

# The Late Bronze Age



by Albert Leonard, Jr.

The Late Bronze Age in Canaan began and ended with large-scale population shifts: the Egyptian repulsion of the so-called Hyksos around 1550 B.C.E. and the incursion of the multinational Sea Peoples just after 1200 B.C.E. Egyptian records from this period provide details of

both events and help illuminate the more than three centuries of cultural development that took place in Canaan between them. In fact, Syro-Palestine can be seen better against the backdrop of these Egyptian records than at any other time in its prior history.

Thus, in the following pages I

will discuss each of the subphases of the Late Bronze Age in Canaan—first in terms of the history revealed by Egyptian sources and then in view of Canaan's ceramic, architectural, and funerary evidence. By this juxtaposition of local archaeological data with contemporaneous Egyptian historical materials, I hope to show



Above: Although small religious structures with a single cult focus appear to have been the norm during Late Bronze IB, a rambling religious precinct in stratum IX at Beth Shan can now be dated to this period. Called the "Tuthmose III Temple" by its excavators, the precinct, probably dedicated to numerous deities, has yielded many steles, including this one. In the upper register a dog and a male lion of similar size wrestle while standing on their back legs. In the bottom register a dog bites the hindquarters of a striding lion. It is doubtful that such a costly monument was erected as a memorial to the hunting dog, but loftier interpretations have not been offered. From an artistic standpoint, the stele is as good a piece of stone sculpture as anything from Late Bronze Syro-Palestine. Photograph courtesy of the Israel Department of Antiquities and Museums. Left: "Seven times and seven times, I bow down on my back and belly," is one of the claims made in the Amarna letters by Canaanite vassals expressing their subservience and loyalty to Egyptian rulers during Late Bronze IIA (el-Amarna letter 323; Mercer 1939: 771). On this relief from the Memphite tomb of Horemheb, last pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty, a mixed group of foreigners seems to be acting out their devotion before one of the pharaoh's servants. The group consists of five full-bearded Syrians, each wearing a long-sleeved garment with a shoulder cape, an additional Syrian whose wavy hair is tied up like a hat and who wears a kilt with long tassels; two Libyans distinguished by their sharp pointy beards and the feather protruding from their long straight hair; and a beardless figure, possibly that of an African. Photograph courtesy of the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden.

that the texture of Canaan's material culture in the Late Bronze Age varied in response to Egyptian political and economic initiatives, which, ironically, were often directed toward the larger and more formidable states to the north and east of Canaan.

## Late Bronze IA

Late Bronze IA covered roughly one hundred years. Its beginning corresponded with the expulsion of the Hyksos from Egypt by Amosis, first pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty,<sup>1</sup> and its end came with the attack of Tuthmosis III, sixth pharaoh of the dynasty, on the Canaanite fortress of Megiddo. This is a very confusing period in the archaeological record, marked by destructions and partial abandonments.

**Egyptian Historical Evidence.** For the hundred years prior to 1550 B.C.E. much of Egypt was ruled by a group of foreigners. Later known as the Hyksos and designated as the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Dynasties, this group, probably Asiatics, had its capital at Avaris (Tell ed-Dab'a) in the eastern Delta (Bietak 1986). It was the Seventeenth Dynasty pharaoh, Kamose, or possibly his predecessor Sekenenre, who first rebelled against the Hyksos (Pritchard 1950: 232). An account of the Egyptian attack on Avaris and its subsequent destruction was found in the tomb

# Dividing the Late Bronze Age

The archaeological record for the Late Bronze Age in Palestine is often uncertain. Scholars have offered varying chronologies of its phases.

Less than forty years ago William F. Albright (1949) made the first intelligent attempts to synthesize our understanding of the late Bronze Age at more than one Palestinian site. At that time there wasn't much material for the critical archaeologist to use. For instance, Late Bronze I was simply subdivided into an early phase (Late Bronze IA), which Albright saw as represented by level II at Tell el-Ajjul and stratum IX at Megiddo, with their characteristic elaborate Bichrome Ware pottery. A second phase (Late Bronze IB) was considered "somewhat of a step-child" until the excavation of the lowest stratum (Structure I) of the Fosse Temple at Lachish provided Albright with what he considered suitable archaeological deposits. Albright admitted that the subdivision of Late Bronze II was difficult to achieve with accuracy, but he offered an early subphase, Late Bronze IIA, which roughly corresponded to the fourteenth century B.C.E. (the Amarna period and the shift from the Eighteenth to the Nineteenth Dynasties), and a later subphase, Late Bronze IIB, which dated to the thirteenth century B.C.E. (the Ramesside period). His rule of thumb for placing homogeneous deposits within this skeleton was overly reliant, however, on Mycenaean Greek and Cypriot imports whose

1570	Pharaoh	Albright 1949	Wright 1965b	Amiran 1970	Weinstein 1981	Kenyon 1973
1550	Amosis					
	-----					A
	Amenophis I					
1525	-----				LB IA	? ?
	Tuthmosis I					
	-----	LB IA				
1500	Tuthmosis II					B
	-----			LB IA		
	Hatshepsut					
1475	-----					
	Tuthmosis III					?
1450	-----		LB IA		LB IB	
	Amenophis II					C
1425	-----	LB IB				
	Tuthmosis IV	?				
1400	-----					
	Amenophis III			LB IIA	LB IIA	
1375	-----	LB IIA	LB IIA			Gap?
	Amenophis IV (Akhenaten)					
	-----					
	Smenkhkare					

The sequence of major Egyptian pharaohs of the New Kingdom and the chronological subdivisions of the Late Bronze Age as proposed by William F. Albright (1949), G. Ernest Wright (1965b), Ruth Amiran (1970), and James M. Weinstein (1981). Dame Kathleen Kenyon's (1973) Late Bronze Age groups also are included. Absolute dates are those followed by the *Cambridge Ancient History*. Conversion to the new dates proposed by K. A. Kitchen (1987) can be achieved by consulting the reigns of specific pharaohs given in the text. When an author has given an

1360	Pharaoh	Albright 1949	Wright 1965b	Amiran 1970	Weinstein 1981	Kenyon 1973
1350	Tutankhamun					Gap?
	-----					
	Ay				LB IIA	LB IIA
	-----					D
1325	Horemheb	LB IIA	LB IIA			
	-----					
	Ramesses I					
	-----					
1300	Sethos I					E
	-----					
1275	Ramesses II					
	-----					
1250		LB IIB	LB IIB		LB IIB	LB IIB
	-----					F
	Merneptah					
1225	-----					
	Amenmesses					
	-----					
	Sethos II					Gap?
	-----					
	Siptah					
	-----					
	Tewosret					
1200	-----					
	Sethnakhte					
	-----					
	Ramesses III					G
1175	-----					

absolute date that date has been used in the chart, when a date has been expressed in terms of a pharaoh's reign, the date has been extrapolated to the *Cambridge Ancient History* dates, when both a pharaoh's reign and an absolute date are offered, the pharaoh's reign has been used, as this is most likely to reflect the original views of the author. This chart attempts only to be an approximation by the author.

chronological sequences were just then becoming known (Leonard 1987b; Hankey 1987). In his later writings Albright continued to refine his original categories, and most scholars follow at least a modified version of his chronology. Both G. Ernest Wright (1965b) and Ruth Amiran (1970), for instance, have divided the period into Late Bronze I, Late Bronze IIA, and Late Bronze IIB.

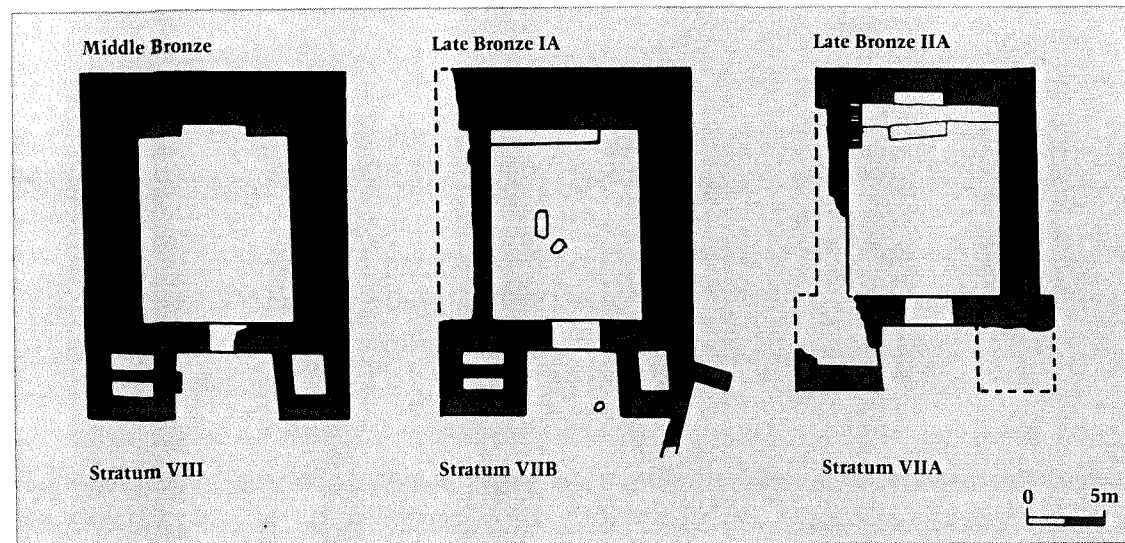
The other major attempt to create a chronological yardstick for the Late Bronze Age material from Syro-Palestine was made by the British archaeologist Dame Kathleen Kenyon, who devised a system based on a reevaluation of the excavated material from Megiddo, Hazor, Lachish, and other sites (1973: 527-30). Kenyon selected only those individual deposits that she was convinced displayed sufficient archaeological (that is, stratigraphical) integrity for chronological purposes, and she arranged them into seven groups (A through G). In Albright's terms these groups can be summarized as Late Bronze IA (Groups A and B), Late Bronze IB (Group C), Late Bronze IIA (latter part of Group C, a gap, and Group D), and Late Bronze IIB (Groups E, F, and G).

In spite of her keen eye for stratigraphical detail and her implicit caveat against placing too much emphasis on sites that were poorly excavated during the infancy of the discipline, Kenyon's system has not been widely accepted. This is most probably the result of practical matters such as confusion over the relationship between Groups A and B, the fifty-year hiatus between Groups C and D (given the absolute dates with which she was working, this gap covers almost the entire Amarna period), and another substantial gap between Groups F and G at the end of the Late Bronze Age.

In 1981 James M. Weinstein produced an important synthesis of the archaeological and literary material bearing on the chronology of the Late Bronze Age. After reviewing the Egyptian as well as the Syro-Palestinian evidence, Weinstein arrived at the relative chronology that is used in this article.



The so-called Midgal Temple (number 2048) in area BB at Megiddo had its origin in Middle Bronze (left) but continued in use during Late Bronze IA (middle) and IIA (right). The final phase, however, was much less impressive. With walls about half their original thickness, the structure in stratum VIIA hardly deserves the use of the epithet "midgal," meaning fortified. Drawing by Lois A. Kain.



of an Egyptian officer, Ahmose son of Eben, at el-Kab in southern Egypt. It was left to the next pharaoh, Amosis,<sup>2</sup> to complete the rebellion by leading a three-year siege against Sharuhen, the Hyksos stronghold in southern Palestine.<sup>3</sup> Thus, the Hyksos were expelled from the Delta and ultimately driven back into Palestine and then Syria (Dever 1987).

The military career of Ahmose son of Eben continued through the reign of pharaoh Amenophis I<sup>4</sup> and into that of Tuthmosis I,<sup>5</sup> whom he claimed to have accompanied as far north into Syria as the great bend in the Euphrates River. This does not seem to have been an idle boast, for the later pharaoh Tuthmosis III recorded that his grandfather Tuthmosis I had erected a victory stele on the east bank of that great river (Pritchard 1950: 239; see also Spalinger 1978). This would have brought the Egyptians face to face with the kingdom of Mitanni, a North Syrian group made up of a small aristocracy

### Small city-states in Syro-Palestine banded together in Late Bronze IA to defend themselves against what they saw as a bigger threat, Egypt.

of Indo-Europeans ruling a substratum of Hurrians (Merrillees 1986). The chariot-owning nobility who formed the upper crust of Mitanni were called *maryanna*, a term almost certainly to be equated with the Indo-European word *marya*, which means "young man" or "young warrior" (Drower 1973: 420), with

emphasis on his prowess in maneuvering the swift horse-drawn, spoke-wheeled chariot. In Papyrus Anastasi I, which dates to the Nineteenth Dynasty, the royal scribe Hori taunts his rival Amen-em-Opet: "Give me (thy) report in order that I may . . . speak proudly to others of thy designation 'maryan.'" To which Hori replies: "I know how to hold the reins more skillfully than thou, there is no warrior who is my equal" (Albright 1930-1931: 217; Pritchard 1950: 475-79).

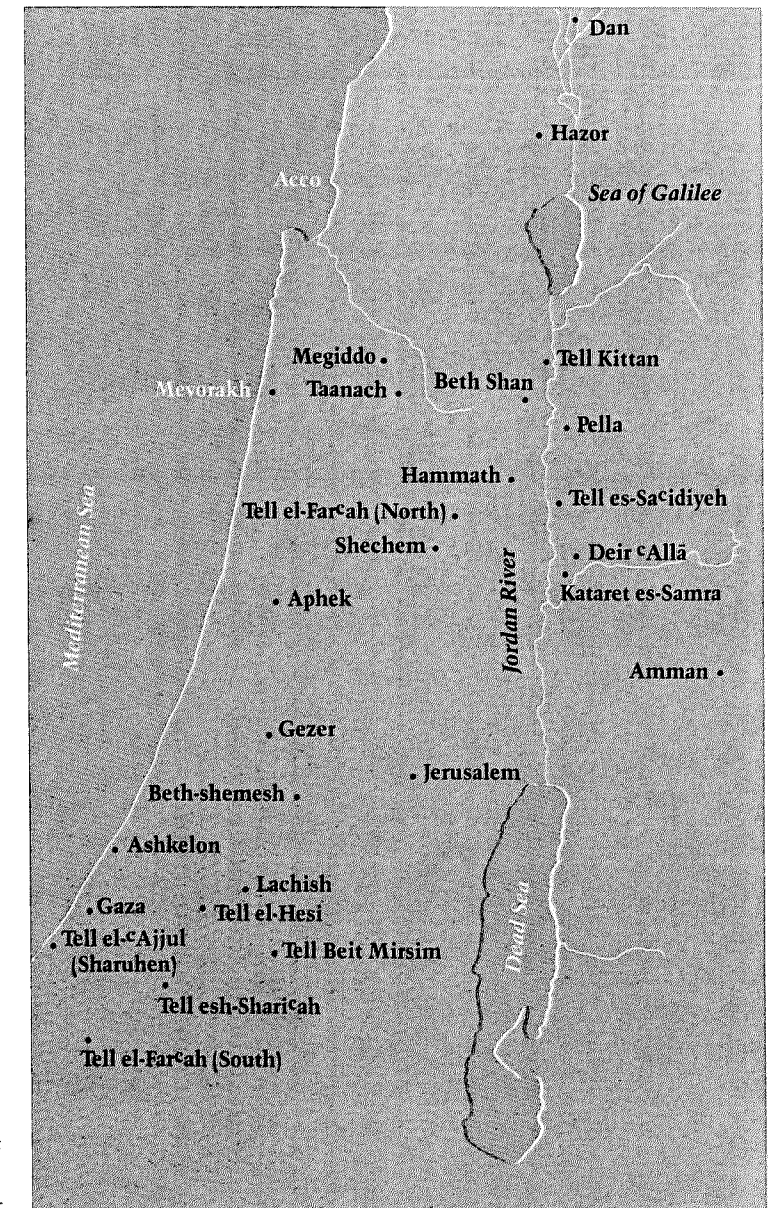
The Mitannian capital, Washukanni, was located somewhere in the region of the headwaters of the Habur River, but its exact location is still unknown and its suggested association with Tell Fakhariyeh has yet to be proven either by excavation or neutron-activation analysis of pertinent cuneiform tablets that were suspected to have been written in Washukanni on local clays (McEwan 1958; Dobel, Asaro, and Michel 1976). At this time Mitanni was the

only military threat to Egypt in the region, but Tuthmosis I was apparently not overly disturbed by the fact; he ended his campaign relaxing and hunting elephants in the Niya Lands of the Orontes Valley.

A gap exists in our knowledge of Syro-Palestine during the reigns of Tuthmosis II<sup>6</sup> and Queen Hatshepsut.<sup>7</sup> Based on the subsequent actions of Tuthmosis III when he became sole ruler of Egypt, we can assume it was a period in which small local city-states were working out their differences and joining into alliances against what they perceived as a greater threat, Egypt. This situation is surprising, since at this time the Egyptians appear to have been rather benevolent. Egypt displayed no desire for permanent economic or political/military control over the area and was apparently content with the occasional raid into the territories to demonstrate its strength (Weinstein 1981; but see also Rainey 1987 and Redford 1987).

**Archaeological Evidence in Canaan.** The archaeological record is unclear as to the manner in which the political transition from the Middle Bronze IIC/Middle Bronze III to Late Bronze IA took place in Canaan. For instance, did the city-states of Syro-Palestine simply transfer their allegiance from the Hyksos to the pharaohs of the Eighteenth Dynasty (the beginning of the so-called New Kingdom), as Yohanan Aharoni suggested (1967: 138), or do the destructions and partial abandonments (Dever 1987; Weinstein 1981) indicate a sharper, more hostile break, described by Kathleen Kenyon (1979: 184) as a "considerable dislocation of life in Palestine?"

**Ceramic record.** From the standpoint of ceramics, the transition from



the Middle to the Late Bronze Age – if it can be seen at all – is marked by a surprising degree of continuity in most of the popular local forms and fabrics. Many vessel types of the Late Bronze I exhibit an ancestry that can be traced to the very beginnings of the Middle Bronze. Three “new” fabric types appeared in the ceramic repertoire near the transition, however, and they are distinc-

tive enough to be used by archaeologists as the type-fossils of the Late Bronze IA. These are Bichrome Ware, Black/Grey Lustrous Ware, and Chocolate on White Ware (for a detailed description of these, see the accompanying sidebar).

There also appeared during Late Bronze IA the first examples of two handmade Cypriot fabrics that enjoyed a long history in Canaan (Oren

1969): Base Ring Ware, a black or brownish gray fabric with raised decoration (designated BR I), which appeared almost exclusively in closed forms such as the jug or the small distinctively shaped *bilbil* that must have been traded for the sake of its contents (perhaps opium, an important painkiller in antiquity – Merrillees 1962, 1986: 154); and White Slip Ware (WS I), which dur-

## Bichrome Ware, Black/Grey Lustrous Ware, and Chocolate on White Ware are the type-fossils of Late Bronze IA.

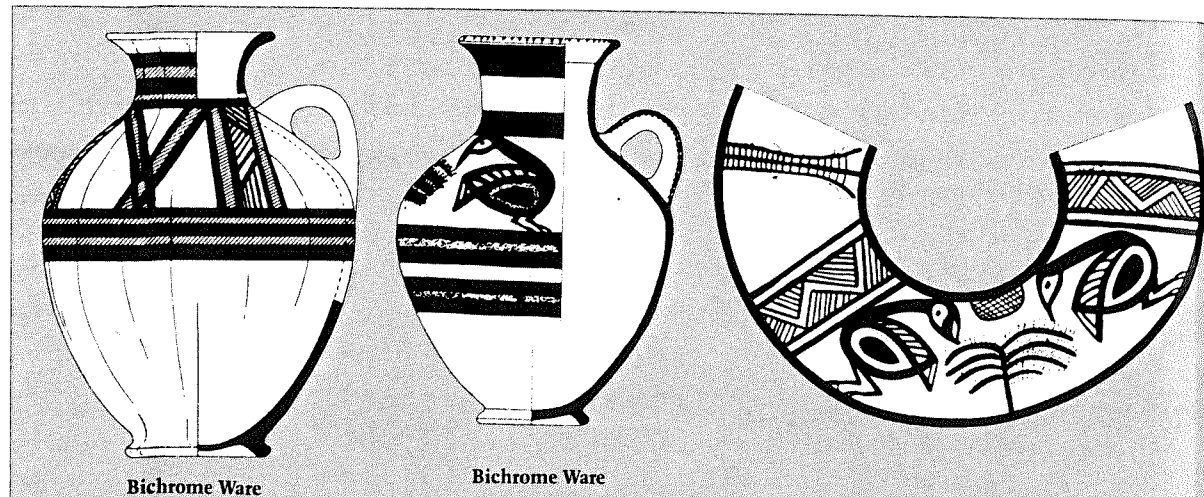
ing this period was restricted to the hemispherical, wishbone-handled “milk bowl” that must have been brought to Canaan as appealing tableware and not as containers for some luxury commodity.

**Architectural evidence.** As for the plan and appearance of the Canaanite city-states in which this pottery was used, we are unfortunately ignorant; only an occasional

hint can be gathered at some of the larger sites where archaeologists have made substantial horizontal exposures. In area AA at the northern end of Megiddo (Tell el-Mutesellim), the city-gate of stratum IX (Loud 1948: 5) and a portion of the adjacent and contemporary “Palace” (Loud 1948: 16 and 33) were uncovered, but so much had been destroyed by later rebuildings that we are not certain

of the city’s character. It has been claimed that area AA originated in the Middle Bronze; similar survivals of town plans from the Middle Bronze into the Late Bronze I have been suggested at Tell el-Hesi (“Bliss City II”) and Tell el-ʿAjjul (City I, Palace II), presenting us with a feeling of continuity that is difficult to reconcile with the discontinuity apparent at so many other sites [see Weinstein 1981: 1–5].

Our knowledge of religious architecture, however, seems to be on much firmer ground (G. R. H. Wright 1971, 1985; Gray 1964). Temple 2048 at Megiddo (stratum VIIIB), with its thick walls, single long-room, and staired towers in front, would have continued in use during this period, as possibly would a related structure, Fortress Temple IB at Shechem (Tell Balatah; Wright 1965a: 122 and following). At Hazor (Tell el-Qedah), the only Palestinian site to offer a true paradigm for the religious architecture of Late Bronze, continuity between the Middle Bronze IIC and Late Bronze I is suggested by the “Long Temple” in area A (Yadin 1972: 103) and the “Orthostate Temple” in area H; the latter was constructed during Middle Bronze II but survived through Late Bronze IA and into Late Bronze II. At Tell Kattan a single-room temple with at least two previous phases from Middle Bronze (strata V and IV) was enlarged during Late Bronze I and rooms were added. The presence of “chocolate ware” on the floors of this latest building (stratum III) suggested to the excavator that it had been destroyed during one of the campaigns of Tuthmosis III, when the Egyptians were beginning to tighten their control over the Beth Shan valley (Eisenberg 1977). [Editor’s



Bichrome Ware

Bichrome Ware

### Bichrome Ware

Production of this pottery, often called Elaborate Bichrome Ware, may actually have begun at the very end of Middle Bronze IIC, since fragments of it have been found in deposits dating to that period at Tell el-ʿAjjul and Megiddo (Wood 1982; Kassiss 1973). It is still considered to be a harbinger of Late Bronze IA, however.

Characterized by a limited repertoire of decorative motifs, such as birds, fish, Union Jacks, and the like, executed in red and black paint on a pale buff slip, this pottery is so distinctive in both vessel-form and the artistic quality of its decoration that when it was first “isolated” it was

thought to be the product of a single artist called the Tell el-ʿAjjul Painter (Heurtley 1939). Subsequent study has suggested that this might be too narrow an interpretation of the material, but the restricted range of mainstream forms—jug with shoulder handle, cylindrical juglet, one-handled juglet and krater—in concert with its distinctive decoration suggest that a limited number of workshops were engaged in producing this ware. Attempts to attribute this pottery to a specific ethnic group, such as the Hurrians, as proposed by Claire Epstein (1966), present chronological problems that do not arise if we think of it as the product of a limited

number of workshops. Neutron activation analysis has shown that some of these workshops were located in Cyprus (Artzy, Perlman, and Asaro 1973), but at least a portion of the Bichrome Ware vessels found at Megiddo was made from local clays (Artzy, Perlman, and Asaro 1978).

### Black/Grey Lustrous Ware

Like the other IA speciality wares, Black/Grey Lustrous Ware appeared on the cusp of the transition from Middle Bronze IIC and Late Bronze IA, having been found in the earlier deposits at Tell el-ʿAjjul and Tell el-Farʿah (South) (Oren 1973: 77). Its greatest popularity came in the years just



Black/Grey Lustrous Ware



Chocolate on White Ware

before the reign of Tuthmosis III. The examples we have are well constructed of a finely levigated [washed] grey clay covered with a grey or black slip that was subsequently polished, often to a luster. This fabric occurred in a single form: a globular-bodied, tall-necked juglet with handle from the shoulder to below the rim. The petal-like appearance of the upper handle attachment is a hallmark of the form.

### Chocolate on White Ware

Morphologically, vessels of this ware echo the mainstream shapes of the period but are technically superior to the standard wares in almost every way. Surfaces

were covered with a thick, cream-colored slip that was burnished to a light luster before the geometric decoration was added in a shade of paint to the red side of chocolate-brown. Also appearing just before the Late Bronze I period, Chocolate on White Ware may have had its origins at sites close to the Jordan River, since the white *katarrah* marls could have been used in the slip. At Kataret es-Samra, just to the north of the Wadi Zerqa, I (1986: 167) have found, in secondary association with Middle Bronze II, rolled-rim cooking pots that appear to be “kiln-wasters” of this ware.

Courtesy of The Oriental Institute, University of Chicago



note: The author prefers the spelling "Beth Shan" as opposed to "Bethshean"—a preference he shares with the authors of the major publications of the Bronze Age strata at this site (Rowe 1930, 1940; James 1966; Oren 1973.)

**Funerary evidence.** Most tombs of Late Bronze IA appear to have been shaft tombs from earlier epochs (in some cases as early as Early Bronze IV/Middle Bronze I) that were partially cleared and reused. Their funerary assemblages have been assigned to this period largely on the presence or absence of the Late Bronze IA ceramic type-fossils mentioned above. Rich examples have been found in Tomb 1100 at Megiddo (these are the hallmark of Kathleen Kenyon's Pottery Group A) and in Tomb 42 at Beth Shan. Unfortunately, because of later disturbances suffered by most of these tombs, it has been impossible to recover any significant details about the funerary cult, or cults, of the period.

#### Late Bronze IB

Late Bronze IB lasted approximately 75 years, its beginning marked by the attack of Tuthmosis III on Megiddo and its end corresponding with the ascension of the pharaoh Amenophis III. Archaeologically, the period has often been considered suspect, its very existence even questioned (Weinstein 1981: 12).

**Egyptian Historical Evidence.** In Egypt the death of Queen Hatshepsut brought Tuthmosis III<sup>8</sup> to the throne. Tuthmosis III was determined to pursue a vigorous set of policies in Canaan. His tremendous achievement at the Battle of Megiddo (1482 B.C.E.) and the major impact that event had on Egypt's foreign policy toward Canaan could be seen

as the keynote of the Late Bronze IB period.

That the Egyptian frontier in Palestine had been coming increasingly under outside pressure during the reign of Hatshepsut is suggested by the speed with which Tuthmosis III, provoked by news of the revolt of a confederation of Syrian princes gathered at Megiddo, moved out of Egypt after her death. This affront to Egyptian power, prestige, and national ego was led by the prince of Kadesh (Tell Nebi Mend) in Syria and was aided and abetted by "individuals of every foreign country, waiting in their chariots—330 princes [*maryanna*] every one of them having their army" (Pritchard 1950: 238; Epstein 1963). Tuthmosis III went forth at the head of an army claimed to number more than 20,000, advancing across the Sinai at the incredible pace of 15 miles per day. North of Gaza, to Yehem south of the Carmel range, the pace of the soldiers and their baggage train slowed to almost half this rate, perhaps because they needed to forage and consolidate as they went or perhaps because of local opposition. Upon reaching Yehem the Egyptian army had three options: to head for the coast and attack Megiddo from the northwest, to come upon Megiddo from the southeast via Taanach (Tell Ta'annek), or to take the direct route through the exceedingly narrow Aruna Pass (Wadi 'Ara). The pharaoh's field officers, who were fearful of attempting the third option, pleaded with him not to take that route but he would not be deterred (Pritchard 1950: 235). Tuthmosis led his forces through the pass and out onto the Esdraelon Plain and surprised the Syrian coalition, which had divided most of its forces to

cover the northern and southern approaches.

As described in the Egyptian records, the Battle of Megiddo was a rout, and the Egyptian forces quickly began looting while the army of the Syrian confederation "fled headlong to Megiddo with faces of fear. They abandoned their horses and their chariots of gold and silver, so that someone might draw them up into this town by hoisting on their garments" (Pritchard 1950: 236). The pharaoh immediately surrounded Megiddo with a moat and a wall made of local timber. The city remained enclosed for seven months until "the princes . . . came on their bellies to kiss the ground . . . and to beg breath for their nostrils" (Pritchard 1950: 237) or until "they came out . . . pleading to [his] majesty, saying: Give us breath, our Lord! The countries of Retinue will never repeat rebellion another time!" (Pritchard 1950: 238, Barkal stele). Even considering the hyperbole of the era the booty that the army of Tuthmosis III brought back from Canaan, which was enumerated and described at length on Egyptian steles and temple walls, was, in both kind and quantity, simply staggering. In addition to mundane fare such as grain, cattle, and sheep (Ahituv 1978; Na'aman 1981), they brought back abandoned horses, which were still relatively new to Egyptians, and chariots worked with gold; bronze coats of armor; inlaid furniture; and intricately carved walking sticks. It should be noted that Tuthmosis III never claimed to have destroyed the city, a fact that accords well with the archaeological evidence,<sup>9</sup> but he did inflict a devastating defeat on those who were walled up there, and the battle enabled him to dictate policy

## After crushing a Syrian confederation at Megiddo, Tuthmosis III was able to dictate policy to the Canaanite princes.

to the Canaanite lords from a position of strength. He appointed new princes for each town—but not before each took a loyalty oath—and Palestine soon became a giant storehouse for Egypt.

Tuthmosis continued his military campaigns, but with Palestine firmly under his control he concentrated on Syria. During his sixth campaign Kadesh-on-the-Orontes was finally captured, with its defeat a new administrative policy was enacted, the taking of royal hostages: "Now the children of the princes and their brothers were brought as hostages to Egypt . . . (and) . . . whoever of these princes died, his majesty was accustomed to make his son go to stand in his place" (Pritchard 1950: 239). Such a policy not only assured the good behavior of relatives who were left behind, but also provided an heir to the throne who would be sympathetic at least to the correct, or Egyptian, way of doing things when the Egyptianized prince returned to rule his own area.

It appears that during the reign of Tuthmosis III Egypt's attitude toward the people of Syro-Palestine began to change as the Egyptians came to appreciate the potential economic benefits of annual Canaanite contributions to the coffers of the god Amon. For the bureaucratic purposes of collecting tribute, Canaan was divided into three districts, each with its own administrative center strategically situated on or near the major highway in the region, the Via Maris (Aharoni 1967: 42). These centers, each of which was the seat of an Egyptian overseer or commissioner,<sup>10</sup> were at Gaza, probably modern Gaza or Rapha in southern Palestine; Kumidu, Kamid el-Loz in the Beqaa Valley; and

Sumur, possibly Tell Kazel on the Syrian coast (Goetze 1975a: 2; Weinstein 1981: 12; Aharoni 1967: 152; Muhammad 1959). Claire Epstein's (1963) reconsideration of the verso of Papyrus Hermitage 1116A, an official Egyptian document composed during the reign of Amenophis II that lists rations of beer and grain for *maryannu* messengers from Djahy to Egypt (including specifically the sites of Megiddo, Taanach, and Hazor), indicates that during the reign of Tuthmosis III the collection of tribute from western Asia was a highly structured affair directly controlled by the court. This system was apparently successful and remained relatively intact for more than a century, since it is still reflected in the Amarna letters of the fourteenth century B.C.E.

Brilliant general that he was, Tuthmosis III also had a softer side that often escapes notice; he took interest in, and recorded, the strange plants and animals he encountered on his many military campaigns. A glimpse of the flora and fauna of Canaan during the Late Bronze Age can be seen today, carved in low relief, on the walls of the Festival Hall he had built at the rear of the Temple of Amon at Karnak.

Tuthmosis III died after a reign of more than half a century and was succeeded by his son Amenophis II.<sup>11</sup> A possible coregency with his father while the crown prince campaigned in Asia creates problems with the numbering of his military campaigns, but the general sequence of them is clear (Rainey 1973; Yeivin 1967). That the King ("Great One") of Naharin was continuing to involve Egypt in Canaanite affairs has been shown by the fact that as Amenophis II was passing through the Plain of

Sharon while returning from his first Asiatic campaign he intercepted a messenger of the prince of Mitanni "carrying a letter of clay at his throat" (Pritchard 1950: 246). We can only guess what the subject matter of this epistle was, but it must not have had the Egyptians' best interests at heart because the messenger was trotted southward at the side of the king's own chariot.

The young pharaoh boasted of personal valor as none had done before, and with him Egyptian foreign policy took on a more severe mood. Whereas Tuthmosis III may have "crushed all rebellious countries" in Syro-Palestine, Amenophis II "trode Naharin, which his bow had crushed . . . (and) . . . cut off the heads of the attackers" (Pritchard 1950: 245). Consider the plight of the town of Shamash-edom, possibly to be identified with Qurn Hattin near the Sea of Galilee (Aharoni 1960). Amenophis II attacked it with "his face . . . terrible like that of Bastet, like Seth in his moment of raging . . . He hacked it up in a short moment like a lion fierce of face when he treads the foreign countries" (Pritchard 1950: 245). Even more severe was the treatment of seven Syrian princes who were captured in the vicinity of Damascus during the pharaoh's second Asiatic campaign. After killing them with his mace, the pharaoh hung them upside down on the prow of his boat all the way to Thebes, where six of them were hanged on the city-walls; further upstream, in the land of Nubia, he hanged the seventh on the wall at Napata, all to show "his majesty's victories forever and ever in all lands" (Pritchard 1950: 248; see also Rainey 1973: 72). This more severe policy seems to have had the desired effect. When in

Smaller religious structures, evidently with a single cult focus, apparently were the norm in Late Bronze IB.

his seventh year of rule Amenophis II was conducting a military campaign against a revolt in Syria, the peoples of the Niya lands came to the walls of their towns to applaud him (Drower 1973: 460), and when, at last, he reached Kadesh, long a thorn in the side of his father, its prince "came out in peace to his majesty . . . (and was) made to take the oath of fealty, and all their children as well" (Pritchard 1950: 246). This new policy of cruel treatment of prisoners, obviously intended to deter rebelliousness, was accompanied by a new concept of Canaan as a conquered land that was characterized by an increase in political and economic control coupled with occasional military force (Weinstein 1981: 12).

Amenophis II was succeeded by Tuthmosis IV.<sup>12</sup> The extent of his military activity in Syro-Palestine is debated (Malamat 1961; Weinstein 1981: 13, with references), but at least one campaign can be inferred from the mention of captives from Gezer on a stele from his mortuary temple in Thebes. This may be the campaign represented on the decorated panels of his chariot, these show a divinely directed pharaoh driving forth to "trample down all northern countries, difficult of approach" (Giveon 1969: 56). The politics of his predecessors seem to have been sufficient to control the region, and the annual parades through Canaan, which had characterized the early part of the dynasty, became less and less necessary. The actual occupation of Canaan was still in the future.

**Archaeological Evidence in Canaan.** As mentioned above, Late Bronze IB has often been considered suspect. Such doubts are based on an appar-

ent gap in occupation at many important Palestinian sites such as Megiddo, Taanach, Tell Beit Mirsim, and Tell el-Far'ah (South). I believe this so-called gap in occupation can be attributed as much to our lack of knowledge of the pertinent subtleties in changes in the material culture as to the radical depopulation of the countryside.

**Ceramic record.** The three ceramic type-fossils noted in the discussion of Late Bronze IA appear to have had their floruit during that period. Their presence in strange (late?), aberrant forms (for example at the Mevorakh XI temple), or their complete absence, is thought to characterize deposits from the rest of the fifteenth century B.C.E.—that is, Late Bronze IB. Kathleen Kenyon filled this period with her Pottery Group C, which consists exclusively of material from Structure I of the Fosse Temple at Lachish. I don't believe, however, that this phase of the building is securely dated (since the dating is based on a single scarab of Amenophis III), and it should not be used to date Lachish itself, let alone the entire region.

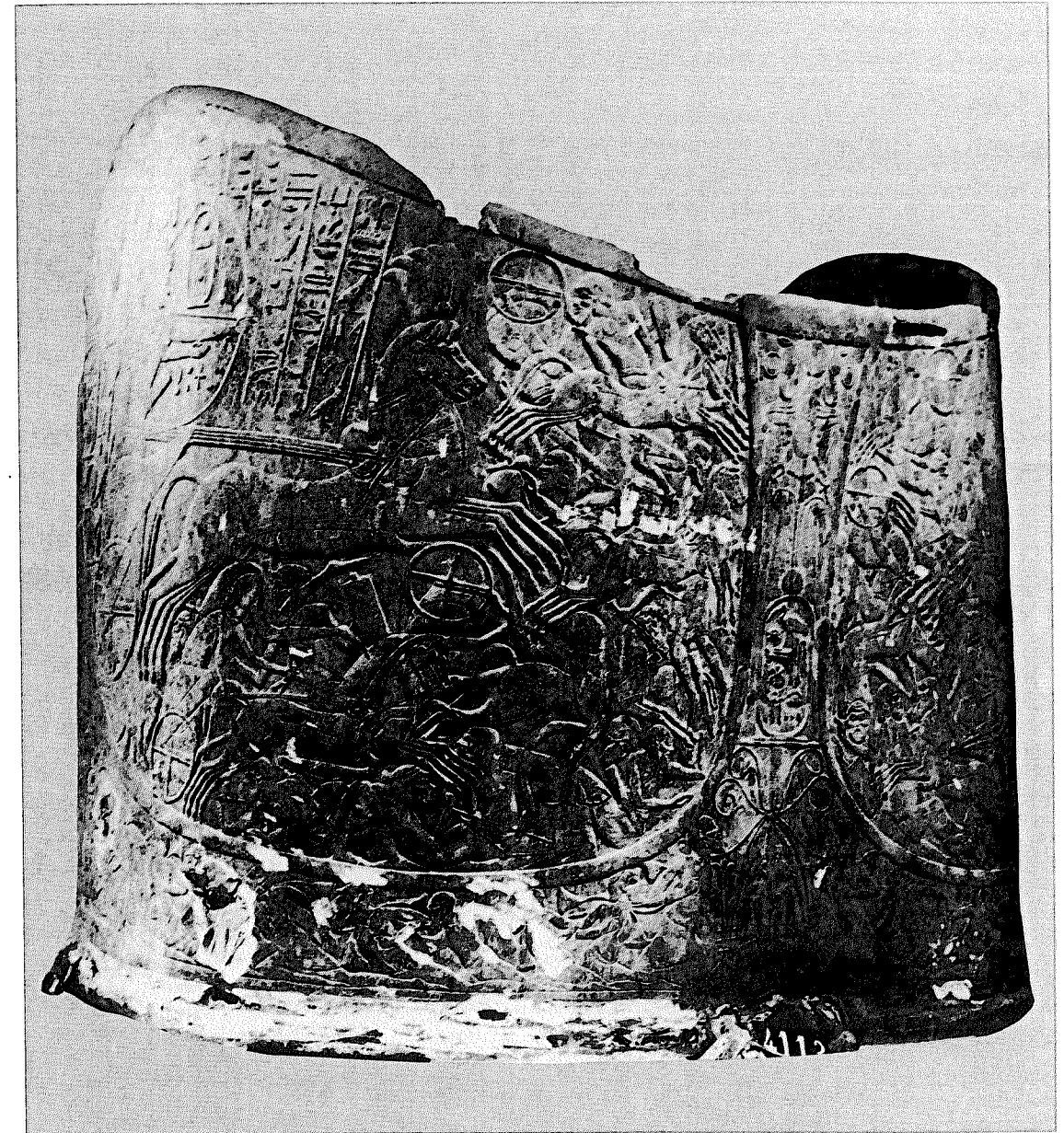
Part of our uncertainty over the development of pottery types during Late Bronze IB is the number of sites at which a gap in occupation following the campaigns of Tuthmosis III has been recognized. One thing is certain, however: In the substratum of nonspecialty wares a slow evolution began in the fifteenth century and continued into the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries. "Milk bowls" from Cyprus painted with the "newer," more schematic, patterns of White Slip II continued to be imported into Palestine, while the first relatively complete import from the Aegean world, a Late Helladic

(Mycenaean) II *kylix* from Fosse Temple I at Lachish, signaled what would become a brisk trade in Aegean goods during Late Bronze II.<sup>13</sup>

**Architectural evidence.** In spite of the alleged gaps in occupation at these sites, our understanding of religious architecture in Late Bronze IB is much better than that in Late Bronze IA. The stratigraphy of the rambling religious precinct at level IX at Beth Shan (Rowe 1930, 1940), called the "Thutmose III Temple" by its excavators, has been a source of confusion for more than half a century (Albright 1938: 76–77), but there is now evidence to support a Late Bronze IB date (McGovern 1985: 13). This precinct housed a stele dedicated by the Egyptian architect Amen-em-Opet and his son to "Mekal, Lord of Beth Shan" (Thompson 1970). The bearded god Mekal is pictured sitting on a throne wearing a conical headdress with horns in front and ribbons in back and holding the Egyptian *waz* scepter and *ankh*, illustrating the hybridization of Egypto-Canaanite religious themes (Pritchard 1950: 249; 1969: plate 487).

With the exception of the temple complex at Beth Shan (stratum IX), smaller religious structures, evidently with a single cult focus, appear to have been the norm in the Late Bronze IB and beyond. This is evident at Hazor where a two-room shrine (the "Orthostate Temple") in area H survived from Middle Bronze IIC with only a slight modification of the cult focus and an enlargement or regularization of the forecourt (Yadin 1972: 75–95). In Late Bronze IB this court included an on-axis gateway and a raised platform, perhaps an altar. A bilobate pottery kiln containing around 20 miniature bowls suggests that the priests supplied

During Late Bronze IB, Tuthmosis IV, eighth pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty, probably led at least one military campaign into Syro-Palestine. This campaign may be depicted on the exterior of his wooden chariot. In the panel left the pharaoh is shown charging across the battlefield with his bow drawn and the reins of the lumbering eight-spoked chariot wrapped securely around his waist. Below each panel is a frieze depicting his vanquished prisoners, all of whom have the characteristic beards of Syro-Palestinians, bound together by a rope. Photograph courtesy of the Egyptian Museum, Cairo.





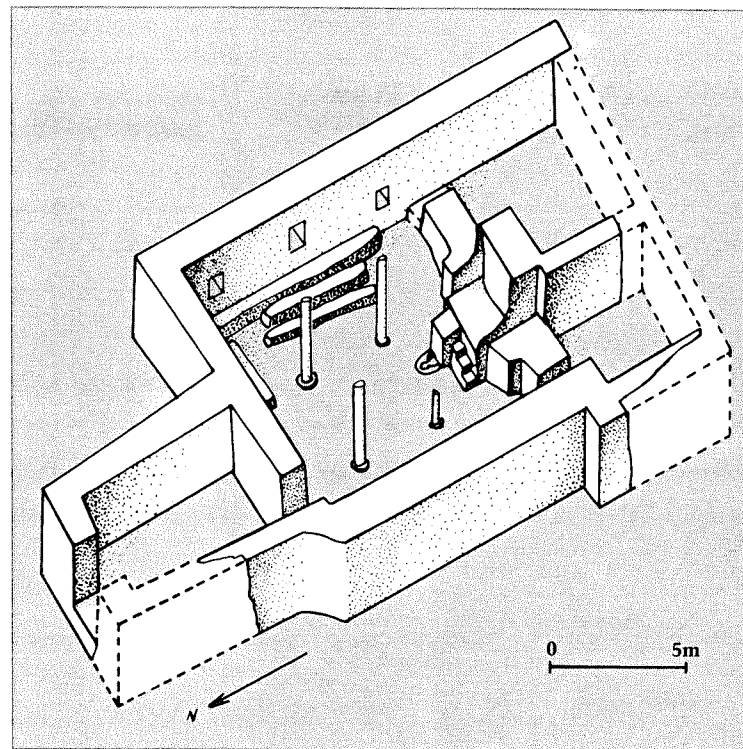
worshippers with some of the necessary cult paraphernalia (Stager and Wolff 1981: 97-98; Yadin 1972: 76). That the forecourt was also used as an important and integral part of the sanctuary can be seen from the finding there of clay liver models bearing Akkadian inscriptions (Yadin 1972: 82-83). Archaeological evidence for the practice of hepatoscopy (divination through the inspection of animal livers), a well-known custom in Mesopotamia, has also been found in the maison du prêtre at Ugarit (Ras Shamra) in northern Canaan (Courtois 1969).

At Lachish, in the fill of the Middle Bronze Age defensive ditch (fosse), a small extramural temple was discovered in the 1930s. Structure I, the earliest phase of the "Fosse Temple," was a three-roomed structure with an entrance from the west that was hidden by a short screen wall. The main room, a north-south longroom, had as its cult focus a tripartite platform built against the southern wall.

Tell Mevorakh, near the coast, was the site of a single-room temple. The excavator dated the temple, in stratum XI to the Late Bronze I, probably IB, a date strengthened by the presence of three (late?) Bichrome vessels among a scree of pottery found in situ on the floor of the building (Stern 1977, 1984). Evidently this temple had a long east-west axis, low benches along two of the sides, and, as its focal point, a stepped platform for cult objects.

What is striking about all of these Late Bronze IB temples is the amount of variety in size, plan, and orientation. Unfortunately, we are as yet unable to associate these differences with specific cults or deities.

**Funerary evidence.** Our knowl-



at Lachish in the fill of a defensive ditch, or fosse, that had been in use in the Middle Bronze Age. Structure I, the earliest phase of the "Fosse Temple," contained a tripartite platform with a raised altar for cult objects against the southern wall. The temple increased in size in subsequent Structures II and III (shown here), suggesting greater prosperity at the site, but it retained its original orientation and the location of the cult focus against the southern wall. Drawing by Lois A. Kain.

edge of funerary practices in Late Bronze IB is practically nonexistent, primarily because of our inability to date Late Bronze I deposits that do not include ceramic specialty wares from IA. Until we have a better understanding of the development of the local domestic pottery we will be unable to identify burials from this period with assurance or to detect any patterns in the funerary customs of the fifteenth century B.C.E.

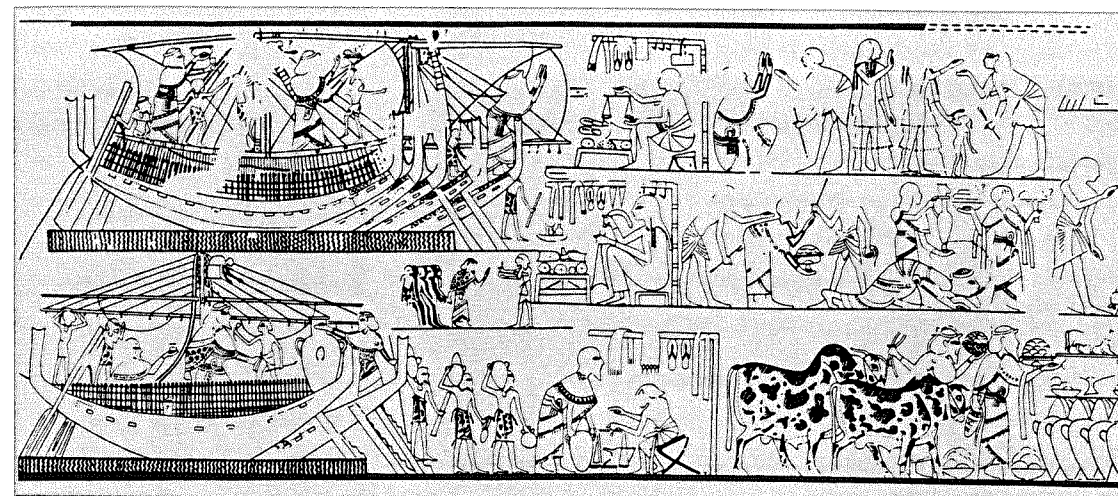
#### Late Bronze IIA

Late Bronze IIA lasted more than one hundred years and corresponded roughly with the reigns of Amenophis III, Amenophis IV (Akhenaten),

Smenkhkare, Tutankhamun, Ay, and Horemheb, the final rulers of the Eighteenth Dynasty. It was a period when Egypt lost much of its empire in Syro-Palestine. In Canaan the archaeological record shows a decline in local ceramics, but religious architecture is notable and funerary evidence is rich.

**Egyptian Historical Evidence.** Tuthmosis IV was succeeded by his son Amenophis III,<sup>14</sup> who used diplomacy as a powerful alternative, or adjunct, to military campaigns in keeping the peace in Syro-Palestine. In his tenth year as pharaoh he strengthened the Egyptian alliance with Mitanni by marrying Gilu-Khepa, daughter of

This drawing of a wall painting from a tomb in Thebes, probably dating to the time of Amenophis III in Late Bronze IIA, shows several Canaanite ships docked in a congested Egyptian harbor. It thus suggests that the reign of this pharaoh was a period of relative calm in Syro-Palestine, with fruitful economic exchange. In the bottom scene left, sailors are unloading their cargo and bartering with the local merchants. The figure dressed in a long garment is a Canaanite. He offers the contents of a heavy amphora while behind him sailors in short, Aegean-like kilts bring forth other ceramic containers, including, in the first sailor's left hand, a pilgrim flask most likely filled with some costly scented oil. Scenes such as this give us an idea of the international trade that flourished in the eastern Mediterranean during the Late Bronze Age. Drawing courtesy of The Committee of the Egypt Exploration Society.



Shuttarna, the new king of that empire. Gilu-Khepa came south to Egypt with her entourage of more than 300 women. This could not have been considered an ordinary event, for it was proclaimed by the pharaoh and his Egyptian wife, Queen Tiy, on a large commemorative wedding scarab, copies of which have been found in Palestine at Bethshemesh (Ain Shems) and Gezer (Rowe 1936: 128, 538, and 539). Later in his reign Amenophis III acquired the princess Tadu-Khepa, daughter of the subsequent Mitannian king Tushratta (Goetze 1975a: 5) as well as the daughter of Kadashman-Enlil, the Kassite king of Babylon (el-Amarna letters 1-5; Mercer 1939: 2-17; Campbell 1964: 44-45).

Amenophis III apparently did not feel the need to campaign in Asia. His reign was a period of relative calm in Syro-Palestine; the Egyptian garrisons "functioned largely to halt intercity disputes, to keep troublesome groups such as the Apiru under control, and to facili-

tate the movement of trade, tribute and communications" (Weinstein 1981: 15). It also appears that during this pharaoh's reign Egypt and Ugarit (Ras Shamra) first came into diplomatic contact (Drower 1975: 475).

The son of Amenophis III and Queen Tiy is one of the most intriguing and controversial figures in history. Ruling after his father's death, the new pharaoh Amenophis IV<sup>15</sup> gradually lost faith in the cult of the great god Amon and promulgated instead the worship of the gleaming multirayed solar disk, the Aten. The pharaoh soon found life at the Theban court too distracting for a man of religious fervor, so he moved his beautiful Queen Nefertiti, their family, and the court northward to a new capital called Akhetaten ("the Horizon of the Aten") at the modern site of Tell el-Amarna, which is located on the east bank of the Nile River about 200 miles south of Cairo (Aldred 1975). Amenophis IV also changed his name to Akhenaten, which means "He who is useful to

the Aten" or perhaps "Glorified Spirit of the Aten" (Redford 1987: 141), reflecting the ardor of his new beliefs. Akhenaten and his successors Smenkhkare and Tutankhamun, the Amarna pharaohs, reigned during one of the most interesting periods in the history of the Near East. They turned the barren piece of desert on which Akhetaten was built into a cosmopolitan center.

One of the most important archaeological discoveries pertaining to the history of Syro-Palestine during the Late Bronze Age was the hoard of more than 300 tablets that was clandestinely excavated by the local villagers of Tell el-Amarna in 1887. These texts, called the Amarna tablets, are extant samples of actual diplomatic correspondence between the pharaohs of the Amarna period and the rulers of the great powers of the day—Babylonia, Assyria, Mitanni, Arzawa, Alasia, and Hatti—as well as the local vassal states of Syria and Palestine. The majority of these epistles date to the reigns of Akhe-

Late Bronze IIa was the time of Amenophis IV, tenth pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty and one of the most intriguing and controversial figures in Near Eastern history. Having lost faith in the traditional gods of Egypt, he promoted the exclusive worship of the gleaming solar disk, the Aten. As part of this, he changed his name to Akhenaten (meaning, perhaps, "he who is useful to Aten") and moved the Egyptian capital north of Thebes to a new capital, Akhetaten (meaning, "the horizon of the Aten"), at the site of modern Tell el-Amarna. On this fragment of a balustrade (now in the Cairo Museum) from a temple ramp at Tell el-Amarna, Akhenaten and his queen Nefertiti are shown presenting offerings to the Aten. The strange deformities apparent here and in many depictions of this pharaoh have led to numerous speculations about his physical and mental well-being, and his religious obsessions have been blamed for the loss of much of the northern part of Egypt's empire during this period. Photograph from Pritchard (1969), courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.



nat, Smenkhkare, and Tutankhamun (Campbell 1964), but some are from the earlier correspondence of Amenophis III and were brought from Thebes to Akhetaten when Akhenaten moved his court to the new capital.

These letters describe, in intimate detail, the so-called presents and gifts that were constantly being exchanged between these foreign kings and their "brother" the pharaoh. Horses, chariots, inlaid furniture, lapis lazuli, and ivory objects d'art were the most common items exchanged, but the most valuable and most sought after commodity was gold. That a tremendous quantity of this costly mineral was available to the Egyptians was never lost on their allies to the north. In el-Amarna letter 16, Ashurballit I of Assyria wrote to Akhenaten that "gold is in thy land like dust" (Mercer 1939: 59).<sup>16</sup>

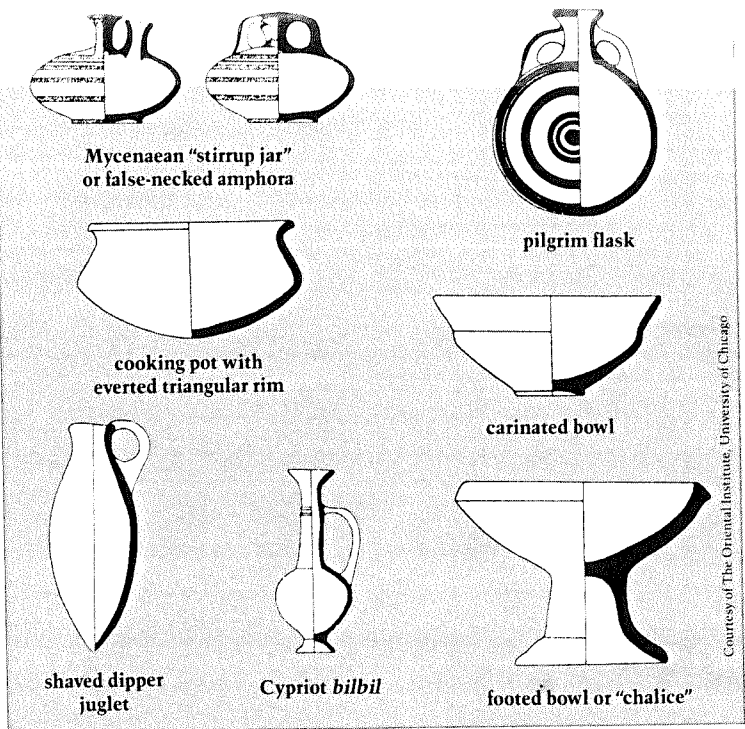
There was also a serious diplomatic side to these exchanges. When Burraburias II of Babylon was dissatisfied with the amount of gold he had received from Akhenaten, he wrote the pharaoh to remind him of his country's past loyalty to Egypt, recalling that when the Canaanites wrote to his father Kurigalzu in an attempt to involve him in an anti-Egyptian coalition Kurigalzu had told them to "cease making an alliance with me; if you cherish hostility against the King of Egypt, my brother, and wish to ally yourself with another shall I not come, and shall I not plunder you, for he is in alliance with me" (Mercer 1939: 131).

In contrast to the correspondence between Egypt and the kings of the powerful lands, letters to Canaan reveal a vast gap between king and vassal, especially in the formulaic salutations. In el-Amarna letter 323,

for example, Waida of Ashkelon does not refer to himself as the pharaoh's "brother" but as "thy servant and the dust of thy feet" (Mercer 1939: 771).

The subject matter of their letters is also different. The lust for gold, so much on the minds of the pharaoh's "brothers," is replaced by a concern for their personal safety as well as the safety of their villages. Such fears were not unfounded. To the north the power of the Hittites was expanding unchecked by the Egyptian army. In Syria several of the nominally loyal dynasts were beginning to doubt the wisdom of an allegiance to a pharaoh who was so distant, and they sometimes tilted their loyalty toward the Hittites, formed alliances with other princes in the area, or simply struck out on their own policies of expansion, such as that followed by Abdi Ashirta of Amurru and his son Aziru. Concerning the latter, the citizens of Tunip in Syria (Drower 1973: 427 and 453) wrote to the pharaoh in desperation: "But now Tunip, the city, weeps, and her tears are running, and there is not help for us. We have been sending to the king . . . of Egypt for twenty years; but not one word has come to us from our lord" (el-Amarna letter 59; Mercer 1939: 247).

Complicating the situation in the south was the appearance, in increasing numbers and strength, of a group of outlaws and outcasts called *cApiru* (or *cAbiru*, *Hapiru/Habiru*; in Sumerian, *SAGAZ*). This group has sometimes been identified with the Hebrews (*abri*) of the Old Testament (Miller and Hayes 1986: 65-67; Gottwald 1979: 396-409). The *cApiru* were first encountered in Palestine by Amenophis II, who claimed to have captured 3,600 of them (Albright 1975: 115). Freebooters and trouble-



makers, they readily allied themselves with the less loyal Egyptian vassals and threatened the staunchest supporters of a pharaoh who appears to have been disinterested in the concerns of the area. Word of their actions was common in the Amarna correspondence. Abdi-Hepa of Jerusalem, described by Margaret Drower (1973: 422) as a man who bore "a semitic name but was a devotee of the Hurrian goddess," wrote several letters bemoaning the turmoil the *Habiru* were causing in the hill country of Palestine and pleading with the pharaoh for military support: "The *Habiru* plunder all lands of the King. If archers are here this year, then the lands of the King, my Lord, will remain; but if archers are not here, then the lands of the King, my Lord, are lost" (el-Amarna letter 287; Mercer 1939: 709).

Amid protestations of loyalty and innocence, or charges and

countercharges of disloyalty, the scene presented in this correspondence repeats itself again and again, with apparently little or no help from the pharaoh.

The Amarna letters offer a great deal of insight into the daily events of Canaan in the Late Bronze Age, but they unfortunately also call attention to the fact that we lack other documented material to corroborate their revelations. As Kathleen Kenyon (1973: 556) noted, "the period of destruction associated with the *Khaboru* [*Habiru*] in the Amarna letters does not seem to be reflected in the history of towns, though there may be some indication of this in a low level of material culture, as shown by buildings, pottery and evidence of art." Rivka Gonen (1984: 69-70) has posited that the majority of Palestinian sites, even those that were well defended in the Middle Bronze Age, were unfortified (that is,



## Superior Aegean and Cypriot imports helped bring about the demise of Late Bronze IA specialty wares.

unwalled) during the Late Bronze Age, possibly as a result of an Egyptian policy that restricted its vassals from accumulating military strength behind their city-walls. It is a perplexing situation (Sever 1972). How are we to know, for instance, whether the whining and doom-crying of the vassals really reflected a dramatic change in daily events or was merely the normal situation couched in hyperbole aimed at winning the pharaoh's attention? Answers to questions such as this would give us a much better view of what was happening and would help us decide whether Late Bronze IIA was a time of catastrophic loss of Egyptian control in Canaan, as scholars have traditionally held, or simply a difficult period for the Egyptians, as some scholars now believe (Weinstein 1981: 15-16).

There is no evidence to indicate that either Akhenaten or his successor Smenkhkare answered the calls of their Canaanite vassals or led the Egyptian army northward in their defense. In fact, the only Amarna pharaoh who may have conducted such a campaign was young Tutankhamun, who claimed on his Restoration Stele that when he ascended the throne everything was topsy-turvy and that "if troops were sent to Djahi to extend the borders of Egypt, their efforts came to naught" (Steindorf and Seele 1957: 224). He may actually have tried to do something about the shameful state of affairs that existed in western Asia. His field marshal, Horemheb, claimed to have brought back prisoners from Palestine (Steindorf and Seele 1957: 247) and is spoken of in his Memphite tomb as the "guardian of the footsteps of his lord on the battlefield on his day of smiting the Asiatics"

(Gardiner 1953; Aldred 1975: 84; Weinstein 1981: 17; Pritchard 1950: 250-51). Other supporting evidence might be found on the side of a small painted wooden trunk from Tutankhamun's tomb where, in a manner that would be used to decorate the massive gateways of the great temples of the pharaohs in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties, he is shown in his chariot leading the Egyptian army into a jumble of already vanquished Syrians.

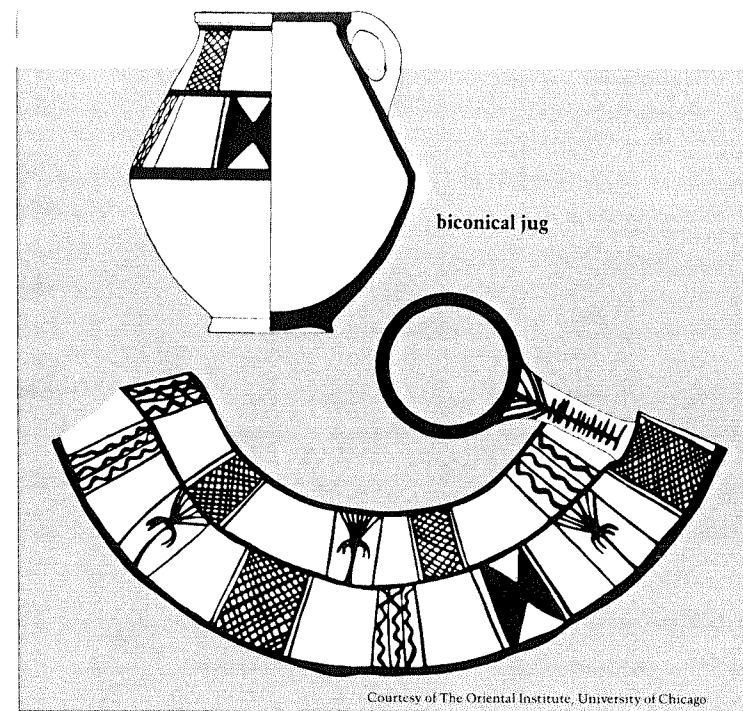
Whether Tutankhamun actually conducted such campaigns (compare Weinstein 1981 with Schulman 1964) or if his claims should be treated as the "stylized recitations of cherished old formulae" (Wilson 1951: 236) can be debated, but whatever the young king tried to do his efforts were unsuccessful. Tutankhamun's early death caused his young wife Ankh-esenamon to beg Suppiluliumas, son of Tudhaliyas III, king of Hatti (as the Hittites called their kingdom), to send her one of his sons so that he might marry her and become king over Egypt (Schulman 1979). We can only wonder how the subsequent history of Canaan would have evolved had this union succeeded, but it did not. The Hittite prince, Zannanzash, was intercepted and murdered while passing through Palestine en route to Egypt (Aldred 1975: 69). In the end the throne was assumed by Horemheb, commander-in-chief of the Egyptian army (Redford 1973), whose reign brought the Eighteenth Dynasty to a close, and with it came the end of Late Bronze IIA.

The cause of the collapse of the relationship between Egypt and Canaan is a matter of controversy. Was it the result of a policy of benign neglect attributable to Akhenaten's preoccupation with his religious re-

forms? Does it reflect a policy of laissez-faire in which individual Canaanite chieftains were allowed, and possibly encouraged, to feud and fight with each other? Could it have been an intentional policy of divide-and-rule? To what extent was the situation exacerbated by the southward expansion of the Hittites under Suppiluliumas or by internal pressures supplied by the *cApiru*, the Shasu bedouin, or others (Weinstein 1981: 15-16)? Whichever explanation one selects it is indisputable that during the Amarna period Egypt lost much of the northern part of its Asiatic empire to the Hittites under Suppiluliumas during his first Syrian war. The degree of loss further south in Palestine is still a matter of debate. **Archaeological Evidence in Canaan.** In Canaan during Late Bronze IIA there was a decline in the quality of local ceramics as imports from Cyprus and the Aegean increased. The architecture, exhibiting both continuity and discontinuity, included good examples of Canaanite religious structures. Some of the most impressive funerary assemblages from all of Late Bronze date to this period.

**Ceramic evidence.** The pottery by which we try to date the events of Late Bronze IIA can be seen more as a degeneration than as a development. With the demise of Late Bronze IA specialty wares came a decline in fabric, form, and decoration, perhaps stimulated by the ever-increasing presence of Aegean and Cypriot imports that were of superior technical quality and artistic merit.

Plain or slipped bowls with a strong carination and cooking pots with everted triangular rims were virtually ubiquitous during Late Bronze II, whereas footed cups, a



Middle Bronze holdover, became less common. The shape of a small juglet sometimes reflected the Late Bronze IA Black/Grey Lustrous Ware tradition, but the wider necked, ring-based version had become the norm. Dipper juglets whose graceful Middle Bronze silhouettes were lost in the short, dumpy Late Bronze I forms tended either to remain squat or return to the earlier, attenuated shapes. The pilgrim flask may have had its inspiration in the Aegean world, but the most popular form in Palestine, with a body constructed by joining two hemispherical bowls at the rims, was strictly a local product. Flasks dating to (and diagnostic of) Late Bronze IIA had a petal-like attachment of the handles to the neck.

The painted decoration of the period was usually restricted to groups of horizontal bands, either isolated or combined, with simple vertical elements to produce embry-

Courtesy of The Oriental Institute, University of Chicago

onic *metope* patterns. Larger vessels, plain and footed kraters, and one-handed biconical mugs presented the pot-painter with a broader canvas, and the larger metopes were often filled with more elaborate geometric patterns. Occasionally, abstract elements were combined to form more representational subjects such as the Tree of Life with its central tree and antithetic caprids, a motif that had been popular in the Near East for millennia. A biconical jug found in Tomb D912 at Megiddo goes far beyond the norm of the period, not only in its scale but also in the number and natural depiction of creatures presented on it (Guy and Engberg: 1938: plate 134). Quite rare was the depiction of the human form, such as on two tiny fragments from Beth Shan or the tankard from Ras Shamra showing a bearded male, possibly representing the Canaanite god Baal, enthroned (Culican 1966: 121).

During the fourteenth century B.C.E. the markets of the Canaanite coast were flooded with pottery from Cyprus and the Aegean world. Typical of the Cypriot imports were the Base Ring jug and *bilbil*, which were introduced to the region during Late Bronze IA. By the Late Bronze IIA the raised decoration of Base Ring I had given way to the white-painted, linear patterns of Base Ring II that may be associated, especially on the *bilbil*, with marks that recorded the scoring of the opium poppy (Merrillees 1968: 154). The White Slip Ware "milk bowl" shape, also introduced during Late Bronze IA, demonstrated less carefully executed White Slip II motifs during Late Bronze IIA but continued to be popular.

Representative of the exports from the Mycenaean Greek world (the land of the Keftiu) were the narrow-necked "stirrup jar," which was purposely designed and crafted to transport and dispense costly specialty oils, and both the pyxis and piriform jars, whose wide mouths and strategically placed handles suggest an easy-to-seal container for scented unguents. Contemporary Linear B texts from sites on the Greek mainland indicate that rose or sage were primary ingredients in these popular olive oil-based products (Leonard 1981). What commodities the Canaanites traded for these costly ingredients is unclear, but transport amphorae have been found as far away as the Greek mainland (Grace 1956; Akerstrom 1975; Bass 1987), and wall-paintings from Egyptian tombs picture similar jars on the decks of Canaanite merchant ships whose crews include long-haired sailors from Keftiu.

**Architectural evidence.** The so-called palace in stratum IX at Megiddo

The cosmopolitan character of the age can be seen in the remarkable wealth displayed at some burial sites.

was enlarged during this period, producing a new version in stratum VIII with fewer, but more spacious, rooms: a configuration that continued through the end of the Late Bronze Age (Loud 1948). Although we are uncertain about the function of individual rooms of the ground floor, we know that a great deal of attention was paid to water removal in the form of sumps, drains, basins, and even a room paved with sea shells. This building and the gateway enjoyed a special relationship, which lasted through the end of the Late Bronze Age. The complaints of Biri-diya of Megiddo recorded in the Amarna correspondence do not prepare us for such a well-planned and well-built city as shown in the published remains of Megiddo VIII.

Late Bronze IIA provides us with some of our best information on Canaanite religious architecture and, once again, there was both continuity and discontinuity in temple plan. At Megiddo the last phase of Temple 2048 was a much less impressive structure with walls about half their original thickness; the building hardly deserves the continued use of the epithet "migdal," meaning fortified. Also less impressive during this period was the similar temple at Shechem (Fortress Temple 2a) whose main chamber was changed from a longroom to a broadroom (Wright 1965a: 95-101). The Fosse Temple at Lachish was rebuilt and enlarged. Although the plan of Structure II was closer to a broadroom sanctuary with offering benches on three sides, the new "altar" was built against the south wall directly over its predecessor, emphasizing the sanctity associated with the spot. In level VI on the tell at Lachish the Summit Temple had a

plan that, in form and function, resembled the Late Bronze IIB temple from stratum VII at Beth Shan (Ussishkin 1978: 10-25; Clamer and Ussishkin 1977). The small finds recovered from the Summit Temple may give us a clue to the deity or deities that were worshipped there, as a gold foil plaque found during excavations depicts a nude goddess standing on a horse. The goddess wears a crown made of horns and vegetation and holds lotus flowers in each hand. Christa Clamer (1980) has identified her as Qudshu (Astarte?).

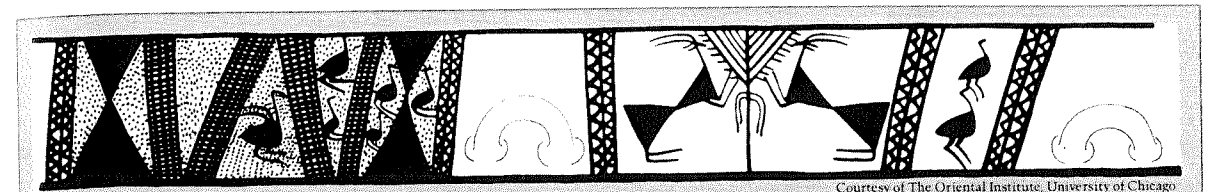
A partner for this goddess may be depicted on a large stone slab incised with the form of a male (Resheph?) who wears a tall conical hat with hanging streamers and who brandishes a long spear over his head in both hands (Ussishkin 1978: figure 4 and plate 7:1, 8). Clamer (1980: 161) compared his crown with that worn by the god on "the MKL stela from Beth Shan." Architectural details of this temple suggest Egyptian influences, and the large quantity of Mycenaean IIIA and IIIB pottery found on its floors accents its cosmopolitan nature, a nature that characterizes all of Canaan in the Late Bronze Age (Ussishkin 1978: 19-20).

The Late Bronze IIA temple from stratum X (1375-1300 B.C.E.) at Tell Mevorakh also was rebuilt over its predecessor from stratum XI. Cult objects found in situ, on or associated with the cult platform, give an indication of the type of worship that was practiced. In addition to pottery vessels, glass pendants, and faience (Mitannian style) cylinder seals, the deposit included a group of important bronzes: knives, a pair of cymbals, a circular pendant with a star design, and a snake measuring

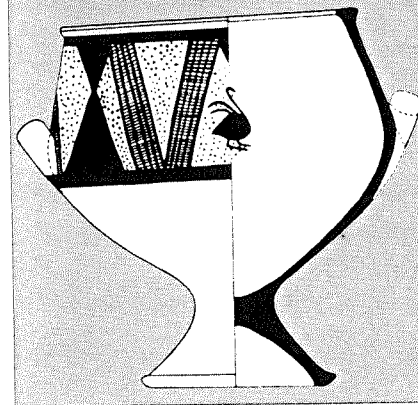
about 25 centimeters in length (Stern 1984: 33-35). On the basis of this serpent, also known from cult-associated deposits at the Gezer High Place, Hazor, and the Hathor Temple at Timna, the excavator has suggested that the temple belonged to "Ashtoret (Ishtar) and Baal (Stern 1984: 35). Pendants similar to the one from Mevorakh have been found at other Canaanite sites. Those from Ras Shamra/Ugarit also have been interpreted as celestial emblems (*shapash-shebis*; see Isaiah 3:18-19; Schaeffer 1939a: 62).

At Hazor, area H continued to retain its sanctity. Although it was rebuilt partially on the remains of the Middle Bronze IIC/Late Bronze I structure, the temple from Late Bronze IIA was enlarged to three, on-axis broadrooms. A pair of basalt blocks, each carved with a lion in relief, greeted visitors as they entered the temple. One of these orthostats was found buried in a pit by the entrance to the shrine. The cult stela found in the later, Late Bronze IIB, phase of this building probably originated in the Late Bronze IIA structure. A similar situation existed in the small temple in area C at Hazor, where original cult paraphernalia was found reused in the slightly repaired phase of the temple dating to Late Bronze IIB.

**Funerary evidence.** Some of the most impressive funerary assemblages of the Late Bronze Age can be assigned wholly or partially to its IIA period. These large, often reused, sepulchers accommodated multiple burials accompanied by a remarkable display of material wealth that reflects the cosmopolitan character of the age. A good example is Cave 10A at Gezer (Seger 1972). The cave was probably dug as a cistern but



footed krater with "tree and ibex" (goat) design



was subsequently used for funerary purposes throughout most, if not all, of the fifteenth century and part of the fourteenth century B.C.E. if one is to judge from the more than one hundred complete vessels, local and Cypriot, and other rich grave goods that it contained. Dating to Late Bronze IIA or slightly earlier is a full-length coffin embellished with rows of handles down the sides and along the lid. Similar *larnax*-burials are known from Crete in the Middle to Late Minoan period (Buchholz and Karageorghis 1973: 82-83, number 1064), but this form is so far unique in Palestine. This sarcophagus was apparently intended for the interment of an adult and child but subsequently served as an ossuary

for a dozen other children. The last burial in Cave 10A was that of a tall female about 34 years of age (named Sarah by the excavation staff) who was interred in the entrance passage. Close to her hand lay one of the finest and earliest examples of Egyptian glass vessels thus far found in Palestine.

Originally, not secondarily, planned as a burial place, Tomb 8144-8145 was cut into bedrock in area F of the Lower City of Hazor. This fourteenth-century shaft tomb contained an exceptional quantity of grave goods, including more than 500 restorable vessels that demonstrate the full range of Late Bronze IIA local ceramics as well as imports from Cyprus and the Aegean (Mycenaean) world (Yadin and others 1960: 140-53, 159-60).

The desire to be buried with an array of imported luxury goods can also be seen at Tel Dan (Tell el-Qadi) where Tomb 387, a structure built of fieldstone, contained a melange of 45 interments of men, women, and children and an array of funerary offerings of gold, silver, bronze, and ivory. The imported pottery included an exceptionally well-preserved Mycenaean "chariot vase." This large, well-made vessel is decorated with a parade of horse-drawn chariots and would have held a position of pride on the table—or in the tomb—of any member of the *maryanna*. Although the Mycenaean chariot krater has been found more frequently in Cy-

prus, it had a surprisingly wide distribution in Canaan, from Ugarit to Tell el-Far'ah (South), and from the coast as far inland as Amman and Sahab (Leonard 1987a; Hankey 1974; Ibrahim 1975).

**Late Bronze IIB**

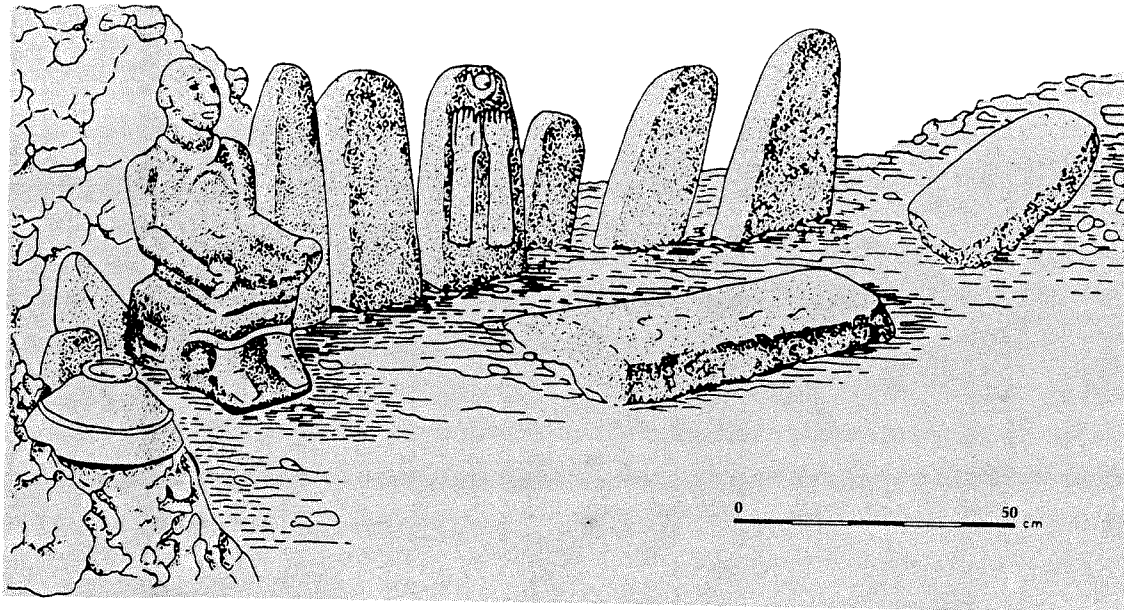
Late Bronze IIB, a period characterized by conflict, lasted approximately 120 years. During this time both Egyptian and Syro-Palestinian rulers were forced to defend their territories against attacks by foreign intruders, most notably the Sea Peoples. With their passing the Bronze Age slowly came to a close. Egypt, then in the early part of its Twentieth Dynasty, was entering what would be a long period of decline, and Syro-Palestine was about to begin the period that archaeologists refer to as the Iron Age.

**Egyptian Historical Evidence.** Egyptian kings in the Nineteenth Dynasty considered themselves the legitimate successors of the great pre-Amarna pharaohs of the Eighteenth Dynasty. Horemheb was succeeded by Ramesses I,<sup>17</sup> an elderly vizier who ruled for a little over a year before his place was taken by his son Sethos I.<sup>18</sup> In the manner of Amosis and Tuthmosis III, Sethos I wasted no time in setting out for Canaan. In the first year of his reign, which he termed "the Renaissance," he had already ventured into Palestine trying to reestablish the old Egyptian frontiers. No longer guided by the more ephemeral and placid Aton



... and that the pharaoh's victory was at best a draw.

The plan of the latter phase shows the objects arranged in a slight arc before an oblong offering table in a niche along the western wall. Below: A basalt statue of a sitting male deity with an inverted, possibly lunar, crescent suspended from his neck was found among the objects. Also found in the niche were ten masseboth, or standing stones, the central one of which was carved with two hands reaching upward toward a crescent. These objects suggest that this broadroom shrine was the focus of a lunar cult. Drawing of plan by Lois A. Kain. Drawing of cult objects courtesy of J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tübingen.



who "filled every land with . . . beauty" (Pritchard 1590: 370), Sethos I proceeded northward guided and protected by the god Amon, whose "heart is satisfied at the sight of blood . . . [who] cuts off the heads of the perverse of heart . . . [who] loves an instant of trampling more than a day of jubilation" (Pritchard 1950: 254). Although the ultimate goal of this ferocious pair was to confront the Hittites in northern Syria, the Egyptian army had to begin fighting as close to home as the southern Sinai where the Shasu bedouin were disrupting the smooth flow of travelers and material along the approximately 120-mile roadway known as the Way of Horus that led from Egypt to Gaza.

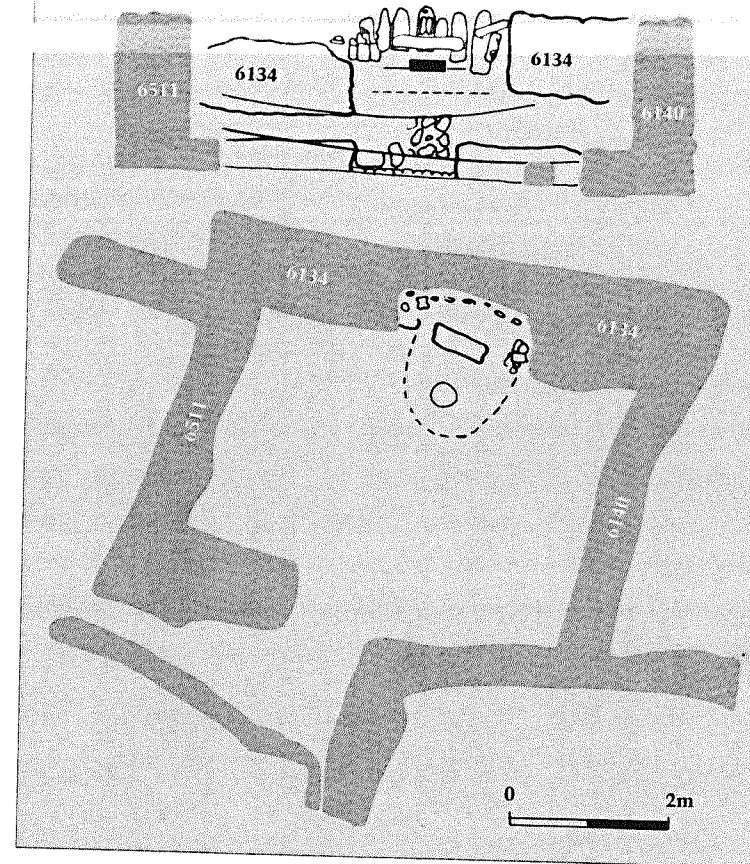
Fighting continued as the army moved northward through Palestine to retake Beth Shan from a confederation led by the Prince of Hammath

(possibly Tell el-Hammeh) in league with the people of Pella (Pahel, Tabaqat Fahel) in Transjordan. Sethos I and his forces defeated the alliance in a single day and set up a basalt stele at Beth Shan to commemorate his achievements (Pritchard 1950: 253–54). He then continued northward through Kadesh, northwest of Lake Huleh (Aharoni 1967: 166), through the Lebanon Valley, and on to the coast near Tyre where cedar was cut for the glory of the god Amon. Upon his return to Egypt the country turned out in celebration, for it had not seen such a victorious pharaoh in more than half a century. Sethos I's good start in regaining control over Syro-Palestine was only a beginning for, as we have learned from a second stele erected by Sethos I at Beth Shan, even the *Habiru* continued to be a problem for the Egyptians.

Sethos I was succeeded by Rames-

ses II,<sup>19</sup> a younger son who pushed aside his elder brother the crown prince to become the longest ruling pharaoh (sixty-seven years) in Egyptian history. For the first few years of his reign Rameses II—King Ozymandias of Percy Shelley's poetry—consolidated his position at home. To the north, the Hittites consolidated their power in northern Syria under King Muwatallis, who had moved the Hittite capital south to Tattashsha (Goetze 1975b: 129) to be nearer to his Syrian interests. (For a different reason for the move, see Bittel 1970: 20–22.) In his fourth year, however, Rameses II reached the Nahr el-Kalb (Dog River) near Beirut and left his inscription on the neighboring rock cliffs; in the following year he headed north to face the largest coalition of Syrian forces that the Hittites had yet been able to muster.

Tension had been building be-



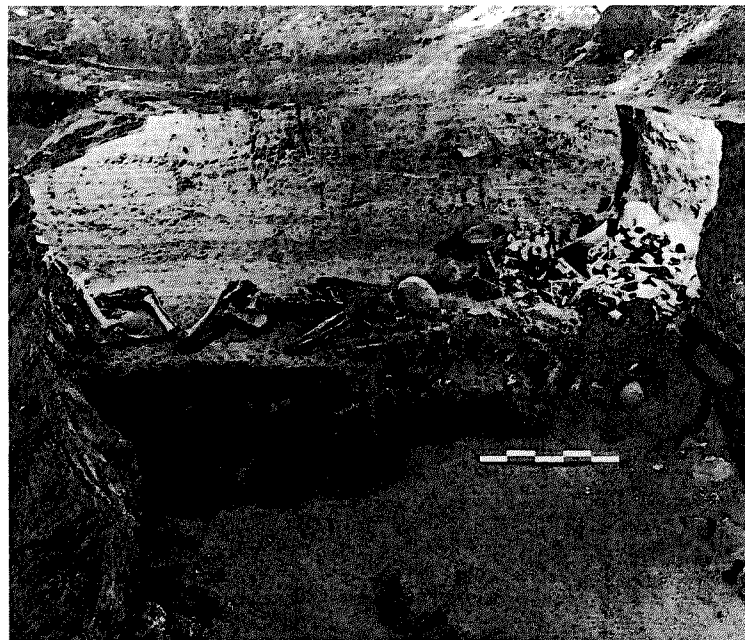
tween the two superpowers for some time, but the real cause of the conflict was the defection of the king of Amurru from the Hittite to the Egyptian side (Bittel 1970: 124). The two sides met at Kadesh-on-the-Orontes where the Egyptian army, led by Rameses II, was ambushed by an estimated force of 17,000 soldiers who lay in wait for him on the northeastern side of the city. According to the Egyptian version, it was the personal valor of Rameses II that countered the Hittite treachery. "He cast them into the water like crocodiles, and he slew whomever he desired" (Steindorf and Seele 1957: 251). The events of the day are depicted in surprisingly accurate topographical detail on temple walls

throughout Egypt (Karnak, Luxor, Abu Simbel), but the pharaoh's boast of total, single-handed victory seems to be somewhat overstated. Documents from the Hittite capital of Hattusha (near modern Boğazköy) give another version: "At the time when king Muwatallis made war against the king of Egypt, when he defeated the king of Egypt, the Egyptian king went back to the country of Aba. But then king Muwatallis defeated the country of Aba, then he marched back to the country of Hatti" (Bittel 1970: 125). If Rameses was pressed as far south as Aba, just to the north of Damascus (Steindorf and Seele 1957: 251), it would seem that the Hittite version was the more truthful of the two accounts

and that the pharaoh's victory was at best a draw.

In subsequent years Rameses II continued to find it necessary to campaign in Asia to keep the Egyptian image strong (Černý 1958; Givon 1965; Kitchen 1964), not only at distant Syrian sites such as Qatna (Misrife) but also much closer to home at Acco/Acre and even nearby Ashkelon when "it became wicked" (Pritchard 1950: 256). New evidence suggests, however, that the scene of the siege of Ashkelon in the temple of Karnak, which is usually attributed to Rameses II, may actually have belonged to his son Merneptah (Yurco 1978 and quoted in Stager 1985). The endless warfare must have taken a tremendous amount of energy on both sides, and with Libyan and Sherden pressure building on Egypt's western flank, plus the growing power of Assyria on the Hittite's southern border, the stage was finally set for a true peace between the two belligerents. Sixteen years after the Battle of Kadesh a peace treaty between Rameses II and Hattusilis III, then king of the Hittites, was inscribed on silver tablets that bore the imprint of the two royal seals. A cuneiform text of the treaty was preserved in the archives at Boğazköy, and hieroglyphic versions of it appear at the Temple of Amon at Karnak and in the mortuary temple of Rameses II (the "Ramesseum") on the opposite bank of the Nile (Pritchard 1950: 199–203; Langdon and Gardiner 1920). Thirteen years after the treaty was signed it was commemorated by the marriage of Rameses II to the daughter of Hattusilis III who was personally escorted to Egypt during the rainy months of winter by her father the Great King of Hatti (Bittel 1970: 127).

Some of the most impressive funerary assemblages of the Late Bronze Age can be assigned to the IIA period. **Below:** This sarcophagus from Cave 10A at Gezer contains the remains of a single adult and twelve young children. Evidently the adult's coffin served as a protected repository for the remains of the children in subsequent burials in the tomb. **Right:** The last burial found in the entrance tunnel to Cave 10A at Gezer was that of a tall female, about 34 years of age, named Sarah by the excavation staff. The woman's remains were found just inside the entryway. Close to her head was a magnificent Egyptian "sand core" glass vessel, one of the finest and earliest examples of Egyptian glass found to date in Palestine. Photographs by Theodore A. Rosen, courtesy of Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati.



This event must have been important to the pharaoh because he included it among the scenes he had carved on temples as far south as Abu Simbel in Nubia.

Ramesses was succeeded by his thirteenth son Merneptah,<sup>20</sup> who must have been older than 50 at the time of his coronation. The major threat to Egypt during his reign came from the west where a large army from Libya, abetted by an assortment of future Sea Peoples was pressing hard against his territories in the western Delta. Merneptah was successful in battle against these intruders during his fifth year, and to celebrate he erected in his mortuary temple at Thebes a stele inscribed with a victory hymn that ended with a song of triumph over his Asiatic enemies. Some scholars contend that the Victory Hymn of Merneptah, also known as the Israel Stele, is the earliest record identifying Israel as an unsettled people in Palestine, since of all the countries mentioned on the stele Israel alone is written with the hieroglyphic determinative for a people rather than for a land (Miller and Hayes 1986: 68-69). This stele is important to biblical scholarship in any event because it is the only mention of Israel in Egyptian records. The text is full of examples of scribeal carelessness, however, and the reference to a "pacified" Hatti was simply not true, although under Arnuwandash III the Hittites did observe the treaty that existed between the two nations. Donald B. Redford (1986) has completely denied the veracity of Merneptah's boasts of an Asiatic campaign during the early part of his reign, claiming that the Victory Hymn was actually plagiarized from an inscription of Ramesses II at Karnak with the substitution of

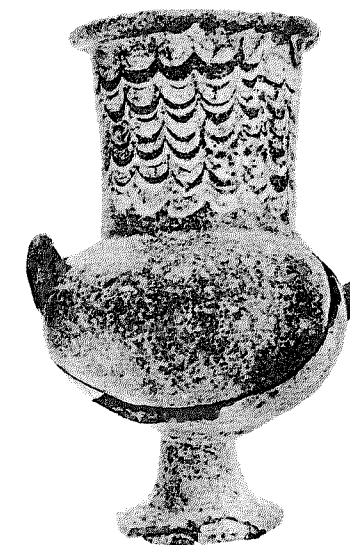
Multiple burials were common during the Late Bronze IIA. At Gezer, for example, the scattered skeletal remains of eighty-nine individuals were found in Cave 10A. Also found in situ was this full-length coffin embellished with rows of handles down the sides and along the lid. Although this sarcophagus is similar to larnax burials from Minoan Crete, the form is unique in Palestine. Photograph by Theodore A. Rosen, courtesy of Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati.



the word/term "Israel" for "Shasu" bedouin. Such an interpretation would suggest that whatever Israel was at this time, it was not completely understood by the Egyptians.

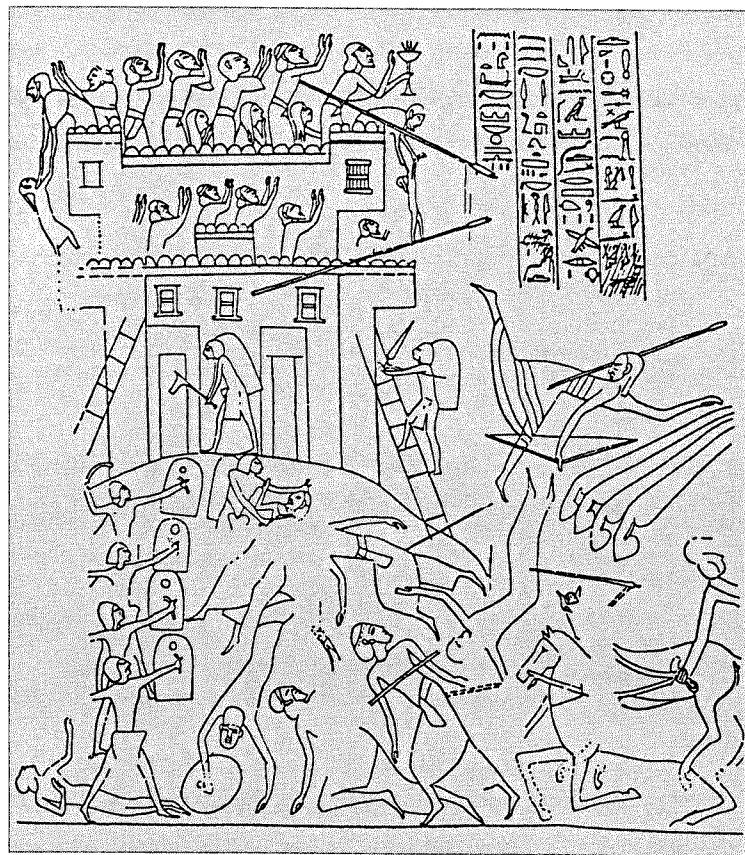
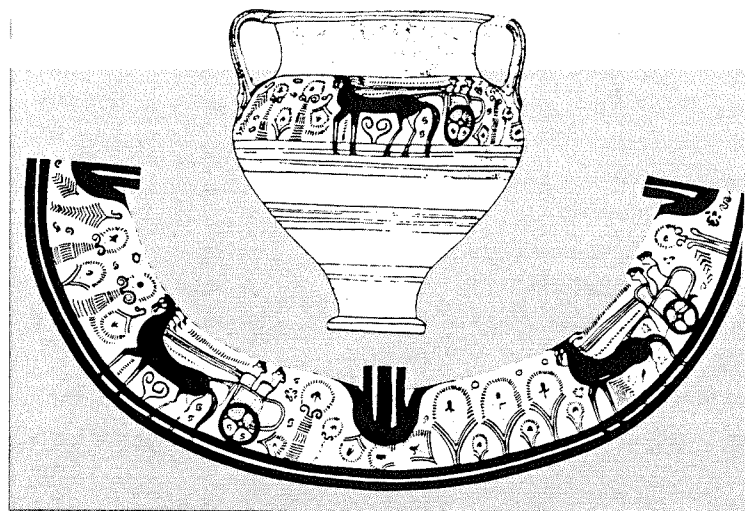
Within five years of this suspect victory, Merneptah had died and been buried in Thebes where his mummy has survived. With his death a disruption close to anarchy enveloped Egypt (Faulkner 1975: 235-39; Černý 1975). Kings Amenmesses and Siptah left no apparent mark on western Asia, but the car-

Yellow and white festoons decorate the neck of the blue-gray glass (unguent?) container found near Sarah's head in Cave 10A at Gezer. Late Bronze IIA burials were often accompanied by a remarkable display of wealth that reflects the cosmopolitan character of the age. Photograph by Theodore A. Rosen, courtesy of Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati.





**Right:** This Mycenaean "chariot vase" from Tomb 387 at Tel Dan, decorated with a parade of horse-drawn chariots, would have held a place of pride on the table—or in the tomb—of any Canaanite prince or member of the *maryanna* (the chariot-owning nobility). Imported luxury goods are a common feature of burials from the Late Bronze IIA. Drawing from Biran (1970), courtesy of the Hebrew Union College, Jerusalem. **Below right:** The Late Bronze IIB was a period of seemingly endless warfare as Egyptian rulers of the Nineteenth Dynasty ventured into Syro-Palestine in an attempt to regain control of areas that had been lost during the Amarna period. In this drawing of a relief from the Temple of Ramesses II at Karnak, the coastal city of Ashkelon is being attacked and overtaken by Egyptian forces. This victory scene is usually attributed to Ramesses II, but new data suggest that it should be dated to the reign of his son Merneptah, fourth pharaoh of the Nineteenth Dynasty. Drawing from Stager (1985), courtesy of the Israel Exploration Society.



touché, or royal seal, of Sethos II<sup>21</sup> has been found impressed on a potsherd at Tell el Far'ah (South) (Weinstein 1981: 22) and a faience vessel bearing the name of Queen Tēwosret<sup>22</sup> was discovered at Deir 'Allā in the Transjordan (Franken 1961; Dornemann 1983: 20, 44; Faulkner 1975: 235–39; Yoyotte 1962). During this period of uncertainty it appears that a Syrian prince was actually able to claim title to the throne of Egypt (Pritchard 1950: 260). Putting an end to this state of chaos, which bordered on civil war, was Sethnakhte,<sup>23</sup> a man of uncertain origin who became the first king of the Twentieth Dynasty. Although he ruled for only a year, Sethnakhte seems to have placed the country back on track before leaving the kingship to his son Ramesses III<sup>24</sup>

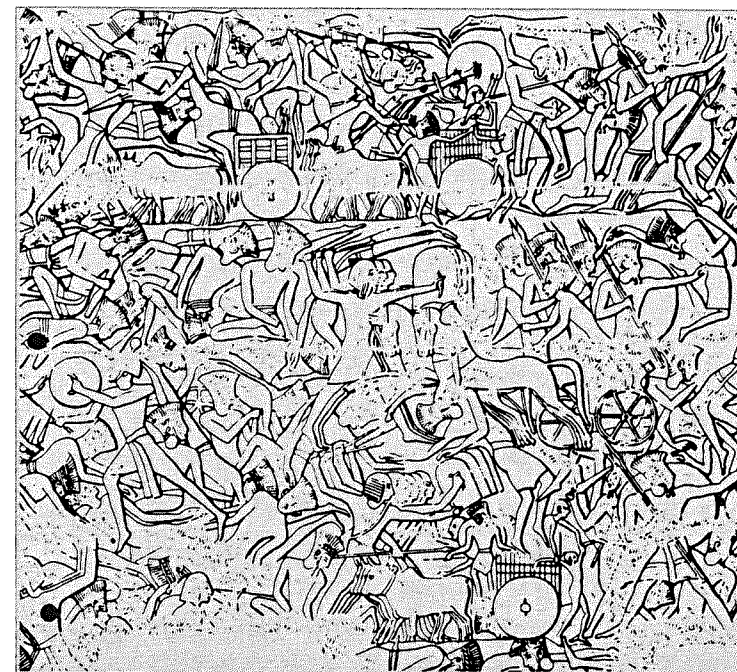
For the first few years of his reign Ramesses III was faced with continued threats from the Libyans and their allies in the western Delta, similar to the situation that his

## The Sea Peoples posed the greatest threat to the region since the movements of the Hyksos more than three centuries earlier.

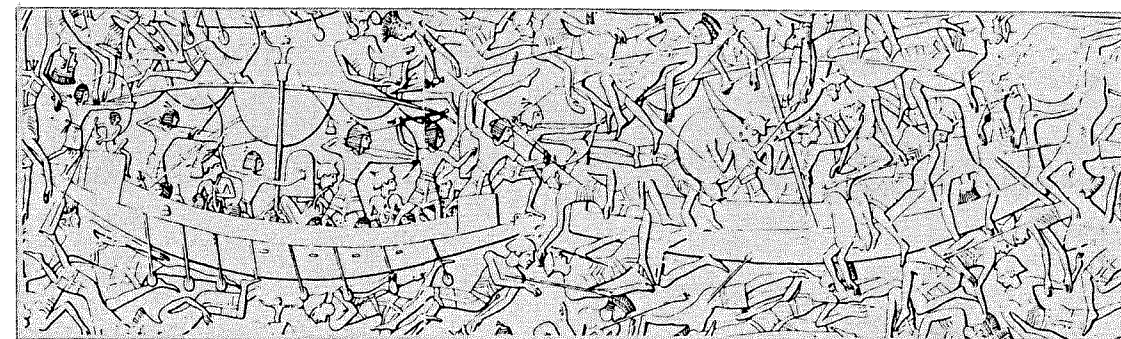
predecessor Merneptah had faced. To the north and east of Egypt, however, trouble in the form of the Sea Peoples was almost literally on the horizon. This international coalition was quickly moving into the Egyptian orb, bringing with them death and destruction (Sandars 1978;

Brug 1985; Dothan 1982b; Barnett 1975). In his eighth year Ramesses III was forced to deploy the Egyptian army and navy in an attempt to thwart the progress of the Sea Peoples who represented the greatest threat to the stability of the countries of the southeastern Mediter-

anean since the movements of the Hyksos more than three centuries earlier: "They were coming forward toward Egypt, while the flame was prepared before them. Their confederation was the Philistines, Tjeker, Shekelesh, Denye[n], and Weshesh, lands united. They laid their hands



In the eighth year of his reign, during Late Bronze IIB in Palestine, Ramesses III was forced to deploy his army and navy to thwart the eastward progress of the Sea Peoples, an international confederation that represented the greatest threat to the region since the movements of the Hyksos more than three centuries earlier. In the land battle shown here, left, taken from the mortuary temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu in Thebes, confusion reigns as the pharaoh's forces, assisted by Sherden mercenaries wearing horned helmets (top row center), battle the invaders' infantry somewhere along the Syro-Palestinian coast. The Sea Peoples, some of whom are characterized by tall, featherlike helmets, must have been severely hampered by the presence of their families and their slow, ox-drawn wagons with heavy solid wheels. In the naval scene below, also taken from Medinet Habu, the lion-headed prows on the Egyptian fleet bear down on the ships of the Sea Peoples somewhere along the eastern shore of the Nile Delta. The Sea Peoples' ships have high, duck-headed prows and sterns but no oars, the absence of which might mean that the Egyptian fleet had caught them by surprise. Sherden mercenaries are depicted as fighting on both sides of the fray. Drawings from Dothan (1982b), courtesy of The Oriental Institute of The University of Chicago.



## Ramesses III defeated the Sea Peoples on land and sea, but the victory depleted Egypt of much of its revenue and resolve.

upon the lands as far as the circuit of the earth, their hearts confident and trusting: "Our plans will succeed!" (Dothan 1982b: 3).

Ramesses III and his forces fought this international confederation on two fronts. Somewhere along the coast of Palestine his army met the infantry and chariotry of their land forces. The Egyptians were victorious over the invaders, who must surely have been severely hampered by the necessity of protecting their families who accompanied them in slow ox-drawn wagons with heavy solid wheels: "Those who came on [land were overthrown and killed]. Amon-Re was after them, destroying them. Those who entered the river-mouths were like birds ensnared in the net. . . . Their leaders were carried off and slain. They were cast down and pinioned" (Dothan 1982b: 3).

Much closer to home, somewhere off the eastern shores of the Delta, a sea battle raged. Oar-driven Egyptian ships with reefed sails, often identified by their lion-headed prows, clashed with the ships of the Sea Peoples, which were characterized by high duck-headed prows and sterns. The absence of any depiction of oars on the ships of these intruders may indicate that they were caught by surprise by the Egyptian fleet (Dothan 1982b: 7), but in any case they were undoubtedly overwhelmed by the pharaoh's navy: "Those who came forward together on the sea, the full flame was in front of them at the river mouths, while a stockade of lances surrounded them on the shore. They were dragged in, enclosed, and prostrated on the beach, killed, and made into heaps from tail to head. Their ships and their goods were as if fallen into the water" (Dothan 1982b: 3). Egypt was

victorious, but it must have been a Pyrrhic victory at best. It so exhausted the nation in both revenue and resolve that Egypt entered into a period of steep decline that lasted for centuries.

At Ras Shamra (Ugarit) the remarkable discovery of a kiln for baking clay tablets that was filled with about 100 pieces of foreign correspondence that had been translated into Ugaritic, a Semitic language closely related to Phoenician and Biblical Hebrew, indicates that this area also faced impending danger, imminent doom. Before the ancient scribes could return to remove these tablets, disaster struck the city, and the palace was destroyed. Fortunately, the tablets survived to tell their story (well summarized in Drower 1975: 145-47; see also Astour 1965). They tell how in parts of Great Hatti, for example, famine was described as being a "matter of life and death," causing the Hittite king Suppiluliumas II to call on his vassal in Ugarit to send a shipment of 2,000 measures of grain to Cilicia. Pagan, ruler of Alasiya/Cyprus, also wrote to Ugarit requesting food supplies. But how could Ugarit help? Its army had already been sent northward to help the Hittites, and its navy had been stationed off the Lycian (Lykka) coast; stripped of its defenses, it had already been ravaged. As Ammurapi of Ugarit responded to the Cypriot request, "behold, the enemy's ships came here, my cities(?) were burned, and they did evil things in my country" (Astour 1965: 255). Marauders were everywhere. Soon the city of Ugarit was completely destroyed and its ruins "mined" for valuables. Afterwards, a different, much less sophisticated people settled on the site. It is difficult not to associate

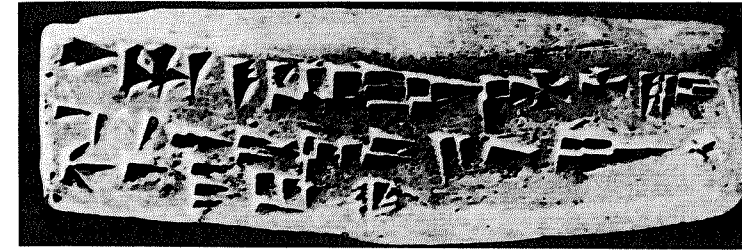
the disruptions mentioned in the kiln tablets with the eastern movements of the Sea Peoples (compare, however, Schaeffer's changing views: 1939b: 45-46, 1968: 760-68).

**Archaeological Evidence in Canaan.** The archaeological record for Late Bronze IIB in Canaan is mixed. Local pottery continued to decline, surprisingly, the quality of Cypriot imports also deteriorated, and eventually these imports disappeared; Mycenaean goods were still popular, but they were also less well made than before, perhaps produced outside the traditional Aegean production centers. In architecture, we are beginning to learn more about the administrative centers in the south, which possibly relate to an Egyptian presence; cult architecture shows continuity with the past, and we know little of Canaanite domestic architecture. Burial customs during the period were strange and varied.

**Ceramic record.** The quality of Late Bronze IIB pottery continued the decline already noted in the preceding periods. The shapes of carinated bowls, cooking pots, kraters, and mugs remained about the same, but a carelessness of execution and of decoration seems to have been the hallmark of Palestinian pottery in the thirteenth century B.C.E.

The only morphological differences in the local repertoire, other than size and proportion, were in the dipper juglet and flask. Dipper juglets dating to this period often had a pinched lip and vertically shaved body. Shaved juglets became popular in Cyprus as well at this time; their fabric and distinctive manner of pushing the base of the handle through the vessel wall pointed to their having been manufactured on the island. A similar technique was

This clay tablet contains the 30 character cuneiform alphabet of Ugaritic, a Semitic language closely related to Phoenician and Biblical Hebrew. At Ras Shamra (Ugarit) a kiln for baking clay tablets was found containing about 100 pieces of foreign correspondence that had been translated into Ugaritic. These texts tell their own story of destruction at the hands of foreign invaders. Although the kiln tablets do not mention the intruders by name, it is hard not to associate the events recorded on them with the onslaught of the Sea Peoples into Syro-Palestine during Late Bronze IIB. Photograph by Marwan Musselman, courtesy of Ali Abou-Assaf, director general of Antiquities and Museums, Damascus.



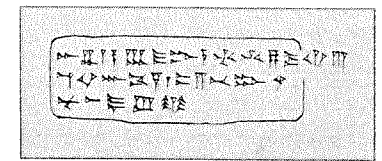
used in the production of shaved juglets made from local Palestinian clays toward the end of Late Bronze II. Pilgrim flasks continued to be popular, but during this period they tended to exhibit a direct (non-petal-like) attachment of the handle to the neck of the vessel.

Strangely enough, Cypriot imports, which were so popular in the earlier centuries, declined in quantity and finally ceased to be imported to Canaan (Gittlen 1981). Mycenaean goods took up the slack and continued to be popular, although many were of lesser quality; both they and their contents could have been made outside the traditional Aegean production centers. The copying of many of the Aegean forms, often quite unsuccessfully by the local Canaanite potters, might have been a reflection of increasing difficulty in long-range seaborne commerce. It is possible that before the end of the period Mycenaean pottery was actually made on the coast out of local Syro-Palestinian clays (Stager 1985; Asaro, Perlman, and Dothan 1971).

**Architectural evidence.** Our knowledge of Canaanite domestic architecture from the Late Bronze IIB period is slight, but Eliezer Oren (1984) has called attention to a distinctive type of well-built, mudbrick structure termed the Governor's Residence at several sites in southern

Palestine (for example, Tell esh-Shari'ah/Tel Serca, Tell el-Hesi, Tell el-Far'ah (South), and Aphek/Ras el-Ain). To these West Bank sites may now be added Tell es-Sa'idiyeh in Transjordan (Tubb 1988a). In fact, the traditional view of Transjordan as a cultural backwater during the Late Bronze Age, based in part on Nelson Glueck's early survey work, is slowly being changed as more sites are excavated (Yassine 1988; Dornemann 1983; Kafafi 1977; Leonard 1987a). These governor's residences were square buildings with rooms grouped around a small central hall in a manner reminiscent of certain New Kingdom structures. It is thought that the Canaanite buildings represent the thirteenth century B.C.E. administrative centers through which the Egyptians controlled their Asiatic empire, and this theory is supported by the concentration of this architectural type (with the exception of Sa'idiyeh) in the southern part of the country where such control was strongest.

The date of the stratum VII "Amenhotep III" temple at Beth Shan has been the subject of some debate, but a thirteenth-century-B.C.E. date seems to fit the evidence best (McGovern 1985: 13). It and the temple in stratum VI (the excavators' "Seti I" temple), whose floruit extended into the twelfth century B.C.E. (James 1966: 25-26), shared



many features including an indirect entrance and a large broadroom sanctuary with two Egyptian lotus columns beyond which was the cult focus. These features set the two temples markedly apart from the reoriented (from north-south to east-west) temples in Beth Shan stratum V, which definitely should be dated to the Iron Age. The degree of Egyptian influence on the plans of the temples in strata VII-VI has also been a topic for discussion (for example, Kenyon, 1979), but the intensity of the Egyptian presence at Beth Shan in the Nineteenth and early Twentieth Dynasties is demonstrated by the presence there of two stone steles erected by Sethos I and a life-sized basalt statue of Ramesses III.

At Lachish the Fosse Temple from Late Bronze II B (Structure III) continued with very little modification. The temple at Hazor also showed considerable continuity of cult. In area H the thirteenth-century-B.C.E. temple essentially continued the plan of its predecessor. The floor of the thirteenth-century temple contained a fire-blackened rectangular piece of basalt described by the excavators as an incense altar. A symbol consisting of a circle with a cross inside it was carved on the face of this block. Nearby, but evidently related to this structure, was a fragmentary statue of a male deity standing on a bull-shaped base; a



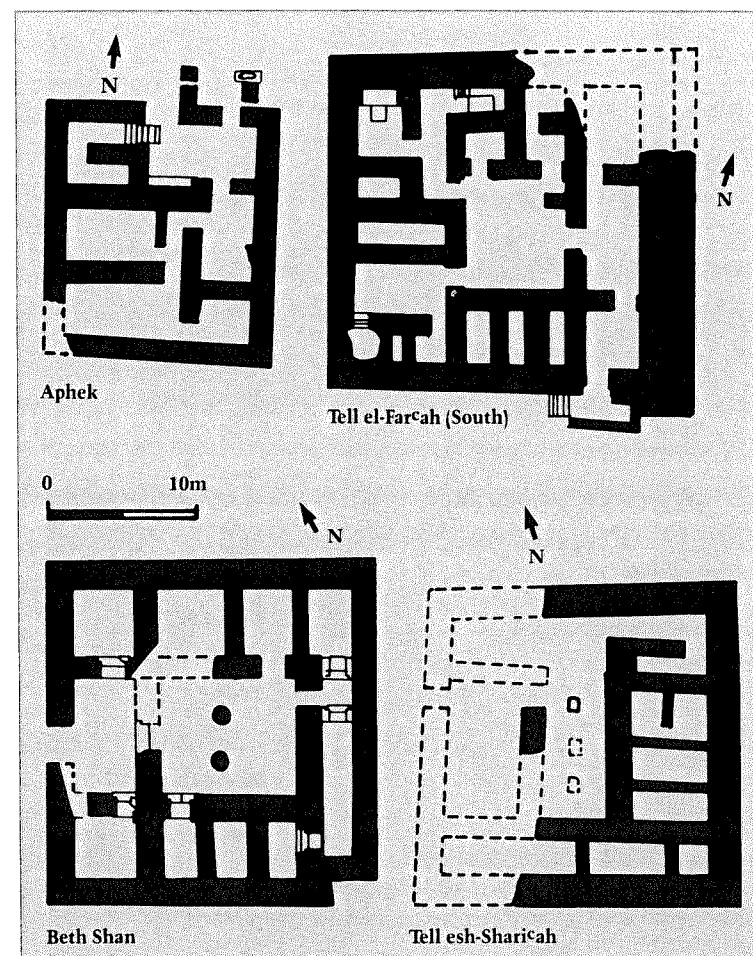
similar circle and cross was carved on his chest. This deity has been identified as the storm-god Hadad, and it is thought that the area H temple was dedicated to him (Yadin 1972: 95).

The small single-room temple in area C, first noted in Late Bronze IIA, was rebuilt in this period. The cult focus of this broadroom shrine was a niche in its western wall that contained a full complement of cult furnishings arranged in a slight arc before an offering table. In the niche was a large basalt statue of a beardless, seated male holding a cup or bowl in his right hand; he wears no identifying headdress, but an inverted (lunar?) crescent is suspended from his neck. The niche also contained ten basalt *masseboth* (standing stones), one of which has a carving on it of a pair of outstretched human arms/hands apparently reaching toward a disc and crescent. Yigael Yadin compared the motif on this *massebah* (stone) with one on a stele from Zinjirli inscribed with a dedication to Baal of Harran and suggested that the area C shrine was the focus of a lunar cult (Yadin and others 1958: 89; Yadin 1970).

Although they were originally constructed as early as the Middle Bronze Age (Schaeffer 1936: 11), the temples to Dagan and his son Baal at Ras Shamra most probably survived into the Late Bronze IIB period to judge from a Nineteenth Dynasty(?) stele of the Egyptian "royal scribe and chief treasurer" Mami dedicated to "Baal of the North," the great god of Ugarit, that was found just inside his temple (Schaeffer 1939a: 24).

When the Amman airport in Jordan was being expanded in 1955, a stone building, square in plan, was discovered and found to be exceed-

The plans of these four buildings—from Aphek, Tell el-Far'ah (South), Beth Shan, and Tell esh-Shari'ah—exemplify a distinctive type of well-built, mudbrick structure termed the Governor's Residency. Because of the similarity of their plans and interior room arrangement, both with suggested Egyptian affinities, these buildings are thought to have been the administrative centers through which Egypt exercised political control over Syro-Palestine in the Nineteenth and early Twentieth Dynasties. Drawings by Lois A. Kain.



ingly rich in imported Mycenaean vessels (Hennessy 1966; Hankey 1974). The structure has been variously identified as a temple for a fire cult, human sacrifice, or tribal covenants, but a recent investigation (Herr 1981) viewed it as a mortuary institution that practiced, in part, rites of cremation, demonstrating possible ties with the Hittite lands to the north.

**Funerary evidence.** That strange and varied burial customs were practiced during the Late Bronze IIB period has been demonstrated at many sites. The cemetery at Tell es-Sa'idiyeh, which has been partially dated by its Aegean imports, produced two tombs (Numbers 102, 117) in which the deceased were wrapped in cloth and subsequently coated with bitumen, possibly in

This aerial view of a building at Tell es-Sa'idiyeh in the Transjordan reveals the characteristic plan of the Governor's Residency, with its square shape and rooms grouped around a small central hall. Photograph courtesy of Jonathan N. Tubb, The British Museum.



imitation of, or as a substitute for, more standard Egyptian rites of mummification. In a third tomb, which was lined with mudbrick, the deceased was interred in a more normal manner, but the wealth of the individual was evidenced by the rich supply of grave offerings; these items consisted of an assortment of bronzes including a wine set (laver, bowl, strainer, and juglet) that was kept close at hand for use in the afterlife. Inasmuch as burial practices are a conservative part of one's personal and religious beliefs, the mixture of such diverse burial types at Tell es-Sa'idiyeh must indicate a similar diversity within the general

population. (For these tombs, see Pritchard 1964, 1965, 1980; also see Tubb 1988b for more intriguing burials from the new excavations at the site.)

Another manifestation of the degree of Egyptian influence on the burial practices of at least one segment of Canaanite society can be seen in the use of anthropoid sarcophagi at sites such as Deir el-Balah (Dothan 1979, 1982a). These large clay coffins represented a type of middle-class burial practiced in the Egyptian Delta during the New Kingdom, but their size and friability suggest that those found in Palestine were locally made, a fact supported

by neutron activation analysis of clay samples from the Deir el-Balah sarcophagi (Perlman, Asaro, and Dothan 1973). Although plain undecorated coffins have been found, they are rare; on most sarcophagi the face and/or upper torso of the deceased has been modelled on the lid. Painted accents also have been found. The maker of the clay coffin found in Tomb 570 at Lachish attempted to paint a prayer in hieroglyphs along with a representation of the goddess Isis and her sister Nephthys, two of the four female deities closely associated with the rites of mummification in Egypt. Funerary offerings that were buried in these anthropoid coffins, both in Canaan and Egypt, were truly international, including pottery and other artifacts from as far away as Cyprus and the Aegean World.

Trude Dothan has identified two main phases in which these anthropoid sarcophagi were used. In the first phase, which took place during the late fourteenth and into the thirteenth century B.C.E., they appear to have been the choice of high-ranking Egyptian officials, either civilian or military, who served at Egyptian garrisons in Canaan. To this group might be added Egyptianized locals of similar status and foreign mercenaries of some rank. Coffins dating to this first phase have been uncovered at Deir el-Balah, Beth Shan, Tell el-Far'ah (South), and, if it is correct to assign Tomb 570 to stratum VI, at Lachish [see Dothan 1982b: 252-88]. The practice of using clay anthropoid coffins outlived the Late Bronze Age, as seen in examples from Dothan's second phase of sarcophagi, which dates to the twelfth and eleventh centuries B.C.E. after the groups of vanquished Sea Peoples had settled—

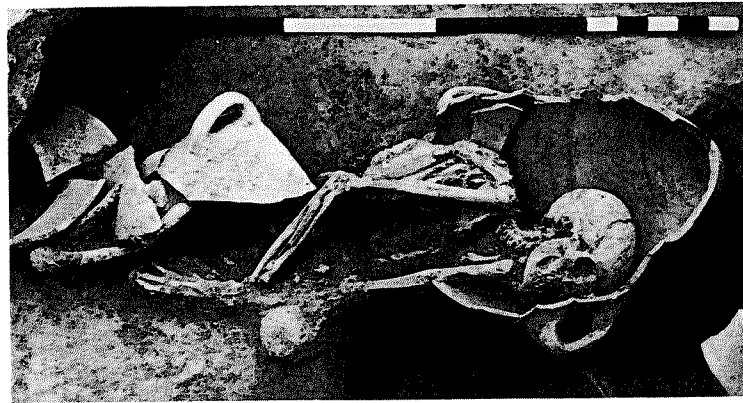
Previously affluent Canaanites were unable to maintain a high standard of living at the end of the Late Bronze Age.

or had been settled—along the coast of Canaan (Dothan, 1982b: 252–88).

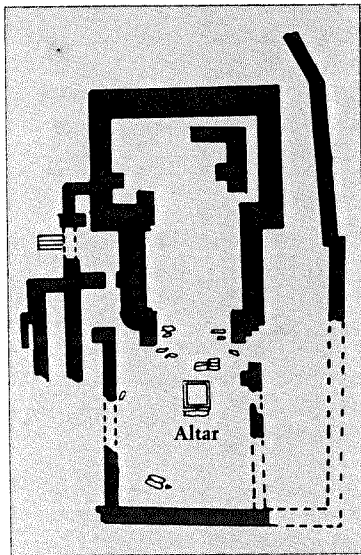
**Conclusion**

The end of the Late Bronze Age in Canaan came less with a bang than with a whimper. Ramesses III had stopped the Sea Peoples. Egypt and its Asiatic empire were saved—for a while. The pharaoh settled some of the vanquished intruders along the coast of southern Palestine, but other survivors simply staked out any relatively secure piece of land and built new homes. The Bible speaks of Philistines settling along the southern coast, but in fact they were probably a hybrid lot. They could easily have included an admixture of other Sea Peoples such as the Sherden or the Tjeker who were encountered by Wen Amun around 1100 B.C.E. on his ill-fated trip to Byblos to purchase cedar wood (Pritchard 1950: 25–29). The victim of treachery and robbery, Wen Amun found that his position as “Senior of the Forecourt of the House of Ammon” had little influence on Zakar-Baal, an eleventh-century prince of Byblos who forced him to camp on the beach for almost a month while sending him daily messages to “get out of my harbor!” It is difficult to imagine a Canaanite prince responding in such a way to an Egyptian official during the reign of Tutthmosis III, Ramesses II, or practically any other non-Amarna pharaoh during the halcyon days of Egypt’s Late Bronze Age empire in Canaan.

The archaeological record is often uncertain and, at times, confusing and difficult to read, but we get the impression that the lessening of Egyptian control was a slow and gradual one (Weinstein 1981). Many of the major Palestinian cities and



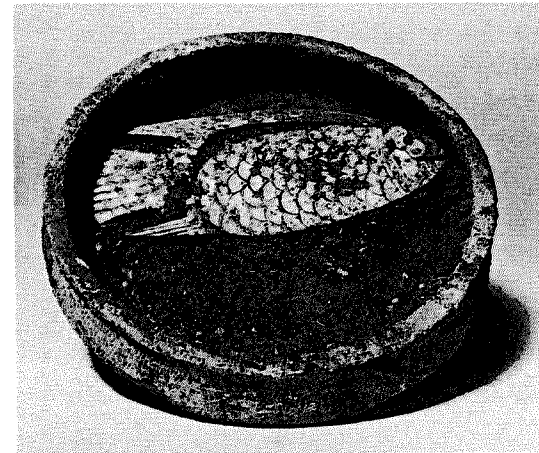
**Right:** Although originally constructed as early as the Middle Bronze Age, the Temple of Baal at Ras Shamra (Ugarit) most probably survived into the Late Bronze IIB period. The temple plan is strictly oriented along a north-south axis and an altar was placed in the courtyard, as it was in the “Seti I” temple in stratum VI at Beth Shan. Drawing by Lois A. Kain. **Above:** One of the strange burial practices found in Syro-Palestinian tombs dating to the Late Bronze IIB is the “double pithos” burial, in which the deceased was placed inside two large storage jars that had been broken and joined at the shoulders to form a kind of coffin. The burial pictured here, grave 45 at Tell es-Sa‘idiyeh, illustrates a variant of this burial type. Here the neck of a jar was broken off to accept the head and upper torso of the deceased while the lower torso was covered with large flat sherds from similar pithoi. Photograph courtesy of Jonathan N. Tubb, The British Museum.



towns suffered one or more destructions in the second quarter of the twelfth century B.C.E. (summarized by Fritz 1987) between the reigns of Ramesses III and Ramesses VI or possibly a little later. No single culprit or culprits can be identified with certainty, although the pharaohs, the Habiru, and/or the Sea Peoples/Philistines, acting individually or in concert, must share the blame for bringing the Late Bronze Age to a close.

Life became markedly different. Previously affluent Canaanite mer-

chants were unable to maintain the high standard of living they had come to enjoy. No longer could they barter for the exotic products of distant lands or commission craftsmen to produce objets d’art whose eclecticism and hybridization were the very essence of the Late Bronze Age. A much different flavor began to



**Left:** This human male skeleton found in grave 251 at Tell es-Sa‘idiyeh shows distorted bone displacement due to the tightness of the wrapping of the body. The bronze javelin head on the chest of the skeleton preserved the imprint of two differently woven cloths, indicating that it had been placed on the cloth-wrapped body of the deceased and then covered with a burial shroud. **Upper left:** A fish-shaped ivory “cosmetic box” was found inside a bronze bowl that had been placed over the pelvis of a man who was buried face down in grave 232 at Tell es-Sa‘idiyeh. The significance of the fish theme is still a matter of speculation, but it apparently had some meaning because a deposit of fish bones was placed on the back of the deceased’s skull at the time of interment, evidently as part of the funeral ceremony. **Upper right:** Indicative of the high standard of living that was attainable during the Late Bronze Age is this bronze wine set, which was found at Tell es-Sa‘idiyeh in the burial of a wealthy individual. Included in the set are a laver, juglet, and handled strainer. Photographs courtesy of Jonathan N. Tubb, The British Museum.

fresh from their own island ports. It would be almost a millennium, not until the passing of the armies of Alexander the Great, before such an international spirit would return to these ancient shores.

**Notes**

<sup>1</sup>Absolute dates for the New Kingdom Egyptian rulers (Eighteenth through Twentieth Dynasties) remain a matter of debate. Perhaps the most readily available chronologies are those of the *Cambridge Ancient History*, but they are based on views dating back to the 1950s (see Hayes 1959) and much work has been done on the subject since then. For better or worse, I have used the system of

K. A. Kitchen (1987), which assigns an accession date of 1479 B.C.E. for Tutthmosis III and 1279 B.C.E. for Ramesses II. I also have accepted that the Sothic datum of the ninth year of Amenophis I, given in the Ebers Papyrus, was taken at Thebes rather than at either Memphis or Elephantine, thereby producing an initial date of 1550 B.C.E. for Amosis and the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty. For the sake of convenience, both the dates from the *Cambridge Ancient History* (abbreviated as CAH) and Kitchen’s dates are presented here. Dates in both of these publications are given as “B.C.,” as they are in the present author’s original manuscript. The use of “B.C.E.” is the editorial policy of *Biblical Archaeologist*.

<sup>2</sup>Kitchen: 1550–1525 B.C.E.; CAH:



1570-1546 B.C.E.

<sup>3</sup>Or was it three successive campaigns against it? See James B. Pritchard (1950: 233) and Hans Goedicke (1974: 40-41). Sharuhin is now identified more plausibly with Tell el-ʿAjjul (Weinstein 1981: 6; Kempinski 1974) than with nearby Tell el-Farʿah (South) (Kenyon 1973: 526, 555).

<sup>4</sup>Kitchen: 1525-1504 B.C.E.; CAH: 1546-1526 B.C.E.

<sup>5</sup>Kitchen: 1504-1492 B.C.E.; CAH: 1525-1512 B.C.E.

<sup>6</sup>Kitchen: 1492-1479 B.C.E.; CAH: 1512-1504 B.C.E.

<sup>7</sup>Kitchen: 1479-1457 B.C.E.; CAH: 1503-1482 B.C.E.

<sup>8</sup>Kitchen: 1479-1425 B.C.E.; CAH: 1504-1450 B.C.E., including a coregency with Hatshepsut.

<sup>9</sup>This view is different from that of G. Ernest Wright (1965b: 111), Kathleen Kenyon (1973: 534-35), and others. See James M. Weinstein (1981: 11). For stratum VIII, area BB as the Megiddo fortress of Tuthmosis III, compare Rivka Gonen (1987).

<sup>10</sup>In Akkadian, *rabisu*; in Canaanite, *sokinu*.

<sup>11</sup>Kitchen: 1427-1400 B.C.E.; CAH: 1450-1425 B.C.E.

<sup>12</sup>Kitchen: 1400-1390 B.C.E.; CAH: 1425-1417 B.C.E.

<sup>13</sup>For more information on Cypriot ceramics of the period see P. Åström (1972). For Mycenaean goods see A. Furumark (1972a, 1972b), A. Leonard (1987b), and V. Hankey (1987).

<sup>14</sup>Kitchen: 1390-1352 B.C.E.; CAH: 1417-1379 B.C.E.

<sup>15</sup>Kitchen: 1352-1336 B.C.E.; CAH: 1379-1362 B.C.E.

<sup>16</sup>I have used Samuel A. B. Mercer's translations because they are in English, but they are not always satisfactory. For a caveat on their value, see Anson Rainey (1978: 1, 7, and continuing).

<sup>17</sup>Kitchen: 1295-1294 B.C.E.; CAH: 1320-1318 B.C.E.

<sup>18</sup>Kitchen: 1294-1279 B.C.E.; CAH: 1318-1304 B.C.E.

<sup>19</sup>Kitchen: 1279-1213 B.C.E.; CAH: 1304-1237 B.C.E.

<sup>20</sup>Kitchen: 1213-1203 B.C.E.; CAH: 1236-1223 B.C.E.

<sup>21</sup>Kitchen: 1200-1194 B.C.E.; CAH: 1216-1210 B.C.E.

<sup>22</sup>Kitchen: 1188-1186 B.C.E.; CAH: 1209-1200 B.C.E.

<sup>23</sup>Kitchen: 1186-1184 B.C.E.; CAH: 1200-1198 B.C.E.

<sup>24</sup>Kitchen: 1184-1153 B.C.E.; CAH: 1198-1166 B.C.E.

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