

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

FERTILE CROSSROADS:  
The Growth and Influence of Interregional Exchange in the Southern  
Levant's Iron Age I-II Transition, Examined through Biblical,  
Epigraphic, and Archaeological Sources

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for  
the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in

History

by

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The Dissertation of Sarah Lynn Malena is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

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2015

## DEDICATION

To my parents,  
Daryl and Audrey Malena,  
for their boundless love and enthusiasm.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> , David Noel Freedman, ed.
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
BA	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
BAAL	<i>Bulletin d'Archéologie et d'Architecture Libanaises</i>
BAR	<i>Biblical Archaeology Review</i>
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BDB	<i>Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> , Brown, Driver, and Briggs
BHS	Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia
BJPES	<i>Bulletin of the Jewish Palestine Exploration Society</i>
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies Series
BoR	Cypro-Phoenician Black-on-Red pottery
BR	<i>Bible Review</i>
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CA	<i>Current Anthropology</i>
CBR	<i>Currents in Biblical Research</i>
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CHANE	Culture and History of the Ancient Near East
DH	Deuteronomistic History
Dtr	Deuteronomistic Historian(s) (or editors/redactors)
E&L	<i>Egypt and the Levant</i>
ELRAP	Edom Lowlands Regional Archaeological Project
<i>ErIsr</i>	<i>Eretz-Israel</i>
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
HALOT	<i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> , Koehler and Baumgartner
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HTR	<i>The Harvard Theological Review</i>
IEJ	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
JANES	<i>Journal for Ancient Near Eastern Studies</i>
JAOS	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
JAS	<i>Journal of Archaeological Science</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JEA	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i>
JESHO	<i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i>
JHS	<i>Journal of Hebrew Scriptures</i>
JMA	<i>Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology</i>
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
JPOS	<i>Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society</i>
JQR	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
JSOT	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplemental Series

<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
KEN	Khirbat en-Nahas
Kh.	Khirbet/Khirbat
LB	Late Bronze (Age)
LC	Low Chronology
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
<i>NEA</i>	<i>Near Eastern Archaeology</i>
<i>NEAEHL</i>	<i>The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land</i> , Ephraim Stern, ed.
OBO	Orbis biblicus et orientalis
<i>OJA</i>	<i>Oxford Journal of Archaeology</i>
OLA	Orientalia lovaniensia analecta
<i>PEQ</i>	<i>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</i>
PN	Personal Name
<i>PNAS</i>	<i>Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences</i>
QPW	Qurayyah Painted Ware
SAHL	Studies in the Archaeology and History of the Levant
SAOC	Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
<i>SHAJ</i>	<i>Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan</i>
SHANE	Studies in the History of the Ancient Near East
SHCANE	Studies in the History and Culture of the Ancient Near East
<i>SJOT</i>	<i>Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament</i>
SWBA	Social World of Biblical Antiquity
T.	Tel/I
TA	Tel Aviv
<i>TSSI</i>	<i>Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions</i>
<i>UF</i>	<i>Ugarit-Forschungen</i>
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZDPV	<i>Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins</i>

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

FERTILE CROSSROADS:  
The Growth and Influence of Interregional Exchange in the Southern  
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Doctor of Philosophy in History

University of California, San Diego, 2015

Professor Thomas E. Levy, Co-Chair  
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One of the most significant problems in historical and archaeological investigations of ancient Israel's early Iron Age is a great disparity between text and artifact. Our most extensive written source, the Hebrew Bible, is frequently at odds with our other primary source of information, archaeological remains. The discrepancy between these resources is most pronounced in images of an early kingdom and its relations with other groups in the ancient Near East (during roughly the late eleventh through the end of the tenth centuries).

In order to explore these problems, this dissertation examines potential evidence of interactions between the southern Levant (i.e., the biblical lands) and its neighbors and evaluates that evidence with the aid of historical and anthropological approaches regarding intercultural interaction and social change.

My survey of evidence begins with two significant discussions of interaction in the biblical history: Israel's relations with the Philistines and Solomon's relations with his royal contemporaries and within his domain. I follow the biblical history with a brief review of interaction involving the Davidic capital Jerusalem, which has been the focus of the most recent debates and is critical to the biblical depiction of Israel's relations. My investigation then shifts to extrabiblical materials. Epigraphic remains, though not numerous in the tenth century, are an important source of information regarding leaders and elites, those most likely to be involved in long-distance interactions. My survey concludes with the most concrete evidence of exchange, which is ceramics imported from northern Arabia and the Mediterranean. In each of these discrete examinations, there is reliable evidence in favor of interregional interaction (including diplomacy, commerce, competitive emulation, and aggression) within the southern Levant and between this region and more distant neighbors, such as Egypt, Arabia, Phoenicia, Cyprus, and even the Aegean. My final chapter synthesizes my findings, and I conclude that exchange and interaction in this period had a significant impact on changes in the region especially involving networks of elites and local rulers. Relations among these groups led to competition and eventual shifts in territories, group identities, and political power.

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### Introducing the Problem

Intrigued by the contrast between the Hebrew Bible's grand claims of international trade under Solomon and scholarly debates regarding the tenth century's historical "reality," I began this study by investigating long distance trade in the Solomonic era. The findings were underwhelming. Using a traditional approach, one finds little to no evidence of the type of trade described in Solomon's history. A critical review of that history reveals many problems in the textual evidence. In response, I reevaluated the basic concepts underlying ideas like "trade" and the lands and people of the region. I shifted the focus of the project to interaction and exchange more broadly defined and looked outside the biblical depictions of territories and chronologies.

By looking at evidence of *interaction*, a necessary foundation to trade relations, I have been able to identify various types of *exchange* throughout the eastern Mediterranean in the transition between the Iron I and Iron IIA periods, roughly the late eleventh and tenth centuries BCE.<sup>1</sup> I found exchange apparent in material culture such as luxury goods and prestige items as well as mundane objects. More significantly, however, I have identified intercultural exchange in scribal activity, emulation habits, and conflict zones near roads and highways that were critical for the movement of traded goods.

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<sup>1</sup> Debates continue regarding chronology in this region, which is discussed in detail below. The transition between the Iron I and Iron II is understood to have occurred in the mid-tenth century. See the recent exchange between representatives of the two competing schemes, Israel Finkelstein and Eli Piasetzky, "The Iron Age Chronology Debate: Is the Gap Narrowing?," *NEA* 74/1 (2011): 50–54; Amihai Mazar, "The Iron Age Chronology Debate: Is the Gap Narrowing? Another Viewpoint," *NEA* 74/2 (2011): 105–11. I have extended the limits of this study to the late eleventh century and in some cases the early ninth century in order to include significant, related evidence in biblical, epigraphic, and archaeological material.

The presence or absence of interactions during this period is especially intriguing in light of the events that preceded it. During the Late Bronze Age (LB), particularly the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries, the eastern Mediterranean and ancient Near Eastern cultures were thoroughly interconnected through elite-driven industries and commerce, expansive imperial policies, and diplomacy. In addition, alternative trade networks paralleled the state-based economies.<sup>2</sup> The impact on the southern Levant was significant. Mycenaean and Cypriot imports, Egyptian material culture, Syrian-inspired art and architecture, prestige goods, and scribal activity were prevalent in LB contexts. During the twelfth century, however, the international system collapsed, major power centers dissolved or were significantly weakened, and the vast majority of interregional relations ceased.

Exchange across very long distances usually implies that there were entities of considerable power that created the demand as well as organized and facilitated the physical transport of goods. Since the southern Levant in the eleventh and tenth centuries was left in a power vacuum resulting from a weakened Egypt, being able to identify evidence of exchange between cultures raises questions about who was involved in these interactions. It also raises questions about how exchange was taking place among peoples prior to the establishment of extrabiblically-attested Iron Age states.<sup>3</sup> Evidence of any states, classically defined, remains wanting in the tenth century, and the Bible's depiction of the Davidic and

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<sup>2</sup> Susan Sherratt, "The Mediterranean Economy: 'Globalization' at the End of the Second Millennium B.C.E.," in *Symbiosis, Symbolism, and the Power of the Past: Canaan, Ancient Israel, and Their Neighbors from the Late Bronze Age through Roman Palaestina*, ed. William G. Dever and Seymour Gitin (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 37–62.

<sup>3</sup> Although the biblical history tells of the advent of monarchy at this time, extrabiblical evidence of states in the region does not appear until the ninth century, for example, the Mesha stele, Tel Dan stele, or the Black Obelisk.

Solomonic eras does not provide a reliable historical reconstruction. Thus we are compelled to find alternative explanations for who was creating the demand for goods, who was organizing the supply and movement of goods, and what social dynamics were in place to support such activities. The alternative explanations involve rethinking not only historical reconstructions but also the relationship between social complexity and long-distance exchange in this time and place.

The resulting project examines evidence of interregional exchange from biblical, extrabiblical, and archaeological sources. I find that there was intercultural interaction, including long-distance trade, in the transition between the Iron I and II periods. The participants in these relationships were leaders of small-scale entities, the largest of which would have been a center with an intraregional dominance (e.g., Tel Masos or Tell es-Safi [Gath]). The extent of interaction ranged from neighboring geographic zones (e.g., between Philistia and the hill country) to long-distance, interregional exchange (e.g., from Euboea to Galilee). Such exchange activities contributed to broader socio-political change in the region. Participants in the renewed interactions became part of an elite network. The interactions fueled competition among small-scale leaders who vied for control of local transportation routes or resources and asserted themselves through elite culture. The consequence of these actions was the consolidation of land and influence that in turn contributed to the development of new Iron Age polities and identities.

### **Scholarly Climate**

This work is necessarily multidisciplinary. The available evidence for researching exchange in the southern Levant comes from biblical texts, from a modest collection of extrabiblical writings, and from archaeological materials. Each type of evidence must be

addressed according to the standards of the appropriate disciplines.<sup>4</sup> And while this project is, above all, historical in its goals, it also relies on the work of literary scholars, anthropologists, archaeologists, epigraphers, and regional specialists. With each of these fields come respective analytical methods and scholarly debates that have influenced my approach. The starting point, partial setting, and a large portion of evidence for this project are biblical. Thus, the most influential field for this work is biblical criticism, especially historical biblical criticism.

The work of W. F. Albright and his blend of ancient history, philology, archaeology, ancient Near Eastern cultural studies, and critical view of the biblical text influenced the development of American biblical scholarship. Although many of Albright's arguments are problematic according to today's scrutiny, his multidisciplinary method revolutionized how scholars investigate and understand ancient Israel and its neighbors. My approach comes out of that scholarly heritage and strives to work in the spirit of Albright's multidisciplinary method. It is not, however, simply Albrightian. I have also been influenced by the minimalist critique's call to approach the biblical sources with more historical scrutiny.

### **The Minimalist Critique**

Critiques of the traditional approach to biblical scholarship (and by extension biblical archaeology) started gaining ground in the 1970s. J. Van Seters's *Abraham in History and Tradition* and T. Thompson's *The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives* call into question

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<sup>4</sup> This conviction is challenging in the context of ever-increasing specialization that is also necessary in scholarship; however, some problems require a multidisciplinary strategy. In the introduction to her work on prehistoric/pre-Hellenic Greece, Margalit Finkelberg urges, "The culmination of any historical enquiry is the point where the results of several disciplines coincide. ... We have to consider every scrap of information that can throw light on human prehistory, for the simple reason that it is only such a multi-disciplinary approach that can give us a wider perspective of the past and guarantee real progress in the field" (*Greeks and Pre-Greeks: Aegean Prehistory and Greek Heroic Tradition* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005], 8–9).

the conventional stance that the Bible's patriarchal stories were related to the historical and archaeological periods that they described.<sup>5</sup> Once the patriarchal narratives were successfully questioned, critiques of the exodus and settlement narratives followed. By the 1990s, reevaluation of the historicity of the early monarchy became the focus. Within this context, a core of scholars more aggressively challenged the position that the biblical texts could provide evidence for any historical inquiry.<sup>6</sup> This group, and others who followed in these views, became known as biblical minimalists.

Although some critics intended to do away with histories of ancient Israel altogether, the result of the minimalist challenge has benefited historical approaches to biblical scholarship and to the region. The debates forced reevaluation of assumptions and methods, and a much more self-reflective and rigorous discipline has emerged. The debate stimulated scholarship, as alternatives to the traditional historical reconstructions competed with defenders of more conventional histories.<sup>7</sup> The challenges have fueled creativity and invigorated historical inquiry for the region. It is in this spirit of more critical and creative inquiry that I attempt to examine the biblical history of the late eleventh and tenth centuries, primarily through the narratives in Samuel and Kings.

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<sup>5</sup> Thomas L. Thompson, *The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives; the Quest for the Historical Abraham* (BZAW 133; Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1974); John Van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975).

<sup>6</sup> Niels Peter Lemche, *The Israelites in History and Tradition* (London; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998); Keith W. Whitlam, *The Invention of Ancient Israel: The Silencing of Palestinian History* (New York: Routledge, 1996); Philip R. Davies, *In Search of "Ancient Israel"* (JSOTSup 148; Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1992).

<sup>7</sup> For a brief review of the influence on the discipline, see Megan Bishop Moore and Brad E. Kelle, *Biblical History and Israel's Past: The Changing Study of the Bible and History* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2011), 37–42; for more detailed treatment, see Megan Bishop Moore, *Philosophy and Practice in Writing a History of Ancient Israel* (New York: T&T Clark, 2006).

## The Contentious Tenth Century

Ancient Israel and its neighboring regions, together the southern Levant, have long captured the interest of scholars, explorers, and believers. Those investigators have rarely been satisfied with using the biblical text as their sole resource. Thus the region has been thoroughly examined by geographers, historians, ethnographers, archaeologists, and others. Each generation of researchers contends with the increasing depth of scholarship, in which there can be forgotten gems and from which there are entrenched assumptions. The tenth century debate that began in the 1980s-1990s stemmed in part from this investigative heritage.

For decades, biblical Israel's tenth century seemed to be synonymous with Israel's historical and archaeological past. Y. Yadin's declarations that he had found physical evidence of Solomon's building projects in the archaeological remains of Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer (1 Kings 9:15) were at the heart of the consensus view until I. Finkelstein proposed a radical shift in his understanding of the stratigraphy at major sites in the region.<sup>8</sup> The proposal sparked intense debate and reevaluation of not only "Solomonic" levels and architecture but also the entire stratigraphy of excavations whose chronologies were based on parallels to material culture at influential sites, most critically Megiddo, which in effect called into question all of Israel's archaeological chronologies. The consequences have

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<sup>8</sup> Israel Finkelstein, "The Archaeology of the United Monarchy: An Alternative View," *Levant* 28/1 (1996): 177–87; see also, more recently, idem, "A Great United Monarchy? Archaeological and Historical Perspectives," in *One God - One Cult - One Nation. Archaeological and Biblical Perspectives* (ed. Reinhard G. Kratz and Hermann Spieckermann; BZAW 405; Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2010), 3–28. For a recent review of the debates and how the biblical text has been (mis-)used, see William M. Schniedewind, "Excavating the Text of 1 Kings 9: In Search of the Gates of Solomon," in *Historical Biblical Archaeology and the Future: The New Pragmatism* (ed. Thomas E. Levy; London; Oakville, Conn.: Equinox Pub. Ltd., 2010), 241–49.

reached far beyond Israel's excavations. Sites and chronologies throughout the Levant and into the eastern Mediterranean are also being revisited as a result. Because this dissertation focuses on precisely the time period in question and involves the various regions impacted by Finkelstein's critique, a thorough review of his main points and how they have been received by current scholarship is necessary before we can proceed to the chronological and general historical framework that this study will rely on.

### **Chronological Setting**

Archaeologists use a variety of methods in determining the relative and absolute dates of material remains. For archaeology in the southern Levant, scholars have traditionally relied on stratigraphy, pottery seriation, and other parallels (e.g., architectural styles) to establish relative chronologies. Links to historical and narrative texts, frequently those of the Deuteronomistic History, have been invoked to assign absolute dates to archaeological strata and significant features. Today's archaeologists have added radiocarbon dating to their chronometric techniques. In theory, using multiple methods should provide more confidence in arriving at results; however, Finkelstein's challenge for the tenth century has caused debate and reevaluation of all approaches.

The debates are able to be so extensive because the agreed-upon chronological anchors for the region's earlier stages of the Iron Age are separated by four hundred years.<sup>9</sup> Egypt's administrative presence that began in the Late Bronze Age and continued into the Iron I is well-attested. At a number of sites, there are good associations between Egypt's

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<sup>9</sup> Amihai Mazar, "The Debate over the Chronology of the Iron Age in the Southern Levant: Its History, the Current Situation and a Suggested Resolution," in *The Bible and Radiocarbon Dating: Archaeology, Text and Science* (ed. Thomas E. Levy and Thomas Higham; London; Oakville, Conn.: Equinox, 2005), 17.

Twentieth Dynasty and key archaeological strata, setting one anchor in the mid-twelfth century. The earliest, undisputed anchor for the Iron II is at the end of the eighth century, when Assyrian destruction layers and occupation are evident across the landscape. In between these periods, there are good candidates for additional anchors that *could* have identifiable, archaeological correlates—Shoshenq’s campaign in the late tenth century and ninth century activity by the Omrides and Aramean campaigns—but evidence thought to be related to these events has also been disputed.

During this four hundred year span, there was little external influence on the region, which contributed in part to relatively stable ceramic traditions across centuries where historians and historical archaeologists anticipated great change based primarily on the biblical history, assuming, for example, that such dynamic events as the advent of the Davidic monarchy or the establishment of the northern kingdom of Israel would be evident in material culture. What has been remembered in biblical tradition as a period of radical political and cultural change did not produce as dramatic an effect on archaeological remains, at least as they are now interpreted by more cautious researchers.<sup>10</sup> Finkelstein’s challenge targeted this span that is lacking in external chronological anchors, affecting our understanding of the eleventh, tenth, and ninth centuries, where change in material culture is more subtle and region-specific, allowing for more freedom for reinterpretation than in other periods.

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<sup>10</sup> In light of the minimalist critique, it is far less common for archaeologists to link excavation results to biblical figures. This trend has not, however, deterred Eilat Mazar in discussing her excavations in Jerusalem (see Chapter Four) or the excavators of Khirbet Qeiyafa in their “Davidic” conclusions, which are most apparent in general publicity, but more conservative in official publications; see Nir Hasson, “Excavations Uncover 3,000-Year-Old Palace, Believed to Be that of King David,” *Haaretz*, July 18, 2013; Yosef Garfinkel and Saar Ganor, eds., *Khirbet Qeiyafa Vol. 1, Excavation Report 2007-2008* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society; Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2009).

## Finkelstein's Low Chronology

Inspired by the minimalist critique of the biblical histories, Finkelstein turned his attention to problems he had observed in various Iron I and early Iron II sites. He proposed an across-the-board shift in absolute chronology, lowering dates of strata by a century across the region. The most controversial result of this Low Chronology (LC) was the reassignment of so-called "Solomonic" architecture and urban remains to the ninth century, leaving to the tenth century no monumental constructions or urban settlements. The biblical history of a great Davidic and Solomonic state, it was determined, could not be reconciled with this new scheme.<sup>11</sup>

Finkelstein's initial challenge was published in 1996 and has been revised frequently since then.<sup>12</sup> The foundational points of his proposal have shifted considerably as a result of responses to his arguments.<sup>13</sup> The most important have been Philistine pottery, parallels to Omride sites, radiocarbon debates, and assigning destruction layers to historical campaigns.

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<sup>11</sup> David W. Jamieson-Drake's work has been highly influential in the assumptions about the necessary elements of statehood (*Scribes and Schools in Monarchic Judah: A Socio-Archeological Approach* (SWBA 9; JSOTSup 109; Sheffield, England: Almond Press, 1991).

<sup>12</sup> Finkelstein, "The Archaeology of the United Monarchy." For updates devoted to his proposal, see idem, "A Low Chronology Update: Archaeology, History and Bible," in *The Bible and Radiocarbon Dating: Archaeology, Text and Science* (ed. Thomas E. Levy and Thomas Higham; London; Oakville, Conn.: Equinox, 2005), 31–42; idem, "A Great United Monarchy?"; Finkelstein and Piasezky, "Is the Gap Narrowing?" Finkelstein has also published numerous iterations of his system as refutations or endorsements to the publication of excavation results, radiocarbon results, and key finds that appear to have an impact on the debates.

<sup>13</sup> Although Finkelstein's position has evolved, his adjustments are not often made with explicit acknowledgement of his critics. Raz Kletter provides one of the sharpest evaluations of Finkelstein's overall method in "Chronology and United Monarchy: A Methodological Review," *ZDPV* 120 (2004): 13–54. He calls attention to many inconsistencies, problems in logic, and problems in Finkelstein's reliance on certain theories.

## **Philistine Pottery**

The linchpin of Finkelstein's original argument was his claim that pottery associated with the Philistines' initial settlement was subsequent to, not concurrent with, the Egyptian Twentieth Dynasty as the Philistine pottery had not been found alongside Egyptian material culture.<sup>14</sup> The consequence of this claim was that Philistine ceramic traditions would be assigned a lower absolute chronology that could then be used to date eleventh and tenth century assemblages where Philistine wares were found. Based on stratigraphic parallels, this shift affected sites throughout the region.<sup>15</sup> His argument relies on the assumption that if two groups of material culture are not found together, they cannot be contemporary. The most damning critique of this position comes from studies of ethnic identity and interaction, which have shown that contemporary and neighboring groups can, in fact, practice avoidance of certain symbols of ethnicity to reflect their membership in or separation from a group. S. Bunimovitz and A. Faust countered the Philistine pottery component with just such an argument.<sup>16</sup> In Finkelstein's 2010 update to his LC scheme, he completely omits this part of his original claim.<sup>17</sup>

## **Northern Parallels**

Finkelstein's chronology also rests on parallels among the sites of Megiddo, Jezreel, and Samaria. Because of its interregional importance, long occupational history, and

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<sup>14</sup> Finkelstein, "The Archaeology of the United Monarchy," 179–180; see also idem, "The Date of the Settlement of the Philistines in Canaan," *TA* 22 (1995): 213–39.

<sup>15</sup> See Finkelstein, "The Archaeology of the United Monarchy," 179–180.

<sup>16</sup> Shlomo Bunimovitz and Avraham Faust, "Chronological Separation, Geographic Segregation, or Ethnic Demarcation? Ethnography and the Iron Age Low Chronology," *BASOR* 322 (2001): 1–10.

<sup>17</sup> Finkelstein, "A Great United Monarchy?."

prominence in biblical history, Megiddo has been at the core of chronological discussions since excavations began there more than a century ago. Parallels between Megiddo and other sites, especially Samaria, have been observed prior to Finkelstein's 1996 proposal; however, the LC has focused intense attention on the early Iron Age levels of these three sites.<sup>18</sup>

Finkelstein sets up the Jezreel component with the reasoning that since the main Jezreel compound was built by the Omrides and destroyed at the end of that dynasty, then the Jezreel pottery assemblage can be equated with the ninth century BCE.<sup>19</sup> This point is agreed on by everyone. He then notes that O. Zimhoni found the ninth-century Jezreel assemblage to be "somewhat similar to the pottery of Megiddo VA-IVB."<sup>20</sup> Thus, he reasoned that the Megiddo stratum should be dated to the ninth century with Jezreel. Zimhoni also noted, however, that the pottery below the Omride compound was the same as that within it. Many of the same pottery forms continued from the pre-Omride assemblage through the Omride occupation at the site, that is in the tenth *and* ninth centuries.<sup>21</sup> A. Mazar has noted that the same observations have been made about the tenth to ninth century strata at Hazor and Tel Rehov.<sup>22</sup> These similarities have led to another generally agreed upon principle, which is that it is difficult to distinguish between tenth and ninth centuries based

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<sup>18</sup> Norma Franklin traces the architectural comparison between Megiddo and Samaria back to Schumacher in 1908; see Norma Franklin, "Response to David Ussishkin," *BASOR* 348 (2007): 71–73. Crowfoot and Kenyon also noted the similarities; see David Ussishkin, "Megiddo and Samaria: A Rejoinder to Norma Franklin," *BASOR* 348 (2007): 68–69.

<sup>19</sup> Finkelstein, "The Archaeology of the United Monarchy," 183.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> Mazar, "The Debate over the Chronology," 17.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

on these ceramic assemblages, although some progress on subdividing the Iron IIA is being made (see below).<sup>23</sup> What this means for Finkelstein's Megiddo is that although VA-IVB is similar to the Omride compound's assemblage, it is also similar to the pre-Omride assemblage, thus Jezreel's pottery alone cannot provide an exclusively ninth-century date for Megiddo VA-IVB.

Finkelstein's reasoning is similar for parallels between Megiddo VA-IVB and Samaria's architecture. In his 2005 iteration, he added a supporting argument based on architectural parallels between Megiddo and Samaria. Like Jezreel, Samaria's monumental remains can be confidently associated with the Omrides in the ninth century. Based on this premise and following N. Franklin's arguments, Finkelstein explains that similarities in the masons' marks between the Omride palace at Samaria and Megiddo's Palace 1723 (Stratum VA-IVB) leave us no choice but to understand that they were part of the same construction program.<sup>24</sup> Since Samaria must be attributed to the Omrides and the ninth century, Finkelstein concludes that Megiddo's Palace 1723 must be a ninth-century construction as well.

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<sup>23</sup> Ze'ev Herzog and Lily Singer-Avitz, "Redefining the Centre: The Emergence of State in Judah," *TA* 31/2 (2004): 209–44; idem, "Sub-Dividing the Iron Age IIA in Northern Israel: A Suggested Solution to the Chronological Debate," *TA* 33/2 (2006): 163–95.

<sup>24</sup> Finkelstein, "A Low Chronology Update," 36–37. Norma Franklin has published numerous articles based on her Ph.D. dissertation ("State Formation in the Northern Kingdom of Israel: Some Tangible Symbols of Statehood"; Ph. D. dissertation, Tel Aviv University, 2006) that compared Samaria, Megiddo, and Jezreel. For the more relevant, see Norma Franklin, "Masons' Marks from the 9th Century BCE Northern Kingdom of Israel: Evidence of the Nascent Carian Alphabet?," *Kadmos* 40 (2001): 107–16; idem, "Samaria: From the Bedrock to the Omride Palace," *Levant* 36 (2004): 189–202; idem, "Correlation and Chronology: Samaria and Megiddo Redux," in *The Bible and Radiocarbon Dating: Archaeology, Text and Science* (ed. Thomas E. Levy and Thomas Higham; London; Oakville, Conn.: Equinox, 2005), 310–22; idem, "Revealing Stratum V at Megiddo," *BASOR* 342 (2006): 95–111; idem, "Trademarks of the Omride Builders?," in *Bene Israel: Studies in the Archaeology of Israel and the Levant During the Bronze and Iron Ages in Honour of Israel Finkelstein* (ed. Alexander Fantalkin and Assaf Yasur-Landau, CHANE 31; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 45–54.

Critiques of Franklin's analysis and conclusions, however, weaken Finkelstein's revised claim. Franklin's work has been thoroughly reviewed and heavily critiqued in publications by D. Ussishkin and D. Frese (with T. E. Levy and D. N. Freedman). Ussishkin evaluates Franklin's stratigraphic and chronological interpretations point-by-point and rejects her links between Samaria and Megiddo.<sup>25</sup> Frese focuses in more detail on her discussions of masons' marks, cubit lengths, and architectural styles, exposing serious inconsistencies and problematic assumptions.<sup>26</sup> In the end, Franklin and Finkelstein do not convincingly explain why the architectural features they cite must be exclusive to a narrow timeframe, let alone to Omride palaces. The reliance on parallels to Samaria does not provide the stable foundation to his chronology that he claims.

### **Radiocarbon Dating**

A little more than a decade ago, radiocarbon dating came to the foreground in the chronology debates. While it had been a component of excavations for some time, a number of publications in the early 2000s had the effect of both highlighting the contribution radiocarbon dating could make to the chronology debates and exposing the limits of the

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<sup>25</sup> Ussishkin, "Megiddo and Samaria." Ussishkin's critique was followed by a response by Franklin, in which she emphasizes that her arguments rely on unpublished data from the early excavations of the sites that Ussishkin did not take into consideration; see Franklin, "Response to David Ussishkin."

<sup>26</sup> Daniel A. Frese and David Noel Freedman, "Samaria I as a Chronological Anchor of Finkelstein's Low Chronology: An Appraisal," *ErIsr* 25 (Ephraim Stern Volume; Jerusalem: The Israel Exploration Society, 2009), 36\* – 44\*; Daniel A. Frese and Thomas E. Levy, "Four Pillars of the Iron Age Low Chronology," in *Historical Biblical Archaeology and the Future: The New Pragmatism* (ed. Thomas E. Levy; London; Oakville, Conn.: Equinox Pub. Ltd., 2010), 187–202. A similar claim to the masons' marks argument used to be made regarding chambered gates and Solomon's constructions. It is now well-accepted that the chambered gate design was not exclusive to Israelite sites, and it cannot be used as an identifier for Solomonic activity. Finkelstein and Franklin's reasoning contains the same problems.

technique.<sup>27</sup> Finkelstein was a contributor to these earliest discussions and has made radiometric dating a major component of his research. He relies on it as another support for his LC.

A number of comprehensive research projects grew from the initial (and conflicting) reports of radiocarbon testing. T. E. Levy and T. Higham approached the new wave of research by organizing a conference at Oxford to bring the archaeologists, historians, and radiocarbon dating specialists together. The volume based on this conference documents the problems and goals for the application of this science to biblical archaeology.<sup>28</sup> Responding to unexpected, dramatically low results from Tel Dor, A. Gilboa and I. Sharon, later joined by E. Boaretto, initiated a large-scale project aimed at collecting radiocarbon measurements from as many sites in the region as possible. The result, the Iron Age Dating Project, has done much work to compile and evaluate data from more than twenty sites.<sup>29</sup> Following up

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<sup>27</sup> Separate excavation projects produced dramatically different results for the same archaeological phases. Initially, Tel Dor's samples resulted in an "ultra low" chronology, results from Megiddo were in line with Finkelstein's Low Chronology, samples from Tel Rehov were compatible with the more traditional chronology (represented by Mazar's Modified Conventional Chronology [MCC]), and dates from Khirbat en-Nahas situated complex metallurgy and fortifications earlier than previously thought possible for the region of Edom. See Ayelet Gilboa and Ilan Sharon, "An Archaeological Contribution to the Early Iron Age Chronological Debate: Alternative Chronologies for Phoenicia and Their Effects on the Levant, Cyprus, and Greece," *BASOR* 322 (2003): 1–75; H. J. Bruins, J. van der Plicht, and Amihai Mazar, "14C Dates from Tel Rehov: Iron-Age Chronology, Pharaohs, and Hebrew Kings," *Science* 300 (2003): 315–18; Israel Finkelstein and Eli Piasezky, "Comment on '14C Dates from Tel Rehov: Iron Age Chronology, Pharaohs, and Hebrew Kings,'" *Science* (2003): 568b; Israel Finkelstein and Eliazer Piasezky, "Recent Radiocarbon Results and King Solomon," *Antiquity* 77/298 (2003): 771–79; Thomas E. Levy et al., "Reassessing the Chronology of Biblical Edom: New Excavations and 14C Dates from Khirbat En-Nahas (Jordan)," *Antiquity* 78/302 (2004): 865–79; Mazar, "The Debate over the Chronology."

<sup>28</sup> Thomas E. Levy and Thomas Higham, eds., *The Bible and Radiocarbon Dating: Archaeology, Text and Science* (London; Oakville, Conn.: Equinox, 2005).

<sup>29</sup> Their results so far appear in several publications: Gilboa and Sharon, "An Archaeological Contribution"; Elisabetta Boaretto et al., "Dating the Iron I/II Transition in Israel: First Intercomparison Results," *Radiocarbon* 47/1 (2005): 39–55; Ilan Sharon et al., "The Early Iron Age Dating Project: Introduction, Methodology, Progress Report and an Update on the Tel Dor Dates," in *The Bible and Radiocarbon Dating: Archaeology, Text and Science* (ed. Thomas E. Levy and Thomas Higham; London; Oakville, Conn.: Equinox,

on the initial radiocarbon findings from Khirbat en-Nahas (KEN), Levy's research project (the Edom Lowlands Regional Archaeological Project [ELRAP]) has amassed an unprecedented collection of samples from southern Jordan. While the initial findings were fiercely debated because the eleventh to ninth century results appeared to be too early for the region—scholarly consensus held that social complexity of the sort apparent from the KEN remains could not have existed in Edom prior to the seventh century—the subsequent research and the scope of the ELRAP collection have shown conclusively that the Iron Age chronology of southern Jordan must be extended centuries earlier than previously thought.<sup>30</sup>

The increase in data collections and results has, without question, advanced our understanding of ancient chronologies; however, it has also revealed significant limits in the application of radiocarbon dating to the Iron I-II and tenth century problems. It appears that more information is not always better. The models and evaluation techniques that were devised for individual samples or intra-site collections appear to be problematic when applied to larger data collections. Frese and Levy's review of the Iron Age Dating Project

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2005), 65–92; Ilan Sharon et al., “Report on the First Stage of the Iron Age Dating Project in Israel: Supporting a Low Chronology,” *Radiocarbon* 49/1 (2007): 1–46; Ilan Sharon, Ayelet Gilboa, and Elisabetta Boaretto, “The Iron Age Chronology of the Levant: The State-of-Research at the 14C Dating Project, Spring 2006,” in *Israel in Transition: From Late Bronze II to Iron IIA (c. 1250-850 B.C.E.): Volume 1: The Archaeology* (ed. Lester L. Grabbe; New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 177–92.

<sup>30</sup> Thomas E. Levy et al., “High-Precision Radiocarbon Dating and Historical Biblical Archaeology in Southern Jordan,” *PNAS* 105/43 (2008): 16460–65; Thomas E. Levy, Erez Ben-Yosef, and Mohammad Najjar, “The Iron Age Edomite Lowlands Regional Archaeological Project: Research, Design, and Methodology,” in *New Insights into the Iron Age Archaeology of Edom, Southern Jordan: Surveys, Excavations and Research from the University of California, San Diego & Department of Antiquities of Jordan, Edom Lowlands Regional Archaeology Project (ELRAP)* (ed. Thomas E. Levy et al.; Monumenta Archaeologica 35; Los Angeles: The Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press, 2014), 2–4; Thomas E. Levy et al., “Excavations at Khirbat En-Nahas, 2002-2009: An Iron Age Copper Production Center in the Lowlands of Edom,” in *New Insights into the Iron Age Archaeology of Edom, Southern Jordan: Surveys, Excavations and Research from the University of California, San Diego & Department of Antiquities of Jordan, Edom Lowlands Regional Archaeology Project (ELRAP)* (ed. Thomas E. Levy et al.; Monumenta Archaeologica 35; Los Angeles: The Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press, 2014), 88–245, esp. 90–92.

exposes the problems inherent in trying to refine results into narrow enough date ranges for the decade-level accuracy that is needed to impact the disputes.<sup>31</sup> Researchers are now working on new models that might better handle the nature of the data that is currently available.<sup>32</sup>

This is not to say that radiocarbon dating has not been effective in advancing our knowledge in critical aspects of the chronology issues, but it cannot provide the definitive answers many had hoped. A. Mazar explains the advances and limitations with results from Megiddo and Tel Rehov. He notes that two radiocarbon samples from the same Megiddo stratum, H-5 (the equivalent of Chicago's VA-IVB), illustrate the Iron IIA problem. One dates to 1000-925 and the other to 896-809.<sup>33</sup> Radiocarbon dating of Tel Rehov's two Late Iron IIA strata, V and IV, reveal a similar situation: stratum IV is confidently situated in the ninth century, but stratum V has produced samples dated to the tenth century, overlapping tenth and ninth centuries, and ninth century.<sup>34</sup> Samples from the important Area C, stratum V, resulted in dates that span the late tenth-early ninth century.<sup>35</sup> Based on examples like

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<sup>31</sup> Frese and Levy, "Four Pillars of the Iron Age Low Chronology," 193–197.

<sup>32</sup> Levy et al., "High-Precision Radiocarbon Dating and Historical Biblical Archaeology in Southern Jordan"; Israel Finkelstein and Eli Piasezky, "The Iron I/IIA Transition in the Levant: A Reply to Mazar and Bronk Ramsey and a New Perspective," *Radiocarbon* 52/4 (2010): 1667–80; Amihai Mazar and Christopher Bronk Ramsey, "A Response to Finkelstein and Piasezky's Criticism and 'New Perspective,'" *Radiocarbon* 52/4 (2010): 1681–88; Israel Finkelstein and Eli Piasezky, "Radiocarbon Dating the Iron Age in the Levant: A Bayesian Model for Six Ceramic Phases and Six Transitions," *Antiquity* 84/324 (2010): 374–75; Mazar, "Is the Gap Narrowing?"; Alexander Fantalkin, Israel Finkelstein, and Eli Piasezky, "Iron Age Mediterranean Chronology: A Rejoinder," *Radiocarbon* 53/1 (2011): 1–20; Sharen Lee, Christopher Bronk Ramsey, and Amihai Mazar, "Iron Age Chronology in Israel: Results from Modeling with a Trapezoidal Bayesian Framework," *Radiocarbon* 55/2-3 (2013); Levy et al., "Excavations at Khirbat En-Nahas, 2002-2009."

<sup>33</sup> Mazar, "Is the Gap Narrowing?," 107.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

these, researchers have concluded that the Iron IIA was a longer period than previously imagined, that it began during the tenth century (earlier or later in that century is the current dispute), and that it continued through to the second half of the ninth century. The margin of error in the technology, however, means that key contexts cannot be divided between a Solomonic era and an Omride one, to use the biblical periodization frequently invoked in the chronology disputes. And regardless of the results that the radiocarbon revolution provides, historiographic challenges remain.<sup>36</sup> At present, radiocarbon testing has succeeded in reducing the “gap” between the higher and lower chronologies to a matter of decades, but the precision of the science simply cannot be pushed to narrow it any more.<sup>37</sup>

### **Destruction Levels and Shoshenq’s Campaign**

Finkelstein’s current discussions of the LC emphasize the importance of identifying destruction levels in both the traditional and historical archaeological methods along with the aid of radiocarbon techniques. The identification of destruction layers with known historical events (military campaigns/coups and natural disasters) was less prominent in his earlier arguments, where they were discussed as a result of the reassignment of key strata to later centuries. For example, Megiddo VIA’s destruction, which had previously been attributed to David, was attributed by Finkelstein to Shoshenq I in his earlier arguments (see below). Coordinating with stratigraphic parallels, this allowed Finkelstein to shift destruction layers previously attributed to David (early tenth century) to Shoshenq (late

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<sup>36</sup> Sue Sherratt, “High Precision Dating and Archaeological Chronologies: Revisiting an Old Problem,” in *The Bible and Radiocarbon Dating: Archaeology, Text and Science* (ed. Thomas E. Levy and Thomas Higham; London; Oakville, Conn.: Equinox, 2005), 114–26.

<sup>37</sup> Finkelstein and Piasezky, “Is the Gap Narrowing?”; Mazar, “Is the Gap Narrowing?”

tenth century), and many of those previously attributed to Shoshenq to the Omride dynasty and Hazael (mid-ninth century). Finkelstein would then rely on these attributions when discussing the greater implications of his LC.

Discussions of destruction layers and, by extension, Shoshenq's campaign to the Levant have become increasingly prominent in Finkelstein's publications.<sup>38</sup> His shift in focus can be explained by the importance of Shoshenq's campaign to studies of the tenth century and by the radiocarbon revolution that swept through the debates. Before radiocarbon dating came to the fore, coordinating destruction layers among sites and with historical events was an important part of arguments both for and against the LC. Because arguments involving destruction layers were used by both sides of the debate, Finkelstein's position has varied. He has expressed skepticism about the identification and usefulness of destruction layers but also relies heavily on them to illustrate his claims. The importance of the relationship between radiocarbon dating and destruction levels in his current argumentation is evident in the updated schematic representation of the Iron Age in recent articles.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Israel Finkelstein, "The Campaign of Shoshenq I to Palestine: A Guide to the 10th Century BCE Polity," *ZDPV* 118 (2002): 109–35; idem, "The Last Labayu: King Saul and the Expansion of the First North Israelite Territorial Entity," in *Essays on Ancient Israel and Its Near Eastern Context: A Tribute to Nadav Na'aman* (ed. Yairah Amit; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 171–87; Alexander Fantalkin and Israel Finkelstein, "The Sheshonq I Campaign and the 8th-Century BCE Earthquake—More on the Archaeology and History of the South in the Iron I-IIA," *TA* 33 (2006): 18–42; Israel Finkelstein and Eliazer Piasezky, "The Iron I-IIA in the Highlands and Beyond: 14C Anchors, Pottery Phases and The Shoshenq I Campaign," *Levant* 38/1 (2006): 45–61; idem, "Radiocarbon Dating and Philistine Chronology with an Addendum on El-Ahwat," *E&L* 17 (2007): 73–82; Israel Finkelstein, "Destructions: Megiddo as a Case Study," in *Exploring the Longue Durée: Essays in Honor of Lawrence E. Stager* (ed. J. David Schloen; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 113–26; Israel Finkelstein and Eli Piasezky, "Radiocarbon-Dated Destruction Layers: A Skeleton for Iron Age Chronology in the Levant," *OJA* 28/3 (2009): 255–74; idem, "Is the Gap Narrowing?"

<sup>39</sup> Finkelstein and Piasezky, "Radiocarbon-Dated Destruction Layers," 260; reproduced in idem, "Is the Gap Narrowing?," 52.

As Finkelstein's own applications of this evidence show, the identification of destruction layers is not as straightforward as it may seem. It is rarely the case that definitive evidence of the aggressor is found with the destroyed remains. The most famous exception is the destruction of Lachish stratum III during Sennacherib's campaign in 701 BCE, documented in reliefs discovered at Nineveh. The campaign left behind weapons, armor, and a siege ramp at Lachish.<sup>40</sup> Often, evidence of destruction is not apparent across an entire site, and identification with a known event relies on our incomplete historical record, which is exceptionally limited in the eleventh through ninth centuries. Complicating our reliance on the few records that are available is the tendency for conquerors to inflate their conquests on their victory monuments or imply domination through iconography rather than explicit text. We must also acknowledge the possibility that sites were destroyed in events that are unattested in our sources.

To take Shoshenq's Karnak relief as an illustration of the problems, many questions result from closer scrutiny of what appears at first glance to be a straightforward and rich resource for the tenth century. To begin, while some names are easily related to known sites (such as Megiddo, Rehov, and Arad), others are not as confidently identified or remain unidentified.<sup>41</sup> The monument leaves us with many questions: Since the relief is damaged, which late tenth-century destruction levels whose names are *not* preserved or recorded can reasonably be attributed to him? Would it have been in Shoshenq's interest to destroy the

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<sup>40</sup> For a recent discussion of the siege, the archaeology, and the reliefs, see David Ussishkin, "Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah: The Archaeological Perspective with an Emphasis on Lachish and Jerusalem," in *Sennacherib at the Gates of Jerusalem: Story, History and Historiography* (ed. Isaac Kalimi and Seth Richardson; Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2014), 75–103.

<sup>41</sup> Frank Clancy, "Shishak/Shoshenq's Travels," *JSOT* 86 (1999): 3–23; Anson F. Rainey and R. Steven Notley, *The Sacred Bridge: Carta's Atlas of the Biblical World* (Jerusalem: Carta, 2006), 185–189.

locations listed?<sup>42</sup> Or does the list encompass locales subdued by methods other than force which are difficult to detect archaeologically, such as intimidation and tribute? Does the list include sites that Shoshenq only *claimed* to have dominated in order to improve his depiction? The uncertainty represented by these questions creates ample room for a variety of interpretations and hypotheses.

Finkelstein has invested much in the Shoshenq campaign, even while shifting his position regarding how the campaign relates to the material record. As critics have shown, Finkelstein has encountered problems trying to coordinate the Shoshenq list and his LC with phases in ceramic assemblages and historical reconstructions.<sup>43</sup> Two examples cover most of his argumentation, the Beersheba Valley and Megiddo VIA. Regarding the Beersheba Valley, Finkelstein agrees that Arad XII was the site referred to as *'rd rbt* in Shoshenq's list; however he has also built a claim that a "Tel Masos chiefdom" dominated the south and reached its height only *after* Shoshenq's campaign.<sup>44</sup> This is in contrast to the prevailing

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<sup>42</sup> Some researchers advise that seeking destruction layers demonstrates a misunderstanding of what Shoshenq's campaign sought to do; see Clancy, "Shishak/Shoshenq's Travels"; Herzog and Singer-Avitz, "Sub-Dividing the Iron Age IIA," 185–186 and sources therein.

<sup>43</sup> Kletter, "Chronology and United Monarchy," 35–36; Herzog and Singer-Avitz, "Sub-Dividing the Iron Age IIA," 188–190; Amihai Mazar, "The Spade and the Text: The Interaction between Archaeology and Israelite History Relating to the Tenth-Ninth Centuries BCE," in *Understanding the History of Ancient Israel* (ed. Hugh G. M. Williamson; Proceedings of the British Academy 143; Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 145–152; idem, "From 1200 to 850 B.C.E.: Remarks on Some Selected Archaeological Issues," in *Israel in Transition: From Late Bronze II to Iron IIA (c. 1250-850 B.C.E.)* (ed. Lester L. Grabbe; Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 491, 521; New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 99–101, 107, 110; Frese and Levy, "Four Pillars of the Iron Age Low Chronology," 198–199; Amihai Mazar, "Archaeology and the Biblical Narrative: The Case of the United Monarchy," in *One God—One Cult—One Nation. Archaeological and Biblical Perspectives* (ed. Reinhard G. Kratz and Hermann Spieckermann; BZAW 405; Berlin; New York: De Gruyter, 2010), 31–32.

<sup>44</sup> Argued in Fantalkin and Finkelstein, "The Sheshonq I Campaign"; and Israel Finkelstein, Alexander Fantalkin, and Eliazer Piasezky, "Three Snapshots of the Iron IIA: The Northern Valleys, the Southern Steppe, and Jerusalem," in *Israel in Transition: From Late Bronze II to Iron IIA (c. 1250-850 B.C.E.): Volume 1: The Archaeology* (ed. Lester L. Grabbe, Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 491; New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 32–44.

view (once also held by Finkelstein<sup>45</sup>) that Shoshenq targeted an already thriving network and contributed to the decline of the south's late Iron I – early Iron II prosperity.<sup>46</sup>

Finkelstein has failed to show how Shoshenq's presumed takeover of this network prior to its success is evidenced in the material record. We would imagine there would be an indication of significant Egyptian activity at the critical moment of growth.<sup>47</sup> In order to shift the period of prosperity, he downplays Tel Masos's excavators' reports of destruction evidence and emphasizes that ceramic assemblages date to *either* the Iron I *or* early Iron IIA, rather than understand the assemblages as spanning the two periods (which are without stratigraphic distinction at the site).<sup>48</sup> Finkelstein chooses the later dates. His position has not gained wide acceptance.

Finkelstein's most dramatic case of shifting chronologies and destruction levels is Megiddo. In his original proposal, he reassigned the destruction of Megiddo VIA to

<sup>45</sup> Finkelstein, "The Campaign of Shoshenq I."

<sup>46</sup> Herzog and Singer-Avitz, "Sub-Dividing the Iron Age IIA," 188–190; Levy et al., "High-Precision Radiocarbon Dating and Historical Biblical Archaeology in Southern Jordan"; Erez Ben-Yosef et al., "A New Chronological Framework for Iron Age Copper Production at Timna (Israel)," *BASOR* 367 (2012): 64–65; Thomas E. Levy, Mohammad Najjar, and Erez Ben-Yosef, "Conclusion," in *New Insights into the Iron Age Archaeology of Edom, Southern Jordan: Surveys, Excavations and Research from the University of California, San Diego & Department of Antiquities of Jordan, Edom Lowlands Regional Archaeology Project (ELRAP)* (ed. Thomas E. Levy et al.; Monumenta Archaeologica 35; Los Angeles: The Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press, 2014), 981–990.

<sup>47</sup> Contra Finkelstein, Fantalkin, and Piasezky, "Three Snapshots of the Iron IIA" 39. While there is evidence of Egyptian-related material culture, none of it is clear evidence of Egyptian dominance. Rather it is explained as the result of emulation and exchange (see Chapter Six; for a theoretical basis to such distinctions, see Carolyn R. Higginbotham, *Egyptianization and Elite Emulation in Ramesside Palestine: Governance and Accommodation on the Imperial Periphery* [CHANE 2; Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2000]). Finkelstein et al. encounter the same problem in proposing Philistine management of Egyptian dominance ("Three Snapshots" 39). Finkelstein asserts implicit arguments that the sites were not yet thriving by explaining away the *rbt*, "great," description for Arad in the campaign list (see Fantalkin and Finkelstein, "The Sheshonq I Campaign," 19; reiterated in Finkelstein, Fantalkin, and Piasezky, "Three Snapshots of the Iron IIA," 35). These points have no bearing on his claims about the relationship between Shoshenq's activities and the southern network.

<sup>48</sup> Fantalkin and Finkelstein, "The Sheshonq I Campaign," 20. For direct refutation of these positions, see Herzog and Singer-Avitz, "Sub-Dividing the Iron Age IIA," 188–190.

Shoshenq.<sup>49</sup> Traditionally, David was credited with this destruction, and Shoshenq's campaign was associated with the end of Megiddo VA-IVB (previously understood to be the Solomonic city).<sup>50</sup> He based this shift on the absence of Mycenaean III C:1b pottery at Megiddo and his analysis of Philistine Bichrome pottery, noting that the Megiddo examples were "comprised mainly of degenerated forms, somewhat similar to, or even later than" Tel Qasile X.<sup>51</sup> From these two observations and a proposed gap following stratum VIIA, he concluded that Megiddo VIA should be dated to the tenth century and therefore must have been destroyed by Shoshenq. Finkelstein maintained this position even after severe criticism forced out his Philistine pottery premise for the claim. Recently, however, radiocarbon dates from Megiddo VIA (Tel Aviv's Level K-4) indicate an early tenth-century destruction. Finkelstein has conceded this point.<sup>52</sup> He maintains the mid-ninth century date for the destruction of stratum VA-IVB, traditionally attributed to Shoshenq, and attributes it to Hazael's attack on Israel.<sup>53</sup> In this interpretation, Megiddo's mention in Shoshenq's list and the discovery of his victory stele at the site are evidence of Shoshenq's visit to Megiddo but not necessarily destruction of it.

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<sup>49</sup> Finkelstein, "The Archaeology of the United Monarchy," 182–183.

<sup>50</sup> That Shoshenq visited the site is accepted based on the stele found there (though not *in situ*) and Megiddo's mention in the Karnak list.

<sup>51</sup> Finkelstein, "The Archaeology of the United Monarchy," 182.

<sup>52</sup> Finkelstein and Piasezky, "Is the Gap Narrowing?," 51. The radiocarbon results were originally reported in their full range, i.e., 1005-925 BCE (Finkelstein and Piasezky, "The Iron I-IIA in the Highlands and Beyond," 47–48), and described as mid-tenth century (Finkelstein, "Destructions: Megiddo as a Case Study," 116).

<sup>53</sup> Finkelstein, "Destructions: Megiddo as a Case Study," 118, 121. The interpretations Finkelstein gives for Hazael's military motivations and decision not to utterly destroy Megiddo and contemporary sites (e.g., to drive out inhabitants but preserve cities for administrative use) cannot be considered corroborating proof of his chronological determinations.

Outside of Finkelstein's proposal, Shoshenq's campaign is traditionally understood as an attack on a growing polity centered in Jerusalem (cf. 1 Kgs 14:25).<sup>54</sup> Since Finkelstein denies that such an entity yet existed, he poses an alternative historical reconstruction that two separate polities were targets of the campaign. For the south, he has revived his "Tel Masos Chiefdom" argument and expanded it so that the Tel Masos polity (and later Shoshenq's administration) governed over the Negev highland sites, the Besor Valley, and Beersheba Valley, and controlled the Faynan copper production in southern Jordan.<sup>55</sup> He argues that the economic potential evident in this growing polity drew the attention of Egypt's king.

To account for the other place names in the Karnak list, particularly those in the hill country near Jerusalem and those in the Jezreel Valley, Finkelstein turns to the biblical narrative and suggests the "Saulide entity" was the target in the north.<sup>56</sup> Since Saul's reign is traditionally dated to the late eleventh century and Shoshenq's campaign to the late tenth century, Finkelstein has to explain how the two can be contemporary. Rather than explain this outright, he calls into question the biblical chronology from which Saul's reign is derived and the date of Shoshenq's campaign. While Saul's chronology is admittedly far

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<sup>54</sup> See, for example, Mazar, "Archaeology and the Biblical Narrative." I would amend this characterization to allow for various successful power centers or lucrative interests that we now know of in the region. Logical targets that may not have been connected to a Jerusalem-based polity would include the southern copper network discussed above or the wealthy site of Tel Rehov.

<sup>55</sup> Again, this is not the prevailing view and is no longer tenable with new research from the Faynan region. See Neil G. Smith and Thomas E. Levy, "Iron Age Ceramics from Edom: A New Typology," in *New Insights into the Iron Age Archaeology of Edom, Southern Jordan: Surveys, Excavations and Research from the University of California, San Diego & Department of Antiquities of Jordan, Edom Lowlands Regional Archaeology Project (ELRAP)* (ed. Thomas E. Levy et al.; Monumenta Archaeologica 35; Los Angeles: The Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press, 2014), 450–453; Levy, Najjar, and Ben-Yosef, "Conclusion," 979–986. See Chapters Six and Seven for further discussion.

<sup>56</sup> Finkelstein, "The Last Labayu."

from precise and he very well may have been active in the tenth, not eleventh, century (see below), the ca. 925 date of Shoshenq's campaign has been reevaluated with and without consideration of the biblical evidence and is well-accepted.<sup>57</sup> It is difficult to follow Finkelstein's suggestion of contemporaneity without more detailed argumentation. There are good correlations between the sites mentioned in Shoshenq's list and the geography related to Saul's history; however, the importance of these sites is not limited to Saul's activities. The areas targeted by Shoshenq were of interest to various groups and do not need to be confined to Saul's history, or for that matter, to David's or Solomon's.<sup>58</sup>

### **North versus South**

Finkelstein's attempt to align Shoshenq with Saul's reign does call attention to important geographic parallels. However, his arguments also expose the bias in his work to avoid any implication that political or economic activity in the region outside of Saul's territory, Finkelstein's Tel Masos polity, or the Philistines could have existed or that it could have been of interest to Egypt. This avoidance is a considerable problem. It exposes inconsistent treatment of the evidence and conflicting logic. For example, scholars have suggested that Jerusalem and other Judahite towns do not appear in the list either because the names were lost in the damaged sections or because the towns cooperated with Egypt and avoided punitive action during the campaign. Finkelstein dismisses explanations for the Judahite omissions as "possible, but highly unlikely" but, in the same publication, puts

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<sup>57</sup> Andrew Shortland, "Shishak, King of Egypt: The Challenges of Egyptian Calendrical Chronology in the Iron Age," in *The Bible and Radiocarbon Dating: Archaeology, Text and Science* (ed. Thomas E. Levy and Thomas Higham; London; Oakville, Conn.: Equinox, 2005), 43–54.

<sup>58</sup> See Chapters Two and Seven.

forward just these possibilities without qualification to account for the lack of Philistine sites in the list.<sup>59</sup>

Finkelstein's inconsistent methods are most pronounced in his treatment of the biblical text. His defense of viewing Saul's domain as a more plausible target for Shoshenq's campaign rests on a consensus among biblical scholars that some aspects of 1 Samuel retain reliable information about Saul's day. He does not follow the consensus, however, that other relevant portions of the history (2 Samuel and some of 1 Kings) similarly contain potentially reliable information about the rest of the tenth century.<sup>60</sup> In his recent history of the north, *The Forgotten Kingdom*, Finkelstein's willingness to rely on biblical sources describing the north (e.g., "even vague memories" are trustworthy resources for the historian!) is in complete contradiction to his critiques of other scholars' methods, of other portions of the biblical narratives, and of the same biblical passages for other historical applications.<sup>61</sup> Finkelstein's introduction to his book lays bare what is at the heart of the bias: the traditional attention to Jerusalem, Judah, and the Davidic history have shortchanged the place of the north in historical reconstructions.<sup>62</sup> There is no question that biblical preference for the Davidic line influenced how the region has been investigated. Such a critique is warranted and continues to be relevant, but Finkelstein's inconsistent historical method is not a justifiable approach to correct previous bias in scholarship.

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<sup>59</sup> Israel Finkelstein and Neil Asher Silberman, *David and Solomon: In Search of the Bible's Sacred Kings and the Roots of Western Tradition* (New York: Free Press, 2006), 79, 83. See also Finkelstein, "The Last Labayu."

<sup>60</sup> See Chapters Two and Three.

<sup>61</sup> Israel Finkelstein, *The Forgotten Kingdom: The Archaeology and History of Northern Israel* (Ancient Near Eastern Monographs 5; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 5.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 1–5.

Finkelstein has crept toward a biblical archaeology of the tenth century but with conspicuous absence of David, Solomon, or Judah. His history now features Saul and a Saulide “entity,” succeeded by the Omrides. The space in between these eras is filled in by Shoshenq aided by the Philistines. Finkelstein’s preference for a Saulide or north-oriented history is not, in itself, a problem, but until recently his focus was attributed to the evidence rather than to his choice to balance historians’ attention between the north and the south. This trend in his scholarship, particularly where his arguments venture into (problematic) historical interpretation, however, threatens to undermine his larger research agenda concerning the LC. If we can detect a categorical bias against historical reconstructions that allow for consequential activity or some significance for Judah in the Iron I and IIA periods, can we be assured that this bias has not influenced Finkelstein’s analysis of material culture, relative chronology, social complexity, and regional relationships?<sup>63</sup>

### **The Transition from Iron I to Iron II**

What was most important about Finkelstein’s 1996 proposal was the impetus it provided to separate archaeological chronologies and interpretations from the biblical narratives. Finkelstein was right that there were critical, logical problems in the system that required a (ruthless) reassessment of assumptions and foundations.<sup>64</sup> His challenge has

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<sup>63</sup> The problem extends beyond Finkelstein’s own publications. There is reason to believe that the chronology debate in general has contributed to what amounts to a late-tenth-century avoidance among researchers. Hayah Katz and Avraham Faust recently point out that, out of caution, many Iron IIA ceramic assemblages have been assigned absolute dates corresponding to the end of the period and those that cannot be dated that late are dated very early. They observe, “This leaves much of the Iron IIA without any assemblages. While this is not an impossible situation and could have resulted from a number of factors, it is still strange and, in our opinion, a distorted picture, which is worth examining” (“The Chronology of the Iron Age IIA in Judah in Light of Tel ‘Eton Tomb C3 and Other Assemblages,” *BASOR* 371 [2014]: 104–105).

<sup>64</sup> Finkelstein, “The Archaeology of the United Monarchy,” 178.

pushed archaeologists and historians to scrutinize their views of the entire region with a positive effect. Among the most important changes have been the modifications made to the conventional dates for the Iron IIA period (1000-925), which was based on assumptions about the Bible's United Monarchy. Radiocarbon dating has both tempered the more extreme aspects of Finkelstein's chronology and contributed to a correction of the traditional view. Mazar's response, a Modified Conventional Chronology (MCC), divorces the periodization from the problematic biblical chronology and better reflects changes in material culture. According to this system, the Iron IIA dates to ca. 980-ca. 830.<sup>65</sup>

Since radiocarbon dating has not been able to settle the debates within this period, Z. Herzog and L. Singer-Avitz have focused on ceramic analysis and proposed subdivisions of the Iron IIA based on their comparisons of assemblages in the south and the north.<sup>66</sup> Reference to Early Iron IIA and Late Iron IIA is becoming standard, following their suggestions.<sup>67</sup> Recently, H. Katz and A. Faust have published another comparison of late Iron I and Iron IIA assemblages, based on newly published material from Judah, and suggest even more discrete subdivisions for this region.<sup>68</sup> Thus the old standard of ceramic analysis,

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<sup>65</sup> Mazar, "Is the Gap Narrowing?"

<sup>66</sup> Herzog and Singer-Avitz, "Redefining the Centre"; Herzog and Singer-Avitz, "Sub-Dividing the Iron Age IIA."

<sup>67</sup> The absolute dates for the transition between these phases are not settled. See Finkelstein and Piasezky, "Is the Gap Narrowing?"; Mazar, "Is the Gap Narrowing?" This proposal puts the controversial Megiddo VA-IVB in the Late Iron IIA, contemporary to Tel Rehov V-IV, Hazor X, and the Jezreel Enclosure. The ceramic parallels combined with radiocarbon dating suggest that these strata *may* have begun in the tenth century and ended in the ninth. Since no strata have been definitively connected to Shoshenq's campaign and ceramic traditions were similar before and during the Omride period, there is no defining line to correspond to the period described for Solomon, David, or Saul.

<sup>68</sup> Katz and Faust, "The Chronology of the Iron Age IIA in Judah."

with contributing information from radiocarbon dating, is providing structure to the re-conceptualization of the end of the Iron I and the Iron IIA periods.

The intense scrutiny that has resulted from the chronology debates has drawn attention to the transition between Iron I and IIA periods. It is becoming clearer that the transition was not as swift or as simple as traditional histories portrayed it. Following the biblical narrative, the shift was once thought to have resulted from David's campaigns across the land ca. 1000 BCE. Careful evaluation of sites throughout the region shows that the transition took various forms. At some sites, there is evidence of violent destruction that marks the end of Iron I material culture (e.g., Tell Qasile X, Yoqneam XVII, Tel Keisan 9, Megiddo VIA, Tel Hadar V, and Khirbet Qeiyafa).<sup>69</sup> Tel Masos, Khirbat en-Nahas, as well as Timna, show evidence of local growth and industry during the transition, suggesting a different type of regional change. Other sites, however, do not have evidence of a punctuated shift to the Iron IIA (e.g., Tyre, Tel Dor, Tell Abu Hawam, Tel Rehov). At these sites, there may be a blend of late Iron I and early Iron II ceramic assemblages. Without a dramatic event to separate the two phases, it is difficult to fix a date for the transition. It is in these cases that the ceramic comparisons of Herzog and Singer-Avitz and Katz and Faust have succeeded in revealing more nuance in the repertoire. Where there was continuity of settlement, there is less evidence of the transition. Residents who lived in more peaceful locations, cleaned and reused their spaces, rather than covered over and rebuilt above debris layers where there had been destruction. This process minimized the amount of remains for

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<sup>69</sup> Radiocarbon dating of these destruction levels situates the transition in the late eleventh to early tenth century; see Amihai Mazar and Christopher Bronk Ramsey, "14C Dates and the Iron Age Chronology of Israel: A Response," *Radiocarbon* 50/2 (2008): 176, 178, fig. 4; idem, "A Response to Finkelstein and Piasezky's Criticism and 'New Perspective,'" 1685–86.

archaeologists to find.<sup>70</sup> These contexts tend to reveal the later phase of an archaeological period. The combined picture indicates that there was both punctuated and gradual change in the southern Levant. These changes began as early as the late eleventh century and stretched across the tenth century. The transition to the Iron IIA was largely complete by the end of the tenth century.

### **Chronology in This Study**

The following chapters will follow A. Mazar's MCC supplemented by an "Early Iron IIA" and "Late Iron IIA" distinction recognized by Herzog and Singer-Avitz and Katz and Faust (see Figure 1:1). As I mentioned at the beginning of this introduction, the survey of evidence is not confined to the tenth century but includes material related to the late eleventh century and early ninth century. The main reason for doing so is that changes in long-distance interactions were not sudden or limited to the tenth century, so a longer time frame allows for a better understanding of how Iron Age interactions developed. A consequence of this broader scope is that if certain archaeological contexts were determined to be later than currently understood (i.e., dated according to Finkelstein's LC), they remain relevant to understanding how long-distance interactions influenced the region and the establishment of Iron Age powers.

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<sup>70</sup> Katz and Faust, "The Chronology of the Iron Age IIA in Judah," 104.

Archaeological Phase	Absolute Dates
end of Iron I	late 11 <sup>th</sup> – early 10 <sup>th</sup> centuries
Iron I-IIA transition	beginning in the late 11 <sup>th</sup> /early 10 <sup>th</sup> centuries ending in the second half of the 10 <sup>th</sup> century
Early Iron IIA	second half of the 10 <sup>th</sup> century
Late Iron IIA	most of the 9 <sup>th</sup> century

**Figure 1:1: Chronological framework**<sup>71</sup>

The chronological heart of this project is, nevertheless, the tenth century BCE, in part because of its reputed interregional trade in the biblical histories.<sup>72</sup> This period is also of interest, however, because even without the biblical bias, the tenth century was a time of transformation and intensification. Archaeological periodization situates the shift from the Iron Age I to the Iron II in the middle of the century because of transitions evident in material culture.<sup>73</sup> Settlement patterns also reveal a shift in social organization with a trend toward urbanization in the tenth century.<sup>74</sup> Egypt renewed campaigns into the Levant

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<sup>71</sup> Derived from Herzog and Singer-Avitz, “Redefining the Centre”; Mazar, “The Debate over the Chronology”; Herzog and Singer-Avitz, “Sub-Dividing the Iron Age IIA”; Mazar and Bronk Ramsey, “14C Dates and the Iron Age Chronology of Israel: A Response”; Mazar, “Is the Gap Narrowing?”; Katz and Faust, “The Chronology of the Iron Age IIA in Judah in Light of Tel ‘Eton Tomb C3 and Other Assemblages.”

<sup>72</sup> For the most part, reference to absolute chronology will follow the Modified Conventional Chronology (MCC) introduced by Amihai Mazar (“The Debate over the Chronology”).

<sup>73</sup> Finkelstein and Piasezky, “Is the Gap Narrowing?”; Mazar, “Is the Gap Narrowing?”

<sup>74</sup> Avraham Faust, *Israel’s Ethnogenesis: Settlement, Interaction, Expansion and Resistance* (Equinox Publishing Limited, 2008), 111–134, esp. 120–121. Faust notes that economic changes are a possible explanation for the move away from rural settlements but cautions that the evidence, at the time of his writing, is not yet convincing. His discussion of imported pottery emphasizes the lack of evidence in the Iron II, which no doubt influences his stance on the possibility of an economic explanation (*ibid.*, 49–64).

towards the end of the century, and Levantine polities caught the interest of the expanding Neo-Assyrian state soon after, by the mid-ninth century. This study attempts to show that these contacts were preceded by interaction from local to interregional levels for some time. The relevant evidence requires that the limits for this study be extended from the late eleventh to the end of the tenth and, in some cases, beginning of the ninth centuries.

### **Biblical Chronology and the Tenth Century**

The biblical figures most important for this study, Saul, David, and Solomon, cannot be assigned precise regnal years or life spans. Traditional reckoning results in this rough timeline (Figure 1:2):



**Figure 1:2: Traditional chronology of Israel's first kings**

We can be sure that historical figures would not conform to such convenient schemes. The biblical historians, the exilic redactor of the Deuteronomistic History especially, modified (or created) timelines of the early monarchs to fit greater historiographic needs.<sup>75</sup> The forty-year reigns of David and Solomon are universally accepted by critical scholars as symbolic. Forty years characterizes one generation, and while each individual is remembered to be personally flawed, each man's reign is symbolic of critical advancements in the people's

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<sup>75</sup> David Miano, *Shadow on the Steps: Time Measurement in Ancient Israel* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010), 57, 117, 209–214. Miano notes that even Saul's enigmatic two-year reign can be accounted for, a necessity in order to fit the 480-year timeframe from the exodus to the beginning of Solomon's temple construction.

relationship to the deity and by extension their stability in the region: David receives YHWH's promise of an eternal dynasty, and Solomon (although provoking an amendment to the Davidic covenant) honors the deity with a monumental temple and the dedication of a permanent earthly residence.<sup>76</sup> The generation-length reigns are a way of communicating stability, completeness, and otherwise positive things for the people and land during these eras. The years should not be used to estimate historical reigns for these figures.

In this chronology-centric scholarly climate, however, some understanding of the biblical chronology must be established before the present discussion can move forward. My treatment of the biblical texts includes 1 Samuel 4 through 1 Kings 11. Precise dates cannot be recovered from this history, but we can piece together a rough idea of the chronological relationships among the figures in the text.<sup>77</sup>

- Samuel's career seems to be significantly earlier than Saul's and David's, and his role in each figure's story is critical, which makes it reasonable that Samuel's career overlapped with both Saul and David, as the narrative describes.
- Saul, David, and Solomon were of successive generations.
- While David and Solomon are said to have died of natural causes and not prematurely, Saul died on the battlefield. David's lamentation implies that Saul was *not* in the twilight of his career at the time.

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<sup>76</sup> Similar considerations, although presented as a negative image, must have been at work in the treatment (i.e., redaction) of Saul's history, which lays the foundation for his successors. For the "negatives," as in the opposite of favorable as well as in a photographic sense, see Gregory Mobley, "Glimpses of the Heroic Saul," in *Saul in Story and Tradition* (ed. Marsha C. White and Carl S. Ehrlich, FAT 47 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 80–87.

<sup>77</sup> Baruch Halpern presents a detailed examination of the many chronological factors in the text related to David's reign (*David's Secret Demons: Messiah, Murderer, Traitor, King* [Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 2001], 229–242).

- Although the biblical account suggests the three monarchs never reigned at the same time, it seems likely that Saul and David contended for leadership beyond the history's presentation, overlapping for at least some of their careers. Solomon and David, if David was very elderly at the time of his death, may have served as co-regents. As we will see, evidence suggests that there were various elite parties in the region potentially vying for leadership.
- David and Solomon's reigns should not be assumed to have lasted 40 years each.<sup>78</sup>
- Finally, the standard anchor used for estimating the chronologies of these figures is 1 Kings 14:25, which states that Shishaq went up to Jerusalem in the fifth year of Rehoboam. That visit/campaign is typically situated ca. 925 BCE.

Based on this information, it is reasonable that the time allotted for Solomon and David should be shortened, both as a correction for the symbolic forty years and due to some likelihood of overlapping careers. Even a generous twenty-five to thirty years each for David and Solomon changes Saul into a tenth-century figure. Saul's timeline shifts from the late eleventh to the early tenth century. David would be positioned in the early to mid-tenth century, and Solomon in the mid-tenth century to ca. 930 BCE. This estimate, albeit vague and hypothetical, seems more likely than the traditional timeline.

Correlating the biblical figures directly with extrabiblical evidence is not a goal of this study, but since the Deuteronomistic History is an important resource and extrabiblical material is also essential, some comparison is inevitable. In my understanding, the transition to monarchy that is traced out through the figures of Saul, his children, David, and Solomon

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<sup>78</sup> Based on the careers of the Judahite kings, an average reign was just shy of twenty years.

took place throughout much of the tenth century. As it happens, the transition between the Iron I and IIA periods appears to coincide with this process. I do not, however, consider the biblical history's account of this social-political change to be an explanation of the changes detected "on the ground" through settlement patterns and material culture. Rather, as I express at the beginning of this introduction, this era was a period of various transformations and the final stages of greater changes that began with the collapse of the Late Bronze system and the decline of Egypt's New Kingdom. The transition period culminated in new identities, boundaries, and power relationships. Just as the extrabiblical evidence informs our historical reconstruction of the period, the biblical narratives too may provide informative insights and alternative perspectives of the changes that were taking place.

### **Additional Studies and Debates**

Aside from the historicity and chronological debates, the areas of contention with the greatest impact for studying intercultural exchange are related to social complexity and change. Long distance trade is typically associated with state level societies, but what the debates have brought to light is that we cannot assume that the socio-political entities of the region in the period prior to the ninth century looked like the later Iron Age polities or that the paths to statehood fit nicely into the traditional framework of tribe—chiefdom—state.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> In contrast to more traditional applications (such as John S. Holladay, Jr., "The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah: Political and Economic Centralization in the Iron IIA-B [ca. 1000-750 BCE]," in *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land* [ed. Thomas E. Levy; 2nd ed.; London: Leicester University Press, 1998], 368–98) or the minimalist-friendly interpretation of Jamieson-Drake (see Chapter Five). For more on the poor fit of the traditional models to the southern Levant, see Oystein S. LaBianca and Randall W. Younker, "The Kingdoms of Ammon, Moab and Edom: The Archaeology of Society in Late Bronze/Iron Age Transjordan (ca. 1400-500 BCE)," in *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land*, 399–415; Daniel M. Master, "State Formation Theory and the Kingdom of Ancient Israel," *JNES* 60/2 (2001): 117–31; Alexander H. Joffe, "The Rise of Secondary States in the Iron Age Levant," *JESHO* 45/4 (2002): 425–67; Levy, Ben-Yosef, and Najjar, "The Iron Age Edom Lowlands Regional Archaeological Project," 2–8.

Instead we have seen unexpected developments like the remains of large scale industry but no evidence of a capital city that organized it or evidence of scribal activity without palaces. I suggest that we can account for these seeming anomalies by recognizing that there were small-scale leaders and elites who operated according to notions of complex statehood even though they did not have the means to be state builders in a material or traditional sense. They fit in between the traditional leadership definitions, drawing popular power from ethnic and community ties while modeling themselves on the memories of state and imperial power left behind from a previous age.<sup>80</sup> As a result, the archaeological setting might appear simplistic, but a local leader's modus operandi might include collecting exotic vessels, employing a scribe, or exploiting a resource on a grand scale. Thus it is possible to see long-distance exchange among leaders and not see the expected evidence of a state-level society.

The scholarly debates have also forced reevaluation of notions of ethnicity and identity.<sup>81</sup> Not all are germane to this study, but questions of this sort are unavoidable when looking at the exchange, acquisition, and display of nonlocal materials. It is fairly accepted that the entities "Israel" of the Merneptah stele, of Saul's supporters, of the Tel Dan stele, or

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<sup>80</sup> We see examples of this leadership model in other periods as well, for example in the Canaanite rulers during the Amarna period (Nadav Na'aman, "The Contribution of the Amarna Letters to the Debate on Jerusalem's Political Position in the Tenth Century B.C.E.," *BASOR* 304 [1996]: 20–21) and later Iron Age rulers of Edom (Neil G. Smith, Mohammad Najjar, and Thomas E. Levy, "New Perspectives on the Iron Age Edom Steppe and Highlands: Khirbat Al-Malayqtah, Khirbat Al-Kur, Khirbat Al-Iraq Shmaliya, and Tawilan," in *New Insights into the Iron Age Archaeology of Edom, Southern Jordan: Surveys, Excavations and Research from the University of California, San Diego & Department of Antiquities of Jordan, Edom Lowlands Regional Archaeology Project [ELRAP]* [ed. Thomas E. Levy et al.; Monumenta Archaeologica 35; Los Angeles: The Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press, 2014], 287–290).

<sup>81</sup> See James C. Miller, "Ethnicity and the Hebrew Bible: Problems and Prospects," *CBR* 6/2 (2008): 170–213; Fredrik Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1969); and Geoff Emberling, "Ethnicity in Complex Societies: Archaeological Perspectives," *Journal of Archaeological Research* 5/4 (1997): 295–344. Barth and Emberling have been particularly influential on new examinations of ethnicity in the southern Levant. See also Chapter Six.

of the Deuteronomist's day were each distinct. One can no longer reconstruct a large, homogenous kingdom of Israel in the tenth century as was common in previous histories. Instead, we have to assume a more diverse population (in ethnicity and class), which also means a more complex picture of identities. For each community, we must allow for distinct values related to interacting with other groups.<sup>82</sup>

The various critiques of texts, archaeological materials, and interpretations of chronology, social complexity, and identity create a challenge for describing the times, places, and peoples that are examined in this project. Some clarification and definition are in order. In earlier studies, the region under examination would be referred to as “ancient Israel” or the “land/s of the Bible.” Now that scholarly interest extends beyond the biblical point of view, and now that it is clear that there was much more diversity than previously imagined, neither term adequately describes the geography and groups under discussion. Instead, this project's focus is on the “southern Levant”—the southern half of the eastern Mediterranean coast along with adjacent, inland populated lands. This descriptor remains accurate regardless of chronology, social complexity, ethnicity, or type of evidence under examination. Where more narrow and appropriate titles are available, they will be used.

Despite these changes in how we conceptualize and discuss the region and its inhabitants, this project also relies heavily on the sub-discipline of historical geography in biblical studies and Levantine archaeology. In addition to the more traditional approaches,

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<sup>82</sup> The examination of this aspect of interactions, that is of perceptions of traders and consumers by each other and how such perceptions influence exchange, is very important but also very difficult to do with limited contemporary historical sources. For a successful exploration regarding exchange in the eastern Mediterranean in the early Iron Age, see Susan Sherratt, “Greeks and Phoenicians: Perceptions of Trade and Traders in the Early First Millennium BC,” in *Social Archaeologies of Trade and Exchange: Exploring Relationships among People, Places, and Things* (ed. Alexander A. Bauer and Anna S. Agbe-Davies; Walnut Creek, Calif.: Left Coast Press, 2010), 119–42.

more recent examinations that rely on archaeological survey, geomorphological study, and settlement patterns in addition to biblical and historical records have allowed for the reconstruction of Iron Age roads throughout the region (see Figure 1:3).<sup>83</sup> These studies inform my reconstructions of the logistics of interaction.

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<sup>83</sup> David A. Dorsey, *The Roads and Highways of Ancient Israel* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991); Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*; Erez Ben-Yosef, “Technology and Social Process Oscillations in Iron Age Copper Production and Power in Southern Jordan” (Ph.D. diss., University of California, San Diego, 2010), 66–126; Erez Ben-Yosef, Mohammad Najjar, and Thomas E. Levy, “Local Iron Age Trade Routes in Northern Edom: From the Faynan Copper Ore District to the Highlands,” in *New Insights into the Iron Age Archaeology of Edom, Southern Jordan: Surveys, Excavations and Research from the University of California, San Diego & Department of Antiquities of Jordan, Edom Lowlands Regional Archaeology Project (ELRAP)* (ed. Thomas E. Levy et al.; Monumenta Archaeologica 35; Los Angeles: The Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press, 2014), 493–575.

## Approaches to the Study of Trade, Exchange, and Interaction



**Figure 1:3: “The Routes in Palestine” (Y. Aharoni, *The Macmillan Bible Atlas* [New York: Macmillan, 1993])**

Trade in the southern Levant and the ancient world has been of interest to scholars for many years. For more than a century researchers have debated approaches to the topic. This section introduces the most influential schools of thought and examines their usefulness for this project. While the biblical narrative dominated historical reconstructions in the past,

interpretive models from the social sciences are proving to be more effective for expanding our examinations of how cultures interacted in the past.

### **Survey of Approaches and Influences**

The traditional approach to questions of interregional trade in the southern Levant started with the biblical history. Earlier research relied heavily on the Bible's accounts and essentially paraphrased the narrative in their reconstructions.<sup>84</sup> Even with a relatively critical approach according to the scholar's own time and with the assistance of extrabiblical evidence from archaeology and other cultures, this scholarship appears naïve and embarrassingly uncritical of the text. The second half of the twentieth century saw improved methods and standards in both biblical archaeology and ancient Near Eastern studies. Scholars added more comparative material to trade studies of ancient Israel, but the underlying assumptions in this scholarship also rely too much on the biblical narrative to meet today's standards.<sup>85</sup> In the new millennium, biblical scholarship related to trade and

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<sup>84</sup> John Bright, *A History of Israel* (4th ed.; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 2000); William Foxwell Albright, *Archaeology and the Religion of Israel* (5th ed.; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1968); Benjamin Mazar, "The Aramean Empire and Its Relations with Israel," *BA* 25/4 (1962): 98–120; W. F. Albright, "New Light on the Early History of Phoenician Colonization," *BASOR* 83 (1941): 14–22.

<sup>85</sup> Moshe Elat, *Economic Relations in the Lands of the Bible (ca. 1000-539 B.C.E.)* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1977); idem, "Trade in the Period of the Monarchy," in *The World History of the Jewish People*, vol. IV, part II, *The Age of Monarchies: Culture and Society* (ed. Abraham Malamat; Jerusalem: Massada Press, 1979), 174–86; idem, "The Monarchy and the Development of Trade in Ancient Israel," in *State and Temple Economy in the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the International Conference* (ed. Edward Lipiński; Leuven: Departement Oriëntalistiek, 1979), 527–46; Morris Silver, *Prophets and Markets: The Political Economy of Ancient Israel* (Boston; Hingham, Mass.: Kluwer-Nijhoff, 1983); Andrew Sherratt and Susan Sherratt, "The Growth of the Mediterranean Economy in the Early First Millennium BC," *World Archaeology* 24/3 (1993): 361–78; Holladay, "The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah"; Lowell K Handy, ed., *The Age of Solomon: Scholarship at the Turn of the Millennium* (SHCANE 11; Leiden; New York: Brill, 1997); Lawrence E. Stager and Philip J. King, *Life in Biblical Israel* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 183–185, 189–195.

exchange continues to add alternative approaches but must also struggle with how to balance the richness of the biblical record with the rigor of historiographical standards.<sup>86</sup>

The alternative approaches draw primarily from economic, sociological, and anthropological theories. At the core of all discussions of trade and exchange is the concept of diffusion. It was a very popular explanation in the first half of the twentieth century to account for shared cultural traits across distances.<sup>87</sup> That similarities in culture are the result of materials and ideas passing from one group to another is too obvious and general to pass muster in today's scholarship. Reactions against overused and vague diffusion explanations caused a decrease in trade and cultural exchange studies until new analytical frameworks emerged in the second half of the twentieth century. Despite these shifts in popularity, the basic principle of diffusion remains at the heart of studies of interaction.

Because of the material nature of trade, the ideas of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels underlie most trade and exchange research. These thinkers' influence intensified in the mid-twentieth century due to renewed interest in Marxist theory among western scholars. The trend redirected attention to issues such as class, inequality, labor, exploitation, and their effects on social change. George Mendenhall's peasant revolt theory was the most popular

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<sup>86</sup> Raz Kletter, *Economic Keystones: The Weight System of the Kingdom of Judah* (JSOTSup 276; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998); Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*; James Maxwell Miller and John Haralson Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* (2nd ed.; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006); Roger S. Nam, *Portrayals of Economic Exchange in the Book of Kings* (Biblical Interpretation Series 112; Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2012).

<sup>87</sup> Alexander A. Bauer and Anna S. Agbe-Davies, "Trade and Interaction in Archaeology," in *Social Archaeologies of Trade and Exchange: Exploring Relationships among People, Places, and Things* (A. A. Bauer and A. S. Agbe-Davies; Walnut Creek, Calif.: Left Coast Press, 2010), 29–34.

expression of this wave for the study of ancient Israel.<sup>88</sup> This particular application did not achieve lasting acceptance, but Marxist themes such as economic difference now appear throughout biblical research. In this study, the concept of inequality in class and power is important, especially in the face of arguments about a relatively class-less early Israelite society.<sup>89</sup> In contrast, I will argue that there was a significant distinction in class and social standing for those who participated in regional and long-distance exchange, and their competition to dominate exchange activities contributed to changes in the social and political landscape.

Max Weber's blend of sociology, economic history, and study of religion and society present an alternative understanding to social and economic difference. Although originally published in German in the interwar years, his work was not translated to English until the 1950s, and biblical scholars did not engage his ideas fully and directly until the last decades of the twentieth century when various social scientific approaches became popular in biblical studies.<sup>90</sup> Weber's discussions of patrimonial structure and patronage in society relate best to questions of interaction. L. Stager's work on the archaeology of family uses Weber's principles to interpret archaeological changes from the Late Bronze to the Iron Age, and more recently, Stager explains the Solomonic kingdom through Weber's

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<sup>88</sup> George E. Mendenhall, *The Tenth Generation: The Origins of the Biblical Tradition* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973). This explanation was continued by Norman K. Gottwald in *The Tribes of Yahweh: A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel, 1250-1050 B.C.E.* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1979).

<sup>89</sup> See Chapter Five.

<sup>90</sup> Max Weber, *Ancient Judaism* (trans. Hans H. Gerth and Don Martindale; Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1952); idem, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (trans. Talcott Parsons; New York: Scribner, 1958); idem, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology* (ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich; transl. Ephraim Fischhoff; New York: Bedminster Press, 1968).

patrimonial structure.<sup>91</sup> Weberian interpretations have also been employed by Stager's students J. D. Schloen and R. Simkins.<sup>92</sup> In these interpretations, social inequalities and the exchange systems tied to them are formalized and stabilized through kinship language and structures. In this way, negative effects of inequality and exchange are mitigated by notions of familial bonds.

The influence of historian Fernand Braudel and his Annales School is also in the background of interaction studies today.<sup>93</sup> Braudel's broad-based approach revolutionized academic investigations not only in history but also in the social sciences. His emphasis away from the prominent historical individual or single moment and instead on larger factors as contributors to change over time (and over longer periods of time) melded especially well with anthropological approaches. The Annales influence is important in this work in a number of ways. I will consider various factors in investigating how interaction affected the region, but more importantly, I look beyond the named figures in the texts. I maintain that there were many influential actors in the region. Only a small number of them are known to us by name. Others, such as the elite of Tel Rehov or the entity organizing

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<sup>91</sup> Lawrence E. Stager, "The Archaeology of the Family in Ancient Israel," *BASOR* 260 (1985): 1–35; idem, "The Patrimonial Kingdom of Solomon," in *Symbiosis, Symbolism, and the Power of the Past: Canaan, Ancient Israel, and Their Neighbors from the Late Bronze Age through Roman Palaestina* (ed. William G. Dever and Seymour Gitin (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 63–74.

<sup>92</sup> J. David Schloen, "Caravans, Kenites, and Casus Belli: Enmity and Alliance in the Song of Deborah," *CBQ* 55/1 (1993): 18–38; idem, *The House of the Father as Fact and Symbol: Patrimonialism in Ugarit and the Ancient Near East* (SAHL 2; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2001); Ronald A. Simkins, "Patronage and the Political Economy of Monarchic Israel," *Semeia* 87 (1999): 123–44; idem, "Family in the Political Economy of Monarchic Judah," *The Bible and Critical Theory* 1/1 (2004): 1–17.

<sup>93</sup> Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (trans. S. Reynolds; 2 vols.; New York: Harper and Row, 1972-1973).

copper processing in the Faynan for example, possessed a great amount of power in the region.

Studies focused explicitly on trade in the ancient world picked up again in the second half of the twentieth century. Karl Polanyi's research rekindled interest in trade studies among economists, historians, and anthropologists. Although his arguments about the nature of ancient economies have been much criticized, the work of Polanyi and his students brought the subject back into scholarly debate and created a model for an interdisciplinary method.<sup>94</sup> Sabloff and Lamberg-Karlovsky's volume *Ancient Civilization and Trade* showcases various scholars' employment of the interdisciplinary approach that Polanyi fostered.<sup>95</sup> Although his theories have been acknowledged in passing in various studies, Polanyi's approach has only recently been systematically applied to the biblical material by R. Nam.<sup>96</sup>

Emerging from methodological debates among archaeologists more specifically, Colin Renfrew and Robert McCormick Adams each pushed for more attention to trade and exchange from their colleagues in the 1970s, arguing for the importance of exchange in understanding social change.<sup>97</sup> Their works have been among the most influential in ancient

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<sup>94</sup> Robert B. Revere, "'No Man's Coast': Ports of Trade in the Eastern Mediterranean," in *Trade and Market in the Early Empires: Economies in History and Theory* (ed. Karl Polanyi, Conrad M. Arensberg, and Harry W. Pearson; Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1957), 38–63; Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1962); idem, *Primitive, Archaic, and Modern Economies; Essays of Karl Polanyi* (ed. George Dalton; Boston: Beacon Press, 1971).

<sup>95</sup> Jeremy A Sabloff, C. C Lamberg-Karlovsky, eds. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1975).

<sup>96</sup> Nam, *Portrayals of Economic Exchange*.

<sup>97</sup> Robert McC. Adams, "Anthropological Perspectives on Ancient Trade," *CA* 15/3 (1974): 239–58; Colin Renfrew, *The Emergence of Civilisation: The Cyclades and the Aegean in the Third Millennium B.C.* (London: Methuen, 1972); idem, "Trade as Action at a Distance: Questions of Integration and Communication," in

Near Eastern studies. K. V. Flannery's work on Olmec trade is also considered a successful archaeological study and model for exploring the importance of trade in social change.<sup>98</sup>

Despite some popularity following these studies, trade as a focus in archaeological research declined again with the rise of postprocessual approaches. By translating, so to speak, the study of trade into terms that are more compatible with theoretical and philosophical perspectives in current archaeological approaches, A. Bauer and A. S. Agbe-Davies have attempted to revive the subject in their discipline.<sup>99</sup>

One of the most popular analytical models for interaction studies has been Wallerstein's World System Analysis.<sup>100</sup> It has been successfully applied to studies of the ancient Near East, in historical contexts and less literate periods.<sup>101</sup> The model's core-periphery dynamic is attractive for the southern Levant because the region, more often than not, was the periphery to significant core powers. However, the model is not the best tool for this study. There is the fairly obvious problem that the ancient Near East did not have a clear core power following the Late Bronze collapse and the decline of Egypt's New Kingdom. Despite the biblical history's claim to Israel's dominance in the tenth century, extrabiblical

*Ancient Civilization and Trade* (ed. Jeremy A. Sabloff and C. C. Lamberg-Karlovsky; Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1975), 3-59.

<sup>98</sup> Kent V. Flannery, "The Olmec and the Valley of Oaxaca: A Model for Inter-Regional Interaction in Formative Times," in *Dumbarton Oaks Conference on the Olmec* (ed. Elizabeth Benson; Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1968), 79-110.

<sup>99</sup> Alexander A. Bauer and Anna S. Agbe-Davies, "Rethinking Trade as a Social Activity: An Introduction," in *Social Archaeologies of Trade and Exchange: Exploring Relationships among People, Places, and Things* (ed. Alexander A. Bauer and Anna S. Agbe-Davies; Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2010), 13-28.

<sup>100</sup> Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Academic Press, 1974).

<sup>101</sup> Guillermo Algaze, *The Uruk World System: The Dynamics of Expansion of Early Mesopotamian Civilization* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); Sherratt and Sherratt, "The Growth of the Mediterranean Economy in the Early First Millennium BC."

evidence does not support the identification of any dominant polity for some time. In fact, power relationships and historical identities are uncertain for many of the players until the ninth century.

We also face a challenge in relying on world system analysis for the Late Bronze Age in order to set the scene for this period. An important critique of the world system model is that it overvalues or overemphasizes the influence of the core and fails to recognize change or innovation in the periphery.<sup>102</sup> This tendency is evident among some scholars, who are reluctant to ascribe developments in social complexity during the earlier centuries of the southern Levant's Iron Age to local populations, preferring to give credit to the New Kingdom legacy or early influence from Assyria instead.<sup>103</sup> Evaluating the smaller-scale, regional relationships (e.g., among coast, hill country, and desert or between key sites) within the southern Levant is critical in this period when long-distance exchange was so dramatically curtailed and power structures on the scale of a world system not yet formalized.

### **Three Models for This Study**

In response to the limitations of world systems analysis and earlier theories, scholars have proposed and expanded on alternative models. Three in particular better fit the

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<sup>102</sup> Gil J. Stein, "From Passive Periphery to Active Agents: Emerging Perspectives in the Archaeology of Interregional Interaction," *American Anthropologist* 104/3 (2002): 903–16; idem, "Rethinking World Systems: Power, Distance, and Diasporas in The Dynamics of Inter-Regional Interaction," in *World Systems Theory in Practice: Leadership, Production, and Exchange* (ed. P. Nick Kardulias; Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1999), 153–77.

<sup>103</sup> For example, Finkelstein, "A Great United Monarchy?," 7. This position is mostly apparent in minimalist interpretations.

conditions in the southern Levant in the early Iron Age: peer polity interaction, interaction spheres, and salient identities.

### **Peer Polity Interaction**

Colin Renfrew's peer polity interaction model offers one alternative to world system analysis.<sup>104</sup> He devised the model in an attempt to avoid limitations of the world system with its core-periphery dominance and to meld theories that focus on either internal or external agents of change. The model considers interactions of various kinds, such as trade, warfare, emulation, imitation, and information exchange. By looking broadly at interaction types, the model includes material/tangible culture (e.g., ceramics, architecture) as well as symbolic elements (e.g., language, ideology). It is designed for conditions where there are numerous small, autonomous units that share much of the same culture.<sup>105</sup> Because of their similarities and proximity, these polities do not operate in isolation, rather they interact regularly. The interaction and intense competition among the peer units tend to cause a shift in the power relationships, and one unit often will dominate the others forming a state or, at its greatest extent, an empire.

In his explication of the theory and possible benefits of its application, Renfrew anticipated much of what has been recently debated for the southern Levant:

...the intermediate-scale interactions between local but independent communities ... are perhaps the most informative and certainly the most neglected. For it is at this level that those uniformities emerge which

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<sup>104</sup> Colin Renfrew, "Introduction: Peer Polity Interaction and Socio-Political Change," in *Peer Polity Interaction and Socio-Political Change* (ed. Colin Renfrew and John F. Cherry; Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 1–18.

<sup>105</sup> Renfrew notes the challenge that the smaller units are often lumped into one archaeological culture because of their similarities (*ibid.*, 2).

sometimes seem to have a significant role in determining the future pattern of development. The significant unit is thus seen, in this perspective, to be the larger community beyond the polity level, comprised of loosely related, yet politically independent, interacting groups. It is here, for instance, that the processes of ethnic formation must in many cases operate, and here too that the foundations for the later emergence of nation state are laid.<sup>106</sup>

The peer polity interaction model addresses the individual, autonomous communities and their relations with similar units in an interaction network (ranging from local to interregional). Renfrew notes that changes that result from peer interaction impact both socio-political organization and identity formation. This model is attractive for application to the southern Levant because of the peer relationships (or at least the absence of one dominant core unit) of the interacting communities, the allowance for different types of interaction, and because of the changes that such interaction tends to bring, namely identity formation and social complexity, two things that changed considerably in the southern Levant in the years between Egyptian and Neo-Assyrian dominance.

### **Interaction Spheres**

Joseph Caldwell's "Hopewell interaction spheres" model, which he developed to explain patterns he observed in prehistoric North American sites, also influences my analysis.<sup>107</sup> This model predates Wallerstein's but was not applied outside of North American archaeology until alternatives to world systems were being sought out. Caldwell uses the term "interaction sphere" to explain shared cultural traits that he observed in

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>107</sup> Joseph Caldwell's explanation of this model is concise and somewhat abstract. Stuart Struever's application of it exhibits its potential (Joseph R. Caldwell, "Interaction Spheres in Prehistory," in *Hopewellian Studies* [ed. Joseph R. Caldwell and Robert L. Hall; Illinois State Museum Scientific Papers 12; Springfield, Ill: Illinois State Museum, 1964], 134–43; Stuart Struever, "The Hopewell Interaction Sphere in Riverine—Western Great Lakes Culture History," in *Hopewellian Studies*, 85–106).

communities that were otherwise independent and distinct. The model explains the cultural continuity in a specific aspect of society (e.g., elite burial practices and luxury goods) and proposes that autonomous sites were linked through exchange relations.<sup>108</sup> The model also relates exchange activities to changes in social complexity. As the connections between communities grow, social bonds develop beyond the local levels, and eventually the smaller communities become linked in a larger structure. These changes shift the relationships and social organization both within an individual community and among autonomous sites in the exchange network.

Norman Yoffee and Gil Stein have each applied the interaction sphere model to prehistoric Mesopotamian culture.<sup>109</sup> Yoffee stresses the importance of the interaction sphere as a more useful model than world systems in cases where the geography of interaction is limited, and he emphasizes the importance of the interaction sphere in the self-identification process that necessarily occurs as autonomous groups encounter each other and as their encounters spur changes in social organization in each of the autonomous groups.<sup>110</sup> Similar to the peer polity model, this approach suits the southern Levant in terms of geographic scale and social organization of small, independent societies. The interaction sphere concept, however, allows for more variation and flexibility.

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<sup>108</sup> In the Hopewell interaction sphere, the shared cultural traits were not simply explained through the distribution of an imported material or type of artifact, but trade networks were an important part of the interaction system.

<sup>109</sup> Norman Yoffee, "Mesopotamian Interaction Spheres," in *Early Stages in the Evolution of Mesopotamian Civilization: Soviet Excavations in Northern Iraq* (ed. Norman Yoffee and Jeffrey J. Clark; Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1994), 257–70; Gil J. Stein, "Local Identities and Interaction Spheres: Modeling Regional Variation in the Ubaid Horizon," in *Beyond the Ubaid: Transformation and Integration in the Late Prehistoric Societies of the Middle East* (ed. Robert A. Carter and Graham Philip; SAOC 63; Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2010), 23–44.

<sup>110</sup> Yoffee, "Mesopotamian Interaction Spheres," 268.

Gil Stein has revisited the model to investigate the Ubaid cultural horizon more specifically. The approach does not require that subjects fit into the core-periphery hierarchy or any other preconceived power relationships. In addition, the interaction sphere approach avoids overlooking local variation and innovation. In the Ubaid case, Stein explains, researchers' attention to Ubaid culture has been disproportionate to the archaeological evidence, in which local cultural variation predominates with different degrees of adoption of Ubaid traits. Thus publications suggest much more homogeneity (or Ubaid dominance in core-periphery terms) than the evidence supports.<sup>111</sup> In Stein's formulation, the interaction sphere model, combined with identity theory, allows for the examination of both the shared culture of the interaction sphere (Stein's *oikumene*) and the participants' local, preexisting cultures without automatically creating a research bias of one over the other.

### **Interaction Spheres and Salient Identities**

Edward Schortman and Patricia Urban have proposed yet another focus (not a model per se) for interaction studies.<sup>112</sup> Their approach also allows for flexibility in the interacting partners' relationships (e.g., dominant or peer relations) and gives more emphasis to the role of social identities in exchange activities than the interaction sphere model does alone. Their research emphasizes the concept of salient identities, that is, "an affiliation or set of affiliations which are used more commonly than others and whose members, as a result,

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<sup>111</sup> Stein, "Local Identities and Interaction Spheres," 32–33.

<sup>112</sup> Edward M. Schortman and Patricia A. Urban, "Modeling Interregional Interaction in Prehistory," *Advances in Archaeological Method and Theory* 11 (1987): 37–95; Edward M. Schortman, "Interregional Interaction in Prehistory: The Need for a New Perspective," *American Antiquity* 54/1 (1989): 52–65. These works predate Stein's but do not figure into his use of identity theory.

share a strong feeling of common purpose and support.”<sup>113</sup> Such affiliations should result in recoverable material remains and thus be particularly useful for archaeological research.<sup>114</sup> When the affiliations can be identified and connected to patterned behavior, changes in time and space, then their approach has the potential to explain social change.<sup>115</sup> Schortman focuses on elites and describes a chain reaction that links identity and interaction activities. Local elites who are able to gain access to nonlocal goods, create the demand for interregional interaction. The interaction supports the development of a salient identity among the participants that then solidifies the elites’ role in the exchange network.<sup>116</sup> This reconstruction predicts local and regional socio-political change. The development of an elite group of exchange partners separates the elites from other members of their own communities (local change) and, despite their shared interests with their elite community, also creates competition and even warfare within the exchange network (regional to interregional change).<sup>117</sup>

The three approaches have considerable overlap and are not mutually exclusive. All provide structures for assessing the interactions that are described in narrative form or are apparent in material evidence. Each model has a slightly different emphasis that will be useful for the distinct evidence types and for considering different consequences of interaction. Peer polity interaction has the potential to highlight regional political change

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<sup>113</sup> Schortman, “Interregional Interaction in Prehistory,” 54.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 57. Schortman suggests four categories: technological, social, ideological, and proxemic (proper use of space), the last three of which would be used among participants in interaction.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 57–59.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 60–61.

with its focus on competition and emulation. The interaction spheres model provides a framework for making sense of the nonlocal and specialized artifacts that begin to appear across the region even where there is considerable variation from site to site. Finally, the identity formation approaches (Schortman and Urban's salient identities and Stein's local and *oikumene* identities) supply a foundation for examining how interaction influences the less tangible ideological changes in these populations.

### **The Organization of This Study**

Before applying these interpretive frameworks, it is necessary to work through the available evidence. The period of focus for this study corresponds to the century or two prior to substantial, contemporary historical documentation of the Iron Age. With the exception of a handful of Egyptian writings, most notably Shoshenq I's Karnak relief, no contemporary sources refer to the region. Contemporary evidence comes instead from a small number of very brief inscriptions and archaeological remains. The paucity of evidence is contrasted by the vivid depictions in the biblical writings, describing kingdoms, imperial behavior, and international trade. Despite the discrepancies, this study relies on all three types of evidence: biblical, contemporary historical/epigraphic, and archaeological. Each demands a different set of evaluative tools and scholarly literature and so will be treated separately. Only after the different types of evidence are reviewed independently will they be combined with the theoretical frameworks discussed above.

The Hebrew Bible's Deuteronomistic History (DH), specifically 1 and 2 Samuel and the beginning of 1 Kings, provides the most information of the biblical material on

interregional exchange in the eleventh and tenth centuries.<sup>118</sup> The present concern receives much attention in the DH in general because of the history's theological argument that interacting with other groups endangered Israel's fidelity to YHWH. Despite interaction being a frequent concern in the history, some episodes are more useful than others for today's historian. I have selected two areas of focus that are the most fruitful: relations with the Philistines and Solomon's interactions.

The book of Samuel is organized to follow the careers of three leaders of the Israelite community: Samuel, Saul, and David. Each of these men's story tells of relations with neighboring peoples, such as Ammonites, Moabites, and Arameans, but relations with the Philistines receive the most attention and are a constant concern in the narratives, despite the composite nature of the history. In Chapter Two, I focus on the tales of interactions between the early Israelite community and these coastal neighbors. For each of the episodes that detail relations with the Philistines, I judge the narrative's suitability for historical use and then combine the best of that evidence to explore the nature and importance of the interactions. What I find is that there is a pattern to the interactions and that they intensified as the history moves from Samuel's era to David's. Philistine leaders attempted to control roads and key passages that connected the Philistine heartland to major highways to the north, east, and southeast. This control gave Philistia power to manipulate traffic and provided access to resources. The Philistine movements not only provoked hostile

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<sup>118</sup> The Deuteronomistic History (DH) takes precedence here because of its proximity to the period. The Chronicler's history also recounts Israel's eleventh-tenth centuries; however it is a later composition, written during the Persian period. Although the Chronicler did make use of older sources, and in some cases sources independent from the DH, there is significant repetition between the two histories because of Chronicles' heavy reliance on the Deuteronomistic work. Where the differences are of historical significance for this study, they are addressed. Of the poetic sources and wisdom literature that also purport to be related to the Davidic and Solomonic periods, none can be counted on for historical reliability for the eleventh-tenth centuries.

interaction from the hill country led by Saul but also fueled competition for control of the routes and passages. Eventually David's mixture of warfare, banditry, alliance, and diplomacy won him control of the hill country passages, control of a larger consolidated territory, and dominance in regional leadership.

Chapter Three turns to Solomon's interactions, both inter- and intraregional. As in Chapter Two, I evaluate the usefulness of the narrative portions that describe exchange in Solomon's day. Because of the greatness that was remembered for Solomon's reign, his history attracted elaboration at various points in the Bible's composition and revision. Regarding his long-distance activities, typically the grandest claims are the least reliable; however, claims to interactions with Phoenicia and Egypt are more likely to have had some correlation to historical relations. Some descriptions of Solomon's domestic policies also appear to be grounded in tenth-century events. Based on the policies that are depicted, the territory that Solomon attempted to unify was diverse in its economic offerings. His district organization exploited agricultural or natural resources in some cases; in others, the districts correspond to transportation corridors, revealing an effort to control traffic in the region. From both views of Solomon's activities, domestic and interregional, there is evidence of involvement in long-distance exchange that was moving through the southern Levant.

The next chapter represents a meeting point between the world of biblical narrative examined in Chapters Two and Three and the examination of material evidence in Chapters Five and Six. Chapter Four addresses the role of Jerusalem in interregional interactions based on biblical and extrabiblical (historical and archaeological) evidence. The case of Jerusalem demands special attention because of the contrast between the centrality of the city in the biblical worldview and the very limited material evidence that can be dated to the

early Iron Age. Recent excavations have had a large impact on how both bodies of evidence are evaluated. Based on Jerusalem's role in the Late Bronze Age, the new archaeological evidence from the City of David, and a critical view of the biblical history (established in Chapters Two and Three), I determine that Iron I-IIA Jerusalem was important as a regional center and was integrated into long-distance exchange networks.

Chapter Five turns to contemporary historical and epigraphic evidence. While examples of longer writings exist (e.g., the Gezer tablet and the Khirbet Qeiyafa inscription), typical epigraphic material in the southern Levant consists of simply a name or name formula on an object. Needless to say, these sources are not substantial enough to provide explicit testimony of trade relations. They are, however, informative in other ways. In this chapter, I review the collection of inscriptions from the southern Levant that have been dated to this period and compare them to contemporary evidence from the neighboring regions of Egypt and Byblos. From this evidence, I argue that although the southern Levant's inscriptions do not describe trade or exchange, they are testimony of interregional interaction. Writing was a specialized activity and was most likely the privilege of elite members of communities. The local leaders that possessed inscribed objects were engaged in other privileged activities such as the acquisition of nonlocal goods, in other words, long-distance trade.

Archaeological remains have long been relied on for evidence of exchange relations among cultures. On the simplest level, the discovery of a nonlocal item at a site is proof of exchange across some distance, and with the ability to detect an artifact's place of origin through scientific testing, such items provide concrete evidence to researchers. The subsequent analysis of how and why goods were transported remains complex, but the

knowledge that a foreign object changed hands is a firm starting place. In Chapter Six, nonlocal ceramics from the Aegean, Cyprus, and Northwest Arabia provide the physical evidence of long-distance exchange. The geographic distributions of these artifacts reveal different exchange networks and clarify which sites and areas were able to participate in the growing exchange activities.

Chapter Seven brings all of the evidence presented in these separate cases into one conversation. By adding the discrete studies of Chapters Two through Six together, we can see that interactions were in fact lively and increasing in the transition to the early Iron II period. Each type of evidence speaks to a considerable amount of interactions, and together the activities involve all areas of the southern Levant. Some areas witnessed more intensity than others, which is revealed through regional summaries of the combined evidence. In addition to this comprehensive view of the material, I apply the theoretical models presented above in order to evaluate the significance of exchange. The interaction spheres approaches provide an interpretive structure for the various indications of elite participation in interregional relations. Peer polity interaction assumes a broader vantage point and supplies a framework for characterizing the different types of interactions and their impact on the region over time. The result of these interactions was increased contact among a variety of groups throughout the region as well as a rise in status for those who were in positions to control resources and strategic locations. An elite leadership community grew from those holding positions of power, and they interacted through cooperative and competitive relations. These interactions led to the consolidation of resources and influence that would eventually lead to the earliest kings and polities of the Iron Age.

## CHAPTER TWO: INTERACTIONS WITH PHILISTINES

The story of ancient Israel's transition from a decentralized tribal organization to a more unified state led by a king is recounted in the book of Samuel. The biblical history explains that this shift was the result of both internal demands and external pressure from neighboring peoples. Among Israel's contemporaries, Philistines dominate the depiction of interactions in the late eleventh and early tenth centuries. This chapter examines relations with Philistines described in 1 and 2 Samuel in order to determine if they were related to trade and exchange activities in the region. Based on events described in the biblical history, which incorporate several originally independent narratives, I conclude that interactions between Israelites and Philistines were connected to interregional exchange and that the interactions were increasingly motivated by competition for control of the routes in and near the hill country. These interactions eventually led to shifts in leadership and territorial control.

### **Why Philistines?**

There are several reasons for the intense attention given to the Philistines in the Samuel narratives. They were the most conspicuous neighbor to the earliest core population of Israelites (or hill country residents).<sup>1</sup> There were, of course, many other peoples in the region, but Philistine settlements urbanized earlier than other Iron Age groups in the southern Levant, and Philistine culture, in its earlier form, was a transplant from the Aegean. These two factors (i.e., urbanization and nonlocal culture) made the Philistine communities exceptionally different from other southern Levantine cultures, especially the inland

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<sup>1</sup> Although I emphasize elsewhere the diversity in the region, I follow the narrative's designation of the two parties as Philistines and Israelites. At present there is no clear way to propose more precise labels for the participants in the conflict.

populations of the Iron I.<sup>2</sup> Their conspicuousness influenced interactions with their neighbors and impacted the way these relations were remembered and eventually recorded.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Research connecting archaeology with ethnicity and identity studies examines more closely the dynamic between Israelites and Philistines, their similarities, and expressions of their differences; see Bryan Jack Stone, “The Philistines and Acculturation: Culture Change and Ethnic Continuity in the Iron Age,” *BASOR* 298 (1995): 7–32; Faust, *Israel’s Ethnogenesis*, 111–156; Avraham Faust and Justin Lev-Tov, “The Constitution of Philistine Identity: Ethnic Dynamics in Twelfth to Tenth Century Philistia,” *OJA* 30/1 (2011): 13–31. For discussions of the Late Bronze to Iron I transition, see Elizabeth Bloch-Smith and Beth Alpert Nakhai, “A Landscape Comes to Life: The Iron Age I,” *Near Eastern Archaeology* 62/2 (1999): 62–92, 101–27; Ann E. Killebrew, *Biblical Peoples and Ethnicity: An Archaeological Study of Egyptians, Canaanites, Philistines, and Early Israel, 1300-1100 B.C.E.* (Society of Biblical Lit, 2005).

<sup>3</sup> As I discuss more below, the biblical text represents a number of different historical periods, ranging from cultural memories of the eleventh-tenth centuries BCE to editorial work and supplementation in the sixth century BCE. Because of this range, it is possible that any episode in the narrative might convey more about a later author’s time than about the events being described (for this type of critique, see Israel Finkelstein, “The Philistines in the Bible: A Late-Monarchic Perspective,” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 27/2 [2002]: 131–67). For discussion of interactions with the Philistines closer to the main period of biblical composition in the seventh and sixth centuries, see Avraham Faust and Ehud Weiss, “Judah, Philistia, and the Mediterranean World: Reconstructing the Economic System of the Seventh Century B.C.E.,” *BASOR* 338 (2005): 71–92. Faust argues that the earliest stages of interaction with Philistines were so influential that they laid the groundwork for attitudes about Israelite interaction with foreigners in general (Faust, *Israel’s Ethnogenesis*, 63).



**Figure 2:1: Overview of sites related to Philistine interactions in Samuel (satellite image © Google earth 2015)**

In addition to these cultural factors, the geographic relationship between the Philistine and early Israelite settlements ensured interaction (Figure 2:1). Both were bordered on their opposite sides by geographic boundaries: the Mediterranean to Philistia's west, and the Jordan Valley to Israel's east. Between them was the Shephelah, a territory that both populations desired, as it was good for human occupation and for supporting crops and livestock. Despite some obvious differences in culture, Philistines and Israelites had several challenges in common, such as growing populations, identity formation and redefinition, and negotiating regional political turmoil. Their shared problems did not

typically lead to camaraderie.<sup>4</sup> Instead they competed for resources and, as I argue here, control of routes used for commerce.

Of the non-Israelite groups mentioned in the text, the Philistines are the most apparent in archaeological and extrabiblical materials, due in large part to their distinctiveness and punctuated arrival in the southern Levant.<sup>5</sup> As a result, there has been less uncertainty in identifying Philistine culture, and research has produced a large body of scholarship.<sup>6</sup> This is especially evident when compared to regions east of the Jordan (Ammon, Moab, Edom) or to the north (Aram). In contrast, Philistine culture and Philistines' interactions in the region are accessible to modern scholars, and focusing on them allows for a more complete picture of a group's interaction activities. Based on the biblical evidence and supported by other historical and archaeological materials, I argue that Philistine relations with others in the region involved the Shephelah, portions of the southern hill country, interests east of the Jordan Valley, and the Jezreel Valley.

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<sup>4</sup> Whether or not Israelites were a product of a migration or descendants of Canaanites, they developed an identity based on a history of migration, expressed through the traditions of the patriarchs, exodus, exile, and return. In this sense, Israelites and Philistines had parallel stories, both having migrated (or maintained stories of migration) in the Late Bronze to Iron Age transition.

<sup>5</sup> Susan Sherratt, followed by Alexander Bauer has argued for a commercial component to the introduction of Sea Peoples/Philistine culture in the Levant (Susan Sherratt, "'Sea Peoples' and the Economic Structure of the Late Second Millennium in the Eastern Mediterranean," in *Mediterranean Peoples in Transition: Thirteenth to Early Tenth Centuries BCE* [ed. Seymour Gitin, Amihai Mazar, and Ephraim Stern; Israel Exploration Society, 1998], 292–313; Alexander A. Bauer, "Cities of the Sea: Maritime Trade and the Origin of Philistine Settlement in the Early Iron Age Southern Levant," *OJA* 17/2 [1998]: 149–68). Their works are useful explorations of economic factors in the early Iron I changes, but note also the challenge by Tristan Barako ("The Philistine Settlement as Mercantile Phenomenon?," *AJA* 104/3 [2000]: 513–30).

<sup>6</sup> There are of course many debates that continue, but since a great deal of the archaeological work done on sites with Philistine culture occurred after "biblical archaeology" began to shift toward more anthropological methods, study of Philistia has escaped some of the challenges that have bogged down the study of ancient Israel and many classic biblical sites. Two recent volumes reflect current issues: Ann E. Killebrew and Gunnar Lehmann, eds., *The Philistines and Other "Sea Peoples" in Text and Archaeology*, Archaeology and Biblical Studies 15 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013); Eliezer D. Oren, ed., *The Sea Peoples and Their World: A Reassessment* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

## Evidence and Method

The biblical evidence for these interactions includes the Eben-ezer battle(s) and the Ark's travels (1 Samuel 4-7); Saul's interactions with Philistines, especially at the Michmash pass (1 Samuel 13-14) and the Jezreel Valley (1 Samuel 28-31); and David's interactions with Philistines (1 Samuel 17 through 2 Samuel 8; 2 Samuel 21 and 23). Analysis of these texts relies on scholarship of the Deuteronomistic History.

Research on the Deuteronomistic History (DH) is indebted to Martin Noth, who first argued that the common elements running from Deuteronomy through 2 Kings signal a distinct unit within the Hebrew Bible.<sup>7</sup> Since Noth, there have been various lines of argument regarding the potential author(s) and reconstructions of the work's composition, but nearly all agree that the history is a compilation of older stories and sources assembled into one large work late in the Judean monarchy or during the exile.<sup>8</sup> My understanding of this work generally follows Frank Moore Cross's theory of a double redaction of the DH.<sup>9</sup> This theory holds that the main history was constructed during Josiah's reign by an author/redactor, the Deuteronomistic Historian (Dtr). That history was revised during the

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<sup>7</sup> Martin Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History* (trans. D. J. A. Clines, JSOTSup 15; Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1981).

<sup>8</sup> Approaches after Noth tend to fall into two groups, following either Frank Moore Cross's double redaction theory or Rudolf Smend's (supplemented by Walter Dietrich and Timo Veijola) multiple redaction theory that the initial history (DtrG) was succeeded by nomistic redaction (DtrN) and prophetic redaction (DtrP). See Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 274–289.; Rudolf Smend, "The Law and the Nations: A Contribution to Deuteronomistic Tradition History," in *Reconsidering Israel and Judah: Recent Studies on the Deuteronomistic History* (trans. P. T. Daniels; ed. Gary N. Knoppers, J. Gordon McConville; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2000) 494-509; see also Albert de Pury, Thomas Römer, and Jean-Daniel Macchi, eds., *Israel Constructs Its History: Deuteronomistic Historiography in Recent Research*, JSOTSup 306 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000).

<sup>9</sup> Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 274–289. See also Richard Elliott Friedman, *The Exile and Biblical Narrative: The Formation of the Deuteronomistic and Priestly Works* (HSM 22; Chico, Calif: Scholars Press, 1981).

exile to explain the destruction of Jerusalem and the fate of the Davidic kingdom.<sup>10</sup> The contributions of the ancient historian(s) to the evidence on interactions are apparent especially in the history of David, in episodes involving the ark or Jerusalem, and Solomon's constructions and foreign relations (addressed in the next chapter).

The accounts of Philistine interaction stem from the full range of the history's sources, from what are arguably the oldest prose portions of the Bible to the Dtr and potentially later additions. Naturally, the historical reliability of the stories is highly contested. On the most basic level, this study allows for the existence of historical versions of the main characters Samuel (and the Ark), Saul, and David. For each episode, I attempt to identify the best material for historical evidence within the narrative, acknowledge potential weaknesses, and when necessary introduce extrabiblical, supporting evidence from geographic and archaeological research in order to build a reasonable historical reconstruction.

### **Prelude to Monarchy: Eben-ezer and the Ark's Travels**

The first interactions in Samuel involve conflict between Philistines and Israelites at Eben-ezer, a location in the northern Shephelah between Shiloh, Aphek, and Mizpah.<sup>11</sup> The material in 1 Samuel 4-7 describes hostilities between generic "Philistines" and "Israel" over some time. According to the story, the Philistines initially gained the upper hand with the

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<sup>10</sup> Cross referred to the author of the Josianic edition as Dtr<sup>1</sup> and the exilic redactor as Dtr<sup>2</sup>. The distinction between the two authors or editions does not play a large part in the analysis in the present chapter. For this reason, I will simply refer to the Dtr, which will indicate either author/redactor of the DH.

<sup>11</sup> The precise location of Ebenezer is unknown. 'Izbet Şarṭah has been put forward as a good candidate (Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 144), but seeking out archaeological remains of a town or village may be misguided. The narrative does not point to such a site. The etiology in 1 Sam 7:12 references a very vague location, "between Mizpah and Shen/Jeshanah." There is no hint of an occupied settlement in Samuel's day or later, no mention of inhabitants or the conquest of a town. It is more likely that Eben-ezer was a battleground, an open field or valley.

capture of the ark (4:2), but later, the two groups battled again, resulting in Israel's victory and the reclamation of territory (7:10-14). This portion of the text is the most difficult of the Samuel episodes in terms of our historical aims, and very little that is related in the narrative can be applied to specific historical reconstruction. The material is important, however, in relation to the interactions that follow involving Saul and David. We will see that the geography that is described in 1 Samuel 4-7 suggests a long-range pattern of interactions between Philistines and their highland neighbors.

Close examination reveals that the episode is a composite of multiple sources.<sup>12</sup> The bulk of the action appears within the source known as the Ark Narrative (1 Sam 4:1b-7:1).<sup>13</sup> Appended to the end of the Ark Narrative is additional material describing Samuel's involvement in a conflict with the Philistines (1 Sam 7:2-14). The verses that describe this conflict most directly (and with the least amount of theological and literary elaboration) are 1 Sam 4:1-2; 7:7, 10-14.

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<sup>12</sup> The historical and literary components to this episode are many. At play are older sources (the Ark Narrative and histories of Saul's and Samuel's careers), a possible pre-Deuteronomistic composition, the process of integration into the larger structure of the DH, as well as the massaging that was necessary to create a cohesive overall narrative. Behind the literary works and cultural memory-traditions are what could be called religio-political tensions and histories of the transition from tribal and chieftain leadership to monarchs, tensions between prophets and kings, and religio-political centers: Shiloh (and the Elides), Mizpah, Kiriath-Jearim, and though implicit, Jerusalem.

<sup>13</sup> Leonhard Rost is credited with the foundational work on the Ark Narrative (*The Succession to the Throne of David*, trans. M. D. Rutter and D. M. Gunn; Sheffield, England: Almond Press, 1982). For more recent studies, see Joseph Blenkinsopp, "Kiriath-Jearim and the Ark," *JBL* 88/2 (1969): 143-56; Antony F. Campbell, *The Ark Narrative (1 Sam 4-6, 2 Sam 6): A Form-Critical and Traditio-Historical Study* (SBLDS 16; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1975); Antony F. Campbell, "Yahweh and the Ark: A Case Study in Narrative," *JBL* 98/1 (1979): 31-43; P. Kyle McCarter, *1 Samuel: A New Translation* (AB 8; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1980); Marsha C. White, "'History of Saul's Rise': Saulide Propaganda in 1 Samuel 1-14," in *"A Wise and Discerning Mind": Essays in Honor of Burke O. Long* (ed. Saul M. Olyan and Robert C. Culley; BJS 325; Providence R.I.: Brown University, 2000), 271-92; Marsha White, "Searching for Saul," *BR* 17/2 (2001); Patrick D. Miller Jr. and J. J. M. Roberts, *The Hand of the Lord: A Reassessment of the "Ark Narrative" of 1 Samuel* (Society of Biblical Literature, 2008).

Despite some detail in these verses, there are still problems reconstructing the events. It is unclear if there was one battle or more at Eben-ezer. To take the text at face value, the region of Eben-ezer saw repeated clashes between the two groups, but the narrative leaves us with questions about how much time passed and additional conflict occurred before the matter was settled. If there was only one battle, then the narrative disagrees with itself. The most glaring discrepancies are whether Israelites (7:11) or Philistines (4:10) won the battle and whether or not Samuel was involved. The account in 1 Samuel 7 appears to correct the embarrassing details of the Israelites' defeat and the ark's capture and does so in Deuteronomistic fashion. A third understanding lies in a combination of these possibilities, that there was an extended period of conflict in the region of Eben-ezer, resulting in a number of traditions about the area. While this option does not settle the narrative and source critical problems, it is likely to be closer to the historical situation of the late eleventh and early tenth centuries.

### **The Interactions**

It is generally agreed that any historical basis to the Eben-ezer accounts should be sought in the narrative's geography rather than in details about characters or the dramatic elements (Figure 2:2).<sup>14</sup> Fortunately, the narrative reveals much in its geographic details.

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<sup>14</sup> Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 143–144. This is the consensus even among those who are more critical in historicity debates. Finkelstein says it explicitly (“The Philistines in the Bible,” 154–155.; see also Israel Finkelstein and Neil Asher Silberman, *The Bible Unearthed: Archaeology's New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of Its Sacred Texts* [New York: Free Press, 2001], 134) as do Miller and Hayes [*A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* (2nd ed.), 128]. Lester Grabbe suggests that if there had been conflict in the Shephelah, Israelites would have initiated raids on dominant Philistines (“From Merneptah to Sheshonq: If We Had Only the Bible...,” in *Israel in Transition, From Late Bronze II to Iron IIA (c. 1250-850 BCE): Volume 2: The Texts* (The Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 521; European Seminar in Historical Methodology 8; London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2011), 98–99). Mario Liverani implies a basic historical accuracy in his depiction of Philistine treatment of the Shephelah and Hill Country (*Israel's History and the History of Israel* [London; Oakville, Conn.: Equinox Pub, 2005], 69–71).

There are two main areas of interaction in the narrative. The action within the ark narrative focuses on a southern approach to Benjamin. The Eben-ezer battle descriptions locate the action around routes that approached Benjamin from the north. I suggest that the contests for dominance in the region were related to the value of the routes that passed between the coastal territories and the Benjaminite hill country, precisely those described in the Eben-ezer accounts and the ark's movements (Figure 2:3).

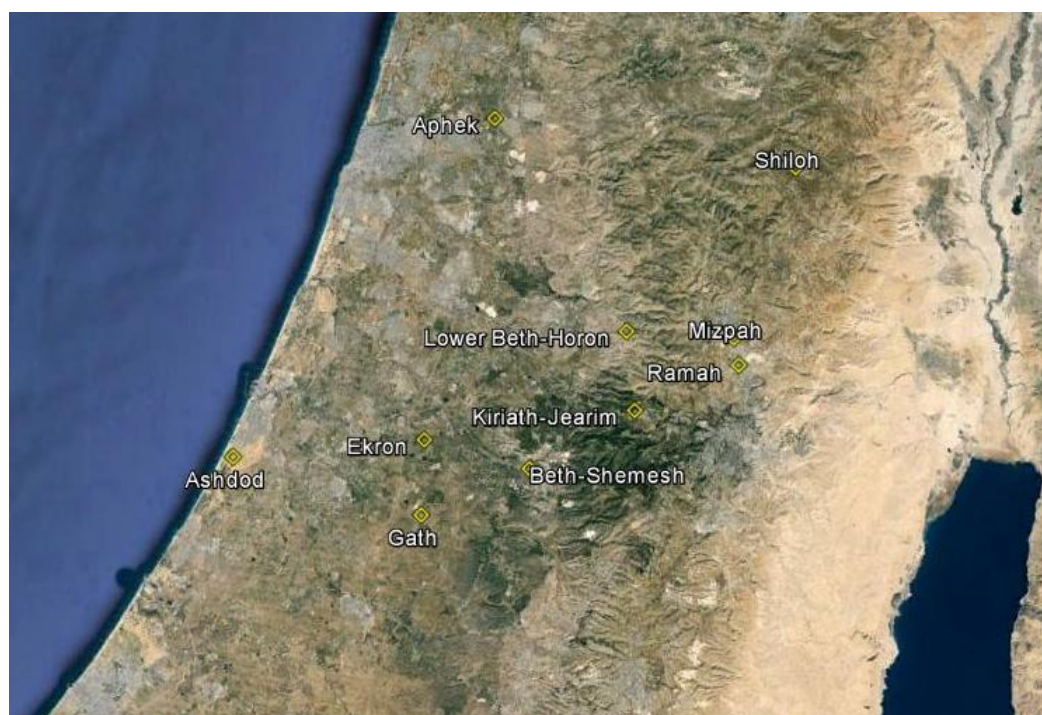


Figure 2:2: Overview of sites in the Ark Narrative and Eben-ezer conflict (satellite image © Google earth 2015)

### Northern Routes

The events of the Eben-ezer conflict that frame the Ark Narrative (1 Sam 4:1-2 and 7:2-14) draw our attention to the northern region of Philistine and Israelite territories. According to 1 Sam 4:1, the Philistine troops prepared at Aphek. Although the Philistine heartland lay further south, the town of Aphek played an important role in Philistine interactions in this episode and later in the history. The site's location, situated at the source

of the Yarkon River, was integral in exchange activities. Since the river was difficult to cross, all coastal land traffic, including and most importantly travel on the international coast highway, the Via Maris, was naturally diverted from the coast to the source of the river, that is, to Aphek.<sup>15</sup> Whoever controlled the town gained power from the inevitability that travelers had to pass through this location. Indeed, its importance is confirmed in historical and archaeological evidence across many eras.<sup>16</sup>

A Philistine operation at Aphek provided advantages beyond control of the coastal route. Substantial Philistine remains along with evidence of intercultural interaction have been discovered at the mouth of the Yarkon at the port city Tell Qasile, suggesting that Philistines may have been exploiting the trade opportunities at the port.<sup>17</sup> I propose that in addition to the typically assumed coastal and maritime trade, Philistine interest extended to the east. With a secure handle on coastal routes through port cities and control of the Via Maris at Aphek, Philistines may have focused on another of Aphek's advantages, which was as a nexus of several routes that connected to the hill country, the Jordan Valley, and Transjordanian highways. If Philistines were interested in expanding their use or control of routes toward the east, Aphek was a logical point of departure. The combination of these

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<sup>15</sup> Dorsey, *Roads and Highways*, 57–61.

<sup>16</sup> The site's occupation begins in the Early Bronze I and continued into the Islamic period. Major fortifications, other monumental architecture, and diplomatic correspondence are just some of the discoveries that attest to Aphek's strategic location. The Egyptian "Governor's Residence" from the New Kingdom is highly suggestive of the city's administrative importance just prior to the period described in the biblical narrative. See Moshe Kochavi, "The History and Archeology of Aphek-Antipatris: A Biblical City in the Sharon Plain," *BA* 44/2 (1981): 75–86; Mosheh Kokhavi and Miriam Tadmor, *Aphek in Canaan: The Egyptian Governor's Residence and Its Finds* (Jerusalem: Israel Museum, 1990).

<sup>17</sup> Amihai Mazar, *Excavations at Tell Qasile* (Qedem 12, 20; Jerusalem: Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1980).

factors suggests a deliberate strategy to participate in, or even dominate, regional and interregional traffic from a base at Aphek.

The Israelite towns associated with the Eben-ezer battle(s), Shiloh and Mizpah especially, also occupied strategic locations.<sup>18</sup> Both were situated along the main highway of the hill country, the Ridge Road, which connected highland settlements from Hebron to Shechem, with extensions to other key regions (south to the Beersheba Valley and north to the Jezreel Valley and Beth-shean). A cursory survey shows that many sites along this road were populated during this period.<sup>19</sup> If these areas were allied or united, the Ridge Road would have been critical in connecting them. Whether Israel moved into battle from Shiloh or Mizpah (or another location on the Ridge Road, Bethel perhaps?), the traditions suggest that Israel made strategic use of this route in defensive and political activities.<sup>20</sup>

Having explored the geography related to both groups, a question presents itself:

What was the source of provocation between Aphek and the Ridge Road? I contend it was

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<sup>18</sup> While the strategic aspects of their locations apply regardless of chronology, neither site is free from historical problems for this period. Excavations indicate that Shiloh's occupation ended near the Ark Narrative's timeframe, at which time occupation at Mizpah was in early stages. It has been frequently repeated that Shiloh's destruction came at the hands of the Philistines and is depicted in this episode, but the text does not claim the Philistines reached or attacked the site, and archaeological evidence does not reveal who, in fact, destroyed it (R. A. Pearce, "Shiloh and Jer. Vii 12, 14 & 15," *VT* 23/1 [1973]: 105–8; Israel Finkelstein et al., "Excavations at Shiloh 1981–1984: Preliminary Report," *TA* 12/2 [1985]: 123–80; Donald G. Schley, *Shiloh: A Biblical City in Tradition and History* [Continuum International Publishing Group, 1989], 196). Mizpah's importance spans several historical periods, so we are faced with the fact that later events may have influenced the story. Tell en-Naşbeh, argued to be biblical Mizpah, has yielded material culture typical for the hill country as well as locally-made Philistine bichrome pottery and possible Cypro-Phoenician imports. The site does have evidence of occupation since the Iron I (with evidence of collard rim jars, Philistine pottery, silos, wine presses, and a kiln) and was fortified in the early ninth century; see Jeffrey Zorn, "An Inner and Outer Gate Complex at Tell En-Nasbeh," *BASOR* 307 (1997): 53; idem, "New Insights from Old Wine Presses," *PEQ* 130 (1998): 154–61; idem, "The Dating of an Early Iron Age Kiln from Tell Al-Nasbah," *Levant* 30 (1998): 199–202; idem, "A Note on the Date of the 'Great Wall' of Tell En-Naşbeh: A Rejoinder," *TA* 26 (1999): 146–50.

<sup>19</sup> Dorsey refers to this route as Israel's "National Highway" due to its importance throughout the Iron Age (*Roads and Highways*, 117–19).

<sup>20</sup> The Israelites' base at the start of the conflict in 1 Sam 4:1 is unclear. The episode begins with the Israelites marching out to engage the Philistines. The present text implies that they marched from Shiloh, but this association is the result of redaction. The starting place is not explicitly stated in the text.

the roads that passed through the hills. According to David Dorsey, about a dozen roads connected the Ridge Road and the coast, with at least four passing directly through Aphek and about that many more passing near the site. Similarly from the Ridge Road, about a dozen routes led east to the Jordan Valley.<sup>21</sup> The southern-most of Dorsey's Samaria roads show the potential for a full route from Aphek through the hill country to the east.<sup>22</sup> From Aphek, one could travel to Shiloh via a fork in the road at Khirbet Tibna. Passing by that fork and heading south on the same road from Aphek led one to Jericho via Bethel, which happens to sit between Shiloh and Mizpah on the Ridge Road.<sup>23</sup> It would be illogical to propose that Philistine success in a campaign east of Aphek or, conversely, Israelite success west of the Ridge Road (especially in the span between Shiloh and Mizpah) was not related to these highways. The region between the Philistine and Israelite bases contained some of the most important crossings through the hill country, important enough to warrant armed conflict.

### **Southern Routes**

The ark's journey after its capture, particularly its path back into Israelite hands as described in 1 Sam 5:6-7:2, follows a southern alternative to the routes implied in the Ebenezer material. The ark passed from Ashdod to Gath and Ekron, then through Beth-Shemesh to Kiriath-jearim. In other words, in leaving Philistia, it followed the Soreq Valley, one of

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<sup>21</sup> Dorsey, *Roads and Highways*, 163–80. Two routes in Dorsey's Judah group (J1 and J2) cross into this territory as well (*ibid.*, 181–85).

<sup>22</sup> Dorsey, *Roads and Highways*, 170–171.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 134, 170–71. With this in mind, it is curious that Bethel does not appear in this narrative (Anson F. Rainey, "Looking for Bethel: An Exercise in Historical Geography," in *Confronting the Past: Archaeological and Historical Essays on Ancient Israel in Honor of William G. Dever* [ed. Seymour Gitin, J. Edward Wright, and J. P. Dessel; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2006], 269–73; Victor H. Matthews, "Back to Bethel: Geographical Reiteration in Biblical Narrative," *JBL* 128 [2009]: 149–65).

three major valley roads that connected the hill country to the west throughout the biblical period.<sup>24</sup> Each of the ark's layovers corresponds to towns located at strategic positions that allowed for participation in, as well as monitoring of, the traffic through the region. In theory, the ark could represent any thing (e.g., people, traffic, goods) that moved along the same route, and if we look beyond the narrative's theological concerns, we see an exchange corridor mapped out by the ark's movements.

The ark's point of departure, Ashdod, sat on the international coastal highway, where traffic flowing in local and interregional channels mingled. The intermediate sites Gath, Ekron, Beth-shemesh, and Kiriath-jearim were at the frontlines in the shifting territories of Philistines, Canaanites (or their descendants), and Israelites in the eleventh and tenth centuries and in border tensions between Philistia and Judah throughout the Iron Age. Eventually, the ark returned to Israelite territory by passing into the highlands and back to the ridge settlements.<sup>25</sup>

Similar to the Eben-ezer accounts of interactions, the area of interest or contention is the intermediate zone, here represented by the ark's passage from Gath and Ekron to Beth-shemesh and Kiriath-jearim.<sup>26</sup> Both Beth-shemesh and Kiriath-jearim mediated passage

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<sup>24</sup> To the north is the Aijalon Valley road and to the south the Elah Valley road. Each of these valley routes was guarded by a major city in/near the Shephelah border zone: the Aijalon by Gezer, the Soreq by Ekron, and the Elah by Gath (Dorsey, *Roads and Highways*, 181–91).

<sup>25</sup> Either to Mizpah with Samuel as described in 2 Samuel 7 or, if the Ark Narrative's original end is indeed now located in 2 Samuel 6, to Jerusalem.

<sup>26</sup> The passage through both Philistine border towns raises some questions. Why should the ark pass through both Gath and Ekron before heading east? Was there a critical reason that both cities were included in the story but other major Philistine cities were not? Judging by the route alone, Gath seems to be the surprise in the story, since there was a more direct route from Ashdod to Ekron to the Aijalon Valley road. In the late Iron I – Early Iron IIA, however, Ashdod and Gath were the major Philistine cities; Ekron was not yet as important (Aren M. Maeir, "The Tell Es-Safi/Gath Archaeological Project 1996-2010: Introduction, Overview and Synopsis of Results," in *Tell Es-Safi/Gath: The 1996-2005 Seasons* [ed. Aren. M. Maeir; 2 vols.; Ägypten und Altes Testament 69; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012], 39–40). The mention of the three cities may reflect

between different geographic, ethnic, and political zones. Beth-shemesh features in discussions of borders and security in the biblical history, and excavations at the site have discovered unusual finds such as an iron smithy, a tenth-century inscription, and luxury goods.<sup>27</sup> Kiriath-jearim also sat at a hub of activity, as a border city between Canaanite and non-Canaanite, between tribal allotments in biblical traditions, and as a gateway between the hill country and lowlands.<sup>28</sup> Anthropological research suggests that border sites like these tend to act as exchange zones, providing neutral territory for various cultures to interact and trade.<sup>29</sup> Looking at the story from this perspective, the ark represents cultural exchange along the passage from the coast through the Shephelah and back into the hill country.

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concerns from two different authors, one earlier (closer to when Ashdod and Gath were predominant) and one later (when Ekron was the main eastern city).

<sup>27</sup> Beth-shemesh is named in boundary delineations (Josh 15:10; 19:22), even though it was not taken from its inhabitants according to Judg 1:33. It was a Levitical city according to Josh 21:16. During monarchic period, it had an administrative role for Solomon according to 1 Kgs 4:9 and was the site of a border war between Amaziah and Jehoash (2 Kgs 14:1-12). Excavations at the site suggest ethnic complexity and some turbulent times (Shlomo Bunimovitz, Zvi Lederman, and Dale W. Manor, “The Archaeology of Border Communities: Renewed Excavations at Tel Beth-Shemesh, Part 1: The Iron Age,” *NEA* 72/3 [2009]: 114–42). McCarter argues that the text is commenting on Beth-shemesh’s inability to provide a proper priest from among its residents, raising some questions about the ancient author’s possible concerns about the city’s ethnic composition (McCarter, *I Samuel*, 131).

<sup>28</sup> Blenkinsopp characterizes Kiriath-jearim as a “nodal point” where the territories of Benjamin, Judah, and Dan’s initial allotment met (Blenkinsopp, “Kiriath-Jearim and the Ark,” 148).

<sup>29</sup> Karl Polanyi, “Ports of Trade in Early Societies,” in *Primitive, Archaic, and Modern Economies: Essays of Karl Polanyi* (ed. G. Dalton; Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), 238–60; Revere, ““No Man’s Coast’: Ports of Trade in the Eastern Mediterranean”; Rosemary Arnold, “A Port of Trade: Whydah on the Guinea Coast,” in *Trade and Market in the Early Empires: Economies in History and Theory* (ed. Karl Polanyi, Conrad M. Arensberg, and Harry W. Pearson; Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1957), 154–76; Francisco Benet, “Separation of Trade and Market: Great Market of Whydah,” in *Trade and Market in the Early Empires: Economies in History and Theory* (ed. Karl Polanyi, Conrad M. Arensberg, and Harry W. Pearson; Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1957), 177–87.

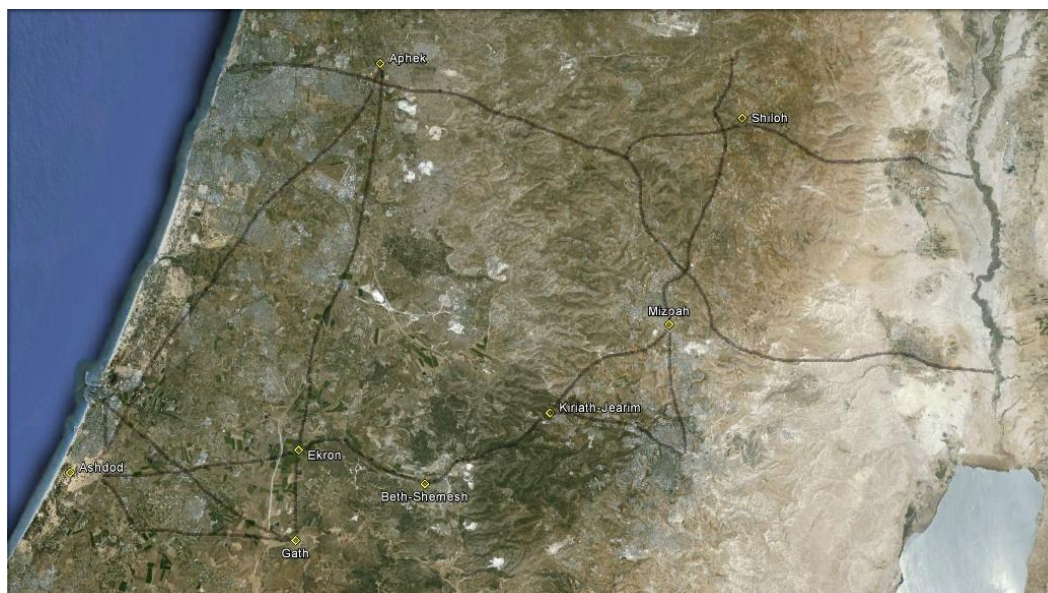


Figure 2:3: Possible routes indicated by the Ark Narrative and Eben-ezer conflict (routes adapted from Dorsey, *Roads and Highways*; satellite image © Google earth 2015)

### An Exchange of Goods

The Ark Narrative is, at its core, a tale of exchange. The nature of the story—overwhelmingly theological and mythic (including etiologies and allusions to Israel’s classic myth/epic, the Exodus<sup>30</sup>)—precludes a historical analysis of the details, but it is useful to entertain the economic implications of the story. The ark passed into Philistine hands with Israel’s defeat at Eben-ezer. This type of exchange is well-known in the ancient world—religious objects, typically constructed of high value materials, were regularly carried off by victors. This act symbolized a supernatural victory that accompanied the earthly one. In addition to the political, ideological, and psychological messages that the acquisition conveyed, the taking of the ark was an economic victory, both in the taking of booty but also

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<sup>30</sup> Etiology and other traditional mythic/epic elements dictate that the gifts serve a literary purpose first and foremost. In addition, the allusions to the Exodus tale (e.g., the Philistine priests’ similarities to the Egyptian priests, plagues forcing the release of the ark/people, gold objects given with the ark’s/people’s departure) have probably obscured any history that might have been behind a tribute exchange between Philistia and Israel in this early period. No doubt various political exchanges occurred between the two, but this episode’s details cannot provide specific historical evidence.

in the potential tribute that the victor could impose if the Philistines were able to assert dominance further.

According to the ark narrative, however, the Philistines were not able to maintain the upper hand. They returned the ark with value added: gifts of gold and cattle from the Philistine leaders. Theologically, the gold objects and cattle serve as an offering to YHWH. According to P. K. McCarter, they function as “decontamination” as well as “compensation” for the Philistine lords/people.<sup>31</sup> They are presented to the deity along with the whole sacrifice of the cows in a religious ritual. As in the Exodus tale, YHWH is recognized as the ultimate power by both the actors in the story and by its audience. However, the gifts also serve as political and economic tools. The objects had both ritual value and intrinsic value in their very material, and thus functioned as tribute from the Philistine lords to YHWH/Israel.<sup>32</sup> Due to the nature of the story, it is difficult to deem these details historical, but the overall power struggle and exchange of religious and luxury goods between Philistia and Israel are appropriate for this period. And it should not be surprising that Israel’s history asserts that the outcome of the Eben-ezer battles resulted in both political and economic victories in relation to Philistia.

### **Preliminary Conclusions**

The ark narrative’s climax traces the ark back into Israel’s hands with a gift of tribute from the beleaguered Philistines. Even though there can be little confidence in this depiction as a precise historical event of the eleventh-tenth centuries, a general sense of the political dynamic and geography suggested in the text were plausible for the period. This conclusion

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<sup>31</sup> McCarter, *I Samuel*, 133.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

relies to some extent on the antiquity of the Ark Narrative itself, but even if we are reasonably skeptical about drawing historical conclusions from a mythic tale, anthropological approaches suggest a similar political landscape for this period.<sup>33</sup> The Eben-ezer accounts and current historiography depict decentralized religious and political circumstances and a tense relationship between Philistines and Israelites. The biblical tale lacks a singular leader, and there does not appear to be “national” unity. From Shiloh, to the battlefield, to Beth-shemesh, to Kiriath-jearim, and back to Samuel at Mizpah, there is little to suggest that these locations and various peoples were under one authority. This image is in accord with more recent models depicting decentralization that continued into the tenth century and possibly later (in contrast to depictions of centralization under Saul and David). What unifies the narrative’s elements, aside from the ark as the focal point, were the highway networks that linked the events and characters and the interactions that were inevitable from the use of these routes. Whether at Eben-ezer or along the ark’s journey, there were tense negotiations along the roads that guarded passage between the Philistine coast and the central hill country. As a result of such tension, we might expect cooperation or consolidation in regional leadership (of either the Philistine towns or the hill country) for defense of routes and borders. In the episodes that follow, we do indeed see these types of developments. Interaction and conflict along these same routes are factors in the rise of the regional leaders Saul and David and the consolidation of territories that would become the core of Israel’s earliest state.

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<sup>33</sup> E.g., Faust, *Israel’s Ethnogenesis*, 111–156; Faust and Lev-Tov, “Constitution of Philistine Identity.”

## Saul

Saul's career in the biblical narrative is inseparable from interactions with the Philistines. It begins and ends with them. Saul's commission stems from a crisis of Philistine oppression (1 Sam 9:16), and his life ends on the battlefield, defeated by a Philistine coalition (1 Samuel 31). Although Saul interacted with other allies and foes, dealings with the Philistines dominate his history—second only to the rivalry with David—and provide good evidence for an assessment of his interregional activities.<sup>34</sup> Two critical events are the focus of this section: the battle at the Michmash Pass and the battle in the Jezreel Valley.

### Battle at the Michmash Pass

Drawn in by the presence of a Philistine outpost (מִצְבָּה / מִצְיָבָה) between Michmash and Geba/Gibeah, Saul, Jonathan, and the Israelites battled for the pass and expelled the Philistines from the Benjaminite hill country (1 Sam 13:2-14:23). This episode has a complex composition, and there are multiple layers. Some scholars reconstruct an older history, now largely lost, that documented Saul's career and supplied material such as the Michmash battle event to later historians.<sup>35</sup> Complicating analysis of its origins and redaction are many corruptions in the manuscript traditions. Fortunately, we do not have to

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<sup>34</sup> That is, within the context of the biases of the ancient authors. Saul's story cannot easily be removed from the larger narrative concern of the history of an Israelite monarchy, of which there are multiple points of view. For discussion of this context and source analysis of 1 Samuel, see Baruch Halpern, *The Constitution of the Monarchy in Israel* (HSM 25; Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1981).

<sup>35</sup> Marsha White refers to it as the "History of Saul's Rise" paralleling the proposed "History of David's Rise" source ("History of Saul's Rise"). See also J. Maxwell Miller, "Saul's Rise to Power: Some Observations Concerning 1 Sam 9:1-10:16; 10:26-11:15 and 13.2-14:46," *CBQ* 36 (1974): 157-74; Patrick M. Arnold, *Gibeah: The Search for a Biblical City* (JSOTSup 79; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990); Diana V. Edelman, *King Saul in the Historiography of Judah* (JSOTSup 121; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991); Diana Edelman, "Saul Ben Kish in History and Tradition," in *The Origins of Ancient Israelite States* (ed. Volkmar Fritz and Philip R. Davies; JSOTSup 228; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996), 142-59; White, "Searching for Saul"; idem, "Saul and Jonathan in 1 Samuel 1 and 14," in *Saul in Story and Tradition* (ed. Marsha C. White and Carl S. Ehrlich; FAT 47; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 119-38.

know each turn of the compositional history in order to evaluate the event itself. A simpler analysis will suffice.

The narrative presents more than one account of the same battle.<sup>36</sup> One is briefly reported in 13:2-6; that same event is presented as a dramatic narrative in 14:1-23. Between these two is additional material related to the event or deemed relevant by redactor(s). This material includes Saul's sacrifice at Gilgal (13:7b-15a), Philistine activities in the vicinity of the pass (13:17-18), and the Philistine metallurgical services on which Israelites relied (13:19-21).

## **Matters of Translation and Interpretation**

### **The Location**

Several related place names are associated with this event: Gibeath-ha-Elohim (from the first mention of the Philistine post in 1 Sam 10:5), Gibeah, and Geba. The similar names pose a problem for historical reconstruction. Are we to understand that there were two or more places, similarly named, that were important in the event? Or are the three names variations from the same root, **גבע**, meaning "hill," all referring to one site? Even though **גבע**-based names were common designations for prominent hill-top sites, I follow the arguments of Miller and Arnold that all three versions of the place name, particularly in

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<sup>36</sup> This is a fairly accepted argument, but there are alternative readings. McCarter, for example, interprets the text as an old, cohesive but textually corrupt, narrative, with only one significant interpolation (1 Sam 13:7b-15a). His reading is that Jonathan attacked a Philistine prefect (1 Sam 13:2, followed by additional background information) that then prompted a full-scale battle, in which Jonathan was again the hero (1 Sam 14:1-23) (McCarter, *I Samuel*, 224-42). However, the narrative's progression in chapter 14 is particularly strange if the events of 1 Sam 13:2-6 came before. Why was Jonathan's attack a surprise if he had already "assassinated" the Philistine prefect? Are the intervening "background" materials explicitly or convincingly connected? In addition, McCarter appears reluctant to address source critical issues that suggest themselves from variations in the terms **נצ"ב** and **מצב** and the place name changes between Geba and Gibeah. These literary and source critical elements appear to rule out the cohesion that he sees in the story.

relation to this episode, refer to one site, today's Jaba, that overlooks the pass.<sup>37</sup> Their solution, compelling in and of itself, also solves difficulties otherwise perceived in the episode. If Geba and Gibeah were two different places, the narrative appears confused and disjointed, not to mention implausible.<sup>38</sup> Instead, if we understand both Gibeah and Geba as references to the site directly opposite the pass from Michmash (modern Mukhmas), the narrative plays out with less difficulty, and the dynamic between Jonathan and the Saulides on the one hand and the Philistine outpost and supporting troops on the other can be more easily explained.

### The Philistine Presence

The point of irritation that provoked the fighting was the Philistine **מִצָּב/נְצִיב**, first introduced in the narrative in 1 Sam 10:5.<sup>39</sup> The **מִצָּב/נְצִיב** is not mentioned again until 1

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<sup>37</sup> Miller's discussion begins with the reasoning that has been used to support the identification of Tell el-Ful with Gibeah. The identification, provided first by Robinson and later argued by Albright, influenced the conclusion that Jaba must be a separate site, namely Geba. Miller then reviews all references to the various forms of the name and determines that variations of **גִּבְעָה** all refer to Jaba except for Gibeath-Kiriath-Jearim and the name and place Gibeon (identified with modern el-Jib) (J. Maxwell Miller, "Geba/Gibeah of Benjamin," *VT* 25/2 [1975]: 145–66). Arnold's arguments build from Miller's, adding a review of the problems in the archaeology of Tell el-Ful and the region's landscape (Arnold, *Gibeah*). Their arguments have not become the consensus, but the debate continues, most recently in publications by William Schniedewind ("The Search for Gibeah: Notes on the Historical Geography of Central Benjamin," in *"I Will Speak the Riddles of Ancient Times": Archaeological and Historical Studies in Honor of Amihai Mazar on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday* [ed. Aren M. Maeir and Pierre de Miroschedji; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2006], 711–22) and Israel Finkelstein ("Tell El-Ful Revisited: The Assyrian and Hellenistic Periods [with a New Identification]," *PEQ* 143/2 [2011]: 106–18).

<sup>38</sup> The effort to maintain that Gibeah and Geba are separate sites results in several emendations (one often causing the need for the next) and problematic archaeological reconstructions (summarized in Miller, "Geba/Gibeah of Benjamin"; Arnold, *Gibeah*; Finkelstein, "Tell El-Ful Revisited"). The most problematic textual issue is in imagining that Saul observed the pass and battle from a more distant location, especially if one holds to the identification of Tell el-Ful as Gibeah. In addition, it distorts the history in the narrative by increasing the Philistine presence, which in turn reinforces an exaggerated view of Philistine domination, a view that likely influenced the argument for multiple locations in the first place. See, for example, Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 145–146.

<sup>39</sup> The MT is plural in this one example, an exception to the rest of the instances in the episode in 1 Samuel 13–14 and in contrast to textual variants. Edelman supplies the simplest explanation with the plural having resulted from a metathesis of the **ב** and **צ** (Edelman, *King Saul*, 55, note 3).

Samuel 13-14 where it is the focus of the dramatic action. The use of both **נָצִיב** and **מַצֵּב**, like the variations in the location name Geba/Gibeah, suggests that at least two sources contributed to the present text. **נָצִיב** occurs early in the episode (1 Sam 13:3-4), and **מַצֵּב** dominates from 1 Sam 13:23 on.<sup>40</sup> Typically, for these chapters, the nouns are translated “garrison,” implying a well-staffed, well-fortified military installation under the command of a central authority. Alternatively, the words might be translated “prefect” suggesting an officer of some kind, implying an overseer of a Philistine occupation of the hill country.<sup>41</sup> Neither translation is fully satisfying nor matches well the assumptions of the narrative. An armed garrison would be unlikely to fall to one man and his armor-bearer. The idea of a “prefect,” a single officer “assassinated” by Jonathan, is plausible, but often this interpretation is accompanied by the notion of a wide-spread Philistine occupation of the hill country, which is not required by the narrative.<sup>42</sup> Instead, translating the term more literally as a “station,” “installation,” or “(out)post” conveys the most necessary meaning and does not impose more than we know onto the translation and the episode. There is no unnecessary ambiguity in this choice—the resulting sense is that a Philistine installation (a person, guard

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<sup>40</sup> Miller explains the alteration as the result of two parallel stories rather than an appropriation of one into another (“Saul’s Rise to Power,” 162).

<sup>41</sup> Many standard translations (King James and New King James Versions, Jewish Publication Society [1917], and New Revised Standard Version) choose “garrison” throughout the episode. The newer Jewish Publication Society TANAKH translation (1985, 1999) distinguishes between the two nouns, translating **נָצִיב** as “prefect” (1 Sam 10:5; 13:3-4) and **מַצֵּב** as “garrison” (1 Sam 13:23; 14:1, 4) or “outpost” (14:6, 11). The “garrison” translation is preferred among some scholars: Itamar Singer, “Egyptians, Canaanites, and Philistines in the Period of the Emergence of Israel,” in *From Nomadism to Monarchy: Archaeological and Historical Aspects of Early Israel* (ed. Israel Finkelstein and Nadav Na’aman; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1994), 282–338; Baruch Halpern, *David’s Secret Demons: Messiah, Murderer, Traitor, King* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W. B. Eerdmans, 2001), e.g., 150–153. McCarter tends toward “outpost” but does use “garrison” in 14:15 (*I Samuel*, 232–242). Rainey entertains various possibilities: “representative,” “commissioner,” “garrison,” and “officer” (*The Sacred Bridge*, 145–146).

<sup>42</sup> McCarter’s translation and interpretation are an example; see *I Samuel*, 224–42.

staff, and/or structure) watched over the pass, and the threat to the station precipitated a full-scale battle.

Despite the corruption and confusion in Saul's history generally, many scholars hold that an event at the Michmash pass has historical grounding. The event was an attack by Jonathan on a Philistine post (as commander, Saul receives general credit in 13:4) that resulted in regional conflict. The account was recorded in more than one source, and the geographic dynamics are probable not only for the place but also for the time. Additionally, if one holds to the theory that Saul's battle against Nahash of Ammon *followed* the Michmash battle historically, contrary to its current place in the narrative in 1 Samuel 11, then there is a strong case for understanding this event as a critical moment in transforming Saul's career.<sup>43</sup> Saul would have been established first as a local leader designated through an elite lineage (1 Sam 9:1) whose military successes led to his engagement in affairs beyond his familial territory ( e.g., Jabesh-Gilead, toward Philistia and the south, Jezreel). In time, Saul became a regional leader with impressive military victories in addition to his worthy family status, thus explaining how Saul ben Kish of Benjamin became known as Israel's first king.

### **Regional Hegemony**

Discussion of this episode has been couched in a broader understanding that Saul's rise stemmed from his leadership in an Israelite uprising against more powerful Philistine overlords.<sup>44</sup> This notion is influenced by the broader view of the Deuteronomistic History.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Miller, "Saul's Rise to Power," 172–174.

<sup>44</sup> E.g., McCarter, *I Samuel*, 241–242; Singer, "Egyptians, Canaanites, and Philistines," 322–25; Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 145–146; Faust, *Israel's Ethnogenesis*, 143–146.

The groundwork is laid in the book of Judges, where the narrator works in broad strokes speaking of “Israel’s” oppression under the “Philistines,” but if we read carefully, interaction between Israelites and Philistines is not geographically widespread. For example, Samson’s story does not reach much further east than the fringes of Philistine territory (Judges 13-16). When we turn to the book of Samuel, the Philistines are indeed the most frequent interaction partner, but their presence in the narrative is limited to specific battles. The narrative leading up to the Michmash pass incident clouds the issue. Samuel’s career summary, in typical Judges fashion, states that the Philistines were banished from Israel for all of Samuel’s days (1 Sam 7:13), but Samuel is sent to Saul in 1 Sam 9:16 because Saul will be called to deliver Israel from the Philistines. This kind of inconsistency is typical of a composite narrative and of the Dtr’s tendency to tweak the backdrop and invoke the image of an oppressive foreign hand upon Israel that reinvigorates divine intervention.

This broad, exaggerated characterization persists in modern historical reconstruction. It is quite common to read that the Philistines had, in the time of Samuel and Saul, occupied or oppressed Israel (generally) or that the battle at Eben-ezer was a successful liberation (though short-lived to accommodate the Saul stories). The dramatic hyperbole of the narrative should not cloud the history of these interactions. In fact, when it comes to the hill country in the time of Saul, there is no *specific* evidence in the text or in the archaeological record of widespread overlordship by Philistines. To support this kind of theory we would

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<sup>45</sup> It has probably also been influenced by trends in scholarship that favored revolution as a stage in the path to state formation for Israel. The “peasant revolt” model for the emergence of Israel, first put forward by Mendenhall and followed by Gottwald in the 1970s, argues for a revolt against elite Canaanite overlords by oppressed peasants (i.e., future Israelites) (Mendenhall, *The Tenth Generation*; Gottwald, *The Tribes of Yahweh*). This theory addresses the period prior to the advent of kingship, but the proposal (despite having lost support among most scholars) plays into the underdog characterization that is built into the DH’s framework and the modern understanding that the Philistines were more sophisticated in their social and technological development.

need evidence of administrative centers within the hill country comparable to Egypt's colonization in the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age or Assyria's program later in the Iron Age. The archaeological evidence suggests the opposite—a deliberate and successful cultural avoidance between Philistia and the hill country.<sup>46</sup> Without better evidence for Philistine hegemony, we must look for another explanation for Saul's interactions at the Michmash pass. According to the narrative for this episode, there were Philistines in the area but limited to the outpost (before Jonathan's attack), and we are not told why they were there. This understanding of a limited Philistine presence is the basis for the present discussion.

### **Interactions at the Pass**

One way to approach analysis of this interaction is to ask: what were the Philistines seeking or defending in the central hill country? The simplest answer is the pass itself. The wadi between Michmash and Geba/Gibeah was the focus of military campaigns at various points in the region's history, and this instance falls in with that tendency.<sup>47</sup> It was a strategic crossroads connected to the Ridge Road and routes like those related to the Ebenezer episode. From these routes and the central hills, this pass provided the main descent into the Jordan Valley. Instead of imagining this post as an extension of a Philistine occupation policy, which would be better carried out through administrative centers in towns or cities, or as a defense for Philistine residents nearby, of which there is no evidence, this installation is better explained as related to the crossroads.

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<sup>46</sup> Faust, *Israel's Ethnogenesis*, 191–220.

<sup>47</sup> Arnold, *Gibeah*, 110–22.

The next logical question is why would Philistines install a post at a remote location, at least in relation to their main settlement? The outpost can be explained in light of the highway networks. Just as in the Eben-ezer event, Philistines had good access to the international coastal routes, but in order to access the routes in the eastern Jordan Valley, Philistines had to pass through the central hill country. Secured transportation through the Michmash pass meant an open door to additional trade connections and eastern highways. A post at the pass may also have provided a source of revenue as a safe layover for travelers or in the way of tolls (which could easily be seen by locals as a source of oppression). If the post was guarding transportation, we have an alternative interpretation for the Philistine “razzias” that went out along the Ophrah road, the Beth-Horon road, and into the desert valley (13:17-18), precisely the directions we would expect for movement to or from the pass. What were “raiding parties” to the Israelites might have been “monitors” to the Philistines.

Previously it was difficult to imagine what commercial interests might have motivated the Philistines to seek control of the Michmash pass, but due to excavations over the last fifteen years, it is now fully plausible, even very likely, that they were engaged in metallurgical trade involving the east and west sides of the Jordan Valley. Excavations at Khirbat en-Nahas in the Faynan region (biblical Punon) of the Jordanian desert demonstrate that intense copper smelting was active from the eleventh to ninth centuries BCE and that, during this time, the site was part of a long-distance trade network that reached far beyond the Jordan Valley.<sup>48</sup> Further north, the earliest known iron smelting in the ancient Near East is now attested at Tell Hammeh on Jordan’s Zarqa river (near Tell Deir ‘Alla and Tell es-

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<sup>48</sup> Levy et al., “Excavations at Khirbat En-Nahas, 2002-2009.” See also Chapter Six.

Sa'idiyeh), which functioned from the late tenth to the mid-eighth centuries. In addition, two early iron production sites have been found in Cisjordan: one at Beth-Shemesh, dating to ca. 900 BCE, and the other was found at Tell es-Safi, biblical Gath, dating to the late tenth to early ninth centuries.<sup>49</sup> The discoveries at Tell es-Safi are, so far, the only known evidence of Philistine metallurgy, which happens to be reported in the addendum to the account(s) of battle at the pass (13:19-21, see below). Both smithies, Tell es-Safi and Beth-Shemesh, show evidence of iron and copper processing.<sup>50</sup> And the remains at Tell Hammeh and Beth-Shemesh indicate that the metallurgists were not novices merely learning or experimenting—they were advanced in their craft and used standardized practices, suggesting the technology had been developed prior to the end of the tenth century and was shared across some geographic distance.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> H. Alexander Veldhuijzen and Thilo Rehren, “Slags and the City: Early Iron Production at Tell Hammeh, Jordan and Tel Beth-Shemesh, Israel,” in *Metals and Mines—Studies in Archaeometallurgy* (London: Archetype, British Museum, 2007), 189–201; Adi Eliyahu-Behar et al., “Iron and Bronze Production in Iron Age IIA Philistia: New Evidence from Tell Es-Safi/Gath, Israel,” *Journal of Archaeological Science* 39 (2012): 255–67.

<sup>50</sup> Eliyahu-Behar et al., “Iron and Bronze Production in Iron Age IIA Philistia,” 262–266.

<sup>51</sup> The relationship between the smithy at Beth-Shemesh and the primary processing at Tell Hammeh continues to be investigated. A close relationship in technology is clear from the distinctive style and consistent size of tuyères that were discovered at both sites, but provenance testing of objects from Beth-Shemesh did not identify Tell Hammeh as a source. See Veldhuijzen and Rehren, “Slags and the City,” 199; Eleanor Blakelock et al., “Slag Inclusions in Iron Objects and the Quest for Provenance: An Experiment and a Case Study,” *Journal of Archaeological Science* 36 (2009): 1745–57.



**Figure 2:4: Potential routes connecting known areas of metallurgical activities (satellite image © Google earth 2015)**

In light of these discoveries, there is much more to say about the value of the Michmash pass. Workshops like the ones at Beth-Shemesh and Tell es-Safi acquired raw materials either from recycled objects or from metal in the form of ingots or billets that were initially processed near the copper and iron sources. The nearest raw material resources in the region that were exploited at this time were east of the Jordan: iron to the north, and copper to the south (Figure 2:4).<sup>52</sup> The sites of Tell Hammeh and Khirbet en-Nahas were used only for metal production. There were no domestic sites (excluding workers' quarters) associated with the smelting activities to suggest a resident, consumer population that was

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<sup>52</sup> Recent reexamination of Timna indicates it too had contemporary copper smelting operations; see Erez Ben-Yosef et al., "A New Chronological Framework."

served by the industrial operations, which means the products were distributed outside their immediate locations for additional processing and consumption, presumably to smithies like the ones at Tell es-Safi and Beth-Shemesh.<sup>53</sup> The Michmash pass was the most convenient passage from Philistia, the Shephelah, and a significant portion of the hill country (especially in relation to Benjamin) to the Transjordanian and Arabah Valley metal sources. When we add to this picture the value of worked metal in general—derived from the elaborate process necessary to acquire ore (itself a rarity), transform it to workable metal (requiring command of resources and location for smelting, as well as a high level of technological specialization and expertise), and transform it once again into final products (yet another set of specialized skills)—control of the Michmash pass impacted what had the potential to be the most lucrative, locally-based trade operation in the region.

Two asides in the biblical story suggest potential connections to this interpretation. According to 1 Sam 13:19-21, Israelites relied on Philistine metalsmiths because “there was no metalsmith to be found in all the land of Israel.” And in 1 Sam 14:21, some “Hebrews” who were previously “with” the Philistines, joined Saul and his forces in the battle. Admittedly, both of these notes pose some historical problems. The metallurgy note was once independent from the battle narrative. Its original form appears to have been a record of prices for tool maintenance. When it was incorporated into the narrative, it became an explanation of why only Saul and Jonathan were armed (13:19b, 22).<sup>54</sup> The passage itself

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<sup>53</sup> Thomas E. Levy, “Pastoral Nomads and Iron Age Metal Production in Ancient Edom,” in *Nomads, Tribes, and the State in the Ancient Near East, Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives* (Oriental Institute Seminars 5; Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2009), 147–77; Veldhuijzen and Rehren, “Slags and the City.”

<sup>54</sup> The cost of maintaining tools is not, on the surface, relevant to who did or did not have weapons at the time. Therefore, the pricing details reveal a previous purpose for the source material. An alternative explanation for the exception of Jonathan and Saul’s weaponry, however, is found in their elite status. Saul’s patriline in 1

does not explicitly claim that metallurgy was related to the outpost, and it is not possible to prove that the biblical material has a *direct* relationship to the archaeological evidence.

The second note, 1 Sam 14:21, seems to conflict with much of the biblical (as well as scholarly) presentation of the relationship between Israelites and Philistines. It states that some Israelites were cooperative with Philistines. In the context of an oppressive Philistine force (as the Bible claims), interpreters must go to some lengths to explain why there would be any cooperation from Israelites.<sup>55</sup> It is more likely that, just as a Philistine presence probably existed only in select locations and on a limited scale, there was intercultural cooperation also in particular circumstances. In the case of the Michmash Pass, the cooperative effort may have been related to the pass as an important stage in transportation and trade networks connecting to Transjordan. As the narrative reads now, however, the emphasis is on the Israelites' shift in allegiance to Saul. This detail probably stems from an earlier narrative (i.e., the History of Saul's Rise) that argued for Saul's success in uniting and leading Israelites. Despite the greater narrative's assertions to the contrary, both passages acknowledge that Philistines and Israelites interacted cooperatively.

If this material does indeed shed light on the Michmash Pass episode, it adds important nuance to our understanding of Philistine-Israelite relations. The possibility that Israelites relied on Philistines for metallurgical services is compelling. Biblical evidence

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Samuel 9:1 is qualified by the phrase גבור חיל. The title signals more than either "warrior" or "wealth" and should be understood to convey that Saul's family was elevated in this community. Saul's possession of weapons is yet another marker of this status.

<sup>55</sup> One way to do so is to argue that Israelites were forced into service by the Philistines, but this explanation only dismisses the content of the verse.

leads us to believe that Israelites were not traditionally metalsmiths.<sup>56</sup> This information may be historically accurate but probably not for the reason the text gives—that the Philistines forbade it. The reasons Israelites turned to others for smithing services were more likely due to cultural, kinship, and environmental factors.<sup>57</sup> A cultural or social distance from metalsmiths explains why Israelites would “go down” for tool maintenance (1 Sam 13:20). The likely descent from the hill country would have been to the lowland, probably the Shephelah (encompassing both Beth-Shemesh and Tell es-Safi) or to the Jordan Valley. It is also logical that there would be Israelites involved in the trade that passed through the hill country; in other words, it is difficult to imagine that they would have been isolated from such activity. This likelihood may explain why 1 Sam 14:21 recollects cooperation between some “Hebrews” and the Philistines before the battle at the pass. Some Israelites were engaged in the exchange activities that occurred at the pass. In this scenario, we can account for both cooperative interactions (commerce) and hostile (objection to foreigners, to foreign gain from exploiting the area, to a toll at the pass). If the trade was lucrative, the pass would be an attractive acquisition for control by local leaders (i.e., Saul and Jonathan). Saul and Jonathan’s victory to take over the pass may have been popular among the area’s residents for both economic and ethnic reasons, thus propelling Saul to a greater leadership position.

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<sup>56</sup> Two biblical traditions suggest a cultural distinction. The ancestor of metalsmiths is Tubal-cain, descendant of Cain, according to the genealogy in Gen 4:22. Cain’s other descendants are also linked to itinerant groups (Gen 4:17-22). Solomon’s artisan for the temple’s bronze work was Hiram, son of a Naphtali woman and Tyrian smith, according to 1 Kgs 7:13-47.

<sup>57</sup> Metallurgists tended to move seasonally in order to coordinate smelting and processing with complimentary activities (e.g., seasonal pruning and harvesting dovetailed with the smelting season at Tell Hammeh) and service to consumers, whose settlements may not have been densely concentrated enough to allow for permanent residency of the metallurgists (Veldhuijzen and Rehren, “Slags and the City”; M. J. Rowlands, “The Archaeological Interpretation of Prehistoric Metalworking,” *World Archaeology* 3/2 (1971): 210–224, esp. 219–220.

### **Battle in the Jezreel Valley**

Saul encountered the Philistines in the Jezreel Valley at the end of his career. This event moves the narrative focus to the northern reaches of both Philistine and Israelite territory. In the structure of the present narrative, there is a long build-up to this conflict, with notices of the troops' movements in 1 Sam 28:4 and 29:1, before the battle is actually addressed in 1 Samuel 31. The events are described two more times in the Deuteronomistic History: partially recounted in narrative form in 2 Sam 1:1-10 and remembered in David's lament in 2 Sam 1:19-27. Despite more than one telling of the encounter, there is little attention focused on the event itself. Only a few verses (1 Sam 28:4; 29:1; 31:1-7) describe the Jezreel Valley conflict, and these must be adjusted slightly to reconstruct a logical historical account (1 Sam 29:1; 28:4; 31:1-7).<sup>58</sup> A tentative reconstruction of the event follows these lines: Based on a provocation or strategy not revealed in the narrative, the Philistines organized at Aphek, while Israelites assembled in the valley, near the Jezreel spring (29:1). As battle neared, the Philistines camped at Shunem across the valley from the Israelites, who were camped near the base of Mount Gilboa (28:4). Battle ensued, and Saul, his sons, and many troops died. The Israelites fled the area, and Philistines took over the Jezreel territory (31:1-3, 6-7).

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<sup>58</sup> If read in the current biblical order, the Philistines were prepared for imminent battle at Shunem (1 Sam 28:4) and then illogically mustered at Aphek (1 Sam 29:1) before defeating Saul and Israel at Mt. Gilboa (1 Samuel 31). The confusion is settled if the En-Dor episode of 1 Samuel 28, along with its necessary setting within sight of the Philistine troops, had been relocated by an ancient author/redactor from a more likely location just preceding the battle account in 1 Samuel 31, as many commentators have suggested. The shift juxtaposes Saul's treatment of the Amalekites (recalled through the scolding from Samuel's ghost) with David's revenge on the Amalekites for the Ziklag raid (McCarter, *I Samuel*, 422–23).

Examination of the material reveals several stages of composition and redaction, some of which can be reconstructed.<sup>59</sup> An older, cohesive narrative has been obscured by the history of David's rise that, not surprisingly, steers the events in the interest of David's image at the expense of the details of the exchange with Philistia.<sup>60</sup> The shuffling that occurred within 1 Samuel 28-31 illustrates the liberty that was taken with Saul's history. There should be no doubt that more information about this battle was compromised in similar ways or simply eliminated as Saul's record was devalued. Nevertheless, an account, albeit brief, remains: the progression of troop movement toward the Jezreel Valley followed by battle and Saul's death at Gilboa is generally accepted to be the basic sequence of events of Saul's final days.

### **Interactions in the Jezreel**

The precise reason for the Jezreel conflict is not evident from the text alone. As in the previous episodes, the Philistines are typically portrayed as aggressors who were taking over Israelite territory. Also similar to the previous episodes, I contend that attention to the routes and exchange habits of the region reveals a better explanation: the hostilities at Mount Gilboa stemmed from an attempt to dominate the Jezreel Valley—at least in part for commercial purposes (Figure 2:5).

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<sup>59</sup> Edelman suggests that the lament may have been the source and inspiration for a prose account of the battle at Jezreel and traces parallels between them ("Saul Ben Kish," 151–52). This argument would leave us with one source and its growth into other accounts. Such a relationship has been demonstrated with other biblical poems (i.e., the Song of the Sea and the Song of Deborah; see Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 123–144; Baruch Halpern, *The First Historians: The Hebrew Bible and History* [San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1988], 76–103), but it seems likely in this case that historical memory, along with the lament, contributed to the biblical history that we have now.

<sup>60</sup> There is one additional account of the battle in 1 Chr 10:1-12. In some places, it appears to be closer to an original version of the events (McCarter, *I Samuel*, 439–44).



**Figure 2:5: Potential interaction zones and routes during Saul's relations with Philistines (satellite image © Google earth 2015)**

The Jezreel Valley provided the best east-west crossing in the region with a naturally formed passage that cut the central mountain range. The valley's importance is indicated by the prominent and long-occupied sites in the region (e.g., Megiddo) and records of political conflict (e.g., Shoshenq's campaign). Its broad western opening allowed traffic from a large stretch of the coastal highway to turn eastward. From the west, the highway moved along the Jezreel Valley to its eastern extent, which was the location of Saul's battle with the Philistines. From here, the highway followed the Harod river valley to the Beth-shean region and from there to several fords across the Jordan river.<sup>61</sup> The meeting point of the Jezreel and Harod Valleys was also an important location for a number of north-south crossings through the mountain ranges that connected Canaan and Israel with the Beqa' Valley to the

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<sup>61</sup> Yohanan Aharoni, *The Land of the Bible*, 21–22, 258; Dorsey, *Roads and Highways*, 103–16.

north.<sup>62</sup> This confluence of routes explains the appearance of sites like Shunem and Jezreel, each sitting at the base of a prominent hill in the valley (Moreh and Gilboa, respectively). These locations made the sites desirable as watch posts over this highway and as strategic positions for defense or battle across the valley. Commercial and political activity around the valley and its major crossroads is a predictable extension of these geographic factors.

Saul's engagement with the Philistines fits into this scenario very well. It is likely that Iron Age commerce was active in the Jezreel Valley for some time. David Schloen's proposal of a commercial *casus belli* for war in the Jezreel during Deborah's era establishes a good case for trade in this territory prior to Saul's time and explains how commercial traffic could have actually increased in the wake of Late Bronze Age decentralization.<sup>63</sup> In the broad context of the region's social organization and political cycles, the transition leading to historical kingdoms is a pivot period where decentralization waned and the competition for new power centers grew.<sup>64</sup> If Saul and the Philistines were vying for strength in the region, the Jezreel was extremely valuable territory. The victor would have won control of the pass, along with its economic benefits, as well as a reputation that would have spread into other regions whose agents used the crossing. Philistine interest in reaching the Jordan Valley has already been demonstrated through the previous episodes. If my interpretation is accurate, the battles at Eben-ezer and the Michmash pass thwarted Philistine efforts to cross the Jordan through the central hills. Since the Philistines held sway on the coast, they could look north and use the Jezreel Valley to achieve the same goals. Running

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<sup>62</sup> Dorsey, *Roads and Highways*, 93–102.

<sup>63</sup> J. David Schloen, "Caravans, Kenites, and Casus Belli," 18–38.

<sup>64</sup> For a review of urbanization during this period, see Faust, *Israel's Ethnogenesis*, 113–119.

parallel to the Philistine territory, however, was Saul's growing influence. The two efforts met at this northern extent of their political and interregional activities.

### **Preliminary Conclusions**

After reviewing the first phases of Israelite-Philistine interactions in Samuel, we find a distinct pattern of hostilities at strategic east-west passages. These episodes have traditionally been used as evidence of Philistine aggression and hegemony in the region, where Israelites are typically portrayed as defenders of their hill country territories. But the usual aggression-defense argument is flawed. The battles occurred at passes, not at key cities that could be used to administer over a subjected population. The traditional explanation neither illuminates the reasons why Philistines would have moved eastward nor delves into the complexity of the small-scale political development that was soon to create larger-scale changes to the region's social and political makeup.

In contrast, turning attention to a common element in the stories, that is, activity at key passes and routes, does lead us to a plausible explanation for the conflicts and for the pattern of interaction. Philistines were active east of their main territory, progressing farther east in each tale of interaction. The best candidates for their interest are the copper and iron industries based in Transjordan.<sup>65</sup> The routes and interregional connections that facilitated metallurgical trade would have included other exchange as well. In this light, it was commercial interests that motivated Philistines to cross the growing Israelite territory to reach routes and resources east of the Jordan Valley. They attempted to do this through the

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<sup>65</sup> Trade interests have been proposed as a reason for Philistine activity in the hill country, but previously this argument could only be made in general and hypothetical terms. For example, Edelman proposes trade to the east motivated Saul's expansion and interregional affairs but does not reconstruct what that trade would have been ("Saul Ben Kish," 157–58).

Shephelah and hill country but were stopped by Israelite opposition in the battles of Ebenezer and the Michmash Pass. The Jezreel battle may have developed as a result of the other two conflicts. Philistines sought an alternative route to the Jordan Valley after a more direct route through the hill country (i.e., the Michmash pass) proved too dangerous or costly to pursue. Saul's motivations are slightly harder to reconstruct. His actions can be described as defensive, but the battle at Jezreel suggests a different tack. It is likely that Saul sought control of the key crossings at Michmash and Jezreel in order to increase his political power and economic position. While he was successful in the first exchange, which probably led to an increased following among the hill country population, he overextended in his attempt to block the Philistines from a northern passage.

### **David**

David's interactions with the Philistines included antagonistic and cooperative relationships. David's early reputation came at Philistines' expense, but he is also remembered as having formed a close alliance with Achish of Gath. Through these complicated interactions, David established his influence over a small region adjacent to both Saul's and Achish's domains, to which he later added territory from the southern hill country and lowlands, Jebus, and eventually Saul's Benjamin. This consolidation effort was the largest yet, in biblical depiction, and the areas of interaction described in the text indicate that it was done in an effort to influence exchange activities between the Mediterranean and Transjordan (see Figure 2:6).

### **Sources and Historical Challenges**

Biblical writers had a variety of sources to draw from in writing about David's life, including heroic folk legend, other cultural traditions, and additional, possibly royal,

records. This variety alone makes analysis complex, but the added weight given to David as the founder of a royal dynasty favored by YHWH increases the literary and historical issues.<sup>66</sup> David's story is largely apologetic, necessitating skepticism of its historical worth. Despite this challenge, many scholars recognize that there are older, historically informative, sources preserved in the DH, even allowing for the possibility that some sources may have originated close to the tenth century, if not during.

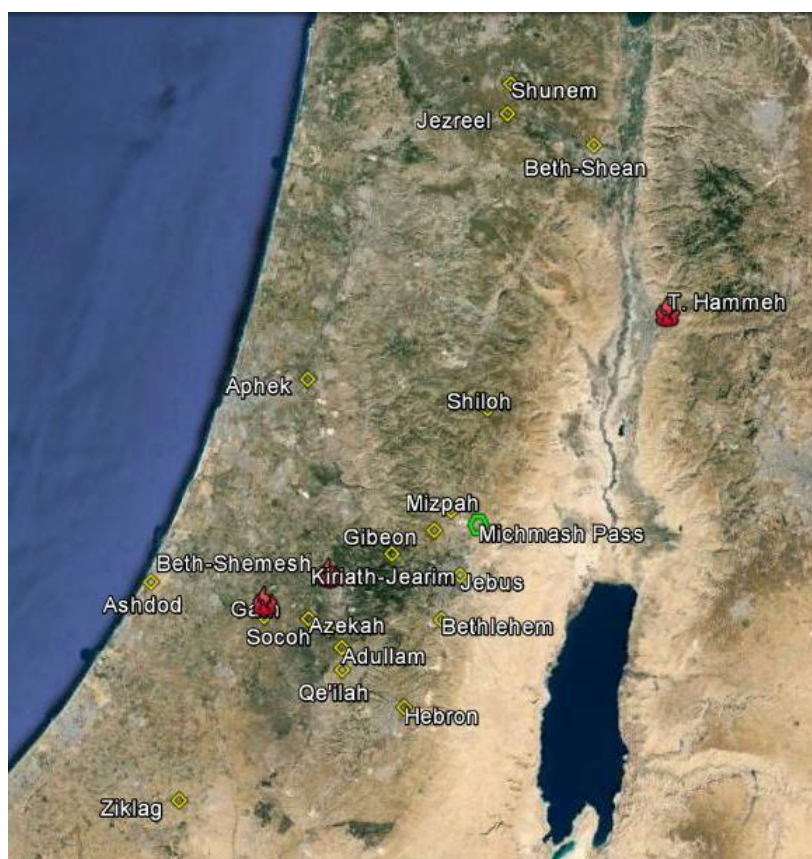
Scholarly literature on David's history and its sources is vast. The most influential avenues of research for this study are the source criticism of the history of David, as well as evaluation of the literary and historical character of the texts. The foundation for such studies was laid by Leonhard Rost in 1926 when he identified a "History of David's Rise" source that recorded how David came to power.<sup>67</sup> This source, now typically understood to run from around 1 Samuel 16 through some portion of 2 Samuel 5, underlies almost all of the interactions examined below. It was not, however, the product of one historian. Its creation, like many of the larger units within the Deuteronomistic History, was based on yet

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<sup>66</sup> The DH depiction is governed by the notion of the Davidic covenant. Modern scholarly attention to the importance of David and this covenant begins with Gerhard von Rad ("Die Deuteronomistische Geschichtstheologie in Den Königsbüchern," in *Gesammelte Studien Zum Alten Testament* [ed. Gerhard von Rad; Theologische Bücherei 8; München: Chr. Kaiser, 1958]). Detailed attention to 2 Samuel 7 is provided by Dennis McCarthy ("II Samuel 7 and the Structure of the Deuteronomistic History," *JBL* 84/2 (1965): 131–38); Cross (*Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 241–264); McCarter (*II Samuel: A New Translation with Introduction, Notes, and Commentary* [AB 9; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1984], 209–231, esp. 217–220); and Schniedewind (*Society and the Promise to David: The Reception History of 2 Samuel 7:1-17* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1999]). Attention to the processes and concerns of the ancient historiographers with special attention to David's career is explored by Halpern (Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, esp. 107–141).

<sup>67</sup> Rost, *The Succession to the Throne of David*. Another substantial source, the Court History of David or Succession Narrative (consisting of 2 Samuel 9-20 and 1 Kings 1-2), is essentially void of David's interactions with the Philistines. Since this source is considered to account for Solomon's succession to David, and Solomon's history does not record major interactions with Philistia, this silence in the text should not be surprising.

additional sources.<sup>68</sup> The discussion that follows will address the various source critical, historical, and literary issues as they arise in the stories of interactions with Philistines. David's affairs are organized into three sections: David in Saul's court, David and his men, and David as Philistine ally.



**Figure 2:6: Overview of sites related to David's interactions with Philistines (satellite image © Google earth 2015)**

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<sup>68</sup> See *ibid.*; McCarter, *1 Samuel*, 27–30; Robert P. Gordon, “David’s Rise and Saul’s Demise: Narrative Analogy in 1 Samuel 24–26,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 31 (1980): 31, 37–64, esp. 38. Baruch Halpern distinguishes between A and B sources within this work to account for parallels and contradictions in the narrative (*The Constitution of the Monarchy in Israel*, 149–174; Halpern, *David’s Secret Demons*).

## In Saul's Court

Wherever we choose to locate the start of David's career, we cannot separate his rise to power from his service in Saul's court. Despite the way the DH now reads—that YHWH and Samuel kicked off David's career with the anointing of the young shepherd boy who happened to become Saul's court musician (1 Samuel 16)—the more plausible historical reconstruction is that David, with a reputation as a heroic man of war (גבור חיל ואיש; מלחמה; 1 Sam 16:18), gained a following among fellow soldiers while in Saul's army. David's early days are presented in legendary form in 1 Samuel 17 and 18, with his underdog victory over the Philistine warrior (later identified as Goliath) and his ability to supply the outlandish bride price for Michal (1 Sam 18:20-27).<sup>69</sup> Regardless of the historicity of these events, it is likely that David's performance in battle against Philistines led to his rise.

The folk saying first quoted in 1 Samuel 18:7, "Saul has killed his thousands; David, his tens of thousands," may be the oldest or best evidence of the successes that came to both men.<sup>70</sup> Although the saying does not identify the unfortunate enemies, the majority of

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<sup>69</sup> David's career fighting the Philistines begins with the well-known David and Goliath story (1 Samuel 17). It has long been observed that the name Goliath is suspiciously rare in the episode and was most likely appropriated from a hero story of one of David's men, which happens to be preserved in 2 Sam 21:19 (a portion of the tradition is also remembered in 1 Sam 21:9-10). In addition to the insertion of Goliath's name, the story has been extensively modified and elaborated over time. Generally, there is little reason to doubt that early in David's career he fought the Philistines in the Shephelah, but that is as far as we can comfortably go for historical purposes based on the evidence from this story. See McCarter, *I Samuel*, 284–309; Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, 275–276.; more recently, Azzan Yadin proposed there was later, Aegean influence on the story ("Goliath's Armor and Israelite Collective Memory," *VT* 54/3 [2004]: 373–95; see also Finkelstein, "The Philistines in the Bible," 142–148). In contrast, Zorn argues that the depiction of Goliath's armor is *not* inconsistent with the period or cultural situation described in the story (Jeffrey R. Zorn, "Reconsidering Goliath: An Iron Age I Philistine Chariot Warrior," *BASOR* 360 [2010]: 1–22).

<sup>70</sup> Presumably, this chant was not intended to compare the two or demonstrate David's surpassing of Saul but employed parallelism to extol the military success of Israel's best warriors (McCarter, *I Samuel*, 312). In hindsight, however, story-tellers exploited the unavoidable association of David's ascent in leadership and

evidence suggests it was the Philistines who suffered as a result of this pairing. The sum of the material on David's earliest days, 1 Samuel 16-18, provides little concrete and reliable evidence for the purposes of writing history today, but a few things can be drawn out of it. David's career was built on his success as a warrior, possibly originating from before he joined Saul's forces (1 Sam 16:18). While with Saul, David was highly successful in conflicts with the Philistines (at the battle introduced in 1 Sam 17:1; celebrated in 1 Sam 18:7) and was closely linked to the next generation of leadership (through Jonathan and Michal, 1 Samuel 18-20). David's success created the opportunity for a shift from leading Saul's army to rivaling Saul's authority (1 Samuel 18ff).

### **David and His Men**

Much of the evidence regarding interactions with the Philistines comes from stories of "David and his men." The material is presented in the form of short battle accounts and brief notes of heroic deeds:

1 Sam 23:1-13	Qe'ilah incident
2 Sam 5:17-21, 22-25	Two accounts of Philistines at the Rephaim Valley
2 Sam 8:1	Philistines and Metheg-ha'ammah <sup>71</sup>
2 Sam 21:15-22	Tales of David's men
2 Sam 23:8-12, 18-23	David's warrior-heroes

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fame. The sentiment is recounted in narrative form in 1 Sam 18:30: as often as the Philistine commanders went into battle against Israel, David outperformed all of Saul's men and became famous. While the poetic phrase does not shed light on any particular battle in David's career, it does suggest a long tradition of conflict with the Philistines and David's path toward leadership based on his military accomplishments.

<sup>71</sup> The note in 2 Sam 8:1 appears to provide unique information, but no one has satisfactorily deciphered the critical phrase *מִתְּחֵלֶּה הַשָּׂדֶה*. Halpern suggests the phrase refers to a thing rather than a place (Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, 144–45); McCarter reviews some of the geographic possibilities and opts for a more general "common land" based on the LXX (McCarter, *II Samuel*, 242–47).

Most of the material is not fully integrated into the main narrative. On the one hand, the sources are easily separated from the greater Samuel narrative, but on the other, there is little context associated with the accounts. The most vexing problem for historical applications is the absence of chronological contexts for these events. There are, however, clues in these sources, and working through them does result in important evidence regarding David's early days.<sup>72</sup>

Sorting out a chronological orientation for these episodes is critical for examining the nature of interactions with Philistia. I propose that the majority of these episodes occurred before Saul's death, when David had become well-known as a warrior and charismatic leader but had not yet secured control of a territory. If David's activities with his men were indeed contemporary to the episodes where Saul engaged the Philistines, then we already have some understanding of why the parties were in conflict. Philistines were involved in an effort to connect with eastern trade. David's activities in the south and in relation to Saul's indicate that David was also vying for participation in the exchange network.

There is significant overlap across the "David and his men" material indicating some redundancy as well as closeness (variously in geography, chronology, or literary form) between the episodes. The associations are not close enough to be dismissed simply as mere repetitions (they are too distinct in content); instead they corroborate the encounters to a

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<sup>72</sup> For a detailed treatment of the many chronological clues in the text, see Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, 229–242.

certain extent. Highlighting the relationships among these texts also builds a case for historical reconstruction. Most of these events can be placed earlier in David's career, when he, along with a band of fellow warrior-heroes, made names for themselves in battles against Philistines.

The Qe'ilah incident is the longest unit in this collection of evidence (1 Sam 23:1-13).<sup>73</sup> In this episode, David and his men defeated Philistines who were attacking the town of Qe'ilah. News of David's success, however, revealed his location to Saul, who then took up pursuit causing David and his men to flee the town. The narrative follows a formula that is repeated in other battle accounts where David and his men are fighting the Philistines (2 Sam 5:17-25). In each episode, Philistines attack; David requests guidance from YHWH, who assures David will be victorious; and in the end David saves the people. The Qe'ilah incident adheres to the formula in verses 1-5, but then the narrative continues with additional content about David's conflict with Saul.

The story's reliance on the oracle formula might reveal an older source at the heart of this account. This example, along with the two in 2 Sam 5:17-25, may preserve traditional tales of David's successes, somewhat like the folk saying of David and Saul's many victories (1 Sam 18:7). The apologetic nature along with apparent elaboration on the initial Qe'ilah report, however, leads to questions about the extent of the author's dramatic license in crafting the episode. That David would have been engaged in a battle against Philistines for Qe'ilah and that Saul was following David's movements are not problematic, although

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<sup>73</sup> Despite its apparent narrative cohesion, there are problematic elements in the story. Its beginning, "And they told David..." (1 Sam 23:1), references informants that are no longer identified. In addition, it is not explained why Philistines who were attacking the town would have brought with them livestock (1 Sam 23:5). Were Philistines residents of the area? Did David raid inhabitants of Qe'ilah (including Philistines)?

David's motives may not have been to "save" the town, as the narrative claims. A strikingly similar event of a raid at Qiltu (biblical Qe'ilah) during the Amarna period was recorded in letters from Shuwardata of Gath and 'Abdi-Heba of Jerusalem.<sup>74</sup> The attack on the town by a band of 'Apiru resulted in a significant regional conflict followed by the installation of Egyptian forces in Jerusalem.<sup>75</sup> The parallels suggest that Qe'ilah was in fact a strategic location in between Philistia and the southern hill country, making it a source of competition among regional leaders (see additional discussion below). Keeping in mind the later exchange with Achish of Gath (who, we must assume, was the Philistine leader most invested in Qe'ilah) where David received land in return for his service (1 Sam 27:5-6), this episode remembers an earlier period of contention as David carved out his own territory, before he and Gath came to an agreement.

The stories in 2 Sam 5:17-21, 22-25 follow the same oracle formula as the Qe'ilah episode, making it likely that they came from a common source or story type about David and his men. The stories' current location obscures the original context. There is a distinct difference in the source material between verses 17-25 and what precedes them. As the narrative reads now, it appears that David fought the Philistines after he had captured Jerusalem, but this association comes from the placement of verses 17-25. They, along with verses 11-16, were added to the end of the History of David's Rise source, which appears to conclude at 2 Sam 5:10.<sup>76</sup> Because the oracle stories follow this material, they are

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<sup>74</sup> Nadav Na'aman, "David's Sojourn in Keilah in Light of the Amarna Letters," *VT* 60 (2010): 87–97; Anson F. Rainey, "Possible Involvement of Tell Eš-Šâfi (Tel Zafit) in the Amarna Correspondence," in *Tell Es-Safi/Gath: The 1996-2005 Seasons* (ed. Aren M. Maeir; Ägypten und Altes Testament 69; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012), 133–40.

<sup>75</sup> Peter van der Veen, "When Pharaohs Ruled Jerusalem," *BAR* 39/2 (2013): 44–45.

<sup>76</sup> McCarter, *II Samuel*, 157–60.

traditionally understood to be chronologically later than David's move to Jerusalem. Details in the stories, however, indicate an earlier point in David's career. His communication method with YHWH, for example, implies a time prior to David's role as a recognized leader of the people. There is no hint of a court structure that should have been in place if the episodes were from David's Jerusalem period.<sup>77</sup>

Comparison of these stories to others in David's history narrows the chronological window further to the period when David was no longer loyal to Saul and not yet allied with Gath. The significant details are in the geographic references to the "stronghold" (at Adullam) and Philistine camp(s) in the Rephaim Valley. According to 1 Sam 22:1-2, David used a stronghold at Adullam as a base of operations following his break with Saul and before he became increasingly empowered, initially in Hebron and later in Jerusalem. In the context of the redacted text of 2 Samuel 5, Jerusalem, with a stronghold in the City of David (2 Sam 5:9), is understood to be David's base in 2 Sam 5:17. When removed from the context of 2 Sam 5:6-16, however, the stronghold's location loses its Jerusalem referent. In this case, we should understand Adullam rather than the City of David for the location of this particular base.

The other common geographic element is the Rephaim Valley, named as the staging ground for Philistine forces in 2 Sam 5:18, 22 and in 2 Sam 23:13.<sup>78</sup> The first two references

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<sup>77</sup> The shift is most easily explained away as a difference in source material; however, there are additional distinctions. After his move to Jerusalem, David is depicted as king in his court, interacting with those outside of his palace through envoys, his general(s), or other messengers (e.g., 2 Samuel 10), not as a renegade hero leading his band of men.

<sup>78</sup> Despite the fact that the valley name appears to indicate a precise location, the actual place is not known, and the repetition of the name might signal a battle story formula (as does the oracle formula discussed above). If there was one location by this name, consensus has situated it to the southwest of Jerusalem. The influence of the literary context surrounding 2 Sam 5:17-25, however, should not be the main reason for locating the valley near Jerusalem. Another possibility is suggested by the name Rapha, part of a title which may have been given

come from the oracle stories. The third is from the story of David's three warriors who retrieved water for him from Bethlehem (2 Sam 23:13-17). We have already established that the 2 Sam 5:17-25 episodes are out of their chronological position, which frees them from a period after Jebus was taken. In addition, David's use of the (Adullam) stronghold (mentioned in two of the three Rephaim Valley conflicts) must have been limited to a period between David's service to Saul and his alliance with Gath, subsequent move to Hebron, or move to Jerusalem.

Thus it stands to reason that these stories should be situated in that same chronological window when David was independent but not fully empowered in his own right.<sup>79</sup> In addition, the Rephaim Valley stories do not reveal any tension regarding David's allegiance to Philistine leadership. Had the Rephaim Valley events occurred after David's cooperation with Achish, we might expect an explanation of just how David's relationship with Gath's leader had soured. While shifts in the region's relations are to be expected, the absence of an explanation of why David would have been fighting his (former) ally is out of character compared to the detail we have at other points in the history. The proposal that the Rephaim Valley events occurred before David aligned with Philistia is the best solution.

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to Philistine warriors referred to as votaries of Rapha ("Votaries of Rapha" is McCarter's translation of the different formulae based on הרפיה + ילד). (McCarter, *II Samuel*, 447–51). He builds from the arguments of Willeson and L'Heureux (F. Willeson, "The Philistine Corps of the Scimitar from Gath," *JSS* 3 [1958]: 327–35; Conrad L'Heureux, "The Ugaritic and Biblical Rephaim," *HTR* 67/3 (1974): 265–74; idem, "The Yelîdê Hārāpā': A Cultic Association of Warriors," *BASOR* 221 (1976): 83–85); cf. 2 Sam 21:16, 18, 20, 22). The warriors' title may be the reason for the name applied to the battles' locations, regardless of each battle's precise geography. Nevertheless, each of these possibilities points to the potential for the episodes to have stemmed from the same period. The stories may refer to a particular time when battles happened at this location or against these enemies, or related battles were linked by the compiler with a "Rephaim Valley" formula.

<sup>79</sup> See Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, 23.

The episode in 2 Sam 23:13-17 requires some additional analysis, as it mentions a Philistine outpost near Bethlehem. The short tale describes David's men's heroic venture to retrieve water for him from a cistern guarded by Philistine troops. The cistern and outpost are not mentioned in any other tradition concerning Bethlehem outside the parallel in 1 Chron 11:15-19. For the present purposes, the well or cistern is of little concern, but the historicity of the Bethlehem outpost is important. It would demonstrate further penetration by Philistines toward the Jordan Valley and create a more complex picture of David's relationship to this portion of the hill country.

Arguments about the episode's composition have placed it across the chronological spectrum, from the oldest of the Samuel material to the latest of the biblical texts.<sup>80</sup> There is little evidence by which to judge the episode, but there is some indication of the editorial and transmission history that it experienced. The episode must have found its way to its present location because of an association between the officers known as "the Three" and the three warriors that accompany David in the story. The men in this tale should not be identified with the named men in the surrounding text. The association suggests that the title "Three" may have inspired a story about three warriors with David, which works against a

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<sup>80</sup> Cross-cultural parallels to the motif of soldiers' response to a leader's thirst call into question the origin and historicity of the episode (Eleanor Hull, "David and the Well of Bethlehem: An Irish Parallel," *Folklore* 44/2 [1933]: 214–18; McCarter, *II Samuel*, 495; Robert Gnuse, "Spilt Water — Tales of David [2 Sam 23,13–17] and Alexander [Arrian, *Anabasis of Alexander* 6.26.1–3]," *SJOT* 12/2 (1998): 233–48). Halpern takes the episode to be the oldest version of David's opportunity to take Saul's life, where 1 Samuel 26 retains the motif of retrieving water from a dangerous encounter (1 Sam 26:12), but 1 Samuel 24 replaces it with the less flattering image of Saul relieving himself (*David's Secret Demons*, 265–66, 274–76). Halpern's claim does not address the absence of the Bethlehem element in the 1 Samuel versions, but he does suppose that since the main army was in the Rephaim Valley (2 Sam 23:13), it is logical that the Philistine army set up a post in nearby Bethlehem. On the other end of the spectrum, Gnuse argues that the strongest parallels to the water-fetching tale are with Arrian's *Anabasis of Alexander* and, in the end, determines that the Hellenistic sources for the *Anabasis* influenced a late addition to the appendices of Samuel ("Spilt Water."). Gnuse is convincing in demonstrating that the *Anabasis* account and the David story are closer parallels than other tales of the same type, but he does not demonstrate conclusively why the biblical version must have relied on the Hellenistic.

claim for historicity. At the same time, there is awkwardness in the narrative from verse 13 to 14 to 15 suggesting a piecemeal composition or editorial work. If verse 14 is removed, there is a better narrative: 13, 15-17. The formula in verse 14 of subject + **וְשָׁם** + location reveals a later clarification connecting this episode to a previous historical situation. It is notable that verse 14 does not harmonize *within* the biblical narrative. The notes in verse 14 connect a cultural memory of a Philistine presence in Bethlehem some time ago to the editor's audience. That verse 14 may be separate from the episode is not necessarily an argument for a historical Philistine outpost, but it does speak to an independent tradition of one.

The remaining material consists of brief notes remembering David and his men in the appendices to Samuel. In addition to the typical problems that accompany transmission and redaction, significant corruption occurred in 2 Samuel 21 and 23, affecting the names of figures and places.<sup>81</sup> Nonetheless, there are strong arguments in favor of the antiquity of the material. Among these arguments are the uniqueness of the content and the possibility that there are independent sources represented in these portions of the text.

Geography plays a role once again. Battle descriptions correspond roughly to the locations of Saul's conflicts with Philistines; that is, they appear to be in the Shephelah, between Benjamin and the eastern Philistine zone (Gath). It is quite likely that these battles too would have occurred earlier rather than later in David's career, and that David and his men would have been fighting for or with Saul.

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<sup>81</sup> See discussion in Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, 150–152.

One in particular warrants detailed discussion. The location **אֶפְסַדְמִים** is the battleground in both the David and Goliath tale (1 Sam 17:1) and in the tradition of Eleazar ben Dodo (1 Chron 11:12-14 // 2 Sam 23:9-10).<sup>82</sup> The coincidences of this unusual location name and the defeat of a great Philistine warrior by an Israelite hero indicate that the two versions recount the same event; however, the closer parallels to the 1 Samuel 17 story appear in the tales of David and his men in 2 Samuel 21. If the David tale in 1 Samuel 17 were simply appropriated from the hero story known to us through 2 Sam 21:15-22, why or how did **אֶפְסַדְמִים**, known otherwise only from the account in 1 Chron 11:13 (presumably also originally in 2 Sam 23:9), enter the picture? Rather than contend that elements of unrelated tales were consolidated into the (David) version in 1 Samuel 17, I think the parallels indicate that the events were related chronologically. The stories of close combat between Philistine and Israelite warrior-heroes stemmed from the time when David and his men were in Saul's service.

Lastly, David's roster of warriors in 2 Samuel 23 is mostly Judahite men, one third from the environs of Bethlehem. The particular collection of men suggests it reflects an earlier stage in David's career when he was a rising warrior with kin and local connections rather than a king with an army drawn from a broader population base.<sup>83</sup> It is possible and likely that, due to the nature of the appendices (compiled from unrelated sources) and the shuffled condition of the material, one or another item would be from later in David's

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<sup>82</sup> The place name in 2 Samuel 23 appears to have been lost due to haplography; 1 Chr 11:13 preserves the original reading (McCarter, *II Samuel*, 490). For discussion of the complex connections among the related stories, see Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, 148–149.

<sup>83</sup> McCarter, *II Samuel*, 500–501; Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, 65–67, 274–276.

career, but the majority of the content points to an earlier stage, when David built a power base from his activities in the hill country south of Benjamin and in the Shephelah.

Despite having been dispersed throughout the history of David, the tales of his activities with his band of warriors took place prior to David's alliance with Achish. During this period, David was making a name and establishing himself as a key player in the area east of Philistia and south of Saul's territory. Now we can evaluate the relationship between this geography and regional interaction. David's base coincided with routes to the east that Philistines may have been using in an effort to skirt Saul's domain.

### **Interactions against Philistines**

Once Saul had expanded his influence throughout Benjamin, Philistines with an interest in reaching the Jordan Valley had to exploit alternate routes. As I explained above, one solution was to head north, which resulted in the battle in the Jezreel Valley (1 Samuel 31). Another solution was to skirt the southern border of Saul's territory. David's encounters against Philistines are concentrated along routes in this southern region.

The most direct southern alternative for Philistines was to travel from Gath along the Elah Valley toward Bethlehem, then to Jebus, and then to the river crossing.<sup>84</sup> The biblical narrative describes conflict at several points on this route (see Figure 2:7). Once independent from Saul, David based his operations at the stronghold of Adullam, which provided easy access to traffic on a variety of roads including the route to Transjordan via Bethlehem. Some battles involved the Rephaim Valley near Bethlehem and Jebus. In this same territory was the crossroad with the Ridge Road that passed Hebron, Bethlehem, and Jebus on its way north into Saul's territory. Like its northern counterpart at Michmash, a Philistine outpost at

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<sup>84</sup> Dorsey, *Roads and Highways*, 189–91, 204–6.

Bethlehem protected traffic at a key juncture with the Ridge Road, the last main crossroad before the descent to the Jordan.



**Figure 2:7: Routes in the region of David's interactions with Philistines (Dorsey, *Routes and Highways*, 182)**

David's concentration on Adullam and his taking of Qe'ilah strengthen the case that he was competing for involvement in or control of this corridor. Adullam and Qe'ilah were located just south of the Gath-Bethlehem route, accessed by a road descending from Adullam to Socoh.<sup>85</sup> Adullam's position, just off of several routes, provided quick access for monitoring traffic. Qe'ilah sat at the intersection of two critical roads. One paralleled the coast highway and the main Ridge Road. It connected key cities like Lower Beth-Horon and

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<sup>85</sup> Dorsey's route J10 (*ibid.*, 191–92).

Aijalon to Beersheba.<sup>86</sup> The other route that passed through Qe‘ilah connected the coast with the Judahite portion of the main Ridge Road. This highway passed from Tel Mor through Gath before meeting the inland highway at Beth-zur, which was situated between Bethlehem and Hebron.<sup>87</sup> Qe‘ilah lay just over ten miles from Gath on this road and about five miles from Socoh along another, where Saul and David are said to have fought the Philistines (1 Sam 17:1). At the edge and meeting point of three territories (i.e., Achish’s, Saul’s, and David’s), the battle for Qe‘ilah would have been a consequential event for regional interactions and had the potential to put David on the map as a serious contender in the region.

David’s move on Qe‘ilah is justified in the biblical narrative as a liberation, a “salvation,” of the people from Philistines. For this depiction to ring true, we have to assume that residents of Qe‘ilah were oppressed by Philistine overlords or that they identified with David and his men as kin or rightful leaders. These assumptions cannot be maintained uncritically, and the narrative even concedes that David’s actions were not well received by Qe‘ilah’s residents (1 Sam 23:7-13). The historical David’s motivations were probably not so noble. The history provides an alternative view in 1 Sam 22:7-13. Saul criticizes David calling him a “highwayman” who cannot enrich his followers with land and fields.<sup>88</sup> It is

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 151–54. Although the biblical text does not reveal if David’s activities involved the Beersheba Valley with its lucrative exchange route (see Chapter Six), his control of these key locations suggests he was at least able to intercept traffic from the Beersheba routes that was moving north to the hill country and Shephelah. His affairs in the south certainly imply interest. It also remains unclear how such involvement affected relations with Philistia and whether a role in relation to the Beersheba Valley influenced his eventual alliance with Gath. For one reconstruction of David in the Beersheba Valley, see Diana V. Edelman, “Tel Masos, Geshur, and David,” *JNES* 47/4 (1988): 253–58.

<sup>87</sup> Dorsey’s route J11 (*Roads and Highways*, 192).

<sup>88</sup> “As a highwayman” is McCarter’s translation of the MT’s לַחֲרָבָה, the *lectio difficilior* reading over LXX’s εἰς ἐχθρον, “as an enemy” (Hebrew \*לַחֲרָבָה resulting from confusion between ח and ך) (McCarter, *I Samuel*,

difficult to know the source of this critique—Saul’s words are certainly an ancient author’s invention—but it may better reflect a historical reality than modern readers would at first assume. David took advantage of the decentralized political landscape in the south in order to accumulate a territory through conquest and create a name for himself among the region’s leaders.

The Qe‘ilah battle demonstrates what military and economic gains were at stake. Philistines had an interest in fighting for Qe‘ilah because it guarded a significant road to Gath from the hill country (which was a source of raiding parties like David’s!). David’s acquisition could not have gone unnoticed by them. Furthermore, if 1 Sam 23:7-13 preserves historical information, Qe‘ilah had some kind of alliance with Saul. David’s victory meant increased independence and power for Saul’s rival instead of the marginalized nuisance in the Negev that Saul might have settled for. As a result, Saul mobilized to regain Qe‘ilah from David. Whichever leader claimed the territory also gained control of the direct route between the southern highland and the Philistine coast, exchange with the Jordan Valley, as well as control of traffic between Benjamin and Beersheba’s highway. David’s conquest meant that Achish and Saul would face a significant obstacle on the main roads leading to their territories.

In sum, even though we cannot connect the dots directly from one conflict to another, David’s hostile interactions with Philistines corresponded to routes that would have allowed alternate passage between Philistia and the Jordan Valley, and it impacted routes connecting Philistia and Saul’s territory to the south. Alternatives were necessary for

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360–62). Saul’s characterization has gained ground as modern scholarship has distanced itself from the pro-David rhetoric of the narrative; for example, see Halpern, *David’s Secret Demons*, esp. 23, 344, 479–480.

Philistines due to Saul's increased control of the Benjaminite hill country. For some time, David operated from an independent base at Adullam, but his involvement in this territory escalated with the capture of Qe'ilah. At this point, David's role must have shifted from a local leader of a band of men in the wilderness to a regional contender.

### **David's Alliance with Achish**

The DH records two attempts by David to approach Achish king of Gath. According to the redacted text, David had a narrow escape from the king in 1 Sam 21:11-15, before allying with him in 1 Samuel 27-29 against their common opponent, Saul. We are not told why David approached Achish in the first episode except that he was fleeing Saul. David abandoned this attempt when Achish's servants noted his leadership status and recited the folk saying celebrating David's prowess. In response, David feigned madness to distract from the threat he might pose. In 1 Samuel 27, David sought out Achish, but this time, David approached with his household, his men, and a proposal. He offered his service in exchange for a sanctioned residence in Philistine territory, and Achish granted him Ziklag. David remained in Achish's service until Saul's Jezreel battle, from which David was (conveniently) excused. The narrative does not record any further communication between David and Achish after the preparations for the march to Jezreel.

The Achish-David episodes appear to come from two sources. One contributed the shorter episode in 1 Sam 21:11-15.<sup>89</sup> This episode is brief and appears to interrupt a longer narrative regarding the priests of Nob. A different (older?) source is responsible for 1 Sam 27:1-28:2 and 29:1-11, which was unified prior to the editorial insertion of the En-Dor

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<sup>89</sup> The Samuel A source (Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, 20, 263–66).

episode in 1 Sam 28:3-25.<sup>90</sup> The longer source is more elaborate in character development, and portions of it exhibit phrases distinctive of the Dtr (likely due to his editorial role).<sup>91</sup> Despite their different lengths, they have in common some basic elements. Both (a) report that David sought refuge in Philistia; (b) reiterate the folk saying of Saul and David's heroics; (c) put the folk saying in the mouths of Philistine leaders' support staff (Achish's servants in 21:12; Philistine commanders in 29:3); (d) show off David's clever deception before the king; and (e) ultimately result in the safe escape/dismissal of David. This basic pattern may be the most problematic for arguments in favor of a historical David-Achish partnership.<sup>92</sup> The Hebrew Bible contains a number of iterations of this formula, which is likely a sub-group of a larger flight motif<sup>93</sup>: Abraham and Sarah before Philistine king Abimelech of Gerar (Genesis 20); Isaac and Rebekah before Abimelech of Gerar (Genesis 26); David before Achish (1 Sam 21:11-15); David before Achish (1 Samuel 27-29); David before Abimelech (or Ahimelech?<sup>94</sup>) (Psalm 34:1); and Shimei's slaves' flight to Achish of Gath (1 Kings 2:39-46, although this episode does not adhere as well to the pattern, it appears related).

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<sup>90</sup> The Samuel B source (*ibid.*, 20–25, 263–266). Richard Elliott Friedman includes this version in the extended J source that runs from Genesis 2 through the Court History (*The Hidden Book in the Bible* [HarperCollins, 1998]).

<sup>91</sup> The most obvious indicator is the phrase “to this day” regarding Ziklag in 1 Sam 27:6, but the Deuteronomistic character is also evident in the dialogue scenes (e.g., 27:5; 29:6-10) and the record keeping that appears for David's household, the number of his men, the length of his service, etc.

<sup>92</sup> Joseph Naveh briefly notes this pattern in his analysis of the name Achish from the Ekron inscription (“Achish-Ikausu in the Light of the Ekron Dedication,” *BASOR* 310 [1998]: 36).

<sup>93</sup> The flight to Egypt variation is yet another sub-group (e.g., the patriarchs to Egypt; Solomon's adversaries to Egypt).

<sup>94</sup> In some LXX and Vulgate mss, which Naveh explains as a similar borrowing from the eighth-century king Ahimilki of Ashdod (“Achish-Ikausu,” 36).

It is an impossible task to determine either the origins of this narrative formula or which of the biblical variations might have served as a template for the others. The more important questions are: What are implications of the use of this formula for the history of relations between David and the Philistines? Is the pattern simply a formula into which a legendary David was inserted? Or did a historic interaction with Philistia easily lend itself to narrative expression through this motif? Of the biblical versions, the patriarchs are the easiest to dismiss as a product of the folk-tale formula, due to the anachronism of a Philistine king in what is supposed to have transpired before the end of the Late Bronze Age. For David, the problem is more difficult, and it would be too rash—and unfair to ancient authors—to dismiss any possibility of interaction based on the use of a popular motif to recount that past.

Modern historical concerns were not shared by the biblical authors. In all of the texts where David interacts with Achish, literary and apologetic efforts outshine historical claims. This habit is evident in the two episodes where David flees to Gath. In 1 Sam 21:11-15, Achish's men are provided the opportunity to reiterate the folk saying that was apparently well-known in later times, suggesting that David's reputation was far-reaching "back in the day." David is given the opportunity to demonstrate his cunning mind and escape a potentially dangerous situation.<sup>95</sup> In the second meeting, David also comes across in a positive light, already powerful, established, and yet again clever. Motives for these episodes are in line with other elements of the David's Rise saga. We are sympathetic for the righteous man who must flee the mad and jealous king; David's craftiness allows him to

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<sup>95</sup> Madness plays a role twice in David's relations to a suzerain, first in 1 Samuel 16 when the young David is able to ease Saul's madness with his musical ability, and then in this episode 1 Samuel 21 where David escapes Achish.

navigate the tense arrangement so that he continues to build his reputation among his own people, while staying in good graces with Achish and thus protected, while also waiting out Saul's self-destruction. Such is the literary David.

A historical David cannot easily be extracted from these episodes, but the text's concern for the relationship between David and Achish is suggestive. To begin, it appears that we have two versions of the same event. Does a contrasting doublet indicate a revision to David's history, where 1 Sam 21:11-15 fixes his embarrassing resume as a mercenary against Israel? It is possible. The apology present throughout 1 Samuel 27-31 reveals similar attempts to explain away a past alliance with Gath and David's role in Saul's demise. It appears that no one was comfortable with the idea that David fought in league with the Philistines, potentially in battle against Saul and Israelites. It is this reasoning that has led most scholars to propose that, yes, there was a historical alliance between David and Gath. The persistence of the apology cannot conclusively prove that the alliance is historical, but it does require that we examine further.

Fortunately, we can turn to additional research to assess the events. Excavations have demonstrated conclusively that Gath played an important role in the region during the tenth century; this element of the stories correlates well to the extrabiblical evidence.<sup>96</sup> The basic premise that a figure like David could have had dealings with Gath's leadership is not itself implausible, but arguments questioning the historicity of the figure King Achish pose one challenge to the reliability of the relationship. The name Achish is known from extrabiblical

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<sup>96</sup> Archaeological excavations are revealing a very important center at Tell es-Safi, identified with biblical Gath; see Aren M. Maeir, ed., *Tell Es-Safi/Gath: The 1996-2005 Seasons* (2 vols.; Ägypten und Altes Testament 69; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012). Additional details are presented below and in Chapters Five and Six.

evidence, but the Achish mentioned in a Philistine inscription and Assyrian records was king of Ekron (not Gath) in the seventh (not tenth) century. The Ekron inscription, which also proved Tel Miqne was in fact the remains of Ekron, provided evidence to support what many scholars had long suspected, that the name of Ekron's king, called Ikausu in Assyrian, was the same name as biblical Achish, both of which are West Semitic forms of Αχαιος, "Achaean," meaning "Greek." This name, along with Ashdod's eighth-century king Yamani, attests to an Aegean-affirming self-identification among Iron Age Philistine kings.<sup>97</sup> In evaluating the inscription, Joseph Naveh suggests that Ekron's Achish and other non-Semitic names in seventh-century records attest to "a national awakening" in Philistia emphasizing "their kinship with the Greeks on Cyprus."<sup>98</sup> From this context, Naveh argues that the name Achish in 1 Samuel and 1 Kings 2:39-40 is likely a "reflection" of the seventh-century Ekronite king onto David's Gittite ally.<sup>99</sup> Naveh concludes that the biblical author supplied details known from his own period in order to illustrate the tenth-century history.

While Naveh's argument is sound, and we see this tendency in many narratives, biblical or otherwise, the appellation "Greek" for the leaders of Philistine communities may have been important in more than one period. The title may *not necessarily* have been anachronistic for earlier centuries, especially if we look to the years before Philistines adopted West Semitic names and southern Levantine culture. According to recent research by Faust and Lev-Tov, identity formation, which is highly informed by observing one's

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<sup>97</sup> Naveh, "Achish-Ikausu."

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

<sup>99</sup> Finkelstein relies on Naveh's argument in his own claim for a late date to these stories ("The Philistines in the Bible," 133–136).

difference from others, was dynamic between Israelites and Philistines throughout the Iron I period and transition to Iron II.<sup>100</sup> How better for the coastal population to describe its distinctness than through an Aegean heritage?

Recent discoveries from Tell es-Safi (Gath) may provide corroborating support. Excavators claim that a sherd containing a tenth-century alphabetic inscription should be read as two personal names of Aegean origin.<sup>101</sup> If they are correct, this inscription testifies to Aegean-oriented ethnic identification in Gath as well as participation in elite-driven scribal culture. In addition, a sherd from a rare Argolid bowl has also been recovered from the site, which demonstrates that contacts with the Aegean (even if indirect) were important to Gath's residents—most likely to its elites.<sup>102</sup> A. Maeir has identified other possible indications such as hearth and house styles.<sup>103</sup>

Comparative archaeological data between Philistine sites indicates that Gath resisted acculturation more than other Philistine settlements during this period. Based on faunal analysis, Faust and Lev-Tov report that there was a sharp decrease in pig bones at Ashdod and Ekron in the strata dated to the tenth century compared to the Iron I strata. Pig bones at Gath, however, did not decrease.<sup>104</sup> The researchers suspect the reason lies in Gath's

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<sup>100</sup> Faust, *Israel's Ethnogenesis*; Faust and Lev-Tov, "Constitution of Philistine Identity."

<sup>101</sup> Aren M. Maeir et al., "A Late Iron Age I/Early Iron Age II Old Canaanite Inscription from Tell Es-Sâfi/Gath, Israel: Palaeography, Dating, and Historical-Cultural Significance," *BASOR* 351 (2008): 39–71. The inscription is discussed in more detail in Chapter Five.

<sup>102</sup> Aren M. Maeir, Alexander Fantalkin, and Alexander Zuckerman, "The Earliest Greek Import in the Iron Age Levant," *Ancient West & East* 8 (2009): 57–80; and see discussion in Chapter Six.

<sup>103</sup> Maeir, "The Tell Es-Safi/Gath Archaeological Project 1996-2010," 40–43.

<sup>104</sup> Although Lev-Tov emphasizes that these results are based on a small quantity of remains; see Faust and Lev-Tov, "Constitution of Philistine Identity," 18–21, 26, note 11; Justin Lev-Tov, "A Preliminary Report on the Late Bronze and Iron Age Faunal Assemblages from Tell Es-Safi/Gath," in *Tell Es-Safi/Gath: The 1996-*

location on the border and “that due to the regular contact with the Israelites, ethnic boundaries were more visible here also during the beginning of the Iron Age II.”<sup>105</sup> Other parts of Philistia inhibited their cultural difference, but Gath retained its distinctness at the same time that it became “the largest Philistine city on the eastern periphery of Philistia.”<sup>106</sup> If Gath had taken on the role of the main interaction portal, ethnic distinctiveness may have persisted even as it lessened in other Philistine locales. This explanation could also account for Gath’s Argolid import and suspected Aegean names on the inscribed sherd at a time when acculturation was otherwise taking place in the neighboring cities and towns. The “awakening” of a Philistine-Aegean identity that Naveh argues for in the eighth and seventh centuries would have been fueled by increased contact with Greek trade and Philistine economic resurgence, but it would also have been inspired by cultural memory of the Levant’s earlier Philistine leaders who asserted their Aegean identities.<sup>107</sup> This is not to say that we can label Samuel’s Achish or his activities as historical, but it appears that an

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2005 *Seasons* (ed. Aren M. Maeir; Ägypten und Altes Testament 69; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012), 589–612.

<sup>105</sup> Faust and Lev-Tov, “Constitution of Philistine Identity,” 26, note 11.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>107</sup> There are several approaches that contribute to this proposal. Halpern argues that there is a pattern of archaizing apparent in the eighth and seventh centuries in line with this conclusion (“Sybil, or the Two Nations? Archaism, Kinship, Alienation, and the Elite Redefinition of Traditional Culture in Judah in the 8th-7th Centuries B.C.E.,” in *The Study of the Ancient Near East in the Twenty-First Century: The William Foxwell Albright Centennial Conference* [ed. Jerrold S. Cooper and Glenn M. Schwartz; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1996], 291–338). Halpern later connects his earlier argument directly to the Achish debate (Halpern, *David’s Secret Demons*, 287). At the same time, commercial activities brought the Aegean and southern Levant into close contact, and Philistia came to dominate areas of the regional economy, which must have contributed to notions akin to “national/ethnic pride” (Jane C. Waldbaum and Jodi Magness, “The Chronology of Early Greek Pottery: New Evidence from Seventh-Century B. C. Destruction Levels in Israel,” *American Journal of Archaeology* 101/1 (1997): 23–40; Faust and Weiss, “Judah, Philistia, and the Mediterranean World.”).

Aegean/Achaean name would not have been out of place in tenth-century Gath, and the site itself was the dominant city on Philistia's border with eastern neighbors.

The Samuel narrative's depictions of David and Achish's interactions, when judged by literary qualities alone, may not at first appear to have historical credence. With the extrabiblical material, however, the *setting* that is assumed by the narratives appears not only to be reasonable for the time period but even likely. Where the narrative, archaeology, and other extrabiblical sources are most in line is in Gath's role as a significant city, possibly a leader in interactions with non-Philistines, and in Gath's character as ethnically and culturally distinct from its Shephelah and highland contemporaries. An alliance between David and Gath is plausible and can be explored further.

### **Interactions in Alliance with Philistines**

The details have been clouded by the historians' apologies, but at some point David and Achish appear to have made a deal. In contrast to the canonized story where David seeks refuge from Saul's jealous wrath, the alliance likely arose from a common desire to be rid of the obstacles to both Achish's and David's goals. The narrative's slant aside, David and Achish probably began their relationship as rivals and later joined their efforts in order to weaken Saul's control of the roads through Benjamin.<sup>108</sup>

Recall that Saul succeeded in denying Philistines passage through the Benjamin hill country. In response Philistines turned to alternate passages to the east. The most direct option was via Gath and the Elah Valley to Bethlehem and on to the Jordan. This passage skirted along the southern extent of Saul's territory, but David and his men—as a part of

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<sup>108</sup> The best reconstruction is probably of a precarious triangle of contemporary powers where David, maybe the region's wild card, built toward a larger goal of taking the hill country through strategic shifts in his alliances.

Saul's army or as independent agents—made this route difficult as well and battled near Gath, Socoh, the Rephaim Valley, and Bethlehem. As David strengthened his base, he demonstrated that he could take Qe'ilah and build a territory of his own, based first in Adullam and later in Hebron. His dominance effectively blocked Philistine access south of Saul's territory (with the notable exception of Jebus, whose participation is unknown).<sup>109</sup> The combination of Saul and David's efforts shut down Philistine access to the east from the Benjaminite hills to the Negev.

The impetus of the negotiations may have been any number of things: a rift between David and Saul, as the biblical narrative argues, the result of David's reputation, or a choice on the part of Gath preferring one ally or territory over another. We will not know for certain, but consequences of the alliance can be teased out of the regional dynamic. When David allied with Gath, both parties would have experienced significant benefits.

The economic consequences would have been immediate. To begin, Philistines could have gained access east through David's territory, with protection offered by his men, and David could collect tolls. In exchange, through a cooperative agreement with Gath, David gained access to coastal trade, which was increasing between the Aegean and southern Levant.<sup>110</sup> David also expanded his holdings through the condition that he be granted his own town, Ziklag (1 Sam 27:5-6).<sup>111</sup> The site's precise location is unknown, but being within Gath's domain and proximate to David's activities implies that Ziklag was south of

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<sup>109</sup> The role of Jebus/Jerusalem in the region's interactions is explored in Chapter Four.

<sup>110</sup> See Chapter Six.

<sup>111</sup> The location of Ziklag remains uncertain. Recently, Jeffrey Blakely has revisited the problem and argued in favor of Tell esh-Shari'ah/Tel Sera', which is often cited as a candidate ("The Location of Medieval/Pre-Modern and Biblical Ziklag," *PEQ* 139/1 [2007]: 21–26). Others include Tell el-Hesi, Tel Masos, Tell es-Seba', Tel Haror, Tel Halif, and Tel Zayit.

Gath and west of the southern hills. The acquisition of a site in this region extended David's influence along a broader west-east stretch, from Ziklag to Carmel and En-gedi.<sup>112</sup> This span would have forced all inland trade moving north from the Negev or Arabah through David's territory. The pact also detracted from Saul's previous gains. If Saul had negotiated relationships in the Shephelah, those connections may have been hurt by David's involvement in the exchange networks in neighboring areas.

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<sup>112</sup> There is a conspicuous silence regarding the Beersheba Valley and Philistine activity south of Gath, which we might expect to be a part of the interactions. Excavations along this route provide plenty of evidence of interactions (see Chapter Six). Did Gath's dominance in the tenth century include the southern network? Or was the source material (and David's interactions) narrow enough that there is simply no record of it? Questions like these inhibit a more conclusive discussion of that particular region based on the biblical material alone.



**Figure 2:8: Overview of interactions with Philistines and key sites in the region (satellite image © Google earth 2015)**

Politically, David and at least some of the Philistines were able to work together against Saul. Saul's territory was expanding, but the David-Achish alliance allowed for a coordinated effort to divide Saul's attention across more than one front. The challenge is apparent in 1 Sam 23:27-28 when Saul abandoned pursuit of David to respond to another Philistine threat. Saul's growing base had already impacted exchange routes through Benjamin. It is logical that traffic through Jezreel would have been attractive for additional expansion. David's alliance with Gath, however, had consequences for this larger exchange network. With a firm grasp of the territory south of Saul, David had the potential to make a deal involving Philistine trade in the hill country. We can imagine that David's role—if he was not in the battle at Jezreel—was to maintain a threat in the south during the northern

campaign. In return for his assistance, Philistines may have helped David take over the Benjaminite territory, and the two parties could then have cooperated in trade between the Mediterranean and Transjordan.<sup>113</sup>

### **Chapter Conclusions and Implications**

At the close of this initial step in the investigation, there is good biblical evidence in favor of interregional exchange activity involving Philistia and the hill country during the end of the eleventh and first half of the tenth century. The biblical evidence, though complicated from a historical perspective, remembers exchange between these southern Levantine neighbors. Virtually all interactions involving the Philistines correspond to key roads and exchange networks in and around the emerging Israelite territory (Figure 2:8). This statement is true across the different stages of political organization and different types of sources within the book, from myth, to military history, to the apologetic, whether pro-Saul, pro-David, pro-Deuteronomistic theology. In addition, extrabiblical material, though limited, is supportive of the conclusion that encounters with the Philistines were related to regional interaction networks.

Having identified key geographic areas, I can address a secondary, and more consequential, research question, which is what were the impacts of these activities? The biblical accounts in Samuel attest to regional competition for control of trade-related locations, which then prompted consolidation efforts on the part of the region's leaders. The most successful, in this body of evidence, proved to be the Philistine princes/kings, Saul in

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<sup>113</sup> Halpern shows that many beneficial consequences came to David due to the alliance with Gath, from commercial gains to assistance in eliminating other claimants to Israel's leadership. He suggests that it is likely that David was actually in the Jezreel battle, but his involvement was concealed to enhance his political image (*David's Secret Demons*, 79–81, 280–316).

his rule over Benjamin, and David, who succeeded not only in solidifying control over a southern territory based out of Hebron but also went on to join this territory with his conquest of Jebus and Benjamin.

In the prelude to monarchy, the action of the Eben-ezer battle(s) and the ark's travels follows highway networks and trade routes that linked Philistia and the central highlands. Two zones receive the focus: 1) the region between northern Philistia (including Aphek) and the Ridge Road (between Shiloh and Mizpah), and 2) the Soreq Valley highway that ran through the border zone between eastern Philistia (i.e., Ekron and Gath) and the Benjamin hill country (via Beth-Shemesh and Kiriath-jearim). Exchange interests as motivation for the conflict are implicit in the focus on the region between Philistia and the hill country, especially in light of the key routes that ran through the area. Exchange is explicit in the transfer of goods that occurs in the Ark Narrative, especially in the exchange that accompanies the return of the ark to Israelites.

During Saul's tenure, the most direct evidence of exchange comes from the circumstances surrounding the Michmash Pass battle. Philistines were engaged in affairs that necessitated a manned outpost, that involved some "Hebrews," and that in some way related to metallurgical services that Israelites had been using. Drawing on extrabiblical evidence, I argue that Philistine interest in metallurgical trade in Transjordan was the impetus for Philistine activities in the Benjamin hill country and later in the Jezreel Valley. While the text emphasizes the Deuteronomistic explanation of Saul's role as a liberator of Israel from foreign oppression, the geography of his conflicts with the Philistines suggests that he was tightening control over routes that led from Philistia (or the west generally) to Transjordan. Once successful at the Michmash Pass and along the borders of Philistia, Saul

expanded his efforts to control access to Transjordan by engaging a Philistine coalition at Jezreel. This campaign to the north was his most ambitious, and it demonstrates that his motivations were not simply to defend his constituents or the more idealistic “all Israel” of biblical depiction but to maintain his hold on access to Transjordan against the Philistines.

David’s interactions stand in strong contrast to Saul’s, but in the end, they were both motivated by the desire to control access through the highlands. In David’s case, his flexibility in allegiance proved a successful approach, as he eventually dominated more territory, including at minimum Judah, non-Israelite Jebus, and the Benjamin hills.

According to the text, David’s interactions with Philistia were through both military conflict and strategic alliance. The most explicit exchange came in the form of land, but like his contemporaries, the geography of David’s activities indicates that he was maneuvering to control key routes through the highland regions.

David’s sphere of influence grew with each stage of his career, with each expansion adding to control of trade networks. David’s work with Saul secured his familiarity with the Shephelah border and the southern border of Benjamin, shoring up some of the most direct east-west routes between Philistia and Transjordan. When David moved away from Saul’s leadership, he gained apparently unclaimed territory in the south (at least in the biblical recollection). During his renegade days, David and his band of men increased his influence, expanding it to all edges of Judah’s hills, which secured a role in traffic related to Negev routes. In addition, David acquired territory through his own activities and his deal with Philistia—some of which is explicitly described in the text, some of which we have to infer (e.g., gaining control of Benjamin). By the time of Saul’s death, David appears to have solidified his place as a leader of the south, as an ally of Philistia, and as possessing enough

power and resources to assume leadership of Benjamin and to take Jebus. This consolidation of territory meant exclusive control over east-west traffic from the Benjaminite hills to southern Judah, with potential shared participation in Philistine efforts from the southern coast and desert traffic north to the Jezreel Valley.

The combined evidence of interactions indicates there was an escalation in the region. From the description of the Eben-ezer conflict to David's consolidation of power, control of routes and influence over certain regions fell into fewer hands. In 1 Samuel 4-7, there is little to suggest that Philistine leadership, Shephelah villages, or highland residents asserted regular control of the contested territories outside of their village, town, or city borders. As Saul's career progressed, he expanded his influence—through success against Philistines—from a zone of several towns and key locations (e.g., the Michmash Pass) in the heart of Benjamin to the west where he engaged in battles against Philistines in the Shephelah borderland and along valley routes.<sup>114</sup> The culmination of David's efforts shows that he was able to build a base south of Benjamin, including the hill country and lowland to the west, and then move to incorporate both Jebus and Saulide territory. His success essentially guaranteed his involvement in, if not control over, southern traffic between the Mediterranean coast and Transjordan. Perhaps the greatest consequence of these interactions was that the intense competition for trade routes that fueled the hostilities between Philistines, Saul, and David led to the creation of the first multi-tribal polity described in the Deuteronomistic History.

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<sup>114</sup> And although not examined here, in Transjordan against Ammon.

### CHAPTER THREE: SOLOMON'S INTERREGIONAL INTERACTIONS AND ECONOMIC POLICIES

The Deuteronomistic History (DH) depicts Solomon's reign as a critical period in Israel's development. According to the history, Solomon inherited the territory that David conquered, which reportedly consisted of the entire tribal allotments and vassal territories in the north and east. In contrast to the narrative events in Samuel, Solomon's history describes administrative strategies rather than battlefield victories, emphasizing that one of the more important accomplishments of Solomon's career was growing Israel's economy through reorganization of domestic resources and participation in interregional exchange. As the DH is our oldest and most extensive report of these activities, it typically serves as the guide for historical reconstructions of changes in economic policy in the tenth century BCE.<sup>1</sup> If the texts pass historical scrutiny, we would have significant inroads to understanding the development of trade in the second half of the tenth century, but as we have seen in the previous chapter, the DH is problematic as a historical source. This chapter evaluates depictions of Solomon's trade and policies relevant to interregional exchange in order to discern the best application of the history to this study.

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<sup>1</sup> The other historical account comes from the Chronicler, which was often informed by the DH or by a common source (Baruch Halpern, "Sacred History and Ideology: Chronicles' Thematic Structure--Indications of an Earlier Source," in *The Creation of Sacred Literature: Composition and Redaction of the Biblical Text* [ed. Richard Elliott Friedman, University of California Publications Near Eastern Studies 22; Berkeley; Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981], 35–54). In the case of Solomon, the Chronicler preferred accounts that favored the monarch, which results in a less critical portrayal than the Deuteronomistic presentation. Other depictions of Solomon come from legendary characterizations that do not contribute to a historical discussion (e.g., Ecclesiastes or the Song of Songs). For this chapter, the Deuteronomistic History will be the main concern. As a historical work, it and its sources were closer in proximity to the time of Solomon; most importantly it was early enough not to have been heavily influenced by the Persian Era (with the possible exception of a small number of additions to the text). In general, Chronicles and other depictions of Solomon reflect values and assumptions of postexilic Yehud/Judea, which differ significantly from the time of the monarchy. For an illustration of Persian influence on depictions of trade and luxury goods, see Christine Yoder *Wisdom as a Woman of Substance: A Socioeconomic Reading of Proverbs 1-9 and 31:10-31* (BZAW 304; Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2001).

Not all of the material in the Solomon narrative is in agreement, and not all of it is historically reliable, but there is sufficient evidence—material which is diverse in origin and in presentation of the events—to posit that the period represented in the DH by Solomon’s reign was indeed a turning point in interregional exchange. In order to have this positive outcome, however, one must concede that many parts of the narrative are unreliable. The most problematic sources are the ones depicting trade across great distances (to Arabia or beyond). Others are potentially more realistic. Accounts of Solomon’s interaction with Egypt and Phoenicia may stand on firmer ground, as does some of the material describing his resource management. Although depictions of Solomon’s era became more fanciful as the narrative and stories developed, we should not wholly discount events from this history *a priori* when reconstructing the interaction of this period.

This chapter begins with examination of Solomon’s “international” affairs. I will demonstrate that there are distinct phases in the records of Solomon’s trade. I argue that partnerships with Egypt and Phoenicia can be reliably dated to the tenth century, even though the narrative depictions of Solomon’s activity were likely composed in the eighth century and at the end of the Judahite monarchy. Finally, the pervasiveness of interregional interaction in all levels (chronologic and literary) of the narrative—from the most explicit discussion to the most implicit assumptions in the sources—suggests a fundamental relationship between the age of Solomon and long-distance exchange.

The second half of the chapter turns to the narrative’s depiction of Solomon’s consolidation of resources within Israel. According to the history, Solomon manipulated Israel’s resources through two main strategies: a district system for collecting provisions from the land and a labor-based taxation system that supported royal building projects.

Solomon's administrative districts and his constructions appear to have had important consequences for Israel's position as an economic contender in the region; however, the biblical accounts have faced significant challenges regarding their historicity. Even with the difficulties in source materials, it appears that the history of Solomon's domestic economic affairs was grounded in tenth-century activities. Although the accounts of his policies are exaggerated, there is reason to believe that Solomon at least *attempted* to use Israel's human resources to maximize the geographic and natural potential of the territory and improve his kingdom's economic standing. In examining these policies, we come to an additional realization that is not the common view. Despite the image of a united Israel that the Deuteronomistic History (DH) puts forward, details within Solomon's policies reveal a struggle to control the economic resources of a diverse territory.

### **Characteristics of the Solomon Narrative**

The Solomon narrative (1 Kings 3-11) recounts the king's deeds and interactions. This unit is separate from both the Succession Narrative (ending in 1 Kings 2) and the history of the divided monarchy (beginning in 1 Kings 12).<sup>2</sup> The biblical narrative has two

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<sup>2</sup> There are varied opinions on identifying the beginning and end of a Solomon Narrative. See, for example, the exchange between Amos Frisch and Kim Ian Parker in *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 51 (1991) for debates regarding the narrative's structure and extent: Amos Frisch, "Structure and Its Significance: The Narrative of Solomon's Reign (1 Kings 1-12.24)," *JSOT* 16/51 (1991): 3-14; idem, "The Narrative of Solomon's Reign: A Rejoinder," *JSOT* 16/51 (1991): 22-24; Kim Ian Parker, "The Limits to Solomon's Reign: A Response to Amos Frisch," *JSOT* 16/51 (1991): 15-21. First Kings 3-11 constitutes the narrowest proposal, but others detect the narrative's beginning at 1 Kings 1 or 2 and end at or within 1 Kings 12. For additional discussions of the narrative's structure, see Marc Brettler, "The Structure of 1 Kings 1-11," *JSOT* 16/49 (1991): 87-97; Jerome T. Walsh, "Symmetry and the Sin of Solomon," *Shofar* 12 (1993): 11-27; David S. Williams, "Once Again: The Structure of the Narrative of Solomon's Reign," *JSOT* 86 (1999): 49-66; John W. Olley, "Pharaoh's Daughter, Solomon's Palace, and the Temple: Another Look at the Structure of 1 Kings 1-11," *JSOT* 27/3 (2003): 355-69. Regardless of one's position on the theory of the Succession Narrative, there is a thematic shift between 1 Kings 1-2 and 3-11, where the latter recounts Solomon's deeds once kingship was secured. Prior to chapter 3, the focus is on succession, not economic or interregional relations. Similarly, whether or not any sources or literary structure extend beyond the report of Solomon's death, the summary of his life activities is complete with 1 Kings 11. For the purposes here, 1 Kings 3-11 functions as the primary source.

goals: one is to highlight Solomon's accomplishments; the other is to assert that Solomon's greatest misstep, his apostasy, led to the kingdom's division.<sup>3</sup> Within this framework, commerce is a consistent theme. Nearly every aspect of his reign was reliant on it according to this source (e.g., building projects relied on domestic and foreign commercial relations), thus it demands detailed treatment and suggests that the author(s) perceived that exchange and commerce in Solomon's day were critical both to the growth of the kingdom and to the division between the north and the south.

### **Matters of Sources, Authorship, and Editing of the Solomon Narrative**

Scholars' positions on the authorship and editing of the Solomon narrative are not uniform, but the following points are generally assumed or accepted and are the basis for my approach<sup>4</sup>:

- 1) The Deuteronomistic Historian (Dtr) compiled this unit using sources regarding Solomon's reign (potentially ranging from royal records to legends about the king). One of these sources may have been a previously existing narrative on Solomon's reign, possibly the "Book of Solomon's Acts" that is mentioned at the end of the unit (1 Kgs 11:41).<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Solomon's depiction is heavily influenced by Deuteronomic laws and ideology, especially regarding kingship (see Deut 17:14-20) and intermarriage. See Halpern, *Constitution of the Monarchy in Israel*, 243–249; Brettler, "The Structure of 1 Kings 1-11"; Gary N. Knoppers, *Two Nations Under God: The Deuteronomistic History of Solomon and the Dual Monarchies* (2 vols., HSM 52-53; Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1993), 1.145–146; Marvin A. Sweeney, "The Critique of Solomon in the Josianic Edition of the Deuteronomistic History," *JBL* 114/4 (1995): 607–22.

<sup>4</sup> Many works examine Solomon and the biblical texts about him. Along with those cited above, the following studies focus on the sources that underlie the Deuteronomistic treatment of Solomon: Steven L. McKenzie, *The Trouble with Kings: The Composition of the Book of Kings in the Deuteronomistic History* (VTSup 42; Leiden; New York: E. J. Brill, 1991); various studies in Lowell K. Handy, ed., *The Age of Solomon: Scholarship at the Turn of the Millennium* (SHCANE 11; Leiden; New York: Brill, 1997); Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*.

<sup>5</sup> For discussion of potential sources, see Halpern, "Sacred History and Ideology: Chronicles' Thematic Structure—Indications of an Earlier Source"; Nadav Na'aman, "Sources and Composition in the History of

- 2) In addition to sources, the narrative contains editorial introductions, summary, and commentary by the historian.
- 3) The narrative is arranged according to thematic concerns at the expense of chronological accuracy.

A number of issues pertaining to the literary aspect of the work continue to be debated:

- 1) the degree of uniformity in the Solomon narratives (the chapters on Solomon have been variously described as a chaotic hodge-podge of disparate sources as well as a carefully crafted, cautionary tale);
- 2) the nature, extent, and date of the sources that were used and whether they or the resulting narrative were intended to be historical or legendary works, moral instruction, or any combination of these purposes;
- 3) the degree to which the creation of the DH altered, arranged, or contributed to a previously existing narrative on Solomon's reign;
- 4) the extent of subsequent editing or corruption after the DH was compiled/composed.<sup>6</sup>

The literary viewpoint informs how a historian deals with the source material, especially in terms of narrative cohesion and consistency. These items are significant to consider in order to develop a complex view of the material. The Solomon narrative grew from many sources

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Solomon," in *The Age of Solomon: Scholarship at the Turn of the Millennium* (ed. Lowell K. Handy, SHCANE 11; Leiden; New York: Brill, 1997), 57–80.

<sup>6</sup> Much of one's position on this matter is based on various directions in scholarship on the DH. Another key factor is that there are important differences between the MT and the LXX in the development of Kings indicating considerable fluidity in the texts even when other biblical material had become fixed. See D. W. Gooding, "Pedantic Timetabling in 3rd Book of Reigns," *VT* 15/2 (1965): 153–66; idem, "The Septuagint's Version of Solomon's Misconduct," *VT* 15/3 (1965): 325–35; McKenzie, *The Trouble with Kings*; Knoppers, *Two Nations Under God*.

(which may have had various reasons behind their composition). Although the historian(s) strove to create a unified work, we do not have to be observant of those goals and can concentrate on the historical material more than (but not independent from) the literary efforts.

### **Matters of Historicity in 1 Kings 3-11**

Debates regarding whether or not we should rely on the biblical material as a historical source on Solomon or the tenth century gained traction in the 1980s. Criticism emerged following several decades of positivism based on epigraphic and archaeological discoveries that appeared to confirm biblical texts. The most influential for the Solomonic era was Yigael Yadin's claim that he had discovered confirmation of Solomon's fortification projects that are described in 1 Kings 9:15.<sup>7</sup> Since the 1990s, additional reevaluation of these sites and the chronology of the region's Iron Age led to questions in the confidence generated from arguments like Yadin's.<sup>8</sup> This debate is far from settled. The most important contribution that results from it is that we should not assume any relationship between archaeology and the Bible to be concrete. Evaluation of both bodies of evidence is dynamic.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Yigael Yadin's conclusions were based on his own excavations at Hazor, where he uncovered a large city gate "identical in plan and measurements with" Megiddo's. Guided by the passage in 1 Kings 9:15, he reviewed R. A. S. Macalister's excavations of Gezer and found yet another, strikingly similar gate complex; see Yigael Yadin, "Solomon's City Wall and Gate at Gezer," *IEJ* 8 (1958): 80–86; see also idem, "New Light on Solomon's Megiddo," *BA* 23/2 (1960): 62–68.

<sup>8</sup> See Chapter One.

<sup>9</sup> Revisions to Miller and Hayes's widely-used history, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, reveal the effects of recent debates. Comparison of the chapters on Solomon shows significant movement from the authors' 1986 position, where they cite the fortifications as proof that history and archaeology finally agree in the period of Solomon (*A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* [1st ed.; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986], 189–190). In the 2006 edition, they are much more tentative, emphasizing scholars' uncertainty while attempting to provide a historical synthesis from biblical and archaeological material (*A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* [2nd ed.; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006], 197–204). See also Gary N.

One response to the problems with a historical Solomon is to shift focus to the literary aspects of the narrative or to the creation of Solomon the legend.<sup>10</sup> While the legendary Solomon is not the focus of this work, early versions of him thoroughly influenced some of the material in 1 Kings 3-11, and modern studies that trace the Solomon-character's development enter the conversation here when they have a significant impact on determining the historical value of the material.

Although the aim of this chapter is *not* to piece together a historical Solomon, any discussion of the DH's depiction of the era must begin with an assumption about the figure's very existence. In order to entertain the possibility that the text retains memories or records of the tenth century, I must allow for a historical Solomon who governed over a territory centered on Jerusalem.<sup>11</sup> At the same time, I will argue that Solomon *did not* command the respect of the world's leaders or dominate an empire as is depicted, but I will also argue that he very likely participated in exchange relations in the region.

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Knoppers, "The Vanishing Solomon: The Disappearance of the United Monarchy from Recent Histories of Ancient Israel," *JBL* 116/1 (1997): 19–44.

<sup>10</sup> Recent examples include Finkelstein and Silberman, *David and Solomon*; Walter Brueggemann, *Solomon: Israel's Ironic Icon of Human Achievement* (Studies on Personalities of the Old Testament; Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina, 2005); Pablo A. Torijano, *Solomon the Esoteric King: From King to Magus* (Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism 73; Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2002); Steven Weitzman, *Solomon, the Lure of Wisdom* (Jewish Lives; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

<sup>11</sup> The possibility of a tenth-century BCE capital for the earliest Davidic kings in Jerusalem has also been doubted (see Chapter Four). This chapter similarly assumes a basic reliability that Jerusalem had become the center of a new kingdom by the time of Solomon.



Figure 3:1: Important locations in Solomon's interregional interactions according to 1 Kings 3-11 (satellite image © Google earth 2015)

### Long-Distance Exchange in the Solomon Narrative

The Deuteronomistic history records interregional interaction in nearly all parts of the Solomon narrative. Discussion of these relations begins in the first verse of the unit (1 Kgs 3:1) and continues nearly to the last (1 Kgs 11:40). In fact, there are few portions of the

narrative that are not related in some way to exchange.<sup>12</sup> The relevant portions derive from multiple sources in the DH, which will be examined here. One appears to be “the Book of Solomon’s Acts” cited in 1 Kgs 11:41.<sup>13</sup> There have been attempts to discern the contents of this source, but all such work is hypothetical. What we can detect in the text is a wealth of sources available to the Dtr that recorded Solomon’s trade activities. The narrative presents the material in several ways: in general statements of wealth and success, in lists or annals, and through Solomon’s diplomatic interaction. Concentrations appear in 1 Kings 4-5 and 9-10.<sup>14</sup> The organization of my analysis will not follow the order or structure of the biblical text. Instead it is arranged thematically based on who was involved in interactions with Solomon. The first section deals with long-distance exchange (Figure 3:1). The next addresses domestic economic development and the consequences of exchange for Solomon and his domain.

### **Exchange Involving Egypt**

An overview of the Solomon narrative results in the general impression that Solomon had good diplomatic relations with Egypt toward the beginning of his reign that

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<sup>12</sup> The few exceptions include YHWH’s bestowing of wisdom and Solomon’s demonstration of it (1 Kgs 3:4-28), prayer or communication between Solomon and YHWH (e.g., 1 Kgs 8:1-9:9), and portions of Solomon’s demise (e.g., 1 Kgs 11:9-13), all of which contain large compositions from the Dtr.

<sup>13</sup> It is not uncommon to see “the Book of Solomon’s Acts” used to refer to the entirety of non-Deuteronomistic material in 1 Kings 3-11. While it is possible that the historian revealed the name of an extensive source, it is unlikely, based on the following analysis, that it was his *only* source; further, we have no way of knowing if it was his *main* source. A more responsible position is that the historian reproduced material from a variety of sources, which may have included content from “Solomon’s Acts.”

<sup>14</sup> There is a broad structure apparent in the narrative that accounts for these concentrations, although scholars debate many of the details, including how much of this order was the work of the Dtr. The focus on the temple and close connections to Deuteronomistic ideology (in light of Deut 17:14-20) that appear in the text’s arrangement suggest a Deuteronomic-minded redactor. The temple construction is at the center with corresponding content before and after. Wealth and wisdom (or trade and economic matters) are detailed on either side of the temple material, possibly with criticism or irony in the second half of the narrative in response to the international character of Solomon’s leadership approach and capital city (see Chapter Four). Solomon’s rise and fall bookend the work.

deteriorated toward the end. This depiction is a result of the Dtr's narrative structure. The historian situated "good" activities earlier in the narrative and reserved the less favorable for later. His arrangement masks what the historical record might have been. When viewed independently from the narrative scheme, the reports of relations with Egypt are varied and the details uncertain. The matters of most concern are intermarriage and diplomacy between Egypt and Jerusalem, control of Gezer, general (non-royal) trade with Egypt, and the political climate of the time.

The biblical records are derived from multiple accounts and tell of mixed relations over Solomon's career. On the one hand, they claim that Solomon was allied through marriage to a pharaoh (1 Kgs 3:1; 7:8) who conquered Gezer and gave the city to Solomon (1 Kgs 9:16). On the other hand, certain passages convey that there was antagonism with Egypt: an unnamed pharaoh allied with Solomon's non-Israelite rivals (1 Kgs 11:14-25), and Shishaq harbored Jeroboam when he challenged Solomon (1 Kgs 11:40).<sup>15</sup> A third category exists where there is no explicit connection to Egyptian royalty: Solomon engaged in horse and chariot trade with Egyptian merchants or representatives (1 Kgs 10:28-29).

The variety in these accounts is best explained as stemming from multiple sources, as many as four: 1) one based on Solomon's trade in luxury items (horses and chariots); 2) one based on a marriage alliance between Solomon and an Egyptian king; 3) one based on antagonism between a pharaoh and Jerusalem (under David and Solomon); and 4) one based on an alliance between Shishaq and Jeroboam against Solomon. None appears to be pure creation of the Dtr, though the Dtr added to and connected the pieces. The challenge to a

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<sup>15</sup> Shishak, Egyptian Shoshenq I, is the first pharaoh in the DH referred to by name. He is connected to Solomon's reign indirectly through the support of Jeroboam. There is no discussion of a relationship between Solomon and Shishaq.

historian is determining if the sources all describe separate relations. The situation is made more difficult when only one of the references to an Egyptian leader definitively identifies an individual known from extrabiblical sources (i.e., Shishaq, Egypt's Shoshenq I, in 1 Kgs 11:40). As a result, we are uncertain of how many pharaohs ruled over the course of Solomon's reign. The answer could be as few as one, Shoshenq, if the relationship between Egypt and Jerusalem was particularly volatile or as many as three if sources 2, 3, and 4 each refer to a different monarch.

The effort to identify figures in the DH and connect Egyptian and Israelite history has produced many debates. There is not conclusive evidence to settle the issues completely, but we can narrow down the possibilities to what is more likely. We know that Egyptian power was not as centralized during the tenth century as it had been during the New Kingdom. Before the rise of Shoshenq I (ca. 945 BCE), power was divided between a king in Tanis and a person holding the offices of army commander and high priest of Amun in Thebes.<sup>16</sup> Although typically an Egyptian king would be in the position of higher authority in a relationship with a southern Levantine king, Egypt was in a weakened condition compared to the Ramesside dynasties. Weakened and decentralized power allowed for the possibility of inconsistent relations with Jerusalem and other locations during the tenth century, especially from the point of view of observers in the southern Levant.

### **Marriage with Egypt and Its Consequences**

Readers are reminded of Solomon's marriage to a pharaoh's daughter frequently during the narrative. This union is the first event that is mentioned after Solomon secured his

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<sup>16</sup> Kenneth Kitchen, *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt* (2nd ed. with supplement; Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1995), 3–81; John Taylor, "The Third Intermediate Period (1069–664 BCE)," in *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt* (ed. Ian Shaw; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 324–363.

kingship (1 Kgs 3:1) and is noted several times (7:8; 9:16; 11:1).<sup>17</sup> The way the historian uses the information suggests that he was relying on a source that recorded the marital alliance and some benefits from the relationship, namely control of Gezer and influence on Solomon's activities in Jerusalem.

The historicity of this relationship is frequently debated.<sup>18</sup> The usual objection is that it was uncommon, nearly unheard of, for Egyptian kings to marry their daughters to non-Egyptians. This aversion to intermarriage is supported by evidence from the New Kingdom. The problem however is that Egypt in the Twenty-first and Twenty-second Dynasties was not necessarily consistent with the New Kingdom, particularly in cultural practices. Many rulers were Libyan in ethnicity, not Egyptian. Although they were heavily Egyptianized in some respects and emulated the pharaonic models of the New Kingdom, some non-Egyptian practices remained.<sup>19</sup> Thus, we should not be too confident in arguments about what pharaohs would *not* do in this period based on New Kingdom examples. The probability of a marriage alliance should not be judged on the earlier periods.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> The mention of Pharaoh's daughter in 1 Kings 11:1 is simply a segue crafted by the historian to move to the discussion of Solomon's many foreign wives. It does not appear to be part of the older source, only a reiteration.

<sup>18</sup> Shaye Cohen's examination demonstrates how treatment of the pharaoh's daughter has changed according to historical notions. Of particular interest is the finding that condemnation of the Egyptian comes from later interpretations of intermarriage. Although he downplays the concern for intermarriage in the DH, Cohen's study supports the argument that there was an older source for the marriage alliance report ("Solomon and the Daughter of the Pharaoh: Intermarriage, Conversion, and the Impurity of Women," *JANES* 16-17 [1984]: 23–37). For a contrasting view, see Knoppers, *Two Nations Under God*, 1.145–146. For a complete dismissal, see Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* (2nd. ed.), 208.

<sup>19</sup> M. A. Leahy, "The Libyan Period in Egypt; an Essay in Interpretation," *Libyan Studies* 16 (1985): 51–65. Burial practices provide the most concrete examples; other indicators are names, political organization, and writing/language. It is also significant that of Egypt, the Delta region was the most Libyan, and it would have been the region that Israelites interacted with most closely.

<sup>20</sup> Incidentally, the DH also reports of a marriage between a tenth-century pharaoh's sister and Aramite/Edomite? Hadad in 1 Kgs 11:19, although there are significant problems with the account. See below.

It is also important to note that the narrative is not concerned with the pharaoh's daughter *per se*, in contrast to the prostitute-mothers of 1 Kings 3 or the collective character of his other foreign wives in 1 Kings 11, from which the historian makes statements about Solomon's quality.<sup>21</sup> Instead the focus is on Solomon's relationship to Egypt, which was secured through the marriage. This alliance is linked to Solomon's control of Gezer and (though only implied) the Egyptian character of Solomon's building campaign.

Several historical figures could have been the father-in-law pharaoh of the Solomon narrative.<sup>22</sup> The best candidates are Siamun and Shoshenq I.<sup>23</sup> Siamun, the second-to-last pharaoh of the Twenty-first Dynasty (ruled ca. 978-959), has proven the most popular. His Tanis relief records his domination of an enemy that may have been of Aegean ethnicity, which some scholars then connect to Philistine ethnicity and a battle at Gezer.<sup>24</sup> S. Yeivin, relying on J. Goldwasser's interpretation of the Siamun relief, proposes that Solomon's alliance with Egypt came about through a complex power play: Solomon's alliance with Hiram/Phoenicia was an attempt to break an Egyptian-Byblian trade monopoly, to which

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<sup>21</sup> Adele Reinhartz treats the figure of the pharaoh's daughter as the same type of character as other women in the narrative, but she also notes that there is something different about her ("Anonymous Women and the Collapse of the Monarchy: A Study in Narrative Technique," in *The Feminist Companion to Samuel and Kings* [ed. Athalya Brenner; Feminist Companion to the Bible 5; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994], esp. 46–48).

<sup>22</sup> Although David and his heroic men encountered Egyptians (e.g., 2 Sam 23:21), there is no discussion in the DH of state-level Egyptian interactions until Solomon's reign.

<sup>23</sup> Another possibility is Siamun's successor Psusennes II, who was the high priest of Amun in Thebes before also taking over leadership in the north. Despite this accomplishment, he did not leave any record of interaction in the southern Levant.

<sup>24</sup> Some use this depiction as extra-biblical evidence that Siamun indeed campaigned at Gezer and must be the pharaoh of 1 Kgs 9:16; however, there is no written identification of the enemy or location on the relief. The argument begins with Pierre Montet's discovery and publication of the relief and gained in popularity after Jacob Goldwasser's article; see Goldwasser, "The Campaign of Siamun in Palestine," *BJPES* 14 (1948-1949): 82–84; Alberto R. Green, "Solomon and Siamun: A Synchronism between Early Dynastic Israel and the Twenty-First Dynasty of Egypt," *JBL* 97 (1978): 353–67. For arguments against these interpretations, see Paul S. Ash, *David, Solomon and Egypt: A Reassessment* (JSOTSup 297; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 37–46.

Siamun responded with military (evidenced by the Tanis relief) and diplomatic (evidenced by 1 Kgs 3:1) intervention.<sup>25</sup> F. M. Cross, building on the arguments of A. Malamat and B. Mazar, argues that Siamun took Gezer in a campaign to annex Philistia for Egypt and that Solomon, in an effort to avoid war with Egypt, made a deal to acquire Gezer but allow Egyptian control of Philistine cities.<sup>26</sup> While it is difficult to support all of the details in these theories with extrabiblical evidence, both consider underlying economic and diplomatic needs of the political parties and account for the cooperative as well as antagonistic relations depicted in the Solomon narrative.

The other candidate is Shoshenq I (ruled ca. 945-924).<sup>27</sup> His involvement in the Levant is well-documented.<sup>28</sup> He became the first king after the New Kingdom's decline (and notably, after Solomon's death) to conduct a large-scale campaign into the southern Levant. Shoshenq was well connected in Egyptian royal circles (in Tanis and Thebes) through family relations and marital ties.<sup>29</sup> He was recognized as the Chief of the Meshwesh prior to his accession to Egypt's throne.<sup>30</sup> Shoshenq's potential participation in a marriage alliance outside of Egypt, with a goal of using it for political or economic gains, fits with other strategic moves in his lifetime. Geographic analysis of Shoshenq's destructive path

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<sup>25</sup> S. Yeivin, "Did the Kingdoms of Israel Have a Maritime Policy?," *JQR* 50 (1960): esp. 198–207.

<sup>26</sup> Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 263; see also Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, 331.

<sup>27</sup> Taylor, "Third Intermediate Period."

<sup>28</sup> See Chapter Five.

<sup>29</sup> For example, Shoshenq's uncle, Osorkon the Elder, was Siamun's predecessor as king in Tanis (Taylor, "Third Intermediate Period," 335).

<sup>30</sup> According to Leahy, evidence from later in the Libyan or Third Intermediate Period shows the problems in trying to distinguish a difference between tribal chiefs and "kings" in eras of decentralized power in Egypt ("The Libyan Period in Egypt," 58–59). There was comparable power by persons of either title. This difficulty in categorization appears to be more of a problem for today's scholars than the ancients; it is also frequently discussed for the southern Levantine rulers during this period. See Chapters One, Four, and Seven.

through Israel and Judah further suggests that he was interested in dominating trade in the region.<sup>31</sup> That his campaign occurred after Solomon's death, which may have freed Shoshenq from any agreements, also contributes to this theory.<sup>32</sup> Shoshenq's power (not confined to his official reign) could have overlapped with David's, Solomon's, and Rehoboam's careers to include the biblical reports of Jeroboam's rebellion in 1 Kgs 11:40 and Shishaq's campaign in 1 Kgs 14:25. Whether with Shoshenq or Siamun, there is compelling evidence that there were diplomatic relations between the southern Levant and northern Egypt in the tenth century.

If Solomon's marriage to an Egyptian woman of status is understood to be historically possible, then we are able to move to a discussion of the consequence of such a relationship. The note in 1 Kgs 9:16 states that Solomon's Egyptian father-in-law conquered and burned Gezer and gave the (ethnically sterilized) city to his daughter, Solomon's wife, as a dowry.<sup>33</sup> Gezer's geographic position made it a gateway town between Philistia and the

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<sup>31</sup> This explanation was suggested by Aharoni (*The Land of the Bible*, 290) and taken up by Rainey (most recently in *The Sacred Bridge*, 185–189). It is most convincingly supported in the case of the southern sites (i.e., the Negev and Beersheba Valley) due to their involvement in the copper exchange network; see Levy, Najjar, and Ben-Yosef, "Conclusion," 985. In many cases, however, the trade motivation is often put forward but not fully argued or simply assumed; see for example, Gösta Werner Ahlström, "Pharaoh Shoshenq's Campaign to Palestine," in *History and Traditions of Early Israel: Studies Presented to Eduard Nielsen, May 8th 1993* (ed. André Lemaire, Benekikt Otzen, Eduard Nielsen; VTSup 50; Leiden: Brill, 1993), 1–16; Clancy, "Shishak/Shoshenq's Travels," 3–23; Finkelstein, "The Campaign of Shoshenq I," 109–35; Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, esp. 465 and note 76 relating to Solomon's districts; Ze'ev Herzog and Lily Singer-Avitz, "Redefining the Centre," 232–233; Mazar, "Archaeology and the Biblical Narrative," 30–31. Even if other areas of the campaign have not yet been connected to trade interests, the circumstantial evidence is compelling. Shoshenq's conquered sites correspond to many of the critical areas surveyed in this study: those associated with interactions with Philistines (see Chapter Two), Solomon's affairs, and sites associated with the extrabiblical evidence surveyed in Chapters Five and Six.

<sup>32</sup> Rehoboam was not the scion of the Egyptian alliance and may not have been willing to maintain the same relationship with Egypt. Based on the story of succession to Solomon's throne, Rehoboam was more aggressive and possibly less cooperative than Solomon, and Jeroboam's (as well as other rivals') history with Egypt suggests Rehoboam was not to be favored in his relations with Egypt (1 Kings 11–12).

<sup>33</sup> Renewed excavations at Gezer largely follow or agree with Dever's conclusions, with a slight adjustment to note that Gezer was not on the level of a major administrative center in the tenth century but could have

Mediterranean coast, on the one hand, and Canaanite, later Israelite, territories on the other. Control over the site would have provided Jerusalem with access to long-distance trade from Egypt and the Mediterranean. The gift of such a city would have gone a long way in securing Jerusalem's role as a new capital.

The benefits from Solomon's alliance to Egypt may be evident beyond Gezer. Where there is mention of the pharaoh's daughter, there is also comment on Solomon's building projects:<sup>34</sup>

- 1 Kings 3:1      Solomon became son-in-law to Pharaoh, King of Egypt, he took Pharaoh's daughter (in marriage), and he brought her to the City of David until he completed construction of his house, YHWH's temple, and Jerusalem's (outer?) walls.
- 1 Kings 7:8      His house, where he would reside, in another court, was of this same work, and he made a house like this hall for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he took (in marriage).
- 1 Kings 9:16      [Following notice of Gezer's fortifications] Pharaoh, King of Egypt, had gone up and captured Gezer, destroyed it by fire, and killed all of the Canaanites who lived in the city, and he gave it as a dowry to his daughter, Solomon's wife.

The one instance that Solomon's marriage to the pharaoh's daughter is mentioned without a note of his building activities is 1 Kings 11:1, which is typically considered to be the Dtr's improvisation, in contrast to his more direct reliance on source material in the other examples. In this case, the note is a reminder of the marriage in order to introduce the topic

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functioned on a secondary level; see Steven Ortiz and Samuel Wolff, "Guarding the Border to Jerusalem: The Iron Age City of Gezer," *NEA* 75/1 (2012): 4–19.

<sup>34</sup> Olley argues for a connection between the Pharaoh's daughter and the discussions of architecture, but his focus is on literary structure not historical relationships ("Pharaoh's Daughter, Solomon's Palace, and the Temple").

of Solomon's many foreign wives. In addition, it appears to be the only case where the Egyptian wife is the primary topic of the sentence. In the other three, it is the relationship to the pharaoh and Solomon's constructions that receive the attention, a pattern that demands more consideration.

If these narrative relationships correlate to historical activities, then the "Pharaoh's daughter" in the text conveys more than is usually assumed. This figure's role has recently been dismissed as fanciful—a device invented in order to improve Solomon's status in cultural memory.<sup>35</sup> The possibility that the DH preserved evidence of Egyptian involvement in Solomon's construction activities through these notes is not typically considered. When there is discussion of Egyptian influence of this kind, it can be attributed to the New Kingdom's cultural residue in the Levant following years of occupation.<sup>36</sup> One exception is a brief note by Halpern that the description of the House of the Lebanon Forest has a good architectural parallel in Karnak's Hypostyle Hall in Thebes.<sup>37</sup> The consistent relationship in the text between the pharaoh's daughter and Solomon's constructions suggests that the history conceived of the union as influential on the character of the kingdom, rather (or

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<sup>35</sup> For example, Miller and Hayes "regard the whole 'pharaoh's daughter' theme as suspect" and "decline to speculate" (*A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* [2nd ed.], 208).

<sup>36</sup> Jerusalem did, in fact, exhibit Egyptian influence that would have been known to the history's author(s) and audience, but the evidence that is currently available to modern scholars dates to the Late Bronze Age. Architectural elements from the New Kingdom have been recovered from the grounds of the École Biblique (Gabriel Barkay, "A Late Bronze Age Egyptian Temple in Jerusalem?," *IEJ* 46 [1996]: 23-43), and Na'aman's review of Amarna-period Jerusalem demonstrates that there was a precedent of Egyptian influence the Eighteenth Dynasty ("The Contribution of the Amarna Letters to the Debate on Jerusalem's Political Position in the Tenth Century B.C.E."). See further discussion in Chapter Four. Regarding the presence and influence of Egyptian/izing culture in the southern Levant including architectural styles, see Higginbotham, *Egyptianization and Elite Emulation in Ramesside Palestine*.

<sup>37</sup> Halpern argues that Karnak's structure is "the closest parallel" to the descriptions of the Jerusalem construction (*David's Secret Demons*, 398, note 21).

more) than an “upgrade” to Solomon’s status in narrative depiction.<sup>38</sup> Instead, the DH reflects on how Jerusalem’s royal estates came to reflect Egyptian architecture. The connection between Solomon and Egyptian style should lead to additional questions and implications for the figure of the pharaoh’s daughter.<sup>39</sup> Though it does not resolve all questions of historicity, the marriage alliance may be less fanciful than currently thought.

### **Egypt and Solomon’s Adversaries**

The same can be said for Egypt’s treatment of Solomon’s rivals in 1 Kings 11. The theological context put onto the stories states that YHWH set adversaries against Solomon as a consequence for constructing shrines to his wives’ foreign gods. Two of these opponents were harbored by Egypt: Hadad (11:14-22) and Jeroboam (11:40). If Solomon’s reign was challenged by his contemporaries, diplomatic and economic matters were likely issues of contention. Na’aman argues that competition for trade routes lay behind the account(s) of Solomon’s adversaries.<sup>40</sup> He proposes that Solomon’s trade activity threatened Egypt and other states’ profits from interactions, arguing that the “adversaries” in the text expose a region-wide effort against Solomon’s trade and economic success. Egypt was in a good position to manipulate trade involving many routes: along the Mediterranean, through the Negev, and along the Red Sea coast. The regions that worked against Solomon in the

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<sup>38</sup> This suggestion opens the door and connects to many other inquiries. Halpern elaborates on Solomon’s emulation of a more prestigious Egypt (*ibid.*, 397–398). A different, more literary, approach exposes connections between Solomon and the Exodus. Solomon’s possible emulation of Egypt may have influenced Israelites’ perception of him as a pharaoh-like oppressor or Solomon as the source of oppressive Pharaoh story; see Michael D. Oblath, “Of Pharaohs and Kings—Whence the Exodus?,” *JSOT* 87 (2000): 23–42.

<sup>39</sup> Her involvement may have secured exchange relations; the same appears to be the case for Solomon’s daughters Taphath and Basemath (1 Kgs 4:11, 15 respectively; see below).

<sup>40</sup> Nadav Na’aman, “Israel, Edom and Egypt in the 10th Century B.C.E.,” *TA* 19 (1992): 71–93. Na’aman’s views of the era have changed since this article, but the idea underlying his 1992 claim is still worth consideration.

narrative—Edom, Aram, and northern Israel—were well situated to benefit from a shift in Egyptian loyalties.

There are significant problems in evaluating the adversary reports. The first is the absence of corroborating extrabiblical documents from this time. Egyptian records do show some involvement in the southern Levant, as we will see in Chapter Five, but they do not correlate to the stories in 1 Kings 11. The earliest Iron Age inscriptions from northern Israel, Transjordan, and Aram, dating to the ninth century, are too late.<sup>41</sup> Thus the accounts cannot be verified by outside sources. A greater problem lies in the text itself and the description of Hadad of Edom (1 Kgs 11:14-22). Hadad was traditionally an Aramean name, and the place names Aram (אֲרָם) and Edom (עֲדוֹם) are frequently confused in the biblical text due to the similarity between the letters א and א. This problem is also present in David's history of wars against Aram (and Edom?) in 2 Samuel 8. It is quite likely that the Hadad of 1 Kings 11 was not an Edomite but an Aramean, as André Lemaire argues.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> By that time, there is sufficient evidence of regional interactions such as those described in 1 Kings 11. The Tel Dan stele and the Mesha stele, for example, make clear that there were regional kings and upstarts antagonizing each other, but the biblical material remains the only description for the tenth century. See Mark W. Chavalas, "Inland Syria and the East-of-Jordan Region in the First Millennium BCE before the Assyrian Intrusions," in *The Age of Solomon: Scholarship at the Turn of the Millennium* (ed. Lowell K. Handy; SHCANE 11; Leiden; New York: Brill, 1997), 168–71; J. C. L. Gibson, *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions II: Aramaic Inscriptions Including Inscriptions in the Dialect of Zenjirli* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975); idem, *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions III: Phoenician Inscriptions Including Inscriptions in the Mixed Dialect of Arslan Tash* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982).

<sup>42</sup> André Lemaire, "Edom and the Edomites," in *The Books of Kings: Sources, Composition, Historiography and Reception* (ed. André Lemaire, Baruch Halpern, and Matthew Joel Adams, VTSup 129 (Brill, 2010), 225–240, esp. 225–230; idem, "Les Premiers Rois Araméens Dans La Tradition Biblique," in *The World of the Aramaeans I: Biblical Studies in Honour of Paul Eugène Dion* (ed. P. M. Michèle Daviau et al., JSOTSup 324; Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 113–43. Lemaire argues that despite the textual corruption, this text is evidence of Aram's first Iron Age king, Hadad son of Eliada.

In light of these textual and historical problems, it is difficult to have full confidence in the adversaries accounts, particularly in reference to Edomite and Aramean opposition.<sup>43</sup> These issues, however, do not necessarily rule out a possibility that the stories introduce, which is the likelihood of Egypt to become involved in southern Levantine rivalries. Judging from Egyptian records, which are examined in more detail in Chapter Five, Egypt's leaders were increasing their interactions with the Levant. It seems quite likely that support within Egypt for Solomon's opponents, along the lines of what the biblical text describes, was a precursor to direct engagement in the region, as we see in Shoshenq's campaign.

### **Horse Trade with Egypt**

Apparently outside of the royal diplomacy is the account of a horse trade with Egypt, Solomon, and Que (1 Kgs 10:28-29).<sup>44</sup> Horse trade involving Egypt in the tenth century has not been verified through extrabiblical evidence. This problem has led some scholars to propose alternate readings for the MT's ממצריִם in order to find tenth century activity that confirms the Solomon narrative. The most popular proposal has been that the MT is a corruption of an original reading ממצרי, "from *Musri*," a location in Anatolia, which aligns better with the location Que, known from the same region.<sup>45</sup> The proposal that Solomon

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<sup>43</sup> The redundancy in the confusion between the Hadad and Rezon episodes suggests some Aramean interaction. Although further confusion in the history's discussion of the port of Ezion-geber (including additional problems with Edom and Aram confusion) cautions against relying on the DH for these events; see below.

<sup>44</sup> This report is the most explicit discussion of commerce with Egypt in the Solomon narrative. There are considerable textual and historical problems. The textual matters are more easily resolved than the historical. They involve quantities (600 measures of silver for a chariot in the MT versus 100 in the LXX and 150 versus 50 regarding horses) and the manner of transport (בִּידֵם "into their hand" versus κατά θαλάσσαν "by sea" [בַּיָּם]), all of which can be attributed to scribal errors (e.g., haplography). In the parallel account in 2 Chr 1:17, there is agreement between MT and LXX in support of the MT's version of 1 Kgs 10:29.

<sup>45</sup> There was wide-spread acceptance of the emendation (מִמְצָרִי), now labeled *probabiliter* in BHS, despite the absence of textual witnesses. Many scholars have returned to the "Egypt" reading over the last half century;

traded with Anatolian kingdoms, Que and Muşri, solves the confusion created by reading “Egypt” in the verse, since Anatolia was well-known for horse breeding and trade.

Unfortunately, it introduces additional problems. Que is anachronistic for a tenth-century account, and the toponym “Muşri,” may not have been in use at the time of Solomon.<sup>46</sup>

According to Na’aman, the MT reading can be left intact and be accurate regarding horse trade in the Assyrian empire, where Egypt and Que are noted as export centers for horses, but the account does not work well for Solomon’s time.<sup>47</sup> The source for this report used an example current in his day, in the eighth to seventh centuries, to describe Solomon’s trading activity.<sup>48</sup>

It is logical, especially in light of this last example, to be skeptical of the accounts of Solomon’s interactions with Egypt. The record of Solomon’s horse trade is most likely an eighth or seventh century projection onto the tenth-century king’s interregional relations. In contrast, the often dismissed marriage to a Pharaoh’s daughter—while not a typical practice across better known periods of Egyptian history—may be historical. When looking at both the DH’s depiction and Egyptian records, tenth-century Egypt was involved in the southern

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for summary of the debate and references, see Ash, *David, Solomon and Egypt*, 119–120, note 64. Even so, for some, confidence in “Muşri” remains; see Mordechai Cogan, *1 Kings: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 10; New York: Doubleday, 2001), 316–324; Volkmar Fritz, *1 and 2 Kings* (Continental Commentaries; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2003), 127.

<sup>46</sup> Hayim Tadmor, “Que and Muşri,” *IEJ* 11/3 (1961): 143–150; 146. Tadmor argues that the term *Muşri* in Assyrian inscriptions from the tenth century and later must refer to Egypt. The Anatolian Muşri known from previous periods was no longer called by that terminology by the time of Solomon because it had become part of the Assyrian empire.

<sup>47</sup> Na’aman, “Sources and Composition in the History of Solomon,” 57–80; 71.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 71. Although this conclusion argues against the historicity of the report, it does not address the historicity of Solomon’s having or trading horses and chariots. It remains possible that the source built on a notion or cultural memory of Solomon’s horses and chariots; however, Solomon’s horse trading report closes a narrative section that describes extensive interregional trading and wealth during Solomon’s reign (1 Kgs 10:22–29), which appears to contain a higher concentration of later material (see additional discussion below).

Levant's political and economic affairs. The relationship between Egypt and Jerusalem appears to have been fickle and opportunistic, a scenario not out of place for post-New Kingdom Egypt. The account of Solomon's relations with Egypt (with the exception of his horse trade) will contribute to the historical analysis and reconstructions in this study.

### **Exchange Involving Phoenicia**

The DH describes in great detail interactions between Solomon and Phoenicia. Most of the narrative's accounts involve Hiram, the king of Tyre, but not all of the accounts are in agreement about the terms and results of the interactions. The reports focus on two major enterprises: 1) an exchange agreement regarding building materials, agricultural goods, and border territory between Israel and Phoenicia (1 Kgs 5:15-25; 9:10-14); and 2) a maritime partnership for Red Sea trade (1 Kgs 9:26-28; 10:11-12, 22). In one account, there appears to be tension between the monarchs (1 Kgs 9:13), but more of the narrative is devoted to Solomon's great gains as a result of the partnership (e.g., 1 Kgs 10:22).

Like the majority of the accounts in the Solomon narrative, extrabiblical evidence does not attest to the relations with Phoenicia, but there are indications of interregional trade in the area. In general, historical and archaeological material suggests there were maritime operations along the Mediterranean coast involving Sea Peoples villages and greater Phoenicia in the early Iron Age, though not on the scale of the Late Bronze Age. Phoenician records from the tenth century demonstrate that leaders in Byblos were relatively well-established, and some were interacting with Egypt.<sup>49</sup> Phoenician inscriptions also appear in Cyprus and further west in the Mediterranean. Epigraphic evidence of Tyrian rulers or any activities with Israel/Jerusalem, however, have not been discovered for the tenth century.

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<sup>49</sup> See Chapters Five and Six.

Extrabiblical Phoenician evidence provides some context for the depictions in the Solomon narrative, but evaluation of activities in Israel has to rely on the biblical material.

### **Treaty, Constructions, and Northern Land**

The DH claims that relations with Phoenicia were established prior to Solomon's reign. According to 2 Sam 5:11, Hiram initiated a diplomatic relationship with David following the seizure of Jerusalem, and according to 1 Kgs 5:15 the relationship was renewed once Solomon secured his position. In both cases, the DH reports that Hiram supplied building materials to the monarchs. While the DH extends only one verse to the agreement with David (perhaps only as a foundation for what will follow), the narrative indulges in recounting the alliance with Solomon. The depiction is carried out in two main exchanges: one before the temple construction (1 Kgs 5:15-25) and one after (1 Kgs 9:10-14). The two episodes record different perspectives on the arrangement and should be considered as coming from two distinct sources.

The first of these two is the most detailed (1 Kgs 5:15-25). Information on the agreement is conveyed through dialogue and narration. In their amicable exchange, Solomon and Hiram establish a treaty and reciprocate gifts: Hiram will provide Phoenician materials and artisans for Solomon's gift of food provisions to Hiram's house. The dialogue follows conventional language and form for ancient treaties, through which the leaders assert the nature of their peaceful relations and agree to an exchange of goods and gifts. Despite this form, the dialogue cannot be assumed to be a historical record of a tenth-century treaty.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> The language of Hiram's correspondence with David and Solomon has been argued to reflect known treaties and diplomatic etiquette. In the middle of the last century, there was much more confidence in the usefulness of ancient Near Eastern parallels for supporting the historical reliability of such a treaty; see, for example, F. C. Fensham, "The Treaty between Solomon and Hiram and the Alalakh Tablets," *JBL* 79 (1960): 59–60; idem, "The Treaty between the Israelites and the Tyrians," in *International Congress for the Study of the Old*

The text is idealized and deuteronomized. The Dtr made use of a preexisting dialogue as a foundation, into which he inserted his theological messages. Hiram and Solomon's words, after Dtr's editing, reiterate the historical conditions for Solomon, rather than David, to be the temple builder (1 Kgs 5:17-19) and bolster the images of both Solomon and YHWH (1 Kgs 5:21). Even if we remove the Deuteronomistic elements in the episode, it is not likely that the text is a tenth-century product. It is *too good* of an example of royal relations. Rather than the successful preservation of tenth-century correspondence, the dialogue may be the result of the use of "model letters" for scribal education, possibly from the eighth century.<sup>51</sup> Though the letters are based on historical figures and potentially also historic relations, they would reflect the social or political reality of the period of the scribal school more than the era of the subjects of the writings.

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*Testament, Rome* (ed. John Adney Emerton; VTSup 17; Leiden: Brill, 1969), 71–87; William L. Moran, "The Ancient Near Eastern Background of the Love of God in Deuteronomy," *CBQ* 25 (1963): 77–87; J. Priest, "The Covenant of Brothers," *JBL* 84 (1965): 400–406. If all of the royal correspondence is viewed together (2 Sam 5:11; 1 Kgs 5:15-25; 1 Kgs 9:10-14), there appears to be conformity to the ancient parallels (e.g., the terminology "brother," "know," "love," "peace," and exchange of gifts); however, the historical conclusions characteristic of the earlier studies have not held up as well as the form-critical aspects. More recently theoretical discussions, especially informed by the social sciences, have dominated research in this area; see, for example, Saul M. Olyan, "Honor, Shame, and Covenant Relations in Ancient Israel and Its Environment," *JBL* 115 (1996): 201–18; Victor H. Matthews, "The Unwanted Gift: Implications of Obligatory Gift Giving in Ancient Israel," *Semeia* 87 (1999): 91–104; Ronald A. Simkins, "Patronage and the Political Economy of Monarchic Israel"; Gary Stansell, "The Gift in Ancient Israel," *Semeia* 87 (1999): 65–90; R. Westbrook, "Patronage in the Ancient Near East," *JESHO* 48 (2005): 210–33.

<sup>51</sup> Na'aman, "Sources and Composition in the History of Solomon," 65–67. He explains, "The epistolary language, the diplomatic and legal terminology and the commercial details, were all borrowed from the reality of his time and outwardly look authentic. Yet the letter is non-historical, and save for a few details (e.g., the contemporaneity of Hiram and Solomon and their possible commercial relations), mainly illustrates the outlines of negotiation and the conclusion of commercial agreements in the author's time" (*ibid.*, 67). The eighth century is a probable for a number of reasons (including our knowledge of a firmly established court system in Jerusalem and evidence of scribal activity in general), but above all the relationship between Solomon's history and Hezekiah's point to Hezekiah's reign as a likely period for the composition of a (favorable) Solomonic account; see Halpern, "Sacred History and Ideology"; Richard Elliott Friedman, "Solomon and the Great Histories," in *Jerusalem in Bible and Archaeology: The First Temple Period* (ed. Andrew G. Vaughn and Ann E. Killebrew; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 171–80.

The second report (1 Kgs 9:10-14) consists of a brief summary of the Tyre-Jerusalem arrangement, which in this account included a gift to Hiram of northern Israelite cities rather than food provisions. This version conveys that the partnership was not mutually satisfying. According to the narrative, Hiram was displeased with Solomon's gift of west Galilean cities (if the etymology is derived from the root כבּל meaning "hobbled" or "fettered"), a reaction intentionally crafted to minimize what Solomon appears to have lost in the exchange.<sup>52</sup> The region, the equivalent of the tribe of Asher, was critical in the renewed exchange relations with Cyprus and the Aegean.<sup>53</sup> The reminder that Cabul is still the name of the region "until this day" (1 Kgs 9:13) demonstrates that this account was endorsed by the Dtr. Despite the characteristic phrase, this version is less Deuteronomistic than the previous exchange. The Dtr included, rather than created, this account of Solomon's less amicable exchange with Hiram. The idea that Solomon gave up Israelite territory to Phoenicia appears to be a pre-Dtr view of the king.<sup>54</sup> A precise date for this report cannot be determined, but the less-flattering view of Solomon might point to certain historical situations as more probable than others. The depiction should be situated chronologically

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<sup>52</sup> Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, 408–410. Halpern suggests that this part of the history is "masking" a loss of this territory and/or the "alienation of Israelites from the national state." In his interpretation, Hiram's payment was part of the kings' maritime arrangement.

<sup>53</sup> See Chapter Six.

<sup>54</sup> The characterization of this land, as either Israelite or Phoenician, is difficult. Material culture in the region often shows more affinity with the north (i.e., Phoenicia) than the south. María Aubet sees a contradiction between the biblical account and the archaeological materials, which indicate Tyre was expanding already in the eleventh century; see "Phoenicia during the Iron Age II Period," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of the Levant: C. 8000-332 BCE* (ed. Margreet L. Steiner and Ann E. Killebrew; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 706–716; 711–713. The archaeological remains, however, may not reveal the residents' notions of identity. We do not fully know whether they understood themselves to be independent from their neighbors (Phoenician, Israelite, or other groups) or linked through lineage or tradition to them.

after the establishment of a northern state, but possibly not long after, especially if hard feelings toward Davidides or Jerusalem influenced the account.

When looking at both depictions, there are significant agreements and divergences. The two have in common that Solomon had an exchange agreement with Phoenicia for the supply of building materials and that Solomon used land—either as a trade commodity or as a source for payment in agricultural goods—to secure Jerusalem’s side of the agreement.<sup>55</sup> The contention between the two accounts suggests that there was a common historical situation that gave rise to stories of Solomon’s dealings with Hiram, but from this common point, the accounts developed differently because of additional historical circumstances of each source.<sup>56</sup> It is also apparent, however, that the sources themselves were not likely from the mid-tenth century. As a result, we are left with a large window of time, from soon after Solomon’s death to as late as the mid-seventh century (or prior to the Dtr), in which these recollections could have developed. With more than one account and point of view, it is best to consider a relationship with Phoenicia as probable and lean toward the less apologetic account (1 Kgs 9:10-14) as the more realistic one.

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<sup>55</sup> The variation between the reports (that is, whether the exchange was in goods or land) is not necessarily incompatible. Agricultural produce may have been viewed as synonymous with the land, especially if the produce taken was considered excessive. Excavator Zvi Gal has identified the archaeological site Horvat Rosh Zayit with the Cabul and sees a correlation between the site and this history. The site was occupied from the tenth to the eighth century and yielded diverse archaeological remains (Gal describes a mixture of Phoenician and Israelite culture) as well as facilities for large-scale agricultural storage; see Zvi Gal and Yardenna Alexandre, *Horbat Rosh Zayit, an Iron Age Storage Fort and Village* (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2000).

<sup>56</sup> The accounts may have developed differently based on where the history was created or remembered. There is no question that there were mixed feelings regarding Solomon’s era: the labor used to construct the kingdom contributed to the rebellion against Rehoboam (1 Kings 12). Northern Israelite territory may have felt the negative consequences of Solomon’s policies more than other areas, and an account favorable to that experience might enhance a potentially negative view or depict the “sad truth” of a king who devalued or lost a portion of Israel. Presumably, the benefits of Solomon’s construction efforts would have been felt in select areas like Jerusalem or other fortified cities; from those beneficiaries, we might imagine the downplaying of the less generous aspects of Solomon’s character.

## Maritime Trade

Later in the history, we learn of a maritime trade partnership between Solomon and Hiram described in three parts: a) 1 Kgs 9:26-28; b) 1 Kgs 10:11-12; c) 1 Kgs 10:22. These reports are intertwined with the Queen of Sheba episode (1 Kgs 10:1-10, 13) and other illustrations of Solomon's wealth and success (10:14-15, 16-21, 23-27). The maritime trade theme runs as a thread within a larger unit (1 Kgs 9:26-10:29) that illustrates Solomon's wealth from trade and tribute.

The three reports stem from more than one source, and at least two have been elaborated upon by the Dtr. The first, 1 Kgs 9:26-28, can be read as a complete account: Solomon constructed a fleet at Ezion-geber and, with Hiram and his Phoenician seafarers' assistance, imported gold from Ophir. The second account, assumes knowledge of a seafaring venture involving Hiram's fleet (but not explicitly linked to Ezion-geber), goods from Ophir, and the import of precious stones and *almug*-wood. It is also concluded with the characteristic comment "until this day" at the end of 10:12. The third, 1 Kgs 10:22, elaborates on the exotic nature of the imports. This last account notes that Solomon's fleet was made up of Tarshish ships (possibly implying Mediterranean expeditions), which imported luxury goods once every three years. There can be no doubt that the historian(s) intended to convey Solomon's success and largess through the trade partnership with the Phoenicians.

Some aspects of these reports appear so extravagant that they easily draw suspicion. The terms Ophir (אופיר) and *almug*-wood (עצי־אלמגים) (1 Kgs 10:11-12), Tarshish ships (אני־תרשיש), ivory (שנהבים), and the enigmatic קפים ותכיים (1 Kgs 10:22) imply trade over great distances in the Mediterranean or even to the far east.

The problematic phrase **קַפִּיִּים וְתַכְיִים** is traditionally translated “apes and peacocks” and appears only in 1 Kings 10:22 and in the parallel 2 Chr 9:21. This reading suggests that exotic animals were imported to Jerusalem from as far away as the Indian subcontinent. Like the animals, these non-Semitic words would have become known to Hebrew speakers only during the exile or Persian periods (particularly the case for **תַּכְיִים**, “peacock”).<sup>57</sup> As a consequence, 1 Kings 10:22 would have to be considered a late supplement to the account of Solomon’s commerce. Lipiński’s alternative translation “knives and razors,” however, results in a more logical and era-appropriate report.<sup>58</sup> Tarshish ships and Phoenician maritime activities point to Mediterranean exchange, in which metals played a large part.<sup>59</sup> Thus metal utensils, “knives and razors,” would be appropriate among the shipment described in 10:22, but even with this alternative translation, the report fits the era of Phoenician trade in the Mediterranean generally. It cannot be narrowed to Solomon’s time exclusively or attest to his *direct* involvement in the maritime exchange.

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<sup>57</sup> Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *HALOT*, 1731. In general, the luxury goods in the verse have troubled translators and interpreters from ancient times to present; for a full variety of translations and possibilities, see entries in *HALOT*. Halpern makes a strong case that some of the more exotic (and typically considered far-fetched) trade in the accounts can be supported through extrabiblical parallels involving other areas of the ancient Near East, and therefore “a trading state” in the tenth century, based in Jerusalem, is likely in his view (*David’s Secret Demons*, 209–210).

<sup>58</sup> Edward Lipiński, *Itineraria Phoenicia* (Ola 127; Studia Phoenicia 18; Leuven; Dudley, Mass.: Uitgeverij Peeters en Departement Oosterse Studies, 2004), 225–226. He argues that the meanings of the words were only vaguely understood (as related to cutting) by the time they were translated into Greek and were completely misunderstood by the author of Targum Jonathan.

<sup>59</sup> Recent research has tightened the connection between western Mediterranean silver sources and Early Iron Age hoards that have been recovered in the southern Levant; see Christine M. Thompson and Sheldon Skaggs, “King Solomon’s Silver? Southern Phoenician Hacksilber Hoards and the Location of Tarshish,” *Internet Archaeology* 35 (2013).

The *almug*-wood is the most unusual product described in 10:11-12 and, ideally, should provide information regarding the provenance of the text. Unfortunately, the material and the source of the word remain obscure.<sup>60</sup> Without knowing the identity of the material, the most significant information in the text becomes the Dtr's comment on it. He testifies that "no such *almug*-wood has since been imported or seen until this day" (1 Kgs 10:12). The statement is not typical for the Dtr's "until this day" formula. This occurrence explains an event or status that had ceased some time before the historian's day instead of one still in existence. The best explanation for this comment is that the Dtr relied on an older (perhaps considerably older) source that testified to the import and use of this unusual wood. It appears that one could no longer simply "see for himself" remaining evidence of this wood in the Dtr's time; if one could, would not the historian have kept to his usual formula? What the Dtr seems certain of is that no one else had imported or seen so much of it since Solomon and that the Dtr's source provided the necessary evidence of its existence.

The destination for the ships was Ophir (1 Kgs 9:28; 10:11).<sup>61</sup> Unlike some of the exotica, this location is attested outside of the Solomon narrative. Gold from Ophir,

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<sup>60</sup> The parallel account in 2 Chr 9:10-11 has an alternate form of the word, אֵלֶּגְמוֹם (also in 2 Chr 2:7). The difference between the two is a deceivingly simple metathesis between ג and ל. The Chronicles version may be related to or influenced by the Arabic *al + gamīm*, "lush plant," but there is no widespread acceptance of etymologies for either of the words in order to determine which is original. Ancient sources also appear to be uncertain of the material (see *HALOT*). There is slight disagreement between Kings and Chronicles on the use of the wood. The discrepancies appear in just two words that happen to be adjacent to one another: עֵצֵי הָאֵלֶּגְמוֹם (1 Kgs 10:12); עֵצֵי הָאֵלֶּגְמוֹם מְסֻלּוֹת (2 Chr 9:11). The Chronicler relied on the same source or the Kings report, but it is unclear why the name of the wood and its use are different between the two accounts. The words were either unknown by the time of the Chronicler and suitable replacements supplied, or the words were corrupted in the Kings version after Chronicles was composed. The former seems more probable as the Chronicler adapted other parts of the verse (and his work) to be appropriate for his situation. The Chronicler would also be more likely to emend an unknown material to the form *al + gamīm* noted above. If the Kings version is original, then there is additional reason to view the other information in 1 Kgs 10:11-12 as derived from older sources.

<sup>61</sup> 1 Kgs 10:22 does not state where the ships imported goods from, but it would not be odd for Ophir to be the assumed location. If the verse was appended to the account later on, there would be no need to restate "Ophir."

apparently known for its rare quality, appears in Isaiah 13:12 as well as on an eighth-century ostrakon discovered at Tell Qasile.<sup>62</sup> What we do not know is where exactly Ophir was and how long peoples of the Levant were interacting with it.<sup>63</sup> The context set by 1 Kings 9:26-28 leads us to believe that it was reached by the Red Sea. Travel through the Red Sea could lead to destinations in eastern Africa, Arabia, or even India; however maritime travel from the Levant to destinations beyond the Red Sea (into the Arabian Sea) was not typical until the Hellenistic and Roman eras. The Tell Qasile find and the association with “Tarshish ships” (1 Kings 10:11-12), suggest Ophir was reached through the Mediterranean, a more logical scenario for a Phoenician fleet and consistent with recent research on Tarshish.<sup>64</sup> Without certain knowledge of Ophir’s location, however, we cannot assess how long it was used as a source for gold.<sup>65</sup> The only historical indication is that it was known in the eighth century. Either the Dtr’s source is our only evidence of Ophir as a trade location in the tenth century, or more likely the source imagined or revised Solomon’s maritime trade through an eighth-century lens.

The last element in the maritime accounts that contributes to a discussion of the Dtr’s sources is the shipbuilding and seafaring port “Ezion-geber near Eloth” (1 Kgs 9:26). The northern end of today’s Gulf of Eilat/Aqaba, where 1 Kgs 9:26 points us, would have been a

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<sup>62</sup> The ostrakon was found on the surface of the site and has been dated based on the epigraphy (eighth to sixth centuries) and the site’s archaeological record (destroyed by the Assyrians in the eighth century); see Benjamin Maisler [Mazar], “Two Hebrew Ostraca from Tell Qasile,” *JNES* 10 (1951): 265–87; Mazar, *Excavations at Tell Qasile*.

<sup>63</sup> Lipiński provides an extensive exploration of possible locations for Ophir as well as a reconstruction of the composition and redaction process that led to the association between Solomon, the eighth century’s Hiram (II), and Ophir trade (*Itineraria Phoenicia*, 189–224, esp. 217–218).

<sup>64</sup> Thompson and Skaggs, “King Solomon’s Silver?”

<sup>65</sup> Lipiński suggests a narrow timeframe, ca. 750-625 (*Itineraria Phoenicia*, 223).

good location for trade headquarters. It provided access to the Red Sea and was situated at a convergence of land routes from the gulf coastlines and into the Levant via the Wadi Arabah and the Darb el-Ghazza. In addition, there were comparable activities in the area at other periods.

The DH demonstrates that, at least to the Dtr or in his time, there was significant interest in the area. The locations Ezion-geber and Eloth/Elath turn up several times in the DH, particularly during the divided monarchy. According to the history, Judahite kings made claims to the area twice after Solomon: Jehoshaphat attempted (unsuccessfully) a trade venture from Ezion-geber (1 Kgs 22:49), and Azariah restored Elath to Judah (2 Kgs 14:22). The region came into and was taken from Jerusalem/Judahite control more than once.

The other states vying for control of the area were most likely Israel and Aram.<sup>66</sup> Israel under the Omrides dominated much of the region including Judah and Edom, making them good candidates for running operations from the port. Control shifted to Aram, probably under Hazael in the ninth century, and later Rezin “reclaimed” the port and drove out Judahites in the eighth century (2 Kgs 16:6).<sup>67</sup> After this notice, the DH is silent regarding Elath and Ezion-geber, even though the region continued as an important gateway area and later fell into Assyrian hands. The historian fails to mention this turn of events despite evidence of significant interest in the location.

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<sup>66</sup> Edom, though well situated to take control of the area, appears to have been a vassal rather than an independent actor in the repeated shifts of power over Elath/Ezion-geber. In both 1 Kgs 22:48-50 and 2 Kings 14, Israel was more powerful than Edom and Judah, and control of Elath was Judah’s attempt to gain power or independence. See Nadav Na’aman, “Azariah of Judah and Jeroboam II of Israel,” *VT* 43 (1993): 227–34; Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* (2nd ed.), 304, 319.

<sup>67</sup> As discussed above, the similarity between 𐤀 and 𐤁 has caused problems in the history. There has been confusion between 𐤀𐤓𐤁 and 𐤀(𐤁)𐤓 in various mss and versions throughout this verse. The reading assumed here is that Rezin, king of Aram, reclaimed Elath for Aram, and Edomites (Arameans also possible) settled there.

The Dtr's hand is evident in each of these Ezion-geber or Eloth/Elath accounts, exposing some piqued interest and potential bias that would affect the history.<sup>68</sup> Complicating matters more is the fact that archaeological research has not identified a tenth-century candidate for Solomon's port. Tell el-Kheleifeh, thought by many to be the biblical Ezion-geber, dates to the later part of the monarchic era.<sup>69</sup> If the archaeological assessments are accurate and Solomon had a port for Red Sea activity, its identification as Ezion-geber in 1 Kings 9:26 is anachronistic and would not pre-date the eighth century. In addition, the clarification of Ezion-geber's location (if not also the name itself or entire verse) may have been added by the Dtr: "The king Solomon built ships at Ezion-geber, *which is near Eloth on the Red Sea shore, in the land of Edom*" (1 Kgs 9:26). The explanation is necessary only if Ezion-geber was no longer in Judahite hands, which suggests that later periods heavily influenced this report in the history.

The DH, in light of the loss of this region from Judah's holdings, asserts a historical claim to the site. With Solomon established as the founder of shipping at Ezion-geber/Elath,

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<sup>68</sup> Examples of the Dtr's work include 2 Kings 16:6, which begins with **בְּעֵת הַהִוא**, "at that time," and ends with **עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה**, "until this day." The entire episode (beginning 2 Kgs 16:1) is set with highly characteristic phrasing. Also, 1 Kgs 22:50 fits a pattern attributed to the Dtr, **וְשׁוֹ** + imperfect; see James A. Montgomery, "Archival Data in the Book of Kings," *JBL* 53/1 (1934): 46–52, esp. 49. Interest in Elath and Ezion-geber is related, in part, to the Dtr's concern for Judah-Edomite relations, which the DH ultimately traces back to the wilderness period; see Jeffrey C. Geoghegan, "'Until This Day' and the Preexilic Redaction of the Deuteronomistic History," *JBL* 122/2 (2003): 201–227, esp. 222–223.

<sup>69</sup> Archaeology has confirmed that the area was important in the later Iron Age, but there is not good evidence for the tenth century. The site identified as Ezion-geber, Tell el-Kheleifeh, was initially considered Solomonic by Glueck, but further examination has focused on the fact that the most concrete evidence (e.g., ceramics) dates to the eighth to sixth centuries BCE. The evidence that continues to provoke questions about occupation in the Iron I-IIA is the earliest architecture at the site (which could indicate an earlier Iron Age date) and the recovery of Qurayyah Painted Ware, which first appears in the Late Bronze Age but is also found into the tenth century in the Arabah and Faynan. See Chapter Six; Gary D. Pratico, "Nelson Glueck's 1938-1940 Excavations at Tell El-Kheleifeh: A Reappraisal," *BASOR* 259 (1985): 1–32; idem, *Nelson Glueck's 1938-1940 Excavations at Tell El-Kheleifeh—A Reappraisal* (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1993); Virginia Egan, Patricia M. Bikai, and Kurt Zamora, "Archaeology in Jordan," *American Journal of Archaeology* 104/3 (2000): 577–578; Smith and Levy, "Iron Age Ceramics from Edom," 412.

the history gives Jerusalem precedence over Samaria, Aram, Edom, or Assyria, all of whom controlled the region around the Gulf of Elath at some point in the Iron Age. Like other aspirations evident in the DH, the Dtr was hopeful for another change of hands, where Josiah would reclaim Ezion-geber/Elath for Judah, thus restoring the land to Solomon's deuteronomistic precedent (whether historical or not). This account provides the literary foundation for later actions or aspirations.

But what of Solomon's day? Did ancient historians (i.e., the Dtr and/or his sources) invent a history of Solomonic maritime trade? There are several sources for Solomon's seafaring or his alliance with Tyre that appear to be older than the Dtr (1 Kgs 5:15-32; 9:11-14; 10:11-12). The Dtr worked with preexisting material on this topic, but the strongest historical markers in the text point to the eighth century as an influential time in the crafting of the material, particularly apparent concerning Ophir. *If* Solomon engaged in maritime trade, we cannot rely on the material in 1 Kings 9-10 to reconstruct it.

Based on extrabiblical and archaeological sources, it is more likely that if any maritime activities were occurring, they would have involved expeditions into the Mediterranean, not the Red Sea.<sup>70</sup> During the tenth century, goods from Cyprus and beyond entered the southern Levant through northern port cities (e.g., Dor, Akko plain, Tyre).<sup>71</sup> This incongruity between biblical accounts and the extrabiblical evidence is further testimony to the heavy influence of later periods on the accounts of Solomon's long-distance affairs. If Solomon engaged in any way with the exchange networks related to the renewed Iron Age

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<sup>70</sup> For recent comparison and evaluation of these two possibilities, see Barry J. Beitzel, "Was There a Joint Nautical Venture on the Mediterranean Sea by Tyrian Phoenicians and Early Israelites?," *BASOR* 360 (2010): 37-66.

<sup>71</sup> Ceramic imports from Cyprus and the Aegean have established that long-distance exchange was reestablished by the end of the eleventh century. See discussions in Chapter Six.

Mediterranean trade, physical records or cultural memory did not retain accounts of it. A generous reconstruction of how the history came to emphasize a Red Sea trade instead of Mediterranean would propose that some notion of interaction involving Solomon, Phoenicians, and long-distance exchange via ships existed, but detailed memory of it was not retained. Historians of the eighth and later centuries instead supplied details relevant to Judah's interactions in these periods and located the activities in the south.<sup>72</sup> In the end, interactions between Solomon and Phoenicia probably took place, but the biblical evidence has been heavily influenced by authors during the divided monarchy (and later). The accounts of maritime trade are too problematic to include in further discussion, but the conflicting reports of an agreement to exchange land, agricultural goods, and building supplies are more realistic.<sup>73</sup>

### **Exchange Involving Arabia**

Perhaps the best known trade relationship in the history is between Solomon and Arabia (1 Kgs 10:1-15). The majority of the narrative concerns the Queen of Sheba (Saba in South Arabia). Sheba was located in the southern corner of the Arabian Peninsula, today's Yemen, and was well-known in the ancient world as the source of frankincense, myrrh, and other luxury goods.<sup>74</sup> According to the biblical story, the queen came to Jerusalem to test Solomon's wisdom and brought with her a great retinue including camels bearing precious

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<sup>72</sup> In addition to creating a Solomonic precedent for control of Ezion-geber, it is possible that inspiration for the southern orientation of these accounts was influenced by cultural memory of the tenth-century copper exchange network that was active in the south; see Chapters Six and Seven.

<sup>73</sup> See also the discussion of Dor and other coastal and northern districts below.

<sup>74</sup> Kenneth Kitchen, "Sheba and Arabia," in *The Age of Solomon: Scholarship at the Turn of the Millennium* (ed. Lowell K Handy; SHCANE 11; Leiden; New York: Brill, 1997), 126–53; Sarah Malena, "Spice Roots in the Song of Songs," in *Milk and Honey: Essays on Ancient Israel and the Bible in Appreciation of the Judaic Studies Program at the University of California, San Diego* (ed. Sarah Malena and David Miano; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2007), 176–180.

goods for Solomon (1 Kgs 10:2, 10). A report of Tarshish ships with regular imports directly follows the visit and is itself followed by an account that Solomon returned the queen's generosity with his own gifts (1 Kgs 10:13). On the heels of the episode with the queen, there is also notice that Solomon received tribute and trade goods from Arabian kings (1 Kgs 10:14-15). The Sheba/Arabia sequence, which is intertwined with the reports of maritime trade, implies that the queen's visit secured safe passage for Solomon's and Hiram's ships through Arabian territories and connected Solomon to caravan trade in the Arabian Peninsula.

Determining the historicity of trade relations with Arabia is complicated by the mixture of seemingly historical records with legendary material about Solomon's fame and, as usual, the lack of corroborating extrabiblical sources. Some of the questionable characteristics include vagueness on the one hand (e.g., no Arabian monarchs are named) and too detailed dialogue on the other (e.g., 1 Kgs 10:6-9), as well as grand depictions of material goods. The account also shows elements of editing and supplementation that compromise historical integrity.

The queen's visit (1 Kgs 10:1-10, 13) appears to interject into a discussion of Solomon's maritime trade partnership with Hiram (1 Kgs 9:26-28; 10:11-12). The combined narratives form part of a larger compendium of Solomon's trading, wealth, and other successes that ends with the description of horse and chariot trading in 1 Kgs 10:29. The queen pericope, which may be a later composition, enhances the narrative so that Solomon's trading activity expands into an elaborate network among monarchs from Phoenicia to Arabia and beyond. In addition, the queen's visit furthers the image of widespread

recognition of YHWH's greatness and Solomon's success.<sup>75</sup> Due to the legendary character and ideological bias, there is general scholarly agreement that the account is not historically reliable for tenth century activities.

The remaining material on Arabia is brief or vague. The history states that "all the kings of Arabia" traded with Solomon (1 Kgs 10:14-15). This report comes from the narrative that now surrounds the queen material. In this arrangement, Arabian kings are among the many monarchs, merchants, and governors that participated in exchange with Solomon. This account at first sounds promising for history, but upon closer examination, the verses appear to be a late supplement, and the report cannot be relied on for historical reconstruction.<sup>76</sup> It has, however, promoted investigation into whether Arabian kingdoms and interregional trade with them existed in the tenth century.

So far, no definitive evidence of monarchs or trade from South Arabia in the tenth century has been discovered, but there is a good possibility that both were emerging at that time.<sup>77</sup> That Arabian goods appear in Assyrian records in the period of Tukulti-Ninurta II

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<sup>75</sup> The queen's speech (1 Kgs 10:6-9) echoes Hiram's and Solomon's words in 1 Kings 5, but it is not entirely clear if the texts are of the same authorship. R. B. Y. Scott sees the queen's words as inspired by Hiram's, as opposed to being related in authorship, and argues that the text contains post-exilic elements, especially in vocabulary and idiom; see R. B. Y. Scott, "Solomon and the Beginnings of Wisdom in Israel," in *Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East Presented to Professor Harold Henry Rowley* (ed. Martin Noth and D. Winston Thomas; VTSup 3; Leiden: Brill, 1960), 262–79.

<sup>76</sup> The last of the list, the *פְּחוּרֵי הָאָרֶץ* or "governors of the land," is the most informative element. The noun *פְּחוּר*, "governor" (translated in the LXX as *σατραπῶν*, "satraps") is a loan word from Akkadian and indicates a later period of composition. Notably the term was used for governors who served the Persian Empire, but it is also related to officials under the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian periods. It is most frequent in later biblical texts. See *HALOT*, 923.

<sup>77</sup> Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, 209–210; Kitchen, "Sheba and Arabia"; Peter J. Parr, "Contacts between North West Arabia and Jordan in the Late Bronze and Iron Ages," *SHAJ* 1 (1982): 127–33; Finkelstein, "The Campaign of Shoshenq I"; Israel Finkelstein, "The Iron Age: Tel Masos 'Chiefdom' and the Rise of the Israelite Monarchy," in *Living on the Fringe: The Archaeology and History of the Negev, Sinai, and Neighboring Regions in the Bronze and Iron Ages* (Monographs in Mediterranean Archaeology 6; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 103–26; idem, "Arabian Trade and Socio-Political Conditions in the Negev in the Twelfth-Eleventh Centuries B.C.E.," *JNES* 47/4 (1988): 241–52. Judging from imported pottery, trade

(890-884 BCE) suggests that trade operations must have been in place by the late tenth century.<sup>78</sup> And evidence of Arabian monarchs and kingdoms appears no later than the end of the ninth century.<sup>79</sup> Although it is likely that trade with South Arabia was growing by the late tenth and early ninth centuries, the biblical accounts describe a later period, in the range of the late eighth to sixth centuries (or even later), when Arabian trade was well established. In the end, we are left with a vague notion of exchange involving South Arabia and the southern Levant. If the connection between Jerusalem and South Arabia originated in the tenth century, the biblical material is the least reliable source for understanding the relationship and historical implications.

Exchange with northern Arabia is quite another matter as research on Qurayyah Painted Ware (QPW) has shown.<sup>80</sup> Exchange involving Northwest Arabia and the copper regions east and west of the Arabah Valley was active in the eleventh and tenth centuries. The site of Qurayyah, where the distinctive painted pottery was produced, was fortified, which, along with evidence of organized irrigation systems and kilns, suggests a complex society—one that is not apparently known through historical sources.<sup>81</sup> At this time, it is too much of a stretch to argue that tenth-century trade with *northern* Arabia was what was

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between Northwest Arabia and the southern Levant was established in the Late Bronze Age and continued through the early Iron Age; see below and Chapter Six.

<sup>78</sup> Nadav Na'aman, "The Contribution of the Suḥu Inscriptions to the Historical Research of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah," *JNES* 66 (2007): 107–22.

<sup>79</sup> Kitchen, "Sheba and Arabia."

<sup>80</sup> See Chapter Six.

<sup>81</sup> Peter J. Parr, "Pottery, People and Politics," in *Archaeology in the Levant: Essays for Kathleen Kenyon* (ed. Roger Moorey and Peter J. Parr; Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1978); idem, "Contacts between North West Arabia and Jordan in the Late Bronze and Iron Ages"; idem, "Qurayya," *ABD*.

remembered in 1 Kgs 10:14-15. It is most likely a coincidence, but the fact that we now know that such trade could have reached Solomon's territory deserves consideration.

No QPW has been found in Jerusalem excavations, but the city was linked to the southern exchange networks that facilitated the distribution of QPW and southern Levantine copper. One of the most prominent sites in this network, Khirbat en-Nahas, has produced evidence of both QPW and black burnished juglets, which originated in the Jerusalem area and have been found in E. Mazar's Ophel excavations in Jerusalem.<sup>82</sup> While there is no direct evidence linking Solomon to these archaeological discoveries (dating to the Early Iron IIA, i.e., tenth and ninth centuries), a relationship between Jerusalem and southern trade, which was linked to northwestern Arabia, may have been remembered and applied to Solomon's history.

### **Exchange in Metals**

Silver, gold, and copper/bronze feature prominently in descriptions of Solomon's constructions and in the records of tribute and riches that came to Solomon from around the world. For these reports to have stemmed from tenth-century activities, there would have to have been significant interregional trade. Although copper was available in neighboring regions, gold and silver, and other materials (such as tin to make bronze) needed to be imported from beyond the southern Levant. Recent research indicates that trade in some of these metals was in fact taking place during this period, but there is currently no direct

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<sup>82</sup> Eilat Mazar, *Discovering the Solomonic Wall in Jerusalem: A Remarkable Archaeological Adventure* (Jerusalem: Shoham Academic Research and Publication, 2011); Smith and Levy, "Iron Age Ceramics from Edom," 327; Neil G. Smith, Yuval Goren, and Thomas E. Levy, "The Petrography of Iron Age Edom: From the Lowlands to the Highlands," in *New Insights into the Iron Age Archaeology of Edom, Southern Jordan: Surveys, Excavations and Research from the University of California, San Diego & Department of Antiquities of Jordan, Edom Lowlands Regional Archaeology Project (ELRAP)* (ed. T. E. Levy et al.; Monumenta Archaeologica 35; Los Angeles: The Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press, 2014), 476, 479, 488.

evidence linking trade in metals or metallurgical activities to Solomon or a tenth-century Jerusalemite ruler.

### **Jordan Valley, Levantine Metallurgy, and Copper/Bronze**

The metal resources that would have been most accessible during Solomon's day are the metal production sites near the Jordan and Arabah Valleys introduced in Chapter Two: the copper resources on either side of the Arabah Valley, in Timna and the Faynan, and Tell Hammeh's iron production center further north.<sup>83</sup> Timna's resources had been exploited by the Egyptians during the Late Bronze Age and were again, or continued to be, used by local metallurgists in the tenth century. East of the valley, the Faynan was intensively used as a copper source and smelting and processing center from the eleventh to ninth centuries by local leadership and workers. While investigations into both regions have produced ample evidence of activity, no documentary or epigraphic evidence has been found to clarify who was in charge of the metallurgical operations or the intended destinations for the processed materials.<sup>84</sup> The iron production site, Tell Hammeh, east of the Jordan Valley, is another candidate for contemporary trade in metals, but here too, we do not have evidence that identifies historical figures or groups involved in the work at the site or the consumers.<sup>85</sup>

In addition to the vast amount of metal that was necessary for the projects described in 1 Kings 5-7, the intriguing note in 1 Kgs 7:46 that Solomon's metalwork took place in the

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<sup>83</sup> See also Chapter Six.

<sup>84</sup> Erez Ben-Yosef et al., "A New Chronological Framework"; Thomas E. Levy et al., eds., *New Insights into the Iron Age Archaeology of Edom, Southern Jordan: Surveys, Excavations, and Research from the University of California, San Diego & Department of Antiquities of Jordan, Edom Lowlands Regional Archaeology Project (ELRAP)* (Monumenta Archaeologica 35; Los Angeles: The Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press, 2014).

<sup>85</sup> There is, however, evidence of a common technology between Tell Hammeh and the Shephelah; see Veldhuijzen and Rehren, "Slags and the City"; H. Alexander Veldhuijzen and Eveline van der Steen, "Iron Production Center Found in the Jordan Valley," *NEA* 62/3 (1999): 195-99.

Jordan Valley, between Succoth and Zarethan (very close to the iron smelting site of Tell Hammeh), makes the connection between the archaeological evidence and Solomon's activities all the more attractive.<sup>86</sup> A definitive link between them, however, cannot be made. We can say that there was an active copper and iron metallurgical trade in the early Iron Age that was meeting a significant demand presumably created by the region's leaders and elites. We can also observe that there was memory of Solomon's acquisition of a large amount of copper/bronze and of his involvement in metallurgical activity in the Jordan Valley. These observations *may* be related because of a historical connection, but it is also very possible that the biblical account of Solomon's participation in the region's metallurgical trade was created by later historians who also knew of the earlier operations in the Jordan Valley and the Arabah.

### **Silver**

According to 1 Kings 10:27, Solomon made silver as common as stones in Jerusalem. He deposited silver vessels from the time of David in the completed temple (1 Kgs 7:51) and received silver from his maritime ventures (involving Tarshish ships), tribute from other leaders, and horse trade (1 Kgs 10:22, 25, 29). Even though some of these claims are clearly hyperbolic, the importance of silver in Solomon's time is apparent from archaeological finds. Iron Age I and IIA silver hoards found in southern Phoenicia have been determined to have originated in western Mediterranean (likely Sardinia, ancient Tarshish, and the Iberian Peninsula) and notably not from closer locations in Anatolia and

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<sup>86</sup> This description situates the activity near the Zarqa River (biblical Jabbok) in the neighborhood of Deir 'Alla (biblical Succoth) and Tell Umm Hammad (Zarethan?), where there is plentiful evidence of ancient metallurgy (Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 176). Tell Hammeh is roughly 2.5 km east of Tell Deir 'Alla. The metallurgical activity in this area is known from investigations of the larger mounds, which date to the Early and Late Bronze Ages. It may be that Iron Age operations took place at smaller locations (like Tell Hammeh) that have not yet become the focus of excavations.

the Aegean.<sup>87</sup> Researchers C. Thompson and S. Skaggs note that it cannot be determined whether the silver was recycled from LB imported metal or was an Iron Age import to the region; nevertheless, they consider the western Mediterranean origins an important discovery for advancing our knowledge about Phoenician connections to Mediterranean trade in silver. Like the copper/bronze industries, however, these discoveries indicate that trade in the metals was in demand in the region, but the consumers involved remain anonymous.

### **Gold**

The same kind of evidence for contemporary trade in gold has not been found, but there is no doubt that gold items existed and were exchanged. As is the case with all metal artifacts, recycling was common, making the recovery of metals in their original contexts quite rare. As one of the most desired metals, it is not surprising that gold has only been recovered in extraordinary circumstances.<sup>88</sup> Contemporary sources testify to royal stores of gold in Egypt: in the quarry inscription describing Shoshenq I's preparations for his Karnak monument, and in Osorkon I's record of gifts of gold and various luxury goods (e.g., silver, copper, lapis lazuli, vessels) to temples throughout Egypt.<sup>89</sup> The nearest sources for gold

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<sup>87</sup> Thompson and Skaggs, "King Solomon's Silver?" The samples in the Sardinian group came from Tel Keisan (11<sup>th</sup> century), Tel Dor (11<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> century) Ein Hofez (10<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> century), Akko (10<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> century); those from the Iberian Peninsula were found at Ein Hofez.

<sup>88</sup> These discoveries usually come from lost caches and undisturbed graves, such as the Middle Bronze Age hoard from Tell el-ʿAjjul and the extravagant eighth century gold luxuries from Ashurnasirpal II's Nimrud palace (Ora Negbi, *The Hoards of Goldwork from Tell El-ʿAjjul* [Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology 25; Göteborg: Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology, 1970]; J. E. Curtis et al., eds., *New Light on Nimrud: Proceedings of the Nimrud Conference 11th-13th March 2002* [London: British Institute for the Study of Iraq, 2008]).

<sup>89</sup> James H. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt: Historical Documents from the Earliest Times to the Persian Conquest*, vol. 4: The Twentieth to the Twenty-Sixth Dynasties (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1906), 344–347, 362–366. Notably, Osorkon is described in terms familiar from depictions in the Deuteronomistic History: "...their bodies repose in all their favorite places; [there is none hostile toward them--], since the time

were in southern Egypt, Nubia, the Arabian Peninsula, Anatolia, and the Zagros mountains.<sup>90</sup> Exchange from these areas was not necessary, however, for gold to have been a traded commodity in the tenth century. Heirloom pieces and recycling may account for gold that was in circulation. As I noted above, however, epigraphic evidence of imported gold within the southern Levant, especially from Ophir, does not appear until the eighth century.

The DH's reports of gold ornamentation in the temple and palace (1 Kings 6; 10:16-21) and gold used and acquired in trade with Hiram (1 Kgs 9:10-14, 27-28; 10:11-12) are not impossible to imagine, especially if the descriptions are taken with a grain of salt, but they cannot be considered direct evidence of exchange or of the historicity of the DH accounts.<sup>91</sup> Rather these activities, especially the use of gold in the royal building projects should be considered fitting of how a king *should* act. In other words, if a historical Solomon did such things, he was following the model for a monarch; if the narrative reflects only a literary Solomon, then the author(s) crafted him in the same model. The great tribute that came to Solomon described throughout 1 Kings 10 is more consistent with Solomon's legendary character of the wisest and wealthiest king in the land.

Overall, the potential for there to have been regional and long-distance trade in precious metals during the tenth century is great. There is substantial material evidence for the production and exchange of copper and iron and the collection of silver in the eleventh

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of former kings; there is none like thee in this land. Every god abides upon his throne, and enters his abode with glad heart, [since] thou art installed to be [king] ----- thee, building their houses, and multiplying their vessels of gold, silver, and every genuine costly stone, for which his majesty [gave] instructions, in his capacity as Thoth" (ibid., 4.362–363, §730).

<sup>90</sup> Lloyd Weeks, "Metallurgy," in *A Companion to the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East* (ed. Daniel T. Potts (Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 295–316; Stager and King, *Life in Biblical Israel*, 170–171.

<sup>91</sup> Alan Millard collects examples of similar reports of lavish uses of gold among rulers of the ancient world. While his comparisons show that the Bible's reports are similar, they do not situate the depiction in the tenth century ("Does the Bible Exaggerate King Solomon's Golden Wealth," *BAR* 15/3 [1989]: 20–29, 31, 34).

through ninth centuries in the region. Although there are few examples of gold objects, the epigraphic evidence from Egypt provides contemporary evidence of the importance of the metal in royal and religious contexts that parallel the biblical depiction. Despite these positive indications that the exchange of such goods is not out of place for the period, there is no current evidence linking these goods to Jerusalem or to Solomon. Thus the historicity of the biblical accounts cannot be confirmed, but trade in metals during Solomon's time is supported by extrabiblical evidence.

### **Preliminary Conclusions**

Based on the DH, there is evidence of trade in Solomon's day, although earlier sources have been overlaid with material from the eighth, seventh, and sixth centuries. The later layer in the narrative is rooted in the Dtr's day, at the end of the monarchy, when Solomon's history provided a foundation for hope of an expanded kingdom and renewed success from Jerusalem. The horse trade, gold from Ophir, "model letters," and regional conflicts indicate that Solomon's story was recorded and enhanced during the eighth century, a time when Solomon's reputation provided a fitting measure for Hezekiah's accomplishments. Among Solomon's partnerships, the least likely are his relations with South Arabia and trade in horses. In contrast, Solomon's alliances with Egypt and Phoenicia are more likely to have historical grounding. Egypt may have allied with Solomon through marriage, which could have contributed to some military and material benefits. Phoenicia and Solomon may have negotiated an agreement over northern Israel, which could have involved maritime trade. In addition, a good case for contemporary trade in metals and relations with northern Arabia exists based in the archaeological evidence, but we cannot make direct connections to the biblical accounts. Solomon's interactions, even if scaled back

to more plausible of the relations examined here, would have been ambitious in a mid- to late-tenth century context. Perhaps the message we can take from the later, more extravagant, accounts in Solomon's history is that interregional interactions were essential to describing his reign because exchange was a defining characteristic of the period and his career.

### **Solomon's Domestic Economic Development**

Significant attention is also devoted to Solomon's domestic policies. The history details changes that Solomon made in the economic organization of Israelite territory and in his use of the region's resources in order to carry out large-scale building projects. Even though these activities are understood to be domestic, they were an integral part of regional and interregional interactions. Solomon's reorganization of his territory's resources reveals an effort to dominate important trade areas. His construction activities provided necessary infrastructure for his administrative system and control of key cities, as well as physical reminders of dominance to inhabitants and travelers through the region.

### **Solomon's Administrative Districts**

The administrative data in 1 Kings 4:8-19 appear to reveal historical details of Solomon's economic policies. The text consists of a list of administrators (נְצִיבִים) who were stationed throughout Israel and sent provisions to the royal court. The form and condition of the list suggest that the Dtr imported this information from older source material. *If* the source dates to Solomon's reign, then we would have critical information regarding how Solomon organized his kingdom, consolidated resources, and controlled territories, possibly in the interest of becoming competitive in interregional exchange. The text, however, is difficult and cannot be dated with certainty, so understanding the list and

assessing its historical value are challenging. Despite the difficulties, the source material appears to be closely linked to Solomon's administration and reveals strategic use of the land and royal officials for economic and trade gains.

For much of twentieth-century scholarship, this list was touted as the most historically reliable portion in the Solomon narratives. Arguments by Alt, Albright, and Wright laid the foundation for confidence that we had a view into accurate records from Solomon's day.<sup>92</sup> Typically, studies on Solomon's administration followed in this vein, until many scholars moved to a more critical view of the material. Today, scholars hold more reservations about whether the information conveys accurate details of the tenth century but, more often than not, continue to label the list as "early" or "old."<sup>93</sup> The text has retained its status as one of the oldest sources in the Solomon narrative, but scholars are more cautious in their application of the material to historical reconstruction. In the analysis here, we will

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<sup>92</sup> Albrecht Alt, "Israels Gaue Unter Salomo," in *Kleine Schriften Zur Geschichte Des Volkes Israel* (ed. Martin Noth; Munich: Beck, 1953), 2.76–89; W. F. Albright, "The Administrative Divisions of Israel and Judah," *JPOS* 5 (1925): 15–54, esp. 25–26; G. E. Wright, "The Provinces of Solomon," *ErIsr* 8 (Sukenik Memorial Volume; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1967), 58\* – 68\*. These studies were followed by F. M. Cross and G. E. Wright, "The Boundary and Province Lists of the Kingdom of Judah," *JBL* 75 (1956): 202–26; Albrecht Alt, "The Formation of the Israelite State in Palestine," in *Essays on Old Testament History and Religion* (trans. R. A. Wilson; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967); Tryggve N. D. Mettinger, *Solomonic State Officials: A Study of the Civil Government Officials of the Israelite Monarchy* (Coniectanea Biblica Old Testament Series 5; Lund: Gleerup, 1971); Baruch Halpern, "Sectionalism and the Schism," *JBL* 93 (1974): 519–532, esp. 528–531; Eric William Heaton, *Solomon's New Men: The Emergence of Ancient Israel as a National State* (New York: Pica Press, 1975); Yohanan Aharoni, "The Solomonic Districts," *TA* 3 (1976): 5–15; Gösta Werner Ahlström, "Administration and Building Activities in the Davidic-Solomonic Kingdom," in *Royal Administration and National Religion in Ancient Palestine* (SHANE 1; Leiden: Brill, 1982), 27–43.

<sup>93</sup> More recent work includes Nadav Na'aman, *Borders and Districts in Biblical Historiography: Seven Studies in Biblical Geographic Lists* (Jerusalem Biblical Studies 4; Jerusalem: Simor, 1986), 167–201; idem, "Sources and Composition in the History of Solomon," 57–80; idem, "Solomon's District List (1 Kings 4, 7-19) and the Assyrian Province System in Palestine," *UF* 33 (2001): 419–36; Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, 412–419; Lawrence E. Stager, "The Patrimonial Kingdom of Solomon"; Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 174–179. More recent examination of the **לְאֹמְרֵי הַמְּדִינָה** specifically comes from Nili Sacher Fox, *In the Service of the King: Officialdom in Ancient Israel and Judah* (Monographs of the Hebrew Union College 23; Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 2000), 141–149. P. Ash has been the most ardent critic of the list; see his article Paul S. Ash, "Solomon's? District? List," *JSOT* 67 (1995): 67–86.

look at the nature of the text and, with cautious acceptance of an early date, examine what it conveys of exchange during Solomon's reign.

The older source material is easily separated from the surrounding narrative due to editorial seams in the text. A summary introduces the list: "Solomon had twelve officials stationed over all of Israel, and they supported the king and his household, each providing for one month of the year. And these are their names..." (1 Kgs 4:7-8a). The character of the verses is similar to statements elsewhere in the DH describing the extent of the kingdom or the length of a king's reign. The phrase "over all of Israel" (על-כל-ישראל), for example, appears a number of times in 2 Samuel and 1 Kings in summary statements that appear to be the Dtr's.<sup>94</sup> At the end of the list is a general conclusion, "Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand by the sea; they ate and drank and were happy" (1 Kgs 4:20), completing the discussion of domestic matters and returning the reader to the greater narrative of 1 Kings 3-11. The introduction and conclusion that bookend the list stand in contrast to the literary character of the catalogue of officials, which allows us to isolate the source material.

The text of 1 Kgs 4:8-19 is made up of individuals' names followed by their geographic locations but is not in ideal condition. There is very little in the way of narrative explanation, contextualization, or transition from one item to the next. The source has been damaged or the text corrupted. For example, some individuals are listed with a patronym while others are not; compare יהושפט בן-פרווח in verse 17 to בן-דקר in verse 9. The text

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<sup>94</sup> E.g., 2 Sam 5:5; 8:15; 1 Kgs 4:1, 7; 11:42; 12:20; 15:33. There is inconsistency in the use of the phrase to refer either to the northern tribes, to the exclusion of Judah, or to the entirety of the Israelite tribes as a state, which includes Judah. Ash's characterization of "all Israel," presumably כל-ישראל, may be slightly misleading; see Ash, "Solomon's? District? List," 77. There appears to be significance to the longer phrase; consider 2 Sam 5:5, where the narrator states that from Jerusalem David ruled for 33 years "over all of Israel and Judah" (על-כל-ישראל ויהודה). The phrase also appears within dialogue in 1 Sam 11:2, which is likely the Dtr's composition.

may have been inconsistent in identifying the officials, or, if the source was originally consistently formulaic, it was damaged or altered long ago.<sup>95</sup> There is also evidence of additions to the source. In some cases, the geographic notes are more extensive than others.

Compare verses 13 and 14:

13 בן־גבר ברמת גלעד  
 לו חות יאיר בן־מנשה אשר בגלעד  
 לו חבל ארגב אשר בבשן ששים ערים  
 גדלות חומה ובריה נחשת  
 14 אחינדב בן־עדה מחנימה

13 Ben-Geber in Ramoth Gilead:

to him were the villages of Jair ben-Manasseh, which are in Gilead,

to him was region of Argob, which is in Bashan, sixty great cities, walled and barred with copper/bronze.

14 Ahinadab ben-Iddo in Mahanaim.

In verse 13, substantial explanation follows the initial listing of the individual's name and location, but verse 14 is concise. It is more likely that the shorter entry represents the older form and verse 13 has been elaborated upon.<sup>96</sup> There are additional complications when we try to make sense of the overall content. For example, the repetition or confusion between verses 13 and 19—where the individual's name contains “Geber” and the region described is

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<sup>95</sup> There are several arguments for the inconsistency in the list of names. It has been proposed that the historian's source was a damaged document that followed the formula personal name + בן + patronym; see Albright, “The Administrative Divisions of Israel and Judah”; Wright, “The Provinces of Solomon”; Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, 418. Joseph Naveh argues that there is not good reason to demand consistency among the names and that the men were recorded according to their known names (“Nameless People,” *IEJ* 40 [1990]: 108–23). See more recently, Pamela Tamarkin Reis, “Unspeakable Names: Solomon's Tax Collectors,” *ZAW* 120 (2008): 261–66. Reis argues that the source was intentionally altered to condemn the individuals.

<sup>96</sup> Verse 13 is a particularly good example. The description of the villages of Jair and the depiction of Bashan are very similar to Deut 3:1-17 but also incorporate information from other parts of the DH; see Ash, “Solomon's? District? List,” 75–78. Likewise, verse 19 invokes familiar or stock phrases and descriptions (e.g., kings Sihon and Og). Both verses contain later additions to an older record.

Gilead—causes concern and raises more questions: Has the repetition resulted from problems in transmission or textual corruption?<sup>97</sup> Was there a father *and* son (Ben-Geber in verse 13 and Geber ben-Uri in verse 19) governing areas in the Transjordan, or was the office passed from father *to* son? There is also confusion as to the presence or absence of Judah in the list or in the administrative system.<sup>98</sup> Overall, however, there is more evidence to support the conclusion that 1 Kgs 4:8-19 preserves a significant amount of historical data, even if it has changed or was manipulated over time.

There is little doubt that the historian used a source when composing this section of 1 Kings 4. In fact, the many problems in the text bolster arguments that the material comes from an older source. We might expect a source closer to the historian's day to be more cohesive, less corrupt or confused, and we know that the Dtr was capable of much better composition than we have in these verses.<sup>99</sup> The debates now lie in how much older the source was, how it was preserved or transmitted prior to the historian's time, and whether the information can be reliable for history writing today, all of which impact whether or not

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<sup>97</sup> In addition to problems discussed in the previous note, some Greek versions lack "Geber" in verse 19 and read "Gad" for "Gilead"; Greek versions in general read υἱος Ἀδαῖ for גִּבְרֵן אֲדָי (due to common confusion between גִּ and ג). Similarly, there are problems with verse 13, where Greek versions lack the segment describing Jair's villages. Ash argues well for the authority of the MT over the Greek versions for this list; see *ibid.*, 76, note 41.

<sup>98</sup> The Greek adds Judah to the end of verse 19. There are textual and exegetical arguments to support the shorter MT reading (e.g., the final clause may have been a gloss or editorial addition). Na'aman argues for the presence of Judah in the list, claiming that a scribe added the second Gilead district to conceal Solomon's taxation of Judah; see Na'aman, *Borders and Districts*, 176. The Greek addition, however, is more likely an attempt to present a more unified Israel or administrative program and should be viewed as an expansion.

<sup>99</sup> Ash expresses this type of sentiment even in an argument against reliance on the list for historical reconstruction ("Solomon's? District? List," 79–80). That we have received a text without too much editing by the historian seems to be the case. The many textual problems among witnesses are attempts to improve upon a difficult text.

this material should be considered when assessing tenth-century economic or commercial interactions.

Proposals for the source's antiquity range from a point during Solomon's reign, mid-tenth century, to just about any point prior to the Dtr in the late seventh century.<sup>100</sup> Before becoming part of the DH, the source could have been preserved in a pre-Dtr history that chronicled Solomon or among court/administrative records. Despite this range of possibilities, most scholars continue to look to Solomon's reign for the *origin* of the information even if the source preserved in 1 Kings 4 is a later product. For example, Na'aman has "no doubt" about a tenth-century origin for the information in the list.<sup>101</sup> But he also argues that administrative records like this list were part of a corpus used in later periods for scribal training.<sup>102</sup> Ash argues that the material stems from the tenth century but could have been a written source only after writing became standard in the eighth century; prior to that, the information must have been transmitted orally.<sup>103</sup> Halpern argues for a tenth-century or at the latest early ninth-century provenance for most of the material in the

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<sup>100</sup> The latest possible date is straightforward: the composition of the DH. This date is unlikely and not popular even among scholars who argue against the historical value of the list. Most of the material in 1 Kgs 4:8-19 does not contain language characteristic of the Dtr, and as I commented above, the verses are framed by introduction and summary that are distinct from the list. The list must be significantly older than the Dtr.

<sup>101</sup> Na'aman, *Borders and Districts*, 176.

<sup>102</sup> Na'aman identifies this corpus with the "Book of Solomon's Acts" from 1 Kgs 11:41 ("Sources and Composition in the History of Solomon," 77).

<sup>103</sup> Ash, "Solomon's? District? List," 84-85. In contrast to Albright and others' arguments that the source was a tenth-century written document, Ash concludes that based on the scant written remains available from the tenth century, we must understand this source (*if* it contains material from Solomon's day) to have been transmitted orally at least in earlier stages (*ibid.*, 71-72). He makes important observations about scholars' assumptions and the list's problems, but his arguments for oral transmission are not as convincing. For additional comments on Ash, see Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, 220, note 23; Na'aman, "Sources and Composition in the History of Solomon," 60, note 6.

list, which, he claims, was incorporated into a history composed during Hezekiah's reign.<sup>104</sup> Just as in these examples, the general trend in scholarship situates the origins of the list's core content in the late tenth century or soon after, with the acknowledgement that some manipulation occurred over time.

The problems notwithstanding, the administrative list seems to have roots in the tenth century and is among the oldest sources on Solomon that we can discern in the DH. This conclusion is based on the condition of the source, some continuity between individuals in the narrative of David's reign and officials in the list, and on the Dtr's assertion that the list represents an administrative policy under Solomon.<sup>105</sup> Additionally, the list does not obviously (or exclusively) describe any other period in Israel's history.<sup>106</sup> Even though the list was not perfectly preserved and was enhanced in certain verses, the Dtr (or other editors or revisers) was not overly liberal in smoothing out these issues. If he had been, there should be far fewer problems with the list. Although the date cannot be confidently narrowed to a particular decade, there is not strong enough evidence to remove the material entirely from a Solomonic origin. No better alternative has been convincingly argued. The list can—and

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<sup>104</sup> Halpern, "Sectionalism and the Schism," 529–530; idem, *David's Secret Demons*, 412–417.

<sup>105</sup> For the continuity between David's and Solomon's administrations, see Halpern, "Sectionalism and the Schism," 529–530; idem, *David's Secret Demons*, 412–417. That the list was connected to Solomon is not typically questioned, but Ash notes that nowhere in the older source (i.e., setting aside editorial framing/commentary) does the list claim to be from Solomon's reign (Ash, "Solomon's? District? List").

<sup>106</sup> Contra Na'aman, "Solomon's District List." Na'aman argues that the text reflects a combination of an older list of names supplemented by late eighth-century political geographies. Na'aman's arguments suggest strongly that the influence of the Assyrian presence on Israelite/Judahite historians cannot be ignored; however, his assertions require unnecessary historical acrobatics. He does not address an important question: why should the Assyrian-era organization that recognized Dor or Megiddo, for example, as logical administrative units trump any other era's tendency to do the same? While he acknowledges that the Assyrians largely continued some of the organizational structures of Israel and Judah, he does not convincingly argue that the list in 1 Kgs 4:7-19 *must* be situated in the Assyrian administration.

does—contribute to understanding the involvement of Israel in interregional exchange in the late tenth century.



Figure 3:2: “The Solomonic commissioner’s districts” (Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 175)

The geographic organization of Solomon’s administrative system aimed to maximize the economic contribution from the districts (see Figure 3:2). Typically, the notes in 1 Kgs 4:7 and 5:7, which are separate from the older source in 1 Kgs 4:8-19, lead interpreters to

the understanding that the district officials, each assigned one month of the year, provided food (וְכֹל־כֹּלֵי) collected from each region. The list itself, however, does not specify that food provisions *per se* were the concern of the officials, and there is good reason to believe that the districts contributed in broader terms.<sup>107</sup> Based on the land's potential, certain districts were better equipped than others to provide agricultural produce to the crown. For example, the first district, Har Ephraim, was the agricultural heartland of Israel, which easily could have supplied foodstuffs. Similarly Bashan and Gilead were prime grazing lands as well as agricultural resources. Other districts, however, may have been better off supplying different types of provisions. Several areas appear to be arranged around alternate assets. For example, the third district (central coast), fourth (Naphath-Dor), and fifth (including the Jezreel and Jordan Valleys) appear best suited to exploit transit routes and port facilities.

The fifth district is an illustrative example of how such areas could be linked to trade resources. The district stretched from Megiddo to Beth-shean and then south some distance

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<sup>107</sup> There is debate about whether each district could have supplied for the crown in the way described in 1 Kgs 4:7 and 5:7 and if וְכֹל־כֹּלֵי should be taken to mean (food) provisions from all districts in like kind. Wright sees the districts as comparable in their resources, though others disagree; see, for example, Na'aman, *Borders and Districts*, 170. Aharoni argues against the claim that there was an effort to create districts of equal area and "economic potential," but he also argues this point in order to maintain that Solomon's districts were arranged "to preserve the tribal unit" (Aharoni, *Land of the Bible*, 315–316). In the interpretation argued here, allegiance to the tribal boundaries is not necessary. There are extra-biblical examples demonstrating that similar administrative districts were in place in the ancient Near East. Na'aman uses ninth-century Assyrian texts, which show that during its expansion, Assyria converted annexed kingdoms into administrative units. There would not have been consistency in size, resources, or contribution of each district through this kind of process (Na'aman, *Borders and Districts*, 170–171). Na'aman also notes that these practices could have contributed in ways other than taxes; the districts could have provided other needs like military or temple service (which is the position Aharoni favors) (Aharoni, *Land of the Bible*, 316; Na'aman, *Borders and Districts*, 172). Another alternative is that the list describes not administrative districts but royal estates. In this view, the officials would have served as custodians of these properties; see Miller and Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* (2nd ed.), 212–213. Regardless of the goods, income, or service provided or whether provisions came once a year or services were provided throughout a year, the list attests to a system of oversight throughout the land that appears to have supported the crown's interests. Actually, the many proposals are not all exclusive. The officials' responsibilities could have involved a combination of the options presented here: collecting local resources from the district, negotiating between state and local authority, maintaining royal properties, and monitoring passage and exchange through the lands.

along the Jordan Valley. The description of this area requires considerable more detail than the others due to its odd shape. Surprisingly, it excludes the agricultural resources to the south and north. These were assigned to other districts (to the first and tenth, respectively). The delimitation follows two major valley systems, the Jordan and Jezreel. They are the natural resource of the region and determine the extent of the district in the same way that other resources (e.g., pasture or agricultural lands) dictate the orientation of neighboring districts. The key attribute of the fifth district is the transportation corridor formed by the valleys that connected distinct natural and cultural areas. These valley systems served the region in this way long before and after Solomon's day.<sup>108</sup> Unifying them into one administrative unit was the most strategic approach to managing (and exploiting) already existing activities. Thus, the fifth district served as a channel that facilitated longer-distance exchange, especially traffic passing through Israel, arriving from the Mediterranean and Transjordanian lands.

It is likely that the main responsibility of administrators of the fifth, fourth, third districts would have been oversight of port and highway traffic. It is useful to ask: if these responsibilities were not the task of the officials, why would the districts take this particular form? Or in other words, if *food* provisions were the goal of the reorganization of land, Solomon's districts were not strategically assigned. From this perspective, the orientation of the districts reveals the philosophy behind them: they were organized in the interest of exploiting the land, whether the resources were domestic products or the landscape's potential in long-distance transportation and exchange. There is no doubt that the economic

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<sup>108</sup> See also Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 176.

advantage from these different types of resources would provide for the crown, thought not in the way that the districts are typically understood.

Examination of the district officials may illuminate further how each contributed to a centralized economic strategy. The officials' title, נצ'יב/נצב, suggests someone "stationed" in a place or over a thing. It is derived from the same root as the terms used to describe the Philistine installations during the time of Saul, but in this source, the position is generally understood to be something like a tax official (appropriate whether collecting produce or other goods/income) who would gather resources from his district and send them to Jerusalem. While this job description appears sound, the nature of the districts indicates that these men were not simply collecting taxes. They must have acted as monitors of each territory, overseeing the resources that were most valuable to Solomon's operation.

The corporate nature implied by the list, that is, Israelite officers managing fellow countrymen, belies the complications that would have existed "on the ground" in the tenth century. A broad overview of the DH leads us to believe that there was a distinct entity called Israel active for centuries by the time of Solomon. Closer inspection, however, demonstrates that Israel's transition to a centralized state was recent by Solomon's reign, if fully accomplished even then. Based on historical, biblical, and archaeological evidence, there was tension between Israelite and others (e.g., Philistine, Canaanite, etc.), between local or tribal and centralized, and between urban and rural throughout the Late Bronze, Iron I, and Iron IIA periods.<sup>109</sup> If Solomon indeed united these lands into one system, we have to

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<sup>109</sup> Some of these tensions have always been apparent through the biblical texts. Other evidence and scholarship, especially from archaeology and through anthropological interpretation, are making clearer how tensions may have persisted and/or shifted despite ethnographic labels. Faust's recent treatment clarifies further the tensions that developed from political competition, ethnic difference, and economic variety (*Israel's Ethnogenesis*). The more sophisticated our approach to these problems, the better we can approximate the

keep in mind the context that for at least a century prior, tribal or local autonomy allowed for management of resources and exchange. Solomon's districting would have changed this practice and imposed unwelcome policies on the traditional holders of authority or local elites, some of whom may have been Israelite while others undoubtedly were not.<sup>110</sup>

Solomon's district officers would have been saddled with the challenge of negotiating one or more of these tensions.<sup>111</sup>

The examples of the fourth (Naphath-Dor) and eighth (Naphtali) districts provide an opportunity to explore factors at play in the districts and among their officials. These two stand out, in part, because of the notices that the officials were each married to a daughter of Solomon: Ben-Abinadab, overseeing the region of Dor, married Taphath (1 Kgs 4:11), and Ahimaaz of Naphtali married Basemath (1 Kgs 4:15). The inclusion of such information—that is, regarding daughters' lives—is unusual in both the list and the Solomon narrative. One might suggest that the marriage notices were expansions, as is the case for some of the other notes in the list (e.g., 1 Kgs 4:13 quoted above), but it is difficult to detect a reason for later addition of their names. We do not otherwise hear of any of Solomon's children (male or female) in 1 Kings 3-11, and these daughters do not reappear in the DH.<sup>112</sup> The inclusion

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complexity of the district official's job; if a district was Canaanite, the official (who may or may not have been Israelite) would have had to negotiate between Jerusalem's authority and local ways.

<sup>110</sup> Such figures align well with the individuals attested to in extrabiblical evidence; see Chapter Five.

<sup>111</sup> Halpern, *The Constitution of the Monarchy in Israel*, 245–249.

<sup>112</sup> We learn of descendants only when the matter of succession is raised in 1 Kings 12. As for Solomon's daughters, the name Taphath (“abundant”?) is otherwise unattested in the Bible; the name Basemath (“spice/perfume”) occurs elsewhere only in the case of Esau's wife (Gen 26:34; 36:1-17). These figures receive little attention from scholars other than brief discussion that their marriages must have been political in nature and useful in securing relationships between Jerusalem and the more distant districts; see, for example, Diana V. Edelman, “Taphath,” in *Women in Scripture: A Dictionary of Named and Unnamed Women in the Hebrew Bible, the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books, and the New Testament* (ed. Carol Meyers; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2001), 165; Carol Meyers, “Basemath 2,” in *Women in Scripture: A Dictionary of*

of their names does not resemble the more obvious expansions in verses 13 or 19, which use stock characterizations known from other texts. Further, the references to Solomon's daughters do not echo any other descriptions of women in the narrative, so they do not fit with the narrative's use of female figures like the prostitute-mothers (1 Kings 3) or Solomon's pagan wives (1 Kings 11). In other words, the daughters' appearance does not contribute to the aggrandizement or condemnation of Solomon. The reason for their inclusion must be because they were of importance to the core purpose of the text (i.e., regarding administrative and economic matters), and it is likely that their place in the list is relatively early.

The marriages linking Solomon's daughters to the district officials are generally, and with good reason, assumed to be political or diplomatic. The districts had the potential to connect Israelite territory to more distant (or non-allied) regions, especially for economic benefit. Through these two districts, Israel had access to Mediterranean, Phoenician, Aramean, and Mesopotamian interaction networks. At the same time, the fourth and eighth districts lay far from the capital and had the potential to be more closely allied to northern neighbors than to Solomon's southern headquarters. Both districts may have had more in common culturally with Phoenicia and Aram than Jerusalem, a problem particularly evident in the case of Dor, which was more closely linked culturally and politically to the Sea Peoples and their descendants than those typically thought of as Israelite.<sup>113</sup> Additionally, studies of border and port territories with economic resources suggest that these locales tend

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*Named and Unnamed Women in the Hebrew Bible, the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books, and the New Testament* (ed. Carol Meyers; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2001), 57.

<sup>113</sup> Such is the impression given in the account of Wenamun, which leads us to believe that Dor was an independent principate in the eleventh-tenth centuries (see Chapter Five).

to act independently or become targets or bargaining chips for larger powers.<sup>114</sup> These very conditions are described for both Dor and Naphtali in subsequent periods (see 1 Kings 15 and 20). It is useful to consider these districts more as peer polities within the southern Levant than as fellow Israelite territories. Solomon would have had strong incentives to tie these regions to him through diplomatic marriage. Establishing his daughters in each territory tethered the districts to Jerusalem and may have assuaged tendencies toward independence or loyalty to nearby powers (e.g., Damascus or Tyre), thus securing economic gains from these trade-friendly regions for Solomon's holdings.

Whether it was to centralize Israel's domestic products or to capitalize on goods that were transported through Israel, Solomon's districts reveal an economically-oriented approach to administering a territory. Underlying this policy may have been concerns for negotiating among ancestral claims to land, competition for loyalty, and small-scale diplomatic arrangements within the southern Levant. Attempts to make any one explanation (especially that each area supplied equal agricultural provisions) account for all of the districts have not resulted in fully satisfying answers for the precise division and organization of all of the territories. Admittedly only a selection is examined here; however, when the economic advantages of individual districts are the focus, without requiring each to make the same contribution to the center, we see how the divisions of land can be

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<sup>114</sup> Explorations in the mid-twentieth century under the influence of Karl Polanyi resulted in supporting evidence across cultures and disciplines. Examples include Revere, "No Man's Coast": Ports of Trade in the Eastern Mediterranean"; Arnold, "A Port of Trade: Whydah on the Guinea Coast"; Benet, "Separation of Trade and Market: Great Market of Whydah"; as well as Karl Polanyi, "Ports of Trade in Early Societies." While Polanyi's theories continue to promote debate, some of the foundations from the earlier studies remain influential; for example, see Joanna Luke, *Ports of Trade, Al Mina and Geometric Greek Pottery in the Levant* (BAR International Series 1100; Oxford: Publishers of the British Archaeological Reports, 2003).

explained according to regional variation and the discrete attributes that any one territory had to offer.

### **Solomon's *Mas* and Building Projects**

In addition to his administrative reorganization, Solomon is reported to have ordered large-scale fortification and building projects during his reign. These projects are related to interregional trade in a number of ways. The constructions, as described in the DH, required the import of resources and artisans from outside of Israel, most notably from Phoenicia. The resulting fortifications would have improved Israel's ability to control trade along highways or routes. In addition, Solomon's transformation of Jerusalem would have elevated the city's status to an economic and diplomatic center, thus increasing Jerusalem's ability to compete in the growing trade of the time. This section will evaluate the policies that supported Solomon's construction efforts and the possible impact they had on Israel's role in long-distance exchange.

Solomon's construction projects are described throughout 1 Kings 5-10. The majority of the material is devoted to the temple and palace complexes.<sup>115</sup> The DH also records projects outside of Jerusalem and the policies necessary for the completion of the work.<sup>116</sup> The foundation for all of the projects is the conscripted labor policy, the *mas* (מַס), which is referenced several times in the Solomon narrative (1 Kgs 4:6; 5:27-32; 9:15-25).<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> 1 Kgs 5:16-6:38; 7:1-51; 9:10-25; 10:12, 16-20.

<sup>116</sup> 1 Kgs 5:16-32; 7:13-14; 7:45-46; 9:10-28.

<sup>117</sup> The DH discusses the *mas* before and after the temple and palace descriptions in 1 Kings 6-7. The narrative's structure in this respect is intentionally symmetrical. The *mas* and the exchanges with Hiram were both necessary for Solomon to undertake his building campaign, and both of them were incorporated into the symmetrical structure. They are introduced in 1 Kings 4-5 and revisited in 1 Kings 9. The repetition should be interpreted as a stylistic choice in the construction of the narrative as a result of having a variety of views of the same or related events rather than repeated actions or a chronologically accurate depiction of the events.

The descriptions of the *mas* differ, revealing both source material and the Dtr's editorial work and commentary.

The first note on the *mas*, 1 Kgs 4:6, appears in the list of Solomon's chief officers and states that Adoniram oversaw the *mas*. This reference does not describe what the *mas* was or why or how it was used, but it may be suggestive of the policy's antiquity.<sup>118</sup> The list of high officials (1 Kgs 4:2-6), like the list of administrators discussed above, is thought to be based on relatively old records, possibly from sources close to Solomon's administration. Solomon's *mas* official, Adoniram (also Adoram), is noted to have governed over the *mas* also under David (2 Sam 20:24) and Rehoboam (1 Kgs 12:18). These references do not appear to be editorial insertions to link the episodes, suggesting that they too stem from older sources.

The additional discussions are situated in narrative sections in 1 Kings 5 and 9. Toward the end of 1 Kings 5, the *mas* pericope follows the dialogue between Hiram and Solomon that dramatized their cooperative alliance and treaty agreement. After the dialogue, the narrative turns to the details of the *mas*. According to this account, Solomon drew from all of Israel to put together his labor force (מַס מְבַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל), which Adoniram oversaw. The laborers numbered thirty thousand and would work in Lebanon in shifts (1 Kgs 5:27-28). There were additional porters, stonemasons, as well as specialized craftsmen from Israel, Lebanon, and Byblos (1 Kgs 5:29-32). After the detailed discussion of the palace and temple (1 Kings 6-7) and another exchange between Hiram and Solomon (1 Kgs 9:10-14), the DH notes explicitly that the *mas* contributed to the main Jerusalem constructions as well

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<sup>118</sup> *Mas* policies (Akkadian *massu*) are known from other cultures in the ancient Near East, from the Old Babylonian and Amarna Periods through the Iron Age; see Anson F. Rainey, "Compulsory Labour Gangs in Ancient Israel," *IEJ* 20 (1970): 191–202.

as the Millo, Jerusalem's wall, Hazor, Megiddo, Gezer, Lower Beth-Horon, Baalath, Tamar, and other royal properties (1 Kgs 9:15-19). The DH then moves to yet another account of the *mas* which states that it was composed of descendants of the pre-Israelite nations, *not* Israelites. Instead the Israelites filled other positions, those not linked to servitude (1 Kgs 9:20-23).

The critical distinctions among these accounts lie in the make-up of the *mas* and slight but significant differences in terminology. In the first part of the narrative, Solomon's forced labor is referred to simply as מַס and הַמַּס (1 Kgs 4:6 and 3 occurrences in 1 Kgs 5:27-28). In 1 Kings 9, it is first introduced as דְּבַר־הַמַּס (9:15) and later discussed as מַס־עֶבֶד (9:21). While any one author may use a variety of terms, the differences suggest that we are looking at multiple accounts. Examination of the nature of the *mas* results in the same conclusion. Earlier in the history, the Israelites are the labor force (1 Kgs 5:27). Later, the DH states emphatically, it is not the Israelites but remaining pre-Israelites who made up the *mas* (9:20). The Israelites, according to this version and in contrast to the previous, were officers and overseers (1 Kgs 9:20-23). These discrepancies point not only to more than one source but also to distinct disagreements about the workforce.

The difference of opinion helps to identify certain influences in these accounts. The last depiction states that the laborers, who were descendants of the unconquered nations, had remained in conscripted labor “until this day”: ויעלם שלמה למס־עבד):

עד היום הזה; 1 Kgs 9:20-21). These verses expose the Dtr's involvement in several ways. The list of nations in 1 Kgs 9:20 is similar to other iterations in the DH.<sup>119</sup> The phrase “until this day” in 1 Kgs 9:21 is a hallmark of Dtr commentary, and the discussion of forced labor is reminiscent of other Deuteronomistic passages.<sup>120</sup> The closest parallel in terminology and content is Josh 16:10: “But they did not drive out the Canaanites who dwelt in Gezer, so the Canaanites dwell in the midst of Ephraim to this day, but they are forced labor” (עד־היום ועבדוּהוּ לְמַסְעַבְדָּם). Very similar language occurs in Deut 20:11 in describing how to treat the inhabitants of a city that surrenders peaceably during war: “...then all who are found in it shall be your forced labor and shall serve you” (יהיו לך למס ועבדוך). Based on these parallels and characteristic phrasing, we can conclude that the depiction in 1 Kgs 9:20-21 was composed or thoroughly edited by the Dtr.

Immediately following the Dtr's description of the *mas*, which removed the Israelites from the labor force and promoted them to the role of overseers, the narrative returns to the Jerusalem constructions. We are told that Solomon built the altar and worshipped at it three times a year, then the narrative concludes with the note that Solomon finished the construction of the temple (1 Kgs 9:25). It is common to view this material as an apologetic account seeking to defend Solomon against less flattering views (e.g., the *mas* in 1 Kings 5 or pagan worship in 1 Kings 11). This version is indeed a defense, but it may be less

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<sup>119</sup> The “remaining peoples” in this verse consist of Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. The LXX includes Canaanites and Girgashites. In other words, it is the (seven) mighty nations often invoked in Deuteronomistic tradition (see Deut 7:1). The list is not exclusive to the Dtr but is frequent in texts associated with him: Deut 7:1; 20:17; Josh 3:10; 12:8; 24:11; and Judg 3:5. Very similar lists also occur in Exodus: Exod 3:8, 17; and 23:23. The same list occurs in 2 Chr 8:7 in the parallel to 1 Kgs 9:20.

<sup>120</sup> Geoghegan, “Until This Day,” 214–215.

concerned with Solomon and more with Jerusalem's character. The Dtr's shaping of this version serves his theological positions concerning Jerusalem as YHWH's residence, so that Solomon's *mas* policy was aligned to Deuteronomic instruction and the Dtr's version of history.<sup>121</sup>

The parallels noted above (e.g., Deut 20:10-11; Josh 16:10), along with Deut 16:16 and Josh 9:27, shed light on the issue. Using this evidence base, J. Geoghegan has identified a connection between the Dtr and depictions of a *מס־עֵבֶר*.<sup>122</sup> Geoghegan argues that the Dtr, informed by Deut 20:10-11, accounts for non-Israelite service at the temple during his own day through historical precedents like Josh 9:27, where Gibeonites provided services for YHWH worship “until this day, at the place that he will choose.” The relationship between Deuteronomy and the examples that the Dtr creates justifies the involvement of non-Israelites in what appear otherwise to be Israel-exclusive locations and activities. We see yet another allusion to Deuteronomic law in 1 Kgs 9:25 with Solomon's worship at YHWH's altar, which conforms to the instruction for all males to appear “before YHWH at the place that he will choose” for the three major festivals (Deut 16:16). This version of the *mas* legitimizes the origins of the Jerusalem cult center according to Deuteronomistic theology and practices observed “until this day.” The Dtr interjects the final word concerning Solomon's policy and, in doing so, obscures the historical record by prioritizing his ideological revision.

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<sup>121</sup> The reformed *mas* and comment regarding Solomon's worship does establish a Solomon who acts in accord with Deuteronomic instruction for part of his reign, only to act against it toward the end, thus setting up a literary rise and fall of Solomon as well as supportive evidence for the Deuteronomistic explanation for the division of the monarchy. There is no doubt that these elements are deliberate, but they would lose their explanatory power without the theological foundations that rely on the sanctity of Jerusalem's holiest residence, the temple.

<sup>122</sup> Geoghegan, “Until This Day,” 214–215.

In contrast, in 1 Kgs 5:27, there is no hint of apology for the use of Israelite labor. It is nearly a reverse of 1 Kgs 9:20-23; the Israelites are the *mas*, and the higher-level artisans come from both Israel and Phoenicia. This is a dramatically different account and can be interpreted in two ways. It either assumes the inevitability of conscripted labor for subjects of a kingdom or attempts to expose Solomon's treatment of the ancient Israelites. The former appears more likely. Regarding the latter, there is not an overtly negative presentation of the policy to suggest that the account was an objection to Solomon's activities.<sup>123</sup> In fact, conscripted labor was not an unusual form of tax.<sup>124</sup> Though it may have been undesirable—as taxes often are—it does not seem to be out of the ordinary or even exorbitant for an Iron Age monarch, and the depiction in 1 Kgs 5:27 reflects this perspective.

One clue to the historical value of 1 Kgs 5:27-32 is that the Dtr-preferred account in 1 Kgs 9:20-23 is undoubtedly speaking against some historical memory of an Israelite *mas*. The version in 1 Kgs 5:27-32 may not have been the only source of such information, but because the Dtr edited the Solomon narrative, we can be confident that he was familiar with

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<sup>123</sup> There is significant debate on this matter, and many argue that there is a subtle but strong criticism of Solomon in these verses. See Sweeney, "The Critique of Solomon in the Josianic Edition of the Deuteronomistic History"; David A. Glatt-Gilad, "The Deuteronomistic Critique of Solomon: A Response to Marvin A. Sweeney," *JBL* 116 (1997): 700–703. The view presented here agrees with Glatt-Gilad and is contra Sweeney. Solomon's policies were very likely viewed negatively at some points in history, but the earlier material in 1 Kings 5 does not reveal such criticism. For arguments in favor of critical depictions at various times see Jerome T. Walsh, "The Characterization of Solomon in First Kings 1-5," *CBQ* 57 (1995): 471–93; J. Daniel Hays, "Has the Narrator Come to Praise Solomon or to Bury Him? Narrative Subtlety in 1 Kings 1-11," *JSOT* 28/2 (2003): 149–74. Oblath suggests a different type of veiled criticism by arguing that the Exodus story was based on Jeroboam's heroic secession from Solomon and Rehoboam ("Of Pharaohs and Kings"). He argues that the Moses character was based on Jeroboam and the Exodus Pharaoh based on Solomon, with a key parallel being the *mas* and its use to build store cities (הַמִּסְכְּנוֹת [עַרְיָה]; Exod 1:11; 1 Kgs 9:19). If Oblath's theory is correct, the Exodus story is yet another (though possibly not fully independent) source regarding Solomon's *mas*. While intriguing, it is not strong enough to be relied on for a history of Solomon or the tenth century.

<sup>124</sup> R. A. Oded, "Taxation in Biblical Israel," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 12/2 (1984): 162–182; esp. 165–167.

the text and thus the claims it makes. First Kings 5:27-32 must antedate the Dtr. Just how much is very difficult to determine. The account follows the Hiram and Solomon dialogue of 1 Kgs 5:15-25. And while the *mas* account is not cut from the same cloth as the correspondence, it may come from a pre-Dtr history.<sup>125</sup> The account is preferable to 1 Kgs 9:20-23 as a historical source, as it does not obviously aggrandize or disparage Solomon or conform to Deuteronomic ideals. Without obvious biases, it is better for our historical reconstruction: Solomon used Israelite labor for his projects, and he was well known for this behavior in periods of Israelite history writing.

The last reference to consider is 1 Kings 9:15-19. This one is silent on the makeup of the workforce but fills in where the others leave off by providing details on which constructions were created through the *mas*. It has some similarities to 1 Kings 4:8-19; it is brief and annalistic and exhibits evidence of supplementation to an older, original source. Expansions are apparent in 1 Kgs 9:16, where Gezer receives unusual attention compared to the other sites, or in 1 Kgs 9:19, where the narrator broadens the scope of the projects to include grander claims (e.g., "...and whatever Solomon desired to build, in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, or in all of his dominion"). The older core of this material appears to be the list of projects that possibly included Jerusalem, Hazor, Megiddo, Gezer, Lower Beth-Horon (and Upper Beth-Horon<sup>126</sup>), Baalath, and Tamar.<sup>127</sup> There is Deuteronomistic material in the

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<sup>125</sup> There is evidence of some editorial activity that relates the *mas* account to 1 Kgs 4:1-6 (compare to 1 Kgs 5:28, 30), but it is not obviously Deuteronomistic in character. While there is evidence of Deuteronomistic editing in portions of the correspondence, there is no such evidence in 1 Kgs 5:27 where the composition of the *mas* is stated.

<sup>126</sup> Included in the parallel list in 2 Chr 8:5; see Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 166.

<sup>127</sup> The debates pertaining to this list and its relationship to archaeological sites and strata are dynamic, in no small part because of the chronological debates discussed in Chapter One. There is good reason to be careful with any of the cities in the list. The importance of Jerusalem, for example, would attract later manipulation. It

surrounding narrative (especially evident in 1 Kgs 9:1-9 and in 1 Kgs 9:20-25), but the verses 1 Kgs 9:15, 17-18 do not exhibit language characteristic of the Dtr.<sup>128</sup> These verses can be treated in the same way as the administrative districts list. They antedate the Dtr and were incorporated into the history by him or were retained as part of an earlier history of Solomon. The reliability of the list is difficult to assess based on the biblical text alone, but it can function as a starting place when considering the impact of the construction projects.

As a result of these evaluations, we can state some conclusions before applying the material to questions of tenth-century trade. Regarding the *mas*, the DH contains four separate accounts in the Solomon narrative. Among these four, all agree that there was some kind of *mas* policy. Those with potential to be the oldest are 1 Kgs 4:6 and 9:15, 17-18. The account in 1 Kgs 9:20-23 is the most recent and was thoroughly shaped, if not composed, by the Dtr. The account in 1 Kgs 5:27-28, though not likely to be a tenth-century report, presents the more reliable account of the policy, that is, that Solomon used conscription of the Israelites for his building campaigns, which might be reconstructed based on 1 Kgs 9:15, 17-18.

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is safest to say that there were likely some Jerusalem constructions at the core of the tradition of Solomon's building campaign (see Chapter Four). The list should also be considered a composite, even in its earliest form as a historical document; see Fritz, *1 and 2 Kings*, 108–109; Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 165–168; William M. Schniedewind, "Excavating the Text of 1 Kings 9: In Search of the Gates of Solomon," in *Historical Biblical Archaeology and the Future: The New Pragmatism* (ed. Thomas E. Levy; London; Oakville, Conn.: Equinox Pub. Ltd., 2010), 241–49. The significance of the locations is discussed below.

<sup>128</sup> The Dtr or another historian/redactor would have been responsible for the introductory וְזֶה דְּבַר־הַמָּס. There are similar constructions in Deut 15:2, regarding the Sabbath year and release of debts, and in Deut 19:4, regarding cities of refuge. The parallels are not necessarily suggestive of Dtr composition; rather, the form indicates that the material was incorporated from a separate (older) source into the history.



**Figure 3:3: Solomon's fortifications**  
(satellite image © Google earth 2015)

We may now entertain the topic of the constructions themselves. The fortifications were situated on known roads and strategic crossroads (Figure 3:3). They would have allowed for defense as well as control over the movement of goods, within an Israelite state and across its borders.<sup>129</sup> All sites were arguably important for a growing kingdom, especially in relation to interregional affairs. Hazor would have negotiated the north and east and neighbors such as Aram. Megiddo guarded the a critical point in the Via Maris and entry to the Jezreel Valley from the West. Gezer, Baalath, and Lower (and Upper?) Beth-Horon would have guarded passage between the west and Jerusalem, while Tamar would have

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<sup>129</sup> The correlation (or dismissal of) the list of fortifications to archaeological remains has been a heated topic for decades. The discussion here does not seek to determine if known remains of fortifications can in fact be *the* Solomonic fortifications. Instead, the focus here is on the significance in the reported locations in relation to exchange relations. Most of these places are known. The less certain are the sites of Baalath and Tamar. Baalath has not yet been identified; Fritz proposes either Qatre or el-Muḡar, “probably a fortified outpost against the Philistine cities of the southern coastal plain” (Fritz, *1 and 2 Kings*, 111). The site of Tamar may be identified with En Haseva (Rudolf Cohen and Yigal Yisrael, “The Excavations of ‘Ein Hazeva, Israelite and Roman Tamar,” *Qadmoniot* 112 [1996]: 78–92).

secured movement in relation to the Arabah. If there had been construction activity to this extent in the tenth century, it would have made a clear statement in Israel and in the region that Solomon was sovereign over these important locations and, as Halpern has noted, “precluded the local Israelites from taking advantage of these strategic positions for commerce.”<sup>130</sup> Construction projects like the ones described in 1 Kings 9:15, 17-18 would have been necessary steps in asserting Solomon’s and Jerusalem’s authority to Israelites, to regional inhabitants, to neighboring kings and states, and in entering into long-distance exchange beyond the southern Levant’s boundaries. The greatest problem in assessing the historical value of these fortifications is, of course, the archaeological material. However, even without connecting the list to any particular material remains, we can conclude that there was a strong tradition linking a *mas* policy to strategic fortifications, and *if* a historical correlation to any of the locations cited by the text can be demonstrated, it is fairly certain that the site or sites were influential in interregional affairs.

### **Preliminary Conclusions**

Even from those who are skeptical that there was an extensive written record from Solomon’s day that made its way to the seventh or sixth century, there is acknowledgement that there may be a historical basis in references like the districts list (1 Kgs 4:9-18), the constructions list (1 Kgs 9:15, 17-18), or accounts of Solomon’s *mas* policy (e.g., 1 Kgs 5:27-28). We have sufficient evidence through the variety in the DH’s sources to support the claim that Solomon employed domestic policies that would have improved Israel’s infrastructure and administrative strength to the advantage of the centralized authority. Solomon likely used a workforce (*mas*, overseers, and administrators) made up of Israelites

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<sup>130</sup> Halpern, *David’s Secret Demons*, 406.

and non-Israelites (though *not* in the sense of 1 Kgs 9:20-21) in order to build a capital city and tie together relatively independent lands. His division and organization of his territory focused on consolidating the strengths of each region, creating one polity able to compete with other emerging states and exchange systems.

### **Chapter Conclusions**

Portions of Solomon's story are larger than life. It is apparent that the ancient authors who wrote about him attempted to convey his successes according to the standards of their own times. For example, an eighth-century historian created Solomon the horse trader, the Dtr crafted the worldly Solomon who was distracted from YHWH, and an even later writer added enhanced the international reach of Solomon's trade connections. Nevertheless, it is also apparent that information from even earlier times has been retained in the source material. The later contributions complicate, but do not negate, the value of this earlier information.

My examination of 1 Kings 3-11 indicates that some of the history can be included in a reconstruction of interregional interactions for the second half of the tenth century. The most promising information from this history includes diplomatic (as well as some tense) relations with Egypt and Phoenicia, state-wide organization that monitored exchange activities within and through Solomon's territory, another system that required labor for construction projects, and geographic information related to the districts and fortifications.

The most suggestive evidence in favor of Solomon's involvement in interregional interactions comes from descriptions of Solomon's management of his own territory. The organization of his districts implies a concern for ports and main transportation corridors, particularly those of the Mediterranean coast, Jezreel Valley, and Jordan Valley. The

locations of his fortifications imply there was a strategy in place to monitor traffic on key roads and at entry points to the region. In addition, Solomon's decision to strengthen his connection to the northern districts through marriage hints at the possibility that relations with some of the officials may have resembled peer interactions more than the biblical history lets on.

Regarding long-distance activity, exchange networks, especially those related to metallurgy, did exist during the time of Solomon, but a direct link to the monarch is not currently possible. Of the events described in the history, relations with Phoenicia and Egypt are the most likely to have been rooted in historical events. Underneath the narrative of diplomatic correspondence between Solomon and Hiram lies an event that determined control of territory in the north in exchange for Phoenician assistance in Solomon's building projects. Solomon's relationship to Egypt may very well have been formalized through a diplomatic marriage, and Egyptian influence was evident in the architectural character of Jerusalem's royal complex. At the same time, political security in either state was fleeting, and relations with Egypt would have varied, which the campaign of Shoshenq illustrates well. In sum, even though substantial portions of Solomon's history cannot be related to tenth-century events with confidence, significant accounts are more likely to have their origins close to his reign. From these sources, we are able to propose a number of exchange-related interests and policies, which will figure into the comprehensive discussion at the end of this study.

## CHAPTER FOUR: THE SPECIAL CASE OF JERUSALEM—A DISCUSSION

Jerusalem is at the crux of the biblical claims for a sophisticated polity that engaged in interregional interactions and exchange. According to the biblical narratives, the pre-Israelite town Jebus was well-established in the early Iron Age. The location did not play an obvious role in Saul's activities, but David's forceful acquisition of the site begs the question of its regional importance (even if only in the narrative's worldview). Solomon's building campaigns and bureaucratic system required a sophisticated capital city, and the Bible credits him with the construction of the city's administrative infrastructure, a royal complex, and of course the first temple to YHWH.

Despite the prominence of the city in the biblical narratives, I have intentionally set aside the topic of Jerusalem in the previous discussions. While the development of the royal city is critical to the biblical depiction of interactions, historical and archaeological investigation of Iron Age Jerusalem has been fraught with difficulty. Limitations to excavation have existed since archaeologists began investigating the city in the nineteenth century. The ultimately destructive nature of excavation combined with religious and political tensions and modern occupation have curtailed exploration of what is believed to be the site of the early Iron Age city center, the City of David—the ridge between the Tyropoeon (west) and Kidron (east) Valleys—and the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif to its north. In addition to challenges to physical examination, the minimalist trend that cast doubt on the extent of Davidic or Solomonic kingdoms has focused on the limited early Iron Age remains that are known from the city and led to arguments that this absence of evidence is indeed evidence of an invented history, concluding that a capital in Jerusalem did not exist until the eighth or seventh centuries BCE (at the earliest); it was merely a town with local

significance.<sup>1</sup> Recent excavations and new arguments, however, are forcing reevaluation of the nature of Jerusalem in the early Iron Age.

Because of this complicated history of investigation, it is best to address the “problem of Jerusalem” in one discussion, here, following examination of the biblical material (Chapters Two and Three) and before venturing into the extrabiblical evidence (Chapters Five and Six). This chapter will briefly introduce the current evidence regarding Jerusalem and situate the Jerusalem material into the context of my broader analysis of interactions.

### **Jerusalem and Interactions**

There is little doubt that Jerusalem has a long history of regional importance.<sup>2</sup> Its location goes some way in explaining why. Jerusalem is situated where important passages leading west and east cross the main ridge through the hill country. D. Dorsey explains that the site sat at “the northern end of the bottleneck on the main north-south highway,” the Ridge Road, “at the point where this highway reached the end of the confining ridge from Bethlehem and arrived at the southern end of the broad, fertile plateau of Benjamin, from which important roads fanned out in various directions to the east, north, and west.”<sup>3</sup>

Archaeological evidence reaches back to the Chalcolithic period. Large scale architecture

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<sup>1</sup> E.g., Jamieson-Drake, *Scribes and Schools*; Thomas L. Thompson, *Early History of the Israelite People: From the Written and Archaeological Sources* (Leiden; New York: Brill, 1992).

<sup>2</sup> For reviews of the archaeological evidence prior to Eilat Mazar’s most recent Jerusalem excavations, along with discussion of the historical and biblical evidence, see the collected essays in Andrew G. Vaughn and Ann E. Killebrew, eds., *Jerusalem in Bible and Archaeology: The First Temple Period* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003). For a recent and thorough review of the early Iron Age evidence, including the latest excavations, see Daniel Pioske, “David’s Jerusalem: A History of Place” (Ph. D. dissertation, Princeton Theological Seminary, 2012), 303–447; and for an abbreviated version, see Daniel D. Pioske, “David’s Jerusalem: A Sense of Place,” *NEA* 76/1 (2013): 4–15.

<sup>3</sup> Dorsey, *Roads and Highways*, 124.

and complex water systems related to the Gihon Spring have now been excavated and dated to the Middle Bronze Age.<sup>4</sup> The earliest historical evidence of Jerusalem's role in long-distance interactions comes from Egyptian execration texts of the Middle Kingdom.<sup>5</sup> Jerusalem's broader significance in later periods is well known from records of the Babylonian and Roman conquests. It is also well acknowledged, however, that the site during the Late Bronze and early Iron Ages, as known from physical evidence, does not correspond to what written sources document and remember.

### **Late Bronze Age: Jerusalem and Egypt**

In the Late Bronze Age, Egypt succeeded in dominating the entire southern Levant, initially ruling through client kings in the Amarna Period and expanding in the Ramesside dynasties to Egyptian-occupied administrative centers throughout the land. Much of these efforts are well documented in historical and material evidence throughout the region, but physical remains in Jerusalem have been more modest. In contrast, we do have documentary evidence from the LB town in the form of letters from Jerusalem's ruler to his Egyptian suzerain. As a number of scholars have argued, the combined evidence for Jerusalem in the Late Bronze Age is instructive for dealing with the Iron Age. Apparently incongruous evidence for the period does not negate the historical record; rather, our modern expectations for the material expression of the written evidence may need to be adjusted.

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<sup>4</sup> Ronny Reich and Eli Shukron, "Jerusalem: The Gihon Spring and Eastern Slope of the City of David," *NEAEHL* (ed. Ephraim Stern, Ayelet Lewinson-Gilboa, and Joseph Aviram; Jerusalem; New York: Israel Exploration Society & Carta; Simon and Schuster, 2008).

<sup>5</sup> Jane M. Cahill, "Jerusalem at the Time of the United Monarchy: The Archaeological Evidence," in *Jerusalem in Bible and Archaeology: The First Temple Period* (ed. Andrew G. Vaughn and Ann E. Killebrew; SBL Symposium Series 18; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 21.



**Figure 4:1: Jerusalem and neighbors in Amarna Period (satellite image © Google earth 2015)**

The classic illustration for this problem comes from the Canaanite hill country in the Amarna Age (fourteenth century BCE). Jerusalem of this period was one of two major centers in the hill country; the other was Shechem (Figure 4:1).<sup>6</sup> As Na'aman has noted, however, archaeological evidence alone would lead us to believe that there were no polities of consequence in the region at that time. Jerusalem particularly has yielded only a meager amount of Late Bronze II pottery sherds and “a few building fragments” south of the Temple Mount.<sup>7</sup> Even if we propose that Jerusalem’s rulers made use of the substantial Middle Bronze Age fortifications that have been discovered, the scanty LB remains hardly fit the presentation from the Amarna letters.

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<sup>6</sup> Nadav Na'aman, “The Contribution of the Amarna Letters to the Debate on Jerusalem’s Political Position in the Tenth Century B.C.E.”

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

The leaders of Shechem and Jerusalem—“mayors” according to Egypt, but “kings” or “princes” among their Canaanite peers—each governed over a territory, albeit with relatively small populations consisting of rural settlements and pastoralists. In their conduct and correspondence, however, the rulers of these centers understood themselves to be elite royals, were of dynastic lines, lived in palaces, were protected by Egyptian forces, and were the authorized agents of Egypt’s king.<sup>8</sup> While in contemporary correspondence, the highland entities were kingdoms, today’s scholars describe the social organization of territories such as these as chiefdoms.<sup>9</sup>

Regardless of the label that is applied to Amarna Period Jerusalem, its ruler ‘Abdi-Ḥeba was an active participant in interactions with others in the southern Levant and with Egypt. Six of ‘Abdi-Ḥeba’s letters are extant, attesting to his connection to the Egyptian king, his role in regional conflicts with his contemporaries, as well as his status and economic success—‘Abdi-Ḥeba employed a scribe and was able to afford gifts and tribute for his suzerain.<sup>10</sup> Thus we must find a meeting ground between our expectations based on language and content of the ancient letters and the archaeological remains.

Additional scholars have sought creative ways of uncovering more material evidence of the Egyptian influence of LB Jerusalem. Gabriel Barkay happened upon surprising

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 21. Na’aman emphasizes that pitting the culture’s self-perception against modern scholarly definitions is problematic. This discrepancy is parallel to the debates regarding Iron Age polities of the region, such as Judah, Moab, or Edom, as the struggles to find fitting descriptions attest. See LaBianca and Younker, “The Kingdoms of Ammon, Moab and Edom”; Bruce E. Routledge, *Moab in the Iron Age: Hegemony, Polity, Archaeology* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); Smith, Najjar, and Levy, “New Perspectives on the Iron Age Edom Steppe and Highlands,” 288–290.

<sup>10</sup> Na’aman, “Contribution of the Amarna Letters,” 21; idem, “David’s Jerusalem: Fiction or Reality?: It Is There: Ancient Texts Prove It,” *BAR* 24/4 (1998): 42–43; idem, “David’s Sojourn in Keilah in Light of the Amarna Letters,” *VT* 60 (2010): 87–97.

evidence of an Egyptian presence during his investigation of Iron Age burials on the grounds of the École Biblique et Archéologique Française.<sup>11</sup> Inspired by Barkay's discoveries, Peter van der Veen started a project to seek out additional evidence of Egyptian influence that had been stored and forgotten from Jerusalem's earliest excavations.<sup>12</sup> Together their studies have identified two alabaster vessels, an alabaster lid, a stele fragment, two offering tables (one local but Egyptian-style), palm-style capitals (several were reported in the late nineteenth century CE records, but the location of only one is still known), as well as figurine and statue/tte fragments.<sup>13</sup> (Additional Egyptian-related finds have been collected from more recent excavations described below.) Both scholars, independently, argue for a Ramesside period date, probably Nineteenth Dynasty, for these remains. Barkay argues that the artifacts he identified originated in an Egyptian temple that sat just north of Jerusalem on the road to Shechem.<sup>14</sup> Van der Veen invokes Carolyn Higgenbotham's arguments that Egyptian kings of the Nineteenth dynasty continued to use vassal rulers to govern over Egypt's interests, attributing the artifacts to the Egyptian-sponsored staff that resided in the town.<sup>15</sup> The sum of the Amarna correspondence and the growing catalogue of Egyptian-related finds demonstrate that despite previous impressions

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<sup>11</sup> Gabriel Barkay, "A Late Bronze Age Egyptian Temple in Jerusalem?"; idem, "What's an Egyptian Temple Doing in Jerusalem?," *BAR* 26/3 (2000): 48–57, 67.

<sup>12</sup> Peter van der Veen, "When Pharaohs Ruled Jerusalem," *BAR* 39/2 (2013): 42–48, 67.

<sup>13</sup> Pottery from the excavations in the nineteenth century CE was discarded (Barkay, "A Late Bronze Age Egyptian Temple in Jerusalem?"; van der Veen, "When Pharaohs Ruled Jerusalem"). Barkay notes a report of a large scarab that is held at the Catholic school at St. Paul's hospice should be considered contemporary to the finds in his article (Barkay, "A Late Bronze Age Egyptian Temple in Jerusalem?," 43, note 43).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 40–43.

<sup>15</sup> Van der Veen, "When Pharaohs Ruled Jerusalem," 47–48.

based on scant archaeological evidence, LB Jerusalem played an significant role in local, regional, and long-distance interactions.

### **In Biblical Narrative**

It is important to note, especially in light of the depiction of Solomon's era discussed below and modern expectations of what the *capital* Jerusalem should have been, that the Jerusalem of the early Iron Age was not a significant, urban, civic center. D. Pioske's analysis of David's Jerusalem reveals it was an exceptionally small settlement compared to contemporary "state capitals" such as Tanis.<sup>16</sup> While there is now evidence of monumental architecture in Jerusalem from this period (see below), it too appears to have been limited if we must compare it to the standard of ancient Near Eastern capital cities. The Jerusalem that became the headquarters of David's operations was the center of an agrarian community, much like its contemporary hill country towns.<sup>17</sup> Like the rest of the population, the leaders of this type of community were primarily concerned with their crops and herds, but they may also have had special status or some prominence through reputation and wealth, as the narrative's introductions to Saul and David attest (1 Sam 9:1-5; 16:18-20).<sup>18</sup> The amount of concern that the Deuteronomistic History shows for Jerusalem prior to David's conquest of it seems to reflect that it was not unlike other hill country settlements and not a location of consequence, at least to the general population.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Jerusalem at ca. 4 hectares was a fraction of the size of Tanis at ca. 177 hectares (Pioske, "David's Jerusalem: A Sense of Place," 6).

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 6–13.

<sup>18</sup> Pioske, "David's Jerusalem: A History of Place," 352–353.

<sup>19</sup> The one exception is Joshua 10 which describes a regional conflict between an Amorite coalition against the Israelites, led by Joshua, and Gibeonites. Adoni-zedek, king of Jerusalem, is portrayed as the leader of the coalition. The ensuing conflict touches on the expected major centers for power and interaction in the

Analysis of the actions recounted in David's history, however, reveal that there was indeed something special about Jerusalem. According to 2 Samuel 5:6-9, David conquered the Jebusite city and moved his headquarters there from Hebron.<sup>20</sup> Typically, David's selection of Jerusalem is explained as a clever move to create a neutral capital for the Israelite tribes.<sup>21</sup> It is more likely, however, that David's selection of Jebus served his interests in expanding his territory and economic gains. The transition to Jerusalem was another step toward consolidating authority over territories that were related to exchange activities and advantageous positions.

First and foremost, moving from Hebron to Jerusalem ensured that David could monitor the activities of his strongest rivals, Saul's descendents and loyalists. Jebus was just about five miles south of Saul's headquarters. This proximity was critical. Saul's territory was not easily subdued according to the biblical history. Even after David and his supporters defeated Ishbaal and his men for control of Saulide Gibeon (2 Samuel 2-4), David maintained a close watch on Saul's descendants (2 Samuel 9) and was subjected to

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central/southern hill country (later Benjamin and Judah) and Shephelah, tracing important connections between the hill country and coastal plain and paralleling much of the geography of conflict and interaction described in Samuel and known from the Amarna correspondence; see Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 126.

<sup>20</sup> As I discussed in Chapter Two, the sequence of events in 2 Samuel 5 is problematic, but I do not take issue with the notion that David took control of Jebus. Even though this part of the text is not the most reliable history, it is the only account of this political transition, and based on greater historical circumstances, we must assume that some (forceful) acquisition took place.

<sup>21</sup> But this interpretation is anachronistic and idealized based on the Deuteronomistic assertion of "all of Israel" and traditional scholarly views of a unified kingdom. Jerusalem's location was not the most central, and Jerusalem was not the only non-Israelite city in the region. Judging from the period before and after David, much more needed to be done to unite the region than the selection of a "neutral" capital location. According to the DH, the tribes were rarely united in the Judges period. There is no persuasive evidence of unity in Saul's history. Solomon installed officials throughout the land to tie the various regions to him, and Rehoboam's threat to intensify Solomon's policies highlighted their failure to produce a united territory. David's motivations were far from pleasing his new constituents.

challenges by Saulide loyalists (2 Samuel 16).<sup>22</sup> Headquarters in Jerusalem gave David tight controls over his newly acquired territory and the routes through Benjamin that Saul and Jonathan had secured.

When we look at the region's interactions more broadly, taking into consideration the events involving Philistia, Saul, and David, as well as potential connections across longer distances (e.g., involving Transjordan), we have even stronger indications that Jebus sat in a prime location for exchange. The biblical text in Samuel, however, is silent on the site's role as an interaction partner with any of its neighbors. There are various ways to interpret the silence, including the accidents of the historical process, but the interaction patterns suggest that either Jebus remained isolated from the region's interactions, which is highly unlikely, or that Jebus was an important part of the region's exchange networks.

For David's interests, the Jebusite stronghold was better located than Hebron to monitor exchange through the central hill country and the south, which included long-distance traffic passing through the region.<sup>23</sup> Philistines, too, would have had reasons to involve themselves in the fate of Jebus. The outposts at the Michmash pass and Bethlehem may indicate that Philistines had been attempting to bypass Jebus in their exchange activities. Perhaps Jebus dominated its environs enough to make Philistine installations outside of its reach worthwhile, even though it meant costly battles with Saul and David to either side. An alliance between David and Achish that included cooperation along the region's highways could easily have led to a joint effort to take Jebus. It is not difficult to

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<sup>22</sup> For detailed analysis of the political calculations involved, see Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, 306–316, 341–344.

<sup>23</sup> We must assume that David's time in Hebron and the south had secured important interactions through the Beersheba Valley and that he would have established some way of maintaining control even from a residence further north; see Edelman, "Tel Masos, Geshur, and David," 253–58.

reconstruct a plausible historical scenario for the alliance and correlate it to the biblical version of how events played out. As I discuss in Chapter Two, Saul and Jebus were antagonistic to Philistine traffic moving between the Jordan Valley and the Mediterranean coast. An effort to control the hill country and its critical Ridge Road had to contend with both Jebus and Saul's capital. David would create problems for Saul in the south; Philistines in their own alliance would draw Saul into battle in the west and eventually north. The overextended Saul would easily be beaten. In exchange for this coordinated effort, David could have agreed to leave the Jezreel Valley to the Philistines. The Philistines may have assisted David's defeat of Saul's successor Ishbaal and Jebus in exchange for a cooperative partner in the hill country.<sup>24</sup> In light of these complex interactions, the importance of Jebus/Jerusalem was in its position in relation to the other regional powers (i.e., Gath, Gibeon, and Hebron) and the exchange networks that moved through or near the hill country (i.e., the Ridge Road and its crossroads).

As we move to David's successor, we see a very different image of Jerusalem. The history reports that Solomon not only put Jerusalem at the center of his economic programs but also increased fortifications and royal complexes, transforming the town into a world center for economic and cultural activity. Solomon's affairs reveal efforts to connect Jerusalem to longer-distance interactions both within the southern Levant and beyond it. The key to doing so would have been in making sure that Jerusalem was not isolated from other regions. As I argue in Chapter Three, integrating Jerusalem into exchange networks could have been achieved through diplomatic efforts, which are recorded with Egypt, Phoenicia, and the northern-most administrative districts that were more likely to have acted

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<sup>24</sup> Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, 303–6.

independently or allied with neighboring states. Solomon's administrative districts would also have imposed structure on regional exchange networks and laid claim to routes and goods to which each district had access. With the decree that provisions be sent to Jerusalem, Solomon's city was formally connected to these exchange activities. Finally, fortification projects in Jerusalem and other key locations in Solomon's territory provided a physical infrastructure for a Jerusalem network as well as propaganda to enforce the idea that Solomon's kingdom was well connected in "global" affairs.

The history also records characteristics of Jerusalem that—again, if historical—may have been consequences of participation in interregional interactions. The Egyptian and Syro-Phoenician styles that have been most intensely examined in relation to Solomon's temple may expose artistic influence that resulted from interactions or emulation that linked Jerusalem to important exchange partners.<sup>25</sup> The imported styles are also evident in descriptions of his palace architecture (particularly in relation to Egypt) and in various accoutrements (but for which a tenth-century origin is impossible to prove) such as Solomon's ivory and gold throne that echoes Phoenician and Syrian style (1 Kgs 10:18-20) or his other furnishings, vessels, and shields (also with ancient Near Eastern parallels) used for conspicuous display.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> See John Monson, "The New 'Ain Dara Temple: Closest Solomonic Parallel," *BAR* 26/3 (2000): 20–30, 32–35, 67. Relying too heavily on a comparison of details between the Solomon narrative and Near Eastern parallels has its problems. As the Dtr notes, some of Jerusalem's features were known "to this day," which reveals a *late* Iron Age perspective and eye-witness report of the royal and temple complexes. We would have to suppose that the historian either had an earlier description of the structures in order to give an accurate tenth-century depiction or intimately knew the history of the city center's various renovations over centuries, if we were to claim that he was not relying on knowledge of his day in describing Solomon's constructions.

<sup>26</sup> For various comparative examples, see Millard, "Does the Bible Exaggerate King Solomon's Golden Wealth."

Furthermore, the history reports that Solomon constructed shrines in the vicinity of Jerusalem that were dedicated to foreign deities (1 Kgs 11:7-8). Admittedly, the reliability of the report is difficult to verify,<sup>27</sup> but if the account was derived from the presence of foreign shrines in the city in the tenth century, such worship places may have existed so that travelers, traders, and envoys felt welcome and were able to serve to their deities and secure safety during their journeys.<sup>28</sup> In addition, Solomon's intellectual pursuits (1 Kings 5:10-13; 10:23-25) fit with depictions of ancient Near Eastern kings.<sup>29</sup> While researchers such as Halpern have made suggestive cases for the appropriateness of such features for tenth century rulers, we must also acknowledge that, like much of the archaeological evidence related to the period, the styles persisted over many centuries.<sup>30</sup> Inspiration for the early Iron Age rulers' behavior can be found in LB examples, but close parallels can also be found in the ninth century and later that may have provided models for historians' depictions.

Thus we can argue that the character of Solomonic Jerusalem is not entirely inappropriate for Solomon's day; however, we cannot fix the depictions to the tenth century. It is much more likely that the later history writers of the eighth through sixth centuries enhanced the greatness of the king's and the city's depiction. At the same time, it appears likely that the motivation by later authors to augment the international character of Solomon,

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<sup>27</sup> It is tied into the tradition that Solomon had many foreign wives whose practices drew Solomon away from YHWH, thus providing a reason for YHWH to remove his protection of the kingdom's integrity. In other words, Solomon's foreign ways provided a theological explanation for the division between the north and south following Solomon's reign.

<sup>28</sup> For discussion of religious practices specific to traders and travelers, see Aaron Jed Brody, *"Each Man Cried Out to His God": The Specialized Religion of Canaanite and Phoenician Seafarers* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998).

<sup>29</sup> See Halpern, *David's Secret Demons*, 113–124.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

his Jerusalem, and his kingdom may have derived from traditions and memories of a leader who connected a growing polity to rapidly increasingly long-distance exchange network that, based on the material surveyed in the next two chapters, included communities from Transjordan, Egypt, Philistia, the Cisjordan hill country, northern Israel, Syria, Phoenicia, and into the Mediterranean.

### **Transitions in Jerusalem**

The difference in function and appearance between David's Jerusalem and Solomon's is in line with a categorical difference observed by anthropologists who study urban spaces. In the case of cities whose economies rely on agriculture, the city during a period of a weaker or decentralized state organization is most important as an ideological center, a "regal-ritual city." The city would be home to the region's religious center and a ruling family of relatively modest wealth, still closely connected to the local identity. In the context of a stronger state system, the city's main role shifts to administrative functions, led by a wealthy elite. According to J. Katz, the "administrative city":

...serving as a nexus for transportation and communication and a hub for commerce, crafts and other specialties—links together a hierarchy of provincial centers that are controlled by the state. These cities extract the agricultural surplus from the countryside and use it to feed the city's residents, pay for monumental construction and support the luxurious lifestyle of the leadership, who are qualitatively separate from the rest of the population. The city is a repository of state power but unifies through coercion rather than common ideology.<sup>31</sup>

Katz applies these anthropological distinctions to a comparison of Jerusalem and Samaria as capital cities during the Divided Monarchy. Whereas Samaria functioned as an

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<sup>31</sup> Jill Katz, "Archaeological Views: Jerusalem and Samaria: An Anthropological Tale of Two Cities," *BAR* 40/3 (2014): 26.

“administrative city,” Jerusalem remained primarily a “regal-ritual city.” Katz argues that this distinction explains why Samaria remained in ruins after its destruction, while Jerusalem was rebuilt. The elite-oriented, administrative Samaria did not retain the significance to the population that the regal-ritual center of Jerusalem did.<sup>32</sup>

I suggest that the differences between David’s city and Solomon’s (as depicted in the Deuteronomistic History) also fit closely with the regal-ritual versus administrative city models. The Jerusalem that David conquered is characterized as a new center for his activities and his developing house (in the dynastic sense) and for service to YHWH but few other changes are described, that is, it functioned in line with the regal-ritual model. In contrast, the description of Solomon’s city highlights resource organization, long-distance commerce, and the conspicuous consumption on display through the royal building projects, a full expression of the administrative city.<sup>33</sup> This distinction holds even if use a limited selection of the DH that has been determined to be more historically reliable in Chapters Two and Three.

### **Archaeological Remains and Debates**

Despite what *appears* to be a significant history of interactions based in Jerusalem, archaeological remains have generally been considered supportive of only a modest agrarian settlement during the early Iron Age that some scholars have considered too small to be

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 68, 70.

<sup>33</sup> Based on archaeological considerations, Margreet Steiner also labels tenth-ninth century Jerusalem an administrative center, even if it was small, and makes the distinction that it only became an urban center in the seventh century (“Jerusalem in the Tenth and Seventh Centuries BCE: From Administrative Town to Commercial City,” in *Studies in the Archaeology of the Iron Age in Israel and Jordan* [ed. Amihai Mazar; JSOTSup 331; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001], 280–88).

reconciled with the biblical history (Figure 4:2).<sup>34</sup> The failure of more than a century of excavation to reveal the expected evidence of an urban, administrative center that could be identified with Jebusite, Davidic, or Solomonite Jerusalem has played an important role in discussions of Israel's history for some time.<sup>35</sup> Prior to more recent discoveries in the Ophel and City of David excavations, the Iron I-IIA evidence from ancient Jerusalem consisted of the "Stepped Stone Structure" (SSS), some wall fragments, small amounts of pottery, a proto-Aeolic capital, a bronze fist fragment from a figurine, and a cult stand fragment.<sup>36</sup> In response, most scholars tended toward one of two interpretive options. Either early Iron Age Jerusalem was not the urban center or administrative capital that the Bible describes but merely a "cow town"; or it had been a significant city, but its remains are not accessible to us because they were destroyed centuries ago through conquest and rebuilding or lie below sacred and contested locations that cannot be investigated.<sup>37</sup>

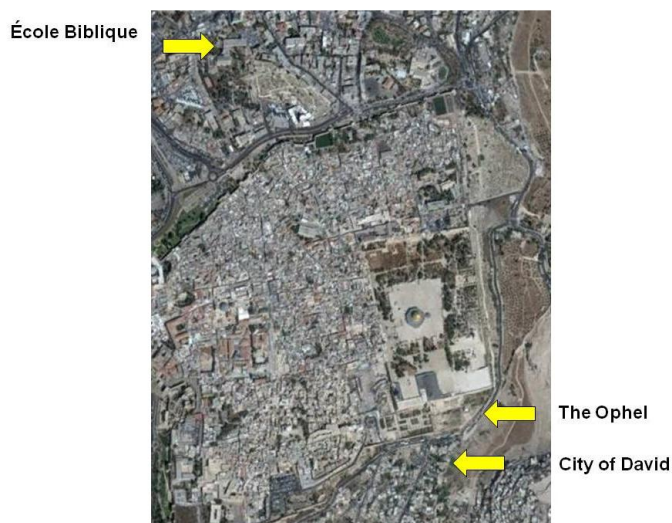
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<sup>34</sup> For example, Ernst Axel Knauf, "Jerusalem in the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages: A Proposal," *TA* 27 (2000); Israel Finkelstein, Ido Koch, and Oded Lipschits, "The Mound on the Mount: A Possible Solution to the 'Problem with Jerusalem,'" *JHS* 11 (2011), Article 12.

<sup>35</sup> Many critiques have taken inspiration from the foundation laid by Jamieson-Drake (*Scribes and Schools*).

<sup>36</sup> Cahill, "Jerusalem at the Time of the United Monarchy."

<sup>37</sup> Nadav Na'aman, "Cow Town or Royal Capital? Evidence for Iron Age Jerusalem," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 23/4 (1997): 43–47, 67; Margreet L. Steiner, "David's Jerusalem: Fiction or Reality? It's Not There, Archaeology Proves a Negative," *BAR* 24/4 (1998): 26–33, 62–63; Jane M. Cahill, "David's Jerusalem: Fiction or Reality? It Is There: The Archaeological Evidence Proves It," *BAR* 24/4 (1998): 34–41, 63; Knauf, "Jerusalem in the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages: A Proposal"; Ze'ev Herzog and Lily Singer-Avitz, "Redefining the Centre: The Emergence of State in Judah," *TA* 2004/2 (2004): 219; Finkelstein, Koch, and Lipschits, "The Mound on the Mount."



**Figure 4:2: Areas of LB and Iron I-IIA remains in Jerusalem (satellite image © Google earth 2015)**

Eilat Mazar has been committed to yet another position, which is that excavation possibilities have not yet been exhausted, and in 1997, she explained that her future excavations would not only discover more Iron I and IIA remains but spectacularly “King David’s Palace.”<sup>38</sup> Over the last decade, E. Mazar’s project has indeed contributed new early Iron Age evidence from the City of David and the Ophel. Although her historical reconstructions of “David’s Palace” and “Solomonic” fortifications have not persuaded many, Mazar’s excavations in the City of David and the Ophel over the last decade have dramatically changed the picture of early Iron Age Jerusalem. Mazar has uncovered a monumental structure (her “Large Stone Structure”) in the City of David and has revisited and further excavated Iron IIA towers/fortifications in the Ophel. Her excavations in the City of David have resulted in additional pottery from the Late Bronze through Iron IIA periods, including assemblages recovered from surfaces, “collared-rim” storage jars, evidence of metalworking, the top portion of a Sekhmet figurine, a Cypriot Black-on-Red

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<sup>38</sup> Eilat Mazar, “Excavate King David’s Palace!,” *BAR* 23/1 (1997): 50–57, 70.

(BoR) imported jug, and ivory handle inlays; and from the Ophel excavations an Iron IIA black juglet and an inscribed potsherd.<sup>39</sup>

Despite this impressive summary of finds, there remains significant debate about how the new evidence should be interpreted. E. Mazar maintains her historical attributions, first and foremost. She decided on her excavation area in the City of David with the explicit intention of finding David's palace, based in no small part on her reading of the biblical text.<sup>40</sup> With her theory seemingly validated by such impressive remains, her reliance on the biblical narrative has been (for her) justified. Such confidence allows her to conclude further that the Large Stone Structure was constructed by Phoenicians for David, as is described in 2 Samuel 5:11, even without physical evidence to corroborate the theory. Needless to say, this line of reasoning has not satisfied many archaeologists or historians. While Mazar's initial claims of a palace found were met with much skepticism, subsequent excavation and publication of the project have convinced more scholars that the large structure was, in fact, built in the early Iron Age and functioned in an administrative or royal capacity.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Eilat Mazar, *Preliminary Report on the City of David Excavations 2005 at the Visitors Center Area* (Jerusalem; New York: Shalem Press, 2007), 61; Eilat Mazar, *The Palace of King David: Excavations at the Summit of the City of David, Preliminary Report of Seasons 2005-2007* (Jerusalem; New York: Shoham Academic Research and Publication, 2009), 38–41, 59–65; Eilat Mazar, *Discovering the Solomonic Wall in Jerusalem: A Remarkable Archaeological Adventure* (Jerusalem: Shoham Academic Research and Publication, 2011); Eilat Mazar, David Ben-Shlomo, and Shmuel Ahituv, "An Inscribed Pithos from the Ophel, Jerusalem," *Israel Exploration Journal* 63 (2013): 39–49.

<sup>40</sup> Mazar, "Excavate King David's Palace?"; Eilat Mazar, "Did I Find King David's Palace?," *BAR* 32/1 (2006): 16–27, 70.

<sup>41</sup> For early criticism, prior to the official publications of the excavations, see Israel Finkelstein et al., "Has King David's Palace in Jerusalem Been Found?," *TA* 34/2 (2007): 142–64. and a measured, but ultimately optimistic, review from Margreet Steiner, "The 'Palace of David' Reconsidered in the Light of Earlier Excavations," *Bible and Interpretation*, September 2009, online: [http://www.bibleinterp.com/articles/palace\\_2468.shtml](http://www.bibleinterp.com/articles/palace_2468.shtml). For reactions since the official publications, see below.

Eilat Mazar's excavation has demonstrated that the Large Stone Structure and the Stepped Stone Structure were integrated during their construction, so that the latter supports the former.<sup>42</sup> This finding is gaining ground and clarifies the purpose of the Stepped Stone Structure. Both of these constructions appear to have been built in the Iron I. Independently, M. Steiner (based on Kenyon's pottery) and J. Cahill (based on Shiloh's pottery) have each dated the pottery associated with the Stepped Stone Structure to the early Iron I.<sup>43</sup> E. Mazar's excavations have provided evidence that no pottery later than Iron I lies beneath the foundations and floors of the Large Stone Structure. From these findings, several scholars have suggested that the two structures likely pre-date an Israelite (or Davidic) phase of the settlement.<sup>44</sup> To maintain E. Mazar's Davidic attribution, however, she argues that the Large Stone Structure was built in the transition period between the late Iron I and the early Iron IIA, thus situating the construction in the mid-tenth century.<sup>45</sup> Despite E. Mazar's

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<sup>42</sup> Mazar, *The Palace of King David: Excavations at the Summit of the City of David, Preliminary Report of Seasons 2005-2007*, 56–57.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 18, 36–37 and references therein.

<sup>44</sup> Amihai Mazar, "Archaeology and the Biblical Narrative: The Case of the United Monarchy," in *One God--One Cult--One Nation. Archaeological and Biblical Perspectives*, ed. Reinhard G. Kratz and Hermann Spieckermann, BZAW 405 (Berlin; New York: De Gruyter, 2010), 45–46; Avraham Faust, "Did Eilat Mazar Find David's Palace?," *BAR* 38/5 (2012): 47–52, 70; Pioske, "David's Jerusalem: A Sense of Place," 5; Daniel Pioske, "Placing the Past: On Writing a History of 'David's Jerusalem,'" *The Bible and Interpretation*, October 2014, online: <http://www.bibleinterp.com/articles/2014/11/pio388012.shtml>.

<sup>45</sup> She lays out her position quite plainly (emphasis in original): "The Large Stone Structure was built in a **transitional phase** between the Iron Age I, which ended at the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> century BCE, and the Iron Age IIA. Since I hold that **it was built by the Phoenicians during King David's reign** in Jerusalem..., I have decided to present its remains in the chapter on the Iron Age IIA, despite the fact that the pottery associated with its construction and its initial phases of use is mainly characteristic of the Iron Age I"; Mazar, *The Palace of King David: Excavations at the Summit of the City of David, Preliminary Report of Seasons 2005-2007*, 18. Even while adhering to her theory that this is David's palace, E. Mazar also explains that there must have been a Canaanite fortress that was used by the Jebusites in the Iron I, since 2 Samuel 5:7 states that "David took the stronghold of Zion, which is the City of David." Mazar assumes the presence of an Iron I fortress, acknowledges that the Stepped Stone Structure has also been determined to have been constructed in the Iron I, and admits that the Large Stone Structure was founded in the Iron I (she argues late in the Iron I). As others have observed, rather than having discovered David's "palace," her reading of the biblical text should indicate that she has uncovered the Jebusite fortification later conquered by David. These complications aside, the

convictions, the monumental constructions are better understood as Iron I fortifications, which probably had a royal/administrative function that continued in use through the Iron IIA.<sup>46</sup>

Eilat Mazar has also revived work in the Ophel, just south of the Temple Mount. Like the City of David, this area has been investigated a number of times since the nineteenth century (by Warren, Kenyon, B. Mazar, and E. Mazar with B. Mazar). In 1989, E. Mazar published her earlier findings (from excavations in the 1980s) along with the findings of B. Mazar's excavations in the 1960s and 1970s, arguing that the complex was a royal gateway constructed in the ninth century.<sup>47</sup> Since her earlier publications, she has reconsidered her chronological determinations and now dates the structures to the late tenth century and additional structures recently uncovered to the early Iron IIA.<sup>48</sup> Her shift in dating corresponds to a new historical reconstruction that this area was part of Solomon's fortification project described in 1 Kings 9:15.

Similar to her arguments regarding David's palace, attributing these structures to Solomon cannot be done with certainty, in part because we lack epigraphic evidence, but

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greater problem in her historical approach is an uncritical use of the biblical history, particularly in the case of 2 Samuel 5 (see Chapter Two) and apparent ignorance or no need for critical biblical scholarship; see also Todd Bolen, "Identifying King David's Palace: Mazar's Flawed Reading of the Biblical Text," *The Bible and Interpretation*, September 2010, online: <http://www.bibleinterp.com/opeds/ident357928.shtml>.

<sup>46</sup> Additional rooms were added on to the structure that can be confidently dated to the Iron IIA (Mazar, *The Palace of King David: Excavations at the Summit of the City of David, Preliminary Report of Seasons 2005-2007*, 47-56).

<sup>47</sup> Eilat Mazar and Benjamin Mazar, *Excavations in the South of the Temple Mount*, Qedem 29 (Jerusalem: Institute of Archaeology, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1989).

<sup>48</sup> She focuses on the presence of a black juglet, which is known from the tenth and ninth centuries, and argues that she had earlier selected the latest possible date for this artifact but now prefers the earlier date based on its broader chronological range of use; Mazar, *Discovering the Solomonic Wall in Jerusalem: A Remarkable Archaeological Adventure*, 70-71. See also Mazar, Ben-Shlomo, and Ahituv, "An Inscribed Pithos from the Ophel, Jerusalem."

more importantly because the chronological ranges related to the associated finds are not narrow enough to exclude, in this case, the ninth century. The most promising evidence, however, is the ceramic assemblage from the “Large Tower” and nearby fills that has strong parallels to Khirbet Qeiyafa.<sup>49</sup> This fortified site, located ca. 30 kilometers southwest of Jerusalem, was founded in the eleventh century and destroyed near the beginning of the tenth century.<sup>50</sup> Thus, her Ophel excavations have produced ceramic evidence that can be situated in the late Iron I, *along with* pottery that has a range of use from the tenth *through* the ninth centuries. Her Ophel excavations cannot be limited to the tenth century, but there is evidence of activity early in that century.

Her overly ambitious historical claims notwithstanding, E. Mazar’s recent excavations in the Ophel have succeeded in bringing to light additional evidence of potential administrative operations in the late Iron I and early Iron IIA periods and some indications of Jerusalem’s place in interregional interactions (LB though Iron Age). Finds include numerous storage jars, collared-rim pithoi, two Sekhmet figurine fragments, an Akkadian cuneiform tablet fragment (Amarna period?), an inscribed potsherd, bullae, stamped jar handles, figurine fragments, and an ivory inlay of a goat.<sup>51</sup> Of these only a few—the collared-rim pithoi, the inscribed pithos fragment, a black juglet, and a scarab—can be

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<sup>49</sup> Mazar, *Discovering the Solomonic Wall in Jerusalem: A Remarkable Archaeological Adventure*, 148.

<sup>50</sup> Yosef Garfinkel and Saar Ganor, eds., *Khirbet Qeiyafa Vol. 1, Excavation Report 2007-2008* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society; Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2009); Yosef Garfinkel, Saar Ganor, and Michael G. Hasel, “The Iron Age City of Khirbet Qeiyafa after Four Seasons of Excavations,” in *The Ancient Near East in the 12th–10th Centuries BCE: Culture and History. Proceedings of the International Conference Held at the University of Haifa, 2–5 May, 2010.*, ed. Gershon Galil et al., *Alter Orient und Altes Testament* 392 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2012), 149–74.

<sup>51</sup> Mazar, *Discovering the Solomonic Wall in Jerusalem: A Remarkable Archaeological Adventure*.

linked to the Iron I-Early Iron IIA periods.<sup>52</sup> From these few finds, we could tentatively conclude that there was some type of storage operation in the area, interregional interaction related to Egypt resulting in the acquisition of a scarab, and a level of status or wealth that allowed for a scribe and a luxury such as perfumed oil that may have been in the black juglet.

### **Iron I-IIA Interactions Involving Jerusalem**

Although historical, biblical, and archaeological evidence do not correspond as closely as many would like, there are strong indications that Jerusalem was active in interregional relations and served as a regional center in the Iron I and Early Iron IIA periods. With good evidence of interactions involving Egypt from the Amarna Period on, there is the chance that some inertia from a history of relations assisted in keeping Jerusalem connected even when long-distance relations lessened during the period between the decline of the Ramessides and the rise of Shoshenq I. Connections to other regions are more difficult to support, but the BoR juglet and the ivory inlays, both discovered in the Early Iron IIA expansion to the Large Stone Structure, suggest that Jerusalem was integrated in exchange networks that carried luxury goods from the Phoenician coast. In addition, collared-rim storage jars and an incised pithos rim from the Ophel speak to the collection of goods and wealth and the employment of scribes in this early period.<sup>53</sup> Lastly, the monumental architecture indicates that an elite leadership had the resources to command the

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<sup>52</sup> Parallels and additional interregional connections for some of these finds will be explored in Chapters Five and Six.

<sup>53</sup> For more on this inscription see Chapter Four. The presence of collared-rim pithoi in both the City of David and Ophel excavations may supply additional information regarding early Jerusalem's ethnic orientation or commercial activities, depending on one's understanding of the vessels. See the review of theories in Faust, *Israel's Ethnogenesis*, 191–205. Faust ultimately settles on an updated version of the theory that the vessels are indicative of Israelite ethnic identity.

construction of these buildings. Their impressive scale undoubtedly had a defensive function, but one cannot help but imagine the psychological effect they would also have had.<sup>54</sup> We must wonder was this great effort extended in order to impress the local hill country inhabitants, or was there a different audience in mind? I imagine these massive structures were intended to have an impact on visitors from farther afield.

Moving from the archaeological picture back to the historical and biblical accounts makes some of the biblical claims about the tenth-century monarchs less surprising. The idea that David would have had an interest in taking Jerusalem seems to be even more logical if the site was well equipped for his new headquarters and was already well integrated into interaction networks in the southern Levant. Solomon's "upgrade" in his administrative systems and fortifications (whether or not they are identified with E. Mazar's Ophel structures) is also easier to imagine with the understanding that a large-scale infrastructure and long-distance exchange networks involving Jerusalem were already in place. In addition, the Egyptian character attributed to Solomon's projects in the DH is quite in line with the smattering of Egyptian cultural remains that have been identified from the Late Bronze through the Iron Ages. While the biblical and material records do not closely correspond, it is much more difficult to maintain that Jerusalem was an isolated, regionally insignificant settlement in the early Iron Age than it was a decade ago. Instead, the site appears to have been a regional competitor along with locations such as Tell es-Safi/Gath, Beth Shemesh, Khirbet Qeiyafa, and Gezer, and the more distant contemporaries Khirbat en-Nahas, Tel Rehov, Megiddo, and Tyre.

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<sup>54</sup> Mazar, *The Palace of King David: Excavations at the Summit of the City of David, Preliminary Report of Seasons 2005-2007*, 65.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: EPIGRAPHIC EVIDENCE FROM THE SOUTHERN LEVANT, LATE ELEVENTH AND TENTH CENTURIES**

The question at the heart of this chapter is: Is there epigraphic evidence of Israel's involvement in interregional trade in the late eleventh and tenth centuries? A quick glance at the evidence from the southern Levant (which consists of a handful of inscriptions usually made up of a name or brief name formula) and the greater Eastern Mediterranean region produces a negative response. No, there is not explicit historical evidence, outside of the Bible, of trade activity in the region. This response, however, is too simplistic for the nature of the social and economic factors of the time. A more complex understanding of the evidence requires that we think not only of its limitations but also of *the reasons for* its limitations, which in turn provides an important context for the significance of inscriptions in the southern Levant in the eleventh and tenth centuries. In this chapter, I will review the epigraphic evidence using historical and anthropological perspectives. The result of this examination and approach is the conclusion that the epigraphic evidence, though not explicitly supportive of trade, suggests that there were individuals or families of rising status who were likely the players in small-scale exchange activities that reached quite far from the source of the inscriptions. This conclusion is further supported by a survey of contemporary evidence in the better-attested regions of Byblos and Egypt. And while these two polities were obviously of a different complexity and regional influence from selected sites in the southern Levant, there are important parallels in elites' use of inscriptions in the processes of political reorganization, eventual stabilization, and interregional activity. In all three regions, the rise of new elite groups corresponds with and is correlated to an increase in scribal activity (especially for the promotion of elite status) and interregional interaction.

## The Nature of the Evidence and the Debate

It is the harsh reality that for this period the nature of extrabiblical evidence in the southern Levant is poor. This statement is particularly pointed if one is accustomed to the evidence from the Late Bronze Age or later in the Iron Age. The evidence consists of inscriptions and ostraca from ten sites plus a number of inscribed arrowheads (many unprovenanced). Only Tel Rehov has produced multiple inscriptions recovered from controlled excavation at one site (eleven dating to the Iron IIA, tenth-ninth centuries). The entirety of the late eleventh-tenth century corpus amounts to about a dozen items not counting the arrowheads. Not one of the inscriptions is monumental in character. The good news is, in contrast to what was known of this period a few decades ago, the majority of the evidence (aside from the arrowheads) now comes from stratigraphically-sound discoveries. With this new wealth of material—relatively speaking—there is renewed discussion of the significance of this evidence. Although the inscriptions are few, their meaning, beyond the words on the objects, appears to be greater than previously thought.

A frequent challenge to traditional reconstructions of the region in the late eleventh-tenth century has been this very problem of the dearth of epigraphic material.<sup>1</sup> The challenge rests in the arguments that centralized kingdoms could not operate without supporting scribal activity and that, if a kingdom of the scope described for David or Solomon existed, scribal activity (both of administrative and monumental character) should be visible in the

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<sup>1</sup> An additional source of information about writing at this time comes from clay bullae. These finds attest to scribal activity in the form of scrolls that were rolled, tied with string, and then sealed with wet clay, often impressed with a decorated stamp. The scrolls, written on papyrus or vellum, rarely survive, but the clay bullae have. Even if they bear no written information, they contribute to our knowledge of the use of scribes. See Seth L. Sanders, *The Invention of Hebrew* (University of Illinois Press, 2009), 108, 212 note 6; Othmar Keel and Amihai Mazar, “Iron Age Seals and Seal Impressions from Tel Rehov,” *Eretz-Israel* 29 (2009): 57\* – 69\*.

archaeological record.<sup>2</sup> This claim necessarily leads to a debate over just when and how Iron Age kingdoms emerged. The arguments over a precise date rest in certain assumptions about the constellation of characteristics and entities that support a state, things like a standing military, public and private spheres evidenced through city plan and architecture, and government bodies that might include, for example, scribes. It would be absurd to believe that this collection of supporting institutions could arise in an instant; some transition or formation process must be necessary. However, more often than not, scholars have failed to agree on how we should discuss or understand these elements and the transition to monarchy.

A factor in contention is the influential biblical claim that earlier, premonarchic Israel was relatively egalitarian and slow to diversify in power. Historians who are particularly loyal to (or swayed by) the biblical history attribute the advent of administrative

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<sup>2</sup> See, for example Jamieson-Drake, *Scribes and Schools*. Jamieson-Drake has been the most influential and a favorite among the so-called minimalist scholars. The popularity stems from both his approach, social-scientific rather than historical or biblical, and his conclusions, especially that Jerusalem was not the seat of a centralized state until the eighth century. His approach has strengths in proposing ways to measure cultural activities in a quantifiable, social-scientific manner and in his warnings about the nature of the evidence and its availability. His work also clearly demonstrates large-scale shifts in the evidence. What it does not do as well is provide a framework for making meaning of *all* of the results, especially the more subtle changes in the record. This is particularly evident in the discussions of the eleventh to eighth centuries. Jamieson-Drake admits that it can be tricky to make large conclusions based on a paucity of evidence but does so in grand fashion with his claims regarding the pre- or early monarchic era. Lastly regarding scribal activity, the work is now outdated. The material covered here (that falls within his geographic limits) was not yet available, not yet discovered. In addition, Jamieson-Drake assumes that literacy should have been widespread or “democratic” in order to recognize social change, which obscures important trends in his evidence. In this chapter, a very different premise is maintained, that is, that scribal activity would have been a tool of the elite in the process of social change and not easily acquired or readily available to a broader population; see sources below, especially Ryan Byrne, “The Refuge of Scribalism in Iron I Palestine,” *BASOR* 345 (2007): 1–31; and Seth L. Sanders, “Writing and Early Iron Age Israel: Before National Scripts, Beyond Nations and States,” in *Literate Culture and Tenth-Century Canaan: The Tel Zayit Abecedary in Context* (ed. Ron E Tappy and P. Kyle McCarter; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 97–112. With this model, we should expect small numbers of inscriptions and other “luxury items” for some time, which produces a better correlation between the data and interpretation. As Jamieson-Drake admits, “If a datum must be interpreted in an unnatural way in order to fit into our model, we must consider modifying or overhauling the model” (*Scribes and Schools*, 149). In this case, it is the model regarding literacy that needs to be changed.

offices (other than the priesthood) to Solomon's reign, with its dramatic transition to centralized administration (1 Kings 4). It would be more realistic, however, especially in the absence of a known imperial takeover or colonization, to explore the possibility of a less dramatic, less punctuated transition.

To make this point, we can focus on writing or scribal activity, often considered to be among the hallmarks of statehood. There is good reason to look for evidence of writing in order to assess the complexity of social organization. Writing is extremely useful in the operations of a state. Its applications range from basic record keeping necessary for taxes to more elaborate applications like court histories, monumental inscriptions, or propaganda. These uses come at an advanced stage of a state. We should not necessarily expect them in the tenth century. Ryan Byrne describes well a more nuanced relationship between writing and the state with attention to different stages of both the state's and writing's development:

The scribal culture of linear alphabetic does not emerge to service the inchoate Iron Age state, nor does it immediately diversify its functions upon the state's emergence. . . . The later Iron II trajectory toward Hebrew script standardization highlights what linear alphabetic *is not* during the late second and early first millennia. It is not standardized, nor is it consistently intelligible, precisely because it subsists during this period on elite wherewithal rather than political or economic exigency. The state facilitates the alphabet's segue from a curiosity to the *sine qua non*.<sup>3</sup>

According to Byrne, the development of both institutions, alphabetic writing and the state, influence each other (we will see more of this discussion below). His argument is not based in the Israelite material alone but also on Ugaritic and Byblian evidence. From these examples, Byrne argues that we should *not* expect standardization in a writing system or

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<sup>3</sup> Byrne, "The Refuge of Scribalism," 23; emphasis in the original.

literacy *before* an established state and not even at the early stages of a state system. This perspective eases pressures to fit the limited epigraphic material into any particular depiction of political organization.

Before looking at the evidence itself, I will expand a bit more on my approach. I present every inscription dated to the late eleventh or tenth century and discovered in the southern Levant. Of course, not all can be dated precisely, but I have included those which are generally accepted to be of this period and which have been recently discovered in controlled excavation that suggests a late eleventh or tenth-century setting.<sup>4</sup> The presentation and evaluation of the evidence will be based first and foremost on the evidence itself without presuppositions about any historical context. In other words, this discussion is positive in nature and limited, for the time being, to this body of inscriptions. We deal with what is in the existing corpus. At this point, I am not concerned with any conspicuous absences in the evidence. A concern for what the epigraphic corpus lacks stems from ideas about what *should be* in it based on *a priori* assumptions. I will not preference certain regions or locations because of biblical or other expectations. Lastly, I proceed on the premise that writing was a specialized, but not institutionalized, skill and limited in this period.<sup>5</sup> I will return to the matter of the privilege of scribalism after surveying the evidence.

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<sup>4</sup> The most recent catalogue of inscriptions is F. W. Dobbs-Allsopp et al., *Hebrew Inscriptions: Texts from the Biblical Period of the Monarchy with Concordance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005). I have also relied on J. C. L. Gibson, *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions I: Hebrew and Moabite Inscriptions* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971); idem, *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions III: Phoenician Inscriptions Including Inscriptions in the Mixed Dialect of Arslan Tash* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982); Yitzhak Avishur, *Phoenician Inscriptions and the Bible: Select Inscriptions and Studies in Stylistic and Literary Devices Common to the Phoenician Inscriptions and the Bible* (Tel Aviv: Archaeological Center Publication, 2000).

<sup>5</sup> This understanding has not been the norm in much of twentieth-century scholarship. For some discussions of scholars' attitudes toward ancient literacy, see Seth L. Sanders, "What Was the Alphabet For? The Rise of Written Vernaculars and the Making of Israelite National Literature," *Maarav* 11/1 (2004): 34–42; Christopher A. Rollston, "Scribal Education in Ancient Israel: The Old Hebrew Epigraphic Evidence," *BASOR* 344 (2006): 47–74.

## Inscriptions from the Southern Levant

There are now a handful of texts that are believed to date from the late eleventh and tenth centuries BCE, and the most recently discovered were found in controlled archaeological excavation (Figure 5:1).<sup>6</sup> They are all written in linear alphabetic script, and most appear to be in Northwest Semitic languages (most likely Hebrew, Phoenician, or Aramaic) with the notable exception of the Tell es-Safi (Gath) example.<sup>7</sup> The inscriptions are organized into three groups: a) educational or scribal exercises, b) dedication or possession name formulae, and c) newer discoveries whose readings are not yet certain. All of these types contribute to the thesis that there was a demand for writing in this period and that it most likely came from independent or separate elite parties.

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<sup>6</sup> Rollston provides a good survey of the evidence (*Writing and Literacy in the World of Ancient Israel: Epigraphic Evidence from the Iron Age* [Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010]). Shmuel Ahituv and Amihai Mazar have the most up-to-date list of all known inscriptions contemporary to those found at Tel Rehov (i.e., tenth and ninth centuries) (“The Inscriptions from Tel Rehov and Their Contribution to Study of Script and Writing During the Iron Age IIA,” in “*See, I Will Bring a Scroll Recounting What Befell Me*” [Ps 40:8]: *Epigraphy and Daily Life—From the Bible to the Talmud Dedicated to the Memory of Professor Hanan Eshel* [ed. Esther Eshel and Yigal Levin; Journal of Ancient Judaism Supplements 12; Göttingen; Bristol: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2014], 54–59). I have excluded some of the inscriptions that are in their list: some listed as tenth century may be ninth, and the ‘Izbet Şarṭah inscription appears to be early eleventh century or even earlier.

<sup>7</sup> There is significant debate about Phoenician versus Hebrew *script*, as well as the *language* of the inscriptions, which contributes much to discussions about the development of ethnic and “national” identities in the region. See Christopher A. Rollston, “The Phoenician Script of the Tel Zayit Abecedarial and Putative Evidence for Israelite Literacy,” in *Literate Culture and Tenth-Century Canaan: The Tel Zayit Abecedarial in Context* (ed. Ron E Tappy and P. Kyle McCarter; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 61–96; Sanders, “Writing and Early Iron Age Israel”; idem, *The Invention of Hebrew*. For the purposes of this chapter, however, the distinctions about both script and language are not the focus. It is the *possession* of the objects that bear writing, used as symbols of status, that is most important.



**Figure 5:1: Inscriptions found in the southern Levant (satellite image © Google earth 2015)**

### **Educational or Scribal Exercises**

Two educational or scribal exercises are now known, the Gezer Calendar and the Tel Zayit Abecedary.<sup>8</sup>

#### **Gezer Calendar**

The best-known tenth-century inscription is the Gezer calendar, which was discovered during R.A.S. Macalister's excavations at the beginning of the last century. Due to his trench excavation method, the precise archaeological context is unknown, but

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<sup>8</sup> As I mentioned in the previous note, I do not include the abecedary from 'Izbet Şarṭah in this survey. In addition to being slightly earlier than the other inscriptions included here, it appears to be from a different phase in the development writing and the alphabet in the southern Levant; see Sanders, *The Invention of Hebrew*, 76–102; Frank Moore Cross, “Newly Found Inscriptions in Old Canaanite and Early Phoenician Scripts,” *BASOR* 238 (1980): 1–20.

orthography and paleography suggest a late tenth-century date.<sup>9</sup> The text is inscribed on a small, limestone tablet and consists of seven lines, a name on the edge (presumably the scribe's), and four letters on the reverse. The main inscription describes agricultural seasons and produce. The script could be Old Hebrew or Phoenician. The tablet itself appears to have been reused and the reverse scraped in preparation for additional use, contributing to its description as a scribal exercise tablet.

### **Tel Zayit Abecedary**

A tenth-century abecedary was discovered in the 2005 excavation season at Tel Zayit.<sup>10</sup> The text was incised on the relatively flat underside of a large stone that may have been used previously as a mortar, basin, or door socket.<sup>11</sup> The stone was discovered in tertiary use in the wall of a structure that was destroyed in the late tenth century. The archaeological context (i.e., the dating of the structure and its destruction) suggests the inscription dates to the mid-tenth century or earlier; based on the epigraphic evidence, it may date to the late tenth to early ninth century.<sup>12</sup>

### **Discussion**

These two inscriptions attest to some level of awareness of linear alphabetic script in the Shephelah region in the mid to late tenth century. It is difficult to extrapolate a historical

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<sup>9</sup> W. F. Albright, "The Gezer Calendar," *BASOR* 92 (1943): 16–26; Gibson, *TSSI*, 1.1–4; Dobbs-Allsopp et al., *Hebrew Inscriptions*, 155–165; Sanders, *The Invention of Hebrew*, 109–111; Rollston, *Writing and Literacy*, 29–31.

<sup>10</sup> Ron E. Tappy et al., "An Abecedary of the Mid-Tenth Century B.C.E. from the Judaeian Shephelah," *BASOR* 344 (2006): 5–46; Rollston, "The Phoenician Script of the Tel Zayit Abecedary." Other epigraphic material has been recovered from the site that dates to the eighth century: ostraca, a possibly royal seal impression, *lmlk* seal impressions, and *lmlk*-style jar handles (Ron E. Tappy et al., "An Abecedary," 9).

<sup>11</sup> The abecedary is written across two lines; a third line is apparent above it, but its meaning is uncertain.

<sup>12</sup> Ron E. Tappy et al., "An Abecedary," 22; Rollston, "The Phoenician Script of the Tel Zayit Abecedary," 72.

reconstruction based on only two sources, but some scribal practice was active. If the small number is meaningful, then it indicates that the nature and extent of participation in education was limited.

Taken together, the Gezer calendar and Tel Zayit abecedary show the effort to retain skill in writing. While the Gezer calendar has been described in somewhat low terms (e.g., a “school boy’s exercise”), it is an impressive text compared to the other examples. Even with considerable disruption in the early Iron Age, Gezer’s scale and status in the LB could be a factor in the calendar’s relative sophistication.<sup>13</sup> If the Tel Zayit abecedary can be interpreted as the presence and practice of a scribe and we consider the location of Tel Zayit, which sits on the boundary zone between the coast and the hill country, then the inscription suggests that an elite party may have become established there, perhaps in response to a need or desire to control the boundary zone. A scribal practice at Tel Zayit indicates that newer or smaller sites were not excluded from the specialized service.<sup>14</sup>

### **Dedication or Possession Formulae**

A growing number of inscriptions are now known that document possession and/or dedication of a thing. This type is presented according to geographic region: three sites in the Shephelah provide evidence (Tel Batash, Beth-Shemesh, Tell es-Safi); two sites in the region of Beth-Shean (Tel Rehov and Tel ‘Amal); and one site in the north (Kefar Veradim).

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<sup>13</sup> Is it not plausible, for example, that despite social and political disruption, a specialized activity like writing would occur near formerly urban areas or major sites? Even though the writing system had changed from LB cuneiform to Iron Age linear alphabetic, the demand for scribal activity appears to have transcended the hard times in the region.

<sup>14</sup> For thoughts on rural versus urban zones and the evidence of writing, see Richard S. Hess, “Writing about Writing: Abecedaries and Evidence for Literacy in Ancient Israel,” *VT* 56/3 (2006): 342–46; Bob E. J. H. Becking, “David between Ideology and Evidence,” in *Between Evidence and Ideology: Essays on the History of Ancient Israel Read at the Joint Meeting of the Society for Old Testament Study and the Oud Testamentisch Werkgezelschap Lincoln, July 2009* (ed. Bob E. J. H. Becking and Lester Grabbe; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 1–30.

In addition, numerous inscribed arrowheads dating to the eleventh-tenth centuries contribute to this collection, although, because their origins are uncertain, they cannot be weighted equally with the others. Discussion of interpretations follows a brief summary of the evidence.

### **Tel Batash (Timnah)**

The Tel Batash find consists of four letters inscribed prior to firing on a ceramic bowl.<sup>15</sup> The sherd is dated to the tenth century based on its archaeological context and paleography. The inscription, which is broken at the beginning, reads *n|hnn*. A likely reconstruction for the beginning of the inscription is a *b*, producing the name formula *bn* + PN, in this case, “Son of Ḥanan.”<sup>16</sup> The name Ḥanan is attested in other inscriptions (see Beth-Shemesh, next) and in biblical texts, notably in the place name Elon-Beth-Ḥanan in 1 Kgs 4:9.

### **Beth-Shemesh**

The letters *hnn* have also been identified on the side of a game board discovered at Beth-Shemesh, located about 7.5 km away from Tel Batash along the Soreq Valley.<sup>17</sup> The find came from a tenth-century archaeological context, and this date is supported through paleographic analysis. It merges nicely with other evidence of the name *hnn* on an earlier ostrakon from Beth-Shemesh (c. 1200 BCE), on the Tel Batash inscription just discussed,

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<sup>15</sup> George L. Kelm and Amihai Mazar, “Tel Batash (Timnah) Excavations: Third Preliminary Report, 1984-1989,” *BASORSup* 27 (1991): 55–56. The sherd was found in stratum IV, which has been assigned by Herzog and Singer-Avitz to the Early IIA sub-phase (“Redefining the Centre,” 221).

<sup>16</sup> Dobbs-Allsopp et al., *Hebrew Inscriptions*, 113–114. Ash labels this inscription as “a potter’s name,” neglecting to note the name formula (“Solomon’s? District? List,” 72, note 22).

<sup>17</sup> Shlomo Bunimovitz and Zvi Lederman, “Beth-Shemesh: Culture Conflict on Judah’s Frontier,” *BAR* 23/1 (1997): 42–49, 75–77. Bunimovitz and Lederman describe a frontier town fortified in the tenth century (with evidence of destroyed eleventh-century houses below), which aligns well with Beth-Shemesh’s appearance in Solomon’s district list (1 Kgs 4:9).

and the district information in 1 Kgs 4:9, where Elon-Beth-Ḥanan follows Beth-Shemesh in the description of the second district.<sup>18</sup>

While the name Ḥanan and variations of it (e.g., Jehu son of Ḥanani in 1 Kings 16 or the “false” prophet Hananiah in Jeremiah 28) were not uncommon, the proximity of the two sites along with the association between Beth-Shemesh and Elon-Beth-Ḥanan in 1 Kgs 4:9 is intriguing. Was there a prominent Ḥanan family in the western Soreq in the early Iron Age? Prior to the game board’s discovery, this possibility was first entertained by A. Mazar, who excavated Tel Batash.<sup>19</sup> Beth-Shemesh’s excavators S. Bunimovitz and Z. Lederman also comment on the potential for a family connection and find in it confirmation of ethnic redefinition along a border zone, given the distinct character that the two sites appear to have had by the tenth century.<sup>20</sup> We cannot say conclusively that these references all belonged to one family, but if they were related, we would have an excellent case for exploring regional leadership of an elite lineage.

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<sup>18</sup> Frank Moore Cross, “The Origin and Early Evolution of the Alphabet,” *ErIsr* 8 (1967): 8\* – 24\*; Bunimovitz and Lederman, “Beth-Shemesh.”

<sup>19</sup> Amihai Mazar, “The Northern Shephelah in the Iron Age: Some Issues in Biblical History and Archaeology,” in *Scripture and Other Artifacts: Essays on the Bible and Archaeology in Honor of Philip J. King* (ed. Philip J. King et al.; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), 255. Koert Van Bekkum has also called attention to the collection of evidence, calling it “remarkable evidence for the relationship of a “Hanan” family with this region” (“‘The Situation Is More Complicated’: Archaeology and Text in the Historical Reconstruction of the Iron Age IIA Southern Levant,” in *Exploring the Narrative: Jerusalem and Jordan in the Bronze and Iron Ages: Papers in Honour of Margreet Steiner* [ed. Noor Mulder-Hymans, Jeannette Boertien, and Eveline van der Steen; Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 583; London; New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2014], 233 note 31).

<sup>20</sup> Shlomo Bunimovitz and Zvi Lederman, “The Early Israelite Monarchy in the Sorek Valley: Tel Beth-Shemesh and Tel Batash (Timnah) in the 10th and 9th Centuries BCE,” in *“I Will Speak the Riddles of Ancient Times”: Archaeological and Historical Studies in Honor of Amihai Mazar on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday* (ed. Aren M. Maeir, Pierre De Miroschedji, and Amihai Mazar; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 422, note 10.

### **Tell es-Safi (Gath)**

An inscribed sherd was discovered in the excavations of Tell es-Safi in an archaeological context dated to the late Iron I to early Iron IIA periods.<sup>21</sup> The script is linear alphabetic, but the inscription is probably not Semitic. Instead, the excavators argue that it should be interpreted to be Philistine, which would make this find the earliest alphabetic Philistine inscription. The preserved writing consists of a line of seven letters with a word divider between the fourth and fifth letter; there is a possible additional sign to the left of the inscription. The main line reads *ʿlwt/wlt[...]*. The excavators suggest the best interpretation is that these words are names, citing parallels in Greek and Anatolian sources: Alyattes and Oletas or Ouliatos/Oalaolos.<sup>22</sup> It is notable that, if Philistine, the Semitic script is used here by relative newcomers to the region. Some possibilities for interpretation will be explored below.

### **Tel Rehov**

Excavations at Tel Rehov have resulted in the discovery of eleven epigraphic finds (inscriptions and ostraca) from Iron IIA strata (tenth to ninth centuries).<sup>23</sup> This amount from

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<sup>21</sup> Maeir et al., “A Late Iron Age I/Early Iron Age II Old Canaanite Inscription.” The pottery assemblage establishes a late Iron I/early Iron IIA date, and the inscribed sherd comes from a vessel whose shape and burnishing are also consistent with the late Iron I/early Iron IIA date (ibid., 47). The excavators assign the absolute date range to late eleventh-early ninth century (MCC) or mid-tenth-early ninth century (LC) (ibid., 48). They also note that there are “fully developed Phoenician-style inscriptions...found in Stratum A3, dating to the ninth century B.C.E., immediately above Stratum A4, in which the currently discussed Old Canaanite inscription was discovered,” (ibid., 62).

<sup>22</sup> Maeir et al., “A Late Iron Age I/Early Iron Age II Old Canaanite Inscription,” 56–59.

<sup>23</sup> Amihai Mazar, “Three 10th-9th Century B.C.E. Inscriptions From Tel Rehov,” in *Saxa Loquentur: Studien Zur Archäologie Palästinas/Israels: Festschrift Für Volkmar Fritz Zum 65. Geburtstag* (ed. Cornelius G. Den Hertog, Ulrich Hübner, and Stefan Münger; AOAT 302 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2003), 171–84; Aḥituv and Mazar, “The Inscriptions from Tel Rehov.” The site has also produced many seals and seal impressions; see Keel and Mazar, “Iron Age Seals and Seal Impressions from Tel Rehov”; Seth L. Sanders, “From People to Public in the Iron Age Levant,” in *Organization, Representation, and Symbols of Power in the Ancient Near*

one site is unparalleled for the period. Four of the items were found in stratum VI contexts, dated to the tenth century.<sup>24</sup> Eight of the eleven items were found in Area C.<sup>25</sup> Most were incised on storage jars and seem to be of the possession or dedication type.

Readings from Stratum VI include *lnḥm*, “belonging to Naḥum”; the letters *mt*’ and a | (the numeral 1?), inscribed twice on a storage jar; a sherd with a single *l*; and a sherd with an *‘ayin* and a *yod*.<sup>26</sup> A vessels from the slightly later strata V (late tenth–early ninth centuries) bears the letters *lnmš*, the name Nemesh (a form of Nimshi), also attested on a Stratum IV example from Tel Rehov and other epigraphic and biblical examples (see next).<sup>27</sup> Further discussion of Tel Rehov’s wealth of inscriptions follows this survey.

### **Tel ‘Amal**

A possession formula on a jar, inscribed prior to firing, was discovered among burial goods at Tel ‘Amal. The assemblage and paleography are consistent with the second half of the tenth century. This inscription reads *lnmš* (or *l + nm + [numeric sign]*), perhaps “belonging to Nimshi.” The personal name *nmš* is attested on the two inscriptions at Tel Rehov just mentioned and in later periods on an inscription, several seals, and in the Hebrew

*East: Proceedings of the 54th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale at Würzburg 20–25 July 2008* (ed. Gernot Wilhelm; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2012), 103.

<sup>24</sup> The Iron IIA period is represented by three strata: VI, V, IV. The excavators date stratum VI to the tenth century, stratum V to the end of the tenth–beginning of the ninth, and stratum IV to the ninth by ceramic and radiocarbon dating. Eight of the eleven items were found in Area C (Ahituv and Mazar, “The Inscriptions from Tel Rehov,” 51–53).

<sup>25</sup> Inscriptions 1, 2, 3 (stratum VI); 5 (stratum V); 6, 7, 9, 11 (stratum IV) (*ibid.*, 40–51). Area C is the largest excavated area, so it is not surprising that it would produce higher numbers of special finds in general, but it is also clear that elite activity was concentrated in this area. An elite structure (building F), an industrial apiary, a cultic area, along with imported ceramics were also found in Area C (Amihai Mazar et al., “Iron Age Beehives at Tel Rehov in the Jordan Valley,” *Antiquity* 82 (2008): 629–39; Amihai Mazar, “Rehov, Tel,” *NEAEHL*).

<sup>26</sup> Ahituv and Mazar, “The Inscriptions from Tel Rehov,” 40–43.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 43–44.

Bible (e.g., Jehu's family, 2 Kings 9).<sup>28</sup> Like the Soreq Valley's Ḥanan inscriptions, these vessels (along with the later instances of this name) compel us to consider whether they could be related. Nimshi was not an uncommon name, but the inscribed vessels (all "hippo" storage jars) are similar and were part of similar ceramic assemblages (the epigraphy is not necessarily the same).<sup>29</sup> The sites are about 7.5 km apart. The proximity and parallels (extrabiblical and biblical) make grand claims about a family Nimshi's regional dominance tempting. While there is no way to be assured of a relationship, it does seem to be a possibility.<sup>30</sup> S. Aḥituv and A. Mazar venture that "the recurrence of the name #mn points to the central role of the Nimshi clan as an elite one at Tel Reḥov and the Beth Shean Valley just before and during the reign of Jehu. This appears to be the region where Jehu came from and it is possible that the large city at Tel Reḥov was the family's hometown."<sup>31</sup> Such connections provide an opportunity to explore ideas about prominent individuals or families and their leadership in local networks like the Beth-Shean region.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Dobbs-Allsopp et al., *Hebrew Inscriptions*, 3.

<sup>29</sup> Mazar, "Three 10th-9th Century B.C.E. Inscriptions From Tel Reḥov"; Aḥituv and Mazar, "The Inscriptions from Tel Reḥov," 43–44, 64.

<sup>30</sup> Especially in light of geography in the Jehu narrative in 2 Kings 9. Mazar is more willing to connect them: "Among the finds in the area of the apiary was a pottery jar carrying the inscription *lmmš* ("belonging to Nimshi"). This name was found also in an inscription from stratum IV and in nearby Tel 'Amal. This name appears in the Bible as that Jehu's father and once as the name of his grandfather, perhaps indicating a family name. It may be surmised that this is the same family mentioned in the three inscriptions and that the Nimshi family was an important one centered at Tel Rehob and its vicinity. Perhaps it was even influential enough to construct such an apiary inside the crowded city." (Amihai Mazar, "Reḥob," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Bible and Archaeology* [ed. Daniel M. Master et al.; New York: Oxford University Press, 2013], 225).

<sup>31</sup> Aḥituv and Mazar, "The Inscriptions from Tel Reḥov," 64.

<sup>32</sup> See further discussion in Chapter Seven.

## Kefar Veradim

An engraved, finely made bronze bowl was found in a burial cave at Kefar Veradim (Cave 3).<sup>33</sup> The bronze bowl is of high quality, and its owner likely hired a scribe to engrave it. The inscription is also of exceptional quality and appears to be Phoenician.<sup>34</sup> It reads *ks psh bn šm* , “cup of Psh, son of Šema.” The inscription corresponds to other eleventh to tenth century examples, and the ceramic assemblage fits in the tenth to eighth century range broadly. Y. Alexandre assigns the burial to the tenth century based, in part, on the style of the bronze bowl (with late eleventh century parallels in Tanis, notably in Psusennes I’s burial) and the Cyriot Black-on-Red pottery (BoR), especially the kraters and jugs.<sup>35</sup> The burial overall testifies to a family of extraordinary wealth that had the means to make use of not only a scribe but also imported goods. The burial setting adds even more to the statement of the family’s wealth in that valuable items were dedicated to a use that eliminated them from the activities of the living. The family was able to afford investment in goods that would not be used again. Alexandre explores many parallels for the find, among which is the strikingly similar burial deposit from Tekke, Crete, with an inscribed bronze bowl, deposited

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<sup>33</sup> Yardenna Alexandre, “A Canaanite-Early Phoenician Inscribed Bronze Bowl in an Iron Age IIA-B Burial Cave at Kefar Veradim, Northern Israel,” *Maarav* 13/1 (2006): 7–41, 129–32. The cave was carved and originally used in the Middle Bronze Age. The Iron Age burials were apparently undisturbed but poorly preserved.

<sup>34</sup> See also Byrne, “The Refuge of Scribalism,” 20–21; Rollston, “The Phoenician Script of the Tel Zayit Abecedary,” 78–79; Rollston, *Writing and Literacy*, 27–29; Ahituv and Mazar, “The Inscriptions from Tel Rehov,” 54–55. Rollston states unequivocally, “There can be no question about the fact that this inscription is written in the Phoenician script. In fact, it is a superb Phoenician script...” (Rollston, “The Phoenician Script of the Tel Zayit Abecedary,” 79).

<sup>35</sup> Alexandre, “A Canaanite-Early Phoenician Inscribed Bronze Bowl,” 13–20. Benjamin Sass has proposed a later date based on Assyrian parallels, among other factors, but his position has not convinced many; see review of his claim in Rollston, *Writing and Literacy*, 27–29; and Ahituv and Mazar, “The Inscriptions from Tel Rehov,” 54–55.

in a burial, which reads *ks.šm* ‘ [ ] *bn l*’ [ ] [ ], “the cup of Šema, son of L[ ].”<sup>36</sup> Both burials contained a wealth of grave goods, many of which were imported and luxury items, including many BoR vessels and, not insignificantly, the use of the Phoenician script.<sup>37</sup> It is highly significant that the closest parallels come from outside the southern Levant, from Crete and royal burials in Egypt, and that the Tekke and Kefar Veradim burials reflect an international character in the tenth century.

### Inscribed Arrowheads

Numerous arrowheads, many inscribed, dating to the Iron I or early Iron II periods were published in the mid-twentieth century.<sup>38</sup> A portion of them are reported to have come from ʿEl Khaḍr near Bethlehem. They seem to have a common origin or manufacture and became known to scholars after appearing on the antiquities market. While many of the items are unprovenanced, the discovery of some in controlled excavations (*after* the initial artifacts appeared on the market) confirms that some portion of the group is authentic.<sup>39</sup> With many cases of forgery in the region now well known, the arrowheads alone cannot be an anchor for any historical conclusions. At the same time, some are authentic, and they corroborate the pattern emerging. The inscribed arrowheads follow a formula, *hš* + PN,

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<sup>36</sup> Alexandre, “A Canaanite-Early Phoenician Inscribed Bronze Bowl,” 28.

<sup>37</sup> Noted by Seth Sanders (personal communication).

<sup>38</sup> There are apparently forty-three now known. They have been found and purchased throughout the Levantine region, Lebanon, Israel/Palestine, and Jordan. The collection has provoked a number of publications: J. T. Milik and Frank M. Cross, “Inscribed Javelin-Heads from the Period of the Judges: A Recent Discovery in Palestine,” *BASOR* 134 (1954): 5–15; J. T. Milik, “An Unpublished Arrow-Head with Phoenician Inscription of the 11th-10th Century B. C.,” *BASOR* 143 (1956): 3–6; Cross, “Newly Found Inscriptions.” See also discussions in Gibson, *TSSI* 3.1–8; Avishur, *Phoenician Inscriptions and the Bible*; Alexandre, “A Canaanite-Early Phoenician Inscribed Bronze Bowl,” 28; Byrne, “The Refuge of Scribalism,” 19, 23; Sanders, *The Invention of Hebrew*, 106–108; Rollston, *Writing and Literacy*, 65–66.

<sup>39</sup> Rollston, *Writing and Literacy*, 65–66.

“Arrowhead of PN,” accompanied in some cases by a patronymic or gentilic element. They appear to be Phoenician and may have belonged to traveling, professional soldiers or were used in divination practices.<sup>40</sup> Most likely they document not only the holder of the arrowhead but also a relationship to local or regional elite. These prestige objects conveyed messages of not only wealth but also power and dominance.<sup>41</sup>

## Discussion

The inscriptions in this group have in common the documentation of personal names and the marking of materials. Assuming the knowledge of a specialist was required, we have a growing list of individuals or families who employed scribes (on at least one occasion) or were literate: Ḥanan (Tel Batash, Beth-Shemesh), Alyattes and Oletas (Tell es-Safi), Mt’ and Naḥum (Tel Rehov), Nimš (Tel ‘Amal, Tel Rehov), Pšḥ ben-Šema (Kefar Veradim), and the ‘El Khaḍr arrowheads’ commissioner(s).<sup>42</sup> While it is important to be mindful of the accidental nature of this kind of evidence—like the scribal exercises, there can be little certainty of how representative this sample is of tenth-century activity—there does appear to be a fairly consistent picture emerging. Based on this evidence, writing was used in the late eleventh and tenth centuries to demonstrate/document ownership or patronage of some kind.

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<sup>40</sup> Milik, “An Unpublished Arrow-Head,” 5–6.

<sup>41</sup> Byrne and Sanders look beyond the artifact to larger power structures implied by such artifacts. According to Byrne, “Elite commission of scribal inscriptions extends also to elite retainers who name their lieges on the arrowhead. Prestige accrues both to the retainer as ‘man of so-and-so’ and to the patron with men thus bedecked with status sigla” (“The Refuge of Scribalism,” 19). Sanders stresses the complex messages that were conveyed: “As these warlords attempted to consolidate power, the means of communication was literally inscribed onto the means of coercion. Writing helped make military groups elite by distinguishing their weapons: inscribed they could speak for them and memorialize them” (Sanders, *The Invention of Hebrew*, 107).

<sup>42</sup> Ash is dismissive of the value of the tenth-century inscriptions for conveying information about social status or change in this period, e.g., he characterizes the Tel ‘Amal inscription as “only a personal name” and “graffito,” which seems inappropriate as it was inscribed prior to firing, and the Tel Batash inscription as “a potter’s name” (“Solomon’s? District? List,” 72, note 22).

In some cases, we have good reason to believe that the owners were of uncommon wealth and status. Most often, there is some evidence of interactions—and potentially influence—beyond the settlement in which the inscription was discovered (e.g., similar names, formula, or associated vessels [or arrowheads] at more than one site, non-Semitic names).

## **Two Additional Inscriptions**

### **Khirbet Qeiyafa**

Excavators of Khirbet Qeiyafa, directed by Garfinkel and Ganor, discovered an ostrakon during the 2008 excavation season.<sup>43</sup> The writing is not well preserved, so there has been great difficulty in establishing a definitive reading, not to mention a translation. What has been established is that the text is written in Early Alphabetic script in a Northwest Semitic language. Most readings understand the text to consist of five lines written dextrograde, but it is also possible that the text was written vertically.<sup>44</sup>

From the first reports, debates have surrounded this find. The excavators date the ostrakon's archaeological context to the tenth century, but epigraphers stress the script is characteristic of the eleventh century.<sup>45</sup> While some argue the language of the text can be identified as Hebrew, others more cautiously include a number of candidates (e.g., Phoenician, Moabite) or state that there simply are not characteristics distinct enough to any

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<sup>43</sup> Haggai Misgav, Yosef Garfinkel, and Saar Ganor, "The Ostrakon," in *Khirbet Qeiyafa Vol. 1, Excavation Report 2007-2008* (ed. Yosef Garfinkel and Saar Ganor; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society; Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2009), 243–57; Ada Yardeni, "Further Observations on the Ostrakon," in *Khirbet Qeiyafa Vol. 1, Excavation Report 2007-2008* (ed. Yosef Garfinkel and Saar Ganor; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society; Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2009), 259–60.

<sup>44</sup> Christopher Rollston, "The Khirbet Qeiyafa Ostrakon: Methodological Musings and Caveats," *TA* 38 (2011): 77.

<sup>45</sup> Or even earlier (*ibid.*, 76–77).

one language in the Northwest Semitic family to rule out all others.<sup>46</sup> Proponents of the Low Chronology have criticized the archaeological findings, and various scholars have cautioned against some of the historical reconstructions that have accompanied interpretation of the text.<sup>47</sup> At present, there is still much to be determined.

Nevertheless, preliminary interpretations are numerous and can be summarized as falling into three groups. The text appears to be either an ethical/social/political writing, a list of names, or (and not exclusive with the last) a scribal exercise.<sup>48</sup> Those who read the text as an ethical, social, or political document note that the first few letters appear to be an exhortation: *ʾlt ʾš* “Do not do...” (or another verb). A number of words might signal ethical or social concerns: *špṭ* (“judge”), *ʾbd* (“do, work, serve”), *ʾlmnh* (“widow”), *mlk* (“king”). Those who argue for a name list or scribal exercise note that many difficulties in reconstructing a continuous prose text are resolved by such an interpretation. Some of the possible names include Phoenician names Bod-Milk, Shaphat, Abda, Gerbaal.<sup>49</sup>

## Jerusalem

In 2012, Eilat Mazar’s excavation team discovered an inscription at Jerusalem’s Ophel site.<sup>50</sup> The incomplete inscription, on two joined sherds, was incised below the rim of a large pithos prior to firing. The crushed vessel, along with approximately six others, was

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 71–78.

<sup>47</sup> See *ibid.*, 79–80.

<sup>48</sup> For review of the various proposals, see Rollston, “The Khirbet Qeiyafa Ostrakon”; and Aaron Demsky, “An Iron Age IIA Alphabetic Writing Exercise from Khirbet Qeiyafa,” *IEJ* 62/2 (2012): 186–99.

<sup>49</sup> Edward M. Cook, “Olive Pits and Alef-Bets: Notes on the Qeiyafa Ostrakon,” *Ralph the Sacred River*, March 14, 2010, online: <http://ralphriver.blogspot.com/2010/03/olive-pits-and-alef-bets-notes-on.html>.

<sup>50</sup> Eilat Mazar, David Ben-Shlomo, and Shmuel Ahituv, “An Inscribed Pithos from the Ophel, Jerusalem,” *IEJ* 63 (2013): 39–49.

used as a fill beneath a floor, yielding an early Iron IIA archaeological context. The script is eleventh-tenth century Early Alphabetic, and the text is written dextrograde.<sup>51</sup> It consists of seven letters. E. Mazar, D. Ben-Shlomo and S. Ahituv suggest that the inscription originally circled the entire rim and that the letter at the far right of what has been preserved may be the beginning of the inscription. Ahituv provides the initial epigraphic assessment. He reads *m q p ḥ n l? n* (the sixth letter is at a break in the sherds). Since this series of letters does not result in an intelligible phrase, he suggests the inscription may be non-Semitic. He also suggests that the inscription might designate an owner, destination, or contents of the pithos.<sup>52</sup> A possession formula has been put forward by Rollston, which seems to be the best solution so far. He reads, *m q l ḥ n r š*, with a partial translation “pot belonging to Ner.”<sup>53</sup>

### **Discussion**

These newer discoveries have promoted even more vigorous debate about scribes, literacy, Iron Age states, and Davidic and Solomonic kingdoms. Khirbet Qeiyafa’s excavators make explicit claims about a direct relationship between Khirbet Qeiyafa and a centralized, Davidic administration in Jerusalem. E. Mazar’s discovery has generated enthusiasm among those who seek evidence of writing in the eleventh-tenth century in order to refute minimalist criticism of the biblical history of Jerusalem. As exciting as these early inscriptions are, neither example provides evidence of people or events known from the biblical history or proves anything about complex states at the time. As Rollston warns: “An

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<sup>51</sup> Christopher Rollston, “The Decipherment of the New ‘Incised Jerusalem Pithos,’” *Rollston Epigraphy*, July 11, 2013, online: <http://www.rollstonepigraphy.com/?p=561>; see also Alan R. Millard, “The New Jerusalem Inscription—So What?,” *BAR* 40/3 (2014): 49–53.

<sup>52</sup> Mazar, Ben-Shlomo, and Ahituv, “An Inscribed Pithos from the Ophel, Jerusalem,” 47. Millard summarizes other interpretations (“The New Jerusalem Inscription”).

<sup>53</sup> Rollston, “The Decipherment of the New ‘Incised Jerusalem Pithos.’”

inscription does not a kingdom make.”<sup>54</sup> These discoveries do, however, contribute more to discussions of scribal ability, practices, and the relationships between writing and other aspects of life in the late eleventh and tenth centuries.

In this capacity, there are two notable observations relevant to the themes of this chapter. The first is that the two inscriptions, having been discovered in roughly the same region and archaeological period, represent very different spheres of scribal activity. Aḥituv notes the high quality of the Ophel inscription. The script of the Khirbet Qeiyafa ostrakon, however, appears to be less accomplished and even technologically backward, in that the script seems to be too old for the archaeological context, as if the Khirbet Qeiyafa scribal tradition remained isolated throughout the Iron I. The second observation, quite contrasting to the last and less likely, is that both inscriptions *might* testify to interregional relations, particularly if the Khirbet Qeiyafa inscription is a list of Phoenician (or Hebrew *and* Canaanite) names. The Ophel pithos, if not written in the Hebrew language, similarly records either commercial information or evidence of diversity in the city. All of these possibilities are speculative, however, until more can be understood of these items.

### **Preliminary Conclusions**

Based on the available evidence, it is reasonable to state that there was not widespread or common literacy by the tenth century.<sup>55</sup> Access to and knowledge of writing were limited to a small percentage of the population, and there was persistent maintenance

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<sup>54</sup> Rollston, “The Khirbet Qeiyafa Ostrakon,” 79. Demsky too advises caution (“An Iron Age IIA Alphabetic Writing Exercise from Khirbet Qeiyafa,” 186).

<sup>55</sup> Despite some assertions to the contrary. A. Mazar’s analysis will be discussed below. Alan Millard has also asserted that, since the Khirbet Qeiyafa inscription does not appear to be by a skilled hand, writing must have been widespread (“The Ostrakon from the Days of David Found at Khirbet Qeiyafa,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 62/1 [2011]).

of the craft within these small numbers. It is also likely that the most frequent use of writing was to mark possession or dedication of an object and that those who were able to do so occupied a privileged position in society. We are now left with questions of what other activities these types of people were involved in, especially whether this evidence can have any bearing on questions of interregional interaction. The most important connection that I will explore next is that of the relationships among rising elite, specialized activities like writing, and access to long-distance exchange.

### **The Assertion of Elite Status through Writing**

In response to recent epigraphic discoveries, S. Sanders, C. Rollston, and R. Byrne each present compelling arguments for rethinking some assumptions about ancient literacy. Sanders and Rollston draw our attention to the predominance of the scholarly view that becoming fluent in the Semitic alphabetic scripts would have been a swift and simple process.<sup>56</sup> This kind of thinking might lead to the idea that anyone would easily become literate in ancient Israel and that writing was not a limited or privileged activity. Such a notion conforms well with another assumption about early Israel, that it was egalitarian (and therefore the antithesis of urbanized and elite Canaanite society). In this idyllic depiction, we might imagine a classless society where the cultural wisdom passed to all members of small, peaceful hamlets. These images cannot be maintained especially in light of the more complicated material cultures in the archaeological record. Many settlements were culturally complex, and the material evidence shows diversity in wealth and status.<sup>57</sup> We can no longer

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<sup>56</sup> Propagated by Albright, Cross, and others; see Sanders, "What Was the Alphabet For?," 34–42; Rollston, "Scribal Education in Ancient Israel," 48–49; Rollston, "The Phoenician Script of the Tel Zayit Abecedary," 67–70.

<sup>57</sup> In addition to the evidence presented in this chapter, see Chapter Six.

hold to the earlier views that Iron II Israel developed from an egalitarian and homogenous Iron I existence.

Ryan Byrne argues convincingly for the use of alphabetic writing as a status statement in this transitional period:

The unprovenanced Iron I arrowheads indicate that they belonged not only to powerful men, but also to their retainers, whose inscribed equipment in turn enhanced the patrons' stature...the survivability of the alphabetic *haute couture* in the centuries after the ebb of Canaanite cuneiform ironically hinged on its own irrelevance, i.e., in its relevance to those who could afford the *luxury*. Perhaps this illuminates a peculiar pericope about the primordial monarchy. In each of David's entourage lists (2 Sam 8:16-18; 20:23-26), the king boasts a single scribe (Seraiah and Sheva, respectively). Some have taken this to represent a larger bureaucracy (or worse still, an Egyptian derivative), but the text makes more sense at face value. David retains a scribe when scribes are curiosities. The narrative is less interested in the hint of a chancery (certainly an anachronism) than the accentuation of a status retainer fashionable for the time. These scribes were less administrators than hagiographers.<sup>58</sup>

In this depiction, one's employment of a scribe conveyed one's ability to "afford the luxury," which would, in turn, convey distinction and power. When we see conspicuous consumption, even in a way that appears subtle compared to monumental creations like structures or statuary, we should expect that these status statements appear in response to others' similar behavior (or an accepted model for elite behavior). For this point, it is important to keep in mind the appropriate cultural context. In the southern Levant at this time, the employment of a scribe may be quite distinguishing from others. By doing so, one would emulate well-known powers and compete with more localized individuals or groups. Indeed, it is suggestive that by the tenth century, certain types of evidence appear in

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<sup>58</sup> Byrne, "The Refuge of Scribalism," 23; emphasis in the original.

geographic clusters. Inscriptions, like other specialized or imported goods, should be interpreted as prestige material culture.<sup>59</sup> It is not uncommon to find these items together or concentrated in certain regions. Rather than view the few inscriptions as anomalous or insignificant in being “only a name,” we can posit that they indicate rising elites who were competing for recognition in the region as it was transitioning through the economic and cultural disruption of the previous era.

The excavations at Tel Rehov provide an interesting test case for both the relationships among writing, elites, and exchange and the role of scholarly expectations. As we have seen, excavators have discovered an unparalleled number of inscriptions from the Iron IIA period (tenth to ninth centuries). A. Mazar, director of the project, has interpreted the inscriptions as a general increase in literacy in society and as evidence against the proposal of D. W. Jamieson-Drake that that amount of inscriptions correlates to social complexity and the presence of a state-level organization.<sup>60</sup> In various publications, Mazar stresses that the early inscriptions in general, and the Tel Rehov finds particularly, are evidence of the “everyday use of writing,” “writing on everyday objects,” and “the spread of literacy in daily activities” and “for routine purposes.”<sup>61</sup> He is building a case for the possibility of a complex state prior to evidence of institutions of writing (such as royal administrations) and monumental inscriptions. In his effort to demonstrate that there is

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<sup>59</sup> Jamieson-Drake argues well why inscriptions should be viewed as prestige goods in his chapter “Luxury Items” (*Scribes and Schools*, 107–135). To illustrate through another type of evidence, I look at nonlocal ceramics in Chapter Six.

<sup>60</sup> Mazar, “Three 10th-9th Century B.C.E. Inscriptions From Tel Rehov”; Ahituv and Mazar, “The Inscriptions from Tel Rehov,” 63.

<sup>61</sup> Mazar, “Three 10th-9th Century B.C.E. Inscriptions From Tel Rehov”; Mazar, “Rehov,” 226; Ahituv and Mazar, “The Inscriptions from Tel Rehov,” 63.

enough evidence of writing to support the advent of monarchy, he rules out another important interpretation.

Mazar acknowledges but downplays the possibility that writing should be viewed as an elite activity at Tel Rehov. His initial discussion is tucked away in the final footnote of his 2003 report on the first three inscriptions discovered at the site. It was prompted by comments from D. Edelman that the ninth-century inscriptions came from what might be a public building and should be attributed to elite, not common, use of writing.<sup>62</sup> Mazar responds, "...the general argument against literacy before the 8<sup>th</sup> century is that it either did not exist at all or was limited to the royal court. Even if the Tel Rehov inscriptions are related to elite activity, this was a local elite of priests, merchants, etc. Thus, the inscriptions should signify the spread of literacy to a broad spectrum of Israelite society."<sup>63</sup> A critical assumption here is that "local elite" were part of "a broad spectrum" who presumably received their knowledge through a relationship to a centralized (i.e., Davidic) state. Literacy, in Mazar's implied argument, emanated from a central Israelite power.

In addition, his response to the nature of the archaeological context glossed over critical information about the site. The assemblages corresponding to the inscriptions speak to *uncommon* wealth and connections, even at the time of the 2003 publication. In addition to evidence of scribal activity and significant wealth, Aegean ceramic imports were discovered at Tel Rehov in the same periods as the inscriptions (i.e., in tenth and ninth-

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<sup>62</sup> Their debate implicitly references Jamieson-Drake's arguments about scribal schools appearing no earlier than the eighth century, on which Edelman relies. The two sides have in common the assumption that literacy was accessible and had to be widespread, which is also derived from Jamieson-Drake's arguments although he is somewhat inconsistent on the matter (*Scribes and Schools*, 148–149, 153).

<sup>63</sup> Mazar, "Three 10<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> Century B.C.E. Inscriptions," note 16. It is notable that though he refers to a "scribe" when discussing the character of the inscriptions, Mazar does not acknowledge or consider those who would have such knowledge to be necessarily in or employed by an elite group.

century contexts). It is notable that, at present, eight of eleven inscriptions and three of the eight imported Greek sherds were found in Area C.<sup>64</sup> In Mazar's 2003 interpretation, he ruled out the possibility that local elite groups were important, independent players in regional and longer-distance interactions. In more recent seasons, a unique apiary complex (Area C), an elite "patrician" house (Building F in Area C), an ivory statuette (Area C, near Building F), zooarchaeological evidence of feasting at the site, and additional evidence of economic stratification and interregional exchange have dramatically changed the appearance of the site in the Iron IIA period.<sup>65</sup> The importance of a well-established elite group (probably not exclusively "Israelite") is now acknowledged.<sup>66</sup> Even so, Mazar stresses that inscriptions were found in mundane contexts throughout the site, ruling out an exclusively elite, state enterprise.<sup>67</sup>

Sanders has argued for a more nuanced understanding of the scribal enterprise at this time, emphasizing that writing need not be confined to the category of a state bureaucracy:

The simplest explanation for the persistence of the linear alphabet between the Late Bronze Age collapse and the Iron IIB renaissance of writing is that writing was a small-scale luxury craft (Byrne 2007). The goal of these scribes' work was to signify local powers such as the king of Amurru (witness the arrowheads bearing his name) but through inscriptions on

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<sup>64</sup> Nicolas Coldstream and Amihai Mazar, "Greek Pottery from Tel Rehov and Iron Age Chronology," *IEJ* 53 (2003): 29–48; Ahituv and Mazar, "The Inscriptions from Tel Rehov." It is also significant that several inscriptions were on "hippo" jars, which appear to be closely related to exchange with Phoenicia.

<sup>65</sup> Amihai Mazar, "An Ivory Statuette Depicting an Enthroned Figure from Tel Rehov," in *Bilder Als Quellen, Images as Sources: Studies on Ancient Near Eastern Artefacts and the Bible Inspired by the Work of Othmar Keel* (ed. Susanne Bickel et al.; OBO; Fribourg; Göttingen: Academic Press; Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), 101–10; Amihai Mazar and Nava Panitz-Cohen, "It Is the Land of Honey: Beekeeping at Tel Rehov," *NEA* 70/4 (2007): 202–19; Nimrud Marom et al., "Backbone of Society: Evidence for Social and Economic Status of the Iron Age Population of Tel Rehov, Beth-Shean Valley, Israel," *BASOR* 354 (2009): 1–21; Mazar, "Rehov"; Ahituv and Mazar, "The Inscriptions from Tel Rehov."

<sup>66</sup> Mazar, "Rehov."

<sup>67</sup> Ahituv and Mazar, "The Inscriptions from Tel Rehov," 63.

portable luxury items such as engraved weapons, not monuments. The linear alphabet's durability was tied to a small-scale, adaptable craft tradition serving elites but free of allegiance to any specific dialect or regime.<sup>68</sup>

This alternate sphere of activity and influence creates a space in which the inscriptions surveyed here can be situated. There is no need to force the characterization of a state system or label a court-sponsored scribal education that made these texts possible. Elite patronage (following Byrne's characterization) seems a more likely explanation. The inscriptions and their corresponding evidence (ceramic assemblages, geographic and historical positions) suggest that elite families or structures become visible in these tenth-century remains. Even the diversity of contexts in which the Tel Rehov inscriptions have been found fits with this interpretation. The scribal activity may have been *sponsored* by the elite leadership, whose reach went beyond specialized residences or structures. It seems plausible that those who emerged in status at this time came from entities (whether it be families or locales) that weathered the economic and cultural transitions better than some others or who filled niches that translated into local status, for example, perhaps an émigré who retained connections to another region<sup>69</sup> or a person in a position of leadership over a border zone (e.g., Beth-Shemesh, Tel Zayit<sup>70</sup>) or a major traffic area (e.g., Tel Rehov).

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<sup>68</sup> Sanders, "From People to Public in the Iron Age Levant," 106.

<sup>69</sup> Despite the anachronistic language, the Iron I period was a time of widespread displacement and migration. We should expect that not all connections to previous "homelands" were lost even across long distances.

<sup>70</sup> In the case of Tel Zayit, the site appears to be at the westernmost edge of an emerging cultural group related to development in the Judean highlands. Overall the ceramic assemblage exhibits qualities of blended coastal and inland cultures without strong signs of Philistine occupation (Ron E. Tappy et al., "An Abecedary," 21–23). We can imagine what regional importance might be ascribed to an individual who managed this site capably, especially between two often incompatible cultural groups. The excavators' views are slightly different from this interpretation, envisioning a regional dynamic similar to Mazar: "...the appearance of an abecedary in an outlying town some distance from the capital city of Jerusalem demonstrates a movement toward literacy in the extreme western frontier of the kingdom during the mid-tenth century B.C.E." (ibid., 24). This kind of scenario a) assumes literacy spread consistently and equally among the population rather than

### **Cross-Cultural Material: Byblos and Egypt**

In the neighboring regions, Byblos and Egypt, we see some similar developments. These two polities have dramatically different histories from the southern Levantine sites, but they also struggled to recover in the wake of the Late Bronze collapse and experienced transformations in organization as the early Iron Age developed. In all regions, new leadership rose to power and had to establish themselves. From both Byblos and Egypt, we have evidence of the use of inscriptions for legitimating power as well as for documenting interaction. The evidence for Byblos and Egypt is undoubtedly different from the southern Levant: we have royal inscriptions from both cultures as well as strong evidence of trade from the Egyptian Report of Wenamun. A comparison between Egypt and Byblos on the one hand and the southern Levantine sites on the other is not a simple issue.<sup>71</sup> It must be carried out carefully and on relative terms. What we will find is that all three regions provide evidence of elites' use of inscriptions to promote their authority and legitimacy, and in the Egyptian and Byblian examples, the connection between elite status and exchange becomes explicit. While we cannot transfer all of this information unaltered to the southern Levant, it

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through selective and sporadic use and b) assumes more centralization than may have been necessary in the development of a political identity. They argue Tel Zayit should be situated in a historical context of “the nascent kingdom of Judah, which by traditional reckoning began as a regionally based, patrimonial kingdom under David and Solomon in tenth-century B.C.E. Jerusalem” and should be viewed “not as an isolated peasant village, but as a significant town benefiting from centralized control over both natural and human resources in this region” (ibid., 42). But could we not also explain the site (rather than “an outlying town” or “an isolated peasant village”) as one with an important geographic location and a potentially important local elite that might have been courted by or allied to the likes of a David or Solomon in the process leading to a larger-scale polity?

<sup>71</sup> Jamieson-Drake presents important cautions for cross-cultural comparison and ultimately rejects using parallels from Egypt and other locations (*Scribes and Schools*, 152–153). His main concern is that scholars have not so much compared as imported information from other locations and time periods. The comparisons that I attempt here are based on how individuals used writing (regardless of the extent or context of the example), and in all three regions, writing documented a name and likely also status, so the comparisons are warranted.

is very suggestive that the constellation of rising power, use of writing, and exchange would also be present (albeit on a different scale).

### **Royal Inscriptions: Byblos**

From opposite ends of the tenth century, we have documentation of two lines of rulers over Byblos. Both groups used scribes to assert their rightful place as leaders, and in the second half of the century, they also document exchange activities with Egypt.

### **Aḥiram and ʾIttobaʿal**

The oldest and best-known Iron Age inscription from Byblos is the Aḥiram sarcophagus.<sup>72</sup> Aḥiram, who ruled at the end of the eleventh century, was immortalized by his son ʾIttobaʿal, in what is the first substantial inscription after the Sea Peoples moved through the area.<sup>73</sup> The inscription consists of a statement documenting Aḥiram as the occupant and ʾIttobaʿal as the provider of the sarcophagus, as well as a curse warning future rulers to be respectful of the burial—all of which is ironic since the sarcophagus appears to be in secondary use. The nature of the inscription (on a reused object; was ʾIttobaʿal not able to command resources for a new one?) and the content suggest that Aḥiram and ʾIttobaʿal's positions were not secure but that they used a scribe to document their place, as the inscription reads, “for eternity.”

### **Yeḥimilk and Successors**

Aḥiram's dynasty was not to last, and by the mid-tenth century, we have documentation of another series of Byblian rulers. Each discusses his relationship to the

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<sup>72</sup> W. F. Albright, “The Phoenician Inscriptions of the Tenth Century B. C. from Byblus,” *JAOS* 67/3 (1947): 153–60; Gibson, *TSSI* 3.12–18; Avishur, *Phoenician Inscriptions and the Bible*, 103–104 and notes 3–4; Marilyn J. Lundberg, “Editor’s Notes: The Aḥiram Inscription,” *Maarav* 11/1 (2004): 81–93.

<sup>73</sup> Gibson, *TSSI* 3.13.

Byblian deities, most often Ba‘alat Gebal, the Mistress of Byblos, who was also identified with Egyptian Hathor. Yehimilk’s inscription documents his restoration of the city’s temple complex.<sup>74</sup> In it, he describes himself as “the legitimate and rightful king” of Byblos. He does not use a hereditary claim to the throne but instead proves himself through his inscribed assertion and deeds, namely rebuilding key structures. His efforts are in line with the legitimization of a new power in the region, and Yehimilk’s actions demonstrated success through public construction, complete with inscriptions.

Yehimilk’s successors, Abiba‘al and Eliba‘al, in addition to continuing to employ scribes for royal projects, provide explicit evidence of interregional exchange. Abiba‘al’s text is inscribed on the base of a statue of the Egyptian pharaoh Shoshenq I, which must have been produced in the second half of the tenth century. In the incomplete inscription, it appears that Abiba‘al claims to have traveled to Egypt and brought back the statue to ensure good favor from the Mistress of Byblos.<sup>75</sup> While the nature of the relationship between Byblos and Egypt is not explained, the inscription stands as a testimony to renewed relations between the two parties.

Similarly, Eliba‘al inscribed a statue of Osorkon I towards the end of the tenth century. His text goes beyond his predecessor and states that he had the statue made for the

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 17–18. Most translations emend *b’l gbl* to *b’lt gbl* because of the frequency of the latter and infrequency of the former. Aaron Schade argues this emendation is not necessary, and the inscription should be translated as it was written (“The Syntax and Literary Structure of the Phoenician Inscription of Yehimilk,” *Maarav* 13/1 [2006]: 120–121). The presence of the goddess in this inscription is not too critical unless one would argue that her appearance in the subsequent inscriptions is fundamentally linked to renewed relations with Egypt.

<sup>75</sup> The text is incomplete but implies that Abiba‘al journeyed to Egypt (Gibson, *TSSI* 3.21): “[Statue which] Abiba‘al king of [Byblos son of .....]/ [king of] Byblos brought from Egypt for the Mistress [of Byblos, his lady. May the Mistress of Byblos prolong the days and years of Abiba‘al] over Byblos!” There is some question, because Abiba‘al’s lineage is not documented/preserved, where he falls in the Yehimilk dynasty, thus making it possible that he was not a contemporary of Shoshenq I. It would not be unusual for him to be a brother or uncle to Eliba‘al.

Mistress of Byblos.<sup>76</sup> Gibson suggests that this inscription, like Abiba'al's, served to elevate the reputation and status of the Byblian king to the level of a pharaoh.<sup>77</sup> The history of Byblian and Egyptian relations transcended the LB crises and continued to be meaningful for supporting a king's rule. Based on this Byblian evidence, the connections between elites of different regions increased or became more important in the second half of the tenth century. In addition, we see a relationship between inscriptions and an elite's status or legitimacy throughout the century.

### **Royal Inscriptions: Egypt**

Although scant when compared to other periods in Egyptian history, the tenth-century pharaohs did leave significant evidence of their activities in inscriptions, and epigraphic evidence increases throughout the century. The summary below focuses on records that speak to the use of writing to assert one's position and Egypt's involvement with other lands, especially the southern Levant. The texts are arranged chronologically, followed by the Report of Wenamun.

### **Siamun**

One relief fragment from Siamun's reign (mid-tenth century) may indicate that he conducted a military campaign into the southern Levant. An Aegean-style(?) axe is depicted on the fragment leading some scholars to propose that Siamun was involved in battle with Philistines, possibly in the campaign against Gezer described in 1 Kgs 9:16.<sup>78</sup> The

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 21–22. Eliba'al's son and successor, Shipitba'al (ninth century), is also documented through royal inscriptions. He recorded repairs to a wall of the supportive structure for the temple area to Hathor/Mistress of Byblos; see *ibid.*, 23–24.

<sup>77</sup> *TSSI* 3.22.

<sup>78</sup> There is much debate regarding this fragment and interpretations of it. Especially contentious is the identification of the weapon and whether it can be informative for the enemy's identity. See Chapter Three.

identification of a foreign culture through an Egyptian artist's depiction of a battle (that the artist very likely did not witness) is undoubtedly a tenuous claim, but it remains a popular interpretation of the relief. While it would be extremely helpful to have evidence of a campaign against the Philistines or other inhabitants of the region, it is sufficient to observe that Egyptian artistic conventions regularly made note of non-Egyptians through cultural attributes, which this scene appears to do. In other words, regardless the identity of the enemy, Egyptian leadership returned to depicting campaigns against foreigners in monumental inscriptions after a break following the end of the Ramessides. The use of this convention, which relied on professional artists and scribes, makes the claim that Siamun was a worthy and powerful king.

## Shoshenq I

Shoshenq's reign (mid to late tenth century) continued in the practice of documenting the king's activities and provides the clearest evidence of interaction between Egypt and the southern Levant. The best demonstration comes from his victory inscription at Karnak. He invaded the southern Levant in the second half of the tenth century and recorded



**Figure 5:2: Possible reconstruction of Shoshenq's Levantine campaign (Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 170)**

the campaign on the Bubastite gate of the Karnak temple.<sup>79</sup> Shoshenq's Levantine incursion was military in nature and, based on the depiction, was meant to demonstrate the dominating power that Shoshenq held over other lands (Figure 5:2). The underlying motivation for the campaign, however, is harder to discern, but there is good reason to believe that he made an effort to control trade routes.<sup>80</sup> His presence in the region is attested through a stele fragment found in Megiddo.<sup>81</sup> A scarab bearing Shoshenq's name was found in the Faynan region (Khirbat Hamra Ifdan), which may indicate not only that his campaign passed as far east as the Edomite lowlands but also that copper production in the area was a target of the campaign.<sup>82</sup> Further north, he is represented in the statue inscribed by Abiba'al. Evidence of additional interregional exchange comes from Shoshenq's record of the presentation of tribute from both Syria and Nubia to Amun in a temple inscription.<sup>83</sup> His interaction with lands outside of Egypt was the most successful of the Third Intermediate Period pharaohs, and we know about it because of his commissioning of monuments and inscriptions. Their presence in Egypt and abroad testified to his power and legitimacy.

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<sup>79</sup> Much attention has been given to this inscription especially in the context of the tenth-century and historicity of the United Monarchy debates (see Chapter One). For a more recent discussion focused on the inscription itself, see Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 185–189.

<sup>80</sup> See Chapters Three and Seven.

<sup>81</sup> Robert S. Lamon and Geoffrey M. Shipton, *Megiddo I: Seasons of 1925-1934, Strata I-V* (Oriental Institute Communications 42; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), 60–61, fig. 70. The choice of Megiddo for such a display of power must have been related to the international traffic that passed through the site.

<sup>82</sup> The scarab was discovered as a surface find at Khirbat Hamra Ifdan (Stefan Münger and Thomas E. Levy, "The Iron Age Egyptian Amulet Assemblage," in *New Insights into the Iron Age Archaeology of Edom, Southern Jordan: Surveys, Excavations and Research from the University of California, San Diego & Department of Antiquities of Jordan, Edom Lowlands Regional Archaeology Project [ELRAP]* [ed. T. E. Levy et al.; Monumenta Archaeologica 35; Los Angeles: The Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press, 2014], 748–749, 758.

<sup>83</sup> James H. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt: Historical Documents from the Earliest Times to the Persian Conquest*, vol. IV (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1906), §723.

## Osorkon I

Osorkon I's record is not as impressive as Shoshenq I, but he also asserted his power through inscriptions and statuary. Osorkon compiled a catalogue of temple gifts and offerings, which attest to his ability to amass a significant amount of wealth.<sup>84</sup> In addition, like Shoshenq I, Osorkon asserted his status abroad through statuary, which Eliba'al then used to promote his own position and piety in Byblos.

### Administrator's Statue, Twenty-second? Dynasty

A statue in Baltimore's Walters Art Gallery may document Egyptian involvement in the southern Levant through an official's use of statuary and inscriptions. The practice of an official, rather than a king, creating a monument is not unusual for Egypt generally, but if indeed from the tenth century, this indicates a broader use of scribes. Like a number of the objects in this survey, the statue was created previously (in the Middle Kingdom) but reused.<sup>85</sup> The end of the inscription reads "...the impartial envoy of Philistine Canaan, Pa-di-iset, son of Apy."<sup>86</sup> Georg Steindorff, who first published the object, argues for a date following Shoshenq's campaign into Palestine based on the method of reuse and the relationship to the southern Levant. The inscription itself, however, does not provide any clearer clues for dating. It is possible that Pa-di-iset's career later than the tenth century.

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., §§729–737.

<sup>85</sup> Georg Steindorff, "The Statuette of an Egyptian Commissioner in Syria," *JEA* 25/1 (1939): 30–33, plate VII.

<sup>86</sup> Walters Art Gallery, "Statue of a Vizier, Usurped by Pa-di-iset," online: <http://art.thewalters.org/viewwoa.aspx?id=33246>. Steindorff translates the location in the inscription as "Canaan and Palestine"; the Egyptian reads *plst* (Steindorff, "The Statuette of an Egyptian Commissioner in Syria," 31–32, note VIII). He also argues that the official's father was Canaanite (compare עִפְיָ in Jer 40:8 [*qere*]). See also Itamar Singer, "Egyptians, Canaanites, and Philistines," 330.

## **Discussion**

Egypt appears to be the most accomplished in the use of scribes and interregional interaction during this period. In addition to the inscriptions, the items that kings commissioned were monumental including statuary, stele, and temple work. We also know, however, from both historical and archaeological sources that Egypt was not the world power it was previously and that stable, familial dynasties were not the norm. The rulers had to vie for their position and legitimacy through visible and powerful means: construction, conquest, and conspicuous inscriptions. Generally, it becomes apparent that individuals often made use of previously made objects (e.g., sarcophagus, statuary) and employed a scribe in order to establish their status. Even those of the highest order, Byblian kings, secondarily used objects, which implies that the wealth and authority required to commission original works were not yet established. Even if other luxuries were lacking, one could “make a statement” through an inscription. It also becomes clear that in the second half of the tenth century, there is additional reason for documenting interregional interaction through inscriptions. Abiba‘al, Eliba‘al, Siamun, Shoshenq I, Osorkon I, and the official Pa-di-iset included mention of their relations with other regions in their inscriptions. Interactions appear to have become more possible or regular in the second half of the century, at least for those in elite positions. The inclusion of their interactions in their documentation suggests that the long-distance relations were significant in establishing one’s importance.

## **The Report of Wenamun**

The Report of Wenamun provides a view of exchange and interaction as well as changes in elite status across the eastern Mediterranean during the LB to Iron Age

transition.<sup>87</sup> It is set in the days of the New Kingdom's decline and follows a representative of the Egyptian state in his effort to acquire building materials (primarily cedar) for the Barque of Amun. The semi-fictional account probably relied on real-life experiences of travel in the region and may depict "a true historical situation and a precise moment."<sup>88</sup> As the New Kingdom as well as other LB powers declined, exchange relationships were turned upside down and former vassals asserted their authority in trade activities.

The Report claims that trade activities among Egypt, the Levantine coastland, and Cyprus continued despite the political upheaval of the time. The relationships, however, had changed dramatically from the Ramesside heyday. Exchange partners no longer treated Egypt with the deference that was customary in previous years. Instead, centers like Dor and Byblos asserted new-found autonomy and authority over their ports and goods.<sup>89</sup> In the void of imperial Egypt, not only were new powers exerting influence in trade relations, but they were also dominating the trade network. Newcomers like the Sea Peoples (e.g., Tjeker at

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<sup>87</sup> The tale opens with a reference to year 5, which has been interpreted to be either the fifth year of Ramses XI's Renaissance (in his nineteenth year) or the fifth year of the next ruler Smendes. This is the typical understanding of the text. There are alternative arguments for later authorship. Edward F. Wente Jr. suggests in his introduction to the Report: "The weakening of the older pharaonic concept of kingship possibly relates to the Libyan tribal background of Dynasty 21. At any rate, the report clearly reflects the decline of Egypt's prestige abroad following the collapse of the New Kingdom empire" (in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry* [ed. William Kelly Simpson; New Haven, Conn.; London: Yale University Press, 2003], 116. See also Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature: A Book of Readings*, vol. II: The New Kingdom [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973], 224–231. Benjamin Sass argues that this tale was composed during Shoshenq's reign ("Wenamun and His Levant – 1075 B.C. or 925 B.C.?", *Egypt and the Levant* 12 [2002]: 247–55).

<sup>88</sup> Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 2.224, 229–230.

<sup>89</sup> Could the Byblian kings' inscriptions on Egyptian statuary be a statement challenging authority as well? Rather than interpret the act as a resourceful way for a king to "create" a monumental inscription, we could also view it as a type of dominance, Byblos over Egypt, where the king appropriates the status object and presents it to the goddess under his name. Would a non-Egyptian ruler have done such a thing at the height of the Amarna Period or the New Kingdom?

Dor) had rapidly moved into positions of power during the transition period, so much so that they could afford to mistreat and turn away an Egyptian official.



**Figure 5:3: Southern Levantine inscriptions in relation to Egyptian and Byblian examples (satellite image © Google earth 2015)**

The Report reminds us to be open-minded about otherwise unusual activities. Power was decentralized, not only in Egypt but throughout the eastern Mediterranean. Previous power structures could be meaningless, and those of newly acquired status reign unpredictably. The playing field had been leveled; elites of small, independent polities could compete with the traditional powers. We should not, therefore, be surprised to see in the epigraphic evidence unknown or unexpected players in interregional trade or attempts by rising leadership or elite parties to distinguish themselves. Lastly, the very existence of the story speaks to scribal activity outside the expected political applications in a relatively “dark” period. The report may demonstrate that literary and scribal activity persisted without state support.

## Chapter Conclusions

Inscriptions from Byblos or Egypt cannot be compared to the southern Levantine examples without qualification. Instead of expecting the same evidence from the southern Levant, we should look for indications of relative forms of distinction. In addition to supplying comparative data, the Egyptian and Byblian inscriptions provide a context for the period (Figure 5:3). From these materials, we have an idea of what early Iron Age states looked and sounded like. Tenth-century leaders attempted to follow known models of leadership and authority. Egypt provides the best examples. The new pharaohs modeled themselves and their inscriptions on the greats of Egyptian history, the idioms of power and status were assumed. Emulation is an important factor in the growth of leadership in the region.<sup>90</sup> Elites in the southern Levant may have learned or imported their notions of power and organization from neighbors like Egypt or Byblos.

In both Egypt and Byblos, new rulers and dynasties declared their status through inscriptions. Egypt provides the best evidence of elites both creating goods/structures and documenting events on them. In contrast, Byblian leaders used preexisting items, like an Egyptian statue, and added a Phoenician inscription to them. This practice puts a spin on the association between monumental inscriptions and complex states—Byblian elites “created” monumental inscriptions through graffiti and associated themselves with recognized elites, thereby elevating themselves in their sphere of influence. It is probably fair to say that both Byblian and southern Levantine elites were engaged in similar emulation processes but in ways relative to their respective locations and wealth. Individuals were marking or

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<sup>90</sup> See Higginbotham, *Egyptianization and Elite Emulation in Ramesside Palestine*; Alexander H. Joffe, “The Rise of Secondary States in the Iron Age Levant.”

documenting their status on materials that may have already testified to elevated social position. In the southern Levantine examples, name formulae appear on prestige items: a fine bronze bowl, on bronze arrowheads, and on a game board. In other cases, names were placed on bowls that likely could have contained dedications or offerings. The usefulness of an inscription lay, at least in part, in its very presence, in its conspicuousness.

This depiction, that there were various, possibly competing, elites in the region, contradicts the biblical image of a lack of diversity in wealth in pre-Solomonic eras. The Bible recounts that outstanding individuals like the Judges, Saul, or David were plucked from a common mass, with dynastic succession endorsed only after David proved his piety. The history conspicuously denies hereditary status or dynastic succession for anything but the priesthood or Davidic line. Despite these efforts, the illusion is not completely successful. Elite status *is* apparent in minor characters like the wealthy Nabal (1 Samuel 25) or wealthy *and* influential Barzillai (2 Samuel 19). If we overlook the biblical argument regarding wealth, the emergence of regional leadership is apparent in the inscribed materials, and often associated with inscriptions are other testaments to elevated status like imported or rare goods.

I return to the original question for this chapter: Is there epigraphic evidence of interregional trade in the eleventh to tenth centuries? Not explicitly. There is, however, a strong case for the *association* of certain types of evidence, social status, and behaviors. Writing was a rarity at this time, and frequently other rare items or activities appear to coincide with it. Writing in the material record implies that other types of activities, like interaction beyond one's immediate environs, were also taking place. The evidence in this

chapter is highly suggestive that where we find writing we might also find evidence of long-distance interaction.

## CHAPTER SIX: IMPORTED CERAMICS

The aim of this chapter is to add material culture, specifically non-local ceramics, to the evidence of interregional interaction in the southern Levant during the late Iron I to early Iron IIA periods (approximately the late eleventh to the early ninth centuries BCE). From this time, there is positive evidence of imported ceramics from Northwest Arabia, Cyprus, and the Aegean in the southern Levant (see Figure 6:1).<sup>1</sup> Imports have been discovered across the entire region, from northern Israel/southern Phoenicia to the southern desert zones, and both west and east of the Jordan and Arabah Valleys.<sup>2</sup> These different types of imports were not integrated into one trade operation. The evidence suggests that smaller-scale exchange from Northwest Arabia persisted into the Early Iron IIA (second half of the tenth century) even as the major LB trade networks dissolved, bridging the gap in long-distance exchange felt elsewhere. Interactions in the eastern Mediterranean were reestablished by the end of the eleventh century, evidenced by a limited amount of pottery from Cyprus and the Aegean. By the end of the tenth century, Cypriot trade had expanded to reach most areas of the southern Levant.

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<sup>1</sup> Shirly Ben Dor Evian recently published a survey of Egyptian pottery in the Levant that documents a greater level of interactions during the Iron I-IIA than is generally acknowledged (“Egypt and the Levant in the Iron Age I-IIA: The Ceramic Evidence,” *TA* 38 [2011]: 94–119). Her study is complementary to this chapter, but I did not include Egyptian ceramics here due to the nature of relations between Egypt and the Levant. The Egyptian influence and administrative presence in the LB and early Iron I periods complicates the characterization of Egyptian and Egyptianizing artifacts (i.e., were the artifacts in use by Egyptians in the Levant or by local populations who sought out foreign goods?). The three import groups examined here are unequivocally imported goods that were transported to the Levant through exchange networks and used by the local populations.

<sup>2</sup> Faust cautions that the absence of imports, particularly in the hill country compared to the coast or northern valleys, does not necessarily mean that there was a lack of interaction or opportunity. He argues that there were negative associations with imported ceramics that inhibited the acquisition of them by the hill country residents (*Israel’s Ethnogenesis*, 49–64). The material surveyed here supports this claim to some extent. It is especially apparent in the distribution of Cypriot Black-on-Red (BoR) pottery (see below).

Spatial distributions of the imported wares make clear that there was a variety of consumers. Combined, the imports stretch from Tyre to the Gulf of Aqaba/Eilat and from all along the Mediterranean coast to the Jordan Valley and Negev and Jordanian deserts, although participation was limited to zones near entry points to the region and strategically positioned sites (i.e., those near key transportation routes, at well-defensible locations such as major tells, or those that governed over crossroads and important resource areas). Based on these geographic observations, participation in the early stages of Iron Age trade was dominated by those who were closest to primary routes and in control of key resources. In some cases, however, exchange penetrated beyond the expected exchange zones, suggesting that the transport of these vessels to more distant locations was the result of a deliberate demand for the wares and their associated goods and may have been the result of special exchange among elite groups.

### **Ceramics as Evidence of Exchange**

Ceramics are a particularly useful type of evidence for the study of exchange and interaction. In contrast to the epigraphic evidence, pottery is ubiquitous in the archaeological record. It is easy to produce, difficult to reuse, and preserves relatively well. As a result, the archaeologist has access to a large body of evidence and examples. Pottery can also reflect cultural interaction in a number of ways. Vessel shape and decoration can easily be adapted and might indicate influence from other cultures. In contrast, the persistence of distinct styles despite frequent interactions with other groups suggests the maintenance of deliberate cultural boundaries.<sup>3</sup> Analysis of a vessel's fabric provides information about clay sources

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<sup>3</sup> This kind of boundary maintenance has been proposed based on ceramic analysis of communities in the Cisjordan hill country versus the southern coastal area and between the Faynan region in Jordan and its interaction partners in the Negev; see *ibid.*, 191–220; Smith and Levy, “Iron Age Ceramics from Edom,” 214.

and thus the pot's place of manufacture.<sup>4</sup> Distribution studies show how widespread the use of a ceramic type was.<sup>5</sup> Once provenience and distribution are determined, we can explore questions about the significance of exchange.<sup>6</sup> This chapter relies on such archaeological principles and previous research that has laid the groundwork in provenience studies, catalogues and inventories, and geospatial information.

### **Issues Particular to the Southern Levant**

Before getting to the specific pottery groups, there are some critical issues that are shaping current archaeological discussions that need to be addressed, especially concerning interactions of various populations, relationships between sites, and historical events.

### **Ethnicity, Pots, and Peoples**

Debates about the relationship between pottery and population groups are ongoing and necessary. On the one hand, there is good reason to ask if a type of pottery can be an indication of a certain people; populations may have a distinct cultural assemblage. On the

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<sup>4</sup> There are a variety of techniques that might reveal the provenience of pottery. A vessel's form or decoration may be the first indicator, and evaluation of these aspects is performed in the field before any other analysis is attempted. This step provides information on the vessel's (and, theoretically, the context's) age and cultural identity (archaeological, not ethnic). If a sherd appears to be separate from the local or expected assemblage, additional testing may occur. Thin section petrographic analysis (TSPA) evaluates mineral elements and inclusions in the clay. When TSPA is not conclusive, ceramists turn to (I)NAA, (instrumental) neutron activation analysis, or AAS, atomic absorption spectrometry, both of which can detect elements within the clay. When a mineralogical profile is determined for a pottery group, it is then matched to a region of origin based on a distinctive composition.

<sup>5</sup> Analysis of the relationships between point of origin and distance from origin (such as fall-off analysis) have proven useful, but additional factors such as the type of imported good and the differences among consumer groups complicate this type of analysis; see Ian Hodder, "Some Effects of Distance on Patterns of Human Interaction," in *The Spatial Organisation of Culture* (ed. Ian Hodder; New Approaches in Archaeology; London: Duckworth, 1978).

<sup>6</sup> The Edomite Lowlands Regional Archaeology Project (ELRAP) has shown that such analysis can indicate social interaction and exchange on various scales: between different segments of society within one site, between neighboring communities, through intraregional interaction, and through interregional exchange. See Smith and Levy, "Iron Age Ceramics from Edom"; Smith, Goren, and Levy, "The Petrography of Iron Age Edom," 460–91.

other hand, diversity within a society is now well-recognized, and anthropology has provided more approaches to exploring identity formation and cultural interaction.

Revolutions in these approaches gained ground in the 1960s; F. Barth's *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* remains an influential example.<sup>7</sup> In the 1970s and 1980s, I. Hodder led a new approach that challenged the way scholars examined people's relationships to things.<sup>8</sup>

Despite these trends in social scientific circles, it was still necessary in 1997 for J.

Waldbaum to remind her audience that Greek *pottery* found in the Levant did not

necessarily mean there were Greeks *peoples* in the Levant,<sup>9</sup> and discussions of ethnicity in

the Iron Age and the Bible have only recently applied sociological and anthropological

approaches to archaeological and historical discussions.<sup>10</sup> Some of the evidence surveyed in

this chapter has been interpreted in previous scholarship as evidence of migrations, and this

period was an age of migration for many population groups. Nevertheless, my point of

departure is that pottery of foreign origins may have reached the Levant through other

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<sup>7</sup> Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*.

<sup>8</sup> Ian Hodder, ed., *The Spatial Organisation of Culture* (New Approaches in Archaeology; London: Duckworth, 1978); Ian Hodder and Clive Orton, *Spatial Analysis in Archaeology* (Cambridge University Press, 1979); Ian Hodder, *Symbols in Action: Ethnoarchaeological Studies of Material Culture* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

<sup>9</sup> Jane Waldbaum, "Greeks in the East or Greeks and the East? Problems in the Definition and Recognition of Presence," *BASOR* 305 (1997): 1–17. Waldbaum's argument was addressing the tendency to propose colonization to explain concentrations of Greek pottery in the east. Similar debates continue regarding the Philistines' relationship to their eastern neighbors and the Phoenicians' relationships to the west. Waldbaum's critiques of the different biases from scholars based on their western or eastern point of reference remain valid.

<sup>10</sup> For example, Elizabeth Bloch-Smith, "Israelite Ethnicity in Iron I: Archaeology Preserves What Is Remembered and What Is Forgotten in Israel's History," *JBL* 122/3 (2003): 401–25; Ann E. Killebrew, *Biblical Peoples and Ethnicity: An Archaeological Study of Egyptians, Canaanites, Philistines, and Early Israel, 1300-1100 B.C.E.* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005); Faust, *Israel's Ethnogenesis*; Thomas E. Levy, "Ethnic Identity in Biblical Edom, Israel, and Midian: Some Insights from Mortuary Contexts in the Lowlands of Edom," in *Exploring the Longue Durée: Essays in Honor of Lawrence E. Stager* (ed. J. David Schloen; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 251–61.

exchange mechanisms. We will see that these were primarily trade or elite exchange networks.

### **Chronological Debate**

By far the greatest challenge to archaeological discussions today remains the comprehensive chronology debates.<sup>11</sup> The ongoing refinement touches on any discussion of Iron Age archaeology, but it is particularly germane to a discussion of imported goods. That is because early biblical archaeology and biblical stories of trade not only laid the foundation for the chronology of ancient Israel and Palestine but also provided anchors for the early Iron Age chronologies of Phoenicia, Cyprus, and the Aegean.<sup>12</sup> The biblical tales of Solomon's trade with Arabia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, and his acquisition of metals for construction projects informed the analysis of scholars like N. Glueck, who conducted the first archaeological surveys of the southern desert regions in the 1930s-1960s. Throughout the first half of the century, W. F. Albright, G. E. Wright, Y. Yadin, and others, excavating the region's most spectacular tells, established their chronologies trusting in biblical history (including David's conquests and Solomon's great building efforts, which they associated with the remains they found). A handful of imported sherds from these digs were coordinated with the imports' lands of origins, thus setting anchor points for all of the regions based on methods that no longer meet standards of excavation or scholarship.

Several key problems have resulted from this research history. The chronologies of the ceramic sequences of the Aegean, Cyprus, and Phoenicia developed independently *after*

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<sup>11</sup> Introduced in Chapter One; see also John Nicolas Coldstream, "Some Aegean Reactions to the Chronological Debate in the Southern Levant," *TA* 30 (2003): 247–58.

<sup>12</sup> This history, particularly concerning Mediterranean relationships, is succinctly recounted in Alexander Fantalkin, "Low Chronology and Greek Protogeometric and Geometric Pottery in the Southern Levant," *Levant* 33/1 (2001): 117–25.

their initial correlation to the earlier southern Levantine excavations. Until recently, adjustments to chronologies did not address the underlying link between the regions, and one region's chronology would continue to reinforce or rely on chronological anchors that were no longer maintained in other regions (e.g., Cypriot chronology's reliance on a Megiddo context that is no longer an anchor for southern Levantine chronology).<sup>13</sup> Regional specialists for the Aegean, Cyprus, Phoenicia, and the southern Levant are all reexamining these foundations, and as each region is experiencing revision, it is difficult to keep parallels current. Until new anchors are determined, a comprehensive, absolute chronology for the Mediterranean is a moving target. Despite these problems, the three pottery groups that are examined below span the time period in question. Thus, even with continued debate, the material in this chapter provides evidence for long-distance exchange during the region's transition period from the late Iron I to the early Iron IIA.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.; Raz Kletter, "Chronology and United Monarchy," 38–39; Ilan Sharon et al., "Report on the First Stage of the Iron Age Dating Project in Israel."

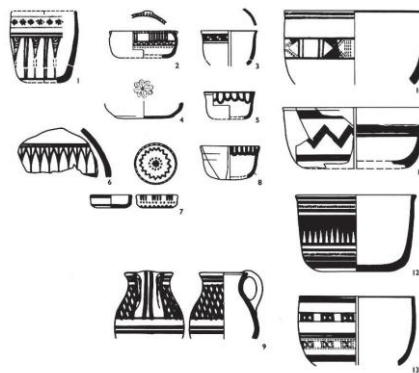
## Imported Wares by Region of Origin



Figure 6:1: Lands of origin of ceramic imports (satellite image © Google earth 2015)

### Northwest Arabia

Qurayyah Painted Ware (QPW), frequently referred to as “Midianite” ware, is best known from surveys and excavations in the Arabah Valley. The vast majority of QPW finds have come from Timna, a complex of archaeological sites in the southwest Arabah Valley whose primary function was smelting and processing local copper. The pottery is also well known from the region’s other copper processing center, the Faynan in southern Jordan, and along the copper trade routes, as far as eastern Egypt. There is an undeniable correlation between the ancient copper industry and QPW, but the pottery has also been recovered from non-metallurgical contexts, as far north as Amman and Gezer, raising questions about QPW’s role in trade activities. Often the ware was associated with other imported and luxury goods, suggesting that it was valued as a prestige item.



**Figure 6:2: QPW from Timna Site 2 (Rothenberg 1972: figure 32; reproduced in Tebes, “Pottery Makers,” 12)**



**Figure 6:3: QPW from southern Jordan (Rothenberg 1983: figure 1; reproduced in Tebes, “Pottery Makers,” 12)**

Because of its distinctive painted designs and characterization as a fine ware, excavators have been recording their discoveries of QPW in one way or another for more than a century, but it was only in the latter half of the twentieth century that scholars worked toward a formal classification of the ware (Figures 6:2-3). Prior to a consensus, this pottery group was recorded under a variety of names or through idiosyncratic descriptions, so that

there was little consistency among researchers and publications.<sup>14</sup> P. Parr's research in Northwest Arabia and B. Rothenberg's research in the Timna region laid the foundation for all subsequent investigations.<sup>15</sup> In 1983, Rothenberg and Glass published results of petrographic testing that confirmed an origin for the pottery in the Hejaz region of Northwest Arabia.<sup>16</sup> Parr's surveys in that area had already provided evidence for a probable site of production, Qurayyah, for which the pottery is now named.<sup>17</sup> Later, Instrumental Neutron Activation Analysis (INAA) further confirmed this relationship.<sup>18</sup>

As is the case with most archaeological evidence from the southern Levant, QPW's chronology is debated. Prior to Rothenberg's Timna excavations, contexts associated with

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<sup>14</sup> This pottery group is referred to by a variety of names: Midianite, Qurayyah(h) Painted (or Painted Qurayyah), Tayma, Hejaz, sometimes identified as Edomite.

<sup>15</sup> Peter Parr, G. Lankester Harding, and John E Dayton, *Preliminary Survey in N.W. Arabia, 1968* (London: Institute of Archaeology, 1970); Beno Rothenberg, *Timna: Valley of the Biblical Copper Mines* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1972).

<sup>16</sup> Beno Rothenberg and Jonathan Glass, "The Midianite Pottery," in *Midian, Moab, and Edom: The History and Archaeology of Late Bronze and Iron Age Jordan and North-West Arabia* (ed. John F. A. Sawyer and David J. A. Clines; JSOTSup 24; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1983), 65–124. Kalsbeek and London published a detailed discussion of the pottery prior to Rothenberg and Glass's analysis, but it was focused on finds at Yotvata rather than establishing a standardization for research of the pottery as a group (Jan Kalsbeek and Gloria London, "A Late Second Millennium B. C. Potting Puzzle," *BASOR* 232 [1978]: 47).

<sup>17</sup> In their survey of Northwest Arabia, Parr, Harding, and Dayton discovered pottery kilns surrounded by examples of Qurayyah ware (plain and painted), along with irrigation systems and the remains of a citadel and town walls, indicating there was a settlement of considerable complexity at the time of QPW's production (Parr, "Contacts between North West Arabia and Jordan," 127–33; idem, "Qurayya."

<sup>18</sup> J. Gunneweg et al., "'Edomite,' 'Negevite' and 'Midianite' Pottery from the Negev Desert and Jordan: Instrumental Neutron Activation Analysis Results," *Archaeometry* 33 (1991): 239–53. Subsequent research on this pottery group has focused on explaining its distinctive style, its function, how it came to be distributed outside of the Hejaz, its chronological range, its relationship to the copper trade or other interaction activities, and its relationship to later pottery styles. The most recent discussions include Lily Singer-Avitz, "The Qurayyah Painted Ware," in *The Renewed Archaeological Excavations at Lachish (1973-1994)* (ed. David Ussishkin; Tel Aviv: Emery and Claire Yass Publications in Archaeology, 2004), 1280–87; Juan Manuel Tebes, "Pottery Makers and Premodern Exchange in the Fringes of Egypt: An Approximation to the Distribution of Iron Age Midianite Pottery," *Buried History* 43 (2007): 11–26; Lily Singer-Avitz, "The Earliest Settlement at Kadesh Barnea," *TA* 35/1 (2008): 73–81; John J. Bimson and Juan Manuel Tebes, "Timna Revisited: Egyptian Chronology and the Copper Mines of the Southern Arabah," *Antiquo Oriente* 7 (2009): 75–118; Erez Ben-Yosef et al., "A New Chronological Framework"; Smith and Levy, "Iron Age Ceramics from Edom," 411–412; Smith, Goren, and Levy, "The Petrography of Iron Age Edom," 476.

this pottery were dated to the tenth century based on assumptions that the sites were connected to Solomon's metallurgical efforts (such as that described in 1 Kgs 7:46); Rothenberg's excavations, however, produced evidence of QPW along with Egyptian activity in the thirteenth and twelfth centuries BCE.<sup>19</sup> Since these excavations, researchers have revisited the Timna contexts (in scholarly debates, publications, physical examination, and renewed excavation of the sites), calling into question Rothenberg's chronological claims. L. Singer-Avitz, for example, argues that while there is indisputable evidence of Egyptian activity and QPW at Timna, they may not be concurrent. She confines QPW to the twelfth century.<sup>20</sup> Recent excavations at Timna and the Faynan have shifted focus again toward the Iron IIA. Two sherds of QPW were found associated with tenth-century metallurgical activity at Timna Site 30.<sup>21</sup> More than thirty sherds of QPW have been recovered from Khirbat en-Nahas (KEN) in the Faynan.<sup>22</sup> The main metallurgical phases at KEN began in the eleventh century and ended by the end of the ninth, and the contexts associated with the QPW date primarily to the tenth century.<sup>23</sup> Thus, QPW at these Early Iron IIA metallurgical sites suggests a longer life span for the ware. Although the full

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<sup>19</sup> For a historical review of investigations and debates, see Bimson and Tebes, "Timna Revisited: Egyptian Chronology and the Copper Mines of the Southern Arabah"; Ben-Yosef et al., "A New Chronological Framework."

<sup>20</sup> That is QPW "in Canaan" ("The Earliest Settlement at Kadesh Barnea," 74); see also Singer-Avitz, "The Qurayyah Painted Ware."

<sup>21</sup> Ben-Yosef et al., "A New Chronological Framework," 50–52. The QPW sherds were found in secure contexts, closely associated with radiocarbon samples, linking the pottery to the tenth century. Overall, the radiocarbon dating from the site shows that the earliest occupation began in the late twelfth century, excluding the period of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Egyptian Dynasties as an explanation for either the metallurgical activity or the presence of QPW.

<sup>22</sup> These sherds have been identified through petrographic examination; see Smith, Goren, and Levy, "The Petrography of Iron Age Edom," 488.

<sup>23</sup> Smith and Levy, "Iron Age Ceramics from Edom," 411–412.

chronological range of this pottery is far from settled, current evidence suggests that it was present in the region prior to Egypt's retraction in the mid-twelfth century, and it appears to have continued in use through the transition from Iron I to IIA.

### **Earlier Phases of Interregional Interaction**

Qurayyah Painted Ware seems to have developed its distinctive style as a result of interregional interaction toward the end of the second millennium. Parr describes the pottery as a "hybrid" of Aegean, Egyptian, and Levantine characteristics from the LB.<sup>24</sup> This artistic blend is a bit surprising coming from the seemingly remote site of Qurayyah, but Parr posits that Northwest Arabians were exposed to these influences in the southern Levant through exchange relations that included trade with Egypt.<sup>25</sup> Ironically, Qurayyah experienced its greatest urban development at the time when much of the ancient Near East was in crisis and the LB international trade system had dissolved. The site sat at a confluence of wadi systems and was well situated along one of the only routes that provided passage through the mountainous terrain to the interregional roads along the Gulf of Aqaba.<sup>26</sup> Because of its location, Qurayyah was able to avoid the upheaval of the eastern Mediterranean and may have benefited from it by filling the void in prestige ceramics that developed from the loss of LB imports.

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<sup>24</sup> The painted designs are closest to LB Aegean styles but also borrow from Egyptian lotus motifs (Parr, "Pottery, People and Politics"; idem, "Contacts between North West Arabia and Jordan," 129–30).

<sup>25</sup> Parr attributes a great deal of innovation to the Hejazi potters, who developed their own style, "not in direct and slavish imitation of Levantine wares... [but] inspired by a heterogeneous collection of ideas borrowed from their neighbours." He suggests the activities in the southern Levant provided the contact point for these influences (ibid.) See also Tebes, "Pottery Makers and Premodern Exchange," 12–13.

<sup>26</sup> Kalsbeek and London, "A Late Second Millennium B. C. Potting Puzzle," 53.

The precise reasons that QPW became a desired, traded good remain uncertain. Most examples of QPW come from open vessels, indicating that the pottery was not simply a container holding a commodity. If QPW was traded, it was for the pottery itself, not an associated product. While the strongest association is with the copper industry (discussed below), burial contexts illustrate the potential for QPW to have been valued as a luxury ware. A QPW bowl and additional sherds were discovered in the “Airport structure” in Amman. The unique building, which may have been a mortuary installation, contained imports from throughout the ancient Near East (from the Aegean, Cyprus, Mesopotamia, and Egypt).<sup>27</sup> West of the Jordan, QPW has also been found in burial contexts, the most striking of which is a burial cave at Tel Jedur (biblical Gedor), where a small QPW bowl was discovered among a rich Late Bronze assemblage. The burial contained Aegean and Cypriot pottery, weapons, jewelry, Nile shells, glass vessel fragments, and two alabaster vessels.<sup>28</sup> There is no doubt that these burial goods belonged to a family of unusual wealth. The presence of QPW in these rich assemblages suggests that it too held significance as a valued, imported good.

The complicating factors in these burial contexts are that they were used over a long period of time for multiple burials and that heirloom items may have been included in them.<sup>29</sup> As a result, it can be challenging to determine the precise date of an item’s

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<sup>27</sup> Larry G. Herr, “The Amman Airport Structure and the Geopolitics of Ancient Transjordan,” *BA* 46/4 (1983): 223–29.

<sup>28</sup> Sarah Ben-Arieh dates the cave’s use to the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries (“Gedor, Tel,” *NEAEHL*). Singer-Avitz has extended the chronology to include the twelfth century, which she considers a more likely range if QPW is present (Singer-Avitz, “The Qurayyah Painted Ware,” 1284).

<sup>29</sup> For example, the Egyptian artifacts in the Amman structure included materials from as early as the Predynastic period and Middle Kingdom. The local pottery was dated to the thirteenth century (Herr, “The Amman Airport Structure”).

deposition. If the QPW was contemporary to the LB materials, then we have an indication that QPW was used as a luxury ware before the end of the LB. It is also conceivable, in theory, that QPW may have been a late addition to a burial deposit, in which case, it could have served as a substitute for the imported, decorated wares that were no longer available. A slightly later burial at Tell el-Farah (S), Tomb 542 (one of Petrie's "Tombs of the Philistine Lords") dated to the twelfth-eleventh centuries, may illustrate this possibility. It contained a QPW vessel along with other imported pottery (Phoenician, Egyptian, and "Egyptianizing" wares), metal vessels, and weapons.<sup>30</sup> The assemblage seems to be an Iron I equivalent of the elite burial deposits of the previous age.

### **Copper Exchange Networks**

The strongest associated context, however, remains the copper trade. There is no question that QPW was closely connected, but the relationships among the pottery and the copper industry, metallurgists, and trade routes are still unclear. Timna's excavations have produced the greatest amount of QPW, followed by the Faynan region, and QPW is distributed along the highways that linked the copper sources and production areas with Cisjordan and Egypt. While QPW was oftentimes found alongside evidence of metalworking, the ware was not intimately linked to the technology of metallurgy. Rothenberg proposed that the pottery, which he labeled "Midianite," was brought to Timna

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<sup>30</sup> Elizabeth Bloch-Smith, *Judahite Burial Practices and Beliefs about the Dead* (JsoSup 123; Sheffield, England: JSOT Press for the American Schools of Oriental Research, 1992), 174–175. Other examples of QPW were found in the Egyptian administrative building (so-called "Governor's Residence") at the site (Eli Yannai, "A Stratigraphic and Chronological Reappraisal of the 'Governor's Residence' at Tell El-Far'ah [South]," in *Studies in Archaeology and Related Disciplines* (ed. E. D. Oren and Shmuel Ahituv; Aharon Kempinski Memorial Volume; Beer Sheba XV; Beersheba: Ben-Gurion University of the Negev Press, 2002), 368–76).

by metalsmiths from Northwest Arabia (biblical Midian) who served Egyptian interests.<sup>31</sup> While it is difficult to maintain the historical reconstruction Rothenberg proposed, the Timna evidence is best explained through a close connection between the area's residents and QPW.<sup>32</sup> Rothenberg's hypothesis, however, cannot account for QPW distributions outside of the Timna and Egyptian copper industry frameworks.

Jordan's Faynan region has produced the next highest quantity of QPW. Its largest copper production site, Khirbat en-Nahas (KEN), has turned up more than 30 sherds but none of the evidence that Rothenberg relied on for a theory of resident Midianite smiths.<sup>33</sup> The KEN excavations, rather, have demonstrated that the site was a locally-run enterprise integrated into a rich Iron I-IIA exchange network.<sup>34</sup> Evidence of interregional interaction, such as unusual jewelry, Egyptian amulets, Cypriot Black-on-Red (BoR) pottery, and other

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<sup>31</sup> Rothenberg, *Timna*. Rothenberg's theory was not based solely on the pottery. Persistence of occupation and metallurgy at Timna and the conversion of the Egyptian temple to a "Semitic" (aniconic) shrine, along with evidence of QPW after the Egyptian activity at the site ended, does indicate that some group made use of the Timna sites. This group may have been from the desert regions of the Arabah, Negev, southern Jordan, or Northwest Arabia. The difficulty in Rothenberg's argument is the characterization of the "Midianite" people, of whom we have no contemporary evidence. The proposal that residents of these desert regions be associated with the Shasu known from Egyptian records has better historical grounding; see Levy, "Ethnic Identity in Biblical Edom, Israel, and Midian"; idem, "Pastoral Nomads"; Marc Beherec, Mohammad Najjar, and Thomas E. Levy, "Wadi Fidan 40 and Mortuary Archaeology in the Edom Lowlands," in *New Insights into the Iron Age Archaeology of Edom, Southern Jordan: Surveys, Excavations and Research from the University of California, San Diego & Department of Antiquities of Jordan, Edom Lowlands Regional Archaeology Project (ELRAP)* (ed. T. E. Levy et al.; Monumenta Archaeologica 35; Los Angeles: The Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press, 2014), 665–721.

<sup>32</sup> Juan Manuel Tebes has presented a modified and more complex version of this argument claiming that the high concentration of QPW in the Arabah should be explained as the result of activities of nomadic groups, "people straddling the interface between the northern Hejaz, Edom and the Negev" as well as Hejazi residents at Timna (Tebes, "Pottery Makers and Premodern," 19). He also argues that in areas where QPW appears in very small quantities, it may have been viewed as a luxury item and traded for that purpose (*ibid.*, 19–22).

<sup>33</sup> Smith and Levy, "Iron Age Ceramics from Edom," 411–412; Smith, Goren, and Levy, "The Petrography of Iron Age Edom," 488. To put this number into context, most sites produced one vessel or only a few sherds.

<sup>34</sup> Levy, Najjar, and Ben-Yosef, "Conclusion," 977–1001. Contra various arguments by Finkelstein: Israel Finkelstein, "Khirbet En-Nahas, Edom and Biblical History," *TA* 32 (2005): 119–25; Finkelstein and Silberman, *David and Solomon*, 174–175; Fantalkin and Finkelstein, "The Sheshonq I Campaign"; Finkelstein, Fantalkin, and Piasetzky, "Three Snapshots of the Iron IIA," 37–39.

ceramic imports from the Negev and Jerusalem became part of the Khirbat en-Nahas assemblage as a result of the copper trade.<sup>35</sup> The associated contexts at KEN have been securely radiocarbon dated to the late Iron I to early Iron IIA, and the evidence does not indicate that the vessels had been preserved as heirlooms. The excavators propose that QPW continued to be manufactured in northern Arabia and traded to northern neighbors as late as KEN's major production phases, primarily during the tenth century.<sup>36</sup> Interestingly QPW, along with imported pottery from the western Negev, was found in metallurgical areas within KEN, but the overall quantity compared to the full ceramic assemblage from the site shows that these imports were of a small number (e.g., QPW makes up 4% of the overall assemblage).<sup>37</sup> Smith et al. conclude that "even among the wheel-made red-slipped bowls from the western Negev and the painted Qurayyah wares, they should be considered rare, infrequent imports rather than a contingent of foreigners living at the site."<sup>38</sup> Thus the QPW found at KEN better fits into the context of an active exchange network associated with the culture of the copper trade rather than Rothenberg's foreign smiths theory.

The full distribution of QPW highlights the close relationship between the copper trade and the pottery (see below), but, to reiterate, it is not limited to metallurgical contexts. QPW has been found along the routes leading from northern Arabia to the southern Levant as well as routes that distributed Timna and Faynan copper products to the west, along the

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<sup>35</sup> Thomas E. Levy et al., "Excavations at Khirbat En-Nahas, 2002-2009."

<sup>36</sup> Smith and Levy, "Iron Age Ceramics from Edom," 412.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 417; Smith, Goren, and Levy, "The Petrography of Iron Age Edom," 476.

<sup>38</sup> Smith, Goren, and Levy, "The Petrography of Iron Age Edom," 488.

Dharb el-Ghazza (including Tell el-Qudeirat [Kadesh Barnea]<sup>39</sup>), throughout the Arabah Valley and Beersheba Valley. These associations indicate that QPW moved through the same channels, possibly as a traded commodity in its own right.

The remains at Tel Masos, the most prominent site along the Beesheba Valley during this period, provide a view from another side of the exchange network. During the twelfth to the tenth centuries, Tel Masos was a thriving center of interregional exchange.<sup>40</sup> Its prosperity was due in part to its position, guarding passage through the Beersheba Valley as well as the routes into the Judahite hill country to the north and a road to Tell el-Qudeirat (Kadesh-Barnea) to the south. The architecture of Tel Masos exhibits Canaanite and Egyptianizing styles (a local adaptation of the Egyptian “Center Hall House,” i.e., “Governor’s Residency”<sup>41</sup>), and its inhabitants accumulated many imported goods and a diverse material culture: QPW from the Hejaz, copper from the Arabah/Faynan, Philistine bichrome pottery, Phoenician bichrome, a “Negebite” vessel, Egyptian wares and small objects (e.g., scarabs), a Canaanite-style carved ivory lion’s head, possibly also Cypriot

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<sup>39</sup> Because Singer-Avitz maintains that QPW must not post-date the end of the twelfth century, she proposes that the QPW at Tell el-Qudeirat must have originated in the levels prior to the Iron IIA structure. Based on this premise, she then dates the earliest levels according to her range for QPW. She follows by arguing that the QPW from Tel Masos and Khirbat en-Nahas must also have originated in the earlier occupations at these sites. See Singer-Avitz, “The Earliest Settlement at Kadesh Barnea.” The updated publications from the Faynan force reconsideration of Singer-Avitz’s commitment to the twelfth century date for this pottery. The weight of this evidence is anticipated by Faust (Review of Lily Singer-Avitz, “Excavations at Kadesh Barnea [Tell El-Qudeirat]1976-1982,” *AJA* 113/2 [2009]).

<sup>40</sup> Volkmar Fritz and Aharon Kempinski, *Ergebnisse Der Ausgrabungen Auf Der Hirbet El-Msas (Tel Masos) 1972-1975*, vol. I–III (Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästinavereins; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1983); Aharon Kempinski, “Masos, Tel,” *NEAEHL*; Israel Finkelstein, *Living on the Fringe: The Archaeology and History of the Negev, Sinai and Neighbouring Regions in the Bronze and Iron Ages* (Monographs in Mediterranean Archaeology 6; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 103–26. See also Juan Manuel Tebes, “A New Analysis of the Iron Age I ‘Chiefdom’ of Tel Masos (Beersheba Valley),” *Aula Orientalis* 21 (2003): 63–78.

<sup>41</sup> Higginbotham, *Egyptianization and Elite Emulation in Ramesside Palestine*, 273.

BoR.<sup>42</sup> The wealth of imports mimics prestige culture known from the LB, suggesting select residents emulated the LB models of elite behavior and did so with the styles and imports that were available at the time.<sup>43</sup> Similar behaviors may account for the rich burial at Tell el-Farah (S) described above and the diversity of imported goods at Khirbat en-Nahas. We should understand these communities and the similarities among them as the result of participation in the copper exchange system, particularly by residents in leadership positions.<sup>44</sup>

In both the copper production areas and along the routes, local, Iron Age leadership directed successful operations. The retraction of Egyptian control in the twelfth century allowed for local leaders to take over the network.<sup>45</sup> Tel Masos and Khirbat en-Nahas provide an archaeological picture of elite leadership within this exchange network. Similarly, residents of Tell el-Farah (S) and Tell el-Qudeirat (Kadesh-Barnea), both of which occupied strategic positions along the routes, must have taken advantage of their

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<sup>42</sup> Kempinski, "Masos, Tel"; Finkelstein, *Living on the Fringe*, 103–26; Higginbotham, *Egyptianization and Elite Emulation in Ramesside Palestine*, 273; Tebes, "A New Analysis."

<sup>43</sup> Herzog and Singer-Avitz note a close relationship between Stratum III finds and the LB pottery tradition and provide a detailed evaluation of the evidence that indicates there was an elite group at the site ("Redefining the Centre," 222–227).

<sup>44</sup> This scenario is more likely than what has been proposed by Fantalkin and Finkelstein that the entire corridor linking the coast, the Beersheba Valley, and the Faynan became a unified operation under the control of one site or power, namely Shoshenq ("The Sheshonq I Campaign"). For specific critiques against this position, see Mazar, "Archaeology and the Biblical Narrative," 31, note 7; Levy et al., *New Insights into the Iron Age Archaeology of Edom, Southern Jordan*.

<sup>45</sup> Itamar Singer proposes that Philistines were the heirs to the Egyptian administrative system of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties. This proposal is attractive as an explanation of the Philistine-related finds associated with the former Egyptian administrative buildings (so-called "Governor's Residences"), especially in the south ("Egyptians, Canaanites, and Philistines"). There is not sufficient evidence, however, to support a claim that Philistines took over the copper exchange network, that Egypt was able to maintain its influence in this area (presumably during the late Iron I and early Iron II), or that Shoshenq was responsible for the surge in copper production and exchange activity along this network as suggested by Fantalkin and Finkelstein ("The Sheshonq I Campaign," 27–28). It is much more plausible that the height of activity in the copper network in the tenth century drew the attention of Shoshenq and was a target of his campaign. See Chapter Seven; Levy, Najjar, and Ben-Yosef, "Conclusion."

location and the lapse in Egyptian oversight to establish their own operations along the exchange network.

### Distribution Overview

Arabia	Arabah	Transjordan	Cisjordan	Northern Sinai
Qurayyah	Jezirat Fara'un	Um Guweah	Tell el-Qudeirat	Bir el-'Abd
Mughair Shuayb	Tell el-Kheleifeh	Kh esh-Shedeyid	Central Negev Highlands	
Tayma	Nahal Shlomo	Ghrareh	Mezad Gozal	
al Ula	Nahal Amram	Tawilan	Tel Masos	
	Har Shani	Kh Duwar	Tel Farah (S)	
	Timna	Barqa al-Hatiya	Lachish	
	Yotvata	Kh en-Nahas	Tel Jedur	
	Uvda Valley	Rujm Hamra Ifdan	Gezer	
	En Hazeva	Amman		

Figure 6:4: Sites where QPW has been recovered

QPW has been recovered from more than thirty sites from Arabia, the Arabah, southern Jordan (lowlands and plateau sites), the Negev, the Shephelah, and the hill country near Hebron (see Figures 6:4-5). Its distribution follows a pattern that we will see again with Aegean and Cypriot imports below. The sites correspond to major routes and prominent locations. The most important include the Arabah and Beersheba Valleys. These routes also coincide with the copper exchange network that linked Arabah and Faynan copper resources with the rest of the southern Levant and Egypt. Whoever transported the pottery likely

traveled by foot, with donkeys or camels to assist with loads.<sup>46</sup> A day's journey could cover about 18-20 miles or about 30 km (see Figure 6:6).<sup>47</sup>



Figure 6:5: Distribution of QPW (satellite image © Google earth 2015)

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<sup>46</sup> Ben-Yosef et al., “A New Chronological Framework,” 65; Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy, “Local Iron Age Trade Routes in Northern Edom,” 513–514.

<sup>47</sup> Dorsey, *Roads and Highways*, 12–15.

The Arabah Valley was by far the most critical zone for QPW distribution (Figure 6:7). Stretching from the southern tip of the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Aqaba, the Arabah dominates the landscape of the south. Modern borders follow the low valley, separating today's nation-states, but its natural, funnel-like quality impacted ancient communities differently. The wadi systems from the highlands to the west and east drain into in this section of the Great Rift Valley. These drainages dictated travel and settlement patterns. As

<b>Find location</b>	<b>Approximate travel distance from Qurayyah (km)</b>	<b>Approximate journey time from Qurayyah (days)</b>
Timna	150	5-6
Faynan	250	8-9
Kadesh-Barnea	265	8-9
Bir el-Abd	450-550	15-19
Gezer	425-450	14-16

**Figure 6:6: Distances from Qurayyah**

a result, the Arabah was a major corridor connecting the more populous areas of the southern Levant to the Red Sea and to routes leading to Arabia. Given QPW's origins in the Hejaz, the Arabah would inevitably be the main passage to sites in the Levant, and the ware's presence at Arabah sites is to be expected.

All routes connecting the Levant to Arabia merged in the Gulf of Elath/Aqaba region. The Hebrew Bible indicates the area's importance with efforts by Israel's kings to control maritime activities through the port/fortress of Ezion-geber (1 Kgs 9:26; 22:49),

which some scholars identify with Tell el-Kheleifeh.<sup>48</sup> With QPW reported from several sites in the area, this was the entry to the southern Levant for QPW's carriers.



Figure 6:7: QPW in the southern Levant (satellite image © Google earth 2015)

QPW east of the Arabah has been found in the lowlands (the Faynan region), on the plateau (Um Guweah, Khirbet esh-Shedeiyid, Ghrareh, Tawilan, Khirbet Duwar), and as far north as Amman.<sup>49</sup> Two main roads ran north from the Gulf. One follows the eastern edge of the Arabah Valley, and the other, the King's Highway, followed the plateau.<sup>50</sup> Sites on the plateau could have been reached by routes leading east from the Arabah road, but the ascent

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<sup>48</sup> See Chapter Three.

<sup>49</sup> Rothenberg and Glass, "The Midianite Pottery."

<sup>50</sup> Ben-Yosef, Najjar, and Levy, "Local Iron Age Trade Routes in Northern Edom," 544–547.

to the highland sites involves a steep climb.<sup>51</sup> Travel to sites such as Tawilan would necessarily have occurred via easier ascents further south or at a limited number of more accessible passages.<sup>52</sup> The lowland Faynan sites (e.g., Barqa al-Hatiya, Khirbet en-Nahas) would have been reached directly from the Arabah. Further north, Amman sat at a convergence of highland roads and passage west to the Jordan Valley, where fords across the river led to Canaan/Israel.

Distribution in Cisjordan suggests that QPW was transported through sites that supported long-distance exchange. From the Gulf, travel to the northwest followed two main routes that ultimately joined again in southern Philistia: 1) the Darb el-Ghazza or 2) along the Arabah and Beersheba Valleys. The most direct route, the Darb el-Ghazza, led through the Sinai desert, along the southwestern fringe of the Negev highlands. Travelers on this road passed Kadesh-Barnea (Tell el-Qudeirat) en route to Gaza, where the road met the international coast highway (the Via Maris).

The Arabah – Beersheba route also began in the vicinity of Elath/Aqaba but headed north along the western edge of the Arabah. This first leg of the journey served the Timna region. Traffic that continued north passed by several sites which were fortified for at least some of their existence and have produced QPW (e.g., Tell el-Kheleifeh, Yotvata, En Haseva, Mesad Gozal). As traffic reached the southern tip of the Dead Sea, it joined with the eastern extent of the Beersheba Valley. The road through the Beersheba Valley was the most important transportation corridor in the south.<sup>53</sup> It connected the west (Egypt and the

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<sup>51</sup> For example, elevation near Tawilan reaches 1500 meters above sea level, and the modern highway 20 km to the west in the Arabah sits at about 150 meters above sea level. See *ibid.*, 497–500.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 521–535.

<sup>53</sup> Dorsey, *Roads and Highways*, 200–201.

Mediterranean coast), the international coastal highway (Via Maris), northern sites in the Shephelah, and highland regions with the Arabah, Transjordan, or Arabia. Tel Masos guarded the crossroads between the east-west valley route and the north-south Ridge Road throughout the Iron Age.<sup>54</sup>

From the core of the Beersheba route, passage further west could continue along a few roads. One followed the Nahal Besor, which directed traffic to Tell el-Farah (S). QPW from Tell el-Farah (S) was discovered in the Egyptian “Governor’s Residence” or “Center Hall House,” an administrative building characteristic of Egyptian hegemony in the region, and in the elite burial discussed above.<sup>55</sup> These contexts were undoubtedly associated with the importance of the site in relation to the major roads. From the Mediterranean coast, a segment of the “Ways of Horus,” led directly to the Egyptian Nile Delta and was equipped with fortified stations along the way. This infrastructure was established to facilitate Egyptian control over Canaan. It should come as no surprise that QPW sherds were found at one of these administrative forts, Bir el-Abd.

Sites in the Shephelah and the Cisjordan highlands would have been reached via roads north from the Beersheba Valley. Three sites produced QPW: Lachish, Gezer, and Tel Jedur. Tel Jedur sat just off the Ridge Road between Hebron and Bethlehem, on the east-west route leading to Adullam, the Elah Valley, and ultimately the coastal plain.<sup>56</sup> Situated at busy crossroads, both Lachish and Gezer were strategically positioned to monitor the eastern extent of routes that followed the coastal plain and the Shephelah, the transition zone

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<sup>54</sup> The Ridge Road followed the watershed of the highland mountain range that runs from the Negev mountains through Judah north into Samaria (ibid., 117).

<sup>55</sup> See below. The Egyptian structure continued in use after the New Kingdom withdrew from the region.

<sup>56</sup> Dorsey, *Roads and Highways*, 182, 191–92.

between the coastland and highland regions valued for its agricultural potential, which often functioned as a border zone between ethnic and political groups.

Examining the distribution of QPW reveals several important things. The pottery coincided with major roads (e.g., the Arabah Valley, the King's Highway, the Darb el-Ghazza, and the Beersheba Valley) and routes related to the copper trade. The use of these roads indicates that QPW trade was one element in an active exchange system in the south. The presence of QPW along these routes and in distinct regions also provides evidence that QPW acquisition occurred across different cultural groups. Finally, QPW found at more distant locations tended to be associated with elite and/or administrative contexts.

### **Summary**

Although the overall chronology of QPW is still debated, it is apparent that during the later days of the LB the pottery was prevalent in Timna and was important as a prestige ware north of the copper region. During the Iron I and transition to Iron IIA, QPW continued to appear along with other imported goods at sites in the south that were associated with the copper trade network that reached from the Faynan and the Arabah to the Mediterranean coast. As a painted fine ware with echoes of the Aegean style, QPW may have served as a substitute for items that were no longer available (i.e., Mycenaean and Cypriot wares). The wealth and concentration of imported goods at Tel Masos and Khirbat en-Nahas, as well as other sites, hint at the possibility that during the Iron I-IIA transition those who were in positions of power in this region participated in a shared culture related to the exchange activities of the copper network.

## Cyprus

Cypriot imports provide evidence of early Iron Age exchange between the island and the southern Levant. White Painted (WP) and Bichrome wares appear first in the transition between Iron I and II periods, followed by (and overlapping with) “Cypro-Phoenician” Black-on-Red (BoR) pottery, which became the most popular Cypriot commodity in the Iron IIA.<sup>57</sup> All three types decreased dramatically during the ninth century. Two studies underscore the relevance of these imports for examining exchange relations: N. Schreiber’s study of BoR and A. Gilboa’s concentration on Cypriot barrel juglets, which appear in WP, Bichrome, and BoR wares (although not in equal frequency).<sup>58</sup> Both scholars demonstrate that Cypriot wares were among the earliest Iron Age imports to appear in the southern Levant, and their findings suggest that small containers (e.g., jugs, juglets, and bowls) were part of a specialized trade between Cyprus and particular consumer groups. The predominance of closed containers (i.e., jugs and juglets) suggests that the vessels carried perfumed oils. The fine quality of the Cypriot wares combined with the recovery of open vessels (i.e., small bowls, although in smaller quantities) indicates that pottery itself was likely acquired as value items as well. Within the southern Levant, Cypriot vessels have

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<sup>57</sup> Nicola Schreiber, *The Cypro-Phoenician Pottery of the Iron Age* (CHANE 13; Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2003), 309–310; Ayelet Gilboa, “Cypriot Barrel Juglets at Khirbet Qeiyafa and Other Sites in the Levant: Cultural Aspects and Chronological Implications,” *TA* 39/2 (2012): 136. The chronology of BoR is very narrow. Schreiber dates the pottery to the second half of the tenth century at the earliest and dates her “Phase 1” to ca. 925–890/880 (Schreiber, *The Cypro-Phoenician Pottery*, 309–310). Herzog and Singer-Avitz emphasize how regular BoR vessels were as a part of the “Jezreel cluster,” an assemblage characteristic of the first half of the Late Iron IIA, which they date to the ninth century (“Sub-Dividing the Iron Age IIA,” 167–168). The difference between the two ranges is quite small but happens to coincide with one of the more contested transitions for historians and archaeologists, that is the end of the United Monarchy in biblical tradition and the late tenth to ninth century Iron IIA period (see Chapter One).

<sup>58</sup> Schreiber, *The Cypro-Phoenician Pottery*; Gilboa, “Cypriot Barrel Juglets.”

been found in Phoenicia, northern Israel, parts of the hill country, the coastlands, the Jordan Valley, and as far south as the Negev and the Arabah.



**Figure 6:8: Origins of BoR (satellite image © Google earth 2015)**

The origin of Cypriot White Painted and Bichrome wares is not disputed, but there has been debate about the source of BoR pottery. The “Cypro-Phoenician” designation reveals the confusion that has persisted. Based on forms and decoration, BoR appears to be closely related to the preceding Cypriot White Painted and Bichrome wares but also shows similarities to Phoenician Red-Slip. Due to problems aligning chronologies throughout the eastern Mediterranean, some examples of BoR in the southern Levant seemed to be earlier than BoR in the north and on Cyprus.<sup>59</sup> Combined with the pottery’s prevalence in Phoenicia, scholars argued that it must have been produced in Phoenicia and traded to

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<sup>59</sup> Schreiber, *The Cypro-Phoenician Pottery*, 230–32, 273–77; N. J. Brodie and L. Steel, “Cypriot Black-on-Red Ware: Towards a Characterization,” *Archaeometry* 38/2 (1996): 263–78.

Cyprus. Fortunately, atomic absorption spectrometry (AAS) has now been used to determine that the pottery was indeed manufactured in Cyprus. N. Brodie and L. Steel's results indicate Amathus or Kourion in southern part of the island were the sources of the samples they tested from Tell el-Ajjul and Tell el-Farah (S) (Figure 6:8).<sup>60</sup> The confusion that surrounded BoR's origins draws attention to its interregional character. The BoR pottery style appears to have developed in response to exchange activities already in place between Cyprus and the Levant.

Gilboa's analysis of barrel juglets provides a context for the developments of Cypriot exchange. She explains that barrel juglets "exemplify a commercial phenomenon starting towards the end of the CG [Cypro-Geometric] IB/II horizon, *prior* to the extensive production and export of BoR containers. The fact that from the moment these vessels were produced, they were also used for overseas shipment, indicates that the shape was *inter alia* meant to serve this endeavor."<sup>61</sup> The barrel juglets have a barrel-shaped body with a narrow flared neck. They are also very small. For example, a recently unearthed, complete miniature juglet from Khirbet Qeiyafa measures 8.8 cm tall, 6 cm long, 5.2 cm wide.<sup>62</sup> The size and distinctive shape suggest expensive, perfumed oils were the traded commodities; the

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<sup>60</sup> Brodie and Steel, "Cypriot Black-on-Red Ware," 267–71. They also tested samples from Al Mina, which appear to have come from Kition or Kouklia. Note that these source areas are all on the southern side of the island. Brodie and Steel also note that samples from Salamis, the most likely candidate for a manufacture site based on historical and archaeological research and geographic position, were not sufficient to provide reliable results.

<sup>61</sup> Gilboa, "Cypriot Barrel Juglets," 140; emphasis in the original. The CG IB-II phase corresponds roughly to the Iron I-IIA transition and the early Iron IIA period and the "Ir1|2 transitional horizon" for Phoenicia (*ibid.*, 136; see also A. Gilboa and I. Sharon, "An Archaeological Contribution").

<sup>62</sup> Gilboa, "Cypriot Barrel Juglets," 133.

different wares (WP and Bichrome versus BoR) may have contained different varieties of oils (Figures 6:9-10).<sup>63</sup>



**Figure 6:9: Barrel juglet from Kh. Qeiyafa (Gilboa, “Cypriot Barrel Juglets,” 137)**



**Figure 6:10: Iron IIA assemblage with BoR, City of David (Mazar, *The Palace of King David*, 53)**

### **Distribution Overview**

The early Iron Age import of Cypriot goods began with White Painted and Bichrome wares (including barrel juglets) during the Iron I-II transition (late eleventh to mid-tenth centuries), and BoR vessels started to arrive during the Early Iron IIA (late tenth to early ninth centuries).<sup>64</sup> The distribution of these goods appears to have been tailored to specific places (see Figures 6:11-12). The earlier phase of barrel juglet imports (WP and Bichrome)

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 143.

<sup>64</sup> The discussion that follows (including the maps and tables) focuses on these earlier phases of Cypriot imports. Later imports, BoR Phase 2 and other ninth century and later examples, are not represented.

were almost exclusively distributed in the southern Levant, especially in southern Phoenicia/northern Israel, with the exception of a few examples known from Syria, a few from Egypt, and one notable example found in a grave at Lefkandi.<sup>65</sup> The distribution of the earlier WP and Bichrome wares more generally shows that ports and coastal centers (from Sarepta to Ashdod) were the first to receive the items. From these entry points, the wares traveled along main roads and wadi systems to a handful of inland sites: Megiddo, Bethshean, Tell el-Ful, Khirbet Qeiyafa, Tell es-Safi, Lachish, Tell el-Farah (S).<sup>66</sup> These sites were among the largest and most strategic in this period.

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<sup>65</sup> Gilboa's "Phase 1," equivalent to her Phoenician Ir1|2 horizon and northern Israel's early Iron IIA ("Cypriot Barrel Juglets," 140–141).

<sup>66</sup> Schreiber, *The Cypro-Phoenician Pottery*, 28–46; Gilboa, "Cypriot Barrel Juglets," 136–138.



Figure 6:11: Distribution of Cypriot imports (satellite image © Google earth 2015)

White Painted	Bichrome	BoR (Phase 1)	
Achziv	Achziv	Achziv	T. el-Ajjul
Ashdod	Dor	Beersheba	T. el-Farah (N)
Beth-Shean	Kh. Qeiyafa	Beth-Shean	T. el-Farah (S)
Beth-Shemesh	Lachish	Beth-Shemesh	T. el-Ful
Dor	Megiddo	Beth-Zur	T. el-Hammeh
Kh. Qeiyafa	Tyre	Carmel	T. el-Qudeirat
Megiddo		Dor	T. en-Nasbeh
Shiqmona		En Gev	T. Halif
T. Abu Hawam		Gezer	T. Jemmeh
T. Beit Mirsim		Hazor	T. Jezreel
T. el-Farah (S)		Hurvat Rosh	T. Keisan
T. el-Ful		Zayit	T. Masos
T. es-Safi		Jerusalem	T. Mevorakh
T. Gerisa		Kh. en-Nahas	T. Michal
T. Qasile		Lachish	T. Qasile
T. Zeror		Megiddo	T. Qiri
Tyre		Pella	T. Rehov
		Shiqmona	T. Taanach
		T. Abu Hawam	T. Yoqneam
		T. Amal	T. Zeror
		T. Azor	Tyre
		T. Beit Mirsim	
		T. Dan	

Figure 6:12: Sites with Cypriot imports

As BoR entered the exchange network and distribution increased, the goods followed roughly the same pattern. The highest density of sites and quantity of finds were in the Carmel/Akko region, indicating that this area became the gateway to the inland sites.<sup>67</sup> In smaller quantities, Cypriot imports have also been recovered along the coast south of Akko. Coastal sites with BoR include, from north to south, Tyre, Achziv, Tell Abu Hawam, Shiqmona, Dor, Tel Mevorakh, Tel Michal, and Tell Qasile.

The trade followed road systems away from the coast, spreading further east and south to reach more sites throughout the region (see below). Notable additions to the earlier list of inland sites include Dan, Hazor, and En Gev in the north; Gezer, Tell en-Nasbeh, Jerusalem, Beth-zur, Tel Halif, Beersheba, and Tel Masos<sup>68</sup> further south; and Tell el-Qudeirat and Khirbat en-Nahas in the southern deserts.<sup>69</sup> The area with the most intensification was the Jezreel Valley, where BoR distribution closely follows the route from the port of Tell Abu Hawam through the Jezreel to the Jordan Valley. Evidence of BoR trade has been found at the most prominent sites along this route: Tell Abu Hawam, Yoqneam, Tel Qiri, Megiddo, Taanach, Jezreel, Tel Amal, Beth-shean, Tel Rehov, Tell el-Hammeh,

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<sup>67</sup> Schreiber provides the reconstruction of quantities as well as is possible, but there are many reasons why quantification of BoR is problematic. Excavation of sites with BoR has occurred over more than a century, and archaeological method has changed dramatically over that time. She explains the most reliable information is the density of BoR compared across the region as opposed to the density of BoR within one site. Overall quantities of ceramics were not consistently measured, and imported and decorated wares tend to be retained/recorded at a higher rate (all decorated sherds) than local ceramics (diagnostic sherds only). Bearing that in mind, a few sites appear to be exceptions to the general pattern. At most sites, BoR is a very small percentage of the overall ceramic finds. Exceptions include Megiddo (ca 40 vessels?), Mt Carmel tombs (13 vessels, but these made up 40% of the pottery), Tell Abu Hawam (at least 40 vessels), Tell Keisan (more than 150 fragments), Tyre (29 sherds, but in a very small excavation area) (Schreiber, *The Cypro-Phoenician Pottery*, 26–28, 92–185; see also Faust, *Israel's Ethnogenesis*, 50, note 2).

<sup>68</sup> Schreiber expresses some reservations about the date of BoR at Tel Masos (*The Cypro-Phoenician Pottery*, 9, 11).

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 28–46, 85–169; Herzog and Singer-Avitz, “Redefining the Centre,” 215–218; Herzog and Singer-Avitz, “Sub-Dividing the Iron Age IIA”; Gilboa, “Cypriot Barrel Juglets,” 138–140; Smith and Levy, “Iron Age Ceramics from Edom,” 327; Smith, Goren, and Levy, “The Petrography of Iron Age Edom,” 479.

Pella, and slightly off this route but related to traffic along it, Tell el-Farah (N).<sup>70</sup> There is a notable near-absence of Cypriot wares in the central hill country (see below).

### **Transport and Routes**

As I mentioned previously, evident in this survey of Cypriot wares is the concentration in the Carmel/Akko region. The distribution aligns well with the best sailing patterns between Cyprus and the southern Levant.<sup>71</sup> Scholars estimate that a merchant ship traveling from Cyprus could reach the Carmel region within a day.<sup>72</sup> The close relationship between maritime activities and Cypriot wares is further indicated by recovery of imports at coastal sites outside of Akko. In many cases, these sites were also located at the mouths of rivers, which may have served as harbors and facilitated transport of the wares inland. The distribution of imports suggests that exchange followed routes along rivers and riverbeds (wadis), filtering inland (Figure 6:13).<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Schreiber, *The Cypro-Phoenician Pottery*, 85–169; Herzog and Singer-Avitz, “Sub-Dividing the Iron Age IIA.”

<sup>71</sup> Schreiber, *The Cypro-Phoenician Pottery*, 76–78.

<sup>72</sup> Based on the expertise of Avner Raban and Ezra Marcus; *ibid.*, 77 note 48. As yet, there is no direct evidence of maritime exchange for this period (e.g., the likes of the LB Uluburun shipwreck). There is no doubt, however, that the Cypriot imports (and Aegean wares discussed below) were part of maritime exchange networks.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 76–80.

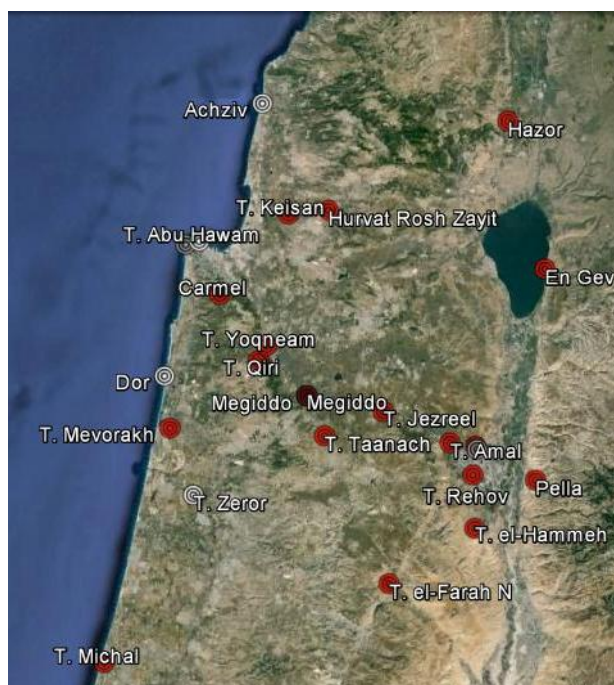
Location of Cypriot Imports	Location Type	Associated River
Tell Abu Hawam	coastal	Nahal Qishon
Yoqneam	inland	
Tel Qiri	inland	
Tel Qashish	inland	
Tel Mevorakh	coastal	Nahal Taananim
Tel Zeror	inland	Nahal Hadera
Tel Qasile	coastal	Nahal Yarkon
Tel Ashdod	coastal	Nahal Lachish
Lachish	inland	
Tell el-Ajjul	coastal	Nahal Besor
Tell Jemmeh	inland	
Tell el-Farah (S)	inland	Nahal Beersheba
Beersheba	inland	

**Figure 6:13: BoR Phase 1 sites on rivers/wadis (from Schreiber, *The Cypro-Phoenician Pottery*, 76-80)**

Finds along the coast and inland also correspond to travel along the main coastal highway, the Via Maris, that passed along the eastern side of Mount Carmel.<sup>74</sup> This tendency appears to be borne out in the BoR distribution, where there is a ring of sites around the mountain from Dor to Tel Qiri, Yoqneam, Tell Abu Hawam, and Shiqmona. From Dor, there may have been another route running south of Mount Carmel to the Sharon Plain, which passed through the sites Tel Mevorakh and Tel Zeror before connecting to the Via Maris.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Dorsey, *Roads and Highways*, 78–83.

<sup>75</sup> Dorsey notes that the locations of Iron Age sites in the area suggests a route (I23), but if there was one it was not in use in later periods (ibid., 76–77).



**Figure 6:14: Cyprriot imports, northern distribution**  
(satellite image © Google earth 2015)

By far, the most important passage was from Carmel/Akko through the Jezreel Valley, which was the most important inland zone for the exchange of Cyprriot imports (Figure 6:14). As we have seen in Chapters Two, Three, and Five, this valley was significant in a variety of interactions, including warfare, commercial ventures, and potentially as a factor connecting elite leadership groups.<sup>76</sup> The distribution of Cyprriot wares illustrates the path of the main highway. Roughly one-third of sites in the southern Levant with BoR sat along this corridor. Most traffic passed from the coast to Megiddo,<sup>77</sup> then on to either the Beqa' Valley in the north (passing through Hazor and Dan along the way<sup>78</sup>) or through the

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 78–101.

<sup>77</sup> Megiddo's large amount of BoR is most likely related to its position as a hub linking these international routes.

<sup>78</sup> These sites were also situated at crossroads, each on west-east routes linking Damascus to the Mediterranean (to sites like Tyre and Achziv). See Aharoni, *The Land of the Bible*, 29–30, 48–49; Dorsey, *Roads and Highways*, 94–97.

Jezreel Valley toward Beth-Shean region of the Jordan Valley in the east (providing passage to Pella and to Transjordan routes that would reach a site like En Gev). A relationship to the roads of the Jezreel and Jordan Valleys is also the most likely explanation for how BoR reached the site of Tell el-Farah (N).<sup>79</sup>



**Figure 6:15: Cypriot imports, southern distribution**  
(satellite image © Google earth 2015)

The cluster of sites Tel Michal, Tell Qasile, and Tel Azor suggests another zone of exchange activity in the area of Joppa that relates to the distribution of Cypriot pottery in the southern half of the region (Figure 6:15). These coastal sites were well-positioned to function as port towns for maritime trade. Tel Michal sat on an alternative to the Via Maris that ran along the narrow pass between the Sharon and the Mediterranean. Tell Qasile was better positioned for organizing trade that was bound for the Shephelah and the hill country;

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<sup>79</sup> Very few imports, Cypriot or otherwise, have been recovered from the highlands. See Faust, *Israel's Ethnogenesis*, 49–64.

its diverse archaeological remains support its characterization as a port city. Tel Azor, situated halfway between Joppa and the coast highway, sat at a convergence of routes.<sup>80</sup>

Further south, the discovery of White Painted ware at Ashdod suggests another entry zone for the imports.

From these coastal sites, a number of routes led to the Shephelah and ascents into the hill country.<sup>81</sup> The Joppa region ports connected to the most direct roads to Tell en-Nasbeh, Tell el-Ful, and Jerusalem, where Cypriot wares have been recovered. Similarly, the sites of Gezer, Tell el-Safi, Beth-shemesh, Khirbet Qeiyafa, and Lachish were well connected by routes to coastal areas as well as to the hill country.<sup>82</sup> Imports at these sites were probably due to their positions at converging routes and in transition zones between highland and lowland.

The southern exchange corridor along the Beersheba Valley also played an important role in the movement of Cypriot goods. Imports at Tell el-Ajjul, Tell Jemmeh, and Tell el-Farah (S) suggest that the Gaza region was yet another gateway for Mediterranean goods. From this southern entry point, imports may have moved to Beersheba and Tel Masos, where many routes led into the Shephelah and southern hill country (including Lachish, Tell Beit Mirsim, Tell Halif, and Beth-Zur).<sup>83</sup> The recovery of BoR at Tell el-Qudeirat and Khirbat en-Nahas is undoubtedly due to movement of Cypriot goods through this southern corridor.

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<sup>80</sup> Dorsey, *Roads and Highways*, 61–63.

<sup>81</sup> Dorsey's J1 with alternate J2 (*ibid.*, 181–84) and J8 (*ibid.*, 61–64, 189).

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 183, 194.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 152. Schreiber expresses uncertainty about the context in which BoR was found at Tel Masos (Schreiber, *The Cypro-Phoenician Pottery*, 11).

Understanding who was receiving these imports is more complicated than tracing their destinations. Schreiber describes BoR's distribution pattern as a "filtering-through" trade from key points on the coast into the Levant in "small consignments."<sup>84</sup> This characterization creates an image of sporadic waves of imports that passed deeper inland with each shipment. Schreiber also finds that BoR was frequently associated with high-value items especially in burial contexts (e.g., metal objects, jewelry, faience, other imports, figurines). She concludes, however, that the consumer base was not exclusively elite, since BoR finds became so frequent and were also associated with domestic contexts, which included cooking and storage vessels.<sup>85</sup>

Gilboa's characterization differs somewhat. She emphasizes regional variations and suggests the shift in products and distribution was due to "a significant change in clientele—the rising importance of (probably elite) customers in Israel, Philistia and Judah and concomitantly possibly also a reshuffle in trade networks."<sup>86</sup> Similarly, Schreiber notes a "disassociation" between BoR and Phoenician material culture.<sup>87</sup> Thus there may have been a preference *away* from Cypriot imports in Phoenicia while it was more popular in other areas of the southern Levant. There is also a conspicuous absence of Cypriot wares in the hill country. The exceptions include Tell el-Farah (N), Tell en-Nasbeh, Tell el-Ful, Jerusalem, and farther south Beth-zur. While it is possible that the hill country was not well

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<sup>84</sup> Schreiber, *The Cypro-Phoenician Pottery*, 80.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 56–73, 308.

<sup>86</sup> Gilboa, "Cypriot Barrel Juglets," 139.

<sup>87</sup> Schreiber, *The Cypro-Phoenician Pottery*, 48–51. Gilboa describes the cultural distance differently, but they appear to be describing the same phenomenon (Gilboa, "Cypriot Barrel Juglets," 139). They also define the limits of Phoenicia differently. Gilboa includes in "southern Phoenicia" regions traditionally described as northern Israel: "the coast of Galilee, the 'Akko plain, the Carmel coast and the western Jezreel Valley (*ibid.*).

integrated into the exchange networks that were associated with BoR, it is also possible, even more likely, that the Cypriot goods were either not useful to the hill country residents or were intentionally avoided.<sup>88</sup>

The importance of being well connected to the exchange networks is borne out in the distributions and site types. The imports' popularity spread to sites that had the best access to the earliest trade activities, for example those along the major routes. Judging from the sites involved, there is an association with sites of significance, meaning prominent sites that guarded crossroads and strategic zones. Based on this tendency, it would appear that the Cypriot goods did in fact carry with them an air of prestige. Despite Schreiber's determination that BoR distribution was not limited to elites, there does appear to be some exclusivity in these patterns. The imported goods gravitated (or were drawn) to the more powerful sites.

The discoveries of BoR at Khirbat en-Nahas (KEN), the most distant location where BoR has been found, supports this perspective. Excavations have produced evidence of an elite, ruling or administrative, class at KEN in the tenth and ninth centuries. Several elite residences and administrative structures have been unearthed in the excavations.<sup>89</sup> Their classification as elite is based on superior architectural plan and quality of construction, special installations in and around the structures (e.g., a dais and perimeter wall), and the presence of exceptional finds (e.g., imported pottery, scarabs, unusual vessels, a figurine fragment).<sup>90</sup> The team also discovered workers' residences and industrial areas that lacked

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<sup>88</sup> This is the argument Faust uses to explain the distribution patterns of Philistine pottery and collared-rim jars (*Israel's Ethnogenesis*, 191–220).

<sup>89</sup> In Areas A, R, T, and W; see Levy et al., "Excavations at Khirbat En-Nahas, 2002-2009."

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 202–232.

the rarer luxury goods and special features, confirming that there were two separate social tiers present at the site.<sup>91</sup> The more exclusive BoR along with black-burnished juglets imported from Jerusalem were found within elite structures, but the southern imports of QPW and western Negev ware were also found outside the elite buildings and in metallurgical contexts.<sup>92</sup> The various finds and the architecture associated with the elite contexts suggest that members of this group were in command of the exchange relations linking them to goods from the Judahite hill country, Phoenicia, and by extension Cyprus. While the possession of Cypriot imports may have been more commonplace, and thus less of a status symbol, near the Mediterranean port cities, these imports conveyed messages of exclusivity with increased distance from their origin.

### **Summary**

The Cypriot imports were the largest component of the revival in Mediterranean trade in the early Iron Age. The renewal in this activity began toward the end of the Iron I with trade in precious oils (or a similar commodity) that were conveyed in small containers, first in WP and Bichrome wares and later also in BoR. As the distribution of these imports increased over time, the preference for different varieties (either of vessel or the contents) correlates to distinct zones. While these distribution patterns might indicate different cultural identities, additional factors such as the site's regional position (geographic and socio-political) and its proximity to the early exchange networks were significant in determining the extent of the trade and the social importance associated with the acquisition of Cypriot goods.

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<sup>91</sup> Neighboring structures in Area W highlight the contrast (ibid., 184–201).

<sup>92</sup> Smith and Levy, "Iron Age Ceramics from Edom," 449.

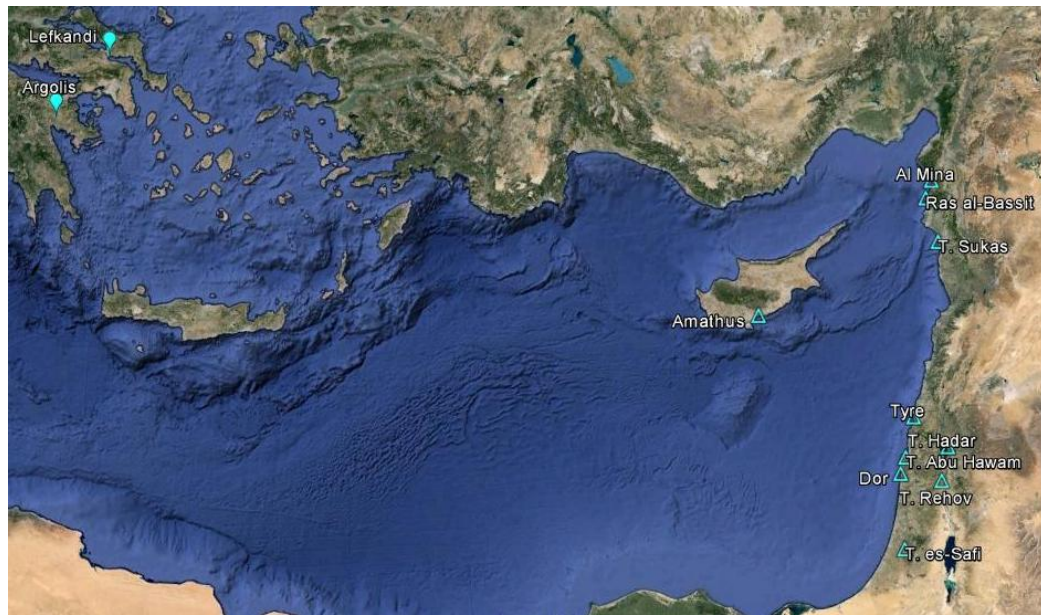
## The Aegean

A handful of early Aegean imports (Sub-Mycenaean and Protogeometric sherds) have now been recovered from six sites in the southern Levant.<sup>93</sup> The imports were discovered at Tyre, Tell Abu Hawam, Dor, Tel Hadar, Tel Rehov, and Tell es-Safi (Gath) in contexts ranging from the late Iron I to IIA periods (late eleventh to ninth centuries).<sup>94</sup> All but one of the imports came from Euboea. The exception is Tell-es Safi's painted sherd, which was produced in the Argolid (Figures 6:16-17). Unlike QPW and the Cypriot imports, there do not seem to be any other trade items closely associated with the Greek vessels.

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<sup>93</sup> The most important Aegean ceramics for this discussion come from the phases that preceded the Greek Geometric Age. These are the Sub-Mycenaean (SM) and the Protogeometric (PG) groups; the latter includes Early (EPG), Middle (MPG), Late (LPG), and Sub-Protogeometric (SPG) phases. Overall, Protogeometric is generally thought to have lasted from the eleventh century to the eighth century. Archaeologists of the Aegean are having their own debates about these phases, their absolute dates, and regional distinctions (e.g., the distinctive Euboean group compared to Attic pottery).

<sup>94</sup> The stratigraphy and chronology of Tyre is extremely complex and has been much discussed. The imported wares have been reviewed most recently by Gilboa and Sharon. They assign them to the same period as the Dor Ir1|2 horizon, roughly equivalent to the Iron I-IIA transition period (essentially early to mid-tenth century) now incorporated into discussions of the MCC ("An Archaeological Contribution," 68–70).



**Figure 6:16: Aegean imports, origins, and distribution in the southern Levant (satellite image © Google earth 2015)**

Site and Strata	Aegean Imports (Origin)	Archaeological Phase	Excavators' Absolute Date
Tell el-Safi/Gath A4-A5/A3	SM-EPG deep bowl (Argolid)	late Iron I to very early Iron IIA	10 <sup>th</sup> century
Tel Hadar IV	MPG-SPG lebes/krater (Euboean)	Iron I	early 10 <sup>th</sup> century
Tel Dor D2/8b	MGP-LPG open vessel, cup (Euboean)	Ir 1 2 to Ir2a	1 <sup>st</sup> half to mid- 10 <sup>th</sup> century
Tyre XI – IX	SM-SPG a number of vessels including amphora, skyphoi, plate, tripod lebes (Euboean)	Ir 1 2 (acc. to Gilboa and Sharon)	(1 <sup>st</sup> half of 10 <sup>th</sup> century)
Tell Abu Hawam III	LPG-SPG skyphos, cup (Euboean)	Iron II	(uncertain)
Tel Rehov VI-IV	LPG-SPG krater(s?), skyphoi, pyxis (Euboean)	Iron IIA	10 <sup>th</sup> to mid-9 <sup>th</sup> century

**Figure 6:17: Aegean imports to the southern Levant**

### From the Argolid

The fragment of a wavy-band deep bowl found at Tell es-Safi (Gath) appears to be the earliest Aegean import of the Iron Age.<sup>95</sup> Excavators suggest the vessel and its contexts should be dated to the late Iron I or very early Iron IIA period, based on the fragment's type and decoration, associated ceramic assemblage, and the site's stratigraphy.<sup>96</sup> Analysis of the

<sup>95</sup> Maeir, Fantalkin, and Zuckerman, "The Earliest Greek Import," *Ancient West & East* 8 (2009): 71–2. The closest parallel to the Gath sherd is a Tyre stratum XIV bowl or skyphos fragment (*ibid.*, 73–4, note 94).

<sup>96</sup> That is, late eleventh to early tenth century in the MCC or mid to late tenth in the LC (Maeir, Fantalkin, and Zuckerman, "The Earliest Greek Import").

sherd established that the vessel was produced in the Argolid region of Greece.<sup>97</sup> The discovery of this import was surprising both for its early date and because of Tell es-Safi's geographic position in relation to the other sites that have produced early Greek imports. All of the other sites are in the north and closely related to the important international routes discussed above. If the Greek imports seem to be concentrated around access to exchange routes in the north, it may seem surprising to find the Argolid sherd in Philistia. Tell es-Safi, however, was also in close proximity to the southern portion of the Via Maris and was one of the most important sites in the south during the Iron I-IIA transition, evidenced in archaeological and historical/biblical materials.<sup>98</sup> With these factors in mind, Tell es-Safi is not a surprising place to find a rare import at this time.

### **From Euboea**

The remainder of the Greek imports originated from the island of Euboea (Figure 6:18). They have been discovered at Tyre,<sup>99</sup> Tell Abu Hawam,<sup>100</sup> Dor,<sup>101</sup> Tel Hadar,<sup>102</sup> and

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<sup>97</sup> David Ben-Shlomo, Aren M. Maeir, and Hans Mommsen, "Neutron Activation and Petrographic Analysis of Selected Late Bronze and Iron Age Pottery from Tell Es-Safi/Gath, Israel," *JAS* 35 (2008): 956–64.

<sup>98</sup> See Chapter Two and Maeir, "The Tell Es-Safi/Gath Archaeological Project 1996-2010."

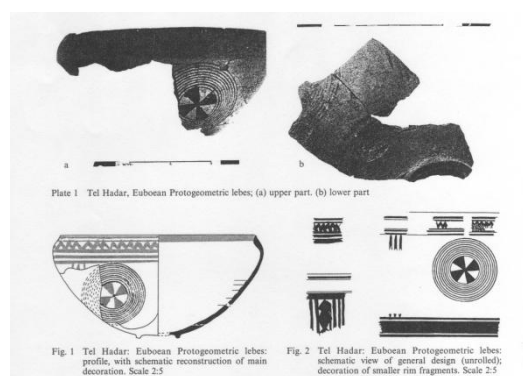
<sup>99</sup> P. M. Bikai, *The Pottery of Tyre* (Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1978); Gilboa and Sharon, "An Archaeological Contribution," 43–49.

<sup>100</sup> Jacqueline Balensi, "Revising Tell Abu Hawam," *BASOR* 257 (1985): 65–74; M. D. Herrera Gonzalez and Jacqueline Balensi, "More about the Greek Geometric Pottery at Tell Abu Hawam," *Levant* 18 (1986): 169–71; Rosalinde Anne Kearsley, "The Redating of Tell Abu Hawam III and the Greek Pendant Semicircle Skyphos," *BASOR* 263 (1986): 85–86; Jane C Waldbaum, "Early Greek Contacts with the Southern Levant, Ca. 1000-600 B.C.: The Eastern Perspective," *BASOR* 293 (1994): 55; Gilboa and Sharon, "An Archaeological Contribution," 67–72.

<sup>101</sup> Gilboa and Sharon, "An Archaeological Contribution"; idem, "Between Carmel and the Sea," *Near Eastern Archaeology* 71/3 (2008): 146–70.

<sup>102</sup> Moshe Kochavi, "Hadar, Tel," *NEAEHL*; M. Kochavi, "The Eleventh Century BCE Tripartite Pillar Building at Tel Hadar," in *Mediterranean Peoples in Transition: Thirteenth to Early Tenth Centuries BCE* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1998), 468–78; Günter Kopcke, "1000 B.C.E.? 900 B.C.E.? A Greek Vase from Lake Galilee," in *Leaving No Stones Unturned: Essays on the Ancient Near East and Egypt in Honor of Donald P. Hansen* (ed. Erica Ehrenberg; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2002), 109–17.

Tel Rehov.<sup>103</sup> (By comparison, a small number of Euboean imports has also been reported at three sites in the northern Levantine coast: Al Mina, Ras al-Bassit, and Tell Sukas.) Each of these sites had in common an advantageous geographic position in relation to the most important interregional routes. Tyre, Tell Abu Hawam, and Dor were the busiest ports of this age. Tel Hadar and Tel Rehov each sat along inland routes connecting east and west sides of the Jordan Valley and connecting the southern Levant to Syria and beyond. In addition, each site has produced evidence of unusual wealth during this period.



**Figure 6:18: Euboean imported lebes from Tel Hadar (Coldstream, “The First Exchanges,” 358)**

The source of this group of imports, the island of Euboea, is best known through excavations at Lefkandi, where an Iron Age settlement and nearby cemeteries have revealed a successful and prosperous community from the same period that Euboean imports begin to appear in the southern Levant. Excavations have established that the harbor settlement was active from the mid-twelfth to late ninth centuries. Among the burial goods in the cemeteries is evidence of Levantine imports and Levantine-inspired styles.<sup>104</sup> The exceptional amount

<sup>103</sup> Coldstream and Mazar, “Greek Pottery from Tel Rehov.”

<sup>104</sup> Mervyn R. Popham, L. H. Sackett, P. G. Themelis, eds., *Lefkandi I, the Iron Age* (British School at Athens Supplementary Volume 11; London: Thames and Hudson, 1979-1980); Mervyn R. Popham, P. G. Calligas, L. H. Sackett, eds., *Lefkandi II: The Protogeometric Building at Toumba* (British School at Athens

of wealth and imported goods, best known from the elite “Heroon” complex, proves that residents experienced Greece’s “Dark Age” crisis differently from other areas.<sup>105</sup>

Pottery from Lefkandi and the Euboean imports found in the Levant attest to a unique repertoire. Lefkandi’s excavators attribute the settlement’s artistic innovation and prosperity to a thorough engagement with long-distance trade.<sup>106</sup> It is fairly certain that Euboea’s relations with the southern Levant, occurring as early as the late eleventh century, were facilitated through exchange with Cyprus.<sup>107</sup> The earliest post-Mycenaean Greek

Supplementary Volume 22-23; London: British School of Archaeology at Athens, 1993); Mervyn R. Popham and Irene S. Lemos, “A Euboean Warrior Trader,” *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 14/2 (1995): 151–57; Mervyn R. Popham, ed., *Lefkandi III: The Tumba Cemetery: The Excavations of 1981, 1984, 1986 and 1992-4* (British School at Athens Supplementary Volume 29; London: British School of Athens, 1996); Jane B. Carter, “Egyptian Bronze Jugs from Crete and Lefkandi,” *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 118 (1998): 172–77; Georg Nightingale, “Lefkandi: An Important Node in the International Exchange Network of Jewellery and Personal Adornment,” in *Between the Aegean and Baltic Seas: Prehistory across Borders: Proceedings of the International Conference Bronze and Early Iron Age Interconnections and Contemporary Developments between the Aegean and the Regions of the Balkan Peninsula, Central and Northern Europe, University of Zagreb, 11-14 April 2005* (ed. Ioanna Galanaki et al., *Aegaeum* 27; Liège, Belgique; Austin, TX: Université de Liège, Histoire de l’art et archéologie de la Grèce antique; University of Texas at Austin, Program in Aegean Scripts and Prehistory, 2007); Irene S. Lemos, “Lefkandi in Euboea: Amongst the Heroes of the Early Iron Age,” *Minerva* (2008): 30–32; John H. Kroll, “Early Iron Age Balance Weights at Lefkandi, Euboea,” *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 27 (2008): 37–48.

<sup>105</sup> The most famous residents are the elite couple from the “Heroon” complex. Finds deposited with their remains included bronze and ceramic heirloom pieces from Mycenaean and Near Eastern cultures, gold jewelry, contemporary Cypriot imports, evidence of exchange with Macedonia, painted decoration of sailors and a ship on a vessel, thousands of faience and glass beads, and a sequence of merchants’ weights that correspond to known commercial standards across the eastern Mediterranean (Popham and Lemos, “A Euboean Warrior Trader”; Nightingale, “Lefkandi: An Important Node.”)

<sup>106</sup> Note, however, that John Papadopoulos warns against the imbalance that has occurred as a result of the sensational finds from Lefkandi and from the excavators’ presentation of these discoveries. He notes that the “warrior/trader” characterization has led to an overemphasis on Euboean activity abroad to the detriment of investigations into interactions that reached Euboea (“Phantom Euboians,” *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 10/2 [1997]: 191–219).

<sup>107</sup> Cypriot maritime activity may have continued in the eastern Mediterranean (including with the southern Levantine coast) despite the upheaval following the LB collapse. Based on Cypriot finds during the transition years, connections to Crete seem to have persisted throughout, which indicates that Cypriot relations to the Aegean more generally were possible at this early date (Nota Kourou, “The Aegean and the Levant in the Early Iron Age: Recent Developments,” *BAAL* 6 (2008): 363–365; see also Nota Kourou, “Phoenicia, Cyprus and the Aegean in the Early Iron Age: J. N. Coldstream’s Contribution and the Current State of Research,” in *Cyprus and the Aegean in the Early Iron Age: The Legacy of Nicolas Coldstream* [ed. Maria Iacovou; Nicosia: Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation, 2012], 38–40).

imports to Cyprus are two PG Euboean vases found at Amathus, which was indicated as a possible source for BoR wares. In addition, the excavations at Lefkandi produced a Phoenician bichrome jug that is thought to have arrived via Cyprus.<sup>108</sup> The best explanation for these early imports is that southern Cyprus was essential in the transport of Greek wares to the east and Levantine goods to the west.

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<sup>108</sup> Nancy H. Demand, *The Mediterranean Context of Early Greek History* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 226.



**Figure 6:19: Distribution of Aegean imports within the southern Levant (satellite image © Google earth 2015)**

## **Discussion**

Based on the Greek imports to the Levant and excavations at Lefkandi, it is clear that an extended, maritime exchange network was in place, at minimum between the Aegean and Cyprus and between Cyprus and the southern Levant, if not more directly between the Aegean and the Levant (via Cyprus), during the Iron I to IIA transition (Figure 6:19). The small number of imports, however, speaks against any centrally-organized trade operation or integration in an established network related to Aegean exchange (in contrast to the copper

exchange network and the later Cypriot exchange discussed above). Instead, it is more likely that the demand for Greek vessels was driven by elites who were able to acquire these exotic or luxury wares.<sup>109</sup>

As in the previous import groups, location plays an important role. The port cities of Tyre, Dor, and Tell Abu Hawam were at the heart of the maritime trade and thus had the best access to Mediterranean imports. Tell es-Safi, Tel Rehov, and Tel Hadar were each the premier location for their respective regions: Tell es-Safi for Philistia, Tel Rehov for the northern Jordan Valley, and Tel Hadar for the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee/Lake Chinnereth.<sup>110</sup> Each of these sites was well integrated into long-distance exchange networks and exhibits other evidence of elite culture among a portion of the population.<sup>111</sup>

It is also evident that all six of these sites fared better in the years following the LB collapse. The three port cities did not suffer major disruption that is known from centers like

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<sup>109</sup> We cannot go as far as some previous interpretations that reconstruct sometimes elaborate personal histories for the individuals involved. See Popham and Lemos, “A Euboean Warrior Trader”; J. Nicholas Coldstream, “The First Exchanges Between Euboeans and Phoenicians: Who Took the Initiative?,” in *Mediterranean Peoples in Transition: Thirteenth to Early Tenth Centuries BCE* (ed. Seymour Gitin, Amihai Mazar, and Ephraim Stern; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1998), 353–60; Kochavi, “The Eleventh Century BCE Tripartite Pillar Building at Tel Hadar”; Kopcke, “1000 B.C.E.? 900 B.C.E.? A Greek Vase from Lake Galilee.”

<sup>110</sup> Tell es-Safi and Tel Rehov have been introduced earlier (see Chapters Two and Five). As for Tel Hadar, it was a major regional center until its destruction in the late eleventh-early tenth century. The site is situated at the point where the main route from Bashan joined passages to the southern Levantine international routes and to the Mediterranean coast. The site was fortified and included a “citadel” area that appears to have served as an administrative and commercial center. The Greek sherd was found along with Phoenician vessels, suggesting the site was actively involved in long-distance exchange networks. The appearance of the Tel Hadar Greek import is unique and seems to have been made according to Levantine style of vessel shape with the Euboean quality and decoration. See Kochavi, “Hadar, Tel”; Kochavi, “The Eleventh Century BCE Tripartite Pillar Building at Tel Hadar”; Kopcke, “1000 B.C.E.? 900 B.C.E.? A Greek Vase from Lake Galilee.”

<sup>111</sup> See previous note. For detailed examination of the routes around these sites, see Dorsey, *Roads and Highways*, 93–102, 103–116, 181–201.

Ras Shamra (Ugarit).<sup>112</sup> As a result, they were able to participate in early Iron Age exchange that ultimately linked the Levantine coast to the Aegean. Tel Dor's excavators A. Gilboa and I. Sharon note that no evidence of a "reurbanization" of Dor has been detected because the site did not experience the "ruralization" of other regions.<sup>113</sup> The Tale of Wenamun, although somewhat a work of historical fiction, corroborates with its description of Dor (and other ports).<sup>114</sup> In the story, the city was governed by an independent prince and maintained a role as an urban center and international port. The narrator, a royal envoy, must continue in his relations with Dor despite feeling mistreated. The stop at Dor was a necessary part of his journey along the coast to acquire wood from Byblos.<sup>115</sup> Although we cannot equate the history and the archaeology of Dor with Tell Abu Hawam and Tyre, it appears that their geographic positions, especially in relation to Cyprus and to routes inland, allowed them to remain active or recover quickly when other cities faced more lasting hardship. As a consequence, they were best situated to become the commercial gateways between the Mediterranean and the southern Levant.

While we do not have comparable narrative sources for the inland sites (with the notable exception of David's history), it is apparent from the archaeological remains that they too were thriving at the time that the Greek imports arrived. All three sites were already

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<sup>112</sup> Tyre experienced some disruption (stratum XIV; Iron I) but continued to function (Bikai, *The Pottery of Tyre*, 73–74). Tel Rehov also shows evidence of some disruptive event in the Iron I, but affected areas were rebuilt (Amihai Mazar, "Rehov, Tel").

<sup>113</sup> Gilboa and Sharon, "Between Carmel and the Sea," 161–163. Tyre may have experienced a population shift from island to mainland at this time, but Bikai cautions that her investigation was too small to say for certain (Bikai, *The Pottery of Tyre*, 73–74).

<sup>114</sup> Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 224–232. See also Chapter Five.

<sup>115</sup> Incidentally, the story ultimately leaves off with Wenamun being blown off course to Cyprus after leaving Byblos.

established by the LB and early Iron I. They too were relatively unaffected by the broader political and social turmoil of the twelfth and eleventh centuries, or, in the case of Tell es-Safi, were reestablished and prospered quickly.<sup>116</sup> During the late eleventh and tenth centuries, they experienced growth or, in the case of Tel Hadar, its high point. The sites' successes were limited to these earlier periods in the Iron Age. Tel Hadar suffered destruction during the Iron I-IIA transition. Tell es-Safi and Tel Rehov were each destroyed in the mid to late-ninth century. These sites were at their highest points during the earlier phases of Mediterranean exchange with the southern Levant.

With so few Aegean imports in the region, their distribution is best explained as the result of special exchange between persons of status.<sup>117</sup> S. Martin situates the early imports in the context of an elite culture:

In the early Iron Age, Mediterranean cultural exchange was fairly restricted to an elite realm where foreign vessels for drinking and other activities/rituals probably served as status markers in both Greece and the Near East. At minimum we can assume that these pots were perceived as exotic (even if their material lacked high intrinsic value). On the other end of the interpretive spectrum, we might propose that they were used sometimes in more specific ways, even to evoke a heroic past. In the Ugaritic texts, the “shades of the dead” (*rephaim*) were said to participate in the *marzeah*. In Greece, one can point to the so-called “heroöns” of Lefkandi where foreign drinking vessels served as funerary goods.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Destruction is evident in some of the LB remains at Tell es-Safi, which is likely due to the arrival of a Philistine population (Maier, “The Tell Es-Safi/Gath Archaeological Project 1996-2010,” 16–20).

<sup>117</sup> Susan Martin reviews critiques that Greek vessels were the primary traded item or that they were exchanged as gifts, but she concludes they may be “indicative of a more personal level of exchange.” She explains, “...perhaps we can still locate Greek ceramics in the elite milieu by understanding that the very uppermost levels of the elite were exchanging gifts with greater intrinsic value, and a few of the lesser elites (members of the *haute bourgeois*, if you will) may have imitated this practice by exchanging or seeking out for themselves fine ceramics” (“‘Hellenization’ and Southern Phoenicia: Reconsidering the Impact of Greece Before Alexander” [Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2007], 122–123, note 15).

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, 155–156.

(In fact, faunal analysis from Tel Rehov indicates that a portion of its population did engage in feasting events.<sup>119</sup>) The elite residents of the sites where the Greek imports have been found likely acquired the vessels through personal contacts with those involved in trade through the northern port cities.<sup>120</sup> This select consumer group may have been emulating their LB predecessors, among whom Mycenaean and Cypriot imports were status symbols. In the case of Tell es-Safi or Dor, the Greek wares may have been sought out in an effort to emphasize an Aegean heritage or Mediterranean-oriented identity.<sup>121</sup> Whatever the personal motives, the rarity of these items and the efforts that must have been involved to acquire them suggest that the recipients were of exceptional status and may have been associates in an exclusive interaction network.

### **Ceramic Imports and Southern Levantine Exchange Networks**

The distributions of these imported wares expose regional exchange networks. From the north, maritime trade from Cyprus entered the southern Levant through the northern ports (e.g., Tyre, Achziv, Shiqmona, Tell Abu Hawam, Dor). These ports fell within a zone that allowed for efficient travel between Cyprus and the Levant. From this gateway, transportation followed river valleys and other routes inland. In the peak of BoR distribution in the late tenth-early ninth centuries, these networks grew to include sites all along the coast

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<sup>119</sup> Marom et al., “Backbone of Society.”

<sup>120</sup> Or through another intermediate location (e.g., Megiddo?) is a possibility, but the distributions at present suggest a direct connection to the northern ports.

<sup>121</sup> See Chapter Two.

that were linked to river valleys, such as Tel Qasile on the Yarkon and Tell el-Ajjul on the Besor.<sup>122</sup>

Inland distributions correspond to the main roads and major crossroads. Aside from the coastal sites, the Jezreel corridor played the most significant role. The distribution of the Mediterranean imports traces the length of the route from the port at Tell Abu Hawam to the Jordan Valley gateway sites of Beth-shean, Tel Rehov, Tell el-Hammeh, and Pella. Other strategic areas and routes can be discerned. En Gev, Tel Hadar, Hazor, and Dan were each at significant crossroads and gateway zones in the north. Tell el-Farah (N), Tell en-Nasbeh, and Tell el-Ful seem to mark entrances to the central hill country via the main ridge highway. The Shephelah border zone contains a number of sites with Cypriot and other imports, each of these sites (Gezer, Beth-shemesh, Khirbet Qeiyafa, Tell es-Safi, and Lachish) guarded geological and traditional, cultural boundaries.

The southern exchange network is revealed through the overlap in Cypriot and Northwest Arabian imports—although not all of these finds are contemporaneous.<sup>123</sup> Sites where both types of imports have been found include Gezer, Lachish, Tell el-Farah (S), Tell el-Qudeirat, and Khirbat en-Nahas. The copper network dominated exchange in the south, and based on the QPW distribution, we see the importance of the Arabah Valley as a southern gateway. The most important route in this network involved a series of roads connecting Gaza to the Arabah and Gulf of Eilat/Aqaba. The major route passed through the region of Beersheba/Tel Masos, from which other roads led north into the Shephelah and

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<sup>122</sup> Schreiber, *The Cypro-Phoenician Pottery*, 79.

<sup>123</sup> Examples of QPW seem to decline as the Mediterranean imports increase. Perhaps the market for decorated wares was met by the Cypriot and later Aegean pottery, decreasing the demand for the Arabian style.

southern hill country, south to Tell el-Qudeirat, west to Gaza, and east to the Arabah. The Darb el-Ghazza was a significant alternate to the main route. It was a more direct route from the Gulf of Eilat/Aqaba (and northern Arabia) to Gaza and eventually Egypt, running along the edge of the Negev. Its most important site Tell el-Qudeirat (Kadesh Barnea) sat at the center of that passage and was connected to the Beersheba Valley through an additional road to the north.

### **Comprehensive Discussion**

What stands out the most in surveying these imported wares and their distributions is the cumulative evidence of active and far-reaching exchange networks during the late eleventh, tenth, and early ninth centuries. There can be no doubt that long-distance exchange was not only occurring but growing throughout the transition from the Iron I to the Early Iron IIA period. What was previously characterized as a period of regional isolation as a result of the breakdown of the LB trade networks must now be viewed as a period of exciting and varied interactions among a number of communities.<sup>124</sup>

Those more likely to participate in this new/renewed exchange were towns that were located closer to major routes and sites that guarded significant crossroads or resources. In addition to the importance of a site's location, how a site fared following the LB collapse seems to have influenced its ability to be involved in long-distance exchange. Many of the sites with imported wares appear to have largely escaped regional turmoil and thrived in this period. For example, Dor and Tel Rehov in the north, Khirbat en-Nahas and Tel Masos in the south, and Tell es-Safi in the western Shephelah all flourished during the late Iron I-

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<sup>124</sup> See also Sherratt, "The Mediterranean Economy: 'Globalization.'"

Early IIA and show signs of an elite class (often with a distinctive cultural style) that would have been able to participate in specialized exchange.

While not all sites with early imports experienced the successes of these examples, the majority appear to have achieved some stability or importance as a result of occupying strategic positions. This trend suggests that participation in long-distance trade was often dominated by persons of power. Although judging from BoR's distribution, the exchange community broadened considerably in ninth century, presumably from a general increase in stability in the region. The various sites also appear to have operated independently in their exchange activities. Indications of complex organization or standardized infrastructure behind the exchange networks are not presently apparent<sup>125</sup>; rather the distributions reflect an opportunistic enterprise where goods "filtered" along the major roads and were acquired most often by people of higher status. The Aegean imports provide the most suggestive evidence of an exclusive community of consumers who were linked by elite status instead of regional proximity.

If interregional interaction was a significant factor in social and political change in this period, the distribution patterns should indicate some potential areas for competition. Interactions were most intense in the northern ports, along the Jezreel Valley, in the Shephelah zone, and along the copper route in the south. These regions would have been the

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<sup>125</sup> One potential exception has been put forward, which is the presence of "Tripartite Pillared Buildings." A number of these structures are found dispersed throughout the southern Levant. They have been interpreted as marketplaces or bazaars, which appears likely. What is less certain is whether their similarities are the result of a common form (not unlike gate or house structures now known to have been in use across ethnic boundaries) or a centralized effort to control trade. See Larry G. Herr, "Tripartite Pillared Buildings and the Market Place in Iron Age Palestine," *BASOR* 272 (1988): 47–67; Kochavi, "The Eleventh Century BCE Tripartite Pillar Building at Tel Hadar"; Moshe Kochavi, "Tripartite Pillared Buildings: Divided Structures Divide Scholars," *BAR* 25/3 (1999): 44–50; Jeffrey A. Blakely, "Reconciling Two Maps: Archaeological Evidence for the Kingdoms of David and Solomon," *BASOR* (2002): 49–54; the structures are also noted in Rainey and Notley, *The Sacred Bridge*, 166.

most lucrative to control and thus potential targets for competition and military action.<sup>126</sup>

More detailed discussion of these zones takes place in Chapter Seven, but it must be noted that some of the more spectacular conflicts that are known or remembered from this period happen to coincide with the areas of more intense interregional activity, for example, Saul's battle against the Philistines at Jezreel, wars between Israelites and Philistines in the Shephelah, and of course, Shoshenq's campaign into the Levant.

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<sup>126</sup> This idea is discussed more generally in Sherratt, "The Mediterranean Economy: 'Globalization,'" 51–54.

## CHAPTER SEVEN: SYNTHESIS AND CONCLUSIONS

Any research into southern Levantine trade and exchange during the Iron I to II transition must confront obvious challenges. The biblical depiction of interaction in and around the tenth century does not match up with historical and archaeological evidence of the same period, and explicit extrabiblical evidence is meager. To be sure, the images of David's widespread conquests and Solomon's international trade empire have been heavily scrutinized and can no longer be considered historical in any uncomplicated way. Those who are skeptical of the biblical account point to the absence of contemporary historical evidence and the discrepancy between how the Bible describes its past and what the tenth century looks like according to archaeological evidence. With the exception of Shoshenq I's campaign to the Levant (ca. 925 BCE, referred to in 1 Kgs 14:25), it is not until the mid-ninth century that inscriptions and biblical history begin to correspond (e.g., the Mesha stele and 2 Kings 3 or Shalmaneser III's Black Obelisk and traditions of the house of Omri). It is not likely, however, that the interaction necessary for these connections would have developed so suddenly that the southern Levant could have remained isolated throughout the tenth century as some critics would have us believe. Based on the probability that interregional interactions preceded the extrabiblical evidence, I have looked for indications of exchange and interaction during the 100-150 years prior, primarily in the late eleventh and tenth centuries. My research has found that interregional and intercultural interactions not only existed but were lively and influential on other important changes in the region, such as territorial organization and the development of new identities.

In the preceding chapters, I have explored biblical, epigraphic, and archaeological evidence and asked several questions. The first is the most basic: does this evidence describe

or attest to intercultural or interregional exchange? In all cases, the answer is, ultimately, yes—some directly, some indirectly—although that is not to say that the information from each type of evidence obviously relates to the others. Based on positive evidence of interactions, I have followed up with questions about who was participating, why they were interacting, and what the consequences were of venturing beyond a group's own boundaries. The participants and reasons for interacting are different based on the evidence at hand. Samuel's heroes fought Philistines who were seeking passage east. Solomon used diplomatic connections to broaden his reach. New leaders inscribed their names and stories on objects, implying they were members of an elite and interregional community. Possession of imported pottery made statements about wealth, stability, exotic connections, and group affiliations.

In this final chapter, I will combine the results of the individual studies and more directly integrate the theoretical models introduced in Chapter One. Combining the material shows that there is solid evidence of exchange and long-distance connections, even trade. The individual chapters shed light on distinct geographic regions, certain ethnic and identity groups, specific interaction niches, and different periods. When combined, that evidence provides greater coverage of the research area in both time and space, but it is admittedly inconsistent and incomplete. It is done with this caveat: combining the evidence and preliminary conclusions is somewhat hazardous. A major source of inconsistency comes from reliance on the biblical texts, where bias is especially apparent. The narratives prioritize certain interactions and geographic territories above others. Perhaps a greater challenge comes from the fact that the different types of evidence do not clearly reference each other; there is a danger of both inflating and conflating the findings and significance.

For example, there is no way to know at present what the precise relationships were among Samuel's Achish of Gath, Tell es-Safi's inscription, Tell es-Safi's Argolid import, and the ancient individuals who handled these artifacts. We can neither assume they were all related nor that they were all independent. Addressing the evidence in sum, however, allows for another perspective and a comprehensive (though cautious) historical reconstruction. Before moving to the larger discussions, I will review the findings from the previous chapters.

### **Summaries of Interactions by Evidence Type**

Interregional interaction, including long-distance trade, was taking place in the southern Levant during the late eleventh and tenth centuries. The support for this initial conclusion comes from the biblical books of 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 Kings 3-11, from epigraphic and contemporary historical materials, and from archaeological evidence and the distribution of imported ceramics.

The biblical materials paint a picture of increased interactions in the region from Samuel's day through Solomon's. The most intense relations were between Israelites and Philistines, first in Shephelah and Benjamin and then in the Judahite hills and as far north as the Jezreel Valley. Samuel, Saul, Jonathan, David, and other warrior-heroes led armed conflicts in these areas. My analysis of these activities leads to the conclusion that most of the conflicts were related to Philistine attempts to gain passage to the east, which, if controlled, could be used to exploit access to resources and inland highways. Saul and David's actions also suggest that there was competition for access. After winning control of the Michmash Pass, Saul engaged the Philistines in the northern route to the east, the Jezreel Valley. David targeted areas in the south that would have impacted traffic between Philistia, Transjordan, and the Negev, and he used diplomatic ventures in addition to military might to

secure his position. The competition among these leaders led to consolidation of power. In the biblical record, David's efforts were the most successful, gaining him control of multiple tribal territories.

Solomon's history describes diplomatic and administrative strategies that expanded regional and long-distance interactions in the mid to late tenth century. Although there are claims to many interregional interactions, those with Egypt and Phoenicia are the most plausible. Of these, Solomon's activities may have involved diplomatic marriage with Egypt and exchange agreements of land (or territorial authority) and commodities with Phoenicia. Solomon's policies regarding the Israelite territories included administrative efforts to control the region through reorganization and control of resources, a labor tax, and construction projects to demonstrate authority. It appears that he used diplomacy in the form of his daughters' marriages to strengthen loyalty from northern districts. In other cases, he used physical statements of power in the form of monumental architecture. All of these efforts indicate that Solomon was attempting to manage a diverse territory and exploit interaction opportunities.

Jerusalem would seem to be an essential component in southern Levantine interactions in the tenth century; however, the role of Jerusalem in the biblical traditions has appeared at odds with the available archaeological remains of the city. Recent excavations have changed this picture somewhat with the discovery of monumental architecture that was in use from the Iron I to IIA, and artifacts such as imported pottery, carved ivory objects, and an inscription. While the new discoveries do not provide explicit correspondence to biblical or historical figures, they do suggest that Jerusalem's leaders participated in exchange networks throughout the southern Levant and that they exhibited their significance

through wealth and statements of power. The geographic context of the site and evidence of its character in the Middle and Late Bronze periods further indicate that despite apparent discrepancies between textual and material remains, Jerusalem was integral in the region's interactions.

The epigraphic evidence appears at first glance to be both scant and silent regarding interaction; however, by situating scribal activity in a broader eastern Mediterranean context, we reach different conclusions. Evidence of scribal activity *is* evidence of elite interaction and competition. As contemporary Egyptian and Byblian material shows, interregional activities accompanied the employment of scribes. Although on a different scale, the short inscriptions in the southern Levant are testaments to competing small-scale elites who displayed their status through inscribed materials. The use of inscriptions went along with other elite activities such as the collection of luxury goods (e.g., imported pottery or metals) and, in the case of Tel Rehov, feasting and an exclusive beekeeping industry. Elites did not do this in isolation. The evidence appears in clusters suggesting that the use of scribes was influenced by conspicuous consumption among neighboring sites. The repetition of names—Hanan in the Shephelah and Nimshi in the northern Jordan Valley—may indicate that certain families dominated some of these territories.

The long-distance exchange of ceramics results in the most conspicuous and objective evidence of interregional exchange. Provenience testing has established that vessels produced in the Aegean, Cyprus, and Northwest Arabia were transported into the southern Levant in the late eleventh and tenth centuries. These items were traded because they were desirable as prestige painted wares and as containers for other commodities such as perfumed oil. The distributions show that the imported goods were more likely to be

acquired at port cities, sites that were on significant roads, and other strategic locations. In addition, sites where imported wares have been found tended to have fared better in the Late Bronze to Iron Age transition, indicating that socio-political stability corresponded to participation in the exchange networks. Like the inscriptions, imported wares clustered in certain regions, which may be evidence of an elite culture or competition among neighboring communities. The Aegean imports reveal a highly exclusive network among select sites.

### **Summaries of Interactions by Region**

Because geography plays an important role in evaluating the different types of evidence, it is also useful to review the material of the preceding chapters according to distinct regions. Not all interactions would have been concurrent, but (with some exceptions for early examples of QPW) events and interactions should fall within 100-150 years of each other. It is also important to remember that because each of the previous chapters focused on a very specific source of interaction evidence, these summaries are biased toward certain territories and types of activities.

#### **Northern Coast**

The northern coast (including Dor and nearby sites) is not emphasized in most of the biblical material from Chapters Two and Three; however, Solomon's district policies and his interactions with Hiram of Tyre dealt directly with this region. Solomon reportedly traded part of the northern coast, the Cabul, to Hiram. His fourth and ninth districts encompass the lands that acted as a gateway for early maritime exchange. And Solomon appears to have secured his relationship to Dor through diplomatic marriage between his daughter and Ben-Abinadab—a wise strategy if the depiction of a highly independent prince and city of Dor in

the Report of Wenamun conveys a historically accurate character for the city. The entire area was impacted by the renewed exchange with Cyprus, and three of the most important ports in this region have produced evidence of Euboean wares. Indications of exceptional wealth come from the burial at Kefar Veradim that included an inscribed bronze bowl, Cypriot imports, and other prestige goods.

### **North (Inland)**

Not surprisingly, the northern inland region is absent from the reports of relations with Philistines in Samuel (although other reports in David's history suggest interactions in this area; e.g., 2 Samuel 8); however, Solomon's history devotes much attention to it. His eighth and tenth districts cover the territory north of the Jezreel Valley to beyond Dan. Solomon reportedly secured these regions through his daughter's marriage to Ahimaaz and his fortifications in Hazor. This area's early involvement in Mediterranean exchange is apparent from the discovery of Cypriot wares at Hazor, Dan, and En Gev, and a Euboean vessel found at Tel Hadar.

### **Jezreel and Northern Jordan Valleys**

The Jezreel Valley and northern Jordan Valley were among the most active exchange zones of the region. In the biblical material, this area is featured in Saul's final war with the Philistines. The main conflict was at the heart of the Jezreel Valley, and Saul's remains were displayed on the wall of Beth-Shean in the Jordan Valley. In Solomon's administration, the fifth district contains the Jezreel and Jordan Valley systems, undoubtedly due to their roles in interregional traffic, and Solomon reportedly fortified Megiddo, which guarded the juncture between the main international highway and the passage to the Jordan Valley. Extrabiblical material parallels the biblical emphasis on these valleys. Local inscriptions

have been found at Tel Rehov and Tel 'Amal. Shoshenq's stele fragment was recovered from Megiddo, and his Karnak inscription names several sites in the region, tracing a path through both valley systems (see also summary of Transjordan region next). Cypriot imports have been found throughout the Jezreel Valley from the port cities through to Pella, and Tel Rehov has produced Greek sherds from the Euboean Protogeometric period and later. Lastly, although not mentioned explicitly in this evidence, the earliest iron smelting site of Tell Hammeh is located within this Jezreel-Jordan Valley sub-region and likely played a role in other interactions reflected in the biblical and Egyptian evidence.

### **Transjordan**

Interactions with Transjordan are evident in select portions of the surveyed material.<sup>1</sup> Although not discussed explicitly in Samuel's history of the Philistines, the effort to gain territory in the east and establish outposts in the hill country suggests the Philistines had an interest in some activities in Transjordan. Solomon's districts include land east of the Jordan river, and his metallurgical operations were reportedly situated in Transjordan. This region appears to be roughly the same place where Shoshenq's campaign crossed the Jordan Valley. As I mention in the last paragraph, Tell Hammeh may have been of interest in the interactions described in the biblical history and in Shoshenq's campaign, although we cannot link the site directly to these sources. Of the imported ceramics, early QPW (Late Bronze?) has been found in Amman. The southern desert sites (e.g., Faynan) are discussed below.

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<sup>1</sup> Saul and David's histories each record activities across the Jordan independent from their interactions with Philistines.

### **Central Coast and Sharon Plain**

The central coast and Sharon Plain are not frequently mentioned in the biblical material, but they were of importance judging from the role Aphek plays in both the Ark Narrative and Saul's interactions with Philistines. Solomon's third district covered this region and must have been aimed at controlling maritime and coastal traffic. Shoshenq's campaign trail seems to have moved through the Sharon following a march through the Jordan and Jezreel Valleys. The central coast's ports and inland routes became more important during the BoR phase of Cypriot imports, judging from the finds at Tel Michal, Tel Qasile, Tel Gerisa, Tel Azor, Tel Mevorakh, and Tel Zeror.

### **Central (Ephraimite) Hills**

Although the central hill country is the focus of many early Iron Age discussions, it is barely represented in the interaction evidence surveyed here. The important site of Shiloh is on the margin of the Ark Narrative's main action, and Solomon's first district is equated with the Ephraim hills. The only ceramic evidence of interaction is Cypriot BoR found at Tell el-Farah (N), biblical Tirzah. The minimal role in interactions that seems to be the case from this evidence may be due to a deliberate avoidance of intercultural exchange.

### **Benjamin**

The Benjaminite hill country is, understandably, the focus in Saul's history, but it also plays a role in the Ark Narrative when the ark rests at Kiriath-jearim and the troops rally at Mizpah. Armed conflict between the Philistines and Jonathan was located in Geba/Gibeah and the Michmash Pass, but there was also commercial interaction regarding smithing services in the neighboring lowland. Although David does not engage with the Philistines in this territory, it is possible that his alliance with them aided in his dominance

over this area after Saul's death. In Solomon's activities, this region corresponds to the eleventh district, and Solomon fortified Lower Beth-Horon, the most important ascent between the Shephelah and Benjamin's core. This same road was used in Shoshenq's campaign to pass through to the Jordan Valley. Other evidence of long-distance exchange is minimal with Cypriot imports at Tell el-Ful and Tell en-Nasbeh.

### **Southern Hills and Jerusalem**

The southern hill country was the site of repeated conflicts between Saul, David, and the Philistines (in Qe'ilah, Rephaim Valley, Bethlehem, and Adullam). This region becomes the focus of the biblical history as the home to both of David's capitals, Hebron and Jebus/Jerusalem. Solomon centered his administrative operations in Jerusalem and devoted attention to expanding the royal complex and building fortifications. Outside of the biblical accounts, there is evidence that this area was important in interregional interactions. Epigraphic evidence has been found in the form of inscribed arrowheads and the recent discovery of the Ophel pithos. Cypriot imports are known from Jerusalem, Beth-zur, Tell Beit Mirsim, and Tel Halif. QPW was found in the Late Bronze burial cave at Tel Jedur. Many of the sites that produced evidence of exchange activity and that are featured in the biblical interactions were situated on key roads connecting to the Ridge Road, the Shephelah, and the Beersheba Valley.

### **Shephelah**

The Shephelah was one of the most active areas according to each evidence group. The region figures prominently in the Ark Narrative with events at Ebenezer and Bethshemesh. David and his men battled Philistines in a number of locations between Benjamin and Gath. According to Solomon's history, Solomon fortified Gezer (a gift that

accompanied his Egyptian wife) and Baalath, and his second district covered much of this territory. Six inscriptions have been recovered from the area, two of which bear the name Hanan. Shoshenq's campaign must have moved through the Shephelah, although relevant place names have not been identified in his inscription. Ceramic imports have been found at Gezer, Lachish, Beth-shemesh, and Khirbet Qeiyafa. The overlap among the different types of evidence and the concentration of prestige goods in this region indicate that exchange was extremely intense in this territory.

### **Philistia**

Interactions within the Philistine heartland are recorded in the Ark Narrative and in David's history with his relations to Achish of Gath. While the biblical narratives present the Philistines as spending much time outside of the core territory, extrabiblical evidence shows that the southern coast was well integrated into exchange networks. Tell es-Safi's inscription provides the earliest evidence of a Philistine alphabetic text, and the Argolid import is the earliest Aegean evidence in the region. Cypriot imports and/or QPW have also been found from Ashdod, Tell es-Safi, Tell el-Ajjul, Tel Jemmeh, and Tell el-Farah (S). Shoshenq's campaign passed through at least the southern portion of Philistine territory en route to the Beersheba Valley.

### **Negev and Northern Sinai**

Interactions in the Negev are evident primarily along the copper trade routes, which were among the most important exchange networks in the southern Levant. QPW has been found at Tel Masos and Tell el-Qudeirat. That these routes facilitated in other trade activities is evident in the discovery Cypriot imports from Tel Masos, Beersheba, and Tell el-Qudeirat and in the wealth and elite culture of Tel Masos. Shoshenq's campaign targeted the

Beersheba region and Negev highland sites and may have penetrated as far as the Faynan. Solomon's fortification of Tamar (located either in this region or the Arabah) would have been related to the southern exchange networks.

### **Arabah and Southern Jordan**

This region's interactions were also intimately linked to the copper exchange network. The area did not appear in the surveyed evidence in the biblical texts or epigraphic material, unless Solomon's Tamar fortification was this far south ('En Haseva?); however, it was the site of some of the most intense interactions in the late eleventh and tenth centuries. The copper industries in Timna and more importantly the Faynan were very likely targeted by Shoshenq's campaign. The success of the Faynan's role in the copper trade is apparent in the wealth of prestige goods and imports from the main site Khirbat en-Nahas. QPW has been recovered from throughout this region.

### **Observations**

Three sub-regions stand out for exceptional intensity in interactions. Perhaps the most important was the northern network that reached from the Carmel/Akko area to the Jezreel Valley and the Jordan Valley. This sub-region is critical in the biblical histories of interactions with the Philistines and Solomon's activities. The Carmel/Akko region was the gateway for the earliest Mediterranean trade in the Iron Age and maintained its importance even as exchange broadened to include other coastal areas. The Jezreel and Jordan Valley road systems provided the best passage through the southern Levant, and sites in these valley systems controlled access into adjacent areas. The amount of imports in general and the concentration of inscriptions in particular show that residents at these sites (e.g., Tel Rehov) were able to participate in specialized and elite activities.

The southern copper exchange network that ran from the Arabah and Faynan to Gaza functioned similarly. The road networks had international importance, linking Egypt and the Mediterranean coast to southern Transjordan (and the Transjordanian highways) and the Arabian peninsula. Tel Masos and Khirbat en-Nahas demonstrate the amount of wealth and power that were possible for sites that dominated a portion of this network. While the biblical texts do not relate directly to this area, there are hints that its importance was felt by the hill country. David's efforts to control the southern hill country and Solomon's southern fortification at Tamar were likely related to traffic moving north from the Beersheba Valley. The southern portion of Shoshenq's campaign also was targeted at this active trade network.

Lastly, as I note above, biblical, epigraphic, ceramic imports, and archaeological evidence more generally all indicate that the Shephelah was the site of frequent interactions. The region was desirable for human habitation and for agriculture, and it was naturally disposed to be a border zone. The Shephelah is also home to several important valley systems that provided passage between the lowland and highland, and as a result, sites along these routes grew to be prominent. Thus it should not be surprising that an area such as the Elah Valley would be featured in biblical narrative and provide archaeological evidence of success in this period.

### **Interpretive Frameworks**

The combined evidence can now be integrated with the theoretical models introduced earlier. The foundation for further interpretation is that interaction and trade were occurring in the southern Levant throughout the tenth century. The evidence shows that the interactions took place across regions and cultures, including exchange *within* the southern Levant and *between* the southern Levant and Cyprus, the Aegean, Egypt, and northern

Arabia. From this broad foundation, we can identify some trends. Geographic location played an important role in determining how long-distance interaction affected any particular site or population group. Gateways to the southern Levant experienced the most direct contact from foreign sources. Outside of that category, cities and towns that were on major roads, at significant crossroads and passes, or near resources were more likely to be involved in regional and interregional interactions. Sites that were in strategic locations and that fared better during the years following the LB collapse show more evidence of engagement in long-distance exchange.

Having established these trends, we can turn to some of the consequences of exchange activities. With the aid of the interpretive models of interaction spheres and peer polity interaction, I maintain that long-distance interactions led to a class of elite leaders who participated in a peer-based network. Exchange activities brought unusual goods into the southern Levant, and the people who were able to acquire them and participate in interactions became part of an elite group. We are able to identify this group in written and material sources through their association with prestige goods. Membership in the elite group ensured that the leaders would engage in interactions, including trade and diplomacy but also emulous behaviors and warfare. Due to the competitive nature of their peer relations and added incentive of increased control of exchange activities, certain members of the elite community grew in influence and eventually dominated larger portions of the region.

### **Southern Levantine Interaction Spheres**

The interaction sphere model seeks to explain why some specific shared material culture turns up among distinct population groups.<sup>2</sup> It is worth considering whether the acquisition (and creation) of prestige goods could be a sign of interaction spheres among elites in the southern Levant. Prestige items, which include imported ceramics, inscriptions, metals and weaponry, are found across numerous locations that do not all share the same general material culture: coastal, highland, east and west of the Jordan, north and south, and so on. This model allows for scholars to recognize that more than one cultural identity may be evident in the material culture and that each identity group is not necessarily a separate population at a site. In other words, we do not have to suppose that a foreign visitor or administrator must have been in residence to explain unusual, seemingly out-of-place finds. Rather, each local culture had its own distinct assemblage, but we also find evidence from the specialized group, those most closely involved in the exchange networks.

I propose that there was a network of long-distance exchange during the transition from the Iron I to IIA periods that does fit the interaction sphere model. The participants were elite, potentially leaders, of key sites throughout the southern Levant. They were autonomous and may have ruled over small territories. These individuals or ruling families would have gained their leadership positions through their ties to the immediate community, probably through tribal affiliation and local lineages, through wealth, and through deeds. As they became involved in the exchange network, they adopted another identity, exclusive to their interregional connections. The material expression of this identity would have included

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<sup>2</sup> Caldwell, "Interaction Spheres in Prehistory"; Schortman and Urban, "Modeling Interregional Interaction in Prehistory"; Yoffee, "Mesopotamian Interaction Spheres"; Stein, "Local Identities and Interaction Spheres."

acquisition and display of prestige goods. As these leaders became more involved in the exchange network, their elevated position in relation to their own territory would have increased.

Evidence from narrative sources and excavations support the reconstruction of autonomous, local leaders who controlled small territories, ruling from sites in critical locations. The northern port cities provide illustrative examples. Their position as the first to receive the renewed exchange with Cyprus must have been a source of power and stability. The Report of Wenamun describes the rulers of Dor, Tyre, and Byblos as wealthy and holding more authority than the Egyptian envoy. From inscriptions, we know that Byblian leaders asserted their legitimacy based on lineage and exceptionalism (displaying Egyptian statues inscribed with their names). If we accept the biblical history, Dor and Tyre's elites were allied to Jerusalem through diplomacy and exchange agreements.

The history in Samuel provides additional illustrations. Saul's power base was at the heart of the Benjaminite hill country, along the main road. His leadership qualifications included being from a family of substance, the son of a *gibbor hayil*, being striking and charismatic, and proving himself as a successful warrior (1 Sam 9:1-2). He gained the loyalty of some neighboring populations, which resulted in extended influence and status. We have a similar picture of David, also described as a *gibbor hayil*, man of battle, and fine speaker (1 Sam 16:12, 18). His strategic alliances and victories resulted in a southern territory, based in a number of key sites. The distinguishing quality in the cases of Saul and David is their membership in a particular elite class that included the label *gibbor hayil*. These men also had personal, metal weaponry (e.g., 1 Sam 13:22) that set them apart from others.

Archaeological excavations cannot provide the colorful details of the narrative sources, but the evidence contributes to a similar picture. For example, Tel Rehov, Tel Masos, and Tell es-Safi were each commanding sites at strategic locations. Tel Rehov and Tel Masos guarded interregional roads, and Tell es-Safi oversaw the boundary between the coastal plain and the Shephelah. All three of these sites have yielded extraordinary finds. Tel Masos had a unique blend of Egyptian and Canaanite-inspired architecture, imported and local pottery, and other prestige artifacts. Tel Rehov's excavations have produced evidence of elite culture in feasting, a unique beekeeping industry, a variety of imports, and inscriptions. Tell es-Safi shows evidence of an elite assemblage, and, judging from the site's size, there was considerable prosperity. In the case of Tell es-Safi, biblical Gath, we can also consider the traditions in Samuel, which describe the site as the residence of one of the south's most powerful leaders (Achish) and a legendary warrior (Goliath).

This survey emphasizes that there were many sites in the region that operated as small, independent polities. They did not all have the characteristics of a state or an urban center, but some inhabitants of the sites and small territories were accumulating wealth and unusual goods and becoming an elite class. These are the candidates for participation in the interaction spheres.

According to the model, as these individuals accumulated nonlocal goods, they created a demand for interaction and linked themselves to extended regional and interregional networks. Participants developed or adopted an identity based on their elite exchange community. The members of this community would develop a distinct value system legitimizing their participation and solidifying their roles in the network. This system

would have its own code and symbolic language that became exclusively controlled by the elite participants.

I contend that we can identify such a code in the use of scribes and display of inscriptions. Here I continue the suggestions introduced in Chapter Five. Literacy and scribal activity were uncommon in this period. Where we see evidence of writing, we must acknowledge that it would have been commissioned by someone with power and status. The Egyptian and Byblian evidence provides a fuller picture; elite use of scribes and inscriptions was closely linked to their interregional interaction. Turning to the southern Levantine examples, it is useful to ask, who was the intended audience for the inscriptions? In recognizing an interaction sphere, we have a satisfying answer: other participants in the elite exchange community. The inscriptions were symbolic of their membership. Indeed, most sites that have produced inscriptions from this period have also produced imported goods, other luxury items, or additional evidence of exchange.

The nature of the inscribed objects and their contexts strengthens the case that their message was intended for other elites or to convey symbolically to non-elites a message of difference. The dedication and possession formulae provide the clearest evidence. Several of the inscribed items were themselves uncommon or otherwise symbolic of status. The personalized game board from Beth-Shemesh implies wealth and leisure. The inscriptions from Tel 'Amal and Kefar Veradim were found in burial deposits, a powerful, even if more private, statement of wealth—and presumably only a portion of the wealth that must have been displayed to the living world. The Kefar Veradim burial is an exceptional case, as I discuss earlier, as it, along with its parallel in Tekke, indicate a more integrated role in long-distance exchange relations of the time.

Metal objects were probably part of the symbolic code as well. Objects like the inscribed arrowheads, the weaponry attributed to Saul and Jonathan, or Solomon's display shields must have made a significant statement in the hill country, which was a considerable distance (geographically and culturally) from the metal sources and production areas. As Sanders has argued, the commissioner of the arrowheads put the "means of communication" directly on the "means of coercion," combining symbols of exclusive, elite circles with physical power.<sup>3</sup>

There is enough evidence to propose that there was an elite class in the region prior to the ninth century. Members are visible to us through their symbolic code of prestige goods like imported pottery, inscribed artifacts, metal objects, and the influence of foreign style (e.g., artistic motifs, Egyptian architecture). The elites were linked to each other through interaction networks and through their own leadership culture which perpetuated and increased the long-distance exchange in the region. Now that this group and its contacts are established, we can turn to the impact their activities had on social change. Their relations with each other and in long-distance exchange networks led to increased competition and ultimately significant changes in the geopolitical make up of the southern Levant.

### **Peer Polity Interaction**

At this point, it is useful to reorient to Renfrew's Peer Polity Interaction model. The aim of his model is to provide ways to examine interactions among peer groups and evaluate the impact of such interactions on change over time. The interactions are both cooperative and competitive, including warfare, commerce, emulation, and exchange of ideas. Renfrew's

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<sup>3</sup> Sanders, *The Invention of Hebrew*, 107. See Chapter Five.

framework is highly compatible with the southern Levant's Iron Age. He describes some typical characteristics of the peer polities:

These usually include closely similar political institutions, a common system of weights and measures, the same system of writing (if any), essentially the same structure of religious beliefs (albeit with local variations, such as a special patron deity), the same spoken language, and indeed generally what the archaeologist would call the same 'culture', in whatever sense he might choose to use that term. The individual unit—the states—are often fiercely independent and competitive.<sup>4</sup>

He goes on to explain that the competitive nature often leads to political domination by one unit over the others, which at its fullest extent creates a nation state.

Renfrew lays out a series of observations based on the application of the model on a number of different cultures.<sup>5</sup> He notes that where a change in social complexity is evident in one of the peer groups, comparable change will be evident in the others at roughly the same time. In addition, there will be other developments in the societies that accompany the change in complexity. These might include public or monumental architecture, development of communication and symbolic systems, special assemblages that are related to status, and customs that reinforce the recent social changes. These changes will also be evident in more than one peer group in the same period, and he stresses that these developments will not be explainable through diffusion; instead these things develop among the peer groups at the same time. Finally, there will be intensification in production and hierarchy within the peer groups.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Renfrew, "Introduction," 2.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 7–8.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

It is difficult not to envision the Levant's Iron Age kingdoms when reviewing Renfrew's model. The Iron II states shared the same measures and script, similar religious systems but with distinct patron deities, and closely related languages and culture, sometimes indistinguishable in the material remains. These kingdoms were interconnected but independent and competed for resources and dominance in the region. I propose that peer interaction as theorized by Renfrew is also an appropriate model for examining the Iron I to IIA transition.

To illustrate briefly with some examples from the eleventh, tenth, and early ninth centuries, social and cultural changes happened at roughly the same time across the region. A striking illustration of this phenomenon is the use of scribes. The earliest Iron Age inscriptions come from areas that were politically distinct but started using inscriptions in close chronological proximity. The elite identities that I propose above equate to Renfrew's specialized assemblages that reinforce status changes. In addition, intensification of production is apparent in Tel Rehov's apiary and metallurgical operations in Tell Hammeh and Khirbat en-Nahas. We can see intensification in consumption as well with the increase in BoR that occurred across the region.

Changes in social complexity from tribal organization led by elders to territorial states led by princes and kings are famously described in the Deuteronomistic History. Saul and David each derived authority from lineage as well as from dominance of neighboring groups, and Solomon transformed the territory to an administrative operation. Similar trends are also evident in extrabiblical evidence. Shoshenq was a tribal leader before taking on the title of king and went on to expand Egypt's power over its neighbors once again. The remains of sites like Tel Rehov or Tel Masos suggest that they were the centers of small

territories. In this application of the model, interactions among the prominent sites, which were the peer polities, influenced the social, cultural, and political changes that we observe as the region moved from the Iron I to the Iron II periods.

The importance of competition is critical in the peer polity model, and it is in this respect that the model is most useful for furthering analysis of this period. Competitive interaction ranges from outright warfare to more subtle behaviors such as emulation. Competition in the form of conspicuous display and consumption are evident in the narrative, historical, and archaeological material.<sup>7</sup> In possessing luxury goods, owners were asserting their elevated status to those in their immediate community, but they were also responding to others in their elite interaction group, engaging in one-upmanship through the possession of rare goods. In the biblical material, we can see conspicuous display in the ornate ark, Saul and Jonathan's weaponry, and in the case of Goliath's sword, which became a prize that changed hands from the Philistines to Saul, to the Nob priests, and to David as they vied with each other.

The possession of imported pottery would have served the same competitive purpose, and the caches in burial deposits provide us with some hint to the excess that was possible for those of exceptional means. Competition is explicit in the epigraphic material, which ranges from possession formulae, perhaps the most succinct competitive statement, to the more elaborate display inscriptions of Byblos and Egypt. The competitive statement in these monumental examples occurs on multiple levels. More than the words inscribed on the objects, Byblian rulers claimed the artistically superior Egyptian monuments by inscribing,

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<sup>7</sup> E.g., Solomon's numerous displays of wealth, especially in front of his foreign visitors; the inscribed game board from Beth-Shemesh; Byblian royal inscriptions on Egyptian statuary; feasting at Tel Rehov; the rare early Greek imports potentially on display.

or more accurately violating, them to claim them as their own.<sup>8</sup> Egypt's victory inscriptions are the clearest examples of all, combining the superiority of military victory with more implicit messages of dominance in wealth and artistic skill. Shoshenq's stele found at Megiddo along with his larger Karnak relief show us that the messages of competition and superiority were aimed at a mixed audience—as monumental inscriptions, these were on display to the general populations, but they were also pointed messages to his peers in the Levant and southern Egypt (not to mention those who passed through Megiddo on the international roads).

Military action is the most direct, physical expression of competition between peer polities. It also tends to be well documented, as the victors took advantage of opportunities to commemorate their success and destruction levels are recognizable in the archaeological record. Renfrew's peer polity model helps put military conflict into a new context, where it is but one of several types of interaction. In viewing it this way and combining the results of the individual studies in biblical, epigraphic, and ceramic evidence, a new relationship between military competition, peer/elite interaction, and trade is apparent. As I argue in Chapter Two, the conflicts with the Philistines recorded in Samuel stemmed from competition to control critical routes and locations. Securing these passages would in turn create access and provide control of access to international routes leading to resources such as the metal processing centers east of the Jordan. The distribution of imported ceramics and inscriptions corresponds to some of these routes, bolstering the case for their importance in long-distance interaction across a broad timeframe. Solomon's history calls attention to a

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<sup>8</sup> It is probably not too much of a stretch to consider the relationship between the violent and violating nature of the inscription process and the symbolic damage done to the Egyptian competitor.

number of these locations. Shoshenq's reconstructed campaign trail targeted many of the same areas: Philistia and the Beersheba basin, the Aijalon Valley and Beth-horon ascent to hill country, the Jordan Valley (especially a metallurgical zone), and the Jezreel Valley.

The recurrence of these key locations in a variety of evidence types suggests that they were among the most critical interaction areas during the eleventh and tenth centuries, and as such they were the targets of the most intense competition for control. We can add to these locations three more territories that Sheshonq's campaign inscription did not name: the northern ports and the Shephelah feature prominently in narrative sources (biblical and the Report of Wenamun) and have a higher density of prestige objects. Inscriptions are particularly frequent in the Shephelah. Lastly investigations in the Arabah have revealed such intense metallurgical activity that this area too must have been integrated into the region's exchange networks and been of interest to the competing elites.

Renfrew's model indicates that social changes occur as a result of the variety of interactions among the peer groups. The interactions are not only competitive; they also take the form of shared innovation ("symbolic entrainment") and increased exchange of goods.<sup>9</sup> All three types are present in the preceding chapters. We have just reviewed the competitive aspects. Renfrew's symbolic entrainment is attested in shared metallurgical technology between Tell Hammeh and Beth-shemesh and is likely at the heart of the increase in scribal activity, to name two examples. Growth in trade has already been established with BoR and the successful metallurgical sites in Jordan, and it is implied in Solomon's district organization. The combination of cooperative and competitive interactions made the region more interconnected. In looking at the increase in relations across the southern Levant and in

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<sup>9</sup> Renfrew, "Introduction," 8.

long-distance contacts from the late eleventh to the end of the tenth centuries, we see stages of transformation. But rather than seek evidence of one state (i.e., the United Monarchy), we should recognize smaller increments of territorial consolidation and social change. These steps were necessary for the larger-scale shift to kingdoms of the ninth-century.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

Long-distance and intraregional interactions had a dramatic impact on the southern Levant in the transition years between the Iron I and Iron II periods. My search to identify trade and exchange in the region during the years after the LB networks had collapsed but before Neo-Assyrian involvement entered the scene has resulted in a surprising amount of evidence of exchange and interaction in the region. Sites that were in key locations and did not suffer significant hardships during the twelfth and eleventh centuries led in establishing Iron Age exchange networks. Small-scale polities engaged in ambitious industries, trade, and competition for control of routes and resources. The leaders of these efforts are visible in biblical narratives, historical sources, and archaeological collections of unusual goods. This body of evidence reveals an elite community, and its members engaged in interactions, including trade and diplomacy but also competitive behaviors and warfare. Due to the nature of their peer interactions and added incentive of increased control of exchange activities, certain members of the elite community grew in influence and eventually dominated larger portions of the region. As we follow the trajectory revealed in the eleventh and tenth century evidence, we see that the elites who were successful in expanding their reach became the earliest “kings” and “princes” of the Iron Age.

## APPENDIX: MAP LEGEND

	Sites mentioned in 1 and 2 Samuel
	Michmash Pass
	Metallurgical sites
	Sites related to Solomon's interactions
	Amarna Period Jerusalem and contemporaries
	Sites with eleventh and tenth century inscriptions
	Ceramic imports lands of origin
	Qurayyah Painted Ware (QPW)
	Sites tested for Cypriot Black-on-Red (BoR) ware origins
	Cypriot White Painted ware
	Cypriot Bichrome ware
	Cypriot Black-on-Red (BoR) ware
	Aegean imports lands of origin
	Aegean imported wares

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