. While no botanical remains are available at Horvat Radum, the limited faunal remains indicated a dominance of sheep (*Ovis aries*) and goat (*Capra hircus*) comprising 85.5% of the assemblage with chicken (*Gallus gallus*; 7.14%),¹⁸⁶ and shark (*Selachii*; 7.14%) also present (Sade 2007b, 328).¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁶ See above n. 166.

¹⁸⁷ These numbers represent the number of individual specimen (NISP).

Figure 22. Cooking pot types attested at Horvat Radum. (Figure by author)



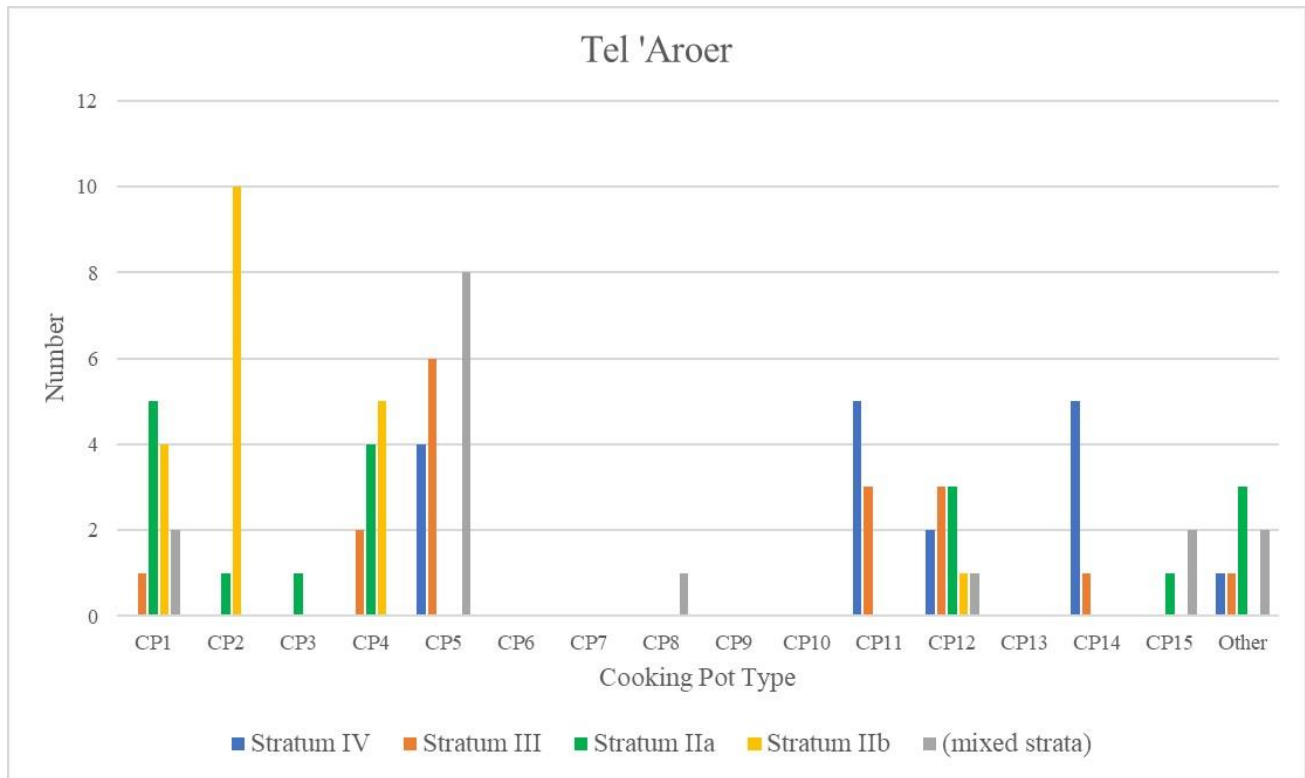
d. Tel ‘Aroer

Tel ‘Aroer presents a multi-period site with strata spanning the eighth through early sixth centuries BCE and the opportunity for a diachronic examination of culinary practices (Thareani 2011b, 2). In the earliest stratum of the Iron IIB (Stratum IV), the ceramic assemblage presents cooking pot types CP11 and CP14 as the most common forms, representing together with CP12 both the open and closed examples of the local cooking pot types (see Figure 23). Also a prominent feature of Tel ‘Aroer’s earliest Stratum is the handmade Type CP5, which is represented in nearly the same proportion as types CP11 and CP12. In Stratum III, dated to the decades preceding the Assyrian invasion in 701 BCE, the same cooking pot types (CP5, CP11, CP12, CP14) are attested in substantial numbers, although several new types appear, namely Type CP4 and one example of Type CP1 (Plate 16).¹⁸⁸ The presence of Type CP4 in the eighth century BCE matches its appearance in other Iron IIB contexts of the northeastern Negev, most

¹⁸⁸ This example of Type CP1 from Tel ‘Aroer Stratum III appears to be one of the earliest attestations of this type of cooking pot, and it is possible that it in fact belongs to the subsequent stratum.

prominently seen at Tel Malhata. In both Stratum IV and III, Type CP5 is well represented (Plate 16).

Figure 23. Cooking pot types attested at Tel ‘Aroer. (Figure by author)



In Stratum IIa and IIb, dated to the seventh and early sixth centuries BCE, the cooking pot profile at Tel ‘Aroer witnesses changes similar to other sites within the northeastern Negev (Plate 17; see below). These changes are primarily represented in the transition of the open and closed types CP11, CP12 and CP14, to the open and closed form of CP1 and CP2 respectively. At ‘Aroer, this transition appears to be gradual, as a *mélange* of these forms appears in Stratum IIa. In the latter Stratum IIb, Type CP2 is dominant with a substantial number of Type CP1. Also prevalent at Tel ‘Aroer in Stratum IIb are a significant number of Type CP4.¹⁸⁹ This type is

¹⁸⁹ The cooking pot forms at Tel ‘Aroer appear to present a higher degree of diversity than at other sites in the northeastern Negev so that its integration with the above schema proved challenging and resulted in a number of forms designated as “other.” This is in large part likely due to variances within the potting community that provided for the inhabitants of the site, whose traditions and training appear to have resulted in cooking pots of greater

found both intramurally in Area H, and extramurally in Area A. Within the extramural settlement, however, Type CP4 is dwarfed by the number of types CP2 and CP1. Only one example of cooking pot Type CP3 is found at Tel 'Aroer

A substantial amount of BPW was excavated at Tel 'Aroer, with many elaborately decorated forms attested in the assemblage (Thareani 2010). The BPW was prominent already in the eighth century BCE, in Stratum IV and III (Plate 18). In these strata, the BPW is distributed across the site, intra- and extramurally, with slightly more clusters found in the extramural settlement. In Stratum II, the BPW is even more prominent and while it is still found intramurally (e.g., areas B and H), in the extramural settlement the amount of BPW increases substantially. In Area D and especially Area A (Plate 18), the large number of BPW clusters are found within a relatively restricted area in what has intriguingly been interpreted as a caravanserai (Thareani-Sussely 2007a; Thareani 2010; 2011a). At Tel 'Aroer then, BPW appears to have been a well-attested phenomenon with clusters of these vessels found in several distinct locales. When the BPW tableware is compared to the cooking pots from the same area and phase (both Stratum IIa and IIb; Plate 17), it is further notable that the predominant cooking pot type is CP2, followed by CP1, and then CP4. There does not appear to be a distinct singular type of cooking pot used in these contexts, although the best attested types do appear to be those local to the northeastern Negev (types CP1 and CP2), rather than the prominent south Transjordanian Type CP4 that one might expect (e.g., Thareani 2011b, Pl. 134).

With regard to the foods consumed at Tel 'Aroer, data is limited as no botanical remains are available. In terms of the faunal record, sheep (*Ovis aries*) and goat (*Capra hircus*) form the

variance to others in the northeastern Negev. Still, many of them were able to be associated with the prominent "types" found throughout the region. In some cases, labelling errors challenged the assigning and identification of some of these forms (e.g., Thareani 2011b, 132–33, Pl. 111:1).

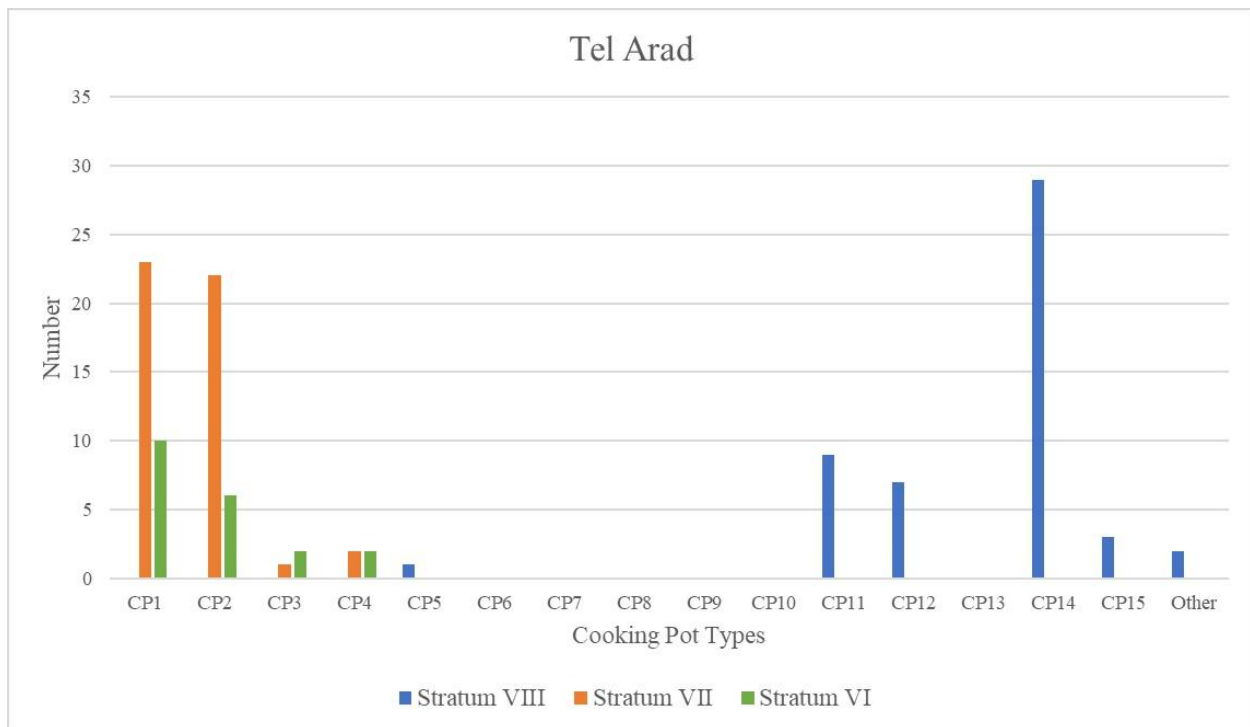
most substantial portion, comprising 87.16% of the recorded Iron Age faunal assemblage. Cattle (*Bos taurus*) are the second most frequently occurring remains, comprising 5.57% of the assemblage. Other species attested include pig (*Sus scrofa*; 2.5%), equids (*Equus* sp.; 2.04%), birds (*Aves* sp.; 0.74%), camels (*Camelus dromedarius*; 0.57%), gazelle (*Gazella* sp.; 0.51%), dog (*Canis familiaris*; 0.17%), deer (*Cervus* sp.; 0.17%), and fish (*Pisces* sp.; 0.11%; Motro 2011, 267). The faunal assemblage at Tel ‘Aroer is indicative of a subsistence economy focused on herding sheep and goat, primarily for their secondary products of wool and milk rather than as a primary meat source. Similarly, the cattle appear to have been used as draught animals (Motro 2011, 275–76, 279).

e. Tel Arad

Tel Arad, although only preliminarily published (Herzog 2002; Singer-Avitz 2002; Aharoni 1981), presents a multi-strata dataset that allows for diachronic changes to ceramic vessel use at the site to be demonstrated. Strata of particular relevance to this work include Stratum VIII (late eighth century BCE), Stratum VII (seventh century BCE), and Stratum VI (seventh to sixth century BCE) that demonstrate transitions in cooking pot usage (see Figure 24). In terms of the cooking pots, Stratum VIII is dominated by Type CP14 with types CP11 and CP12 the next most represented types (Plate 19). These forms represent the major closed (CP14) and more open (CP11 and CP12) forms of the Iron IIB (see Figure 10). In Stratum VII the forms are dominated by types CP1 and CP2 (Plate 20), which appear to represent an evolution of the major open and closed forms of the previous centuries (CP11, CP12 and CP14 respectively). Appearing in limited quantities, however, are Type CP4, and a single example of Type CP3, a form often associated with the southern coastal plain. Stratum VI preserves the same general ratio of vessels as the previous stratum suggesting a high degree of social and culinary continuity between the

strata (Plate 21). Overall, the cooking pot assemblage of late Iron Age Tel Arad presents an assemblage dominated by types CP1 and CP2 which are especially popular in the region of the northeastern Negev and southern Judah (Beit-Arieh and Freud 2015a, 367; Gitin 2015b, 347–48). Small amounts of pottery in the BPW tradition were found at Tel Arad, primarily in Stratum VIII (Singer-Avitz 2002, figs. 10: B18, 11: B28), and Stratum VII (Singer-Avitz 2002, fig. 10: B7). The quantity of BPW, however, is minimal and indicates that this decorated tableware and its associated patterns of consumption were not a notable feature at the site.

Figure 24. Cooking pot types attested at Tel Arad. (Figure by author)



Unique regarding culinary practices at Tel Arad are the inscribed ostraca that indicate the provisions supplied to garrisoned persons throughout the region in the late seventh and early sixth centuries BCE. These provisions consist of the so-called Levantine triad (N. Macdonald 2008), which in the Tel Arad Ostraca is identified in varying portions of grain/flour (*qmh*) or bread (*lhm*), oil (*šmn*), and wine (*yyn*). These ingredients would have been the essential

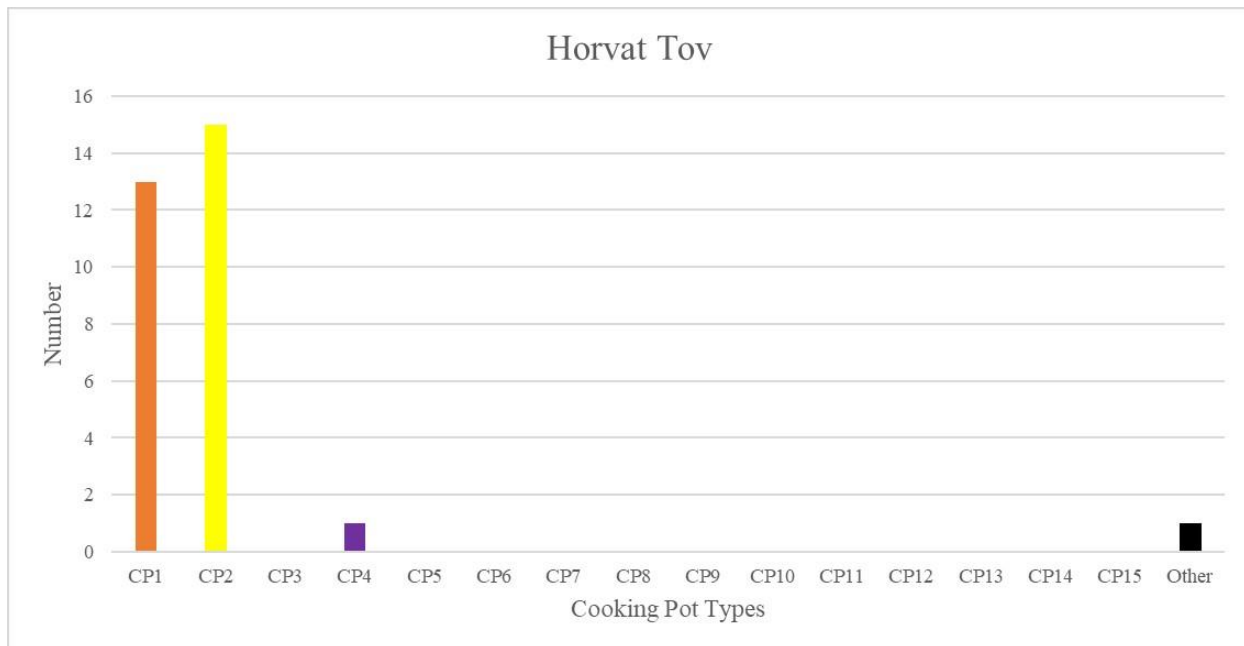
components of the rations provided for those stationed at the fort, and thus the basis of foodstuffs consumed (Pace 2014, 187–89). Limited faunal data indicates that sheep (*Ovis aries*) and goat (*Capra hircus*) were the most prevalent species attested at the site (62.72%), with a substantial quantity of domestic cattle (*Bos taurus*) in the later phases (Herzog 2002, 62; Sadeh 1988).

f. Horvat Tov

The cooking pot assemblage at the small fort of Horvat Tov is similar to Stratum VII and VI at nearby Tel Arad, namely in the high concentration of types CP1 and CP2 (see Figure 25). While one example of Type CP4 is attested at the site, Horvat Tov presents the most restricted culinary assemblage encountered within the northeastern Negev. It is perhaps notable, in terms of the forts along the eastern edge of this region (Horvat Tov, Tel Arad, Horvat ‘Uza and Horvat Radum), that the quantity and ratio of types CP4 vs. CP1/CP2 increases as one heads further toward the south, indicating the proximal range of the tradition of Type CP4. The spatial distribution of these cooking pot forms (Plate 22) exemplifies this conformity in cooking pot types. BPW is not attested at Horvat Tov.¹⁹⁰

¹⁹⁰ No botanical data is available from the excavations at Horvat Tov. Similarly, as discussed by Itkin, the faunal remains from Horvat Tov have not been located in the warehouses of the Israel Antiquities Authority where they were stored following excavation (2018, 136–37).

Figure 25. Cooking pot types attested at Horvat Tov. (Figure by author)

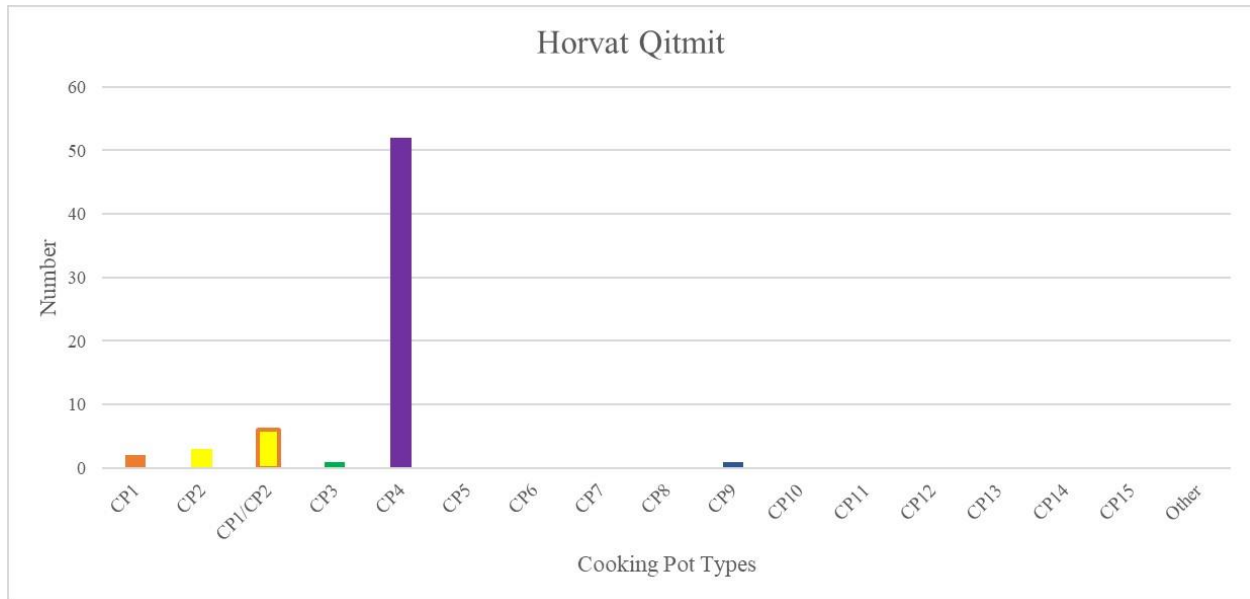


g. Horvat Qitmit

At the sanctuary of Horvat Qitmit, the cooking pot assemblage consisted overwhelmingly of Type CP4 (see Figure 26), a stark contrast to the ratios seen at Tel Arad Stratum VII and VI and at Horvat 'Uza. Types CP1 and CP2, the most common forms found in the northeastern Negev in the Iron IIC are also attested, although in comparatively unremarkable numbers. A single example of Type CP3 and of Type CP9 were also attested.¹⁹¹ The spatial distribution of these forms across the site (Plate 23) reveals a somewhat larger grouping of types CP1 and CP2 in the environs of Complex A, although these were still vastly outnumbered by Type CP4. Due to the cultic nature of Horvat Qitmit, the context of food consumption at the site is not solely reflected of household consumption, but of consumption occurring within a ritualized and sacred space. Notably, the cooking pot forms used in the ritual activities are those most prominent in household contexts of southern Transjordan.

¹⁹¹ For further discussion on Type CP9, see discussion of Tel Malhata below.

Figure 26. Cooking pot types attested at Horvat Qitmit. (Figure by author)



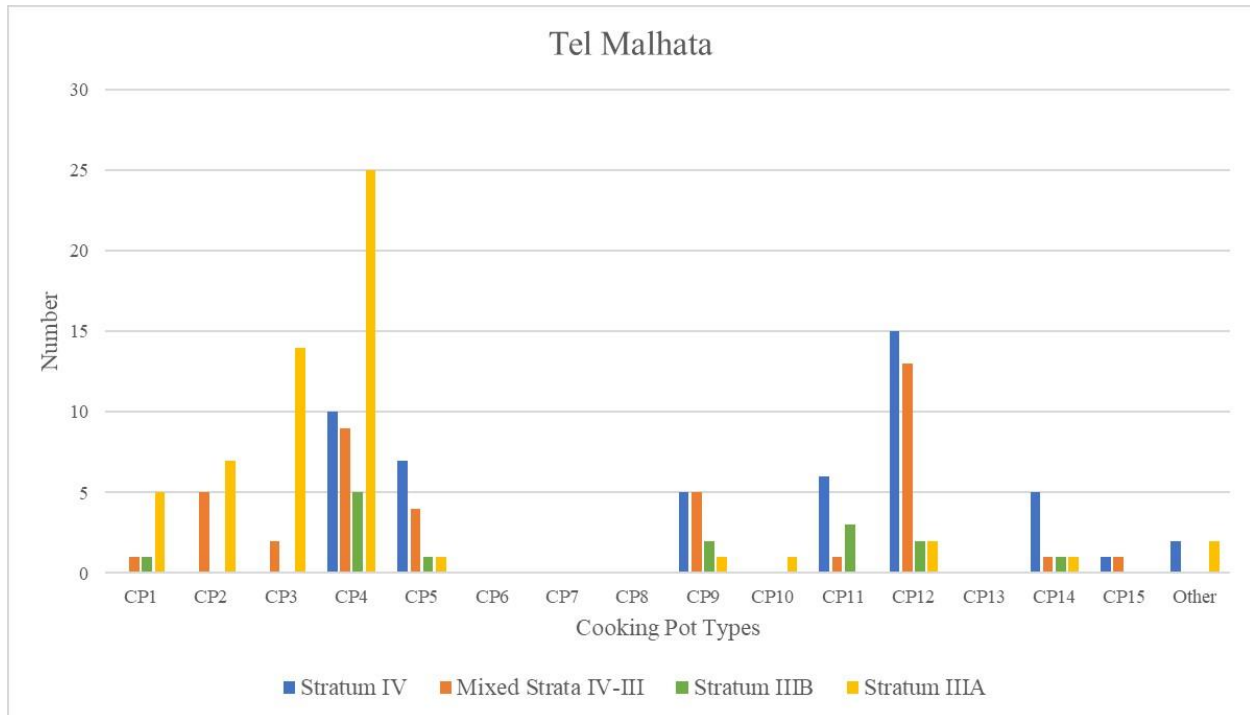
BPW is fairly well-attested at Horvat Qitmit, particularly in Complex A where two medium sized clusters were found in L.30 and L.44 (Plate 24). This area is interpreted as a part of the *bāmā* enclosure of the site, and on the basis of the BPW together with the cooking pots, presumably the locus of communal feasting within a ritual context. It is notable that even here, among the clustered area of BPW, while the cooking pot evidence yields predominantly Type CP4, types CP1 and CP2 are represented, indicating that food was not being prepared in an entirely homogeneous fashion. While no botanical remains are available from Horvat Qitmit, the faunal remains indicate that sheep (*Ovis aries*) and goat (*Capra hircus*) comprise 80% (n=12) of the minimum number of individuals of the overall assemblage, with cattle (*Bos taurus*) accounting for 20% (n=3; Horwitz and Raphael 1995, 291).¹⁹²

¹⁹² At Horvat Qitmit the entirety of the shell remains consisted of *Cypraea annulus* Linnaeus (n=18), which appear to have functioned either as votive objects (Mienis 1995, 276–78), or as decorative features, perhaps on dress (Beck 1995, 43–47).

h. Tel Malhata

The strata from Tel Malhata that span the eighth (Stratum IVB–IVA) and seventh (Stratum IIB–IIIA) centuries BCE provide a substantial dataset in which to examine diachronic trajectories of culinary traditions in the northeastern Negev (Beit-Arieh and Freud 2015b, 28). Overall, the site presents a diverse portrait of cooking pots over the successive strata (see Figure 27). In Stratum IV, dating to the eighth century BCE, cooking pot types CP11, CP12, and CP14, representing the most regionally prevalent open and closed forms are well-attested (Plate 25). Beyond these forms, a not insubstantial amount of cooking pot Type CP9 is present. This type, appearing in every Iron Age strata at Tel Malhata, appears to represent a method of production local to the site. As the forms of this type vary, often mimicking types CP4 and CP1, what sets this type apart are variances in its production, which produces a white surface on the vessel and whose petrography indicates a local source for the origin of the clay (Freud 2015, 198; Freud and Goren 2015). Vessels representing this distinct and traceable form of production are also found in limited quantities at nearby Horvat Qitmit and Tel ‘Ira. Significant also within Stratum IV are substantial numbers of the handmade Type CP5 as well as the significant numbers of Type CP4. The mixed contexts of strata IV and III present a *mélange* of the types attested in both Stratum IV and Stratum III (Plate 26).

Figure 27. Cooking pot types attested at Tel Malhata. (Figure by author)



Stratum III at Tel Malhata can be divided into two subphases, Stratum IIIB dating to the first half of the seventh century BCE and Stratum IIIA dating to the second half of the seventh and early sixth century BCE. The cooking pot assemblage of Stratum IIIB presents close affinities with the patterns of earlier Stratum IV (e.g., CP4, CP9, CP11, CP12, CP14), while Stratum IIIA presents a more substantial number of the prominent seventh century BCE forms (e.g., CP1, CP2, CP3, CP4) at the expense of the earlier forms (Figure 27; Plate 27). From Stratum IIIA, the most prevalent cooking pot form by a significant margin is Type CP4, followed by Type CP3, with types CP1 and CP2 present in much less significant numbers than elsewhere in the northeastern Negev. In this fashion, Tel Malhata presents a distinct and unique assemblage in the region in the lesser prominent role it affords types CP1 and CP2.¹⁹³

¹⁹³ Compare Tel Malhata with Horvat Qitmit, although site functionality distinguishes the two sites.

In examining this ceramic assemblage more closely, we can focus on each excavated area at the site, examining a smaller context and changes that occur within more distinct areas. In Area A for example, discrete clusters of ceramics and food preparation areas may be examined over successive strata (Plates 28–30). Of note are the substantial numbers of Type CP4 seen in Stratum III. Similarly, in Stratum III, the excavated cooking pot Type CP10 in L.241, represents the only excavated cooking pot of this type within this region. With origins in the Aegean region, type CP10 is best attested in the contemporaneous assemblages found on the coastal plain at sites such as Ashkelon and Me'ad Hashavyahu where it is found with a variety of other East Greek forms (Fantalkin 2001, Fig. 31:1-2; Waldbaum and Magness 1997, Fig. 9). At Tell Malhata also, limited remains of East Greek ware were identified (Freud 2015, 209). Within Area F, substantial data from Stratum IVB and IVA are available (Plates 31–33). Here, it becomes apparent that cooking pot Type CP4 is already an established phenomenon in the late eighth century BCE, appearing in substantial quantities within Stratum IVA (Plate 32). Similarly, the presence of an additional exemplar in Stratum IVB (L.1126) indicates that the tradition of cooking pot type CP4 can be extended even earlier into the eighth century BCE.¹⁹⁴ Likewise, the Type CP4 cooking pots appear to be integrated into the same activity areas as other cooking pots that appear to be more local to the northeastern Negev (e.g., CP12 and CP14).

In Area H, a more detailed portrait of the seventh century BCE can be examined (Plates 34–36). While Stratum IV (Plate 34) presents the dominant locally attested cooking pot forms (CP11, CP12 and CP12), Stratum IIIB and IIIA gradually begin to present a more diverse

¹⁹⁴ On the basis of this data, the presence of Type CP4 at Busayra and elsewhere within southern Transjordan cannot be seen as solely an indicator of Iron IIC (seventh and sixth century BCE) habitation. Rather, as the stratigraphic sequences at sites such as Tel Malhata and Tel 'Aroer indicate, this form is also a feature of at least the late Iron IIB (eighth century BCE). Similarly, at sites lacking more defined dates for strata (i.e., Busayra), it appears on the basis of this ceramic data that habitation can easily be extended to the eighth century BCE.

assemblage, seen first in the appearance of cooking pot type CP4 (Plate 35), and later in the substantial increase of this cooking pot type. In these later strata this diversity is also attested in the substantial numbers of Type CP3 (Plate 36). Within these contexts, while Type CP4 is most prevalent, there are not any significant clusters or divergences in the location of these forms, with multiple locations presenting an assorted assemblage of cooking pot types (e.g., L.1564). A similar context of diversity and integration of cooking pot forms is seen in L.27K in Section W at Tel Malhata (Plate 37). Overall, Tel Malhata presents a diverse cooking pot assemblage, most notable for the “non-local” cooking pot forms (CP3 and CP4) that dominate the Stratum III assemblage.

Busayra Painted Ware is attested in recognizable clusters already in Stratum IV in the eighth century BCE, similar to Tel ‘Aroer as previously discussed. Several small clusters can be outlined in areas F, H and Z (Plate 38). Likewise, not insubstantial quantities and small clusters are attested in the mixed assemblages of Stratum IV–III (Plate 39), indicating that the assemblage from the eighth century BCE (Stratum IV) is in fact greater than is demonstrated in Plate 38. BPW attestations continue into the seventh and early sixth centuries BCE, increasing in both the quantities of vessels, and in the number and size of clusters present (Plate 40). These clusters are found across the site in all areas presenting contexts dating to this Stratum, namely areas A, H, and W. In associating these tablewares with contexts of consumption and with the cooking pot forms that produced food for consumption, several patterns emerge. First, within Area A, the significant cluster of BPW (L.284; Plate 40) is not found in the same locus or room as significant numbers of cooking pots, but due to the substantial cluster of cooking pots in adjacent rooms to the west and south (L.220, L.225, L.226, L.269; see Plate 30) we may assume a relationship between these areas. In these contexts, cooking pot Type CP4 is the

overwhelmingly most popular type, accounting for more than 75% of the cooking pot assemblage. In Area A then, there appears to be a correlation between food prepared in cooking pot Type CP4 and food consumed with BPW. In the small clusters of BPW found in Area H, these can also be associated with contexts that possess cooking pot Type CP4 (e.g., L.1564, L.1604), but in total are present with diverse types (e.g., L.1512, L.1570 and L.1801; see Plates 35–36 and 40). Overall, the assemblage of BPW at Tel Malhata indicates that it was a recognizably visible tradition. In some contexts, it is clearly associated with food prepared in cooking pot Type CP4, the most popular type within Stratum III, but its general distribution across the site indicates its association with other types of cooking pots.

With regard to the extant data relating to foods consumed, botanical species from Tel Malahta include: wheat (*Triticum* sp.), barley (*Hordeum* sp.), olive (*olea europaea*), dates (*Phoenix dactylifera*), grape (*Vitis vinifera*), vetch (*Vicia* asp.), and desert squash (*Citrullus colocynthis*; Liphshitz 2015, 712–13). Sheep (*Ovis aries*) and goat (*Capra hircus*) account for 86.73% (n=98) of the minimum number of individuals of the domestic species at Tel Malahata. Cattle accounted for 5.31% (n=6) and single exemplars (0.88%; n=1) of horse (*Equus caballus*), donkey (*Equus asinus*), zebu (*Bos indicus*), camel (*Camelus dromedarius*), pig (*Sus scrofa*), dog (*Canis familiaris*), chicken (*Gallus gallus*),¹⁹⁵ goose (*Anser anser*), and pigeon (*Columba livia*) are present (Sade 2015, 716–20). Wild species attested at Tel Malhata include the dorcas gazelle (*Gazella dorcas*), eagle (*Aquila* sp.), vulture (*Gyps fulvus*), raven (*Corvus* sp.), and other birds (*Aves* sp.), with fish species including Nile perch (*Lates niloticus*), catfish (*Clarias gariepinus*), shark (*Selachii*), gray triggerfish (*Balistes carolinensis*), Jaffa cod, and golden sparus (*Sparus aurata*; Sade 2015, 718). Sheep and goat herding for their secondary products of wool and dairy

¹⁹⁵ See above n. 166.

appears to be the most prevalent use of animal species at Tel Malhata, with a 5:3 ratio of sheep to goat. The cattle were likely used for their aid in agriculture, with their numbers limited in part by their greater demand for water (ca. 14 litres per day) in the semi-arid region. Notable from Tel Malhata were the significant number of varied fish species, likely attesting to commercial relations with regions from which the fish derive (Sade 2015, 715).¹⁹⁶

i. Tel ‘Ira

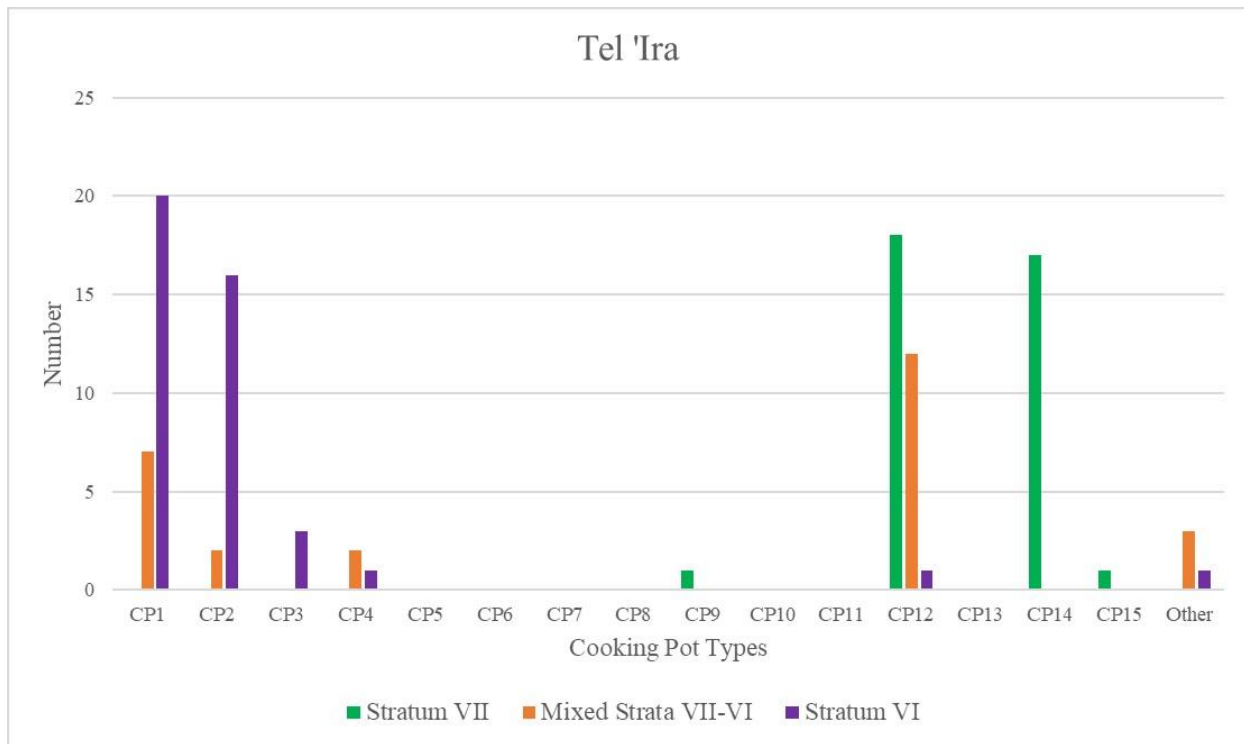
At Tel ‘Ira, Stratum VII dating to the eighth century BCE, and Stratum VI dating from the seventh to early sixth century BCE, provide a diachronic perspective of culinary preferences (see Figure 28). Stratum VII presents an abundance of types CP12 and CP14, representing the prominent open and closed forms of this period (Plate 41).¹⁹⁷ The contexts assigned as “mixed strata, VII–VI” present a representative mixture of both of these strata, which include the prevalent Iron IIB and Iron IIC forms (Plate 42). In Stratum VI, the cooking pot assemblage is very similar to that at Tel Arad VII–VI, and to high degree Horvat Tov, Horvat ‘Uza, and nearby Tel Masos. Stratum VI is remarkable in its near ubiquity of cooking pot types CP1 and CP2 (Plate 43). This pattern especially contrasts with Tel ‘Aroer and Tel Malhata, as well as Kadesh Barnea, and all sites in southern Transjordan. While several examples of Type CP3 and a single example of Type CP4 are attested, these remain the exceptions to the prevailing trends at Tel ‘Ira. This pattern of cooking pots identifies Tel ‘Ira as sharing culinary practices most closely

¹⁹⁶ Likewise, while no evidence exists that they were used as a food source, the shell remains from Tel Malhata indicate contact with the Red Sea, Mediterranean, and Nile regions (Mienis 2015, 733–34). The shells appear to have been used as beads, pendants, game pieces, etc. with the most frequently attested species including cowrie (*Cypraeidae*), dog-cockles (*Glycymerididae*), giant clam (*Tridacna*), murex (*Muricidae*) and other gastropod (*Lambis*, *Conus*) and bivalve (*Pinctada*, *Cerastoderma*, *Chambardia*, *Donax*) species (Mienis 2015).

¹⁹⁷ In many instances it was difficult to differentiate between forms CP11 and CP12, as each site’s classification system varied, as do potter’s products in different contexts. As a result, CP12 may be slightly overrepresented and some of these forms might otherwise be classified as Type CP11. Nonetheless, the pattern presented at the site remains constant in its prominence of open and closed forms of a local tradition.

representative of the militaristic forts in the northeastern Negev, and particularly those sites on the northern edge of this region. It bears emphasis that the cooking pot portrait that is representative of the militaristic and administrative sites would have, as a result of site functionality and directional focus, held stronger links to external political centers such as Jerusalem.

Figure 28. Cooking pot types attested at Tel 'Ira. (Figure by author)



The BPW at Tel 'Ira is mostly attested in Stratum VII and in mixed VII–VI strata contexts and derives predominantly from the gate area, Area E (Plate 44). The BPW forms excavated at Tel 'Ira present less highly decorated motifs than found elsewhere in the northeastern Negev (e.g., Tel Malhata, Tel 'Aroer), and especially in southern Transjordan (e.g., Busayra, Ghraheh). It is notable that no examples appear to have been excavated intramurally beyond the gate area. While it is possible that this is merely the result of the areas chosen for excavation, a comparison to the similar patterns at Tel Arad (Stratum VII–VII) and Horvat 'Uza,

which both present a very similar cooking pot assemblage, would suggest that this is not the case. Rather, it appears that the cluster of BPW found in the gate area represents a restricted pattern of usage where this ware was not desired within the site.

Botanical remains are limited from Tel 'Ira but evidence at a minimum in Stratum VII wheat (*Triticum*), olive (*Olea europaea*), and grape (*Vitis vinifera*), and in Stratum VI, wheat (*Triticum*; Liphshitz 1999, 479). The faunal remains from Tel 'Ira follow the pattern evidenced at previous sites, with a dominance of sheep (*Ovis aries*) and goat (*Capra hircus*) representing a minimum number of individuals representing 63–73% of the overall assemblage. These are followed by cattle (*Bos taurus*) representing approximately 10% of the assemblage. Chicken (*Gallus gallus*),¹⁹⁸ dog (*canis familiaris*), pig (*Sus scrofa*), camel (*camelus dromedaries*), donkey (*Equus asinus*), gazelle (*Gazella* sp.), and deer (*Dama dama mesopotamica*) are present in very low numbers (5% and less; Dayan 1999; Horwitz 1999).¹⁹⁹ Analysis of the sheep, goat, and cattle remains at Tel 'Ira indicated that they were primarily kept for their secondary products (wool, dairy, labor), rather than their meat (Dayan 1999, 486–87). Analysis of the human remains from the Iron Age tombs at Tel 'Ira appears to indicate a relatively healthy population engaged in intensive agriculture (Eshed, Wish-Baratz, and Hershkovitz 1999, 507). Several articular bone pathologies on some skeletons (e.g., arthritic changes in the metatarso-phalangeal joint), are likely evidence of extensive kneeling for grinding cereal grain (Eshed, Wish-Baratz, and Hershkovitz 1999, 507).²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁸ See above n. 166.

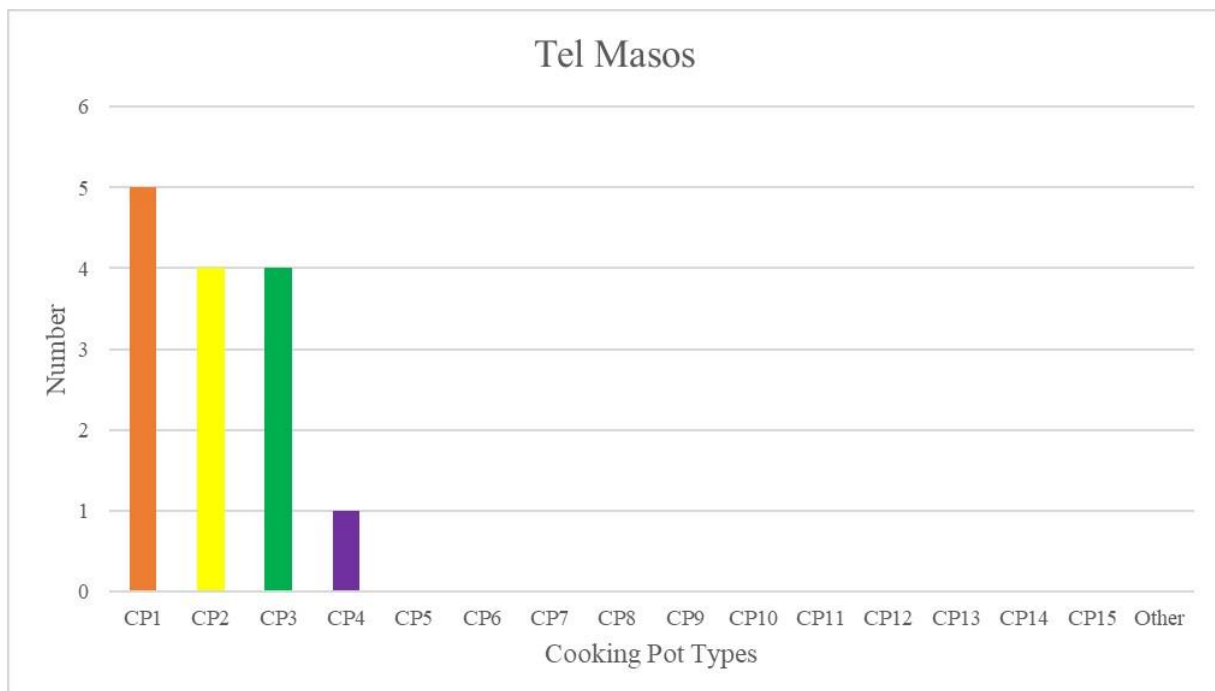
¹⁹⁹ The faunal remains from Tel 'Ira are difficult to holistically quantify as they were analyzed separately on the basis of area (Areas A-G by Dayan (1999), and Areas L-M by Horwitz (1999)), and on the basis of remains excavated by Tel Aviv University, and those by Hebrew Union College (Horwitz 1999, 490–91). Nonetheless, the faunal signature is similar to other sites in the northeastern Negev (e.g. Tell Beersheba, Horvat 'Uza, etc.).

²⁰⁰ Tel 'Ira is the only site in the northeastern Negev that presents mortuary data for the period of the late Iron Age.

j. Tel Masos

At Tel Masos, the only area exhibiting remains from the Iron IIC was Area G. Here the cooking pot assemblage reveals a prevalence of types CP1, CP2 and CP3, with an additional example of Type CP4 (see Figure 29). The greatest context of food preparation appears to be L.708 (Phase II) in the south-central portion of the site, where the cooking pot traditions of CP1 and CP2 are exclusively present (Plate 45). In this fashion, Tel Masos' assemblage most closely mirrors that of Horvat 'Uza, while presenting a greater amount of Type CP3 and less of CP4. The fact that Tel Masos sits further to the west, and nearer the coastal plain is perhaps a factor in the greater representation of Type CP3. In contrast to significant numbers of the local northeastern Negev tableware traditions at Tel Masos (see Figure 12), only a single example of BPW was attested, indicating that BPW was not a visible tradition at the site (Plate 45). Faunal remains were not recorded, and no botanical remains were excavated from Area G (Liphshitz and Waisel 1983, 213).

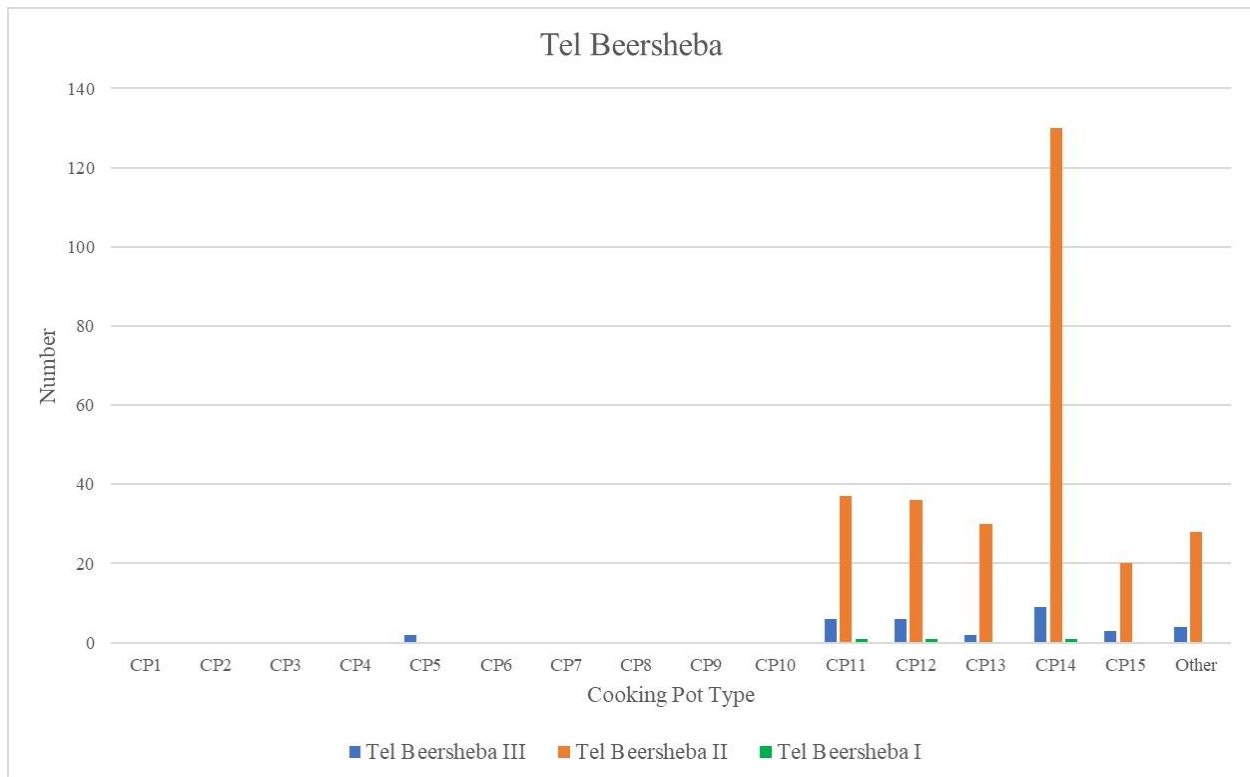
Figure 29. Cooking pot types attested at Tel Masos. (Figure by author)



k. Tel Beersheba

Though settlement at Tel Beersheba was not renewed following the Assyrian destruction of the city in 701 BCE, as one of the major long-lasting and well-published settlements at the western end of the northeastern Negev, it can be viewed as a type site for the region in the eighth century BCE. Thus, while not inhabited during the Iron IIC, it serves as a precursor to the trends that would soon dominate the region. Moreover, Tel Beersheba's position as a "gateway" community for the South Arabian trade and the multiple lines of evidence demonstrating that this trade and related interactions were well-established in the eighth century BCE confirms its importance for this study (Singer-Avitz 1999).

Figure 30. Cooking pot types attested at Tel Beersheba. (Figure by author)



The trends in the cooking pot types attested at Tel Beersheba generally conform to the portrait outlined above for Tel Arad Stratum VIII (see Figure 30). The cooking pot types represented in Stratum III consist of types CP14, CP11 and CP12 as the most prominent closed

and open forms respectively (Plate 46). Also attested in this phase are several handmade forms of Type CP5. This same portrait is presented in Stratum II, although on a more accentuated scale due to a larger dataset (Plate 47). Notable within Stratum II, and also attested earlier in Stratum III, is the form of Type CP13, which beyond Tel Beersheba is quite rare (Singer-Avitz 2016, 608, Type CP-5), but appears to closely relate to contemporaneous forms found in the coastal plain (Gitin 2015a, 263). Similarly, this form appears to be the antecedent of Type CP3, prominent in the Iron IIC, which is prevalent not only in the coastal plain but also in Judah and the northeastern Negev (Singer-Avitz 2016, 608; Gitin 2015c, 390; A. Mazar and Panitz-Cohen 2001, 86–87). Following the destruction of Stratum II by the Assyrians at the close of the eighth century BCE (Gottlieb 2016), the squatter remains of Stratum I presented only several cooking pots that align with forms dominant in the previous strata (Figure 30). Through the presentation of these strata, Tel Beersheba provides a robust example of the prominent cooking pot traditions of the region in the eighth century BCE (Iron IIB).

Regarding BPW at Tel Beersheba, what is most remarkable is that this ware is attested already in the eighth century BCE (Plate 48). At Tel Beersheba, these examples are few and isolated save a very small grouping found in the central quarter. Several of these forms, however, are elaborately made (e.g., Singer-Avitz 2016, fig. 12.187:10), and demonstrate that BPW and its symbolic association with Busayra was already well-attested in the northeastern Negev by the (late) eighth century BCE.²⁰¹ Moreover, as seen at Tel ‘Aroer, and as will be further demonstrated at additional sites, the other multi-period sites in the northeastern Negev and

²⁰¹ These examples of BPW appear to have been locally produced, with one particular vessel having been made from clay that likely originated in the region of the upper Shephelah, according to its petrography (Singer-Avitz 2004, 81; see also Iserlis and Goren 2016).

adjacent areas attest to BPW in the region by the eighth century BCE, albeit in modest quantities (e.g., Tel Arad, Tel 'Ira, Tel Tel Malhata, Kadesh Barnea; see Singer-Avitz 2014; 2004).

In terms of foods consumed, the botanical remains from Tel Beersheba Stratum III indicate the consumption of wheat (*Triticum* sp.), barley (*Hordeum* sp.), vetch (*Vicia* sp.), olive (*Olea europaea*), lentil (*Lens* sp.), and mustard (*Sinapis* sp.; Liphshitz 2016, 1423–24). In addition to the aforementioned species, Stratum II preserved evidence of pea (*Pisum* sp.), bean (*Vicia faba*), date (*Phoenix dactylifera*), grape (*Vitis vinifera*), and flax (*Linum* sp.; Liphshitz 2016, 1423–24). The faunal remains from Stratum III preserved a majority of sheep (*Ovis aries*) and goat (*Capra hircus*) whose minimum number of individuals accounted for 90.08% (n=109) of both the domestic and wild assemblage, with domestic cattle (*Bos taurus*) representing 4.13% (n=5) of the assemblage.²⁰² Other species from this stratum include chicken (*Gallus gallus*; 1.65%; n=2),²⁰³ boar (*Sus scrofa*; 0.83%; n=1), zebu (*Bos indicus*; 0.83%; n=1), donkey (*Equus asinus*; 0.83%; n=1), horse (*Equus caballus*; 0.83%; n=1), and dog (*Canis familiaris*; 0.83%; n=1; Sade 2016, 1359–60). Additionally, unidentified fish bones were excavated (n=20), as were the remains of a dove (*Columba livia*) and two other unidentified birds. Species of marine invertebrates from Stratum III indicate contacts with both Mediterranean (*Murex trunculus* (n=1), *Pustularia spurica* (n=2), *Pteria acca* (n=1), *Trochidae* (n=1) and *Glycymeris violacescens* (n=37)) and Red Sea regions (*Tridacna* (n=4), *Cypraeidae* (n=9) and *Cymatiidae* (n=1)), although the use of these shells do not relate to subsistence (Sade 2016, 1361).

²⁰² While seemingly represented in lower quantities than at other sites, it is possible that standard NISP counts overrepresent cattle, as cattle bones have been noted to fragment at higher rates than other bones (A. Sasson 2016, 1382, 1397–99; Klein 1989, 374–75). In the absence of MNI counts for other sites it is difficult to draw substantive inter-site conclusions.

²⁰³ See above n. 166.

From the more abundant remains of Stratum II, a very similar faunal assemblage was preserved with the minimum number of individual sheep (*Ovis aries*) and goats (*Capra hircus*) comprising 73.33% (n=66) of the domestic and wild assemblage, followed by domestic cattle (*Bos taurus*; 13.3%; n=12). Other attested species include bird (*Aves* spp.), camel (*Camelus dromedaries*; 2.22%; n=2), gazelle (*Gazella doracas*; 1.11%; n=1), dog (*Canis familiaris*; 1.11%; n=1), fish (*Actinopterygii* sp.), boar (*Sus scrofa*; 1.11%; n=1), donkey (*Equus asinus*; 1.11%; n=1), with several other species including rodents (A. Sasson 2016, 1368).²⁰⁴ Faunal analysis of the remains of the sheep/goat and cattle indicate that husbandry at the site was directed towards subsistence practices, with the cattle providing a pivotal role in ploughing for dry farming despite the fact that they were biologically less adapted to the local environment. The sheep and goat species indicate a focus on their associated byproducts, namely wool, with the culling practices of the herd indicating management within a self-sufficient subsistence system (A. Sasson 2016, 1399–1401; 2008).

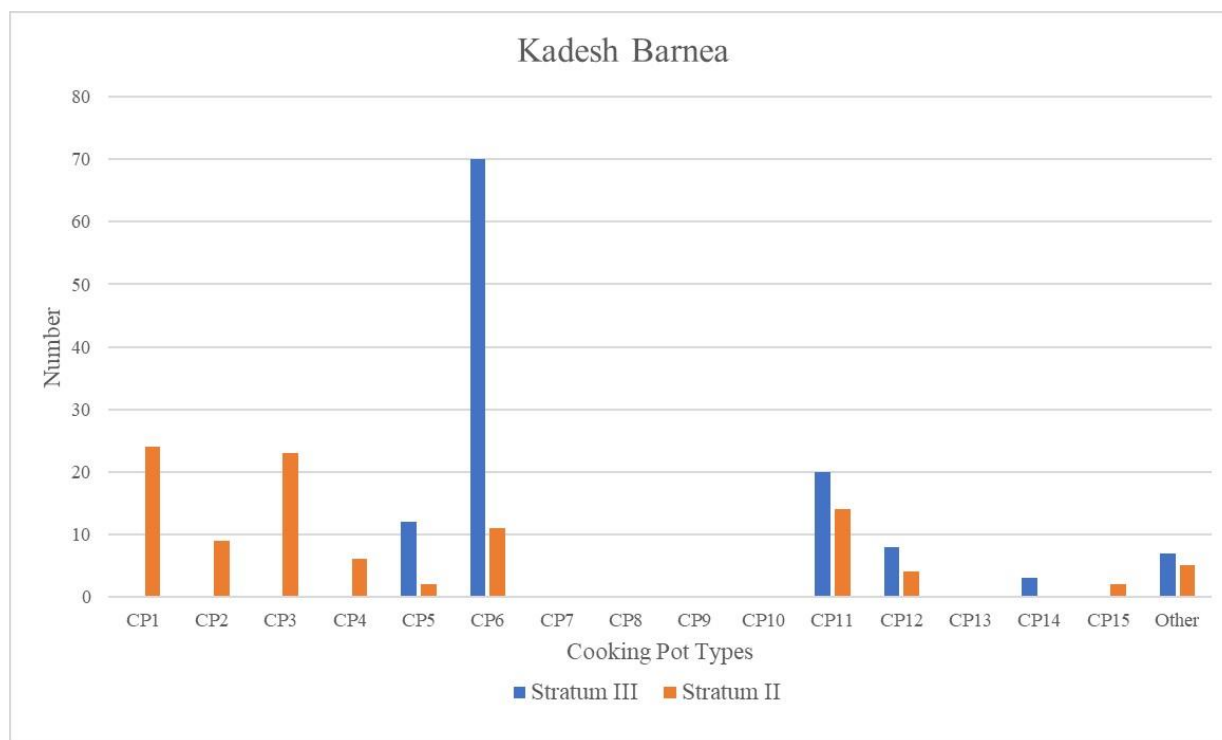
I. Kadesh Barnea

At Kadesh Barnea, two strata are relevant for discussion, Stratum III dating to the second half of the eighth century BCE, and Stratum II dating to the seventh and early sixth century BCE (Cohen and Bernick-Greenberg 2007, 9–17). In Stratum III, the cooking pot assemblage preserves a majority of Type CP6, a part of the handmade Negevite assemblage (see Figure 31). Challenges in the designation of these handmade forms as cooking pots, kraters, or bowls, has led to a significant amount of confusion across the Negev (Bernick-Greenberg 2007b, 188–93). For this reason, and in an effort to maintain a consistent designatory system across different sites, it is possible that Type CP6 may be slightly overrepresented at Kadesh Barnea in this analysis.

²⁰⁴ The presence of rodents may relate to penecontemporaneous intrusion (Gautier 1987), or they may relate to events surrounding the siege and abandonment of the site (Maher 2008).

Nonetheless, even with a more conservative system of designation, this form would still be the most prevalent within Stratum III (Plate 49). Also prominent within Stratum III is the handmade form Type CP5 and the open cooking pot forms common in the Iron IIB, types CP11 and CP12. Somewhat surprisingly, the closed globular cooking pot form otherwise well attested at other sites in the Negev, Type CP14, is present only in curiously low quantities.

Figure 31. Cooking pot types attested at Kadesh Barnea. (Figure by author)



From Stratum II, in addition to a diminishment of forms most prominent in the eighth century BCE is the introduction of the popular types of the seventh and sixth centuries BCE (see Figure 31).²⁰⁵ This representation consists of a decrease in types CP11 and CP12, the disappearance of Type CP14, and the addition of types CP1, CP2, CP3, and CP4 (Plate 50).²⁰⁶

²⁰⁵ Several of the cooking pots at Kadesh Barnea were re-classified in this analysis. For example, while Kadesh Barnea Type CP1 most closely corresponds to types CP11 or CP12 of this schema, Kadesh Barnea subtype CP1.3, though possessing variant fabric from Kadesh Barnea ECP1 (= Danielson CP4), best equates to Type CP4 in this work. See, for example, Cohen and Bernick-Greenberg (2007, Pl. 11.87:1) and Bernick-Greenberg (2007a, 170).

²⁰⁶ Note, however, that Type CP4 is attested elsewhere in the Iron IIB, most prominently at Tel Malhata (see above).

Conspicuous in Stratum II is the relatively high number of Type CP3 cooking pots, suggesting that Kadesh Barnea possessed strong links to the culinary traditions found in the southern coastal plain. These variant cooking pot types appear fairly evenly distributed across the site, with a notable cluster of the Type CP1 and CP2 tradition in the southwestern corner of the fort (L.637 and L.553). Of the five examples of Type CP4 that appear in Stratum II at Kadesh Barnea, two are located outside the fort, in fill within the moat (L.2150).

BPW is present in very small quantities at Kadesh Barnea already in Stratum III, dated to the eighth century BCE (Plate 51). The number of attested forms increases slightly in the subsequent Stratum II, although is still represented by relatively low quantities (Plate 52). Several small clusters are present, in L.402, and in L.2150 a secondary fill context. Overall, there are no contexts that suggest an overtly conspicuous role of this ware at the site. More likely this ware was acquired or presented on a more individual or ad hoc basis rather than being featured as a central element in larger feasting contexts. Notably, however, some of the quintessential forms of the BPW tradition often appearing in representative depictions of BPW, derive from Kadesh Barnea (e.g., see Figure 11:17; after Cohen and Bernick-Greenberg 2007, Pl. 11.79: 12). Moreover, other decorated tableware traditions are known at Kadesh Barnea such as the Black-Painted Ware of Stratum III (Bernick-Greenberg 2007a, 153–55, 171).²⁰⁷ Kadesh Barnea's importance as a caravan stop along the trans-Negev route is also clearly demonstrated by the ceramic assemblage. From Stratum IV, the presence of Qurayyah Painted Ware attests to contact with northwest Arabia already in the tenth century BCE (Bernick-Greenberg 2007a, 140–41). Similarly, the misidentification of some of the Qurayyah Painted Ware, which is in fact Tayma Painted Ware (e.g., Cohen and Bernick-Greenberg 2007, Pl. 11.15:1; Hausleiter 2010, 233),

²⁰⁷ Tebes considers the Black Painted Ware to be local variant of the broader painted traditions such as Qurayyah Painted Ware and Tayma Painted Ware that originated in the Arabian Hejaz (Tebes 2015, 261).

further attests to Kadesh Barnea as in contact with distant Arabian oases that were central in facilitating caravan trade.

Botanical remains from Kadesh Barnea are limited and should be viewed as incomplete. Yet, from Stratum III pomegranate, almond, and dates are attested, and from Stratum II the remains of apples, dates, pomegranate, wheat, and other unspecified grains were excavated (Cohen and Bernick-Greenberg 2007, 363). The excavation and analysis of faunal remains at Kadesh Barnea does not lend itself to an easy quantifications of species present (Hakker-Orion 2007, 285).²⁰⁸ However, from both Stratum III and II the most frequently attested species in descending order are: sheep (*Ovis aries*) and goat (*Capra hircus*), camel (*Camelus dromedarius*), equids (*Equus* sp.), gazelle (*Gazella* sp.), cattle (*Bos taurus*), birds (*Aves* sp.), ibex (*Capra ibex*), dog (*Canis familiaris*), hare and pig/boar (*Sus scrofa*; Hakker-Orion 2007, 285–91). The mortality profiles for the sheep and goat indicate that most animals reached adulthood, indicating that they were primarily exploited for secondary products such as wool and dairy rather than as a meat source (Hakker-Orion 2007, 291).²⁰⁹

m. Regional Patterns

A distinct stratigraphic sequence from the northeastern Negev allows for greater diachronic perspectives than were possible in southern Transjordan. Across the northeastern Negev, the

²⁰⁸ The available data only allowed for a quantification of loci that recorded the presence of certain types of faunal remains but not quantities represented, much less the minimum number of individuals (Hakker-Orion 2007, Table 19.1).

²⁰⁹ Numerous marine species are attested at Kadesh Barnea indicating contact with Mediterranean, Red Sea, and Nilotic networks (Bar-Yosef Mayer 2007). Most significant and appearing in substantial numbers in all strata are cowrie shells (*Cypraea annulus*), dog-cockles (*Glycymeris*), and giant clam (*Tridacna*), with other bivalve (*Pinctada*, *Cerastoderma*, *Chambardia*), and gastropod species (*Lambis*, *Conus*) attested (Bar-Yosef Mayer 2007, 273, 281). These shells appear to have served multiple functional purposes (beads, souvenirs, game pieces, decoration, raw material, currency, etc.) rather than as a food source (Bar-Yosef Mayer 2007, 279–83). Nonetheless, their sources of origin indicate that despite Kadesh Barnea's relative geographical isolation in the Sinai/Negev, it sat on networks extending from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean and Egypt.

most prominent cooking pots of the eighth century BCE include types CP11, CP12, CP14 and CP15, which represent the open and closed form traditions of this region. The distribution of Type CP13 is regionally quite restricted, present only in the assemblage of Tel Beersheba. Also appearing in not insubstantial numbers is the handmade Type CP5, found especially at Tel ‘Aroer, Tel Malhata, and Kadesh Barnea, although also attested in minimal numbers at Tel Beersheba and Tel Arad. The handmade Type CP5 was present only at Kadesh Barnea in the eighth century BCE, although in substantial quantities. Also appearing within eighth century BCE strata is cooking pot Type CP4, found in substantial quantities at Tel Malhata, although also attested at Tel ‘Aroer.

The most prominent cooking pots of the eighth century BCE (CP11, CP12 and CP14) see their seventh and sixth century BCE successors in types CP1 and CP2, representing again both an open and closed form. In the case of cooking pot Type CP2, its antecedents in Type CP14 are clearly visible. Beyond several instances of continued attestations of earlier forms (e.g., CP11, CP12, CP14, CP15) in the seventh and sixth century BCE contexts, the other major forms in this period include types CP3 and CP4. Type CP3, the apparent successor to Type CP13, is found at nearly all sites in the northeastern Negev, although only found in substantial numbers at Kadesh Barnea, Tel Malhata and to a lesser degree Horvat ‘Uza.²¹⁰ Similarly, while Type CP4 is found at every major site in the northeastern Negev with seventh century BCE occupation, it is only present in substantial quantities at Horvat Qitmit, Tel Malhata and Tel ‘Aroer, although it does form a noteworthy percentage of the limited number of vessels from Horvat ‘Uza and Horvat

²¹⁰ See (Singer-Avitz 2016, 608; Gitin 2015c, 390; A. Mazar and Panitz-Cohen 2001, 86–87).

Radum.²¹¹ Cooking Pot Type CP4 does not appear to extend into the northwestern Negev nor the coastal plain.

Busayra Painted Ware appears already in the eighth century BCE, most visible at Tel Malhata and Tel ‘Aroer, but also attested in limited quantities at Tel Beersheba, Kadesh Barnea and in mixed contexts at Tel ‘Ira. In the seventh century BCE, it appears in more substantial numbers and at additional sites, although again is most prominently attested at Tel Malhata and Tel ‘Aroer. As a distinct tableware, it is dwarfed by the “local” forms that feature more prominently in this region (Figure 12). In terms of intra-site clusters of this ware, the most notable contexts derive from Tel Malhata, Tel ‘Aroer, and Horvat Qitmit. BPW does not appear in the areas north of the northeastern Negev, and likewise, beyond several uncertain identifications at Tel Haror and Tel Sera‘, does not appear to extend into the northwestern Negev, much less the coastal plain (see below).²¹²

The faunal and botanical remains from the northeastern Negev present a more robust portrait of the agropastoral subsistence economy intimated by the remains from southern Transjordan. Namely, this economy consisted of the farming of wheat and barley, with a diet supplemented by various legumes, olives, and dates. Infrequent evidence of grape pips in the region may suggest limited viticulture, or more likely imported wine as a component of diet. In essence the botanical remains indicate the centrality of the “Levantine triad” as forming the elemental components of the regional diet, as preserved in ration provisions recorded in the Arad

²¹¹ Of 41 total cooking pots at Horvat ‘Uza, 6 are Type CP4 (15%) whereas in the extremely limited assemblage at Horvat Radum, it accounts for 5 of the 8 total cooking pots (see Appendix B).

²¹² BPW was claimed to be present at Tell Jemmeh (Tebes 2007; 2006b), although the pottery found there is rather APW, which, while bearing similar forms to BPW lacks its distinctive decorative features and is thus erroneously identified. Similarly, the claim of BPW as present at Tel Sera‘ and Tel Haror (Oren 1993a, 584; 1993c, 1333), may similarly be an erroneous identification mistaking APW for BPW. Short of the final publication of these sites, or a visual depiction of these claims, this situation remains unclear.

Ostraca (Pace 2014, 187–89; N. Macdonald 2008). Faunal data indicates that sheep and goat herding was the most significant component of the animal economy with these species kept primarily for their secondary products (wool, dairy), with their use as a meat source of secondary importance. Similarly, the much smaller quantities of cattle were likely reserved for use as draught animals in agriculture, with their meat similarly of secondary importance. The number of cattle within the region was likely also constrained by the amount of water needed to support them (Sade 2015, 715). Limited numbers of chicken, pig, and various wild species, including gazelle, deer, and various birds such as geese and pigeon, indicate varied sources of meat acquisition. The fish remains, undoubtedly underrepresented due to excavation methodology and taphonomic processes, provide evidence of the interconnected nature of the region with consumed species deriving from the Mediterranean, Red Sea, and Nile regions.

3. ADDENDUM: WESTERN ADJACENT SITES AND REGIONAL PATTERNS

Several additional sites from the region to the west of the northeastern Negev—the northwestern Negev and southern coastal plain—are relevant due to their participation within the trade network and for their ceramic datasets that can be compared to southern Transjordan and the northeastern Negev. The sites are discussed again from east to west, following the hypothetical itinerary of trade.

a. Tel Sera‘

Past the Beersheba Valley, the major route heading west along the Nahal Gerar would pass the site of Tel Sera‘.²¹³ Tel Sera‘ remains unpublished beyond brief synopses (Oren 1993c; 1997b), and thus can only contribute preliminarily to the present discussion concerning foodways and interactions in this region. At Tel Sera‘ a large structure dating to the late Iron Age (Stratum V)

²¹³ The presence of trade connections and caravans passing Tel Sera‘ is intimated by the presence of an ostrakon that preserves a list of North Arabian names (Oren 1993c, 1333).

is described as a citadel and is associated with an Assyrian military administrative presence in the region (Oren 1993c, 1333). From the Tel Sera' assemblage in the vicinity of this structure, Oren records the presence of APW, local imitations of APW, imported East Greek pottery, and Edomite sherds (Oren 1993c, 1333). It is unknown what exactly is meant by "Edomite" sherds, although based on comparative data from neighboring sites, it is likely that these are limited examples of BPW. No further data regarding ceramics or foodways are available.

b. Tel Haror

To the west of Tel Sera' along the Nahal Gerar is the site of Tel Haror. Likewise, unpublished beyond preliminary reports (Oren 1993a; 1997a), Tel Haror preserves a similar "citadel" associated with the Assyrian administration (Oren 1993a, 583–84; 1997a, 475–76). In addition to the robust local assemblage, Oren notes the presence of Phoenician-type transport amphora and "diagnostic Edomite sherds" (Oren 1993a, 584). Exactly what forms these Edomite sherds consist of remains unclear, although examples of BPW are most likely. It is also possible, particularly owing to the limited understanding of Edomite pottery at the time of excavation, that the "Edomite" label is a misnomer and that APW was mistakenly identified as BPW. No further data regarding ceramics or foodways are available.

c. Tell Jemmeh

Tel Jemmeh is located at the western end of the Nahal Gerar and the nexus point between the northwestern Negev and the coastal plain. The ceramic assemblage at Tell Jemmeh does not easily integrate itself to the typology created for the northeastern Negev, likely due in large part to its geographic distance and integration within different spheres of ceramic production and tradition. Similarly, the nature of excavation and publication does not easily lend itself to quantifiable data, nor an efficient visualization of cooking pot types within their appropriate

contexts. Nonetheless, from the available data, several observations may be made. First, from eighth century BCE contexts (Field IV, strata 8–6), among other variant forms, cooking pot types CP11 and CP12 are common (Ben-Shlomo 2014b, figs. 8.42:c; 8.61:d; 8.84:k).²¹⁴ From seventh century BCE contexts, cooking pot Type CP3 is prevalent (Ben-Shlomo 2014b, figs. 8.174:m–o; 8.150;s–z). Additional forms common to Tel Jemmeh during the seventh century BCE are not common in the northeastern Negev and rather appear to herald forms better known from the Persian Period (Ben-Shlomo 2014b, figs. 8.176:CP3; Fig. 8.255).

Assyrian Palace Ware and its imitations are well attested at Tell Jemmeh (Ben-Shlomo 2014a; 2014d, 74–79), however, BPW does not appear to be present. While previous studies have referenced “Edomite pottery” at Tell Jemmeh (Tebes 2007, 625), it is unclear which ceramics this implies. It is possible that several of the APW forms may be BPW (Ben-Shlomo 2014b, figs. 8.94:j, n), though on the basis of the surrounding predominance of APW, their published identifications as APW should be maintained. At Tell Jemmeh, a number of East Greek vessels were also excavated, indicating trade connections with the Greek world (R. Martin 2014; Waldbaum 1994; Waldbaum and Magness 1997). The quantity of these vessels, however, which consists of a “handful” of oinochoai and approximately forty Ionian cups, pales in comparison to other coastal sites such as Ashkelon (see below; R. Martin 2014, 749–54).

The analysis of selected components of the zooarchaeological remains from Tell Jemmeh indicates that during the late Iron Age sheep (*Ovis aries*), and goat (*Capra hircus*), comprise 84% (n=84) of the minimum number of individuals of the assemblage. Cattle (*Bos taurus*) accounted for 6% (n=6) and fish, cat (*Felis* sp.), and hare (*Lepus* sp.) completed the late Iron Age assemblage (Maher 2014, 1040–41, 1046–49). Additional studies have demonstrated the

²¹⁴ It is possible that an example of CP15 is attested in Fig. 8.115:t (Ben-Shlomo 2014b, 490).

presence of camels (*Camelus dromedaries*) at Tel Jemmeh and their role with caravan transport (Wapnish 1981).

d. Ruqeish

On the Mediterranean coast, the site of Ruqeish marked at least one Levantine terminus for the Arabian trade network. Constructed during the eighth century BCE, the massive (8–10 ha) fortified site remains unpublished beyond brief summaries and preliminary reports but appears to have served as a center for the intersection of overland and maritime trade networks (Oren 1993b; Culican 1973). The site is likely to be identified with Sargon II's "sealed *karum* of Egypt" (Oren 1993b, 1294). The limited available ceramic data from the cemeteries at the site evidence a strong Phoenician presence and connections with the Egyptian, Cypriot, and East Greek worlds (Culican 1973; Oren 1993b, 1294; Waldbaum and Magness 1997, 30). No Edomite pottery is known from the site, indicating that similar to Tell Jemmeh, Edomite influence and interaction did not extend to the Mediterranean coastal plain, but was restricted primarily to the Beersheba Valley. No further data regarding ceramics or foodways are available.

e. Ashkelon

In the absence of substantial data from the sites of Ruqeish and Gaza, which would have formed the closest logical output for this trade network at the Mediterranean, the data-rich ceramic assemblage from Ashkelon permits a view into a context that also served as a coastal terminus for this trade system. At Ashkelon, of the cooking pots that were produced locally within the southern Levant, cooking pot Type CP3 accounts for more than 90% of the cooking pot assemblage. Cooking pot Type CP1 was the second most-attested type, though accounting for a substantially smaller percentage (Stager, Master, and Schloen 2008, 86–87). An additional form of cooking pot was excavated at Ashkelon in rare numbers and is not attested in the northeastern

Negev. Of cooking pot forms that were not petrographically local to the southern coastal plain, a Phoenician type cooking pot was identified in infrequent numbers, though it is paralleled in the shipwrecks off the coast of Ashkelon (Stager, Master, and Schloen 2008, 99; Ballard et al. 2002, figs. 7:1-2; 9.7-8). Several additional infrequently attested cooking pot forms are paralleled in Cypriot/North Syrian assemblages and again in the Phoenician shipwrecks off the coast of Ashkelon (Stager, Master, and Schloen 2008, 113–14; Ballard et al. 2002, Fig. 9.10).

Significant within the Ashkelon assemblage are the remains of imported Greek cooking pots, 185 fragments of which were found within the 604 BCE destruction phase or the contexts immediately preceding it (Waldbaum 2011, 292–306). These cooking pots, corresponding to Type CP10, are paralleled in a single example from Tel Malhata in the northeastern Negev, and together with the expansive remains of Greek pottery at Ashkelon are indicative of the extensive nature of maritime contact between Ashkelon and the Greek world (Waldbaum 2011; Waldbaum and Magness 1997). It is likely that many of the cooking pots represent the physical presence of Greek persons bearing those culinary traditions, many of whom may have served as mercenaries in the region (Fantalkin 2011; 2001, 84; Waldbaum and Magness 1997, 31–32; Na’aman 1991). However, as noted by the excavators of Ashkelon, the diversity and functional variety of Greek forms, many of which were associated with the seventh century BCE marketplace, indicate trade to have been a significant factor in its appearance (Master and Stager 2011, 737–40; Waldbaum 2011, 133–39).²¹⁵ In all, the magnitude and range of non-local, imported ceramics at Ashkelon demonstrates its integration within Mediterranean systems of exchange and interaction.

²¹⁵ Master and Stager’s preference to interpret the Greek ceramics as solely the result of trade likely overstates the case and glosses over many of the functional aspects of forms such as cooking pots, which together with historical data indicate the presence of Greek mercenaries (see Chapter 6.C.2).

The ceramic assemblage at Ashkelon also indicates trade connections to the southeast. While small in overall number, these vessels include bowls, jugs, and bottles (including APW), whose forms and petrography indicate they were imported from sites in the northwestern Negev (e.g., Tell Jemmeh, Tel Sera', and Tel Haror) and from the northeastern Negev and the Arabah or even southern Transjordan (Stager, Master, and Schloen 2008, 117–21). While none of these forms include any of the iconic Type CP4 cooking pots or BPW, they nonetheless demonstrate contact between these regions along this trade route and likely that Ashkelon was a secondary port destination after Gaza and Ruqeish within this network (Stager, Master, and Schloen 2008, 121).

The cereal remains from the seventh century BCE at Ashkelon were dominated by wheat species (*Triticum dicoccum*; *Triticum parvicoccum*), with a significant amount of barley (*Hordeum vulgare s.l.*) also identified. Of the pulses, grass pea (*Lathyrus sativus*) was most prevalent, but bitter vetch (*Vicia ervilia*), chickpea (*Cicer arietinum*), and lentil (*Lens culinaris*) were also attested. Fruit species were dominated by fig (*Ficus carica*), and grape (*Vitis vinifera*), which may both be over-represented due to the abundance of seeds for the former, and their inclusion in wine for the latter. Almonds (*Amygdalus communis*), carob (*Ceratonia siliqua*), olives (*Olea europaea*), and pomegranates (*Punica granatum*) were also identified (Weiss, Kislev, and Mahler-Slasky 2011).

Of the faunal remains, sheep (*Ovis aries*) and goat (*Capra hircus*) were the most common, with sheep represented in a greater proportion to goat (ratio of 12 to 1). The sheep and goat were also nearly sixteen times more common than cattle (*Bos taurus*), the next best represented species. Pigs (*Sus scrofa*), equids (likely *Equus asinus*), camels (*Camelus dromedarius*), gazelles (*Gazella* sp.), dogs (*Canis familiaris*), deer (*Dama* or *Cervus*), small

carnivores (weasels and cats), and sea turtles were also attested but each accounted for less than one percent of the faunal assemblage. Various bird species accounted for approximately two percent of the faunal remains (Hesse, Fulton, and Wapnish 2011). The diet at Ashkelon was supplemented by a vast variety of fish species. Among the most prevalent marine species were sea breams (Sparidae), sea basses (Serranidae), sharks (*Selachii*), mullets (Mugilidae), croakers (Sciaenidae), and triggerfish (Balistidae). Freshwater species were dominated by Nile catfish (*Clarias gariepinus*), Nile Perch (*Lates niloticus*), cichlids (Cichlidae), and attest to Ashkelon's maritime connections with Egypt (Lernau 2011).

f. Regional Patterns

The most substantive data from the northwestern Negev and coastal plain come from Tel Jemmeh and Ashkelon. This region serves as the western output zone from the east-west trade route that ran from Edom through the northeastern Negev and thus presents a dataset that can be compared to the regions to the east. Most significant from this dataset is the prominence of the Type CP3 cooking pots at Tell Jemmeh and Ashkelon. Noticeably absent from these datasets are Type CP4 cooking pots and BPW. While limited exemplars of BPW *may* be present at Tel Sera' and Tel Haror, they would only further indicate that the distributional range of these wares was predominantly restricted to the northeastern Negev and did not extend further west. The lack of western spread of BPW was likely the result of a combination of ecological variance, distance from southern Transjordan, and sociopolitical differences—especially the Assyrian presence at Tell Jemmeh.

D. DISCUSSION: COOKING AND FEASTING IN THE NORTHEASTERN NEGEV AND EDM

The above analysis presents a substantial dataset from which to draw broader conclusions regarding the nature of different foodways throughout the region. Further, these datasets allow for more nuanced descriptions of the varieties of interregional and cross-cultural interactions and the means by which the above material culture footprint came to exist. The subsequent discussion follows the two major datasets examined here, first the cooking pots, then the Busayra Painted Wares.

1. COOKING POT DISTRIBUTIONS

The cooking pots examined within this study present intriguing patterns when visualized spatially across the region. While the quantities presented are constrained by available and published data, the pattern of regional clusters of attestation indicate regions where particular traditions of potting and their associated foodways were and were not practiced. For example, cooking pot types CP1 and CP2 are attested at approximately the same sites, in very similar quantities (Plates 53–54). Comprising both an open and closed form of cooking pot, beyond a single attestation of Type CP1 at Tell el-Kheleifeh, the tradition of these two vessels is restricted to the northeastern Negev and does not extend to the east. Due to their prevalence within the region of Judah in the seventh and sixth centuries BCE, these vessels are often referred to as “Judahite” cooking pots (Gitin 2015b, 347–48; Beit-Arieh and Freud 2015a, 367). Cooking pot Type CP3 is likewise found at the majority of sites in the northeastern Negev but does not extend to the east. These are most conspicuously attested at Tel Malhata and Kadesh Barnea (Plate 55). This form is oft-referred to as the “coastal” cooking pot due to its prominence in the coastal plain as seen at Tell Jemmeh and especially Ashkelon (Gitin 2015a, 263), although it is also common

in Judah and the northeastern Negev and likely sees its formal antecedent in Type CP13 (Singer-Avitz 2016, 608; Gitin 2015c, 390; A. Mazar and Panitz-Cohen 2001, 86–87).

In contrast to the aforementioned types, which do not extend to the east, Type CP4 is found overwhelmingly at sites in southern Transjordan and is likewise found in substantial quantities in the northeastern Negev—notably at Horvat Qitmit, Tel Malhata and Tel ‘Aroer—exhibiting trans-regional prominence (Plate 56). Due to its dominance in the ceramic assemblages of southern Transjordan, this type is often called the “Edomite” cooking pot (Beit-Arieh and Freud 2015a, 367; Bienkowski 2015, 423). When the data regarding quantities of Type CP4 are presented as a percentage of the overall cooking pot assemblage at each site (Plate 57), rather than the individual exemplars excavated (Plate 56), its prominence within southern Transjordan is overwhelming. As many of the sites from southern Transjordan were not extensively excavated, if at all, the number of individual attestations from these sites presents only a fraction of what likely remains to be excavated. In this way, while the (often) handmade cooking pot Type CP5 is found distributed across both the northeastern Negev and southern Transjordan, for the above reasons, its association with southern Transjordan is likely underrepresented in its visual presentation (Plate 58). In the northeastern Negev it is found primarily in eighth century BCE contexts, and is described by Liora Freud in her encounters with it at Tel Malhata as an “Early Edomite” cooking pot (Freud 2015, 196). She describes it as such due to its association with southern Transjordan as well as the apparent association between its decline in the seventh century BCE and the concurrent rise of Type CP4 (Freud 2015, 196). While it is challenging to definitively establish a direct association between types CP4 and CP5, the relative size and shape of typical examples of these forms (see Figure 10), indicate that they may both follow a similar tradition of food preparation.

The handmade form of Type CP6 is associated with the more marginal environs of the Negev at Kadesh Barnea, in the Arabah at Tell el-Kheleifeh, and at a number of sites in southern Transjordan. While these vessels have often been associated with mobile communities operating in arid regions (e.g., Haiman and Goren 1992, 145; Bernick-Greenberg 2007b, 187–210), their form and style suggest that they were a feature of household production and likely a product of rural life (Bernick-Greenberg 2007b, 210; Dagan 2013). Similarly, due to their style of production, it is likely that these vessels were used for different types of foods than their wheel-made counterparts, namely a more slow-cooking dish that required less heat (Thareani 2010, 37). These vessels span a significant period of the Iron Age as has been demonstrated from the assemblage at Kadesh Barnea (Bernick-Greenberg 2007b, 187–210). Cooking pot types CP7 and CP8 are found in low quantities in southern Transjordan with extremely limited attestation in the northeastern Negev (Plates 60 and 61). Overall, spatially, these types appear to represent a mode of cooking that is secondary to Type CP4 in southern Transjordan, and primarily restricted to that region.

Some forms, such as cooking pot Type CP9, allows for the positing of site-based potting production, demonstrated in the popularity of this type at Tel Malhata, with several examples attested at neighboring sites (Tel 'Ira and Horvat Qitmit), but not beyond (Plate 62). Moreover, as this form represents a variant mode of technological production rather than solely differences in form, it provides evidence of a specific local source of raw material (Freud 2014, 292–95), together with a specific mode of production (Freud 2015, 198; Freud and Goren 2015). Cooking pot Type CP10 is not at all a significant feature of the northeastern Negev, with only a sole attestation at Tel Malhata (Plate 63). What is remarkable about this form, however, is that it derives from the Aegean, based both on its form and petrography (Freud 2015, 201; Freud and

Goren 2015, 238). In the southern Levant, this type of vessel is well attested at coastal sites such as Ashkelon and Me'zad Hashavyahu and is likely an indicator of the presence of Aegean mercenaries (Fantalkin 2001, 84; 2011, 95; Waldbaum and Magness 1997, 31–32).

Cooking pots CP11 and CP12 represent two open forms of cooking pots that were prominent in strata of the eighth century BCE within the northeastern Negev, and do not extend eastward into southern Transjordan (Plates 64 and 65). An exception to this pattern is seen at Tell el-Kheleifeh where a number of Type CP11 vessels were excavated. A variant open cooking pot form—Type CP13—is restricted to the assemblage of eighth century BCE strata at Tel Beersheba (Plate 66; Singer-Avitz 2016, 608). Cooking pot types CP14 and CP15 represent closed forms that in the case of CP14 are well-attested in eighth century BCE strata in the northeastern Negev, whereas CP15 is best attested at Tel Beersheba and to a lesser degree at neighboring sites within the same period. These types are not found east of the Arabah Valley.

2. COOKING POT PRODUCTION, USE, AND INTEGRATION

Of particular interest for this work are the relations between the most prevalent cooking pot forms of the seventh and sixth century BCE (CP1, CP2, CP3 and CP4), and their relations to one another. First, as has been previously discussed, there is a difficulty in identifying each of these vessels as a distinct marker of one's "ethnic" or "national" identity. Fundamentally, these cooking pots represent certain traditions of cooking, traditions that they may hold in common with a large number of people sharing the same landscape, food source, food production tradition, social status, etc. As was demonstrated in the distributional maps, these vessels have regional ranges in which they are used but ranges that overlap with other traditions. There are no strict delineated boundaries by which these can be conclusively demonstrated to relate directly to one political entity. If CP4 for example is to be called Edomite, then this term would be best served in its

geographic sense, as reflecting the dominant tradition of southern Transjordan. In this chapter I have tried to reflect these regionalities through the use of regional terminology in order to avoid implicitly associating particular social practices with political institutions.

Further, related to these perspectives are the locales in which these vessels were produced, which most often correlates to their context of use. Of the limited data deriving from petrographic studies on cooking pots, several determinations can be made. With regard to cooking pot types CP1 and CP2, unsurprisingly, these appear to derive from local or adjacent environs, with some petrographic data indicating they were produced from *Terra Rosa*, likely originating in the Shephelah or central hills of Judah (Freud 2014, 302; Iserlis and Thareani 2011, 181). Of the Type CP3 cooking pots, petrographically, some have been determined to belong to the *Coastal Hamra* group, originating in the coastal plain, while others belong to the *Sandstone* group of the Hazeva formation have an apparent origin in the environs of the northeastern Negev or northern Arabah (Freud 2014, 286–87, 292).

Cooking pots of Type CP4 (exemplars from Tel Malhata, Horvat ‘Uza and Horvat Qitmit) belong predominantly to the *Sandstone* group of the Hazeva formation, likely originating in the environs of the northeastern Negev or northern Arabah (Freud 2014, 285–86, 289–91). Other petrographic studies on Type CP4 cooking pots from Tel ‘Aroer associated them with the Hazeva group as well as Lower Cretaceous shales with a suggested origin on the southern Transjordanian plateau (Iserlis and Thareani 2011, 180–82).²¹⁶ Of Type CP4 cooking pots from Edom, only Instrumental Neutron Activation Analysis (INAA) studies are available. These studies have demonstrated a dissimilarity between exemplars from the northeastern Negev and

²¹⁶ Freud suggests that the association with southern Transjordan is not necessary as Lower Cretaceous shales are found in the Negev (Freud 2014, 297–300), however, these locales appear to be restricted to the regions of Makhtesh Gadol, Makhtesh Qatan, and Makhtesh Ramon (see Sneh et al. 1998). The distance of these locales from the northeastern Negev suggests that an origin in southern Transjordan is more likely.

those from southern Transjordan (Ghrareh, Busayra, Tawilan, Umm al-Biyara), suggesting that the vessels found in the northeastern Negev were produced there, while the vessels found in southern Transjordan were similarly locally produced (Gunneweg and Mommsen 1995, 281, 285–86; Gunneweg and Balla 2002; Gunneweg and Mommsen 1990; Gunneweg et al. 1991). Thus, it appears that Type CP4 cooking pots were being “locally” made both in the northeastern Negev and southern Transjordan, and indicating little need for, and little evidence of the importation of these vessels.

What then are the implications of these locales of production, especially in relation to Type CP4 when it appears in the northeastern Negev? As previously articulated, cooking pots have been demonstrated to be socially sensitive and culturally conservative, and due to their relatively drab appearance and socially inconspicuous nature, they may serve as markers of the actual presence of persons bearing these traditions. In short then, these Type CP4 vessels that appear in the northeastern Negev may be confidently associated with persons who hold these culinary traditions, traditions that predominate in southern Transjordan. Furthermore, as many of these vessels are being “locally” produced in the northeastern Negev, we can posit both the established presence of not only their users, but also of their producers—potters trained in the modes of production of these vessels. In light of earlier discussion relating to the muscle memory and specialist apprentice knowledge necessary to reproduce particular ceramic forms, the potters in the northeastern Negev making Type CP4 cooking pots would have had to either possess these skills or have been trained directly by those familiar with them, in some way demonstrating a link to this tradition that dominated southern Transjordan.

However, this does not necessarily immediately indicate that this tradition migrated westward from southern Transjordan, despite the perceived likelihood of this pattern. As many

examples of this type of cooking pot appear already within eighth century BCE contexts in the northeastern Negev, they are present in some of the earliest strata at these sites, and in effect pre-date many of the classic seventh century BCE forms (CP1 and CP2) with which they are often contrasted. Further, such a hypothesis of movement westwards for Type CP4 must be demonstrated, most easily through petrographic data, for which there is tentative support. Only one Type CP4 vessel of the eighth century BCE has been petrographically studied, deriving from Stratum IV at Tel ‘Aroer.²¹⁷ This vessel appears to be made of Lower Cretaceous shales, for which the most convincing origin would be southern Transjordan (see above discussion). From seventh and sixth century BCE contexts, an additional exemplar identified with the Lower Cretaceous shales may derive from southern Transjordan (Iserlis and Thareani 2011, 181, no. 31). All other petrographically studied cooking pots of this type from the northeastern Negev appear to be locally produced there (Iserlis and Thareani 2011, 180–82; Freud 2014, 302; Freud and Goren 2015, 237–38). What this petrographic data then indicates, is that there is tentative support for the hypothesis of a westward movement of persons (and potters) using and producing these cooking pots, followed by settlement and then local production of these vessels.²¹⁸ The data for this hypothesis, however, would place the origins of movement within the late eighth century BCE.

²¹⁷ Within Area A, this vessel and its context belong to substratum A3, which dates to the end of Stratum IV. Thus, this evidence is for the final phase of Stratum IV rather than the earliest attested activity in this area (Thareani 2011b, 2, 423; Iserlis and Thareani 2011, 181, No. 25). This vessel does not visually appear in the above plate for Tel ‘Aroer (Plate 16) as the ceramics from this locus (L.423) are not presented in the publication report’s plates, and beyond this petrographic reference, it is unknown.

²¹⁸ In following a methodological approach to evidence for migration (e.g., Stager 1995, 332), it is worth emphasizing that: (1) an “intrusive” material culture can be identified that can be distinguished from “local” material culture, (2) a “homeland” for this new material culture can be identified, and (3) a plausible and viable route of movement can be demonstrated.

Rather than being seen as the result of a massive influx of persons associated with a late seventh or early sixth century BCE invasion as has been posited in interpretations of this region (Beit-Arieh 1995c; 1995a, 311–16; 2007c, 333–34), these data indicate that these vessels were introduced very early on in the major settlement phase of the northeastern Negev in the eighth century BCE.²¹⁹ This is not to argue that there was no Edomite involvement in the destruction of this region and in Jerusalem in the early sixth century BCE as is intimated in the biblical text (Psalm 137), but rather that this dataset cannot be used as evidence of such. These vessels, while yet representing variant culinary practices and variant associated identities, were in fact a “local” feature of this region for at least 150 years before the end of the settlement activities in the early sixth century BCE. Whether these persons and their descendants, attested from the eighth through sixth centuries BCE, can be considered as still related to the “polity” of Edom (if ever they even were), or rather if their affiliation ought to be more in relation to the “region” of Edom and social practices found therein remains unknown. It is also difficult to determine whether the continued use of the Type CP4 cooking pot is related to these families and their offspring perpetuating these practices, or if the continued use of these vessels relates to additional persons moving westward into this region. It was likely a combination of the two scenarios with some migrants perpetuating these traditions, and other longer established persons at times adopting other practices prominent within the region. Causes of westward migration and movement can most easily be found in activity associated with the trade networks of the period and also in regular patterns of seasonal transhumance for pastoral grazing purposes.

²¹⁹ In a similar fashion, the site of Horvat Qitmit, originally dated to late seventh century BCE based on the perceived relation to an Edomite “invasion” at the time of the Babylonian invasions (Beit-Arieh 1995a, 303), actually appears to present sufficient ceramic parallels to nearby Tel Malhata Stratum IIIB to indicate that it was likely in use already in the *early* seventh century BCE (Beit-Arieh, Freud, and Tal 2015, 742). Independent analysis on several of the inscriptions from Horvat Qitmit has likewise suggested activity as early as the eighth century BCE on the basis of the paleographic data (Rollston 2014b, 966).

Moreover, due to the nature of cooking pots as relating to food production, yet further interpretations regarding the persons using them may be posited. For example, food preparation and production has been demonstrated to have been a highly gender segregated activity, most often performed by women, indicating that it is appropriate to view these vessels with considerations of gender (S. Nelson 1997, 104–6; King and Stager 2001, 50–51; Brumfiel 1991; Gero and Conkey 1991; Wright 1996). Evidence for this gender segregation is attested in numerous avenues of data including the bone pathologies of women that suggests a substantial amount of time spent kneeling for grinding cereal grains (Eshed, Wish-Baratz, and Hershkovitz 1999, 507).²²⁰ In neighboring Egypt, texts and figural depictions place women in close association with grinding grain and baking (E. Lang 2016; Robins 1999, 177–82; Sweeney 2004, 70–71). Similarly, in the narratives of the Hebrew Bible, the grinding of grain, cooking, and baking are tasks most often associated with women, especially when conducted in domestic contexts (Job 31:10; 1 Samuel 8:13, 28:24; 2 Samuel 11:21, 13:8; Leviticus 26:26; Exodus 11:5; Judges 9:53; Lamentations 4:10).²²¹

In bringing these perspectives to bear on various sites within the northeastern Negev, it is remarkable how in many of the contexts where cooking pot Type CP4 is found, they are integrated with other cooking pots of “local” tradition (types CP1 and CP2). For example, at

²²⁰ One of the most engaging studies of this phenomenon derives from analysis of the Neolithic graves at Abu Hureyra that demonstrated bone pathologies of women to be consistent with extensive time kneeling in positions most likely associated with the grinding of grain (Molleson 2007, 189–96; 2000).

²²¹ The grinding of grain and food preparation is often also associated with those of lesser status, whether servants or prisoners of war (e.g., Judges 16:21; 2 Kings 4:38). An apparent exception to this pattern can be seen in the Jacob and Esau narrative (see Chapter 6.A), where Jacob prepares a meal (Genesis 25:27–34). Such segregated gender roles in food production ought not be viewed as a universal constant, however, as within this narrative the centrality of food in the interactions between Jacob and Esau negates any apparent oddity in Jacob’s association with it. Moreover, in the same narrative sequence, the individual most associated with food preparation is in fact Rebecca, Jacob’s mother (Genesis 27:5–17).

Horvat ‘Uza this portrait is made particularly clear in that when Type CP4 appears, it is present in the same activity areas as other cooking pots (Plate 13). In this fashion, foods of variant traditions were being produced in identical and contemporaneous activity areas, perhaps in some instances by the same person, but based on the frequency and diversity of forms, most likely by the multiple persons bearing these distinct traditions. Thus, exposure to a diversity of traditions was, at some sites such as Horvat ‘Uza, commonplace. The function of these sites, however, is also noteworthy, in that in the case of Horvat ‘Uza, we are discussing a fort garrisoned by soldiers. As the soldiers at Horvat ‘Uza on the basis of their names indicate a strong affiliation with the cultic ideals of Jerusalem, it is very unlikely that these individuals were affiliated with southern Transjordan or the Edomite elite (see Chapter 6.C).²²² The most likely explanation for the diversity of cooking pot forms is that the soldiers at this fort were marrying (or taking) persons who bore different types of culinary traditions, whether they originally came from southern Transjordan, or were a part of the already established Type CP4 tradition in the northeastern Negev, attesting to the region’s culinary diversity. The integration—rather than segregation—of variant forms into the same activity areas implies a relative degree of normality between these diverse traditions. Other sites such as fortified city-settlements like Tel Malhata reveal a heterogenous pattern of culinary traditions, suggesting a complex and varied context of culinary traditions.

The exposure to culinary diversity, however, is not ubiquitous across the region. In looking at two other military forts to the north of Horvat ‘Uza, namely Tel Arad and Horvat Tov, we see a much more restricted pattern of food preparation (Plates 20, 21 and 22). Here the apparent “local” forms of type CP1 and CP2 dominate the assemblage, and evidence for

²²² Data for mercenary activity in the region centers upon Greeks (Kittim) serving this role (see Chapter 6.C.2).

diversity is practically non-existent. It is perhaps notable in that beyond the militaristic nature of these forts and their close association with Jerusalem, these forts do not sit along the main east-west route through the region, and rather sit along the subsidiary road heading north (Figure 8). Consequently, the apparent lack of types CP3 and CP4, which are associated with the coastal plain to the west and southern Transjordan to the east, is in part a reflection of the location of these forts.

Further, the presence and role of prisoners of war and slaves within this region ought not to be excluded as a factor involved in the movement of people. While often overlooked, or disregarded, slavery was a common feature of nearly every ancient society (Culbertson 2011; Magdalene and Wunsch 2011; Scott 2017, 150–82). Likewise, direct textual evidence for slaves in this region is described in the biblical text of Amos 1:6, where Gaza is reported as capturing and selling communities of people to Edom. This transaction and movement of peoples between Gaza and Edom would travel directly through the Arad-Beersheba Valley of the northeastern Negev (Figure 6).²²³ Other texts further indicate the normalcy of the sale of persons in this region (Exodus 21:1–11; Deuteronomy 15:12). Thus, any of the persons engaged in food preparation and production at these sites in the northeastern Negev could also be subjugated persons, not originally local to the region but maintaining the culinary traditions with which they were familiar.

Finally, with regard to the foods prepared in, and consumed from these vessels, a few comments are warranted. On the basis of references from the Hebrew Bible, the elemental Levantine triad of grains/bread, oil and wine (N. Macdonald 2008), was supplemented by stews

²²³ Additional mention of person sold in slavery who would have travelled along the incense route can be found in Joel 3:8, where there are descriptions of people being sold to the Sabeans (present-day Yemen). See also Genesis 37 for a similar narrative of person being sold into slavery taking place in this region.

of vegetables, often with a base of lentils and at times containing meat (King and Stager 2001, 67). Meat would have been restricted to more festive occasions, feasting, elite contexts, and ritual activity (Magness 2014, 35; King and Stager 2001, 68). For an average family, three meals a day were eaten with the main meal in the evening, usually a type of vegetable (and meat?) stew, flavored with herbs and sopped up with bread (Genesis 25:29–34; Ruth 2:14; King and Stager 2001, 67–68). The foods consumed would also be constrained by geography, social status, and even gender, with those at lower social level lacking access to greater nutritional diversity, and likely women consuming less prestige foods such as meat than their husbands and sons (N. Macdonald 2008, 91–93). Supplements to this diet would be achieved by hunting game, but again restricted to those possessing the skills or access to someone with the skills to acquire it (e.g., Genesis 25 and 27; Pace 2014, 193–94). Similarly, the ability to trade for food was an additional opportunity for those who could afford to, with imported foods including fish and dates.²²⁴

The shape of the cooking pots themselves would also be a factor in determining both diet and the manner in which food was consumed, both of which would be associated with a certain identity corresponding to that cuisine. In studying the cooking pots common in Judah in the seventh century BCE (types CP1 and CP2), Magness has noted that the restricted rim diameter, especially of the closed forms (ca. 15–20 cm for CP1 and 7.5–13 cm for CP2), were not particularly suited to include large chunks of meat that would have been boiled as a part of the meal (Magness 2014, 50–51; Shafer-Elliott 2013, 107).²²⁵ In contrast, cooking pot Type CP4,

²²⁴ Fish were brought from the Mediterranean, Red Sea, and even Nile into the northeastern Negev. Dates were likely grown in the warmer Sudano-Decanian zone present in the Arabah and environs of 'En Hazeva, as well as the oases of North Arabia (see Chapter 3).

²²⁵ The ubiquity of these two types of cooking pots (types CP1 and CP2) within Judahite assemblages, their size and restricted openings, together with the lack of other known methods of meat preparation in late Iron Age Judah

much larger in size on average, presents a substantially larger rim diameter (ca. 20+ cm; see (Bienkowski 2002c, 308) that would have more easily allowed for larger portions of meat to be added to the stew. The restricted necks vs. larger holemouth openings can then indicate variances in the foods that would have cooked within them, reflecting the recipes of their users. Similarly, the relative sizes of these forms, with Type CP4 on average much larger than types CP1 and CP2, would indicate that larger groups of persons could be fed from Type CP4, suggesting slightly larger social groups present for meals. The social groups present for meals could also reflect cultural differences in the structuring of daily life and mealtimes, wherein certain customs would dictate smaller more intimate meals, and others, the frequent presence of larger, or multi-household gatherings.

Similarly, the shape of these vessels affected bodily movements and actions relating to the consumption activities. For example, both cooking pot types CP1 and CP2 present everted rims on a relatively small to moderate sized cooking pot, a vessel that could then fairly easily be lifted and due to its everted rim, poured out into bowls or other vessels for consumption (Magness 2014, 47–58). Type CP4 on the other hand, was much larger and when full would have been more difficult to move. Its holemouth shape and lack of everted rim would similarly make it difficult to pour food from it. Rather, this cooking pot was more suited to have other vessels dipped into it in order to draw food out.²²⁶ In this way, we can see that the form of the vessels would influence and reflect not only foods consumed and difference in the recipes used, but also

beyond boiling, has led Magness to suggest that meat was seldom consumed, especially within these vessels (2014, 49–51).

²²⁶ Cooking pot Type CP5, most prominent in the northeastern Negev in the eighth century BCE and also in southern Transjordan, would have functioned very similarly to cooking pot Type CP4. Its relatively large size and lack of handles would have made it challenging to move once it was full. It is probable that food eaten from it would have been drawn out with other vessels. Thus, an identification as the precursor to Type CP4, at least in terms of behaviors associated with it, is quite likely.

in the bodily practices and the corresponding physical daily rituals associated with eating these types of food. In cases where these practices were quite different (i.e., between CP1, CP2 and CP4), we can better identify the ways that people in antiquity would be able to visually identify, distinguish, and associate certain behavioral and culinary practices with particular groups of people.

3. BUSAYRA PAINTED WARE: DISTRIBUTION AND SIGNIFICANCE

The analysis of Busayra Painted Ware engages with the conspicuous visibility of a distinctive type of tableware, not as a part of the standard repertoire of tablewares in the northeastern Negev, but rather in relation to its high degree of iconicity and close association with elite ideals in southern Transjordan as demonstrated at Busayra. Thus, whether these vessels can definitively be associated with a specific “feast” event or rather with an everyday meal context is in part arbitrary, as this work focuses on the semiotic significance of the tableware.²²⁷ The iconic significance of BPW, however, could be amplified by the size and nature of the gathering, its context, and foods consumed. In short, this perspective into ancient culinary practices differs from the previous analysis of cooking pots in that (1) it reflects a much more conspicuous mode of social expression centered on consumption, rather than the more visibly restricted actions surrounding food preparation, and (2) it is strongly associated with elite contexts, and thus evokes elite ideals emanating from the acropolis area of Busayra. Consequently, BPW fundamentally reflects a different perspective of identity than the cooking pots, as on the basis of visibility alone it serves more to *promote* a certain identity as opposed to the less conspicuous *maintenance* of identity as reflected by the less socially visible cooking pots.

²²⁷ Although, there is in fact a close association between everyday meals and feasts, as the everyday, ordinary meals provide the foundation upon which larger feasts and commensal practices are built (Pace 2014, 179–81; Pollock 2012b).

In engaging with the distribution of BPW, its association with Busayra is both remarkable and undeniable (Plate 69). This association is further supported by Busayra's presentation of the most varied and highly decorative forms of this tradition (Bienkowski 2002c, 236–306). Substantial clusters of this ware are found across southern Transjordan, namely at Tawilan and Ghrareh, and to a lesser degree at Tell el-Kheleifeh, and future excavations will undoubtedly accentuate the association of this ware to the region. At Busayra, and identifiable also at Ghrareh, these wares are clustered in elite quarters or structures in the city, appearing to provide evidence of elite feasting (Plate 2 and Plate 7). In these feasts that use a highly identifiable tableware, not only would social relations be fostered and obligations created (e.g., Meyers 2012; Fox and Harrell 2008; Janowski 2007), but the prestige of the elites hosting the feasts featuring these vessels would be emphasized. Similarly, in the context of Assyrian imperial control and the similarities of form between Assyrian Palace Ware and particular forms of the BPW corpus, Assyrian prestige may have been evoked, and to a select few it may even have been reminiscent of a royal Assyrian feast (Hunt 2015, 182–204; Ermidoro 2015, 237–45; Groß 2015; Ben-Shlomo 2014d, 79).

In the northeastern Negev, this ware is best attested at Tel Malhata, Tel 'Aroer and Horvat Qitmit, and in not insignificant numbers as far away as Kadesh Barnea. In fact, if one is to draw a line connecting each center in which BPW is strongly attested, these lines would almost directly overlay the major trade routes traversing this region (Figure 6), with each cluster of BPW representing one of the important trade nodes in this network (Plate 69). These clusters at various sites then appear to have a degree of significance, where, through conspicuous feasting, social and economic alliances could be fostered. This is acutely visible at the site of Tel 'Aroer where the vast majority of BPW is found in Areas A and D external to the site in what has

been interpreted as a caravanserai (Plate 18; Thareani-Sussely 2007a; Thareani 2010; 2011a). At Tel 'Aroer then, evidence of feasting with BPW is evidenced in a context that directly relates to the South Arabian trade traversing the region, appearing to play a visible role of identity promotion and alliance forming within this context. In this fashion, the distribution of BPW, rather than indicating an "invasion" or even solely a migration of persons into the region, can be seen as an active strategy of the elites from Edom toward fostering relationships and alliances for the purpose of economic trade. These vessels appearing at additional sites along these routes and in adjacent areas, if not a result of these feasting activities, could be understood as traded prestige items by which the image and status of elites and elite actions (associated with Busayra), could be emulated. Indeed, whether contexts of BPW indicated direct activity by elites of Busayra, individuals acting on their behalf, or of the use of BPW by other individuals wishing to distinguish themselves, the visual significance and associative connotations of the ware remain.

The limited studies that relate to the origins of BPW appear to demonstrate that the vessels excavated in southern Transjordan originated there (Gunneweg and Balla 2002), whereas the BPW vessels from the northeastern Negev either originated in the northeastern Negev or in several cases, were likely imported from southern Transjordan (Iserlis and Thareani 2011). Similar to the cooking pots, the tradition of creating BPW vessels is a tradition that can also be considered as locally produced to serve the needs of those located in the region. In this fashion, those performing and participating in these feasts need not necessarily originate from southern Transjordan but could have lived and operated in the northeastern Negev. These persons then, while they may be described as bearing the customs of elites from Busayra and promoting their ideals, and may be considered culturally Edomite, are fundamentally inhabitants of the northeastern Negev. One need only examine the cooking pot and BPW assemblage from Tel

Malhata to understand from where they may be operating. Similar to the cooking pot Type CP4 that appears to be established in the region in the eighth century BCE, BPW appears already well stratified in eighth century BCE contexts in the northeastern Negev, namely at Tel Beersheba (Plate 48), Tel Malhata (Plate 38), Tel 'Aroer (Plate 18), and even Kadesh Barnea (Plate 51). Thus, this pattern of food consumption and the significance it imparts are features that find their origins already in the eighth century BCE.

To further complicate the portrait of these vessels in the northeastern Negev is the inconsistent association of cooking pot Type CP4 with BPW. Whereas at Busayra, Ghrareh, and Tawilan we can see a close relationship between food production in cooking pot Type CP4 and clusters of BPW, this pattern is not always replicated in the northeastern Negev. For example, at Horvat 'Uza, while cooking pot Type CP4 forms a recognizable portion of the cooking pot assemblage (Plate 13), we lack a corresponding emphasis on Busayra Painted Ware (Plate 14), indicating that the majority of this food was served in less iconic, but especially local tablewares (e.g., see Figure 12). Consequently, this type of food and food preparation lacked a high degree of social visibility and rather represents a more concealed form of identity maintenance. The outcomes of a feast that featured BPW were not a feature at Horvat 'Uza. Similarly, no forts in the northeastern Negev featured a particularly substantial assemblage of these wares, implying that these types of feasts and associated social relations were not an active component of military sites.

The disassociation between cooking pot Type CP4 and BPW at the military forts can be contrasted with Horvat Qitmit and Tel Malhata where there is a positive correlation between cooking pot Type CP4 and BPW (Plates 23, 24, 27 and 40), indicating that a substantial portion of food consumed in BPW vessels was produced in Type CP4 cooking pots. Perhaps the most

unique example, and evidence of complex forms of social entanglement can be seen at Tel ‘Aroer. Here, where substantial clusters of BPW were discovered in the extramural caravanserai (Plate 18), one would perhaps likewise expect to find substantial numbers of CP4, which are in fact lacking. From these contexts, the most prevalent types of cooking pots are the local “Judahite” forms, especially the closed vessel Type CP2. It appears then that the food being consumed in BPW vessels in the caravanserai may in fact have been produced predominantly in cooking pot Type CP2, a form that is perhaps the most opposite cooking pot Type CP4 in terms of associated behaviors. The opposition is marked by Type CP2’s substantially smaller size and restricted neck and rim that indicate that the food produced in it would have been prepared, served, and consumed differently than food from Type CP4. Indeed, this context indicates that food prepared in a local “Judahite” fashion was likely consumed in a way that evoked the ideals of elite activity at Busayra. Within a caravanserai context one can envision a variety of scenarios in which trade caravans, trade facilitators, local hosts, and other interested parties would have shared large meals and in doing so, fostered social relations and/or obligations. In sum, the above portrait of food production and consumption is one of multi-faceted complexities evidencing intricate webs of social, political, and economic entanglements.

E. CONCLUSION

This chapter has been concerned with the most substantial of the datasets from the northeastern Negev and Transjordan—ceramics related to cooking and consumption. As these ceramics relate to food production and consumption, they reveal significant evidence relating to the foodways of the ancient inhabitants of the region, which is an especially informative dataset with regard to social identities due to its high degree of social sensitivity and cultural conservatism. While the

archaeological record does not preserve data that demonstrate stark differences in the ingredients used in cooking across the region, the cooking pots rather reveal that the recipes and the manners of consumption would have indeed varied. Distinct forms of cooking pots are noted across the region, best typified in the types CP1 and CP2 that are dominant in the region of Judah during the late Iron Age, Type CP3 that is prominent in the southern coastal plain, and Type CP4 that is most prominent in southern Transjordan. The shape of the vessels demonstrates both different methods of food preparation and of food consumption. These distinctions were perpetuated over successive generations though both social continuity and through their continued production by potting communities.

When distributions of different cooking pot types are visualized spatially at different sites, they present a rather high degree of integration with one another where certain forms are not restricted to certain areas of a site but are found within the same domestic structures and activity areas. However, location and site functionality appear to play a significant role in the distribution of different cooking pot types. This is particularly noticeable in that the military forts of the region (e.g., Tel Arad, Horvat Tov) present a highly restricted cooking pot assemblage dominated by types CP1 and CP2 with very few forms of type CP3 and CP4. The exception to this pattern is the fort of Horvat 'Uza whose greater diversity was likely the result of its position directly adjacent the major east-west road. Similarly, the settlements located along this road (e.g., Tel Malhata, Tel 'Aroer) present a high degree of culinary diversity integrated within the fabric of everyday life.

Culinary diversity in the northeastern Negev—and especially the presence of Type CP4 cooking pots—is attested already as early as the late eighth century BCE. Seasonal transhumance and especially economic opportunity associated with trade routes provide the most convincing

contexts for movement across the region. When the cooking pots are considered in relation to the gendered and status patterns of use that have been demonstrated for antiquity, the culinary diversity may further be indicative of intermarriage in the creation of social alliances or even as evidence of prisoners or slaves. As petrography has demonstrated that the majority of the Type CP4 cooking pots found in the northeastern Negev were locally produced, it appears that while this tradition may have had its origins in southern Transjordan, its perpetuated use in the northeastern Negev demonstrates it also to have been a “local” form.

The assemblage of BPW tablewares and their use in consumption—and feasting—contexts, identifies the promotion of a certain elite identity than the less socially visible cooking pots. The ware is well established as associated with elite contexts at Busayra, and in southern Transjordan is found in high concentrations at settlement nodes associated with the King’s Highway trade route (e.g., Tawilan, Ghrareh). When considered through the lens of feasting activities, it is likely that these contexts are indicative of sociopolitical links with Busayra, at least through their semiotic signals. Future excavations in southern Transjordan will continue to shed light on this situation.

In the northeastern Negev, the distribution of BPW is inconsistent with the contexts where Type CP4 cooking pots are found, demonstrating that Edomite interactions in the northern Negev cannot be interpreted through a singular model. While BPW is found in very limited quantities at the military forts in the region (e.g., Tel Arad, Horvat Tov, Horvat ‘Uza), it is found in larger quantities in the settlements nodes and locales associated with the south Arabian trade, particularly in the caravanserai at Tel ‘Aroer. Site functionality again appears to play a role in the distribution of this ware. Significantly, in the caravanserai at Tel ‘Aroer, the cooking pots used to produce the food consumed with BPW were not dominated by Type CP4 cooking pots. The

divergence between BPW and Type CP4 cooking pots indicates a unique relationship between different modes of food preparation and food consumption and the entangled relationships between the food producers and consumers in this context.

CHAPTER 5. RITUAL SPACES AND THE INTERSECTION OF PRACTICE AND IDENTITY

Religious diversity in the northeastern Negev in the late Iron Age is traditionally cast through the lens of two competing cults, that of Yahweh and that of *Qws*. These deities in turn serve to represent the cultic preferences of the inhabitants of Judah and Edom respectively. While expedient, such approaches essentialize the complexities of cultic traditions and ritual behavior, and work to flatten society into homogeneous singularities that can be more effectively contrasted. This chapter challenges these characterizations by examining the deities of Yahweh and *Qws* and the diversity of ritual behavior in the region. Likewise, it explores the role that religious affiliation plays in identity construction and maintenance, and as a means by which to designate difference. Ultimately, this chapter demonstrates the high degree of similarity within everyday domestic ritual activity across southern Judah and Edom, and the interplay between household ritual and state sponsored cult.

A. THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS: CONTINGENCY AND THE PROMOTION OF DIFFERENCE

A major recurring challenge in the study of religion in antiquity is the positional bias of the scholar and the creation of artificial constructs by which to broadly describe different religious traditions (Shaw 1990). For example, anthropological study of religion has commonly divided it into two major groups that include the “world” religions (Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc.), and so-called traditional, or “primitive” religions that tend to feature tribal or animist elements (e.g., African religions or Australian Aboriginal religions), a division that has led to differentiated perspectives of validity and imbalances in study (Insoll 2004, 8). In their application to the southern Levant, these analyses have tended to essentialize the origins and

nature of Israelite religion (e.g., Kaufmann 1960), accentuating particular elements as wholly unique phenomena in a manner that ultimately melds well with faith-based approaches to ancient Israel. However, as noted by David Edwards, any approach that essentializes ancient religion and presumes singular features to have been the most authentic or orthodox forms of belief and practice, ought to be regarded with wariness as our post-Enlightenment and secularized modernist positionality leaves us “poorly equipped to appreciate the breadth of past religious experience” (Edwards 2005, 128).

Similarly, the artificiality of the methodological divisions between the study of religious, political, social, and economic spheres of the human experience that disassociate religion from other aspects of ancient life reveals more our own post-Enlightenment and western capitalist situated context than of any reality in antiquity (Insoll 2004, 24; Brück 2007, 284–85).²²⁸ The challenge of such academic divisions of inquiry are striking, when for example, political and religious authority are methodologically examined separately. As our western capitalist system tends to attribute great social value to economic status, this has resulted in the frequent interpretation of wealthy burials as indicative of political (and economic) status, when in reality, these wealthy burials may have more likely reflected a position of religious significance (Edwards 2005, 124–26; Pearson 1999; Luley 2016, 35).²²⁹ Similarly, the role of religious legitimation in pre-capitalist societies, the oft-interwoven nature of religious and political power within theocratic societies, and the role of religion as a form of social control further complicates our usage of predetermined modernist categories (Steadman 2009, 49–51). The application of

²²⁸ For example, the very use of the term “religion” may be inapplicable to antiquity as it reflects a modernist analytical category of scholarly inquiry and was not necessarily something that could be identified as a distinct and separate part of life and consciousness (J. Smith 1982; Insoll 2004, 6).

²²⁹ A critique of the methodological divisions of this present work, for example, might focus on the division between the analysis of foodways and feasting in the previous chapter and the religious considerations of this present chapter. In all likelihood, many of the previous contexts of feasting were integrated with religious activity.

these distinctions to physical space, such as Mircea Eliade and Émile Durkheim's division of the "sacred" and "profane" (Eliade 1959; Durkheim 1976), has similarly artificially divided human experience and has failed to emphasize the interrelated and generative influences that religion has on other aspects of space and human behavior (Tweed 2011; Rowan 2011). In this way, religious experience ought to be emphasized as interwoven with all other aspects of culture, and continuously and recursively influencing all aspects of life (Steadman 2009, 23).

When investigating ancient religious behavior then, both historical contingency and situatedness are essential. Likewise, an openness toward a multiplicity of traditions and both oral and literate discursive traditions is necessary (Abu Lughod 1989, 297). Traditions that place significance upon written scriptures (e.g., Christianity and Islam), similarly hold within them a great diversity of perspectives and practices with members of the same tradition often viewing another's heterodoxy as invalid and deviant (Edwards 2005, 118–19). In the archaeological record, material culture is likewise poorly equipped to display orthodoxy (right belief), but instead can provide a complex narrative of both orthopraxy (right practice) and heteropraxy (different practices; Edwards 2005, 116). Lastly, the relation of gender to religious practice is pertinent, especially in relation to the use of space and of ritual as most forms of religious tradition and scholarly discourse have been overwhelmingly androcentric (Edwards 2005, 123).

Many previous investigations of ancient religions have centered on the attempt to create an all-encompassing definition of religion for purposes of cross-cultural comparison (Steadman 2009, 21–23). The challenge, however, is that such definitions risk reifying *a priori* assumptions regarding the context of study, particularly when rigid definitions are confronted with the varieties of human experience. Definitions maintain their validity only so long as there is an insistence that they are cross-cultural and that comparative methods are able to identify core

features (Joyce 2011, 185).²³⁰ Rosemary Joyce adapts an old analogy stating that archaeologists attempting to fully conceptualize an ancient religion are akin to a group of visually impaired persons having each physically touched an elephant, attempting to produce an accurate description of the object before them, each ultimately failing to produce a description matching one another (Joyce 2011, 180). Similarly, for the archaeologist examining a context thousands of years removed with only limited exposure to certain preserved elements of the archaeological record, there is a likelihood of misrepresenting the context at hand, particularly when influenced by prior assumptions and unrecognized biases. Rather, in archaeological analysis, the focus needs to be placed upon the embodied practices associated with ritual behavior, examined on the basis of the extant material culture record (Joyce 2011, 180).

In a shift toward the examination of embodied practices as seen through their material consequences, the analysis then shifts from what religion *is*, to what religion *does*, not in functionalist terms, but rather as a dynamic entity with “overlapping, and often contradictory functions and roles in the hands of agents with different and competing agendas” (Aldenderfer 2011, 23–24).²³¹ One of the consequences of these behaviors is the social construction of religious identities affiliated with particular deities or orthodoxies that actively create and re-create boundaries between different social groups (Edwards 2005, 116). In their enactment, these

²³⁰ With archaeological concerns in mind, Sharon Steadman promotes the following definition of religion: “Religion is a system of beliefs that posits supernatural beings and resolves mysterious or unexplainable phenomena; it is a set of practices and associated trapping that allows believers not only to engage the supernatural world but also to demonstrate their devotion and faith in it. It is intricately intertwined with every aspect of culture that shapes social structure, while it also in turn is shaped by it” (Steadman 2009, 23). The successes of this definition for its use in certain archaeological analyses lie in its emphasis on the non-disassociation of religion from other aspects of culture, the recursive influences held by religion and other socio-cultural elements of society, and the behavioral and material culture elements associated with it.

²³¹ In this sense, the body of literature concerned with “ritual” in archaeology can be brought into a discussion of religion, as what is being viewed in a study of the ambiguous “ritual” is in essence “religion in action” (Aldenderfer 2011, 24; Insoll 2004).

identities and boundaries can work to differentiate between other ethnic or cultural identities and inasmuch as they work to define the majority, they also define the minorities (Edwards 2005, 121–22; Davis and Ravid 2001).²³² With these considerations in mind, let us turn to the context of southern Levant in the late Iron Age. The following discussion will seek to contextualize this region by outlining first the significant deities, followed by a discussion of ritual practices.

B. ENTANGLED DEITIES: YAHWEH, *QWS*, AND ASSOCIATES

Two deities stand at the forefront of the religious landscape of the northeastern Negev and southern Transjordan: Yahweh and *Qws*. Numerous treatises debate the origins and nature of Yahweh and Yahwistic cult (e.g., Mark Smith 2002; 2004; Day 2000; van der Toorn 1999; B. Lang 2002; Zevit 2001; Miller 2000; Dearman 1992; Vriezen 1967; Kaufmann 1960) and additional studies explore the lesser known deity *Qws* (e.g., Knauf 1999; Dearman 1995; Bartlett 1989, 200–204), and do not necessitate extensive reexamination. Rather, what is significant for the purposes of this work are the data and interpretations that situate these deities within this region and in relation to one another. In beginning, both Yahweh and *Qws* are relatively unknown prior to the Iron Age.²³³ They are best understood as deities associated with the phenomena of the rise of secondary states of the Iron Age southern Levant, with each frequently portrayed as the “official” god of their respective polities (Herr 1997; Joffe 2002; Porter 2004, 381–84).

²³² Indeed, the very emergence and formalization of a religion or religious identity may be the result of opposition to, or rivalry with other religions.

²³³ The exceptions lie in poorly understood Egyptian topographic lists which identify both Yahweh and *Qws* as associated with *shasu* groups of the Levant (Oded 1971; Astour 1979; Giveon 1964). The exact geographic location of the region to which *Qws* and Yahweh are associated is debated as these lists may refer to the central or southern Levant (Helck 1962, 220–21; Giveon 1971, 26–28; Weippert 1974, 427, 430; van der Toorn 1999, 911–12; Axelsson 1987, 60). A locale within the southern Levant is certainly more harmonious with the subsequent geographic range of these deities.

Both Yahweh and *Qws* appear to hold the roles of storm deities and divine warriors following the Syrian Hadad-type deity and functioning similar to the better known role of Ba‘al within the Levantine pantheon (van der Toorn 1999, 916; Mettinger 1990, 410; Knauf 1999, 677). For Yahweh, the role of storm god and divine warrior is presented in numerous instances within the biblical text where he is associated with clouds, rain, thunder, and lightning (e.g., Judges 5:4–5; Psalms 18:9–15; 29; 68:7–9; 77:17–18; 97:1–5; 104:2–3, 7, 13). Likewise, the close similarities between Yahweh and Ba‘al—seen in the sub-textual confiscations of Ba‘al-like imagery within the Hebrew Bible—similarly establish the storm god and divine warrior imagery (e.g., Psalm 29; Cross 1950).²³⁴ Data concerning *Qws* is limited, although on the basis of extant data, *Qws* can similarly be understood as functioning in the mold of, or as an aspect of the Syrian Hadad-type weather deity (Dearman 1995; Knauf 1999; Bartlett 1989, 200–204). This is seen through the numerous weather god paraphernalia (e.g., bull figurines) found in relative proximity to inscriptions naming the deity at the shrine of Horvat Qitmit (Beck 1995, 187–90; 1996, 107–9), and in the association of his name as related to the deified weapon of the storm god/divine warrior (Bartlett 1989, 200–204; Knauf 1999, 676).

The etymological origins of the names of these deities are likewise intriguing. *Qws* (קוּס) is confidently accepted as derived from the Arabic *qaws* (قوس) meaning “bow” (Knauf 1999, 676; Bartlett 1989, 200–204), and as such, supports the understanding of the role held by the deity as conceptualized by adherents, and also the south Transjordanian/Northwest Arabian

²³⁴ The close similarities between Yahweh and Ba‘al appear to be one of the central foundations for the conflict between their respective cults in the southern Levant. Beyond the storm and divine warrior imagery, Yahweh’s battles against the divine Sea/Yamm (Exodus 15; Psalm 77:16–20), and similar intimations toward divine Death/Mot (Isaiah 25:8), together with Yahweh’s capture of the divine epithet “rider on the clouds” (Psalm 68:4, 33; Psalm 104:3; Deuteronomy 33:26; Isaiah 19:1), mirror the Ba‘al narratives as seen at Ugarit (Coogan and Smith 2012, 97–153; Mark Smith 2004, 88–101; 2002, 80–82, 87–88; van der Toorn 1999, 916; Day 1985; Herrmann 1979; Hackett 2001, 158–59). For an alternative suggestion, see Mark Smith (2003).

regions of his early attestations.²³⁵ Arguments concerning the etymological origins of the name Yahweh (יהוה) are varied (see van der Toorn 1999, 913–16).²³⁶ Due to the challenges of finding a west Semitic etymological origin for the name Yahweh, and in light of the self-identified southerly origins of the deity (see below), a South Semitic linguistic explanation may be better suited. Within the semantic range of the Arabic root *hwy*, the meanings “to fall” or “to blow,” with causative derivations “he who causes [rain/lightening/enemies] to fall” or “[wind] to blow” are harmonious in both linguistic derivation, and in complementing the association of Yahweh as a weather deity and divine warrior (Knauf 1984, 469; 1988b, 43–48; van der Toorn 1999, 916; Kelley 2009, 262–63). Similarly, morphological (3rd masc. sing. imperfect) theonymic parallels are attested in the pre-Islamic Arabian pantheon, which include *Ya ‘ūq* (he protects) and *Yaǧūt* (he helps), rendering Yahweh’s name as plausibly related (Haussig 1961, No. 478, 479; van der Toorn 1999, 913).

In terms of the geographic origins of these deities, an enigmatic portrait emerges. With regard to Yahweh, numerous archaic sounding passages in the Hebrew Bible, which are likely some of the oldest texts in the corpus (Schniedewind 2013, 51–72), associate Yahweh with regions to the south or southeast of Judah and Israel. These archaic references describe Yahweh as coming/marching/dawning/shining forth from either Seir/Edom (Judges 5:4; Deuteronomy 33:2),²³⁷ Teman (Habakkuk 3:3) Paran (Deuteronomy 33:2; Habakkuk 3:3; Hamilton 1992) or

²³⁵ Though a tenuous correlation, Dearman suggests that the martial and hunting nature of the figure of Esau (equated with Edom) in the biblical text is also supportive of the association between *Qws* and the bow (Dearman 1995, 126).

²³⁶ The majority of interpretations concerning the identification of the root and meaning of the form *yhwh* associate it with the root *hyh* on the basis of Exodus 3:14 and the deity’s response to a question of who he is with: “I am who I am” (אהיה אשר אהיה). As noted by van de Toorn, however, this is in essence an Israelite theological explanation, not linguistic (1999, 913–14). Other common positions view the name as derived from *hwy*, with Yahweh functioning as either as *qal* or *hif’il* (van der Toorn 1999, 915; Albright 1968, 147–49).

²³⁷ See also the apparent reference to Judges 5:4 in Psalm 68:8–9 which appears to “correct” the reference to Seir by inserting “Sinai” in its place (van der Toorn 1999, 912). On the basis of this and other examples, Mark Smith

Sinai (Deuteronomy 33:2). Extra-biblical references from Kuntillet ‘Ajrud likewise identify Yahweh with Teman (Ahituv, Eshel, and Meshel 2012, 95–98), a locale often associated with Edom in the biblical text (e.g., Jeremiah 49:7; Amos 1:12; Knauf 1992b). Similarly, late second millennium BCE Egyptian texts dating to the reigns of Amenhotep III and Ramesses II reference a “Yahu in the land of the Shasu” (Giveon 1971, 26–28), again in association with Seir (Weippert 1974, 271; Knauf 1992a). In addition to the Mount Sinai references, the association of Yahweh with Seir provides another allusion to a mountain abode for the deity (Genesis 14:6, 36:8–9; Deuteronomy 2:1–5; Joshua 24:4; Ezekiel 35:3, 7, 15), not dissimilar to other examples of weather deities having homes atop prominent mountain peaks (e.g., Ba‘al Saphon).²³⁸ Thus, through these archaic passages, Yahweh is intriguingly and consistently associated with locales to the south and southeast, in regions where Edomite and Arabian presence is more significant (Mark Smith 2004, 153–54, 170–71; van der Toorn 1996, 281–86; 1999; Knohl 2017; B. Lang 2002, 177–78; Axelsson 1987; Smoak and Schniedewind 2019).²³⁹

suggests that Seir is the older reading and that many of the memories of origins in Edom [Seir] were remapped onto Mount Sinai as a part of the identification of Yahweh as “the god of Israel” and cult centralization processes (Mark Smith 2004, 153–54).

²³⁸ The most prominent peak of Seir (the Shara Mountains), is Jabal Harun in the environs of Petra. It is tempting to view Jabal Harun as a sacred mountain of the Iron Age, particularly on the basis of continual ritual activity from the Nabatean through Byzantine and Islamic periods, and into modern times through its association with the Prophet Harun/Aaron. Unfortunately, to date, no substantive data exists supporting Iron Age activity on the mountain (Hertell et al. 2013, 334–35; Kouki and Lavento 2013; Fiema, Frösén, and Holappa 2016; Fiema and Frösén 2008). There appears to be a degree of discontinuity between the Iron II and Nabatean ritual sites that defy discussions of a continuous shared tradition. For instance, continuity has been suggested for the Nabatean temple site of Khirbet at-Tannur atop the prominent mountain Jabal at-Tannur in the Wadi al-Hasa. A continuity from Iron Age Edomite practices is suggested in the presence of an inscription to *Qws*, and in structures that loosely echo the architecture of late Iron Ages sanctuary sites such as Horvat Qitmit (McKenzie 2013, 45–46; McKenzie and Reyes 2013, 247–49). While it has been suggested that there may be an Iron Age ritual site beneath the large Nabatean sanctuary, the lack of Iron Age sherds from excavation or the surrounding slopes diminish this possibility (McKenzie 2013, 45).

²³⁹ The “Kenite/Midianite Hypothesis” is built in part from this data. This model outlines a context in which Yahwistic worship came to Israel by way of the interactions between Moses and Jethro/Reuel/Hobab of Midian, challenges in historicity notwithstanding (Blenkinsopp 2008; Cross 1998, 66–70; 1988; Halpern 1992; Schloen 1993).

Despite substantially less data, or perhaps as a result of it, the origins of *Qws* appear less hazy. Beyond the geographically ambiguous potential references to *Qws* in Egyptian topographical lists (see n. 233), the earliest references to *Qws* appear in the region of Edom in the late Iron Age (Porter 2004, 382–84; Bartlett 1989, 204–7). Despite Rose’s now-dated argument that *Qws* originated further south in Arabia due to the onomastic references at Dedan (1977), a chronological examination of these attestations indicate that the Dedan references post-date the Iron Age examples in Edom (see Chapter 6.C). Nonetheless, while the earliest attestations of *Qws* derive from southern Transjordan, this region was not necessarily as separate from Arabia as present day borders would suggest,²⁴⁰ indicating that an Arabic linguistic origin for the name is not untenable.²⁴¹

What is further intriguing regarding *Qws* is that the deity is never directly referenced in the Hebrew Bible, while at the same time the god Yahweh is frequently associated with the region of Edom. The only place where *Qws* may be found in the Hebrew Bible is in the oblique reference to Persian period exiles—to the “sons of *barqōs*” (ברקום; Ezra 2:53; Nehemiah 7:55).²⁴² The silence is all the more striking in contrast to the other regional neighbors of Israel/Judah where deities are frequently invoked in association with polity (e.g., Astarte and Sidon, Milkom and Ammon, Kemosh and Moab; 1 Kings 11:5–8, 2 Kings 23: 13, etc.). Some

²⁴⁰ The present-day borders between Jordan and Saudi Arabia ought not to shape the way this region is viewed. Much of southern Jordan, for example, shares the same environment and topography as northwestern Arabia and until quite recently provided numerous examples of transhumance and unrestricted movement (Bocco and Tell 1994). In antiquity persons speaking proto-Arabian languages would not have been restricted to the regions labelled as “Arabia” in twentieth century CE maps.

²⁴¹ Dearman speculates that the present-day name of a mountain, Jabal al-Qos, in the northern Hisma (southeastern Jordan) may preserve the name of this deity (Dearman 1995, 124).

²⁴² A potential additional mention of *Qws* may be found in 1 Chronicles 15:17 which preserves the name *qwšyhw* (קישיהו). This may be an example of cultic syncretism between the two deities as suggested by Bartlett (1989, 200–201), however, within Canaanite and Aramaic texts *Qws* is always spelled with a *samek* and never a *šin* (Knauf 1999, 674). Rather, this name more simply means “bow of Yahweh,” providing an alternatively interesting potential allusion to *Qws*.

explanations of the silence concerning *Qws* and the corresponding origins of Yahweh in Edom have suggested that the biblical writers in Judah knew very little of Edomite religion and thus knew not to include *Qws* within the biblical text (Bartlett 1989, 195). This is a challenging interpretation due to the close geographic proximity of the two regions and the degree of interaction between them during the Iron Age. Beyond the presence of the cultic site of Horvat Qitmit in the northeastern Negev that evidences the deity in inscriptions, *Qws* is known in Judahite administrative epistolary, appearing as a theophoric element in names (see Chapter 6.C). Moreover, in the post-exilic period, the presence of persons bearing *Qws* as a theophoric element within their name as attested in the biblical text (Ezra 2:53; Nehemiah 7:55), and the prominence of *Qws* within the northeastern Negev/Idumea (Porten and Yardeni 2006; 2014; 2016; 2018), render the absence of *Qws* from the post-exilic texts similarly noteworthy. It is difficult to accept that the silence concerning *Qws* is anything but intentional.

The absence of *Qws* in the biblical text, and the functional similarities between Yahweh and *Qws* have led to hypotheses of a shared heritage between the people of Edom and Judah and/or a close relationship or affinity between the deities. One of these hypotheses suggests that prior to the rise of Yahweh, proto-Israelite/Judahite and proto-Edomite persons originally worshipped an El deity who later became Yahweh for Israel and Edom, and in Edom was later identified as *Qws*. This idea was originally promoted by Albrecht Alt (1929) and followed by Rose (1977, 31), and suggests that *Qws* is, in essence, an alternative name for, or understanding of the deity Yahweh, which arrived during an Arabizing “wave” in the Iron Age (Rose 1977, 31). According to this hypothesis the references then to a “brotherhood” or kinship with Edom (e.g., Genesis 25:19–34; 27; 35:29; Numbers 20:14; Deuteronomy 2:4, 8; 23:7; Amos 1:11; Obadiah 1:10, 12; Malachi 1:2–4; see also Chapter 6.A), are understood as faint memories of this shared

heritage (see Dearman 1995, 126–27). The interpretation of an Arabizing “wave,” however, lacks evidence in the Iron Age and as is discussed elsewhere, there is no need for *Qws* to “arrive” in Edom from Arabia as the references in Transjordan predate those of Arabia (see Chapter 6.C).

Other hypotheses have similarly suggested *Qws* to have originally served as an epithet of Yahweh. Amzallag creates a unique adaptation of the Midianite-Kenite hypothesis by incorporating the substantial archaeological data of copper metallurgy in this region, and identifying Yahweh as the primary deity of the metallurgical process and of the persons identified as most involved in this process—the Kenites (Amzallag 2009). In this context, he argues that Yahweh was the foremost deity in this region, including Edom, and that “*Qws*” was merely an epithet used by Edomite persons to refer to Yahweh and not in fact a separate deity at all (Amzallag 2009, 392; Kelley 2009, 265). Building on Amzallag’s theory, Kelley promotes the argument that an emphasis ought to be placed on the “bow” meaning of *Qws*’ name (Kelley 2009, 266; see also Vriezen 1965). This argument suggests that in the shared and entangled origins of Yahweh and *Qws*, the latter may be associated with the divine bow (קשת) of Yahweh (Habbakuk 3:9; Psalm 18:15; Psalm 7:12–13; Genesis 9:13–16), citing the frequency with which deities are associated with deified weapons (Kelley 2009, 266).²⁴³ According to this hypothesis, affiliation with *Qws* is derivative of the worship of Yahweh, with the biblical texts silence regarding *Qws* reflective again of this shared heritage. Within these interpretations that posit *Qws* as derivative of the Yahweh, it is necessary to stress that they are all formulated from a Yahwistic position in their reliance on the Hebrew Bible. While this is due to the lack of corresponding text that features a *Qws*-based perspective, this is fundamentally an etic approach

²⁴³ See discussion in van de Toorn for the differences in the Arabic vs. Canaanite renderings of the word for bow (Knauf 1999, 676).

to understanding the deity of Edom. Were the texts of the priests of *Qws* likewise available, these hypotheses might differ significantly.

While to date, no hypothesis provides a definitive understanding of the murky origins and entangled relations between Yahweh and *Qws*, we can instead shift our focus to the ways in which these deities were understood within this region and the role they played in cult centralization. First, in discussing these gods, it would likely be more accurate in the above discussion to refer to *Yahwehs* rather than a single Yahweh. The inscriptions discovered at Kuntillet ‘Ajrud reveal numerous regionalized manifestations of Yahweh, seen in the references to “Yahweh of Shomron (Samaria)” and “Yahweh of Teman” (Ahituv, Eshel, and Meshel 2012, 130).²⁴⁴ Such regionalized references ought to be unsurprising in light of the similar presentation of other deities such as “Ba‘al of Zaphon,” “Ba‘al of Hermon,” “Ba‘al of Hazor” or even Yahweh as “the god of Jerusalem” as seen at Khirbet Beit Lei (Ahituv 2008, 317). Dating to the period immediately preceding the focus of this work, the Kuntillet ‘Ajrud inscriptions indicate that while Yahwistic affiliation was widespread, localized manifestations of the deity and corresponding cult centers were likely the *modus operandi* within the region, where the deity was regarded as the lord of multiple cities (McCarter 1987, 140–41; Smoak and Schniedewind 2019, 11; Mark Smith 2016, 91–92). Thus, the Deuteronomistic movement in the late Iron Age (Deuteronomy 12; 2 Kings 22–23), was as much a rejection of foreign gods as it was an effort to centralize the diverse Yahwehs to Jerusalem through a rejection of other Yahwistic cult centers. Hutton argues that this fact may also be reflected in the *shema* (Deuteronomy 6:4), where the call for god as “one” could in fact reflect the same consolidation of Yahweh’s numerous localized

²⁴⁴ Compare also with “Yahweh in Hebron” (2 Samuel 15:7), “Yahweh in Zion” (Psalm 99:2) “God of Jerusalem” (Ezra 7:19); see further discussion in Mark Smith (2016, 71–98).

identities (Hutton 2010). With relation to *Qws*, to date no direct data exists to indicate similar regionalized understandings, although such a situation would not be surprising.

Furthermore, beyond the multiple manifestations of Yahweh and likely *Qws*, these were by no means the only deities operating within the landscape. In Edom during the late Iron Age, the names of multiple additional deities are referenced in onomastics, notably Šalem, El, Ba'al, and Ea/Aya (Bartlett 1989, 211–14; Pritchard 1969, 287; Galter 1999). Likewise, at the cultic site of Horvat Qitmit, the head of a large female statue likely indicates Asherah or Astarte functioning as either the consort of the male deity (most likely *Qws*) or as the primary deity of the shrine (Beck 1995, 187–89). Yahweh is similarly associated with a consort, Asherah, at least in some of his localized manifestations as seen at Kuntillet 'Ajrud (Ahituv 2008, 315).²⁴⁵

Onomastic data in Israel and Judah during the Iron Age also references additional deities (Albertz and Schmitt 2012, 508), although as noted by Golub, when these data are limited to Judah during the late Iron Age, the diversity of deities becomes quite restricted (2017, 28). The restriction of diversity appears in line with the process of pantheon reduction promoted by the late Judean monarchy and the Deuteronomistic movement (Sanders 2015; see Chapter 6.C). Whether the entirety of the cult centralization was the result of active destructions on the part of the Judean monarchy (Deuteronomy 12; 2 Kings 22–23), or the long *durée* product of successive destructions of local cult centers that resulted in a *de facto* centralization (Fried 2002; Herzog 2010), the general pattern is undeniable.

Where then does this leave the reader? Or the ancient inhabitant of the northeastern Negev? First, on the basis of onomastic and textual data, despite the presence of multiple deities within these regions, the prominence of Yahweh (and his consort?), and *Qws* (and his consort?)

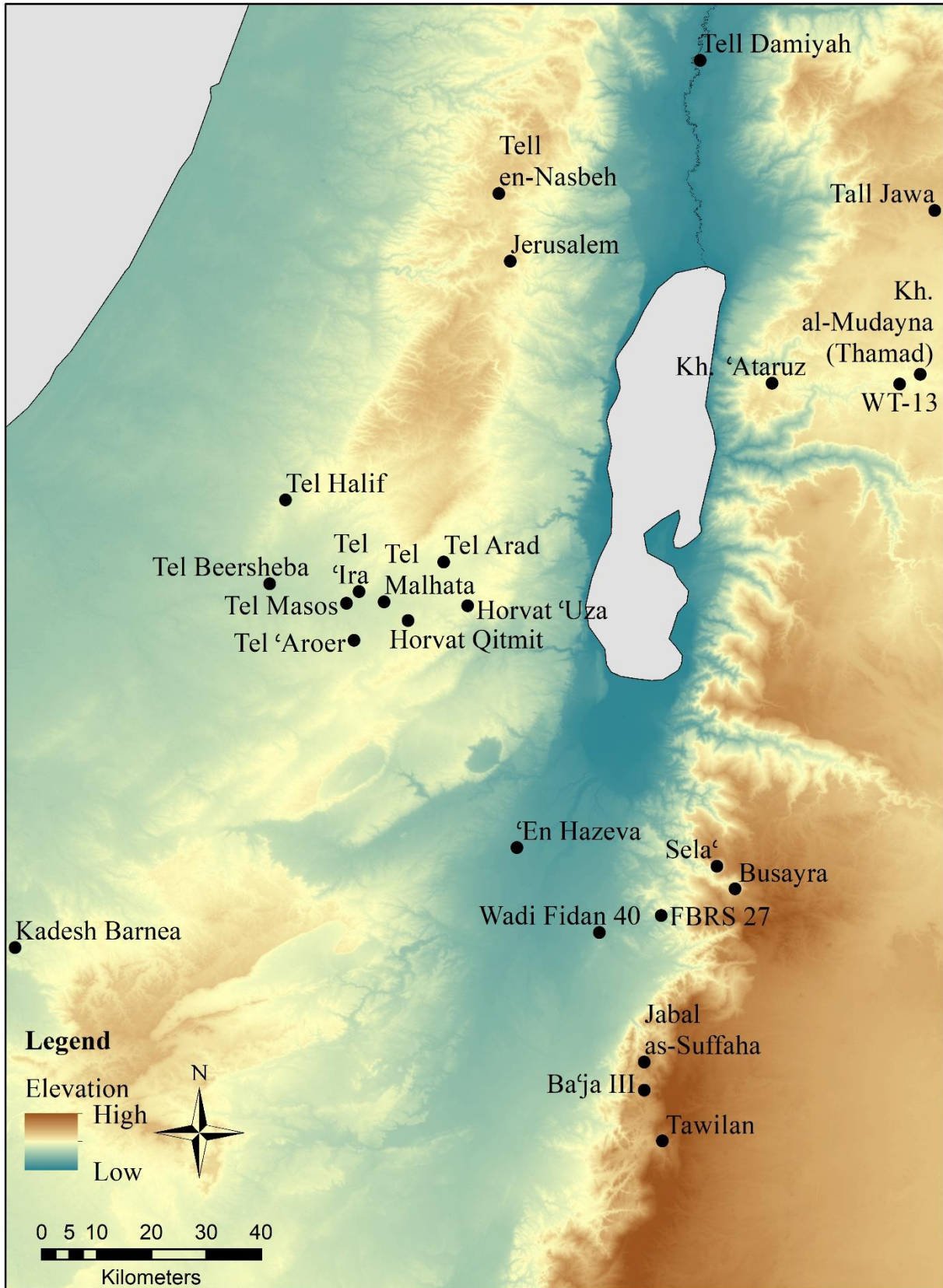
²⁴⁵ There is a substantial body of literature surrounding Yahweh and his consort. To begin, see Dever (2008; 1997; 1984) and Olyan (1988).

within Judah and Edom respectively, is readily apparent.²⁴⁶ Following a half millennium of strong association of the deity to the *region* of Israel/Judah as the most popular folk deity and the dynastic god (Sanders 2015), the prominence of Yahweh and his original role as a storm god and divine warrior was likely recognized in opposition to deities who held similar positions in neighboring regions (e.g., Ba‘al, Kemosh, *Qws*). In terms of the murky external origins of Yahweh as found within the Hebrew Bible, it is likely that the general populace was not familiar with the intricacies of these traditions, instead viewing Yahweh predominantly in relation to local cult centers or Jerusalem. For the restricted subsets of society involved in writing and reading the texts that would form the Hebrew Bible (i.e., elite religious or political persons), the numerous associations of Yahweh to southern and southeastern locales and the implicit relation with the deity *Qws*, would have been challenging to ignore, particularly in light of the Sinai traditions. The impact that this limited degree of exposure had upon these persons is debatable. At the very least, it appears to have been significant enough to warrant an exclusion of the deity *Qws* from the text, likely an inadvertent admission of a shared or entangled religious heritage.

For these reasons, and as is advanced in the following section, ritual behavior needs to be examined on multiple levels, adopting again a multi-scalar approach. The broadest and most “official” aspects of ritual practice, those advocated for on a grand scale by the region’s elite, need to be examined separately from more localized regional practices, and again from those practiced within the sphere of the domestic household, not presuming or implying that these will reflect the same patterns of behavior. Likewise, the nature of the northeastern Negev as a borderland region between Judah and Edom requires consideration of not the different traditions present in the region, but if possible, the ways in which each tradition affected the other.

²⁴⁶ The role of these deities in naming practices will be further explored in Chapter 6.C.1.

Figure 32. Map of sites discussed in Chapter 5. (Map by author)



C. RITUAL SPACES AS THE LOCATION OF PRACTICE: A MULTI-SCALAR APPROACH

Analyses of religious behavior in the southern Levant have demonstrated the need to engage with multiple scales of activity, both regionally and socially (e.g., Schmitt 2014; Burke 2011; Zevit 2001; Holladay 1987; Nakhai 2001, 161–200; Albertz 1994, 17–21; Ackerman 1992). These analyses have focused on larger state-sanctioned spaces, regional places, and most recently an emphasis on the household as an important locus of ritual behavior (e.g., Albertz and Schmitt 2012; Albertz et al. 2014; van der Toorn 1996; Bodel and Olyan 2008; Daviau 2001a).²⁴⁷ Death and burials similarly provide a rich dataset in which to examine ritual practices (Insoll 2004, 68–73; Bloch-Smith 1992; Hallote 2001), however, the lacuna of such data from the northeastern Negev excluding Tel ‘Ira, precludes this avenue as a consequential dataset.

Recent scholarship, and particularly the work of Rüdiger Schmitt, has created useful typologies by which to categorize the diversity of ritual spaces of the southern Levant on the basis of their context, scope of influence, and/or qualitative characteristics (Schmitt 2014; Albertz and Schmitt 2012, 220–44).²⁴⁸ Schmitt’s typology divides the ritual spaces of ancient Israel and the southern Levant into eight types: Type I—domestic shrines and spaces; Type II—industrial or work-related ritual space; Type III—neighborhood shrines; Type IV—ritual spaces associated with death and burial; Type V—local and village shrines, high places, and gate sanctuaries; Type VI—palace shrines; Type VII—regional sanctuaries; Type VIII—supra-regional and state sanctuaries (Schmitt 2014, 267–77). Due to the nature of available data and a

²⁴⁷ One of the first to push for different contexts and scales of practice was Rainer Albertz in his promotion of the concept of “personal piety” in contrast to “official” religion (Albertz 1978). Albertz now promotes a tripartite division of the scales of religious practices with an intermediate regionalized space between that of family religion and state religion—the same division that is adopted in this work (Albertz 2008, 91–92; 1994, 19).

²⁴⁸ Similar methodological questions exist in relation to what in fact constitutes a religious site, again relating to the artificiality of academic categories of inquiry. Working within this region, Michèle Daviau has promoted the methodology developed by Colin Renfrew in his excavations at Phylakopi on Melos (Daviau 2017, 16–18; Renfrew 1985).

vision towards a coherent presentation of the dataset, the following analysis will group these ritual spaces into three levels of hierarchy, the formal state-level spaces (Type VIII), smaller regionalized or city-based ritual spaces (Types II–VII), and lastly, ritual settings identified in domestic spaces (Type I). Each of the following sites will nevertheless be identified in relation to the above defined types for the purposes of illustrating the complexity and diversity of ritual behavior in the region (see Figure 32 and Table 3).

Table 3. Classification of ritual spaces, according to Schmitt (2014).

| Ritual Site Type | Domestic | | | Regional | | | | State |
|---|----------|---------|----------|----------|--------|---------|----------|-----------|
| Site | Type I | Type II | Type III | Type IV | Type V | Type VI | Type VII | Type VIII |
| Northeastern Negev, Edom, and Jerusalem | | | | | | | | |
| Tel Arad | | | | | | | X | |
| Tel Beersheba | X | | | | | | X? | |
| Busayra | X | | | | | | | X? |
| FBRS 27 | | | | | | | X? | |
| ‘En Hazeva | | | | | | | X | |
| Horvat ‘Uza | X | | | | | | | |
| Horvat Qitmit | | | | | | | X | |
| Jerusalem | | | | | | | | X |
| Kadesh Barnea | X | | | | | | | |
| Tel Malhata | X | X? | | | | | | |
| Tel Masos | X | | | | | | | |
| Tel ‘Aroer | X | | | | | | | |
| Tel ‘Ira | X | | | X | | | | |
| Tawilan | X | | | | | | | |
| Comparanda | | | | | | | | |
| Tell Damiyah | | | | | | | X | |
| WT-13 | | | | | | | X | |

1. FORMAL STATE RELIGION

The first category of sites considered will be those related to a supraregional, formal, and seemingly state-promoted spaces evidenced in monumental temples (Burke 2011, 898–901).

This category relates to Schmitt’s Type VIII (Schmitt 2014, 276–77). It is the sites within this

category (namely Jerusalem) that come to mind in discussions of the ancient religious practices of the region. This is due in part to the success in antiquity of the promotion of the ideals of these religious centers, and in the case of Jerusalem, as the result of the Deuteronomistic rhetoric toward cult centralization and consolidation. These sites appear to be the formalized home of the “state” deity (and perhaps their consort), who in the case of Judah and Edom appear to be both the dynastic and the most prominent kin-deity (Porter 2004, 381–84; Sanders 2015, 67, 81). In another sense, whether intentional or not, formal religious sites serve as a form of social control as the social, political, and economic activities associated with ritual behavior now all occur within a centralized place associated with the ruling elite (C. Meyers 2012, 166–68; Steadman 2009, 49–51). Such centralization, however, can also serve a unifying function as it promotes a singular religious identity across a differentiated social landscape (Sanders 2015, 59–67; Porter 2004, 381–84).

a. Jerusalem

Although not located strictly within the region of study, the site of Jerusalem necessitates inclusion due to its position as holding the consequential and largest sanctuary to Yahweh. The Jerusalem Temple serves as the ideal exemplar of Schmitt’s Type VIII—supra-regional temple (Schmitt 2014, 276–77). This temple, also called Solomon’s Temple or the First Temple, is best known from the traditions of the Hebrew Bible, which describe the structure as built during the reign of Solomon in the middle of the tenth century BCE (1 Kings 5–6; 2 Chronicles 2–5), and destroyed during the Babylonian conquest of the city in 586 BCE (2 Kings 25; 2 Chronicles 36). Strikingly, however, despite the rich textual traditions concerning the structure, no archaeological remains have endured to the present, owing largely to the long and difficult

history of destruction and re-construction beneath the Haram ash-Sharif.²⁴⁹ On the basis of the literary descriptions of the temple, however, parallels have been made to a number of twelfth to eighth century BCE parallels, most notably the temples at ‘Ain Dara’ and at Tell Tayinat (King and Stager 2001, 330–36; Bloch-Smith 2002; Dever 2001, 144–57).

Throughout the period of use of the temple, however, there appear to be several renovations to the structure, especially during the early eighth century BCE (2 Kings 12:5–16; 14:11–14) and again later within the same century (2 Kings 15:35; 16:10–20; see Lemaire 2011; Mark Smith 2006, 280–81). These renovations appear to have expanded the temple and altered its function from that of a royal chapel (Schmitt’s Type VI) to a more outward focused temple for the city and state (André Lemaire 2011; Ussishkin 2003, 114; Na’aman 1996, 23; Albright 1942, 139; Alt 1930, 55–56). Thus, it is necessary not to view the cult of Yahweh as static, not the ritual practices and evolution of the physical structure of the temple and its role within society.

On the basis of the biblical traditions, a number of observations regarding the Temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem are warranted. First, as previously identified, Yahweh was not the sole deity present within the temple. During the reforms of Hezekiah as outlined in 2 Kings 18:4, he cut down the “Asherah” only to have it re-established during the reign of Manasseh in the seventh century BCE (2 Kings 21:3), indicating that Hezekiah’s original reforms did not have popular support (Dever 2008, 212).²⁵⁰ What these implements of Asherah actually constituted,

²⁴⁹ It has been argued that a part of the eastern retaining wall of the temple’s terrace yet remains (see Laperrousaz 1975; Lemaire 2011).

²⁵⁰ Note also how Hezekiah removes the “Nehushtan” or bronze serpent from the temple (2 Kings 18:4). Though the biblical writers note that it was purportedly constructed by Moses in relation to Yahweh, their displeasure with the object indicates that either its function had changed, or more likely, it was associated with a part of the former cult of Yahweh which was either no longer recognized or was not in vogue with Deuteronomistic ideals (Hendel 1999; Amzallag 2009, 398–400).

whether they relate directly to the goddess or are representative features of her is not relevant, as to the ancient worshipper the objects themselves would directly indicate the goddess (Ackerman 1992, 65–66; 2003, 455–59; McCarter 1987, 143–47). Furthermore, the biblical writer’s displeasure toward Manasseh emphasizes his re-establishment of the worship of Ba‘al and the host of heaven (2 Kings 21:3–4). These practices appear to have remained in place for much of the seventh century BCE, as the biblical writers likewise record removing “vessels made for Ba‘al, Asherah, and for all the host of heaven” as well as “the Asherah” (2 Kings 23:4–6). These textual records indicate that while the efforts of Hezekiah and later of Josiah, do appear directed toward a monolatrous and centralized practice of the cult of Yahweh, cultic diversity in Jerusalem and the temple flourished during the interregnum period of Manasseh, reflecting that they were in fact likely “naturally” commonplace.

Second, as the Deuteronomic Historian argues for the centrality of Jerusalem as the locale for numerous festivals (Exodus 23:14–19; 34:23–24; Deuteronomy 16:1–17; King and Stager 2001, 353–54), the city and its temple appear to have served a centripetal function for religious activity.²⁵¹ The practice of centralizing religious festivals would also politically and economically serve to centralize power through the amassing of resources, re-establishments of loyalty through feasting, and ultimately work toward the enshrining of a collective identity (C. Meyers 2012, 166–68). This situation may also be applied to the act of performing sacrifices, again mandated by the Deuteronomist to occur in Jerusalem, which would serve to further centralize religious activity and elevate the deity Yahweh in relation to Jerusalem (Miller 2000, 106–30; King and Stager 2001, 357–62).

²⁵¹ Likewise, the quote: “Look upon Zion, the city of our appointed festivals! Your eyes will see Jerusalem...” (Isaiah 33:20) and the Songs of Ascent (Psalms 120–134), likewise identify Jerusalem as the locale where the festivals are to be celebrated.

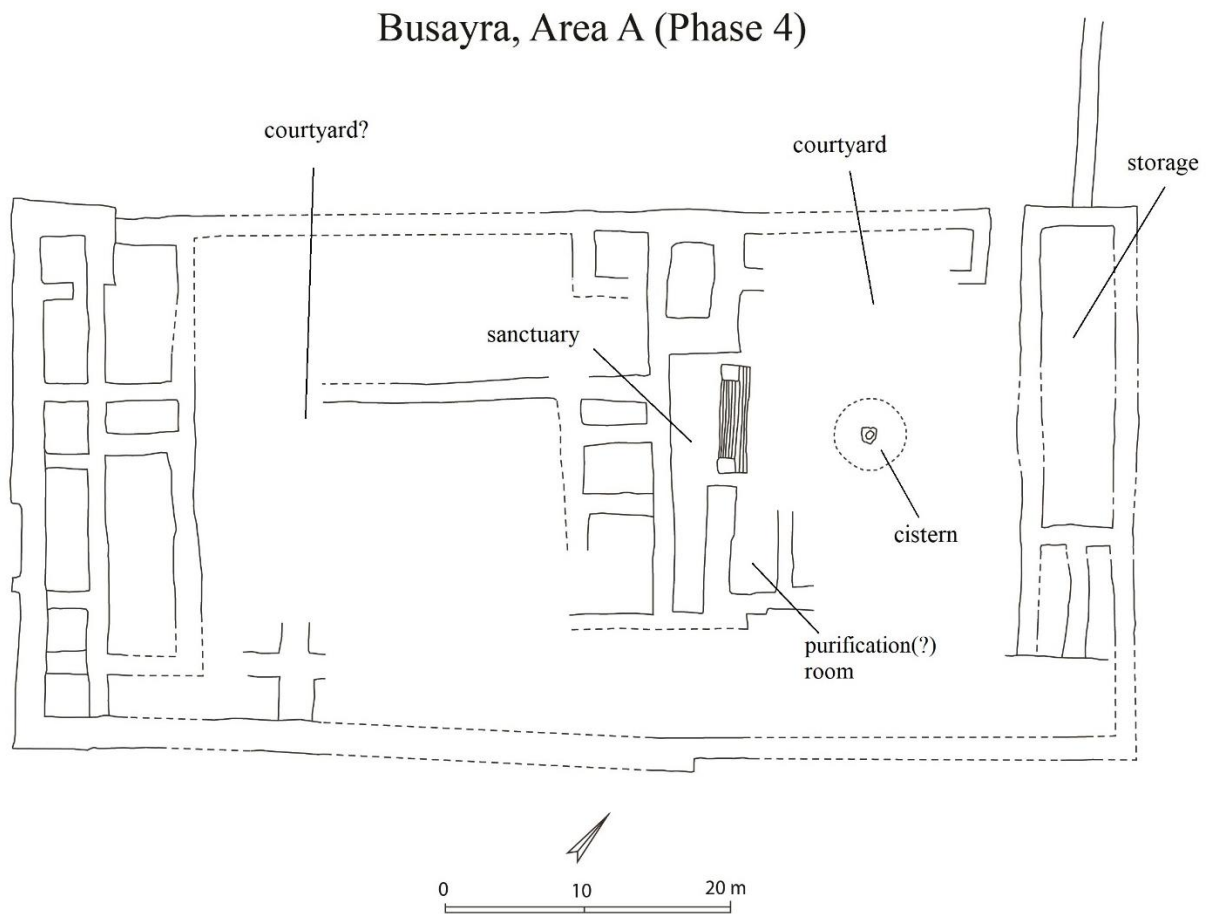
The degree to which the Deuteronomic mandate was reflected in late Iron Age Judah is debated (Herzog 2010; Fried 2002; McCarter 1997), although the centrality—at least politically—of the Jerusalem Temple, would suggest that increasing centripetal religious practices around the cult of Yahweh were a significant form of late monarchic authority and the formation of pre-exilic communal identities. Nonetheless, the nature of the dataset regarding the Temple in Jerusalem as purely textual, renders it challenging to compare with the below sites that present exclusively archaeological data. This bifurcation of differently positioned datasets presents a challenge to not only correctly represent the Jerusalem cult, but similarly to not uncritically use the Deuteronomistic agenda as a base of comparison for other datasets (e.g., Busayra) that lack both textual data and abundant material culture.

b. Busayra

The dataset regarding the temple at Busayra is nearly the inverse of that at Jerusalem. No inscriptions or texts are available, and unfortunately scant archaeological material culture from within it remains. The only substantial features by which a temple is posited are on the basis of architectural remains. Excavated on an artificially built platform on the acropolis in Area A is a large winged structure whose interpretation is somewhat unclear, but ought to be understood as a temple complex (Figure 33). Much of the ambiguity of this structure stems from the hesitance of Bienkowski, its publisher, to formally label it as such, due in part to his earlier interpretations of the structure as a palace (Bienkowski 1995b), but also as a result of the lack of any material culture that could definitively corroborate it as such (Bienkowski 2002a, 94–95).²⁵²

²⁵² Since this early hypothesis, the identification of the structure in Area C as a palace negated Area A's interpretation as such (Bienkowski 2002a, 199; Porter 2004, 384–87).

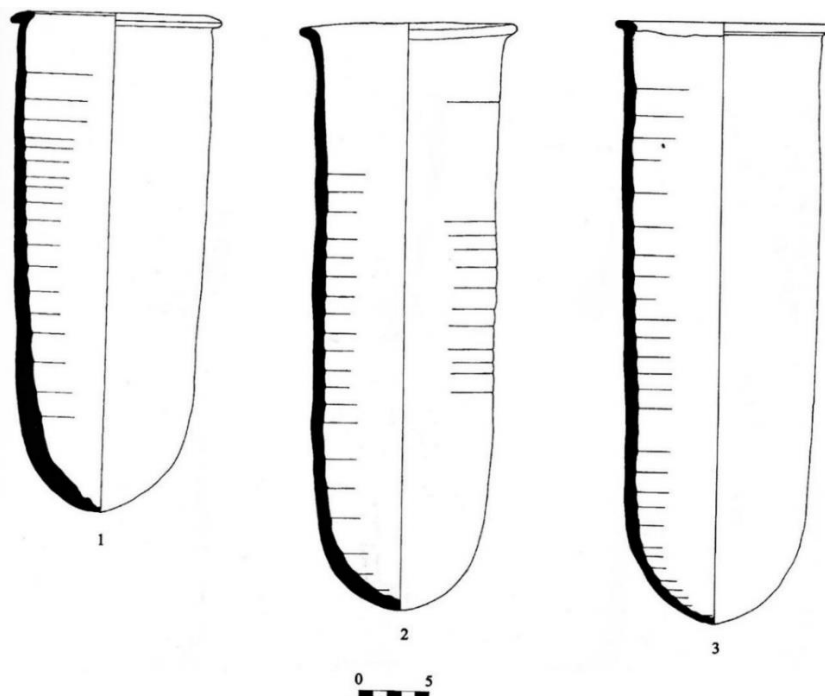
Figure 33. Area A Temple Complex at Busayra. (Figure by author after Porter 2004, Fig. 5; and Bienkowski 2002, Fig. 4.7)



Further supporting its identification as a temple, however, is a close parallel to Temple Complex 650 at Tel Miqne (Gitin and Cogan 1999, 195, fig. 3; Stern 2001, 30; Bienkowski 2002a, 94–95), as well as the tendency of major temples at Levantine sites to be located both atop a city acropolis, and in close proximity to a palace (cf., Jerusalem). Hypothesized reconstructions of the Busayra temple complex identify the long room accessed by several steps in the center of the complex to be the sanctuary, a space that was reached from a large courtyard

(see Figure 33).²⁵³ Adjacent the sanctuary was a small plastered room, interpreted by Bennett to be a “purification room” due to its proximity to the temple, and a drain that exited from it into the cistern in the center of the courtyard (Bienkowski 2002a, 94). In addition, a distinctive type of cylindrical jar was excavated within this structure that is not found elsewhere at Busayra, or in southern Transjordan (Figure 34; Oakeshott’s Jar E; Bienkowski 2002c, 313, figs. 9.47-9.49). Similar variants to this vessel have been encountered in the storerooms surrounding the sanctuary at Temple Complex 650 at Tel Miqne and in other store contexts at Beersheba and Tel Malhata, leading to the suggestion that they were used to support oil for cultic activities (Bienkowski 2002a, 94–95; S. Brown 2018b, 68–69). While these jars are circumstantial evidence, collectively these data support the interpretation of this structure as a temple.

Figure 34. Cylindrical Jar E from Busayra. (Figure after Bienkowski, Oakeshott, and Berlin 2002, Fig. 9.47)



²⁵³ Based on the limited available data, this reconstruction differs in a significant way from Temple Complex 650 at Tel Miqne. The space identified as a sanctuary at Busayra is identified as a throne room at Tel Miqne, with the Miqne sanctuary located in the location of Busayra’s potential western courtyard space (Gitin 2003, Fig. 1).

Although there remains ambiguity regarding the structure, in its maximalist extent the relative size of the complex, its position on the acropolis of the foremost city of Edom, and its proximal association with the ruling elite, would all support its classification within Schmitt's Type VIII, supra-regional temple. While Schmitt does not discuss the temple complex at Busayra, such a categorization is implied in the classification the parallel temple, Temple Complex 650 at Tel Miqne, as such (Schmitt 2014, 277). In particular, the apparent separation of this structure from the palatial structures located in Area C likewise supports its identification as supra-regional, and not merely as a palace shrine according to Schmitt's typology (2012b, 234, 237–39). As such, the significance of this structure regionally would appear to be similar to that of the temple in Jerusalem, although in its own contextually contingent fashion. While there is no textual data that would elucidate the role of a dynastic or state-sponsored cult in Edom, the location of the temple, its relative size and association with the ruling elite, again support that it likely served as an attempt to centralize religious practice. In doing so, it would serve to elevate both the power and prestige of Busayra's elite, but also work toward the creation of a unifying communal identity for persons affiliated with the cult (Porter 2004, 381–84).

The most likely candidate for the deity worshipped here would be *Qws* due to his association with Edom and the ruling elite (Porter 2004, 381–84), and through an inscription, excavated in the adjacent Area B that preserved a blessing to him (A. R. Millard 2002, 432–33, Reg. 583). These data render the identification of *Qws* within this temple as not merely tempting, but probable. Similar to the context at Jerusalem, an identification of *Qws* as the sole deity of Busayra or Edom would be inaccurate, as he was likely worshipped together with a consort,

Perhaps Asherah.²⁵⁴ Lastly, as previously described, the identification of other deities within the onomastics of Edom suggests a varied cultic landscape in which *Qws* was supreme.

2. REGIONAL/COMMUNITY RITUAL SPACES

Beyond the Jerusalem and Busayra temples, the majority of additional iconic ritual spaces evidenced within the region can be classified broadly as regional or community ritual spaces, encompassing Schmitt's Types II–VII (2014, 270–76). This grouping broadly includes all ritual spaces, including mortuary contexts (Olyan 2008, 115), that function at a level above that of the domestic family or household, but beneath that of the supra-regional or state sanctuaries. These spaces are typically used by multi-house compounds, extended kin-groups or any social grouping within the “community” range, representing a great deal of diversity in location, character, and function. The sites are discussed transregionally in alphabetic order.

a. Tel Arad

Perhaps the best example of a temple in Judah outside of Jerusalem is the one excavated at Tel Arad. The temple, measuring approximately 12 by 18 m, is relatively large in relation to the overall size of the site, comprising approximately one sixth of the available space within the inner fort. The temple was originally understood as in use from the tenth through the end of the eighth century BCE (Stratum XI–VIII), a period of 350 years (Herzog et al. 1984).²⁵⁵ However, a re-evaluation of the stratigraphy and chronology have clarified that it was only operational in Stratum X and IX, a period of 50 years spanning from the middle to the late eighth century BCE,

²⁵⁴ For further discussion on the relationship between *Qws* and Asherah, see the discussion below in relation to Horvat Qitmit.

²⁵⁵ Aharoni originally proposed that the temple went out of use in two phases, first in the cancellation of the sacrificial altar after Stratum IX, and then the *hêkāl* and *dêbîr* after Stratum VIII, interpreting its stages of disuse with the reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah (Aharoni 1968, 26; Herzog et al. 1984, 19–22; Zevit 2001, 161–62). This dating, however, is no longer widely accepted. See also (Herzog 2010; Fried 2002, 445–47).

with its termination appearing to predate the invasion of Sennacherib (Herzog 2002, 14, 49–50).²⁵⁶ The temple appears to have been intentionally decommissioned in the late eighth century BCE as valuable objects were removed and there were no corresponding signs of destruction by fire prior to intentional fill being placed over it (Herzog 2002, 66). Thus, the temple at Tel Arad is significant as a precursor to the period of focus in which no temple was present. Nonetheless, the absence of the temple in the subsequent Iron IIC period ought to be viewed with as much significance as its presence in the preceding period, particularly in its lack of continuity (Herzog 2002, 66). Due to the association of the fort to the ruling Judahite administration, an affiliation with the cult of Yahweh is presumed (Herzog 2002, 68).

Located in the northwestern corner of the fortress, the temple contained a tripartite division, with a courtyard (10 by 10 m) containing a large altar of unhewn stones (2.2 by 2.4 m), a main hall (*hékāl*; 9 by 2.7 m) with its interior wall surrounded by stone benches and entered on its broad side by two steps, and a holy of holies (*dēbîr*; 1.2 by 1.2 m) located directly across from the entrance to the main hall.²⁵⁷ The entrance to the holy of holies was accessed via three steps and was flanked by two limestone incense altars. Inside the holy of holies was a standing stone (*maššēbah*) set upon a small platform (Herzog 2002, 49–72; see also Nakhai 2001, 186–87; Holladay 1987, 256–57; King and Stager 2001, 338; Zevit 2001, 156–71, 298–300). Few ritual items were found within the temple, likely owing to its intentional cancellation, but extant material culture included an incense burner surrounded by bones (Herzog 2002, 58), an eighth

²⁵⁶ Building on an apparent mistaken reading of the stratigraphy, Ussishkin proposed that the Temple was actually in operation in Stratum VII–VI (Ussishkin 1988; Nakhai 2001, 187), though Herzog clarifies the stratigraphic sequence in favor of his proposed dates (Herzog 2002, 69–72).

²⁵⁷ A large installation 2 m south of the altar was excavated, consisting of a square made of untrimmed stones with an un-plastered elliptical depression in the middle. Due to grain elements found within the locus, Herzog interpreted it as a potential granary for the temple (Herzog 2002, 60–61).

century BCE ceramic stand with a tree motif, stone basin, and small bronze lion figurine (Nakhai 2001, 186).²⁵⁸ In addition, two shallow bowls found near the stone altar were inscribed with the letters *qôp* and a presumed *kāp*, which have been interpreted to indicate *qōdeš kōhanîm* (כהנים שקדו), or “set apart for the priests” (Herzog 2002, 56, 58; Nakhai 2001, 186).

While a relatively small space, the temple stands quite large in relation to the available real estate within the fortress. Such an organization of space in the Stratum X and IX fortress relays the importance of this structure for the inhabitants of this period. Its participants appear to most likely be military and administrative personnel stationed at the fort. Because of its martial function, it is unknown the degree to which those living beyond the fortress were allowed access to the temple. Schmitt, in his identification of the fort temple as his Type VIIB—regional sanctuary with shrine or temple, suggests that due to its central location on the road to the Arabah, it was widely used by persons living in the region and also travelers moving along the trade routes (Schmitt 2014, 275–76). As argued earlier, I do not view Tel Arad as centrally located on this east-west road, but rather as the final position on the north-south road from Jerusalem (Figure 8; see Chapter 3.C). According to this analysis, Tel Arad’s route-based significance is strongly oriented toward Jerusalem in addition to its proximity to the east-west trade route. In this way, the temple located in the fort of Arad appears closely associated with the Judahite administration, and the martial nature of the fort likely precluded significant numbers of travelers from involvement with it. The decommissioning of the temple prior to the Iron IIC, regardless of whether it was a result of Hezekiah’s cult reformation program or not, indicates that it was either no longer necessary or no longer permitted after this period. In summary, during the

²⁵⁸ Schmitt notes that several Judean Pillar Figurines were also found in the vicinity of the Temple (Schmitt 2014, 275, n. 37; after Kletter 1996, nos. 80, 442, 446, 448, 453, 456).

Iron IIC period of focus for this work, Tel Arad is notable for its *lack* of a formal ritual site, and discontinuity with the previous period.

b. Tel Beersheba

Though the physical structure of an Iron II sanctuary was not excavated at Beersheba, fragments of a horned ashlar altar excavated in secondary contexts provide evidence of its existence. These altar fragments were used as building material within the Stratum II city, suggesting that they originally came from a ritual space originating in Stratum III (early eighth century BCE), Stratum IV (late ninth century BCE), or perhaps earlier, and continuing in use until the end of Stratum III (Zevit 2001, 171, 301–2; Holladay 1987, 255–56). The location of this space within the city is unknown (Herzog 2016a, 1477). Its discontinuation has again been argued to be a result of Hezekiah’s reforms (2 Kings 18:4; Herzog 2016a, 1477–78), although the archaeology cannot confirm this interpretation (Nakhai 2001, 187; see also Fried 2002, 447–48; Herzog 2010). Regardless, prior to the invasion of Sennacherib and destruction of the city in 701 BCE, the altar and its sanctuary were already dismantled and no longer in use. This ritual space can be categorized as within Schmitt’s Type VIIB—regional sanctuary with shrine or temple (Schmitt 2014, 274–76).

Additional relevant ritual material includes a krater with the inscription “holy” (שׁדק) that was excavated in Building 76 at Tel Beersheba (Singer-Avitz 2016, 720; Beit-Arieh 2016, 415, 419–21), and suggests ritual activity at a scale above that of the household. Zevit suggests that this house may have been the home of a priest (2001, 174–75), although this remains conjecture. The decommissioning of this purported ritual site prior to the terminus of Stratum II at the end of the eighth century BCE again indicates that during the Iron IIC period, this structure—and the

city—were no longer operational. Similar to the situation at Tel Arad, the lack of continuity of the ritual site ought to be viewed with as much significance as its earlier existence.²⁵⁹

c. FBRS 27

Site FBRS 27 was found during the survey of the mountainous region between Faynan and Busayra in southern Transjordan. The site consisted of a scatter of well-preserved Iron II ceramics and a small ceramic male figurine found within a shallow crevice nearby (Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014a, 517, 521–22). The site was located on the edge of a sandstone cliff in the midst of the Ras al-Miyah mining complex and near the Wadi al-Ghuwayba access point from the Arabah to the Transjordanian plateau and Busayra. The presence of the ceramic figurine and its remote location were the factors leading to its identification as a ritual site (Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014a, 521). The size of FBRS 27 appears quite small and likely only featured occasional activity by a limited number of persons, or non-sedentary persons either working in the Ras al-Miyah region or travelling through the Wadi al-Ghuwayba. The closest correlate within Schmitt’s typology is sub-type VIIA, although the associated built elements that Schmitt presumes (benches, *maṣṣēbôt*, altars, hearths, etc.; Schmitt 2014, 274–75, 281) are not present at this site. FBRS 27 may then suggest a different type of ritual space, or different ritual behaviors.

²⁵⁹ A comparative structure to the regional sanctuary at Tel Arad and Tel Beersheba is found at Khirbat ‘Ataruz in Moab. Here, a large complex consisted of a temple structure and several external altars and “high places.” In a second phase, the temple was expanded to include flanking rooms, and the ritual space saw the erection of additional altars (Ji 2012). Significant ritual material culture included a kernos, figurines, altars, a bull statue and additional bull imagery (Ji 2012, 210–17). Following the destruction of the complex in mid-ninth century BCE—an event attributed to Mesha—a small sanctuary of a variant nature was constructed in the northeastern part of the earlier temple area and was eventually abandoned in the late eighth century BCE (Ji 2019; Bean et al. 2019). In accordance with Schmitt’s typology, the early temple appears to be of the regional type (Type VIIB), while the later sanctuary likely relates to Schmitt’s local or village shrine type (Type V; Schmitt 2014, 272–76). Similar to Tel Arad and Tel Beersheba, the ritual space at Khirbat ‘Ataruz is notable in the fact that by the late Iron Age it was no longer in use.

d. ‘En Hazeva

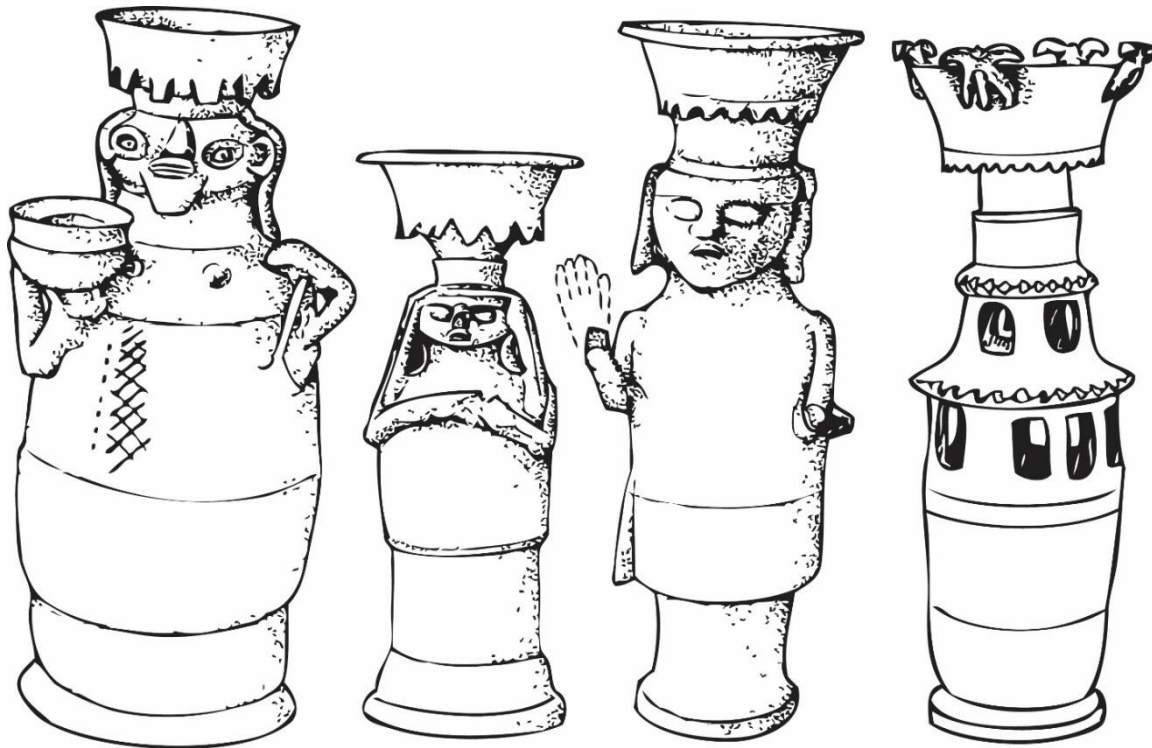
The ritual space at ‘En Hazeva is as poorly understood as it is iconic. While the final results of the excavations of the Arabah fort have not been published and only preliminary results are available (Cohen and Yisrael 1995a; 1995b; 1996; Ben-Arieh 2011), significant latitude appears to have been given in the preliminary interpretations of the ritual space (E. Darby 2017). The material culture remains come from Stratum 4, dated to the seventh and early sixth centuries BCE (Cohen and Yisrael 1995b, 223; 1995a, 26–27), although it is unclear if they are solely restricted to this period on the basis of stratigraphy or historical interpretation. There appears some ambiguity in the date of the shrine since despite being assigned to Stratum 4, it appears to be included in depictions of Stratum 5, and constructed in relation to Stratum 5 architecture (Cohen and Yisrael 1995b, 230; 1996, 43).

The most significant ritual material culture from ‘En Hazeva was excavated within a favissa at the foot of the Stratum 5 fortifications, near a “U” shaped structure interpreted as a shrine. The vessels appear to have been placed intact into the pit as all pieces were recovered, but were then smashed by the ashlar blocks that were found above them (Cohen and Yisrael 1995b, 224).²⁶⁰ In total 67 clay objects and vessels were found, in addition to seven stone altars. The ceramic vessels include anthropomorphic and non-anthropomorphic stands, pedestalled bowl incense burners, chalices, perforated tripod cup incense burners, incense shovels, bowls, and pomegranates (Figure 35; Cohen and Yisrael 1995b, 224–25). A stone sculpture that may be representative of a deity was also excavated (Figure 36; Cohen and Yisrael 1995b, 225). Much of

²⁶⁰ The smashed vessels are interpreted as the result of Judahite religious reforms, in this case the reforms associated with Josiah (2 Kings 22–23; Cohen and Yisrael 1995b, 225; 1996, 42), although this interpretation is purely conjecture.

the ritual material culture was associated with the burning of incense, a significant element of religious behavior in this region, and notable for its relation to the South Arabian trade.

Figure 35. Various stands excavated in the favissa at ‘En Hazeva. (Figure after Beck 1996, figs. 2, 4)

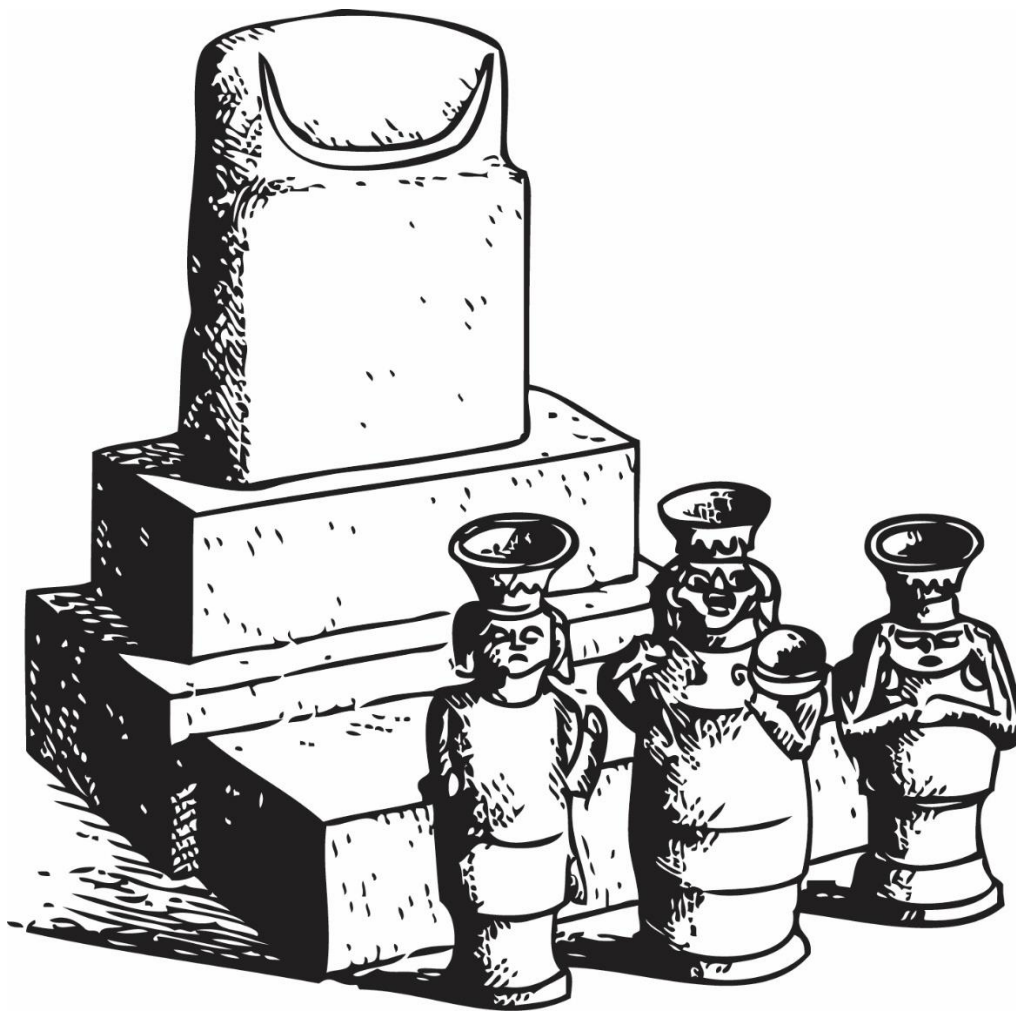


There is a high degree of similarity between the ‘En Hazeva vessels and those excavated at Horvat Qitmit (Beck 1996; Ben-Arieh 2011). Similarly, the “denticulated fringe” on many of these vessels bear strong similarities to other sites yielding Edomite material culture and to elements of the Busayra Painted Ware assemblage (Cohen and Yisrael 1995a, 26–27). Other purported ties to Edom have been argued on the basis of the script on a seal that appears to be Edomite, and the “foreign” nature of the name (see Chapter 6.B; Cohen and Yisrael 1995b, 224).²⁶¹ While no deity is explicitly identified at the site, the discovery of an incised goring bull

²⁶¹ Cohen and Yisrael suggest that this may be name of the Edomite priest at the site (Cohen and Yisrael 1995b, 224), although this is speculation and an Arabian origin for the name may be more likely (Naveh 2001; Beck 1996, 109).

is suggestive of a weather deity—perhaps *Qws*—an association that is supported by similarities to Horvat Qitmit, although there are also North Arabian influences in the ‘En Hazeva assemblage (Beck 1996, 107–10). There is no evidence for a female deity as the anthropomorphic figures present appear to represent priests or worshippers and not deities (Cohen and Yisrael 1995b, 225; Beck 1996, 111).

Figure 36. Hypothesized reconstruction of the stone stele at ‘En Hazeva. (Figure after Beck 1996, Fig. 7)



In terms of the overall function of the site, its presence outside the fortress walls renders it immediately different than the sanctuary at Tel Arad, to which access would have been far more restricted. The nature of the interior space at ‘En Hazeva is not fully understood, although

the extramural nature of this shrine suggests its use by caravaneers or traders passing through the region who may have had limited access to the interior of the fort. ‘En Hazeva’s position along the major east-west road from Busayra to the northeastern Negev, and its position at the northern end of the Arabah Valley, further support the extramural shrine’s use by diverse persons moving through the region. Petrographic analyses of the assemblage from the favissa indicate a homogeneous petrofabric with origins most likely in the Hazeva formation. The origin of these clays thus indicates a local context of production rather than an importation from external regions including the southern Transjordanian plateau (Cohen-Weinberger 2011). In all, a categorization as belonging to Schmitt’s Type VII—regional sanctuary, appears warranted (Schmitt 2014, 275–76).

e. Tel ‘Ira

At Tel ‘Ira, a cemetery consisting of approximately thirty tombs was identified on the eastern slope of the site, ten of which were excavated.²⁶² The majority of these tombs have been robbed in recent times (Beit-Arieh, Freud, and Baron 1999, 121–31). The tombs were rock cut, and in general consisted of stair *dromos* leading into one or more chambers surrounded by burial benches, although there is a fair degree of latitude in the exact layout of chambers and benches. Several of the tombs (Tomb 14 and 23) exhibit material remains of greater value including silver and bronze jewelry and it is unknown how many of the looted tombs contained similar elite goods. The prominent location of the cemetery below the gateway of the site likely indicates that the individuals and families buried there were important at Tel ‘Ira and perhaps influential in the region. The ceramic finds from the tombs correspond with the ceramics of Stratum VII and VI on the site and thus a date within the eighth and seventh centuries BCE is tenable. Several

²⁶² Burial data from this region is very limited, restricted to Tel ‘Ira and Wadi Fidan 40 discussed below.

exceptions to this date include Tomb 15, which appears to date earlier in the Iron II, and Tomb 23, dated to the Babylonian period (Beit-Arieh, Freud, and Baron 1999, 167).

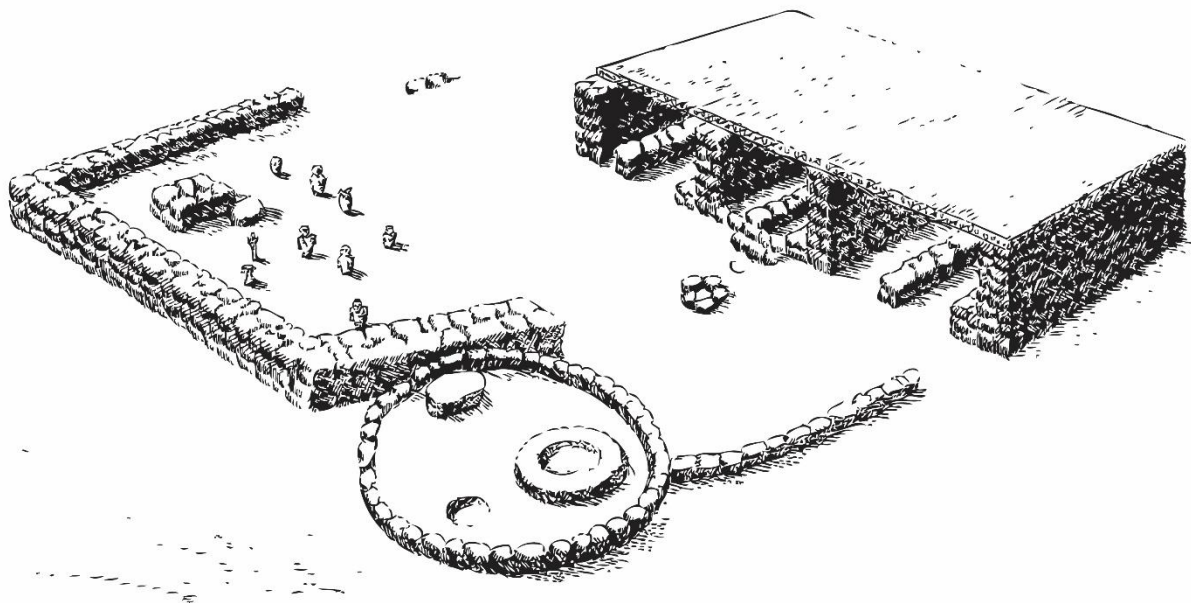
The tombs are located on the eastern slope of the site below the gate complex and would have been in close proximity to significant foot traffic by those entering and exiting the site. As such, these tombs were located within a prominent and visible space that would have been known to all affiliated with the site. Burial spaces as the locale for ritual activities can be demonstrated at a number of sites (e.g., Tel ‘Eton, Jerusalem Caves I–III; Zevit 2001, 206–10, 242–47; Schmitt 2014, 272), with practices including the veneration of, and communing with, the dead by means of commemoration and ritual meals (Lewis 2014; Struble and Herrmann 2009; Sanders 2013; Bloch-Smith 1992, 122–26). Indeed, the ceramics attested at the tombs include substantial numbers of serving vessels, in addition to lamps and a number of small juglets that likely contained valued substances such as perfumes and unguents (Beit-Arieh, Freud, and Baron 1999, 138, 141, 144, 151, 156–59, 166). Furthermore, the proximity of these tombs to the city exemplifies the embeddedness of the mortuary landscape within not only the physical space of the site but the behavioral world of the inhabitants of Tel ‘Ira. The ritual elements of the cemetery can be categorized as a part of Schmitt’s Type IV—places for the cult of the dead (Schmitt 2014, 272).

f. Horvat Qitmit

Located atop a small hill on the southern side of the Beersheba Valley, the site of Horvat Qitmit consisted of two areas of activity, Complex A and Complex B. Complex A, appearing to be the main sanctuary area, consisted first of a rectangular structure that contained three parallel longitudinal rooms each measuring approximately 2 by 4 m (Figure 37). Each room had a bench along its east wall, and standing at a right angle to the entrance of each room, a small segment of

a wall appearing to function as a podium or a table (Beit-Arieh 1995a, 9–12). Found within the structure was pottery, including a substantial number of the cooking pots excavated at the site, several figurines, and animal bones. The deposition of these finds within and above the ash of the destruction debris suggests that the rooms were periodically cleaned, perhaps making use of a *favissa* (Beit-Arieh 1995a, 12–13).²⁶³

Figure 37. Artistic reconstruction of Complex A at Horvat Qitmit. (Figure after Beit-Arieh 1995a, Fig. 9.1)

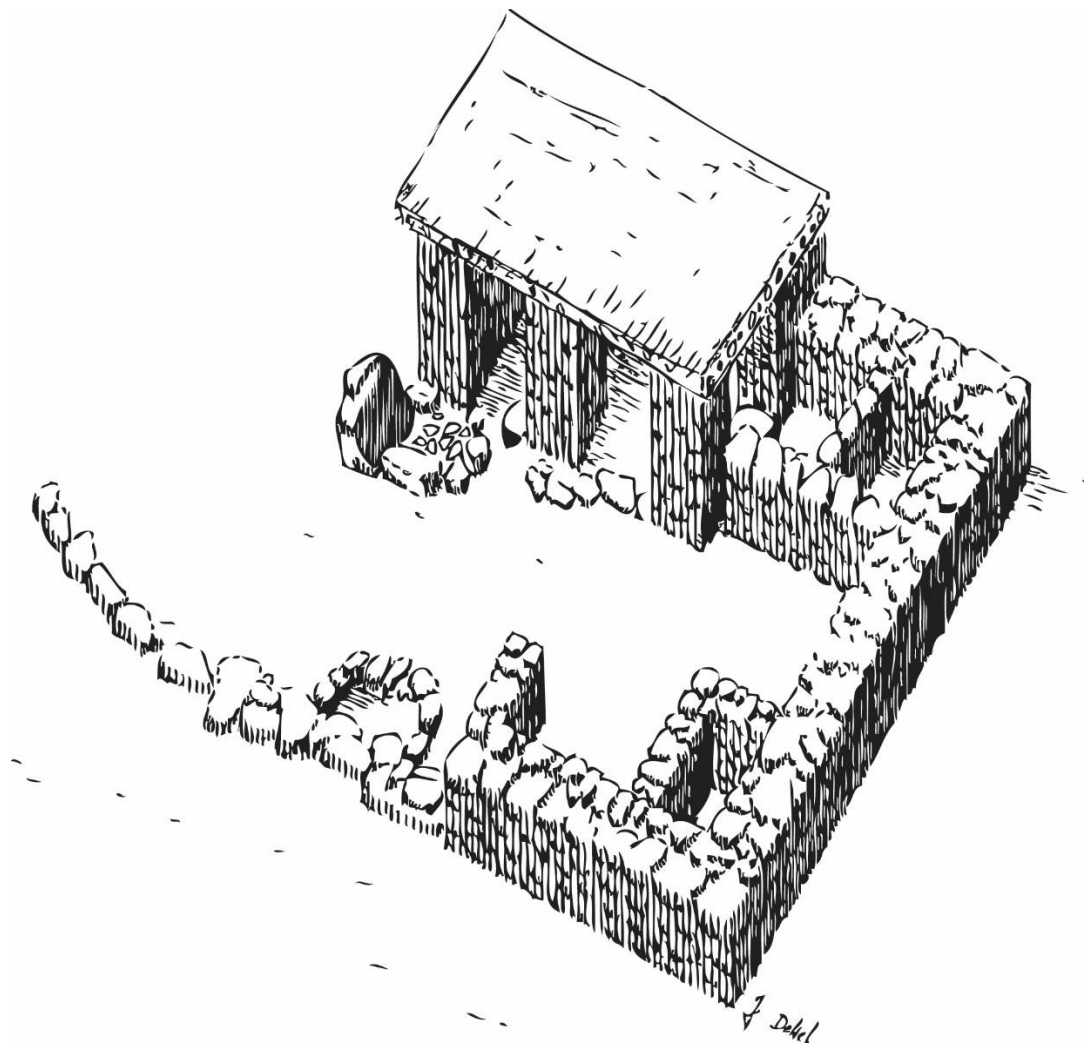


To the south of this structure was a stone platform, interpreted as a *bāmā*, measuring 1.25 by 1 m and surrounded by a stone enclosure. It appears that the bedrock within this enclosure surrounding the stone platform had been plastered in antiquity. The majority of iconic ritual material culture from Qitmit was found within this enclosure, and in a cluster to the south. These finds include: clay figurines, a horned deity head, ceramic stands, ceramic vessels, and bronze, and stone artifacts were found within this (Beit-Arieh 1995a, 13–18). The final major element of

²⁶³ A large concentration of pottery (Locus 80) on the edge of a cliff 70 m to the southeast of the site is tentatively identified as a *favissa* (Beit-Arieh 1995a, 26).

Complex A, located to the east of the aforementioned platform (*bāmâ*) enclosure, was less well-preserved, but appears to have consisted of a flint-slab topped altar (0.9 by 0.7 m), a round basin (1 m diameter), and an 0.8 m deep pit all surrounded by a poorly preserved wall. A relatively small number of figurines was found in this second enclosure, perhaps attributable to a higher degree of erosion (Beit-Arieh 1995a, 18–20).

Figure 38. Artistic reconstruction of Complex B at Horvat Qitmit. (Figure after Beit-Arieh 1995a, Fig. 9.2)

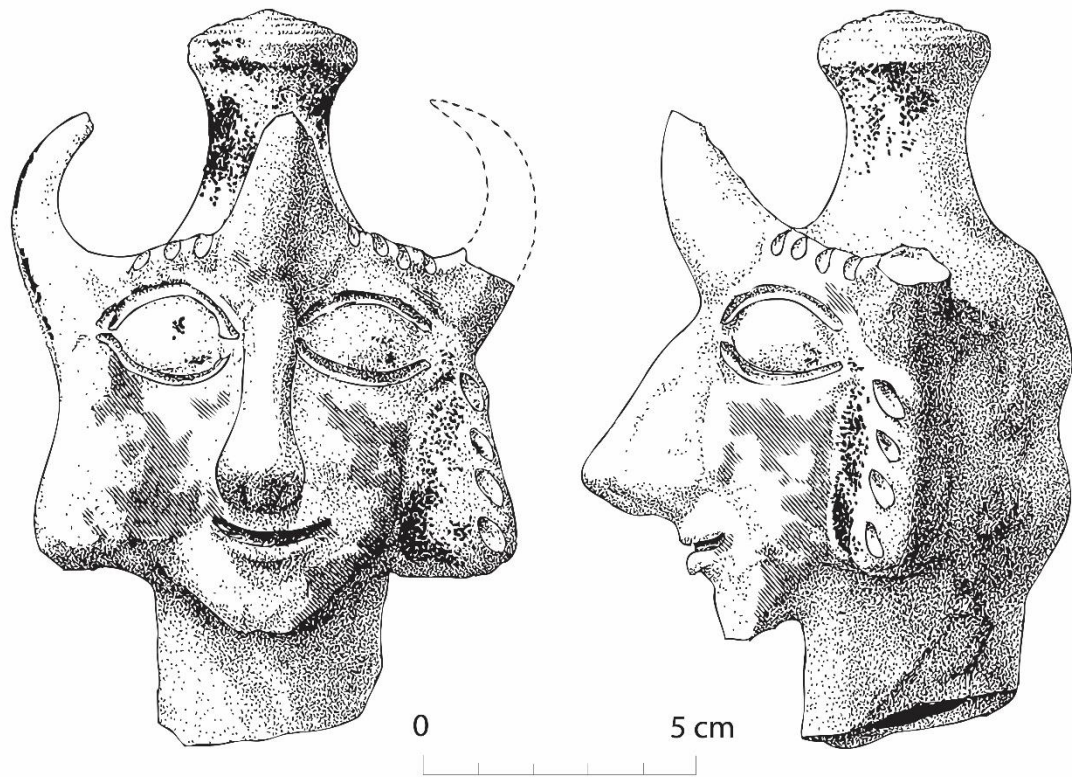


Complex B, located 15 m to the north, consisted of a roughly square structure whose inner dimensions measured 8.5 by 8 m (Figure 38). A series of rooms were located on the west, north and northeast sides of the inner structure, with the southeastern quadrant appearing to have

served as an open-air courtyard. In the rooms in the northwest corner of the structure, large numbers of faunal remains, ash, and fragments of cooking pots suggest that this was a space for food preparation (Beit-Arieh 1995a, 20–24). Similarly, significant amounts of ceramic material culture and faunal remains were excavated within the courtyard attesting to its function in antiquity. On the southern side of the structure, between the courtyard and the rooms to the west, a large trapezoidal upright flint boulder was interpreted as a standing stone (*maṣṣēbah*) with the stone paved area surrounding it interpreted as a space for votive offerings (Beit-Arieh 1995a, 20–24). In both Complex A and Complex B there appear to be two phases of activity, although these are only attested architecturally and there is little basis by which to determine the length of time in which the structures were in use (Beit-Arieh 1995a, 9–26). On the basis of the ceramic forms, the activity at Qitmit, at least in its later phase, appears to fit within the seventh and early sixth centuries BCE (Freud and Beit-Arieh 1995, 254–55).

Two additional stone enclosures are present at the site. The larger is located to the northwest of Complex A and is elliptical in shape with a diameter of 11 m at its narrowest extent and 13 m at its widest extent. Only a single course of fieldstones is preserved. Limited material culture within it included ceramic fragments. The function of the feature is not clear, and while it appears on its face to serve as an animal enclosure, the presence of a bench along the interior of the enclosure wall and a large stone (*maṣṣēbah?*), suggests a potential ritual role similar to the other enclosures. A second, smaller elliptical enclosure was identified to the southwest of Complex A whose diameter measured between 3.5 and 6.5 m. A similar bench and two large stones, perhaps *maṣṣēbôt*, were found within it. This enclosure was similarly interpreted as a type of ritual space, although its function was not entirely clear (Beit-Arieh 1995a, 24–26).

Figure 39. Head of a female deity excavated in Complex A. (Figure after Beck 1995, figs. 3.53, 3.54)



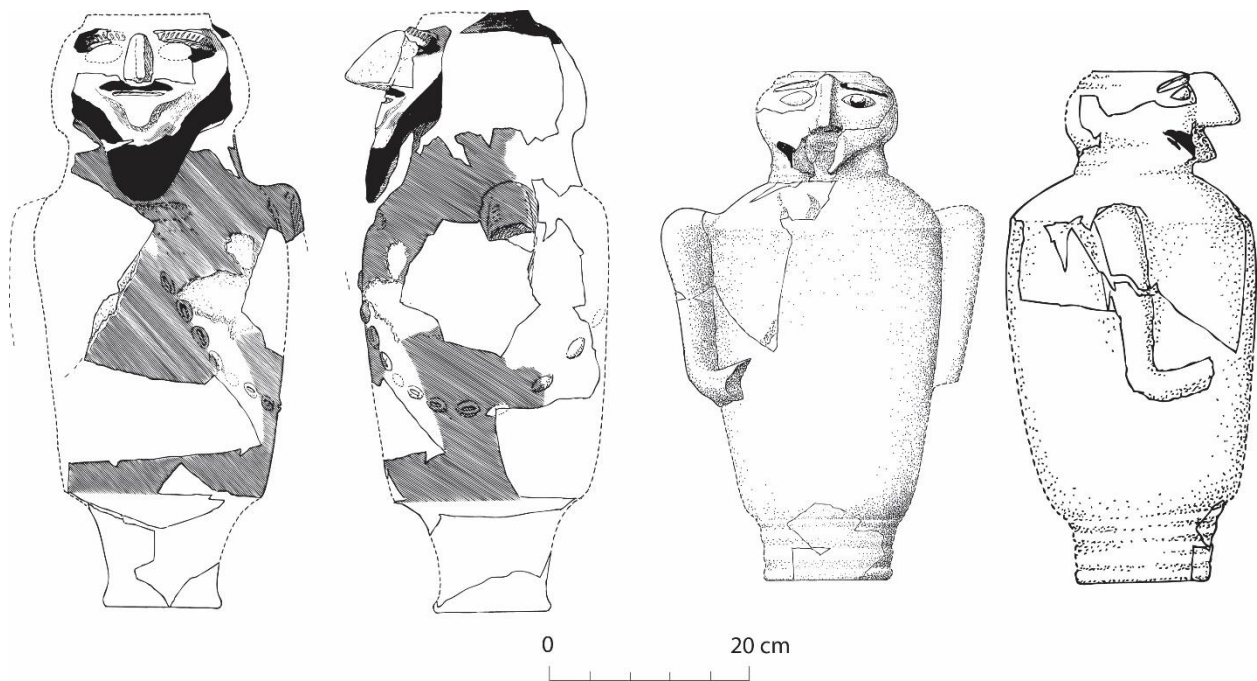
Qitmit is probably best known for its iconic anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figures. Most prominent is the statue head of a horned female deity (Figure 39), and the hollow jar-shaped anthropomorphic figures that likely represented priests or worshippers (Figure 40).²⁶⁴ Additional ritual material culture include solid male and female figurines, a large variety of zoomorphic figures including bovids and a sphynx, musical instruments, architectural/cultic stands with many human, floral, and pomegranate decorative features that were at one point affixed to them (Beck 1995).²⁶⁵ The most significant influences are argued to be Transjordanian,

²⁶⁴ The statue head is identified as female on the basis of its clear absence of a beard, and the stylistic features of its hairdo, both of which clearly contrast with the features of the male statuary at the site (Beck 1995, 78–80, 120–21).

²⁶⁵ While the hollow anthropomorphic statues present both male and female forms, it is interesting to note that among the solid figurines, all mold-cast examples were female, and all the solid hand-modelled examples were male, indicating a distinct divergence in the modes of production of these figures. Mold-cast examples, however, are

although other influences including Phoenician and south Philistian elements are recognizable. The assemblage appears divergent from elements common in Judah, and in particular, at nearby Tel Arad (Beck 1995, 185–87). In terms of deities presented at the site, the horned head of a goddess (No. 68) is suggested to have perhaps been the central deity at the site (Figure 39), and two additional deities are likely represented in the material culture assemblage, a male (No. 60) and a female (No. 110; Beck 1995, 187). Inscriptional evidence suggests that *Qws* was worshipped as well (Beit-Arieh 1995b). In light of the cumulative data, Beck suggests that a weather deity, perhaps *Qws*, and a female deity, perhaps a variant of Astarte/Ishtar or Asherah were the featured deities at Horvat Qitmit (Beck 1995, 188–89). The multiple enclosures and the tripartite division of the structure in Complex A also suggest that the architecture of the site reflects the worship of multiple deities.

Figure 40. Anthropomorphic male figures excavated in Complex A. (Figure after Beck 1995, figs., 3.17, 3.19, 3.22, 3.23)



present in a much lower quantity than surrounding contemporaneous sites. Similarly, the horse figurines popular in Judah are likewise absent from Qitmit (Beck 1995, 180, 185).

A noteworthy feature of Horvat Qitmit is its relatively central location within the valley and its visibility from many of the major sites in the area including Tel ‘Ira, Tel Malhata, Tel ‘Aroer, and Tel Arad, and similarly their visibility from Horvat Qitmit (Beit-Arieh 1993, 1230). As has long been suggested by Israel Finkelstein, Horvat Qitmit likely fulfilled the role of a wayside shrine for diverse persons moving through the region, many of whom likely held ties to southern Transjordan (Finkelstein 1992b). It is essential to note, however, that the petrographic identification of the majority of vessels as of local production, and fundamentally Horvat Qitmit’s physical location in the northeastern Negev, identifies this shrine as a feature of the *local* landscape, and frequented by persons and communities local to the region. Thus, it cannot easily be regarded as an intrusive element. What is more significant, and as will be discussed in greater detail below, is how such a shrine was able to, or allowed to exist within a landscape traditionally interpreted as not receptive to non-Yahwistic practices. Nonetheless, the requisite features of Horvat Qitmit and its position within the landscape of the northeastern Negev identify it as Schmitt’s Type VII—regional sanctuary (Schmitt 2014, 274–76; 2012b, 234–37).

1. Comparanda: WT-13

While Horvat Qitmit appears somewhat unique as a sanctuary in the region of Judah, this type of structure and space finds several parallels in Transjordan. A comparison may first be drawn to the site of Wadi-Thamad Site 13 (henceforth WT-13) in Moab (Daviau 2017; Dolan 2007). Located on a hilltop overlooking a large bend in the Wadi Walla the site has been interpreted as a wayside shrine and presents two major phases of activity dated to the early Iron Age (Iron IIA) and to the eighth and seventh centuries BCE (Daviau 2017, 12, 39, 72). The early phase is characterized by a series of cooking installations and substantial number of faunal remains (predominantly *Ovis/Capra*; Daviau 2017, 22–39; Lipovitch 2017). The second phase saw the

construction of a single large rectangular structure measuring approximately 13.8 by 7 m, where the practices of food preparation continued and were supplemented by the appearance of large numbers of votive offerings and assorted ritual material culture including large wheel-made hollow statues (Dolan 2007, 177; Daviau 2017, 39–75; 2001b; 2012, 443).²⁶⁶ The overall assemblage indicates external influences, and considering the site’s geographic location along a secondary trade route, WT-13 likely served traders and travelers moving through the region in addition to its local participants (Dolan and Edwards 2020). In this way, WT-13 appears to function similar to the sites of Horvat Qitmit and ‘En Hazeva, and can be classified as Type VIIB—regional sanctuaries with shrines or temples (Schmitt 2012b, 275–76).

2. Comparanda: Tell Damiyah

Similar to WT-13, the site of Tell Damiyah appears to have held a ritual function for traders and travelers. Located at an important ford of the Jordan River, the ritual space at Tell Damiyah consists of a mudbrick building that measured 14 by 6 m with two apparent raised platform spaces within it (Petit and Kafafi 2016). Among a diverse set of ritual material culture, of note are two anthropomorphic wheel-made statues, which though rare within the southern Levant, are best paralleled at the sites of Horvat Qitmit, ‘En Hazeva, and WT-13 (Petit and Kafafi 2016, 24). The sanctuary at Tell Damiyah was destroyed in a fire sometime in the seventh century BCE. Its position at an important ford of the Jordan River suggests it served an important interregional function for traders and travellers (Petit and Kafafi 2016, 25), of a type similar to Schmitt’s Type VII—regional sanctuary (Schmitt 2014, 274–76). In this way, Tell Damiyah, both in function, style, and material culture, holds strong similarities to Horvat Qitmit, ‘En Hazeva, and WT-13.

²⁶⁶ While no petrographic studies have been performed on the statues, their INAA signature suggests local production, separate from the similar statues found at Horvat Qitmit and ‘En Hazeva (Gunneweg and Balla 2017).

g. Wadi Fidan 40

Though not contemporaneous with the late Iron Age focus of this work, the mortuary data from Wadi Fidan 40 is relevant for a brief investigation as it presents one of the only mortuary datasets of the Iron II period from southern Transjordan. Here, at Wadi Fidan 40, there are as many as 1380 graves present with 245 examples excavated—all dating to the Iron IIA (Beherec, Najjar, and Levy 2014; T. Levy 2009; Beherec 2011).²⁶⁷ These burials consist of individual stone-lined cist graves with some evidencing stone paving and stone capstones, and frequently either aniconic or loosely anthropomorphic standing stones, (Beherec, Najjar, and Levy 2014, 703–10). The cists graves were designed to contain a single individual, usually, though not exclusively, in a flexed or semi-flexed position. Similarly, secondary burials were relatively common (Beherec, Najjar, and Levy 2014, 682–85). Many individuals were covered with a shroud of animal skin and goat hair, and grave goods varied but included few metal objects, which appear to have held the greatest value, as well as beads, pendants, and food remains. Ceramic vessels were quite rare and surprisingly, more wooden vessels were encountered than ceramic (Beherec, Najjar, and Levy 2014, 683–703). Several burials of note include a child burial (Grave 371) that contained the greatest number of metal items, likely reflecting inherited status. The burial of a fully extended woman (Grave 92) was one of the wealthiest (Beherec, Najjar, and Levy 2014, 690–91), and pollution studies on the skeletal remains indicate that high status women buried at Wadi Fidan 40 were involved in copper production (Beherec et al. 2016, 81). Many of the beads in the burials and other features indicate extensive contact with Arabia (Beherec, Najjar, and Levy 2014, 712–13).

²⁶⁷ For a discussion of the limited assemblage of other burial contexts from southern Transjordan, see Beherec, Najjar, and Levy (2014, 671–77). These have not been included in this work as they all appear to postdate the context at hand.

These burials date to the Iron IIA, several centuries before the period of focus for this work, however, the paucity of burial data from the region of Edom warrants their inclusion.²⁶⁸ The sheer quantity of graves in addition to evidence of secondary burial (Beherec, Najjar, and Levy 2014, 679–80), indicate that this mortuary landscape was utilized by a significant number of people for multiple generations, and thus indicating the embeddedness of this area within the ritual mindset of the community that used it. As such, this mortuary context would fall within Schmitt’s Type IV—places for the cult of the dead (Schmitt 2014, 272). The lack of mortuary contexts of subsequent centuries precludes a more robust understanding of mortuary contexts from the kingdom of Edom.

h. Ambiguous Ritual Spaces (Ba‘ja III, Jabal as-Suffaha, and es-Sela‘)

The identification of additional ritual spaces on the southern Transjordanian plateau are limited by their lack of published data and ambiguous identification. At Ba‘ja III, the first of these potential spaces, several round holes with grooves leading toward them were identified. Their original surveyors suggested that they could have held “rain water, blood or some other sacrificial liquid,” implying a ritual function (Lindner and Farajat 1987, 176). No additional data exists, although it may be surmised that these installations just as likely served a domestic or food processing function (Bienert, Lamprichs, and Vieweger 2000, 127). In yet greater tantalizing ambiguity, at Jabal as-Suffaha an open sanctuary dating to the Islamic period was encountered at the highest point on the mountain. However, within the ritual space, Roman-Nabatean and Iron II sherds were encountered, and due to the prominent location of the site, it was suggested by its surveyors that it may have held significance as a sacred space in earlier periods including the Iron II (Lindner et al. 1998, 227). Unfortunately, this hypothesis remains

²⁶⁸ These burials at Wadi Fidan 40 in their stone-lined cist form are reminiscent of the stone-slab covered cist tradition attested at certain contemporaneous sites in the Negev, particularly Horvat Ritma (Meshel 1977, 112–13).

unsubstantiated. Lastly, at es-Sela', in the center of the plateaued site, an isolated rock standing 2 m high was carved into a staircase that did not appear to go anywhere and was surrounded by rock-cut walls with water channels. An additional tiered rock-cut platform is present at the site, reminiscent of cultic features at Petra (Lindner 1992, 143–44, 159). The functions of these features, however, remains unclear, as does their period of use.²⁶⁹ These sites remain ambiguous and poorly understood ritual spaces, if they are in fact such. If such a determination is positive, challenges remain in determining their periods of use as either Iron II or Nabatean and whether they ought to be discussed as related to domestic or more regional patterns of behavior.

3. HOUSEHOLD/FAMILY RITUAL PRACTICES

The final scale at which ritual practices will be explored is the most local level, that of the household or family. In its original inception, the recognition of ritual behavior that did not reflect the “official” religion of Israel/Judah as promoted in the Deuteronomist’s vision led to the creation of the concept of “popular” religion, beneath which much significant early scholarship was conducted (Ackerman 1992; Dever 2008; 1997). While groundbreaking in its recognition that archaeological data presented evidence of a diversity of ritual behaviors that were not sanctioned by the Deuteronomist’s account, the term “popular religion” was challenged as it cast such practices into the realm of deviance, as evidence of a “non-normative” pattern of ritual behavior and betraying Jewish and Christian biases (Stavropoulou 2010; Zevit 2003; 2001, 658–64). Rather, using the term “household” or “family” religion avoids the assumption of a duality in ritual behavior, and works to situate the practices within a context that can be explored not only textually, but archaeologically.

²⁶⁹ Substantial Nabatean finds have also been found atop es-Sela' (Lindner 1992, 143–44).

Indeed, by conceptualizing ritual behavior in relation to the household, it can be applied to the textually and archaeologically explored concept of the *bêṯ 'āb*, or “the house of the father” (Schloen 2001; Stager 1985). In discussing ancient households, it is essential to remind ourselves that the *bêṯ 'āb* does not necessarily neatly correlate to a heterosexual, monogamous husband, wife, and their biological children. Households are complex. Extended family, slaves, freedpersons, and resident workers could and would have been present in varying degrees, as would additional wives, concubines, and non-biological children. Similarly, western modernist notions of a distinction between the spheres of work and home, and of only the elder males participating in “work” need to be eliminated (Stowers 2008, 5–7). Likewise, using the concept of the family unit as the locus of analysis, research can move beyond modernist western tendencies to overemphasize and isolate the individual at the expense of the kin or social group within which these persons lived (van der Toorn 1996, 3).²⁷⁰

Yet, despite these necessary critiques, even within the household there were multiple modes of functioning and multiple contexts in which ritual behavior can be identified. Nakhai emphasizes, for example, the level of women within the household and how gendered practices may reflect a specific subset of family ritual behavior (Nakhai 2014, 53). Similarly, while some elements of family ritual behavior may reflect a concern with the immediate and local, such as Judean Pillar Figurines (henceforth JPF) and their apparent relation to apotropaic ritual (E. Darby 2014), other elements of household ritual such as model shrines may be reflective of regional or state sanctuaries (Olyan 2008, 116–17). These divergences indicate that even in their diversity, certain localized elements of ritual behavior may be reflective of, and entangled with, broader

²⁷⁰ See also the challenge to the concept of “personal piety” as earlier conceived by Albertz (1978).

ideologies. More substantive studies of types of material culture that can be associated with ritual activities has been explored elsewhere (Schmitt 2012a, 60–74; Daviau 2001a; 2012).

In this way, we return again to the concept of the embeddedness of religion within the fabric of everyday activities and the inability to separate it from other categories of behavior (Nakhai 2014, 56). Deities and the supernatural were an integral and very real component of the landscape, and communication or reaction to them was a constant in life (Stowers 2008, 8–9). Nakhai notes that while material culture such as altars, stands, zoomorphic or anthropomorphic figurines, and specialized vessels may easily be identified with ritual behavior, other material culture such as non-specialized pottery, lamps, arrowheads or faunal remains may have also been related to such behavior depending on local beliefs, ritual requirements or available resources (Nakhai 2014, 57).

Indeed, it is challenging and likely impossible to define every context in which ritual behavior was practiced in the domestic sphere as religious sentiment and associated behavior were embedded in every aspect of life. In this context, Schmitt's typology of ritual spaces is of high utility. For example, while family ritual is categorized as Type I, it is subdivided into two components. The first, Type IA describes simply the house as a context in which ritual behavior (intertwined with everyday actions) will occur. Spaces of food production are especially highlighted as contexts in which explicit ritual material has been identified, although the broadness of the category provides latitude for diversity. Such ritual activity has been well articulated at neighboring sites such as Tell Jawa (Daviau 2003, 254–56; 2014, 108–17) and Khirbat al-Mudayna Thamad (Daviau 2014, 118–24). In contrast, Type IB—domestic shrines, relates to elements within the house that appear to be more formalized such as a bench or platform where specialized objects including altars and stands may be clustered together

(Schmitt 2012b, 224–28; 2014, 267–69). Examples of such spaces have been well demonstrated at sites such as Tel Halif (Hardin 2010, 124–60; 2004) and Tell en-Nasbeh (Brody 2009; Nakhai 2014, 60–61). Thus, we now turn to the material culture record and contexts where such behavior may be explored. The following examples are far from exhaustive but provide rather, a window into household ritual contexts of the late Iron Age.²⁷¹ The sites are discussed transregionally, in alphabetic order.

a. Busayra

From Busayra, ample data indicates patterns of ritual activity within domestic contexts. The most substantial of this data derives almost exclusively from Area B, an area associated with domestic activity, albeit located in an elite space on the acropolis of the site (Bienkowski 2002a, 138).

Here a significant number of female figurines were encountered in distribution patterns consistent with that of integrated family ritual (Sedman 2002, 367–75). While sharing the broad characteristics of JPF's in their presentation of females with accentuated breasts, the types from Busayra bear characteristics that cumulatively mark them as of a variant tradition, with greater similarities rather to Tawilan and Horvat Qitmit (Sedman 2002, 367, 375; Bienkowski and Sedman 2001, 312). The majority of these moldmade figurines hold hands over their breasts, are pregnant, wear a cloak, and have both legs portrayed (Sedman 2002, 367). Additional figurines, again almost exclusively from the domestic contexts of Area B, include male figurines, several intersex figurines, and zoomorphic figurines, mostly horses or camels (Sedman 2002, 375–79, 381–91). While not all of these figurines may definitively be categorized as associated with explicit ritual/cultic behavior *per se*, these examples demonstrate the embeddedness of ritual activities within domestic life (Type IA (Schmitt 2014, 267–69).

²⁷¹ Due to insufficient data, Umm al-Biyara, Ghrareh, Tell el-Kheleifeh, Horvat Tov, and Horvat Radum will not be discussed.

b. Tel ‘Aroer

In the excavated spaces at Tel ‘Aroer, all ritual material culture derives from domestic or non-formal ritual contexts. In the majority of cases, these contexts are clearly associated with domestic household activities spanning from the eighth century BCE through to the terminus of occupation at the site in the early sixth century BCE. Evidence from the eighth century BCE consists primarily of female figurines—JPFs and others—integrated into domestic contexts (e.g., Thareani 2011b, pls. 1; 25).²⁷² In two separate contexts associated with the caravanserai of areas A and D, two small stone altars were found that likely demonstrate ritual activity in this area (Thareani 2011b, pls. 49; 77). Perhaps the most enigmatic context evidencing household ritual from this period is a stone lined pit from the intramural Area B where a JPF, two bone spatulas, a loomweight, two juglets, two bottles, a lamp, a krater, a flask, and a storejar, were excavated. (Thareani 2011b, 34; Pl. 53). The reason for the pattern of deposition is unknown, but the association of the JPF with implements related to textile production is noteworthy.

The seventh century BCE contexts present ritual material culture assemblages similar to the preceding period and again integrated with items of everyday use (Thareani 2011b, pls. 106, 110, 113, 119, 122, 135, 154, 161, 211, 230).²⁷³ Several contexts, however, bear more detailed discussion. First, the excavation of Locus 339 in a small room of Area D west, revealed a JPF, part of a zoomorphic figurine, a stand, numerous bowls, a cooking pot, a seal depicting a schematic bull head, a bead, and two spatulas (Thareani 2011b, 86; Pl. 125). While providing an

²⁷² While frequently discussed in relation to seventh century BCE ritual contexts, JPF's are also attested in eighth century BCE (Kletter 1996, 40–42).

²⁷³ The presence of zoomorphic figurines together with objects related to textile production occurs in multiple discrete contexts (Thareani 2011b, pls. 125, 140, 161, 177). Most notable is Locus 114 in Area A, where the remains of four zoomorphic figurines are found within the extramural caravanserai together with multiple loomweights, a spatula, and an iron rod (Thareani 2011b, 30; Pl. 140).

excellent example of ritual material culture integrated with culinary ceramics, textile production implements and a seal, it is notable that the cooking pot is of the CP2 “Judahite” type, and many of the bowls are decorated in the BPW style. Building on the analysis of the previous chapter, the integration of household ritual behavior including a JPF with the divergent forms of culinary ceramics highlights the entangled behaviors and identities at play within this area. Similarly, in Locus 835 from Area D East, the body of a JPF was found with several loomweights, a lamp, cup, a decorated bottle, and a number of sherds in the BPW tradition (Thareani 2011b, Pl. 221).

Lastly, in Locus 1621, an intramural context from Area H, a zoomorphic vessel, a fragment of a kernos, two rattles, a spatula, and a jar stopper were excavated. While the function of the space is not entirely clear and was interpreted as a rubbish depository, the structure is definitively domestic, and depending on the exact origin of these items, there is evidence for iconic elements of ritual behavior from a domestic structure (Thareani 2011b, 107; Pl. 177). It is possible that their origin was a formal domestic shrine (Schmitt Type IB) as opposed to being interspersed in domestic activity areas (Schmitt Type IA; Schmitt 2014, 267–69). Of final note, both stone altars, and the majority of JPF’s and other figurines were consistently found in domestic spaces, and predominantly within the caravanserai (Area A and D) and road station (Area C; Thareani 2011b, 204).²⁷⁴ The portrait from Tel ‘Aroer, then, is one of ritual practices embedded within domestic activity, particularly in the caravanserai space where material culture of diverse traditions were encountered.

c. Tel Beersheba

The extensive excavations at Tel Beersheba have demonstrated numerous examples of family ritual practices within domestic contexts. From Locus 844 of Stratum II in the central quarter of

²⁷⁴ One of the figurines, from an anthropomorphic vessel (F/7019/1; Thareani 2011b, Pl. 230:1), is reminiscent of the “grotesque” style identified at Busayra (Sedman 2002, 370).

the site, a cluster of material culture including an Egyptianizing standing figurine, a bull figurine, an animal head figurine, double crown amulet, a Seth-like animal, cylinder seals, glass objects, ostrich shells and other remains were encountered within a “hoard” on the street adjacent a domestic structure. The uniqueness of many of the objects combined with the figurines strongly indicates a distinct ritual function. Their excavation on the street suggests that these objects had fallen from a second story ritual space (Schmitt 2012a, 80–82).²⁷⁵ Locus 844 and its original second story context likely relate most closely to a formal space set aside for domestic shrine, relating to Schmitt’s Type IB (2014, 269; Aharoni 1973a, pls. 22.1-2; 23.4-5). In the central quarter, Room 859 from Stratum II yielded a similar in situ context within a domestic structure. Here was a pedestal with a faience animal on it, a bone amulet, part of a decorated bone spout and a jug (Schmitt 2012a, 82; Aharoni 1973a, pls. 23.3; 24.1, 5; 44.8; Beit-Arieh and Herzog 2016, 407). This context appears to function similar to the previous, as a small shrine integrated within the domestic structure (Type IB).

In Locus 25 of Building 25 in the western quarter, an almost complete domestic assemblage dating to Stratum II was excavated. This included a JPF, a model of a chair, and a miniature lamp on a stand together with four cooking pots, two bowls, two juglets, a jar and an additional figurine fragment found nearby (Schmitt 2012a, 82; Beit-Arieh 2016, 421–22; Zevit 2001, 175–76; Aharoni 1973a, pls. 71.1–6; 70.16–21).²⁷⁶ In Rooms 443, the head of a female figurine was found with a model chair, and nearby in Room 430 two cuboid incense altars were excavated (Zevit 2001, 175; Aharoni 1973a, pls. 27.6; 28.5; 29.5-6; 52.1-2; Herzog 2016b, 264–67). Additional contexts of this sort include a zoomorphic vessel found with the model of a

²⁷⁵ P. M. Michèle Daviau’s excavation and analysis of Tall Jawa revealed that many of the ritual activities appear to have been performed in the upper stories or on the roof (Daviau 2001a, 202).

²⁷⁶ See n. 280.

couch and a juglet (Schmitt 2012a, 82; Aharoni 1973a, pls. 28.2, 6; 45.4). Further, more than 40 additional JPF's were excavated at Beersheba, mostly from domestic contexts (Kletter 2016, 1119–21; 1996, 136). What these examples indicate is the rich integration of ritual elements into the everyday behavior within domestic structures at the site, not all relating to formalized domestic shrines, but relating to Schmitt's Type IA of the house itself as a ritual space (Schmitt 2014, 267–69).

These contexts perpetuate the domestic ritual behaviors of the preceding centuries and while they predate the Iron IIC period of focus for this work, they are strong indicators of subsequent behavior in the region (Albertz and Schmitt 2012, 84). Moreover, these examples richly demonstrate the longevity of the embeddedness of religious behavior within domestic life. While they do not appear to be in line with Deuteronomist's vision of the state cult promoted in Jerusalem, they represent the ritual behavior with which the majority of persons of the northeastern Negev would be more intimately familiar.

d. Tel 'Ira

At Tel 'Ira, the household ritual contexts are similar to many of the aforementioned sites in that ritual behavior was most consistently found in non-formal spaces, integrated into the everyday spaces of household activity (Type IA; Schmitt 2014, 267–69). These material culture elements consisted of two small incense altars and numerous figurines (Goldsmith, Ben-Dov, and Kertesz 1999, 469–70; Kletter 1999; Beck 1999). Both incense altars were found in domestic contexts dating to Stratum VII and VI (eighth and seventh centuries BCE), with one excavated in a room of the casemate wall system (Room/Locus 191). Located between the gate system and the fortification wall, Room 191 appears as part of a larger series of rooms with an eighth century BCE assemblage of decidedly domestic ceramics. These vessels include seven bowls, three

kraters, three cooking pots, two juglets, four lamps, two jars, a flask, and a JPF (Freud 1999, 262–63; Kletter 1999, 375, No. 4). The cooking pots were of types CP12 and CP14 (see Plate 41) and notably, one of the bowls possessed a denticulated fringe, common within the BPW assemblage.

The figurine assemblage consists primarily of JPF and zoomorphic figurines, including horse and rider figurines, all typical of other sites in Judah. While some of these figurines or fragments were excavated in fill or surface contexts, the majority of them, specifically the JPFs, can be assigned to domestic contexts exemplified by Schmitt's Type IA; 2014, 267–69). Beyond the JPF and zoomorphic assemblage, one figurine fragment is from a larger anthropomorphic female vessel (Kletter 1999, 376, 384, No. 7), and a second fragment of a female figure appears to have been applied to a vessel, likely a cultic stand (Kletter 1999, 378, 384, No. 8). The former was found in a domestic context, and the latter, in a storeroom (Kletter 1999, 375). Divergent from the overall fairly homogeneous stylistic assemblage was an anthropomorphic plaque bearing both male and female genitalia and holding a tambourine (Kletter 1999, No. 37; Beck 1999). The figurine was located in Room 512, contemporaneous to, and adjacent the aforementioned Stratum VII Room 191 wherein the incense altar was excavated (Kletter 1999, 375).²⁷⁷ The figurine finds its closest stylistic parallels at Horvat Qitmit, Tel Malhata, and within Transjordan (Beck 1999; Kletter 2015, 548).

e. Kadesh Barnea

Evidence for ritual activity at Kadesh Barnea is found in limited quantities. These consist of a small number of figurine fragments predominantly found in secondary and fill contexts in Stratum III and II (eighth and seventh centuries BCE; Gera 2007, 211–13; nos. 1–12). Several

²⁷⁷ A model of a bed was also excavated, although within a ninth century BCE context (Kletter 1999, 375, 383, No. 39).

were excavated in association with domestic floors (nos. 4, 8, 9), and it may be hypothesized that such was also the origin of those in secondary contexts. The figurines consist of hand-made male and non-JPF female types and several zoomorphic figurines including horses of types known in Judah (Gera 2007, 213). Several incense altars were also excavated, again, primarily from secondary contexts dated to both Stratum III and II (Gera 2007, 214, nos. 29, 30; 224, 4, 5). In addition, pendants, including those of the Horus-eye type, may have fulfilled a similar ritual or apotropaic role (Gera 2007, 233, nos. 1, 2, 18, 22). Overall there do not appear to be any clear formalized ritual contexts, but the data suggests that ritual practices were interwoven with everyday household activity within domestic structures (Schmitt Type IA; Schmitt 2014, 267–69).

f. Tel Malhata

Ritual material culture at Tel Malhata is most easily identified in the robust figurine tradition and in the incense altars found there. Fourteen incense altars were found that date to the eighth and seventh centuries BCE, and were predominantly found within domestic structures, attesting to their use in household ritual activity (Freud and Reshef 2015, 585–92). Five of the altars, however, were found within Pillared Building 1564 in Area H (Stratum IIIA). The discovery of three of the altars clustered together in the southwest corner of the structure together with a 23 cm long phallus-shaped clay object, wooden furniture, and bone inlays, suggests that this corner of the structure served a more formalized ritual function (Beit-Arieh 2015a, 580; Freud and Reshef 2015, 591).²⁷⁸ The relative size of the pillared building compared to those adjacent it along the fortification walls suggests that it may have served a role beyond that of a single family, perhaps a kind of industrial function similar to that seen at Khirbat al-Mudayna Thamad

²⁷⁸ The nearest parallels to the phallus-like object derive from the southern coastal plain at Tell es-Safi (A. Maeir 2007, 26, 33) and Ashkelon (Stager 1996a, 68–70).

(Daviau 2014, 120–24; Schmitt 2014, 270–71). A fragment of a kernos was also excavated in what appears to be a domestic context (Locus 1524) in Stratum III in Area H (Kletter 2015, 553, 570–71).

With regard to the figurine assemblage, again the majority are present within domestic contexts, integrated into the everyday activities of the household (Kletter 2015). What is significant about the figurines, however, is that while they predominantly depict elements common within typical “Judahite” assemblages such as females and horses (cf., Tel ‘Ira, Lachish), the technological style with which many are created is divergent from that of other sites in Judah. Instead, and for the majority of the zoomorphic figurines, their mode of manufacture most closely aligns with figurines crafted in southern Transjordan, and in particular at Busayra (Kletter 2015, 572). In terms of the anthropomorphic figurine assemblage, numerous stylistic features again share parallels with southern Transjordan, and in the case of the male figurine heads, to the “grotesque” style of heads at Busayra (Sedman 2002, 375–76). The famed “double flute player” figurine from Tel Malhata draws its closest stylistic parallels to Horvat Qitmit (Kletter 2015, 545, No. 1). The majority of female figurines are in the plaque style and again similar to those at Busayra, although they exhibit their own unique features (e.g., holding drums, having ears, and not exhibiting pregnancy; Kletter 2015, 573; Sedman 2002, 367). At Tel Malhata, JPF figurines are very few in number ($n=2+$), and far less common than the plaque types (Kletter 2015, 570).

Overall the assemblage indicates a mixture of features which are described as Judahite and Edomite, with the latter representing the majority of examples excavated at Tel Malhata. These features appear in Stratum IV and III indicating a continuity of similar behaviors from the eighth century BCE until the early sixth century BCE (Kletter 2015). Despite the differences in

mode of production and stylistic features from other “typical” Judahite sites, the majority of figurines present the same themes common in the Judahite tradition, namely females and equids, indicating that the degree to which these figurines are perceived as divergent likely depends on one’s positionality. The data strongly indicates that the majority of these ritual artifacts were integrated into the everyday activities of the inhabitants at the site and thus represent Schmitt’s Type IA, of the house as a ritual space (Schmitt 2014, 267–69).

g. Tel Masos

At Tel Masos, located approximately 3 km to the southwest of Tel ‘Ira in the Beersheba Valley, the limited excavations by Aharoni, Fritz, and Kempinski in the Iron II contexts of Area G revealed further evidence of the integration of ritual behavior into everyday activities. For example, from Phase 2, Room 609 revealed the torso of an animal figurine, a bowl, krater, juglet, jug and store jar within a partially excavated room (Fritz and Kempinski 1983, pls. 111.3; 163.3; 164.2; 165.22; 166.1; 166.14). Similarly, within Room 708 of the same phase, four cooking pots (all Type CP1; Plate 45), a bowl, two juglets, a storage jar, two lamps, and the base of a JPF were found together in a context that appears focused on food preparation (Fritz and Kempinski 1983, pls. 111.5; 163.14; 165.6-9, 20-21; 166.1, 3, 15, 16). Further, within Room 758, a model chair and a cup were excavated together (Fritz and Kempinski 1983, pls. 172.13; 164.11).

Additional JPF fragments and zoomorphic figurines were found in various contexts throughout the site (Albertz and Schmitt 2012, 129–32). There are no indications of any formal domestic shrines or larger ritual spaces in the limited exposure, yet the extant data reveals that ritual behaviors were embedded within everyday life, particularly in food preparation contexts. All of these examples relate to Schmitt’s Type IA category of the house itself as ritual space (Schmitt 2014, 267–69).

h. Tawilan

At Tawilan on the southern Transjordanian plateau, several limestone incense altars were excavated in the domestic contexts (Bennett and Bienkowski 1995, 9.14). Similarly, a number of ritual objects including a female plaque figurine, fragments of a pillar figurine and a horse figurine, and a mold for the head of a female pillar figurine were found among other, less identifiable fragments (Bennett and Bienkowski 1995, 80, figs. 9.3, 9.4; N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, fig. 3.36: i).²⁷⁹ Similarly, the presence of a number of miniature vessels, particularly miniature cooking pots (Hart 1995b, 55; Bennett and Bienkowski 1995, 263, fig. 6.34), and their known association with ritual contexts (Daviau 2001a, 213–24), suggests additional evidence for ritual activity dispersed within domestic structures. In the same spaces as these ritual elements was evidence for food preparation and textile production demonstrating that at Tawilan as well, unsurprisingly, ritual activity was embedded within the everyday actions of its inhabitants (Type 1A; Schmitt 2014, 267–69).

i. Horvat ‘Uza

Very few ritual artifacts were excavated at Horvat ‘Uza. The majority of examples are restricted to fragments of quadruped zoomorphic figurines, likely horses, although there is an example of a smaller quadruped and a bird. Another example may represent the head of an anthropomorphic figurine, although it is too poorly preserved for a definitive reading. The figurines derive from domestic contexts and are made in the Judahite coroplastic tradition, well represented at sites such as Lachish and Tel ‘Ira (Kletter 2007). No figurines were found at the nearby associated watchtower of Horvat Radum. Beyond the figurines, ritual behavior may likely be found in the

²⁷⁹ Note the strong similarities of the Tawilan figurines to those from Busayra (Bienkowski and Sedman 2001, 312)

four fragmented and one complete rattle found at the site, and again, integrated within domestic contexts (Freud 2007b, 260).

D. DISCUSSION: BELONGING AND DIFFERENCE

What the above examination has sought to demonstrate is that contrary to the one-dimensional narratives that describe Edomite and Judahite religious difference in terms of the site of Horvat Qitmit's divergence from the Deuteronomist's vision of a Yahwistic cult in Jerusalem, there is in fact a wealth of data regarding diverse patterns of ritual activity that attest to both similarities and difference across time and space. The simple narrative of Judah vs. Edom, or Yahweh vs. *Qws*, flattens and essentializes these complexities, and in its effort to highlight differences, misses the numerous ways in which divergent ritual practices also evidence similarities.

Perhaps most striking is that these top-down approaches toward cultic difference present an entirely different narrative than a bottom-up approach that begins within the household. The former is an elite religious-political narrative, and the latter is a narrative built from the ordinary, everyday behaviors of domestic life for the region's inhabitants. In examining domestic structures and the material culture within, the degree to which ritual activities were embedded within everyday behavior is significant (Nakhai 2014; Zevit 2014). Many of these behaviors would likely not have been recognized by their performers as a separate class of "religious" activity but rather merely the status quo of what life entailed when the divine and supernatural were a constant in the physical world. The very act of seeking to classify what constitutes such behavior is fraught with theoretical and methodological challenges. All this serves to indicate that within the northeastern Negev, the most immediate and constant form of ritual behavior was not participation in the Yahwistic cult in Jerusalem, but the everyday act of structuring behavior

and space within the household. This could entail small individual or gendered acts of reverence, supplication, thanksgiving, etc., or more family-wide participation in a household shrine, both significant in their embeddedness within the everyday physical space and *habitus* of a family.²⁸⁰ The question this raises then, is the degree to which this household behavior reflected and/or influenced larger patterns of collective religious activity (Albertz and Schmitt 2012, 55; Sanders 2015).

That the primary god(s) of the family were the same as those revered in broader state-sanctioned religions is evidenced to a degree by patterns in onomastic traditions, with Yahweh and *Qws* at the forefront, though not exclusively so (see Chapter 6.C; Golub 2017; 2014; Sanders 2015; Porter 2004, 381–84). That the most prominent deity reflected in onomastic traditions is the male deity, however, perhaps also reflects the very androcentric nature of the onomastic dataset. Similarly, within the JPF tradition, whether or not the figurines are physical models of a female deity (E. Darby 2014; Dever 2014; Kletter 1996), their directed supplications or apotropaic practice was likely in relation to a female deity, for which evidence of a consort for both Yahweh and *Qws* exists. Moreover, what is further noteworthy within household religion, is that the *classes* of ritual artifact types, namely cultic stands, incense altars, female (and male) figurines, and zoomorphic figurines are similar throughout southern Judah and southern Transjordan. While the stylistic features and technological mode by which figurines were produced differs regionally and demonstrates production by distinct communities, overall the types of ritual material culture are generally comparable.²⁸¹ The greater divergences in types of

²⁸⁰ There is evidence that much of the individual ritual activity within domestic contexts was performed by women (Nakhai 2014; 2007; Ackerman 2008; 2006; E. Darby 2014). Likewise, see Ackerman (2003), for a demonstration that such practices were not restricted to non-elite contexts.

²⁸¹ There are several divergences, for example the commonness of perforated tripod cups to Transjordan.

material culture rather occurs at different scales and is dependent on the specific context of ritual behavior. For example, as noted by Daviau, female figurines appear most strongly related to domestic contexts (rather than industrial) and inversely, limestone altars were determined to be more strongly associated with industrial or work-related ritual practices (Type II; Daviau 2014, 123).

This is not to say that household religious practices were all similar across the southern Levant, they undoubtedly varied across time and space and in the deities toward which the behavior was directed. Rather, within the context of the northeastern Negev and southern Transjordan, the differences between the cult most commonly practiced within the household presented far fewer differences in *behavioral* patterns than may be originally assumed. Likewise, the physical space where much ritual behavior was practiced as on rooftops appears to be a pan-regional phenomenon (Schmitt 2012a, 80–82; Daviau 2001a, 202). Further, if one is to draw in select data from texts and inscriptions, it may be posited that ritual behaviors and ideals such as male circumcision (Jeremiah 9:25), and the offering of unleavened bread (Horvat ‘Uza No. 7; Ahituv 2008, 354), were common to both Judahites and Edomites. This indicates that a person introduced into a new household (by intermarriage, slavery, etc.) may not have found ritual behaviors radically different, but to a degree, quite familiar. Even if the central deity worshipped within a new house was different, the regional situatedness of gods within the landscape may not have made the transition to a new deity all that consequential (McCarter 1987, 140–41; Smoak and Schniedewind 2019, 11; Mark Smith 2016, 91–92). Such examples are not uncommon in the ancient world, where in contexts of migration, humans are known to syncretize traditional deities to deities that are dominant within their new socio-religious context (Winnicki 2009, 300, 303;

Thompson 2012, 93, 96; Rapaport 1969, 75). Further, when viewed through a multi-generational diachronic lens, such examples of syncretism are even less remarkable.

Starker divergences in ritual behavior become more pronounced only when one moves to a scale larger than that of the household, namely village or regional sanctuaries and shrines (Schmitt's types II–VII). Here again, however, there is a broad diversity in places, scales of behavior, and participants so that all cannot be viewed through the same lens. For the inhabitants of the northeastern Negev, beyond participation in their household religious practices, their next most familiar context of activity would be in the larger regional or kin-group ritual activities. Prior to the eighth century BCE, these larger regional activities would have been performed at Tel Arad, Tel Beersheba, and the mortuary contexts at Tel 'Ira. In the seventh century BCE, these spaces would include Horvat Qitmit, the mortuary context of Tel 'Ira, and for those travelling east, 'En Hazeva. Whether or not these sanctuaries and shrines were utilized by all, and evidence indicates that they were not, these were visible spaces that were prominent within the region.²⁸² Even if one's family or tradition did follow the cultic ideals that promoted Jerusalem as the centralized cult space, it is unlikely that many of the individuals or families in the region beyond a select few frequented or even saw the temple in Jerusalem.²⁸³ Inadvertently, they would be far more visually familiar with the site of Horvat Qitmit upon its visible hill than the temple in Jerusalem.

²⁸² For differences in those using particular sanctuaries, see for example the discussion concerning Horvat Qitmit in Chapter 4.C. Culinary practices at the site presented an overwhelming dominance of the Type CP4 (Edomite) cooking pot (see Plate 23), yet still, this type was not exclusive, and a minority of vessels are of the local "Judahite" (CP1 and CP2) tradition. Further evidence may be found in the style and manufacture of statuary and figurines at Horvat Qitmit which are not known at "Judahite" sites.

²⁸³ Furthermore, as I have demonstrated in this work, the primary directional orientation of significant economic and social movement through the region was of an east-west orientation, rendering the north-south route to Jerusalem as a highway of secondary import, used primarily for elite administrative and military behavior.

As Zevit notes with regard to Horvat Qitmit, that this sanctuary existed in the midst of a series of Judahite (yet diverse!) settlements indicates that either it was not overwhelmingly offensive, or that the Judahites were not able to do anything about its presence, suggesting that they lacked the authority or will to oppose it (Zevit 2001, 147). I would rather propose that despite the region's integration within the Judahite administrative apparatus, the numerous examples of entangled multicultural behaviors and identities were rather a characteristic feature of the region. The presence of numerous persons from southern Transjordan, and/or their descendants, or others whose social or ritual traditions were not affiliated with Yahweh, were in themselves a natural and accepted component of the northeastern Negev. The diachronic longevity with which these interactions and entanglements can be traced (see Chapter 4), further exemplifies the rootedness of diversity within the region. While persons following traditions as exemplified at Horvat Qitmit were not a majority, they were likely a strong minority, rooted over generations within the region, and thus it is necessary to view the Qitmit sanctuary as also reflective of *local* practices in the northeastern Negev by inhabitants *local* to this region. Indeed, for non Qitmit participating persons, the site would, due to its relative proximity, be far more visually familiar than far off Jerusalem. Continued exposure to, and the naturalness of such shrines in the landscape combined with frequent interactions among persons who practiced there, would likely render Horvat Qitmit not as something entirely "foreign," or "intrusive," but merely *different*.

Moreover, among many of the most supposedly divergent sanctuaries and shrines, namely Horvat Qitmit and 'En Hazeva (but compare also with WT-13 and Tell Damiyah), there is also a functional factor that marks them as distinct. As early as 1992, Israel Finkelstein argued for understanding the site of Horvat Qitmit as associated with diverse populations participating

in the South Arabian trade (Finkelstein 1992b). Indeed, its location on a hill overlooking the main route through the Beersheba Valley, and its strong material culture similarities with traditions of southern Transjordan indicate its significance as related to diverse persons linked to the south and east, most especially Edom. Similarly, the site of 'En Hazeva with its unique features was located along the same trade route. One may also consider WT-13 and Tell Damiyah in this context of mobile persons and as situated on major trade routes or their subsidiaries (Petit and Kafafi 2016; Dolan and Edwards 2020). Whether Qitmit held a direct role in relation to elite Edomite political or economic ideals and the promotion of their cult of *Qws* (Porter 2004, 381), remains open to interpretation. Provided such an association with the Edomite elite is not immediately equated a formal territorial expansion and that Qitmit's "Edomite" practitioners are understood as also local to the northeastern Negev, such an interpretation is viable.²⁸⁴ In the end, however, Horvat Qitmit and 'En Hazeva appear emblematic of the westward movement of persons and communities as a result of trade activities, likely operating, to a degree, in tandem with elite Edomite objectives.

Horvat Qitmit is also striking for a different reason altogether. Namely that it stood alone, and not in direct opposition to other major regional sanctuaries in the seventh and early sixth century BCE. Most notably, the temples at Tel Arad and Tel Beersheba had gone out of use by the late eighth century BCE. While the decommissioning of these sites was likely not directly associated with the biblical account of Hezekiah's reforms (Herzog 2010; Fried 2002), their cessation of use by the seventh century BCE would have accomplished a similar feat. Thus, for families or communities who placed Yahweh at the forefront of their cultic ideals and identities,

²⁸⁴ See discussion in Chapter 4, but the determination of these practitioners as local is determined most consistently on the basis of petrographic study of the ceramics (Freud 2014, 285–86, 289–91).

at a scale larger than the household, there were no formal larger, regional sanctuaries available in the northeastern Negev.²⁸⁵ Consequently, the degree to which a strong affiliation with Jerusalem and its temple was felt, remains unclear. The pattern of Yahwistic naming as most strongly associated with Judahite administrative and military sites, in other words the sites most closely affiliated with Jerusalem (see Chapter 6.C), suggests that there were likely varying degrees of association with Yahweh, or more accurately, with Yahweh of Jerusalem. Thus, a general ambivalence toward, or tacit acceptance of Horvat Qitmit by significant portions of the population is quite likely. At the very least, the lack of formal, regional Yahwistic cult centers in the northeastern Negev created a vacuum into which Horvat Qitmit was established.

In a similar vein, it is difficult to gauge the impact that the “state” cult centers had on this region, particularly as the centers of both Jerusalem and Busayra are both nearly equally distant. The relation between household ritual and larger state sanctuaries is argued to have been somewhat mutually influential (Albertz and Schmitt 2012, 55). Yet the role of state, or elite sanctioned cult as a “top-down” form of cult centralization, wealth creation, and increased sociopolitical control ought not to be discounted. Further, such an initiative’s ability to promote a unifying identity, especially in a context of imperial uncertainty, is impactful. The promotion of a cult centered solely in Jerusalem would likely have been met with varying degrees of success within a region as distant as the northeastern Negev, especially within its context of multicultural diversity. In many instances, the promotion of Jerusalem as the sole Yahwistic center would have competed with localized practices, practices that were embedded in the very social fabric of not only the region, but individual households. In many cases, beyond perhaps the name of the deity of focus, household ritual behaviors between the northeastern Negev and southern Transjordan,

²⁸⁵ It is possible that there were additional naturalistic ritual spaces not associated with formal sites or extant architecture where larger gatherings took place and thus options beyond Jerusalem (Ackerman 1992, 152–63).

or between Judahites and Edomites, appear quite similar. Stark differences between ritual practices only become readily identifiable when cult centralization and a uniformity of behavior are promoted—and in this context, from external to the northeastern Negev.

E. CONCLUSION

This chapter has highlighted the necessity of moving beyond dichotomous interpretations of the religious traditions in the northeastern Negev that are so often framed as a contrast between the deities Yahweh and *Qws*. When these deities are contextualized within the region, the textual and inscriptional data reveal a complex and entangled relationship wherein Yahweh appears to have originated in the region of Edom, and *Qws* may in fact have originated as an aspect of Yahweh. The remarkable omission of reference to *Qws* within the biblical tradition, despite the fact that *Qws* was known in Judah as evidenced at Horvat Qitmit and in Judahite administrative epistolary, is likely indicative of an attempt to overlook elements of a shared heritage between Edom and Judah, and Yahweh and *Qws*.

Moreover, this chapter has argued for analysis that moves beyond a focus on the supposed orthodoxies related to a particular cult, and rather to emphasize the inherent diversity of ritual practice at multiple social scales. In essence, this analytical shift moves away from what religion *is* to rather, what religion *does*—wherein human ritual behavior takes center stage. Further, it is necessary to recognize the inherent artificiality of religion as a distinct category of analysis for the premodern world and to view ritual behavior as fully integrated into every aspect of ancient life (e.g., cooking, weaving etc.).

When different contexts of ritual activity are explored at different social scales (i.e., state, regional and household levels), the inherent similarity of the *behavioral* ritual practices at very

local levels can be identified. Whether the contexts are in southern Transjordan or the northeastern Negev, or the ritual artifacts evidence different contexts of production, the categories of ritual artifacts remained remarkably similar. The deities to whom the ritual behavior was directed is harder to identify, although naming practices within the region do identify Yahweh as most prominent in the northeastern Negev, and *Qws* as most prominent in southern Transjordan. The regionality of these deities likely also reflects their promotion by elite segments of society through the establishment of formal state cults at Jerusalem and Busayra. To the extent that Yahwistic exclusivity as promoted by the Deuteronomist may have existed in the northeastern Negev, it would have competed with established, local traditions.

Further, the northeastern Negev presents an interesting case study that there are no sanctuaries for Yahweh within the region during the late Iron Age. Any ritual behavior that was directed toward Yahweh would have been practiced in more local, domestic settings. And yet there is a large sanctuary to *Qws* within the region. This fact indicates that the local residents would have been far more visually familiar with a sanctuary to *Qws* than the state-sponsored temple in Jerusalem. The fact that Horvat Qitmit was permitted to exist within the northeastern Negev without any apparent indications of local or Yahwistic aggression, demonstrates that diversities in cultic expression at a more local level were not viewed with an inherent hostility. Such ambivalence may stem from the concepts of multiple deities inhabiting a landscape and as rooted in distinct locales. In this way, migrants or persons bearing variant traditions who were introduced into a new household (by intermarriage, slavery, etc.), would have found ritual behaviors and objects rather familiar. Even if the deity of focus was different, the regional situatedness of gods may not have made such a transition particularly significant.

CHAPTER 6. EDOM AND THE NEGEV THROUGH INSCRIPTIONS AND TRADITION

The final case study will focus on the third way by which Edomite identity in the northeastern Negev has been described, specifically, through the data of textual traditions and inscriptions. First, this chapter will engage with the fraternal and hostile portrayals of Edom from the biblical text that present the perspectives of the Judahite elite. Second, this chapter investigates inscriptions to determine the similarities and distinctions that can be identified in Edomite language and script. Lastly, it explores the data within the inscriptions and how they may be used to elucidate identities and interactions, including the theophoric elements of naming traditions during the seventh and early sixth centuries BCE. These datasets, preserved in the very writings of these ancient people, reveal multifaceted portrayals of identity and interaction that do not allow for expedient narratives of hostility and difference, but rather reveal multifaceted and entangled relationships.

A. TRADITIONS OF BELONGING AND DIFFERENCE: EDOM IN THE BIBLICAL TRADITION

When my sword has drunk its fill in the
 heavens,
 lo, it will descend upon Edom,
upon the people I have doomed to judgment.
Yahweh has a sword; it is sated with blood,
 it is gorged with fat,
 with the blood of lambs and goats,
 with the fat of the kidneys of rams.
For Yahweh has a sacrifice in Bozrah,²⁸⁶
a great slaughter in the land of Edom.
 Wild oxen shall fall with them,
 and young steers with the mighty bulls.
 Their land shall be soaked with blood,
 and their soil made rich with fat...
(Isaiah 34:5–7, NRSV with modifications)

You shall not abhor any of the Edomites for
 they are your kin...
The children of the third generation that are
 born to them may be admitted to the
 assembly of Yahweh
(Deuteronomy 23:7–8, NRSV with
 modifications)

²⁸⁶ Most likely present-day Busayra.

Edom has long been interpreted through the lens of the biblical tradition—interpretations that prioritize a Judahite perspective. Yet within this tradition are varied and divergent portrayals of Edom and its people that are necessary to explore within the context of this work. Engaging with the biblical text, however, is a challenging endeavor due to the complex nature of the formation of the biblical text(s), and its appropriate situation among the social, political, and religious entities involved in its production (Schniedewind 2004, 1–23; M. B. Moore and Kelle 2011; Carr 2011). Owing to the multifaceted manners in which Edom is portrayed, there is no clear or singular Judahite perspective presented. In light of the other datasets this work has explored, however, singular and straightforward interpretations ought not to be expected.

Much has been written in recent decades concerning the various portrayals of Edom within the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Assis 2016; 2006; Anderson 2011; Tebes 2011a; 2006c; Bartlett 1989, 83–186; 1995; 1977; Glazier-McDonald 1995; Crowell 2004, 141–202; Edelman 1995b; Beach 1994, 48–158; Dykehouse 2008, 209–81). It is not the goal of this work to duplicate these studies, which supply rich and varied examinations of the biblical dataset, but rather to highlight the major themes of the biblical portrayals of Edom, and especially how they may be best understood in relation to the frontier context between these two peoples and regions.

1. EDOM AS BROTHER

One of the most intriguing portrayals of Edom within the biblical tradition is as a brother to Judah/Israel, where Edomites were considered kin, and their land was designated as their own through the provision of Yahweh (Anderson 2011, 5). For example, explicit kinship terms often in form of “brother,” are applied to Edom and the Edomites, whether in etiological origin myths or references to events, but nonetheless presenting Edom as a brother (e.g., Genesis 25:19–34;

27; 35:29; Numbers 20:14; Deuteronomy 2:4, 8; 23:7; Amos 1:11; Obadiah 1:10, 12; Malachi 1:2–4; Assis 2006, 9). These kinship terms are exemplified in the patriarchal narratives where the figures of Jacob and Esau—twin brothers—are cast as the eponymous ancestors of Israel/Judah and Edom respectively (Genesis 25, 27, 32–33). In such portrayals, the relationship, as with kin, takes precedence over grievances and iniquities.

The patriarchal texts outline a series of events in which Jacob dupes first his brother Esau into selling his “birthright” for a pot of stew, and then with the help of his mother Rebekah dupes his father Isaac into giving him said birthright (Genesis 25, 27). After fleeing Esau’s fury for a period of time, Jacob, yet in fear, returns with his family to make amends with Esau. Ultimately, Esau greets him warmly and their fraternal bonds are re-established (Genesis 32–33).

Throughout the narrative, both explicit and implicit references identify Jacob as the eponymous ancestor of Israel/Judah, and Esau as the ancestor of Edom. One of these references includes the folk etymology of Esau’s name as “hairy,” or relating to the “hairy” or forested landscape of Seir, and numerous associations of Esau to being “red” and eating “red stew,” corresponding to the meaning of Edom as “red,” and identifying it with iconic red sandstone formations of the region of Edom (Knauf 1992a; Bartlett 1992). While the folk etymologies of Esau as “hairy” and of Jacob as “heel holder” (Genesis 25:24–26) are not linguistically correct (Hendel 1987, 111), they serve to immediately situate these figures within a landscape that would be moderately familiar to the reader, and follows the greater pattern of the association of epic characters to social groupings, tribes, or polities that can be found within the Hebrew Bible and other ancient Near Eastern texts (Hendel 1987, 113–15).

In examining these narratives for the purpose of this work, it is perhaps most appropriate to view them as serving in part as a form of cultural memory (Hendel 2010; 2005, 45–47),

following the ideas of collective memory as advanced by Halbwachs (1992; see also Connerton 1989). From this perspective and owing to their ultimate transcription in the mid-first millennium BCE, these narrative traditions feature a particular *Sitz im Leben* in which knowledge of, and interactions with a neighboring polity and people are cast within a deep time perspective. In this vein and as has long been noted by Gunkel, the association of Jacob and Esau with the polities of Israel/Judah and Edom is likely a later phenomenon in the development of the tradition, and unsurprisingly ought not be used to formulate a history between these polities (Gunkel 1910; Hendel 1987, 114–15).²⁸⁷ For example, a number of characteristic features of Esau within Genesis 25 and 27 stand at odds with other characteristics associated with Edom. Whereas Esau is depicted as lacking in intelligence, contrasted with Jacob’s cunning (Genesis 25, 27), other traditions associate Edom with wisdom (Jeremiah 49:7; Obadiah 1:8; Baruch 3:22–23; Job; Hendel 1987, 114–15). Similar, later emendations to the text may perhaps be seen in Isaac’s proclamation of Esau/Edom’s subservience to Jacob/Israel/Judah (Genesis 27:40), which contradicts the remainder of the narrative in which Jacob shows willing submission to Esau, and in the intimacy of their reunion (Genesis 32–33; Fleming 2012, 84).²⁸⁸

Despite being cast as a coarse and somewhat abrasive figure (Arnold 2009, 232–33), Esau is portrayed in sympathetic terms, a feature that further belies interpreting Esau as Jacob’s enemy. Even with the humiliating events of Genesis 27, a simple contrast between Esau and the

²⁸⁷ Similarly, even the texts of Kings, and to a greater degree Chronicles, are problematic to use as a guide to an historical reconstruction of Edom’s history as is attempted by Bartlett due to inconsistencies between the portrait provided in Kings and what archaeological investigation has determined (Bartlett 1989; 1977). Such approaches fail to account for complexities in the production of the text, the fundamentally etic perspective it presents, and the function of the text itself as designed for purposes beyond that of presenting an unbiased fact by fact account of the region (Crowell 2004, 141–47).

²⁸⁸ Fleming also presents an argument that Esau’s relationship to Jacob is more in line with the traditions of the Iron II Northern Kingdom of Israel following the premise of his book (2012, 81–85). See, however, Suriano’s critique (2013).

figure of Laban, representing Aram (Genesis 29–31), together with Esau’s re-acceptance of Jacob, places Esau in higher regard (Fleming 2012, 83–85). In this fashion, an alternative manner of looking at this text would be through the lens of the narrative “hero” (Jacob) and the uncultured “other” (Esau), a portrayal frequent within Near Eastern literature that emphasizes one figure as a literary foil to the other (Hendel 1987, 101–31; Hamori 2011, 633–36). The contrast between the two, with the later equation between Esau and Edom through various physical (red, hairy, hunter) and personality (coarse, abrasive, intellectually dim) characteristics, would serve to evoke within Judahite readers (or listeners), a certain image of their eastern regional neighbor (Arnold 2009, 232–33). These associations may be described as a pattern of “othering,” defined as the “process which serves to mark and name those thought to be different from oneself,” a feature that has been established as a key component of identity formation processes (e.g., Weis 1995, 18). Consequently, these contrasts of the physical and intellectual characteristics of Jacob and Esau would serve to reify belongingness to communities who identified as Jacob’s descendants in contrast with those associated with the figure of Esau, who at least in the surviving version of the narrative stand as metaphors for Israel/Judah and Edom.

A further unique feature of these narratives is that Jacob and Esau are described as not only brothers, but twins, who despite competition and ill-deeds (on the part of Jacob nonetheless!), end their narrative on good terms with fraternal ties restored. This situation may be contrasted with the similar etiological origin narratives that have been applied to Moab and Ammon, Edom’s northern neighbors and Judah and Israel’s neighbors to the east. For example, while casting the Moabites and Ammonites as similarly sharing the same general bloodline through Lot, the nephew of Abraham, their portrayal is as a more distant relation to Jacob (first cousin once removed), not fraternal as in the case of Esau. Moreover, the origin of eponymous

Moab and Ammon is embedded in a narrative surrounding the intoxicated incestuous relations of Lot and his daughters (Genesis 19:30–38), a stark contrast to the origin of Esau/Edom as the firstborn twin brother (Arnold 2009, 186–87). Once again, these texts may be viewed as part of a process of othering, although to a different end than those of Esau/Edom.

The legitimacy of Esau is further established through the so-called “Edomite King List” preserved in Genesis 36 that serves to situate Edom within the landscape of southern Transjordan and as distinct from Judah and the Negev (Nash 2018),²⁸⁹ while portraying this land as allocated to them by Yahweh (Anderson 2011, 129–48).²⁹⁰ The allocation of a legitimacy to land on the part of the biblical writers appears in numerous narratives, where the Israelites inquire of Edom but are not permitted to travel through the region controlled by them (Numbers 20:14–21; Deuteronomy 2:1–12; Judges 11:14–18). In these instances, and especially expressed in Deuteronomy 2:1–12, Edom is not condemned for its unwillingness, but rather Yahweh explicitly acknowledges his gift of this region to Edom, and their legitimacy to it (Fleming 2012, 84). Thus, the refusals on the part of Edom, rather than being viewed as a form of hostility expressed in the Judahite writings, can rather be read as a recognition of their legitimacy, and their right to self-determination. Further mention of Esau’s marriages, contrasted with Jacob’s in their exogenous nature (Genesis 36:2; 26:34 vs. Genesis 29–31; Arnold 2009, 308–11), also serve to situate Esau and Edom with communities to the south and east, where his associations

²⁸⁹ The text of Genesis 36 is mirrored in part in 1 Chronicles 1:35–53.

²⁹⁰ Knauf-Belleri uniquely attempts to identify locales in southern Transjordan with the places and person described in Genesis 36, where he argues that the Horites are clustered to the west in the better agricultural areas and the sons of Esau are scattered to the east. Interspersed are the “chiefs” (אֱלֹפִים), who Knauf-Belleri argues is reflective of an attempt by a central power to control the region (Knauf-Belleri 1995, 100–107). While intriguing, this interpretation remains highly speculative and based only on the tentative association of toponyms with Genesis 36 (Crowell 2004, 173–74).

with Ishmael's daughter are strongly suggestive of the trade engagements Edom held with the Arab tribes.

This relationship between Judah and Edom is made more complex by numerous archaic-sounding passages in the biblical text that draw an association between Yahweh and southerly regions in, or in the general location of Edom (see discussion in Chapter 5.B; Judges 5:4; Psalm 68:8–9; Deuteronomy 33:2; Habakkuk 3:3; B. Lang 2002, 177–78; van der Toorn 1996, 281–86; Mark Smith 2004, 153–54, 170–71). Likewise, extrabiblical references such as the inscriptions from Kuntillet 'Ajrud also associate Yahweh with Teman (Inscriptions 3.6 and 3.9; Ahituv, Eshel, and Meshel 2012, 95–98), a locale often identified with Edom in biblical text (e.g., Jeremiah 49:7; Amos 1:12).²⁹¹ These texts perhaps resulted in a perception of a shared religious heritage together with kin affiliation that resulted in Edom being portrayed differently than say, Moab or Ammon. This position is also accentuated when other “nations” are cursed for their following of other gods, or Israelite/Judahite kings are cursed for their adoption of the gods of foreign wives (1 Kings 11:5–8, 2 Kings 23:13, etc.), and yet Edom is never included in these lists, and neither is a deity, other than Yahweh, ever associated with Edom.²⁹²

2. CURSING EDOM

Beyond the portrayals of Esau/Edom as brother, a significant component of the scholarly discussion regarding references to Edom within the biblical text highlights the hostile perspective with which Edom is portrayed, particularly in the prophetic texts of the latter prophets (e.g.,

²⁹¹ Similarly, late second millennium Egyptian texts (Amenhotep III and Ramesses II) reference a “Yahu in the land of the Shasu” (Giv'eon 1971, 26–28), in association with Seir, a locale within the region of Edom (Weippert 1974, 271; Knauf 1992a).

²⁹² The Chronicler makes a vague reference to capturing the “gods of the people of Seir” following a campaign, although no specific deity names are included (2 Chronicles 25:14). Moreover, the late date of Chronicles, post-dating the fall of Edom by several centuries, together with the lack of a reference to deities of Edom within the corresponding account in 2 Kings 14, and the clear ulterior motives of the Chronicler (2 Chronicles 25:20), indicates that this reference should not be taken at face value (Bartlett 1989, 194–96).

Assis 2016, 74–162; Glazier-McDonald 1995). These texts appear to portray an anti-Edomite bias that has its basis in the perceived role that Edom played in the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BCE, and Judahite sentiment that arose as a result of these acts. These perspectives are most clearly outlined in Isaiah 34, 63:1–6, Ezekiel 35:1, 36:15, Joel 4:19–21, Amos 1: 9–12, Obadiah, Malachi 1:1–5, Psalm 137, and Lamentations 4:21–22. The majority of these texts, however, appear to post-date the late Iron Age, or First Temple Period (Assis 2006, 1–3), indicating that a significant amount of the textual hostility toward Edom is not contemporaneous with the period of the late Iron Age.

These portrayals have also, in no small way, influenced scholarly perspectives of Edom. For example, among some of the earliest western travelers to explore the region of Edom in the mid-nineteenth century CE, the Reverend Professor David Millard wrote upon entering Edom:

We were now advancing into the doomed and accursed land of Edom. It was given to Esau as the “the fatness of the earth;” but now it lay stretched out before us, a barren, sterile waste, the theatre of awful prophetic fulfillment written upon its parched surface as with the finger of the Almighty (D. Millard 1855, 182–83).

Millard’s description was then followed by an extensive quote of the curse of Edom found in Isaiah 34.²⁹³ From the earliest scholarly engagement with the region then, an “anti-Edomite” bias has been present, one that appears to have been successively reinforced through the political and military activities of the twentieth century CE, the presence of the Israeli/Jordanian border that reinforced the assumption of Edom as confined to Jordan, and an overall scholarly gravitation toward research on Judah. Thus, as has been previously discussed, many of the early and

²⁹³ Millard’s perspectives toward Edom were likely heavily influenced through Protestant, and especially Calvinistic concepts of election theology. These ideas are borne in large part from Malachi 1:2–5, wherein the divine oracle states: “Yet I have loved Jacob, but I have hated Esau,” where Jacob and Esau stand as referents for Judah/Israel and Edom respectively, following the etiological patriarchal origin narratives of Genesis 25, 27, 32–33, 36 (Anderson 2011, 203–27; Krause 2008).

dominant interpretations of Edomite material culture found within the northeastern Negev centers upon it as evidence of an Edomite invasion to which the biblical curses supposedly relate. Likewise, the curses within the biblical texts are interpreted as the result of an Edomite invasion as also evidenced by the archaeological material culture (Beit-Arieh 1995c; 1995a, 311–16; 2007c, 333–34), creating an essentially circular argument driven by readings of the biblical text.

The exact role played by Edom in the conquest and destruction of Jerusalem, however, remains unclear. While certain post-exilic prophetic and poetic texts reference Edomites rejoicing at the destruction of Jerusalem and even intimating a form of betrayal (e.g., Psalm 137:7, Ezekiel 25:15, 35:5–15, Obadiah, Lamentations 4:21–22; Krause 2008, 478–79; Assis 2006, 3), explicit reference to Edomite participation in the Babylonian destruction is lacking. In particular, in the more contemporaneous texts of 2 Kings 24–25 and Jeremiah, where one would expect to find such references, especially when other social groups are listed as participating in the raids (Arameans, Moabites and Ammonites; i.e., 2 Kings 24:2), there is silence regarding Edom (Tebes 2011a).²⁹⁴ Further, references to Edom that do appear in these contexts, for example in Jeremiah, describe Edom as serving as a region of refuge for Judahites fleeing the Babylonian conquest (Jeremiah 40:11). In a sense, this realia concealed within the text underscores the role of “Edom as Brother” as previously described.

This obscurity regarding the role of Edom in the conquest of Jerusalem has led to suggestions that Judahite blame is the result of prejudice against a former neighbor, who from the perspective of a devastated Judah, survived the Babylonian campaigns unscathed and stood

²⁹⁴ An explicit reference to Edom’s participation can be found in the very late text of 1 Esdras 4:43–45. This reading has led Lindsay to suggest that despite the lack of a reference to Edom in the Chroniclers account, discrepancies between the singular subject but plural verbs employed in the Chronicler’s account of the destruction (2 Chronicles 36:19), indicate a veiled reference to Edom (Lindsay 1999, 72; 1976, 29; Tebes 2011a, 228). While this is potentially possible, it is by no means a certain reading and does not negate the initial silence regarding Edom’s supposed participation in both Kings and Chronicles.

to profit from Judah's demise (Bartlett 1989, 155–56), in essence, becoming a scapegoat in late prophetic and poetic texts (Tebes 2011a, 241–45; Assis 2006).²⁹⁵ Similarly, following Bartlett's argument, Juan Tebes suggests that the blame laid on Edom is more a reflection of a later Judean *perception* of Edomite participation, which for them became a reality (Tebes 2011a, 232). Such perceptions would have been accentuated in later centuries by the presence of substantial numbers of Edomite persons in the northern Negev, now labelled Idumea, primarily evidenced in onomastics referencing *Qws* and attesting to Edomite continuity in a formerly "Judahite" region (Kloner 2015; Levin 2015; Bartlett 1999). During the Persian period, returning Judean exiles, upon witnessing a greater social transformation of this region may have expressed their distaste within the texts that were codified at this time (Tebes 2011a, 248–52).²⁹⁶

Other study has emphasized the concept of treaty betrayal as the origin of the anti-Edomite bias. According to this perspective, geographic proximity as well as mutual economic interests in the northeastern Negev, strongly indicate that in the course of history there would have been periods of cooperation and the formation of treaties between Judah and Edom, and that evidence of these treaties may be found in the kinship language that is often applied to Edom within the biblical text (Dykehouse 2008). Evidence for political cooperation in the face of the Mesopotamian empires is well attested in the southern Levant. For example, the rebellion-crushing campaign of Sargon II against Ashdod records its impetus as the "seditious words and slander" that were sent to the "kings of Philistia, Judah, Edom, Moab and the residents of the seacoast" (Fuchs 1998, 44–46, 73–74), likely intimating the nascent formation of an anti-

²⁹⁵ Edom did not survive entirely unscathed, however, as evidence suggests that Edom saw a similar fate several decades later in the campaigns of Nabonidus (Crowell 2007).

²⁹⁶ Note, however, as argued by Knoppers, that not all post-exilic perspectives of Edom were necessarily hostile. The overlap of a number of names in the genealogical lists of Edom and Judah in 1 Chronicles 1–2 suggests a conscious affirmation of the numerous ties between these people (Knoppers 2001, 23–28).

Assyrian alliance.²⁹⁷ Consequently, as covenants and treaties were codified through concepts of kinship and responsibility, during the time of the Babylonian crisis, a failure of Edom to lend aid to Judah would have been perceived not only as a rejection of Judahite/Israelite kinship, but a creation of kinship between Edom and Babylon (Dykehouse 2008, 292). In this way, combined with the apparent rejection of kinship, the later Edomite “inheritance” of the northern Negev would, from the perspective of post-exilic Judeans, be seen as an additional rejection of the lands that Yahweh had allocated for Israel/Judah (Anderson 2011, 5).

3. CONFLICT AND ACCEPTANCE

Despite the fraternal language and unique position Edom held within the Judahite texts, their relations do not appear to have been consistently peaceful throughout their time as neighboring polities. Numerous accounts in Samuel, Kings, and correspondingly in Chronicles, note military conflict between Israel/Judah and Edom (1 Samuel 14:47–48; 2 Samuel 8:13–14; 1 Kings 11:14–17;²⁹⁸ 2 Kings 8:20–22; 2 Kings 14:7; 1 Chronicles 18:11–13; 2 Chronicles 21:8–10; 2 Chronicles 25:11–14), as well as specific conflict over the strategic Red Sea fortress of Elath/Ezion Geber (2 Kings 14:22; 2 King 16:6). Additional references present general tones of enmity toward neighboring groups, among whom Edom is counted (Psalm 60, 108; Isaiah 11, etc.), as well as the apparent purchase of captured Judahites by Edom (Amos 1:6). A number of these instances, however, appear to place Edom within a list of surrounding enemies where the

²⁹⁷ Similarly, 2 Kings 3 illustrates a narrative in which the kings of Israel, Judah, and Edom joined forces against the king of Moab.

²⁹⁸ There are a number of complexities in the Solomon–Hadad conflict outlined in 1 Kings 11:14–17, particularly in how they may relate to a historical context, if at all. Lemaire for example has suggested that Hadad should be read as Aramean, not Edomite, due to a scribal error, similar to what appears to be the case in 2 Kings 16:6 (note the similarity between ארמי and אדמי), as well as the prevalence of Hadad within Aramean names (André Lemaire 1988). Alternatively, Na’aman suggests that the “Edom” of this text is a reference to northern Negev in the tenth century BCE, especially as sedentary sites are lacking from the highlands of Edom at this time (Na’aman 1992). See further discussion on this history in Chapter 3.A.4.

purpose of the text may not have been to expressly indicate wars with Edom, but rather to emphasize the successes and laudable behavior of certain kings (e.g., 1 Samuel 14:47–48). Despite these conflicts and tropes of enmity interwoven with fraternal references, we see the Deuteronomist create unique provisions for Edom, provisions that were not applied to neighboring Ammon and Moab. Deuteronomy 23 reads:

No Ammonite or Moabite shall be admitted to the assembly of Yahweh. Even to the tenth generation, none of their descendants shall be admitted to the assembly of the Yahweh, because they did not meet you with food and water on your journey out of Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam son of Beor, from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you. (Yet Yahweh your God refused to heed Balaam; Yahweh your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, because Yahweh your God loved you.) You shall never promote their welfare or their prosperity as long as you live. You shall not abhor any of the Edomites, for they are your kin. You shall not abhor any of the Egyptians, because you were an alien residing in their land. The children of the third generation that are born to them may be admitted to the assembly of Yahweh (Deuteronomy 23:3–8, NRSV with modifications).

Intriguingly, amidst the complexities in which Edom is presented in the Judahite textual tradition, where relatively few are permitted to join the assembly of Yahweh, specific provisions are made for the Edomites. On the basis of the perceived kinship between the two, likely owing in part to the *Sitz im Leben* of the entangled relations within the northeastern Negev, Edom is viewed as holding a unique status among the neighbors of Judah.

B. LANGUAGE AND WRITING AS MARKERS: SOCIOLINGUISTIC AND SCRIPT CONSIDERATIONS

Turning to the inscriptional corpus of the region, linguistic and script data can be used to explore questions of belonging and difference within the borderland region. The inscriptional dataset, however, presents a single large caveat in that it does not directly preserve the language, or the speech of these ancient populations. Rather, linguistic data must be cautiously inferred from

clues within the written text (Coulmas 2003; 2013). Thus, this section explores the theoretical considerations concerning the interplay between script and language.

Language serves as one of the most readily identifiable and efficient means by which humans identify and categorize others, whether as similar and belonging to a perceived community, or as different and not belonging (Bolonyai 2018). These differences can be noted in overt cases of entirely different languages, or in more subtle manners such as a variant dialect or even minute variances in pronunciation, lexicon, or syntax. Language is central to, and interwoven in all human interactions and cannot be separated from its human speakers within their social context (Labov 1972; 1971). This allows for language variation both temporally and spatially to provide unique insights into the social context in which that language existed. Studies on the variations in speech and its social implications are well-known in modern contexts (Weldon 2018; Lanehart and Malik 2018). Similar study and acknowledgement of dialect differences that can be determined through careful analyses of written text and inscriptions are also attested for the ancient world (Garr 1985; Colvin 2010; Whatmough 1970; Haring 2005; Allen 2010, 2), and are likewise better known in more recent chapters of human history (Nielsen 2005, 25–47; McIntosh, Samuels, and Laing 1989; Kristensson 1987). What many of these studies do not emphasize, however, particularly for the ancient world, is the social impact that dialect differences held for those communities involved.²⁹⁹

While language does mark difference, there is seldom if ever, a direct correlation between language and an ethnic community or “state,” the reality is always more complex (Lucy 2005, 92; Barth 1969b). For example, within the same spoken language region, certain communities will often employ marked differences in pronunciation, syntax, or lexicon,

²⁹⁹ For an exception, see Schniedewind (2013).

consciously or unconsciously marking difference (Weldon 2018; Lanehart and Malik 2018). In other cases, a single diglossic community can employ multiple languages, dialects, or registers, depending on the social context or situation (Torres Cacoullos and Travis 2018; Bani-Shoraka 2005; Nortier 1990; Sebba, Mahootian, and Jonsson 2012). These nuances of the linguistic landscape relate to the fact that multiple factors are at play in persons marking themselves or others as part of a particular community, and language itself is not homogeneous, two-dimensional, nor static. It is this vibrancy and opportunity to either embrace or refrain from linguistic change that makes this field such a fascinating opportunity in which to engage with questions of identity.

Beyond geographic regions creating differences in speech (Carver 1987; Scholler and Reidy 1973; Pederson 1973), age, gender, status, education, ethnicity, and family origins can also play a significant role (e.g., Pederson 1973, 206). Many of these variances are conscious markers of community cohesion and identification, but also serve as highly identifiable markers for non-members of that community, such as can be seen in African American communities in the American South (Weldon 2018). In these contexts, though the same language is spoken, there are often clear differences in syntax and in lexicon, including the phonological and semantic altering of pejorative lexemes as a manner of reclamation of identity and subversion of original use (Lanehart and Malik 2018). Linguistic variation can also be affected by social position. Within a network perspective of social groups, one's position within that network can affect manners of speech, as a positive correlation exists between certain vocabulary or syntax differences and the speaker's centrality within that network community, differences that are maintained and enforced on the basis of the locality and density of that network (Labov 1972; Milroy 1980; Dodsworth 2018; Milroy and Milroy 1992). These differences, whether intentional

or below a level of awareness can serve to index individuals as “others” or as belonging to a different community. Even slight detections of accent or minute linguistic variation is often noticed, reflecting the keen ability of humans to create social boundaries and identify those who by a certain set of criteria, belong, and those who do not (Bolonyai 2018).

Similar sociolinguistic principles may be applied to inscriptional datasets, particularly with regard to script choice and orthography. Different scripts hold significance and value for groups of people and can also delineate those who belong to a specific community and those who do not, as is evident in cases of Urdu vs. Hindi in India (Ahmad 2012). Likewise, script choice in many contexts reflects an intentional effort toward the creation of a cohesive community identity, often as a reaction to colonialism (e.g., the Khom, Tatar, and Hangeul scripts; Sidwell 2008; Wertheim 2012; Silva 2008). In other instances, scripts are noted to belong only to a specific subset of a community as seen in the case of Nüshu and its relation to women in southern China (Zhao 1998). Script choice, or even writing system choice, is seldom coincidental but rather reflects intentionality on the part of governments, collective users of that language, and influences from tradition. Consequently, a script can hold significant social meaning in its marking of belonging and difference (Sebba 2012, 4; 2009, 36–39; Unseth 2005). Similarly, orthography can serve as marker of identity, often used to distinguish oneself, or to serve as iconic features of particular communities (Sebba 2007, 160–62). Orthography can also hold a social authority, with those using non-standard forms receiving social stigma (Sebba 2007, 163–65; Jaffe 2012). Thus, both scripts and orthographic choices can be used as markers of community cohesion and identity and when used by elite agents, as aspects of a political identity.³⁰⁰

³⁰⁰ Similarly, even within a singular language and relatively consistent orthography, it is possible on the basis of grammatical nuances to detect regional variation in writing (e.g. Grieve 2016).

To apply these concepts to the northeastern Negev, it is necessary to first determine if there are sufficient data to isolate variances between the languages, or dialects, of Judah and Edom. Likewise, similar questions hold in terms of their respective scripts. If certain features can be isolated, they need also be considered in terms of their recognizability to persons beyond that community of practice, namely, the potential of these features to index different communities. Lastly, these variances need be examined in terms of the social significance they would hold within their contexts of usage and corresponding implications toward different scales of marking identity through interactions.

1. IDENTIFYING EDMITE AS A LANGUAGE AND A SCRIPT

For obvious reasons the language spoken by the late Iron Age inhabitants of Edom and Judah cannot be directly studied. Reliance is instead placed on inscriptions to serve as proxies for features of language. The inscriptions can also be used, however, to demonstrate decisions regarding script choice and paleographic features that bear potential to serve as markers of difference. It is significant to emphasize, however, the difference between language and script, as in many contexts these are not identical, and many different scripts may be utilized to represent the same language, and likewise, many different languages may be represented by the same script (Rollston 2014b, 962).³⁰¹ Consequently, two separate lines of inquiry into the Edomite corpus are necessary: linguistic features, and script features.

The initial challenge in analyzing linguistic and script features is first, the identification of which inscriptions can in fact be designated as Edomite. Traditionally, the criteria used to

³⁰¹ For example, the English language uses the Latin script, as does French, German, Spanish, etc. The Arabic language is most commonly written in the Arabic script, but in antiquity certain communities wrote the Arabic language by using the Syriac and Hebrew scripts. Likewise, modern Persian uses an adaptation of the Arabic script. In the case of the seal from 'En Hazeva (see below; Cohen and Yisrael 1995b, 224), while the script of the seal appears to use Edomite, the language of the names appears to be Arabic (see n. 341).

identify Edomite inscriptions consist of a combination of diagnostic linguistic features, inscription provenance and chronological horizons, onomastics (personal, divine, place), and script (though note the above caveats; see Rollston 2014b, 961). As the corpus of Edomite inscriptions is limited, determinations have most consistently relied on inscription provenance, particularly in relation to the region of Edom, the presence of the divine name *Qws*, and to an extent paleographic features that are considered “Edomite” (Vanderhooft 1995, 138–40). However, none of these frequently used criteria are linguistic (Huehnergard 1987, 531; Vanderhooft 1995, 138).³⁰² The limited nature of the corpus challenges a more robust understanding of the language/dialect and script used in Edom, although this by no means precludes such study or negates the potential significance that the limited dataset can provide. A collation of Edomite inscriptions identified to-date is presented in Appendix C.

As a methodological caveat, a relationship between “languages,” and “polities” is often assumed or at the least forms the subtext in studies of the southern Levant, and such assumptions bear brief discussion. Notably, questions arise as to the point by which one considers different dialects to be in fact different languages, and by what criteria such designations can be made. This is particularly pertinent for the southern Levant where the inhabitants across numerous polities appear to have spoken a mutually intelligible language (Segert 1997). The humorous notation of Max Wienrich that a “language is a dialect with an army and a navy” (Schniedewind 2013, 51), highlights the often political basis for the reification of a certain “language,” that is named according to the polity from which it derives, as is seen in the case of Edomite.

³⁰² Additional consideration of each text is necessary, particularly as non-Edomite languages and script are attested at Edomite sites (e.g., Thamudic at Ghrareh (Knauf 1988a), and Akkadian language and script at Tawilan (Dalley 1995)). Similarly, many of the best examples of “Edomite” inscriptions are found outside of the region of Edom (e.g., Ostrakon Reg. No. 6043 from Tell el-Kheleifeh (Divito 1993, 55–57), and Ostrakon No. 7 from Horvat ‘Uza (Beit-Arieh 2007a, 133–37)). Likewise, the divine name *Qws* is attested in non-Edomite inscriptions (e.g., Hebrew/Judahite ostraca from Arad (nos. 12, 26; Aharoni 1981, 26, 52)). Thus, a cautious approach is necessary in the categorizations of these inscriptions.

Such examples may also be seen in the attempts to classify early Iron Age inscriptions as “early Hebrew” in efforts to identify an early polity of Israel, even though these inscriptions are virtually indistinguishable from Canaanite (Schniedewind 2013, 51–53). Similar cases exist in relation to the differences between Hebrew and the Transjordanian languages such as Moabite or Ammonite that appear by all accounts to have been mutually intelligible and are only labelled as a language (as opposed to dialect) on the presumed need to associate them with a distinct polity (Segert 1997; Garr 1985, 228–30; Naveh 1979, 194). This distinction between Iron Age languages in the southern Levant strongly reflects *political* considerations rather than solely *linguistic* criteria and bears strong correlates to modern assumptions regarding nation-state systems and efforts to artificially conflate language (and ethnicity) to a national identity. The main distinguishing criteria between these languages is the political entity to which they have been assigned, and beyond their political affiliations may just as accurately be discussed in terms of regional dialects. Regardless of classifications as either a language or dialect, any noticeable differences in speech would readily serve as a means by which to index persons as belonging to a particular community.

In contrast, however, as previously outlined, the use of different scripts to encode speech often reflects active political considerations. In antiquity, the restricted nature of writing to elite (political and religious) elements of society exemplifies its opportunity to serve the needs and goals of the elite. As such, script variations were likely largely meaningless to the majority of the populace who could not read or write, but rather served as a significant marker of difference among trained scribes and the elite member of society responsible for using the script, and perpetuating it through continued scribal training.

2. *EDOMITE AND LINGUISTIC INDEXICALITY*

Cumulatively, the linguistic content of the Edomite inscriptions (see Appendix D), indicates a close linguistic affinity with its north and northwestern neighbors of Hebrew and Moabite. The use of the definite article *he-* (ה), and the lexeme *bn* (בן) indicate linguistic distinction from Aramaic, defining the language of these inscriptions as a child of Canaanite within the linguistic family tree.³⁰³ Likewise, the use of the relative pronoun *'šr* (אשר) indicates strong correlations between neighboring Hebrew and Moabite. With the lack of any substantial linguistic or phonological variation with Hebrew, the linguistic criteria of Edomite indicates that the languages spoken in Judah and Edom were closely related and mutually intelligible (Segert 1997; Garr 1985, 228–30; Naveh 1979, 194). Thus, the designation of the major language spoken by the inhabitants of Edom as “Edomite” is solely based on scholarly perspectives of “national” languages associated with each Iron II polity. It would be more accurate to describe the language of the southern Levant as “southern Levantine” or something of the sort, with regional variances characterized as different dialects.

The general similarity between the spoken languages, however, does not necessarily indicate that those hearing different communities speak would not note distinguishing cues in pronunciations or oddities of speech. As these regions reflect topographically distinct areas containing primarily subsistence agrarian communities, the majority of the population can be seen as locally restricted to their respective regions, with localized dialects and accents developing and being maintained over time (Nielsen 2005, 25–47; Pederson 1973). In this way, it ought to be expected that variances of pronunciation, or phonological stresses would be

³⁰³ There are challenges to the perception of languages as placed within “tree” models (Lucy 2005, 92), and alternative proposals for the Semitic languages including the “wave” hypothesis have been proposed. See the concise summary in Blau (2010, 16–23).

evident, features that are not captured in writing but that would distinguish different speakers from one another. In this way, it is likely that the community living at Tel ‘Ira would very swiftly be able to distinguish a difference in the speech of an individual from Tawilan or Busayra, even without other highly visible social cues such as dress or adornment. As an example, the popularized *shibboleth* narrative from ancient Judah is informative:

Then the Gileadites took the fords of Jordan against the Ephraimites. Whenever one of the fugitives of Ephraim said, “Let me go over,” the men of Gilead would say to him, “Are you an Ephraimite?” When he said, “No,” they said to him, “Then say Shibboleth” and he said “Sibboleth,” for he could not pronounce it right. Then they seized him and killed him at the fords of the Jordan. Forty-two thousand of the Ephraimites fell at that time (Judges 12:5–6).

This story uniquely provides insight regarding not only regional differences in pronunciation, differences that are seldom captured in writing (see Schniedewind 2013, 8–15), but also the ability of these communities to use minute features of pronunciation to distinguish which individuals belonged to a certain community, presumably in the absence of other more visually recognizable features.³⁰⁴ This narrative would also only hold relevance for its audience if such differences were widely known, which through continued re-iteration in stories such as these, would emphasize those differences and perpetuate their enforcement. The text also highlights the often-hostile approach assumed by humans toward non-members of their own community, no matter how minute or superficial the distinguishing criteria may be.

Other more explicit differences in speech are present, however. Though perhaps on first glance insignificant as the English language translation fails to capture the nuance of the original, the use of the causative H stem (*hif’il*) in the blessing formula: הברכתך לקום “I bless you by *Qws*”

³⁰⁴ For narrative reference, the geographic distance between Ephraim and Gilead is comparable, or even slightly less than the distance between the northeastern Negev and Busayra. The ancient presumption of dialect differences between Ephraim and Gilead indicates the appropriateness of a comparable situation between Edom and southern Judah.

(Horvat ‘Uza Inscription No. 7), is notable for several reasons. First, there is a clear distinction between this example and the Judahite blessing formulas common to the contemporary region, which rather make consistent use of the D stem (*pi ‘ēl*): ברכתך ליהוה “I bless you by Yhwh” (e.g., Arad nos. 16, 21 and 40; Aharoni 1981, 30–31, 42–43, 70–74). This variance would be readily recognizable to those familiar with epistolary convention, as well as presumably to a much broader swath of the populace due to the phrase serving both a cultic function and use as a formulaic greeting. Second, as this is a cultic blessing formula, the association of the “Edomite” variant with the deity *Qws* and the apparent exclusive use of the deity Yahweh within the counterpart Judahite blessing formula accentuates these differences between these greetings. As the deity *Qws* has been demonstrated to be closely affiliated with Edom and particularly the ruling elite (Porter 2004, 381–84; Bartlett 1989, 200–207; Dearman 1995), in contrast to the prominence of the deity Yahweh in Judah and the northeastern Negev as attested in onomastics (see below), the convergence of these two divergent features presents what appears to be a stock phrase that would clearly demarcate members of separate cultic communities, recognizable in both the deity referenced and in the linguistic rendering of the phrase. In particular, as outlined in Chapter 5, cultic behavior at a more elite and supra-regional level demonstrate recognizable features of difference, one element of which appears to be preserved in language as seen within this blessing formula.

3. *EDOMITE AND SCRIPT VARIATION*

Just as the mutually intelligible languages of Edomite and Hebrew appear to be differentiated in small but identifiable ways, so too the Edomite script, while mutually legible with the Hebrew/Judahite script, bears unique differences that would have been readily identifiable to a trained scribe (see Appendix E). In particular, the Edomite script’s similarity to the other

Transjordanian scripts (Ammonite and Moabite), and its similarity to the Aramaic script rather than the Hebrew, indicates its affinity to regions other than the northeastern Negev and likely a lack of early scribal influence from Judah. The script elements that demonstrate this most clearly are the *bêt*, *‘ayin*, *rêš*, *wāw*, *sāmek*, *qôp*, and *tāw* that demonstrate affinity with Aramaic, whereas the *dālet*, *hê*, and alternate *samek* appear to indicate the unique aspects of the Edomite script (Rollston 2014b, 970; Vanderhoof 1995, 151; Rollston 2014a).

While there is a general similarity between the scripts of the southern Levant, the unique regional “flavors” demonstrate recognizable features and delineated patterns of use. Labelling these as “national” scripts, however, is likely not the best way to envision them, as it glosses over the means by which they were acquired and developed within each region, which is namely through decisions enacted by literate scribes beneath the aegis of the political elite (Byrne 2007). Thus, rather than the scripts serving as features of a “national” identity as their titles insinuate, the scripts can be viewed as reflective of the patterns of training of educated members of society within their regional and social networks, in other words, the scribes who are often intricately entangled with the activities of elite elements of ancient society. Thus, while not a “national” script in the modern sense of the term, the scripts very likely reflect active political or elite action.

As the need for writing in the small polities of the southern Levant was limited, those desiring its use were primarily associated with the palace and elite political actors, who appear concerned with the military, administrative activities and record keeping (e.g., Jeremiah 36:21; 1 Kings 11:41; 14:19, 29), and likely to a lesser degree, the temple (Schniedewind 2013, 100–115, 117–20). Likewise, on the basis of epigraphic data, scribal activities appear most closely linked to administration (Jameison-Drake 1991, 141). One of the major administrative uses of writing

was for militaristic purposes (e.g., 2 Kings 18:18; 25:19 and Jeremiah 52:25), including record keeping and communication, with some of the largest corpora of data deriving from such contexts, especially seen at Tel Arad (Aharoni 1981), Horvat ‘Uza (Beit-Arieh 2007a), and Lachish (Ahituv 2008, 56–91). In this way, the particular scripts used in these regions reflect different military-administrative scribal communities, and distinctions between the scripts were perpetuated through insular systems of training.

The evidence from the epigraphic data, particularly concerning the meticulousness in a range of writing features including morphology, stance, orthography, and spatial relationships between the letters, indicates that formal scribal education was a part of southern Levantine society. This is especially well attested in Judah and Israel where there is evidence for a degree of control over writing in order to maintain standardization (Rollston 2006; Schniedewind 2013, 117). On the basis of modern data concerning the time required, and the degrees by which a student learns their first alphabetic system, it is likely that this process took years in order for the student not only to learn and become adept, but to master the process (Rollston 2010, 92–94). The time required to become proficient at writing, together with its restricted usage among elite elements of society, are the major reason for the high status these scribes enjoyed, not only in the southern Levant, but throughout the ancient Near East (Rollston 2010, 85–90). The limited usage and degree of prestige associated with it, indicates that access to scribal training was not widespread, and was likely perpetuated through local familial apprenticeship practices, whereby sons would learn the profession of their fathers (Schniedewind 2013, 118). Parallels within Mesopotamian and Egyptian contexts indicate the same pattern of “schools” present in domestic settings and exhibiting a very limited number of “students” as seen at Nippur (Veldhuis 2006, 13; 1997), and in examples such as at Deir el-Medina where the scribe’s trainees are three of his

sons (McDowell 2000, 224; Rollston 2010, 115–26). Thus, the Edomite script was likely perpetuated through an insular, multi-generational kin-based scribal community.

In general then, writing was limited to an elite subset of society—namely a military-administrative scribal community—with the majority of the population unable to read or write (Rollston 2010, 127–35; Na’aman 2015, 64–66).³⁰⁵ By the late Iron Age it does appear as though a greater degree of scribal training was taking place, particularly within the administration of the military. A number of texts throughout the region of Judah indicate unfamiliarity with the nuances of writing, a lack of adept proficiency (e.g., Horvat ‘Uza Ostrakon No. 10; Mendel 2011; Beit-Arieh 2007a, 139–43), and a social stigma beginning to be applied to those at lower levels of administration who were less proficient (Lachish Letter 3; Schniedewind 2013, 105–10; Ahituv 2008, 62–69). Likewise, the identification of numerous scribal hands within a single fort (Faigenbaum-Golovin et al. 2016), as well as the distribution of inscriptions throughout domestic settings (Beit-Arieh 2007a, Fig. 4.36), indicates a limited increase in writing among the military administration (Na’aman 2015, 64–66). Further data regarding the scribal training that took place within military contexts has been demonstrated at sites such as Kuntillet ‘Ajrud (Schniedewind 2014).

The fact that the Edomite script bears so many Aramaic tendencies (see Appendix E), is tempting to view as the result of interactions with Assyrian administrators using Aramaic. Particularly in the early decades of the nascent Edomite polity in the eighth century BCE, the transmission of substantial elements of the Aramaic script into Edomite could have been the result of cooperative scribal training following the elite of Edom’s need for a script and scribes for administrative purposes (Sebba 2009, 41). As Busayra appears to the base of administrative

³⁰⁵ This is contrary to Albright’s suppositions that even “street urchins” would have exhibited the ability to read and write (1960, 123).

authority in Edom, these scribes would then find themselves positioned there and perpetuating their craft through local and limited (likely familial) patterns of scribal training. Due to the locality and the restricted size of this scribal network, any peculiarities of a scribal hand could easily become the norm and the continued tradition among successive generations of scribes.³⁰⁶

The number of inscriptions from Edom is limited, although this may in part reflect the lack of necessity for scribes beyond a select number of sites within Edom. Busayra, as the foremost city and seat of elite authority would have been the central locale of scribal activity and consequently also of scribal training. Beyond Busayra, the most substantial inscriptional evidence comes from the site of Tell el-Kheleifeh, where the inscriptional data predominantly concerns seals and sealings—elements of administrative activities. The administrator *Qws 'nl* at Tel el-Kheleifeh, bearing the title “servant of the king,” is notable both for his affiliation with the ruling authority but also in the inscriptional realm as being the intermediary between the Edomite administration and the distribution of store jars carrying necessary goods. Likewise, other inscriptions from Tell el-Kheleifeh that provide lists of persons (e.g., No. 6043), closely correspond to the name lists seen in the military administration across the northeastern Negev.

In terms of the iconicity of the Edomite script and the ability of Judahites to notice “otherness,” and vice versa, it would have been immediately restricted to the literate—a small sub-set of society. Those possessing lesser degrees of proficiency in reading may also have been able to detect “otherness” in their inability to recognize some of the variances of the graphemes, but the greater significance of difference between these scripts would have been limited to the more adept and advanced scribes. Overall, scribal practices in Edom can then be argued to have

³⁰⁶ Similar centripetal forces of script development through systems of scribal training may also be seen in northwest Arabia where each of the major oases (Tayma, Dedan, and Dumah) perpetuated their own unique variant of the South Semitic alphabet (M. Macdonald 2010, 9).

followed a similar, but more restricted trajectory to that of Judah, although gaining original script inspiration from a different, likely Aramaic source. The variances of these scripts would have allowed those proficient in writing to detect the hands of scribes trained in different scribal networks, and thus, belonging to a different community.

C. THE NEGEV OSTRACA: COMMUNITY AFFILIATION, ADMINISTRATION, AND INTERACTION

The corpus of ostraca from the late Iron Age northeastern Negev reveal further insights into the identities and activities of certain agents in the region. This next section will first examine the names found in the ostraca, engaging with them in terms of indexicality, and second, it will explore the macro-scale organization of the region on the basis of the content of the ostraca.

1. ONOMASTICS AND THEOPHORIC ELEMENTS AS MARKERS OF BELONGING AND DIFFERENCE

At the foundation of the following discussion is the understanding that specific theophoric elements within an individual's name, and patterns of similar names found within a comparable spatial and chronological horizon, mark persons as members of a particular community of shared cultic ideologies that are reflected within their names (Nyström 2016). As such, these names cannot *a priori* be assumed to relate to a specific ethnic or political entity or identity, although in many cases there can and will be an overlap between these spheres. These names rather indicate that members of a specific community had expressed a feature of their ideological perspectives or a social circumstance through the often highly intentional act of assigning names, either to oneself, or in most cases, to one's offspring (Aldrin 2016; 2017; Zadok 1997). The originally intended meaning and nuance of these names, however, would not necessarily be readily understood by others outside of that community, with the significance of these personal names

rather lying in their role as serving an identifying function. Various presuppositional meanings, such as positive or negative associative connotations, or categorical indexing on the basis of names, would be the most readily apparent externally derived meanings (Nyström 2016; Aldrin 2016), and one of the more fruitful avenues in which to study such names in antiquity. In other words, where consistent patterns of naming practices are evidenced, and highly recognizable elements such as theophoric elements can be determined, these names can be examined in terms of their ability to serve as indices of belonging, and of difference.

These names, however, cannot necessarily be viewed as static and rigid indications of identity and community membership. In certain contexts, humans can and will adopt a second name or a new name entirely that may be more suited to a certain social, economic, or political context, such as the practice of “double names” in Ptolemaic Egypt (Clarysse 1985; Fischer-Bovet 2014, 246–55). Instances such as these indicate the necessity of a cautious approach toward assigning broad and definitive identities solely on the basis of names, as names at times can be flexible markers of an individual’s social and cultural affiliations rather than ones ethnic or national origin. Similar to other forms of identity, names ought to be considered as bearing the potential for malleability and modification based upon the experiences and interactions of an individual (Insoll 2007a; 2007b; Diaz-Andreu and Lucy 2005; Lucy 2005; Edwards 2005).

Related to the consideration of theophoric elements in onomastics, within the biblical text are associations between particular deities and regions/states (e.g., Astarte and Sidon, Milkom and Ammon, Kemosh and Moab, Yahweh with Israel and Judah; see 1 Kings 11:5–8, 2 Kings 23: 13, etc.). While these deities may be pre-eminent within such regions, the practice of naming persons after such deities cannot be assumed to indicate an ethnic or “national” affiliation. Rather, names bearing theophoric elements ought to be examined along more stringent lines of a

cultic identity or affiliation, in terms of the popularity of such a deity within certain social or political circles (i.e., as a popular kin-deity, as a dynastic deity; Sanders 2015), as well as in relation to other deities attested in the same region. Therefore, viewing iconic or noticeable markers of names within a certain community that can be viewed *in opposition* to contrasting elements within another community of naming practices, allows for a more nuanced use of these names to serve as markers of belonging and of difference.

In other words, persons bearing the theophoric element *qws* in their name cannot be assumed to be ethnically or politically “Edomites.” However, there may be significant overlap between these identities or *Qws* identities may find themselves nested within larger networks of meaning. Similarly, theophoric elements such as *qws* do not necessarily indicate that an individual or community worshipped *Qws* solely, as opposed to worshipping *Qws* as one among many deities. Nor does it even indicate that the community even worshipped *Qws* at all. Rather, it means that *Qws* held significant enough meaning within a certain community to be referenced within that group’s naming practices (van der Toorn 1996, 143–46).

Table 4. References to *Qws* in names and inscriptions during the Iron Age.

| No. | Text | Context | Language | Provenance | Date (cent. BCE) | Reference |
|-----|-------------------------------|------------------|----------|---------------|------------------|--|
| 1 | <i>qaušmalaka</i> of Edom | PN; Tribute List | Akkadian | Nimrud | 8 th | (Tadmor 1994, 170–71, Sum. 7, K3751) |
| 2 | <i>qwsgr</i> King of Edom | PN; Sealing | Edomite | Umm al-Biyara | 7 th | (van der Veen 2011, 79–81, Reg. 50) |
| 3 | <i>qausgabri</i> King of Edom | PN; Tribute List | Akkadian | Nineveh | 7 th | (Luckenbill 1926, 527–28, 876, Prism B V.56, Prism C II.28); (n=2) |

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|----------------|---------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 4 | <i>qwsgr</i> [King of Edo]m | PN; Seal | Edomite | Babylon | 7 th (?) | (Avigad and Sass 1997, 387–88, No. 1048) |
| 5 | may <i>qws</i> be [blessed] | DN; Blessing | Edomite | Busayra | 7 th –6 th | (A. R. Millard 2002, 432–33, Reg. 583) |
| 6 | <i>bdq[ws]</i> | PN; List | Edomite | Tell el-Kheleifeh | 7 th –6 th | (Divito 1993, 55–57, No. 6043) |
| 7 | <i>pg'qws</i> | PN; List | Edomite | Tell el-Kheleifeh | 7 th –6 th | (Divito 1993, 55–57, No. 6043); (n=2) |
| 8 | <i>qwsb[nh]</i> | PN; List | Edomite | Tell el-Kheleifeh | 7 th –6 th | (Divito 1993, 55–57, No. 6043) |
| 9 | <i>qwsny</i> | PN; List | Edomite | Tell el-Kheleifeh | 7 th –6 th | (Divito 1993, 55–57, No. 6043) |
| 10 | <i>qws'nl</i> servant of the King | PN; Sealing | Edomite | Tell el-Kheleifeh | 7 th –6 th | (Divito 1993, 53–55, Nos. 146, 215, 241, 243, 267, 278, 381, 463, 464, 466, 467, 528, 724, 742, 822, 1014, 2092, 2096, 2098, 6049, 9098, 20271); (n=22) |
| 11 | <i>[m]lkqw[s]</i> | PN; Dedication | Edomite | Horvat Qitmit | 7 th –6 th | (Beit-Arieh 1995b, 259–60, No. 2) |
| 12 | to <i>qws</i> | DN; Dedication | Edomite | Horvat Qitmit | 7 th –6 th | (Beit-Arieh 1995b, 260–61, nos. 3, 4); (n=2) |
| 13 | <i>šwbnqws</i> | PN; Seal | Edomite | Horvat Qitmit | 7 th –6 th | (Beit-Arieh 1995b, 264–67, No. 7) |
| 14 | ...I bless you by <i>qws</i> ... | DN; Blessing | Edomite | Horvat 'Uza | 7 th –6 th | (Beit-Arieh 2007a, 133–37, No. 7) |
| 15 | ...[...] <i>qws</i> and <i>yhw</i> [...] | PN; Letter | Hebrew | Tel Arad | 7 th –6 th | (Aharoni 1981, 52, Insc. 26) |
| 16 | ...[to <i>qw</i>]s'nl quickly... | PN; Letter | Hebrew | Tel Arad | 7 th –6 th | (Aharoni 1981, 26, Insc. 12) |
| 17 | <i>qws'</i> | PN; Seal | Edomite | Tel 'Aroer | 7 th –6 th | (Thareani 2011b, 227, No. F/361/1) |
| 18 | <i>qsw'dny</i> | PN; Seal | Edomite | N/A | 7 th –6 th (?) | (Avigad and Sass 1997, 393–94, No. 1057) |
| 19 | <i>[qw]s'm</i> [son of] <i>l'd'l</i> | PN; Seal | Edomite | N/A | 7 th –6 th (?) | (Avigad and Sass 1997, 393, No. 1056) |

a. *Qws* and Yahweh in Onomastics

During the Iron Age, several of the earliest attestations of *Qws* derive from Assyrian sources in Mesopotamia that preserve the deity name as a theophoric element (*qws*) within anthroponyms (Table 4: nos. 1, 3).³⁰⁷ These names, as previously discussed, appear in tribute lists with clear identifications of these individuals as from Edom, and as representatives or kings of Edom. Thus, a clear link between this naming convention and Edom is established, witnessed especially among elite persons. The external references are paralleled by contemporaneous references to one of these kings—*Qwsgr*—attested on a seal that was excavated locally in southern Transjordan at the site of Umm al-Biyara (Table 4: No. 2). The lack of a larger epigraphic dataset from the region of Edom precludes a more robust understanding of the local naming practices.

Nonetheless, knowledge of these practices can be further substantiated by ostraca and sealings excavated at the site of Tell el-Kheleifeh on the northern coast of the Gulf of Aqaba. Tell el-Kheleifeh has already been demonstrated to have been under the aegis of the Busayran elite during this period and served as a crossroads for the South Arabian caravan trade (Lipiński 2013, 65–70; Pratico 1993). On an ostrakon from the site, a list of names perhaps representing a military accounting (Table 4: nos. 6–9) preserves half of the individuals as bearing the theophoric element *qws*, with no other deity appearing more than once. Moreover, the preserved sealings of the figure *Qws'nl*, the “servant of the king,” in other words, an administrator or perhaps commander, likewise links this theophoric element to the Edomite king and elite naming practices in general (Table 4: No. 10; n=22). Thus, of the few names that are present within the region of Edom or in direct relation to Edomite political hierarchy, the majority demonstrate an

³⁰⁷ As alluded to previously, *Qws* appears attested already during the Late Bronze Age in topographic lists from New Kingdom Egypt (ns.. 76, 233).

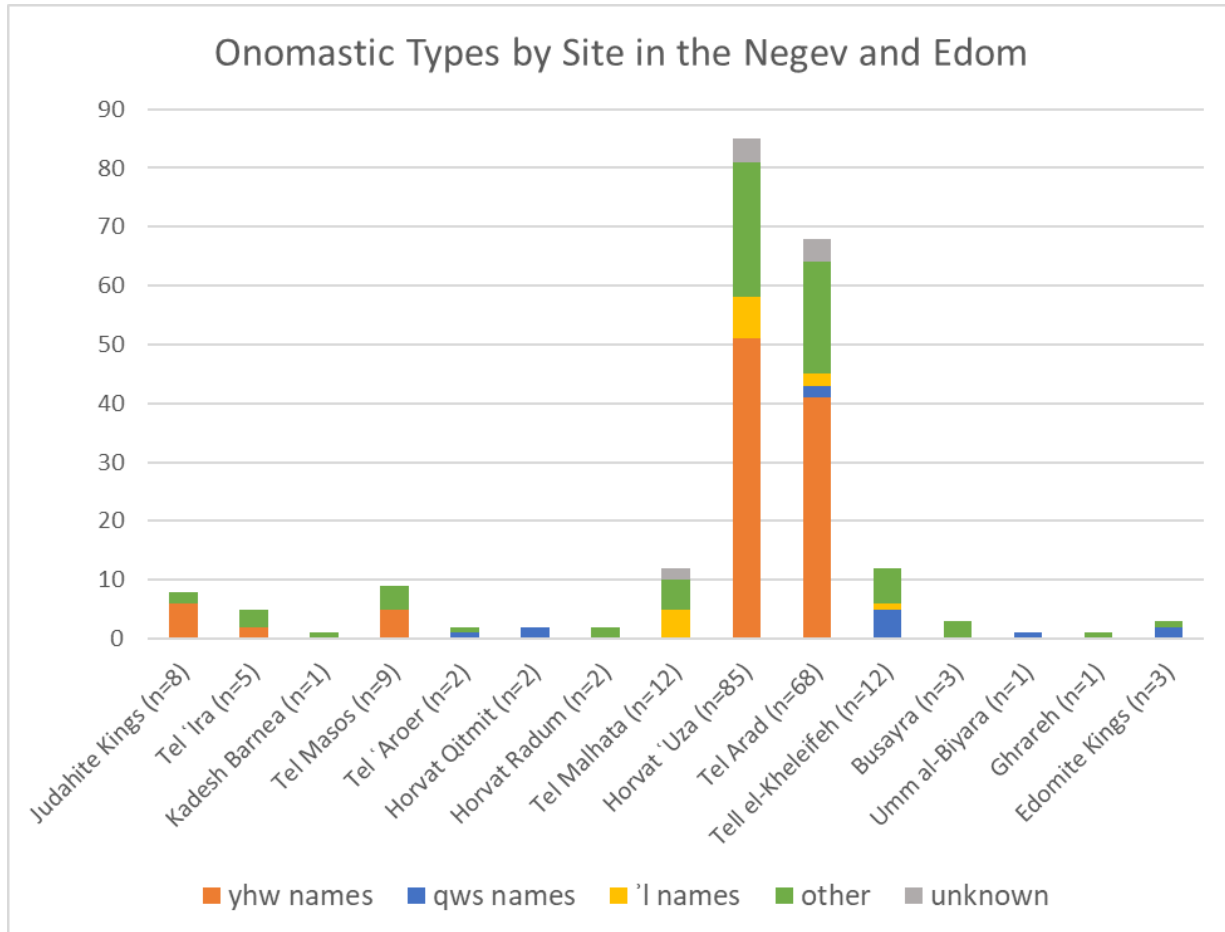
affiliation with the deity *Qws*. From southern Transjordan in the late Iron Age, while other deities are attested in names, no other deity is present in comparable numbers.³⁰⁸

Names bearing the element *qws* also appear in the northeastern Negev. These are preserved on several seals (Table 4: nos. 13, 17), and in indirect references in military epistolary (Table 4: nos. 15–16).³⁰⁹ Interestingly, the figure *Qws 'nl* mentioned in the Tel Arad epistolary perhaps references the same Edomite administrative person located at Tell el-Kheleifeh (Table 4: nos. 10, 16; see below). Several direct references to the divine name *Qws* are also present in the northeastern Negev, in a letter found at the site of Horvat 'Uza (Table 4: No. 14), and in several dedicatory inscriptions from the site of Horvat Qitmit (Table 4: nos. 11–13). These attestations of *Qws* within the northeastern Negev, however, are vastly outnumbered by names bearing the theophoric element *yhw* that attest to the popularity of Yahweh within this region and that have been examined in greater detail elsewhere (Tigay 1986; Pardee 1988; Albertz and Schmitt 2012, 245–386; Sanders 2015, 76–80; Golub 2014; 2017).

³⁰⁸ For other deities attested, see for example Tell el-Kheleifeh Ostrakon No. 6043 that preserves the deity names: El ('l) and Shalem (*šlm*; Divito 1993, 55–57).

³⁰⁹ Several unprovenanced seals are also attested dating to this period (Table 4: nos. 18–19), although their lack of context limits their utility in this discussion.

Figure 41. Onomastic types by site in the Negev and Edom (see data in Appendix F). Figure by author)



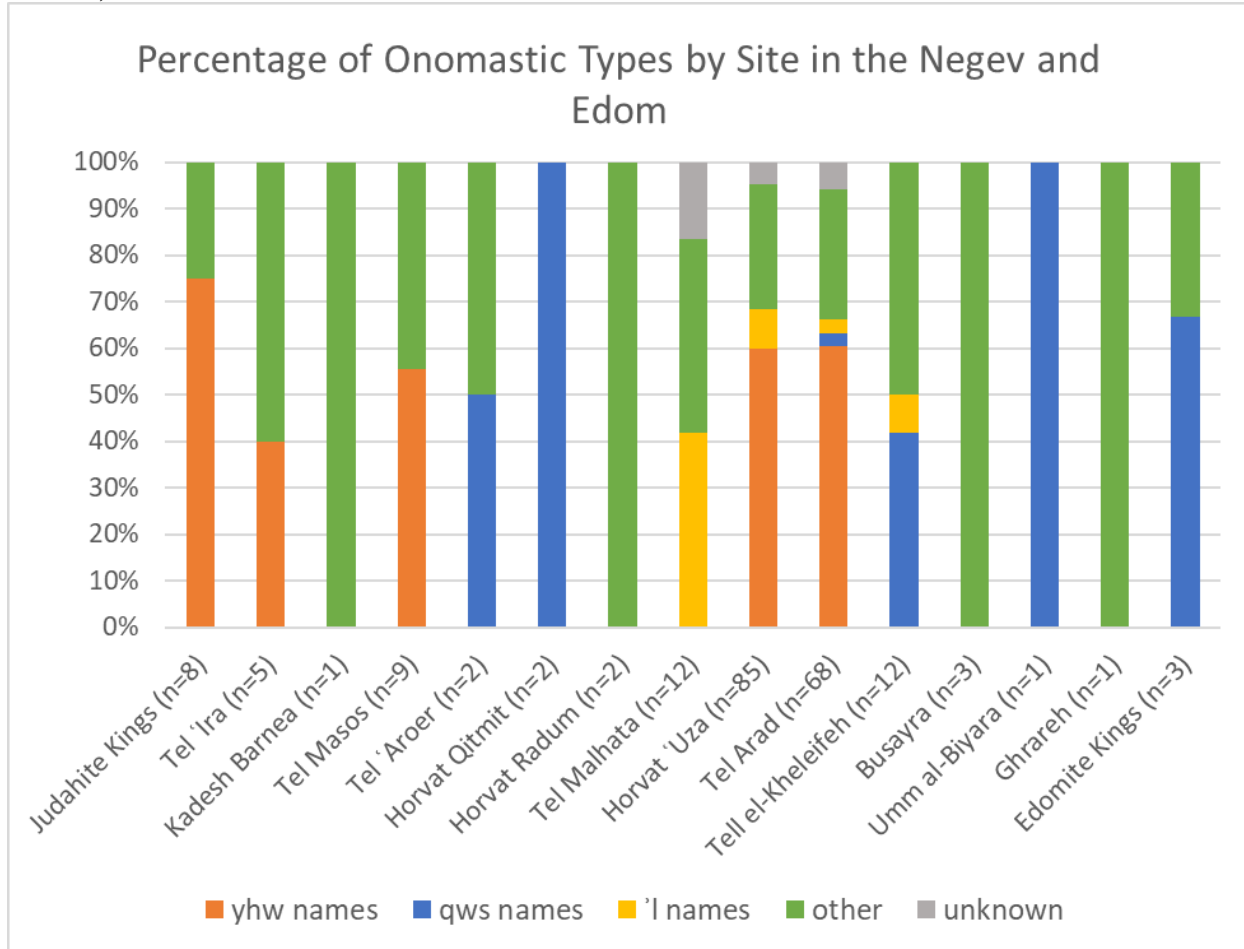
A stark contrast can be drawn both regionally and on a site by site basis regarding naming practices affiliated with these deities (Figure 41; see also Appendix F).³¹⁰ While there is a clear sample bias based on the sheer quantity of ostraca that were excavated at Tel Arad and at Horvat 'Uza, the pattern of naming practices demonstrated within these greater datasets largely holds

³¹⁰ See Appendix F for a complete list of the names that are present within this graph. With regard to the methodology by which these names were quantified, each entry attempts to reflect a *single* historical individual as can be best reconstructed on the basis of the data. In other words, well-attested persons such as Eliashib (*'lyšb*; n=20) from Tel Arad, or *Qws 'nl* (n=22) from Tell el-Kheleifeh, were only counted once, as these multiple attestations can definitively be identified as a single person so as not to artificially skew the results. Only names that could be reasonably reconstructed in terms of a partially preserved theophoric element were included in this list, with reconstructed names evaluated on a case by case basis with consideration given to partially preserved paleographic features and the overall likelihood of reconstructions. In most cases, a fairly conservative approach was taken and only names with a high degree of certainty were included.

true at the sites that lack similar quantities. Figure 42 demonstrates these patterns in a more visually comprehensive fashion, although note that the percentage format of the graph masks the raw number of variables. First, as previously discussed, at sites in or associated with Edom there is a preference for *qws* names, and if the *qws* names lacking provenance but associated with Edomite kings are considered in relation to Busayra, this pattern becomes more definitive. Contrasted with this situation are sites within Judah where *yhw* names are by far the dominant type, and which mirror the naming practices of the Judahite kings.³¹¹ Interestingly, several major settlements of the northeastern Negev such as Tel ‘Aroer and Tel Malhata lack this prevalence or even a single Yahwistic name, although in the case of Tel ‘Aroer the dataset is severely restricted. What is perhaps most notable is that the nature of the sites where Yahwistic names are most dominantly attested are sites associated with Judahite administration and serving militaristic purposes (i.e., Horvat ‘Uza, Tel Arad, Tel ‘Ira and Tel Masos).

³¹¹ If one takes into account that the element *’l* (El) may at times indicate a dominant deity such as *Yhwh* or *Qws* within the first millennium, this frequency of attestations will increase. Likewise, divine kinship elements such as *’b* (father) or *’h* (brother), that are all categorized beneath “other” could possess some overlap with the aforementioned deities, likewise increasing these ratios (Pardee 1988, 128, 133; Albertz and Schmitt 2012, 339–67).

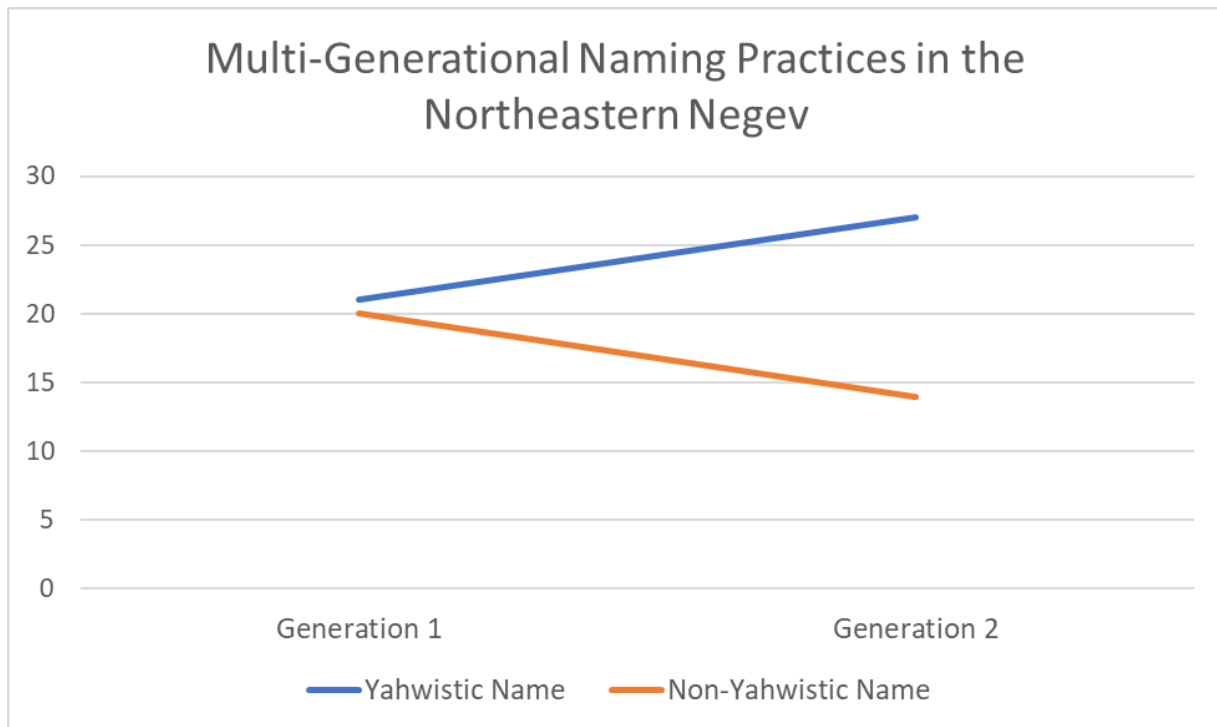
Figure 42. Percentage of onomastic types by site in the Negev and Edom. (Figure by author)



The case of Tel Malhata is particularly intriguing in that it possesses a not insubstantial number of names (n=12), however, despite its close geographic proximity to sites with overwhelming numbers of *yhw* names, it possesses none. Likewise, as demonstrated in Chapter 4.C, despite the prevalence of culinary ceramics of the tradition popular in Edom, no *qws* names are present at the site either. If this site is understood as consisting of substantial numbers of diverse persons as is evidenced by its culinary ceramic dataset, and with social and economic alliances forged through social actions such as intermarriage, then perhaps the absence of expected names is a result of this situation, with the more ambiguous El ('l) names as most prominent. Similarly, Tel Malhata was one of the few Negev sites to present continuous

habitation from the Iron IIB into the Iron IIC, and perhaps this site preserves older, local patterns of naming, whereas newly established sites such as Horvat ‘Uza, and forts such as Tel Arad that were garrisoned by soldiers who may not have been local to the northeastern Negev, reflect the more politically in-vogue naming practices of the late seventh century BCE. Unfortunately, the relatively small sample size of this site ought not to be used to draw substantial conclusions on its own.

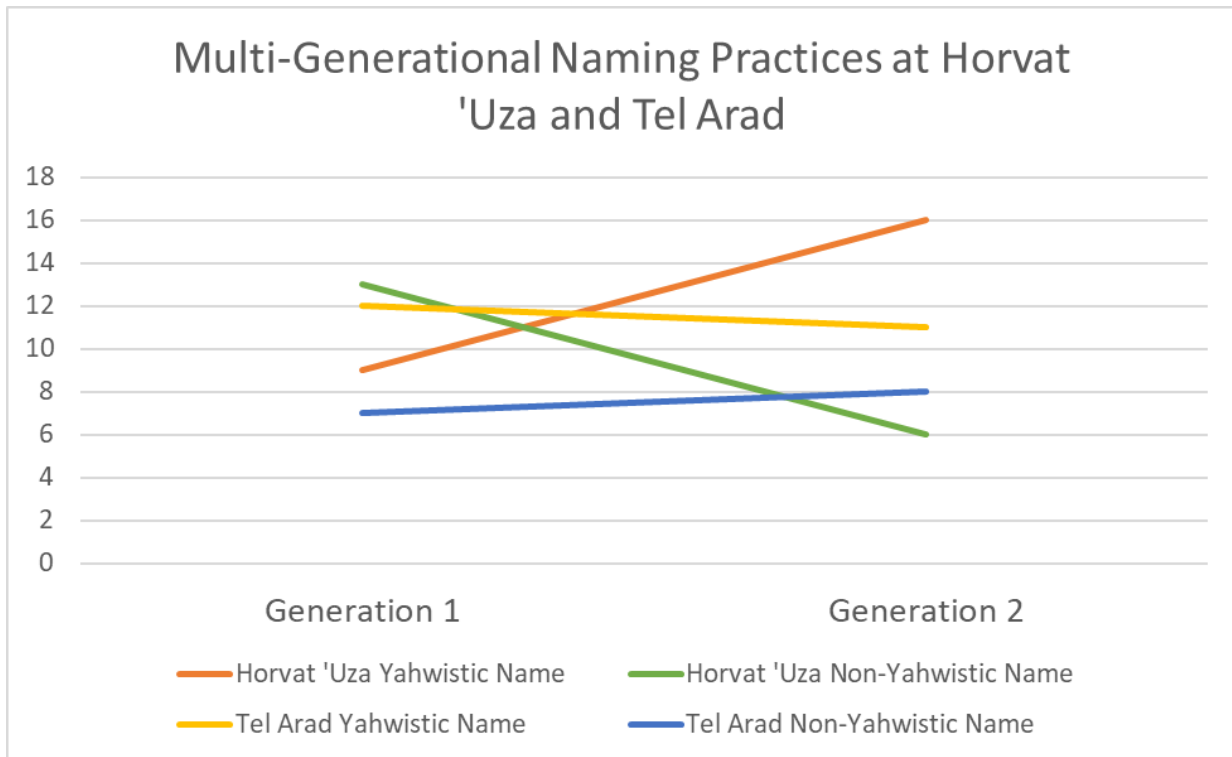
Figure 43. Multi-generational naming practices in the northeastern Negev. (Figure by author)



The corpus of names also presents numerous examples where the named individual’s patronymic is preserved, though these derive solely from the sites of Horvat ‘Uza and Tel Arad (see Appendix F). These multi-generational names allow for the unique opportunity to examine patterns of naming practices over successive generations. These names, when presented together (see Figure 43), demonstrate that there is a marked increase in the popularity of Yahwistic names in the second generation, and a decrease in non-Yahwistic names in successive generations

within these military forts. When this data is broken down by site, however, the naming practices at Tel Arad demonstrate an almost consistent pattern, which, based on the nature of the data ought to represent a rather stable continuity (see Figure 44). Horvat 'Uza, on the other hand, demonstrates a sharp increase in Yahwistic names, indicating a clear preference for these names in the second generation.

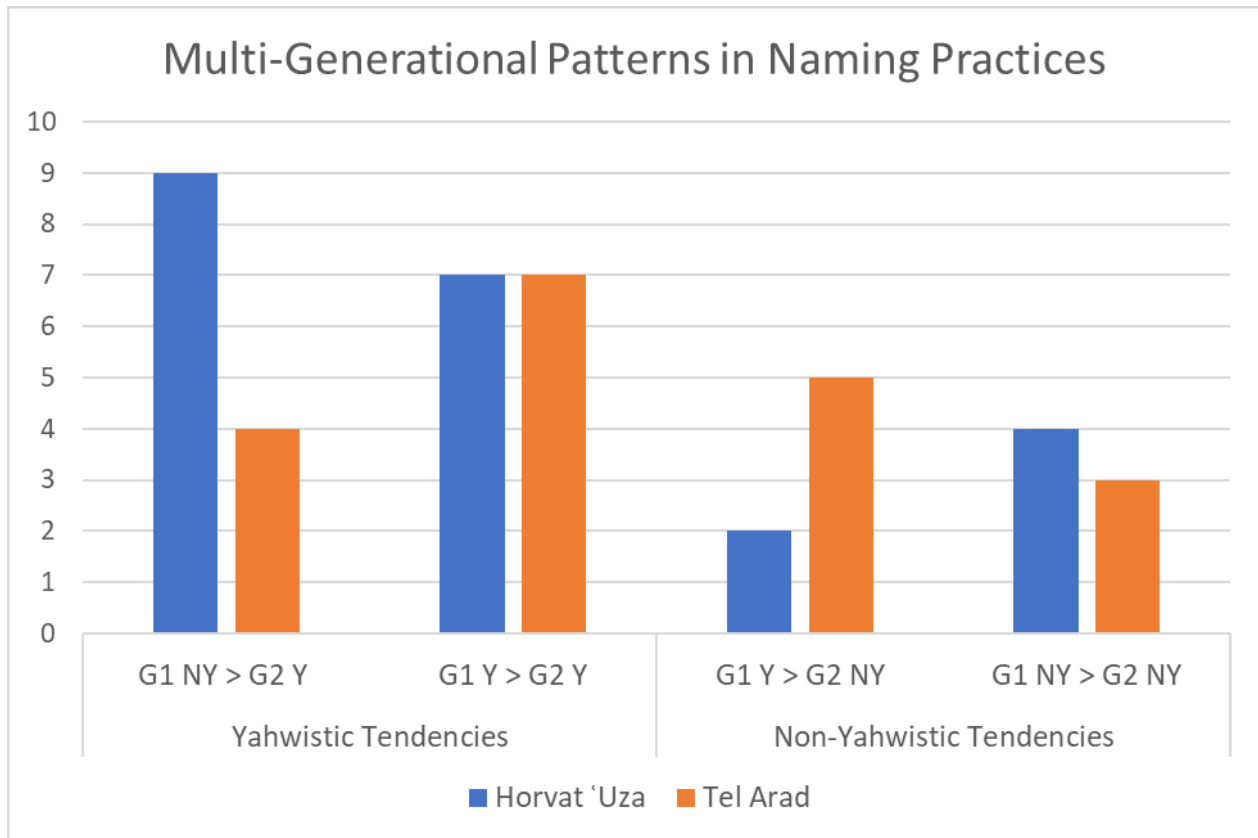
Figure 44. Multi-generational naming practices at Horvat 'Uza and Tel Arad. (Figure by author)



Of note is the fact that Tel Arad is a multi-period site that was established centuries prior to the late Iron Age context discussed here, whereas Horvat 'Uza, as a one period site, only existed during the late Iron Age. This indicates that in its establishment, Horvat 'Uza necessitated an influx of persons to inhabit and garrison the site, whereas Tel Arad could have conceivably been inhabited and garrisoned by persons who had been established within the region for a more substantial period of time. During the late eighth and seventh centuries BCE,

the religious ideals promoted by Hezekiah and Josiah created a context where Yahwistic tendencies became officially sponsored (2 Kings 18:1–8; 2 Kings 22–23:25), matching the already popular nature of the deity among the populace (Sanders 2015). As a military establishment constructed during this period, the dominance of Yahwistic names among the soldiers garrisoned at Horvat ‘Uza is perhaps not surprising. The relationship of this fort to the Judahite administration, together with Tel Arad, is notable in the links it would have held to the Judahite political elite. Constructed during this period, it would have necessitated a populace to garrison and operate it, and while it may be difficult to determine the regional origins of these persons, the stark preference for Yahwistic names (see Figure 44 and 45), demonstrates that many of the individuals of this community held ideals that reflected the cult-centralizing ideals of the political elite in Jerusalem.

Figure 45. Multi-generational naming practices in the Northeastern Negev (G1 NY > G2 Y = Non-Yahwistic named fathers with Yahwistic named sons; G1 Y > G2 Y = Yahwistic named fathers with Yahwistic named sons; G1 Y > G2 NY = Yahwistic named fathers and non-Yahwistic named sons; G1 NY > G2 NY = Non-Yahwistic named fathers and non-Yahwistic named sons; data from Appendix F). (Figure by author)



Previous research has already examined many aspects of the relationship between naming practices and patterns of religious behavior (e.g., Tigay 1986; Pardee 1988; Albertz and Schmitt 2012, 245–386; Sanders 2015, 76–80). However, one of the more intriguing avenues of study with regard to onomastics and deities, is the interplay between prominent kin-deities, dynastic deities, and regional deities. In the case of Judah, the most prominent kin-deity is the same as that of the ruling dynasty, a process argued by Sanders on the basis of onomastics to have been a form of pantheon reduction resulting from royal dynasts adopting a deity from the people (Sanders 2015, 67, 81). Through this action, a convergence between a regional god, the god of the people, and the god of the king can be seen to have created a unifying identity between the

social elements of this region, a phenomenon later erroneously identified as “monotheism” (Sanders 2015, 59–67). This form of pantheon reduction then, in a certain fashion, can serve as one element by which a desire of the ruling elite toward constructing regions and populations as singular and unified could be realized (Sanders 2015, 73).³¹² Such concepts bear significant implications for the study of the northeastern Negev and Edom and the apparent preference of certain deities within certain sociopolitical contexts.

Similarly, a highly informative context can be found in Edom’s northern neighbor Moab, during the ninth century BCE as witnessed in the Mesha Inscription (MI). Narrated in the first-person voice, Mesha’s inscription does not reflect a unified Moab, but rather, Mesha appears to create an argument for one (Sanders 2009, 114–15; 2015, 72). Beyond the general geographic identity inherent in the references to the region of Moab and Mesha’s position as king of that region, the other common metaphor of unity used by Mesha is cultic, evidenced in the invocation of the deity Kemosh (*kmš*; also preserved in Mesha’s patronymic: *kmšyt*). In these invocations, Kemosh serves not only as one of the guiding forces behind Mesha’s militaristic campaigns, but also as a unifying force between Mesha, his people, and the territories that Mesha conquers. In particular, through the military and ritual genocidal act of *ḥrm*, Mesha unites the dynastic deity to the newly conquered land, and by extension, its people (Sanders 2015, 70). In this example, the *ḥrm* is dedicated to a gendered manifestation of Kemosh: *štr-kmš* (MI 17; Ahituv 2008, 389–418).

³¹² Even in this seemingly apparent unity, however, lies a complex web of difference where a single deity could be presented in multiple forms or aspects, whether based on locality or gender (Sanders 2015, 67–68). See for example the references in the Kuntillet ‘Ajrud inscriptions to “Yahweh of Teman,” and “Yahweh of Shomron” (Kuntillet ‘Ajrud Inscriptions 3.1, 3.6, 3.9; S. Ahituv, Eshel, and Meshel 2012, 87–98), as well a reference to “‘Ashtar-Kemos” (*štr-kmš*) in the Mesha Inscription (MI 17; Ahituv 2008, 389–418).

In this fashion, the Mesha Inscription serves as an example of royal rhetoric arguing for a unified “Moab” through unifying metaphors of place (Moab) and deity (Kemosh) in an otherwise segmented social landscape (Routledge 2004, 150; 2000b, 238–39). In Moab, a strong minority of Moabite names (40%) present the theophoric of the deity Kemosh, displaying an interesting interplay between identity unifying aspects such as the deity Kemosh and aspects of popular cult (Sanders 2015, 80). Similar to the case of Moab, patterns of *h_{rm}*, dedicating a land to a deity through genocide is not uncommon in ancient Near East, and can also be seen in the Deuteronomistic ideology (Joshua 6–7; 1 Samuel 15), as well as in Saba’ in southern Arabia (Sanders 2015, 70).³¹³ This interplay maybe interpreted to suggest that a ruling dynasty or elite group adopted a popular kin-god or regional deity to serve as an active means by which to create a unifying identity for a region and populace.

Based on the onomastic data from Edom and parallels to its regional neighbors, a similar pattern of dynastic deities utilized to promote a unifying identity and ideology may be postulated. In other words the deity *Qws* served as an equalizing entity and a means by which to foster social and political alliances and integrate disparate social elements within the region (Porter 2004, 381–84). The onomastics in which *Qws* is attested, can be found among the elite and ruling kings of Edom (Table 4: nos. 1–3), among subordinate agents of the king (Table 4: No. 10), and among the general populace (Table 4: nos. 6–9). Likewise, on the basis of these patterns and their provenience, the deity *Qws* appears as local to southern Transjordan—in the

³¹³ In a variant, yet highly informative case of the phenomenon of ruling dynasties and popular deities, Moab’s northern neighbor of Ammon provides an intriguing case study. Here, the dynastic god Milkom is evidenced in names and in external references (e.g., 1 Kgs 11:5, 2 Kgs 23: 13 etc.). However, Milkom is not the most prevalent deity reflected in the naming practices of the populace, where references to the deity El are by far the most prominent (Aufrecht 1999, 156–60). That the theophoric *’l* is most likely a reference to the supreme deity El, and not a generic reference to a deity, is supported by extant iconographic evidence (Daviau and Dion 1994). In this instance it appears that pantheon reduction and a dynastic adoption of a popular kin deity did not occur and that a unifying cultic identity was not created in the same way.

region known as Edom—and as having pre-dated the rise of Iron Age sociopolitical complexity there. The same patterns are present in Judah, where Yahwistic names are found in diverse social strata. Again, these names cannot be used necessarily to identify “ethnic” or “national” Edomites or Judahites, but rather they portray that persons bearing these names, were, or had at one point been affiliated with the communities in which these naming practices were dominant, communities which may have held a vested interest in promoting a particular deity. Sites such as Tel Malhata, however, stand as cautionary indications that conclusions regarding these names cannot be sweepingly applied to the entirety of a region.

What these names can most readily portray, is either belonging or difference. The *qws* and *yhw* names would have served as indices by which persons would be recognized as affiliated with a particular community or as not-belonging. In the northeastern Negev for example, these names may not have necessarily marked a person as Edomite or even necessarily as a worshipper of *Qws*, but they would have indexed an individual whose name was not reflective of the “normative” naming patterns. Moreover, many of both *yhw* and *qws* names present the same lexical elements and structures, with only the name of the deity being different. For example, at Horvat Qitmit, a seal is preserved of an individual named *šwbnqws* (Table 4: No. 13) that corresponds to the name *šbnyhw* (see Appendix F), which, beyond the *plene* spelling of the former, are differentiated only by the deities present in the name. Likewise, the names *qwsmlk* and *mlkqws* (Table 4: nos. 1, 11) may be contrasted with *yhwmlk* and *mlkyhw* (see Appendix F), which, despite lexical and structural similarities are marked different by the deity included.³¹⁴ In contrast, several other *qws* names do not preserve correlates within the northeastern Negev or the Judahite repertoire (e.g., *qwsgr*, *pg'qws*; Table 4: nos. 2–3, 7; Appendix F; Golub 2017, 36–58),

³¹⁴ Likewise, the name *bdqws* (Table 4: No. 6), may perhaps be reconstructed as *'bdqws*, which would correspond to *'bdyhw* (see Appendix F).

and may have been even more readily distinguished as “different” or “other.”³¹⁵ The increase in the use of Yahwistic names as demonstrated above, would have heightened awareness of names that did not conform to “Yahwistic” patterns and despite even a lack of personal knowledge of another person, divergent names would have immediately signaled a difference.³¹⁶

b. Addendum: *Qws* in Arabia

Names referencing *Qws* have also been found in northwestern Arabia, namely at the oasis site of Dedan with which Edomite trade and interaction has already been discussed (see Chapter 3; see Table 5). Though difficult to date precisely, it is probable that these derive from the Babylonian or early Persian Period (S. al-Said 2010, 268).³¹⁷ Late and post-monarchic biblical references to Dedan situate it within a context of curses against Edom (Jeremiah 49:8; Ezekiel 25:13), and in relation to trade networks of the region (Isaiah 21:13; Ezekiel 27:15, 20; 38:13), thus establishing a strong link between Edom and Dedan. The trade network creates a context in which movement and complex forms of interactions are to be expected, and in which cultic traditions of *Qws* can be seen to arrive at Dedan in the form of onomastics, with certain individuals bearing these elements even holding positions of authority (Table 5: No. 6).³¹⁸ Similarly, the campaigns of

³¹⁵ The practice of giving names that bear the theophoric element *qws* continues in substantial numbers into the subsequent centuries, particularly well-attested in the region of Idumea in the southern Levant during the Persian and Early Hellenistic period (Porten and Yardeni 2006; 2014; 2016; 2018; A. Lemaire 1996; 2002; Eph'al and Naveh 1996; Eshel and Kloner 1996; Naveh 1979).

³¹⁶ There is also significant evidence for other actors in the northeastern Negev, namely Arabian persons whose names preserve altogether different traditions of language, script, and theophoric elements. See Chapter 3.B.3.

³¹⁷ There is yet an inability to assign any fixed dates to the monuments of pre-Islamic Dedan and thus the paleographic and chronologic distinctions between what has been described as “Dadanite,” and “Liحيانite” are founded on very subjective and hypothetical grounds. For these reasons, these scripts have since been designated as “Dadanitic” with a date range of the second half of the first millennium BCE (M. Macdonald 2001, 33; 2018).

³¹⁸ See, however, the suggestion of Knauf that the suffixed *qs* in North Arabian inscriptions may rather refer to the deity Qais (Knauf 1999, 676). The exact deity here is inconclusive. The linguistic monophthongization of the Edomite diphthong *aw* around this time (Garr 1985, 38; Rollston 2014b, 967), indicates that variations in the spelling of *Qws* are not necessarily to be unexpected.

Nabonidus through Edom and into North Arabia in his efforts to reroute the trade networks of the region (Crowell 2007; Beaulieu 1989, 165–74; Pritchard 1969, 562–63), provide additional contexts of interaction and opportunities in which these persons could have arrived at Dedan.

The desire to see an external source for the origin of these names lies in the lack of a cultic tradition for *Qws* at Dedan, where the inscriptional evidence demonstrates the primacy of the deity Dhū Ghābit followed by Lāh, Lāt, Han-ʾAktab (Nabatean al-Kutbā), Baʾl Shamīn, Han-ʾUzzā (Nabatean al-ʾUzzā), and even Minean Wadd among others (M. Macdonald 2015, 20; Farès-Drappeau 2005, 79–88). Likewise, beyond these onomastic exemplars, *Qws* is relatively unattested in North Arabia (Harding 1971). The relative infrequency of these names in North Arabia contrasted with their prevalence in southern Transjordan suggests that these names were not originally local to Dedan but rather arrived there through processes of social and economic alliances with the Edomite elite. This is not to suggest the assigning of a particular ethnicity or place of origin on the basis of the names alone, but rather to suggest an affiliation of these names with ideals and objectives of the Edomite elite, especially within the context of economic opportunity along the routes of the lucrative South Arabian trade.

Table 5. References to *Qws* from Dedan.

| No. | Text | Context | Language | Proven- ance | Date (cent. BCE) | Reg. No. |
|-----|---|-------------------|-----------|-----------------|----------------------------------|--|
| 1 | <i>qws^lmlk</i> son of <i>lft</i> | PN | Dadanitic | Dedan | 6 th -1 st | OCIANA: JaL 061 i; (Jamme 1974, 56-57) ³¹⁹ |
| 2 | <i>'dbqs^l</i> | PN | Dadanitic | Dedan | 6 th -1 st | OCIANA: JSLih 143; (Jausen and Savignac 1914, 471; Knauf 1999, 676) |
| 3 | <i>'kms^l</i> | PN | Dadanitic | Dedan | 6 th -1 st | OCIANA: JSLih 265; (Jausen and Savignac 1914, 501; Harding 1971, 62, 909; Knauf 1999, 676) |
| 4 | <i>qws^lmlk</i> | PN | Dadanitic | Dedan | 6 th -1 st | OCIANA: JSLih 331; (Jausen and Savignac 1914, 520; Jamme 1968, 50; Harding 1971, 491, 923) |
| 5 | <i>qws^lbr</i> | PN | Dadanitic | Dedan | 6 th -1 st | OCIANA: JSLih 334; (Jausen and Savignac 1914, 521; Grimme 1937, 282; Harding 1971, 491, 910) |
| 6 | ...in the government of <i>glts^l</i> | PN; Dedication | Dadanitic | Dedan | 6 th -1 st | OCIANA: JSLih 083; (Jausen and Savignac 1914, 454-55; Winnett and Reed 1970, 125-27; Harding 1971, 164, 912) |
| 7 | <i>slmtqs</i> | PN | Minean? | Dedan | 6 th -1 st | (Jausen and Savignac 1914, 331-32, JSMin 117; Milik 1960, 96; Knauf 1999, 676) |
| 8 | <i>qws^lhnk</i> | PN | Dadanitic | Dedan | 6 th -1 st | OCIANA: Umm Darağ 54 |
| 9 | <i>qws^ls²hr²</i> | PN | Dadanitic | Dedan | 6 th -1 st | OCIANA: Nasif 1988: 56, pl. LVI(b)/f |

³¹⁹ OCIANA refers to the Online Corpus of the Inscriptions of Ancient North Arabia: <http://krc.orient.ox.ac.uk/ociana/index.php>.

2. MILITARY ADMINISTRATION AND ACTIVITIES IN THE NEGEV

The ostraca found within the northeastern Negev date to a relatively short period of time in the seventh and early sixth centuries BCE and present the opportunity to examine textual records written by the region's inhabitants. These ostraca overwhelmingly relate to administrative activities within a militaristic context as the vast majority were excavated in the military forts of Tel Arad and Horvat 'Uza. Consequently, there is a bias in the dataset in which due to the entangled association of scribal activities and the military apparatus, the inscriptions present an overmilitarized perspective of the region. This is particularly notable as the major settlement sites of the region (Tel 'Ira, Tel 'Aroer, Tel Malhata, Bir es-Saba) provide only a small fraction of the number of inscriptions in contrast to the abundance present at the forts of Tel Arad and Horvat 'Uza. Due to this discrepancy, one must not view the inscriptions as *pars pro toto*, and thus represent the nature of the region as a whole and commit the fallacy of composition. Yet, with proper consideration of these caveats, the dataset does provide a number of unique insights into the nature of military activities in the region and the relation between the military establishment and "others."

A substantial number of these ostraca within the northeastern Negev present lists of names as seen at Tel 'Ira (No. 1; Beit-Arieh 1999a, 402–5), Tel Malhata (nos. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8; Beit-Arieh 2015b, 487–96), Tel Masos (Fritz 1983, 134–37), Horvat Radum (No. 2; Beit-Arieh 2007b, 324–25), Horvat 'Uza (nos. 3, 10, 11, 12, 14, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 28, 34; Beit-Arieh 2007a, 129–78), and Tel Arad (nos. 23, 27, 35, 36, 38, 39; Aharoni 1981, 45–69). A similar type of list can also be found within the Edomite sphere of influence at Tell el-Kheleifeh in Ostrakon 6043 (Divito 1993, 55–57). These lists, when combined with their prominence in military forts and scribal associations with military administration, appear to indicate the names

of soldiers, or perhaps persons fulfilling a form of *corvée* duty within a military context (King and Stager 2001, 239–42). Likewise, these lists also reflect a key component of scribal training—list making (Schniedewind 2014, 283–87). Other examples of scribal training in these ostraca are found in Horvat ‘Uza nos. 10 and 29, which present scribal hands that do not appear to have been particularly proficient (Beit-Arieh 2007a, 139–43, 171–78; Mendel 2011).³²⁰ Similarly, from the Horvat ‘Uza corpus, a literary text is likely evidence of a curriculum for advanced students (Beit-Arieh 2007a, 122–28; no. 1; Schniedewind 2014, 289–92).

Several of the ostraca provide more detailed insight into military administration through their portrayal of organizational structures and hierarchies. In Tel ‘Ira Ostrakon No. 1, a list of names is preserved beneath the heading of *mpqd* (מפקד) in what appears to be a census or guard list (Beit-Arieh 1999a, 402–5; Garfinkel 1987).³²¹ Horvat ‘Uza Ostrakon No. 19 begins with the lexeme *‘srt* (עשרת), indicating an organized sub-entity of individuals at the site and follows with a list of male names together with their patronyms (Beit-Arieh 2007a, 152–56). Although only eight of the implied ten names are preserved—perhaps due to a break in the ostraca or a non-literal semantic range of *‘srt* (עשרת)—the list indicates a discrete unit of individuals known from comparative references in the biblical text to have been a foundational unit of men (אנשים עשרה or נערים עשרה) within military and other administrative activities (e.g., Jeremiah 41:1–2; 2 Samuel 18:15; 1 Samuel 25:5; Judges 6:27; Deuteronomy 1:15; Beit-Arieh 2007a, 155–56). Several other ostraca from Horvat ‘Uza (nos. 23 and 24) preserve ranked hierarchies of individuals that suggest scribal recordings, or announcements regarding the position of the

³²⁰ See also Arad Ostraca No. 16 (Aharoni 1981, 30–31), and the new reading which has led to the suggestion that it was not written by a professional scribe (Mendel-Geberovich et al. 2017, 122).

³²¹ For an alternative reading, see Demsky (2007), although the reading of Beit-Arieh is preferred by this author. See also Creason (2007) for a more thorough treatment of this lexeme.

individuals (Beit-Arieh 2007a, 159–68). The lists also preserve the tribal term *mṯh* (מטה) in what appears to be the designation of a larger sub-group of organized persons similar to the *ʿsrt* (עשרת), though presumably on a larger scale. The similar structure and reference of the subtribe of Galdi (גדלי מטה), while preserving different names between the two lists, perhaps indicates a rotation among persons within this designated group.

As the ostraca corpora derive from a relatively concise chronological period and restricted network of persons, it is also possible to provide names for different leading military persons in the region. The best documented individual is Eliashib (*ʿlyšb*) whose correspondence from Tel Arad includes eighteen epistolary ostraca (nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 24) and three separate seals (nos. 105, 106, 107) that include his patronym, Eliashib son of Eshiyahu (*ʿlyšb bn ʿšyhwh*; Aharoni 1981, 12–38, 46–49, 119–20). On the basis of the sheer quantity of seals and epistolary, as well as the position of authority indicated in the ostraca, it is clear that Eliashib held a high position at Tel Arad, likely a functional equivalent to *Qwsʿnl* at Tell el-Kheleifeh. It is likely that he was the commander of the fort in Stratum VII and VI as originally suggested by Aharoni (Aharoni 1981, 142–43; Naʿaman 2011, 83). However, on the basis of the reassignment of Arad Ostraca No. 40 to Stratum VI rather than Stratum VIII as was originally suggested by Aharoni (Aharoni 1981, 70–74, 182), the figure of Malkiyahu (*mlkyhw*) also becomes identified as a person of prominence.³²² This individual was originally thought by Aharoni to have been the commander of Stratum VIII (Aharoni 1981, 70–74, 182), but is now

³²² This ostrakon is reassigned to Stratum VI (from Stratum VIII) on the basis of several lines of reasoning (Naʿaman 2003). First, Aharoni himself noted some ambiguity in the stratum designation for this ostrakon and its context, having originally assigned it to Stratum VII (Aharoni 1981, 74, n. 1); challenges in the overall stratigraphy of the site are well-known (Herzog 2002, 1–7, 14). Second, the paleographic features of the ostrakon are much more indicative of the late seventh century BCE than the eighth century BCE, and lastly, the content within the ostrakon appears to contextually echo the content of Arad ostraca No. 24, which is likewise dated to Stratum VI (Dobbs-Allsopp et al. 2005, 69–70; Naʿaman 2003). While none of these data alone are grounds for the re-assignment of the ostrakon, collectively they indicate that Stratum VI is likely the context in which this ostrakon was written.

suggested to have been the primary commander of Tel Arad in the later strata (Faigenbaum-Golovin et al. 2016, Fig. 4). Within this paradigm, it is likely that Malkiyahu held an important command position, with Eliashib heavily involved in the administration and logistics at the fort (Faigenbaum-Golovin et al. 2016, Fig. 4).

These letters also afford a position of authority to Gemaryahu (*gmryhw*) and Nehemyahu (*nḥmyhw*), the authors of Arad Ostrakon No. 40, who are understood to have held a higher rank within the region (Aharoni 1981, 70–74; Faigenbaum-Golovin et al. 2016, Fig. 4).³²³ On the basis of Arad Ostrakon No. 40, Aharoni suggested that it was sent by a commander of a fortress to the south, undoubtedly referring to yet unexcavated Horvat ‘Uza (=Qinah), and implying that Gemaryahu or Nehemyahu may have held a position of authority there (Aharoni 1981, 71–74). Further, the name Nehemyahu is also attested in several instances at Horvat ‘Uza (nos. 18, and 23; Beit-Arieh 2007a, 150–52, 160–63). The reference to Nehemyahu in Horvat ‘Uza No. 23 is particularly intriguing, as within the ostrakon he is listed as ranked above numerous other “subordinates” and second only to an individual named Natan (*ntn*), likely a shortened form of the name Elnatan (*’lntn*), who is also the highest ranked person of Ostrakon No. 24 at Horvat ‘Uza (Beit-Arieh 2007a, 160–68).

In a similar fashion, while Hananyahu (*ḥnnyhw*) was not an uncommon name in Judah (Dobbs-Allsopp et al. 2005, 598), its repeated appearance in the administrative epistolary at Tel Masos (Fritz 1983, 134–35), Horvat ‘Uza (No. 14, Beit-Arieh 2007a, 146–47), and three times at Tel Arad (nos. 3, 16, 36; Aharoni 1981, 17–18, 30–31, 65–66), suggests that many of these references may be to the same individual. Furthermore, in Arad Ostrakon No. 3 (see also

³²³ These individuals are also attested in additional inscriptions: Gemaryahu in Arad nos. 31, 35 and 38, and Nehemyahu in Arad nos. 31 and Horvat ‘Uza nos. 18, and 23 (Aharoni 1981, 56–59, 65, 67; Beit-Arieh 2007a, 150–52, 160–63). It is possible, however, that these are different individuals bearing a common name (see Dobbs-Allsopp et al. 2005, 593–94, 609).

Ostrakon No. 16), the figure Hananyahu commands Eliashib at Arad to send provisions to Beersheba (=Bir es-Saba), suggesting that Hananyahu may have been a significant figure in the region, presumably based in the west, near or at Beersheba (Aharoni 1981, 17–18; Na’aman 2011, 84). Likewise, in Arad Ostrakon No. 24, the troops from Malkiyahu at Tel Arad that are transferred to Ramat-Negeb (=Tel ‘Ira) are given to a certain Elisha‘ son of Yirmiyahu (*’lš‘ bn yrmyhw*), who based upon context, presumably was an important figure at Tel ‘Ira (Aharoni 1981, 46–49).³²⁴ Unfortunately, the name of the author of this ostrakon is not preserved.

Although it is not possible to speak definitively regarding rankings of individuals throughout the region and named titles for positions held at each site, the detailed data these ostraca provide are unique and highly illustrative of the activities in the region. Furthermore, through the interactions of these individuals as preserved in letters, we gain a sense of the interconnected interactions between the sites and the manner in which they related to one another. For example, Arad Ostrakon No. 25 lists shipments of barley that appear to have been levied from the surrounding countryside, likely in a form of taxation to support the fort at Arad and its inhabitants. The sites mentioned within the ostrakon are Upper ‘Anim, Lower, ‘Anim, and Ma‘on that may be identified with Khirbet Ghuwein el-Foqa, Khirbet Ghuwein et-Tahta, and Tell Ma‘in, respectively, all smaller sites located 10–14 km to the north of Tel Arad (Aharoni 1981, 50–51).³²⁵ Likewise, Arad Ostrakon No. 3 implies that Arad may have held an additional role in distributing provisions to persons at other sites, as is implied in the command to transfer provisions from Arad to persons at the settlement of Beersheba (Bir es-Saba; Aharoni 1981, 17–

³²⁴ Similarly, on the basis of Arad Ostrakon No. 10, it appears that Ben Obadyahu (*bn ‘bdyhw*) may have held a position commanding the mercenary force of Kittim (Aharoni 1981, 24; Na’aman 2011, 88).

³²⁵ An ostrakon that likely intimates a similar situation of levied provisions can be found in Stratum II (late eighth century BCE) at Tel Beersheba (Reg. No. 2117/1; Aharoni 1973b, 71–73).

18). In terms of the fortresses of the eastern Negev, the ostraca from Tel Arad suggest that major correspondence ran through Arad, and that the fort of Horvat ‘Uza reported to Arad. This is expressly seen in Arad Ostrakon No. 24, where the correspondence desiring troops from Arad and Qinah (Horvat ‘Uza) is delivered to Tel Arad for fulfillment (Aharoni 1981, 46–49).³²⁶ That these troops are then sent to Ramat Negeb (Tel ‘Ira) may imply that Ramat Negeb not only had a greater need of troops, but that it was a more important site to defend against impending danger. This might suggest that the fortified settlement at Ramat Negeb (Tel ‘Ira) was of central importance to the administration of the region, an hypothesis corroborated by its size, fortifications, visibility, and regional centrality.

The Arad ostraca, and the Eliashib archive in particular, provide yet another intriguing insight into military activities in the region, namely that of the Kittim (כְּתִיִּים; *ktym*). The archive includes numerous ostraca (n=10) that reference a group of persons called the Kittim who were to be provisioned at Arad (Arad nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 14, 17; Aharoni 1981, 12–34). On the basis of the etymology of their name and references within the Hebrew Bible, these persons are assumed to have had an origin in Cypriot world,³²⁷ and to have served as mercenaries,³²⁸ presumably in the service of the late Judean monarchy (Aharoni 1981, 12–13).³²⁹ Such

³²⁶ Similarly, the small watchtower of Horvat Radum was undoubtedly administered by Horvat ‘Uza due to their proximity as well as the coordination necessary in order to take advantage of the additional visibility that Horvat Radum offered Horvat ‘Uza.

³²⁷ The geographic origin is assumed on the basis of the biblical identification of the Kittim as one of the sons of Javan (=Ionia), their association with coastal contexts (e.g., Genesis 10:4; Numbers 24:24; Isaiah 23:12; Jeremiah 2:10; Ezekiel 27:6), and the toponym of Kition on Cyprus. Though writing centuries later, Josephus provides an explicit identification between the gentile Kittim, and Kition on Cyprus (*Antiquities* 1:6:1).

³²⁸ The *qrsy* of Arad Ostrakon No. 18 have also been suggested to relate to another type of Aegean mercenary, namely Carians (Garfinkel 1988), although this identification is met with challenges and does not appear to be the best interpretation (Na’aman 2011, 87; Dobbs-Allsopp et al. 2005, 37–41; Aharoni 1981, 35–38).

³²⁹ The Cypriot identification has been suggested to imply that these were presumably Phoenician-speaking individuals who may have also been caravaneers rather than soldiers (Herzog et al. 1984, 29, 31). Although the context and cumulative data appear to intimate that the Kittim were indeed functioning as mercenaries, such singular

mercenaries are well attested in the ancient Near East in this period, with evidence of them in the armies of all the major imperial powers including Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon (Luraghi 2006; Niemeier 2002; 2001; Parke 1981; R. Brown 1984).³³⁰ Associations with the Aegean and Cypriot worlds also witnesses a significant increase during the seventh and early sixth centuries BCE, attested in part by material culture of Aegean origin that becomes prevalent in the southern Levant, particularly at coastal sites (Waldbaum 1994; 1997; Waldbaum and Magness 1997).³³¹ At many of the coastal sites the interactions appear to be of a militaristic nature, with Aegeans serving as mercenaries in addition to the trade contacts that were established. These mercenaries are best attested at sites that came under the control of the Egyptian army during Necho II's brief period of influence at the end of the seventh century BCE (e.g., Mezad Hashavyahu (Fantalkin 2001), Ashkelon (Fantalkin 2011), and Tel Kabri (Niemeier 2002)).³³²

The ostraca do not yield a substantial amount of information regarding the Kittim beyond that instructions were given to provision them with rations of wine and bread/flour, with oil occasionally also distributed. On the basis of the amount of provisions provided, and the intervals for which the rations were provided, estimates of the number of mercenaries involved range from approximately 75 men (Lemaire 1977, 229–30), to a more general 50–100 men

interpretations may cloud the mixed origins and activities of these individuals as mercenaries, pirates, and traders (Luraghi 2006).

³³⁰ Note, however, that the clearest data for Greek mercenaries appears to be in relation to their inclusion in the Egyptian army (Fantalkin 2001, 130–31, 139–40).

³³¹ It is also at this time in the late seventh century BCE that the Greek trade colony of Naukratis in Egypt was founded (Braun 1982a; Oren 1984).

³³² On the basis of the strong relation between Greek mercenaries and the Egyptian army, Na'aman originally suggested that the Kittim be associated with the period of Egyptian control of the southern Levant and over Judah following the events of the Battle of Megiddo and the death of Josiah (Na'aman 1991, 47–48). However, on the basis of the short duration of Stratum VI at Tel Arad and its suggestion to post-date the Egyptian interlude (Herzog 2002, 14), together with the indication of the Kittim as beneath the command of an apparent Judahite individual Ben Obadyahu (Arad No. 10; Aharoni 1981, 24), it appears that they were most likely under the direction of the late Judean monarchy, which Na'aman later concludes (Na'aman 2011, 88).

(Aharoni 1981, 145), or even as few as 18–25 men (Mittmann 1993, 46–48). Due to a lack of complete understanding of ancient units of measure and discrepancies between calculations of the bread vs. wine rations, their number remains uncertain, although somewhere within the range of 25 to 100 men (Na’aman 2011, 90). Similarly, as the provisions appear to have been provided to the mercenaries in transit (Braun 1982b, 22), and with the duration of provisions lasting 4–5 days, Aharoni suggested their destination to have been Kadesh Barnea (Arad nos. 2, 7; Aharoni 1981, 15, 22).³³³ A different ostrakon (Arad No. 17) outlines provisions to be sent with the Kittim to a site presumed to read Ziph (זִיפּ), which Aharoni suggests to have been an Iron Age fortress near the site of ez-Zeifeh, southwest of Nabatean Mampsis and approximately 30 km to the southwest of Arad (Aharoni 1981, 32–34). Though again speculative, these ostraca highlight the transitory nature of these mercenaries, presumably being sent to areas of perceived need, perhaps serving on patrols or even escorting caravans and other travelers. Provisions were not only supplied for foreign mercenaries, however, as a number of ostraca appear to intimate the supplying of provisions for non-military purposes, perhaps in times of need such as a year of agricultural hardship (e.g., Arad nos. 3, 6, 9, 12, 13, 17, 22, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35(?), 36(?) 38(?); Aharoni 1981, 3–67). Although it is not always clear if these accountings reflect provisions entering or leaving the fort, it is evident that Arad held a significant role in provisioning various persons and groups and served as a central military redistributive locale in the region.

Lastly, the Negevite ostraca provide insight into relations with Edom during this period. As they derive from military forts, these insights are primarily of a militaristic perspective. Previous interpretations of Edomite hostility toward Judah at this time were centered on Aharoni’s reading of several of the Arad ostraca that suggest hostile behavior. This discussion

³³³ This distance is approximately 115 km (ca. 23 hrs), and at a pace of 6 hrs of walking per day, the distance could be completed in 4 days (info courtesy of Google Maps).

centers on Arad ostraca nos. 24 and 40 (Aharoni 1981, 46–49, 70–74). In Arad Ostraca No. 24, while the obverse of the ostraca is too poorly preserved to be read, the reverse notates a transfer of troops, 50 from Arad and an unknown number from Qinah to Ramat-Negeb. The tone of the inscription appears to portray a sense of urgency and grave concern for the city of Ramat Negeb, followed by the warning “lest Edom should come there” (Aharoni 1981, 46–49; Dobbs-Allsopp et al. 2005, 47–53).³³⁴ As the obverse of the ostracon is not preserved, the reason for this troop reinforcement is not known. The second ostracon, No. 40, discusses a contentious situation between a Judahite commander and several subordinates over who has possession and was given access to “[letters from] Edom.”³³⁵ The ostracon later introduces the phrase the: “evil that Edo[m has done],” but does not preserve the necessary details to fully understand the context (Aharoni 1981, 70–74; Dobbs-Allsopp et al. 2005, 69–74). Na’aman likewise has interpreted Arad Ostracon No. 3 to suggest reinforcements provided due to an Edomite threat (Na’aman 2011, 84, 89), although there is no direct evidence of such as the ostracon preserves only a shipment of provisions headed to Beersheba, with a very poorly preserved reverse where the only legible words are: “and Edomites” (Aharoni 1981, 17–18). Based on Arad ostraca nos. 24 and 40, and later indications of hostility from the biblical text, Na’aman’s reconstruction is possible, although it remains speculative. An additional, tantalizing reference to Edom is preserved within Arad No. 21, although the ostraca is too poorly preserved to provide context for the reference (Aharoni 1981, 42–43; Dobbs-Allsopp et al. 2005, 44–45).³³⁶

³³⁴ For a more extensive discussion of Arad Ostracon No. 24, see Dykehouse (2008, 138–78).

³³⁵ See above n. 322 for a discussion on the rationale concerning the reassignment of Ostracon No. 40 to Stratum VI.

³³⁶ Similarly, the “Edomite” nature of Horvat ‘Uza Ostracon No. 7, has been suggested to be indicative of an Edomite seizure of the fort following their supposed invasion (Beit-Arieh 1995a, 311–14). This is, however, not certain, and it is also likely that the “Edomite” recipient of this letter was merely a resident of the site or passing through.

These references, and particularly Arad ostraca nos. 24 and 40, do appear to intimate a context of concern and impending hostility between Edom and Judah, although the exact context of this concern is not preserved. There have been additional attempts to read these ostraca in a different light, suggesting that these letters instead relate to contested grazing rights, and that the original interpretations of the conflict between Edom and Judah were overly influenced by the political circumstances in Israel surrounding the excavation and publication of the ostraca (Guillaume 2013). While, Guillaume's hypothesis is intriguing, and interpretations of interactions within the region do appear to over-emphasize hostility, as these ostraca relate to the final phase of the fortress (Stratum VI) it is likely that they indeed reference impending aggression in the region in the early sixth century BCE. Later biblical traditions of hostility between Edom and Judah (see Chapter 6.A; Psalm 137:7; Obadiah 8-14; 2 Chronicles 28:17), together with numerous destructions in the region at the end of this period (Lipschits 2005, 224–29), provide sufficient context to interpret these ostraca as such. However, these references ought not serve as an explanation for interactions in the region as a whole, nor for the century and a half preceding the early sixth century BCE. They rather serve as narrow insight into the final decades of the region.

To illustrate this point, other ostraca from the northeastern Negev indicate a more complex set of interactions at this time, even within a military context. For example, Arad Ostrakon No. 12 preserves a shipment of provisions that were directed to an individual named *Qws 'nl* (*[qw]s 'nl*), and Ostrakon No. 26 preserves the suffixed theophoric element *qws* from a name (Aharoni 1981, 26, 52; Dobbs-Allsopp et al. 2005, 28–29, 55–56).³³⁷ As previously

³³⁷ The reconstruction of the name in Ostrakon No. 12 with a prefixed theophoric element *qws* is the most likely reading due to the absence of attested Judahite names preserving the element 'nl (Golub 2017; Dobbs-Allsopp et al. 2005, 583–622). This reconstruction is further supported by the attested use of 'nl in *qws* prefixed names (Divito 1993, 53), and the preservation of a *sāmek* in the inscription.

demonstrated, during the late Iron Age there is distinct pattern in regional and community naming practices, with a clear preference for *yhw* in Judahite contexts and *qws* in Edomite contexts. While this does not indicate with certainty the political attachments or affiliations of individuals, it is highly intriguing that within Arad No. 12, a shipment of provisions is supplied to an individual with a name that reflects the naming practices of the Edomite elite. The only other attested instance of this name is from the fort of Tell el-Kheleifeh, where numerous seal impressions indicate this to be the name of a high-ranking commander or administrator at the fort, appearing to date to the same period (Divito 1993, 53–55).

While it is not possible to state with certainty that these are references to the same individual, the fact remains that the recipient of an urgent shipment of provisions from Tel Arad possessed an iconic name that would immediately index him as relating to a community of naming practices that was distinctly non-Yahwistic and not common within the Judahite administration. Second, this individual presumably held a position of import in order to be the recipient of such a shipment, indicating that regardless of whether the *Qws 'nl* of the Arad ostraca held ties to Edomite or Judahite political structures, contexts of cooperation and support existed between persons who would otherwise be indexed as “others.” Likewise, Arad Ostrakon No. 26 preserves only the theophoric elements of two names, first a suffixed *qws*, and second a prefixed *yh[w]* (Dobbs-Allsopp et al. 2005, 55–56). The epistolary format of this ostrakon, and the presence of the fragmented names in the same lines indicates a context of familiarity and interaction between the two individuals, whose divergence in naming traditions would suggest that they would have been recognized and indexed as “others.” Thus, in the final decades of the social, political, and economic systems of the northeastern Negev, while certain ostraca appear to indicate aggression and fear, other ostraca suggest close interaction and even cooperation

between persons whose indexical features would mark them as associated with both Edom and Judah.

D. CONCLUSION

This chapter has engaged with portrayals of Edom in the biblical text, inscriptional data for differences in language and script, and lastly onomastic data within inscriptions and evidence of interactions between diverse actors. The biblical text preserves multi-faceted portrayals of Edom including as the descendants of the fraternal twin of Israel's eponymous ancestor, but also as a cursed entity, and as (partly) responsible for Judah's demise in the early sixth century BCE.

While the role Edom played in the destruction of Jerusalem—if Edom was involved at all—is difficult to determine, and it is likely that hostile sentiment grew when post-exilic returnees to Judea saw Edomite descendants flourishing in the northeastern Negev and Shephelah.

Nonetheless, the biblical text's portrayal of Edom is multifaceted, with chronologically and sociopolitically divergent perspectives woven together. While Edom is frequently highlighted in episodes of conflict, the text ultimately portrays Edom as related kin, and as holding a unique status among the neighbors of Judah.

The limited linguistic data that can be extracted from inscriptions reveal that the people of Edom and Judah spoke a mutually intelligible language, and inasmuch as there were differences in speech, they would be categorized as variances in dialect or regional pronunciations. Even subtle differences, however, are significant as they are easily used to index persons as belonging or not belonging to a particular community. Similar variances are identifiable in the scripts of the respective regions that would have served to index scribes as belonging to distinct scribal communities related to their respective administrative systems.

Lastly, the analysis of theophoric elements within the onomastic data revealed strong preferences for Yahweh in Judah, and *Qws* in Edom. The preference for Yahweh, however, was most strongly evidenced at the militaristic forts of the northeastern Negev. The information recorded in the ostraca reveals the complex workings of the Judahite administration in the northeastern Negev. While the ostraca indicate concern over potential aggression, they also demonstrate close interaction and even cooperation among the diverse actors of the region.

CHAPTER 7. CONCLUSIONS

This work has sought to demonstrate a new way of examining the complex social interaction and entanglement between Judahites and Edomites in the northeastern Negev during the late Iron Age. Previous interpretations had focused on the Edomite material culture found within Judah's northeastern Negev as "intrusive" and ultimately the result of an Edomite invasion conducted in tandem with the Babylonian invasions of the early sixth century BCE. This interpretation found its origins in certain ways of reading the biblical text.

Evidence of Edomite presence was categorized into three main "ethnic markers." These included ceramics, namely holemouth, ridged-rim cooking pots and Busayra Painted Ware. The second marker included inscriptions referencing the deity *Qws* and the iconic cultic statuary and figures associated with these contexts that found no parallels in Judah. Found primarily in inscriptions and onomastics, *Qws* was likewise associated with Edom on the basis of the naming conventions of the late Iron Age Edomite kings. Lastly, within these inscriptions and other onomastics, a script distinct from that of Judah was identified and assigned as the "national" script of Edom, serving as the final "ethnic" marker of the Edomites. The discovery of varying quantities of these material culture indices in the northeastern Negev were interpreted as the physical presence of ethnic Edomites who were present in the region as a result of an invasion. Support for an invasion was found in the expression of animosity in post-exilic references to Edom within the biblical text.

The present study challenges these interpretations through a series of case studies, each critically engaging with one of these "ethnic" markers with an eye toward their role in structuring human behavior, and the identities that could be associated with such behaviors. Prior to developing these case studies and their own theoretical particularities, several general critiques

to previous assumptions regarding this region and its inhabitants were necessary. The first critique considered the nature of sociopolitical organization within the region and the nature of the relation of sociopolitical elements to the landscape. This critique also concerned the structure of authority as an evolving process whose relation to the landscape was not consistent nor undifferentiated, but rather best understood through network concepts wherein strategic nodes served as the focus of both elite power expression, and of human behavior more generally. Similarly, it emphasized the perception of the region of the northeastern Negev through the lens of frontier and borderland studies. In this way, the second theoretical critique concerned with modes of human interaction and corresponding indications within material culture was outlined. The concept of entanglement was highlighted as a heuristic for understanding not only forms of interactions, but of the creation of human and material dependencies. Lastly, the notion of identities and of ethnicity was explored. Here the critique of the applicability of a “national” identity in the ancient world was levied, as was its often-implicit equation with “ethnicity” in which ancient states are (erroneously) viewed as containers of an ethnically homogeneous social entity. Rather, the complexities of identities in all their forms and malleability were emphasized as a mode of inquiry. The use of shared behaviors as identified through archaeological material culture as a proxy for broader social identities was then outlined as the approach of this work.

The context of mobility and interaction between Edom and Judah during the late Iron Age is best understood within the context of trade—especially in South Arabian aromatics—and the major routes that linked and crossed these regions. The economic activity associated with trade created significant economic motivations not only within the southern Levant, but throughout the greater ancient Near East. Such interest is exemplified in the behavior of the imperial regimes of the Iron Age, namely Assyrian interest in controlling the exit nodes of this

trade in the southern coastal plain, as well as their forays into the Arabian Desert, witnessed in their successful conquest of the oasis trade node of Dumah. Similarly, Babylonian methods, though divergent from their Assyrian predecessors, betray the same concern with the Arabian trade, seen especially in the efforts of Nabonidus to conquer strategic North Arabian oasis trade nodes to effectively control and direct this trade toward Babylonia and to deny Egypt access. Within these transregional encounters and interests, the rising elite at Busayra were able to establish their control over the region of Edom, seen in their exertion of authority over their own regional network of trade routes, and the intermediary role they played with the Assyrian rulers. With a major trade route crossing the southern Transjordanian highlands and heading west through the northeastern Negev in order to reach the Mediterranean coastal ports, there was a substantial context for westward movement. Similarly, this trade created motive and purpose for the creation of cross-cultural social and economic alliances. It is within this context that the “Edomite” material culture of the northeastern Negev finds its most profound meaning.

In addition, this region of the southern Levant consists of an arid and semi-arid landscape, from the desiccated Mediterranean zone of the heartland of Edom and the neighboring Arabian Desert, to the inhospitable Arabah and semi-arid northeastern Negev. While agriculture was feasible in parts of southern Transjordan and the northeastern Negev, consistent and sufficient agricultural yields were never a given, and significant intra- and interannual fluctuation in precipitation was a constant. A diverse subsistence regimen that included pastoral and trade activity was a necessity. As a result, and particularly relating to agricultural cycles, seasonal transhumance for pastoral purposes created an additional context for mobility and movement across the landscape.

The first case study analyzed “Edomite” ceramics in the northeastern Negev. These ceramics consisted predominantly of cooking pots and tablewares and presented the opportunity to examine foodways and the significance that foodways hold in the establishment and maintenance of identities. A diachronic pan-regional examination of the types of cooking pots used in the Negev and southern Transjordan indeed reveals that a specific form—Type CP4—may be identified as having origins in, and strong associations with Edom. Type CP4 may similarly be contrasted with variant forms (Type CP1 and CP2) that comprised the dominant tradition of the northeastern Negev. However, these cooking pot forms are not the sole types present within the region, and even within Edom, a range of forms is attested. It is notable that only Type CP4 appears to have migrated westward with its bearers to any significant degree. Similarly, the northeastern Negev holds a variety of traditions, some of which represented culinary practices common to the southern coastal plain to the west.

Cooking pots are socially sensitive and culturally conservative because they reflect the intimate behaviors of the learned traditions of certain types of food preparation. This means that they are not the types of material culture to move through trade or gift-giving, but rather tend to indicate the presence of the persons whose culinary traditions are linked to them. Similarly, as they are prone to breakage they do not travel well, and indeed, petrography indicates they are most usually produced within the same regional locale in which they are found. Thus, when the “Edomite” Type CP4 cooking pot is found in the northeastern Negev, it indicates the physical presence of persons who were familiar with both that particular culinary practice and the potting traditions require to produce those vessels. Moreover, the gendered nature of food production in antiquity indicates that many of these cooking pots represent not just Edomite persons, but more specifically Edomite women. The provenance of these vessels within domestic structures, and

especially in relation to the “local” Judahite variants (Type CP1 and CP2), indicates that these vessels were fully integrated into the same domestic contexts and food production areas, which in turn suggests an integration of the persons responsible for cooking. Social acts that could demonstrate this portrait are most likely intermarriage, with Edomite women marrying persons local to the northeastern Negev, or the taking of slaves who were involved in food production. Further, the diachronic nature of the Type CP4 cooking pots within the northeastern Negev indicates that this was not the result of a singular event, but a pattern of behavior that took place over multiple generations spanning nearly 150 years. Consequently, many of the “Edomite” persons exemplified by these cooking pots may very well have been second or third generation persons living in the northeastern Negev who had maintained a particular culinary tradition.

The cooking pots may be contrasted with the Busayra Painted Ware (BPW) vessels that are also associated with Edom. As the vast majority of these vessels—and in particular their most highly decorated forms—are found in elite contexts at Busayra, they appear to reflect a tableware associated with elite Edomite feasting. Indeed, when these vessels are mapped regionally according to findspot across the southern Levant, they appear at nearly all of the major settlement nodes of the trade network. They are also found in especially significant quantities in the caravanserai at Tel ‘Aroer, a locale expressly identified as facilitating the South Arabian trade. Thus, as an expression of elite alliance making and image generation, these vessels reflect or symbolize the ideals and objectives of Edom’s elite, identifiable already within the eighth century BCE and extending through the early sixth century BCE.

Within the northeastern Negev, however, the locales in which BPW can be found have an inconsistent correlation with the contexts in which the Type CP4 Edomite cooking pots are attested. This is highly significant as it demonstrates that the pattern of Edomite interaction in the

Negev was not homogeneous and cannot be interpreted through a singular model. Needless to say, then, it does not reflect a mass migration following an invasion. Further, the BPW is found in insignificant numbers in military contexts, namely the Judahite forts of Tel Arad, Tel 'Ira, Horvat Tov, and Horvat 'Uza, although notably, Horvat 'Uza preserves a relatively significant number of Type CP4 cooking pots. Consequently, the function of various sites within the region plays a role in Edomite behaviors in the northeastern Negev, where elite identity promotion through feasting is unattested at Judahite forts, yet intermarriage with, or slave taking of Edomites at these forts is attested, with the bearers of these vessels then fully integrated within the domestic structures of the site. This analysis reveals that the ceramic assemblage needs to be examined according to the contextually contingent factors of their findspots in addition to the social behaviors that they embody, in order to determine their role in signifying interactions and identities.

Next, the context of ritual practices was explored, namely the role that the cults of Yahweh and *Qws* held in signifying the identities and interactions of adherents in the region. In general, this analysis demonstrates the necessity of a bottom-up approach to ritual behavior that engages with the household as the primary locus of ritual activity. In this way, the household ritual *behaviors* of Judah and Edom appear not to be particularly divergent in a general sense. Accordingly, migrants or persons bearing variant traditions who were introduced into a new household (by intermarriage, slavery, etc.), would likely not have found ritual behaviors and objects to be markedly different. Likewise, even if a new social or domestic context featured a different deity, such a transition may not have been all that significant when deities are considered as rooted within certain landscapes.

Nonetheless, onomastic and inscriptional data do support a primacy of Yahweh within Judah, and a primacy of *Qws* within Edom. Yet, when we consider these deities, it is easy to assume an interpretation of them in relation to their major cult sanctuaries in Jerusalem and Busayra and as equating to the ideals expressed in these elite locales. With regard to Yahweh, this includes the ideals promoted by the Deuteronomist in the biblical text. That there were no formal sanctuaries to Yahweh in the Negev in the Iron IIC is significant as it indicates that Yahwistic sentiment within the northeastern Negev was predominantly practiced within a domestic setting. In contrast, Horvat Qitmit provided a sanctuary of alternative expression, likely directed toward *Qws* and his consort. Horvat Qitmit, however, does not appear to have been viewed with any sense of hostility by Yahwists, to whom it was simply a different form of cultic expression in the region. The promotion of cultic exclusivity and centralization, while successful in creating unifying identities and highlighting differences, fundamentally appears to be an elite “top-down” application to the region that would have competed with established, local traditions.

Lastly, an investigation of the inscriptions from this region reveals the social significance of both linguistic differences and script variances. On the basis of the limited inscriptional data, it is more than likely that while a mutually intelligible language was shared between Edom and Judah, regional dialect variances and phrases—including greeting formulas—differed and would have been used to identify persons as from different regions or associated with different social groups. Similarly, while small but noticeable differences between the scripts used in Judah and Edom can be identified, labelling them as national scripts is problematic as writing would have been restricted to a select group of scribes associated with elite political, administrative, and religious activities. Thus, variances in these scripts would first reflect different patterns and

perpetuations of scribal training, and second, while the differences in script could be identified, only well-trained scribes associated with elite institutions would have been able to do so.

An investigation of the internal data within these inscriptions, namely the theophoric elements within onomastics, indicates a preference for Yahweh in Judah, and for *Qws* in Edom. The preference for Yahweh is most starkly seen at military forts associated with the Judahite administration, although there is a sample bias within these datasets. Similarly, where multi-generational data exists, there appears to be an increase in preference for Yahwistic names in successive generations, most particularly seen at Horvat ‘Uza. Lastly, a re-investigation of the portrayal of Edom within the biblical text reveals the complexities that socially and chronologically divergent perspectives weave into an entangled tapestry, that though highlighting episodes of conflict, ultimately portray Edom as a brother and as holding a unique status among the neighbors of Judah.

In drawing together these analyses, the critiques raised here do not intend to deny that there were broad social or ethnic divisions within the region between Edom and Judah. The data demonstrates such differences. Yet the material culture proxies for these identities, whether cooking pots, elite tablewares, script, or cultic ideals need to be examined in relation to their respective social elements and especially the behaviors of those who were using, maintaining, or promoting them. Likewise, human society is not homogeneous. A wealthy political/religious elite Edomite male ruling in Busayra will fundamentally experience their “Edomite-ness” far differently than would a young Edomite woman given or sold to a Judahite soldier at Horvat ‘Uza. In examining diversity, we need to move beyond the sole investigation of “Judahites” and “Edomites.” In many cases supposed Judahite individuals living at Tel Malhata may have held more in common with their Edomite-labelled local neighbors than soldiers of the Judahite

administration, stationed for instance, at Horvat ‘Uza. Breaking down a supposed “Judahite” identity into more relevant components, for example, based on status (religious, political), or on gender, provide far more meaningful avenues of study. What I hope to have demonstrated within this work is that the archaeological material culture record preserves evidence of a multi-faceted pattern of human interaction and social entanglement. While it does not provide evidence for an explicit Edomite invasion, neither does it simply demonstrate a context of Edomite migration into southern Judah. Humans seldom behave in such readily interpretable manners—the reality is always more intricately complex.

The necessary step for future study in the context of Edom and interactions in the northeastern Negev undoubtedly lies in a more robust understanding of the polity of Edom. For this to occur, additional archaeological excavations in Edom are needed. The site at the forefront of such objectives ought to be Busayra, not only to clarify activity on the acropolis, but more significantly to gain data from domestic contexts beneath the acropolis. Such efforts ought to build upon and together with the work of the Busayra Cultural Heritage Project begun by Benjamin Porter and Stephanie Brown (S. Brown et al. forthcoming; S. Brown 2018b, 94). Additional candidates for excavation include any of the numerous sites in the hinterland of Busayra (B. MacDonald et al. 2004), in order to further determine the relation of Busayra to other sites in the region. Likewise, analyses of the survey data from southern Transjordan, and especially that from the central Edomite plateau (e.g., B. MacDonald et al. 2004; B. MacDonald 2012; B. MacDonald, Clark, and Herr 2016), could be synthesized to provide a better understanding of regional settlement patterns and potentially their degree of integration with one another.

Similarly, 'En Hazeva in its unpublished state precludes a firmer understanding of the nature of Edomite movement and influence to the west, and especially at such a pivotal location within the Arabah Valley. The publication of this material will answer many questions, especially concerning the nature and the functioning of the trade from southern Transjordan into the northeastern Negev, and extensions of political authority and cross-cultural interaction. Lastly, a more robust examination of Tell el-Kheleifeh that builds on the work of Pratico (1993) would further aid in understanding the nature of the interface of Arabian trade with the Levant. Beyond the data examined by Pratico, significant quantities of material culture from Glueck's excavation are currently stored in Harvard's Semitic Museum and to a lesser extent at the Smithsonian. Further analysis of these remains will shed significant light onto the nature of Edom and its relation to the Arabian Trade at this important southern locale.

Perhaps the most significant critique that can be extended to other regions of the southern Levant is to move beyond assumptions of static homogeneous "ethnic-national" entities. Such assumptions are as problematic in antiquity as they are in the present and serve more to mask ancient social life than to elucidate it. Rather, more nuanced approaches to individual and collective social identities as can be identified on the basis of behavioral similarity as seen through archaeological material culture is necessary. Likewise, analyses need to move beyond implicit assumptions of bordered polities and work to outline the processes by which political authority was attained and maintained, rather than assuming these polities to have existed as timeless constants. Such critiques could readily be applied to Moab and Ammon in west-central Transjordan, where current debates yet feature searches for borders between the two polities and many discussions implicitly imply ethnic-national homogeneous social totalities. Similarly, Israel and Judah are frequently discussed and even formally presented as examples of early

ethnic-national states. One could also look to Phoenicia and the modern categories of analysis that homogenize independent cities and people beneath an anachronistic label used as an ethnic determinative.

In their analysis, these regions could be viewed as a network of settlement nodes where extensions of a central or political authority could be extended—and potentially archaeologically identified. Similarly, in recognizing that material culture is not an *a priori* indicator of an ethnic identity, it can be analyzed in relation to the behaviors associated with its use, and the ways that such behaviors would signal similarity and difference with others. Likewise, these behaviors would not solely reflect affiliation with a singular “Moabite” or “Edomite” identity that is more of an artificial construct, but rather present a singular layer of an identity that is situational and overlapping with others, and continuously constructed and negotiated within different contexts. Such nuances would draw individual actors and communities to the forefront of analysis and highlight the more complex processes through which social cohesion was created and maintained.

APPENDIX A: LIST OF SITES DISCUSSED IN THE TEXT

The following list presents all archaeological sites discussed within this work, describing them in relation to their geographic location, size, and site functionality, to the extent that such data is available. The sites are listed alphabetically, and coordinates are listed in decimal degrees according to their longitude and latitude.

‘Ajrud, Kuntillet

Coordinates: 30.193128, 34.420461
Location: Northwestern Sinai
Size: 0.05 ha
Site Type: Fort, waystation
References: (Meshel 2012; Singer-Avitz 2006; 2009)

‘Anim, Horvat

Coordinates: 31.352933, 35.063786
Location: Northeastern Negev
Size: —
Site Type: Small fort
References: (Cohen 1995, 116–18)

Arad, Tel

Coordinates: 31.280723, 35.126222
Location: Northeastern Negev
Size: 0.3 ha
Site Type: Fort
References: (Herzog 2002; Singer-Avitz 2002; Aharoni 1981; Herzog et al. 1984)

‘Aroer, Tel

Coordinates: 31.152233, 34.979112
Location: Northeastern Negev
Size: 2 ha
Site Type: Fortified settlement
References: (Thareani 2011b; Thareani-Sussely 2007a)

‘Ataruz, Khirbat

Coordinates: 31.574394, 35.665107
Location: Northwestern Moab
Size: 1.4 ha
Site Type: Fortified settlement, cultic site
References: (Ji 2019; 2012; 2016; Bean et al. 2019)

Ba'ja III

Coordinates: 30.414507, 35.455501

Location: Southern Edomite Plateau

Size: —

Site Type: Mountaintop settlement

References: (Bienert, Lamprichs, and Vieweger 2000; Lindner and Farajat 1987; Lindner 1992; Zeitler 1992)

Beersheba (Bir es-Saba)

Coordinates: 31.237375, 34.796219

Location: Northeastern Negev

Size: —

Site Type: Settlement(s)

References: (Fabian and Gil'ad 2010; Talis 2012; Peretz 2018)

Beersheba, Tel

Coordinates: 31.244842, 34.840740

Location: Northeastern Negev

Size: 1 ha

Site Type: Fortified settlement, administrative center

References: (Herzog and Singer-Avitz 2016; Singer-Avitz 1999; Aharoni 1973a; Herzog 1984)

Busayra

Coordinates: 30.744736, 35.604064

Location: Northern Edomite Plateau

Size: 8.1 ha

Site Type: Fortified settlement

References: (Bienkowski 2002a; Bennett 1973; 1974; 1975; 1977; 1983)

Dabba, Khirbat ad-

Coordinates: 30.399056, 35.541928

Location: Southern Edomite Plateau

Size: 4 ha

Site Type: Settlement

References: (Whiting et al. 2008; 2009)

Dahaha, Khirbat (JSS 132)

Coordinates: 30.297115, 35.494588

Location: Southern Edomite Plateau

Size: —

Site Type: Settlement

References: (Tholbecq 2001, 402; Glueck 1935, 78)

Dahal, Naqb ad-

Coordinates: 30.754364, 35.499789

Location: Northern Edomite Plateau

Size: —

Site Type: Road

References: (Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014a, 540–47; Ben-David 2009)

Tell Damiyah

Coordinates: 32.103931, 35.546832

Location: Jordan Valley

Size: 2.9 ha

Site Type: Settlement and cultic site

References: (Petit and Kafafi 2016)

Dedan (al-‘Ula)

Coordinates: 26.655211, 37.913222

Location: Northwestern Arabia

Size: —

Site Type: Oasis settlement

References: (S. al-Said 2010; 2011a; 2011b; Farès-Drappeau 2005; Parr, Harding, and Dayton 1970, 204–14; Nasif 1988; Jaussen and Savignac 1909; 1914)

Deraj I

Coordinates: 30.456238, 35.462793

Location: Southern Edomite Plateau

Size: 0.12 ha

Site Type: Settlement

References: (Lindner et al. 1998, 232–33)

Deraj III

Coordinates: 30.469546, 35.472914

Location: Southern Edomite Plateau

Size: 0.18 ha

Site Type: Small fort

References: (Lindner et al. 1998, 230–31)

Dharib, Khirbat

Coordinates: 30.907090, 35.705313

Location: Northern Edomite Plateau; Wadi al-Hasa

Size: —

Site Type: Settlement

References: (al-Muheisen and Villeneuve 2005)

Dumah (Dumat al-Jandal)

Coordinates: 29.811972, 39.868353
Location: Northern Arabia
Size: —
Site Type: Oasis settlement
References: (Ahmad al-Sudairi 1995)

Esdar, Tel

Coordinates: 31.172902, 34.972755
Location: Northeastern Negev
Size: 0.75 ha
Site Type: Settlement
References: (Kochavi 1993a)

Farah (South), Tell el-

Coordinates: 31.281944, 34.482500
Location: Northwestern Negev
Size: 6.6 ha
Site Type: Settlement
References: (Gophna 1993)
Comments: Not settled in the late Iron Age

FBRS 12

Coordinates: 30.757828, 35.494103
Location: Northeastern Arabah
Size: —
Site Type: Caravanserai
References: (Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014a, 530–35, 545)

FBRS 27

Coordinates: 30.700866, 35.483233
Location: Northeastern Arabah
Size: —
Site Type: Cultic site
References: (Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014a, 517, 521–22)

Gaza

Coordinates: 31.518330, 34.440189
Location: Mediterranean Coast
Size: —
Site Type: Port city
References: (Ovadia 1993)

Ghrareh

Coordinates: 30.151909, 35.425834
Location: Southern Edomite Plateau
Size: 1 ha
Site Type: Fortified settlement
References: (Hart 1987, 35–39; 1988; 1989, 9–20)

Ha'il

Coordinates: 27.516442, 41.705152
Location: Northern Arabia
Size: —
Site Type: Oasis settlement
References: (M. Macdonald 1997, 349)

Halif, Tel

Coordinates: 31.382716, 34.866336
Location: Southern Judah
Size: 3 ha
Site Type: Fortified settlement
References: (Hardin 2010; 2004)

Hamra, Qosa el-

Coordinates: 30.893816, 35.545171
Location: Northern Edomite Plateau
Size: 0.5 ha
Site Type: Fortified mountaintop site
References: (Ben-David 2015, 230–31; Glueck 1939a, 42)

Hamrat Ifdan, Rujm

Coordinates: 30.672593, 35.389858
Location: Northeastern Arabah
Size: —
Site Type: Settlement
References: (N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014a)
Comments: Copper production activity attested in the early Iron II; domestic settlement in the late Iron II

Haror, Tel

Coordinates: 31.381002, 34.607775
Location: Northwestern Negev
Size: 1.6 ha
Site Type: Fortified settlement
References: (Oren 1993a)

Harun, Jabal

Coordinates: 30.317069, 35.404368

Location: Southern Edomite Plateau

Size: —

Site Type: Mountaintop cultic site

References: (Fiema and Frösén 2008; Fiema, Frösén, and Holappa 2016; Kouki and Lavento 2013)

Comments: No activity attested in the Iron Age

Hazeva ‘En

Coordinates: 30.808957, 35.244582

Location: Northwestern Arabah

Size: less than 1 ha

Site Type: Fort with extramural sacred space

References: (Cohen and Yisrael 1995b; 1995a; 1996)

Hibra (Khaybar)

Coordinates: 25.685476, 39.295069

Location: Northwestern Arabia

Size: —

Site Type: Oasis settlement

References: (Gadd 1958; Pritchard 1969, 562–63; de Maigret 1997, 321–22; M. Macdonald 1997, 349)

‘Ira, Tel

Coordinates: 31.232662, 34.986895

Location: Northeastern Negev

Size: 2.5 ha

Site Type: Fortified settlement, administrative center

References: (Beit-Arieh 1999c)

Comments: Most likely ancient Ramat-Negeb

Iraq Shmaliya, Khirbat al-

Coordinates: 30.467295, 35.499252

Location: Southern Edomite Plateau

Size: —

Site Type: Settlement

References: (N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 268–75)

Ishra, Khirbat

Coordinates: 30.485974, 35.513227

Location: Southern Edomite Plateau

Size: 0.06 ha

Site Type: Small fortified site

References: (Hart 1987, 42–45; 1989, 55–56)

Jariya, Khirbat al-

Coordinates: 30.705320, 35.452109

Location: Northeastern Arabah

Size: 3 ha

Site Type: Copper production site

References: (Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 798–816)

Jawa, Tall

Coordinates: 31.857770, 35.931625

Location: Ammon

Size: 2 ha

Site Type: Fortified settlement

References: (Daviau 2003; 2002b; 2019)

Jemmeh, Tel

Coordinates: 31.387419, 34.445071

Location: Northwestern Negev

Size: 4.9 ha

Site Type: Administrative site, Assyrian presence

References: (Ben-Shlomo and Van Beek 2014)

Jerusalem

Coordinates: 31.777876, 35.235740

Location: Northern Judah

Size: ca. 50 ha

Site Type: Fortified settlement

References: (B. Mazar et al. 1993)

Kadesh Barnea

Coordinates: 30.648101, 34.422632

Location: Northwestern Sinai

Size: 0.3 ha

Site Type: Fort

References: (Cohen and Bernick-Greenberg 2007)

Comments: Identified with Tell el-Qudeirat

Kheleifeh, Tell el-

Coordinates: 29.547218, 34.980261

Location: Southern Arabah, Red Sea Coast

Size: 0.58 ha

Site Type: Fort

References: (Pratico 1993; Glueck 1938; 1939b; 1940a; 1967; Mussell 1999; 2000; Luciani 2018)

Khubtha, Jabal al-

Coordinates: 30.324391, 35.450588

Location: Southern Edomite Plateau

Size: —

Site Type: Mountaintop settlement

References: (Lindner et al. 1997)

Kur, Khirbat al-

Coordinates: 30.456456, 35.498750

Location: Southern Edomite Plateau

Size: —

Site Type: Settlement

References: (N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 264–68; Hübner and Lindner 2003)

Comments: Formerly known as Khirbat al-Iraq Junubiya

Kutle II

Coordinates: 30.465755, 35.460094

Location: Southern Edomite Plateau

Size: 0.1 ha

Site Type: Settlement

References: (Lindner et al. 1998, 228–29)

Kutle III

Coordinates: 30.472473, 35.477477

Location: Southern Edomite Plateau

Size: 0.21 ha

Site Type: Settlement

References: (Lindner et al. 1998, 233–34)

Manktaa, el-

Coordinates: 30.197025, 35.410056

Location: Southern Edomite Plateau

Size: —

Site Type: Mountaintop settlement

References: <http://www.apaame.org/2015/01/flight-20141019-new-edomite-stronghold.html>

Comments: Unpublished

Malayqtah, Khirbat al-

Coordinates: 30.495546, 35.499933

Location: Southern Edomite Plateau

Size: —

Site Type: Settlement

References: (N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 257–64)

Malhata, Tel

Coordinates: 31.214918, 35.026847
Location: Northeastern Negev
Size: 1.8 ha
Site Type: Fortified settlement
References: (Beit-Arieh and Freud 2015b)
Comments: Most likely the ancient site of Moladah

Mansur, Qurayyat al-

Coordinates: 30.512587, 35.455583
Location: Southern Edomite Plateau
Size: —
Site Type: Mountaintop settlement
References: (Hübner 2004)

Masos, Tel

Coordinates: 31.213235, 34.966433
Location: Northeastern Negev
Size: 0.4 ha
Site Type: Small fort
References: (Fritz and Kempinski 1983; Kempinski 1993)
Comments: Iron II settlement is in Area G

Megheitah, Khirbat al-

Coordinates: 30.158384, 35.469557
Location: Southern Edomite Plateau
Size: 0.64 ha
Site Type: Settlement
References: (Hart 1987, 38–42; 1989, 56–57)

Miyah, Ras al- (East)

Coordinates: 30.703101, 35.486532
Location: Northeastern Arabah
Size: 0.15 ha
Site Type: Fortified site, copper production area
References: (Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 827–37)

Miyah, Ras al- (West)

Coordinates: 30.701100, 35.471205
Location: Northeastern Arabah
Size: 0.1 ha
Site Type: Fortified site, copper production area
References: (Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 822–27)

Mudayna (Thamad), Khirbat al-

Coordinates: 31.589065, 35.907834

Location: Northeastern Moab

Size: 1.5 ha

Site Type: Fortified settlement

References: (Daviau 2006; Daviau et al. 2006; Daviau and Steiner 2000; Daviau 1997)

Mu‘allaq, Khirbat al-

Coordinates: 30.294568, 35.459134

Location: Southern Edomite Plateau

Size: 0.38 ha

Site Type: Small fortified site

References: (Lindner, Farajat, and Zeitler 1996)

Nahas, Khirbat an-

Coordinates: 30.681186, 35.435901

Location: Northeastern Arabah

Size: 10 ha

Site Type: Copper production site

References: (Levy, Najjar, Higham, et al. 2014; Levy, Najjar, Ben-Yosef, et al. 2014; N. Smith and Levy 2008)

Comments: The fortress at Nahas is 0.65 ha. The entire activity area is 10 ha

Najran

Coordinates: 17.477100, 44.178865

Location: Southwestern Arabia

Size: —

Site Type: Oasis settlement

References: (al-Marh 2010; de Maigret 1997, 317–19)

Nasbeh, Tell en-

Coordinates: 31.885344, 35.216550

Location: Northern Judah

Size: 3 ha

Site Type: Fortified settlement

References: (Zorn 2003; Brody 2009; Zorn and Brody 2014)

Nawafla, Khirbat an-

Coordinates: 30.327569, 35.486945

Location: Southern Edomite Plateau

Size: —

Site Type: Settlement

References: (‘Amr et al. 2000)

Comments: Located in Wadi Musa, likely an extension of the Tawilan settlement.

Padakku (Fadak)

Coordinates: 25.978671, 40.466492
Location: Northwestern Arabia
Size: —
Site Type: Oasis site
References: (Hausleiter and Schaudig 2016)

Qarara, Khirbat al- (JSS 74)

Coordinates: Unknown
Size: —
Location: Southern Edomite Plateau
Site Type: Settlement
References: (Tholbecq 2001, 402)
Comments: Also known as al-Muzayr‘a

Qitmit, Horvat

Coordinates: 31.184339, 35.067632
Location: Northeastern Negev
Size: 0.14 ha
Site Type: Cultic site
References: (Beit-Arieh 1995a)

Qseir, Jabal al-

Coordinates: 30.240235, 35.442094
Location: Southern Edomite Plateau
Size: —
Site Type: Mountaintop settlement
References: (Lindner et al. 1996)
Comments: also known as Jabal al Qusayr

Qurayyah

Coordinates: 28.784171, 36.010479
Location: Northwestern Arabia
Size: 35+ ha
Site Type: Oasis site
References: (Luciani 2016; 2018; Hüneburg et al. 2019; Parr 1997; 1992)

Radum, Horvat

Coordinates: 31.189729, 35.167491
Location: Northeastern Negev
Size: 0.05 ha
Site Type: Small fort; watchtower
References: (Beit-Arieh 2007c)

Ruqeish

Coordinates: 31.417514, 34.330867
Location: Northwestern Negev, Mediterranean Coast
Size: 8–10 ha
Site Type: Fortified Mediterranean port
References: (Oren 1993b)
Comments: Likely Sargon II's "sealed *karum* of Egypt"

Sadeh, es-

Coordinates: 30.211533, 35.390622
Location: Southern Edomite Plateau
Size: —
Site Type: Mountaintop settlement
References: (Lindner, Farajat, and Zeitler 1988; Lindner et al. 1990; Lindner 1992)
Comments: Also known as Umm el-'Ala

Salima, Tell Abu

Coordinates: 31.211752, 34.110477
Location: Northeastern Sinai; near the Mediterranean Coast
Size: —
Site Type: Fortified site; Assyrian presence
References: (Reich 1993)

Sela', as-

Coordinates: 30.782511, 35.574170
Location: Northern Edomite Plateau
Size: —
Site Type: Mountaintop settlement
References: (Da Riva 2019; 2016; Da Riva et al. 2017; Hart 1986; Raz, Raz, and Uchitel 2001; Lindner 1992; Dalley and Goguel 1997)

Sera', Tel

Coordinates: 31.390136, 34.680112
Location: Northwestern Negev
Size: 1.5–2 ha
Site Type: Fortified settlement; Assyrian presence
References: (Oren 1993c)

Shag Rish

Coordinates: 30.662511, 35.606928
Location: Southern Edomite Plateau
Size: —
Site Type: Mountaintop settlement
References: (Ben-David 2015, 229; Glueck 1939a, 38–41)
Comments: Also known as Sheikh er-Rish

Shorabat, ash-

Coordinates: 30.972040, 35.681435

Location: Wadi al-Hasa

Size: —

Site Type: Settlement

References: (Bienkowski 1995a; Bienkowski et al. 1997; Bienkowski and Adams 1999)

Tabuk

Coordinates: 28.425738, 36.599684

Location: Northwestern Arabia

Size: —

Site Type: Oasis settlement

References: (de Maigret 1997, 323–24)

Tannur, Khirbat et-

Coordinates: 30.968733, 35.706458

Location: Wadi al-Hasa

Size: 0.1 ha

Site Type: Cultic site

References: (McKenzie et al. 2013a; 2013b; Glueck 1965)

Tatlit

Coordinates: 19.533296, 43.502655

Location: Southwestern Arabia

Size: —

Site Type: Oasis settlement

References: (M. Macdonald 1997, 334)

Tawilan

Coordinates: 30.331130, 35.484512

Location: Southern Edomite Plateau

Size: 0.9 ha

Site Type: Settlement

References: (Bennett and Bienkowski 1995; N. Smith, Najjar, and Levy 2014b, 276–87)

Tayma

Coordinates: 27.626503, 38.549620

Location: Northwestern Arabia

Size: —

Site Type: Oasis settlement

References: (Hausleiter 2010; 2011; 2018; Hausleiter and Zur 2016; Eichmann, Schaudig, and Hausleiter 2006; Edens and Bawden 1989; Hausleiter 2012)

Tov, Horvat

Coordinates: 31.328226, 35.150834

Location: Northeastern Negev

Size: 0.15 ha

Site Type: Fort

References: (Itkin 2018)

Umm al-Biyara

Coordinates: 30.326839, 35.434470

Location: Southern Edomite Plateau

Size: —

Site Type: Mountaintop settlement

References: (Bienkowski 2011c; Schmid and Bienkowski 2011)

‘Uza, Horvat

Coordinates: 31.209105, 35.165522

Location: Northeastern Negev

Size: 0.2 ha

Site Type: Fort

References: (Beit-Arieh 2007c)

Comments: Most likely the ancient site of Qinah

Wadi ‘Anabah (JSS 001)

Coordinates: Unknown

Location: Southern Edomite Plateau

Size: —

Site Type: Settlement

References: (Tholbecq 2001, 402)

Wadi Fidan 40

Coordinates: 30.673320, 35.381391

Location: Northeastern Arabah

Size: 0.35 ha

Site Type: Cemetery

References: (Beherec, Najjar, and Levy 2014; Beherec 2011; Beherec et al. 2016; Levy 2008)

WT-13

Coordinates: 31.572890, 35.873844

Location: Northeastern Moab

Size: 0.015 ha

Site Type: Cultic site

References: (Daviau 2017; Dolan 2007)

Yadi‘u (Yadi‘)

Coordinates: 25.615535, 40.397611

Location: Northwestern Arabia

Size: —

Site Type: Oasis settlement

References: (Gadd 1958; Pritchard 1969, 562–63)

Yattir

Coordinates: 31.352779, 35.017042

Location: Northeastern Negev

Size: —

Site Type: Settlement

References: (Beit-Arieh 1999c, 1)

Yathill

Coordinates: 15.995271, 44.800002

Location: Southwestern Arabia

Size: —

Site Type: Settlement

References: (Fedele 2014)

Yathrib (Medina)

Coordinates: 24.520615, 39.591784

Location: Western Arabia

Size: —

Site Type: Oasis settlement

References: (Gadd 1958; Pritchard 1969, 562–63; de Maigret 1997, 320–22; M. Macdonald 1997, 334–35)

APPENDIX B: COOKING POT TYPES ATTESTED BY SITE

The following table presents a breakdown of cooking pot types represented at each site within the northeastern Negev and southern Transjordan. The cooking pots are numbered according to the typology presented in Chapter 4.B.

Appendix B. Numbered cooking pot types by site, see Chapter 4

| Site | CP 1 | CP1/CP2 | CP 2 | CP 3 | CP 4 | CP 5 | CP 6 | CP 7 | CP 8 | CP 9 | CP 10 | CP 11 | CP 12 | CP 13 | CP 14 | CP 15 | Ot her |
|--------------------|------|---------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| 'En Hazeva | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Horvat Qitmit | 2 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 52 | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| Horvat Radum | | | 3 | | 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Horvat Tov | 13 | | 15 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| Horvat 'Uza | 14 | | 13 | 8 | 6 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Kadesh Barnea III | | | | | | 12 | 70 | | | | | 20 | 8 | | 3 | | 7 |
| Kadesh Barnea II | 24 | | 9 | 23 | 6 | 2 | 11 | | | | | 14 | 4 | | | 2 | 5 |
| Tel Arad VIII | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | 9 | 7 | | 29 | 3 | 2 |
| Tel Arad VII | 23 | | 22 | 1 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Tel Arad VI | 10 | | 6 | 2 | 2 | | | | | | | 1? | | | | | |
| Tel 'Aroer IV | | | | | | 4 | | | | | | 5 | 2 | | 5 | | 1 |
| Tel 'Aroer III | 1 | | | | 2 | 6 | | | | | | 3 | 3 | | 1 | | 1 |
| Tel 'Aroer IIa | 5 | | 1 | 1 | 4 | | | | | | | | 3 | | | 1 | 3 |
| Tel 'Aroer IIb | 4 | | 10 | | 5 | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| Tel 'Aroer (mixed) | 2 | | | | | 8 | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | | 2 | 2 |
| Tel Beersheba III | | | | | | 2 | | | | | | 6 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 3 | 4 |
| Tel Beersheba II | | | | | | | | | | | | 37 | 36 | 30 | 130 | 20 | 28 |
| Tel Beersheba I | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | |
| Tel 'Ira VII | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | 18 | | 17 | 1 | |
| Tel 'Ira VII-VI | 7 | | 2 | | 2 | | | | | | | | 12 | | | | 3 |
| Tel 'Ira VI | 20 | | 16 | 3 | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Tel Malhata IV | | | | | 10 | 7 | | | | 5 | | 6 | 15 | | 5 | 1 | 2 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|---|--|---|----|----|----|----|---|----|---|---|---|----|--|---|---|---|
| Tel Malhata IV-III | 1 | | 5 | 2 | 9 | 4 | | | | 5 | | 1 | 13 | | 1 | 1 | |
| Tel Malhata IIIB | 1 | | | | 5 | 1 | | | | 2 | | 3 | 2 | | 1 | | |
| Tel Malhata IIIA | 5 | | 7 | 14 | 25 | 1 | | | | 1 | 1 | | 2 | | 1 | | 2 |
| Tel Masos | 5 | | 4 | 4 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Busayra | | | | | 23 | 10 | 4 | 8 | 3 | | | | | | | | |
| Ghrareh | | | | | 45 | 3 | 24 | | 11 | | | | | | | | 3 |
| Tell el-Kheleifeh | 1 | | | | 23 | | 10 | | 2 | | | 7 | | | | | |
| Khirbet Ishra | | | | | 3 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Khirbet al-Megheitah | | | | | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Tawilan | | | | | 18 | 6 | 12 | | | | | | | | | | 2 |
| Umm al-Biyara | | | | | 4 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| Ba'ja III | | | | | 6 | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 |
| Jabal al-Khubtha | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Jabal al-Qseir | | | | | 6 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Qurayyat al-Mansur | | | | | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| es-Sadeh | | | | | 13 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sela' | | | | | 3 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Khirbat al-Mu'allaq | | | | | 6 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ash-Shorabat | | | | | 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| Khirbat al-Iraq Shmaliyeh | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Khirbat al-Kur (KIJ) | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Khirbat al-Malayqtah | | | | | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ras al-Miyah | | | | | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rujm Hamrat Ifdan | | | | | 12 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Tawilan-J | | | | | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |

APPENDIX C: LIST OF IDENTIFIED EDMITE INSCRIPTIONS

To date, the inscriptions that have been most definitively identified as Edomite on the basis of their linguistic and script features, and that form the basis for the discussion in Chapter 6.B include:³³⁸

1. Seal from Busayra (Reg. 268; A. R. Millard 2002, 430–31; Avigad and Sass 1997, 388).
2. Bulla from Umm al-Biyara (Reg. 50; van der Veen 2011, 79–81; Avigad and Sass 1997, 388).
3. Ostracon no. 7 from Horvat ‘Uza (Beit-Arieh 2007a, 133–37; Beit-Arieh and Cresson 1985; Ahituv 2008, 351–54).
4. *Qws ‘nl* seal impressions from Tell el-Kheleifeh (Reg. nos. 146, 215, 241, 243, 267, 278, 381, 463, 464, 466, 467, 528, 724, 742, 822, 1014, 2092, 2096, 2098, 6049, 9098, 20271; Divito 1993, 55–57; Avigad and Sass 1997, 389–90).
5. Ostracon no. 6043 from Tell el-Kheleifeh Ostracon (Reg. No. 6043; Divito 1993, 53–55; Ahituv 2008, 354–56; Glueck 1971, 226–29).
6. Ostraca from Tel Malhata (Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8; Beit-Arieh 2015b, 487–96).
7. Inscriptions from Horvat Qitmit (Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7; Beit-Arieh 1995b).³³⁹

Though less clear but likewise to be considered as Edomite are:

8. Ostraca from Busayra (Reg. nos. 816 and 1191; A. R. Millard 2002, 431–32).
9. Graffiti from Busayra (Reg. 583; A. R. Millard 2002, 432–33).
10. Ostracon from Umm al-Biyara (Reg. 239; al-Ghul 2011).

³³⁸ See also discussions in Bartlett (1989, 29–229), Vanderhooft (1995, 140–45), and Rollston (2014b, 965–66).

³³⁹ Of particular note from the Horvat Qitmit corpus is inscription No. 3, which Rollston argues to date to the eighth century BCE on the basis of paleography and the form of the *qôp* (2014b, 966).

11. Signet from Tell el-Kheleifeh (Reg. No. 7022; Divito 1993, 53; Avigad and Sass 1997, 392).
12. Jar graffito from Tell el-Kheleifeh (Reg. No. 374; Divito 1993, 57–58; Glueck 1971, 234–35; Naveh 1966, 27–30).
13. Ostrakon from Tel ‘Aroer (Reg. no. F/8565; Naveh 2011a; 1985).
14. Seal from Tel ‘Aroer (Reg. No. F/361/1; Avigad and Sass 2011; 1997, 392).³⁴⁰
15. Seal from ‘En Hazeva (Cohen and Yisrael 1995b, 224; Naveh 2001).³⁴¹

³⁴⁰ Additional proposed Edomite seals can be found in Avigad and Sass (1997, 387–98), although due to ambiguity in their provenance have not been presented within this list. See further discussion of these in (Vanderhooft 1995, 151–54; Bartlett 1989, 211–15), as well as an analysis of the seal script in (Herr 2014, 196–99).

³⁴¹ Note, however, that this identification as Edomite is with reference to the script and not to the language as the names preserved within it have been identified as Arabian (van Der Veen and Bron 2014, 212–14; Naveh 2001, 197–98). An additional inscription from a stone figure was identified at ‘En Hazeva and is suggested to be Edomite (Naveh 2011b), although it is too poorly preserved for more extensive observations.

APPENDIX D: LINGUISTIC FEATURES OF EDMITE (PHONOLOGY, MORPHOLOGY, SYNTAX, AND LEXICON)

To date, the most important linguistic studies on Edomite include those of F. Israel (1979; 1987), Naveh (1979), Garr (1985), Vanderhooft (1995), and most recently Rollston (2014b). On the basis of the inscription dataset listed in Appendix C, a number of linguistic observations may be made:

1. Edomite uses the prefixed definite article *hê* (ה), rather than the suffixed definite article *'ālep* (א), linguistically placing it within the Canaanite branch of Northwest Semitic (e.g., Hebrew, Moabite, Phoenician, Ammonite), rather than the other major branch of Aramaic (Rollston 2014b, 966).
2. Edomite uses the lexeme *bn* (בן) rather than *br* (בר), again attesting to its Canaanite rather than Aramaic linguistic affiliation (Rollston 2014b, 966).
3. Edomite uses the relative pronoun *'šr* (אשר; e.g., Horvat 'Uza No. 7:4) presumably following the same shift from the proto-Semitic **tr* as Canaanite and Old Aramaic, unlike Imperial Aramaic. Moreover, as *'šr* (אשר) is only really used as a relative in Hebrew, Moabite and Edomite, the use of this relative particle intimates closely shared features with its regional neighbors (Garr 1985, 85–87; Rollston 2014b, 967; Vanderhooft 1995, 155).
4. Within Edomite, the diphthong *aw* appears to contract only in the late sixth and early fifth century BCE. This is evidenced within the divine name *Qws* (קוּס), which appears as *qa-us* or *qa-uš* in Akkadian during the eighth and seventh centuries BCE (Tadmor 1994, 170–71, Summary 7; Borger 1956, 48–49; 1996, 18–20, 212; Pritchard 1969, 282, 291, 294), but as *qu-us* by the fifth century BCE (e.g., Dalley 1995, 67–68), indicating a

contraction during this period (Garr 1985, 38; Rollston 2014b, 967). It is also likely that that the diphthong *ay* contracted as well (Young 1992).

5. The accusative marker used in Edomite inscriptions is *'t* (אֵת), another feature shared only with Moabite and Hebrew that suggests a close linguistic affiliation (Vanderhooft 1995, 156; Rollston 2014b, 967).
6. Edomite appears to use the interrogative *hê* (הֵ), as well as *tn* (תֵן) for the G-Imperative form of *ntn* (נָתַן), as is demonstrated through Horvat 'Uza Ostraca No. 7 (Beit-Arieh 2007a, 133–37), and again intimating linguistic similarities to the neighboring dialects of Hebrew and Moabite (Rollston 2014b, 967).
7. Edomite appears to use the causative H stem (*hif'il*) with the prefix *he-* (הֵ). While this is attested in Aramaic as well as Canaanite, the Edomite use of this stem in blessing formulas rather than the D stem (*pi'el*) as is frequently seen in Hebrew and Phoenician is notable (Ahituv 2008, 352; Rollston 2014b, 967, 972; Vanderhooft 1995, 196). For example, within Horvat 'Uza Inscription No. 7 the phrase הַבְּרַכְתֶּךָ לְקוֹס "I bless you by *Qws*" (Beit-Arieh 2007a, 133–37) may be compared with Hebrew ostraca from Arad (nos. 16, 21 and 40) בְּרַכְתֶּךָ לַיהוָה "I bless you by Yhwh" (Aharoni 1981, 30–31, 42–43, 70–74) and in Phoenician לְבַעֲלִצְפֵן בְּרַכְתֶּךָ "I bless you by Ba'al Saphon" (Donner and Röellig 1962, No. 50: 2-3). The use of this stem with the verb *brk* (בָּרַךְ) in this context, appears unique to Edomite (Ahituv 2008, 352; Beit-Arieh 2007a, 133–37).
8. The inscriptions that are present indicate that Edomite syntax appears to be verb-subject-object, as would be expected; with an example of a deictic adverb: *w't* (וְעַתָּה), as would also be expected with regard to its linguistic similarity to Hebrew and Moabite (Vanderhooft 1995, 156; Ahituv 2008, 352).

9. The direct object pronoun of the verb is once attested as an object suffix (e.g., “I bless you” [והברכתך]), and based on the limited data there is no evidence for the accusative marker (’t [את]), with a suffix. Likewise, the “conversive perfect” is likely attested, but not certain (Vanderhooft 1995, 156).
10. Although there are methodological challenges in the use of lexemes as the basis for language and dialect differentiation (Rollston 2014b, 962–63), the use of the lexeme *bn* (בן) as discussed above, is significant. Likewise, lexical peculiarities in Edomite appear to exist in the causative use the verb *brk* (ברך) as well as in the absolute use of the preposition *’md* (עמד; Vanderhooft 1995, 157).
11. On the basis of the present dataset, the inscriptions do not reveal any identifiable phonological features that would mark Edomite as distinctively different from the neighboring dialects of Hebrew and Moabite (Vanderhooft 1995, 154–55; Garr 1985, 229–31), indicating that by all accounts Edomite was mutually intelligible to its neighbors to the north and northwest (Segert 1997; Garr 1985, 228–30; Naveh 1979, 194).

APPENDIX E: SCRIPT FEATURES OF EDMITE

While Edomite can be viewed as using a regional variant of the late Iron Age Northwest Semitic script (Bartlett 1989, 209), certain distinctions of the script that was used in the Edomite sphere have been noted for some time (Naveh 1966; Glueck 1971; Herr 1980). Summaries of these distinctions can be found in the now dated work of Naveh (1966), Glueck (1971), and Herr (1980, 29–31), as well as Vanderhooft (1995, 145–51), and most recently Rollston (2014b, 968–70).³⁴² Regarding the Edomite script, while there do appear to be variances in the lapidary and cursive versions, there is more data regarding the cursive script, particularly as no major inscribed Edomite monuments have yet been excavated (Vanderhooft 2014; Herr 2014). Thus, the following identification of script features focuses on the cursive version unless otherwise noted. Likewise, as the study of Edomite is in its fledgling stages due to a general paucity of data, as noted by Rollston, the following features ought not to be viewed as definitive (Rollston 2014b, 962), but rather as demonstrative of individual scribal hands that reflect a similar context of scribal training, presumably associated with Busayra. As such, small script variances in the Edomite inscriptions are to be expected as these reflect different scribal hands, as well as potentially different temporal contexts. The following features are common to the Edomite script:

’ālep—The form used in Edom presents a horizontal “V” with a vertical shaft, more comparable with Transjordanian and Aramaic traditions than the Hebrew script of the late Iron Age (Herr 1980, 29). Although, Vanderhooft notes that different hands appear to present slightly different

³⁴² See also Herr regarding the script presented on seals (2014, 196–99). Note, however, that several of the example’s Herr includes lack provenance and can only tenuously be associated with Edom on the basis of minute, and at times not unambiguous details.

variants so that the Horvat ‘Uza (no. 7) *’ālep* bears stronger similarities to inscriptions from Tel Arad than that of those at Tell el-Kheleifeh described by Herr (Vanderhoof 1995, 146).

bêt—The head of the *bêt* appears open during the seventh century BCE (Horvat ‘Uza no. 7; Tell el-Kheleifeh Reg. 6043), similar to the Aramaic script at that time; closed heads are, however, attested in the eighth century BCE (seal from Busayra Reg. 268; Rollston 2014b, 969).³⁴³ In addition to an often open head, the baseline of the *bêt* frequently tends to drop below horizontal, similar to Moabite, Ammonite and Aramaic, but variant from Hebrew (Vanderhoof 1995, 146; Rollston 2014b, 969; Herr 1980, 30; Glueck 1938, 16).

gîmel—The *gîmel* is poorly attested.

dālet—Edomite *dālet* appears to be one of the more significant and unique forms of the Edomite script, often tilted to the right at approximately 45°, presenting an open head during the seventh century BCE, and with a tail that is often initiated above its head (Vanderhoof 1995, 146–47; Rollston 2014b, 969).

hê—The *hê*, particularly in the Horvat ‘Uza ostrakon, appears unique within the region. Rather than preserving the three horizontal bars of the archaic form as seen in Hebrew and Phoenician, this form presents the three bars in a continuous “s” stroke (Vanderhoof 1995, 147). Rollston notes the similarity of this form to that of contemporary Aramaic (Rollston 2014b, 970). The

³⁴³ Note, however, that the Busayra example cited by Rollston (seal Reg. 268; A. R. Millard 2002, 430–31; Avigad and Sass 1997, 388), could rather be a feature of lapidary as few other eighth century BCE examples are demonstrated.

form is especially notable in its difference to the forms of the Hebrew inscriptions of the Negev, especially those seen at Tel Arad (Aharoni 1981, 133–37).

wāw—The *wāw* presents as an inverse “L” with its head forming a shallow cup, a form that is closely paralleled in contemporary cursive Aramaic (Vanderhooft 1995, 148; Rollston 2014b, 970).

zayin—The *zayin* is very similar to that of Ammonite in the seventh century BCE and to the earlier Deir ‘Alla inscription. Its form is markedly different from that of contemporary Hebrew (Vanderhooft 1995, 148; Herr 1980, 30).

ḥêt—The *ḥêt* is poorly attested.

ṭêt—The *ṭêt* is poorly attested.

yôd—The *yôd* is poorly attested.

kāp—The *kāp* presents a curved downstroke serving almost as a “foot,” similar to the *bêt* and *mêṣ*, and similar to cursive Aramaic as seen in the Saqqarah papyrus (Vanderhooft 1995, 148).

The form is not dissimilar to many of the Hebrew forms at Tel Arad (Aharoni 1981, 133–37).

lāmed—The *lāmed* does not appear to be diagnostically significant (Vanderhooft 1995, 148).

mēm—The *mēm* presents a very large head similar to Moabite, and also a curved base (like the *bêt* and *kāp*) most closely resembling forms in Moabite and Hebrew (Vanderhooft 1995, 149; Herr 1980, 31).

nûn—The *nûn* does not appear to be diagnostically significant (Vanderhooft 1995, 149).

sāmek—The *sāmek* echoes Aramaic forms with a “zig-zag” head (Rollston 2014b, 970).

However, as noted by Vanderhooft, there is a variation in these forms particularly between the Horvat ‘Uza ostrakon (no. 7) and the Tell el-Kheleifeh ostrakon (Reg. 6043), with the former bearing stronger similarities to cursive Aramaic and Ammonite (Vanderhooft 1995, 149).

‘ayin—The *‘ayin* appears with a square base and is almost always open except for several seals that may reflect lapidary variance. It presents strong similarities to cursive Aramaic (Vanderhooft 1995, 149).

pê—The *pê* is not seen as diagnostically significant (Vanderhooft 1995, 150).

šādē—The *šādē* is poorly attested.

qôp—The *qôp* presents both open “S” shaped heads and closed heads, with the closed head examples (e.g., Horvat Qitmit no. 3) suggested to be an earlier, often lapidary form that was replaced by the open-headed variant, similar to cursive Aramaic (Rollston 2014b, 969; Vanderhooft 1995, 150).

rêš—Edomite cursive *rêš* appears most often open, similar to Aramaic in the seventh century BCE, developing as such sooner than Ammonite (Vanderhooft 1995, 150; Rollston 2014b, 969).

šîn—The *šîn* appears to present the “W” form that is common across the southern Levant and is not seen as diagnostically significant (Vanderhooft 1995, 150; Herr 1980, 30).

tāw—The Edomite *tāw* possesses an elongated downstroke, similar to Ammonite and early Aramaic, and contrasting with the squat “X” form seen in Hebrew (Vanderhooft 1995:150).

Overall, the script used in the region and influence of Edom draws its strongest parallels to Ammonite and the other Transjordanian scripts. Very strong influences and parallels can also be drawn to Aramaic, which are especially seen in the open forms of letters including the *bêt*, *‘ayin* and *rêš*, with the *wāw*, *sāmek*, *qôp*, and *tāw* appearing to be nearly identical (Vanderhooft 1995, 151). It is for these reasons that Rollston views Aramaic to have been the mother script of Edomite (Rollston 2014b, 970). Nonetheless, certain features, such as the large-headed *mêm* distinguish Edomite from Aramaic, while drawing parallels to the other Transjordanian scripts such as Moabite (Rollston 2014b, 970). While Edomite shares forms such as the *kāp*, *lāmed*, *nûn* and *šîn* with Hebrew, the form of these graphemes is also common in the Transjordanian scripts, and among the particularly distinct features of seventh and sixth century BCE Hebrew, Edomite draws no parallels (Vanderhooft 1995, 151). Within the northeastern Negev contact zone between Edomite and Hebrew, the most prominent ostrakon, Horvat ‘Uza no. 7 draws its most distinct differences to the Hebrew inscriptions of the area in the forms of the *dālet*, *hê*, and *sāmek*

(Vanderhooft 1995, 151), as well as the open forms of the *bet*, *ʿayin* and *rêš*, and the other forms that more closely resemble Aramaic.

APPENDIX F: ONOMASTIC DATA FROM THE NEGEV AND TRANSJORDAN

The following table presents all names encountered in late Iron Age inscriptions from the northeastern Negev and southern Transjordan. With regard to the site name abbreviations: TI = Tel 'Ira; KB = Kadesh Barnea; TMs = Tel Masos; TAr = Tel 'Aroer; HQ = Horvat Qitmit; HR = Horvat Radum; TM = Tel Malhata; HU = Horvat 'Uza; TAd = Tel Arad; TK = Tel el-Kheleifeh; B = Busayra; UB = Umm al-Biyara; G = Ghrareh; EK = Edomite Kings; JK = Judahite Kings. See above Appendix A for corresponding bibliography.

Appendix C. Onomastics from the Negev

| Name | TI | KB | TMs | TAr | HQ | HR | TMI | HU | TAd | TK | B | UB | G | EK | JK |
|--------------------|----|----|-----|-----|----|----|-----|----|-----|----|---|----|---|----|----|
| 'byhw | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 'by[hw] | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 'byhy | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| 'dnš | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| 'wryhw bn rg' | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| 'wryhw bn šlm[yhw] | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 'h'mh[.] | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 'hz | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 'hqm | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 'hyqm bn šm'yhw | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| ayyarammu | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| 'lyšb | | | | | | | | 1 | 18 | | | | | | |
| 'lyšb bn prh' | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 'lyš' bn yrmyhw | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| 'mwn | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| 'lntn | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 'lp[lʔ] | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 'prn bn lyqm | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| 'lšm' | | | | | | | | 2 | | | | | | | |
| 'lšm['] | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 'l[.]m' | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 'ryhw | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|--|--|--|--|--|---|---|---|--|--|--|--|---|
| 'šyhw | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 'škr tbyhw | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| [']dm bn yqmyhw | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| bdq[ws] | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| blbl | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| bn brky[hw] | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| bn nḥmyhw | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| bn ntnyhw | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| bn 'bdyhw | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| brkyhw | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| g'lyhw | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| g'lyh[w] | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| g'lyhw bn yd'yhw | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | |
| gbḥ | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| gdlyhw | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| gdlyhw bn 'wryh[w] | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| gdlyhw bn 'ly'r | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | |
| gdlyhw bn kr [...] | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| ghm | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | |
| gmryhw | | | | | | | | | | | 3 | | | | | |
| dqy bn yhw'z | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| dn'[l] | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| dtd | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| hwdwyhw | | | | | | | | | | 2 | | | | | | |
| hwš'yhw | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| hwš'yhw bn nwy | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| hwš'yhw nwh | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| hkws | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | |
| [h]šlyhw | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| hšlyhw bn šdq | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | |
| zkr | | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| [z]kr | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | |
| zkryhw | | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| hzqyhw | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| ḥḥ' | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| ḥldy | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|--|--|--|---|
| <i>hnn</i> | | | | | | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | |
| <i>hnnnyhw</i> | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | 2 | | | | | | |
| <i>hšby[hw]</i> | | | | | | | | 2 | | | | | | | |
| <i>y'syhw</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>ydneyhw bn šb[nyhw]</i> | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| <i>ydneyhw bn špt[yhw]</i> | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| <i>yd'wy[hw]</i> | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| <i>yd'yhw</i> | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| <i>y'znyhw</i> | | | | | | | | 3 | | | | | | | |
| <i>y'znyhw bn bnyhw</i> | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| <i>yh'b bn hldy</i> | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| <i>yhw'hz</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>yhwkl</i> | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| <i>yhwyqym</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>yhwmlk</i> | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| <i>ywhykyn</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>yw'lyhw bn brd[.]</i> | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| <i>yhw[...]</i> | | | | | | | | 2 | 2 | | | | | | |
| <i>yhzyhw</i> | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| <i>yqmyhw</i> | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| <i>yšrwyh[w]</i> | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| <i>ytm</i> | | | | | | | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | |
| <i>knyhw</i> | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| <i>lmlk</i> | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| <i>ltw</i> | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| <i>mgnyhw</i> | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| <i>mwqr</i> | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>mšs[yhw]</i> | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| <i>my'mn</i> | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| <i>my'mn bn š'l</i> | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| <i>mky bn hšlyhw</i> | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| <i>mkyhw</i> | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| <i>mlkyhw</i> | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| <i>mlkyhw bn qrb'wr</i> | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| <i>mlklb´</i> | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| <i>[m]lkqw[s]</i> | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>mlš</i> | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| <i>ml[š]</i> | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| <i>mnḥm</i> | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>[m]nḥm bn h[...]</i> | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>mnšh</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>m šy</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>mšlm bn ndbyhw</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>mtn</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>mtnyhw bn šyhw</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>nḥm</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 |
| <i>nḥmyhw</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 |
| <i>nḥmy[hw]</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>nḥmyhw bn yhw ʿz</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>nḥmyhw bn yš y[hw]</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>n ʿm</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>nqy[...]</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>nryhw</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>nryhw bn mšk[n]y[hw]</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>nryhw bn smk[yhw]</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>nryhw bn s ʿryhw</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>nrt [bt] nrl</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>ntn</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>ntnyhw bn ḥtb</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>ʿbdy[hw] bn šm ʿyhw</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>ʿbhkm [bn] ʿzwl</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>ḥ ʿ</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>[z] ʿl</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>ʿzn ʿl</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>ʿzr</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 |
| <i>ʿmdyhw bn zkr</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>ʿmyrw</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>ʿmy</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>pg ʿqws</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 |
| <i>pšḥr</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>šdqyhw</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>š ʿz</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>špnyhw</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>qws ʿ</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|---|--|---|--|----|--|---|--|---|
| <i>qwsb[nh]</i> | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| <i>qwsgr</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| <i>qwsmlk</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>qwsny</i> | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| <i>qws`nl</i> | | | | | | | | | | 22 | | | | |
| <i>[qw]s`nl</i> | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| <i>rbtngn</i> | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>r`l</i> | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| <i>rp`</i> | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| <i>smkyhw</i> | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| <i>šb`</i> | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| <i>šby</i> | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| <i>šbn[yhw]</i> | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| <i>šwbnqws</i> | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| <i>šhrh</i> | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| <i>škk</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| <i>šlm</i> | | | | | | 1 | | 1 | | | | 1 | | |
| <i>šlm bn 'hy`yl</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| <i>šlmyhw</i> | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>šlmyhw bn yšm [l]</i> | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| <i>šm`yhw bn mlkyhw</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| <i>šm`[yhw]</i> | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| <i>šmš`l</i> | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| <i>šmryhw</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| <i>šmryh[w]</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| <i>š`l bn hn[n]</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>špt[.]</i> | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| <i>tłtnh</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| <i>tnhm bn yd`yhw</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>[`]zryhw</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>[.]bnyhw</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| <i>[...] bn 'byhw</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>[...] bn 'lyšb</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>[...] bn `py</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| <i>[...] bn 'šy[hw]</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>[...] bn ph</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| <i>[...] bn `rd</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|--|--|---|--|--|--|--|---|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| [...]b'l | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| [...]bn šm'yhw | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| [.]hml'y[.] | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| [...]yhw bn 'hy[.] | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| [...yh]w bn hgb | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| [...]yhw | | | | | | | | 1 | 2 | | | | | | |
| [...y]hw | | | 1 | | | | | | 2 | | | | | | |
| [...yh]w | | | | | | | | | 2 | | | | | | |
| [...]ny[hw] | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| [...]qws | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| [..]ryhw | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| [.]šlyhw bn šdq | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |

PLATES

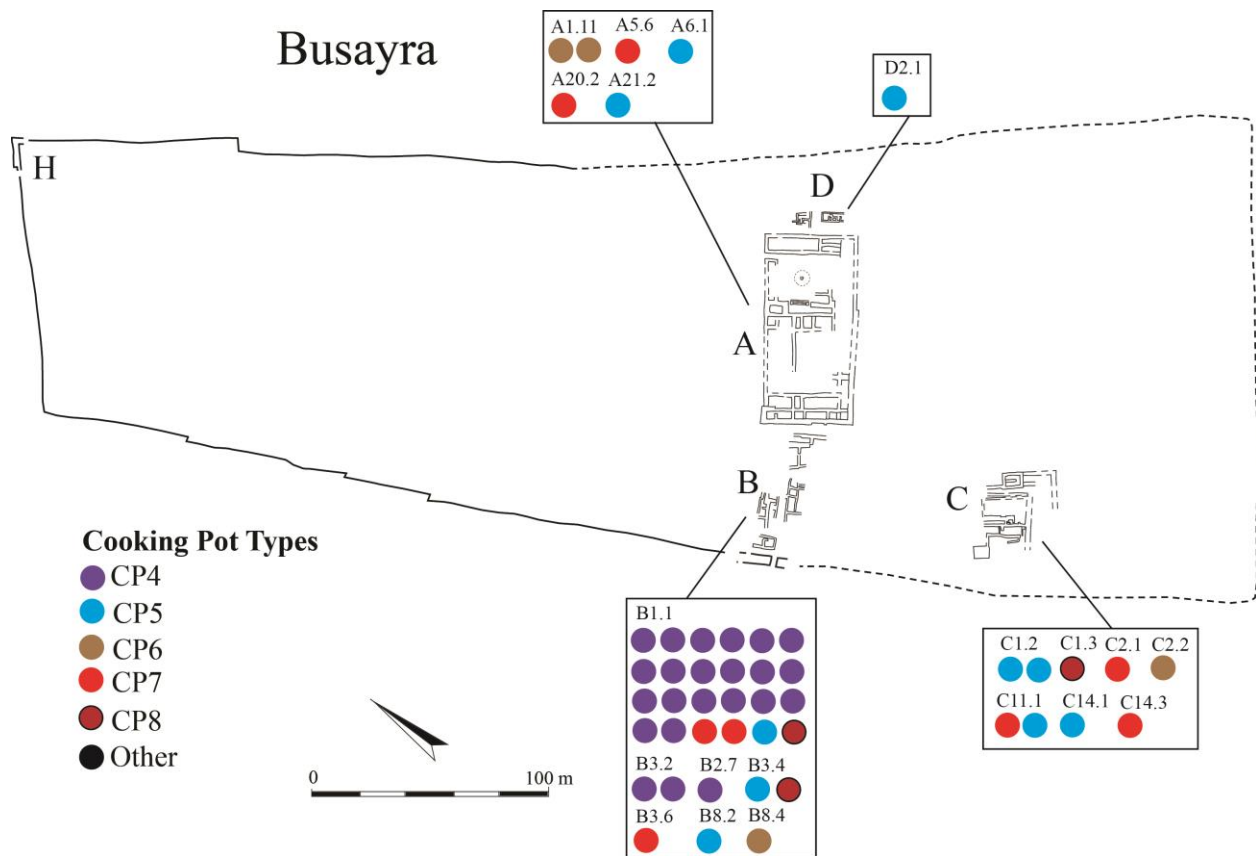


Plate 1. Cooking pot forms attested at Busayra, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Busayra

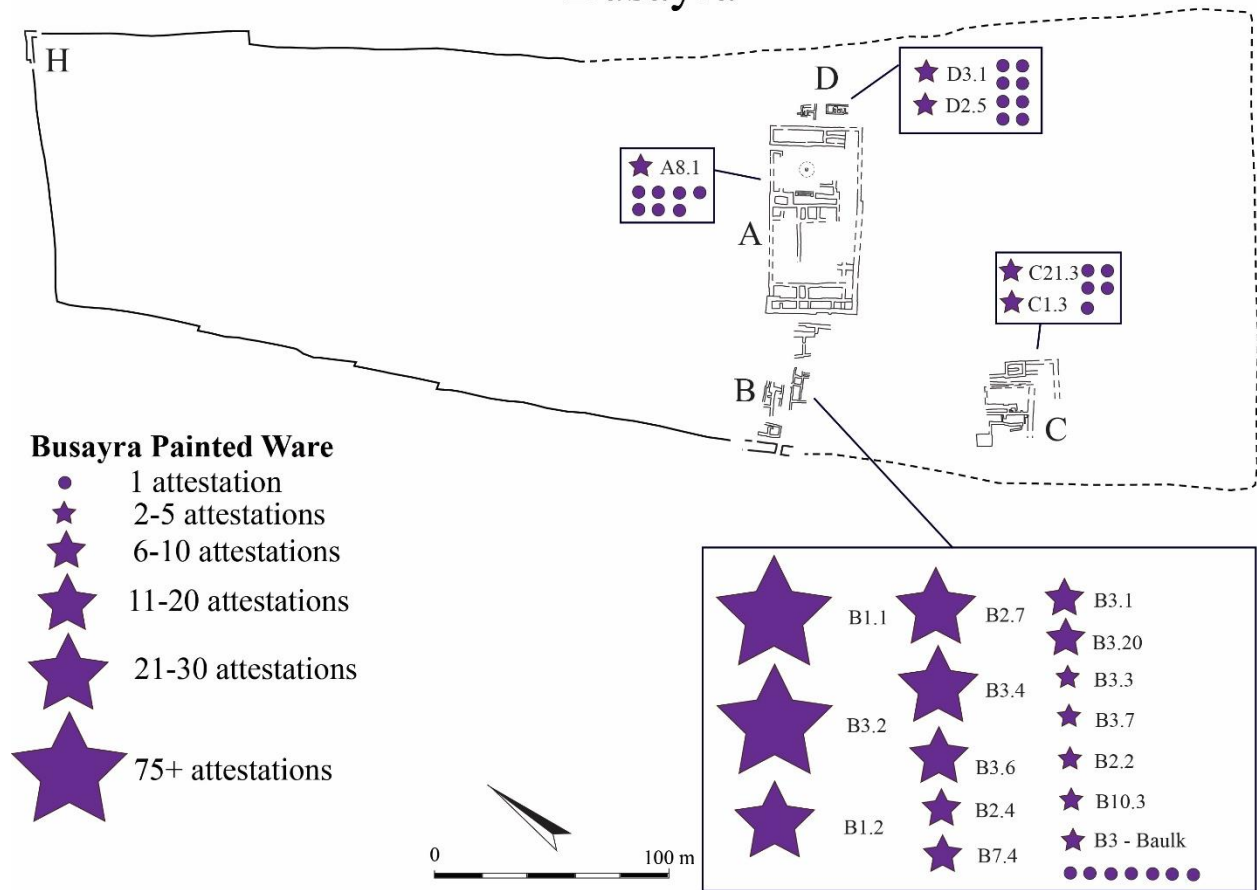


Plate 2. Busayra Painted Ware vessels at Busayra, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

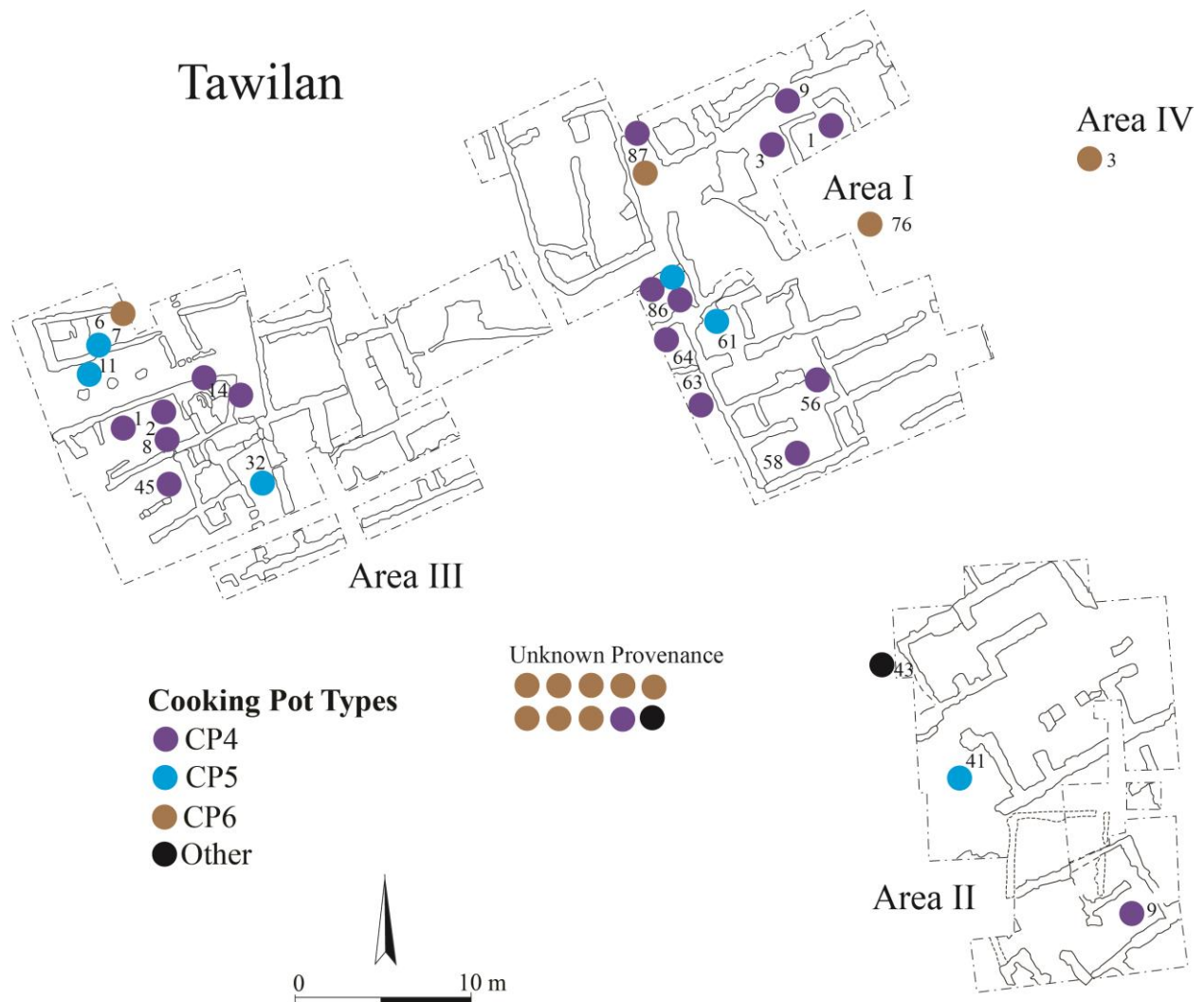


Plate 3. Cooking pot forms attested at Tawilan, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

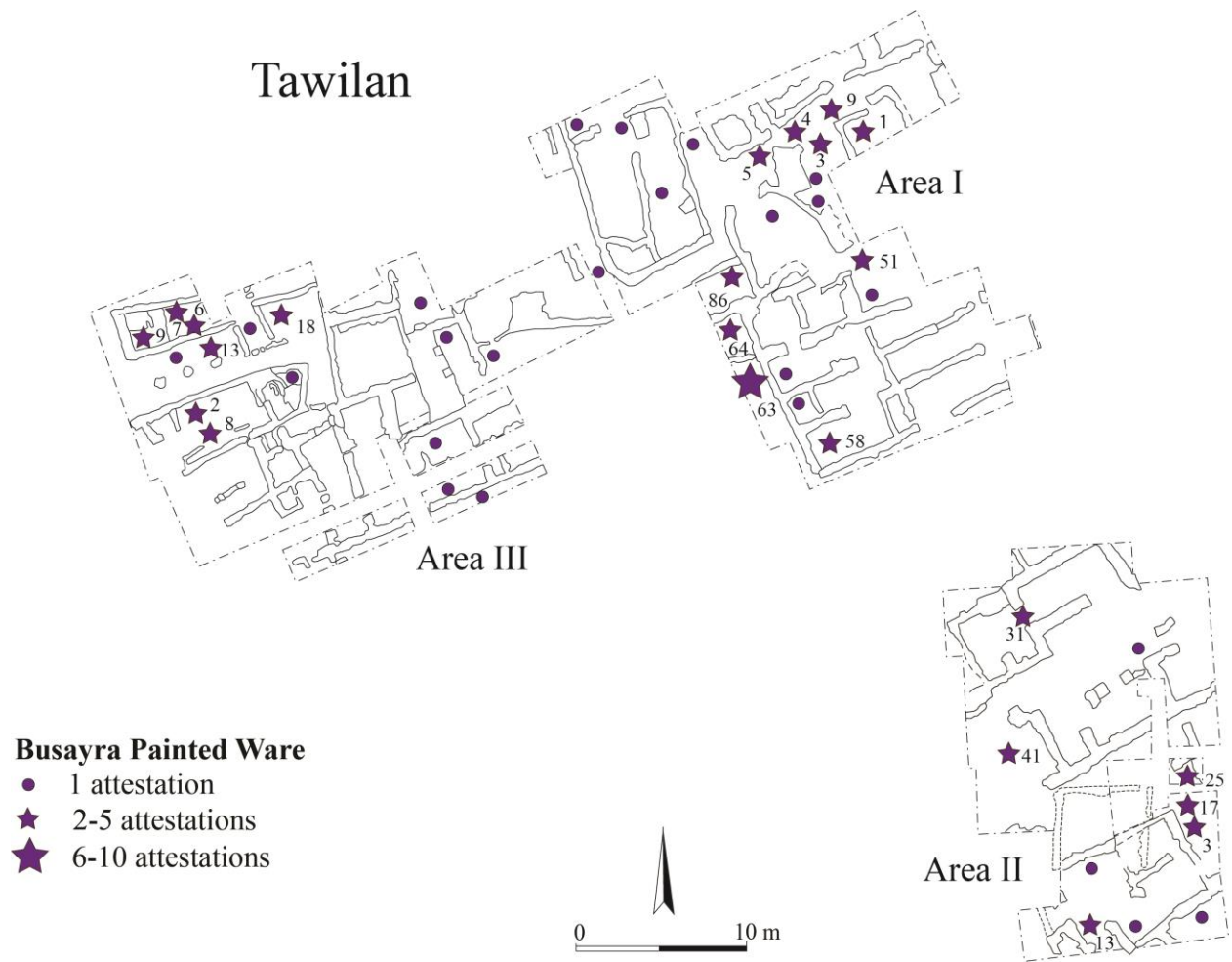


Plate 4. Busayra Painted Ware vessels at Tawilan, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Umm al-Biyara

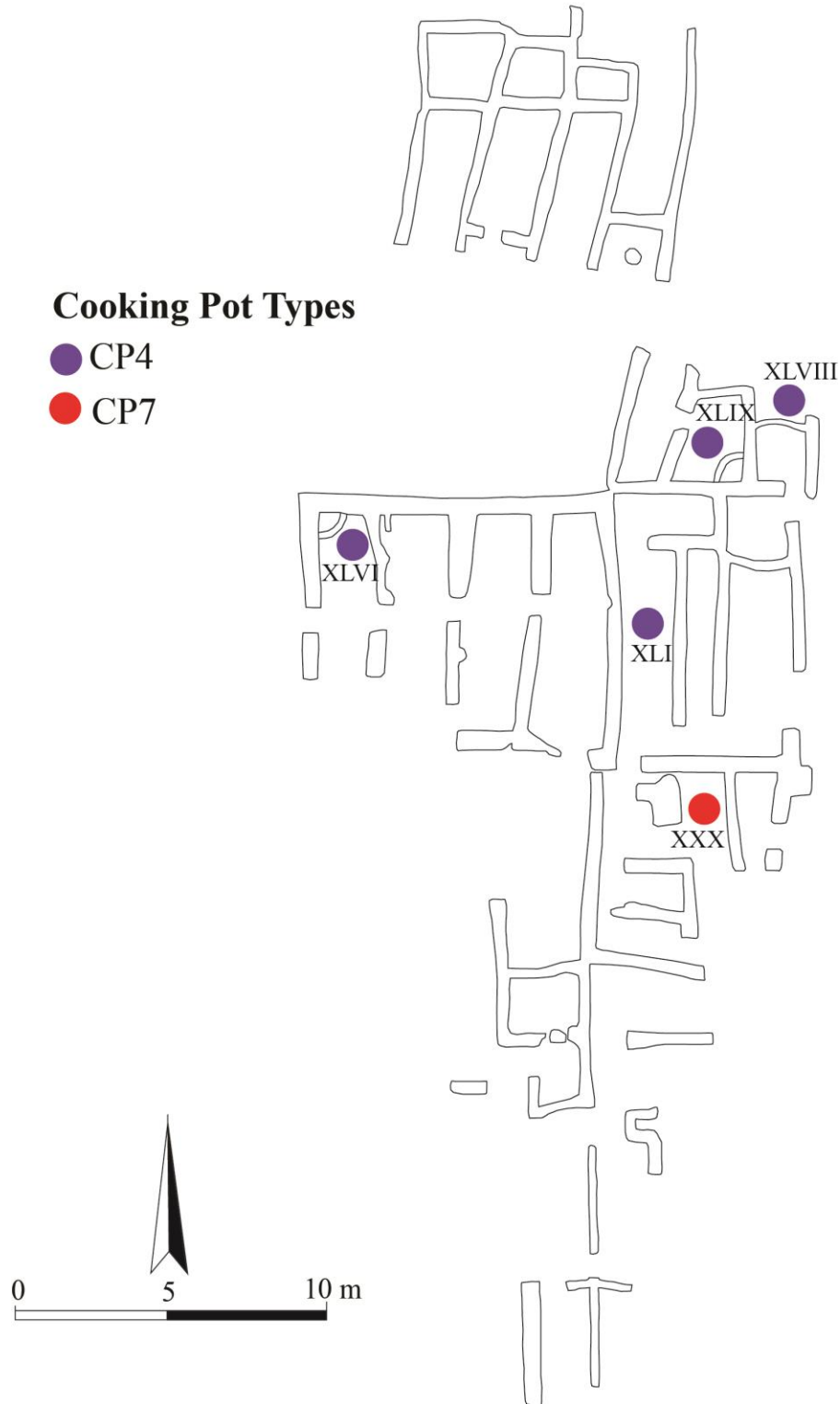


Plate 5. Cooking pot forms attested at Umm al-Biyara, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Ghrareh

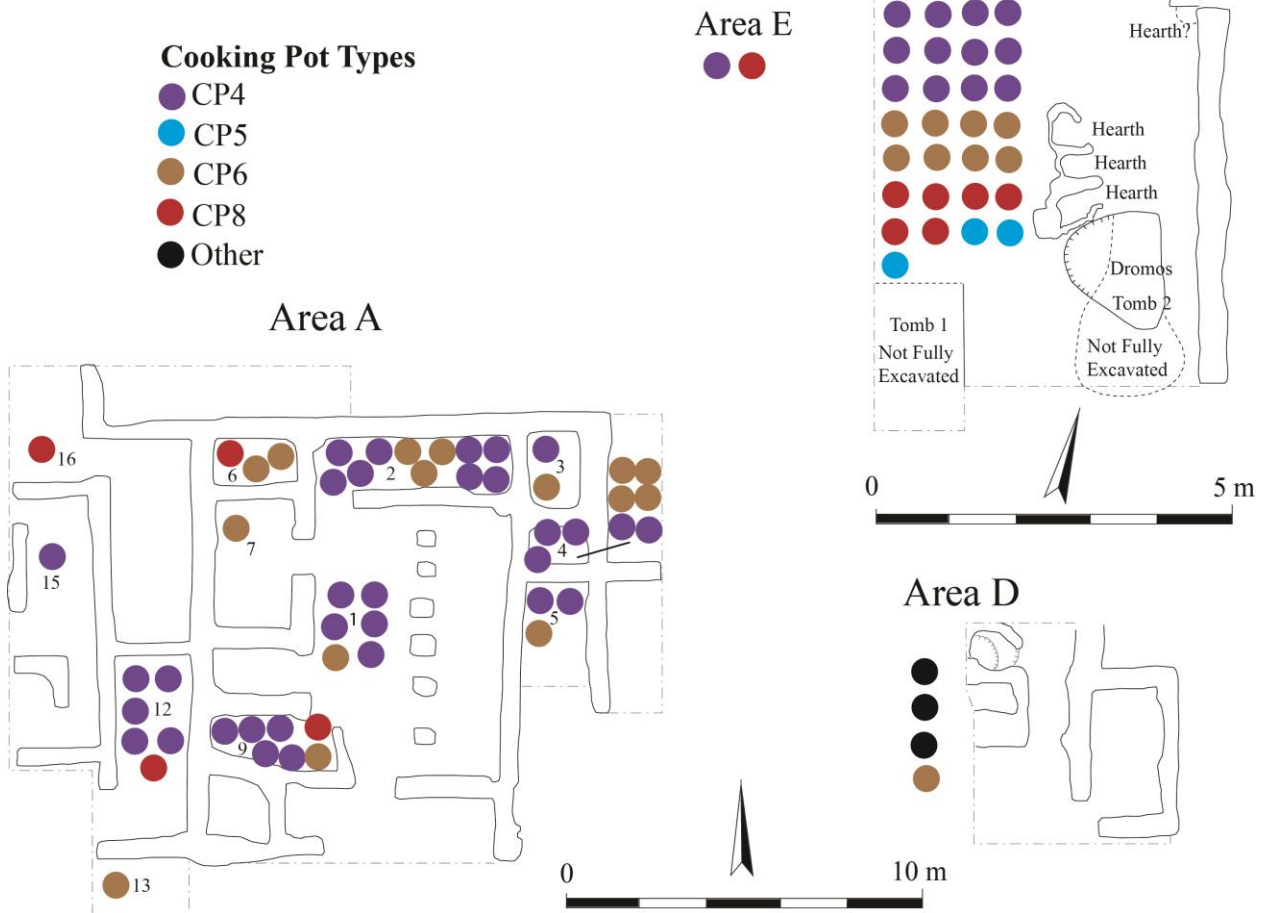


Plate 6. Cooking pot forms attested at Ghrareh, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Ghrareh

Busayra Painted Ware

- 1 attestation
- ★ 2-5 attestations
- ★ 6-10 attestations
- ★ 11-20 attestations

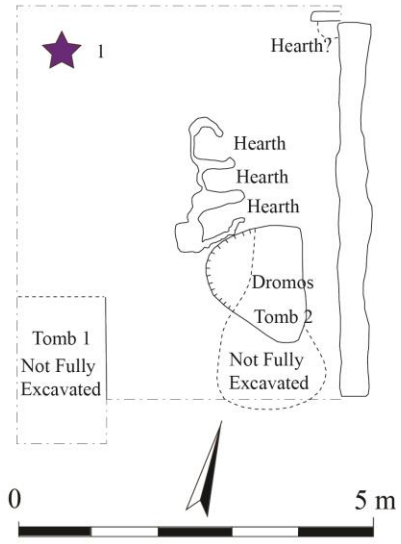
Area C



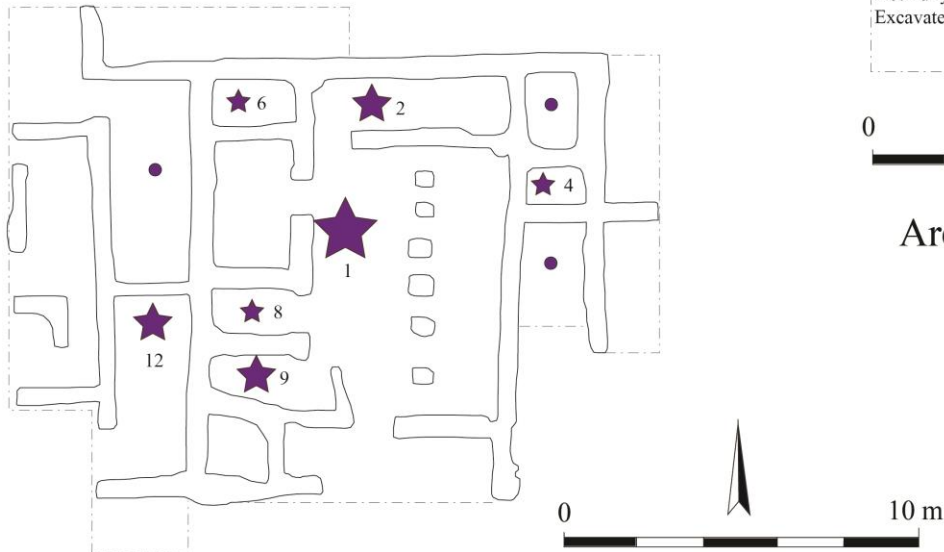
Area E



Area B



Area A



Area D

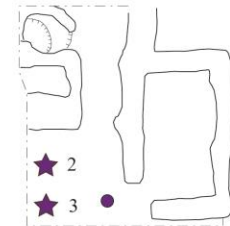


Plate 7. Busayra Painted Ware vessels at Ghrareh, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tell el-Kheleifeh (Glueck's Periods I-IV)

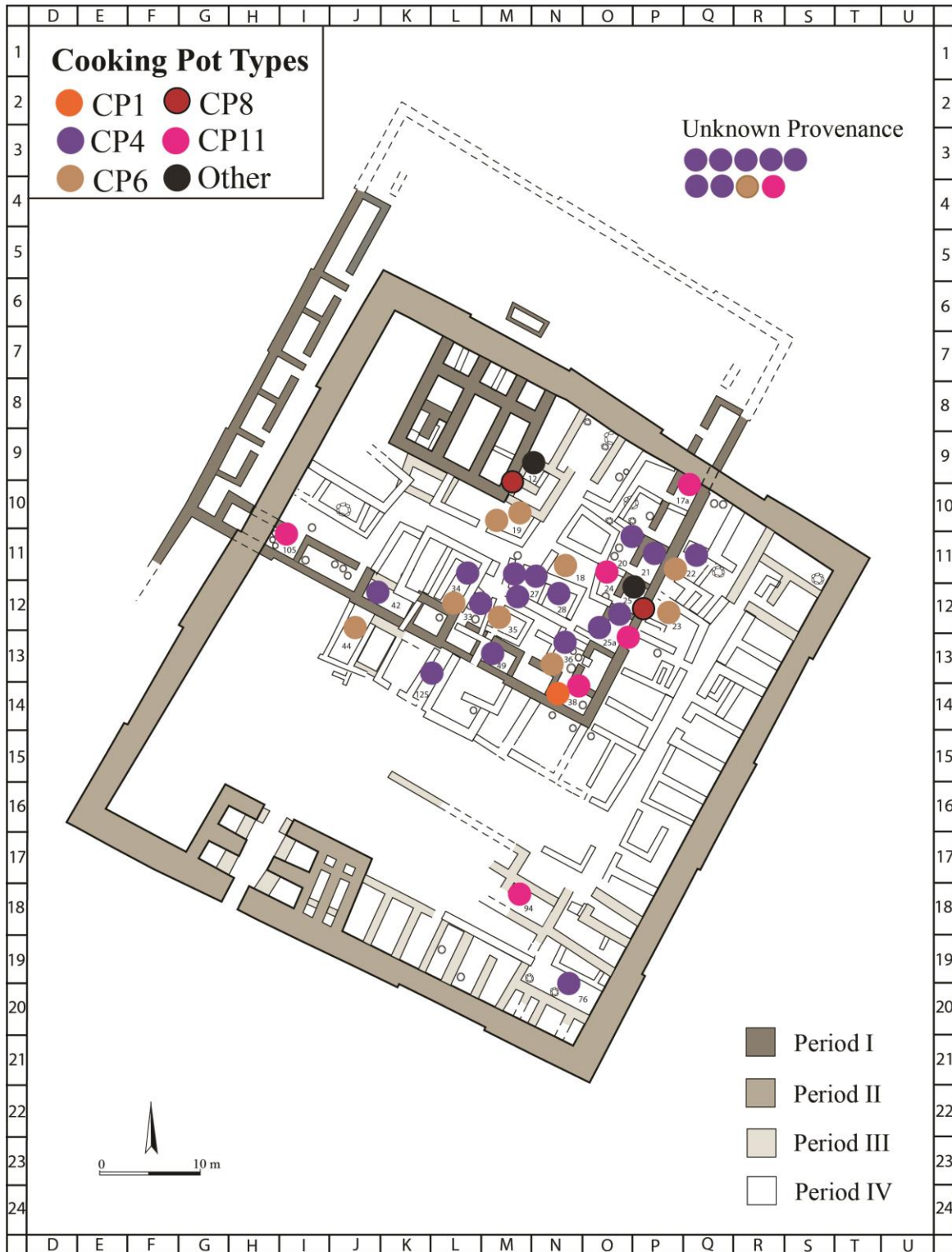


Plate 8. Cooking pot forms attested at Tell el-Kheleifeh, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tell el-Kheleifeh (Glueck's Periods I-IV)



Plate 9. Busayra Painted Ware vessels at Tell el-Kheleifeh, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tell el-Kheleifeh (Glueck's Periods I-IV)

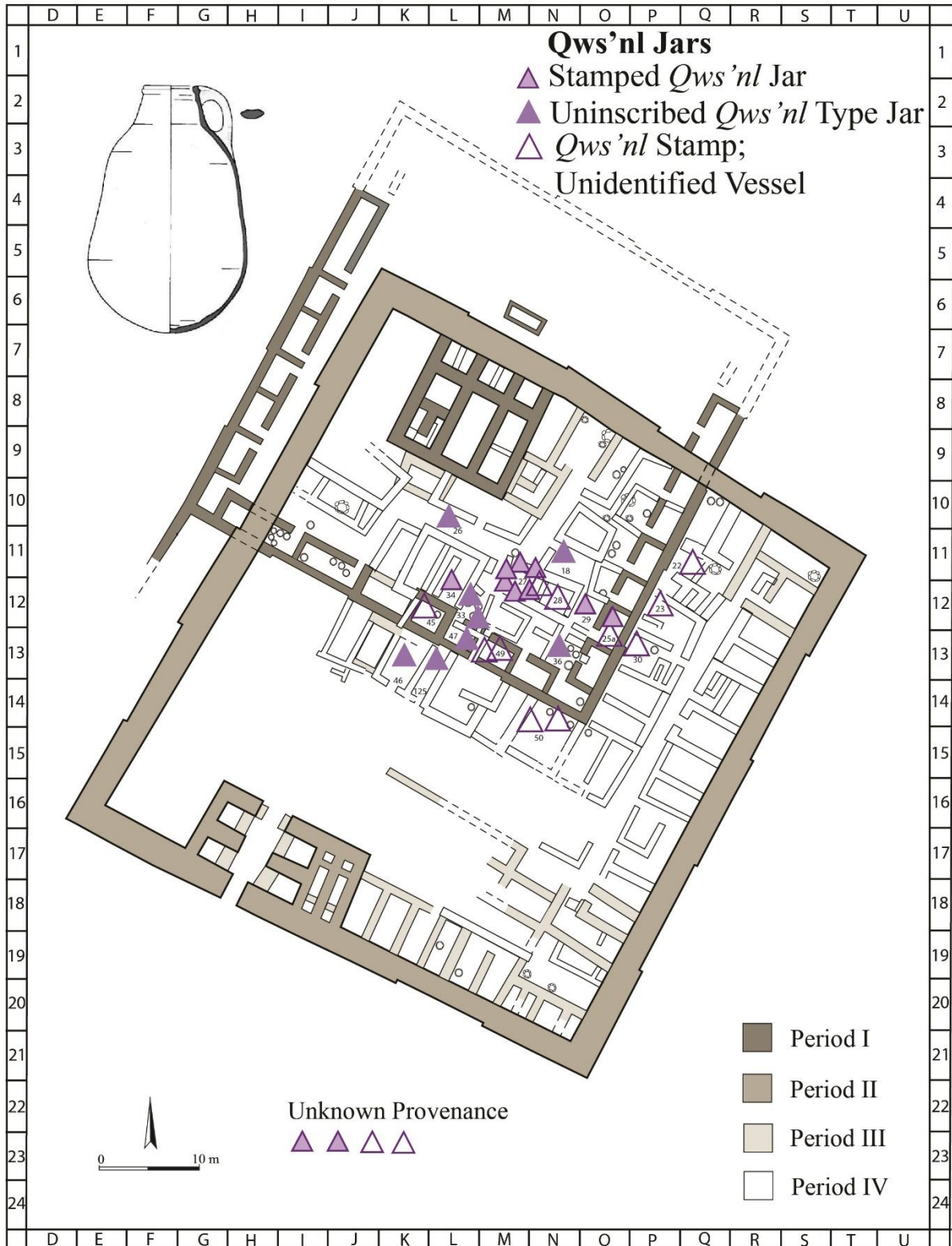


Plate 10. *Qws'nl* jars at Tell el-Kheleifeh, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Khirbet Ishra

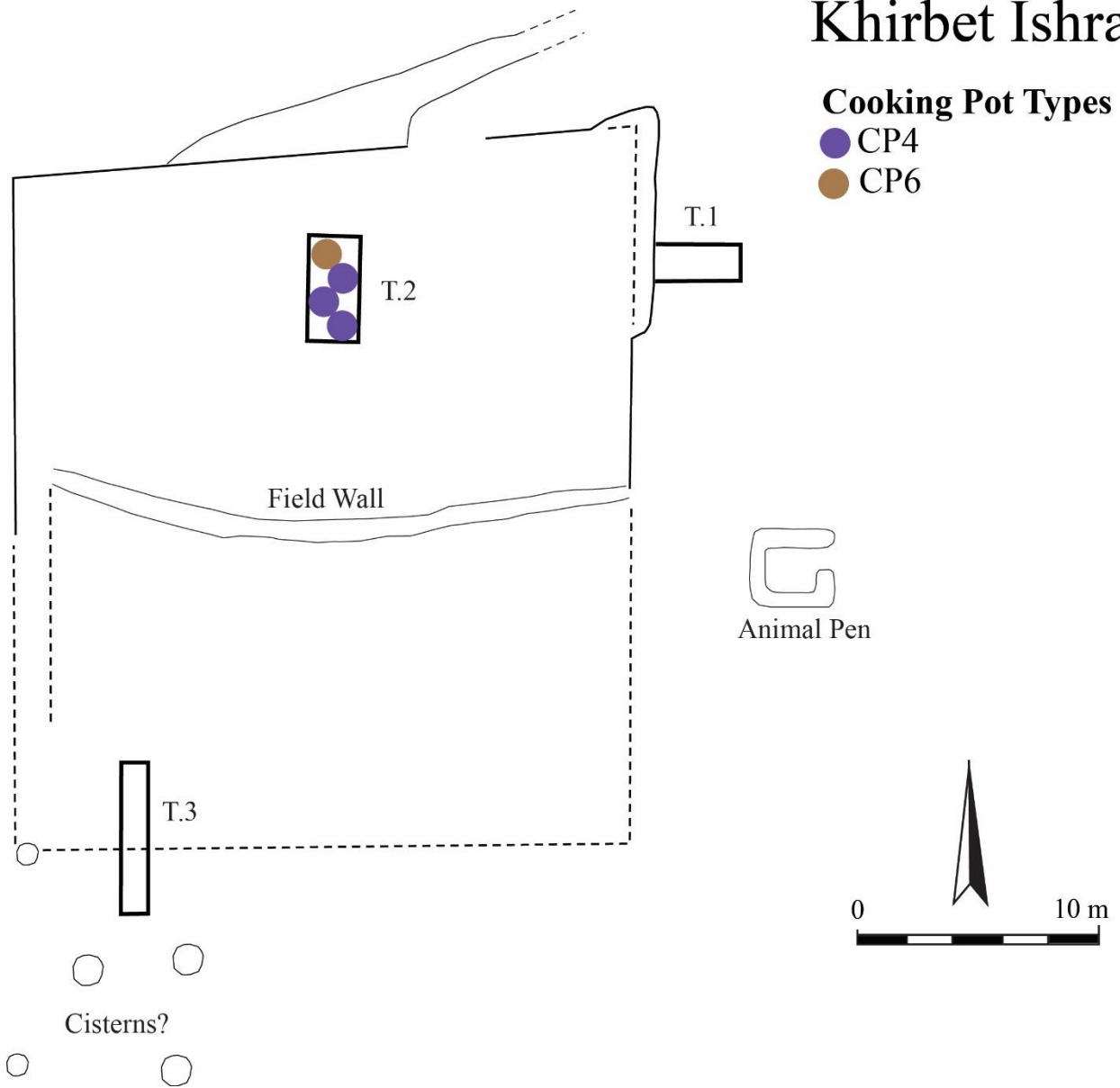


Plate 11. Cooking pot forms attested at Khirbat Ishra, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Khirbet al-Megheitah

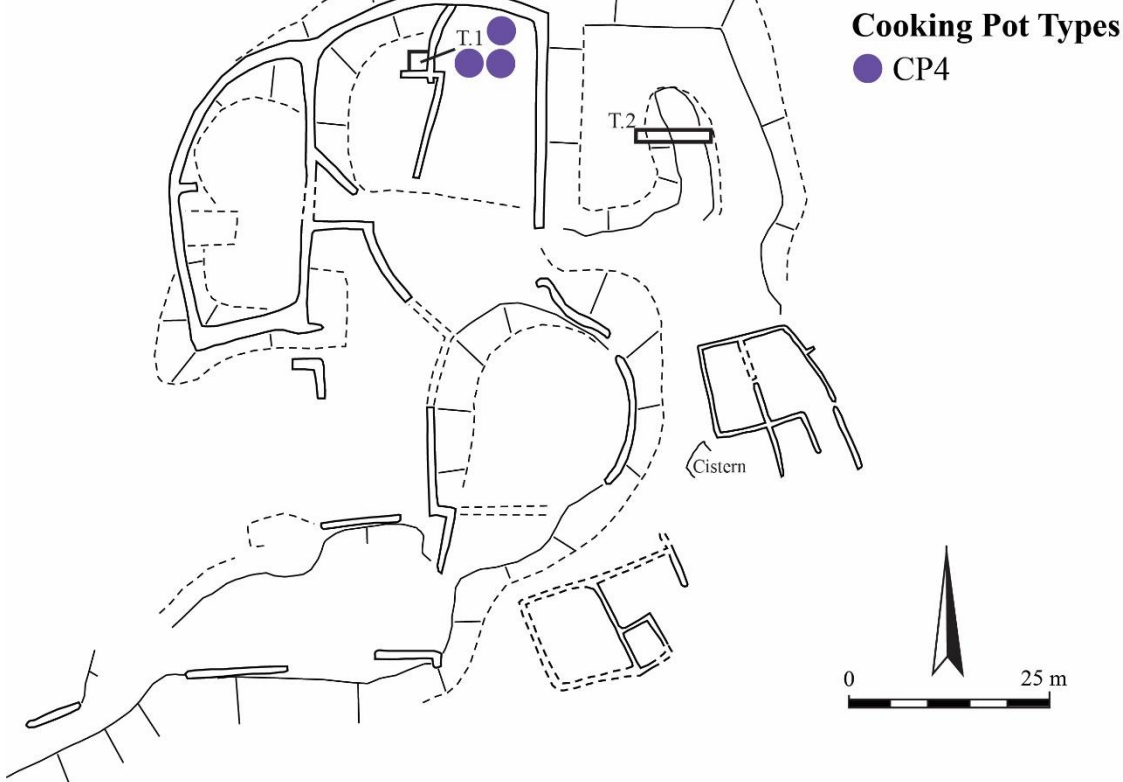


Plate 12. Cooking pot forms attested at Khirbet al-Megheitah, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Horvat 'Uza (Stratum III)

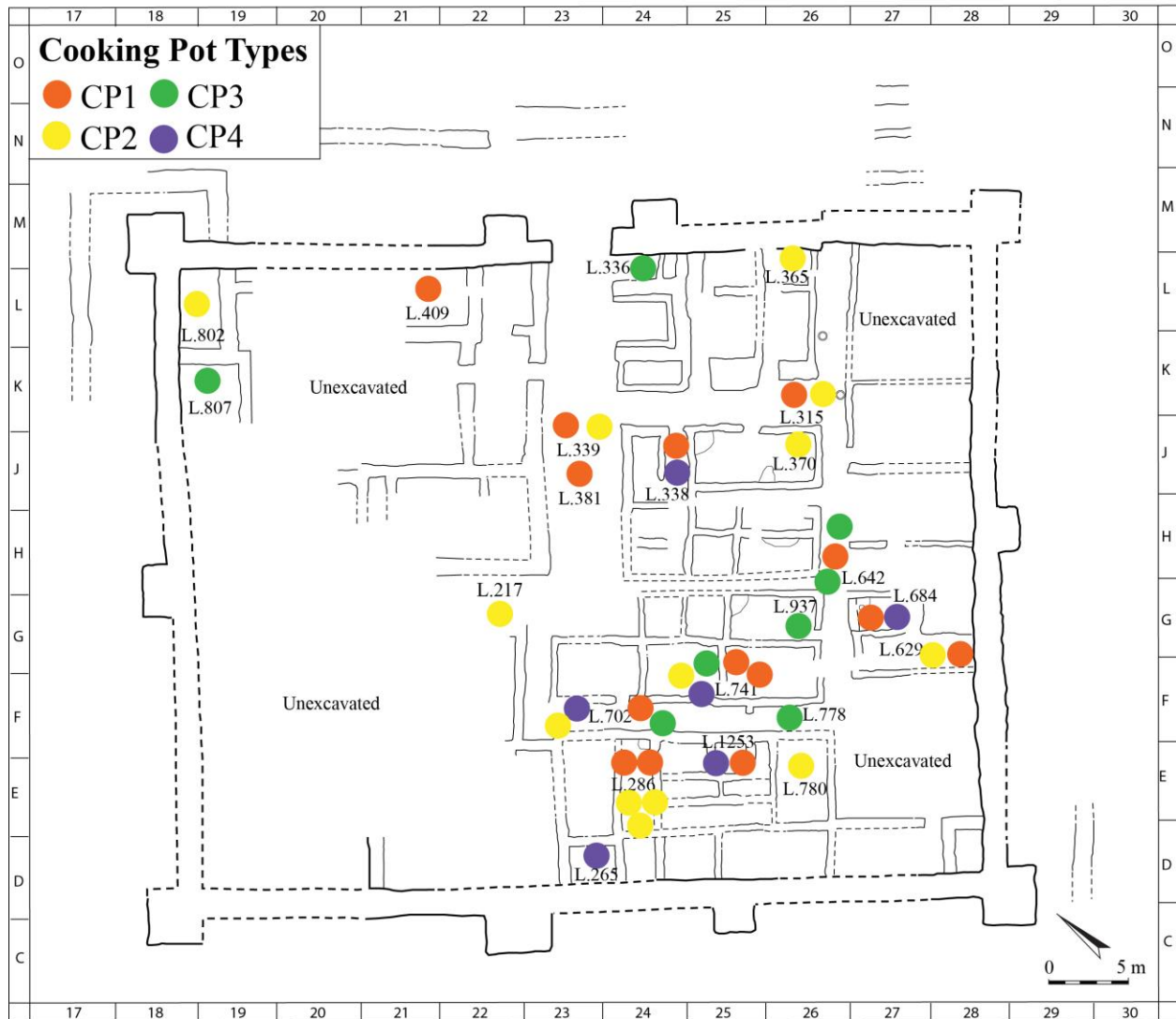


Plate 13. Cooking pot forms attested at Horvat 'Uza, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Horvat 'Uza (Stratum III)

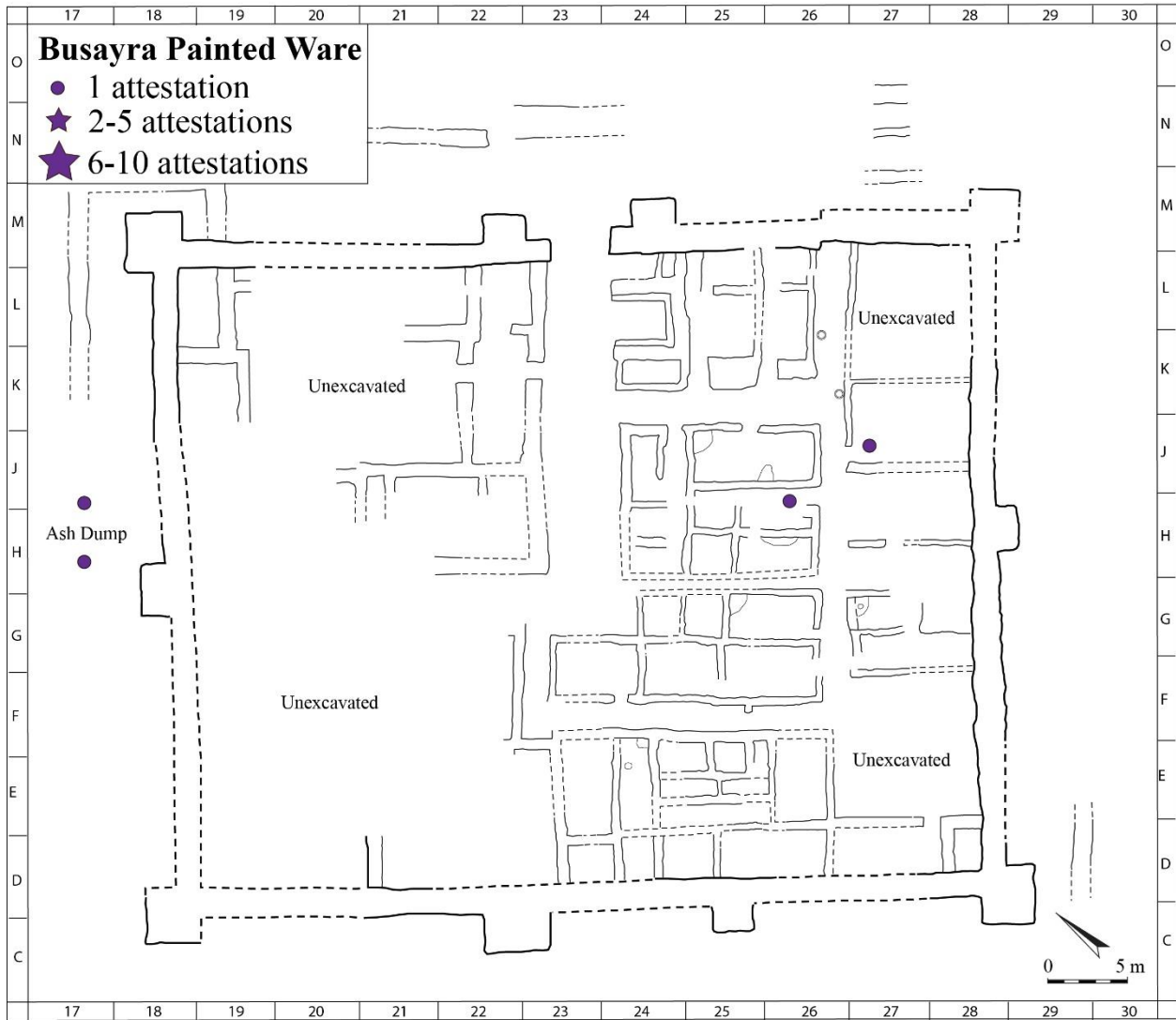


Plate 14. Busayra Painted Ware vessels at Horvat 'Uza, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Horvat Radum

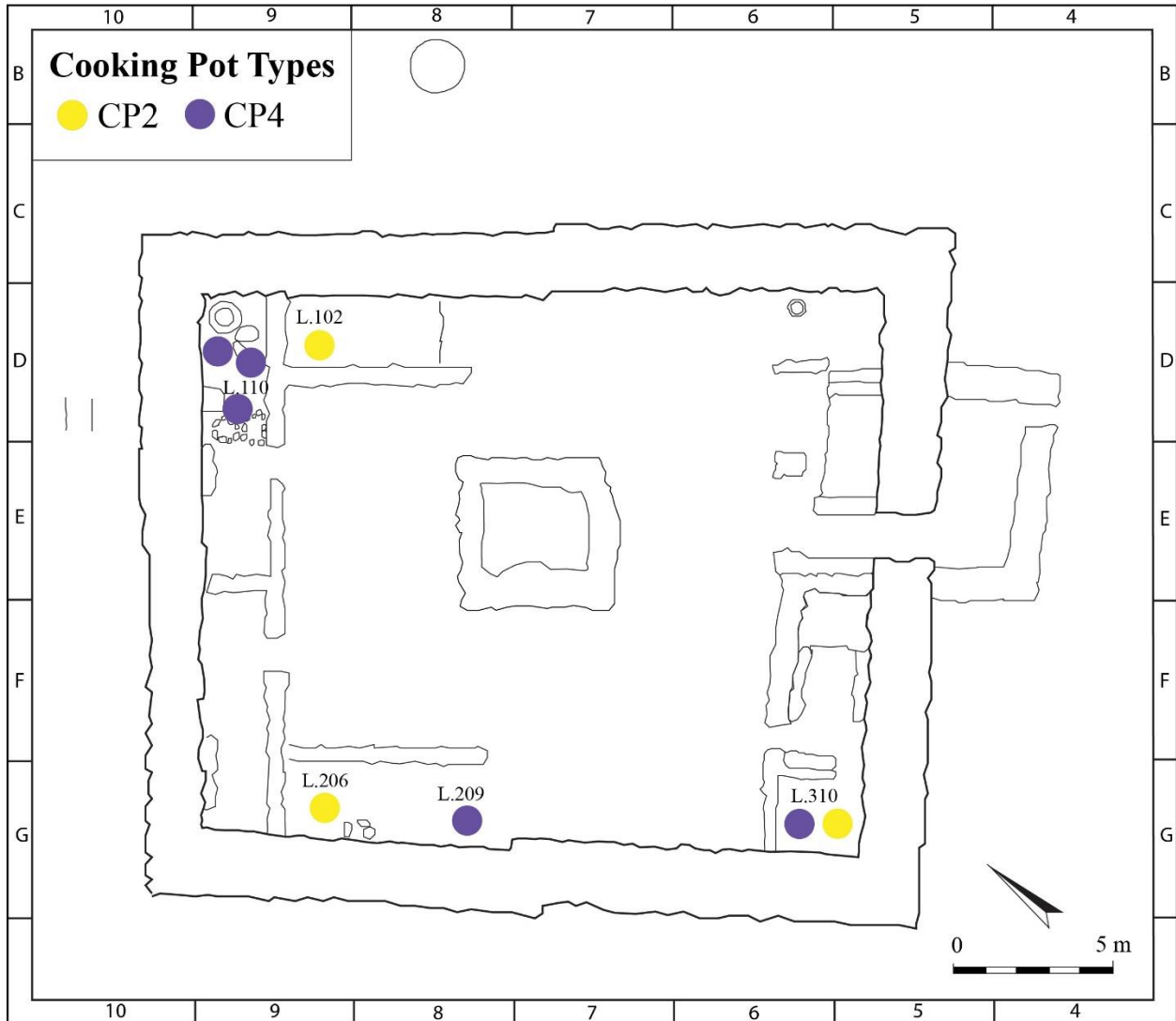
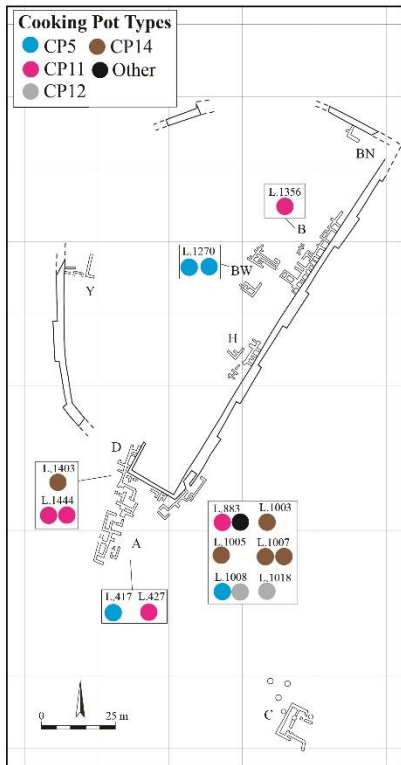
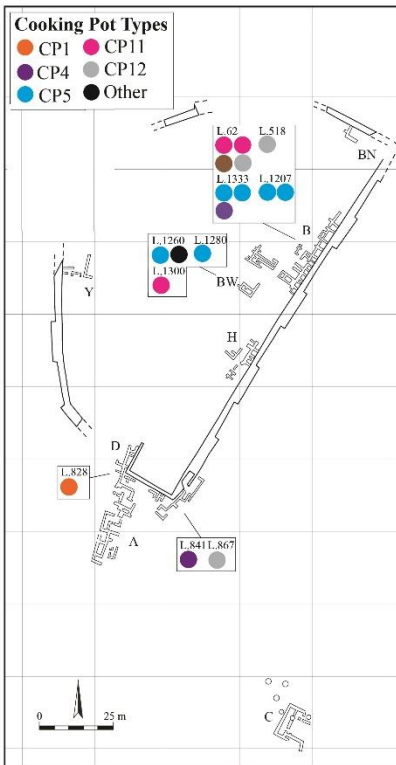


Plate 15. Cooking pot forms attested at Horvat Radum, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel 'Aroer (Stratum IV)



Tel 'Aroer (Stratum III)



Tel 'Aroer (Mixed Strata)

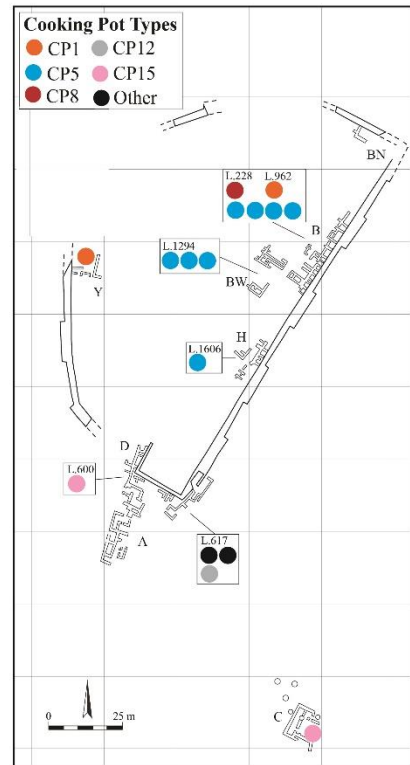
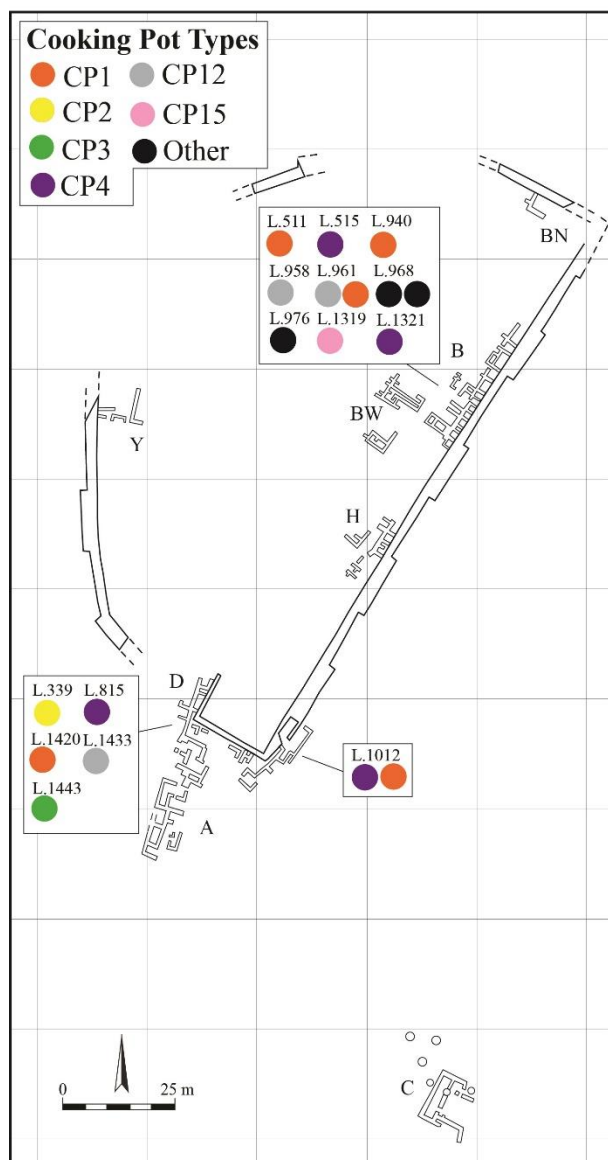


Plate 16. Cooking pot forms attested at Tel 'Aroer Stratum IV–III, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel 'Aroer (Stratum IIa)



Tel 'Aroer (Stratum IIb)

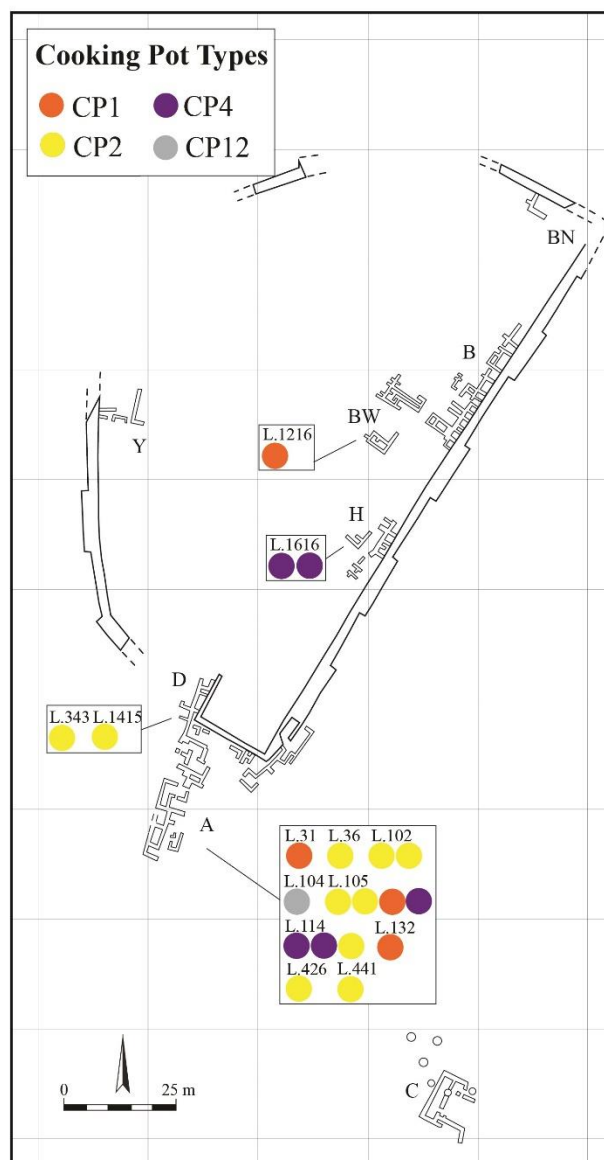
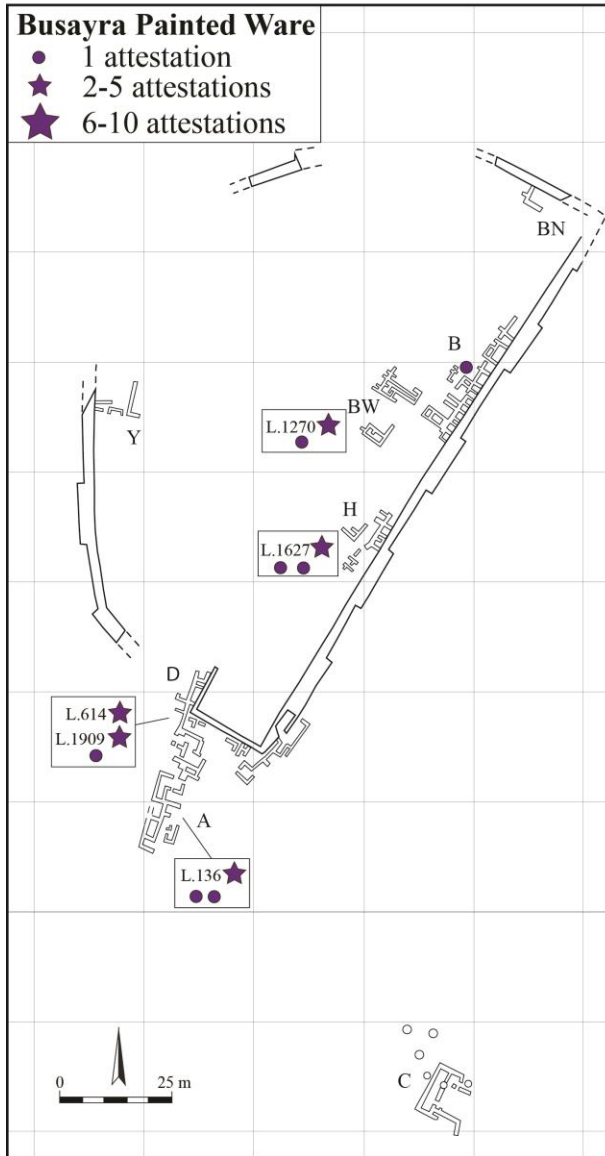


Plate 17. Cooking pot forms attested at Tel 'Aroer Stratum IIb–IIa, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel 'Aroer (strata IV-III)



Tel 'Aroer (Stratum II)

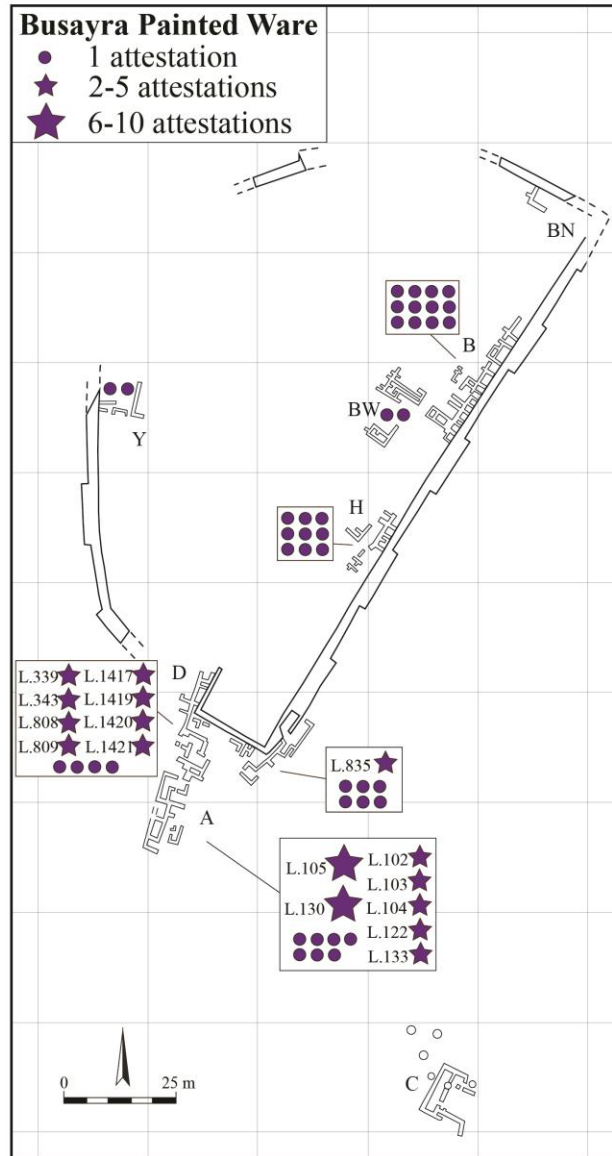


Plate 18. Busayra Painted Ware vessels at Tel 'Aroer, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel Arad (Stratum VIII)

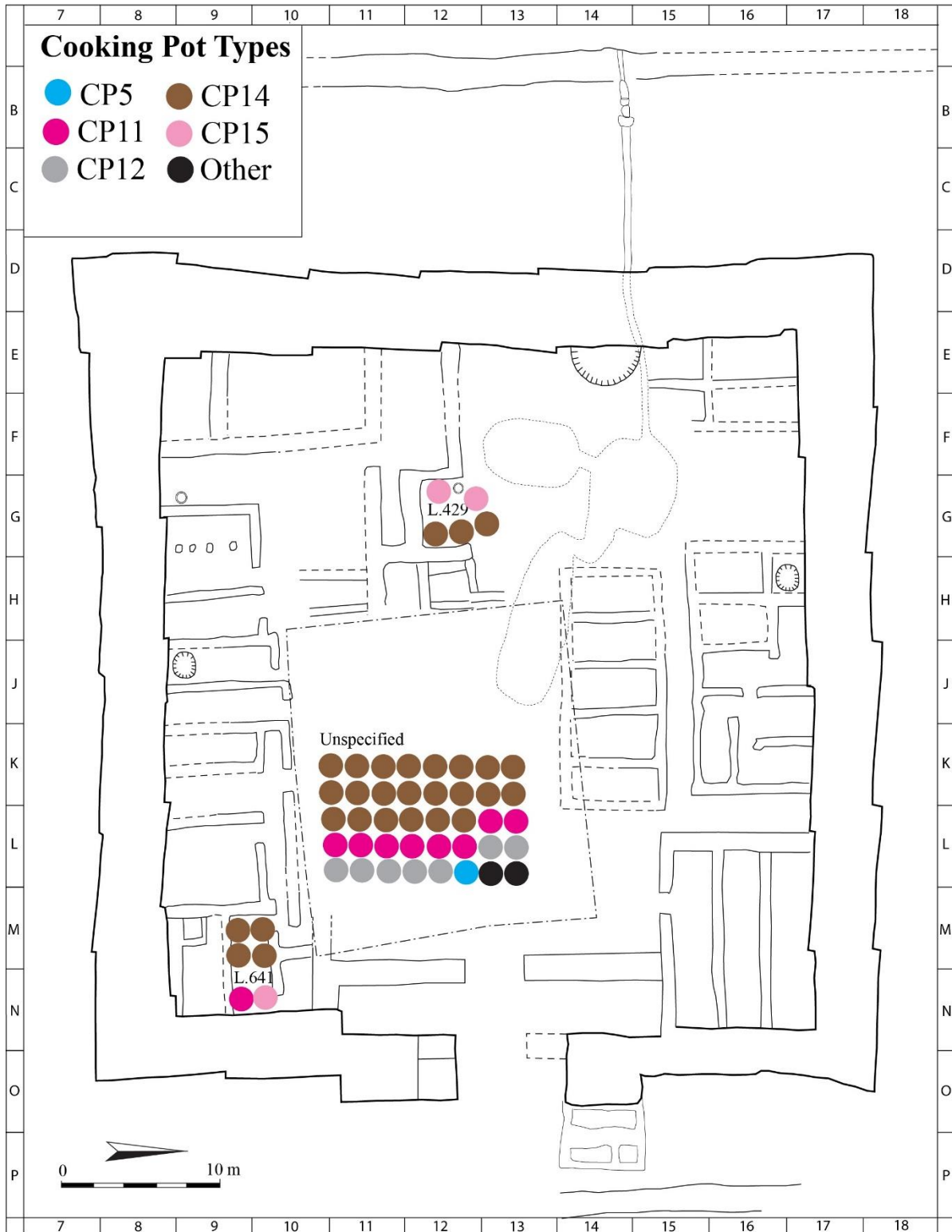


Plate 19. Cooking pot forms attested at Tel Arad Stratum VIII, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel Arad (Stratum VII)



Plate 20. Cooking pot forms attested at Tel Arad Stratum VII, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel Arad (Stratum VI)

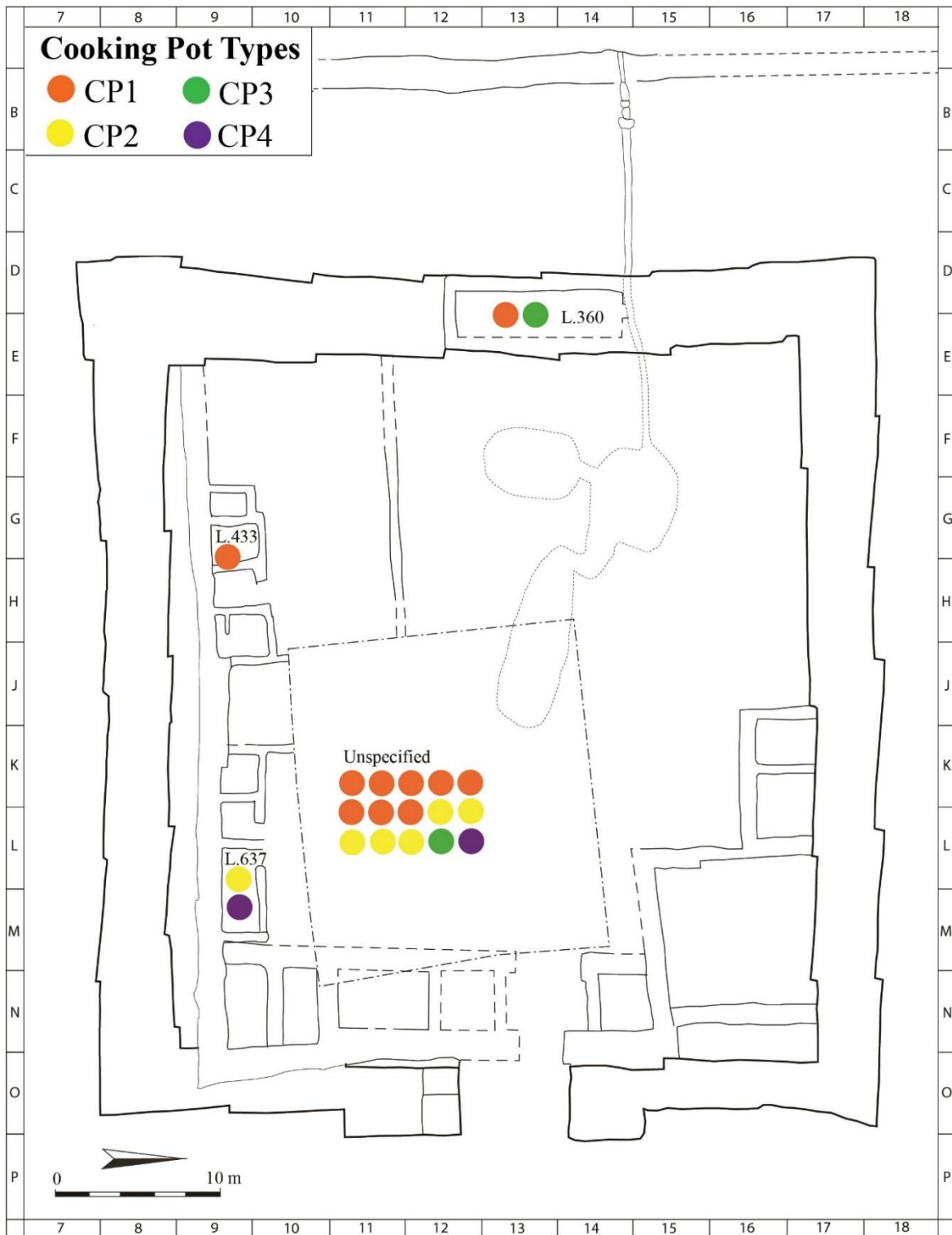


Plate 21. Cooking pot forms attested at Tel Arad Stratum VI, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Horvat Tov

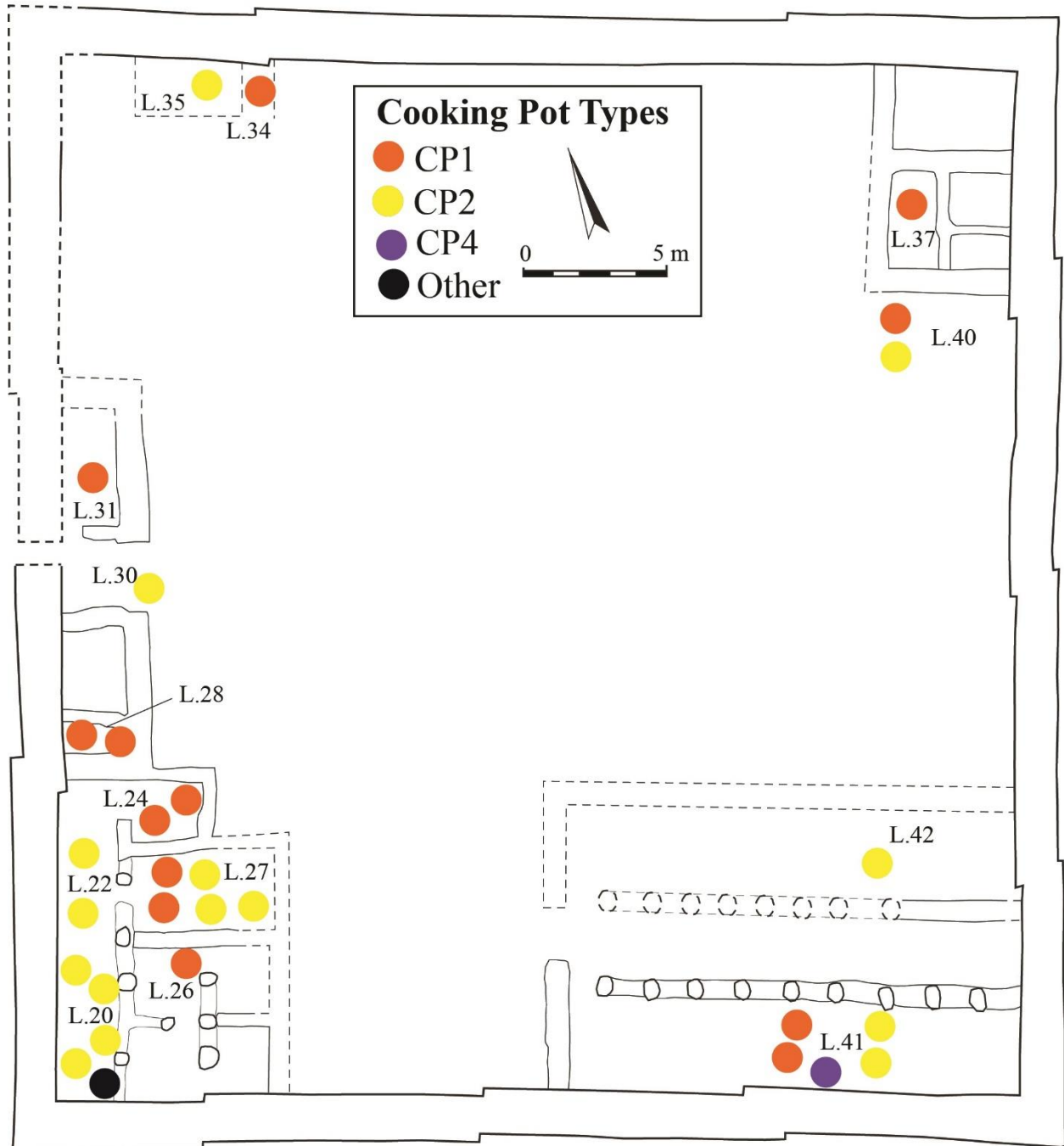


Plate 22. Cooking pot forms attested at Horvat Tov, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Horvat Qitmit

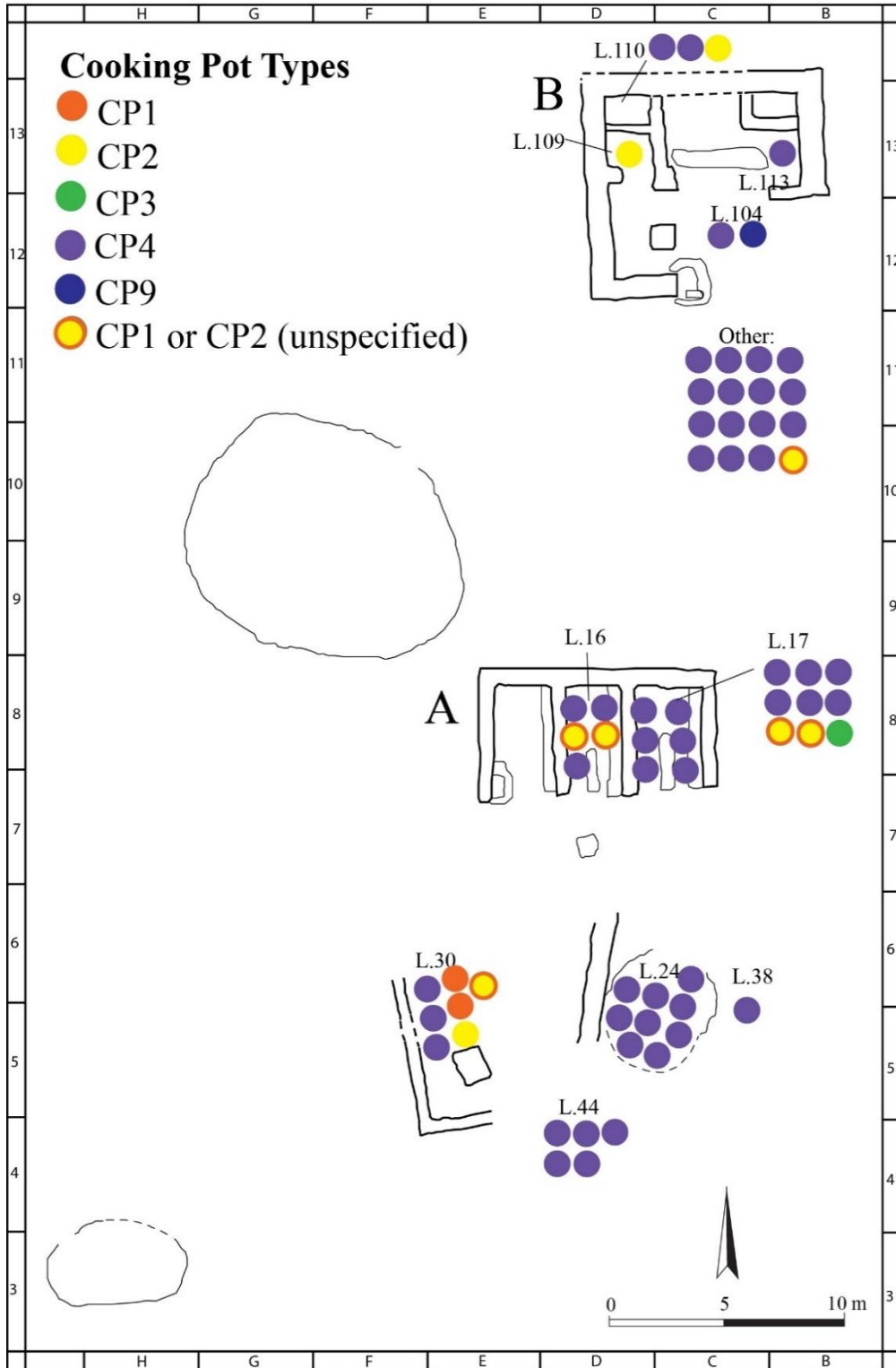


Plate 23. Cooking pot forms attested at Horvat Qitmit, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Horvat Qitmit

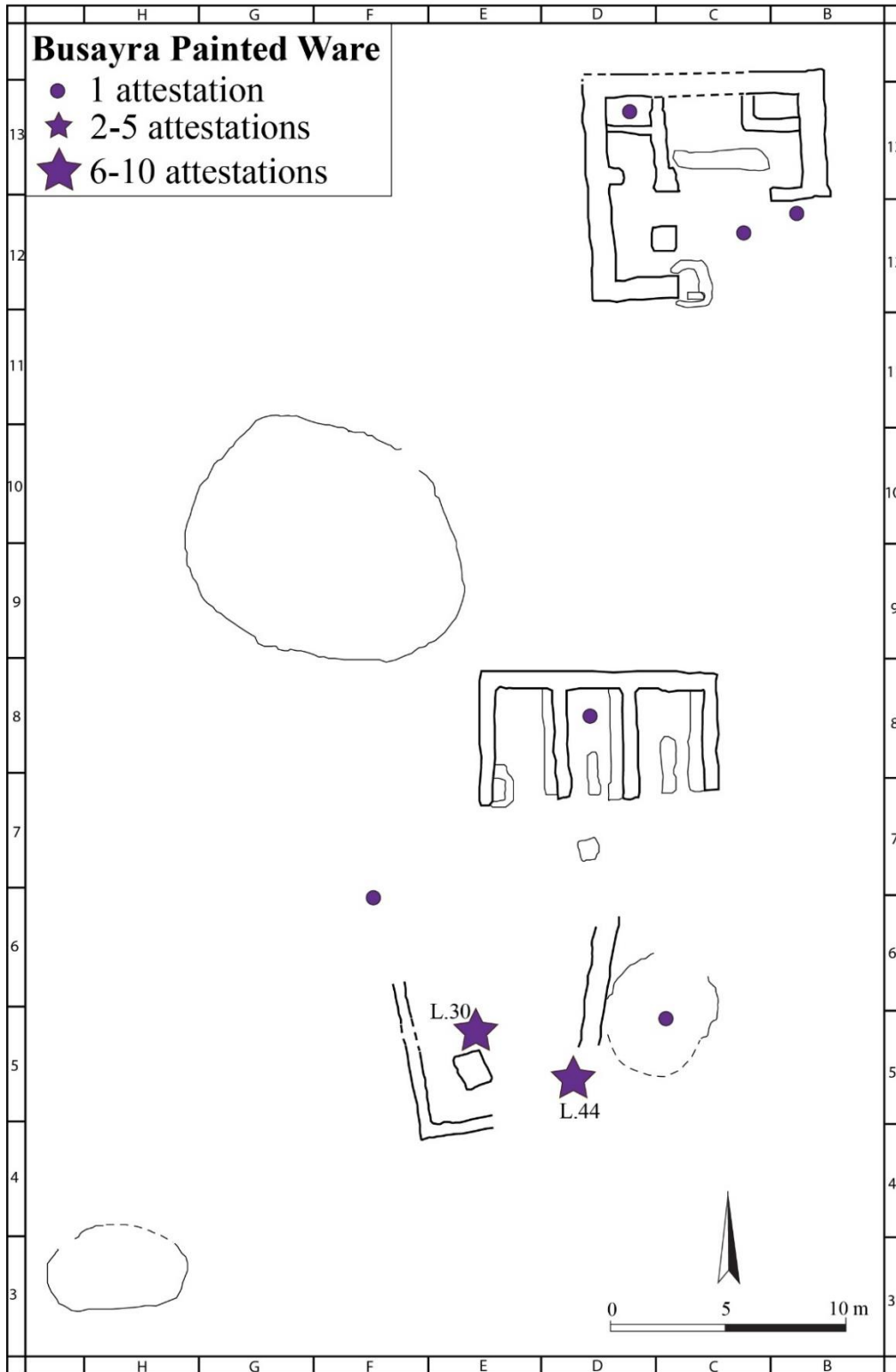


Plate 24. Busayra Painted Ware vessels at Horvat Qitmit, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel Malhata (strata IV-III, mixed)

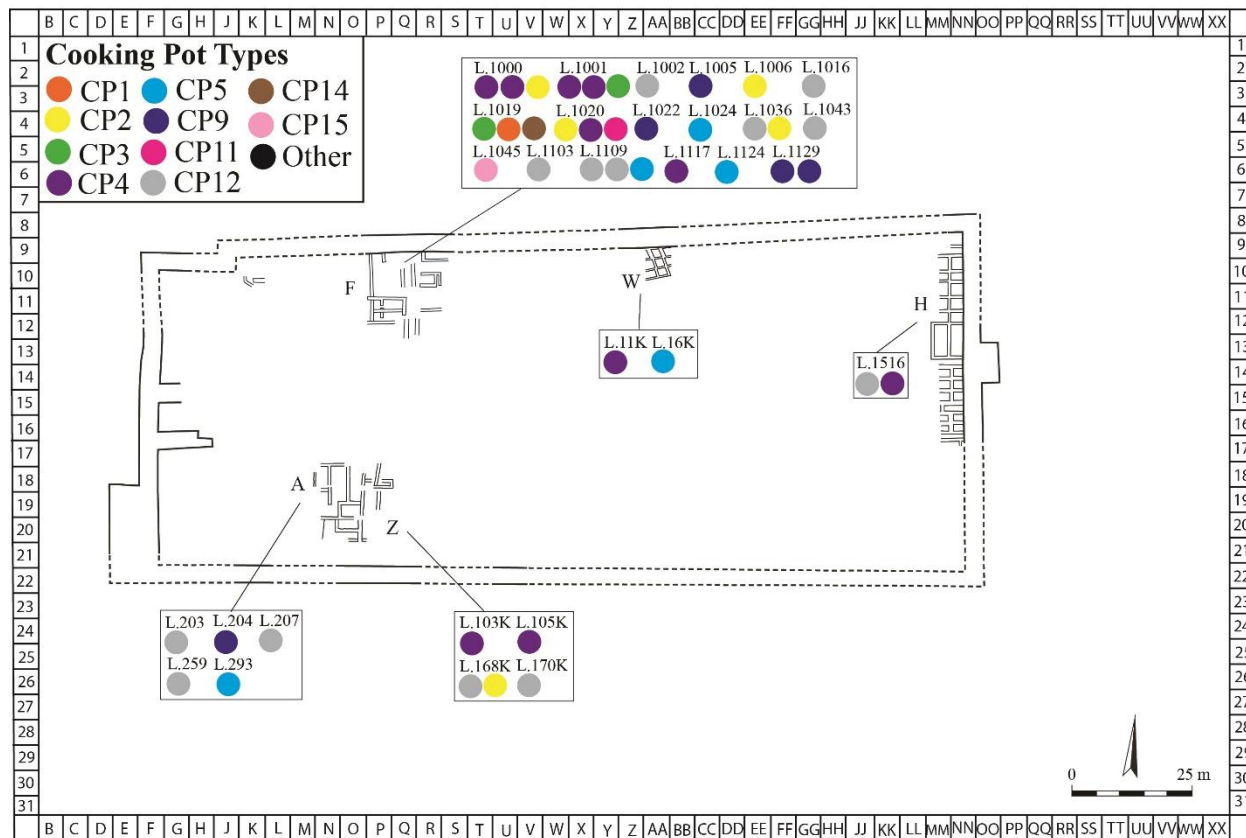


Plate 26. Cooking pot forms attested at Tel Malhata Stratum IV–III, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel Malhata (Stratum III)

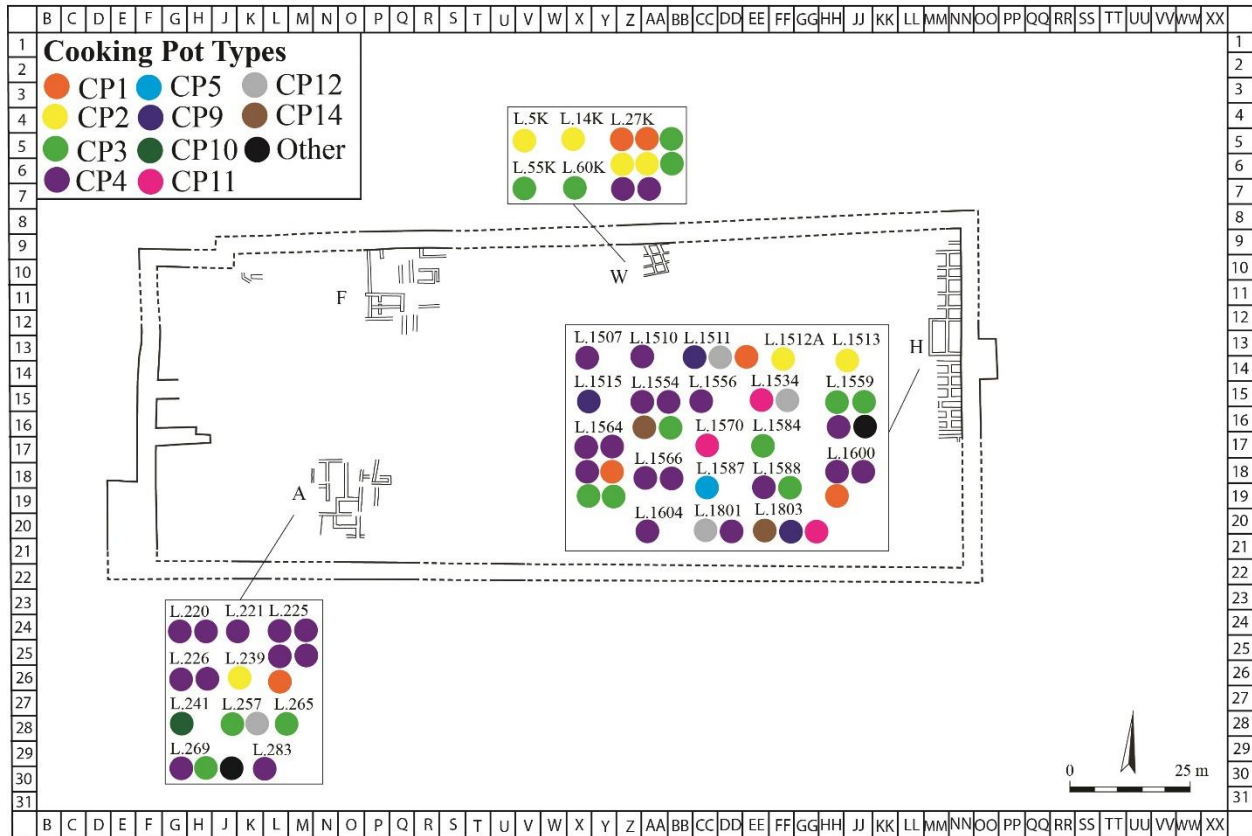


Plate 27. Cooking pot forms attested at Tel Malhata Stratum III, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel Malhata, Area A (Stratum IV)

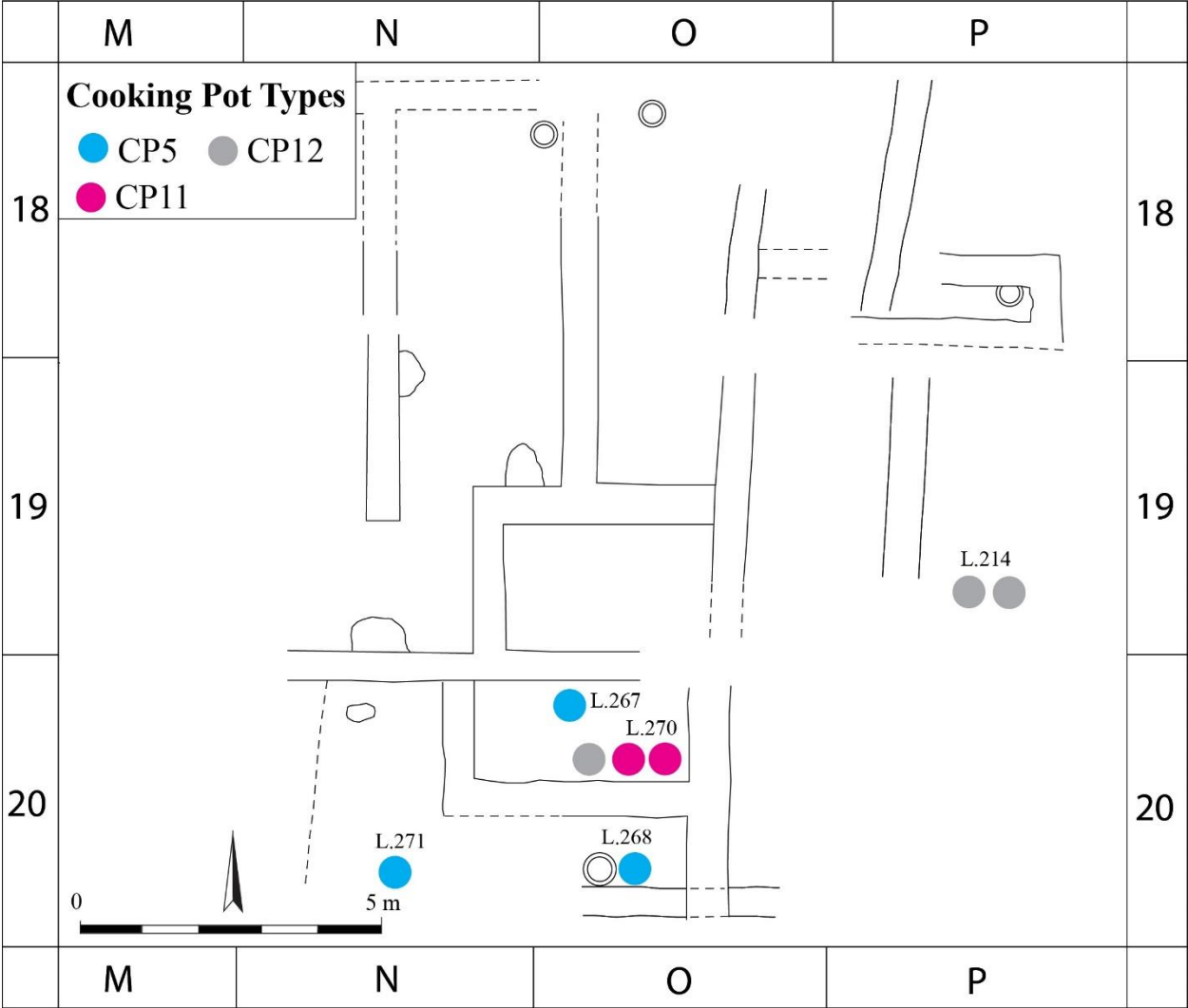


Plate 28. Cooking pot forms attested at Tel Malhata, Area A, Stratum IV, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel Malhata, Area A (strata IV–III, mixed)

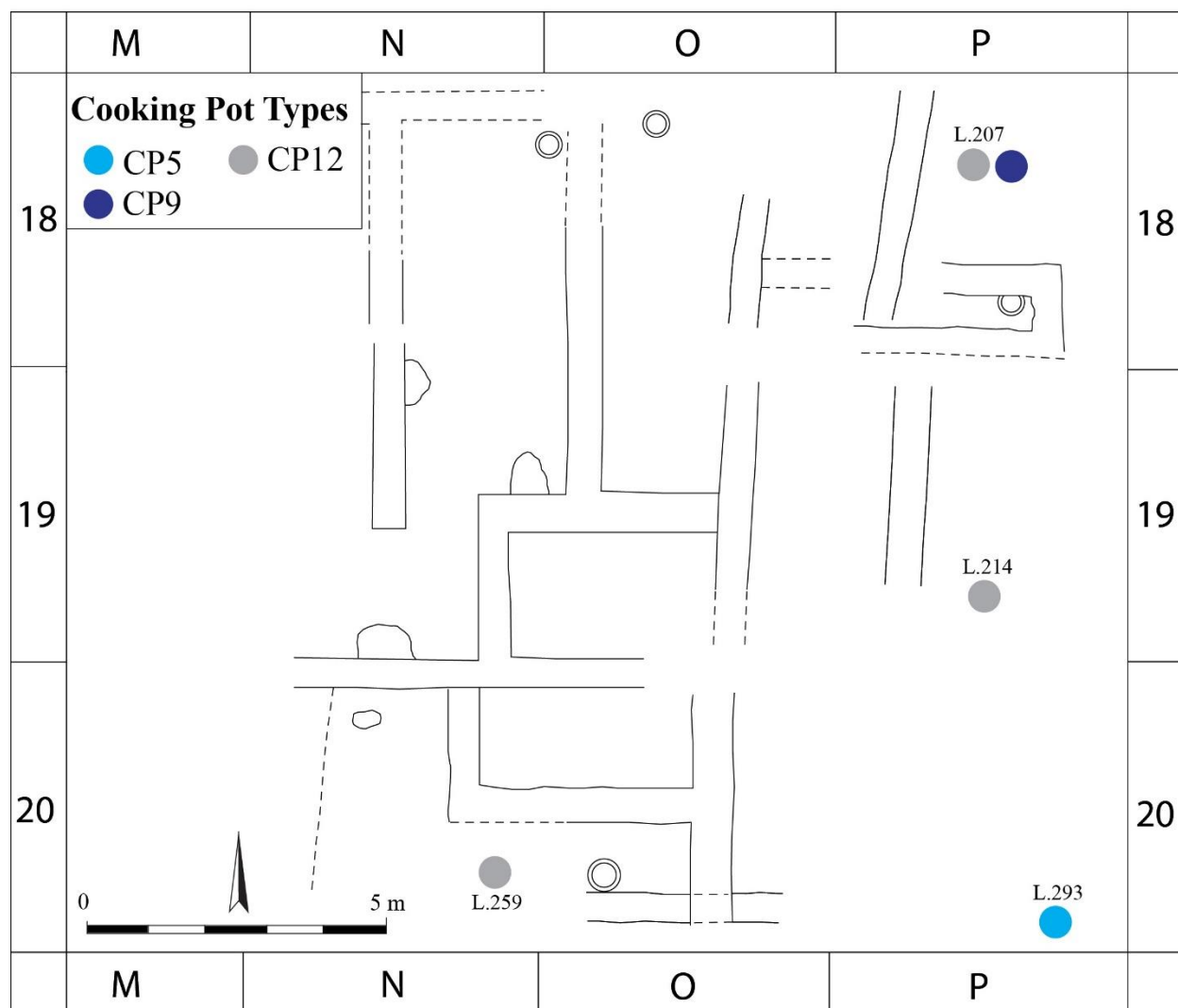


Plate 29. Cooking pot forms attested at Tel Malhata, Area A, Stratum IV–III, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel Malhata, Area A (Stratum IIIA)

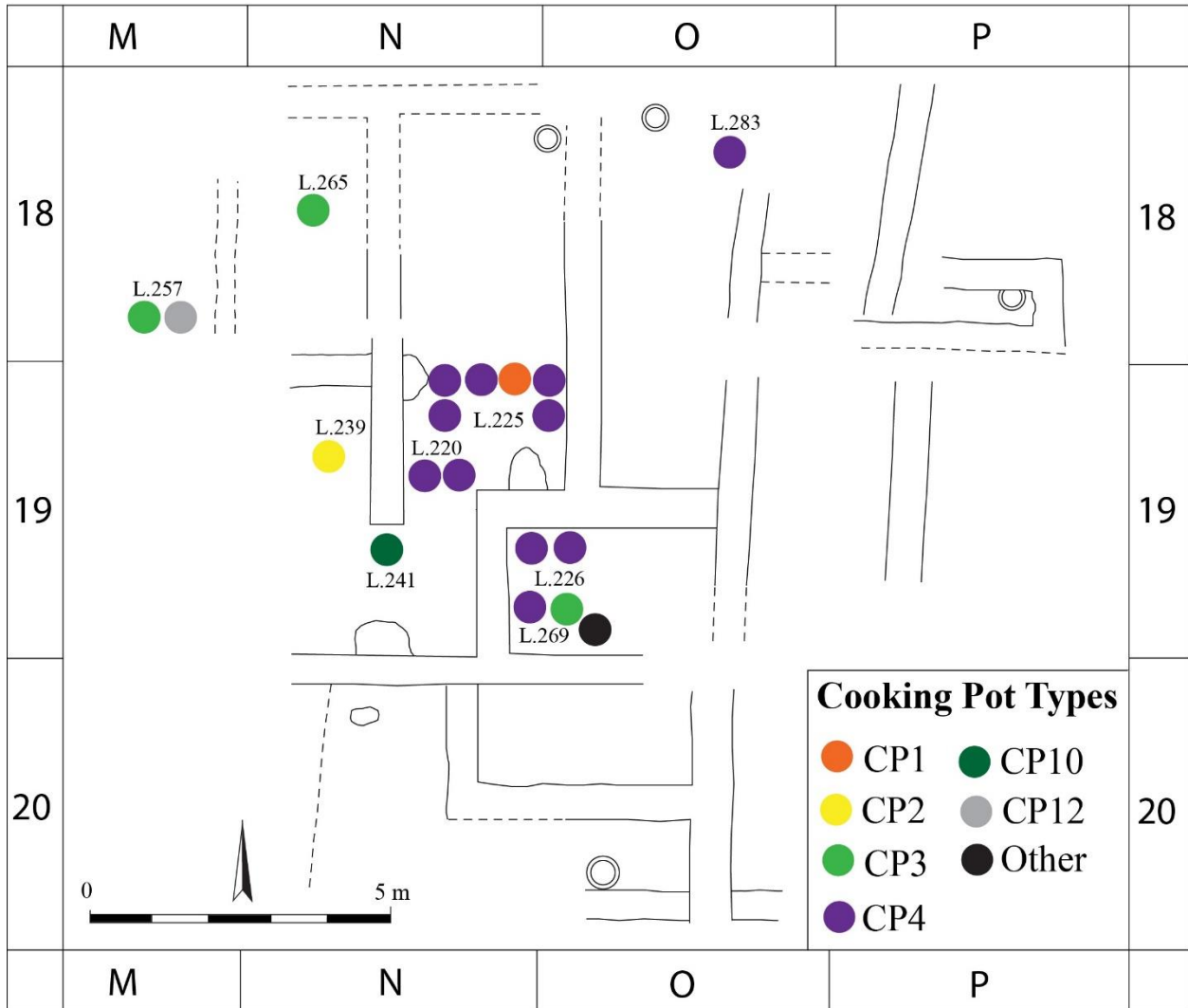


Plate 30. Cooking pot forms attested at Tel Malhata, Area A, Stratum III, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel Malhata, Area F (Stratum IVB)

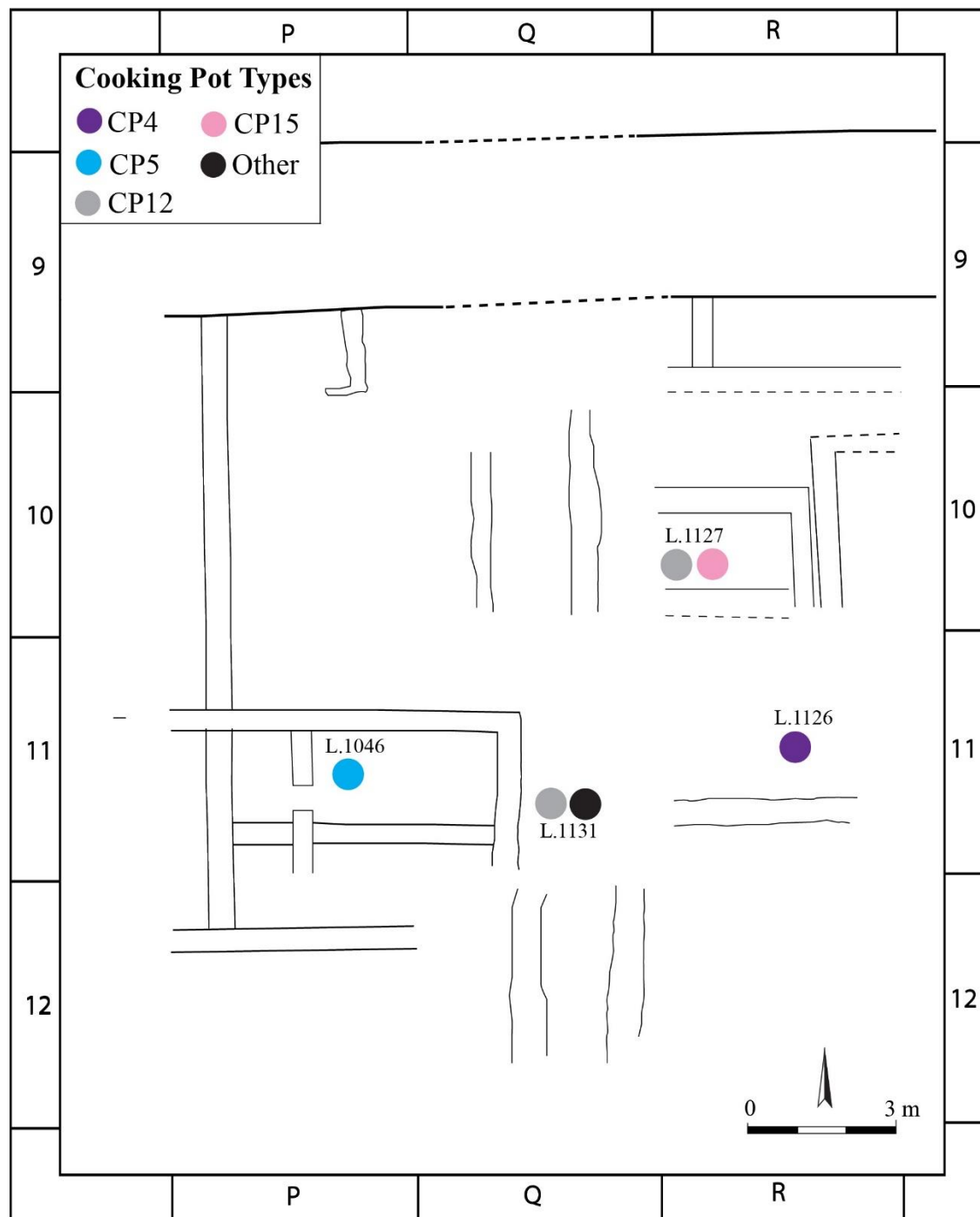


Plate 31. Cooking pot forms attested at Tel Malhata, Area F, Stratum IVB, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel Malhata, Area F (Stratum IVA)

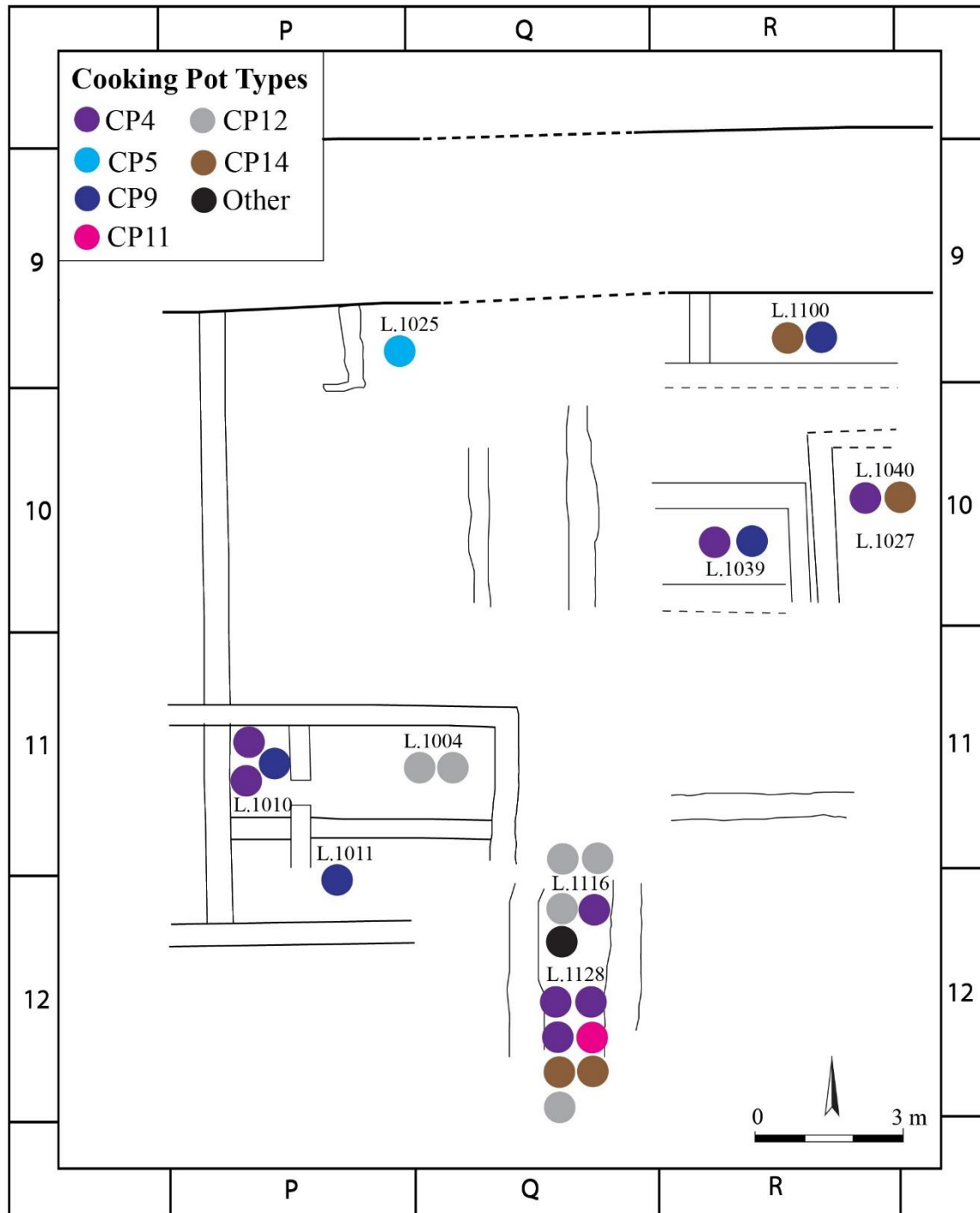


Plate 32. Cooking pot forms attested at Tel Malhata, Area F, Stratum IVA, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel Malhata, Area F (strata IV–III, mixed)

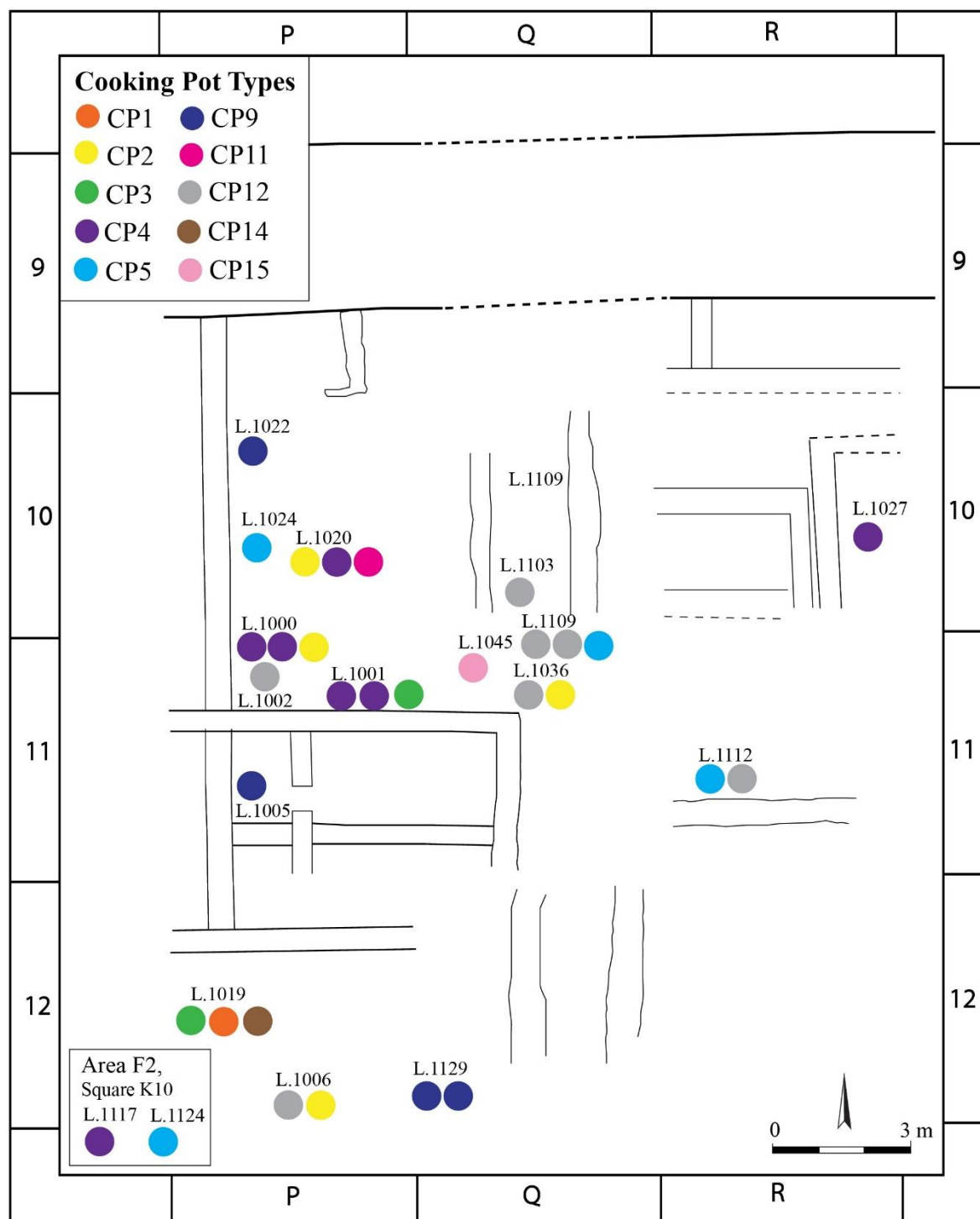


Plate 33. Cooking pot forms attested at Tel Malhata, Area F, Stratum IV–III, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel Malhata, Area H (Stratum IV)

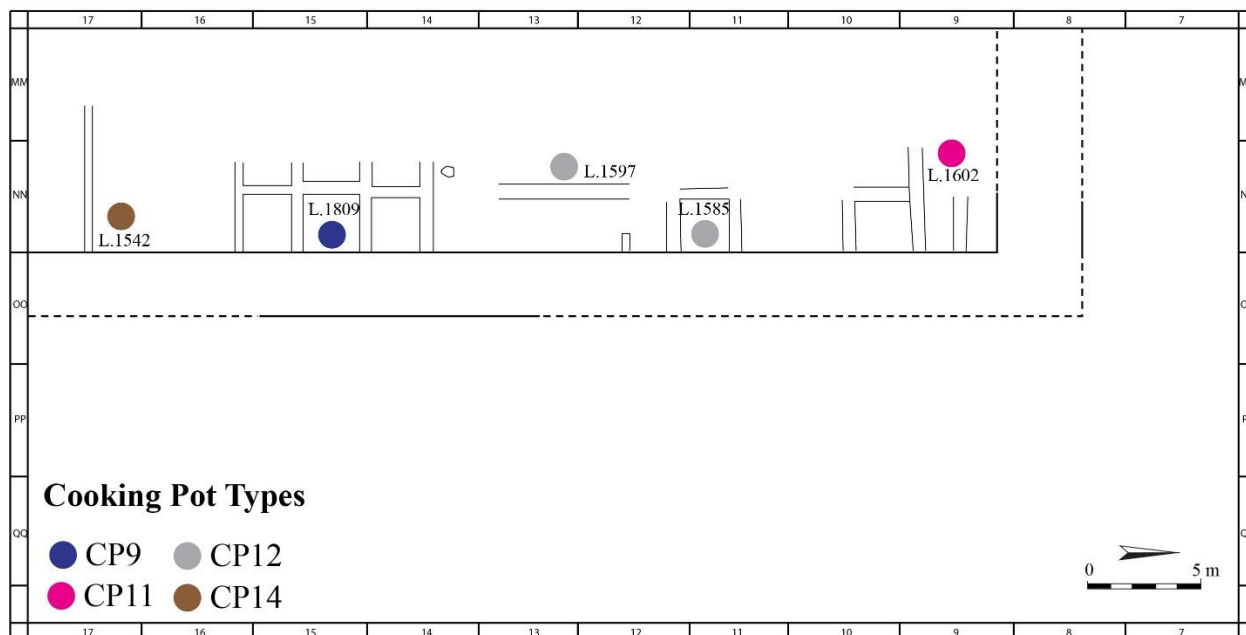


Plate 34. Cooking pot forms attested at Tel Malhata, Area H, Stratum IV, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel Malhata, Area H (Stratum IIIB)



Plate 35. Cooking pot forms attested at Tel Malhata, Area H, Stratum IIIB, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel Malhata, Area H (Stratum IIIA)

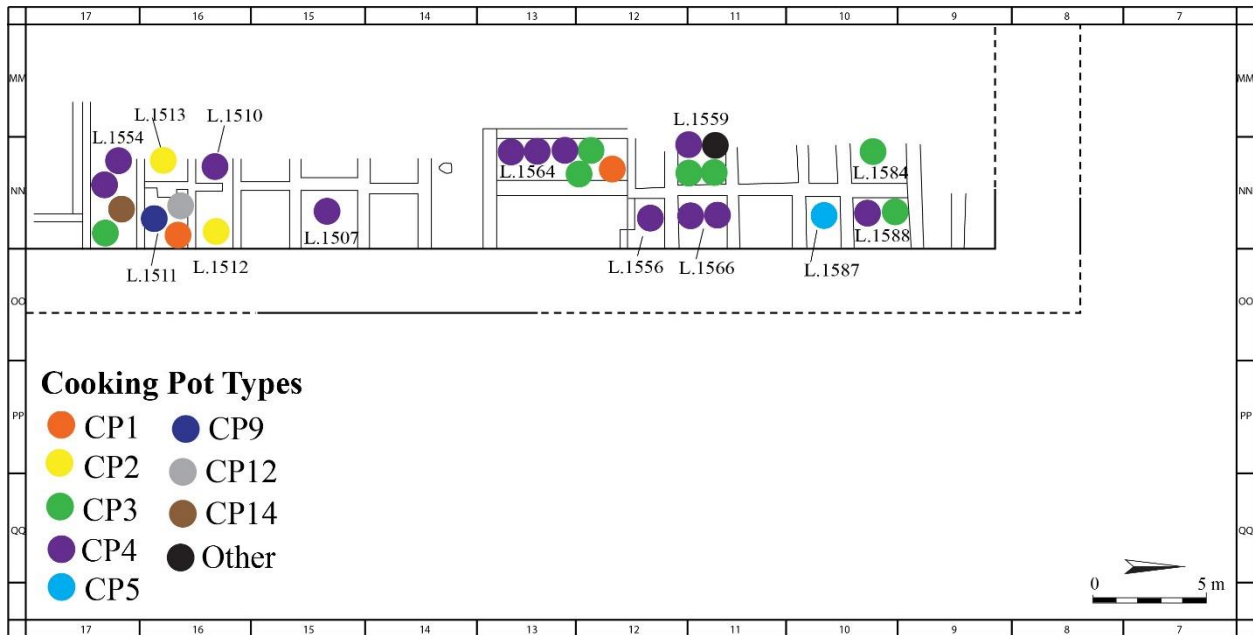
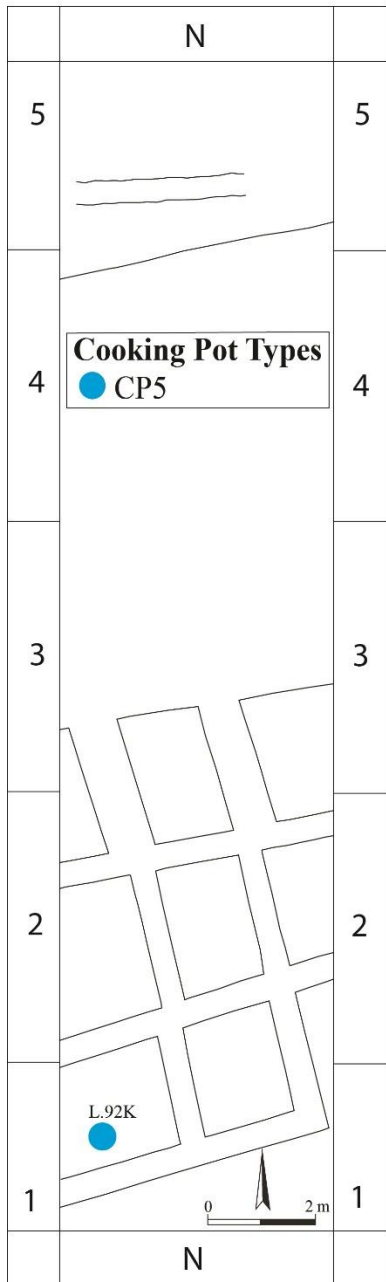
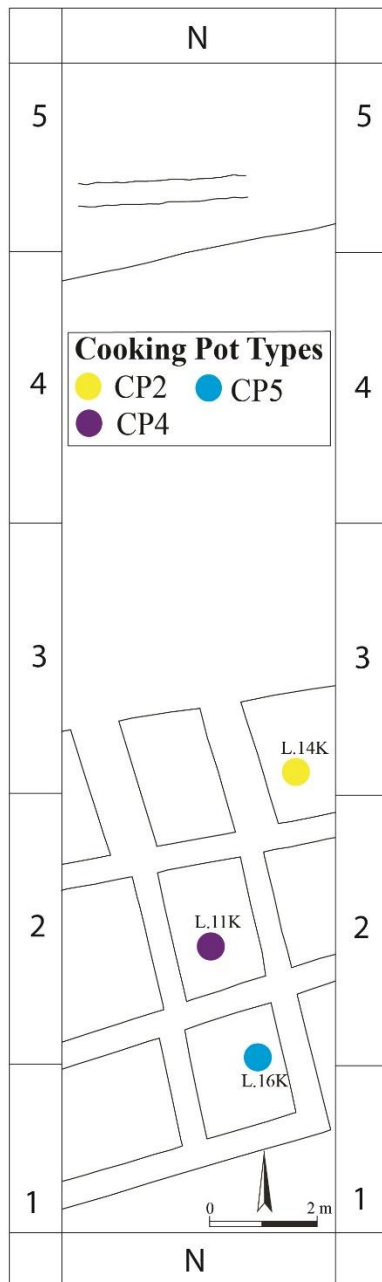


Plate 36. Cooking pot forms attested at Tel Malhata, Area H, Stratum IIIA, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel Malhata, Section W
(Stratum IV)



Tel Malhata, Section W
(Stratum IIIB)



Tel Malhata, Section W
(Stratum IIIA)

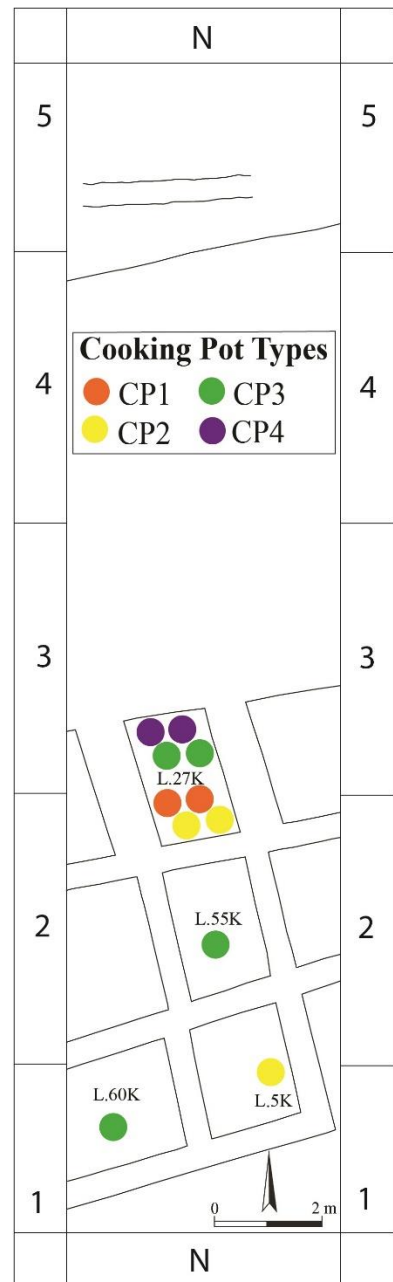


Plate 37. Cooking pot forms attested at Tel Malhata, Section W, visualized spatially.
(Figure by author)

Tel Malhata (Stratum IV)

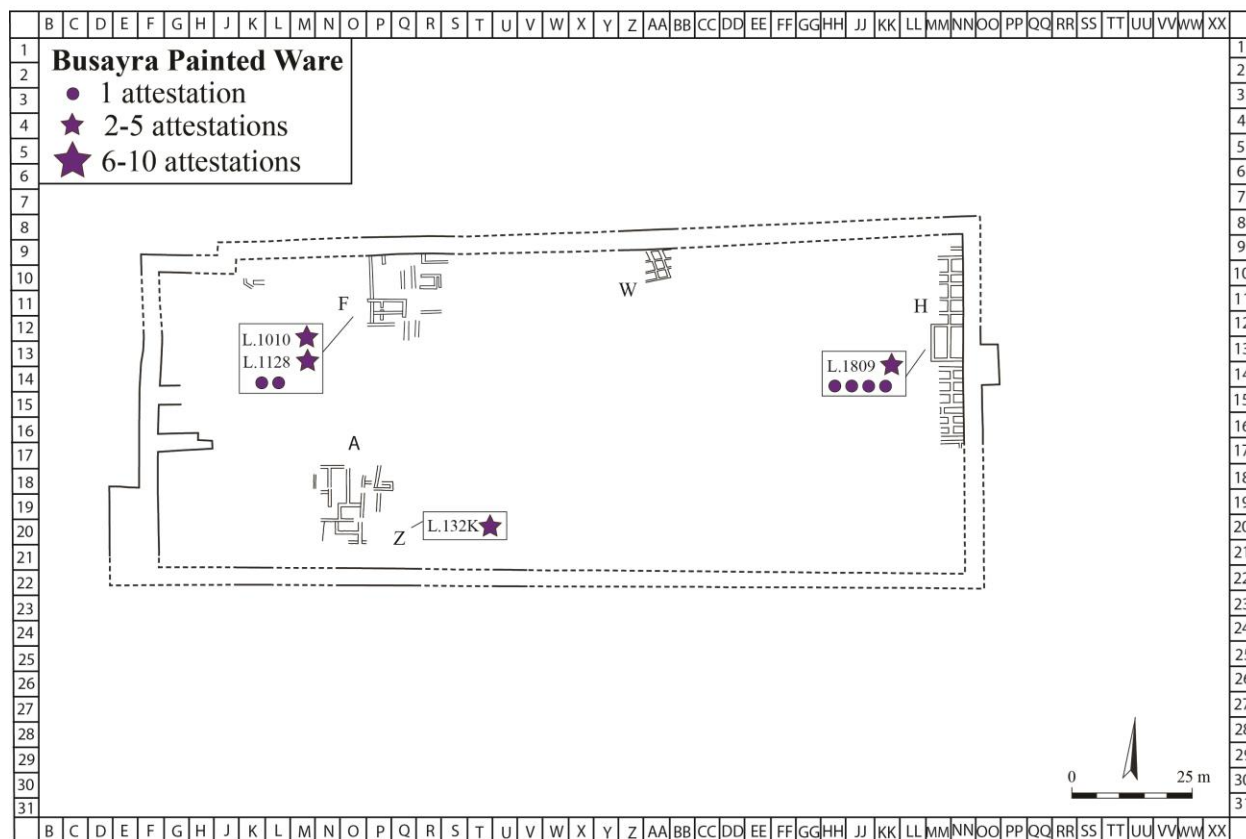


Plate 38. Busayra Painted Ware vessels at Tel Malhata, Stratum IV, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel Malhata (strata IV–III, mixed)

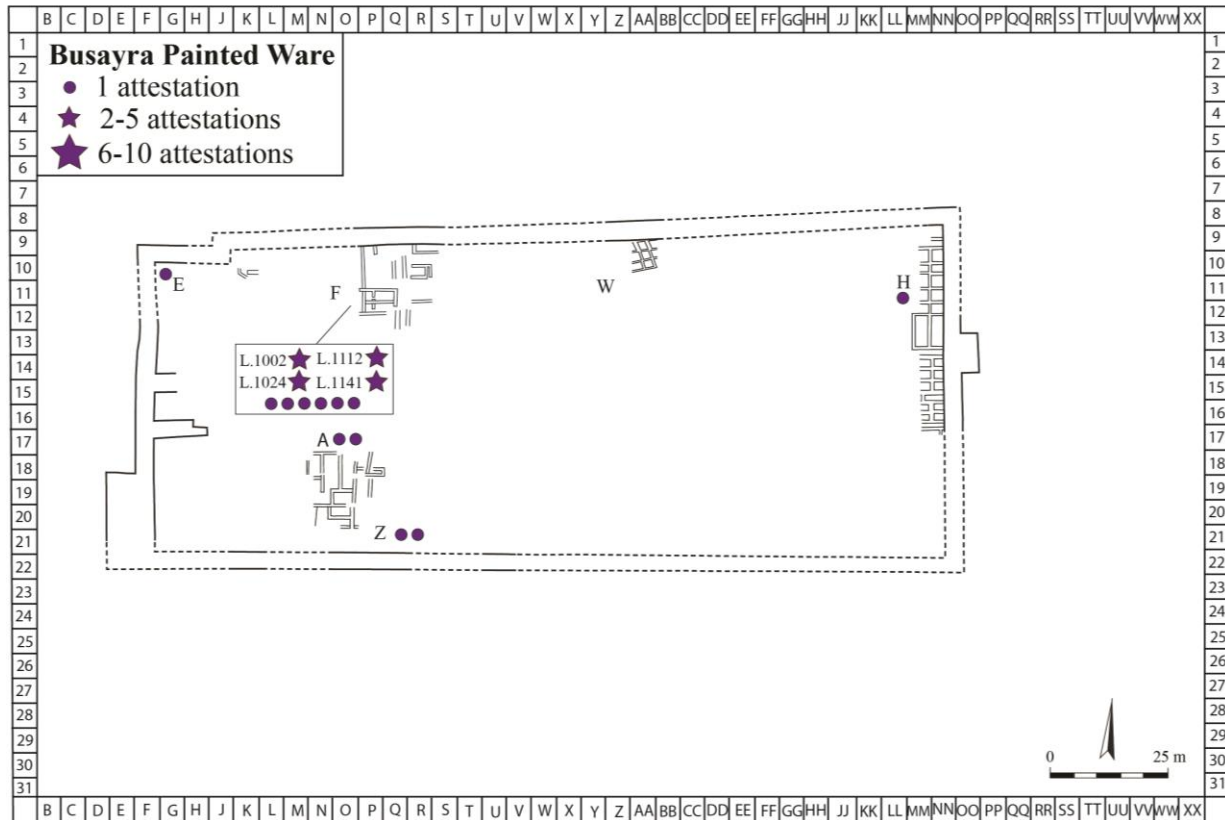


Plate 39. Busayra Painted Ware vessels at Tel Malhata, Stratum IV–III, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel Malhata (Stratum III)

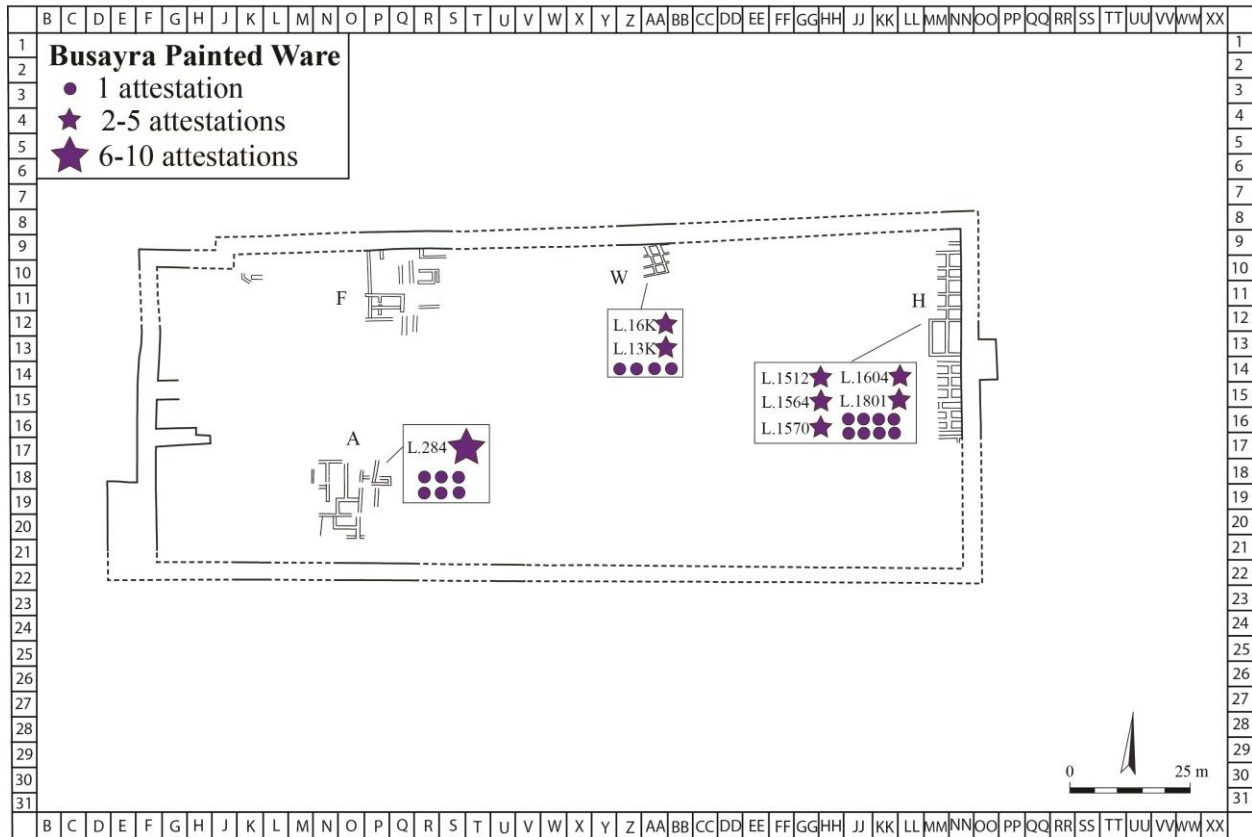


Plate 40. Busayra Painted Ware vessels at Tel Malhata, Stratum III, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel 'Ira (Stratum VII)

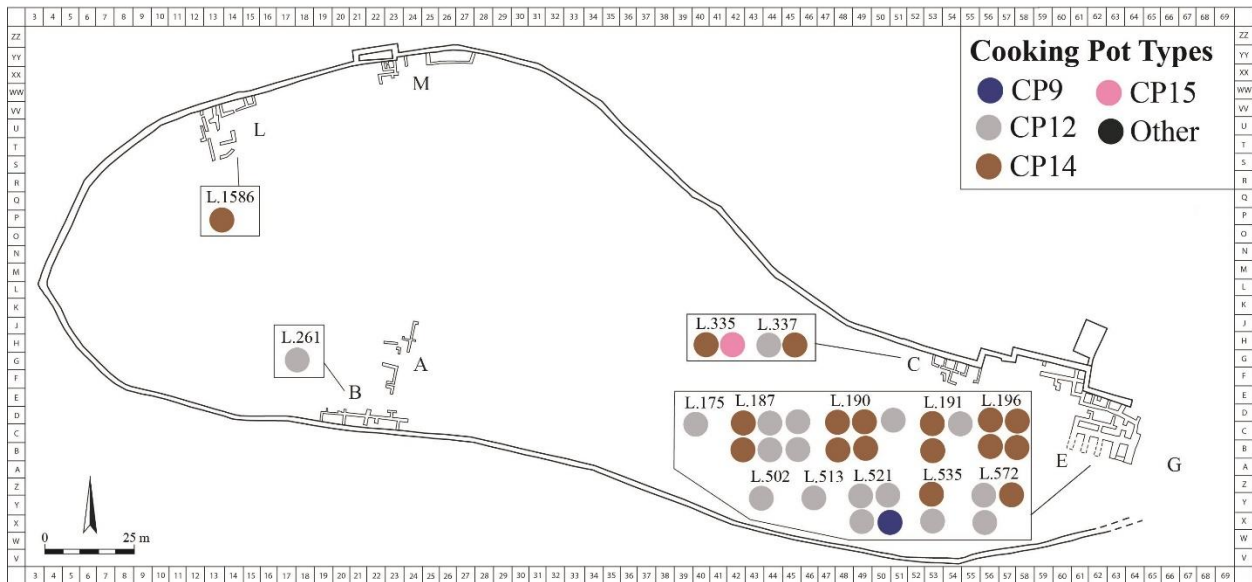


Plate 41. Cooking pot forms attested at Tel 'Ira Stratum VII, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel 'Ira (strata VII-VI, mixed)

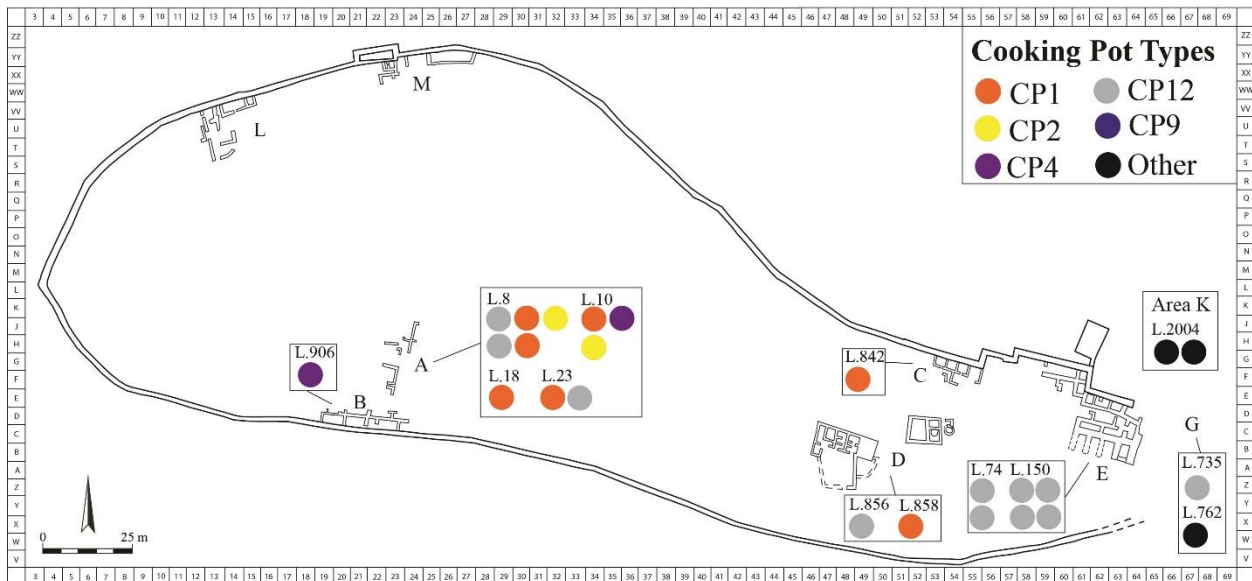


Plate 42. Cooking pot forms attested at Tel 'Ira Stratum VII-VI, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel 'Ira (Stratum VI)

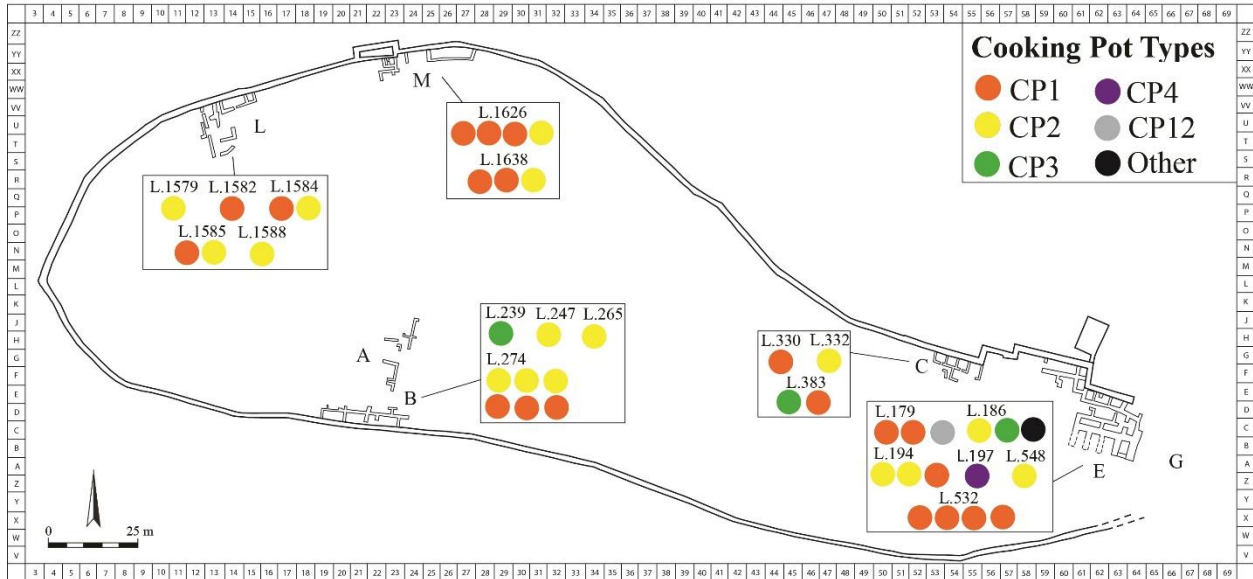


Plate 43. Cooking pot forms attested at Tel 'Ira Stratum VI, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Tel 'Ira (Stratum VII and VII-VI, mixed)

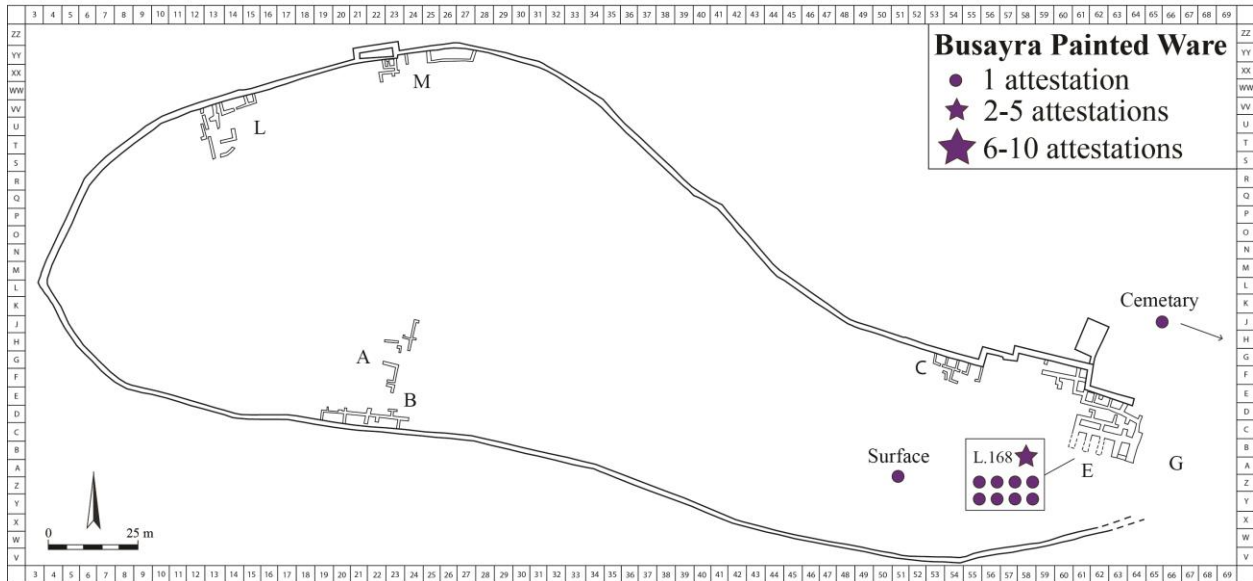
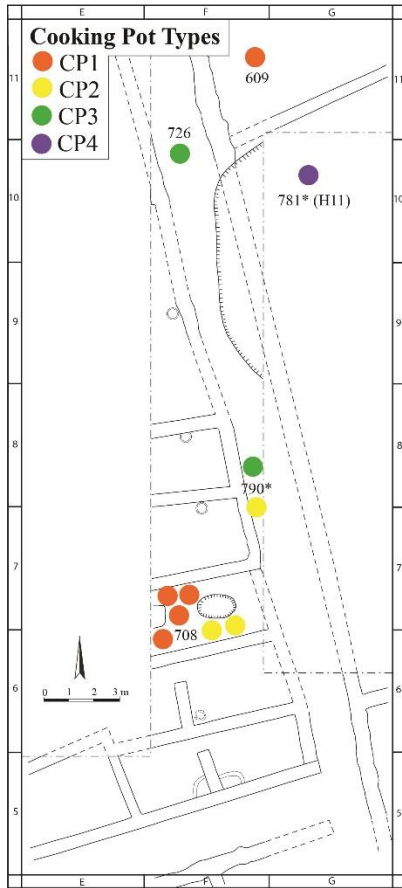
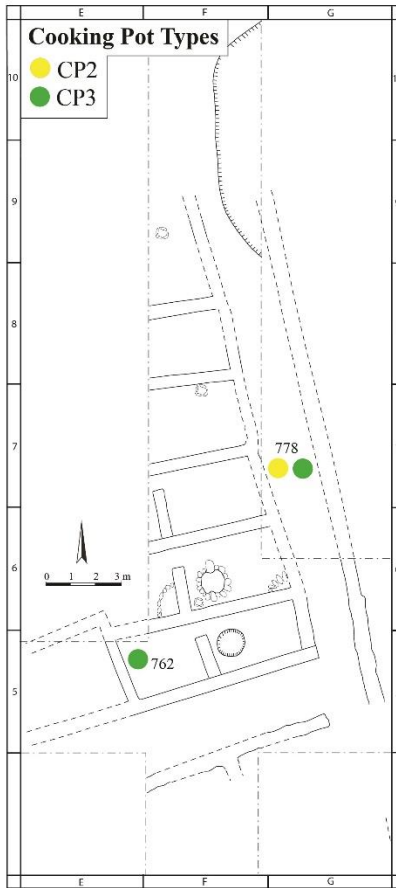


Plate 44. Busayra Painted Ware vessels at Tel 'Ira, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

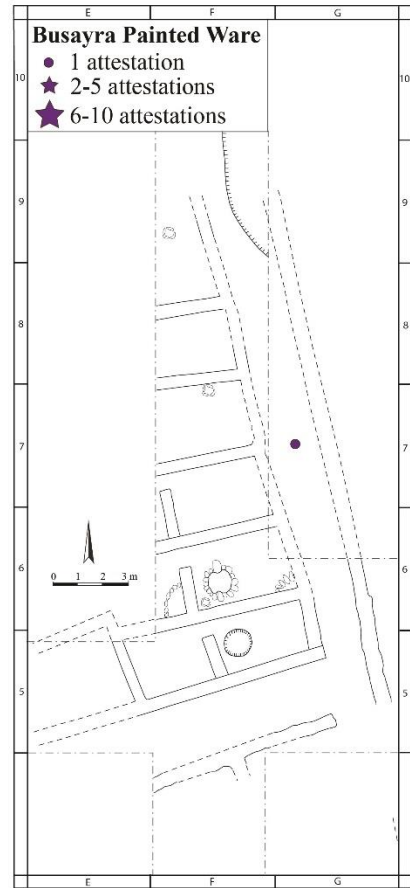
Tel Masos, Area G (Phase II)



Tel Masos, Area G (Phase III)



Tel Masos, Area G (Phase III)



* 790 - present in phases I-III
 * 781 - Square H11; phase unspecified

Plate 45. Cooking pot forms and Busayra Painted Ware attested at Tel Masos, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

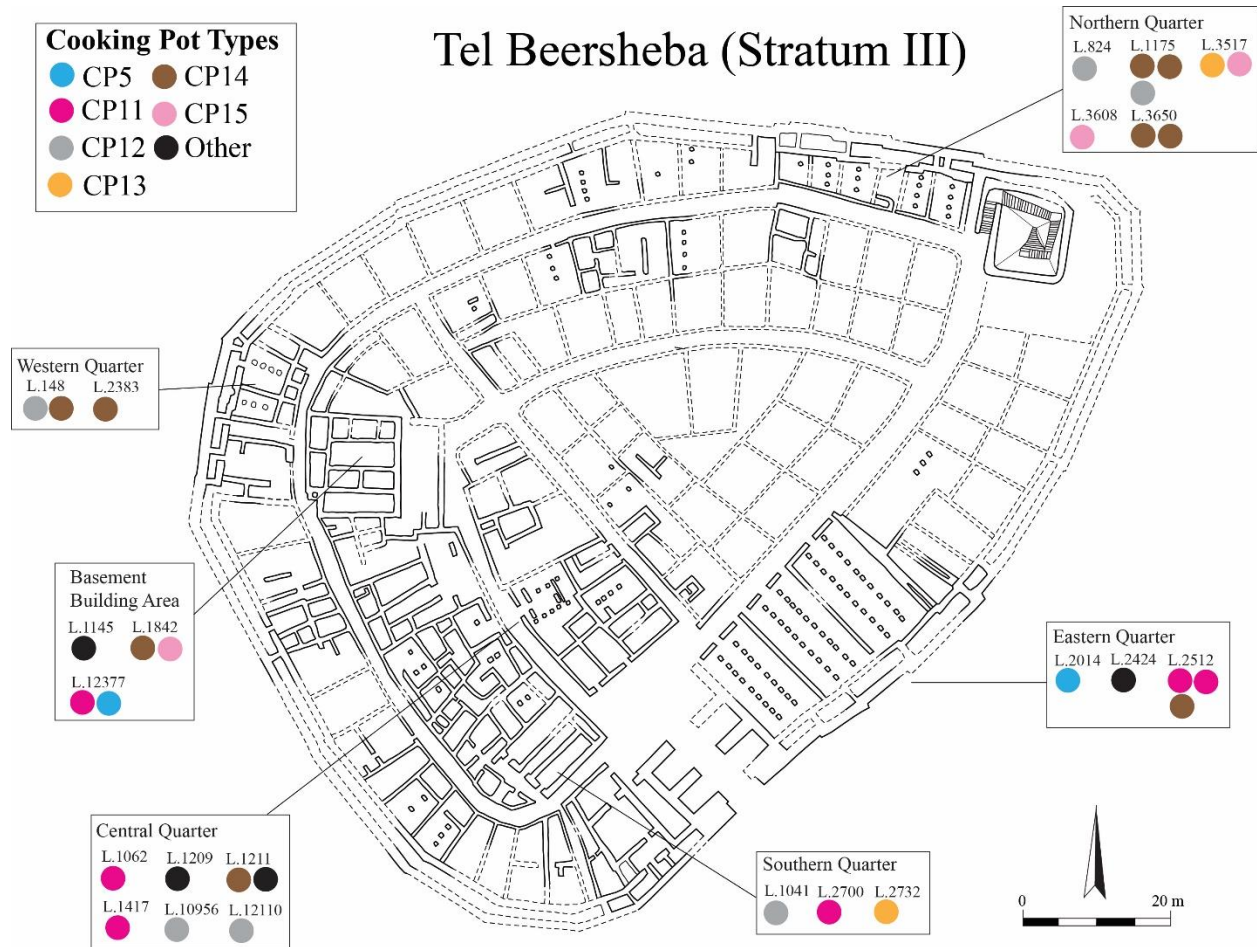


Plate 46. Cooking pot forms attested at Tel Beersheba Stratum III, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

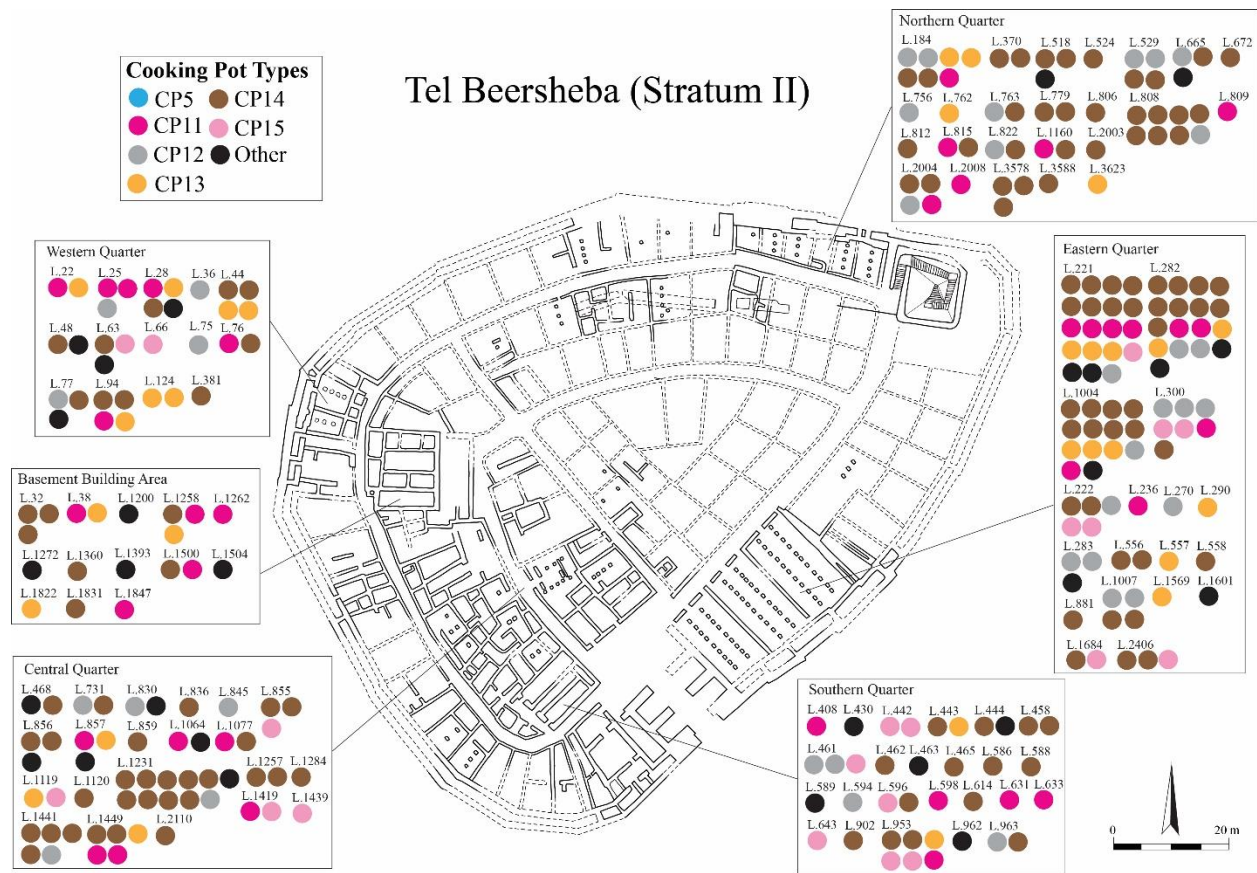


Plate 47. Cooking pot forms attested at Tel Beersheba Stratum II, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

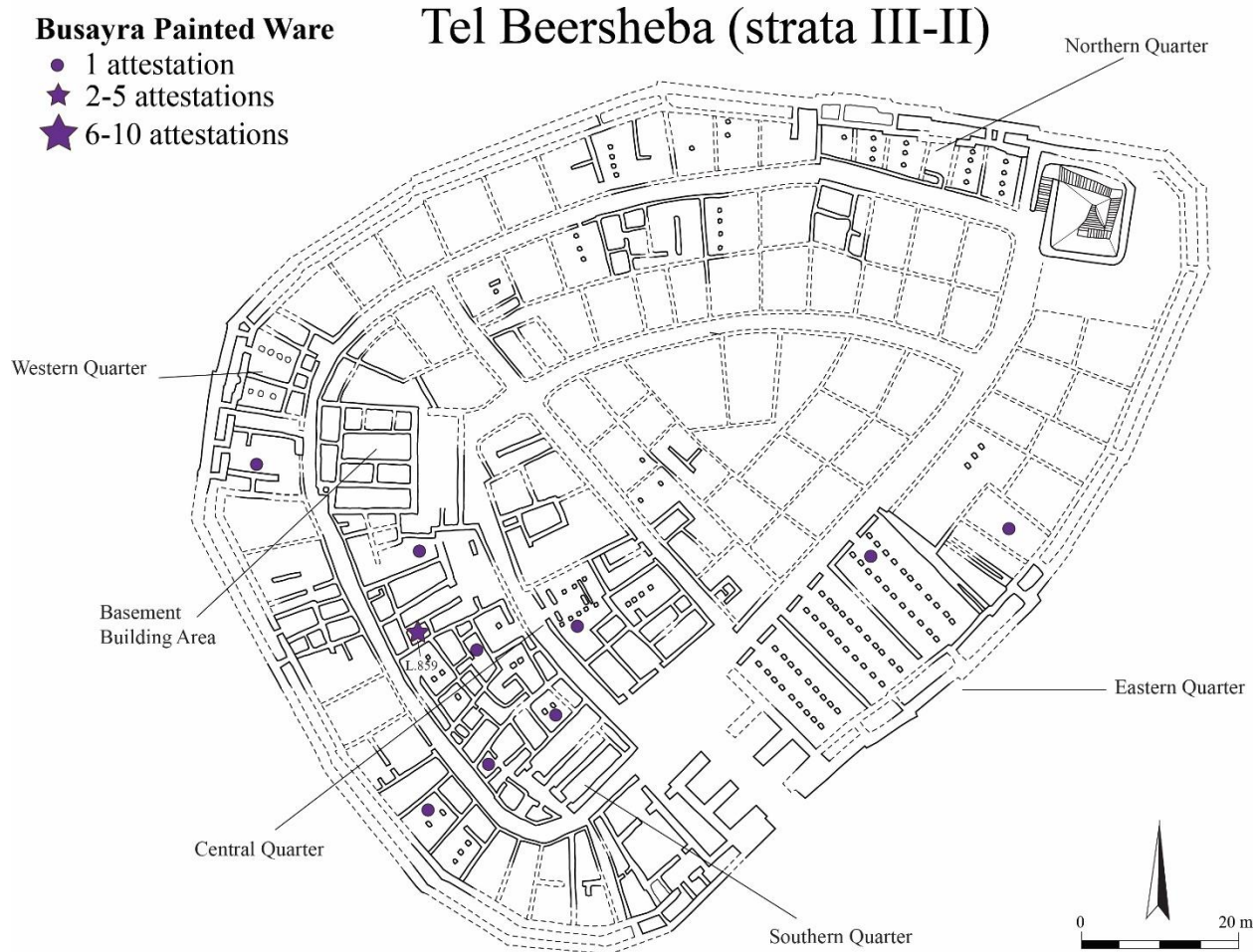


Plate 48. Busayra Painted Ware vessels at Tel Beersheba, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Busayra Painted Ware

- 1 attestation
- ★ 2-5 attestations
- ★ 6-10 attestations

Kadesh Barnea (Stratum III)

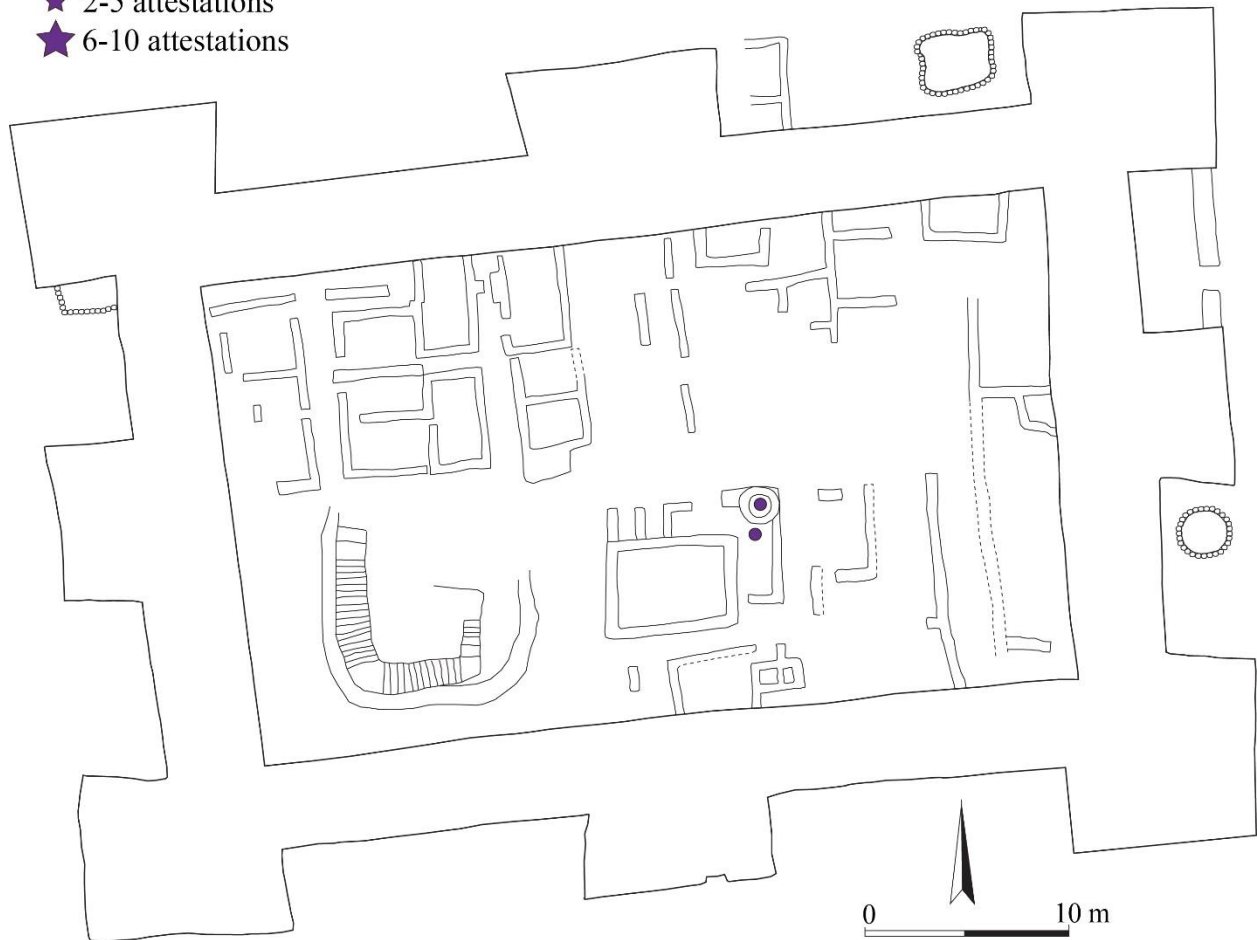


Plate 51. Busayra Painted Ware vessels at Kadesh Barnea Stratum III, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

Busayra Painted Ware

- 1 attestation
- ★ 2-5 attestations
- ★ 6-10 attestations

Kadesh Barnea (Stratum II)



Plate 52. Busayra Painted Ware vessels at Kadesh Barnea Stratum II, visualized spatially. (Figure by author)

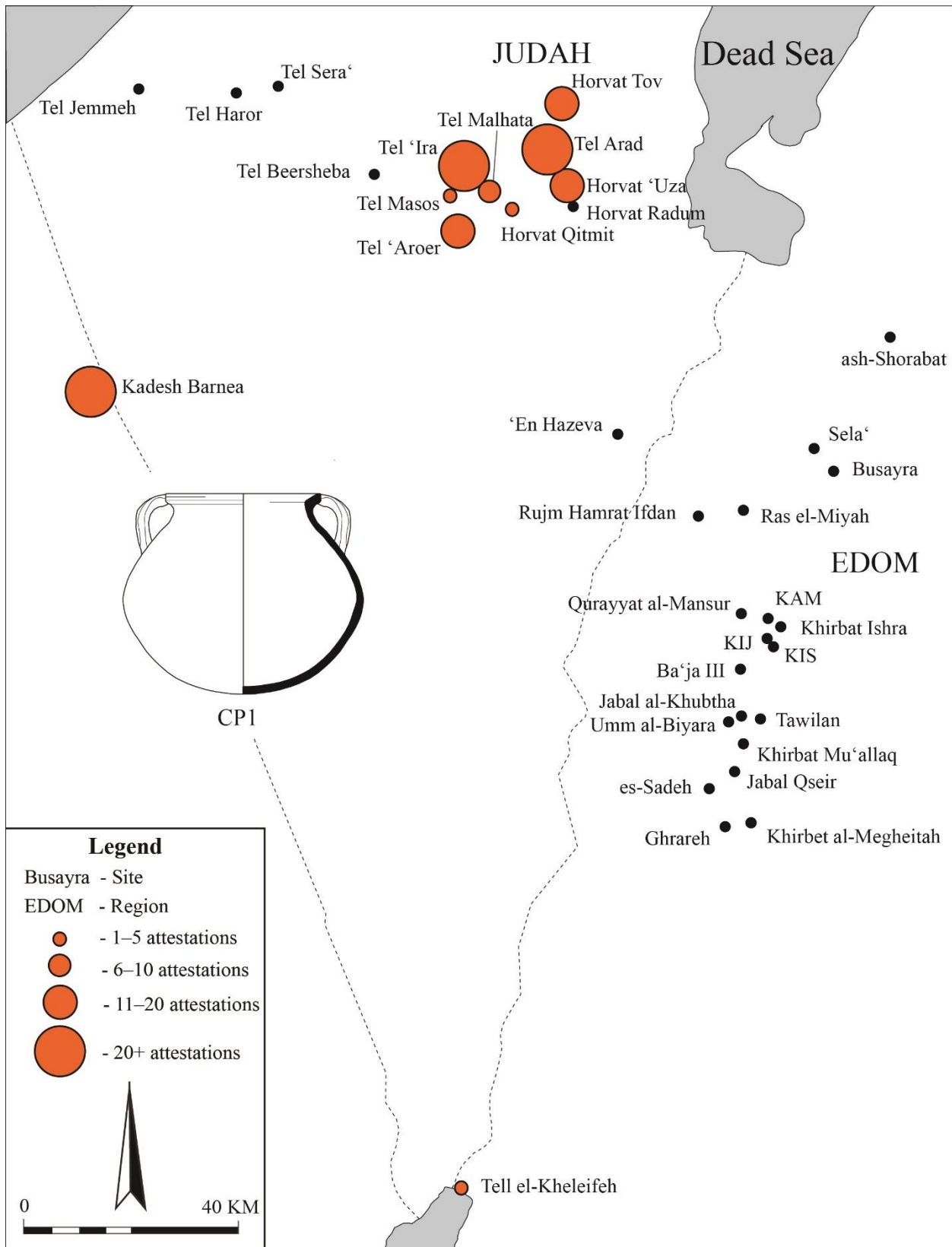


Plate 53. Regional distribution of cooking pot Type CP1. (Figure by author)

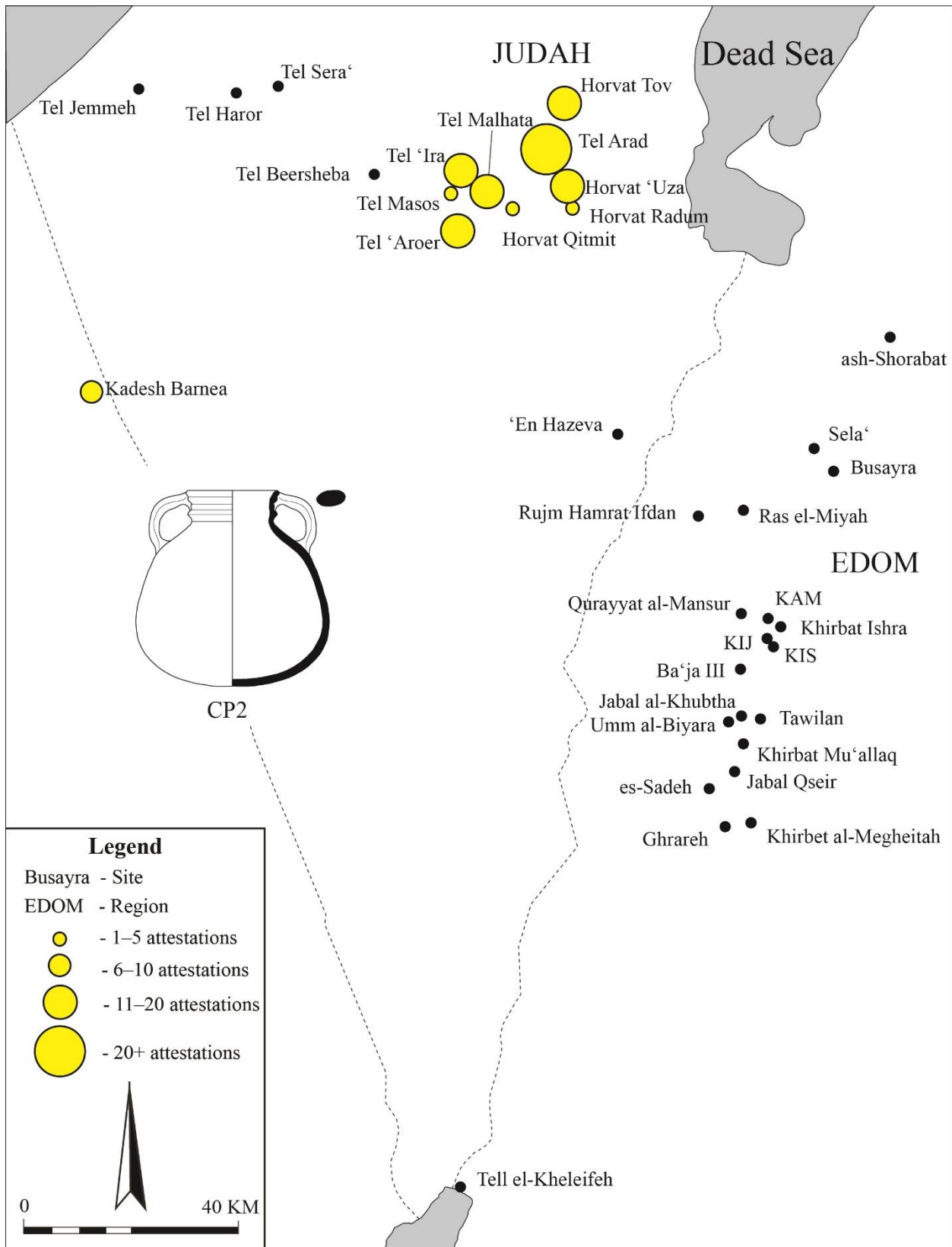


Plate 54. Regional distribution of cooking pot Type CP2. (Figure by author)

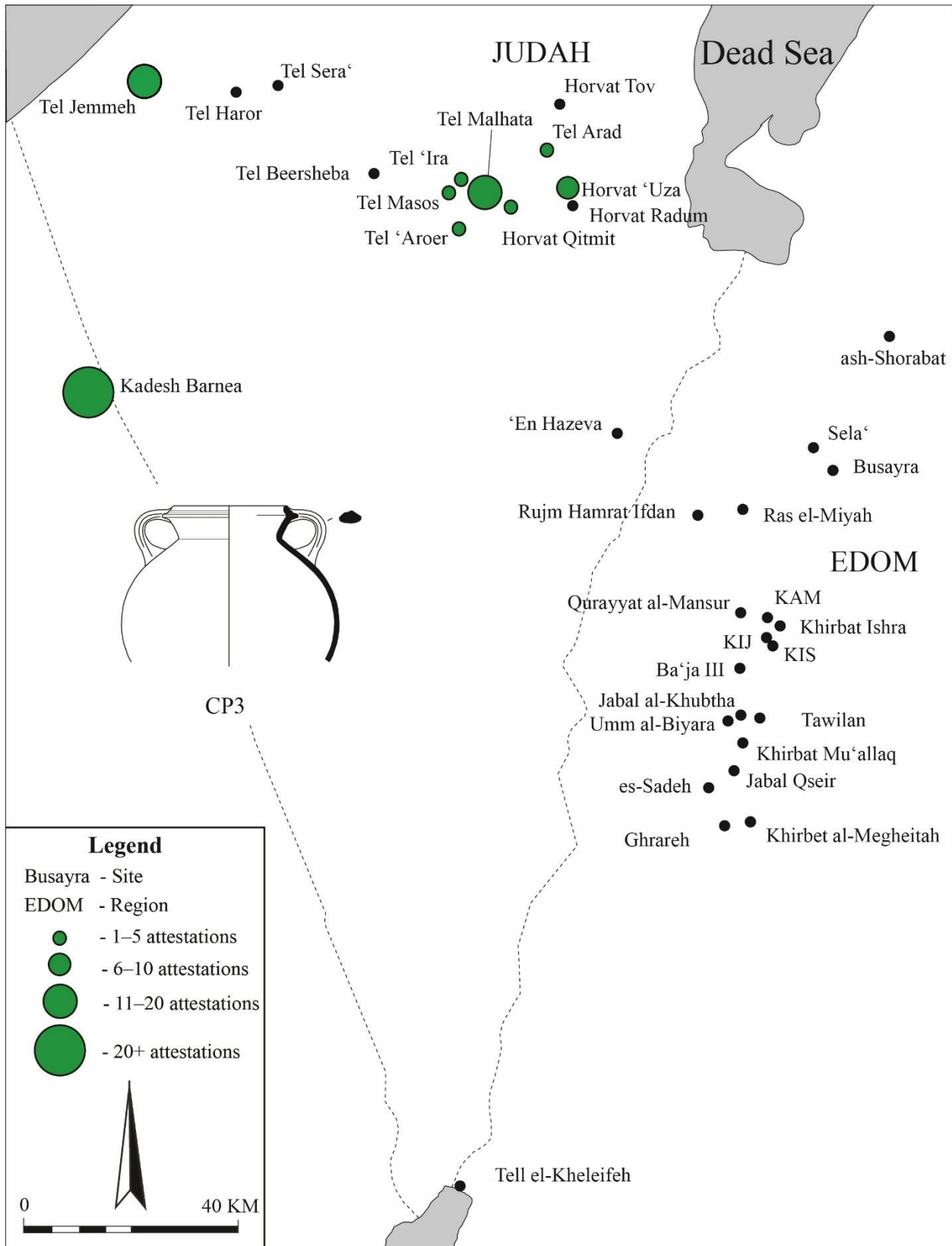


Plate 55. Regional distribution of cooking pot Type CP3. (Figure by author)

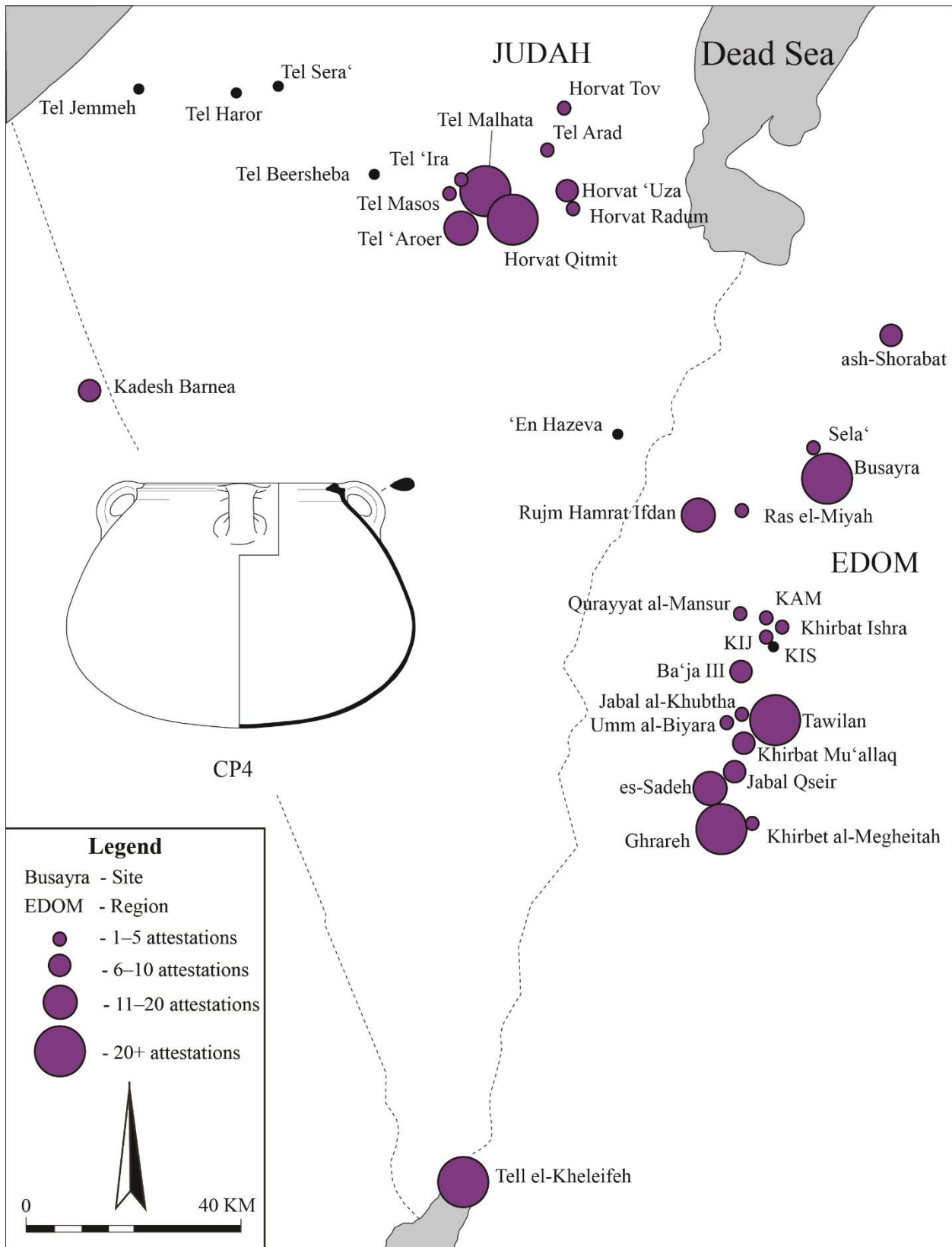


Plate 56. Regional distribution of cooking pot Type CP4. (Figure by author)

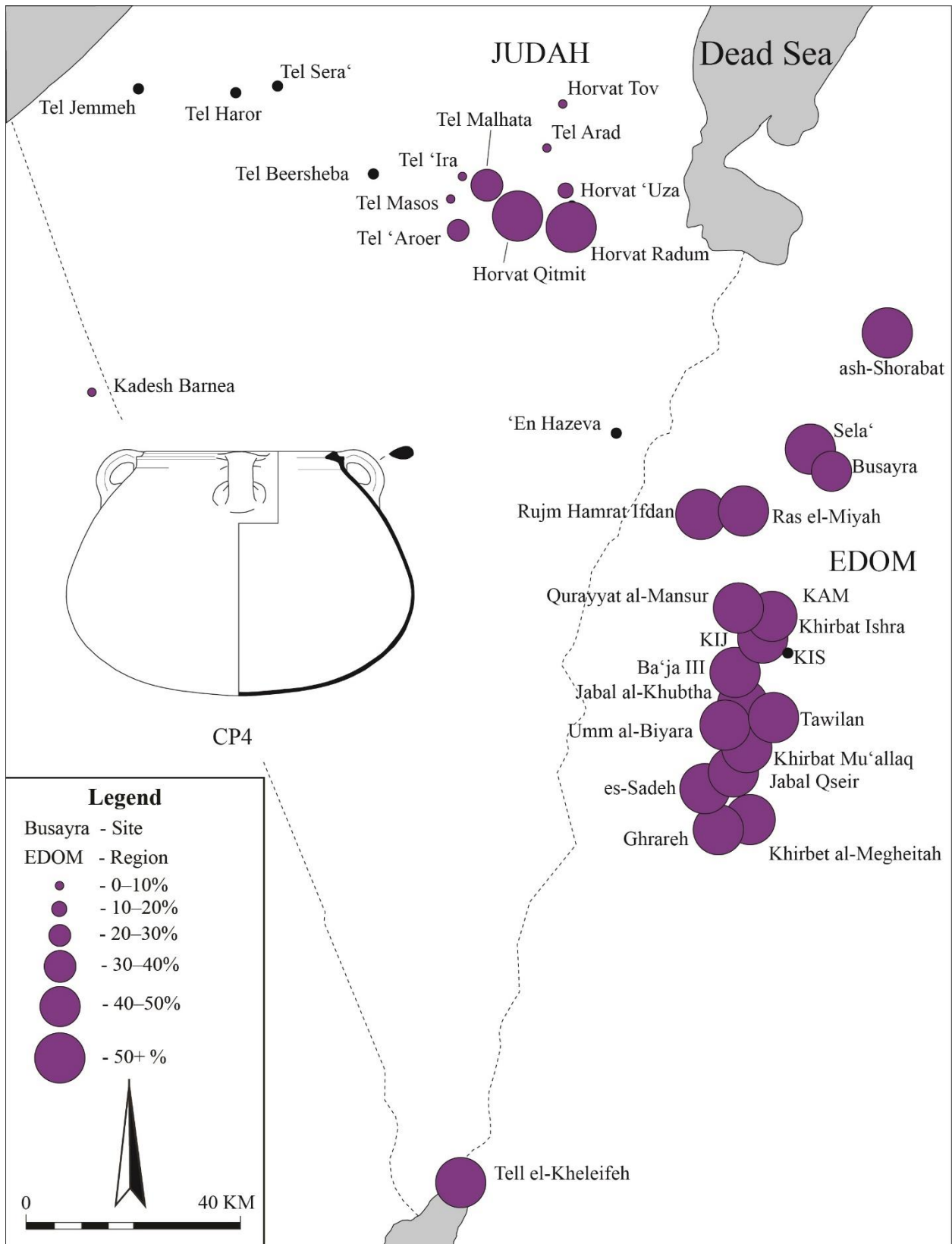


Plate 57. Regional distribution of cooking pot Type CP4 by percentage. (Figure by author)

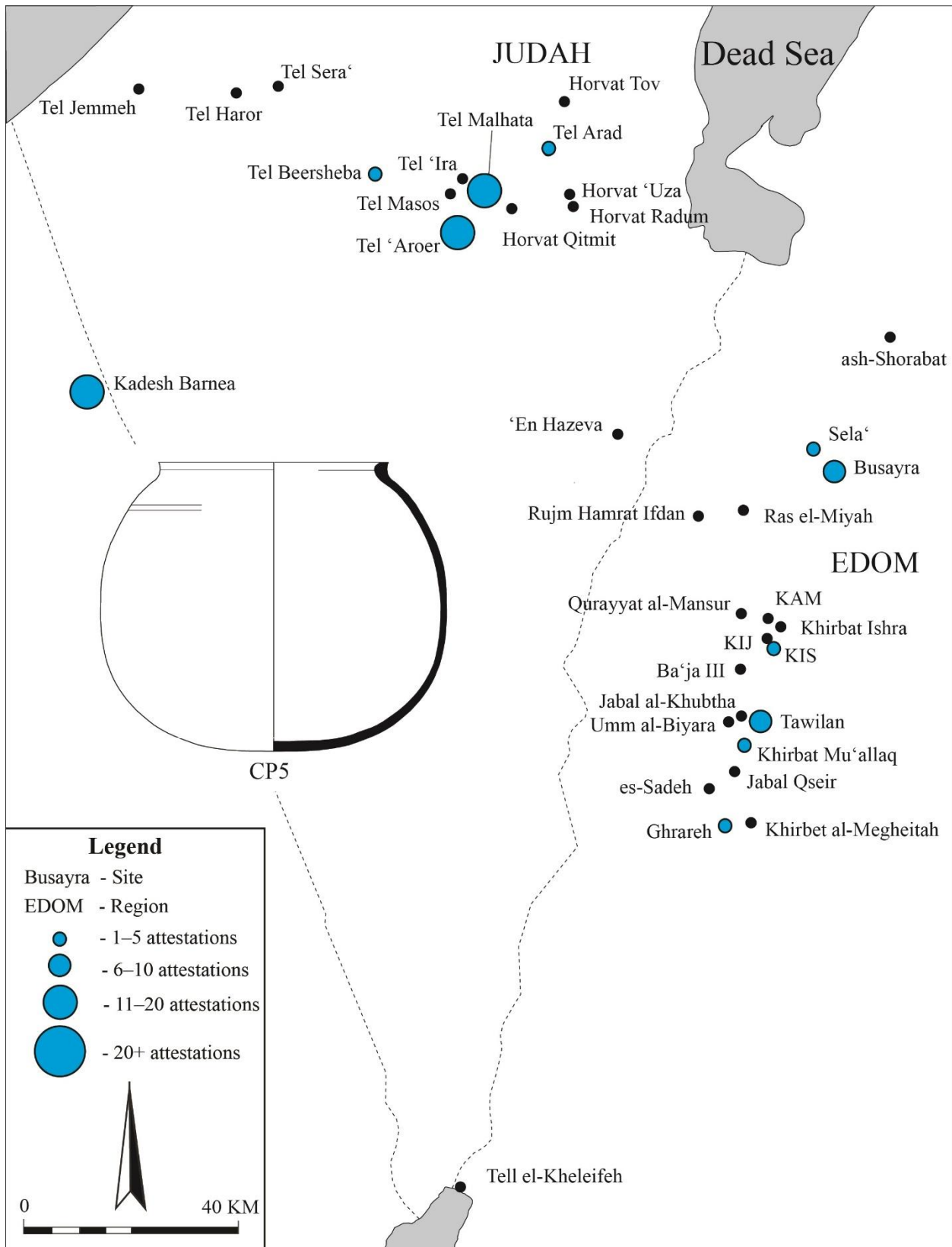


Plate 58. Regional distribution of cooking pot Type CP5. (Figure by author)

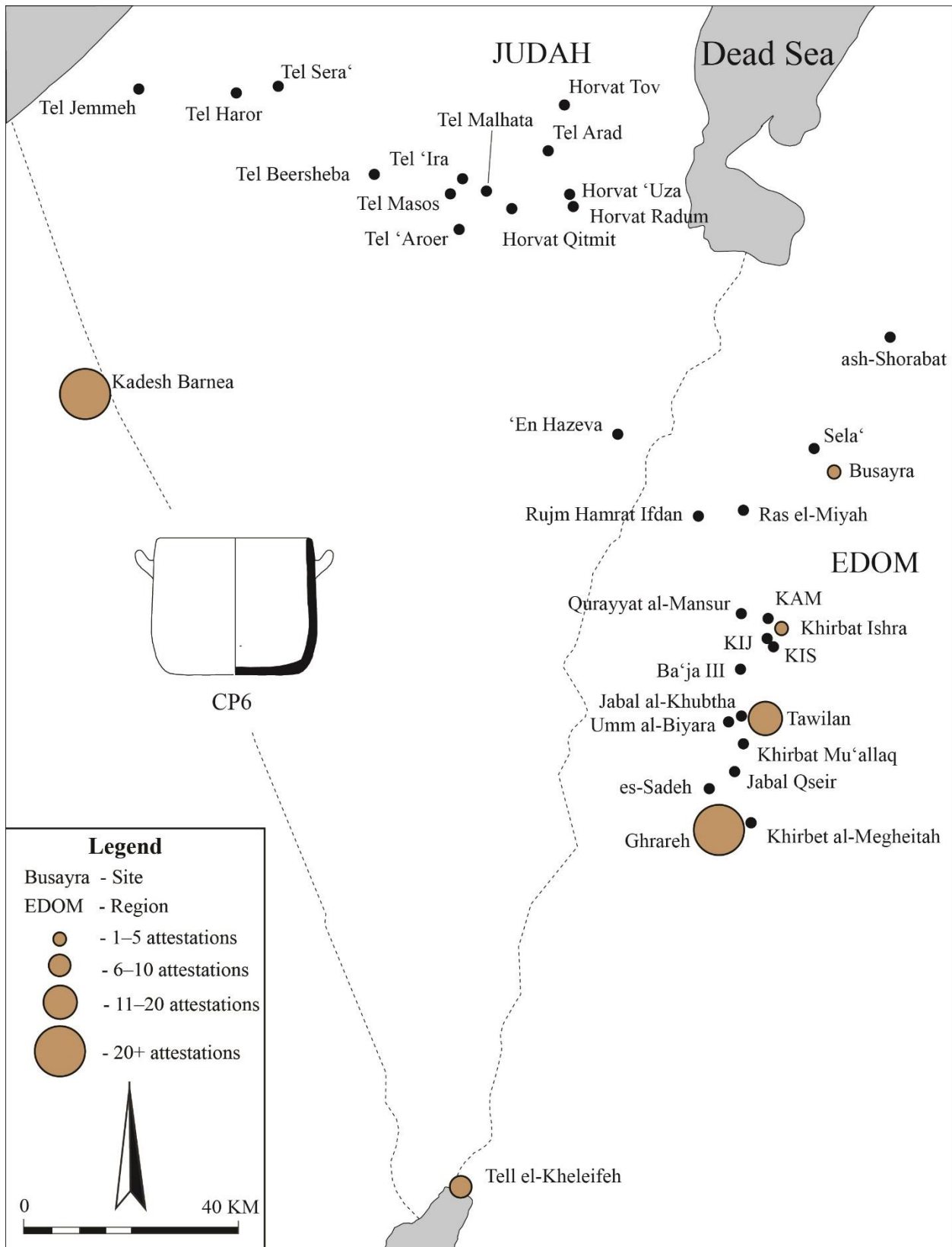


Plate 59. Regional distribution of cooking pot Type CP6. (Figure by author)

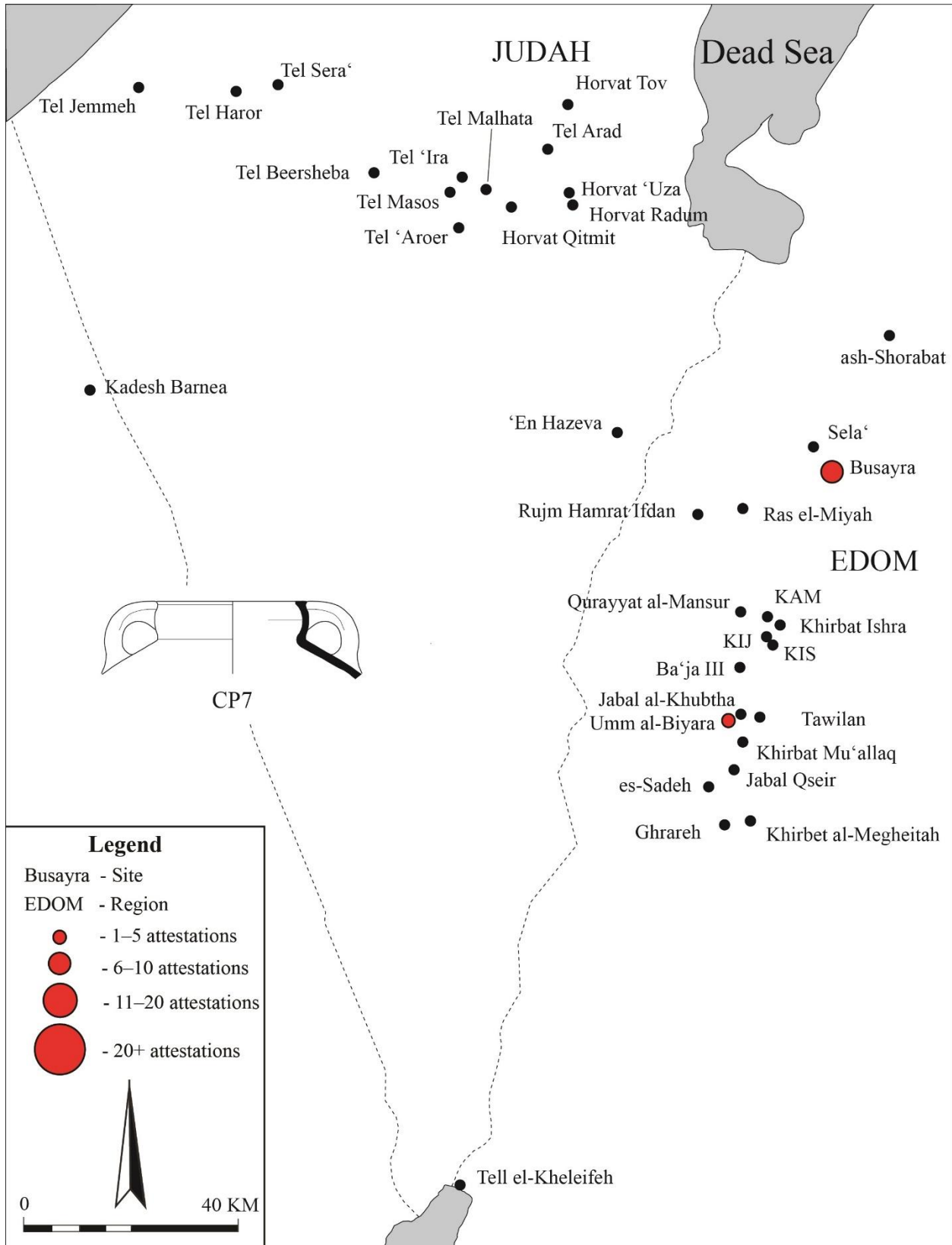


Plate 60. Regional distribution of cooking pot Type CP7. (Figure by author)

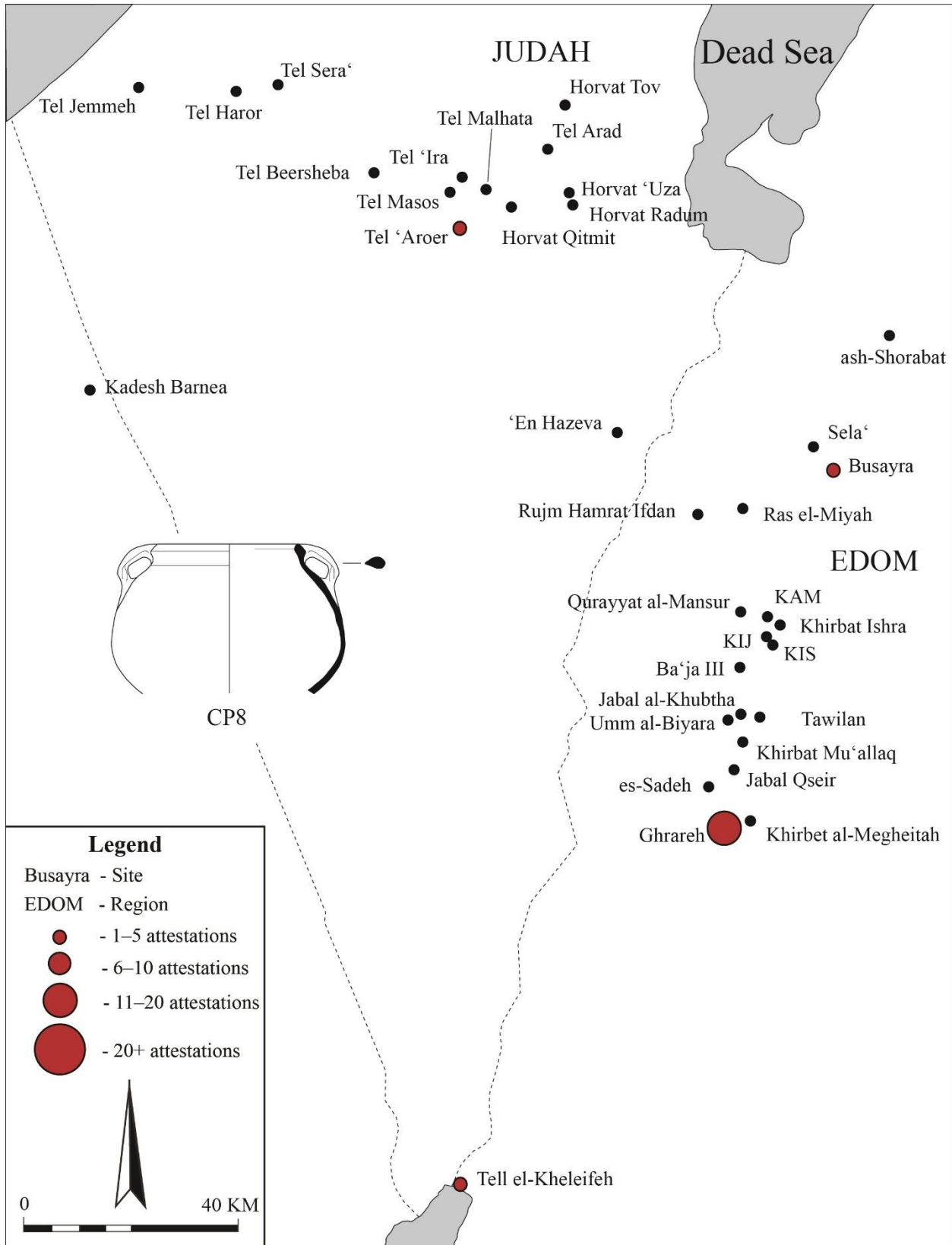


Plate 61. Regional distribution of cooking pot Type CP8. (Figure by author)

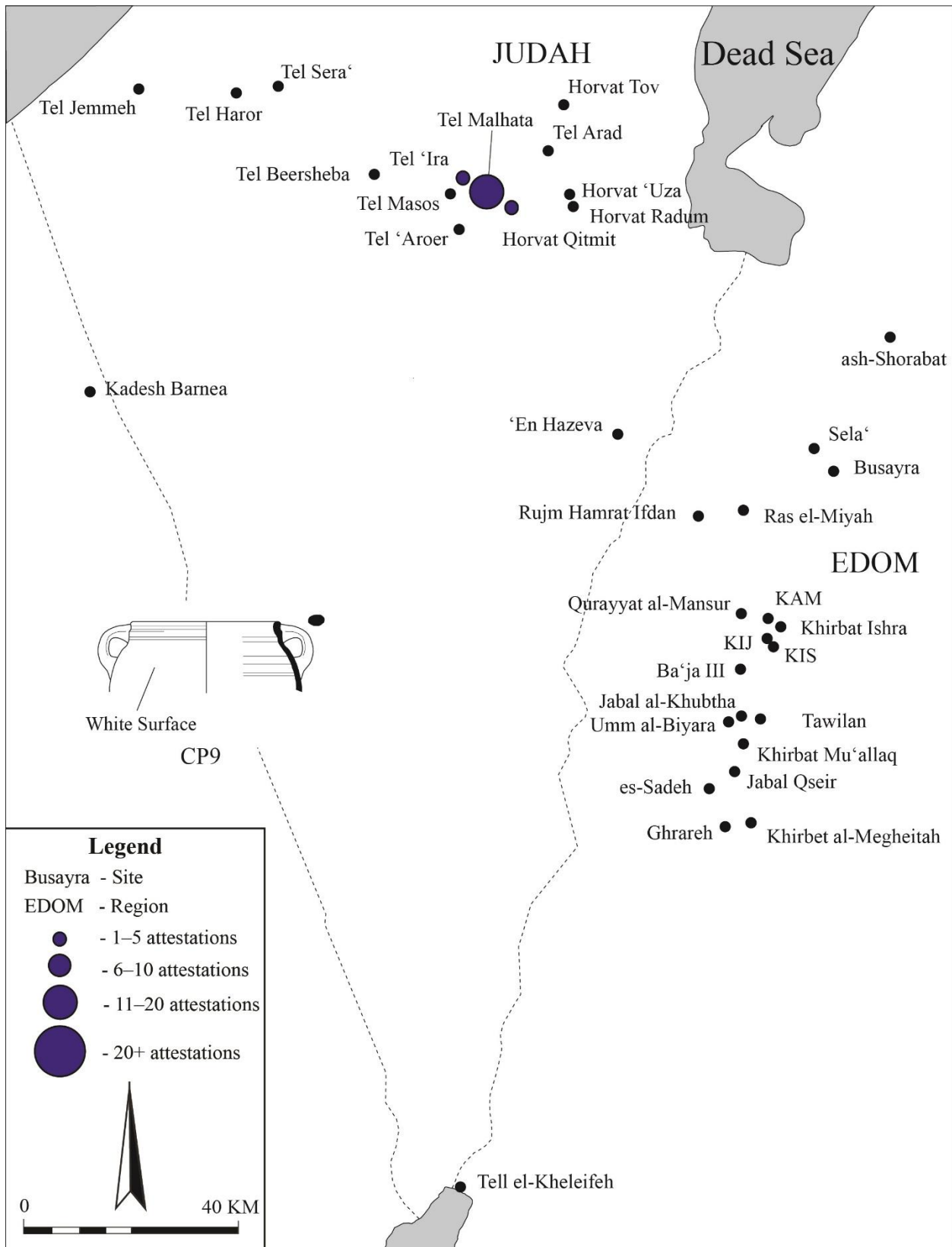


Plate 62. Regional distribution of cooking pot Type CP9. (Figure by author)

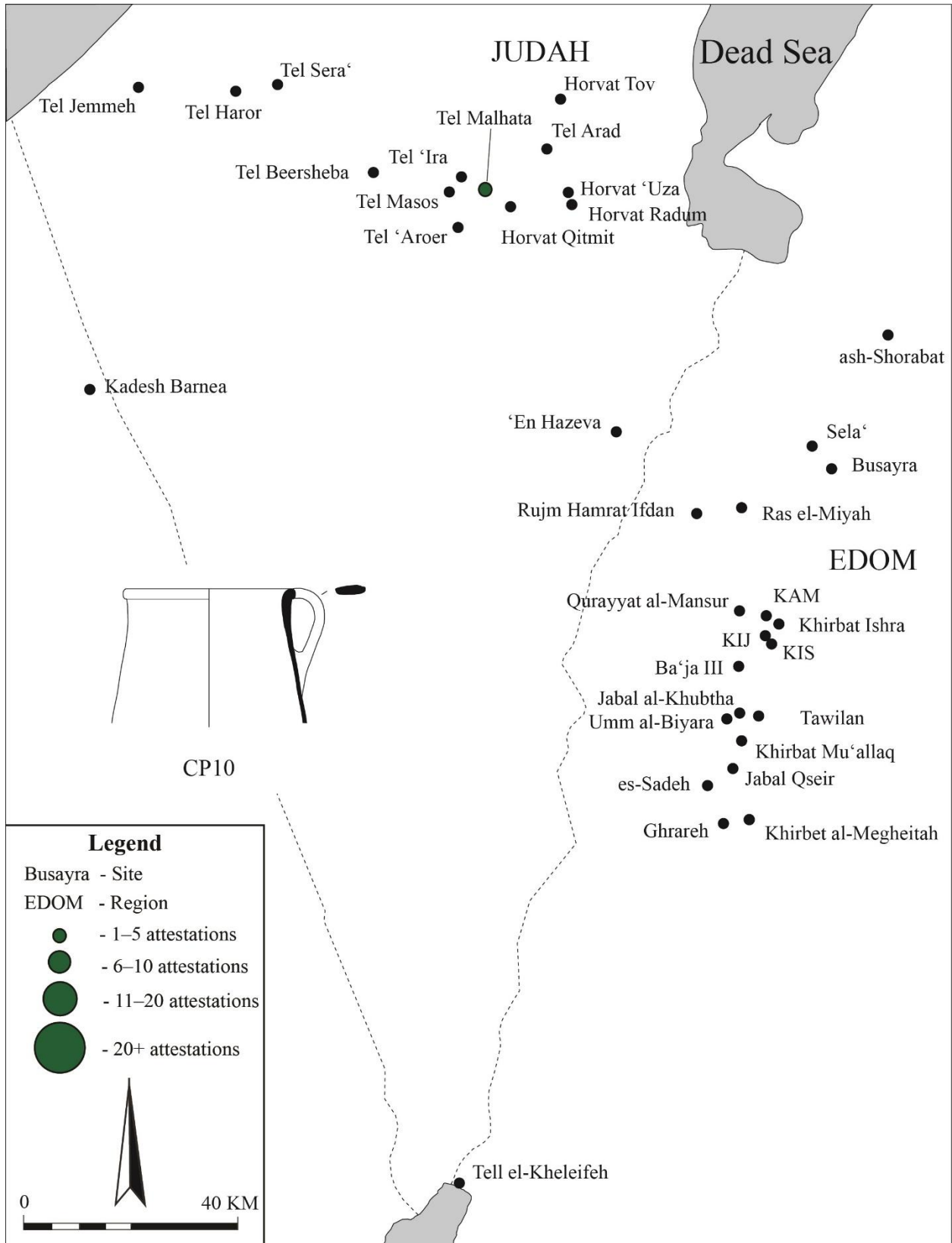


Plate 63. Regional distribution of cooking pot Type CP10. (Figure by author)

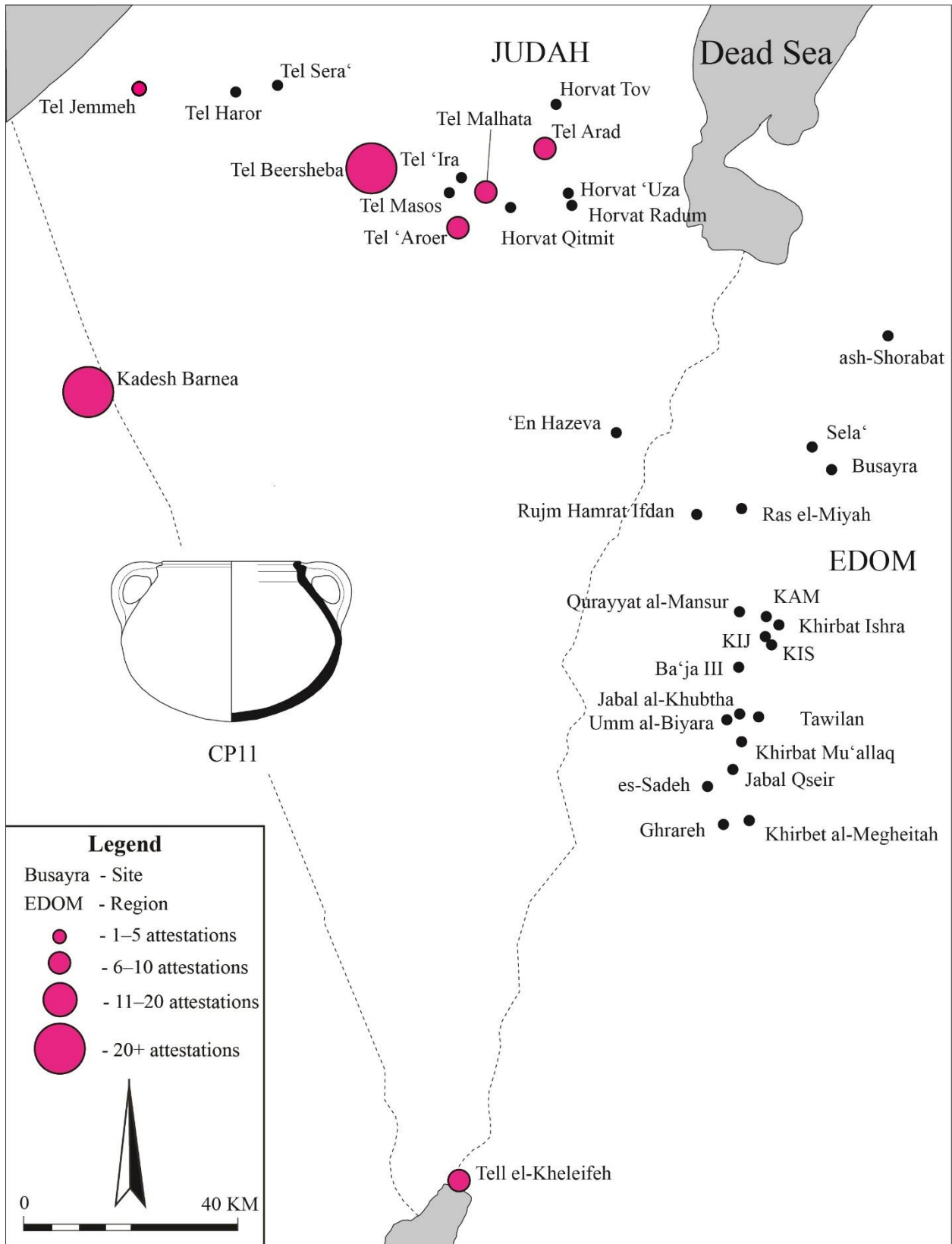


Plate 64. Regional distribution of cooking pot Type CP11. (Figure by author)

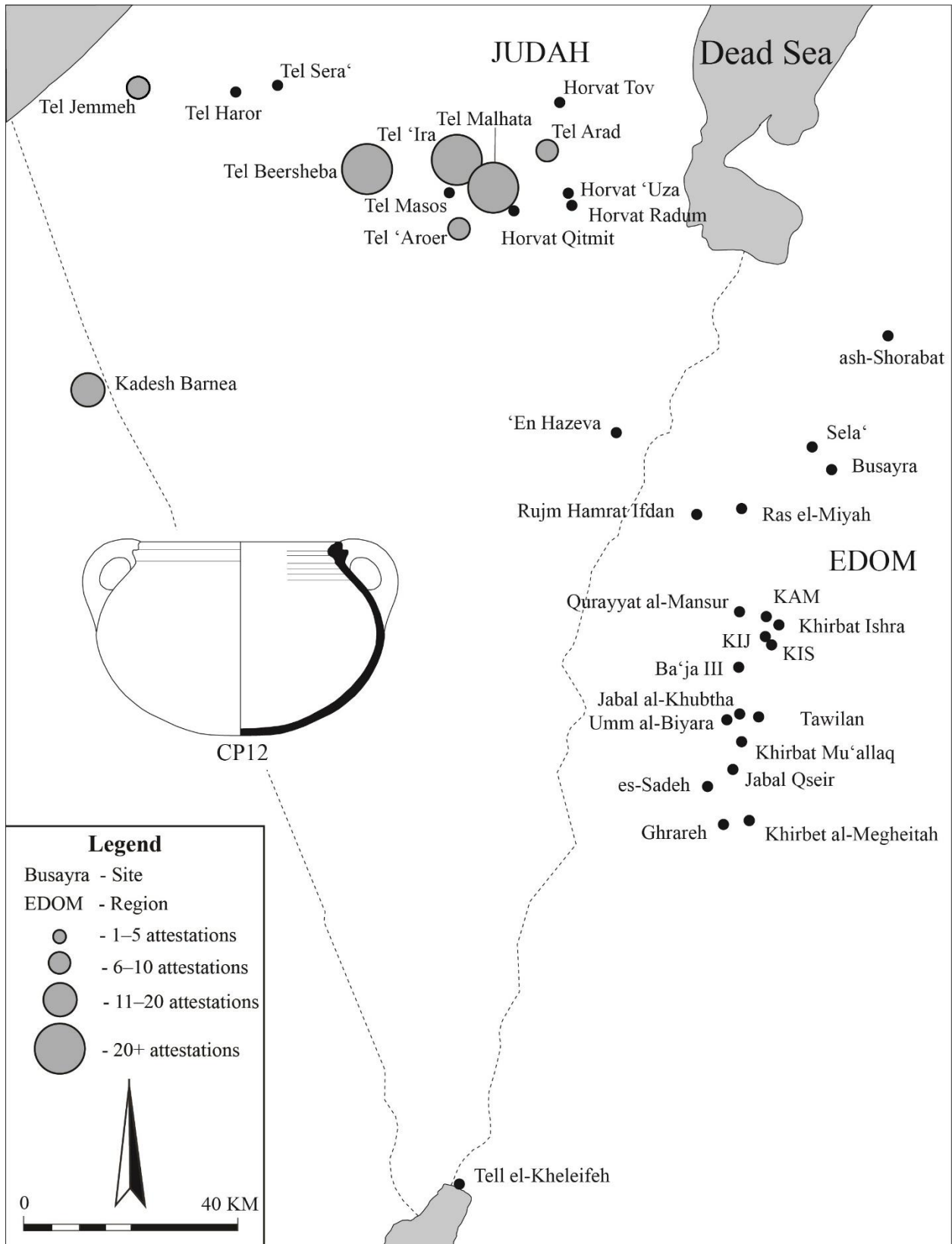


Plate 65. Regional distribution of cooking pot Type CP12. (Figure by author)

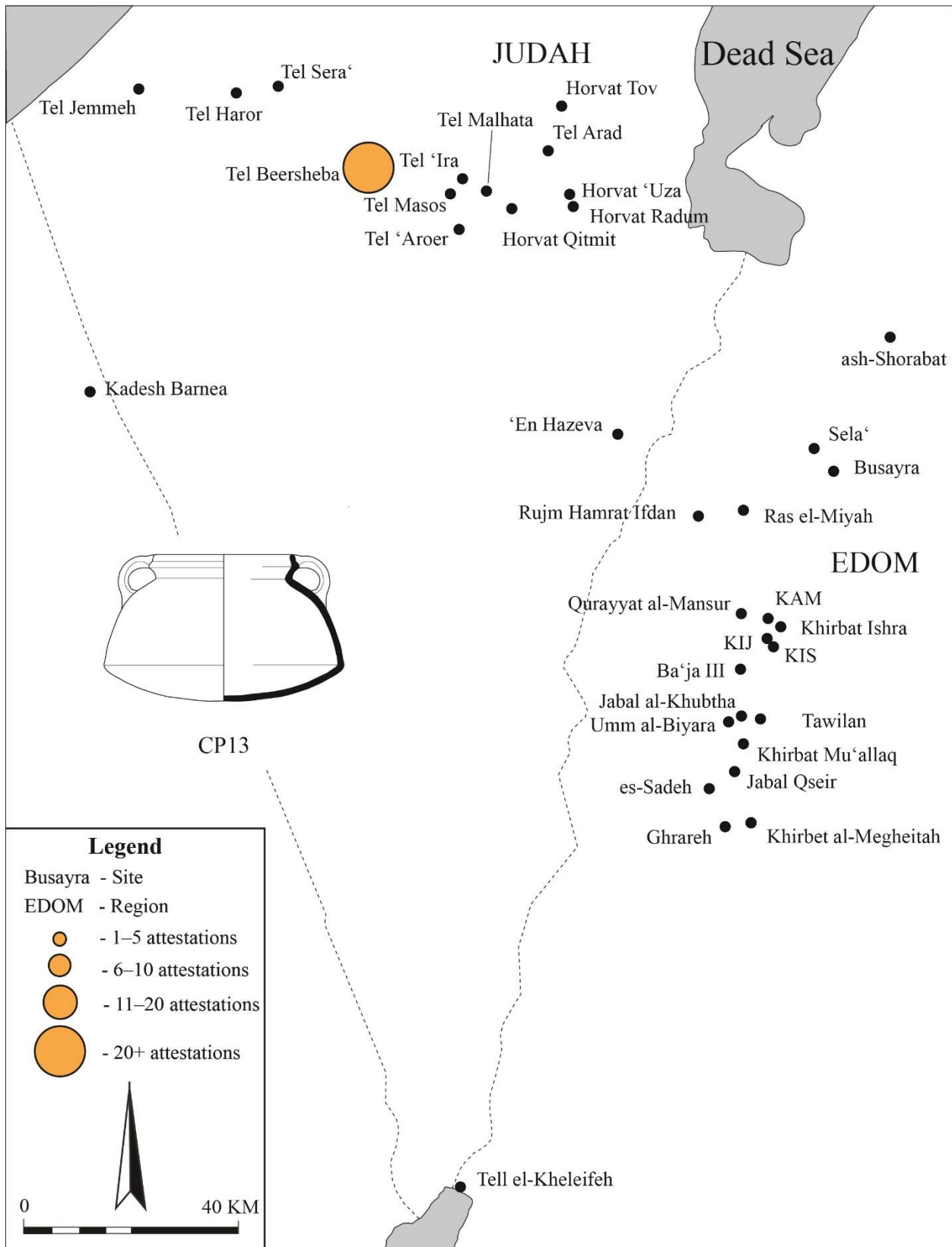


Plate 66. Regional distribution of cooking pot Type CP13. (Figure by author)

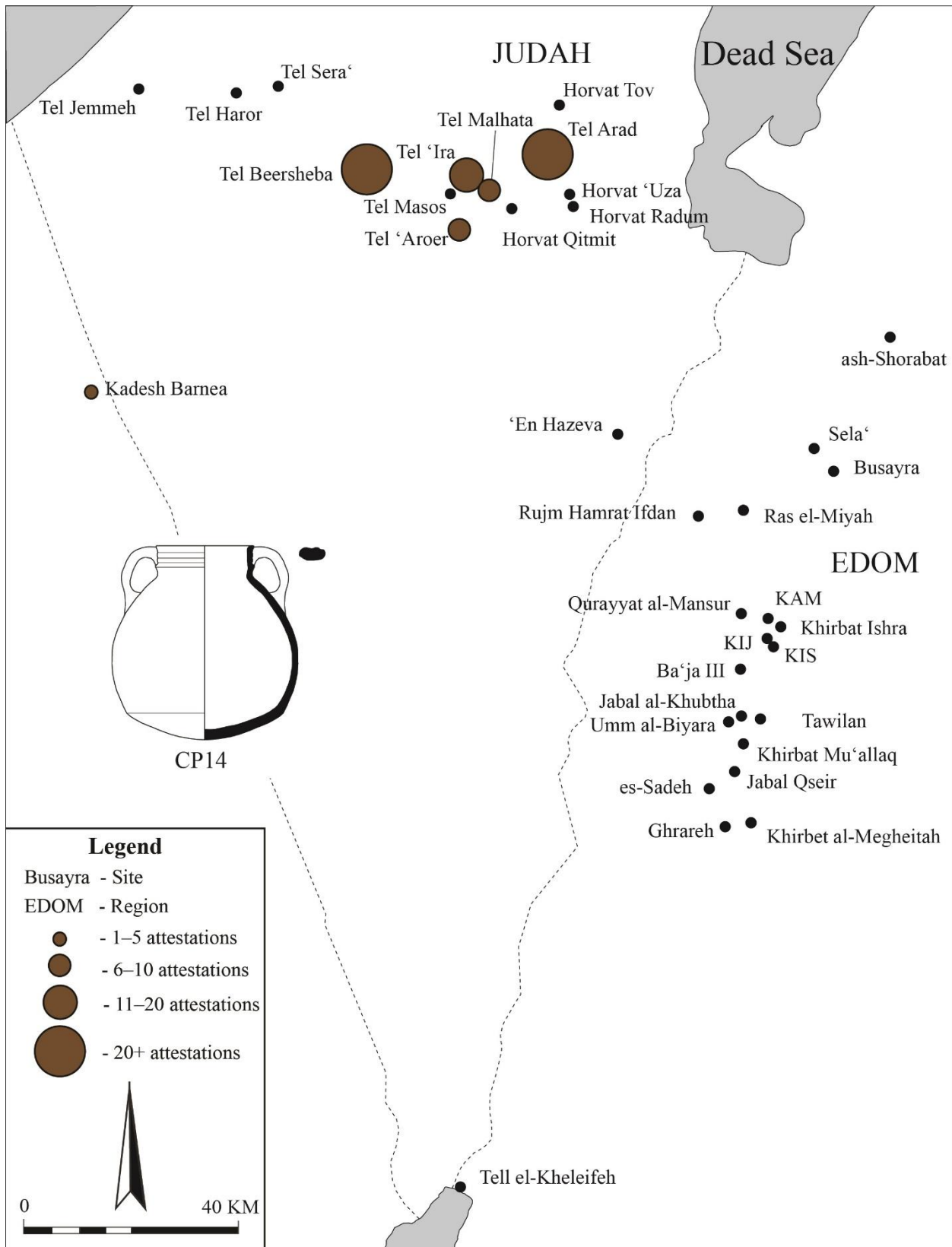


Plate 67. Regional distribution of cooking pot Type CP14. (Figure by author)

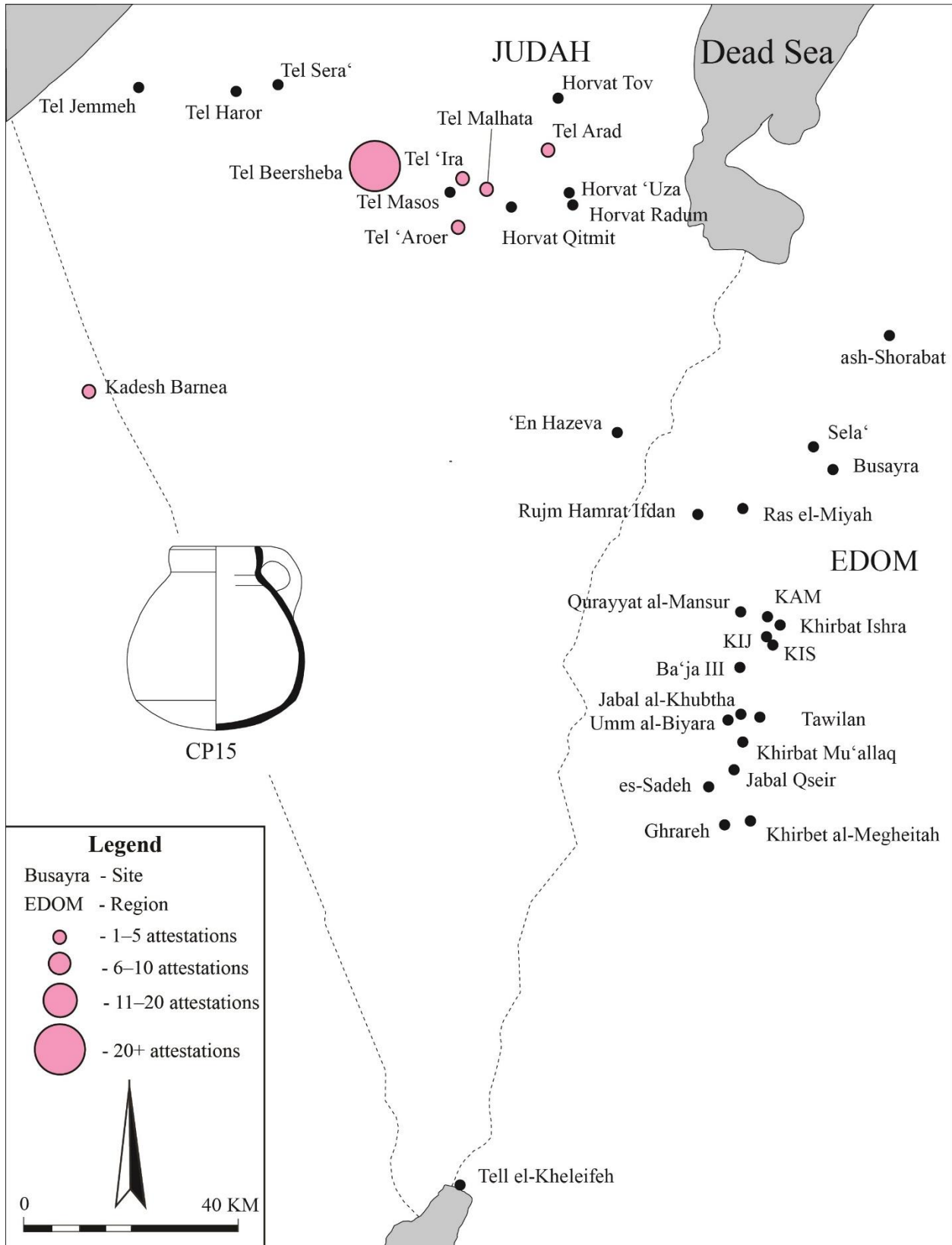


Plate 68. Regional distribution of cooking pot Type CP15. (Figure by author)

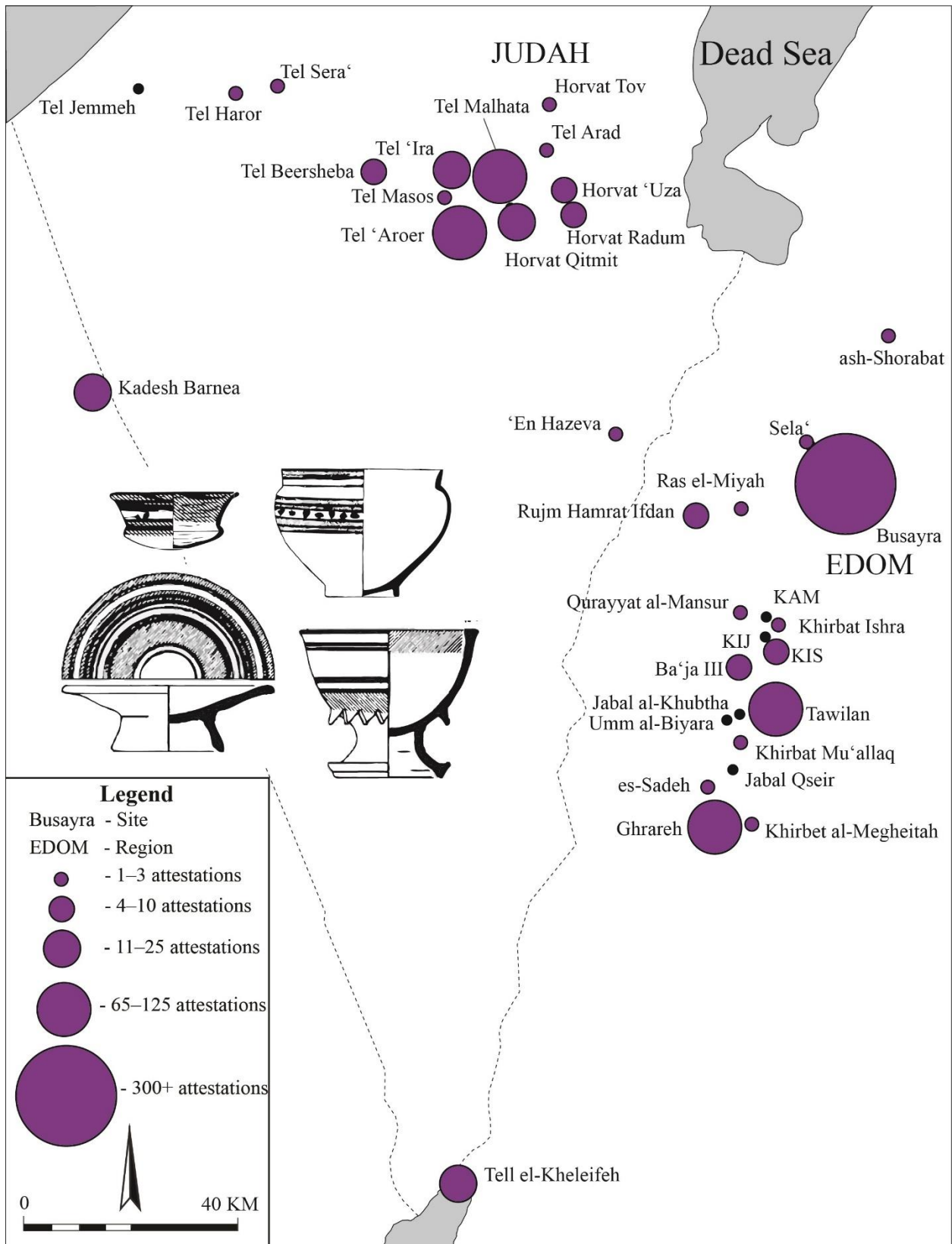


Plate 69. Regional distribution of Busayra Painted Ware. (Figure by author)

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