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NOTES AND NEWS

EXCAVATIONS

Tel Dan, 1979, 1980

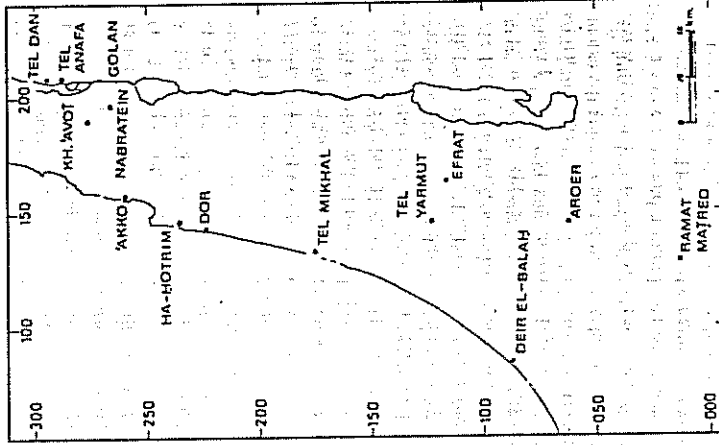
The 1979 season of excavations at Tel Dan, carried out by the Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, the Harvard Semitic Museum and the Department of Antiquities and Museums, lasted five weeks, with an additional three weeks with a smaller staff, and was directed by A. Biran. The staff included Ruth Heslin (Area B), K. Schoville and R. Voss (Area T), Rahel Bar-Nathan (Area Y), G. Mazor and A. Higgs (Area K), Dalia Pakman (registrar), Gila Cook and D. Bechar (surveying and drawing of plans), Nili Cohen and Tikvah Levine (restorers), Hanni Hirsch (administration), and R. Goren. Some seventy students, mainly from the United States and others from Canada, England and Israel, took part.

Area B (the upper part of the pavement and the ridge of the mound), it became apparent in the course of excavations that with the destruction of the gate at the foot of the mound in the ninth century B.C.E. the upper city-gate became the major entrance to the town. A 7 X 6 m. paved surface was uncovered which served as a square in front of the eastern threshold of the gate complex. A bench built of ashlars bordered this square on the north. Additional benches and other evidence indicate a number of stages in the building and use of the gate and flagstone pavement.

The upper gate complex was built in this area on the remains of the southern gate of the MB which was part of the rampart system. This is indicated by the break in the stone core and by the fact that below the Israelite construction five courses of the core were found forming a corner

with a wall running north. This may well be a segment of the MB gate structure. In the Israelite period, however, the stone core was reinforced and served as the upper city-wall. Signs of the existence of Israelite fortifications of the tenth century B.C.E., or possibly earlier, were also found. Among the finds in this area are crucibles with bronze slag, parts of clay bellows, a broken glass scarab with a winged figure and another scarab with pseudo-hieroglyphic decoration.

Area T (the high place). An attempt was made to reach the earlier Israelite strata and to determine the transition from the LB to the Iron Age. A



Cf. IEJ 28 (1978), pp. 268-271.

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number of squares were opened south of the Hellenistic wall. Below the Hellenistic floor, approximately 0.2 m. thick, walls of the Iron Age II were uncovered. The flagstone pavement discovered in previous seasons continued to the south, where remains of a clay tub were found on it. The tub measures 1.41 x 0.82 m., is 0.65 m. deep and has a ledge at one end. At the southern end of the pavement a rectangular pool fed by water from the spring was found; because of seepage work had to be stopped. The stone pavement, the pool and the tub date from the end of the tenth century B.C.E. This season the excavation of the plastered installation found in 1978 was completed (for a preliminary report, see *IEJ* 30 [1980], pp. 91-98).

The entire length of the eastern face of the high place has now been cleared. It was built of ashlar laid on top of large worked basalt boulders which were used to level the slope of the MB rampart. Here, as in Areas Y and K, courses of mud brick were found on top of the stone core. Near the steps of the high place a probe was carried out below the surface where the pithoi were found in 1976 and 1977. A burnt layer 0.8 m. thick, similar to that found in Area B in previous seasons, was uncovered. Among the vessels was a collared-rim jar. At a lower level, a stone-lined pit was found similar to those in Area B (Stratum VI). This provides the first opportunity to correlate the stratigraphic sequences of Areas T and B.

Area Y (the eastern section). Additional information was obtained relating to the building of the MB rampart. In 1978 a 3 m. wide stone construction was found east of the sloping stone structure excavated in previous seasons. This year it was discovered that this was a wall 3 m. high built of eight courses of stone which may have served to strengthen the core. Further east, five narrow walls 1.2-1.5 m. thick were found approximately 2.5 m. apart. It appears that these served as retaining walls for the different layers of the earthen rampart.

Area K (the south-eastern part of the mound). In 1978 a stone core and a mud-brick construction were uncovered. This season the nature of these structures was explored and a mud-brick gate of

the MB was revealed (*IEJ* 30 [1980], pp. 89-91).

The 1980 season of excavations at Tel Dan, carried out by the same institutions as the 1979 season, lasted seven weeks and was directed by A. Biran. The staff included G. Mazor and A. Higgs (Area K), R. Voss (Area T), Gila Cook (surveying and drawing of plans), Dalia Pakman (registrar), Hanni Hirsch (administration) and R. Goren, with a small contingent of students and volunteers from the United States and Israel. This season the main effort was directed towards the excavation of the MB gate complex (Area K) and the clarification of the stratigraphic sequence in the area of the high place (Area T).

Area K. After removing the earth of the rampart, we uncovered steps leading to the gate (see *IEJ* 30 [1980], Pls. 6-7). Some 20 steps were cleared along an 11 m. stretch, each about 0.4 m. wide and 0.1-0.17 m. high. Below these, earlier steps and their threshold were found. The gate was approached through an opening in the earthen rampart which necessitated special revetments on both sides. On the north, to the right of the entrance, 14 narrow battered rows of stone built on top of a sloping mud-brick construction served as a revetment (Pl. 19:A). Two similar structures whose function remains unclear were uncovered west and north of the gate. The gate's entrance was blocked in antiquity with an earth fill. This season a 3 m. long tunnel was dug into this fill. Three steps were uncovered inside the gate entrance, the third 0.4 m. higher than the threshold. To reach the floor of the gate chamber, a shaft 7 m. deep was excavated from the top of the tower at its north-east corner. Remains of white plaster which had covered the walls were still visible. At the bottom of the shaft was a white plastered floor 0.1-0.15 m. thick laid over a large stone construction. A bowl and fragments of a storage jar were found on the floor, and dated to the transitional period between MB IIA and MB IIB.

Two parallel trenches 6.5 m. apart were opened northwards from the northern tower. It has been ascertained that the rampart was built with a core in the centre consisting of earth, stone and brick constructions set next to one another. Layers of earth were then poured on both sides of

the core. Two parallel walls 2 m. wide and 3 m. apart running east-west abut the eastern face of the core. These walls probably have a structural function, to stabilize the slopes of the rampart. On one of the walls a seal with a loop handle from the end of the EB was discovered.

Most of the sherds found in the mud bricks, on the steps leading to the gate, in the core and in the rampart material belong to the EB and only a few to the transitional period between MB IIA and MB IIB. The homogeneity of the ceramic evidence and the fact that the gate was blocked and became part of the core of the rampart led us to the conclusion that the gate was in use for a relatively short time. However, it is clear that there are two or more stages in the construction of the steps, threshold and revetments. Consequently the use of the city-gate may have lasted one to three generations in the late nineteenth and part of the eighteenth centuries B.C.E.

Area T (the high place). The discovery last year of remains from Strata V and VI below and south of the *bamah* prompted us to extend the area southwards. On the floor of Stratum IV, vessels similar to those found below the steps of the high place were found. These included burnished bowls of the early Samaria-type ware, cooking pots, storage jars and a 6 cm. long glass bead. Below this level, the burnt layer of Stratum V was found with a *tabun*, a rim of a collared-rim jar, cooking pots, bowls and jars. Under the floor of Stratum V was a pit (Stratum VI) which had been dug into a layer of occupation, Stratum VII. This level was also excavated westwards and the vessels found include a complete storage jar, two chalices, a jug, cooking pots and a sherd of a milk bowl. The assemblage belongs to the beginning of the Iron Age with a few sherds of the end of the LB. Stratum VII seems to represent the last level of occupation before the conquest of the city by the tribe of Dan. Below Stratum VII the excavation had to be discontinued because of water seepage. In the wet soil a carinated bowl and sherds of the end of the MB were found.

North of the plastered water basin (see *IEJ* 30 [1980], pp. 91-98), a large pithos decorated with a snake, similar to the two uncovered near the high place in previous seasons, was found. Many bones of sheep, goats and gazelles, and bowls,

cooking pots, storage jars and a fine Samaria-type bowl, were discovered. These vessels are similar to those found in Stratum IV in the high place.

South of the Hellenistic wall, below the floor Iron Age II walls were uncovered; in one of them in secondary use, was an Egyptian statue of the 'Scribe' category (Pl. 19:B), stylistically dated to the LB. Architectural remains found in secondary use in the Hellenistic and Roman walls include limestone column base, a decorated basalt base and a basalt pillar.

(Communicated by Avraham Biran)
*Tel Anafa, 1979, 1980**

The joint University of Michigan/University of Missouri team returned to Tel Anafa in 1979 and 1980 for two more seasons of excavation. As in 1978, the expedition was sponsored by the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology of the University of Michigan and the Museum of Art and Archaeology of the University of Missouri under a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities supplemented by funds from both Museums and fees paid by students participating in the field school. Saul S. Weinberg served as principal investigator and Sharon Herbert directed the field work.

In the 1979/80 seasons we concentrated our work on the early Roman and Hellenistic levels seeking to clarify the plan and function of the late Hellenistic (150-80 B.C.E.) stuccoed building which dominates the north-east quadrant of the mound and to ascertain the extent and nature of the first century C.E. Roman re-use of the area. With these goals in mind we opened 13 new 5 x 5 m. squares centred on the late Hellenistic stuccoed building and the major early Roman building beginning to appear to the north. Discoveries in these trenches confirmed our previous hypothesis that the stuccoed building went through three major building phases (IIa, b, c) between 150 and 80 B.C.E., but necessitated major revisions of our theories concerning the extent and function of that building in its IIB and IIC

* Cf. *IEJ* 28 (1978), pp. 271-274.