more generally in the material culture of Tel Batash/Timnahn and southern Judah in the early first millennium B.C.E.

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REFERENCE

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Horbat Rosh Zayit (Arabic: Khirbat Ras ez-Zeitun) is a small site located 15 km east of Akko in the western Lower Galilee. It was excavated between 1983 and 1992 by Zvi Gal on behalf of several institutions. The volume under review is the final report of these excavations.

The report is divided into eight chapters. Chapter 1 is a brief introduction covering the discovery, identification, and investigation of the site which the author equates with biblical Cabul. Chapter 2 is a stratigraphic report of the main fort area. The pottery and other objects from the fort are treated in chapter 3. Chapter 4 presents general functional and chronologic considerations relating to the fort. Chapters 5–7 cover the stratigraphy and artifacts from non-fort Areas A–C. General conclusions are presented in chapter 8.

The fort area contained three main strata (III–I), with two subphases (a–b) for the two earliest strata. Stratum III was exposed only in small areas, mostly below the central room of the fort, and consisted of rather flimsy walls and food processing installations. The fort itself was basically a four-room house, reinforced by additional external walls and modest glazes. A number of the internal rooms functioned as basement magazines for hundreds of store jars. The main differences between phases a and b were the raising of several floor levels after a minor destruction and the construction of an additional fortification wall which blocked direct access into the fort. Phase b was destroyed in a fierce conflagration fueled by the stores of grain and olive oil. Post-Stratum II occupation was limited to squatters eking out an existence among the ruined walls of the fort.

The pottery assemblages and other artifacts were studied in a straightforward typological manner. However, since the entire area of the fort was excavated down to the final main phase IIa, and since this stratum was destroyed all at once and provided a large number of in situ materials, a detailed functional analysis of the various rooms was undertaken. The author provides important caveats, namely that it was not always 100 percent possible to differentiate remains from above and below ceiling level. Nevertheless, reasonably clear functional patterns emerged. For example, basement rooms were used for storage, as 70 percent of the pottery remains found there were storage jars and their stoppers. Certain of the upper rooms were also used for storage, but for either agricultural implements or cooking pots. There seems to have been little living space available and little evidence for the presence of women or children.

Surrounding the fort were a number of subsidiary structures, not all of which were excavated. Area A contained what may have been a three-room house and flimsy remains of another structure. All remains were domestic in nature. Area B consisted of a four-room house with a large external courtyard. Most notable among the remains were seven olive presses. Area C contained remains of two partially overlapping buildings which provide the only certain non-fort evidence for multiperiod usage. Nearby was a third structure which contained a small censer and fragments of two figurines suggestive of some degree of cultic activity.

Gal dates the fort area strata to the tenth and early ninth centuries. He gives the structures from the surrounding area terminal dates in the eighth century. Some of the remains in Area C seem to come from at least the ninth century, so he is willing to suggest that the fort and some of the surrounding buildings may have been contemporaneous, at least toward the end of the tenth century and later.

There are six appendices devoted to petrographic analysis, charred wood remains, agricultural products, animal remains, fish bones, and textile remains. While all of these chapters are thorough in their discussion of their relevant subjects, most are not well integrated within the overall archaeological picture of the site presented in the rest of the report. For some chapters this is due to the paucity of remains (textiles and fish bones), but it is striking how little information is provided on local diet in the discussion of plant remains. In light of the recent debate on high and low chronologies for just the period covered by the site, it is unfortunate that none of the plant or wood remains were subjected to radiocarbon testing. The most successful appendix is that dealing with animal remains, which does attempt to trace trends in local diet and to supplement the discussion of cultic activity in Area C.

In his conclusion Gal wisely chose not to push too far any possible sociohistorical reconstructions for the site. Something approaching certainty on any of these issues is impossible given the limited historical data we have for the Iron Age Galilee. He does, however, canvass the
available possibilities fairly. For example, he notes that
the material culture has affiliations with both Phoenicia to
the west (fine wares) and Israel to the east (storage jars and
other coarse wares). Thus the site could be an outpost
administered by Phoenicians with Israelites as the local
laborers, or an Israelite site on the border supplying agri-
cultural resources to Phoenicia. The agents of the early
nineth-century destruction of Stratum II likewise remain a
mystery.

I confess to being somewhat unhappy with the de-
signation of the main structure as a “fort” because this
conjures up images of state-created, -maintained, and -gar-
risoned fortresses such as Arad. It is not clear to me that
the main structure is the work of a governmental organi-
zation. While the seal, plummets, and ostracon recovered
could be associated with royal administration, they could
also be evidence of the management practices of a local
wealthy landowner. However, a single more suitable term
for the structure is hard to come by. It is really a large re-
forced (or fortified) four-room house used as a central
storage facility for surrounding structures whose inhabit-
ants were engaged in agricultural processing and cultic ac-
tivity. Gal suggests a population of 300+ for the site, and
it is clear that the house could not hold all of these indi-
viduals. It seems to be a “keep” for the local ruler/admin-
istrator and a few well-armed men (as evidenced by the
two swords, four spearheads, mace head, and arrowheads
found) supported by a number of villagers armed in an ad
hoc fashion with sickles, axes, and plow points (used as
spearheads? Joel 3:10).

Since direct access to the fort was blocked by a new
fortification wall in Stratum IIa, and entry was gained by
climbing up and over this wall via two ladders, it would
have been extremely clumsy to transport bulky commodi-
ties like grain and oil in and out of the structure. The
location of the storage jars in the structure’s basement
rooms, accessible only by ladders (no evidence for stairs
was found), compounded this awkwardness. This architec-
tural arrangement certainly would not have encouraged
trade. Perhaps the fort functioned primarily as a central
storehouse for the community and nearby settlements.

Most tantalizing is the reference in a footnote on page
201 to the possibility of a fortification wall around the site,
definitely a subject worthy of additional investigation as it
could alter greatly one’s understanding of the settlement.

The bibliography is current up to about 1995. The
black-and-white photos and line drawings are well done
and nicely integrated with the text. The only exception is
fig. III.123, in which the gray scales used to differentiate
functional categories are very similar in appearance, mak-
ing easy evaluation difficult. Different types of cross-hatch-
ing as in figs. 124–30 would have been more helpful.

These comments should be taken as part of a dialogue
on how to best understand the site and do not detract from
the authors’ real achievement in producing such a fine re-
port. Gal and Alexandre have done a real service for the
archaeological community by providing such a thoughtful
and well-documented report on this excavation.

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Historical Atlas of Jerusalem, by Meir Ben-Dov.
Translated from Hebrew by David Louvish. New
York: Continuum, 2002. xvi + 400 pp., 400 illus-
trations, 300 maps. Cloth. $50.00.

Jerusalem is an unending source of fascination for mod-
ern, Western readers. This is the latest addition to a long
list of popular and semi-popular books on the history and
archaeology of Jerusalem published in recent years. The
first edition of Meir Ben-Dov’s volume, published in He-
brew, was apparently timed to coincide with the turn of
the millennium. Occasional passages reveal a political or
apologetic bias aimed at the original Israeli audience:
“. . . only the Jews have ever made Jerusalem their politi-
cal capital and most important holy city” (p. xiv). Ben-Dov
provides an overview of the development of Jerusalem
from the period “Before the City Existed” (chapter 1) up
to the present: “Jerusalem at the Threshold of the Third
Millennium” (chapter 13). Each chapter is subdivided into
sections (for example, a section on “Solomon Builds
the First Temple” in the chapter on “Jerusalem in the First
Temple Period”). For the purposes of this review, I focus
on the ancient periods that will be of interest to the major-
ity of BASOR’s readers. Overall, the book is clean and well
written and provides a clear and engaging account for non-
specialists with little or no background in the subject. The
numerous black-and-white diagrams, maps, drawings, and
photographs are helpful, although the quality of some of
the photographs is poor, and some of the illustrations are
better suited to a Sunday-school text (for example, an “art-
ist’s impression of the prophet Jeremiah, standing on the
Mount of Olives and prophesying the destruction of Jeru-
salem” on p. 80).

Knowing that Meir Ben-Dov is an archaeologist, I was
surprised at the historical (and often biblical) emphasis of
this volume (as the title indeed suggests). In this respect
and others, it differs from other atlases of Jerusalem or
the Holy Land such as D. Bahat’s The Illustrated Atlas of
Jerusalem (1990). In fact, this could have been an ideal
textbook for historical background in introductory courses
on biblical or Near Eastern archaeology. However, Ben-
Dov’s tendency to simplify (which is exactly the quality
that makes it useful as a textbook) sometimes creates prob-
lems. For example, he provides no indication that Jose-
phus’s account of the meeting between the Jewish high
priest and Alexander the Great (embellished in rabbinic
sources) is highly legendary (pp. 88–89). In some cases,
Ben-Dov crosses the line from oversimplification to out-