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AUTHENTICITY EXAMINATION OF THE JEHOASH INSCRIPTION

Yuval Goren, Avner Ayalon, Miryam Bar-Matthews, Bettina Schilman

Abstract

A black stone tablet bearing an engraved Hebrew inscription in ancient Phoenician script has been attributed to the period of King Jehoash of Judah's repairs of the First Temple in Jerusalem. The results of a previous mineralogical and geochemical study suggested that the inscription could have been genuine, leading to the hypothesis that the tablet is a royal inscription that was placed in the Temple. However, a majority of philologists, palaeographers and epigraphers seems to agree that the inscription is highly problematic and should be regarded as a forgery. The present study focuses on the tablet's petrography and the oxygen isotopic composition ($\delta^{18}O$) of the secondary materials (patina). The micromorphologic, petrographic and oxygen isotopic composition of the patina covering the letters and surface of the inscription present numerous anomalies that clearly indicate that it was artificially created in recent times and as such is a modern forgery.

A RAMESSES IV SCARAB FROM LACHISH

Nir Lalkin

Abstract

This paper discusses an overlooked scarab from Lachish that bears the name of Ramesses IV. The scarab was found in Tomb 570, which is dated to the final days of Late Bronze Age Lachish. This scarab supports a lower date for the destruction of Level VI at Lachish to the time of Ramesses IV rather than to the time of Ramesses III.

A CYPRO-MINOAN POTMARK FROM APHEK

Assaf Yasur Landau and Yuval Goren

Abstract

An amphora handle incised with a possible Cypro-Minoan sign from 13th century BCE Aphek provides new evidence for the Cypro-Canaanite trade during the Late Bronze Age. Manufactured in the Acco plain, this amphorah may have travelled to Cyprus, been marked there, and then re-filled and sent to Canaan, to be deposited in the Egyptian Governor's residency at Aphek.

DOR AND IRON AGE CHRONOLOGY: SCARABS, CERAMIC SEQUENCE AND ¹⁴C

Ayelet Gilboa, Ilan Sharon, Jeffrey Zorn

Abstract

Recently, Stefan Münzer proposed that Egyptian so-called 'mass-produced' stamp-seal amulets may be traced to a Tanite origin and dated to the late 21st–early 22nd Egyptian Dynasties. Among these, it has been suggested that some scarabs bear the name of Siamun of the late 21st Dynasty, who ruled in the first half of the 10th century BCE. Since in Palestine these scarab seals first occur in late Iron Age I contexts, Münzer suggests that they corroborate the 'low Iron Age chronology', which incorporates most of the 10th century in Iron Age I rather than in Iron Age II. The site of Tel Dor, on Israel's Carmel coast, produced the best stratified group of these scarabs, including one that was identified as bearing the name Siamun. This paper elucidates the archaeological context of these finds and discusses their chronological repercussions vis-à-vis Münzer's proposal.

THE JUDAHITE SHEPHELAH IN THE LATE 8TH AND EARLY 7TH CENTURIES BCE

Israel Finkelstein and Nadav Na'aman

Abstract

In a recent article, Blakely and Hardin (2002) reviewed the results of excavations at several sites in the Shephelah and Beersheba Valley and interpreted them as evidence of an early Assyrian attack by Tiglath-pileser III on Judah. This study questions their proposal from both the archaeological and textual perspectives. It suggests an alternative interpretation, according to which the sites under discussion were devastated by Sennacherib in 701 BCE and partly reoccupied in the early 7th century, in the days of Manasseh.

‘BUSAYRA PAINTED WARE’ AT TEL BEERSHEBA

Lily Singer-Avitz

Abstract

A painted vessel of the ‘Busayra Painted Ware’ group was discovered at Tel Beersheba. This paper discusses its implications for the chronology of the Edomite pottery in Edom and for that of Tel ‘Ira in the Negev.

Unpainted Edomite ware is known in the pottery assemblages of Strata III and II of Y. Aharoni’s excavations at Tel Beersheba (Singer-Avitz 1999). However, painted Edomite ware, which has lately come to be called ‘Busayra Painted Ware’ (as labeled by Bienkowski 1992:7; 1995b:139; see discussion below), has been unknown there. Recently, when the pottery from the excavations was examined afresh as part of the preparations for the publication of the final excavation report, fragments of a painted vessel of this group were discerned. This vessel and its implications for the chronology of painted Edomite pottery in Edom and at Tel ‘Ira in the Negev form the subject of this note.

IDOLS AND SYMBOLS

DIVINE REPRESENTATION IN FIRST MILLENNIUM MESOPOTAMIAN ART AND ITS BEARING ON THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

Tallay Ornan

IN MEMORY OF PIRHIYA BECK

Abstract

First-millennium Mesopotamian art reveals a strong tendency to avoid the representation of human-shaped deities. Considering the historical framework, such a tendency may suggest Mesopotamian inspiration in the ancient Israelite negation of divine representation as articulated in the biblical image ban. This inspiration may indicate that biblical repudiation of the image of the divine was not necessarily shaped as a response to opposed alien religious imagery but was rather inspired by related prevalent seventh–fifth century Assyro-Babylonian concepts.

“ASHDOD REVISITED”—MAINTAINED

Israel Finkelstein and Lily Singer-Avitz

Abstract

In a recent issue of this journal, Ben-Shlomo (2003) disputed our main conclusions regarding the excavations at Ashdod (Finkelstein and Singer-Avitz 2001) and reaffirmed Dothan's stratigraphy and historical interpretation almost to the word. In this article we deal with his arguments period by period, to show that our observations should be maintained. We also deal with Ben-Shlomo's methodology regarding pottery assemblages, stratigraphy, regionalism and historical interpretation.