RE-DISCOVERING THE IRON AGE FORTRESS AT TELL QUDADI IN THE CONTEXT OF NEO-ASSYRIAN IMPERIALISTIC POLICIES

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Tell Qudadi (Tell esh-Shuna) is located on the northern bank of the mouth of the Yarkon River. A preliminary trial excavation was conducted at the site in October 1937 under the direction of P. L. O. Guy, followed by extensive excavations carried out from November 1937–March 1938 on behalf of the Hebrew University, headed by E. L. Sukenik and S. Yeivin with the participation of N. Avigad. An impressive Iron Age fortress with two architectural phases was reported to have been found in the excavations. The excavators dated the first phase of the fortress to the 10th/9th century BCE, whereas the second phase, in their opinion, existed from the latter part of the 9th century BCE until 732 BCE, when it was destroyed as a result of the military campaign led by Tiglath-pileser III. Although the excavations were conducted some seventy years ago, the findings were never published. Considering the importance of the site to the history of the Land of Israel during the Iron Age, and as a result of cooperation between the Tel Aviv University and the Hebrew University, it was recently decided to publish the final excavation report. The preliminary study has produced interesting results that challenge the insights gained by the excavators. The ceramic assemblage is now thought to indicate that the site was not established before the second half of the 8th century BCE. Moreover, the ceramic evidence made it possible to determine that the fortress existed during the neo-Assyrian period. It seems reasonable to assume that the Tell Qudadi fortress was one of a series of neo-Assyrian fortresses constructed along the coast of the Land of Israel (some of which were erected at the mouths of rivers) at the end of the 8th and in the first half of the 7th century BCE.

I. INTRODUCTION

Tell Qudadi is situated on the northern bank of the Yarkon Stream estuary, within the municipal boundaries of the city of Tel Aviv.[1] The site is located on the road that traversed the length of the coastal plain, linking Syria and Phoenicia with Egypt. Historical documents prove that during various periods the main international north–south highway crossed the Aphek Pass at the sources of the Yarkon Stream to the north-east. However, Tell Qudadi apparently controlled the ford of the Yarkon estuary, allowing those who held the site to monitor convoys and travellers who chose the coastal road. There is no doubt, however, that because of its strategic location, Tell Qudadi's main purpose was to protect maritime trade along the coast of Palestine. The mound also afforded a view of the settlements on the banks of the Yarkon Stream in antiquity, among them Giv'at Beth HaMitbachaim, Tell Qasile, Tel Gerisa, Tell Abu Zetiun, and perhaps also Tel Aphek (Fig. 1). It is noteworthy that during various historical periods, the Yarkon Stream, being the widest of the country's Mediterranean coastal waterways, was considered a political, social and even cultural border (Gilboa 2005, 66–67).

Tell Qudadi was declared an antiquities site in 1944 after it was included in the booklet of addenda to Mandatory antiquities sites.[2] The site was discovered in 1934, following a

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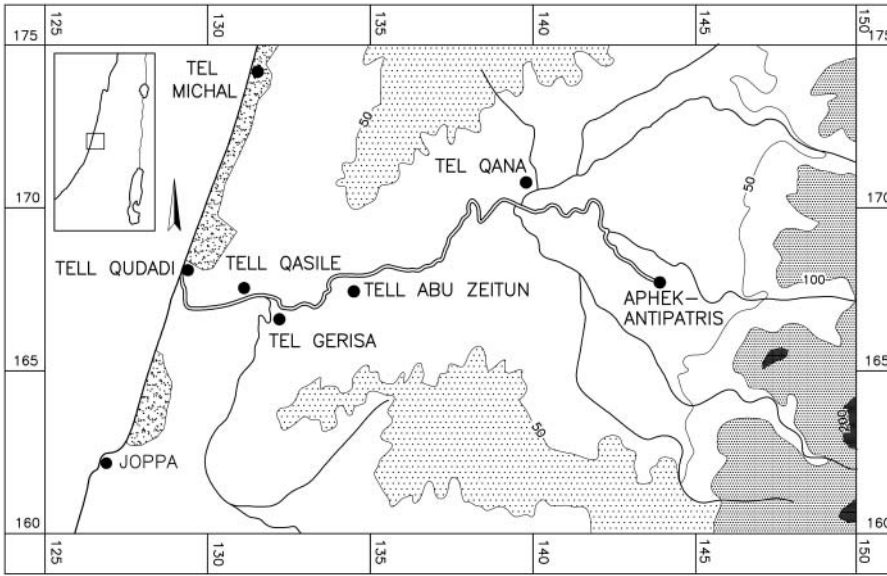
Fig. 1.   Location map — The Yarkon's central sites.

Fig. 2.   Left: Aerial photography of Tell Qudadi (Deutsche Luftwaffe, 1917);
right: Tell Qudadi in the late 1920s/early 1930s.

survey by J. Ory, in which he reported an artificial mound from the biblical period which had recently been robbed.[3] The fact that Tell Qudadi was recognized as an antiquities site only in 1934 is of particular interest since the site had been a military stronghold during World War I, in 1917, in the struggle of the allied forces against the Turkish army (Fig. 2) (Falls 1930, 214–217, 265–275; Bowman-Manifold 1932, 53–58). A monument at Tell Qudadi, which is visible today, commemorates that struggle, consisting of an inscribed Proconesian marble column taken from Apollonia-Arsuf, located some 12 km to the north (Fuchs 2004, 652).

Salvage digs were carried out at Tell Qudadi from 1937 to 1938, in preparation for the construction of the Reading (Electric) Power Station, and again in 1941 as part of conservation work at the site. Further excavations took place in 1969 in preparation for the building of the new Reading D Power Station.

The preliminary trial excavation at the site took place in October 1937, conducted by P. L. O. Guy for the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem. A fieldstone wall was uncovered, reinforced by Phoenician-style dressed piers (c. 17 m long, c. 0.75 m thick, with

a maximum height of 1.20 m; of the type discussed by Shiloh 1979, 50–59; Elayi 1996, Type G; Stern 2001, 464–466). A perusal of the excavation notes and the finds reveals that the wall was dated to the Persian period based on ceramics from the Iron Age and the Persian period uncovered in its foundation. The wall and the adjacent finds were not published. As opposed to the remains of the fortress (below), the wall cannot be seen at present (Fig. 3).

An extensive salvage dig was conducted at the site by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem from November 1937 to March 1938, headed by E. L. Sukenik and S. Yeivin and assisted by N. Avigad.[4] This excavation uncovered the remains of an impressive Iron Age fortress revealing two architectural phases (Fig. 4).[5]

A foundation was discovered from the first phase of the fortress consisting of roughly hewn *kurkar* (fossilized dunes sandstones), whose maximum height was 3 m and maximum width of the walls c. 7 m. The eastern wall was preserved along c. 33 m and its northern wall along c. 14 m. The rest of its walls were completely destroyed and apparently washed into the sea. Above the walls of the foundation a row of rooms was built around a courtyard, of which six survived—two in the north and four in the east. The walls of the rooms were also constructed of roughly hewn *kurkar* stones; their maximum height was 0.60 m. The rooms were found filled with sand and devoid of artefacts. The excavators concluded that the walls above the rooms, which did not survive, were built of mudbricks. The entrance to the court-yard was on the east in the centre, between the two pairs of rooms. The surviving walls apparently enclosed an inner courtyard, which meant that the original fortress had a square plan with an entrance in the centre of the eastern side. However, if the entrance was to the side of the eastern wall rather than in its centre, the fortress may have been larger than the excavators estimated. The excavators disagreed as to the dating of the first phase of the fortress. In Yeivin's opinion, it was established during the 10th century BCE (Yeivin 1960, 204–205), while Avigad believed it was not built until the 9th century BCE (Avigad 1993).

From the second phase of the fortress, an inset-offset wall of roughly hewn *kurkar* stones was found parallel to the eastern façade of the first phase. Its length is c. 30 m, its thickness c.2.50 m and its maximum height more than 2 m. Near its centre was an entrance 4 m wide, protected by a buttress on each side and approached by a ramp paved with fieldstones.

According to the excavators, two floors and two burnt layers they discovered were con-nected to the second phase of the fortress, since they cover the rooms of the first fortress. The pottery found in the burnt layers was dated to the end of the 9th and the beginning of the 8th centuries BCE. The excavators therefore determined that the fortress belonged to the Israelite kingdom and they attributed the destruction of the second phase to the campaign of Tiglath-pileser III in 732 BCE. Such a reconstruction of events was unreservedly accepted by other scholars (e.g. Kaplan 1959, 66, 71; Wright 1985, 212; Mitchell 1991, 336; Becking, 1992, 59). Likewise, according to excavators, the 7th-century potsherds discovered at the site demonstrated continuity of settlement.

Considering the absolute dates proposed for the Iron Age phases of the fortress, accepted scholarly opinion ascribed to it the function of guarding the entrance to the Yarkon against invaders and pirates. The site was therefore seen as an integral part of the settlement network that included other sites in the Yarkon basin, among them Tell Qasile and Tel Gerisa (Yeivin 1960, 204–205; Gophna and Ayalon 1989, 21).

The two phases can clearly be seen at the site today; our computerised measurements of the area and the remains verify the basic architectural data proposed by the excavators (Fig. 5). Nevertheless, neither the final results of the excavations carried out more than seventy years ago, nor the finds, were ever published, and Avigad's succinct half-page summary was the most in-depth presentation of the Iron Age remains of the site (Avigad 1993).
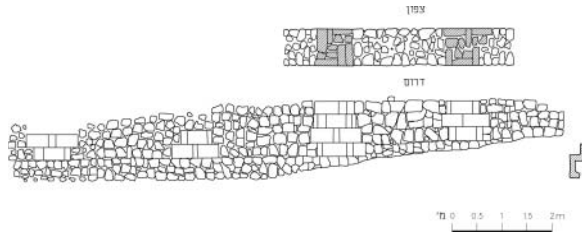
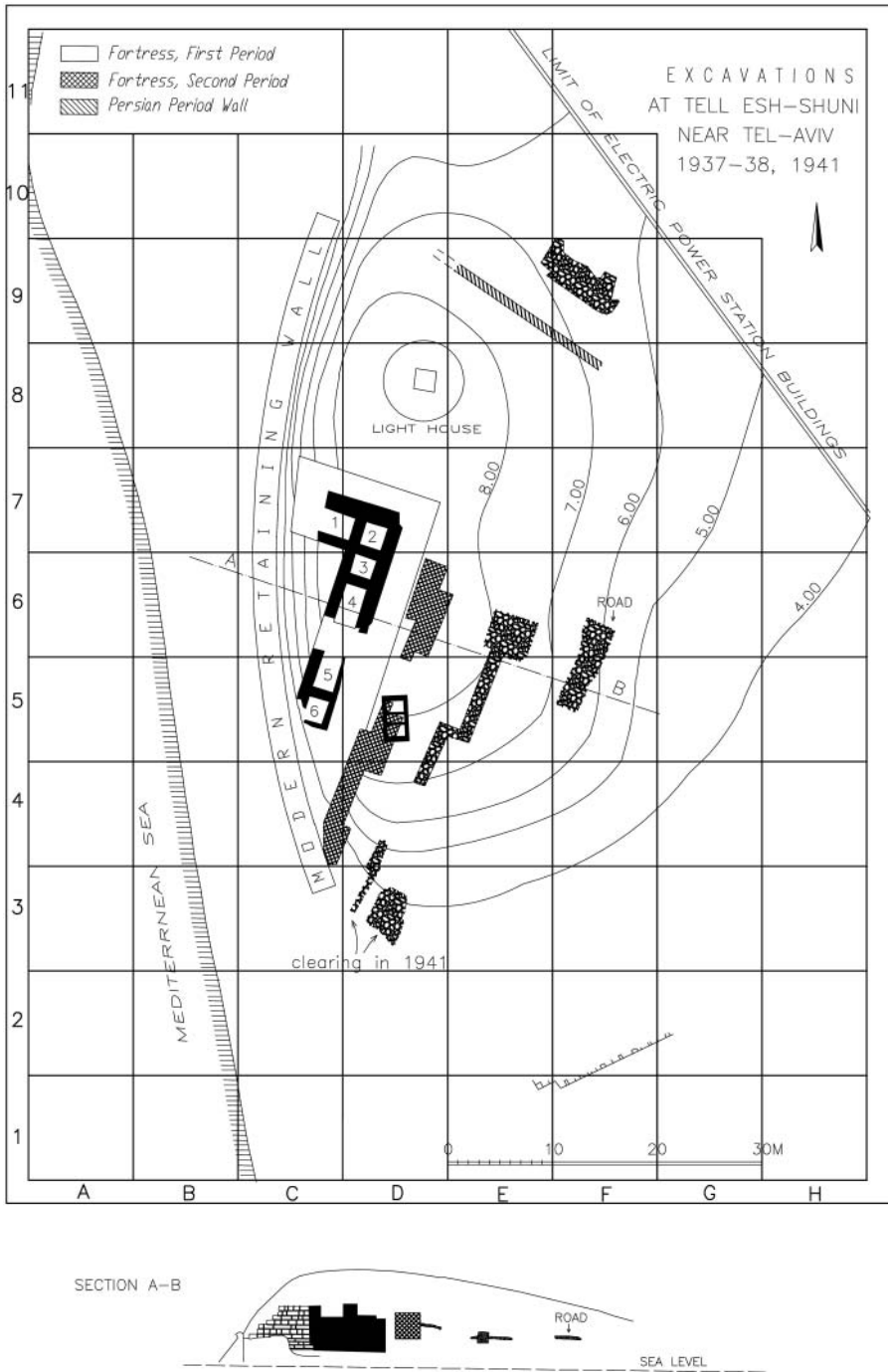Fig. 3.   Persian-period wall (plan was redrawn
according to archival plan).

Fig. 4.   Site map of the 1937–1938 and 1941 seasons of excavations
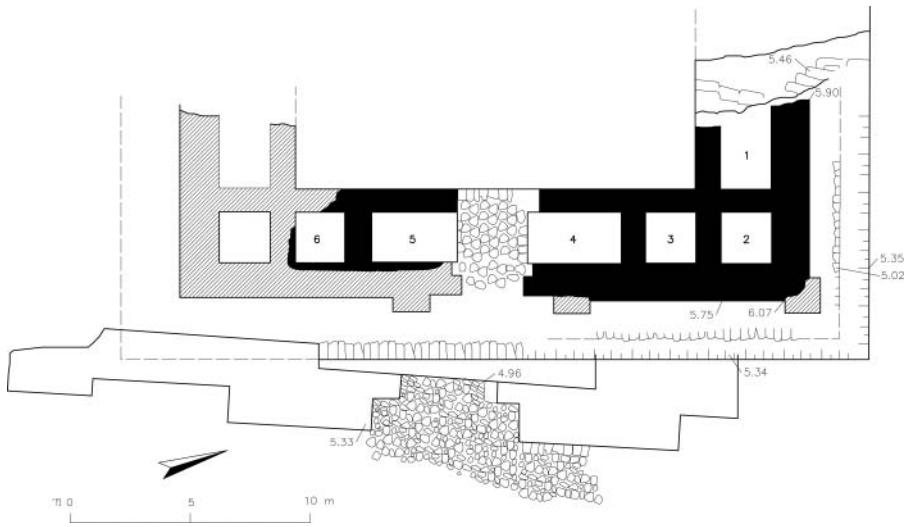(redrawn according to archival plan).

Fig. 5. Plan of the fortress (redrawn according to archival plan) and an aerial photograph taken in 1981, looking south-east. *Courtesy of Z. Herzog.*

This article suggests a reassessment of excavators' stratigraphic conclusions and revisits the proposed dates for the ceramic assemblage. In contrast to earlier interpretations, we believe that the existence of the fortress and its activities should be associated with neo-Assyrian rule in Palestine rather than with the preceding period. Moreover, we do not regard the site as part of the network of settlements that included Tell Qasile and Tel Gerisa since, as will be shown, these sites exhibit settlement gaps during the time the fortress at Tell Qudadi continued to be in use.

2. STRATIGRAPHIC ASPECTS

As noted, the excavators ascribed the two floors and the two burnt levels in which pottery was found to the second architectural phase of the fortress. However, an examination of the excavation notes, the plans and the site's excavated sections proves that all the floors uncovered in the excavation are isolated from the fortress walls of the first and second phases. Accordingly, the link between the floor of the earlier phase and that of the later phase — as well as any other floor uncovered during the excavation — is not a physical one. A probe of the north-eastern casemate (casemate 2) of the fortress strongly supports this argument (Fig. 6). This probe reveals the stratigraphy of the fortress: Stratum V is associated with the stone foundation and the walls of the north-eastern casemate; the casemate room contained beach sand devoid of artefacts, which was used to strengthen the foundations of the building. Above the casemates of the foundation a superstructure would certainly have been built of mudbricks that did not survive. Stratum IV, whose floor consists of shells, was destroyed in a conflagration, as was Stratum III, which had a stone floor. Between these two strata (i.e., above the first destruction level and below the second one) an occupation level was uncovered (Stratum IIIB), which should be regarded as a stratum of repairs between the two phases. Ceramics from the Iron Age IIB were found in all three strata, as will be shown below. Stratum II consists of fill containing a mixture of potsherds from Iron Age IIB and the Persian period, while Stratum I, on the surface, revealed a mixture of potsherds from the Early Islamic, Byzantine and Persian periods and the Iron Age.

As noted, the floors, including the burnt layers, were found without proper connection to the walls of either phase of the fortress. Therefore the excavators' conclusion that the two floors and the two burnt layers were associated with the second architectural phase of the fortress does not correspond to the findings. Logic indicates that each burnt layer represents a destruction, i.e., the first burnt layer represents the destruction of the first phase of the fortress and the second such layer represents the destruction of the second phase of the fortress. It should be noted that the archaeological data indicate no essential changes in the internal plan of the fortress between its two phases, i.e., the inset-offset wall of the second phase is no more than a new façade and a new gate on top of a ramp to the fortress. However, our re-examination of the remains at the site also indicates that the massive foundation representing the first architectural phase of the fortress had a stepped façade (Fig. 5), which may have served as a stone glacis that protected the foundations of the structure. Thus the inset-offset wall of the second phase apparently cancelled out the glacis and the stepped façade of the first phase.
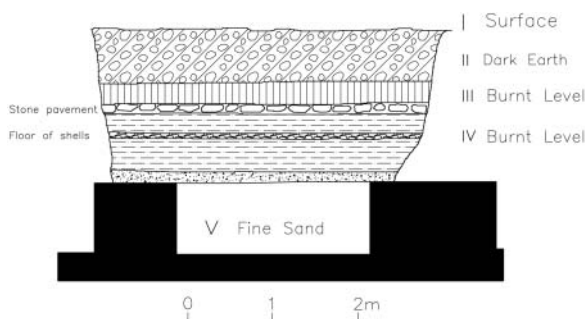

Fig. 6.   Section through casemate 2, looking east (redrawn according to archival plan).

3. THE FINDS AND THEIR DATING

A variety of ceramic finds were uncovered at the site including quite a large group of loom weights; however, in this article we would like to focus on the chronological aspects of the selected ceramic groups uncovered in clear contexts in the fortress.[6] The particular focus will be on the group from the first destruction layer (Stratum IV; Fig. 7); the group from the occupation level above the first destruction layer (Stratum IIIB; Fig. 8); and the group from the second destruction layer (Stratum III; Fig. 9). Although heterogenic in their nature, that is to say the three assemblages from Tell Qudadi feature northern, southern and coastal characteristics, their study reveals no essential differences in terms of typology, showing that the fortress was in use only during the Iron Age IIB. Indeed, the characteristics of the pottery clearly indicate a chronological horizon identified with the assemblages of Hazor VI–V or Beth-Shean P-7 or of Lachish Level III and its many parallels.[7]

The date of transition between the later phase of the Iron Age IIA, recently termed 'Late Iron IIA' (Herzog and Singer-Avitz 2004),[8] and the beginning of Iron Age IIB is widely discussed. Although for many years scholars used to believe that the Iron Age IIB horizon represents mainly the second half of the 8th century BCE, nowadays, the majority opinion favours the idea that the transition from the assemblages of the Late Iron Age IIA to those of the beginning of the Iron Age IIB had already occurred at the beginning of the 8th century BCE (see, with slight alternations, Mazar and Panitz-Cohen 2001, 274–275; Herzog and Singer-Avitz 2004; Faust 2005; Fantalkin and Finkelstein 2006; Na'aman 2007). Most recently, however, it has been suggested that the Lachish Level III ceramic horizon
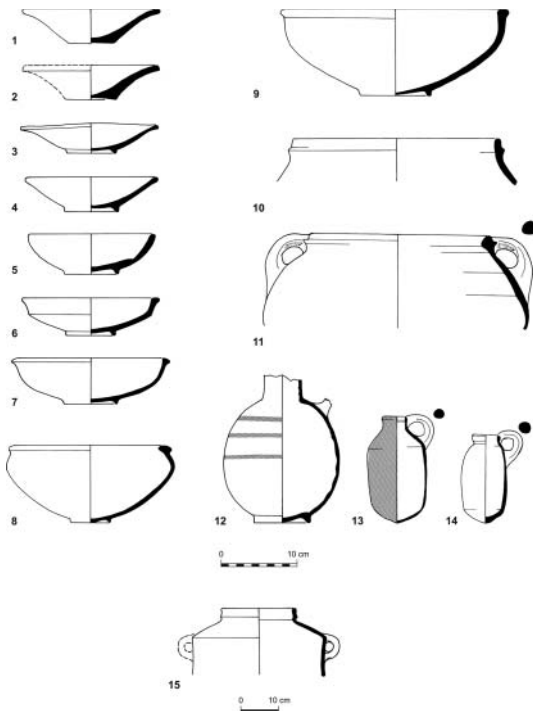

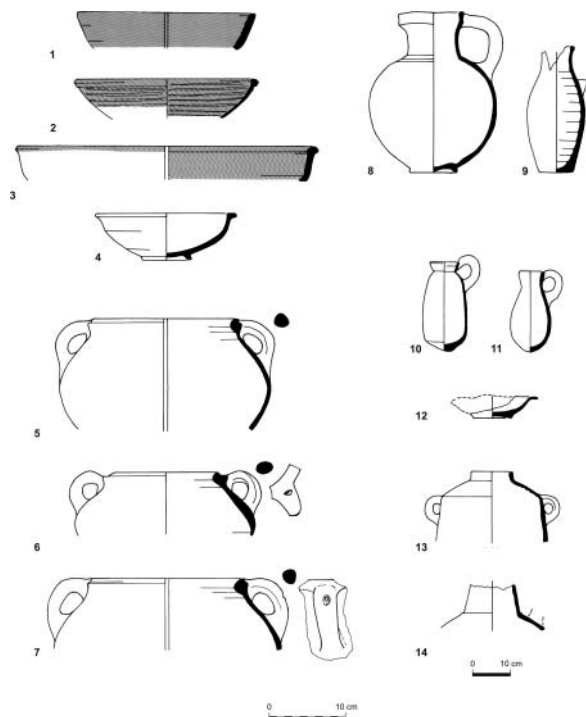Fig. 7.   A selection of pottery vessels from Stratum IV.

Fig. 8.   A selection of pottery vessels
from Stratum IIIB.

cannot pre-date the 760s BCE (Finkelstein 2008, 502). This is based upon a number of C 14
dates from Beth-Shemesh 3, recently published by Sharon et al. (2007, 40, 44) and re-
evaluated by Finkelstein and Piasetzky (2007, 78).[9] Be that as it may, it seems that in terms
of ceramic development, the transition between characteristic assemblages of Late Iron IIA
and Iron IIB was rather gradual and was completed sometime in the first half of the 8th
century BCE.

The ceramic horizon of Lachish III and its parallels with their counterparts from the
north of the country does not end, however, with the neo-Assyrian destruction layers but
continues at least throughout the first half of the 7th century BCE (Finkelstein 1994). It is
possible that this ceramic horizon may even be stretched beyond the mid-7th century BCE
(on the problems involved in the identification of first half of the 7th century BCE pottery
assemblages, see ibid.; Finkelstein and Na'aman, 2004, 72–73). Similar to the gradual transi-
tion from the assemblages of the Late Iron Age IIA to those of the Iron Age IIB, it may be
assumed that the transition between the Iron Age IIB assemblages and those uncovered in
the neo-Babylonian destruction layers from the end of the 7th to the beginning of the 6th
centuries BCE (sometimes called Iron Age IIC) was also gradual and was completed only
around the last third of the 7th century BCE. This next chronological horizon, which is often
being referred to as 'Lachish Level II and its parallels', is securely defined in terms of
ceramic assemblages, due to its preservation in the neo-Babylonian destruction levels.[10]

Taking these assumptions into consideration, we face a certain problem in our attempts
to determine the period of existence of Tell Qudadi's Iron IIB fortress in absolute chrono-
logical terms. The chronological horizon of all three Iron IIB assemblages discerned at
Tell Qudadi and presented above might extend over quite a long period of time, beginning
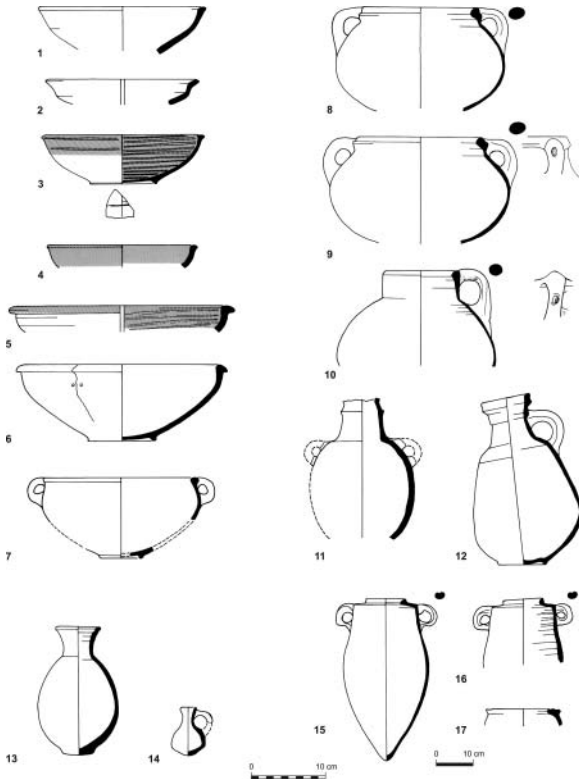
Fig. 9.   A selection of pottery vessels from Stratum III.

already in the first half of the 8th century and ending around the middle of the 7th century BCE or slightly later, that is to say a period of some 150 years. The fact that two clear construction phases were discerned in the fortress, sealed in burnt layers, and that the beginning of the second phase involved noticeable architectural changes, may point perhaps, although not necessarily, to maintaining the fortress during a sufficient period of time. Can this assumed lengthy time span be delimited in order more precisely to determine the period during which the fortress was occupied?

First of all, we should pay attention to the fact that all three Iron IIB ceramic assemblages from Tell Qudadi seem to represent the 'classic' Iron IIB horizon. That is to say, both the transitional features of Iron IIA/Iron IIB pottery forms and the forms that characterize the ceramic assemblages from the end of the 7th to the beginning of the 6th centuries BCE are basically missing from Tell Qudadi's ceramic repertoire. Such an observation might help to limit the fortress's operation in broad terms to the second half of the 8th to first half of the 7th centuries BCE. Additional assistance comes from an unexpected source: the discovery of a rather large fragment of the neck and body of an imported amphora of the Grey Ware family, which originates, most probably, on the island of Lesbos in the north-eastern Aegean Sea.[11] This amphora was uncovered in Stratum IIIB (Fig. 8: 14), i.e., in the assemblage from the occupation level above the first destruction layer.

The earliest secure dated example of these amphorae came from the excavation of the Athenian Agora, in the context of the third quarter of the 7th century BCE (Brann 1961, 346, pls. 86, 89: F 80; Clinkenbeard 1982, 249; Dupont 1998, 159). Other early examples have

also been ascribed to no earlier than the late 7th century BCE. This relates to a number of vessels uncovered in the late 7th century BCE contexts, mainly in Greek colonies in southern Italy and the Black Sea area (e.g. Berlingo 1993, 9; Dupont 1998, 159; Stea 2000, 473; Bîrzescu 2006, 22–56), but additional localities are also present (e.g. Skarlatidou 1986; Aslan 2002; Lawall 2002; *idem* 2006; Hürmüzlü 2004). Published examples from Israel relate to an example from Meẓad Ḥashavyahu which consists of a large rim and base fragments as well as a complete profile stopper (Fantalkin 2001, 94, fig. 34: 1*–2*) and a few additional amphorae body fragments of probable Lesbian origin from Ashkelon (Master 2001, 40, 146–147, 155, fig. 2.9.8). These, however, are too clearly belonging to the late 7th century BCE contexts.[12] Cook, following his excavation of ancient Smyrna in Asia Minor, did suggest that these amphorae were already in existence in the 8th century BCE if not earlier (Cook 1953, 124; *idem* 1958–1959, 14), but this theory has never been supported by additional archaeological evidence, and the early Grey Ware amphorae from Smyrna remain largely unpublished. Thus the discovery of the amphora from Lesbos in what is clearly an Iron Age IIB context in our region comes as a complete surprise, since it is usually assumed that the production of these amphorae did not begin before the third quarter of the 7th century BCE.[13] It should also be noted that based on the conventional chronology, other East Greek amphorae, which came from workshops of Samos, Chios, Klazomenai, Miletos and else-where, also began to appear in the second half of the 7th century BCE at the earliest (cf., e.g., Abramov 1993; Dupont 1998; Monakhov 1999; Lawall 2004; Seifert 2004; Sezgin 2004).[14] It should be emphasized, however, that in too many cases much weight was given to the Black Sea region whereas the evidence from other areas was sometimes overlooked (Docter 2000; Kershner 2000). However, new evidence from Carthage in North Africa and Toscanos in Spain proves that these chronological assumptions are not precise, since several East Greek amphorae fragments from various workshops were found in much earlier contexts. Docter, in his comprehensive study of these early amphorae, concludes persuasively that the produc-tion and distribution of the Samian amphorae, for example, began as early as the third quarter of the 8th century BCE instead of the customary late 7th century BCE; those of Chios were already being produced at the beginning of the second quarter of the 7th century BCE and not in the third quarter of that century; while the beginning of the Clazomenian series may be pushed up to the end of the 8th century BCE instead of the second half of the 7th century BCE (Docter 2000). This being the case, the fragment of the Lesbian amphora from Tell Qudadi joins the rest of the archaic East Greek amphorae series, which began to appear as early as the second half of the 8th century to the beginning of the 7th century BCE. Still, because of their rarity in such early contexts, the production and circulation of these trans-port amphorae was clearly on a modest scale between the end of the 8th century and the end of the 7th century BCE, and only during the 6th century BCE did their production and circulation become extensive. What is the significance of this data in terms of our attempts to seek evidence for the length of the existence of the fortress at Tell Qudadi?

It seems to us that considering the corrected date for the initial production and circula-tion of the majority of the archaic East Greek transport amphorae, it would be inaccurate to assume that the series from Lesbos made its appearance in our region as early as the beginning of the Iron Age IIB, i.e., already at the beginning of the 8th century BCE. The single Lesbian amphora fragment found in Stratum IIIB of Tell Qudadi cannot bear respon-sibility for raising the chronology of Lesbian transport Grey series amphorae so significantly. It is reasonable to assume, however, that this fragment, as the earliest example of the Lesbian amphorae found so far, dates no earlier than the end of the 8th to the beginning of the 7th centuries BCE. Moreover, if the beginning of the Iron Age IIB, i.e., Lachish Level III ceramic horizon, indeed cannot pre-date the 760s BCE (Finkelstein 2008; and above), it would provide an additional support for such a dating. This notion, however, which brings us back

to scholarly opinion that the Iron Age IIB horizon started around the middle of the 8th century BCE (although this time it is based on C 14 dating), should wait additional support.

All in all, although in terms of absolute chronology the local Iron IIB assemblage from Tell Qudadi can extend over a period of some 150 years, its particular characteristics as well as the presence of the imported fragment do allow the period of the fortress's use to be further narrowed down to between the second half of the 8th century and the first half of the 7th century BCE. This period of time corresponds, at least in general terms, to the period of neo-Assyrian rule in Palestine. Accordingly, it may be assumed that the fortress at Tell Qudadi was an integral part of the system of administrative centres, trade stations and fortresses established on the coastal plain and inland in response to the needs of the neo-Assyrian Empire.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL CONCLUSIONS

Our analysis of the finds from Tell Qudadi presents the following picture. In contrast to the presently accepted scholarly opinion with regard to the dating of the fortress,[15] its establishment can very reasonably be attributed to the second half of the 8th century BCE at the earliest. The second phase of the fortress shows continuity in terms of the ceramics and therefore it should be dated to the first half of the 7th century BCE. As for the end of the fortress, it seems to have ceased functioning after the middle of the 7th century BCE and perhaps even towards the final third of that century, due to the withdrawal of the neo-Assyrians from the country.[16] This assumption is supported by the fact that the site revealed no ceramic types characteristic of the end of the 7th century and/or the beginning of the 6th century BCE, types with which we are familiar from sites where layers associated with the neo-Babylonian destruction or abandonment have been documented. Even if the archaeological interpretation seems wanting in and of itself that the period of the existence of the fortress at Tell Qudadi should be limited to a time corresponding to the neo-Assyrian period, larger historical considerations provide even more support for this scenario. Indeed, considering the strategic location of the fortress, it is difficult to imagine its maintenance under the control of anyone other than the neo-Assyrian sovereign or its representatives.

The recent understanding of the processes that took place in the southern Levant near the end of the 8th and during the main part of the 7th centuries BCE shows unprecedented involvement of the neo-Assyrian administration in local affairs. This involvement may be seen in a variety of fields, such as the annexation of many Levantine kingdoms accompanied by the transformation of some of them into neo-Assyrian provinces; population exchanges; rearrangement of the borders and intensive construction activity. The latter is particularly visible in the coastal area, which is dotted with neo-Assyrian *emporia* and fortresses (see, e.g., Na'aman 1995; *idem* 2001, 260–280; Gitin 1997; Finkelstein and Singer-Avitz 2004). One may reasonably assume that the fortress at Tell Qudadi was an integral part of the fortresses and trade stations built during the period of neo-Assyrian domination along the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea. It seems to us that these building activities, both along the coast and along other main roads of Palestine, were intended to create a new architectural landscape that radiated political power of the neo-Assyrian sovereign to the western margins of the empire, creating a new 'imperial landscape'.

The neo-Assyrian interest in the coastal area is known to have stemmed from their desire to be involved in, and obtain their share from revenues of, the international trade among Phoenicia, Philistia and Egypt (see, e.g., Elat 1978; *idem* 1990; Gilboa 1996; Fantalkin 2006, 201–202). As a result, on the one hand the Phoenicians enjoyed the stability of the *pax Assyriaca* and exclusive access to trade routes and mercantile centres, but on the other hand, neo-Assyrian administrative officials closely monitored that trade and levied duties on

it (Frankenstein 1979; Na'aman 2001; Sommer 2007).[17] There is no doubt that the neo-Assyrians invested a great deal of effort in the routing of commerce and its concomitant taxes, an effort that required constant supervision over main points of control, among them seaports. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the location of the fortress at Tell Qudadi made it an important intermediate station on the maritime and overland route between Egypt and Phoenicia.[18]

But must we assume that attributing the fortress to the neo-Assyrian network means it was actually built and maintained by neo-Assyrians? While some of the architectural components discerned in the fortress may point in that direction,[19] in our opinion this was not the case. Rather, both the construction and maintenance of the fortress were likely to have been carried out by a local vassal of the neo-Assyrians on orders from the sovereign, as had been common practice in the frontier zones of the neo-Assyrian empire (see, e.g., Parker 1997; *idem* 2002; *idem* 2003; Dubovský 2006, 203–207). Thus although, according to our reconstruction, the fortress at Tell Qudadi belonged to the neo-Assyrian network, we need not seek standard Mesopotamian construction or even neo-Assyrian pottery-types there.[20] If our proposed date for the functioning of the fortress is accepted, its attribution to a certain ruling authority should be based on a wider historical perspective rather than construction style or ceramics. Considering the lack of a developed hinterland in the Yarkon basin in the 8th and 7th centuries BCE (Shavit 2003; *idem* 2008; see also Dagot 2007), it seems only likely to attribute to a foreign power the initiative for the construction of a monumental fortress at the estuary of one of the most important rivers in the country.[21]

In fact, there is no shortage of possible scenarios concerning the building of the fortress or the causing of its destruction layers. Thus, as is well known, during Sennacherib's campaign in 701 BCE, an Ashkelonian enclave was targeted in the area discussed, consisting of Beth Dagon, Joppa, Bene-Baraq and Azur (Pritchard 1969, 287). How can the control of Ṣidqa, king of Ashkelon, be explained over this area? According to Gadot, it is plausible that already during the Iron Age I Ashkelon had extended its power (colonized?) or at least significantly tightened its trade connection with the central part of Israel's coastal plain (Gadot 2008). In this reconstruction, the appearance of the Ashkelonian enclave in the area of Joppa in 701 BCE may be an outcome of a colonization process that had started 400 years earlier (Gadot 2006, 31). According to Na'aman, however, it was Tiglath-pileser III who may have transferred Joppa and the adjacent areas to the control of Rukibtu, king of Ashkelon, in 732 BCE (Na'aman 1998). Whatever the case, it is possible that Rukibtu was required to build and maintain the fortress at Tell Qudadi in the service of neo-Assyrian interests in the region, which involved securing maritime trade and customs. However, after Ṣidqa joined Hezekiah's rebellion in 701 BCE, the Ashkelonian enclave in the area of Joppa was targeted and most probably confiscated by the neo-Assyrians. Could the first destruction layer discerned at Tell Qudadi, Stratum IV, be the work of Sennacherib, who was forced to conquer the fortress from the troops of the rebellious king who may have taken it over? According to this possibility, it might be assumed that the remains of the second phase of the fortress, in which the inset-offset wall and its gate and ramp were added, are none other than a repair of the imperial property and its restoration to the original owners. That is to say, one may hypothesize that Šarru-lū-dârri son of Rukibtu, who was appointed by the neo-Assyrians to rule in Ashkelon instead of rebellious Ṣidqa, took care of the repair of the fortress and its daily maintaining as part of his vassal obligations to the neo-Assyrian masters. Clearly we have no certain answer, and this scenario is one among many possibilities.

Another, not less attractive possibility is that neo-Assyrian orders were given to one of the local rulers to build the fortress at Tell Qudadi after the suppression of the revolt in 701 BCE. According to Na'aman's original suggestion, after the rebellion of Ashkelon in 701 BCE, the area of Joppa was transferred to Padi, king of Ekron, and served as a main port of trade for his kingdom. This is based on the notion that the territory of the kingdom of Ekron in

the 7th century BCE roughly overlapped the inheritance of Dan (in particular the western border of the town list of Dan) in the boundary system of the Israelite tribes (Na'aman 1998, 225; *idem* 2001, 262). It must be stressed, however, that the general decline of the Yarkon area during the 7th century BCE, including the absence of the 7th- century remains at Joppa and Tel Gerisa, and the modest remains from Stratum VII at Tell Qasile (only from the end of the 7th century), makes it difficult to accept that Joppa had served as a main port of trade for Ekron. We concur therefore with Na'aman's more recent proposal, according to which it is reasonable to assume that following Sennacherib's campaign, most of Joppa's inland enclave was annexed to the province of Samaria, while the coast of Joppa was transferred to the province of Dor (Na'aman 2009, 355).[22] In this scenario, the building, repairing and maintaining of the fortress was entrusted to the governor of Dor who may be considered as the representative of the imperial power. On the other hand, the possibility that the first fortress at Tell Qudadi may have been built on the instructions of Sargon II, is also not to be discounted. It was during the reign of this king, who 'opened the sealed harbour of Egypt', that immeasurably significant changes took place in all parts of the country, including the coast (see, e.g., Na'aman and Zadok 2000).[23]

Be that as it may, the common denominator behind all these possible scenarios is seeing the region during the existence of the Iron Age fortress at Tell Qudadi as an integral and important part of probably the first world empire in the history of mankind.

NOTES

[1] That is Quḍâdî, Tell (and also as esh Shūna / esh Shūne / esh Shūneh / esh Shūni, Tell), see Rashumot, State of Israel, *Yalqut HaPirsumim*, 1091 (18 Mai, 1964), Jerusalem (Hebrew), p. 1427. It seems that the site-name Tell Kudadi as cited in Avigad 1993 (and elsewhere) is erroneous, apparently originating in the spelling of the site-name in preliminary publications (i.e., Sukenik 1939; *idem* 1945). It should be noted that the verb *qdd* bears two different meanings; the one is to bow or to bend down (in Akkadian and Hebrew), while the other is to cut or to slice (in Aramaic and Arabic). It is probable that the site-name (Quḍâdî) as preserved at present, is a survival of the original Aramaic name that refers to the site location next to the Yarkon river mouth. We are indebted to R. Zadok for this observation.

[2] *Supplement No. 2 to the Palestine Gazette Extraordinary No. 1375 of 24 November, 1944*: Schedule of Historical Monuments and Sites, p. 1317, s.v. esh Shûna (Quḍâdî, Tell): 'Remains of Iron Age tower, ramp, foundations and surface pottery to south and east'.

[3] Report dated to 08.06.1934, File No. S2274, Israel Antiquities Authority archives, Rockefeller Museum, Jerusalem.

[4] The excavation was funded by the 'founding father' of the Israel Electric Corporation, P. Rutenberg, who followed its progress closely and assisted in every way possible, according to letters found in the Israel

Antiquities Authority Archive at the Rockefeller Museum and the Palestine Exploration Fund Archive in London.

[5] Oddly enough, according to Lipiński's most recent treatment of the *Itineraria Phoenicia*, Tell Qudadi 'was not yet excavated' (Lipiński 2004, 198).

[6] Only selected pottery prototypes appear here for the case of the argument; a full presentation of the types retrieved, together with statistical analyses, will appear in the final report.

[7] For Hazor, see Amiran 1969, 'Iron II C — North', 191–293, pls. 60–100, *passim*, which abundantly but selectively represents strata VII–VA at Hazor, otherwise one can refer to the five volumes (I–V) of Hazor final reports that were published by season and contexts resulting in the repetitive appearance of the same pottery types; for Beth-Shean, see Mazar, 2006, 313–384, *passim*, esp. pls. 26–42; for Lachish, see Zimhoni 2004, 1789–1899, *passim*; for comparative assemblages in the Shephelah, cf. those of Tel Miqne/Ekron II and IC, and Tel Batash III (Mazar and Panitz-Cohen 2001, esp. 159). For comparative assemblages in the southern coastal plain, see those of Ashdod VIII and VII (Dothan and Porath 1982, 28–41, figs 13–29, *passim*; Finkelstein and Singer-Avitz 2001, 244–246; *idem* 2004, 127–131; Ben-Shlomo 2003, 83–107; *idem* 2005, 63–246).

[8] In the southern part of the country, Late Iron IIA horizon is represented by assemblages such as Lachish IV, Tell es-Safi/Gath A3, Beersheba V and Arad IX. For comparative assemblages in the north, see Herzog and Singer-Avitz 2006; Sharon et al. 2007.

[9] For the actual pottery assemblage of Beth-Shemesh 3, a stratum which features transitional Iron IIA/Iron IIB pottery forms, see Bunimovitz and Lederman 2006, 419–420.

[10] For the southern coastal plain and the Shephelah, the destruction layer of Ashkelon which is dated to 604 BCE, is of vital importance (Stager 1996, 61*–74*; Master 2001; Waldbaum 2002). In addition to Ashkelon and Lachish II, other chronologically important assemblages include those of Meẓad Ḥashavyahu (Fantalkin 2001); Tel Miqne-Ekron IB (Gitin 1989); and Tel Batash II (Mazar and Panitz-Cohen 2001).

[11] The Lesbian Grey series amphorae should not be confused with what is often referred to the Lesbian Red Series amphorae (having oxidised red clay), whose attested initial appearance corresponds on the whole to the Lesbian Grey series (Dupont 1998, 158–159; Bîrzescu 2005).

[12] For quite a number of Lesbian Grey Ware series amphorae from Egypt, mainly from the 6th-century horizon, see Oren 1984, 27; Smoláriková 2002, 25–26 (Migdol), 32 (Heliopolis), 40 (Iuffa), 43 (Qurna).

[13] Concerning the place of origin, it is not always easy to postulate with certainty whether a given Grey Ware pottery fragment was produced in mainland Aiolis or in Lesbos, since the Anatolian pedigree of a Grey monochrome fabric is a well-known phenomenon (Lamb 1932; Bayne 2000; Coldstream 2003, 262–264). Although through the ages the Grey Ware is certainly not alien to the Aegean–Balkan milieu (Jung 2007; Pavúk 2007), it has been noted that during the Bronze and Iron Age the Grey Ware from Lesbos had much more in common with Anatolia than with any other region of mainland Greece (Spencer 1995, 303–305; Rose 2008). While some advances have been made recently in identifying various pottery workshops for different types of Grey Ware in Aiolis (Kerschner 2006a; Mommsen and Pavúk 2007), our knowledge concerning the workshops of the Grey Ware amphorae is far from being satisfactory (Dupont 1998, 158). Given the uniqueness of Tell Qudadi and Meẓad Ḥashavyahu allegedly Lesbian pieces, both of them have been subject to thin section analysis (petrography) and neutron activation analysis (NAA). The petrographic examination largely confirms the earlier observations made by Whitbread (1995, 154–164) (Goren, pers. com.); the NAA, on the other hand, has yielded an unknown provenance for both specimens (Mommsen, pers. com.). However, according to Mommsen, the Tell Qudadi's piece is made of the same paste as that of the above-mentioned amphora from Meẓad Ḥashavyahu (above p. 199). Since the complete profile of Meẓad Ḥashavyahu's amphora is widely considered to be of truly Lesbian origin (Dupont 1998, 159; Bîrzescu 2006, 24–26), we are inclined to believe that there is no alternative but to attribute the Tell Qudadi piece to the Lesbian origin as well. Needless to say, additional NAA is needed, especially from the isle of Lesbos itself, which is presently lacking. Still, paradoxically, the fact that a particular chemical fingerprint detected at the amphorae from Tell Qudadi and Meẓad Ḥashavyahu

does not fit any known chemical pottery profile from Anatolia (and there are many of them attested so far), strengthens the view that these amphorae were indeed produced in Lesbos (Fantalkin and Tal, in press).

[14] The current archaeological consensus, although still disputed by many historians, that an actual Greek colonization of the Black Sea area began only in the second half or even in the late 7th century BCE (e.g. Tsetskhladze 1998; Kerschner 2006b), helps in understanding why the conventional and, as it appears nowadays, too low chronology for the first production stages of the Archaic East Greek amphorae has been so widely accepted.

[15] Most scholars dealing with the site agreed on its dating and its Israelite hegemony. Given the evidence gathered here we reject their arguments. Tell Qudadi's excavators were of the opinion that the fortress served to prevent sea raids on the Yarkon inner settlements, but during the time the fortress operated these settlements had ceased to exist. It is likely therefore that a renewal of the settlement at Stratum VII of nearby Tell Qasile (Mazar 1985, 113–114) is the outcome of Tell Qudadi's destruction, and the withdrawal of the neo-Assyrian power from the country.

[16] On the dating concerning the neo-Assyrian withdrawal from Ebir nāri, see Na'aman 1991; idem 2001 (cf., however, Vanderhooft 1999, 64–68).

[17] As has amply been seen, for example, in the letter of Qurdi-Assur-Lamur to Tiglath-pileser III (ND 2715), dated to c. 732 BCE (Postgate 1974, 390–393; and more recently, Yamada 2008, 301) or in a famous treaty from the 670s BCE, between Asarhaddon and Ba'al of Tyre (Borger 1956, 108, lines 18–20; and more recently, Kuhrt 2002, 22–23; Edelman 2006, 219–223).

[18] In this respect, a neo-Assyrian trend of erecting fortresses by river mouths should definitely be emphasized (see Shavit 2003, 213).

[19] It is possible that the plan of the fortress, an open-court structure surrounded by a row of rooms, built upon a square monumental podium with a stepped glacis reflects direct Mesopotamian influences, see Amiran and Dunayevsky 1958. Resembling features were discovered in other 'neo-Assyrian' sites, e.g. Tell Abu Salima (Reich 1993), Ashdod (Kogan-Zahavi 2007) and Rishon LeZion (Levy, Peilstöcker and Ginzburg 2004), although concerning the latter, its neo-Assyrian influence is less pronounced).

[20] Recently, Kletter and Zwickel (2006, 178) criticized our suggestion to ascribe the fortress of Tell Qudadi to a neo-Assyrian network, based on a wrong interpretation of a lecture we gave at Tel Aviv University in October 2005. Kletter and Zwickel accept the date proposed by us but reject a neo-Assyrian origin based on the fact that the fortress was built in accordance with local building traditions. It should be emphasized that we never argued for actual building and maintaining of the fortress by the neo-Assyrians (although we do not reject such an idea altogether), but we concluded that it was politically controlled by representatives of the neo-Assyrian regime, given the fortress's chronology and the political history of the region.

[21] Throughout many periods of its history, the region experienced direct intervention of various rulers who shaped it as they saw fit. Thus, during the late Bronze Age Joppa was an administrative centre with direct Egyptian rule over the surrounding lands (see Na'aman

1981, 177–180), while at the beginning of the Iron Age, the region and its resources were exploited by various Philistine rulers (Gadot 2006; *idem* 2008).

[22] Indeed, in this case there is a reasonable explanation to the fact that later on, Persian kings transferred the territories of Dor and Joppa to 'Eshmun'azor II, king of Sidon.

[23] Finally, is it possible that the destruction layers documented at the fortress of Tell Qudadi were the result of none other than occasional incursions of pirates, like those made by Ionian Greeks and documented in the areas further to the north of the Eastern Mediterranean basin (see, e.g., Parker 2000; Yamada 2008, 303–305)?

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